

Hurstbridge Open Space Precinct Plan

Community Engagement Report



November 2018

Background

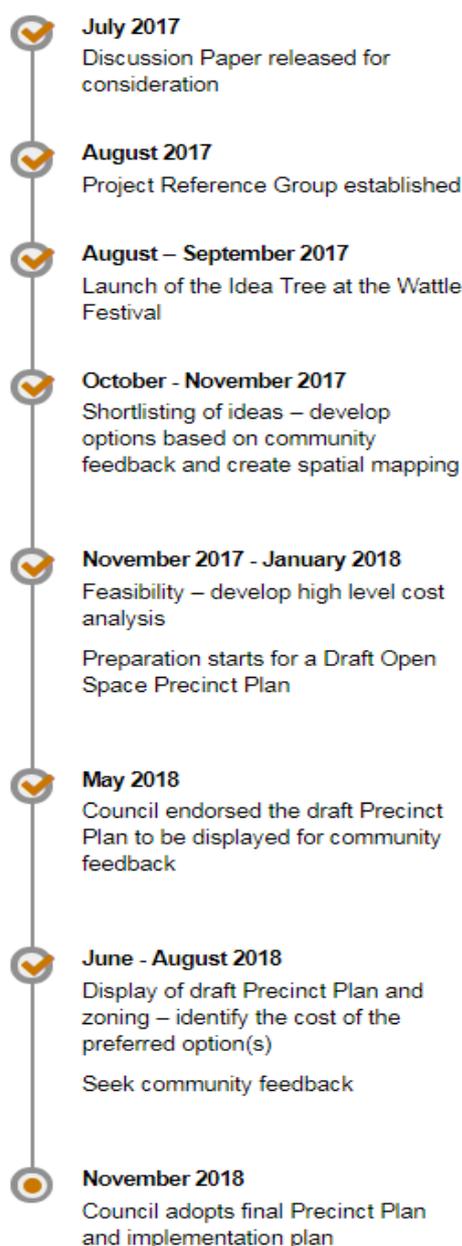
Graysharps Road and the surrounding area of open space and community facilities contribute significantly towards the character and identity of Hurstbridge.

Forming part of an open space corridor, the Precinct is home to a range of community assets such as the cricket, football, netball and bowling clubs, basketball stadium, Hurstbridge Community Hub, preschools and the Hurst Family Graveyard. It also features the Diamond Creek which is home to a diverse range of flora and fauna. The creek and surrounds are subject to periodic flooding.

Over the last six months, Council has worked with the community to develop a vision and a series of ideas for the Precinct (see Table 1). The top ideas were further explored through a series of community Design Workshops and input from a Community Reference group.

Using this feedback, the **draft plan** for the precinct was developed.

Table 1: Project timeframes



How we engaged

The Draft Precinct Plan was released to the community on Wednesday 20 June 2018. It was displayed at the Hurstbridge Community Hub, Bendigo Bank (Hurstbridge Branch) and the Hurstbridge Football & Netball Club. It was also available for viewing on Council's Participate Nillumbik website with an electronic feedback form. Council's social media pages regularly posted information about how the Draft Precinct Plan could be viewed and how feedback could be submitted.

During July 2018, the Draft Precinct Plan was sent out in a Bulletin to 2,730 households in Hurstbridge, Arthurs Creek, Cottles Bridge, Nutfield, Panton Hill and Wattle Glen. The Draft Plan and Bulletin were also available at the Hurstbridge Post Office, Hurstbridge Community Bank, Hurstbridge Medical Centre, Hurstbridge Football & Netball Club and Hurstbridge Community Hub. Boxes were placed at these sites for community members to submit their completed feedback forms. The Bulletin was also available at the two Graysharps Road Preschools and was sent electronically to families of the Hurstbridge Primary School.

Information sessions were scheduled in July 2018 and August 2018 for members of the community and Precinct user groups wanting further information about the Draft Precinct Plan. This included a stand at the Hurstbridge Farmers Market on Sunday 1 July 2018, two information sessions held during training and matches at the Hurstbridge Football & Netball Club, and an information session with the Hurstbridge Men's Shed.

The three information sessions open for the general community had very low attendance rates with 10 people attending across the three sessions. The stakeholder groups session e.g. the Hurstbridge Football & Netball Club had a large attendance at their training night and matches, and 15 people attended the session specifically for the Men's Shed.

The display period was scheduled to conclude on Tuesday 31 July 2018, but was extended to Sunday 5 August 2018, to allow the community further time to consider such a large precinct plan and ensure plenty of opportunity for community input.

What we asked

The Feedback Form comprised of two parts. The first asked about specific options in the Draft Precinct Plan to determine the opinion of the wider community. The purpose of this is to help determine the demand for such elements in the precinct. The second part asked the community to prioritise the elements in order of importance to them. This tool will help determine how elements should be prioritised in the Implementation Plan.

Who we heard from

A total of 135 feedback forms were received with responses to the Options, and of these 118 feedback forms placed the elements in priority order. The feedback forms were submitted in the following ways.

Table 2: Feedback Form Submission Locations

Feedback Form Submission Location	Forms Submitted
Hurstbridge Football & Netball Club (HFNC) Submission Box (used predominantly by club)	41
Mailed directly to Council	27
Hurstbridge Community Hub Submission Box / Info Session	15
Hurstbridge Post Office Submission Box	3
Bendigo Bank (Hurstbridge Branch) Submission Box	1
Hurstbridge Medical Centre Submission Box	0
Hurstbridge Men's Shed Information Session	13
Council's Online Participate Site	35
Total	135

What we heard

OPTIONS

We asked the community which option they preferred for three specific elements of the Precinct Plan.

Outdoor Courts

Two additional outdoor courts to the east of the stadium were proposed to meet the needs of the netball club who are currently travelling outside of Nillumbik for suitable training and playing facilities. For this option the feedback form asked respondents to choose between these additional courts being built or retaining the existing landscape.

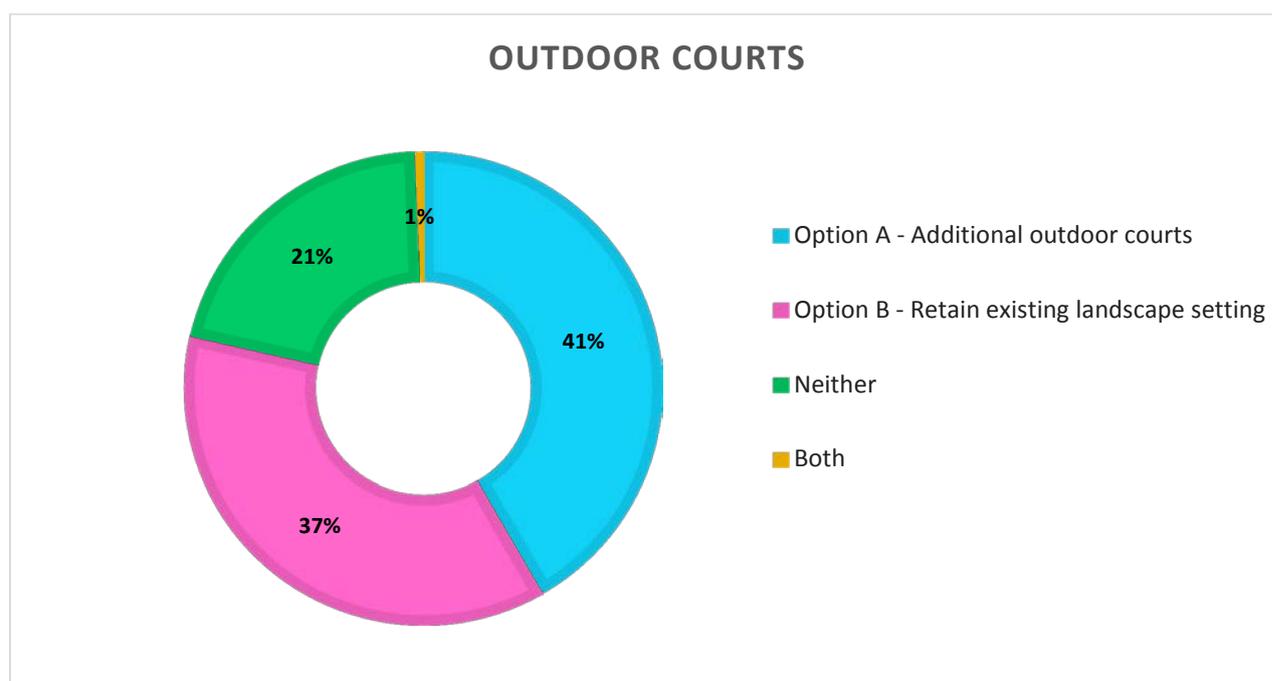
The feedback forms had 60 respondents vote in favour of the additional courts and 51 voting for the retention of the existing landscape setting. There were 30 forms with no vote for either option, and one voting for both options.

Comments from respondents in regard to this option were that there was an identified need for the courts for the health and wellbeing of the community, as the courts would be open for community use and not just for specific people.

Concerns for this option were mainly expressed by those opposed to the courts and centred mainly around the removal of the existing vegetation and potential impact on the children's centre inside the Hub. There were some respondents who believed that perhaps only one court was necessary.

The voting of this option is slightly in favour of the additional courts, mainly prioritised by those affiliated with the Football & Netball Club. Those that provided feedback from other areas of the community did not vote in favour of this option and/or did not rank it highly as a priority.

Table 3: Outdoor Courts – voting results



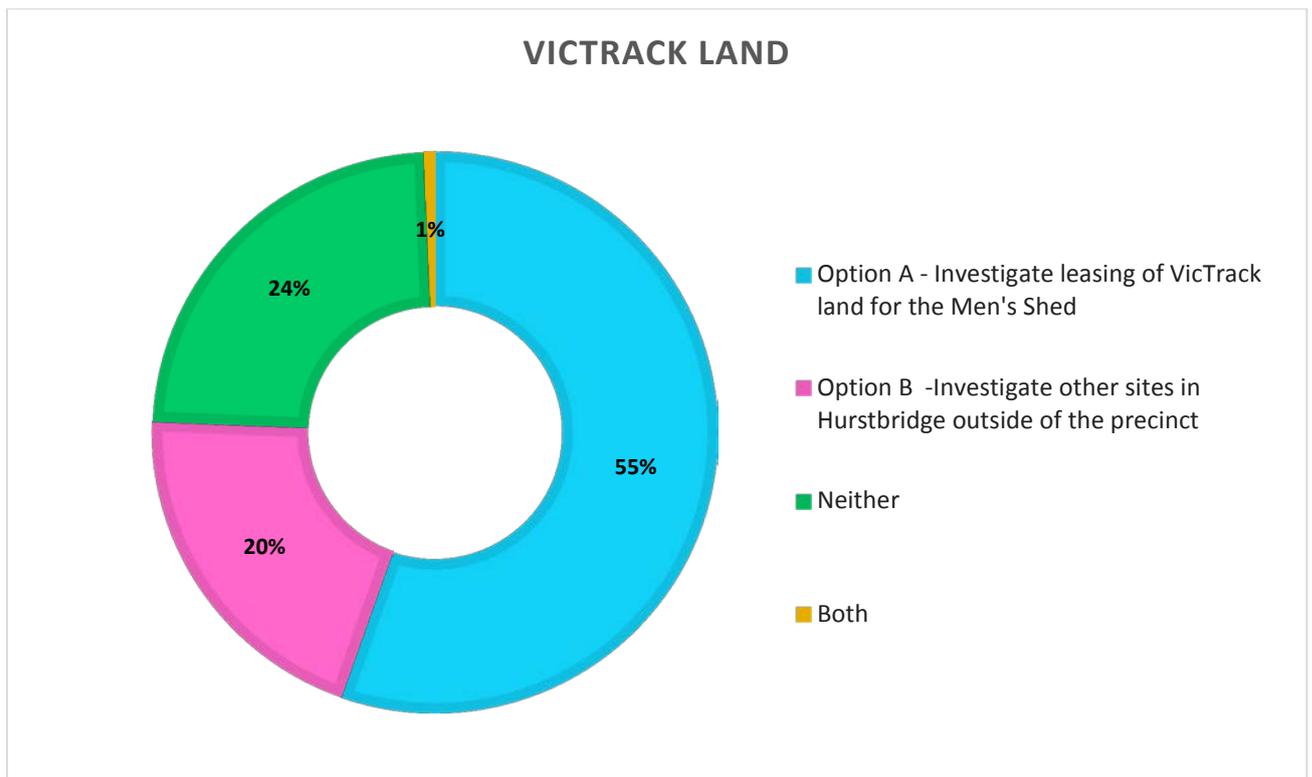
VicTrack Land

The current Hurstbridge Men's Shed is based in a store room in the Basketball Stadium. An option currently exists to investigate the possibility of leasing VicTrack Land to re-home the Hurstbridge Men's Shed. A landscaped edge is proposed adjoining the railway crossing and a new building could be situated within this, as services are currently available to this piece of land. This could allow for larger projects and future integration of a bicycle workshop which would complement at the extended Diamond Creek Trail.

The feedback form asked respondents to choose between the investigations of leasing VicTrack land or to continue investigating other sites in Hurstbridge. The feedback forms had 79 respondents support the investigation of VicTrack land, whilst 28 responses stated that other sites should be investigated. There were 34 forms that did not respond to this question, and 1 that selected both options.

The option to investigate leasing VicTrack land had the most support of any option; only those affiliated with the Men's Shed that ranked it as a high priority. Other areas in the community ranked it slightly higher than the outdoor netball courts.

Table 4: VicTrack Land – voting results



Northern Play Trail

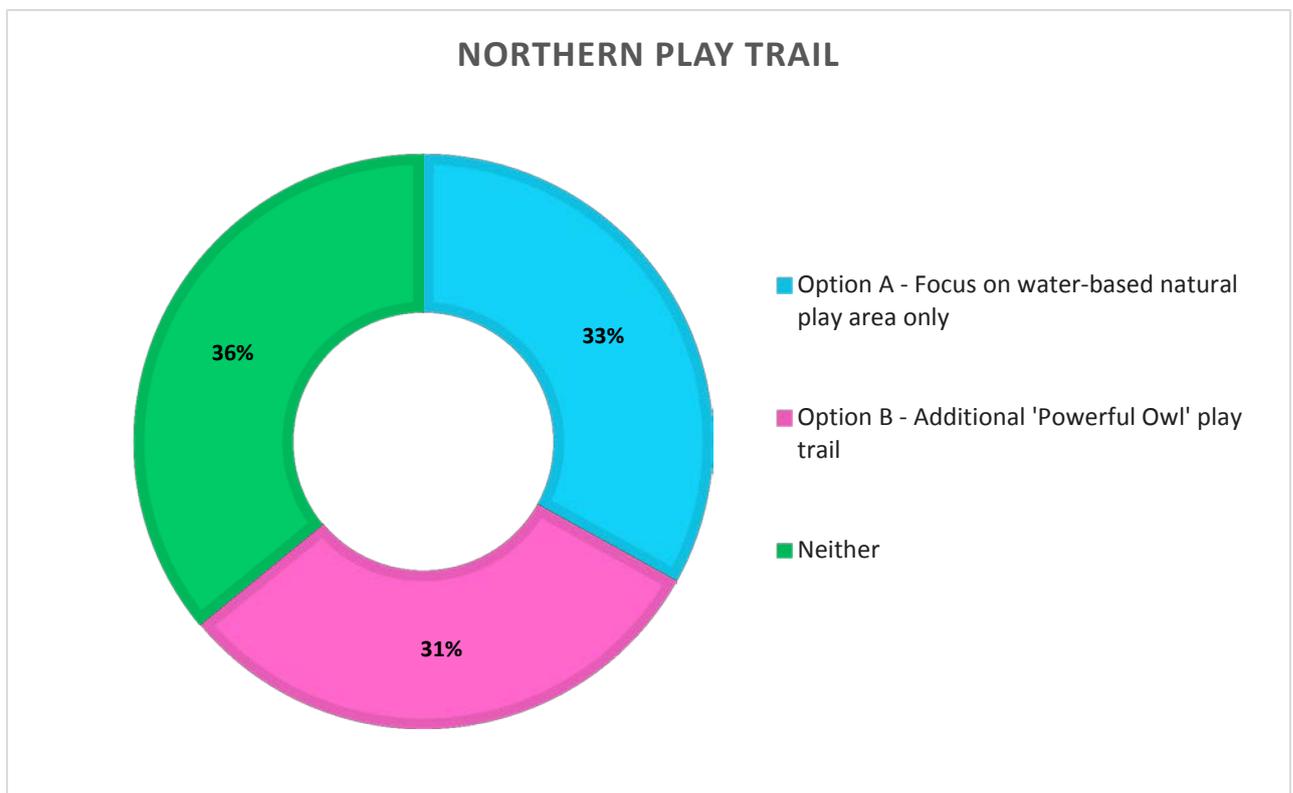
This option is regarding a nature-based play space in the northern area of the precinct as an extension of the current playground. This would be in the form of a landscaped trail, with sensory and exploratory play elements, running parallel to the existing trail, west of the Hurst family cemetery. This could include integration of elements such as a kid's bird hide and reference to the Powerful Owl who reside in the area.

The feedback form asked for respondents to choose between the water-based natural play area only, or for the water-based natural play area with the additional natural play trail. Respondents to the question had 46 in favour of the water-based play only, and 43 in favour of the additional play trail. There were 51 respondents that did not select an option, with 10 of those providing feedback that they did not support either option.

Concerns were raised by a number of respondents about disturbing the Powerful Owl and also the cost of these options, stating that they would prefer neither.

Despite the lack of support for both the water-based play and the additional play trail in the options, both elements were ranked highly in priority (with the exception of those affiliated with the Football & Netball Club and Men's Shed). With the exception of these two elements, most respondents prioritised the precinct plan elements that enhanced already existing areas, and not so much to elements that required a lot of building or additional infrastructure.

Table 5: Northern Play Trail – voting results

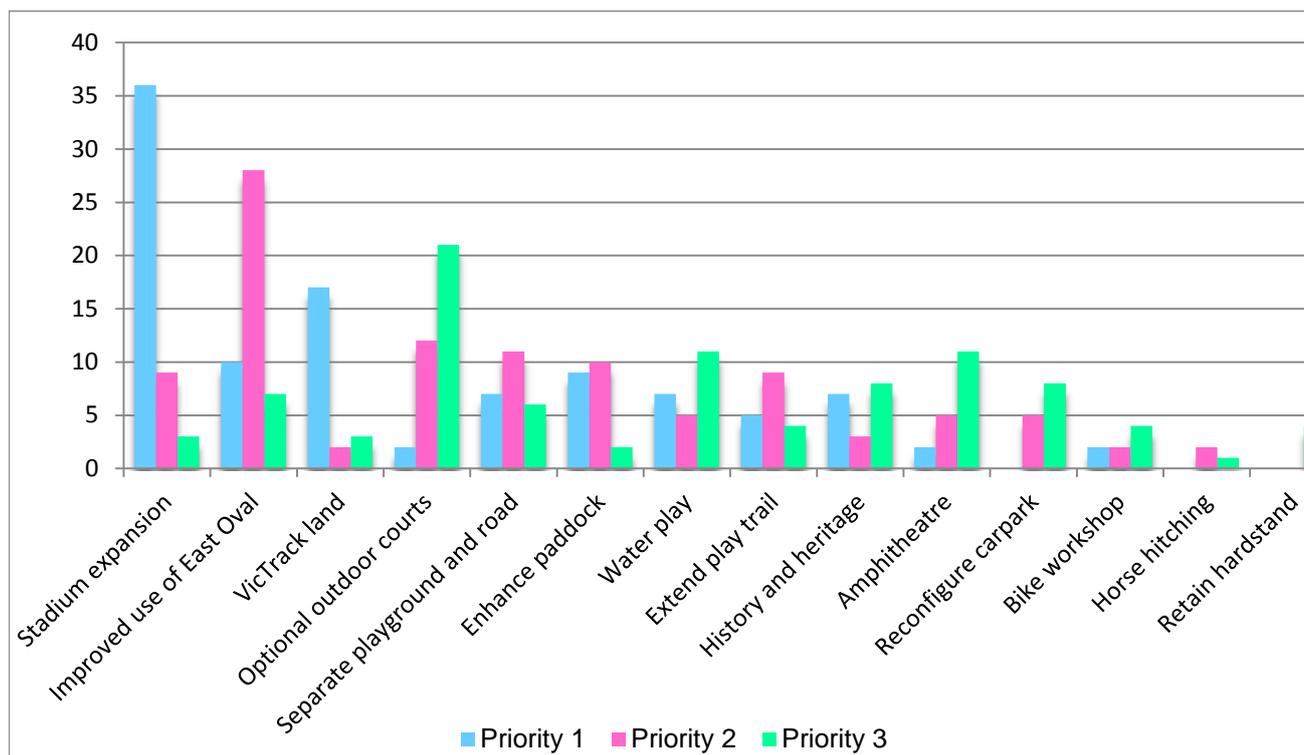


PRIORITIES

We asked the community which elements of the Precinct Plan they would like to see Council prioritise. The feedback form asked respondents to rank the 14 precinct plan elements in order of their own preference, with one being the most important. Respondents could choose to rank some or all precinct elements based on their preference.

This graph shows how many people identified each of the elements as one of their top three priorities.

Table 7: Prioritisation of Draft Precinct Plan Elements



NEXT STEPS

Council will adopt the Precinct Plan at the December 2018 Future Nillumbik Committee Meeting.

An implementation Plan will be developed, taking into consideration the priorities as determined by the broad Hurstbridge community, the significant amount of external funding that will be required to complete the implementation plan and the funding that will be required from Council's operating budget to maintain all such elements.