Upgrade for Wishart Reserve dog off leash area

Bayside CITY COUNCIL

Contents

1 Overview

The western area of Wishart Reserve is a dedicated and secure dog off-leash space. This reserve is extremely popular among dog walkers, which has led to heavy wear and tear and deterioration of some of the existing surfaces and infrastructure.

This project presented a great opportunity to enhance the play and exercise experience for dogs and their owners, as we improve the reserve and provide a safe and suitable space for all user groups.

Works are proposed to include a new perimeter path, additional planting and infrastructure designed for dogs within the fenced off leash section of Wishart Reserve.

From 30 January to 27 February 2023, a four-week community engagement process was held to gather community and stakeholder feedback on the overall concept design and proposed new elements. Overall, 500 participants provided feedback via a survey (online or hard copy), online Question and Answer (Q&A) forum, onsite Drop-in sessions, written submissions, a petition, and social media. Of the 157 survey respondents, 110 visited Wishart Reserve to "*Exercise dog(s)*", 32 "*Live nearby*", and 15 respondents have an "*Other*" connection. Individuals may have participated in one or more engagement activities. Consultation findings are contextualised by insights from the sub-group analyses.

Support for the overall concept design was shown from 55 (or 50% of) survey respondents who *Exercise dog(s)* at Wishart Reserve, who stated they love the concept design overall and a further 35 (or 31.8%) think it is okay. Some respondents who *Live Nearby* (12 or 37.5%) love it or think it is okay. Most participants at the Drop-in sessions like the concept design overall.

Survey respondents that loved or liked the concept design overall, reported liking most elements. Features that survey respondents reported liking most frequently were:

- Agility elements
- Double gated entry
- Additional vegetation and trees
- Drinking fountain

In contrast, 12 (or 37.5% of) respondents who *Live nearby* Wishart Reserve, have some concerns and a further 8 (or 25.0%) don't like it at all. A further 20 (or 18.1% of) respondents who *Exercise dog(s)* have some concerns or don't like it all at. Features that survey respondents most frequently reported being concerned about were:

- The dog off leash area restricting pedestrian access and excluding others from using the space
- Negative impacts on resident amenity
- Agility equipment being unnecessary

Survey respondents who have some concerns or don't like the concept design at all, also provided a range of suggestions including:

- Creating a quiet area/section
- Increasing water points
- Reconsidering trees, shade, and vegetation

Among the proposed elements within the concept design, the elements that most appealed to participants included:

- Drinking fountain
- Bin and litter bag dispenser
- Additional vegetation
- Double gated entry

The majority of survey respondents who *Exercise dog(s)* (80 or 78.4%), think their dog will use the agility equipment. Equipment most likely to be used is the bridge and tunnel. Most survey respondents agree that the proposed elements are in the right location. Respondents who disagreed suggested a variety of changes to the fencing, improve pedestrian access, inclusion of agility elements, more trees and vegetation in specific locations, and retaining open space for dogs to run.

Participants were invited to provide personalised feedback under any other comments. This feedback largely reiterated topics already raised in previous question such as create a quiet area or separated section; provide more drinking fountains and water points; reconsider the path. New topics referenced included improve the grass irrigation and quality; regular maintenance and upkeep; and requests for a water play feature.

Correspondence was submitted by six residents who *live nearby* Wishart Reserve and a representative of the Bayside Dog Alliance. Submissions were consistent with the general feedback. There was limited support for the project (referenced in 1 submission). Concerns raised were consistent with those in the general feedback regarding space being used by commercial dog walkers (5); the area being fully fenced and fully enclosed and access being restricted to and through the Reserve (4), and the improvements further increasing over-use (1). A variety of suggestions were also made regarding the concept design overall and the concept design elements.

A petition was lodged with 34 signatories requesting Council to “Cease any and all upcoming changes to Wishart Reserve and conduct a comprehensive review of the needs of the whole community with respect to the layout, amenity and accessibility of the space". Most signatories *live nearby* Wishart Reserve.

Around 40 comments across all of the engagement feedback referred to topics regarded as out of scope for this consultation. These comments have been shared with the responsible Council departments.

Next steps

Community feedback will be considered to inform the detailed design of the dog off leash area. Counicl will consider community feedback and the proposed concept design at a future Council meeting.

2 Background

This document provides a detailed summary of stakeholder and community feedback on the Proposed Upgrade to Wishart Reserve Dog Off Leash Area.

The western fenced area of Wishart Reserve in Hampton East is a dedicated and fully secure dog off leash space – the only fully-fenced off-leash area in Bayside. Due to the high volume of use of this area, some of the existing infrastructure is in a poor state. Works associated with this project will provide safer and more enriching spaces for all user groups – particularly those who exercise their dogs off leash.

Council has created a high-level concept landscape plan, which includes a new path, additional planting, dedicated dog infrastructure (including agility equipment, dog water bowl) within the dog off leash section of Wishart Reserve. Completion of this upgrade will deliver an action from the 2022/23 Council Plan - Council Plan Action Plan: 3.1.3. Manage our open space and public places to balance the different needs of people who visit, live, or work in Bayside.

Key findings

During the engagement program, it was clear that some key stakeholders (adjacent neighbours) felt they had not been previously consulted on the change of primary use of the reserve to be a fully fenced dog off-leash area. Concerns were expressed via correspondence and at drop-in sessions. It was also evident at site visits and drop-in sessions that local residents use the park as a short-cut to Bluff Road to access public transport and shops. It is noted that the Reserve is located nearby to several social housing estates and a higher proportion of residents who may not have a car in their household.

Community engagement on the project was open between 30 January and 27 February 2023 and received 500 contributions.

3 Consultation process

3.1 Consultation purpose

The consultation was designed to provide affected stakeholders, particularly those using the dog off leash area or playground, and/or living in streets adjacent to Wishart Reserve, and the broader community with the opportunity to provide input into the draft concept plan for the proposed upgrade to the Wishart Reserve dog off leash area.

3.2 Consultation methodology

The following activities were undertaken from **30 January to 27 February 2023:**

- Project information and online survey hosted on the engagement platform *Have Your Say*
- Online Question and Answer (Q&A) Forum
- Promotion of the project using Council's communication channels including social media
- Hard copy survey available upon request
- On-site drop-in sessions at Wishart Reserve
- Written submissions

Engagement activities, timeframes and outcomes relating to this consultation are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Engagement activities, timeframes, and outcomes

Timeframe and details	Activity
30 January to 27 February 2023: 217 contributors 334 contributions 74 project followers	**On-line engagement platform *Have Your Say*** Survey seeking feedback on Proposed Upgrade to Wishart Reserve Dog Off Leash Area (156 responses) Fund-it Tool seeking votes on 12 proposed design elements (159 participants) Q&A Forum (19 participants)
1 Social media post 36 comments 3 'Shares' 40 'Likes'	**Social media *Bayside City Council* pages** A **Facebook** post was made by Council alerting readers to the engagement project.
30 January to 27 February 2023 Seven email submissions and a petition with 34 signatories	**Correspondence to officers in the Open Space team, Customer Service, Mayor, and Councillors**

8 and 21 February 2023 2 drop-in sessions, 143 participants	**Drop-in sessions at Wishart Reserve** Sessions were attended by stakeholders including neighbours, representatives of Bayside Dog Alliance, local dog owners, and local families
30 January to 27 February 2023 1 response	**Hard copy survey** Available upon request

4 Participant profile

Overall, **500* participants provided feedback** that largely and directly addressed the proposed upgrade questions via the following consultation methods:

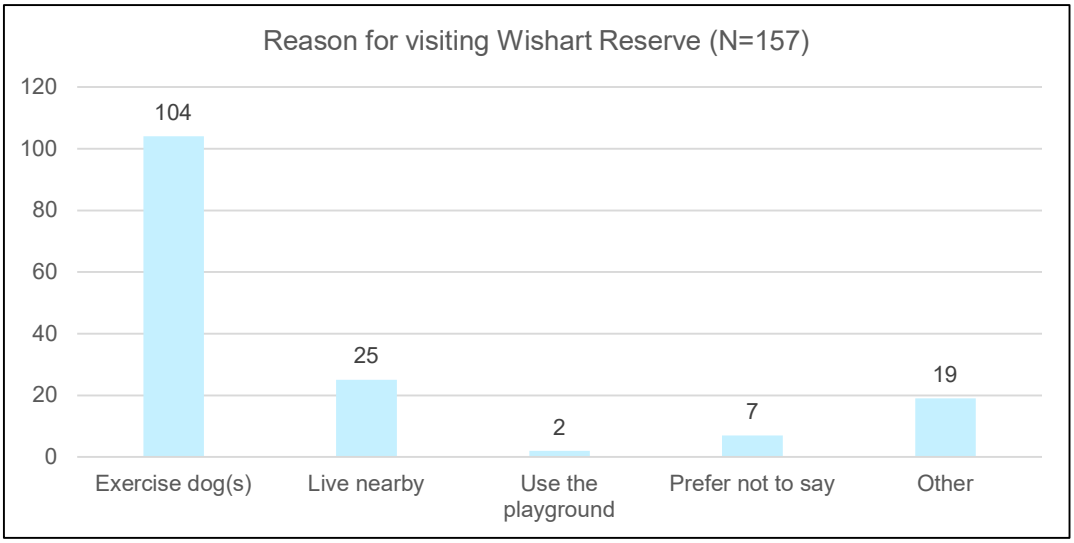
- Online Fund-it tool (159 participants)
- Online survey on the *Have Your Say* project page (156 respondents)
- Onsite drop-in sessions (143 participants)
- Petition (34 signatories)
- Online Q&A Forum (19 contributors)
- Email correspondence to the Mayor, Councillors or Council (7 submissions).
- Hard copy survey (1 response)

* *Individuals may have participated in one or more engagement activities*

Participants were not requested to provide demographic information. However, reason for visiting Wishart Reserve (i.e., *Exercise dog(s), Live nearby, Other*), was captured to both demonstrate a broad range of views had been captured and permit sub-group analyses. This section of the report relies heavily on the information provided by survey respondents. Details for those participating via correspondence, petition, social media, and the online Q&A Forum are not included within the body of this report, although overviews are presented in Section 5.2.5 and 5.2.6.

Survey respondents were asked "Why do you visit Wishart Reserve?" and presented with four prescribed response options and "Other (please state)". As shown in Figure 1, 104 (or 66.2%) of the 157 respondents selected *Exercise dog(s)* and 25 (or 15.9%) of respondents selected *Live nearby*. Two respondents selected *Use the playground* and 19 selected *Other* and provided a personalised response.

Figure 1: Reason for visiting Wishart Reserve (Survey)

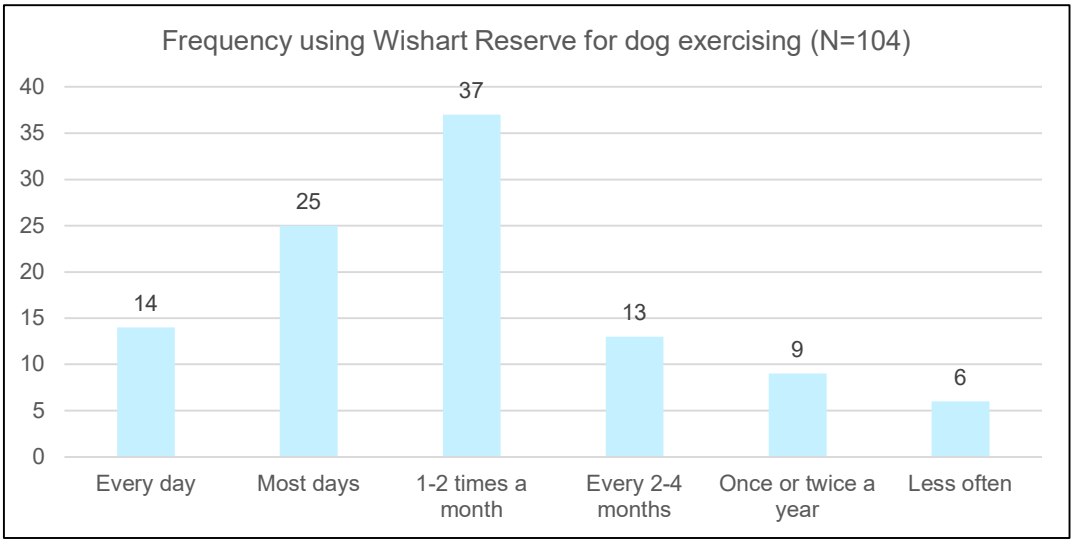


The 19 “Other” personalised responses are presented below (and indicate some respondents could be categorised as *Exercise dog(s)* or *Live nearby* for the purposes of sub-group analyses, see Section 5).

- I don’t visit, or have not yet visited, Wishart Reserve (4 responses)
- Don't visit anymore because too dangerous for grandchildren because dogs off leash and can't get to Bluff Road without going through dog area
- Entertain grandchildren and granddog, short cut through to Ludstone Street to get bus to Hampton
- I have an active dog who would love a challenging playground
- It’s my closest fully fence off leash dog park
- Live Next Door & Exercise Dogs
- Most important feature for puppy owner is that fence & gates are 100% secure so that curious puppy cannot find a way out and run away
- My family uses the park to play, walk through, exercise and meet friends
- Nearby resident who uses the park to walk through to Ludstone Street
- Puppy carer for Seeing Eye Dogs
- Rate payer
- Sadly, because this is the only secure off lead park for dogs in Bayside
- To help reactive dogs
- Used to occasionally walk through it before you cut it off to non-dog
- Walking through to Ludstone Street to and from bus, play with grandchildren, as a shortcut to walk to Hampton Street
- Work at Council

Survey respondents that selected *Exercise dog(s)* when asked why they visit Wishart Reserve were then asked, “How often do you exercise your dog(s) at Wishart Reserve?” and presented with six prescribed response options. As shown in Figure 2, all response options were selected, albeit to varying degrees. The most common responses were “1-2 times a month” selected by 37 (or 35.6% of) respondents and “Most days” selected by 25 (or 24.0% of) respondents.

Figure 2: Frequency using Wishart Reserve for dog exercising (Survey)



5 Consultation findings

This section summarises the results and findings from the analysis of the feedback on the Proposed Upgrade to Wishart Reserve Dog Off Leash Area. Key themes emerging from the analysis of personalised feedback are presented by topic of enquiry. In the interest of participant privacy, individual quotes have not been included within this public document. Where applicable, the number of responses or references to a topic is specified in parentheses () and italics. Themes are generally presented as statements in the tables, which represent a blending or synthesis of the verbatim responses.

Consultation findings are contextualised by insights from the sub-group analyses which aim to draw out nuances based on the participant's connection to Wishart Reserve and reason for visiting (i.e., *Exercise dog(s), Live nearby, Other* – see Figure 1). Following post hoc analysis, 12 of the 19 personalised "Other" responses were reclassified to provide richer sub-group insights. The final grouping of the 157 survey responses is as follows:

- **110 Exercise dog(s):** 104 plus 6 reclassified "Other" respondents (I have an active dog who would love a challenging playground; It's my closest fully fence off leash dog park; Most important feature for puppy owner is that fence & gates are 100% secure so that curious puppy cannot find a way out and run away; Puppy carer for Seeing Eye Dogs; Sadly, because this is the only secure off lead park for dogs in Bayside; and To help reactive dogs)
- **32 Live nearby**: 25 respondents plus 7 reclassified "Other" respondents (Don't visit anymore because too dangerous for grandchildren because dogs off leash and can't get to Bluff Road without going through dog area; Entertain grandchildren and granddog, short cut through to Ludstone Street to get bus to Hampton; Nearby resident who uses the park to walk through to Ludstone Street; Used to occasionally walk through it before you cut it off to non-dog owners; Walking through to Ludstone Street to and from bus, play with grandchildren, as a shortcut to walk to Hampton Street; My family uses the park to play, walk through, exercise and meet friends; and Live Next Door & Exercise Dogs)
- **15 Other:** 2 Use the playground, 7 Prefer not to say, 6 Other (not reclassified - I don't visit, or have not yet visited, Wishart Reserve (4); Rate payer; and Work at Council)

5.1 Support for actions

Many survey respondents, particularly those who *Exercise dog(s)* at Wishart Reserve, as well as Drop-in session participants, generally indicated support for the proposed upgrade and concept design overall. Features that survey respondents reported liking most frequently were the agility elements, double gated entry, additional vegetation, and trees, and drinking fountain. Elements that most appealed to participants included the drinking fountain, bin and litter bag dispenser, additional vegetation, and double gated entry. Most survey respondents who *Exercise dog(s)* (80 or 78.4%), think their dog will use the agility equipment, particularly the bridge and tunnel. Most survey respondents agree that the proposed elements are in the right location.

In contrast, many of the survey respondents who *Live nearby* Wishart Reserve and some of the respondents who *Exercise dog(s)*, have some concerns about the proposed upgrade and concept design overall, or don't like it all at. Features that survey respondents most frequently reported being concerned about were restrictions to pedestrian access and excluding others from using the area, negative impacts on resident amenity, and agility equipment being unnecessary. Changes and suggestions included create a quiet area/section, increase water points, and reconsider trees, shade, and vegetation, changing the fencing, improving pedestrian access, including agility elements, more trees and

vegetation in specific locations, and retaining open space for dogs to run. Concerns raised via correspondence focussed on the space being used by commercial dog walkers; the area being fully fenced and fully enclosed and access being restricted to and through the Reserve, and the improvements further increasing over-use. A petition with 34 signatories requested Council to “Cease any and all upcoming changes to Wishart Reserve and conduct a comprehensive review of the needs of the whole community with respect to the layout, amenity and accessibility of the space". Most signatories *live nearby* Wishart Reserve.

5.2 Proposed Upgrade to Wishart Reserve Dog Off Leash Area

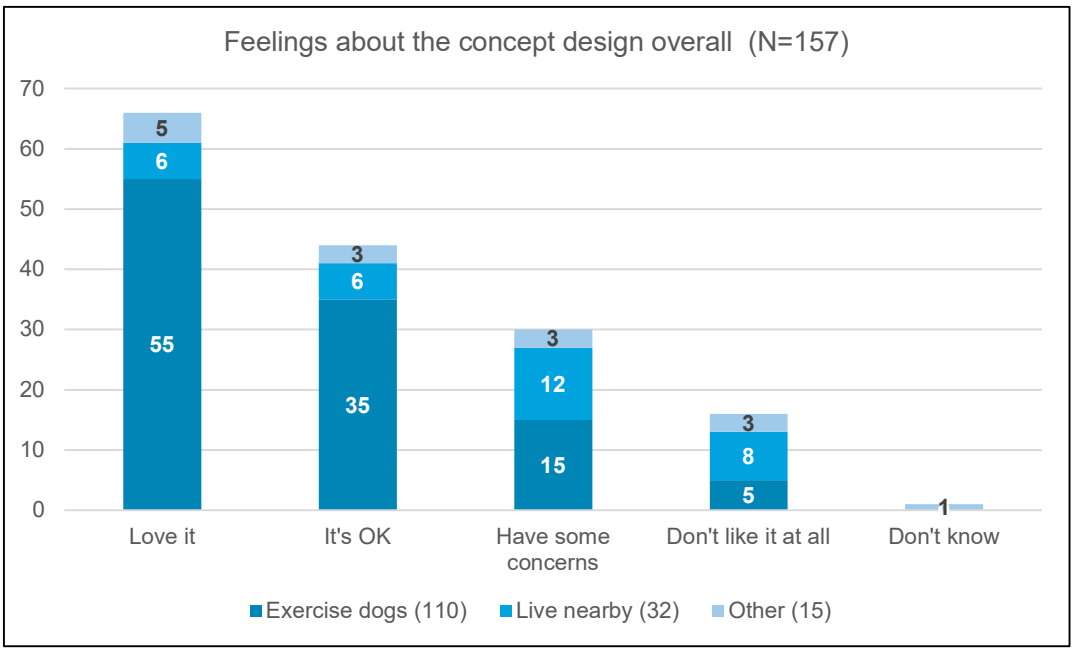
5.2.1 Draft concept design overall

The draft concept design was developed by a dog agility landscape architect and aims to provide a more enriching exercise and training space for dogs and their walkers. The design aims to improve the environment and vegetation and create an engaging space for all dogs to play, explore, socialise, and learn. The design proposes several new elements including new infrastructure, vegetation and dog agility equipment.

All survey respondents were asked “How do you feel about the concept design overall?” and presented with five prescribed response options. As shown in Figure 3, many respondents across the three sub-groupings supported the concept design overall, however, opposing views were also apparent.

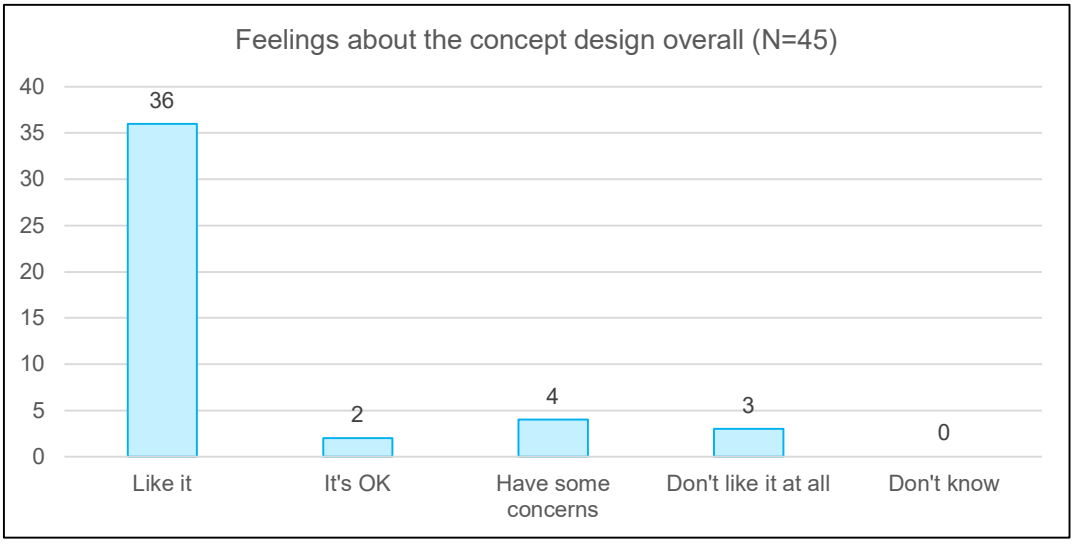
- Overall, 66 or 42.3% of respondents selected “Love it” (**50.0% of those who *Exercise dog(s)***, 18.8% of those who *Live nearby*)
- Overall, 44 or 28.2% of respondents selected “It’s OK” (31.8% of those who *Exercise dog(s),* 18.8% of those who *Live nearby*)
- Overall, 30 or 19.1% of respondents selected “Have some concerns” (13.6% of those who *Exercise dog(s),* **37.5% of those who *Live nearby***)
- Overall, 16 or 10.2% of respondents selected “Don’t like it at all” (4.5% of those who *Exercise dog(s),* 25.0% of those who *Live nearby*)

Figure 3: Ratings of feelings about the concept design overall, by sub-groups (Survey)



Drop-in participants were asked “How do you feel about the concept design overall?” and presented with five prescribed response options. As shown in Figure 4, most of the 45 respondents supported the concept design, and 36 or 80.0% of respondents selected “Like it”.

Figure 4: Ratings showing feelings about the concept design overall (Drop-in sessions)



Survey respondents that selected “I love it” or “It’s okay” when asked how they felt about the concept design overall were then asked, “What do you like about the design?” Comments submitted by **106 respondents** have been synthesised and summarised in Table 2. This feedback was provided by 88 respondents who *Exercise dog(s)*, 11 respondents who *Live nearby*, and 7 *Other* respondents.

Table 2: Summary of desirable aspects about the concept design

Response to proposal	Themes in feedback
Support for proposed design *(56 comments)*	Improves the existing area Creates an interactive and social space for dogs and owners Provides a fun area with a variety of activities
Support for the agility elements *(27 comments)*	Like the agility area and activities Like the training equipment, tunnels, and bridges
Support for the double gated entry *(24 comments)*	Like the double gate entries for security and safety
Support for the additional vegetation *(22 comments)*	Like the revegetation, additional vegetation, and native vegetation
Support for the drinking fountain with dog bowl *(13 comments)*	Like the water fountain, drinking station with dog bowl Would like additional or more water points
Support for trees *(12 comments)*	Like the retention of trees and additional trees Like having more shade and tree shade
Support for the walking path *(12 comments)*	Like the pathway or walking path around the perimeter (5) Like the solid or concrete walking path (4) Like the perimeter path, but prefer a gravel path or not concrete (3)
Support for the digging area *(9 comments)*	Like the digging area and sand pit

Response to proposal	Themes in feedback
Support for a secured, fenced area *(8 comments)*	Like the area being safe, and securely fenced
Support for the seating *(7 comments)*	Like the seating and additional seats/benches
Support for bins and litter bag dispensers *(7 comments)*	Like the bins and litter bag dispensers
Support an open space for running *(3 comments)*	Like the open space, lawn area for dogs to run around
Support for rock scramble mound *(3 comments)*	Like the rock scramble mound
Other feedback *(4 comments)*	Toilet, dog accessible toilet (3) Space for water play (1)

Survey respondents that selected "Have some concerns", "Don't like it at all", or "Don't know" when asked how they felt about the concept design overall were then asked, "What concerns you about the design?" Comments submitted by **45 respondents** have been synthesised and summarised in Table 3. This feedback was provided by 20 respondents who *Exercise dog(s)*, 19 respondents who *Live nearby*, and 6 *Other* respondents.

Table 3: Summary of concerns about, and suggestions for, the concept design

Topic	Themes in feedback
Concerns	
Do not support proposed design *(16 comments)*	Waste of ratepayers' money, disagree with the proposed upgrade Park is too small for a dog off leash area Area is already over-used, and crowded with dog walkers and doesn't need more things or equipment
Dog off leash area restricts pedestrian access *(9 comments)*	Dog off leash area blocks access, no safe, dog-free thoroughfare from Wishart Street to Bluff Road and restricted access to/from playground
Dog off leash area negatively impacts resident amenity *(8 comments)*	Houses back directly on to the area. Nearby residents impacted by noise and parked cars, dog excrement, smelly bins, proposed elements behind back fence and restricted access to recreation area
Concerns the agility element is unnecessary *(7 comments)*	Concerns the agility equipment is unnecessary, may not be appropriate for some dogs, and will not be used by many dogs
Dog off leash area excludes others using the space *(6 comments)*	Dog off leash area excludes other individuals and groups from using the space Needs more of a community focus so residents can access and enjoy their local park
Suggestions	
Create a quiet area or separated section *(9 comments)*	Create a space for timid, small, and young dogs and owners to socialise away from energetic, larger, and louder dogs
Increase dog access to water *(8 comments)*	Increase dog drinking areas, at least two or three water points in different locations away from seating, and manage water drainage to avoid muddy spots

Topic	Themes in feedback
	Water bowls that hold a good amount of water, fill quickly and are hygienic (easy to wash out)
Reconsider trees, shade, and vegetation *(7 comments)*	Good area for large and native trees for the urban forest, need more trees, shade or shelter and vegetation Avoid Sheoak trees (leaves and flowers in coat of long-haired dogs)
Increase seating options *(5 comments)*	Increase seating and benches, have some in the shade
Remove the digging zone *(5 comments)*	Remove the digging pit sand element, and if retained, relocate it away from residential gates that open into the park
Reconsider the path *(5 comments)*	Do not use concrete for the path, keep it more natural, consider white, compact "stone" materials Path around perimeter is overdevelopment, creates uneven surface for walking
Ensure open space for dogs to run *(4 comments)*	Ensure sufficient room for the use of ball throwers and dogs able to run and chase freely and safely
Increase access to bins *(3 comments)*	Provide at least two bin/poo bag areas, one near the eastern entry gates. Locate bins in the park, away from neighbouring houses
Consider safety of hurdles *(2 comments)*	Consider small dogs for hurdle height Hurdles could be a tripping hazard
Other feedback *(2 comments)*	Double gated entry appears to be unnecessary Reframe the consultation and improve the space for all users

5.2.2 Draft concept design elements

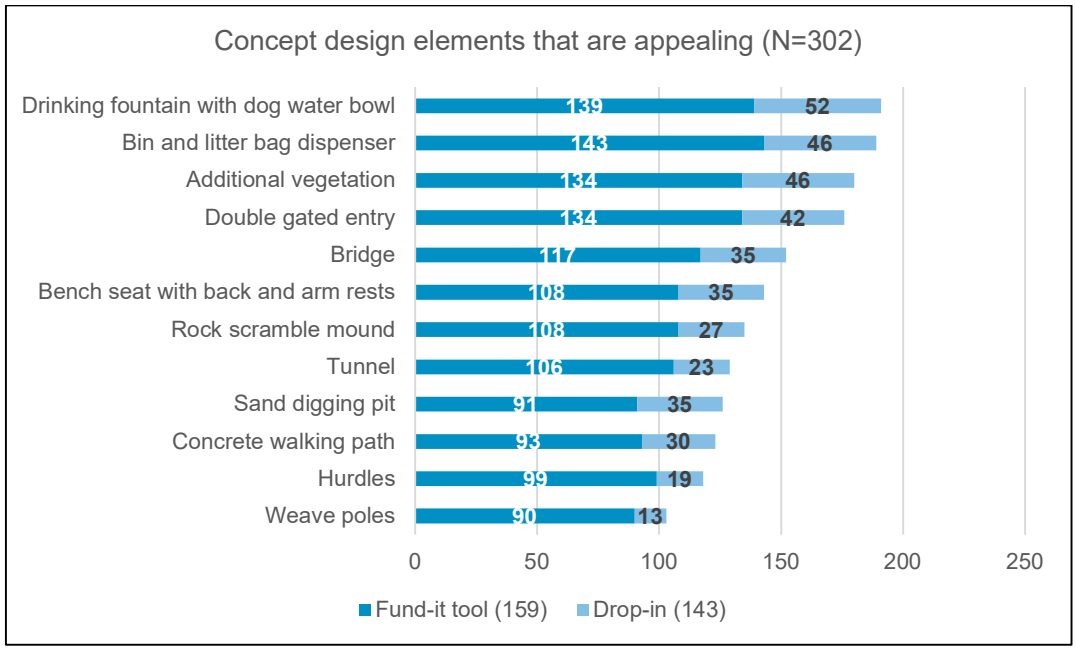
A number of new elements are proposed in the draft concept design. New infrastructure and vegetation which is intended to provide a safer and more enjoyable experience for all visitors to the reserve. Dog agility equipment (i.e., hurdles, tunnels, weave poles and bridges) will enhance the play and exercise experience for dogs and provide dog owners with the tools to develop different skills and competencies in their dogs. As well as a new perimeter path, double gated entry to the fenced off leash area, additional dog water bowls with taps.

Fund-it tool participants were asked “Which aspects of the concept design appeal to you? (select up to 12 elements)” and invited to select the 'like' button to indicate favourite or preferred design elements. **Participants at the two Drop-in sessions** were asked “Which aspects appeal to you?” and invited to select their preferred design elements.

As shown in Figure 5, all proposed design elements were selected, albeit to varying degrees by the 302 participants. The top four most appealing concept design elements were consistently selected by Fund-it tool participants and Drop-in session participants:

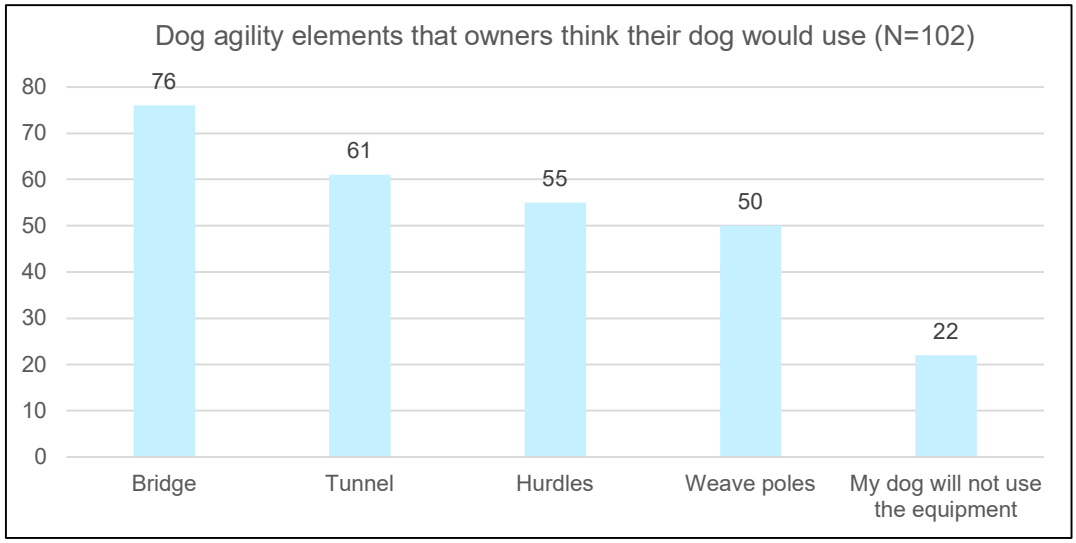
- Overall, 191 or 63.2% of participants selected **Drinking fountain with dog water bowl** (87.4% of Fund-it tool participants, 36.4% of Drop-in session participants)
- Overall, 189 or 62.6% of participants selected **Bin and litter bag dispenser** (89.9% of Fund-it tool participants, 32.2% of Drop-in session participants)
- Overall, 180 or 59.6% of participants selected **Additional vegetation** (84.3% of Fund-it tool participants, 32.2% of Drop-in session participants)
- Overall, 176 or 58.3% of participants selected **Double gated entry** (84.3% of Fund-it tool participants, 29.4% of Drop-in session participants)

Figure 5: Concept design elements that are appealing (Fund-it tool and Drop-in sessions)



Survey respondents that selected *Exercise dog(s)* when asked about the reason they visit Wishart Reserve were also asked, "Which dog agility elements do you think your dog would use (select all that apply)?" and presented with five prescribed response options. As shown in Figure 6, 80 of the 102 respondents indicated their dog would use one or more of the proposed dog agility elements. The most frequently selected elements by the 80 respondents who reported their dog will use the equipment were Bridge (76 or 95.0%), and Tunnel (61 or 76.3%). Two respondents did not provide a response for this question.

Figure 6: Views on likely use of proposed dog agility elements (Survey)

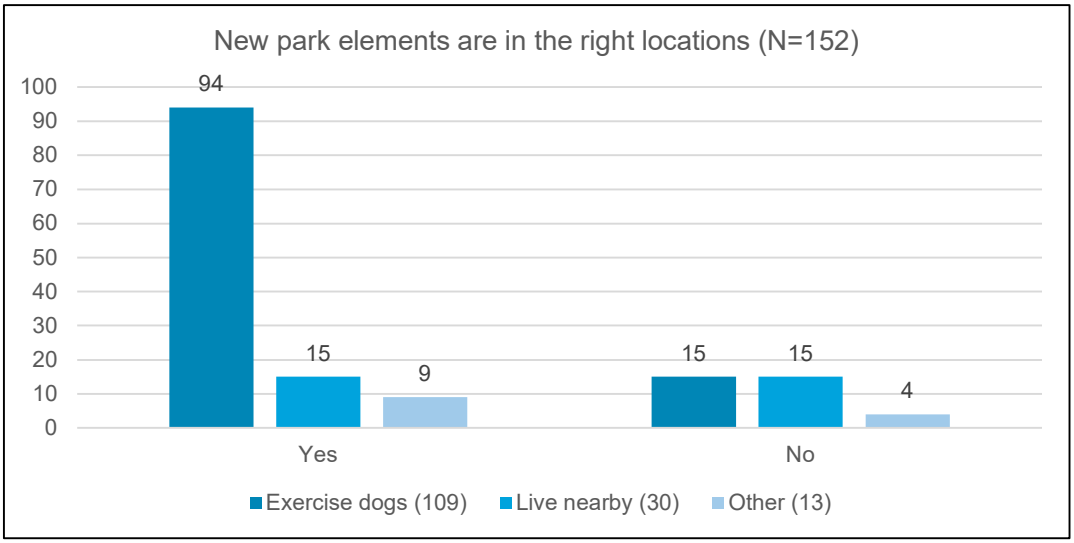


All survey respondents were asked "Do you think the new park elements are in the right locations?" and presented with two prescribed response options. As shown in Figure 7, many respondents across the three sub-groupings indicated Yes, however, opposing views were also apparent. Five respondents did not provide a response for this question.

- Overall, 118 or 77.6% of respondents selected "Yes" (86.2**%** of those who *Exercise dog(s)*, 50.0**%** of those who *Live nearby*)

- Overall, 34 or 22.4% of respondents selected “No” (13.8**%** of those who *Exercise dog(s),* 50.0**%** of those who *Live nearby*)

Figure 7: Views on proposed locations for new park elements, by sub-group (Survey)



Survey respondents that selected “No” when asked about the park elements being in the right locations were asked, “What would you like to be changed?” Comments submitted by **34 respondents** have been synthesised and summarised in Table 4. This feedback was provided by 15 respondents who *Exercise dog(s)*, 15 respondents who *Live nearby*, and 4 *Other* respondents.

Table 4: Summary of suggested changes to proposed locations for new elements and concept design overall

Topic	Themes in feedback
Unsupportive of proposed upgrade *(9 comments)*	Do not proceed, waste of money Concept and new elements are not necessary and an over-development Reduce or move the dog off-leash area
Change the fencing *(6 comments)*	Remove the fence or part of the fence Build a new internal fence away from neighbours’ fencing or bring in the boundary fences to provide space for a path external to and fenced off from the off-leash area
Improve pedestrian access *(7 comments)*	Create pedestrian walk-through access, external to and fenced off from the dog off-leash area, it could be along the fence line of neighbouring houses
Mixed support for agility elements *(6 comments)*	Have all the agility equipment together (3) Remove most of the agility equipment elements (3)
Add more trees and vegetation in specific locations *(5 comments)*	More mature and native trees and more vegetation Mixed views about trees lining the path for shade, a few large single trees, shrubs around the perimeter not in open running space
Ensure there is open space for dogs to run *(5 comments)*	Ensure there is open space for dogs to run, leave the centre open for ball and frisbee running games Lots of high energy dogs at the park who love to run
Create a new quiet area/ section *(4 comments)*	Offer an option to segregate dogs Section off an area for small or fearful dogs and/or puppy training
Mixed views about benches *(3 comments)*	Fewer bench seats to discourage dog walkers being inattentive Benches to be located away from the water points Some seating under shade

Topic	Themes in feedback
More bins, and bins in specific locations *(2 comments)*	More bins Bins to be located further in the park, on the walking track
Relocate the digging pit *(2 comments)*	Move the digging pit away from neighbouring fence
More water fountains *(2 comments)*	More water points, water to be located in an unshaded area to discourage resource-guarding
Mixed views about path *(2 comments)*	Remove the concrete path Pathways to accommodate wheelchair users and their dogs
Other feedback *(4 comments)*	Park etiquette signage outlining behavioural expectations Rules of use for the off-leash-area posted in multiple locations and internal gate for users to segregate smaller dogs and bigger dogs Low bench seating for dogs to sit on and underneath Positioning elements away from perimeter and neighbouring gates and fences to minimise noise and potential dust/debris impacts

5.2.3 Other comments about concept design

All survey respondents were asked "Do you have any other feedback about the concept design you'd like Council to consider?" Comments submitted by **134 respondents** have been synthesised and summarised in Table 5. This feedback was provided by 94 respondents who *Exercise dog(s),* 27 respondents who *Live nearby*, and 13 *Other* respondents. "Share your comments" feedback and notes taken during conversations with 99 participants at the **Drop-in sessions** are also presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Summary of general feedback on the concept design overall and elements

Topic	Themes in feedback
Create a quiet area or separated section *(24 comments)*	Create a space for timid, small, and young dogs and owners to socialise away from energetic, larger, and louder dogs
More drinking fountains and water points *(24 comments)*	Like the water fountain, drinking station with dog bowl Additional or more water points, water taps, possibly in shade or with matting or good drainage to avoid excessive mud
Reconsider the path *(23 comments)*	Need dog-free pedestrian access or path (12) Do not use concrete for the path, keep it more natural (8) Path is not necessary (2) Move path closer to fence line (1) Agree with concrete path (1)
Improve the grass irrigation and quality *(21 comments)*	Needs turf irrigation or a drainage system Automatic watering system for grass to avoid the dirt and dust Replace or repair the current grass, it is full of nasty prickles, weeds, and bare patches, needy hardy grass like buffalo grass
Support more vegetation and trees *(16 comments)*	More vegetation, more native and indigenous vegetation More trees, shade trees, mature trees, but not restrict visibility of dogs
New signage, park rules, and enforcement *(14 comments)*	Signage outlining rules, responsible pet ownership behaviours, effective control, and pick up dog litter Rangers monitoring picking up dog litter, dogs off leash in on-lead areas
Mixed views and suggestions on agility elements *(14 comments)*	Support for agility equipment, consider safety, heights, suitable for small dogs, group items together and surrounding with a barrier (7) Agility equipment is unnecessary (4) Agility equipment will encourage foxes in area (3)
Support for seating and a picnic table *(13 comments)*	More park benches and seating in shade, especially for older persons and tired dog owners Return or replace picnic table
Support for concept design overall *(11 comments)*	Happy with the concept design, well done, can't wait, please get on with it

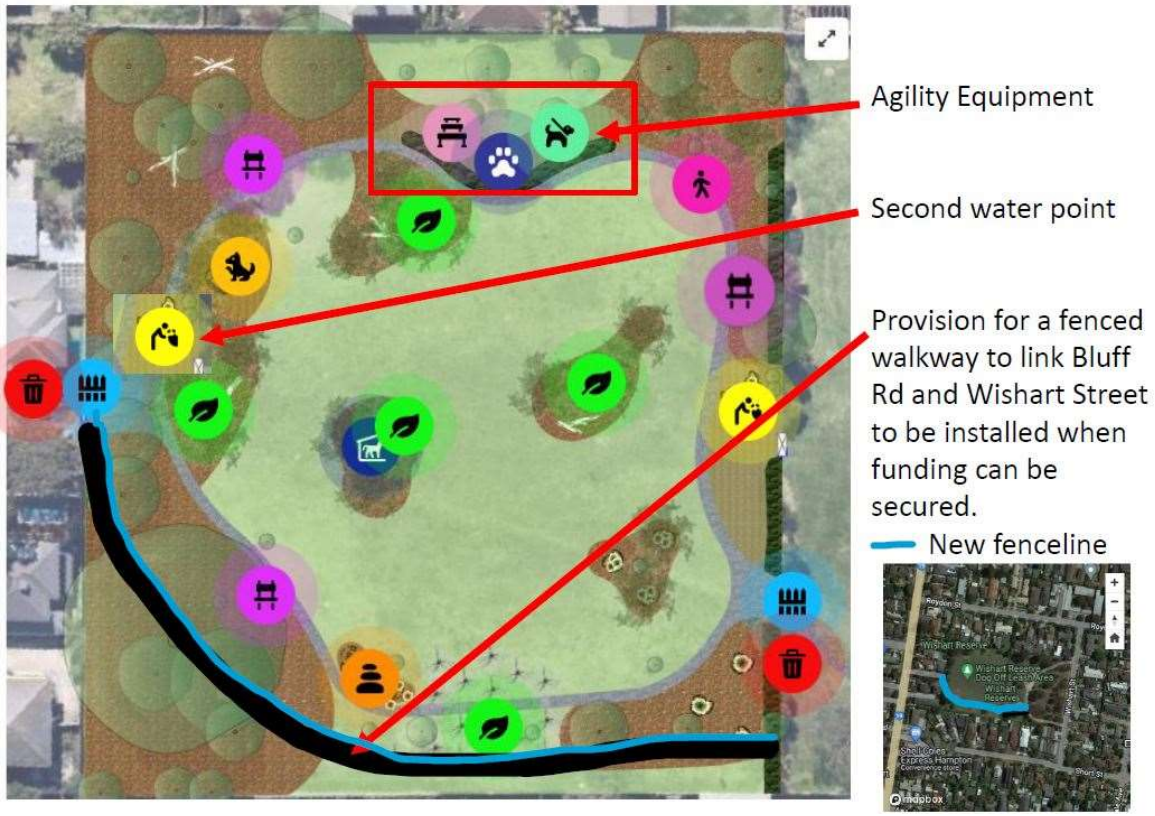
Topic	Themes in feedback
Concerns and suggestions about walkers with multiple dogs *(11 comments)*	Have a designated time for dog training and multiple dogs, restrict access to commercial dog walkers or charge commercial dog walkers Concerns that improvements will attract more dog walkers and commercial dog walkers and dog parties
Ensure there is open space for dogs to run *(10 comments)*	Ensure there is grassed, open space for dogs to run and chase Lots of dogs at the park who love to run and run long distances
Request for shade and shelter *(9 comments)*	Shelter from sun and rain and some shade over seats and benches
Do not support proposed design *(9 comments)*	Waste of ratepayers' money, disagree with the proposed upgrade Please reconsider and listen to local residents
Impact on resident amenity *(8 comments)*	Concerns about noise and parking impacts for local residents
Mixed views on digging area *(7 comments)*	Concerns about digging area becoming smelly, having dog, fox, cat, or possum faeces (5) Support for digging area or larger sand pit (2)
Request for toilet *(7 comments)*	Request for public toilet at the Reserve for users of the dog park and playground, possibly a compostable toilet
Request for more consultation *(6 comments)*	Request for broader consultation and genuine discussion including meeting with dog groups Plans of park hard to see and comment further.
More bins, and bins in specific locations *(6 comments)*	More bins and litter bag disposal, extra bins on the Wishart Street side, both sides of area
Suggestions for gates *(6 comments)*	New gates, higher gates, minimal gap under gate, gates that are accessible for a pram to navigate
Secure fencing around area *(3 comments)*	Ensure area is secure, fences could be higher to restrain exuberant dogs
Need for regular maintenance and upkeep *(7 comments)*	Keep the area, trees, and bushes regularly well-maintained, fix the potholes in the dirt road to the entry to the park
Request for a water play feature *(4 comments)*	Consider adding a shallow pool or water play feature
Other *(9 comments)*	Storage box to leave balls and toys for other dogs to play with (2) Lighting for night-time use Keep it simple, adding complexity will push back timelines Sensory areas would be more beneficial to a wider range of dogs Concerned about being told to leave private park Market it as a dog park but for everyone Lots of foxes in the area which are unsafe for dogs Unclear whether there will be distinct on-lead and off-lead areas

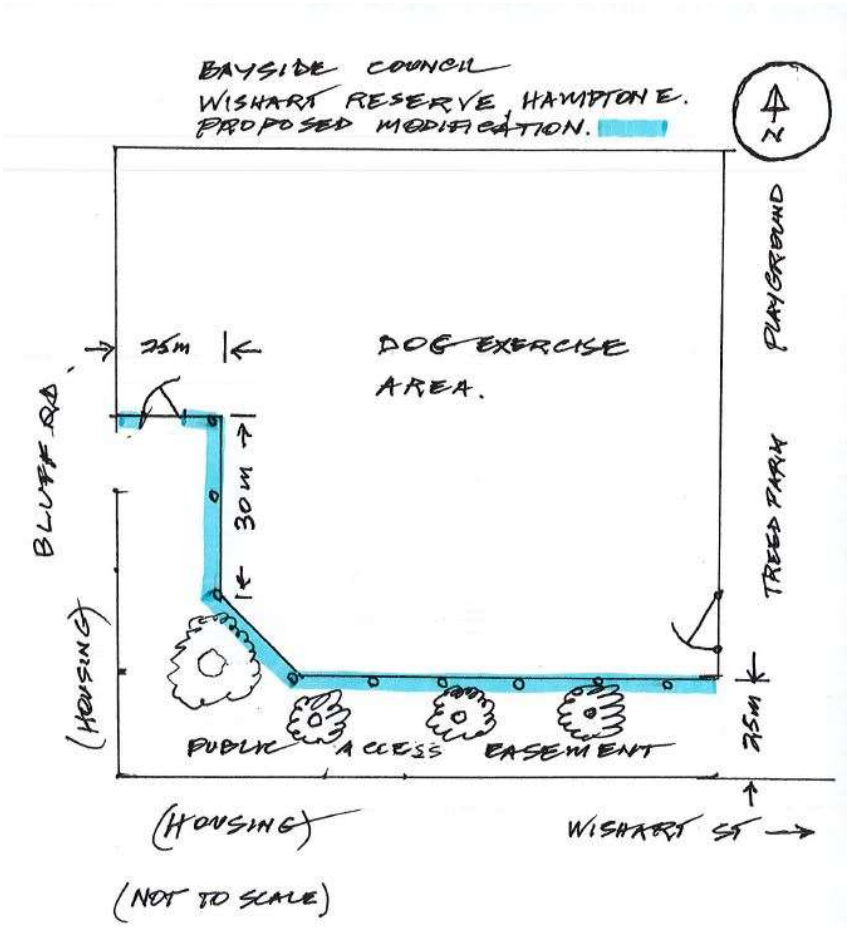
Around 40 comments across all of the engagement feedback referred to topics regarded as out of scope for this consultation. These comments referred to topics such as to the need for more dog off leash spaces and dog parks in Bayside, expanding or reducing the dog off leash area, replacing gates removed from sportsgrounds, doing these improvements in other suburbs, improving Stillitoe Park, enhancing other parts of Wishart Reserve, loss of trees, and enforcing responsible pet ownership. These comments have been shared with the responsible Council departments.

5.2.4 Correspondence from key stakeholders

Individual correspondence was submitted by six residents who live nearby Wishart Reserve and a representative of the Bayside Dog Alliance. Submissions were largely consistent with the general feedback. These was limited support for the project (referenced in 1 submission). **Concerns** were raised regarding the area being used by commercial dog walkers (5); the area being fully fenced and fully enclosed and access being restricted to and through the Reserve (4), and the improvements further increasing over-use (1). **Concept design overall suggestions** included considering rules/restrictions to manage use by commercial dog walkers; increasing accessibility to the Reserve for all users; changing the proposed fencing and path and considering a partial fence removal to open up access to the entire Reserve, creating a dog-free pedestrian path, fenced walkway or double-sided fenced walkway to link Bluff Road and Wishart Street and also a small section for quieter play; encouraging and enforcing responsible pet ownership; more and broader consultation. **Concept design element suggestions** included reconsidering the location of the digging area away from abutting properties and the location of the dog agility equipment (if necessary); specific vegetation and planting; having a path but not concrete; additional sand for dog digging area and to repair divots in grass; additional water points; using large rocks for seating; retaining an oval style open space; and Dog Park etiquette signage.

Alternate designs were provided by the Bayside Dog Alliance and neighbouring residents that included a fenced pedestrian path.





5.2.5 Petition from neighbouring residents

A petition was lodged requesting Bayside City Council to “Cease any and all upcoming changes to Wishart Reserve and conduct a comprehensive review of the needs of the whole community with respect to the layout, amenity and accessibility of the space". The petition included 34 signatories, most of whom indicated an address in neighbouring and adjacent streets to the Reserve (i.e., Bluff Road, Roydon Street, Short Street, and Wishart Street).

5.2.6 Discussion on social media and online Q&A Forum

The discussion on the Council **Facebook page** largely related to the proposed upgrade to the dog off leash area. There were 93 Facebook user actions. A total of 83 (or 89.2% of) actions were not analysed as they were deemed unusable, duplicates or edits of a post, or posts made by Council officers.

The sentiment in the remaining 10 (or 10.8% of) actions comprised:

- Support for the proposed concept design (5)
- Support for the path, mixed views on concrete path (3)
- Queries about the need for agility element (2)
- Do not support proposed concept design (1)

Nineteen contributions were submitted via the **online Q&A Forum**. The contributions were consistent with the general feedback, indicated mixed support for the proposal, and referred to commercial dog walkers, a dog-free path for pedestrians, irrigation and drainage, parking, creating a quiet area or section, seating, signage to inform and educate, and vegetation.

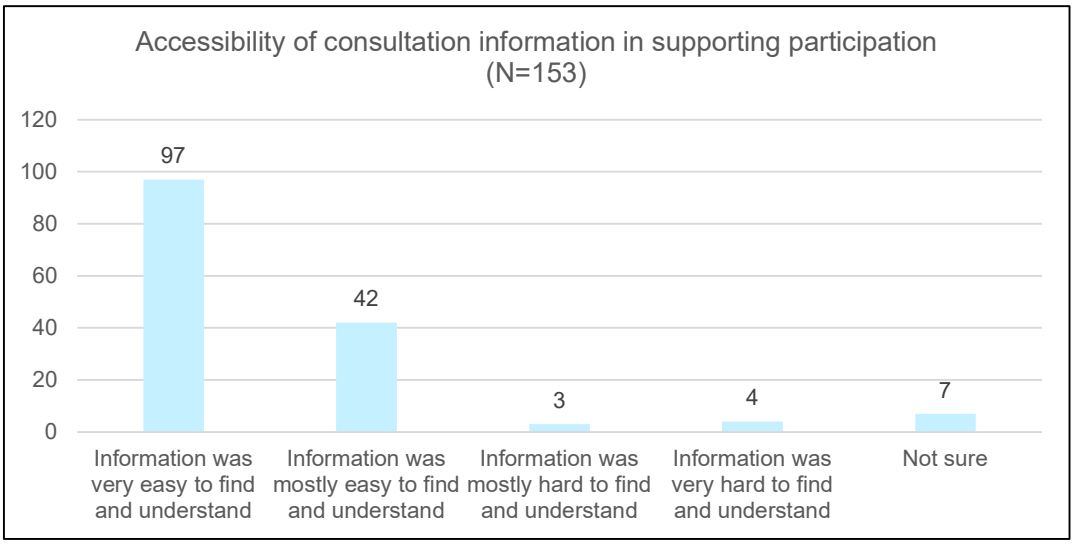
6 Project Evaluation

This Report presented the findings from the analysis of the stakeholder and community feedback gathered from 30 January to 27 February 2023. The communications and engagement program and use of a variety of online, in-person and paper-based activities, resulted in 500 participants and a solid volume of detailed feedback. A petition and submissions were initiated by some community members. Some activity and commentary were generated via the online Q&A Forum and social media posts (Council's Facebook channel).

Participant profiling based on respondents' reason for visiting Wishart Reserve demonstrates participation by the target audience (i.e., dog owners using the Reserve, off leash area, playground, and those living nearby) as well as other interested or affected persons. These responses also permitted sub-group analyses and capacity to draw out nuances based on different perspectives.

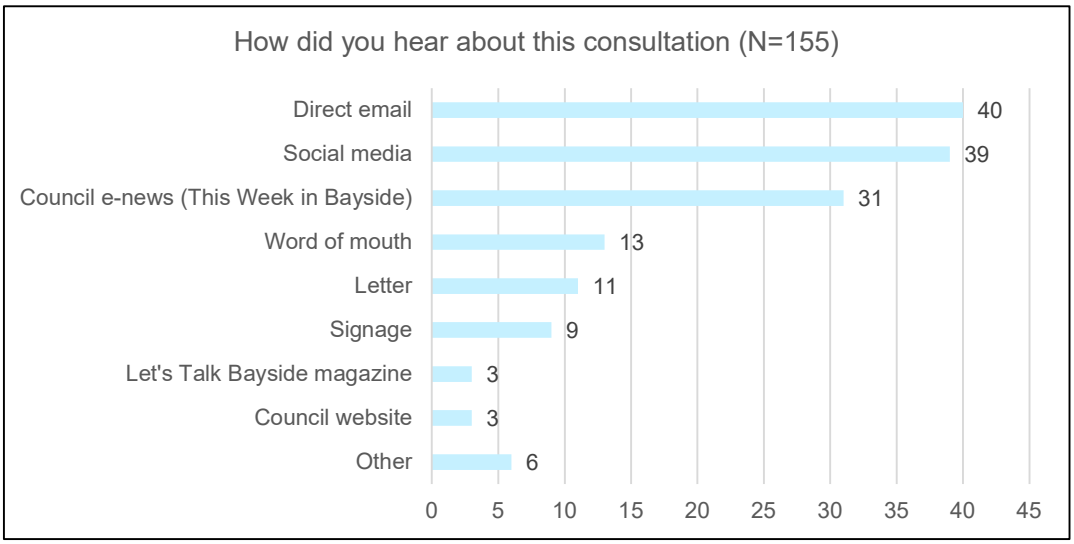
To assess accessibility of consultation information to support participation, **all survey respondents** were asked "Did you have the information you needed to provide feedback on the concept design for the Wishart Reserve dog park?" As shown in Figure 8, most respondents (139 or 90.8%) indicated the information was very easy or mostly easy to understand and find. This question was not asked in the hard copy survey.

Figure 8: Views on accessibility of information in supporting participation (Survey)



To determine the communication channels and sources used by participants to hear about the consultation, **all survey respondents** were asked "How did you hear about this consultation?" As shown in Figure 9, many respondents heard via direct email (40 or 25.8%) or social media (39 or 25.2%). Six respondents selected "Other" and provided a personalised response. This question was not asked in the hard copy survey.

Figure 9: Ways that participants heard about the consultation (Survey)



The six “Other” personalised responses are presented below:

- Flyer in letterbox (2)
- Bayside dog owners’ group
- Husband received email, forwarded it to me
- Signage, e-news, social media, Let's Talk Bayside Magazine, and word of mouth
- This Week In Bayside

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