



# Community engagement report

April 2018





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## THIS REPORT

This report provides a summary of the local insights, values, opportunities and challenges we heard from community members who participated in our workshops in February and March 2018.

Feedback from these workshops has been provided to technical experts for review and consideration. We will report back on how feedback from communities has been considered as we develop the project design.

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*The information in this report is based on data collected from community members who chose to be involved in engagement activities for North East Link. This report is intended to provide a high-level analysis of the most prominent values and opportunities. While it's not possible to include all the detailed feedback we received, feedback that was relevant to the project has been provided to technical experts for review and consideration. Feedback that is relevant to future stages of the project (i.e. road design) will be kept and considered at a later stage.*

*NELA has answers specific questions asked at the workshops and provided these on the North East Link website.*

# Introduction

Large infrastructure projects like North East Link provide opportunities and funding to develop and improve local areas.

To help inform some of the early project design work happening in early 2018, we hosted workshops on 27 February and 6 March 2018 to better understand:



## WALKING AND CYCLING URBAN DESIGN

What communities value about walking and cycling.



What communities value about where they live, and to explore urban design ideas.



## ENVIRONMENT

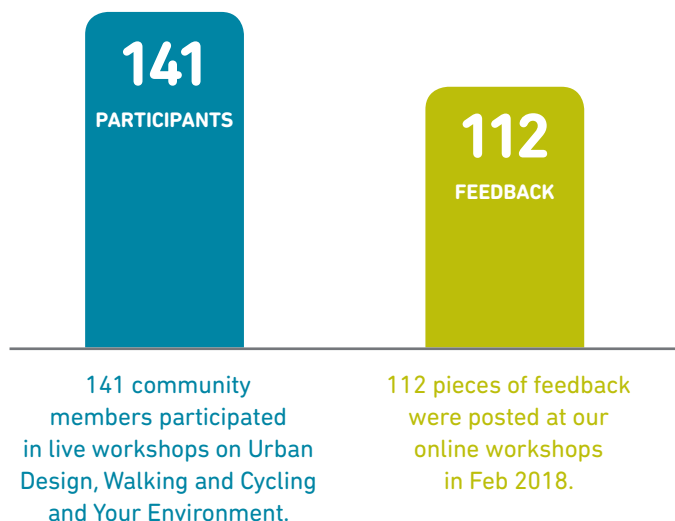
What communities value about their environment.

We also asked participants to help us consider some key design challenges.

Because project design work for North East Link is still at an early stage, we asked 'big picture' questions, rather than for feedback about specific locations or design elements.

After the workshops, we continued the conversation online. Visitors to our website could see what we heard from the participants in the room, and add any extra comments they wanted us to consider.

The next round of workshops will take place after we release an update on design work. These workshops will help us to have conversations with communities about specific design challenges, options and opportunities so we can keep refining the design.



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

- ✓ — **2017**  
**Project corridor selected**
- 2018
- ✓ — **EARLY 2018**  
**Community workshops (series 1)**  
We'll ask you to help shape early 'big picture' planning work for urban design, walking and cycling and the environment.
- ✓ — **EARLY-MID 2018**  
**Design update (No. 1)**  
Feedback on our early design work.
- — **MID-LATE 2018**  
**Design update (No. 2)**  
We'll show you how your feedback has informed changes.
- 2019
- — **EARLY 2019**  
**EES public display and panel hearings**  
The EES, including the project design, will be on public display. You can make a submission to an independent panel.



# Walking and cycling

We asked you to help... design a walking and cycling network for all kinds of walkers and cyclists.

## What we heard is important to you:



### SAFETY

A safe journey for everyone — drivers, cyclists and walkers.



### CONNECTIVITY

A logically connected cycling and walking system.



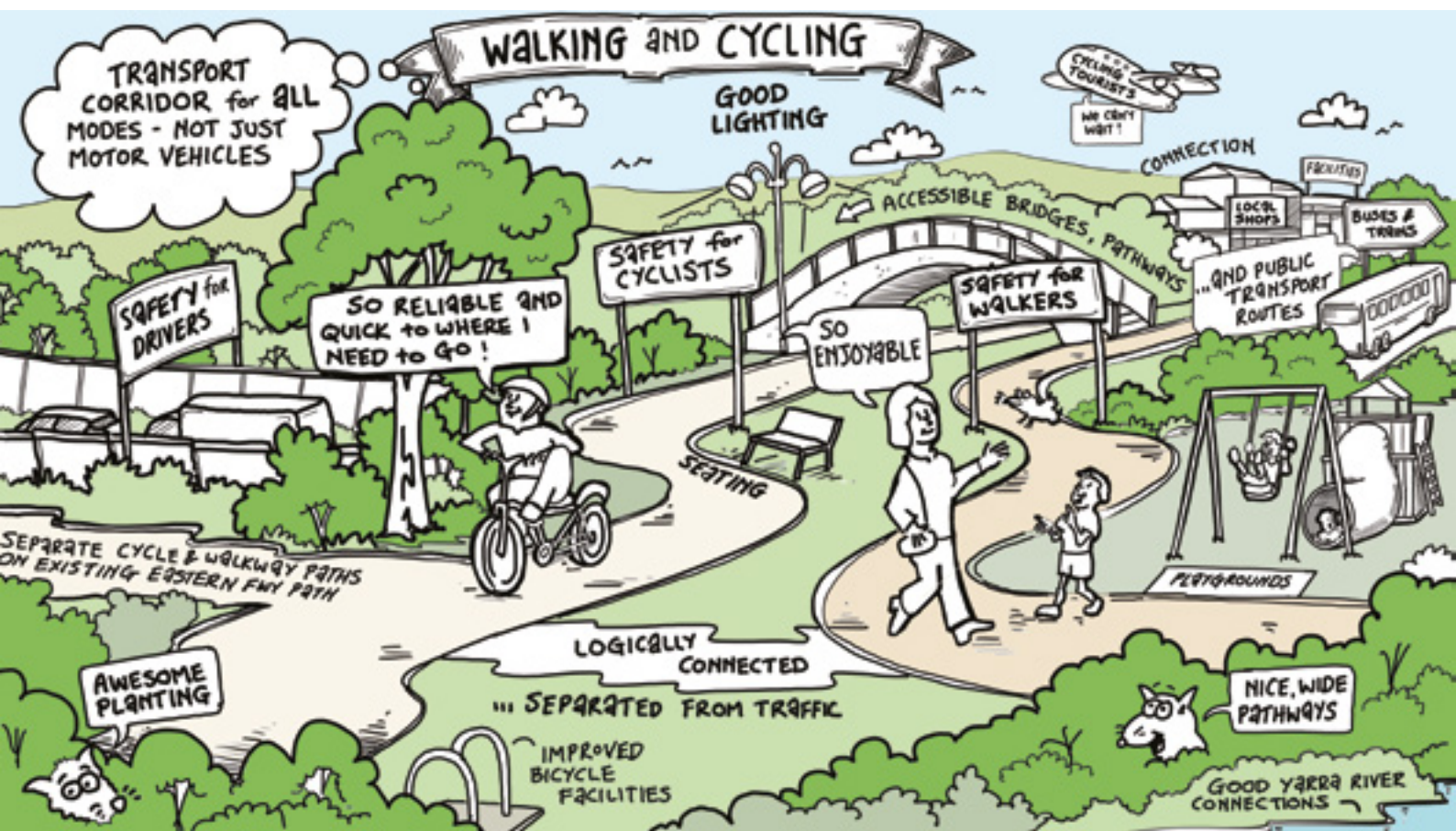
### EXPERIENCE

Accessible and enjoyable active transport routes, bridges and pathways.



### EFFICIENCY

A reliable and efficient journey to where you need to go.





"Any plans need to differentiate between two main categories of bicycle infrastructure: recreational and transport. They are both quite different."

*Workshop participant*

## You asked us to consider:

- Separating walkers and cyclists from traffic
- Separating walkers and cyclists from each other
- Adding facilities like seating and playgrounds along paths
- Looking globally for leading ideas
- Connecting paths to key destinations like local shops
- Improving safety with good lighting, crossings and wide paths
- Creating cycle tourism/ cultural experiences
- Creating direct and reliable commuter cycling routes
- Thinking about North East Link as a "transport corridor" for all transport modes, not just a road for motor vehicles
- Using plantings and wide paths for an enjoyable experience.

## You also made specific suggestions:

- A north-south bike route following the alignment of North East Link, like the Eastlink Trail
- Extending the existing walking and cycling path from near Lower Plenty Road and Greensborough Highway up past Yallambie and Simpson Barracks, with wheelchair access
- A dedicated walking and cycling path between south of Lower Plenty Road and the Plenty River Trail in Viewbank, with a bridge over Plenty River (for example, at Cleveland Wetlands Reserve)
- Improve the condition of the main Yarra Trail near Eastern Freeway
- Improve unsealed and indirect parts of the Yarra Trail and add more visible and safe facilities for bicycle commuters
- Create more, and improve existing, connections across the Yarra River
- Separate walkers from cyclists on the existing Eastern Freeway path to improve safety
- Create a path over or under Rosanna Road for walkers and cyclists to cross safely
- Replace the existing path along Greensborough Highway with a safe and dedicated cycling path running parallel to the new road.

## What we'll do:

- Use urban design examples and best practice from around the world to influence our work
- Consider community preferences for planting and facilities in our Urban Design Strategy, and include these in project requirements for the project builders
- Find opportunities to connect existing paths in our Urban Design Strategy
- Explore opportunities to connect cultural areas and places of interest, such as Heide Museum that could create tourism opportunities
- Continue to develop North East Link as a "transport corridor" for walking, cycling, public transport, motorists and freight
- Find opportunities to create new walking and cycling crossings over waterways.



# Urban design

We asked you to help... connect communities in Melbourne's north-east while preserving what makes living in the area so special.

## What we heard is important to you:



## GREEN SPACE

Being surrounded by natural environment, trees and parkland.



## COUNTRY-FEEL AND NEAR THE CITY

Being close to the city,  
but separate from it.



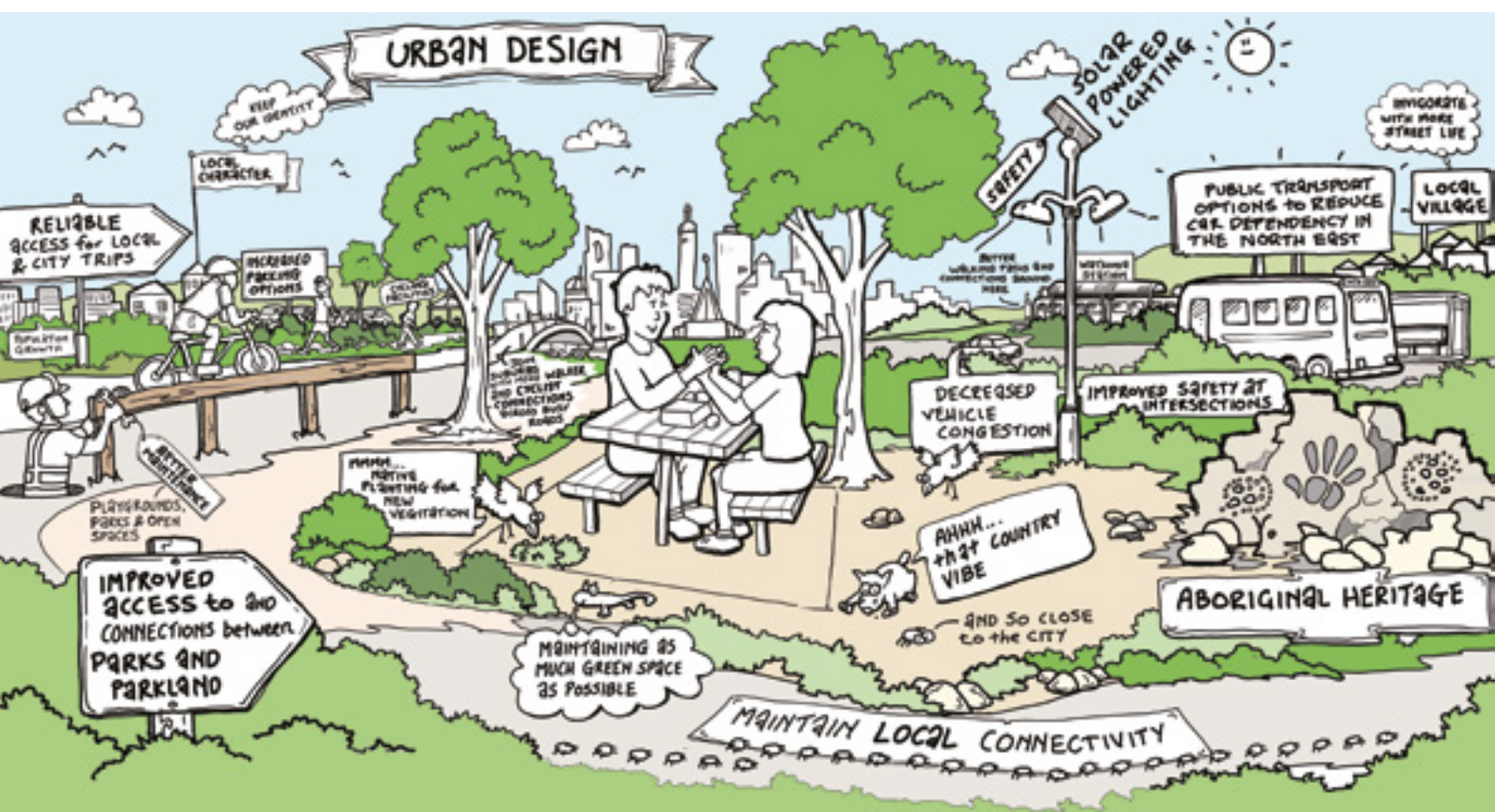
## CONNECTIVITY

Having easy access and consistent travel times for local and city trips.



## LOCAL CHARACTER AND IDENTITY

Preserving local character  
in the face of population  
growth and change.



*Illustration of workshop feedback by Sketch Group.*



## You asked us to consider:

- Increasing active and public transport options to reduce car dependency
- Designing infrastructure that stays true to local character, natural environment and Aboriginal and local heritage
- Decreasing congestion on local roads and on the Eastern Freeway
- Increasing parking options
- Improving access to and connections between parks and parkland
- Making paths and community spaces safer with lighting and regular maintenance
- Maintaining as much green space as possible
- Invigorating "local villages" or activity hubs with more street life.

## You also made specific suggestions:

- Better walking paths and connections around Watsonia Station and shops to create a precinct feel
- Join suburbs in the project area with safer walking and cycling across busy roads that currently separate communities such as Rosanna and Greensborough roads
- Where new vegetation is added, use native species and stay true to the local ecosystem
- Use passive, solar-powered lighting along walking and cycling trails such as solar lights on Plenty River Trail, similar to those at Kalparrin Gardens in Greensborough
- Find ways such as tunnels, cut throughs or long bridges to make walking and cycling to local shops and services in hilly areas more accessible
- Maintain local connectivity between Yallambie and Greensborough, and Watsonia and Macleod at multiple points, and maintain Elder Street access
- Improve safety and amenity along Rosanna Road and key intersections such as Manningham and Bulleen roads by reducing traffic congestion and adding more space for cyclists and walkers
- Maintain and improve playgrounds, parks and open spaces throughout the project area for families.

## What we'll do:

- Develop guidelines for parkland and improved existing public open space
- Identify missing cycle paths or pedestrian connections, to help complete the walking and cycling network
- Find opportunities to support the development of the "20 minute neighbourhood" concept where people are within 20 minutes' walk to shops and services.
- Ensure that sustainability is a core part of the Urban Design Strategy
- Identify the character of the local area, through engagement with the community, and ensure that it is reflected in the design of the project.

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"Local village options, well designed infrastructure that prevents graffiti, maintained park."

*Workshop participant*



# Your environment

We asked you to help... us understand more about what you value about the environment you live in and where we can make improvements.

## What we heard is important to you:



## NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Being surrounded by waterways and native plants and animals.



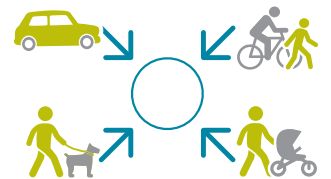
## SURROUNDINGS

Living somewhere  
quiet with a natural  
look and feel.



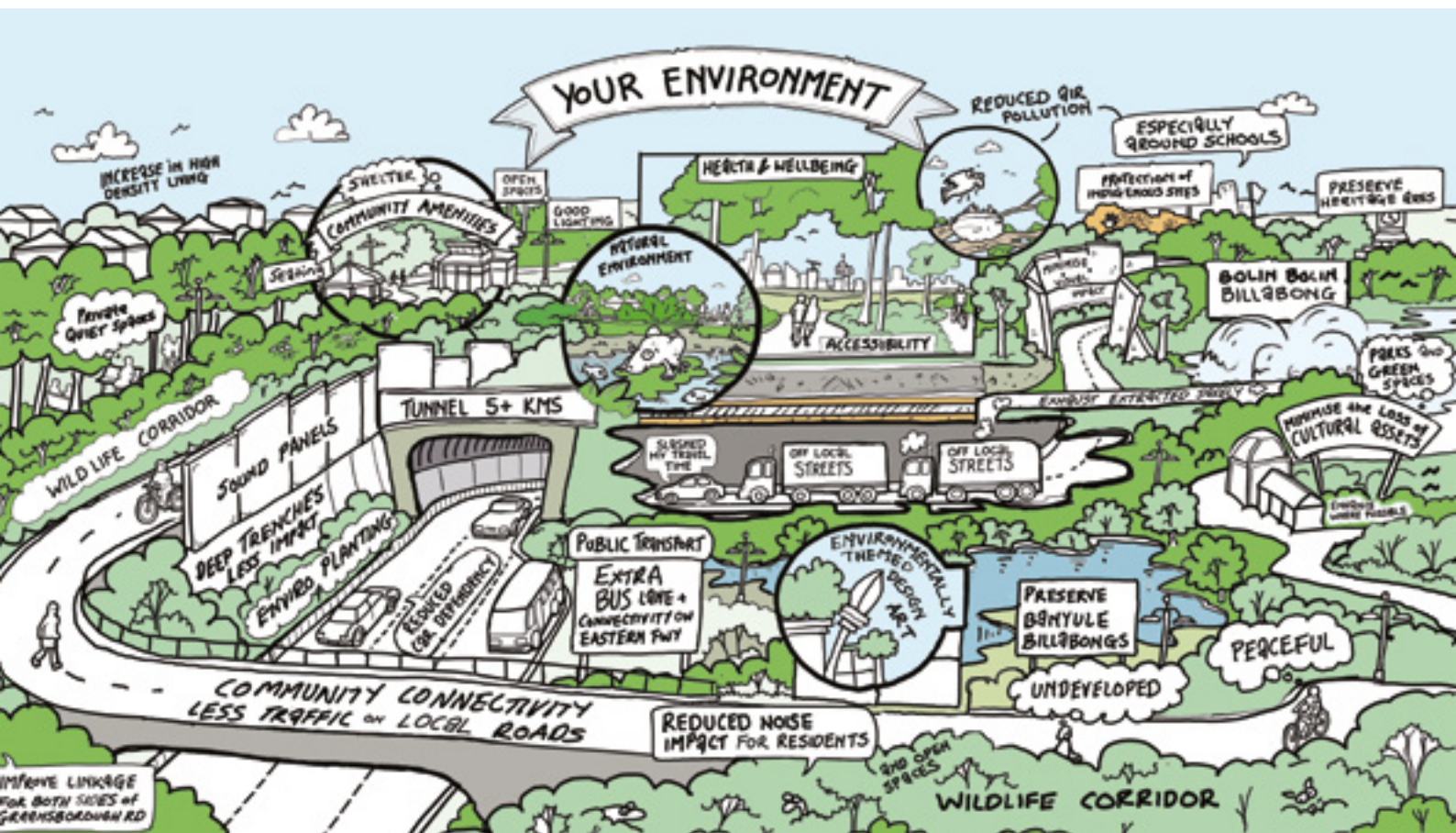
## HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Living in a place that is safe, clean and free from pollution.




## ACCESSIBILITY

Being able to get around  
the local area easily.



*Illustration of workshop feedback by Sketch Group.*





**"We live in urban paradise.  
A special pocket of Melbourne  
by the mighty Yarra, it  
should remain this way."**

*Workshop participant*

## You asked us to consider:

- Minimising the loss of natural assets, and enhancing these where possible
- Minimising the loss of cultural assets, and enhancing these where possible
- Finding ways to reduce traffic congestion, especially trucks, on local roads
- Looking at how to reduce car dependency by increasing active and public transport options
- Population growth and the increase in high density living
- Reducing pollution from road traffic, particularly around schools
- Reducing noise impacts, both for residential areas and open spaces
- Minimising visual impacts of infrastructure such as ramps
- Improving connectivity across currently separated areas.


## You also made specific suggestions:

- Protect and find a way to improve access to the large old eucalyptus tree on Manningham Road
- Reduce noise and pollution from traffic on Rosanna and Bulleen roads and other congested locations
- Minimise impacts of ventilation structures by choosing locations that do not have negative air quality impacts on schools and residential areas
- Preserve natural wetlands, waterways and Bolin Bolin Billabong
- Improve cycling and walking paths and public transport options to reduce car dependency
- Protect outdoor spaces such as AK Lines Oval, Warringal wetlands, Banyule Flats and Heide art precinct
- Find ways to get trucks and through traffic off local arterial roads to make it easier to access local amenities
- Minimise noise impacts by enforcing truck bans and weight limits in local areas.

## What we'll do:

- Prepare comprehensive flora and fauna studies to assess the impact on the local environment
- Investigate existing noise conditions and make recommendations for noise management treatments
- Consider sensitive areas during tunnel design while considering a suggested location for ventilation structures
- Tunnel underneath key environmentally sensitive areas to protect wetlands, waterways and Bolin Bolin Billabong as well as important places like Heide, Warringal parklands and Banyule Flats
- Look at how traffic conditions are predicted to change with and without North East Link and provide a report on the results
- Consider North East Link as a "transport corridor" for walking, cycling, public transport, motorists and freight, rather than just as a road for motorists
- Share feedback with VicRoads about truck bans and weight limits
- Prepare a strategy for dealing with sport and recreational facilities that could be impacted by North East Link.

## Contact us

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