

Frederick Wachter Reserve



FINAL REPORT

Frederick Wachter Playground Upgrade

Community Consultation Report

May 2020



Community Consultation Report

Executive Summary

Outlines landscape architecture was engaged to undertake community consultation for the design of the district level playground upgrade for Frederick Wachter Reserve.

The consultation was based on the brief provided by Council as well as feedback from the initial consultation for the Frederick Wachter Reserve Masterplan (2018).

The consultation material provided enabled the respondents to comment on:

- Their preferred theme of the playground (Market Garden or Wetland).
- The layout of the playground
- The location of the new playground
- Their preferred type of play (active, social, adventure, nature, tower or water-play); as well as any additional comments they had about the playground upgrade.

Objectives

Outlines worked closely with Council to develop the initial community consultation plan that includes the following consultation principles:

- Undertake the consultation prior to design ideas being explored or developed - listen to the community first.
- Run the consultation through various platforms including school consultations, park pop-ups and an online survey.
- Provide a range of opportunities and avenues for the stakeholders and community members to participate in the consultation processes and to provide feedback.
- Encourage community members and stakeholders to provide feedback to ensure the best possible project outcome.
- Provide an evidence based design outcome for the project site.

Outcome

The three sets of consultation feedback received from Council have been analysed and the overall findings have been collated into this report.

Consultation feedback was received from:

- Chandler Kindergarten, Bloomfield Road, Keysborough
- The Children's Advisory Group workshop;
- Online survey through Survey Monkey

These sets of feedback showed a variety of responses and covered a range of age groups and community members.



Key Findings from Project Brief and Masterplan Report

The playground needs to be easily accessed from surrounding roads and pedestrian networks. There should be a positive activation of the park and adjoining event spaces. Accessible connections across play zones should be provided with clear view lines to surrounding use areas (i.e. picnic, toilets, tennis courts and adjoining lawn.)

The playground should include a wide variety of equipment to cater for all ages and abilities, with a diverse range of activities (active, social, passive, nature). A theme/local narrative should be identified for a unique character, including how this relates to the expansion and restoration of a wetland environment/habitat.

Shade is to be an important factor in the design of the playground, with a mixture of shade structures and trees. Planting is to be incorporated into the design of the playground and connect to the chosen theme. Furthermore the tree planting plan/program provided by Council is to be followed.

Community feedback from the initial masterplan report in relation to the playground and associated area focuses on:

- the need for more trees and shade to play spaces
- the enhancement of natural areas
- incorporating public art into the space as well as,
- a need for spaces that provide play options for a variety of ages (i.e. bigger swings and play for older kids/teenagers).

Council Playground Strategy and Action Plan Key Findings:

Greater Dandenong City Council's *Playground Strategy and Action Plan (2013-2023)* runs through the requirements of a district playground. These requirements include the following:

- Include custom designed equipment with strong, large scale themes and integrated artwork.
- 70 plus play activities to be provided across play spaces.
- Minimum 50% activities to be accessed/utilised by children carers with a range of physical, social or emotional disabilities.
- Utilisation by children of diverse age groups (ranging from 2-14 years of age) and abilities, including children with a broad range of physical, social or emotional disabilities.
- Integrated landscaping and the incorporation of natural elements (such as logs, boulders, water features, mounds etc), both within and around the playground to inspire natural or sensory play.
- Provide physical, cognitive, social, challenging, explorative, imaginative, natural, sensory, quiet, cubby and fun types of play that simulate the mind to all ages and ability groups.
- Provide multi-functional, multi-use, multi-level equipment that can be used by all ages and ability groups.
- Provide equipment that can be accessed with carers.
- Each district playground should include a feature element, landmark or icon that children can identify that playground with.
- Where possible, district playgrounds demonstrate a clear sense of entrance.



Previous Consultation Findings

Consultation findings on community playgrounds recently conducted in the area were provided by Council.

The key findings were as follows:

- Active play was the most popular type of play.
- Nature play also very popular especially when incorporated with sensory play (i.e smells, sounds, sights etc.)
- Movement based equipment was the most popular (swings, slides, monkey bars, ropes etc.)
- Social equipment also popular (see-saws, sharing swings, seating etc.)
- Drawing and reading areas popular.
- More trees, planting etc. that is integrated with play space.
- No separating of play based on ability.
- Favourite types of equipment: swings, flying fox, rock climbing walls, sandpits, giant slides, giant net, tower slide, monkey bars and trampolines).
- Seating spaces around the play space were also viewed as highly important.

Chandler Kindergarten

A workshop with Chandler Kindergarten was conducted by the kindergarten (March 2020). Due to COVID19 restrictions, workshops could not be attended by Outlines or Council members. The kindergarten advised that there was a limited response due to the majority of children not present due to COVID19.

A group of ten children participated in these consultation activities and results were recorded and provided to Outlines. Outcomes of this workshop can be found in the attached analysis pages.

Children's Advisory Group Workshop

The Children's Advisory Group Workshop was conducted by the Council on 11 March 2020.

The Children's Advisory Group Workshop is a regular event organised by Council's Children's Services Department to promote students/children's participation in all aspects of Council's business and planning. The forum is typically attended by students and teachers from local primary schools. On the day the consultation was held, there was 15 primary schools represented with a total of 30 students altogether.

Council officers asked the students to answer a series of questions that were displayed on the consultation posters. The questions asked for their opinion on the playground location, theme, types of play and an open ended question for other feedback.

Results

- Wetland theme preferred over Market Garden
- Active, Tower and Water-play were the top three rated zones selected by the students.

Outcomes of this workshop can be found in the attached analysis pages.



Online Survey

An online survey was conducted from 20 March 2020 until 8 May 2020. The online survey was promoted via letter drops to surrounding areas within a 500 metre catchment. Six A0 posters were displayed at five different locations within the park and in front of Chandler Kindergarten (Bloomfield Road). The online survey formed the main consultation method with the wider community.

A total of **121** residents responded to the survey. The questions on the survey captured:

- Respondents age-group
- Children's age-group
- Postcode
- Preferred playground theme
- Ranking the six types of play plus;
another open ended question for other comments.

Results

Age Group:

The dominant age group that participated in the survey were aged **30-45**, representing **58%** of participants, followed by those aged **46-65**.

Ages of children they will bring to the playground:

Respondents would primarily bring children aged **0-6** to the park, followed by those aged **7-12** and **13-17**.

Preferred Theme

The preferred theme was the Market Garden at **53%**, closely followed by Wetland at **47%**.

Preferred Zone

The most valued zone was the active zone, closely followed by the adventure zone and then the water-play zone. The nature zone was the least favourite with only six votes for it as the favourite zone.

Other Comments

There was a large number of comments from the participants regarding what else they would like to see in the playground/reserve. The most common item brought up was shade/shelter (including nature shade, built shade, sheltered seating/BBQ zones), which was mentioned by **23** participants.

"SHADE SHADE SHADE SHADE SHADE PLEASE!!"

Other popular items included the following:

- **BBQ/Social Area - 18 mentions** - *"Undercover BBQ and seating area."*
- **Basketball Court - 15 mentions** - *"Could there please be basketball courts placed somewhere at the reserve. It is long overdue and is a shame there are no basketball courts."*
- **Toilet - 13 mentions** - *"Some more public toilets. Undercover area with benches and tables and BBQ's."*



Other popular items included the following (continued):

- **Seating Areas - 11 mentions** - *"An area near BBQ covered with tables and seats."*
- **Trees/Nature - 10 mentions** - *"More trees and bicycle tracks."*
- **Exercise area/equipment - 10 mentions** - *"Fix exercising equipment for older kids and adults so they can do stretches and exercise outdoor while their kids are playing in the playground."*
- **Bike/Scooter track/Skate-park - 9 mentions** - *"It would be good to see Victoria's first Pump track at the reserve (a continuous loop, providing hours of exercise fun for all ages whether on a BMX, scooter or skateboard)."*

A graph of all comments/items and number of mentions can be found in the attached analysis pages, along with further analysis of the online survey.

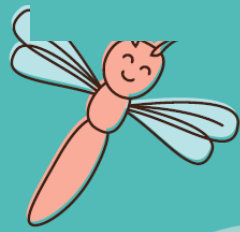
Return Brief: Summary Consultation and Next Steps

Despite the COVID-19 restriction, Frederick Wachter Reserve playground consultation has generated a high number of interests from the community which has generated a high number of feedback (total 161 responses). The three consultation activities have successfully captured all age groups within the community, from the kindergarten students (4yo), to primary school students (10-12yo), and parent's groups (i.e. online survey participants).

While the Market Garden theme had slightly higher votes (**53%**) in the online survey, the Wetland theme had slightly higher votes (**58%**) in the Children's Advisory Group workshop. When combining the two results, the total votes for the two themes are spread almost evenly (i.e. **51%** votes for the Market Garden vs. **49%** votes for Wetland). Thus, it is almost impossible to choose one theme over another. Based on this finding, it is recommended that the playground upgrade should be developed with both references (i.e. Market Garden theme with a subtle reference to the Wetland theme for the water-play activities).

On review of the consultation outcomes, in respect to previous referenced play elements, the following zones/play areas are noted as being desirable and should be considered in the playground design (in no particular order of priority).

- **Active Zone** - This was the most popular in the Children's Advisory Group Workshop and online survey. Active play items such as trampolines, swings and hamster wheels were some of the highest rated play items by the students at the workshop.
- **Water-play Zone/Elements** - Again, this was highly popular with the students at the Children's Advisory Group Workshop as well as Chandler Kindergarten. It was the third most popular zone on the online survey. There is opportunity to make a strong water-play zone/area within the playground, this could also incorporate items that fall within other zones.
- **Adventure Zone** - This was in the top three zones amongst both the Children's Advisory Group Workshop and online survey.



Return Brief: Summary Consultation and Next Steps - Continued

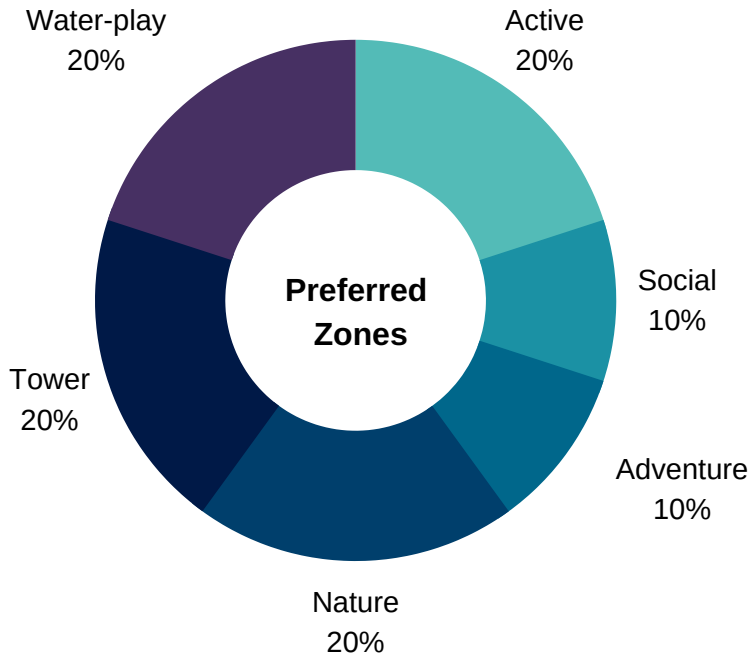
- **Tower Zone** - This was popular amongst the Children's Advisory Group Workshop but not highly rated by the online survey group. However, the site has good potential for outlooks across to the wetland that tower play can provide. Giant slides were also a highly popular play item that can be incorporated within a tower.
- **Shade** is another important component to consider in the design in both the built and natural forms.

Additional to the playground theming and elements, there were additional strong desires for shade/shelter, seating, trees/nature and exercise/basketball courts. We note that these elements have been proposed elsewhere within the masterplan, however, where appropriate, consideration should be given to these elements within the development of the playground.

In conclusion, the outcomes and feedback from this highly successful community consultation process will be used to develop a concept design for the playground. This design process will occur over the coming months and be presented to Councillors at a future date.



Consultation Analysis - Chandler Kindergarten Results (10 Participants)



Most Liked/Suggestions:

(Note that they could vote for more than one)

- **Giant Watering Can** - 5 Votes
- **Giant Banana** - 2 Votes
- **Play Equipment** - 1 Vote
- **Climbing** - 3 Votes
- **Towers** - (2 Votes)
- **Ladybug theme** - (1 Vote)
- **Water-play** - (4 Votes)
- **Giant Reeds** - (2 Votes)
- **Giant Frog** - 1 Vote)

Other:

The Kindergarten group did not indicate a preference towards either of the theme options. No other ideas/comments were suggested.

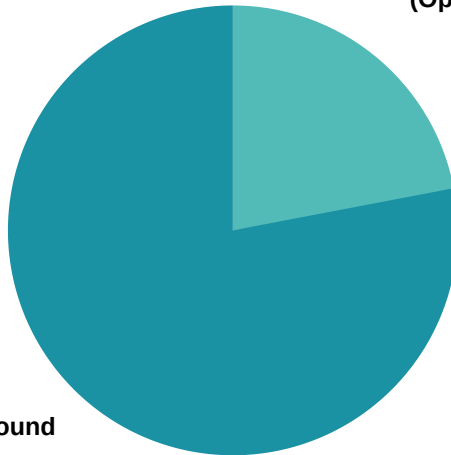




Consultation Analysis - Children's Forum Workshop Results (30 Participants)

Preferred Location

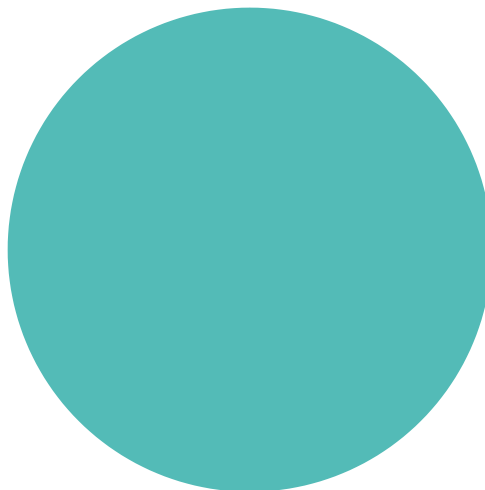
(Option 1) To the north of the existing playground
22%



(Option 2) To the south of the existing playground
78%

Preferred Orientation

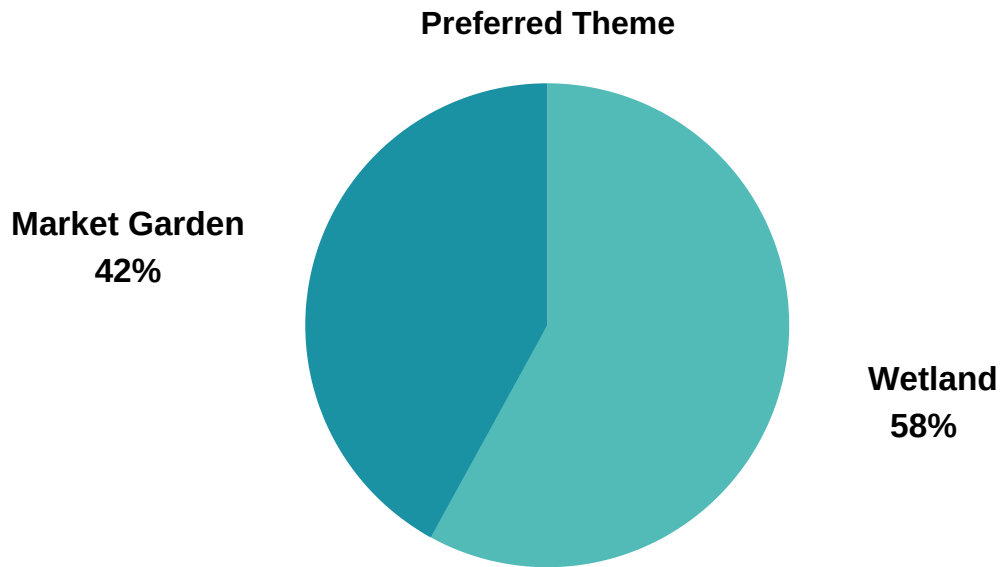
(Option B) - Placing the six play zones in the west-east direction with nature play threads as a visual and physical link
100%



Note - this is compared to Option A - connecting the southern adventure and the northern nature zone with the active-water-social zone thread in a north-south direction.



Consultation Analysis - Children's Forum Workshop Results (30 Participants) - Continued

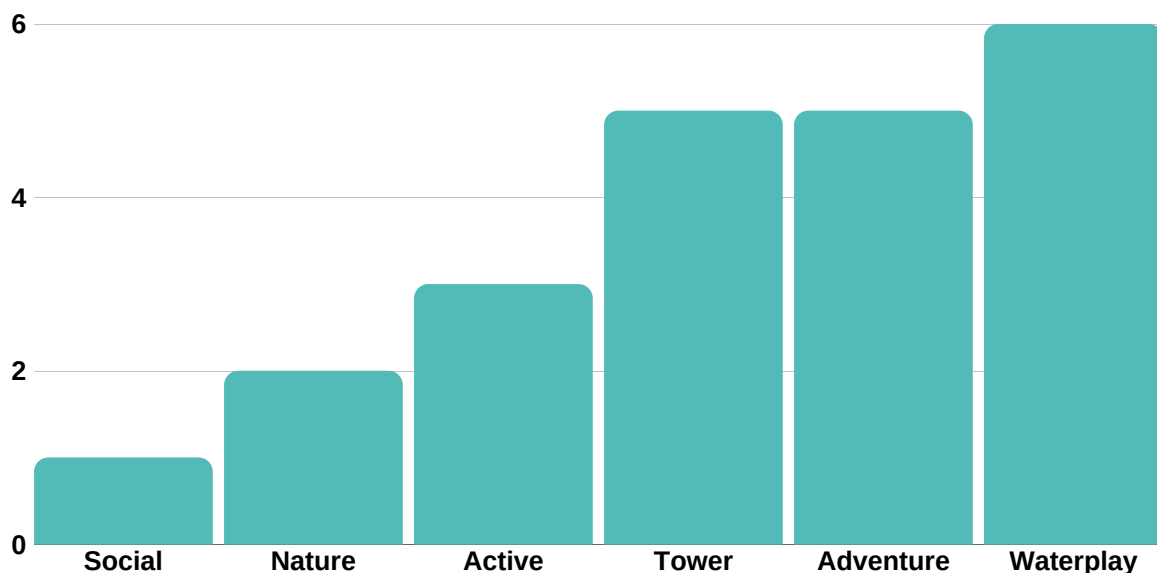


Other Theme Suggestions:

There was a range of other theme ideas suggested by the schools including beach, pokemon, zoo, animals, space, forest, toys, bugs, pollution, water, music, wooden home and countries. Elements from some of these themes already exist within the proposed consultation themes and/or could be incorporated into them.

Preferred Zones:

Note - 22 students out of the 30 students participated in this question.



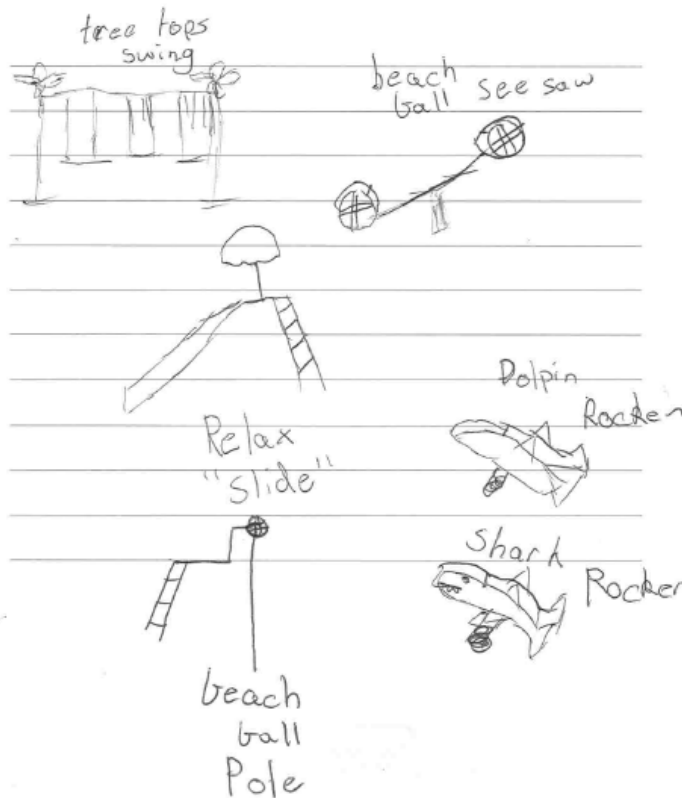


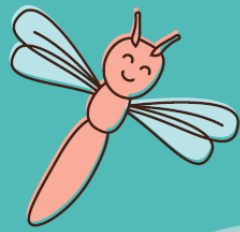
Consultation Analysis - Children's Forum Workshop Results (30 Participants) - Continued

These images below were submitted by the students on the day that highlight other ideas they have for Frederick Wachter Reserve.



beach theme





Consultation Analysis - Children's Forum Workshop Results (30 Participants) - Continued

What is most important to you?

The majority of the students said that they just wanted a place to have fun. They also made a few other comments around:

- having a variety of spaces
- having a grass area and;
- having a fun and interactive play and swings.

Other comments by the students included:

- Wanting BBQ and picnic spaces
- Having a family area
- Skateboard zones and shops
- The importance of the layout of the areas in relation to the playground
- To have varying heights of play equipment
- To incorporate unusual items and a flying fox



Trampoline - 14 votes

Basket swings - 12 votes

Swings - 10 votes

Water-play - 8 votes

Giant slides - 8 votes

Hamster Wheel - 7 votes

Obstacle - 5 votes

Towers - 4 votes

Climbing - 4 votes

Interactive - 3 votes

Rockers/see-saw - 2 votes

Flying fox - 2 votes

Nature - 2 votes

Cubbies/quiet places - 1 vote

Carousel - 1 vote

Musical - 1 vote

Sand play - 1 vote

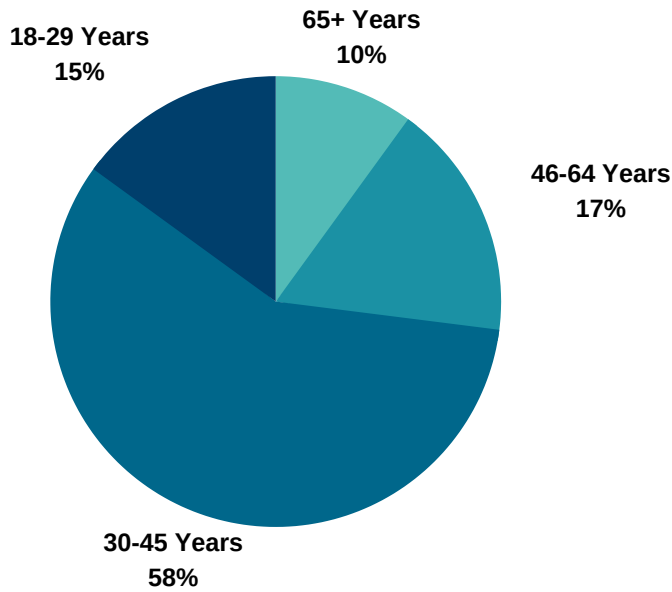
Embankment slides - 0 votes

Play panels - 0 votes

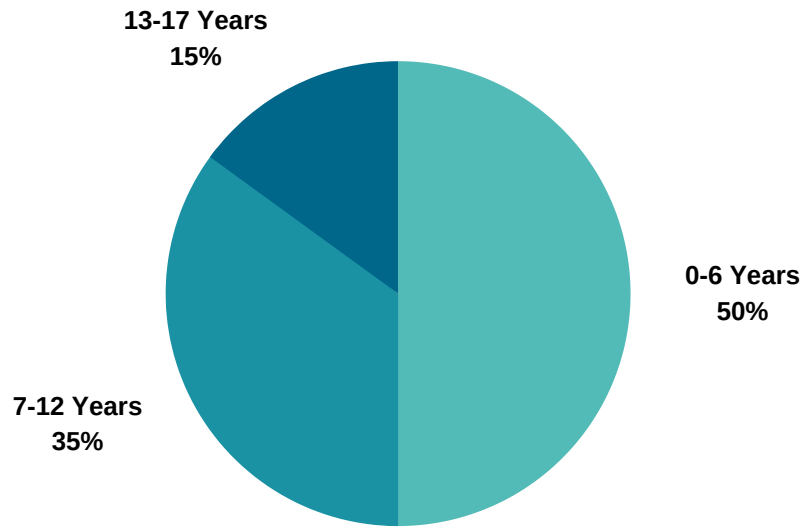


Consultation Analysis - Online Survey Results (121 Participants)

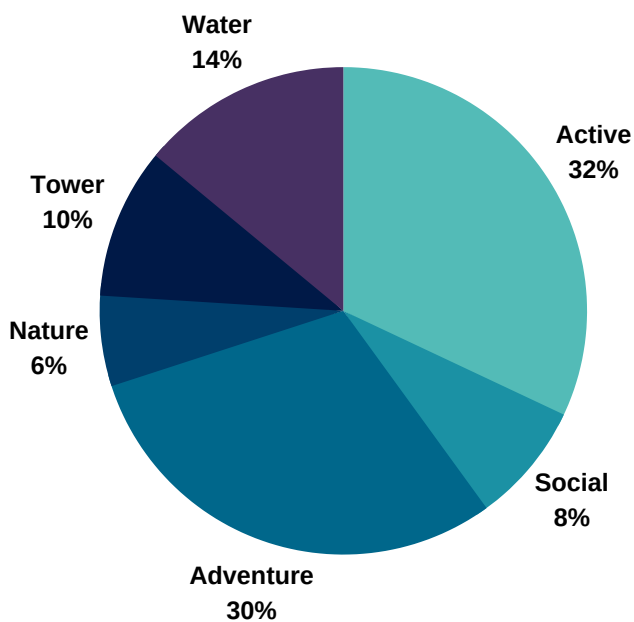
Age Groups:



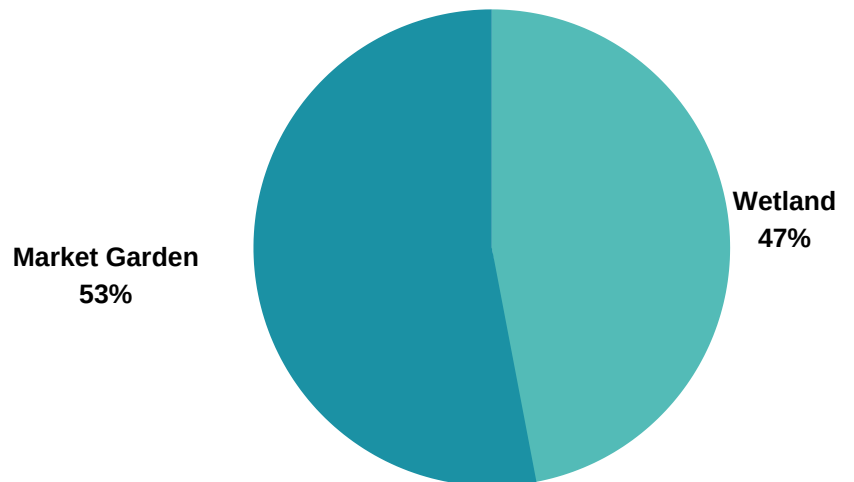
Children's Age:

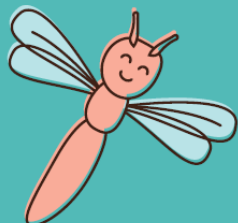


Preferred Play Zones:



Preferred Theme:





Consultation Analysis - Online Survey Results (121 Participants) - Continued

Comment	Number of Mentions
SHADE/SHELTER/UNDERCOVER AREAS	23
BBQ/SOCIAL PICNIC AREA	18
BASKETBALL/HARD COURT	15
TOILETS	13
SEATING AREAS/TABLES	11
TREES/NATURE, NATIVE PLANTING	10
EXERCISE EQUIPMENT, ADULT PLAYGROUND	10
BIKE, SCOOTER TRACK, SKATE-PARK	10
WATER-PLAY	8
SEPARATE PLAY AREAS FOR SMALL CHILDREN	4
CAFÉ	3
DRINKING FOUNTAIN	3
CLIMBING	3
COMMUNITY GARDENS	2
BINS	2
MAINTENANCE	2
NATURE PLAY	2
ADVENTURE PLAY	2
WETLAND	2
WALKING PATH	2
AUSTRALIAN MADE PRODUCTS	2
SWINGS	2
VARIETY OF PLAY FOR AGE GROUPS	2
SOCCER NETS/SMALL NETS	2
BOULDERING	2
ALL ABILITIES PLAY	2
ANIMAL SCULPTURES	1
CAR PARK	1
FLYING FOX	1
SAND PLAY	1
LIGHTING	1
IMAGINATION PLAY	1
TRAMPOLINE	1
FORT	1
CCTV	1
TENNIS WALL	1
HAMSTER WHEEL	1