COMMUNITY CONSULTATION REPORT: DUNSTAN RESERVE STORMWATER HAVESTING SYSTEM FEBURARY 2022

1. Executive summary

This report provides overview of the community engagement that was undertaken as part of the proposed Dunstan Reserve Stormwater Harvesting System (SWHS). Dunstan Reserve SWHS is a project prioritised for delivery in the Integrated Water Management 5-year Action Plan 2020/21-24/25 (Action Plan), subject to external funding from Victorian State Government.

Council endorsed the integrated Water Management (IWM) Strategy 2040 (IWM Strategy) and associated Action Plan in August 2020. Delivery of the IWM Strategy and the Action Plan includes the construction of large-scale stormwater harvesting systems (SWHS) throughout Moreland to deliver on the commitment to become a water sensitive city.

A concept design was developed, and community consultation sought between 13 January 2022 and 10 February 2022. Contributions made by the community will inform changes prior to the detailed design. In total, 55 responses were received via Conversations Moreland, approximately 40 people attended in person consultation and 3 emails were received.

In summary, majority of the feedback from the community was positive of the proposed design (over 66%). The remining feedback was a combination of concerns and requests. The main concerns related to, how construction works will impact the use of the park, how the raingarden will be maintained, and if the raingarden will be muddy, attract mosquitos and pose a safety risk to children. Moreover, requests from the community related to, upgrading the existing shelter adjacent the proposed raingarden, educational signage and a public toilet.

Below are the recommendations made following community consultation:

- Develop a construction management plan that specifies how the existing infrastructure, which includes the footpath (main entry to the park), gym, trees and seating, will be managed during construction. The construction management plan should include, but should not be limited to, temporary paths and seating, tree protection zones and alternative access routes.
- Develop a maintenance plan which covers, but is not limited to, schedule and scope
 of maintenance works, budget and expected asset lifecycle (i.e. when it will need to be
 replaced).
- Include educational signage (subject to budget) that provides information on:
 - o what the raingarden is constructed of (i.e., sandy not muddy)
 - o how the water is filtered (i.e., through plants and UV, not chemicals)
 - o how the raingarden will function (i.e., water will filter through into the rainwater tank below, no ponding).
- Adjust the shape of raingarden slightly to better provide maintenance vehicles with access to the community garden and the park.
- Advise relevant units in Council on the renewal of the shelter and discuss budgeting.

2. Policy Context

The Dustan Reserve raingarden and stormwater harvesting system project supports the following outcomes of Moreland's Integrated Water Management (IWM) Action Plan:

 3.9 Deliver functional design and construction of two new stormwater harvesting projects from prioritised schemes (DeChene & McDonald Reserve, Dunstan Reserve) and complete functional concept design and business case of a further one (e.g., Jones/Allard Park).

3. Background

Community consultation for the stormwater project at Dunstan Reserve was open from the 13 January 2022 until 10 February 2022. The consultation was undertaken in line with the Local Government Act of 2020 and Council's approach to consultation set out in the <u>Community Engagement Policy 2020</u>. This approach included a Community Engagement Plan (D22/8276), 4 weeks of community engagement, and exhibiting draft documents for a minimum of 10 days to allow for input that informed the detail documents.

The project was previously identified as a strategic project due to:

- The catchment area and opportunity for road stormwater treatment.
- Existing infrastructure and topography, such as drainage network and proximity to the Moonee Ponds Creek.
- Opportunity for water reuse at Dunstan Reserve.

As a result, the consultation with community focused on design features such park access, raingarden shape, and improve amenity around the raingarden rather than if the project should be undertaken. Community were informed what elements of the project where non-negotiable and the reasons above given. Once risks and stakeholders were identified, Council engaged with community members through, letter drop, posters and invited to provide feedback through conversations Moreland, direct emails and at the pop-up session on site.

Further detail of the different of the different engagement methods is below:

3.1 Conversations Moreland Website

"Conversations Moreland" is an online community engagement platform maintained by Moreland City Council (Council). The community was invited to provide feedback through a survey, 55 responses were received.

3.2 Drop off letters

Council sent 2,360 letters to residents who lived within a 500-meter radius of the project site. The letter included a copy of the concept plan, information about the benefits of the system, details of the 'pop-up' in-person sessions and contact details (email and phone number) of a Council representative. Notification was also sent to Brunswick Sports Club, the West Brunswick Community Garden & Food Forest and Moreland Community Child Care Centre (Dunstan Reserve).

3.3 Installation of posters on site

Posters were installed at Dunstan and Johns Reserve. Posters provided a copy of the concept plan, details of the 'pop-up' in-person sessions and contact details of a Council representative.

3.4 Email

Several community members contributed detailed feedback on a range of subjects via email found on the 'Contact Us' website page.

3.5 Pop-up session

Council staff facilitated two in person 'pop-up' sessions. These were held near the proposed raingarden at Dunstan Reserve on Thursday 3rd and Sunday 6th of February. Feedback was collected from people who attended, this data was later collated and included in Section 4 of this report. In total, 40 people attended the in-person sessions.

3.6 Internal consultation

The projects team has undergone extensive consultation with stakeholders within Council including, Open Space, Maintenance, Arborists, Sports and Recreation, Street Cleansing.

4. Summary of Responses

4.1 Contributions via Conversations Moreland Website

Performance Summary

The full dataset is provided in the Appendix 1.

The Conversations Moreland Website had 500 views and 55 contributions. The results of the survey are summarised below. In the following sections, numbers in brackets refer to the number of respondents.

How the space is used by the respondents

- Run or walk in the area (34)
- Walk a dog in the area (22)
- Use the gym equipment (14)
- Use the playground with children (15)
- Use the community garden (15)
- Sit/read in the park (16)
- Play or watch sports (1)
- Picnic and meet with friends (17)

How the proposed plans are rated (out of 5)

In total 55 respondents provided a rating out of 5 for the plans (1 being the lowest possible rating and 5 being the highest possible score) (Figure 2).

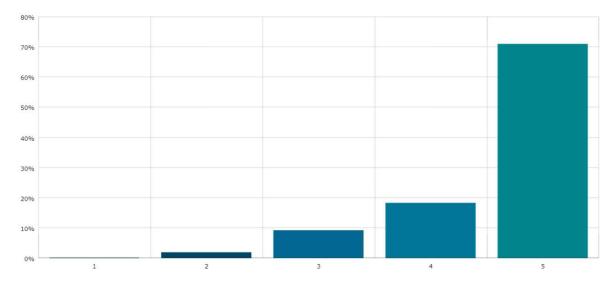


Figure 1: How respondents rated the plan out of 5

Figure 2 shows the percentage of respondents who provided each rating. The issues raised by the 6 people that gave 3 stars or less were:

- The raingarden would create a muddy area that attracts mosquitos,
- a lack of detail in the proposed plans, and
- prioritization of this project over others.

What respondents liked about the proposed plans

- The location and shape of the proposed raingarden (38)
- The dry creek bed (vegetated swale) on the north part of reserve (44)
- The new footpath and seating areas around the raingarden (43)
- The integration of the existing shelter overlooking the raingarden (34)
- Free text reasons provided by respondents why they liked the proposed plans:
 - o "More plants to the local area" (1)
 - "Collecting stormwater, saving drinking water, reducing water pollution, bring the creek back and great to see the old creek coming back in a way" (3)
 - "Educational opportunities the raingarden offers, to raise awareness about stormwater issues" (1)

The sentiment of the respondents, including issues raised

Respondents provided 72 contributions, broken down into:

- 51 positive
- 10 neutral
- 1 mixed
- 0 negative
- 2 undetermined

The most frequent contributions are listed below summaries in the categories of positive,

concerns, and requests:

Positive (66% of responses)

- 29% provided general support and praise for the project (21)
- 26% feel positively about the water saving and reuse / stormwater resource / project sustainability (19)
- 10.5% feel positively about urban ecology / indigenous planting / habitat / natural beauty / improved amenity (7)
- 1.5% feels positive about child play and education (1)

Concerns (20% of responses)

- 7% concern about works impacting use of park: existing trees / footpath / gym (5)
- 4% concern about maintenance (3)
- 3% concern about mud, mosquitos and dogs getting into the proposed raingarden (2)
- 3% concern about safety of children (2)
- 3% concern about synthetic grass (Hoskin reserve referenced) (2)
- 1.5% do not think project is a priority (1)

Requests (11% of responses)

- 5.5% request for a public toilet (4) (outside of project scope)
- 4% request for upgraded seating / shelter (3) (outside project scope)
- 1.5% request for educational signage (1) (within project scope)

4.2 Contributions made during in-person consultation sessions

There were 40 attendees across the two 'pop-up' in-person sessions. All attendees were supportive of the project and encouraged Council to continue to undertake similar projects. While supportive, some attendees raised concerns around how the project would impact how they use the Reserve.

Suggestions within the project scope:

- Selection of a site name as early as possible. Suggestions focused on the indigenous name of Melville Creek.
- Planting indigenous plants
- Plant identification signage, educational signage with QR code

Concerns:

- Noise from the pumps (Council response: the pump shed will be well-insulated)
- Maintenance of raingarden (Council response: a maintenance plan will be implemented)
- Maintenance and renewal of the shelter (pergola) (Council response: this will be investigated with Council's Open Space team. If this is feasible and sufficient budget is available, some refurbishment works can be carried out)

 Breeding of mosquitoes in the proposed raingarden (Council response: Raingardens are designed to dry out completely 6 hours after a storm event. This drying will kill mosquito larvae, which require multiple days in standing water to survive)

Suggestions outside the project scope:

- Access to toilet (5 people commented on this)
- Lack of maintenance of Moreland parklands and reserves over the last few years.
 This concern was noted and will be flagged to the Open Space Maintenance team.
 It was suggested to the community members that COVID19 has had an impact on the usual scheduled maintenance of parks and reserves across Moreland.
- Delays in completing infrastructure works associated with recreational spaces /
 parks carried out by Council. As above, this was noted and will be flagged to
 Open Space Maintenance team. It was also suggested to the concerned
 community members that COVID19 has had a disruptive impact on construction
 timelines.
- Flooding issues at 6 Menzies court. This was noted and has been flagged with Council Drainage Engineers.



Figure 2- Meeting with residents on Thursday 6th February

4.3 Contributions via direct email

In total 3 emails were received. All the emails were supportive and encouraged Council to continue with its sustainable approach toward managing our water.

- a. "I am pleased to hear that FINALLY Moreland Council will be recycling water runoff. I was hoping that tanks would have been put in under the second soccer pitch when it was built years ago. This was an opportunity missed. I support the collection and filtering of runoff water and the use of it for the reserve."
- b. "I fully support the idea of water harvesting at Duncan Reserve. Years ago I proposed the idea of storm water collection tanks below the streets between Shore Reserve & Moreland Road with a Storage facility at the reserve-works like a hydro electric system; and an electric pump system to operate off peak to utilise electricity circulating in the grid; this to be a model for all undulating areas in urban areas. Keep working on positive reduced wastage proposals in this driest inhabited continent."
- c. "I am all for saving water. Water is such a precious resource, lets not waste any of it and preserve it for other things like the community gardens at Dunstan Reserve."

5. Changes to draft plan following consultation

- Shape of the raingarden: based on internal consultation, the shape of raingarden will be changed slightly to better provide maintenance vehicles with access to the community garden and the park.
- Integration of existing shelter overlooking raingarden: subject to budget and feasibility the existing shelter will be retained and upgraded, and additional seating will be provided.

6. Recommendations

Following community consultation, it is recommended that Council:

- Develop a construction management plan that specifies how the existing infrastructure, which includes the footpath (main entry to the park), gym, trees and seating, will be managed during construction. The construction management plan should include, but should not be limited to, temporary paths and seating, tree protection zones and alternative access routes.
- Develop a maintenance plan which covers, but is not limited to, schedule and scope of maintenance works, budget and expected asset lifecycle (i.e. when it will need to be replaced).
- 3) Include educational signage (subject to budget) that provides information on:
 - what the raingarden is constructed of (i.e., sandy not muddy)
 - o how the water is filtered (i.e., through plants and UV, not chemicals)
 - o how the raingarden will function (i.e., water will filter through into the rainwater tank below, no ponding).

- 4) Adjust the shape of raingarden slightly to better provide maintenance vehicles with access to the community garden and the park.
- 5) Advise relevant units in Council on the renewal of the shelter and discuss budgeting.

Additional requests by respondents, that are outside the scope of this projects but will be raises with the relevant Council units:

- Access to a public toilet: this was raised by the community both at the pop-up consultation and online. This will be discussed with Council's Community Wellbeing team.
- Maintenance of open space: the complaint focussed on Council's ability to carry out best practice maintenance of parks and nature strips, particularly with regards to mowing. This will be discussed with Council's Open Space team.
- Flooding issues: this related to the rear of 6 Menzies Court in Brunswick West. This will be raised with Council's Drainage team.
- Rectification of asphalt: Recent works by the electricity distributor Powercor have resulted in a tripping hazard along the footpath at the Lyne Grove entry to Dunstan Reserve near the proposed raingarden. This will raised with Council's Open Space team.

7. Community feedback

Following the publishing of this report, it will be made available on Moreland Council Community Engagement website for the community to review how their feedback and contributions have been considered. Residents who provided a contribution via the Conversations Moreland Website will automatically be updated when the report is added to the website. Here, they will be able to review how their feedback has been considered and impacted the project.-

8. Appendix: Data from Conversations Moreland Form – Communities response

Table 1: Comments by respondents via the Conversation Moreland Website

Score	core Can we ask why you gave it this rating?	
Positive	So much water is used for areas accessed by the football club, while young trees surrounding the park are often left without adequate water over summer. This proposal allows for wiser water management, improved habitat, biodiversity and enjoyment for all.	
Positive	More native plants will encourage more insects and birds into the park, it will save water and it will be an attractive space for walkers in the park.	
Neutral	There are many small children that frequent the park. Will it be safe for small children to play in and around the gardens?	
Positive	I love the idea of saving water, and my daughter will love exploring the rain garden.	
Positive	I believe this is a great way to reuse rain water and conserve our clean water	
Positive	It's sustainable and will add beauty and diversity. I cringe when it rains and I see the Moonee creek (drain) gushing with storm water that is not being captured or performing environmental flushes as it is concrete.	
Positive	It's brilliant. Well thought out and appreciated	
Positive	We love this park. Thank you	
Positive	No	
Positive	Great idea	
Neutral	Need a toilet in the park could use water from this project. See wastewater gardens.	
Positive	Looks like a good step forward	
Positive	1 star missing in case it will affect walking my dog in the area.	
Positive	Great to save driving water and have sustainable options for watering. A good use of the open space there.	
Positive	Long overdue work on this park	
Positive	Would love to increased use of indigenous grasses and plants.	

Score Can we ask why you gave it this rating?		
Positive	Love anything that helps improve the park and recycle water at the same time	
Neutral	I just hope there is no future plans to astroturf the soccer pitch after all this work, like what happened at Hosken Reserve. If there are future plans, or perhaps even a possibility, it might be good to outline how a future project like that may impact this new water reclamation project.	
Positive	It will be something interesting for my child to see and explore. Also would be happy to see more biodiversity in the area and stormwater recovery / water reuse	
Positive	Nil	
Positive	5 stars for eco friendly planning	
Positive	I like that we would be able to use reclaimed water in the community garden and food forest, and I hope it would help to attract native animals to the area. I like the naturalistic layout of the swale	
Positive	Great initiative to make better use of the water resource.	
Positive	We strongly agree with the plan and hope it can be implemented quickly.	
Positive	No we think it all looks really good.	
Positive	For its water conservation and increased biodiversity of the Reserve which is needed	
Neutral	Could we please have the Food Forest's area with new seating (under grapevine pergola) and the pergola next to the soccer grounds re built please.	
Positive	I love it. Sustainable, environmental planning. We need more of it!!	
Positive	Great initiative for sustainability that integrates into community's lives. Low inconvenience but high education and awareness gains	
Mixed	Will there be any risk to the existing big trees on the northern side of park? They are extremely beautiful and provide lots of bird habitat throughout the year. Also it's the best shaded recreation zone for dogs so I'd hope there's still room for dog exercise beside the new creek bed. Hope it doesn't restrict walkers to the path strictly. Changing the groundwater in that area could affect those old trees?	
Neutral	I hope that the plan won't impact the outdoor gym which is a fantastic addition and regularly used by the community.	

Score Can we ask why you gave it this rating?		
Positive	I love my local park. I love the Moonee Ponds Creek and the benefits this will have for community and the environment. This proposal is something I was hoping for and raised in redevelopment of Dunstan Reserve regarding feedback. Thank you!	
Neutral	"The existing shelter needs improved shading & seating. The seats are not comfortable.	
Positive		
Positive	Will that ugly semi circle wooden bench be removed? It's diagonal opposite the shelter."	
Positive	Im supporting all the changes that would improve ,create greener spaces and utilised stormwater .	
	Because this is overdue and we're wasting water by not doing this. I'd like to see more of these projects	
Positive	I love the idea of naturally filtering & reusing rainwater, especially to save water on irrigation	
Neutral	My only concern is with construction—how much of the existing path will it obstruct, and for how long? The path on the opposite corner has been blocked for well over six months as the playground/barbecue area is renovated and it'd be nice to see Dunstan Reserve without construction for a little bit, or at least for the entire path to be accessible.	
Positive	I would love more plants and trees in the local area. This looks like a lovely place to come and sit or walk by.	
Neutral	Water sits in the current location making it muddy during winter. How will the project improve this?How will the area look beautiful instead of a ugly wet marsh? Will it attract mosquitoes and smelly bacteria? I don't want my dog to go near it.	
Neutral	Unsure about the environment that will be created by the excess water. Will it create a mud bog, which will mean our dog will end up wet and muddy during the cooler months?	
Neutral	Nothing in the plan about equitable access to the facilities, use of chemicals, nor community upkeep & maintenance.	
Neutral	Neutral "How will the collected water be ""disinfected"" hopefully not with FLUORIDE, FFS?	
Positive	Who will maintain the grounds hand-weeding, or spray with POISON, FFS?"	
Positive	It's such a logical solution	
Positive	I value the synergies of biodiversity, stormwater reduction and reduced mains irrigation of the landscaping in the park.	
Positive	Please do in depth assessments of how the infrastructure will function in 10/20/40years and design for resilience.	

Table 2: Issues raised by respondents via Conversations Moreland Website

No.	Would you like to raise any issues with regard to the proposed plan?	Comments from Council
1	There are many small children that frequent the park. Will it be safe for small children to play in and around the gardens?	We will design based on safety criteria and making sure it is safe for adults, children and animals. Anywhere that presents a possible tripping or falling hazard to pedestrians will be managed appropriately through protections. It should be noted that the raingarden will not hold water (like a pond) except for in a heavy rain event.
2	It's brilliant. Well thought out and appreciated	No concerns raised
3	No	No concerns raised
4	Need a toilet in the park could use water from this project. See wastewater gardens.	Toilet facilities are not in the scope of this project, but the request has been passed on to the relevant Council team.
5	Would love to increased use of indigenous grasses and plants.	Council will be planting indigenous species.
6	I just hope there is no future plans to astroturf the soccer pitch after all this work, like what happened at Hosken Reserve. If there are future plans, or perhaps even a possibility, it might be good to outline how a future project like that may impact this new water reclamation project.	There are no plans for synthetic grass to be used in this park.
7	Nil	No concerns raised
8	No we think it all looks really good.	No concerns raised
9	Could we please have the Food Forest's area with new seating (under grapevine pergola) and the pergola next to the soccer grounds re built please.	Upgrade of seating around the raingarden will be determined by budget, Council is exploring options for this.

10	Will there be any risk to the existing big trees on the northern side of park? They are extremely beautiful and provide lots of bird habitat throughout the year. Also it's the best shaded recreation zone for dogs so I'd hope there's still room for dog exercise beside the new creek bed. Hope it doesn't restrict walkers to the path strictly. Changing the groundwater in that area could affect those old trees?	We will design based on the existing depression line and minimise the excavation. This plan has been developed with consultation with an arborist and ecologists. In order to provide new maintenance paths some tress may be required to be cut back, however not removed. A new path will be provided for walkers and the spaces will be free for dogs to move around as it is a dry creek bed.
11	I hope that the plan won't impact the outdoor gym which is a fantastic addition and regularly used by the community.	The plan does not have any impact on the outdoor gym.
12	The existing shelter needs improved shading & seating. The seats are not comfortable. Will that ugly semi circle wooden bench be removed? It's diagonal opposite the shelter.	The existing shelter is outside the scope of this project. However, we will raise this with the relevant unit in Council and consider whether additional works are feasible.
13	My only concern is with construction—how much of the existing path will it obstruct, and for how long? The path on the opposite corner has been blocked for well over six months as the playground/barbecue area is renovated and it'd be nice to see Dunstan Reserve without construction for a little bit, or at least for the entire path to be accessible.	We will develop a construction management plan that specifies how the existing infrastructure including, the footpath (main entry to the park), the gym, trees and seating will be managed during construction. Including but not limited to, temporary paths and seat, tree protection zones and alternative access routes.

14	Water sits in the current location making it muddy during winter. How will the project improve this? How will the area look beautiful instead of a ugly wet marsh? Will it attract mosquitoes and smelly bacteria? I don't want my dog to go near it. Not keen on native grasses etc. They look weedy and unattractive. The current shelter us not in good shape and is uninviting. Can creeper plants be encouraged to grow over it and can the area be paved?	Raingardens are designed to dry out completely 6 hours after a storm event. This drying will kill mosquito larvae, which require multiple days in standing water to survive. The area will also be sandy rather than muddy. We aim to provide a mix of native plants to the park and improve the shelter.
15	Unsure about the environment that will be created by the excess water. Will it create a mud bog, which will mean our dog will end up wet and muddy during the cooler months? Integration with existing shelter is good, but it could do with a refresh.	The raingarden soil is mostly sand, which filters the rainwater. As a result, any water will only sit in the raingarden for a few hours. The area will not be muddy.
16	How will the collected water be "disinfected" hopefully not with FLUORIDE, FFS? Who will maintain the grounds hand-weeding, or spray with POISON, FFS?	Water will be cleaned using a combination of plants, sand filter and ultraviolet treatment. No chemicals, including fluoride, will be applied to the water. We work closely with Council's Maintenance team to minimise the use of chemicals around raingardens.
17	Please do in depth assessments of how the infrastructure will function in 10/20/40years and design for resilience.	Council is currently preparing a Climate Risk Policy. In the next financial year we will prepare climate resilience assessment on key infrastructure. In the first instance this will focus on buildings, but it will be extended to cover other assets. It is more efficient to assess climate risks at the level of asset classes rather than individual assets. Raingardens are designed to improve resilience to extreme weather events.
18	How much will it cost and what disruption will it have for residents. Does paying for this stop ability to fund other council initiatives?	This project is estimated to cost approximately one million dollars. It will significantly reduce Council's spend on water for irrigation in this park. The project is supported by grant funding from State Government, thus reducing Council's costs. This project will not reduce Council's ability to fund other initiatives.

		We will do our utmost to minimise disruption at the construction stage.
19	Would be great to see those extended across Dunstan reserve (near the new playground being built) across the road at John's Reserve and Shiels Reserve to be an ecological systems wide approach.	Selection of raingarden locations depends on the ground level and the source of water. At this stage there are no plans for a second raingarden in this area.
20	No we don't.	No concerns raised
21	Please for the love of god out a public toilet in, or ensure the door at the football club is unlocked. It's ridiculous how much time and money is being spent on amenities like a gym and a playground, and now this, without there being a public toilet available. It's really inaccessible, and it's so unpredictable guessing when the door will be locked or won't. I have friends with disabilities who cannot use this park for this reason and that is just really not okay	Toilet facilities are not in the scope of this project, but the request has been passed on to the relevant Council team.
22	I'd like to understand what will be done to control mosquitos in the waterway, considering their preference for shallow vegetated habitats? I'd also like Council to consider fully fencing the park with self latching gates to further enhance the area as an off lead dog park.	Raingardens are designed to dry out completely 6 hours after a storm event. This drying will kill mosquito larvae, which require multiple days in standing water to survive. This suggestion will be passed on to the relevant Council team. However, it does raise accessibility and cost concerns.
23	The 'existing' shelter is very old, does it need to be updated? It may look very odd next to new infrastructure.	The existing shelter is outside the scope of this project. However, we will raise this with the relevant unit in Council and consider whether additional works are feasible.

24	I would like to know if council has plans to install any synthetic fields at Dunstan reserve. Previously, council has spent extensive ratepayers' funds installing a stormwater capture facility at hosken reserve and then wanted to rip up all the irrigation to install a synthetic pitch two years later. Will the same pattern be repeated at Dunstan reserve? I'm very keen to see the stormwater capture facility installed at Dunstan Reserve, but am tired of Moreland council wasting ratepayers money.	There are no plans for synthetic grass to be used in this park.
25	Congratulations on a design which achieves both environmental and passive recreation benefits	No concerns raised
26	I hope there's interpretive signage	Yes, interpretive signage will be installed as part of this project.
27	None - please go ahead. All the work you have done in Dunstable Reserve is fantastic	No concerns raised