

Fawkner Park – Pasley Street North entrance improvements

6 March 2018

Presenter: Michelle Fitzgerald, Acting Director City Strategy and Place

Purpose and background

1. The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement of the Fawkner Park Pasley Street North entrance improvements concept plan and proceed to detailed design and documentation.
2. Fawkner Park was listed on the Victorian Heritage Register in 2016 and is a highly valued and extensively used regional park. In addition to servicing the needs of the local community of residents, office workers and recreational visitors, South Yarra Primary School (SYPS) and Christ Church Grammar School are adjacent to the eastern boundary of the park and school students use the park for play before, during and after school every day.
3. The Pasley Street North entrance project has been developed to improve drainage, improve landscape health (addressing soil compaction), upgrade the park entrance, better manage access from the SYPS, reduce conflict between cyclists and pedestrians and repair disturbance from recent water main works. The project also includes a new multipurpose court, designed to better integrate with the existing play area and help resolve the drainage issues (Attachments 2 and 3). A number of these actions were specified in the Fawkner Park Master Plan (2006).
4. Community engagement on the draft concept plan was undertaken in November to December 2017. This draft plan was circulated to Councillors via Briefing Paper on 4 December 2017. Two community engagement events were held in the park and over 220 people viewed the participate webpage. Thirty submissions were received which provided good quality information and have further informed the concept plan. In addition to capturing the adult voices, a program of engagement with children from SYPS will be implemented during the detailed design.

Key issues

5. The majority of community responses supported the draft concept, including SYPS. There were a number of requests from community members to change the proposed configuration of half court netball and basketball provision. Management have responded to this by providing a typical basketball court arrangement with informal provision for netball shooting practice. There were also a number of responses regarding path alignments, landscape improvements and amenity provision which will be addressed in the detailed design process.
6. Three respondents did not support the proposal to relocate the existing court as they felt this would have a negative impact on the park's highly valued landscape character. Two submissions were not supportive of court lighting. However, as lighting will encourage community use, it has been retained in the revised concept. A small number of submissions from community members involved with SYPS requested a second sports court to be provided, however the school itself is supportive of the current draft concept. Attachment 4 provides a detailed summary of the issues raised and the design response.
7. Feedback from the community has been incorporated in the concept plan (Attachment 3). On Council endorsement of the concept plan, a permit application for approval from Heritage Victoria will be submitted for their consideration and approval.
8. All project costs to date including design and consultation have been provided for in the current 2017–18 capital works budget. Capital budget provisions for construction works have been included in the draft 2018–19 capital works program, subject to approval as part of the overall 2018–19 Council budget process.

Recommendation from management

9. That the Future Melbourne Committee endorses the Fawkner Park Pasley Street North entrance improvements concept plan and authorises the Acting Director City Strategy and Place to approve any further minor changes.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment (page 2 of 10)
2. Project area – Fawkner Park (existing conditions)(page 3 of 10)
3. Fawkner Park – Pasley Street North entrance improvements concept plan(page 4 of 10)
4. Summary of community feedback and response January 2018 (page 5 of 10)

Legal

1. There are no direct legal issues arising from the recommendation from management.

Finance

2. Funding for the proposed works is subject to the annual capital works budget process.

Conflict of interest

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

Stakeholder consultation

4. Community engagement on the proposed concept plan was undertaken from 29 November to 22 December 2017. The community were invited to participate through signage in the park, letter drop in the immediate areas, emails to stakeholders, and information was distributed through school newsletters. Feedback was provided through Participate Melbourne website submissions and on site discussion.
5. The engagement included meetings with the local schools and local residents. Two opportunities for the community to meet Council officers in the park were provided on Saturday 9 December 2017 (2 – 4pm) and Monday 11 December 2017 (3.15 – 6pm).
6. Engagement with children is planned for first and second term, with the Junior School Council and a sustainability leadership group.

Relation to Council policy

7. The recommendation is consistent with the following Council policies: Fawkner Park Master Plan (2006), Open Space Strategy (2012), Parks Policy, Urban Forest Strategy (2012), Urban Forest Precinct Plan: South Yarra 2013–2023, Nature in the City (2017), Total Watermark – City as a Catchment (update 2014) and Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Refresh (2017).

Environmental sustainability

8. The proposal will improve the health, resilience and function of an existing park. The objectives include improving landscape and tree health, increasing canopy cover through tree planting and addressing an ongoing drainage problem with the solution enabling stormwater to be reused in the landscape.

The proposal will result in an increase in biodiversity through the introduction of new tree species and plantings to the area.



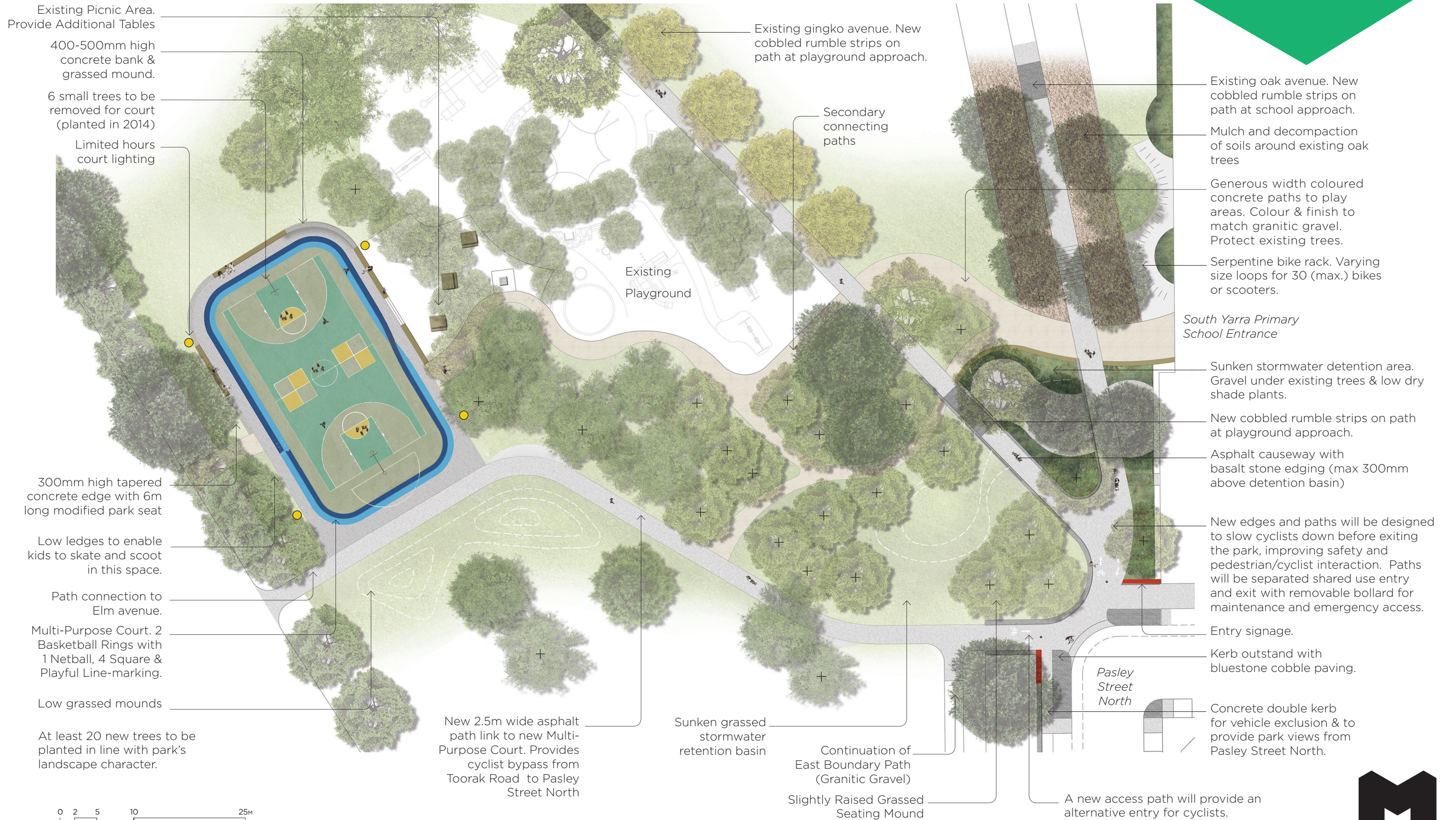
PLAYGROUND

EXISTING BASKETBALL COURT

Project area – Fawkner Park, existing conditions

FAWKNER PARK – PASLEY STREET NORTH ENTRANCE IMPROVEMENTS

CONCEPT PLAN



0 2 5 10 25m
SCALE 1:500 @ A3



Fawkner Park – Pasley Street North entrance improvements
Summary of community feedback and response January 2018

Key Theme	Issue	Response
Multi-purpose court		
Basketball rings or Netball rings. The concept proposed a multi-purpose court with basketball at one end and netball at the other. These could be interchangeable.	The majority of responses requested basketball rings at both ends as this is what is currently provided and well used. One respondent requested netball rather than basketball. There was some support for the mix of basketball and netball rings.	Concept plan to provide for a fixed netball ring(s) on the back of the fixed basketball pole(s) or alternatively an additional fixed netball pole(s) facing outside the court for goal shooting.
Request for two courts.	A number of community responses requested two courts, one for basketball and one for netball. The growth of the school population was the main reason for the request for the additional court. There was a suggestion for an additional court to be located parallel to the eastern boundary near the fence (Sabbath Hall). There was a response articulating that courts should not be constructed specifically for the school, as public open space should not be used for private purpose.	The provision of any further courts in Fawkner Park is a matter which would need to be reviewed as part of a Master Plan process.
Request for one full size court and one half court.	A number of responses requested one full size basketball court and one half court (for netball or basketball). There was a suggestion for a third goal shooting area to be constructed alongside the new court.	The provision of any additional courts in Fawkner Park is a matter which would need to be reviewed as part of a Master Plan process.
Request for netball ring or court for training.	A request for netball rings to allow practice – there are no public outdoor netball courts in the area.	Minimum of one netball ring will be provided.
Location of multi-purpose court.	Most responses were supportive of the proposed relocation site. Residents in Pasley street were supportive of the relocation as evening use of the current court has sometimes impacted on residential amenity. A few respondents prefer the court to remain in its current location,	The South Yarra Primary school is already using the proposed area for play and Physical Education (PE). The school administration is supportive of the proposed location.

	<p>some citing concern about the increased distance between the school and the new court location.</p> <p>Three respondents did not support the proposal.</p> <p>One was strongly opposed to relocation as they viewed it to have a major negative impact on the landscape character of the park.</p> <p>One noted that the court was the only place the whole school could gather.</p>	<p>Retaining the landscape character of the park is core to the vision for Fawkner Park.</p>
<p>Relocation of multi-purpose court inconsistent with landscape character of the park.</p>	<p>One respondent strongly opposed the relocation, viewing the location as being well into the park and along one of the main tree lined pathways. They would prefer that built structures were on the periphery of the park.</p> <p>The concern was that this would give the experience of walking along the magnificent avenue of trees and looking out on an expanse of asphalt bordered by concrete. The respondent was of the view that this was not consistent with the Master Plan, which notes tree avenues framing open grassy spaces were highly valued by park users. The respondent quoted the Heritage Victoria listing referencing 'the simple open character of the lawns as a key component of the original design remains a vital part of the character today'. The respondent queried if a Heritage permit would be required.</p>	<p>The master plan's vision for Fawkner Park is 'a much loved place where a diverse range of recreation and sporting activity is enjoyed in a magnificent setting of significant tree avenues and open, spacious lawns'.</p> <p>The proposed design will greatly improve the entrance to the park. The current location and condition of the court creates a poor approach to the park dominated by asphalt the concept improves the park character at the entry, and the new court location site is designed to sit well within the landscape, integrated with the existing play and picnic spaces, and easily accessible from existing pathways. It also provides a solution to the significant drainage and landscape issues this area of the park is currently experiencing.</p>
<p>Proposal for 'limited hours' court lighting.</p>	<p>There were no specific comments regarding support for lighting, but two responses were opposed to the provision of lighting. The main concern was noise associated with use of the court in the evening.</p>	<p>Lighting will increase the flexibility for use and increase the ability for the community to use the court, especially during winter. While there was some opposition, it is proposed to incorporate sports lighting on the court. The lighting management would be consistent with Council's other sports lighting.</p>
<p>Materials for court construction.</p>	<p>One response described the noise minimising backboards and requested these to be used. They queried what the court surface would be.</p>	<p>The noise minimising backboards will be used for the court. A specialised court surface will be used.</p>
<p>Proposed pathway and low edges around court to enable kids to skate and scoot.</p>	<p>One respondent queried the provision for scooters on the edge of the court.</p> <p>One respondent how the area will work with scooters as there are</p>	<p>Providing flexible spaces for children to use their scooters and learn some skate skills will add to the range of recreational experiences available. The</p>

	<p>many children using these after school and they are fast. One respondent raised the possible noise skateboard use might have.</p>	<p>court is a considerable distance from residential areas and is one of the limited options available to provide these experiences. The proposal is consistent with Council's Skate Melbourne Plan 2017. The City of Melbourne recognises that skating is a legitimate physical activity that provides health, social and other benefits for many people. The Skate Melbourne Plan 2017–2027 (Plan) aims to encourage safe, inclusive and multi-use public spaces for all city users. The low level skateable surfaces around the multi-purpose court provides for this activity. This is consistent with key actions in the Skate Melbourne Plan including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify spaces suitable and unsuitable for skate activity. 2. Increase the provision, designation and integration of skateable spaces.
<p>Scheduling of construction.</p>	<p>There were some requests for the new court to be constructed prior to removal of the old court.</p>	<p>If feasible the court will be constructed prior to removal of the old court (subject to construction logistics). While some disruption to usual use of the area during construction is unavoidable, it will be kept to a minimum.</p>
<p>Entrance Improvements</p>		
<p>Proposed stormwater retention basin to resolve drainage problems.</p>	<p>Most responses were supportive of the proposed stormwater retention basin. One response suggested further small ponds and water bodies. One response suggested enhancing the play possibilities of the space by addition of stepping rocks. One respondent did not support the proposal with concern that this would be where the children were collected after school and it would be boggy and collect litter. One respondent requested that drainage be directed to stormwater drains underground. (This reflects a mistaken view that the works</p>	<p>The provision of some stepping rocks to add play value to the basin will be investigated during detailed design and documentation. The existing stormwater drainage system is in very poor condition which has created the drainage problem this design seeks to resolve. The overall concept will enhance the new entrance to the park. The new entrance will be more generous and legible, including informal seating edges. The stormwater retention spaces have</p>

	recently undertaken by Melbourne Water were for stormwater drainage, where in fact the works were installing a new major water main).	been designed to be separate from key access and circulation areas.
Proposed entrance improvements.	<p>Most responses were supportive of the entrance improvements. One response queried the 1.5m separated shared use entry paths with regard to the convergence of cyclists and scooters with pedestrians.</p> <p>There was a request to review the disabled parking and access that is currently at this entry which does not appear to be successful. One response described the importance of a welcoming entrance to the park.</p>	<p>All suggestions to improve the entry will contribute to the detail design.</p> <p>The paths currently converge at the entry. New edges and path alignments are designed to slow cyclists before the entry, to improve safety and pedestrian / cyclist interaction.</p> <p>The accessible parking will be reviewed.</p> <p>The curved kerb is designed to discourage parking in this corner.</p>
Path network		
Entrance to school.	<p>The high traffic area between the school and the park was raised by one respondent. The school has recently installed a new gate and it was requested that the path link be widened to join the entry.</p> <p>There was one request for a path rather than vegetation directly adjacent to the school.</p>	<p>The current path design at the school entry is wider than any park path and will adequately cater for the student movement into the park.</p> <p>Vegetation provides a formal entry and sense of arrival. Vegetation adjacent to the school building has been specifically included to discourage walking in this area to protect the tree roots and enhance the amenity of the area and increase biodiversity outcomes.</p> <p>The proposed path network will adequately provide for those walking to the meeting points.</p>
Proposed bike rack for up to 30 bikes or scooters.	This proposal was supported and one request was made to prioritise the installation.	Noted.
Major paths connecting to the Pasley Street entry.	There were some requests for additional treatment to slow cyclists in this area, suggesting the cobbled path could be instead a slightly arched timber bridge to enhance character and sense of play.	While appreciating the aesthetic of a timber section to the path, this is not a suitable material for a major path that will sometimes have vehicles (maintenance, garbage) on it. The design measures will include cobbled rumble strips and signage.
Proposed path south of the new court location.	There was one request to straighten the alignment of the path, to divert cyclists away from the court.	The path alignment will be further refined during detailed design, but a cycle only path is not proposed. This path will need to be a shared path,

		and the alignment will seek to provide a safe, direct connection between paths and to the court, while minimising the visual impact of the path.
Secondary connecting path immediately adjacent to playground.	One response suggested this path could be raised to promote play value, citing the playfulness of the raised path that is already within the playground.	This will be investigated during detailed design and documentation.
Additional requests or comments		
At the playground.	One request for a public toilet and water tank for water play One request for additional play equipment.	The master plan recommended two public toilets in Fawkner Park at the northern and southern boundaries. These have been provided. Any further public toilets can be reviewed during a master plan process. Current Council policy locates public toilets on the perimeter of parks. Any new playground equipment and water play can be referred to the playground renewal program.
Landscape.	One request for planting more shrubs and indigenous species. A request for tree planting for shade near the multi-purpose court.	The planting request will be explored in detailed design. Shade will be provided by the avenue trees and other large trees at the side of the court. The open landscape character of the inter-avenue planting will be retained.
Drink fountains.	One response supported retaining the two existing drink fountains and providing a third near the new court.	A third drink fountain will be provided.
Parking in Pasley Street.	One response described the parking pressure in the area, which is particularly problematic when the Corner oval is used in the evening.	Noted.
Access and safety.	A request for a pedestrian and cyclist bridge from Punt road to the Park, citing the danger of crossing Punt Road (even with the pedestrian crossing).	This is not within the scope of this project.
General feedback.	The area is highly valued. Children enjoy climbing the trees there.	Noted.
Growth at the school.	Many respondents described the recent substantial growth of student numbers at the school. One respondent (Parent) provided the following enrolment statistics for South Yarra Primary School :	Noted.

- 2014 – 285 students
- 2015 – 325 students
- 2016 – 360 students
- 2017 – 395 students
- 2018 – 465 students (current enrolments for next year)
- 2019 – 525 students (forecast based on current growth rates)
- 2020 – 575 students (forecast based on current growth rates).

The Department of Education built six new classrooms on the current school grounds in 2017. It was suggested that the school is one of the few not to have sporting facilities provided.