



City of Darwin Waters Ward Multigenerational Recreation Space Consultation Report

Prepared by True North Strategic Communication
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Consultation statement

True North Strategic Communication is guided by the principles of good community engagement, based on people's level of interest and concern as outlined by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). Our role is to provide stakeholders and the general public with objective information, so they can provide informed feedback on consultation projects. We give people the opportunity to provide input that is balanced and reflective of the range of community views to independently provide the best possible guidance to decision makers. Our practice reflects professional standards and ethical standards for human research including anonymity, confidentiality, record storage and keeping people informed.

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Executive summary

City of Darwin is developing a new multigenerational recreation space in Waters Ward as part of its broader Play Space Strategy 2023-2030. This project aims to enhance recreational amenities in the northern suburbs, catering to a diverse community and benefiting all residents, including young families, seniors and people who are new to the area.

True North Strategic Communication was engaged by City of Darwin to design and implement a consultation program, which involved engaging with stakeholders and the community to understand views, ideas and concerns about the project and report on the consultation findings.

Consultation

City of Darwin engaged True North Strategic Communication to design and lead the consultation program over 4 weeks from 2-30 September 2024. Consultation was extended by 2 weeks until 11 October to provide stakeholders and the community with further opportunity to provide input and be involved.

The objectives of consultation were to:

- communicate the rationale for Malak Oval as the preferred location, and gather community input on this location
- understand how the recreation space would be used by different age groups, abilities and demographics and their unique requirements
- gather input on specific playground elements and inform the community on must have requirements.

The following engagement tools and tactics were used to support the consultation approach:

Engagement tool/tactic	Distribution
Fact sheet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letterbox dropped to 150 nearby residents and businesses • Displayed on Engage Darwin webpage • Emailed to 72 stakeholders • Supplied at community information sessions, workshops and meetings.
Engage Darwin webpage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visited 549 times during consultation
Letterbox drop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact sheet letterbox dropped to 150 nearby residents and businesses
Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 82 responses
Community information sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 sessions with a total of 54 attendees
Drawing competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 entries received from young people and children.

Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 posts and one Facebook event promoting Northlakes Shopping Centre information session with a total reach of 14,406
Dedicated email and phone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 email received with feedback
One-on-one meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 stakeholder meetings with 25 individuals representing 8 organisations
Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 workshops with a total of 11 attendees
Advertising and PR activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> promotional boards and materials displayed at City of Darwin's Native Plant Giveaway at Holzerland Park, Malak on 14 September media release, resulting in an article in the NT News on 4 September a feature in the Vibrant Darwin eNewsletter on 12 September 2024.

Effort against objectives

The table below outlines the effort made to achieve the consultation objectives.

Consultation objectives	Effort
1. Communicate the rationale for Malak Oval as the preferred location and gather community input on this location.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fact sheet and information on website communicating reasoning behind preferred location Sharing information through 8 stakeholder meetings, 2 workshops, 4 community information sessions.
2. Understand how the recreation space would be used by different age groups and abilities, and their unique requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeting a wide range of interest groups and demographics through 8 stakeholder meetings. Online survey for input from wider community, with 82 responses. 4 community information sessions at different locations with one held during a Karama Library Knit and Knatter session to reach older age groups and the other during lunchtime at O'Loughlin Catholic College to target teenagers. Drawing competition aimed at young people and children to share their feedback, with 13 entries received.
3. Understand cultural priorities and expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offering meetings to Indigenous groups, Multicultural Council NT and other key stakeholders. Sending fact sheet to all.
4. Explain the concept of a multigenerational recreation space and how it could be achieved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing information through 8 stakeholder meetings, 2 workshops, 4 community information sessions and inviting feedback.
5. Foster a sense of ownership and build a shared vision for the playground's design and features, incorporating elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inviting feedback from a wide demographic through online survey, 8 stakeholder

that align with the Play Space Strategy's priorities.	meetings, 4 community information sessions and 2 workshops. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing competition aimed at young people and children to share their feedback, with 13 entries received.
6. Gather input on specific playground elements and inform the community on must have requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inviting feedback from a wide demographic through online survey, 8 stakeholder meetings, 4 community information sessions and 2 workshops. • Drawing competition aimed at young people and children to share their feedback, with 13 entries received.
7. Establish clear communication processes for feedback throughout the consultation process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • True North established a dedicated phone number and email address for feedback, with 1 email received with feedback during consultation.

Findings

Feedback was provided through the survey, community information sessions, drawing competition, social media, one-on-one meetings and stakeholder workshops.

The key feedback themes raised during consultation are outlined below. These are summarised in order of how frequently they were raised during consultation but do not reflect level of importance as this was subjective and depended on the specific interests of the group or individual.

- **Safety and security** – safety and security were key concerns that were raised regularly in discussions. Suggestions to improve safety and security centred on improving visibility in the area, introducing lighting around the oval and surrounding carparks, installing security cameras with 24 hour surveillance and regular police patrols.
- **Suitability of the proposed location** – some suggested the site was not appropriate as the area is unsafe and high levels of crime and antisocial behaviour were reported. Others expressed the view that it would be good for the area and activate the space.
- **Shade** – Many suggested more shade was important and should be achieved through greenery and trees rather than concrete shade structures. Contrastingly in the survey, constructed shade to courts was rated as the most important infrastructure element when asked to rank various elements.
- **Improved parking options** – Key stakeholders and people who frequently use Malak Oval expressed a need for additional parking, with a lack of parking already experienced at the community centre, childcare facility and oval during soccer season.
- **Lighting** – Many indicated lighting was needed at the recreation space not only for safety but to encourage use in the evenings. Innovative ideas were suggested for solar sensor lighting and sensory lighting.

- **Innovative ideas for the space** – Common suggestions included a nature theme or use of natural elements and water play elements, equipment for all ages such as large slides and swings, digital innovation and opportunities for kiosks, food trucks and community events.
- **Inclusivity** - City of Darwin's objective to develop a multigenerational recreation space was very well received in all stakeholder and community interactions. It was clear there is a desire for a safe and accessible space for families and individuals of all ages and abilities to use together.

Insights

Insights gathered during consultation include:

- The overall response during consultation was that many believe Waters Ward would greatly benefit from a multigenerational recreation space and many were pleased it had been selected for a development of this scale.
- Input from stakeholders and user groups generally related to their specific use or interest of the area and what they consider important however there was unanimous feedback from all groups that safety and security in the area was a key concern.
- The level of involvement in consultation activities such as the survey was lower compared to other recent City of Darwin engagement programs and could be due to a number of factors, including community interest in recreation spaces and consultation fatigue.

Recommendations

This consultation report has been prepared after a 6 week consultation process. The suggested next steps following consultation are:

- Consider feedback received from stakeholders and the community to confirm the location and design.
- Continue engaging with nearby residents and stakeholders surrounding the proposed location as the project progresses.
- Publicly release the consultation report, excluding appendices, and make it available on the Engage Darwin website. Close the feedback loop with the stakeholders who participated in consultation such as emailing it directly to them.

Based on feedback received during consultation, the following recommendations should be considered for the concept design:

- Consider the suitability of the location in terms of safety and security.
- Address safety and security concerns through design, particularly ensuring improved visibility and lighting.

- Ensure there is shade and incorporate natural shade elements.
- Incorporate cooling features such as heat resistant materials where possible for play equipment and water play features.
- Increase the amount of parking and to improve accessibility ensure parking and public transport facilities are not too far away from the space.
- Ensure areas are accessible with wide pathways, accessible water fountains and consideration for signage and dementia-friendly colours in toilet facilities.
- Create nature themed play spaces that are accessible and functional for all ages and abilities, such as big slides and swings, obstacle courses and water play facilities.
- Incorporate digital innovation such as a community jukebox, community noticeboards and touch screens/buttons for water fountains and toilet facilities to improve accessibility.
- Include barbeque and picnic facilities and consider the potential for food trucks/vans and pop ups at the space in future.

Background

City of Darwin is developing a new multigenerational recreation space in Waters Ward as part of its broader Play Space Strategy 2023-2030. This project aims to enhance recreational amenities in the northern suburbs, catering to a diverse community and benefiting all residents, including young families, seniors and people who are new to the area.

Waters Ward covers Anula, most of Berrimah, Coonawarra, Eaton, Karama, Malak, Marrara, Moil, Wagaman, Winnellie and Wulagi.

City of Darwin classifies playgrounds as regional, district and local. Waters Ward currently has 4 district playgrounds and one regional recreation space compared to other city wards that have up to 3 regional recreation spaces.

City of Darwin staff conducted a thorough investigation across Waters Ward, focusing on demographics, housing density and site-specific features in Malak, Wagaman and Wulagi. Malak Oval was identified as the top recommendation for the site based on the following parameters:

- proximity to other recreational and community facilities
- higher population with diverse age groups, including a higher percentage of children and percentage of over 60s
- more medium-density housing

- recreational facilities
- proximity to public transport
- higher number of residents without cars.

True North Strategic Communication was engaged by City of Darwin to design and implement a consultation program, which involved engaging with stakeholders and the wider community to understand views, ideas and concerns about the project and report on consultation findings.

Methodology

Level of engagement

True North adheres to the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum of Participation (see below) for best practice community engagement. This consultation was conducted at the levels of inform, consult and involve.

Level of Engagement	Promise to the public
Inform	We will keep you informed.
Consult	<i>We will keep you informed, listen to your concerns and provide feedback on how the public's input influenced the decision.</i>
Involve	We will work with you to ensure your concerns are reflected in the alternatives developed, and provide feedback on how the public's input influenced the decision.
Collaborate	We will look to you for advice, ideas and solutions and incorporate those into the decisions as much as possible.
Empower	We will implement what you decide.
©International Association of Public Participation www.iap2.org	

Consultation objectives

The desired objectives of consultation were to:

- communicate the rationale for Malak Oval as the preferred location, and gather community input on this location
- understand how the recreation space would be used by different age groups and abilities, and their unique requirements
- understand cultural priorities and expectations
- explain the concept of a multigenerational recreation space and how it could be achieved
- foster a sense of ownership and build a shared vision for the playground's design and features, incorporating elements that align with the Play Space Strategy's priorities
- gather input on specific playground elements and inform the community on must have requirements

- establish clear communication processes for feedback throughout the consultation process.

Consultation approach

City of Darwin engaged True North Strategic Communication to design and lead the consultation program. Consultation was originally planned to be open for 4 weeks from 2 – 30 September 2024 and was extended by 2 weeks until 11 October to provide stakeholders and the community with further opportunity to provide input and be involved.

The consultation approach focused on achieving the above desired objectives by directly engaging with key stakeholder groups, including those surrounding the immediate area of the proposed location, as well as nearby residents and the wider community. The approach specifically involved providing opportunities for all ages and demographics to be involved.

Tools and tactics

The following tools and tactics were used to support the consultation approach.



Fact sheet

A fact sheet with information about the project and consultation was prepared and provided to stakeholders and the community during consultation. The factsheet was letterbox dropped to approximately 150 nearby residents and businesses, displayed on the Engage Darwin webpage and emailed to 72 stakeholders.

Engage Darwin webpage

A specific webpage was created on the Engage Darwin website. The webpage included an overview of the project, consultation and links to the online survey and drawing

competition. The webpage also contained the factsheet, FAQs, map and City of Darwin's Play Space Strategy 2023-2030.

The webpage was visited 549 times during the consultation period, 57% of these visits involved engagement through either the survey, viewing the FAQs and key dates or downloading the available documents.

Letterbox drop

The fact sheet was distributed at the start of consultation to approximately 150 Malak residents and businesses surrounding the proposed location. The areas included in the letterbox drop were:

- Radge Court
- Malak Crescent
- Darwent Street
- Todd Crescent
- Hummel Court
- Renner Court
- Bayfield Road
- Malak Place
- Machell Court
- Maddock Court
- Businesses within the Malak Shopping Centre.

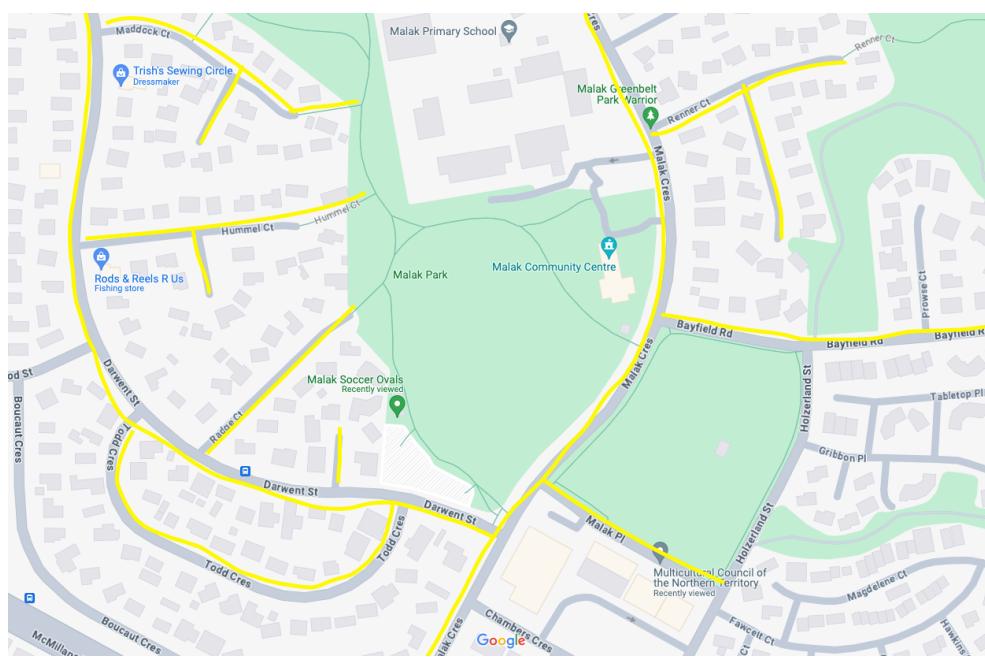


Figure 1: Map of letterbox drop area

Survey

A survey was developed and made available to the community via the Engage Darwin webpage. The survey was also made available for hard copy use and available at City of Darwin libraries, including Darwin, Casuarina, Karama and Nightcliff.

The survey included question on demographics, and priorities and preferences for the recreational space.

Overall, there were 82 survey responses, with 76 online survey responses and 6 hard copy survey responses.

Community information pop ups

Four community information sessions were held to provide the wider community with the opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions about the project. Representatives from City of Darwin attended the Malak Community Markets and Northlakes Shopping Centre pop ups.

At each session, maps of the proposed location were displayed and fact sheets, hard copy surveys and drawing competition forms were available to community members. An iPad was also available for community members to complete the online survey.

Information session	Engagement
Malak Community Markets, Saturday 14 September 5pm – 7pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 people attended • 4 fact sheets were taken and 8 people took drawing competition forms.
Northlakes Shopping Centre, Saturday 21 September 10am – 12pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 people attended the display to ask questions and provide feedback • 5 fact sheets were taken and 7 people took drawing competition forms.
Karama Library Knit and Knatter session, Monday 7 October 10:30am – 11am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 attendees • 5 provided feedback
O'Loughlin Catholic College lunchtime student session, Friday 11 October.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 students from Years 7-9 provided feedback • 3 teachers provided feedback.

Drawing competition

Children and teenagers aged under 18 had the opportunity to participate in a drawing competition to share their ideas for the space. The competition encouraged young people to draw their ideal space and ran from 2 – 30 September. Prizes were offered for 2 lucky winners to increase engagement.

Drawing competition forms were available at the Darwin, Casuarina, Karama and Nightcliff libraries, on the Engage Darwin webpage and emailed to relevant stakeholders to distribute to their own networks. A total of 13 entries were submitted either in person or online.



Figure 2: Drawing competition library display.

Social media

City of Darwin shared 5 posts and one Facebook event promoting the Northlakes Shopping Centre information session to its Facebook page. The posts generally promoted the consultation and encouraging participation. Facebook and Instagram stories were also used to promote the consultation. See examples of Facebook posts below.

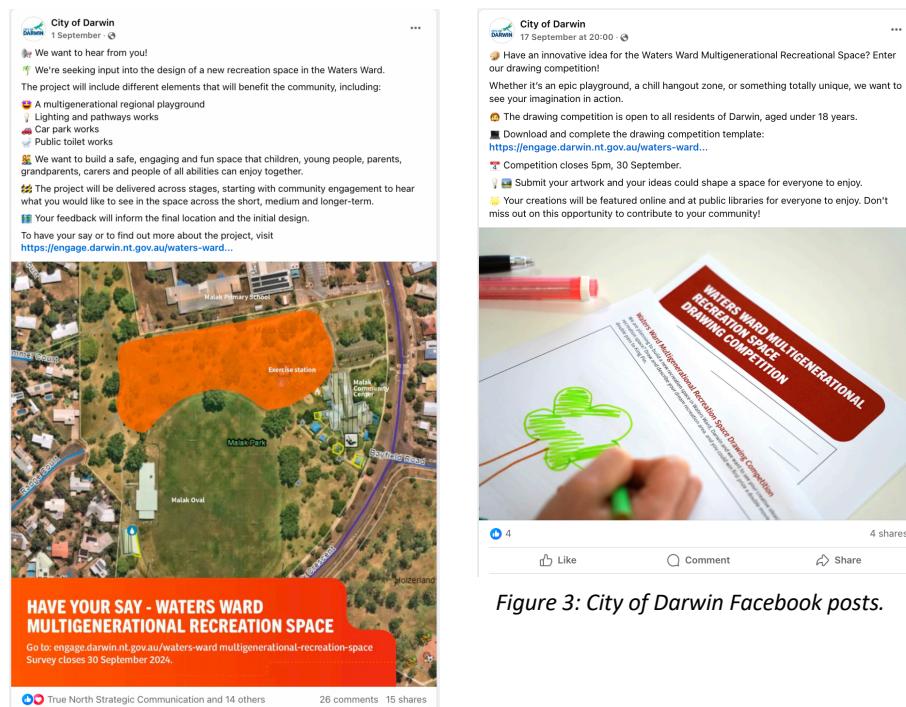


Figure 3: City of Darwin Facebook posts.

The Facebook posts and event received 123 interactions (comments, reactions and shares) and had a total reach of 14,406 during the engagement period.

Dedicated email address and phone number

A dedicated True North email address and phone number were available to community members to contact to provide feedback during consultation. The contact details were included on all communication materials and on the Engage Darwin webpage.

During consultation, one email was received with feedback from a community member and no phone calls were received.

One-on-one meetings with key stakeholders

One-on-one meetings were offered to a range of stakeholder groups with an interest in the proposed recreation space, as well as those in close proximity to the location in Malak.

The following stakeholders were contacted at least three times with the offer of a one-on-one meeting. All stakeholders were emailed the fact sheet and some were also provided with the drawing competition form to share with their networks.

1. Malak Primary School
2. Tropics Early Learning
3. O'Loughlin Catholic College
4. Multicultural Council of the NT
5. Life Without Barriers
6. Arafura Calisthenics Club
7. Football NT
8. Darwin Olympic Sporting Club
9. Larrakia Nation
10. Larrakia Development Corporation
11. Gwalwa Daraniki Corporation
12. Integrated disAbility Action (IDA)
13. Environment Centre NT
14. Council of the Ageing NT (COTA NT)
15. City of Darwin Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee.

Of these stakeholders, 8 groups participated in a meeting during the consultation period. These included:

1. Malak Primary School
2. Tropics Early Learning
3. Arafura Calisthenics Club
4. Darwin Olympic Sporting Club
5. Integrated disAbility Action
6. Council of the Ageing NT (COTA NT)
7. Life Without Barriers
8. City of Darwin Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee.

Environment Centre NT acknowledged the offer of a meeting and declined, indicating it was not an area of expertise but said they would forward the information onto their members to encourage participation. Larrakia Nation advised their Deputy CEO had reviewed the information provided and did not feel that any further consultation was needed.

Multicultural Council of the NT said they were unable to attend a one-on-one briefing but provided feedback via the online survey. Meetings were scheduled with Gwalwa Daraniki Corporation and Football NT however they each were cancelled due to stakeholder availability on the day and both chose not to reschedule during the consultation period.

Workshops

At the start of consultation on 3 September 2024, 7 City of Darwin Elected Members participated in a one and a half hour workshop to outline their ideas, concerns and aspirations for the space.

A second one hour stakeholder workshop was conducted on 10 October with City of Darwin's Youth Advisory Committee. One Elected Member and 4 committee representatives participated in the workshop.

Both workshops followed similar agendas, with questions and activities tailored in each to suit the participants involved. The workshops were designed to:

- explore the term 'multigenerational' and what it meant to them
- gather feedback on the proposed recreation space
- gather insights on values and aspirations for the space in the short, medium and long-term.

True North facilitated both workshops and City of Darwin representatives were present at each.

Advertising and PR activities

City of Darwin promoted the consultation in the following ways:

Advertising:

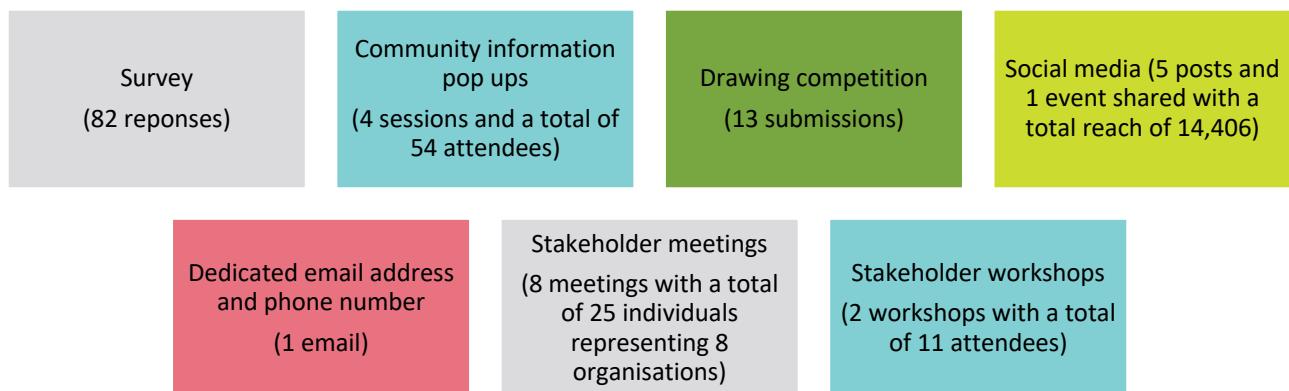
- promotional boards and materials displayed at City of Darwin's Native Plant Giveaway at Holzerland Park, Malak on 14 September.

PR:

- a media release, resulting in an article in the NT News on 4 September
- a feature in the Vibrant Darwin eNewsletter on 12 September 2024.

Feedback

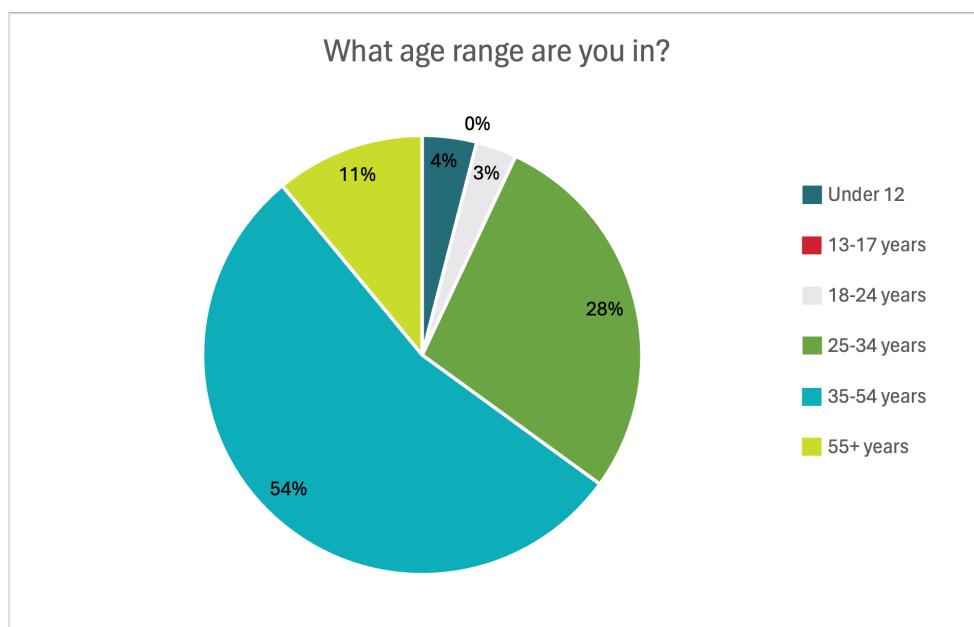
Feedback was provided through the survey, community information pop ups, drawing competition, social media, email, meetings and stakeholder workshops. In total, approximately 186 individuals provided feedback through these channels.



Survey

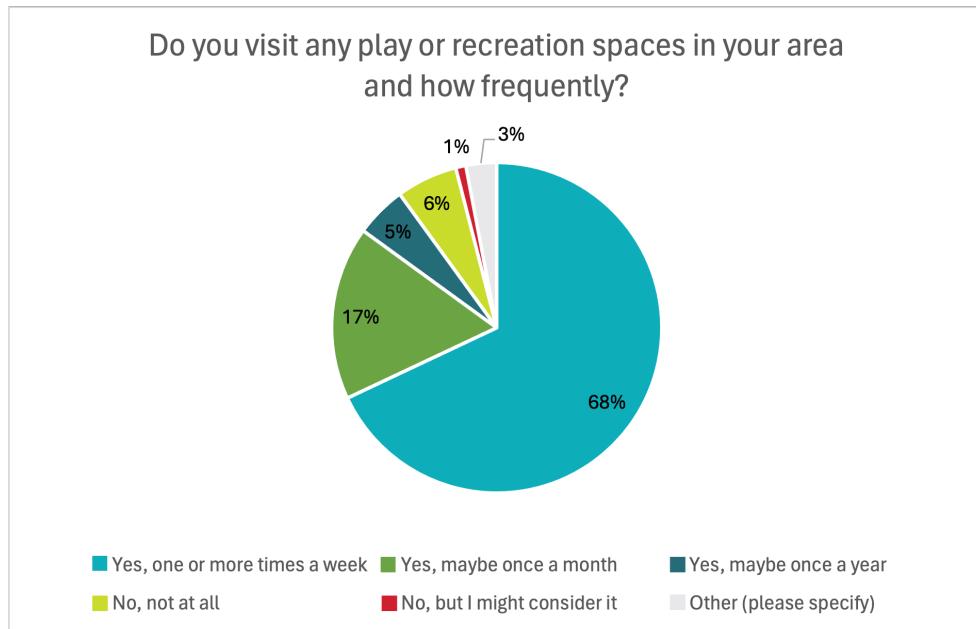
A total of 82 survey responses were received during consultation, with 8 hard copy submissions and 76 online submissions. The survey responses have been combined and detailed below, the full survey report can be found in Appendix A. Percentages have been rounded up to the nearest whole percentage.

The majority of respondents (82%) were aged between 25-54 years, 11% were over 55 years, 4% were under 12 years, 3% were 18-24 years and no respondents were aged 13-17 years old.

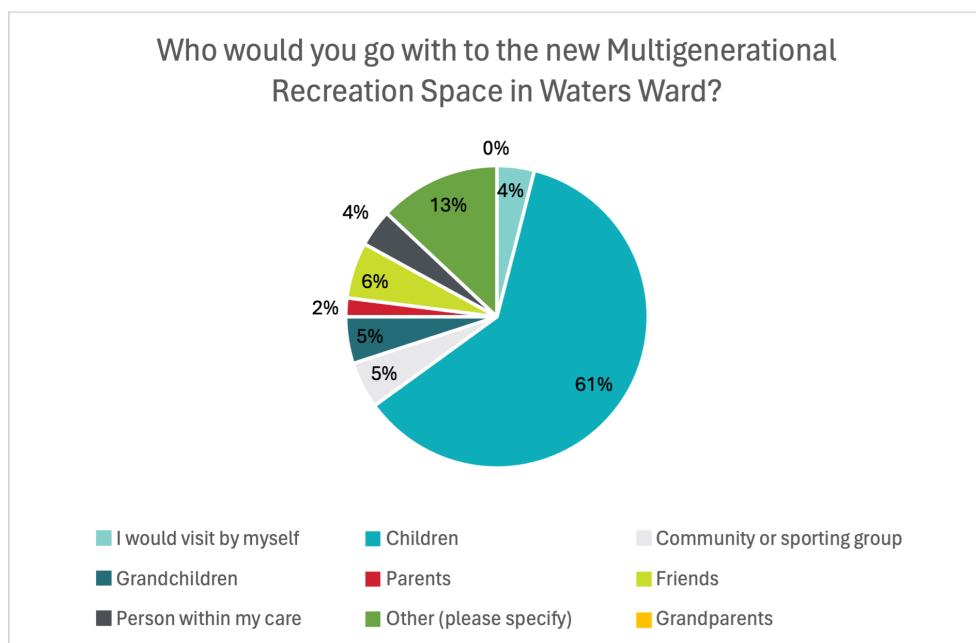


All respondents were Darwin residents and 57% of respondents live within the Waters Ward. Malak and Karama were the suburbs with the highest number of respondents with 33% and 10% respectively.

The survey asked respondents to outline if they visit any play or recreation areas and how frequently. Many respondents (68%) said they visit play or recreation areas one or more times a week.



Over half of respondents (61%) said they would visit the Waters Ward Multigenerational Recreation Space (WWMRS) with their children.



Respondents were asked to explain what a multigenerational and inclusive recreation space meant to them. The word cloud below outlines the most common responses.



Figure 4: Word cloud with most common responses.

Respondents were asked to rank 'may have' equipment and infrastructure elements from City of Darwin's Play Space Strategy 2023-2030 on a scale of 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important. Exercise stations and multi-use courts were ranked as the most important equipment options. Constructed shade to courts was ranked as the most important infrastructure option. The results are shown below in order of importance.

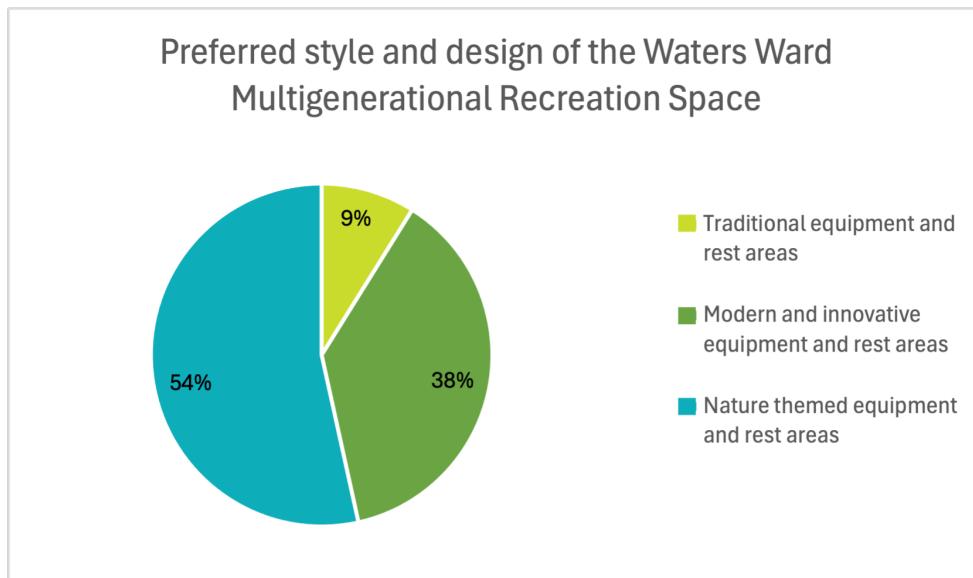
'May Have' Equipment		'May Have' Infrastructure	
Type	Score	Type	Score
Exercise stations	2.79	Constructed shade to courts	1.54
Multi-use courts	2.79	Fencing around play equipment	2.41
Skate surfaces (boards, roller skates, scooters)	3.04	Water misters	2.49
Pump track (BMX)	3.80	Wifi electronic charging stations or other digital innovation	3.55
Tennis hitting wall	4.01		
Tennis courts	4.53		

Respondents provided additional ideas for equipment or infrastructure. Some notable comments were:

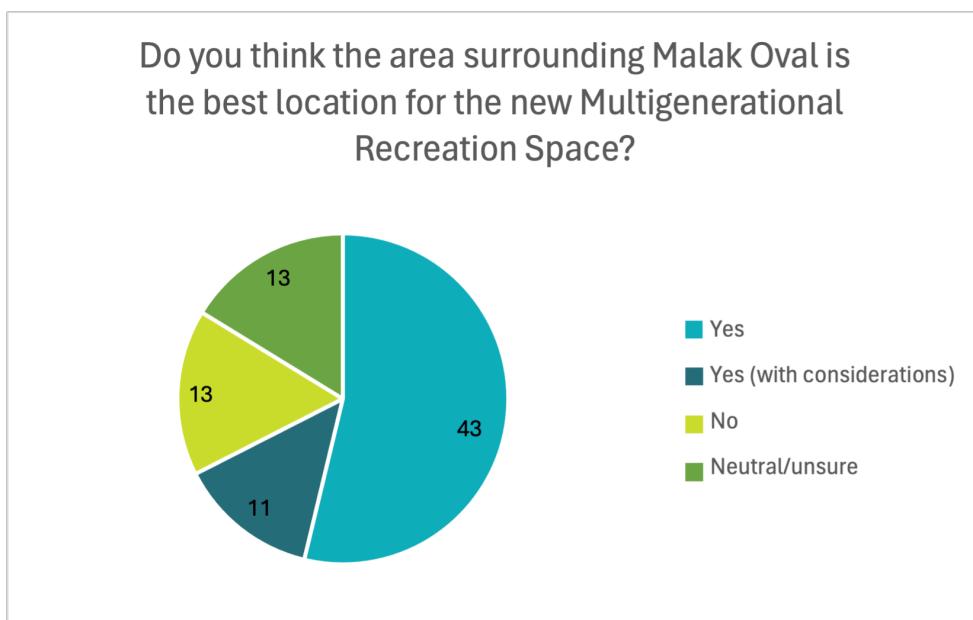
- *Unique play equipment or play areas that are not typical for Darwin. Darling Harbour playground in Sydney is a good example, with lots of great ideas for all including water play areas and options for climbing*
- *Nature play ground*

- *Smooth skate track/space with small rolling hills for beginner skaters with enough length or space that many can use at the same time*
- *BBQ areas and picnic areas*
- *Chess tables. Hamster wheel.*

When asked to consider the design and style of the recreation space, 54% of respondents said they would prefer it to have nature themed equipment and rest areas.



Respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree with Malak Oval as the location for the recreation space and why. Of the 82 respondents, 80 provided a response. The results have been interpreted and summarised below, however this data is qualitative in nature and analysis of the results is subjective. 54 respondents (68%) indicated they agree with the location, with 11 of these respondents saying they would support with considerations such as improved safety and security.



Some notable comments were:

- *Yes as there are others in the surrounding suburbs, would be lovely and accessible for Malak residents*
- *Uncertain due to safety concerns. Will there be security patrols? But I do love well designed parks, like Lyons or Jingili*
- *No. Not enough car parking and all open green space is great for walking and would be a shame to build over*
- *Consideration should be given to the surrounding houses and antisocial behaviour that may cause issues*
- *It's perfect I've lived in this area for over 15 years and this spot needs an upgrade so it's usable space.*

Community information pop-ups

Four community information sessions were held at separate locations during consultation to attract responses from the wider community and to reach different groups such as teenagers and seniors.

The table below summarises feedback gathered at each session. Note, this is a summary of the feedback and not presented in any specific order.

Date	Location	Engagement	Feedback summary
14/9/24 5pm-7pm	Malak Marketplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 people stopped • 4 fact sheets were taken and 8 drawing competition forms were distributed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free Wifi and spaces equipped for people to work outdoors • BBQ's and dining areas • Centrally located toilet facilities that are accessible for people in wheelchairs and include family change rooms • Lighting for paths, play equipment and all other inclusions within the space • Bike racks that include a locking system • Drinking water access • A clock tower similar to the structure in Coconut Grove that could also incorporate a public art and be used as a timer for people using the area for exercise • Public art • Car parking that can help illuminate people illegally parking when soccer matches are played – Car parking could look onto the field so people could watch games from their cars • Seating to be used by people using the area generally and those attending soccer • Facilities to use the space to host the markets so that the markets can change

			<p>locations to someone where more kids entertainment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open spaces • Water play areas that are interactive • Shade and sheltered areas • Rubber flooring under play equipment and on paths • Mini golf course • Frisby golf equipment • Exercise equipment for seniors • Regular clean up of the space for any glass or hazardous materials left.
21/9/24 10am-12pm	Northlakes Shopping Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 people stopped at the display to ask questions and provide feedback • 7 people took drawing competition forms and 5 people took fact sheets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will space be inclusive and accessible? I work in rehabilitation and always on the hunt for accessible spaces • Generally spaces are not designed for teenage girls, consideration for good sight lines, tables, shade, solar power to plug in phones etc. A lot of research papers show once you design spaces for girls in mind it will be suitable and attractive to all generations. • Retiree living on Boucet Crescent in Malak – it will be great to activate the space. Wouldn't use the space himself but knows people in the area with grandchildren who would. Pathways are a big issue, uneven footpaths are dangerous and can lead to injuries. • Sort out the antisocial behaviour in the space, otherwise don't waste the money. • Water bubblers are needed, absolutely no BBQs, it will just encourage antisocial behaviour • Need shade, drainage behind school is an issue and needs to be looked at. Mahoganies are an issue and very dangerous. Not happy about the location as residents there already deal with antisocial behaviour. Radge Court residents will call the police. No basketball court as its close to houses and the noise of the ball will be an issue. Need water for dogs or a tap to wash your feet. How can you ensure the water is hygienic for dogs? Need fencing around pedestrian crossings.
7/10/24 10:30am-11am	Knit and Knatter session at Karama Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 attendees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question about location and proximity to road. Need to make sure play equipment isn't too close to roads for safety of children, fencing would be good.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different play options to suit needs of all users • Use of ramps, stairs are hard to use and it will be accessible with walker or wheelchair. • Wide paths for accessibility • Lots of shade is important in the hot weather, water features are good.
11/10/24	O'Loughlin Catholic College lunchtime session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 students from Years 7-9 provided feedback • 3 teachers provided feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students were positive about the project, especially students that lived in the area of the proposed site. • Some ideas included BBQ areas with chairs and tables, space for live music, free wifi, playground, plants and gardens, basketball court, water sensory play, exercise equipment stations, ponds that you can fish in, a café, a playground built for teenagers and not just little kids, rock climbing wall, outdoor cinema, built in trampolines.

The full session notes can be found in Appendix B.

Drawing competition

A total of 13 drawing submissions were received during the consultation period from participants aged between 4 and 12 and can be found in Appendix C. Two winners were selected and given prizes for their efforts, the winning submissions are shown below.



Figure 5: Drawing competition winning submissions.

Some other creative ideas received are also shown below.



Figure 6: Drawing competition submissions.

Social media

Community members provided comments on the Facebook posts shared by City of Darwin during consultation. Comments included suggestions for preferred equipment, design ideas and concerns over parking and shade.

Some notable comments on Facebook were:

- *A hall of sorts or semi enclosed space where oldies can gather to socialise, enjoy a game of cards or chess or whatever and maybe enjoy a coffee. Everything is always family friendly but there is nothing for the oldies. Maybe COTA can advise on this*
- *SHADE! The ninja course near there is useless for most daylight hours because of lack of shade. (Unless it's been added, we went once when it was brand new and haven't been back because it was roasting*
- *The soccer field urgently needs more parking. A few weeks ago Council Rangers came down on a Sunday morning while parents were watching kids play, and started*

threatening everybody with fines if they didn't move their cars from the grass area on Malak Crescent side. This caused massive disruption to children's games, flared tempers and then increased risk to parents and children as they had to cross the busy road and walk back to their cars parked miles away. Even on training nights the existing car park overflows, and when games are on and other teams come to the oval, the entire area becomes dangerous as people have to cross blindly from behind cars parked on both sides of the roads, which are already busy for a residential area. Start there before you try to bring more traffic to the area

- *What we really need is; more shade including over the ninja course, more parking, dog park so we don't have to drive up to Lyons, skatepark, upgrade the existing playground opposite Malak shops before building another one.*

All available Facebook comments can be found in Appendix D.

Dedicated email address and phone number

During consultation, 1 email was received with feedback from a community member and no calls were received. The feedback included suggestions for more shade, as well as areas for young children to play sports while soccer is on, such as a quarter court for AFL or soccer with mini goals and basketball courts in a separate area for older kids.

Stakeholder meetings

During consultation, 8 one-on-one meetings took place. A summary of the feedback gathered during the meetings is outlined below. Meeting notes can be found in Appendix E.

Stakeholder	Feedback summary
Darwin Olympic Sporting Club 19/9/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happy with the proposed space and think it will be good for the community • Improve lighting around the oval, parking and include at recreation space • Concerns with sufficient parking – additional car parking is needed • Asked if there is room to create an additional oval or extend some oval space to have a smaller oval for soccer games • Safety is a concern in the area and increased security measures are needed. Clubhouse is broken into regularly.
Integrated Disability Action 19/9/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IDA recommends design is in line with universal guidelines • Will share information about consultation with members and encourage them to provide feedback • Consideration around footpaths – often access issues to water fountains where there isn't enough concrete around the fountain to make it accessible.
Tropics Early Learning Centre 23/9/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security is an issue in the area, people loitering around park and car park

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional parking is needed, staff already have to park on verge Fence around playground would be good It will be a positive addition if parking and safety concerns are addressed Excited about opportunities the space will allow for children at the centre.
Arafura Calisthenics 24/9/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security and safety are key issues in this area Concerned the space would attract antisocial behaviour, particularly due it being used as a thoroughfare and lack of visibility from the road There is not enough parking and unsure where additional parking would be included as space is already limited High levels of antisocial behaviour in the area, regular break ins and loitering at community centre Suggest the investment is put toward expanding or developing indoor community spaces that are safer and would attract community groups and services.
Life Without Barriers 24/9/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would like the opportunity for members to participate in creating public art Wheelchair access throughout is important Consider assisted technology such as a touch screen with button for water bubbler to improve accessibility Distance from transport pick up and drop off areas should be as close as possible.
Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee 3/10/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure areas are well shaded, prefer using natural shade from trees rather than synthetic shade Make space and equipment accessible and inclusive for everyone Have areas of interest for teens, seniors and children to interact together Consider angle parking off Malak Crescent as this will be easier to access Softfall is preferred over concrete.
Council of the Ageing NT (COTA) 7/10/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider walking track with hand rails and soft fall Dementia friendly spaces – coloured toilet seats, coloured doors to help with spacial awareness Use pictures and symbols for wayfinding and signage for elderly and people who can't speak English Sensory garden and interactive water features Sensory lighting that changes colour at night Soft fall surface is preferred.
Malak Primary School (Principal and group of 11 Year 5 and 6 students) 10/10/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make the space different and special to give students a reason to go there Have lots of shade and water features for cooling Students were very concerned about safety and security in the space and this would stop them from going there

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students suggested having tall fences with gates that are locked at night, lights, security cameras, security guards and police regularly patrolling • Metal seating and equipment gets very hot and shouldn't be used • Have something there for everyone to use • Equipment options: fun swings, a cubby house for climbing, BMX track, mini gym, flying fox, handball court • Principal indicated the students see the school as their safe space as their homes are not always safe for them and they need somewhere to escape. It would be great if this park was developed and they could also view this area as another safe place.
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Workshops

Elected Members workshop

Seven Elected Members participated in a one and a half hour workshop. The Elected Members were interested in the project and plans for how the funding would be used. There was discussion about the proposed location and why it was chosen over Malak Oval or Holzerland Park. One person said they prefer Holzerland Park.

When asked to explore what a multigenerational space would look like, the group agreed it would be a place suited to different ages and abilities but also a place where the different ages and abilities can interact together at the same time. There were suggestions the space should be different and creative and needs to keep the demographics of the immediate community in mind. There was also a suggestion to involve local cultures in the provision of art.

Additional suggestions for the space included:

- equipment that can grow with the children
- something for the whole family to use where everyone can find an element to use or interact with
- exercise and resistant equipment for teens and seniors
- graffiti wall for teenagers
- inclusive features such as a lower level basketball hoops
- rotating climbing wall
- jumping pillow
- hamster wheel.

The group discussed long term aspirations for the space over the next 5 to 7 years. Key ideas were a dog park at Holzerland Park, community movie nights, stage platform and public forums for outdoor Council meetings.

Youth Advisory Committee workshop

Five committee members from City of Darwin's Youth Advisory Committee participated in the one-hour workshop, including one Elected Member.

The committee was asked to explore what a multigenerational space would look like, the group indicated it would be an inclusive space which different ages can use and interact simultaneously.

Most of the committee members were aged under 18 and provided insights into what would attract young people to recreation spaces. A key insight was teenagers tend to visit places to meet other people in their age group, so the space would need to have a central activity to bring people together. A popular suggestion was an area for performances or live music where young people could go to see other young people perform.

Some of their other ideas for the space included:

- exercise spaces and equipment for all age groups to use, similar to what is at East Point
- water play activities that are big enough so that people can run in and out of
- jukebox music that is available at the playground
- digital community notice board
- a designated entry and exit point for safety and security – inclusion of lockers for your belongings and a vending machine
- big slides and swings that all ages can use
- paths and spaces designed for roller skating not just skateboards
- handball court or painted lines
- unique seating options available in other places such as Perth
- a community garden
- a large fan to keep the area cool.

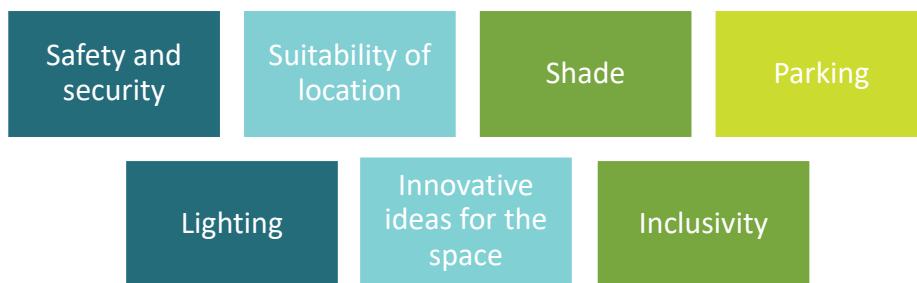
Full workshops notes for both workshops can be found in Appendix F.

Analysis

Key themes

Several key themes emerged during consultation and are presented below in order of how often they were raised during consultation.

The key feedback themes gathered during consultation were:



Safety and security

Nearby residents and businesses indicated there are recurring safety and security issues surrounding Malak Oval. Interestingly, students at Malak Primary School had strong views about how safe they feel in the area, with many indicating their parents or guardians would not allow them to use the recreation space unless there was a vast improvement in safety and security.

Suggestions to improve safety and security centred on improving visibility in the area included sight lines to the street from the parkland, introducing lighting around the oval and surrounding carparks, installing security cameras with 24 hour surveillance and regular police patrols.

There were several suggestions for the recreation space to be fenced off to minimise children running onto the road and so it could be locked at night.

Suitability of location

Stakeholders and the community indicated they were pleased Waters Ward was identified as a location for a development of this scale, however the suitability of the proposed location in Malak was a popular topic that attracted split views.

Many indicated they believe the Malak area is unsafe, with high levels of crime and antisocial behaviour reported. There were strong concerns the recreation space would be unusable due to safety concerns and existing antisocial behaviour issues would be exacerbated. Alternatively, some shared the view that the recreation space could empower youth in the area as well as activate the parkland, which is quite dark and isolated, reducing the chance for crime to occur.

In the survey, 54 out of 80 respondents (68%) shared their support for the proposed location.

Shade

Shade was identified as a key element for the recreation space. Many stakeholders and community members suggested more shade was needed, with some saying it should be achieved through greenery and trees rather than concrete shade structures. Contrastingly in the survey, constructed shade to courts was rated as the most important infrastructure element (1.54 score in ranking from 1-5 with 1 being most important).

Parking

Stakeholder groups who frequently use the area and key users of Malak Oval expressed a need for additional parking, with a lack of parking already experienced at the community centre, childcare facility and oval during soccer season. Parking was not raised as regularly as in issue by the wider community, however those that use the space for soccer said there is not enough parking. People were pleased parking would be considered as part of the design but questioned whether there would be enough to cover the community centre, childcare centre and recreation space. Most understood there would not be enough parking to cover busy periods at the oval during soccer season.

Consideration around the location and distance to parking facilities and public transport was raised as long distances make it less accessible, especially for people with mobility issues or additional needs.

Lighting

Many indicated lighting was needed at the recreation space not only for safety but to encourage use in the evenings.

There were suggestions for innovative lighting features such as solar sensor lighting activated by movement or sensory lighting featuring different colours and hues as a calming technique for people with additional needs.

Innovative ideas for the space

A common suggestion throughout consultation was to develop a space with a nature theme or use of natural elements. There were also many suggestions for water play elements, including a sensory water garden, water spouts that all ages can play or walk into to cool down, a splash park, a pond with a bridge over it and also pond that could be used for fishing. Other ideas also included a skate park or a path suitable for roller skating for all ages.

Digital innovation was also another popular suggestion, with suggestions for digital noticeboards, a community jukebox, touch screen activation to improve accessibility for water fountains, solar charging stations and free wifi.

Darwin's hot climate was also a recurring topic with several people indicating an indoor space with air conditioning would be good to provide an opportunity to cool down. Others also indicated heat resistant materials for the play equipment should be used.

A kiosk, café or food trucks were also popular suggestions, with some young people indicating a central activity would attract people to the area. A concert area with raised platform, music space or sound shell was suggested by students to draw people to the space.

Inclusivity

City of Darwin's objective to develop a multigenerational recreation space was very well received in all stakeholder and community interactions. Throughout consultation, it was clear there is a desire for a safe and accessible space for families and individuals of all ages and abilities to use together.

Many ideas centred around equipment and infrastructure that could be used by all age groups and mobility levels, such as large swings and slides, sensory gardens and wide footpaths. There was also a suggestion to use dementia friendly colours for amenities, such as toilet facilities with a contrasting coloured toilet seat or door to help with spatial awareness.

Overall analysis

The overall response during consultation was that many believe Waters Ward would greatly benefit from a multigenerational recreation space.

Input from stakeholders and user groups generally related to their specific use or interest of the area and what they would consider as important however there was unanimous feedback from all groups that safety and security in the area was a key concern. Feedback was received from a wide demographic, however teenagers and Indigenous groups were more difficult to reach.

There were varied opinions around the proposed location in Malak mostly based on the concerns for safety and security. While 54 respondents (68%) in the survey indicated they think it is the right location, 11 of these respondents suggested it would be only if security and safety issues were addressed. Survey respondents who supported the location said it was a good location based on its proximity to the oval and ninja park but some said there was not enough parking.

People mostly shared the same views about what they would like to see at the recreation space. Feedback indicated people would like a space that is inclusive and accessible to all ages, abilities and mobility levels and can be used simultaneously by all. Key suggestions included a nature theme with natural shade elements, as well as fun and interactive water play features, barbecue facilities and opportunities for digital innovation.

While parking was an issue mostly raised by stakeholders who frequently use the area and key users of the oval, these stakeholders indicated it is one of the most important issues affecting the use of the space and should be considered in the design.

The level of involvement in consultation activities such as the survey was lower compared to other recent City of Darwin engagement programs and could be due to a number of factors, including community interest in recreation spaces and the perception of it being a playground aimed at a younger age group and not of interest to everyone. Community members may have also experienced consultation fatigue with various engagement programs occurring consecutively, particularly nearby residents in Malak who were involved in engagement around the Malak changeroom facility in recent years.

Recommendations

This consultation report has been prepared after a 6 week consultation process. The suggested next steps following consultation are:

- Consider feedback received from stakeholders and the community to confirm the location and design.
- Continue engaging with nearby residents and stakeholders surrounding the proposed location as the project progresses.
- Publicly release the consultation report, excluding appendices, and make it available on the Engage Darwin website. Close the feedback loop with the stakeholders who participated in consultation such as emailing it directly to them.

Based on feedback received during consultation, the following recommendation should be considered for the concept design:

- Consider the suitability of the location in terms of safety and security.
- Address safety and security concerns through design, particularly ensuring improved visibility and lighting.
- Ensure there is shade and incorporate natural shade elements.
- Incorporate cooling features such as heat resistant materials where possible for play equipment and water play features.
- Increase the amount of parking and for improved accessibility, ensure parking and public transport facilities are not too far away from the space.
- Ensure areas are accessible with wide pathways, accessible water fountains and consideration for signage and dementia-friendly colours in toilet facilities.

- Create nature themed play spaces that are accessible and functional for all ages and abilities, such as big slides and swings, obstacle courses and water play facilities.
- Incorporate digital innovation such as a community jukebox, community noticeboards and touch screens/buttons for water fountains and toilet facilities to improve accessibility.
- Include barbeque and picnic facilities and consider the potential for food trucks/vans and pop ups at the space in future.

Appendices

Appendix A – Survey responses

Appendix B – Community information pop up notes

Appendix C – Drawing competition entries

Appendix D – Social media summary

Appendix E – Stakeholder meeting minutes

Appendix F – Workshop notes

Appendix G – Councillor feedback

Appendix H – Contact log