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GREEN SPACE

WATTLE RESERVE PLAYSPACE UPGRADE

CONCEPT DESIGN REPORT FOR THE CITY OF HOLDFAST BAY

NOVEMBER 2025 - CONCEPT OPTIONS

Site Analysis Mapping



Overlooked by two-storey houses to three sides and opening up to the beach, the reserve is in a highly visible location.

The reserve is well connected to its local surroundings with off-street parking on the Esplanade (including an accessible bay) and on-street parking on all perimeter streets. The popular walking and cycling route of the Esplanade connects to the site via a wombat crossing at the south-western corner and continuous perimeter footpaths with pram ramps at each corner.

Wattle Reserve currently offers a range of amenities and usable open space, listed below:

- Playground with:
  - complete perimeter fencing (2 gates to internal reserve interface)
  - swings
  - net climbing structures
  - bouncer
  - springer boat
  - shade sails (to be retained in-place and incorporated)
  - softfall mulch
- Double-sided basketball /netball ring and half-court
- Fenced pickleball court
- Volleyball net
- Public toilets
- BBQs
- Shelter and picnic tables
- Drink fountain
- 5x memorial seats (1 with current lease)

The adjacent map highlights key features of the reserve, listed below.

Legend

- pedestrian paths
- cycle/shared paths
- bike rack
- car parking
- vehicle maintenance access
- shelters
- existing toilet (proposed for upgrade)
- fencing
- bollards
- sports; pickle ball, volleyball, basketball
- playground
- seating and picnic tables
- bbq
- **d**rink fountains, **b**ins, **s**ignage
- transformer
- existing trees

Community Consultation Findings

Overview

The community consultation for the Wattle Reserve Playspace Upgrade was conducted through three main channels between 25 September and 15 October 2025:

1. **Onsite Community Drop-in Sessions (2 & 9 October)**
2. **School Workshop (14 October)**
3. **Online Survey**

Each consultation method gathered valuable feedback from a diverse cross-section of the community, with a **strong emphasis on inclusive, active, and adventurous play for a wide range of age groups.**

Key Findings

1. COMMUNITY DROP-IN SESSIONS
Approximately 30 participants attended two interactive community sessions. Feedback was collected through sticky dot activities, written comments, and children's creative play tasks.

Top-Rated Play Elements (via Sticky Dot Exercise):

- Multi play tower (17 votes)
- Flying fox (17 votes)
- All abilities play (13 votes)
- Monkey bars (12 votes)
- Rope play tower (12 votes)
- Scooter/bike tracks (10 and 9 votes)
- Basket swing (10 votes)

Top-Rated Amenities:

- Improved paths (11 votes)
- Community Feedback Highlights:
- Desire for inclusive, diverse, and age-appropriate play equipment
- Strong support for retaining popular elements like the boat and rope structures

Requests for:

- More toddler-friendly equipment
- Water play and nature play
- Outdoor gym for adults
- Better shelter, seating, and shade
- Improved toilet facilities (noted as being upgraded separately)
- Enhanced safety, particularly fencing and traffic calming
- Designated food van area, BBQs closer to the playground, and bike parking
- Mixed views on rope play elements due to difficulty for younger users

School Consultation Findings

2. SCHOOL WORKSHOP
Over 60 Year 5 students from McAuley Community School participated in two activities: **individual worksheets and a collaborative "Playground Island" design task.**

Most Preferred Play Elements (from Worksheets):

- Scooter tracks (clear favourite)
- Slides and flying fox (frequently ranked #1)
- Monkey bars and spinning elements (e.g. "tornado spinner")

Preferred Design Themes:

- Ocean Ecology (21 students)
- Beach Activity (16 students)
- Colourful/Sculptural (5 students)

Design Task Findings:

- Students emphasized adventure, imagination, and interactivity

Repeated suggestions for:

- Trampolines
- Bike/skate/pump tracks
- Sports areas (soccer, basketball, footy)
- Large slides and climbing elements
- Natural features (lakes, bridges, trees)

Themes included:
Ocean Playground, Sealife Park, Beach Adventure, and Adventure Parks

- Designs reflected thought for younger children, parents, and social areas

Overall Conclusions

There is strong community support for a dynamic, inclusive, and engaging playspace that caters to all age groups and abilities.

The most popular features combine active play, accessibility, and natural or beach-themed environments.

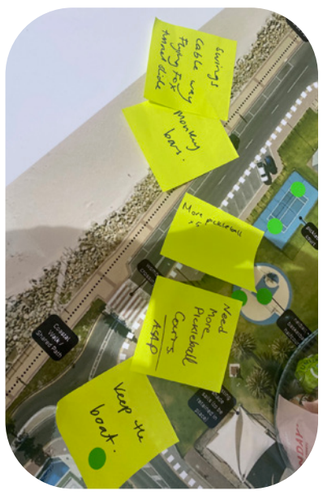
Feedback across all consultation methods showed consistent preferences for:

- Flying foxes, monkey bars, slides, and multi-use play towers
- Scooter and bike tracks
- Improved comfort through better seating, shade, and amenities
- Enhanced accessibility and safety features
- Children particularly emphasized creativity, imaginative play, and high-energy activities, offering clear guidance for the design phase.









Online Survey Summary

Introduction

The City of Holdfast Bay undertook community consultation to understand how Wattle Reserve is currently used and to identify community preferences for future playspace and reserve improvements.

A total of 68 participants provided responses through online and hard copy surveys. Feedback was gathered regarding preferred play equipment, design themes, park features, and general observations about the reserve.

This summary presents key findings from the consultation and identifies priorities to guide the concept design phase.

Overview of Participation

Total respondents: 68

Survey method: Online and hard copy combined

Location of respondents:
84% City of Holdfast Bay residents (mainly Hove, North Brighton, Brighton)
13% visitors from surrounding suburbs

Demographics:
Primary age groups: 27–39 years (38.24%), 40–59 years (36.76%)

Children:
60 participants regularly visit with children aged 1–9 years
Indicates strong family engagement and local community ownership of the reserve.

Summary of Key Insights

Community priorities for Wattle Reserve include:

- Modern, inclusive, and age-appropriate play equipment — particularly swings, slides, and flying foxes.
- Safety and visibility — maintain a fully fenced area and avoid enclosed structures.
- Nature-based coastal theme — reflecting local identity and environment.
- Improved amenities and comfort — more shade, seating, and updated toilets.
- Balance between open space and recreation — retain sports courts and grassed areas for informal play.

Design Recommendations

Based on community feedback, the following design directions are recommended:

Theme & Aesthetic:

- Adopt a coastal/nature play theme with natural materials, soft colours, and marine-inspired elements.

Play Equipment:

- Incorporate a play tower, a mix of traditional (swings, slides) and interactive (flying fox, sensory play) equipment suitable for children aged 1–12 years.

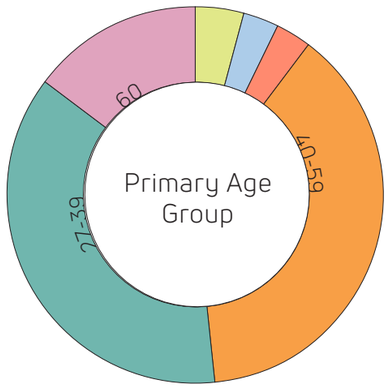
Safety & Accessibility:

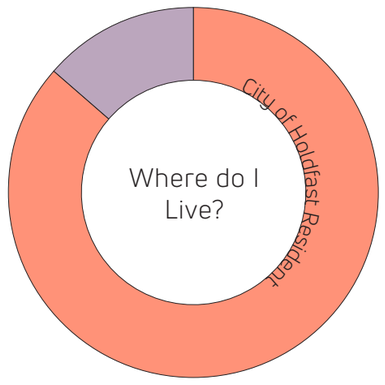
- Retain fencing around the playspace.
- Ensure equipment is visible and accessible for all users.
- Replace softfall with a more suitable material (rubber or sand mix)

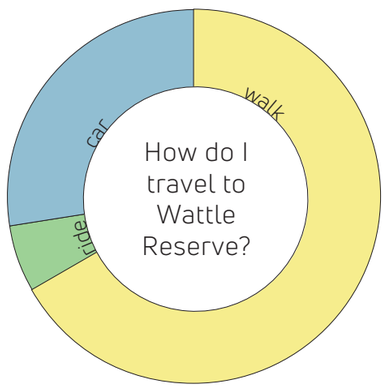
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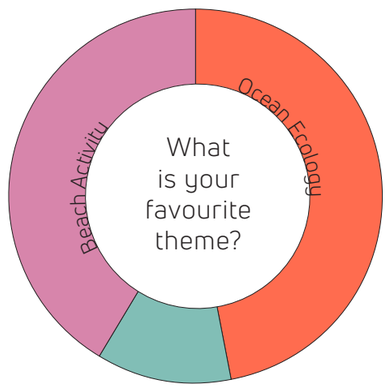
- Provide additional seating, picnic shelters, and shade.
- Upgrade toilets and BBQ facilities for family use.

Sports & Open Space:
Maintain and potentially expand pickleball and basketball courts and preserve large open grassed areas for informal recreation.









Conclusion

Community feedback for the Wattle Reserve upgrade demonstrates strong local support for an inclusive, natural, and family-focused playspace that maintains the reserve's open, community-oriented character.

The design should build on existing strengths — its location, open space, and active recreation — while addressing key concerns around aging equipment, accessibility, and comfort.

Key Play Outcomes

Designs will incorporate feedback from all consultation methods which showed consistent preferences for:



1. Create an active play, accessible and natural or beach-themed playspce



2. Include:
Flying foxes, monkey bars, slides, multi-use play towers
Scooter and bike tracks



3. Improve comfort through better seating, additional shelter, and amenities

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Overall Design Approach



Legend

- NEW CONCRETE PATHWAY
- NEW PLAYGROUND LOCATION
- NEW FENCING ALIGNMENT
- NEW SHELTER
- pedestrian paths
- cycle/shared paths
- shelters
- existing toilet (proposed for upgrade)
- bollards
- sports; pickle ball, volleyball, basketball
- seating and picnic tables
- bbq
- **d**rink fountains, **b**ins, **s**ignage
- transformer
- existing trees

Play Option 1: Stingray

1. new concrete pathway
2. small bike track
3. new feature wall and shelter
4. relocated existing fencing
5. retain boat in toddler play zone
6. bespoke stingray element:
    - **a.** double slide
    - **b.** rope play
    - **c.** stair access
    - **d.** monkey bars
    - **e.** balancing
7. accessible chime panel
8. accessible digger
9. rotating seesaw
10. double swing & basket swing
11. cableway
12. new picnic furniture
13. relocated existing picnic table and bin
14. retain existing shade over playground
15. new bbq
16. tree planting and garden beds



approx 1:200 @ A3

Play Option 1 - PLAY EQUIPMENT



Stingray - Bespoke Element



Row Row Boat Chime Panel



Accessible Digger



Rotating Seesaw



2 Bay - Flat - Toddler -
Roto Basket



25m Single Post Cableway
- Galvanised Finish

Play Option 1 - 3D IMPRESSION



Play Option 2: Sandcastle

1. new concrete pathway
2. compacted sand pathway
3. relocate existing fencing
4. bespoke play element:
    - **a.** cubby
    - **b.** wobble bridge
    - **c.** slide tower and tube slide
    - **d.** round steppers
    - **e.** sky rail flying fox
    - **f.** monkey bars
5. all access carousel or beach buggy
6. spinning orb ‘beach ball’
7. adult and baby swing
8. bike track
9. new pastel toned seating
10. new pastel toned picnic furniture
11. new shelter
12. relocated existing picnic table and bin
13. retain existing shade over playground
14. new bbq
15. tree planting and garden beds

approx 1:200 @ A3



Play Option 2- PLAY EQUIPMENT



Sandcastle - Bespoke Element



All Access Carousel

OR



Beach Buggy



Spinning Orb 'Beach Ball'



Swings



Bike Track

Play Option 2 - 3D IMPRESSION



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