

Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report

Proposed Playground – Fielding Reserve, Collaroy (Stage 1 of 1)

Consultation period: 1 May – 28 May 2023

Contents

1.	Summary.....	2
1.1.	Key outcomes	2
1.2.	How we engaged	2
1.3.	Who responded.....	3
2.	Background.....	3
3.	Engagement objectives	3
4.	Engagement approach	4
5.	Findings	5
	Appendix 1 Verbatim community and stakeholder responses	10

1. Summary

This report outlines the outcomes of community engagement as part of a proposal to reinstate the local playground at Fielding Reserve, Collaroy.

The feedback collected during consultation indicated a high level of support for the proposal, with some comments proposing additional or alternative facilities.

The minority of respondents who were not supportive of the proposal raised concerns that there is no need for the playground as there is a large playground nearby at Collaroy Beach and others suggesting it may contribute to anti-social behaviour, noise and parking issues in the street.

1.1. Key outcomes

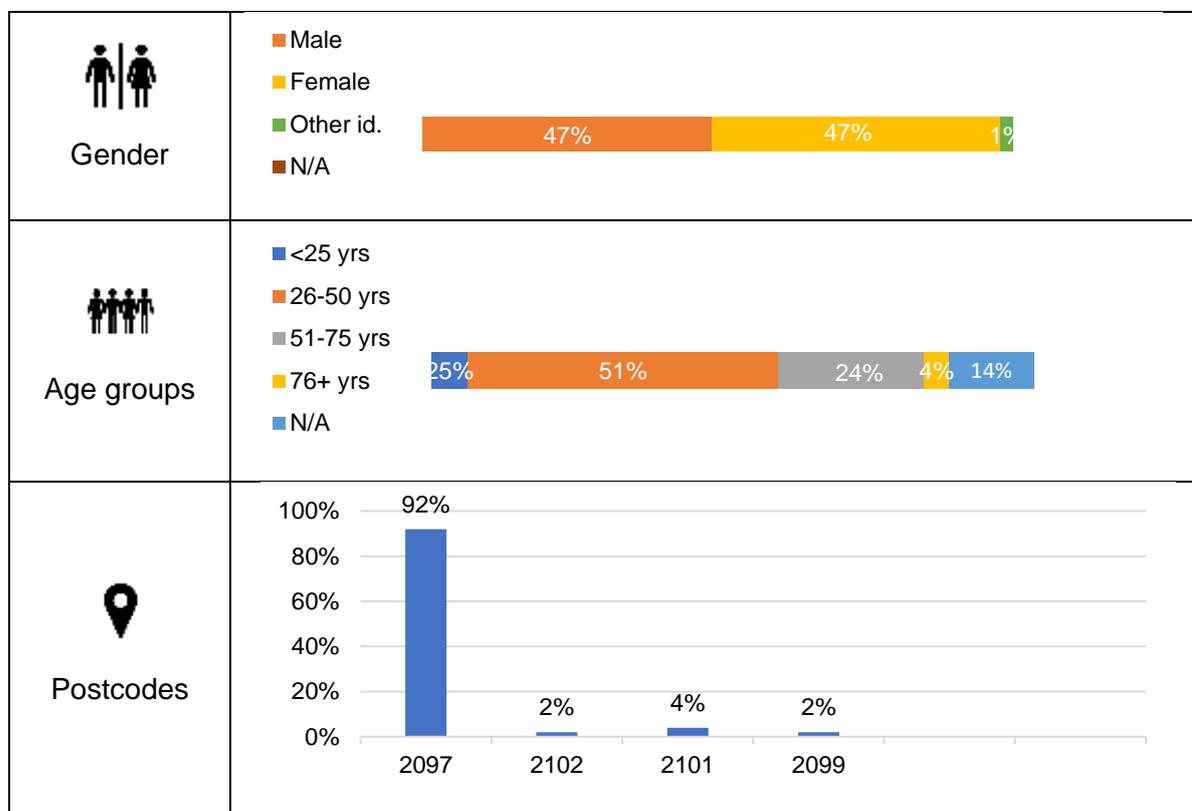
 Total unique responses	55	
 How responses were received	Submission form Written responses (email)	Completions: 49 Number received: 6
 Feedback themes	Project Support Other Facilities	Play Equipment Anti-social Behaviour

1.2. How we engaged

 Have Your Say: visitation stats	Visitors: 867	Visits: 1022	Average time onsite: 1mins 15secs
 Print media and collateral	Letterbox drop: 377 Letters to surrounding properties Site signs used: Signs placed on-site and along Fielding Street		Distribution: 377 Number of signs: 3
 Community Engagement (fortnightly) newsletter: 2 editions			Distribution: 24,000 subscribers

Electronic direct mail (EDM)	Council (weekly) e-News: 1 edition	Distribution: 61,500 subscribers
------------------------------	------------------------------------	----------------------------------

1.3. Who responded¹



2. Background

In 2022 Council adopted the [Lets Play! Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Strategy](#). This strategy set out key directions, priorities and actions outlining how we will manage our open spaces and outdoor recreational facilities over the next 15 years.

Following the analysis of playground distribution within the Northern Beaches, an action was included in the strategy to provide an additional local playground in Fielding Reserve, Collaroy.

The proposed playground is designated as a “Local Playground” so will be small scale, and is likely to include a swing set and one or two other play pieces or site furniture.

3. Engagement objectives

Community and stakeholder engagement aimed to:

- build community and stakeholder awareness of participation activities

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

- provide accessible information so community and stakeholders can participate in a meaningful way
- provide balanced and objective information to assist in understanding the problem, alternatives and/or solutions
- identify community and stakeholder concerns, local knowledge and values.

4. Engagement approach

Community and stakeholder engagement for the playground proposal at Fielding Reserve, Collaroy was conducted between 1 May 2023 to 28 May 2023, 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 page 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 comment form embedded onto the have your say project page. The form included a question that directly asked respondents for their level of support on the proposal.

An open-field comments box provided community members a space to explain or elaborate on their support, not support or neutral sentiment as well as any other feedback they wished to contribute.

As well as the sentiment question and free text, a rating tool was used to ask participants to rate the importance of the following elements of play:

- swings
- moving play pieces
- climbing pieces
- imaginative play
- toddler aged play (1-4)
- junior aged play (3-6)
- senior aged play (6+)
- seating
- tree planting
- other (including text field)

Email and written comments were also invited.

5. Findings

Feedback received during the engagement period was mostly positive towards the proposal with 86% of respondents stating they were supportive of the proposed local playground by selecting that they either supported the proposal or supported the proposal with changes.

Amongst the comments from respondents there were many requests for other facilities and uses within the reserve such as basketball hoop, bike track, gym equipment and dog park.

A small number of respondents were against the proposal. Some suggesting that there is no need as there is a large playground nearby at Collaroy Beach and others suggesting it may contribute to anti-social behaviour, noise and parking issues in the street.

The features that were rated as most important included climbing pieces, swings and seating.

Table 1: Response to question: Do you support the plans for the playground?

Do you support the proposed playground in Fielding Reserve? (nearest %)			
Yes	Yes with Changes	No	Undecided
59%	27%	14%	0%

Table 2: Response to question: Importance of the following features.

Importance of the following features (Score out of 5)	
Feature	Average Score (One Decimal Point)
swings	3.9
moving play pieces	3.1
climbing pieces	4.0
imaginative play	2.9
toddler aged play (1-4)	3.4
junior aged play (3-6)	3.6
senior aged play (6+)	2.9
seating	3.7
tree planting	3.5
other (See appendix for text field responses)	2.2

Table 3: Issues, change requests and other considerations

Theme	Issues, change requests and other considerations raised	Council's response
Project Support	Most submissions expressed support for the project as they see the benefit of a local playground in Fielding Street.	We acknowledge that many respondents have been compelled to inform Council of their support for the project.
Other Facilities	Some respondents used the opportunity to request other facilities such as fitness equipment, basket ball hoop, facilities for teenagers or dog exercise space	We acknowledge that some members of the local community would like other facilities within the reserve either to compliment or as an alternative to the playground. The playground will only take up a portion of the reserve, hence leaving space for other activities or future facilities.
Play Equipment	Some respondents requested particular types of play equipment that they felt would best suit the playground.	We welcome suggestions for play equipment however the size and budget of the playground is limited in what can be provided. Council will work with a playground supplier to ensure the best possible outcome is achieved.

Theme	Issues, change requests and other considerations raised	Council's response
Anti-social Behaviour	Some respondents felt that the location was not suitable for a playground due to anti-social behaviour in the area and that a playground would attract more anti-social behaviour.	<p>Council's Community Safety Officer has consulted with police regarding the proposal to develop a local playground at Fielding Reserve. Police advised that they are not aware of any issues in the reserve or the area surrounding Fielding Street that should prevent the playground proposal from proceeding. Their review of police data indicates that the level of antisocial behaviour in that area is extremely low, with the only incidents reported recently being domestic related.</p> <p>The installation of a playground will further increase the passive surveillance of the area.</p> <p>The term passive surveillance refers to the opportunities for people in public spaces and adjoining buildings to casually see into the space e.g. users of an area, passers-by or people in nearby properties and doesn't imply that residents are expected to actively monitor the reserve.</p> <p>Passive surveillance increases the perception of being seen, which is known to be a deterrent for antisocial behaviour as it also increases the risk of consequences. The reserve's frontage to the street, the nearby walkway from another street, and the presence of numerous neighbouring residences with windows and driveways adjacent to and facing the reserve all create an impression that you are able to be seen in the reserve.</p>

During the consultation/exhibition. Council received a number of questions either through direct contact or within feedback received.

Table 4: Questions raised and Council's responses.

Question raised in feedback	Council's response
<p>What is your plan for resident parking??</p>	<p>Local playgrounds are located to serve very small catchments where walking is the primary means of transport. Local playgrounds only offer one or two pieces of play equipment and hence generally are not a destination where people travel by cars to get to.</p> <p>In the case of Fielding Reserve, due to being surrounded by apartments, there is a large catchment of people who live in very close walking proximity to the park. The park and playground is to offer amenity to these local residents. The park is also connected to surrounding residents by footpaths. The playground is intended to be very low key and hence would not be a destination where people would consider driving to.</p>
<p>Will dogs still be able to use this space if a children's playground is built on the area?</p> <p>Also what's the likelihood of Hall Reserve being fenced off for small dogs in the neighbourhood to play safely?</p>	<p>Dogs are currently allowed to use the Fielding Reserve if kept on a lead. It is NSW Law under the Local Government Act 1993 that dogs are not permitted within 10m of a playground.</p> <p>The proposal for Fielding Reserve is to locate the playground at the street end of the reserve, hence there would be space at the rear of the reserve to allow recreation for dogs on a lead.</p> <p>Please note that both Fielding and Halls Reserves are not a designated off leash dog areas. Consideration of Halls Reserve to be fenced or designated as an off leash dog area is out of scope for this project.</p>
<p>Currently it's a dog area, with more kids in the area will this remain the same?</p>	<p>The proposal for Fielding Reserve is to locate the playground at the street end of the reserve, hence there would be space at the rear of the reserve to allow recreation for dogs on a lead.</p>
<p>In regards to the playground in fielding street, will my rates go up.</p>	<p>The playground proposal will not have any impact on rates.</p>
<p>Will it be patrolled at night for improper activity.</p>	<p>Council does not conduct night patrols on playgrounds. Council conducts regular maintenance checks on playgrounds during normal working hours. Residents should contact NSW Police if they suspect improper activity at any playground.</p>
<p>Why a playground is needed less than 5 minutes walk from a large playground at Collaroy Beach</p>	<p>When undertaking consultation for the more recent 2023 Let's Play! Open Space and Recreation Strategy and Action Plan Council received requests to reinstate the playground that was removed in 2013. It was considered that people value small local playgrounds as a more intimate spaces closer to home. Crossing a major road to use a large</p>

	regional playground is a different experience that is not always suitable.
Whether there will still be space for families to play ball sports and use the field for other uses. Right now there is a huge lack of open green space in the area to safely kick a football with family (which many people do at this reserve) for example.	The proposal for Fielding Reserve is to locate the playground at the street end of the reserve, hence there would be space at the rear of the reserve to allow for ball sports and other recreational uses.
Whether dog owners will still be allowed to walk their pet on a leash at the park	The proposal for Fielding Reserve is to locate the playground at the street end of the reserve, hence there would be space at the rear of the reserve to allow recreation for dogs on a lead.
Whether the proposed plans would further exacerbate flooding and drainage issues at the park.	The playground would consist of permeable surfaces and hence would not exacerbate flooding and drainage issues.
If the playground is to go ahead, why not place it further back the reserve, away from the road where it would be safer for families?	The proposal for Fielding Reserve is to locate the playground at the street end of the reserve to allow for greater passive surveillance to and from the playground.
Could Council please have a look at replacing the steps and the path with a low grade ramp? Also at the top of the steps leading to The Avenue there is less than a metre of space to the busy road which allows parking right where a child needs to cross the road. The elimination of just one parking spot here would make their passage much safer.	This request is out of scope of the playground project, however the request has been forwarded to the responsible Council department for consideration.
Any chance of a basketball court surrounded by high fencing being placed there too for older kids?	It is unlikely a basketball facility would be considered for this location. Generally, basketball facilities are located further from residential properties as the constant bouncing of the ball can generate noise complaints in a close built up environment.

Appendix 1 Verbatim community and stakeholder responses*

Table 5: Verbatim Responses Submitted via Your Say Website Comment Form

Number	Comment/submission
1	Fencing around the reserve or to block the road off from the reserve/playground. Small bike/scooter track around the reserve.
2	Great idea!
3	Yes!! A playground at fielding reserve would be a great addition! There are so many kids in the area in apartments with out yards (including my own!) so a playground we can easily walk to everyday is amazing.
4	loads of kids and playground at beach very busy
5	Good idea
6	A fantastic idea
7	Great initiative. Would be wonderful to have swings and a slide for the kids.
8	Need exercise/gym set like at Berry Reserve Narrabeen
9	Unnecessary with the giant playground literally a 2 minute walk away down by the beach. Leave what little green space we have left alone. Not everyone has chosen to have kids and so therefore shouldn't have to listen to them and their parents all day long. Especially while working from home.
10	It is a lovely area where the local little do kick a ball and use the space.
11	Playground should have a slide. This is my toddler's favourite part of any park. A rubbish bin would be welcome. Ramsay St park always has a lot of rubbish because there is no bin.
12	Amazing idea! At the moment it's just a place for dogs to piss. But we have just had a baby and have lots of young toddlers in our apartment block. It's quite far to walk all the way to the south end of collaroy beach and this would be the perfect little park for the area. Thanks so much.
13	I think it is especially important to have these public play areas in areas that now contain a lot of home units. This is not only for the children but also the parents/carers. While the location of this area is quite close to the beach and large play area adjacent to Collaroy Beach, it is across the very busy main road. This makes it difficult to access these other play areas.
14	Our family would like to be against this playground. Why you ask? We have seen no children currently playing on this ground. Due to COVID it has been a haven for us locals to meet and let our small dogs enjoy the little bit of grass that is around. We cannot use the beach that is off limits. We cannot use long reef as it is too far, and very dangerous for our dogs and for us. It has bought a community together, meeting locals and share common interests. It will attract teenagers at night and the equipment will be destroyed. Please can you talk to the locals especially small dog owners. We are happy for children to be there; however, it will bring a quiet place into annoying and noisy space. Yes, dogs bark however, it is only for a brief period. Hope you will consider a dog park option/small dog as Long Reef does not suit our little ones. There is no other dog park near us and if you do not have a car or are elderly too far for the others. Also, due to COVID many locals bought a pet for their mental health. Many of the owners are single with no family nearby and their dog is their family just like children. It is sad to see this beautiful piece of land and the only grassed area around be destroyed by vandals, which will happen and attract drug paraphernalia. Maybe ask the local police as they have been called to Fielding Street many times due to drug issues and violence. Thank you so much for your time and really hope you rethink this. Warmest regards Concerned local resident Fielding Street.

*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.

15	This is a great idea
16	There is avreal need for older children play in the area. The Collaroy beach plyground is great for younger children but older chikdren have to go to Narrabeen. Could you please consider a concrete pad with a basketball ring or something similar. We are grandparents with older grandchikdren we mind.
17	Make it a space that will allow older kids to play. It doesn't necessarily require lots of equipment but rather a paved area where there's unstructured play space. This will allow a variety of ball sports. At the least a couple of handball courts would be great
18	Great idea.
19	<p>Agg pipe drainage to the edging perimeter will enhance the use of the playground and increase the life of the safety mulch as the reserve receives a large volume of rain water run-off.</p> <p>There are 2 concept plans on Councils website, one marked March 2023 with 3 pieces of play equipment and one marked April 2023 with only 2 pieces of play equipment. From a community perspective, clearly the March 2023 version with 3 pieces of play equipment would be preferable.</p> <p>Regarding the swing set, is it possible to include one conventional swing and one layback swing as currently installed at the Collaroy Beach playground. The orange plastic layback swings are the swing of choice during busy times and these two swing types would cover a broader range of children ages.</p> <p>If provision can be made for 3 play pieces, as per the March 2023 version, can the 'Springer' be changed to the small blue 'Spinning Saucer' as installed at the Collaroy Beach playground. My observations are that the 'Springer see-saw' at Collaroy Beach playground is the least used piece of play equipment, as it is designed for younger children but requires too much effort from a young child to activate the springs and solicit a response from the equipment.</p> <p>Sandstone block edging (March 2023 version) would be preferable to the timber edging possibility included in the April 2023 concept. Sandstone is a set and forget option, whereas timber edging will require maintenance and replacement in the future.</p>
20	<p>It's great to see council doing something with that space.</p> <p>However, when councils put in unimaginative playgrounds they seem like a big disappointment and waste of money. Playgrounds with just a swing set a simple climbing frame are ideas from the 1960's. They are unimaginative and children find them boring. Why not take some inspiration from places like the lan potter children's gardening centennial park.</p>
21	<p>I live in one of the properties adjacent to Fielding Reserve and question the need for this equipment. After viewing the council's draft plans, Council needs to confirm:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why a playground is needed less than 5 minutes walk from a large playground at Collaroy Beach 2. Whether there will still be space for families to play ball sports and use the field for other uses. Right now there is a huge lack of open green space in the area to safely kick a football with family (which many people do at this reserve) for example. 3. Whether dog owners will still be allowed to walk their pet on a leash at the park 4. Whether the proposed plans would further exacerbate flooding and drainage issues at the park. Council has still yet to fix drainage issues with the area that sees large volumes of water empty on to the property at 28-30 Fielding Street. Council could be liable for damages to this property if the playground worsens these flooding and drainage issues 5. If the playground is to go ahead, why not place it further back the reserve, away from the road where it would be safer for families?
22	Currently it's a dog area, with more kids in the area will this remain the same?
23	This would be life changing for me and my children (1 and 3) who live in a small apartment across the road. Thank you and we can't wait for this to be up in action!
24	Absolutely love the idea of using this public space as the children would love to have this space for fun and exercise in a quiet closed off street with access from two to more streets safely ans easily

25	While I am not opposed to the playground I would request that council does not plant significant trees which could impact residents views. Low planting would be fine and preferable. I agree with the positioning of the proposed playground.
26	I would like this park to be focused at younger children,as the main park at Collaroy beach has a lot of equipment that already suits older children. Also, it would be handy for parents with young children (1-4) to be able to access park without having to cross pittwater road. This is a safety concern for parents with younger children. As it is fairly dense apartments in fielding street and surrounding streets, it would also be important to include bbq and tables so families and community can have access to facilities.
27	The proposed location should work well provided that it does not block access to all parts of Fielding Reserve for trucks and other larger equipment which requires access from time to time.
28	Wonderful idea. Land is currently used personally by the houses backing onto it. Tradie trucks etc access the properties via this land (one of the posts meant to deny access by private vehicles has been loosened and is removed when tradies etc want to access the houses at the bac. It should therefore be made safe for the children to play, maybe railings and a gate as people park in the circle illegally. Trees and shades are needed (obviously) under which kids can be protected and it would nice if a few picnic tables could be included. There are so many units with children it would be great to see the land used for them to play.
29	A very good concept for the street.
30	Maybe not in this space but would be great if council could build playgrounds that also catered for teenagers, adults including adults with disabilities.
31	I dont believe a children's playground would be the best option for this space as it would create an after hours hangout area which would support local crimes. At the moment this park gets used as a meet up area at night with intoxicated members of the community. There are also a number of mentally unstable individuals who are often seen walking around the park and street. If the playground was created, i feel that the park would then become a hangout area for them which would create an unsafe space for the local community. A gated dog park area with frequent ground care so the kids could also play sport would be a much better option.
32	- There is always cops in our street as we have three known people with mental illness that walk from the back alley right next to reserve towards the beach yelling and screaming profanities - Police are frequently called to our street because of intoxicated and mentally ill people within the street that come from the beach and walk past the reserve into the back alley - having a playground would increase the potential for them lingering (sitting on the playground) rather than passing through the street - There is always shady characters sitting in the reserve late at night potentially selling narcotics - The street itself quite often has cars racing from the back (where the reserve is) to the front of the street as it is quite a straight road - which could be harmful for children and having a playground with more children could increase the risk - You cannot see the reserve from the street unless you are standing right in front of the reserve, as it is tucked away behind the apartments, so if something happens no one would really know - Residents park in the Cul-de-sac as there is extremely low parking within the road as it is, which council frequently fine residents and even at times tow cars away. This means the street has no accommodation for extra cars (family's vehicles)
33	My commonet was primarily added in the other section of the form. Essentially creating more space thart all ages can use in local areas. A basketball half court would be ideal as there is a massive shortage of outdoor courts on the northern beaches.
34	Would be good to incorporate some outdoor gym equipment for adults. For example, pull up bars.
35	So many of our playgrounds are swings and a play module. can this site be a bit more creative. The site has grass and trees and a slope - what about a natural obstacle course with balances, small climbs and the like across the grass. There is a fabulous example in Warminster Lake Park UK

<p>https://maps.google.com/maps/contrib/114193428999846412659 Also woodchip/bark softfall is horrible on bare feet/in sandals etc please avoid it!</p>

Table 6: Verbatim Responses Submitted via Email

Number	Comment/submission
1	<p>To Whom it May Concern,</p> <p>As a resident of The Avenue and back onto the park, my concern is parking. It is so hard to find parking for residents with more than 1 car as it is and you want to bring more cars into these streets.</p> <p>What is your plan for resident parking??</p> <p>Please contact me at anytime.</p> <p>Regards</p>
2	<p>I have a question regarding the above proposal. Will dogs still be able to use this space if a children's playground is built on the area?</p> <p>Also what's the likelihood of Hall Reserve being fenced off for small dogs in the neighbourhood to play safely?</p> <p>While there is a large dog park at Griffith Park, it's not really safe for smaller, more apprehensive dogs especially next to a busy road.</p> <p>I look forward to your reply.</p> <p>Kind regards,</p>
3	<p>Hi, in regards to the playground in fielding street, will my rates go up. Will it be patrolled at night for improper activity.</p> <p>Regards</p>
4	<p>I live at XXXXX and the rear of my property abuts the Reserve and I am writing regarding the proposed Playground for the Fielding street Reserve. The removal of play equipment in the past has met with disapproval of neighboring residents and I think this proposal will be met with nothing but approval.I await</p> <p>I agree in principal with your plans but would like to see the following items added to help make the facility more attractive to children and their parents, carers,etc.</p> <p>A toilet facility</p> <p>Tap and/or drinking fountain</p> <p>Picnic tables and bench seats</p> <p>Replace or repair the current park bench seat</p> <p>I await in anticipation to your reply.</p> <p>Thanking you,</p>
5	<p>Thank you for your letter re the above proposal.</p>

	<p>We highly approve of Council's intention to reinstate this little unloved park. It is so important for little children to have the opportunity to run and play outside in a safe place when many of them now live in unit buildings. To this end we think that emphasis should be placed on children of under primary school age who only need simple structures to have fun. Please, no skateboard ramps!</p> <p>We live in The Avenue, close to the park, and know that there are many children in our street who will love the new facility. Access to Fielding St for them is a descent down a flight of 8 steep steps and along a flat path about 30 metres long to the cul de sac in front of the park, which would be unmanageable for a mother with a stroller.</p> <p>Could Council please have a look at replacing the steps and the path with a low grade ramp? Also at the top of the steps leading to The Avenue there is less than a metre of space to the busy road which allows parking right where a child needs to cross the road. The elimination of just one parking spot here would make their passage much safer.</p> <p>This little park is surrounded by trees, making it a very pleasant space, however there are a couple of small trees in the park which may be a climbing hazard, especially for boys, and the Council might consider removing these.</p> <p>Good luck with this proposal,</p>
6	Any chance of a basketball court surrounded by high fencing being placed there too for older kids?

Table 7: Verbatim Responses to Question on Importance of the Following Features (Other)

Number	Comment
1	A small bike/scooter track/path around the outside of the park.
2	Dog area
3	shallow reticulating watercourse for 'puddle play' in warmer months
4	Good concept
5	Chin up, parallel bars & ring set
6	I don't want another park near me. I would like space and quiet. Families have the entire beach and the giant playground down there to use. Just leave what little green space we have left alone
7	Climbing equipment with a fireman pole and a slide are what my boys love to with. Similar to Dee why beach playground
8	something to challenge the thinking, that is not at the wonderful Collaroy Beach park
9	Slide
10	This is amazing! We cannot wait!
11	We see no children playing on this ground. It has bought a community together meeting and letting our small dogs enjoy the little bit of grass that is around. The beach is off limits and the long reef is too dangerous.
12	Maybe a basketball ring and pad to bounce a ball
13	Basketball hoop or handball court
14	A short concrete path from the street to the playground will improve access to the park particularly following wet weather, as this section of Fielding Reserve receives a large amount of rain water run-off saturating the ground.
15	Short scooter track
16	Seesaw, spiderweb

17	Monkey bars!!!
18	Bbq area (2 hot plates) and min 2 tables with shelter for families and community groups.
19	Slide, roundabout
20	Lots of young children in the street. A very good idea
21	Would be great to have adult sized swings or big swinging chair like at Brookvale playground, great to sit on with your kids
22	Gated dog park
23	There shouldn't be a playground in this reserve.
24	A playground space should be usable for all ages from children to adults. There is a lack of basketball courts both half and full from Manly to Colloroy with many half courts far from each other, the back of this land could be the place for a half court.
25	Outdoor gym equipment for adults
26	There is no parking in the street now let alone if there was a park. You would need to take away the no parking at the end of fielding street.
27	no need for mulching - grass much more pleasant on bare feet.

Document administration	
Version	1.0
Date	15 June 2023
Approval	Content provided and approved by Park Assets Team. Responsible manager: Jeremy Smith
Status	Draft
Related Projects	Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Strategy
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.