

# FERGUSON STREET LEVEL CROSSING REMOVAL PROJECT

## PRECINCT PLAN – WHAT WE HEARD

### The community engagement process

We would like to thank everyone who provided feedback on the Ferguson Street Level Crossing Removal Project Precinct Plan. We were delighted with the number of responses and insightful feedback that has helped inform the final precinct plan, which aims to address pedestrian and cyclist safety, protecting local heritage and environmental values and improve amenities.

At the time of this project, face-to-face consultations were unable to proceed due to COVID-19 restrictions. As an alternative, a copy of the precinct plan and a detailed description sat alongside an online survey calling for community feedback on the Participate Hobsons Bay website.

Over 10,000 households across Williamstown, Williamstown North and Newport received printed copies of the precinct plan, an information flier and the survey form, along with reply paid envelopes to submit their feedback. Copies of the precinct plan were on display at Council's libraries. In addition, a live online question and answer session (via Facebook) was conducted with 30 participants engaged in this forum.

On 19 June 2020, shortly before Council's consultation closed, the state government announced a rail under road design for Ferguson Street. More information on the design approach and project updates can be accessed via [engage.vic.gov.au/lxrp-ferguson-street](https://engage.vic.gov.au/lxrp-ferguson-street)

### Who got involved

Despite being unable to host face-to-face workshops due to COVID-19 restrictions, there was a high level of engagement by the community during the four week consultation period from 25 May to 22 June 2020. The project's webpage on Participate Hobsons Bay received 1,836 site visits, 109 online survey submissions and 26 submissions to the "Show Us" tool. 429 submissions were received via mail along with 14 phone enquiries.

Williamstown and Williamstown North residents came out in force making up for 80% of all responses received. This engagement attracted a high percentage of older participants with 31% of respondents aged 65 years or over, 27% aged between 55 and 64 years and 22% aged between 45 and 54 years.

### What we heard from the community

From the survey responses received, 46% agreed that the precinct plan addresses the issues and opportunities in the precinct, 30% disagreed and 24% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Pedestrian and cyclist safety remain a key concern for residents, however most respondents were supportive of the proposed shared user pathways. There were mixed views on the proposal to remove roundabouts, with some believing signalised interceptions would be safer for pedestrians and cyclists, while others questioned how this would enable continued local road access. Car parking was a challenging topic and the proposal to relocate the car park was not supported, while suggestions were made to increase parking limits to the existing Champion Road parking.

Most respondents were supportive of the retention and repurposing of both station houses and the open space, including the established trees, with requests to retain the village feel in the precinct. In addition, many respondents supported the inclusion of public art in open spaces and having a playground within the precinct, however concerns were raised around the playground's proximity to Ferguson Street.

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## Where to from here

The Ferguson Street Level Crossing Precinct Plan has been updated to include various improvements that address community concerns about safety (including cyclist, and pedestrian and vehicular), amenity and open space opportunities.

The final plan takes onboard community feedback, input from the Council's community Interest Group and is complementary to the Level Crossing Removal Projects (LXRP) design decision of rail under road.

Key features include:

- safe pedestrian and cyclists connecting pathways into and through the precinct
- retention of both station houses to be repurposed for the updated station and community use
- enlarged community plaza space providing safe access through the precinct and a key meeting point for commuters and students of nearby schools
- relocation of the Power Street playground further north, away from Ferguson Street
- no increase to the current Power Street station car park capacity
- retention of existing established trees (subject to further formal assessment of their health condition) with additional trees to increase canopy shade
- intermodal hub providing a bus terminal, end of trip cyclist facilities and a 'kiss and ride' point

After considering community feedback, Council has elected to consider all traffic measures at a later date to consider any behaviour change following the removal of the level crossing. The delivery of the LXRP project in the coming months will create a different environment that will present changes in pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular activity. Once the new environment is in place, Council will review data together with the Department of Transport to determine best placed measures to enable an efficient and safe road network within the precinct. This review will consider both the local and arterial roads within the precinct network.

Council adopted the Ferguson Street Level Crossing Precinct Plans at the ordinary Council Meeting on 11 August 2020 and will now advocate to the Victorian Government for a funding partnership seeking to implement the recommended upgrades, which would complement the LXRP work.

State government funding and consideration for the Ferguson Street Precinct Upgrade is one of Council's Advocacy Priorities for 2020.

## Keep informed

Regular updates on this project can be found at Participate Hobsons Bay website [participate.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/ferguson-street-precinct-plan](https://participate.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/ferguson-street-precinct-plan)

If you have any questions regarding the project, contact Marg Scanlon, Manager Strategic Projects on 9932 1000 or email [communityengagement@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au](mailto:communityengagement@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au)