Cultural River Precinct Structure Plan Engagement

Department of Environment, Land, Water, and Planning

20 July 2018
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96 Pelham Street Carlton VIC Australia 3053.
Executive Summary

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) have engaged Taylor Cullity Lethlean (TCL) to prepare a Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) for a Cultural River Precinct in Heidelberg and Bulleen.

The PSP will provide a 50-year outlook for the area, aiming to protect the Yarra River and its parklands, and to build on the existing strong arts, environmental and Aboriginal values. Capire Consulting Group (Capire) undertook two phases of engagement over May, June and July 2018 to inform the development of the PSP. This report summarises the key feedback from the second phase of engagement, referred to as targeted engagement.

The key findings of this report as they relate to key areas if inquiry are as follows.

- The development of a new cultural facility in the area is largely supported. Existing cultural facilities (particularly the Heide Gallery) are treasured for their historical, cultural and environmental values. Participants recommended that new cultural facilities should retain the existing values, be connected to Aboriginal and art histories, involve a making space (such as residency / studio facilities), and be inclusive and accessible.

- The inclusion of more open space in the precinct was supported. The type of open space that is desirable is largely bushland areas and walking trails. The location of open space was suggested to be either close to the river, or well dispersed throughout the precinct to allow a diverse community to access it.

- Transport connections in the area, particularly cycling, walking and public transport connections could be improved. Participants largely supported a new bridge crossing the river. Cyclists highlighted key issues as relating to infrastructure, trail design, wayfinding and maintenance. The suggested improvements for cycling included improving trail design for safety and environmental benefit, providing facilities such as water stations, pumps and toilets, and enhancing wayfinding and signage along trails.
1 Background

1.1 Yarra River Protection Planning

Since 2016 the Victorian Government has been delivering a wide range of policy commitments to protect the Yarra River and its parklands for decades to come. The key tool driving these commitments is the Yarra River Action Plan (the Action Plan), which includes the 30 recommendations made by the Yarra Ministerial Advisory Committee (Yarra MAC). The landmark Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung mur’-on) Act 2017 was passed through the Victorian Parliament to protect the Yarra River for future generations and aligns with the Action Plan.

As part of the Action Plan, the corridor between Bulleen Park and Banyule Flats was identified as an opportunity for immediate action (Action 21 of the Yarra River Action Plan). It was identified as an area that would benefit from early master planning during the development of the Yarra Strategic Plan to guide future land use planning along the corridor.

The Action Plan recognises that this precinct has the opportunity to become an internationally-significant cultural precinct, centred on the relationship between the arts, nature and Traditional Owner heritage. The precinct has several public acquisition overlays and land use opportunities that should be reviewed as a whole to provide certainty to land owners and developers.
1.2 The Cultural River Precinct Structure Plan

The Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) is being prepared by Taylor Cullity Lethlean (TCL), landscape architects engaged by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP). The PSP will provide a 50-year outlook for the precinct, aiming to protect the Yarra River and its parklands and manage development along the Yarra corridor. The PSP will also help realise the precinct’s potential as a significant cultural precinct centred on showcasing its existing strong arts, environmental and Aboriginal values.

TCL are preparing the PSP in two stages, with the first stage focusing on the core of the precinct, the area around Yarra Flats and Heide. The core precinct is the area experiencing the most development pressure but also contains some of the most significant cultural and heritage values.

Capire Consulting Group (Capire) was engaged to plan and deliver community engagement for the PSP. Figure 1 illustrates the boundary of the Cultural River Precinct and the core Yarra Flats and Heide focus area.

*Figure 1  Culture River Precinct and core Yarra Flats and Heide focus area*
2 Engagement

Capire designed and delivered an engagement program in two stages, with delivery commencing in May 2018 and concluding in July 2018.

2.1 Engagement objectives

The objectives of the Cultural River Precinct Structure Plan engagement were to:

• To identify and understand local community values and preferences for future land uses and developments.

• To increase the community’s understanding of the Yarra River, its land, history and values.

• To facilitate participation of a diverse range of community members.

• To build on the engagement knowledge developed by Melbourne Water on the suburban reach and Yarra River Community Vision and assist community to understand the engagement journey to date.

• To increase understanding of the Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murrion) Act 2017 and how it relates to the future planning of the Cultural River Precinct.

• To increase understanding of and actively promote Caring for Country, in line with the Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murrion) Act 2017.
2.2 Engagement program

Capire has delivered two stages of engagement, as summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Overview of Cultural River Precinct Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broad community engagement</td>
<td>April 30 to May 20 2018</td>
<td>Online engagement on Engage Vic</td>
<td>171¹</td>
<td>Draft submitted 25 May 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Two community workshops held in Ivanhoe and Bulleen</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted engagement</td>
<td>14 June to 13 July 2018</td>
<td>Focus group with cyclists</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Draft submitted 20 July 2018 (this document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Online survey for cyclists</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Two pop ups in Heidelberg</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Telephone interviews with artists</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Workshop with scouts group</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

¹ Determined by the number of unique IP addresses.
2.3 Purpose of this report

This report outlines the engagement activities that took place in the targeted engagement phase and provides a summary of the precinct’s values, issues and opportunities as discussed by key user group participants. This report has been prepared to assist TCL in the development of the draft Cultural River PSP. It complements the first report submitted in May 2018 and should therefore be read in conjunction with that report.

2.4 Lines of inquiry

In the targeted engagement phase, specific questions were developed for each engagement activity to meet the participants’ engagement interests. These questions align with the high-level project lines of inquiry:

- How do people use the Banyule-Bulleen Yarra River Precinct parklands?
- How can this precinct deliver on the Suburban Reach vision and overarching Yarra River Community vision?
- Are there additional specific priorities and values that need to be considered in the structure plan for this precinct?
- What does ‘cultural river precinct’ mean to you?
Table 2 shows the line of inquiry for each engagement activity in this phase.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement Activity</th>
<th>Line of inquiry</th>
<th>Relevant appendix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus group with cyclists</strong></td>
<td>1. How do participants currently use the Cultural River Precinct (including preferred routes)?&lt;br&gt; 2. From a cycling perspective, what do they currently like about the area and existing facilities, and what could be improved?&lt;br&gt; 3. What does a great trail / route look like? What are the features or facilities that complement the cycling experience?&lt;br&gt; 4. Are there any usage conflicts between cyclists and other user groups? What are the ‘hot-spots’ and how can movement conflicts be managed?</td>
<td>Appendix A1: cycling focus group agenda&lt;br&gt; Appendix A2: cycling focus group maps&lt;br&gt; Appendix A3: cycling submission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Online survey for cyclists</strong></td>
<td>1. What type of bike riding do you undertake in the Cultural River Precinct?&lt;br&gt; 2. Can you tell us about the typical route you take when riding through or in the Cultural River Precinct?&lt;br&gt; 3. What are the features that you like about the route you ride, facilities available and the cycling experience in the Cultural River Precinct?&lt;br&gt; 4. What are the features that you dislike about the route you ride, facilities available and the cycling experience in the Cultural River Precinct?&lt;br&gt; 5. What improvements are required in the Cultural River Precinct to make it better for different types of cycling? Please respond for the types of cycling you participate in.&lt;br&gt; 6. Are there usage conflicts between cyclists and other commuters or user groups in the Cultural River Precinct? How can movement be better managed to reduce conflict between different user groups?</td>
<td>Appendix B1: Heidelberg Football Club/Possum Hollow survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pop-up at Heidelberg: Football Club/Possum Hollow Playground</strong></td>
<td>1. Is there a need for more open space in the Cultural River Precinct?&lt;br&gt; 2. What kind of open space do you think we need (if any)?&lt;br&gt; 3. Where should open space be located?&lt;br&gt; 4. How do you think we could use this newly available [following the construction of the North East Link] space?&lt;br&gt; 5. What things are important to consider as part of the planning and approval of new developments in the area?&lt;br&gt; 6. How could we improve transport facilities and connections within the precinct?&lt;br&gt; 7. Are there any missing [transport] links?&lt;br&gt; 8. Should there be new places to cross the river, if yes, where?</td>
<td>Appendix B1: Heidelberg Football Club/Possum Hollow survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pop-up at Heidelberg: Heide Gallery</strong></td>
<td>1. How could culture and heritage be expressed in the Cultural River Precinct?&lt;br&gt; 2. Do you think there should be a new cultural facility in the Cultural River Precinct, where?&lt;br&gt; 3. What would be the key features of a new cultural facility, and do you have other suggestions about including and supporting a cultural precinct in the area?&lt;br&gt; 4. How do you think we could use this newly available [following the construction of the North East Link] space?&lt;br&gt; 5. What things are important to consider as part of the planning and approval of new developments in the area?&lt;br&gt; 6. How could we improve transport facilities and connections within the precinct?&lt;br&gt; 7. Are there any missing [transport] links?&lt;br&gt; 8. Should there be new places to cross the river, if yes, where?</td>
<td>Appendix B2: Heide Gallery survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement Activity</td>
<td>Line of inquiry</td>
<td>Relevant appendix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone interviews with artists</td>
<td>1. Can you please describe your connection or role to art, the art community in the Heide and Yarra Flats area?</td>
<td>Appendix C1: Artist interview questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. What things do you love most about the way culture and heritage is expressed in the Heide and Yarra Flats Precinct?</td>
<td>Appendix C2: Artist interview responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. What does the term ‘cultural precinct’ mean to you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. What makes a great cultural precinct?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Artistic practice has been a legacy of the area historically—what could that look like into the next 50 years? What could a cultural precinct unique to this place look like?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6. What new cultural facilities could be developed as part of the precinct?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop with scouts group</td>
<td>1. Can you please describe your connection to this precinct, which spaces do you love and use a lot?</td>
<td>Appendix D1: Scout workshop run sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. How do you think we could use this newly available [following the construction of the North East Link] space?</td>
<td>Appendix D2: Scout workshop ‘big ideas’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. What’s your vision for the future of the Yarra (in 50 years’ time)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5 Engagement limitations

The following limitations should be considered when reading the engagement findings presented in this report:

- The information in this report is based on participant discussions during engagement activities facilitated by Capire. Participants were self-selecting and not randomised. Whilst Capire is confident that this report accurately reflects the view of participants, it is natural that these findings may not necessarily entirely reflect the views of a statistically representative sample of the regional community.

- Some information or participant views included in this report may be factually incorrect or unfeasible. Information, views or proposals captured from participants has not been independently validated, however we have faithfully recorded participants’ opinions, ideas and feedback.

- Some participants raised concerns that were outside the scope of the discussions and subject site. These points have been noted but may be out of scope for consideration and are offered for completeness.

- Figures shown in this report use key themes and compare ideas that were more widely supported; the numerical values in these graphs do not reflect the number of responses. As responses from participants may have raised more than one idea or theme, the numerical values in the graphs show the number of times an idea was raised.

- The report presents key points of discussion and includes a broad range of feedback expressed by participants. It provides an overview of participant sentiment but does not report on the sentiment of individual participants.
Figure 2 word cloud of cyclist responses to ‘what are the features that you like about the route you ride, facilities available and cycling experience in the Cultural River Precinct’?

Figure 3 a Scout’s ‘Big Idea’ for possible use of newly available public land after the construction of North-East Link
3 Engagement findings

This section summarises the engagement findings from the targeted engagement conducted during June and July 2018. This report presents the findings per cohort user group:

- young people – drawn from the Scouts workshop
- Yarra parklands users – drawn from the pop-up at Heidelberg Football Club and Possum Hollow Playground
- cyclists – drawn from cyclist focus group and online survey
- art community – drawn from the artist telephone interviews and the pop-up at Heide Gallery.

3.1 How key cohorts use the precinct currently

Participants stated that they use the precinct for a range of reasons, and often for multipurpose activities. The main uses and locations are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of usage by cohorts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>Usage</th>
<th>Key locations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Young people       | • Transport in and around the precinct including transport to and from school, riding bikes, walking, taking the train or public transport  
                   | • Bike riding or walking in and around the river  
                   | • Commercial activities and shopping in Heidelberg  
                   | • Playing, using sporting facilities and visiting galleries or seeing art | • Heidelberg Train Station  
                   |                                                                      | • Main Yarra Trail  
                   |                                                                      | • Possum Hollow Playground  
                   |                                                                      | • surrounding parklands and residential areas |
| Yarra parklands users | • Sporting activities (football)  
                        | • Recreation (walking and cycling)  
                        | • Playing                                                                       | • Possum Hollow Playground  
                   |                                                                      | • Main Yarra Trail  
                   |                                                                      | • Heidelberg Football Club |
| Cyclists           | • Road riding  
                   | • Commuting  
                   | • Mountain biking  
                   | • Cyclocross and use of off-road trails  
                   | • Recreational riding with family or children | • Main Yarra Trail  
                   |                                                                      | • Yarra Flats  
                   |                                                                      | • Westerfolds Park  
                   |                                                                      | • Surrounding residential areas |
| Art community      | • Visiting art galleries (Heide), making art  
                   | • Recreation                                                                       | • Heide  
                   |                                                                      | • Riverfront areas |
As examples, participants’ comments on how they use the area included:

I grew up down the road from Heide, close to the river. I became an artist. I visited Heide as a kid, and in 2011 or 2012 I was commissioned to make some work at Heide - that was really exciting for me. (Interview with artist)

I use the whole area for different riding, I use single trails for recreational mountain biking. I use the Main Yarra Trail and Plenty River Trail for commuting and recreational riding. And use the roads through there when road riding. (Cycling survey response)
3.2 Cultural facilities

Feedback was gathered about existing and potential cultural facilities in the area. Participants commented on existing cultural uses and practices in the area, the key features of a cultural precinct, and offered ideas for the area as a cultural precinct in years to come. Feedback about cultural facilities was also gathered during the pop-up session at Heide Gallery and through artist interviews. This feedback is summarised in Table 4 below.

*Table 4: Key messages - cultural facilities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>Key messages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heide pop-up</td>
<td>• There is support for a new cultural facility in the precinct&lt;br&gt;• Any new facility should be accessible, and diverse with many activities) and accessible by public transport with walking connections to Heide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art community</td>
<td>• There is general support for a new cultural facility&lt;br&gt;• The precinct has a rich artistic history that could be better showcased, particularly Aboriginal history, 1930s modernist history and impressionist art from the Heidelberg School&lt;br&gt;• The inclusion of space for creating art (through residency and studios) to attract local and international artists was supported&lt;br&gt;• Connection with the natural environment and environmental preservation is important for art in the area&lt;br&gt;• Cultural precincts should be connected to community and involve partnerships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2.1 A new cultural facility

There was generally consensus for the idea of a new cultural facility in the Cultural River Precinct (12 responses) with very few opposed to the idea (one only), as shown in Figure 4. There was not, however, consensus about where a facility could be located. In interviews, some artists suggested satellite galleries or studios, separate from Heide, could be explored.

Permanent structures and connections to Aboriginal culture and the Heidelberg School were also key considerations for locating any new facility. Other suggestions that arose in pop-up surveys included having a mobile or temporary facility, co-locating with Heide and having a location that is connected to Heide and the river.

![Bar chart showing responses to whether there should be a new cultural facility](chart.png)

*Figure 4: Participants’ views on whether there should be a new cultural facility*

3.2.2 Key features of a cultural precinct

Artist interviewees described a cultural precinct as providing:

- a diverse experience where there is more than one cultural thing that’s attractive or interesting, or more than one thing to do or experience
- a space to showcase history and culture

Three participants also described that there are risks and challenges in creating a cultural precinct as a marketing exercise; some cautioned that care should be taken to understand and recognise existing history and culture and protect what is already there so that the experience is not over-curated or ruined by development.

Participants discussed the key features of a cultural precinct, and what a cultural precinct unique to this area could look like in pop-up surveys at Heide Gallery, and during artist telephone interviews. The key features that emerged are summarised below:

- **It is connected:**
  - connections to existing institutions (universities, Heide, colleges, other art precincts along the Yarra)
  - connection to the Yarra River and preservation of the existing natural environment
  - accessible and walkable, and capacity to travel between sites or features by means other than by car
• connection to the history of the area, including Aboriginal, the 1930s modernism and Impressionist art

• **There is creating and making:**
  • studio or residency space for emerging artists to create and make art is available.

• **Environmental and cultural values are protected:**
  • respect for Aboriginal history and cultural values
  • actively working with Wurundjeri
  • maintain environmental landscape values
  • retain connection to historic art movement in the area.

• **It is inclusive:**
  • attracts international and regional artists to exhibit, live and work
  • affordable for artists, and has secure financial investment
  • inclusive of cultural history particularly Aboriginal history, the 1930s modernism, Impressionist and also emerging art
  • includes a range of art mediums such as: fine art, live music, sculpture and gardens, and is interactive
  • it should be participatory, collaborative and involve local and diverse communities.

Some comments regarding a new cultural facility included:

• **Don’t assume what people would like, especially about studio space - ask what people want.**

• **Reach out on historical connections, the ‘making’ and that history of Heide and surrounds was about people who made art. I feel that could be reinstated, it’s currently not about making, it’s about display.**

**Examples of outstanding cultural precincts**

Participants referenced the following examples of outstanding cultural precincts and facilities:

• The Highline, New York, for its connection to nature in the city
• Art Gallery and GOMA, Queensland
• Melbourne Arts Precinct - NGV, VCA, Federation Square and Southbank, Melbourne
• Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo, the Netherlands
• MONA (and MONA FOMA), Tasmania
• Hermitage, St Petersburg, though access can be difficult
• Blak Dot Gallery, Brunswick
• SiteWorks, Moreland.
3.2.3 Supporting and growing a cultural precinct

Participants were asked about how to create and support a cultural precinct in the area at the Heide Gallery pop-up and during artist interviews.

The key recommendations were to:

- engage with existing and local community throughout the process
- connect with existing organisations such as Heide, schools and international art bodies to attract people to work, learn, visit and live in the precinct
- secure ongoing and adequate funding to suit the project needs
- create a place that is accessible by public transport and walking
- instil environmental and community connections through acts of care such as gardening and land care
- host events and workshops.

One participant stated the precinct should aim to ‘create a space that is welcoming, accessible and trans-disciplinary and is open to all the facets of culture and society’.

The key risks and challenges of creating a cultural precinct in the area that were identified during art interviews included:

- inadequate engagement with local community and not being inclusive could lead to conflict and misunderstanding
- financial risk, or creating inaccessible or unaffordable space
- losing the current history and environmental values in the area
- transport limitations restricting accessibility.
3.3 Open space and public land

There was general support for more open space within the Cultural River Precinct, as shown in Figure 6. Feedback gathered at the pop-up at Heidelberg Football Club/Possum Hollow Playground showed that the type of open space desired is largely bushland and walking trails, with some support for sporting ovals, grassed areas and dog-friendly spaces, as shown in Figure 7. Participants indicated that more open space close to the river is desirable, though some people suggested it should be well dispersed within the precinct and accessible to all.

The most common words used about what new public open space could be used for are shown in Figure 9.
3.3.1 New space for community or public use

Participants shared their ideas about how new community and public space that may become available following the construction of the North East Link could best be used. There was some consistency between comments given at pop-ups and young peoples’ ideas (Error! Reference source not found.). The most popular suggestions related to:

- open space and bushland
- multi-purpose recreation and sporting facilities
- commercial and retail activities (including farmers markets and cafes)
- public facilities such as shelters, walking and trails, and BBQs to support use.

The suggestions are summarised in Figure 8 below.

![Chart showing suggestions for community and public land use]

**Figure 8 Suggestions for how to use new open space created by the North East Link**

A member of the scouts engagement session also drew their ideas for the area, as shown in Figure 9 on the following page.
Figure 9: ‘My Big Idea’ for new public or community land - Scout response
3.4 Transport and connectivity

As part of the pop-ups, cycling surveys and the cycling focus group, feedback about transport and connectivity in the Cultural River Precinct was gathered. Cyclists who participated in the engagement activities included mountain bikers, road riders and trail riders (shown in Reference source not found.) who use a range of areas within the precinct, though predominantly make use of the Main Yarra Trail, as shown in Figure 10.

![Key cycling locations](image)

**Figure 10 Key cycling locations**
3.4.1 Key trail features

The key features that cyclists said made a great trail included the trail / pathway quality, wayfinding, safety features, connectivity and the cycling community surrounding the trails. The key themes that emerged in response to the question ‘what are the features that you like about the route you ride, facilities available and the cycling experience in the Cultural River Precinct?’ are summarised below.

- **Trail / pathway characteristics:** including the flow of the trail, single-track along the Yarra, option to ride on sealed or gravel, and minimising contact with roads.
- **Natural landscape:** in and around the trails feels remote, serene and like bushland despite proximity to the city.
- **Location:** of cycling is connected to urban environments.

One cyclist said:

*This is an amazing and rare piece of greenway that allows cyclists to ride on mostly fun and challenging cross-country single track all the way from Fairfield to the mountains without ever having to ride on the road with cars. There are few other cities in the world that have this ability and it should be highly valued here.*

3.4.2 Current cycling issues

Cyclists identified key issues, or features they do not like about their cycling experience in the Cultural River Precinct as including:

- the width and design of tracks is unsuitable (detail provided below)
- upkeep of trails is inadequate which has safety and environmental implications
- key links are missing, or need improvement
- facilities are inadequate particularly lighting, water taps, and toilets
- there is ambiguity about engagement with Parks Vic surrounding legal use and maintenance of trails.

The most issues raised (40 comments) related to the Main Yarra Trail. Other key areas identified as having issues were: the Yarra Flats because of the trail design and missing connections, Heide because of missing links and Banksia Street for safety concerns.

Some comments were:

- *The only aspect that I dislike is the ambiguity about what trails are legal/sanctioned by Parks Vic and which are not.*
- *No lighting ... Minimal /unclear signage directing through sections of the trail ...no links or suggested routes to local train stations. The design of these trails often seems to neglect multi-modal transport ... the surface of the Yarra flats section can be quite bumpy / potholes / challenging*
Cyclists stated that there was some conflict between bike riders and other commuters or user groups, though many (15 participants) did not see an issue with current use (shown in Figure 11).

The key conflicts related to trail design were different speeds between users, unspecified direction along single-track trails and multi-use trails (such as walkers, dogs off leads, and bikes) creates conflicts. Signposting the use of key trails and giving direction (wayfinding) was also considered a source of conflict, as is engagement with, and education of all trail users.

Figure 11: Usage conflicts in the precinct
3.4.3 Suggested improvements

Cyclists and Yarra parkland and Heide users suggested ways to improve the transport connections within the precinct, as highlighted in Figure 12 and discussed in the following section.

**How could we improve transport facilities and connections within the precinct?**

**Should there be new places to cross the river?**

*Figure 13: Pop-up feedback about transport connections*

*Figure 12: Pop-up feedback about river crossings*

**River crossings**

Feedback from pop-up surveys showed general support for a new place to cross the river (as shown in Figure 13). A location for the crossing was not agreed, though responses suggested a footbridge, and separated road/pedestrian river crossings.

Cyclists suggested improvements to make riding better for different types of cycling, as shown in Figure 14.

**Design of trails**

Improving the design of trails was a key suggestion for road, trail and mountain bike riders. Road cyclists suggested key changes such as keeping paths close to the river to limit changes in gradients and ensuring adequate path and bike lane widths. Trail riders suggested trails be designed with better drainage consideration particularly in the Yarra Flats area; this was also supported by mountain bikers. Mountain bikers suggested that the design of paths should accommodate separate uses better. They also suggested new mountain bike tracks, particularly at Banyule Flats and Bulleen Park.
Suggested cycling improvements

Figure 14: Suggested cycling improvements (numbers indicate number of comments)
Facilities provision

Cyclists and pop-up survey respondents suggested the following key facilities be provided for all types of riders:

- water fountains
- toilets
- path lights (solar)
- bike pump stations
- bike parking
- new mountain biking facilities in Westerfolds Park and Rosanna Golf Course.

Wayfinding

Signage along paths with directions, maps, recommended usage, and path etiquette was suggested by road, trail and mountain bike riders. Cyclists also suggested signage and line markings to delineate between cycling and walking areas along the Main Yarra Trail would be useful.

Infrastructure improvements

Upgrades to infrastructure, particularly the surface of paths for road and trail riders (either maintaining gravel surfaces better, or providing more paved options), points of road crossing, and width of trails was suggested by road riders.

Connections

Key connections that are currently missing in the cycling network should be developed such as a river crossing near Heide, connections to existing paths and areas as well as connections to new housing developments.

The Yarra Flats in particular was mentioned as a key area that needs to be better connected.
3.5 Development considerations

Participants at pop-ups were asked ‘what should be considered as part of planning for new development in the area?’. Many respondents raised the issue of building height and restricting the height of future developments. There was not consensus about how many storeys is appropriate, though people mentioned three levels and less as desirable. Participants also new developments should be focused around strategic locations and have adequate setbacks from the river. Participants also suggested that maintaining the natural environment and natural characteristic of the landscape is a worthwhile consideration.

![Bar chart showing important considerations for new developments](image)

**Figure 15: Development considerations (feedback from pop-up surveys)**
4 Conclusion

The targeted engagement activities largely focused on drawing out and further exploring key themes that have been identified during the earlier engagement phase.

Particular community cohorts were identified and targeted as part of the second phase, including young people, cyclists, artists and people currently using / visiting the Heidi and Yarra Flats core precinct.

Engagement with these groups allowed more in-depth discussions and feedback, which focused on the following key themes:

- The development of a new cultural facility in the area is largely supported. Participants recommended that new cultural facilities should retain the existing values, be connected to Aboriginal and art histories, involve a making space (such as residency / studio facilities), and be inclusive and accessible.

- The inclusion of more open space in the precinct was supported. The type of open space that is desirable is largely bushland areas and walking trails. There was not a clear consensus regarding the location of open space, and it was suggested that new open space could be located either close to the river, or well dispersed throughout the precinct to allow a diverse community to access it.

- Transport connections in the area, particularly cycling, walking and public transport connections could be improved. Participants largely supported a new bridge crossing the river. The suggested improvements for cycling included improving trail design for safety and environmental benefit, providing facilities such as water stations, pumps and toilets, and enhancing wayfinding and signage along trails.