

Consultation Summary – Marks Park Playground

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Purpose

This Consultation Summary Report has been prepared to document findings of the community consultation on the proposed Marks Park Playground Upgrade project. The consultation occurred over the period four weeks from 10 March 2018 to 8 April 2018.

The report will detail the activities undertaken with the community during this period, provide a summary of the outcomes of the consultation activities, and propose actions to address issues identified by the community.

Background

The Marks Park Playground Upgrade project has been developed to improve the play experience within the park as identified in *Waverley Council's Play Space Strategy (PSS)*, to address dogs off leash management issues, and upgrade the park to the suite of furniture identified in the *Public Domain Technical Manual (PDTM)*.

The PSS proposes the playground to remain as a 'Neighbourhood Play Space' catering to the community in a 400m radius catchment area, within an 8 – 15 minute walk, and to be tailored to a wider age range up to 12 year olds.

The following actions from the PSS have been incorporated into the project scope:

- A1 - Provide a range of play experiences and cater to a range of age groups through active, imaginative, creative, social, quiet and free play.
- A4 - Interpret any significant site history into the design of the play space.
- B3 - Ensure play spaces are designed and located to achieve a high level of safety.
- E2 - Create play spaces that are sensitive to the cultural values of the community and strengthen the sense of place.

Additional work will address site issues identified in earlier community consultation, undertaken in January 2017, for general landscape works at Marks Park. These include:

- Footpath and easily accessible pathway from the playground to the amenities building, along Marks Lane behind the kerb.
- Upgrading the deteriorating timber post and log barrier with bollards as per the PDTM.
- Upgrading the timber and chain barrier around the playground with a steel hoop barrier to assist in management of off-leash dogs.
- Upgrade of park signage to assist in regulation of off-leash dogs and other regulatory management issues.
- Upgrade of park furniture, including bins, and seats.

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Consultation Methodology

The community were engaged through an online survey, social media, and a public face to face consultation event.

Council's consultation and engagement website, *Have Your Say Waverley* was updated on 10 March 2018 with key information on the project, draft plans, concept imagery with a direct link to the survey.

The *Have Your Say* public consultation event was advertised via a letter box drop inviting residents to view the draft plans at Marks Park on 24 March 2018 between 10am to 1pm, a total of 2,000 flyers were distributed (for distribution area refer Appendix A). Council staff were available during this time to present the proposed plans, answer questions and take feedback. In addition to the letter box drop, Council's official website, *Have Your Say Waverley*, social media and the *Wentworth Courier* were used as mediums to promote the public consultation event.

During the public consultation day attendees were invited to peruse the material provided and Council officers were available to talk through and present the content. Council officers invited participants to complete the survey on one of Council's digital tablets. A total of 20 people engaged with the Council officers and 5 surveys were submitted on the day.

Consultation Feedback Summary

Have Your Say Waverley received 218 visits, with 34 of those visitors downloading the draft plan. The online survey received 19 submissions in total, inclusive of formal responses from the Have Your Say Day and surveys independently completed online, and the quick poll received 10 votes.

The inclusion of the quick poll was to allow respondents to quickly cast their preference without having to complete a detailed survey. Of those that responded, 90% liked the proposed draft concept for the playground.

The detailed survey aimed to gather information on how people used the reserve and what they would like to see improved or addressed. The survey also asked what aspects of the draft design were supported or opposed.

Key findings from the received surveys include:

- Most respondents visit the reserve weekly (67%) or visited daily (33%).
- Most respondents visit for a short period, 30mins (50%) to 1 hour (44%).
- Almost all respondents walk to the reserve (94%).
- Majority of respondents were dissatisfied with the existing playground (61%).
- The most popular type of play experience is swinging (13 votes), followed by sliding (9 votes), and then climbing and nature play (8 votes each).
- Majority of respondents visited the park with children under the age of 6.
- General comments not pertaining to the playground included:
 - Addressing the management of off-leash dogs, whether it be a sign or barrier.
 - Inclusion of a shade structure.
 - Requests for a circulation path around Marks Park.

Discussion

The community feedback indicates the proposed draft design generally meets community expectations and requirements. The detailed development of the playground design will continue, with consideration of specific play related community comments. Respondents that had provided contact details will be

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circulated the updated design when completed, and the designs will be accessible to the public on Council's webpage.

Respondents raised items that are not play experience related, these include the inclusion of a shade structure, dog off-leash management, and a circulation path around Marks Park.

A shade structure had been considered for the draft concept, however, the location of the park is in a frontline coastal environment where there are multiple factors to discourage the erection of a shade structure. These include the higher winds that may stress a shade sail, and the high visual impact of a shade structure. The proposition of trees on the northern boundary, and the relocation of the playground towards these trees will assist in providing shade during the hotter times of the day. The option of a picnic shelter will also be investigated to provide immediate available shelter.

The issues raised in relation to dog-off leash management are being addressed through multiple actions in the proposed design. These actions aim to provide a low-key physical barrier, alternate access route, and signage to allow for practicable enforcement and education. The inclusion of a low garden barrier placed within the gardenbeds around the playspace will become a physical barrier for both children escaping the playground, and dogs wandering into the playspace. This fence has been used successfully in parks and reserves across Sydney (Sydney Park in St Peters, Stephen Street Reserve in Bondi). The works also propose a paved path on Marks Lane, providing an alternate route for dog walkers to access the Marks Park off-leash area without the need to walk through the play space. Park signage will also be improved with the upgrade in alignment with the Waverley Council Signage Strategy. Signs will provide additional information to dog owners to assist in education of regulatory requirements and to also allow for effective enforcement by Council Rangers.

The circulation path around Marks Park is being investigated separately to this project. The community was consulted in early 2017 in relation to the functional design of the circulation path and access to Mackenzies Point from Marks Park. Council is still pursuing this as part of Council's commitment to providing universal access to all users of the park, as identified in the *Waverley Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021* adopted in 2017.

Design Resolution

The design has been further developed to improve access into the playground, provide a level play area, increase play value and amenity.

Access into and around the playground has been resolved in more detail with:

- The main access path into the playground from the bottom corner off Marks Lane has been re-graded to provide a gentle change in level and easily accessible entry point.
- Access from the top corner off Fletcher Street has a set of steps to address the greater level change.
- A rubber soft-fall apron has been incorporated between the play area and new turf area to manage the change in level.
- The nature play space now continues around the entry and connects to the rubber soft-fall play area.
- A level rubber play area for easy access into all play equipment.

Play equipment has been selected for its suitability to meet the play experience of the target age ranges. All existing equipment will be replaced and upgraded, additional play elements have been included in the design to improve play value. A singular multi-play structure has been included to encourage children of all ages to play together and maximise play value for the available space and age range. The variety of

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play activities are designed to be accessible to certain abilities and provides for a progression in skill development through play.

Next Steps

- Councillors and the community will be provided with a summary of feedback received.
- The concept plans will be updated with the finalised play equipment and will be made available online.
- The design will be further developed in preparation for construction.
- Construction is anticipated to take up to 3 months and we are currently working through the programme to ensure disruption is minimised to previously organised events and the community.
- The community will be notified of any updates to the construction program as works progress.

Appendix B

Consultation Response Summary

Appendix C

Consultation Survey Responses