

Phase 2 Public Events and Workshops: Zoning, layout and design elements

22 MAY 2024

COLLABORATIVE DESIGN PROCESS
FOR WALTER MILDENHALL PARK

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Thank you to everyone who gave their time and insight to the Walter Mildenhall Park project.

After the initial phase of engagement was complete, Third Studio and the Hutt City Council Urban Design team organised public events and workshops to focus on zoning, layout and more detailed conversation about design elements for the design of Walter Mildenhall Park.

These events included:

- 2 Workshops at Wesley Rata Village
- 1 Workshop with CAG
- A public event at Trade School Kitchen

The kaupapa of these events is:

1. To encourage passive and in-person active engagement
2. To capture voices of the community who could not make it to other events
2. To continue to understand why design elements are important to make smart design decisions
3. To start locating where important design elements should go in the park and understand why it is important they are located there.

CAG Workshop

On the 10th of April for 1.5 hours between 6pm and 7.30pm, three facilitators held a workshop with members of the Naenae Community Advisory Group (CAG).

This group was asked to test the workshop method proposed for future workshops and public events.

The facilitators used plans, tracing paper, the project values and pens to support a design exercise for the park. Participants were asked to consider where to locate the key elements that the community has said are most important.

Insights & Conclusions: the engagement process

SIMPLIFY ENGAGEMENT CONTENT

There was a lot of content for the group to consider. The element that was most contentious was where the kai preparation space(s) should be located. Therefore this will be a focal point to simplify the engagement going forward.



Summary of Key Themes

PARK WHAKAPAPA & WAIRUA

- Now is the time to rename the park. This is the opportunity for people to build further connections to it and do this by building on the whakapapa that already exists.
- The wairua of the park needs to be recognised and shown. It is a living, breathing park that is not static. The community will continue to nurture it.
- Leave space for elements that we can't afford now but can come later.

KAI PREPARATION AND SHARING

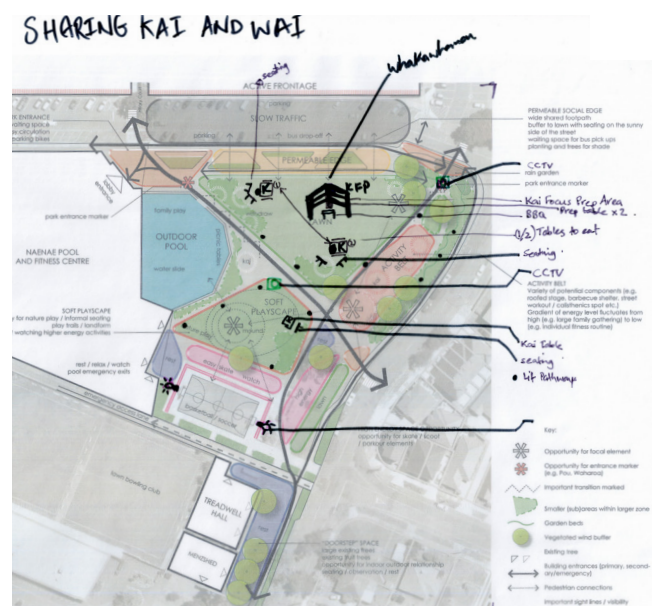
There were varying suggestions for where these spaces should be located in the park:

- Centre of lawn with seating options dotted around edges of lawn: focus of whakawhanaungatanga.
- On top of the mound to keep away from busy roads. Others raised accessibility issues.
- Kai space should be a pavilion that can transform into a stage when necessary. Naenae is lacking a big open space for an event, the lawn here is an opportunity.
- Multiple people suggested there be multiple kai preparation spaces.

Facilities required:

- At least 2 tables for food prep.
- Potential to have food sharing spaces separate from food prep spaces.
- Rubbish and recycling bins.
- Water source.
- CAG desires hāngī/umu pit.
- Shade/shelter.

“If you get a strong recommendation [from the community] for something we can't afford plan for it because we can go to the community or people we know that will give us money for something specific.”



Wheels and Canes Group

On the 12th of April, three Urban Design team facilitators talked to:

- Elderly members of the community (5 women and 4 men)

Facilitators used plans, pens and stickers to support conversations about where elements should go in the park and why.

Summary of Key Themes

REST SPACES AND PLANTING

- Events are important for wellness and connection. Benches that cut into a slope are easier for people with disabilities to sit on than a grass slope.
- Planting to transition between spaces.
- Opportunities for health and cultural education with rongoa and herbs.
- Trees with colour can complement existing greenery.
- Seating at Treadwell St and Everest Ave corner for people to stop (potentially also used by drinkers so they are on the edge rather than middle of the park).
- Shaded areas that are accessible for wheelchairs.
- Quiet zones away from busy areas for people with sensory needs.

SHARING KAI AND WAI

- A good gathering space that is shaded.
- Seats under trees for 8-10 people including wheelchair access.

HIGH ENERGY PLAY

- Loop tracks are interesting and engaging.
- Playable pathways that can be used by a mum with a pram and child on a scooter.
- Volleyball nets encourage intergenerational play.

LOW ENERGY PLAY

- Accessible sensory flower beds enable disability groups to get closer.
- Simple water play allows all groups, but especially mokopuna, to stay hydrated.
- Board games give rangatahi and elderly a space to meet up.
- Equipment should have accessible pathways. An accessible swing for wheelchairs users to enjoy is good.

ACCESSIBILITY AND SAFETY

- Non-verbal communication boards (core boards) so the park is more accessible.
- Treadwell St is a busy road and fencing or planting was discussed for safety.

COMMUNITY IDENTITY

- Sculptures to create continuity for mental health. E.g. pou marking rongoa.
- Expressions of tikanga were important. Eg. two pou: one pou representing 'organically Naenae,' second pou representing all diverse community groups. Note, Mana Whenua have indicated that pou should represent only Mana Whenua cultural identity.
- Murals are a great way to show culturally diverse artists and bring colour to the park. They could show the history of Naenae which would encourage pride.
- Small details like wooden wind chimes in trees and upside down umbrellas for shade can foster community identity.

Summary of Key Themes

REST SPACES AND PLANTING

- Participants would like to see free WIFI in the park for young people
- Planting could be low maintenance, a mixture of native and exotics and low for security. A mixture of native and exotic plants are important to attract wood pigeons, tuis and fantails back to the park.



Above: green stickers indicate suggested rest space and planting

- Seats for people using walking frames, spread seats throughout and have arm rests and back supports for older people. Seats at Wainuiomata Town Centre were mentioned as a good example as they

are simple. Some low-lying seats that are not in the way of pathways

- Shelter from wind – doesn't need to be high but create a calm zone on the other side. Covered seating was also mentioned. Raised mounds could be used for shelter and was suggested as one way to achieve this next to the "Social Activities area."
- All participants felt that the rain garden should be playable. Playful characters in the rain gardens/making the space fun. Perhaps eel sculptures and herons.
- Participants would prefer if the space was explicitly smoke and vape free
- A swinging love seat and s shaped conversation seat were mentioned as options.



Above: pink marker indicates suggested S-shaped seat locations in the park

SHARING KAI AND WAI

- Participants felt that the kai space should extend the whole length of the "Social activity space" and include preparation, shelter and good accessible seating
- There was a concern that the main eating area was too far from the bathroom facilities in the Pool.
- They also liked the smaller kai area next

to the play space and felt this would be good for young families. This was seen as a more accessible area for bathroom facilities.

- Rubbish bins should be throughout the park especially next to eating areas.



Above: pink and orange marker indicates suggested kai and wai sharing areas.

- More water fountains would be preferable especially next to eating spaces.
- Room for a coffee cart was also mentioned as adding value to the space.
- BBQs along Petone foreshore were mentioned as a good example, but need to have good maintenance.

HIGH ENERGY PLAY

- Outdoor gym equipment for health and wellbeing was important.
- Beginner skating area was seen as very useful for young people.
- Participants were very positive about the fact that the design created "safe spaces for children, teens and teen girls."
- Participants valued and approved of the Rangatahi focused area.
- They could see the lawn being useful for games such as soccer and cricket for young people and wished to make sure seating areas didn't interfere with space to play.

LOW ENERGY PLAY

- This area was positively received. The concept of a playful landscape and natural play was supported.
- They wanted to ensure that play elements are universal and accessible for those in wheelchairs.
- Large basket swings can be used by older people.
- Rocking horses able to be used by elderly people.
- Merry go rounds were also mentioned.
- Accessible play that will take a wheelchair. Imaginative / creative examples such as a fire engine were given.



Above: orange stickers indicate suggested low energy play locations and red stickers indicate suggested high energy play locations.

SAFETY

- Participants said the park must be accessible and stepless. Surfacing should be solid and even after heavy rain. People in wheelchairs must be able to access the whole park.
- Participants would like the park to be well lit at night-time. This is important for safety of pedestrians using the park to get home. They were mindful of cost but felt that at least 5 light poles or rows

of lights should be installed all the way down the main path between Everest and Treadwell. Arches like on bridges covered in lights at the entrances were suggested.

- Getting out of the car on Treadwell St was dangerous and difficult as you might fall over.
- They like the idea of the crossings and asked that they be raised and coloured red in the style of the Beltway cycle path.
- Participants liked the idea of adding more accessible parking outside the medical centre on Everest Ave.
- Dogs should be leashed or not allowed in the park.
- Speed limits for wheeled activities in the park near rest areas was suggested.

COMMUNITY IDENTITY

- Participants liked and approved of the space outside Treadwell Hall being a spill out area for Menz Shed and Treadwell Hall. They felt it would make these amenities more visible to the community.
- It was suggested that the Menz Shed should be involved in fabricating elements for the park.
- The name of the park was mentioned several times as needing to be changed. Happy Fun Park was suggested. (Interestingly this is the same name suggested by our refugee and migrant workshop).
- Local history on display in the park was mentioned in the form of artwork, pou and other markers. Artworks should be changeable and updated over time.

Trade School Kitchen

On the 16th of April for 4 hours between 10am and 2pm, three facilitators talked to:

- Parents with tamariki/rangatahi
- Accessibility advocates and caretakers
- Migrants
- People who live across the street/within proximity of the park

The table was ready for discussion, equipped with plans, 3D printed building and trees for site context, and a tablet with a digital model of the existing park.

The facilitation team connected with both passers by and people who intended to come and chat about where elements that community engagement has shown are most important should to in the park and why.

Insights & Conclusions: the engagement process

DIFFERENT WAYS OF UNDERSTANDING SPACES

Until this engagement, most conversations were supported by the design component "polaroids" and plans of the proposed zones. Having plans, a physical model and a digital model had a good impact on how people orientated themselves, understood scale and contributed to the conversation.

ACCESSIBILITY

Due to the time, day and school holidays, the event was accessible to people that weren't able to join previous events - particularly caregivers of neurodivergent rangatahi and tamariki.

KAI AND WAI

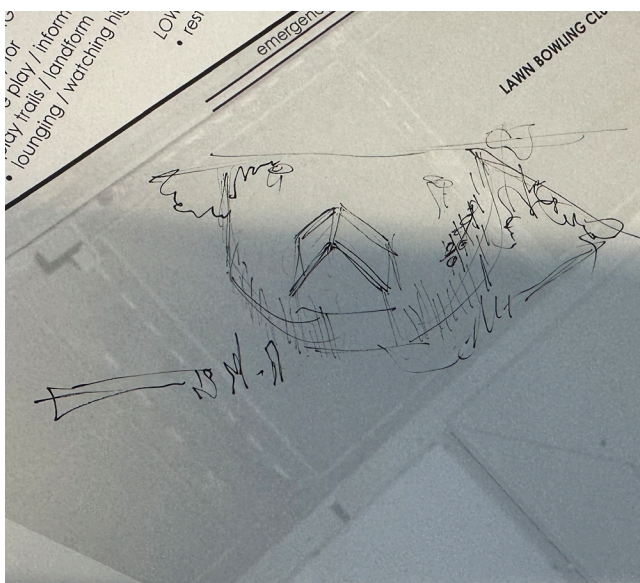
The majority of conversations are about where kai sharing spaces should be.



Summary of Key Themes

PRIORITISING FOR ACCESSIBILITY AND NEURODIVERGENCE

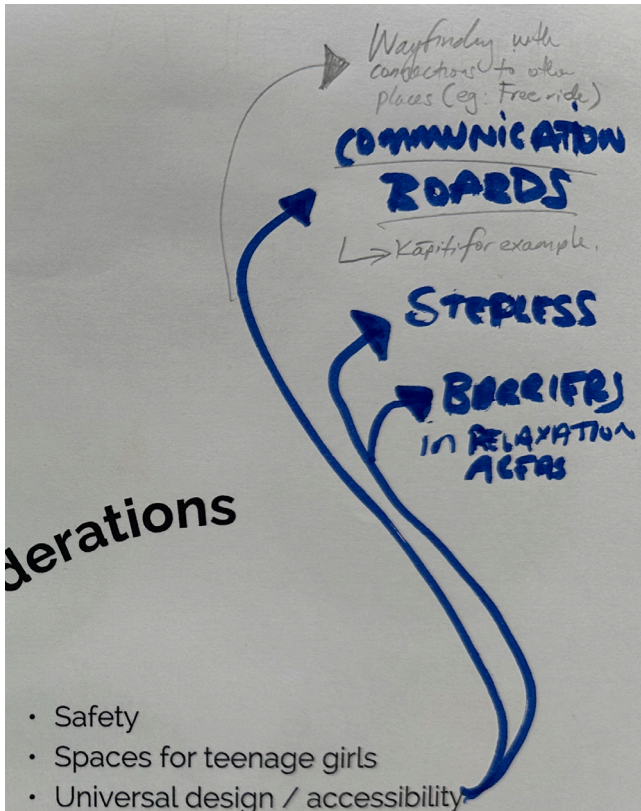
- Communication boards are crucial for non-verbal people. Talk Link Trust is a supplier of boards and should be looked into and the Lorna Irene Drive Reserve playground in Kāpiti was given as a good example.
- Major routes should be stepless and at least 1.8 metres so people can walk and wheel side by side.
- Wayfinding and connection to crucial amenities for parents and caregivers is necessary. For example, clear signage to nearly accessible toilets.
- Fencing and barriers for “relaxation areas” to cater to neurodivergent young people were very important. They should not be too big, accommodate approx. 20 kids, have accessible play elements and should integrate with other natural play elements. This could be located into the nature play area near the beginner skating area and the pool boundary.



“No one goes to Avalon Park if they have neurodivergent kids - there's nowhere for us to go where it's safe”



- Accessible play was important, with suggestions that tumblers and balancing elements are opportunities for movement to be soothing and to tell the stories of Naenae.
- The road crossing network was noted as particularly problematic for early childhood education caregivers as they have to follow protocols for crossing at official crossings, making access to the park difficult for some.

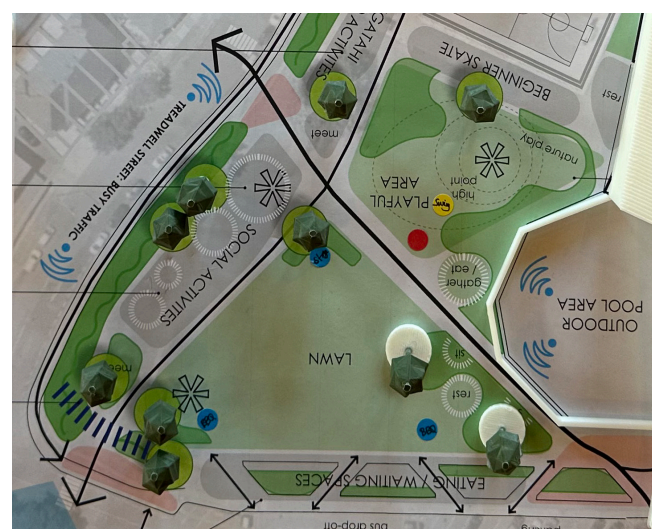


SHARING KAI

- Accessible seating in kai areas came up - seating with arms for people to push themselves up and out of seats was important.
- Accessible picnic tables with a single sturdy leg and square shape were a priority for better wheelchair access.
- Seating 10-15 people away from stream of pedestrians was highlighted.
- Location of facilities for kai were suggested for outside the perimeter of the lawn, in the social activity area and next to the pool fencing.

IMAGINATIVE PLAY

- Simple balance elements, tree swings and natural play were important, and suggestions to get the Menz Shed involved in their creation came up.
- Spider swings were again very popular and important for versatility and social connection.
- Rangatahi brought up opportunities to scatter Te Reo and English stories in the park that talk about Naenae - this connects quite well with the opportunity to sandblast rangatahi poetry and artworks into park elements.





REST SPACES

- Reading and resting “nooks” were important. For this reason, low lying bushes and higher trees can achieve these nooks without obstructing sight lines.
- Harakeke was mentioned as an option pool edge of the park.
- Sturdy new trees like pohutukawa that can handle climbing were important to rangatahi. More trees were encouraged on the outer edge of the park, particularly kōwhai.
- One rangatahi said soft colours like purple could be prioritised in the selection of flowers. Flowers closer to



the major routes was a suggestion made so that young tamariki and people with accessibility needs can interact with them. Avoiding plants that are known to give hay fever were also mentioned.

- Fruit trees were popular because they are useful and foster community connection
- Rain gardens were mentioned as a good way to cleanse water.
- Paving stones could be used to delineate pathways through bushes to deter trampling of vegetation.

HIGH ENERGY PLAY

- Versatile “choose your risk” play like levels of monkey bars were popular amongst rangatahi.
- Beginner wheeled activities were reinforced as important by tamariki and girls.
- Boulders for sitting and climbing in the social activity zone were seen as a cost effective way to do risky play whilst also referencing local narratives.
- Skating facility location was confirmed - a suggestion was made to make it more of a looped pathway.



For the feedback in raw form please
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THIRD STUDIO
creating opportunities in design processes

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