



Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report

Aranda Reserve Frenchs Forest - Playground Renewal

Consultation period: 15 February to 17 March 2024

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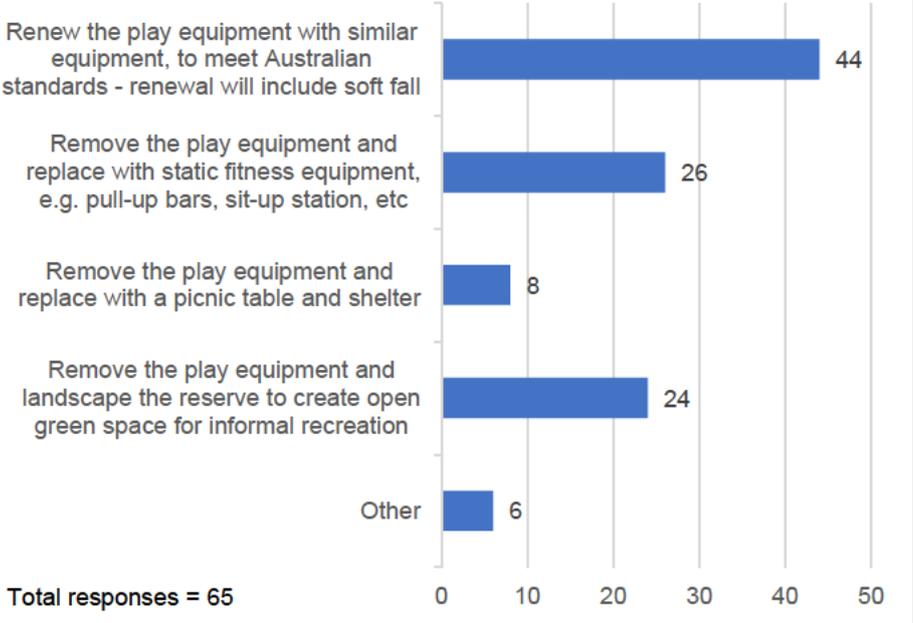
1. Summary

This report outlines the outcomes of community and stakeholder engagement as part of a proposal to either renew Aranda Reserve playground or replace with an alternative recreational use between 15 February to 17 March 2024.

The feedback collected during consultation indicated a high level of support to maintain and renew the playground in Aranda Reserve.

Feedback also suggested that many local residents would like to see fitness equipment or open informal recreational space.

1.1. Key outcomes

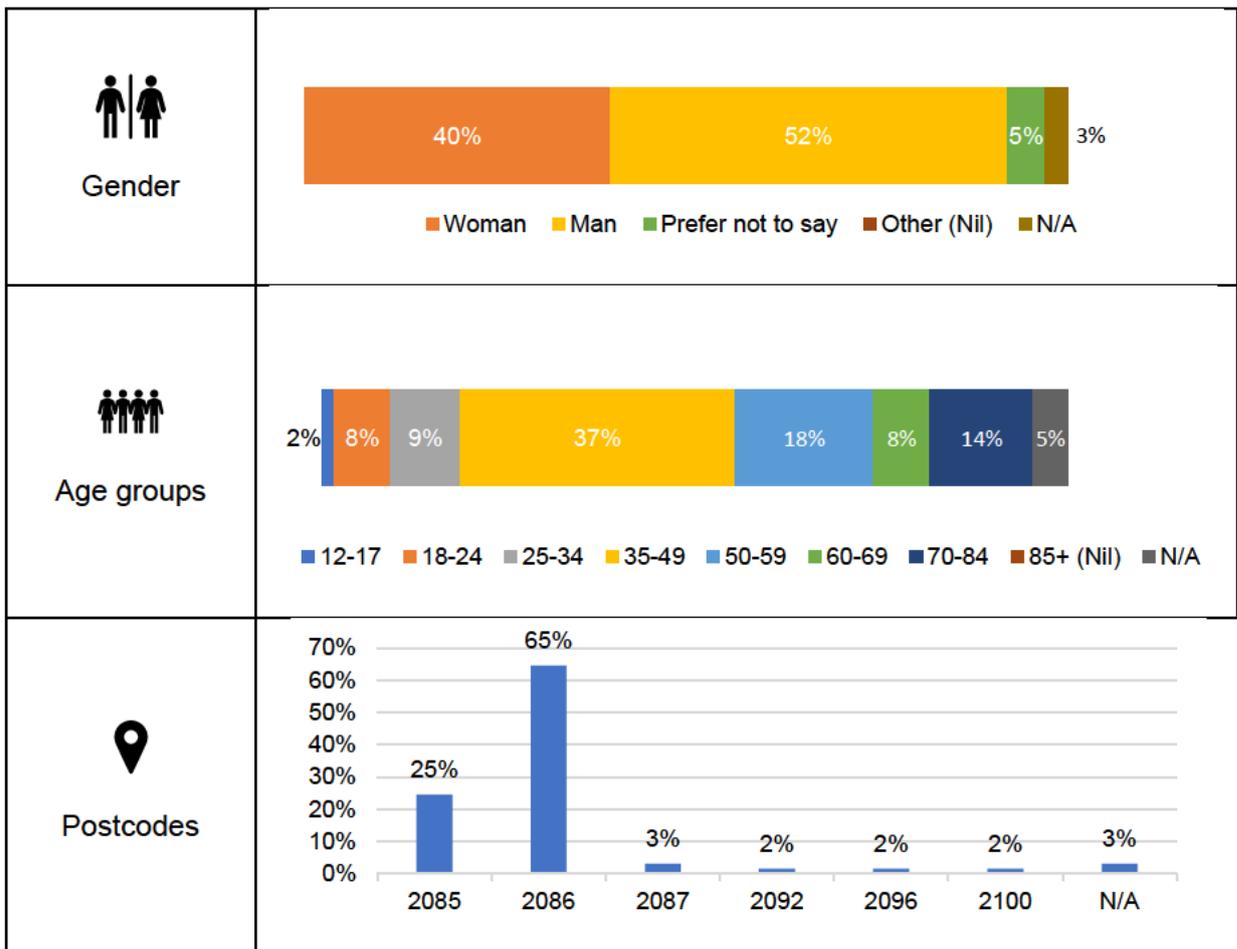
 Total unique responses	66*															
 How responses were received	Survey Written responses (email/letter)	Completions: 65 Number received: 1														
 Online question:	<p>Select your top two preferences form the options below:</p>  <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px;"> <caption>Online Question Results</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Option</th> <th>Number of Responses</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Renew the play equipment with similar equipment, to meet Australian standards - renewal will include soft fall</td> <td>44</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Remove the play equipment and replace with static fitness equipment, e.g. pull-up bars, sit-up station, etc</td> <td>26</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Remove the play equipment and replace with a picnic table and shelter</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Remove the play equipment and landscape the reserve to create open green space for informal recreation</td> <td>24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total responses</td> <td>65</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Option	Number of Responses	Renew the play equipment with similar equipment, to meet Australian standards - renewal will include soft fall	44	Remove the play equipment and replace with static fitness equipment, e.g. pull-up bars, sit-up station, etc	26	Remove the play equipment and replace with a picnic table and shelter	8	Remove the play equipment and landscape the reserve to create open green space for informal recreation	24	Other	6	Total responses	65
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 Feedback themes	Young families currently using the playground Play equipment options and styles	Other uses for the reserve including open space														

*Not every respondent made a comment in addition to answering the sentiment question.

1.2. How we engaged

 Have Your Say: visitation stats	Visitors: 252	Visits: 335	Average time onsite: 1 min 23 seconds
 Print media and collateral	Letterbox drop: 2085 and 2086 Site signs used: Yes		Distribution: 183 Number of signs: 2
 Electronic direct mail (EDM)	Community Engagement (fortnightly) newsletter: 2 editions		Distribution: 22,300 subscribers

1.3. Who responded¹



¹ Demographic data was gathered by request only. The data represented only includes those respondents who provided this detail.

2. Background

Council's [Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Strategy and Action Plan](#) identified that there were a high number of playgrounds in the vicinity of Aranda Reserve, Frenchs Forest. The plan included an action to consult with the local community to establish if there was a desire for the playground to be renewed or removed and replaced with an alternative recreational use.

3. Engagement objectives

Community and stakeholder engagement aimed to:

- build community and stakeholder awareness of participation activities
- provide accessible information so community and stakeholders can participate in a meaningful way
- identify community and stakeholder concerns, local knowledge and values
- recognise, manage and communicate the needs and interests of community and stakeholders, including decision makers
- seek out and facilitate the involvement of those affected by or interested in a project
- communicate to community and stakeholders how their input was incorporated into the planning and decision making process.

4. Engagement approach

Community and stakeholder engagement for the Aranda Reserve Frenchs Forest - Playground Renewal was conducted between 15 February and 17 March 2024, and consisted of a series of activities that provided opportunities for community and stakeholders to contribute.

The engagement was planned, implemented and reported in accordance with Council's [Community Engagement Strategy](#) (2022).

A project page² was established on our have your say platform with information provided in an accessible and easy to read format.

The project was primarily promoted through our regular email newsletter (EDM) channels.

Feedback was captured through an online survey embedded onto the have your say project page. The form included a question that directly asked respondents to nominate their top two preferences from a list of the following options:

- Renew the play equipment with similar equipment, to meet Australian standards - renewal will include soft fall
- Remove the play equipment and replace with static fitness equipment, e.g. pull-up bars, sit-up station, etc
- Remove the play equipment and replace with a picnic table and shelter
- Remove the play equipment and landscape the reserve to create open green space for informal recreation

² <https://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/aranda-drive-frenchs-forest-playground-renewal>

- Other (please specify).

An open-field comments box provided community members a space to explain provide any other feedback they wished to contribute.

Email and written comments were also invited.

5. Findings

The feedback collected during consultation indicated a high level of support to maintain and renew the playground in Aranda Reserve. Many respondents commented that there were local families that valued the playground.

Feedback also suggested that many local residents would like to see fitness equipment or open informal recreational space.

Other comments suggested that there could be more play equipment or that the park could cater for other ages and user groups by incorporating fitness equipment, open space or a community garden.

All respondents were generally supportive of either the playground to be renewed or used for alternative recreation activities.

Table 1: Issues, change requests and other considerations

Theme	Issues, change requests and other considerations raised	Council's response
Young families currently using the playground	Many respondents commented that there were young families in the area who value the playground, and it should therefore be renewed.	The preference to renew the playground is noted.
Play equipment options and style	Some respondents commented that there should be more or better play equipment that catered to a variety of ages.	This is a small playground with limited space. New equipment will hopefully cater for a range of users, however it is difficult to cater for all in such a small playground.
Other uses for the reserve including open space	Some respondents commented that the reserve should include other facilities such as fitness equipment, open space or a community garden.	The playground will only utilise a portion of the reserve, leaving space for informal recreation.

Appendix 1 Verbatim community and stakeholder responses*

Number	Comment via Your Say Website
1	Please renew the playground for children, my son loves the swing
2	The children's park at the Frenchs Forest Showground has been beautifully upgraded and I feel fitness equipment would be ideal in this park. There are many local adults walking in the area at differing times of the day and I feel this equipment would enhance their exercise routine. A combination of fitness equipment and play equipment would, in my view, be a great addition to the area.
3	<i>No comment provided.</i>
4	<i>No comment provided.</i>
5	<i>No comment provided.</i>
6	Fitness equipment would be a great addition! Please also include at least one bench seat and a bit of natural green space.
7	<i>No comment provided.</i>
8	<i>No comment provided.</i>
9	The swing sets that are being installed are too small and absolutely BORING. No parent wants their child covered in dirty wood chip that gets infested with weeds, and the rubberised surfaces are hot and useless. Please put in a decent BIG swing set on grass, so simple, cheap and easy.
10	<i>No comment provided.</i>
11	<i>No comment provided.</i>
12	<i>No comment provided.</i>
13	<i>No comment provided.</i>
14	Have a fun park with a flying fox
15	<p>Dear Council,</p> <p>Thanks for the opportunity to comment on options for the Aranda Reserve to make it more appropriate for the years to come.</p> <p>Though I have lived in Frenchs Forest for 53 years and in a very near street to Aranda Drive, I have no concept of how the current Reserve, with its aging play equipment, has and is being used. I presume the Council have some data as to the volume of people that use the Reserve over the recent years, and that this info has enabled the various options to be suggested.</p> <p>It's a very complex subject to arrive at a best option, while noting the ever-changing demographics and together with the changing social patterns and the ever-changing activities being offered for all ages.</p> <p>However, I commend the Council for seeking the community's opinion on a variety of Council options.</p> <p>Therefore, to assist the Council's process towards making a decision, I offer the options 3 and 4, as I've marked above.</p> <p>Though I support, in general, the need to slowly increase the density of homes within our community, I strongly reject an 'other' option which is not listed, but may be suggested and that is to replace the Reserve with a dwelling/s. The remaining and existing green spaces must be absolutely kept.</p>

*Personal details and inappropriate language have been redacted where possible. Spelling and grammatical errors have been amended only where misinterpretation or offence may be caused.

Number	Comment via Your Say Website
	Good luck with your decision and I look forward to reading of your approved plan. Regards
16	This location is one which can be walked to from many streets and surrounding residences. It suits very small children. When our children were young we would walk there from home and it was an outing for a little person. The addition of a picnic table and shelter would help parents and grandparents supervise and enjoy.
17	<i>No comment provided.</i>
18	<p>My vote goes for removing the play equipment and landscape the reserve to create open green space for informal recreation.</p> <p>If you replace the existing play equipment with similar I'm assuming it will still be a primarily grassed reserve. My concern with this is that the council does not maintain grassed reserves in our area sufficiently.</p> <p>The grass in this reserve and the reserve between Pound Avenue and Nianbilla Place gets mowed so infrequently that the grass is often up to knee height. We had to stop using both of these playgrounds when our kids were very young as we always left the reserve with leeches.</p> <p>Access to Aranda reserve is a little sloped / steep. I think it would be amazing to grade an access route into the park for people with disabilities and older residents living in the street.</p> <p>So, my vote is for accessible landscaping that will be properly maintained by the council and not left to go wild.</p>
19	<i>No comment provided.</i>
20	It would be nice if the playground would have a few more equipment. A rocking horse and a swing is not really a playground.
21	This type of equipment would possibly be used by a greater number of residents and travelers.
22	<i>No comment provided.</i>
23	A community garden would be great here but I spent many years in my childhood on this play equipment and would like to see it renewed so others can enjoy
24	<i>No comment provided.</i>
25	<i>No comment provided.</i>
26	Fitness equipment would great. Please include at least one bench seat and open green space for older people to also enjoy.
27	<i>No comment provided.</i>
28	<i>No comment provided.</i>
29	<p>The fact that there are other playgrounds in the area doesn't mean that this playground should be abandoned or re-used. We should take every action we can to encourage children to engage in outdoor physical activity. Perhaps the nature of the equipment at this playground could be quite different from that in playgrounds close to it?</p> <p>Given that this reserve is closely surrounded by houses, I don't think it's appropriate to establish it as a picnic area where people may conduct informal parties and gatherings.</p>
30	Renew the play equipment plus provide shaded seating for parents. This may include a picnic table. It may also include alternative play equipment to what is currently there.
31	<i>No comment provided.</i>
32	Kids play equipment is a great idea in these small local reserves. Landscaping to encourage using the whole space would also be welcome

Number	Comment via Your Say Website
33	I have two young kids and we always go to the park to play on the swing. Please include a swing and a slide with a soft rubber floor. If there's space for some exercise equipment (pull up bar, dip bar) that would be great too.
34	<i>No comment provided.</i>
35	<i>No comment provided.</i>
36	There are many families with children who live in or near Aranda Drive and who would love for the equipment to be upgraded. We have 3 children under 10 years old and live in close vicinity. Upgraded play equipment, including swings, a slide, climbing frame or something similar would be popular with the local children.
37	<i>No comment provided.</i>
38	<i>No comment provided.</i>
39	<i>No comment provided.</i>
40	<i>No comment provided.</i>
41	<i>No comment provided.</i>
42	<i>No comment provided.</i>
43	<i>No comment provided.</i>
44	Presently, this reserve looks very dead. I wouldn't ever take a child there. It is boring and ugly. Very misplaced as it now is. Seems it would be a better place for community gatherings, street parties where everyone is welcome.
45	Upgrade the swings and bring back the slide that used to be there. My parents live down the road and often take my kids there for a play. The old playground at Yindela went a few years ago, so please don't get rid of this one.
46	A lot of young families live in the area therefore the need for kids playground equipment. The inclusion of some fitness equipment would be suitable for young parents in the area.
47	This is specifically a children's playground and it should be maintained with both adult and children's facilities similar to Clontarf.
48	<i>No comment provided.</i>
49	<i>No comment provided.</i>
50	Reserve is used mainly by young kids riding on swing & is a good option for parents in the neighbourhood.
51	<i>No comment provided.</i>
52	<i>No comment provided.</i>
53	<i>No comment provided.</i>
54	Would be great to increase the amount of play equipment rather than just a straight replacement. There is lots of space there. We regularly visit
55	<i>No comment provided.</i>
56	<i>No comment provided.</i>
57	<i>No comment provided.</i>
58	<i>No comment provided.</i>
59	<i>No comment provided.</i>
60	Benches and open green space. Fitness equipment also.

Number Comment via Your Say Website	
61	Some more benches to sit and enjoy the open green space. Some fitness equipment would be a good addition also- not too much though. A combination of both would be ideal.
62	<i>No comment provided.</i>
63	<i>No comment provided.</i>
64	<i>No comment provided.</i>
65	The people I see currently using the park are children under high school age. I therefore think they are unlikely to use fitness facilities. If the toddlers and younger children attending really wanted to have a picnic they would bring a rug and have one if they really wanted to and I never see that happening, so I don't think a picnic table would get the use.
Comments received via Email	
66	<p>Thank you for your advice on the proposed Playground renewal as noted above.</p> <p>As the [REDACTED] resident of the Reserve we are very cognizant of the use of the reserve by neighbours and general public.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The playground swing structure appears in good condition other than a coat of paint. However the swings should be upgraded in particular the baby swing. 2. The " rocking horse " or "chicken" structure are not used very often. A new one something similar for a playground could be installed. 3. The memorial seat is used considerably by the residents and school children. also the tradies so should not be removed. It has good memories of families in the street. 4. As a point of interest you should be aware that we make the effort to keep the reserve clean and remove any papers etc., left. also we have water for the dog walkers. <p>In closing if we can assist in any way please contact us.</p> <p>Regards,</p>

Document administration	
Version	1.0
Date	17 April 2024
Approval	Content provided and approved by Parks Assets – Planning, Design & Delivery Team. Responsible manager: Lia Skountzos
Status	Final
Related Projects	Let's Play Open Space and Recreation Strategy and Action Plan
Notes	Community and stakeholder views contained in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Northern Beaches Council or indicate a commitment to a particular course of action.