

# Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report

## Catherine Park, Scotland Island – Landscape Improvements Plan (Stage 2)

Consultation period: 12 September to 13 October 2024

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# 1. Summary

This report highlights the outcomes of the second stage of community and stakeholder engagement to develop the landscape improvements plan for Catherine Park, Scotland Island. The plan is being developed in response to issues that continue to affect the operation, amenity and aesthetic of this highly valued open space.

The majority of feedback collected during the consultation was supportive of the revised design, with comments saying the plan was much improved with greater emphasis on the natural environment and more in keeping with the park’s low-key landscape character and appeal.




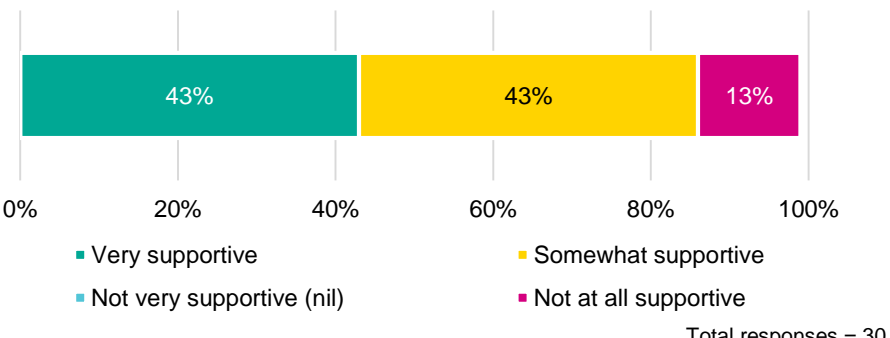

While out of scope from this stage of engagement, there were many respondents who queried how the ongoing issues with vehicles will be resolved and how the park entry design would be integrated with the rest of the park.

Although most respondents were happy with the revised plan, there were still a number who had concerns and change requests, and some made other suggestions for Council to consider.

As we saw in Stage 1 engagement, a few respondents were not supportive of any changes to the park and say funding should be spent on other priorities on Scotland Island.

Overall, the engagement process revealed strong support for undertaking the proposed improvements while preserving the natural character of Catherine Park. However, there remains interest in resolving vehicle management and improvements to the park entry.





## 1.1. Key outcomes

 Total unique responses	30*	
 How responses were received	Comment form Written responses (email/letter)	Completions: 30 Number received: 3
 Online sentiment question: How supportive are you of the revised design? <sup>1</sup>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Total responses = 30</p>	
 Feedback themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicle management &amp; park entry</li> <li>• Pathways</li> <li>• Improved access &amp; safety</li> <li>• Bushland &amp; open grassed space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play</li> <li>• Fitness &amp; recreation</li> <li>• Drainage improvements</li> </ul>

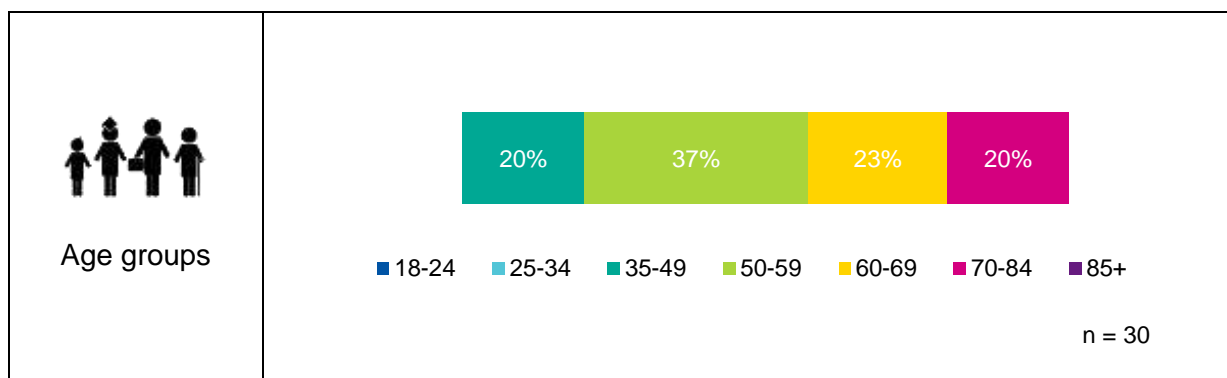
\* Not every respondent made a comment in addition to answering the sentiment question

<sup>1</sup> Percentage may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding

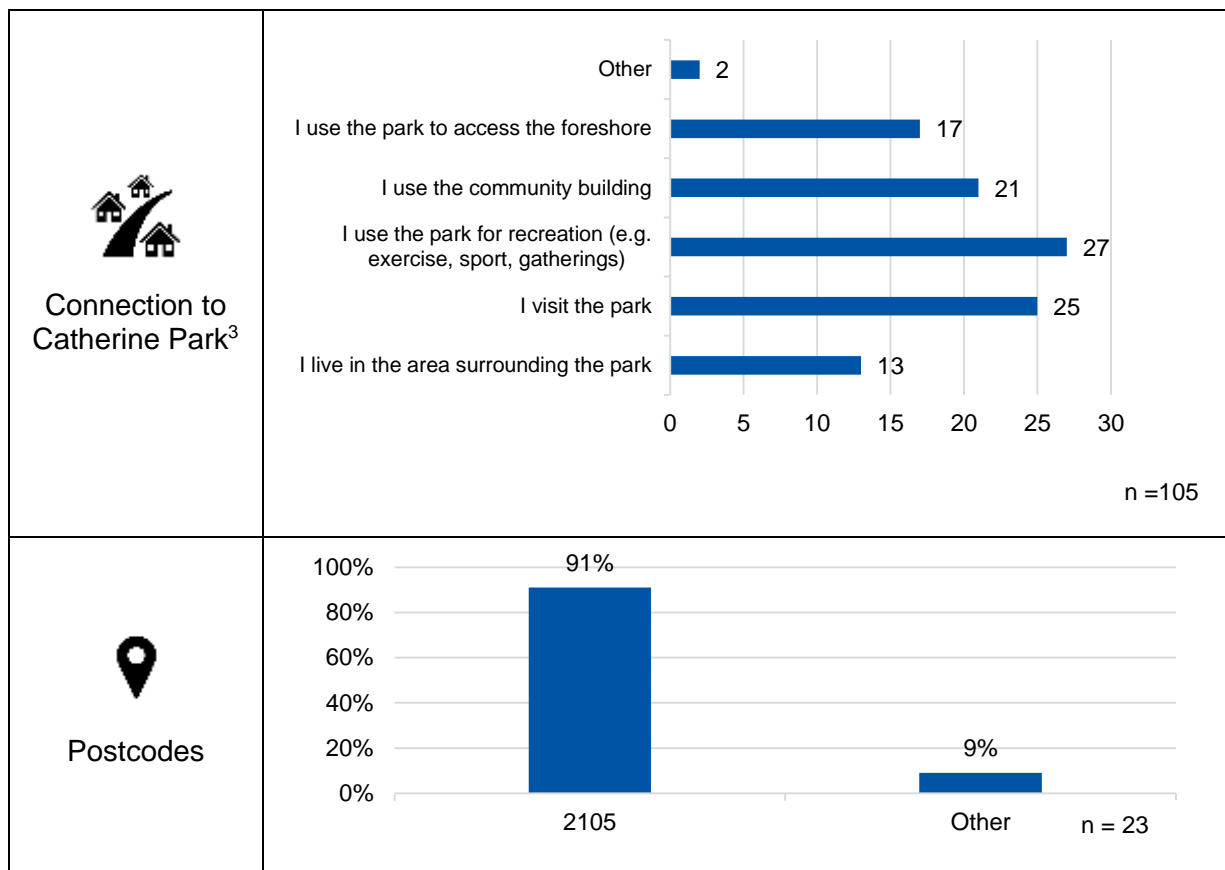
## 1.2. How we engaged

 Have Your Say: visitation stats	Visitors: 554	Visits: 699	Average time onsite: 1 minute 38 seconds
 Print media and collateral	Letterbox drop: 2105 Site signs used:		Distribution: 649 Number of signs: 6
 Electronic direct mail (EDM)	Community Engagement (fortnightly) newsletter: 1 edition Council (weekly) e-News: 1 edition		Distribution: 21,900 subscribers Distribution: 58,100 subscribers
 Key stakeholder engagement	Meetings: 2 meetings with SIRA in 2023/24 - 04/05/23 & 02/07/2024		Attendance 11

## 1.3. Who responded<sup>2</sup>



<sup>2</sup> Demographic data was gathered by request only. The data represented only includes those respondents who provided this detail.



## 2. Background

Council is developing a landscape improvements plan for Catherine Park, Scotland Island in response to issues that continue to affect the operation, amenity and aesthetic of the park. The plan looks to identify future works to resolve these issues and to ensure they are coordinated and designed to meet the current and future needs of the community.

The first stage (Stage 1) of community and stakeholder engagement for the draft landscape improvements plan was conducted between 18 November 2022 to January 2023. Many responses were supportive of the draft plan with changes. There were opposing views in relation to vehicle management and so this item (Key Feature 3, Inset 1 of Draft Plan) will be resolved as part of the Scotland Island Traffic Management Plan where further community and stakeholder consultation will be undertaken.

The draft plan was modified based on feedback (excluding vehicle management) and the second stage (Stage 2) of community and stakeholder engagement was undertaken between 12 September to 13 October 2024.

Engagement on the revised plans aimed to provide the community of Scotland Island with an opportunity to review the changes and comment on the proposals. Feedback will inform and progress detailed design as well as confirm the communities' priorities for implementation.

This engagement represented an opportunity for all Scotland Island residents, as well as the broader community and stakeholders, to have their say.

<sup>3</sup> Respondents could tick more than one option – there were 105 options selected by survey respondents.

### 3. Engagement objectives

The community and stakeholder engagement aims to:

- build community and stakeholder awareness of participation activities.
- continue to liaise with targeted stakeholders and residents on the project to integrate relevant community feedback during implementation.
- 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

Staff worked with key internal and external stakeholders, and the Scotland Island Residents Association (SIRA), to progress the plans that considered all the relevant issues and recommendations raised during the design process.

The second stage of community and stakeholder engagement for the Revised Catherine Park Landscape Improvements Plan was conducted between 12 September to 13 October 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).

The project page<sup>4</sup> was updated 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/submission 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 revised 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.

Email and written comments were also invited.

### 5. Findings

During the first stage of engagement, 7% of respondents expressed 'support', 63% 'support with changes' and 15% of those who were neutral or did not support the plan.

Feedback from the second stage of engagement showed respondents were more supportive of the revised plan with 43% expressing 'very supportive' and 43% 'somewhat supportive'. Of those who were not supportive, 13% of respondents felt that the park should be "left alone" and that funding should be spent on other priorities on Scotland Island.

While respondents were pleased with the revised plan, there were some who had concerns or change requests and other considerations. These are included in the table below - Table 1: Issues, change requests and other considerations.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/catherine-park-scotland-island>

**Table 1: Issues, change requests and other considerations**

Theme	Issues, change requests and other considerations raised	Council's response
Vehicle management & park entry	<p>Vehicle management needs resolving.</p> <p>Consider the park entry, arrival space and foreshore.</p>	<p>Vehicle management will be resolved as part of the Scotland Island Traffic Management Plan Review where further stakeholder and community consultation will be undertaken.</p> <p>The park entry design will be informed by resolution of vehicle management and well considered to ensure integration with the rest of the park.</p>
Pathways	<p>The proposed pathway is too wide.</p> <p>Minimise the use of concrete.</p>	<p>Council has taken into consideration the feedback relating to this proposal (Key Feature 2b on the revised plan) and will modify the plan to show the concrete path width as 1.2 metres wide.</p> <p>Support is noted for the 1.2 metres wide compacted gravel path (Key Feature 2a on the revised plan).</p>
Improved accessibility & safety	<p>Overall support for a new ramp access between community buildings (Key Feature 16 on the revised plan) and implementing an accessible path connection between community buildings and Robertson Road (Key Feature 22 on the revised plan).</p> <p>Consider safety improvements to the stair access between Robertson Road and community buildings.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p> <p>The feasibility of implementing an accessible path connection between the Recreation Centre and Robertson Road will be investigated in the detail design phase.</p> <p>New low-level lighting is planned to be installed in the vicinity of the community buildings to help improve the safety of existing stair access.</p>
Bushland & open space	<p>Adequate funding to better protect existing bushland</p> <p>Grassed areas need aeration, reseeded and weed removal.</p>	<p>Noted. There is allocated budget for bush regeneration activities and upkeep.</p> <p>Grass improvements such as aeration &amp; reseeded etc will be carried out as part of the drainage</p>

		improvements (Key Feature 20 on the revised plan).
Play	<p>The play area next to the recreation centre is a valuable community asset for young people.</p> <p>Consider teens - the main play equipment should have the same appeal as existing equipment.</p> <p>Incorporate rocks and logs around the main playground for the younger children to play.</p>	<p>Support noted, the area will be maintained as a play area.</p> <p>The future playground renewal will maintain a similar footprint and include new play elements with similar play opportunities and fitness elements.</p> <p>This idea has value and can be incorporated in the detail design phase.</p>
Fitness & recreation	<p>Incorporate static fitness equipment.</p> <p>Improvements to the existing basketball court are needed.</p> <p>Consider the park for bootcamp, volleyball, pickleball, netball, tennis full size basketball courts.</p>	<p>Incorporating low-key fitness elements in the park will be considered in detailed design.</p> <p>Improvements are planned for the existing basketball court such as new surfacing treatment &amp; line marking.</p> <p>We recognise that providing a level open grassed area can accommodate for a wide range of sports, recreational and social opportunities.</p>
Drainage improvements	<p>Support for improvements to existing flow path (Key Feature 20 on the revised plan).</p> <p>Design should consider pedestrian access over the flow path.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p> <p>Pedestrian access will be considered in design development phase, subject to hydraulic design.</p>
Watercraft storage	<p>Get rid of unwanted and unused craft.</p> <p>Storage racks are needed.</p> <p>No vertical storage rack structures.</p>	<p>The plan outlines implementing a low-key storage solution in two locations (using timber sleeper railings set horizontally on-ground), positioned sympathetically in the landscape whilst maintaining clear foreshore space.</p> <p>Council will liaise with SIRA on initiating an audit process and formalising a permit system for the reserve (that is consistent for</p>

		watercraft management at Scotland Island).
Miscellaneous suggestions	<p>Public amenities are needed.</p> <p>Improved emergency access.</p> <p>Community compost area.</p>	<p>Council is supportive of providing public amenities and has recently undertaken the modifications required for converting the existing amenities on the ground floor community building for public use.</p> <p>There are logistical issues however with resolving a cost-effective solution for the ongoing cleaning and maintenance required.</p> <p>There is an existing system in place for emergency response.</p> <p>While council encourages waste minimisation initiatives such as composting, establishing a healthy compost system would require ongoing commitment from volunteers and regular attention on a number of aspects to be successful.</p> <p>This suggestion will be raised with SIRA for consideration.</p>



## Appendix 1 Verbatim community and stakeholder responses\*

Responses received on Your Say	
1	<p>The kids especially are always getting sick due to (20) - the septic runoff that runs through the park, this little "river" is full of septic when it rains and it kills off all the crabs in the bay and makes visitors and kids sick who play there. It's important to not let the river flood.</p> <p>I would love to also see a community area for compost and island leaves/cuttings. Our island has a green waste problem so it would be great to have a giant compost near the old kindi.</p>
2	<p>I am disappointed to see no long term solution for the watercraft lying on the ground on the western end of the park. A campaign to get rid of unwanted and unused craft is needed and then some storage racks still need to be installed - like at Riddle Reserve, Bayview. .</p>
3	<p>support all aspects of the proposed park improvements; logs on the perimeter of the park (1) separating the wooded area from the park, should be suitable for sitting - very useful for events taking place in the park; surface of the playground (8) should not be sand - should be a soft surface that doesn't attract animals to defecate in it</p>
4	<p>The park must have a serviced/cleaned public toilet. The basketball court should be full length and multi sport i.e pickleball, netball, tennis, etc A designated sand volleyball court would bring the community together. Why is there no public barbeque? Public bin with dog poo bags would be appreciated and a new fenced off leash area. Drinking water fountain would be great.</p>
5	<p>The island has so much septic waste that overflows out and is sent through the park "river". It makes so many kids sick... Also, I would love to see a community compost area. So much green waste is taken off the island. Finally, I'd prefer to see 6 closer to the middle of the park. That area is close to the houses and in the shade and mosquito area. Thanks</p>
6	<i>No further comment provided</i>
7	<p>We love our park. I'm a designer myself, The design is good. Our population on the island is aging, and so improved disability access to the community buildings would be great, and more important in the future. Please allow mobility scooters access to the park - at present, an elderly man I know can't get his scooter through the sandstone block barricade near the buggy parking area. I'm very supportive of making the 'creek' (or 'drain') more natural looking and improving it's function.</p>
8	<p>I help run a free bootcamp in Catherine Park with six volunteer coaches. Bootcamp runs every Tuesday and Thursday and we have been running this for five years. Currently we have around 20 regular attendees. We were told that there will be changes to the playground equipment to include more all age equipment like static exercise benches and bars. Is this still happening as I can't see anything mentioned in the plan?</p>
9	<i>No further comment provided</i>
10	<p><b>Comments from Scotland Island Playgroup on the Revised Catherine Park Landscape Improvement Plan</b> I am writing on behalf of Scotland Island Playgroup. We are parents and grandparents of children under 5 who meet in the park so our children can play together and adults can also enjoy friends. Sadly, we no longer have the preschool, so we need to find other ways to create supportive networks for young children and their carers. We use the beach and foreshore, the whole park and the playground which was formerly part of the preschool. This gives our children a wonderful variety of opportunities for exercise, exploring and fun. We would like to comment on the Catherine Park Plan from the particular point of view of parents of young children. <b>Item 19 – Minor upgrades and maintenance to play area for younger children</b></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.

	<p>We are really pleased to see that this play area is now on the plan as an asset within the park. Our children have many hours of fun here. This is a very suitable area for younger children as it is quite shady and tucked away from other park activities like soccer or dogs and further from the waterfront. This part of the park would not be used for anything else besides vegetation so the playground does not detract from the precious usable space in the park. At some point, the surfacing, sand pit and ferry platform will need replacement but parents are helping to keep the current equipment safe as long as possible. And also maintaining by raking of leaves and weeding the encroaching trad. Thanks for including this as an ongoing asset!</p> <p><b>Item 8 – retaining footprint of current playground</b></p> <p>Having the dedicated play area for younger children by the Recreation hall, means the main playground can cater mainly for 5 – 18 year olds. Under 5s do still enjoy the swings and starting to climb the structures, plus sand always provides fun. Any new equipment needs to have the same appeal for a broad age range as the current equipment. Our older children and teenagers right up to 18 use this playground in a way you do not usually see on the mainland. They do not have all the other options that mainland kids have. Teenagers can be seen hanging (literally) in the net at the top of the climbing frame long into the evening.</p> <p>Preschoolers to teenagers and adults all enjoy the swings. One request is to replace the narrower width swing with a broader one like the other existing swing. Small bottoms slip too easily off the narrow swing. However, we do not want a baby swing as then older children can't use it. Just two standard wider swings.</p> <p>More logs and rocks around the edge of the playground would provide other opportunities for younger children to have fun.</p> <p><b>Item 18 – new embankment slide</b></p> <p>Great! The existing slide is quite dangerous as it has a very short flat part to slow kids down. It also collects water at the bottom after rain. An in-ground bumpy slide would be fun new feature and doesn't take extra park space with soft fall.</p> <p><b>Item 20 Proposed improvements to existing flow path to provide more usable open space subject to hydraulic design</b></p> <p>This sounds like a good idea. Kids love jumping across the current creek ditch and making little bridges. It only flows during heavy rain and is dry the rest of the time. Redesigning this creek line so it does not cut through the centre of the park makes sense for ball games.</p> <p><b>Item 10 – maintain and enhance existing open grassed areas</b></p> <p>This is really important for our children as most of our blocks do NOT have grassed areas. The steep slopes, bushland vegetation, clay soil and tank water mean these children do not have lawns at home. Council needs to do more than just mow the grass, there are dead areas which need aeration and reseeding, weed species need reducing.</p>
11	<p>As a Community First Responder, I assist in patient egress to the Water police boat during an emergency via the wharf. Please note that unregistered buggies continue to drive and park on the public footpath. I believe this to be against federal law.</p>
12	<p>Looking great, congrats and thanks for listening.</p> <p>Only comment re path - prefer the path to remain narrow, and crushed sandstone or natural material, to a minimum size. Do not want a concrete path and do not want it to be 1.5 or even 1.2m wide. Can it be left at 1 metre? Not clear as to why it needs to be concrete and so big. We don't get the pedestrian traffic or use. Keep it simple, minimal</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
13	<p>The park is an important community gathering space and therefore maintaining its natural beauty with minimum impact is important. ie. that the concrete paths not be excessively wide (1.2m) as only one or two people are abreast ever on them at one time.</p> <p>The recent council works and the efforts of [REDACTED]'s ongoing bushcare team have made it more pleasant and user friendly.</p> <p>The buggy parking has to provide for those who really need it with minimal impact on the foreshore.</p>
14	<p>It would be a good idea to provide people who are visiting the island and also for residents living on the other side of the island toilet facilities at Catherine park. Also better play equipment for little ones aged 0-5 years would be a great addition to the park as lots of families from all around the northern beaches enjoy taking the ferry with small children as a day out and there isn't much for little ones living on the island down at the park.</p>

15	If the toilets in the Community or Recreation centre are to be made public, a sharps container should be installed, and NBC arrange for regular clearance, at least twice weekly. presently. Tennis wharf is the only possible place for such, a level facility should be included in the plan, to allow a wheelchair bound person to enter a vehicle and possibly a turning area so the vehicle can turn. Cars, including the Island Community Vehicle now reverse either up or down Pitt View St which is dangerous.
16	The parks needs public toilets. We regularly have visitors to the island desperate for the toilet ask us to access our toilets are there are no facilities in the park (where they should be as people are stuck on the island for at least an hour until the next ferry). People have to defecate or urinate in the park behind the trees otherwise which is unsanitary.
17	Can you please cater while planning the works to retain half of the park area for bootcamp, soccer, social events, etc?
18	<p>See Attachment: 'Catherine Park : proposed amendment'. Hello team.</p> <p>I have lived on the Island for 22+years and in that time been aware of the various 'interest groups' some of whom comment on usage and access to the entire Island. Alas this has led to tensions in community not least a resistance to them taking on board majority views such as removing several trees from the park to enable safe ingress and egress for the operation of a helicopter to evacuate persons who are deemed to require prompt medical treatment, including lifesaving treatment.</p> <p>RFBS supported this suggestion as did the majority on the island. I also believe that at the time council were prepared to remove these trees. Given that works are being proposed could I ask that you remove those trees required to enable helicopter access. Thank you.</p> <p>Also: please ensure that there is parking for vehicles. This will enable to park to be appreciated by those who are of limited mobility and who would like to access the park.</p>
19	<p>7/10/2024</p> <p><b>Comments Re: Improvements to Landscaping Proposals for Catherine Park, Scotland Island</b></p> <p>It's great that NBC has listened to resident comment regarding these updates, and delivered a better plan as a result. I make comments, both positive and negative, below, for your perusal.</p> <p>*Great to hear that the 'Green Electricity Box' might be moved from 'front and centre' of Catherine Pk, though I note there are no promises attached, nor any indication of potential for a positive result.</p> <p>*Surely 1.2m is wide enough for paths at 2a and 2b? It's not like a footy crowd breaks up all at the same time. Foot traffic is usually low, if not sparse.</p> <p>*Connecting the Community Centre and Rec. Centre with a ramp rather than a mish-mash of stair flights appears a good improvement, along with other changes around these buildings.</p> <p>*Is area 3 realistic as a watercraft storage space? I can't find a scale on the map, but is area 3 maybe 10m x 4m? I haven't done a count recently of vessels at Catherine Park, but photos indicate a wide variety and substantial number of craft, many of which appear non-functioning or abandoned. (I did do a count at Carols Wharf the other day. There are 70 vessels of all descriptions there, completely overflowing the racks for perhaps 20, that NBC has built.) I have previously recommended moving all craft to the western part of C.P. This is not without problems but leaves some potential for improving the amenity of this narrow 'entry' area, wharf-public park. The monitoring and culling of unwanted &amp; broken toys in all waterfront parks would seem an ongoing problem to me worthy of NBC consideration.</p> <p>*The deferral of Stage 2 planning to 'later'. I don't know if council has already done the planning but just not released it yet? Surely this is the case? It would appear to be 'anti-planning' to design up to a hard boundary, and not in the adjoining public property. The elephant issue of course is Golf Buggies and similar quad bikes, 4WDs, etc. If these cars aren't kept away from the waterfront, wharf, footpath and kid's swimming area, I think it threatens both the amenity of the Park's most intensely used area, and possibly the safety of the area for pedestrians. The number of 'cars' will certainly continue to grow, probably ever-faster, as they become considered</p>

	<p>'essential'. As I recall, there were almost none here 10-15 years ago, and now they demand unlimited front-row parking. Surely better to keep them away from the waterfront.</p> <p>Yours Sincerely</p>
20	<p>I am part of a group of users who participate in a free bootcamp on the island twice a week. The bootcamp has been running for five years and has over 30 members. I would love to see some static exercise equipment as part of the improvements to the Catherine Park as well as the sand replaced by soft-fall in the playground. The sand encourages faeces from both native and domestic animals, requires cleaning and maintenance. Soft-fall is much more hygienic for both little users and big ones.</p>
21	<p>Further Comment:  The importance of the landscape character of the park needs to be of a simple, rural character and not suburban. Therefore, the materials need to emphasise simplicity and unity. The spatial character of the park in the valley is more important than the objects. An example of this is the proposed pathway 2a and 2b which at present represents a difference in materials as it changes from gravel to concrete. Why can't it be the same material to create a sense of unity?  On the slopes it could be stabilised gravel with stone edging cross bars in the same plane as the path. If any concrete is needed, it should not be coloured, but natural such as either exposed aggregate or broomed finish, but not coloured, because it stands out as an element of difference and it looks artificial and suburban which is not necessary.  The width of the pathway should not encourage golf buggies.</p>
22	<p>I would use the park more if it were more attractive.</p> <p>I think the proposed 1.5m path width for the concreted portion near the community hall is still excessively wide, and concrete is likely to become too slippery when wet, especially considering the steepness of the slope there. Some other kind of surface other than concrete would make more sense -- maybe a grid allowing rain infiltration? The path never has so much traffic that there needs to be passing width on the path.</p>
23	<p style="text-align: right;">Comments Catherine Park Landscape Plan [REDACTED] 12/10/24</p> <p>Good News</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emphasis on the natural environment</li> <li>2. Maintaining a boundary for vehicles parking and driving into the park</li> <li>3. Restoration of paths</li> <li>4. Natural swale</li> <li>5. Improvement of connectivity between buildings</li> </ol> <p>Unaddressed problems</p> <p>Drainage</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) There is a lack of detail on how drainage from Florence Terrace and Pitt View Street will be managed to prevent continued flooding and saturation of the foreshore and picnic area below</li> <li>b) There is no mention of management of stormwater flows from Robertson Road at the west boundary of the park. These flows adversely affect the recreation and picnic site below.</li> </ol> <p>Unresolved issues</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <u>Preservation of the park boundary at the stone groin</u> by relocation of the stone blocks – This will enhance safety within a confined recreational space used for swimming, boating and movement of pedestrians to the ferry, community buildings or playground. Note: Access to the foreshore for those with genuine mobility needs is supported by the community and SIRA. There is presently parking for mobility scooters at the wharf or along the foreshore and transport available by the community vehicle. There is parking for those more able on the roads above and below the foreshed. This is in keeping with the rest of the island. In Stage 2 there could be limited parking for smaller registered vehicles with a genuine disability sticker and a drop off and pick up area. It is important that</li> </ol>

	<p>pedestrians and recreational users be safe. It is also critical that there is access for the Island Ambulance vehicle and access is not blocked by parked vehicles</p> <p>b) <u>Restoration of the park entrance and foreshore from Tennis Court wharf</u> – There is no mention of this, and it could well be possible to make some improvements now especially along the seawall and immediate beach edge. A temporary log edge could be considered. In the very least the discarded engines and unused boats could be removed.</p> <p>c) <u>Storage for small craft:</u> This could be provided over 2 areas The east side for small paddle boards and kayaks and the west side for the sailing dinghies. This is in practice and seems to work well. Ideally as requested in the past there should be a yearly stickering and unclaimed items removed.</p> <p><u>Pathways should be minimal in size:</u> The maximum width should be 1.2. This is adequate for an individual using a baby stroller, wheelchair or crutches. There is no need for a double laneway as with a roadside walkway. Traffic in the park is not an issue rather the goal is an all-weather surface for a single item or person.</p> <p><u>Connectivity between buildings and the ring road:</u> This is an issue of health and safety. There continue to be accidents and limits to hall users as a result of the poor access from the street above and the steps below. Lighting will assist but the need to carry heavy equipment up and down between building should be addressed asap.</p> <p><u>Public amenity:</u></p> <p>a) Additional or improved seating along the foreshore, around the playground and around the park is most welcome. Sandstone edging below the slope between the two buildings should be included. It would be a benefit for gathering and make a nice edge for the gardens above.</p> <p>b) Play spaces for all ages: The improvements and continued maintenance of these is most welcome as is the addition of the in-ground slide. Improvements to the grass surface should coincide with the construction of the swale. Presently the park surface has been compacted by large vehicle and construction with the NBN and Ausgrid. Stormwater has brought weed, sediment and road gravel all of which is a problem.</p> <p>c) Bushland: This is flagged but needs to be adequately supported or funded. The park should provide quality habitat for local wildlife and be an inspiration to the public and residents by showcasing local native plants and good weed management practices. The Catherine Park Bushcare group is a small group of individuals, and they cannot be responsible for the whole park. Asset management as fire reduction burns by the rural fire service as well as APZ can proliferate weed growth. Thought and money should be given to preparation and follow-up.</p>
24	As a frequent users of the park for fitness we would like to see fitness equipment in the play area for users of all ages.
25	<p>I have been living in Church Point for over 27 years. The offshore areas are an important part of my locality. I have been a regular visitor to Scotland Island over the years to visit friends and attend festivals and the like.</p> <p><b>Stage 2 works:</b> One of the Design intents stated is to improve the arrival experience at Catherine Park.</p> <p>When I first visited Catherine Park was unencumbered by vehicles. The island provided a unique escape from the demands of onshore life. When disembarking at Tennis I was welcomed by a peaceful waterfront park. The small rock garden in front of the pool area provided the perfect spot to meet with friends, enjoy the outlook and keep an eye out on those using the pool.</p> <p>In recent years this waterfront area has become a parking area for buggies – at the last fair I attended several years ago on the island there were up to 14 parked along the waterfront. This fixation of locating infrastructure for vehicles on the waterfront, impacting the character of the park, and amenity and enjoyment for so many is nothing less than poor and uninformed planning. This has degraded the arrival experience to the park.</p> <p>With about 368 households on the island, many of which are occupied intermittently as holiday houses, and given the availability of an island taxi service, it would be reasonable to provide up to three spaces maximum for those requiring accessible parking. These can be more appropriately located adjoining Pitt View Street, away from the waterfront.</p>

	<p>In the interrim – till Stage 2 works proceed I would ask that the area for buggy parking be clearly delineated to prevent intrusion into the park beyond the park boundary and restricted to 3 spaces max.</p> <p><b>Furniture settings</b> With reference to proposed furniture there is a link between Thomas Stephens Reserve and the offshore areas given their history. Wharf style furniture is desirable in both locations. This would be consistent and appropriate. An opportunity to consult further on this for both areas would be appreciated.</p> <p><b>Pavement 2b:</b> It is not clear if the gravel path is 1200 wide PLUS 150 stone edging each side. It would be preferable for both the gravel path and concrete path be the same total width. The washed aggregate concrete used at Currawong has been highly successful in blending into adjoining areas and would be preferable to coloured concrete.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback Yours Faithfully</p>
26	<p>This is the only park for the community and the only public gathering space, and play space for children of all ages. I am grateful that both play areas are being maintained, as they are serving different age groups. The play areas will at some point need some tlc or an upgrade.</p>
27	<p>It is disgraceful that between road upgrades and various park and amenities expenditure, the few hundreds of wealthy, well connected, incl. notable politicians, Scotland Island residents benefits from millions of \$ from the NBC funds. Far more is spent by residents in Scotland Island than the average annual rate we pay. This at a time the NBC is broke and requires massive rate increase, that cannot even pay for the budgeted deficits. STOP THE WASTE OF OUR MONEY, STOP THIS GOLD PLATED PROJECT.</p>
28	<p>What is needed on the island right now is a sewerage system connected to the main grid so effluent stop leaking into Pittwater. Please also use our hard earned tax moneys to fix our roads so we can finally feel like this is the 21st century we are living in! The park is not at all a priority in my mind.</p>
29	<p>Both my husband and I are elderly and my husband is a TPI war veteran with disabilities that prevent him using community vehicle. Parking close to wharf has been available to us for as many years in the past .Now there is no provision for us. This means as residents os Scotland Island for my family and I for over 60 years we will be unable to access out home or go to mainland for shopping medical appointments etc. Dept. of Veteran Affairs and Aged Care would not be happy to know of this exclusion.</p>
30	<p>Scotland Island and the provision of services for Island Residents by far in away exceeds the rates payable to the council. Scotland Island is an isolated community with very few visitors.</p> <p>There are way more other projects of need that have a much greater overall Northern Beaches community benefit. (Such as fixing our potholed roads)</p>

**Verbatim community and stakeholder responses outside of Your Say\***

<p>31</p>	<p>I am responding to Council's invitation for comment relating to Catherine Park, Scotland Island and am drawing on my four decades of permanent residency on the island. My first thoughts concern the role of Council in any alterations to the Park's Usage, as these will entail both winners and losers and the guiding principle with any decision impacting the lives of residents and visitors, I feel must be in identifying and catering to the worst case scenario/s which should be evaluated against other competing interests. In this regard I would suggest that the mobility impaired amongst us fall into that worst case scenario category. It consists, as it does, people from any community entailing those suffering physical and non-physical impairments. Some, such as broken limbs, may be temporary but others such as stroke victims, those with congenital illnesses as well as those with mental disorder/s may be longer-term or even permanently impaired.</p> <p>To fully appreciate the situation Council should visit the Island without involving or appointing the Residents' Association in order to prevent the potential of bias in its evaluation. It is widely agreed that the Residents' Association does not speak for all residents, with the vast majority of members coerced into membership as it is the only way for residents to access mains ("town") water. As the water sold by the Residents' Association is non-potable it is a requirement that drinking water be purchased off-island and brought conveyed back to the island and residence. A physical visit would confirm that the topography of the island is steep therefore limiting the access/egress areas for the mobility impaired. Proof of this may be gleaned from the ferry service: the island plays host to visitors on a regular basis and often the ferry drivers tell those tourists firstly that water is not available on the island and advises them to disembark at Tennis Wharf (adjoining Catherine Park) due to the steepness to be negotiated to access the ring-road.</p> <p>The first stop on the ferry crossing is Bell Wharf and to access the ring road one needs firstly to climb a series of approximately 20 roughly hewn large          ◆ andstone steps giving access to Vivian Street-which does not meet the requirements of being a public street and to reach the ring-road one needs to climb about 100 steps.</p> <p>The second stop is at Carol's Wharf which is accessed via Harold Reserve and is the only viable alternative for vehicular access to the public wharf should Council seek an alternative to Catherine Park for small vehicle access.          However, realistically, this would be a very expensive exercise.</p> <p>The next ferry stop is at Eastern Wharf which, in many ways, replicates the difficulties encountered at Bell Wharf. Access is via Lowlana Street, again not meeting the requirements of being a public street and having in excess of 120 steps.</p> <p>The next stop is Tennis Wharf, adjoining Catherine Park. It is a flat access and a park with family orientation as it has the only tidal pool serving the island, plus children's play items and a barbecue area. When one considers that mobility impaired residents pay for these facilities via their rates but may be denied access to them because their means of transport may not be permitted it is a very sad day, especially as we are discussing less than 6 golf buggies. The area to be freed up will soon be cluttered up with personal watercraft which are already strewn near the shoreline of the park. One should consider that a hobiecat has a larger footprint than a golf buggy, and that unlike the PWC, golf buggies are there temporarily.</p> <p>The Residents' Association will cite a "community vehicle" as being an available alternative for transport but this is far from the case. Until most recently it did not operate on Wednesdays (and other days when drivers are not available; or it is off-island for repairs/servicing etc., and on other occasions when it has been commandeered for alternative use), nor on Sundays. It is simply not a viable alternative when one has to make medical appointments, etc.</p> <p>To use the Community Vehicle at Tennis Wharf requires mobility impaired to walk most of the length of Pitt View Street which, like the other wharf access roads, is steep. So, I see the question confronting the Council is whether the mobility impaired are to be told that, no matter if the impairment is permanent or not, they should not be living on the island.</p>
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\*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.

We are very pleased with this much more appropriate plan for Catherine Park. Thank you for listening to the community feedback. We greatly appreciate your willingness to communicate and consider our input. We support nearly all the measures in this plan, with a couple of requests and suggestions.

### **1. Requested modification: reduce width of concrete path (item 2b) from**

#### **1.5m to 1.2m with surface finish as washed aggregate concrete**

The plan states:

*Item 2 Provide a pedestrian pathway (2a - 1.2m wide, compacted gravel with 150mm wide sandstone edge, 2b - 1.5m wide coloured concrete). New access bridge over low lying drainage outlet.*

**Item 2a: We support the 1.2m wide compacted gravel path with 150mm wide sandstone edge** from the wharf to the creek. A 150mm sandstone edge would be both attractive and functional in maintaining the path. Will this path extend to the wharf of stop at the park boundary?

**Item 2b:** 1.5m wide coloured concrete path from the creek to the steps and the halls

#### **Width: We urge you to reduce the width of Item 2b from 1.5m to 1.2m.**

We have been told that this section of concrete path is 1.5m wide to be consistent with the flatter section of path (2a) which is 1.2m plus 300mm in edging, totalling 1.5m. We do not accept this argument. The 2a section is surfaced with compacted gravel and narrow sandstone edging which will harmonise with the environment more easily than concrete.

The formed path is 1.2m so it is consistent to keep 1.2m as the width for the concrete path. A bridge is between the two sections anyway.

As we have consistently argued, 1.2m is quite adequate for the small numbers of pedestrian users and would fit better with the small scale of the landscape. This path is used constantly, but mostly by one or two people at a time, coming to and from the wharf. When there are community events at the hall, some people will come along this path, but many come down either of the two sets of stairs from Robertson Rd or from the emergency access track.

Path width of 1.5m is used regularly by Council elsewhere because of the numbers and mixed types of users. Unlike the mainland, we do not have large groups walking together or bikes, prams or wheelchairs using the path. Our park is distinct in its pattern of usage and a smaller path is sufficient to meet our needs while fitting less obtrusively into the landscape.

Reducing the width will save money which is needed for other park priorities.

Surface: We request a washed aggregate finish to the concrete rather than coloured concrete to merge more naturally into the landscape. It will also reduce possibility of slippery conditions during prolonged wet weather.

Bridge: While we felt xxxx xxxx's suggestion of a stone arch to support the path across the creek could be an aesthetically pleasing feature, we accept the economic advantages of a mod wood bridge.

### **2. Questions around buggy foreshore access**

The third stated aim of the Design Intent is "To better manage vehicles (buggy) for improving pedestrian access & safety".

#### **a) Are buggies to be stopped at the park boundary?**

**b) Who is responsible for the design of the area excluded from this plan and marked as Stage 2? What is the timeline? Final Stage 2 design should be consistent with the principles of the plan masterplan.**

The plan shows the pedestrian path commencing at the boundary to the park beside the stone groin which bounded the old swimming enclosure. Currently, the two sandstone blocks preventing buggy access further into the park are placed 4 -5 metres within Catherine Park. This enables daily parking by up to seven buggies which has reduced this foreshore area to bare dirt. Frequent coming and going of buggies dominates the foreshore path by the beach and wharf. We support the sandstone blocks being moved to



the park boundary, as originally planned. This would still allow access by buggies and parking for about three buggies if that is what Council intends to enable.

The legal context for considering buggy access is that Transport NSW has repeatedly stated it will not allow conditional registration of buggies and ATVs for Scotland Island. We have been told that only two buggies have current conditional registration for Scotland Island and no more will be issued. Parking is available nearby at the phone box and further up the hill in front of the Fire Shed.

We note that this plan does not address improvements to the foreshore area which is within road reserve marked as Stage 2. This is a prime waterfront area with both access and recreational functions. It is the arrival point for most visitors, a constantly used pedestrian path plus a popular recreational place for chatting, swimming, children playing and launching kayaks. We urge Council to restore it as a pedestrian-only beach front.

### **3. Comments on some of the measures we support**

We appreciate the reduced number of total items in park and reduced hard surfaces which helps to preserve the uncluttered, natural character of the park. Item 1 – Upgrade stormwater Pitt View St, Florence Terrace and within the park to address drainage issues

The work already done by Council has resulted in significant improvements and it is a top priority to complete remaining improvements.

Request: specify works for stormwater from Robertson Rd at the western end of the park. A large volume of water comes from the steep descent of the Thompson St to the junction with Robertson Rd, is piped under the road and discharged without further controls. This results in a large unusably wet area on the grass below. We have repeatedly urged that this problem be listed for drainage works.

#### **Item 3 – Watercraft storage area**

Council and the community need to work together to reduce the number of watercraft left in the park despite being rarely used. We oppose the installation of racks as they are an ugly visual intrusion and do not solve the problem. This is evident at Carols Wharf where three racks have been installed but there are a great many more kayaks etc on the ground, often unused for years. The plan only shows Area 3 as a small area for watercraft. We suggest that the plan also acknowledges the western slope of the park as a watercraft storage area. This is a longstanding reality in an area otherwise unused. Additionally, there is an APZ zone along the adjoining property requiring vegetation to be minimised.

Item 20 – We support the improved flow path through a broad swale with changed route. Putting a bend in the swale increases the area of uninterrupted open grass and creates a more natural creek line appearance. The addition of sizeable sandstone rocks to slow the flow is also welcomed. Additional planting on the upper gully edges may also be helpful but should not create maintenance problems for mowing.

Item 14 – Extending paved area in front of Community Hall and installing sandstone logs for seating at the edge of the embankment.

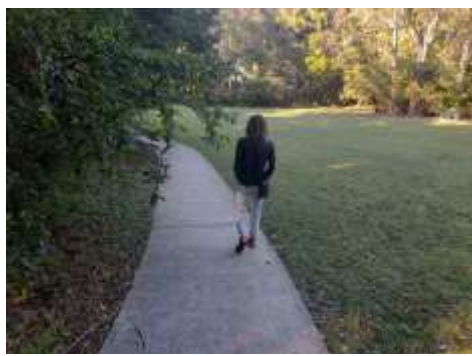
Suggestion: We suggest to also add sandstone logs at the base of the bank between the two halls. This would serve to both reinforce the sloped bank and provide seating at a very convenient location.

Item 16 – improvements to steps from Robertson Rd to the halls and improved accessibility between halls. The community sees this as a safety priority.

Item 19 – Minor upgrades and maintenance to play area for younger children, previously constructed for the kindergarten. We support ongoing retention of this play area and hope that Council will replace equipment when required.

The additional fence which had been extended to make a garden bed has already been removed. The remaining fence still serves the purpose of delineating the playground area and protecting the edge of the softfall and artificial turf. Since the area is no longer part of a preschool, the fence is not really required for child safety. Longer term, it would be aesthetically preferable to replace the metal fence with sandstone and wooden edges.

	<p>Item 12 – Ongoing bush regeneration activities – This makes a very significant difference to the amenity of the park, as well as the obvious benefits to the flora and fauna. The recent additional bush regeneration contract work on the slopes of the park have been greatly appreciated by residents.</p> <p>Item 13 – Improvements to basketball court need to include resurfacing as well as line marking.</p> <p>Item 22 - Investigate accessible path connection between Robertson Rd and the halls</p> <p>This was a suggestion from Island architects xxxx xxxxx and xxxx xxxxx who would be glad to meet onsite to discuss this option.</p> <p>In conclusion</p> <p>Apart from the width and surface finish of the concrete path, we support the concepts outlined, submit some additional comments and look forward to engaging with you on the design details.</p>
33	<p><b>Revised Catherine Park Landscape Improvement Plan</b>  <b>Comments by xxxxx xxxxxx</b></p> <p>Thank you for revising the plan in response to community feedback and providing a much more appropriate design. Please consider my suggestions to further refine it.</p> <p>I really value that the natural character of the park is preserved by installing <b>fewer new items and hard surfaces</b>. Similarly, creating <b>a broad swale with a new curved route</b> looks more like a creek. Have you a plan showing the location of the wastewater disposal trenches which are in the area sloping to the paperbarks?</p> <p>I'm also delighted that the <b>play area of the former kindergarten is retained as an asset, with minor maintenance and upgrades listed</b>. Personally, I would be glad for the fence to be removed as it is no longer needed for regulations and child safety. Instead, log or stone edging would create a much more attractive, inconspicuous barrier between the mown grass and the soft fall or artificial turf. The additional piece of fencing which was in front of the kindergarten building has already been removed, so this does not need to be an objective as stated in the plan.</p> <p><b>Improved access and landscaping around the halls is needed for public safety and enjoyment</b>. The area between the two halls really needs new shrubs and a couple of trees to grow up and provide shade. The extra paving and sandstone logs for seating will be appreciated.</p> <p><b>Paths – Item 2a)</b> great to see crushed gravel as the surface for the first section of path along the foreshore to the creek. Also glad to see width of 1.2m. <b>Will this path start from the wharf or at the park boundary as shown on the plan? If so, are vehicles (buggies and quad bikes) to be stopped from entering the park as they'll quickly wreck it?</b></p> <p><b>Paths - Item 2b) Drainage - Does this section of path have to be concrete if drainage was properly addressed? Continuity using the crushed gravel would look more natural – could this be sufficient on the slope if drainage was adequate?</b> When Council previously put crushed sandstone on this section, another resident and I urged Council to install a cross-drain at the top of the path, but to no effect. A drain is needed here to divert the huge flow of water which comes down the steps and the smaller flow which comes from the ridge in front of the septic tanks. There was never any attempt at removing water from the path and so it eroded. <b>What does Council plan to do about the stormwater with new path? Concrete finish?</b> If Council determines that concrete is necessary, I urge that it be <b>washed aggregate finish rather than coloured concrete</b> which always looks artificial. Larger pebbles blend into the environment and provide a surface with more grip as shown in this path between Central Parade and Bowling Green Lane in Avalon. It is only .96m, old style, but at 1.2m a path like this would be a suitable option for Catherine Park. As also shown in this photo, concrete paths often tend to get eroded at their grass edges, leaving the path above the soil level.</p>



This photo shows what Council is proposing – 1.5m coloured concrete like this recently constructed path through Catalpa Reserve. It will never merge into the landscape due to its size and colour.

**Width of path – Please reduce width of path 2b) to 1.2m consistent with the crushed gravel path in 2a).**

This is wide enough for the actual usage and will fit better into the landscape. I have been told Council now makes paths a standard 1.5m to accommodate multi-use by bikes, prams, wheelchairs, mobility scooters, mobility walkers as well as pedestrians. However, this path is just used by pedestrians as all these other types of transport couldn't negotiate the many steps, steep slopes and dirt roads of the Island. If, once in a blue moon, any of these

wheeled transports was approaching, I would more than happily step off the path – as would everyone else! We all walk constantly on unsealed and uneven surfaces to get to our houses and wear footwear to suit. Save your money for where we really need it. 1.2m is wide enough.

**Robertson Rd steps** – the set of steps rising above the proposed concrete path (2b) are not listed for improvements but in heavy rain they pool so badly that you need gumboots or your shoes are soaked. Decades ago, when community volunteers built an earlier set of steps under local architect Steve Crosby's direction, each step was designed to slope and shed water. They worked well for many years but when Council replaced them with wider steps, they made them all level and the water has pooled ever since. This is an example of a Council "upgrade" which actually was a functional downgrade. Can you put some cross drainage to periodically shed water off the steps? Just two pieces of wood with a small gap as used on walking tracks can work well – if someone periodically removes the leaves which will gradually turn to soil if left.

**Item 5 – Proposed native shade tree plantings** – this is only indicated in one place near the paperbarks by the creek outlet. We need some other new trees growing up so they give good shade in 40 years. A couple are needed in front of the halls.

**Vehicle access to the park and foreshore** – The emergency access track should be kept for occasional public use such as emergencies, community events and maintenance. Private vehicles will enter the park unless prevented.

**The foreshore by Tennis Wharf and the beach** is probably the most heavily used beach and path on the Island. It used to be a beautiful area where community working bees had built the stone walls and planted the garden beds. People sat on the walls and chatted, children played on the beach and around the path, people walked to and fro. Now it is a bare dirt carpark for up to seven buggies. People no longer use this path area to just sit and relax, children need to be kept off the path as buggies come and go. This revised plan shades the beach foreshore area and labels it as Stage 2, which simply avoids confronting the foreshore parking issue. It baffles me that Council allows this on our foreshore, especially since there are only three or four buggies that are registered for use on the Island and Transport NSW has repeatedly said they will not allow any further registrations. Council is usually so risk-averse, yet in this case are enabling unregistered vehicles to drive and park on a pedestrian path. There is ample parking by the phone box and Fire Shed where other registered vehicles park. Why should unregistered vehicles have privileged access to avoid walking a short distance like everyone else?

Council has a sign asking that the foreshore parking spaces be left for people of "limited mobility" which implies that buggy access is legal. Everyone is more than happy to accommodate genuine need and a legally accepted vehicle to assist those with a disability. I do not know of any disabled person who has a registered buggy, but if there was such a person, parking for up to two buggies could be provided at the base of Pitt View St just before the bollards.

Mobility scooters are legal transport for people with a documented medical condition. These scooters are small, travel slowly (max 10 kph) and two people use these and park them on Tennis Wharf. There is enough room to accommodate them on the wharf and they cause no problem. The Community Vehicle is also a very helpful service funded by state government. Unregistered vehicles are not a safe option.

The plan shows the new path starting on the boundary of the park, where buggies currently park four to five metres within the park area. There's no point building a path unless all vehicles are prevented from driving on it. Will the path really start only at the point shown on the plan, rather than at the wharf? Since this plan does not address the beachfront area, when will Council resolve the buggy access issue and enhance this damaged area?

**Item 3 Designated Watercraft Storage Area** – I do not want to see racks installed. They are ugly and do not solve the problem of large numbers of kayaks on the ground, as we all see at Carols where three racks were installed and are most unpopular. I would like to see Council sticker boats and any that are not removed within a certain period should be taken away. This may be sufficient to reduce the problem. Boats are also stored on western side of park which would not be used otherwise.

**Item 12 ongoing Bush Regeneration** - yes, please keep up the funding as there is no point in small amounts of time with such a long gap that the weeds regain the territory. We appreciate how Andrew Jennings has increased the funding for bush regeneration on the Island.

**Item 10 - Maintain & enhance existing open grassed areas** – sounds good, but does it mean anything more than mowing? Our compacted play area has never had the standard oval maintenance of aeration, turfing or reseeding and weed control.

## Document administration

Version	1.0
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Approval	Content provided and approved by Parks and Open Space Team Responsible manager: Jeremy Smith
Status	Final
Related Projects	
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.