

Batman Park Renaming:

Summary Report on Findings from Community Consultations

December 2016

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The project model

In early 2016 Council formalised a project plan to start engaging with the local community and gauging the level of support for a change to the name of both Batman Park and federal electorate of Batman.

Wurundjeri Council & the project model

Council's initial thinking on the project model positioned the Wurundjeri Council (and specifically its Committee of Management) as the project authorisers and leaders, and Darebin Council as the project operationalisers. This reflected Council's desire to establish a respectful model which gave Traditional Owners the power to steer the project and make higher-level decisions. At this early stage, a presentation was made to the Wurundjeri Council's Committee of Management on the proposed model. Wurundjeri Elder Ron Jones agreed to take a leading role in the community consultation. Ron also became the Wurundjeri Council's representative on the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee.

Subsequent to the COM presentation the Wurundjeri Council indicated its unpreparedness to take the project lead and that its involvement would be premised only on Darebin Council taking the lead role – and that this be made clear in all public communications. Adjustments were made to the project model and to communications materials to reflect this change.

The other notable component of the project design was the creation of opportunities for a respectful dialogue – recognising that conversation and connection was key to understanding the rationale for the proposal (regardless of opinions on its merit) and that the whole community needed opportunities to connect and converse with one another through the project. Council had acknowledged in its initial resolution that this would be a reconciliation process and as such the journey of learning and connecting together would be critical. These opportunities to gather and engage were termed 'community conversations' in the project.

A feature of these community conversations was the involvement of Wurundjeri Elders to lead part of the conversation and share their perspectives, their knowledge and their ideas. It was recognised that opportunities for non-Aboriginal people to connect with Elders are few, and that Wurundjeri Elders were the best placed to explain why Batman's name on the park means to them – and equally, what a change might mean.

Steps in the Engagement Process

Initial communication

The project was introduced to the community through an article in Darebin Community News in June 2016. The article featured a photo and interview with Ron Jones which gave the chance for the community to view the proposal 'through his eyes' and also for Ron to give a first-hand account of what the current name, and also renaming, means to Wurundjeri people. Residents were invited to email through their feedback and/or register for more information. Sixteen responses were

received to the DCN article via the email address diversity@darebin.vic.gov.au: nine supported the change, one respondent did not support and six respondents registered for the ebulletin. All were subsequently sent information about the online survey when it went live a few weeks later in July.

Generating Wurundjeri names

As noted earlier, Wurundjeri Council generated three new potential names for the park. These names: *Be Be Jern*, *Billebellary* and *Gumbri* are three significant Wurundjeri people. Initially these were to be the three names to be taken as options for community consideration and 'vote', the results of which would guide the final name selection.

However at the first community conversation it became apparent there were differences in the level of support for the name *Gumbri* from within the Wurundjeri Council itself. Uncle Ron Jones spoke publicly that he did not support *Gumbri* as a name for the park. This placed a question on whether *Gumbri* can be used, a matter which requires further discussion with the Wurundjeri Council's COM.

Additionally, while there was community support for these three names and respect for the Elders who proposed them, people also wanted to: propose their own names; wanted more time to discuss the proposed names; and/or wanted to discuss names which reflected reconciliation and the community's mutual aspirations for the future.

Community conversations

The project's community engagement featured four opportunities for residents to engage directly with Wurundjeri Elders. These were termed 'community conversations', and were promoted as an opportunity to "*... connect personally with local Aboriginal history, culture and heritage and learn more about this part of Darebin before and after colonisation*" (promotional flyer). Residents were also invited to share their connection with Batman Park and provide a response to the three names provided by Wurundjeri Council.

The community were also invited to email feedback directly to the project team and had an opportunity to register for regular ebulletin updates about the project over the coming months.

Opportunities to participate in the discussion were promoted via:

- News articles in the local papers – Northcote & Preston Leader
- News article in Koori News
- Feature on Council's website in the 'Have Your Say' section from 1 July onwards including online survey
- Promotional boards located in three sites across Darebin including Batman Park
- 60 posters placed in trams along route 86 (High St) and route 11 (St Georges Rd) between 1 August - 25 August
- Rolling posters at Northcote Station (near Batman Park) between 1 August - 25 August
- Invitation to register for regular ebulletin project updates

Information sharing and data collection also occurred via:

- Surveys distributed to all households within a 500 metre radius of Batman Park
- Council's Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee
- Letter sent to Aboriginal agencies located in the City of Darebin inviting feedback
- Interviews/ vox pops conducted by 3KND Indigenous Radio at the first community conversation in Batman Park
- Media interviews with Darebin Mayor: TV Channel 9 , 3AW radio & the Herald-Sun newspaper

Survey for data collection

A survey was designed to capture people's comments and feedback, their preference in relation to the three proposed Wurundjeri names and reasons for their choice, and finally some brief demographic data including age and postcode. The survey was completed at community conversations, could be completed online on Council's website and could be posted (free post) back to Council.

Education materials

Council created information boards and handouts for the community conversations which included the original Batman Treaty and its translation, the William Burt painting and explanation for each of the three Wurundjeri names.

A key handout '*Fast Facts about Renaming Batman Park*' provided succinct, comprehensive information about the proposal and the process for community engagement, feedback and decision making.

Community conversations

Four community conversations were held in July to August 2017: two on-site in Batman Park (16 July & 21 August), one at nearby Northcote Town Hall (26 July) and the final in Northcote Plaza shopping centre (28 August). These provided a varied range of locations, dates and times to optimise their accessibility.

The first event at Northcote Park (16 July) included a Smoking Ceremony and Welcome to Country; around 120 people attended over the two hours of the event. This was a significant event and was effectively the 'launch' of the project. The third conversation was also held in the Park and attracted around 50 people.

The second event at Northcote Town Hall was in the evening and 25 people attended.

The final conversation was a table in the local shopping centre. This provided a final opportunity for the community to find out about the project, complete surveys and engage in a conversation with Elders.

The community conversations featured free-flowing conversations and exchanges between Elders and community. The conversations were transcribed to allow for some analysis.

Findings

Quotes from community conversations

Topics covered in the discussions were very broad however some clear themes emerged through the process. The selected quotes below highlight and illustrate these themes:

About the need for the project/ the renaming:

Aunty Di: *“Not many people know about the history of Batman, what happened. They want to know more, so this would support that.”*

Aunty Di: *“I am very proud that people want to change the name ... it is a community effort. It shows you are proud to be on Wurundjeri country – and we are proud of that.”*

Community member: *“It is a very symbolic (act) to change the name of the Park. But perhaps Council could also consider reparations in the form of the park as land being given back to Traditional Owners.”*

Aunty Di: *“When I walk around Melbourne there is nothing saying there are First Nations – it is still not accepted. There is a long way to go with racism.”*

About the process:

Aunty Di: *“Changing the name is an honour to us. It is a joint journey – we need to sit down together and go on the journey together.”*

Uncle Ron: *“We want everyone to be part of the name.”*

Community member: *“This process is an opportunity ... why not think outside the naming process. Could the process encompass something beyond that: a gesture or stepping stone towards people engaging with Indigenous culture and our shared history? A place people can go to.”*

Community member *“I’m looking forward to more relationship building and talking. And don’t just decide something because we have to have a decision quickly. The way that white culture and Aboriginal people do things is different, and time is one of them. We can rest in the discomfort of not resolving and being finalised, and go along the journey. It is our pleasure to be part of this.”*

Uncle Ron: *“In Ballarat they forced an Aboriginal name. That’s not right. It has to be a journey that we do together. Scaremongering is already happening as part of Treaty discussions. “*

About the names:

Community member: *“Would it be good to have an umbrella word that also recognises genocide. Maybe ‘Kulin Nations Unite’ – so that all peoples of the Kulin nation can feel a part of and included in this.”*

Community member: *"I am interested in the words that tie us together as people... I really support finding something (a word) that can unify people, rather than having the weight of this on one person."*

Uncle Ron: *"Look at what children at local schools can come up with – then we can interpret that into the Wathaurong language."*

Community member: *"I have no preference for the names; I want to respect any choice you (Elders) make."*

Community member: *"I see this as a chance to get some healing in train – the relationships are something more important than the name – and an idea of the place which accommodates the hopes for the future."*

Uncle Ron: *"They are the ones that should be remembered and respected – the people in our past who have put in the hard yards, that have lead the way for us."*

Community member: *"One of the Darebin parks is named after my grandmother. As a descendant I know she would have loved (that) park to have an Aboriginal name."*

About the value/significance of the renaming proposal:

Community member *"It will have a ripple effect and inspire people to do more."*

Community member: *"As President of the (Batman Park) kindergarten, I would like to acknowledge that this is really important. I want to recognise that the staff from the Kinder are here because of its importance. We need to understand why these names have been chosen and when the decision is made, we need to embrace it."*

Aunty Di: *"We've lost a lot of land that was ceremonial to Wurundjeri. This is Wurunderji land but we are also inclusive of all others – the cleansing and smoking ceremony allows only good spirits and we meet as equals."*

Uncle Ron: *"Aboriginal people don't own the land, the land owns us. It would be better if the community respects the history and the land."*

Community member: *"I firmly support the changing of the name ... this would be a good way of deepening our knowledge about the person, as a way of learning more about Aboriginal history."*

About Darebin's importance to Aboriginal people:

Uncle Ron: *"People settled here from Cumberagunga Mission, where they'd been moved after Corranderk was closed down. This area is very significant. Preston is a major hub now for Aboriginal services and a special place for Aboriginal people. (It is) a prominent place, a prominent history."*

About Elders and their priorities:

Aunty Di: *"There are thirty-three Elders but only ten of us are well enough to go out and speak. We have a committee of management and they make decisions on behalf of all of us. We are really lucky that we do have an Elders council and that we are self-sufficient and we do look after family as a result of that."*

Aunty Di: *"(Elders') priorities is making sure we are well enough to do business"*

Aunty Di: *"I say my blessings every day that I am over 50 and still alive. I thank my Creator for this. That's why we are working hard to help our kids because we die too young. In two generations – my grandmother died at 103, now people die in their 50s on average. So (instead) we have to teach our kids what to do when we die, rather than about how to live, have a house and so on"*

About reconciliation:

Community member: *"I know reconciliation is a challenge and we are all challenged by it. But I also do know that I am deeply sorry for our history and what we have done. I just want to pay my respects you (Elders)."*

Uncle Ron: *"The relationship between William Barak and Anne Bonne. This is a good story as a model for working together."*

About what needs to happen next:

Aunty Di: *"Council have come to us with the plan to change the name of the Park. They have to get the process right."*

Survey findings

Executive Summary

A total of 354 Surveys were completed from 16 July – 2 September 2016.

292 (83%) of all respondents live in the Darebin municipality.

Just over half (54%) of all respondents live in proximity to Batman Park (postcodes 3070, 3071, 3072).

Of the 354 surveys:

- 292 respondents (83%) supported a name change.
- 15 respondents (4%) had no particular preference for the name
- 47 respondents (13%) wanted the name to remain Batman Park

The largest number of all respondents (51%) preferred the name *Gumbri*.

49% of all respondents from Northcote (3070) preferred the name *Gumbri*.

53% of respondents closest to Batman Park (postcodes 3070, 3071, 3072) preferred at least one of the three proposed names.

There is a direct correlation between the distance from the Park and the level of positive feedback for a name change.

56% of respondents were between 25 and 44 years 47% of respondents from Preston preferred *Gumbri*, being the strongest correlation with regards to age and postcode.

71% of respondents made additional written comments.

When asked to identify what is important to them about Batman Park, 89% of respondents cited amenity in some form. 11% used this opportunity to make additional comments on the Park name.

Information about the respondents

Aboriginality

- 91 % of respondents identified as non-Aboriginal
- 8% identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Age range

- Over half the respondents were aged between 25 and 44 years (55%)
- 15% were aged between 16 and 24 years
- The remaining 30% were aged from 45 years onwards

16 -19 years	4%
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20 -24 years	11%
25 – 34 years	32%
35 – 44 years	24%
45 – 54 years	16%
55 – 64 years	8%
65-74 years	4%
75 +Years	1%

Place of residence

292 (83%) of all respondents live in the Darebin municipality. Just over half (54%) of all respondents live in proximity to Batman Park (postcodes 3070, 3071, 3072).

Northcote (3070)	117 respondents (32%)
Thornbury (3071)	48 respondents (13%)
Preston (3072)	68 respondents (19%)
Reservoir (3073)	36 respondents (10%)
Bundoora (3085)	6 respondents (2%)
Alphington (3078)	12 respondents (4%)
Other	71 respondents (20%)

Name selections

Of those supporting a name change,

- 180 respondents (51%) preferred the name *Gumbri*
- 72 respondents (20%) preferred the name *Billibellary*
- 40 respondents (11%) preferred the name *Be Be Jern*
- 47 respondents (13%) preferred to keep the current name
- 15 respondents (4%) indicated they had no preference

Preferred Name	<i>Be Be Jern</i>	<i>Billibellary</i>	<i>Gumbri</i>	<i>Keep current name (Batman)</i>	<i>No Preference</i>
Total Number and percentage	40 11%	72 20%	180 51%	47 13%	15 4%

Gumbri

Reasons given for selecting *Gumbri* include:

- shorter/easier to say
- recognises a woman (acknowledging the paucity of women's names in public places, the association with the Kinder and caring responsibilities)
- connotes peace and harmony given its meaning 'white dove':

"Because of the proximity to the Kindergarten a woman's name is appropriate. The 'white dove' is also a peace symbol so has a cross cultural significance."

"I think it also be wonderful for the park to be named after a female Aboriginal Elder, as a symbol of equality and respect for all women."

".. let's have some gender balance in naming here in Darebin!"

Respondents who chose *Gumbri* by age and postcode (N: 180)

Age	Northcote (3070)	Thornbury (3071)	Preston (3072)	Reservoir (3073)	Bundoora (3083)	Alphington (3078)	Other
16 -19 years	6		3				
20 -24 years	4	2		4			
25 – 34 years	6	5		7			5
35 – 44 years	13	6	15	7		4	2
45 – 54 years	20	8	15			11	
55 – 64 years	3	6	7				4
65-74 years	5	3	7				3
75 +Years							

Billibellary

Main reasons for choosing *Billibellary* are:

- linked to the Treaty as he was present at the signing
- was a strong and wise cultural and tribal leader
- name sounds nice to say.

"A song maker, a local, an astute and diplomatic leader – all things we need to celebrate and build more of in our modern world."

“Billebellary makes sense to me given the link to the Batman Treaty. Isn’t so much of a step away from Batman Park, but with better intentions.”

“A beautiful euphonious name – although five syllables may be hard at first.”

Respondents who chose *Billebellary* by age and postcode (N: 72)

Age	Northcote (3070)	Thornbury (3071)	Preston (3072)	Reservoir (3073)	Bundoora (3083)	Alphington (3078)	Other
16 -19 years		1		1			
20 -24 years	3						
25 – 34 years	5			5			
35 – 44 years	12			6			6
45 – 54 years			8				
55 – 64 years	1		3				8
65-74 years		3	7				
75 +Years	3						

The main reasons for selecting *Be Be Jern* can be summarised as:

- Wurundjeri people descend from him;
- easy to pronounce;
- was present at Batman signing.

“He is the ancestor to all current Wurundjeri.”

“Because he should or would have been the custodian of this land.”

Respondents who chose *Be Be Jern* by age and postcode (N: 40)

Age	Northcote (3070)	Thornbury (3071)	Preston (3072)	Reservoir (3073)	Bundoora (3083)	Alphington (3078)	Other
16 -19 years							
20 -24							

years							
25 – 34 years	5						
35 – 44 years	6						
45 – 54 years		4	6				4
55 – 64 years	5						3
65-74 years	5						
75 +Years	3						

Other themes arising in the name selection

A significant number of survey respondents who supported the name change were ambivalent when it came to selecting one of the three names. Of these, some felt it more appropriate for Wurundjeri Elders to make the final name selection and indicated that they would be very happy with that decision, whatever it may be. Others were keen to make their own suggestion for a park name beyond the three proposed names.

Many respondents used the Comments section of the survey to express / explain / reiterate their support for the proposed renaming.

Comments about keeping the name Batman Park

Forty seven respondents (13%) chose 'keep the current name'. The reasons provided were wide-ranging and can be summarised as follows:

- change is not justified based on a judgement of Batman
- current high level of recognition of the park would be risked
- questioning what impact a name change would actually have
- waste of Council resources
- a case of 'political correctness'.

“Apart from spending unnecessarily, what does the changing the name of the park actually achieve?”

“Please keep the current name. It’s a great park and a well-known place in the community.”

“It would be better to focus energy on promoting equality and redress of Aboriginal community needs, rather than such a meaningless gesture.”

“Did John Batman rape, pillage and murder for the land or did he trade for it? I am lead to believe it was the latter so what was his crime and why do we need to disassociate with this part of Melbourne’s history?”

“I think it is important to retain the name Batman as a reminder to ALL people of the early non-Aboriginal settlers of what we now recognise, call and enjoy as the City of Darebin. The solution, which would honour both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures, would be to have a joint name for the park. For example it might be called Be Be Jern – Batman Park.”

Input from John Batman’s descendants

In mid-July Wendy Batman, a descendant of John Batman, contacted Council in relation to the proposed name change. She asked to be kept informed of the process and hoped to be more fully involved once she returned to Melbourne later in the year. She expressed her hope that the park maintains its current name, although she was sympathetic to the work of reconciliation. Since this contact she received two project updates and she has not made further contact.

Respondents who chose to keep the current name (Batman) (N: 47)

Age	Northcote (3070)	Thornbury (3071)	Preston (3072)	Reservoir (3073)	Bundoora (3083)	Alphington (3078)	Other
16 -19 years	6						
20 -24 years							
25 – 34 years							
35 – 44 years							
45 – 54 years	8						
55 – 64 years		5	6	8		4	
65-74 years	2					5	
75 +Years		3					

Respondents who chose *I have no preference.*

Of those who indicated that they had no preference for the three proposed names,

- 11 respondents were positive about the renaming and were happy with any of the names proposed
- 2 respondents were negative about any of the names
- 1 respondent suggested 'Wurundjeri Park'
- 1 respondent suggested 'Annie Boorat Park'

Respondents who indicated that they have no preference, by age and postcode (N:15)

Age	Northcote (3070)	Thornbury (3071)	Preston (3072)	Reservoir (3073)	Bundoora (3083)	Alphington (3078)	Other
16 -19 years							
20 -24 years		1					
25 – 34 years	3	1					
35 – 44 years	2	1		1			
45 – 54 years			1				2
55 – 64 years							1
65-74 years							2
75 +Years							

Responses in relation to question: What is important to you about Batman Park?

As part of the survey, people were asked to identify/nominate what is currently important to them about the Park – as part of building a record of what may need to be considered for protection into the future, regardless of other changes which may occur.

The responses were numerous and extremely wide ranging. Themes have been categorised as follows:

- Safe/inclusive/accessible
- Green space/garden/trees/green oasis
- Shared/community/gathering place/ communal
- Heat mitigation/ green lungs/climate change
- Children/kindergarten/playground/family
- Recreation
- Amenity / toilets /BBQ

- Central
- Landmark/important/distinctive/iconic/visible
- Nature/natural/environment/ecosystem
- Beautiful
- Used by multiple generations of families

What is important about the park (N: 357)

Age	Total number of respondents	Number of respondents who made a written comment	Number of respondents who made a comment about the name
16 -19 years	13	5	1 pro renaming
20 -24 years	39	22	2 pro renaming
25 – 34 years	116	66	6pro renaming 3 pro Batman
35 – 44 years	85	72	5 pro renaming 2 pro Batman
45 – 54 years	58	52	5 pro renaming 3 pro Batman
55 – 64 years	30	25	5 pro renaming 1 pro Batman
65-74 years	13	11	1 pro renaming
75 +Years	3	2	1 pro renaming

The Project E-list

Community members were invited to send their independent comments through to Council’s mailbox diversity@darebin.vic.gov.au and also consider registration to the project E-list for regular progress updates. To date, four project updates have been sent to those registered – in July, August, September & October.

Given this feedback avenue was not anonymous and included the E-List invitation, it is not particularly surprising that the great majority of comments were supportive and very positive:

“Have just read the article in the Darebin community news ‘ What’s In a Name? Batman in the Spotlight’. I think without a doubt change the name of Batman Park and I can’t imagine why people in the community wouldn’t support it. Our son attends the kindergarten there and we frequent the park. It’s great to see the park being

updated and now would be a perfect time for renaming and acknowledging the traditional owners. I have already corrected my 4 year old's notion that the park is named after Batman the superhero with something bland about John Batman being involved in the development of Melbourne; now I would like to give him and my older daughter and all of us the rightful narrative. Our family of 4 fully supports! Change the name now."

"I am non-Aboriginal. I have long thought the name of Batman Park was out dated in view of Darebin's inclusion of indigenous Australians in its policies and publications. I can only give the renaming of the park my complete support. I think many thinking residents and visitors to the area would feel more comfortable if the park was not connected by name to the man who swindled indigenous occupiers of the area was removed. Renaming the park to honour an indigenous man or woman might be some redress as well as a mark of respect to those ancestors who lost so much in their dealings with Batman. As an aside I have heard teens and young adults in conversation wondering why the park was named after Batman of the Marvel comic characters Batman & Robin."

There was one concern about possible next sites which could be chosen, and protection of another Park name of family significance:

"... I just wanted to touch base with you to enquire as to whether there have or will be discussions on changing the name of this park away from Caddayes Corner, as I believe the great work that Pa provided over many decades in the local area justify its retention. Can you please let me know on the state of play in regards to proposed name changes of parks, as we as a family would be devastated to know that Pa's legacy could be removed from the local area which he serviced so well for so many years."

Others were keen to acknowledge the significant timing of the renaming of Batman Park and to propose future sites for renaming:

"With NAIDOC week approaching I would like to revisit the historic achievements of the Northcote City Council, now amalgamated with Preston as the Darebin Council. When I was a member of the Northcote Council in the late 70's and early 80's we did two things that will resonate with the Darebin Council of today: We transferred the title of what was then known as the Watt Street land to the Aborigines Advancement League. The League is now the de-facto headquarters of the Victorian Aboriginal community and a central resource for the Wurundjeri people from whom Batman took the land which is now the Darebin municipality. Council of the time believed that the land transfer was part restitution for the loss of the land of the Wurundjeri people. Council also attempted to rename Batman Park, Wurundjeri Park. There was considerable hostility to the resolution as a search of the local media of the time will reveal. Council was reluctant to force the initiative onto the residents and withdrew. The City of Darebin is now a much different place to the City of Northcote, with the League a central feature of the city. I believe now is the time after almost 35 years to rename Batman Park. To honour the original residents of the City of Darebin I believe it should finally be renamed Wurundjeri Park. Further I believe that the beautiful R J Bramham Gardens at the entrance to Preston should be renamed Australia's first "Treaty Park".

Engagement via Social Media

The four conversations and the links to the survey via Your Say on Council's website were promoted on Council's social media channels. The hash tag #batmanrename

was created to facilitate and follow tweets on the topic. Posts and tweets were received – less than 40 on total. The Facebook posts were shared (9) and liked (47). Comments were a mix of negative and supportive. Three illustrative quotes:

“More lunacy from the People’s Republic of Darebin. Ho hum.” (10/8)

“Leave things alone!” (11/8)

“Of course I’m happy to follow the lead of the elders on this one but I’d love to see Douglas Nicholls honoured in Northcote in more than one place. Played footy for Northcote and went on to become one of the greatest Australians, and a proud indigenous person.”

Whether these comments are from local residents is not possible to determine.

Additional information beyond the Survey and Community Conversations: what was learned?

- Many contributions reflected an understanding and appreciation of the link between the name change, its symbolism and how the change can also raise awareness and understanding of (currently largely invisible) Aboriginal history of Darebin.
- All four community conversations found their own free flowing rhythm, and were characterised by respectful listening and dialogue. Very little moderation was needed. Contributions from the community were genuine, heartfelt and very emotional at times.
- Community members came to the conversations with a sense of gravitas in wanting to articulate their deep respect to the Wurundjeri Elders present. The survey responses support this.
- The conversations included a level of truth-telling, emotion and witnessing. At times they had the quality of a reconciliation process happening concurrently to the discussion.
- The Wurundjeri Elders expressed some ambivalence the meaning and value of the renaming to them, in that they shared their belief that the notion of ‘we don’t own land, we belong to the land – it owns us’. The renaming the Park to somehow indicate their possession or ownership of the park has no cultural resonance for them. However they understood the renaming to be an expression of respect and an acknowledgement of their history and living culture.
- Traditional Owner groups and Wurundjeri Elders in particular, are under significant pressure. Extremely heavy responsibilities are carried by only a few Elders at enormous personal costs. They are still asked to give and do give their unpaid time and energy in advising governments and public authorities.

Overview of findings

The community engagement undertaken in this project has generated evidence that:

- The community living around Batman Park support and are ready for a name change in the spirit of reconciliation.
- The community living around Batman Park is interested in and ready to be part of other significant actions which support reconciliation and acknowledgement of Traditional Owners.
- There is an appetite across the municipality for actions which support reconciliation and acknowledgement of Traditional Owners.
- The community wants to learn more about and engage more fully with the history, culture and heritage of Aboriginal Darebin but aren't sure where to go, or can't locate a place to where it is readily available.
- Having Elders lead the discussions was powerful and significant in many ways – to the community who attended and to the Elders themselves. Community members were keen to honour and defer to Elders, while Elders were genuinely surprised and delighted by the response they received.

There is also evidence of some concern that:

- The true history of the Park is not erased by the renaming ('it's our shared history') and that Batman's name and legacy are captured and memorialised in some way within the Park – and that this may also be an important consideration when selecting other potential sites for renaming.
- Selection of a person's name always risks controversy, whereas a more generic word which reflects the community's vision or aspiration for a more harmonious and reconciled society may be less so and have other benefits.
- Any actions include consideration of how Darebin Council can provide financial compensation or benefit for Wurundjeri.