

Project Scope - Shannon Reserve Playground Upgrade

File No: X011048.003

Summary

This report outlines the proposed scope for the renewal of the Shannon Reserve Playground and associated works. As part of the ongoing small parks and playgrounds improvement program, Shannon Reserve Playground, located at 450 Crown Street, Surry Hills, has been identified for renewal.

Following initial consultation with Bourke Street Public School, a concept plan was presented to the community on 22 September 2018 and exhibited on the City's website. Community feedback was broadly in support of the proposal, with community suggestions incorporated into the concept where possible. These included maximising park area by removing redundant paths and consolidating the playground footprint, additional shade tree planting, seating and bubbler / water station provision.

The proposal includes a new play structure, swing set and nature play area, primarily for the six month to eight year age group. The play areas are consolidated into 'pods' to minimise softfall area, and redundant paths removed to maximise the park grass area. Low fencing is provided to the play areas in response to community requests. A new perimeter path allows greater accessible park access and provides more seating opportunity.

The proposal has been developed with consideration of the local area play provisions for young children to teenagers within 500 metres, including Ward Park, Arthur Street Park, Moore Park West and the new Wimbo Park.

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) endorse the scope of work for improvements to Shannon Reserve Playground, as described in the subject report and shown in the concept design at Attachment C to the subject report, for progression to design development and preparation of construction documentation; and
- (B) note the estimated project forecast re-phasing as outlined in Confidential Attachment D to the subject report.

Attachments

- Attachment A.** Location Plan
- Attachment B.** Community Consultation Plans
- Attachment C.** Concept Design
- Attachment D.** Financial Implications (Confidential)

Background

1. The City has an ongoing small parks and playgrounds improvement program for parks that are in need of upgrade or enhancement works to renew play equipment and provide appropriate facilities for local residents.
2. Shannon Reserve Playground was identified for an upgrade because its play equipment has reached end of asset life and does not meet current standards.
3. Shannon Reserve is a local park fronting Crown Street, Surry Hills. The park is approximately 2,600 square metres and is characterised by mature Eastern Cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*) tree planting, open grass, paths, and a paved square to the south. A playground located at the eastern side of the park fronting Richards Lane provides a climbing frame with a ramp, slide, bridge and adjacent swing. The park is also used by the Surry Hills Markets, held on the first Saturday of each month.
4. The existing play equipment caters for a younger age group (six months to eight years) and is well used. The continued provision for this age group was widely nominated and supported in community feedback.
5. The play provision and layout has been developed with the input of a childrens play specialist. Consideration has been given to the provision of play equipment in surrounding parks within a 500 metre radius, to ensure a coordinated network of facilities that caters for a broad range of park users and age groups including:
 - (a) Ward Park - older children with adventure play, ball hoop and skate bowl;
 - (b) Arthur Street Park - pocket play with climbing, cubby and see saw; and
 - (c) Moore Park West - older children with climbing and large circuit path for cycling.
6. The playground upgrade will provide equipment that conforms to Australian Standards and increase the range of play opportunities within the park.
7. The concept design sets the overall layout and form of the proposed playground improvements. The key principles are to:
 - (a) enhance the existing open grass park character by consolidating the play equipment footprint and rationalising park paths;
 - (b) provide an imaginative play space that encourages play for children aged six months to eight years to interact with the natural environment and be physically active;
 - (c) provide enclosure to the play spaces; and
 - (d) improve accessibility to the play area and the park generally by rationalising park paths and provide more seating opportunities.

8. The proposed works include:
 - (a) The provision of new fenced children's playground 'pods'. The playground will remain in its current location to take advantage of the shade trees and retain the open lawn areas for unstructured play. The two play areas - play structure and swing group - are set within their own 'pod' areas to minimise the extent of softfall and maximise the park grass setting.
 - (b) Rationalisation of park circulation, including:
 - (i) new perimeter paths with seating and modifications to the wall between park and paved plaza to facilitate perimeter circulation and reduce cross park paths;
 - (ii) removal of the central path through the lawn area;
 - (iii) new accessible entry to paved plaza from Crown Street; and
 - (iv) closure of the adjacent park entry onto Richards Lane adjacent to the playground to improve safety.
 - (c) The play areas are enclosed with low fences and planting.
 - (d) New seating, shade tree planting, bubbler / water station and playground signage.
9. The play elements include:
 - (a) A play structure with:
 - (i) high and low raised climbing platforms with various ropes, ladders, steps and slides;
 - (ii) climbing net and 'wobbly' bridge;
 - (iii) cubby house;
 - (iv) climbing poles; and
 - (v) speaking tubes;
 - (b) an adjacent nature play area with timber logs and boulders for balancing and climbing; and
 - (c) an area with three new swings, including basket and toddler swings.
10. The play equipment and play areas have been designed for all abilities and to be inclusive, allowing access to a variety of play experiences.

11. The following tree management is proposed as part of the playground works:
 - (a) the removal of one Cottonwood tree (*Populus deltoides*) within the playground, which is deemed to be of poor health;
 - (b) the planting of one new deciduous tree adjacent to the playground; and
 - (c) the planting of new shrubs and ground covers along the playground boundary.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision

12. 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 plan is aligned with the following strategic direction and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 9 - Sustainable Development, Renewal and Design - the project will provide new open space infrastructure for the public, supporting family recreation activity in an improved landscape setting.
13. The City of Sydney Draft Open Space, Sports and Recreation Needs Study 2016 provides a series of directions and recommendations for future planning, provision, development and management of public open space and recreation facilities within the City of Sydney.
14. The strategy notes, with the growing population, the need to improve the quality and capacity of our open space through:
 - (a) recreational facilities improvements;
 - (b) provision of new facilities and amenities to encourage social interaction;
 - (c) improved layout, legibility and circulation, and increased public safety;
 - (d) achievement of greater aesthetic appeal; and
 - (e) promotion of quality park facilities to support the increased density within the City, encourage healthy lifestyles and support local ecology.

Organisational Impact

15. The upgrade will provide improved playground facilities. These higher value assets will require ongoing maintenance.

Social / Cultural / Community

16. The project will provide updated playground facilities that are conducive to use by all in the local community, encouraging healthy activity and social interaction. The playground is also located adjacent to the Surry Hills Library and Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre.

Options

23. No action taken - this option is not recommended as the existing playground and equipment exceeds its asset life (approximately 20 years) and does not comply with current playground standards.
24. Replace the playground in its current location in accordance with the asset renewal brief and as recommended in this subject report.

Public Consultation

25. Consultation for Ideas and Suggestions was held at the Surry Hills Market from 6 to 22 February 2016. The community had an opportunity to make suggestions on the park's upgrade. The community's feedback helped inform the brief for the park / playground design.
26. Key feedback included requests for:
 - (a) overall playground improvements and additional swings;
 - (b) a fence and gates to the new playground;
 - (c) improved shade;
 - (d) additional seating; and
 - (e) retention of the paved courtyard.
27. On 4 July 2018, a workshop was held with the children of Bourke Street Public School. City staff and specialist playground consultants worked with a class of year three children to explore types of play they enjoyed and what play equipment they would like to see in the Shannon Reserve Playground.
28. The results of the consultation noted that children like a wide variety of experiences on the play equipment, as well as opportunities to engage with nature, animals, friends, family and the community.
29. The findings indicated that boys especially like a balance of equipment, active play and sport. Girls like a balance of play equipment experiences, community interaction, electronic interaction and learning experiences.
30. The feedback from the consultation identified a number of key play themes across both boys and girls:
 - (a) nature play;
 - (b) climbing;
 - (c) swinging;
 - (d) being with family and friends;
 - (e) jumping;

- (f) being in a cubby;
 - (g) balancing;
 - (h) waterplay;
 - (i) monkey bars;
 - (j) discovering;
 - (k) sliding;
 - (l) spinning; and
 - (m) sand play.
31. The concept design was on exhibition from 22 September to 29 October 2018. Twenty submissions were received via Survey Monkey, with the majority supporting the design of the playground for young children. Submissions were also positive about enclosing the playground, additional trees, plants and the play equipment proposed.
32. The public exhibition for the concept design involved:
- (a) a letter sent to 127 local residents about the concept plans inviting them to attend the drop in session at the Surry Hills Festival in Ward Park 22 September 2018;
 - (b) stakeholder email sent to key stakeholders, inviting them to give feedback on the proposal. The email was sent to:
 - (i) Nichols Street Community Group;
 - (ii) Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre;
 - (iii) Surry Hills Library; and
 - (iv) Bourke Street Public School.
 - (c) a webpage on SydneyYourSay showing the plans for consultation from 22 September to 29 October 2018. Four hundred and twenty-three individual users viewed the page and 80 users downloaded the plans;
 - (d) a community drop in session was held at the Surry Hills Festival in Ward Park on Saturday 22 September 2018; and
 - (e) displays of the design were available in Shannon Reserve Park between 11 and 29 October 2018.

33. Key feedback included:
- (a) playground equipment preferences included: swings, big slide, wobbly bridge, cubby house and climbing net;
 - (b) seven submissions requested additional shade from the sun (through additional planting of trees or shade cloth);
 - (c) four submissions requested more plants and trees;
 - (d) two submissions requested equipment for older kids;
 - (e) two submissions requested a water fountain / tap to fill up water bottles;
 - (f) two submissions made positive references to the newly opened Elizabeth McCrae playground;
 - (g) two submissions requested a sandpit; and
 - (h) open areas for active play.
34. In response to this consultation, the concept was refined to include:
- (a) additional trees to provide shade to the playground and seating areas;
 - (b) additional climbing pieces for older children;
 - (c) a bubbler/water station;
 - (d) additional perimeter path and seating on the western side of the park to allow improved access to the playground and paved courtyard;
 - (e) increase park areas and provision for more unstructured play by removal of two paths; and
 - (f) accessible entry to the paved courtyard from Crown Street.

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