



Dandenong Road East Shared User Path Extension **Community Engagement Report**

May 2023



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Overview

The Level Crossing Removal Project is funding an extension to the shared user path on Dandenong Road East, Frankston to connect the existing shared user path between Cricklewood Avenue and Fletcher Road.

In November 2022 Frankston City Council consulted the community on a concept plan for the proposed extension that would construct the shared user path on the nature strip. Council received a number of concerns about the proposed tree and vegetation removal. A second concept plan was developed that retains most of the existing trees but would require the removal of 76 on-street car parking bays.

Consultation outcomes



Purpose

Community engagement is being used to give members of the public influence over which option is selected. Council will progress with a planning permit for the most supported option.

Community consultation methods

Community Engagement on this project used a mixed method approach. An online project page was created on Council's Engage Frankston website. A short online survey was offered on this page, that allowed participants to add free text comments in addition to selecting a preferred option. Signage, letters to residents and car windshield flyers promoted participation through a QR code and website address.

Engage Frankston!

Council's engagement website Engage Frankston was used to share information about this project and survey the community on their preferred option.

The Engage Frankston project page presented simplified technical drawings, detailed plans, aerial photography and written descriptions of the project options. This allowed participants to make an informed decision while considering the level of surrounding tree cover (shown in aerial photography) and surrounding parking (labelled on an area image).

Participants were then asked to answer the question "Which plan best meets the needs of our community?" to encourage community minded thinking beyond personal preference.

Intercept Surveys

Two Council Officers conducted intercept surveys near the project area. During intercept surveys, officers were able to point along the road and show participants the project area and ask them to consider their immediate surrounds to respond to the question.



Participation

Community Engagement is most effective when we reach a representative sample of the people who will be impacted by a decision. For this project, we aimed to reach potential users of the shared user path, road users, those who value the trees in the area and those who live nearby.

Promoting the opportunity to participate

To reach our target audiences, a combination of communication channels was used. Their reach and known participation rates are shown in Table 1. All communications for this project directed participants to complete a survey on Engage Frankston so all data could be analysed together.

Table 1 Effectiveness of Communication Methods

Method	Reach	Results
Letters to nearby residences	670 letters were hand delivered in the week of 17 April 2023.	The web address was typed directly into a web browser 92 times , indicating they found the URL on printed materials.
Signage in the project area	2 signs placed at key locations at either end of the project area.	
Car windshield flyers	40 flyers were posted on the windshields of cars parked on Dandenong Road East on Thursday 4 May 2023 to reach weekday car parking users	The QR code used on letters, car flyers, and public signage was scanned 52 times . 31 Participants indicated they park their car in the area.
Project page on Engage Frankston!	350 page views during the consultation period. 41.15% went on to do the survey.	108 responses by individuals through engage Frankston (including one by email)
Intercept surveys	Intercept surveys were conducted at the project site: Thursday 20 April 4:00pm to 5:30pm Facilitators estimate they recorded responses for approximately 75% of passers-by, which is considered a very high conversation rate for this method.	Recorded responses from a total of 82 participants .



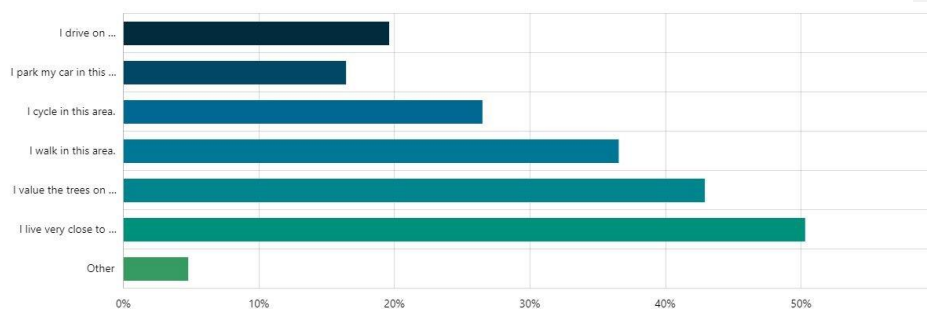
	On average officers successfully engaged people at a rate of just under one person per minute. (0.91 people per minute)	
Word of Mouth	Council officers noted that the project was shared by a community member on a local Facebook Group notice board.	32 visitors arrived via a Facebook link.

Who did we reach?

There was a total of 190 responses collected from across all methods. Participants were asked to nominate up to three categories that described their interest in the project, therefore the total number of interest selections is greater than the total number of participants. Interest categories were:

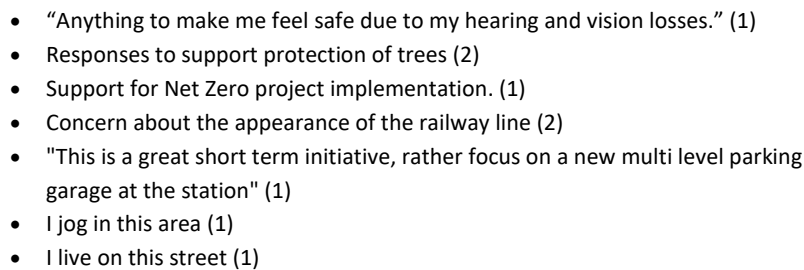
- I drive on this road
- I park my car in this area
- I cycle in this area
- I walk in this area
- I value the trees on this road
- I live very close to this area
- Another reason (tell us more)

Graphic 1. Results for “What is your interest in this project? Choose up to three that apply.”



Other areas of interest

There were 9 ‘other’ reasons stated for interest in the project. These can be summarised as follows:



When asked ‘which plan best meets the needs of our community’ participants were asked to drag a slider towards their preferred option or leave it in a neutral position. Those who placed the slider in a neutral position were required to provide a comment to “tell us more about your answer”. This activity is shown in Graphic 2 below.

Which plan best meets the needs of our community? Required

Move the slider to respond.

Option 1 - Remove the Trees Option 2 - Remove the car parking

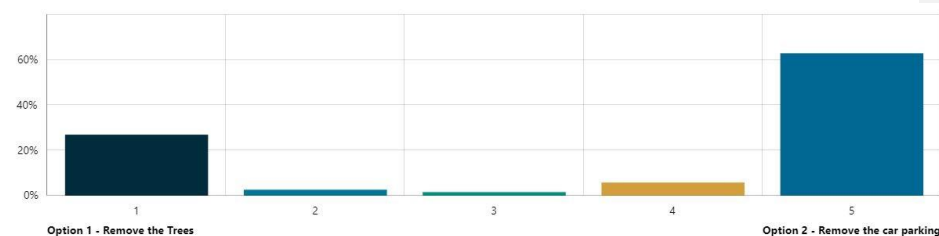
You can tell us more about your answer here Required

You have 500 characters left



The graphic below shows the total number of selections at each point along the slider. Most participants dragged the slider to select an option, with only a few leaving it in a neutral position. Option 1 was selected by 56 participants, by dragging the slider to the left. Option 2 was selected by 130 participants by dragging the slider to the right.

Graphic 3. Results for “Which plan best meets the needs of our community?”



Option 1 – Remove the Trees

This option was chosen by 29.6% of participants. When looking at interest groups, this option was slightly preferred by people who park their car in the area. (Participants who *park their car in the area* selected this option 17 times, and the second option 14 times.) Option 1 was not preferred by any other interest group.

Some comments from this group are presented below:

- “I really don't like the idea of removing healthy trees, but those carparks are always busy there.”
- “...Trees are ugly and full of weeds and don't really provide much benefit. Tree area us currently used as a rubbish gathering area...”
- “The unrestricted parking is not enough”
- “My staff parks their car along this road.”
- “It may generate less traffic and makes me feel safer to walk due to my deafblindness.”

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Option 2 – Remove the Car Parking

This was the most selected option, chosen by 68.8% of participants.



When looking at interest groups, this option was most supported by people who live nearby (69), walk in the area (52), value trees (51) or cycle in the area (35).

Some comments from this group are presented below:

- “The car park at Frankston station has plenty of spaces, and once the trees are gone they won't be back for decades if at all.”
- “We are in a climate crisis. If anything we need to keep the trees and add more vegetation.”
- “I’m a bit worried about people parking outside my house more”
- “As someone who walks that way, Trees are a good idea particularly in summer.”
- “I don’t agree with removing any trees. As an Indigenous person of these lands I don’t agree with any of that.”
- “Hopefully multi-storey parking at Frankston station will relieve the loss of the parking.”
- “I am concerned about removal of trees given the importance of having a natural path on the way to the station.”

No Selection

A small number of people did not select either concept plan (1.6%). Their comments indicate that the lack of selection was driven by ambivalence about both options [in three cases and because the participant did not like either option in one case](#).

Some comments from this group are presented below:

- “I’m homeless and don’t care about bike lanes right now” (1)
- “Don’t care” (2)
- “NEITHER work!! ... parking is highly needed ... bushes provide some much needed sound barrier”

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Other Feedback

Some people used the survey to provide other feedback about the project or area. This feedback is presented below:

Support for the project

- “I have a bike but I don’t ride it because there’s no bike infrastructure. A lot of people ride on the footpath because they are too scared to ride on the road.”
- “It should have always been connected”
- “Good to see the path extension”



Opposition of the project

- “This is essentially an industrial area and does not require shared pedestrian/cycle zones. F/path exists already and bikes are can travel on road.”

Concerns or suggestions

- “It may be worthwhile to set up a pedestrian lights for safer walking over the railroad tracks between Cricklewood and Raymond streets”
- “Undergrounding of the power lines needs to be part of this scope... Also, if the area becomes a construction site it is more economical to complete the work in one ... You should also consider the kerb extension on the east side to create a separation between the parking bays and the carriageway.”

Selection by interest group

Each participant could select up to three interest groups. The following table presents which options were selected by each interest group. Each person could select three areas of interest, so the total number of selections is greater than the number of participants.

This shows us that Option 2 was preferred by most interest groups. Option 2 is supported by intended shared user path users, local residents, those who value trees and those who drive on the road. Those who park their car in the area were almost evenly divided with 17 preferring Option 1 and 15 preferring Option 2.

Table 1. Selections by interest group.

Interest group	Selected Option 1	No Selection	Selected Option 2
I drive on this road	13	0	24
I park my car in this area	17	0	14
I cycle in this area	12	3	35
I walk in this area	17	1	52
I value the trees on this road	17	1	51
I live very close to this area	25	1	69
Another reason	0	1	9

Recommendations



The following recommendations are based on community engagement findings and will need to be considered alongside project planning and site constraints.

- That Council proceed with a planning application for Option 2 – Remove the Car Parking
- That Council investigate options to enhance the nature strip with additional planting.
- That Council develop a communications plan to notify on-street car park users and nearby residents prior to the commencement of construction.

Appendices



1. Aerial image provided on Engage Frankston!



Appendices



2. Concept drawings (Detailed Functional Plans were also provided on Engage Frankston)



3. Signage erected at the project area.



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