

# BIRRARUNG MARR MASTER PLAN



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

March - April 2018



CITY OF MELBOURNE

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# ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

# ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

The City of Melbourne is creating a master plan for Birrarung Marr, which outlines a vision for the future of the parkland and establishes the principles and actions that will guide management of the park over the next 20 years.

Developing the master plan requires a combination of research, planning and key stakeholder and community engagement. The information gathered through this process and the resulting analysis will tell us about community use of the park, landscape character, pedestrian accessibility, horticulture, and other social and environmental values of the park.



## PROJECT CONTEXT

Birrarung Marr is a significant cultural and recreational space for the City of Melbourne. It is also an important meeting place for the Aboriginal community and celebrates their connection to the land and the Yarra River. ‘Birrarung’ (river of mists) is the Wurrundjeri name for the river and ‘Marr’ relates to ‘side of the river’.

In recent years, population growth and major construction projects in and around Birrarung Marr have changed the way that people access and use the park. Some areas of the park are in need of upgrade or repair, while others are currently not being utilised to their full potential. This represents an opportunity to explore how this capital city park can be better managed to provide a local park experience for visitors, residents and workers, while continuing its role as a major events space into the future. There is also an opportunity to celebrate and improve the social, environmental, recreational and cultural functions of the park, and the importance of its connection to Traditional Owners.

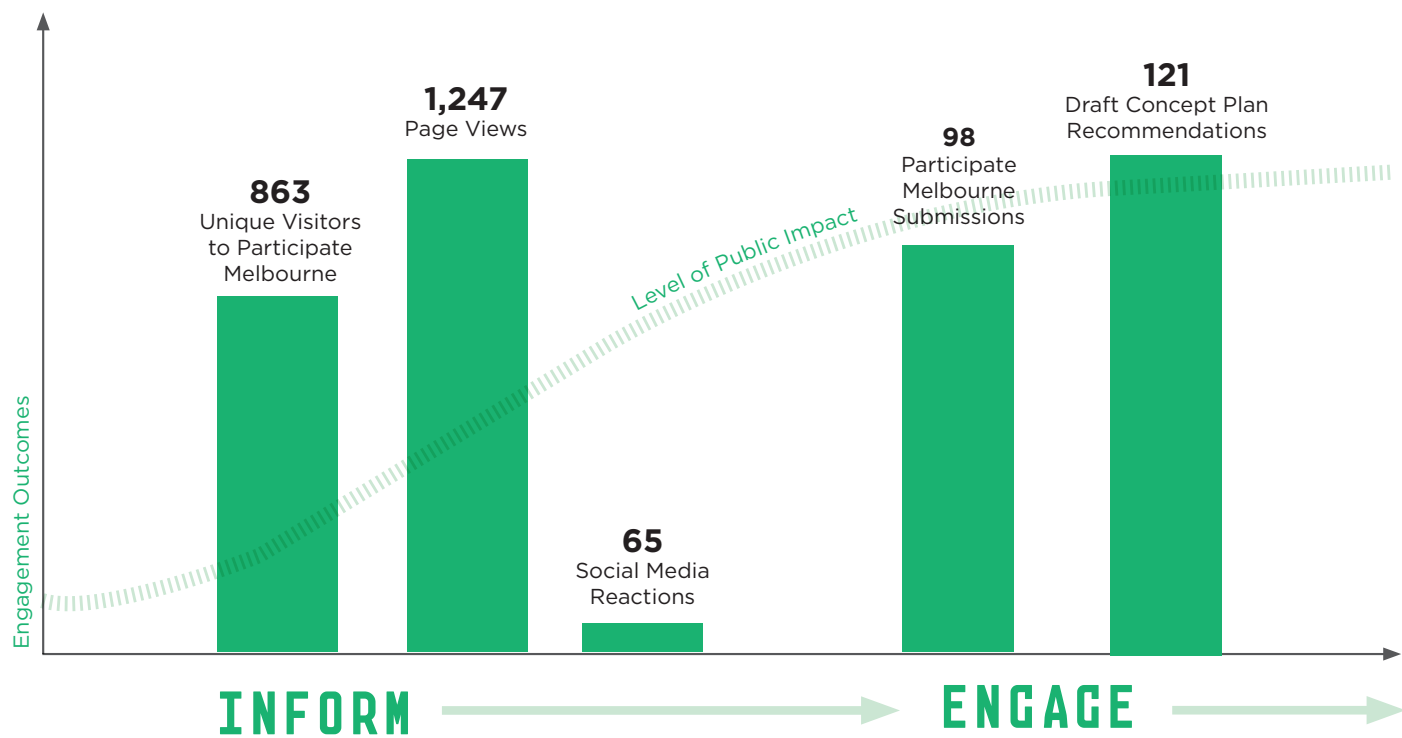
These community insights and recommendations will help support the development of the Master Plan and in turn will shape the continued evolution at Birrarung Marr into one of the Melbourne’s most loved and visited public open spaces.

## ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Running for the month of March until the 3rd of April 2018, the first stage of community engagement sought to better understand how people (including local area residents, people from across Melbourne, as well as visitors from interstate and overseas) currently use Birrarung Marr. The aim of the engagement was to gather stories and feedback on their experience using the public space in order to identify areas for improvement. Through a combination of online and on-the-ground consultation approaches, the engagement identified 10 key themes and generated 121 recommendations from 98 participants.

# PARTICIPANT SNAPSHOT

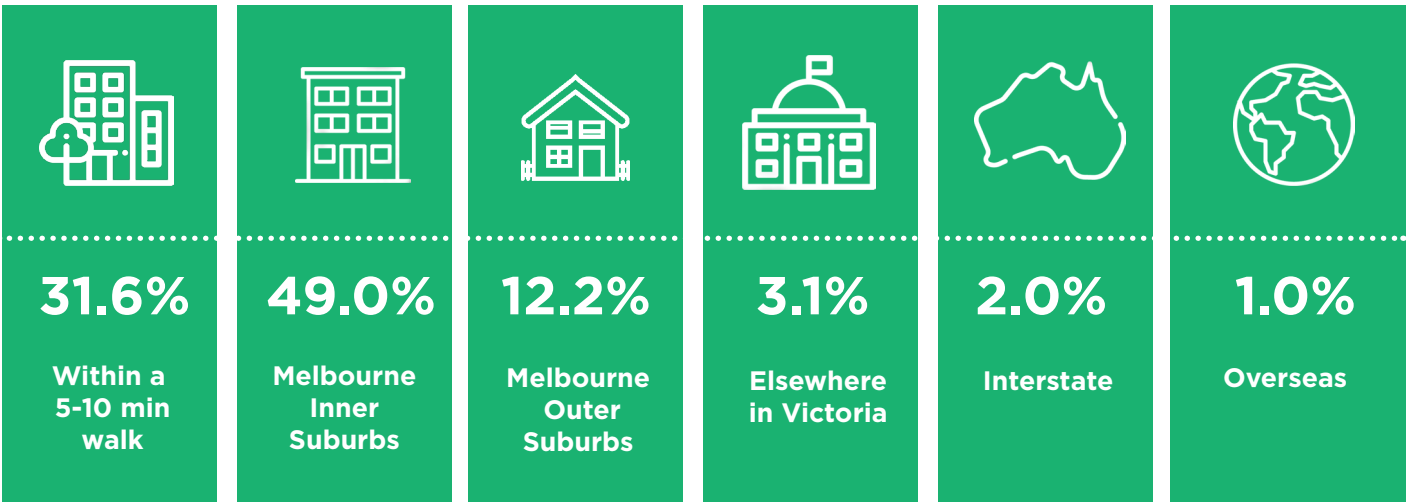
## PARTICIPATION OUTCOMES:



Participate Melbourne is the digital hub for all City of Melbourne engagements. Over the duration of the engagement, the platform attracted 863 unique visitors who committed 1,247 page views.

Through Participate Melbourne, participants were able to share their views via a digital questionnaire. A total of 98 submissions were logged through Participate. These submissions contained 121 recommendations towards the master plan.

## WHERE PARTICIPANTS LIVE:



# KEY LEARNINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## HOW WE USE BIRRARUNG MARR...

- Over 50% of participants visited Birrarung Marr on a daily or weekly basis ( 50 responses).
- One in three participants said they would come to Birrarung Marr to relax ( 36 responses).
- 16% of participants said they visit the park for recreational purposes( 16 responses).
- 12% of participants said they visit Birrarung Marr for events( 12 responses).



## WHAT WE LOVE...

- Nearly half of all participants (45 responses) said that they liked the natural environment of the park the most.
- 22.4 % of participants (22 responses) liked the views and access to the Yarra River the most about Birrarung Marr.
- Riverside Promenade was the most visited area within the park. Nearly 70 % of the participants (68 responses) said they generally visit this location, followed by the Lower Terrace (65.3%).
- The characteristics participants most valued regarding Birrarung Marr were its greenery and connection to nature, peace and quiet, as well as the vistas to the river and the city skyline.

## WHAT PARTICIPANTS RECOMMEND...

- Participants most wanted to see changes made to the Lower Terrace - including upgrades to the compacted gravel and segregated bike and pedestrian paths.
- Other recommendations included more planting and greenery, improvements to access and wayfinding, and more / improved public amenity in the park.



# **ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES**

# INTRODUCTION

This document has been prepared following the conclusion of Phase 1 community engagement on Birrarung Marr. The engagement sought community insights and recommendations to support the development of a master plan to inform how Birrarung Marr might continue to evolve as one of Melbourne’s most loved and visited public spaces.

More broadly, this multi-phased community engagement seeks to address some of the missing pieces of Birrarung Marr and better articulate the purpose of this public space for the city. When the park was established in 2002, it was the first major open space created in Melbourne for over a century. At the time of inception however, there was no clear agreement on the park’s purpose or functionality - though community events and Aboriginal culture and history were a significant part of its design. Moreover, with an increasing number of workers and residents in the CBD, increasing numbers of commuter cyclists, as well as an increased frequency and duration of commercial events, new issues have arisen that place pressure on the existing park’s design and how spaces are enjoyed.

Running for the month of March until the 3rd of April, the first phase of community engagement sought to better understand how people (including local area residents, people from across Melbourne, as well as visitors from interstate and overseas)

currently use Birrarung Marr. The aim of the engagement was to gain stories and feedback on their experience using the public space and what they value in order to identify areas for improvement. Through a combination of online and on-the-ground consultation approaches, the engagement identified 10 key themes and generated 121 recommendations from 98 participants.

These insights will be used by the City of Melbourne in collaboration with the State Government and Federation Square to improve the use, safety and management of Birrarung Marr. In the next phase of community engagement, a series of principles and a vision for the park will be introduced for public review.

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 accurately represent participant feedback and insights.

**For recommendations or questions, Please contact: [parkplanning@melbourne.vic.gov.au](mailto:parkplanning@melbourne.vic.gov.au)**



# ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

## ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

- To inform the community about what a master plan for Birrarung Marr means
- To find out what the community value about Birrarung Marr
- To understand how the community use Birrarung Marr
- To understand what is important to the community about future development, use and management of Birrarung Marr



## GAINING FEEDBACK

Participants were asked to share their feedback and insights in four ways:

1. By sharing a story through Participate Melbourne (What do you love about Birrarung Marr? Tell us in 500 words or less),
2. By completing a survey (10 questions relating to participants experience and values),
3. By uploading an image to Instagram using #lovebirrarungmarr,
4. Or by visiting a pop-up engagement session.

Four pop up engagement sessions were held to inform and engage people in proximity to Birrarung Marr:

- 17 of March am- 10 am to 12am ( East Melbourne Library Foyer)
- 17 March pm - 1pm to 3pm ( Birrarung Marr) - Near ArtPlay
- 20 March - 12:00 to 2pm - Lunchtime Pop-up - Near ArtPlay
- 23 March - 7:30 to 9:30am - Breakfast Pop up ( Birrarung Marr) - Near ArtPlay

## ENGAGEMENT PROMOTION

The engagement was promoted through the distribution of near 3,000 postcards to surrounding residents, posters in City of Melbourne facilities, as well as through the City of Melbourne's corporate and social media channels.

# DATA INTERPRETATION

The phase 1 community engagement was a combination of quantitative and qualitative data gathering. All data was captured through a digital questionnaire provided on Participate Melbourne - the online engagement hub for the City of Melbourne. The primary objective was to better understand the experience of visitors to Birrarung Marr including when they visit, where they visit, and what they like most about the space.

In order to better understand the specific needs and experiences of participants, respondent's data has been segregated into four groups: those who live within a 5-10min walk of Birrarung Marr and those who live beyond this; as well as participants under the age of 40 and those above 40. Where there are significant differences between the experience or needs of one of these groups compared with the broader cohort, the writers of this report have chosen to highlight it, for consideration within the document text.

Long form qualitative responses were only gathered for two questions. Each of these entries has been reviewed by the writers of this report in order to inform a group of Key Themes and Recommendations. Every effort has been made to accurately represent participant feedback. As such, themes offer a wide range of opinions - some of which may be conflicting. Where relevant, the writers of this report have sought to highlight

conflicting views and different perspectives in order to best reflect how people expressed themselves in the engagement as well as the different levels of support they might have for the project.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

The engagement was successful in attracting 98 participants. Participants were not asked to specify their gender or their relationship to the city (i.e. whether they are a resident, worker, student of visitor within the survey). The City of Melbourne is committed to providing inclusive and accessible community engagement. While every effort is made to ensure a broad cross-section of the community is consulted, it is not always possible to reflect this within written reports.

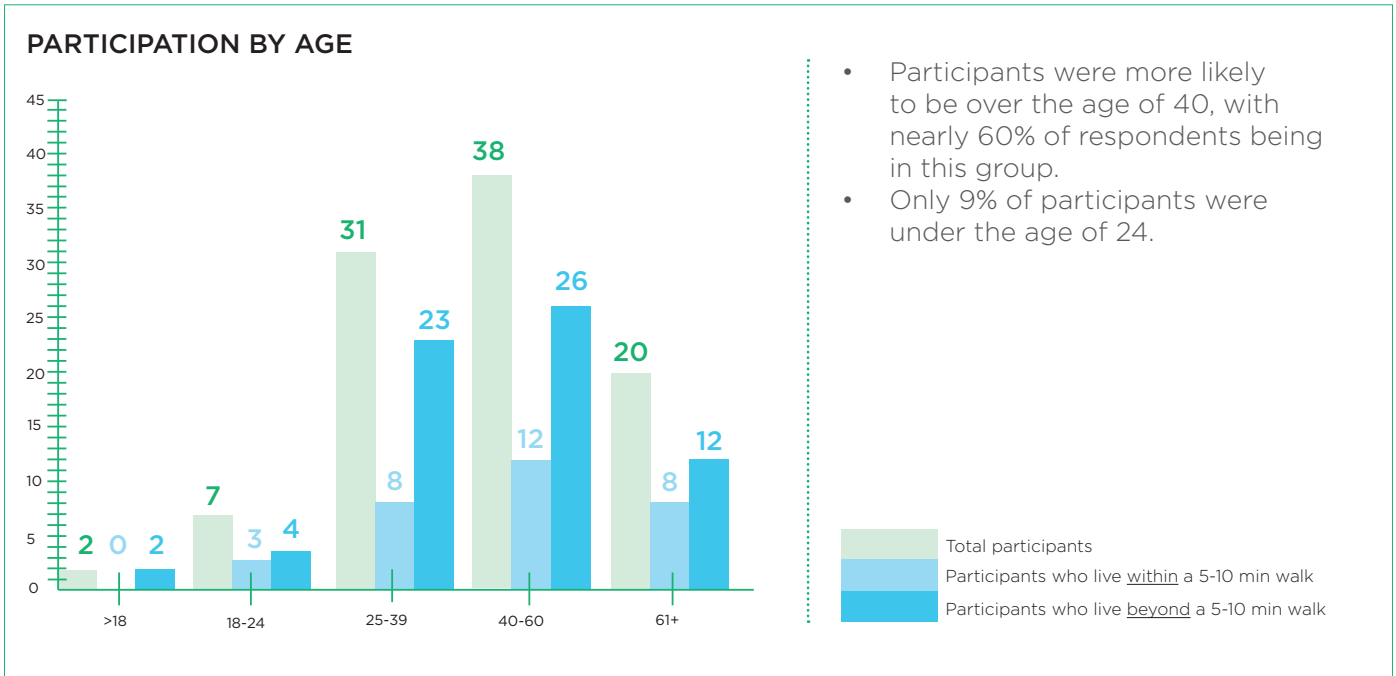
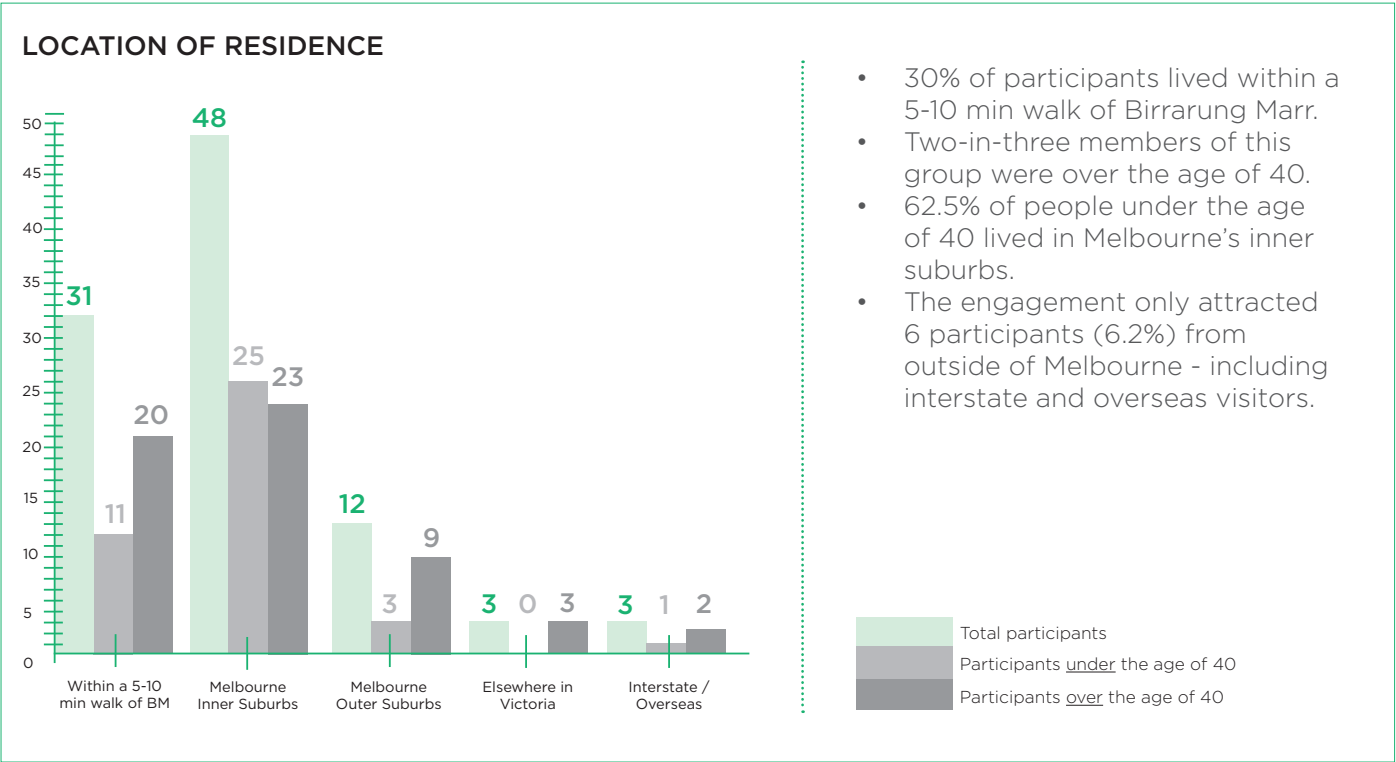
## ACTION AREAS

Through Participate Melbourne, participants were invited to provide feedback on seven areas within Birrarung Marr. These included: ArtPlay, Lower Terrace, Main Entry, Middle Terrace, Riverside Promenade, Speakers Corner and Upper Terrace. Within the participant feedback, most respondents have chosen to speak more broadly than these specific areas. As such, this report does not drill down into specific recommendations for each action area.



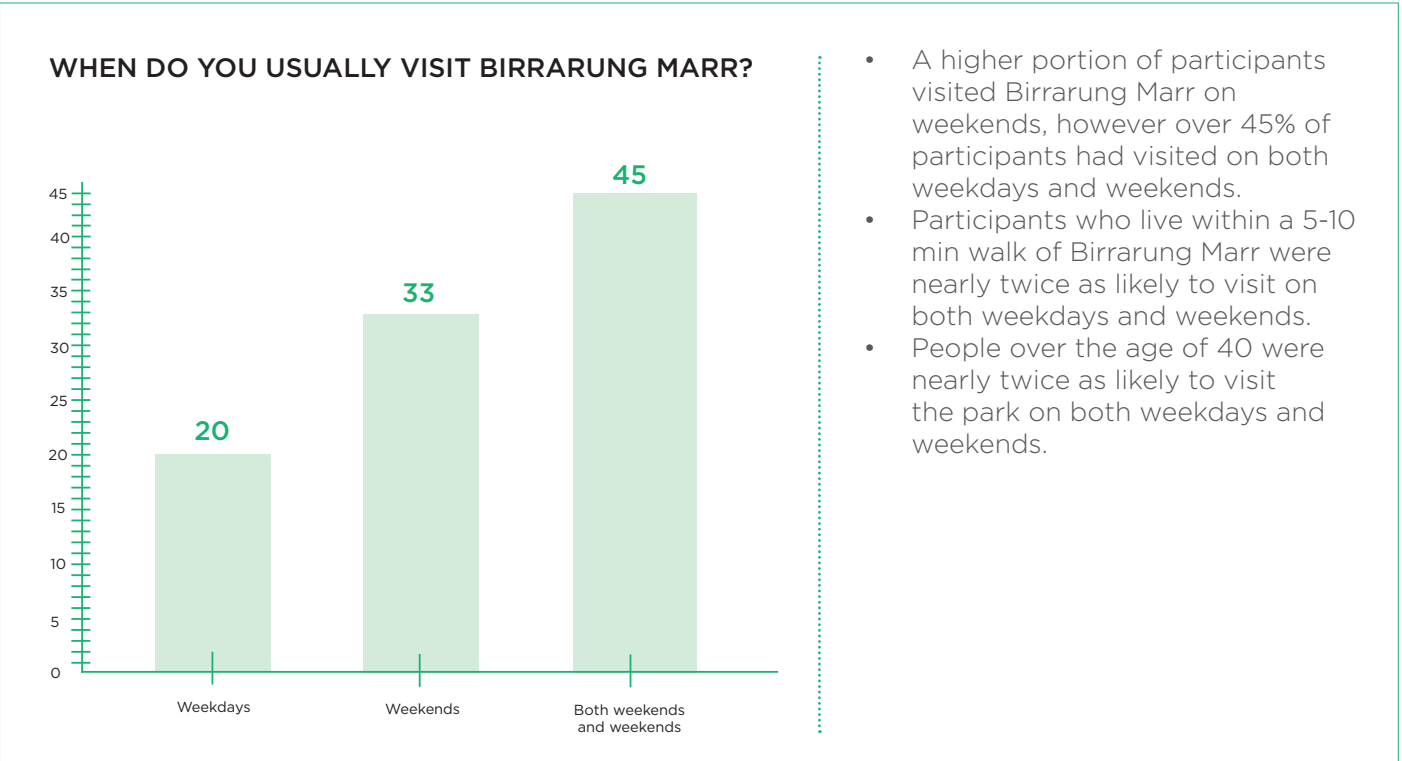
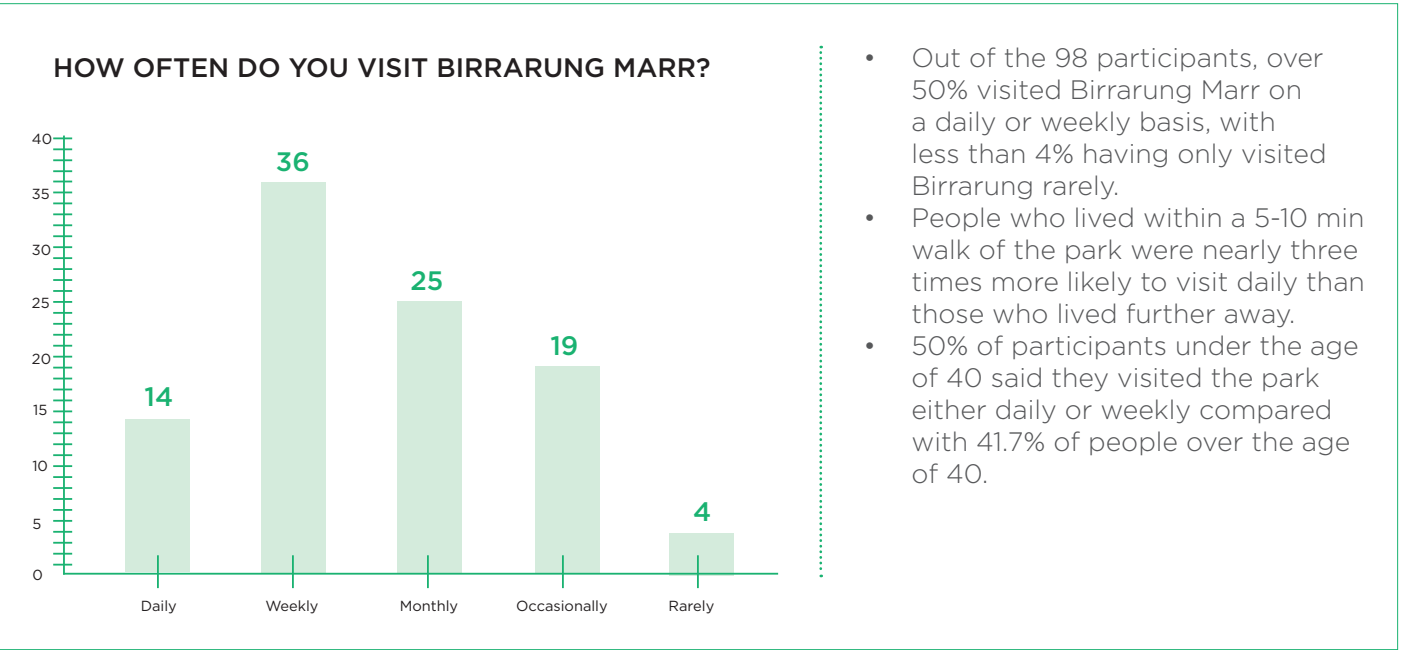
# PARTICIPANT PROFILE

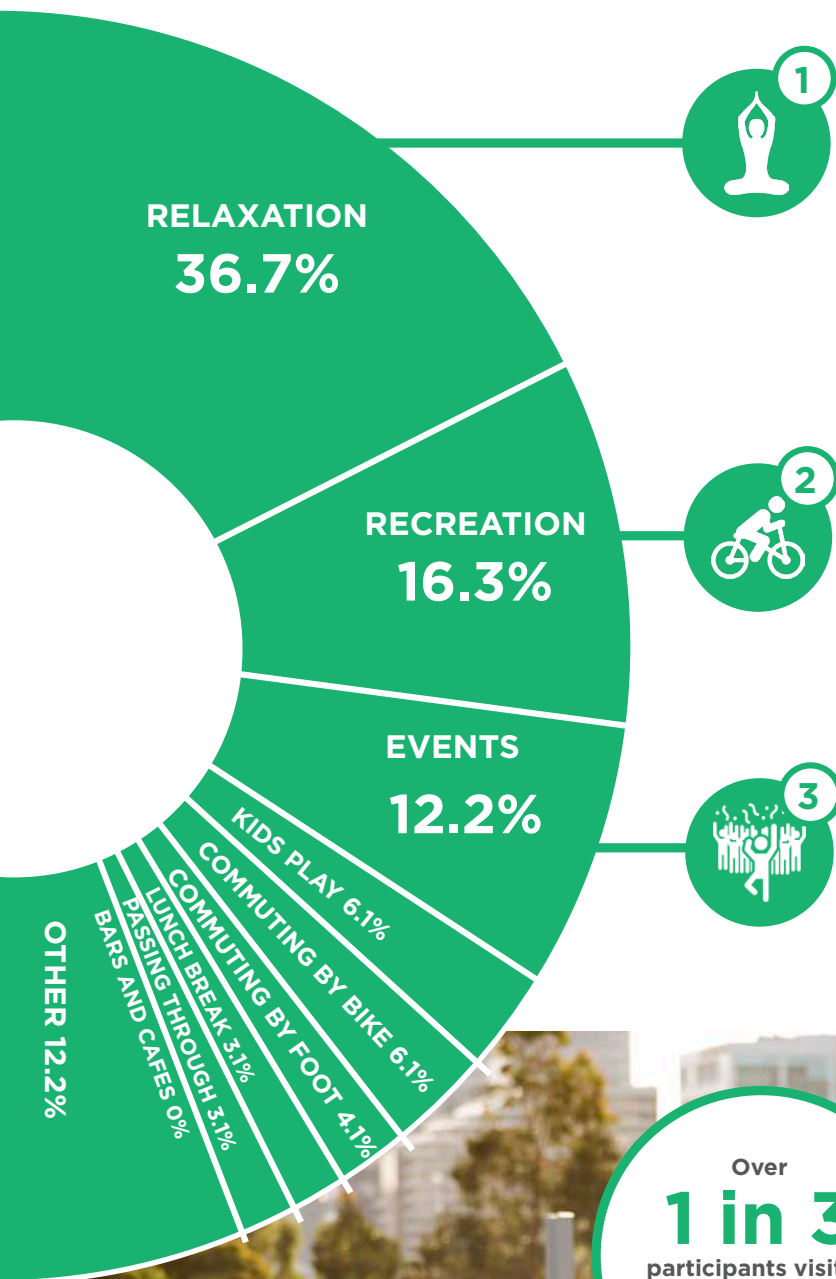
A total of 98 participants were consulted as part of the Phase 1 community engagement. The average participant lived in Melbourne’s inner suburbs and was over the age of 40. Participants were not asked their gender or for their relationship to the city (i.e resident, worker, student, visitor).



# PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE

This section relates to participant’s experience in Birrarung Marr. As part of the engagement, participants were asked six questions relating to why they visit the space, what areas they generally go to, how frequently they would visit, and on what days they were most likely to go to the park.





## WHY DO YOU VISIT BIRRARUNG MARR?

Relaxation and Recreation were the most common reasons for visiting Birrarung Marr recording over 50% of participant responses(52 responses). Participants who lived within a 5-10 min walk of the park were the most likely to visit for Relaxation (13 responses).



Events was the third most popular reason to visit the space, and people over the age of 40 were twice as likely to visit for an event than those under the age of 40.



People under the age of 40 were nearly twice as likely to visit for recreation than those over the age of 40.

None of the participants said they come to Birrarung Marr for the bars and cafes along Princess Walk.

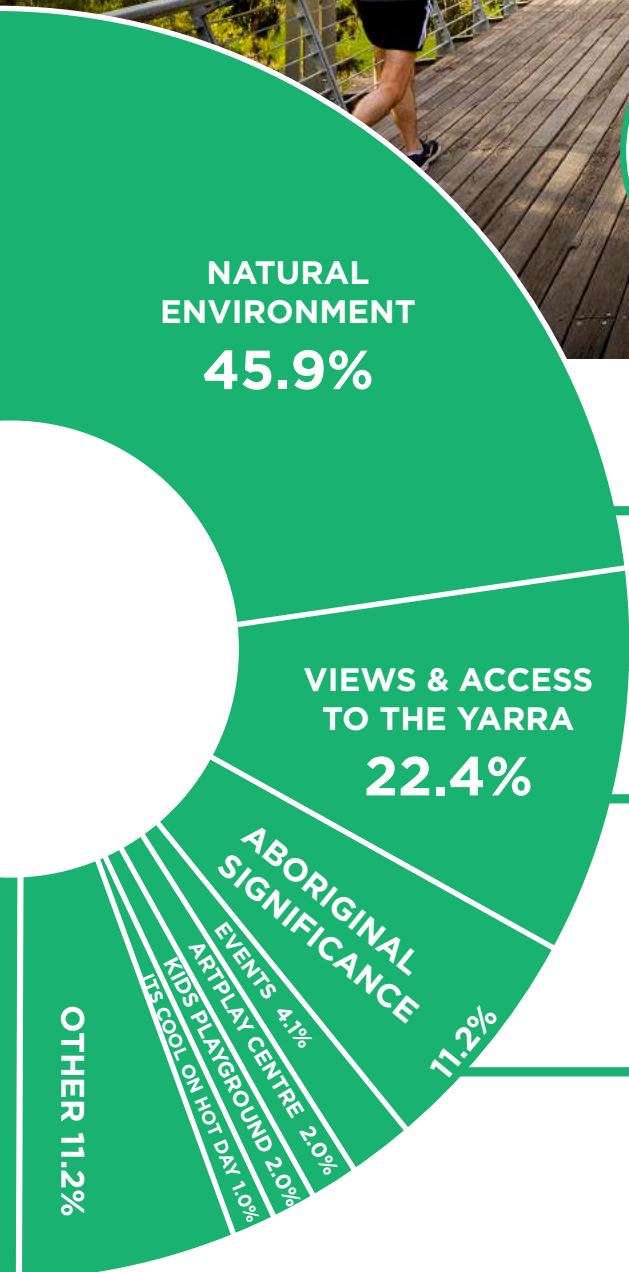
The full table of results can be found in Appendix 1.

Over  
**1 in 3**  
participants visited  
Birrarung Marr for  
Relaxation





Nearly  
**1 in 2**  
participants said  
they liked the  
**Natural Environment**



## WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT BIRRARRUNG MARR

The Natural Environment was the most liked feature of Birrarung Marr ( 45 participants), followed by Views and Access to the Yarra River (22 participants) and the Aboriginal Significance of the park( 11 participants).



Only 4.1% of participants( 4 responses) said they like Birrarung Marr for its events. No participants recorded 'views of the city' as being a feature they like most about Birrarung Marr.



The Aboriginal Significance of the space was more relevant to people who lived within a 5-10 min walk with close to double the number of participants highlighting this aspect.

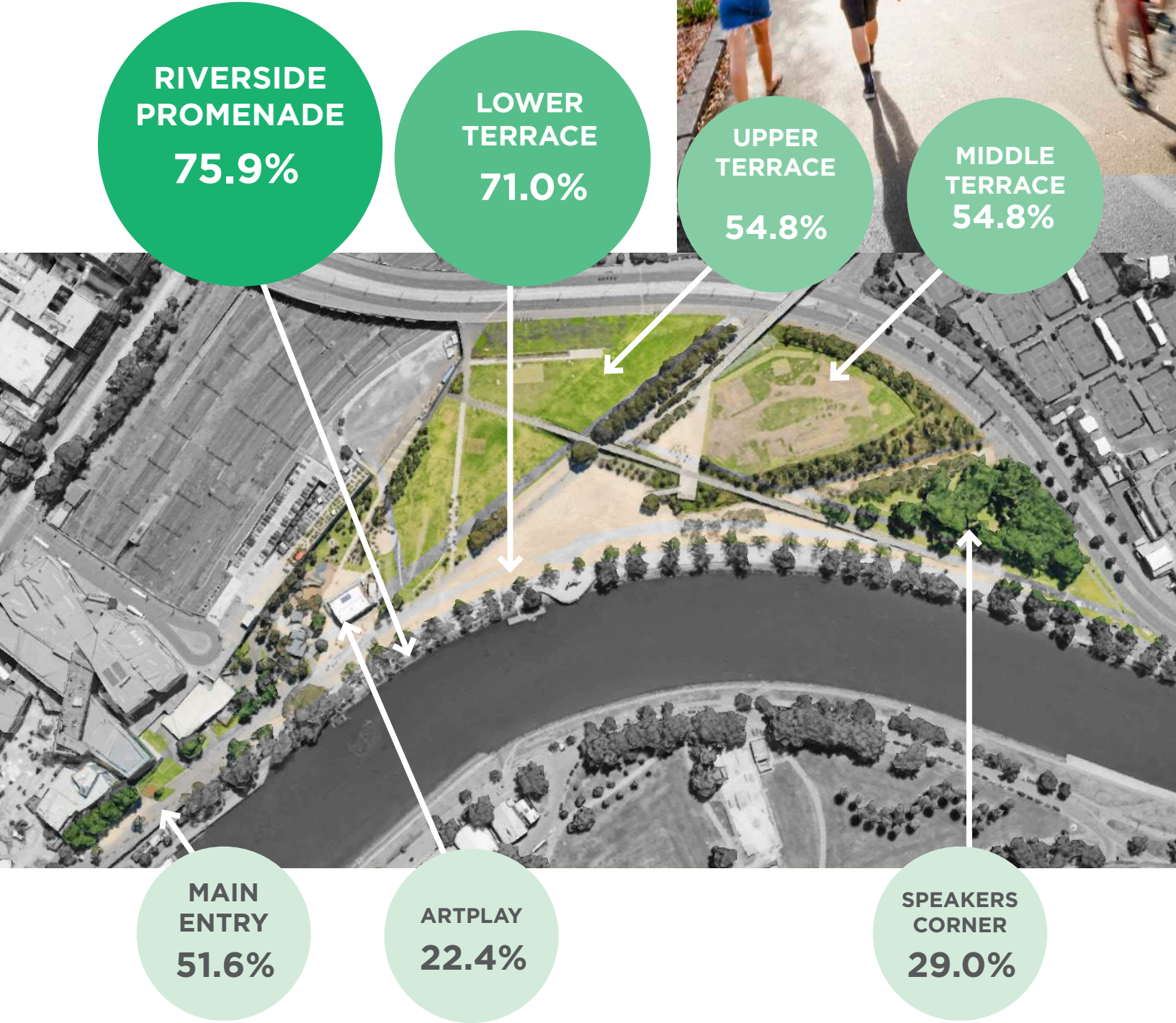
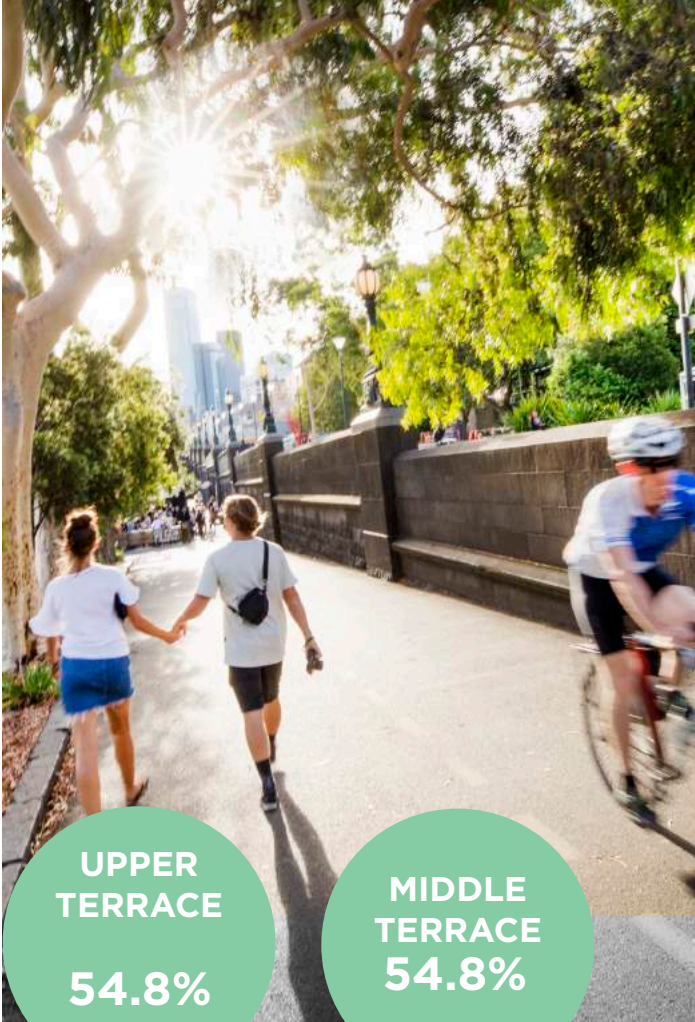
11 participants nominated an 'Other' aspect of the park which they liked most. Comments included cycling and commuting (3 responses), and the different areas (2 responses).

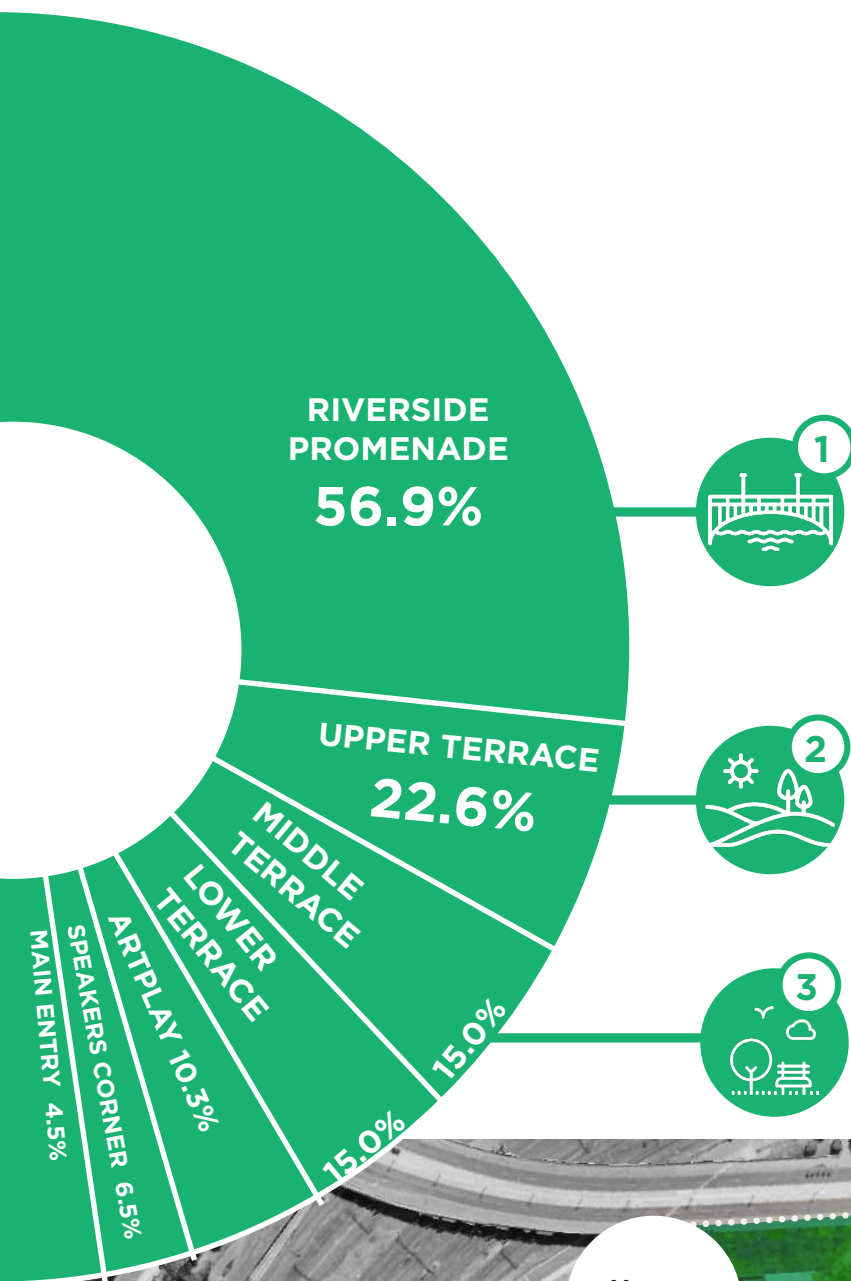
The full table of results can be found in Appendix 1.

# WHAT AREAS OF BIRRARUNG MARR DO YOU GENERALLY VISIT?

From participant responses, the most popular places to visit within Birrarung Marr are the Riverside Promenade (68 responses) , Lower Terrace ( 64 responses) and the Main Entry (48 responses) at Federation Square. People living in a 5-10 min walk of Birrarung Marr were more likely to visit all the areas of the park. People over the age of 40 were more likely to visit Riverside Promenade and ArtPlay compared with the total group.

The full table of results can be found in Appendix 1.





## WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE AREA OF BIRRARUNG MARR?

Riverside Promenade was overwhelmingly the favourite area recorded by participants with nearly 50% nominating this space (48 responses). The Upper (15 responses) and Lower Terraces (11 responses) came in second and third.

Participants under the age of 40, and people who live within 5-10 min walk of the park were twice as likely to nominate the Upper Terrace as their favourite space.

The Main Entry and Speakers Corner scored the lowest, with only 6.2% of participants (6 responses) nominating these spaces as their favourite.

The full table of results can be found in Appendix 1.



# KEY THEMES



# KEY THEMES

Rank	Key Themes	Number	%
1	Greenery and Nature	42	29%
2	Peace and Quiet	28	19%
3	The Views	19	13%
4	The River	15	10%
5	Activity	9	6%
6	Events	8	5%
7	Aboriginal Heritage	6	4%
8	Public Art	6	4%
9	Connectivity	5	3%
10	Kids Activities	5	3%
/	Other	3	2%
	TOTAL	146	100

Participants were asked what they liked most about Birrarung Marr. While they were invited to comment on specific areas, most participants chose to speak more generally about what they felt made the park special.

Participant comments have been individually reviewed and have been categorised according to 10 themes. The most popular quality of Birrarung Marr was the greenery and natural environment, with nearly 30% of comments relating to this theme.

The second most important quality to visitors was the park’s peace and quiet. Nearly 20% of participants described how this made the park special for them.

The third most popular aspect that participants highlighted was the views across the river and the way the park framed the city.

In the following section, an explanation of participant comments has been provided for each theme alongside a participant story. Participant stories were submitted separate to the engagement questionnaire.



# 1. GREENERY AND NATURE

Greenery and Nature was the most favoured element, and the theme that generated the most comments from participants. Majority of comments related to the leafy trees and natural element to Birrarung Marr, the open green space and the connection it creates to the Yarra River. The shade created along the riverbank and the views to surrounding open space including the Botanical Gardens on the other side of the river was also mentioned as a favoured link between nature and Birrarung Marr.

**29%**  
of participants  
commented on  
Greenery and Nature



## PARTICIPANTS SAID

"The lovely grassy areas to sit with friends and enjoy sunny afternoons. Hanging under the bridge for some shade or under the nice trees."

Alannah

Liz

"I love that Birrarung Marr is mostly open space, and that it celebrates indigenous culture and heritage on the banks of the Yarra. I especially love the artwork and the bells. I also love the various terraces that offer vistas of different city areas."

"The sloping grass and sense of space. It's an oasis of calm right near Flinders Ft. It lets you take a breath. It's amazing to have a green space so close to everything (botanic gardens can be a touch too far!). The dry river bed was a highlight as a kid. And love the events (noodle market etc)"

Elspeth

Joshua

"I love the greenery and the peace. The more trees the better"

"The greenery - it is very relaxing to be around it."

Helen

Kerry

"I love the wide open spaces. The relief from the busy-ness of the CBD , fed square and Southbank. And that it is different every time I visit - which is almost daily. There is always something interesting to see or experience... festivals, celebrations, installations and events bring vibrancy and colour and excitement. And It's not important that you like what's happening today, because next time you visit you'll find something else to participate in. Love it. Please don't change it."

"The boardwalk from the Upper Terrace to the river is fantastic, you can smell the gums, hear the birds and see the river, the contrast with the city sky line is amazing. I love the new walk/ bridge to Melbourne Park and mid terrace for dog play. its a very relaxing park with many different spaces depending on what mood you're in!"

Gavin

# 2. PEACE AND QUIET

As the second most favoured theme and element to Birrarung Marr, the peace and quiet was reflected through comments about the tranquility, the beautiful atmosphere and the provision of quiet and beautiful spaces for reflection within the busy CBD hustle. The informal layout and natural flow from one space to other was commented on as a great way of encouraging people to experience the different areas of Birrarung Marr at their own pace, and the different levels, surfaces and views each space offers allows a space for everyones needs.



## PARTICIPANTS SAID

Tina

“The space and the openness. An expanse of green and trees. It is usually peaceful and is a good place to step aside from the congestion and busyness nearby. I love that there are no cafes, no shops, no buildings. Relief.”

“Please keep out circuses, rubber ball rolling and cafes from a peoples area. ...; people should be left in peace and calm for (sic) whenever they have a chance to escape being consumers. Take a leaf out of the first settlers of this City who were more humanitarian than all those that followed them to leave a space for people not to be trespassers, customers or overseen by the Masters. Believe in Democracy...”

XLA

Richard

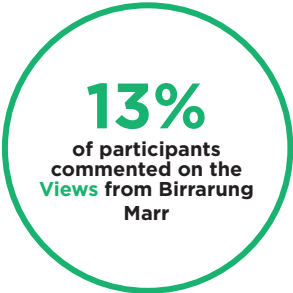
“Birrarung Marr is to me a peaceful and eloquent oasis within the harsh landscape of commerce and industry. It works well as a flexible event space and retreat. My family appreciate and use the space regularly. More river boating infrastructure seems reasonable - boating seems under-represented around there. Development over the bordering Fed Square East railyards should complement rather than overshadow Birrarung Marr - so should be funded by the state. Maybe a fairground...”

“I absolutely love Birrarung Marr for its beauty and tranquility. Likely because of its important Aboriginal heritage and references, it feels magical and whole. In terms of events, I think there should be much tighter restrictions placed in order to protect the wild life in this special space, and surrounds. Banning petrochemical waste would be a good start. The Sustainable Living Festival does an amazing job of enhancing and respecting the area, ideally demonstrating what is possible.”

Deborah

# 3. VIEWS

The views of the CBD from Birrarung Marr as well as the Botanical Gardens, the Yarra River and the MCG were recorded as some of the participants more favourable experiences. Views from within Birrarung Marr including the view of the federation bells on the Upper Terrace from the Lower Terrace, the panoramic views of the river from the Lower Terrace, and the views looking back at Melbourne from the hill were also mentioned.



## PARTICIPANTS SAID

“I absolutely love the park space and to be able to sit on top of the hill and look down onto the Yarra. The hills is also marvelous during the tennis. During the times where there is no events on...it is great to sit on the benches and read and watch the world go by. We are so lucky to have this area. I feel with some developments... it overlooks the importance of having a community area that isn't about a purpose/profit but somewhere where people can just hang out and be.”

Frankie

“It's a great place to take visitors to beautiful Melbourne, a slow walk through this area is always welcomed by them as it does give you a good picture of the City. I love walking through to the Footy or Tennis Centre day or night.”

Terri

“When I first arrived in Melbourne and walked home from a sports event one late afternoon, the walk along Birrarung Marr was sublime. Wow! That view of the city is the most beautiful and framed by the trees, greenery and sweeping river is so worth preserving. Years later and it never loses that magic! The revolving round of exciting events and periods of calm is a balance that works well and it's a delight to see it giving joy to so many.”

Colin

# 4. THE RIVER

Majority of participants commented on the connections and proximity Birrarung Marr had to the Yarra River, as well as the trees and greenery that has been provided along its edge. It was also recorded that the atmosphere created along the river allowed Birrarung Marr to feel a million miles away from city, given the calming effect it has on people. One participant also mentioned that they enjoy the fact that people stop along the river, meditate and then continue along their journey.



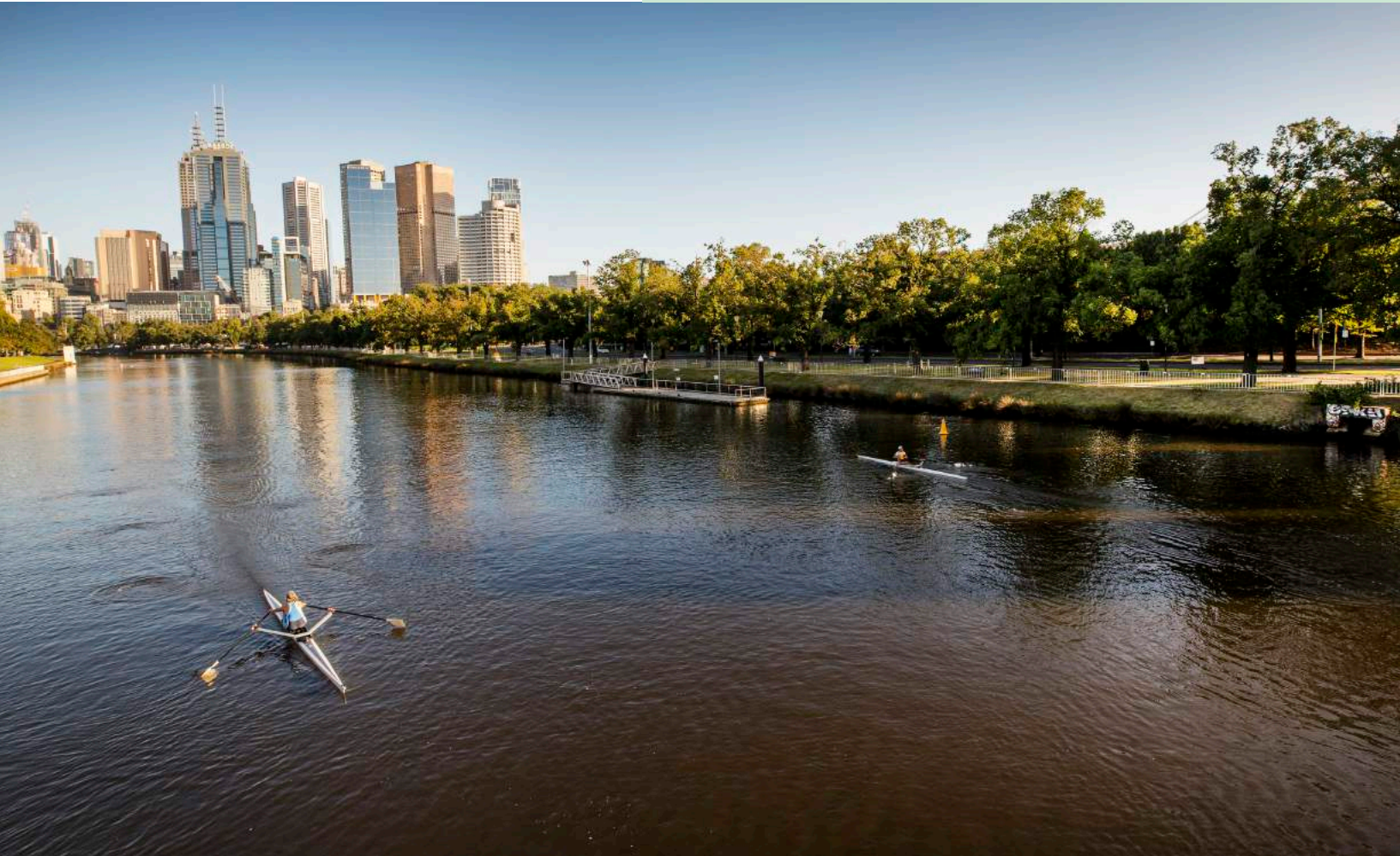
## PARTICIPANTS SAID

Max

“Walking along the river, shade, nice trees, quiet spaces, places to sit and read, the public art is nice. Relatively good connections to the city.”

Sue

“Sitting on the grass and watching a mother swan and her goslings come out of the water and fearlessly sun themselves.”



# 5. ACTIVITY

Activity within Birrarung Marr was reflected through comments about the openness and the range of programming that takes place within the different spaces, as well as the vibrancy and variety of people and events. It was noted that Birrarung Marr is a great place to go for a run, watch the world go by, and also see others exercising and enjoying the health benefits within the space, both physically and mentally.



## PARTICIPANTS SAID

John

“It’s a combination of things for me. First the history and soul of Speakers corner because when I was a young boy my father took me there and we listened to the pontification and politics of the time. More recently the reclaiming of the area as a multi-park under the Aboriginal people’s overlay and my new appreciation of the importance of this place to the Kulin nation. The informal pathways, the old stone walls the brilliant dry riverbed and planting. It is a reflective space for me.”

Barb

“I love the fact that if I’m bored on the weekend, I just need to walk over to Birrarung Marr and there is almost always something going on! A festival of this or a competition of that. It’s a great space for walking along the river, cycling or just sitting in the shade (a bit more shade in summer wouldn’t go astray). I love the 3-legged cat statue! I love the Indigenous connection.”



# 6. EVENTS

As an event space, the comments about Birrarung Marr all related to the wide range of events that are held, the ample seating, and the views the event spaces offer of both the city and the river - this relating directly relating to the Upper Terrace. It was also recorded that it is a favourable and greater location for holding events within the CBD in comparison to other spaces around Melbourne’s city.



## PARTICIPANTS SAID

Fiona

“Vibrant. Beautiful space for events. Different sections with different feels. Invites you in from fed square along Yarra. More park area in CBD.”



# 7. ABORIGINAL HERITAGE

Within Birrarung Marr, the Aboriginal heritage was most commonly associated with and reflected through the artworks and sculptures, and the natural landscape surrounding it. Participants also commented on the William Bridge, and how the Aboriginal significance made them reflect on and think about the areas history.



## PARTICIPANTA SAID

Sonja

“I really like the open space beside the river and the view from the top of the steps in Federation Square. I like the way the Fed Square building back onto the riverside. I don’t want anyone to mess with the design of Fed Square - leave the Yarra Building where it is and don’t let a retail shop like Apple go into the square. Once again, white people are telling the Aboriginal people to move on, we want your land. Where are Koorie Heritage Trust going to go now?”

Ray

“I love the celebration of rocks and aboriginal heritage. Love the forest of sheoaks, but why are we unimaginatively restricted to groups of mono-culture - how un-aboriginal. Please can we have somewhere, an eco-system which reflects that which the original community of people cared for, or are we not clever enough to work its complexities?”

Heather

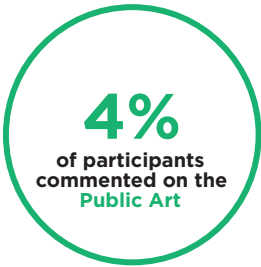
“Birrarung Marr is an excellent park in that it’s central feature is the beautiful Yarra River and it has an important indigenous aspect to it - another central feature. You don’t see that in any other parks in Melbourne.”

Ruby

“I love the connection to our Indigenous heritage reflected in the art, sculptures and cultural references integrated into the landscape. This is a place I know I can go and feel our Aboriginal culture alive. I like the forest areas where the trees are dense I think this is super cool to have in the city. I think the sandy surface can be a problem having been down there during the summer on hot windy days it can become unpleasant. I think it’s a really cool interesting part of town!”

# 8. PUBLIC ART

Two participants mentioned the chimes and the bells as an important element of public art within Birrarung Marr. There were no other references to the public art along riverside terrace and the Lower Terrace.



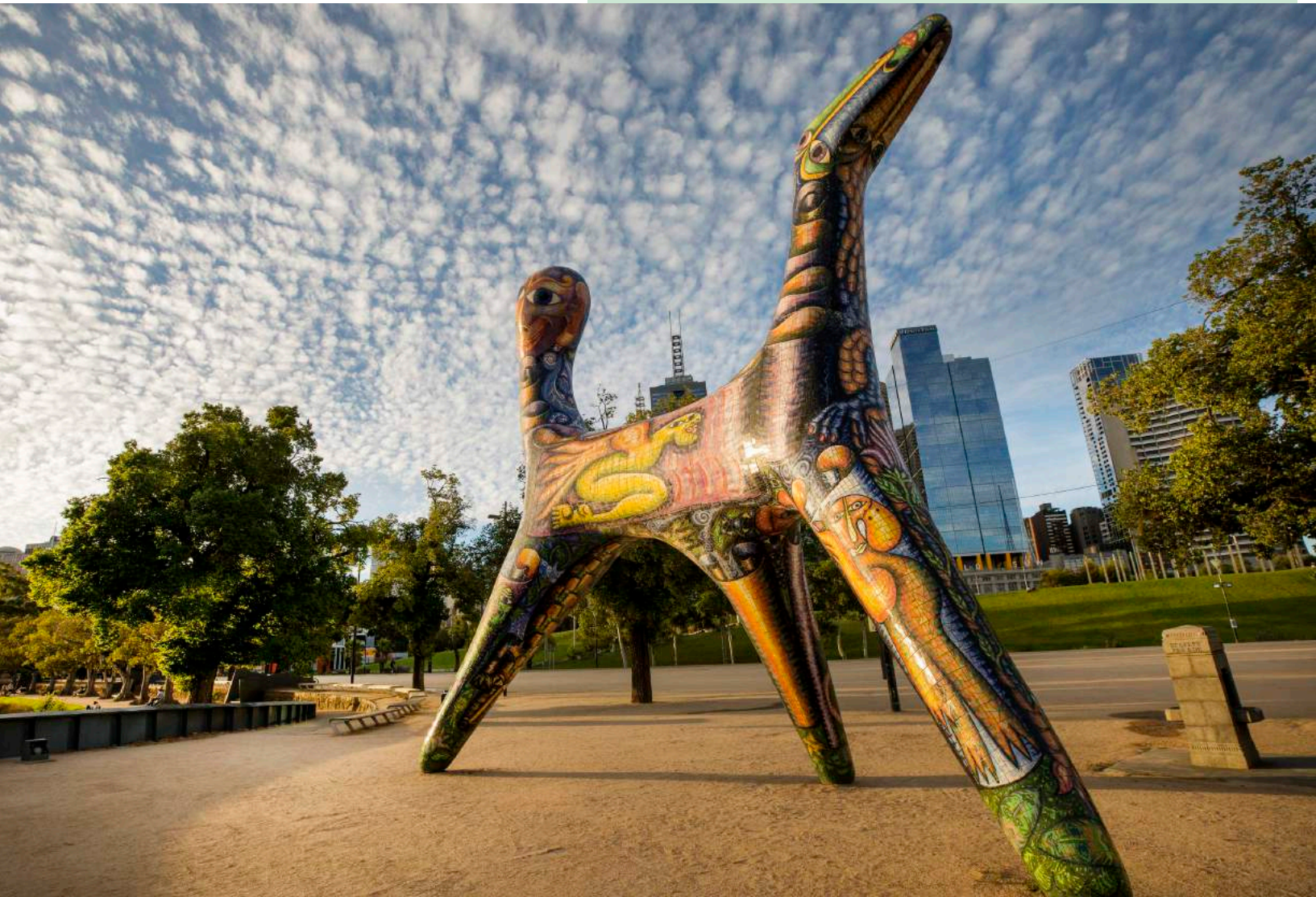
## PARTICIPANT STORIES

Paul

“I am a tour bike guide (Rentabike) that starts at Federation Square and stops in Birrarung Marr at Gaudi inspired sculpture to outline Melbourne’s history and Federation Bells to discuss being Australian and not British. We then ride over William Barrack bridge and discuss Aboriginal history. So I love how these stops raise awareness and sometimes act as a conversation starter for the rest of tour (4hrs). Also a safe scenic start and finish for the tour.”

“The aboriginal artworks and landscaping that feels Australian, not European. the open space and view of the river and city.”

Damian



## 9. CONNECTIVITY

The most common response relating to the connectivity within Birrarung Marr was around the cycle paths and the connection it provides through the city. In particular, this is related to the Lower Terrace given its connecting paths from both sides of Birrarung Marr. Participants also commented on the open space and how it allows for walkability and that the space is totally pedestrian friendly.

**3%**  
of participants  
commented on the  
Connectivity with  
Birrarung Marr

### PARTICIPANT STORIES

"I love the accessibility for cyclists and walkers. When it is disrupted by events the whole city seems less functional."

Alex

"It's lovely. Except when you hold large events there and the bike path becomes unusable. It's a really wide track. Cordon off part of it for bikes. It's the equivalent of closing the Monash freeway in Richmond. It's a well used bike path. We get a detour sign. Detour to where? Flinders St? City road?"

Tobe

"Being a constant walker I always go through Birrarung marr when going to Gosch Paddock , The Royal Botanical Gardens, The Shrine Of Remembrance , St Kilda & Albert Park Lake."

Gordon

"I love that I can walk from Richmond station across the William Barak Bridge and all the way down Birrarung Marr to reach the city. I do it every morning and its one of the nicest ways to start my day before work. Its quiet and the air is fresh."

Kamilla

"I really enjoy cycling the the park on the way to and from work."

Deborah



# 10. CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

Relating directly to ArtPlay and the playground, these children's activities were recorded as a fantastic way for children to experience the outdoors and the natural elements of Birrarung Marr, and more broadly, Melbourne city. The inclusion of these elements allows for a full day of activities within Birrarung Marr, combining the ArtPlay area, with the lower middle and Upper Terrace as a space for lunch and socialising before and after play.



## PARTICIPANTS SAID

Carly

"I love ArtPlay and the gardens and playground around ArtPlay. The giant rocks, the tree's, the artwork that pays respect to the First peoples. I also love the huge old gum trees along the river in that area. The area has a really nice feel to it."



# **PARTICIPANTS RECOMMENDATIONS**



# WHAT PARTICIPANTS RECOMMENDED

Overall Recommendations	Number	%
Segregated Bike and Pedestrian Paths	18	14.6%
More Planting and Biodiversity	16	13%
Improved Access, Connectivity and Wayfinding	14	11.4%
Improved Public Amenity	13	10.6%
Improved Event Management	8	6.5%
Other	7	5.7%
More Things to Do	3	2.4%
Improved Security	2	1.6%
Greater Representation of Aboriginal Heritage	2	1.6%
Nothing to Change / Don't Change	13	10.6%
Recommendations Specific to Areas		
Lower Terrace	14	11.4%
ArtPlay	4	3.3%
Upper Terrace	4	3.3%
Middle Terrace	3	2.4%
Main Entry	2	1.6%
TOTAL	123	100

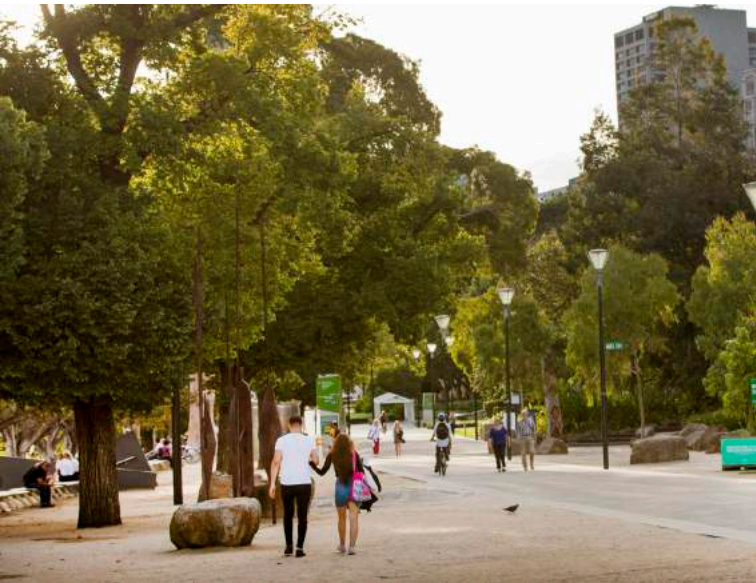
Participants were asked if there was a specific area that they thought needed improvement, and to articulate what this change should be. Overall, participants provided 123 recommendations that fell within 10 categories and 5 specific areas within the park.

Participant recommendations have been individually reviewed. Where applicable, comments have been grouped together into categories.

The most frequent recommendation suggested by participants was to introduce separated bike lanes or segregate cycling and pedestrian activity. Other recommendations related to comments about the apple store, constructing public space over the rail lines and the inclusion of boat ramps into the Yarra.

Following this, participants recommended adding more planting, improving access and connectivity, and replacing the compacted gravel in the Lower Terrace.

In the following section, an explanation of participant recommendations has been provided for each category as well as for the locations that attracted comments.



# OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

## SEGREGATED BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN PATHS

A separated bike and pedestrian path was the highest recommendation from participants. This was noted to be mostly required along the Lower Terrace. One participant mentioned that it is close to impossible to travel by or take a bike through Birrarung Marr during events, especially along the Lower Terrace. Another participant also raised concerns regarding cyclist riding through the park space and the issues this causes relating to City of Melbourne having banned all cyclist from riding through parks.



## MORE PLANTING AND BIODIVERSITY

Overall, there were multiple comments and recommendations referring to the need for a greater number of trees within Birrarung Marr, and this recommendation was across all areas of the site. One participant recommended that this increase in trees will better integrate Birrarung Marr with nature and will improve the overall user experience.



## IMPROVED ACCESS, CONNECTIVITY AND WAYFINDING

There were a large number of participant comments relating to the access and connectivity, and recommendations made as to how this can be improved. One participant mentioned that the visibility of the steps leading from the middle to the Lower Terrace can be challenging for visitors to find. Another commenting that the speakers corner and the Middle Terrace are poorly integrated with the rest of Birrarung Marr. A lack of signage and the surface finishes (mainly relating to the gravel on the Lower Terrace) were noted as other contributing factors for the need to improve access, connectivity and wayfinding around Birrarung Marr. Three participants suggested that a pedestrian bridge linking Birrarung Marr to the Alexandra Gardens would enhance the space and the visitor experience.



## IMPROVED PUBLIC AMENITY

Participants made a number of recommendations relating to the upgrading of public amenity facilities including the toilets near ArtPlay, and the overall lighting for the site. Participants also mentioned keeping the site tidy and maintained at all times, and one commented on the need for access to refill water bottles. There were a significant number of participant comments recommending adding shade structures within the different areas of Birrarung Marr.



## IMPROVED EVENT MANAGEMENT

It was noted that participants felt the park was a great location for hosting events, however this came at a cost for Birrarung Marr's everyday users, especially those using the Park as an access / connection though the city. There was one participant comment relating to the overall safety of the space during the set up and pack down of events being held within Birrarung Marr.



## MORE THINGS TO DO

There were three participant comments that all referred to Birrarung Marr offering more things to do, one relating to the need for boat ramps leading to the river for kayaking, one recommending more passive activity and the last suggesting a greater variety of events to be held.



## IMPROVED SECURITY

There were two comments and recommendations relating to safety, one participant reflecting on the need for improved lighting around Birrarung Marr, but in particular the Lower Terrace. The other comment relating to safety was in relation to the lack of surveillance around the ArtPlay area.



# GREATER REPRESENTATION OF ABORIGINAL HERITAGE

Two participants commented on the need for additional Aboriginal significance information within Birrarung Marr, with one participant recommending additional information be presented on the Koori Centre walks, and another recommending additional information in general.



# NOTHING TO CHANGE / DON'T CHANGE

Approximately 10% of comments ( 8 responses) related to keeping Birrarung Marr as is, and for no change to the space. These also included recommendations not to allow any built elements within the space, in an attempt to keep it open and expansive. Overall, these participant comments reflected that the space in general was well maintained and looked after.



# OTHER

The main issues raised and recommendations from participants in this category were around covering and converting the railway area to provide additional open space within the CBD, and the refusal of the Apple Store building within close proximity to Birrarung Marr.

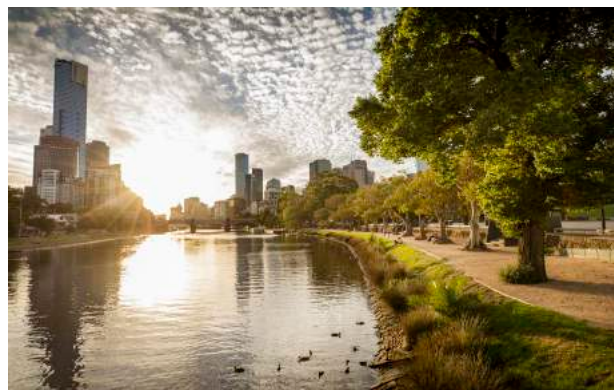
Note: The review of the existence and location of the Apple Store building is not part of the scope of this Master Plan.



# AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

## RIVERSIDE PROMENADE

Nearly 70% of participants ( 68 responses) said they visited the Riverside Promenade. It was the most popular space to visit among participants. In addition, nearly 50% of respondents (48 responses) nominated it as their favourite place. There were no direct recommendations from participants regarding the Riverside Promenade, although more general comments reflected their love for the space in its current form. It was noted that the connections created between the Yarra River and Birrarung Marr though the natural landscape around the river, as well as the spots to sit and rest were important to visitors, in particular those over the age of 40.



## LOWER TERRACE

The Lower Terrace was the second most visited space according to participants after Riverside Promenade. It was also the area with the highest number of recommendations and comments. Participant feedback mostly related to the crushed gravel surface, noting that they found this dusty, difficult to cycle on and of poor quality and aesthetic. It was recommended that this could be a form of grass or astro turf, as it will reduce the issues relating

to sand in the dry weather and the unpleasant surface that it created when it rains, for both pedestrians and cyclists. The other main recommendation was to segregate the cycle and pedestrian paths throughout Birrarung Marr but in particular, the Lower Terrace.



## MAIN ENTRY

The Main Entry along with the Speakers Corner recorded the lowest percentage of respondents as their favourite place within Birrarung Marr. Participants mentioned that the main entry space was not a noticeable or a recognisable feature for the Park and did not feel as though there was an association between it and the overall space. It was also mentioned that it felt more like a space within Federation Square than it did for Birrarung Marr. One participant also mentioned that the Main Entrance was hard to get through, especially during events. It was also commented that participants felt that Birrarung Marr did not need a Main Entry, or that it should be from Federation Square.



UPPER TERRACE

There were no direct recommendations captured for the Upper Terrace, however within the general comments, participants mentioned that the hill and the views from the Upper Terrace were a benefit and asset to Birrarung Marr. Participants commented on preventing built form within Birrarung Marr which would disrupt the current views, and mentioned that it was a rarity to have a public space with 360 degree views of the CBD, the River and the sports precinct, all clearly visible from the Upper Terrace. Comments relating to added greenery and trees within Birrarung Marr could also be applied to the Upper Terrace, given the lower number of trees compared to other spaces.



MIDDLE TERRACE

Over 50 percent of participants ( 64 responses) commented on using and visiting the Middle Terrace, and it was noted to be one of the more flexible spaces within Birrarung Marr. Being used for events and as a space for passive and active recreation, it was not commonly used by participants who lived within a 5-10 min walk of Birrarung Marr more than other participants. There was only one participant comment and recommendation on the Middle Terrace which referred to it being useless if and when there are no events taking place. It was recorded that the Middle Terrace turf has been heavily damaged and this detracts from the space.



ARTPLAY

ArtPlay had the highest responses as a favourite area from participants who were over 40 years old and those who lived further than a 10 min walk of Birrarung Marr. There were few comments and recommendations regarding ArtPlay. One participant mentioned the need to bring back or replace the café that used to be located near the ArtPlay space. Another participant commented that there was a lack of information relating to ArtPlay, and what takes place within the space and when. There was a recommendation for the inclusion of a sustainable garden in order to teach children how to grow food and manage worm farms.



SPEAKERS CORNER

There were a large number of participants who did not know that Birrarung Marr had a Speakers Corner, and those who did use the space associated it more with a passive recreation and space for greenery and nature. There were no direct recommendations for the Speakers Corner, however a number of participants were keen to visit and explore the space now that they were made aware of its existence.



# APPENDIX



## WHY DO YOU VISIT BIRRARUNG MARR?

	Number	% of N	A	% of A	B	% of B	C	% of C	D	% of D
<b>Relaxation</b> (e.g. reading, reflecting, social gatherings)	36	36.7%	13	41.9%	23	34.3%	12	32.5%	23	39.7%
<b>Recreation</b> (e.g. running, sport and fitness)	16	16.3%	6	19.4%	10	14.9%	9	22.5%	7	12.1%
<b>Events</b>	12	12.2%	4	12.9%	8	11.9%	3	7.5%	9	15.5%
<b>Commuting by Bike</b>	6	6.1%	0	0%	6	9.0%	2	5.0%	4	6.9%
<b>Commuting by Foot</b>	4	4.1%	1	3.2%	3	4.5%	2	5.0%	2	3.4%
<b>Passing through on my way somewhere else</b> (e.g. Tennis or MCG)	3	3.1%	1	3.2%	2	5.0%	2	5.0%	1	1.7%
<b>Lunch Break</b>	3	3.1%	0	0%	3	4.5%	3	7.5%	0	0%
<b>Kids Play</b>	6	6.1%	2	6%	4	7.5%	0	0%	6	10.3%
<b>Bars and Cafes along Princes Walk</b>	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

## WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT BIRRARUNG MARR?

	Number	% of N	A	% of A	B	% of B	C	% of C	D	% of D
<b>Natural Environment</b>	45	45.9%	11	35.5%	34	50.7%	20	50.0%	25	43.1%
<b>Views and Access to the Yarra River</b>	22	22.4%	9	29.0%	13	19.4%	10	25.0%	12	20.7%
<b>Aboriginal Significance</b>	11	11.2%	5	16.1%	6	9.0%	3	7.5%	8	13.8%
<b>Events</b>	4	4.1%	1	3.2%	3	4.5%	1	2.5%	3	1.7%
<b>Playground</b>	2	2.0%	1	3.2%	1	1.5%	1	2.5%	1	1.7%
<b>ArtPlay Centre</b>	2	2.0%	0	0%	2	3.0%	1	2.5%	1	1.7%
<b>It's Cool During Hot Days</b>	1	1%	0	0%	1	1.5%	0	0%	1	2.5%
<b>Views of the City</b>	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

N = Total Participants

A = Participants who live within 5-10 min walk of the space.

B = Participants who live further than 5-10mins from the space.

C = Participants under the age of 40

D = Participants over the age of 40

## WHAT ARES OF BIRRARUNG MARR DO YOU GENERALLY VISIT?

	Number	% of N	A	% of A	B	% of B	C	% of C	D	% of D
Riverside Promenade	68	69.4%	22	71.0%	46	68.7%	24	60.0%	44	75.9%
Lower Terrace	64	65.3%	22	71.0%	42	62.7%	24	60.0%	40	69.0%
Main Entry	48	49.0%	16	51.6%	32	47.8%	19	47.5%	29	50.0%
Upper Terrace	39	39.8%	17	54.8%	22	32.8%	15	37.5%	24	41.4%
Middle Terrace	36	36.7%	17	54.8%	19	28.4%	12	30.0%	24	41.4%
ArtPlay	20	20.4%	6	19.4%	14	20.9%	7	17.5%	13	22.4%
Speakers Corner	20	20.4%	9	29.0%	11	16.4%	10	25.0%	10	17.2%

## WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE AREA OF BIRRARUNG MARR?

	Number	% of N	A	% of A	B	% of B	C	% of C	D	% of D
Riverside Promenade	48	49.0%	15	48.4%	33	49.3%	15	37.5%	33	56.9%
Upper Terrace	15	15.3%	7	22.6%	8	11.9%	9	22.5%	6	10.3%
Lower Terrace	11	11.2%	3	9.7%	8	11.9%	6	15.0%	5	8.6%
Middle Terrace	11	11.2%	3	9.7%	8	11.9%	6	15.0%	5	8.6%
ArtPlay	7	7.1%	1	3.2%	6	9.0%	1	2.5%	6	10.3%
Main Entry	3	3.1%	0	0%	3	4.5%	1	2.5%	2	3.4%
Speakers Corner	3	3.1%	2	6.5%	1	1.5%	2	5.0%	1	1.7%

N = Total Participants

A = Participants who live within 5-10 min walk of the space.

B = Participants who live further than 5-10mins from the space.

C = Participants under the age of 40

D = Participants over the age of 40