



## NATURE PLAY SPACES

As part of the ACT Government's Better Suburbs Program, a community-led Play Spaces Forum allocated \$1.9 million to play spaces in 2018-19.

This Forum trialled a new way of making decisions in the ACT, through participatory budgeting. The Forum's decisions are now being implemented by the ACT Government.

One key decision was the allocation of \$350,000 for new nature play spaces to enhance Eddison Park in Woden and Glebe Park in the City. \$150,000 has also been set aside to build a nature play space in Farrer.

Natural play spaces provide creative and imaginative play experiences, using elements from the landscape to encourage children to climb, jump and explore. These new play areas add to Canberra's extensive playground network, providing opportunities for social interaction and play to enrich the lives of our children.

Nature play spaces can include anything from bike trails, dry creek beds, balance beams, climbing structures, cubby houses, water and sand play, sensory landscaping, balance logs, and much more.

The Play Spaces Forum specified these nature play spaces are to be designed in partnership with the community. The ACT Government asked the community what types of play elements they would like to see in the nature play spaces in Glebe Park, Eddison Park and Farrer. These views informed the design of the nature play spaces.

## THE CONVERSATION

The community told us what they would like to see in the nature play spaces over two phases of engagement:

**Phase 1: Initial co-design sessions** - the community provided input on preferred play elements, the nature play space location within each park, and other feedback and ideas.

**Phase 2: Final co-design sessions** - the community was presented with design concept options and asked to choose which design concept they preferred, and which play elements in the designs they preferred.

We held conversations online, face to face and directly with the community from 12 December 2018 to 22 February 2019.

The community had their say on what play elements to include in the designs through:

- Pop-up sessions for:
  - Glebe Park – Saturday 15 December at the Merry and Bright family festival.
  - Eddison Park – Thursday 3 January at the Woden Westfield and Sunday 13 January at the Southside Farmers Market.
  - Farrer – Tuesday 18 December at the Fox and Bow café.



- Final co-design sessions for:
  - Glebe Park – Monday 11 February 2019 at Glebe Park.
  - Eddison Park – Monday 18 February 2019 at Eddison Park and Sunday 24 February 2019 at the Southside Farmers Market.
  - Farrer – Wednesday 20 February 2019 at the Farrer Primary School Community BBQ and Thursday 28 February 2019 onsite.
- An online YourSay survey.
- Emailing comments to [communityengagement@act.gov.au](mailto:communityengagement@act.gov.au).

## WHO ENGAGED

The ACT Government conducted targeted engagement and co-design with approximately 220 community members for Glebe Park, 360 community members for Eddison Park, and 130 people for Farrer. This included the following groups:

- Children aged between 6 and 13 at local schools
  - Ainslie Primary School for Glebe Park
  - St Peter and Paul Primary School for Eddison Park
  - Farrer Primary School for Farrer
- Carers of children aged between 0 and 5 at child care centres:
  - Binara Early Childcare Centre for Glebe Park
  - Woden Early Childcare Centre for Eddison Park
- Special needs groups, including children aged between 6 and 13, and carers:
  - Black Mountain School for Glebe Park
  - Malkara School for Eddison Park
  - members of a disability advocacy group, Imagine More
- The broader community, with feedback from people of all ages
  - pop-up sessions
  - co-design sessions
  - through the online YourSay survey.

We also presented updates on the implementation of the Play Space Forum decisions to three community councils: Woden Valley Community Council, Weston Creek Community Council and Tuggeranong Community Council.

We presented the plans for Glebe Park to the United Ngunnawal Elders Council. The Council suggested we work with the traditional owners to create educational signage for visitors to learn about Ngunnawal language and culture.

### Key insights from the community

#### Glebe Park nature play space

1. The top 5 preferred play elements were water play, climbing, places to hide, traditional play and loose parts play.
2. There was strong support for adding Indigenous elements to the play space to recognise Ngunnawal culture, including Aboriginal artwork, signage with Ngunnawal language for play elements and giving the play space a Ngunnawal name.
3. The site between the existing playground and rotunda was the preferred location for the nature play space.
4. Primary considerations in creating the final design concept included universally inclusive play, incorporating a large tree house/climbing structure, and ensuring the nature play space complemented the beauty and heritage of Glebe Park.

#### Eddison Park nature play space

5. The top 5 preferred play elements were water play, climbing, places to hide, balance and a dirt bike track.
6. The sites adjacent to the existing playground next to the pond (on both the BBQ side and skate park side), were equally preferred for the location of the nature play space, so the final design concept builds on the existing playground and island in between, to maximise use of existing natural elements, amenities and provision for access and inclusion.
7. Feedback from the community centred around safety in the park, universal inclusion, more amenities (seating and shade) for carers and more challenging play opportunities.
8. The final design concept of the nature play space incorporated a farm theme to acknowledge the history of Eddison Park.

#### Farrer nature play space

9. The top 5 preferred play elements were water play, climbing, places to hide, traditional play and balance.
10. The Gattan Street and Longerenong Street sites were equally preferred for the location of the nature play space in Farrer, however there was overwhelming support for co-locating the nature play space with a bike track in the Longerenong Street site, due to being larger in size, well shaded by trees and situated between the school and the local shops.
11. Key themes identified in community feedback and incorporated into the final design concept included bike tracks, journey and connectivity, and challenge and risk.
12. There was strong support for adding Indigenous elements to the play space to recognise Ngunnawal culture, including art poles and a mural with artwork by children and an Aboriginal artist, and signage with Ngunnawal language for play elements and a welcome to the nature play space.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

The final design concepts will be available on the YourSay website once construction costs are finalised and final inclusions are confirmed. The inclusion of elements in the designs for the nature play spaces will be determined based on the available budget. The nature play spaces will be constructed by August 2019.

You can register to receive project updates at [TCCS.BetterSuburbs@act.gov.au](mailto:TCCS.BetterSuburbs@act.gov.au).



To find out more about nature play spaces and other initiatives, policies and projects in Canberra visit [www.yoursay.act.gov.au](http://www.yoursay.act.gov.au).

### Key Timings

- August 2018 – First Play Spaces Forum held**
- September-October 2018 – Second Play Spaces Forum and panel meetings held**  
Priorities Framework agreed and allocation of \$1.9 million into categories finalised
- December 2018 – Engagement for co-design of nature play spaces commenced**  
Pop-ups, meetings and co-design workshops held for Glebe Park, Eddison Park and Farrer
- February 2019 – Engagement for co-design of nature play spaces closed**
- March 2019 – Final design concepts accepted**
- April 2019 – Tenders for construction procurement released**  
We are here
- May 2019 – Winning tenders for construction accepted**
- May 2019 – Construction of nature play spaces in Glebe Park, Eddison Park and Farrer commences**
- August 2019 – Construction of nature play spaces finishes**

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

<p><b>83</b></p> <p>We reached 83 people via YourSay</p>	<p><b>710</b></p> <p>We spoke to 710 individuals</p>	<p><b>22</b></p> <p>We delivered 22 presentations and pop-ups</p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>We ran seven workshops with school students, two with child care workers and three community design workshops</p>
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