

BRUNSWICK VELODROME PUMP TRACK PROJECT PHASE 2 ENGAGEMENT

Outcomes Report May 2023

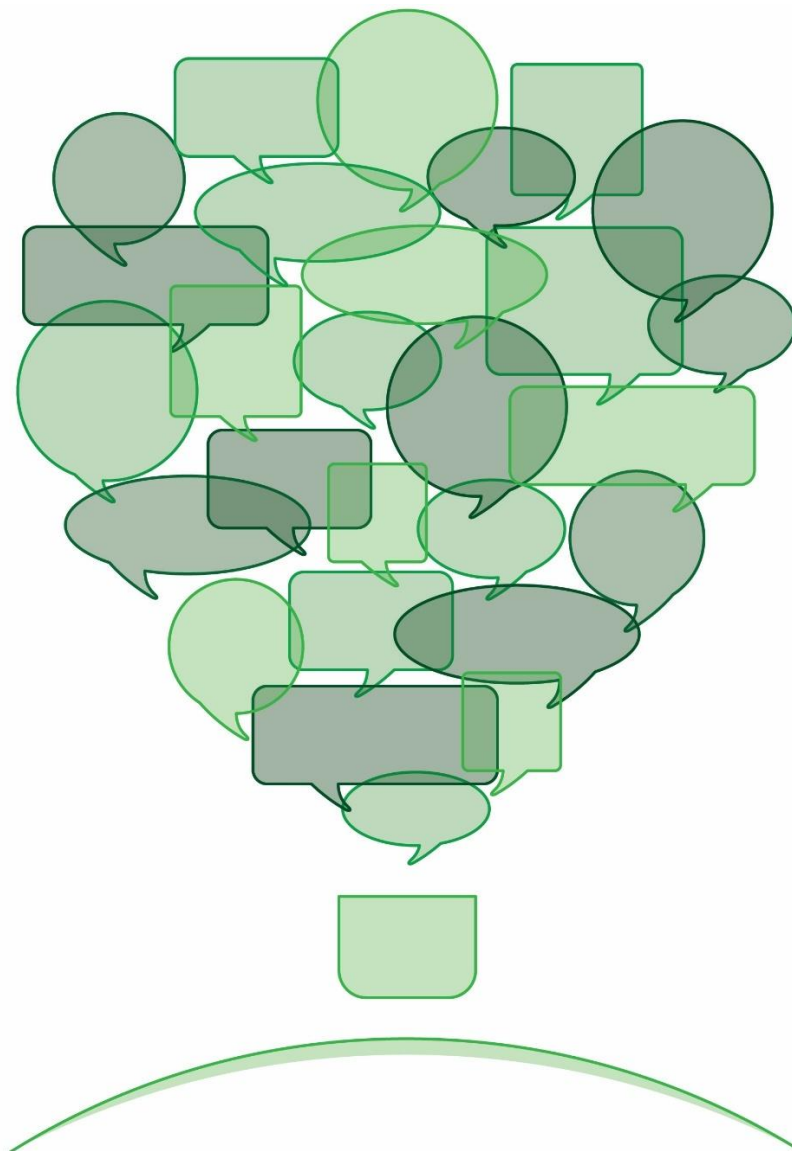


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Executive Summary

The Brunswick Cycling Club successfully received a Recreation Design Grant for the planning and design of a Pump Track within the infield of the Brunswick Velodrome on Harrison Street. A draft design has been created to provide a challenge for all skill levels and all ages, and is likely to attract users from across northern Melbourne.

The Club conducted targeted community consultation in 2021 (phase one) and Council has now conducted further, more broad engagement with the community (phase two). This second round of community consultation was held March-April 2023, requesting feedback on the draft concept plan via the online Conversations Moreland project page (91 responses), drop-in session at the velodrome (40 attendees) or via email (1 response).

Overall, there was very strong support for the draft design, the project, and for the wide appeal it will hold for all ages and skill levels.

There are several very important concerns held by local residents. There is apprehension about a rise in anti-social behaviour, particularly after dark, that such a facility will attract. This is viewed as having a negative impact on residents through the noise, rubbish left behind and feelings of safety in their neighbourhood and home. There is also great concern about the increased pressure on parking spaces with an increase in patronage of the area that the pump track will create and the inconvenience caused.

Of medium importance to participants (when compared to other themes) were some design elements such as the overall visual impact, possible lighting, noise impacts and lack of toilets on site.

Other design elements, observations about the site, and suggested additions were considered of lower importance but still worth noting. There are a number of suggestions made throughout the results that Council and the Brunswick Cycling Club could begin to work on immediately to start addressing concerns and enhancing the velodrome area.

Feedback and questions received during this consultation period indicate an excited and engaged local community who are looking forward to a pump track. Those living close by have raised legitimate concerns that should be investigated. Clear and regular communications and invitations to be involved in further planning will be welcomed.

Introduction

There is appetite in the community for the development of a world class Pump Track located in the inner northern suburbs of Melbourne and the Brunswick Cycling Club has successfully received a Recreation Design Grant for the planning and design of a Pump Track within the infield of the Brunswick Velodrome on Harrison Street.

The facility draft design has been designed around providing an attraction for families and the many groups that use the Velodrome as their training and community base. The layout provides a challenge for all skill levels and it will allow youngsters just starting out on two wheels to enjoy the course in the same environment as more experienced riders.

Brunswick Cycling Club has previously conducted engagement with some stakeholders in June 2021 (phase one) and incorporated changes to the original draft design based upon this feedback.

The second phase of engagement in March – April 2023 allowed those involved in phase one to revisit the designs and extended the engagement to a broader audience to ensure that all stakeholders had been identified and had the opportunity to get involved. The engagement consisted of an online survey via the Conversations Merri-bek project page, drop-in conversations at the Brunswick Velodrome and stakeholder check-ins via letter box drop and email.

This report summarises the feedback received and questions asked about the project, by theme. Feedback received that was outside the scope of the project has been separately passed on to the appropriate Council officers for noting and response where applicable.

Engagement Approach

This second phase of engagement was held from 9 March 2023 to 14 April 2023 to ensure the broader community had the opportunity to learn about the pump track project and proposed design, raise any concerns they may have and show their support for the project before designs are finalised and external grant funding acquired.

- Project page on Council's Conversations Merri-bek website
- letters were sent to local residents via letterbox drop in the surrounding area
- Social media posts were shared by Council and Brunswick Cycling Club to reach the Merri-bek and cycling communities
- Posters with information about the project were displayed on site at the velodrome

The purpose of the engagement was to:

- Raise awareness of the pump track project
- Seek community feedback on the project concept design
- Capture feedback and questions for the design and concerns about the impact of the project on local residents

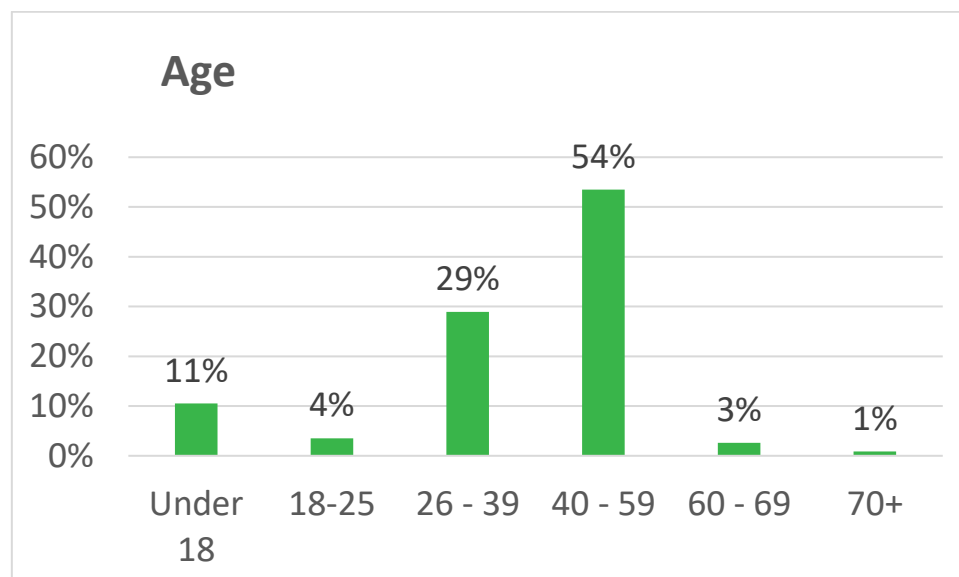
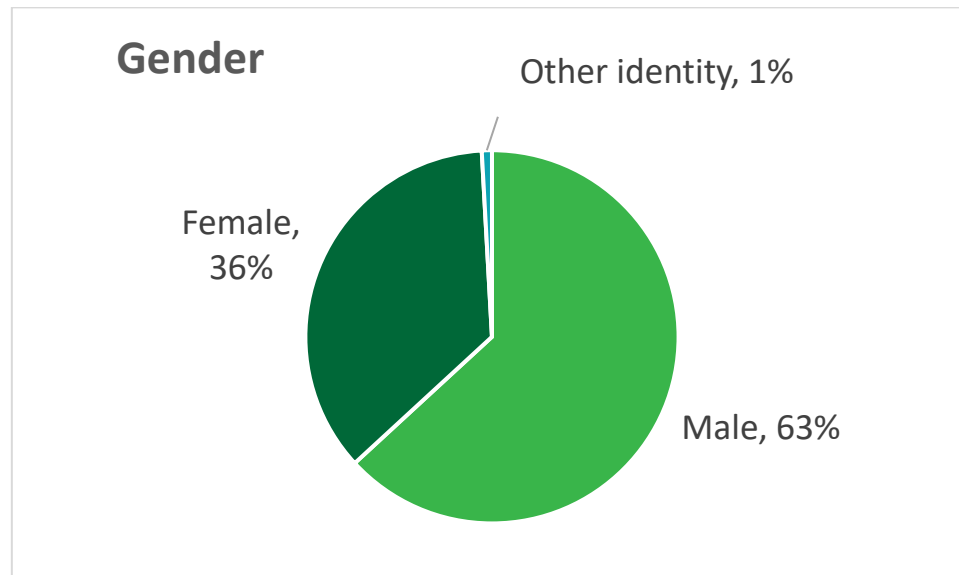
Activity	Questions Posed	Participants
Online survey	What do you like about the proposed pump track design? Would you like to see any other changes made to the draft concept design of the proposed pump track? Is there anything we haven't considered about the pump track?	91 responses
Drop-in information session	Survey questions, as above What questions do you have? What other feedback would you like to share?	24 recorded responses 40 total participants dropped-in
Written feedback (email)	Please contact us if you have questions or want to learn more about this project	1 response

The Conversations Merri-bek online project page, which hosted information, the designs and the online survey, attracted 1,109 visitors during the engagement period (9 March – 14 April 2023). Some attendees at the drop-in session at the velodrome reported discussing the project and concept plan with neighbours who had been online to have a look and were happy for their concerns to be raised by attendees on their behalf. Other attendees mentioned the intention to go online to have a look to be able to tell others about the project but not needing to comment as they were happy with the proposal.

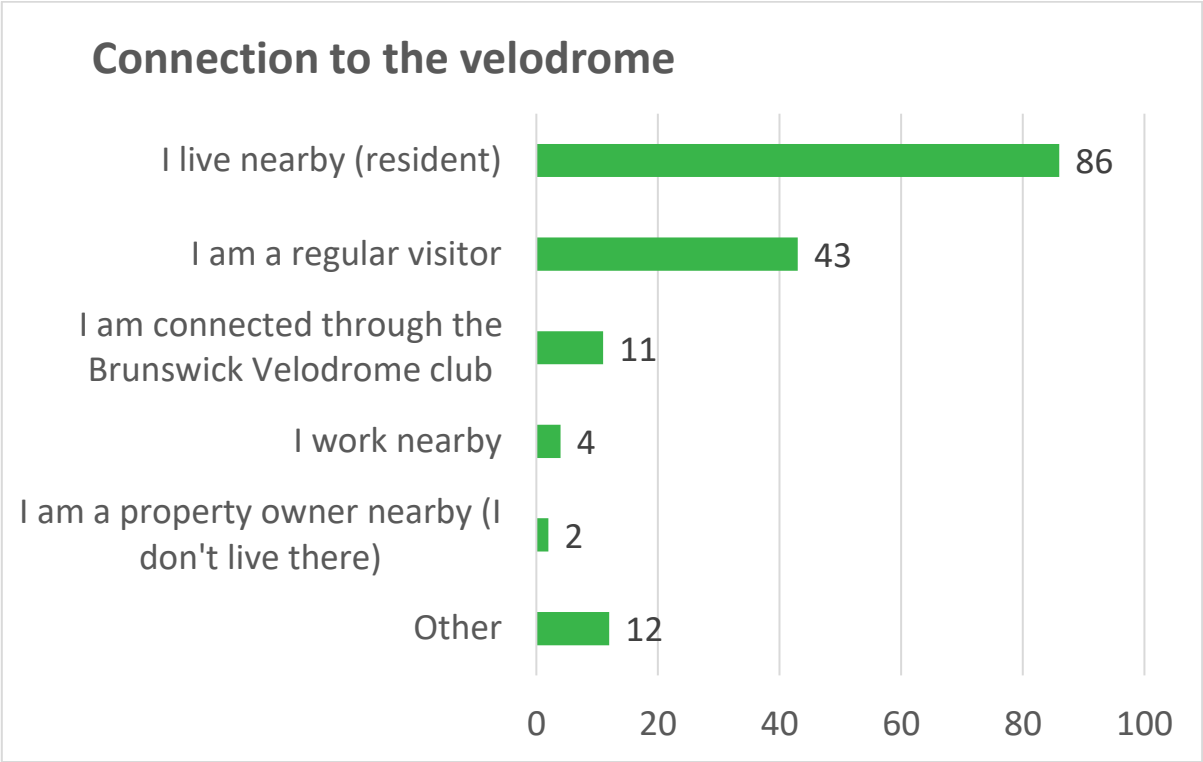
Participants

Community members completing the online survey or providing feedback at the drop-in session were asked several demographic questions to ensure the engagement was reaching a broad audience. Some drop-in session participants noted that their feedback was not only from themselves but other household or family members too, and in several cases, on behalf of other neighbours they had talked to. This is possibly the case for the survey respondents also.

There were 91 survey respondents and 23 drop-in participants who shared their demographic details.



Many community members chose more than one response for their connection to the velodrome, with living nearby the most popular option.



Engagement Outcomes

This section presents a summary of the comments and questions received from all the engagement activities, by theme.

Each theme has been given two ratings: *level of importance* and *sentiment*. These ratings have been awarded based on a combination of volume of comments received, time spent in discussion, tone and nature of comments. How *important* each theme was for the participants has been rated as high, medium or low, in comparison to the other themes raised. The *sentiment* of the comments in each theme has been rated as positive, neutral or negative.

Some drop-in participants mentioned their intention to also fill in the online survey and email Council directly, which raises the possibility of receiving the same feedback from the same person several times. This has been considered in the analysis of results and judged to be quite minor. On one or two occasions comments were received in different formats with distinctive phrasing and allowances have been made for this in the ratings.

Level of Importance	Theme	Sentiment
High	Support for the concept plan/project	Positive
High	Anti-social behaviour	Negative
High	Access in the neighbourhood	Negative
Medium	Design concerns 1	Negative
Low	Design concerns 2	Neutral
Low	Other points raised	Neutral

Support for the concept plan/project

Importance: High

Sentiment: Positive

Overall, the project has a very high level of support from the community. As well as general support for the draft concept plan overall, community members identified particular elements that they were happy with:

Design

- Different levels of ability can use it, in different sections
- Shade and seating provided, drinking taps
- Complements the velodrome
- Great use of space
- Inclusion of mountain bikes (MTB)

Audience

- It encourages all ages to be outdoors and active
- Lots of people will use it
- Can be a family activity
- Great way to get riders progressing and taking their riding to another level

*More activities for kids and young people. Use of existing space in the area.
Inclusive sport. Connected to a fantastic cycling club.*

I really like the mix of beginner to expert levels, so everyone can use it.

Anti-social behaviour

Importance: High

Sentiment: Negative

Possibly the most concerning aspect of the pump track proposal for local residents is the risk of the project attracting anti-social behaviour in the area. The neighbourhood is currently considered by the residents to be quiet and peaceful, but there were several experiences during the Covid-19 lockdowns of anti-social behaviour at the velodrome at night which was disturbing and not considered to have been dealt with effectively by authorities. There is real concern in the neighbourhood that such instances will increase with the building of the pump track. The residents are seeking reassurance that this will not occur by requesting that plans for prevention be developed before it occurs.

Unwelcome behaviours

- Drinking
- Loud noise late at night - particularly because of the amphitheatre style the noise will carry
- Loitering in the dark – feeling unsafe
- Leaving behind rubbish and waste

Management of issue when it occurs

- What will Council do to prevent it?
- Police don't respond
- Restrict hours of use/access

The velodrome as it is acts as a magnet for anti-social behaviour and disruption at all hours of the night. Broken glass, rubbish and discarded drug paraphernalia are evidence of how the velodrome is used outside of club events.

Access in the neighbourhood

Importance: High

Sentiment: Negative

While many of the local residents support the project, they believe that the number of visitors and users of the velodrome area will increase significantly. There is great concern for the negative impacts of this, and they are looking to have solutions developed before the pump track is constructed. In particular, they are concerned with:

Parking

- Already significant challenges in finding parking in the area, especially on Cycling Club days

- Do not want to see parkland taken up by car parking
- Residents cannot park close to home on some days anyway, this will make it much worse
- Existing issues with illegal parking which blocks access, this likely to increase

Traffic

- Will create a busier Merri Creek path, increasing the likelihood of accidents
- Need for providing more separated cycle paths more broadly in the area as a way of users getting to and from the site

I do not care about the track, but the parking around Nunan, and Galada way. (And part of Harrison) The parking is very limited already, is a no thru road so when there is already an event it is hard to park and hard to get out of here - visitors are often annoyed cos of this. Make limited parking around and resident/visitor permits. Attendees can park on Harrison Street near the church (but they never do).

Design concerns 1

*Importance: **Medium***

*Sentiment: **Negative***

The design in general has strong support, but there are several aspects that caused questions and concern amongst many engagement participants. These concerns are both about the impact of the design on local residents and upon users.

- Confusion over whether there is lighting proposed, when it would be in use and its impact on local residents
- Unhappiness with the potential visual impact on local residents, especially in use of material colours, possible glare, and what the shipping containers will look like
- Generation of noise. Would the sound be better if pump track at other end of velodrome and can there be anything done design wise to reduce the noise?
- Need for toilets as the park ones are pretty far away when you have several young children to wrangle

Aesthetics - the pump track appears to be full of bright colours and manufactured materials and there are no plans for including any plants. This doesn't match that current natural aesthetic that is part of the appeal of living in this area and so close to Merri Creek

Noise! This area is deathly silent at night - this is a major benefit of the area. As such, any person hanging out at the velodrome can be heard in bedrooms.

Design concerns 2

Importance: Low

Sentiment: Neutral

Other design queries that were raised during the engagement via the survey and conversations are noted below.

Safety

- Safety crossing the velodrome track
- Possibility of really young kids getting in the way of other riders on the track
- Dogs off leash not under control and get in the way
- Any sandpits can end up blowing on velodrome track
- Need plenty of grass runoff for velodrome riders

Appearance

- Bridge to cross the track looks too domineering

Added features

- Adding skatepark facilities, or at least using surface materials that will accommodate skateboards and roller skates, would be great
- Include a bike fix station
- Vending machines
- more vegetation added

Other points raised

Importance: Low

Sentiment: Neutral

There were several additional points raised by the community that are worth noting.

- Drainage is currently not good in centre of velodrome, will need addressing
- Please ensure dog off leash access still possible
- Would like to see creation of rules and expectations for use and behaviour
- Could the hours of use be restricted?
- What will be the construction impact on residents?