

Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve

Community Engagement Executive Summary

Project Goal

The council has resolved to create an environmentally focussed reserve with four key priorities (Environment, Water quality, Flood mitigation, and Public amenity) within Elsternwick Park.

While there has been much consultation that has informed the council decision, the goal of this engagement was to understand how the community would like to see the council's strategy for an environmentally focussed reserve, and the four endorsed priorities, reflected within the future design of EPNR:

As per the engagement scope endorsed by council, the engagement was specifically not going to seek or consider feedback that was inconsistent with the council's strategy and resolutions.

Project Methodology

A range of activities were conducted and the level of engagement and interest from the community was very high. The activities included:

- Have Your Say page
- On site, drop in style sessions
- Hard copy surveys, email/written submissions

The feedback from these sessions was then summarised and results outside the scope of the engagement removed.

These results will inform the design of the scope and brief for the draft masterplan.

Results

Global Interpretations

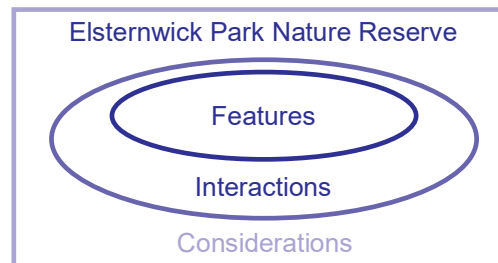
What is meant by environmental

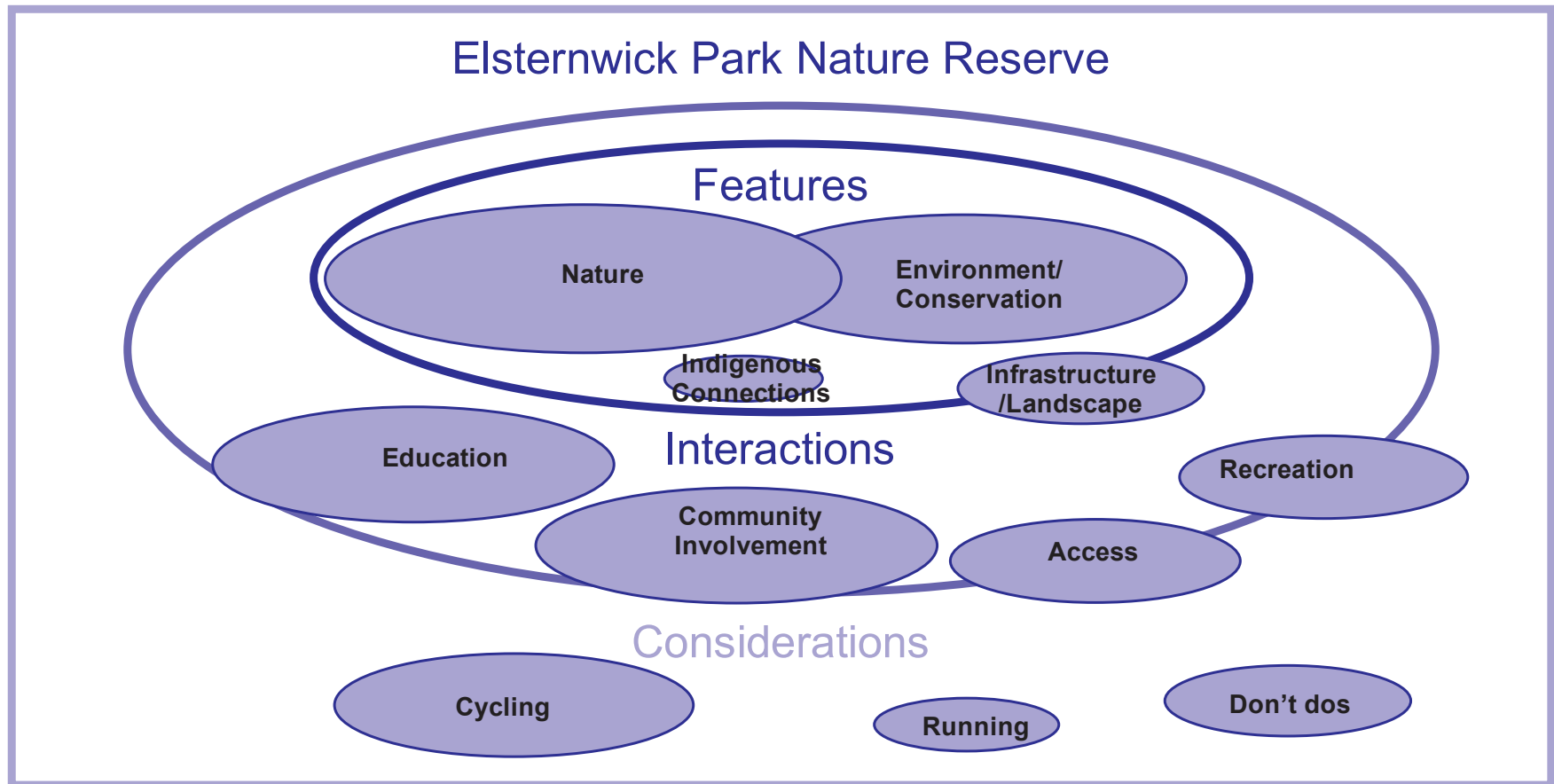
The council resolved to create an “environmentally” focussed reserve. Environmental could have a very a very wide understanding and potentially include activities as diverse as recycling, swap meets, and composting through promoting use of sustainable living and greenhouse gas reduction to supporting the “natural environment”.

The overwhelming major of respondents have interpreted environmental as supporting the natural environment, that is plants, animals and habitat. This includes the creation of this environment, the conservation of what is already there. Further, it also includes being able to access, appreciate and understand this “natural environment” and the opportunity for the community to be involved in supporting this.

Feedback at different Levels

The community provided feedback at different levels. At the central level was feedback about the reserve features; what it should include, what its focus should be. The next level was, given those features, how the community wanted to interact with the reserve. The outer level was overall considerations for the reserve, these are things that should be considered in the design of the reserve, somewhat independent of the reserve features themselves.





Bubble sizes reflect weighting of the response themes.

Nature

- ▶ Wildlife sanctuary
 - Including:
 - Some areas of minimal disturbance (people, dogs)
 - Management of pest species
- ▶ Locally indigenous flora
- ▶ Planting
 - Including:
 - More trees
 - Bushes
 - Flowering plants
 - Urban forest feel
- ▶ Extensive Wetlands

Indigenous Connections

- ▶ Reflecting traditional land ownership and use with park features

Environment / Conservation

- ▶ Natural environment
 - including:
 - Adequate space
 - Maintained
 - Protected
 - Restored
- ▶ Flood prevention and mitigation
- ▶ Water quality
 - Including:
 - Improvement
 - Catchment to trap rubbish
 - Water features to purify
- ▶ Lake biodiversity/facilitate a healthy environment
- ▶ preserve what is currently in place (63 votes)

Infrastructure/landscape

- ▶ Lighting to support cycling, running activities
- ▶ Variety of different spaces
- ▶ Seating
- ▶ Drinking Fountains
- ▶ Toilets

Education

- ▶ Indigenous culture including:
 - Learning about the history of the area
 - Traditional land management/ownership
- ▶ Observation points and information stations explaining Fauna and Flora
- ▶ Environmental learning programs including:
 - Environmental centre
 - Indoor and/or outdoor classroom spaces
 - Partnership with organisations (eg. Sacred Heart Mission) to establish low cost programs/volunteer opportunities
- ▶ Educational shop within reserve including:
 - Selling native seedlings
 - Artwork/merchandise/reserve maps

Community Involvement

- ▶ Planting/volunteering
- ▶ Community gardens
- ▶ Café
- ▶ Meeting places for social gatherings

▶ Access

- ▶ Installation of boardwalks and observation points
 - ▶ Access to southern park areas including:
 - Footbridge(s)
 - Existing floodway
 - Closing Bent Ave
 - ▶ Restricting access at night
 - Wildlife respite
 - Personal safety
 - ▶ More entries to reserve
 - Combined with pedestrian crossings
 - ▶ Disabled access
 - ▶ Paths to provide access to areas around reserve
- Considerations include
- Natural and permeable materials
 - Providing access to different areas
 - Avoiding 'goat tracks'/minimising impact on habitat
 - Separation of cycle and pedestrian traffic
 - Minimal paths
- ▶ Allow for multiple uses

Recreation

- ▶ Nature based play / play areas

Picnic areas

Considerations

Cycling

- ▶ Bike riding on bike paths, specifically providing commuter access and connecting with existing paths including along Elster Creek
 - Strong preference for paths around reserve (rather than through)

Running

- ▶ Running tracks around perimeter

Don't do's

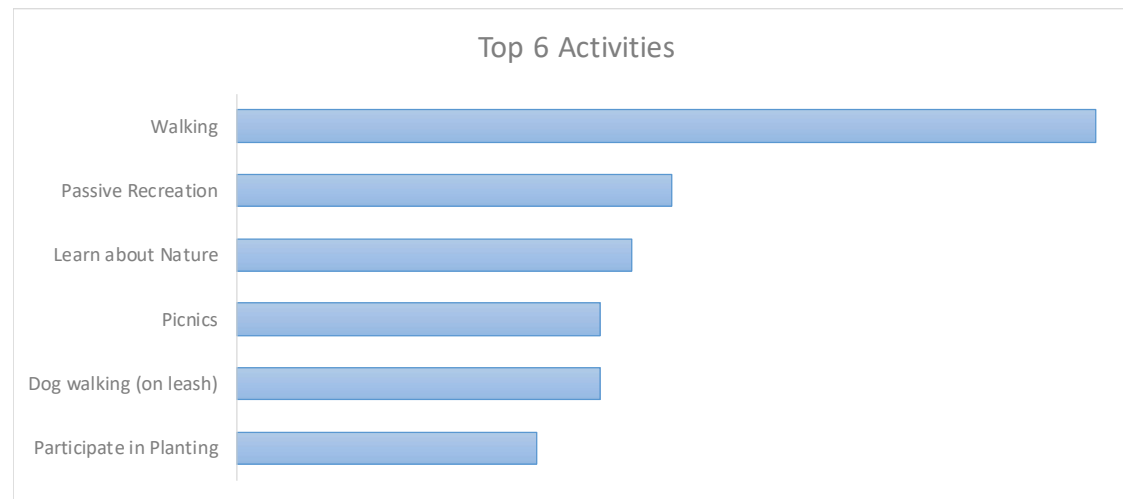
- ▶ No sporting venues/facilities/ovals
- ▶ No dogs (on-lead) permitted in park
- ▶ No artificial structures/playgrounds
- ▶ No drones to be used (22 votes)

Key Insights

Intended Activities

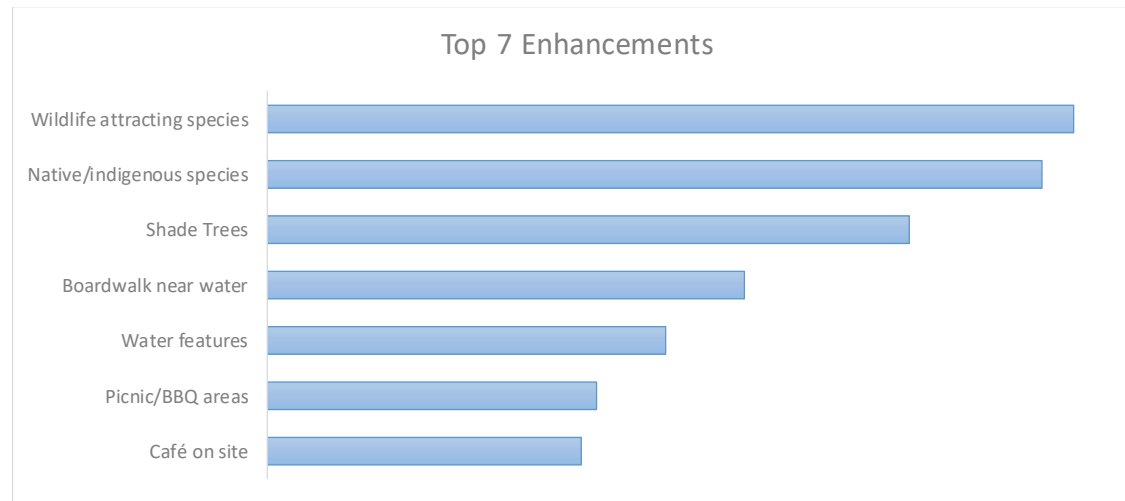
Feedback was gained through a number of different channels. Including online survey and a drop-in centre survey.

After walking, passive recreational use, learning about nature, dog walking and picnics were the most popular activities.



Enhancements

The main suggestion for enhancement of the reserve centred around having wildlife attracting species and native/indigenous trees. Shade trees was also a popular feature for consideration in the design of the reserve.



Path ways

Paths made from permeable materials that do not impact on natural habitats or flora was the most suggested design consideration for paths in the reserve. A loop around the perimeter was also suggested (mainly for cycling and running). Multiple suggestions centred around linking paths with existing external paths – particularly for bicycles – to make an interconnected system for the area.