

Project Scope - Kings Lane Reserve Upgrade, Darlinghurst

File No: X019564

Summary

This report outlines the proposed scope of works for the upgrade of Kings Lane Reserve located between Thomson Street and Bourke Street, Darlinghurst. Kings Lane Reserve has been identified for renewal as part of the small parks and playgrounds improvement program.

The project brief is to upgrade the reserve including replacement of the existing sandstone wall on Bourke Street.

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. Some community suggestions to be investigated during detailed design include additional garden beds and a refinement of stair alignment.

The key principles of the proposal are to improve safety, views, and access and amenity within the lane by creating legible and welcoming entries, increasing sightlines, removing trip hazards and using 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 Kings Lane Reserve as described in the subject report and shown in the concept design 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 as outlined in Confidential Attachment D to the subject report.

Attachments

- Attachment A.** Location Plan and Existing Site Photos
- Attachment B.** Consultation Concept Plan
- 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. Kings Lane runs east west from Riley Street to Thomson Street. The reserve sits at the eastern portion (from Bourke Street), functioning as a pedestrian laneway. The lane rises to the east via a set of sandstone steps.
3. Kings Lane Reserve was identified for an upgrade due to its overall condition, including rectification / replacement of an existing sandstone wall to the Bourke Street entry affected by adjacent tree roots.
4. Kings Lane Reserve is defined as a street section, however, it functions as a public reserve, and is maintained by the Parks Team.
5. There are three pedestrian entries to the adjacent properties on the northern boundary from the lane; these entries provide access for rubbish bin collection from the adjacent streets.
6. The Darlinghurst substation is located to the south of the site (264 Bourke Street, Darlinghurst). This sub-station is scheduled to be decommissioned; works in the reserve have been scheduled by Ausgrid over the next two years. There are 15-16 direct laid 11000V cables within the lane. It is estimated that they have 600-750mm cover and may have implications for the final works, levels and wall design.
7. The Reserve is narrow, approximately 6.5 metres wide and 38 metres long. There are 13 trees including *Casuarina cunninghamiana* (7), *Melaleuca quinquenervia* (2), *Harpullia pendula* (2), *Eucalyptus moluccana* (1) and *Ficus benjamina* (1). Low light levels and the current tree species has resulted in poor survival rates of understorey planting.
8. The existing materiality of the lane is characterised by sandstone edging to garden beds, a rough sandstone wall at the Bourke Street entry, sandstone stairs and concrete unit paving.
9. Kings Lane has for a long time been associated with anti-social behaviour including injecting drug use. Poor sightlines, low level of lighting and poor passive surveillance have contributed to this. There is a sharps bin located within the lane.

Concept Plan

10. A concept plan was developed for the works and community consultation undertaken (refer to Attachment B).
11. The Concept Plan sets the overall layout. The key principles are:
 - (a) improve safety, views, access and amenity within the lane;
 - (b) create legible and welcoming entries;
 - (c) increase sightlines into the lane;
 - (d) remove trip hazards to improve accessibility and permeability through the lane; and

- (e) use simple, robust, high quality, materials which reflect the local neighbourhood character.
12. The proposal includes the following works:
- (a) new sandstone clad retaining wall on Bourke Street entry to replace existing unsound wall approximately 1-1.5 metres high;
 - (b) new and wider sandstone clad stairs, including provision of handrails and lighting from Bourke Street;
 - (c) new concrete paving to match the existing paving;
 - (d) rectified paving and edging to remove trip hazards; and
 - (e) new robust planting throughout the garden beds.
13. In response to community feedback, as outlined in the subject report, the following will be investigated during Detailed Design:
- (a) reduction of proposed pavement extents to maximise planting areas at the Thompson Street Area;
 - (b) refinement of alignment of stairs at Bourke Street entry to adjacent property; and
 - (c) review of the fence condition.
14. The following tree management and planting is proposed as part of the park works:
- (a) the removal of two *Melaleuca quinquenervia* (Broad leaved paperbark) and two *Casuarina cunninghamiana* (River she oak). These trees are recommended / required to be removed due to the structural impacts on the existing sandstone wall and the proposed alignment of the new pavement and new wall;
 - (b) replacement tree planting is not recommended due to the existing site constraints; and
 - (c) the planting of new ground covers throughout the reserve.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision

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 plan is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
- (a) Direction 4 - A City for Walking and Cycling - upgrade to the lane is part of providing a safe and attractive walking network.
 - (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 pedestrian access connecting to an existing laneway network.

Organisational Impact

16. This upgrade works will provide improved amenity and safety in for pedestrians along an existing pedestrian route. The rectification / replacement of both the walls and paths of failed assets represent a removal / mitigation of risk to the City. The assets will require ongoing maintenance.

Risks

17. Risks to not implementing the scope of these works is potential failure of infrastructure and risk to the community.
18. Significant electrical infrastructure is located within the reserve. Existing information is currently limited to Dial Before You Dig information. Additional on-site investigations will be undertaken during detailed design to confirm location of infrastructure and determine an appropriate detail design and construction methodology.

Environmental

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

Budget Implications

20. There are sufficient funds in the current year capital budget and future year forward estimates to deliver the project. Current cost estimates and financial implications are detailed in Confidential Attachment D.

Relevant Legislation

21. 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.
22. 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.
23. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.
24. State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007.
25. Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012.
26. 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.

Public Consultation

32. The concept design was on exhibition from 17 May to 14 June 2019. Fourteen submissions were received, including 11 via Survey Monkey and three via the Sydney Your Say email address, with the majority in support of the proposed works.
33. The public consultation / exhibition involved the following:
 - (a) a letter / email sent to 281 local residents about the concept design and inviting them to provide feedback;
 - (b) a webpage on SydneyYourSay showing the plans for consultation from 17 May to 14 June 2019. 130 individual users viewed the page and twenty users downloaded the plans;
 - (c) two 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
 - (d) members of the project team met with two residents of an adjoining property to discuss current conditions and issues and impacts of the proposed design.
34. Overall there was strong support for the proposed works; there was acknowledgment that the current condition of the lane is poor which discourages its use.
35. Key feedback included:
 - (a) there was repeated feedback in favour of additional tree removal. This was raised in reference to the leaf drop associated with the casuarina trees (four submissions) and the opportunity for additional light within the lane (three submissions);
 - (b) one submission requested no trees were removed;
 - (c) one submission requested the fence on the property boundary be reviewed;
 - (d) one submission requested that the alignment of the stairs be reviewed due to proximity to the adjacent property and potential impact on privacy;
 - (e) a number of submissions provided comment around the planting and potential to provide edible plants or native plants for habitat. There was a request for educational signage about the plant species;
 - (f) one submission requested additional lighting;
 - (g) one submission requested the path be widened;
 - (h) one submission requested additional garden beds provided at Thomson Street entry rather than extended hardstand;
 - (i) one submission requested the provision of a street library;
 - (j) one submission suggested there was opportunity for a public art installation; and
 - (k) one submission suggested that the pedestrian access be removed and that the reserve should function as a breeze way.

36. In response to this consultation, the following is proposed to be investigated as part of the detailed design phase:
- (a) reduction of proposed pavement extents to maximise planting areas at the Thompson Street Area;
 - (b) refinement of alignment of stairs at Bourke Street entry to adjacent property; and
 - (c) review of the fence condition.

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