

Ben Pethick Reserve

Proposed Playground Removal

Community Engagement Findings

August 2019

Introduction

The proposed removal of Ben Pethick Reserve playground was endorsed by council as part of the 2009 Playspace Strategy. The strategy was reviewed in 2017, where Council endorsed the Playground Framework to ensure the community's playground were well – designed, well – located, safe and fun for users. In the last 9 years, 50 playgrounds have been upgraded and an additional 7 are currently in the process of being designed or constructed, As part of the Framework, a number of playgrounds will be upgraded and some will be removed to ensure that

- Current and future playgrounds are renewed at appropriate times to ensure safety of the community
- Playground are in an accessible location and spread as evenly as possible through the City of Marion – this may include removal of playgrounds due to over supply in a particular area. Additionally it may include new playgrounds to address a deficiency in an area
- Council resources are used effectively, in line with Council's strategic objectives of keeping rates as low as possible whilst providing services that are fair and equitable throughout the City of Marion.

As there are a number of new playgrounds in the area, it was not proposed to replace the play equipment at the reserve, but to reinstate the reserve to create an attractive and useable open space.

A concept plan was send out to residents that proposed to replace the play equipment with

- Picnic table
- Basic nature play elements e.g rocks and logs
- Mulched garden beds beneath the existing trees.

Community consultation was undertaken over a three week period to 13 August 2019 including:

- A Making Marion online survey
- Postcards delivered to 279 households directing them to the online survey
- Signs installed at Ben Pethick Reserve.
- Social media marketing

The purpose of the engagement was to seek feedback from residents regarding the proposed concept plan.

The following report provides an analysis of the feedback received.

Executive Summary

In summary, during the 3 week consultation period Council received:

- 18 completed surveys
- 1 emailed response
- 1 phone call
- 1 letter from the Oaklands Estate Residents' Association Inc

Of the 18 residents who responded to the survey **72% were not supportive of the proposed concept plan.**

The phone call received and the letter from the Oaklands Estate Residents' Association also did not support the proposed concept plan.

Comments provided an understanding of why residents did not support the proposed concept plan and have been grouped into the following categories:

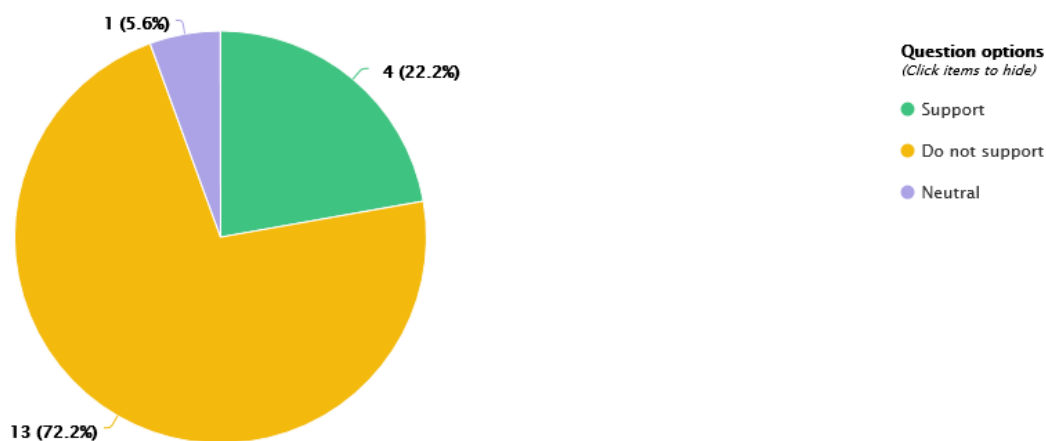
Do not support removing swings / no alternative toddler option nearby	13
Do not want mulching under trees / keep area open for kick about	6
Do not support the addition of a picnic table	4
Do not support the installation of nature play / rocks and logs	4

Consultation Findings

Consultation was held over three weeks, closing on 13 August 2019.

Question 1

What do you think of the proposal?



Question 2.

Do you have any other thoughts or comments to add?

It appears that the decisions are already made. I support the picnic table but removing all play equipment ie swings is a shame as there is nothing for the children and toddlers. The Oaklands Reserve does not have suitable play equipment for young children. Why are we getting rid of all the swings..... forget rocks and logs...Also Ben Pethick Reserve is used by people kicking a ball. If you mulch around the trees this will restricted that activity.

Council staff are obviously not aware that this Reserve is used by a lot of children to kick footballs/other balls. If you install a picnic table, rocks and logs and mulch garden beds/plant them this will minimise the area available for play. Picnic table would be useless on such a small reserve - most people go to the Wetlands area for a picnic where there are barbecues and it is 2 minutes walk away. As for taking away the ONLY suitable play equipment for very young children, this is a travesty. The revamped play equipment in the Oaklands Estate Reserve is for older children....there is nothing there for young ones. Four push swings were removed and one round swing replaced them - little children who try to use this hang on for grim death for fear of falling off. The equipment in the Hendrie Street playground is in constant use and so crowded there is a line up waiting to use the equipment for smaller children. The other two playgrounds listed are 1.5 kms away which probably doesn't seem far if you don't have to walk it with young children, particularly on a hot day. If you do ultimately decide to take away these push swings it is imperative that you install replacements in the OER. Hopefully common sense will prevail and you will not ruin this Reserve.....it does not need any of the items proposed.

I live along side the park .The mothers that use the park with small children use it where the child is not in fear of bigger children or dogs not on leads as is in the new Oaklands park . They do not want rocks and logs as there children are still small. They want small swings not big round one that need pushing and hurt when there child gets hit . Please leave our park as is ,

We feel saddened to hear you are removing the swings. We have seen the equipment being removed from the playground gradually over the last few years and the space has gone from an area frequently used Bryan young families to fewer and fewer visitors because the council has not maintained the equipment.

What is is still used for is ball sports (ie kicking a footy) and now you want to put a picnic table right in the middle to stop that too?

Residents adjacent to the reserve are suffering from the actions of people making trouble on their way to and from the skate park (bins knocked over, standing in the middle of the road not letting cars through, abusive language), all of which neither the council or the police are able to act on. Please make sure you do not make this a place this group will be comfortable to spend more time in and increase their harassment of the residents.

We live just up the road at 26 Coolah Terrace and my grandchildren sometimes play there but the play equipment is a bit outdated now. Great idea to have natural play elements - maybe some big logs for kids to play on (safe) plus planting a few more trees. The Marion Council has done a great job in the past few years updating the wetlands/parks. It is good to know our rates are being used properly

Several of us grandparents use this reserve frequently with our toddler age grandchildren. The new Oaklands reserve - lovely and you have done a wonderful job, is not suited to under 2: the roap swing is too intimidating and the balance / climbing things too advanced:

Toddlers require the strap in rubber swings, they love the little spring car, I walk here regularly and have not found the swings or car to be at the end of their life- Please keep them for this age group - I did contact you re putting some in the new area but was ignored : as rate payers I think we should have a say in this matter.
Thank you

I would think that exercise equipment (like around West Lakes) would be a good activity for young and old. Gives the older children / adults an activity also. Promotes exercise.

Hello; In total I do not support the changes to the available green space that is currently on Ben Pethick Reserve. Should the council find it necessary to remove the children's play equipment, which would appear to be due to Health and Safety concerns then so be it. Please however, do not reduce the lawned area by filling in with mulch. Of what use is it?? the available area is quite often used by parents and children to 'kick a footy' or 'hit a ball'. How can residents and others utilise the shade of these magnificent trees if the under area is strewn with mulch. I would dearly love to be informed of the 'why' as to removing understory areas of the trees.

Your reserve description has it suitable for 0-5 years which for many years has been the case. Hence it has been a reserve used by toddlers etc. We strongly request that toddler swings and a small slide be included. Particularly as they have been removed from new wetlands playground in favour of nature play. Ben Pethick Reserve is surrounded by and is near many houses that would to use these toddler facilities.

Whilst we were initially disappointed with the idea of the removal of the swings, as they are used at least once every day by the littlest people walking past with their parents/carers, we understand that the age of them makes it a necessity to retire them. The idea of a few climbing rocks and logs along with some low garden plantings sounds like a great idea to blend with the surrounding leafy green gardens. As long as the bench seats remain (maybe replace the old one) there is no need for a picnic table. People having picnics (staying longer) would go into the Oaklands Estate Reserve where there are toilets. Overall the plan seems sensible.

Please don't place 'smallish' rocks or stones as your 'natural element'. Mulch and logs, or very large rocks, will be fine. It's just that quite a few young skateboarders make their way from the skate park on Oaklands Rd to the train station or their homes via Coolah Terrace. This, of course, is no problem, but giving them easy access to projectiles would not be a great idea. Thanks

There is no slide and only 1 swing Oaklands Estate Reserve. The nearest slide is at Hendrie Street and as we have a toddler, crossing the main road is not preferable. We use the swings and the bouncy bike 2-3 times per week. We walk from Melanto tce to Coles regularly with our toddler and use the park on the way.

Still need swings etc for younger children /babies

The proposal sounds ok, but as you removed some swings in Oaklands park recently, I believe you should at least keep the same amount of swings at Ben Pethick reserve.

Please keep the same number of swings as the existing

Keep the same number of swings

We have been living in this estate for the past 45 years and have used this park frequently with our children and now our 2 young grandchildren. Whilst there has not been a lot of play equipment in this park over the years the one thing the kids always enjoy is the swings, where they will spend a lot of their time. As my children grew they were able to play ball games kicking the footy and soccer and playing cricket.

My young grandson loves to kick the footy and soccer ball now and we can do it without hindrance of falling over obstacles.

It seems to us and other neighbours that your planning department personnel have NO IDEA what young children require to play on and are intent on building teenage/adult so called play grounds. We need play equipment for the little kids.

DO NOT GO AHEAD WITH THIS CRAPPY DEVELOPMENT.

ALSO - I would also make comment on the Oaklands Estate Playground just completed.

When I took my grandson (aged 6) over to see the new development the first comment he made was ""where are my swings and playsets"" this is terrible stuff poppa there is nothing for the little kids - not coming to this park again.

It seems many kids have fallen off this new play equipment since it has been installed. So much for safety!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Email response

Hi. Just to register our approval of the Marion Council plans do the Ben Pethick Reserve. We have lived close to the reserve since 1965. Our children and grandchildren as toddlers enjoyed the basic equipment there before moving on to the larger Oaklands Estate reserve, but in recent years use has declined. What is now proposed seems very appropriate for community needs, and also to maintain the memory of a great pioneer of the Oaklands Estate area. With best wishes

Phone call

Received 26/7/19
Please leave lawn area an open space for kick about
No picnic table is needed
No rocks / logs, especially any smaller items that can be thrown
Leave the reserve as is