

## Public Park Consultation

### Results

The Northwestern Development Partnership carried out a public consultation survey to gather views on the provision of **public parks** in Donegal Town. The survey was made available to the public over a defined consultation period and received a total of **248 responses**. The results below summarise the feedback provided by respondents and reflect the range of views expressed through the survey.

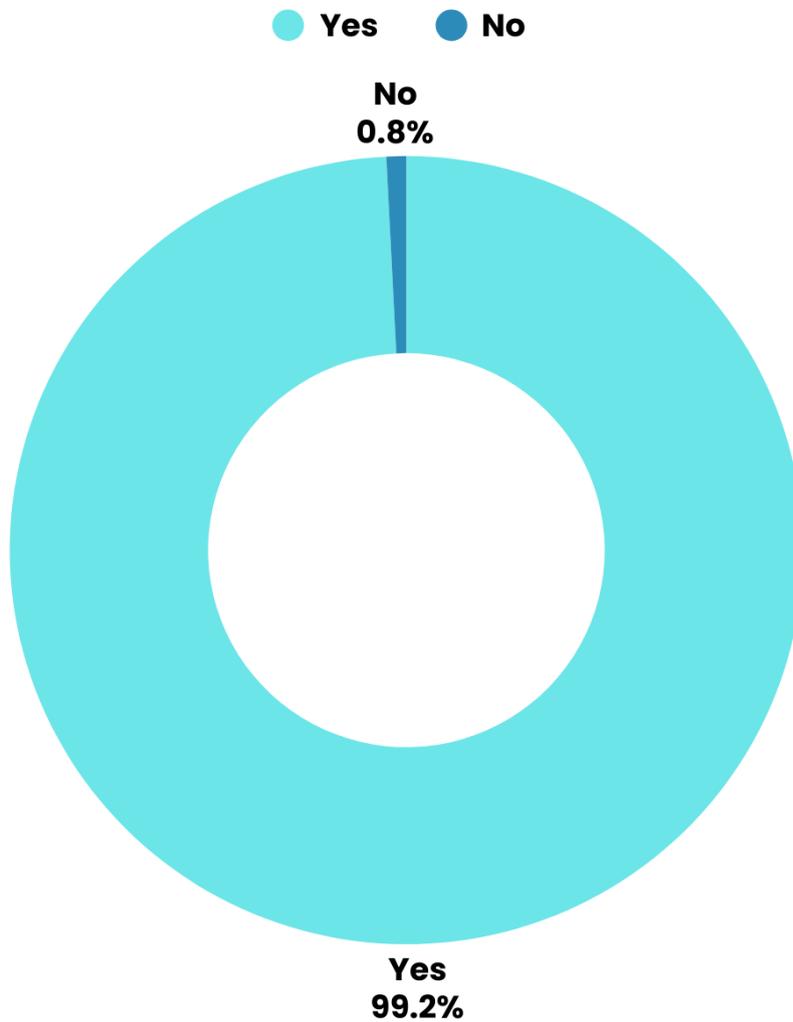
### Consultation Results – At a Glance

- **99% of respondents support** the provision of a public park in Donegal Town
- **88% of respondents use public spaces daily or weekly**, indicating strong existing demand
- Strong support for **walking paths, seating, children’s play, accessibility, and safety**
- **75% support** for linking a park to the planned Barnesmore Gap Greenway
- Responses identify a **broad range** of desired amenities, which could be provided either within a **single park or across multiple parks** across the town.

### 1. Should Donegal Town have a public park?

*There is near-universal support for the provision of a public park in Donegal Town.*

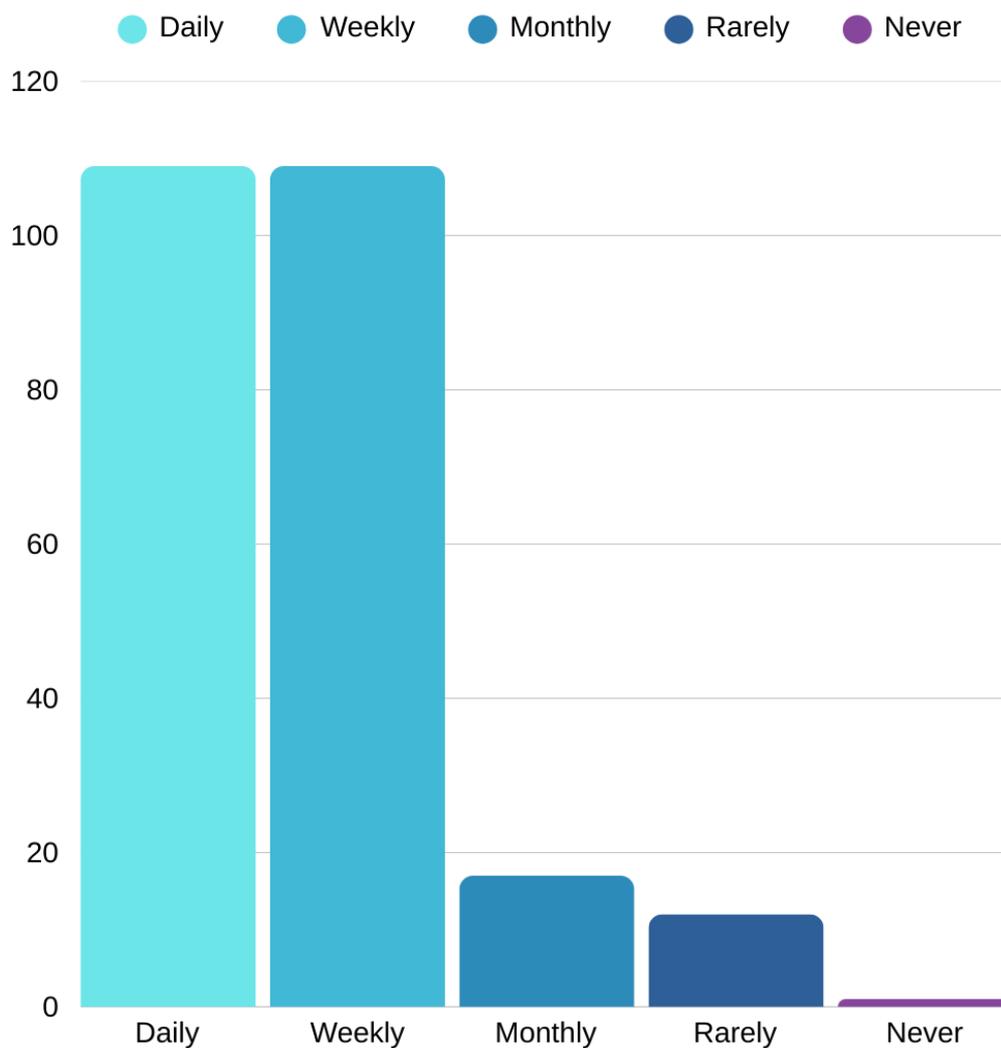
Response	Count	%
Yes	246	99.2%
No	2	0.8%



## 2. How often do you and/or your family use public spaces?

The majority of respondents regularly use public spaces, with almost nine-in-ten respondents using them daily or weekly.

Frequency	Count	%
<b>Daily</b>	109	<b>44.0%</b>
<b>Weekly</b>	109	<b>44.0%</b>
<b>Monthly</b>	17	6.9%
<b>Rarely</b>	12	4.8%
<b>Never</b>	1	0.4%



### 3. What amenities would you like to see in a public park?

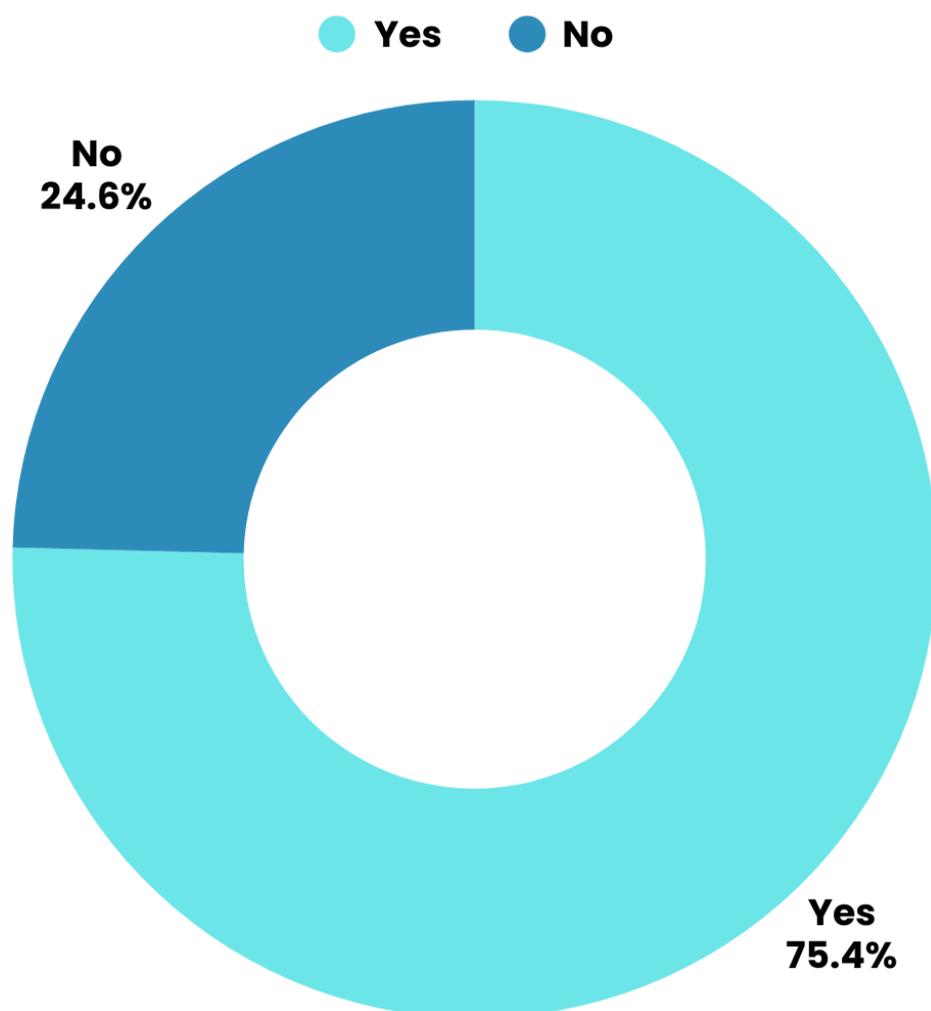
*Responses identify a broad range of desired amenities, which could be provided either within a single park or across multiple parks or public spaces.*

- **Walking and movement spaces:** Safe, well-connected walking routes and paths suitable for everyday use by people of all ages and abilities.
- **Seating and informal gathering areas:** Benches and small places to sit, rest, and socialise within parks and public spaces.
- **Children's play opportunities:** Accessible play areas integrated into neighbourhood parks and local open spaces.
- **Nature and landscape:** Retention and enhancement of natural features, planting, and biodiversity.
- **Basic facilities:** Toilets and essential amenities where appropriate to support longer visits.
- **Accessibility and safety:** Inclusive design, good visibility, and a sense of safety as core requirements.
- **Quiet and passive areas:** Smaller, calmer spaces for relaxation alongside more active uses.

#### 4. Should the park have access onto the planned Barnesmore Gap Greenway?

The majority of respondents support linking a public park to the planned Barnesmore Gap Greenway.

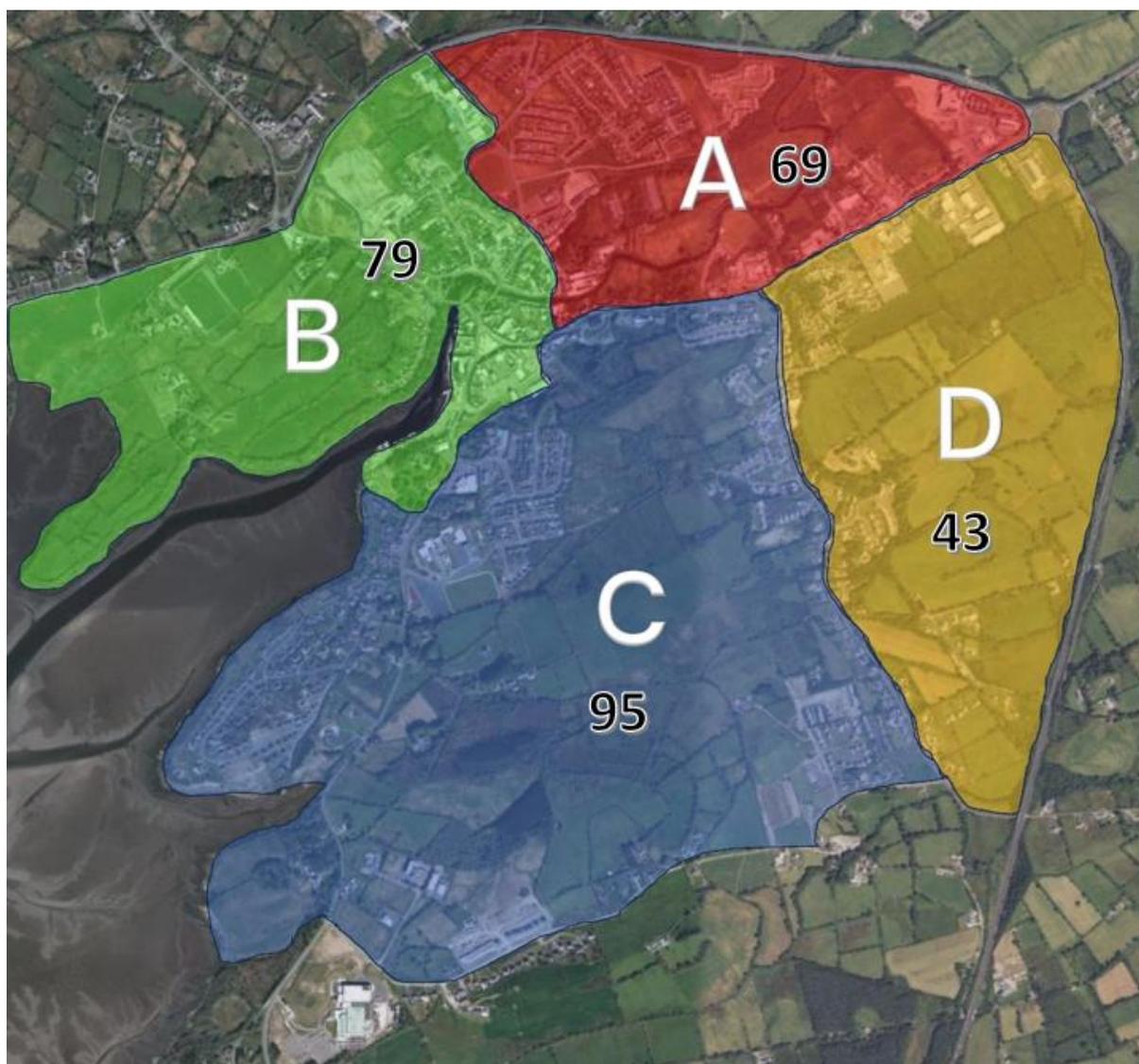
Response	Count	%
Yes	187	75.4%
No	61	24.6%



## 5. Areas assessment

*Responses show differing levels of support for the broad areas identified, with no new locations emerging outside the areas already assessed.*

### 5.1 Number of preferred area mentions



Respondents were able to indicate more than one broad area.

Area	Number of mentions
Area C	95
Area B	79
Area A	69
Area D	43
Other specific locations suggested	18

## 5.2 Assessment of specific locations mentioned

Some respondents selected “Other” and named particular places or features rather than choosing one of the broad areas shown on the map. These included locations such as river walks, the pier, greenway routes, and areas close to the town centre.

All of the locations mentioned were checked against the mapped Areas A–D to see whether they identified any additional areas not already included.

This review showed that:

- References to the river, river walk, and pier fall within Areas A, B, and C.
- Mentions of the greenway or old railway relate to linear routes rather than separate park sites, and run through Areas A and B.
- References to Revlin fall within Area B.
- Comments about the town centre or walking distance describe general location preferences rather than new areas, but also fall within Area B.

In summary, the locations suggested by respondents are already covered within the existing Areas A–D. No new or separate areas were identified through the consultation.

## 6. Top priorities when designing the park

*Responses consistently emphasised practical, day-to-day considerations in relation to the design of public parks.*

The most frequently identified priorities were:

- **Universal accessibility for all ages and abilities**, with respondents highlighting the importance of paths, surfaces, gradients, and layouts that can be comfortably used by children, older people, and those with mobility or sensory impairments.
- **Safety, visibility, and lighting**, particularly in relation to personal safety, passive surveillance, and creating spaces that feel welcoming and usable throughout the day and across different seasons.
- **Inclusive design**, with comments indicating a desire for spaces that can be shared by individuals, families, and groups with differing needs, without excluding quieter or less physically active users.
- **A balance between active and quiet areas**, reflecting a preference for parks that accommodate walking, play, and informal activity while also providing calmer spaces for rest and relaxation.
- **Ease of long-term maintenance**, with respondents noting the importance of durable materials, manageable landscaping, and designs that remain functional and attractive over time.

Overall, the responses indicate that **usability, safety, inclusivity, and longevity** are viewed as the most important features.

## 7. Matters to keep in mind when planning

Responses raised a number of **practical considerations** related to the day-to-day functioning and management of public parks.

Common themes included:

- **Addressing anti-social behaviour through design**, with respondents noting the importance of clear sightlines, passive surveillance, lighting, and layouts that promote natural oversight and regular use.
- **Buggy and wheelchair accessibility**, including smooth, continuous paths, appropriate gradients, and entrances that allow easy access for users with mobility aids, prams, and pushchairs.
- **Appropriate parking provision**, with respondents recognising the need for access by car while also expressing a preference for parking that does not dominate or detract from the quality of the park environment.
- **Ongoing management and maintenance**, with comments highlighting the importance of long-term upkeep, cleanliness, and clarity around responsibility for maintenance.

Overall, the matters raised relate to **implementation, design, and management**. The issues identified focus on ensuring that spaces function well, feel safe, and remain usable over time.

## **8. Is there anything else you'd like us to consider?**

- Most respondents did not provide additional comments
- Comments received were broadly supportive or reinforced earlier themes
- No new concerns emerged

### **Next Steps**

The Northwestern Development Partnership team will review the consultation results alongside technical, environmental, and planning considerations, and will engage with Donegal County Council and other relevant stakeholders as the work progresses.