

COFFS HARBOUR CITY COUNCIL

Sandy Beach Reserve

Community Hub and Active Youth Space
Draft Concept Plan



2021 Community Engagement Outcomes Report

August 4, 2021



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Community Engagement Outcomes Report

Sandy Beach Reserve Community Hub and Active Youth Space

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ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment A: Detailed Project Report: *Have Your Say Coffs Harbour* project webpage
- Attachment B: Online Submissions (CONFIDENTIAL)
- Attachment C: Email and Mail Submissions (CONFIDENTIAL)
- Attachment D: Background Briefing Document
- Attachment E: Sandy Beach Community Hub Concept Plan (as presented for consultation).



IMAGES:

Cover and above - The community was invited to attend a public workshop in March, to contribute ideas for the Community Hub picnic areas and play space and for the Active Youth Space;

Opposite Page - The Reserve caters for a wide range of recreational and social activities including events such as the Christmas Carols.

Acknowledgement of Country

Coffs Harbour City Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land, the Gumbaynggirr people, who have cared for this land since time immemorial. We pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging, and commit ourselves to a future with reconciliation and renewal at its heart.



Introduction

Sandy Beach Reserve Masterplan was adopted by the Coffs Coast Regional Park Trust Board in November 2017 following extensive consultations, which included a series of workshops for the general community, workshops for local school students, public exhibition and online surveys.

Since the Masterplan was adopted, a number of elements of the Masterplan have been constructed in accordance with community priorities, including: the installation of bollards; stage one of the main shared pathway; the viewing deck at the southern car park, dunal and foreshores restoration works by Dunecare volunteers and; entry statement signage. Cultural heritage and interpretive signage is designed and soon to be installed.

Consultations in 2021 have focused on the design of the community hub and the recreational elements to be included within the junior play space and active youth space. A total of \$900,000 funding has been allocated for design and construction of the Community Hub and Active Youth Space. The funds are provided by the Regional Park, Coffs Harbour City Council and through two NSW Government grants.

The Community Hub and Active Youth Space elements of the Masterplan are to be located in the central area of the Reserve at the site of the current central car park, existing playground and picnic facilities.

In 2021, through a two-stage consultation process, local residents and the wider community were invited to: review the Masterplan concept for this area of the Reserve, contribute ideas to develop a concept plan, and secondly; to comment on that concept plan to inform detailed design and construction.

A total of 171 valid submissions were received during the exhibition, from June 25 until July 23. The majority of submissions and survey responses were positive and supportive of the concept plan to proceed with no change (122 submissions representing 71 per cent of participants). Participants are representative of a broad age demographic and include neighbouring residents as well as park users.

The positive response demonstrates that the plan meets the needs and expectations of the majority of the local community, and aligns with our vision of: ***creating a vibrant inclusive place for young people and the wider community to connect, participate and play.***

Project Objectives and Design Drivers

The Sandy Beach Reserve Masterplan 2017 identifies the Community Hub as “the heart” of the site.

The Community Hub includes shelters, barbecues, junior play and active youth space including skate park and multi-purpose court. Supporting amenities include connecting pathways, water bubbler, seating, revised car parking, among other improvements.

The Key Objectives and Design Drivers for the Community Hub and Active Youth Space are:

- Promote social inclusion
- Improve District-level youth facilities
- Improve park facilities and recreational use of the reserve
- Improve car parking facilities and provide accessible parking facilities
- Improve safety
- Improve pedestrian circulation and accessibility
- Protect and conserve ecological habitats through considered placement of community spaces
- Maintain feel and character of the Reserve and village
- Improve drainage
- Reduce overnight camping
- Celebrate natural materials
- Be relaxed, low maintenance, understated and is uniquely Sandy Beach.



SNAPSHOT OF CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

- 71 per cent of consultation participants support the concept plan with no changes
- 77 per cent of participants support the inclusion of the skate park and multi-purpose court
- 80 per cent of *Have Your Say* participants say they are more likely to visit the Sandy Beach Reserve when the Community Hub and Active Youth Space are completed.
- 15 per cent of participants do not support the skate park and/or the multi-purpose court.

Community Engagement Methodology

Masterplan development - 2017

Community engagement to prepare the overarching Sandy Beach Reserve Masterplan has been rigorous, taking place over a period of more than nine months before the Masterplan was adopted in 2017. The process included:

- Initial Consultation with key stakeholders and government agencies (January 2017)
- Community Workshop: issues & opportunities (Feb. 2017)
- Consultation with Sandy Beach Public School students and secondary meeting to present concepts (Feb. 2017)
- Community Meeting: present plan (Feb. 2017)
- On-line Exhibition of Draft Concept Plan (March - April. 2017)
- Preliminary Concept (Feb. 2017)
- Revised Concept plan (May - June. 2017)
- Community Meeting: present revised plan (June. 2017)
- Community online Feedback (July. 2017)
- Publication of Masterplan Consultation Report (Sept-Oct. 2017)
- Public exhibition of draft masterplans, online survey (Sept-Oct 2017)
- Informal meetings/discussions with stakeholders (Oct-Nov. 2017).

Concept Planning for Community Hub and Active Youth Space - 2021

A two-stage community engagement process was initiated in 2021 to guide the concept planning for Community Hub and Active Youth Space.

Local school students had been involved in school-based Masterplan workshop consultations in 2017, and the consultation process for the Active Youth Space sought to extend opportunities for young people to add their voice to the planning discussions, while continuing also to involve other age demographics for the play space and Community Hub facilities.

Stage One - Community Workshop March 1 Onsite:

About 80 adults and children visited Sandy Beach Reserve on March 10 this year to take part in an informal workshop to gather ideas and priorities for the Community Hub and junior play space and for the Active Youth Space. The workshop was promoted in a local newspaper, through flyers distributed to schools and through the local shop, through social media and via the Sandy Beach Reserve community noticeboard. Ideas generated during the workshop helped to inform preparation of a draft concept plan for the Community Hub, Active Youth Space and supporting infrastructure.

Stage Two - Public Exhibition of Concept Plan and Call for Submissions:

A draft concept plan for the Community Hub, Active Youth Space, connecting pathways and future relocated central car park was placed on public exhibition for a period of 28 days and submissions were invited from June 25 until July 23.

The public exhibition and consultation period was promoted online, through newspaper advertising, social media, online, through flyers sent to schools and the local shop and on the community noticeboard. Property owners neighbouring the Reserve were advised through flyers or direct mail and invited to comment. Registered *Have Your Say* participants in previous Northern Beaches consultations including Sandy Beach Reserve were notified by email of the consultations and invited to participate.

Community Consultation Outcomes Summary

Community feedback during the 28-day public exhibition period for the draft concept plan included:

- A total of 115 submissions and survey responses lodged online (Refer to Attachments A & B);
- A total of 56 valid submissions via email and letter (Attachment C - includes five additional submissions that were lodged by participants who had also lodged *Have Your Say* submissions. These additional submissions are not counted in final numbers but are provided in the Attachment for review as additional information supporting the online representation);
- Petition in favour of the youth components (submitted);
- Petition opposing skate element - note that this petition was not formally submitted for consideration as part of these consultations.

Online Survey and Submissions - *Have Your Say Coffs Harbour*

Please refer to Attachment A for a Detailed Report on the online survey responses and to Attachment B to review the online submissions (Confidential).

Key Indicators:

- 80 per cent of survey respondents say they are more likely to visit Sandy Beach Reserve when the Community Hub and Active Youth Space are completed;
- 61.3 per cent of online submissions were positive about the concept plan;
- 17.1 per cent of online submissions were neutral;
- 15.3 per cent of online responses contained a mix of positive and negative responses;
- 6.3 per cent of online submissions were negative about the concept plan.

Email and Mail Submissions

A total of 56 letters and emails are assessed as valid submissions of the 62 emails and letters received by Coffs Harbour City Council and by the Coffs Coast Regional Park Trust Board during the consultations. One of the submissions was withdrawn at the request of the organisation which lodged it, and five submissions were lodged by participants who had also lodged *Have Your Say* submissions. To avoid duplication, only the *Have Your Say* submissions of these five participants were included in the response assessment totals. Please refer to Attachment C (Confidential).

Key Indicators:

- 56 valid submissions;
- 55 supportive submissions - 98.2% in favour;
- One (1) valid submission not supporting the concept plan - 1.8% opposing skate park/court.

Petitions

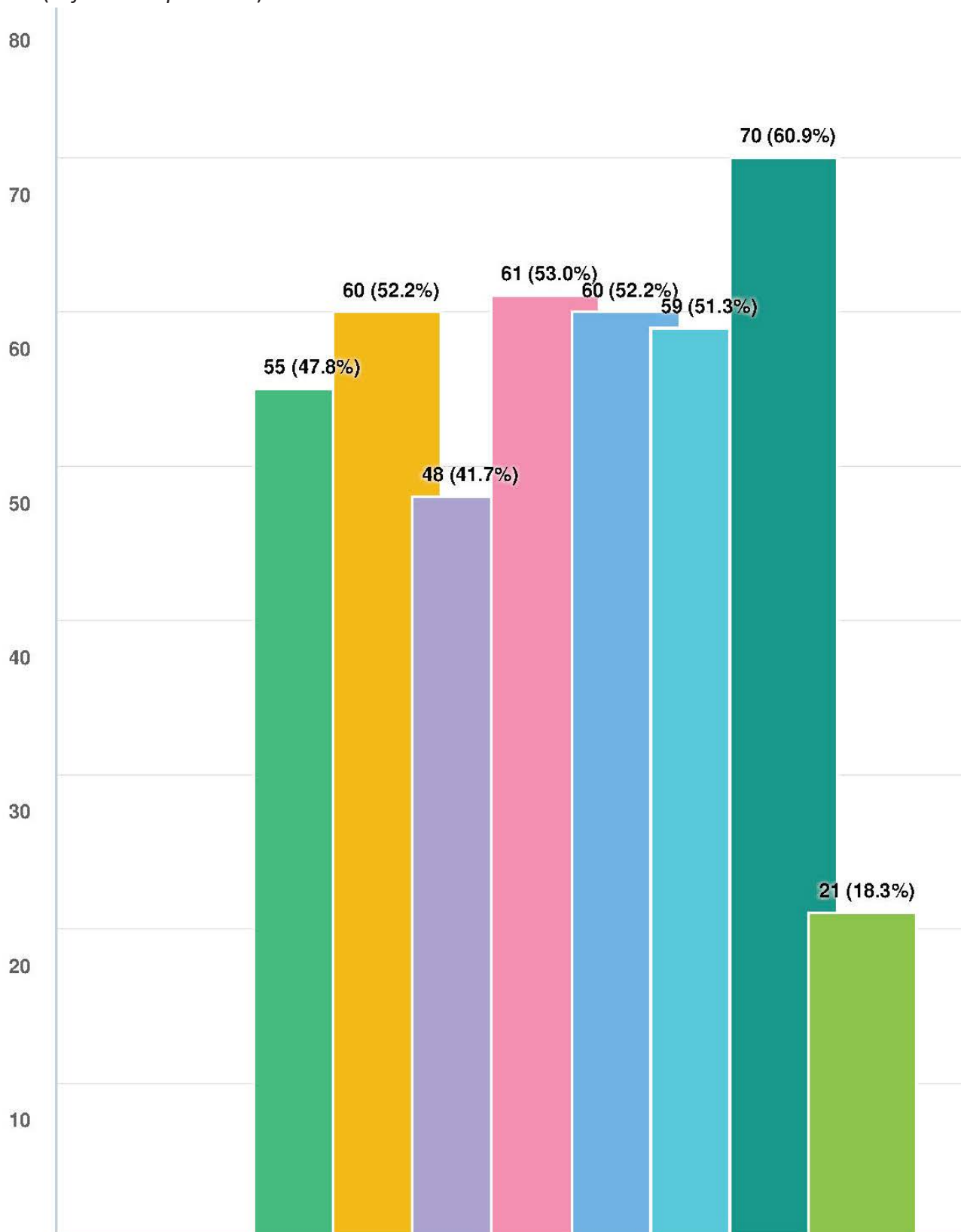
Separate petitions were launched during the consultation process. Coffs Harbour City Council Submission Policy deems that a petition is treated as a single submission.

- On July 15 a petition was launched on Change.org in support of completing the concept plan for the Active Youth Space and Community Hub. The petition was formally lodged as part of this consultation process, and at the close of public exhibition on July 23, this petition had attracted 605 signatories, including 260 signatories from Sandy Beach and surrounding areas
- A petition opposing the skate park was created by another resident through Change.org. Numbers of signatories are unknown as this petition has not been lodged for consideration as part of this consultation process.

The Community's Favoured Project Elements - *Have Your Say Coffs Harbour*

Have Your Say survey participants were asked to nominate their three favoured elements of the plan. The most valued elements of the Concept Plan are:

1 - Connecting accessible pathways and Shared Path; 2 - Skate Park; 3 - Multi-purpose court and picnic areas (Refer to Graph below).

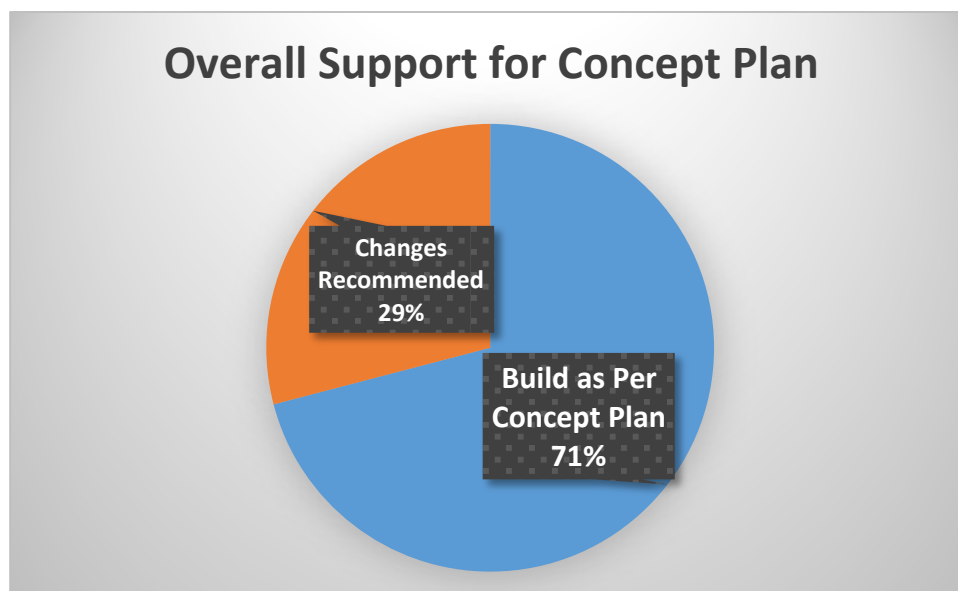


Question options

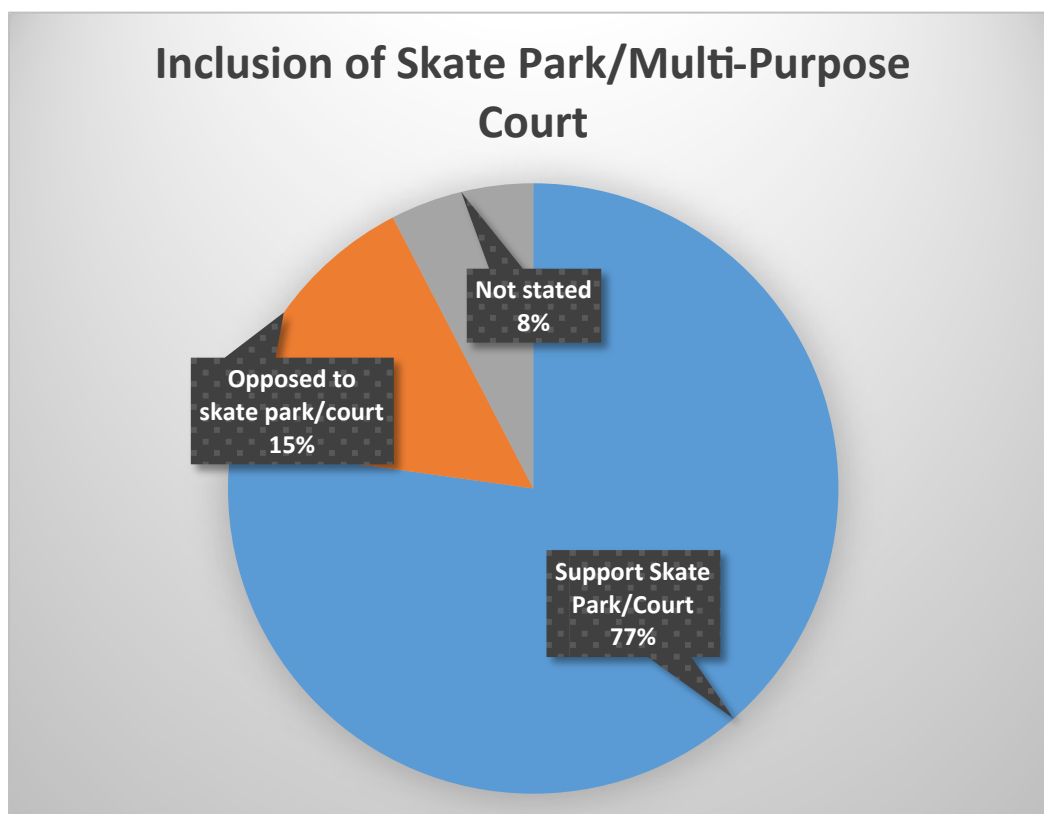
- BBQs
- Picnic Areas
- Junior Play
- Skate Park
- Multi-purpose Court
- Grassed Areas
- Connecting accessible pathways and Shared Path
- Other - see below

Key Findings in Total Responses

The majority of submissions and comments are in favour of the Community Hub and Active Youth Space concept plan, with some submissions providing comment that will be taken into consideration in the detailed design stages. The graphs below provide an overall view of the views of the 171 participants in regards to the Concept Plan and in relation to the inclusion and construction of the Skate Park and Multi-Purpose Court, the main Active Youth Space components that are included in the Sandy Beach Reserve Masterplan 2017.



Graph One - Overall Support for Concept Plan: Of the total 171 submissions it was assessed that: 122 (71%) submissions support the project to be built according to the Concept Plan presented at public exhibition; 49 submissions (29%) are opposed to elements of the Concept Plan or seek some changes to the plan.



Graph Two - Inclusion of Skate Park/Multi-purpose Court: Of the total 172 submissions it was assessed that: 132 (77%) submissions support the skate park/multi-purpose court; 26 (15%) do not support inclusion of the skate park/multi-purpose court, and; 13 submissions did not clearly state support or opposition to the skate park and multi-purpose court.

Key Considerations Raised by Community

The majority of submissions and comments have been in favour of the Community Hub and Active Youth Space concept plan, with some submissions providing comment that will be taken into consideration in the detailed design stages.

Other key considerations raised by the community during the consultations include:

- Surveillance, security (lighting and CCTV);
- Parking needs;
- Pedestrian safety on Sandys Beach Drive;
- Completion of the northern section of the Shared Pathway (Stage 2);
- Recreational and ecological values.

Surveillance and Security

Concerns about surveillance, noise, security and lighting were raised as part of the consultation of the car park. The design has been reviewed in accordance with Safer by Design and CPTED principles (*Refer to Attachment D - Background Briefing Document*). Maximising surveillance from the road, ensuring use of robust materials and ensuring safe access through the site are some of the safer by design elements included.

CCTV and lighting have been suggested. Council is undertaking development of an LGA wide policy regarding installation of CCTV in parks and reserves. This policy will inform future installations of CCTV. While not currently funded in this project, allowance will be made for future lighting if/as required.

Parking

Construction of the Community Hub and Active Youth Space on the identified locations will require closure of the existing central car park, which provides about 37 informal parking spaces. It is intended to replace this car park in the future at the location as presented within the concept plan. The concept plan indicates a car park providing about 20 spaces (including accessible parking), which could be expanded as required. It is recommended that consideration be given to funding for future car park design and construction.

Pedestrian Safety

Proximity of the Community Hub, junior play space and connecting pathway to the informal road crossing near the local shop has resulted in requests for consideration of traffic calming, formal pedestrian crossing or pedestrian refuge at this location. Roads and traffic management is outside the scope of this project, however, Coffs Harbour City Council will be conducting updated traffic studies in Sandys Beach Drive, with the aim of identifying the most suitable road safety design measures to improve pedestrian safety.

Completion of Shared Pathway - Northern Section, Stage Two

The completion of Stage Two of the main Shared Pathway - the northern section - was one of the requests frequently raised in submissions regarding the concept plan.

A concept design has been prepared for this section, in consultation with interested residents, however funding is not currently available to complete this project. It is recommended that the completion of the northern section of the Shared Pathway be considered as one of the priorities for future funding in the Sandy Beach Reserve.

Recreational and Ecological Values

Some submissions expressed views in regards to the ecological values of the Regional Park and perceived impacts that may be caused by the construction of facilities for recreation or access. It is noted that Sandy Beach Day Use Area is a major-day use area within the Regional Park and that regional parks in NSW tend to be more modified and provide more recreational facilities than other types of reserves (eg national park & nature reserves). The CCRP is managed for a range of uses and objectives which are detailed in the Plan of Management (POM). One of the principles of Regional Parks is to protect and conserve areas in a natural or modified landscapes that are suitable for public recreation and enjoyment. The adopted Coffs Coast Regional Park Plan of Management (Section 5) refers to the desired outcomes within the 12 day-use areas within the park. Sandy Beach Day Use Area is a highly modified area. The existing facilities within Sandy Beach Day Use Area, which include picnic shelters, playgrounds, car parks and walking tracks, are degraded after high levels of use over many years. Upgrades of the recreational facilities will meet the required safety standards.

Other Submission Feedback from Community

The main themes of feedback from the community are listed below, with the numbers of submissions in which these themes were raised:

- Upgrade playground only - 14 submissions
- Reserve car park - 20
- Cited the Griffith Report References - 9
- Cited Alternative Report References - 1
- More Rubbish Bins within Community Hub - 10
- More BBQs within Community Hub - 5
- Cited concerns with safety and requested CCTV - 3
- Requested Northern Pathway be completed as part of works - 17
- Cited safety of pedestrians crossing Sandy beach Drive is a concern and requested pedestrian refuge or similar -13
- Cited issues with Existing Amenities Block; should be upgraded - 2
- Requested Dog Facilities with Poo Bags - 1
- Requested more BBQs Reserve wide - 7
- Requested more showers reserve wide - 8
- Concern with condition of beach access points and cited these needed upgrading - 11
- Requested natural-coloured play area or be of natural character - 2
- Requested Lighting for Safety Reasons - 2
- Cited area was ecologically important and planned works are not in keeping with this - 4
- Requested roofed gathering space for yoga and small events - 1
- Requested formal exercise equipment areas - 1
- Requested 'no alcohol' signage - 1
- Requested no lighting - 1
- Cited concern with noise impacts of court and skate park - 6

Recommendation

Significant community support has been demonstrated for the Sandy Beach Reserve Community Hub and Active Youth Space concept plan. It is recommended that Coffs Coast Regional Park Trust Board:

- 1 - Notes the submissions and other feedback received during the public exhibition of the Sandy Beach Reserve Community Hub and Active Youth Space;**
- 2 - Thanks the participants in the consultation process for their contributions and advises of the outcomes of the consultations;**
- 3 - Adopts the Sandy Beach Reserve Community Hub and Active Youth Space Concept Plan as presented at public exhibition;**
- 4 - Proceed to detailed design and construction of the Sandy Beach Reserve Community Hub and Active Youth Space.**

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