



Newport Residents Association Inc.

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www.newport.org.au

29th January 2020

The Chief Executive Officer,
Northern Beaches Council,
PO Box 1336,
Dee Why, NSW 2099

Dear Sir,

Re Proposed Outdoor Youth Space, Newport Beach environs

Our Association is very supportive of endeavours to provide the youth of Newport with facilities which encourage and enhance constructive, healthy outdoor activity.

A number of our members and their families are actively involved in local netball and basketball. Even more have active involvement with the Newport Surf Life Saving Club. So our comments include aspects which reflect those specific inputs.

The Newport SLSC, including its Nippers program, is one of the pre-eminent Clubs in NSW for fostering wide youth involvement and providing excellent, healthy and developmental training for youth in general. For quite some time, the Club has been pursuing options to increase the size of the clubhouse, which is grossly inadequate for housing the equipment it already requires and to provide the facilities, which optimise the involvement of current and future youth membership. We would not wish to see anything proceeding on the area indicated, which will in anyway compromise or impact upon these paramount Club improvements. The detailed plans for the Club must be considered and duly allowed for before concluding what other youth initiatives might be progressed.

Our member feedback on the inclusion of a Basketball Halfcourt is that the ones recently installed elsewhere (eg, Narrabeen Lake) do not seem to attract many basketballers and/or netballers, so go largely unused. Whereas full-size court with standard playing surface get very regular use.

A **Climbing Wall** is an excellent idea; as is a **Street Workout** system. However, has *the location* been fully thought through by those familiar with the existing uses of this particular area, which is quite small and adjacent to so many existing active zones?

The wall, the workout apparatus, the halfcourt (and its fence) and the several concrete seating walls will all block the existing, main vehicle access to Bert Payne Park. And its not just events such as Australia Day and the Newport Market Day which need to have vehicular access. Every Surf Life Saving interclub event also needs such access, to set up tents and position trailers with boats, surf skis, etc. This significant grassy area is also extensively used by visiting family groups throughout the whole summer. These structures, in this location will likely make their access that much more problematic.

There are a number of factors which really need to be thought through, before any non-Surf Club developments proceed in this area:

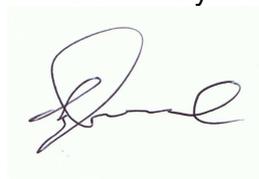
- Has it been considered that this takes over the area where voters queue, every election day?
- Does having an older teens' activity facility hard up against a children's (and disabled youths') playground attract more vandalism?
- Does the adjacent presence of noisier, more active, bigger youths diminish the enjoyment and overall attraction of the existing playground for the current users?
- And, as we've already touched on, will it detract from the current and future optimal use by the Surf Club, its members and its visiting contestants?

The facilities you've listed – plus a small skate park (larger ones seem to attract a much older, bullying element) – would be great youth embellishments for the Newport community. But is this the optimal location?

Under Pittwater Council, a small skate park was mooted at the northern end of the carpark. For several years, there has been consistent lobbying and indeed, community-sourced professional plans to upgrade the look and the facilities of Newport Oval, the welcoming southern gateway to our village. Could some of these youth facilities be looked at for incorporation into such an oval upgrade? Especially as a significant part of the funding would already appear to be in place.

We heartily endorse the intent of the NBC proposals; we just don't think this is the right location, relative to existing and planned future uses, and also to alternate spaces that can be available elsewhere, adjacent to our village.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gavin Butler', is written on a light green rectangular background.

Gavin Butler
President