

12.1 ELWOOD FORESHORE: LOOKING TO THE FUTURE -
RESPONSES TO COMMUNITY SURVEY

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: CHRIS CARROLL, GENERAL MANAGER, CUSTOMER,
OPERATIONS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

PREPARED BY: ANTHONY SAVENKOV, HEAD OF PROPERTY PROJECTS

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To report the feedback from a recent community survey *Have your say: Enhancing Elwood foreshore*.



2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 An online survey (*Have your say: Enhancing Elwood foreshore*) was carried out during July and August last year.
- 2.2 It sought to hear how users experienced Elwood Foreshore and their priorities for change.
- 2.3 The survey received 1,493 views and was undertaken 279 times.
- 2.4 A full record of responses is included (as Attachment 2 and the chart at report Item 4.21), with personal information redacted.



- 2.5 The results of the survey suggest that:
- Elwood’s identity is multi-dimensional;
 - it tends to be perceived as charming but tatty, authentic, relaxed and friendly (including family friendly); and
 - although some would like to see no change, there is more frequently a desire, or at least an acceptance of a need, for modest change.
- 2.6 Of the broad range of opportunities for improvement, the survey participants ranked these as the highest priorities:-
- “Enhance the natural landscape and vegetation, maintaining important visual corridors and open spaces”.
 - “Water sensitive urban design to manage and improve the quality of stormwater entering the bay”.
 - “Alleviate conflict between pedestrians, bike riders and vehicles”.
 - “Redesigned buildings are appropriately sited, designed, attractive and cost effective”.
- 2.7 A brief summary of the survey results has also been published on Council’s *Have Your Say* webpage.
- 2.8 A preliminary siting plan is being prepared, and the survey results will help inform it, together with other inputs (including policy of the State Government and City of Port Phillip, other consultation feedback, and the results of technical investigations).

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:-

- 3.1 Notes the responses to the recent online community survey *Have your say: Enhancing Elwood foreshore*.
- 3.2 Thanks the participants for their contributions.
- 3.3 Directs Officers to consider this community input in preparing a preliminary site plan.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

- 4.1 Elwood Foreshore is a premier public place. It makes a significant contribution to the amenity and identity of the local area and the City of Port Phillip.
- 4.2 However, it faces several challenges, including: aged infrastructure; a sub-optimal user experience; and climate change risk.
- 4.3 Council is therefore planning to refresh and improve the Elwood Foreshore area, and so a plan is being prepared to guide infrastructure decommissioning, renewal, replacement and redevelopment at the location over the next decade.
- 4.4 To help inform this, community consultation is being undertaken.
- 4.5 This includes an online survey that was carried out for from 24 July to 16 August 2020.



- 4.6 It was publicised with:
- a mail drop to 3,500 neighbouring properties in Elwood and Brighton;
 - on site signage;
 - email blast; and
 - social media advertising (on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and Twitter).
- 4.7 The survey page received 1,493 views. The survey was undertaken 279 times.
- 4.8 It comprised five questions.

Values

- 4.9 The first question asked, “What do you value about Elwood foreshore?”.
- 4.10 The responses are summarised visually in the treemap below – in which the relative size of each rectangle represents the relative frequency that the subject was mentioned.

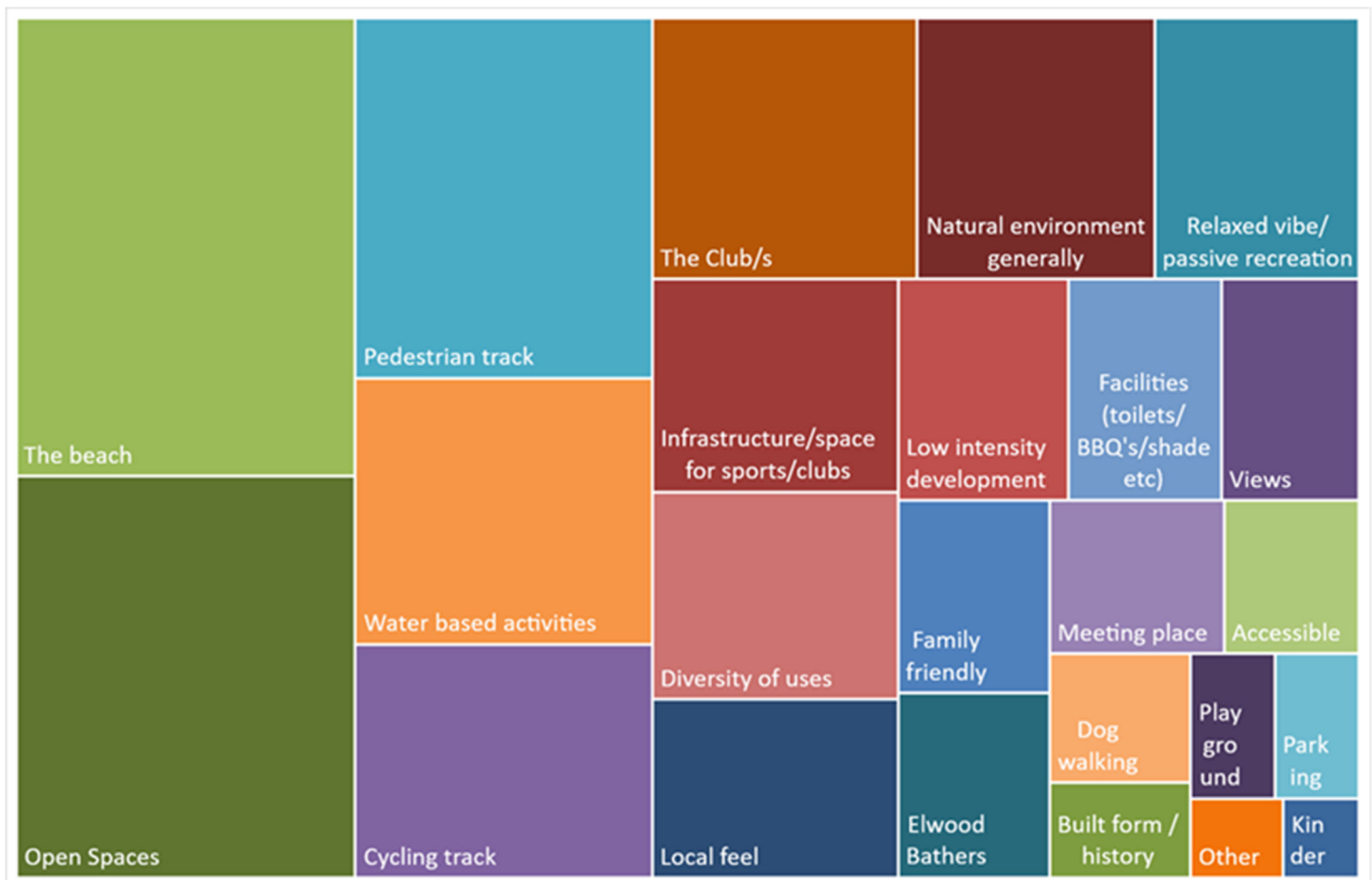


Diagram: What do you value about Elwood Foreshore? Relative frequency of results.



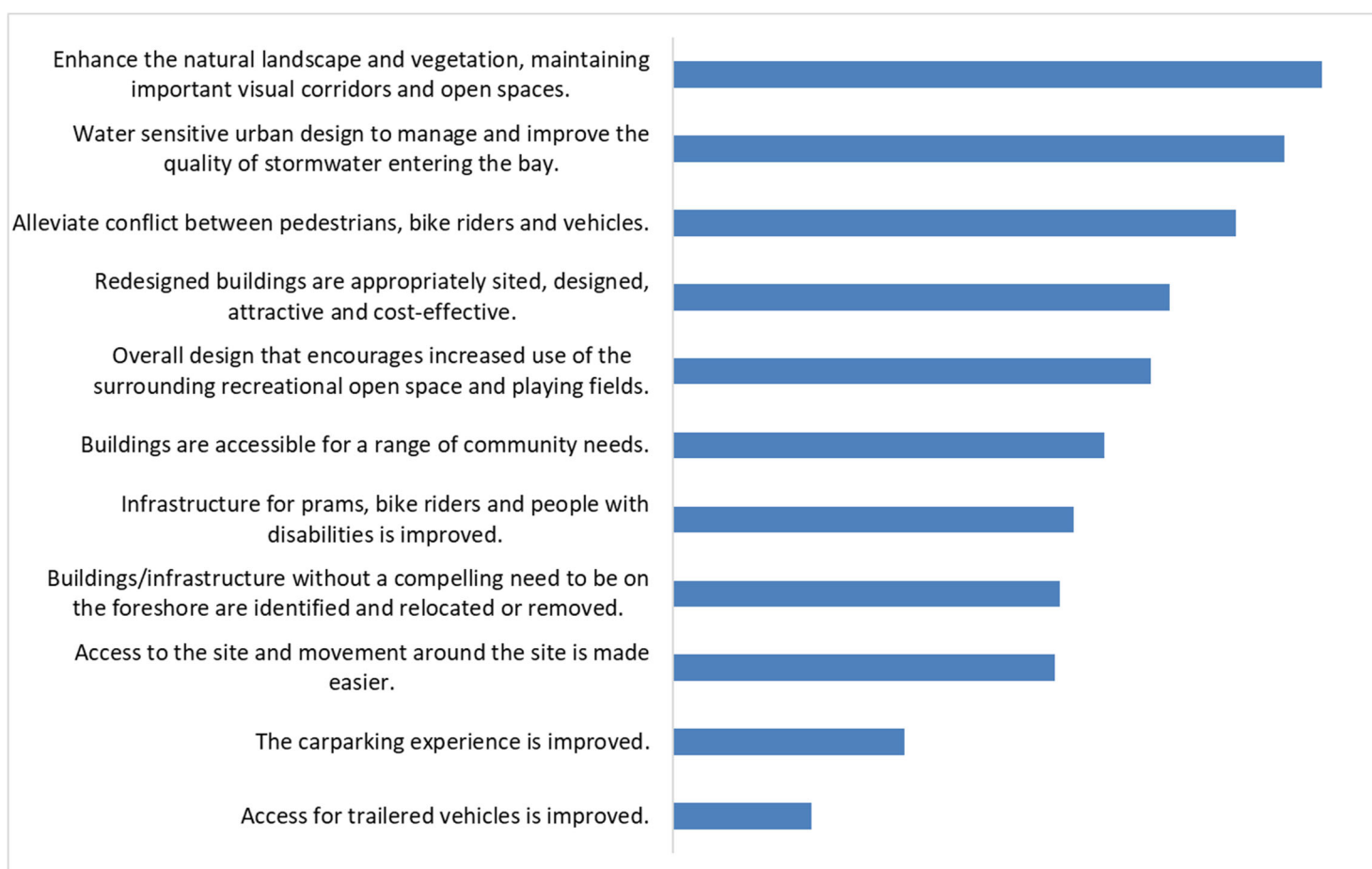
Character, culture, relationship with place

- 4.11 The identity, character and culture of the Elwood Foreshore was explored through the subsequent two questions, that asked the community to consider the place in anthropomorphic terms, (that is, as a human being):-
- Question 2: “If the Elwood Foreshore area were a person, how would you describe its personality?”
- and
- Question 3: “If you could, what attribute/characteristic of that personality would you change? Why?”
- 4.12 A notable proportion of the respondents expressed that they perceive Elwood Foreshore as humble and authentic.
- 4.13 A modestly strong number consider it relaxed, “laid back”. This is perhaps not surprising, given that it is a place of recreation. Note however, that some responses specifically differentiated Elwood’s Foreshore’s “personality” from that of others such as St Kilda, Brighton, and Surfers Paradise.
- 4.14 “Fun” or “fun loving” appeared with modest frequency.
- 4.15 Many considered Elwood Foreshore “tired”, “worn”, though this characteristic was often framed in positive terms – for instance “well used”.
- 4.16 Many respondents consider it friendly/welcoming/inclusive. A smaller, but still notable proportion specifically expressed that it was a family friendly place.
- 4.17 Some participants felt Elwood foreshore to be calm, harmonious – one described it as the Dalai Lama. Others however, noted a disjointedness, and pointed to the opportunity for greater coherence: “delete the confusion”; and “I’d like Elwood foreshore to either be more stylish or full embrace its retro feel”; and “she lacks wholeness, and in lacking wholeness lacks integrity”.
- 4.18 Elwood Foreshore is a well known, major public place. Even so, the responses do not suggest a clearly defined, dominant “identity”. Indeed several responses explicitly noted this – for instance: “at the moment it’s not clearly defined as a personality”; and “lost [her] grip on what she was and who she really is”.
- 4.19 Its identity appears nuanced and multi-dimensional. There may be opportunity through the plan to enhance and embrace those elements of its identity that make it distinctive, and thereby contribute to a stronger sense of place.
- 4.20 Though a significant portion of the responses expressed a desire to see no change, (or merely better upkeep), more acknowledged a need or desire for some change – though typically small or moderate in degree.
- 4.21 For the latter, the most common themes were a desire for: nature friendliness; a more contemporary feel; and vibrancy/excitement.



Priorities

4.22 Question 4 listed opportunities to improve Elwood Foreshore, and asked participants to rank them in order of importance.



Additional opportunities

4.23 The final question (number 5) asked: “Are there any other opportunities you think we should consider?”

4.24 The “ideas boards” at Attachment 1 summarise the opportunities mooted in this survey question. Note that some opportunities are location specific, others less/not so.

4.25 Several responses aligned with the priorities contained within question 4.

4.26 Some of the ideas that appeared multiple times included:

- more food and drink options;
- focus on beach and water based activities;
- provision of a swimming pontoon;
- recognition/involvement of local Indigenous community;
- publicly accessible changerooms for foreshore users;



- enabling safe swimming; and
- using existing open space areas for other purposes.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

- 5.1 This paper summarises and briefly analyses the information gathered through a recent online community survey.
- 5.2 In addition to that consultation, Officers have:
- liaised with Bayside City Council and Melbourne Water to understand current, proposed or mooted projects within the immediate and surrounding area;
 - carried out twenty two structured interviews with the contractual lessees, licensees and government agency stakeholders at Elwood foreshore; and
 - directly notified other relevant user/interest groups, including: Port Phillip Bicycle Users Group; Elwood Flood Action Group; Earthcare St Kilda; Elwood Love Our Street; Good Sports; Port Phillip Emergency Climate Action Network; the ZU board sports.
- 5.3 Council has also informed the Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (“DELWP”) of the initiative, and will ultimately require their consent to implement any works under the Plan.
- 5.4 A project webpage (<https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/about-the-council/projects-and-works/elwood-foreshore-masterplan>) provides general information and updates about the project.
- 5.5 We continue to work with internal and external stakeholders to progress the project.
- 5.6 Further stages of development will have their own community consultation.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Elwood Foreshore is owned by the Crown, though City of Port Phillip is responsible to “manage, improve, maintain and control” it as its Committee of Management under the *Crown Land Reserves Act 1978*.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 7.1 It is contemplated that the improvements to Elwood foreshore be undertaken in stages over approximately a decade.
- 7.2 Development funding will be considered as part of the Council Plan.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 8.1 Elwood Foreshore has important natural and ecological values. These, and the opportunities to enhance them, are being considered in planning for Elwood Foreshore’s future.
- 8.2 Consistent with the intent of Council’s *Sustainable Design Strategy 2013*, the site planning gives early thought to environmentally sustainable design.
- 8.3 The State government’s *Marine and Coastal Policy (2020)* requires that Council develop the site sustainably, and strengthen the site’s ability to cope and adapt to climate change.



- 8.4 Council's *Act and Adapt – Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018-2028* outlines the changes and collaborative partnerships required to embed sustainability into Council operations and projects to ensure the City of Port Phillip has a sustainable future. Consistent with that strategy, the site planning incorporates adaptation to climate change risk and water sensitive urban design.
- 8.5 It also measures the proposed improvement to the permeable surface and the tree coverage ratios.
- 8.6 Efforts to improve the vegetation coverage (and quality) of the site aligns with *Greening Port Phillip – An Urban Forest Approach 2010*, that promotes a healthy and diverse urban forest to enhance amenity and support environmental (as well as economic, cultural and social) sustainability.
- 8.7 Contamination investigations undertaken are consistent with Council's *Soil Contamination Management Policy 2004*.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 9.1 Creating a long-term plan for the Elwood Foreshore will support:
- local amenity;
 - asset performance (including compliance and risk mitigation); and
 - capacity to accommodate City growth.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

- 10.1 Providing a long-term vision for the Elwood Foreshore precinct will deliver upon Council's strategic directions, including:
- a safe and active community with strong social connections;
 - our streets and places are designed for people;
 - a greener, cooler and more liveable City;
 - a city that is adapting and resilient to climate change; and
 - a city of diverse and distinctive neighbourhoods and places.
- 10.2 Council's *Foreshore Management Plan 2012* guides how to protect, maintain and manage the City's coastline. It provides strategic directions to address unsustainable impacts on the Port Phillip coast and community. The long term planning for Elwood foreshore helps address the challenges and action items identified within that document.
- 10.3 Council's *Access and Inclusion Plan 2019-2021* commits to improve the equitable participation and inclusion for people with disability within the community. In planning for the future of Elwood Foreshore, we are considering opportunities to improve the access performance of Elwood foreshore – for instance with buildings and spaces the comply with the *Disability Discrimination Act (Cth) 1992*, and by incorporating universal design.
- 10.4 The initiative also has potential to support Council's *Sport and Recreation Strategy 2015-24*, in encouraging further participation in active and passive recreation, helping the City respond to changes in sport and recreation participation trends, and aiding investment in the place and its infrastructure.



- 10.5 Consistent with the recent consultation feedback for Council's draft Public Space Strategy, the consultation undertaken specifically to inform the Plan suggests that Elwood foreshore is culturally significant to the Yalukit Willam clan of the Boon Wurrung.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

11.1 TIMELINE

- 11.1.1 The underlying initiative is one that spans multiple years – the staging of which is schematically represented in the diagram included on the project web page:
<https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/q2jjqvjj/project-staging-for-hys.pdf>.
- 11.1.2 We are currently at the stage of “bringing together” the various inputs to form up a preliminary siting plan.
- 11.1.3 Each stage will have an associated consultation process.

11.2 COMMUNICATION

- 11.2.1 The Elwood foreshore is an important and valued part of our City.
- 11.2.2 City of Port Phillip is working to ensure that it remains a high-quality public and natural place, and meets contemporary expectations, standards and needs.

12. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST

- 12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any direct or indirect interest in the matter.

TRIM FILE NO: 20/01/329

ATTACHMENTS

1. "Ideas board" of question 5 responses
2. Survey responses, questions 1 2 3 5, (redacted)