

## 1. Background

Council asked for feedback on the Johns Reserve Playspace Upgrade draft concept plan during March 2020. Postcards were distributed to households in the neighbourhood surrounding John Reserve, notifying residents of the Draft Concept Plan available for viewing on Council's website.

## 2. Feedback Findings

Council received 14 submissions providing feedback to the draft concept plan. Overall, responses were in favour of the proposal to upgrade the existing playspace. There was a call for retention of existing play equipment, particularly the existing carousel, with some asking for the existing combination unit be retained and a request to have both spring rockers kept in place.

Included in the feedback was a petition bearing over 120 signatures objecting to replacement of the existing carousel in the playground and asking Council to have it retained. A second petition was also received with 22 signatures requesting that the carousel be retained.

Feedback generally supports the addition of nature play and water play into the park to increase the diversity of play. There are numerous calls for the playspace to provide "Equal Access" including wheelchair access to picnic table, and to include more inclusive play opportunities for the less-abled.

Some responses asked for Council either to retain and renovate the existing picnic shelter or to provide a new and larger shelter in its place. Feedback was generally appreciative of the new furniture including seating and drink fountain while there were also requests for more seating as well as additional facilities such as toilet and BBQ.

In addition to retention of the carousel that was raised in the petition, other feedback about the proposed upgrade includes:

- Request for installation of a public toilet
- Request for installation of BBQ
- Request for a new shelter
- Request for additional seating and picnic settings
- Requests for a trampoline and a tree house
- Greater use of natural and recycled materials
- Increased park lighting for amenity and safety
- Divided opinion over merits of physical closeness of play activities for older and younger children, such as the new track glide attached to combination play unit
- Divided opinion over whether the natural character of the park would be spoiled by having footpaths made of concrete and/or gravel
- Request for inclusion of more native vegetation in the reserve
- Request for more trees to be planted in the reserve

## 3. Response to Feedback

All feedback was provided in a constructive way, often giving credit to Council's proposals while also offering preferred alternatives or additional requests. All the feedback received is valid and Council officers are grateful that people took time and gave a great deal of thought to their responses.

Carousel: Since hearing the overwhelming response from our community **it has been decided to keep the carousel** and further investigations are underway to determine options for refurbishment.

Not all requests are able to be incorporated into the final version of the upgrade plans for Johns Reserve, however, the main reasons being:

- excessive cost in relation to the available budget
- the limitations of space for the playground and associated facilities; and
- the appropriate scale of investment in facilities for a small local reserve.

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**Equal access:** access into and around Johns Reserve will be improved greatly by construction of the proposed concrete path and gravel path extension, plus the new picnic setting will have wheelchair access, as does the new drink fountain.

**All abilities play:** provision of this kind of play equipment is not feasible in relation to the budget for a small local reserve such as Johns Reserve.

**Barbecue:** provision of a BBQ is outside the scope of this park & playground upgrade project, and there is no metered power available at this site.

**Picnic shelter:** provision of a new picnic shelter is outside the scope of this park & playground upgrade project. Funds may be allocated in a future budget and this will be shown in the final concept plan as “proposed future works”.

**New public toilets:** installation of a toilet is outside the scope of this park & playground upgrade project.

Council’s public toilet strategy has provision for public toilet in nearby Dunstan Reserve. Details on scope and timeframe for this are still to be confirmed.

### 4. Next Steps

The community response to the proposed playspace upgrade has been heard and the feedback is now incorporated into the final concept plan for this park and playspace upgrade. This is provided as a black & white plan available to view on the Moreland website

As indicated above, the carousel is being kept in place and Council is exploring options to overhaul and refurbish this valuable piece of equipment to the extent possible.

The playspace in Dunstan Reserve is planned for upgrade in 2020-21 financial year, further consultation will follow.