

City of London Open Spaces



CONTACT

Barbara Kaucky Erect Architecture

Tel: 020 7254 6336

bk@erectarchitecture.co.uk

www.erectarchitecture.co.uk

INTRODUCTION

The City of London identified the sand pit play area in Queen's Park playground for capital investment.

To establish a brief and collate park users' insights and ideas the City of London and Erect Architecture hosted an engagement event during the Queen's Park Day event. The annual event is attended by approximately 14,000 people and presents an excellent opportunity to engage with users.

Our stall was set up outside the playground entrance. We focussed on users with small children, who were asked to complete a questionnaire and share their views of a number of initial design approaches on display.

Details of consultation

Date and time of consultation:

Sunday, 18.09.16 from 12pm-5.30pm Location: Queen's Park, outside playground

Enablers: Barbara Kaucky, Ashleigh Watkins, Karla Kaucky

Attendance: 200+ people were engaged and either filled out a questionnaire, commented on the display or did both.

Method

Users were asked to:

- Fill in a questionnaire
- Share preferences for initial design approaches
- Come up with ideas for the underused grass area to the south of the sandpit
- Comment on the requirement of additional access points into the sandpit area

Throughout, residents were encouraged to make further comments on the proposals.

The display boards and an example of the questionnaire (including post-it notes and priority stickers) are included in the appendix.

A small sand play area was provided to engage children.



A) RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE

170 questionnaires were filled in. Below a summary of the responses.

Question 1: How often do you visit the sand pit play area:

Every day: 24

Once a week: 54

Sometimes: 47

Rarely: 27

Never: 17

Not filled in: 1

Question 2: On a rating of 1-10 (10 being the highest) How would you rate the quality of the sand pit play area:

1: 3 votes

2: 0 votes

3: 8 votes

4: 5 votes

5: 20 votes

6: 33 votes

7: 44 votes

8: 36 votes

9: 11 votes

10: 9 votes

Not completed: 5 people

Question 3: What do you like best about the sand pit play area?

Sand: 42

Safe contained space for younger children to play that is easy to monitor: 41

Variety of equipment to suit various ages: 39

Nice, generous and spacious sandpit area: 32

Large provision of sitting areas and the variety of play types: 14

Shade provided by the trees: 11

Fun and allows the children to be creative: 9

Clean and well maintained: 9

Truck and train: 9

Slides: 5

Baby change: 4

Question 4: What don't you like about the sandpit area?

Poor maintenance. Sand is dirty, litter left in it: 30

Nothing: 25

Play equipment is a worn out: 22

Sand pit not deep enough resulting in the underlay beneath sandpit showing: 19

Messy. Edging does not hold the sand in place: 13

More diversity in play needs to be offered: 13

More seating needed: 7

Covered area over sand so that it doesn't get wet: 6 no easy access to toilets: 5 People Smoking: 4

More play equipment: 3

Nothing to play on if it has rained: 3

It's too busy: 3 poor quality of sand: 3

Sand pit should be covered at night: 3

Gate is not self-closing: 2

Needs to be more integrated with the other playground: 2

No access to clean water to wash and drinking water: 2

No swings for younger children: 2

Nappy Change Area is dirty and ugly: 2

Don't like that all play equipment is located in the sandpit: 2

Edge of sand pit is a trip hazard: 2

Not much on offer for children 3+: 2

Not toddler friendly: 1

Not accessible for use by disabled children: 1

Don't know where to put my shoes: 1

Train bell makes no noise: 1

Sand is too dry for sand castles: 1

Vehicles: 1

Bins too attractive to children: 1

Misbehaving children throwing sand: 2

Question 5: What do you play with the most in the Sand pit play area?

Play Vehicles (Train, bus, truck and fire truck): 55

Sand: 51

Slides: 39

Climbing Frames: 17

House dens: 16

Rocking Animals: 4

Question 6: Would you like to have easier access to the toilets from the sand pit play area?

Yes: 116

No: 27

No opinion: 16

Not sure: 8

Access to spot to wash your hands: 2

A new separate toilet: 1

Question 7: Would you like to remove fencing between the sandpits and the rest of the playground?

No: 137

Yes: 17

Not sure: 8

No opinion: 8

General Information of consulted users:

Question 8: How old are you and/or your children?

0-4: 130

5-9: 54

10-14: 19

15-19: 4

20-29: 10

30-39: 32

40-49: 19

50-59: 1

60-69: 1 70+: 0

Question 9: What is your and/or your child's gender?

Male: 95

Female: 125

Question 10: What is your ethnic origin?

White British: 39

White American: 2

English: 6

British: 21

White European: 10

Asian: 4

Italian: 3

Afro Caribbean: 1

African: 4

Australian: 4

Philippines: 2

Latin American: 1

Norwegian British: 1

Indian: 2

Irish: 4

Caucasian: 2

Mediterranean: 1

Iranian: 1

Egyptian: 1

Turkish: 1

Dutch: 1

Croatian: 1

Middle Eastern: 1

Arab: 1

German: 1

Japanese: 1

Hispanic: 2

Mixed: 7

Question 11: do you consider your child to have a disability:

Yes: 4 No: 149

70 people requested updates.

B) INITIAL IDEAS: USERS' PREFERENCES

We presented six groups of possible improvements and asked people to vote for their favourite 3:

Water play, pump, channels: 113 votes

'Yes please! There's nowhere for the little kids in hot weather. The big kids are crazy/scary in the pool! This water would be great.' 'Don't integrate water and sand. Retain sand pit.'

Interesting textures, integrated water channels, rocks: 70 votes

'This is great, but uneven surfaces mean you have to keep a close eye on little ones. Its lovely if they can explore safely on their own.'

Integrated sand play equipment: 67 votes

'More sand.'

Add planting, willow dens: 58 votes

New timber play equipment: 55 votes

Integrated seating: 35 votes

C) IDEAS FOR THE UNDERUSED GRASS AREA

Ideas from residents included: 'Imaginative play: e.g. Mud kitchen', 'Picnic + water play area', 'picnic area, mud kitchen and willow dome'

'Living den area and seating', 'Used for parties, maybe there should be more planting', 'Maybe some imaginary play equipment - like in Mapesbury Del.', 'Items that encourage imaginative play, not just ships and slides', 'Maybe seating area and covered area i.e. canvas awning type thing', 'Treehouses', 'picnic benches'

D) ADDITIONAL ACCESS POINTS INTO THE SAND PIT AREA AND PREFERRED LOCATION

3no arrows added indicating access to the toilets directly from the sand pit. other comments included:

'put access to the toilets internally.'

'It feels a lot safer with just one gate.'

'Access to toilets would be good. But for safety entrance/ exit only! Don't mind if you change it.'

'Single access to sandpit is essential as lots of under 5s play here and only one exit makes it easier to watch your children (especially if you have more than one.)'

'One in and one out and stop the integration of the younger and older children.'

'No additional gate as it adds risk of kids exiting (even though a lot of parents/ kids do not close gates.)'

'Single access provides real security and helps people relax. Don't add another gate. Toilet access from the area is important.'

'Easy access to the toilets.'

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A) Results from questionnaire

The sandpit play area is popular amongst people with young children. 24 users visit every day and 101 once a week or sometimes. In comparison only 34 visit rarely or never.

133 users rated the quality of the sandplay area between 6 and 10 (10 is excellent and 1 is terrible). only 36 users rated it between 1 and 5.

Asked what they liked best most users listed sand (42) and the safety of the enclosed space which makes it easy to monitor small children (41). Immediately behind in popularity were the fact that the sand pit is generous and spacious (32) and the variety of play equipment (39).

Asked what they didn't like the largest group of users commented on maintenance, Too dirty (30). The second most common response to this question was nothing (25).

With regards to the existing play equipment 22 users complained that it is WORN OUT (22) and NOT DIVERSE ENOUGH (13) or generally not enough (3). 19 people complained that the weed suppressing membrane was showing and 13 about the fact that the sand was spilling over the edge.

Asked what they play with most the response was sand (51) & play vehicles (55).

The majority of people would like to be able to directly access the toilets and keep the existing fence and access arrangement in place.

There was great interest in remaining informed of the ongoing design development and 70 users left their email addresses.

B) Results from display boards

113 users were interested in adding WATER PLAY/ PUMPS & CHANNELS to allow children to engage in sand and water play.

Similar numbers of users liked interesting textures / rocks / water channels (70), integrated sand play equipment (67), additional planting and willow dens (58) and new timber play equipment (55).

C) Ideas for the underused area

7 people contributed ideas listing imaginative play, picnic, water play, den area, seating and tree houses.

d) Additional access

11 people commented that they preferred to just have one gate. Some would like to be able to access the toilets directly from the sandplay area.

Queen's Park Sandpit Improvement

Initial Ideas:

New timber play equipment...



Any thoughts, leave a comment on a post-it note:



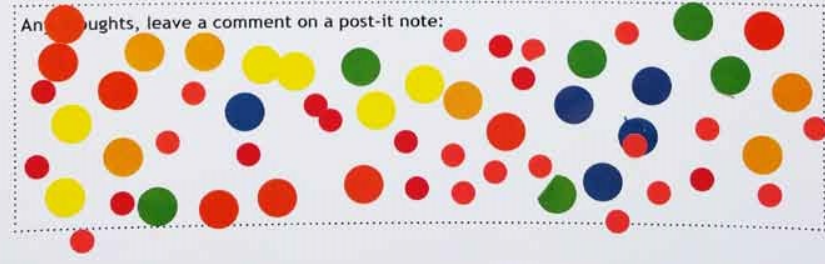
Queen's Park Sandpit Improvement

Initial Ideas:

Integrated sand play equipment...



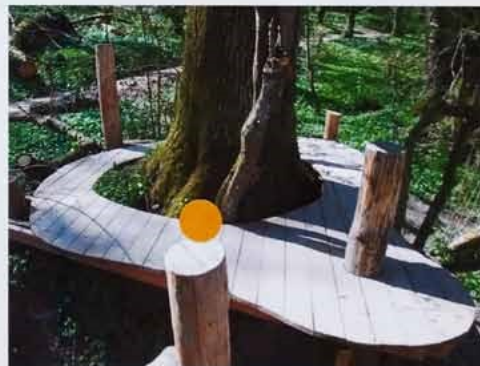
Any thoughts, leave a comment on a post-it note:



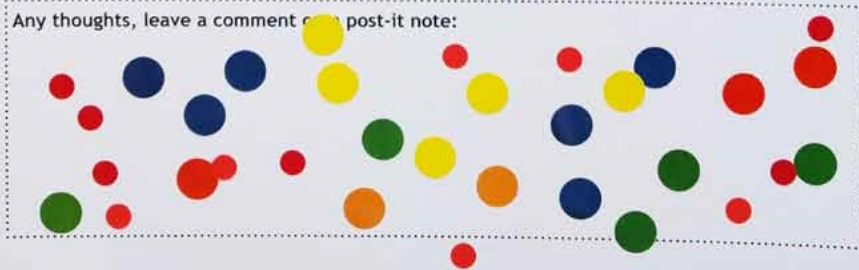
Queen's Park Sandpit Improvement

Initial Ideas:

Integrated seating...



Any thoughts, leave a comment or post-it note:



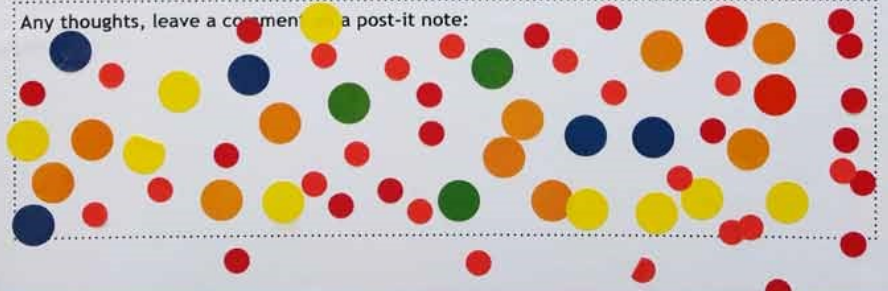
Queen's Park Sandpit Improvement

Initial Ideas:

Interesting textures and varied surfaces...



Any thoughts, leave a comment or a post-it note:



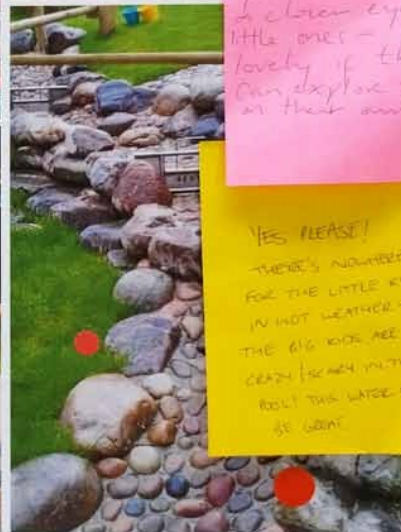
Queen's Park Sandpit Improvement

Initial Ideas:

Waterplay. Pump, channels, puddles...

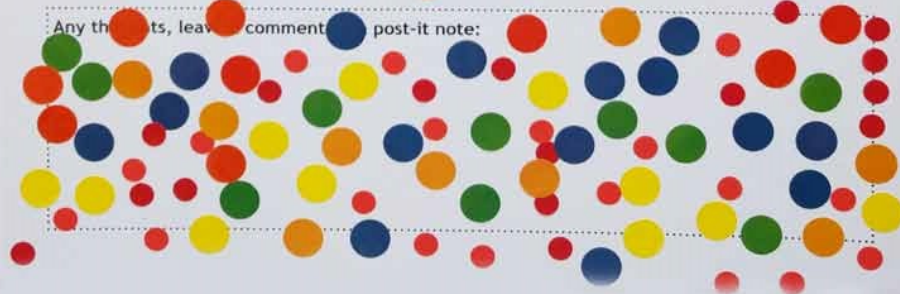


This is great but we need surfaces we can put him to keep a closer eye on little ones - it's lovely if they can explore safely on their own...



YES PLEASE!
THERE'S NOTHING FOR THE LITTLE KIDS IN HOT WEATHER - THE BIG KIDS ARE CRYING BECAUSE THEY CAN'T PLAY IN THE SAND! THIS WATER WALL IS GREAT

Any thoughts, leave a comment on a post-it note:



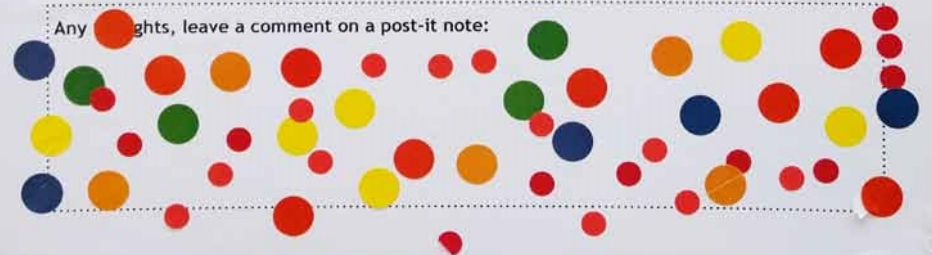
Queen's Park Sandpit Improvement

Initial Ideas:

New planting and live willow dens...



Any thoughts, leave a comment on a post-it note:



Queen's Park Sandpit Improvement

The area shown green appears to be underused.
What would you like to see within this area?



Imaginative Play
e.g. Mud
Kitchen

Picnic
+
Water
play
area

Mud Kitchen
Willow dome
Picnic area

Please leave a comment on a post-it note:

Used for
Parties
Maybe more
planting

More
Dirt area
+ trees

larger summer area
+ canopy area
for events
with trees

maybe some
imaginative play
equipment - like in
Magersburg Det
like floor that encourage
imaginative play
(not just slides +
slides)

Queen's Park Sandpit Improvement

Access:

Would you like additional gates into the sandpit area?

For example near the main park entrance off the corner of Harvist Road or near the toilets. Please mark preferred location on the plan below.

