

Project Scope - Minogue Crescent Reserve Upgrade, Forest Lodge

File No: X025396

Summary

This report outlines the proposed scope of works for the whole park upgrade at Minogue Crescent Reserve, Forest Lodge. Minogue Crescent Reserve has been identified as part of the Stage 15 small parks and playgrounds improvement program.

There are three landowners which make up the site: Sydney Water, Land and Housing Corporation and the City of Sydney.

The project brief is to refurbish the play area including: replace end of life equipment and soft-fall as required, provide a range of play experiences, improve access into and through the park, improve the function of the existing turf areas, and provide additional seating and associated landscape improvements.

Draft concept plans were presented to the community between 20 July 2020 and 24 August 2020, and exhibited on the City's website. The proposed works were generally supported by the community and the responses highlighted that an upgrade to this park would increase the current use of this park.

The principles of the proposal are to protect and enhance the existing landscape character and habitat planting, provide a local scale play space which improves the play opportunities for children aged 0-10, provide a useable turf area, provide a range of seating opportunities which encourage social interaction and use simple, robust, high quality materials which reflect the local neighbourhood character.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council endorse the scope of work improvements to the park and playground at Minogue Crescent Reserve, Forest Lodge, as described in the subject report and shown in the Revised Concept Plan as Attachment B to the subject report, for progression to relevant approvals, preparation of construction documentation, noting tender and construction pending favourable resolution of a signed agreement with the Land and Housing Corporation;
- (B) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to liaise with the Land and Housing Corporation and Sydney Water to reach agreement on the use of land before any works commence; and
- (C) Council note the estimated project forecast as outlined in Confidential Attachment D to the subject report.

Attachments

- Attachment A.** Location Plan and Site Photos
- Attachment B.** Concept Plan
- Attachment C.** Engagement Report
- Attachment D.** Financial Implications (Confidential)

Background

1. The City has an ongoing small parks and playgrounds improvement program. This program is for parks which need upgrade or enhancement works, the replacement of end-of-life equipment, and to generally provide appropriate facilities for local residents.
2. Minogue Crescent Reserve is a triangular piece of land which is bound to the west by Minogue Crescent, to the north by the Johnston's Creek Sewage Aqueduct (State Heritage Listed) and to the south by public housing. It is zoned RE1 - Public Recreation. The site is approximately 1,900 square metres.
3. There are three landowners which make up the site: Sydney Water, Land and Housing Corporation and the City of Sydney. Refer to Attachment A.
4. The area that includes Minogue Crescent Reserve is within the traditional homelands of the Gadigal and Wangal people, two of the 29 clan groups of the Sydney metropolitan area that are collectively referred to as the Eora Nation.
5. An Indigenous Cultural Consultant has been engaged as part of this upgrade process, to ensure the project contributes to recognising the City's Indigenous heritage, celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in the public domain, and enriching local knowledge about the cultural landscape.
6. Minogue Crescent Reserve was established in the late 1980's as part of the adjacent public housing development. Immediately prior to this the site had been part of the construction company AW Edwards offices/sheds.
7. The existing site is predominantly a sloped turf area. There are a random range of trees of different ages and species. The play area consists of a large sloping rubber pad with a double swing and a small play structure. There are two non-compliant seats, no path access from the road and a single flood light.
8. Minogue Crescent Reserve was identified for an upgrade due to the overall condition of the reserve including the condition of the existing playground, the limited access into and through the park and limited seating. Currently there are two key user groups: residents at the adjacent public housing units and individuals or groups associated with the Police and Citizens Youth Club.
9. 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.
10. The site is nominated as a Priority Habitat site under the Urban Ecology Strategy. There is currently a series of garden beds on the southern edge of the reserve which are bush restoration sites managed by the City.

Draft Concept Plan

11. A concept plan was developed for the works and community consultation was undertaken (refer to Attachment B).

The concept plan sets the overall layout. The key principles are:

- (a) protect and enhance the existing landscape character and habitat provision;
 - (b) provide a local scale play space which improves the play opportunities for local children;
 - (c) provide a range of seating opportunities which encourage social interaction; and
 - (d) use simple, robust, high quality materials which reflect the local neighbourhood character.
12. The proposal includes the following works:
- (a) a new on-grade path connecting from the street, through the park and towards the Police and Citizens Youth Club;
 - (b) an open lawn area for passive recreation and informal ball games;
 - (c) a range of seating in both sun and shade, including a low seating wall and new bench seats with backs and arm-rests;
 - (d) a new basket swing;
 - (e) a new hill slide and nature play area;
 - (f) new tree planting;
 - (g) new planted swale to manage site stormwater;
 - (h) extension of the existing habitat planting;
 - (i) improved access to the adjacent public housing units; and
 - (j) footpath widening on Minogue Crescent.
13. An Indigenous Cultural Consultant has been engaged as part of this upgrade process to undertake Indigenous community engagement and institution/organisational consultation. In addition, the consultant has produced a 'Narratives' report, which broadly identifies project opportunities for the integration of Indigenous themes and narratives.
14. The themes and narratives for Minogue Crescent Reserve which were raised include:
- (a) natural features of the place and its broader connections to the Johnston's Creek through drainage lines and pathways; and
 - (b) association of freshwater with women and women's business, birthing and medicines, fishing and coming together.

15. The engagement process highlighted that stakeholders were interested in seeing the demonstration of culture in the design of the parks. This was predominantly expressed through a desire to see Aboriginal themed inclusions in the design such as artwork, language and native plants.
16. As part of the next stage of the upgrade, the consultant will review how the key themes and narratives should be implemented into the project design and delivery.
17. In response to the public consultation, the following will be investigated and incorporated where possible in the detailed design as noted on Attachment B:
 - (a) provision of a traditional swing in addition to the proposed nest swing;
 - (b) a bin and bubbler with dog bowl will be provided;
 - (c) a lighting design will be prepared as part of the detailed design and will reflect the City of Sydney Lights Code requirements for park lighting; and
 - (d) shade modelling will be undertaken for the site, with the final equipment and seating location to reflect this analysis.
18. The following tree management and planting is proposed as part of the park works:
 - (a) retain and protect all existing trees and planting within the existing bush restoration area;
 - (b) relocation of five small *Liriodendron tulipifera* trees to accommodate the works;
 - (c) eleven additional trees to be planted across the site; and
 - (d) preparation of an Aborigicultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan to inform the detailed design and ensure appropriate construction methodology.
19. A Review of Environmental Factors (REF) will be lodged for the works in accordance with the Environmental Planning Assessment Act 1979 and the State Environmental Planning Policy Infrastructure 2007.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

20. 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 wider program of ongoing renewal of small parks across the local government area; it will improve the quality of open space infrastructure.

Organisational Impact

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

Risks

22. Risks related to land ownership: the area of land which makes up the site has three landowners, Sydney Water (includes aqueduct), Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) and the City of Sydney. No formal agreement / care and control management with landowners is currently in place to manage these areas. A licence is currently being pursued by the City to ensure the appropriate license agreements are in place and notification/approvals have been sought from both Sydney Water and the Land and Housing Corporation. At this stage in principle support has been provided by Sydney Water.
23. Risks related to the provision of appropriate lighting levels to paths which currently connect through the site to the adjacent Land and Housing Corporation site. Lighting installation and maintenance will be coordinated with the Land and Housing Corporation to ensure appropriate provision of lighting levels.
24. Risks related to tree maintenance currently maintained by the City includes trees located within the Sydney Water and Land and Housing Corporation sites. No formal agreement / care and control management with landowners is currently in place to manage these areas.
25. Risks of not implementing the scope of these works include potential failure of play infrastructure and risk to the community. Daily inspections are carried out by the City as per standard parks and playground maintenance operations.
26. Risks of not implementing this scope of works could result in failure to meet community expectations.

Social / Cultural / Community

27. Minogue Crescent Reserve is part of a significant network of well-loved pocket parks and larger parks located within the Glebe/Forest Lodge/Annandale area. It is co-located with the Police and Citizens Youth Club. Improving the amenity and play offering within the park represents an investment in this community, providing opportunities for people of different ages and abilities to use the park alongside each other.
28. An Indigenous Cultural Consultant has been engaged as part of this upgrade process, to ensure that the project contributes to recognising the City's Indigenous heritage, celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in the public domain, and enriching local knowledge about the cultural landscape.

Environmental

29. Minogue Crescent Reserve is nominated as 'Priority Habitat Site'. It is part of a series of connected habitat areas which extend from the Glebe Foreshore Walk East to Orphan School Creek. Protection and enhancement of the existing planting through this works is in line with the Urban Ecology Strategic Action Plan.

Financial Implications

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

Relevant Legislation

31. Local Government Act 1993 - Section 10A provides that a Council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.
32. Attachment D to the subject report contains confidential commercial information which if disclosed, would confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.
33. 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 rate payers.
34. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.
35. State Environmental Planning Policy Infrastructure 2007.
36. Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012.
37. Disability Discrimination Act 1992.
38. Companion Animals Act 1998.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

39. Current Program Dates
 - (a) Council Approval of Concept Design October 2020
 - (b) Detailed Design October 2020
 - (c) Tender July 2021
 - (d) Construction Start November 2021
 - (e) Construction Duration 20 weeks

Options

40. Proceed with progression of improvement works as outlined in this subject report including relevant approvals, preparation of construction documentation, tender and construction.

41. Project does not proceed - this option is not recommended as the current condition of the playground has a number of associated risks and compliance issues.

Public Consultation

42. The Land and Housing Corporation and Sydney Water were each notified as landowners of the proposed works and to establish the required approval process for the City to undertake these works. These discussions are ongoing.
 - (a) In principle support for the works has been provided by Sydney Water subject to a formal license agreement being in place and further consultation through the detailed design phase.
 - (b) The project team has received correspondence on behalf of the tenants at the Land and Housing Corporation but is yet to receive formal feedback from the Land and Housing Corporation as landowners.
43. Community consultation was undertaken as a two-part process: pre-consultation/early engagement and public consultation/exhibition. For a detailed description of the consultation process and findings refer to Attachment C.
44. A pre-consultation notification letter / email was issued to several local stakeholders and 20 residents to notify them of the project, provide a link to a pre-consultation survey and offer to meet on site to discuss the proposed upgrade.
45. A pre-consultation workshop with children attending the Police and Citizens Youth Club Holiday camp was held on 10 October 2019. There were 30 children in attendance, aged 5-12.
46. There were nine submissions during the pre-consultation period.
47. The public consultation/exhibition involved the following:
 - (a) a letter sent to 156 residents about the concept design, 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) The Glebe Society;
 - (ii) Friends of Orphan School Creek – Bushcare;
 - (iii) Police and Citizens Youth Club including the following groups using these facilities:
 - a. The Talent Society;
 - b. Gymbaroo;
 - c. Karate Acaemy of Japan - Gojuryu Dojo; and
 - d. Youth and Family Connect;
 - (iv) Forest Lodge Public School;
 - (v) Sydney Water (Landowner); and

- (vi) Land and Housing Corporation (Landowner);
 - (c) a webpage on SydneyYourSay showing the plans for the consultation from 20 July 2020 to 24 August 2020. Two hundred and thirty-eight individual users viewed the page;
 - (d) two Have Your Say A2 panels were installed in the park notifying the park users of the proposed works, providing contact details for the Design Manager and the web address for the SydneyYourSay page; and
 - (e) an online briefing was scheduled for 28 July 2020. One person registered but did not attend.
48. There were 11 submissions received during the consultation period. This included submissions via email and the online feedback form. There was one submission from the Land and Housing Corporation on behalf of its tenants.
49. The proposed works were generally supported by the community and the responses highlighted that an upgrade to this park would increase the current use of this park.
50. There were three main areas of comments including: broader comments on the park amenity, specific requests around the playground, and commentary around road safety on Minogue Crescent. These comments have been addressed in the Engagement Report (Attachment C).
51. Key feedback included:
- (a) Three submissions requested gym equipment to be included in the upgrade. At this stage, fitness equipment will not be provided in line with the park fitness plan for the local government area.
 - (b) Two submissions requesting fencing. Fencing will not be provided at this stage. Protection from the road will be achieved through adjustments to site levels, planting, a low seating wall and a pathway.
 - (c) Two submissions requesting accessible seating including picnic tables. A range of accessible seating opportunities will be provided as part of these works. No picnic tables are proposed due to the proximity to residential units. Picnic tables and bbq facilities are provided at Harold Park.
 - (d) Two submissions requesting lighting within the park. A lighting audit has been undertaken and a lighting design will be developed as part of the detailed design.
 - (e) Four submissions requesting consideration of shade to the playground. Equipment will be located and orientated with consideration of the existing shade and future shade of the proposed trees. This is considered a small, local park which is for short stay use. Within a short walking distance there are equivalent and larger scale facilities with high levels of shade provided.
 - (f) Two submissions requesting the traditional swings be retained. Provision of a single traditional swing and a nest swing will be considered as part of the detailed design.

- (g) Two submissions raised concerns around road safety and sightlines on Minogue Crescent. This has been noted and will be referred internally to the City's Traffic Team.
52. In response to community feedback, the following will be incorporated/investigated into a detailed design as noted on Attachment B:
- (a) provision of a traditional swing in addition to the proposed nest swing;
 - (b) a bin and bubbler with dog bowl will be provided;
 - (c) a lighting design will be prepared as part of the detailed design and will reflect City of Sydney Lights Code requirements for park lighting; and
 - (d) shade modelling will be undertaken for the site, with the final equipment and seating location to reflect this analysis.
53. Indigenous community engagement and institution/organisational consultation was led by the Indigenous Cultural Consultant engaged as part of this upgrade process.
54. As part of the next stage of the upgrade, the Indigenous Cultural Consultant will work with the project team to identify how the key themes and narratives identified from the consultation should be implemented into the project design and delivery.

AMIT CHANAN

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