

Report to the Future Melbourne Committee**Agenda item 6.5****University Square Stage 2 Concept Design****23 April 2024****Presenter:** Rick Kwasek, General Manager Infrastructure and Amenity**Purpose and background**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement of University Square Stage 2 Concept Design.
2. The University Square Master Plan (the Master Plan) was endorsed in 2016. In 2018, the Metro Tunnel Project (MTP) commenced occupation of part of University Square and Barry Street, Carlton for a construction works area. This occupation necessitated implementation of the Master Plan in two stages; Stage 1 completed in 2019 and Stage 2 are the remaining areas.
3. An updated Master Plan was endorsed by the Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) in October 2023 (Attachment 2 of report from management). The Master Plan needed review and refresh to respond to the design and siting of MTP permanent structures in Stage 2.
4. At the October 2023 meeting, FMC also endorsed a draft Concept Design for University Square Stage 2 for community consultation. The consultation Summary is provided in Attachment 3 of report from management. The final Concept Design (Attachment 4 of report from management) has been updated in response to this feedback.

Key issues

5. Based on extensive community consultation and engagement with external stakeholders including Wurundjeri elders and the University of Melbourne (UoM), the changes to the final Concept include:
 - 5.1. Foregrounding recognition of Traditional Owner narratives, particularly through opportunities for wellbeing and continuation of the Bouverie Creek water story through the site.
 - 5.2. Establishing Barry Street as an emphatic green space with ephemeral water features. This includes Barry Plaza as the entrance to University Square from Parkville Station.
 - 5.3. Enhancing pedestrian movement and relocating active recreation spaces to manage potential pedestrian and player conflicts.
 - 5.4. Collocating activities to support a diversity of uses, including passive, active and social activities, having consideration for interfaces, i.e. quiet spaces are located adjacent to the library.
 - 5.5. Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung welcomed a reconsideration of the square's name in consultation with Aboriginal community. This is consistent with Future Melbourne 2026 Goal 9, that we are a city with an Aboriginal focus (Priority 9.1). It is also aligned with Council place naming strategy and Reconciliation Action Plan.
6. Note the potential for adjustments in the Concept as the detailed design for University Square is undertaken. Adjustments may also be realised through collaboration with Aboriginal Traditional owners and reinstatement works for the Metro Tunnel Project, particularly within the plaza and its connection with Barry and Grattan Streets.

Recommendation from management

7. That the Future Melbourne Committee:
 - 7.1. Endorses University Square Stage 2 Concept Design
 - 7.2. Authorises the General Manager Infrastructure and Amenity, to make any further minor editorial changes to the University Square Stage 2 Concept Design prior to publication.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment (page 2 of 41)
2. Master Plan Refresh (page 4 of 41)
3. Community Consultation Summary Report (page 31 of 41)
4. Concept Design (page 41 of 41)

Supporting Attachment

Legal

1. Legal advice has and will continue to be provided on the impact of the MTP on University Square and in finalising any contractual obligations.

Finance

2. All finance aspects have been reviewed by Finance Business Partner.
3. The Council Works Budget does not include Stage 2A University Square (stage 2A). It is currently proposed to be delivered by MTP (subject to final negotiations).

Conflict of interest

4. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a material or general conflict of interest in relation to the matter of the report.

Health and Safety

5. The concept design will be an opportunity to address current access and inclusion issues through University Square including the following aspects:
 - Accessibility of the lawn area from Barry Street – currently has level difference preventing disabled access.
 - Accessibility of the western footpath – currently has non-conforming cross fall.
 - Accessibility of the future tenancy under chiller building – currently is not accessible from Barry Street.
6. Stage 2 of University Square will further contribute to local community health and wellbeing. The entirety of University Square is neighbourhood open space serving the passive and informal recreational needs of people who live and work in the western portion of Carlton. Stage 2 includes additional informal recreation opportunities in the Square including a multipurpose play court, picnic and BBQ facilities, spaces to relax and a location for a toilet if required in the future.
7. The concept design will enhance safety and passive surveillance by:
 - Improving lighting
 - Activation
 - Appropriate planting

Stakeholder consultation

8. The second phase of community engagement sought feedback on the Master Plan Refresh and draft concept plan for University Square Stage 2. This was held from 3 October to 20 November 2023.
9. Over 130 people provided feedback through Participate Melbourne. A number of people also provided feedback through on-site meetings. Further feedback was gained through stakeholder meetings with the University of Melbourne and the Disability advisory committee.
10. Three workshops were conducted with Traditional Owners; Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung. With a third conducted with the final concept in early February.
11. Draft Concept was presented at the Melbourne Design Review Panel (MDRP

12. The engagement findings overall were supportive of the Square concept and made a number of suggestions for further nature elements and amenities.
13. The detailed engagement report with external stakeholder consultation can be found in Attachment 3 of report from management.

Relation to Council policy

14. The following Council policies are applicable to this project:
 - Reimagine University Square Master Plan 2016
 - City of Melbourne Carlton Urban Forest Precinct Plan 2013-2023
 - Melbourne Metro Parkville Station plans and supplementary information
 - City of Melbourne Open Space Strategy 2012-2027 and Open Space Strategy Technical Report 2012
 - City of Melbourne Urban Forest Strategy 2012-2032
 - Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2021–2023
 - City of Melbourne Design and Construction Standards 2022

Environmental sustainability

15. In developing this proposal, the following environmental sustainability issues or opportunities have been considered:
 - Stage 2 will deliver further greening of University Square and an overall increase in tree canopy cover. These outcomes will support strategic environmental and biodiversity objectives of the City of Melbourne.
 - Increased permeable surfaces - minimised stormwater run-off.
 - Encouraged use of low—embodied-carbon materials.

UNIVERSITY SQUARE MASTER PLAN REFRESH

OCTOBER 2023



CITY OF MELBOURNE

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

University Square is located on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country.

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we govern, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong Boon Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge and honour the unbroken spiritual, cultural and political connection the Wurundjeri, Bunurong, Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wadawurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin have to this unique place for more than 2000 generations.

We are committed to our reconciliation journey, because at its heart, reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, for the benefit of all Victorians.

Council Plan 2021-25

The Council Plan 2021-25 sets out our strategic direction and commitment to the community for the next four years. Based on six strategic objectives for our city, this is our detailed plan for our city's revitalisation and considers the needs of all people who access and experience the City of Melbourne municipality. For more information visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/council-plan



Melbourne's unique identity and place

Melbourne is a city defined by its places, people and cultures, assets we want to celebrate and protect. Driven by our creative, entertainment and education sectors we will ensure Melbourne remains a unique, vibrant and creative city with world-leading liveability.

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Issue 01 - University Square Master Plan Refresh

October 2023

Cover Image: University Square. Photo Credit: David Hannah

Disclaimer

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Image 1: University Square
David Hannah

FOREWORD FROM THE LORD MAYOR OF MELBOURNE



University Square Master Plan Refresh

University Square is one of Carlton's oldest and most-loved public squares. It sits within a well-established and growing neighbourhood that enjoys a mix of uses – education, health, research, commercial and residential.

We're transforming University Square to create a world-class space on the doorstep of one of the city's newest public transport hubs. Once complete, our new-look University Square will be a lush green area for the community to enjoy. It will deliver more than 6500 square metres of public open space, garden beds, new lawns and hundreds of new trees.

We will improve connections between the new Parkville Station and University Square through Barry Plaza. The community can also dwell and enjoy barbecue areas, shady spaces and a multi-purpose sports court.

Stormwater will be redirected and reused, while cooling infrastructure and an increased tree canopy cover will reduce the urban heat island effect, all part of our ongoing response to the changing climate.

The City of Melbourne launched the original Master Plan for University Square in 2016. Since then, the Metro Tunnel Project's Parkville Station and the 2019 MPavilion installation have significantly changed University Square and the surrounding area.

The first stage of the original master plan was completed in 2019, and delivered a large new open space with additional trees, a biodiverse garden, seating and terrace spaces. Stage 2 was paused to allow work on the Metro Tunnel Project. With this work almost complete, we're refreshing the Master Plan to pick up where we left off with Stage 2 of University Square – and to update our community to make sure we deliver on your aspirations for this significant public space.

We're working closely with residents, businesses and stakeholders, including the University of Melbourne, and Wurundjeri elders, as we plan for the future of this important community space. We're also releasing a draft concept design for Stage 2; and we'll seek feedback in October and November ahead of a final concept design in early 2024. Please let us know what you think about the future of your public square.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sally Capp".

Lord Mayor
Sally Capp

INTRODUCTION

Context

University Square (the Square) is of significant strategic and community value. It is located within the diverse suburb of Carlton, adjacent to the Central City and Parkville neighbourhoods.

Located in the 'City North' precinct, University Square sits within a well-established, globally-renowned and growing area of mixed uses including educational, health, research, commercial and residential. It is part of a broader network of parks in the area including Lincoln Square and Argyle Square. The Square is immediately surrounded by University of Melbourne landholdings.

University Square is classified as a 'Neighbourhood open space' within the City of Melbourne Open Space Strategy 2012. This classification means that the Square should function for "neighbourhood use within walking distance of home with a diversity of character and facilities that appeal to the local community at a neighbourhood level. This means a family or groups of people can visit the park for an extended time, with a suitable range of facilities to meet their different needs....". Over 80 per cent of dwellings in Carlton are apartments or flats, placing additional demand on the role of public open space to serve as a high-quality place to meet, gather and rest.

Purpose of this Master Plan Refresh

The Master Plan Refresh is guided by the engagement, vision, principles and actions identified and endorsed in the 2016 Master Plan.

The purpose of this Refresh is to update the University Square Master Plan 2016 in light of three key drivers:

1. The site context has evolved
2. City of Melbourne policies and strategies have progressed over the past seven years
3. The University Square Master Plan 2016 reached the end of its implementation plan in 2022.

These key drivers are discussed further on page 9.

This document updates the actions, outcomes and implementation plan in relation to the three key drivers. It is to be read in conjunction with the 2016 Master Plan.

Community snapshot

Carlton is set to grow significantly over the next 20 years...

Currently, **17,185** people live in Carlton ¹ In 2041, the population is forecast to grow to **35,877** ¹

27 is the **median age** of the Carlton population compared to 30 for the City of Melbourne ²

81% of dwellings are apartments or flats ²



The number of **households** between 2021-41 will grow by **83%** ¹



The number of **jobs** between 2021-41 will grow by **82%** ¹

The adjacent neighbourhoods of the **CBD** and **Parkville** are set to grow by **104%** and **65%** respectively in population by 2041 ¹



Source:

¹ SGS Economics (2021)

² ABS (2021)

What is driving the Master Plan Refresh?

1

The site context has evolved

Since the 2016 Master Plan's endorsement, two major developments have occurred within University Square - Metro Tunnel's Parkville Station and installation of the 2019 MPavilion.

The development of the new Parkville Station has introduced buildings and rail infrastructure into the Square. It will also increase demands on the Square as both a transport hub and the nearest public open space serving the surrounding university and health precinct. Rail infrastructure has been accounted for in the Master Plan Refresh to ensure that the immediate and long-term needs of the site and community are addressed.

In 2022, City of Melbourne granted a licence to the University of Melbourne to install the 2019 MPavilion in University Square. Its purpose is to provide "a public structure of general architecture interest that can be used for events and activities and is available for public use". The licence was granted for a ten year term from January 2022 to January 2032. At the completion of the licence, the pavilion will be removed and the area reverted to lawn.

2

City of Melbourne policies and strategies have progressed over the past seven years

The 2016 Master Plan recognised the critical role of University Square in responding to contextual changes of the site while also building on its layers of history. Since the 2016 Master Plan, a number of key City of Melbourne documents have been endorsed which set updated targets for the Square.

Key policies and strategies relevant to the Refresh include:

- The **Municipal Integrated Water Management Plan (2017)**
- The **Nature in the City Strategy (2017)** which aims to create and maintain healthy ecosystems and thriving biodiversity within the city.

- **Skate Melbourne Plan (2017-2027)**
- **Melbourne Innovation Districts City North Opportunities Plan (2020)**
- **Public Art Framework (2021-2031)**
- **Design and Construction Standards (2022)**

3

The University Square Master Plan 2016 reached the end of its implementation plan in 2022

The 2016 Master Plan set the vision for University Square and included a short and medium-term implementation plan, up to the year 2022. This document ensures relevance and continuity of

the vision. It also assesses the implementation status of the Master Plan actions to ensure momentum for years to come.

The 2016 Master Plan

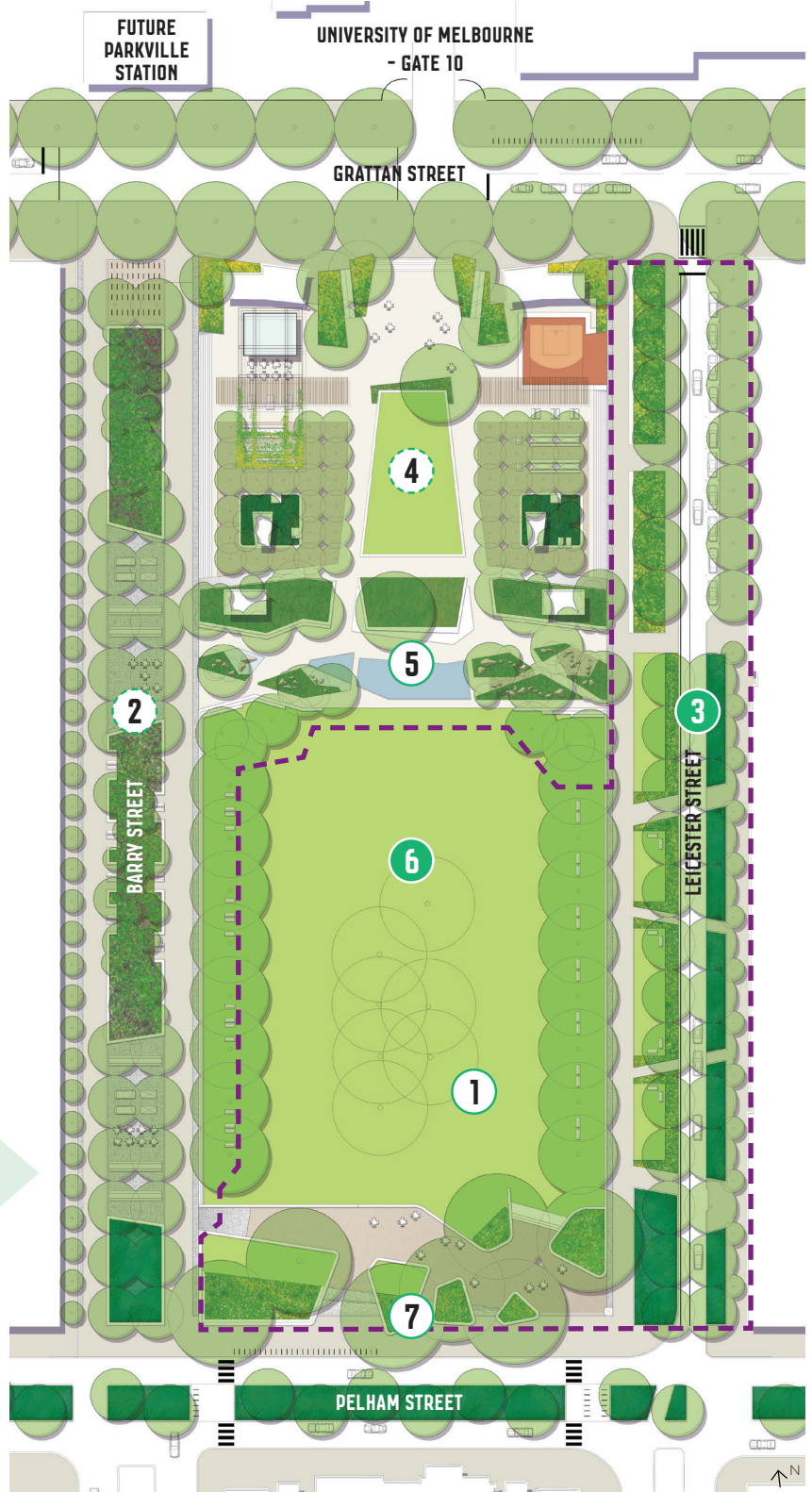
The Master Plan 2016 outlines the vision for University Square. It was developed from years of community engagement and is guided by three overarching principles, which are still relevant today. Ten major actions were identified to realise the vision. An implementation plan outlined projected delivery phases.

2016 MASTER PLAN PRINCIPLES

-  A connection to the past
-  Meeting the needs of the future
-  Balancing priorities in a limited space

2016 MASTER PLAN ACTIONS

- 1** Tree planting and succession
- 2** Barry Street new park spaces
- 3** Leicester Street road within a park
- 4** Plaza and Grattan Street
- 5** Water Terrace
- 6** The Green
- 7** Pelham Street parkfront and biodiversity corridor
- 8** Creating social spaces
- 9** Building a living laboratory
- 10** Integrated public art vision



 Stage 1 (Completed)

Image 2: 2016 Master Plan diagram

What has been implemented at University Square since the Master Plan was endorsed in 2016?

Since the 2016 Master Plan was endorsed, several key actions have been progressed. Two of the ten main actions have been fully implemented. In 2019, Stage 1 of the University Square delivery installed approximately 3,600 m² of new public open space. The following is a summary of the actions and their corresponding items that have been delivered since 2016.

2016 MASTER PLAN ACTIONS	Implementation Status
1 Tree planting and succession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 85 trees planted in 2019
2 Barry Street new park spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not yet implemented
3 Leicester Street road within a park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation complete
4 Plaza and Grattan Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not yet implemented
5 Water Terrace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of underground storm water storage tank for irrigation, which is linked to Lincoln Square system
6 The Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 3,600 m² of new public open space installed in 2019, creating a unified lawn
7 Pelham Street parkfront and biodiversity corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New central park entrance at Pelham Street installed in 2019
8 Creating social spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of seating and gathering spaces Installation of the 2019 MPavilion serving as a venue for public and educational events
9 Building a living laboratory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Native Grassland and Wildflower planting trial
10 Integrated public art vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water sensors installed to understand water movement Materiality trials, including permeable pavement treatments Two temporary public art commissions were installed across 2021-22. Sean Lynch's installation, 'Distant Things Appear Suddenly Near', will remain in the northern plaza for a period of up to five years (2026)

- Fully implemented
- Partially implemented
- Not yet implemented

THE MASTER PLAN REFRESH

The Master Plan Refresh adopts the three principles from the 2016 Master Plan. Actions have been updated in response to the key drivers of this Master Plan Refresh and are informed by the principles.

The updated actions build on what has already been implemented to achieve a cohesive and high-quality public open space.

MASTER PLAN REFRESH PRINCIPLES



A connection to the past



Meeting the needs of the future



Balancing priorities in a limited space

MASTER PLAN REFRESH DRIVERS

1

The site context has evolved

2

City of Melbourne policies and strategies have progressed over the past seven years

3

The Master Plan 2016 reached the end of its implementation plan in 2022

MASTER PLAN REFRESH ACTIONS

1

Tree planting and succession

2

Barry Street new park spaces

3

Leicester Street road within a park

4

Plaza and Grattan Street

5

Water Story

6

The Green

7

Pelham Street parkfront

8

Creating social spaces

9

Building a living laboratory

10

Integrated public art vision

The Master Plan Refresh will aim to deliver:

+ 6,500 m² additional public open space

+ 3,500 m² new garden beds

+ 2,200 m² new lawn

41 % tree canopy cover



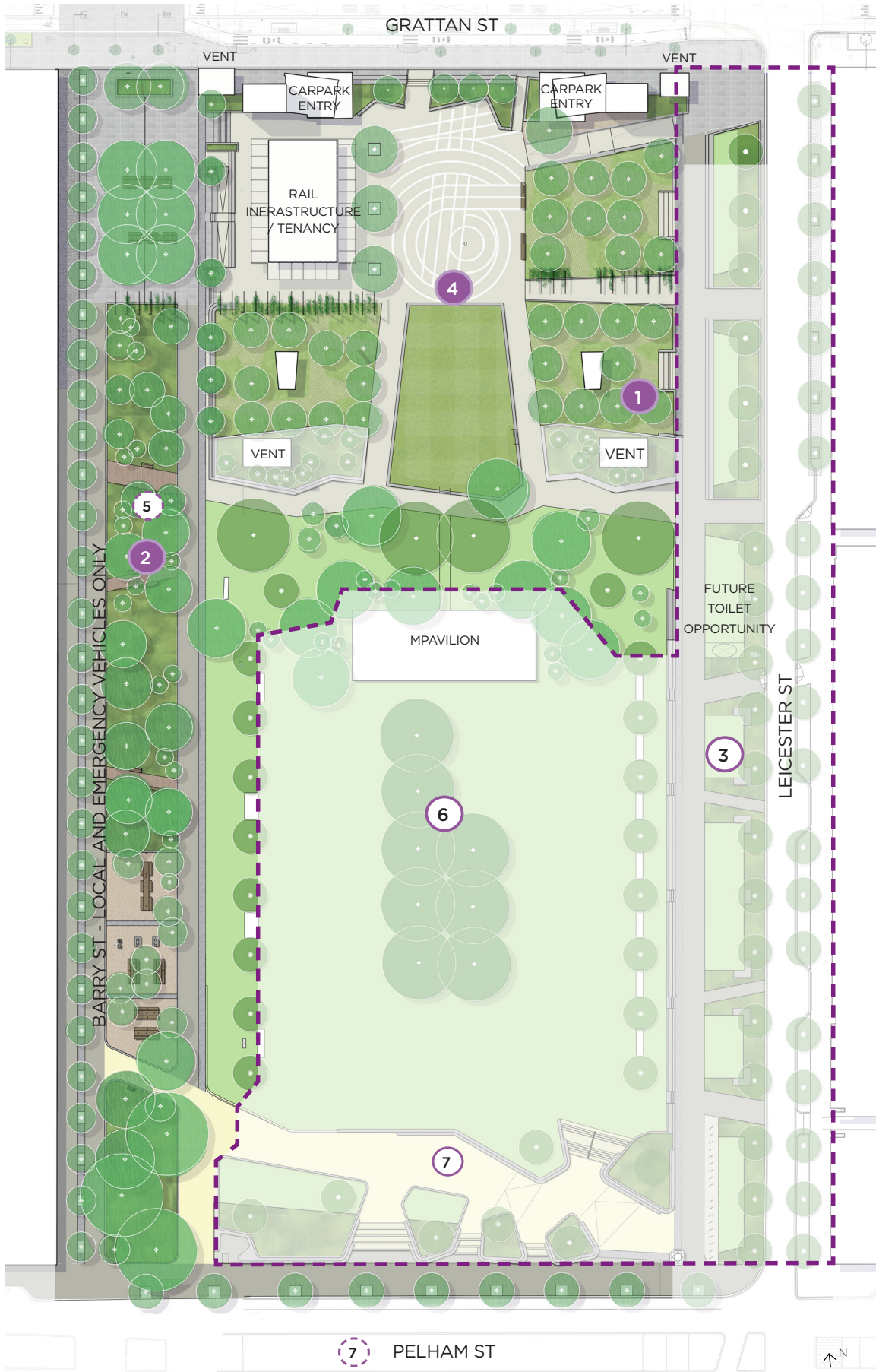
To further deliver



Complete / mostly complete



Removed from project scope



--- Stage 1 (Completed)
Image 4: The Master Plan Refresh

MASTER PLAN REFRESH ACTIONS

1 TREE PLANTING AND SUCCESSION



2016 Master Plan Actions Summary

Create a new urban forest at University Square, with the addition of almost 250 new trees (48 per cent overall canopy cover). To maintain the square's distinctive leafy profile, we must strike a balance between retaining and removing the declining mature Elm trees in order to start planting new trees to keep the park looking green for generations to come.

2023 Master Plan Actions Summary

Create a new urban forest at University Square by increasing overall canopy cover to 41 per cent.

Reasons for change: canopy cover measures are more impactful than counting the total number of trees (City of Melbourne Urban Forest Strategy 2012). The mature Elm trees retained within the Green have been kept short term for canopy and habitat value, and will be replaced with grass at the end of their lifespan.

2 BARRY STREET NEW PARK SPACES



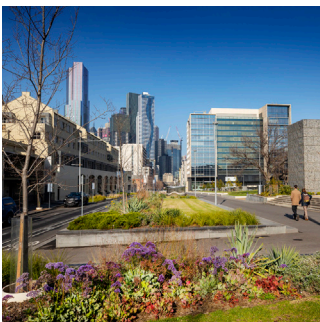
Increase the size of the square by closing Barry Street to traffic and car parking. Expand the lawn, plant new trees, establish new gardens beds and create 'new park spaces' with additional seating, communal tables and movable furniture. These spaces can be suitable for small events, food vans and public art installations.

Increase the size of the square by closing Barry Street to general traffic and car parking - only allowing emergency vehicles and approved maintenance access. Ensure the extension is seamlessly integrated with the existing Square and new Metro Tunnel context. The extension will:

- Increase vegetation and create new social spaces
- Celebrate water and investigate opportunities to bring it to the surface
- Explore the opportunities to advance the goals of the Nature in the City Strategy (2017).

Reasons for change: The celebration of water has been relocated to this area as it can no longer be accommodated in the 2016 Master Plan location due to installation of the 2019 MPavilion and new Metro Tunnel station.

3 LEICESTER STREET ROAD WITHIN A PARK



Reduce the width of Leicester Street and maintain northbound traffic only to retain essential bus services, bicycles and traffic while enlarging the square. Leicester Street will become a 'road within a park' that can be easily crossed by pedestrians and is lined with trees. The smaller road will also allow space for new shared perimeter paths and a dedicated bike lane.

This action was completed in 2019.



Image 6: University Square
David Hannah

4 PLAZA AND GRATTAN STREET



2016 Master Plan Actions Summary

Build a new heart for University Square in a re-designed plaza. New features include diverse trees and gardens, a recessed basketball half-court, table tennis and chess boards. Communal tables with Wi-Fi and charging points will create an outdoor study space, while barbecues and picnic tables provide space for socialising and relaxation beside a new cafe.

2023 Master Plan Actions Summary

Build a new heart for University Square in a re-designed plaza. New features include diverse trees and gardens, a multi-purpose informal sports court, table tennis, chess boards, informal recreation and places to socialise and study. Metro tunnel infrastructure including the 'chiller building' will be tenanted to activate the square and may include innovation, social and/or food and beverage uses.

Reasons for change: multi-purpose informal sports court provide more uses for diverse people and will replace the 2016 proposed basketball half court. The path network, some social amenities, BBQ and public toilet will be located in other areas of the Square, in response to the new Metro Tunnel Train Station Chiller Building and tenancy, ventilation shafts and associated infrastructure.

5 WATER STORY



Water terrace: A transition from the Plaza to The Green will be created with a Water Terrace. The new space will include trees, gardens and aquatic plantings with a focus on water. The space will feature water jets and misters, public art and play.

Water story: University Square sits on the 'headwaters' of the Elizabeth Street catchment, just north of the fork between the historical watercourse of Bouverie and Elizabeth Street Creeks. These creeks represent biodiversity and knowledge pathways to the Wurundjeri People, the traditional owners of the land. Wurundjeri are also known as freshwater people, due to the environment they manage of their Country.

Water story will be represented and celebrated at University Square through:

- Exposed water elements in the Barry Street Park extension, featuring native and indigenous planting
- Utilise Integrated Water Management strategies where possible, including understanding of Elizabeth Street catchment and use of indigenous planting to cleanse water
- Continued engagement with Wurundjeri
- Continued use of recycled water sources for irrigation on site

Reasons for change: Installation of the 2019 MPavilion in University Square has necessitated the relocation of the water element. The Master Plan Refresh pivots the 2016 action to better represent the historical use and significance of water on the site to the Wurundjeri People and to reflect the Municipal Integrated Water Management Plan (2017).

2016 Master Plan Actions Summary

2023 Master Plan Actions Summary

6 THE GREEN



Expand and improve the square's much-loved lawn area. Remove the existing central and diagonal paths to create a single unified lawn space. Build new perimeter paths along Leicester and Barry streets to become new pedestrian thoroughfares for access through the park from Grattan Street, the new Parkville Station and to adjacent sites and buildings.

This action was completed in 2019.

7 PELHAM STREET PARKFRONT

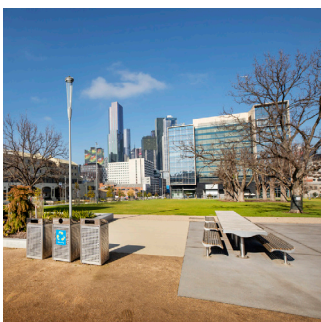


Pelham Street Parkfront and Biosiversity Corridor: Replace the current single central entrance with a new park entrance and address at Pelham Street. Pelham Street itself will be transformed into a green corridor linking University and Lincoln Squares, by replacing central street parking with new trees. The median strip will also be reconfigured as a water sensitive garden.

Pelham Street Parkfront: The central entrance along Pelham Street was completed in 2019.

Pelham Biodiversity Corridor reasons for change: Pelham Street Biodiversity Corridor extends from Rathdowne Street to Elizabeth Street, linking University Square, Argyle Square and Lincoln Square (Carlton Urban Forest Precinct Plan 2013-2023). To ensure a holistic network approach to the Corridor, it has been removed from this Master Plan Refresh and be considered at an Urban Forest Precinct Pan level.

8 CREATING SOCIAL SPACES



Design and locate park elements that meet the needs of social, accessible and connected spaces in the new park including seating, lighting, bicycle infrastructure, picnic, barbecue facilities, drinking fountains and bins. Focus on both permanently fixed and movable park elements and incorporate technology to meet the needs of an education and innovation precinct.

Design and locate park elements that foster social, accessible and connected spaces. Provide park elements (furniture, facilities, lighting, bicycle infrastructure, picnic, barbecue facilities, drinking fountains, bins and technology infrastructure etc.) that enhance the Square's role within the Melbourne Innovation District City North precinct.

Management:

- Investigate opportunity for sports equipment library at Chiller Building tenancy.
- Monitor the use of the BBQs and park furniture for the proposed Barry Street social spaces.
- Monitor the use of the informal active recreation equipment proposed in the plaza such as basketball / netball ring.
- Maintain amenity assets to a good standard, and provide new seats, drinking fountains, signage and public lighting as required.
- Minor upgrades, additions or adjustments to the current open space facilities may be considered if community need or demand is demonstrated and the changes do not impact on the amenity value or presentation of University Square.



Image 7: University Square
David Hannah

9 BUILDING A LIVING LABORATORY



2016 Master Plan Actions Summary

Provide opportunities and infrastructure that encourages research and prototyping in fields such as alternative energy sources, biodiversity, air quality, heat-island-effect and connect with the University of Melbourne’s research aspirations.

2023 Master Plan Actions Summary

Provide opportunities and infrastructure for research and prototyping that aligns with Melbourne Innovation Districts City North Opportunities Plan (2020) and supports City of Melbourne sustainability investigations, including cooling infrastructure interventions.

Reasons for change: Established in 2017, Melbourne Innovation Districts (MID) is a partnership between the City of Melbourne, RMIT University, and the University of Melbourne, to develop urban innovations in Melbourne, for the benefit of the whole city. University Square is located within the MID City North area. To maximise impact, this Action will align with MID ambitions.

10 INTEGRATED PUBLIC ART VISION



Integrate art into University Square from the design phase through a strategic creative vision that enables art to be a fundamental component of the site’s design, grounded in the essential values and priorities underlying the reimagining of the space. Implement an art program that is inclusive, coherent, well-considered in relation to the evolving context, and that produces suitably innovative works capable of animating public awareness and imagination.

Integrate art into University Square that is responsive to its context and aligns with City of Melbourne’s Public Art Framework (2021-2031).

Reasons for change: The Public Art Framework (2021-2031) provides guiding principles, priorities and key deliverables for public art in the municipality, including University Square.



Image 8: Pelham Street parkfront was delivered in 2019
David Hannah

USES AND ACTIVITIES

This chapter has been added to the Master Plan Refresh to provide clarity of the expected types of use at University Square.

As a neighbourhood open space, University Square supports a range of passive and informal recreational uses, along with booked activities. The Master Plan Refresh proposes an expansion of informal active recreation offerings, social gathering opportunities, increased use as a movement corridor and provision for booked activities.

Events are managed by both the City of Melbourne (for the Square) and University of Melbourne (for MPavilion). It is envisaged that event and other permit bookings will continue at University Square in line with standard City of Melbourne management and booking procedures. Larger activities on the plaza are not encouraged given the load limits for the University of Melbourne carpark structure underneath, and the need to maintain access to the informal recreation facilities.

Bookings for the MPavilion are coordinated by the University of Melbourne, with notification provided to the City of Melbourne. No other temporary structures would be considered in University Square, beyond those utilised during events.

The Skate Melbourne Plan (2017) recognises skating as a legitimate activity, with a range of benefits to the city, general community and individuals. It is particularly popular amongst young people, who form a larger than average proportion of the surrounding Carlton population. Skating use safely integrated into areas at University Square is supported to create vibrant, inclusive and multi-use spaces.

Recommendations:

General

1. Continue to manage University Square as primarily a passive recreation space, to meet the open space needs of the Carlton community, with a particular focus on tertiary students and staff, nearby residents, health precinct staff and area commuters.
2. Encourage the use of the plaza area as an informal active recreation space, with a multipurpose court and relocated outdoor table tennis tables. Formal, organised active recreation activities or sports are not supported.
3. Acknowledge skating as a welcomed activity in some areas of the square, recognising it as an inclusive and accessible activity providing health, social and economic benefits, to be managed in line with council policies.

Bookings

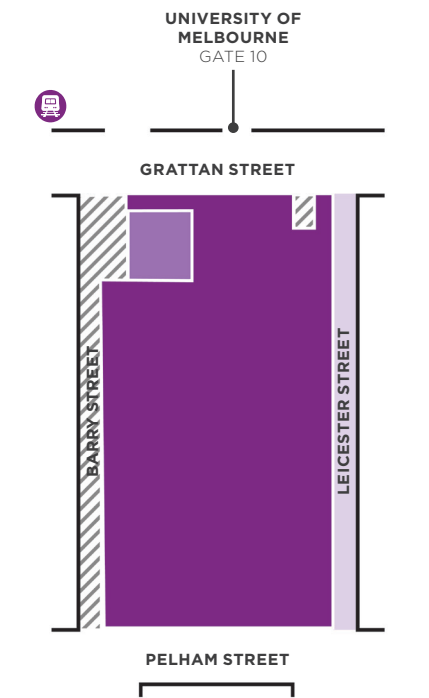
4. Continue to manage University Square for events and other permitted activities, avoiding impact on regular passive and active recreational opportunities.
5. Event bookings for the plaza should not be considered to ensure general public availability of this informal active open space at all times, unless by exception and subject to load limits (e.g. University Open Day).
6. Continue to coordinate bookings for the MPavilion with the University of Melbourne, ensuring the pavilion and adjacent lawn are not booked for separate events at any one time (see section 'Facilities').

MASTER PLAN REFRESH OUTCOMES

The combined actions of the University Square Master Plan Refresh will deliver the following outcomes from 2019 onwards.

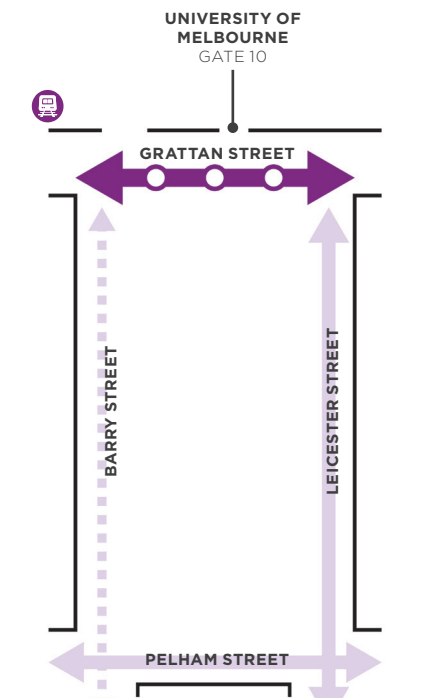
Park expansion

Car parking and traffic



- Key**
- Reserve crown land
 - Rail land
 - Emergency vehicle access
 - Vehicle access road

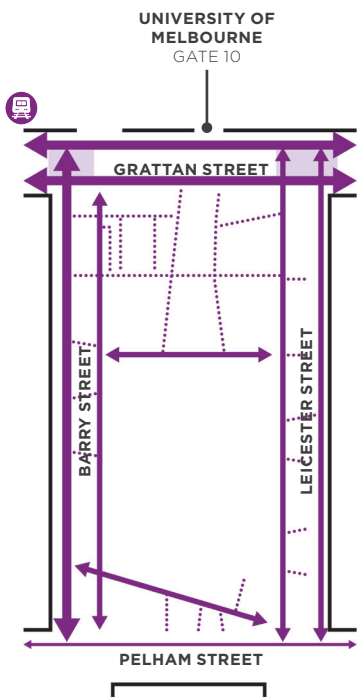
- Including:
- +6,500 m² of new public open space, unlocking Leicester Street and Barry Street from streetscape to more open space
 - +600 m² of beautified rail land.







- Key**
- Parkville station entry
 - Bus stop
 - Bus and vehicle route
 - Vehicle route
 - Emergency vehicles and approved maintenance access only

- Including:
- Grattan Street as a key bus corridor with new traffic function to integrate with Parkville Station
 - Barry Street for emergency vehicles and approved maintenance access only
 - Leicester Street for north bound local traffic only.

Prioritising pedestrians



Key

-  Primary pedestrian route
-  Secondary pedestrian route
-  Minor pedestrian route
-  Signalised crossing


Including:

- Clear hierarchy of pedestrian routes of all sizes and uses.
- Signalised crossings across Grattan Street.
- Provide accessible routes where possible.

Urban forest



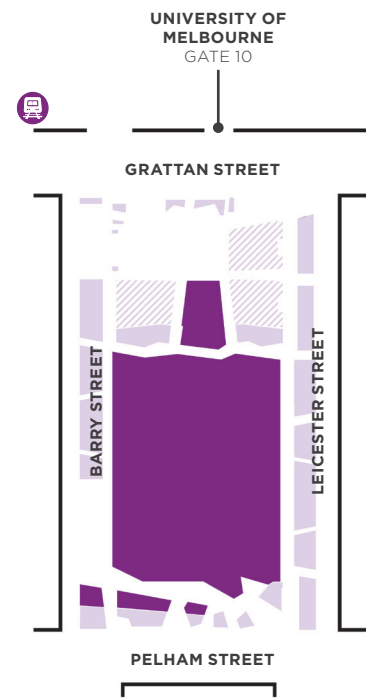
Key

-  Tree canopy cover



Including:

- 41 per cent tree canopy cover
- Diverse mix of exotic, native, evergreen and deciduous species.

Urban heat island and biodiversity



Key

-  Lawn area
-  Planted area

Including:

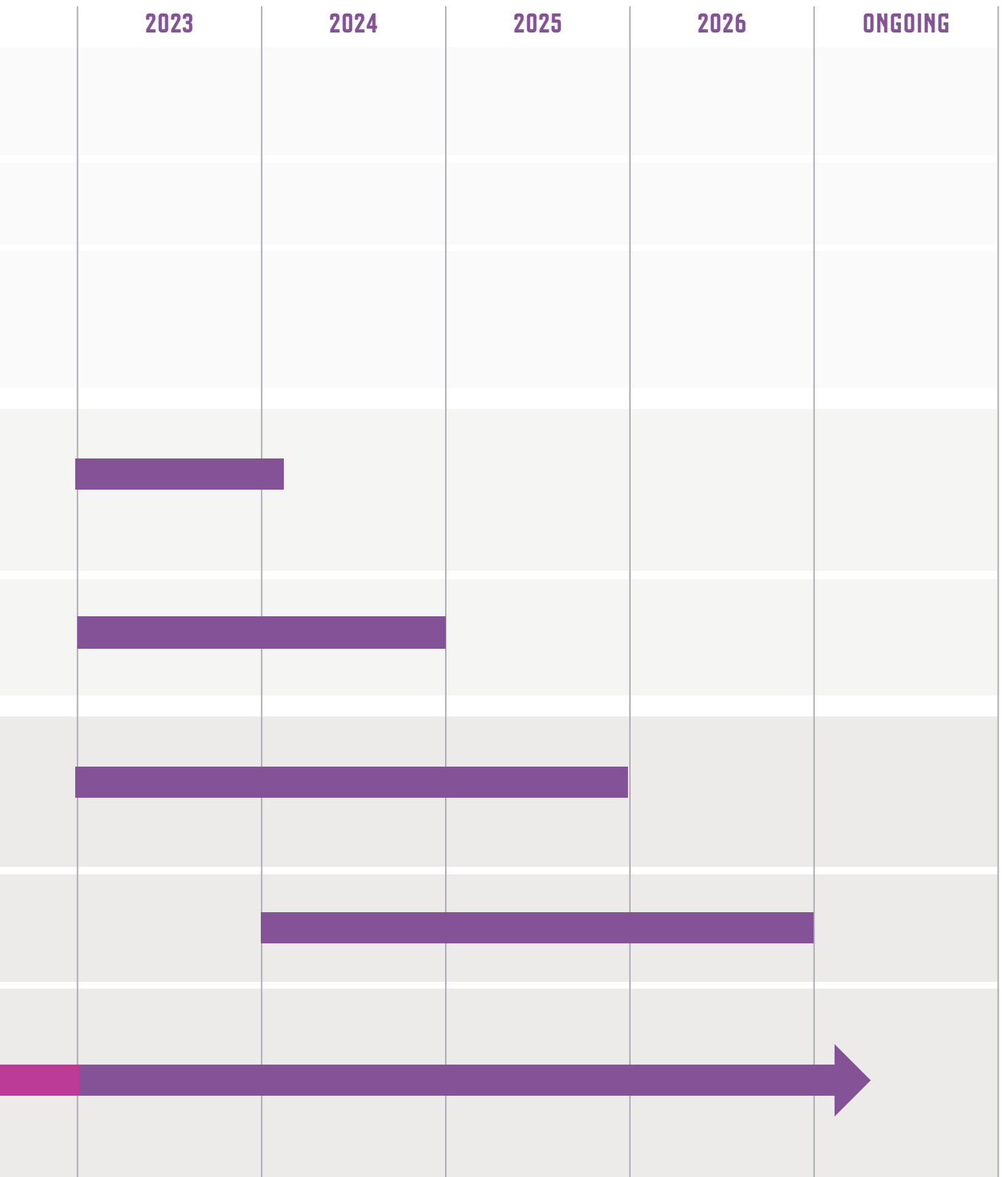
- +2,200 m² of new lawn
- +3,500 m² of new garden beds.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Master Plan Refresh actions are proposed along the following timeline, subject to relevant approvals and detail design:

		2016-2022
3	Leicester Street road within a park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constructed (2019) 	COMPLETED
6	The Green <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constructed (2019) 	COMPLETED
7	Pelham Street parkfront <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pelham Street parkfront completed (2019) Biodiversity corridor removed from scope 	COMPLETED
	Release Master Plan Refresh and consult community on Draft Concept Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete by early 2024 	
	Rail Projects Victoria Land reinstatement by others* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete by late 2024 	
2	Barry Street new park spaces,	
5	Water Story	
4	Plaza and Grattan Street	
1	Tree planting and succession,	STARTED
8	Creating social spaces,	
9	Building a living laboratory,	
10	Integrated public art vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2017 - ongoing 	

* Refer Appendix 1 for land ownership distribution across University Square



APPENDIX I – CURRENT AND PROPOSED LAND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENT



APPENDIX II – REFERENCES

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City of Melbourne (2013) *Carlton Urban Forest Precinct Plan 2013-2023*, accessed 16 June 2023. <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/greening-the-city/urban-forest/pages/urban-forest-precinct-plans.aspx>

SGS Economics (2021) *City of Melbourne Population Forecasts by Small Area 2021-2041* [OpenData], City of Melbourne Open Data website, accessed 16 June 2023. [OpenData format]

APPENDIX III – PHOTO REFERENCES

Cover University Square, David Hannah

Image 1. University Square, David Hannah

Page 14 (Top). University Square, David Hannah

Page 14 (Bottom). University Square, David Hannah

Page 16 (Top). University Square, David Hannah

Page 16 (Middle). University Square, David Hannah

Page 16 (Bottom). University Square, David Hannah

Image 6. University Square, David Hannah

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Interpreter services

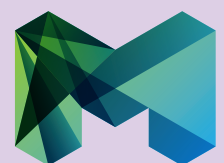
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CITY OF MELBOURNE

UNIVERSITY SQUARE DRAFT CONCEPT COMMUNITY CONSULTATION SUMMARY REPORT 2024



CITY OF MELBOURNE

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Melbourne Design Review Panel	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: OVERVIEW AND KEY FINDINGS

The second phase of community engagement sought feedback on the Master Plan Refresh and draft concept plan for University Square Stage 2. This was held from 3 October to 20 November 2023.

Over 130 people provided feedback through Participate Melbourne. A number of people also provided feedback through on-site meetings. Further feedback was gained through stakeholder meetings with the University of Melbourne and the Disability advisory committee.

Two of three workshops were conducted with Traditional Owners; Wurundjeri Woiwurrung. With a third to be conducted with final concept in early February.

Draft Concept was presented at the Melbourne Design Review Panel (MDRP)

The engagement findings overall were supportive of the Square concept and made a number of suggestions for further nature elements and amenities. Their suggestions are described in this report.



Image: University Square Concept Community Engagement Pop Up session at MPavilion.



Image: University Square Concept Community Engagement Pop Up session at MPavilion.



Image: University Square Concept Community Engagement Pop Up session at MPavilion.

BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Background

The University Square Master Plan sets the direction to transition a 19th century landscape into a modern space that will provide more room for the community and complement a range of future uses, while recognising the rich history of the site.

The Master Plan was endorsed in 2016 and a number of iterations of community consultation were carried out between 2014 to 2016. The Master Plan outlines a vision for the Square that will better serve the local community, students, workers and visitors. Stage One was completed in 2019, creating a large new open space, additional trees, a biodiverse garden, seating and terrace spaces.

With the Parkville Station set to open in 2025, University Square will become the doorstep to one of the city's newest public transport hubs. This has called for an updated Master Plan - responding to the many changes the Metro Tunnel will make to Carlton and University Square.

The refresh provides an update on the actions from the 2016 Master Plan, including actions that have been adapted to create a world-class space for the community that complements its future uses.

The University Square Master Plan Refresh and updated concept design for Stage two seeks to accommodate an evolved site context with the new additions of the MPavillion on site and the Metro Tunnel Parkville Station entry opposite the Square. Community consultation on the project was held from 3 October to 20 November 2023. Consultation focused on understanding the specific needs of the local community to inform the design.

Methodology

The information and feedback gathered during community consultation highlighted the need for the Square to support passive recreation activities and to provide a space for local community to connect with nature. Due to its close proximity to the University of Melbourne, the Square is often used by students and workers as a gathering space and a place to relax. The engagement process provided opportunities for people to become familiar with the concept plan by: Discussing the concept on site with Council Officers Viewing the concept plan on the Participate Melbourne website.

Responses were encouraged through the Participate Melbourne website, while information was also gathered in person at the site meetings.

The invitation to participate in the community engagement was promoted by the City of Melbourne through a range of mediums including:

- 6 information board/ signs in the Square with QR codes.
- Face-to-face engagement at University Square at a Pop up session.
- Intercept Surveys around carton, Parkville and the University of Melbourne
- Social media campaign.
- Key Stakeholder meetings.
 - University of Melbourne (UoM)
 - Disability Advisory Committee
 - Cross Yarra Partnership (CYP)
- Engagement and workshops with Traditional Owners; Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung.
- Presenting to Melbourne Design Review Panel (MDRP)

ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

SUPPORT AND CONCERNS

Overall, the feedback on the concept plan was positive.

- Respondents were supportive of the increase in green park space and the opportunity for University Square to foster connections with nature.
- Respondents were also largely supportive of the opportunity for active recreation in the multi-purpose area for casual sport and organised events. Provision for passive recreation was also supported, especially the inclusion of a BBQ area, table tennis and tables for group gatherings and playing chess.
- Respondents were generally supportive of the Square communicating a design narrative with Indigenous stories and nature being most popular.
- Respondents were supportive of the at grade interfaces of Barry street from building line to square's green zone for barrier free connections.

“ This space as it presently exists is a missed opportunity to build a vibrant community that is accessible to all and connected to the university and emerging local community. I would use it for classes; social gatherings, active recreational activities and quiet reflective times

“ CoM should design the area to ensure the Square can be a social space day to night, year-round, with suitable lighting to assist passive surveillance, especially along Barry Street as the primary pedestrian route to the new Parkville Station

Some Concerns for the Square were also captured

- Concerns related to accessibility and greening.
- Comments were made about the accessibility of paths for people with disabilities and concerns for bikes and pedestrians sharing cars.
- Comments were also made requesting more trees be planted to replace the central elms and provide more shade.
- Some respondents were also concerned that the area allocated to open green is too large.
- Concerns were raised about the location of the BBQ area on Barry Street adjacent University of Melbourne Faculty of Business and Economics (FBE) building and FBE Library entrances, as noise would be an issue.

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Comments and suggestions were captured across all sessions, and listed below.

- Increase canopy cover.
- Ensure all areas are accessible to people with limited mobility.
- Warm ambient lighting at night for safety
- Improve connections through the square to increase accessibility and safety.
- Ensure pathways are clear, legible and safe for pedestrians.
- Explore increasing seating options throughout the Square, focusing on seating options for people of all needs.
- Ensure there is a level of passive surveillance achieved throughout the Square to improve safety. Consider how the multi-purpose area can be utilised for a wide variety of active uses.
- Explore how more shade can be provided to the multi-purpose area.
- Consider the location of water taps and providing a tap with a dog bowl.
- Explore the possibility of including a public toilet with disability facilities.
- Consider pathway connections across open green to improve accessibility.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Going forward into the concept design for university square comments, suggestions and recommendations have adjusted and informed the final concept design.

Key moves and updates incorporated into the concept are.

- Consolidating a multipurpose active recreation court to the north of the project to best support pedestrian movement central to the plaza.
- Moving the BBQ areas from the southern area of Barry street to consolidate them into the social plaza areas and to reduce noise outside of key UoM building entrances and Libraries.
- Unifying the ground plane materials to best support clear and direct pedestrian routes across the square
- Embed and celebrate Wurundjeri stories throughout the project through educational opportunities, seasonal flush of flora and fauna and welcoming spaces.
- Ensuring a sense of safety and inclusivity of all the spaces in the day and night through lighting and passive surveillance.

“

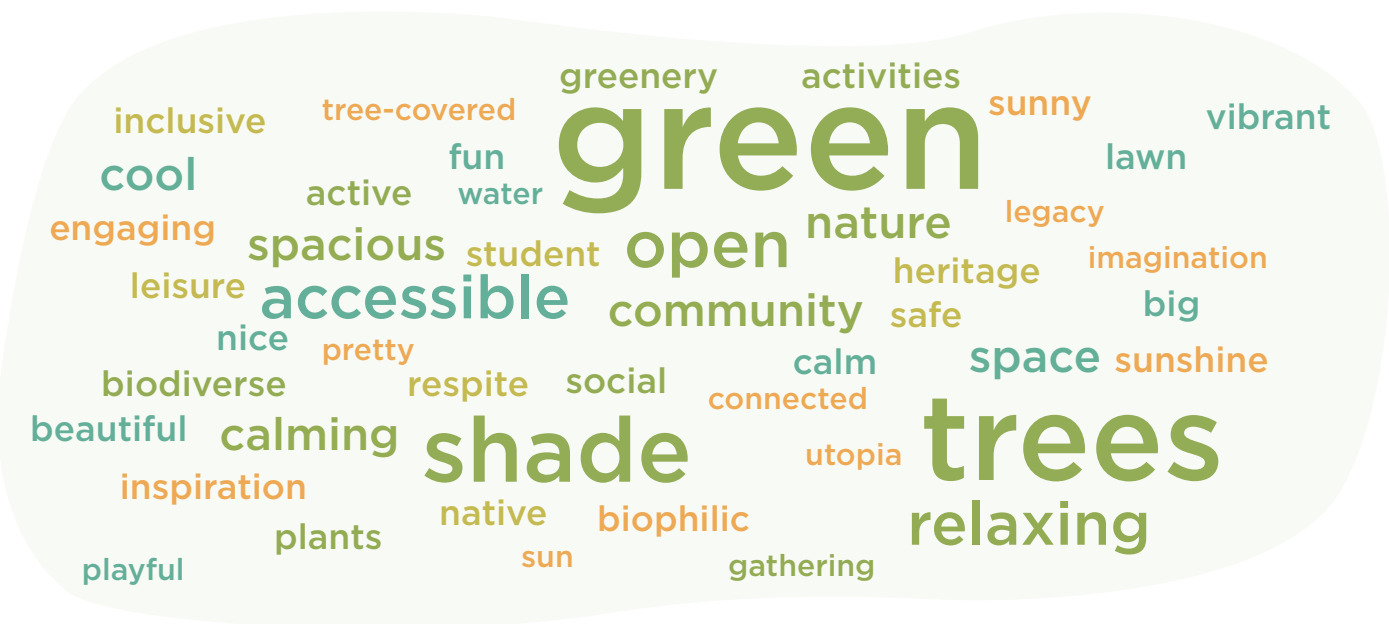
|

think there should be spaces that are good to eat lunch, to hang with friends to study including table spaces, room for a little coffee spot [and] also better plantings

UNIVERSITY SQUARE KEY SENTIMENTS

We asked the community to describe the future of university square in 3 words. We captured this in a word cloud to highlight key words that were clearly coming through.

Describe the future University Square in three words?

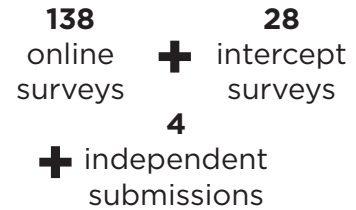


WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU FEEL SAFE AND INVITED TO USE THIS SPACE AT ANY TIME OF DAY?

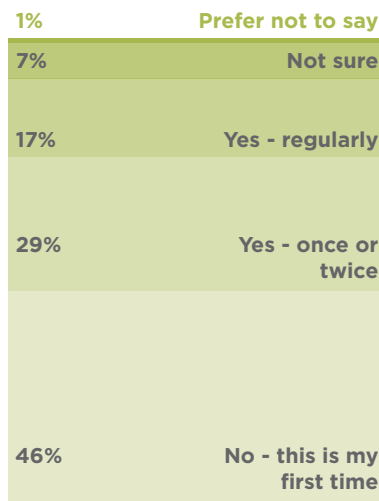


WHO WE HEARD FROM

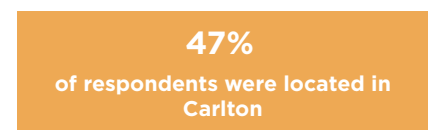
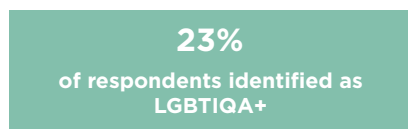
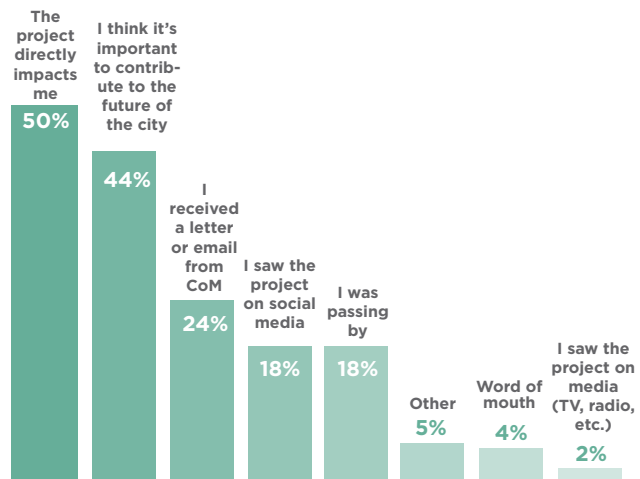
138 people provided feedback on the draft concept plan through the Participate Melbourne webpage. Further feedback was provided through the specific consultations with stakeholders such as the University of Melbourne and Cross Yarra Partnership as well as from on-site discussions with community members. The following section provides a summary of the feedback received.



Have you participated in a consultation with City of Melbourne before?



What motivated you to participate in this consultation?

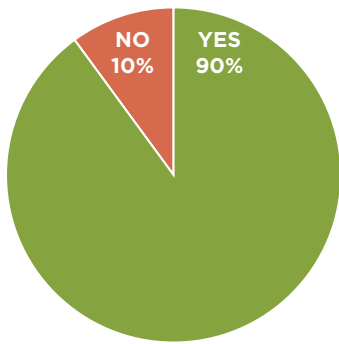


WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE COMMUNITY

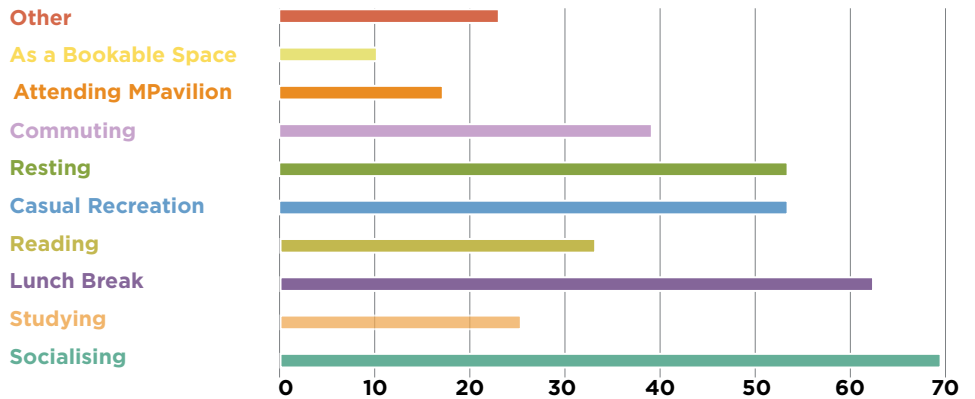
Through the engagement we asked a variety of questions through participate Melbourne, with the aim of hearing how the community currently and would use University Square.

UNIVERSITY SQUARE NOW

Do you use University Square?

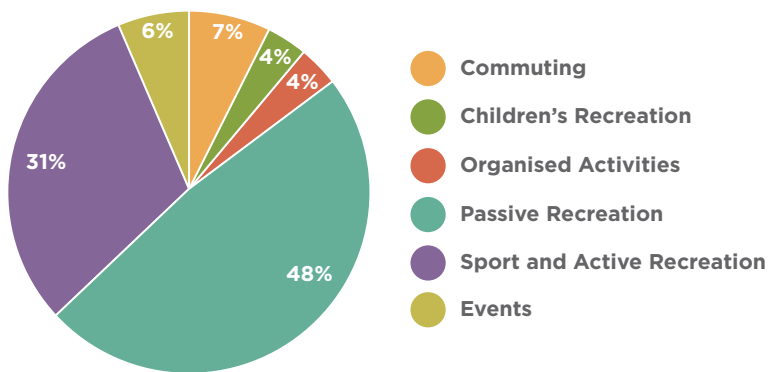


How do you use University Square?

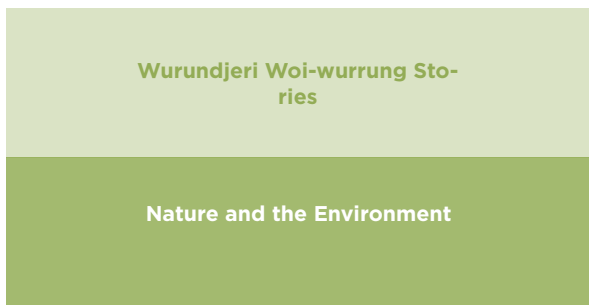


UNIVERSITY SQUARE GOING FORWARD

How would you like to use University Square?



What stories would be told in University Square?



We asked the community to select from a range of stories that they would like to be told through the design of University square. These were the 2 which were the most popular.

WURUNDJERI WOI-WURRUNG WORKSHOPS

During the concept development phase, we collaborated with the traditional owners of the land where University Square is located, the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung people. We engaged with Auntie Juliane and Auntie Gail through three workshops, including a site visit to University Square and two online meetings. During these sessions, we shared ideas and concepts, and workshoped items suggested by the aunts for inclusion in the space.

Some of the key items that came out of these workshops were

- Including an Acknowledgment Sign somewhere in the square which lets you know “you are on Wurundjeri Country”
- Considerations of renaming of University Square
- Seasonal markers and planting across the project as a way of celebrating the 7 seasons
- A place of wellbeing
- The square should be an educational space
- A space which is well connected to surrounding stories and context
- A space which celebrates the story of water

MELBOURNE DESIGN REVIEW PANEL (MDRP)

The Melbourne Design Review Panel (MDRP) reviewed the proposal by City Design for the concept design for University Square. This was a presentation of the draft concept to a group of industry panelists where recommendations and comments for encouraged to best support the design development of the project. From this there was a series of recommendations from this for University Square.

The vision and ambition for University Square is commended. The site’s legacy of competing geometries and materials brings a complexity that requires addressing. Clarity of the design narrative and a simplified and integrated materials palette is needed to produce a unified public space.

The proposal demonstrates a well-considered series of spaces for active and passive uses. As the design develops, design exploration and refinement will be required to address how structures and geometries can relate to varying scales and uses.

There is opportunity for the water story along Barry Street to be more heavily grounded as a design principle, and drawn into the site to break down the formality of the square’s geometry, encouraging education, play and interaction with the landscape.

A report of this advice has been prepared separately, with the follow key points summarised.

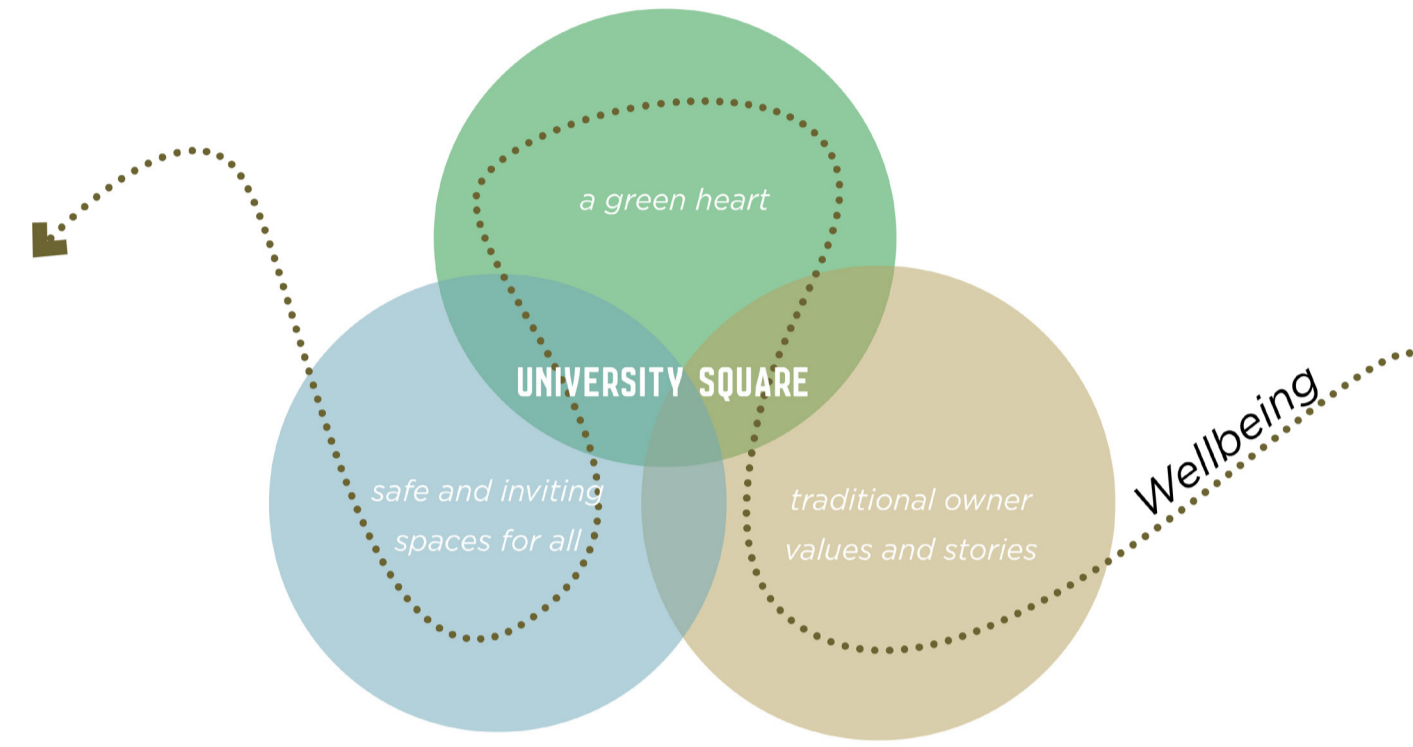
- The design concept for the project faces challenges due to past interventions, but there’s an opportunity to incorporate pre-colonisation history into the design narrative.
- The project should consider foregrounding health concepts, especially given its proximity to health-related districts, with input from Traditional Owners.
- The current site layout emphasises geometries, but there’s a need to soften boundaries, improve ground connections, and provide better seating options for different group sizes.
- Intimate gathering spaces are supported but require further exploration to ensure effectiveness.
- Topography should inform the layout of spaces as “outdoor rooms.”
- The size of spaces should be tested for their value, and consideration should be given to incorporating tenancies compatible with surrounding noise levels.
- Circulation pathways need to be better integrated with the square’s center and water elements to create a more cohesive experience.
- A material audit is recommended to simplify the site’s materials palette, and planting should be integrated to soften hardscapes and increase canopy cover.
- The water story, informed by Traditional Owner engagement, should be prioritized with playful, interactive elements and should flow into the main square for a more integrated narrative.

UNIVERSITY SQUARE

STAGE TWO

CONCEPT DESIGN

CONCEPT PRINCIPLES



MASTER PLAN ACTIONS

- 1 Tree planting and succession
- 2 Barry Street new park spaces
- 3 Leicester Street road within a park
- 4 Plaza and Grattan Street
- 5 Water Story
- 6 The Green
- 7 Pelham Street parkfront
- 8 Creating social spaces
- 9 Building a living laboratory
- 10 Integrated public art vision

LEGEND

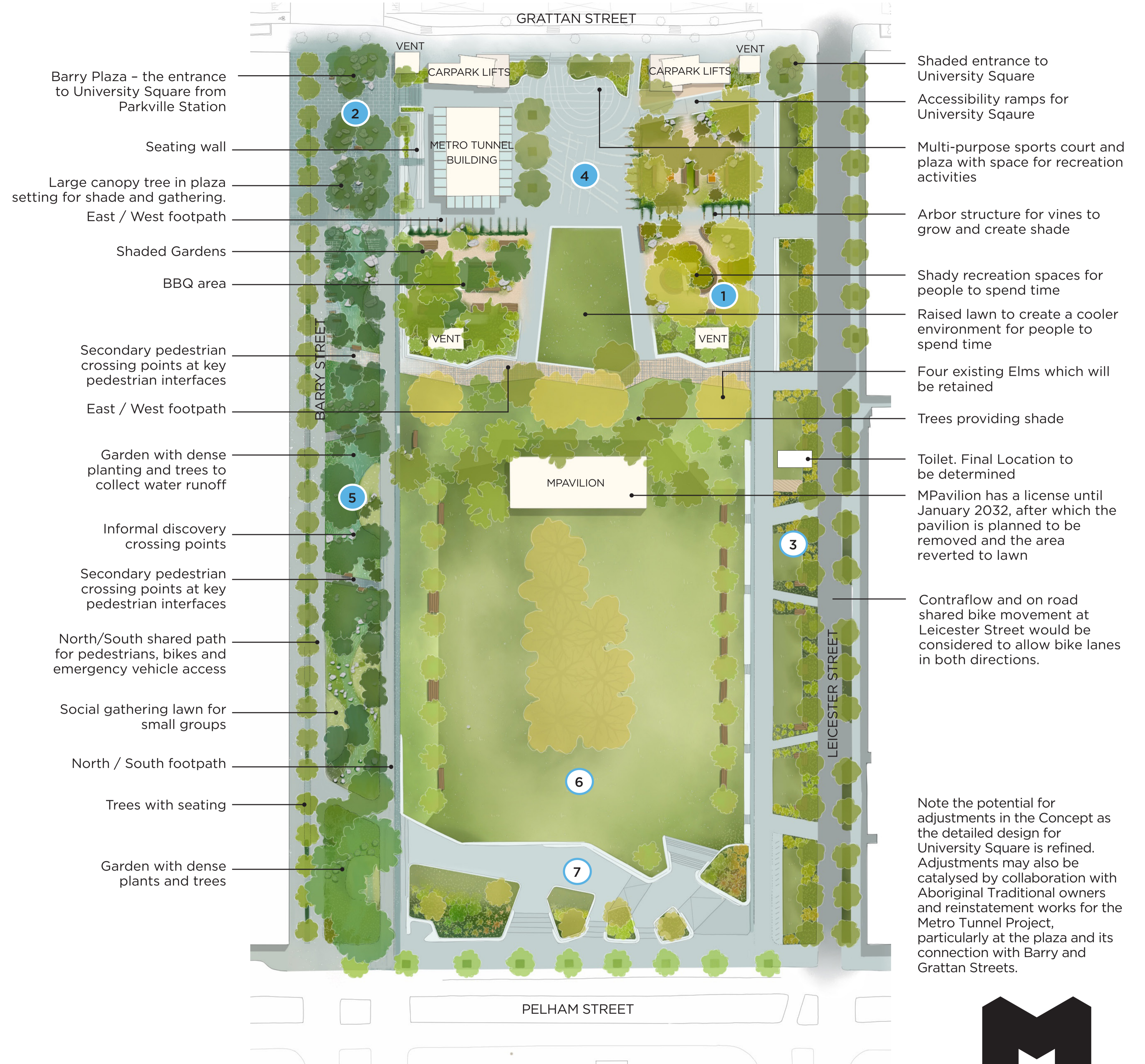
- To further deliver
- Complete / mostly complete

CONTACT

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Telephone: 03 9658 9658

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Note the potential for adjustments in the Concept as the detailed design for University Square is refined. Adjustments may also be catalysed by collaboration with Aboriginal Traditional owners and reinstatement works for the Metro Tunnel Project, particularly at the plaza and its connection with Barry and Grattan Streets.

