



---

# Paul Keating Park Masterplan

## Engagement Outcomes Report – Stage 2

16 December 2020

**JOC**CONSULTING  
creative urban planners



**JOC**CONSULTING  
creative urban planners

© JOC Consulting 2020

All care has been taken to prepare this  
report for City of Canterbury Bankstown

If you have any queries regarding this  
report please get in touch:

John O'Callaghan, Director

+61 0400 471 469

[john@jocconsulting.com.au](mailto:john@jocconsulting.com.au)

[jocconsulting.com.au](http://jocconsulting.com.au)

---

# Contents

## **OVERVIEW** **4**

What was the general sentiment?

Who participated in the Stage 2 consultation?

What were the key insights from the Stage 2 consultation?

## **BACKGROUND** **8**

Project context

Purpose

Engagement and communications approach

## **KEY FINDINGS** **11**

General feedback

Places within the park

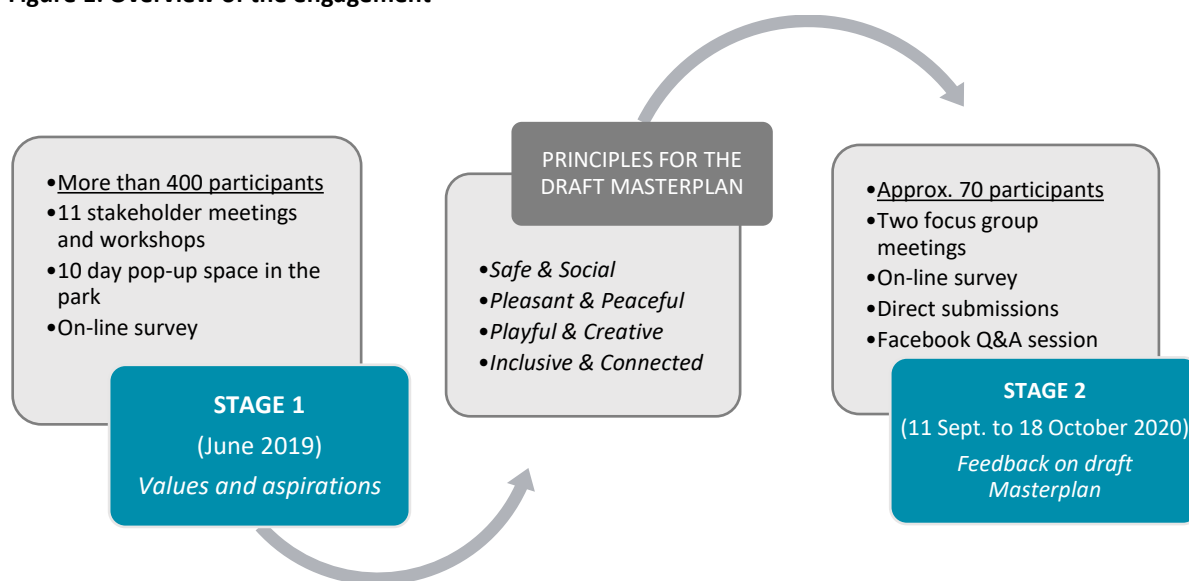
## **CONCLUSION** **15**

# Overview

More than 450 people from diverse cultural backgrounds, demographics, and stakeholder groups have contributed their time and insights during the two stages of engagement for the Masterplan. This report presents the views of the community as they were heard with the aim of assisting City of Canterbury Council in considering adoption and implementation of the 20-year Masterplan.

The community engagement for the project has been instrumental in setting a vision and direction for the development of a Masterplan for Bankstown's premier public space – Paul Keating Park. An overview of the engagement is shown in Figure 1 below and described in more detail in this report for the Stage 2 engagement as well as in the Engagement Outcomes Report for Stage 1 of the engagement.

Figure 1: Overview of the engagement



---

## What was the general sentiment?

Conversations with the community and stakeholders throughout the two stages of the engagement were lively and positive. Community members are clearly passionate about Paul Keating Park, and are generally supportive of the Masterplan project. There was very little divergence in opinion between different cultures, ages or genders in terms of how important the park is seen to Bankstown's community: everyone sees Paul Keating Park as a family park, a place for everyone, and a place to get together and currently feel it is underutilised and uninviting.

Feedback on the draft Masterplan (Stage 2) was overall positive, and none of the submissions or input called for radical changes to the design, though some suggestions for improvement for different aspects of the park were put forward (see Key Findings section below).

---

## Who participated in the Stage 2 consultation?

A total of approximately 70 participants participated in the Stage 2 engagement for the project, offering feedback and insights on the draft Masterplan.

Despite being widely promoted through posters on site, social media, Council's website, advertisements and media releases, direct emails, and door knocking to local businesses, the Stage 2 engagement generated a low submission rate from the general public of 16 formal submissions.<sup>1</sup> This is in addition to participation in two focus groups with 9 randomly recruited participants and 15 participants from the Youth Off the Streets program.<sup>2</sup> Council also facilitated an online Q&A session via Facebook, where 34 people participated.

The low public participation rate may indicate a general satisfaction with the draft Masterplan, as 1,273 people visited the project page but did not leave a response, e.g. showing interest and awareness but no need to comment. The most clicks on the project page were on the image slider which contained all the renders of the proposed designs with 973 clicks.

Of the 16 written submissions, 11 expressed direct support for the Masterplan, 6 were neutral/unsure, and no one expressed direct opposition to the Masterplan.

---

<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this report, comments received via the online survey are considered on par with direct submissions received via email or letter. There were 9 submissions via the online survey and 7 direct submissions.

<sup>2</sup> The focus group participants were independently recruited to form a 'neutral' (e.g. not self-selecting) community group representing the demographic profile of City of Canterbury Bankstown in terms of age, gender, cultural background, and place of residence).

## What were the key insights for Stage 2 consultation?

The overall response to the draft Masterplan was generally positive, with all respondents welcoming plans to improve the public park. A summary of key insights from all engagement activities is provided below and described in more detail in the following.

### EXCITEMENT/OPPORTUNITIES

- Appreciation of the Masterplan as a whole and the variety of uses
- Greenery and trees
- Opportunities for planting native trees, edible trees/herb gardens
- Water play
- Change rooms near waterplay
- Preservation of existing Council building
- Bike parking
- Environmental sustainability
- Getting the community involved in implementation

### CONCERNS/CHALLENGES

- Accessibility for all, particularly for vulnerable groups
- WSU impacts (overshadowing and use of park and library)
- Value sharing
- Spaces for young people (loss of activation areas/ball play options)
- Exercise equipment
- The urban forest could potentially be experienced as being unsafe – lighting and activation are important
- Maintenance and energy costs of waterplay area
- Pedestrian safety and traffic/parking management
- Underground carpark
- Food and beverage options in the park
- Time frame (should be shorter)
- Car congestion
- Night-time use

### VALUES

- Whole of community
- Social, sense of community
- Inclusive and accessible for all
- Safe – both in terms of “feel” as well as pedestrian safety
- Active and healthy
- Playful
- Fairness (e.g. developers’ contributions and impact of WSU)
- Sustainability



*Thank you so much for all the beautiful plans for this park for the future. I am proud that such a beautiful improvement is coming to our place soon!!*

(Online submission)

*I would love to see plenty of native trees planted too so the birds can also enjoy the park with us.*

(Online submission)

---

# Background

**The City of Canterbury Bankstown has commissioned the development of a Masterplan for Paul Keating Park that will inform future public domain capital works for Bankstown's premier public space to create a welcoming, diverse and inclusive space for all. The local community have been instrumental in shaping the design of the new park.**

---

## Project context

Paul Keating Park is Bankstown's premier public space. With an overall aim of improving the park for a changing and growing population, in 2019 City of Canterbury Bankstown commissioned McGregor Coxall Landscape Architects and Urban Designers to prepare a Masterplan for the park. Working closely with the project team, JOC Consulting was engaged to plan, develop and deliver community engagement to help inform the design of the park.

Over the coming 20 years, the number of jobs, students and residents in Bankstown CBD is expected to increase dramatically. The access to - and quality of - public spaces will become increasingly important as the city grows and more people choose to call Bankstown home or come here to work, study or visit.

Paul Keating Park Precinct is the centrepiece of Bankstown's civic area. It is located in the heart of the northern CBD and includes the street block bounded by Jacobs St, Rickard Rd, Chapel Rd and The Mall, commonly known as the Civic Precinct, The Bankstown Court House Reserve, the section of pathway on the southern side of The Mall, between Fetherstone St and The Appian Way.

The Masterplan encompasses Paul Keating Park and its local surroundings, providing a cohesive and integrated public domain throughout the Civic Precinct which includes Bankstown Library and Knowledge Centre (BLaKC), the Western Sydney University Campus, Civic Tower, Council Chambers, Court House Reserve and a variety of local commerce. The masterplan can be understood through eight key areas that are distinctly different and provide a diversity of programs and amenities for an inclusive, safe and connected public domain. These 8 areas are:

- The Appian Way
- The Play Space
- Green Incline
- Library Interface
- Urban Forest and Deck
- The Mall
- War Memorial
- Civic Plaza and Rickard Road (not covered by the engagement)

---

## Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the feedback received from Stage 2 engagement (public exhibition). It should be read in extension of the Engagement Outcomes Report from Stage 1 engagement (input to concept design). The findings from the engagement are presented as a consolidated view on key themes as well as feedback on specific places within the park (as related to the eight key areas of the Masterplan).

---

## Engagement and communications approach

The draft Masterplan was placed on public exhibition from 11 September to 18 October, during which time a variety of online and face to face engagement activities took place. A summary of the communications and events for the Stage 2 engagement is provided in Tables 1 and 2 below.

**Table 1: Communications**

Method	Audience	Description
Mailout of flyers	2,000 neighbouring residents	Promotion of the project and survey in English, Arabic and Vietnamese.
Signage on site	Visitors to the park and to BLaKC and the Bankstown Customer Service centre	Visual renders of the draft Masterplan
Media release and articles	General public	An article in the Canterbury Bankstown Express Two advertisements in the Torch
Direct emails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>200 people on mailing list from Stage 1 engagement</li><li>2,000 registered community members on Council's mailing list</li><li>Council's reference groups and advisory committees</li><li>RSL and Bankstown Historical Society</li></ul>	Promotion of the project and the survey
Social media	General public	Promotion of the project and the survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>2 Facebook posts</li><li>2 Instagram posts</li><li>2 Twitter posts</li></ul>

**Table 2: Engagement events**

Date (2020)	Engagement	Participation	Description
11 September to 18 October	Online survey	9 people from the general public	Quantitative and qualitative feedback on the draft Masterplan
12 September to 6 October	Direct submissions (via email)	7 people from the public	Quantitative and qualitative feedback on the draft Masterplan
14 September	Focus group (90 min online)	9 randomly recruited community members (representative of demographic profile of Canterbury Bankstown LGA)	<p>Qualitative feedback on the draft Masterplan overall as well as the 8 key areas of the plan.</p> <p>Workshop format: 'Journey through the park' discussions with renders from the draft Plan being presented to the group who were then asked:</p> <p>What excites you about [the specific area]?</p> <p>What are you concerned about?</p>
Door knocking	18 September	10 (approx.) neighbouring businesses	<p>Face to face conversations with neighbouring businesses (owners or staff) about the draft Masterplan.</p> <p>Promotion of online survey.</p>
22 September	Youth Off the Streets Focus group (60 face to face)	15 young people aged approximately 14 to 18 years old.	<p>Qualitative feedback on the draft Masterplan overall as well as the 8 key areas of the plan.</p> <p>Workshop format: 'Journey through the park' discussions with renders from the draft Plan being presented to the group who were then asked:</p> <p>What excites you about [the specific area]?</p> <p>What are you concerned about?</p>
to be provided by Council	Q&A online session	34 people from the general public (6,683 people reached)	Promotion of the project and the survey and opportunity to get any questions about the project answered by a Council staff member

---

# Key findings

**The community were especially excited about the waterplay feature and greenery in the park. Their biggest concerns were safety, shading and weather proofing and managing impacts of the Western Sydney University project – especially regarding use of the public space and BLaKC as well as overshadowing.**

---

## General feedback

The draft Masterplan was generally well received by the community with many expressing high levels of satisfaction with the design:

- *“Love the new plan”!*<sup>3</sup>
- *“I enjoyed imagining the outdoors library area and the jacaranda trees and the tree lined boulevard, I imagined a Parisian look at feel which is very exciting! I am expecting my first baby soon and the water park section also sounds great.”*<sup>4</sup>

There were no objections to the draft plan as such, though there were some overall concerns – namely about overall access, green include, wider context, and sustainability related issues (as detailed below). There were also suggestions about specific aspects of the park (see following section).

### Areas of strong agreement

The following themes came out strongly throughout all engagement events for Stage 2 (and are also closely aligned with outcomes from Stage 1 engagement):

- **Environmental:** The green aspects of the park (trees, natural shading, cooling) are essential to create a pleasant and welcoming environment are of fundamental importance to the community.
- **Social:** The park is regarded as being for the whole community and needs to be accessible and welcoming for all – and especially to children, young people, and people who may be vulnerable or at risk of social isolation. Activation and access to coffee, food, and events (e.g. markets) are seen to contribute to the social vibrancy of the place.
- **Economic:** The park, located in the heart of Bankstown CBD, plays an important role in attracting people to local businesses and its connection to surrounding businesses are seen as being important to the overall place.
- **Cultural:** Bankstown is culturally diverse, and the community considers it as important that the design and use is culturally appropriate.

---

<sup>3</sup> Focus group participant

<sup>4</sup> Direct submission

### Areas of some divergence in opinions

There were only three areas of some divergence of opinion amongst the community members who participated in the Stage 2 engagement: the impact of increased visitation to the park as a result of the WSU development; the green incline; and the underground carpark:

#### WSU impact on general public use:

While there was general widespread concern about the impacts potential impacts of the WSU development and increased visitation to the area by students, some community members also voiced overall support for the life the WSU would bring to the park as illustrated by the quotes below:

- *'It's pretty dead at the moment, particularly with COVID-19; It's a dead area at the moment, so whatever you can do to make it come alive would be great''. (Focus group participant)*
- *"Given the new campus will be located adjacent to Paul Keating Park, it is critical that consideration is given to how the introduction of potentially thousands of additional students will impact how the park's amenities are used."*<sup>5</sup>

#### The green incline

Most community members felt the green incline was a positive contribution to the park. Some community members, and especially young people, expressed concern that the green incline would mean loss of activation space.

- *"The plan has some very good elements and some that need improving. Most of it is good other than the incline but I like the use of the space."*<sup>6</sup>
- *"Paul Keating Park is well known, people come here from all over – it should continue to cater for young people and activities as well as relaxing spaces for sitting"*<sup>7</sup>

#### Underground carpark

In general, most community members expressed concern about traffic congestion in the CBD area. Some community members saw it as a positive and others stating there already are too many cars in Bankstown CBD (and one community member suggesting more bike storage and parking should be provided instead).

- *The under croft is a cool idea, but I don't like the idea of MORE car parking going into the centre of Bankstown – let's leave all the car parks to Meredith St. Better to use that space for pop up art shows or for retail /cafe to serve the people using the outdoor areas. Or put in one of those bike parking hubs where you can park it and get it maintained and have showers etc like they do in Brisbane.*<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Direct submission

<sup>6</sup> Youth Off the Streets workshop participant

<sup>7</sup> Youth Off the Streets workshop participant

<sup>8</sup> Online survey submission

*“I love the idea of waterplay - we are really missing that in our local area [...] I like the idea of toilets next to it for when the children need to go (so they don't go in the water). I really hope that the amenities include space for changing the children in/out of bathing suits to discourage having to change them publicly.”*

*(Direct submission)*

## Feedback on places within the park

Specific feedback on seven of the eight key areas of the park are summarised in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Community input on specific aspects of the park**

"What excites you..."	"What concerns you..."
<b>APPIAN WAY</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green and shaded</li> <li>Water features</li> <li>People friendly (less cars)</li> <li>Outdoor dining</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not enough seating</li> <li>More parking needed</li> </ul>
<b>AMENITIES, PLAY SPACE</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water play!</li> <li>Play equipment catering for young children (0 – 5-year olds)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safety - need fenced area around playground</li> <li>Maintenance and upkeep</li> <li>Changerooms or facilities?</li> </ul>
<b>GREEN INCLINE (some diverging opinions – see also section above)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incline good, just not for the whole area (YOTS)</li> <li>"Like the incline" (Focus Group)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of activation space (especially for young people)</li> <li>Loss of events area</li> <li>Inaccessible (e.g. for people with disabilities)</li> </ul>
<b>LIBRARY INTERFACE</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better use of the space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overcrowding of WSU students</li> <li>Lack of wheelchair access</li> <li>Not enough outdoor eating spaces</li> </ul>
<b>LIBRARY INTERFACE</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better use of the space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overcrowding of WSU students</li> <li>Lack of wheelchair access</li> <li>Not enough outdoor eating spaces</li> </ul>
<b>URBAN FOREST AND DECK</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Garden beds and plantings</li> <li>Significant improvement on what is there now</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need to retain existing Council building – potentially repurpose to a cafe</li> <li>Types of trees (e.g. call for native trees and herb garden)</li> <li>Safety – and need for good lighting (<i>"Lots of trees; a little bit creepy"</i>)<sup>9</sup></li> </ul>
<b>THE MALL</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very few comments, but overall supportive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>"With respect to the concept of The Mall becoming a shared road which prioritises pedestrians, the impact of this proposal on residents and businesses warrants closer examination given the street is currently a thoroughfare for commuters"</i><sup>10</sup></li> </ul>
<b>WAR MEMORIAL AND CIVIC PLAZA</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome facelift – it looks gloomy now</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need for more seating</li> </ul>

<sup>9</sup> Focus group participant

<sup>10</sup> Direct submission

---

# Conclusion

The Stage 2 engagement for the Paul Keating Park Masterplan has reaffirmed the importance of the park to the overall wellbeing of the community.

The draft Masterplan was generally well received by the community and there were no objections as such to the draft plan and hence no drive to make radical changes to the design on account of the engagement.

When finalising and implementing the Masterplan, Council may wish to consider the following opportunities to further accommodate specific community aspirations and suggestions, such as (and not limited to):

- Improve social amenity of the park by providing more seating, food and beverage options within the park and opportunities for events
- Provide activation opportunities, particularly for young people (e.g. in situ game boards, areas for temporary active uses, exercise, and fitness equipment etc)
- Ensure landscaping incorporates native species and use of recycled materials wherever possible
- Provide easy access for all, with particular attention to people living with a disability
- Ensure overall safety of pedestrians (as related to traffic movements and look and feel of the park).



---

## JOC Consulting

L4, Level 4/68-72 Wentworth Ave,  
Surry Hills NSW 2010

T +61 400 471 469

E [john@jocconsulting.com.au](mailto:john@jocconsulting.com.au)

Follow Us



[facebook.com/JOCConsulting](https://facebook.com/JOCConsulting)



[@JOCConsulting](https://twitter.com/JOCConsulting)



[instagram.com/jocconsulting](https://instagram.com/jocconsulting)

[jocconsulting.com.au](https://jocconsulting.com.au)

**JOC**CONSULTING  
creative urban planners