

UPPER HARBOUR LOCAL BOARD FEEDBACK TO THE TĀKARO, INVESTING IN PLAY DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

1. Which benefits of play are the most important?

All benefits of play are important. With particular attention given to the points listed below:

- Enhancing public space to allow for social engagement and building community
 - Facilities for planned social activities
 - Bumping places for place making
- Health and physical development
 - Encourage physical activity
 - Developing balance and coordination
- Art and culture
- Physical and Mental Health Benefits
- Community and Social Benefits
- Economic Benefits and Environmental benefits are all important.

Play spaces should ideally include elements that tell a story that engage the imagination.

2. Should council investment target a particular demographic group, such as young children, or should it seek to cater to all ages, abilities and backgrounds equally?

Council needs to adopt an inclusive approach to investment in play by spreading the benefits to all age groups, abilities and backgrounds. (see **ATTACHMENT A** – feedback from a member of the disc golf community about the benefit of this activity for informal all-age play. As a place in the strategy, it is one of many options that could be looked at for all-age play facilities).

3. Should council prioritise investment in areas of high socio-economic deprivation over other areas?

Council should prioritise investment following a needs analysis. Not everything is required in all areas. Play provision should rather be based on density of population, as an example, Upper Harbour's population is projected to grow by 64%. Outdoor community space is not determined by socio-economic standing. The real barrier to accessing outdoor recreation space is density.

4. What is an acceptable level of risk in play?

An acceptable level of risk in play is not something that can be quantified. Equipment should be structurally sound, which allows for a reasonable risk. A healthy degree of risk is good for development but Council should not renege on its responsibility by encouraging unnecessary risk.

5. Where does the council's responsibility to manage risk end and personal responsibility begin?

It is Council's responsibility to provide New Zealand Safety Standard approved equipment. If the ordinary use of the equipment meets safety standards, then utilising the equipment appropriately should be a parent's, caregiver's and individual's responsibility.

6. What happens if something goes wrong? How should the council respond?

Council should respond sympathetically, investigate the actual occurrence, provide the affected parties with the outcome of the investigation, and be up front and honest about errors and learnings in order to avoid repeat situations. Council must actually implement identified improvements or modifications.

7. How can council provide a play network that welcomes and accommodates:

- youth?
- adults?
- families?
- seniors?
- the disabled?
- culturally diverse communities?

Council can provide a play network that is welcoming and accommodating by developing policy that involves the local community early in the process of planning, design and building to create "bespoke play spaces" with equipment suitable for all demographics, abilities and backgrounds, and artworks which inspire.

Council should provide paths to and joining equipment which are age appropriate and are suitable for the elderly and disabled.

Child play spaces should be no further than a 15min walk, and all age play space should be accessible within a 30min walk.

Child Space: In addition to current provisions, themed play spaces, nature play and more *learn to ride* parks should be provided for.

All age: Basketball, disc golf, walking routes (with way-finding signs that specify distance and time targets), bike paths, putting greens/mini-golf, skate parks, augmented reality activities.

8. What opportunities do you see for partnerships between council and private providers of play?

Previously developers were often only too pleased to contribute to play equipment in parks in new subdivisions. This additional amenity provided incentives for potential buyers. Council has many spaces that could be developed by means of considered partnerships. There are opportunities for schools, businesses and philanthropic organisations and volunteers to become involved, as long as there is a clear framework regarding the division of roles, responsibilities and resources.

9. What criteria should underpin Auckland's investment in play?

Auckland's investment in play should be underpinned by safety of equipment and environmental CPTED principals, needs analysis and the consideration of distance to residential properties. **Access principle:** of the 15-30min rule for child and all age. Overall the level of investment should be based on population density. Play must be one of the vital pieces of infrastructure provided as communities develop. There needs to be flexibility in the type of activity that is supported in play infrastructure provision. There also needs to be a recognition that the nature of play activities will change over time and council should be able to adapt to the changes.

Equal access: all Aucklanders have the same opportunity to participate.

Inclusive: caters to a diverse range of abilities, cultures and age groups

Integrated: play integrated across open and civic spaces

Diverse: variety of opportunities, play along the way, equipment based and pop up

Tolerant of risk: recognition that risk is a normal part of play

Community centric: Council involves community early in planning, design and building

Evidence based: council has data to support investment decisions.

10. Should we encourage and provide for nature play?

Yes, council should encourage and provide for nature play, but only in a controlled environment which does not damage the existing ecosystem.

11. Where should we provide for nature play?

Nature play should be provided as widely as possible, however it should be contained and constrained in natural environments of high value. Not on clay-silt stream banks. In low value natural environments where investment in nature play can contribute to enhanced ecological outcomes.

Nature play is acceptable in fenced off areas in parks and civic spaces, which are inspected for hazards, professionally cleaned and maintained, and where safety risks can be managed while providing benefits of nature play.

12. How accepting do you think the wider community would be to lowering maintenance standards to provide for nature play in some parks?

The community will not tolerate unkempt looking areas unless they are fenced off, contained and retained for the explicit purpose of nature play, with signage explaining nature play and displaying safety warnings. Many complaints about service levels are received now.

It needs to be clear as to what is intended in the space and should be accompanied by other mitigating maintenance. For example, long grass can provide habitat for mice and rats to reach households. If an area is not mowed, then a neighbouring area would require additional pest control.

The nature of the vegetation and the kinds of grasses sown or planted, such as rye or tussock, will look different from just an unkempt lawn. If the areas are specifically landscaped for the intention of nature play, with flowering clover, as well as grass, they may have the additional benefit of providing wildlife habitat that children can explore.

13. Should we encourage and provide more opportunities for water play? If so, in what form?

The local board does not support water play as it brings with it increased liability. In the current fiscal environment Council cannot afford to invest in this. Auckland is surrounded by beautiful beaches and water, let water play happen there.

14. In what situations should the council prioritise play activations:

- **seasonally?**
- **to promote existing play spaces?**
- **where there are no other play opportunities?**
- **to activate underutilised spaces?**

Activation implies an event to invite the community into a play space and encourage them to make use of it. Where you have a resilient community the facilities should not need to be activated, unless they are the wrong facilities for that space. People should know the play assets in their community and be confident enough to talk to neighbours to activate their use on their own.

Activation may however be required when people are neither connected to the spaces in which play facilities are situated, or to their neighbours. This is, however, an issue of community development and the local community trusts should be working with those installing and designing play facilities to identify community need, underutilisation of space, community development and placemaking.

15. What priority should be given to investment provision of temporary play experiences over permanent play assets?

Investment provision in permanent play assets is more sustainable and fiscally prudent. However if temporary play experiences are considered they should be used in high density places with less open space provision. Permanent play assets should be considered in less density area.

16. Does Auckland need an adventure playground?

No Auckland does not need an additional adventure playground, there is enough variety currently provided in the private sector.

17. Which are the most important supporting facilities which council should provide at play spaces?

Supporting facilities will vary depending on size and location of the park, but consideration should be given to seating, water drinking fountains, artificial or natural shade, toilets and bins.

Attachment A

From: Oliver Christeller [<mailto:ochristeller@gmail.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, 19 July 2017 11:02 AM

To: Nicholas Mayne (Upper Harbour Local Board)

[<nicholas.mayne@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz>](mailto:nicholas.mayne@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)

Cc: Haydn - Woodhill MTB Park [<haydz@bikeparks.co.nz>](mailto:haydz@bikeparks.co.nz)

Subject: Auckland Council Play Review

Dear Nicholas

My name is Oliver Christeller and I am an active member of the Auckland Disc/Frisbee Golf Community. I have copied in Haydn Shore who is experiences at organizing disc golf in Auckland including leading the successful development of the Henderson disc golf park with the council.

I understand that the Auckland Council is currently undertaking a review of its play strategy and would like the council to consider the benefits of further developing disc golf facilities in Auckland as a all ages friendly activity that can be integrated within current park facilities and with other park use.

Disc golf is growing in popularity quickly and is a diverse community. There are currently organised weekly and monthly disc golf meet ups in Auckland as well as National formal events. The community has also seen the establishment of an Auckland based golf disc manufacturer RPM who are selling discs through Rebel Sports and online forms in New Zealand and through a number of major US online retailers.

I regularly use the facilities at Henderson Park and have noticed a growth in use of the park. The people using it are quite diverse. The age range of disc golfers is from primary school children up to the elderly (I know a regular disc golfer in his 70s). There are people who are quite serious regular players however I often see a woman taking her primary age school son around with a regular Frisbee and family groups playing together. The relatively high use at Henderson park is integrated well into the other activities in the park and the relationship between golfers and other park uses is good. This is due to a culture by in golf community members to be considerate and also through thoughtful design of the course layout that ensure discs are not thrown across walking areas.

Disc golf is also a very cost effective activity. It can be played with a regular Frisbee or one can buy a specialized golf discs for about \$20. It is also cost effective for the council to put in as it is integrated with existing park and other park uses. A nine whole course could be established for approximately \$10,000 and has minimal upkeep costs as the maintenance is already established.

I am happy to speak to this submission and am available to be contacted on 027 548 7002.

kind regards

Oliver Christeller