



Community Engagement Results Report

BACKGROUND

At its meeting on 27 October 2025, Council endorsed new *Guidelines for the Deaccessioning of Public Art in Darebin* and authorised a community consultation on the removal of the Fairfield Pavement Mosaics. Council requested a report on the outcome of the consultation, prior to making a decision about whether or not to remove the mosaics.

Objectives of community engagement:

To understand community preferences regarding the possible removal of the mosaics including

- The removal or restoration (for a period of time) of the Fairfield Pavement Mosaics
- The preferred timing of the removal, restoration or replacement works

Questions asked of the community:

- What are your thoughts on removing the Fairfield Mosaics?
- Do you have any feedback on the timing of the removal of the Fairfield Mosaics?

Engagement Key Messages:

The Fairfield Pavement Mosaics are coming to the end of their life.

Created by artist Simon Normand, this well-loved artwork has played a special role in the cultural landscape of Fairfield for three decades and Council thanks the artist for his contribution.

Most public art has a lifespan of 20 years. Over time, the mosaics have become worn and damaged, and the ongoing cost of repairing them is no longer sustainable.

Removing them would make the footpath safer, cleaner and easier to use.

This will allow for opportunities to explore working with new artists to create more diverse artworks across Darebin in the future.

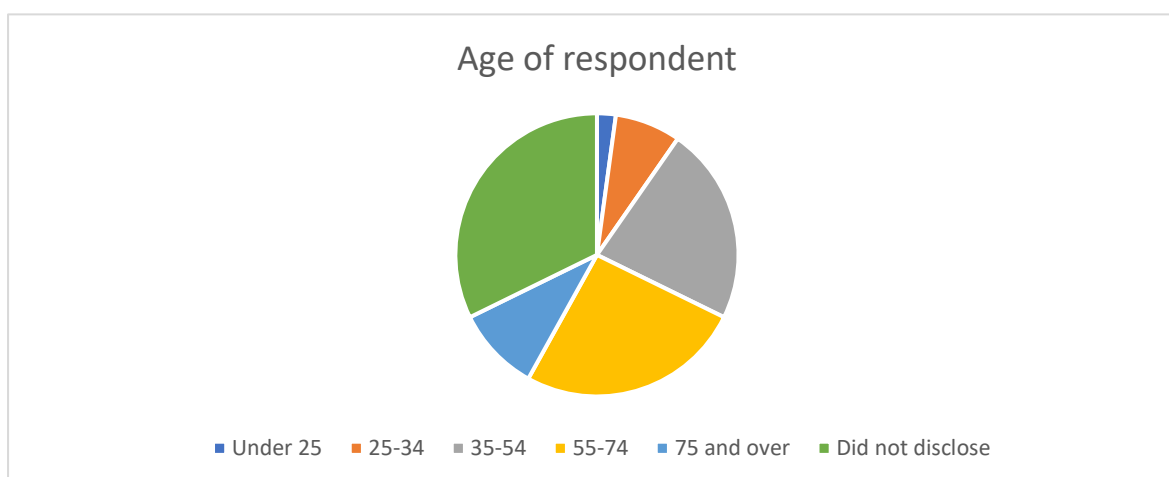
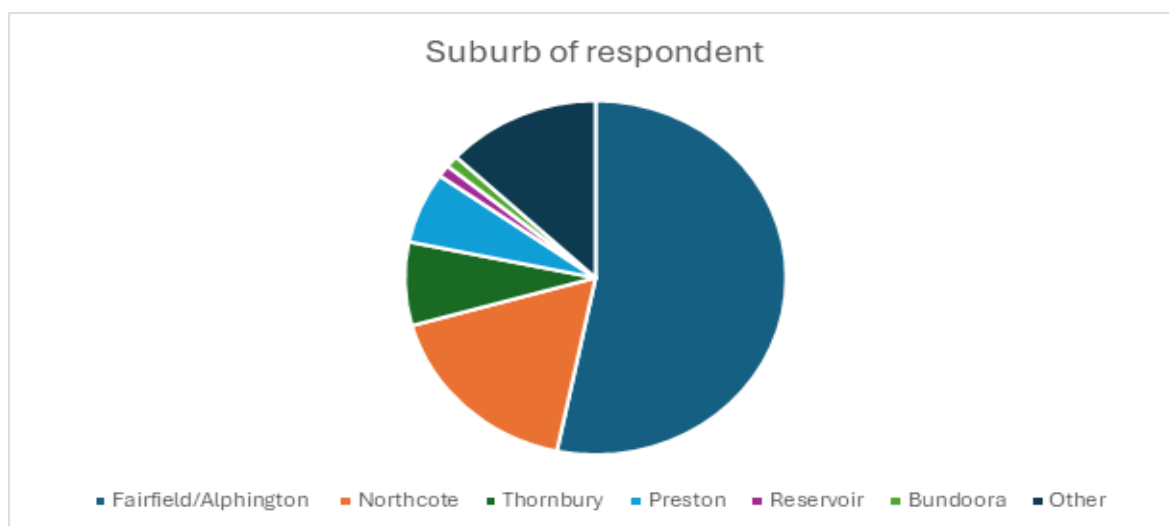
We'd like to hear your thoughts on the possible removal of the Fairfield Mosaics. Have your say in your language by 15 March 2026 at www.yoursay.darebin.vic.gov.au/fairfieldmosaics

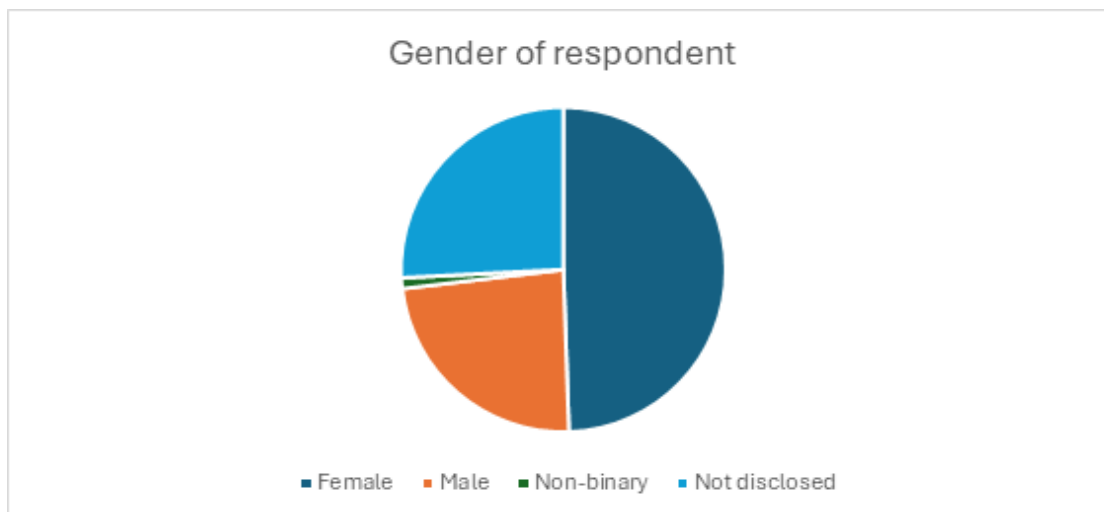
PARTICIPATION ANALYSIS

Engagement Activity	Number of participants/ people engaged	Targeted group
<i>Your Say Darebin page</i>	<i>87 responses via online Your Say page</i>	<i>General Darebin community, residents and traders</i>
<i>Public Engagement pop-up sessions in Fairfield</i>	<i>Approximately 30 people spoken to across 2 sessions. 5 paper surveys completed</i>	<i>Residents, visitors and local traders of Fairfield</i>
<i>Postcard drop</i>	<i>200 postcards delivered to local residents of Fairfield</i>	<i>Residents of Fairfield</i>

<i>Promotion via:</i> • <i>Social media</i> • <i>Website</i> • <i>E-newsletters</i> • <i>Posters & postcard</i> • <i>Translations into:</i> • <i>Greek</i> • <i>Italian</i> • <i>Mandarin</i> • <i>Spanish</i> • <i>Cantonese</i> • <i>Direct emails to Fairfield trader's association and Darebin Public Artist Database</i>		<i>General Darebin community, Fairfield Traders Association, Residents, Visitors to Fairfield</i>
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DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS





ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

- Total contributions via Your Say: 87
- Total contributions in person: 5
- Total contributions via email: 1
- Total Unique responses: 93

Response	Detail	Number of Responses
REMOVE THE MOSAICS	Deaccession the mosaics and replace with concrete	21
REMOVE THE MOSAICS AND REPLACE WITH NEW ARTWORK	Deaccession the mosaics and create a new artwork of some sort in its place	18
REMOVE THE MOSAICS AND DISPLAY THEM ELSEWHERE	Carefully remove the mosaics and display some/all of them in another location, such as Fairfield Library	13
KEEP THE MOSAICS	Keep the mosaics in their current location	41

REMOVE THE MOSAICS – QUOTES FROM RESPONDENTS

- *"Agree at the end of their life. Remove them as planned and replace with normal concrete path. We don't need any trip or slip items on the ground - the footpaths are dangerous enough for the elderly and the rest of us"*
- *"They have been lovely but I understand the concerns about tripping hazards etc."*
- *"They are tired and old and should be removed."*
- *"I live in Fairfield and whilst I enjoy the colour and vibrancy of the pavement artwork, they are really worn and not disability friendly. Given the current fiscal climate for many councils including Darebin, I don't want to have to commit to ongoing funding for maintenance where those funds could be diverted for other purposes like reducing the price of entry to the NARC, funding more librarians or tending to the giant overgrown trees on Grange Rd."*
- *"I agree they are past their use by date"*
- *"I agree with the proposal for the removal of the mosaics as they have reached the end of their lifespan and spending on their maintenance and repair is not a wise use of council funds."*

REMOVE THE MOSAICS AND REPLACE WITH A NEW ARTWORK – QUOTES FROM RESPONDENTS

- *“Give the next generation of artists a chance to put their mark on our public spaces.”*
- *“As much as the removal of the mosaics will prompt an end of an era, I am optimistic that the potential engagement with new art/multiple artworks with a new artist/artists would benefit the area as well as help support local artists.”*
- *“I think it is reasonable to hope that the opportunity is taken to replace the mosaics with new artworks that capture how Fairfield has changed over time.”*
- *“I think that a public artwork of this sort (its materials) naturally come to their end and 30 years is a really good run. I am in favour of removing the mosaics if it means the council implements new opportunities for public art that reflects the changing community. A lot has changed in 30 years, it’s also a great opportunity for local artist to learn about the logistics and materials of public art, in developing new ideas.”*
- **“From The Fairfield Traders Association:**
Our Position: Art, Not Just Infrastructure
The Fairfield Pavement Mosaics are more than just decoration; they are a hallmark of our precinct’s character. We find it entirely unacceptable for these artworks to be removed and replaced with standard concrete. Simply reverting to industry standard concrete that serves as a footpath in the village is not an acceptable solution. It is a step backward for the vibrancy of our local economy and the "village" feel that draws visitors to Fairfield.
Our Requirements for Success:
For the transition to be successful and supported by the local business community, the Fairfield Traders Association stipulates the following:
A High-Quality Creative Alternative: We advocate for a "well thought out" art piece that honors the legacy of the original work while reflecting the modern diversity of Darebin.
End-to-End Partnership: The Association expects to be an active partner in the selection and implementation process. This includes representation from the initial consultation phase through to the completion of the replacement works.
Sustainability & Vision: Any new installation must be designed with both longevity and artistic merit in mind, ensuring Fairfield remains a destination for public art enthusiasts.
"Replacing a beloved cultural landmark with concrete is a disservice to the traders and residents who have cared for this identity for three decades. We seek a creative evolution, not a removal. We look forward to a formal invitation to the working group for this project to ensure the next chapter of Fairfield’s streetscape is as iconic as the last."

REMOVE THE MOSAICS AND DISPLAY ELSEWHERE – QUOTES FROM RESPONDENTS

- *“I understand the issue but really think they need to be saved. They should be restored and put up on the walls in the library complex.”*
- *“Preserve the mosaics after removing them.”*
- *“Display them vertically, perhaps in the library or some public location?”*
- *“Relocation of the mosaics to a wall in the corridor of the community centre, adjacent to the library would be a way of preserving this historic and social asset”*
- *“It would be great if they could be recorded in some way, like if photos of the artworks could be displayed in the community.”*
- *“Don’t remove them, relocate them. Eg out of the pedestrian wear and tear like the library”*

KEEP THE MOSAICS – QUOTES FROM RESPONDENTS

- *“They are a part of Fairfield and we love that!”*

- *"I actually love that they have aged and would not be happy to see them removed. Restored would be preferred"*
- *"I think it would be a terrible shame to remove them. They are part of the history of the area and accessible public art. If cost is the barrier to restoring them, I and others would happily volunteer the labour."*
- *Keep them. You have no right to take away artist work and thus has an impact on all the community. They are integral to the community. They encourage children to be artists. Find money to keep them.*
- *"Please don't, they are beautiful and important to the character of the area."*
- *"Leave them there and repair. I don't understand why we are always replacing. Keep the links to the past. Respect and continue to celebrate the artists who made the work."*
- *"Very saddened by this. There is very little left of Fairfield from before its gentrification. Me and my friends at Fairfield Primary School helped create these mosaics. They're very sentimental to us."*
- *"I think that the pavement mosaics are a fantastic addition to Station St, Fairfield and should stay. This end of Darebin Council receives very little funding from council - leave the mosaics"*