

PADDY'S PARK

Playground Audit



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Authors

This report was written by Cathy Hope and Hannah Richardson from the Play, Creativity and Wellbeing Project at the University of Canberra.

We would like to thank the Ginninderry staff and community members who participated in the co-design and surveys for this report.

Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Ngunnawal people. We respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

1. Introduction

“I really enjoyed [Paddy’s Park Play Day] with my family, it was great to meet new friends.”

Survey Participant 27 August 2022
2:30pm

Purpose

About this project

Ginninderry is a young and vibrant community with Paddy's Park as its central play, open and green space. To achieve Ginninderry's vision of creating a highly liveable and sustainable community of international significance, it is critical to continuously learn from and co-design with the community.

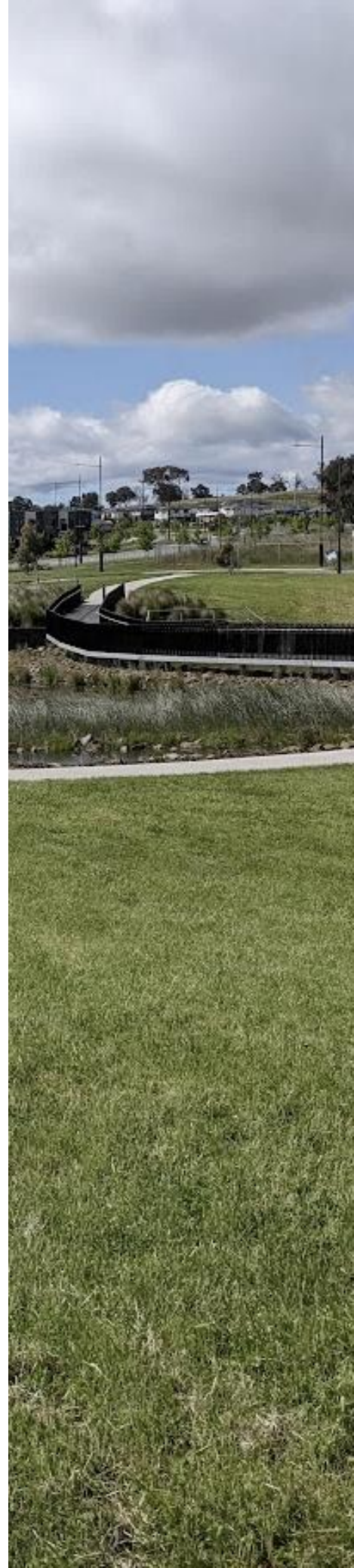
This action research project is a partnership between Ginninderry, the Faculty of Arts and Design at the University of Canberra and the Ginninderry community to conduct an audit of Paddy's Park to inform improvement of existing assets and design of future ones.

About this document

This report identifies lessons and celebrates the successes of Paddy's Park.

The purpose of this audit is to:

- Create an evidence base for a **cost benefit assessment** of Ginninderry's investment in equipment and amenities at Paddy's Park
- Inform the design of further **activations and events** at Paddy's Park
- Inform any future decision-making process on **possible minor amendments needed** at Paddy's Park
- Inform the design of **future play spaces throughout Ginninderry**



About our audits

From three surveys delivered across 2021-22 we assessed:

- Who uses the park in terms of demographics and residency?
- When do people use the park, for how long and how frequently?
- How do they use the park?
- How do visitors feel about using the park?
- What is the impact of activation on visitor numbers, frequency and dwell time?

We have synthesised this data to identify:

- What are the major successes of Paddy's Park?
- What lessons can Ginninderry learn from Paddy's Park?
- What are the opportunities to improve Paddy's Park?
- How does Paddy's Park compare to the use and feedback generated by other parks throughout the ACT?

This report is structured into the following sections

1. **Introduction** including summary of findings and overall usage statistics and **a list of strategies and recommendations** on page 11.
2. **Maximising the site** including landscaping, shade and weather protection and amenities
3. Play equipment and sport facilities, including a play type assessment and strategies to offer more balanced types of play and play for toddlers and teenagers
4. Events and activation, including 5 principles for impactful events

Snapshot of this project

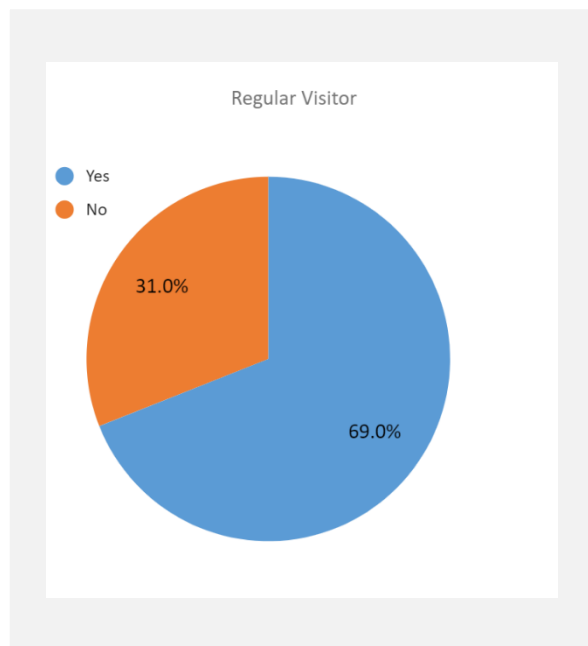


Key findings

Paddy's Park: A success story for Ginninderry

Paddy's Park is an overall success story for Ginninderry according to the three audits conducted throughout 2021-22.

Ginninderry locals see Paddy's Park as a vital part of their lifestyles. 69 percent of all visitors in our audit were regular visitors to Paddy's Park. People primarily visit this park to entertain their children (54 percent) but also to socialise (20 percent) and spend time outdoors (14 percent).



Visitors love a lot about Paddy's Park.

Visitors most enjoy the play and sporting equipment, with 51 percent of survey participants identifying these elements as a key attractor to the park. The grassed areas and 'spaces to run' is the second largest attractor (18 percent), followed by the amenities – particularly the toilet and BBQs. Visitors also enjoy the vistas and natural

features, as well as the high levels of maintenance.

There is relatively high frequency of visits to Paddy's Park. Over 50 percent of survey participants visit this park weekly, which is high considering the average visitation by the ACT community to a mix of Canberra's playgrounds, including destination playgrounds, is 55 percent. We also know that people will drive to playgrounds to entertain their children if they are not satisfied by their local playground.

Paddy's Park attracts a diverse group of people including larger numbers of older children, senior adults and ethnically diverse people compared with averages. This reflects the diverse community and the range of activities on offer including basketball and cricket and the pond and play equipment, and the accessibility of the site and amenities from Ginninderry's housing.

Most visitors walk to Paddy's Park.

Observational audits show that most visitors walk to Paddy's Park using multiple access points. Visitors also walk through and around Paddy's Park using the pathways for a walking journey.

Events and activations at Paddy's Park are a catalyst for social connection. When events are held in Paddy's Park, the attractor of 'socializing' is double to triple the percentage the non-activated days in Paddy's Park .

Reasons for success

Three of the five reasons for the success of Paddy's Park are consistent with ACT sentiment about destination parks. The success that sets Paddy's Park apart from other destination play spaces is its walkability and proximity, and the delivery of regular, successful events.

1. **Paddy's Park offers a mix of co-located modern play and sporting equipment providing a range of active play opportunities.**
2. **Paddy's Park is walkable and accessible and in proximity to park visitors.**
3. **The Paddy's Park amenities are critical for attracting diverse crowds and increasing dwell times.**
4. **People also appreciate the natural setting and landscaping,**
5. **Events at Paddy's Park have been highly successful.**



“It's perfect!”

Survey 28 May 2:10pm



**“The Paddy’s
Park Play Day
gave me a sense
of belonging in
the community”**

Survey participant
27 August 2022

Lessons for Ginninderry

All seven improvements that visitors would like in Paddy's Park are consistent with the feedback from the broader ACT community about destination play spaces in the ACT.

1. Visitors want more shade on the play equipment, sport facilities and picnicking areas.

2. Visitors want more amenities – especially BBQs, tables and seating

3. Visitors want water play.

4. Visitors want more challenging play for older children and young people,

including skating, climbing walls, bike pump tracks.

5. Visitors want more play for toddlers, including smaller play elements and diverse types of play elements, like imaginative play and nature play.

6. Visitors want co-located gym equipment.

7. Visitors want a coffee van.

“

**[I would like]
more
equipment for
older kids**

”

Survey participant 7 August 2021

Strategies & recommendations

Strategy	Recommendation	Chapter
1. Build on the success of Paddy's Park as a walkable and accessible park	1.1 Ensure walkability to and from future parks using multiple access points 1.2 Create multiple journeys within parks using natural features and amenities as attractors 1.3 Include multi use pathways	Chapter 2 Maximising the site Pg 13
2. Take advantage of Paddy's Park's unique natural features	2.1 Encourage creek play 2.2 Find positive uses for the windiness and exposed nature of the site 2.3. Continue to activate the open green space	Chapter 2 Maximising the site Pg 13
3. Use events and activations to increase visitation, build identity and social connection in Ginninderry	3. 1 Deliver high impact community and targeted demographic events using the principles in Chapter 4	Chapter 4 Events and Activation Pg 43
4. Use activations to test possible improvements to play equipment and sport facilities to inform future upgrades, green and play spaces	4.1. Deliver temporary play activities for toddlers 4.2. Deliver temporary interventions in the basketball court, like modular skate elements	Chapter 3. Play equipment and sport facilities Pg 25
5. Plan for strategic long-term delivery of diverse play types within the Ginninderry public realm to act as an attractor and provide the benefits of all types of play	5.1 Include a dedicated toddler play space or spaces in a future park or parks with smaller play equipment, sensory and imaginative play, nature play. 5.2 Include dedicated play elements for older children and young people, such as bike pump track, skating elements, large climbing wall, and parkour. 5.3 Include accessible, all abilities play for people and families living with disabilities	Chapter 3. Play equipment & sport facilities Pg 25
6. Include more shade and weather protection and use activations to test shade and weather protection	6.1. Trial tables and chairs with umbrellas in Paddy's Park 6.2 Continue planting Paddy's Park 6.3. Include more shade in future play spaces	Chapter 2 Maximising the site Pg 13
7. Improve amenities in future green and play spaces.	7.1. Ensure distance between BBQ and table settings in future park so multiple visitors can comfortably engage in group and milestone activities.	Chapter 2 Maximising the site Pg 13

Context and background

Partnership with the University of Canberra

Ginninderry is working in partnership with the University of Canberra on a broader strategic placemaking project.

The objectives of this partnership are to:

- 1. Apply the Living Lab approach** to co-create public open, green and play spaces in Ginninderry to better serve the health and wellbeing, liveability, prosperity and sustainability of the Ginninderry
- 2. Develop a vibrant, diverse and active culture** in Ginninderry with community engaging in optimal physical, recreational and social activity and play.
- 3. Facilitate the delivery of quality and equitable open, green and play spaces** that are accessible, inclusive, diverse, innovative and sustainable through an iterative cycle of trial-monitor-evaluation of both permanent and temporary infrastructure.
- 4. Co-create these spaces** in collaboration with Ginninderry communities and with private-public-community-education sector partners for better outcomes.
- 5. Undertake a study of innovative, evidence-based** green and play space design across the life of a project of Ginninderry's scale.

Method

This project has a dual focus on *innovation* and *co-creation* for positive community and site development outcomes. We combined two complementary research approaches to deliver the Ginninderry vision: living lab and action research. The primary method for this was through surveys 7 August 2021, 28 May and 27 August 2022.

Living lab and action research are complementary because they:

- focus on real-world contexts
- occur in physical or virtual / conceptual space
- identify and solve societal challenges in urban areas
- are user / community-driven
- bring together the spectrum of stakeholders for collaboration and collective ideation
- use a systematic and iterative cycle of creation, prototyping, testing, validating and refining to solve these challenges
- Living lab and action research also provides different anchors to achieve change:
 - living lab is driven by *innovation* for positive social and technological change
 - action research is driven by *democratic and collaborative participation* for positive social change.

2. Maximising the site

“[we need] more shade.”

Survey participant 27
August 2022, 2:20pm

Successes: location and landscape

Paddy's Park is highly walkable and accessible. Most people travel to Paddy's Park on foot, coming from a range of directions and using multiple access points into the park. These access points play a critical role in visitors' decision-making to walk to the park, particularly for carers with prams and small children. During a 1.5-hour observation, the only cars in the carpark belonged to the researchers.

Paddy's Park is also highly walkable within the park. Many visitors choose to follow the paths through and around Paddy's Park as a form of exercise. Multiple access points and walkable journeys through parks - including flat wide pathways and dual pathways for on foot and cycle access - are a key public realm strategy for encouraging healthy lifestyles in Ginninderry.

Walkability and accessibility improves age diversity. Walkability and accessibility makes Paddy's Park an attractor for older adults and is a unique feature of Paddy's Park. Across the ACT only about 6.5 percent of play space visitors are 56 +, while park use by older adults is as high as 10 percent. For the August 2021 audit, 3.4 percent of visitors were 76+, compared with the ACT average of 0.5 percent.

Community enjoy the natural features and open space of Paddy's Park. The open space, creek and landscaping is an attractor to the site. The slope of the site is maximized through the amphitheatre.



During one observation the only cars in the carpark belonged to the researchers

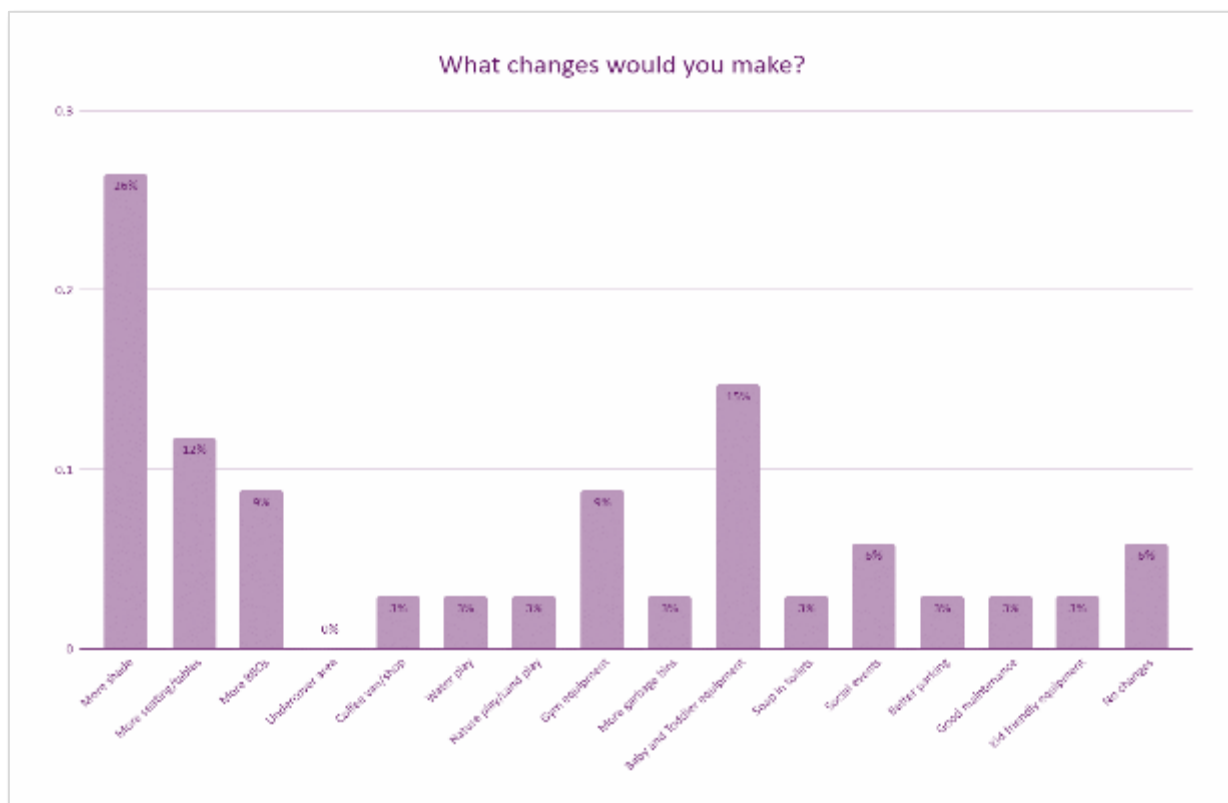
Lessons: location and Landscape

Shade and weather protection

Visitors want more shade at Paddy's Park

More shade significantly outstrips all other feedback for changes to Paddy's Park across all three audits. Twenty-two percent of visitors want to see more shade in Paddy's Park. The graph below from the August Paddy's Park Kite Festival demonstrates how important shade is when compared with other recommended changes.

This feedback is consistent with other parks in the ACT. Shade was the second highest requested change to play spaces Canberra Destination Playgrounds Study. In this context, Paddy's Park is not an outlier in terms of more demand for shade. Shade is not only a requirement for playgrounds and other high use open spaces to ensure adequate protection from the sun radiation and heat, but also part of the ACT Climate Adaptation Strategy and Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan.



Opportunity: shade

Studies show the importance of shade in parks for visitor wellbeing – particularly with rising global temperatures - and for increasing visitation and dwell time during hotter months. (Vanos et al, 2017).

Ginninderry has invested significantly in Paddy's Park. Developing weather protection could maximise Ginninderry's investment by increasing dwell time while also contributing to visitors' wellbeing.

The areas that are currently lacking shade include:

- Play equipment

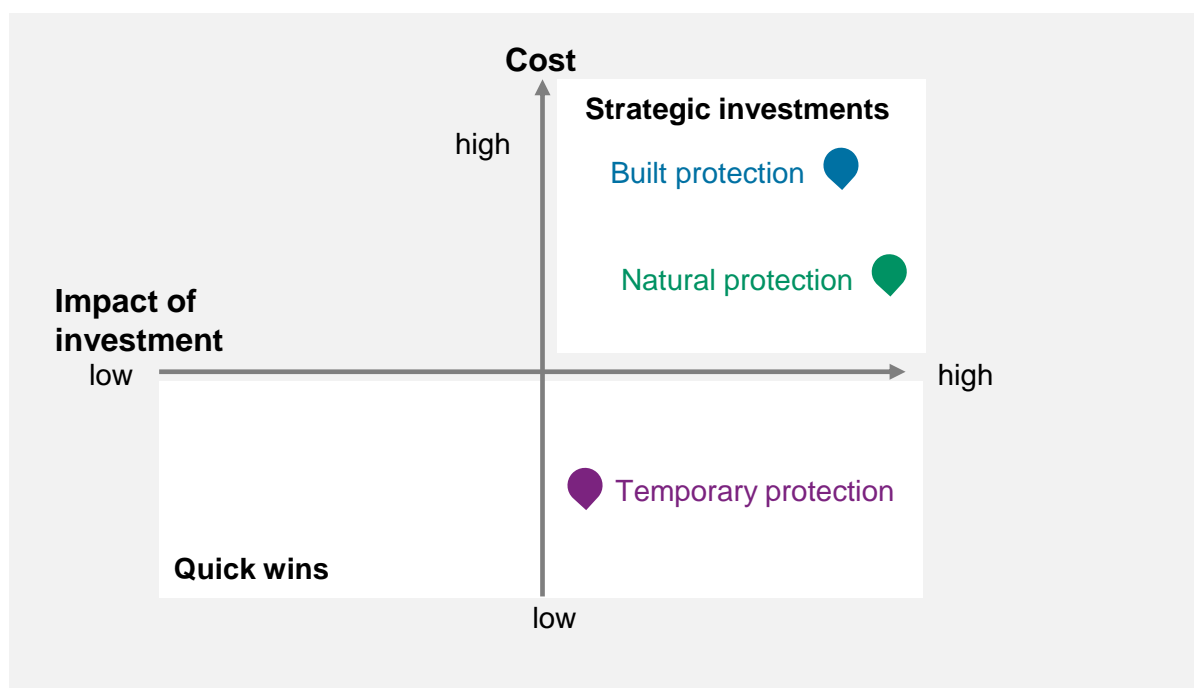
- Cricket and basketball areas
- Amphitheatre
- Grass and picnic areas

There are three options for weather protection:

1. **Temporary protection as part of activation and events.**
2. **Natural protection** through dense bushes or trees.
3. **Built protection structures.**

Weather protection options: which is the most strategic?

The most strategic option is a quick win which tests the need for shade and wind protection while contributing to long term planning on future investments



Temporary weather protection

Provide temporary shade and weather protection structures or elements during events or defined periods.

This could include offering blankets to protect against cold and wind during colder months and temporary umbrellas or shade structures during warmer months.

The benefits

This is the cheapest and quickest method and has the benefit of being able to test whether shade and wind protection is a good investment while also providing temporary protection while trees grow.

This form of activation is popular with citizens and creates a sense of vibrancy within a space.

The limitations

These are only temporary options and require maintenance and monitoring.



Natural weather protection

Natural weather protection and landscaping could be designed around existing spaces or as part of further developments in Paddy's Park or Ginninderry more broadly. This could include deciduous vines that grow quickly over structures for sun protection or bush and natural grass areas for wind protection

Benefits

These forms of weather protection are an attractor to stay in a space in all weather. As natural elements, they also contribute to visitor wellbeing including mental and physical health. They increase visual appeal and can provide privacy for milestone events.

There are clear environmental benefits to natural weather protection including urban cooling, fostering native animals and reduced carbon impact compared with built

structures.

The shade under a tree can be up to 10 degrees cooler than under a shade structure (Trobe, 2015). Trees with a dense canopy also provide effective protection from direct UV radiation (Cancer Council, 2013).

Vines are fast growing and can be used where spaces don't allow tree planting.

Limitations

Any investment is limited by existing structures and landscaping and would need thorough site planning and feasibility studies. Natural weather protection is still expensive, particularly in the design phase, and takes time to grow.



Children's garden at the Arboretum

Built weather protection structures

As part of long-term development of Paddy's Park, Ginninderry could invest in more built shade and wind protection structures.

This could include shade sails as well as built shade structures.

Benefits

These structures are highly effective at protecting people from the weather, particularly shade.

Limitations

This is the most expensive option and requires the most significant investment in time and resources.

These structures are less visually appealing and higher in environmental costs with less urban cooling benefits.

There would be challenges in terms of retrofitting shade over existing designs.



Opportunity: the creek

The creek has potential as a major attractor that has yet to be maximized for Paddy's Park. Transforming the creek into a safe water play space for children could increase dwell time and have benefits on mental and physical health.

More water play and nature play are the third most requested change to Paddy's Park by visitors to the park after shade and more amenities.

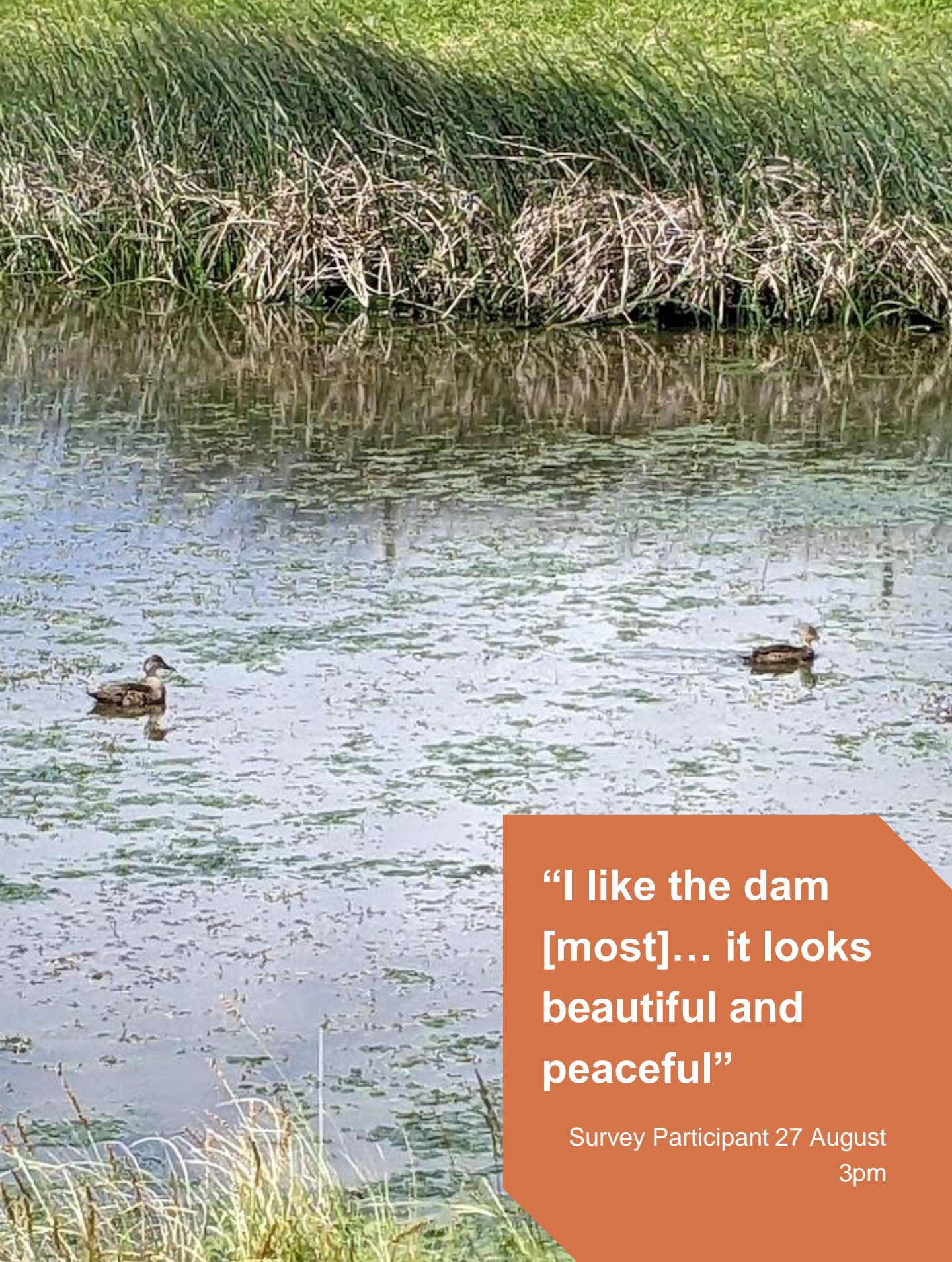
This is aligned with ACT community demand for more nature and water play, according to the Canberra Nature Playgrounds Study and Canberra Destination Play Space Study.

International studies of water play also show that water play is in children's top five favourite play elements (Brunelle et al., 2016) and suggest that active water play – play with rather than in water - attracts and engages children in parks and play spaces. (Bozkurt & Woolley, 2020).

The range of options for landscaping or built structures around the creek is broad and beyond the scope of this report.

Before investing in any water play structures, Ginninderry could test the value of water play by holding water play events such as make your own boats for children or water races with natural elements like leaves and sticks.





**“I like the dam
[most]... it looks
beautiful and
peaceful”**

Survey Participant 27 August
3pm

Successes: amenities

Paddy's Park has accessible toilets, change facilities, as well as tables and chairs and BBQs. Other amenities include a water bubbler and seats for viewing basketball, park benches and the amphitheatre seats.

The amenities at Paddy's Park are suitable for visitors during weekdays but may not always meet demand on weekends and during school holidays.

Amenities are identified by the ACT community as a key attractor to a play space, enabling visitors to hold gatherings and milestone events outdoors. (Hope et al., 2018).

This is particularly important for households without adequate private green space

because play spaces provide free public access to what is essentially a significantly upscaled backyard.

Amenities like toilets, tables and chairs also improve dwell time because visitors can stay in place for longer.

“You could add some umbrellas and tables”

Participant 27 Aug 2:30pm




Lessons: amenities



Visitors want more seating and tables in Paddy's Park, and away from the toilets.

Visitors would like more BBQs near seating and tables, but further away from other BBQs to create a better environment for events and milestones held in the park. The two available BBQs are located right next to each other which closely co-locates different group events. Greater distance between BBQ settings, such as is found in Weston Park, would enable more and larger gatherings with better dwell times in one play space.


What changes would you make?	
More shade	18%
More seating/tables	14%
Windbreaks	2%
More BBQs	11%
Undercover area	2%
Coffee van/shop	7%
Water play	7%
More play equipment	7%
Nature play/sand play	7%
Gym equipment	7%
Play equipment for toddlers	7%
More community events	5%
More garbage bins	2%
Dog off lead area	2%
More sporting facilities	2%
More parking	2%
BMX/Skateboard/scooter track	2%
Fence the lake (grass areas)	2%
No changes	5%



**“I like the view, it
makes you feel
free.”**

Survey Participant, 27 August 2022
3:05pm

3. Play equipment & sport facilities



“[I would like] a toddler area and baby play.”

Survey participant 27 August 2022, 2:30pm

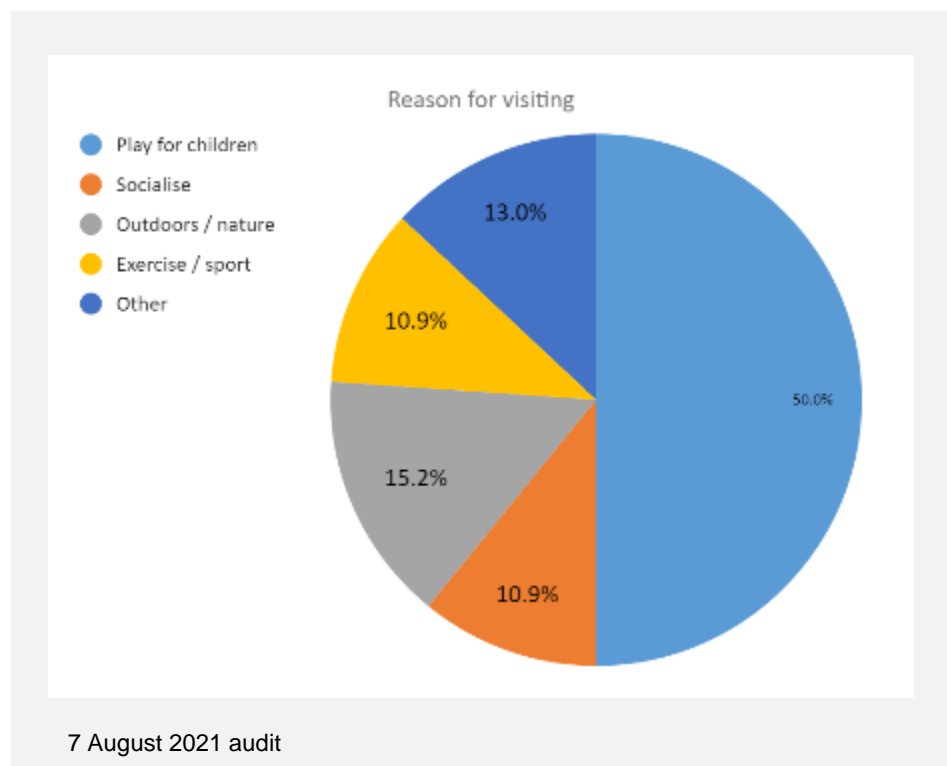
Successes: play equipment

The play equipment is the number one attractor to Paddy's Park. 29 percent of visitors in our study identified the play equipment as their favourite feature of the park. Some visitors identified specific play equipment, while others spoke of the mix of equipment.

The mix includes the swings, slides, climbing nets, balancing and spinning equipment.

Paddy's Park provides excellent active or physical play options for children in the core age group of 4 to 10. It scores very high in our Active Play Assessment on page 26 offering nearly every type of active play.

The site has also been well designed to create a flow between each piece of equipment and clustered to allow a single carer to have line of sight.



Active Play Assessment

Active Play: a strength for Paddy's Park

There are many opportunities for active play at Paddy's Park. This fulfils the core aim of families to provide exercise and entertainment for children, and also to build children's physical, cognitive and social skills.

Paddy's Park satisfies almost all types of Active Play:

- Balancing and coordination
- Catching and throwing
- Climbing
- Hanging
- Jumping
- Riding

- Rolling
- Running
- Sliding
- Spinning
- Swinging

The only missing active play opportunity is crawling (although there are some opportunities on the rubber areas). This is not a major limitation of Paddy's Park, as successful playgrounds do not need to satisfy every type of active play.

For further details see Active Play Map 1 and 2 on page 27.

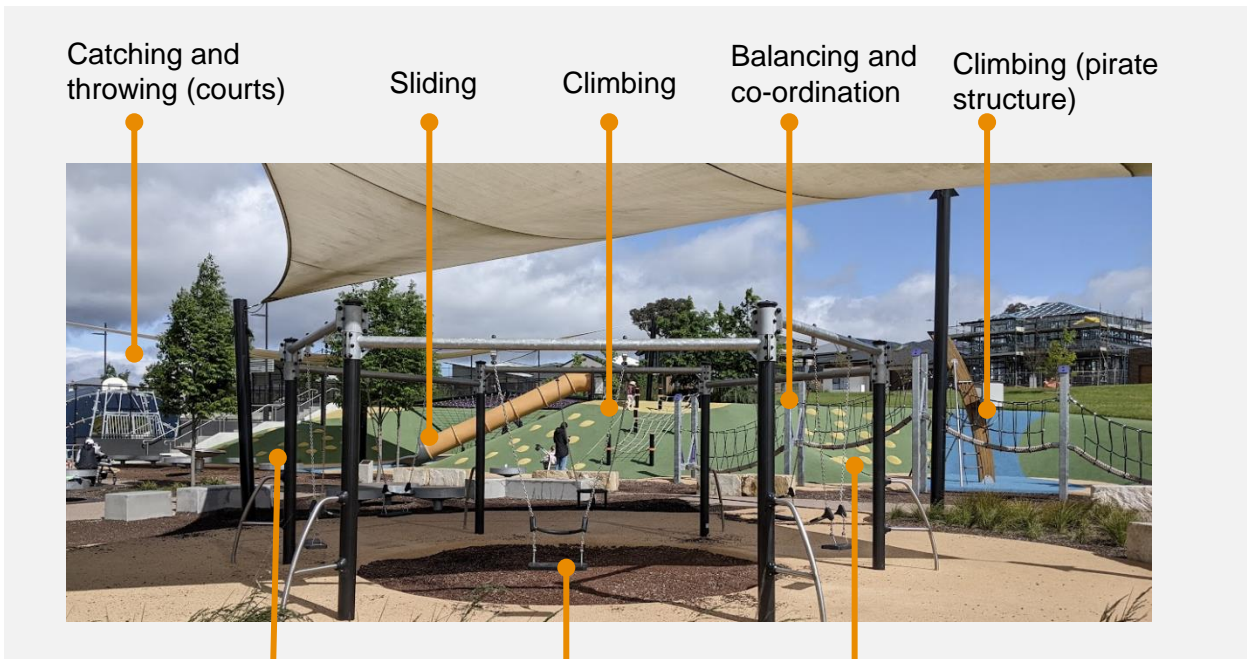
“[I like the amount of] space, the play equipment and area is big for children to run around and play and socialize with other families”

Survey 28 May 2:10pm

Active Play maps

These maps show where Paddy's Park offers different types of Active Play

Active Play Map 1



Active Play Map 2



Successes: play equipment creates a journey

Paddy's Park play equipment creates a journey of play for children, who were observed flowing continuously through the play elements.

This is achieved by the combination of proximity of play options and the connecting soft rubber transitional areas that allow children to naturally navigate the area.

Soft rubber climbing options in transitional areas between equipment



The play journey in Paddy's Park

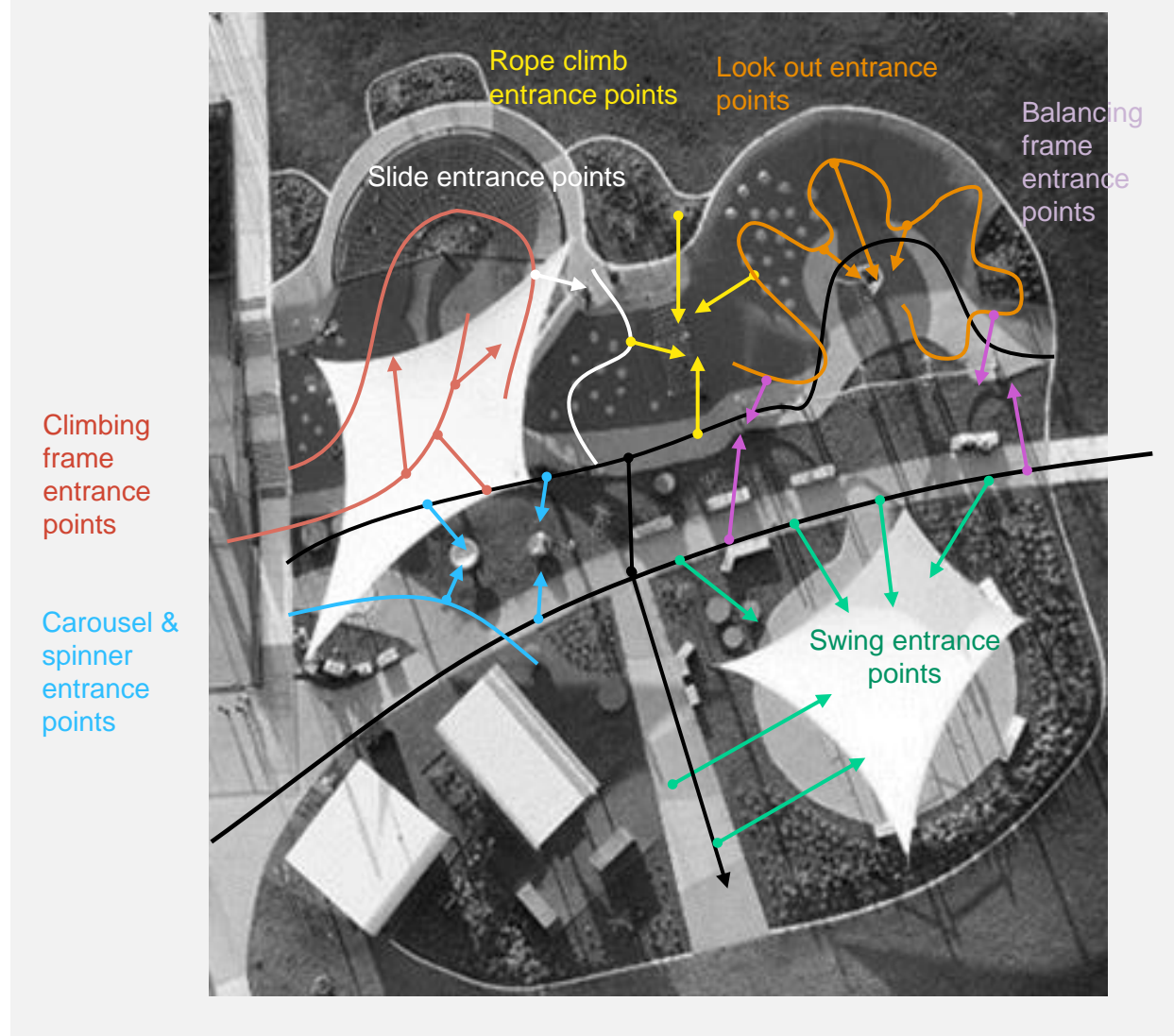


Play equipment entrance point and movement

Transition and entrance points have been well thought through in the design of the play equipment at Paddy's Park. There are multiple entrance points to each piece of equipment and few choke points. This is particularly important at high peak times and as Ginninderry grows because it enables

more children to co-engage with the play elements. It is also a key safety feature because children can easily navigate around each other and also find other modes of playful engagement if too many children are clustered in one area.

Entrance point and movement flow map



Climbing opportunities are unique

Climbing equipment is a unique feature of Paddy's Park. There are many climbing options that take advantage of the natural slope of the site. A visitor favourite is the spider web climbing structure, which encourages multiple forms of climbing.

Climbing opportunities



Lessons: play equipment

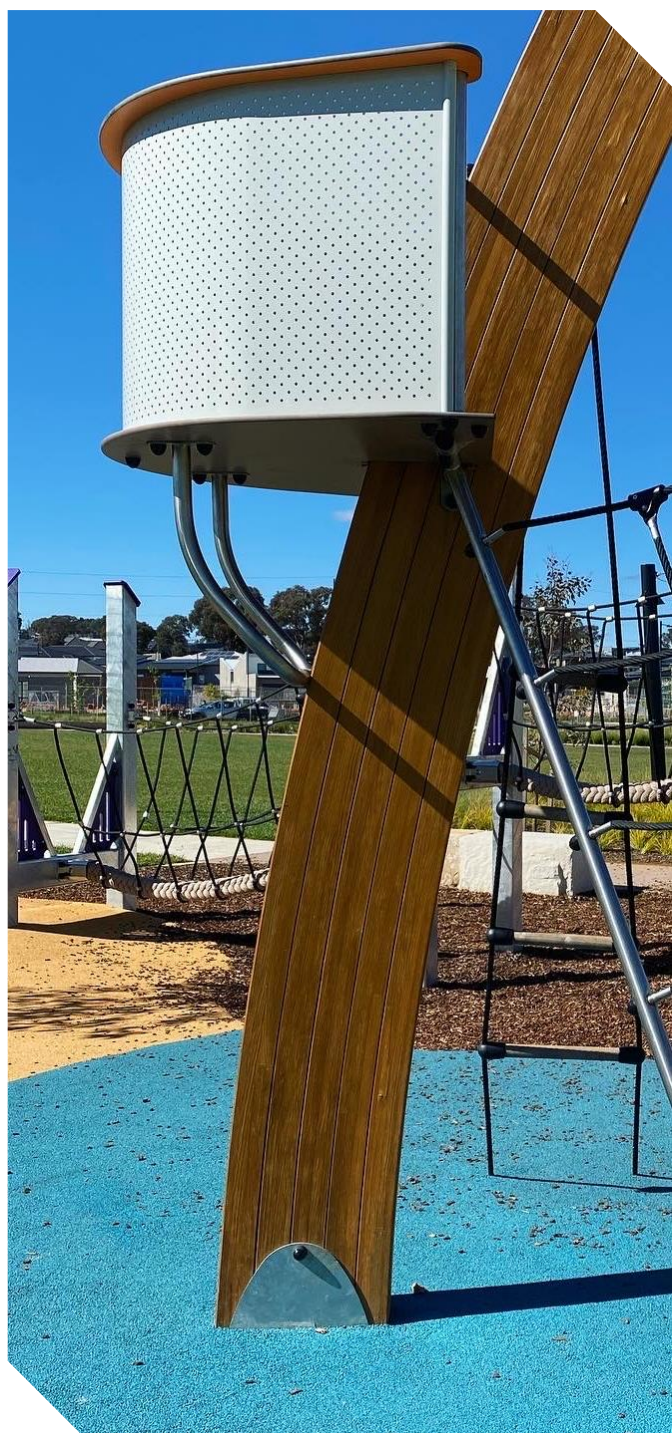
Summary

Paddy's Park is successful in the delivery of active play. However, there is a lack of other types of play, and gaps in play opportunities for toddlers and for older children and teenagers.

Visitors want more diverse types of play offered including nature play and water play.

Visitors want more play options for toddlers including imaginative play, nature and water play, and sensory play

Visitors want more play options for older children and teenagers including skating, bike pump track, scootering, climbing walls and parkour.



The eight types of play

We assessed Paddy's Park against the eight types of play that playgrounds can offer.

The eight types of play include



Active: physical activities and exercise



Creative: music and arts



Imaginative: make believe, acting out imaginary scenes and adopting roles such as cubby houses, shops and fairy nests



Manipulative: building, making, moulding, manipulating, sifting, pouring, scooping, stacking, combining, and altering



Nature: experiencing the natural world



Reflecting: thinking and learning, watching, resting, reflecting, daydreaming.



Sensory: engaging all the senses such as interacting with textures, plants, sounds, perspectives and angles and colours



Social: learning social interactions such as talking, sharing, cooperating, taking turns, following rules and playing sports.

Assessment of play types

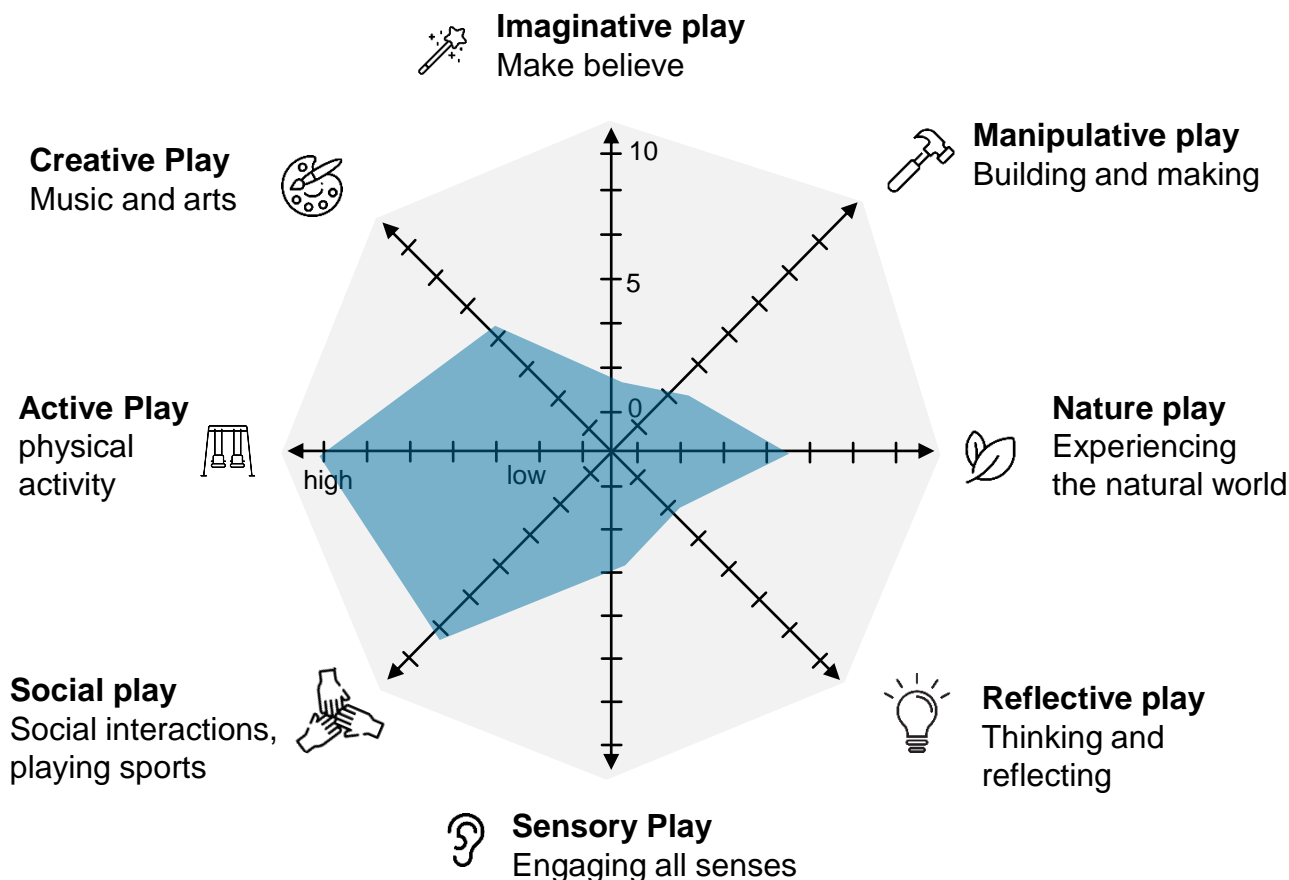
How balanced are the current play opportunities at Paddy's Park?

The diagram below illustrates the types of play Paddy's Park is currently offering children. In this spider diagram, a score near the outside of the spider web illustrates a high score, and close to the centre, a low score.

Current play options: focused on active play

Active Play scores high at Paddy's Park and we assess it as around 9 out of 10 because it offers almost all the types of activity in the criterion of active play. Most other types of play offers are limited and score low, with reflective play the lowest (2 out of 10) and the others sitting between 3 and 5. This gives Paddy's Park a total of 35 out of 80 or 43 percent in terms of the *balance of play* options on offer. However, this is not the full story as Paddy's Park has potential to offer a broad range of play types. Further, Paddy's Park is only one play space in Ginninderry, with other play spaces enabling diversity of play within proximity of residents.

Many parks across Canberra currently lack balance in terms of the types of play offered, with active play dominating the types of play in most playgrounds, according to the Canberra Destination Playground Study. Paddy's Park is not alone in its lack of diversity of play types.

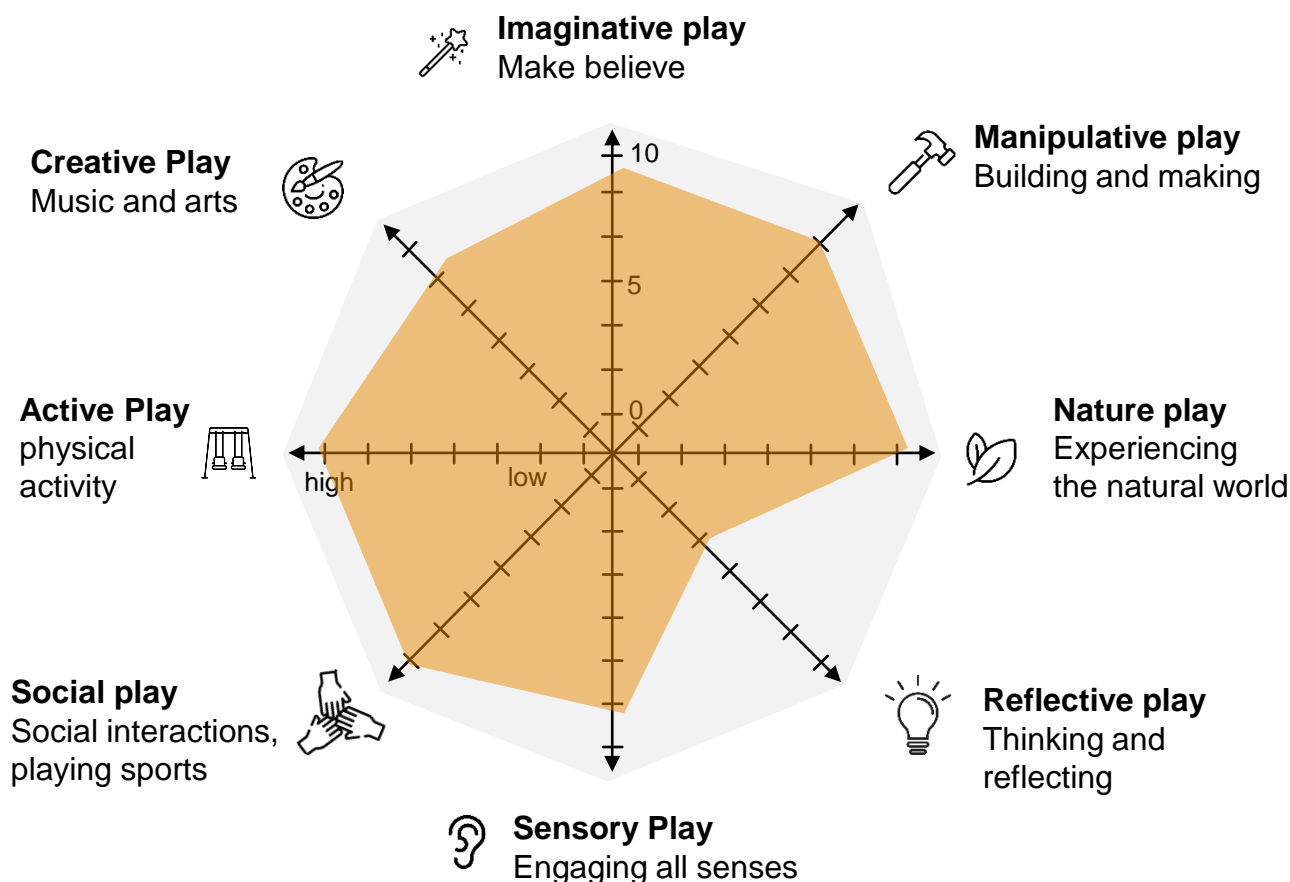


How to offer balanced play types

Paddy's Park has a great deal of potential based on its site, natural features and existing equipment to offer other types of play. This could be done through activation – for example temporary structures and equipment for single day event.

Activation could shift the play options to a more balanced play experience

This could shift the play type assessment from 35 out of 80 to 56 out of 80 or 70 percent score. In particular, there are options to deliver creative, imaginative, manipulative, nature play and sensory play.



Diversifying play: nature play

Visitors want more diverse play options a strategic way to deliver this is through activation.

Activation could not only diversify play options but also test the need for further investment throughout Ginninderry. Paddy's Park has many existing features that can be easily used for activation that increases play options.

Nature Imaginative & Sensory Play

The most strategic options would be nature and sensory play and imaginative play.

As part of broader activation, Ginninderry could use the small round tables in the centre of the playground to host art and craft activities. This could be linked to nature and sensory play.

Examples of nature play through activation include:

- Paint pot plants
- Plant herb seedlings in recycled egg cartons or coffee cups
- Collect natural objects to make craft such as a "fairy house"
- Make bird seed holders

Tables make excellent craft stations



Paint pot plants



Make fairy gardens



Plant herbs and make bird seed feeders



Diversifying play: imaginative play

Imaginative Play

Paddy's Park has excellent potential as a site for imaginative play as part of activation.

Examples

- The 'lookout' climbing structure would make an excellent pirate ship as part of a make-believe day.
- The round tables could be decorated as toadstools as part of a fairy activity.
- The square boundaries surrounding the carousel could be used as pretend 'shops'.

Tables for fairy and toadstool activities



Fairy activities



Look out structure as a pirate ship



Stone boulders could become shops



Appealing to different age groups

Ginninderry has the opportunity to appeal to young children (2 and under) and teenagers at Paddy's Park or future developments.

Full analysis of the demographic changes in the region is outside the scope of this report. It is clear, however, that Ginninderry is very young with an average age of 36 when compared with other suburbs (i.e. Macquarie has an average age of 39) according to the 2021 Census.

There are nearly 13,000 children in the 2615 postcode, making up around 26 percent of

people, with nearly 50 percent of households (occupied private dwellings) having children. Children aged 5-9 make up the largest group of children. (ABS, 2021)

Young children in Ginninderry will eventually become teenagers. If the aim is to encourage households to remain in Ginninderry, then providing healthy and engaging outdoor activities for teenagers in the form of play elements is a worthwhile investment in the future.

“some things for small children would be good. There's not much for my 13 month old”

Survey Participant 27 August 2022, 4:05pm

How to increase play for toddlers

There are many ways that Ginninderry could increase the appeal of Paddy's Park to toddlers. Many of these can be achieved through activation and events. Activation has the benefit of being much cheaper than investment in play equipment and it could test the need for toddler play and feed into designs for other play spaces.

Activation options for toddlers include:

- Temporary sand pit
- Sensory play tubs filled with water, objects etc

The basketball court could be transformed into a soft play space for toddlers during an event



- Transform the basketball court with soft foam obstacle courses, tunnels and large light balls
- Monthly toy library aimed at toddlers

Landscaping changes for toddlers include:

- Sand pit
- Sensory garden
- Water stream
- Tunnel

Sensory tubs



Sensory garden



Increasing play for older children and teenagers

Paddy's Park could also be better activated for teenagers. These temporary activations could run in periods that celebrate young people, such as Youth Week. These activations could also be used to test whether there is demand in Ginninderry and the region for more play spaces dedicated to older children and teenagers.

Activations could include:

- Temporary BMX / skate boarding equipment
- Roller derby
- Youth live music in the amphitheatre
- Giant bubble balls
- Frisbee
- Ping-Pong on the basketball court
- Halloween

Temporary skating



Live music



Roller derby



Inflatable soccer



Successes: sport facilities

The sport facilities at Paddy's Park are highly valued by the community. In the 7 August audit, sport facilities were rated as the equal best feature of the park at 28 percent, and higher than the play equipment at 19 percent.

The sport facilities play an important role in providing exercise options for older children and teenagers. This is a beneficial feature of Paddy's Park as many playgrounds throughout ACT focus on the core 4-10 age group.

The sport facilities also provide opportunities for families to play as a whole, including parents and children and extended families. Many families were observed using the basketball court and the cricket nets.

The playground has been well designed so that these features are separate and yet close to the play equipment. This means that older children do not overwhelm younger children on the play equipment, and that parents with older and younger children can supervise both at the same time.

The choice of cricket appeals to ethnic communities that originate from sub-continental Asia, according to our observations.

7 August audit

What do you like best about Paddy's Park?	
Space to run	20%
Basketball/Soccer Court	28%
Play equipment	19%
Good for all ages	10%
Easy to get to/ parking	7%
Good for young kids	8%
Toilets	8%
Well maintained	5%
Seating and tables	6%
BBQs	3%
The lake	3%

“I like that it has a mix of [opportunities for] both adult and children to play

Survey Participant, 27 August 2022, 3pm

Lessons: sport facilities

There are two key lessons in terms of sport facilities emerging from our survey data.

1. Visitors would like to see more adult gym equipment.

Gym equipment ranks in the top five most requested additions to Paddy's Park and future parks.

2. Visitors want more sport facilities.

Sport facilities in Paddy's Park represent a significant investment for Ginninderry and could be transformed into multi-modal spaces through activation. The basketball court has great potential for a broad range of uses.

Options for temporary transformation of the basketball court include:

- Soft jungle gym using large soft form forms
- Learn to ride your bike day: paint a temporary road on the surface, put up signage, and preschoolers could learn to ride. This could be run over a series of days during the school holidays
- Skating
- Ping-Pong
- Inflatable activities like a jumping castle



4. Events and Activation



**“[I’d like to see]
more social
events”**

Survey participant 27 August 2022

Successes: events and activations

Events held in Paddy's Park have been a strategic success in engaging and community building in Ginninderry.

The audit and survey data of the Paddy's Park Play Day Kite Festivals on 28 May and 27 August 2022 demonstrate the success of these festivals.

In particular:

- **Double to triple the visitation levels** compared with everyday visits
- **Twenty-five percent increase in visitation** between Kite Festival 1 (28 May) and Kite Festival 2 (27 August)

- **Community demand for more events** Visitors to the second Kite Festival ranked 'more community events' equal first with shade and coffee van for 'what would you like more of in Ginninderry Playgrounds?'.
- **Increased diversity of visitors.** There was significantly greater age and ethnic diversity at both Kite Festivals than at the everyday audit.



Successes: community, identity and belonging

The Kite Festivals fostered a sense of community, identity and belonging.

People enjoyed connecting with community and felt more socially connected to the Ginninderry community in response to the Kite Festivals. As one participant in the Kite Festival stated: *“The Paddy’s Park Play Day gave me a sense of belonging in the community.”*

Participant observations during the 27 August Kite Festival revealed that a portion of visitors were invited by Ginninderry friends and family to attend the Kite Festival, based on the latter’s positive experience of the previous Kite Festival. This demonstrates Ginninderry resident pride about the event, and the desire to share this with others.

We know from other placemaking activities in the ACT that events and activations are powerful tools for growing community connection and cohesion, improving perceptions of place, connecting people to place and enhancing a sense of belonging. (Hope et al., 2020), and that all of these outcomes are important for enhancing wellbeing in the ACT (ACT Government, 2020).

The Paddy’s Park Play Day model, as demonstrated by the Kite Festivals, has the capacity to achieve these outcomes and contribute to the wellbeing of the Ginninderry community.

“I would like more social gatherings that celebrate other national celebrations”

Survey Participant,
27 August 2022, 3pm

Successes: participation and gifting

Making, building and gifting

People enjoyed making, building and gifting the kites as well as bags and t-shirts at the Kite Festivals. This enabled participatory and immersive (active creative and physical) engagement, rather than simply observational and transactional (passive) engagement. Visitors also developed skills and could take artefacts (kites, bags etc) home, facilitating longer term connection

with the experience. It also means that people could replicate their experience during everyday engagement with the site (flying home-made kites at other times).



Lessons: food and beverage

We want a coffee van

While the Kite Festivals were an overwhelming success, visitors would have liked food and beverage options at the event.

Mobile food vans have many benefits.

The benefits include:

- Increase dwell time by providing food and beverage options on site
- Improve vibrancy and diversity of offerings
- Support local business (if sourced locally).



Principles for impactful events

We have developed five guiding principles for high impact events based on analysis of Paddy's Park audits. These will help Ginninderry to make strategic investments in activation.

Principles

1. **Leverage the unique existing natural and built environment features of the site** including the slope, the wind, the space and seasonal opportunities. Activate existing built structures in traditional and diverse ways include the basketball courts and cricket nets, and play equipment.
2. **Design event activities with demographics in mind.** Target whole of community by choosing activities that appeal to a broad range of ages and ethnicities, like the Kite Festivals. Build engagement with specific target demographics using targeted activities identified for and with that demographic, like skating elements for teenagers.
3. **Hold activities that foster social connection across demographics.** Create opportunities for people from different demographics to interact, connect and communicate through active and passive activities.
4. **Include simple participatory activities with take home outputs.** Participatory activities engage people in place longer than observational/passive activities. Include easy making and building activities that enable visitors to build skills, produce an output and take this output home.
5. **Create a predictable cadence.** Impactful events with high rates of return and growth are ones that people remember and schedule into their calendar. A predictable cadence includes regular events like Paddy's Park Play Day and familiar milestones like Diwali, Ramadan, Easter and Christmas.

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“I like that the community has an opportunity to meet and greet [each other], to get to know each other”

Survey Participant
27 August 2022, 3pm