



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

Seafarers Rest Park Stage 2

ENGAGEMENT: summary and analysis

28 August 2020

Prepared by Global Research Ltd
For



CITY OF MELBOURNE

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Executive summary

About the project and process

The City of Melbourne is working in partnership with the Victorian Government, developer Riverlee, and landscape architects Oculus to create a new park at Seafarers Rest in Docklands.

Seafarers Rest is an existing public open space earmarked for renewal in the City of Melbourne's [Open Space Strategy](#). It has also been identified as a key area in the [Docklands Public Realm Plan](#).

The park is located on the north bank of the Yarra River (Birrarung) between The Mission to Seafarers heritage building and the Seafarers Bridge.

Key considerations in the development of the park are to:

- Increase pedestrian and bicycle access
- Retain existing trees where possible
- Protect neighbouring heritage sites
- Improve amenity
- Respond to the site's context and constraints

This engagement is the second of three phases of engagement. To complete Phase 1, the City of Melbourne undertook a community engagement and consultative process in late 2018. They wanted to gain an understanding of the local community's needs, interest, and ideas for a new park at Seafarers Rest (SR) in Docklands.

The feedback from Stage 1 was analysed and used to inform the design brief for the park. Over June – July 2020 this design was presented to the public, along with a request for feedback as part of the second phase of engagement. Additionally, the City of Melbourne continued its engagement with Traditional Owners and other key stakeholders, such as Mission to Seafarers to ensure their input into the development of designs. The park's design is now at the '50 per cent stage', and the aim of this consultation was to help finalise and refine design, rather than introduce entirely new ideas or elements.

Key findings

Overall, respondents were happy with several elements of the design. In particular, the community appreciated the focus on trees and greenery, and felt that Seafarers Rest Park would become a space for all to enjoy.

The elements that respondents liked most included:

- The focus on greenspaces and biodiversity through the inclusion of Habitat Hollows, the Urban Forest, and grassy areas
- That Seafarers Rest Park would become a community space for everyone to enjoy, bringing life back into an area that has been unusable and unused for some time.

Elements that respondents felt were missing were varied, but included things such as:

- A more exciting and safety conscious design for the Play Wharf
- Even more trees and greenery
- Memorials or other artefacts highlighting Melbourne's maritime history
- More seating.

Some concerns about the current design raised by respondents included:

- Safety concerns about the shared user path. Several respondents suggested that paths should be separate, or that cyclists have limited access to the park altogether
- That the park might become a skateboard space
- That the Events Deck would bring loud music and noise, consumption of alcohol and possibly anti-social behaviour to the area, disrupting the tranquillity of the park and surrounding area
- Concern about homelessness and the possibility of people sleeping rough in the park.

Who respondents were:

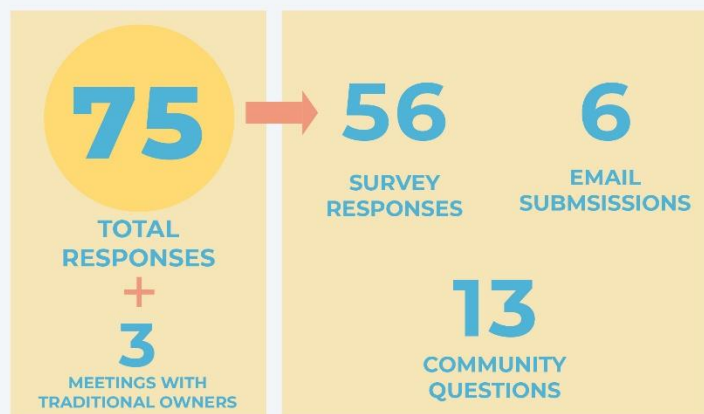
- Most respondents lived or worked in the area. Other respondent groups that made up a small portion of respondents included visitors to the area and students
- Older age groups were over-represented in responses when compared to Docklands' usual population. The opposite is true for younger age groups, who were vastly under-represented.

SEAFARERS REST PARK

PHASE 2 ENGAGEMENT

In June-July 2020, CoM asked for your feedback about the designs for Seafarers Rest Park. This is what you told us:

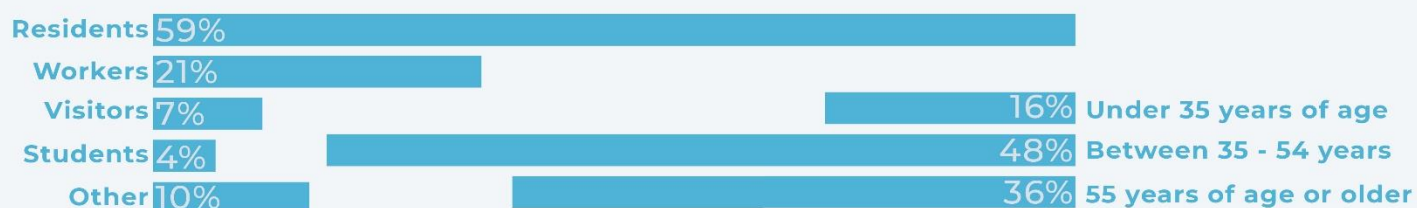
ENGAGEMENT REACH



SOCIAL MEDIA REACH



WHO RESPONDENTS WERE



Impressions: The number of times the post was shown to users.
Engagements: The number of actions that were taken on a post e.g. shares, likes, comments.

WHAT RESPONDENTS LIKED ABOUT THE DESIGN



Trees and biodiversity

"I really like the Urban Forest and including more natural habitat into the space in addition to curated ones (e.g. lawns). As a neighbour it provides a much needed pocket of nature in the area."



Shared community space

"I love the family friendly areas, especially the children's play area. There are lot of young families living in the surrounding apartments and we could use another park for the kids to play in."



Heritage / maritime history

"I like the name "Seafarers Rest" and the recognition of the Maritime Heritage that has played such a strong part in the development of Melbourne. The use of maritime artefacts is excellent and can deliver a sense of Melbourne's maritime ties."

WHAT RESPONDENTS FELT WAS MISSING



Playground ideas

- Incorporate more texture (retaining the use of ropes in keeping with the maritime theme)
- Ensuring that playground equipment is useable in all seasons
- Ensuring that play equipment is also accessible to children with physical disabilities.



Memorials

A desire for stronger recognition of Melbourne's seafarers through:

- Plaques
- Memorial walls
- Events and services



Other concerns

Some respondents outlined other feedback and concerns including:

- Noise
- Shared user paths
- Safety

Project overview

Introduction

City of Melbourne with the Victorian Government and developer Riverlee is working to create a new park at Seafarers Rest in Docklands.

The park is located on the north bank of the Yarra River (Birrarung), between The Mission to Seafarers heritage building and the Seafarers Bridge.

This report presents analysis of public engagement undertaken over June – July 2020 aimed at collecting the community's thoughts about the proposed design for Seafarers Rest Park, to inform the final design phase of the new park.

Background

A communications and engagement plan was developed for the project, identifying three phases of engagement to consult with the community in the redevelopment of the park. Each phase involves engaging broadly with residents, businesses, key stakeholders, workers, and visitors to the area. The three staged strategic approach includes:

Stage 1 – Consulting with the community to better understand needs and ideas are to be incorporated into the project design brief where possible.

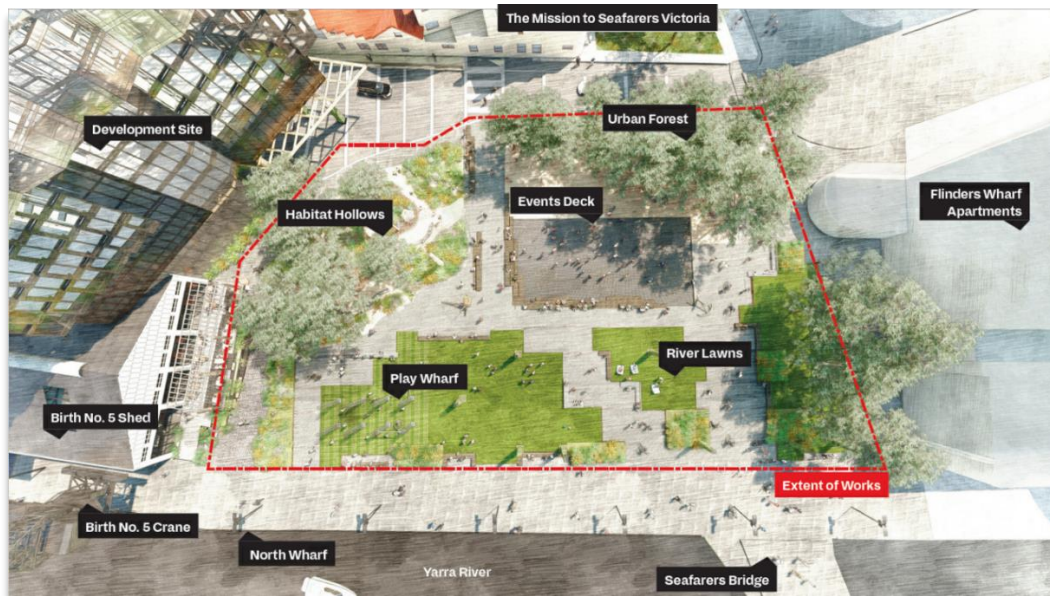
Stage 2 - Inform community of the draft concept design and gather feedback to help finalise the designs.

Stage 3 - Keep community informed with regular updates at key stages of the project, including design, development, and construction. Where possible gather feedback to inform activation and programming of the new park.

This engagement is the second of three engagement phases.

To complete Phase 1, the City of Melbourne undertook a community engagement and consultative process in late 2018. They wanted to gain an understanding of the local community's interest, needs and ideas for a new park at Seafarers Rest (SR) in Docklands.

The feedback from Phase 1 has been analysed and used to come up with a design for the park. This design was presented to the public, along with a request for feedback as part of Phase 2 engagement. A brief outline of the plan for the park can be seen below:



As this is the second phase of community engagement, the design for the new Seafarers Rest Park is quite developed and at the '50 per cent stage'. The aim of this consultation was to provide an opportunity to 'check in' and finalise and refine the design, rather than introduce entirely new elements or ideas. There was a range of community feedback received and some additional suggested elements put forward by the community. These have all been collated and analysed in this report. While every effort is made to incorporate ideas and address concerns, in some instances due to the constraints on the site and project, it is not possible for every idea to be acted on. These suggestions have been discussed under 'beyond project scope' in the discussion section of this report.

Objectives

The broad objectives for this phase of engagement was to

- Present the proposed design to the community.
- Illustrate proposed design features and elements.
- Communicate how the design responds to Stage 1 community engagement, the design brief, site context and site constraints.
- Communicate key themes influencing the park design i.e. maritime heritage and existing buildings and structures surrounding the park; wharf shed and crane, wharf, the Mission to Seafarers building.
- Communicate site constraints and opportunities influencing the design i.e. wharf structure within the park, existing stand of trees.
- Explain how the space might be used i.e. play, recreation, pedestrian connection, shade, seating, amenity, events deck, interfaces with surrounding buildings.
- Provide an opportunity for the community to comment on the design and provide an avenue to ask questions.
- Provide this feedback to the design team for them to consider when finalising the design.

Engagement

The engagement sought to drive visitation to the Participate Melbourne site, which provided detailed visual renders of the design and a survey for collating feedback, along with an option to easily pose online questions to the project team.

Below are some statistics showing the engagement reach via social media channels:

SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT REACH

Channel	Impressions (The number of times the post was shown to users)	Engagements (The number of actions that were taken on a post e.g. shares, likes, comments)	Link clicks (to Participate page)
Facebook	11,900	493	162
LinkedIn	6,456	398	168
Twitter	17,412	729	109
Total	37,388	2,059	439

Overall visits to the Participate Melbourne project webpage during this consultation were 1,962.

This compares to 819 visits in phase 1 and 1,756 for the Market Street engagement also undertaken prior to COVID. This indicates that there has been much stronger visitation of online engagement opportunities during COVID, compared with phase 1 which also included a number of face-to-face sessions.

In total, 75 responses were received by CoM for this engagement. These comprised of:

- 56 online survey responses through Participate Melbourne platform
- 13 questions from members of the public
- 6 email submissions

In addition, 3 meetings were held with Traditional Owners Groups.

The participate Melbourne online survey consisted of the following 4 questions:

- Q1. What do you like most about the designs for the park and the opportunities it provides?
- Q2. Is there anything missing or anything else you'd like to tell us to inform our planning?
- Q3. What is your connection to the city of Melbourne?
- Q4. What is your age group?

Thirteen questions were asked by members of the public. These questions were each answered directly by City of Melbourne staff prior to this report being written, and the questions have been coded into appropriate themes and topics along with other written responses to questions 1 and 2.

Email submissions were received from six stakeholder groups. These groups were: *Yarra Riverkeepers*, *Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network*, *The Mission to Seafarers*, *Naval Association of Australia*, *The Company of Master Mariners of Australia Limited*, and *Flinders Wharf Apartments Owners Corporation*.

These submissions have been read and an overview summary of their main themes can be found in the 'Analysis of written comments' section of this report. Follow up meetings have been held with each of these stakeholders. Meetings with three Traditional Owner groups occurred during both phases of engagement and will help to inform a detailed cultural heritage layer for the park. The purpose of these meetings is to involve Traditional Owners with the development process for Seafarers Rest Park, acknowledging traditional knowledge and the important role of traditional culture in the area. Some of the opportunities identified for this project are:

- Recognition of the long history of Aboriginal maritime activity on Melbourne's waterways.
- Connecting culture to landscape through Traditional Owners' input to the native/indigenous planting pallet across the site to support reference to the landscapes that once existed in this area.
- Connecting cultural practices to the management of the land and the use of particular plants for cultural purposes, and to create ecologies that might support more diverse native flora and fauna on the site.

COVID-19 impacts and engagement reach

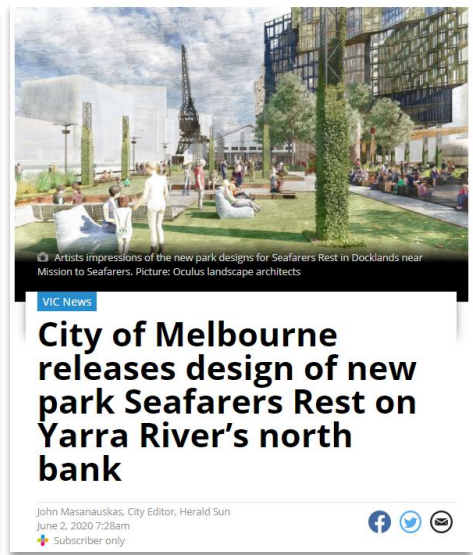
The engagement process for the second phase of this project has been impacted by the global COVID-19 pandemic. Due to social distancing requirements, City of Melbourne was unable to host face to face workshops or pop up sessions and were limited with some of the marketing approaches they could take.

Because of these limitations, City of Melbourne took steps to focus engaging people with onsite signage and displays, promotion through an extensive range of groups and

organisations in Docklands, the CBD and beyond, and focusing on target online engagement through various social platforms and online channels (see table on page 8 for social media engagement figures). The project also received positive media coverage in the Herald Sun, Broadsheets and other media outlets.



Broadsheet article, June 5 2020



Herald Sun article, June 2 2020

Stage 2 engagement results

Quantitative analysis overview

Frequency analysis was completed on the demographic and connection to Seafarers Rest questions and results are presented in the charts below.

The relatively small sample size for this engagement (56 survey respondents) means that the results are not representative of the whole Dockland's population, but are reflective of the opinions of those who participated in the engagement process. The results for survey respondents' age groups were compared with Docklands population data, sourced from Australian 2016 Census data, retrieved from:

http://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC20760).

The Participate Melbourne survey responses have been analysed comprehensively, including quantitative analysis of questions 3 and 4, (*What is your connection to the City of Melbourne?* And *What is your age group?*), as well as qualitative analysis of questions 1 and 2 (*What do you like most about the designs for the park and the opportunities it provides?* and *Is there anything missing or anything else you'd like to tell us to inform our planning?*).

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

Key for comment numbers	
3 comments	A few
4–7 comments	A small number
8–14 comments	Several
15–24 comments	A moderate number
25–49 comments	A considerable number
50–74 comments	A substantial number

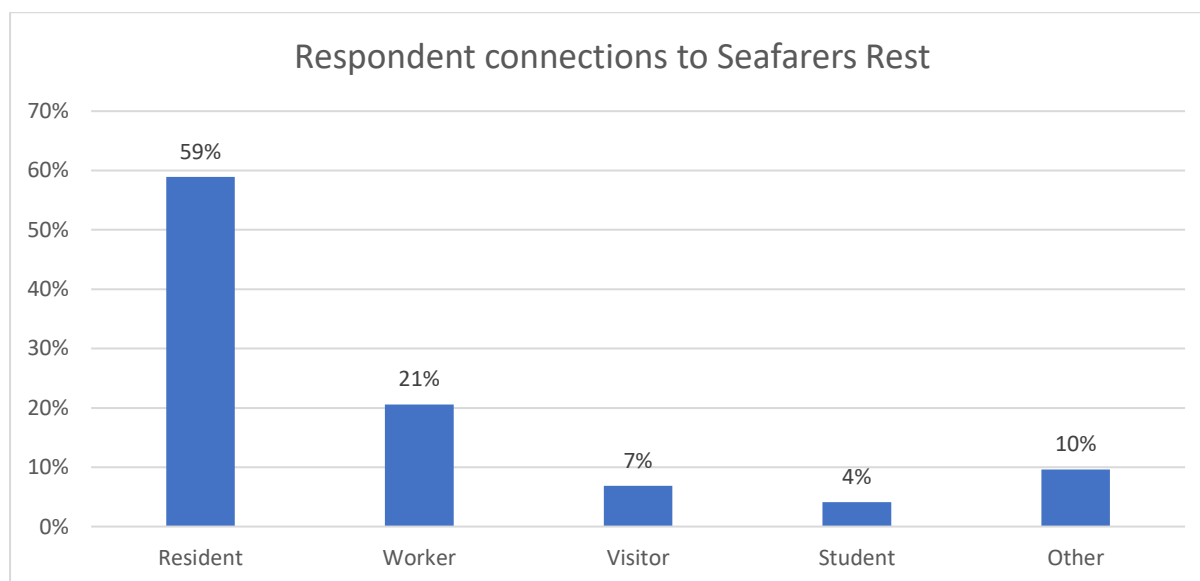
Note: Participant comments are included throughout this report. Comments have been inserted verbatim, however where obvious typos, grammatical errors or spelling mistakes have occurred, these have been corrected (without changing the meaning or content of the comment).

Respondent characteristics

Summary of respondents to the Seafarers Rest engagement:

- Most respondents live (59%) or work (21%) in the area.
- Visitors and students made up only 11% of respondents.
- Younger age groups were under-represented in survey responses.
The 20–24 year age group makes up 14% of the Docklands population, yet there were no respondents between the ages of 18 – 24.
- Respondents aged 18–44 years made up 37% of respondents, compared to 66% of the Docklands population.
- Conversely, older age groups were over-represented. Over one quarter of respondents were aged 45–54 years (27%), while this age group makes up only 10% of the Docklands population.
- Respondents aged 45 and over made up 63% of respondents, compared to 23% of the Docklands population.

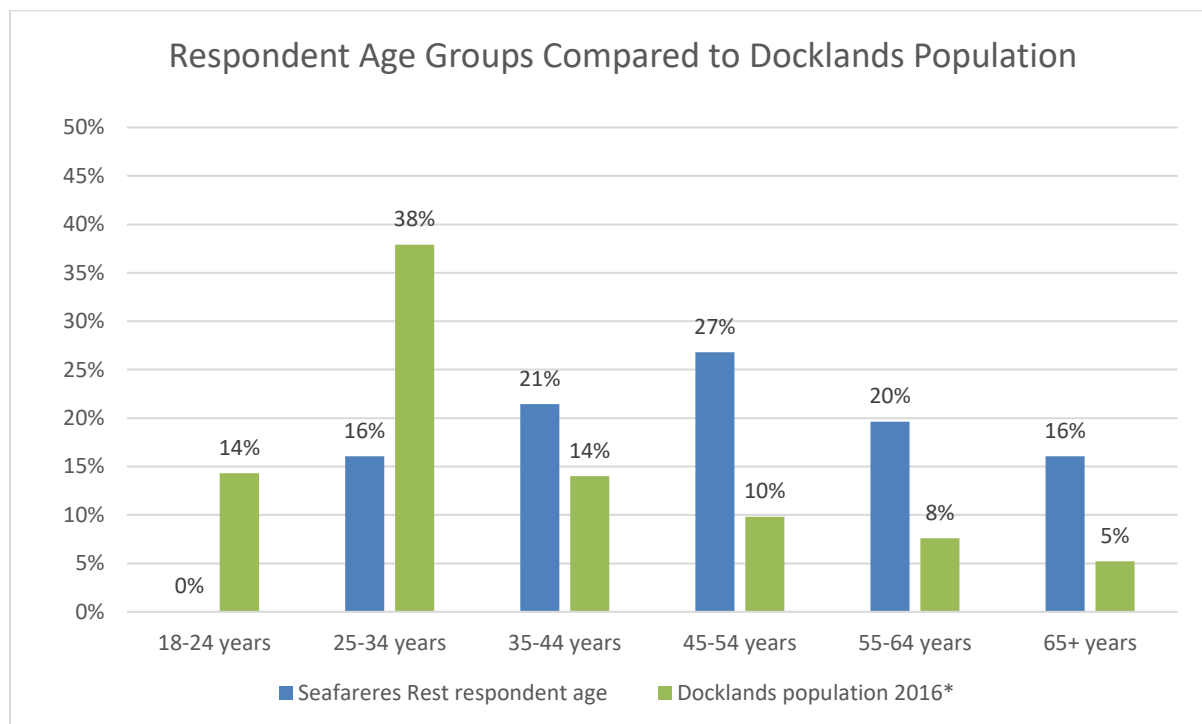
Respondents main connection with Seafarers Rest



RESPONDENTS' MAIN CONNECTION TO AREA SUMMARY

- Over half of the respondents (59%) live in the area
- Twenty one percent of respondents work in the area
- Visitors (7%) and students (4%) made up 11% of respondents

Respondent age groups



* Docklands Population Data has been sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australia Census 2016.

** Note the survey age category was 18-24 years of age, and the Census data is for 20-24 years of age. The difference between this age-group would be greater if the same age categories were used.

AGE GROUP SUMMARY ANALYSIS

- The largest group represented in survey responses was the 45-54 year age group.
- No respondents were under 25 years of age.
- Forty seven percent more respondents were older than 34 years of age, compared with the Docklands population.
- Thirty six percent fewer respondents were younger than 35 years of age, compared with the Docklands population.

Stage 2 analysis of written comments

Overall synthesis of all written comments:

- Overall, respondents supported the design's focus on green spaces, trees, and biodiversity, expressing that this was a welcome addition to the Docklands area.
- Respondents also welcomed the new shared community space that Seafarers Rest Park will provide.
- The recognition of Melbourne's heritage and maritime history was also praised by respondents, though some felt that this could be incorporated even further in the design. Suggestions were offered about how City of Melbourne could commemorate Melbourne's seafarers within the park.
- Other suggestions offered about what could be added to the design were varied, but included practical design ideas such as ideas for how the Play Wharf could be made more accessible and useable, and how the maritime theme could be incorporated more through the use of materials in this space; and reducing the 'busy-ness' of the park by focusing on fewer areas/elements.
- Respondents also shared concerns they had with the current design, including considerations regarding wind and sun exposure; seating; the safety of shared user paths (collisions) and other general safety concerns; and other potential concerns about skateable spaces, and loud music and noise from the Events Deck.

Written comments analysis and reporting overview

ANALYSIS APPROACH

The following discussion presents results from qualitative analysis of the following two free-text questions, which captured ideas and opinions from participants in the engagement process.

- What do you like most about the designs for the park and the opportunities it provides?
- Is there anything missing or anything else you'd like to tell us to inform our planning?

Responses were combined during analysis to present findings summarised under two themes:

- 1 What respondents liked most
- 2 What respondents felt was missing

The summaries that follow present the key points made relevant to each of the three main engagement themes.

HOW ANALYSIS WAS COMPLETED

To complete the analysis, Global Research analysts read each comment received from the community and organised (coded) them into themes and topics based on the points made. Some comments contained multiple points, relevant to multiple topics, resulting in many comments being coded to multiple topics. The analysis was assisted by NVivo qualitative analysis software.

Analysts then synthesised the coded comments and used the results to inform this report. The discussion below was written in the order of most-to-least commonly mentioned topics under each of the two themes.

What respondents liked most

Respondents were asked, “What do you like most about the designs for the park and the opportunities it provides?”. Responses to this question have been sorted into relevant themes and topics and are discussed below in order of the frequency of comments on each topic (most to least).

Landscaping and trees

27 comments

A considerable number of respondents supported the landscape design and the incorporation of trees in the space. Several of these comments expressed an appreciation for the abundance of vegetation, the urban forest, the natural landscape features, and the amount of green space. These comments included the following:

Thoughtful design with multiple zones, each with a specific purpose, surrounded by trees and green space.

Encourages people to enjoy our beautiful Yarra River. I love that there is some habitat areas for local wildlife.

Several respondents also noted how the green space encourages people to spend time in and enjoy the space, as well as foster play for younger visitors. It was noted by one respondent that the area is a good size to facilitate leisure rather than recreation. It was also noted by a small number of respondents that the landscaping and trees revive the space and bring new life into the area. The following comments are examples of these:

I really like the Urban Forest and including more natural habitat into the space in addition to curated ones (e.g. lawns). As a neighbour it provides a much needed pocket of nature in the area.

Green space with lots of trees and plants and space for people to relax and play outside

The park brings more precious green space to the Yarra banks and will inject new life into the precinct.

A small number of comments were made regarding how the landscaping and trees soften and balance out the concrete jungle, revamp barren areas and bring nature into the CBD. A small number of respondents complimented the shelter and cover that the trees provide, noting that shade was sometimes hard to find when needed in the summer, and observed that the plans aligned with the open space 40% canopy target in Resilient Melbourne’s *Living Melbourne strategy*.

A few respondents mentioned that they liked the grassed river area and how the space encourages people to enjoy the river. One respondent appreciated that a dog-friendly habitat is important. It was suggested by a respondent that they hope the trees do not block out the view from the river to see the historic Mission to Seafarers building.

Shared community space

20 comments

A moderate number of respondents expressed fondness toward the shared community space articulating that they liked the park design and the opportunities it provides. Several respondents complimented the space for the playground, and play space provided, especially noting how welcomed this will be by children that live in nearby apartments. One respondent noted that the playground was well situated on the site. The following comment is an example of these:

I love the family friendly areas, especially the children's play area. There are a lot of young families living in the surrounding apartments and we could use another park for the kids to play in

The events deck and events space were noted by a small number of respondents, with one respondent suggesting the events space should have the ability to be hired out. The ability for the area to be a community space, and community meeting space was also complimented by a small number of respondents, alongside appreciating the multi-use aspect of the space.

I love how you have made it a real community meeting space and less like a built environment, natural looking is lovely.

Comments were also made that the space encourages people to relax by the river, that it is family friendly and everyone can enjoy the space. Several respondents also commended the Seafarers Rest Park redevelopment, noting that it would bring a welcome spark of life to an area that has been perceived as unusable and unattractive.

Heritage / Maritime Heritage

10 comments

Respondents were generally supportive of the maritime theme of the park, noting the importance of recognising this important part of Victoria's history. A small number of respondents made similar comments around this point, including the following:

The concept is very good and hopefully will bring to the general public a closer understanding of shipping and seafarers and their importance to not only Melbourne and Victoria but Australia generally.

I like the name "Seafarers Rest" and the recognition of the Maritime Heritage that has played such a strong part in the development of Melbourne. The use of maritime artefacts is excellent and can deliver a sense of Melbourne's maritime ties

A couple of comments referenced the way the proposed design mixes the old with the new, through the connection with the Mission to Seafarers building, and retaining the old crane and anchor. Remaining comments offered general support for the maritime theme of the park, including the name, Seafarers Rest.

Biodiversity

7 comments

Comments that discussed biodiversity were supportive of the inclusion of Habitat Hollows in the design for Seafarers Rest. These comments were general in nature and provided little detail. Typical comments under this topic included:

The focus on biodiversity and habitat!

I love that there are some habitat areas for local wildlife.

Amenities and infrastructure

4 comments

Amenities and infrastructure were discussed by a small number of respondents. These comments praised the Events Deck design, as well as the timber seating around it.

Shared user paths (bike and pedestrians) 2 comments

The two comments on the paths around the site commend them, though one comment specifies that these paths should be reserved for pedestrian use only.

General support for the project

7 comments

A small number of respondents made comments which simply generally supported the project, such as:

The park is fantastic. It looks fantastic and the River rest area is great as well

Anything is an improvement on what's there

*Thoughtful design with multiple zones, each with a specific purpose,
surrounded by trees and green space.*

What respondents felt was missing

Respondents were also asked, “Is there anything missing or anything else you'd like to tell us to inform our planning?” Below is the analysis of comments made in response to this question in order of most to least frequently mentioned.

NOTE: This section also includes questions asked by 13 respondents.

General design comments

17 comments

A moderate number of respondents offered design suggestions, that they felt might improve the look, feel and/or functionality of the park.

Five respondents discussed ideas for the Play Wharf area of the park. These suggestions included: adding more ‘texture’ to the children’s playground (retaining the use of ropes in keeping with the maritime theme); ensuring that playground equipment is useable in all seasons (for example not using metal that will be too hot to use in the summer months); ensuring that play equipment is also accessible to children with physical disabilities; and creating a more exciting and interesting design for the Play Wharf overall.

A small number of respondents made comments about the ‘busy-ness’ of the proposed design, making comments such as:

The design seems to be trying to do a lot for all people, risking doing nothing for anyone. The five elements are each, on their own, fine. However, fitting them all on the site means each one is a small representation of the broader idea.

These comments suggested that focusing on a smaller number of themes or areas within the park, the space would be more useable and cohesive, fitting with a clear vision for the space.

A couple of comments discussed mitigating wind and sun impacts in the current design. There were concerns about whether there would be enough shade provided (by trees or structures) for those wanting to relax in the park during the warmer months, and a lack of shelter from wind, particularly in the seating areas.

Other design comments included concerns about the practicality of current seating arrangements on the events deck being all on one level making it difficult for everyone to see the screen, and a desire for high standards for the wooden finishes to ensure adequate safety and aesthetic. Another couple of comments expressed concerns about the amount of concrete and/or ramps and flat edges that may attract skateboarders. The concern here, was that this could damage property and spoil the tranquility of the park. Other suggestions included:

Installation of street sculpture e.g. Bunjil Eagle would appease & pay homage to the Wurundjeri people.

It looks too suburban

The wooden finishes are in keeping with the wharf theme however a higher standard than the wooden construction presently in place which is really dangerous and unsightly.

Another theme contained in a small number of responses was concern around loud music and drunkenness as a result of the Events Deck creating a nuisance for those living in the area. The following quote sums up this sentiment:

Living and looking directly over Seafarers Rest I'm concerned about the event space uses especially late night activities. Noise issues in the close vicinity has been the cause of much disturbance and years of action with authorities in years past.

Heritage / Maritime Heritage

13 comments

A small number of respondents made comments about the maritime heritage aspect of the proposed Seafarers Rest park. The consensus amongst these comments was that the park's design should reflect the maritime theme, and that efforts should be made to commemorate Melbourne's seafarers within the park. Ideas for this included erecting plaques; information or photo boards; or an interactive map illustrating the numerous maritime sites of Melbourne. Another idea submitted was to create a 'Seafarers Memorial Wall' where details of Melbourne's seafarers and their service could be engraved.

The park needs artefacts etc. to reference Melbourne's seafaring history. A large timeline photo mural with captions on the history of seafaring in Melbourne like the ones along the wool shed at Vic Dock.

One respondent also highlighted the opportunity to hold memorial services in respect to the Merchant Navy officers who lost their lives during the First and Second World Wars at Seafarers Rest Park. It was proposed that September 3rd would be an appropriate day for such a service as it is Merchant Navy Day.

A couple of comments also stressed the importance of preserving the Mission to Seafarers building.

Amenities and infrastructure

14 comments

Comments about amenities and infrastructure varied. A small number of respondents suggested that they would like to see more seating within the park, including in the 'Forest' section, and under shady areas within the park. A couple of comments took a slightly different stance, noting that seating should be individual seats with armrests separating them to discourage rough sleepers in the park – an issue that was a concern for a small number of respondents. One respondent also suggested that tables would benefit those visiting the park at lunch time. Comments included:

I don't see enough seating (i.e. proper benches). Sitting on the grass is not an easy option for older people.

It would be great if you could situate seating to take advantage of shade in summer and sunshine in winter.

Other suggestions included installing: public toilets; a drinking fountain for cyclists and pedestrians; outdoor gym equipment; a bike rack for cycle storage; a BBQ area; better lighting; a street library; a community notice board; and recycling and composting facilities.

Shared user paths

12 comments

Nearly half of comments relating to cycle or pedestrian paths outlined a concern about multi-modal conflict on the shared path network within the vicinity of the park. Some suggested that bicycle access to the park be limited. These comments generally came out of concern for the safety of park visitors due to the speed of some bike riders.

Remaining comments on the topic of paths suggested that either separate paths for cyclists and pedestrians would be more appropriate, or that a well-defined 'path hierarchy' needs to be implemented and clearly signposted so that everyone respects the shared space. One comment suggested:

There needs to be signage and education of cyclists using the area. There needs to be observance of the shared spaces, especially where paths cross, so that pedestrians don't get hit by speeding cyclists, which is already a problem in this area.

Landscaping and trees

10 comments

Comments about landscaping and trees overwhelmingly expressed a desire for more trees. In particular, respondents wanted to see more native vegetation, taller trees to provide shade, and community herb or vegetable gardens. Below are some of these comments:

Would love to see it as green as possible. A lovely oasis within the city.

Riverlee's sharp tessellating glass design would be complemented and enhanced with the introduction of more trees and grass. Also, trees planted randomly along the river's edge might naturally slowdown the cycle, skateboard and scooter rush and give relief to a possible bottleneck situation.

Access

7 comments

Respondents raised concerns about access to the park and surrounding areas. The issues raised included: a desire for adequate wheelchair and disabled access to the park; clear signage directing locals and tourists how to access Docklands and Seafarers Rest; and clear guidelines for pedestrians and cyclists to ensure everyone respects the shared space. There were also concerns about local traffic and road safety:

We are concerned about the proximity of car traffic entering the new hotel forecourt to the park and also to the south side of the Mission to Seafarers

(MTS). What provision will there be for the safety of people moving between the park and the MTS?

General safety

4 comments

Safety was a concern for a few respondents. One respondent suggested that the children's play area should be gated, while another noted that visitors may be tempted to climb on the old crane. Social distancing measures were mentioned by one respondent, who suggested that signs should be in place encourage visitors to maintain distance, and that sanitising machines should be available within the park. One respondent also noted that if tall buildings are built around the park, it will make the park darker and may deter people from using it due to safety concerns.

Biodiversity

3 comments

One respondent suggested that the current design does not properly address the ecological value of the adjacent river. Another respondent wrote:

What scientific basis is there for the planting of the habitat hollows? What species will these hollows attract? Invertebrates, particularly butterflies and native bees, and birds and potentially possums? What continuity if there with other habitats on the river? What is the overall expectation for the ecology of the site?

A final comment raised the issue of threats to the wildlife that may reside in the park, which read:

I'd like to see how you are going to manage threats to wildlife - i.e. domestic cats, dogs, trampling, over-use of the space.

Other suggestions

12 comments

Other comments that did not fit into the categories above were received on a variety of topics. These included suggestions of things to add, such as: a coffee cart; cafes or restaurants; an off-leash dog area; performances by local artists and musicians; art works; hourly light or fire shows; and an 'event information board' to display upcoming events, improving engagement from the public. Below are some examples of such comments:

if you decide to go ahead with it and have the unveiling ceremony it would be nice to have as many Merchant Seafarers as possible from the ships in port also the tv and press. It could turn out be to a great tourist attraction on the day making it an advent to go down in the History of our great city of Melbourne.

We could also do something with the historical crane to draw in crowds on a daily basis.

Beyond project scope

4 comments

Even though the design for this project is quite progressed, commentary was still made about whether additional elements not currently in the project scope could be included. Resolution of the broader shared path network issues was raised, however this park design, while aiming to provide an improved network, will not be able to address broader concerns that require a precinct-wide planning approach.

Comments that extended beyond the project scope included: the addition of a water play area for children; reconsideration of the proposed apartment block development which was seen to be visually 'insensitive' to the heritage shed; extending the park into the river with big steps that people can sit on and enjoy being right on the river and changes to the road access to the area, including putting roads underground to allow pedestrians unobstructed access to Docklands proper. This was one comment:

There needs to be a bridge/skywalk/tunnel north-south across Wurrundjeri Way to allow easier access from Collins Square. The current pedestrian crossing lights take forever but more importantly, are frequently ignored by trucks and cars who run the red light. I have personally witnessed 3 instances of pedestrians having to give way to red light running traffic in the last year. This is critical. There will be significant increase in bikes and foot traffic across this intersection after the development is complete.

Summary of email submissions

Email submissions were received from 5 stakeholder groups. These groups were: Yarra Riverkeepers, Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network, The Mission to Seafarers, Naval Association of Australia, Flinders Wharf Apartments Owners Corporation. These submissions have been read and their main themes are summarised below. Follow up meetings have been held with each of these stakeholders, where ideas and concerns were discussed in greater detail. The details of these meetings have not been included in this report.

Yarra Riverkeepers Association

The Yarra Riverkeepers Association define themselves as “the community voice for the river.” Their submission focused on ensuring that the Yarra River is adequately considered in the Seafarers Rest design, in terms of both its ecological value and its environmental health. The submissions also called for recognition of indigenous cultural values and what was previously on the site before the environment was constructed.

Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network (MMHN)

This submission focused on the importance of connecting Seafarers Rest with the maritime history of the area. They welcomed connections made through the name of the park, and that the park also provides a south bank to north bank connection to the Mission to Seafarers. MMHN proposed the inclusion of a ‘seafarers’ memorial’ in the park to commemorate all those, past and present, who worked on the sea or ships to carry, load and discharge cargoes and people at the Port of Melbourne.

The Mission to Seafarers

The Mission to Seafarers highlighted the important maritime history of the area and acknowledged Melbourne’s seafarers. The submission expressed general support for the design of Seafarers Rest Park, but also discussed some concerns it had about the park’s design. These concerns included: how best to connect the Mission to the park; concerns about the management of cycle traffic; and issues with seagulls in the area.

The Mission to Seafarers has provided City of Melbourne with information about maritime artefacts including the propeller from *Lady Loch*, the anchor from MV *Tycoon*, and the propeller from Tug Boat, *Corsair*, after expressing a desire to be involved in the incorporation of maritime artefacts.

Naval Association of Australia

This submission also praised the park’s maritime theme and recognition of the maritime history of the area. They also expressed support for MMHN’s proposal to install a memorial to Melbourne’s seafarers within the park, stating that the provision of an open space that highlights Melbourne’s maritime history and that of seafarers in particular is long overdue.

The Company of Master Mariners of Australia Limited

A submission from the Company of Master Mariners of Australia Limited shared their belief that the design for Seafarers Rest Park should include provision for a suitable tribute to the seafarers who played a vital role in the establishment and development of Melbourne. They also expressed that Seafarers Rest Park provides a unique opportunity to recognise and honor people who have played such an important role in Melbourne's history.

Flinders Wharf Apartments Owners Corporation

This submission expressed a number of concerns that the Flinders Wharf Apartments Owners Corporation had with the Seafarers Rest Park development. These concerns related to potential skateboard-noise, people sleeping rough, issues with wind (being that Seafarers Rest Park is a high-wind area) and eliminating light-spill to neighbouring apartments.

Aside from seeking clarification around these concerns, the Flinders Wharf Apartments Owners Corporation generally expressed support for the design of the park. In particular, they commended the use of maritime artefacts.

Additional engagement with Traditional Owners

The City of Melbourne is committed to undertaking meaningful engagement with Traditional Owners of the land. In addition to a Cultural Heritage Management Plan prepared for the project, it was identified that ongoing consultation should occur with Traditional Owners in order to inform an Aboriginal cultural heritage element for the project. A separate targeted engagement process is underway with the three Traditional Owner groups.

Discussions identified the following opportunities for Aboriginal cultural heritage and knowledge to inform the progression of the design and experience of the park:

Aboriginal maritime heritage

There is a need and opportunity for the interpretation and definition of maritime heritage at the site to be broadened to recognise and include the long history of Aboriginal maritime activity on Melbourne's waterways. This may be included through landscape and representing the connection of traditional and more contemporary Aboriginal people to maritime activity such as wharf workers.

This approach ensures that the post-European settlement maritime story is balanced with a picture of the Aboriginal perspective on maritime heritage that also permeates the experience of the site.

Cultural connection to landscape

The concept for the park has been developed with a strong focus on the reintroduction of landscape to the site with an intent for this landscape to focus on local ecology. Opportunities to embed Traditional Owner knowledge into the landscape elements of the project include:

- Input to the native/indigenous planting palette across the site to support reference to the landscapes that once existed in this area
- Refining the details of how the spaces might work to support cultural practices – i.e. rock placements in the habitat area to allow for groups to sit.

The City of Melbourne will continue the conversation with the Traditional Owners groups while finalising design details. Provision of relevant information and further comments has been requested from the groups and workshops will be organized to further develop opportunities identified.

How the feedback will be used

Feedback collated in this engagement process will be provided to the project design team for them to consider when finalising the design. This feedback will also:

- Be responded to by the design team during Stage 3 engagement – presentation of final design to the community accompanied by justification and explanation text
- Some feedback received that is out of scope for this project will be reported to the appropriate council areas for their future consideration when undertaking planning for the area i.e. broader bicycle network planning, broader habitat and biodiversity objectives and broader reference to maritime heritage
- The report will be uploaded to the project web site for the community to view
- The report will also be provided to City of Melbourne Councilors to document the engagement process and inform them of community feedback and support for the project.

This report has been prepared by:

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