

Bawley Point/ Kioloa Recreation and Skatepark Hub Q and A



The Site

Just over 18 months ago, the Bawley Point/Kioloa/Termeil Community Association members voted that a skatepark was something they were interested in for our community. In February 2021, Community Association members voted again on one specific site location for the hub, put to them by the Recreation and Skatepark Hub Subcommittee. This site was the grassed area south of the children's playground in Bawley Reserve amongst some trees. Although the community vote was close, this specific location was voted AGAINST.

This does not mean that there will not be a Recreation and Skatepark Hub in our community, it simply means that it will not be at the *southern* end of Bawley Reserve.

Why did Shoalhaven City Council (SCC) take over community consultation and when will consultation begin?

Since the Community Association Members voted in February, some community members have expressed their concerns and objected to a skatepark in our community. To avoid community conflict, SCC have officially taken over community consultation. This means, in consultation with the Recreation and Skatepark Hub subcommittee, SCC staff members are putting together a community survey to ascertain exactly what all members of the Bawley Point/ Kioloa/ Termeil community want from a Recreation and Skatepark Hub. SCC have advised that this community consultation should be carried out by the end of 2021.

What will the subcommittee's vision for the Recreation and Skatepark Hub?

Facilities

- A children's playground upgrade to suit all ages and abilities. We want to create a vibrant, inclusive space where children of all ages can not only be curious, active and engaged, but play *safely* on the available equipment.
- A quality skatepark to be designed to fit within the natural surrounds where older children can skate/scooter or bike ride.
- A bike pump track around the outside of the hub.
- A designated calisthenics area for adults to exercise (due to the fact we are 30 mins drive from any gym).
- Comfortable seating and picnic areas designated near the playground/ skatepark, and separate seating and picnic tables specifically designed to take in the natural surrounds of the area.

Aesthetic

As natural as possible, not impeding on the natural beauty of the area that the entire community loves. Use of timber, rock, and organic matter as much as possible with native plants to be incorporated into the design as much as possible. The subcommittee aims to engage local artists and craftspeople to help create a visual space where locals and visitors alike want to visit to feel inspired and connected.



How will a Recreation and Skatepark Hub benefit our community?

Bawley and Kioloa are geographically isolated communities. The vision we have for the Community Recreation and Skatepark Hub will help reduce the social isolation that comes with geographic isolation (and consequential mental health and wellness concerns) and save our families driving to Batemans Bay or Ulladulla to enjoy family-friendly facilities.

To dispel any skatepark related myths, below are excerpts from skatepark related research:

"In an age when the current generation of youth is disparaged for its lack of physical activity, discouraging activities such as skateboarding seems misplaced and hypocritical. Moreover, skateboarding can be used to animate public space for multiple publics, not just skateboarders. What if instead of deterring such activity, public spaces acted deliberately to encourage it? Not just on the edges of the city or in convenient out-of-sight spaces, but in everyday public spaces intended to serve everyone." (Glover et al, 2021, p.2)

"[Skateparks are] health-enhancing environments, which enable youth to benefit from social participation and to create relationships which otherwise might not have been possible through other sports or street skateboarding. In this sense, skateparks are generally conducive to social cohesion, social interaction and informal coaching/ learning, while their limited number encourages the cohabitation of youth from various socio-cultural horizons." (Dumas and LaForest, 2019, p.28)

"Formal [skateparks] and improvised public spaces clearly provide untapped opportunities for enhancing the psychosocial health of the skateboarding and the non-skateboarding public through creating bridges of trust and mutual acceptance. However, the difficulty in realizing these health gains is embedded in the skateboarding subculture's 'bad-boy' image which generates fear within vulnerable elements of the population." (Walker et al, 2014, p.2)

Will the creation of this hub encourage antisocial behaviour and vandalism?

The increasing popularity of skateboarding and its inclusion in the recent Olympic Games means that skateparks are becoming more 'mainstream' and family-friendly spaces. People's behaviour obviously isn't something the subcommittee can control, however, the design of a multipurpose, inclusive, family-friendly space that is visually open and encourages all members of the community to use, will certainly discourage these behaviours. So too will youth ownership of the murals and artworks the subcommittee have envisioned for the skatepark section of the hub. Ideally, the subcommittee plans to encourage community participation with local artists to produce artworks and murals together, creating ownership and pride and thus, discouraging vandalism.

Will the installation of a Recreation and Skatepark Hub mean our beautiful trees will be removed?

The subcommittee do not want to see any of Bawley/ Kioloa's old-growth trees cut down. Our vision is to see more native shrubs incorporated into the design of the hub, keeping the natural surroundings that everyone loves the area for, in mind. For any tree that is removed, a significant number of others will be planted. Once a site is agreed upon, the subcommittee plans on engaging local nurseries and professionals to plant native bee and bird attracting species which will complement the natural surrounds.

What next?

The Recreation and Skatepark Hub subcommittee continues to meet monthly at the Kioloa Hall to act as a voice for our community and ensure community needs are communicated to SCC staff and Councillors. Minutes from these meetings are posted to the Community Association Website.

SCC, in liaison with the Recreation and Skatepark Hub subcommittee, are currently drafting community survey questions and a 'Get Involved' page whereby all Bawley Point/ Kioloa/ Termeil community members can have their say.

Any new information or updates, along with monthly meeting minutes, will be posted to the hub's Facebook page (@BPKSkateparkHub).

References

- Alex Dumas & Sophie Laforest (2009) Skateparks as a health-resource: are they as dangerous as they look?, *Leisure Studies*, 28:1, 19-34, DOI: 10.1080/02614360802334898
- Troy D. Glover, Sarah Munro, Immony Men, Wes Loates & Ilana Altman (2021) Skateboarding, gentle activism, and the animation of public space: CITE – A Celebration of Skateboard Arts and Culture at The Bentway, *Leisure Studies*, 40:1, 42-56, DOI: [10.1080/02614367.2019.1684980](https://doi.org/10.1080/02614367.2019.1684980)
- Adam Walker, et al. "Creating Friendship Networks, Establishing a Social Identity, Developing a Sense of Belonging, Meeting New People, and Building Connections with the Community: The Social Capital Support Health Benefits to Be Derived from Skateboarding in Skate-Parks." *International Journal of Child Health and Human Development*, vol. 7, no. 2, Nova Science Publishers, Inc, 2014, p. 135