

Project Scope - Strickland Park Upgrade

File No: X019464

Summary

This report outlines the proposed scope of works for the upgrade of Strickland Park and Playground, located in Chippendale. Strickland Park Playground has been identified as part of the small parks and playgrounds improvement program.

The project brief is to provide a safe and welcoming park with recreational opportunities for everyone to enjoy. This includes providing better views and access within the park, providing an improved local play experience for children and creating a flexible park with plenty of seating and green character.

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 to be incorporated into the detailed design where possible.

The key principles of the upgrade comprise the protection and enhancement of the existing trees and park character, creating more accessible entries to the park, providing improved play experiences for local children, and increasing seating.

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) endorse the scope of work for improvements to Strickland Park, as described in the subject report and shown in the Final Concept Plan as Attachment B to the subject report, for progression to preparation of relevant approvals, construction documentation, tender and construction; and
- (B) note the estimated project forecast as outlined in Confidential Attachment D to the subject report. Additional funding is sought from the transfer and bringing forward of funds from the Parks general Capital Works forward estimates to cover the shortfall.

Attachments

Attachment A. Location Plan

Attachment B. Concept Design and Public Consultation Panel

Attachment C. Engagement Feedback Table

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, replacement of end of life equipment, and to provide appropriate facilities for local residents.
2. Strickland Park is bound by Bartley Street, Balfour Street and Bartley Lane in Chippendale. It sits at the end of a row of heritage terraces, bound on its western edge by the property wall of the private residence at 12 Bartley Street.
3. Strickland Park was identified for a general upgrade due to the overall condition of the playground, including non-compliant elements, a limited range of play experiences, poor integration of play that caters to varying ages and needs, and limited seating, access and passive recreation opportunities within the park.
4. The current playground consists of a rocker, a play structure with slide, tower lookout, and climbing panel. There is also a double swing set which includes a bucket swing. The playground sits in green soft fall with decomposed granite surrounds.
5. The playground is partially fenced, and bordered by a neighbouring terrace to the west and a tall hedge to Bartley Lane on the northern edge. There is a bench seat within the fenced playground area, and two additional bench seats in the broader park.
6. There are no shade structures, however, the park sits below a canopy of established Plane Trees, two of which are listed on the City's significant trees register.
7. The sandstone elements will be retained.
8. 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.

Concept Plan

9. A concept plan was developed for the works and community consultation undertaken (refer to Attachment C).
10. The Concept Plan sets the overall layout. The key principles are:
 - (a) protecting and enhancing the existing mature trees;
 - (b) creating better access and sightlines within the park;
 - (c) providing an improved local play experience for children; and
 - (d) creating a flexible surrounding park with seating.

11. The proposal includes the following works:
 - (a) play area:
 - (i) new play structure for ages 3-8;
 - (ii) new basket swing;
 - (iii) new nature play elements in sensory planting;
 - (iv) new brick seating wall inside and outside fenced playground area; and
 - (v) new soft-fall pavement; and
 - (b) general works:
 - (i) new low playground fence with gates;
 - (ii) new and increased seating in the park;
 - (iii) new picnic area; and
 - (iv) retention of existing sandstone edging, pillars and walls.
12. The play area will be accessible.
13. A Review of Environmental Factors (REF) will be prepared for the park in accordance with the Environmental Planning Assessment Act (1979). The REF will determine any additional approvals required.
14. In response to community feedback, as outlined in the subject report, the following amendments will be incorporated into the Final Concept Design:
 - (a) more seating, including looking at alternate seating arrangements; and
 - (b) more natural elements.
15. The following tree management and planting are proposed as part of the park works:
 - (a) retain and protect all existing trees;
 - (b) new planting to increased garden areas;
 - (c) screening planting to the neighbouring property; and
 - (d) tall hedge at Bartley Lane to be replaced with low planting.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision

16. 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 directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies - The proposal will provide greater and improved public use and enjoyment of the park and playground, through the provision of new play equipment and experiences, and plenty of seating.
 - (b) Direction 9 - Sustainable Development, Renewal and Design - The proposal incorporates increased planting to permeable garden areas, supporting ecology and opportunities for habitat, while retaining and protecting the existing mature Plane Trees.

Organisational Impact

17. 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

18. There is a risk associated with demolition and construction works in close proximity to the established root zones of the mature Plane Trees. An external arborist consultant has been engaged to review the impacts and provide advice for tree management, which will guide the construction and maintenance of the park.

Social / Cultural / Community

19. The park and playground will be an improved setting for informal social activity. They will provide outdoor passive and recreational spaces at a neighbourhood scale for children living nearby, as well as residents and workers in the area.

Environmental

20. The proposal retains the established Plane Trees on the site, and enhances the habitat value of the parklands through increased areas of planting.
21. Protection and enhancement of the existing planting is in line with the Urban Ecology Strategic Action Plan.

Budget Implications

22. There are insufficient funds allocated in the current year capital budget and future year forward estimates. Cost estimates and financial implications are detailed in Confidential Attachment D.

Relevant Legislation

23. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act).
24. State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007.
25. Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012.
26. Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) - 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. Attachment D 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. 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.
29. Companion Animals Act 1998 No 87 - Division 1 Section13 - Responsibilities while dogs are in public places.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

30. Current Program Dates:

- Community Consultation May 2019
- Council Approval of Concept Design August 2019
- Complete Final Design August 2019
- Tender Phase Late 2019
- Construction start Early 2020
- Construction duration 18 weeks

Options

31. No Action - this option is not recommended as the existing play equipment has a number of associated risks and compliance issues.
32. Improvement works undertaken - recommended in accordance with the asset renewal brief and as recommended in this subject report.

Public Consultation

33. Consultation was undertaken as a two-part process, comprising pre-consultation, and public consultation and exhibition.
34. 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 no responses to the pre-consultation survey:
 - (a) Chippendale Resident's Interest Group;
 - (b) Sustainable Chippendale; and
 - (c) the resident immediately adjacent the park.
35. City staff met with the adjacent resident on site.
36. The concept design was on exhibition from 17 May to 14 June 2019. Activities included online engagement, 483 letters to residents, on site project signage in the park, and face-to-face engagement at a pop-up session in the park.
37. The Sydney Your Say webpage exhibited the plans for consultation. This was an opportunity for the community to provide feedback on the proposed design.
 - 159 individual users viewed the page and 29 users downloaded the plans;
 - 28 submissions were received; and
 - the majority of responses were in support of the proposed works, with some providing specific suggestions for further refinement of the design.
38. The Community Consultation report is included at Attachment C. It contains feedback, concerns and suggestions raised by the community during consultation. The feedback and refined concept design will be incorporated into a Review of Environmental Factors for the project, and addressed in the design moving forward.

39. Some specific suggestions included additional play elements suitable for babies and young children, more lighting installed, and a mural on the neighbouring property wall. A summary table of key feedback comments, and how the proposal will respond, is included at Attachment C.

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