



Parks for People  
**Phase 2 Engagement Outcomes Report**  
Carrawood Park, Carramar

April 2021

**JOC**CONSULTING  
creative urban planners





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All care has been taken to prepare this  
report for the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.  
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Photography by The Being Group.

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# Acknowledgement of Country

This document acknowledges that Carramar is on Aboriginal land where the traditional custodians have been caring for Country for more than 70,000 years.

We pay our respects to the Traditional Owners of this land, their Elders past, present and emerging, and acknowledge the continued rich culture and heritage of all Aboriginal people on this land.

## ***“Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories”***

- Online Survey participant, Phase 1

***“The natural environment has important connection and meaning to the local Dharug people and this is something that the wider community can share.”***

- Design Board participant, Phase 2

# Executive summary

The New South Wales Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) has commissioned JOC Consulting to assist with the delivery of community engagement for the upgrades to Carrawood Park in Carramar (the Park) as part of the Parks for People Program.

The community's input during the first phase of engagement (October 2020) helped to shape a vision for the future park and guided some of Australia's best designers and landscape architects to create a draft Concept Design that builds on the rich natural, cultural, and social fabric of the area (see below).

This Engagement Outcomes Report presents the results from the second phase of consultation that sought community feedback on the Draft Concept Design. The consultation took place between 12 March 2021 and 6 April 2021 and captured the feedback from 31 community members.

Overall, the majority of participants confirmed that "the design team is on the right track", with only two participants disagreeing with this statement. For those who disagreed, responses were justified by a need to emphasise design considerations, rather than issues with the proposed elements of the draft Concept Design. Broadly, participants appreciated that the design retained natural bush elements while providing inclusive facilities which encourage people to gather, socialise, and get active.

Looking at the draft concept design for the improvements to Carrawood Park, do you think we're on the right track? (n=11)

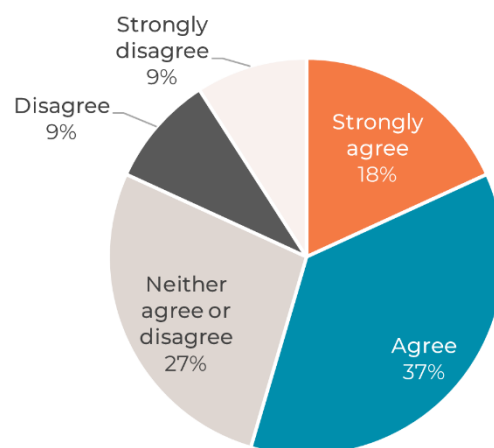


Figure 1: Draft Concept Design presented to the community during Phase 2 engagement



***"The balance between structured and organic spaces and the wide range of potential use - gathering places, picnics, sport etc.... This will definitely help."***

- Online survey participant

# What we heard in Phase 1

The first phase of engagement was held entirely online in December 2020, capturing feedback through an online survey, interactive Social Pinpoint map and social media.

## The key priorities for the community were:



A comfortable and enjoyable park for everyone



A dynamic, flexible space that supports informal and formal play



A green space that supports and integrates the unique natural setting and cultural history

## Some of the community's big ideas included:

- Improved connections to and through the Park
- Play spaces that encourage all ages to get active
- Better facilities to improve comfort and encourage longer stays
- More trees to provide shade
- Improved connections to the Creek
- Spaces to gather with friends and family
- Outdoor exercise equipment and walking track
- Celebrate Aboriginal history and cultural diversity of the area
- Good lighting to improve safety at night

## Online COVID-safe engagement hub

51

community members

Ranging from 18 to 65 years of age

50% female, 50% male

67% living within 10 minutes' walk of the site

32

Interactive map participants

18

Online survey responses

1

Submission

# What we heard in Phase 2

The most common feedback received from participants was an appreciation that the design retained the natural feel of the Park, and where new elements are proposed, they similarly reflect the natural setting. Participants especially valued the connection to Prospect Creek and wished to see this enhanced.

Participants recognised that the Park could contribute to a healthy active lifestyle, and wished to see the inclusion of facilities that catered to people of all ages and levels of mobility. Ideas included play facilities for both children and adults, and accessible, conveniently located bathrooms.

**Figure 2: A word cloud based on common Design Board phrases**



## Aboriginal Consultation (see Appendix C)

As part of the development of the draft Concept Design, Phillips Marler and Jiwah led engagement with representatives from the Fairfield Aboriginal Advisory Committee and Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council. The site walks uncovered several opportunities that foster a greater Connection to Country and could provide opportunities for ongoing cultural education and dialogue. Specific opportunities included:

- Areas of reflection, characterised by appreciation of nature, storytelling and interpretation
- Site regeneration and preservation of critically endangered native plant communities. This includes recognising the importance of two scarred trees which were identified on site.
- Creating a place where the local multicultural community can learn about the land through an Aboriginal cultural perspective
- Creating a place for the teaching of Aboriginal culture from elders to younger people, and the wider multicultural community

## Online COVID-safe engagement hub

**31**

community members participated

Ranging from 18 to 65 years of age

54% female, 27% male

45% of carers care for a partner

91% living within 10 minutes' walk of the site

**367**

visits

**119**

unique visits

**20**

Design Board participants

**11**

Online Survey responses

**1**

Submission

## “Water” “Natural”

Popular words used in the Design Board

# Feedback on the design features

Phase two engagement participants were asked to provide further input on several key design features that we heard the community wanted to see during the phase 1 engagement. The following table outlines feedback that was captured for each of these design features on the Design Board, also integrating comments from the 'Concept Design' tile where appropriate.

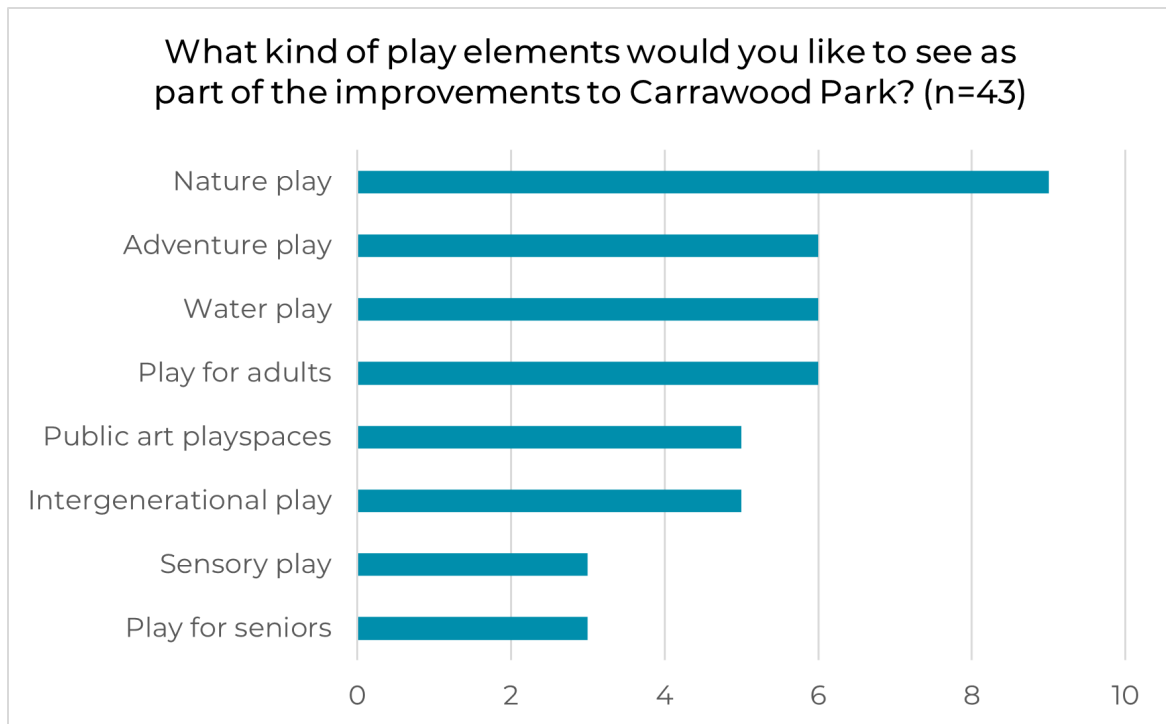
Design feature	What did the community like?	Additional ideas from the community
<b>Connecting to Prospect Creek</b> (The draft design celebrates the site's connection to water by situating activities and play near Prospect Creek and incorporating water where possible)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Celebrating the site's connection to water</li> <li>Providing safe and sustainable access to the water and natural wildlife</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a lookout or viewing platform on the water's edge</li> </ul>
<b>A variety of play and activity</b> (Creating a local destination for children, families and people of all ages, the design provides a variety of play and activity spaces)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Size of the play area is in character with the site, allowing the Park to remain tranquil</li> <li>Adequately shaded play areas</li> <li>Accessible play equipment, including water play</li> <li>Seating which faces the direction of the sports field for viewing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide facilities such as bubblers, dog drinking areas and accessible bathrooms</li> <li>Include an off-leash dog area which incorporates space for dogs to play and interact, and owners (pedestrians) to walk</li> <li>Include an adult's exercise station</li> <li>Include a kid's traffic-signalled pathway around the playground for scooters and bikes</li> </ul>
<b>Path and exercise loop</b> (A path network and exercise loop will make the park more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessible path network and exercise loop</li> </ul>	(No additional comments)



accessible to get around, explore, play and exercise)		
<b>History, culture and learning</b>  (Learn about the area's history and culture through materials, landforms, public art and living classrooms)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater connectivity to the waterway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognise Lansdowne Bridge and celebrate its significance in the Park. Ideas included a plaque outlining its history towards the Hume Highway</li> </ul>
<b>Restoring nature</b>  (The design works to improve habitat for local flora and fauna by protecting and restoring the Cumberland Plain Woodland and River-Flat eucalyptus forest)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of restoration and untouched natural elements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Showcase the connection between the natural environment and its significance to the local Dharug people</li> </ul>
<b>Cool gathering areas</b>  (Shaded areas from trees and structures encourage people to gather and enjoy picnics with friends and family all year round)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gathering areas for local families to access green space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure seating and gathering areas are clean and well-maintained</li> <li>Provide facilities such as bubblers/bottle refill stations and accessible bathrooms nearby gathering areas</li> </ul>

# Feedback on elements of play

Participants were asked which types of play elements they would like to see in the upgraded Park. *Nature play* was the most popular preference, receiving 9 votes, followed by *Adventure play*, *Water play*, and *Play for adults* which each received 6 votes. A relatively high preference for inclusive play (such as *Play for adults* and *Intergenerational play*) was echoed from phase 1 engagement.

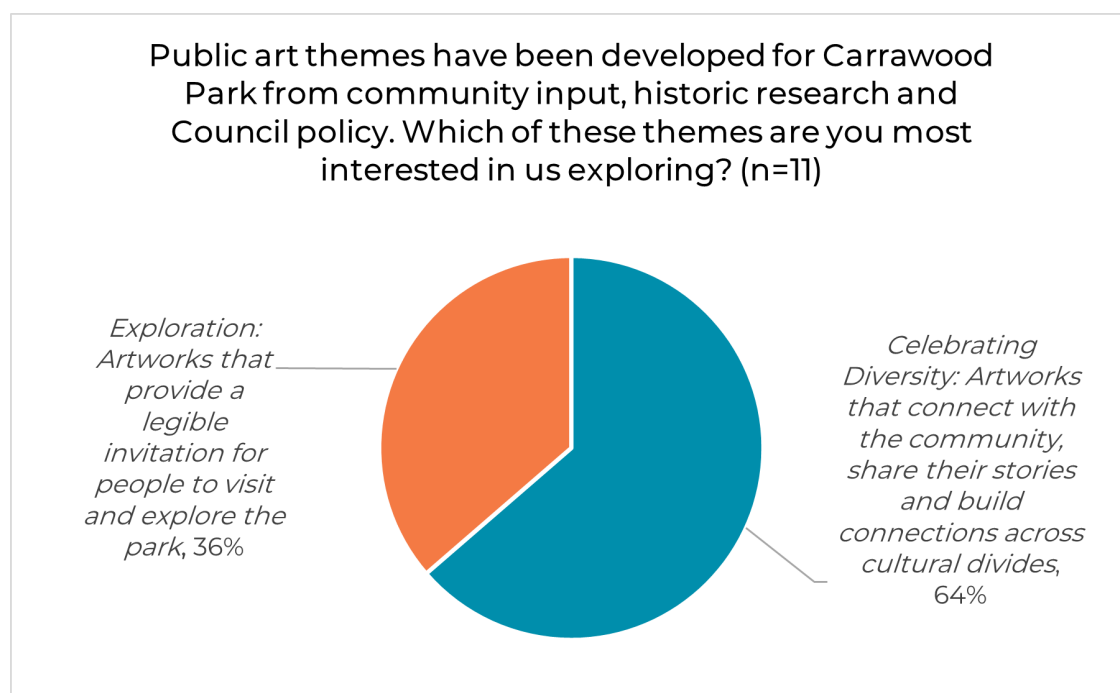


## What we heard during the Phase 1 Community Engagement:

- Participants wished to see the inclusion of facilities that encourage active lifestyles, and encourage people to stay longer and gather
- Opportunities to connect with the natural landscape, especially the creek, were greatly valued
- The play space should be inclusive and accommodate all ages and abilities
- The community wished to see local Aboriginal history and cultural diversity reflected within the design

# Feedback on public art

Participants were asked to indicate their preference between two public art themes which have been developed based on community inputs, historic research, and council policy. The majority of participants (64%) nominated *'Celebrating Diversity: Artworks that connect with the community, share their stories and build connections across cultural divides'*, while 36% of participants nominated *'Exploration: Artworks that provide a legible invitation for people to visit and explore the park'* as a public art theme for the upgraded Park.





Participants were also asked to select which examples of public art best reflect the type of art they would like to see in the Park.



The most popular images (Image 1 - 8 votes and Image 6 – 6 votes) ranged in materials but both featured sculptural art which incorporated nature-inspired shapes and playful elements. These artworks were also of a larger, impressive scale. Image 5 did not receive any votes from participants.

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# Issues and considerations

Participants raised the following issues and considerations for the design team to consider when finalising the Concept Design:

**Dog facilities:** Two survey participants and five Design Board comments highlighted that the Park is currently used by a lot of dog owners, and the draft Concept Design fails to acknowledge a space for dogs or facilities such as drinking bowls or bins. It should be noted that two other survey participants highlighted that they felt the Park was not suitable for an off-leash dog area.

*“I’d like to see also a dog park, that would be awesome. Somewhere where the dogs can play and interact and owners do some walking, also a path for walkers.”* – Design Board participant

**Safety and antisocial behaviour:** Four survey participants highlighted the need for the final Concept Design to prioritise safety in the Park. While some comments mentioned vandalism and antisocial behaviour in the Park, others simply acknowledged that the Park needed to include design elements that would make users feel safe, and encourage families to return to the Park.

Sufficient lighting, particularly along walkways was acknowledged by all four participants. One community member did raise the need to avoid direct lighting in bush areas, to minimise disturbance for native fauna.

*“Lots of lighting for night time along footpaths”* - Online survey participant

**Inclusive exercise stations:** Three survey participants and two Design Board comments highlighted the need for more inclusive exercise equipment within the Park. Many of these comments noted that the ‘Parkour area’ seemed to cater to a niche part of the community, and would prefer to see exercise areas or stations that catered to a more diverse demographic. Two participants wished to see these facilities integrated along the walking path.

*“Needs to have something for all ages eg not just fitness equipment for young strong people but older people too.”* - Online survey participant

## Case studies

Several participants referenced case studies for the design team to consider. These have been consolidated below:

- *Lambeth Reserve Boardwalk (water connection) – Picnic Point, NSW*
- *Lakeside Walk (water connection) – Lansvale, NSW*

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# Where to from here

The vision and draft Design Concept for the upgrades to Carrawood Park has been well received by participants. Through the course of community engagement, valuable feedback on the draft Concept Design was captured, along with additional design ideas and elements for consideration as Phillips Marler develop a final Concept Design.

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## Next steps

The findings from this report will be used to inform the final plan for the upgraded Park in Carramar. In 2021, an online information session will illustrate the key features of the plan and highlight how community input has helped shape the design.

***“Each area provides additional facilities whilst being humble/modest and not coming at the expense of the natural environment to maintain tranquillity.”***

- Online survey participant



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# Appendix A – Online Survey Analysis

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## Overview

A total of 11 people participated in the survey.

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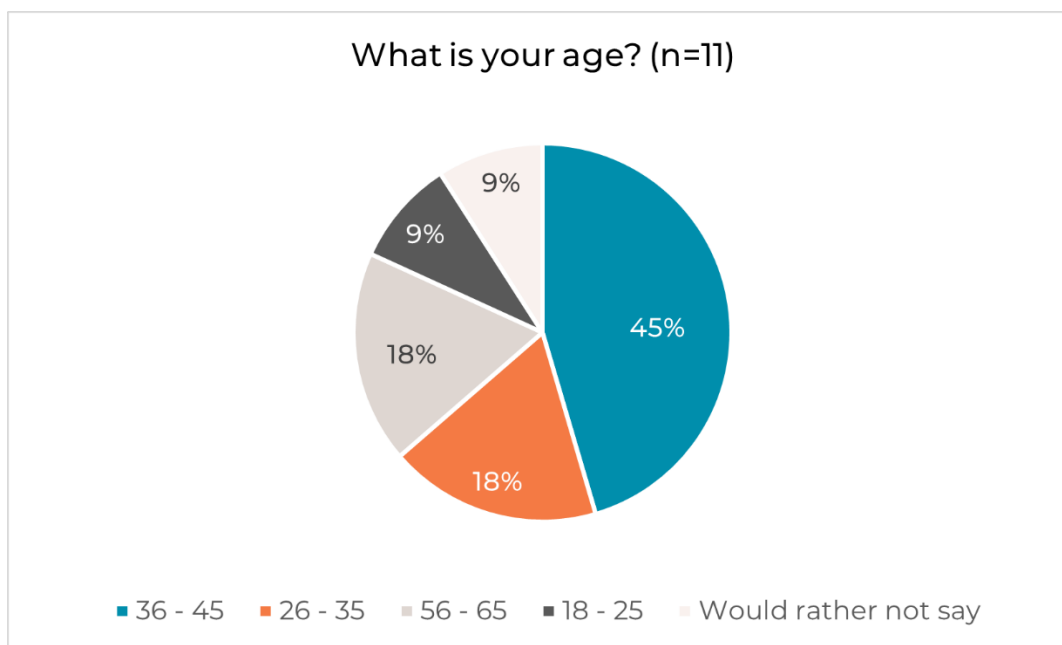
## Demographics

### What gender do you identify with? (Q12)

54% of participants identified as female, and 27% identified as male. Two participants preferred not to answer this question.

### What is your age? (Q10)

The largest age group among participants was 36-45 year olds (45%). This was followed by 18% of participants aged 26-35 and a further 18% aged 56-65. One participant was aged 18-25. One participant did not answer this question.



### Where do you live? (insert suburb name or postcode) (Q11)

72% of participants live in locally in Carramar (2163). One participant each lives in Fairfield East (2165), Canley Vale (2166) and Lansvale (2166).

### **Do you live within 10 minutes walk of the Park? (Q12)**

91% of participants live within a 10 minute walk of the Park.

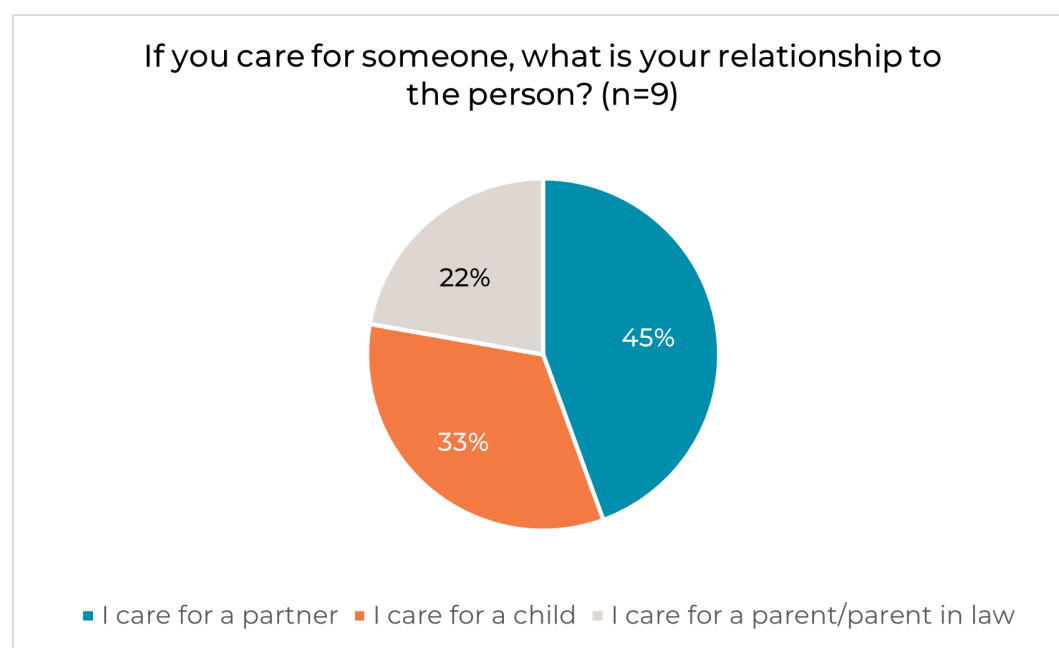
### **Do you identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander? (Q16)**

Two participants identified as Aboriginal.

### **If you care for someone, what is your relationship to the person? (Q17)**

64% of participants care for someone. Out of these participants, 45% care for a partner, 33% care for a child, and 22% care for a parent/parent in law.

Four participants did not answer this question.



### **Do you speak a language other than English at home? Please specify (Q14 & Q15)**

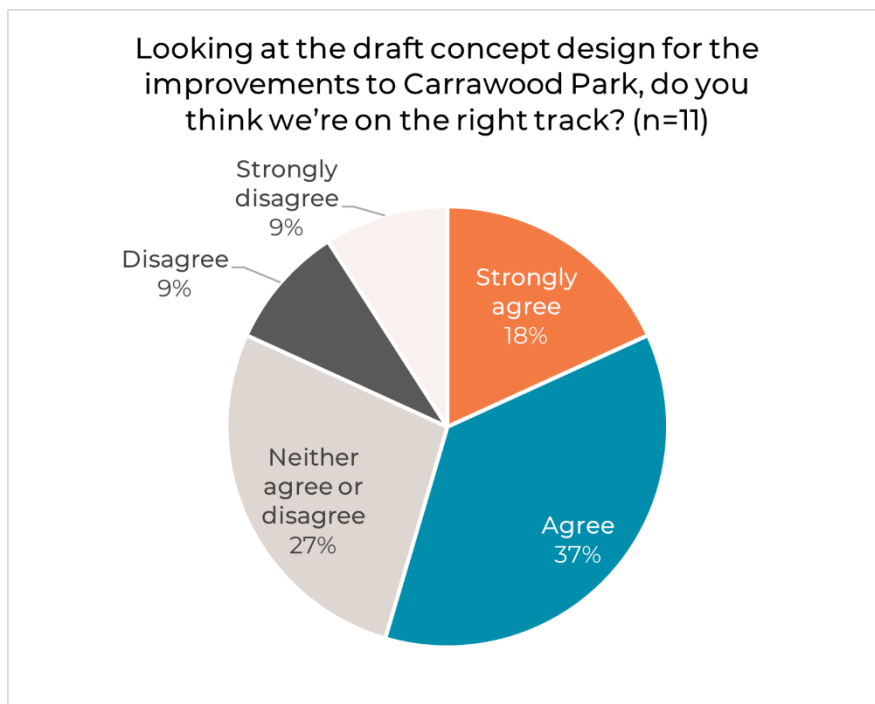
Nearly half (45%) of participants speak a language other than English at home. These languages included Auslan, Czech, Chinese (Mandarin), Vietnamese, Tagalog and Croatian.

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## Community aspirations

### Looking at the draft Concept Design for the upgrades to Carrawood Park, do you think we're on the right track? (Q2)

Four participants (54%) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. Conversely, only two participants (18%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. Three participants (27%) were undecided.



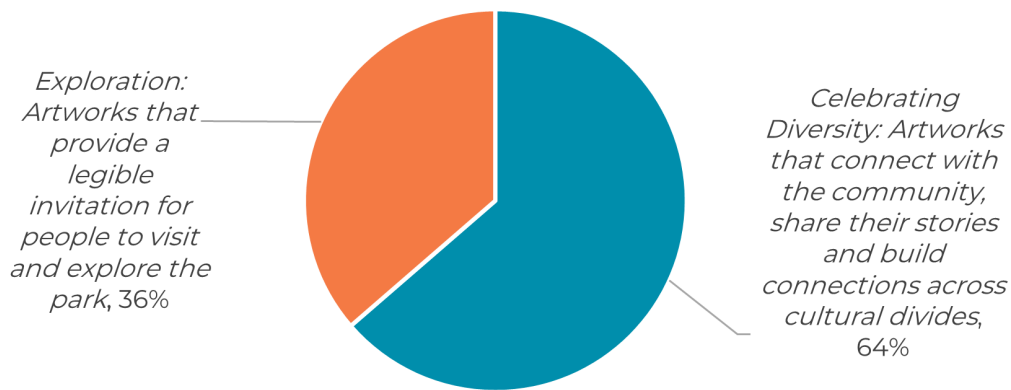
### Public art themes have been developed for Carrawood Park from community input, historic research and Council policy. Which of these themes are you most interested in us exploring? - Celebrating Diversity: Artworks that connect with the community, share their stories and build connections across cultural divides? (Q5)

The majority of participants (64%) nominated '*Celebrating Diversity: Artworks that connect with the community, share their stories and build connections across cultural divides*' and the remaining 36% of participants nominated '*Exploration: Artworks that provide a legible invitation for people to visit and explore the park*' as a public art theme for the upgraded Park.

Two participants did not answer this question, and two participants selected both public art themes.



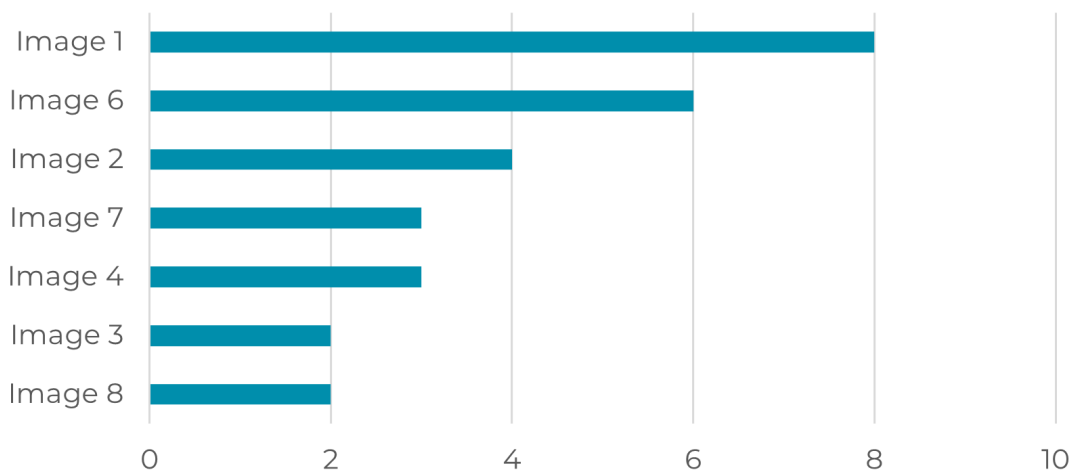
Public art themes have been developed for Carrawood Park from community input, historic research and Council policy. Which of these themes are you most interested in us exploring? (n=11)



**Public art comes in many different types, scales, and forms. Which of these examples reflect the type of art that excites you? (Select 3) (Q6)**

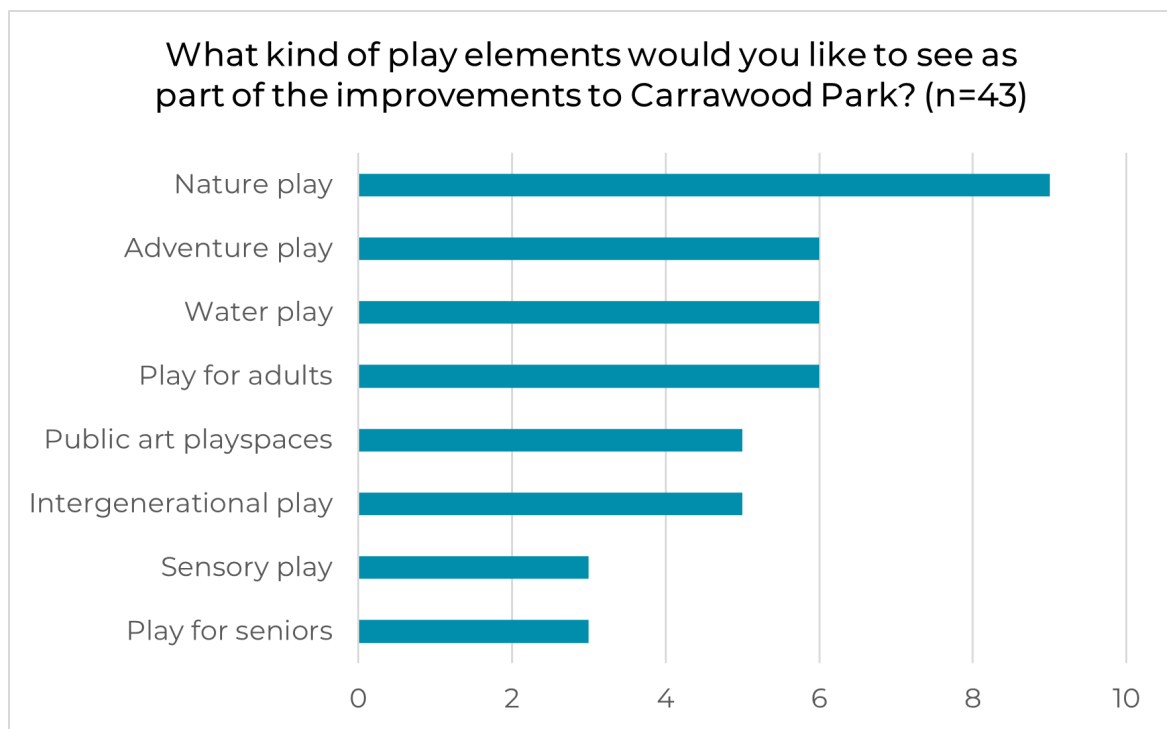
Image 1 was the most popular selection among participants, receiving 8 votes. This was followed by Image 6 which received 6 votes, and Image 2 which received 4 votes. Image 3 and Image 8 were the least popular images, receiving 2 votes each.

Public art comes in many different types, scales, and forms. Which of these examples reflect the type of art that excites you? (Select 3) (n=28)



### What kind of play elements would you like to see as part of the improvements to Carrawood Park? (Q8)

The majority of participants nominated *Nature play* as a priority play element for the park, receiving a total of 9 votes. This was followed by *Adventure play*, *Water play*, and *Play for adults*. *Sensory play* and *Play for seniors* were less commonly selected, each receiving three votes.

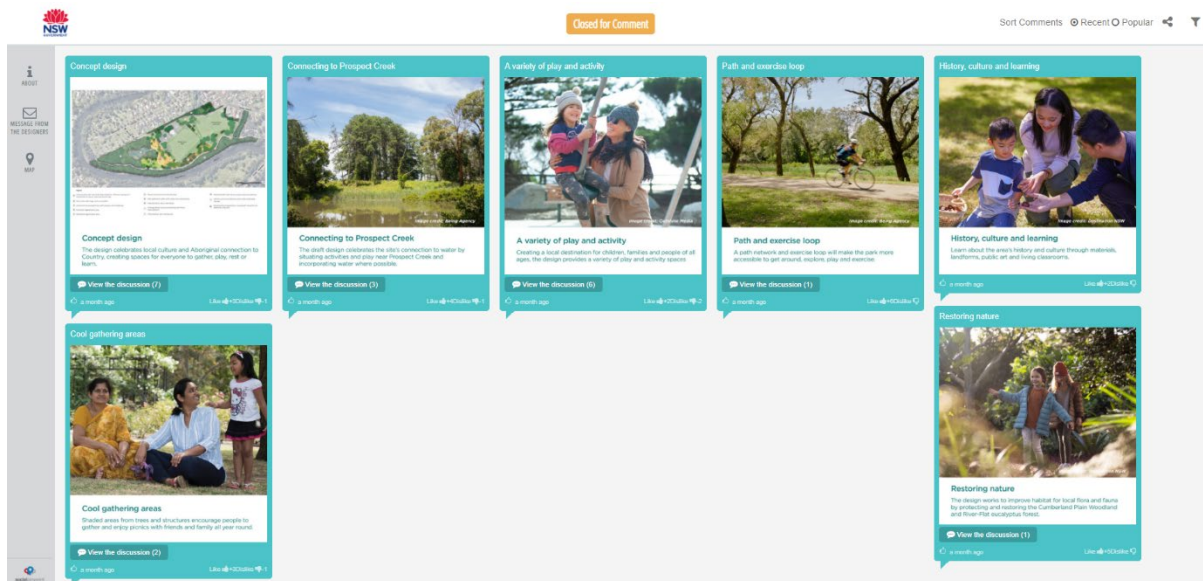


# Appendix B – Social Pinpoint Design Board Analysis

## Overview

A total of 20 responses were recorded on the Design Board:

- 7 (35%) 'Concept Design' comments
- 6 (30%) 'A variety of play and activity' comments
- 3 (15%) 'Connecting to Prospect Creek' comments
- 2 (10%) 'Cool gathering areas' comments
- 1 (5%) 'Path and exercise loop' comments
- 1 (5%) 'Restoring nature' comments
- 0 (0%) 'History, culture and learning' comments





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## Overall sentiment

Community members were extremely passionate in their responses on the Design Board. The majority of comments had a positive to neutral sentiment.

The following word cloud was created using the most common phrases on the Design Board, to convey the community's feedback for the design of the upgraded Park.



# Appendix C – Aboriginal Consultation

## Western Sydney - Aboriginal Cultural Context

According to ABS data and as per the 2016 census, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people number 649,171 or 2.8% of the Australian population. NSW is home to 216,176 or 33.3% of the population and at 70,135, Sydney is home to the largest population of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people in the country.

A large number of Aboriginal people call the Sydney region home yet there is a diverse array of Aboriginal language groups represented due in part to opportunities for education and work in larger metropolitan centres.

Many Aboriginal community members have direct links to both the Gandangara and Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council areas, whilst many others come from homelands from across New South Wales and beyond. Individuals maintain cultural links to their own language groups and country whilst also feeling a strong connection to the country they reside, work and live upon.

These connections are in the case of many community elders decades long and a strong affinity for and connection to country is ongoing. Cultural connections within an urban context are at times difficult to maintain as a result of colonisation in the first instance, assimilation, urbanisation and modernisation.

Urbanisation and loss of bushland areas continues to impact access to and connection with culture which is embedded within the landscape and forms a very large part of who we are as Aboriginal people.



## A Lived Experience

"My own journey as an Aboriginal man straddling two cultures is not dissimilar to many of my Aboriginal Brothers and Sisters in that currently, I don't live on country but I am constantly energised by the ancestors and the spirit of place where I do currently reside. Having been in the Sydney Region for over 20 years, I feel connected to many of the places that hold special meaning to the specific language groups of Sydney.

As an avid native plant enthusiast, I frequently visit many of the freshwater and saltwater places of the Sydney region and I am familiar with the language, stories and songs related to many of the areas visited. Although, greatly impacted by colonisation processes, Carrawood holds a strong connection to its Aboriginal past through the presence of significant pre-1788 trees throughout the site.

The knowledge that the ancestors of this space had ongoing interactions with the flora and fauna at this location and that many of the trees in particular were physically associated with them is remarkable to say the least. The age and number of these trees is an overwhelming reminder of our connection as Aboriginal people to country. I feel we all have a responsibility of caring for country as the ancestors allow us to enjoy these spaces, and to be energised and re-invigorated by the cultural connection and vibrancy afforded by them.

As green space constricts due to urbanisation those with access to larger parks fortunate to contain remnant native vegetation may also be rejuvenated and feel a sense of belonging through if not cultural connection then at least an association with the natural world. These connections are intrinsic to Aboriginal people and where opportunities present that allow natural, cultural and spiritual renewal, perhaps \*Connecting with Country will support and help to realise projects that protect the health and wellbeing of country and therefore of Aboriginal communities, and by extension all communities.\*- Clarence Slockee, 2021



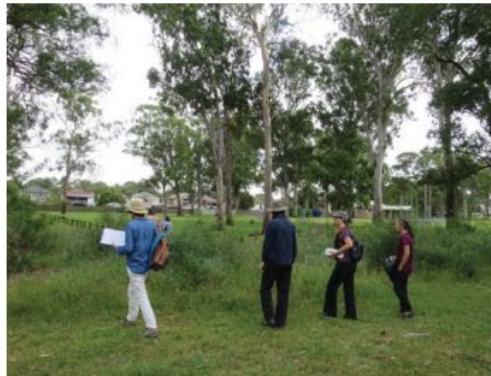


### Indigenous Engagement and Design Objectives

Consultation was undertaken with the Fairfield local Aboriginal community Elders and representatives from Fairfield Council by Phillips Marler and Jiwah.

Carrawood Park is located on Gandangara land. The consultation included discussions with Elders and individuals from Aboriginal representative groups;

- Aboriginal Advisory committee - Fairfield
- Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council



The findings from the Aboriginal consultations identified consistent messages and themes throughout the site walks and discussions including;

**A Connection to Country** - Re-connecting the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community to the parkland fostering the natural environment while enabling engaging in and learning about cultural practices.

- **Cultural** - Cultural practices, areas of reflection and tranquillity and appreciation of nature, story telling and interpretation.
- **Environmental** - Site regeneration activities that will help to re-establish critically endangered plant communities including weeding and native tree and shrub planting and benefit local fauna through protection and creation of habitats.

**Cultural acknowledgement** - Create a place where the local multicultural community can learn about the land through an Aboriginal cultural perspective in an imaginative and reflective way. This can be achieved through park naming by local Aboriginal groups, interpretation, cultural tours and park signage/branding.

**Ongoing place for cultural engagement** - Providing the setting for the teaching of Aboriginal culture from elders to younger Aboriginal generations through teaching and participation, is an important aspect of sustaining Aboriginal culture and the park can play a significant role in this endeavour.

**Cultural dialogue** - Providing opportunities for indigenous people and the multicultural community to come together and engage through exchanging stories and learning about each others cultural practices.

**Protection of existing significant** - Two scarred trees where identified on site, one of which is noted in the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) register as AHIMS 45-5-4301 and noted in the Aboriginal Due Diligence report.



On site consultation with Aboriginal Elders and Fairfield Council representatives



Scar tree - AHIMS 45-5-4301



Second Scar tree identified on site - not listed in AHIMS

### Connecting with Country

Connection to Country is an essential part of Indigenous culture and life. During the consultations it became apparent that there is a lack of engagement with the local park but its natural environment and history as well as the presence of scar trees has a high potential to facilitate reconnection with Country and culture.

This reconnection was communicated primarily as opportunities to:

- Revegetate critically endangered plant communities, which can provide ongoing cultural experiences.
- Engaging in cultural practices such as gathering materials
- The protection and interpretation of existing natural and Aboriginal cultural heritage areas such as the creek and identified significant trees and key species within the park is another key element to cultural connection.

Possible themes for interpretation could be:

- Creek story
- Local bird life
- Water creatures (Turtles)



### 'It is about sharing' - Creating Cultural Dialogue

During facilitated site walks, a strong desire to not only re-connect with Country but also to engage and connect with the local multi-cultural community was expressed as a way to share experiences and learning from each other and to permeate cultural boundaries.

The site can facilitate this by offering places to come together such as "yarning" circles for smaller gatherings and the provision of a larger shelter that can be used as a stage setting for multi-cultural events or can function as an outdoor classroom.

An outdoor classroom does not require a dedicated building but can include seating areas in natural settings for learning about different cultures and nature alike, creating cultural and environmental literacy.



### Fostering Cultural Awareness

Ongoing connection to the Park in revegetation, regeneration and land management activities will provide further opportunities for cross-cultural knowledge sharing and a sense of place.

These activities will further foster cultural awareness, educational opportunities and ongoing custodianship of the park and associated programs.



Source: GANSW - Draft Connecting with Country 2019



### Land Management

The park is an opportunity to further encourage community engagement in sustainable ecological practices. Regeneration builds on the existing natural assets of the existing Cumberland Plain Woodland and River-Flat Eucalyptus Forest vegetation.

Caring for the site involves: weed removal, reduced mowing, local provenance seed collection followed by nursery propagation, planting and ongoing maintenance to re-establish endangered plant communities.



Protecting existing habitats by retaining dead wood in a safe way and creating new habitats for animals with existing elements or considering opportunities to integrate them in interpretive elements or artworks.





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# Appendix D – Email submission

## Item 1: CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

-----Original Message-----

Sent: Saturday, 30 January 2021 10:12 PM

Subject: Carrawood Park ...'upgrade'

I grew up in Fairfield East and know and love this park. It has many magnificent old growth native trees. Please do not in any way do any construction work of any kind anywhere near them. I do know of a number of local environmentalists who are watching with just as much fear as I have for their fate. After the disastrous treatment of Deerbush Park, the reputation of Fairfield Council is not good for conservation management.

## Item 2: PROPOSED RESPONSE

Thank you for contacting the DPIE Open Space Team regarding the Carrawood Park project.

We were pleased to receive your email and note your feedback about the importance of Carrawood Park's old growth native trees and conservation.

Feedback about retaining large trees was heard from the community during the first round of engagement for Carrawood Park which was conducted at the end of 2020. The design team is currently reviewing all feedback received and will produce a 50% Concept Design for public exhibition by mid-2021.

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