

**ITEM 8. JOHNSTONS CREEK PARKLANDS MASTER PLAN – ADOPTION****FILE NO: S064540****SUMMARY**

This report seeks Council's endorsement of the Johnstons Creek Parklands Master Plan.

Following the public exhibition of the Draft Master Plan, the Master Plan for Johnstons Creek Parklands has now been updated as outlined in this report.

The Master Plan includes the existing parkland areas of Bicentennial Park, Federal Park and Jubilee Park, as well as the new areas known as "The Crescent", "The Hill" and "Harold Park"; the new open space arising from the redevelopment of the former Harold Park Paceway and Rozelle tram depot site.

The Master Plan envisages a series of high quality, complementary parkland spaces, building on the existing and well-loved foreshore parks. The Master Plan provides a clear direction for the use and configuration of the new parkland, and strategies to link the parks together to create a continuous 19 hectares of parkland.

The Master Plan is intended to be a guide for the City's coordinated public domain planning and investment in the Parklands into the long term. More immediately, it will set the basis for the City's design and implementation of the open space associated with the former Harold Park Paceway redevelopment. A prioritisation of projects has been prepared to assist with future planning.

The report outlines the foundation strategies and key recommendations of the Master Plan, the three stages of consultation undertaken to inform the plan and the feedback received from the community public exhibition period and surveys.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve the amended Draft Johnstons Creek Parklands Master Plan, as shown in Attachment B to the subject report; and
- (B) Financial Estimates and Priorities, Attachment G to the subject report, remain confidential in accordance with section 10A(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 1993.

**ATTACHMENTS**

**Attachment A:** Location Plan

**Attachment B:** Amended Draft Johnstons Creek Parklands Master Plan  
**(Note – This Attachment will be circulated separately from the agenda paper and to Councillors and relevant senior staff only. A copy will be available for viewing on Council’s website and at the One Stop Shop and Neighbourhood Service Centres.)**

**Attachment C:** Draft Master Plan significant amendments and Precedent Images

**Attachment D:** Community Consultation Stage 3 report

**Attachment E:** Consultation Summary – Stage 3 Submissions – Detailed Issues and Responses

**Attachment F:** Community Consultation Stage 1 and 2 report

**Attachment G:** Financial Estimates and Priorities (Confidential)

**(As Attachment G is confidential, it will be circulated separately from the Agenda Paper and to Councillors and relevant senior staff only).**

**BACKGROUND**

1. In March 2013, Council approved the Draft Master Plan for the Johnstons Creek Parklands for public exhibition.
2. The Draft Master Plan was on public exhibition for four weeks between 19 April and 17 May 2013. The public exhibition included surveys and a drop in session in the parklands on 4 May 2013.
3. It is nearly 20 years since a community Master Plan for parkland areas at Johnstons Creek was prepared. The 1994 Master Plan guided park improvements, statutory planning, property acquisitions and galvanised community effort.
4. Significant investment has been made since 2004, by the City of Sydney, following transfer from Leichhardt Council. This has included further property acquisitions along The Crescent and the Anchorage, the implementation of the Glebe Foreshore project, as well as the Johnstons Creek shared path project and a new playground for Jubilee Park.
5. In March 2011, Council endorsed the preparation of a new Master Plan to coordinate public domain planning and improvements across a number of open space areas and properties that collectively form the parklands of Johnstons Creek.

**Draft Master Plan**

6. The Master Plan is intended to set the long term vision for the parklands, guiding the integration of new open space areas, as well as the evolution and refinement of the existing parklands, to align with contemporary community needs.
7. The Johnstons Creek Parklands Draft Master Plan was prepared from June 2012 to March 2013. It includes the existing parkland comprising Pope Paul VI Reserve, Bicentennial Park, Federal Park and Jubilee Park, as well as "The Hill", which is a residual area of filled land located between the light rail line and tram sheds. Due to site contamination in this area, public access is currently restricted.
8. These parks, on the foreshore of Rozelle Bay, are part of a ribbon of continuous parkland around the Glebe Peninsula. These waterfront parks provide diverse opportunities for active and passive recreation. They comprise formal and informal park settings, saltmarsh and mangrove communities, car parking and small amenity buildings.
9. In addition, the Draft Master Plan includes proposed new areas of public park comprising:
  - (a) The Crescent – lands on the western edge of the precinct, which have been progressively acquired by Leichhardt Council and, more recently, the City for the future incorporation into the parklands for public recreation. There are currently buildings on this area; and

- (b) approximately 3.8 hectares of new open space to be dedicated from the redevelopment of the former Harold Park Pace Way and Rozelle Tram Depot site by Mirvac. Ground remediation, earthworks and stabilisation will be completed by Mirvac. In addition, the voluntary planning agreement requires the developer to provide approximately \$8 million dollars to the City towards the further embellishment of the park. This Master Plan will guide the design of the future embellishment.
10. A key role of the Master Plan is to inform the planning and delivery of these new parkland areas. The site area is shown in Attachment A.

#### **Development of the Draft Master Plan**

11. The Master Plan is the fourth stage in the design and planning process, and refines and finalises the Draft Master Plan in response to community and stakeholder feedback.
12. Previous stages included Stage 1: Analysis and Investigations, Stage 2: Strategy Development, and Stage 3 Draft Master Plan.
13. Each stage has been supported by community consultation. The vision, principles and findings within the Master Plan have been shaped by the phase 1 consultation, and the strategies that underpin the Master Plan proposals have been tested and refined through the phase 2 and phase 3 consultations.
14. The Master Plan balances the values of the parklands, strengthening its ability to provide passive and active recreation, areas for habitat and water sensitive design, in a range of settings. The amended Draft Master Plan report structures the key strategies for the parklands into the following themes:
- (a) Environment;
  - (b) Hydrology;
  - (c) Community and Recreation;
  - (d) Access and Transport;
  - (e) Heritage; and
  - (f) Landscape Character.

**Key Recommendations in the Draft Master Plan**

15. The key recommendations of the Master Plan for each theme are detailed below (with further related commentary regarding our response to community feedback and suggested amendments to the Draft Master Plan found at paragraphs 23 and 24):
- (a) Environment
    - (i) The Master Plan conserves the existing marshes, cliff lines and terrestrial planting and proposes an expansion of the landscapes of ecological value within the parklands. These include new salt and fresh water wetlands, diverse woodland, shrubland and grassland habitats. The value of existing cultural landscapes and their contribution to vegetation corridors is recognised.
  - (b) Water
    - (i) The Master Plan seeks to engage people with the local water cycle by providing rich and varied ways to view, access and understand it. To a large degree, water thematically unites the individual parks into one parkland.
    - (ii) Opportunities to naturalise the canal, improve and expand saltmarsh communities and establish new wetlands to improve habitat and water quality have been incorporated.
    - (iii) The overland swale through the Harold Park open space will be planted to treat low flows, cleaning stormwater run-off and providing habitat. It is further recommended to harvest stormwater for irrigation reuse within the parklands.
    - (iv) Measures to manage ground and flood waters to maintain safe and workable recreation areas are included in the Master Plan.
  - (c) Community and Recreation
    - (i) The Master Plan strengthens the formal and informal recreation precincts of the parkland, and proposes to expand opportunities for both.
    - (ii) Formal recreation is consolidated within the central precinct, retaining and improving the existing Jubilee Oval and improving Federal Oval for sporting activities. The Crescent area supplements this precinct with a new village green area for activities, which include junior games and casual ball games.
    - (iii) The new Harold Park parkland provides settings at a range of scales, including a large village green for casual ball games as well as unstructured recreation, such as picnics and dog walking.
    - (iv) The Master Plan identifies ancillary infrastructure, including seating, shelters, barbeques, kiosk, toilets and change rooms, boat store and play environments, sited across the parklands to support this wide range of activities.

- (v) The Master Plan proposes the expansion of co-located, complementary community uses:
  - a. an allocation of 500 square metres to be provided (by Mirvac) in the former Rozelle Tram Sheds for community use could be developed as a creative hub that could accommodate activities such as artist studios, work spaces, community gallery and pop up shop, co-located with public amenities. This will be subject to a separate study and report. Following final determination of the uses, Council will be responsible for the fit out of the space, and has made an allocation for this within the Corporate Plan; and
  - b. the majority of warehouse buildings along The Crescent will be demolished to increase the parklands and recreation provision. The adaptive reuse of one of the existing buildings within The Crescent is proposed to provide a range of flexible community spaces such as childcare, community meeting and activity space, public amenities and multi-purpose indoor courts.
- (d) Transport, Access and Circulation
  - (i) The Master Plan encourages visitation by public transport by improving access to key nodes, such as light rail stations and bus stops on key routes. The Master Plan connects the park to the surrounding neighbourhood by proposing new pedestrian crossings at The Crescent and stairs into Harold Park parklands.
  - (ii) There are a range of paths to ensure significant north / south and east / west networks link the new open spaces. They link with the existing parklands and continue the foreshore walk.
  - (iii) There are currently approximately 130 car parking spaces in the park. To minimise vehicle movements in the park, increase safety and improve park amenity, some car parking has been relocated to the park edge. New 90-degree car parking along The Crescent and parking in Chapman Avenue north replicates the existing provision, and parking restrictions are proposed to limit use by commuters. The car park and access roads to the Tram Sheds will be delivered, owned and operated by Mirvac. The Master Plan seeks to visually integrate these parking areas with the parkland.
- (e) Heritage
  - (i) The Master Plan interprets the site's history of change and protects and incorporates the parklands main natural and cultural elements.
- (f) Character and Visual Amenity
  - (i) The Master Plan acknowledges that the parkland is a group of parks with distinct and diverse characters. The proposals add to the diversity of landscape characters and strengthen existing qualities. Uniting the parkland is the expression of water and drainage, be it foreshore, canal, swale or wetland. At a detailed scale, a consistent design language and coordinated materials palette, applied to the ancillary infrastructure of the park, will bring cohesion and identity.

- (ii) The Master Plan proposes a strong park perimeter landscape, which contributes to the surrounding precinct and maximises the parklands legibility.

### **Community consultation to date**

16. There have been three phases of community consultation to inform the Master Plan:
  - (a) phase one ran from 26 June to 17 August 2012;
  - (b) phase two ran from 10 December 2012 to 14 January 2013; and
  - (c) phase three ran from 19 April to 17 May 2013.
17. Comprehensive reports on the consultations of phase one and phase two can be found in Attachment F. Activities included community workshops, focus groups with key users and local residents, intercept surveys, online surveys, an online forum and submissions.
18. Phase one consultation revealed community aspirations for the following:
  - (a) a parkland with a space for everyone – appropriate for all ages, flexible spaces, distinct spaces for active and passive recreation;
  - (b) a place where accessibility and good connections are prioritised – within the park, with surrounding neighbourhoods, with good public transport and parking and which is safe for all;
  - (c) a place which responds to its natural environment through its vegetation, habitat areas, cliffs and waterways;
  - (d) a cultural place where local heritage is celebrated – a place which celebrates local history, with public art and opportunity for community/cultural activities;
  - (e) a parkland with well-maintained facilities and improved stormwater management; and
  - (f) a parkland which addresses future needs – changing demographics, increasing population.
19. In phase two, feedback was sought on the six proposed strategies for the environment, water, recreation and community facilities, transport, access and circulation, heritage and character. These were generally well received. Participants particularly liked strategies that:
  - (a) protected and enhanced local habitats, vegetation and ecosystems;
  - (b) related to management of flooding and stormwater in the parklands, including naturalising the canal;
  - (c) made improvements to parkland facilities and showed a balance between active and passive recreation areas;
  - (d) allowed for flexible community space and a new sports field, with acceptance of the fact that a competition-sized field was not possible in the space;

- (e) whilst there was discussion around increased demand for parking, strategies that retained existing parking spaces were supported, as were those that enhanced connections within the parklands and with neighbouring areas;
  - (f) protected heritage items and celebrated Aboriginal heritage; and
  - (g) protected and enhanced views.
20. The final phase, phase three of consultation was a formal exhibition of the draft Master Plan. This ran from 19 April to 17 May 2013. The following engagement activities were conducted:
- (a) 18,000 letters sent to residents in Glebe, Forest Lodge, Camperdown and half of the Leichhardt Local Government Area (7,625 residents) providing notification of the consultation period, details of where consultation material could be viewed, details about the drop in session and the ways in which people could have their say;
  - (b) advertisements were placed in the Inner West Courier and Central newspapers;
  - (c) a dedicated page on [sydneyoursay.com.au](http://sydneyoursay.com.au) with news items, maps, the Draft Master Plan, display material, reports, an online survey and an online submissions form;
  - (d) information was displayed on the City of Sydney website about the consultation, drop in session, the [sydneyoursay](http://sydneyoursay.com.au) site and the ways in which people could have their say;
  - (e) emails were sent to an extensive database of residents, interested community members, sporting groups, environmental and community groups announcing the consultation, details of where the consultation material could be viewed, the drop in session and the ways in which people could have their say;
  - (f) letters were sent to key stakeholders including key staff and the Mayor of Leichhardt Council and the State Member of Parliament for Balmain announcing the consultation, details of where the consultation material could be viewed, the drop in session and the ways in which people could have their say;
  - (g) consultation material was displayed at the Glebe Neighbourhood Service Centre, the Annandale Neighbourhood Centre and three key locations in the parklands;
  - (h) a drop-in session was held in two locations in the parklands on 4 May 2013. The draft Master Plan was presented via displays and a model, and community members could take guided tours of the parklands, ask questions of the project team and submit feedback; and
  - (i) intercept surveys were conducted in the parklands, Johnston Street, Annandale and Glebe Point Road, Glebe over a range of days and times.



21. A comprehensive report on the outcomes of the phase three consultation can be found in Attachments D and E and are summarised by theme below. Key issues raised are addressed in the 'Key Issues' section of this report.

#### Environment and Water

- (a) Overall the strategies were well received. Most participants wanted new habitat areas and native vegetation corridors, improvements to water quality, rainwater harvested for use in the Parklands and naturalisation of the canal. A significant number of participants wanted new wetlands and saltmarsh ecosystems. However, an equally significant number did not want these located at the foreshore. There was broad support for the flooding and water management proposals and for the remediation of The Hill.

#### Recreation and Community Facilities

- (a) Overall the strategies were well received. Participants liked the balance between active and passive recreation spaces, with many showing enthusiasm for more seating and picnic areas. Also popular were improved facilities such as toilets, picnic and barbeque areas, seating and amenities associated with sports.
- (b) The Master Plan identifies flexible spaces for a broad range of active recreational uses and these were popular amongst participants, particularly the skate facilities, playgrounds and sporting fields. Some participants sought a new competition-size sports field, with some suggesting it be located in Harold Park.
- (c) Early stage consultation revealed support for additional community facilities in the parklands. This was also reflected in feedback received during the exhibition period. However, a significant number of submissions objected to the retention or reuse of any buildings along The Crescent for this purpose.

#### Transport, Circulation and Access

- (a) There was significant support for strategies that enabled or encouraged use of public transport, walking or cycling. As in phase two, retention of the existing number of parking spaces was also supported, with some discussion around whether new facilities and open space might increase the need for parking in the future.
- (b) There was confusion on the part of a number of residents who submitted objections to what they interpreted as a proposed new bus route along Maxwell Road, and vehicular access through the parklands from Maxwell Road to The Crescent. Neither were proposed in the Draft Master Plan.

#### Access and Circulation

- (a) Pathway connections from the surrounding neighbourhoods and within the parklands were regarded as important, with support for additional bridge connections across the canal. However, there was strong local opposition to stair access into the Harold Park open space from the Toxteth Estate.
- (b) Mixed views were expressed around cycling, mostly shared paths. Shared paths will need to be carefully designed to minimise conflict.

Heritage, Character and Visual Amenity

- (a) These strategies were supported, especially those around maintaining and enhancing heritage landscapes and heritage items within the parklands. There was strong support for the interpretation of Aboriginal history and past uses in the parkland.
- (b) Mixed views were expressed around opening up the viaducts.
- (c) As previously noted, a number of submissions were received from participants opposing re-use or retention of buildings on The Crescent for a community facility, areas of active recreation and parking. Some advocated relocating the facility to the Mirvac-owned Tramshed building. Many of these submissions referred to the earlier 1994 Master Plan as a preferable scheme.
- (d) Other participants expressed support for recreational facilities, such as the skate park, netball courts and the junior sports field on The Crescent.

**Key Issues**

22. The key issues raised in the consultation and exhibition of the Draft Master Plan are:
- (a) proposed saltmarsh communities along the foreshore of Bicentennial Park;
  - (b) why a competition-sized sports field was not included;
  - (c) retention and adaptive re-use of an existing building for a community facility;
  - (d) implementation of the 1994 Master Plan;
  - (e) inclusion of mounding along The Crescent;
  - (f) stair access into Harold Park open space;
  - (g) why is there a new bus route on Maxwell Road and vehicular access through the park from The Crescent to Maxwell Road;
  - (h) opening the viaduct arches;
  - (i) parking demand and supply; and
  - (j) toilet facilities.
23. In relation to:
- (a) **Proposed saltmarsh communities along the foreshore of Bicentennial Park** – A number of submissions indicated they did not want additional saltmarsh communities at the expense of open areas. Key views expressed were:
    - (i) retention of open grass areas at the foreshore;
    - (ii) views across the harbour.

The addition of five hectares of new open space provides an opportunity to develop a variety of landscape settings in new and existing areas. The Master Plan seeks to complement the existing areas of saltmarsh habitat in Federal Park, with additional salt marsh in Bicentennial Park and Federal Park south. As a natural association with the mangroves, it will support the saltmarsh along the canal and to the south. Saltmarsh does not impede views of the harbour.

In response to the community feedback, the amended Master Plan reduces the size of the proposed saltmarsh at the foreshore by 40 per cent, to ensure a balance between maintaining open lawn areas at the foreshore and expanding this ecologically endangered community.

- (b) **Why a competition sized sports field was not included** – Some participants revisited the idea of a competition-sized sports field, which was raised early in the Master Plan consultation process.

In response to early community consultation requesting a full-sized hockey field, the project team investigated the following two locations in The Crescent and Harold Park:

- (i) a full-sized field of 100 x 55 metres does not fit in The Crescent within the existing site constraints, including the viaduct and existing saltmarsh; and
- (ii) a full-sized field does not fit in Harold Park between the cliff line and stormwater swale.

The Master Plan proposes a Village Green at The Crescent, accommodating an open space for junior sports with a diameter of 60 metres, or can accommodate a rectangular area of 50 x 30 metres. A similar Village Green is provided in Harold Park. The Master Plan makes a subtle distinction between the suggested use of these two areas. Formalised sport programs are suggested at The Crescent, which consolidates the existing active recreation precinct and is close to parking and supporting amenities such as toilets, change rooms and store rooms. Harold Park, located away from these amenities, is suggested for less structured, casual ball games.

Together, these two spaces increase provision for both formal and casual active games. Outside of these uses, both these areas will be available for other activities, such as dog walking and picnics.

Improvements to the existing playing fields, currently underway at Jubilee Oval and proposed within the Master Plan at Federal Park, will increase their usability.

- (c) **Retention and adaptive re-use of an existing building for a community facility** – A number of community submissions did not support the retention of a building along The Crescent. Key views expressed were:

- (i) all buildings should be removed from The Crescent;
- (ii) the area should be grass and trees;
- (iii) the building contains hazardous materials; and

- (iv) the community facilities should be located in the Tram Sheds.

Adaptive re-use of the existing building can help address current community facility and childcare shortfalls, and can provide flexible space for recreation, education, creative and community use.

#### Need for child care facilities

- (i) In 2005 and 2008, the City undertook two substantial child care needs assessments. These have identified there were long waiting lists for all services and, in particular, centres for children aged 0 to 2 years.
- (ii) Population trends indicate, with a rapidly growing resident and worker population, the need for child care services across the City of Sydney Local Government Area (LGA) is expected to continue to increase.
- (iii) Current data reveals there is a high proportion of 0 to 4 year olds in Glebe and Forest Lodge, and the need for child care services across the City's LGA is expected to continue to increase. Statistics from Leichhardt LGA also indicate a high proportion and an estimated high growth rate of the under school age group.
- (iv) As part of an integrated, multi-purpose community facility proposed in the Master Plan, providing for these activities will contribute even more to the social activation of the parklands than the current child care facilities in Jubilee Park.

#### Community space / collective space

- (i) Forecasts of community space demand by the City indicate a high demand for community meeting and creative space areas.
- (ii) Providing for these activities will contribute positively to the social activation of the parklands.

#### Preference for trees and grass

- (i) The Master Plan guides the evolution of diverse, sustainable and activated parklands. In the context of approximately an additional 5.4 hectares of new parkland, there is opportunity to improve the provision of community facilities within an expanded parkland setting.
- (ii) The existing building identified for adaptation is well located, being on the perimeter of the parklands and close to parking and transport. At The Crescent, an additional 1.3 hectares of land, not currently accessible to the public, will be released for public use. The proposed building comprises approximately 1 per cent of the overall parklands within the Master Plan. The majority of the new park frontage to The Crescent will be open parkland.

The presence of hazardous materials

- (i) Contamination within the parklands will need to be addressed for both demolition and adaptive re-use proposals. Similarly, any contaminants in the Tram Sheds arising from their long life as a stabling and servicing yard for rolling stock will need to be addressed by the owner through the process of redevelopment. All standards will be met to ensure safe removal and remediation of contaminants as required for the safe use of the parkland and its facilities.

Locate proposed facilities within the Tram Sheds

- (i) The Tram Sheds are a privately-owned building. The developer Mirvac, will provide 500 square metres to the City for community space. While this will be a positive contribution to overall provision in the precinct, the size is not sufficient for child care.
  - (ii) The proposed location in the Master Plan for a mixed use community facility on the edge of the parklands is a more serviceable location, with a strong correlation to the active recreation precinct in which it sits.
- (d) **Implementation of the 1994 Master Plan** – A number of submissions indicated they wanted to see the implementation of the 1994 Master Plan, unamended.
- (i) The role of a parkland Master Plan is to understand place, holistically investigate issues and opportunities, respond to current and future needs and develop a coherent vision to guide future effort. This Master Plan acknowledges and reflects past community effort and work, and has invested in significant consultation to ensure it also reflects current community needs and aspirations.
  - (ii) A significant proposal of the 1994 Master Plan was the acquisition of land along The Crescent to increase the size of the parkland. Since the development of this Master Plan, Leichhardt Council, the local community and businesses have successfully acquired 3, 7 and 9 The Crescent. The subsequent purchase of 11-13 The Crescent by the City consolidates a large parcel of land for community parkland.
  - (iii) In addition to the above, the following proposals in the 1994 Master Plan have been achieved:
    - a. the wetland pond associated with the existing tidal and stormwater canal has been implemented and is now a successful saltmarsh community. This Master Plan proposes to complete the 1994 proposal of creating a “recreational focus for the southern parkland together with wildlife habitat and an educational role”. It proposes to improve the water treatment system and extend the saltmarsh to improve its health and incorporate boardwalks and viewing decks.
    - b. cricket pitch currently located in Federal Park south. The Master Plan proposes to relocate this pitch to The Crescent area.

- c. works in Bicentennial Park west including the playground, toilet amenities, pavilion, paths and tree planting.
- (iv) Many of the ideas in the 1994 Master Plan are a focus for this plan, and include:
- a. increasing the habitat diversity and opportunities for improving stormwater quality, with areas of wetlands and mangroves. In addition to the wetland pond, the 1994 Master Plan aspired to create a foreshore estuarine wetland within the waters of Rozelle Bay and on land owned by Roads and Maritime Services. The 2013 Master Plan seeks the same aspirations within the current parkland boundaries;
  - b. provision of parking at the edge of the park, along The Crescent and at Nelson Street;
  - c. a pedestrian crossing on The Crescent and an integrated path network through the park;
  - d. street trees and canopy trees within the park; and
  - e. a café close to the playground and picnic area. The 1994 Master Plan locates a café in the viaduct arches. This Master Plan proposes to open the arches and locate amenities in the proposed community facility adjacent to The Crescent.
- (v) Since the preparation of the 1994 Master Plan, the following changes have occurred:
- a. the western boundary of the parklands is now secured following the successful acquisition of 3 to 11-13 The Crescent by Leichhardt Council and, more recently, the City;
  - b. the redevelopment of Harold Park and Camperdown Children's Hospital for new residential areas;
  - c. the release of the new parkland associated with the redevelopment of Harold Park;
  - d. the successful establishment of mangrove habitat and construction of water access facilities within Bicentennial Park; and
  - e. the 2.5km parkland from Wentworth Park to Federal Park in Rozelle Bay.
- (vi) The additional parkland proposed in the Master Plan at The Crescent will expand areas of significant ecological value, improve stormwater quality and create new areas for passive and active recreation.
- (vii) The Village Green and skate park proposed at The Crescent are supported by the existing active recreation precinct of Federal Park and Jubilee Oval, offering the opportunity to consolidate and co-locate supporting amenities, such as equipment storage, toilets and change rooms.

- (viii) These sport facilities and amenities also help address the needs for sport facilities and amenities in the LGA:
  - a. The population forecasts for 2011 to 2031 for the surrounding precinct is 14 per cent. It can be assumed that needs for sports facilities will increase with the increase in population.
  - b. There is an anticipated increasing number of children in the area. Glebe Point Road Village has the highest growth of 10 to 14 year olds. This age group has a high rate of participation in informal and organised active sports.
- (ix) In response to the community feedback regarding the extent of formalised active sport areas, the three courts are removed from The Crescent and replaced with an area of trees and grass suited to unstructured recreation.
- (x) Opportunities for junior sports to be played on the Village Green balances the need for active areas and passive recreation. The skate area provides a much needed facility for a range of age groups. These programs of junior sport and skating are supported with adjacent parking, drop-off plaza, toilet, change room and storage facilities.
- (e) **Mounding along The Crescent** – the submission from Leichhardt Council requested amending the Draft Master Plan to include three metre high mounding and associated small shrub planting along The Crescent.
  - (i) The Master Plan proposes that the extended areas of parkland present an address to the street that draws on the existing characters of the adjacent parklands and maximises views and access. Three metre earth mounding is not consistent with this character and is not recommended to be included in the Master Plan:
    - a. mounding of this size would also occur at the expense of the junior sized playing field and areas of trees and grass suited to unstructured recreation;
    - b. it would also restrict pedestrian and cycle access from along The Crescent;
    - c. mounding may also have the effect of reducing sight lines through, and could make the parking areas and playing areas more susceptible to anti-social behaviour;
  - (ii) More subtle landforming that does not impact in the way described above could be explored in the future design of projects.
- (f) **Stair access into Harold Park** – There was local opposition to stair access into the Harold Park open space from the Toxteth Estate.
  - (i) Submissions included a petition with 38 signatures from local residents citing:
    - a. increased parking congestion from the Harold Park development;

- b. possibility that it will bring in more people and destroy the peace and quiet;
  - c. the stair access had not been approved in previous Development Applications.
- (ii) The provision of convenient access to public open space from surrounding neighbourhoods is an established principle of open space planning. It is important to connect existing neighbourhoods with the parkland and new public amenity.
- (iii) In response to the Harold Park Stage 1 Development Application (Mirvac), the Central Sydney Planning Committee provided the following response:
- No stair access is proposed as part of this DA. However, it is noted that improving access to the future park is a DCP objective and stair connections to the Toxteth Estate are permitted under the DCP. This will be considered as part of Council's future embellishment works to the park.*
- (iv) In response to the community comments, the following amendments to the Master Plan are proposed:
- a. the lift access from Toxteth Road into Harold Park has been removed; and
  - b. the provision of stair access into Harold Park is proposed to be staged. The prioritisation of projects recommends one stair access is delivered in the initial Harold Park open space embellishment project. The other stairs are proposed as a longer term priority to be considered for potential funding in the future.
- (g) **New bus route on Maxwell Road and vehicular access through the park from The Crescent to Maxwell Road** – There were a number of submissions and response to a community petition objecting to what was believed to be a proposed new bus route along Maxwell Road and vehicular access through the park from Maxwell Road.
- (i) These are not included as proposals in the Draft Master Plan. To remove the potential for this misinterpretation of the Master Plan, the notations and graphics on the plan have been updated to clarify:
- a. the existing bus stop on Maxwell Road is an existing school bus stop;
  - b. there is no proposed bus stop on Victoria Road;
  - c. vehicular access off Maxwell Road is only to the adjacent Mirvac residential development site and not to the Tram Sheds, nor the park, nor the bulk of the Harold Park development;
  - d. there is accessible pedestrian and cycle access from Maxwell Road into Harold Park, which include a zone shared with vehicles accessing the development site noted above.



- (h) **Opening the viaduct arches** – There were mixed views expressed around opening up the viaducts. Some participants wanted all viaducts opened to take advantage of views. Others would like a few to remain enclosed for existing uses of cultural/community space or storage.

The Master Plan proposes to open key arches in the viaduct to improve views and access through to adjacent parklands.

At present, there are seven closed arches adjacent to Jubilee Oval. Given the visual quality and heritage significance of the structure, it is proposed to open four of the arches associated with the works for The Hill.

The Master Plan proposes to open up all the closed arches adjacent to The Crescent and Federal Park.

In response to community feedback, the Master Plan has been amended to include the staging of opening the arches. This would allow existing uses to be located in the new community spaces or the arches bounded by The Hill.

- (i) **Parking demand and supply** – There were mixed comments around the parking requirements including:

- (i) concern of additional impact in adjacent streets;
- (ii) concern if additional parking is created there will be more traffic; and
- (iii) new facilities and open space might increase the need for parking in the future.

The parklands are well serviced by public transport, both light rail and bus routes. The Master Plan encourages visits by public transport, walking and cycling by improving access to light rail stations and bus stops and adjacent neighbourhoods.

The Master Plan seeks to maintain the existing parking numbers. It minimises vehicle movements in the park to increase safety and improve park amenity.

Parking and drop-off areas are located on the edge of the parklands and near to the key destinations, such as the playground, picnic areas, community facility and junior playing field.

Parking for the Tram Sheds will be provided and delivered by Mirvac.

- (j) **Toilet/Kiosk facilities** – There were mixed comments around toilet provision, including concern regarding the location of the toilet and kiosk near Federal and Northcote Roads in Bicentennial Park.

The Master Plan provides the opportunity to plan future provision for the parklands. Toilets are proposed to be generally within 250 metres of any place in the park and located near children's playgrounds and active open spaces, where toilet facilities are in demand. Well designed, high quality amenities with good passive surveillance enhance park environments and help reduce vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

Co-location of additional services, such as kiosk or boat store, can create positive social activation near the facility.

Currently, Bicentennial Park east, Pope Paul VI Reserve and Jubilee Park and oval do not have good toilet provision, with current facilities poorly designed and located.

- (i) In response to community feedback, the Master Plan has been amended to delete the co-location of a kiosk facility at Federal and Northcote Roads, therefore making the building smaller.
- (ii) The orientation and location of this proposed toilet has been adjusted to relocate outside the sightlines of adjacent houses and away from open vistas, whilst maintaining safety through close proximity to the street and major use areas.

24. In addition, the following amendments are proposed in response to consultation feedback:

(a) Environment and Water

- (i) additional trees in The Crescent have been included to increase shade and amenity;
- (ii) additional street trees to The Crescent are shown adjacent to the Harold Park redevelopment; and
- (iii) the fountain proposed in Bicentennial Park is shown smaller and incorporates areas of landscaping or planting, more appropriate to the scale of the existing park design.

(b) Transport, Circulation and Access

- (i) The Transport, Circulation and Access strategy has been updated. It clarifies the existing and proposed paths, the existing boundary and connections for pedestrians and cyclists through the viaduct arches from The Crescent.
- (ii) The foreshore path and bridge over the canal is downgraded to a secondary access route on the Transport, Circulation and Access strategy. This will guide the future design of the bridge and associated pathways to be relatively low key and slow speed design, appropriate for its harbour's edge location, and encouraging cross-park cycling via the existing bridge to the south.

(c) Recreation and Community Facilities

- (i) additional opportunities for community garden locations are included for further development in future projects;
- (ii) a fitness circuit has been included, improving the recreation opportunities in the parkland; and
- (iii) the description of the playing fields at The Crescent and Harold Park have been amended to better explain their character and use.

- (d) Heritage
  - (i) the key interpretive themes have been updated to include the story of community activism and the community's role in the development of the parklands;
  - (ii) the Heritage strategy plan has been updated to show the proposed views and vistas from The Crescent.
- (e) Character and Visual Amenity
  - (i) Supporting material of precedent images and additional text has been included to better explain the proposed landscape character of The Crescent. The Village Green will be a landscape similar to Federal Park playing field, an open area of grass with adjacent shade trees that allows open views and vistas and a range of uses. Similar to Federal Park, fixed structures such as fencing and goal posts are not proposed.
- (f) Minor amendments to fix grammar, spelling mistakes and to clarify intent.

## KEY IMPLICATIONS

### Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

25. *Sustainable Sydney 2030* is a vision for the sustainable development of the City to 2030 and beyond. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the City, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This project is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
- (a) Direction 4 - A City for Walking and Cycling – the project will expand recreation and access opportunity for the neighbourhoods of Forest Lodge, Glebe and Annandale.
  - (b) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies – the foreshore parklands are a setting for both informal social activity and a place for structured community activities, such as team sports, rowing, exercising or planting.
  - (c) Direction 7 - A Cultural and Creative City – the parklands can accommodate a mix of creative, multi-purpose and community facilities to address residents' needs into the future.
  - (d) Direction 9 - Sustainable Development, Renewal and Design – this project builds on the existing unique ecosystems in the parklands, incorporates new areas for ecology and opportunities for habitat, and highlights water that runs through the site as a connector of the parklands. The project seeks to realise the community benefit of increased parkland and foreshore access.

### Organisational Impact

26. The following organisational impacts of the project will be incremental:
- (a) the development of the parklands will require concurrent expansion of the maintenance and management regimes to respond to the increased new open space, the more complex landscapes and infrastructure and to foster the parklands successful growth and establishment;

- (b) the proposed community facilities will be subject to lease by operators, which will require management oversight; and
- (c) the extension of shared paths will require the supporting social programs already in place along the foreshore parklands and in other parks.

### **Risks**

- 27. The Master Plan mitigates the risk of ad-hoc development of the parklands, which is unlikely to maximise the opportunities, establish the principles and priorities nor coordinate investments over time to achieve a long term sustainable vision.

### **Social / Cultural / Community**

- 28. The Master Plan proposals will enable greater and improved public use and enjoyment of the unique foreshore parklands, through the provision of new open space, associated recreation and improved connections to the surrounding neighbourhoods.
- 29. Adaptive re-use of the existing building can help address current childcare and community facility shortfalls, and can provide flexible space for recreation, education, creative and community use.
- 30. The Master Plan will be a useful tool for improving the outcomes of existing community participation programs, such as Community Planting Days. The key environmental rehabilitation theme through the parklands could form the basis of educational programs in the future.
- 31. The parklands are already a venue for sporting events and small-scale community events. The Master Plan will recognise this event overlay and plan future development to cater for these and other possible cultural activities.
- 32. The Master Plan outlines opportunities to interpret the parklands' rich heritage and past uses, and preserve and protect heritage items.

### **Environmental**

- 33. The City is transforming two significant areas to new parkland, which will significantly enhance the environmental quality of the area. The new sites, Harold Park and The Crescent, are 5.4 hectares in area. Once combined with the existing parklands, this will create up to 19 hectares of open space.
- 34. The Master Plan proposes enhancements to the habitat value of the parklands, through the consolidation of existing habitats and the introduction of new aquatic and terrestrial habitat.
- 35. The Master Plan includes proposals to improve the water quality in the park, Johnstons Canal and that entering Rozelle Bay, through wetland, rain garden and swale systems.
- 36. The Master Plan proposals support sustainable transport, such as walking, cycling and public transport, by extending and improving path connections to and through the parklands and to key nodes of public transport.

**Economic**

37. The redevelopment of The Crescent Lands will result in a loss of income (currently \$471,100 per annum from the commercial leases). However, the purpose of purchasing these sites was to provide for community facilities and increase open space.
38. Income from Johnstons Creek Parklands is to be generated by lease and booking fees from applicants for approved sporting and community events. These would contribute to ongoing operational and maintenance costs.

**BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

39. The Master Plan does not constitute a commitment of funds, nor does it obligate the City to implement all recommendations within the report. Rather, the Master Plan defines potential public domain projects into the medium and long term, which can be considered in the formulation of future works programs, funding applications, negotiation of developer contributions and community programs.
40. The current Capital Works Budget and future years' estimates have allocations totalling just over \$15.9 million for the new landscaping and community facilities in the area covered by the Master Plan, and comprises:
  - (a) \$4.9M general allocation for works within the Johnstons Creek Parklands;
  - (b) \$8.0M allocation for works to embellish the Harold Park new open space. This is the developer contribution;
  - (c) \$1.2M allocation for works to fit out community space within the former Tram Sheds development;
  - (d) in the order of \$0.9M allocation for Jubilee Oval playing field; and
  - (e) in the order of \$0.9M allocation for Jubilee Park Playground from the Parks General Upgrade.
41. A prioritisation of projects has been prepared to assist with coordinating future planning (see Attachment G).

**RELEVANT LEGISLATION**

42. This Master Plan is a non-statutory document. The Master Plan proposals will however, trigger a range of statutory processes including:
  - (a) Contaminated Land Management Act 1997 (for development on contaminated sites);
  - (a) Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (for development requiring consent and for informing future Contributions Plans);
  - (b) Local Government Act 1993 (for the allocation of capital works funding, for project approvals and future updates of the Plan of Management); and
  - (c) Harold Park Local Environment Plan 2010 (for proposals within the former Harold Park Paceway site).

43. Attachment G is to remain confidential in accordance with section 10A(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 1993, as it contains information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.

#### **CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES**

44. The role of the Master Plan will be to guide the program and design of a range of current capital works projects, particularly the new Harold Park. The following dates indicate a general aggregate timetable for these projects:

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| August 2013  | Approval of the Johnstons Creek Parklands Master Plan              |
| October 2013 | Lodge Development Application for Harold Park new open space works |
| Early 2014   | Tender Documentation for Harold Park new open space.               |

#### **PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

45. As detailed earlier in this report, three stages of community consultation have been conducted in the development of the Master Plan.
46. If adopted, a re-issue of the documents “as adopted” will be prepared and made available on the City’s website and in hard copy at the Glebe Town Hall and Library.
47. Subsequent public consultation programs will be developed for any individual projects arising from the Master Plan, and may take the form of concept design exhibitions, statutory notifications, expressions of interest and the like.

#### **MICHAEL LEYLAND**

Director City Projects and Property

Lisa Dodd, Specialist Design Manager