

**ITEM 5. RECONCILIATION PARK IMPROVEMENTS, REDFERN – DEVELOPED DESIGN SCOPE****FILE NO: S094965****SUMMARY**

This report outlines the proposed scope for the renewal of Reconciliation Park, Redfern.

As part of the ongoing small parks and playgrounds improvement program, Reconciliation Park, located at 13-15 George Street, has been identified for renewal.

The concept plan was presented to the community on-site on 9 March 2013 and exhibited on the City's website. Twenty five responses were received. Community feedback was generally in support of the proposal, with some additional elements requested. During the consultation, residents requested to see the developed design, and this was carried out in July 2013.

As part of the design process, an analysis of other playgrounds within 550 metres of Reconciliation Park and the play facilities currently provided was also undertaken.

In August 2012, the students of Darlington Public School were consulted for their ideas for the new playground. The consultation identified the types of play equipment the children from the neighbourhood like best. This feedback informed the design of the playground and selection of proposed equipment.

In July 2013, the developed design plan was delivered to all residences within a 500 metre radius of the site. The consultation letter and developed design was delivered to around 1,250 residents. Four responses were received.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council endorse the scope of work for improvements to Reconciliation Park as described in the subject report and shown in the concept plan at Attachment A to the subject report, for the purpose of proceeding to documentation and construction tender;
- (B) Council note the project cost estimate detailed in confidential Attachment E to the subject report; and
- (C) Financial Implications, Attachment E to the subject report remain confidential in accordance with section 10A(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 1993.

**ATTACHMENTS**

**Attachment A:** Community Consultation Presentation – July 2013 developed design

**Attachment B:** Community Consultation Presentation – March 2013 concept plan

**Attachment C:** Community Consultation Response Schedule – developed design

**Attachment D:** Community Consultation Response Schedule – concept plan

**Attachment E:** Financial Implications (Confidential)

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

## BACKGROUND

1. The City has identified a number of small parks that are in need of significant enhancement works to provide up-to-date and appropriate facilities for local residents.
2. The City has been systematically undertaking these works to parks in stages. Over 19 small parks have been completed since 2007. Reconciliation Park is nominated to be upgraded in Stage 11 of the ongoing small parks and playgrounds improvement program. These parks have been identified to be upgraded because they have old or non-complying play equipment and basic amenity.
3. The upgrade of existing playground equipment is generally required due to non-conformance with Australian Safety Standards. The upgrades also attempt to rationalise the provision of play equipment with surrounding parks to provide a diverse network of play facilities that caters for each age group and a broad range of park users.
4. Reconciliation Park is a local park in George Street, Redfern and is approximately 1330 square metres in area. The site contains playground facilities that are in a deteriorating state. Planting in parts of the park has been undertaken by residents.
5. The park is designated as an on-leash area for dogs. Dogs are not permitted within 10 metres of playground equipment. The upgrade of the playground will not preclude dogs from the entire site.
6. A mural is painted on the wall of the adjoining property at 17 George Street. The mural received the Sir John Sulman Prize for paintings and murals in 1985. Temporary site fencing will be installed along the alignment of the mural to prevent items being leant against the mural or inadvertent impact damage during construction. The design for the park upgrade has considered the mural. It aims to provide a sympathetic design response, with upgraded facilities in the park.

## Concept Plan

7. The concept design phase of the project has set the overall layout and form of proposed playground and open space improvements. Detailed resolution of the arrangement, materials and finishes will be determined during documentation phase (refer Attachment A). The key design principles are:
  - (a) retain and enhance the existing informal park character;
  - (b) design an imaginative play space that encourages children to interact with the natural environment and be physically active;
  - (c) refurbish park furniture and facilities;
  - (d) use simple, robust and high quality materials;
  - (e) maintain sightlines and passive surveillance (visibility) to create open and safe open space;
  - (f) improve accessibility;
  - (g) meet resident needs identified in the consultation;

- (h) improve the park's environmental performance and sustainability; and
  - (i) meet the requirements of the Australian Standards.
8. Proposed works include the provision of a neighbourhood children's playground, new paths, furniture, planting and signage in order to provide a high quality public open space. The key elements include:
- (a) an extension of the playground and new equipment to provide for a variety of play activities;
  - (b) improved access and creation of a wider, more welcoming path from George Street;
  - (c) additional seating opportunities for social interaction and park enjoyment;
  - (d) a rain garden in the north western corner of the site to filter stormwater;
  - (e) a designated area for a future community garden should a garden group be formed;
  - (f) a lawn area for passive recreation;
  - (g) maintaining an area for dog walking;
  - (h) repaving the pathways with brick paving;
  - (i) creation of low walling within the park to edge the playground and provide informal seating;
  - (j) continuation of the existing low stone wall around the perimeter of the park; and
  - (k) additional shrub and tree plantings.

### **Developed Design**

9. In response to the items raised during public consultation on the concept plan, the developed design includes:
- (a) additional seats in the park;
  - (b) a refined layout for the future community garden; and
  - (c) low fencing around the future community garden.
10. The playground aims to provide a creative and physically challenging play space. The developed design will provide high quality public open space (refer Attachment A). The play elements include:
- (a) raised timber deck surrounding existing trees with curved slide tunnel and rope climbing tube;
  - (b) timber or stone animals for climbing;
  - (c) stilt balance challenge;

- (d) monkey bars with platforms;
- (e) basket swing; and
- (f) toddler swing.

### **Accessibility**

11. The City of Sydney's Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan 2007-2011 was adopted in March 2008. Council is committed to making its services and amenities accessible and 'barrier-free' to all residents, workers and visitors.
12. The design provides accessible routes and access to facilities within the park upgrade.

### **Tree Management**

13. A review of the existing trees has been undertaken with the City's Arborist. The following tree management is proposed as part of the works:
  - (a) the retention of 17 existing trees in the park;
  - (b) the removal of one Callistemon (Bottlebrush) on the George Street (western) boundary to enable widening of the entry path to improve sight lines, access to the park and general safety;
  - (c) the removal of three Casuarina located along the southern boundary (within the vicinity of the future community garden);
  - (d) the planting of two trees in the playground area; and
  - (e) the planting of new shrubs and ground covers throughout the park.
14. The removal of the nominated trees is recommended to improve pedestrian access, sight lines through the park and ambient light levels, within the context of the high number of existing trees and heavy shading of the park.
15. Other tree removals have been undertaken in the park, which are separate to this project. These include:
  - (a) the removal of one eucalyptus on the George Street boundary after a significant percentage of the tree canopy failed;
  - (b) the removal of one dead tree near the William Street boundary; and
  - (c) the removal of one dead Casuarina along the southern boundary.

### **Community Consultation to date**

16. In August 2012, consultation with students of Darlington Public School was undertaken to seek ideas for the new playground. The consultation identified the types of play equipment the children from the neighbourhood like best. This has informed the design of the playground and selection of proposed equipment.

17. The concept plan (refer Attachment B) was presented to the community at a drop-in session on-site on 9 March 2013. Letters advising of the consultation were distributed to local residents within a 500 metre radius of the site. The purpose of the consultation was to present the concept plan, seek input on how the community uses the park and views on how the park could be improved. City staff were also available to answer questions. Approximately 30 people attended the session (refer Attachment D).
18. The concept plan was also displayed on the City's website with a description of the project.
19. 25 submissions were received. Feedback from the consultation informed the design development of the proposal. A detailed response to the community consultation feedback forms and submissions has been undertaken (refer Attachment D).
20. In July 2013, a second round of community consultation was undertaken on the developed design. Notification included the distribution of letters and developed design plans to the residences in the Redfern area within a 500 metre radius of the site. Approximately 1,250 letters were distributed.
21. The developed design was also displayed on the City's website with a description of the project.
22. Council received four written community responses. Feedback from the consultation has indicated overall support for the proposals. A detailed response to community consultation has been undertaken (refer Attachment C).

## KEY IMPLICATIONS

### Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

23. *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 9 - Sustainable Development, Renewal and Design – the project will provide improved infrastructure for the public domain, encourage greater activation, provide improved landscape character and encourage the community to be involved in the process.
24. The City of Sydney Open Spaces and Recreational Needs Study 2007 establishes the provision and target age of all playgrounds within the Local Government Area. Reconciliation Park is identified as a neighbourhood scale playground that:
  - (a) caters for short length stays (30 minutes to 1 hour);
  - (b) is easily accessed by the local community (250 metre radius or 5 minutes' walk); and
  - (c) provides a basic range of equipment and play themes for children.

**Organisational Impact**

25. The upgrade will provide improved facilities and a more usable public open space. These higher value assets will require ongoing maintenance.

**Social / Cultural / Community**

26. The playground upgrade will provide facilities for structured and adventure play that meets the needs of the local community. The upgraded playground will be integrated into the informal park setting.
27. The community garden will provide a community-based educational environment that encourages social interaction between all ages.
28. The overall park upgrade will provide updated facilities and improved amenity, conducive to use by all in the local community.

**Economic**

29. The improved playground and park facilities are likely to attract local residents, which may assist the viability of local businesses, such as the nearby cafes and stores, by encouraging greater locally based activity.

**Environmental**

30. The upgrade of Reconciliation Park includes a range of environmentally sustainable elements to improve the environmental performance of the park. The key elements include:
  - (a) reuse of park furniture and building materials;
  - (b) cleaning stormwater in bio-filtration planting; and
  - (c) additional planting areas to increase biodiversity.

**BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

31. There are sufficient funds allocated to this project within the capital works budget 2013/14 and future years forward estimate.
32. The project budget and cost estimate for the upgrade is presented in detail in confidential Attachment E.

**RELEVANT LEGISLATION**

33. Attachment E 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 whom Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.
34. Following Council endorsement, an external planner will be engaged to assess the proposed works under Part 5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. An Environmental Impact Assessment will be carried out to ensure that all environmental impacts have been identified, assessed and, where required, action is identified to manage impacts.

**CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES**

35. The proposed program for the project is:
- |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| (a) Preparation of construction documentation | Aug - Nov 2013;     |
| (b) Tender for construction                   | Jan - Feb 2014; and |
| (c) Commence construction                     | April 2014.         |

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

36. Consultation undertaken on the project is outlined earlier in this report.
37. The outcome of the consultation with students from Darlington Public School was summarised in a report prepared by the Children's Play Expertise consultant engaged on the project. This report was placed on the City's website.
38. A summary of the consultation with the local community on the concept plan and developed design is included in Attachments C and D.
39. Prior to the commencement of construction, the local community will be notified by letterbox drop, and neighbouring properties will be door-knocked and provided with an updated program of works.

**MICHAEL LEYLAND**

Director City Projects and Property

Mark Brandon, Landscape Architect