



Merri-bek
City Council

Richards Reserve

New Public Space Area

Consultation summary report

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Open Space Design & Development Unit

October 2022



Richards Reserve – New Public Space Area

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A new public space area at Richards Reserve is proposed in 2022-2023. This is part of a program of works that will make Richards Reserve overall a more engaging and safer space for the community.

1. Background

Following the completion of the enclosed dog park at Richards Reserve in late 2018, Council resolved (NOM 20/19) to request for public toilets and lighting of the dog park to be considered during consultation on the 2020 financial year capital works budget. Council resolved to undertake a review of Richards Reserve and prepare a minor works development plan for future budget consideration (D20/51750). This work was supported by the Moreland Open Space Strategy (page 71 & 96) Goal 2: Strategy 4 - *Improve the quality of existing open space: Evaluate Richards Reserve and prepare an open space redevelopment plan to attract residents for active recreation, and enhance amenity.*

The major works proposed in the reserve include the provision of a public toilet, a potential new playspace, and a social picnic area (gathering space). These elements are the subject of the current community engagement process. Council also funded a refurbishment of the soccer club pavilion and facilities in 2019. Additional minor works were identified through the site review by Open Space Design & Development, Recreation, Events and the Capital Works team including path and maintenance access, events infrastructure, safety improvements, irrigation and car park upgrades. The 2020/21 Council budget process endorsed the proposed park works in Richards Reserve.

In 2021, Council were successful in receiving \$2 million in grant funding from the State Government for open space activation across 8 Council parks including Richards Reserve. Some of this funding was used at Richards Reserve to fund the construction of a circuit path, exercise stations and drinking fountains.

In 2021, Council's Open Space Design & Development unit commenced a community engagement process which included onsite consultation and meetings with local stakeholders at Richards Reserve and was supported by online engagement through the Conversations web platform. To date this has included an initial consultation phase, draft concept plan consultation on the public toilet, social picnic area and play space area and voting on preferred elements in the reserve overall.

Stakeholders engaged include:

- Local community residents within 1km of this reserve
- Local events and sports clubs who use Richards Reserve
- Council departments who have an involvement in Richards Reserve open space including Open Space Maintenance, Recreation Services, Festivals/Events, Street Cleansing/Programmed Services.

Council's Open Space Design and Development unit have conducted three consultation phases with the local community for Richards Reserve playspace/gathering space upgrade, these being:

- **Stage 1 - Initial Consultation (24 June – 23 July 2021)**

Council have asked the community what they would like to see in the upgrade of the playspace/gathering space which can be used as input in developing the draft concept plan.

- **Stage 2 - Draft Concept Plan Consultation (25 February – 25 March 2022)**

Using results from the initial consultation, Council developed a draft concept plan based on the community's initial input.¹

¹ In between the initial consultation and draft concept plan consultation, Council designed the Richards Reserve car park upgrade (now constructed).

- **Stage 3 - Voting on Preferred Elements (8 April – 6 May 2022)**

As responses to the Draft Concept were varied, Council asked the local community to vote for their preferred improvements in Richards Reserve, in order of importance. That way the highest votes would be used to prioritise the next stage of works. A site meeting of 28 April was also held for locals to discuss their thoughts directly with officers.

- **Stage 4 - Revised Concept Plan Consultation (5 September - 7 October 2022)**

The revised concept plan reflects changes to the draft concept plan, incorporating further feedback where possible. Thereafter a Final Concept Plan is provided, reflecting any changes on the Revised Concept Plan. The design team then proceed to detailed design.

To date, Council has conducted an initial consultation, draft concept plan consultation, voting on preferred elements, a revised concept plan and final concept plan. This report covers a summary of findings to date and next steps. For both the initial and draft consultations, postcards were distributed to households within 1km of Richards Reserve, advising residents that they can provide feedback on Council's website, <https://conversations.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/richards-reserve-playspace>.

For the voting exercise, details were provided on Conversations Merri-Bek webpage, respondents from the Draft Concept Plan and sports clubs in Richards Reserve were notified along with a site meeting. For the revised plan consultation details were provided on Conversations Merri-Bek webpage. For all consultation stages posters were also displayed at the proposed works area.

2. Initial Consultation Feedback Findings

Council received 25 feedback responses to the initial consultation, topics broken down into the following subjects:

Perceived safety and lighting

There were some concerns about the lack of passive surveillance within Richards Reserve. The overall aim of the project is to increase activation and improve the amenity of the space to encourage greater and more diverse use of the park. The playspace and gathering space locations are proposed to be positioned adjacent to Charles Street in a very visible location, which it is hoped will address some of these concerns. Some comments have mentioned the need for additional lighting, so the area feels more secure. The project includes a review of lighting in Richards Reserve.

Adventurous play and scooter circuit

Many comments have emphasised the need for some form of fun and engaging play with opportunities for nature-based play with logs and rocks and a space for teenagers to hang out. There was plenty of interest in having a small scooter circuit or similar. The majority have asked for a space to satisfy children older than 10 years (teenagers), including rope play. A few have mentioned that there should be connecting shared trails from Charles Street through to the laneways. One respondent asked for good quality lawn area to be kept to play on.

Site suitability

A few questioned whether Richards Reserve is the right park for a playspace.

Shade and amenities

For the gathering space a few have mentioned a need for sufficient seating with shade. Two respondents asked for a BBQ.

3. Draft Concept Plan Consultation Feedback Findings

The draft concept plan was developed in response to the initial consultation. Council received 14 responses to the draft concept plan.

Responses on the draft concept plan were mixed, with follow key topics raised:

Adventurous play and scooter circuit

Some are very keen on inclusion of a pump track as shown on the Draft Concept Plan and feel that it will help activate the space as well as provide a unique offering not found in Merri-Bek municipality. This element was also requested by a few residents in the initial consultation.

Fencing

One respondent asked for fencing around the whole playspace to protect children from dogs off-leash. As dogs are only allowed off-leash within the fenced dog park at Richards Reserve and not within other areas or within 15m of the playspace, this conflict should not occur. Garden beds have also been included in the design to help act as a buffer around the playspace and pump track.

Tree canopy shade

Many have commented on the need for increased tree canopy cover which the Draft Concept Plan tries to reflect. (Note that some additional proposed trees had to be removed from this plan in order to ensure that the reserve can continue hosting local events in the park).

Site suitability and safety concerns

A few others highlight that this reserve is in an industrial area and question whether it is the right location for such elements. There are some concerns over the need for surveillance. One of the aims of this project is to encourage a diverse range of park users at different times of the day and week to meet the needs of local workers and residents and overall make the whole precinct safer.

Other site suitability comments focused on whether proposed elements are better suited at Hosken Reserve. There are separate existing plans and funding for park improvements at Hosken Reserve².

Activation

Dog parks often attract users from a large catchment who typically drive to the dog park early in the morning, late in the day and on weekends. The industrial setting is complementary to the dog park especially with reducing conflict over car park availability, which can occur in residential areas.

Lighting

The need for lighting across the reserve and in the dog park has also been highlighted as necessary. We agree that improved lighting in the reserve is important. To date a provisional lighting design for the dog park has been developed and will be presented as one of the options for ranking by the community.

Cycling safety

A few comments highlighted the need for improved pedestrian/cyclist provision and road safety. We agree that these are important issues though they extend beyond the scope for a playspace/gathering space project. These comments have been shared with Council's Transport and Engineering teams for consideration as a separate project.

Park plan

One respondent asked to see the masterplan for Richards Reserve and how the playspace/gathering space fits within it. There is no formal masterplan for Richards Reserve. The Richards Reserve Development Plan is a basic spatial tool used to support minor works and upgrades to the space in line with the Open Space Strategy. The improvements in Richards Reserve have responded to safety considerations with existing conditions.

It also assists with internal discussions within various council departments to identify areas needing improvement across the reserve and to help prioritise funding.

² Refer to: <https://conversations.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/hosken-reserve-masterplan-refresh>

4. Voting on Preferred Elements

Council asked the local community to vote on their preferred improvement areas out of the following items (not shown in priority order on the webpage). This was accompanied with a map to indicate the proposed locations:

- Reserve lighting
- Lighting for dog park and access path
- Gathering space and toilet block
- Playspace
- Pump track
- Playspace and gathering space (without toilet block)
- Tree planting & irrigation around reserve
- Improvements around velodrome.

Council received no votes through Conversations Merri-Bek.

Through the site meeting however, several local residents expressed interest in improved lighting, having an earth-mound based pump track and larger gathering space in particular. One thought the adventurous playspace a good option.

5. Revised Concept Plan

Council received 6 feedback responses to the revised consultation.

This Revised Concept Plan reflected the majority of feedback on the Draft Concept Plan and site meeting for the voting exercise.

The majority supported the larger compacted earth-mound pump track and gathering space and felt that this version of the design made more sense than the previous concept plan version.

One queried why the playspace had been removed from this design and would leave little for younger children. This has been done in response to the feedback on the Draft Concept Plan where many questioned the need for a playspace at Richards Reserve when there are others in close proximity. There were also concerns over safety for children playing in this area. For these reasons the playspace was removed. That said the musical play element has been retained and opportunities for informal play through increasing some of the nature-based play elements to support younger children will be considered.

Many were supportive of the pump track, recognising that this offers a different experience than the velodrome whilst being complementary. The pump track is intended for a mix of younger and older children, not for use by adults or professionals and would be designed as such.

One respondent asked for traffic calming measures from the adjacent vehicle path near the pump track/gathering space to avoid conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians. This will be considered through design and if needed vehicle signs or path slow-down treatments can be included. As the vehicle access path is being relocated to the western edge of the reserve and is only used by maintenance staff or by events staff on an occasional basis, there are reduced risks.

Similarly another respondent highlighted ongoing concerns of bicycle access into the reserve from Charles Street. This topic has been raised with Council's Transport team for improved safe crossing measures and may be subject to future works.

During the time that the Revised Concept Plan was issued for consultation, it was agreed that the public toilet will now be provided by converting the existing clubroom toilet by the adjacent pavilion to an accessible public toilet, rather than introducing an additional toilet. Works to upgrade this existing toilet including provision of additional concrete paving for improved accessibility are starting shortly.

One respondent asked whether the shade trees would be sufficient in the gathering space and there is enough seating. We have included a shelter over the BBQ area (which can otherwise be repositioned

over the picnic settings instead), in addition to providing shade trees near seating areas. We can assess if an additional picnic setting is included, now that the public toilet will be provided by the pavilion. Concerns over insufficient lighting in the reserve have now been addressed through provision of solar lighting from the pedestrian entry on Charles Street past the dog park areas and inside the dog park.

6. Final Concept Plan

The Final Concept Plan reflects feedback on the Revised Concept Plan.

An additional picnic setting has been added in place of the proposed toilet (since the clubroom toilet will become the public toilet). The shelter has also been repositioned over the picnic setting.

Additional nature-based play elements have been included, to provide further interest for younger children.

Council will now proceed with detailed design.

7. Next Steps

The Open Space Design & Development team will commence detailed design so that procurement and tendering can be undertaken during December with construction commencing early 2023.

As mentioned, some of the works have already been completed or are underway including solar lighting in the park, and conversion of the clubroom toilet to a public toilet along with additional concrete paving for accessibility to this unit.

8. Further information

Any questions can be directed to Council's Open Space Design & Development Unit via email openspace@merri-bek.vic.gov.au or by phoning 9240 111.

9. Appendix

Below is all feedback received from the community for each stage of consultation for Richards Reserve.

9a Initial Consultation



**Richards Reserve
Playspace and Park Infrastructure**
Coming soon!

Council's Open Space team will be providing a new playspace with gathering space at Richards Reserve, in Charles Street, Coburg North.

Love this park?
Great news!
Funding has been allocated in Council's current budget, to provide a new playspace with gathering space near Charles Street entry.
We would like to hear from locals what you enjoy about this park and what you would like to see in it that would make it better.

With your feedback we can develop a draft concept plan that we can share with the local community for further comments in the next few months.
You can keep informed by contacting Council for further information or share your thoughts on this park.
We look forward to hearing from you!

Have your Say

Online
<https://conversations.moreland.vic.gov.au/richards-reserve-playspace>

Phone
9240 1111

Email
Open Space Team
openspace@moreland.vic.gov.au

Closing date: FRIDAY 23 JULY 2021

Moreland Language Link

廣東話	9280 1910	عربي	9280 1913	हिंदी	9280 1918	All other languages 9280 1919
Italiano	9280 1911	Türkçe	9280 1914	한국어	9280 0750	
Български	9280 1912	Tiếng Việt	9280 1915	ਪੰਜਾਬੀ	9280 0751	

Figure 1: Poster displayed at site.



**Richards Reserve
Playspace & park infrastructure
2021/2022
Initial consultation**

Council is providing a new playspace with a gathering space at Richards Reserve, in Charles Street, Coburg North. This is part of the Richards Reserve Development Plan 2020-2022 and Play Strategy 2016-2020.

What would you like to see in this new small playspace? Your input can help shape the concept design.

Have your say at:
<https://conversations.moreland.vic.gov.au/richards-reserve-playspace>
or phone Council on 9240 1111

Feedback closes on 5pm 23 JULY 2021

Have your say!

**Moreland
City Council**

Figure 2: Postcards issued to households within 1km of site.

Initial Consultation Responses

The following are responses to the initial consultation from 24 June – 23 July 2021.

Date Submitted	Title	Description
Jul 23, 2021	Who and what is this play upgrade for	<p>There is concern among Merlynston residents that City of Moreland is trying to turn Richards Reserve into compensation for the Hosken Reserve debacle, and possibly make it the preferred off-leash dog park for residents of the area. The draft Hosken Reserve Masterplan makes that park obsolete as a welcoming space for dog owners and others, who will be squeezed onto a narrow lawn whenever soccer training/games take place.</p> <p>There are people + young families living in the industrial precinct. The reality is though, it's a space that doesn't naturally lend itself to community gathering + play due to its industrial surrounds and lack of passive surveillance (the 'no one will hear you scream' vibe). If council puts in a playground at Richards, it's possible few will use it, especially as it's still mainly women who accompany children to parks. Maybe something for older, independent kids at Richards Reserve is better (some have proposed a dirt BMX track) although many teens would still feel unsafe there.</p> <p>The big question about council's plan to put play space at Richards Reserve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is it genuine recognition + acceptance from council that there are families living in the industrial precinct (seems strange, because council only fairly recently rejected an idea to make it transition away from industrial - MITS) <p>OR, is it some sort of poor consolation for lost community access to Hosken? If so, I'd like to see the planning + policy rationale for forcing a majority of intended users (who live north of Bakers Road in residential Merlynston) to: - cross unsafe Bakers Rd (there is no safe foot or bike route from Merlynston to Richards Reserve) and high-speed motorists, - walk a few extra hundred meters (everyone is supposed to have open space within 500-800m of their home), - go into an industrial area with little passive surveillance, in order to get play and exercise.</p> <p>How about turning Richards into a home for 'the Paco faithful'? Not as appealing for its sponsors?</p>
Jul 23, 2021	We are residents living very close to this park!!!	<p>People will probably be surprised to know there are a lot of residents in this area - in spite of industrial zoning - and many of these residents have young children. This area is also on the school/kindergarten/circus/rock-climbing gym/pool path for a lot of families who walk or cycle to these destinations via this area. It's a great time (while we're all appreciating local spaces) to be making the most of our green spaces and linking them up. An engaging nature play area would be an excellent addition and attraction along a corridor or loop of green spaces, complementing the current dog park, velodrome (which is used for bikes of all sorts, rc cars, kites, etc) and oval. My children have grown up using this space, and the velodrome and the oval and, although they're teenagers now, tell me they would have really appreciated playground equipment near their home. My son would love some kind of nature filled jump track or just a shady place to hang out. My daughter would also like nature-based play and shady seating for gathering with friends, and space for cartwheeling. I'd like to see more indigenous plant landscaping combined with fun play equipment. Thanks for paying attention to the kids who live in this area and pass through here every day.</p>

Date Submitted	Title	Description
Jul 21, 2021	Nature based playground and nature based bmx track	<p>Can we please have the following at Richard's Reserve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a nature based playground that includes equipment for teenagers as well as younger kids - a nature based bmx track with lots of logs, rock and indigenous plants included, including mid and understorey plants - lots more planting of indigenous plants within the park, again including mid and understorey plants, - rocks and logs lining the paths, track and playgrounds that double up as seating and play equipment (the new paths are great, thanks!) - bike paths connecting into Richards Reserve from the Upfield Bike Path, Hosken Reserve and Merlynston Creek Trail, to invite people into the park and make it safer to get there. Please make these paths interesting and beautiful by using plants. What you have done along the bike path side of O'Hea St is great, all these diverse understorey plants, - murals and artwork on the walls of the buildings surrounding the park, plus the concrete wall around the tunnel that goes into the velodrome, engaging local artists to create these would be awesome, - better lighting to help make it feel safer, taking the fencing down has been great for feeling safer, thanks, see if you can further reduce the fencing around the park and make it more inviting, - opening up the new toilets to the public would also be great.
Jul 21, 2021	Check out the Glenhuntly Reservoir playground	The Glenhuntly Reservoir redevelopment is the benchmark for how to do a playground/public space. Landscaped with native plants, recycled water, toilets and electricity, along with first nation and settler (boo) history and clever reuse of the reservoir infrastructure, it gives users a perspective of their suburb, while the kids kick the footy or swing on the flying foxes. And looks good at night as well.
Jul 21, 2021	Nature based all ages play space please!	We would like a nature-based playground that can be used for all ages from toddlers to teenagers. These are some of the things we would like to see included: a jungle around the playground, cubby house, water feature/s with bridge over them, ropes course, lots of logs, rocks and plants, swings, a big slide, sandpit/sand play area, tepee, vine tunnel, log seesaw. A BMX dirt track with lots of plants, going through the jungle would be really cool! Local art in this park would also be amazing. We would love to see bike paths that feed into this park from the Upfield bike path and Merlynston creek path, so it's safer and easier to get to Richards Reserve, and put nice plants alongside these paths, for a nicer journey. Can the park also be renamed with a local Wurundjeri name that has relevance to this area. Put heaps of indigenous plants, including flowers, in the area.
Jul 21, 2021	Consider the uses of 3 parks together	<p>Richards Reserve always feels unsafe and uninviting except when there's an event on. Being in the industrial area it's a good location for events. Adding a play space at this industrial site won't change its neighbourhood. What are we looking for in playspaces?</p> <p>My 11 year old son wants good grass to play on. Not organised sport - just nice grass to run around on. He likes going to Hosken Reserve but there are so few times he can access Hosken Reserve oval outside of lockdown.</p> <p>You risk injury running around playing tag on the uneven, holey, roughly grassed and weedy land at Harmony Park. Apart from the swings and skate park my sons are out-growing the playground at Harmony Park. All the playgrounds in the area are missing challenging elements suitable for over 10 year olds. So my family would like open space that has a well maintained grassed surface for informal play such as tag and frisby. For playgrounds, we would like challenging elements suitable for older children. Overall, council should look at all 3 parks and who they cater for. It would make more sense for Moreland residents local to Harmony Park, Richards Reserve and Hosken Reserve to 1. move organized sport to Richards Reserve to 2. upgrade Harmony Park with elements suitable for older children to complement the skate park and basketball 1/2 court. 3. Use Hosken Reserve for learning to ride bikes and informal running around play.</p>

Date Submitted	Title	Description
Jul 21, 2021	BMX track for older kids	This is an industrial area which I can't see any use for a playspace with Hoskins servicing the residents and families. Richards reserve space needs better lighting and maybe a BMX track for older kids. It's not an ideal location for small kids.
Jul 20, 2021	Lighting, paths and green play space	Many people have commented so far about the lack of safe lighting in this space. From late dusk onwards this area feels decidedly unsafe. With a growing family, as they become more independent I want them to feel safe on their bikes and be able to make good decisions getting from a to b. This should be extended down the alley through to Pallet St. Any playground equipment should enhance the green space. It would be great for any bike paths and foot paths to go around the whole perimeter rather than the western side behind the velodrome.
Jul 20, 2021	Suitability of location	I would, similar to other comments, question the suitability of the location for a playground. I/we use this space for dogs, green space and bike riding. I would like more lights as it is not safe. We live in merlynston and use it to walk through a lot but can't use at certain times as it is to dark and no safe road crossings. If you want to upgrade I would suggest a bmx track and bike riding facilities for all ages. Maybe traffic school 'like' , and dirt tracks etc. That would fit with current use and location. If you really want a playground then rope climbing, older kids. There is limited suitable facilities for this tween group.
Jul 20, 2021	Put funds elsewhere	This park is currently for sport and dog recreation, plus events. This really works. It's not a residential area so I agree with other posts that funds shouldn't be spent here on a playground, there are very few residents nearby. Plus you have harmony park and Hosken reserve so close with playspace so there isn't really a need.
Jul 20, 2021	Not the right area	Agree with previous posts, Richards Reserve is not an ideal location for a play space. It is not very safe walking to this location with children through an industrial area. This location should be used more for sport and the money should be spent improving and adding to the play facilities at Hosken reserve or Bain Reserve. Our local area has too many small play spaces and no large multi-age playgrounds.
Jul 20, 2021	Usage numbers	How many residents live within 800m walking distance to richards? How many at Hosken reserve?. This playground is best suited for hosken east reserve. Richards better suited for formal sport.
Jul 20, 2021	Better location	Richards is surrounded by industrial zone. Better suited for formal sport. Build a playspace at Hosken east reserve, better suited, residential zone, greater accessibility, a lot of families in immediate proximity. It will get greater use and increase activity in more youth than at richards.
Jul 20, 2021	Sport	Richards reserve should be used for formal sport such as soccer and remove/reduce formal sport at Hosken North and hosken East so that residents in the area have access to usable open space. Richards is better suited for formal sport, no noise or light issues as in industrial area, better parking and is under utilised.
Jul 19, 2021	Let there be light!	Could you please install some lighting along the footpath and at the dog park? In the winter it gets dark very quickly and given the location of the park and as people tend to walk their dogs after work, lighting is really important for safety reasons.
Jul 19, 2021	Dog agility	I would love to see some dog agility equipment built in this park. This would really compliment the fact that there is a fenced dog park there. There is also some sand at the park which the dogs use as a sandpit. It would be great if this could be used/converted into a proper sandpit for dogs! Please also build toilets (for humans)!
Jul 16, 2021	Excellent!	This is a great idea. I agree that we need equipment for both young and old, and would also love a bike track, space permitting - could do something similar to the little circuit at Allard Park? A fence would be great for parents of young mobile toddlers, and a few bench seats with backs on them (for the breastfeeding mums). I also agree shade is very important and public toilets would be great. Can I also suggest a sandpit. If there was enough space it would be great to have some small pieces of play equipment to play with the sand (similar to Princes Park southern playground)? So great for promoting different forms of play, and such a safe, calming way for younger kids to play.

Date Submitted	Title	Description
Jul 15, 2021	Toddlers	Something for younger kids - babies and toddlers - would be amazing. A basketball ring would also be great. And in keeping with the Velodrome location, a bike track for learner riders would be awesome too.
Jul 09, 2021	Natural Multi age Playspace	Being a small area it needs to be well thought out and the space used wisely. Something that combines nature and caters to different age groups, not just smaller children. Benches to sit on, plenty of shade and if still enough space, also a bbq and table.
Jul 08, 2021	Natural Playspace	It is great that the Council is going to provide a playspace for children in this park. I would like to suggest to Council to consider a natural looking space that caters for a range of children's age groups. I would suggest taking a look at a park I visited in Perth called Braithwaite Park in Mount Hawthorn as a great example of creating an inviting natural looking space. This park will be a welcome addition to complement the existing dog park and Velodrome.
Jul 08, 2021	Playground Richards Reserve	Thank you. It would be good to have a playground with items for small children, but also with equipment attractive for older children, obviously with safety in mind.
Jun 30, 2021	Ensure "through" access for pedestrians/cyclists at all times	I've cycled or pushed a pram through Richards Reserve a lot over the last few years - I love the Velodrome events being there, but it was a huge hassle to find the gates barred when an event was on. It meant having to go pretty far out of our way to get to the other side of the industrial area. Please make sure there's always a path for people to move through the reserve independently of whatever sporting or entertainment events are happening.
Jun 28, 2021	Bike tracks for young kids	So pleased to hear this space is getting some love and attention and for all age groups and users. We go there frequently and use the velodrome with the kids, but this can annoy the serious bike riders and even be a bit dangerous. It would be great, along with some play equipment such as slides and swings and climbing frames, to have a bike/scooter track that can be used by the kids. Norris Bank Reserve in Bundoora has a great example of a wave like track that has been concreted and excellent for kids bike riding and scootering - see link below. Also, there are frequently scatters using the velodrome so maybe a half pipe for them would be good (which Norris Bank also has for the more experienced or older kids). Other than that the main thing i think it needs is a public toilet and tree planting along the factory side to try and enhance the greenery of the area and perhaps a mural wall alongside the factory area to connect the areas and acknowledge their history and mixed use between industrial, public space, residential, sports (soccer and oldest cycling club in Vic) all surrounding it. https://www.mammaknowsnorth.com.au/parks-and-playgrounds/norris-bank-reserve-bundoora
Jun 27, 2021	Lots of potential	Please have a look at Gumnut park in Donnybrook. If we had parks like that in Moreland it would be such a drawcard to this area.
Jun 27, 2021	Play equipment	We would like some play equipment at Richards reserve. We go to Richards reserve almost every day to walk the dog and my young children are very excited about the paths being paved and are looking forward to scooting around on them. We'd love some play equipment and seating. BBQs would also be a welcome addition. So happy that this space is getting an upgrade, it really is an under-utilised green space that has so much potential

9b Draft Concept Plan Consultation

Richards Reserve Playspace & gathering space Draft concept consultation

Council is providing a new playspace and gathering space at Richards Reserve, Coburg North. This is part of the Richards Reserve Development Plan 2020-2022.

We would like your feedback on the draft concept plan.

Have your say at:
<https://conversations.moreland.vic.gov.au/richards-reserve-playspace>
or phone Council on 9240 1111

Feedback closes **Friday 25 March 2022**

Join
the
conversation!



**For more information
contact Council's Open
Space team:**

Email: openspace@moreland.vic.gov.au

Phone: 9240 1111

<https://conversations.moreland.vic.gov.au/richards-reserve-playspace>



Moreland Language Link

廣東話	9280 1910	عربي	9280 1913
Italiano	9280 1911	Türkçe	9280 1914
Ελληνικά	9280 1912	Tiếng Việt	9280 1915
हिंदी	9280 1918		
普通话	9280 0750	All other languages	
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ	9280 0751	9280 1919	

Figure 3: Postcards displayed at site and on Conversations webpage.

Draft Concept Plan Consultation Responses

The following are responses to the draft concept consultation from 25 February – 25 March 2022.

Date Submitted	Title	Description
March 24, 2022	Lighting and Fencing	<p>As a female regular used of Richards Reserve as a dog park, the community that has grown over the past 3 years due to the pandemic have become increasingly frustrated with the severe lack of any form of lighting. With the whole space being an off lead area is fantastic in summer during daylight savings however in winter those of us who have returned to work will again not be able to utilise the space in a safe manner. during the evening. The most recent updates including the extension of the enclosed dog park seem to not have actually been done with consultation with those who use the space. The money used on extending the fencing would have been far better used in installing lighting. During the darker months the only lighting present is during soccer training sessions, making it untenable for anyone particularly women feel safe attending the space.</p> <p>Second to this if the play equipment etc. is to go ahead please install fencing between the children's play area and the leash free dog area. As many of the users attend this park daily to allow their furry children a chance to socialise and play without the risk to children.</p> <p>Having a play space for older children does make some sense in the area as many of the local high school students to ride to the velodrome and reserve, but there still needs to be some separation for the safety of all those involved.</p>
March 16, 2022	Cycling access	<p>I ride along Charles St twice a day to and from work and it is terrifying.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The road surface is significantly damaged, forcing cyclists out from the kerb. Try riding it, you will see immediately that this road is a disaster waiting to happen. 2. Entering from Sussex St means playing chicken with unforgiving motorists. Poor visibility, aggressive motorists and heavy vehicles exiting/entering regularly. 3. The two lanes only accommodate cars, not bikes as well and motorists will do ANYTHING, including pass cyclists while a car is approaching in the opposite lane, forcing me off the road, rather than wait a few seconds to pass safely. 4. It feels isolated and unsafe due to the industrial setting and regular dumping and this encourages/appears to imply permission for ppl to speed and to harass cyclists. Men have followed me in their cars, followed me on foot (while I was walking to the park) and attempted to grab at me while passing in moving vehicles. So nice, guys, thank you! 5. The bollards placement at the entry point is terrible for cyclists. Especially while trying to concentrate on what cars are doing at the same time. 6. The other exit/entry point down/up a steep incline after exiting/entering a narrow path is awkward and potentially dangerous. 7. Trucks turning create a build-up of traffic and this can mean cyclists get tailgated by lines of vehicles wanting to pass but with me unable to move over due to the condition of the road. <p>To make this park work, it has to be safe to get to!</p>
March 16, 2022	Shared access	<p>I am a regular user of both the Richards Reserve and Raeburn Reserve fitness parks. I LOVE them both, they have transformed my fitness. However, at Raeburn, the fitness park is largely used as a playground. It is closer to the path than the playground and parents seem uninterested in moving their children to the playground when I am clearly waiting to use the fitness equipment. This means I sometimes have to wait 40 minutes for successive families to (parents) sit on equipment and look at their phones and (children) play on the bars much as they would the lower and safer monkey bars only 10-20 metres away. I often give up and go to the new Richards Res park instead. Or miss my workout after a long and pointless wait.</p> <p>So ... is there anything you can do to delineate the fitness area or define it as a priority area for those who want to use it for fitness?</p> <p>I love all the new playgrounds and the kids adore them too but when I saw the playground plans for Richards Reserve I was like 'oh no, another fitness park I will not be able to use half the time, or will be forced to use late at night in the dark when no kids/parents are there.</p> <p>It baffles me as the playground at Raeburn is brilliant. Maybe you should install a mini fitness park for kids (with wifi and seating for parents) at Richards?</p> <p>Anyway, these are my thoughts, hope you will consider them! Thank you</p>

Date Submitted	Title	Description
March 14, 2022	Reserve has safety and access flaws	Engaging and creative play spaces are great but the location of this is a fail. This would be perfect for Hosken Reserve! Locals have significantly reduced access hours to Hosken Reserve due to organised sport bookings and council thinks that we should leave our safe and open residential area, cross busy roads, pass through an industrial block and then enter via a dodgy laneway to this park? Being so shut off from any residential areas it also lacks the passive safety that Hosken provides with its many neighbouring homes having eyes and ears on the reserve. Richards reserve would be much better suited to the daily organised sports and training, which the overwhelming majority of participants commute to by car.
March 7, 2022	Bring on the pump track	<p>Don't listen to the naysayers!</p> <p>A pump track for adventurous kids is a great addition to Moreland's parks and I love the idea. There are heaps of parks for little kids but not a lot for bigger kids, pre-teens or teenagers. A properly built track would be a good, safe alternative to the rogue unsafe tracks and jumps that are popping up around Edgars creek and other walking trails in Moreland. Our kids are growing up - parks with only see saws and slides aren't cutting it anymore. There is nothing like this nearby- you have to drive to Kensington for a park with playgrounds, sport fields and a pump track. Harmony Park has done well in catering for little kids and older kids with the skate park, but it's small in comparison. Having the pump track and playground next to the velodrome, refurbished cycling club and soccer pitch is a good connection and will breathe life into a place that hasn't been used as well as it could be.</p> <p>Check out Youtube - there was a time when night races at the Coburg velodrome were broadcast on TV. The next Anna Meares or world MTB champion may be living in Coburg - all we need is a hook for them to catch the bug. Please build this.</p>
March 7, 2022	Will it be accessible? Will it be cleaned up?	<p>Whenever there is an event at the Velodrome, the entire park is fenced off, cutting off the dog park and thru access. Please stop spending money on this park if such practice is going to continue.</p> <p>Otherwise, I echo sentiments of others, it seems like an odd choice to develop, given it's in an industrial area. There are better candidates nearby at Harmony park and Hosken reserve.</p> <p>My main issue with this park is that people frequently use it to dump rubbish. More surveillance and cleanups required.</p>
March 7, 2022	No go zone	<p>As a local parent, there is NO WAY that I will be using this playground. Richards Reserve is in no way close enough for local families to walk to. It is the middle of an industrial zone. It is so far from anyone to hear or help you if there is trouble. It is a dust bowl.</p> <p>Council money would better used by flipping the use of Hosken and Richards. The soccer precinct could sit well in the industrial area as business use and soccer usage times would not clash.</p> <p>Hosken is in the middle of a residential area. Plenty of families enjoy the open space. Many with or without children walk dogs and picnic. All of which can't be done close by or with the feeling of safety at Richards.</p> <p>I would like to think that during at least one of these consultation processes, the needs of RESIDENTS not visitors, not students, not soccer and not business will be finally listened to.</p>
March 7, 2022	Wrong decision, wrong location	A dog park in the middle of an industrial precinct remains a highly questionable decision. Noone is able to walk here. It is unsafe being so far from everything and will be under-utilised. This site should've been developed for sport, and Hosken left alone for the local community.
March 7, 2022	Useers	<p>Looks great but it won't be accessible to local families as it is in an industrial estate. It will be underutilized, the entry way from where residents live from north is a huge hill.</p> <p>Short sighted with hosken reserve plan needs to be revisited. To maximise users this should be on hosken reserve east and the hosken north pit h works should be moved to richards reserve. This will boost usage of both spaces and result in a more active moreland.</p>

Date Submitted	Title	Description
March 7, 2022	Why not Hosken	This is in an industrial estate not often accessed by people with kids. Would it be easier to further invest in community sport and free up other parks such as Hosken?
March 7, 2022	Why not Hosken	This is in an industrial estate not often accessed by people with kids. Would it be easier to further invest in community sport and free up other parks such as Hosken?
March 6, 2022	Where is Richards Reserve Masterplan, not just the sub-plan for playground	<p>Where is the Richards Reserve Masterplan? We are entitled to see the Richards Reserve Masterplan for transparency.</p> <p>This Childrens Playground is only a small section of Richards Reserve. This reserve is in the middle of an industrial area, with poor lighting, secluded pathways with high perceptions of danger especially at night. While there are residents dotted about the area, its questionable whether this full childrens playground design is the most suitable for this area.</p> <p>Really the focus and design of Richards Reserve should have been considered at the same time as Hosken Reserve. Richards Reserve is far more suitable for active sports club use, while the growing residential population projected for the east of Hosken Reserve should have meant more space for active informal recreation, dog walking, even upgraded childrens playground as part of Hosken Reserve redevelopment plan.</p> <p>Something has gone very wrong in Sports and Recreation and the Open Space Unit in consideration of equity in urban planning, design and use. In failing to open up how Richards Reserve is redeveloped as part of the surrounding neighborhood and other Reserves.</p> <p>Council should be doing co-ordinated planning for all present and future residents, not just for Sports clubs.</p> <p>I think this particular development is inappropriate considering the bigger issues being ignored by Council.</p>
March 3, 2022	Not accessible for Merlynston residents	This proposed playground is a 10 minute walk from my home, but will not be useable for myself and my family. This park is located within an industrial area and is not safe for children to cross bakers road and walk through industrial space to reach the park. This space would be better suited to the sports fields currently proposed at Hosken reserve.
March 3, 2022	Needs more canopy	<p>Anyone that has ever bought their kids down here to play or use the velodrome know how hot it is in summer and an icy tundra it is in winter. The green canopy in the area really needs to be worked on. The play equipment area in this plan needs a permanent shaded sails fixture (similar to the sandpit at harmony park) or needs fast growing trees inserted in the play area (similar to Raeburn reserve). The foot paths on Charles St need to be upgraded from Sussex St onwards on the north side so it is safe to walk/ride children to the park from the west. The road is big enough for a dedicated bike lane to run all the way to Batman train station.</p> <p>I think an upgrade of Martyn Reserve on Lyking Street a few hundred metres away would service the area better as many kids use this park from the local area and after swimming lessons at the private pool nearby. However the equipment there is sparse and dated and also needs more shade and better entry development from the north of that park.</p>

9c Voting on Preferred Elements Consultation

Thanks to all who submitted their feedback to the draft concept plan.

As responses to this plan have been varied and cover a number of different topics, the Open Space team are now asking the community to vote for their preferred improvements for Richards Reserve in order of importance. Your highest votes will help us prioritise the next stage of works and shape the refined concept plan for Richards Reserve.

These improvement areas are indicated on the Richards Reserve map below:



Improvement areas for voting (not in priority order):

- Reserve lighting
- Lighting for dog park and access path
- Gathering space and toilet block
- Playspace
- Pump track
- Playspace and gathering space (without toilet block)
- Tree planting & irrigation around reserve
- Improvements around velodrome

<https://conversations.moreland.vic.gov.au/richards-reserve-playspace>

Please provide your votes on your preferred improvement areas before:

Friday 6 May 2022

We are also holding a site meeting at Richards Reserve on **Thursday 28 April 4:30-5:30pm** where you can discuss your consultation feedback with us in person.

Richards Reserve - 30-34 Charles Street, Coburg North
Voting for preferred improvement areas

Sheet 1 of 1



Figure 5: Posters displayed at site and on Conversations Webpage.

Council received no votes through the Conversations Moreland webpage. Through the site meeting, several local residents expressed interest in the lighting, pump track and gathering space options in particular and also thought the adventurous playspace a good option.

9d Revised Concept Plan Consultation

Join the conversation!

<https://conversations.moreland.vic.gov.au/richards-reserve-playspace>

Please provide feedback on this design before:

FRIDAY 7 OCTOBER 2022



See sheet 2 for example images

REVISED CONCEPT PLAN

Council is providing a new public space area at Richards Reserve, Coburg North.

We listened to your feedback from the draft concept design and the voting exercise. As we had mixed responses on including a playspace and owing to proximity of playspaces at Harmony Park and Hosken Reserve, this design focuses on a pump track, larger gathering space and planting.

This proposed upgrade includes:

- A larger earth-mounds pump track for kids on scooters/bikes and musical play (mini bongo drums). No playspace included on this option.
- Improved barrier fencing along road frontage of pump track.
- A larger gathering space including BBQ with shelter, picnic setting, seating with shade tree and bike racks near existing fitness equipment and an accessible public toilet.
- Additional shade trees and garden beds with shrubs.
- New vehicle path for maintenance and events access to the velodrome area. Existing access paths and waste bin retained.



Example shelter over BBQ



Example public toilet



Small earth-based pump track for kids scooters/bicycles, edged with painted tyres



Example BBQ



Mini bongo drums for musical play



Gathering space on gravel paving with platform seat, backed seat & picnic settings



Shade trees and garden beds offering variety of interest across the seasons

RICHARDS RESERVE new public space area: Revised Concept Plan



Figure 6: Posters displayed at site and on Conversations Webpage.

Revised Concept Plan Consultation Responses

The following are responses to the revised concept plan consultation from 5 September - 7 October 2022.

Date Submitted	Screen Name	Title	Description
October 6, 2022	☺	Great for older kids	<p>With so many playgrounds nearby, this is good for older kids and for the younger ones to grow into (and from the pump track to the velodrome for cycling and/or events). Also good for young adults and those without kids to socialise, too.</p> <p>Kids grow up and need different spaces to be themselves in and this allows that. Excited to see this come to life.</p>
September 28 2022	Ryan	What will kids do?	<p>Much like the skate park @ Harmony Park a few blocks away, the idea is for kids to use this but it will be dominated by teenagers and young adults and won't be safe for kids 13 and under because the course won't provide enough space. Then when the track gets trashed, will the council provide maintenance? There is simply nothing for kids to do at this park. The music equipment installed elsewhere in the inner north (Harmony Park again a perfect example) was destroyed by vandals over 6 years ago and was not fixed when they refreshed that park (but they still left it there?) The example BBQ area also looks small and in the summer when this opens and there is no artificial shade sails which are needed. Along with a kids playground. Love that this is being redeveloped into something useful, just feels like it is being underdone. Agree with other posters on fixing bike/pedestrian access on Charles Street, absolute danger zone and if you have kids riding bikes there, leaving it as is, is just asking for an accident. The money being spent on the needless Derby St/O'Hea St bike upgrades could have been diverted into fixing/widening the road from Batman Station to Derby St for a better bike connection (and safer driving conditions).</p>
September 8 2022	CoNoNick	A great option for young adults	<p>Think this this is a great plan. Having a bike track caters to the missing offers of play for kids 12+ that tend to be forgotten for the 3–12 age range. Also the addition of the bbq area and accessible toilets make will make the park so much more enticing in terms of dwell time. My only additional recommendation would be either some signage or traffic calming measures along the vehicle path from to/from the velodrome to show vehicles that it is a shared zone so they need to driving slowly and cautiously.</p>
September 8 2022	Lisa	More toilets in Moreland	<p>I feel this plan is missing something for younger children. The music area is nice but if your coming to use the bbq facilities that's not going to hold attention for long.</p> <p>Also it's great to see a public toilet added here. No parks in Coburg North have access to toilets and it's a real issue. When Sanger reserve had an upgrade and bbq area put in I was waiting for the toilets that never came. You can't stay anywhere long if there isn't proper facilities. I'd love to have more get togethers and birthday celebrations at the parks around my home (Pascoe Vale/Coburg north) but their are no toilets!</p>
September 2 2022	Fitness station fan	Much better	<p>This concept makes much more sense than the previous. Am happy to have the fitness equipment - which I do use up to 6 days a week - retained and not assimilated into general playground equipment as would likely have happened with the previous design.</p> <p>Also really like the idea of a more active type of gathering space for people who want to have a picnic and kick a ball around, etc. With all the new shade trees, etc, the area will be fantastic for that in the future.</p> <p>It's good to have spaces catering to different age groups and socialising styles and this offers something new and different.</p> <p>Thank you for listening and responding with thought and care.</p> <p>Just need to fix bike access from insanely dangerous Charles St and stop cars flying out of the industrial park on Hocking and this will be an active people's oasis!</p>

Date Submitted	Screen Name	Title	Description
September 2 2022	Nash	Needs a play area	Why a massive bike track next to a place where you already ride bikes at the velodrome? Who is going to use a BBQ area without a play area? Just seems catered for one minority group. Also I have seen zero people use the outdoor gym equipment since installed. I go past the reserve multiple times nearly every day. Maybe relocate to a more popular park.

9e Final Concept Plan



FINAL CONCEPT PLAN

Council is providing a new public space area at Richards Reserve, Coburg North.

We listened to your feedback from the revised concept design. This design focuses on a larger pump track and gathering space with additional tree planting/garden beds.

In addition to the musical play element we have also included a nature-based play log balancing area for younger children.

As the existing clubroom toilet by the adjacent pavilion will now be converted to an accessible public toilet, we have added an additional picnic setting in this location and repositioned the shelter over this rather than the BBQ unit.

The Open Space team will now proceed to detailed design prior to tendering and construction starting in early 2023.



RICHARDS RESERVE new public space area

Final Concept Plan

October 2022

