GREEN YOUR LANEWAY PROJECT EVALUATION 2023

SUMMARY REPORT

CITY OF MELBOURNE

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we govern, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong Boon Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin, and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge and honour the unbroken spiritual, cultural and political connection the Wurundjeri, Bunurong, Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wadawurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin have had to this unique place for more than 2000 generations.

We are committed to our reconciliation journey, because at its heart, reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, for the benefit of all Victorians.

Council Plan 2021-25

The Council Plan 2021-25 sets out our strategic direction and commitment to the community for the next four years. Based on six strategic objectives for our city, this is our detailed plan for our city's revitalisation and considers the needs of all people who access and experience the City of Melbourne municipality. For more information visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/council-plan

Climate and biodiversity emergency

Melbourne is a city setting the standard on climate action. Prioritising our environment and taking urgent action to reduce emissions and waste is key to protecting public health, strengthening the economy and creating a city that mitigates and adapts to climate change.

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August 2023

Cover Image: Guildford Lane. Photo Credit: David Hannah, 2022.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Context and aims

Melbourne's city centre is about a whole lot more than just shops, cafes and office buildings. The city's outdoor spaces – where we walk, meet up and relax – are a vital part of what makes Melbourne tick.

That's why the City of Melbourne established Green Your Laneway – a program with the specific mission of transforming our city's laneways and alleyways into leafy, welcoming places to be enjoyed by the whole community.

The program has already borne fruit: in 2017, after several years of planning, community engagement, site investigation and design development, four inner-city laneways were given the green treatment: Coromandel Place, Guildford Lane, Katherine Place and Meyers Place. These pilot projects were used to test different greening approaches – to trial the planning, growing and maintenance of vegetation when it comes to the complex laneway growing environment.

This report is the result of an evaluation five years after the pilots were completed. It examines how effective the pilot projects were, covers the lessons learnt and gives recommendations for tackling future laneway greening – both in Melbourne and beyond.

Evaluation method

We looked at the impact of laneway greening across five different areas: social, environmental, economic, technical and governance. We also examined what was needed to maintain the greenery, and how effective the maintenance had been.

Here are the steps we took to evaluate each of the pilot laneway projects:

- We commissioned researchers from Victoria University and the University of Melbourne to provide a framework for evaluating laneway greening.
- We reviewed all the relevant project documentation.
- We undertook site audits and condition assessments, to review each laneway to check how well the greening had progressed.
- We consulted with the pilot project laneway communities to get their feedback and perspectives.
- We looked at the practicalities of establishing and maintaining the laneway greenery, by talking to relevant contracted businesses and checking in with the people at City of Melbourne involved with the pilot projects.
- We pulled together the lessons and feedback from different stages of the projects.
- We developed draft recommendations for future laneway greening projects.
- We asked City of Melbourne's Parks and Gardens Advisory Committee for input on our recommendations, and used that feedback to prepare this final summary report.

Our evaluation looked at a whole range of practical aspects of laneway greening, including vegetation performance, ongoing maintenance needs, arrangements made over ownership of the greenery, financial costs and social benefits.

Key findings

These pilot projects were a valuable test of the approaches needed to create successful laneway greening, and provided insights on the benefits that these greenings bring – both to the environment and the local community.

The Green Your Laneway projects combined initiatives led by City of Melbourne, residents, landlords and businesses to create a whole range of laneway greening, using a variety of different watering systems, including green facades, green living wall systems, drain gardens and planters.

The combination of council, community and business partnerships highlighted the issues faced by the different groups involved in a laneway greening project, and provided some important findings when it comes to delivering lasting laneway greening.

Here are the key findings from the pilot projects:

1. There's more than one way to create lasting laneway greening

Each pilot project took a different approach to laneway greening. Each laneway called for its own design and technical approaches, involved varying amounts of community participation and offered different greening opportunities – including, in some cases, on private property connected to the laneways.

Different approaches to funding the greening were also used as needed, including some partnerships between City of Melbourne and local businesses or building owners to create greening on private property.

2. Laneway greening can bring communities together

Almost all the pilot project communities benefited from the social connection that laneway greening provided.

3. Melbourne's communities want more green laneways

In the laneway communities we surveyed, more than 95 per cent of people want to see more greening in the city's laneways.

4. 'Community champions' are vital to the long-term success of laneway greening

The success of the Guildford Lane greening project was driven by people in the community who were engaged, empowered and closely connected to the greening projects.

5. Low-cost, community-driven greening can be just as effective as more costly approaches

Despite the fact that different amounts of financial investment were made across the four pilot laneways, the outcomes were mainly dependant on community participation rather than cost.

6. Co-funding partnerships with businesses and building owners had good outcomes

Co-funding laneway greening with building owners or businesses reduced costs, risks and ongoing maintenance responsibilities for the council, while giving similar outcomes and benefits to the community. A good example is the Meyers Place green living wall, created in partnership between City of Melbourne and a laneway bar, which has become a thriving tourist attraction cared for by the co-funding business.

7. Laneway greening provides economic, health and wellbeing benefits

These benefits include increased foot traffic that brings more business to retailers, restaurants and cafes, better visual aesthetics, greater social interaction, and improved health and wellbeing for the local community.

Recommendations for future laneway greening

It's clear that laneway greening brings a number of benefits to the local community, and that it's broadly supported by visitors as well as local residents and retailers.

Based on our findings, we've come up with three approaches to promoting future laneway greening across the entire city centre, in ways that meet community expectations, are financially responsible, and are sustainable, lasting and socially inclusive.

Rather than choosing just one of these models, we recommend they're all used together – taking a three-pronged approach that will be cost-effective, and will support people in the community to roll out laneway greening across both public and private space.

Three models for laneway greening

Community driven

Support and empower – *Supporting privately owned greening in public spaces*

In this model the City of Melbourne gives guidance and support to help community groups create green areas in public spaces, using a permit process. This would include technical and administrative support, and providing information and advice on how best to create and maintain greening.

Business and community driven

Cooperate and co-invest – *Co-funding privately owned greening on privately owned spaces connected with laneways*

This model focuses on supporting private greening projects with co-funding, with the City of Melbourne providing matched funding for laneway projects led by community groups, building landlords and business owners. The City of Melbourne would actively seek out people in the community or in local businesses who are interested in initiating these kinds of greening projects.

These kind of co-funding arrangements should prioritise facade greening projects like green living walls that will significantly contribute to laneway greening.

Council driven

Transform and demonstrate – *public-owned greening in public space*

In this model the City of Melbourne actively seeks out new laneway greening opportunities by capitalising on other projects that are launching – whether it's incorporating them into ongoing capital works, advocating for laneway greening outcomes in major projects led by external delivery partners, or through city developments by private interests.

INTRODUCTION

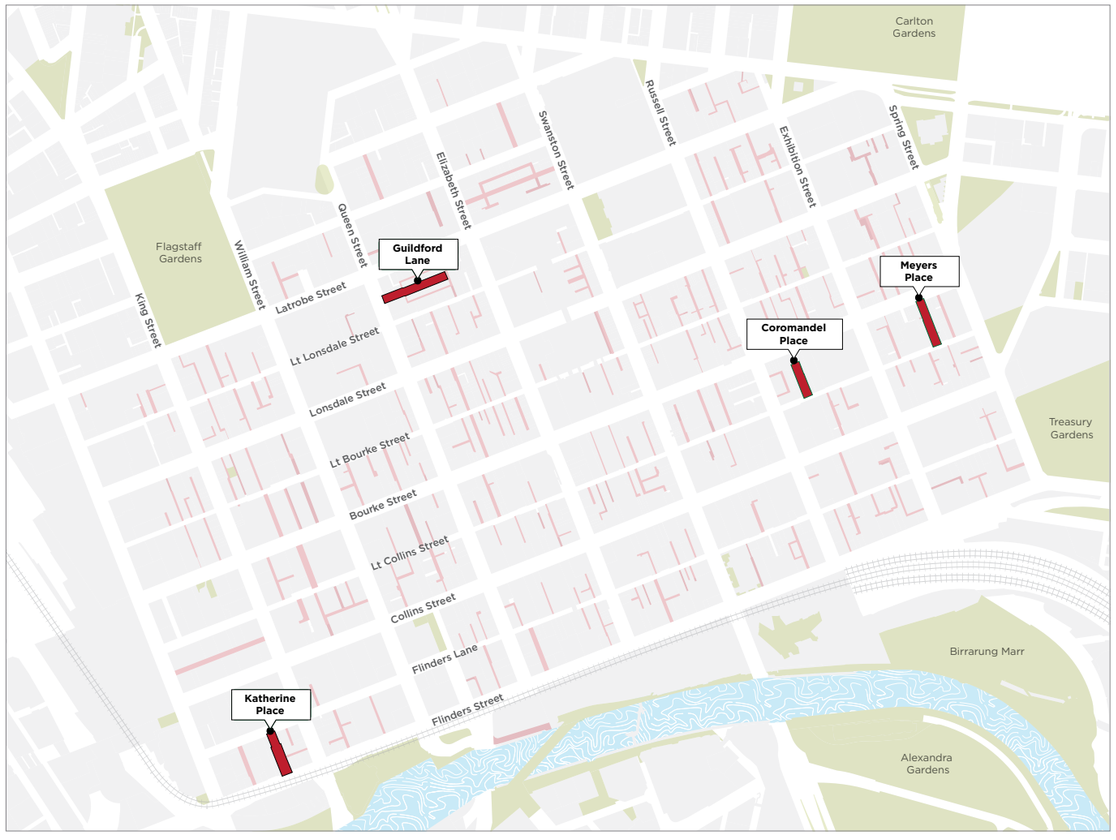
Project background

In an Australian first, the City of Melbourne established the Green Your Laneway program to help transform city laneways into leafy, welcoming places for Melbourne's community to enjoy.

The first phase of the program was to test if greening, along with other improvements, could increase visual appeal, attract visitors, cool the city, improve health and well-being, and provide habitat for flora and fauna in Melbourne's iconic laneways.

In 2017, after several years of planning, community engagement, site investigations and design development, the program delivered four greened laneways in Melbourne's central business district: Coromandel Place, Guildford Lane, Katherine Place and Meyers Place.

Locations of the Green Your Laneway pilot projects.



Coromandel Place

Guildford Lane

Katherine Place

Meyers Place

These pilot projects also tested new approaches to laneway greening, trialling different methods for installing greenery that were highly collaborative and largely community-led. Unique greening designs were created to fit the conditions of each laneway, and the ownership and maintenance arrangements for the greenery were set up to be shared across both the council and local residents and retailers.

Five years after greening the pilot laneways, the City of Melbourne undertook this evaluation to review the outcomes of the Green Your Laneway program – to share what had been learnt, and to create approaches for greening more laneways across the city.

In this report we lay out the details of the evaluation, including our findings and recommendations.

Benefits of laneway greening

Melbourne's laneways are internationally renowned for their street art and cafe culture – a culture that could be enhanced by making our laneways greener and more sustainable, creating a network of inner-urban 'green sanctuaries' for the city community.

Laneway greening can deliver real benefits for laneway communities, with potential positives including:

- improving aesthetics and visual appeal
- attracting visitors to the city
- providing shading and cooling
- improving air quality and reducing the 'heat island' effect
- enhancing health and wellbeing
- improving community engagement and social interactions
- increasing foot traffic for local retailers
- creating habitat for flora and fauna.

There are also benefits that extend beyond the immediate laneway neighbourhoods, such as:

- providing connection corridors for biodiversity
- reducing stormwater runoff in critical catchment areas
- increasing urban canopy
- forming part of 'cool route' walkways within the city
- creating green destinations for visitors.

Artist impression of laneway greening benefits

Opportunities for laneway greening in Melbourne

Melbourne's laneways are an essential part of the city's identity. Its central business district is home to hundreds of these unique walkways, offering places to visit, linger and experience the distinctive flavour of Melbourne life.

These laneways have always played a central role in Melbourne's development. The earliest laneways emerged through the sale and subdivision of city blocks specified in Melbourne's first urban plan, known as the Hoddle Grid, to act as service and delivery routes – but over time they became an emblem of the city's unique character. The revitalisation of Melbourne's laneways in the 1990s transformed them into a vibrant network of walkable areas throughout the city, creating a key attraction for both visitors and locals.

Continuing to improve Melbourne's laneway experience brings clear benefits for locals and visitors, and creating more green spaces is a compelling way to do that. Laneway greening offers plenty of benefits in terms of visual appeal, but also serves an environmental role. With climate change already affecting the experience of the city, and biodiversity loss threatening our natural systems, greening Melbourne's iconic laneways can contribute to creating a more environmentally-friendly, healthy and resilient city.

There's immense opportunity for laneway greening across Melbourne, with an estimated 70 hectares of horizontal laneway space across the City of Melbourne. In the central city alone laneways make up more than 13 hectares with an additional 150 hectares of vertical space that is largely suitable for greening – a total area almost equivalent to the size of Melbourne's Royal Park. This vast amount of space is largely underused and offers great potential as a future green network.

Many of these greening opportunities exist not just in publicly owned laneways, but also in privately owned ones. While the City of Melbourne owns about 47 hectares of laneways, 22 hectares of the municipality's laneways are in private hands. Giving these private laneway owners co-funding and support for laneway greening could be an important aspect of creating a greener city.

The Green Your Laneway pilot projects were created to understand the horticultural challenges of growing laneway greening in complex environments. Designed as learning opportunities, they looked to test the effectiveness of different greening approaches, and to develop greening models that could be evaluated and expanded on – opening the door to a greener, more vibrant Melbourne.

Laneway locations in the City of Melbourne, shown by public or private ownership status, 2023

Table 1. Area and number of public and private laneways across the City of Melbourne, 2023

PRECINCT (SUBURB)	PUBLIC LANEWAY AREA (m^2)	PRIVATE LANEWAY AREA (m^2)	TOTAL LANEWAY AREA (m^2)	TOTAL NUMBER OF LANEWAYS	NUMBER OF PUBLIC LANEWAYS	NUMBER OF PRIVATE LANEWAYS
Carlton and Carlton North	54,849	4,926	59,775	307	229	78
Docklands	98,985	41,005	139,989	126	91	35
East Melbourne	24,085	7,015	31,100	93	72	21
Flemington (racecourse precinct)	4,608	-	4,608	1	1	-
Kensington	75,664	14,512	90,176	202	166	36
Melbourne (central city)	91,665	42,571	134,236	428	280	148
North Melbourne	63,953	7,381	71,334	280	181	99
Parkville	28,137	28,842	56,979	71	44	27
Port Melbourne	-	39,574	39,574	18	-	18
South Wharf	168	18,147	18,316	8	1	7
South Yarra	11,590	1,393	12,982	59	37	22
Southbank	7,954	7,286	15,240	31	21	10
West Melbourne	16,918	10,974	27,892	143	69	74
City of Melbourne (entire municipality)	**478,576**	**223,626**	**702,201**	**1,767**	**1,192**	**575**

Pilot project delivery

The Green Your Laneway project was delivered between 2015 and 2023, and consisted of four stages:

Stage 1: Laneway assessment (2015)

Stage 2: Community engagement (2015–2016)

Stage 3: Project delivery (2016-2018)

1 - Coromandel Place (constructed June 2017)

2 - Guildford Lane (constructed August 2017)

3 - Katherine Place (constructed September–November 2017)

4 - Meyers Place (constructed September–November 2017)

Stage 4: Establishment, monitoring and evaluation (2018-2023)

Overview of the Green Your Laneway pilot project stages

Stage 1
(January 2015 - September 2015)

- Business case development.
- Suitability assessment of 250+ laneways in Melbourne's CBD.
- Development of four greening typologies:
  - Park Lane
  - Forest Lane
  - Farm Lane
  - Vertical Gardens.
- Project plan development.

Stage 2
(November 2015 - November 2016)

- Laneway community nominations (800+ received).
- Workshops with the community to define project objectives, develop design briefs and develop concept designs.
- Stakeholder review of draft designs.
- Public reveal of pilot projects and concept designs.
- Pop-up laneway greening at Meyers Place.

Stage 3
(December 2016 - June 2018)

- Tender process to appoint Design & Construct partner.
- Detailed design development.
- Construction of four pilot laneways in order of delivery:
  - Coromandel Place
  - Guildford Lane
  - Katherine Lane
  - Meyers Place.
- Establishment maintenance by Design & Construct partner.

Stage 4
(July 2018 - March 2023)

- Handover to City of Melbourne operations.
- Laneway greening establishment.
- Project evaluation:
  - Research report "Valuing Laneway Greening"
  - Design & Construct partner report
  - Community engagement
  - Evaluation report and consultation.

Laneway assessment

The City of Melbourne assessed more than 250 laneways in Melbourne's central business district to evaluate which areas were suitable for greening and for partial or full closure to vehicles. Spatial analysis, computer modelling and onsite surveying was used to assess these aspects of each laneway:

- sun and wind exposure
- laneway width
- rubbish bin space
- number of driveways
- area of suitable wall space
- location of downpipes and drainage channels.

Laneways were ranked according to their suitability for implementing different greening techniques and on this basis they were divided into different laneway types:

Park lanes: laneways with the option to partially close off vehicle traffic, allowing for 'pocket parks'.

Forest lanes: laneways with the option for narrowing vehicle traffic areas, and suitable space for tree planting.

Farm lanes: laneways with the option of closing off or narrowing vehicle traffic areas, and suitable space for planter boxes or in-soil food planting.

Vertical gardens: laneways with the potential for planting vertically on walls while still maintaining vehicle access.

A dynamic map was created to show the results of these laneways assessments and rankings – you can view the 'Laneways with greening potential' map on the City of Melbourne's open data website.

Community engagement

From the laneway assessment, the project team identified areas suitable for the pilot projects. To make sure the plans had the community's support, they undertook a consultative approach to designing the Green Your Laneway pilot projects. The process engaged locals to co-design the greening, and invited community feedback that could be directly incorporated into the greening designs.

Here's how it worked:

- Potential sites were nominated by the community, with 800 nominations received and 10 laneways shortlisted. Ultimately four pilot laneways were selected to be part of the Green Your Laneway project.
- The residents, businesses and property owners associated with each laneway took part in workshops to decide the projects' objectives, which were included in each design brief. (You can find more information on these objectives in the case studies for each pilot laneway at the end of this report.)
- An 'open door' policy was adopted for these local residents and businesses, with the project team working closely with most of them throughout the projects.
- As part of the project's community engagement phase, for two weeks in November 2016 Meyers Place was set up as a prototype green laneway, closed off to vehicles and featuring vegetation.

This consultation process was used to develop the design briefs for each pilot laneway, which were then used to guide each of the laneway concept designs.

Project delivery

Greening concepts were individually designed for each pilot laneway, in concert with the residents and businesses local to each area. Here are the design visions created for each laneway:

- **Coromandel Place** – a design to create an inviting green urban sanctuary, discouraging vandalism and crime, and including distinctive public art.
- **Guildford Lane** – a naturalistic and cohesive-yet-diverse design, created to suit the unique, refuge-like character of the laneway.
- **Katherine Place** – a natural oasis in the city with space for people to gather, with unique design elements to match the character of the laneway.
- **Meyers Place** – an inspiring planting design that closed part of the lane off to vehicles, creating a better walking experience, and a lighting design that suits the lane's character as a dining and bar destination.

The public were then invited to share their views on these greening concepts. Their feedback was used to shape the final laneway designs in early 2017.

Following the completion of this community engagement, the projects went through a detailed design development phase, with construction commencing later that year.

For a full picture of the greening approach for each of the four pilot laneways, along with the community feedback and response, check the case studies for each pilot laneway.

Pilot laneway concept designs

Financial snapshot

The total project cost for planning, consultation and implementation of the pilot Green Your Laneway projects was $2,249,700.

The external capital expenditure costs, such as construction and delivery, were $1,947,665, while internal operational expenditure costs, including project initiation and planning, conceptual design and consultation, were $302,036.

The Coromandel Place project costs were higher for a few reasons: more stainless-steel planters were needed there than in the other lanes; unanticipated underground obstructions required extra work to deal with; and delays to installing the automatic watering system meant that, for a time, hand watering was needed.

Table 2. Costs of the Green Your Laneway pilot projects
This table shows the implementation costs of the pilot projects in Australian dollars, excluding GST.

GREEN YOUR LANEWAY PHASE 01 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COSTS	GUILDFORD LANE	COROMANDEL PLACE	MEYERS* PLACE	KATHERINE PLACE	COMBINED	% OF TOTAL COST
External project costs	$415,327	$589,533	$511,863	$430,941	$1,947,665	87%
Internal project costs	$75,509	$75,509	$75,509	$75,509	$302,036	13%
Total costs	**$490,836**	**$665,042**	**$587,372**	**$506,450**	**$2,249,700**	**100%**

* Some additional funding contributions are included under external project costs: $50,000 from City of Melbourne's Urban Forest Fund and $50,000 from private investment for the green living wall at Meyers Place, and $25,000 from Melbourne Water for a rainwater tank installed in a car park for green living wall irrigation.

PROJECT EVALUATION

In 2017, the City of Melbourne established the Green Our City Strategic Action Plan 2017–2021, which aimed to increase the quality and quantity of green roofs, vertical gardens and other greenery in Melbourne.

Part of this action plan involved this evaluation of the four Green Your Laneway pilot projects to better understand the barriers and opportunities involved with laneway greening. With five years having passed since the greening of the pilot laneways – ample time for the vegetation to have become established – this was an ideal opportunity to assess how effective the various greening approaches and maintenance had been.

Evaluation purpose

This evaluation assesses the outcomes, successes and challenges of the Green Your Laneway pilot program, so that future laneway greening across the entire City of Melbourne can be implemented in ways that are cost-effective and reflect the wants and needs of the community.

Laneway and street greening programs have plenty of benefits to offer local communities – including reducing the negative impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss – so we're sharing this evaluation publicly to encourage people in the community to get involved with laneway greening, and to help other cities learn from our laneway greening program.

Evaluation methodology

We considered the outcomes of the four laneway greening pilots across five different areas – social, environmental and economic aspects, technical outcomes and governance – and we identified the features that are critical for achieving long-term greening success and community satisfaction.

We also looked at the practical aspects of the laneway greening projects, including how the vegetation performed in terms of growth and health, the social benefits (as reported by the local community), the costs of different approaches and how much ongoing maintenance was needed.

Here's how the evaluation was conducted:

1. We asked researchers from Victoria University and the University of Melbourne to develop ways to measure the success of laneway greening, based on social, economic and environmental aspects, which they delivered as a report titled Developing Robust Indicators for Valuing Laneway Greening (2018).
2. We reviewed all relevant project and financial documentation, and conducted interviews with the key project partners. We used this information, along with the research success measures, to evaluate how appropriate the project planning, consultation, design and implementation processes had been.
3. In 2021, we commissioned the company that did the detailed design and constructed the projects to do a detailed audit of the plants and equipment at each pilot laneway.
4. We asked for feedback from the laneway communities and laneway visitors in December 2021 – January 2022, to check whether the greening and laneway changes had met community expectations of the program.
5. We compared the cost-effectiveness of different greening approaches and ownership models. We prepared a detailed evaluation report with recommendations for future laneway greening models, including the lessons learnt from the pilot.
6. We incorporated feedback from the City of Melbourne project team and from its Parks and Gardens Advisory Committee on our initial findings and recommendations.
7. We prepared this report, which summarises our findings and gives our recommendations for future laneway greening.

EVALUATION OUTCOMES

Community engagement

As part of this project evaluation, during December 2021 and January 2022 we asked visitors, residents and businesses in the pilot laneway areas for feedback on the Green Your Laneway projects, five years after implementation.

To make sure we got feedback from the people most affected by the projects, we focused primarily on the immediate pilot laneway communities, using a different set of survey questions for residents, businesses and visitors.

We mailed survey invitations to 1213 laneway residents and 146 businesses, as well as putting posters in all the pilot laneways inviting visitors to do surveys using a QR code.

Our surveys asked about a range of topics, including:

- overall satisfaction with the laneway greening, and how it affected the community
- the community's preference for different types of greening measures
- whether the community would like to see more laneway greening in the city
- how we can improve future laneway greening projects
- whether laneway greening improved social wellbeing, including during Melbourne's COVID-19 restrictions
- general demographic information.

What we heard from the community

In total, we received 130 survey responses across the four laneways – 76 from visitors, 45 from residents and 9 from businesses.

Guildford Lane received the highest response rate, with overwhelmingly positive responses from visitors, businesses and residents.

We received less responses for Coromandel Place, Meyers Place and Katherine Place compared to Guildford Lane, and the feedback for those laneways was more mixed, with both positive and negative comments. This feedback highlighted some community concerns around the planning, consultation and implementation processes for laneway greening.

In some cases, particularly for Meyers Place, our understanding of the community's true feelings is limited by a low number of feedback responses.

Table 3. Surveyed responses to laneway greening
This table shows the percentage of positive responses for different aspects of the laneway greenings. The blank fields indicate aspects that aren't relevant to that particular laneway.

	LANEWAYS				
COMPONENT	COMBINED	GUILDFORD LANE	MEYERS PLACE	COROMANDEL PLACE	KATHERINE PLACE
Window Planter	79%	92%	62%	42%	29%
Street Tree	64%	79%	36%	42%	17%
Pot Plants	76%	91%	55%	30%	11%
Planter (large)	76%	92%	60%	25%	20%
Artwork	67%	70%	62%	64%	
Facade Greening	74%	86%	71%	43%	
Green living wall	79%		79%		
Green Roof	90%	90%			
Community Garden	92%	92%			

Overall, visitors were the most positive in their responses, while residents and businesses gave more mixed feedback. Ultimately each group had their own specific insights to give about their experience with the laneway greening.

Table 4: Surveyed responses to laneway greening across different groups
This table shows the percentage of positive responses for different aspects of the laneway greenings, broken down by type of respondent.

	RESPONDENTS			
COMPONENT	COMBINED	VISITOR	RESIDENT	BUSINESS
Window Planter	79%	89%	66%	50%
Street Tree	64%	78%	46%	44%
Pot Plants	76%	89%	55%	44%
Planter (large)	76%	92%	47%	63%
Artwork	67%	76%	50%	50%
Facade Greening	74%	90%	44%	56%
Green living wall	79%	100%	0%*	0%**
Green Roof	90%	94%	71%	100%
Community Garden	92%	93%	88%	100%

* Based on a single response
** Based on two responses

Lessons learnt

Social outcomes

The community-driven activities at Guildford Lane and Coromandel Place, along with the responses to our surveys, show that laneway greening can bring communities together.

We found that engaging the community in the planning of greening projects and encouraging residents to maintain greening can help build support and participation. However, it needs to be backed up by City of Melbourne with knowledge sharing and ongoing administrative, technical and horticultural support.

It's critical to be clear and realistic about the time involved in ongoing greenery maintenance, so that people in the community taking on this responsibility understand the commitment involved – particularly in places that need more regular maintenance and watering.

The proportion of renters to owner-occupiers in a laneway community is important, since areas with more owner-occupiers are better able to provide more consistent and ongoing care for greenery, compared to areas with more short-term rentals. Laneway greening volunteer groups might be able to create more continuity around greening care in areas with high rental turnover.

Supporting volunteer networks and sharing information about greening can help inspire and sustain laneway communities, which can also create more interest in laneway greening in other areas of the city.

Environmental and technical outcomes

It's critical to fully investigate the conditions of any laneway being considered for a greening project – it's particularly important to identify all underground services or obstructions that could complicate later stages of the project.

When creating watering systems for laneway greening, there are clear benefits to creating passive systems that are integrated with existing infrastructure, such as stormwater drains. The pilot projects each incorporate automated, manual and passive watering systems – to keep the greenery thriving. Passive and manual irrigation systems are significantly cheaper than automated irrigation. For example, the manually-watered plants at Guildford Lane have performed very well, whereas the automatically-watered plant at Katherine Place have not. Irrigated planter systems have another drawback: they often need to be relocated or removed during building works – as recently happened at Coromandel Place.

The pilot projects developed and trialled several new approaches to greening urban areas, such as planter systems and drain gardens – approaches which can now be used for future greening projects, reducing design and development costs.

It pays to use quality plant stock and to make sure the planting conditions are right for the vegetation to thrive – healthier plants that don't need to be replaced as often. Using more durable materials can also lead to lower maintenance costs and greater sustainability.

Planting a range of plant species makes for a better diversity of foliage, colour, texture and seasonal variety, as well as creating a more resilient ecosystem.

Some plant species did much better than others in each of the unique laneway conditions. It's important to choose plants that are well-suited to the microclimate, soil and natural light levels to give the greenery the best chance to thrive. We've put together a list of each plant species used in the pilot programs, to help in choosing vegetation for future laneway greening.

Providing adequate water and nutrients is essential for the growth and health of plants in laneways, as is proper drainage – pooling water can lead to root rot in planters and pots, causing poor plant health or death.

Planting advanced vegetation helps to reduce littering and creates an immediate greening impact.

It's vital to have frequent vegetation maintenance, weed control, pruning, litter removal and pest management – it's not only important for long-term plant health, it also helps keep the support of the local community.

Economic and project governance outcomes

The City of Melbourne has a number of programs and initiatives in place to green our city's urban areas. Good locations to grow new greenery are hard to come by in urban centres, which is why the City of Melbourne is trialling novel approaches to greening areas like laneways and rooftops, where it's traditionally been harder to grow vegetation.

The pilot projects gave us some valuable lessons on how to improve future laneway greening. Though the delivery costs for these pilot programs were high, the lessons learnt mean future laneway greenings should be significantly less expensive.

We found that cost-intensive projects didn't always lead to long-lasting greening. For example, the Katherine Place pilot included a costly automated watering system that didn't end up performing any better than manual watering used in other laneway projects maintained by community members. Low-cost and community-driven greening could therefore be just as effective at creating and maintaining green spaces.

A good alternative way of creating lasting greening in the city is by encouraging greening on private property, through partnerships between councils and businesses or property owners. These privately greened spaces contribute to a 'green city network' and are more likely to be maintained long-term, since the businesses or property owners are benefiting from them directly. In the case of Meyers Place, City of Melbourne's co-funding of a green living wall on private property helped to attract private funding and resources, creating one of the most celebrated features of that pilot program.

Large-scale laneway greening is generally expensive to create and maintain, but it's essential for testing out new approaches to creating urban greenery, which is a key strategic goal for City of Melbourne.

We found that laneway residents are interested in taking responsibility for maintaining and watering laneway plants, as they recognise the wellbeing and social benefits of caring for nature. Supporting resident greening and maintenance both reduces costs for council, and makes it more likely for greenery to thrive in the long term. In some of the pilot projects, community-led greening delivered a double benefit: providing an appealing space for the local community to spend time in, and increasing foot traffic – giving a boost to the local cafes, restaurants and shops.

It's crucial to have clear and lasting agreements about the funding, maintenance and ownership arrangements for greened laneway spaces – so it's well understood who's responsible for what. It's also essential that all project partners are willing to work together to solve any issues that come up down the track.

It's vital to keep detailed project documentation for each laneway project, and to have ongoing monitoring after the greening has been done – this information can be invaluable to improving laneway greening in the future.

Making changes to laneway vehicle access can provide plenty of benefits, such as play space for children, more outdoor space for retail and hospitality, and increased safety. But such changes can be time-consuming and controversial, and need buy-in from the local residents, owners and businesses.

Key evaluation findings

Here are our key findings from the pilot laneway greenings:

- Laneways comes in all shapes, sizes and conditions, and greening projects can't take a one-size-fits-all approach – they need to be tailored to suit the environment in each area. Each laneway will need its own particular strategy, which should also take into account the needs of the local community, as well as environmental, technical and economic considerations.
- Laneway greening can bring communities together, and create a shared sense of ownership and responsibility for the plants in public laneway spaces.
- Almost all (95 per cent) of the laneway communities and visitors we heard from wanted to see more laneway greening in the city.
- In general, local residents and businesses said they wanted more involvement in decision-making for laneway greening.
- Having people in the local community to champion the laneway greenings was pivotal to the long-run success of these projects. Finding and working closely with these 'community champions' from early on is integral to the long-term success of these projects.
- After the laneway projects were completed, how well the greenery continued to develop depended a great deal on the local community's engagement with the projects. Greening expanded in laneways with engaged community members, whereas overall plant health and vegetation cover declined in laneways without ongoing community participation.
- Having City of Melbourne co-fund private greening can create more greenery that's owned and cared for by building owners or businesses – an approach that capitalises on private funding, labour and resources, reduces public costs, and creates lasting greenery that benefits laneway communities.
- Low-cost, community-driven laneway greening was just as effective at creating long-term green spaces compared to more costly, publicly funded greening.
- Laneway greening can be supported by City of Melbourne using different engagement and co-funding models – such as supporting community-driven greening programs, or incorporating laneway greening into other new or ongoing city development projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE LANEWAY GREENING

Based on our lessons learnt and key findings, we've developed three distinct models for rolling out laneway greening across the City of Melbourne.

The models aim to promote future laneway greening projects, making sure they're cost-effective and successful in the long term, and that they deliver what the community wants.

Laneway greening models

We've developed three models to support future laneway greening in the City of Melbourne. The models vary mainly by who's responsible for initiating and creating the greening project, whether the greened locations and maintenance responsibilities are public or private, and what funding approach is taken by the City of Melbourne.

Community driven – supporting privately owned greening on public space

This model supports people in laneway communities to do their own greening of publicly owned spaces, such as laneway footpaths.

As part of this model, City of Melbourne would offer programs that give residents and businesses options for greening on public space, including information on how to approach laneway greening and administrative support to help people apply for greening permits.

This approach focuses on supporting community-led greening, with the City of Melbourne giving support and information, and helping to connect interested people in the community.

Encouraging community members to take the lead on laneway greening projects can help build their feelings of ownership over city greening, which makes the vegetation more likely to be maintained in the long-term.

Business and community driven – co-funding privately owned greening in private space

This model focuses on supporting laneway greening by working with businesses and building owners looking to green their building facades, along with community members that are interested in greening privately owned (but public-facing) laneway walls or facades. The City of Melbourne would support these projects financially, offering co-funding to split the costs of greening projects with the individuals or businesses involved. Existing council funding programs could be used to do this, with some tweaks to funding criteria to focus on laneway greening.

Ideally these projects would encourage community laneway groups to form greening collectives, as well as supporting businesses and property owners to create more green spaces in areas that are privately owned but publicly accessible.

Providing incentives for property owners to green their facades and buildings can help to pool resources, expertise and labour, increasing the reach of laneway greening initiatives.

Council driven – public-owned greening in public space

In this model the City of Melbourne stimulates laneway greening projects by linking in with other capital works projects or city developments that are taking place. City of Melbourne wouldn't initiate these greenings as standalone projects, but would look for appropriate opportunities for laneway greening as other works are developed. Where possible, these projects could also focus on trialling innovative approaches to greening.

A decision process for laneway greening models

Implementation of the models

By offering a range of laneway greening models, we can better make use of the resources available to create more city greening – which is exactly what Melbourne's community have said they want.

The first two models, which encourage community groups, businesses and property owners to lead and maintain greening projects, should be the main approaches to laneway greening. These models give the best value for money, provide more options for future greening and are more likely to give good long-term results for the community.

A key aspect of the first model is properly implementing educational programs and guidance on urban greening, since these will be important to building support and increasing community participation, by showing the benefits of greening to Melbourne's population,

For the second model, when it comes to the City of Melbourne considering co-funding greening projects, it'll be important to carefully weigh the merits of each project – to make sure the funding wouldn't be put to better use meeting another community need.

The council-driven third model should be used when the opportunity arises – when laneway greening can be done as part of a capital works project or through strategic projects delivered by other government agencies and landlords. Encouraging property developers to incorporate laneway greening into major developments or building upgrades could help increase green space throughout the city.

These three models should all be used together, as they can tackle a range of laneway greening situations, reduce costs and capitalise on a desire in the community for more green spaces.

It's likely that these models will need to be adjusted over time, as we gain more insights from future greening projects. To make sure those lessons continue to be learnt, all projects should be carefully monitored and evaluated, so the results can be used to improve our approaches to greening.

CONCLUSION

With over 400 laneways in central Melbourne, laneway greening has plenty of potential to deliver a greener, more sustainable and more liveable city – and it has the support of Melbourne's residents, businesses and visitors.

The Green Your Laneway program tested out new approaches to laneway greening, and delivered significant greening improvements in the four laneways chosen for the trial. The projects have been invaluable in testing out the viability of different approaches to creating and maintaining greenery within Melbourne's laneways. They showed laneway greening projects come in all shapes and sizes – and can be successful with both generous funding or on a constrained budget.

Since establishment, the greening in the pilot laneways has continued to evolve, and the unique development of each laneway offers plenty of lessons on how to create greening projects that will be successful in the long term.

As part of an ongoing, holistic approach to urban greening, we intend to continue greening laneways using a range of different approaches.

From the lessons of the four pilot programs, we developed three laneway greening models: a community-driven model, a co-funding model and a council-driven model.

We intend to prioritise the community-driven and co-funding models, as they offer a community-oriented approach that can be supported with horticultural, technical and administrative guidance. We'll apply the third model when the opportunity arises, by keeping an eye out for ways to create laneway greening through new or ongoing capital works projects.

This approach supports and encourages people in the community and business owners to get directly involved in laneway greening – while making sure the City of Melbourne continues to look for new opportunities for greening projects, and to test out new and innovative ways of greening the city's spaces.

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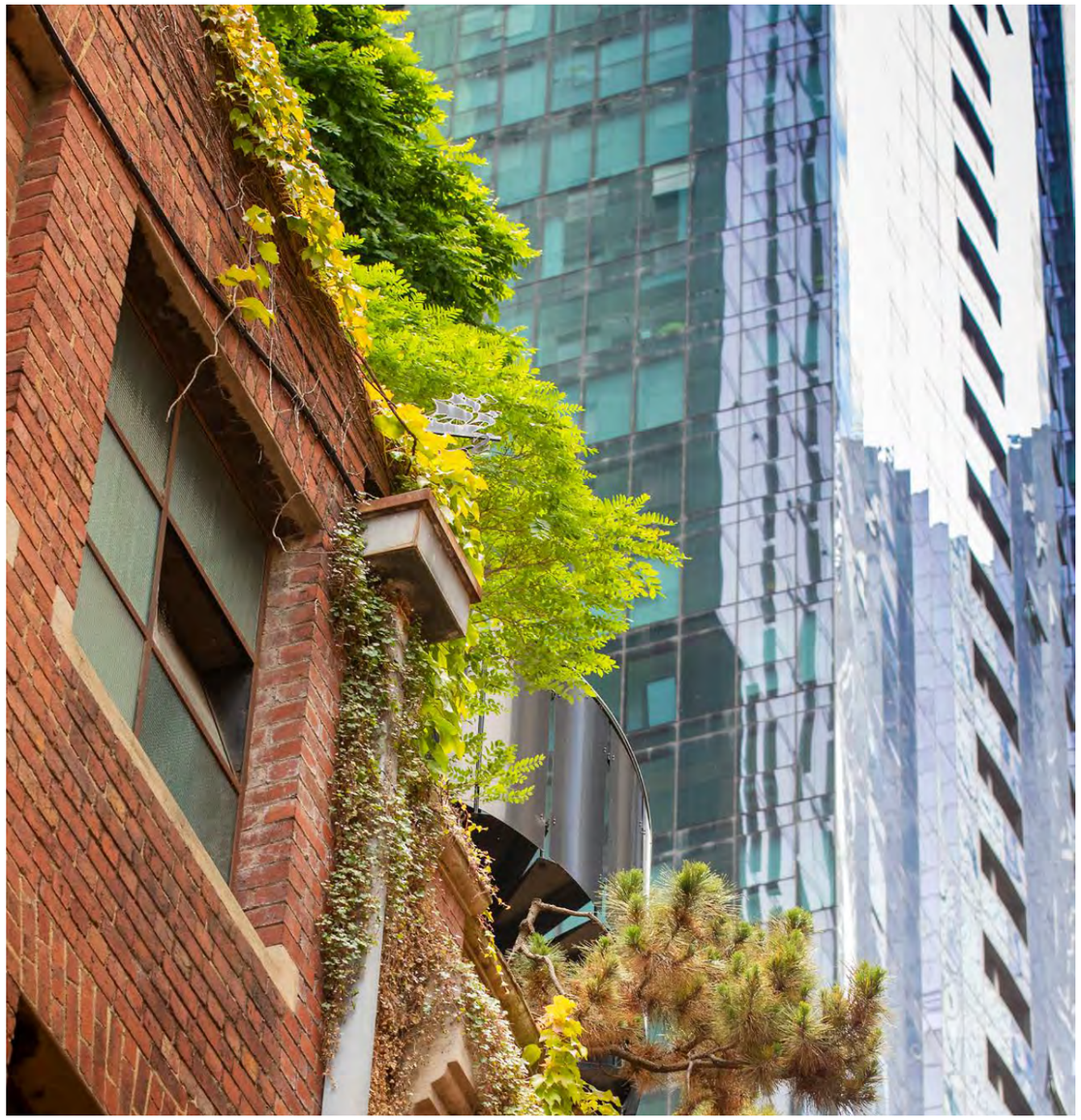


CASE STUDIES

Coromandel Place

Laneway environment

Coromandel Place sits near the centre of the city grid, running about 70m north-south, with a width of 5.8m from building to building. The widened northern end of the laneway is a dead end for vehicles, but there's a pedestrian walkway (only accessible during the day) that runs through to Bourke Street. There's a mix of two-story brick buildings and high-rise apartment buildings, with a cafe and other businesses at ground level.

Coromandel Place after greening. Photo by David Hanna Photography for the City of Melbourne, December 2022

Community aspirations and design brief

Feedback from the local community showed they wanted the laneway greening to have an inviting design that created the feel of a green sanctuary, discouraged vandalism and crime, and included public art. Here are the main themes that emerged from the community feedback:

- areas to gather in, and places to meet and have a coffee
- a design that balances the needs of residents and visitors
- design elements (such as custom paving) that mark the area as specifically for pedestrians
- a profusion of layered greenery that encourages people to enter the laneway
- a design that's robust, resilient and safe, and discourages crime and vandalism
- greenery that lets in plenty of natural light and maintains a decent view of the sky
- artistic lighting and lanterns that capture the character of the lane
- sculptures, seating and spaces to break the laneways up into different areas.

Location of Coromandel Place

Greening in Coromandel Place

Planters

Window planters

Tree planters

Pot plants

Key

Viewpoint section next page

Retail

Business

Residential

Section view Coromandel Place

Green Your Laneway improvements

The following improvements were delivered in 2017 as part of the project:

- 18 stainless-steel planters, with Boston Ivy (*Parthenocissus tricuspidata*), Sikkim Creeper (*Parthenocissus sikkimensis*), Golden Bamboo (*Phyllostachys aurea*), Cut-leaf Daisy (*Brachyscome multifida*) and Japanese Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*)
- a large concrete tree planter with an integrated watering system, planted with Native Frangipani (*Hymenosporum flavum*) and Lily Turf (*Liriope muscari*)
- three large pots planted with Evergreen Magnolias (*Magnolia doltsopa*)
- six small pots planted with Cordyline 'Red Star' (*Cordyline australis*) and Black Mondo Grass (*Ophiopogon planiscapus 'Nigrescens'*)
- two laneway murals
- the north end of the laneway was closed to regular car traffic
- an automated watering system was installed, including an under-curb irrigation line, irrigation cabinet and wall mounted control boxes, pot plants are manually watered.

Laneway condition five years after completion

By 2023, most of the landscaping and artworks were still in place with only a little cosmetic wear and tear, but some elements had been removed due to construction works:

- the majority of the steel planters on the western side of the laneway were in excellent condition, and the climbing plants (*Parthenocissus tricuspidata* and *Parthenocissus sikkimensis*) were growing well.
- most of the small pots gifted to the community were well maintained and in good condition; a small number of them had been stolen or weren't maintained.
- a small green living wall was installed by the community at the laneway entrance of the Citadines apartment building.
- one of the murals was gone – it had been painted on a building (at the south-west side of 130 Little Collins Street) that had since been knocked down.
- the steel planters at the northern end of Coromandel Place had been removed during redevelopment works, and replaced with privately owned planters. New climbing plants were established that matched the removed plants, maintaining the planting design for the laneway.

Some of the original species planted had been replaced:

- the Evergreen Magnolias (*Magnolia doltsopa*) in the large fibreglass pots at the entrance of Citadines on Bourke Melbourne (131–135 Bourke Street) had been replaced with Hill's Weeping Figs (*Ficus microcarpa var. hillii*), which are thriving.
- the Native Frangipani (*Hymenosporum flavum*) tree planted at the north end of the laneway became infected with mealy bugs, and after unsuccessful treatment it was replaced with an Australian Umbrella Tree (*Schefflera actinophylla*).

Community engagement feedback

In 2022, five years after the implementation of the laneway greening, we asked the local community for feedback on the project. It's worth noting that when the community survey was done, there were extensive construction works happening in the laneway, and some of the greening additions were covered with scaffolding, which may have affected the feedback given.

The responses were mixed, with overall satisfaction with the greening evenly split into negative and positive. The main criticisms were a lack of maintenance, littering in the planters and the laneway, a lack of canopy trees, insufficient lighting and disappointment that there wasn't more vegetation.

The murals were the most popular element of the laneway with 64 per cent positive responses, compared to the overall project greening, which had less than 50 per cent positive feedback.

Guildford Lane

Laneway environment

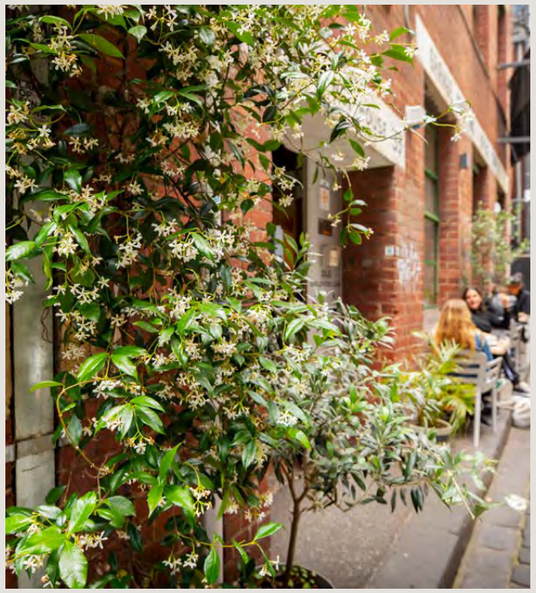
Sitting at the north end of Melbourne's inner-city grid, Guildford Lane runs east-west between Sutherland Street and Queen Street for about 140 metres. The western end of the laneway intersects with Flanigan Lane and McLean Alley, dividing it into two distinct parts. The eastern section, which is around 100 metres long, features attractive two- and three-story brick buildings with an industrial history, now largely converted to residential and office use, with a profusion of cafes and restaurants at ground level. The western section is flanked by walls with no direct frontage to the laneway. The sidewalks are very narrow – it's just 4.7 metres across from building to building – and the laneway operates as a shared zone between cars and pedestrians, and features quite a few loading areas.

Guildford Lane after greening. Photo by David Hanna Photography for the City of Melbourne, December 2022

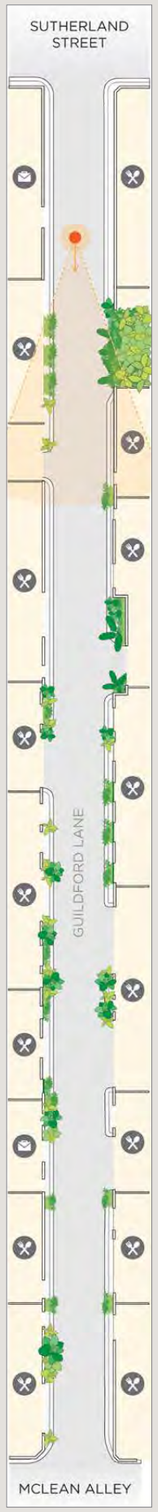
Community aspirations and design brief

Feedback from the local community showed they wanted the laneway greening design to enhance the character of the laneway as a green sanctuary within the city, and to feature a range of greenery that comes together in a coherent way. Here's the wish list that came out of the community feedback:

- lots of vegetation, featuring colours that will change with the seasons
- plant species that will improve biodiversity
- greening that is more vertical, and allows natural light into the narrow laneway in all seasons
- a design that can be implemented in stages, to allow greening to be expanded over time
- a design that includes playful elements
- greenery designed to be enjoyed from both street level and from the windows higher-up.



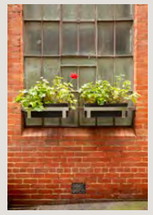
Location of Guildford Lane



Drain garden

Green roof

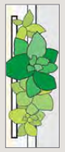
Window planters



Community garden

Planters

Pot plants



Key

Viewpoint section next page

Retail

Business

Restaurant

Green Your Laneway improvements

The following improvements were delivered in 2017 as part of the project:

- eight in-ground drain gardens planted with Star Jasmine (*Trachelospermum jasminoides*)
- 47 small pots planted with a wide range of species, chosen by residents from a list of suitable plants
- two large stainless-steel planters planted with Boston Ivy (*Parthenocissus tricuspidata*), Cut-leaf Daisies (*Brachyscome multifida*), Butterfly Bush (*Gaura lindheimeri*), Catmint (*Nepeta racemosa*) and Ivy-leaf Pelargonium (*Pelargonium peltatum*)
- 18 window boxes with Snake Plants (*Sansevieria trifasciata var. laurentii*), Bush Lilies (*Clivia miniata*), Geraniums (various Geranium species) and Sikkim Creepers (*Parthenocissus sikkimensis*)
- a greened roof area on private property
- a community garden
- a mural
- street-greening permits were issued to local residents and businesses, who between them acquired, planted and maintained more than 100 additional pot plants in the laneway
- signage and information posters were put up by the people in the community
- an automated watering system was installed, including an under-curb irrigation line, irrigation cabinet and wall mounted control boxes, pot plants are manually watered.

Laneway condition five years after completion

By 2023, plenty of extra greenery and explanatory signage had been added by people in the laneway community. Most of the plants – both original and new – were in excellent condition and by and large were thriving:

- all the drain gardens planted with Star Jasmine (*Trachelospermum jasminoides*) were well established with good wall coverage.
- the many extra pots and plants placed by people in the local community had created a lush and verdant feel in the laneway.
- across the entire laneway, the vegetation has been exceptionally well maintained.

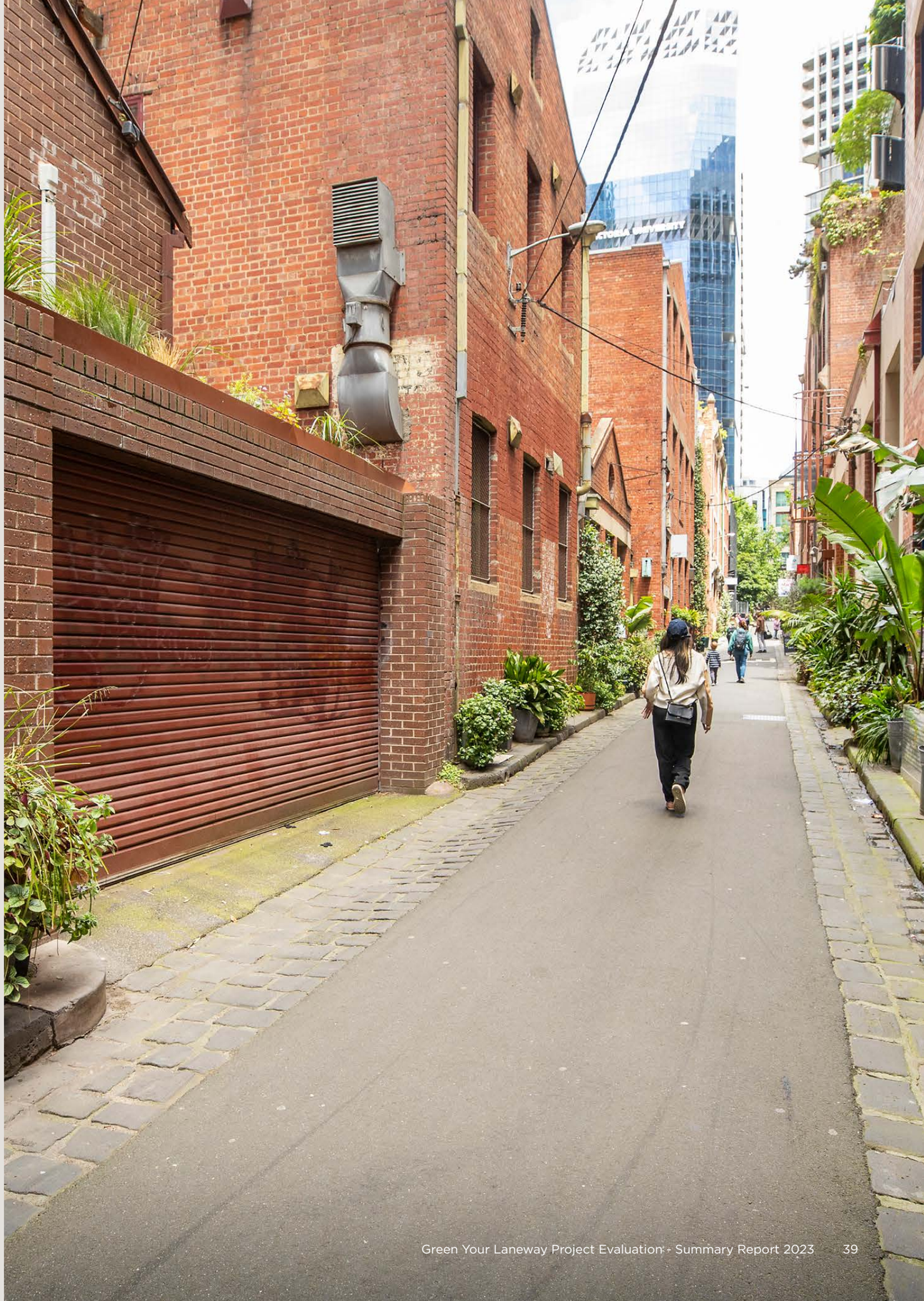
Community engagement feedback

In 2022 we asked the local community for feedback on the laneway greening at Guildford Lane, and found that the feedback was overwhelmingly positive, from visitors, residents and businesses alike.

The Guildford Lane survey had the largest number of responses of all the pilot laneways (87 out of a total 130), including a high number of responses from visitors.

All the new greening features received very high approval rates – with more than 80 per cent of the responses being positive. The most popular features were the window planters, the green roof, the community garden and the profusion of pots and planters. The public artwork – the 'least popular' feature – got a 70 per cent positive response rate.

Almost all respondents said they wanted more greening in the city, including more native plant species and street trees. Other suggestions were better lighting at night, strategies to slow vehicle traffic and more street furniture.



Katherine Place

Laneway environment

Located in the south-west corner of the Melbourne city grid, Katherine Place is a sizable laneway – it's around 10-metres wide building-to-building for most of its 90m length, narrowing to 6 metres at its northern end, where it meets an archway entrance into to Flinders Lane. At the north end of the laneway, a five-story apartment building hosts several ground-level cafes and eateries – a food precinct that has been branded The Archway. An underground car park runs beneath most of the laneway, and around halfway down Katherine Place intersects with Mercantile Place, a narrow lane running east to King Street.

Katherine Place after greening. Photo by David Hanna Photography for the City of Melbourne, December 2022

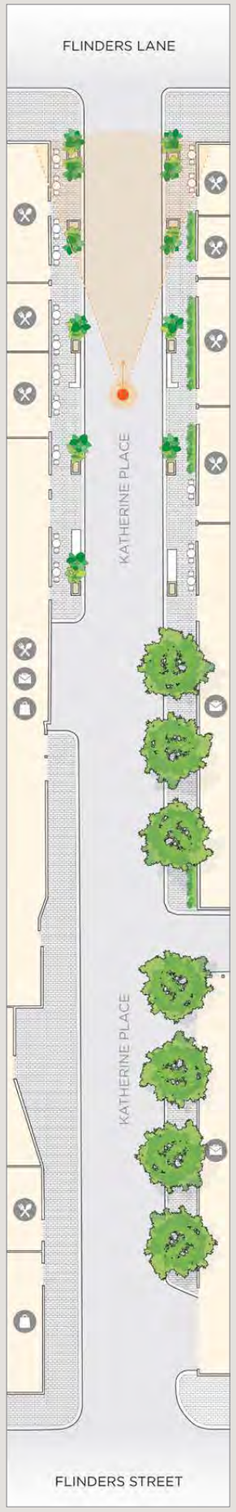
Community aspirations and design brief

Feedback from the local community showed they wanted the laneway greening design to focus on improving traffic management and increasing the visual appeal of the area. Here's the wish list that came out of the community feedback:

- a natural oasis in the city with space for people to meet up
- a design that includes unique elements, to reflect the distinctive character of the laneway
- vines, plants and trees that will change colour with the seasons, while still maintaining plenty of natural light
- well-maintained seating, and rubbish bins for cigarettes.
- a space for public art and daytime music.

Location map of Katherine Place

Greening in Katherine Place



Planter

In-ground Planter

Street tree

Key

Viewpoint section next page

Retail

Business

Restaurant

Section view Katherine Place

Green Your Laneway improvements

The following improvements were delivered in 2017 as part of the project:

- seven Firewheel Trees (*Stenocarpus sinuatus*) were planted in the southern part of the laneway, where there is no underlying car park
- nine free-draining, stainless-steel planters were placed next to archway pillars in the northern part of the laneway, planted with Lily Turf (*Liriope muscari*) and Creeping Fig (*Ficus pumila*)
- 10 self-watering window planters, planted with Bush Lilies (*Clivia miniata*)
- an in-ground planter with Boston Ivy (*Parthenocissus tricuspidata*)
- two movable plant pots
- car traffic was restricted, with the laneway changed to be a single-lane, one-way throughway for vehicles
- an automated watering system was installed, including an under-curb irrigation line, irrigation cabinet and wall-mounted control boxes.

Laneway condition five years after completion

During the five years following the original laneway greening many of the planted species had struggled to grow, or had suffered from changing conditions:

- the original plan to have the northern laneway walls covered in climbing plants didn't materialise – the Creeping Fig plants (*Ficus pumila*) had perished at some point, and been replaced with hardy succulent Foxtail Agaves (*Agave attenuata*), that have survived well despite cosmetic leaf damage.
- the Boston Ivy (*Parthenocissus tricuspidata*) had grown well in the northern corner of laneway, adding significant greenery over two stories of wall – but in mid-2021 it was removed so that the rendered wall could be painted. It is now recovering.
- many of the street trees were vandalised and continue to be replaced.
- the vegetation in the window planters was suffering from insufficient maintenance – and possibly from not getting enough light in their position underneath the archway.
- bikes and scooters were being locked to the tree protection frames, partially blocking the foot paths.
- littering in the planters and garden beds – mainly cigarette butts – was preventing vegetation from thriving.
- some of the free-draining stainless-steel planters were rusting at the bottom. They were still working fine, but would likely need replacing at some point in the future.

Community engagement feedback

The original design vision of turning Katherine Place into an inner-city oasis with a profusion of greenery running up the walls has so far been unsuccessful – something that was clearly reflected in the feedback we got when we surveyed the local community in early 2022.

The residents and businesses at Katherine Place were the least satisfied of the four pilot laneway communities, with the main criticisms being a lack of plant maintenance, poor plant performance, littering, disruptive vehicle traffic and vandalism. Businesses also felt that the disruptions caused by the greening construction works weren't justified by the meagre results.

Meyers Place

Laneway environment

Located at the eastern end of Melbourne's city grid, near Parliament Station, Meyers Place is around 100 metres long, with a width of 5 metres in its northern half and 5.8 metres in its southern half. At its south end, the laneway is flanked on both sides by multi-story car parks, while the rest of it features a number of popular restaurants and bars. The middle section of the laneway was permanently closed to traffic as part of the Green Your Laneway project, and now hosts plenty of outdoor dining areas. Two short side alleys, mainly used for access and bin storage, intersect with Meyers Place to the east and west. The laneway is almost exclusively home to businesses, with only one residential address in the entire laneway.

Meyers Place after greening. Photo by David Hanna Photography for the City of Melbourne, December 2022

Community aspirations and design brief

Feedback from the local community showed a desire for a laneway that's designed for people rather than vehicles, with a lighting design that matches Meyers Place's status as a dining and bar destination. Some laneway business owners also expressed interest in setting up co-funding arrangements with City of Melbourne to create more extensive greening in the laneway.

Here are the main things asked for in the community feedback:

- a vertical, connected corridor of green
- a design that retains the lane's quirky, idiosyncratic character, and features diverse plants
- a laneway that shines night and day, with the lighting levels designed to maximise safety and illuminate vegetation
- a lane that expresses the city's seasons, in colour, shape and light.

Overview map of Meyers Place

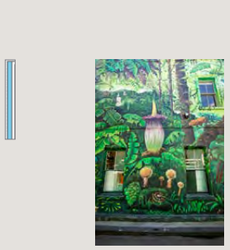
Greening in Meyers Place

Living wall

In-ground Planter

Street tree

Mural



Key

Viewpoint section next page

Retail

Bar

Business

Restaurant

Car park

Accommodation

Section view Meyers Place

Green Your Laneway improvements

The following improvements were delivered in 2017 as part of the project:

- eight street trees in the laneway's southern sections, including four Native Frangipani Trees (*Hymenosporum flavum*) on the west side, and four Weeping Figs (*Ficus benjamina*) on the east side
- an in-ground planter with Creeping Fig (*Ficus pumila*)
- a wall-mounted planter with succulents
- a wall mural
- the middle section of the laneway was closed to car traffic
- a co-funded green living wall was created at Loop Bar
- a water tank was installed in the south-eastern car park
- an automated watering system was installed, including an under-curb irrigation line, irrigation cabinet and wall-mounted control boxes
- passive stormwater-irrigation measures for tree pits were installed through curb penetrations.

Laneway condition five years after completion

By 2023, apart from a little cosmetic wear and tear, most of the landscaping done was still in place and thriving:

- the green living wall at Loop Bar was in excellent condition, giving the laneway tremendous visual impact. The wall's original installer, Fytogreen, makes six visits a year to do maintenance, with the upkeep costs paid by the building's tenant, Loop Bar.
- the Weeping Fig Trees (*Ficus benjamina*) at the south end of the laneway were well developed and providing good canopy cover for their age.
- there were some aspects of the greening that had been compromised by building works, and vandalism, and some of the planted species had been replaced for various reasons:
- the Creeping Fig Climbers (*Ficus pumila*) planted next to the south-west car park were replaced with Star Jasmine (*Trachelospermum jasminoides*), and a trellis was installed to prevent the wall being defaced with poster ads or graffiti. Unfortunately this measure hasn't been entirely successful, and the regular need to remove graffiti has slowed plant growth.
- a number of the Native Frangipani (*Hymenosporum flavum*) trees became infested with mealy bugs and were replaced with new Native Frangipanis and Weeping Fig (*Ficus benjamina*) trees. The Native Frangipanis appear to be struggling to grow, probably due to heat from street heaters and shade from umbrellas in the nearby outdoor dining areas.
- some of the street trees were prevented from getting passive irrigation, after local roadworks caused the stormwater drains and street slope to no longer be aligned with the tree pits.

Community engagement feedback

In early 2022, five years after the pilot laneway project, we asked the local community for feedback on the Meyers Place greening.

Visitors to Meyers Place were very positive about the laneway greening – they were particularly taken with the striking visual impact of the green living wall, and consistently said that they'd love to see more greening in other city laneways.

The laneway businesses and resident were more critical, mainly about a perceived lack of maintenance, poor street tree growth, littering, and the small amount of greening done compared to the disruptions from the construction works.

Overall the green living wall was the most popular feature, while the street trees were rated the poorest of all the greening improvements.

APPENDIX

Table 5: Plant species used in the Green Your Laneway pilot projects

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME(S)	ORIGIN	TYPE	APPLICATION	COROMANDEL PLACE	MEYERS PLACE*	GUILDFORD LANE	KATHERINE PLACE
Agave attenuata	Foxtail Agave	Exotic	Succulent	Pot				x
Aspidistra elatior	Cast Iron Plant	Exotic	Perennial herb	Pot			x	
Berberis thunbergii	Japanese Barberry	Exotic	Shrub	Pot	x			
Brachyscome multifida	Cut-leaf Daisy	Indigenous	Groundcover	Pot	x		x	
Bulbine bulbosa	Bulbine Lilly	Indigenous	Herb	Pot			x	
Carpobrotus glaucescens	Pig Face	Indigenous	Succulent	Pot			x	
Clivia miniata	Bush Lily	Exotic	Perennial herb	Pot			x	
Cordyline australis 'Red Star'	N/A	Exotic	Shrub	Pot	x			
Dianella caerulea	Blue Flax Lily	Native	Perennial herb	Pot			x	
Fatsia japonica	Aralia, Japanese Fatsia	Exotic	Shrub	Pot			x	
Festuca glauca	Blue Festcue	Indigenous	Ornamental grass	Pot			x	
Ficinia nodosa	Nobby Club Rush	Indigenous	Rush	Pot/Drain garden			x	
Ficus benjamina	Weeping Fig	Native	Tree	In-ground				
Ficus pumila	Creeping Fig	Exotic	Climber	Facade	x	x	x	x
Ficus microcarpa var. hillii	Hills Weeping Fig	Native	Tree	Large pot	x			
Gaura lindheimeri (White)	Butterfly Bush	Exotic	Perennial	Pot			x	
Geranium spp.	Geranium Red	Exotic	Perennial	Pot			x	
Goodenia hederacea	Ivy Goodenia	Native	Perennial herb	Pot			x	
Howea forsteriana	Kentia Palm	Exotic	Palm	Pot			x	
Hymenosporum flavum	Native Frangipani	Native	Tree	In-ground; Large pot	x	x		
Leucophyta brownii	Cushion Bush	Indigenous	Shrub	Pot			x	
Liriope muscari	Lily Turf	Exotic	Perennial herb	Pot	x			x
Magnolia doltsopa	Evergreen Magnolia	Exotic	Tree	Large pot				
Mentha suaveolens	Pineapple Mint	Exotic	Perennial herb	Pot			x	
Monstera deliciosa	Fruit Salad Plant	Exotic	Climber	Facade/Pot				
Myoporum parvifolium	Creeping Boobialla	Indigenous	Shrub	Pot			x	
Nepeta racemosa	Catmint	Exotic	Perennial herb	Pot			x	
Olea europaea 'Tollys Upright'	Tolley's Upright Olive	Exotic	Tree	Large pot			x	
Ophiopogon japonicus	Mondo Grass	Exotic	Perennial herb	Pot	x		x	
Parthenocissus sikkimensis	Sikkim Creeper	Exotic	Climber	Facade	x		x	
Parthenocissus tricuspidata	Boston Ivy	Exotic	Climber	Facade	x		x	x
Pelargonium peltatum	Ivy Geranium	Exotic	Trailing perennial	Pot			x	
Persicaria odorata	Vietnamese Mint	Exotic	Perennial herb	Pot			x	
Philodendron hederaceum var. oxycardium	Heart Leaf Philodendron	Exotic	Climber	Facade			x	
Phyllostachys aurea	Golden Bamboo	Exotic	Bamboo	Robust pot	x		x	
Rhapis excelsa	Lady's Finger	Exotic	Palm	Pot			x	
Sansevieria trifasciata 'laurentii'	Snake Plant	Exotic	Succulent	Pot			x	
Schefflera actinophylla	Australian Umbrella Tree	Native	Tree	Large pot	x			
Stenocarpus sinuatus	Firewheel Tree	Native	Tree	In-ground				x
Trachelospermum jasminoides	Star Jasmine	Exotic	Climber	Facade/Drain garden		x	x	

* Plant list for Meyers Place excludes proprietary green living wall system on Loop Bar

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