



TRIP HAZARDS AT CHARNWOOD SHOPS

REPORT ON WHAT WE HEARD

Canberrans were invited to provide feedback on trees and trip hazards at Charnwood shops to improve safety and amenity at the popular shopping centre.

There are a number of well-established and healthy deciduous London Plane trees growing around Charnwood shops, including in traffic islands in the car park and in the pedestrian pavement. These provide shade for shoppers and contribute positively to the environment. However, they also cause issues to the surrounding pavement by causing it to lift. When this damage occurs in a highly frequented area such as the front of a busy supermarket there is a higher risk of the damage presenting a trip hazard.

The ACT Government undertook work in late 2020 to install a special treatment near some trees to allow water penetration to the roots and minimise surrounding pavement damage. Repair work was also most recently undertaken to pavers in June 2021. However, as the tree roots continue to grow there will be ongoing issues. In response, the ACT Government is looking at longer term solutions for removing trip hazards at Charnwood shops.

THE CONVERSATION

Online survey

An online YourSay survey was open during the consultation period from Thursday 22 July until Friday 3 September 2021 for the local community to provide feedback on potential solutions to address trip hazards at Charnwood shops. Members of the local community also provided feedback via email and hard copy surveys at Kippax Library.

Pop-up session at Charnwood shops

Two public pop-up sessions were scheduled for Thursday 5 August and Saturday 21 August for the local community to ask questions and share their thoughts on how to best address trip hazards at Charnwood shops. The session on Saturday 21 August was cancelled due to the ACT lockdown.

Prior to and during the pop-up sessions, the ACT Government also liaised with the Charnwood Residents Association and the Capital Chemist Charnwood, to advise of the YourSay Engagement survey and to share with their networks.

WHO WE ENGAGED

The consultation targeted regular users of and visitors to Charnwood shops.

98.5% of those who filled out the online survey identified themselves as regular users of Charnwood shops with 89.5% visiting the shops at least once a week. The main purpose for visiting the shops was grocery shopping, followed by having a coffee or meal, appointment for a service and visiting the chemist.

Most respondents to the online survey were local residents (88%) predominantly from the suburbs of Dunlop, Charnwood, Flynn, Macgregor and Fraser. Four percent of survey responses were from members of the community who worked in the area, including Charnwood shops workers, tenants and shop owners.



Key insights from the community

Safety and accessibility

1. Improving safety and accessibility at Charnwood shops is a key priority for the community.
2. There is strong support for reducing trip hazards and replacing the existing paving with a safer, level, non-slip option.
3. There is only moderate support for replacing the existing trees to improve safety at the shops.
4. Installing an elevated walkway or ramp were other suggestions put forward to improve accessibility.

Support for tree canopy

5. There is considerable support for maintaining some form of tree canopy at the Charnwood shops with two thirds of survey respondents preferring to either keep the existing trees or replace them with a more manageable tree species.
6. Support also exists for keeping some mature trees for the shade they provide while replacing other trees for safety.
7. Approximately one quarter of survey respondents would prefer if trees were replaced by low level gardens and shrubs.

Replacement tree species

8. There is a wide variety of opinions on what type of tree species should be selected if the existing trees are to be replaced, with significant support for both native and exotic evergreens as well as deciduous trees.
9. There was general agreement that if the trees were to be replaced, any new tree species should have non-invasive roots, provide ample shade, be low allergy, low maintenance, drought tolerant and fast growing.

General amenity

10. Shade is highly valued by the community. Several respondents suggested installing shade sails if the trees are replaced by gardens and shrubs to ensure there is adequate shade at the shops, especially in summer.
11. There is also support for additional seating at the shops amongst elevated garden beds to improve amenity.

WHAT'S NEXT?

We will now consider this feedback to inform how we implement long-term improvements to safety and amenity at Charnwood shops.

Updates will continue to be provided via the YourSay page. If you have any questions about this project or would like to be kept updated on its progress, please email communityengagement@act.gov.au.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

800+

We reached 810 people via YourSay

366

We received 366 completed surveys

250+

We distributed more than 250 flyers at the shops

5

We received 5 submissions via email

21,000+

We reached a social media audience of 21,219

8.9%

We had an engagement rate of 8.9% on social media

1

We held one pop-up at Charnwood shops

20

We spoke to approximately 20 individuals at our pop-up