THE ZONE PROJECT
WHAT WE HEARD



The Zone project is an initiative from the Better Places - Place Guide for Brooklyn and Altona North.

Background

During the development of the Place guide projects, community feedback consistently highlighted a 'lack of things to do' for young people in Altona North. There was a strong desire to create more facilities and activities for young people (12-17 years) to provide them with engaging options and opportunities to connect with their peers and the broader community.

The primary goal of The Zone project is to establish a 'new space' for young people within Brooklyn and Altona North. Initial investigations have identified Paisley Park as a potential site due to its proximity to schools and public transport.

Community engagement process

A scope-defining stage was conducted with a small local youth focus group to better understand the project's scope. Based on this input, three draft options were developed.

The public exhibition period included several engagement opportunities:

- **Session one:** held on 1 May 2024 with the local youth focus group.
- **Session two:** held on 26 June 2024 with the local youth focus group to review concepts.
- **Drop-in session:** Held at Paisley Park on 3 August 2024
- **Hobsons Bay Life:** July edition featured information on the project.
- **Community consultation:** ran from 16 July to 23 August 2024
- **Flyers:** distributed to properties and schools in the Newport and Altona North catchment area.
- **Social Media:** information shared via Council's social media platforms.

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Focus Group Outcomes

For the first phase of engagement, was undertaken with a group of young ambassadors that have been working with Youth Services on a number of various projects/activities. An external facilitator, who has been working with this group was engaged to run and lead two sessions in relation to The Zone Project. The sessions were held on 1 May and 26 June 2024.

The facilitator played a crucial role in guiding these sessions, which involved 12 young people. His role was to engage the youth in discussions about their needs, interests and ideas for creating improved spaces that cater specifically for young people (12-17 years).

Session one:
The first session focused on creative thinking, aiming to understand the key outcomes that a well-designed space should achieve for young people and the broader community. The goal was to explore what makes a space beneficial and engaging for youth, ensuring that it not only meets their needs but also contributes positively to the surrounding community.

The key outcomes are listed below:

1. Make new friends / social connection
2. Learning
3. Entertainment / fun (free)
4. Welcoming
5. Sense of belonging
6. Flexibility
7. Accessibility
8. Safety
9. Connection to nature / grounding / stress relief
10. Nostalgic

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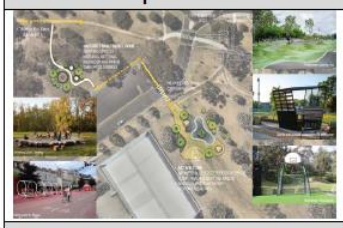
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Session two:
Listed below are the outcomes from the second session, where the group was presented with three concept options based on their feedback and ideas from the first session. The group felt that the presented concepts reflected their priorities, focusing on spaces that promote connection, safety and engagement for young people. While all three concepts were positively received there was a strong consensus around one option (option 3) that best meets the needs of the group.

Here are some key statements from the group regarding what they love about option 3, which was the preferred choice:

- Swing hammocks
- Serenity and calming
- Nature environment
- Trees
- Stays to the essence of what the space is about eg, a place to hang out.

The key outcomes are listed below:

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
		
Votes		
0	3	5
Summary		
A little bit too vanilla. Everyone loved the two zones and the swing chairs. Skate park better than pump track. Art trail to connect the two spaces.	A bit of a cliché. Everyone loved the colour within the space. Probably more of an events space that a youth space. Mix views on amphitheater.	Everyone loved the large swing. Needs more active elements. Increase opportunities for social connection.

Participation and Feedback

As part of the consultation, the project received 84 online survey responses, 30 attendees at the online drop-in session and 700 visits to the project page. The demographics of survey respondents included:

- 61% were 21 years & younger
- 20.7% were 13 years & younger
- 15.9% were between 14 -17 years
- 2.4% were between 18 – 21 years
- 58.3% identified as female
- 36.9% identified as male
- 4.7% identified as other.

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The Participate Page asked the community to rate each element out of 5 stars (with 5 being the most popular). A total of 14 items were included.

The elements below are ranked from most popular to least popular.

The top 5 items:

- Pump track – average 4.01 stars
- Basketball hoop/Futsal goas – average 3.83 stars
- Rock climbing wall – average 3.76 stars
- Multipurpose wall – average 3.68 stars
- Nature walk – average 3.68 stars



1. Pump track

Average 4.01 Stars



2. Basketball hoop/Futsal goals

Average 3.83 Stars



3. Rock climbing wall

Average 3.76 Stars



4. Multipurpose wall

Average 3.68 Stars



5. Nature walk

Average 3.68 Stars



6. Shelter with possible Wi-Fi connection

Average 3.63 Stars



7. Amphitheatre style seating

Average 3.58 Stars



8. Converted container

Average 3.56 Stars



9. Oversize swing

Average 3.55 Stars



10. Hammocks

Average 3.40 Stars

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Average 3.63 Stars



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8. Converted container

Average 3.56 Stars



9. Oversize swing

Average 3.55 Stars



10. Hammocks

Average 3.40 Stars



11. Gathering circle

Average 3.27 Stars



12. Paved hard stand area

Average 3.21 Stars



13. Swing pods

Average 3.19 Stars



14. Circle seating

Average 2.98 Stars

Sentiments of Example Designs

Overall, majority of the feedback was positive, with:

- 88% of comments being positive
- 11% of comments being mixed
- 1% of comments being negative.
- comments were well received, with 88% comments positive, 11% comments were mixed and 1% comment was negative.

Quotes from Survey Respondents

"It's cool to have something different in this area besides grass and it's good for my dog to play around"

"I think we have enough open spaces, now we need to look at more things kids and teen agers can enjoy"

"I like the active elements. There needs to be things for young people to do in Altona North, not just meet, sit and congregate"

"They are creative and accommodating to all teens"

"I think that some of the ideas, bring the community together with market and entertainment spaces"

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The below word cloud shows some of the frequent answers received from their responses. (Note: larger words indicate the most frequently mentioned feedback).



Next steps

November 2024 – January 2025	Preparation of Final Concept Plan based on community and Focus groups Feedback
February 2025	Community Notification of Final Concept Plan
February – March 2025	Preparation of Detailed Design and Documentation Drawings
April 2025	Project Tendering Process
May 2025 – August 2025	Anticipated Construction Period (TBC)

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