

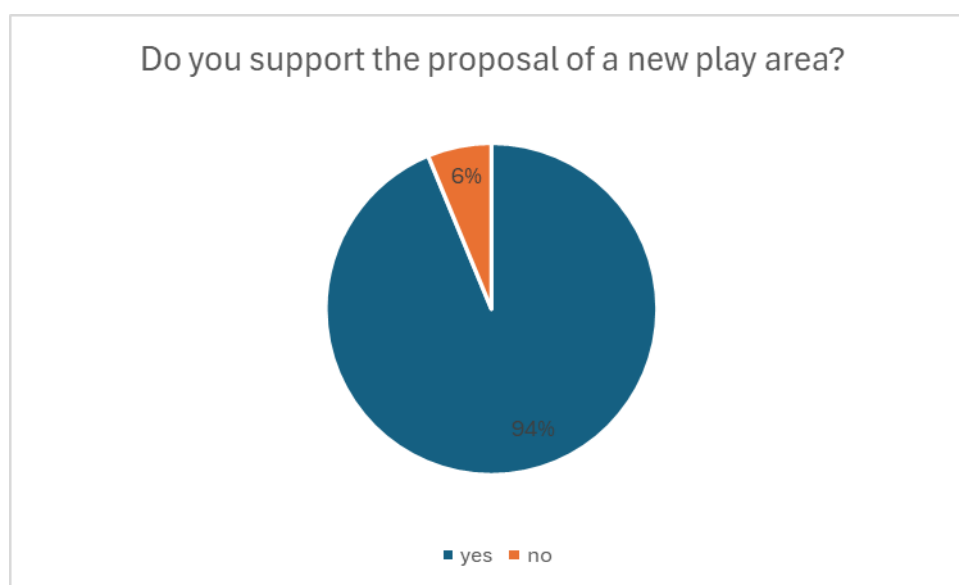
# Lickey Hills Country Park Public Consultation Results

May 2025

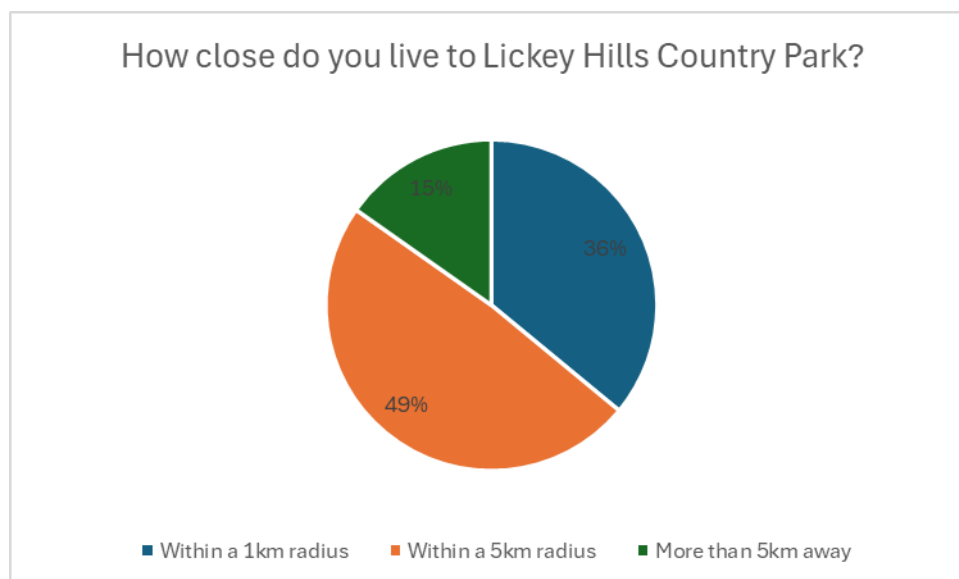
Thank you for taking the time for filling out the consultation. We have had 281 responses overall, 274 being from the online consultation and 7 being from a paper copy consultation. Please read below for the summary of the conducted consultation for the proposal at Lickey Hills Country Park play area as well as future proposals.

Overall, there is an overwhelming support for the creation of a new, inclusive, and accessible play area, but with a few concerns about proper maintenance, and preserving the park's natural beauty remain prominent. The project would be welcomed by families, especially those with young children or children with disabilities, provided that these issues are addressed.

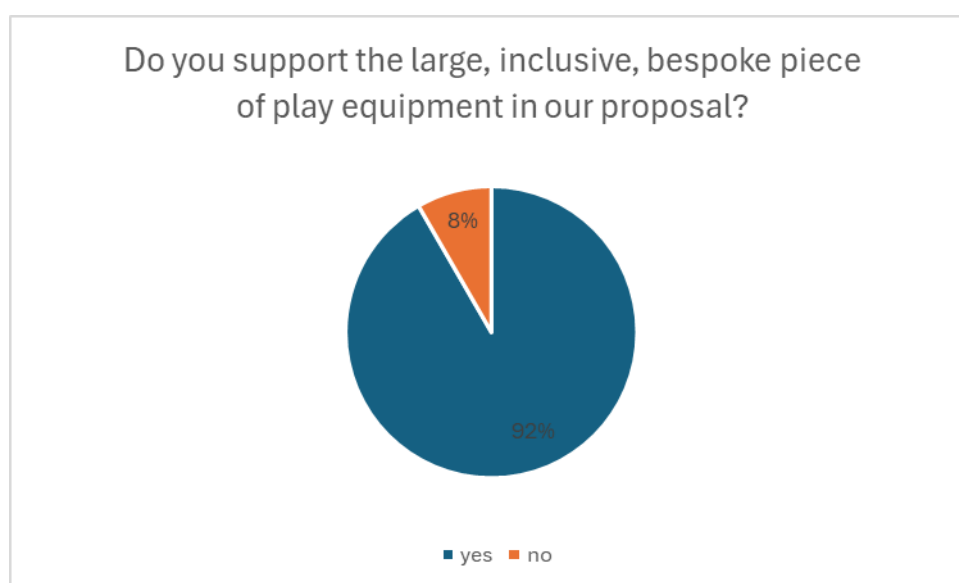
Respondents agree that the current play area needs updating, expressing dissatisfaction with the existing play area, calling it outdated, unsafe, and not suitable for all ages.



Most are very happy about the proposed improvements (94% of respondents saying they agree with the proposed improvements). A lot of respondents stressed concerns about accessibility, particularly for younger children, older children, and those with disabilities (including wheelchair users and those with additional needs), were commonly raised. There's a strong consensus that a new, inclusive playground would be beneficial.



15% of respondents answered the consultation live very locally, within 1km from the park, 49% of respondents live within 5km of the park, while 36% live more than 5km away.



92% of respondents said they are in favour of the proposed large, inclusive, bespoke piece of multi-play equipment in the new play area that was presented to them in the consultation.

The respondents that selected 'no' (8%) are not sure how the bespoke piece of play equipment is inclusive and have concerns that it does not cater to all ages. Some believe we should omit it and keep the play area smaller and have more green space instead.

### **Play equipment choices**

Respondents were asked if they agree with the proposal of the following pieces of equipment:

- Inclusive Springer
- Inclusive Spinner
- Play boulders
- Vertical spinner
- Swings
- Timber seating
- Inclusive rocking boat
- 'Bowl' playful seating
- Seating shelter
- Picnic Tables

Most respondents support the play equipment pieces and features above, which each feature being a “yes” at least 88% or more.

### **Top 5 pieces of play equipment**

Respondents were asked to rate the top 5 pieces of equipment they would like to see.

Overall, the most popular top 5 answers were:

1st Choice – SWINGS

2nd Choice – INCLUSIVE ROCKING BOAT

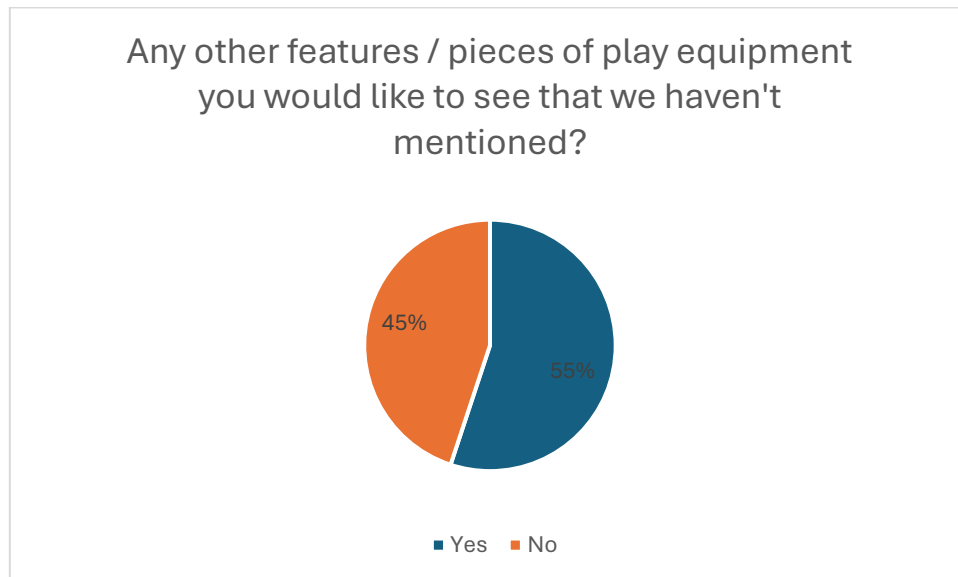
3rd Choice – INCLUSIVE SPINNER

4th Choice – SEATING SHELTER

5th Choice – **Joint** PICNIC TABLES & PLAY BOULDERS

### Other features

Respondents were asked if there any other pieces of play equipment or features we haven't included that they would like to see in the new play area. 55% of respondents said there are other features / pieces of play equipment that they would like to see that we haven't mentioned.

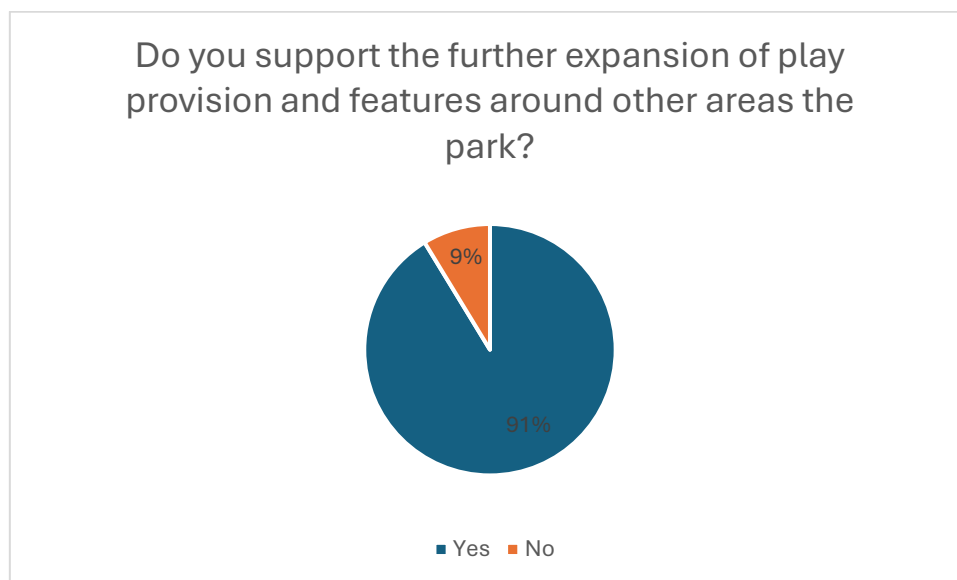


#### Additional Features suggestions:

Include adding equipment for older children (ages 10+), like climbing walls, rope circuits, or a small basketball court. Some respondents would appreciate features like water play areas, outdoor gyms, and a more diverse range of activities. There's a strong push for the inclusion of natural play features (like wood) to blend with the park's environment, as well as quieter zones. Community Impact: The park is seen as a key local resource for families, and respondents believe a well-designed new play area will attract more visitors and enhance the area's reputation. Many think it will be a great destination for local families and tourists alike, especially with improved facilities such as a café, accessible toilets, and a visitor center. There's a desire for the park to be preserved as a community space without commercializing it, such as through parking charges.

### **Further expansion of the play provision and features**

Respondents were asked if they support the proposal of further expansion of play provision and features around other areas of the park. 91% of respondents support it.



Respondents were asked if they support the proposal of the following pieces of play equipment and features for future prospects of the park:

- Outdoor gym area / calisthenics
- Play sculpture
- Cableway / zipline
- Climbing walls / nets
- Embankment Tubes / Slides
- Outdoor Musical Play Equipment
- Additional Seating / Shelters

Most respondents support the proposal of the above, with 'yes' at least 77% of the time for each one.

### **Future prospects of the park – top 3 choices**

Respondents' top 3 choices of play equipment / features for future prospects of the park are as follows:

**1<sup>st</sup> – Cableway / Zipline**

**2<sup>nd</sup> – Climbing Wall / Nets**

**3<sup>rd</sup> – Joint – Additional Seating / Shelters & Embankment Tubes / Slides**

### **Respondents' data**

Respondents were asked if they are a parent or guardian to a child, and 73% of respondents selected 'yes'. Most commonly, respondents have 2 children to care for. Of those who selected that they look after a child / children, nearly half of the respondent's children's age group are in the 5-8 years old bracket (45%). 13% of respondents' children under care have special needs / disabilities.

### **Overall consensus from respondents' comments:**

**Location of play area:** A new location closer to the Visitor Centre is seen as a positive change, improving accessibility for all, especially parents with pushchairs, wheelchairs, or elderly family members. Some express concerns about potential noise from the busier area and the risk of overcrowding, especially in the summer months. The steep slope of the current park is problematic, with flooding and difficult access.

**Improvement in Facilities:** Respondents are hopeful that the proposed upgrades will include more variety in play equipment, catering to different age groups, and that the park will feature more inclusive and accessible options for children with disabilities. Many suggested adding equipment like swings for older children with autism, sandpits, sensory walks, or exercise equipment for families.

**Concerns about Vandalism and Maintenance:** Some voiced concerns about the park's maintenance and the potential for vandalism, questioning whether there would be enough funding allocated for upkeep and repairs. Suggestions for using natural materials and including nature-themed play areas were made to blend with the park's environment.

**Desire for a Cafe and Additional Amenities:** Many respondents also expressed a desire for the reopening or improvement of a café at the Visitor Center, which had been a popular spot for families after their walks. There were suggestions to either reopen the café or offer it to a small business.

**Concern Over Environmental Impact:** A few respondents raised concerns about the potential over-development of the park, preferring it to remain as natural green space rather than becoming overly commercialized or developed with too many amenities. Some respondents voiced concerns about the potential environmental impact of building a new play area, especially regarding trees and wildlife habitats. They emphasized the importance of maintaining the park's natural beauty and suggested incorporating natural features in the design to maintain harmony with the surroundings.

**General Excitement for the Proposal:** While there are concerns, many people support the proposal for a new playground, viewing it as a much-needed improvement for the Lickey Hills, which is a popular destination for families, nature lovers, and dog walkers. Respondents highlighted the park's importance as a community asset and are looking forward to its revitalization.

### **Other pieces of play equipment / features**

Respondents were asked if there any other pieces of play equipment or features that we haven't mentioned that they would like to see. The responses were as follows:

#### **Play Equipment & Features:**

- Swings: More swings for all age groups, including toddler swings, wheelchair-accessible swings, and swings where parents can swing with children. A variety of swing types is requested to avoid long queues.
- Slides: Multiple slides of different sizes and heights, including large slides and traditional ones. A wider range of slides is needed for different ages, including toddler-friendly and larger ones for older children.
- Zip Wire: A popular feature to be maintained, with suggestions for multiple zip wires, including double zip line.
- Climbing Structures: Larger and more challenging climbing frames for older children, including monkey bars, climbing nets, and climbing walls.
- Obstacle Courses: Incorporating adventure-style play like a "floor is lava" style course, ropes courses, and rock climbing.
- Inclusive Play: Including equipment for children with disabilities, such as wheelchair-accessible swings, inclusive roundabouts, and sensory equipment like musical instruments or sensory towers.

### **Natural Play & Sensory Areas:**

- **Nature-Based Features:** Utilization of natural materials such as logs, sand, and rocks for climbing. Some suggest a woodland-themed area with wooden structures, treehouses, and mud kitchens.
- **Sensory Play:** A sensory trail with elements like musical pipes, sand, water play areas, and mud kitchens. Some requests include nature-based sensory experiences and interactive water play elements like channels and waterwheels.
- **Role-Playing Areas:** Ideas for adding areas like a pirate ship, a small shop, house, or café.

### **Seating & Sheltered Areas:**

- **More Seating:** A demand for additional seating, particularly sheltered benches for parents and carers, as well as picnic tables with backrests for comfort.
- **Sheltered Spaces:** Covered areas for protection against rain, encouraging social gatherings, and making the park more accessible in all weather conditions.

### **Other Suggestions:**

- **Multi-Age Play:** Ensure that there is equipment for children of all ages, including older kids and teenagers (e.g., larger swings, obstacle courses, more challenging play structures).
- **Additional Features:** Some ideas include bike tracks, scooter ramps, and sports areas (e.g., football pitch), as well as more picnic tables and benches.
- **Inclusive and Accessible Play:** A focus on making the park accessible to all children, including those with physical disabilities and sensory needs.
- These ideas aim to cater to a wide range of ages and abilities, with a particular focus on increasing the number and variety of swings, slides, and climbing features, while maintaining a natural, inclusive, and sensory-friendly environment.

### **Conclusion**

Overall, the feedback from the respondents about our proposals was very positive and respondents are excited to see change and an update to the park for all to enjoy.