



Gregson Park Masterplan

Public exhibition report

October 2021

October 2021

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Executive summary

This report outlines key findings collected during the Phase 2 public exhibition of the draft Gregson Park Masterplan between 25 August and 6 October 2021. The draft Masterplan was available for review on the City of Newcastle's Have Your Say website and the community were invited to provide feedback by completing an online feedback form or by submitting a response via email, mail or by phone.

A total of 216 responses were gathered during the public exhibition period including 205 submitted feedback forms and 11 responses received via email. Of the 216 respondents, 140 resided in the suburb of Hamilton.

Many respondents commented positively about the Masterplan and are eager for works to begin. There was dominant support for the retention of the two tennis courts, the playground upgrade and the addition of a bat ball wall and a basketball halfcourt in the multi-activity hub. Respondents were most concerned about the removal of Tennis Clubhouse and the Tennis Club from the park and questioned the re-purposing of the gardeners shed with the assumed removal of gardeners from the park. There was also concern about the placement of the wetland in the northeast corner having an impact on Sunday soccer and the removal of heritage gardens at two locations within the park.

Respondents also made suggested changes or additions to the draft Masterplan. Many requests were received for a dedicated off-leash dog exercise area and a similar high number of responses were received calling for the retention and renovation of the Tennis Clubhouse. Other frequently mentioned requests included the addition of a second basketball halfcourt or replacing the halfcourt with a full sized basketball court and the need for night lighting to improve safety.

This engagement report will accompany a report to Council on adoption of the draft Masterplan.

1. Background

Gregson Park is a local heritage listed park located in Hamilton, NSW. The park has historical significance and is bordered by a growing community with diverse interests. The draft Masterplan builds on key existing attributes of Gregson Park to vision a vibrant, inclusive space for all ages, that supports community needs and aspirations.

The draft Gregson Park Masterplan has been prepared by Phillips Marler Landscape Architects in partnership with the City of Newcastle (CN). Using community feedback collected during Phase 1 consultation in 2020, the Masterplan suggests future improvements and development of Gregson Park with consideration to elements of green space, heritage, community use, passive and active recreation.

2 Engagement objectives

To better understand community opinion on the draft Gregson Park Masterplan, CN publicly displayed the Masterplan from 25 August to 6 October 2021.







More specifically, the public exhibition sought to:

- Raise awareness of the draft Masterplan
- Seek community feedback on the draft Masterplan.

2. Communication and promotion

During the public exhibition, a communications campaign was implemented to raise awareness of the draft Gregson Park Masterplan and promote the opportunity for community members to provide feedback.

Key communications activities are summarised on the following page, and key pieces of communications collateral are available in **Appendix I**.

Channel	Description
 Have Your Say webpage	A dedicated project webpage was created on CN's Have Your Say. The page aimed to provide information and raise awareness about the draft masterplan, and to encourage people to submit their feedback via an online form, email or mail.
 Flyers and onsite signage	<p>Flyers were distributed to 1,000 surrounding Gregson Park.</p> <p>Onsite signage was also installed at eight key locations at all entrances to the park, and within the park itself.</p>
 Social media	The public exhibition was promoted via an unpaid post of CN's Facebook page on 25 August 2021. The post intended to raise awareness and encourage people to have their say. The post reached 8,986 people.
 Newsletters	<p>An e-newsletter was distributed to 2,384 members of CN's community panel on 27 August and 29 September.</p> <p>A further article was included in the City e-news eDM on 3 September 2021, which was distributed to 2,573 people.</p>
 Council meeting	Councillors voted to place the draft Gregson Park Masterplan on public exhibition for 42 days in the Council meeting held on 24 August 2021.
 Media coverage	A media release was issued on 18 August 2021 advising of the draft masterplan and the upcoming exhibition.

3. Engagement activities

The community were invited to provide feedback on the draft Gregson Park Masterplan from 25 August to 6 October, 2021.

The community were able to provide comment on the draft Masterplan by submitting feedback via an online feedback form on CN's Have Your Say project web page, or by mail or email.

Online feedback form

An open online form inviting comments on the draft Masterplan, with a mechanism to upload an attachment, and fields for demographic information was included on the Gregson Park Have Your Say webpage. The form also sought to capture feedback on the draft Gregson Park Heritage Plan of Management, which was on exhibition at the same time as the Masterplan. A copy of the online feedback form can be found at **Appendix II**.

In total, 205 people provided feedback via the online feedback form. Findings from the online form are presented in section **4. Key findings**

Other submissions

Community members were also able to provide feedback on the draft Gregson Park Masterplan by mail, email or phone. In total, 11 submissions were received via these channels. De-identified copies of submissions received are included in Appendix III.

4. Key findings

A total of 216 community members provided feedback during the consultation period. Due to COVID restrictions feedback was invited using Council's online feedback form or via email, mail or phone.

Of the online comments received, ten forwarded a formal letter of response or images to provide greater understanding and depth to their response. One of these letters was from a community organisation on behalf of its members. These formal letters of response are shown in **Appendix III**. The sentiments of these letters have been included in the summary of findings below.

A majority of respondents resided in the suburb of Hamilton (140), followed by Adamstown/Highfields (9), Wallsend/Rankin Park (9), Broadmeadow (8) and Newcastle/Cooks Hill (7). A full list of respondents residential suburbs are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Respondent residential suburb

Suburb	N	Suburb	N
Hamilton	140	Tiges Hill	3
Adamstown/Highfields	9	Cardiff	2
Wallsend/Rankin Park/Elmore Vale/Maryland	9	Wickham	2
Broadmeadow	8	Charlestown	1
Newcastle/Cooks Hill/The Hill	7	Shortland	1
Islington	6	Bolton Point	1
Merewether/The Junction	5	Fullerton Cove	1
New Lambton/New Lambton Heights	4	Stockton	1
Waratah	4	Not provided	5
Mayfield	4		
Lambton/Jesmond	3	Total	215

What you told us

Due to the high volume of responses, similar ideas have been grouped to allow for easier interpretation. The responses listed in the tables below appear in order from most mentioned to least mentioned for each category. The (N) column represents the number of respondents providing a similar comment. Additionally, responses were provided for park elements that lay outside the scope of the Masterplan, however are important to be mentioned to compliment a long term vision for the area. These appear at the bottom of Table 4 as indicated.

Community feedback has been separated into three categories being:

- Likes
- Issues
- What needs to change or is missing

Likes

Many respondents thought the Masterplan was great and they are eager for works to begin (43). The community also liked the retention of the two tennis courts (26), the playspace upgrade (24), the addition of a bat ball wall (20) and basketball half court (19). Some agreed that a community

garden (16), planting of additional trees for shade (15) and choosing native plants that support local biodiversity (14) were all good ideas for Gregson Park.

The community also liked the large outdoor shelter for family/cultural and community events (14), additional seating, BBQ's and picnic tables (11), the idea of outdoor gym equipment (11), the multi-activity hub (10) and the addition of a kiosk (10). Some also appreciated the retention and restoration of heritage features including the cannons and park fencing (10).

There was also support for an amenities upgrade (9) and the provision of activities for all ages (9). A full list of grouped sentiments are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Positive feedback

Response	N
The plan looks excellent/great/good, can't wait to see it finished, amazing, love it all	43
Retention of two tennis courts (leave as is/not multipurpose court/keep grass surface)	26
Playspace upgrade with Indigenous themes in current location	24
Bat ball wall	20
Basketball half court (pls fast track, prioritise for delivery)	19
Community/edible/bush tucker garden and orchard	16
Retention of green space, retention and planting of trees/shade, leafy outlook, trees as windbreaks	15
Native garden/plantings, local biodiversity supported	14
Large outdoor shelter for family gatherings, events and markets	14
Additional seating, BBQ's and picnic tables	11
Adult exercise/outdoor gym area	11
Multi activity hub	10
Addition of a kiosk	10
Retention/restoration of heritage/historical park features including cannons, fences	10
Provision of activities for all ages	9
Amenities upgrade	9
Upgrade to community space that supports community connection, health and wellbeing	6
Retention of heritage garden beds	5
Upgraded entrances	3
Yarning circle	3
Rainwater tanks capturing runoff	3
Wetland area	3
Pathway upgrade/resurfacing	2
Inclusion of Indigenous concepts	2
Drainage and lighting upgrade	2
Repurposing of existing buildings	1
Resurfaced tennis courts with multicourt markings	1

Issues

Many respondents disliked the removal of the Tennis Clubhouse and the Tennis Club (organisation) from the Park (58), followed by the removal of gardeners from the park and the repurposing of the gardeners work shed (21). Some disliked the position of the wetland (9), the removal of heritage gardens near the memorial (6), the part removal of the circular rose garden (5) and the loss of entry to the park from the Samdon/Tudor St corner (5).

Respondents also considered that a 10 year Masterplan was too long to wait for some of the park features to be added or upgraded, another indication of positive anticipation for delivery of the Masterplan. A full list of grouped sentiments are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Issues for consideration

Response	N
Removal of the Tennis Clubhouse and the Tennis Club as an operating community organisation	58
Repurposing of gardeners shed/removal of gardeners from the park	21
Wetland position encroaches heavily on informal Sunday family soccer space (could it be relocated closer to tennis courts?)	9
Removal of heritage gardens especially around the Anzac memorial/retain the A'	6
Removal of rose garden beds especially the circular designed bed that has been sliced in half to accommodate a basketball half court	5
Time frame too long – 10 years before completion	5
Loss of entry to the park from corner of Tudor/Samdon Sts, removal of an entry point on one corner of the park (loss of historical symmetry)	5
Community garden – unsightly, risk of being left unkept	3
Size of wetland encroaching on green space/open space	3
Large covered area for markets/don't need more markets	3
Playground could be designed better/more detail required in Masterplan, would like to see climbing tower, slides, flying fox, trampoline etc	3
Too much equipment for active recreation	2
Repurposing of the glasshouse	2
Kiosk (commercial entities in the park)	2
Basketball half court/bat ball wall (noise)	2
Location of the basketball half court/bat ball wall (move to western side of the park closer to Tudor St)	2
Flowerbed around base of cannon – children climb these daily (practical?)	2
Location of large open shelter – better placed near children's playground?	1
Path realignment/loss of paths	1
Resurfacing of tennis courts/possible multicourt line marking	1
Addition of BBQ's	1
Playground overly complex/complicated	1
Not enough trees	1
Retention of tennis courts	1

What needs to change or is missing

Many respondents suggested that a dedicated dog off-leash area was required in the park (40) followed by requests for the retention and repair of the Tennis Clubhouse (38), the addition of a full sized basketball court (18) and improved night lighting (12). A full list of suggestions are shown in the Table 4.

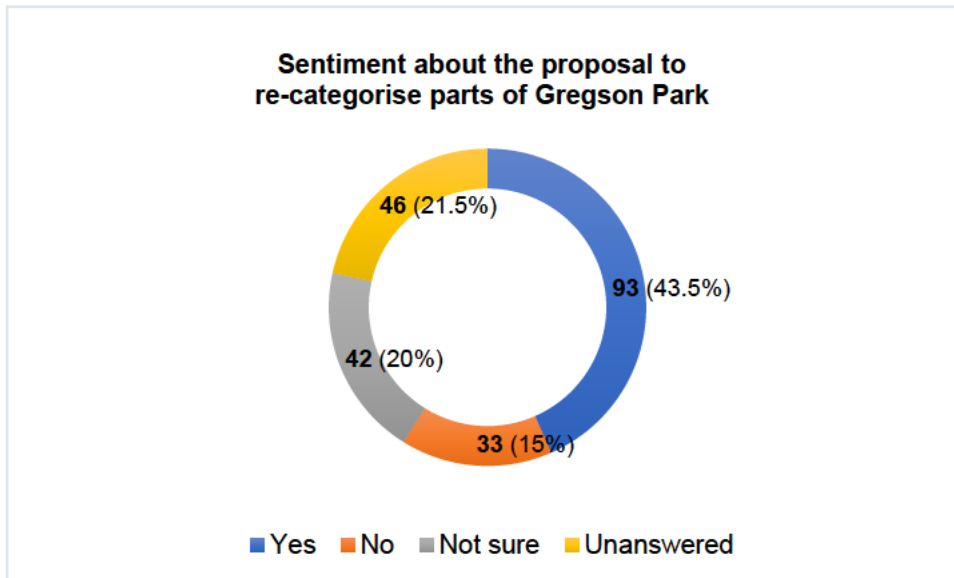
Table 4: Suggested additions or changes

Response	N
Dedicated off-leash dog exercise area (includes few requests for early morning dog off leash only) Location suggestions (if any): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ex-Bowling Club site (14) SW corner (2) Small triangular patch of land at corner of Samdon and Tudor St's (1) 	40
Retained/renovated/repared/rebuilt and upgraded Tennis Clubhouse to include toilet, meeting space, plumbed kitchen facilities	38
Full size basketball court (replacing the basketball half court)	18
Night lighting to improve safety Included: Night lighting for tennis/basketball courts outside of DLS (2) and requests for solar power lighting (3)	12
Area or circuit to scooter/skateboard/skate/bike ride (youth)	7
A mix of undercover seating eg. Large outdoor shelter to cater for large family/cultural groups/events and smaller separated tables (to assist social distancing)	7
Indigenous features/interpretation, Indigenous art, continued consultation	6
Two basketball half courts instead of one	6
A fully fenced children's playground	5
Include space for temporary food vans or pop-up kiosk (on concrete slab or similar hard surface) instead of permanent kiosk	5
Add a seated Café/restaurant with large deck	5
Ensure all abilities access to ex-Bowling Club site, playground and other facilities including amenities	5
Ensure exercise areas/playground/seating areas are part shaded, consider round tree seating	5
Ensure the Masterplan provides for passive recreation space – this is a unique/special quality of Gregson Park	4
Move large outdoor shelter to the Steel/Tudor St quarter to increase visibility from busy street/move away from residential	3
Move the Library into the Park	3
Include a bocce area, gravel/crushed sandstone strip (a nod to the cultural past)	3
Add recycling bins	3
Add dog poo bag stations and dog drinking water stations	3
Add water drinking stations for humans	3
Add a simple raised stage or wooden deck for events and yoga/pilates classes (instructor elevated) or small amphitheatre	3
Add bicycle racks/lockup stations	2

Response	N
Ensure playground is given the highest priority for construction	2
Retain open grass areas for children to run freely and play unorganised ball sports	2
Use Indigenous language to name park elements (with English equivalent) eg. toilets, playground/use traditional name for the Park	2
Locate full or half court basketball area away from Tennis courts	2
Remove glasshouse	1
Signage to remind dog owners to pick up after their pets/keep dog on leash	1
Restoration to in park memorials, reinstating entry gates	1
Provide a more detailed program of works – what is happening across the 10 year lifespan of the plan?	1
Demonstrate how the Plan aligns with local strategic planning, state and regional planning policies/Premier's priorities	1
Add a boutique place making sign – as a reflection of the past but new direction of the park	1
Both the ex-Bowling Green and SE corner of the park need to be levelled	1
Acknowledge/respect Indigenous custodians	1
Needs a Camperdown Commons system of community gardening/food production	1
Add a hedge around the perimeter of the park to separate the park from city feels	1
Add a sensory garden for the communities aging population	1
Add netball court	1
Add art installation	1
Attention to drainage/flooding issues in the NW corner that may impact the multi activity hub (moisture, moss, slippery)	1
Retain tennis court fence and synthetic grass surface on tennis courts to assist play following wet weather	1
Improve accessibility to and from and inside the established Tennis venue	1
Support for Hamilton (Gregson) Park Tennis Club community legacy	1
Path resurfacing	1
Out of Masterplan scope - but important suggestions for bigger picture thinking	N
Safe road crossings /pedestrian access into the park for all ages and abilities (mentioned: Lindsay/Steel St's, Lindsay/Samdon St's, Lindsay/James St's, James St speed humps?)	12
Provide safe cycleways too and from Gregson Park	4
Parking considerations for both residents and visitors on weekends	3
Create a Tree Planting Plan to gradually replace aging fig trees with younger fig trees	2
Better public transport access	1
Make it clear to park users how many people are allowed to gather in a public space without a permit	1
Upgrade bus shelter near (current) main entrance to the park in line with upgrades to park	1
Include wayfinding from Hamilton Train Station	1

Proposal to re-categorise parts of Gregson Park

Additionally, respondents were asked if they 'agreed with the proposal to re-categorise parts of Gregson Park as Park, Sportsground, General Community Use, and Area of Cultural Significance as shown on Page 6 of the Heritage Places Plan of Management – Gregson Park Hamilton (August 2021)?' Results show that there is strong support for this to occur (43.5%) when compared to those who disagreed (15%).



When asked to provide a reason for their response, the community commented in both the affirmative and the negative as shown in the tables below. NOTE: Some respondents did not provide a reason as they had not read the document mentioned, were unable to access it at time of responding or chose not to answer this question.

Table 5: Support for re-categorisation

Response	N
A variety of spaces that benefit a diversity of community need/sensible zones that allow for a range of activities (incl pets/active lifestyles)	15
Opportunity to promote a healthy and active lifestyle/increased recreation opportunities	10
Makes logical sense/useful for the Parks longevity/if it helps justify spending or sourcing funding	8
Improves accessibility/inclusiveness/multi-use of the park (all ages)	8
Protect heritage values/connect to the past/bring community closer together through shared history	7
Important to accommodate a growing community/plan for the future growth of the area	7
Acknowledge traditional custodians/cultural significance of the area	6
Great to have amenities to enable hosting of events/place making/culturally animating the space	5

Table 6: Non-support for re-categorisation

Response	N
The only organised sport in the park should be the tennis club/courts – not enough space for large sports fields	15

Response	N
No dedicated sportsground – others are located in close proximity	5
Needs a basketball/netball court but not as organised sport – informal/ad hoc games preferred	3
If it is too busy, it will ruin the ambience of the Park/no large crowds	3
Unnecessary/keep as one/too much red tape	3
Impacts to accessibility/restrictions	1
Will this reduce the possibility of a dog off leash area?	1
Spend time/money fixing up other parts of Newcastle eg. Jesmond Park	1
No addition of 'new' sports infrastructure eg. basketball, bat ball wall	1
Entire park should be designed as one cultural resource – do not want to lose cohesion	1
Respect Indigenous and environmental heritage of the area as one	1

Appendix I – Promotional materials

Flyer and onsite signage



Social media

City of Newcastle
27 August · 🌐

Last year, we asked the community what they thought the future of Hamilton's much loved Gregson Park should look like. We've listened to this feedback and created a new Draft Masterplan. Click 'learn more' by Oct 6 to read it and tell us what you think.



Click to expand


NEWCASTLENSW.GOV.AU
Have Your Say on Gregson Park [Learn More](#)


👍❤️ 51 14 comments 10 shares

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

Newsletter

Have Your Say EDM and City e-news





You're encouraged to have your say on a range of projects open for feedback and read updates on previous projects.


Community shapes vision for Gregson Park

We recently unveiled a new vision for Hamilton's historic Gregson Park as part of the development of a draft masterplan.

The draft masterplan showcases three key components including a new playspace, community hub on the former bowling green and multi-sports activity hub and aims to celebrate the existing heritage of the site and Awabakal culture, while meeting the recreational needs of the local community.

The draft masterplan is on public exhibition for community feedback until 6 October 2021.

[HAVE YOUR SAY](#)





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The draft masterplan is on public exhibition for community feedback until 6 October 2021.

Learn more and have your say on [our website](#).

Media release

18 August 2021

<https://www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/council/news/latest-news/community-steers-vision-for-historic-gregson-park>

Appendix II – Online feedback form

Your say

Please provide comments / feedback on the Gregson Park Masterplan and/or the Heritage Plan of Management:

If you want to provide further detail, upload a Word or PDF file here:

No file chosen

Do you agree or not with the proposal to re-categorise parts of Gregson Park as Park, Sportsground, General Community Use, and Area of Cultural Significance as shown on Page 6 of the Heritage Places Plan of Management – Gregson Park Hamilton (August 2021)? :

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

Please provide your reasons for your response above:

Your details

First name:*

Last name:*

Email:*

Suburb:*

Postcode:*

Appendix III – Other submissions

Submission 1: Hamilton Child Care Centre

To: The Newcastle City Council

Re: Feedback to Gregson Park Masterplan

Some of our preschool aged (4-5 years) children of Hamilton Child Care Centre would like to provide some feedback in regard to the Gregson Park Masterplan, as well as share their hopes and dreams for the future of this park, which is a place of special significance to them.

Our children frequently use this park during and outside of their time attending Hamilton Child Care Centre. The children love to walk to Gregson Park, and we often use this space to host events, and connect to the Awabakal Country, our community, and the environment. Our families often meet at Gregson Park together so our children can play and spend time together long after they leave our centre. It is a beautiful place that serves as a 'hub' and 'piazza' for our community of Hamilton Child Care Centre.

The children would like to contribute their ideas for the master plan, to ensure their voice is heard and valued and their favourite elements are considered in the upgrade. Please see below some of the children's images, who have worked tirelessly during the lockdown period.

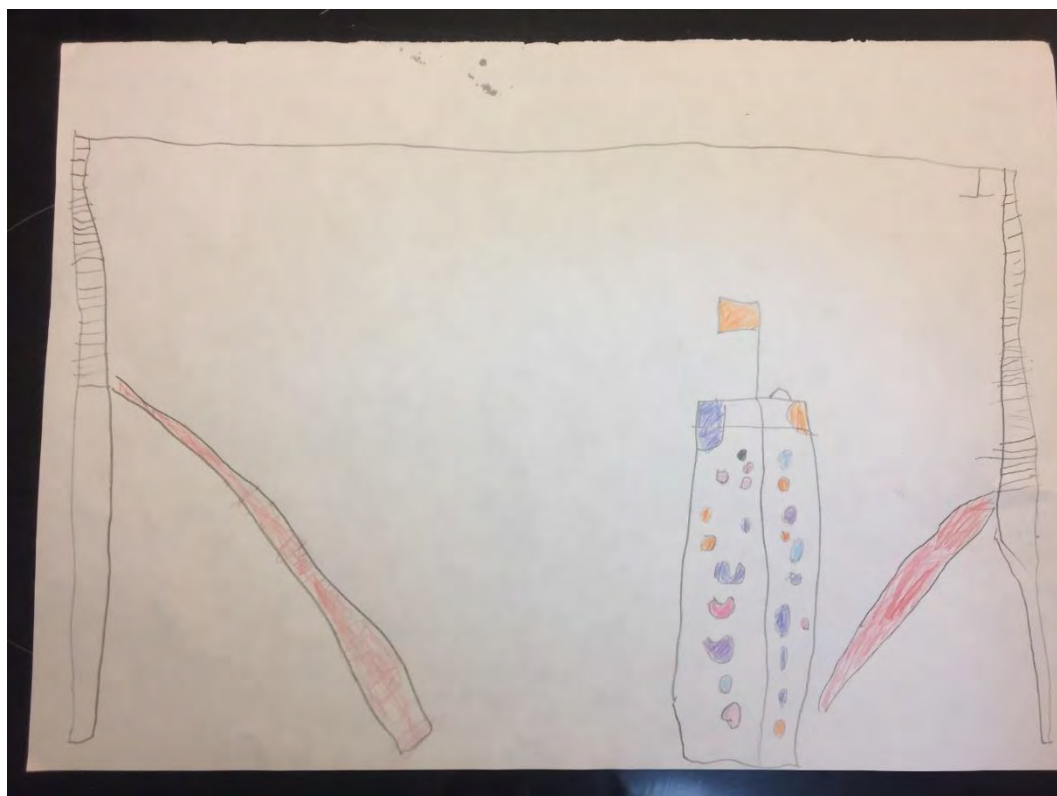
Warm regards,

The preschool children and staff of Hamilton Child Care Centre

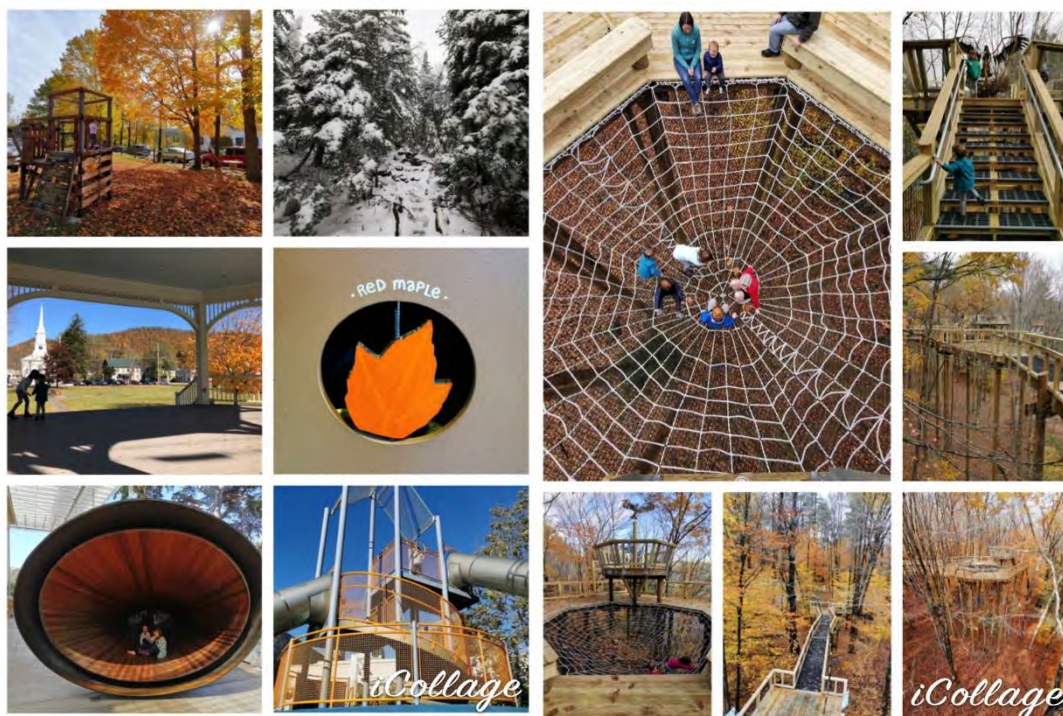
Images attached: 4

Rex: would like climbing towers, complete with a flying fox and a slide. He would also like a skate park and bike flip ramp!

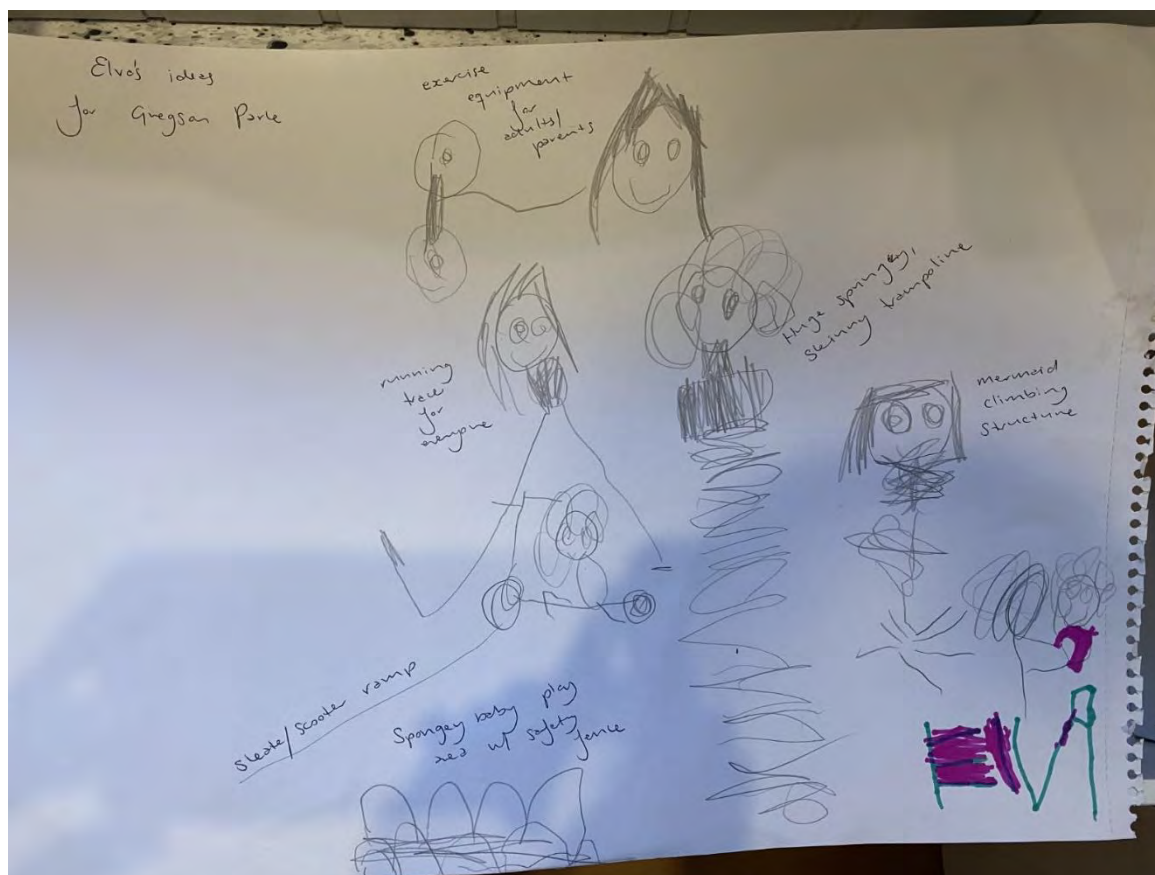




Audrey: Created an interest board and would like to make things “BIG” - this includes lots of climbing equipment!



Elva: Has thought of not only her needs and wants, but those of parents and families as well.



Submission 2: Resident [REDACTED]

Thank you to Council for creating a vision for Gregson Park. I live across the road from the park near the tennis courts. The following key points come not only from my personal use of the park but my observations over many years as to how the park is used by the community.

1. **The rose garden:** It strongly oppose destroying the symmetry of the rose garden (marked as E on the plan) by realigning the existing path to cut through it. This garden is a beautiful heritage feature of the park and should remain as such.

I realise that straightening the path creates space for the proposed half basketball court at the southern end of the tennis courts, but the basketball court could also easily be located on the western side of the courts which I have observed is only very lightly used. That would mean the existing path around the rose garden could remain. It seems an odd decision to remove a heritage feature plus the existing established planting at the southern end of the tennis courts simply to add a basketball court that could be located elsewhere. It seems particularly odd to remove this heritage feature given that in the meeting held on 16 September, the landscape architect pointed out that there would be a new Victorian style garden planted in the location marked M on the draft plan. It seems odd to destroy one established Victorian garden but, realising the importance of that style to the park, add another Victorian garden elsewhere.

I strongly object to realigning the path and in doing so, destroying the rose garden.

2. **Tennis club house:** I strongly object to removing the tennis clubhouse. The clubhouse is valuable for a number of reasons: the club stores its equipment and first aid in the clubhouse and hold their meetings there; the hirers congregate there after playing, use the kitchenette and the fridge for their drinks. Members of the public hold children's birthday parties there. The clubhouse definitely needs some maintenance and a toilet, but I see it as a community facility that should be refurbished or replaced so it has even greater potential for community use, not removed as proposed.

I strongly object to removing the tennis clubhouse.

I propose that the clubhouse be upgraded or replaced by an enhanced building.

3. **Tennis hit wall:** I note that including a tennis hit wall was requested by many community members in the consultation phase. I wholeheartedly support it. The draft plan indicates a new tennis hit wall (R in the legend) but it is not clear where it will be located.

If the thick white line drawn on the fence line at the southern end of the tennis courts is mean to represent a hit wall (although it's not in the multi-activity hub character sketch), it seems that the plan is for people to use the hit wall from within the tennis courts. If that is the case, I must disagree with that location. The courts are kept locked for security reasons, and hirers are given a code to open the gate. If this method was also used to access the hit wall, it would create the following problems:

- a. Hit wall users would need to book their time

- b. This would take possible hiring hours away from those who want to use the courts to play tennis
- c.

Hit walls are usually located in a space that is open and accessible to the public, with no bookings or costs associated with using it (Empire Park is an example). I believe this model is also the most appropriate for Gregson Park.

I strongly object to the hit wall being located within the tennis court fencing.
I propose that the hit wall be located where it is easily accessible by the community.
I would like more information to be made available about the location of the hit wall please.

Submission 3: Resident [REDACTED]

Thank you for the preparation of the Gregson Park Master Plan. Please find my comments regarding various parts of the master plan. Please feel free to call to discuss with me if required

All ages playground

This has been lacking maintenance for many years. The improved playground area would be a welcome change.

Community garden

This idea ranked as the 3rd highest in what would you like to see more of. Was in the top comments pinned. Was in the top five responses. Was number 2 in the Top 5 most popular pins and was in the top 5 pins with the least opposition. It is ranked as the highest preference idea for the use of the space in the bowling green area.

Given the above feedback please explain why the community garden is not located on the site of the old bowling green. This appears to be the most logical place to put it. The space that has been allocated is quite small and appears that it would not cater for the demand or popularity in the survey.

The community garden also has 3 new shade trees shown planted above it. Community gardens need sunlight for plants to grow. Please explain why there are shade trees planted over the gardens?

Given the high response rate for the community garden why is this the only item that is marked as "Potential"? Similarly given its popularity why is it a long term work? The Master plan does not align with the community feedback. Why is there a reluctance for the council to provide a community garden?

Paths

More paths were requested however the plan now shows less paths than what is currently there. Is this just an error from the artist's impression?

Reading the comments it appears one of the major concerns was the lack of upkeep of the paths. A walk around the park will show that many of the paths have cracks, lips and uneven surfaces. Benefit would be gained by resurfacing but this has not been included in the master plan.

K & M– Realigned path

Where is the benefit to re-aligning the path? What is wrong with the current alignment. If you observe the children at the moment they love racing each other down the straight path. Better value would be put into the resurfacing of the path.

E – Decorative garden bed

The garden bed appears to have been chopped in half. Is this a true representation of what is to be done? Where is the value in removing the configuration of the garden bed? It does not seem to be warranted to fit the basketball court in.

P - Kiosk

Existing building has been converted into a kiosk. If this is done what will happen to the gardener's storage and equipment? Please have a plan before this is enacted.

C- Swale drain

The swale drain has been placed in the middle of the open field. This field is used for soccer, kicking a ball and the annual Christmas concert. Can a more sympathetic design be developed to allow the current activities to continue?

The swale drain says that it is for detention. The park goes under water and at times the water doesn't go away. Why is the swale drain and detention required? Gregson Park already has an issue with mosquitos. Would this increase the mosquito population?

A – Floral beds

Kids regularly climb on the cannons. Do floral beds and this activity go hand in hand? The artist impression for one cannon has the bed surrounding the cannon.

H – Open shelter

Would it make more sense to have the open shelter in position **N** as this is close to the playground as is the current shelter. This would allow the children to be supervised while parents prepared food. An alternate idea would be to make two smaller shelters, one in each location.

W – Widened park entry

I could not find this location??

Submission 4: Resident and local historian

Hamilton NSW 2303
30 September 2021

Chief Executive Officer
City of Newcastle
PO Box 489
Newcastle NSW 2300

Dear Sir

*Draft Gregson Park Masterplan and Draft Heritage Places Plan of Management
Gregson Park Hamilton 2021*

I am writing to confirm my overall agreement with the Draft Masterplan and Draft Heritage Places Plan of Management for Gregson Park, Hamilton. That agreement is subject to some concerns I have. I would also like to make some observations.

I commend the planners for achieving a good balance between retaining the existing features of the park which are integral to its identity (such as fig trees, fences, flower plantings, pathways, and built heritage items) while modernising and upgrading it to better meet community needs. Inclusion of Indigenous heritage and culture, as well as improving the accessibility of the park for people with disabilities, is welcomed. My comments follow.

1. An important amenity of the park currently is open space for unstructured play (eg young children kicking a ball around) as well as casual exercise and passive recreation. I am concerned that these opportunities may be lost as a result of seeking to address the multiplicity of other identified needs. I appreciate that new play spaces (across a range of ages) have been provided in the Draft Masterplan and these are most welcome.
2. Welcome too is the provision of additional seating and tables which will become even more important post-Covid, as people look for outdoor settings to enjoy take-out food from Beaumont Street and have small group picnics.
3. I note that implementation is divided into short and longer term, over a ten year period, and is subject to funds. The ten year time frame is disappointing. While some projects are flagged to begin in 2022, the prospect of an imminent hot summer in a 'living with Covid' environment calls for more immediate action. Specifically, the provision of temporary seating and tables in shaded areas as people seek safe outdoor eating opportunities. In her feedback, Hamilton resident Vicki Coughlan has advocated this, drawing attention to one such an initiative in Bryant Park, Mid-Town Manhattan, New York. This is an excellent model for Gregson Park (image p.3) which I hope can be emulated.
4. As an older person with limited mobility, I find the state of current pathways hazardous. It is pleasing that these will be replaced/upgraded and that should be a priority. No mention is made of the material to be used. Whatever that is should be smooth and safe, for example for older people using canes, walkers or other aids. There are also well-known safety issues

for older people using multi-user paths. I hope that the new paths will be designed in such a way as to limit hazards from riders of scooters and bikes.

5. I note that a new accessible Lindsay Street entrance is planned, and that there is to be an accessible ramp to the former Bowling Green area. While there is reference to the amenities block being upgraded, it is not clearly stated that the block will be accessible to people with disabilities. I assume it will be, to meet the requirements of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act.
6. On the south-west corner of the park there is an unusual corridor of over-arching grevillea trees. It is not clear from the plan how this special feature might provide a centrepiece for a section of park that has tended to be under-utilised.
7. A swale is proposed on the northern edge of the park. No detail is provided as to why this area has been chosen. People who walk regularly in the park during all seasons report multiple other locations where water pools and the ground becomes soggy.
8. Furthermore, there is considerable variation in ground levels right across the park, possibly the result of landfill when it was first established. While I recognise the challenges of levelling, and the value of having some variation, there may be some locations inaccessible to people with walking aids. This makes it all the more important to have pathways that are smooth, and also safe.
9. I want to record my strong support for the retention of the tennis courts and clubhouse or something similar. I think of tennis as a 'heritage sport' (indeed, tennis has been played in the park since 1898). Many children use this park who don't have the advantage of schools with tennis courts, and it is good to have some spaces in which to demonstrate and encourage the game. The addition of other features to increase the flexibility of ball play options nearby is welcomed. The maintenance of the courts has been the responsibility of a community club; this should continue as it is not easy to find organisations to take on such roles. I note the establishment of community gardens is contingent on a suitable organisation coming forward to own/manage them.
10. Finally I understand that the demolition of the greenhouse and adaptive reuse of the gardeners' maintenance building as a kiosk may put at risk the future use of Gregson Park by the City's gardeners as their base. Use of Gregson Park as the base has contributed to the outstanding work done to maintain and beautify the park over many decades. I hope that the Draft Masterplan will not result in a diminution of this outcome.

I appreciate the thoughtful work that has gone into the Draft Masterplan and the opportunity to comment. I look forward to the next stage.

Kind regards

██████████

Images attached: 1



Image: Bryant Park, New York

Submission 5: Photo [REDACTED]

Image: Children's Birthday Party inside the Gregson Park Tennis Clubhouse

Submission 6: Resident [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
HAMILTON NSW 2303

To Whom it May Concern,

I am composing this letter regarding the draft masterplan vision of the beloved Gregson Park in Hamilton. Recreational parks within a vibrant city such as Newcastle provide intrinsic environmental and aesthetic benefits, as well as creating a sense of community.

I want to preface this letter by acknowledging the history of the park and how appreciated it has always been as an outdoor space for locals, however I believe this has been even further highlighted in more recent times, during a global pandemic. A wider love and community appreciation for the park has been evident amidst restrictions imposed. It is a thriving place for families and friends alike, transcending multiple age demographics. For many I suppose you could say it is a 'Happy Place'.

I have responded to a few of the draft plans below. I haven't included the flower beds and tree planting, as I believe any extension on these are a good idea. The cannon history is beautiful at the Steel St entrance and upgrading the entrances to the park aesthetically and historically would be beneficial. The dot points are the NCC Vision, with my response underneath.

- New inclusive play space with nature play, water feature and formal and informal seating and native garden with small yarning circle.
Love idea of the yarning circle and native garden idea. Creating a place of belonging for all people.
- New swale, footbridges & wetland area for water detention
I think this is a fabulous idea & like the look of the photo impressions. It supports water quality improvement and supporting of habitats. Obviously with Urban sprawl over upcoming decades and urbanisation, there would be further changes to water balance and quality as well as further disruption of habitats. I think the wetland plans is an important consideration with climate change also.
- Seating steps to raised former Bowling Green area with integrated accessible ramp
Great variety in seated areas for all.
- New open shelter - picnic, markets and event space, with provision of picnic settings and BBQs
- New Kiosk - Adaptive re-use of maintenance building, subject to relocation of maintenance building
I think this is a wonderful idea – to combine the old with the new and transform the maintenance building into a kiosk.
- New halfcourt
- Re-surfaced tennis courts, possible multicourt line markings subject to outcomes of Tennis Strategy Plan, hit-wall, outdoor fitness equipment suitable for all ages & small shade structure with seating

Does this mean that the half court would be shared with a hit/wall ball ? I think the wall ball option is wonderful and should be a definite inclusion, not a maybe.

- Potential Community Garden with raised beds, subject to agreed community ownership
As a local community member, owner & occupier of my residential property, I envisage I will remain in the Hamilton area for a significant period, in which I would love to be apart of the community garden concept and maintenance. There is much to be said for community gardens giving people purpose, pride and fostering reconnection to food, nature and community. There is much literature to support that community garden initiatives have positive community building outcomes, promote social cohesion, and create a variety of benefits for both individuals and communities.

I do note that there was a bit of mention around dog off leash areas. Whilst I'm unsure what the consensus or attitudes toward this is, within recent times, many people take their dogs to Gregson Park. Whether a dog off leash time period could be looked at to facilitate this environment, perhaps for consideration before 9am and after 5pm?

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Kind regards,

██████████

████████████████████

Submission 7: Resident [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 October 2021 8:49 PM
To: Engagement Team <engage@ncc.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Gregson Park Masterplan review

Hi Natalie

Thanks for getting back to me and providing me with an opportunity to make comments.

Whilst in many ways I support the masterplan, I have certain concerns. What I like is that you are looking towards retaining a recreational focus, considering the heritage of the park and making improvements without wild changes.

My objections and comments are aimed at reducing unnecessary and pointless cost, reduce impacts and provide better outcomes, these are:

1. The location of the markets.

The markets have traditionally been held in the south eastern area on the park. This being a part of the park that adjoins angle parking and is not surrounded by sensitive receivers. That is, near a school, motel, non residential facilities such as offices, yoga centre, church and community hall. Switching the markets to the west side of the park means that the impacts such as noise, traffic and parking burdens the residential properties in Samdon Street and properties in the side streets. That is, you are placing the markets in a residential area, away from the backdrop of a noisy main road, and further away from the far better (previous) setting.

2. The location of the basketball facility

The facility is proposed on the south side of the tennis courts. This will necessitate the loss of formal gardens and an interesting circular pathway feature of the park. It make no sense to run a feature of the park when it could be easily and more cheaply be located to the east or west of the tennis courts, these are parts of the park that are seldom used.



3. The covered community centre and BBQs

Why move the BBQ picnic area away from the playground where it is? The infrastructure costs are unnecessary. The shelter will be a white elephant. Again you are pushing the traffic and noise impacts of the park into a residential area that has far more peace and quiet. This is worse than the bowling club, the bowling club was much quieter and had far fewer impacts than this presents. Council should at the very least do an acoustic assessment for this and the markets.



4. Suggestions

- a. Retain the glasshouse, it has character and is a historical feature. Not all historical significant features are aesthetically pleasing.
- b. Extend the kerb on the west side of Samdon St to the north so that vehicles cannot enter Tudor St but not so far as to block the exit. This will pedestrianise the area, make it safer for vehicular traffic, (the Tudor street intersection is too close to Belford St intersection), will provide more parking for the car yard that is meant to provide on site parking but never has (and of course NCC does nothing as usual) and eliminate a rat run.

Yours sincerely

██████████

Submission 8: Resident [REDACTED]

I am happy with/agree with most of the visions for Gregson Park, however, I have issues with the following:

1. The removal of the tennis clubhouse
2. The location of the bat-ball/hitting wall

1. The removal of the tennis clubhouse

I strongly oppose the removal of the clubhouse for the following reasons:

- The clubhouse stores equipment that the club members use to maintain the courts
- The clubhouse stores first aid kit
- The hirers gather in the clubhouse for lunch and wet weather circumstances
- Hirers use the kitchenette and fridge in the clubhouse to keep food/drinks
- The clubhouse has been there since 1959, and holds historical significance

Instead of removing the clubhouse, there is potential to renovate the clubhouse to further increase community engagement with the courts, and thus the park. This renovation should include a new permanent toilet in the clubhouse that the hirers can use, offering a more suitable alternative to walking to the main toilet block in the park. Above practicality, this should be considered for the following safety reasons:

- A child who is being coached on the courts does not have to walk to the main toilet block, instead they can use a toilet located in the clubhouse that can be supervised from the courts
- The park's main toilet block often closes in the nights before the tennis courts do, meaning the court hirers cannot access the toilets. When they are open however, it poses a safety issue walking to the park's main toilet block in the dark.

I strongly oppose the removal of the clubhouse.

I propose it is upgraded or renovated with the inclusion of a permanent toilet.

1. The location of the bat-ball wall

The proposal of a bat-ball/hitting wall in Gregson Park is an excellent idea and is highly requested by the community. If the thick white line on the draft masterplan represents this hitting wall, it appears the plan is for people to use this wall from within the tennis courts. If this is the case, this proposed location of the wallball is problematic for the following reasons:

- The tennis courts are locked and accessed with a code for security reasons
- The hitting wall would reduce access to the tennis courts
- A hitting wall is solid (usually concrete). The location of this hitting wall is a major safety concern for the tennis hirers who will be playing with a solid wall behind them. If they were to run into it, they are bound to injure themselves.

Alternatively, the hitting wall could be located on the western side of the park, away from the tennis courts. This would allow the hitting wall to be open, accessible to the public, and bring more people to a part of the park that is currently minimally occupied.

I strongly oppose the location of the hitting wall being located within the tennis court fencing.

I propose that the location be on the western side of the park in an open, accessible space.

Submission 9: Hamilton Park Tennis Club [REDACTED]

Draft Gregson Park Masterplan - Gregson Park, Hamilton 2021

Hamilton Park Tennis Club Response

4 October 2021

Dear Chief Executive Officer

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Gregson Park Draft Masterplan. There are many elements of the draft masterplan that will no doubt prove to be great additions to what is already a lovely and well used community park.

In response to the public exhibition of the draft masterplan, and noting particularly the proposed demolition of the tennis clubhouse, the members of Hamilton Park Tennis Club wish to raise the issues outlined below.

1. Summary

- **the tennis clubhouse should be retained and improved**
- **a permanent toilet should be located in the tennis complex**
- **the existing perimeter fence should be retained**
- **the court surface should continue to be green synthetic grass**
- **child safety, diversity and accessibility should inform decision making**

2. Introduction

Gregson Park is community land bestowed upon the people of Hamilton in the late 1800s. The tennis courts are a community asset run by members of the community. The tennis club which operates the courts is self-funded and almost all of the cost of maintaining and operating the tennis court complex this century has been born by the tennis club. This model is successful and ideal for the City of Newcastle, and the masterplan should reflect support for the tennis club so that this scenario continues for as long as possible.

3. Clubhouse

A clubhouse is required to support both the activities of club and the proper operation of the court complex. The masterplan should recognise the retention and/or improvement of the existing clubhouse.

We note references to “upgrade clubhouse to multipurpose building” in both the Community Engagement Report and Part A of the Draft Heritage Places Plan of Management. However, the Draft Masterplan shows that the existing clubhouse will be removed and replaced with a “small shade shelter”. This is a change which we strongly object to.

It is typical for Australian community sporting clubs to have a clubhouse. We believe that our need for a clubhouse is no different.

A clubhouse is required for the tennis club for the following reasons:

- storing maintenance and court cleaning equipment

- storing spare nets
- first aid generally including a possible defibrillator
- housing the electricity meter box and control switches of the court lights
- kitchenette including a fridge for first aid ice packs and refreshments
- meeting room
- change room (some players come to the courts directly from work)
- historical tribute wall commemorating the history of the club and its members
- noticeboard
- coaching needs
 - Coaching equipment is stored in the clubhouse
 - Activities are held in the clubhouse when on-court coaching is paused during wet weather (there is table tennis equipment currently housed in the clubhouse)
- covered walkway
- shade and rain protection (e.g. during a short rain shower) for players including children waiting off-court
- bookswap
- social space.

It is impractical if the court maintenance and cleaning equipment is not stored adjacent to the courts.

4. Toilet

The tennis complex requires an on-site toilet and to fulfill this need we are currently renting a temporary toilet. This toilet should be replaced with a permanent toilet which is either a separate structure or housed somehow in the clubhouse. It has long been our goal to save enough money to build a permanent onsite toilet for players. A permanent toilet should be included in the masterplan.

Toilet facilities would increase the safety for all players – particularly children – using the tennis courts. When coaching groups of children, it is not practical to stop a lesson to escort a child off-site to the main park toilet. A child should not be permitted to leave by themselves because that compromises both their safety and the coach's duty of care.

The general park toilet closes at 5pm (or thereabouts) each evening. The majority of our mid-week players play after 5:00pm. Therefore, the off-site toilet does not serve as a practical replacement of an on-site toilet.

Our coach is providing coaching services to groups with special needs. Our goal is to provide toilet facilities that are inclusive by providing accessible facilities that can be used by all our players including the wheelchair users who are now being coached at the courts.

5. Fencing

Currently, the tennis facilities are enclosed by a 3m high fence. It is not clear on the draft masterplan whether the fence around the tennis complex will be impacted. A fence around a tennis complex is standard and should be retained in our case for a number of reasons including:

- it prevents tennis balls from being hit into the park
- it protects the playing surfaces from general park traffic

- through this protection the life of the playing surface is maximised and costs are reduced
- it provides security for equipment and furniture located in the complex
- it protects players – particularly children – whilst using the venue.

The external fence should be retained and should remain at its current regulation height.

6. Court Surface

The draft masterplan includes reference to “Re-surfaced tennis courts, possible multicourt linemarkings subject to outcomes of Tennis Strategy Plan”.

Currently, the tennis court surface is green synthetic grass and has been since 1995.

We believe the use of green synthetic grass should continue. We believe that multicourt linemarkings are not necessary for coaching at the complex but we are happy to wait and discuss the recommendations of the Tennis Strategy Plan which we understand is being informed by work currently conducted by Tennis NSW.

We believe that synthetic grass is the appropriate surface to use in order to:

- reduce injury including impact injuries from falls
- avoid slippery courts after rain
- maintain continuity (current hirers are used to playing on this surface)
- suit all ages including older players.

The colour green is ideal given that the courts are within a park.

7. Child Safety

Whatever changes to the tennis complex are being proposed in the masterplan, they should not lessen, and should ideally improve safety conditions for children in relation to:

- accessing a toilet
- maintaining adult supervision (e.g. by the coach) particularly because parents may not be on-site during coaching
- preventing children wandering off the tennis complex
- reducing the need for children to leave the tennis complex
- dealing with sensitive circumstances with suitable privacy.

We believe that the complex as a whole, which includes the clubhouse, proposed on-site toilet and the perimeter fence, is important in addressing these needs.

Particularly because of the park setting, the complex as described above represents a unique venue ideal for active social events including birthday parties.

8. Diversity and Accessibility

The tennis courts are located near to Lindsay Street and nearby parking is usually available. The court complex and the surrounding area is flat. The coach operating at the venue, Danial Stredder of Access Tennis, is determined to be the leading local provider of tennis coaching services to special needs groups

and minority groups. These elements combined present a tremendous opportunity for what could be achieved at the site of the tennis courts. Much of the related detail doesn't need to be shown in a park masterplan but the infrastructure required to support these activities should be. We believe that support should be shown for a clubhouse, an on-site toilet and modifications to improve accessibility both in and out of, and within the venue.

9. A Case For Supporting the Goals of the Tennis Club

Tennis in Gregson Park has never been as popular as it is now. Further to this:

- Tennis NSW recently reported that the level of tennis activity at the complex last financial year far exceeded state-wide benchmarks
- potential hirers have been turned away during the lockdown because demand has exceeded supply
- the tennis complex in Gregson Park is operated by volunteers for the benefit of all tennis players in the local area
- the operation of the tennis complex is self-funded
- there is genuine affection for the complex on the part of the community
- because tennis has been played in Gregson Park for over 120 years, both the tennis complex and the Hamilton Park Tennis Club represent a living heritage item of the park
- Hamilton Park Tennis Club, as the last of the once three tennis clubs in the park, is the custodian of the Gregson Park tennis legacy.

Given the above, we believe that the operation of the tennis complex in Gregson Park by Hamilton Park Tennis Club should be supported at every opportunity and that the removal of the clubhouse is the antithesis of the support the club deserves. We look forward to moving past discussions of demolition and onto the discussions alluded to in Part A of the Draft Heritage Places Plan of Management, that being an upgraded multipurpose building.

10. Conclusion

We hope we have made some useful suggestions and made our case clearly for not just the preservation of a clubhouse but for support, both now and into the future, of the needs of the tennis complex housed within beautiful Gregson Park and for the tennis club that operates it.


For the benefit of any reader not fully aware of the activities of Hamilton Park Tennis Club, the high use of the tennis courts by the community and the heritage significance of tennis in Gregson Park, we have included a PDF document intended to help educate anyone with an interest in the club.

Thank you for considering our response.

Yours sincerely,



On behalf of Hamilton Park Tennis Club



4 October 2021

RESPONSE TO THE GREGSON PARK DRAFT MASTERPLAN

Hamilton Park Tennis Club Inc

Submitted by [REDACTED]
on behalf of Hamilton Park Tennis Club Inc
e: [REDACTED]@optusnet.com.au

On Saturday 4th September...

Court 1

7am – 7pm

12 hours

Fully Booked

Court 2

7am – 7:30pm

12.5 hours

Fully Booked

Over 24 hours of community
service in 1 day!



ABOUT US

Hamilton Park Tennis Club

maintains and operates the two tennis courts within the beautiful setting of Gregson Park.

Typical of clubs of its type, the club has a membership and is run by a committee of **volunteers** elected from that membership.

Membership is open to all adult and junior tennis players and although not large, currently includes both male and female players and Indigenous Australians.

Tennis **coaching** is provided at the courts by Danial Stredder of Access Tennis Newcastle, a Tennis Australia accredited coach who specialises in all levels of coaching with a strong focus on underrepresented groups such as Disability, Indigenous and Girls in Sport.

Children from the local Hamilton Public School regularly attend coaching at the courts.

In 2021, the first wheelchair coaching session was conducted at the courts.

The two tennis courts are available for hire by the community.



IN NUMBERS

30	The number of permanent hire groups who play at the same time each week.
The number of permanent hire sessions played between 24 May 2020 and 18 September 2021	1,863
383 and 1,237	The number of different casual hire groups and the number of bookings they have made between 24 May 2020 (resumption after 2020 lockdown) and 18 September 2021
The number of hire groups that hired the courts during the COVID lockdown between 7 August and 24 September 2021	464
12+	The number of coaching sessions delivered in 2021 for people with disabilities including wheelchair and people with intellectual disabilities.
July to September Increase in bookings this year compared to the same period last year!	58%

HISTORY

Tennis has been played in Gregson Park since approximately 1898.

Hamilton Park Tennis Club has operated within Gregson Park since the very early 1900s.

Picture:

The Hamilton Park Tennis Club clubhouse c. 1956.

The replacement to the pictured clubhouse was unveiled in 1959 and remains the clubhouse to this day.



The first synthetic grass courts were first laid in October 1995. Prior to that the court surface was gravel.

The current synthetic grass surface was laid in 2007 after the Pasha Bulker storm.



Picture:
Hamilton Ladies Tennis Club
Gregson Park c. 1949

Gregson Park was once home to three tennis clubs. Hamilton Park Tennis Club is only one remaining.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Custodian

The club is the custodian of a 100+ year history of tennis in Gregson Park and is responsible for continuing the local tennis legacy into the future.

Hamilton Park Tennis Club is currently financially responsible for the:

- Tennis court resurfacing
- Tennis nets
- Lights
- Fence, gates and locks surrounding the court complex
- Electricity
- Insurances

Financial

...plus the hire of the Portaloo that acts as our on-site toilet.

Court Hire

The club is responsible for making the courts available for hire by the public.

The volunteers of the club handle the communication with all hirers and schedule the bookings and coaching sessions.

They handle and reconcile all payments which are now made electronically.



REQUIREMENTS: FENCE, SURFACE

Fence

A fence around a tennis complex is standard and prevents tennis balls from going all over the park! It also:

- Protects the playing surfaces from general park traffic
- Provides security for equipment and furniture located in the complex
- Protects children whilst they use or visit the venue

The external fence height must be a suitable regulation height.

The presence of the fence means that children's parties can be held at the club complex with parents knowing their children can't wander off into the wider park.

The current internal dividing fence provides a perfect balance between separating but not isolating each of the two courts.



Court Surface

The tennis court surface is currently synthetic grass.

The courts in Gregson Park regularly receive positive feedback sometimes being described as "the best courts in Newcastle".

The club believes that synthetic grass is more suitable than a hard court surface because of the reduced risk of injury over the long term.

The colour of the surface should also be green to suit its park context.

REQUIREMENTS: CLUBHOUSE



Clubhouse

It is normal for a tennis club to have a clubhouse.

The clubhouse serves many purposes.

Tennis is played at Gregson Park in all seasons including winter with, interestingly, summer being the least popular season.

The clubhouse gives players a refuge from both the heat and cold when not on court.

It provides an indoor venue for coaching activities when the courts are too wet.

The clubhouse is the venue for committee meetings. It is an integral part of the social activities which occur at the venue.

Some regular hirers hold luncheons in the clubhouse and make use of the table, chairs, fridge, kettle, microwave and the BBQ.

The bookswap, an initiative of the community, is housed in the clubhouse. It, along with the noticeboard, acts as a bridge between the hirers and members who often aren't at the venue at the same time.

REQUIREMENTS: CLUBHOUSE

Storage

The clubhouse is where lots of things are stored including:

- Coaching equipment
- Court maintenance equipment
- Tennis balls
- Spare nets

If the club acquires a defibrillator, it will be stored in the clubhouse.

When entering the clubhouse, one may be impressed by the old tournament shields, vintage tennis racquets and photographs and historical memorabilia of the club.

There aren't a lot of items but what is there gives a real sense of the longevity of the club.

Memorabilia

Light Control

In 2021, Hamilton Park Tennis Club contributed funds for the installation of LED lights costing over \$20,000.

It was an upgrade well received by all players and the nearby residents.

The control box for these lights is located in our clubhouse.

REQUIREMENTS: TOILET

Toilet

The toilet is a very important part of our venue.

The photograph below includes so much. A sunset, beautiful Gregson Park, two terrific tennis courts and...

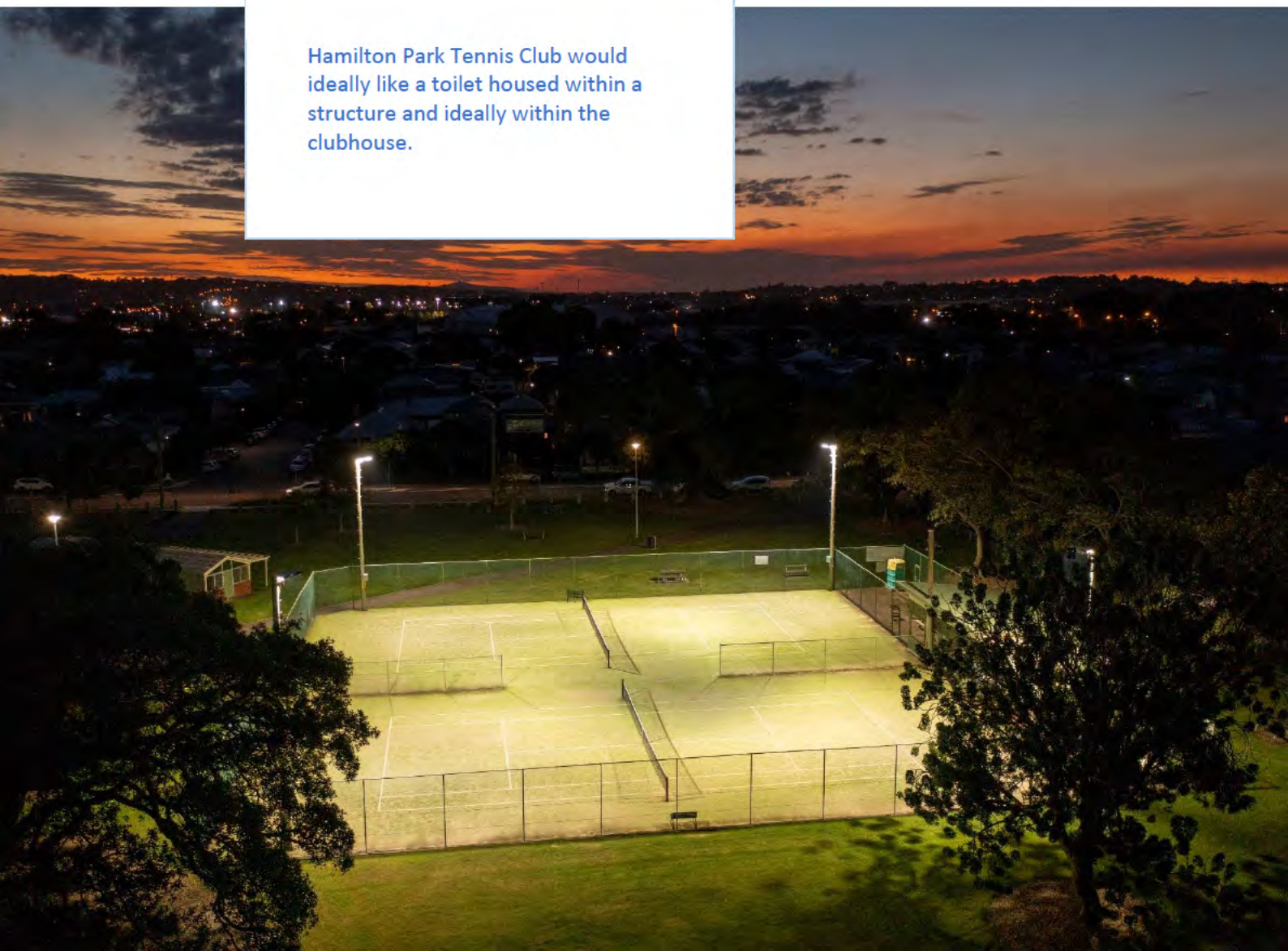
...a Portaloo!

The nearby Gregson Park toilets get locked at around 5pm. The majority of our mid week hirers start after 5pm.

Child Safety

It is much safer for children being coached to visit an on site toilet.

Hamilton Park Tennis Club would ideally like a toilet housed within a structure and ideally within the clubhouse.



THE FUTURE

Hamilton Park Tennis Club strives to provide a high quality venue for tennis players and make that venue accessible to the local community.

During this current lockdown, the importance of that venue has been reinforced by how many people have sought exercise on our tennis courts.

We have local school children being coached on the courts which brings with it the wonderful sound of young people having fun.

The club is financially sound and has a strong income from healthy levels of court hire.

The tennis courts in Gregson Park can, and should, be enjoyed by many future generations.



HPTC
+ Gregson Park
= “Great Future”

© 2021
Hamilton Park Tennis Club Inc
Phone [REDACTED]

Submission 10: Resident [REDACTED]

Hamilton NSW 2303

e [REDACTED]@optusnet.com.au

6 October 2021

Chief Executive Officer
City of Newcastle
PO Box 489
Newcastle NSW 2300

Dear Chief Executive Officer,

Re: Draft Gregson Park Masterplan and Draft Heritage Places Plan of Management - Gregson Park Hamilton 2021

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Gregson Park Draft Masterplan (the Plan).

My family lives on Lindsay Street adjacent to Gregson Park, a place where we spent a lot of time. Two things my wife and I like most are walking through the park and admiring the flora and playing tennis. Consequently, my two main concerns regarding the masterplan relate to supporting the work of the park gardeners and supporting the continued operation of the tennis club.

? Concern - Gardener's Shed and Glass House

The Plan's Vision indicates the proposed removal of the Glass House. In contrast, the Plan's Opportunities Plan refers to its retention. The Plan's Vision indicates the repurposing of the Maintenance Shed so that it becomes a Kiosk. This would have a significant impact on the ability of park's gardeners to maintain their high level of work. I therefore strongly disagree with this proposal unless some other on-site amenities are provided for them as replacements. I have observed the changing landscape of the park for the last 23 years and know that when the gardeners aren't supported, the beauty of the park suffers. Please refer to the appendix The Case of the Disappearing Strelitzia.

? Concern - Tennis Clubhouse

The Plan's Vision indicates the proposed removal of the tennis clubhouse. In contrast, the Plan's Opportunity Plan refers to the possible refurbishment of the clubhouse. I strongly support the refurbishment of the clubhouse. The tennis club provides a valuable service to the community and should be supported. City of Newcastle has provided very little financial support for that clubhouse since it was unveiled in 1959. I think now is an opportunity to provide long overdue support to the tennis club, help them introduce toilet facilities and perhaps create an amenity building that can be shared with all park users.

Some further opinions follow.

✓ Like - Vision - Draft Gregson Park Masterplan – Reference H – New Open Shelter

I can see this being used and can imagine it providing opportunities for the community to come together. When the detail of the shelter is being developed, its design should support Carols in the Park events at Christmas, markets and also large community lunches.

✓ Like – Additional Sporting and Activities Area – Near Reference R

I believe that fixtures like a basketball half court and tennis hitting wall will be well used particularly by teenagers and young adults. I support their introduction. Having said that, firstly, none of these fixtures should impact the fencing around the existing tennis courts. Secondly, a cautionary word about the flooding that occurs in the north-west corner of the park. I have attached a photograph which I hope is informative. Without mitigating work, this flooding indicates a risk that hard surfaces in that area will regularly be moist, mossy and hence slippery.

? Concern - Vision - Draft Gregson Park Masterplan – Reference E – Decorative Garden

This garden is currently circular, symmetrical and hints at a modest grandeur from a bygone era. Breaking this symmetry should not be done.

? Concern – Annual Garden Bed

The annual garden bed near the Anzac memorial is beautiful and is admired by many visitors to the park. It is a fixture that has been enjoyed for as long as I can remember.

It is not clear from the plan if this small area will be retained. I support its retention or if not retention, its relocation but not its complete removal.

Thank you again for the opportunity to contribute to the important task of improving Gregson Park.

Yours sincerely

██████████



Photograph: North-west corner of Gregson Park facing southwards. c March 2021



This photograph was taken in Gregson Park in 2003 in an area south of the tennis courts. The top of the tennis court fence can be seen in the background.

The Case of the Disappearing Strelitzia

A Case For Looking After Our Gardeners

There were once Strelitzia adorning a garden area just south of the Gregson Park tennis courts. There were murraya in that same garden, a garden surrounded by agapanthus.

The murraya are now tree like and the agapanthus produce a stunning display of flowers each season. But where are the strelitzia?

Answer: They were removed and replaced by woodchip.

I can't know for certain why woodchip now sits where the strelitzia plants once did but I suspect it had something to do with reducing the requirement for garden maintenance.

To me it speaks to the difference between the mentality of a park maintenance crew (who without doubt perform a valuable service) and that of a team of gardeners.

The masterplan must firstly support the retention of gardeners within Gregson Park, and secondly ensure they can perform their gardening function at least as well as they do now. For this reason, the existing gardener's shed shouldn't be repurposed if it means the gardeners have no base in the park. The glass house shouldn't be removed unless another park location can be used to store plants as is currently the case.

The change in the park since the gardeners have returned to Gregson Park has been remarkable and I, for one, do not want that to diminish. My point doesn't relate to strelitzia specifically (I can give other examples of plants that disappeared during the same stage of the park's history). Rather, I appreciate what the gardeners achieve and want to enjoy the results of their efforts for many years to come.

Submission 11: LGBTQI+ Public Art Installation Project





Are You a Friend of Dorothy's?

Death + Life of Queer Cities

Georgie, Kyra, Sean

I begin today by acknowledging the Awabakal people, Traditional Custodians of the land on which we are joining from today, and pay my respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. I extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today.

As a team, we wished to create an immersive architectural installation that alludes to local LGBTIQ+ heritage of Newcastle City, with a strong focus on community interaction, colour symbolism and effective use of light.



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Are You a Friend of Dorothy's?

Concept Introduction

Georgia Collins
Sean Bryant
Kyra Hinett

Good afternoon councilors and fellow peers,
I begin today by acknowledging the Awabakal people, Traditional Custodians of the land on which we are joining from today, and pay my respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. I extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today.

As a team, Sean, Kyra and I wished to create an immersive architectural installation that alludes to local LGBTIQ+ heritage of Newcastle City, with a strong focus on community interaction, colour symbolism and effective use of light.



Gregson Park, Hamilton Newcastle 2303

Proposed design addition for the Newcastle City Council's re-development vision of Gregson Park, Hamilton. Placed and designed in conjunction with the 'Family and Community Hub' concept without altering any pre-existing or proposed landscaping.



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Are You a Friend of Dorothy's?

Location

Georgia Collins
Sean Bryant
Kyra Hinett

Our architectural installation is a proposed addition for the Newcastle City Council's redevelopment vision of Gregson Park, Hamilton. Placed and designed in conjunction with the 'Family and Community Hub' concept without altering any pre-existing or proposed landscaping. This design will bolster the intent of the masterplan through its ability to identify the role of the park in meeting local recreational needs and respecting the local historical significance.

We would like to acknowledge Councilor Carol Duncan who championed the investment for the redevelopment of the Park. We hope our ideas today can further your vision for this beautiful, queer inclusive space.

- LGBTQ+ Historical Sites
- Public Transport
- Installation Design Site



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Are You a Friend of Dorothy's?

Site Analysis

Georgia Collins
Sean Bryant
Kyra Hinett



In our site analysis we mapped venues that historically held importance to the local queer community with yellow dots, further emphasising the relevance of the park in relation to the queer history of Hamilton. These spaces have now sadly all disappeared. Additionally we have located public transport through blue dots. The proposed location for our installation is marked in red.



Past



Present

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Are You a Friend of Dorothy's?

Evolution of Queer Space

Georgia Collins
Sean Bryant
Kyra Hinett

Queers spaces are most often general spaces adapted to fit the specified needs of the community. In the past, up until fairly recently, this included the privacy and safety offered by blacked out windows and outward cohesion with the predominant built environment. Today they are more outwardly queer, although mostly still existing as adapted spaces, rather than as architecture that is essentially queer.



1940

Keith Opened his Store



1952

Yellow Socks Affair

1966

Star Hotel - Gay Bar



1970

Bernie's Bar

1972

Gay Liberation

1979

Star Hotel Riot



1982

HIV / AIDS

2018

Gateway Hotel
Rebranding

2021

Are you a friend of
Dorothy's?



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Are You a Friend of Dorothy's?

Timeline

Georgia Collins
Sean Bryant
Kyra Hinett

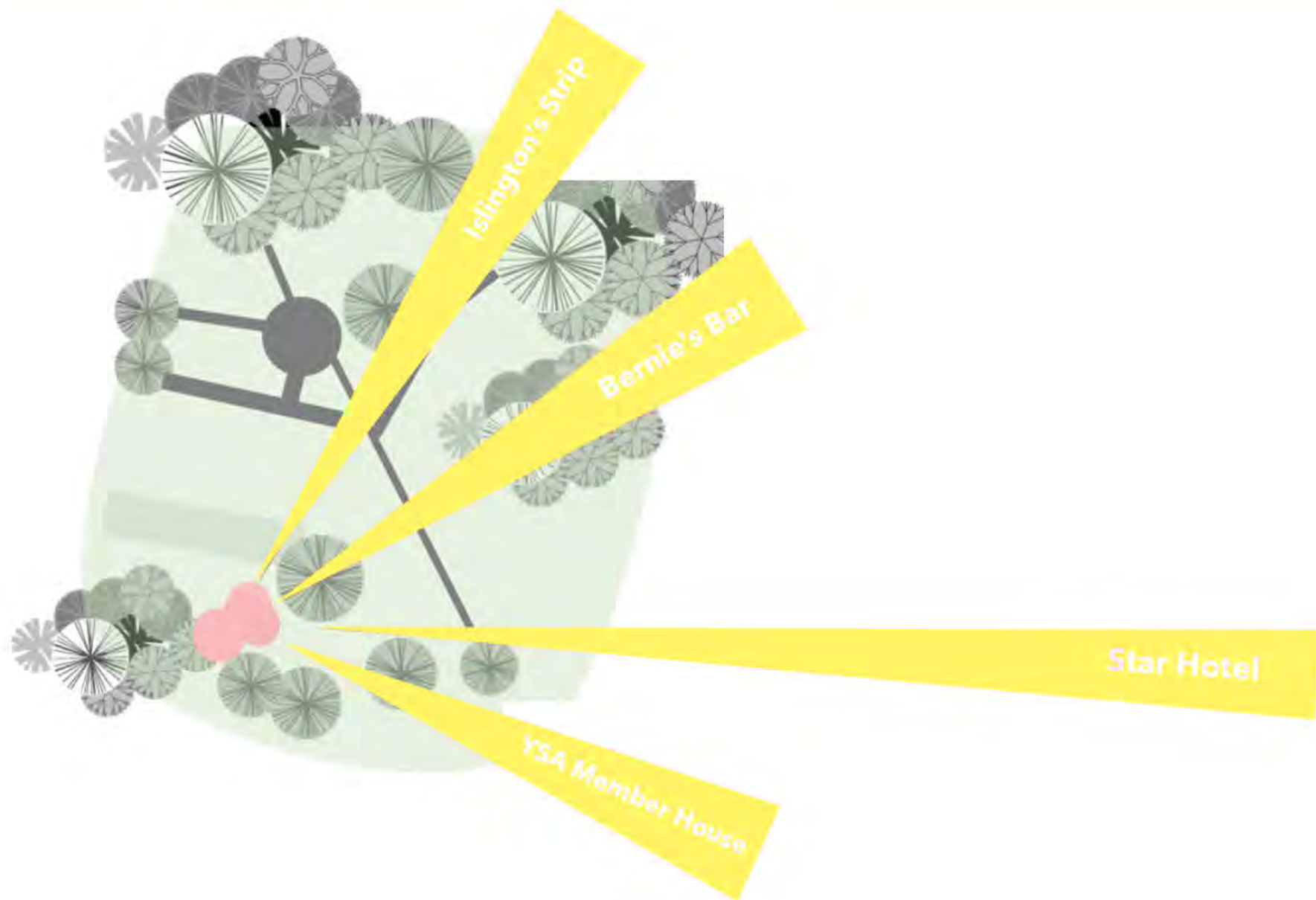
An important factor to understand the need to recognise queer spaces in the current day is to first understand the history of queer Newcastle and its destruction. This timeline also places importance on exactly why we chose Gregson Park as our location. We chose to focus on two of the most influential aspects on this slide which are the Yellow Socks Affair and Bernies Bar.

The Yellow Socks Affair is important as in 1952, 12 men were arrested and doxed in Newcastle because they were homosexual. Homosexuality was illegal in NSW up until 1984 and this persecution has become known as the Yellow Socks Affair. One of the members of this group lived in an apartment building adjacent to the Park.

Bernie's Bar was the second venue we believed significant to our location. Bernie's was described as a place for wining, dining, and relaxation, and as it was one of the only licensed venues to stay open till midnight it became inviting to every individual from the community. Through interior decoration, the bar vividly supported the queer community, unlike any venues in Newcastle today.

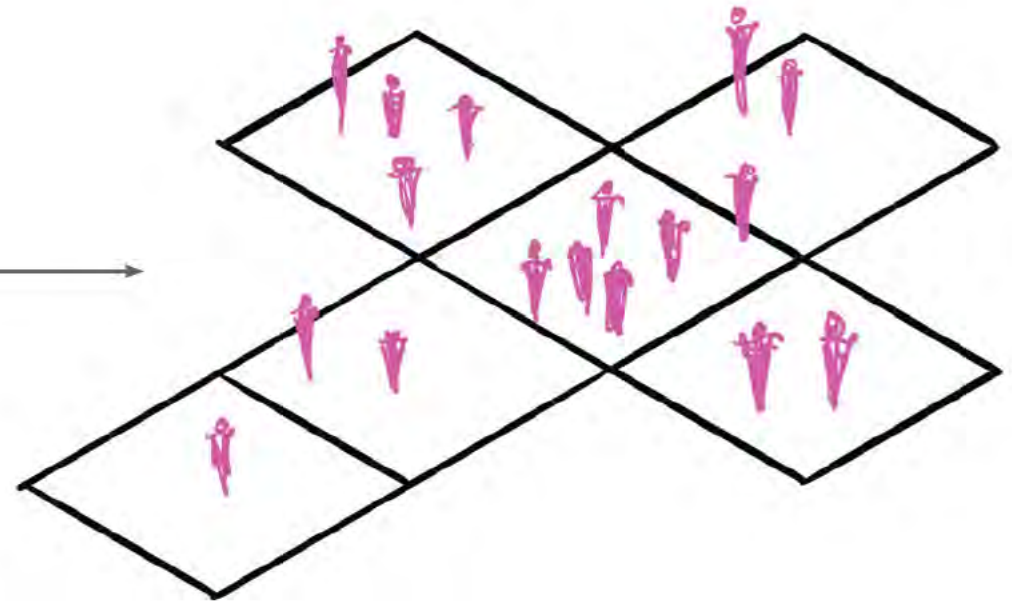
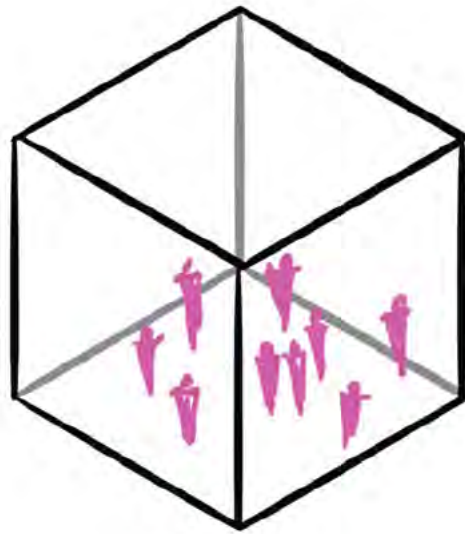
In the early 1980's the first case of AIDS was diagnosed in Australia. The discovery and spread of this virus was a disaster for gay men in Australia, yet within the tragedy would lie seeds of change and hope. As the public health crisis unfolded, the queer community was recognised through health care, research and education.

This admitted political and collective activism for the queer community, however as support started being shown through these intangible ways, the queer venues started disappearing and to this day we now have nothing physical to show for it. We strive to change that.



We decided as these venues were such significant part of shaping queer Newcastle it was important to pay recognition, and we did this through using light vistas. We imagine these lights acting as paths highlighting the directions from the past queer venues and symbolising a safe public space for the queer community to emerge from, where they will be accepted and supported.

These lights will not be leading out but rather inviting individuals in towards our installation, whilst commemorating queer history and immersing the entire community into in interactive space. Getting the locations of venues involved could also be a symbolic way of unity, and we'd ask the locations shown on this map to have similar yellow light wrapping the exterior of their buildings. This need for interactive space also relates to the masterplan of Gregson Park as interactive play space was the highest voted development need from the Newcastle public.



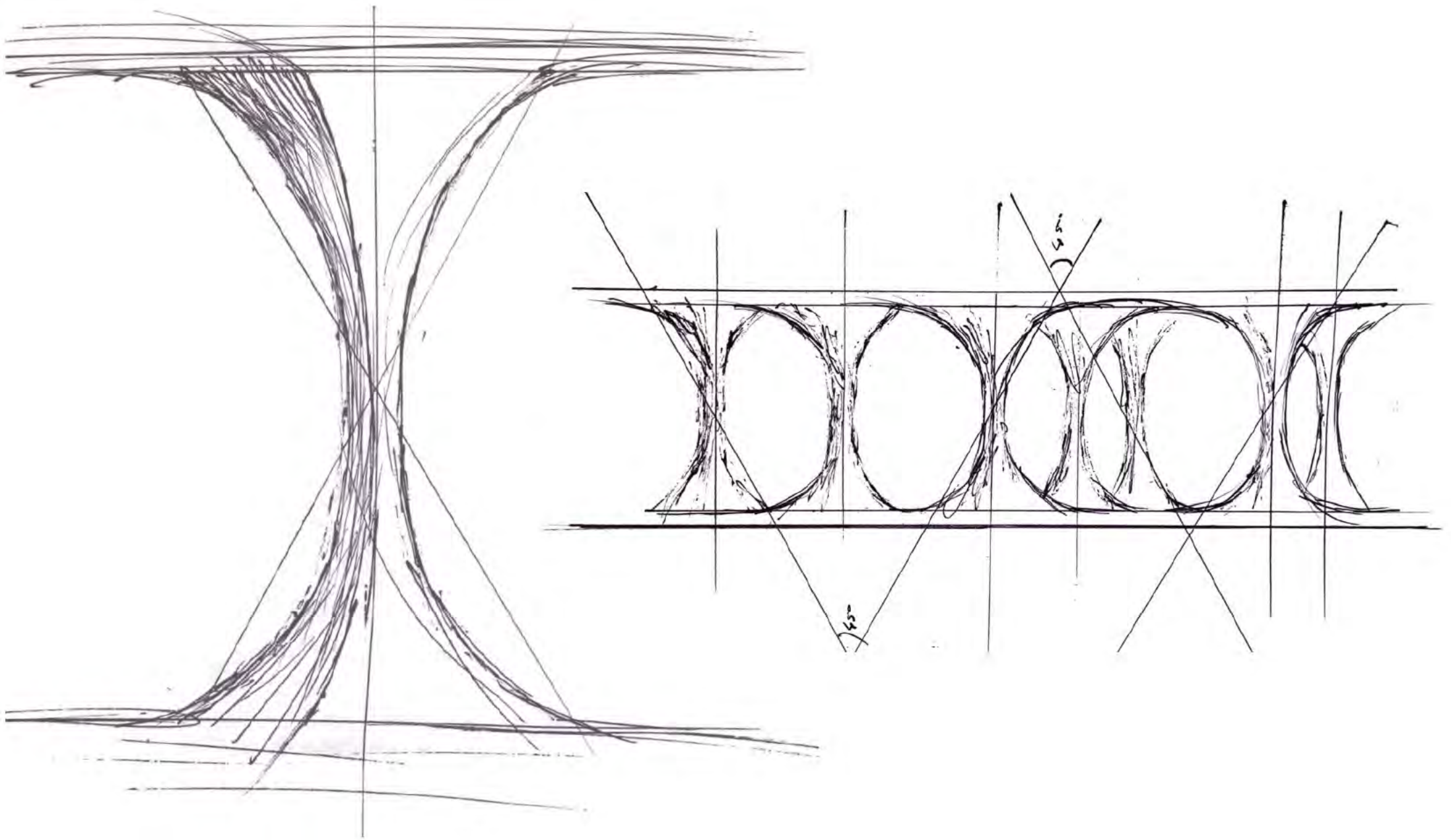
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Are You a Friend of Dorothy's?

Atmosphere

Georgia Collins
Sean Bryant
Kyra Hinett

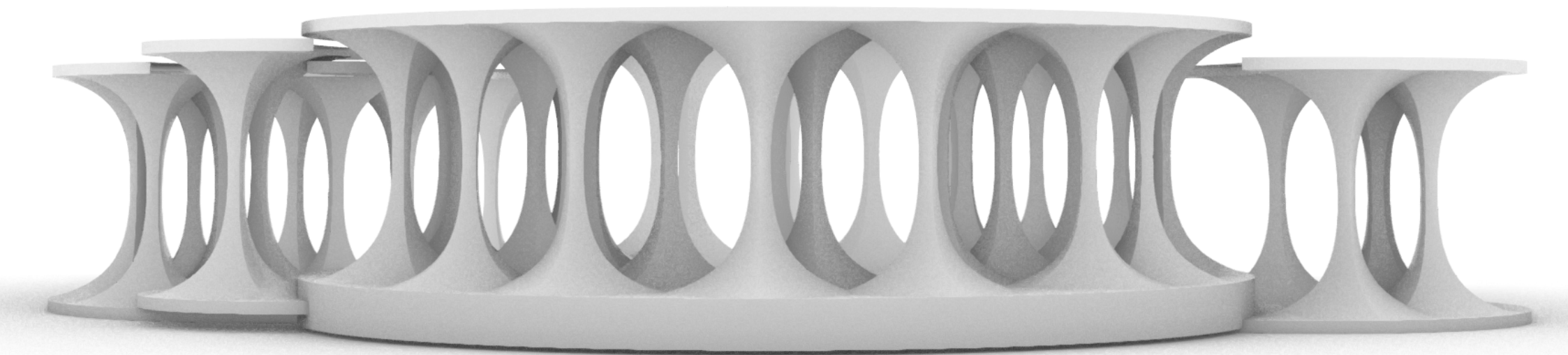
It was important to us that our design not only commemorate local queer history, but also embody the contemporary spirit of progress, and joyous pride that characterises the community.
In the past the queerness of spaces was an internal atmosphere, hidden from the wider world. Today queer space is internal AND external.
This is a core part of our concept.



Our concept began with a large focus on the form. Creating an immersive space that would blend in with its environment yet stand out through its uniqueness, as any queer space should.

Through site studies, the enormous fig trees stood out as a reflection of Hamilton's history. We wished to parallel this notion through a design that emphasised the way in which they are embedded into the park, via implanting the LGBTIQ+ community into a family forward, public space.

Initially designed as being enclosed to envelop the intrinsic atmosphere, we took into consideration the safety of the community and the usability. Instead, creating a transparent pavilion that was more inviting and visually striking.



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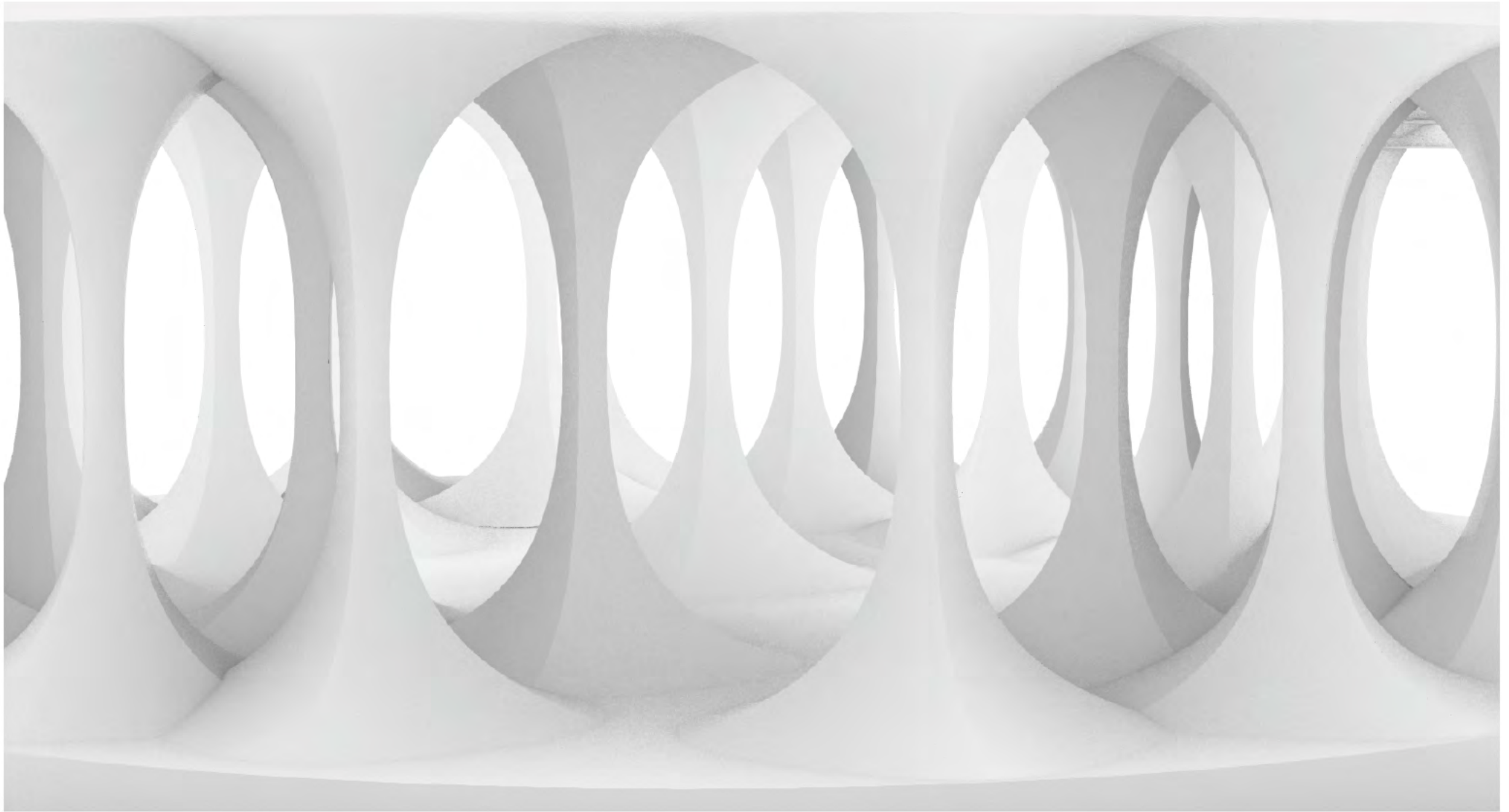
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3D CAD Model

Georgia Collins
Sean Bryant
Kyra Hinett

Through combining our intensive research, metaphorical focus and conceptual designs, our 3D CAD model was formed. The organic, curvilinear lines represent the surrounding flora, while subconsciously promoting a peaceful, meditative state.

The portal-like perspectives allude to the notion of an individual emerging from within, exposing their intrinsic selves. Our design was formed with the importance of sensory inclusivity in mind. Knowledge surrounding the disabled within the community is paramount to the success of an installation piece, especially when those individuals identify as a part of the LGBTIQ+ community. It is a space that should be experienced by all.



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Are You a Friend of Dorothy's?

3D CAD Model

Georgia Collins
Sean Bryant
Kyra Hinett

Our design plays with compression and release. The compression technique acts as a literal embrace. The organic character of the columns is additionally reflected in their arrangement.. Some columns are closer together, some more dispersed, picking up on the language of the natural world.



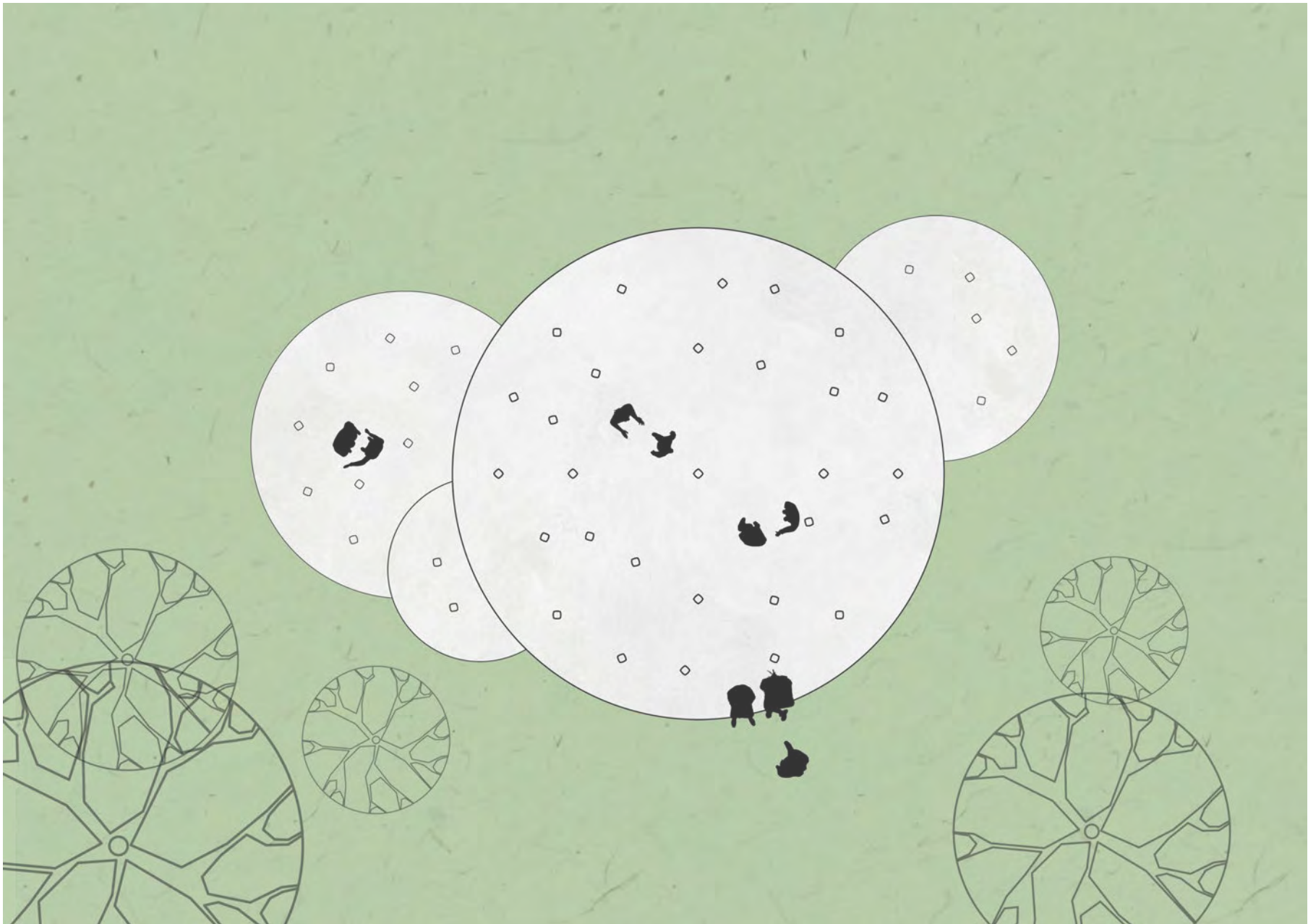
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Are You a Friend of Dorothy's?

3D CAD Model

Georgia Collins
Sean Bryant
Kyra Hinett

The structure is a porous one. Comfortable to enter, easy to find the exit. It offers the opportunity to exist within or observe it from the outside. It is a space for interaction and community.



The plan again shows the organic arrangement of the space. We can see how perhaps the public would start to inhabit the space, weather that's conversating with friends, reflecting on their identity and queer history, or just mearly sitting along edge to have some lunch. In the centre there is a single column with additional room provided around it.



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Are You a Friend of Dorothy's?

Column Concept

Georgia Collins
Sean Bryant
Kyra Hinett

An important part of our installation is recognising the personal experiences of individuals within the queer community. We have demonstrated this along our centre column. We put out a form to the Newcastle's queer community asking them, what is one thing you would tell your younger queer self? The answers run up strip LED lights within the centre column. The answers and information displayed are ever evolving, allowing for the installation to be stagnant yet always advancing alongside the community.

"Grab love when you find it and it finds you."

"Enjoy an active LGBTIQ community and nightlife while you have it."

"It wasn't a phase."

"Don't buy the twilight books."

"There will be people who will appreciate you for who you are."

"Being queer is literally the most wonderful thing. And it will one day be the thing you love most about yourself."

"Sometimes it takes us longer to figure out who we are."



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Are You a Friend of Dorothy's?

Strip Lighting - Personal Messages

Georgia Collins
Sean Bryant
Kyra Hinett

These are some examples of the replies we got, which gives a really personal connection between the queer community of Newcastle and this location.

As individuals walk through our installation these messages will run along the middle column, encouraging people to stop and appreciate the space. Individuals could lean along the columns or sit within the compressing shapes, which as well allows this installation to become an amenity to the park in it's own unique way.



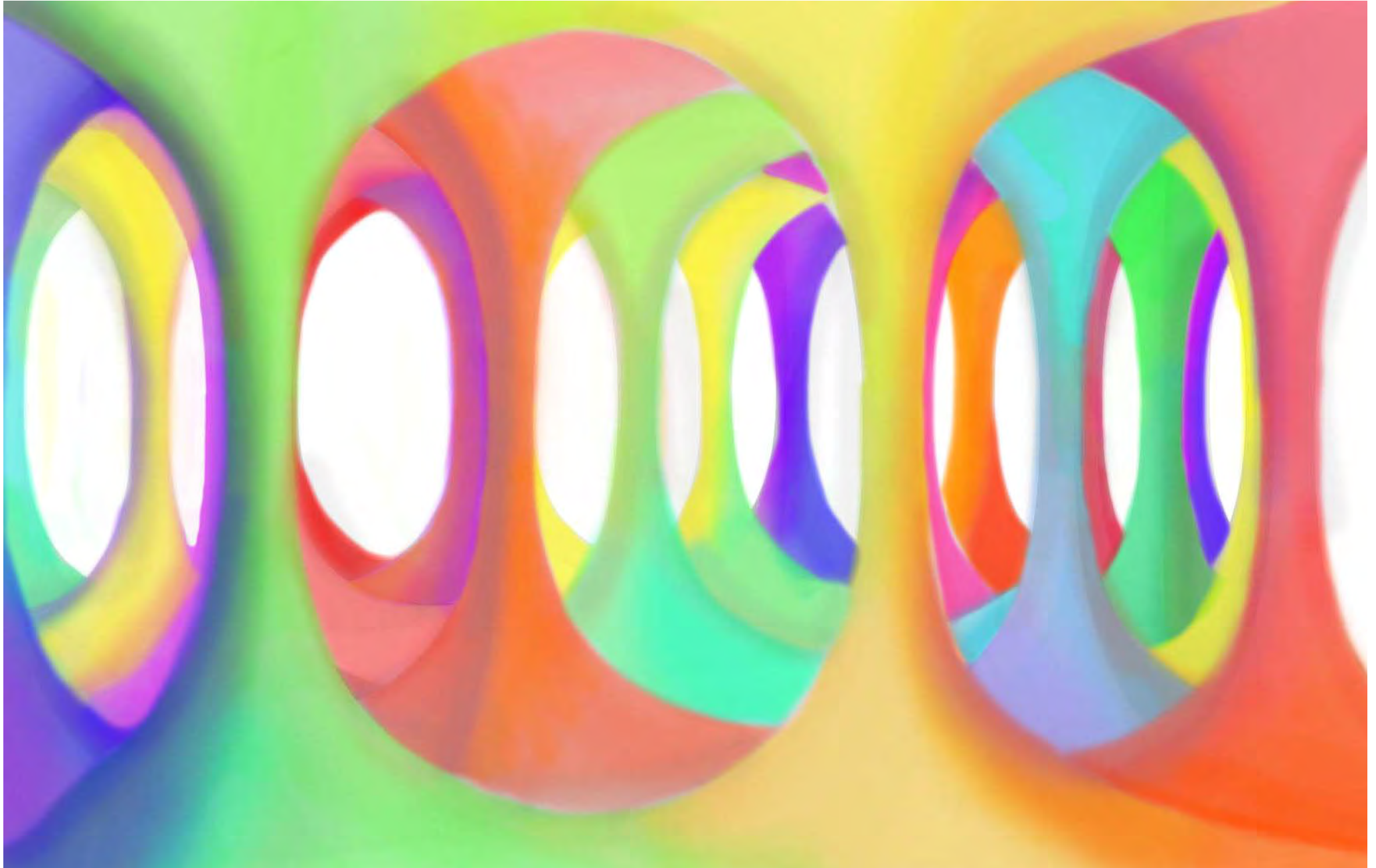
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Are You a Friend of Dorothy's?

Perspective

Georgia Collins
Sean Bryant
Kyra Hinett

Through digital super imposing, we have overlaid the 3D model into an image taken on site. This somewhat demonstrates the scale of our architectural piece while alluding to the interactive aspects. The open design allows it to belong, enveloped by the trees, furthering the notion that it belongs as much as any other form or structure placed in the park. This metaphor is of great importance to not only our design, but to the inclusivity of queer communities.



One of the most pivotal aspects in creating an atmospheric space was colour.

Traditionally, the LGBTIQ+ community has been represented via the rainbow flag. We understood the importance of this symbol and expanded it, ensuring the inclusivity of all hues.

The materiality of the columns will differ in colour, yet being translucent enough that internal lights can reflect and refract the various hues. The use of the full colour spectrum further hints at the intrinsic hidden self in all of its beauty.

This interactive, joyful space embraces creativity, inclusivity and imagination, promoting education and fun for all members of the community. An open pavilion that quite literally changes those who walk within it, through their state of utter awe and new understanding.



- Energy
- Excitement
- Strength
- Love

- Optimism
- Freedom
- Youth

- Joy
- Positivity
- Curiosity
- Happiness

- Luck
- Nature
- Loyalty
- Safety

- Trust
- Confidence
- Security

- Respect
- Calm
- Softness



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Are You a Friend of Dorothy's?

Colour Map

Georgia Collins
Sean Bryant
Kyra Hinett

Stepping away from the typical red, orange, yellow, green, blue and purple stripes allowed us to dive deeper into the exploration of hues and their symbolism.

Colour plays a large catalyst in the deliverance and altering of one's emotions.

Through focusing on the positive sensations that derive from these warm gradients, we feel we have created an immersive space where anyone can belong.

Columns



High-density Polyethylene

Optimal strength/density, vary in flexibility, cost effective, UV resistant



Plexiglass

Fluorescent Acrylic Sheet is a specialized type of sheet with the unique ability to glow at the edges in natural light, allowing it to catch and disperse sunlight or ambient room light to create a distinct glow

Flooring/Roofing



Polished Concrete

Reflective, tough, hard-wearing, durable, weather resistant.



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Are You a Friend of Dorothy's?

Materiality

Georgia Collins
Sean Bryant
Kyra Hinett

When it came to material research for this installation we compiled a list of potential materials in relation to economic factors, sustainable factors, aesthetic, and durability. These are the listed top ideas so if this installation was to be built the best interests of the community and environment would be utilized.

You can see for the columns there's options of high-density polyethylene and plexiglass, both cost effective and UV resistant.

For roofing and flooring the best option would be polished concrete as it would reflect the interior lights, is hard wearing and especially weather resistant for an outdoor installation.



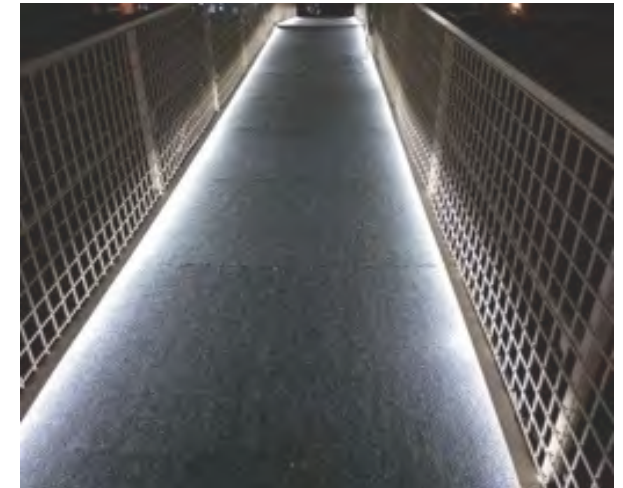
Outdoor Strip Lighting

Low power usage, low heat output



Spotlights

Enabled easy path, easy highlighted locations



LED Light Strips

Energy saving, flexible colour choices, long life span, less heat generation, environmentally friendly



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Are You a Friend of Dorothy's?

Lighting

Georgia Collins
Sean Bryant
Kyra Hinett

For lighting the interior columns could have LED light strips, creating less heat generation and are environmentally friendly. The outdoor lights creating the light vistas could be created by either strip lighting or spotlights, both have low power usage and just depend on what aesthetic is most proficient.



Are You a Friend of Dorothy's?

Death + Life of Queer Cities

Georgie, Kyra, Sean

Late Submission: National Trust of Australia (NSW), received 28 October 2021

Hunter Regional Committee
PO Box 791
HAMILTON NSW 2303
October 27th 2021

Attn: Councillor Carol Duncan & Isabelle Rowlatt (Heritage Planner).

RE: Hamilton Park Tennis Clubhouse, Gregson Park.

The National Trust notes the Review of the Draft Strategic Master Plan currently before Newcastle Council with respect to Gregson Park.

Gregson Park is on the National Trust Register and as we're sure you are aware is a listed item itself on the CN LEP 2012 (Item 151) with numerous individual heritage items within its boundaries:

- John William Parsons Monument (Item 152)
- Fountain Monument (Item 155)
- Steel Street Gates (Item 156)
- Tudor Street Gates (Item 153)
- War Memorial (Item 154)

It has been brought to our attention that the Gregson Park Tennis Club building is potentially earmarked for demolition & future replacement with an awning like structure as part of the Draft Master Plan. The Clubhouse is not a heritage listed item on the CN LEP however it does fall within Gregson Park which is a listed item, & from a heritage perspective we believe there is merit in its retention & repair. Tennis has been played in Gregson Park in some form since 1898, and the Hamilton Park Tennis Club has existed since the early 1900s - so there is a continuous social significance attached to the Tennis Club albeit not this particular building. Therefore a facility that ensures the continued running of the Hamilton Park Tennis Club is of historical importance.

Some of the National Trusts justification for retention of the Clubhouse include the following:

- The current building was constructed in 1959 & is a good example of 1950s architecture in NSW associated with tennis clubhouses at the time.
- The 1950s Clubhouse reflects the post war limited availability of materials. Many of this style of structure were often supported by community donations of funds, materials & labour. Examples of these types of buildings are rapidly disappearing.
- An enclosed clubhouse has existed on this site in some form since the early 1900s. Refer to images below. Therefore a need has existed for an enclosed clubhouse throughout the club's history.



1956 Clubhouse (Source: Hamilton Park T.C)



Today's Clubhouse (Source: A.Hinds, 2021)

- The Clubhouse adds to the layers of history which contributes to the rich fabric of Gregson Park. We need to value buildings from different eras if they can feasibly be repaired, otherwise we'll only have new builds remaining. Over time various buildings in Gregson Park have already been lost: The two bowling clubs, original green house, wooden gardeners sheds, Mechanics Institute Tennis club, Ladies tennis club & potentially the current green house.



Gardeners Sheds (Source: Flickr)



Hamilton Ladies Tennis Club, 1949 (Source: HPTC)

- A Clubhouse building is a home for the deep history associated with the tennis club such as trophies, flags, photos of members, historic newspaper articles & communication boards etc. These need a secure place to be stored & on display.
- A clubhouse throughout its history was not just for use during the warmer months but also during Winter, which an open awning structure would not accommodate as successfully. An enclosed clubhouse gives greater protection from the elements of the weather allowing increased use of the facilities.
- The enclosed Clubhouse over time has assisted with a smoother functioning tennis club by allowing storage of the various equipment on site which the club utilises. Hamilton Park Tennis Club is the last remaining tennis club in Gregson Park – there were once 3 clubs.
- The Hamilton community has a connection with the Clubhouse as a location for birthday parties over the years, & various meetings associated with the club that often make use of the kitchen facilities.

However, if it is deemed to be unfeasible to repair the Tennis Clubhouse the National Trust would make the following suggestions for any rebuilds:

- To take up a similar location & footprint to the existing building.
- A new building should be simple & sympathetic in design.
- Keep a visual connection from Lindsay St through the tennis courts to Gregson Park proper.
- If additional shelter is required then may we suggest open shade awnings projecting off the shorter side elevations of the Clubhouse would be acceptable. A possible skillion roof form.

We hope our feedback can be of assistance & if you have any queries please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted]
BA (Arch), B.Arch (Hons), M.B.A (Glasgow)
Secretary, Hunter Regional Committee
National Trust of Australia (NSW)

[Redacted]