



Communication Link

Garema Place upgrade

Consultation report

Version 1

26 May 2023

1. Executive summary

Between 27 March and 14 May 2023 The ACT Government's City Renewal Authority engaged with local business, property owners, community members, and key stakeholders on a planned upgrade of Garema Place in Canberra's City Centre.

Over the last 5 years the City Renewal Authority has been engaging with the community to understand what they desire to create a lively city centre. In 2020, works were undertaken to construct upgrades to City Walk, the first phase of implementing community feedback. The Authority is now turning their attention to Garema Place and seeking community feedback on the proposed designs for City Walk.

The community were provided with project information, proposed designs, and artists impressions to help them understand the Authority's proposed draft Preliminary Sketch Plan designs. The project was promoted via:

- Door knocks and letterbox drops to businesses
- Direct meetings with property owners
- Interested stakeholder emails and newsletters
- ACT Government websites and signage
- Social and public media campaigns
- A pop-up information session and online drop-in session
- Bus and library screens

The engagement received strong levels of participation. Figure 1 summarises the feedback received through engagement channels.

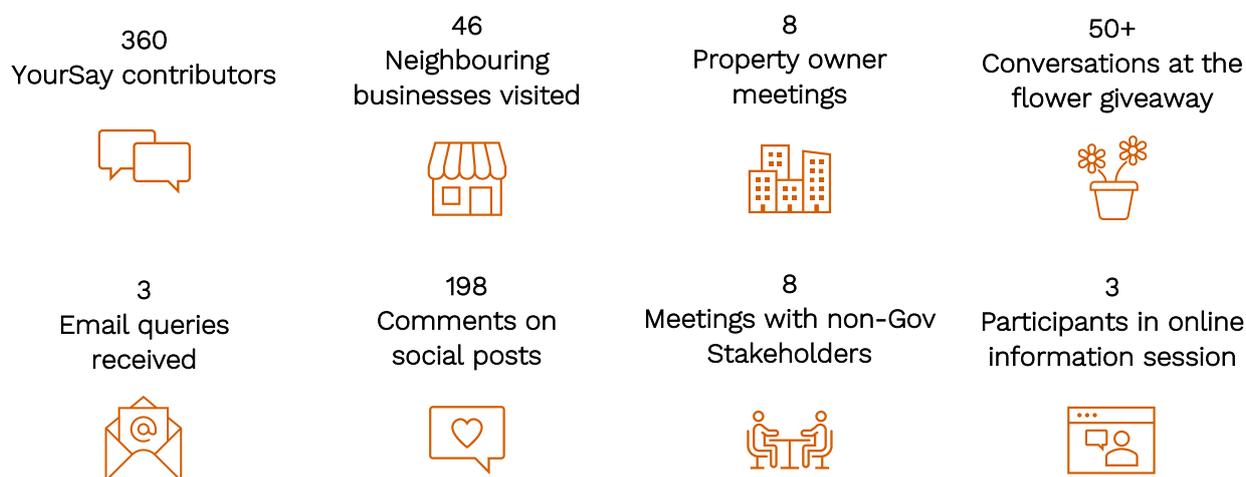


Figure 1. Community feedback by consultation method

The community provided valuable insights into what is needed to improve Garema Place. Overall, the community were enthusiastic about the proposed upgrade of Garema Place and provided suggestions on opportunities for refinement, and additional considerations. Figure 2 provides a summary of key feedback themes from this consultation process, generated from all feedback methods. Please note that while figures are represented as percentages, feedback was often attributable to more than one theme.

More detailed information can be found in the following report.



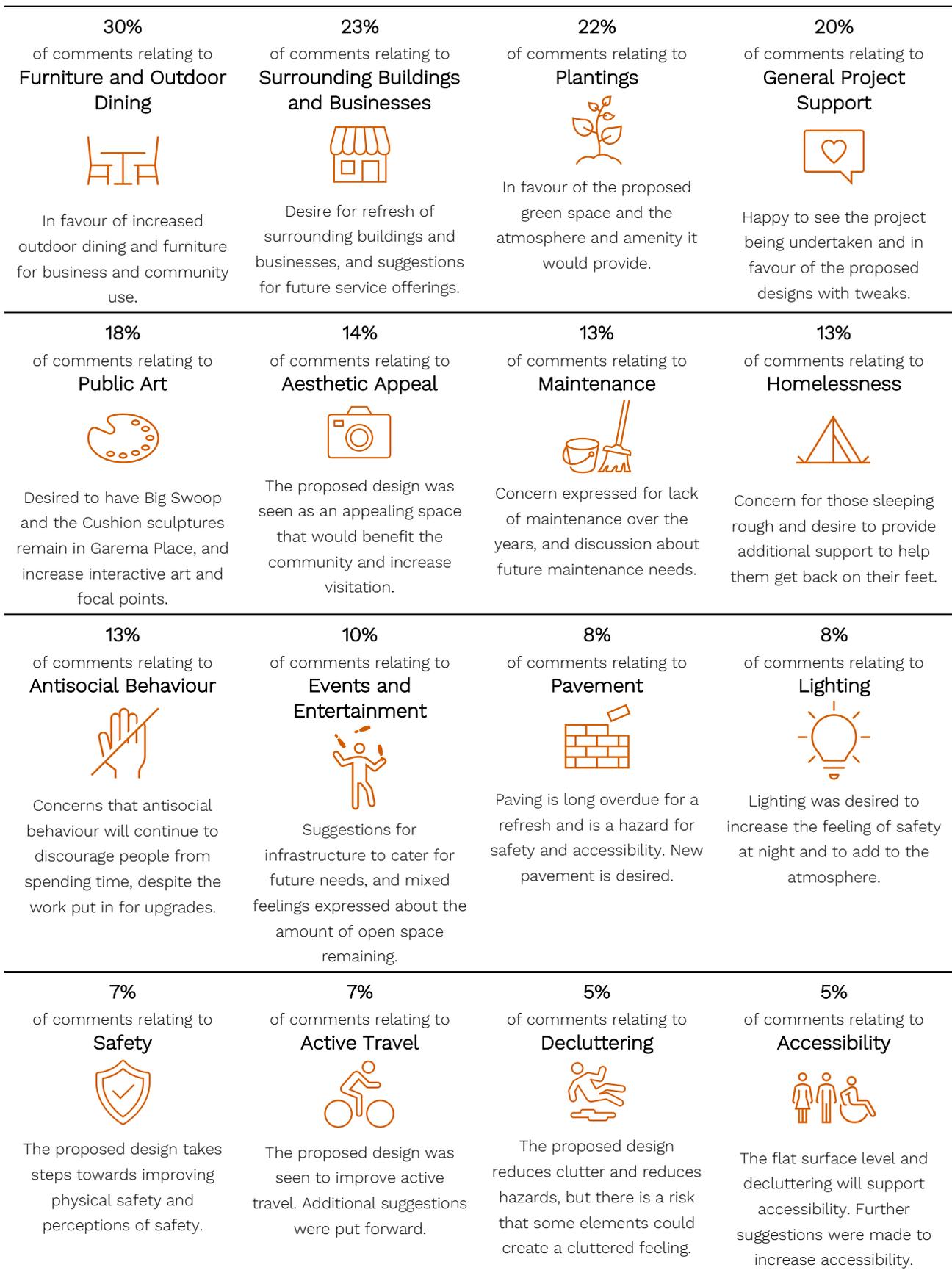


Figure 2. Consultation themes



2. Project background

The ACT Government's City Renewal Authority engaged with local business and community members on a planned major upgrade of Garema Place in the City Centre.

The project is a key component of the Authority's ongoing urban renewal program given Garema Place's central location and long history as a place for Canberrans to meet and connect.

The upgrade of Garema Place will:

- Reinforce the City Centre as Canberra's main shopping and entertainment destination
- Promote social interaction, economic growth, and diverse activity in the City Centre
- Create a functional space that serves Canberra for the coming decades.

The Authority has previously undertaken research and community engagement as part of its broader renewal program in the City Centre, which has resulted in 1000m² of paving being removed for mass planted garden beds creating comfortable spaces for friends to gather, new furniture under the trees for lunchtime performances, and open sunny lawns for passive recreation in City Walk.

The Authority is now turning its attention to Garema Place.

After consultation on the Garema Place and City Walk Place Plan in 2019, and with neighbouring building owners in 2022, the Authority has now sought broader stakeholder input on a proposed design for this public realm upgrade.

This engagement process paves the way for final design development and construction documentation.



3. Consultation process

Pre-consultation with businesses and property owners took place from 27 March to 31 March. This was done to allow businesses and property owners to have an introduction to the project, and an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback prior to the commencement of public consultation.

Public consultation took place from 31 March to 14 May 2023.

The goals of consultation were to:

- Consult the building owners, business owners and the community on draft Preliminary Sketch Plans for Garema Place
- Gather feedback on proposed designs, including any areas stakeholders view as highly favourable or areas they are concerned about.

The objective of this engagement process was to provide stakeholders and interested community members with accessible methods to contribute to feedback that will be used to refine the planned approach to the revitalisation of Garema Place. Discussion with First Nations representatives are ongoing.

The consultation process was promoted through a variety of channels including:

- Door knocks and letterbox drops to businesses
- Meetings with property owners
- Interested stakeholder emails and newsletters
- ACT Government websites and signage
- Social and public media campaigns
- A pop-up information session
- Bus and library screens

The engagement received strong levels of participation. Feedback was gathered through a variety of channels, summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Consultation methods

Method	Number of participants
A YourSay survey	360
Doorknocking nearby businesses	46
Property owner meetings	8
Conversations with the community at the flower giveaway	50+
Email feedback	3
Social media	198
Meetings with representatives of interest groups and peak bodies	8
An online information session	3



4. Consultation feedback summary

Throughout the consultation, respondents were predominantly positive about the proposed design and the revitalisation of this public space.

16 key themes were identified in the consultation process. Table 2 below lists the key themes identified, and identifies which themes we heard through each engagement method. Table 3 presents a summary of the key consultation themes, and highlights the percentage of the comments which referenced the theme. It is important to note that not all items of feedback received fall within these key themes, however they represent the areas of greatest interest to participants.

Table 2. Summary of key themes by engagement method

Key themes	YourSay	Business door-knock	Property owners	Flower giveaway	Other stakeholder	Social	Online information session
Furniture and outdoor dining	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Surrounding Buildings and Businesses	✓				✓	✓	
Plantings	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
General Project Support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Public Art	✓		✓		✓	✓	
Aesthetic Appeal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maintenance	✓		✓		✓	✓	
Homelessness	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Antisocial Behaviour	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Events and Entertainment	✓		✓		✓	✓	
Pavement	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Lighting	✓		✓		✓	✓	
Safety	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Active Travel	✓				✓	✓	✓
Decluttering	✓		✓		✓	✓	
Accessibility	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

As demonstrated in Table 2, comments relating to the aesthetic appeal, furniture and outdoor dining, and plantings came through almost all engagement channels, with most respondents positive about what was proposed. People were happy to see new life coming to the space, and a continuation of phase one of the City Walk upgrade, which was seen as a success.



Table 3. Summary of themes across the feedback provided

Theme	Summary
<p>30% of comments relating to Furniture and outdoor dining</p>	<p>In favour of increased outdoor dining and furniture for business and community use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community were broadly in favour of increased outdoor dining in Garema Place, seeing it as creating a destination, encouraging people to linger longer, contributing to the local economy, and supporting passive surveillance. • Mixed views about volume of public and private outdoor dining were expressed. Clear definition of business and informal seating areas was desired. • Opportunity was noted to create outdoor dining guidelines, supporting unity across public and private outdoor dining areas. • Respondents desired protection from the elements, including shade sales, umbrellas, outdoor heating in winter and protection from wind and rain, as well as access to seating in sunshine. • Consideration for quality, inclusive, and accessible furniture, noting high, and heavy furniture creates access challenges. Flexible, comfortable, and moveable furniture were noted as an opportunity, desiring furniture to support groups of varying sizes. Space for prams and wheelchairs was desired, as well as chairs with back support and preferences for non-concrete seating. • Opportunity was also identified to have barriers around the garden beds be wide enough to sit on. • It was noted that bins and regular cleaning would be needed to support outdoor dining.
<p>23% of comments relating to Surrounding Buildings and Businesses</p>	<p>Desire for refresh of surrounding buildings and businesses, and suggestions for future service offerings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community members were concerned that the buildings that surround Garema Place were outdated, neglected, and in need of upkeep. • It was noted there was an opportunity for some of these buildings to be replaced with something new which better integrates with Garema Place.
<p>22% of comments relating to Plantings</p>	<p>In favour of the proposed green space and the atmosphere and amenity it would provide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents felt plantings create a beautiful, relaxed, attractive, and ambient place to meet and spend time, and break up the drab city feeling, with environmental benefits acknowledged. • Planting of additional deciduous trees was desired, but businesses noted they should not be planted too close to buildings as this impacts visibility. • It was desired to maintain the existing trees, however allergens, falling leaves and fruit from plane trees were noted as an issue. Participants liked that trees provided shade in summer and sun in winter. • Grass was not considered not to be an appropriate choice for Garema Place due to high foot traffic.



Theme	Summary
<p>20% of comments relating to General Project Support</p>	<p>Happy to see the project being undertaken and in favour of the proposed designs with tweaks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community were enthusiastic about seeing Garema Place get an upgrade from its “dull and lifeless” state, and were positive about the proposed design.
<p>18% of comments relating to Public Art</p>	<p>Desired to have Big Swoop and the Cushion sculptures remain in Garema Place, and increase interactive art and focal points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents felt that the space lacks a focal point or draw card in the proposed design. The community felt artistic elements attracted people, and created a wow factor. Suggested focal points included Ngunnawal design, interactivity, fountains, overhead sculptures, and free activities. • Respondents felt the aspiration to include playfulness was not appropriately reflected in the design. Increased playfulness and family friendly elements were desired, including elements for children to climb, swing on, and crawl into. It was also noted it shouldn't necessarily be a kid-focussed area. • Artworks enjoyed by the community in other areas tended to have a playful or interactive quality, or were enjoyed for nostalgic reasons. • The community were highly in favour of keeping the big swoop ‘Big Swoop’ and ‘The Pillow and the Wedge’ sculptures, and had mixed views about keeping or removing the fountain. • Murals were seen to give the city some personality, tying in with the local history, culture, and environment.
<p>14% of comments relating to Aesthetic Appeal</p>	<p>The proposed design was seen as an appealing space that would benefit the community and increase visitation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents found the proposed designs aesthetically appealing and felt the upgrade would draw people in, increase safety, support business, and increase consistency with the City Walk. • Plants were seen positively, with increased colour, and reduced concrete was seen as an opportunity. • It was noted that the proposed design doesn't appear to let you know that you are in the heart of Australia's capital city, with the opportunity for Ngunnawal representation noted.
<p>13% of comments relating to Maintenance</p>	<p>Concern expressed for lack of maintenance over the years, and discussion about future maintenance needs.</p> <p>Ongoing cleaning and maintenance were desired particularly targeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pavement cleanliness, including cleaning of chewing gum, broken glass, vomit, and urine • Maintenance of garden beds, trees, and weed removal • Cleanliness of eating areas including removal of rubbish and cleaning of bird droppings • Upkeep of surrounding buildings
<p>13% of comments relating to Homelessness</p>	<p>Concern for those sleeping rough and desire to provide additional support to help them get back on their feet.</p>



Theme	Summary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness and begging were acknowledged as a big issue for Garema Place including congregation of homeless people, and people sleeping rough. • Respondents desired for them to have safe places to go and gain appropriate help and durable accommodation. It was noted homelessness was less bad than it has been in the past, but is still an issue.
<p>13% of comments relating to Antisocial Behaviour</p>	<p>Concerns that antisocial behaviour will continue to discourage people from spending time, despite the work put in for upgrades.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents were concerned that the benefits of the project will not be fully realised unless the problem with antisocial behaviour can be managed, so the community can feel safe in the area. • It was noted that people feel unsafe due to people regularly seen to be aggressive, smoking, drinking, taking drugs, violent, shouting, swearing, vomiting and urinating. This behaviour makes visitors feel unsafe and discourages people from staying in the area.
<p>10% of comments relating to Events and Entertainment</p>	<p>Suggestions for infrastructure to cater for future needs, and mixed feelings expressed about the amount of open space remaining.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was seen as important to strike a balance between day to day use, and allowing space for events • Mixed views were expressed toward whether or not the proposed design would negatively impact events like New Years, the Multicultural Festival, protests, and the comic festival. People wanted to leave as much space as is practical to support these events. • A sheltered stage, power, and water access were seen as important to support activation of the area. • Live entertainment including music, theatre, circus, dance, markets, and food vans was desired for people to enjoy. Stakeholders provided feedback on power desired event supports such as platforms, rigging, safety, shade cover, and accessibility. • It was noted the upgrade will make it easier to hold attractive events as less effort will need to be put in to make the space more vibrant, lively, and visually appealing.
<p>8% of comments relating to Pavement</p>	<p>Paving is long overdue for a refresh and is a hazard for safety and accessibility. New pavement is desired.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire was expressed for a level pavement surface for safety, reducing water pooling, and creating greater stability for furniture. • An upgrade to a modern looking flat pavement was desired, with dislike for the current aesthetic mismatch noted. It was suggested pavement options consider materials that clean easily, or becomes more clean on its own during rain would be more suitable in the area.
<p>8% of comments relating to Lighting</p>	<p>Lighting was desired to increase the feeling of safety at night and to add to the atmosphere.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambient lighting such as fairy lights, tree lights, and coloured lights were desired to make the area feel nicer, more enjoyable, welcoming, encourage use of the area, and increasing safety.



Theme	Summary
<p>7% of comments relating to Safety</p>	<p>The proposed design takes steps towards improving physical safety and perceptions of safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater supports to increase safety were desired including additional policing and security to reduce anti-social behaviour and supports for homeless people to prevent rough sleeping. • The proposed single pavement level was seen as safer and more accessible.
<p>7% of comments relating to Active Travel</p>	<p>The proposed design was seen to improve active travel. Additional suggestions were put forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of, and infrastructure to support skateboarding, e-scooters, bicycles, and foot traffic were desired including e-scooter parking locations, removal of A-frames and other clutter, and inclusion of simple bike racks and bike sheds. • Flow of movement was noted as an important consideration to prevent collision of active travellers.
<p>5% of comments relating to Decluttering</p>	<p>The proposed design reduces clutter and reduces hazards, but there is a risk that some elements could create a cluttered feeling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City Walk upgrade was seen as being overly cluttered creating accessibility issues, and reducing space for pedestrians and active travel. • The community acknowledged that Garema Place currently feels cluttered, with too many A-frames creating an unappealing look and a hazard for active travellers. • Respondents desired that the proposed design be cautious to not create clutter with furniture, or impact movement.
<p>5% of comments relating to Accessibility</p>	<p>The flat surface level and decluttering will support accessibility. Further suggestions were made to increase accessibility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed flat pavement surface was seen positively, with a desire for smooth pavement choices. • Space around, and accessibility of furniture for prams and wheel chairs was desired, as well as chairs with back support and places for the elderly and disabled to rest. • Wide spaces and improved sight lines in the proposed design were seen as beneficial, with opportunities noted for improved wayfinding, disabled parking nearby, and sensory spaces.



5. Your Say Feedback

A survey was run on the ACT Government's YourSay platform to gauge community feedback in the following areas:

- Satisfaction with key focus areas of the project
- Prioritisation of potential inclusions
- How people interact with art in Garema Place currently
- Opportunities to improve outdoor dining in Garema Place
- What worked well, or could be learnt from the 2020/2021 City Walk upgrade.

360 people participated in the survey. A summary of the feedback received is provided in this section of the report.

5.1 Satisfaction

Elements were provided for participants to rate on a scale of 1 to 100, with one being low satisfaction, and 100 being high satisfaction with the element within the proposed design. Table 4 provides these elements ranked from highest rating to lowest rating, based on their average score out of 100. As a follow up, participants were asked:

'We're interested to know why you liked or disliked elements of the design. Do you have any comments about why you gave the above ratings?'

A summary of this feedback relating to the ratings given is also provided in Table 4.

All elements received a median score no lower than 70. Based on participant comments, elements that received lower scores appeared to do so because it was difficult to perceive them within the designs and artist impressions, such as safety, lighting, and creative and playful elements. Higher rated elements centred around creating a space that was more aesthetically pleasing and more accessible.

Table 4. Design satisfaction

Ranked elements	Number of responses	Average score out of 100	Median score out of 100
#1 Keeping the existing trees planting more deciduous trees	314	79.3	90.00
	Respondents were highly in favour of maintaining the existing trees and planting additional deciduous trees. Concerns were noted about the London Plane trees as an allergen.		
#2 Green space	322	76.65	80.00
	Respondents found the proposed green space to be appealing and attractive with some respondents suggesting there could be even more greenery. It was noted that trees should not be planted too close to buildings as it inhibits light to the building and blocks access to views from the second floor.		
#3 Accessibility	302	73.54	80.00



Ranked elements	Number of responses	Average score out of 100	Median score out of 100
#4 Places to sit, eat, and gather	303	71.32	80.00
#5 Visual appeal	317	71.04	80.00
#6 Supporting local business	284	70.4	80.00
#7 Lighting	295	68.71	70.00



Ranked elements	Number of responses	Average score out of 100	Median score out of 100
#8 Attractive for both tourists and locals	294	68.47	80.00
	<p>Respondents felt that the proposed design lacks a focal point and wow-factor to draw people in.</p> <p>It was noted that the area doesn't let you know that you are in the centre of the capital of Australia and this is an opportunity for consideration.</p> <p>It was identified there is an opportunity to use signage to help people learn about Canberra and our unique nature, as well as to support wayfinding. People also desired colour, murals, Ngunnawal art, and places for local artist to showcase their work.</p> <p>Desire was expressed to keep 'Big Swoop' and 'The Pillow and the Wedge' sculptures, and mixed views about keeping or removing the fountain.</p> <p>Amenities such as toilets, a parents room, shelter, e-scooter parking location were requested.</p> <p>Respondents referenced the need for ongoing maintenance and cleaning of pavement, gardens, trees, bird droppings, and the buildings that surround Garema Place.</p>		
#9 Space for public events	297	67.14	70.00
	<p>Mixed views were expressed toward focusing on allowing space for day-to-day use of Garema Place, and allowing additional space for events, markets, and community gathering. It was acknowledged that Garema Place is a small area which could become easily crowded, and that there are other spaces available within the city to fit larger crowds.</p> <p>Opportunity for a sheltered stage and regular performances was raised, preventing the set-up of make-shift stages in the space.</p> <p>The single surface level was seen as advantageous for events.</p>		
#10 Safety	291	67.08	70.00
	<p>Respondents felt that the proposed changes to level out the pavement, while increasing open space and lighting would support safety in Garema Place.</p> <p>Many felt that the reason they don't feel safe in Garema Place is less to do with the design, and more about antisocial behaviour in the area, particularly at night time. Additional security and policing in the area was desired. Respondents desired increased help for the homeless people in Garema Place.</p> <p>It was suggested that further considerations to improve safety strategies to prevent cyclists, skateboarders, and e-scooter riders from colliding with pedestrians was required, and that metal edges of the garden bed could create a safety hazard.</p>		
#11 Playful and creative aspects for all ages	280	61.39	70.00
	<p>Respondents felt that the aspiration to include playful aspects wasn't reflected in the design, creating opportunity for further investigation.</p> <p>The community desired an element with wow factor that would draw people into the area. Suggestions for changes included more innovation, footpath treatments that involve play (hopscotch etc), climbable art, a chess pit, a family area, and a water feature.</p>		



5.2 Prioritisation

The survey provided a list of elements which could potentially be used within the final design for the upgrade of Garema Place. It was noted to participants that it might not be possible for all elements to be included within the final design, and that prioritisation would assist in determining what should be included. We then asked respondents:

‘Please rank the following elements from highest to lowest priority’.

11 elements were provided to participants for ranking. The below table shows the average rank for each element the Average rank is the sum of the ranked position of the choice, multiplied by the response count for the position choice, divided by the total 'Count' of the choice. A low average rank indicated a higher preference from participants.

After ranking the provided themes from 1-11, respondents were then asked:

‘What makes the things you selected in the previous question a priority for Garema Place?’

to provide further context for their choices, along with suggestions for future designs. The following table lists the proposed elements from highest to lowest priority, and summarises the feedback provided.

Feedback for each of the topics centred around what individuals felt would help to activate the space and create an area that was more enjoyable to spend time in. Comfort, safety, and creative elements were reoccurring themes in most of the priorities.

The below table ranks the proposed elements from 1 to 11, where 1 is the highest priority and 11 is the lowest priority. A summary of feedback in relation to the element is also provided.

Table 5. Priority ranking

Proposed element and its rank	Summary
<p>#1 More Trees Average rank 4.4</p>	<p>Trees were seen as the highest priority for respondents.</p> <p>The community felt they create a comfortable, relaxing, and inviting space, softening the hard concrete city landscape.</p> <p>Trees were seen as creating a calming place where people want to meet and sit during the day, connect with nature, and enjoy their visual appeal, particularly when paired with decorative lighting. Participants liked that they provided shade in summer and sun in winter.</p> <p>Environmental benefits were recognised including decreasing carbon emissions, improving the microclimate, decreasing the heat island effect in summer, creating cleaner air, and supporting wildlife habitat.</p> <p>The community had mixed views about preferences for deciduous or native trees. Challenges associated with the falling leaves and “fruit” of the plane trees.</p>
<p>#2 New paving Average rank 4.85</p>	<p>Community members were concerned that the current paving has been buckled by tree roots, creating a safety concern, reducing accessibility, and creating water pooling in Garema Place. Not fixing paving would mean outdoor dining has tables and chairs that aren’t stable and create an unpleasant dining experience.</p> <p>Additionally, there is an aesthetic mismatch of pavement types in the area, and the current paving detracts from the aesthetic appeal of the space.</p>



Proposed element and its rank	Summary
<p>#3 Garden beds Average rank 4.89</p>	<p>People liked that it creates beauty, breaks up the drabness of the city, ties into City Walk upgrade, and helps to draw in tourists</p> <p>Environmental benefits were noted including decreasing carbon emissions, improving the microclimate, and creating cleaner oxygen.</p> <p>Concerns were expressed that without maintenance garden beds would be full of litter and become scruffy.</p>
<p>#4 Seating near and amongst garden beds Average rank 5.24</p>	<p>Respondents liked that garden beds created a relaxed, attractive, and ambient place to meet and spend time.</p>
<p>#5 Ambient lighting Average rank 5.41</p>	<p>Ambient lighting such as fairy lights was seen as better than street lighting as it is visually appealing and welcoming, improves visitor perceptions, and encourages use of the area. Ambient lighting was seen to increase safety, and the perceptions of safety.</p>
<p>#6 New street-lights Average rank 5.52</p>	<p>The current street lighting in Garema Place was seen as insufficient. Respondents wanted increased ability to see, and for lighting to reach the edges of foot paths. Improved lighting was seen to increase safety, and the perceptions of safety.</p>
<p>#7 Informal outdoor dining Average rank 5.69</p>	<p>Informal dining was seen as a way to create a destination, increase popularity of the area, and encourage people to stay longer with their family, children and friends. It was also valued for its contribution to the local economy to stimulate spending at Garema Place businesses.</p> <p>It was seen as a great way to rest, eat, and relax, using the space in a functional way, while increasing passive surveillance of the area.</p> <p>Maintaining socially distanced spacing was noted as a consideration.</p>
<p>#8 Seating Average rank 5.34</p>	<p>Seating locations were desired as they create good meeting places. Respondents felt there was not currently enough seating in Garema Place, particularly in the sun.</p> <p>Seating was seen as a way to allow people to stop, sit, and rest, not just move through the space, increasing dwell times. People watching and passive surveillance were noted as positives attributed to seating in Garema Place. Comfort of seating was noted as important. Respondents felt that garden bed edging could be designed as perch seating.</p> <p>Bird droppings and social distancing were noted as issues.</p>



Proposed element and its rank	Summary
<p>#9 Playful/ artistic elements</p> <p>Average rank 6.84</p>	<p>Playful and artistic elements to bring joy were desired, with respondents feeling that this aspiration hadn't been met in the proposed design.</p> <p>People desired interesting things to catch your attention and improve your day. They wished to see the area be more family friendly, including integrated elements for children to climb, swing on, crawl into etc. It was acknowledged that the space didn't need to be a kid focused area, but could provide play elements for parents and grandparents to rest while the kids play.</p> <p>Respondents suggested artistic elements to attract people and create a wow factor including Ngunnawal design, interactivity, fountains, and free activities. It was also suggested that not everything needs to be at ground level, and that there was opportunity to include interesting elements in the air such as sculpture.</p>
<p>#10 Space for future events</p> <p>Average rank 7.04</p>	<p>Mixed views were expressed toward whether it was more beneficial to allocate additional garden and dining space, or more event space.</p> <p>Some respondents felt event space was too limited in the proposed design to support occasional larger events such as protests including creative protests, cultural events or other types of gatherings. proposed plantings would impact the ability to host events, and potentially become damaged during events. People were also concerned about leaving a wide empty area when large events were taking place.</p> <p>Live entertainment including music, theatre, circus, and dance was desired for people to enjoy, while having food and beverages from local businesses.</p>
<p>#11 tables</p> <p>Average rank 7.31</p>	<p>Informal tables were seen as a great place to meet and eat with family, children and friends, particularly on lunch breaks. They provide a place where people can work outdoors and spend some work time out of the office, while having some food.</p> <p>Tables as a functional way to encourage use of the area, and for people to stay longer, and provide passive surveillance.</p> <p>It was noted that informal tables tend to collect a lot of rubbish from people getting takeaway and leaving their scraps behind which causes a number of issues with birds. Bins were requested to help reduce this problem.</p>

5.3 Art

To understand how to best manage the approach to the removal, relocation, or addition of public art community members were asked the following.

We are considering how to manage existing art installations in Garema Place. Do you appreciate the public art in the precinct and which pieces – if any – do you like or engage with?

A large proportion of respondents loved the inclusion of public art in Garema Place and other parts of the city. For future art in Garema Place people desired interesting, high quality, visually appealing, playful, interactive, whimsical, and tactile pieces.



People wanted to bring joy, interest and ambience, adding to their experience of Garema Place and creating photo opportunities. They desired greater connection of pieces to Canberra and our local culture, including Ngunnawal representation. Other opportunities identified for pieces in Garema Place included water play, integrated and creative lighting, art that included movement, was educational, or served multiple purposes.

Community members noted that no single art piece will be pleasing to all members of the community. The opportunity was also identified to create a cycle of temporary installations to bring interest and draw more people to visit Garema Place.

Some respondents felt the existing art in Garema Place didn't connect with them. Pieces were seen as lacking interest and aesthetic, European centric, inconsistent, creating clutter, and aged the space. Respondents noted that public art can disrupt the flow of movement, and that there may be higher priority areas to spend limited funding on.

The following table ranks summarises the themes provided in the feedback on existing artworks in Garema Place and city walk. Artworks are listed in order of most to least commented on.

Table 6. Appreciation of existing public art in, and close to Garema Place

Sculpture name	Image	Summary
<p>Big Swoop 74 responses</p>		<p>Nearly 30% of respondents to this question commented about Big Swoop. The piece was seen as an icon that brings character, visual interest, is fun, whimsical, and great for families, play, and photo moments.</p> <p>Respondents noted that it connects to our culture and the bush capital. Respondents liked that it attracts people and encourages them to engage with it.</p> <p>Some respondents suggested Big Swoop is too big for the area, and that its current location disrupts movement through the area. Relocation was suggested as well as integrated lighting.</p> <p>A handful of respondents didn't like swoop and preferred more traditional art.</p>
<p>The Cushion and the Wedge 33 responses</p>		<p>The cushion and the wedge was seen as a classic, and a piece of history that people connected with. It was seen as a fun place for play and photos, and was affectionately referred to as the goon bag, cask wine, pillow, cloud couch, sofa, or cushion.</p> <p>Respondents desired that the sculpture be kept, but potential to reposition the sculpture within Garema Place was noted.</p>
<p>Murals 17 responses</p>		<p>Murals were seen to give the city some personality, tying in with the local history, culture, and environment. Surface festival was seen positively with murals bringing brightness to boring buildings.</p> <p>It was noted that graffiti art can seem low class.</p>



Sculpture name	Image	Summary
<p>Ainsley's Sheep 17 responses</p>		<p>Respondents liked Ainsley's Sheep and saw it as a weird, playful, and interactive institution. It was noted that it can get in the way of thoroughfares and create bottle necks.</p>
<p>Fountain - 'Father & Son' 15 responses</p>		<p>Respondents who commented on this fountain predominantly felt it should be removed, feeling it was no longer appropriate and was out of place. It was noted that it is rarely clean or operational. A handful of people felt the fountain should remain.</p>
<p>Bush Pack (nil tenure) 13 responses</p>		<p>Respondents expressed mixed views about Bush Pack (nil tenure). That they like the "zombie dogs", finding them engaging, with children using them for play.</p>
<p>Poets' Corner 2012 11 responses</p>		<p>Respondents expressed mixed views about Poets' Corner. Some desired to see it retained, others felt it should be relocated or removed from Garema Place. It was noted that this sculpture is an issue for pedestrian and cyclist movement.</p>
<p>The Other Side of Midnight 7 responses</p>		<p>Mixed views were expressed about The Other Side of Midnight, with people enjoying it or finding it "creepy". It was noted that it brings play and colour which was appreciated.</p>



Sculpture name	Image	Summary
<p>Chess pit 4 responses</p>		<p>People liked the chess board and the playful element it brings.</p>
<p>Foosball 2 responses</p>		<p>Respondents noted that the Foosball table looked run down, but liked that it brought fun to the area.</p>
<p>Reclamation: Culture, Spirit and Place 2 response.</p>		<p>Respondents noted this piece should stay for first nations representation, and that the poem was hard to read or follow.</p>
<p>Brass Paving Inlay - Recognition of Augustin (Gus) Petersilka 0 responses</p>		<p>No responses were received in relation to this piece located in Garema Place.</p>



5.4 Outdoor dining

Garema place is regularly used by businesses and the public as an outdoor dining space. To understand how the community wants to be able to use the space we asked:

The proposed design increases informal spaces to sit, eat, and meet friends. Are there changes you'd like to see to outdoor dining in Garema Place?'

The following table summarises the feedback provided.

Table 7. Outdoor dining

Theme	Summary
Support for outdoor dining 61 responses	<p>Respondents were positive about the inclusion of outdoor dining in Garema Place, feeling it would make the space vibrant, lively, and comfortable. They desired clearly definition of which seating areas are for business and which are informal seating.</p>
Support for business 48 responses	<p>Business use of outdoor space for dining was desired to increase their footprint and profitability. Concerns were raised about the privatisation of public space. Respondents had mixed views on how dining should be balanced between private businesses and informal public dining.</p> <p>Unity across public and private outdoor dining areas was desired, and prevention of delineation barriers between businesses was noted as an opportunity.</p> <p>Additional activation and events to draw people into businesses was noted as an opportunity.</p> <p>Respondents also noted the types of businesses they would like to see in the area, particularly street food, quality cafes, and increased variety.</p>
Design 46 responses	<p>Respondents desired consistency in the look of seating across City Walk upgrade, businesses, and the proposed Garema Place informal seating. The establishment of guidelines was noted as an opportunity.</p> <p>Variety in table sizes and types to support a variety of group sizes and uses, and options for shelter to protect from weather, or to enjoy the sun was desired. Respondents also desired furniture to be inclusive, innovative, amongst greenery, and not cluttered. Mixed views were expressed about the use of colour, and concerns were raised about seating without back rests, and challenges presented by round seating which facing out, as it limits group conversation.</p>
Weather protection 27 responses	<p>Weather was acknowledged to impact businesses visitation and the ability of people to take advantage of outdoor dining. Respondents desired protection from the elements, including shade sales, umbrellas, outdoor heating in winter and protection from wind and rain.</p>
Space for movement 22 responses	<p>Respondents felt outdoor dining areas should be designed to allow easy movement in and out of businesses, and to prevent impacts to movement in and out of Garema Place. Risk of collision with bikes, scooters, and skateboards was acknowledged as a risk.</p>



Theme	Summary
Cleaning and maintenance 20 responses	Respondents were concerned about the need for regular cleaning of furniture and removal of rubbish if additional outdoor dining is implemented. Consideration for a service provider to undertake regular cleaning and tidying of the space was suggested with concern people wouldn't clean up after themselves. Consideration for visually appealing bins, deterrence for bird that scavenge food, and regular cleaning droppings was suggested.
Informal dining 19 responses	A preference for informal outdoor dining, rather than dining which is privately managed by businesses was expressed by some respondents. It was seen to provide an opportunity to eat in an enjoyable public space, without being a customer of a specific business was desired.
No increase to seating 14 responses	Some respondents desired to maintain the openness of Garema Place and not add additional seating or outdoor dining.
Quality 10 responses	High quality of the space and furniture was seen as important to successfully implement outdoor dining. It was also desired that building and businesses improve the visual appeal of their façade.
Accessibility 9 responses	Space around, and accessibility of furniture for prams and wheel chairs was desired, as well as chairs with back support and places for the elderly and disabled to rest. A-frame signs were noted to negatively impact accessibility.

5.5 Lessons from City Walk

In 2020 and 2021, upgrades were made to City Walk, that included new street furniture, ambient lighting, mass planted garden beds, lawns, and repairs to paving and public artworks. The purpose of this was to make the space more inviting and engaging.

We asked respondents:

‘What do you think worked well in that project? What could we learn from?’

in order to see what elements from the City Walk upgrade were most valued by those that use the area, and if any, what possible elements detracted from the space. The following table summarised the themes of feedback provided.

Table 8. Lessons from the upgrade of City Walk



Theme	Summary
<p>Plantings 81 responses</p>	<p>34% of respondents felt that lessons could be learnt from the plantings in City Walk. Respondents loved the high-standard, lush, friendly, and welcoming ambience created by the plantings, and desired to see this continue into Garema Place. The plants were recognised as creating a genuine improvement and softened the city scape, drawing people in to visit and stay.</p> <p>The clearly defined garden beds, with height that elevates plants to eye level works well.</p> <p>Some respondents felt that deciduous trees were a problem and that the plane trees should be replaced. Desire was expressed for more local plants and flowers.</p> <p>Flow of movement was noted as an important consideration impacted by planting.</p> <p>Challenges were acknowledged with grass on city walk, with concerns it was not able to stand up to the volume of foot traffic. Grass was not considered not to be an appropriate choice for Garema Place.</p>
<p>Outdoor dining and furniture 78 responses</p>	<p>The community really enjoyed the addition of furniture and both public and private outdoor dining in City Walk, and desired to see this approach extended into Garema Place. They appreciated that it created a relaxing and private space to enjoy lunch while not being directly connected to a business.</p> <p>Having a range of seating options was seen as a positive, however some people noted that there are too many furniture types which can create a lack of cohesion, and the heights of chairs and tables didn't seem to match comfortably. Artistic seating was appreciated but wasn't always seen as practical.</p> <p>Mixed views were expressed about the bright colours of the furniture. Some felt that it brightened the space, while others thought it detracted from the beauty of the space.</p> <p>It was noted that the addition of furniture reduced pedestrian space and impacted movement flow.</p> <p>It was suggested garden bed structures be strong as kids climb on them. Opportunity was also identified to have barriers around the garden beds be wide enough to sit on.</p> <p>People noted that their enjoyment of the space was impacted by the weather, and that City Walk experiences quite high, and quite low temperature periods throughout the year.</p> <p>Mixed views were expressed about moveable furniture. Some like that it could better support groups of different sizes, others felt there was a risk of furniture being stolen, or relocated by community members leading to negative impacts on movement flow.</p> <p>It was noted that the furniture in City Walk was heavy and challenging to move which creates an accessibility issue. It was also noted there is a lack of space surrounding the furniture making it challenging to fit a pram near the tables.</p>



Theme	Summary
General support 49 responses	Respondents were very positive about the ambience, aesthetic and quality of the City Walk upgrade and desired extension of the concept into Garema Place. People felt that the space feels safer, invites people in, and increases the use of City Walk.
Pavement 24 responses	Buckling and broken pavement caused by tree roots was acknowledged as an accessibility issue and a trip hazard. Respondents noted that the pavement always looks dirty. A upgrade to a modern looking flat pavement was desired. It was suggested pavement options consider materials that clean easily, or becomes more clean on its own during rain.
Visual appeal 22 responses	Respondents felt that materials were well chosen to create a cohesive aesthetically pleasing space with ambience. The upgrade made the space look fresh, clean, and cared for. It was acknowledged that Garema Place is a different space to City Walk and should have design elements applied differently.
Maintenance 17 responses	The requirement for ongoing maintenance for both City Walk and the upgraded Garema Place was acknowledged by respondents, with observations that the City Walk upgrade was already dirty and damaged. Regular cleaning of litter, bird poo, graffiti, and pavement was desired as well as maintenance of wood and removal of weeds from garden beds. It was recognised that maintaining the lawns with high foot traffic has been a challenge.
Lighting 15 responses	Ambient lighting such as fairy lights, tree lights, and coloured lights made the area feel nicer and more enjoyable. Some area could be brighter.
Antisocial behaviour 14 responses	Can feel unsafe due to a group of people who hang out near the merry-go-round regularly seen to be drinking, taking drugs, violent, shouting and swearing. This behaviour makes visitors feel unsafe and discourages people from staying in the area.
Accessibility 13 responses	Mixed views were presented about encouraging movement flow down the sides of Garema Place. Clear lines of travel were looked on favourably, but it was noted that bringing together more people, including those on scooters and bikes created the risk of collision. Movement through the area with the furniture was seen as a challenge for people with mobility issues. Broken and buckled pavement was seen as a trip hazard and creating accessibility issues. Stools and high tables are challenging for children and the elderly
Events and entertainment 12 responses	Lunch time music was popular, and people desired to see this and other pop-up entertainment return, improving the ambience of the area. The use of the seating area during the Multicultural festival was seen positively.
Decluttering 11 responses	The City Walk upgrade was seen as being overly cluttered creating accessibility issues, and reducing space for pedestrians and active travel.



5.6 Anything else you want us to know

For the last question we asked:

‘Is there anything else about the proposed Garema Place upgrade you want us to know?’

This provided respondents with the opportunity to provide any further feedback on elements mentioned in the proposed upgrade and any additional ideas they may have for the future of Garema Place.

Table 9. Anything else you want us to know

Theme	Summary
Support 27 responses	People liked what was proposed, were enthusiastic to see the work take place and felt it was overdue and expressed gratitude.
Plantings 27 responses	Increased greenery was a priority. Suggestions for plants that shouldn't be used were provided.
Aesthetic appeal 19 responses	Suggestions were put forward of other areas within the city that respondents could benefit from an upgrade, particularly the buildings and businesses surrounding Garema Place, and continuing the revitalisation through more of the city centre. A suggestion was made to look at other successful projects throughout the world.
Antisocial behaviour 12 responses	Respondents were concerned that the benefits of the project will not be fully realised unless the problem with antisocial behaviour can be managed, so the community can feel safe in the area.
Active travel 12 responses	Greater support for active and public transport was desired.
Pavement 12 responses	New, upgraded pavement was seen as a priority.
Furniture 9 responses	People were in favour of increased seating in Garema Place.
Safety 10 responses	Increased safety and security were a priority.



6. Stakeholder engagement

6.1 Business door knock

Prior to the commencement of formal public consultation, a door knock was undertaken to visit businesses neighbouring the project area.

Door knocking was undertaken on two occasions, the first was Wednesday 29 March 2023 between 10:30am and 2:30pm, visiting 39 businesses. A second door knock was undertaken to speak with the 7 businesses that were not open during the first door knock. The second door knock took place on Friday 31 March from 5pm to 6pm.

During the doorknocks businesses were provided with a flyer containing information about the Garema Place upgrade project, and a consolidated version of the **Garema Place Strategic Design Feasibility Study**.

The businesses were encouraged to provide initial feedback during this interaction, and provide further feedback via YourSay. Business contact details were also gathered within this process.

The following table summarises the key themes heard when undertaking door knocking.

Table 10. Business door knock themes

Theme	Summary
Homelessness 5 respondents	There are many concerns about homelessness in the area, including congregation of homeless people, people sleeping outside of buildings and causing disturbances. Businesses desired more support for the homeless such as providing space for them to get help and durable accommodation. One respondent noted homelessness was less bad than it has been in the past, but still recognised it is an issue.
Amenity 4 respondents	Business representatives suggested the area could be improved by including additional amenities such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tables and seating that does not block thoroughfares, with suggestion they be moveable to increase use • Shade structures • Bins • Toilets, including gender neutral bathrooms and change tables.
Maintenance and cleanliness 4 respondents	Businesses wanted to see improved upkeep of the buildings that surround Garema Place including activation of empty shop fronts and laneways, and improved waste management. They desired increased cleanliness of Garema Place’s public and privately managed spaces.
Trees and greenery 3 respondents	Businesses were enthusiastic about increasing plantings and greenery. It was noted that the fluff generated by the existing trees was problematic getting stuck to windows.
Undesirable Behaviour 3 respondents	Businesses expressed concern about undesirable behaviour in the area including yelling, drinking, and drug use.



Theme	Summary
Crime and Safety 1 respondent	There is concern about crime in the area, with the police frequently checking business security cameras. It was noted that roller shutter doors are used for safety and that uneven pavement also creates a safety hazard.
Navigation and Direction 1 respondent	It was noted poor road linkage and directions on how to access businesses are causing challenges.

6.2 Property owner meetings

In the week prior to consultation opening to the public, the City Renewal Authority met with interested and available owners of properties which surround the project area. Within these meetings project representatives shared the proposed designs, providing an overview of the project and discussing areas that interested participants.

Table 11. Property owner meeting themes

Theme	Summary
Plantings 18 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owners were positive about keeping the existing trees and the proposed use of deciduous trees, maintaining solar access in winter, and shade in summer. Some property owners felt that some of the existing trees were blocking the visibility of businesses in their building. Suggestions were made to have trees trimmed and one owner suggested relocation of some trees. Positivity was expressed about not using lawn in the area, and the use of planter locations to protect tree roots.
Project support 14 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owners are supportive of the project and the proposed designs with minimal recommended changes or additional considerations. They were happy to see it getting a refresh, bringing new energy, and creating more of a destination.
Outdoor dining and furniture 11 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owners were supportive of developing outdoor dining guidelines to bring consistency to the approach in the area. Mixed sentiment was expressed toward moving dining closer to shop fronts, and one Property owner noted they didn't want outdoor dining space to be lost in the new design. Moveable furniture was seen as positive.
Pavement 7 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owners were positive about creating a single surface level and first nations representation on the pavement. Suggestions were made in relation to the type of pavement to be used. One property owner noted concerns about chewing gum sticking to the new pavement as it has on the old pavement.
De-cluttering 5 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> De-cluttering and creating open spaces were seen positively with property owners noting that the A-frame signage was not appealing and created a hazard.
Events 4 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities for events were noted.



Theme	Summary
Lighting 4 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property owners felt lighting changes were important for beautification, decluttering, and safety.
Access 4 comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was suggested access be considered to support loading zones, pickup/drop off areas, and wheelchair accessibility.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed designs were seen as appealing. It was noted that garden beds should have tall edges to deter people from walking through them. It was noted that when construction occurs that consideration needs to be made for noise reduction. Opportunities may also exist to use the empty premises as site sheds. Homelessness and antisocial behaviour were noted as challenges, leading to some community members feeling unsafe. Opportunity for water play area was seen favourably. Mixed sentiment was expressed toward the inclusion of first nations artwork in Garema Place. Interest was expressed in being involved in future consultations. Advice was provided about works planned in the area surrounding the project. It was suggested developers could co-fund the works. Sustainability considerations were raised.

6.3 Online information session

An online information session was held for targeted stakeholders, representative groups, and peak bodies to find out more about the project and provide feedback. This session had three people participate.

Feedback relevant to the Garema Place upgrade is summarised below.

Table 12. Online information session themes

Theme	Summary
Cycling through Garema Place and the Centre	<p>Participants discussed considerations to support cyclists in Garema Place such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of A-frames and other clutter Inclusion of simple bike racks Options and opportunities for bike sheds
Public seating	<p>Positive sentiment toward the inclusion of benches with tables and the uptake of their use in City Walk. It was noted the new seating looks ‘cool’ but questioned if it was accommodating for children.</p>
Antisocial behaviour	<p>Participants noted that the durability of furniture should be considered due to previous damage of furniture through anti-social behaviour.</p>



6.4 Other stakeholder feedback

Throughout the engagement process the project team met with, or received written submissions from other stakeholder groups.

The following table summarises the feedback provided.

Table 13. Other stakeholder feedback

Theme	Summary
Pavement	<p>It was noted that paving needed improvement with existing paving being over 20 years old, with trip hazards. Modern stylish pavers extending to Mort and Bunda streets were desired.</p> <p>While respondents desired flat and accessible surfaces, the opportunity to include a grade in the pavement to create an amphitheatre was noted as an opportunity.</p>
Access and accessibility	<p>A single flat surface of the proposed design was seen as much more accessible for people with mobility issues, active travellers, and emergency services vehicles than Garema Place is currently.</p> <p>Wide spaces and improved sight lines are beneficial</p> <p>Difficult for disabled people to move through due to clutter, low garden bed edges or road guards, and lack of tactiles for the blind.</p> <p>Ramp access to staging was proposed for performers with mobility issues.</p>
Plantings	<p>Proposed garden beds were seen as beneficial and could help reduce speeds of cyclists in the area.</p> <p>Proposed landscaping, and the inclusion of shade trees, and the connection to the design of the City Walk upgrade was seen favourably. Desire was expressed for more native plants to support bird and insect life.</p> <p>It was noted that seating under trees creates an issue with bird droppings.</p>
General support	<p>Stakeholders were positive and felt designs were moving in the right direction. It was noted further work is needed throughout the city centre.</p>
Events	<p>It was noted the upgrade will make it easier to hold attractive events as less effort will need to be put in to make the space visually appealing. Stakeholders provided feedback on power needs, platforms, rigging, safety, shade cover, and accessibility.</p> <p>Future activation and events will need to go hand in hand with the upgrade to drive outcomes. It was noted that day to day activity should be prioritised over event needs.</p>
Art	<p>Stakeholders desired that the Big Swoop sculpture stay in Garema Place.</p>



Theme	Summary
	<p>Relocation or removal of the sculpture The Cushion and the Wedge was seen as beneficial for access.</p> <p>Opportunity was noted to relocate Poet's corner elsewhere in the city.</p> <p>Removal of the Father and Son fountain was desired.</p> <p>Opportunity for artwork on the ground.</p>
Active travel	<p>Considerations were put forward to increase safety, and prevent collision for cyclist, e-scooter, and pedestrian safety, including how to control active travel speeds.</p> <p>Bike racks were desired to be included in the final design.</p>
Maintenance	<p>Stakeholders felt that future maintenance of Garema Place was an important part of planning, with a focus on cleanliness.</p> <p>Maintenance was seen to be needed throughout the city centre with a desire expressed for a higher funding allocation from government to achieve this.</p>
Outdoor dining	<p>Outdoor dining was valued, with maintenance of existing outdoor dining, and consistency in outdoor furniture desired.</p>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality desired • Design and longer term activation need to go hand in hand • Solar access was valued • Antisocial behaviour and security was noted as issues for consideration. • Maintenance and upgrade required to surrounding buildings was seen as a key issue. • The construction period will be a challenge for business.



7. Social media feedback

Throughout consultation public discourse was monitored to better understand community feedback and interest areas outside of those actively participating in engagement activities.

It is important to note that social media was not designed to be a formal engagement channel within this engagement, however due to the strong interest of media and the public in the project, a lot of feedback provided online provided value, and has been captured in this report.

The following table summarises the feedback provided. Please be aware that the rankings are also based on likes and interaction with posts made by community members.

Table 14. Social media feedback

Theme	Summary
Surrounding businesses and buildings 293 comments and reactions	<p>While not directly related to the design of Garema Place, community members were concerned that the buildings that surround Garema Place were outdated and neglected. It was noted there was an opportunity for some of these buildings to be replaced with something new which integrates with Garema Place. Mixed opinions were expressed about whether or not new buildings should include residential properties, noting the potential negative impact on businesses. The impact of a new hotel to be built on the Garema Arcade site was noted.</p> <p>Community members expressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire to keep Gus's café • Desire for more food and beverage businesses surrounding the area and leveraging outdoor dining
Homelessness 212 comments and reactions	<p>Homelessness and begging were acknowledged as a big issue for Garema Place, with people desiring for them to have safe places for them to go</p>
General support 189 comments and reactions	<p>The online community were enthusiastic about seeing Garema Place get an upgrade from its "dull and lifeless" state, and were positive about the proposed design.</p>
Furniture and outdoor dining 149 comments and reactions	<p>Outdoor dining was looked upon favourably. Seating that brings people together and creates a place to meet, and seating under trees was seen as desirable.</p>
Antisocial behaviour 143 comments and reactions	<p>The online community were concerned about regular antisocial behaviour negatively impacting their experience of, or desire to visit Garema Place, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggression and swearing • Alcohol and drug affected community members • Public vomiting and urination <p>Suggestion was made that Garema Place become a smoke-free area</p>
Maintenance 140 comments and reactions	<p>People were disappointed with the maintenance of Garema Place and the broader city centre over time, and hoped for better maintenance into the</p>



	future, particularly rubbish clean up, weeding, chewing gum, bird poo, broken glass, vomit, and urine.
Events 77 comments and reactions	Mixed views were expressed toward whether or not the proposed design would negatively impact events like New Years, the Multicultural Festival, protests, and the comic festival. People wanted to leave as much space as is practical to support these events. People expressed desire for markets, food vans, and musical performers (including popular bands).
Landscape and aesthetics 73 comments and reactions	Mixed sentiment was expressed in relation to the design of Garema Place. Some people felt no change was needed or that the proposed designs lose what Garema is about. Others sought nostalgic elements of the past such as seating, gardens, landmarks as meeting places, but predominantly people were interested to see it move forward and be comfortable, warm, and welcoming, suggesting the design would “be very European if they can pull it off”. People didn’t want to see a “cold grey wasteland” with too much concrete.
Plantings 51 comments and reactions	The online community were positive about the inclusion of more trees and greenery but were concerned it wouldn’t be appropriately cared for.
Amenities 43 comments and reactions	People desired additional amenities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas to skate • More for children • The return of, or a nod to the chess pit.
Active travel 37 comments and reactions	Consideration of, and infrastructure to support skateboarding, e-scooters, bicycles, and foot traffic were suggested.
De-cluttering 25 comments and reactions	The community acknowledged that Garema Place feels cluttered in its current state with too many A-frames, strangely located seating, and pieces of art which negatively impact foot traffic.
Art 22 comments and reactions	Mixed views were expressed about whether to keep or remove the father and son fountain, and relocating ‘The Cushion and the Wedge’ sculpture, or keeping its current position. People also wanted to keep the ‘Big Swoop’ sculpture.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People were concerned about trip hazards, chewing gum stuck to the pavement. • Appealing lighting was desired, and seen to support night safety • Community members were concerned about limited parking in the areas surrounding Garema Place.

