

## **Project Scope - Fig Lane Park Playground Upgrade, Ultimo**

**File No: X019498**

### **Summary**

This report outlines the proposed scope of works for the upgrade of Fig Lane Park Playground located at Fig Lane Park, Ultimo. Fig Lane Park Playground has been identified as part of the small parks and playgrounds improvement program.

The project brief is to refurbish the playground area, replace end of life equipment and soft-fall, increase the range of play experiences for children of different ages and abilities and improve the range of seating.

Concept plans were presented to the community between 17 May and 14 June 2019 and exhibited on the City's website.

Community feedback was broadly in support of the proposal with community suggestions incorporated into the Final Concept Design. These include retaining the existing fence arrangement, provision of play equipment to challenge older children, inclusion of a double swing set and additional shade.

The key principles of the proposal are to protect and enhance the existing landscape character, renew the playground to provide a local scale play space which maximises play opportunities for children 0-11+, provide an accessible route in and around the playground, provide a range of seating opportunities that encourage social interaction, and use simple, robust, high quality, materials which reflect the local neighbourhood character.

## Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) endorse the scope of work for improvements to Fig Lane Park Playground as described in the subject report and shown in the final concept plan at Attachment B to the subject report, for the progression to relevant approvals, preparation of construction documentation, tender and construction; and
- (B) note the estimated project forecast and that additional funding is required to complete the project as outlined in Confidential Attachment E to the subject report.

## Attachments

- Attachment A.** Location Plan and Existing Site Photos
- Attachment B.** Final Concept Plan
- Attachment C.** Consultation Concept Plan
- Attachment D.** Engagement Feedback Table
- Attachment E.** 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, replacement of end of life equipment, and to provide appropriate facilities for local residents.
2. Fig Lane Park Playground is located in the north-eastern corner of Fig Lane Park which is bounded by Upper Fig Street, Jones Street, Fig Lane and Bulwarra Road, Ultimo.
3. Fig Lane Park Playground was identified for an upgrade due to the playground's overall condition, including non-compliant soft-fall surfacing and equipment, the limited range of play experiences, poor integration of different ages or abilities and limited seating opportunities. No broader park works are proposed.
4. Fig Lane Park was established in 1996. Prior to the establishment of Fig Lane Park the site had been used for storage and car parking.
5. The original 1996 design for the park was developed by Clouston Associates on behalf of the City with significant collaboration with the local community. The existing layout reflects this design with the park divided into four quarters, each with a different programme, and a raised oval grass area at the centre. Key views over Pymont are established from this park on the viewing platform and on the lawn mound. The existing playground was established as part of this design.
6. The existing play equipment includes a rocker, a toddler play structure with slide, tower, steering wheel and play-board, and an older child's play structure with similar components. There is a limited range of play experiences with a clear absence of dynamic, sensory or manipulative play types.
7. The existing patterned soft-fall area is failing. Seating within the play area is limited. The toddler play zone is enclosed by a faded purple pool fence.
8. There is no shade structure, however shade is provided by a semi-mature stand of Spotted Gum *Corymbia maculata* to the north eastern corner.
9. The existing planting in the play area consists of flowering hedges which provide a sense of seasonal change and act as a barrier to the edge of the playground.
10. 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.

## Final Concept Plan

11. A concept plan was developed for the works and community consultation undertaken (refer to Attachment C).
12. Following consultation, feedback from the community has been incorporated into the Final Concept Plan (refer to Attachment B).

13. The Final Concept Plan sets the overall layout. The key principles are:
  - (a) protect and enhance the existing landscape character including existing trees and planting;
  - (b) renew the playground to provide a local scale play space which maximises play opportunities for children 0-11+;
  - (c) provide an accessible route in and around the playground;
  - (d) provide a range of seating opportunities that encourage social interaction; and
  - (e) use simple, robust, high quality, materials which reflect the local neighbourhood character.
  
14. The proposal includes the following works:
  - (a) new play structure for older children (4-12);
  - (b) new double swing set with one swing for toddlers, and one swing for all ages;
  - (c) new play structure for younger children (1-6) within a fenced area;
  - (d) new soft-fall across the play areas. Soft fall areas will be minimised and colours muted;
  - (e) new and additional backed seating within the play areas;
  - (f) new nature play areas; and
  - (g) new shade structure to the toddler area.
  
15. Entry from Bulwarra Road and circulation in and around the play area will be accessible. In response to community feedback, the following amendments have been incorporated in to the Final Concept Design:
  - (a) maintenance of fencing to the toddler play area and keeping the main play area for older children open;
  - (b) provision of shade for the toddler play area and additional tree planting;
  - (c) more provision for older children and adult fitness as provided by the existing monkey bars; and
  - (d) provision of swings.

16. The following tree management and planting is proposed as part of the park works:
  - (a) retain and protect all existing trees;
  - (b) new tree planting within the play area;
  - (c) preparation of an Arboriculture Impact Assessment to inform the detailed design and ensure appropriate construction methodology when installing equipment and soft-fall;
  - (d) retain existing flowering hedge planting in play area; and
  - (e) new infill groundcover planting to the playground area to provide both habitat and sensory experience.
17. The scope of the works is limited to the current playground extent. No other works are proposed outside this extent. The existing planting, turf, walling and public art will be retained.
18. A Development Application will be lodged for the shade structure and a review of Environmental Factors will be prepared the remaining park upgrade in accordance with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

## Key Implications

### Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision

19. 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 report is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
  - (a) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies - this project will provide an improved open space infrastructure which meets the needs of a wide variety of user groups and provides opportunities for social interaction.
  - (b) Direction 9 - Sustainable Development, Renewal and Design - this project is part of a wider program of renewal of small parks across the city; it will provide an improved quality of open space infrastructure.

### Organisational Impact

20. This upgrade will provide an improved play experience and amenity for children, their carers, and other community members visiting the park. The replacement of the non-compliant assets represents a removal / mitigation of risk to the City. The assets will require ongoing maintenance.

### Risks

21. Risks to not implementing the scope of these works is potential failure of play infrastructure and risk to the community.

**Social / Cultural / Community**

22. The playground within the Fig Lane Park is used by a range of community members including local pre-schoolers, school aged children and members of the community for play, for dog walking, as well as both passive and more active recreation such as yoga.
23. The park itself is a well-loved community asset which was established as a result of strong community action. Residents are passionate about the park and the upgrade represents an investment in this community, providing opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to use the park alongside each other.

**Environmental**

24. Protection and enhancement of the existing planting through this works is in line with the Urban Ecology Strategic Action Plan.

**Budget Implications**

25. There are insufficient funds allocated for this project in the current year capital budget and future year forward estimates. Cost estimates and financial implications are detailed in Confidential Attachment E.

**Relevant Legislation**

26. Attachment E to the subject report contains confidential commercial information which, if disclosed, would:
  - (a) confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business; and
  - (b) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.
27. 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.
28. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.
29. State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007.
30. Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012.
31. Local Government Act 1993 - under the Act, a council's charter is to provide adequate, equitable and appropriate services and facilities for the community and to ensure that those services and facilities are managed efficiently and effectively.
32. Disability Discrimination Act 1992 - the City has a responsibility to ensure, as far as practicable, that people with disabilities have the same rights to access services and facilities.
33. Companion Animals Act 1998 No 87 - Division 1 Section 13 - Responsibilities while dogs are in public places.

### Critical Dates / Time Frames

34. Current Program Dates:

- Community Consultation May 2019
- Council Approval of Concept Design August 2019
- Complete Design September 2019
- Tender Preparation September 2019
- Construction start Early 2020
- Construction duration 24 weeks

### Options

35. Proceed with progression of proposed improvement works as outlined in this subject report to relevant approvals, preparation of construction documentation, tender and construction.
36. No action taken - this option is not recommended as the existing park has a number of associated risks and compliance issues with regard to access.

### Public Consultation

37. Consultation was undertaken as a two-part process: pre-consultation / early engagement and public consultation / exhibition.
38. A pre-consultation notification letter / email was issued to the following local stakeholders to notify them of the project and provide a link to a pre-consultation survey. There were 15 responses to the pre-consultation survey:
- (a) FACS - Jenny Wilson;
  - (b) Council of Ultimo/Pymont Associations; and
  - (c) Ultimo Village Voice.
39. The concept design was on exhibition from 17 May to 14 June 2019. Twenty-eight submissions were received, including 21 via Survey Monkey and seven via the Sydney Your Say email address, with the majority in support of the proposed works.
40. The public consultation / exhibition involved the following:
- (a) a letter sent to 1,600 local residents about the concept design and inviting them to provide feedback;

- (b) a stakeholder email sent to key stakeholders, inviting them to give feedback on the proposal. The email was sent to:
    - (i) FACS - Jenny Wilson;
    - (ii) Council of Ultimo/Pymont Associations; and
    - (iii) Ultimo Village Voice;
  - (c) a webpage on SydneyYourSay showing the plans for consultation from 17 May to 14 June 2019. One hundred and fifty-nine individual users viewed the page and 29 users downloaded the plans;
  - (d) three (3) Have Your Say A2 panels installed in the park notifying park users of the proposed works, providing contact details of the Design Manager and a web address to the SydneyYourSay page; and
  - (e) following feedback received during the Public Consultation, two stakeholder meetings were held onsite with the community on Monday 17 June 2019. The first was with teachers and 10 students from KU Ultimo Children's Centre and the second was with 12 members of the community, including members of Ultimo Voice.
41. Overall, there was concern that the proposed works would affect the wider park rather than the existing playground. The design team met with the community to clarify the scope and address some of the concerns raised below.
42. There were four key areas of comments including: layout; play equipment elements and experiences; planting; and comment around the consultation process. These have been addressed specifically in the Engagement Feedback Table (refer to attachment D).
43. Key Feedback included:
- (a) There were six instances of feedback in support of the existing fencing, as it provides a fully enclosed fenced area for the toddler play structure, and allows for the north-east corner to remain as an open area for access and for a range of activities, consistent with the original design.
  - (b) Two submissions requested consideration of shade structure.
  - (c) Submissions from students at the KU Children's Centre, as well as the SYS Survey, provided feedback on the proposed equipment with a clear preference for swings, a nature play element, opportunities for imaginative play, and climbing activities such as monkey bars or a rock-climbing wall.
  - (d) Nine submissions requested provision of equipment which was suitable for older children or adults which provided opportunities for fitness, strengthening and climbing, such as monkey bars or fixed fitness equipment.
  - (e) Three submissions referred to planting and / or trees.

44. The stakeholder meeting highlighted that there is a strong sense of ownership of the park and its original design intent, that a variety of groups use the park and playground for a range of functions, and that the planting and landscaping generally is valued by the community.
45. In response to this consultation, the following have been incorporated into the Final Concept Plan (refer to attachment B):
- (a) review of the fence alignment to ensure the toddler area is enclosed fully and the open character of the north-eastern entry is retained. Final fence alignments respond to the updated play equipment offering;
  - (b) provision of a double swing set with one adult swing and one bucket swing incorporated;
  - (c) provision of one structure for older children which includes monkey bar elements and climbing activities;
  - (d) provision of one structure for younger children which includes slides, some climbing elements and imaginative play such as a shop-front and steering wheel; and
  - (e) provision of a shade structure over the toddler play area.

**AMIT CHANAN**

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