



Haywood Avenue

Report on the findings from feedback received during a public engagement on the proposed changes to Haywood Avenue play area, Marsh, Huddersfield.

Summary

- The Haywood Avenue play area consultation took place from 2nd November to 30th November 2021.
- The purpose of the consultation was to communicate the draft proposals for a new play area directly with the public and gather feedback.
- The methodology used was a short online survey.
- The survey involved sharing the draft plans and asking for views via several closed and open questions.
- Overall, 24 respondents completed the online survey.

Headline Results

- The **majority of respondents (58%) did not agree** with the proposals for the redesigned park (**29% No / 29% Not really**) with **37% in agreement** to some extent.
- There was a **mixed response to the proposed key features**, with two in particular receiving a majority of disagreement from respondents (**the basket swing and the removal of fencing**). The **picnic bench** also received a high amount of disagreement.
- The key themes to emerge from the **suggestions** were that several aspects pertaining to **safety** hadn't been properly considered, and neither had the impact on the **privacy of the residents** of Haywood Avenue.
- Several **concerns** arose – primarily **safety, privacy**, and the potential for **anti-social behaviour** as a result of the proposals.
- **Comments were generally negative** as a result of the concerns, but there was support for maintaining and renovating the existing equipment.
- **Direct consultation from the council with residents** who owned property in Haywood Avenue itself and who would be impacted by the proposals was requested.

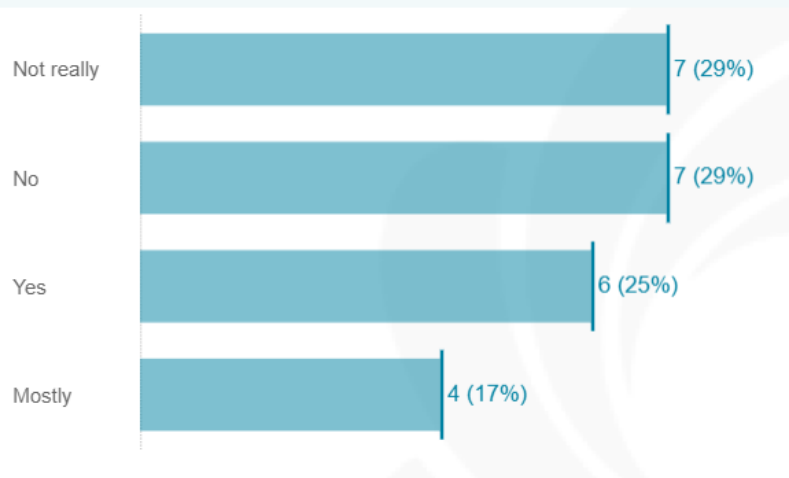
Results

A summary of results for each question as it appeared in the survey is detailed below.

Please note percentages may not always total 100%, due to rounding.

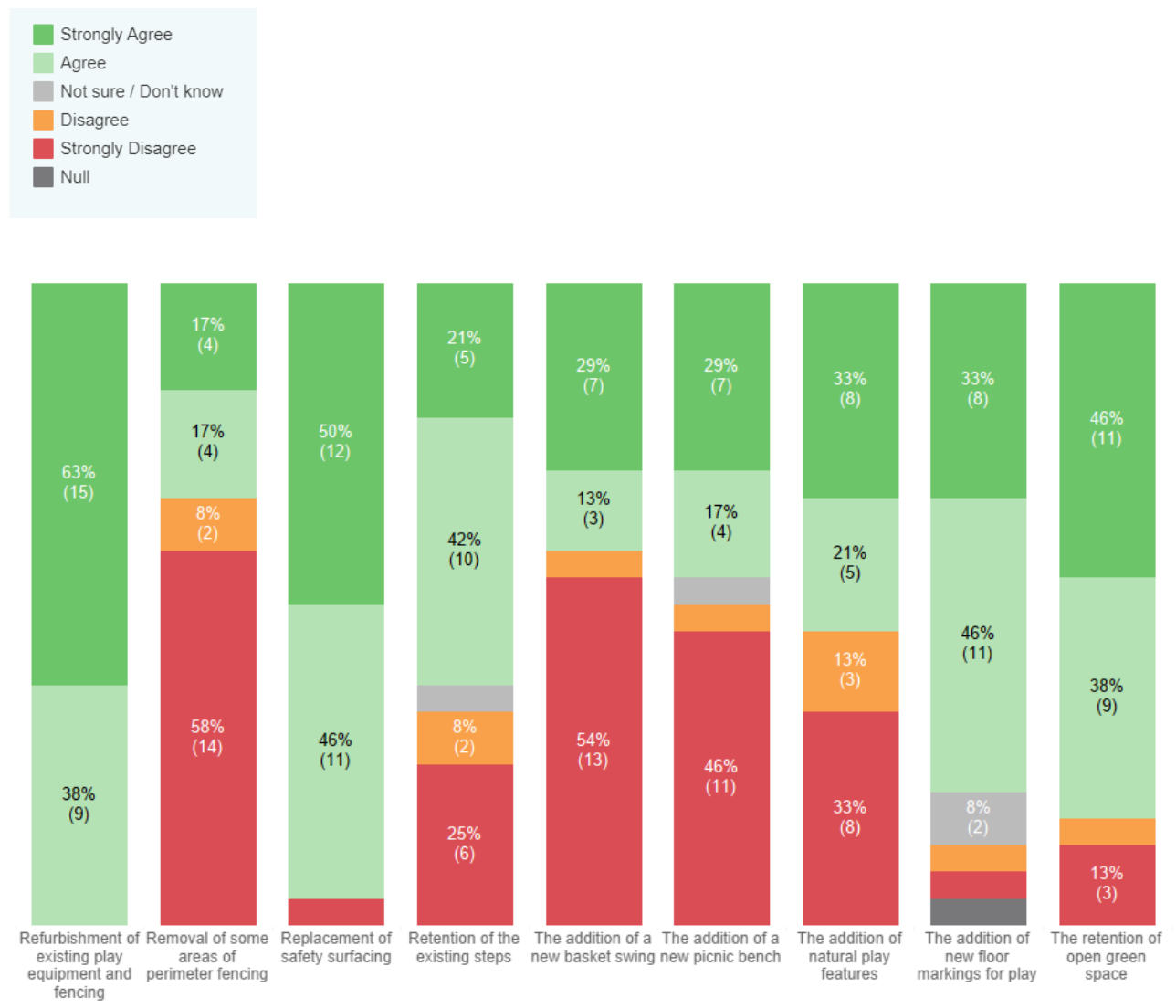
Respondents were first shown an image of the new proposed play area design and then asked the following question:

Are you generally supportive of this proposal?



The majority of respondents (58%) did not agree with the proposals, with 37% in agreement.

Respondents were then asked to what extent they agreed with the 9 key features of the proposed plan:



As you can see there was a mixed response to this question.

The majority of respondents agreed with the following key features –

- Refurbishment of the existing play equipment and fencing (including painting and new seats)
- Replacement of safety surfacing under existing play equipment
- The addition of new floor markings for play
- The retention of open green space to encourage informal play/games

There was a significant amount of disagreement with the following two features despite an overall majority of support –

- Retention of the existing steps (63% Agree, 33% Disagree, 4% Not sure)
- The addition of natural play features (54% Agree, 46% Disagree)

Respondents were divided about the addition of a new picnic bench, with 50% disagreeing to some extent (4% Disagree, 46% Strongly disagree), and 46% agreeing to some extent (17% Agree, 29% Strongly agree) with 4% answering 'Not sure / Don't know'.

The majority of respondents disagreed with proposals for the following two key features –

- The addition of a new basket swing
- Removal of some areas of perimeter fencing to open up access to the play area

Respondents were then asked three open questions:

This play area has been designed to cater for a wide range of ages and abilities. Do you have any suggestions for how the improvements can better meet local needs?

This was an open question and received 19 comments.

Key themes to emerge were as follows:

- Safety concerns were the biggest theme to emerge from this question – in particular the steps and the danger they posed to small children and the accessibility issues they caused for wheelchairs. A large percentage of respondents commented that the steps should be levelled. Retaining the railings to keep children safe and prevent dogs from getting into the play area was also mentioned by several people.
- Consideration of the residents of Haywood Avenue cul-de-sac was the second biggest theme to emerge. Respondents commented that their privacy would be compromised by the plans, and they were concerned that the proposals would attract anti-social behaviour as teenagers might start drinking there on a night.
- Maintaining the boundaries of the existing play area was the third biggest theme. Respondents called for the play area not to be expanded and for the existing equipment to simply be maintained rather than increased.
- Other comments included calls for the equipment to be more inclusive for disabled children and for the play area to be more accessible for wheelchair users.

Do you have any specific concerns about the play area renovations?

This was an open question and received 22 comments.

There were 3 clear themes to emerge:

- Attracting anti-social behaviour was the biggest theme to emerge. Respondents commented that there was already a problem in the area with drinking and drug taking, and they were worried that including a seating area or picnic bench would encourage youths to go there at night, resulting in noise and intimidation for the residents of Haywood Avenue.
- Safety was another key theme. Respondents commented that the positioning of the basket swing so close to the road was a hazard. Also, that encouraging ball games in the open spaces could lead to damage of local properties, and the removal of fencing would cause safeguarding issues for young children and problems with dogs entering the play area.
- Privacy was the third key concern. Respondents commented that the proposed basket swing was positioned too close to resident's homes, and that if the picnic bench went ahead you would be able to see into people's windows when you were sat on it. People called for the play area to be maintained as suitable for small children only, and not expanded in this way.
- Other concerns included littering / dog fouling, and issues with disabled access / lack of equipment for disabled children.

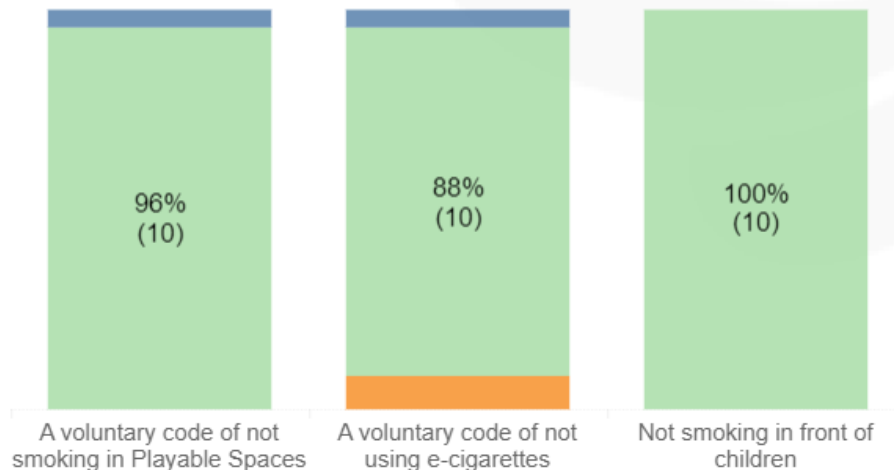
Is there anything else you would like to add to your feedback on the proposed play area renovations?

This was an open question and received 16 comments.

Many comments re-iterated issues already mentioned in the previous two questions:

- Support for maintaining and renovating the existing play area but not for expanding it.
- Concerns about the proposals attracting anti-social behaviour to the area.
- Safety issues surrounding removing the fence and placing play equipment too close to the road.
- Improving wheelchair access and equipment suitable for disabled children.
- Privacy concerns and calls from residents of Haywood Avenue for closer consultation with them as these plans directly impact on their property.
- Litter concerns and risk of damage to the trees on Haywood Avenue.

Proposal to introduce smoke-free playable spaces



Please see <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/countryside-parks-and-open-spaces/playable-spaces.aspx> for information about our next steps going forward following this consultation.