

Item 3.1**Moore Park Golf Course Proposal****File No: S051491****Minute by the Lord Mayor**

To Council:

Moore Park is public land that is part of the original Governor Macquarie 1811 Sydney Common bequest for the benefit of the people of Sydney.

Moore Park Golf Course could be reconfigured to provide a publicly accessible park as well as a 9-hole Golf Course for the increasing inner-city community.

The need for increased publicly accessible parkland in Moore Park is a result of the change in land use over the last century.

The area adjacent to Moore Park was primarily industrial when the Moore Park Golf Course was established in 1913, but the area of Redfern, Waterloo and Green Square is undergoing a process of urban renewal and is becoming the densest residential area in Australia - with an expected residential population of up to 70,000 people and 22,000 workers by 2031.

As well, the NSW Government's Land and Housing Corporation is undertaking a program of redevelopment of its property in Redfern and Waterloo. The proposed Waterloo Estate alone will see an additional 15 to 20,000 people. By 2040 up to 90,000 additional people could be living within a catchment less than 2km from Moore Park.

Projects such as the Eastern Distributor, the light rail and the Tibby Cotter Bridge have also eroded Moore Park, as has event parking, which has taken over more than five hectares of parkland.

City planners are working with Green Square developers to create forty urban parks and playgrounds as part of urban renewal. However, small parks do not provide the opportunity to stride out, de-stress and recharge or renew and commune with nature for people living in high density apartments. They need this opportunity for their mental and physical wellbeing.

Today, 31 million people visit Centennial Parklands while just 60,000 rounds of golf are played on the Moore Park Golf Course each year.

Ausplay sport and recreation participation data reveals that walking is consistently popular across a broad spectrum of park user groups, which highlights the importance of large parks for recreation. The data also shows a declining participation in golf.

The City's Open Space, Sport and Recreational Needs Study 2016 recommended the Centennial Parklands Trust review the layout of the golf course to improve community access. It suggested reducing the course from 18-holes to 9 or 12-holes, to make available an area of parkland to provide for a range of uses rather than for the exclusive use of one sport.

Golf is well catered for in the Sydney metropolitan area. Within a 10km radius of Moore Park there are twelve 18-hole golf courses of which six are accessible to the general public.

The pandemic has also highlighted how valuable parkland is for people to gain respite, exercise and connect with nature.

Moore Park Golf Course should no longer be fenced off for the benefit of just one group.

The City's progress on a proposal

In May 2020, Council resolved to support my Minute about creating more space for people in a post Covid-19 city.

As part of that work, we asked the Chief Executive Officer to develop a proposal to create public parkland through reconfiguring part of Moore Park Golf Course from an 18-hole course to a 9-hole course, for a submission to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces.

The City developed two potential options involving reconfiguration of the existing golf course from an 18-hole to a 9-hole facility. Both options retain the popular driving range facility, club house, and maintenance depot and require only minimal reconfiguration of the fairway and greens.

Option One proposes public parkland along the western side of the park, north of Dacey Avenue. Option Two proposes public parkland south of Dacey Avenue. Both these options would create a public parkland area of between 18 to 20 hectares.

On 14 September 2020, I briefed the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces on the City's options. The Minister has asked the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust to consider the proposal.

It is now time for Council to undertake community consultation on these options.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note that:

- (i) in May 2020, in response to a Lord Mayoral Minute about creating more space for people in a post-Covid-19 city, Council resolved to request the Chief Executive Officer to develop a proposal to convert part of Moore Park Golf Course into a public park by reducing the golf course from an 18-hole course to a 9-hole course for a submission to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces;
- (ii) the City has developed two potential options for reconfiguring the existing golf course from an 18-hole to a 9-hole facility;
- (iii) the proposal is supported by compelling reasons for a reconfiguration of the Moore Park Golf Course because:
 - (a) a changing land use context – the residential area of Redfern, Waterloo and Green Square adjacent to Moore Park has evolved from a predominantly industrial area in the 1900s to an area with an expected population of up to 70,000/90,000 people by 2031;

- (b) increasing residential population - By 2040, there will be up to 90,000 additional people living in Green Square, Redfern and Waterloo within 2km of Moore Park;
 - (c) existing golf course provision – within a 10km radius of Moore Park there are twelve existing 18-hole golf courses of which six are accessible to the public;
 - (d) consistency with State Government Directions - the appointment of a Minister for Public Spaces exemplifies the Government’s recognition and importance of parks and open space;
 - (e) City Strategic Directions - the City’s Open Space, Sport and Recreational Needs Study 2016 suggests the course is reduced from 18 holes to 9 or 12 holes to free up a larger area of green open space to provide for a range of uses, rather than for the exclusive use of one sport; and
 - (f) recreation trends - Ausplay sport and recreation participation data reveals a national decline in golf club membership and participation compared to walking which is consistently popular among park users.
- (iv) Moore Park is public land that is part of the original Governor Macquarie 1811 Sydney Common bequest for the benefit of the people of Sydney. The NSW Government has stewardship over this gift; and
 - (v) the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces has requested the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust consider the proposal;
- (B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to develop and implement a community consultation plan for the options identified in Attachment A to the subject Minute; and
 - (C) Council approve up to \$50,000 to undertake community consultation on the two options to be funded from 2020/21 General Contingency.

COUNCILLOR CLOVER MOORE

Lord Mayor

Attachments

Attachment A. Moore Park Golf Course Options