

Building an inclusive playspace at Rippleside - Geelong

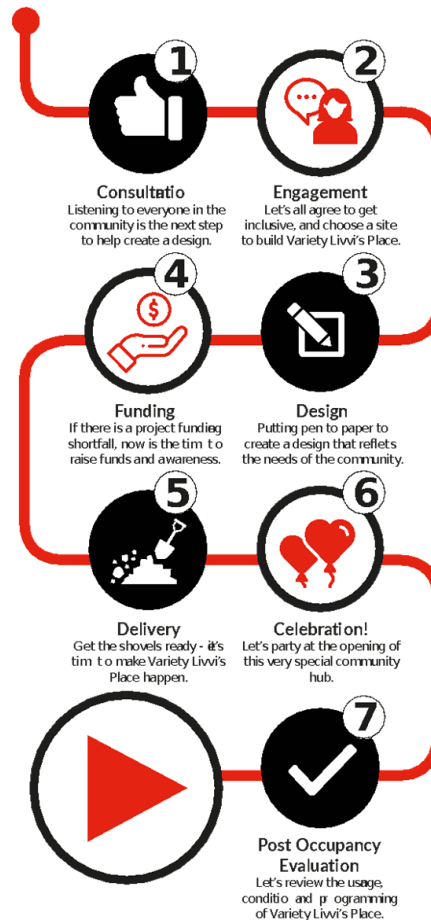


Consultation Report
Prepared by Variety NSW for The City of
Greater Geelong and Jeavons Landscape
Architects – December 2019



The Process

Playtime! How to build a Variety Livvi's Place



Introduction

The City of Greater Geelong (CoGG) has entered into a partnership with Variety - the Children's Charity to deliver an inclusive playspace at Rippleside Park. This new inclusive playspace, is to be known as Variety Livvi's Place Rippleside. This playspace will offer a unique and inclusive play experience encouraging play for all.

Well-designed inclusive playspaces activate the community and enhance social interactions by bringing people together to strengthen family and community bonds, encourage participation and healthy activity. The playspace is due for completion mid 2021.

Rippleside Park has an aged but much loved existing playground that was built by the community 19 years ago. The community supported CoGG and the State Government to fund the playground with sponsorship and fundraising and was hands-on with its actual construction. This has a great history of community input and ownership makes it a perfect location to build a Variety Livvi's Place playspace.

This community project will follow the same ethos as 20 years ago and work with community members, local champions and corporate connections to create an exceptional playspace where we can all have fun and create an inclusive community.

Future site of Variety Livvi's Place



The Community

Greater Geelong Population 233,429 (2016) Estimated current population 257,000

18% of the population is under 14 years old – 42,261 (2016)

14,054 (6%) of the population in 2016 reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability.

In comparison to Melbourne's population this is a higher proportion. In Melbourne, 4.8% of people reported needing assistance with core activities.

Sourced: www.forecast.id.com.au <https://profile.id.com.au/geelong/population?WebID=10>

What are we doing

The project will live and breathe inclusion. We engage with all members of our community for input and feedback, bringing stakeholders together, sharing each others' perspectives and learning from each other on what inclusion truly is. We undertake best practice to do this, with an inclusive and playful process to build an exceptional inclusive playspace and community hub.

The playspace will be an attribute for The City's aims as an accessible city that supports participation and promotes social inclusion. It will be included in the national network of Livvi's Places around Australia.

"Victoria's 2nd capital, most liveable city".

This first stage community consultation was conducted in three phases:

1. An online survey
2. Face to face consultation with the students from two local schools closest to the site and two schools with students who require additional support.
3. Stakeholder workshops with community members, council staff and key service providers in the community.

(Consultations were also attended by engaged landscape architects Mary Jeavons & Melody Miller, Jeavons Landscape Architects)

Methodology

The Community Engagement Plan was established allowing consultation opportunities for the local community to engage prior to design work being undertaken.

Program	Group and location	Details	Objective	Attendees
8.11.19	Christmas Launch Cancelled due to extreme weather conditions	Geelong foreshore	Engage with key stakeholders and explore design options for an inclusive play space. Draw on community knowledge and experience.	VNSW
20 & 21.11.19	Barwon Valley School Ashby Primary School Nelson Park School St Patrick's Catholic Primary School	School Consultations	Engage with key stakeholders (the children) and explore design options for an inclusive play space. Draw on community knowledge and experience.	VNSW
22.11.2019 Session planned for 21.11.19 cancelled due to no registrations	Stakeholder Group	Geelong Library	Workshop Intro to the project and start community engagement. Explore design options for an inclusive play space and draw on community knowledge and experience.	VNSW CoGG
Oct/NOV 19	Online Survey		An online survey was created and promoted. The survey page had over 700 hits to the page and an uptake of 158 undertaking the survey . Click here to access the survey data and responses.	VNSW CoGG

The Workshops

Variety facilitated the group to think and share on the following topics:

- What is Inclusion?
 - what does it mean when we say it
 - what does it mean we have to do or think about?
- What does it mean to play?
- What makes the space inclusive and what do we need to consider in our design that people can play, stay, be comfortable, safe, have fun and PLAY!

Following robust discussion about lived experience and the priorities of inclusive play, participants broke into groups of 5-7 and drew their dream playspace for Rippleside Park. These were then presented and shared to the group and engaged landscape architects Mary Jeavons and Melody Miller (Jeavons Landscape Architects).



Feedback – What is Inclusion...

We opened our consultations sharing thoughts and understandings of what inclusion meant to them what we needed to think about if we are to create an inclusive place at Rippleside.

“Inclusion is making people feel they belong”

Our kids said Inclusion is...

Making it fair for all

Everyone can use it, everyone can join in and do the same thing

Don't leave anyone out

When we share and play together

Everyone is welcome

To include everyone we need to make sure people using wheelchairs can get up, like ramps

Exclusion is when people are different and we keep them out

When someone is out of the game and can't get to the space

Feedback – What is Inclusion...

Our adults said an inclusive place is...

A place for all ages

A destination where there is access and participation that leads to inclusion

Inclusion = ALL people

“Everyone wants to go and feels they belong”



Feedback – Our Kids

About 140 children, from 4 local schools. Mainly Student Representative Council from each year, prep to Year 10.

The children go to school or live within close proximity to the school location.

Well over half have used the park for their birthday parties, school excursions, family gatherings and Christmas gatherings.



Feedback – Our Kids said....

What we love about Rippleside Park...

We ride their bikes to the park

It's a good park for little children and big children

Lots of open space

Its fun to be creative in and use your imagination

It's challenging - it wobbly and clattery, ropes and bridges

You don't have to follow the rule and can climb all over it

The monkey bars and swings

Mum and Dad and grandparents can play with us too

The beach is close by

"I play near the fat tree – You can climb on it and hang from it"

There's lots of hiding spots

Great for chasing games and Hide and seek

A good place to make friends

The not so good stuff...

We like snacks on the grass – but we need a path or a table, it's a long way to walk and its dangerous.

Bark and dust from the bark and kids throw bark

One entrance

You can get lost in there because it all looks the same

We get splinters from the old wood

The flying fox is too high, little kids can't use it

It's too sunny and hot

Not enough swings

Bridge is too low and we bump our heads

Play equipment is squashed up, need to space it out

Not enough climbing

Feedback – How we play

What games we play

Hide and Seek
Chasing games
Imagination games - Treasure hunts/gaols/cooking
/shops/mums and dads
Climbing and being high
Ninja Warrior
Sitting down and playing music
Sardines (squash into spaces)
Jump, fly and launch from high spaces and land
Spies and secret code breakers



What equipment we like to use

Flying foxes - A Double ride seat - two sizes - one you can sit, one you can hang on, 2 so we can race, a curly one, running track next to it so you can race

Slides - curvy and covered, wide

Swings- double swings, high swings, high backs on them

Balance beams with hand supports

Monkeys bars – rings and turnover bars and flipping bars

Tunnels and bridges

Sandpit

Trampolines

Climbing wall – with ropes

Hammocks

Feedback – What we would LOVE in our playspace

TREES - Lots of real trees for shade and to climb

Climbing rocks – Big rocks we can climb and perch on

A BIG tree house - with a slide, places to hide, bridges, shelves and rooms inside, space to be together, toy

Dark spaces that echo, A GIANT Cave
Hiding spaces

Loose natural materials

Bark, sticks, rocks and leaves and logs, props

Sensory Wall

Sounds – ocean sounds, bird sounds, trees swaying

"I like to feel the weather"

A garden - plants for picking

Flowers for a bug garden

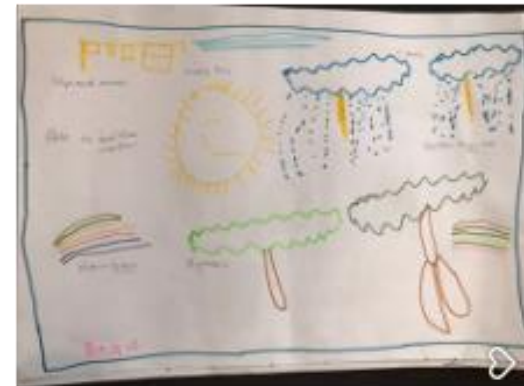
A fairy garden – with real birds and real butterflies

A jungle path

A Hobbit house

A space ship

"More greenery makes us feel happy"



Feedback – What we would LOVE in our playspace

“Water that trickles on its own so you can take your shoes and socks off and feel it“

A Waterfall – flowing water – a river that runs through the park – a creek – a stream

Water, water, water – Pumps / trickling water / creek with rocks you can walk in / water sprays

Fish in a pond to feed

A place you can sit and dangle your feet in

Water you can hear

Sit next to and be calm

Ponds with tubes and rocks to throw in

Bridges

Mud pit – wet sand pit

Sit on diggers in the sand pit – hidden things you have to find

A rock wall

Real chickens and a chicken coup



Feedback – What we would LOVE in our playspace

A place to “do” art – more artwork and colour
A mural done by the kids with an artist

A message wall and positive affirmations and motivational quotes

A basketball court
A place to hang with my friends
A giant tree swing

Space to run and play chasings
A bike track and skate path
A swirly slide
An obstacle course
A snake you can climb
TWO flying foxes next to each other so we can race

Group equipment - lots of kids can get on and play together – Spinner or carousel
Group games – hopscotch, bowling

A book corner

A fort, a tower, A castle that lights up at night

.....A café for mum and dad



Feedback – Our big people

A workshop was hosted on November 22 by the City of Greater Geelong. It was attended by both council staff, community members and local service providers.

- 2 x ECEI BCYF staff
- 2 x CoGG staff
- 2 x friends of Rippleside Park and Environs
- 5 x local residents
- 5 x local residents gave input remotely



Feedback – Our big people said...

- Make it fun, interactive and develop the imagination for both kids & adults – Get the adults PLAYING!
- Scooter track and bike track with humps, diversions and challenges
- raised-maize-like-wall that kids can actually walk along
- Incorporate outdoor adult exercise equipment
- Wheel chair swings, Extra large net swings up to 10 kids , Swings for adults and kids
- 3 heights flying foxes, from kids to adults at 3 different heights but make sure the kids can reach properly with raised inclined ramp areas leading up to them on both sides. (No steps.) Have a rubber section underneath for falls
- Climbing/rope play/forts
- Little spaces, hiding spaces and sectioned areas.
- **“Big kids don’t think its cool to be at a little kids playground”** Give 13-17 y/o hang out spaces
- Intimate spaces
- Shade over the seats – lots of seats.
- Seating with good visibility, perhaps in the centre of the playspace not on the edges
- Seats facing each other so it promotes conversation
- Trees and grassed areas inside the playspace.
- Water play – messy mud play - Reference to water and the bay – Pirates and hidden treasure
- A large overhead water spray area for use on weekends closer to the water
- Gardening areas and flowers/herbs/veggie gardens/Community Garden
- Natural environment and resources used
- Sensory wall with sound and water and solar lights

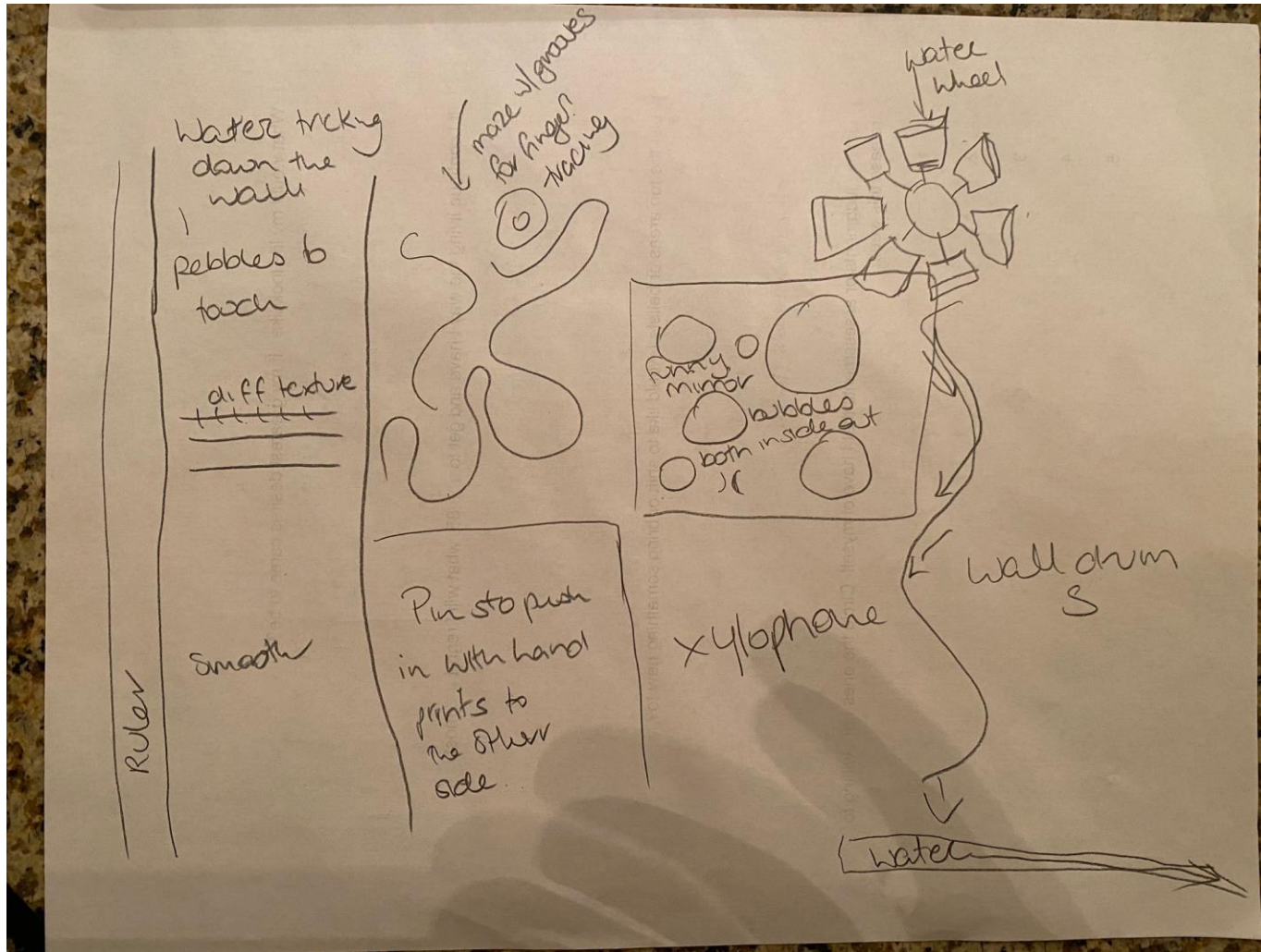
Feedback – Our big people said...

- Solar lighting and use recycled materials
- Try and reduce the need for steps where possible and use inclined ramps with side walls
- Design the area to be used in changing weather conditions.
- Street library/book swap and a reading nook or area in the wider park
- No-one uses the open space because it's not flat, it's too hot. We need more trees and something set amongst the trees to entice people out into the park.
- Use the wider park space – not everything needs to be kept in the fenced playspace – climbing sculptures, draw people out into the park area.
- More shade in the big park for picnics and free play
- Safe passage from Drumcondra siade – need a walk track/bike path - Raised sensory gardens around outer edges along a walk
- Create challenge and risk and high areas
- An old real train, tractor, plane, tank, old truck, a boat, a fire engine all made safe so kids can climb on and use their imagination
- Colourful wall art and artistic sculptures – related to nature and music.
- CCTV or lock the park after hours to avoid anti-social behaviour
- **“Make this in Geelong a first and lead the way with something better for the kids”**

Our big people designed...



... A sensory wall with water, sound and light.



Can I get there?

Participants highlighted:

CAN I GET THERE

- There is issues accessing the playspace by public transport.
- There is no path from Drumcondra side. Need a walking/bike path
- There is difficulty accessing from the current parking are and this is limited

Can I play?

There is no access for wheelchair, mobility devices or prams because of the bark.

Ensuring there are spaced off sections for older and younger children.

Set up so we are protected from elements

Communication in a number of universal languages such as PECS, Braille or large fonts. Important the signage at entry clearly states companion animals are welcome.

No transfers - this is the optimal. Carers/teachers can not lift their clients/students into swings.

Clear line of sight across the playspace - don't obstruct views, this allows independent play.

The height and width of swings, slides, all experiences needs to allow for people of all sizes.



Can I play?

Sensory pathways

Being part without being immersed. Be as engaged as much as you can.

Nature based and adventure play experiences with water was favoured.

The height and width of swings, slides, all experiences needs to allow for people of all sizes.

Wheelchair accessible trampolines.

Basketball hoops, netball hoops and footy posts in the wider park area



Can I stay?

The need for a fence with single entry to secure the experience.

Bubblers or water taps inside the space

Shelters that enable people to stay and connect longer - temperatures during summer get very hot. Having shelters with tables meant that people with sensory issues could stay and play longer.

Bathrooms are not accessible - A full changing table with a hoist is ideal, see Changing Places. <https://changingplaces.org.au/>

Ensuring the quieter activities are protected from elements

Safe and clean

Wheelchair accessible tables and playspaces

Need BBQ inside the fence line - more BBQ's closer to playspace

Big trees, gardens are important.

Café coffee shop or coffee cart.

Needs to be safe and clean, and regularly maintained.

Need for shade in the wider park area



Engagement and Communication

Discussed the need to incorporate

Braille and PECS for a communication strategy.

Requirements to use signage to promote what an inclusive playspace is.

Require the opportunity to role model inclusion.

Look at integrating community art.



Recommendations

All consultations heavily focused on:

- Use of natural resources – with lots of trees for shade and to play in and on
- Connection to water
- Adventure and exploration where we develop imagination
- Risk progression and universal design principals very important
- It be a place for kids and adults – where we get adults to PLAY!



Recommendations

There was a high regard for artistic stimulation and opportunity to be creative - art and sculpture incorporated into design and play opportunities

