

ITEM 8. HAROLD PARK NEW OPEN SPACE – PROJECT SCOPE**FILE NO: S111765****SUMMARY**

This report describes the design for the new public park as part of the redevelopment of the former Harold Park Paceway and Rozelle tram depot site (Harold Park).

The Harold Park site is on Wigram Road and The Crescent, Forest Lodge. The site is undergoing redevelopment, with 3.8 hectares of land to be dedicated to the City as a public park.

The public park will form part of the open space network within the Johnstons Creek Parklands. It is the next project guided by the Johnstons Creek Parklands Master Plan adopted by Council on 26 August 2013.

The new park provides an opportunity to create an important recreation, environmental and cultural asset and to expand the existing open space network around the Glebe Peninsula. The design creates a distinctive place, drawing on the existing setting, history of the site and ecological and recreation opportunities.

This report provides a summary of responses received during the two phases of community consultation and recommends a scope of work.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council endorse the project scope and refined design plan for the public park at Harold Park, as described in the subject report and shown in the drawings at Attachment B to the subject report, for progression to construction documentation and tender;
- (B) Council note the ongoing coordination between City Projects and City Planning in respect to managing interface works with the park embellishment and the Mirvac development;
- (C) Council note the estimated project costs as detailed in confidential Attachment F to the subject report; and
- (D) Financial Implications, Attachment F to the subject report, 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.

ATTACHMENTS**Attachment A:** Location Plan**Attachment B:** Refined Design Plan

Attachment C: Exhibition Panels – Developed Design

Attachment D: Summary of community feedback on the concept design

Attachment E: Summary of community feedback on the developed design

Attachment F: Financial Implications (Confidential)

(As Attachment F is confidential, it will be circulated separately from the agenda paper and to Councillors and relevant senior staff only.)

BACKGROUND

1. The City will receive 3.8 hectares for public open space as part of the redevelopment of the former Harold Park Paceway and Rozelle tram depot site (Harold Park). The redevelopment of Harold Park by Mirvac includes a residential neighbourhood with retail / commercial uses in the former Rozelle Tram Sheds (refer to Attachment A).
2. Ground remediation, earthworks, cliff stabilisation and essential infrastructure will be completed by Mirvac. In addition, the voluntary planning agreement requires the developer to provide approximately \$8.25M to the City towards the further embellishment of the park. The City will subsequently embellish the site for use as a public park.
3. Ongoing coordination is being undertaken with Mirvac on current site works, and proposals that interface with the future park.
4. On 26 August 2013, following extensive public consultation, Council adopted the Johnstons Creek Parklands Master Plan. The Master Plan includes the new public park at Harold Park and encompasses existing parkland areas of Bicentennial Park, Federal Park and Jubilee Park, as well as The Crescent and The Hill. The Master Plan set the basis for the City's design and implementation of the public park at Harold Park.
5. Exhibition of a concept plan for the new public park at Harold Park was undertaken in December 2013. Following community consultation on the concept design, a developed design was prepared and consultation on the developed design was carried out.
6. The process for the temporary classification of the public park is underway. Following Council approval in May, the park will be classified as operational land to enable the early staged construction of the open space as a public park, whilst still enabling Mirvac to complete construction works for adjacent sites. Following the completion of the public park and conclusion of obligations set out in the voluntary planning agreement, the open space will be classified as community land.
7. The design principles embedded in the Johnstons Creek Parklands Master Plan guide the design of the new public park. The key design principles include:
 - (a) enhance natural systems and include spaces for recreation, flora and habitat;
 - (b) provide a range of spaces for recreation, including places to sit, areas to meet and picnic, and children's play spaces;
 - (c) provide a large open space for structured recreation opportunities, suitable for casual ball games;
 - (d) harvest stormwater close to the source to improve the quality of water entering Johnstons Creek and Rozelle Bay and for storage and re-use in the park;
 - (e) provide a path network to link to existing and new neighbourhoods and existing parklands;
 - (f) create safe and clear pedestrian and bike riding connections through the park;

- (g) tell the story of past uses through integrated interpretation and public art; and
- (h) showcase the park's context and natural assets, including the heritage significant Tram Sheds and the cliff.

Refined Design Proposal

8. Following feedback on the concept design and developed design, further resolution of technical considerations and ongoing coordination of site works being undertaken by Mirvac, the developed design has been refined.
9. The new park is conceived as one part of larger parkland. The long linear parkland contains a series of lawn spaces, linked by areas of native planting and tree canopy. It is bounded by a significant cliff face along the eastern edge of the park and the new buildings along the western edge.
10. The design creates a distinctive place, a product of the site characteristics and responses that draw on the setting, the history of the place and ecological opportunities.
11. The key areas include:
 - (a) Ross Street Entry and Swale
 - (i) The gateway into the park at Ross Street and Wigram Road is created by a bridged crossing over the swale and an art work incorporating the semaphore board. The semaphore board is a celebrated relic from the former Harold Park Paceway.
 - (ii) The linear swale captures overflow from infrequent storm events and is planted with grasses, sedges and small shrubs. It creates an area for habitat and a buffer between the public park and the new dwellings.
 - (iii) The main link path for pedestrians and bike riders connects the new park to the existing parklands and surrounding neighbourhoods. The path width is generous for walking and riding and provides seating opportunities along the length.
 - (b) Cliff edge
 - (i) Informal pathways at the base of the cliff meander through pockets of native planting and a series of bioretention rain gardens for treating stormwater from adjacent catchments. The stepped platforms within the cliff are ideal for urban habitat.
 - (ii) The cliff edge provides a backdrop for the play area for young children. Inspired by the sandstone on the site, the play elements are placed within an arrangement of sandstone blocks, giving the impression they are carved from the cliff. The local scale play space includes fixed play elements of swings and a slide, low key water and sand play ideal for active and imaginative play.
 - (iii) Shade shelters, in close proximity to the play space, provide for informal group gatherings.

- (iv) A suspended walkway from Rock Lane stairs connects the park to the adjacent neighbourhood. At this entry, the lightweight structure offers a view over the park.
 - (c) Tram Sheds Precinct
 - (i) Located on the southern side of the Tram Sheds is a contemporary interpretation of the ornamental garden once in this location. A garden with a rich textural mix of plants, grass and pathways, it is structured on a pattern reminiscent of early 20th century pressed metal work.
 - (ii) Inspired by the original tram depot garden, the new Tram Sheds Garden will feature an artwork called the Rose. The artwork is an oversized element giving a sense of a larger than life world.
 - (iii) Above the garden, a pedestrian connection via Maxwell Road provides a high level view of the garden and park and connects the park with surrounding neighbourhoods. It serves as a landmark entry to the park and the precinct and a legible connection to the Light Rail station.
 - (iv) The water tank will sit at the highpoint of the walkway as a reference to the prior use of the Tram Sheds.
 - (v) The curtilage to the front of the Tram Sheds includes low shrubs and grasses, and stands of native trees placed to allow vistas to the Tram Sheds and across Johnstons Creek. This area extends and enriches the habitats in the parkland. A rain garden is part of a series that captures and cleans stormwater from neighbouring areas for reuse in the park for irrigation or released back into the stormwater system.
 - (vi) The path network and bridge over the canal provide links to the surrounding parkland.
 - (d) The Green
 - (i) The Green is the largest of the open lawn areas, levelled for informal ball games and surrounded with pockets of trees for shade.
12. The creation of this significant new open space will expand the existing open space network into an important recreational, environmental and cultural asset that will form a part of the connected open space network within the Johnstons Creek Parklands.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

13. Extensive community consultation was undertaken in the preparation of the Johnstons Creek Parklands Master Plan. Activities included community workshops, focus groups with key users and local residents, intercept surveys, online surveys and an online forum. The consultation provided information to inform the master plan, which sets the design brief for the new public park at Harold Park.

14. Two stages of community consultation have been conducted in the development of the design of the new public park at Harold Park:
 - (a) consultation on the concept design was held between 9 November and 1 December 2013; and
 - (b) Consultation on the developed design was held between 3 and 23 March 2014.
15. The following engagement activities were conducted:
 - (a) 17,800 letters sent to residents in Glebe, Forest Lodge, Camperdown and half of the Leichhardt Local Government Area, 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) a dedicated page on sydneyoursay.com.au with the Concept Plan and Developed Design Plan, display material and an online submissions form;
 - (c) 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;
 - (d) letters were sent to key stakeholders, including key staff of Leichhardt Council, the Mayor of Leichhardt 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;
 - (e) consultation material was displayed at the Glebe Neighbourhood Service Centre, the Annandale Neighbourhood Centre and Town Hall House One Stop Shop; and
 - (f) three drop-in sessions were held on 9 and 27 November 2013 and 3 March 2014 for the concept design and developed design. The concept design and developed design were presented via displays, and community members could ask questions of the project team and submit feedback.
16. Comprehensive reports on the outcomes of the consultation can be found at Attachments D and E.
17. The ideas, suggestions and concerns received from the community during the two exhibition periods helped to shape the refined design.
18. Key issues raised in community consultation now incorporated into the refined design include:
 - (a) conflict at the access roads to the Tram Sheds;
 - (b) areas of habitat;
 - (c) access for pedestrians and bike riders; and
 - (d) playground location.

19. The City's response to each of the key issues raised by the community are summarised below.
20. Conflict at the access roads to the Tram Sheds – a number of submissions expressed concern for potential conflict between vehicles entering the parkland to access the Tram Sheds. Suggestions were made around separating pedestrians and bike riders from vehicles and managing the risk of vehicles colliding with park users.
 - (a) Vehicular access to the Tram Sheds is subject to a Development Application prepared by Mirvac. Council resolved that consent be granted subject to conditions on 7 April 2014.
 - (b) All submissions received during the community consultation for the public park were also provided to Planning Assessments for consideration of the Tram Sheds Development Application prepared by Mirvac.
 - (c) The refined design considers the proposed vehicular access to the Tram Sheds and guides improvements, greater connectivity and integration for pedestrians and cyclists.
 - (d) In response to comments, the refined design proposes a separated pedestrian and cycle bridge across the canal located south of the existing road bridge. The bridge aligns with the proposed north / south link path through the new park. The form and final location will be subject to approvals from Sydney Water.
 - (e) Pedestrian crossings are proposed where the path intersects the road, giving pedestrian and bike riders priority along the connecting paths.
 - (f) The southern vehicular access to the Tram Sheds is a shared way for vehicles, pedestrians and bike riders, giving pedestrians and bike riders priority along the length. Signage and pavement material will signify the shared use.
 - (g) In addition, ongoing coordination and collaboration with Mirvac, specific to reviewing vehicle and pedestrian access through the parklands, will be undertaken. This work will include a review of proposals for complementary work in the existing parkland.
21. Areas of habitat – feedback received requested creation of functional habitat area along the cliff walk, creation of exclusion zones for habitat areas and retention of existing trees along the cliff.
 - (a) The refined design includes a range of opportunities for improved biodiversity, extending the habitat areas and corridors of the greater parkland. The park comprises a mosaic of open grass, larger native tree canopy, understory planting and grasses, rain gardens and cliff responding to the area's gully locale. The planting is diverse, and predominately native.

- (b) The cliff, planted swale and major rain garden provide key opportunities to create higher functioning habitat, responding to the localised ecology of these areas.
 - (i) The vast height of the cliff along the eastern edge of the park is made up of ledges, outcrops and platforms and is ideal for urban habitat out of reach from people and pets.
 - (ii) The linear swale along the western edge provides another key opportunity for habitat. The turf swale captures overflow from infrequent storm events. It will be enhanced with low shrubs and grasses, adding to habitat areas and creating privacy for the new residents.
 - (iii) The area between the Tram Sheds curtilage and canal will be planted with low shrubs and grasses and includes the largest rain garden in the system to increase flora and fauna habitats.
- (c) The design seeks to strike a balance between ecology, water treatment and recreation opportunity, reflecting the composite values in the parkland. Landscapes of ecological value will be a distinctive setting for recreation in this park, and access to some of these areas will allow people to enjoy, learn more about nature and provide the opportunity for community programs. Whilst the linear nature of the park creates some functional limitations to the habitat areas, it provides the opportunity for people to closely engage with the different ecologies as they move through the parkland.
- (d) In addition to the key habitat opportunities, the design incorporates buffer areas to form a transition between the higher functioning zones and areas of informal recreation:
 - (i) At the base of the cliff, a 'cliff walk' combines ecological values and recreation opportunities. Minor park paths meander past pockets of vegetation, including trees and understorey shrubs and rain gardens, in turn creating settings for play. The edge of the rain gardens separate planted areas from the walkways and gathering spaces.
 - (ii) Incidental opportunities for planting of low shrubs, grasses and sedges throughout the park encourage habitat for insects, small birds and lizards. They provide interest through the park and create a distinctive park character.
 - (iii) Native trees establish high level corridors through canopy to surrounding parklands for arboreal species.
- (e) In response to the community comments, the refined design includes additional areas for habitat that are inaccessible. The northern and southern sections of the swale will be contained by barriers such as fencing and balustrades. These areas offer approximately 1000 square metres of inaccessible habitat. Whilst pedestrian access is provided at key locations across the swale, the detailed design will control access to inhibit movement into the swale planting.

- (f) The existing trees on the cliff are subject to separate Development Applications and remediation works to the cliff prepared by Mirvac. The trees along the cliff line will be retained if they do not impact on the stabilisation of the cliff. The trees will be retained in the park design, and plans for succession planting of weed species or trees in poor condition will be prepared.
22. Access for pedestrian and bike riders – a number of submissions suggested paths needed to accommodate pedestrians and bike riders safely and to minimise conflict.
- (a) In response, in the refined design, the main north-south link path takes a less direct form than in the concept plan to slow speeds, and is wider allowing groups of pedestrians and bike riders to pass. It incorporates wider areas for seating and planting to integrate with the surrounding park elements.
23. Playground location – feedback was received on the concept design that the playground location was too close to residents at Ross Street. During the developed design consultation, some submissions raised concern that the playground was close to the new residential building. Some submissions requested water play to be included in the playground.
- (a) In response to the comments received from the Concept Design regarding the location, the Developed Design included the play space in a central location away from existing houses.
- (b) In response to comments on its location during exhibition on the Developed Design, the Refined Design has located the playground further toward the toe of the cliff. The playground is integrated with its surrounding setting of the cliff, associated meandering paths, and pockets of vegetation and rain gardens.
- (c) The Refined Design includes low scale water and sand play in the playground.
24. The City's response to additional issues raised by the community during the consultation are summarised below.
25. Shade structure location – several comments on the character and location of one shade structure were received.
- (a) The shade structures provide shelter for informal gatherings and picnics in close proximity to the play space and The Green (the open level lawn area for informal ball games). Their playful and architectural form and scale responds to the vast scale of the cliff, creating a unique element particular to the new park. The shelter's more generous scale provides additional gathering opportunities from the smaller picnic shelters located elsewhere in the parkland.
- (b) The shelters are located at key activity areas along the cliff edge, are well connected by the paths and sandstone terraces and will have good surveillance from park users and the new residential development. Further detailed design on the structures will be undertaken in the next stage of design.

26. War memorial – there was a request to salvage the soldier that once stood in the Tram Sheds garden and reinstate it into the new park.
- (a) The soldier is a First World War Memorial and was located in the Tram Depot garden. Memorials were a feature of Sydney's Tram Depots after the Great War. The memorial is currently located in the Leichhardt Bus Depot.
 - (b) In response, further investigation will be undertaken in consultation with Leichhardt Council and the RSL, to review its association with past and present depots and its significance to past and present workers.
 - (c) It will be considered in respect to the change in use of the Tram Sheds and Harold Park sites, and a recommendation made on either its relocation to the Harold Park site, or otherwise interpretation within the garden to acknowledge the role of the garden as a memorial setting.

Design Advisory Panel

27. The Design Advisory Panel was consulted on 18 March 2014 on the refined design. The main comments from the panel were:
- (a) additional trees to frame the park along the eastern boundary, providing a buffer to the residential development. This has been incorporated in the refined design; and
 - (b) further investigation of the detailing and design of the entry bridging element connecting to Maxwell Road. This will be subject to additional design work and will be addressed in the next stage of design. A revised design will be tabled with the Design Advisory Panel for further review.

Public Art Advisory Panel

28. Public art that interprets past stories of the site has been integrated in the park design. Working collaboratively, the landscape architect, architect and public artist have identified site specific opportunities and developed art work proposals for aspects of the park's design.
29. The proposals were discussed at the Public Art Advisory Panel meeting on 25 February 2014. Ongoing advice will be sought from the Public Art Advisory Panel as the public art proposals are refined.

Cliff edge

30. The area along the base of the existing cliff is subject to current site works, including final earthworks levels and stabilisation works to the cliff, being undertaken by Mirvac. This was noted in the community exhibition for the developed design.
31. As part of the ongoing coordination between Mirvac's site works and the park design, a vertical or near to vertical profile in this area along the base of cliff edge between Arcadia Road and Boyce Street has now been agreed. The new toe of the cliff will be close to the alignment of the existing cliff toe, providing additional space for the park elements along the cliff edge (which was depicted in the developed design) measuring up to eight metres in extra width to this long, linear parkland.

32. This confirmation has in turn enabled further development of the park design, finalising the location of the bioretention rain gardens, pockets of planting and associated pathways, play space and shelters. This is reflected in the refined design (refer to Attachment B).

Heritage Assessment

33. There are two existing heritage items adjacent to the park – the Tram Sheds and southern area of the cliff. The park design responds sensitively to their surroundings, retaining vistas from surrounding areas and providing settings to enhance their qualities, offering visitors to engage with these two unique elements.

Tree Management

34. Assessment of existing trees on the site is currently subject to Development Applications and cliff remediation studies prepared by Mirvac.
35. Following completion of Mirvac's works of ground remediation, earthworks and stabilisation and transfer of land, a detailed assessment and Tree Management Plan will be undertaken of all existing trees on site. It is anticipated the trees retained from the Development Application process will primarily be located along the existing cliff and the canal. The trees will be retained in the park design, and plans for succession planting of weed species or trees in poor condition will be prepared.
36. The new park includes numerous new native trees. The trees extend existing canopies in the surrounding parklands, provide shade and enhance vistas through the site to the cliff, Tram Sheds and park entries.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

37. *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 recreational opportunities for the neighbourhoods of Forest Lodge, Glebe and Annandale;
 - (b) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies – the new public park will be a setting for informal social activity;
 - (c) 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, highlights water that runs through the site as a connector of the parklands and improves stormwater quality. The project seeks to realise the community benefit of increased parkland and foreshore access.

Organisational Impact

38. 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; and
 - (b) the extension of shared paths will require the supporting social programs already in place along the foreshore parklands and in other parks.

Risks

39. The proposed embellishment of the swale and pedestrian bridges over the swale and Johnstons Canal will require owners consent approvals from Sydney Water. In principle approval has been received from Sydney Water, however final consents are subject to the results of the detailed flood modelling being undertaken.

Social / Cultural / Community

40. The proposals will enable greater and improved public use and enjoyment of a unique parkland through the provision of associated recreational opportunities and improved connections to the surrounding neighbourhoods.
41. The proposal includes opportunities to interpret the rich heritage and past uses and preserve and protect heritage items.

Environmental

42. The City is transforming 3.8 hectares to new parkland and, when combined with the existing and future parklands, will create up to 19 hectares of open space.
43. The proposal increases the habitat value of the parklands through new areas of planting, extended canopies and rain gardens. In particular, areas of native under storey planting and grasses will provide habitat for small birds and increase biodiversity.
44. The proposal improves water quality in the park, Johnstons Canal and that entering Rozelle Bay, through bioretention rain gardens and swale systems.
45. The design supports sustainable transport, such as walking, cycling and public transport by extending and improving path connections to and through the parkland and to key nodes of public transport.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

46. There are not sufficient funds allocated for the embellishment of the new public park at Harold Park in the City's 10 year Long Term Financial Plan. Additional funding is required to deliver the proposed project scope as detailed in the confidential Attachment F, which has been included in the draft 2014/15 capital works budget and future year's forward estimates.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

47. The activities related to this project fall under Part 4 and Part 5 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment (EP&A) Act. A Development Application will be submitted for specific items such as art work and a Review of Environmental Factors will be completed in accordance with the EP&A Act for the park.
48. Attachment F 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.
49. Procurement of consultants and contractors for this project will be in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993.
50. Harold Park Local Environment Plan 2010.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

51. The proposed program for the project is:

Milestone	Target Date
Design development completion and lodge approvals	June 2014
Tender period and approvals	July – November 2014
Construction period	end 2014 – mid 2016

52. The target dates are linked to the transfer of land and the completion of site remediation and essential service infrastructure by Mirvac. It is anticipated that these target dates will time well with Mirvac's target program.
53. A separate report has been submitted to the 5 May 2014 meeting of the Corporate, Finance, Properties and Tenders Committee, seeking endorsement of a proposed resolution to classify the land following the public notification period.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

54. Comprehensive reports on the outcomes of the consultation can be found at Attachments D and E. They include a summary of issues and suggestions raised by the community.
55. Development Applications will be lodged for specific items, such as art work, and community members will have further opportunity to comment on these items.
56. Further updates on the project, including construction notification, will be given via the following channels:
 - (a) updates on the sydneyoursay.com.au and City of Sydney web pages; and
 - (b) notifications sent to local residents, business owners and people who have made submissions on the concept design.

57. During construction, the selected contractor will be required to provide a community liaison officer on-site to assist all stakeholders with day-to-day operational construction related issues.

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