



NZILA RESENE PRIDE OF PLACE  
LANDSCAPE AWARDS 2019

# PLAY

Landscape Design:  
PLAY Playgrounds  
Anderson Park

Submitted by  
Boffa Miskell

Boffa Miskell 

# Anderson Park

Anderson Park Playground is the outcome of quality engagement with stakeholders, and the courage to invest and not compromise on quality. Centrally located within one of Napier's premier suburban parks, accessible and imaginative features create an inclusive environment that encourages all abilities and ages to play alongside each other.

The Anderson Park Master Plan 2015 was developed in consultation with numerous stakeholders. Community responses supported the direction of the plan, particularly the proposal to develop an 'all-abilities' playground. The existing playground in Anderson Park was well-used; but it was small, non-challenging for some and inaccessible for others, and not at all unique.

Boffa Miskell was selected to develop a conceptual masterplan for the park and new playground and to proceed through developed design, detailed design and documentation and to act as engineer's representative for the playground during construction.

The proposal to locate the new playground within existing mature trees was developed by Boffa Miskell to provide a shady environment for the children to play within. Meanwhile the open character of the wider park was retained and the park's abundant bird life enhanced. The waterplay area reflects the nearby waterways and provides a great alternative to the beach for this inland site.

The mix of traditional playground equipment alongside custom-designed features seamlessly transitions through the diverse play environments, in response to the fundamental design driver: creating opportunities for adventure for all abilities.

Pods of similar play experiences, at different challenge levels, are located together. This encourages children to extend themselves as they grow, and for a range of ages and abilities to climb, splash, swing or slide together. Areas within the playground offer varied opportunities and contrasting spaces for high and low activity levels. A yellow pathway encircles the playground and provides an easy visual boundary and wayfinding tool that works for a range of ages and abilities.

The wider design incorporates ancillary facilities such as paths, accessible toilet/changing facilities, BBQs and signage. These are vital in creating an inter-generational recreation destination that allows users to stay and play.





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**"THE DESTINATION PLAYGROUND AT ANDERSON PARK IS RECEIVING OUTSTANDING FEEDBACK FROM THE COMMUNITY."**

Wayne Jack, Napier Council CEO

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**"WOULD JUST LIKE TO SAY A HUGE THANK YOU TO NCC AND EVERYONE WHO WAS/IS INVOLVED WITH THE REDEVELOPMENT OF ANDERSON PARK."**

**I STOOD ON THE HILL AND LOOKED AROUND AND COULD SEE THE AMOUNT OF THOUGHT THAT WAS PUT INTO THIS PROJECT.**

**IT REALLY IS AN ALL AGES PARK!**

**I REALLY ADMIRERED THE USE OF THE "OLD" TREES. WHAT GREAT SUSTAINABILITY BUT IMPORTANTLY I FELT IT PAID HOMAGE TO WHAT WAS STANDING THERE FOR YEARS BEFORE AND USED IN SUCH A CREATIVE WAY.**

**I OBSERVED CHILDREN WAITING PATIENTLY FOR OTHERS TO GO DOWN THE SLIDE AND OLDER CHILDREN ALLOWING YOUNGER CHILDREN ON THE ZIP LINE FIRST. ONE EVEN HELD IT FOR MY FIVE YEAR OLD. THERE WAS PLENTY OF LAUGHTER AND UTTER DELIGHT.**

**OUR COMMUNITY IS VERY FORTUNATE AND WE THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH. PLEASE SEND OUR SINCERE THANKS AND HIGH 5'S TO ALL WHO WERE/ARE INVOLVED."**

Community Feedback

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**"I WOULD LIKE TO CONGRATULATE EVERYONE WHO HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN THIS PROJECT. THIS PROJECT IS A GREAT EXAMPLE OF WHERE YOU PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND YOU LOOK FOR NEW IDEAS AND CHALLENGES AND PROVIDE SOMETHING THAT HAS 'SUBSTANCE AND STYLE' THE COMMUNITY WILL EMBRACE IT. WELL DONE EVERYONE ON THIS PROJECT."**

Wayne Jack, Napier Council CEO



# Project Summary

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## Anderson Park Playground provides an inclusive play space that engages children in physical activity, cognitive and social play

A Disabilities Reference Group invited by Napier City Council had active involvement through design and equipment selection, ensuring opportunities for everyone to experience swinging, sliding, spinning, splashing, bouncing and accessing a high point to look over the play area are provided.

A number of structured and non-structured play experiences encourages a wide variety of activity, and several areas provide elevation, enclosure and sensory experiences. All ages and abilities are able to play alongside each other with pods of similar experiences at graduated challenge levels. Non-isolating and modified play equipment for those with limited mobility encourages “playing together”.

Outdoor musical playspace offers opportunity for creative expression and shared experience. Story-telling prompts are interwoven throughout. Sensory planting and a natural play environment is in balance with other play possibilities.

Wayfinding cues on the ground plane and as ‘totems’ provide easy visual reference and navigation. There are places to sit and eat for everyone, including picnic seating, shelter and BBQ.

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## Maximises the borrowed landscape to extend play opportunities into existing or surrounding park areas

The mature tree setting gives the playspace scale and context while maximising the opportunity for natural shade. Towers and topography give a ‘treetop experience’ without actually scaling the trees. Protected bird species in the wider park are referenced in the bird sculptures encircling the tower, interpreted in wayfinding totems, appear as climbable eggs and basket ‘nests’ for hanging out with friends.

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## The playground encourages and supports children’s development of gross motor skills across a range of different muscle groups, through the equipment or structures provided

Numerous mounds offer rock holds, ropes, and scramble-up. The slide tower and activity cluster provides multiple climbing options at various heights.

Seven different swing types offer an experience for everyone from babies to seniors, including a special-needs high-back swing, basket swings and tall swings for teens, while five spinner options for solo or group spinning are ground level and at height.

Large in-ground trampolines can be rolled onto by a wheelchair, enjoyed by toddlers or used by more confident children for flips and tricks. A wide slide is ideal for several small children, or child and caregiver together. The large tower provides challenging tube slides at different heights.

The perimeter path connects to wider park. New plaza space in front of the existing skate park encourages wheeled play adjacent to and as part of skate facility and wider cycle network.

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## The space and facilities engage with the communities they serve

Anderson Park is near local shops and in suburban communities Napier City Council wanted to activate and involve. It is not on the waterfront ‘tourist trail’, and the wider existing park and older-style playground were seen as memories to be respected and renewed.

As part of the wider construction, new access paths to parking spots were added, increasing infrastructure amenity. By using local contractors, tradesmen, artists, plant nursery and materials whenever possible, the construction phase of the project offered wider economic benefit as well as incorporating desired regional flavour.

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## Anderson Park Playground broadens the types of play available to users within one space through diverse and flexible spaces and multi-functional landscape elements

Logs and rocks create playable edges and handy sitting spaces. Caregivers can sit within the playspace rather than on the fringe. Textured, scented and colourful plantings in and around the play area encourages sensory exploration.

The play area offers numerous places to sit and observe, or hangout and chat, including a sitting wall around the water play area, basket ‘nests’ under the trees, the top of the Space Shuttle Spinner, and high swings; alongside traditional park benches and tables, and logs, rocks and steppers.

New planting wraps around a large lawn, inviting ball play and picnicking within the wider landscape adjacent to the playspace.

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## Encourages social interaction and shared play across age groups and abilities

Graded challenges through repeated play experiences allow children to play in the area where they are most confident and comfortable, regardless of age. Challenging elements are deliberately designed in, so repeat visits needed to master the whole space.

The water play area is designed for collaborative play. Multiple children need to operate pumps and weirs, creating pools and puddles big enough to lie in. These are fully accessible due to the gentle gradient. Some play equipment needs more than one player to facilitate the experience.

Clustering of play equipment for older children and the new basketball court near to the existing skate park allow for hanging out together and apart.



Children's artwork was incorporated into the wayfinding totems. Here, a young girl stands by artist Rick Terstappen's interpretation of her drawing.



# Essential Criteria

## 1. Clarity

Boffa Miskell took the lead to ensure that the playspace was designed as a robust space for inclusive play, reflecting the wide park space it occupies. The space sits within a tree covered part of the site, where proprietary play elements were selected to be inclusive and natural, play was expanded using 'found' logs and rocks.

## 2. Sense of place

The character of Anderson Park is of large areas of open grass, ponds and a watercourse, with beautiful mature trees and a large number of birds that live in the park. A sense of place for the playground within the park was reinforced with the selection of a tree covered location for the playspace, a space which would provide natural shade. The opportunity to reinforce the sense of place was seized through the artwork which includes birds taking off from a tower structure, a quiet bird themed playspace nest area with a hatching bird and entry feature playful artworks with birds flying atop

## 3. Performance

The playground demonstrates a response to the brief, which provides play opportunity for all abilities, paths are accessible and there is graded challenge in the equipment selected and there expanded play opportunity through the utilization of 'found' materials. The breadth of the play opportunity has seen not only local families enjoying the playspace, but children and family groups of a wide range of abilities, from the wider environs are attracted in, they set up for an extended period, the playspace performs well as children co-operate to enjoy the play opportunity.



## 4. Value

The Napier City Council, local community and wider population are delighted with the playspace for the all-abilities play value achieved in the space and the breadth of the play opportunity achieved within the budget.

## 5. Innovation

The project took care to consult with an advisory group leading to the inclusion of specific play pieces which allowed opportunity for people who for are in wheelchairs to spin and to go to high points in their play. It worked hard to be inclusive in the opportunities offered. The project also demonstrated, we believe for the first time, the use of natural materials to innovatively expand the play opportunity, in a park/playspace of this scale, for all ages, hugely. Further to this the entry feature artworks were an innovative idea we had which was described to the artist, who used children's art to develop the playful feature at the entries to the playground.

## 6. Execution

Boffa Miskell developed the plans and specifications for the implementation of the entire project. We worked closely with the play equipment suppliers, playground safety auditor, to ensure co-ordination to achieve compliance through the documents. Once the tender was let through Napier City Council, we worked as engineers representative with the Councils 'engineer to the contract' and the playground auditor to ensure that the contractor was co-ordinating the various parties installing the play equipment and surfacing to meet specification.



## 7. Plantsmanship

We consulted with the council parks personnel and their ecologist to understand appropriate planting for the environment, then developed planting proposals utilising our knowledge of environments for play and learning. Once on site, we worked with the planting subcontractor to ensure he understood how to carry out the planting as required in the high use play environment.

## 8. Environmental stewardship

The playspace was implemented within a tree covered part of the park to provide maximum natural shade for the children and their caregivers 'playing' within the environment. The construction of play elements was in part within the dripline of trees and we worked with the Council arborist through the planning stages and developed details together with him to ensure the trees protection, once being implemented the arborist was on site as needed to ensure the standards were met.

## 9. Significance and influence

This playspace project was pioneering in the inclusive play provided and with its use of natural elements in this scale of destination playspace, expanding the play opportunity for all ages and abilities, the project will continue to influence destination playspace projects throughout the country.











Concept Plan

## Project Information

Client:	Napier City Council Antoinette Campbell – Director Community Services
Boffa Miskell Team:	Sarah Collins – Project Manager Aynsley Cisaria – Landscape Architect
Project Partners:	Derek Newton – Senior Project Engineer, Napier City Council – Engineer to the contract Carl Webber – McNatty Construction Michael Senior – Numat Philippa Bollond – Playground auditor Jared Mardle – Constructive Landscape Solutions – All planting Midland Horticulture – Nursery Riks Terstappen – Artist – Bird and egg sculptures, birds flying round the tower, wayfinding sculptures Leith McFadden – Playground People Kevin Wallace – Playground Centre Julian Miller – Playrope Cameron Rennie – Park Life A.E. Tilley – Park furniture Walkspace – Park furniture Street Furniture NZ – Park furniture
Project Date:	2016 - 2018
Awards:	Outstanding Park 2018 – New Zealand Recreation Awards

