



LAURIES FIELD MASTER PLAN

Engagement Summary Report

**Phase 3 Community Consultation
21 November to 19 December 2025**

Introduction

The City of Whittlesea has developed a draft master plan for Lauries Field, one of Council's open spaces in Doreen, an established area of the municipality. The reserve has an area of approximately 4.90 hectares made up of an open grassed area, lake, and conservation area.

The master plan is a high-level document providing a broad vision for the reserve. The master plan endeavours to:

- **improve park infrastructure** to ensure the safety and accessibility of all users, including children, the elderly, and people with disabilities
- **enhance environmental sustainability** by addressing the water quality of the lake and restoring the natural habitat for aquatic life, as well as protecting and preserving natural features of the park by implementing measures to mitigate the damage to conservation areas
- **foster community interaction and recreation** by creating opportunities such as walking paths and leisure areas to promote healthy lifestyle and community interaction
- **promote connectivity and accessibility** by improving pedestrian pathways and connectivity within the park to enhance accessibility for all users and to establish linkages with surrounding areas and transportation networks to facilitate easy access for residents and visitors
- **enhancement of play experience** by improving the quality and variety of play experiences offered at the recreation reserve by introducing new and innovative play equipment, features, and layouts. Create a dynamic and engaging environment that caters to the diverse needs and preferences of children and families.

Feedback from the community and stakeholders informed the Lauries Field Master Plan. The community engagement comprised of three phases:

- phase one - information gathering - **completed**
- phase two - draft Lauries Field Master Plan shared with community for feedback – **completed**
- phase three - revised draft Lauries Field Master Plan shared for community feedback – **completed**.

This report summarises the community engagement undertaken as part of phase three, sharing the draft with community for feedback, which was open for community comment from Friday 21 November to Friday 19 December 2025.

How we engaged you

Phase one: Gathering ideas – Tuesday 18 June to Tuesday 16 July 2024 COMPLETED

We consulted with our community to inform the development of the draft Lauries Field Master Plan by identifying key issues, challenges and opportunities of the site and capturing the key ideas for improvement. To do this we asked the community how they felt about the park, what they valued and if they had any ideas to improve the area.

Community feedback was sought online through Council's *Engage Whittlesea* platform and through direct conversations and activities at two community-based pop-ups.

Phase two: Draft master plan shared with community for feedback: 24 July to 7 September COMPLETED

We shared the draft Lauries Field Master Plan with stakeholders previously consulted in phase one, as well as the wider community to understand if the draft plan met community expectations and the current and future needs of user groups.

Feedback from more than 650 community members through survey, in person drop-in sessions, emails and an information session helped shape key updates for the revised master plan including retaining the lake.

What we heard is important to community?

- retaining the lake in its current form
- protecting and enhancing the conservation area
- planting more native trees and vegetation
- improving lighting, paths and entrances.

Phase three: Draft revised master plan shared with community for feedback: 21 November to 19 December COMPLETED

Following extensive community consultation in phase one and phase two, we shared the revised draft 10-year master plan for Lauries Field with community.

What has been revised in the draft master plan?

- The lake is proposed to stay and not be changed. Council plans to explore ways to improve the water quality including filtration, stormwater harvesting, and vegetation management.
- Conservation area to be enhanced with interpretive signage, fencing and more native plants.
- The Monterey Cypress trees health to be monitored and stay unless they are unsafe.
- The plan will investigate replacement planting for the future including more native trees that will complement the reserve and improve local wildlife habitat.
- Six parking bays to remain on Lake Front Mews, while the others will become open parkland with a path and lighting.

This updated plan outlines a vision that aligns with community priorities to make Lauries Field safer, more welcoming and more enjoyable for everyone, while protecting its natural and environmental values. All proposed works are subject to future funding.

Online Engagement

The project page on the *Engage Whittlesea* platform featured an interactive view of the revised draft master plan offering visitors a chance to learn more about the key recommendations of the plan. Visitors to the page were encouraged to complete a short survey to indicate their level of support for the draft plan and provide any additional comments or suggestions on the proposed design for Lauries Field.



In-person engagement

During phase three, Council held three community-based drop-in sessions below:

- Tuesday 2 December, 2.30pm–5pm onsite at Lauries Field in Doreen
- Thursday 4 December, 9.30am – 11.30am at Brookwood Community Centre
- Thursday 4 December, 5pm–7pm at Brookwood Community Centre

In-person participants had an opportunity to view the draft master plan and complete a dot board activity where they were asked if they support the draft plan and were encouraged to share any further comments. The in-person engagement mirrored the online engagement activity.



Figure 1: Interactive map showing Council's recommendations from revised draft Lauries Field Master Plan on the Engage Whittlesea page



Figure 2: Images from in- person engagement at Lauries Field and Brookwood Community Centre

Project promotion

The opportunity to participate in the community engagement was promoted through a range of channels to have a widespread reach across the local Doreen area including:

- Council's digital engagement platform [Engage Whittlesea](#)
- Social media – we shared posts across Council's social media channels (Facebook and Instagram)
- Letterbox drop to residents within 800m of the site advising them of the project and inviting them to share their feedback through the project *Engage Whittlesea* page or by visiting one of the community-based drop-in sessions
- Posters displayed at Brookwood Community Centre, Laurimar Community Activity Centre and Mernda Community Activity Centre as well as 150 flyers available to take at these locations
- Media Release – 20 November 2025
[Lauries Field draft master plan updated following community feedback | City of Whittlesea](#)
- Local newspaper/media coverage
 - Insert article – 21 November - Star Weekly – online: [Council listens to pleas to save lake | Northern](#)



Figure 3: Large corrugate signage onsite, social media post and flyer promoting the consultation

Participation

A total of 65 community members participated in phase three consultation, 20 in-person at community-based drop-in sessions and a further 45 online via the *Engage Whittlesea* platform.

A snapshot of community participation and social interaction

Gender Identity



A total of 65% identified as female, 34% as male and 1% preferred not to say.

Age



The most represented age bracket being 45-54 years (29%), followed by 65-74 years of age (26%) and 55-64 years (20%).

Suburb



A total of 94% of participants reside in Doreen.

LGBTQIA+ Community



2% of participants identified as a member of LGBTQIA+ community.

People with Disabilities



17% of participants identified as a person with a disability, unpaid carer of an older person or unpaid carer of a person with a disability.

Aboriginal /Torres Strait Islander People



A total of 9% identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Digital Engagement



821 views of the project Engage page with 45 people participating in the online survey, one new follower subscribed for project updates, and the revised master plan was downloaded 101 times.

In person Engagement



Twenty people participated at one of three community-based drop-in sessions in Doreen.

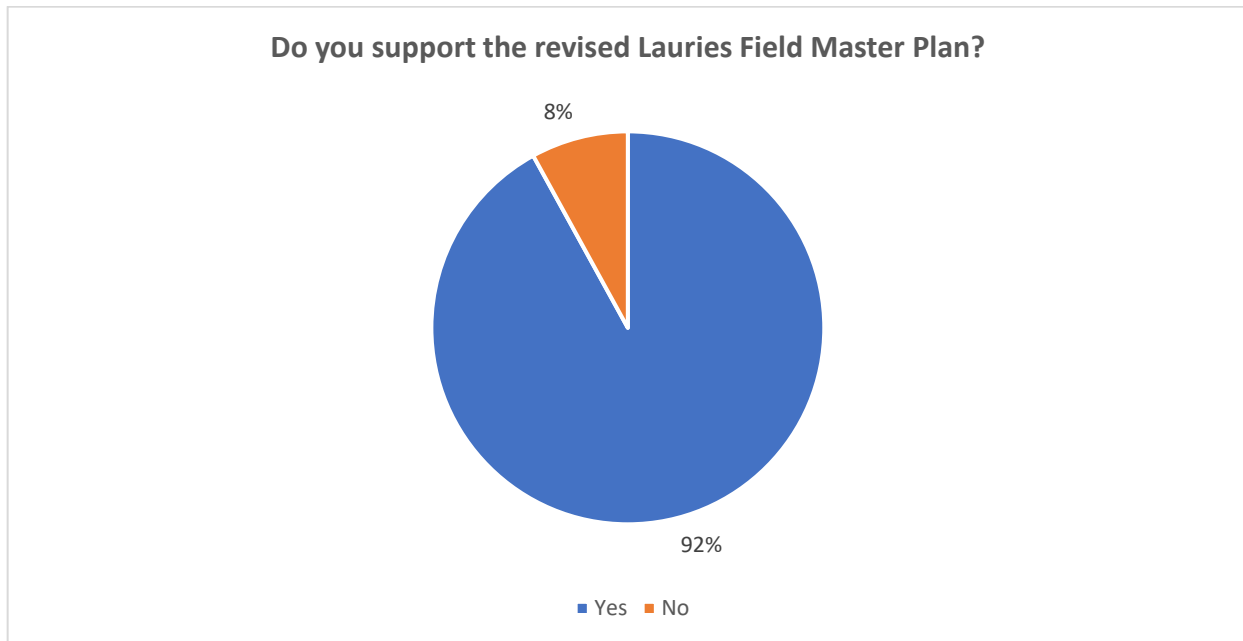
Socials Engagement



Four social media posts with over 16,000 views and engaged with 444 times, generating 38.4% of traffic to the online Engage page.

What we heard

A total of 65 people responded to the question **“Do you support the proposed design for Lauries Field?”** Of these, 60 people (92%) said they supported the plan, while the remaining 5 (8%) indicated they did not support the draft plan.



Online and in-person participants had the opportunity to provide additional comments to explain why they supported or didn't support the draft master plan. Many of the themes raised had community divided with some for and others against. (See verbatim comments). The main theme of these comments listed below:

- Trees/plants (9)
- Fencing (6)
- The lake (10)
- Lighting (3)
- Conservation Area (3)
- parking (4)
- Playground (5)
- Toilets (3)
- Sports Play area (2).

Key messages from community feedback

Participants were invited to share any further comments about the revised draft master plan. Below are the themed comments received through both online and in-person engagement activities



Playground area - play space upgrades are supported, especially nature-based and play equipment that blend into the environment.

"Perhaps more play equipment, like Landano way Park with a shelter for parents to watch their children. It is an excellent park"

"The playground and amenity's need to be upgraded"

Council response:

The proposed play space will continue to be developed as outlined in the master plan, with consideration of specific experience types requested in submissions.

The play space will be to the provision standard of a municipal reserve, where play experiences will be suited to a broad age, skill and ability range of children below the age of 12. There will be graduated risks in nature and formal play equipment for skill and challenge progression. The play space will not be 'all-abilities', however, will include play equipment that considers accessibility and use by people with disabilities. The proposed play space will not have water play due to the need for additional infrastructure and services, and the new splash park being close by at Hill Top Park. The proposed play space will include improved seating, shelter and drinking fountains for carers and parents, and increasing the social amenity of the reserve.



Sports Play Areas – a lack of facilities for young people aged 12 and over was a concern for some residents.

"Add basketball hoops, play areas, cricket nets"

"I can't see anything besides a half court for 12+ kidsno chance of a freestyle skating environment with water and seats and shade?"

"I disagree and do not support the ball sports court. It'll increase noise, graffiti, and late-night public visitors to the park who may not have local best interests at heart.

I disagree and do not support the build of any recreational walls. Not unless council are willing to put up working CCTV at the location to prevent crime and graffiti.

I disagree with the exercise station. Great in concept, but I've lived around these several times before. Teens either hang out at them but do not use them"

Council response: The proposed informal sports area will continue to be developed as outlined in the master plan, with consideration of detailed submissions.

The space is intended for teenagers and young adults in Doreen, an increasingly needed facility type as the demographics shifts from young families to households with teens. It is now estimated that over 15% of the Doreen population is between the age of 15 to 24, and they are serviced by four informal multi-purpose courts in the whole suburb. This is an under provision compared to the 27 play spaces servicing younger age groups. The proposed informal sports area will have seating and shelter to allow for casual gathering and social connection, however, the spatial limitations reduce the ability to have a skate park or similar facility.



The lake – preservation and enhancement – residents were happy that the lake will stay and will not be changed.

“This is a much better idea for the site. It maintains the lake which allows for the fish and birds to remain. It also improves what is there making this an even better park that it already is”

“Very pleased that the lake will remain in its current form and with improvements for its surrounds in the future. Ways to improve the water quality for the various birds, ducks and pelicans who use the lake is fantastic. The grasses in the lake could also be removed and replaced with some nice water plants”

“So pleased the lake will stay in its current format. So much wildlife is on the area & the pelicans have just recently returned”

“I am very happy the lake stays. We want to keep the park as natural looking as possible to keep that country feel. It is a lovely area we enjoy going on walks”

Council response:

The lake will remain as proposed and investigations for water quality improvement opportunities will continue as outlined in the master plan.



Conservation areas - there is strong support for preserving and enhancing Lauries Field's natural areas.

“Love the proposed enhancement works for the Conservation Area which should be the priority including interpretive signage and lots of extra native grasses and wildflowers”

“Great idea to restore the wetland function too and please include interpretive signage around this important work too”

“Blackberries need to be removed around lake in conservation area”

“No conservation areas. This creates bushfire hazards with areas that can't be maintained. Existing planning framework does not allow this type of hazards. This was previously objected about”

Council response:

Council proposes to maintain and enhance conservation areas through native planting and habitat improvements. Protection measures are proposed to be introduced to safeguard offset conservation area from damage, such as the recent unsanctioned bike jumps.

- Install interpretive signage to promote awareness of environmental values and purpose of the conservation area
- Investigate fencing and additional planting in accordance with the Offset Plan for Laurimar Park and The Maples, Doreen (2008).
- Strengthen ecological resilience through locally sourced native species and habitat features



Enhance the native vegetation and trees - residents have conflicting opinions on the park's vegetation and trees with some wanting the existing trees protected and others feel that the trees need to be removed. Community feel that more regular maintenance of the existing trees is needed.

"Whilst it is encouraging that through community consultation, the lake in its current form is to be retained. I don't agree with retaining the Monterey Cypress trees. Nothing grows beneath them, they have become a bit of an eyesore. We agree with your original draft plan, to remove the MC trees & replace with natives. We feel this would greatly enhance the overall look of Lauries Field"

"Make sure the Existing large trees are protected and not removed"

"Please remove Cypress"

"When new trees are planted, please check regularly"

"My only request is that the pine trees be inspected, and any dead branches removed so they become less of a fire risk"

Council response:

The proposal to retain the Monterey Cypress Pine will remain in the master plan. It should be noted that the trees will be reviewed regularly and will be removed if they pose a safety risk or continue to decline in health. The trees will also be replaced with natives in the case that they are removed.

The latest proposal to retain the Monterey Cypress Pine was directly related to the strong opposition to remove during the second phase of consultation. The continued monitoring of the existing trees will ensure the trees are safe to park visitors.



Fencing – opposing opinions were shared about fencing around Lauries Field. Safety is an issue for some residents, while for others restoring the natural feel of the park is more important.

"Protection around waterways to protect children from drowning as it is close to playground"

"Fencing around the lake for safety"

"No fencing around the lake. Want to keep it natural"

Council response:

There will be no fencing around the lake.

The lake has sufficient vegetation and natural barriers to restrict unintended access, in addition, viewing platforms and decks have been designed to meet Australian Standards and water safety best practice.



Toilets – more toilets at parks in the Doreen area is a priority for residents.

“Really need toilet facilities at these parks”

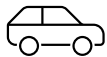
“It would be helpful if more of the parks around Doreen had more toilets”

“Leave as is just add a few different sporting activities and toilets”

Council response:

A public toilet will not be provided at Lauries Field.

Public toilets are located at parks designed and provisioned for high visitation with long dwell times, and attracting visitors from beyond the suburb. Lauries Field, when fully upgraded, will be provisioned to the same standards as other municipal reserves with informal recreation within the City of Whittlesea and these do not include public toilets.



Parking - retaining car park at 7W Lake Front Mews - there were mixed views about the future of the car park at 7W Lake Front Mews. Some residents expressed a strong desire to retain it for accessibility and convenience, especially given limited street parking in the area. Others raised concerns about its impact on the park's character and potential for antisocial behaviour if converted to passive open space.

“I agree the car spaces are a waste of space, and one spot is nearly always used for somebody to park their boat. A few spots for public parking would be great”

“Perhaps more parking, user friendly and safer for children to exit their cars”

“The six carpark spaces at 7W Lake Front Mews should remain as they currently are. This means to remain them in a North/South orientation as this provides the best and safest way to enter and exit the car parking area. There is significant space between the three carpark spaces on the West side and the three carpark spaces on the East side to facilitate foot traffic along with stroller access and dog access. It is no different to pedestrian access in a shopping centre carpark yet the car park at 7W Lake Front Mews has significantly less, if any, vehicle traffic on a regular basis and poses no risk to pedestrians in the current configuration”

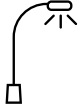
Council response:

The proposed car park configuration in the draft master plan will persist in the final master plan with the proposed quantity of parking (6 bays) being supported by the community.

The proposed configuration addresses the concerns raised by the community. It will increase visibility to parked cars, surveillance into the park, and remove vehicle movements that may conflict with pedestrians. This is achieved by:

- removing parking bays behind the property frontages and aligning the parking bays to the low traffic volume street
- opening sightlines into the park and increasing public lighting

- removing any potential vehicle movement conflict with pedestrians, such as carpark entry driveways, footpaths behind parking bays, or shared zones.



Improve path network, entrances and lighting— Safety and accessibility are key concerns. Improved lighting and path upgrades are welcomed, especially to support evening use and enhance security.

“We live opposite the road and do not want intrusive lighting. This can promote undesirables and crime at night. There is hardly anyone that uses park paths when it is dark. Keep it that way by not installing unnecessary lighting. No lighting upgrades!”

“Path lighting would be a great addition”

“Ensure adequate lighting - for safety of the community, to deter any antisocial activities and make areas more visible to patrolling police vehicles”

Council response:

The proposed path and lighting improvements will persist in the final master plan.

Public open space lighting will only be in areas shown in the master plan, as these are the likely thoroughfare paths connecting public transport and residential areas. Public open space lighting will not light facilities to enable evening use.

The lighting will be designed to consider lighting levels, lighting spill, environmental impacts, and time of use. With newer lighting technology, lights are less intrusive with warmer colour rendering and more directed light. Light pollution and impact to wildlife will also be reduced by timing controls that dim and turn off the lights.

Next steps

Thank you to everyone who participated in the third phase of community engagement by sharing feedback through the digital engagement and at a community-based drop-in session. We will continue to update the community on further developments via the [Lauries Field project Engage page](#).