

### Item 3.3

#### Improvement Works Kings Cross

File No: S051491

#### Minute by the Lord Mayor

To Council:

The City East precinct has played an important role in our city's history. The precinct includes Potts Point, Kings Cross, Elizabeth Bay, Rushcutters Bay, Woolloomooloo, East Sydney and Darlinghurst. It covers some of the most diverse and densely populated areas in Australia.

I've represented this area since 1988 as the Member for Bligh/Sydney and as Lord Mayor since 2004.

The vast majority of people live in apartments and so the public domain, open space, parks and playgrounds in the area are critical. They are essential green lungs - spaces where people who live and work can meet, walk their pets, watch their children play, garden, play sport or simply enjoy the solitude of a quiet corner. Also important are the community spaces we provide such as our libraries and creative and cultural facilities.

Since 2004, the City has invested over \$70 million in the City East precinct on a range of projects including:

- a major refurbishment of Kings Cross Library and Neighbourhood Service Centre which included moving the facilities to the heart of Kings Cross on Darlinghurst Road;
- the revitalisation of Darlinghurst Road with footpath widening, new pavements, lighting, street furniture and street trees;
- upgrades to Beare Park and Kings Cross Rotary Park in Elizabeth Bay;
- the creation of the Bourke Street separated bike path from Woolloomooloo to Redfern;
- major renewal of Rushcutters Bay Park which included more open space and trees, a new kiosk and facilities, revitalised tennis courts and a restored grandstand and Reg Bartley Oval;
- the restoration of the Lankelly Place lights (completely rewired with LED) followed by increased opportunities for outdoor dining;
- the opening of Hayes Theatre in the former Reg Murphy Hall. It is now recognised nationally as an exciting home for musical theatre and cabaret;
- the expansion of King Cross library with additional computers and community space;
- the start of the Create Spaces program in the City's Oxford Street and William Street properties, providing opportunities for innovative start-up businesses, creative enterprises and artists;

- the restoration of El Alamein Fountain in Fitzroy Gardens;
- the adoption of the City's OPEN Sydney strategy for Sydney's night-time economy;
- a major renovation of the Baptist Tabernacle which is now the Eternity Playhouse;
- a major renewal of the playground in Fitzroy Gardens;
- the creation of the East Sydney Early Learning Centre on Bourke St;
- a refurbishment of the Juanita Nielsen Community Centre, including updated gymnasium, outdoor childcare space, and a mural in honour of Juanita Nielson;
- the opening of the East Sydney Community and Arts Centre opened with an exciting upgrade in the adjoining reserve;
- upgrade to footpaths and new seating and street trees in Burton Street to link the East Sydney Community and Arts Centre with Eternity Playhouse; and
- an urban design study guided by community consultation to plan for the future of Darlinghurst Road and protect its character, heritage and amenity.

In 2010, the City released concept plans for a major upgrade of Fitzroy Gardens and Lawrence Hargrave Reserve. The plans were developed after two years of public consultation. During that consultation, 74 per cent of public submissions supported the new concept plans, however, after a strong local campaign further consultation showed that the community was divided.

Council therefore resolved to only undertake heritage and maintenance work and other upgrades which included:

- restoration of the El Alamein Fountain and establishment of its heritage curtilage;
- improved lighting and seating;
- new shrubs and floral displays in both Fitzroy Gardens and Lawrence Hargrave Reserve;
- painting of the Police Station façade;
- renewal of the playground; and
- regular living colour displays.

The City has also recently begun work to upgrade the Fitzroy Gardens toilets and that project is due to be completed this financial year.

In May this year, the City approved the establishment of a community garden in a section of Lawrence Hargrave Reserve. Work on the garden is expected to start in October this year.

The community garden group has informed me that they have developed other designs for the rest of the Reserve. I would like to take this opportunity to look at the group's proposal and propose that staff consult the community in the preparation of a concept plan.

I have also been approached by residents asking for other improvements to the area. After discussions with the community and with staff over the last month it is clear that some new work in the area is required including streetscape upgrades, new paving, tree plantings, new bins and seating and a reduction of redundant street signage.

This is work that is routinely undertaken by the City, however, I propose we respond to the suggestions and concerns raised recently by the community and request staff to bring forward a package of works for the area.

### **Recommendation**

It is resolved that Council request the Chief Executive Officer to:

- (A) work with the community to prepare a plan to upgrade Lawrence Hargreaves Reserve in conjunction with the establishment of the new community garden; and
- (B) develop a package of public domain works to respond to the issues identified in this Minute.

### **COUNCILLOR CLOVER MOORE**

Lord Mayor