

Project Scope - Peace Park Upgrade, Chippendale

File No: X025378

Summary

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

The project brief is to refurbish the whole park, replace end of life play equipment and soft-fall, provide a range of play experiences for children of different ages and abilities, improve accessibility and circulation into and through the park, improve turf durability and quality, as well as provide additional seating and associated landscape improvements.

Draft Concept Plans were presented to the community between 20 July and 24 August 2020 and were exhibited on the City's website. Community feedback was associated with four broad themes: turf type, shared pathway alignment, planting and play equipment. Community feedback was incorporated into a Revised Concept Plan. These include a review of the proposed turf type, shared path alignment, retaining all existing trees and increasing playground equipment.

The Revised Concept Plans were presented to the community between 27 November and 18 December 2020 and exhibited on the City's website. The proposed works were generally supported by the community and the responses highlighted that the park is highly utilised by a wide variety of users and is a key piece of open space for residents.

The key principles of the proposal are to upgrade the turf surface, renew the playground to provide a local scale play space which maximises play opportunities for children of different ages and abilities, improve access in and around the park, improve lighting 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 for improvements to Peace Park as described in the subject report and shown in the revised concept design as 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.** Revised Concept Plan
- Attachment C.** Engagement Report
- Attachment D.** Financial Implications (Confidential)

Background

1. The City has an ongoing small parks and playgrounds improvement program for parks in need of upgrade or enhancement works, replacement of end of life equipment, and to provide appropriate facilities for local residents.
2. Peace Park is a rectangular-shaped park located on Myrtle Street between Pine Street and Buckland Street, Chippendale. The site is approximately 1,750 square metres.
3. The land is owned by the City of Sydney.
4. Peace Park was identified for an upgrade due to the park's overall condition, including poor turf performance and growth, end of life play equipment and soft-fall surfacing, limited seating provision and poor access through and around the park.
5. A particular issue is the poor turf growth and high wear as a result of high use and limited sun in areas.
6. The City of Sydney purchased the site (70-80 Myrtle Street) in 1978, and in 1985 a section of Myrtle Street between Pine and Buckland Streets was closed and incorporated into the establishment of Peace Park. In 1995, the park was refurbished, and two community mosaics, The Birds of Peace and Industry, were installed. The most recent upgrade of the playground was to renew the soft-fall material in 2006.
7. There is a strong and active community in the Chippendale area. The park is highly utilised and well-loved by a variety of community members for play, rest, relaxation and particularly dog exercise.
8. The park is characterised as a small pocket park, with a paved, pedestrianised area to the south. To the north is an open grassed area and a partially fenced neighbourhood playground catering for children of all ages. A grove of Paperbark trees shades the northern edge. Planting beds edge the park, separating it from the surrounding streets, streetscape footpaths and the Broadway cycle link, which runs along Myrtle Street and across the park's south boundary.
9. The existing play equipment includes a play structure with curly slide, staircase and spiral climb as well as a shop front and steering wheel play panels. There is also a swing set with two seats, toddler and child. Seating within the play-space is limited.
10. The existing planting includes:
 - (a) a mix of exotic and native shrub and groundcovers;
 - (b) 32 trees in total with the majority being native species, and
 - (c) 21 of the trees are *Melaleuca quinquenervia* (Broad Lead Paperbark), the dominant species within the park.
11. 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.

12. 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.

Revised Concept Design

13. A Draft Concept Design was developed for the works and community consultation undertaken.
14. Following consultation, feedback from the community has been incorporated into the Revised Concept Design (refer to Attachment B).
15. The Revised Concept Design sets the overall layout. The key principles are:
 - (a) retain the existing shared path alignment;
 - (b) protect and enhance the existing landscape character, including existing trees;
 - (c) renew the playground to provide a local scale play space which maximises play opportunities for children 0-11+;
 - (d) relocate the play area to the north (shaded) area of the park and consolidate the turfed area in the sunnier central area of the park;
 - (e) increase seating and provide a range of seating opportunities to enhance social interaction; and
 - (f) use simple, robust, high quality materials which reflect the local neighbourhood character.
16. The proposal includes the following works:
 - (a) a hybrid turf area located in the park's sunniest area for optimal turf growth. Hybrid turf is a combination of open weave synthetic turf oversown with natural turf. This helps provide a much stronger wearing surface;
 - (b) speed reduction and alignment measures (chicanes, bollards and fences) to slow bike movement and encourage use of the shared path;
 - (c) review existing site drainage, stormwater retention, soil profiles and irrigation to optimise water efficiency and sustainability in the park. Incorporate sustainable water practices including absorption grates adjacent to paths, and direction stormwater to planted areas;
 - (d) a new play structure with a curly slide and staircase components as well as imaginative play panels/elements;
 - (e) a new three seat swing set with one toddler seat and two strap seats for all ages;
 - (f) new soft-fall across the play area. Soft-fall is to be minimised and colours muted;
 - (g) new permeable paving to Buckland Street footpath around the existing street trees;

- (h) increased seating in both sun and shade;
 - (i) new bins and bubbler with dog bowl;
 - (j) retain Birds of Peace and Industry mosaics in their existing location;
 - (k) new seating wall allocated for future community artwork; and
 - (l) an area allocated for a future community garden/compost.
17. In response to community feedback, the following will be investigated in the detailed design as noted in Attachment C:
- (a) review proposed play equipment provision to maximise play experiences where possible;
 - (b) review provision of a picnic table noting concerns also raised about people congregating at night;
 - (c) improve site drainage, particularly in the turfed area to reduce boggy areas (poorly drained); and
 - (d) a lighting design will be prepared as part of the detailed design and will reflect City of Sydney Lights Code requirements for park lighting.
18. The Indigenous Cultural Consultant has produced a 'Narratives' report, which broadly identifies project opportunities for the integration of Indigenous themes and narratives. The key themes and narratives which were raised include:
- (a) Peace Park was part of an important catchment area; Blackwattle Swamp and Creek was once a tidal watercourse that extended from Glebe to Redfern. This park was known as 'Pino Park' Pine Street.
 - (b) Peace Park is also on a significant Aboriginal Pathway Site - Brickfields - one of many Aboriginal pathways (muru) in the Sydney area and went south directly to Botany Bay. This site would have been used mainly for its resources of birdlife, and perhaps even the harvesting of weapons like wommeras and boomerangs made from the tough angled mangroves.
19. The engagement process highlighted that stakeholders were interested in seeing the demonstration of culture in the design of the parks. This was predominantly expressed though a desire to see Aboriginal themed inclusions in the design such as artwork, language, and native plants.
20. As part of the next stage of the upgrade, the consultant and project team will review how the key themes and narratives should be implemented into the project design and delivery.
21. The following tree management and planting is proposed as part of the park works:
- (a) retain and protect existing trees;
 - (b) preparation of an Aboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan to inform the detailed design and ensure appropriate construction methodology near existing trees and when installing equipment and soft-fall; and

- (c) provide additional and supplementary planting as required to provide habitat as well as sensory and edible opportunities.
22. A Review of Environmental Factors (REF), and any other required approvals, will be prepared and assessed for the park upgrade in accordance with the Environmental Planning Assessment Act 1979.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

23. 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 a wider program of renewal of small parks across the city; it will provide an improved quality of open space infrastructure.

Organisational Impact

24. This upgrade will provide improved amenity for the community visiting the park.
25. Upgrading the playground will provide improved play experience and amenity for children and their carers. The replacement of the non-compliant play assets represents a removal/mitigation of risk to the City. The assets will require ongoing maintenance.
26. Upgrading the turf will provide improved surface conditions, coverage and reduce the amount of time the turf area is closed (4-6 months each year) to the public due to resting, returfing and establishment. The asset will require ongoing maintenance.

Risks

27. 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.
28. Risks of not implementing this scope of works could result in failure to meet community expectations.

Social / Cultural / Community

29. The site is an important open space within the Chippendale area where people do not have access to backyards or courtyards within their own homes. The site provides a place for people to meet, walk their dogs, eat their lunch or drink a take-away coffee from the adjacent café. The park is located 20 metres from the SDN Chippendale Child Care Centre and Pine Street Creative Arts Centre and is 260 metres from the Blackfriars Children's Centre.
30. 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.

Environmental

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

Financial Implications

32. There are sufficient funds in the Parks Renewal Capital Works 10 year budget to complete all currently programmed small park upgrades to be delivered by 2024. Current project cost estimates and financial implications for the delivery of the Peace Park upgrade are detailed in Confidential Attachment D. Construction cost estimates will be confirmed by a Quantity Surveyor prior to tender.

Relevant Legislation

33. 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.
34. 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.
35. 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.
36. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.
37. State Environmental Planning Policy Infrastructure 2007.
38. Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012.
39. Disability Discrimination Act 1992.
40. Companion Animals Act 1998.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

41. Current Program Dates:

- Council Approval of Concept Design February 2021
- Detailed Design March 2021
- Tender Late 2021
- Construction Start Early 2022
- Construction duration 24 weeks

Options

42. Option 1 (recommended): Proceed with progression of improvement works as outlined in this subject report including relevant approvals, preparation of construction documentation, tender and construction.
43. Option 2: The project does not proceed. This option is not recommended as the playground has a number of compliance issues and associated risks. A recent playground condition assessment (2020 Playground Audit) together with the City's broader park condition assessments and inspections identified the parks playground fencing, gate, play unit, swing and safety surface materials as needing replacement to meet relevant Australian Standards.

Public Consultation

44. Public 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.
45. A pre-consultation notification letter/email was issued to a number of local stakeholders and 147 local 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.
46. A pre-consultation meeting was held on-site with two residents and there were three consultation meetings with staff at the Chippendale Child Care, the Pine Street Creative Arts Centre and the Blackfriars Child Care Centre, to provide feedback for the draft concept design.
47. There were 58 submissions during the pre-consultation period. Key themes were;
- (a) Improve turf surface
 - (b) Improve play offering and fully fencing the play area
 - (c) Improve shared pathway
 - (d) Increase seating

48. The public consultation/exhibition of the Draft Concept Design involved the following:
- (a) A letter sent to 969 residents about the concept design 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) Pine Street Creative Arts Centre
 - (ii) SDN Chippendale Children's Education and Care Centre
 - (iii) Blackfriars Child Care Centre
 - (c) A webpage on SydneyYourSay showing the plans for the consultation from 20 July to 24 August 2020. 168 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 4 August 2020. Nine people attended.
49. There were 64 submissions received during the Draft Concept Design consultation feedback. This included submissions via email and the online feedback form.
50. There were six main areas of comment including turf type, tree replacement, shared path alignment, play equipment, mosaic relocation and sustainable initiatives.
51. Due to feedback from the community, a resident workshop group was assembled to review the concept plan and consultation comments. The group met twice; on 29 October 2020 at the Pine Street Creative Arts Centre and on 17 November 2020 via Zoom.
52. A Revised Concept Design was prepared with the resident workshop group, considering all community feedback.
53. The public consultation/exhibition of the Revised Concept Design involved the following:
- (a) A letter sent to 969 residents about the concept design 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) Pine Street Creative Arts Centre
 - (ii) SDN Chippendale Children's Education and Care Centre
 - (iii) Blackfriars Child Care Centre
 - (c) A webpage on SydneyYourSay showing the plans for the consultation from 27 November to 18 December 2020. 320 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) One onsite meeting with a resident.
54. There were 18 submissions received during the Revised Concept Design consultation feedback. This included submissions via email and the online feedback form.
55. The revised design and proposed works were predominately supported by the community and the responses highlighted that the park is highly utilised and well loved by a variety of community members for play, rest, relaxation and dog exercise.
56. Key feedback included:
- (a) support for upgrading the playground with two of the submissions requesting specific additional play equipment/elements;
 - (b) two submission raised concern about mosquitos in the park and requested rubber instead of bark soft-fall;
 - (c) two submissions requested picnic tables;
 - (d) one submission requested fitness equipment; and
 - (e) one submission requested a fenced area for dogs.
57. In response to community feedback, the following will be investigated in detailed design as noted on Attachment C;
- (a) review proposed play equipment provision to maximise play experiences;
 - (b) review provision of a picnic table noting concerns also raised about people congregating at night;
 - (c) improve site drainage, particularly in the turfed area, to reduce boggy areas (poorly drained); and
 - (d) a lighting design will be prepared as part of the detailed design and will reflect City of Sydney Lights Code requirements for park lighting.
58. 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.

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