LINCOLN SQUARE CONCEPT PLAN

CITY OF MELBOURNE

PHASE TWO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

October - November 2017

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INTRODUCTION

This document has been compiled following the conclusion of Phase Two community engagement on Lincoln Square (October - November 2017). The purpose of this consultation was to present back to the community a drat concept plan for the future of Lincoln Square that will set the direction for improvement works over the next five years.

Lincoln Square is a significant local open space in Carlton, in the heart of Melbourne's Innovation District valued by residents, local workers, students and visitors for its mature trees, sunny lawns and gathering spaces. Home to the first public playground in Victoria from circa 1907, play continues to be an important part of Lincoln Square.

Following works in 2016 to upgrade the plaza on Swanston Street and install an underground stormwater collection and flood mitigation system, the City of Melbourne is now planning for the future of the whole space to ensure that Lincoln Square meets future needs and community expectations.

Underpinned by the City of Melbourne's Open Space Strategy, the draft concept plan has been substantially informed by Phase One community engagement undertaken in April-May 2017 and includes the following:

- An expanded park
- A new play space
- Planning for trees
- Improved park amenity.

A total of 20 participants took part in the engagement. This group contributed 34 recommendations for the draft concept plan via Participate Melbourne and a stakeholder workshop.

This engagement summary has been commissioned by The City of Melbourne and completed by The Space Agency - an independent consultancy specialising in stakeholder engagement and placemaking.

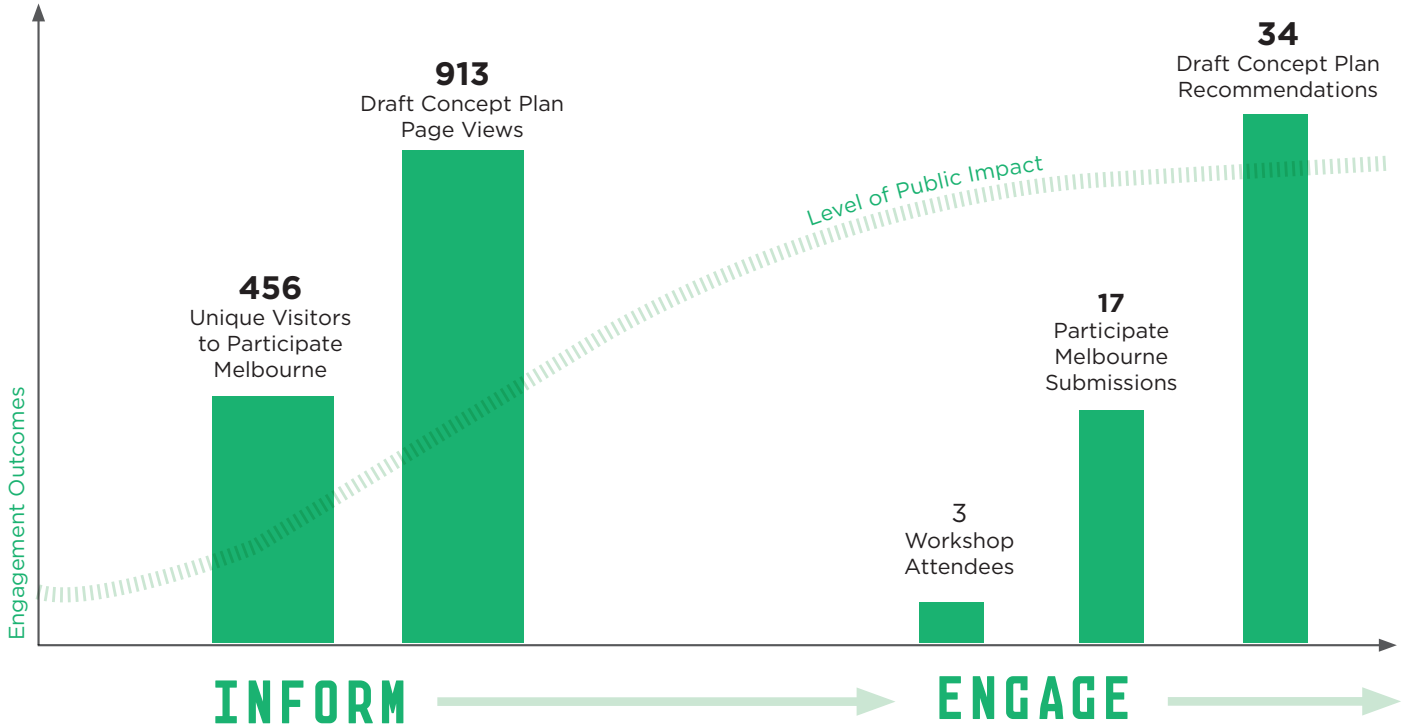
The Space Agency was engaged, as an impartial, external consultant, to review and analyse community feedback in order to identify key themes and recommendations. Every effort has been made by the authors of this document to represent accurately participant feedback and insights.

For recommendations or questions, Please contact: citydesignstudio@melbourne.vic.gov.au

PART A:
ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT

PARTICIPATION OUTCOMES:



Participate Melbourne is the digital hub for all City of Melbourne engagements. Over the duration of the engagement, the platform attracted 456 unique visitors. In addition, the Lincoln Square interactive concept plan received 913 views.

A total of 17 participants commented on the interactive concept plan on Participate Melbourne. A further 3 people attended a community information session and workshop. Together, participants put forward 34 recommendations.

WHAT HAPPENED?

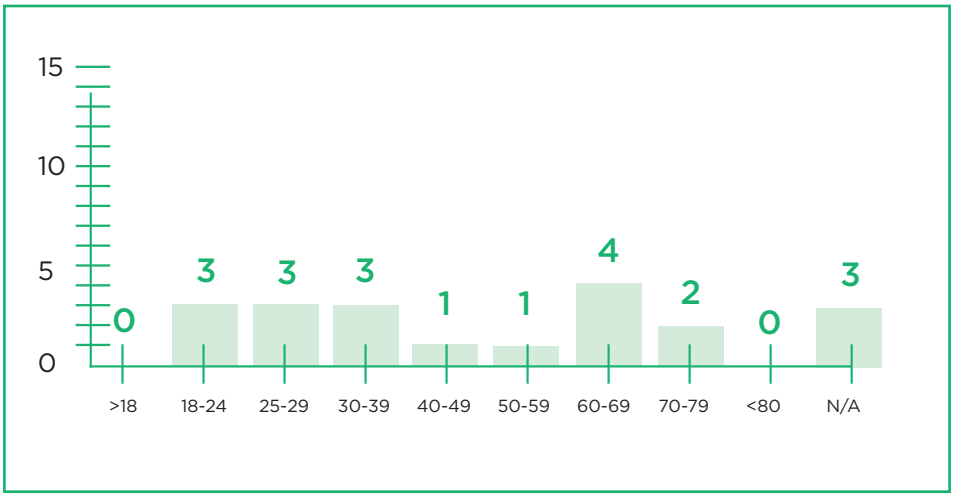
- The City of Melbourne ran a community engagement campaign from 20 October, 2017 to 22 November 2017 (5 weeks).
- During this period, the draft concept plan was presented to the public via an interactive plan on Participate Melbourne.
- A community information session was held on Monday 13 November, 5.30 pm.
- In addition to Participate Melbourne, presentations to key stakeholders and a post card mail-out to 5000 Carlton residents were undertaken across the engagement period.

WHAT'S NEXT?

- Community feedback will be reviewed and integrated into an updated concept plan.
- The updated plan will be displayed for community view (Phase 3).

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

PARTICIPATION BY AGE



Participants represented a broad range of ages. There were no participants under the age of 18 or over the age of 80.

RELATIONSHIP TO CITY

Participants were mainly area residents (35%) and local students (20%).

ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Phase 2 community engagement collected responses from **20 participants**. Of this total, 17 participants submitted recommendations and considerations directly onto the interactive Lincoln Square concept plan on Participate Melbourne.

Community responses have been independently reviewed by an external consultant. Within these responses, a total of **34 separate recommendations** have been identified. These recommendations fall into 4 action area, namely: An Expanded Park, Improved Park Amenity, Planning for Trees and A New Play Space.

Action Area	N	%
Expanded Park	14	41.2%
Improved Park Amenity	9	26.5%
Planning for Trees	7	20.6%
New Play Space	4	11.8%
Total	34	100%

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SUMMARY

Theme	N.	%	Recommendations
Expanded Park	14	41.2%	Participants were strongly in favour of the proposal to expand the park. This theme attracted the highest proportion of responses from the cohort. Of this group, nearly half (six participants) suggested that the park could be further expanded if the adjacent small streets were made one way. Recommendations for improvements to the draft concept plan included: • Improved surfaces and connections to make cycling easier and safer • Improved surfaces and colours on the pedestrian crossings to make them stand out more to motorists.
Improved Park Amenity	9	26.5%	Participants supported the proposal to increase the public amenity within Lincoln Square. Of the nine comments received, four were suggested that the seating choices within the concept plan could be more creative and inviting. Other recommendations included: • Adding more green space and lawn areas • More lighting than proposed • Materials that deter skateboarding.
Planning for Trees	7	20.6%	Participants provided a range of suggestions including planting trees that would expand the current canopy, to planting tall thin trees that would allow light to come through. Participants wanted to see a diversity of planting with a good selection of native trees as well as European varieties.
New Play Spaces	4	11.8%	Participants strongly supported the New Play Space proposal within the draft concept plan. Feedback acknowledged the use of creative play equipment, and the effort that has gone into making this space an inviting destination for families. One participants highlighted the lack of a play space for skateboarders.

PART B:
APPROACH

PROJECT CONTEXT

Lincoln Square is one of Melbourne's oldest parks and the site of the first public playground in the city, the Bali Memorial, as well as a diverse planting of remarkable 19th century trees.

The square is bounded by Bouverie Street, Lincoln Square North, Lincoln Square South and Swanston Street. Its location in the heart of Carlton and Melbourne's education precinct make it a popular destination for a diverse range of park users.

In 2014, Council conducted community workshops at Lincoln Square specifically to seek a solution to skate related issues. This engagement produced the Lincoln Square 'Design In' Summary Report - an engagement outcomes document that highlighted the critical issues of Lincoln Square. These included:

- How best to accommodate diverse park users,
- How to engender respect and responsibility among park users,
- How to address noise, amenity and safety,
- How to improve facilities
- A broader conversation on the Bali Memorial, the activation of the public space, the children's playground, and future upgrades to the park.

Participants in the 'Design In' produced a series of guiding principles to inform the future upgrade of the park. These included:

- Broadly maintain the current layout and feel of the Square,
- Enhance the Square to be a greener, safer, more inviting and inclusive space,
- Acknowledge that skaters are actual users of the space - local law or not,
- Reflect an inclusive design so that no single group or activity monopolizes the square,
- Avoid design solutions that lead to exclusion,
- Engender a sense of mutual respect for current and future users,
- Be a community led process.

In 2016, Lincoln Square underwent construction works to upgrade the park. Changes included the installation of a two-million litre flood mitigation and storm-water tank, as well as a re-paving and design of the plaza.

The changes sought to highlight the need to integrate the park with other open spaces in Carlton as well as major infrastructure projects such as the Metro Rail Tunnel.

The City of Melbourne is now preparing a concept plan for Lincoln Square in order to respond to these developments. The decision to prepare a Concept Plan was triggered by a number of factors including the need to:

- Guide the future use of the park.
- Respond to differing demands placed on public open space in fulfilling the requirements of a 21st century park.
- Rejuvenate Lincoln Square to address a wide range of challenges and opportunities to meet the needs of a changing Carlton. This includes a rapid increase in population and density as well as a changing demographic.
- Implement the Open Space and Urban Forest Strategy recommendations to increase open space and expand the urban forest to mitigate increasing urban heat island effect, climate change and improve the community's livability.

The Concept Plan will be informed through a three phased community engagement process which began in May 2017. The engagement approach and goals are outlined on the following page.

ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

The Lincoln Square Concept Plan will be informed through a three-phased community engagement process. The key objectives of each phase are outlined below.

Phase 1: April-May 2017

- Revisit the 2014 Lincoln Square 'Design In' community engagement report,
- Outline the strategic goals and vision of the Open Space Strategy in the context of Carlton and Lincolns Square,
- Understand what park users like and don't like about Lincoln Square.
- Invite park users to share their vision for the Square,
- Invite the public to speak directly with a project manager,
- Gather feedback, insights and recommendations to help shape a Draft Concept Plan.

Phase 2: October-November 2017

- Report back to the community with a summary of Phase 1 engagement outcomes,
- Present a Draft Concept Plan for community review,
- Invite the community to comment on the Draft Concept Plan and provide feedback,
- Provide opportunities for the community to meet face-to-face with the project team to gain further insights and stimulate discussion.

Phase 3: Dates TBC

- Display final Concept Plan for community viewing.

MEDIA SNAPSHOT

The Phase 2 engagement was supported by a media campaign including:

- 5000 postcards sent to Carlton residents.
- A media release distributed to media organisations
- Posts on the City of Melbourne social media channels - including: Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn
- Signage in Lincoln Square for the duration of the campaign.

Signage in Lincoln Square

australian **design review**

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Home • News • Community feedback on Melbourne's Lincoln Square

Community feedback on Melbourne's Lincoln Square

Oct 23, 2017

share

Article by Online Editor

The City of Melbourne seeks community feedback for a proposed expansion to Lincoln Square in Carlton, Melbourne. The historic park is undergoing development, including the creation of a new play space.

Chair of the City of Melbourne's Environment Portfolio Councillor Cathy Oke says the new concept plan will set the direction for improvement works to the Square over the next five years.

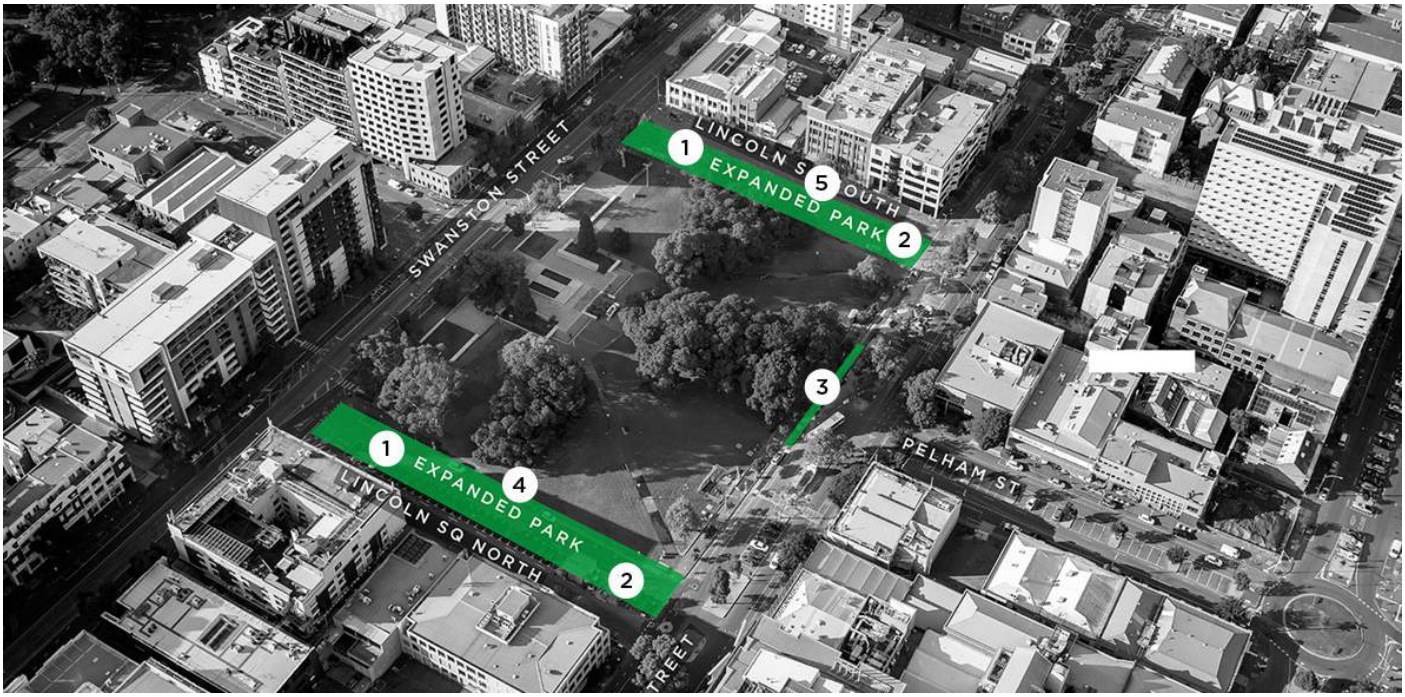
"With the population of Carlton expected to increase by 60 percent by 2026, now is a good time to improve Lincoln Square. A significant number of pedestrians walk through Lincoln Square to get to key destinations such as Melbourne University," says Oke.

Article in Australian Design Review

Facebook Post

PART C:
RECOMMENDATIONS

AN EXPANDED PARK



CONCEPT PLAN PROPOSAL:

1. *Remove central road car parking, retain kerb-side parking and retain two-way traffic.*
2. *Expand the park by approximately 15 metres into the roadway of Lincoln Square North and Lincoln Square South (resulting in a 28 per cent increase in open space).*
3. *Construct a new kerb out-stand at Bouverie Street and improve the pedestrian connection between Lincoln Square and Pelham Street.*
4. *Construct a new pedestrian path along Lincoln Square North to address the current desire/wear line.*
5. *Build a bicycle lane on the roadway at Lincoln Square South to connect to Swanston Street and Pelham Street.*

WHAT PARTICIPANTS SAID:

Fourteen participants commented on the 'Expanded Park' theme.

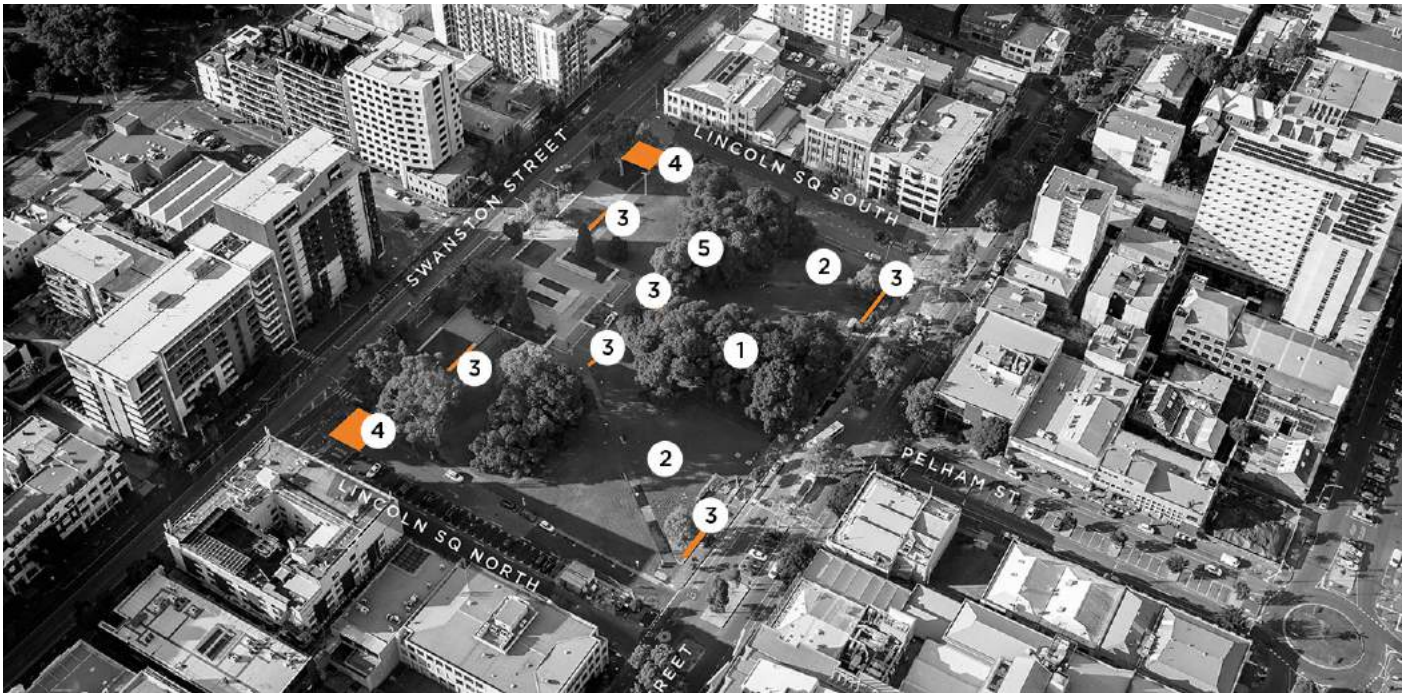
Six participant suggested further expanding the park by making the small streets along Lincoln Square one-way. Another participant suggested expanding on the plan and turning Pelham Street into a linear park.

Four participants were concerned with the bike paths and thought that a better surface treatment, or relocations would be better suit the needs of area cyclists. One participant suggested that the area requires additional bicycle parking.

Two participant suggested that the pedestrian crossing at Bouverie Street might be enhanced to make it more visible to motorists. Suggestions included adding colours and texture.

Three comments within this theme expressed their support for the draft concept plans recommendations.

IMPROVED PARK AMENITY



CONCEPT PLAN PROPOSAL:

1. *Upgrade lighting throughout the park.*
2. *Preserve the sunny lawn spaces for flexible activities.*
3. *Provide new seating in the centre of the park and along Swanston and Bouverie Streets.*
4. *Open up park entrances at the corners of Lincoln Square with new seating areas.*
5. *Build a new BBQ and picnic area near the play space.*

WHAT PARTICIPANTS SAID:

Nine participants commented on the 'Improved Park Amenity' theme. Of this group, four participants suggested an alternative furniture design should be considered for the park. This group suggested that the choice of furniture was not particularly inviting. They recommended more creative seating as well as different kinds of seating arrangements that might be used by groups. One participant said that they liked the proposed seating, noting that it didn't seek to detract from the unique aspects of Lincoln Square.

Two participants said adding more grass / green space. One respondent suggested that grass should replace the proposed compacted gravel area.

One participant said creating more spaces for social gatherings - not just a BBQ area. They recommended pingpong tables or a place for chess.

One participant said that the park requires more lighting than is proposed.

One participant said that Council should ensure that the choice of surface material will prevent skateboarders from using the space.

A NEW PLAY SPACE

CONCEPT PLAN PROPOSAL:

Design and build a new playground that interacts with the Moreton Bay Figs at different heights, from bugs at the forest floor to the tree canopy level.

Provide a range of play for all ages and abilities including challenging climbing opportunities to sensory imaginative play.

Create spaces of enclosure and quiet reflection with a tree house or pods.

Flexible play on the grass hill including rolling, kicking the ball and picnicking.

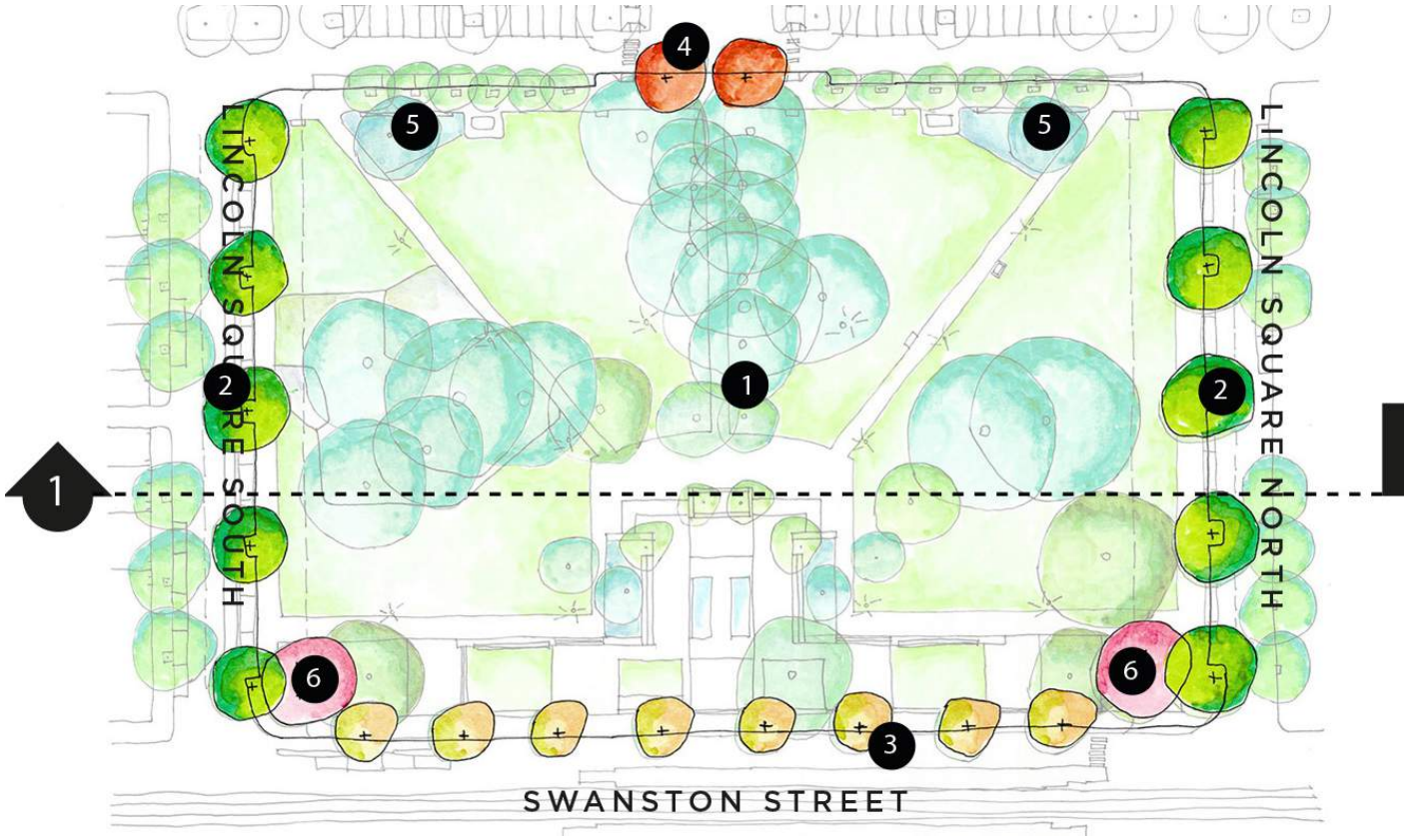
Create an inviting space for parents, carers and other visitors, with seating and gathering spaces throughout.

WHAT PARTICIPANTS SAID:

Four participants commented on the 'A New Play Space' theme. Three of these comments expressed their fondness of the proposal, stating how they thought integrating the playground with the trees, utilising creative play equipment, and making a space for families to come together were good additions to the park.

One participant was disappointed that there was no space for skaters included within the draft concept plan.

PLANNING FOR TREES



CONCEPT PLAN PROPOSAL:

1. *Preserve existing healthy and mature trees in the park.*
2. *Create shaded streets along the reconfigured roadways on Lincoln Square North and South.*
3. *Plan for succession planting to replace declining Elms on the Swanston Street footpath.*
4. *Enhance and frame the Moreton Bay Fig boulevard with two new gateway feature trees on Bouverie Street.*
5. *Incorporate extensive understory planting to strengthen the biodiversity corridor along Bouverie Street and Pelham Street.*
6. *New feature tree planting at plaza entry points and on Lincoln Square North and South.*

WHAT PARTICIPANTS SAID:

Seven participants commented on the 'Planning for Trees' theme. One participant suggested that taller, thin trees would allow more light to enter the park. Another participant said they liked the large canopy of trees and encouraged more Moreton Bay Figs to be planted.

One participant said that the planting of trees around the perimeter of Lincoln Square would be a great addition and would further enhance the appeal of the park.

One participant highlighted the need for more native vegetation and suggested including more native varieties of eucalyptus. Another suggested there should be a mix of native and European trees.

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