

Appendix B Community Engagement



View of Community Consultation in Progress. Photography by Welsh + Major.

Overview + Engagement Strategies

1.0 Summary

Inner West Council engaged the community on their enjoyment of Hammond Park, with a view to the preparation of a 10-year plan, which includes a Plan of Management and a Master Plan. Community engagement was carried out with two drop-in sessions at Hammond Park and via the online platform Your Say Inner West (YSIW).

1.1 Background

Plans of management must be prepared for all types of parks on community land. Community engagement is a critical step in the preparation of a Plan of Management, forming one of the first stages of the process. Community feedback is then taken into consideration alongside stakeholders and expert advice to form a draft plan of management and master plan, which is presented for further community input prior to council endorsement of the final document

Inner West Council has established a parks planning priority list, which nominates which open spaces it feels are in greatest need of new or updated Plans of Management. Hammond Park has been nominated as high priority within the Inner West Council area.

The purpose of engagement was to establish key issues that the community have in relation to Hammond Park, as well as highlighting aspects of the park which are highly valued. Contributors were encouraged to include ideas, comments and suggestions to assist in prioritising the focus of key strategies and outcomes for the future.

1.2 Engagement method

The methods of engagement were:

- Online on yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au through survey and user posts
- Drop-in sessions held in the park

1.3 Promotion

The engagement initiative was promoted by a number of means, including:

- Your Say Inner West project page
- On-site signage
- Media release
- Social media
- E-news
- Council website
- Email to identified groups

All promotion collateral directed people to the online submission form on YSIW and to the two park drop-in sessions.

2.0 Engagement Outcomes

Outcomes of community engagement have been separated into feedback received at the drop-sessions and feedback received through the online survey.

The online Hammond Park page received 781 visits, with 78 contributions made to online forms + discussion.

2.1 Drop-in sessions

Inner West Council held two drop in engagement sessions at Hammond Park, one on Saturday morning 13.08.22, 11am-1pm, and the other on Saturday afternoon 20.08.22, 2-4pm.

The material consisted of two A1 panels, which displayed an overall map of the park and some images of existing or proposed park features in order to prompt discussion.

2.2 Online Survey

The online survey included multiple choice and essay style questions for more detailed feedback. Quantitative responses to the multiple-choice questions are displayed visually in graphs. Written responses have been themed to create word maps accompanied by summarised responses.

2.3 Online 'Share your visions'

The YSIW website also offered the opportunity for members of the community to post a public comment on the page, to which other users could like, dislike and comment in response. Posts to the page have been collated and summarised in this document.

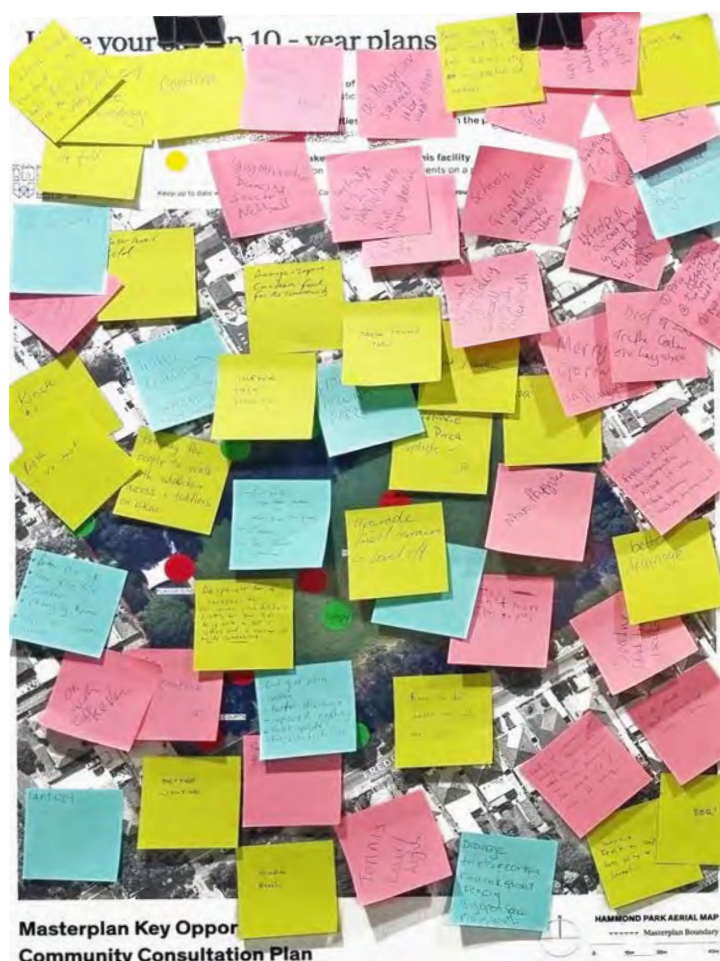
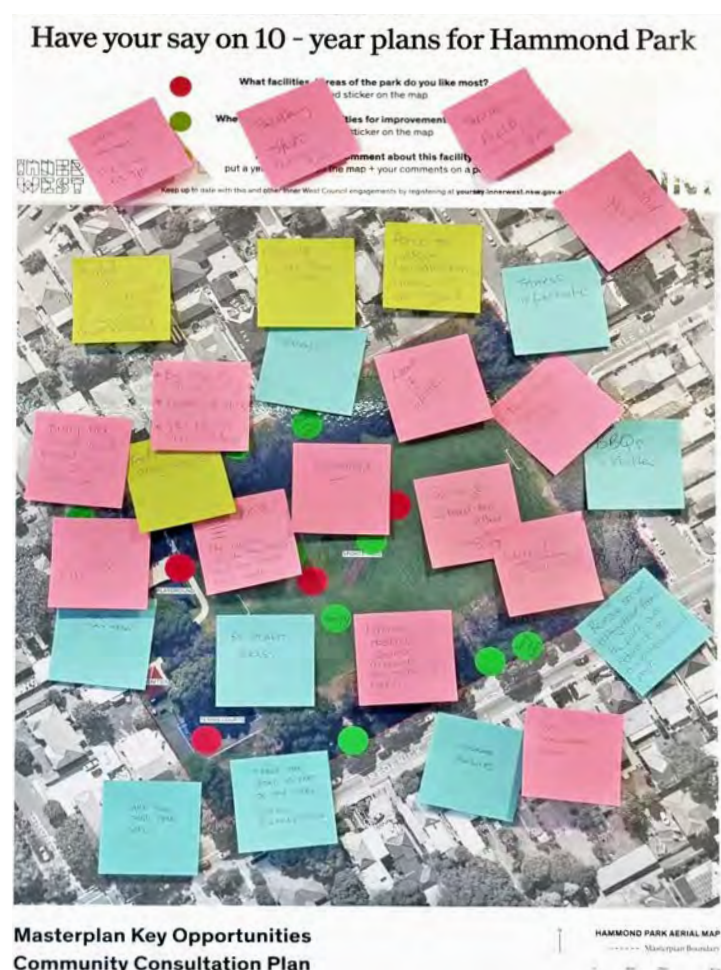
2.4 Stakeholder meetings

2.1 Drop In Sessions

Overview

To engage park users during the drop-in sessions, two A1 sized printed boards were used. The first panel highlighted with labels the existing features of the park, shown on a map. The second panel presented eight image prompts of both existing and proposed features of the park. Park visitors were asked to identify the facilities and areas they liked the most, and which facilities and areas they felt had room for improvement, through coloured stickers on the panels. Further comments were welcomed through post-it-notes on the panels and A4 forms which participants could fill in.

The sessions were productive with a number of park visitors approaching the team and engaging with the material to have their say. The comments have been themed and are presented without hierarchy.



2.1 Drop In Sessions

Community feedback has been themed for ease of reference:

Movement and parking

- Users requested formal paths on the perimeter of the park to improve accessibility for prams and wheelchairs.
- There was some concern around parking and traffic management. Residents sought improvements at the intersection between Henry and Fredrick Street, traffic management to reduce the inconvenience to residents, and to ensure pedestrian safety.
- The majority of users were unhappy with the recently removed parking on Lucy Street, near Church Street.
- There was a high support to install a fence around the perimeter of the park, specifically along Frederick Street to reduce balls going onto the road and protect young children from traffic.

Recreational use

- Users requested lighting, safety and access improvements to enable early morning and evening use.
- There was a lot of support for retaining on/off-leash dog areas in the park.
- Some users were in favour of a community fitness station for passive exercise and stretching, although more park users were against additional built items.
- Users expressed their enjoyment of places to sit and the informal nature of these spaces was valued.
- There was one suggestion for increased organised community events and activities in the park such as outdoor yoga, dog training sessions, dance, Tai Chi.
- Users identified less frequented flat areas as having potential to support a greater range of activities in the park. Suggested activities include a kick wall, a basketball half stand/hoop and tennis table.
- Many users enjoyed the tennis court and enjoyed the casual cost free booking system.
- Many users love using the playground but have suggestions for it to be more inclusive for all ages, to add a merry go round, 'net' swing and a climbing structure.
- Users appreciated the seating around the playground for supervision of children and requested it be maintained or expanded upon.

Playing fields and organised sport

- A few of participants wanted to see more community use of the oval and felt the park was dominated by organised sports.
- The poor condition of player facilities, and lack of facilities for female and non-binary players were flagged as priority items to address including.
- Sports users requested more storage.
- A major concern was the condition of the existing sports field. Users requested that the field be levelled for the safety of organised sports and maximise field usage.
- Users also identified ongoing drainage issues which had regular impacts on organised sports, forcing the oval to close frequently.
- Many respondents expressed strong opposition to synthetic playing surfaces due to negative environmental impacts and impacts for passive park users.
- In contrast many users were supportive of a synthetic pitch as a solution to ongoing drainage issues.
- A few participants suggested a roll-out cricket pitch.
- There was a lot of support for retention and maintenance of the tennis court.

Lighting

- Many users were keen for the park to be better lit for early morning and evening recreation to edge of park, to field + tennis court.
- Many users brought up lighting to be upgraded for hours of use to be increased at winter and weekends.

Facilities and furniture

- Most users were enthusiastic about having a on site canteen/kiosk for sporting events. Other users suggested a cafe for breakfast and lunch. As an alternative a few suggested a food truck location be provided.
- Users were supportive of new or upgraded amenities (toilets + change rooms), noting the lack of accessibility, poor lighting, poor presentation.
- There was support for more seating in ambient and shaded locations around the park, and for more water stations.
- Some users were keen to add a BBQ Shelter.
- Users requested improved provisions for waste disposal - ,

more bins in more locations.

- Some users requested additional tables and seating around the perimeter of the sports field.

Biodiversity and green space

- There was support for increased native understorey planting to provide habitat and food for birds.
- Many residents enjoy the big open space and requested the 'openness' of the park be retained.
- Some comments were made about unhealthy trees and the planting of large generational trees alongside narrow footpaths not being the best solution.

History + sense of place

- The majority of users were keen for the park to remain essentially as it is, a big open space as a community asset.
- Some users stressed the importance of maintaining the informal character and laid back vibe of the park and that is isn't only a sporting ground.
- A greater presence and interpretation of the site's history was identified as something that would enhance visiting the park.

Maintenance

- Ongoing maintenance of the field to maximise use was a common request from park users.
- Signage and entry gates and lettering, were also flagged as requiring maintenance.
- Users requested lighting be regularly maintained.

2.2 Online Survey

Overview

An online survey was conducted in August and September 2022 through the 'Your Say Inner West' (YSIW) website, seeking feedback on a range of questions regarding Hammond Park. The survey included multiple-choice and essay style questions and was open for public response for five weeks from 04.08.22 to 11.09.22.

Quantitative responses to the multiple-choice questions are displayed visually in graphs. Text based responses to the essay style questions have been grouped into themes, and issues which featured the most prominently have been summarised below. Text based responses are presented alongside word maps which highlight common responses.

Of all participants to the site, 53 submissions were made to the online survey. Participants could choose to skip questions if they preferred. The percentage of participants who answered the question is stated alongside the figure diagrams throughout this document.

Demographics of Participants

Q1: Age Group

See figure 1

Of the 53 participants who contributed to the online survey none were below 18 years of age and only 1 person was within the 25-34 age bracket. The largest age bracket was 45-54 year olds at 40% of the total number of participants. No contributions were made by persons over 75 years of age. 3 people, 5.6% of those surveyed preferred not to state their age.

Q2: Gender

See figure 2

22 participants identified as female, contributing to 42% of responses, while 26, 55%, identified as male. No participants identified themselves as non-binary or using other pronouns. Two users preferred not to comment on gender.

Q3: Do you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

See figure 3

No participants identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Three participants, 5.7%, preferred not to say.

Q4: Do you identify as having a disability?

See figure 4

When asked about disability status, 3 users, 5.7%, identified as having a disability. Three persons preferred not to say and the remaining other 47 users answered no.

Q5: Suburb

See figure 5

Participants were asked to state their suburb/place of residence in the survey. Of the 53 responses, the majority, 66% of users, were from Ashfield. Croydon and Marrickville, at 5.7%, were the second largest bracket of users, followed by Haberfield. Users from neighbouring suburbs made contributions. All participants were from Sydney.

Q6: How do you get to Hammond Park?

See figure 6

Responses to this question were gathered in a multiple choice format, but allowed users to select multiple answers if applicable. 1 person surveyed skipped this question.

The majority of park users who were surveyed walk to Hammond Park as their primary mode of transport, 56%. Driving to the park was the second highest result with 54%. 11.5% of respondents cycle to the park and 8% run. Only 3 people surveyed, 5.7%, use public transport to get to the park. No other means of transport to the park were identified.

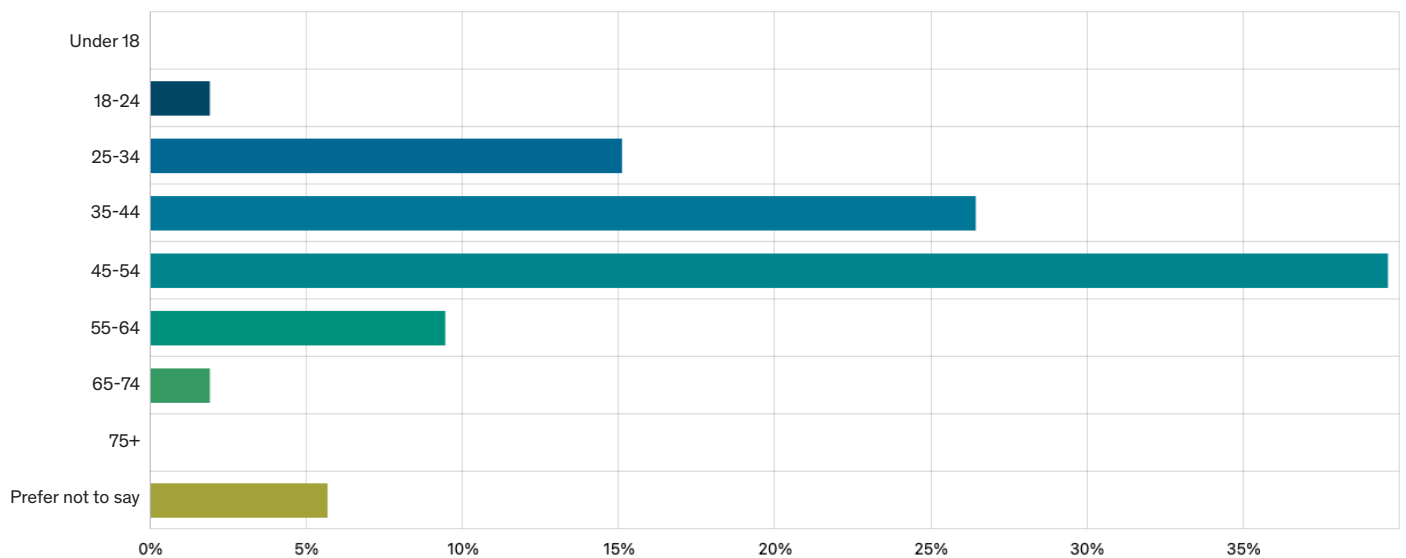
Q7: How often do you visit Hammond Park?

See figure 7

Of those surveyed, 24.5% of users frequently visit Hammond Park. This 25% stated that they visit daily or multiple times a week. The majority of users, 60%, stated that they visit the park weekly. While 13% of participants visit the park a few times a month and 1 person, 2%, rarely visits the park.

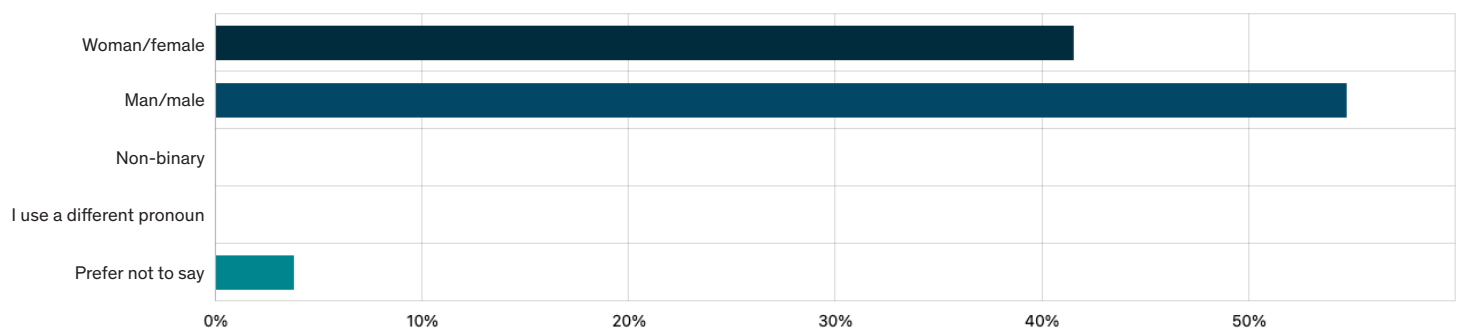
Q1: Age Group

Figure 1. Skipped: 0 | Answered: 53 (100%)



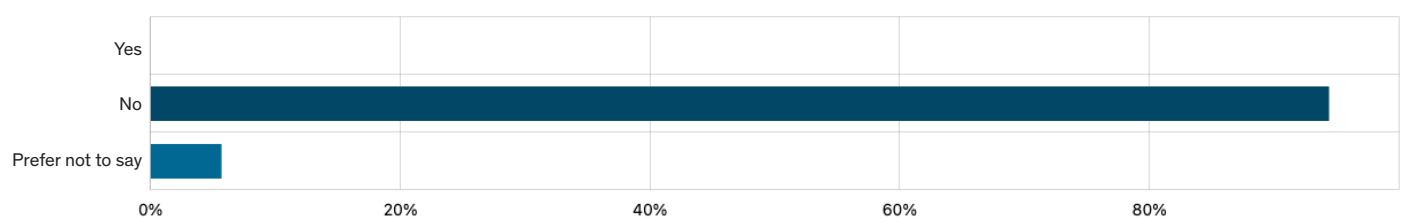
Q2: Gender

Figure 2. Skipped: 0 | Answered: 53 (100%)



Q3: Do you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

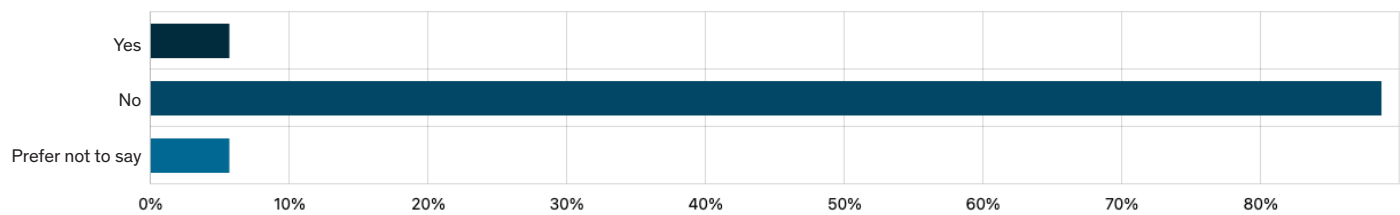
Figure 3. Skipped: 0 | Answered: 53 (100%)



2.2 Online Survey

Q4: Do you identify as having a disability?

Figure 4. Skipped: 0 | Answered: 53 (100%)



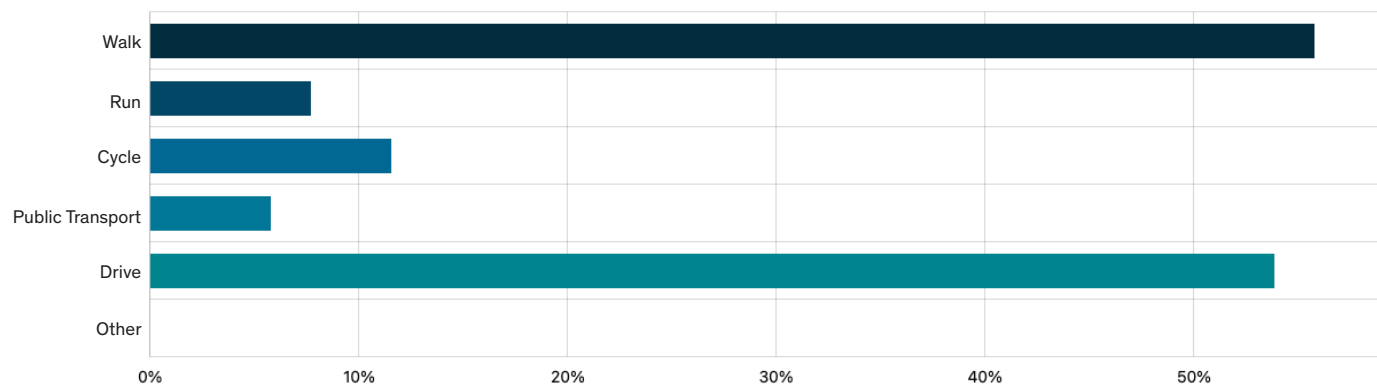
Q5: Suburb

Figure 5. Skipped: 0 | Answered: 53 (100%)



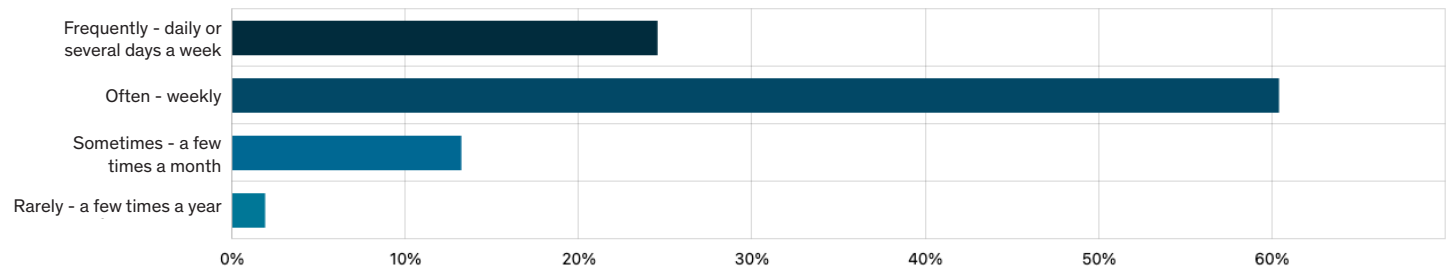
Q6: How do you get to Hammond Park?

Figure 6. Skipped: 1 | Answered: 52 (98.11%)



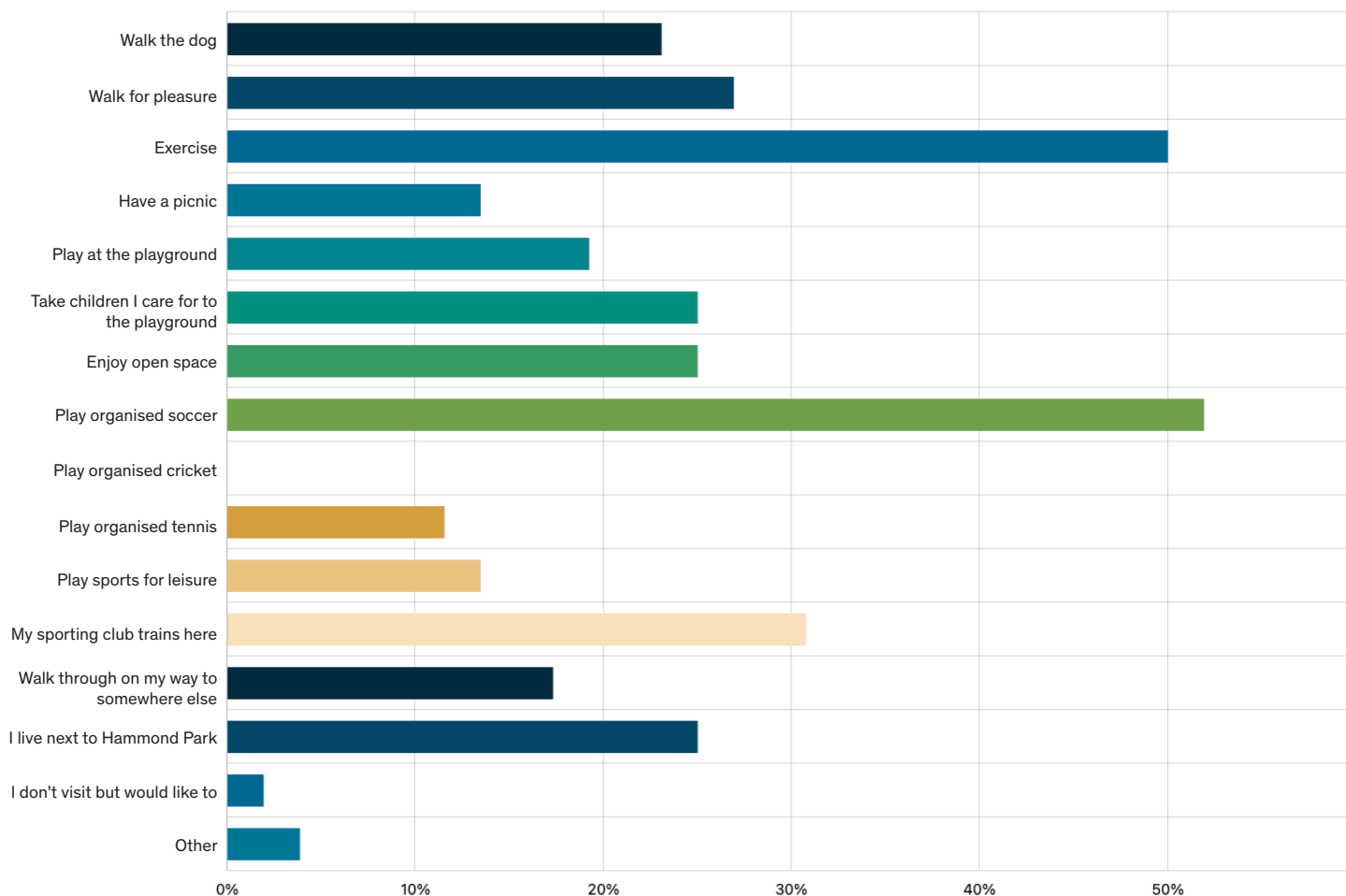
Q7: How often do you visit Hammond Park?

Figure 7. Skipped: 0 | Answered: 53 (100%)



Q8: What are the main reasons you visit Hammond Park?

Figure 8. Skipped: 1 | Answered: 52 (98.11%)



Q8: What are the main reasons you visit Hammond Park?

See figure 8

Responses to this question were gathered in a multiple choice format, but allowed users to select multiple answers if applicable. On average, users selected more than three responses to the question, highlighting the diversity of park use + activity.

The most frequently recorded answer was to 'Play organised soccer' at 52% of surveyed users. To 'Exercise' was the second highest at 50%. 'My sporting club plays here', 30.7%, and

walking for pleasure, 27%, were also common answers.

None of users surveyed identified organised cricket as a reason they visit the park. 11.5% of users do visit the park to play organised tennis and 13.5% visit to play sports for leisure.

2.2 Online Survey

Q9: What stops you from visiting Hammond Park?

This essay style question received no input from participants. As such, no data or word cloud for this question is included in this document.

Q10: Please describe what you value about Hammond Park, e.g. what it looks like, how you use it or how it makes you feel.

See figure 9

Most participants engaged with this question, many of whom left thorough responses and highlighted a number of positive attributes of the park within their responses. As highlighted in the word map, 'Open Green Space' was identified as the parks biggest asset.

The root of what users valued most about Hammond Park was repeatedly attributed to:

- Access to open green space in a dense residential environment;
- The large established trees which create separation from the streets and harbour a sense of relaxation within the park;
- The existing native planting which promotes biodiversity;
- Interaction with dogs, their owners and the community;
- Availability of open space for use by casual and organised recreation/exercise;
- The variety of informal activities catered for by the park;
- The intimate local feeling within the park which promotes a family friendly atmosphere for users;
- The play equipment;
- Attending organised sport;
- The close proximity of the park for local players and schools who use it for organised sports;
- The relaxed booking system of the tennis court, including the free admission;
- The simplicity and overall lack of built structures in the park;
- The historic value of the park and the ability of the park to hold on to the history of the site.
- The affiliation with the Ashfield Pirates.

Q11: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

See figure 10

Successful aspects of Hammond Park were highlighted by responses to this question:

- Users feel safe when they visit Hammond Park during the

day, 83%;

- 77% of users think Hammond Park has a nice character;
- The majority of users, 73.5%, feel apart of the community when they visit.

Less successful aspects of Hammond Park were also highlighted by responses to this question:

- Users feel substantially less safe in the park after dark than during the day;
- Less than half of users feel that the park is well maintained.
- Only 42.3% of those surveyed feel the park meets the needs of the community.
- 42.3% of users agreed that it was easy to find information on the park. Many respondents were unsure.

Q12: What don't you like about Hammond Park?

See figure 11

- Poor drainage and the implications of rain on the sports field + organised sports.
- The general surface condition of the sports field, specifically the uneven level of the field and the hump in the middle.
- The overall condition of the grass around the field, including patches areas under shading trees.
- Limitations placed upon organised sports, specifically the limited hours compared to other parks in the LGA and age groups allowed to use the field.
- Condition of the lighting for organised sports at night.
- General lack of fencing along Lucy and Frederick St which users identify as important for safety of dogs and children playing sports.
- Lack of pathways around the perimeter of the park, specifically along Frederick Street.
- Lack of understorey planting along Frederick Street, which users identified as a potential tool to combat grass degradation in shady areas and block noise pollution from the road.
- Noise pollution from surrounding streets.
- Speed of cars traveling along surrounding streets.
- Lack of parking, specifically on sports days.
- The lack of variation in seating arrangements and overall lack of seating along Frederick Street.
- Lack of bins and smelly nature of two current bins within the park.
- Unappealing toilet facilities which are not inclusive to all park users.
- Lack of sporting amenities, which don't meet the needs of the local sporting clubs.

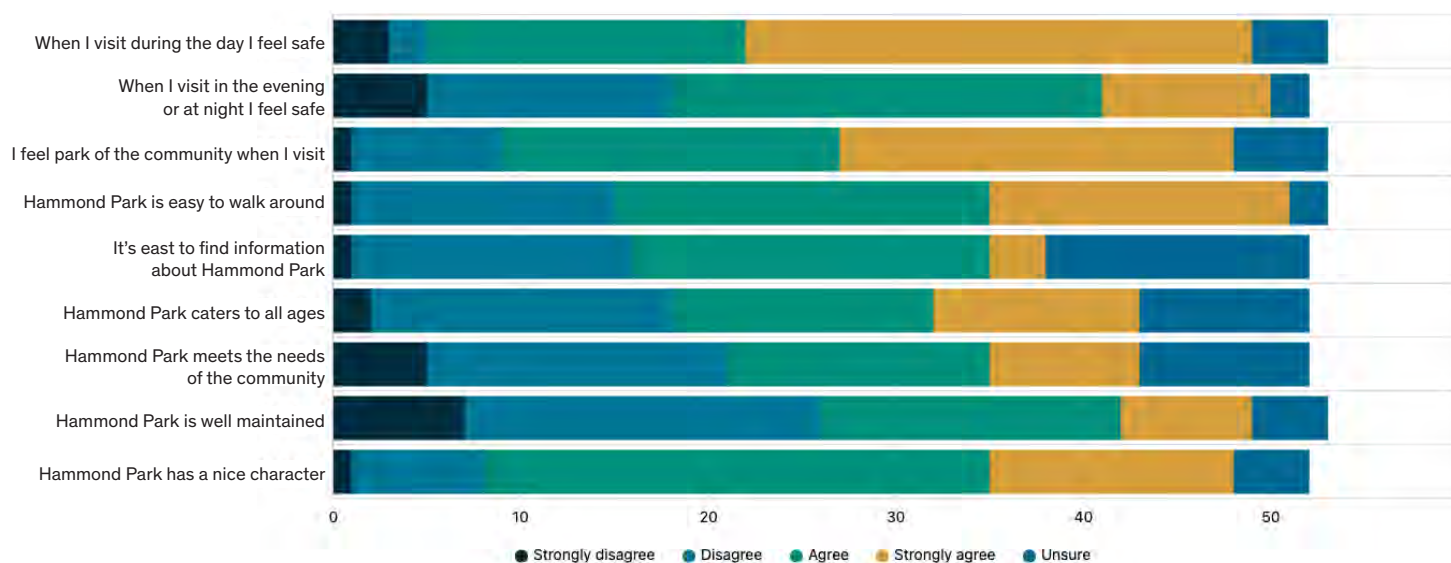
Q10: Please describe what you value about Hammond Park, e.g. what it looks like, how you use it or how it makes you feel.

Figure 9. Skipped: 3 | Answered: 50 (94.34%)



Q11: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Figure 10. Skipped: 0 | Answered: 53 (100%)



Q12: What don't you like about Hammond Park?

Figure 11. Skipped: 3 | Answered: 50 (94.34%)



2.2 Online Survey

- The impact that the lack of paths has on accessibility for older/less mobile park users.
- Only one tennis court.
- Lack of food and beverage provisions, particularly on game days.
- Limited play and exercise equipment for older kids/adults.
- The impacts of organised sports on the local community, including the increased demand on parking, noise and constant occupation of the sporting facilities.
- Lack of a basketball hoop.
- The ongoing dumping of wood chips in the park along Henry Street.
- The lack of sheltered sitting areas for spectators or picnic goers.
- That the facilities are visually run down and generally in poor condition.

Q13: What should be the main priority for the park planning?

See figure 12

- Improving the condition of the sporting field for both organised sports and passive use.
- Fencing along Frederick Street for the safety of park users, dogs and traffic.
- To reflect the needs of the whole community, making sure that Hammond Park considers and accommodates everyone who uses it.
- Food and drink provisions. Some participants recommended a canteen while other suggested a designated space for a temporary food cart within the park.
- Maximising community use, building upon current assets while retaining the parks character.
- Better maintenance of the park, specifically in regards to surface condition.
- Maintaining open space and limited future development in the park which may threaten the openness of the park.
- Better toilet facilities which are inclusive of minority groups.
- Dog friendly, and support of community connection through dogs.
- Expansion of native planting and increased biodiversity.
- Extended hours for organised sports and reduced limitations of sporting activities.
- Reducing noise pollution from surrounding streets.
- Maintaining the calm and relaxing qualities of the park.

- An additional tennis court to meet demand.
- Table tennis.
- Ongoing community consultation for decisions made about the park.
- Upgrades to lighting, specifically sport lighting for organised sports.

Q14: Do you have any other comments about Hammond Park?

See figure 13

The demand for additional fencing along Frederick and Lucy Street was highlighted by repetitive comments of concern. Users felt that a fence, specifically along Frederick Street, would increase the safety of junior sports players and dogs, as well as traffic which could be disrupted by balls on the road.

As seen throughout responses to all questions, there were conflicting answers in regards to organised sports.

A park user stated in support of organised sports “that the park is a resource belonging to the greater Inner West community”, while another commented that “the neighbourhood can’t support the growth of organised sport”. Overall there seemed to be conflicting comments in regards to organised sports.

One comment stated that the “informal/casual park that anyone in the community can use any time is it’s greatest character”.

Those in favour of organised sports had comments on the state of the existing facilities. Most users made a comment on the dilapidated state of the sports field, requesting it be levelled and resurfaced. Members of the local sports club made specific comments highlighting that the amenities didn’t support the current sporting practice, that the existing toilets and changing rooms were in poor condition. Alongside these requests were those advocating for a canteen to support the local sports club. Members of the club also requested additional storage as a solution to the overflow of equipment stored in the current change rooms.

One user commented that the club and park “brought so many communities together and created a beautiful sense of belonging”.

Other users suggested that a wide path around the parks perimeter, able to support pedestrians and cyclists, would be an asset to the community. Specifically, a user suggested wide paths to increase mobility of visually impaired/elderly members of the community.

One request was made for simple outdoor gym equipment in the park to promote passive exercise. This user suggested pull up bars and dip bars.

Likewise, a half basketball court was suggested for passive use by the local community.

One park user requested table tennis in the park. They commented on the benefits of table tennis in a neighbouring park during Covid.

A number of additional comments were left in regards to planting and the existing vegetation on site. Multiple users commented on the large trees and advocated that they be protected. Users liked the existing understorey planting, but felt it could

be expanded upon to for the 'sense of calm' and to promote biodiversity. A user suggested that the expansion of understorey planting could be used as a natural boarder around the park.

Multiple users stated that they didn't want to see built infrastructure expanded. It was said that "the parks simplicity and lack of clutter is very appealing".

Concerns about traffic/parking implications on sports days were readdressed with responses to this question. "Traffic on organised sport days is terrible with competition for parking in the area".

The park was described as "well loved" and "a local jewel". One comment stated that the park "adds spirit to the local area".

Q13: What should be the main priority for the park planning?

Figure 12. Skipped: 3 | Answered: 50 (94.34%)



Q14: Do you have any other comments about Hammond Park?

Figure 13. Skipped: 27 | Answered: 26 (49.06%)



2.3 Share Your Visions

Overview

The Community were also encouraged to make a post on the YSIW website. These posts, in the structure of a social media platform, could be liked and commented on to encourage community members to engage with one others views on the park.

The page received 20 posts which received 35 likes/comments from other users.

The outcomes of the 'Shared Visions' for Hammond Park are summarised below:

Outcomes

“Not a synthetic surface. This is not just a soccer field.”

This post suggested against synthetic sports surfaces in the park as it does not serve the needs of the whole community. It also raised concerns about the implications on safety and visibility if planting were added to screen the park from Frederick Street.

“Good local park”

This post was left by a user who frequently uses the park for sports. They raised concern about the impact of rain on sports games/training.

“Hammond Park for tweens and teens”

This user made the suggestion of play equipment for bigger kids, such as hammocks and net-swings. The addition of a BBQ area and shelter was raised, as well as a pedestrian crossing on Frederick Street for safe access into the park. This comment received one like from another user.

“Improvements needs to benefit children in the community”

This comment, which received one like, addressed the drainage issues of the field and the impacts of rain on local sports. They suggested that a synthetic surface might be the only solution. Also included in the comment was the poor quality of toilet and changing facilities, specifically that they are less inclusive to female sport players.

“Variety of play surfaces and equipment”

Suggested more natural play objects, with reference to Lizard Log Nature Playground in Western Sydney.

“Native understorey plantings”

This comment encouraged the development of native planting and suggested that planting be used to create a barrier between



Native understorey plantings

Posted by Sue Pritchard 2 months ago

Would be great to have local native understorey plantings under trees along Frederick Street and other boundaries to create a visual and physical barrier between busy roads and the park, to create a greater sense of calm in the park and provide much...

2 Likes 3 Comments

Above: example of 'post' format from YSIW website.

the park and Frederick Street. This comment received 2 likes and two comments from other contributors who agreed. One user disagreed and disliked the post.

“Create traffic calming for crossings/improved gateway to Ashfield”

This post addressed the safety concerns of narrow pedestrian paths along Frederick Street and the safety implications from speeding cars. It was suggested that a pedestrian crossing be added. This post received three likes and one comment.

“Walking track”

This user requested a path around the parks perimeter suited to pedestrians, bikes and other activities. A bubbler was also requested.

“Ashfield Pirates Under 11’s Soccer 2022”

This user highlighted the significance of community sports within the park and the positive development and well-being as a result of community sports. This post received two likes.

“It is not all about sport”

This user addressed a lack of support for any additional built infrastructure, specifically anything for the purposes of sports which has implications on general park users. They recommended some new bins + lighting to service the whole park, not just sporting field.

“So much potential”

This user was keen to see improvements to sporting facilities. The addressed the condition of the field, amenities and lighting which could be improved. This post had three likes and one dislike.

“Make it safer”

This post addressed the needed improvements to the field and drainage. It also suggested improvements to vehicle safety and the poor quality of the facilities. This post received two likes.

“A flat, better draining pitch please.”

This user stated that the condition of the pitch was borderline dangerous and should be addressed. This post received two likes.

“The worst ground in the Inner West”

This post also requested work to the sports field surface, suggesting that a synthetic field might be beneficial to the community. Concerns were also raised around lighting, with the proposal that lighting be improved to allow the park to stay open until 9pm.

“Outdoor gym”

This user requested some casual outdoor fitness equipment be added to the park. Three others supported this comment with a like.

“Football facilities need updating”

This comment reiterated the issues addressed in regards to the dilapidated condition of the sports field, lighting and amenities. The user suggested the new lights at Pratten Park be used for reference.

“Like and don’t like”

This user requested a levelling of the field and upgraded lighting

to the tennis courts. This post received two likes.

“Better facilities for sports!”

This post commented on the required upgrades to the sporting facilities and field alongside safety concerns as a result of the lack of fence along Frederick Street.

“Fenced playground”

The park commented that they would visit the park more if the playground was fenced for younger children.

“Table Tennis table?”

This user requested an outdoor table tennis table.

2.4 Other Input

Individual Submission

Following the online and in person community engagement for Hammond Park, council received one written submission from Cricket NSW on 8 September 2022 and one from an Inner West resident on 9 September 2022.