

## **Project Scope - Glebe Street Playground Renewal, Glebe**

**File No: X090851.002**

### **Summary**

This report outlines the proposed scope of works for the refurbishment at Glebe Street Playground, Glebe. Glebe Street Playground has been identified as part of the small parks and playgrounds improvement program.

The project brief is to refurbish the park and playground, including creating a contained play space, replacing end of life equipment and soft-fall, improving access and function of the existing paved area, and providing additional seating, planting and lighting improvements. The existing mural will be retained and protected.

Consideration has been given to the provision of play equipment in surrounding parks to ensure a coordinated network of facilities that caters for a broad range of park users. Robyn Kemmis Reserve and Minogue Reserve are the nearest neighbourhood parks. Both offer outdoor amenity and enclosed play areas suitable for children of all ages. These reserves are part of the current small parks and playgrounds improvement program. Wentworth Park playground is also nearby offering a shaded playground for children of all ages.

A draft Concept Plan was publicly exhibited from 29 January to 4 March 2024. A letter was distributed in the local area and the proposal was exhibited on the City's website. The proposed works are supported by the community.

The proposal consolidates the play area to the lower section of the park. It includes provision of a local scale play space suitable for toddlers and young children, a nature play trail with plants, steppers and sandstone boulders, an upgraded upper plaza area with paving, seating, a new water bubbler, more planting areas and a low fence around the play space. A range of seating opportunities encourages social interaction. Use of simple, robust materials reflects the local neighbourhood character.

This report recommends that Council endorse the proposed scope of works for the refurbishment of Glebe Street Playground, Glebe.

## Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) endorse the scope of improvements to the playground and reserve at Glebe Street Playground, Glebe as described in the subject report and shown in the draft Concept Plan at Attachment B to the subject report, for progression to relevant approvals, preparation of construction documentation, tender and construction; and
- (B) note the financial implications as outlined in Confidential Attachment D to the subject report.

## Attachments

- Attachment A.** Location Plan and Site Photographs
- Attachment B.** Draft Concept Plan
- Attachment C.** Engagement Report
- Attachment D.** Financial Implications (Confidential)

## Background

1. The City has an ongoing small parks and playgrounds improvement program. This program is for parks which need upgrade or enhancement works, the replacement of end-of-life equipment, and to generally provide appropriate facilities for local residents.
2. Glebe Street Playground is a local park located on the corner of Glebe Street and Mitchell Street in Glebe. It is bounded by residential properties (refer to Attachment A). The site is approximately 200 square metres.
3. The land is owned by the NSW Land and Housing Corporation.
4. The City is negotiating access, management and maintenance of this land with the landowner and has received in principle approval for the small park renewal works as outlined in this report. The land use agreement will be formalised to enable the construction works for this project.
5. Glebe Street Playground was identified for an upgrade due to the playground's overall condition, end of life play equipment and soft-fall surfacing.
6. The reserve is characterised as a small pocket playground, with a paved area and a turf area with and a small offering of play equipment throughout. A mature fig tree on Glebe Street provides shade to the site. Low boundary walls and planting frame the space.
7. The existing play equipment including offering is small, comprising two single rockers and one a four-way rocker.

## Draft Concept Plan

8. A draft concept design was developed for the works and community consultation undertaken in January/February 2024.
9. The draft concept design sets the overall layout. The key principles are:
  - (a) provide an accessible, welcoming and safe park for the community and visitors;
  - (b) provide a contained play space which improves the play opportunities for local children with structured equipment, imaginative and nature play elements;
  - (c) improve usability and function of the space by increasing the paved seating plaza and consolidating the play space;
  - (d) provide a range of seating opportunities which encourage social interaction; and
  - (e) use simple, robust, high-quality materials which reflect the local neighbourhood character.
10. The proposal includes the following:
  - (a) creation of a new paved plaza space with new benches, seating walls, paving and enhanced low planting areas;
  - (b) improved access into and through the plaza space;
  - (c) new play area contained in the lower portion of the reserve;

- (d) new seating and play equipment including a multi-play tower and nest swing suitable for toddlers and young children; and
  - (e) imaginative and nature play elements providing a connection between the play and plaza areas.
11. The following tree management and planting is proposed as part of the park works:
- (a) Recently one tree on site has shown signs of stress/decline. The tree is a *Celtis sinensis* (Chinese Hackberry) and offers only limited shade value due to its small size. The tree will be monitored closely during the detailed design phase and if it continues to decline will be replaced during the construction phase with a native tree of similar scale.
  - (b) The preparation of an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan to inform the detailed design and ensure appropriate construction methodology.
12. A Review of Environmental Factors (REF) will be lodged for the works in accordance with the Environmental Planning Assessment Act 1979 and the State Environment Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021.
13. A Development Application (DA) will be lodged for the required soil remediation works in accordance with Part 4 of the Environmental Planning Assessment Act 1979. This is triggered by the location of the site in a heritage conservation area.
14. Contamination was detected in the soil during early site investigation works, and an interim Environmental Management Plan prepared and implemented. A Remediation Action Plan will be prepared and adhered to during the construction works in order to fully remediate the site.

## Key Implications

### Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

15. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This plan is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
- (a) Direction 3 - Public places for all - this project will provide an improved open space and streetscape which meets the needs of a variety of users and provides opportunities for social interaction.
  - (b) Direction 4 - Design excellence and sustainable development - this project is part of a wider program of renewal of local small parks and reserves across the city. It will provide an improved quality of open space.
  - (c) Direction 6 - An equitable and inclusive city - this project will provide public play and gathering spaces to be enjoyed by everyone.

**Organisational Impact**

16. Upgrading the playground will provide improved play experience and amenity for children and their carers. The replacement of the furniture and play equipment assets represents a mitigation of risk to the City. The assets will require ongoing maintenance.

**Risks**

17. Risks of not implementing the scope of these works include potential failure of play infrastructure and risk to the community. Daily inspections are carried out by the City as per the standard parks and playground maintenance operations.
18. Risks of not implementing this scope of works could result in failure to meet community expectations.

**Social / Cultural / Community**

19. The site is an important open space within the Glebe area where many people do not have access to backyards or courtyards within their own homes. Improving the amenity and play offering within the park represents an investment in this community, providing opportunities for people of different ages and abilities to use the park alongside each other.

**Environmental**

20. Protection and enhancement of the existing planting and trees through this work is in line with the Urban Ecology Strategic Action Plan.

**Financial Implications**

21. There are sufficient funds for this project in the Parks Renewal Capital Works 10-year budget included in the approved Capital Works budget and future year forward estimates.
22. Current project cost estimates and financial implications for the delivery of the Glebe Street Playground renewal are detailed in Confidential Attachment D. Construction cost estimates will be confirmed by a Quantity Surveyor prior to tender.

**Relevant Legislation**

23. Local Government Act 1993 - Section 10A provides that a council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises the discussion of information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.
24. Attachment D to the subject report contains confidential information which, if disclosed would confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.
25. Discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest because it would compromise Council's ability to negotiate fairly and commercially to achieve the best outcome for its ratepayers.

26. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.
27. State Environment Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021.
28. Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012.
29. Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

### **Critical Dates / Time Frames**

30. Current Program Dates:

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| (a) Council approval of Concept Design | May 2024      |
| (b) Detailed Design                    | June 2024     |
| (c) Tender                             | November 2024 |
| (d) Construction start                 | Early 2025    |
| (e) Completion                         | Mid-2025      |

### **Options**

31. Proceed with the progression of the improvement works as outlined in this subject report including relevant approvals, preparation of construction documentation, tender and construction.
32. Project does not proceed - this option is not recommended as the current condition of the playground has a number of associated risk and compliance issues.

### **Public Consultation**

33. Community consultation was undertaken as a two-part process; early engagement (pre-consultation) and public consultation / exhibition. For a detailed description of the consultation process and findings, refer to Attachment C.
34. An early engagement notification letter/email was issued to residents. Twelve submissions were received during the period. The purpose of the early engagement was to seek input from the community about how they used the playground and how the reserve could be improved.
35. The public consultation involved the following:
  - (a) Letters advertising the online feedback portal were distributed to the local area. 342 letters were distributed.
  - (b) A webpage on Sydney Your Say showing the plans from 29 January to 4 March 2024. The page included an electronic copy of the draft concept design, a survey and other key information about the consultation.

- (c) A pop-up consultation feedback session was held in the reserve on Tuesday 20 February 2024 from 4pm to 5.30pm. Council staff were available to answer questions and obtain feedback about the proposed concept plan. Respondents were also encouraged to view the plans and provide feedback on the Sydney Your Say website. Two people attended the session.
  - (d) An online feedback form.
  - (e) Two signs were placed in the park directing people to leave their feedback online.
36. There was one submission received during the consultation period. The Sydney Your Say page was visited 300 times during the consultation period. This included submissions via email and the online feedback form.
37. The responses highlighted that an upgrade to this park would improve the current amenity of the park. A summary and response to the key comments and suggestions are:
- (a) There was one request for more play equipment to be included in the design. The footprint of the play area is constrained by the small size of the site. The proposal provides a more diverse play offering, including a deck for imaginative play, a stepper balance trail for nature play, and a multi-play tower and nest swing.
  - (b) It was noted at the pop-up consultation that the grass is well used by local dog owners. The grass area will be removed due to poor performance in the shade, however there will be increased access and areas of planting in the paved plaza area to provide more green character. The nearest dog off-leash parks are Mary Ann Street Park Ultimo, Fig Lane Park Ultimo, Wentworth Park Ultimo and Victoria Park Broadway.

**KIM WOODBURY**

Chief Operating Officer

Emma Cosgrove, Design Manager