

WAIKIRIKIRI PARK PLAYGROUND

Insights gained through community engagement



“

I live next door and my mum used to play in this park and so did her mum and so did my nanas mum ... I hope Waikirikiri park gets a cool as park that will last forever

”

Report prepared to inform the design of Waikirikiri Park's replacement playground



PROCESS

Over the course of three months, Sport Gisborne Tairāwhiti, in partnership with Gisborne District Council have engaged and gathered feedback from the community surrounding Waikirikiri Park. The information informing this report was gained through an online survey (~400 responses), 'design a playground' visits to two local primary schools, local event visits, social media engagement and a targeted event at the park, in which 150 people drilled down to specifics on the information already gathered.

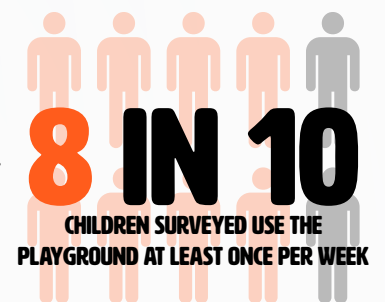


Kids from Te Wharau School building their dream playgrounds

Additionally through incorporating the principles of Locally Led Development, we've encouraged and enabled the surrounding community to drive change within their own park, and many have expressed their desire, skills and ideas to further the potential of this project.

SAMPLE

The information gathered has been specifically targeted at those who live near the park, and are current or potential users of the playground. Delivery of the survey was targeted to those within a 2km radius of Waikirikiri Reserve, and events held or attended were within close proximity to the park.



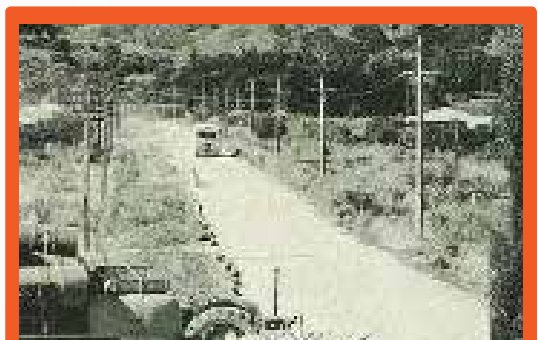
DESIGN

Throughout the engagement process, the community have made clear their desire to see the new playground reflect the historical, cultural and social significance of the park.

Waikirikiri (meaning water and sand/gravel) was part of a wider area of land known as Papawhariki and later Kāiti, that originally belonged to Ngati Oneone. Waikirikiri was named for its fertile, sandy soils which were once home to extensive community gardens. The park itself was purchased by the Gisborne District Council from the Crown in 1991 for the purposes of developing a sportsground with parts being set aside for public housing and later being declared a recreation reserve 1996.

The park has a long history of community-led development. The original playground was lobbied for by a group of women in the area, later known as the Dalton Street Housewives. In the 1950s, many in the community recognised a need for a playground for their tamariki who were playing in the now empty paddock (which prior to this had held livestock). These seven women were champions of this cause. They mobilised grassroots fundraising, hangi after hangi and raffle after raffle, eventually raising enough money to purchase playground equipment.

Through community led activism, they mobilised volunteers to assemble and build the playground equipment, some of which still stands today.



Tyndall Road (bordering the now Waikirikiri Park), 1961



An aerial image of Waikirikiri Park in 1973, showing the rapid expansion of the area



Kids playing on the original playground equipment, made possible by the Dalton St. Housewives

Waka Taylor, reminiscing 60+ years on, recalls how their neighborhood collective did the work mostly without any significant involvement by any municipal entities or agencies; it was truly community-led.

To that end, the project’s design should continue to utilise the ideas, passions and skills of residents to continue the park’s rich history of community-driven change.

Over 50 residents have already offered skills, passions and time to developing their park during our involvement in consultation events.

“ IT’S IMPORTANT THAT OUR COMMUNITY IS REFLECTED IN THE DESIGN AS WE WANT TO CREATE AND BUILD TAONGA AROUND US ”

Feedback has shown that the history of the park’s naming, the role of the Dalton Street Housewives and kaupapa māori principles should be incorporated into the design of this playground.

“ THE PLAYGROUND SHOULD REFLECT THE PARK’S HISTORY AND TANGATA WHENUA ”

“ A CULTURAL FEEL. LIKE SOME ARTWORKS, SCULPTURES AND SIGNAGE ABOUT WHAKAPAPA ”

“ WE’D LIKE TO SEE THE ORIGINAL EQUIPMENT THAT HAS SURVIVED THE TIMES REUSED ”

Today, the park represents an important place for whānau to spend time, and for the community to connect.

The park is a base for a number of sports including Softball, Touch, Rugby and League. Although a significant number of park visits are due to sporting events, the most common reasons identified that adults use Waikirikiri Park are bringing children to the playground, and seeing friends or whānau.

Furthermore, the majority of children surveyed lived in close proximity to the park and accessed the playground by walking, biking, scootering or skateboarding. Thus it truly is an essential social hub for the surrounding neighbourhood.

The community want an inclusive facility which enables and encourages them to interact as a whole whānau.

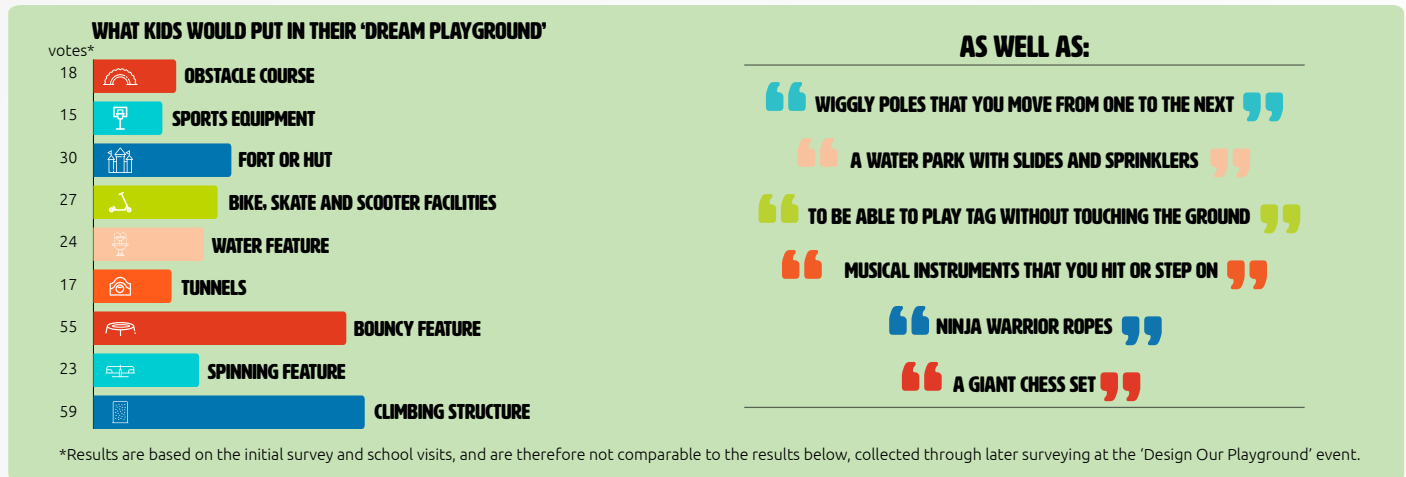
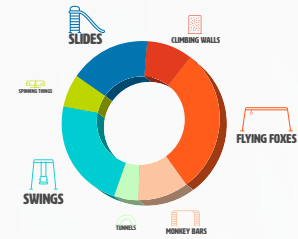
The playground and surrounds need to reflect their social significance to the community, as a key ‘bumping place’ to see neighbours, friends and relatives.



PLAYGROUND FEATURES

FAVOURITE TRADITIONAL PLAYGROUND FEATURES

Results from the initial survey showed high demand for playground features which encourage risky play, many involving height or fast movement. The most demanded features were as follows: flying fox, swings, slide, monkey bars, a climbing structure, a bouncy feature, a fort or hut and a spinning feature.



FLYING FOX

The community opted firstly for a stand-alone, wire flying fox (61%, 86 votes), followed by a straight, metal flying fox connected to a wider playground module (23%, 32 votes), followed by a semi-circular, metal and connected flying fox (16%, 22 votes).

SWINGS

While there is a traditional swing set that can likely be recycled from the previous playground, 79% (112) of those surveyed indicated that they would like a nest/basket type swing. Many indicated that both would be preferable.

SLIDE

Public opinion was split between a tube slide (43%, 61 votes), and a straight double slide (40%, 57 votes), with little interest in a single slide with a bump (16%, 23 votes).

MONKEY BARS

A large majority (50%, 69 votes) showed interest in the spinning, circular monkey bars, followed by chain-style monkey bars with handles (26%, 36 votes), while 21% (33) voted for traditional, straight metal ones.

CLIMBING STRUCTURE

The community demonstrated highest interest in a rope net tower (49%, 68 votes), followed by a rock climbing type wall (34%, 47 votes).

BOUNCY FEATURE

The second most popular item identified in kids' dream playgrounds was a bouncy feature, such as a trampoline or bouncy pillow.

FORT/HUT

Throughout the process, there was high demand for a fort or hut, in which kids could engage in a range of make-believe play. When given two options to vote upon, they preferred the fort which was designed to look like a traditional whare reflective of the project's kaupapa māori design.

SPINNING FEATURE

Votes were more or less split between the two options which allowed multiple children to play and interact together. The rocktopus (46%, 64 votes) was slightly more popular than the smaller carousel style feature (42%, 58 votes).

PLAYGROUND SURROUNDS

Through the engagement process, it was evident that the community was passionate not only about the playground itself, but also the peripheral environment and the experiences this creates.

These experiences included:

- “ BETTER FACILITIES TO VIEW OUR CHILDREN FROM AS THEY PLAY ”
- “ A PLACE FOR THE WHANAU TO ENJOY A PICNIC TOGETHER ”
- “ TABLES THAT WE CAN PAINT CHESS BOARDS ON ”

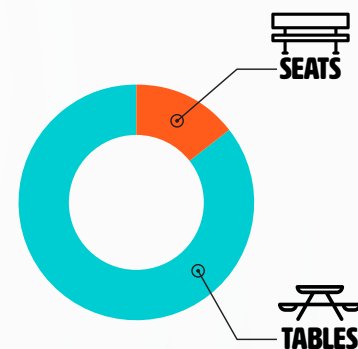
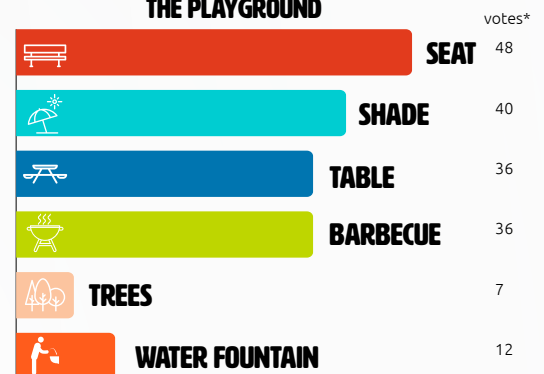
A common comment from the community around furniture was that it must be close to and face the playground set-up. Whānau want to be able to view their children from the seating while they play, as well as join them if they desire to either help or interact. Surroundings must also cater to all ages and degrees of mobility, for a park that is inclusive of the entire whānau.

The most popular options for surrounding features were seats, shade, tables, BBQs, water fountains and trees.

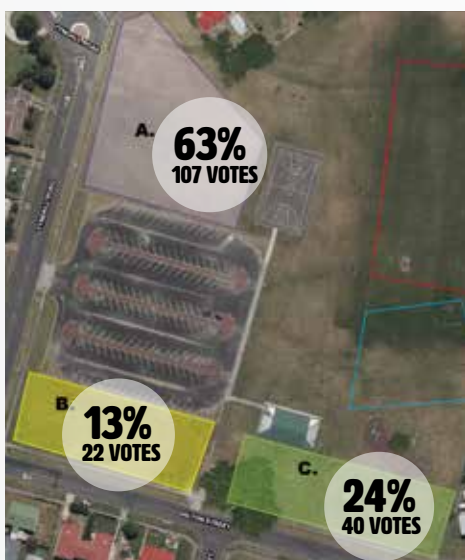
86% of people (117) indicated that they prefer tables over stand-alone seats. Comments indicated that this provided greater opportunities for whānau to connect, spend time and to eat together.

Shade sails over the playground were a clear preference for survey participants, with 75% (103) opting for this option over trees. In the initial survey, however, there was a clear desire for gardens and planting to happen alongside the development of the playground.

WHAT ADULTS WOULD LIKE SURROUNDING THE PLAYGROUND



*Results are based on the initial survey, and are therefore not comparable to the results (left) collected through later surveying at the 'Design Our Playground' event.



LOCATION

Due to the Health and Safety risk of the current location of the playground, the new playground must be built elsewhere in the park. Gisborne District Council have identified 3 possible locations for the new playground.

Location A proved to be the strongest preference by significant margin. The community felt that this site provided a safer space for tamariki to play, and also liked its larger size.

RECOMMENDATIONS

DESIGN

- The history of the park's naming, the Dalton Street Housewives and kaupapa māori principles should be incorporated into the playground's design.
- The playground and surrounds need to reflect their social significance to the community.

PLAYGROUND FEATURES

- A flying fox, swings, a slide, monkey bars, a climbing structure, a bouncy feature, a fort/hut and a spinning feature should be considered highest priorities.
- To celebrate the history of the original equipment, any surviving features should be incorporated into the new playground.

SURROUNDING/PERIPHERY LANDSCAPING

- Seating must be close to and face the playground.
- The landscape design must cater to all ages and degrees of mobility, for a park that is inclusive of the entire whānau.
- Tables should be included, for families to spend time and eat together.
- The playground surrounds should enable and encourage community connection.

LOCATION

- Location A (in the northwestern corner of the park) should be used for the new playground.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- The project's design should continue to utilise the ideas, passions and skills of residents wherever possible.

PROJECT SUPPORTED BY:

