CITY OF BALLARAT

BINNEY RESERVE PRECINCT PLAN

Phase One Engagement Summary

Proudly working with and for our community



“This engagement report is a summary of what the community told us about Binney Reserve in Black Hill in May and June 2026”

Background

The engagement process was designed to inform the community about a proposal from the City of Ballarat to construct a new kindergarten facility in the reserve, whilst creating an opportunity for people to provide input and feedback on all aspects of the reserve. With concept plans for a new kindergarten facility being developed, the reserve is entering a new chapter, presenting an opportunity to explore how this community space can best serve current and future generations.

Community members were invited to share their ideas about the future use of the reserve. The engagement also provided an opportunity to communicate why the City of Ballarat is proposing the development of a new kindergarten facility in the reserve.

The engagement report is a snapshot of what the community told us about the future of Binney Reserve during May and June 2026.

Find out more about the project – **mysay.ballarat.vic.gov.au**

Engagement Approach

A range of engagement activities were undertaken to ensure local community members and stakeholders could provide into the City of Ballarat's future thinking for the precinct. Supported by a localised communications campaign to raise awareness of the project, the engagement was conducted over a four-week period between 5 May to 9 June 2026.

A range of communications and engagement activities were delivered to raise awareness about the process. These included a detailed project page on the 'MySay Ballarat' website, postcards and correspondence to local residents, signage at the reserve, articles in local newspapers, radio interviews, organic and social media campaigns, and direct outreach to community groups.

How did we engage

- 500 replied-paid survey postcards to surrounding residents
- Additional follow-up letters to 100 residents who live closest to the reserve
- 3 onsite face-to-face drop-in sessions
- A dedicated 'MySay' page on the City of Ballarat website
- An online survey on the 'MySay' page
- Four social media posts

Who did we hear from

Recognising that this is primarily a locally based engagement process, the engagement generated a medium level of community interest with 103 community responses across a range of engagement methods. Engagement attracted feedback from residents, with group submissions from the Black Hill Primary School, the Black Hill kindergarten and the Ballarat Cricket Association who use the oval for junior cricket.

Capturing a range of local voices was important to ensure the development of the future precinct plan reflects the needs, aspirations and experiences of the people that currently use, or may benefit from the Reserve now and into the future.

103
Responses in total

58
MySay online surveys

33
Face-to-face and phone engagement

7
Returned postcards and social media comments

5
Resident and Community Group submissions

Survey Results

The MySay survey questions directly focused on the public realm to inform considerations within a future precinct plan; 58 responses were received.

Frequency of Use	Main Use	What matters most at Binney Reserve?	Top 5 Suggestions
The highest cohort of survey responses (37%) occasionally use the reserve. The second highest (33%) regularly use the reserve.	Walking. 63% of responses use the reserve for informal recreation.	1. Open Space 2. Biodiversity 3. The pool 4. Walking Tracks 5. Parking	1. Improved pathways 2. Tables & Seating 3. Better parking 4. Public BBQ 5. More shade

Key Feedback (In no particular order, preference or ranking)

Black Hill needs a new kindergarten facility to replace the existing one

Most responses supported the development of a kindergarten in Black Hill recognising the need for new or additional early years infrastructure in the suburb. Many acknowledged the importance and convenience of a larger kindergarten facility co-located with the Black Hill Primary School.

Feedback on the proposed location of a kindergarten development at Binney Reserve

Approximately 81% of community responses were either supportive of, or did not express opposition to the City of Ballarat's proposal to construct a new kindergarten facility within Binney Reserve. This figure includes several residents who were supportive of investment and considered development at the reserve.

19% of community responses were not supportive of the City of Ballarat's proposal to construct a new kindergarten facility within Binney Reserve. A small number of responses expressed strong opposition to the proposal. This included four residents who raised potential traffic and parking impacts, additional noise, visual impacts, and an overall change to the reserve's open space character and biodiversity.

City of Ballarat also received formal written correspondence from the Black Hill Primary School and the Eureka Community Kindergarten Association (ECKA) that runs the Black Hill Kindergarten in support of the development proposal.

Open space and biodiversity are important within the reserve

Many residents described the reserve's open space, trees, wildlife, biodiversity, outlook and informal landscape character as defining features. Many wanted these qualities protected and enhanced through additional tree planting, native vegetation, landscaping and sensitive design that does not over develop the space.

Better walking paths and connections to the school are an opportunity

Walking came through as the most important reason for using the reserve. Further connections to the school throughout the reserve and potentially the new kindergarten were raised as important opportunities.

Recent pathway improvements and the replacement of trees were valued. Many participants wanted further landscape management planning and works to be undertaken to protect and enhance the reserve's open and green space.

The pool is an important community asset that must remain

Whilst the pool was not in scope for the engagement process as it was always remaining, many participants suggested improvements to the pool and its amenities including requests for heating it, new changeroom and toilet facilities, an upgraded kiosk and additional seating, shade and shelters.

Movement, access, traffic and safety around the precinct

Several residents raised concerns about safety along Chisholm Street during peak times around school drop-off and pick-up times. There were also some concerns raised regarding the likely increase in traffic and parking congestion along Chisholm Street should the proposed kindergarten be constructed.

Safer pedestrian linkages and connections to surrounding streets, the Black Hill Primary School and reserve facilities were also identified as key priorities.

The oval has community benefit

Respondents acknowledge that the oval has community benefit but that access to the oval and the actual surface needed improvement. Community members identified the lack of onsite amenities highlighting the need for public toilets, a shelter for shade protection and some additional seating options.

No change

A small number of respondents identified no improvements to the reserve were required..

Activation and Family Friendly Facilities

Participants suggested a range of improvements to support broader community use, including seating, picnic areas, a public BBQ, shade, bins, drinking fountain, nature play opportunities, bike riding facilities, and signage. Feedback also emphasised that any activation should be balanced with protection of open space and natural character.

Next steps

This report presents a summary of the community engagement process undertaken in May and June 2026. This summary will be presented Council later this year.

Key feedback from community responses will be considered alongside technical investigations, site constraints and strategic planning considerations to inform the development of the Binney Reserve Draft Precinct Plan.

A further stage of community engagement (which will exhibit a draft precinct plan diagram) will again seek community input. It is anticipated that this will occur in early 2027.

CITY OF BALLARAT

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