

# INNER WEST



## Engagement outcomes report Yeo Park Playground Upgrade

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# Summary

This document provides an overview of the community consultation process and outcomes for the design development of Yeo Park Playground.

Input from the community was sought online via Your Say Inner West (YSIW) – Council’s engagement hub – and in person at a targeted engagement activity at the local school, Yeo Park Infant School.

From 14 February to 25 March 2022, the community could post their ideas for the playground onto an ideas wall published on YSIW. A targeted engagement session was organised with Yeo Park Infant School on Tuesday 8 March 2022, which allowed students and teachers to ask questions and fill out equipment preference surveys.

During the engagement period there were over 1,200 visits to the Your Say project page from 669 individual visitors. 140 participants contributed comments and votes to the ideas wall, with a total of 89 comments and 470 votes recorded. Popular themes for the upgrade of Yeo Park Playground included nature and water play, plenty of additional seating, and activities for children of all ages.

48 children participated in the face-to-face engagement at Yeo Park Infant School. The most popular equipment choices were a cubby house, monkey bars, a climbing net and slides.

## Background

The project originates from a need to upgrade degrading park assets and replace equipment that is at the end of its useful life. The intent of the upgrade is also to improve the accessibility of the playground for the local community.

The community was asked to help design a unique playground by providing ideas for playground equipment and themes. Council also sought to understand how the community currently use the playground.

The community was invited to provide further feedback regarding specific equipment preferences through the equipment preference survey. These surveys were distributed to the Outfield Café in Gough Reserve.

The children of Yeo Park Infant school were engaged to ensure that their unique experiences of the playground and hopes for its future were captured.

The input provided by the community will inform the designs and will guide the programming of the spaces. The project team will carefully consider all provided input and assess what proposed elements are compatible and feasible within the available space and budget.

## Engagement methods

- Online 'ideas wall' on [yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au](https://yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au)
- Onsite engagement session with Yeo Park Infant School children
- Equipment preference surveys
- Email and phone

### Online Ideas Wall on Your Say

Residents were asked to share and discuss their ideas for Yeo Park Playground on Your Say Inner West. Images could be included in these posts. All posted ideas were visible on the webpage and visitors could leave comments or votes on the posts. The number of votes a post received gives an indication of the popularity of the idea.

### Yeo Park Infant School engagement session

On 8 March 2022, representatives of Inner West Council held an onsite engagement session at Yeo Park Infant School. 48 students and 3 teachers were present for the engagement session.

During the session, Council's project lead presented a background on the project and explained the scope of the upgrade to the students. The staff and project lead then led a discussion where students were asked to respond to a series of questions:

- What is your favourite thing about Yeo Park Playground?
- What is your least favourite thing about Yeo Park Playground?
- Think about your favourite playground – what do you like about it?
- What games do you like to play outside?

The students were then broken up into class groups to complete equipment preference surveys. The equipment preference surveys showed 11 equipment options. Students were asked to rank their top 3 preferences.

## Equipment preference surveys

An onsite engagement session was planned with the general community to allow community members to complete equipment preference surveys, draw their ideas, and ask questions of the project team. This session was cancelled due to extreme weather.

Instead, equipment preference surveys were distributed to Outfield Café in Gough Reserve and the engagement period was extended by two weeks. The community was notified of this change via direct email and on the YSIW page.

The intention of these surveys was to determine at a quantifiable level which equipment the community would like to see in the playground.

## Promotion

- Letterbox drop
- Council's social media channels
- Direct email
- Onsite notifications

Most of the website visitors came directly to the Your Say page. A smaller proportion of the visitors were redirected via social media (Facebook) and via government websites.

Website visitors who came directly to the Your Say page were most likely to engage in online activities (75% conversion rate).

## Engagement outcomes

This section provides an overview of ideas raised for Yeo Park Playground.

No equipment preference surveys were submitted by the general community through the Outfield Café promotion. The responses from the general community are therefore only those submitted through the Your Say ideas wall and emails sent directly to the project lead.

The responses from the general community are presented separately to the targeted school engagement session to ensure the responses from children are not lost in the general responses.

## What did the community say?

### **Equipment preferences**

#### *1. Water play*

Three of the top five comments requested water play in some form – these comments received a total of 78 votes on the ideas wall. Water play was specifically mentioned in 21 of the 89 comments. Multiple commenters referred to Steele Park as a great example of water play while others requested “water play of any kind”.

#### *2. Nature play*

Three of the top five comments requested nature play in some form – these comments received a total of 76 votes. Nature play was specifically mentioned in

13 of the 89 comments. Comments supporting nature play often also supported natural landscaping and seating options.

### 3. *See-saw*

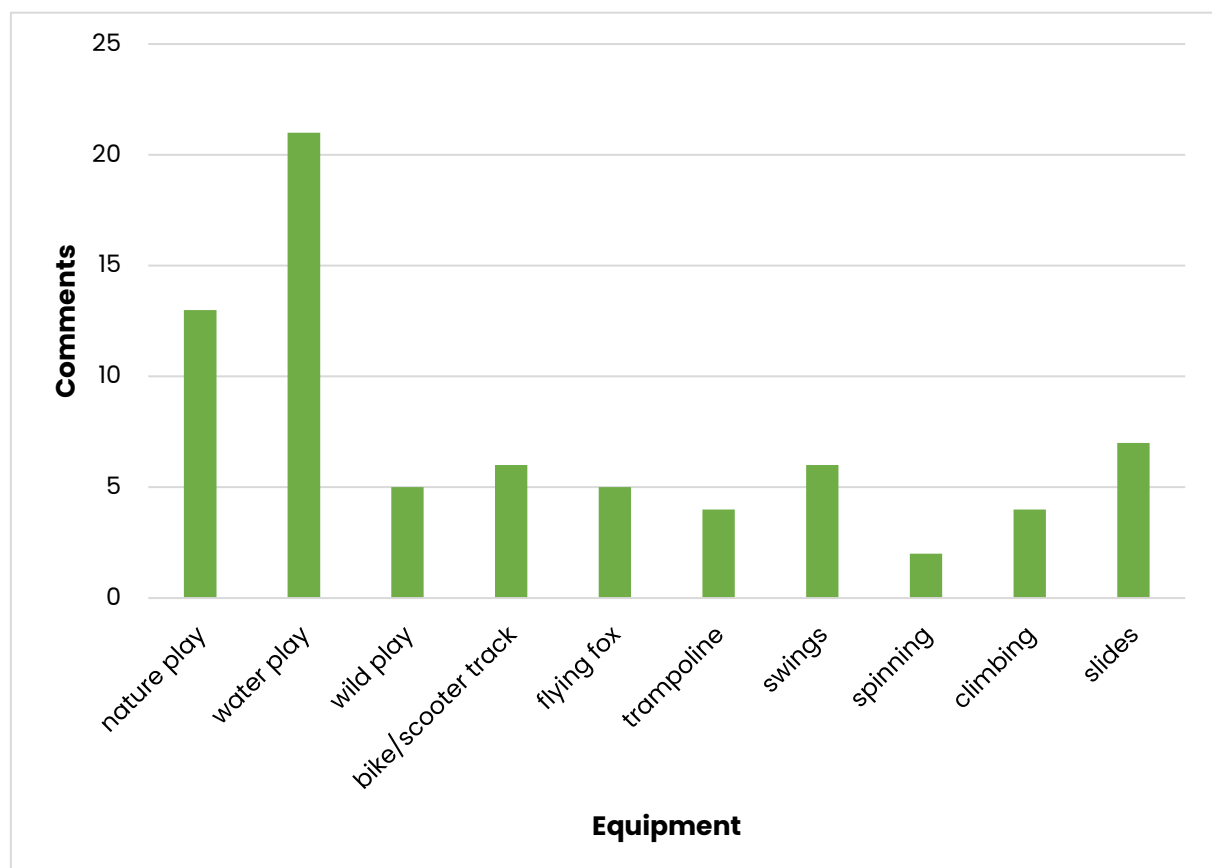
One of the top five comments expressed a wish for “a big see saw”. This comment received 26 votes, however no other respondents mentioned a see-saw.

### 4. *Wild play*

One of the top five comments expressed a wish for “wild/nature play” on the café side of the school. This comment received 23 votes. Wild play was mentioned in four other comments.

### 5. *In-ground trampolines*

One of the top five comments expressed a wish for in-ground trampolines as they are “a hit with young and older children”. This comment received 23 votes. In-ground trampolines were mentioned in three other comments.



## **Supportive features and other themes**

### *1. Age inclusivity*

23 respondents had some comment referring to age inclusivity. The general sentiments were:

- Ensure there are activities for younger and older children
- Make sure the playground is safe and accessible for toddlers
- Include activities for parents/grandparents to play with children in their care

There were conflicting comments about whether activities for different ages should be integrated or separated.

### *2. Additional seating and tables*

The need for additional seating was mentioned in 16 comments, specifically sandstone seats and seats suitable for older people. Commenters also requested seating and tables close to the playground to cater for larger groups to host parties.

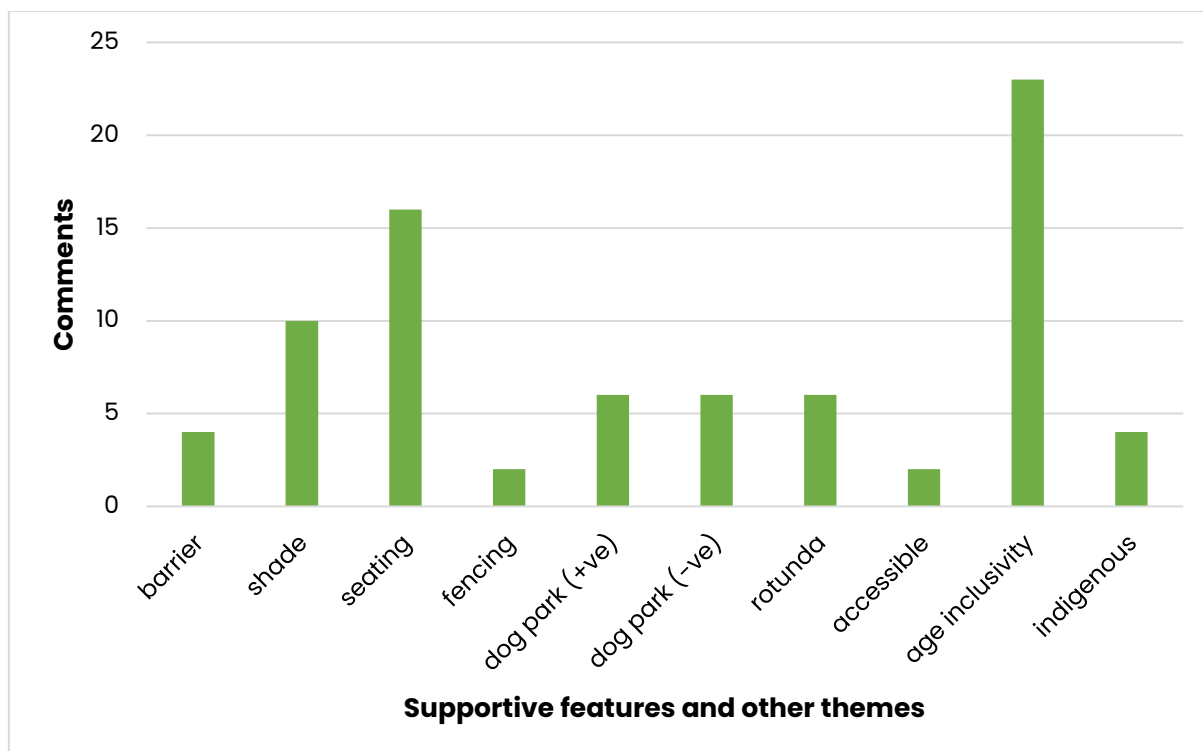
### *3. Adequate shade*

10 commenters emphasised the need to ensure there is adequate shade in the upgraded playground. Multiple comments mentioned that the seating needs to be shaded.

### *4. Landscaping*

One of the top five comments referred to specific natural landscaping for the playground, including sand, pebbles, rocks, a bridge and water pump. This comment received 29 votes (the top comment overall).





## Other suggestions from the community

Other ideas for the playground included:

- Include accessible play equipment and paths (18 votes)
- Add a barrier between the park and Old Canterbury Road (17 votes)
- Add a new play space between the school and the café (14 votes)
- Incorporate Aboriginal art to celebrate traditional owners (11 votes)
- Upgrade the pavilion (10 votes)
- Activities for older children, e.g. outdoor gym equipment, basketball hoop, skate ramp (7 comments)

## Yeo Park Infant School

1. *What is your favourite thing about Yeo Park Playground?*

The clear favourite items were the swings (13 votes) and monkey bars (10 votes).

2. *What is your least favourite thing about Yeo Park Playground?*

The only thing most students agreed on is that they don't like how muddy the playground is.

### 3. Think about your favourite playground – what do you like about it?

Lots of students mentioned different types of slides (sliding super fast, twisty slide, super high slide, sliding into a sandpit, upside down slide, options for slides). Students also mentioned flying foxes and climbing.

### 4. What games do you like to play outside?

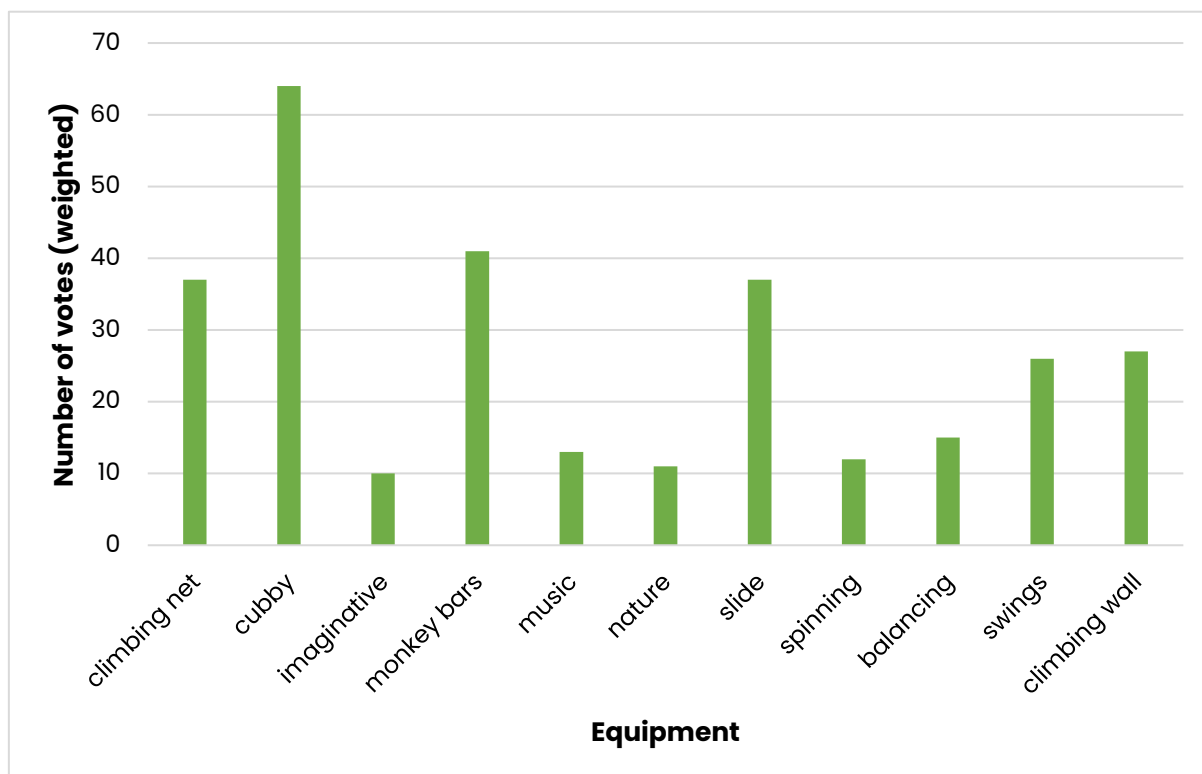
Chasing/tips was the clear favourite game for students to play together.

### 5. Equipment preferences

Students were asked to indicate preferences (1, 2, 3) on an equipment preference survey. To weight these preferences, their top preference received 3 points, second preference 2 points and third preference 1 point.

The favourite types of equipment were:

- Cubby house (64 votes)
- Monkey bars (41 votes)
- Climbing net (37 votes)
- Slide (37 votes)



## **Other suggestions from students and teachers**

Students mentioned that they want a smooth surface to play on. An example of this would be rubber, which is commonly used in playground design. Students also mentioned that the existing monkey bars are too high, and that you need space for slides so you don't crash.

Teachers mentioned that there is an existing problem with the path into the park leading to the school – members of the public frequently follow this path and come onto school grounds.

Teachers mentioned that students often visit the playground before and after school and are accompanied by parents, grandparents and siblings.

## **Out of scope for this upgrade**

All comments relating to sections of the park outside of the playground area have been referred to Council's Planning team. This includes comments relating to the boundary treatment between the park and Old Canterbury Road, the management of dogs within the park and the upgrade of the pavilion within the park.

Several comments were received relating to a new playground adjacent to the café within Gough Reserve. As part of this upgrade Council will only be upgrading the existing play area, however comments have been recorded for review relating to future upgrades.

There were also a number of comments regarding fencing to the new playground. Council will not be installing new fencing to the playground as part of this upgrade due to budget constraints. The management of the playground edge through other means (e.g. landscaping) will be thoroughly considered as part of the design.

# Next steps

As Yeo Park is heritage listed, Council will now be completing a heritage impact statement to understand the constraints to the upgrade due to heritage requirements.

The Concept Design will then be developed using ideas, requests and priorities identified by the community engagement, along with heritage requirements. Where possible the key themes that were identified will be incorporated into the design for the new playground design.

The project team will:

- Balance the needs and wishes for different user groups and consider potential conflicting and complementary uses
- Consider the availability of other parks and facilities in the surrounding areas
- Work with the available budget and site constraints

The Concept Design for Yeo Park Playground will be uploaded to the project page on Your Say Inner West and the community members who provided feedback will be notified.