



City of Port Phillip Adventure Playground Upgrade Project



Consultation Report

10 December 2018

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Context

Adventure playgrounds (AP) date back to the work of Danish landscape architect Carl Sorensen in the 1940s and examples of adventure playgrounds have emerged (and often disappeared again) across many countries, including Australia. Adventure playgrounds differ from traditional playgrounds in some key ways. Adventure playgrounds, for example, are often built through processes that “encourage children to make decisions about structure, form and function” (Knight, 2016: 13) and are therefore some of the best examples of co-design involving children. Adventure playgrounds often include loose materials (like balls and tires) in addition to fixed structures (like cubbies and forts) to facilitate children’s imaginative play. Finally, unlike traditional playgrounds, adventure playgrounds are generally staffed by specialist play supervisors who support children in navigating risk and danger through measured and graduated challenges in their play. Staff in adventure playgrounds are ‘facilitators’ and ‘educators’ as opposed to ‘police’.

The two adventure playgrounds in the City of Port Phillip were established to reflect these play principles. They were also established to act as ‘urban backyards’ for children and young people living in social housing.

The St Kilda Adventure Playground (Fig. 02) was established in 1981 and currently hosts out-of-hour activities on two days a week (the weekly Long Table Dinner Program and the 3182 Crew) in addition to being a popular regional/tourist destination and a space available for (and busy with) bookings for events such as birthday parties.



Fig. 02: St Kilda Adventure Playground site map (source: Jacob Komesaroff)

Skidders Adventure Playground (Fig. 03) was built in 1978 and hosts a range of in-hour and out-of-hour programs (Boys' and Girls' groups, Friday Night Feast, Sustainable Art, and a Breakfast Club) in an average week. The Skidders Adventure Playground is more locally-



Fig. 03: St Kilda Adventure Playground site map (source: Jacob Komesaroff)

focused and the majority of its attendees are children and families from the local area (from the near-by public housing estates in particular).

Both Adventure Playgrounds are open every day (except over Christmas and New Year, and Good Friday) and focus on delivering three key service delivery priorities to children and their families:

1. Recreation Opportunities (providing opportunities for young people to engage in play-based activities, controlled challenges and risks, and creative exploration through fun activities and play spaces)
2. Support System Linkages: creating soft entry pathways and making referrals for vulnerable and difficult to engage community members who struggle to connect with mainstream services
3. Leadership and Participation Activities: Providing strong adult role models and opportunities for young people to show leadership / be praised for showing leadership or taking initiative.

(City of Port Phillip 2018)

Purpose and format of this report

This report summarises the processes and findings from the community engagement activities and consultation informing the early stages of the Adventure Playground Upgrade Project. These activities focused on generating ideas and recommendations and facilitating discussions from all stakeholders to inform Council in the design, service mapping and implementation of the upgrades.

The consultations served to ensure that “both sites meet the needs of the community and provide positive outcomes for children and families in the City of Port Phillip” (City of Port Phillip 2018). This report consolidates the professional and community advice for enhancing the users’ experiences at St Kilda and Skinners adventure playgrounds. This was achieved through extensive site-specific consultations with playground users as well as deliberative enquiry with staff and services providers

This report is organised into five sections, as outlined in the Table of Contents. These sections weave a story that touch on the following questions:

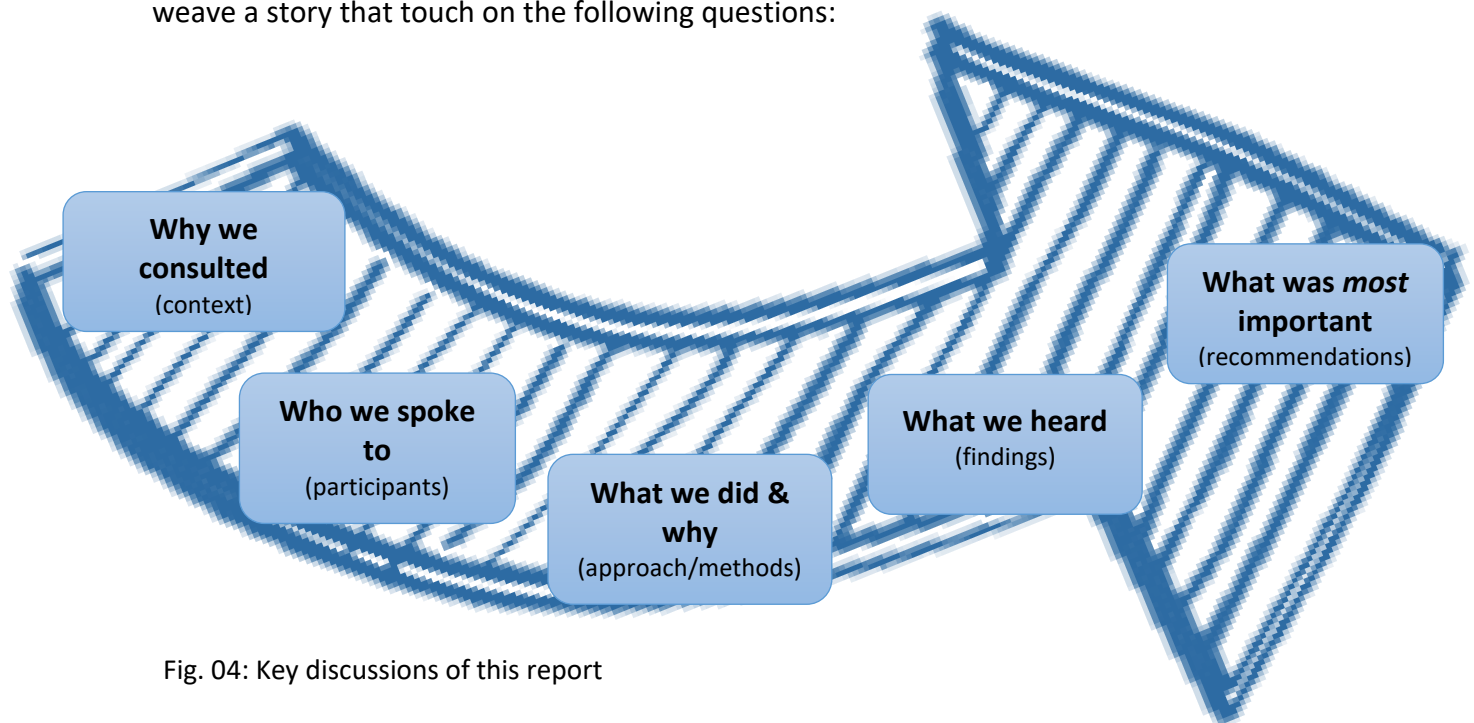


Fig. 04: Key discussions of this report

Definitions

We apply the following definitions in this report:

Co-design: while co-design now encompasses a wide range of practices, they generally reflect “the sharing and combining of knowledge and to developing shared understanding” (Steen 2013: 16). Knowledge includes those held by laypeople who are the users of facilities or spaces.

Risky play: play which involves heights, speed, feeling ‘out of control’, using dangerous tools (e.g. saws, hammers, cordless drills) and/or other experiences that enable children to overcome fear. Risky play challenges children to stretch their capabilities “while learning to master age adequate challenges” (Sandseter & Ottesen Kennair 2011: 257).

Safety: when speaking of risky play, the tendency can be to equate ‘safety’ with protections from physical harm (e.g. falling off equipment and harming oneself). However, in relation to this consultation and report, safety is a broader concept, encompassing psychological as well as physical safety, comfort and protection. This allows children to take risks such as climbing or swinging to help them learn how to assess risk. These are key life skills which can help to mitigate or manage risk taking in later life.

Supervised: Adult supervision of play is a key element of managing risk in adventure playgrounds. In this report, ‘supervised’ refers to professional playground staff (as opposed to, say, parents) providing supervision of playground users. Supervision ensures that children (and adults) are not taking unnecessary risks, that all users are safe from other harm such as bullying or intimidation. As the playgrounds are supervised in this manner, equipment can be designed to be more challenging than in non-supervised public playgrounds.

Authorship and acknowledgements

This report was written by the team from RedRoad Consulting and Wayfarer Consulting. The views expressed in the report are as verbatim as possible and, therefore, represent the views of those participating in the consultations rather than the views or decisions/commitments of the City of Port Phillip. This consultation advice is part of, not the sum of, the information shaping the design decisions for the adventure playground upgrades.

We gratefully acknowledge the ideas, reflections, and stories shared with us by over 500 people, from the very young to the young at heart and from the professional to the public pundits. We also want to acknowledge the fantastic project support given to the consultation program by the Youth & Middle Years Services Team and the broader City of Port Phillip staff. Thank-you so much for your energy, enthusiasm and emergency blobs of blu tak.

02 Consultation approach

This section details the consultation methodology and methods. Participant and facilitator evaluations of the design and implementation of the consultation activities is provided (Appendix D).

Who we consulted with

The goal of these consultations was to maximise opportunities and speak to professional stakeholders (e.g. Adventure Playground staff, Council staff from a range of areas and professional stakeholders from other local agencies that intersect with the St Kilda and Skidders users and/or deliver services into the playgrounds) and community members (children and their families who use the Adventure Playgrounds, primarily, but also other community members who don't actively use the playgrounds but live nearby, for example).



Fig. 05: Summary of participants in the Adventure Playground Upgrade Project consultations, 26 October to 23 November 2018

In total, we engaged with approximately 525 people between the first activity (26 October 2018) and the final activity (23 November 2018).

How we consulted

As the stakeholders for this project ranged from young children to professional staff, a variety of engagement activities were designed to appeal to these different audiences. While professional and staff discussed the purpose of the playgrounds and their place within

broader service provision children and families were more focused on elements of the playground, how they used them and advice they had for improving the user experience and future of the playgrounds.

The consultations started with professional Search Conferences these included staff working at the adventure playgrounds, council staff who engage with the playgrounds and service providers from community agencies. They continued with larger public Parties @ the Playgrounds and smaller Focus Groups with community members, families and children. The consultations conclude, with professionals drawn from council departments and service providers working through the recommendations in an Action Workshop. The following provides more detail on each of these activities.

Search Conferences

Two half-day Search Conferences were held, one with internal City of Port Phillip staff (26 October 2018) and the second with external service providers (29 October 2018). They ran to the same broad agenda (Fig. 06).

Time	Agenda
30m	Welcome (large group) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome from the organisers • Introduce participants with short icebreaker
45m	Our vision & guiding principles (small group) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw out the Vision and key design goals people have for the playground upgrades, using a guided visualisation activity • Establish <i>shared</i> principles through a follow up activity to the visualisation
45m	Interrogate and refine the guiding principles (large group) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fast-paced, large group ‘participatory edit’ of the shared principles • Negotiation of ‘world café’ stations for post-break discussion
15m	Break
60m	Deep dive (small group) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World café style brainstorming in three rounds: issues, context, and potential actions/priority • A large group debrief
15m	Wrap up & what to expect next <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of key Search Conference outcomes and next steps • Process evaluation

Fig. 06: Search Conference agenda

Twenty-nine CoPP staff members attended the Internal Search Conference and 19 agency/service providers attended the External Search Conference.

The format of the Search Conferences was expansive, future-focused (visioning) and encouraged creative brainstorming. The key questions for the groups were: ‘where do we want to be in the future?’ and ‘what do we need to focus on to achieve that ideal future?’



Fig. 07: Internal and External Search Conferences

In both Search Conferences, participants were prompted to imagine an 'ideal future' (or vision) for the two Adventure Playgrounds. Attendees were then encouraged to discuss and negotiate their ideas, listing the key vision people shared for the two future Adventure Playgrounds (Fig. 08):

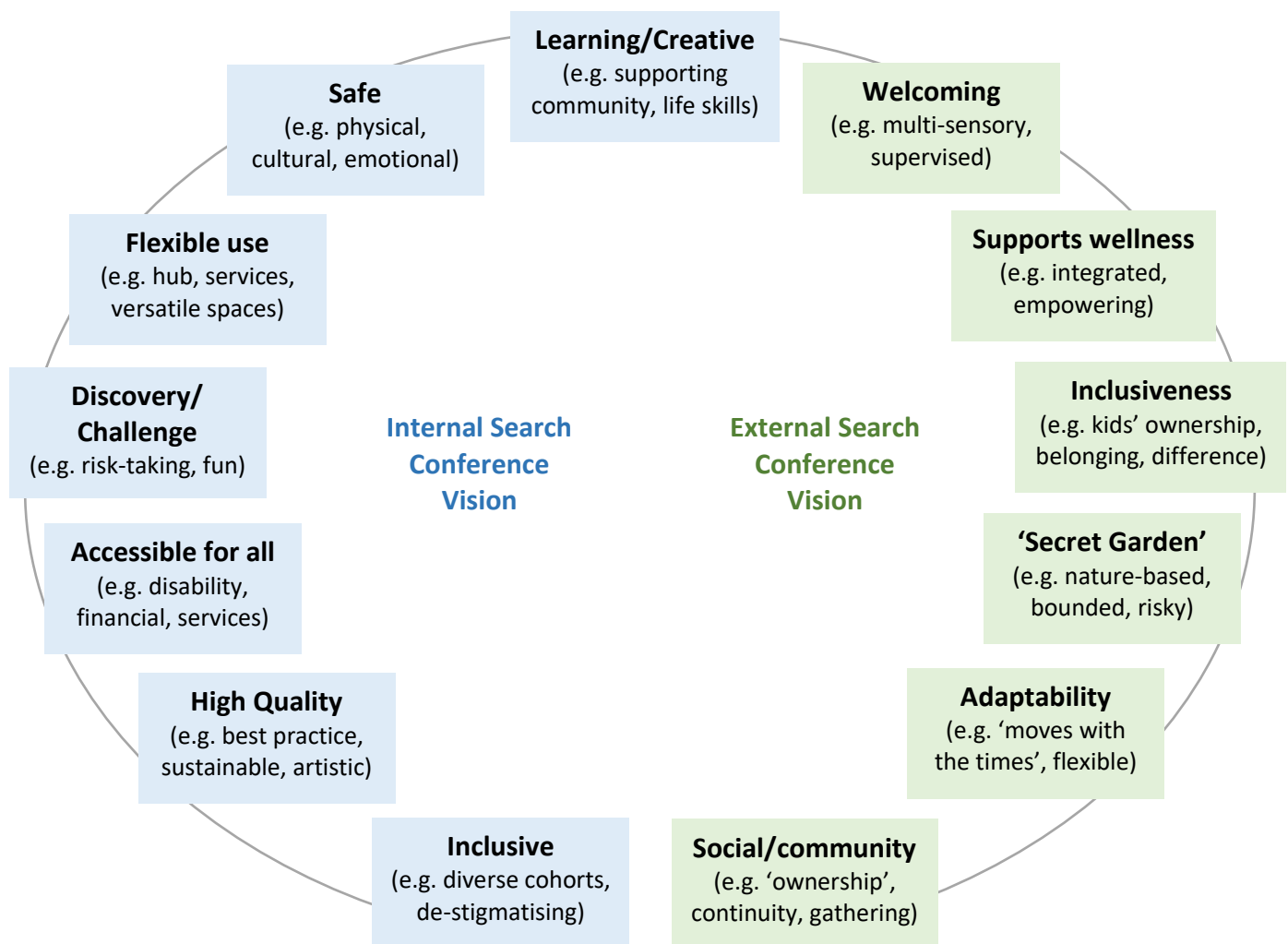


Fig. 08: Key vision/principles, Search Conferences

The Search Conferences participants and their discussions helped to frame subsequent consultations, particularly the Action Workshop.

Parties @ the Playground

Four 3-hour, drop-in consultations were held in the Adventure Playgrounds:

St Kilda Party@ the Playground 1: 12.00-3.00pm, Saturday 3 November 2018

St Kilda Party@ the Playground 2: 12.00-3.00pm, Sunday 4 November 2018

Skinners Party@ the Playground 1: 3.30-6.30pm, Thursday 8 November 2018

Skinners Party@ the Playground 2: 12.00-3.00pm, Sunday 10 November 2018



Fig. 09: Parties @ the Playgrounds, St Kilda and Skinners

A total of 176 children registered at and participated in the two St Kilda Parties @ the Playground and 86 (registered) children registered/participated in the two Skinners Parties @ the Playground. We estimate that about 50 adults (who didn't register) also participated in the four Parties @ the Playground.

As detailed in Fig. 10, most children were between 3 and 11 years-old with the younger age groups more strongly represented at the St Kilda Parties @ the Playground.

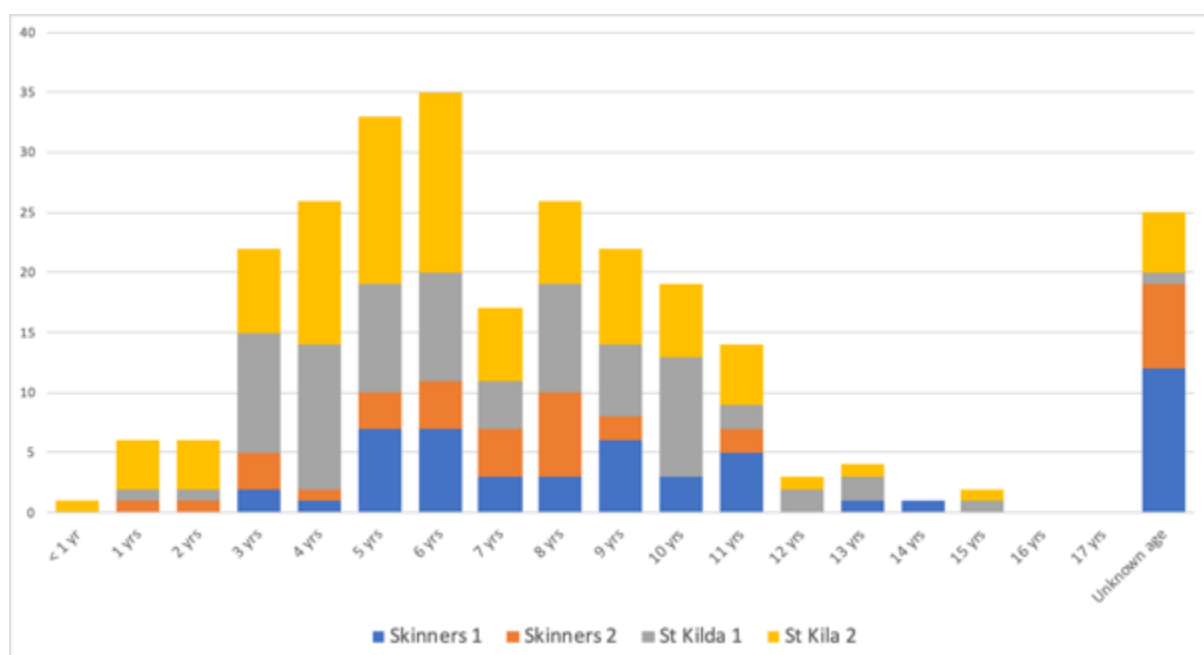


Fig. 10: Ages of children participating in the Parties @ the Playground

The Parties @ the Playgrounds were based on a 'SpeakOut' model of engagement (Sarkissian et al. 2009) and facilitated varied and colourful activities suitable for children and adults to participate in as they visited the adventure playground. The consultative activities included:

- playground mapping (documenting the loved and unloved elements of the playgrounds, and ideas people had for change/improvement)
- 'model future' (modelling play equipment and other facilities that people would put in their ideal adventure playground)
- storytelling face painting (a facilitated discussion about the adventure playgrounds, held while children had their faces painted)
- photo scavenger hunt (a guided photo tour, led by children, to capture Polaroid images of equipment/facilities that must be kept and could change in the upgrade)
- VoiceLab: at two of the four Parties @ the Playground, Polyglot Theatre attended with their VoiceLab, a cocooned 'igloo' that children crawl into to have a discussion with an interviewer/operator

Each of these activities generated different types of data (e.g. spatial, oral/verbal, visual) which served to cross-check/validate and triangulate the findings

Focus Groups

Four focus groups (two at each Adventure Playground) were held to have a more conversational and less public conversation with existing groups (including vulnerable children/families). On average, the focus groups had ten child and adult participants and followed a rough script:

Introduce the idea:

- the playground is being upgraded, we really want to make sure it is really good for local kids, we need to understand the playground better, etc.

Group discussion:

- Why do you come to the adventure playground? How does it make you feel? What do you like to do?
- What are the best bits in the adventure playground? Why are they the best bits? Is there one area that is the most special/sacred?
- Are there any bits you don't like? Why don't you like them? Could they be made better?
- Is there anything else we need to know?

These conversations happened around large plan maps of the Adventure Playgrounds and/or while being shown the space by children/adults. The information generated was therefore both spatial and verbal.

Action Workshop

The final engagement activity was an Action Workshop held with approximately 25 internal and external professional stakeholders on 23 November 2018. It was a two-hour session focusing on negotiated resolutions and recommendations with respect to six 'provocations' or tensions that had emerged in the earlier consultations (and are summarised in Appendix B of this report). The agenda is provided in Fig. 11.

Time	Agenda
10m	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome from the organisers • What to expect at the Workshop
20m	What we've learned <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A presentation to summarise the key findings from the consultations, concluding with a set of 'provocations'...
45m	Resolving the provocations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three rounds of small group deliberative negotiation over the contested aspects of the table's 'provocation' • Working the resolution to the provocation into a 'Design Principle'
40m	Plenary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large group report back from small tables • Large group discussion to finalise the arching principles
5m	Wrap up & what to expect next <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the final steps and timeframes for this consultation • Process evaluation

Fig. 11: Action Workshop agenda

The provocations were presented as contested statements designed to help participants think about how to manage potential conflicts in the design and use of the playgrounds. The six provocations were:

1. Maintaining/enhancing risky play experiences while keeping children safe at APs
2. Innovating and implementing new things while respecting the history of the APs
3. Involving users and other laypeople in AP (re)design while ensuring professional standards
4. Addressing strategic planning and long-term sustainability while remaining responsive and 'nimble'
5. Ensuring the integrity of adventure play experiences facilitated by the APs while integrating broader family services
6. Maintaining the local community involvement while managing wider community interest/use.

The approach/format of this Workshop was oriented to problem-solving and negotiation of value difference (such as risk and safety). This approach helped articulate the unique issues at each of the playgrounds and the universal issues and recommendations across both spaces. This, in turn, generated purposeful design principle advice, and related recommendations from the range of professional participants involved.

03 Key findings

All the comments and ideas gathered from the consultation process were captured and analysed to identify the key themes. These themes were made up of ideas and opinions that were expressed across all the consultation activities described in Section 02.

The data from these consultations was transcribed and then coded/grouped (by the authors but also through tasks done by participants in the later consultation activity. For example, the participants of the Action Workshop contributed to the analysis by negotiating preferred approaches to the 'provocations' – or tensions – arising from earlier feedback and they also prioritised ideas through a participant voting activity within the Workshop). The majority of findings related to both playgrounds however some elements were specific to one particular playground, these have been included at the end of this section.

The following key findings, grouped into themes, are the ideas that came out most strongly in the consultations. It is not feasible to provide all the raw data in this report but it was provided as an electronic 'Addendum' to the client and key summary material is included in the Appendices.

A shared vision

Developing an agreed articulated vision for the playgrounds will help ensure their purpose is clear throughout any changes and redevelopments.

Many people are passionate about the playgrounds and how they should change, develop and grow. Developing a clear, shared vision of what they are, and what they are not, will help to reduce conflict and confusion throughout the redesign process.

Elements of the vision that were confirmed throughout the process are outlined below. The key vision elements are the same for both playgrounds.

The playgrounds are:

- primarily a local facility, while children from anywhere are welcome to attend, decisions about their future will focus on the needs of local children
- predominantly play spaces, the provision of additional services will be provided discreetly and not impact on children's play
- a risk-taking environment where children can test boundaries and develop skills
- supervised by professionals to ensure children and families are safe and supported if required.

This is primarily a local facility for local children, others are welcome to attend but when decisions are made they must be made with respect to the primary users, being the local children and their families.

Risk

Encouraging and accommodating risk-taking play helps children build confidence, foster curiosity and develop the capacity to self-assess risk.

Throughout the consultation the concept of risky play was supported by all. The element of risk-taking play was considered important for children's development and understood as an element of what makes the Adventure Playgrounds unique. While most people supported and championed the importance of risky play it is not without challenge. The recent removal of the flying fox at St Kilda adventure playground has elicited considerable comment and discussion for playground users and staff.

What the children say

'Adventure means like, going to new places in the playground you haven't known and like, having fun. (Can you tell Voice Lab about an adventure you have had?) Adventure is when I first came here with my brother when I was old enough to stay here alone with my brother. I found the slide, it looked really fun and like, that's how I found my way round the playground, just searching in random places. (Thank you for sharing that.)'

12-year-old child, St Kilda Party @ the Playground (VoiceLab)

What parents say

'Fun play builds resilience it doesn't hurt to fall down and get back into it.'

Parent, Skinners Party @ the Playground (Adults' Corner)

'Love the playground, want a place for risky play – it is how they learn and grow'

Parent, Skinners Party @ the Playground (Mapping)

What professional say

'Supervised playground enables risk that can't happen in regular playgrounds'

Professional, Action Planning Workshop

Maintenance

Maintain the playgrounds facilities, play equipment and essential infrastructure to a high standard to provide a high-quality community resource.

Playground users throughout the consultations indicated that the playgrounds needed a better standard of maintenance for buildings, facilities and key infrastructure such as toilets, kitchens and indoor spaces. One parent suggested (below) that designing the playgrounds so they were easier to maintain would be useful.

What parents say

'Need to design elements to be easier to maintain like self-watering for veg and properly designed chicken coop.'

What the children say

'Well on the basketball court we need a new surface and um, new basketball rings because the surface what we have now is all bumpy and when you trip over the bumpy stuff you can get a graze and that's why I wish we'd get a new surface, so yeah.'

11-year-old child, Skinners Party @ the Playground (VoiceLab)

'[Is there anything else you would like to say to Voice Lab?] Yes. (What?) Well I would want to build a bigger art room, a bigger vault. (Can you tell Voice Lab a bit more about that?) We need a new kitchen because our kitchen is dirty and all that and everything gets in it. And we need a new vault, a bigger art room so kids can learn better when we do art class. So yeah, and get everything new and spick and span.'

11-year-old child, Skinners Party @ the Playground (VoiceLab)

Community Engagement including co-design

The playgrounds were built and developed by the local community and still maintain a strong community focus. Playground users, past and present, are essential partners in developing the playgrounds. Co-design and genuine community engagement are key elements of the adventure playground experience and help build a sense of ownership and respect for the history of the playgrounds.

While this concept was well supported by community members and many professionals some believed that the actual design of play equipment should be undertaken by professionals after consultation with playground users. There is a tension here between professional standards and the organic, community orientated approach.

What parents say

I just hope you don't install some tedious prefab play equipment. The thing that makes this place great is the community/ kid-built nature of it. I grew up building the St Kilda adventure playground out of scrap lumber and such and it was awesome!!!

Parent, Skinners Party @ the Playground (Adults' Corner)

What the children say

'I would make everyone happy. If ever anyone has any feedback, I would listen to them and I would change things if they don't like anything.

'Putting everything that we could in. (Can you tell Voice Lab a bit more about that?) Like doing all of the playgrounds, making all of the playgrounds better and just using some of the ideas like, and putting it in Skinners. (That is a great idea.)

What professional say

‘Children making [their] own space/children’s autonomy/adults trusting children – FACILITATING VISION’

Professional, External Stakeholders Search Conference

‘What are the actual professional standards that need to be in place to say yes or no and guide how decisions will be made?’

Professional, Action Planning Workshop

Well designed, multi-use spaces

The adventure playgrounds provide a space for a range of activities. They are predominantly outdoor spaces but also provide a venue for services and activities that require indoor space, particularly during periods of inclement weather. The spaces within the playground need to be designed to accommodate a range of uses.

The organic development of the adventure playgrounds has led to sometimes strange and awkward spaces. Renewing spaces, particularly indoor spaces, with a view to how they will be used will help ensure they are more functional. This will provide more options for the use of the adventure playgrounds into the future.

What parents say

‘The art room upstairs has no sink and the steps get slippery - it is dark and not a good space’

Parent, Skinners Focus Group

Service Provision

The playgrounds provide an ideal location to provide services for families in need. They can be a place of ‘soft entry’ for families and services. However, any service provision needs to ensure it does not distract from the playgrounds key purpose, as a (socially) safe play environment for children.

The concept of using the playgrounds to link people in need with services was supported by families and professionals. However, it was recognised that this must be done discretely. It is important that services do not dominate the playgrounds or change their focus. It is suggested that some form of practice network be developed to articulate how external groups use the playground and ensure a common understanding of the playgrounds purpose and philosophy.

What parents say

‘Having permanent social workers would not be ideal. Good that they drop in but if they were there too much it might put people on edge’

What professionals say

‘Adventure playgrounds are for playing not treatment. However, they can provide a soft entry to external services (e.g. Maternal and Child health, weighing babies demystifies outside services and is an extension of what already happens)’

Professional, Action Planning Workshop

Incorporating children’s and families’ voices

The playgrounds are loved and respected community spaces. Children and families have close links to the playgrounds and have strong opinions on how things should be managed, changed and upgraded. Their voice is essential in all decisions.

Children and families enthusiastically engage when asked their opinions on how the playgrounds should be developed over time. They are very invested in the spaces and like to understand what happens and why.

What parents say

‘Playground has really helped children [after experiencing DV] has built their confidence - this is their family, they are valued and belong, workers know their names, it is a safe space where they are known’

Parent, Skinners Focus Group

What children say

‘Well you are super nice, I like talking to you. Can I come another time please? (Voice Lab would love it if you came back to visit again.) I will come back in thirty minutes. Bye-bye Voice Lab, you are the best. (Goodbye).’

6½-year-old child, St Kilda Party @ the Playground (VoiceLab)

Differences between the playgrounds

While the playgrounds are very different in many aspects, the findings relating to the consultations were very similar in most areas. The key difference outlined by professionals and some users was that St Kilda has a smaller number of regular users and draws a larger number of families from beyond St Kilda. Skinners has a more local focus with fewer visitors from outside the local area. These differences do not have a direct impact on the physical design principals of the playgrounds but does impact on additional service provisions provided from the playgrounds. The table below identifies how playground users experience each playground.

	Skinner's Adventure Playground	St Kilda Adventure Playground
What users like	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The trampoline • The cubbies (as a venue to run and hide and play with friends) • The basketball court • The monkey bars. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The space and 'feel' including rustic nature and colours. • The trampolines • The cubbies • The slide
What users would change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The toilets and kitchen/meals area • The Vault (not fit for purpose) • Basketball court (requires new surface and rings) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The office, • shed and toilets (use space more efficiently and clean and refurbish)

04 Recommendations

The following recommendations were crafted from the analysed and consolidated advice of participants, as much as possible. The recommendations relate to design advice (e.g. design principles that are recommended for Stage 2 of the Adventure Playground Upgrade project), service advice (e.g. recommendations regarding future service provisions in the upgraded Adventure Playgrounds) and process recommendations (e.g. advice for designing future consultations related to these upgrades and/or advice for how to involve people co-design processes in the playgrounds in future). The recommendations are for both playgrounds unless specified otherwise.

These are recommendations only and need the endorsement of Council to be adopted in any formal manner in the Adventure Playground Upgrade project.

Recommended design principles

This process has highlighted five key recommended design principles:

1. **MANAGED RISK:** The design of the playgrounds must provide an opportunity for risky play in a well maintained and supervised environment. “Design should enable children to conquer fear gain confidence and encourage and foster inquiry and curiosity. It should promote an environment where young people can self-assess risk with all areas accessible to supervisors”.
2. **UNIQUE AESTHETIC:** New and updated items should be designed to fit in with the current aesthetic (natural, organic, crafted) of the playgrounds.
3. **COMMUNITY/CO-PRODUCED:** Children and families should have a key role in the design process for major changes to the playground and the playgrounds should reflect community input and values.
4. **DIVERSIFIED:** Changes should include multi use spaces (outdoor and indoor) to encourage a range of uses and activities.
5. **ROBUST:** The playgrounds must be designed and built to be easily maintained and robust and ensure their unique community value is preserved.

Related recommendations

Underpinning the five design principles are a number of other recommended actions for Council, the Adventure Playgrounds and the broader neighbourhood services and communities who use or provide services from the playgrounds.

To facilitate **MANAGED RISK** in the playgrounds, the results of these consultations suggest that:

- the upgrade process maintains (and enhance, where possible) the sacred and iconic risky play areas and equipment: the trampolines, the cubbies/forts and the basketball courts.

- risks be defined and identified both in terms of short-term (e.g. physical injury; mental health, etc.) and long-term (e.g. chronic illness resulting from sedentary behaviours, financial hardship, etc.).
- the upgrade process and future management of the playgrounds recognises that supervision has a role in managing risk and building relationships with children/families. The fact that the playgrounds are supervised allow for a more exciting and challenging play environment.

To facilitate the **UNIQUE AESTHETIC** of the playgrounds, the results of these consultations suggest that:

- contractors and providers be ‘inducted’ into and be expected to adapt to the culture of the playgrounds.
- trees and other flora be retained.
- robust construction need not reflect ‘cookie cutter’ design: “If it is a bit off-centre it adds to the charm”.
- no plastic/mass-produced equipment be installed.

To facilitate the **COMMUNITY/CO-PRODUCED** nature of the playgrounds, the results of these consultations suggest that:

- the priority be to the local community (in both St Kilda and Skinners):
 - St Kilda: Consider banning the use of space for private birthday parties to create more space for local users and free up staff to supervise the playground. This will help maintain local community involvement while remaining open to public.
 - Skinners: Maintain community focused/back yard feel for local residents, particularly those from the public housing.
- a commitment to work with children and families should underpin all upgrade processes.
- both the arching concept design/s and the on-going choices and upgrading of materials be participatory, involving designers, other professionals and children/community.
- the adventure playgrounds accommodate cultural/indigenous arts and materials so that indigenous and migrant children and young people feel welcome.
- children be involved in implementation not just design (as a skill-building technique as well as a democratic one).

To facilitate **DIVERSIFIED** experiences in the playgrounds, the results of these consultations suggest that:

- service provision and family support need to be provided discreetly, recognising that the primary focus of the playgrounds is for play. Early intervention services are currently, and could in the future provide a soft point of entry for families in need.
- collaborative practice frameworks underpin relationship with users and service providers, including external providers.
- designs incorporate multi use spaces and/or building shells that can change function but that any buildings do not distract from outside play.

To facilitate a **ROBUST** upgrade and well-maintained future for the playgrounds, the results of these consultations suggest that:

- basic infrastructure such as toilets and kitchens be improved in the upgrade and are subsequently kept well-maintained.
- maintenance functions for the adventure playgrounds be resourced and prioritised.

To facilitate playground management that is clear and **EVIDENCED**, the results of these consultations suggest that:

- a strategic plan is created that details the shared vision for the playgrounds along with protocols for things like inducting new staff/services/contractors, periodic reviews/assessments of equipment and so forth.
- there are clear, basic site plans for each playground which clearly indicate physical elements of the playgrounds such as services, infrastructure, soil quality etc.

05 Conclusions

The consultation process was rigorous and broad reaching. Children, families, staff and service professionals provided comment, shared ideas and helped to prioritise the recommendations in this report. Throughout the consultation process there were many areas of shared understanding such as the unique nature of the playgrounds, the essential element of risky play and the community nature of these facilities.

The concept of risky play was supported and championed in a social environment that can curtail children's access to risk taking environments and activities. The organic and slightly 'wonky' aesthetic of the playgrounds was also embraced by most users and professionals. It provides a unique play experience. The staff provide supervision for children and adults in the playground and this sets them apart from other play environments. It allows for the provision of more challenging equipment as its use is monitored, it also provides users with support if required.

The key learning from the full consultation process is that the adventure playgrounds offer a much loved and valued space for children and families. They require some care and attention but infrastructure is generally solid and the sites relationship between the playgrounds and local community is good. There is potential to enhance their use through supporting and expanding current services provided at the playgrounds (particularly Skinners) and redeveloping some areas to be more multi use but the redevelopment should also respect that these are much loved and respected community resources.



Fig. 12: 'The final word...'

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Appendices

Appendix A: A summary of what children and families said

Appendix B: Parties @ the Playground methodology

Appendix C: Summary of Action Workshop recommendations/priorities and discussion points

Appendix D: Evaluation of how participants viewed the consultation

Appendix A: A summary of what children and families said

Children and their families were engaged throughout the consultation process. The engagement focused on asking them what they loved about the playgrounds, what they hated and things they thought should change. Children and families provided their input through mapping, modelling, Voice Lab and focus groups. The results provided below are based on all consultation activities. They have been quantified where possible and are presented in order of importance. The results from each playground were slightly different so have been separated. The % figures relate to the number of people engaged in mapping and modelling who indicated these results.

St Kilda Adventure Playground



Children and families love...

The space/ everything

15% of respondents indicated that they loved the space – this included the colours, the ‘feel’ and the aesthetic of the playground. Both parents and children indicated similar elements that they loved.

‘Like that it [playground] is rustic, like someone’s back yard’

(John M/adult)

Big and got a lot of stuff

(Ryan M/9)

Trampoline

16% of respondents indicate that they loved the trampoline.

‘Trampoline – it’s big and I like being in there’

(Olivia F/10)

Cubbies and plane

15% of respondents indicated that they loved the cubbies and enjoyed playing on them, hiding in them and climbing a further 8% of respondents loved the plane.

‘I like the stair, going up and down [cubby]’

(Martha F/6)

‘Love planes, they can fly. Like that the plane crashed’

(unnamed)

Slide

15% of respondents loved the slide, they enjoyed sliding down and climbing up as well, they loved that it was big.

‘The design is great and fun to go down’

(Kyra F/11)

Other loved areas

The monkey bars, basketball area and just the opportunity to play in the playground either with friends or alone.

Children and families hate...

Kitchen, shed, office

Far fewer people indicated places that they hated and there was no stand out issue or area. Those who did indicate things they hated mentioned the office, shed and toilets. Some children felt that the non-playing areas were not needed and distracted from playing areas. The toilets were considered smelly.

‘(Shed) Boring – not much to do there’

(Unnamed)

Play equipment

The play equipment that was hated included the trampoline (due to having to wait), the pirate ship (dark, scary and wobbly), the plane (old and hard to get into) and the slide (don’t like it and it needs a coat of paint).

‘(Trampoline) Queue for too long’

(Unnamed)

‘Pirate ship – too scary and wobbly’

(Maddie F/4)

‘It’s really old and feels like a baby plane’

(Indi F/6)

Children and families would change...

Specific areas/ equipment

The majority of suggestions for change were related to specific areas and items such as the cubbies, sand pit, pirate ship and plane. The responses wanted areas changed or improved.

There were additional responses requesting new equipment such as swings, small climbing equipment for smaller children and a bigger basketball court. The loss of the flying fox was also mentioned.

‘Don’t like tunnel – don’t understand why it’s there’

(Louis M/9)

‘Slide near the fort. Need more than one slide in the playground’

(Indi F/6)

Trampoline

The trampoline was the only piece of equipment that received multiple mentions. The biggest concern was the length of time children had to wait to access the trampoline.

‘An extra trampoline, a timer’

(Unnamed)

Toilets

The toilets we considered smelly and dirty and it was suggested that they could be extended.

‘Open vents up [toilets] – a bit smelly’

(Kyra F/11)

Skidders Adventure Playground



Children and families love...

Trampoline

21% of respondents indicated that they loved the trampoline. They loved doing tricks, bouncing and having fun.

‘Trampoline – be free and jump – in the ground’

(Akashas F/10)

Cubbies

15% of respondents liked the cubbies particularly climbing, hiding and playing with friends.

The cubby because you can play around in it a lot – tiggy, hide and seek and lots of other games

(Diego M/8)

Basketball court

10% of respondents liked the basketball court area to play basketball and other games.

I like the basketball court because that's where everyone goes to have fun and play a basketball match

(Nashir)

Monkey bars

9% of respondents liked the monkey bars and enjoyed climbing and playing on them.

'Monkey bars – this is where I first learnt to hang upside down'

(Eva F/9)

Other comments

Other areas of the playground that were loved were the art room and art activities, the space and environment, food and the slide.

'Tina got me into art. I like to come and create something – bring back the art room'

(Maraea F/17)

'The meal space provides a place for us all to sit and interact. Teaches manners. I like the extra space for outdoor arts and crafts'

(Ana 8)

Children and families hate...

Kitchen, shed, office

Far fewer people indicated places that they hated and there was no stand out issue or area. Those who did indicate things they hated mentioned the office, shed and toilets. Some children felt that the non-playing areas were not needed and distracted from playing areas. The toilets were considered smelly.

'(Shed) Boring – not much to do there'

(Unnamed)

Other

Other hated elements were the toilets (old and smelly), the cubbies (want them to be bigger, smaller, different), seesaw (needs fixing), meals area (needs to be bigger and the roof fixed).

Children and families would change...

Children and families indicate that the things they most wanted to change related to the equipment in the playground.

New/ changed equipment

13% of respondents wanted changes to the play equipment although there was no real agreement on what equipment should be changed. Equipment that was mentioned included the seesaw, sandpit slide and monkey bars.

Cubbies

11% of respondents indicated that they would like to change the cubbies, there were a number of areas that were outlined for change including making them bigger, adding additional cubbies and linking up the cubbies.

‘I want to add another tree house with a bridge in between’

(Bohdan)

Basketball area

11% of respondents wanted to fix up the basketball area, this included making it bigger, fixing the surface and the basketball ring.

‘Fix the basketball court and make it like MSAC; fix the basketball ring’

(Lucian M/8)

Arts space

7% of respondents wanted the art room to be improved, the main improvements related to the size and issues with leaking roof.

‘Want a bigger art room. It gets too busy sometimes’

(Kayden M/8)

Toilets

6% of ideas for change related to the toilets particularly the cleanliness and smell.

‘Stinky – want new toilets’

(Yeknom M/7)

Other comments

Other areas that could change included fixing up the kitchen, bringing back the chooks more trampolines, better use of the space, return of the flying fox and more activities.

Appendix B: Parties @ the Playground methodology

The outline below shows the methodology and questions for the Parties @ the Playground consultation activities.

Station	Materials	Key themes/questions/tasks
Station 1: Information A welcome to the Party! Information, consent and materials for people to take with them as they party @ the playground.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3x3 marquee with one (back) wall • trestle table • 3 chairs • welcome and wayfinding signage • Adults' Corner signage • participant tally sheet and registration (for those wanting to be kept informed) • consent/assent forms • wrist bands • participant 'passports' • basket of pens/pencils, blu tak, scissors, post its, etc. • clipboards • VoiceLab script (for adults) • optional – iPad with the survey loaded?? • 2 facilitators (Cherry/Helen, who can also roam and relieve other facilitators) 	Administration stuff: do the following to welcome and 'register' participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ distribute/collect consent/assent forms ○ provide wrist bands to those with consent ○ give participants their 'passport' (to take to different 'stations' and get stamped, encouraging participation. Can be dropped back as an evaluation form) ○ answer questions people have ○ host adult contributors in an Adults' Corner space Key questions/prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • would you like to be part of this consultation? • are you ok with your child participating? • do you have any questions about the Adventure Playground/s or the planned upgrade? • do you need help getting involved in the consultations? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ access support? ○ other? For 'Adults' Corner': <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offer a comfortable sport for adults who do not want to venture further into the Playground... • offer opportunity for scribed conversations, following the rough script for the VoiceLab • optional: help people complete the Have your Say survey on an iPad

YOUR NOTES:

Station	Materials	Key themes/questions/tasks
Station 2: VoiceLab A cocooned space for children to discuss their views on play, adventure and the future of this space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VoiceLab 'igloo' • Extension cords • 'station' instruction signage • stamp for 'passports' • basket of pens/pencils, blu tak, scissors, post its, etc. • Polyglot staffing to support 	Administration stuff: do the following in preparation for the activity/discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ provide a wait list for kids who are waiting ○ answer questions people have Key questions/prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VoiceLab programming: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ welcome and settling in + child assent to be recorded ○ script (already developed)
Station 3: Storytelling Facilitated and scribed discussion with children (which includes facepainting) and adults (which may include another creative activity... or adult facepainting). Focused on favourite moments in the playground.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3x3 marquee with one (back) wall • trestle table • 4 chairs • 'station' instruction signage • stamp for 'passports' • face painting materials (Jacob?) • scribing sheets • basket of pens/pencils, blu tak, scissors, post its, etc. • 1 facilitator/face painter (Jacob) + (co-facilitator/ scribe) 	Administration stuff: do the following in preparation for the activity/discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ stamp 'passports' (for VoiceLab too) ○ explain the face painting (and the VoiceLab if the child is waiting for that) and answer questions people have Key questions/prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the initial conversation to negotiate what will be painted • While painting faces, have a scribed discussion with children about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ choice for the face painting (and why that choice) ○ their favourite moments and stories from the playground ○ best things about playing/playing here ○ favourite kinds of play ○ how this Playground makes them feel ○ other questions, determined by facilitator

NB: located as a waiting area for VoiceLab on the two Saturdays and will replicate

YOUR NOTES:

Station	Materials	Key themes/questions/tasks
Station 4: Community mapping A 'desktop' mapping of how individual kids use the playground and the wider neighbourhood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3x3 marquee with one (back) wall • 2x trestle tables • 3 chairs • 'station' instruction signage • stamp for 'passports' • A0 plans of playground and of wider neighbourhoods • basket of pens/pencils, blu tak, scissors, post its, etc. • 1 facilitator (Perry) 	Administration stuff: do the following in preparation for the activity/discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ stamp 'passports' ○ explain the mapping and scavenger hunt activities and answer questions people have Key questions/prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the A0 plans as a prompt, explore the following questions with children and adults: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ where people roam in the Playground ○ where people roam outside of the Playground (e.g. in the wider neighbourhood) ○ how they rank different play experiences in and out of the playground ○ what are the loved elements of the Playground? ○ what are the ignored/overlooked parts of the Playground? ○ how does the Playground relate to the wider neighbourhood? ○ other questions, determined by facilitator • annotate the A0 maps with people's comments. Annotations will also include a first name, gender and age. (Mandy F10, Tom M35, Sam X15) • ask children/adults and small groups to do a scavenger hunt to illustrate some of their mapping discussions

NB: co-located with the scavenger hunt activity. Facilitators will swap and co-facilitate as required

YOUR NOTES:

Station	Materials	Key themes/questions/tasks
Station 5: Scavenger hunt A photo-scavenger hunt of the great and not-so-great elements of the playground, from children's perspectives. <i>NB: co-located with the mapping activity. Facilitators will swap and co-facilitate as required</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trestle table • 2 chairs • 'station' instruction signage • stamp for 'passports' • polaroid camera and film • display area for photos • 'KEEP' and 'CHANGE' and 'YOUR CHOICE' heading sheets • clip boards • sheets for facilitator notes • post-its for annotating the photos • basket of pens/pencils, blu tak, scissors, etc. • one facilitator/guide (Sue on Saturday, Lara on Sunday) – this station and the Mapping station will share and swap facilitators) 	Administration stuff: do the following in preparation for the activity/discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ stamp 'passports' ○ offer a guided scavenger hunt to individual or small groups of kids and adults (4 max) ○ explain how to use the polaroid camera Key questions/prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • with the help of the guide, children will be asked to take (or direct the taking of) three photos: a KEEP photo, a CHANGE photo and a YOUR CHOICE photo • photography can be prompted by asking people about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ favourite part of the Playground ○ more popular/busiest part of the Playground ○ most beautiful/attractive part ○ strangest/weirdest ("good weird") part ○ strangest/weirdest ("bad weird") part ○ a restful part of the playground ○ a part that needs changing • facilitator to maintain control over the camera (delicate!) but allow the participants to play with the polaroid itself. • Annotations about the photo (details, stories, etc.) noted on post its attached to bottom of photo. Photos should include first name, gender and age. (Mandy F10, Tom M35, Sam X15) on the photo bottom • photos pegged to string display so others can see range of photos.

YOUR NOTES:

Station	Materials	Key themes/questions/tasks
Station 6: Model Future An evolving and annotated model of the 'perfect' future playground.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3x3 marquee with no walls • trestle table • 3 chairs • 'station' instruction signage • stamp for 'passports' • ground tarp (3x3ish) with plan of playground • blocks, modelling clay, pipe cleaners, and other modelling material • annotation labels • basket of pens/pencils, blu tak, scissors, post its, etc. • two facilitators (Clare/final Council person...) 	Administration stuff: do the following in preparation for the activity/discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ stamp 'passports' ○ explain the modelling activity Key questions/prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using the large floor mat with a plan of the playground, facilitators will engage children and adults in creating a model of an ideal Adventure Playground • facilitators will discuss the emerging elements with people and annotate with key things the person says about why they want this element in the Playground. Labels will also include a first name, gender and age. (Mandy F10, Tom M35, Sam X15) • and kids' modelling of 'perfect' elements on the plan, facilitators will capture (through discussion that is written onto labels that can annotate the model): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ parts of the Playground that need to be protected (annotated with green labels) ○ ideas for new equipment and facilities (annotated with blue labels) ○ other questions, determined by facilitator • protect against destruction of elements by others... if there is a 'critique' of an element, encourage that discussion and record it on a pink label and add the label to the model • periodically photograph the model so that its evolution is captured.

YOUR NOTES:

Appendix C: Summary of Action Workshop recommendations/ priorities and discussion points

The following is the transcript of the Action Workshop discussion scribed at each of the six tables. in the Workshop. Each table discussed a particular ‘provocation’ or tension that had arisen from the previous consultation activities.

Legend:

votes	The participants were each allocated three ‘votes’ to ideas, recommendations or principles that they felt were critical. These votes indicate priority from the perspective of the involved professional stakeholders
‘shared’	During the plenary discussion with the full group, this point was agreed to by the whole, wider group (NB: there may be other ‘shared’ recommendations that the group didn’t have a chance to endorse in the plenary)
*	The table participants highlighted this point as a key/important idea

Table 1: Maintaining/enhancing risky play experiences while keeping children safe at APs

Design principle/s	Votes
Design should enable children to conquer fear, gain confidence and encourage and foster inquiry and curiosity. It should promote an environment where young people can self-assess risk with all areas accessible to supervisors	shared 13
Related recommendations	
Define short and long-term risk e.g. physical injury, mental health, financial and chronic illness	shared 1
Modern robust equipment which maintains the existing character	
Supervised, not policed	
Invest in risk by investing in supervisors e.g. specialized play workers	
Key discussion points	
Challenge	
Supervise playground enables risk that can’t happen in regular playgrounds	
Identify outdated equipment	
Responsibility re: safety rests with users	
Enable challenge	
Trust supervision and the relationships it builds	1
Can’t imagine playground without supervision	
Who defines risk?	

Table 2: Innovating and implementing new things while respecting the history of the APs

Design principle/s	Votes
Rebuild or build infrastructure but keep aesthetic/character	*
Like now but bigger and more functional	
Interrogate the historical reasons for decisions and ensure still relevant	1
Build to reflect core values of community and keep character	* shared
Design is participatory (community/users) – both concept design and materials	3
Related recommendations	
Rebuild and replicate what's there e.g. structures	
Keep trees and native flora	1
At Skinners: renovating existing infrastructure, change the Vault as it is not insulated	
At St Kilda: put the basketball court undercover and have a large protected space	
Indoor outdoor space, multipurpose	*
Cultural arts and indigenous: create comfort and welcome for indigenous young people	2
Spaces that have natural light	
Passive surveillance through design	*
Space for children to build and program	
Risk is part of history	
Key discussion points	
Keep the look and the homey feel. Not modern, organic	
Make more sustainable and use resources better e.g. solar	
Not corporate or plastic	
Does this have to be a tension?	shared
At St Kilda: rebuild the plane, structurally safe	
Review existing play equipment e.g. fort, plane and rebuild but keep the look. Seal and weatherproof	
St. Kilda has changed over time, Skinners hasn't changed	
Install a cultural fire pit and the yarning circles that are portable	1
Keep equipment but move and configure	
Children used to make equipment and cubbies	
Keep iconic pieces	1
History different at St Kilda and Skinners	

Table 3: Involving users and other laypeople in AP (re)design while ensuring professional standards

Design principle/s	Votes
The professionals do the professional work, users and laypeople contribute to the uniqueness	1
Participation doesn't mean in every aspect, but the key parts, embodying uniqueness in the process of codesign	4
Related recommendations	
Decorative work by kids but structural stuff by contractors	*
Kids need to be involved in implementation not just design	* 4
Like to see the regulations about OH&S relaxed a bit	* 1
Important to involve the children in all the steps	
We should have training to use power tools etc. with the kids	
Updated policy on what can be done by children to encourage codesign and comply with standards	*
Induction of contractors being site and service specific. Take into account the user views and be sensitive to history	2
Develop a Communications plans for changes. Communicate what has changed and why e.g. DVA compliant, more accessible etc.	shared 1
Key discussion points	
Ideas from kids → vetting through OH&S and other systems → Explanation of final outcomes with families and children	shared
Building is complex and educating kids that it doesn't just build itself or happen quickly is important and facilitated true codesign	
"We give children the opportunity to leave their mark on the adventure playgrounds"	
Involvement equals ownership and pride	
"If it's a bit off-centre it adds to the charm"	
If we do something (with children, codesigned) and it doesn't quite work, professionals can fix it	
What are the actual professional standards that need to be in place to say yes or no and guide how decisions will be made?	
The history is the involvement of users. May not be material equipment	*
Vertical garden at Saint Kilda as a case study. Inducted the contractor through scope, brief and history	*

Table 4: Addressing strategic planning and long-term sustainability while remaining responsive and ‘nimble’

Design principle/s	Votes
A clear purpose, both in terms of physical/infrastructure and service/social, for the adventure playground that influences decision-making. Decision-making needs to be responsive to change rather than reactive to incidents	3
Related recommendations	
Building on assets	
Multi use spaces. Buildings are shell that can change	
Strategic plan should include meeting the needs of kids as they get too old for the adventure playgrounds	
A set plan about when we replace fix review playgrounds. We should review the equipment	
Have a strategic plan that is broadly welcoming but reviewed to ensure its meeting the needs of the community	
Can the equipment be rotated or changed?	
Key discussion points	
Make sure there are clear, basic plans for things such as assets and soil conditions etc.	1
Methods for scheduling renewal that includes reviews	
Be responsive not reactive	
The strategic plan needs to be reviewed and able to evolve	
Strike a balance. Community services need to change to meet community needs	
Responsive versus reactive... within the parameters but these should be clear	

Table 5: Ensuring the integrity of adventure play experiences facilitated by the APs while integrating broader family services

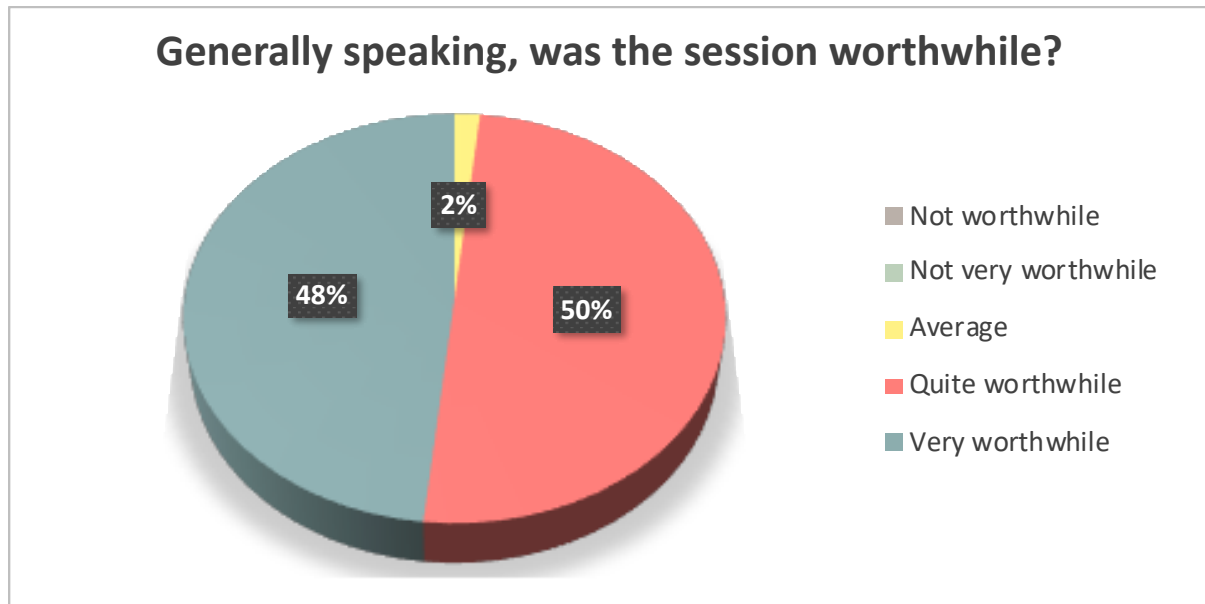
Design principle/s	Votes
A multipurpose space that looks and acts primarily as a playground, however discreetly accommodates services, passive surveillance, and informal space for users	6
Related recommendations	
Collaborative practice frameworks underpin relationship with users and service providers, Including external providers.	shared 3
External providers agreed to/negotiate terms and are 'inducted' into the culture of the playground	1
Explicit contract around behaviour in adventure playgrounds made on every PD for supervisors	
Have other services co-located or nearby → outward facing, not inside the playground but interconnected	
Fit for purpose, i.e. not too generic	
Key discussion points	
Enabling playground staff to make referrals to outside services	
Building services into other activities to normalize them (e.g. meal planning/material aid combined with long table dinners)	
Informal service provision available to those who need it when needed	
Service providers part of the adventure playground community without being labelled in their professional roles	
Tension about conflicting KPIs/funding by different service providers	
Adventure playgrounds are for playing not treatment. However, they can provide soft entry to external services (e.g. maternal and Child health weighing babies demystifies outside services and is an extension of what already happens)	
Service providers adopt cultures of the two playgrounds rather than imposing clinical/formal/professional standards from outside	
Long term commitment to regular presence in adventure playground/building relationships	
Opportunities to connect and build relationships that could lead to accessing external services	

Table 6: Maintaining the local community involvement while managing wider community interest/use

Design principle/s	Votes
The first priority is the local community (In both St Kilda and Skinners)	shared 5
Define adventure playground purpose so as to better inform promotion/advertising and community ownership	
St Kilda: Get rid of birthday parties to create more space for local users while remaining open to public but maintaining local community involvement	1
Skinners: Maintain community focused/back yard feel for local public housing residents	
Related recommendations	
Council providing greater description on adventure playgrounds in a way that explains the actual programs and informs promotion/advertising/ownership	*
Should have an absolute decision from Council about what we are, a party venue or a community backyard	*
St Kilda: Not as accessible to disadvantaged families. Opening hours is the disadvantage to certain families. Creating more opportunities for users from disadvantaged backgrounds for access to St Kilda	*
At St Kilda: Newton Reserve is a possible place/space to driver large public groups. "You can come celebrate at the park". Can keep the gates open and have amenities available for everyone	
Key discussion points	
Empowering local groups	
Give staff the license to focus on local/regular people	
Still remain open to the public but not taking bookings	
Focus on more inclusive birthday parties, food, participation	
Theme of Skinners is community backyard for kids from the flats. St. Kilda is as a tourist destination	
Playgrounds are going in different directions	
There is potential to decrease birthday parties at St Kilda to maintain local community interest	
Enabling one playground as public and one is private is negative given users living in close proximity to a particular playground	
If we start advertising to the general public we could lose community feel	
Skinners: maintaining use for local users. Must participants or local public housing residents. The playground is located near the flats and is inherently connected to them	
General public isn't a bad thing as long as it's not detracting from the locals	
You shouldn't check the gate and decide who enters...	
St Kilda: Users coming to the playground based on Trip Advisor and advertising	
Newton Reserve to facilitate party needs with more benches and furniture	
The proximity of public housing to Skinners may deter the public	

Appendix D: Evaluation of the consultations

Sixty process evaluations were completed by participants in the workshop-type activity (the two Search Conferences and the Action Workshop). The following is a summary of participant feedback on those processes:



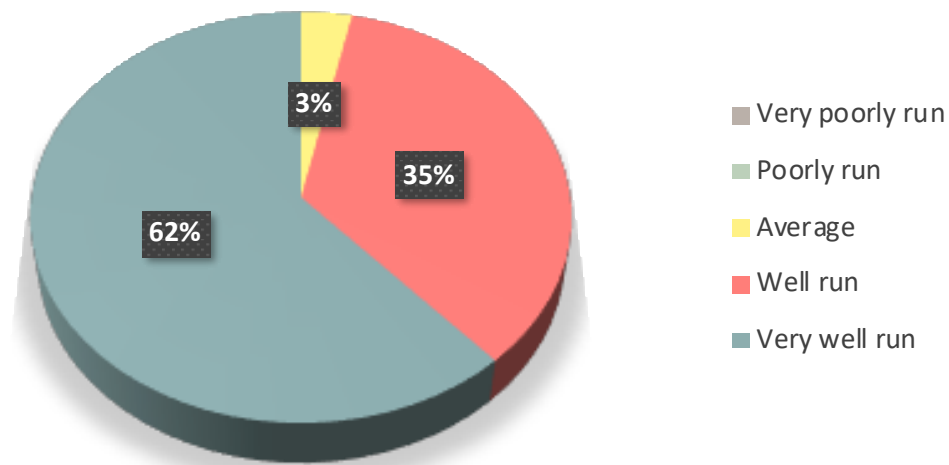
Comments from Search Conferences

- *Look forward to more discussions on this topic. Very exciting to hear so many people on the same page*
- *There were some people who didn't know what the playgrounds are - sometimes comments were misunderstood/distracting*
- *Extremely well run - everyone seemed to be getting into it - could have gone longer*
- *It may have been good for people who hadn't seen playgrounds in a while to see them before this step*
- *A good cross section of Council staff*
- *Good that group moved to different tables to meet/network with other participants*
- *Seemed great to have lots of different organisations around the table for diverse perspectives*

Comments from Action Workshop

- *Clarified philosophical priorities of AP redesign*
- *Great guided discussion. Appreciate effort to identify tensions (provocations) and unpack them*
- *Worthwhile to clarify priorities and values but wary that the consultations may not be prioritised throughout whole planning process*
- *A lot of the areas discussed today are the same at the Internal Search Conference*
- *Some of the provocations were well-known by operators. Could have been an option to seek feed-in solutions/advice on issues that were predicted*
- *It's good to see that a lot of us understand the importance of risky play*

Generally speaking, was the session well run?



Comments from Search Conferences

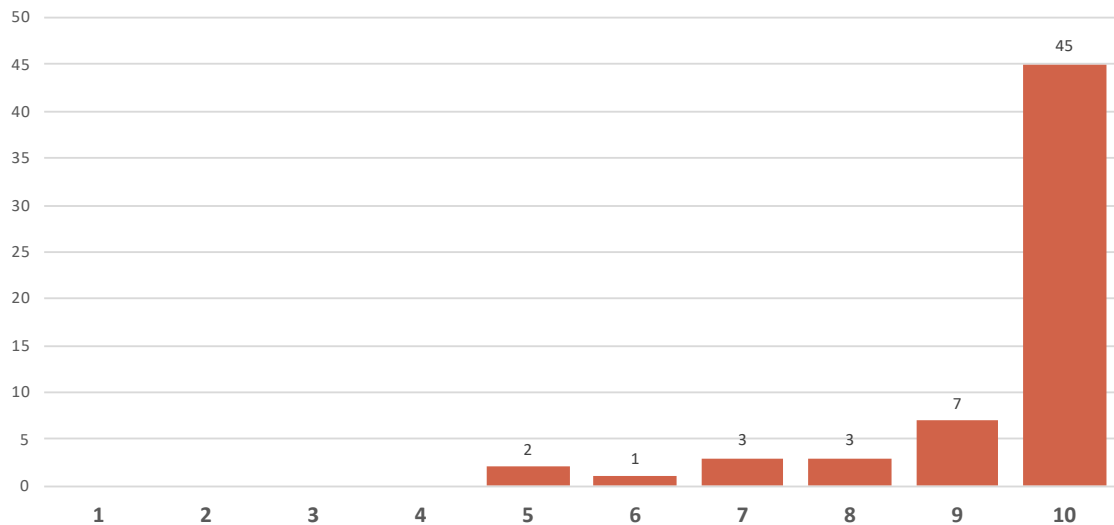
- *Potentially the facilitators to have visited the Playgrounds prior*
- *Well run, timely and efficient. Ice-breaker wasn't even cringey*
- *Knowledgeable facilitators, good to have many - one per group and floaters. Good to know next steps, other opportunities for input etc. Visualisation was really helpful!*
- *Small groups allowed for freedom of speech*
- *Facilitators could've kept people focussed and on topic, though this might've been an issue relating to the above [abstract]*
- *Good structure*
- *Help generate ideas/continue the flow*

Comments from Action Workshop

- *Very well-run. Facilitated meaningful conversation. Could have been an hour longer*
- *Brilliant work! Please... you should both be CoPP Councillors. Thanks!*
- *Maybe make it compulsory for people to move between tables?*
- *Time should have been 30m longer*
- *Love having the facilitators on the tables to do the 'admin' so others can focus on providing input*

The process evaluation at the Parties @ the Playground were simpler, with participants 'grading' the Party at the Playground out of 10. In summary, the four Parties were 'graded' as follows by the 61 people who responded:

On a scale of 1 (terrible) to 10 (excellent), how was this Party @ the Playground?



Across the consultation activities (the three professional workshops and Parties @ the Playground, where evaluative questions were asked of participants), there was a positive process evaluation, both in terms of content and facilitation.

- *Thanks for such an extensive and well-planned consultation process :) (practitioner participant)*
- *I think that today went really well. It was engaging, interesting for the children -- the passports/prizes were a great idea (parent participant)*
- *Impressive creativity in consultation processes at APGs. Nice blend of professional and community inputs (practitioner participant)*
- *Thank you for coming in and I respect you doing this for a lot. And I hope there is playground change. I love you, peace. Fabalooshious, let's go. (12-year-old participant)*

There is room to improve, however, and the following sub section includes the learnings about the process, as shared by participants and by the facilitation team.

Reflections on the approach

The participants shared important information about how the activities could be improved and advice people had for the wider process. As with virtually all consultation/engagement activity, there was some concern about how the outcomes would reflect participants' contributions. Feedback of this sort also stressed the importance of continued engagement, communications and feedback:

- *Continued conversations with all staff and stakeholders throughout process please!! (Internal Search Conference participant)*
- *Glad to consult community - they've been 'consulted' before and haven't seen the results so I hope that's different this time (Internal Search Conference participant)*
- *Keep working with community and include young people in the process (External Search Conference participant)*
- *I really hope it gets past Councillors without too much changed (Action Workshop participant)*

In the view of some participants, a few key actors were missing, possibly affecting the outcomes and certainly weakening the informed discussions the groups were able to have in the Search Conference/Workshops:

- *It's a shame OHS & Building Maintenance weren't able to attend (Internal Search Conference participant)*

Additionally, some elements of different activities need improvement:

- *Not a great set up to encourage challenge in conversation/perspective. Bit confronting? (Action Workshop participant)*
- *Maybe make it compulsory for people to move between tables [in the Action Workshop]?*

Finally, one participant made the important point that the workshop techniques need to be more environmentally thoughtful:

- *Less paper please!! (Internal Search Conference participant)*

The facilitation debriefing from all sessions highlighted that:

- *a separate (2 hour) facilitator briefing/training session, for all internal and external facilitators and for all activities should occur prior to the first activity*
- *Some terminology (e.g. 'safety') needs definition and others (e.g. 'strategic planning') is too abstract for a consultation process such as this*
- *the passport headings didn't match the activities at the Parties @ the Playground and this was somewhat confusing for participants*
- *the child consent form was too fussy and too dense... it should be simplified in future*
- *in future, blending the internal and external Search Conference participants could benefit both and be more generative*

This feedback is a critical support to reflective practice. A response to some feedback was made within the consultation period while other feedback will influence changes in future consultation and engagement process design.