



Parks for People

Phase 3 Engagement Outcomes Report

Wollondilly Shire Council

Masterplan for a New Park in Appin

24 November 2023

JOCCONSULTING
creative urban planners



JOCCONSULTING
creative urban planners

© JOC Consulting 2021
All care has been taken to prepare this
report for the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.
If you have any queries regarding this
report please get in touch:

John O'Callaghan, Director
+61 0400 471 469
john@jocconsulting.com.au

jocconsulting.com.au

Photography by The Being Group.

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Acknowledgement | 4 |
| Executive Summary | 5 |
| What we heard | 6 |
| What we heard in Phase 1 | |
| What we heard in Phase 2 | |
| What we heard in Phase 3 | |
| Feedback on Proposed Draft Concept Design | 9 |
| Issues and Considerations | 11 |
| Where to from here | 12 |
| Appendix A – Online Design Board Comments | 13 |
| Appendix B – Pop Up Comments Analysis | 14 |

Acknowledgement of Country

This document acknowledges that the area of Appin is on Aboriginal land where the traditional custodians have been caring for Country for more than 70,000 years.

We pay our respects to the Traditional Owners of this land, their Elders past, present and emerging, and acknowledge the continued rich culture and heritage of all Aboriginal people on this land.

Executive summary

The New South Wales Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) has commissioned JOC Consulting to assist with the delivery of community engagement for the creation of a masterplan for a new park in Appin (the Park) as part of the Parks for People Program.

The community's input during the phase one (September 2020) and phase two (November – December 2020) engagement helped shape a vision for the park and guided some of Australia's best designers and landscape architects to create the draft Concept Design. The draft Concept Design was recently revised to ensure it is fit-for-purpose and meets community needs before construction commences. The revised draft Concept Design (see below) was presented to the community during a third phase of engagement.

This Engagement Outcomes Report presents the results from the third phase of engagement that sought community feedback on the revised draft Concept Design. In order to capture the community's feedback, a Design Board and online survey were open to the public between 18 October and 18 November 2023 and an in-person pop up event was held in Appin on 25 October 2023. Overall, the revised draft Concept Design received very positive feedback from the community.

Figure 1: The revised draft Concept Design for Appin Park presented to the community during Phase 3 engagement.

Stage 1 Masterplan



“Full support for the project. It is so needed for kids of all ages.”

- Pop up event participant, Phase 3

What we heard in Phase 1

The first round of consultation consisted of an Online Survey and Social Pinpoint Map available for community comment between 2 and 22 September 2020.

Overall, the community were very supportive of the new park project. Participants expressed opinions and ideas that were passionate, nuanced, and largely positive.

Top three vision statements were:

1. A place for adventure and discovery through the natural landscape (26% of respondents)
2. A fun place with lots of different activities and play equipment (22% of respondents)
3. A peaceful place to relax and wind down (19% of respondents)

Top four priorities were:

- Leveraging the natural beauty of the site as a foundation to deliver an open space for play, relaxation, celebration, and education.
- Building a healthier, happier, and more creative community through opportunities to play and get active.
- Utilising the innate tranquillity of the landscape to create an escape from the stresses and strains of urban life.
- Strengthening the community's connection to place and landscape by creating greater access to the natural environment.

Common ideas for improving the new park in Appin:

- A koala centre or space for koala learning, preservation, and appreciation
- Connected cycleways, bike trails and walking trails.
- Play spaces integrated and learning from nature
- Spaces for social and family gatherings
- Formal and informal learning opportunities across the site

The top three things missing from the area:

The engagement uncovered the need for greater provision and access to open space in the Appin – Wollondilly Area.

- Walking/ hiking tracks and trails – 51%
- Water features – 49%
- Natural areas and parks – 41%

146

Community members participated

5,336

Visits

1,708

Unique visits

Ranging from under 18 to 75+ years of age

66% female, 33% male

99% local residents

81% living within 10 minutes' walk of the site

72

Design Board participants

74

Online survey responses

What we heard in Phase 2

Phase 2 engagement was held online from November to December 2020, capturing feedback on the Concept Design through an Online Survey, Design Board, and written submissions.

Overall, participants felt as though ideas raised by the community had been incorporated into the design and appreciated that the design maintained the majority of existing large trees and further enhanced the natural qualities of the site.

Figure 2: Draft Concept Design presented to the community during phase 2 community engagement



Most importantly, all participants felt that the proposed design gave appropriate consideration for the care of the neighbouring bushland and koala population. This high regard for nature was a theme that was further reflected in phase 2 participants' preferences for the design of public art and play spaces within the Park.

However, some participants noted that the draft Concept Design (and accompanying media) failed to mention the role of the Park in the wider open space network in the Local Government Area, and the opportunity for the Park to act as an entrance point for the extensive trail networks in the region. These comments commonly noted the need for links to local swimming holes and the banks of The Georges River.

44

community members participated

1,694

visits

684

unique visits

Ranging from under 18 to 75+ years of age

71% female, 29% male

94% local residents

88% living within 10 minutes' walk of the site

47% care for a child

21

Design Board participants

17

Online survey responses

5

Written Submissions

“Koala”
“Splash”

Popular words used in the Design Board

What we heard in Phase 3

Phase 3 engagement took place online and in person to capture feedback on the revised draft Concept Design through an Online Survey, Online Design Board, written submissions, and an in-person Pop Up Event held at Appin.

Overall, the community response was very positive. The revised project received full support from every single engagement participant except one (who simply felt the area was already suitably provisioned with parks and open space). Notably, the residents around the park are supportive of the project moving forward. Most feedback focused on ideas for improvement, with key community priorities including pedestrian access, park user safety and maintenance costs.

Many participants emphasised the importance of high-quality open space being developed in Appin, saying that the delivery of this project means more to the community than simply being a “nice to have”. Community members described the new park as an opportunity to fulfil an essential community need. Participants highlighted the positive impact the new park would have on the lives of children and youth in Appin. As such, community expressed a desire to see the park delivered as soon as possible to provide vital facilities to neighbouring residents and young people in the area.

Several participants also suggested that water play, and BBQ facilities be included in the design. These recommendations have previously been considered or excluded in past design iterations due to a number of factors, including on-going maintenance costs, feasibility, and the need to respond to more prominent community priorities.

Image 1: Pop up event at Appin for Phase 3 engagement



62

Total community ideas shared online and in-person

118

Online visits

52

unique online visits

40+

Participants at the Appin pop up event

“Pedestrians” “Kids” “Water”

Popular words mentioned by participants at the Appin pop-up event

“Appin needs this. Please deliver asap”.

- Pop up event participant, Phase 3

Feedback on Proposed Draft Concept Design

A summary of the key comments and ideas provided by participants via the online and in-person engagement activities on Phase 3 are shown in the below table.

| Design feature | What did the community like? | Additional ideas from the community |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Draft Stage 1 Concept Design The draft concept design that shows the layout for the proposed stage 1 park</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participants were happy to see a place for children and youth to enjoy and praised the project for prioritising community space for Appin residents. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pedestrian crossings from Appin Valley ▪ CCTV to improve user safety and deter anti-social behaviour ▪ Speed mitigation on Appin Road e.g. speed humps, signage, and speed cameras ▪ Boundary fencing to prevent wildlife and motorbikes from entering the park ▪ Traffic management for Appin Road ▪ Pathed footpaths for elderly people ▪ A koala ranger station ▪ Emergency trails for the Rural Fire Service ▪ A splash park |
| <p>Play in nature An inclusive nature play space that offers play opportunities for children of all ages and a space for carers to relax and enjoy</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participants were excited by the size of the playground and the range of experiences available. They also praised the park setting as well as the play and recreation options available. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A community garden or bush care propagation area. Residents saw significant potential in this idea, saying that neighbouring community gardens are currently operating at full capacity and managing groups are looking for additional space. This idea was described by participants as low cost, environmentally un-intrusive and self-sustaining. ▪ Exercise equipment for adults ▪ Gated play area for children ▪ Address wildlife risk to children e.g., Snakes, territorial kangaroos ▪ Water play and splash pads |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>A place to explore Explore the Lyrebird adventure play. The lyrebird is a totem animal of the Dharawal people</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participants praised the inclusion of the extensive walking trails and emphasised the need to ensure these are well maintained and remain accessible and safe throughout the lifecycle of the facilities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Additional safety measures to ensure the walking trails were not utilised by motorbikes ▪ Additional treatments or boardwalks to make trails more accessible |
| <p>A place to relax Peaceful location within the natural surroundings to meet and spend time with family and friends</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participants praised the designation of the koala corridor and maintaining the natural qualities of the site, to provide opportunities to truly escape from urban life. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participants said they hope to see access to Georges River considered in future stages of the park design |
| <p>Trail experiences Have a walk at audible bridge and cycle at informal trails surrounded by the preserved local flora and fauna</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participants recognised the need for these trails in Appin, as connecting to nature is a core value for the community. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A 5km loop for runners and cyclists ▪ Introduction of a park run in Appin ▪ Bushwalking trail along the river to local swimming holes |
| <p>A place to enjoy Enjoy the flying fox surrounded by informal play, park amenities and landscape planting</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participants recognised that such places are hugely under provisioned in Appin, and the proposed design responded to community needs, not simply desires or “nice to haves”. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fenced off-leash dog area |

“Full support. Just ensure pedestrian access is adequate”.

- Pop up event participant, Phase 3

Issues and considerations

Across the engagement, participants raised the following issues and considerations for the design team to consider when finalising the Concept Design:

Facilitating pedestrian access: The most common piece of feedback from community was the need for the design team to explore further opportunities for pedestrian access and safe crossings over Appin Road to the park. The key concern is the safety of children travelling from Appin Valley and the issue of only having access to one safe crossing point in the current design.

Park user safety: Participants want to see the use of CCTV, lighting, signage, and other measures to mitigate anti-social behaviour in the park. Multiple participants highlighted a current issue with dirt bike riders using the space, as well as other recreational and open spaces in the LGA. They are concerned about the negative impact on play spaces and the safety of park users if this continues. There are strong calls for measures that will minimise the chance of dirt bike riding in the new park, as they currently do in the skate park and other play spaces in Appin.

Maintenance cost: Participants were very positive about the new park in Appin and its design, but feared Wollondilly Shire Council does not have adequate budget to maintain the facility. This concern is based on the community's perception that existing facilities are not suitably maintained. Suggested solutions ranged from ensuring the design was developed with consideration for low maintenance cost and/or that the project budget should include funds for maintenance.

Image 2: Pop up event at Appin for Phase 3 engagement



“Concerned about maintenance falling short due to lack of funding at Wollondilly Council”.

- Pop up event participant, Phase 3

“Use of CCTV to mitigate antisocial behaviour”. - Pop up event participant, Phase 3

Where to from here

Overall, the visions and draft Design Concepts for the new park in Appin have been well received by participants. Through the course of community engagement, valuable feedback on the revised draft Concept Design was captured, along with additional design ideas and elements for consideration.

Next steps

The findings from this report, along with previous consultation insights, will be used to inform the final design for the new park in Appin.

“Love the setting. Provides a varied range of experiences. Better than a small playground.”

- Pop up event participant, Phase 3

“Great to see space dedicated to community and not housing.”

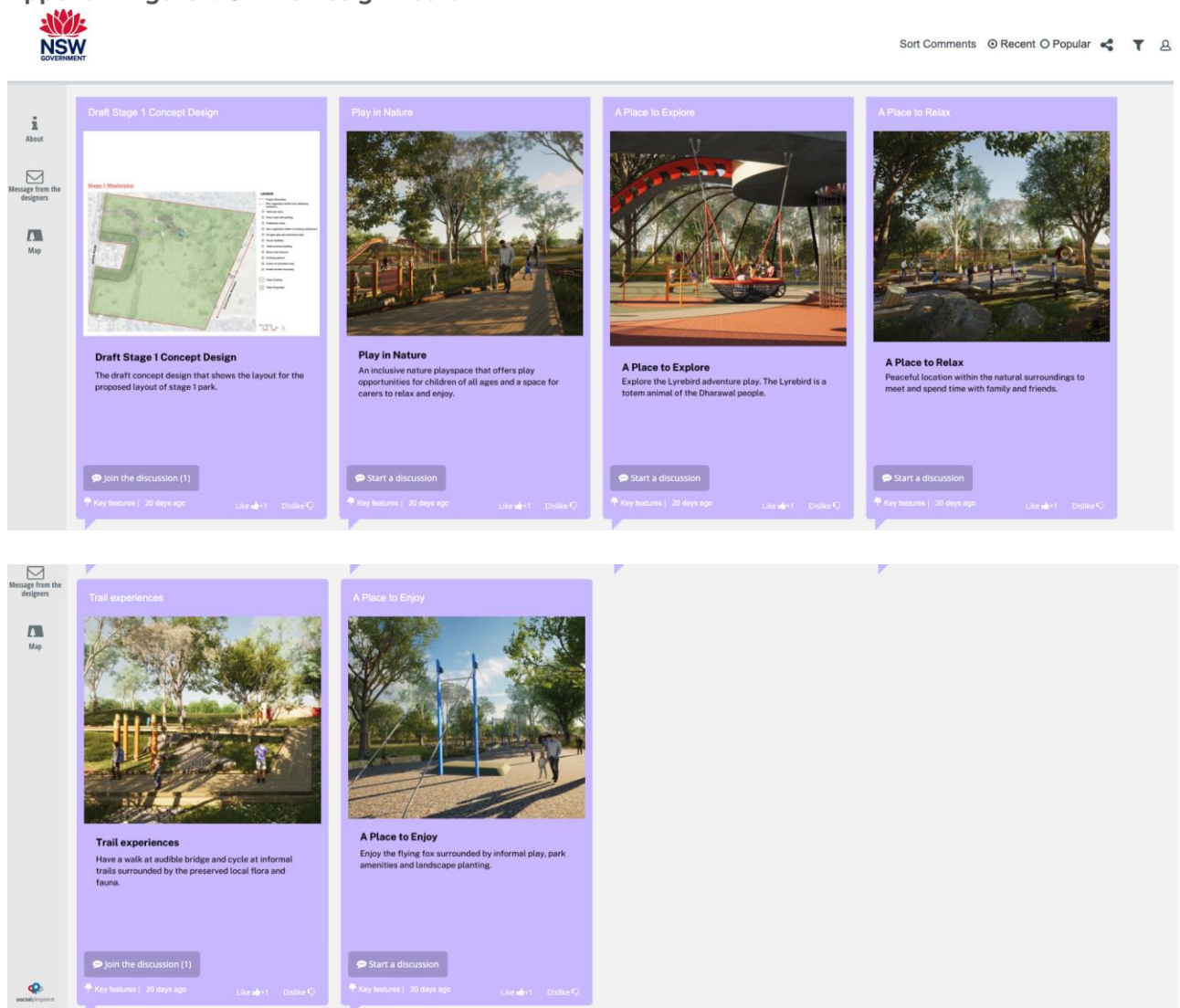
- Pop up event participant, Phase 3

Appendix A – Social Pinpoint Design Board Raw Data

A total of 2 responses were recorded on the Design Board:

- *“It would be great to have a splash park too”* – **Community member comment, Draft Stage 1 Concept Design**
- *“We need at least a 5km loop for runners and also for cyclists so they can ride. It’d be great to start a 5km park run in Appin. Park runs are usually on Saturday mornings and require a circuit that’s long enough and some volunteers. It would certainly build onto the existing sense of community. Right now, to run 5km in Appin means running across roads - it’s not a safe option”* – **Community member comment, Trail Experiences**

Appendix Figure 1: Online Design Board



Appendix B – Pop up Event Data Analysis

Overall sentiment – Appin Park

Community members were very positive about the new park and draft design. The majority of comments were positive with multiple people calling out how important the park is for children and youth in Appin. There was also a strong focus on improvements to enhance safety through pedestrian crossings and CCTV. Water play was another common suggestion that has been consistently mentioned across all engagement phases.

The following word cloud was created using the most common words to convey the community's feedback for the design of the new Park.

Appendix Figure 2: Phase 3 Engagement Word Cloud



Appendix C – Pop up Event Raw Data

| Comment | Like | Improvement |
|---|------|-------------|
| Water play to cool down, splash pads. Adult toilet, change room, table etc. | | 1 |
| Consider traffic stress for the new park with Transport for NSW. Infrastructure for Appin Road, Bus Shuttle/other services provided by the state gov. | | 1 |
| BBQ at picnic is preferred to provide options | | 1 |
| Full support for retrieving the space as a community space | 1 | |
| Water play | | 1 |
| Appin needs this, please deliver asap | 1 | |
| Appin road is a beautiful road so try to minimise impacts on the beautiful drive along here | | 1 |
| Need for more pedestrian crossings from Appin Valley across Appin Road | | 1 |
| Pedestrian access across Appin Road is a priority | | 1 |
| Walking paths for elderly people (pathed) | | 1 |
| Include elements of water play within the play | | 1 |
| Need for speed mitigation along Appin road - speed camera, roundabouts | | 1 |
| Speed down when at roundabout. Signage. Consider speed bump | | 1 |
| Park needs to be well maintained, there are wildlife in the area, snakes etc. | | 1 |
| Georges River cycleway needs to be prioritised | | 1 |
| Mind motorbikes - signage/CCTV | | 1 |
| Use of CCTV to mitigate antisocial behaviour | | 1 |
| Wish to see child focused engagement. Department to consider additional engagement round to detail | | 1 |
| Crossing is incorrectly located and needs to serve residents of Appin Valley | | 1 |
| Ongoing cost to maintain - council needs income | | 1 |
| Youth in the area desperately need play recreation options - full support | 1 | |
| Pedestrian access for kids on scooters or bikes | | 1 |
| Current dam on property is essential for wildlife - drinking (due to polluted water source nearby) | | 1 |
| Full support for the project. It is so needed for kids of all ages | 1 | |
| Diverse engagement needed: children's voice, youth voice, those who can't reach today's pop up | | 1 |
| Question the need for the park - there is already a suitable provision of open space | | 1 |
| Consult with police on public safety and anti-social behaviour | | 1 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Need to address wildlife risk to children: snakes, territorial kangaroos | | 1 |
| Appin Road on Saturday/Sunday is bumper to bumper, park needs to understand this will impact entry | | 1 |
| Amenities to include adult change facility and family suitable inclusions | | 1 |
| Inclusion of spaces and facilities for youth in the park | | 1 |
| Great to see space dedicated to community and not housing | 1 | |
| Gated play area for the kids | | 1 |
| Boundary fencing for wildlife and motorbikes | | 1 |
| Is there a need for another amenities building to accommodate capacity for users? | | 1 |
| Consider the inclusion of a community garden or bush care propagation area, similar to the Wollondilly community garden. This idea is low cost, environmentally un intrusive, and a huge appetite from community to get involved. | | 1 |
| Exercise equipment for adults for future stages | | 1 |
| Concern how this regional park will impact road congestion along Appin Road. Full support | 1 | 1 |
| High school kids need safe surveillance | | 1 |
| Bushwalking trail to Mahoneys Hole | | 1 |
| New tree - no gums at back of residents' house | | 1 |
| Wish to see local procurement policy | | 1 |
| Love the setting. Provide varies range of experience. Better than small playground | 1 | |
| Full support for this much needed space | 1 | |
| Emergency trails. RFS bushfire concerns from residents | | 1 |
| No footpath on east side of Appin Road South of first round about | | 1 |
| NSW Gov to allocate maintenance budget | | 1 |
| CCTV at choke/entry points into the park | | 1 |
| Movement activated CCTV needed | | 1 |
| Wish to see connection to Georges River as part of this project --> through Koala corridor | | 1 |
| Better to have a bus stop at entry for kids to access | | 1 |
| Traffic along Appin Road needs to be a shared project alongside this | | 1 |
| Koala ranger station? Authority to look after wildlife | | 1 |
| Allocate maintenance budget | | 1 |
| Full support, just ensure adequate pedestrian access | 1 | 1 |
| Space needs to include elements of waterplay or splash pads | | 1 |
| Concerned about maintenance falling short due to lack of funding at Wollondilly Council | | 1 |
| Fenced off dog area for off-leash | | 1 |
| Zebra crossing for pedestrian access | | 1 |
| Footpath along Appin Road on the park side | | 1 |

L4, Level 4/68-72 Wentworth Ave, Surry Hills NSW 2010

T +61 400 471 469 E john@jocconsulting.com.au

Follow Us

Facebook: JOCConsulting

Twitter: JOCConsulting

Instagram: [jocconsulting](#)

jocconsulting.com.au