

ITEM 2. QUARRY GREEN UPGRADE ULTIMO – DEVELOPED CONCEPT DESIGN – PROJECT SCOPE**FILE NO: S116317****SUMMARY**

This report describes the proposed developed concept design and public consultation undertaken for the Quarry Green Upgrade project.

Concept plans have been developed for Quarry Green informed by the feedback received from the preliminary community consultation including stakeholder meetings, door-knocking and a community survey. The developed concept design was then placed on exhibition and a community drop-in session hosted in the park during July 2014.

During the exhibition period, 125 community members engaged with the design online, five left comments on the site's guest book and six emailed the City directly. 25 community members attended the drop-in session and another six engaged directly with City staff to provide feedback. Where possible, appropriate suggestions have been integrated into the Developed Concept Design.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that Council endorse the developed concept design as described in the subject report for the purpose of proceeding with seeking any relevant planning approvals and preparation of tender documentation for the works.

ATTACHMENTS**Attachment A:** Location Plan**Attachment B:** Community Consultation Boards and Developed Concept Plan**Attachment C:** Financial Implications (Confidential)

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

BACKGROUND

1. As part of City's vision to green our city through an ongoing program of park improvements, a Developed Concept Design has been prepared for Quarry Green, Ultimo.
2. Quarry Green is located on Quarry Street between Jones Street and Ada Place, Ultimo (refer Attachment A). In the early 1980s, a section of Quarry Street was closed to traffic to create the park. At approximately 2,740 square metres, Quarry Green is one of the larger open spaces in the area.
3. Quarry Green is one of four small parks within 250 to 500 metres or 5 to 10 minutes' walking distance of Darling Harbour and Tumbalong Park to the east and Wentworth Park to the west. The proposal has been developed considering the character and facilities in all the surrounding parks to ensure a network of complementary open spaces.
4. The park is bounded by two-storey residential terraces, Ultimo Uniting Church (formerly Presbyterian), the Lord Wolseley Hotel and three-storey residential apartments, all contributing activity to the park.
5. The park is an important thoroughfare and event space for local residents in Ultimo and Pyrmont and students of Ultimo Public School. Events such as the Ultimo Pyrmont Uptown festival, Chinese New Year celebrations, Second Hand Saturday and Christmas Carols are held in the park throughout the year.
6. Quarry Street sits within the Ultimo Heritage Conservation Area. The informal park is characterised by a mixture of mature exotic and native tree plantings, brick paths and grass areas.
7. Quarry Green is tired and in need of an upgrade. Some of the key issues include irregular and poorly articulated paths, small overshadowed and worn turf areas, a mixed palette of aging materials, poor park address at street interfaces and overplanting with mature trees.
8. An upgrade of the park has been requested by members of the Ultimo Village Voice, residents at the Harris Centre and Ultimo Community Centre and City staff since 2005.

THE DEVELOPED CONCEPT DESIGN

9. The purpose of the Developed Concept Plans (Attachment B) is to set the overall form and character for the park. Detailed arrangement and finishes will be resolved during design development. The key design principles are:
 - (a) retain and enhance the existing character of the park;
 - (b) improve accessibility (pedestrian paths and paved areas);
 - (c) increase usable green space (turf grass);
 - (d) improve solar access;
 - (e) improve passive surveillance (visibility) during the day and night;

- (f) provide opportunities for informal social activities and integrate facilities for community events (power); and
 - (g) improve the park's environmental performance and sustainability.
10. The Developed Concept Design improves circulation paths and defines four key areas within the park.

Pathways

11. The key improvements are:
- (a) a direct and generous east-west pedestrian path to better connect Quarry Green to Wentworth Park and Tumbalong Park in Darling Harbour;
 - (b) new link paths connecting the primary east-west path to the existing multistorey residential building entries;
 - (c) a narrowing of the northern path adjacent the two-storey residential terraces and introduction of low planting beneath the existing paperbark trees (*Melaleuca quinquinervia*) to create a green landscape buffer between the residential terraces and lawn areas; and
 - (d) an upgrade of brick pavements and furniture for a consistent palette of materials across the park for greater unity.

The Church lawn (Area 1)

12. The key improvements are:
- (a) the introduction of a raised brick plaza and tree planting at the eastern end of Quarry Green to extend the park, improve its eastern address, reducing the dominance of vehicle driveways while maintaining access to properties;
 - (b) extension of brick pavement outside cafes to Kirk Street; and
 - (c) reconfiguration of the lawn area, seating and relocation of the community noticeboard for information and events.

The Village Hub (Area 2) at Bulwara Road

13. The key improvements are:
- (a) a brick paved "urban square" with seating that extends across Bulwara Road to define the hub of key buildings, including the Lord Wolseley Hotel and Uniting Church;
 - (b) the introduction of a shared zone (10km/hr) at Bulwara Road where it intersects with Quarry Green, repaved in brick to link the open spaces and prioritise pedestrian movement (pending Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) approval);
 - (c) new trees to provide shade and distinguish the area as a park plaza rather than a street; and

- (d) integration of localised sandstone pavement seating clusters (combining existing and new seats) in response to the site's history.

The Green (Area 3)

14. The key design improvements are:

- (a) an enlarged central turf grass area through the selective removal of six trees to improve solar access for lawn growth and provide sufficient space for passive recreation and community events;
- (b) new power outlets to facilitate community events in the park; and
- (c) retention of the north facing grass embankment for lounging in the sun.

The Grove (Area 4)

15. The key design improvements are:

- (a) retention of the existing trees and some areas of existing planting beds;
- (b) upgrade to the western entry embankment planting, and removal of existing rockery to enhance the park address to Jones Street; and
- (c) introduction of a shaded seating area adjacent to 'The Green'.

Accessibility

- 16. The City of Sydney's Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan 2014-2017 outlines Council's commitment to making its services and amenities accessible and 'barrier-free' to all residents, workers and visitors.
- 17. The existing slope from Jones Street to Bulwara Road limits accessibility. To improve access and mobility, the paths include level rest points. The proposed seating areas also include sufficient room for wheelchair and mobility aids. The shared zone at Bulwara Road will provide a more generous, kerb-free crossing.

Heritage Assessment

- 18. A heritage overview study was prepared to provide an understanding of the site's history and inform the Developed Concept Design. The park design has taken into account this history and will integrate sandstone elements and interpretative signage.

Tree Management

- 19. An independent assessment of all park trees in Quarry Green was undertaken to inform the design, and the upgrade retains the majority of mature trees and informal park character. However, Quarry Green is over-planted in some areas, suppressing tree form, health and lifespan. Overplanting also crowds and overshadows lawn areas, reducing the useability of the park.
- 20. Removal of six casuarina trees is proposed to enable the creation of an enlarged open space lawn with sufficient solar access for passive recreation and community events.

21. The remaining 50 established park trees will be retained and protected, with 11 new trees to be planted as part of the works.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION PREVIOUSLY UNDERTAKEN

22. The consultation activities outlined below were conducted to develop and promote the Concept Design for Quarry Green.

Identifying Community Needs

23. The City organised stakeholder meetings between February and May 2014 to gauge general community sentiment, as well as to involve people who will be immediately impacted.
24. The City held stakeholder meetings with key organisations including: Ultimo Community Centre, Ian Thorpe Aquatic Centre, Ultimo Village Voice, Ultimo Uniting Church and the Lord Wolseley Hotel. This phase also included door-knocking 12 residents immediately adjacent the park in March this year.
25. Key considerations embedded in the concept design as a result include:
 - (a) ensuring the park remains a safe thoroughfare for locals;
 - (b) ensuring that ample places to sit and rest are provided;
 - (c) establishing means to encourage more community events in the park, such as site power;
 - (d) designing a multi-purpose park for all ages; and
 - (e) reviewing lighting.

Community Survey

26. A community survey was distributed to community members in the Ultimo/Pymont precincts between February and March 2014. The survey aimed to identify how the community currently uses Quarry Green, what they want to see in this space and how this upgrade could meet their needs.
27. The City worked with stakeholders in the area to distribute the survey, including Ultimo Community Centre, Harris Street Community Centre, The Ultimo Village Voice Community Group, the Fusion Friendship Multicultural Group, Ian Thorpe Aquatic Centre and the Ultimo Public School. An intercept survey was also undertaken in Quarry Green to capture ideas from the immediate neighbourhood. Surveys were also accessible digitally at the online consultation hub Sydneyyoursay.com.au.
28. 120 surveys were distributed to the community asking for feedback to inform a concept design. Fifteen survey responses were received.
29. Key considerations that have been embedded in the concept design as a result include: ensuring the pedestrian thoroughfare remains, encouraging social activities such as picnics, creating a place for quiet relaxation, increasing the amount of seating, increasing the amount of lighting, providing facilities for outdoor events and increasing the amount of lawn area.

Concept Design Public Exhibition

30. The concept design was placed on public exhibition for three weeks in early July 2014. A notification letter was distributed to 1,654 local properties and the designs were made available on the City's consultation hub Sydneyoursay.com.au.
31. A community drop-in session was also hosted on Saturday, 19 July 2014 at Quarry Green, Ultimo between 10am and 12pm. The drop-in session provided the community with an extra opportunity to view the concept plan and provide their feedback directly to City staff.
32. During the exhibition period, 125 community members engaged with the designs online and five left comments on the site's guestbook. 25 community members attended the drop-session and another six engaged directly with staff to provide feedback.
33. The key issues raised by the community are responded to below:

(a) Concern about the Removal of Trees

There are 56 trees within this medium-small park. Six trees will be removed to enable the creation of an enlarged central lawn space with enough sun penetration to sustain the lawn. 11 new trees will be planted providing additional shade, visual amenity, noise attenuation and habitat for wildlife in other locations.

(b) Proposed Walkways will impact on properties and encourage new activity

The path where properties face directly onto the park is to be narrowed to reflect it as a secondary route. New planting will act as a landscape buffer between residents and the park. The primary east-west pedestrian path runs along the southern edge of the park and aligns with the pedestrian crossing at Jones Street and connects to the footpath on Quarry Street.

(c) Proposed Shared Zone needs to ensure speed is limited

The shared zone will be detailed to ensure it is a self-enforcing slow speed environment as required to achieve the 10km/hr speed designation.

(d) Install CCTV cameras and more lighting.

Lighting will be upgraded with LED pole top lights installed to illuminate the primary east-west path. Street Safety CCTV camera locations are determined by NSW Police crime statistics. The City installs CCTV cameras in response to requests from the NSW Police to support their law enforcement efforts. The installation is a significant investment, and needs to be directed to areas of need. In the last review of crime statistics by the NSW Police, this site was not identified as a high risk of crime area, and therefore installation has not been requested nor is it considered warranted. CCTV cameras are not proposed for inclusion in the scope of this project.

- (e) Ensure new benches are not close to the pub and backpackers so they remain places for public use.

Seating is mainly located in Area 2 and grouped in clusters adjacent to the lawn areas. Low groundcover planting has been integrated around the seating to create a sense of separation from surrounding activities, including the Lord Wolseley Hotel.

- (f) Install a communal barbecue, tap / bubbler, more bins and bike racks.

Bubblers and bins are included in the concept design and bike racks will be incorporated in the developed design. Due to the close proximity of residents, and the noise impacts barbecues can generate late at night, it is not recommended to install these facilities. Barbecue facilities are nearby in Fig Lane Park and McKee Street Park and residents are able to use portable barbecues in the reserve.

- (g) Create garden beds where the community can share plants. Ensure all new plants are native.

Additional planting including trees and groundcovers have been proposed in the concept design. During design development a planting palette will be developed that incorporates native species. Due to the small size and layout of Quarry Green, it is not feasible to incorporate a community garden in this heavily shaded space without the removal of more trees. Other community gardens exist within the vicinity and can be located at McKee Street Park.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

34. *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 concept plan is aligned with the following strategic direction and objectives:

- (a) Direction 9 - Sustainable Development, Renewal and Design – responds to sustainability and environmental imperatives facing our cities. Actions under this direction aim to better capture the potential of streets, parks and squares in public life and improve design excellence in our buildings;
- (b) Objectives under this direction include defining and improving the City's streets, squares, parks and open space, and enhancing their role for pedestrians and in public life.

Risks

35. The proposed Shared Zone on Bulwara Road is pending RMS approval. The City has made a formal application to RMS for a Shared Zone on Bulwara Road within the vicinity of Quarry Green. A Traffic Management Plan was prepared and included plans and traffic counts (volume and speed) as part of the application. If approval is not granted, the road corridor will remain in its current condition and the remainder of the Quarry Green upgrade will be implemented.

Social / Cultural / Community

36. The upgrade of Quarry Green will better facilitate the opportunity to host community events by creating an enlarged central green and the addition of new power outlets. Community events include the Ultimo Pymont Festival (up to 4,000 people, stalls and closure of Bulwara Road), Chinese New Year celebrations (February), Secondhand Saturday (September) and Carols in the Park (December).
37. The upgrade will provide a direct and generous east-west pedestrian link, in addition to a shared zone at Bulwara Road where it intersects with Quarry Green, to improve pedestrian access and priority across the suburb.
38. Brick paving will extend from the park to Kirk Street in front of the existing cafes to create an improved setting for outdoor dining and activation.

Environmental

39. The project integrates sustainability initiatives to improve the environmental performance of the park. The key elements include:
 - (a) re-use of brick pavers and park furniture;
 - (b) additional tree plantings and removal of impermeable paving around trees;
 - (c) diverting stormwater run-off into garden beds (passive irrigation); and
 - (d) new low energy lights.

Economic

40. The park upgrade will improve amenity and may contribute to local business patronage to the Church, Lord Wolseley Hotel and cafes near Kirk Street.
41. The park upgrade will maintain existing vehicle driveways and loading zones. Local businesses have been consulted and support the proposal.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

42. There is sufficient funding allocated in the 2014/15 capital works budget and future years forward estimates to complete the design of the Quarry Green Upgrade.
43. A preliminary cost summary has been prepared for the project (refer confidential Attachment C). Construction funding will be from the 2014/15 and 2015/16 financial years.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

44. Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979 (Part 4 and 5). After design development is completed, the scope of works will be reviewed by a statutory planner to determine requirements for the project under the EP&A Act. Some of the proposed works may not require planning approval and may be exempt development.
45. Procurement of consultants and contractors for this project will be in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993.

46. Attachment C contains confidential information which, if disclosed, would confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.
47. Discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest because it would compromise Council's ability to negotiate fairly and commercially to achieve the best outcome for its ratepayers.
48. NSW Roads Act 1993 for road related approvals (shared zone).

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

49. The program for the project is:
 - (a) Design Development August to September 2014;
 - (b) Documentation September to December 2014;
 - (c) Tender phase January 2015 to April 2015; and
 - (d) Construction May to October 2015.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION TO BE UNDERTAKEN

50. Once the concept design is adopted and construction plans are completed, the community will be notified by emails to survey participants, a monthly newsletter from Sydneyyoursay.com.au and community noticeboard updates.
51. Statutory notification periods and exhibition will be undertaken as part of any required planning approvals process.
52. During the construction phase, the following activities will take place to keep the community updated:
 - (a) letters to residents informing them of the commencement and details of construction;
 - (b) updated webpage;
 - (c) hoarding signs placed on-site; and
 - (d) appointment of a community liaison officer.

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