

ITEM 5. SCOPING – OBSERVATORY HILL PARK AMENITIES**FILE NO: S121892****SUMMARY**

This report outlines the project scope for a new park amenities building at Observatory Hill Park, Millers Point.

Observatory Hill Park is a significant heritage park that attracts large numbers of users and visitors throughout the year, including local residents, city workers and tourists, and is a popular location for weddings and group events.

There are currently no amenity facilities within the park. The provision of amenities was recommended in the Harbour Village North Public Domain Study 2012 and City of Sydney Public Toilet Strategy 2014.

A proposal for amenities facilities has been developed, based on a standardised park toilet study. The standardised park toilet study was undertaken in response to comments made by the Design Advisory Panel, which advocated a standardised approach to park amenities buildings. The proposal aims to provide a simple, elegant, robust facility that provides for the specific demands of park users within the smallest provision and footprint possible. This will not only minimise visual impact, but maximise visual permeability and safety in its park location.

The amenities are proposed to be located in the north-east corner of the park, between the harbour bridge cycle path off ramp and the stairs that access the harbour bridge pedestrian walkway. While the proposed amenities are located central to and visible from the main use areas of the park, they are positioned discreetly enough out of the main park curtilage so as not to be visually dominant in this significant heritage location.

It is intended that the Observatory Hill Park Amenities will form the basis of a more standardised park toilet design that can be used throughout the City's parks and open spaces.

It is recommended that this scope form the basis for design development, development application, construction documentation and tender for construction.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) approve the project scope for the Observatory Hill Park Amenities as described in the subject report for the purpose of proceeding with design development, any relevant planning approvals, documentation and tender for construction works; and
- (B) note the financial implications detailed in confidential Attachment C to the subject report.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Schematic Design Presentation

Attachment B: Park Toilet Standardisation Study – Summary Recommendations

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

Site

1. Observatory Hill Park is an iconic and historic park located in Millers Point, with expansive views to Sydney Harbour. It covers an area of approximately 2 hectares. The park is Crown Land and the City of Sydney is Trustee under the Crown Lands Act. The park is located within the Millers Point and Dawes Point village precinct listing on the NSW State Heritage Register.
2. Observatory Hill Park attracts significant numbers of users and visitors throughout the year, including local residents, city workers and tourists, and is a popular location for weddings, photographs and group events.
3. There are currently no amenity facilities within the park. The nearest facilities are located at the bottom of Watson Road, adjacent Argyle Street. This is a significant incline and distance from the park.

Project Overview

4. The need for toilet provision in Observatory Hill Park was identified in the Harbour Village North Public Domain Study endorsed by Council in May 2012. Extensive community consultation and public exhibition for the study was undertaken during 2011.
5. The provision of amenities in Observatory Hill Park was also identified in the City of Sydney Public Toilet Strategy 2014.
6. In early 2015, tenders were undertaken for architects for the amenities building. Panovscott Architects were appointed in May 2015. A concept design for the amenities was developed and presented to the Design Advisory Panel in August 2015.
7. The Design Advisory Panel recommended that a simple standardised park toilet design be investigated for the City's parks, rather than individual designs in each instance, with the objective that they become more recessive elements.
8. A Working Group was formed to undertake a Park Toilet Standardisation Study, comprising representatives from relevant City business units including City Projects and Properties, City Greening and Leisure, City Planning and City Design and Strategy.
9. The Park Toilet Standardisation Study draws from research and analysis of park toilets recently delivered in the City of Sydney local government area, as well as a range of other benchmarks (Attachment B). The aim of the study was to propose a facility approach that included:
 - (a) Quality;
 - (b) Sustainability;
 - (c) Efficiency;
 - (d) Consistency;

- (e) Fitness for Purpose;
 - (f) Value for Money;
 - (g) Simplicity and Flexibility; and
 - (h) Confidence in the robustness of construction and parts to ensure lifecycle efficiency.
10. The study proposed standardisation in three areas:
- (a) Provision – the number and configuration of facilities based on standardised units. The units comprise:
 - (i) accessible single unisex module;
 - (ii) ambulant single module;
 - (iii) external shared basin; and
 - (iv) unifying canopy;

The basic module starts with a single accessible unit, with additional ambulant units added to support the required total. Various configurations will be considered to accommodate specific site variables and characteristics.
 - (b) Interior Elements – standardised interior fittings, fixtures and finishes covering over 35 elements; and
 - (c) Exterior Finishes – standardised exterior fittings, fixtures and finishes.
- The finishes proposed are hygienic, robust, easily maintained and cost efficient.

PROJECT SCOPE FOR OBSERVATORY HILL PARK AMENITIES

11. The objectives for the Observatory Hill Park amenities are to:
- (a) provide a simple, elegant, robust facility that provides for the specific demands of park users within the smallest provision and footprint possible;
 - (b) located central to the main use areas and visible to main use areas, but discreetly enough not to be dominant in this significant heritage location; and
 - (c) minimise footprint and built volume to not only minimise visual impact, but to maximise visual permeability and safety in its park location.
12. The amenity structure has been located to the northeast of the park, adjacent the Cumberland Street underpass (Attachment A). This site is adjacent to the main park thoroughfares, particularly routes to the Harbour Bridge and Cumberland Street and down to Argyle Street, as well as adjacent to the proposed Harbour Bridge cycle route. It is out of the main park curtilage, but is visible and accessible from most park areas.

13. The proposed provision is based on the Park Toilet Standardisation Study and includes:
 - (a) one unisex accessible toilet cubicle;
 - (b) two ambulant toilet cubicles (either male and female, or two unisex);
 - (c) separate hand wash facility; and
 - (d) coffee cart storage.
14. It is proposed feedback and monitoring of the Observatory Hill Park amenities will inform the development and elements of subsequent City of Sydney park facilities, including new projects, upgrades and maintenance works.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

15. *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 new amenities will provide facilities to encourage walking and cycling in both the immediate locality, as well as the greater surrounds due to the proximity of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to the park.
 - (b) Direction 5 - A Lively and Engaging City Centre – the new amenities will facilitate greater use of the park, further activating an already popular location.
 - (c) Direction 9 - Sustainable Development, Renewal and Design – this project will address environmental targets listed in the City's Environmental Management Plan and *Sustainable Sydney 2030* vision.

Organisational Impact

16. The City's contract maintenance service provider will be responsible for the daily maintenance requirements of the building and facilities. The City's park maintenance team will be responsible for the surrounding greenspace.

Risks

17. Heritage – Observatory Hill Park is State heritage listed. Regular consultation will be undertaken with the City's heritage specialists and the Heritage Council of NSW.
18. Site conditions – site surveys have been undertaken to locate existing site services and ground conditions.

Social / Cultural / Community

19. The amenities provide accessible toilet facilities in a popular location that currently lacks accessible toilet facilities.

Environmental

20. The City aims to maximise environmental performance. This project will:
- (a) use low embodied energy materials where possible;
 - (b) minimise energy usage through natural ventilation, natural daylighting and sensor lighting, and minimise water consumption through efficient sanitary fixtures; and
 - (c) improve waste management during the construction process.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

21. There are sufficient funds in the current year capital budget and future year's forward estimate for proceeding with the recommended project scope. Current cost estimates and financial implications are detailed in confidential Attachment C.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

22. Work, Health and Safety Act 2011.
23. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.
24. Attachment C is confidential 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. Discussion of the contents of Attachment C 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.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

25. Current program dates are:
- | | | |
|-----|--|---------------|
| (a) | Commence Detailed Design and Development Application Documentation | Nov 2016; |
| (b) | Lodge Development Application | Jan 2017; |
| (c) | Construction Tender | Apr 2017; |
| (d) | Commence Construction | Jul 2017; and |
| (e) | Complete Construction | Dec 2017. |

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

26. Consultation has been undertaken with the City's heritage planners and will continue to be undertaken with key stakeholders, including the Heritage Council of NSW, the National Trust and local resident groups, during the design development of the facilities.
27. An Integrated Development Application will be required for the works, including referral and approval from the Heritage Council of NSW.

28. Statutory notification periods and public exhibition will be undertaken as part of the development application process.

Design Advisory Panel

29. The siting and concept design was presented to the Design Advisory Panel on 18 August 2015. The Panel recommended:
- (a) the amenity building should be small, discrete and recessive;
 - (b) to reduce roof structure bulk; and
 - (c) consider a standardised approach using a 'kit of parts' or components where a limited number of elements are assembled in response to various site conditions.
30. The recommendations of the Park Toilet Standardisation Study and revised Observatory Hill Park amenities concept design will be presented to the Design Advisory Panel on 8 November 2016.

AMIT CHANAN

Director City Projects and Property

Matthew Gribben, Specialist Design Manager (Architecture)