

## Garden of Tāne Nature Play Space summary of feedback

A total of 51 submissions were received.

Of that, 48 submissions (94%) indicated support for the proposal and three indicated opposition.

A Newsline main page article on 7 March generated mainly supportive responses on the Councils and local Facebook pages.

Key comments included strong support for the new nature playground as an attraction to enhance the Garden of for locals and visitors.

Organisations providing feedback were Disabled Persons Assembly, Canterbury District Health Board, Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga, and two submitters identifying themselves as representing the Garden of Tāne Management Committee.

There were many positive comments about how the nature playground design will support the overall character of the reserve, reinforcing the intention for imaginative play and exploration that encourages physical and social connection in this natural environment.

Specific recognition and support for the role of such a nature play space in early childhood education, especially for the local Play Centre, also included suggestions for features such as interpretation panels and guided walks.

A number of submitters recognised the Reserve Committee's local work and input, and other comments specifically supported the collaboration to include Maori cultural values.

Most suggestions for improvements or amendments to the plan were from those in overall support for the proposal. Canterbury District Health Board (CDHB) and Disabled Persons Assembly (DPA) led with suggestions relating to the need for suitable disabled access such as mobility impaired and blind and low vision.

Other suggestions included several requests to retain the old playground swings, countered by two submitters stating that the old playground equipment is out of date. It is important to note that the new nature play space does not replace and will not affect the existing playground. Council will consult separately on the future renewal of the existing playground when the equipment has reached the end of its life within the next 3 to 10 years.

A range of other requests included tables for kai, cater for older children in Akaroa, a request for a drinking fountain, gym equipment, smoke-free space, all trees retained, and a CPTED concern about the hut design.

Comments from the three submitters in opposition to the concept plan included two suggestions for alternative use of funding including upgrading the tracks in the reserve, and two questioning the need for a designed nature playground space when children can 'just play in the bush' and 'keep it natural'.

There was also a request to re-gazette the Reserve to its original name of Akaroa Domain, and to recognise Arthur William Erickson as the playground founder and long-term supporter.