



North Melbourne Community Hub

Phase 2 Community Engagement Report

March 2025

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we govern, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong / Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin and pays respect to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge and honour the unbroken spiritual, cultural and political connection they have maintained to this unique place for more than 2000 generations. We accept the invitation in the Uluru Statement from the Heart and are committed to walking together to build a better future.

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Executive Summary

The North Melbourne Community Hub project will see the development of a new, community hub located at 91-115 Melrose Street, North Melbourne. Existing Family, Youth, and Ageing and Inclusion services in the local area require a larger, fit-for-purpose home. The new Hub presents an opportunity to co-locate these services in one location and provide new spaces for the community to utilise. Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) endorsed the draft concept design for public feedback on 10 September 2024.

We understand accessible services and spaces for the public and community spaces remain a top priority for the North Melbourne community. Especially with significant population growth expected in the area in Macaulay and Arden precincts in the coming years. This consultation provided an opportunity to demonstrate how previous community feedback shaped the proposed design while also assessing community support for the draft concept.

This public consultation was open from 20 November to 18 December 2024. The invitation to participate was through an online survey on Participate Melbourne and at eleven community pop ups. Key stakeholders were also invited to meet with the project team directly.

During this time, we received **5,224** Participate Melbourne webpage views and **310 completed surveys**. We held eleven community pop up sessions, with over **400 people talking to the project team**. Results show strong participation from across North Melbourne, West Melbourne, Kensington and the wider municipality. Notably, **45 per cent of participants indicated that this was their first time engaging with the City of Melbourne**, demonstrating that the consultation effectively reached new members of the community.

The proposed **draft concept design was supported by 76 per cent of participants**. There was a positive response from community about improved community spaces, accessibility, and cultural inclusivity. A small number reported dissatisfaction there were not more spaces for children, including a toy library.

In addition to the data collected from the seven multiple-choice survey questions, we received **661 open-ended comments** from participants. This feedback supported us in identifying clear, key findings from the engagement which will help shape the final concept design.

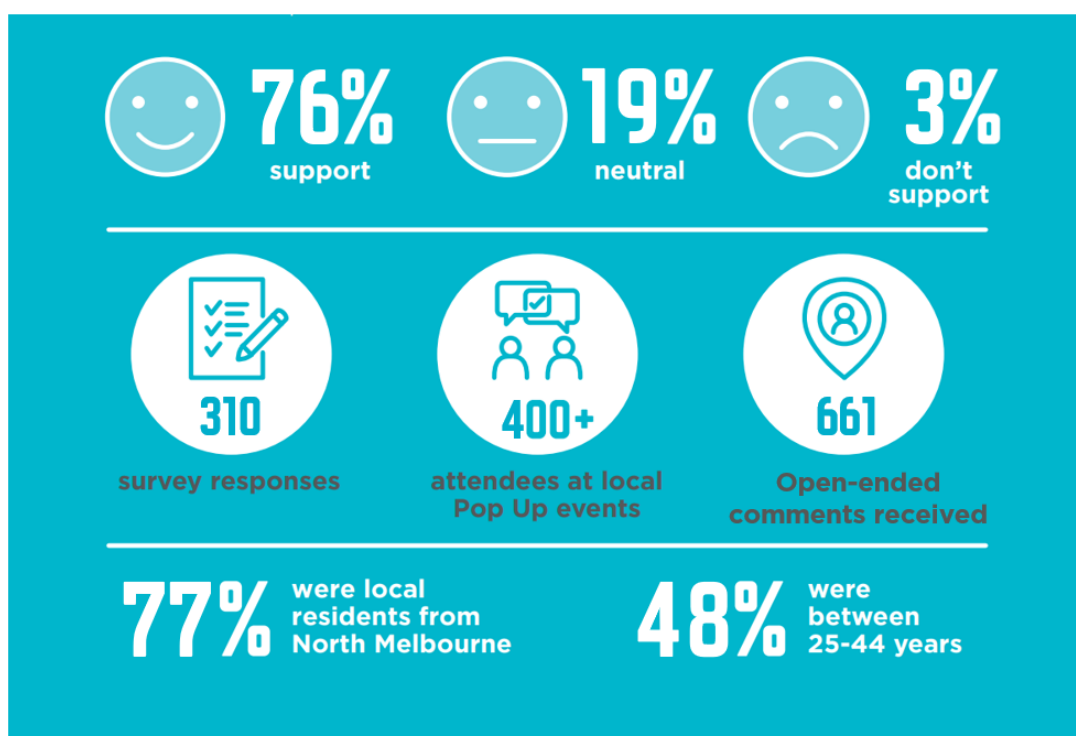


Figure 1 – Key engagement results.

Key findings

- **Strong Support for the Concept Design:** 76 per cent of participants were either satisfied or extremely satisfied with the draft concept design, with enthusiasm for improved community spaces, accessibility, and cultural inclusivity.
- **Prioritisation of Green, Sustainable Design:** A green, living building was the most preferred design choice, with strong support for eco-friendly materials, passive cooling, and integration of greenery throughout the space.
- **Diverse cultural representation and inclusion:** Participants emphasised the importance of multicultural artwork, multilingual signage, and diverse programming to reflect North Melbourne's community. In addition, it is important the design of the hub incorporates culturally safe spaces which are functional and considered.
- **Demand for functional and accessible spaces:** Participants highlighted the need for a mix of practical spaces, including quiet areas, large community halls, outdoor gardens, play areas for children, and spaces for youth engagement. Ensuring financial accessibility for all community members was also a key concern.
- **Food as a key connector:** Findings show a high demand for shared kitchens, community dining spaces, and free outdoor BBQs for social gatherings. There was also strong support for cultural exchange through the sharing of food, cooking programs.
- **Social enterprises, local business, and community organisations:** There is strong community support for food-based social enterprises and economic opportunities for local businesses. Additionally, dedicated spaces for community organisations to meet and operate were highly valued.
- **Emphasis on safety and security:** Participants stressed the importance of well-lit outdoor areas, passive surveillance, and clear wayfinding to ensure the hub is safe, especially for evening use.
- **Continued desire for consultation and transparency:** Some participants expressed concern about the length of the consultation process and lack of clarity around future site development. Maintaining ongoing community engagement and clear communication was a strong recommendation.
- **Ensuring the Hub represents the wider community:** A common theme in feedback was the importance of the Hub reflecting the diverse North Melbourne community, including residents, business owners and key community organisations.
- **Recreational provision and planning:** Community members expressed strong support for the provision of additional recreational spaces, highlighting the need for multi-purpose sports areas, indoor and outdoor play spaces for children, and facilities like basketball courts, a pool, and open green spaces for informal activities.
- **Spaces for young people:** Community members strongly advocated for the inclusion of a toy library, emphasising its role in supporting families, promoting sustainability through toy sharing, and providing a valuable play and learning space for children. In addition, areas were requested for youth to engage and socialise through informal activities, programming, and recreation.

Introduction

Project Overview

To help meet the current and future needs of North Melbourne’s vibrant and diverse community, the City of Melbourne is moving ahead with plans to develop a new community hub in North Melbourne. The new Hub will improve access to services and provide more high-quality community spaces for a growing population.

The new community Hub will be located within the Macaulay urban renewal area. The Macaulay Structure Plan 2021 (MSP) recognised that a community Hub of 3000 m² would be required to support current use and significant population growth and form part of a broader community infrastructure network identified in the planning of the Arden and Macaulay urban renewal precincts.

The North Melbourne Community Hub (NMCH) development is included in the Council Plan 2021–25 as Major Initiative 42.

On 27 June 2023, Council selected 91-115 Melrose Street, with frontage to Sutton Street, as the site for the community hub. This site is occupied by Jean McKendry Neighbourhood Centre (JMNC) and the out-of-service Hotham Hub Children’s Centre. The site is situated approximately 200 m from the North Melbourne Community Centre (NMCC) at Buncle Reserve. These existing centres are heavily utilised and are in declining condition or are no longer fit for purpose.

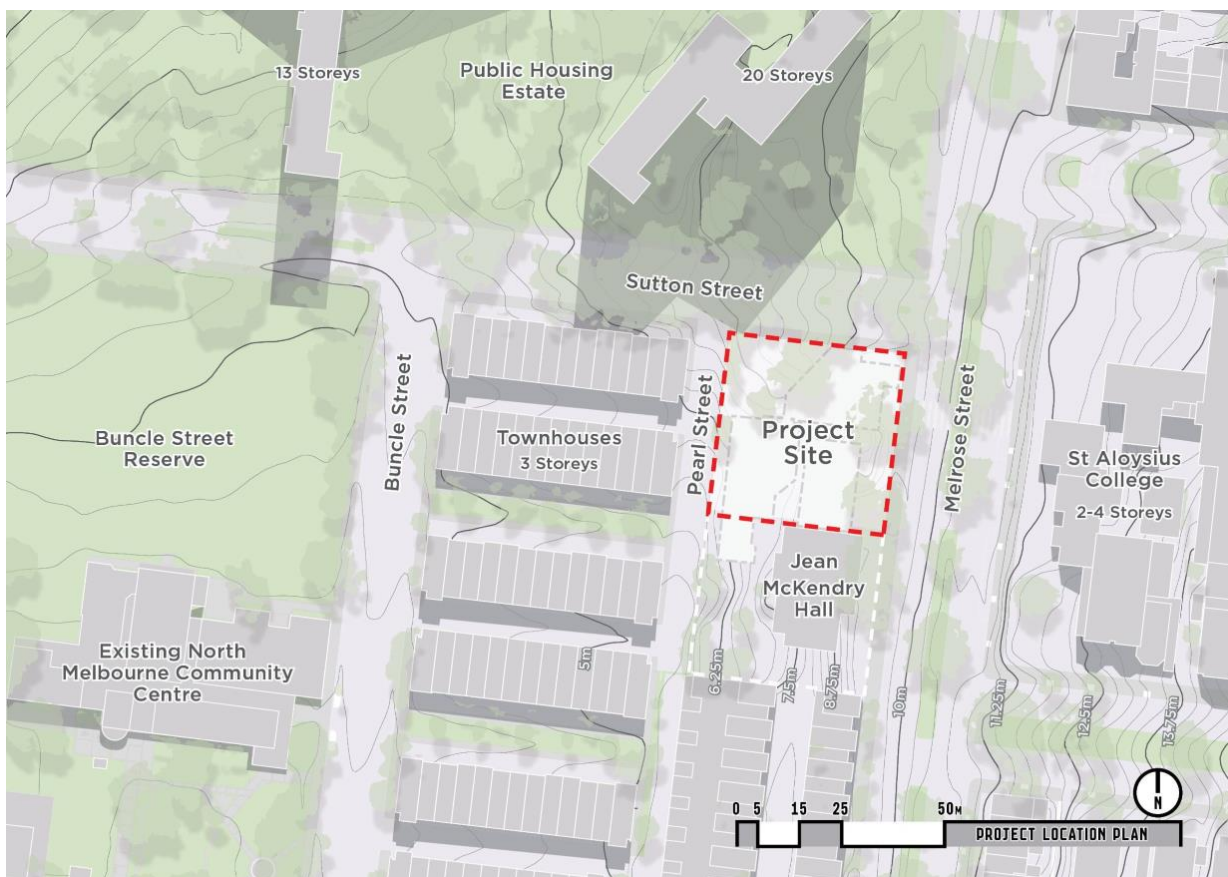


Figure 2 – Location of new North Melbourne Community Hub and surrounding area.

On completion of the project, both the existing NMCC and Jean McKendry will shift their Family, Youth and Ageing and Inclusion service provision to the new hub, alongside spaces for the wider community. Recreation services will remain at North Melbourne Community Centre, both during and after construction of the new community hub.

Recreation facilities (e.g. basketball and fitness equipment) are not proposed for this project site and will remain at the existing NMCC. Previous community feedback, neighbourhood priorities and the Macaulay Structure Plan have identified the need for future redevelopment at Buncle Street Reserve which will be undertaken as part of City of Melbourne's longer-term planning for recreation needs in the precinct.

Phase 1 of community engagement in 2023 gathered feedback on key service, design, and construction priorities for the new community hub. This input shaped the draft concept design, endorsed by the Future Melbourne Committee on 10 September 2024.

About this report

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the Phase 2 engagement approach, who we heard from and what they shared. All feedback gathered through the online survey, pop ups, meetings and submissions has been synthesised and manually coded to identify common themes for this report. Themes are in order of most to least frequently mentioned in each section, which is structured under the survey questions. The below categories were used to describe the relative number of comments consistently throughout:

- 3 and under = a few
- 4 to 7 = several
- 8 to 14 = a small number
- 15 to 25 = a moderate number
- 26 to 51 = a considerable number
- 52 to 100 or more = a substantial number

Engagement approach and activities

The objective of this consultation was to assess community satisfaction with the proposed concept design for the new North Melbourne Community Hub. The feedback gathered will inform the concept design, ensuring it aligns with community and stakeholder needs.

Expanding on previous community engagement during Phase 1, questions focused on:

1. Testing and refining key elements of the draft concept design, ensuring it meets community expectations and needs.
2. Understanding the emotional and social experience users seek to have at the new Hub, how it should feel and what would make it inviting and comfortable for community.
3. Further defining community priorities and needs by identifying essential features like outdoor spaces, food areas, and design styles to align with community preferences.
4. Ensuring the design embeds cultural inclusion by celebrating the community's diversity and multilingualism, creating a space reflective of North Melbourne's identity.

Project awareness

Activities to raise awareness of the project and opportunity to participate included:

- Posters promoting the consultation (Vietnamese, Tigrinya, Somali, Oromo, Simplified Chinese, Arabic, and English) were placed in local centers, libraries, schools, businesses, and public places.
- A2 corflute signs onsite with a QR code to project website were displayed at the site of the new hub, the Jean McKendry Neighborhood Centre and around Buncle Reserve

- Postcard with QR code widely distributed at pop-up engagements and to local businesses.
- Newspaper articles
- Direct email notifications to stakeholder groups
- Geo-targeted social media advertising
- Translated surveys were available through Participate Melbourne
- Paper surveys were available for collection at North Melbourne Community Centre and Jean McKendry Neighborhood Centre and utilised by staff at in-person activities.

Other communication channels employed included the Participate Melbourne newsletter, other appropriate newsletters and social media.

Community pop-ups and engagement activities

Community engagement activities and pop ups focused on:

1. Creating awareness of the engagement and online survey.
2. Distributing postcards with a QR code to the Participate Melbourne page (and online survey), and
3. Encouraging community members to complete a survey 'on the spot' with City of Melbourne staff via the online survey or through the completion of a paper survey.

Activities were also scheduled to target the broader North Melbourne community through a physical presence of City of Melbourne staff in visible and high traffic public places such as community events, sessions programmed at libraires and in high pedestrian areas.

A total of 11 community pop-ups were held across North Melbourne at a variety of times. Where possible, pop-ups had bi-lingual City of Melbourne staff or community members to assist with translation at engagements. Where no translation support was possible simple English, infographic surveys were used. The full schedule is listed in Appendix 1.

Feedback through submissions

This report includes sentiment from discussions held concurrently with the projects Community Reference Group (CRG), North Melbourne Youth Advisory Committee, representatives of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, and submissions received from Somali Community Inc.

Discussion on engagement activities and outcomes

Consultation was open on Participate Melbourne over a four-week period from 20 November to 18 December 2024. Engagement activities included an online survey, 11 pop-up sessions and additional meetings with stakeholder meetings. During the engagement period we received 5,224 Participate Melbourne webpage views and 310 completed surveys (including 112 paper surveys).

Comparatively, the previous round of engagement was open on Participate Melbourne from 16 August to 5 October 2023. During this time, we received 2,504 Participate Melbourne webpage views and 327 surveys (a mix of paper and online) over the seven-week period. These numbers indicate that community interest in the project remains high.

To help identify and alleviate potential barriers for engagement, and allow for community agency, the project worked with a Community Reference Group (CRG) to co-design the Community Engagement plan. Over three sessions, the CRG provided guidance on materials and methods for engagement. In addition, to ensure engagement was accessible, the project working group consulted with the Disability Advisory Committee. Consultation with both groups was primarily focused on the co-design of the engagement plan but discussions

also included feedback on the draft concept design and how the Hub may operate. Further discussions with both CRG and DAC are planned.

Following CRG advice, activities were scheduled around community meetings, events, and programmed activities in North Melbourne to leverage existing networks and reach specific community segments. With support from the CRG and City of Melbourne's neighbourhood partner network, 56 local organisations were identified and notified about the engagement.

A summary of who we heard from

While there was some gender diversity, there was a higher response from people who identified as a woman (n=155) as man or male. People aged 35 to 39 years were the most represented, while young people under 25 accounted for 8 per cent (n=24) of respondents and older people 60 and over 23 per cent (n=72).

Of the participants where other key demographic attributes were recorded:

- 1% (n=4) were from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island background
- 3% (n=11) said they live with disability.
- 4% (n=15) identified as carers.
- 41% (n=155) said they speak a language other than English at home.
- 45% (n=169) said they were born overseas.
- 5% (n= 19) said they were from an LGBTIQ+ community.

A full analysis of who we heard from, and other key demographic data, is included in Appendix 2.

What we heard / the conversation

Overall support for the draft concept design

Participants were invited to consider the draft concept design prior to sharing their level of satisfaction with what is proposed.

In total 307 participants responded, with the majority sharing they were either extremely satisfied, 36 per cent (n =113), or satisfied, 40 per cent (n=123), with the draft concept design. 19 per cent (n=58), shared they were neutral towards the draft concept plan, 3 per cent (n=10) were dissatisfied, while 1 per cent (n=3) were extremely dissatisfied. 71 participants provided an open-ended comment to share their reasons for their support level.

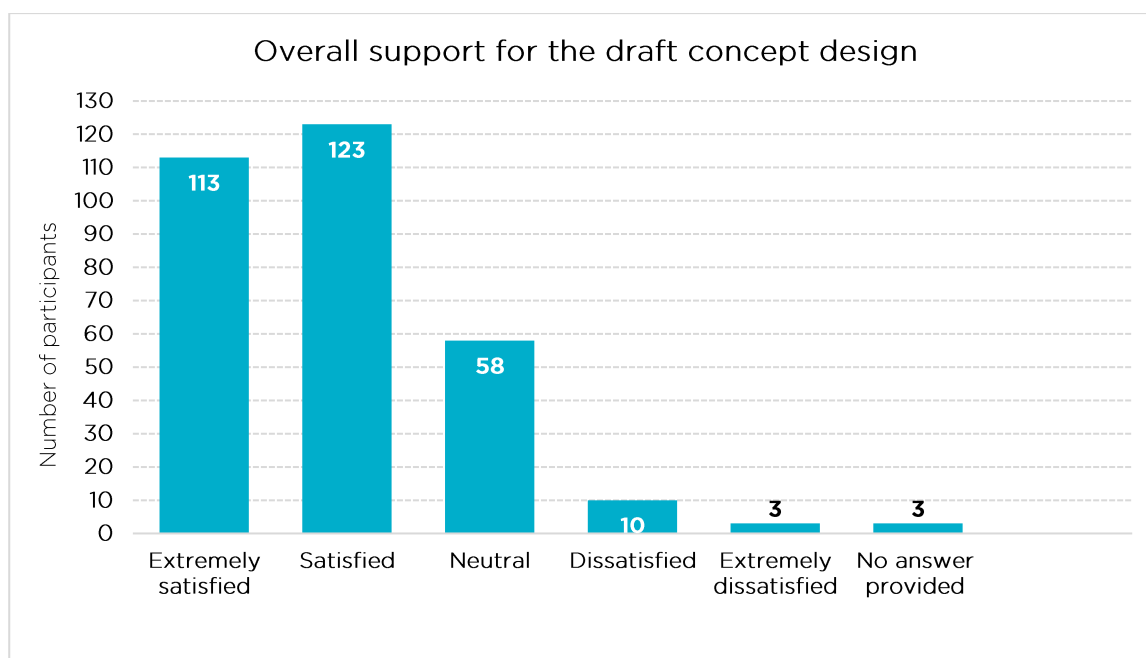


Figure 3 - Overall support for the draft concept design.

Extremely satisfied or satisfied with the proposed draft concept design

The highest proportion of participants who shared their satisfaction level were either extremely satisfied (n = 113), 37 per cent, or satisfied (n=123), 40 per cent, with draft concept design. 44 participants provided comments to support their scoring.

Common themes as to satisfaction were:

- Enthusiasm about having a modern and well-designed space.
- The draft concept design including culturally inclusive and welcoming spaces which foster a sense of belonging.
- An appreciation for community involvement and consultation, and for community having a voice in the process and the design.
- Positive feedback on the accessibility of community engagement and the survey.
- Excitement about new and improved community spaces, such as community hall, space for art and creative activities, and recreational areas.
- Excitement the project was progressing, with some looking forward to further details.

"I want to congratulate the input you are doing consulting some of the people and the community. They have the knowledge to make the decision and participate. This means you care about us and the community."

"It will be wonderful! Good luck with the project and can't wait to see it."

"Thank you again for your time and thought in preparing this survey. If only all government communication with this hard-to-reach audience were conducted in this way".

Many participants in this cohort also shared what they would like to see or felt could be improved in the final concept design. This included:

- The accommodation of a toy library and spaces for children and youth.
- More recreation options including basketball, a women's gym, and pool.
- The need for ongoing consultation and communication with the community about the project.
- A request to maintain existing valuable community spaces (North Melbourne Community Centre and Jean McKendry Neighborhood Centre) alongside the development of the Hub.
- Ensuring the design considers diverse groups, including young people, women, and multilingual communities, while also prioritising accessibility for people of all abilities.
- Well-thought-out functional spaces for community activities, such as workshops, cultural events, and prayer.
- A desire for community gallery spaces for art events and exhibitions, good quality AV systems and places for rehearsing music.
- Access to spaces should be affordable, especially for low-income families. A participant shared their hoped the Hub would become a symbol for the community and circular, economic thinking.
- Direct feedback from participants on design elements including color choices, the proposed shape roof, a need for natural light in interior spaces and incorporate better connections to the outdoors. In addition, sustainability features such as energy-efficient lighting, water-saving systems, and solar panels.
- The desire for the Hub's design reflects North Melbourne's unique cultural and artistic identity. Another participant asked the design to maintain a consistency in look, feel, and naming with other City of Melbourne spaces.
- The need for passive surveillance and lighting for outdoor spaces to improve safety, especially at night.
- Consideration for transportation and access to the center including bicycle facilities and more parking options, especially extending current parking time limits.

"Growing up in this community from a young age I would say there needs to be more quiet rooms for young people who are trying to focus on their work."

"One thing that that the students talked about needing was a women-only exercise facility such as a gym or pool. The consensus on this was unanimous, even from male students present. They are all aware of the importance of exercise but reported that there is no culturally safe place for them to exercise in North Melbourne."

"I think getting a lot of light into the interior is important and creating views and connections to the outside/ context."

"Seems to be progressing well but the site planning could relate better to the surrounding neighbourhood context. The project could also look beyond the current site boundaries to consider the streetscape and any concurrent or related changes/improvements that could be made."

While being satisfied or extremely satisfied with the concept design, in this cohort, some participants expressed displeasure and concern about:

- A toy library not being shown in the draft concept design.
- The length of time the project had taken to date.
- The need for more recreational facilities in the area.

“Hurry up and build the thing!”

“I don't care about the draft concept design as long as there is space for us to use such as a basketball courts”.

“To bring it to fully satisfied it would definitely be for the toy library to stay.”

Neutral to the draft concept design

Of the participants who shared their satisfaction level, 19 per cent (n=58) shared they were neutral toward the draft concept design. 17 participants provided comments to support their scoring. Common themes were:

- A desire for free for use community and social spaces such as community gardens, tool sheds and bike facilities.
- The accommodation of a toy library and more spaces for children.
- Participants asked for consideration to be given to recreation activities such as sports to keep youth and older men active, basketball courts and boxing facilities.
- Consideration for how the Hub will operate and respond to the needs of the community.

“Having our valuable toy library included as part of children's spaces would be wonderful.”

“I am excited to see the draft concept design in reality. Like any first draft writing, without it, it would not be possible to continue to improve it to reach the final draft. I encourage more detail mapping of services and user's experience and journey in the day-to-day operation of the hub. This will give more details on the specific needs on different groups in the community at different time of them engaging with the hub.”

Participants in this cohort placed feedback on the design of the Hub. Comments were varied but included:

- Ensuring the hub was safe at night through the inclusion of more lighting.
- Disappointment the design appears enclosed and unwelcoming. A few participants requested the inclusion of more windows.
- For building materials common in North Melbourne's architecture to be used in the construction of the Hub such as red brick and glass.

“The current look and design of the building feels so enclosed and unwelcoming with the big corten steel covering the building, doesn't look warm and inviting. Perhaps the use of red bricks in the facade which is common in North Melbourne and glass windows so we can see what is happening on the higher stories even if we are just walking in the street.”

While being neutral toward the concept design, in this cohort, some participants expressed displeasure and concern about:

- The length of engagement time during this consultation. One comment also referenced a disappointment with Council that community wasn't consulted properly in the public housing towers.
- A toy library not being shown in the draft concept design.
- A need for more recreation facilities for the North Melbourne community and a desire to understand how Council were planning towards future recreation provisions.

"It's a start, but I worry about the continued engagement throughout the process. Also, the sports and recreation facilities are intertwined with communities needs and need to be answered before this is completed."

Dissatisfied or extremely dissatisfied with the proposed draft concept design

Of the participants who shared their satisfaction level, 3 per cent (n=10) shared they were dissatisfied with the draft concept design while a further 1 per cent (n=3) were extremely dissatisfied. 12 participants provided comments to support their scoring. Themes included:

- The desire for more spaces for children and families: particularly a toy library.
- Concern the draft concept underutilised the space available and there was a lack of transparency for what future development on the site may be.
- The draft concept does not capture what community requested through previous engagement phases. This included recreational spaces, more greenery and open space.
- The draft concept and proposed services cater for specific demographics and not the wider community.
- The proposed site on Melrose Street may have been better suited for the building of a new school.

"The existing toy library serves as a vital resource for families with young children who may face financial challenges in acquiring toys. It also promotes sustainability within the community by encouraging the reuse and recycling of toys, reducing waste, and redistributing items to those in need. This initiative plays a crucial role in supporting children's development while fostering early lessons in sharing and environmental responsibility."

"The concept does not capture what community wants. Throughout the engagement phase, the community was very clear on their specific needs."

Level of satisfaction based on connection

From participants who indicated they are a resident and responded to the question asking their level of satisfaction, it is possible to ascertain the residential community's satisfaction in the draft concept design. Support for the draft concept design amongst residents is strong with 73 per cent of residents saying they were either extremely satisfied (n=66) or satisfied (n=90). Residents who were neutral toward the draft concept design made up 21 per cent (n=45), while residents who said they were dissatisfied (n=7) or extremely dissatisfied (n=2) made up 4 per cent.

Table 1 – Level of satisfaction for residents of North Melbourne.

Residents	
Level of satisfaction	Percentage (number)
Extremely satisfied	31% (66)
Satisfied	42% (90)
Neutral	21% (45)
Dissatisfied	3% (7)
Extremely dissatisfied	1% (2)
No answer provided	1% (2)

Qualitative data received through this engagement, and discussions with community, indicate future users of the new Hub will travel from surrounding suburbs. From the participants who provided an answer to which suburb they live/work/own a business/study/visit and responded to the question asking their level of satisfaction, it is possible to understand the support for the draft concept by location. The below tables show the level of satisfaction by percentage for the three suburbs with the highest selection rate by participants: North Melbourne, Kensington, and West Melbourne.

Table 2 – Level of satisfaction for participants who live/work/own a business/study/visit North Melbourne.

North Melbourne	
Level of satisfaction	Percentage (number)
Extremely satisfied	28% (50)
Satisfied	48% (86)
Neutral	19% (35)
Dissatisfied	3% (6)
Extremely dissatisfied	1% (2)
No answer provided	1% (1)

Table 3 – Level of satisfaction for participants who live/work/own a business/study/visit Kensington.

Kensington	
Level of satisfaction	Percentage (number)
Extremely satisfied	35% (9)
Satisfied	31% (8)
Neutral	27% (7)
Dissatisfied	8% (2)
Extremely dissatisfied	0% (0)
No answer provided	0% (0)

Table 4 – Level of satisfaction for participants who live/work/own a business/study/visit West Melbourne.

West Melbourne	
Level of satisfaction	Percentage (number)
Extremely satisfied	27% (3)
Satisfied	73% (8)
Neutral	0% (0)
Dissatisfied	0% (0)
Extremely dissatisfied	0% (0)
No answer provided	0% (0)

Level of satisfaction across age groups

As the Hub will provide multi-generational services, it is important to understand satisfaction in the concept design across age groups.

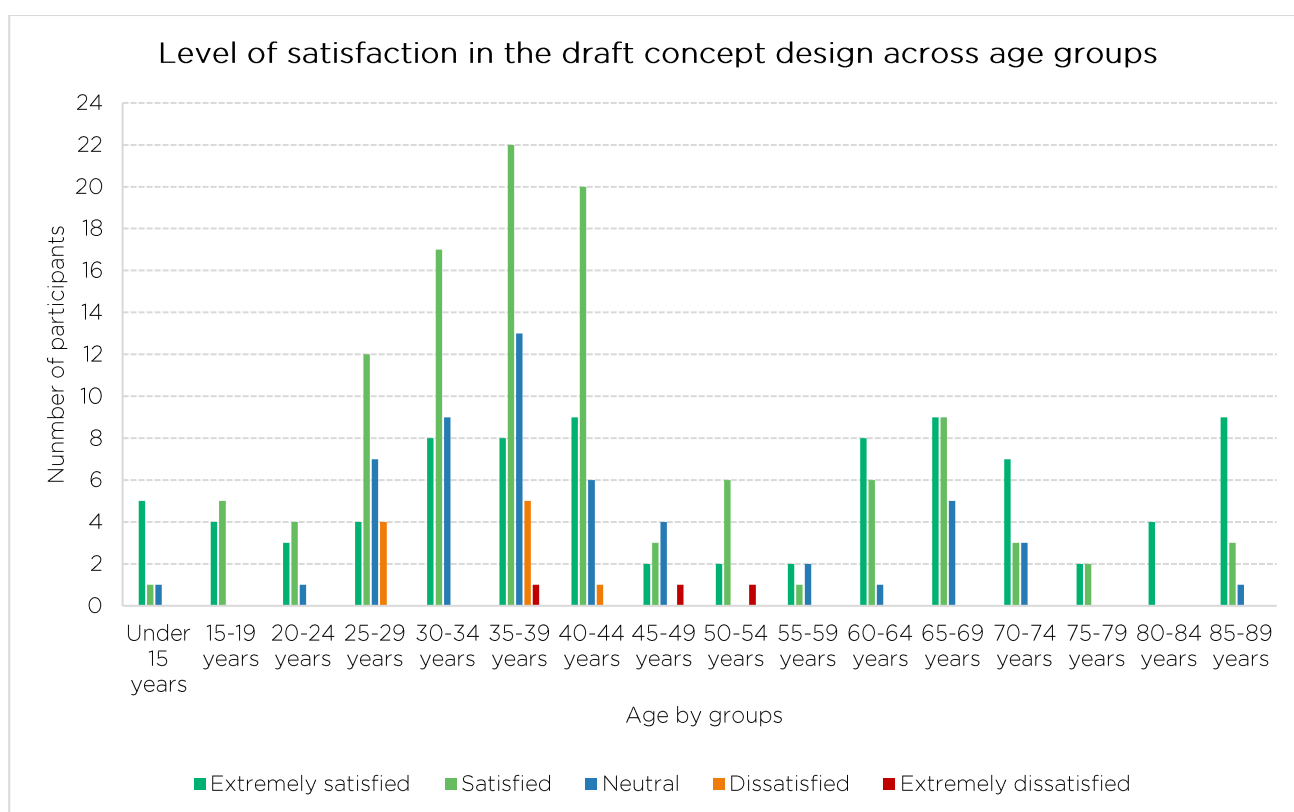


Figure 4 – Level of satisfaction in the draft concept design across age groups.

Engagement results show confidence in the design and a high level of satisfaction across all ages. Age groups showing the highest levels of dissatisfaction are 35 to 39 years and 25 to 29 years. Examining written responses to questions from these age groups, dissatisfaction is most linked to a desire to see more child and family orientated spaces (including a toy library) and more recreational facilities.

Feedback to survey questions

Question 1

Please select the top 3 spaces you are most excited to see in the new Hub. Is there anything else you would like to see included at the new Hub?

During previous engagement, the community shared the types of facilities and spaces they wanted to see in the Hub. Many of these have been incorporated into the draft concept design. To better understand demand and ensure appropriate space allocation in the final design, participants were asked to select the top three areas they were most excited to use. This question was not mandatory but limited each participant to a maximum selection of 3 spaces only. There was also an option to share anything not listed.

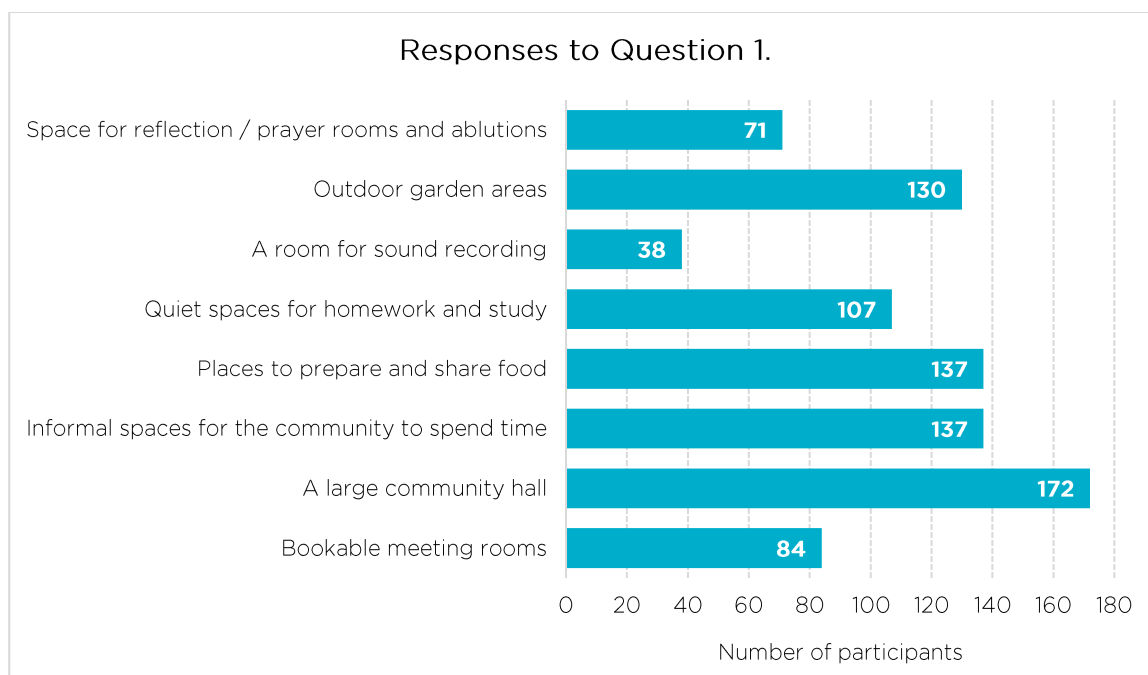


Figure 5 – Question 1: “Please select the top 3 spaces you are most excited to see in the new Hub.”

The most popular spaces were a large community hall, followed by places to prepare and share food and informal spaces for community which were equal in vote. Outdoor garden areas, quiet spaces for study, bookable meeting rooms and spaces for reflection and prayer also received a substantial number of responses. A room for sound recording received the lowest response.

129 participants responded to the open-ended question to share anything not listed. The overall sentiment in responses to this question was positive, with a focus on creating inclusive, accessible, and supportive spaces for all members of the community, particularly for families, youth, and marginalised groups. There is a call for more spaces for social interaction, creativity, learning, and physical activities, with a shared vision of improving community cohesion and sustainability. Some critical feedback is aimed at ensuring the space designs are both functional and welcoming.

Comments were varied but common themes included:

- A substantial number of participants gave feedback on the general infrastructure and services provided in the hub. Common themes were storage spaces for community groups, secure bike facilities and free community access to facilities, technology and wi-fi.
- A considerable number requested large outdoor areas for recreation including bike riding tracks, spaces for sports events, and informal play for children and adults, such as ping pong tables, and

soccer pitches. Participants also placed an emphasis on outdoor spaces with lush Australian gardens, native plants, community vegetable gardens, and spaces for relaxation and retreat.

- A considerable number of participants discussed the importance of social and community spaces which were financially accessible to the North Melbourne community. This included common areas for socialising, relaxing, and meeting people, community kitchens, culturally appropriate facilities for prayer and ablutions outdoor BBQ areas, and spaces for community meals. Several comments spoke to the opportunity for community leadership and advisory in the operation of the new Hub.
- A moderate number of participants requested additional recreational areas including indoor soccer and basketball courts, multi-purpose spaces for sports like tennis and pickleball, and a swimming pool were mentioned.
- A moderate number of participants discussed the importance of maintaining or expanding the toy library for children's development, sustainability (to reduce waste and promote sharing) and to promote engagement among families, especially in areas with smaller living spaces.
- A moderate number of participants mentioned safe play areas, particularly for children under 10, including outdoor spaces for young children to play safely, a modern playground, and areas for drop-in play sessions. Suggestions also included indoor play areas for local parent groups.
- A moderate number of suggestions emphasised creating an inclusive, welcoming Hub that brings together residents of all ages and backgrounds. This included and engagement with local culture and indigenous culture, a desire to integrate local art, particularly reflecting the history of North Melbourne, and creating a space where various community groups feel connected.
- A small number wished to see provision for commercial and business needs including small office spaces for local community organisations, areas for social enterprises like cafes or repair shops, market spaces or pop-up businesses and job boards for local employment opportunities.
- A small number recommended dedicated spaces for young people to socialise, learn, and engage in activities like music, games, or informal social events.
- A small number of participants discussed spaces to support youth including spaces to play music, rehearse, or practice dance, including facilities like small PA systems, and safe spaces for teenagers to interact and create. Outdoor activity spaces for youth recreation were stated as being important to participants.
- A small number felt creative and educational space were important to participants. Makerspaces, sound recording studios, video recording facilities (podcasting), and small performance spaces were discussed by a moderate number of participants. In addition, several participants discussed the need for a small library space, bookable rooms, tech workshops, and access to digital resources (free Wi-Fi and computers).

"I'm 21 and there's a big gap of things to do in terms of community. The City of Melbourne hubs close off at 18 for most services and other community events I've gone to in north Melbourne have had people a lot older than me. I'm keen for services that give space to play music, boardgames, meet people my age. Local gigs. Anything art and creative for my age group would be awesome. Having more second spaces that you can enter without paying at most times of the day with lots to do."

Question 2

What are 3 words to describe how you would like to feel when you are using the new Hub?

This question was included to capture the emotional and experiential aspects of the Hub from a community perspective. By asking for three words, it encourages people to express their core expectations concisely, highlighting what atmosphere, vibe, or experience would make them feel comfortable and engaged.



Figure 6 – Question 2: “What are 3 words to describe how you would like to feel when you are using the new Hub?”

The image above shows top 20 most commonly used words by participants. The most frequently mentioned words were safe, community, happy, welcoming, comfortable, connected, and inclusive. The repetition of themes indicates participants want the new hub to be a secure, inviting, and socially engaging space where people feel at home. Safety is a top priority, suggesting a need for well-lit areas, secure facilities, and a design that fosters trust. The strong emphasis on community and connection highlights the desire for a space that brings people together, strengthens relationships, and fosters a sense of belonging.

Question 3

We want the new hub to feel like an extension of the community’s living room. What do you think will encourage people to visit the Hub and stay for a while? Is there anything else you would like to see included at the new Hub?

It is essential that the Hub facilities are well utilised, its services have a broad outreach, and community feel represented and welcomed in the new Hub. This question was designed to gather insights on how the Hub can feel inviting, comfortable, and useful while fostering a sense of representation and belonging. Framed as an "extension of the community’s living room," feedback to this question will help identify the amenities, services, and design elements that not only attract visitors but also encourage them to stay, connect, and engage with the Hub regularly.

This question was not mandatory but limited each participant to a maximum selection of 3 spaces only. There was also an option to share anything not listed.

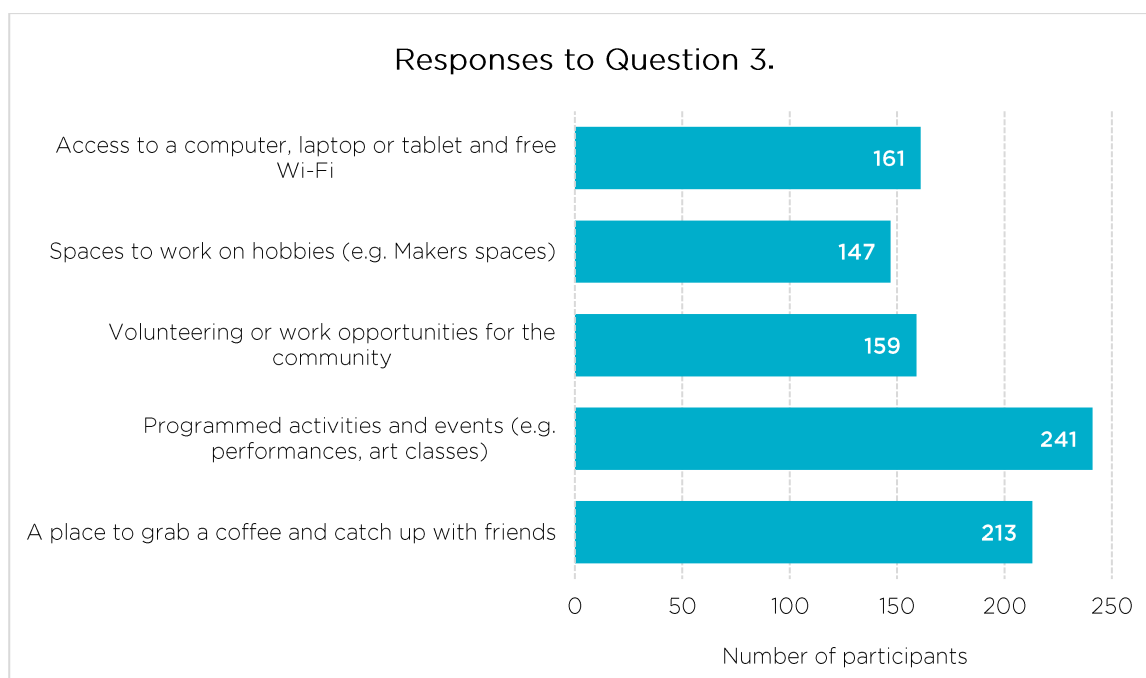


Figure 7 – Question 3: “What do you think will encourage people to visit the Hub and stay for a while?”

Of the options provided, programmed activities and events was the most popular, followed by a place to grab coffee or catch up with friends. The remaining options were evenly distributed, with the number of votes differing by no more than 14.

101 participants responded to the open-ended question to share anything not listed. Comments were varied but common themes included:

- A considerable number expressed their desire for community connection through events, including culturally diverse celebrations such as New Year’s, Ede, Ramadan, and Vesak. Participants felt community-led programs and volunteering opportunities provided at the Hub would further strengthen relationships, while a community café could foster cultural exchange.
- A moderate number of participants mentioned family and child-focused facilities. Alongside request for a toy library, participants felt safe play space for babies and toddlers, baby change rooms, along with shaded and fenced playgrounds for children, is essential for families.
- A moderate number of comments from participants addressed the desire for outdoor and green spaces catering to relaxation and recreation, while shaded spots with native plantings would offer a natural environment for people to enjoy, relax and connect.
- A small number of participants recommended resources for vulnerable community including the cooking and sharing of food, and access to sanitary items. Additionally, cool spaces and relief during heat events. Several participants also discussed facilities such as community notice boards, recycling drop-off points, and shared tools.
- A small number of participants discussed the importance of libraries and educational spaces. This included library pick-up and drop-off services, quiet study spaces for students, and access to free Wi-Fi, computer stations, technology education, and printing facilities.
- A small number of participants spoke about youth-oriented amenities and programs. The sentiment was providing a space for young people to hang out, a boxing training area, and various teen-oriented activities like workshops, table tennis, and social spaces would offer valuable outlets for youth, foster socialisation and active engagement.

- A small number of participants spoke about the importance of health and wellness offerings, and fitness facilities to support physical health and encourage community inclusion.
- A small number of participants suggested a low-cost, social enterprise offering simple snacks, tea, and biscuits could serve as a place for social gathering. Several spoke about opportunities for volunteering, promoting local products and employment opportunities for the community.
- A small number shared their desire for multipurpose spaces, such as rooms for workshops, meetings, or social gatherings, would serve a variety of needs. These spaces could also host cultural and religious activities, while a maker space, art room, and hobby space would provide opportunities for creative expression. There was a shared desire for facilities at the Hub to be financially accessible to community.
- Several participants mentioned the need for adequate lighting outside to enhance safety, particularly in the evenings and winter months.

"Access to nature and green areas. Space the community can access regularly and feel welcome which is not always programmed or charged for. Places to sit and relax and read."

"Culturally sensitive cafe offering cultural food to create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere. Spaces for community gathering to foster cultural exchange and a sense of belonging."

Question 4

Through previous community engagement we heard the inclusion of outdoor garden spaces are of high priority for the community. We are thinking of including some of the below around the new Hub. Which are the most important to you? Is there anything else you would like to see included at the new Hub?

During previous engagement, outdoor garden spaces are a high priority for the community. Many of the previously requested spaces have been incorporated into the draft concept design. To better understand demand and ensure appropriate space allocation in the final design, participants were asked what type of outdoor spaces would be of most importance to them at the new Hub.

This question was not mandatory but limited each participant to a maximum selection of 3 spaces only. There was also an option to share anything not listed.

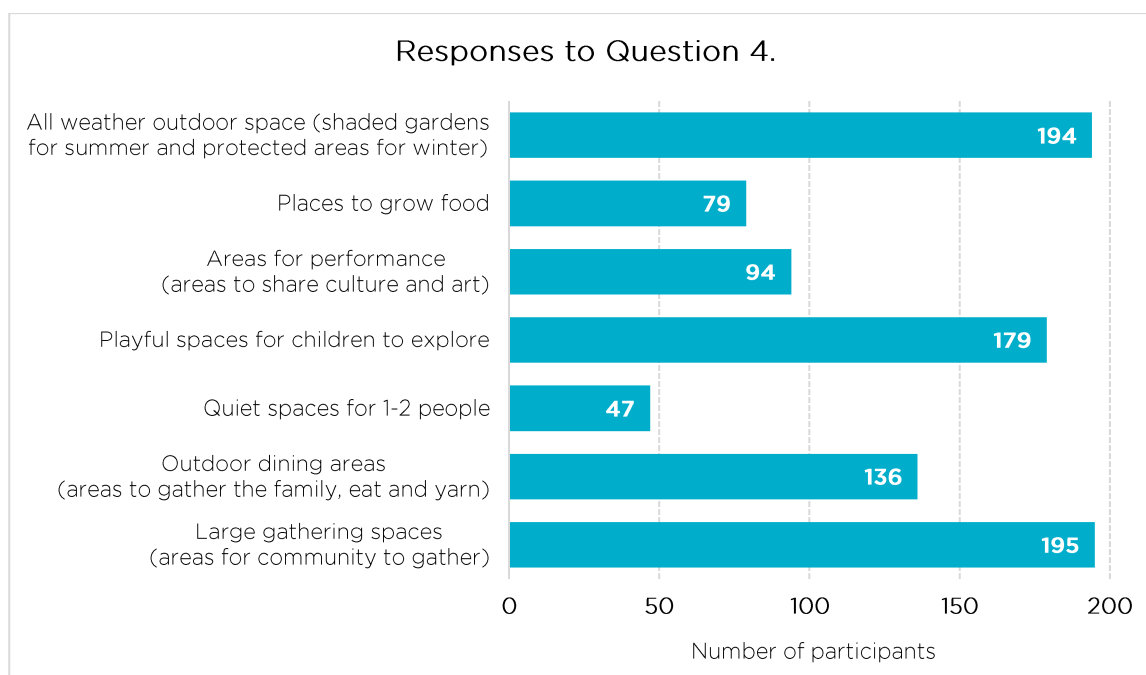


Figure 8 – Question 4: “Through previous community engagement we heard the inclusion of outdoor garden spaces are of high priority for the community. Which are the most important to you?”

Based on the response provided, the most important spaces to participants are large gathering spaces for community, followed closely by all-weather outdoor spaces with shade and wind protection. Playful spaces for children to explore and areas for outdoor dining also received a substantial number of responses.

61 participants responded to the open-ended question to share anything not listed. Comments were varied but common themes included:

- A small number of participants expressed a desire to for educational spaces and programming for community to learn to grow food, herbs, and flowers or learn about the ecology of the area.
- A small number made the feedback that play areas should offer fun and active opportunities, like flying foxes, climbing with natural materials, and water play. Fenced, shaded playgrounds would be ideal for children and could be complimented by baby-changing facilities.
- A small number requested a makerspace or workshop area, with tools for creative projects, would encourage artistic expression. Art exhibitions, talent shows, and cultural celebrations would add vibrancy to the community. Creative spaces, including performance areas and natural play features, should be integrated into the landscape.
- Several participants requested outdoor BBQs be free for use and available on weekends and after hours. Adequate lighting and security were suggested for safe after-hours use.
- Several comments called for shaded areas for families and youth to relax, would promote socialising in outdoor environments.
- Several people spoke about the importance of greenspace in the North Melbourne and the provision of outdoor areas for people to come together. A few felt a culturally sensitive café and cooking area would enhance inclusivity, offering food-sharing events and cultural connections.
- Several participants spoke about cultural representation in the garden design and the importance of diversity. In addition, some participants felt areas for traditional storytelling and games may help fostering cultural connections and community well-being.

- A few participants felt accessibility is key to the new Hub, with a focus on easy parking and access for all members of the community. Design features should ensure accessibility, with ramps, elevators, and sensory-friendly spaces.
- A few participants emphasised the importance of keeping community spaces well-maintained to ensure they remain inviting and serve their intended purpose.
- A couple of comments spoke to the space should reflect a connection to North Melbourne's ecology and early landscape by including plants native to the area and regenerating habitat for native species. Suggestions also included the addition of water features and tree coverage for natural cooling and to enhance sustainability.
- A couple of participants felt regular upkeep of green open spaces and community facilities reflects a Council care for the community and fosters a sense of value and belonging.

Question 5

Many of the North Melbourne community speak a language other than English at home. Alongside acknowledgement of Traditional Owners, how would you like to see the language of the North Melbourne community celebrated in the new community hub? Is there anything else you would like to see?

It is important the concept design for the Hub reflects North Melbourne's linguistic diversity and celebrates the languages spoken by its residents. In this question participants were asked to share how they felt the language of the community could be incorporated into the operation and design of the new Hub.

This question was not mandatory but limited each participant to a maximum selection of 3 options. There was also an option to share anything not listed.

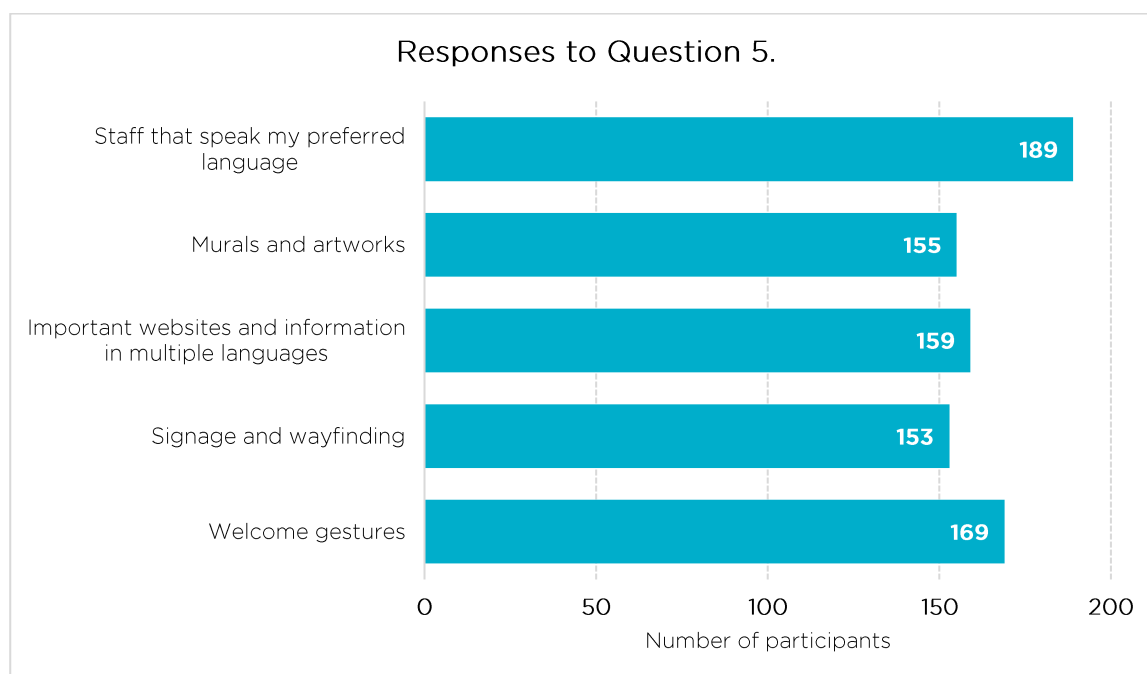


Figure 9 – Question 5: “How would you like to see the language of the North Melbourne community celebrated in the new community hub?”

From the 275 people who answered this question, the most popular option for incorporating language was 'staff that speak my language' (23 per cent of total), followed by 'welcome gestures' (20 per cent of total). The remaining options 'important websites and information in multiple languages', 'murals and artworks', and signage and wayfinding were evenly distributed each taking up 19 per cent of the total.

47 participants responded to the open-ended question to share anything not listed. Comments were varied but common themes included:

- A small number of participants suggested inclusion of multilingual signage, resources, and interpretation services to make the Hub to ensure accessibility to non-English speakers.
- A small number of participants advocated for hiring staff from the North Melbourne community who speak widely spoken languages. In addition, volunteer opportunities for community to help with translation, education, and community-led initiatives would encourage deeper engagement, participation would strengthen trust.
- A small number also felt community members should be involved in designing and curating the hub to ensure it meets local needs. Representation should be balanced to ensuring all cultural groups and residents feel included. Cultural art works such as murals were suggested.
- A small number of participants shared specific languages they wished to see showcased in the Hub including Arabic, Amharic, Chinese, Oromo, Somali, Tigrinya, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Cantonese, Sinhala and Tamil and other South Asian dialects.
- Several participants requested the Hub provide inclusive spaces for prayer and religious practices. This included women-only spaces and safe areas for different cultural needs. Several other participants requested the space remain as mixed faith to create a welcoming and respectful environment.
- Several participants felt programming at the Hub should reflect diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Suggestions included Aboriginal storytelling, Auslan story time, multilingual playgroups, and language exchange workshops to encourage cross-cultural learning and support cultural preservation.
- Several participants shared they wished for the predominant language used in the space to be English.
- A few participants suggested digital and physical features, such as interactive screens, could celebrate linguistic diversity.
- A few participants proposed a library space at the new Hub which includes books, films, and learning materials in multiple languages.
- A few participants expressed their displeasure the surveys for this consultation were not translated into more languages to ensure meaningful engagement.
- A few participants expressed a desire to see the areas Aboriginal history showcased alongside and North Melbourne's broader cultural heritage.
- A few participants proposed a culturally diverse café or shared kitchen space would allow communities to share and celebrate their cuisines. Nutrition education programs tailored to different cultural backgrounds could promote healthy habits.

"It is important to have a very wide focus on matters relating to culture. I've experienced situations where a dominant cultural group "overwhelms" (with all good intention) the look and feel of a centre. I think "less is more" is a good approach just so smaller / minority groups don't feel excluded."

“My mum who is still learning English, would not usually use service like this hub offers. Having signage in her language, and hearing staff speaking her language, I'd imagine it would make her feel she is welcomed here in this community centre, and it would make it easy for her to access the service.”

Question 6

Food can be important for bringing people together and sharing cultures. The community hub will have different spaces to prepare and share food. What spaces would you most like to use? Is there anything else you would like to see?

During previous engagement, the preparation, sharing and security of food was identified as being a high priority for the community. Many of the previously spaces for the preparation of sharing of food have been incorporated into the draft concept design. To better understand demand and ensure appropriate space allocation in the final design, which of these spaces will be of most importance for them at the new Hub.

This question was not mandatory but limited each participant to a maximum selection of 3 options. There was also an option to share anything not listed.

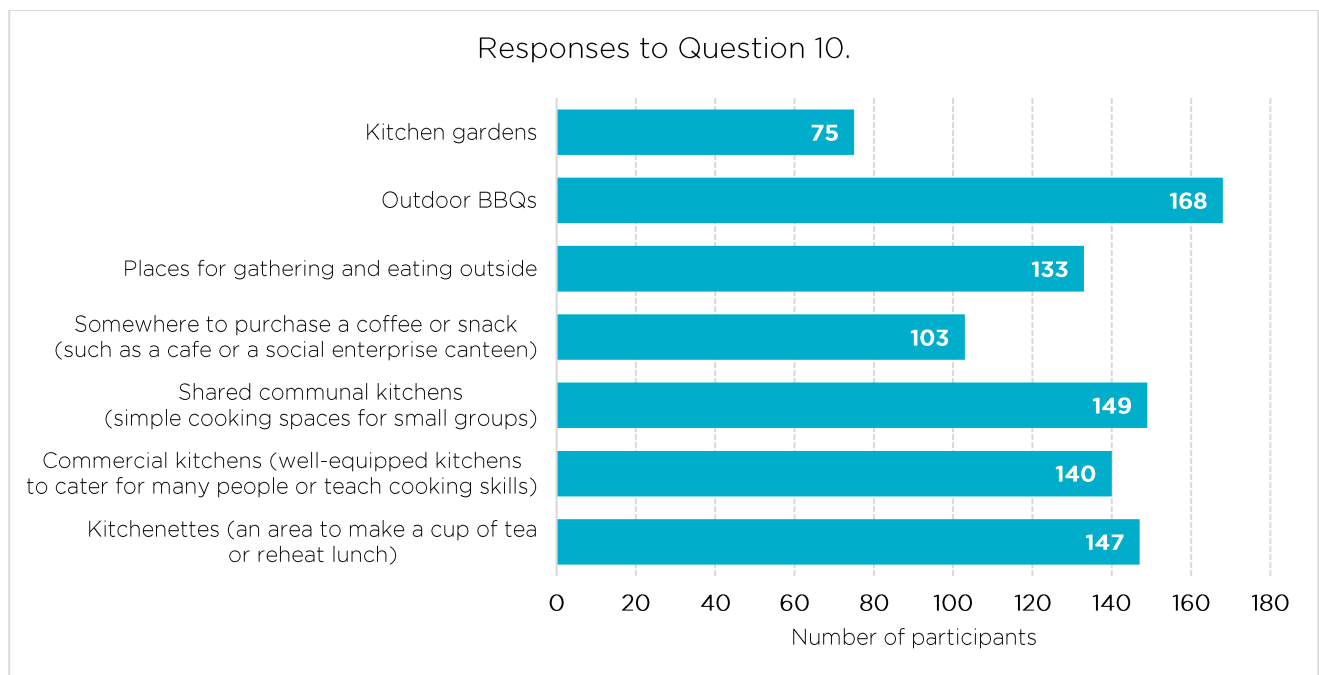


Figure 10 – Question 6: “The community hub will have different spaces to prepare and share food. What spaces would you most like to use?”

A total of 305 participants responded to this question. Of the total response outdoor barbeques was the most popular (n=168), followed by shared communal kitchens (n=149) and kitchenettes.

40 participants responded to the open-ended question to share anything not listed. Comments were varied but common themes included:

- A moderate number of participants discussed potential economic barriers for community use of kitchens. Sentiment was spaces should not be tied up in bureaucracy or high costs, ensuring fair access for all.
- A moderate number of participants felt providing affordable, well-equipped commercial kitchens can support social enterprise and local business opportunities. It was suggested Council partner with local

businesses and community organisations to enhance economic opportunities while serving community needs.

- A small number felt a food pantry should be available for those in need, with potential for free community meals once or twice a month to support residents facing financial hardship. Participants also proposed Council partner with local businesses and social enterprises to help provide affordable cultural food options.
- A small number of comments focused on cooking programs, food preparation workshops, and cultural food events can foster learning and community engagement, while celebrating diversity and sharing culture. Teaching youth essential life skills, such as cooking, through hands-on programs would empower young community members.
- Several participants requested clean, accessible BBQ areas and picnic spaces to be embedded in the landscape to accommodate family groups to large gatherings. Ensuring BBQ facilities are well-maintained, spacious, and available for free use would enhance community interaction. Water taps, bubblers, and shaded seating should be included to support outdoor gatherings.
- Several participants expressed spaces should be functional and adaptable for various purposes. For example, a communal dining hall or large table would encourage gathering and social interaction. Ensuring free and easy access to these spaces would prevent exclusion due to financial barriers.
- Several comments discussed a need for kitchens to be well-maintained and used responsibly. A couple of participants requested cooking spaces allow for religious dietary needs (e.g., pork-free or beef-free areas).
- A few participants felt community gardens should be integrated with kitchens to promote fresh, sustainable cooking.
- A few participants expressed a desire for a family-friendly café/playground combination to help make the Hub more welcoming for parents and children. Outdoor recreation areas such as ping-pong table were also suggested.
- A couple of participants requested best practice environmental practices (no single use items, no gas appliances, composting facilities for waste etc.) be integrated into the design and operation of kitchen spaces.
- A participant requested more communication about how the southern area of the remaining site will be developed.

Question 7

We want the new Hub to reflect North Melbourne's diverse community. Please select your top 3 favourite styles of design you would most like to see in the new Hub. Is there anything else you would like to see reflected in the design?

In this question, participants were asked what style (from a range of visual examples) of design they would most like to see in the new hub. This question was not mandatory but limited each participant to a maximum selection of 3 options. There was also an option to share feedback.

We want the new Hub to reflect North Melbourne's diverse community. Please select your top 3 favourite styles of design you would most like to see in the new Hub:

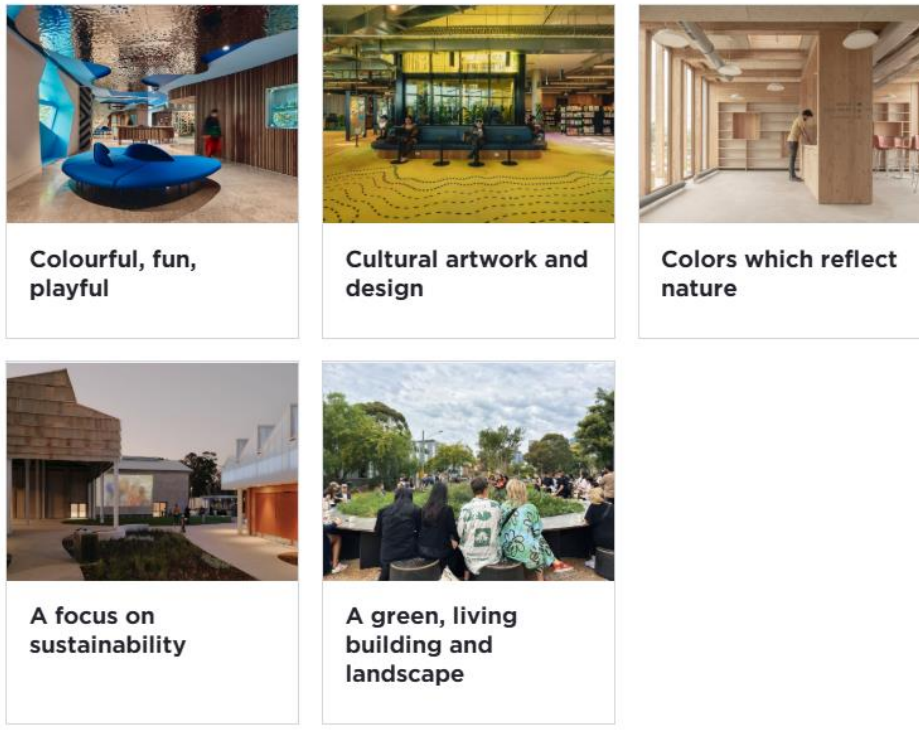


Figure 11 - Image showing design options provided to participants.

A total of 310 participants responded to this question. The most popular design choice (25 per cent, n=233) was a green, living building and landscape, a sentiment echoed in the comments. Cultural design and artwork (23 per cent) and a colorful, playful design (20 per cent, n=180) were also highly valued.

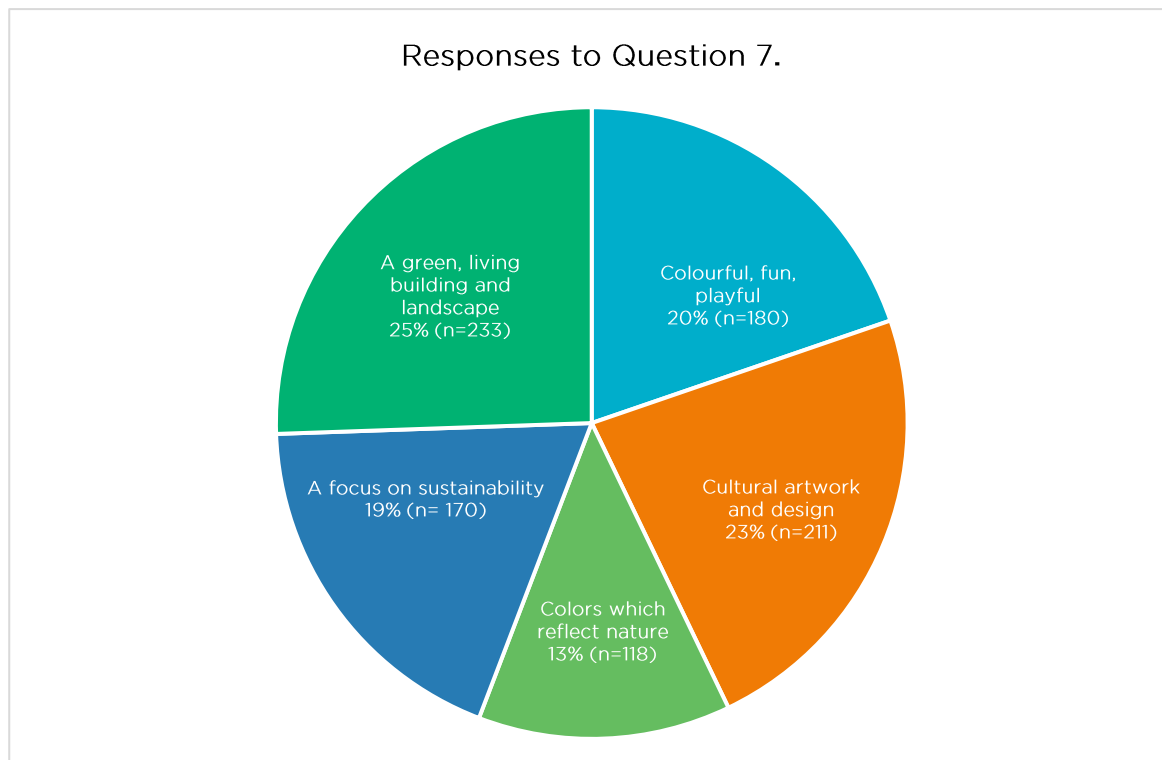


Figure 12 — Question 7: "Please select your top 3 favourite styles of design you would most like to see in the new Hub."

46 participants responded to the open-ended question to share anything not listed. Comments were varied but common themes included:

- A moderate number shared they felt the design should reflect North Melbourne's diverse cultures through community-created artwork, multicultural themes, and spaces for community events.
- A moderate number asked for strong community representation in the final design. Participants felt residents from across North Melbourne should have a role in shaping the space, ensuring it reflects their needs and aspirations.
- A small number of participants requested a sustainable and eco-friendly design using low carbon, sustainable materials, passive cooling, and heating design elements for energy-efficiency.
- A small number of participants hope the Hub would be a warm, and accessible, with spaces that are functional, well-maintained, and adaptable for various uses, including quiet areas for those needing solitude. A few also hoped the design would include spacious and informal areas for free community use.
- A small number of participants discussed the design honoring both Aboriginal and North Melbourne's architectural history, incorporating elements like Melbourne bluestone, red brick, local historical references, and acknowledgment of Traditional Owners.
- A small number shared they wished the space to be a balance between fun, color, and cultural vibrancy ensuring a welcoming environment for all ages and purposes. Several hoped-for opportunities for local artists and community members to contribute to the design through art projects and murals.
- A small number of participants felt the Hub should integrate nature through the integration of indoor and outdoor greenery, thoughtful landscaping, and incorporating the prominent, existing trees on site as a focal point of the design.
- Several participants requested a timeless design style with neutral tones.
- Several participants discussed the need for the design to be safe, and an opportunity to lift the amenity in the area through design, landscaping and placemaking.
- A few comments asked for the design of the Hub to support and consider the broader community including North Melbourne's businesses and homeowners.

"Relate to North Melbourne colourful history. Relate to the buildings and streetscape around, including especially large signature trees ... maybe a tree could be a central design feature?"

"I'd like community involved with the detailed design, not designed by others for us. Curated by designers with a cultural background that reflects community."

"Multicultural nature of North Melbourne and acknowledging the First Nations traditional owners. The carpet in the kid's library at the Vic Markets library is a great example because it is fun for kids but teaches adults about local seasons."

Key Findings

Key findings from Phase 2 of community engagement are:

- **Strong Support for the Concept Design:** 76 per cent of participants were either satisfied or extremely satisfied with the draft concept design, with enthusiasm for improved community spaces, accessibility, and cultural inclusivity.
- **Prioritisation of Green, Sustainable Design:** A green, living building was the most preferred design choice, with strong support for eco-friendly materials, passive cooling, and integration of greenery throughout the space.
- **Diverse cultural representation and inclusion:** Participants emphasised the importance of multicultural artwork, multilingual signage, and diverse programming to reflect North Melbourne's community. In addition, it is important the design of the hub incorporates culturally safe spaces which are functional and considered.
- **Demand for functional and accessible Spaces:** Participants highlighted the need for a mix of practical spaces, including quiet areas, large community halls, outdoor gardens, play areas for children, and spaces for youth engagement. Ensuring financial accessibility for all community members was also a key concern.
- **Food as a key connector:** Findings show a high demand for shared kitchens, community dining spaces, and free outdoor BBQs for social gatherings. There was also strong support for cultural exchange through the sharing of food, cooking programs.
- **Social enterprises, local business, and community organisations:** There is strong community support for food-based social enterprises and economic opportunities for local businesses. Additionally, dedicated spaces for community organisations to meet and operate were highly valued.
- **Emphasis on safety and security:** Participants stressed the importance of well-lit outdoor areas, passive surveillance, and clear wayfinding to ensure the hub is safe, especially for evening use.
- **Continued desire for consultation and transparency:** Some participants expressed concern about the length of the consultation process and lack of clarity around future site development. Maintaining ongoing community engagement and clear communication was a strong recommendation.
- **Ensuring the Hub represents the wider community:** A common theme in feedback was the importance of the Hub reflecting the diverse North Melbourne community, including residents, business owners and key community organisations.
- **Recreational provision and planning:** Community members expressed strong support for the provision of additional recreational spaces, highlighting the need for multi-purpose sports areas, indoor and outdoor play spaces for children, and facilities like basketball courts, a pool, and open green spaces for informal activities.
- **Spaces for young people:** Community members strongly advocated for the inclusion of a toy library, emphasising its role in supporting families, promoting sustainability through toy sharing, and providing a valuable play and learning space for children. In addition, areas were requested for youth to engage and socialise through informal activities, programming, and recreation.

Summary of community recommendations

Based on community engagement, the following community recommendations will be explored further during the design and operational development phases.

1. Sustainable & Green Building Design:

- Prioritise a green, living building with extensive indoor and outdoor greenery.
- Use low-carbon, sustainable materials and passive design for energy efficiency.
- Integrate solar panels, water-saving systems, and natural cooling methods.

2. Welcoming Culturally Inclusive & Community-Driven Spaces and Services:

- Incorporate multicultural artwork and murals reflecting North Melbourne's diversity.
- Investigate multilingual signage and the provision of bilingual staff to enhance accessibility.
- Design flexible spaces that accommodate cultural celebrations, storytelling, and language programs.
- Ensure spaces for prayer or reflection are culturally sensitive and designed appropriately.
- Investigate the inclusion of a toy library within the Hub.
- Consider opportunities for vulnerable community to access resources including the cooking and sharing of food, and access to sanitary items.

3. Functional & Accessible Community Spaces:

- Ensure a mix of quiet and social spaces, including study areas, a large community hall, and informal gathering spots.
- Consider financial accessibility models under the operational framework so all community members can use the facilities.
- Provide well-designed play areas for children and youth-friendly zones for socialising and recreation.

4. Food & Social Gathering Areas:

- Explore free outdoor dining and food preparation areas, communal kitchens, and shared dining spaces to encourage food sharing and social connection.
- Investigate opportunities for social enterprise kitchens, local food businesses and cultural food markets.
- Ensure shared and commercial kitchens are robust in design and functional.

5. Safety, Lighting & Security Enhancements:

- Well-lit pathways, passive surveillance features, and clear wayfinding for safety, especially at night.
- The provision of bike parking, shaded seating, and accessible pathways throughout the site.

6. Heritage & Local Identity Integration:

- Acknowledge Indigenous history and Traditional Owners in the design.
- Use locally inspired materials like Melbourne bluestone and red brick to align with North Melbourne's architectural heritage.
- Maintain aesthetic cohesion with surrounding streetscapes and greenery.

7. Outdoor & Green Spaces:

- Ensuring landscaping considers spaces to grow, shaded rest areas, and natural playgrounds with climbing structures and water play.
- Ensure all-weather outdoor spaces with adequate shade, wind protection, and flexible seating.

8. Flexible & Multi-Purpose Design:

- Create versatile rooms for workshops, meetings, and cultural events. Ensure spaces include storage.
- Explore the provision of performance spaces, art exhibition areas, and maker spaces for creative expression.
- Consider zoning different levels or sections for various community needs, such as youth spaces, family-friendly areas, and quiet zones.
- Explore opportunities for free-use technology for community use such as wi-fi and computers.

9. On-going community engagement:

- Ensure residents, cultural groups, and community organisations have opportunity to partake in decision-making, the planning of programming, and how the Hub is managed to foster ownership and relevance.
- Ensure future community engagement and communication is consistent, shares key project updates and maintains transparency.

10. On-going planning for the provision of recreation services and facilities in North Melbourne:

- Independently of the NMCH project, continue exploring opportunities for the provision of multi-purpose recreation facilities that support a variety of activities within the North Melbourne precinct.

Next Steps

The City of Melbourne will finalise the concept design utilising the community feedback. Discussions with key stakeholders and the Community Reference Group will continue alongside design and operational development planning.

The final concept design will be presented to Future Melbourne Committee for endorsement in August 2025.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Pop-up engagement schedule

Table 5 – Schedule of pop-ups and community engagements.

Location	Date	Time	
Community Room, 159 Melrose Street	Wednesday 21 November	5.30pm - 6.30pm	North Melbourne Public Housing Residents Association (NMPHRA) Meeting
Community Room, 12 Sutton Street, North Melbourne	Tuesday 3 December	10.00 am -11.00 am	North Melbourne Language and Learning - Neighbourhood Networking
Jean McKendry Neighbourhood Centre	Thursday 5 December	9.00 am -10.00 am	Programmed Session: Slavic Women's Group
Jean McKendry Neighbourhood Centre	Wednesday 11 December	10:00 am – 12:00 pm	Programmed session: North Melbourne Chinese Association
North Melbourne Community Centre	Thursday 12 December	4.30 pm – 6.45 pm	Pop-up North Melbourne Community End of Year Party
North Melbourne Community Centre	Friday 13 December	10.00 am – 11.00am	Pop-up: After playgroup session and women's gym
Australian Muslim Social Services Agency (AMSSA)	Friday 13 December	2.00pm – 4.00pm	Programmed session: Australian Muslim Social Services Agency (AMSSA)
Jean McKendry Neighbourhood Centre	Monday 16 December	12.30 pm-1.30 pm	Programmed Session: African Communities Group
North Melbourne Library/Errol Street	Tuesday 17 December	10.00 am – 11.30 am	Pop-up
Jean McKendry Neighbourhood Centre	Tuesday 17 December	12.30 pm – 1.30 pm	Programmed Session: Community end of year Christmas Party

Appendix 2 – Further analysis of who we heard from

Survey participants

Gender

Survey participants were asked their gender identity. Of those who chose to respond to this question (n=263) there was a higher response from people who identified as a woman (n=155) to those who identified as a man (n=105). Participants who identified as non-binary had the lowest response rate (n=3). These results are comparable to the last round of engagement which was conducted for this project (August – October 2023).

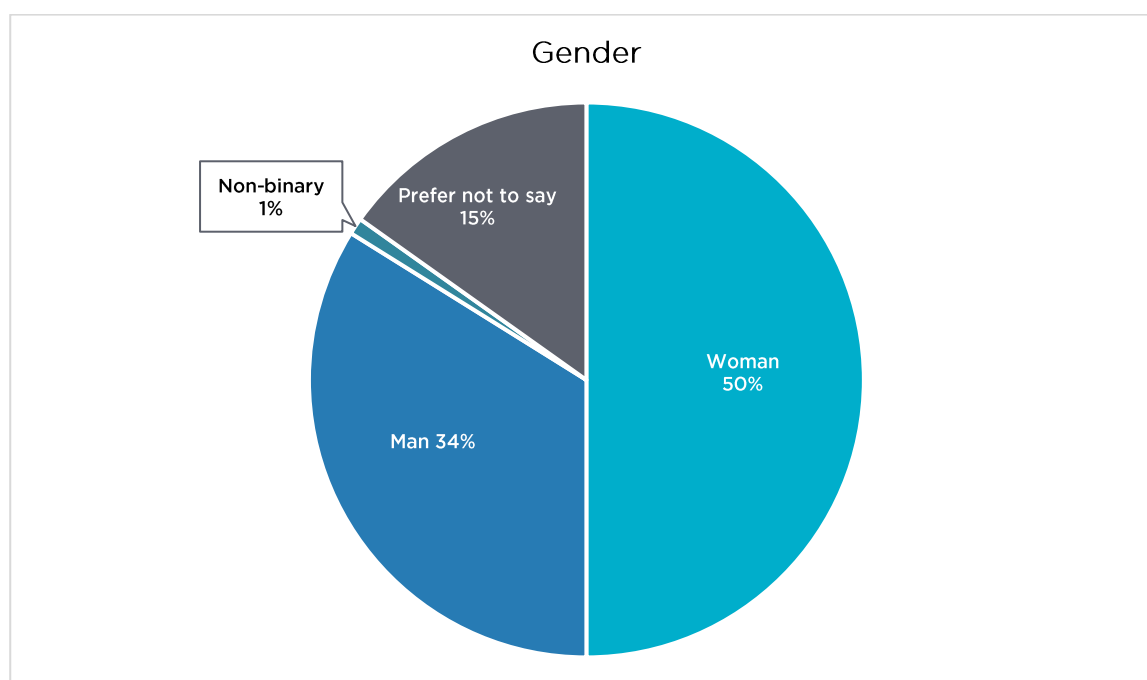


Figure 13 – Gender identity of participants.

Age

Survey participants were asked their age. Of the participants who shared their age (n=268), the age group with the greatest representation was 35 to 39 years (n=50).

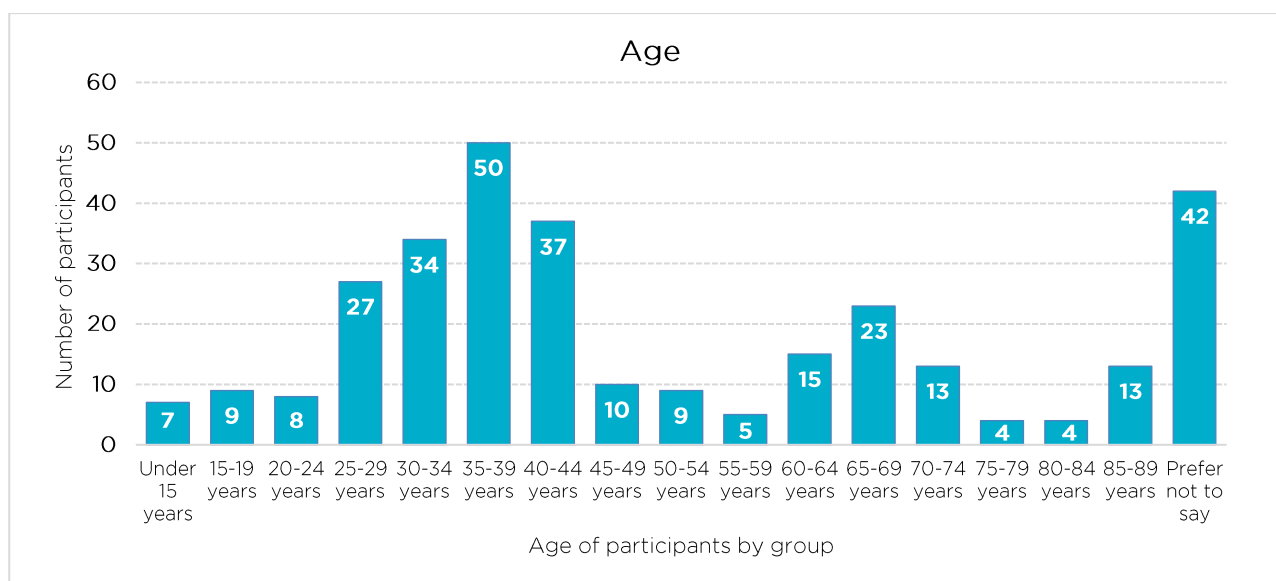


Figure 14 – Age of participants by group.

In 2021, Census data indicated the largest age group in North Melbourne was 25 to 29 year-olds. However, this age group only represented 9 per cent of participants (n=27).

Of note was a decrease of youth participants (12 to 24 years of age) from the previous Phase 1 of Community Engagement conducted in 2023. In 2023, 12 per cent of participants were youth (n=38) comparative to only 8 per cent (n=24) this round of engagement. This may be attributed to consultation fatigue stemming from several youth centric, community engagements being run concurrently in North Melbourne or the projects methods of engagement. Future phases of community engagement may wish to should employ engagement activities targeted to Youth.

From participants who chose to submit both age and gender information, we understand the most represented age group for those identifying as a woman was between the ages of the 35 to 39 (n=30). For those identifying as a man, the age groups we have the highest responses from were between 35 to 39 years (n=18) and 40 to 44 years (n=18).

Other key demographic groups

Participants were invited to select from a list of categories that applied across several demographics. Of the participants where other key demographic attributes were recorded:

- Some participants identified with more than one category.
- 56 participants identified with none of the categories and 17 preferred not to say.
- 1 per cent (n=4) were from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island background
- 3 per cent (n=11) said they live with disability.
- 4 per cent (n=15) identified as carers.
- 41 per cent (n=155) said they speak a language other than English at home.
- 45 per cent (n=169) said they were born overseas.
- 5 per cent (n= 19) said they were from an LGBTIQA+ community.

Language

For participants who indicated they speak a language other than English, there was an option to specify which languages they speak.

According to the 2021 ABS Census, 38 per cent of North Melbourne residents speak a language other than English at home, with the five most common languages being Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Spanish, and Somali. Comparatively, 41 per cent (n=155) of participants who answered this question indicated they speak a language other than English at home, with 14 people reporting they speak more than one additional language.

Of the 43 languages shared by participants, the top 5 most used were Somali, Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese and Croatian.

Connection to the City of Melbourne

Participants were asked what their connection to the North Melbourne Community Hub project is, with the ability to select multiple of the following options:

- I am a resident
- I am a student
- I am a visitor
- I am a worker
- I own a business
- Other – Free text
- Prefer not to say

From the participants who answered this question (n=277), 77 per cent shared they were residents of North Melbourne, with 9 per cent indicating they were a worker (n=24), and 7 per cent visitors (n=20). Two participants provided an open-ended comment to 'Other' including a pensioner and a community leader.

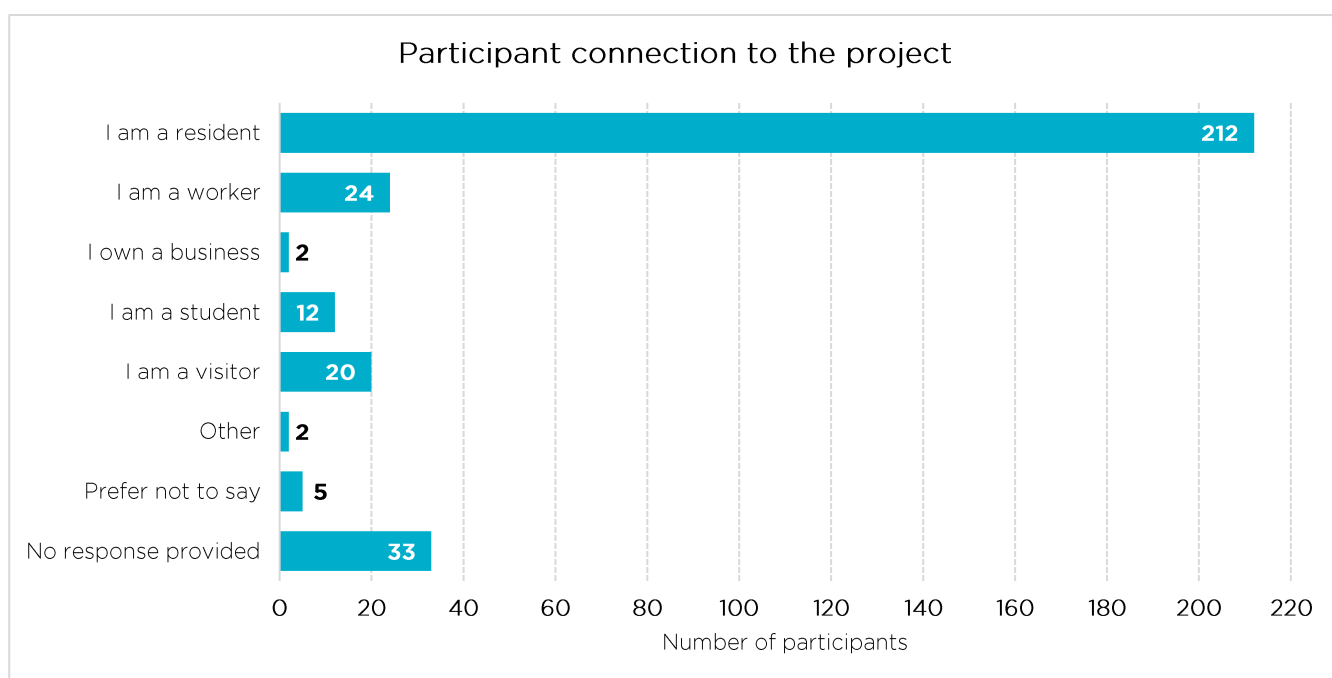


Figure 15 -Connection of participants to the North Melbourne Community Hub project.

Participants were asked, based on their connection to this project, where did they live/work/own a business/study/visit. Over half of survey participants have a connection to North Melbourne, with a considerable number from Kensington, a moderate number from CBD and a smaller number from West Melbourne. Of the 11 participants who indicated 'Other' these included: Yarraville, Camberwell, Ascot Vale, Templestowe, Dandenong North, Flemington, Sunshine, Thornbury. An additional participant shared they worked across the City of Melbourne.

Previous Participation in City of Melbourne consultations

Participants were asked if they had participated in a consultation with City of Melbourne before. Of the survey participants who answered this question, 45 per cent (n=140) indicated this was the first time they had engaged. This result suggests the engagement and communications approaches were effective at reaching new and members of the community. A substantial number indicated they had participated in consultations once or twice before, a considerable number participate regularly, while several were not sure if they had previously participated.

Motivations to participate in this consultation

Participants were invited to share their motivations for participating in this consultation and could select one or more options from a provided list. As this was a multiple-choice question, the total number of responses exceeded the number of survey participants (n=310).

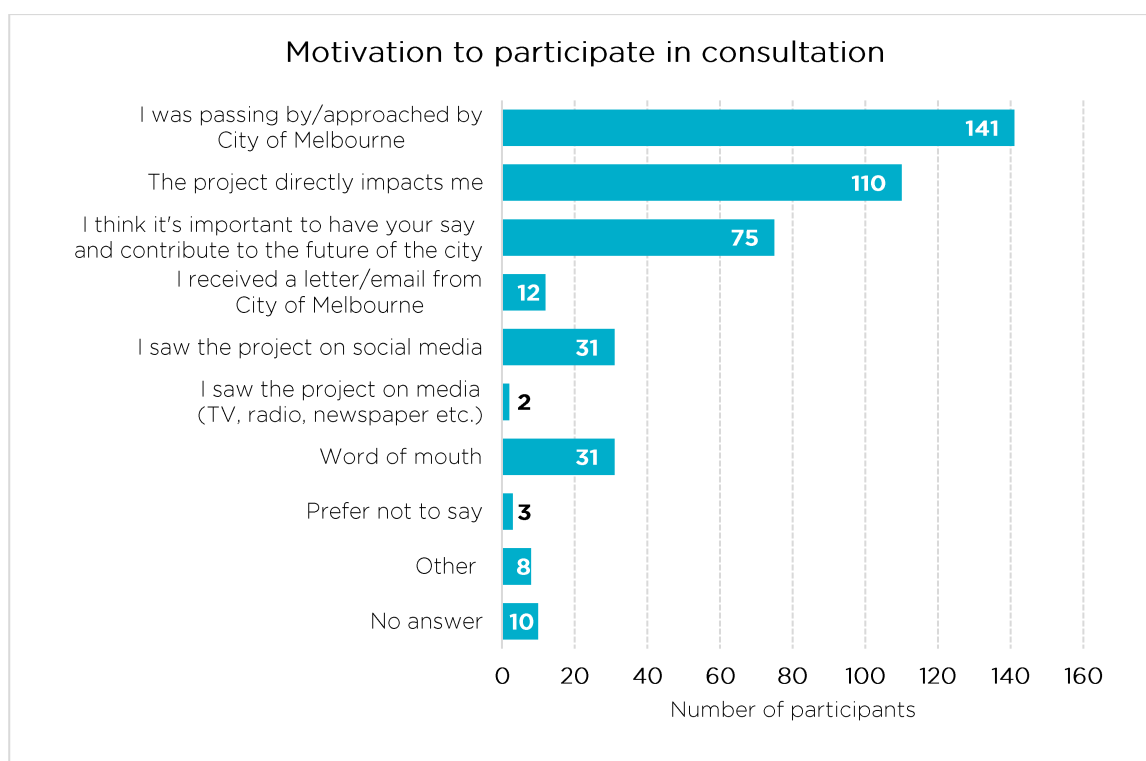


Figure 16 - Motivations to participate in consultation.

Of the total responses received (n=423), 33 per cent of participants indicated they joined the consultation after being approached by a City of Melbourne staff member (including participating in a scheduled consultation activity). Additionally, 26 per cent stated they were directly impacted by the project. The third most common reason was the desire to have a say and contribute to the municipality's future. Considerable numbers also learned about the project through social media or word of mouth.

Of the 8 participants who provided an open-ended response to 'Other', these included: researching the North Melbourne area prior to moving, a participants desire to spend time with their children in fun and educational spaces, the wish to advocate for a toy library in the new hub a submission on behalf of a community organisation and a participant submitting on behalf of their business.