



Community Consultation Summary Report

Fagan Park Children's Forest

Fagan Park, Galston

Parks, Trees and Recreation Branch
Administration Centre
296 Peats Ferry Road
Hornsby NSW 2077

March 2023

1. Consultation Methods

	Stakeholder	Consultation Method	When	Closing Date for Comment
1	Local Residents	Survey accessible on Council's Your Say website	21/2/23	14/3/23
		Email to Your Say registered participants	23/2/23	
		Hand delivered letters to adjoining residents	21/2/23	
		Post on Council's Facebook page	26/2/23	
2	Park Visitors	Notification signage displayed in park	21/2/23	
3	Councillors	Email notification in Councillor newsletter	20/2/23	
4	Friends of Fagan Park	On site meeting and email	21/2/23	
5	Hornsby Electric Model Flying Club	On site meeting and email	21/2/23	

2. Respondents

- 56 people completed the online survey
- 2 comments were received via email from local residents
- 1 submission was made on behalf of the Hornsby Electric Model Flying Club (HEMFC)
- 1 submission was made on behalf of the Friends of Fagan Park (FoFP)

3. Comments Received and Council Response (edited from respondents' own words), Survey numbers reflect number of survey responses in total

Do you and your family ever visit Fagan Park?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (Survey: 52 + Email: 2 + FoFP + HEMFC) • No (Survey: 4) 	
If no, why not?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our kids are too old (Survey: 2) • Not enough playground equipment for kids (Survey: 1) • Cost of entry for 2159 residents. No shade at either play area. Maintenance issues with existing equipment. (Survey: 1) 	
Have you had a chance to look at the Fagan Park Children's Forest Concept Plan?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (Survey: 48 + Email: 2 + FoFP + HEMFC) • No (Survey: 8) 	
What are your thoughts on the Concept Plan for Fagan Park Children's Forest?	
Community Suggestions / Comments	Council Response
Supportive of the proposal (Survey: 19 + FoFP)	Noted
Supportive of the proposed Yarning Circle / Connection to Country (Survey: 2)	Noted
Ensure the proposed fence is retained and gates can be closed (Survey: 1)	Stage 1 works will include a fence surrounding the perimeter of the Children's Forest.

Consider whether the picnic areas have shade sails or sheltered tables for shade (Survey: 1)	The Children's Forest contains numerous trees which will provide shade to the proposed picnic areas and tables.
The design doesn't seem to follow any of the children's suggestions (Survey: 1)	<p>Consultation undertaken with local children revealed "Nature" as being the top requested element in the Children's Forest with 27%. From 24 choices presented to the children, "Tree House" was selected as the most popular with 21%.</p> <p>The proposed Stage 1 design focuses on "Nature" with the inclusion of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large tree on ground for educational purposes • Discovery pods • Interaction with existing dam via stepping stones • Pathways weaving through the existing trees <p>A tree house is included in the Master Plan as part of future works when budget becomes available.</p>
Request that the connecting pathways be in mulch and logs, rather than concrete. (Survey: 1)	The main pathway within the Children's Forest is proposed to be accessible to enable users of all ability to experience the Forest. Given this requirement, the proposed pathway will be made of concrete. The Forest will contain numerous additional pathways for children to explore, which will be made from mulch and logs.
Concern that the covered outdoor learning space will be outside envelope of the forest itself. I think the best thing about Fagan Park is the minimal use of built structures and the quiet places one can find. (Survey: 1)	<p>In stage 1 of works, a Yarning Circle / outdoor classroom will be provided within the fenced Children's Forest. The Master Plan provides a location for a potential future covered outdoor learning space with amenities.</p> <p>The outdoor learning space is currently unfunded. Council will undertake further site investigation including consideration of any built form should funding become available for these works.</p>
Do not believe this project is needed. We should let children explore natural landscapes without landscapes having to be constructed for them. (Survey: 1)	The intention of the Children's Forest is to provide a space where children can explore and appreciate trees and natural landscapes in a fun and educational setting. The landscape is only "constructed" in that the setting is designated by fencing and paths to provide guidance and facilitate exploration in a safe and managed way. Carrs Bush located at the northern end of Fagan Park provides a similar opportunity for children to explore a natural bushland landscape but will not enable the play opportunities that the Children's Forest is intended to provide.
Preserve the existing trees as much as possible while developing the area. (Survey: 1)	The proposed Children's Forest site currently contains numerous existing mature trees. These trees add to the character of the site, and where possible Council proposes to retain them, subject to advice from Council's Arborist.
Request incorporation of more challenging equipment for older children. (Survey: 2)	The intention of the Children's Forest is to provide a space where children can learn about and engage with trees, not necessarily to provide equipment you would see in a typical playground.

	The main Fagan Park playground is proposed to be upgraded in 2024 and will include more challenging equipment for older children (e.g. flying fox and climbing tower).
Concern over the distance from the main carpark to the Children's Forest and the capacity of the main carpark on weekends / in busy periods. Request parking is opened on Bayfield Rd which is closer to the Children's Forest. (Survey: 2 + FoFP)	<p>Fagan Park has been designed with carparks at the northern and southern entrances which promotes people to walk throughout the park. In busy periods, overflow carparking is provided on the lawn area adjacent to the southern carpark which is sufficient to cater for additional car parking on busy days.</p> <p>Council acknowledge that there may be a desire for children with disabilities (e.g. Warrah School), or large groups (e.g. Schools) to visit the Children's Forest for educational purposes. Therefore, as part of future works, Council proposes to include a mini-bus turning bay / drop off point off Bayfield Road.</p> <p>Council has no intention to construct an additional carpark on the eastern side of the park.</p>
As this area of the park is not frequently visited by park users, ensure appropriate signage is included to direct people to the Children's Forest. (FoFP)	Signage will be included to direct park users to the entrance of the Children's Forest.
<p>Concern regarding the number of ornamental trees selected and their suitability. (Survey: 1)</p> <p>Desire for more native trees to be included (FoFP)</p>	<p>The intention of the Children's Forest is for children to learn about all different types of trees in a fun and educational setting. Where possible native trees will be selected, however exotic / ornamental trees will also be included to provide a diverse range of trees for children to experience and engage with.</p>
<p>Proximity to the Hornsby Electric Model Flying Club (HEMFC) airfield & associated risks. Is there an alternate suitable location within Fagan Park? (Survey: 29 + Email: 2).</p> <p>Note – all submissions noted they were members of the HEMFC</p> <p>Note – the President of the HEMFC also provided a detailed submission to Hornsby Council regarding the Club's objection and concern over the proposal. Council will provide a direct response to HEMFC regarding their submission.</p>	<p>When selecting the location of the proposed Children's Forest, there were numerous site constraints which had to be considered. Some of these included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage views to the North & North/East from the <i>Netherby Homestead</i> preventing any vertical elements from being erected (e.g. trees). Overhead powerlines at the northern end of Fagan Park, preventing any vertical elements above 5m from being erected including trees. Carrs Rd Bush is an Endangered Ecological Community restricting construction within the area. Open lawn areas are currently used for picnics, informal ball sports, weddings, and overflow carparking. <p>The location for the proposed Children's Forest is currently an unused park of Fagan Park, which already has significant existing mature trees which will provide an instant impact. It is also within walking distance to the main carpark, children's playground and toilets, and in the future can facilitate a drop off zone for larger groups (e.g. schools) directly at the Children's Forest.</p>

	<p>While the HEMFC flight area is located to the north of the proposed Children's Forest, the Children's Forest is outside of the designated flying area for the HEMFC. The Children's Forest will be fully fenced to prevent users leaving the forest and entering the airfield.</p> <p>Additionally, the existing mature Casurina trees (approx. 15m tall) along the northern edge of the Children's Forest are proposed to be retained, which will provide an additional buffer to prevent any wayward model aircrafts from entering the Children's Forest.</p>
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Comments regarding other areas in Fagan Park

<p>Generally supportive of the proposal however concerned Council is proposing new infrastructure and not adequately maintaining the existing assets within Fagan Park (e.g. broken swings & water fountain, uneven pathways, carpark needs resealing). (Survey: 3)</p> <p>The two existing Fagan Park playgrounds need upgrading to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More bark around equipment • Shade • More swings at the lower playground <p>(Survey: 1)</p>	<p>In 2022, Council applied, and were successful, for two NSW Government grants to fund the proposed Children's Forest. If Council had not been successful in obtaining these grants, the Children's Forest would be unable to proceed, as Council would not have been able to fund the entire project.</p> <p>Maintenance of Council assets is derived from Council's Operational Funds, which are currently very stretched. Council is aware of the pathway and carpark conditions within Fagan Park and are currently investigating ways to fund future upgrades.</p> <p>The Children's Forest has been designed to require minimal maintenance requirements, with a strong focus on natural elements and engagement with trees to provide play opportunities, rather than via traditional play equipment.</p> <p>The existing main Fagan Park playground (off Arcadia Rd) is proposed to be upgraded in 2024 and be funded by Developer Contribution funds.</p> <p>The main Fagan Park playground has significant shade which is provided by existing mature trees. Council may consider installation of a shade sail above any water play elements as part of future upgrade works. When the Carrs Bush playground was constructed in 2018, Council planted new Turpentine trees which are growing and now providing natural shade.</p> <p>Council provides softfall in the playgrounds at Fagan Park in the form of; rubber softfall, mulch softfall, and sand. Council's maintenance staff regularly top up the mulch and sand levels, however after periods of heavy rain, the material can erode from the playground, and levels can be left appearing low until the next delivery.</p> <p>Carrs Bush currently contains one nest swing (which can be used by multiple children at one time), a standard strap swing and a</p>
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	toddler swing with a back support. It is seen that this number of swings is appropriate given the scale of the Carrs Bush playground.
Will we be getting a dog park and water play area too? I think these two items are a lot more important however a nature education area is good. (Survey: 1)	<p>The main Fagan Park playground (located in the southern area of the Park), is proposed to be upgraded in 2024. Water play will be included as part of these upgrade works following the recommendation in Council's Play Plan.</p> <p>In 2021 Council adopted a new Off-Leash Dog Park Strategy, which included a recommendation for a new off-leash dog park within Fagan Park. It is anticipated the off-leash dog park will be constructed in 2023 / 2024.</p>

Comments received regarding other matters

I would like to see a dedicated bike path or lane in The Hills connecting to the Cherrybrook area, so children can ride their bikes to school. (Survey: 1)	These works are outside the scope of work for this project.
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