

## PROPOSED COMMUNITY GARDEN IN THROSBY

**The proposed Throsby community garden is an initiative of the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust, supported by the SLA.**

Adjacent to the Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary (the Sanctuary), the proposed community garden aims to provide an opportunity for the people of Throsby and surrounding suburbs to connect and learn about gardening, the local environment and each other.



## THE CONVERSATION

**The Suburban Land Agency and the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust engaged with Throsby and nearby Gungahlin community members in June and July 2020 to gauge interest in the possible development of a community garden. Communications included mailouts, social media, a presentation at Gungahlin Community Council, local radio, and face to face meetings.**

Community members were encouraged to submit feedback through an online YourSay survey which was open from 29 June to 27 July 2020, or to email or call Suburban Land Agency. Seven respondents contacted SLA but did not complete the survey. Survey respondents answered questions about their experience and interest in gardening and about what they would like to see in a community garden. Questions included multiple choice, ranking questions and free text.

## YOURSAY SURVEY - WHO ENGAGED

**The YourSay survey attracted 826 views from 377 individual visitors with 45 survey contributions completed (numbers rounded to nearest percentage point). 89% of respondents live in Throsby; 9% reside in other Gungahlin suburbs and 2% live elsewhere in Canberra.**

- 53% identify as female; 44% as male; 2% did not respond to this question.
- 2% were aged 18yrs or under; 33% were aged 25-34yrs; 38% were aged 35-44yrs; 16% were aged 45-54yrs; and 7% were aged 65yrs+.
- 58% have no experience with community gardens; 22% have average or low experience and 13% have high or very high experience levels.
- 60% of respondents indicated that they would like to access the garden. 51% would like to be involved in growing plants for food; 40% indicated interest in supporting with



membership and administrative tasks; and 36% offered assistance with general maintenance work.

- 82% of survey respondents expressed interest in participating in the next stage of consultation.

### The following organisations were also invited to provide feedback and to share information about the survey through their networks:

- Canberra Organic Growers Society
- Gungahlin Community Council
- Belconnen Arts
- PWDACT
- Women with Disability ACT
- Majura Men’s Shed
- Multicultural Youth Service
- Ngunnawal community representatives
- Home of Football

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

**45**

The survey was completed by 45 people.

**27**

We spoke to 27 people in person or on the phone, individually and in small groups.

**1**

We delivered one presentation to the Gungahlin Community Council Public Meeting

**700**

We delivered letters to 700 Throsby households

**514**

Over 514 emails were sent to Throsby residents and leaseholders and community stakeholders.

**2595**

Social media posts reached an online audience of over 2,595.

**11**

We received written feedback from 11 individuals.

**377**

377 individuals visited the YourSay page while the survey was open.

### Key insights from the community

#### Summary

Opportunities for connection to nature, growing their own food; exercise and fresh air; and interaction with other community members were ranked highly as important aspects of a community garden by survey participants.

A range of additional aspects were suggested including: the capacity for the site to grow indigenous food; host workshops and community arts events; and to house on-site, sustainable, composting and mulching infrastructure.

Key areas of interest that will be discussed in more detail at the workshop stage include location, safety and accessibility, skills and experience to contribute, plot sizes/overall design and time commitment.

#### Location

1. Thirteen survey respondents used free text options to provide feedback on site selection.
2. The location was opposed by 11 survey respondents, 4 of whom also contacted us directly, and a further 7 people who contacted us directly but did not complete the survey.
3. High winds, overland flow of water following heavy rain, increased traffic levels, and provision for parking were noted as potential issues
4. Additionally, a loss of natural amenity, potentially messy outlook, child safety, and potential impact on investment were identified as potential negative aspects of the proposal by survey respondents and people who contacted us directly.
5. Two survey respondents used free text options to express support for the proposed location.

#### Safety and Accessibility

6. There was strong interest in site accessibility with 35 respondents answering an optional question about access requirements. Shade was the most popular access requirement, followed by clear signage throughout the garden, child security, and bike racks.
7. Other responses indicated that appropriate measures need to be in place around wheelchair accessibility, ability to work while seated and designated disabled parking spaces.
8. The inclusion of braille signage also received support.
9. Security cameras to prevent vandalism were suggested by one respondent.

#### Skills and experience

10. A total of 16 respondents had some previous experience of community gardens. Six rated their level of experience as high or very high.
11. Skills that respondents indicated they could bring to a garden included: carpentry (1); building/labouring (1); irrigation (4); expert gardener of my own yard (9); weed identification (4); community Leader/organiser (3); arts/culture (3); marketing/communications (3).
12. Other transferrable skills identified by respondents included planning, composting, vegetarian and vegan recipes, and sustainability advice.



### Preferred plot sizes and design

13. More than half of survey respondents didn't mind whether there were individual or shared garden plots in the garden. Individual plots were preferred by nine respondents and four respondents expressed a preference for shared plots.
14. Support was also expressed for the provision of shade, space for fruit trees, a seating area suitable for community workshops, and children's nature play and water play areas.

### Time commitments

15. Nearly half of the survey respondents (22) indicated that they would participate in the garden weekly for between 1 and 5 hours.
  16. A total of 11 respondents preferred to participate monthly or on an ad hoc basis.
  17. Most respondents would prefer to access the garden on weekends with the next most popular option being weekdays during business hours.
- 12 respondents indicated that they would not participate in the garden on an ongoing basis. This group includes the 11 respondents who opposed the location of the garden and one respondent whose primary interest was in planning.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

**We received a high level of interest in the proposed Throsby community garden. We appreciate the time taken by respondents to provide their feedback.**

**A common concern centres around the overland flow of water through parts of the proposed site, following heavy rain.**

**In response to the feedback received, we are undertaking further investigations, so that we have a detailed understanding of all issues and potential solutions for the proposed community garden.**

**Accordingly, we have revised our consultation timeline and we will now hold a workshop with community members in early 2021. To register your interest in taking part in the workshop please email [mingle@act.gov.au](mailto:mingle@act.gov.au)**

To find out more about the proposed Throsby community garden and other initiatives, policies and projects in Canberra visit: [www.yoursay.com.au](http://www.yoursay.com.au)

For updates on the progress of the Throsby community garden consultation, follow [facebook.com/ThrosbyMingle/](https://www.facebook.com/ThrosbyMingle/)

You can also sign up to the Throsby Mingle e-news to find out about activities and events in for Throsby residents including further consultation around the proposed Throsby community garden at <https://suburbanland.act.gov.au/throsby/mingle>



## Key Timings

June 2020 – YourSay survey open

July 2020 – YourSay survey closed

August 2020 onwards – Investigations in response to feedback received

November 2020 – Listening report

Early 2021 – Community workshop confirmation and next steps