

Project Scope - Tote Park Playground Upgrade, Zetland

File No: X025418

Summary

This report outlines the proposed works for the upgrade of the playground at Tote Park, Zetland. Tote Park playground has been identified as part of the Stage 15 small parks and playgrounds improvement program for replacement of end of life play equipment.

The project brief is to refurbish the existing play area including replace end of life equipment and soft fall, and continue to provide a range of play experiences for children of different ages and abilities (targeting ages 0-8).

Draft concept plans were presented to the community between 20 July and 24 August 2020 and exhibited on the City's website. The proposed works were well supported by the community and the responses highlighted that the playground and its play offering is well used and well loved. Suggestions by the community which will be investigated during detailed design have been noted on the draft concept plans.

The key principles of the proposal are to protect and enhance the existing landscape character, provide a local scale play space which improves the play opportunities for local children, 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 Council:

- (A) endorse the scope of work improvements to the playground at Tote Park, Zetland, as described in the subject report and shown in the Revised Concept Plan at Attachment B to the subject report, for 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 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 an upgrade or enhancement works, the replacement of end-of-life equipment, and to provide appropriate facilities for local residents.
2. Tote Park is bound by Joynton Avenue, Grandstand Parade, Austin Grove and Wolseley Grove in Zetland. It is owned by the City of Sydney. The playground is located on the southern edge of the park, on Austin Grove. The total area of the park is 3,050 square metres while the playground is approximately 200 square metres. The scope of works is limited to the playground.
3. The area that includes Tote Park is within the traditional homelands of the Gadigal people, part of the 29 clan groups of the Sydney metropolitan area that are collectively referred to as the Eora Nation.
4. 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.
5. Tote Park was established in the early 2000's as one of a series of parks within the Victoria Park Residential Precinct. Immediately prior to this the site had been part of the BMC car manufacturing site. Other parks include Joynton Park and Waluba Park.
6. Tote Park Playground was identified for an upgrade due to the playground's overall condition, including failing play equipment, seating and soft-fall surfacing. No broader park works are proposed.
7. The existing play equipment includes a double swing set, sand play, a series of timber balance beams and decks, and a large timber play structure. The current play offering provides a good range of play experiences including active, imaginary, dynamic, manipulative, and sensory.
8. There is no shade structure, however, shade is provided by a series of Jacaranda trees throughout the play area. Planting provides a buffer to the road and there is some well-established plant material within the playground which will be retained as part of the upgrade.
9. Tote Park is an off-leash dog park. Across the local government area dogs are not permitted within 10 metres of a playground. At Tote Park there is some conflict between playground users and dog owners. A low fence is located on Austin Grove to provide separation between the playground and footpath. There is currently no fence between the grass areas / off leash areas and the playground. A low fence is proposed between the play area and the lawn to improve separation between the different user groups.
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.

Draft Concept Plan

11. A concept plan was developed for the works and community consultation was undertaken (refer to Attachment B).
12. The concept plan sets the overall layout. The key principles are:
 - (a) protect and enhance the existing landscape character;
 - (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.
13. The proposal includes the following works:
 - (a) extend paving to improve an accessible entry;
 - (b) replace existing rubber soft-fall;
 - (c) a new see-saw;
 - (d) a new play tower with slides for children (0-8);
 - (e) a new sand play area;
 - (f) replace existing double swings with similar;
 - (g) retain existing rock boulders and planting;
 - (h) replace and extend the existing timber balance beams and nature play elements;
 - (i) provide a new entry on the eastern edge;
 - (j) provide planting and a low fence on the park side including a defined entry point;
 - (k) replace existing bench seats with similar; and
 - (l) retain and protect the existing planting and fence on Austin Grove.
14. The Indigenous Cultural consultant has produced a 'Narratives' report, which broadly identifies project opportunities for the integration of Indigenous themes and narratives.
 - (a) The themes and narratives which were raised include:
 - (i) Tote Park is in the pathway between two key known Aboriginal communities - Redfern and La Perouse.
 - (ii) Exploration of the songline between neighbouring Gadigal and Bidjigal people.
 - (iii) Celebration of the life of Mum Shirl who is a local woman who is known for her work with children.

- (b) 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.
- 15. 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.
- 16. In response to community feedback, the following will be investigated and where possible incorporated into the detailed design as noted on Attachment B:
 - (a) provision of a triple swing within the existing playground footprint;
 - (b) additional fencing to provide improved protection to the road; and
 - (c) provision of a play tower which is equivalent to the existing play tower in terms of play experience and capacity.
- 17. The following tree management and planting is proposed as part of the park works:
 - (a) retain and protect all existing trees;
 - (b) improve the existing surface treatment around trees within the play area to manage tree health and minimise trip hazards;
 - (c) preparation of an Aborigicultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan to inform the detailed design and ensure appropriate construction methodology when installing equipment and soft-fall;
 - (d) retain existing planting within the play area and provide supplementary planting as required; and
 - (e) provide a low planted edge on the park side.
- 18. 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

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 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 ongoing renewal of small parks across the local government area; it will provide 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 non-compliant assets represents a removal/mitigation of risk to the City. The assets will require ongoing maintenance.

Risks

21. 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.
22. Risks of not implementing this scope of works could result in failure to meet community expectations.

Social / Cultural / Community

23. The playground within Tote Park is used by a range of community members including pre-schoolers, school aged children and their respective family and carers, as well as other members of the community which share the space for passive recreation.
24. The park and playground is a well-loved community asset, many residents use this park daily and the upgrade represents an investment in this community, providing opportunities for people of different ages and abilities to use the park alongside each other.
25. 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.

Environmental

26. Protection and enhancement of the existing planting through these works is in line with the Urban Forest Strategy.

Financial Implications

27. 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

28. 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.
29. 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.
30. 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.
31. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.
32. State Environmental Planning Policy Infrastructure 2007.
33. Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012.
34. Disability Discrimination Act 1992.
35. Companion Animals Act 1998.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

36. 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

37. Proceed with progression of improvement works as outline in this subject report including relevant approvals, preparation of construction documentation, tender and construction.
38. 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

39. 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.
40. A pre-consultation notification letter/email was issued to local stakeholders and 816 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.
41. There were 50 submissions during the pre-consultation period.
42. The public consultation/exhibition involved the following:
 - (a) a letter sent to 816 residents about the concept design and inviting them to provide feedback;
 - (b) a stakeholder email sent to local stakeholders, inviting them to give feedback on the proposal. The email was sent to:
 - (i) Friends of Victoria Park;
 - (ii) Green Square Growers;
 - (iii) Sydney Local Health District;
 - (iv) Waranara Early Education Centre; and
 - (v) Green Square Storytime and Rhymetime;
 - (c) a webpage on SydneyYourSay showing the plans for the consultation from 20 July to 24 August 2020. Five hundred and nine 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 of the Design Manager and a web address to the SydneyYourSay page; and
 - (e) an online briefing was scheduled for 28 July. One person registered but did not attend.
43. There were 30 submissions received during the consultation period. This included submissions via email and the online feedback form.
44. The proposed works were well supported by the community and the responses highlighted that the playground and its play offering is well used and well loved.

45. There were three main areas of comments including: broader comments on the park amenity, specific requests around play equipment and fencing, and commentary around the conflict between dog users and the playground users. These comments have been addressed in the Engagement Report (Attachment D).
46. Key feedback included:
 - (a) Nine submissions requesting additional fencing around the playground. Additional fencing will be provided to address this.
 - (b) Six submissions requested additional swings to be provided. The City will investigate if an additional swing can be provided within the existing playground footprint.
 - (c) Four submissions requested additional regulatory signage about dogs. This will be considered as part of the park signage program of works.
 - (d) Three submissions requested the park become dog free.
 - (e) A number of submissions related to the proposed play structure with some suggestions for more challenging equipment, others wanting it to be similar to the existing and others requesting that separate structures were provided for two age groups 0-3- and 4-7. The play tower will be reviewed as part of the detailed design phase to ensure that the play experience is of equal value to the current structure.
47. In response to community feedback, the following will be investigated and where possible incorporated into a detailed design as noted on Attachment B:
 - (a) provision of a triple swing within the existing playground footprint;
 - (b) additional fencing to provide improved protection to the road; and
 - (c) provision of a play tower which is equivalent to the existing play tower in terms of play experience and capacity.
48. Indigenous community engagement and institution / organisational consultation was led by the Indigenous Cultural Consultant engaged as part of this upgrade process.
49. 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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