

## Abstract

# Northcote Urban Development Programme: Community-Identified Food, Activity and Socialisation Opportunities <sup>†</sup>

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**Abstract:** The Northcote area is undergoing major urban regeneration and the diverse community residents there are experiencing significant changes that may affect wellbeing. It is important that the community identifies social and environmental changes they perceive would be of benefit. This strengths-based community-led study sought to identify how Northcote's Development programme could benefit the wellbeing of the Northcote Central community. Two focus groups were thematically analysed, and a written survey was completed by 27 Northcote residents. In this case, 22 residents lived in Kāinga Ora ( $n = 14$ ) and private rental homes ( $n = 8$ ). Participants were older than 45 years, and identified as Māori, Pacific, and NZ-European. The need for more and different kinds of spaces for community use were identified by the focus groups and the survey. Half of the participants wanted more outdoor and green community space. Some Kāinga Ora participants shared their regrets about the demolition of the previous social housing stock and their shift into newly developed more intensive housing. Previous homes had more space inside and outside space which supported the diverse needs of whanau. The need for outdoor spaces suitable for gardening particularly vegetables, games, living, and hangi was identified. Overall participants believed that their health and wellbeing would be improved with more physical activity (75%), consuming more fresh and whole foods (52%), and opportunities for better relationships with family, friends and neighbours (37%). Urban design including more shared spaces could have a significant positive impact on the wellbeing of residents. The Te Ara Awataha greenway project aims to form a 1.5km network of parks, public spaces and quiet streets and may help the Northcote community to be able to access more outdoor spaces for physical activity and more community gardening that would help address food security.

**Keywords:** Northcote; wellbeing; space; urban regeneration; food security



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