Council told to stick it

ESPLANADE residents are horrified the council could build a playground on their doorstep.

The Darwin council has outlined a community play space on Bicentennial Park as part of the Darwin City Draft Master Plan 2016, but residents who live in the area are outraged that it could ruin a “sacred” piece of land.

Australian author Terry Underwood is one of the residents at the apartment block The Sentinel, on Daly St, where her and her husband retired two years ago. She overlooks the untouched landscape of the Park.

“On one side of the building is concrete structures blocking out sunrises and sunsets, where as on the front we have the privilege of looking across the parkland to the harbour,” Ms Underwood said. “We’re quite adamant that this is something that should be avoided at all cost, we don’t think it’s necessary.”

She said the area was already abundant with birdlife and tourists taking uninterrupted views of the natural parkland. “Any development we would see as a desecration,” she said. Resident Jo Vandermark said the council had not consulted with the community.

But Lord Mayor Katrina Fong Lim said the project, as part of the master plan, was consulted extensively from 2012 to 2013 with over 120 individual meetings held with different stakeholders. “I think the community play space has the ability to activate the area,” Ms Fong Lim said.

Public comment finished last week. A report will be presented to council in the new year.

Darwin youths’ tech wild side

FROM 3D prints and videos to robots and a forest of secrets, the result of months of hard work by members of Darwin Youth Tech Club have gone on display.

The House of Tech multimedia installation was a collaboration with Corrugated Iron Youth Arts and the Digital Enterprise program initiated by the University of South Australia, which helps engage young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Deagen Walsh, 13, was a keen participant in the club this year, creating a 3D printed village. “I went on my laptop and designed it, before getting it printed out,” he said. “It’s been great in the club, it’s helped me a lot because there’s people like me to talk to and I want to excel in things I do.” The exhibition was an exploration into the group’s creative projects. While the bulk of the creations were made in the last six months, members have not weekly for more than 18 months.

Program manager Justin Schmidt said about 40 participants, aged from 10 to 20, had benefited.

“Kids who have no social interaction in the community could join in and do this. It’s been great for them. It’s helped them to be involved in the community,” he said.

“I am passionate about assisting self-funded retirees to enjoy the benefits of living in the NT while ensuring their unique needs are addressed,” he said.

“This will complete the map for AIR across Australia, it will give Independent Retirees in the Territory a voice and we will for the first time be able to look at local issues.”

“The local branch will look at the impacts of policies from all levels of government, we’ll also have a say on a national level.”