

## Lighting in Joynton Park

File No: X023035

### Summary

Following interest from both Council and the community, in 2022 the City trialled park evening lighting at Joynton Park, Zetland. The trial was considered a success, noting there was strong visitation and minimal community concern.

In 2023, public consultation sought feedback from the community about the permanent introduction of open space lighting in areas of Joynton Park, Tote Park and Nuffield Park in Zetland. Over 87 per cent of people responding to the survey supported park evening lighting to 10pm. The majority of survey respondents supported permanent park evening lights in Joynton Park, however there was no majority support for more lights in Tote and Nuffield Park.

Our parks support an inclusive and equitable city where people from all walks of life can live, work, learn, play and grow. The trial and strong public support has demonstrated there is merit for the provision of park evening lighting. Park evening lighting is a sustainable service that will make Joynton Park more inclusive and available to a more diverse range of community members.

This report recommends an update to the City's Sydney Lights Code for a proposed park evening lighting service and the installation of park evening lighting at Joynton Park.

### Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) receive and note the subject report - Lighting in Joynton Park;
- (B) note that a review of the Sydney Lights Code will proceed with the intention of adding a new Community Service Level, being Park Evening Lighting; and
- (C) note that Park Evening Lighting will be installed in Joynton Park, following design and all necessary approvals.

### Attachments

**Attachment A.** Engagement Report - Green Square Park Lighting

## Background

1. On 17 May 2021, Council resolved to investigate lighting at a number of locations including Joynton Park. A CEO Update of 8 July 2021 outlined steps that would be taken to identify issues, consider options, consult with community and review the Sydney Lights Code.
2. Notice of Motion 13.2 from Council's meeting on 15 November 2021 resolved that the Chief Executive Officer be requested to investigate expediting lighting upgrade work in Joynton Park so it can be completed prior to Winter 2022.
3. On 1 December 2021, a CEO Update committed to the undertaking of consultation and deploying a trial of temporary lights in time for Winter 2022.
4. Between April and October 2022, the City trialled park evening lighting in Joynton Park Zetland from 5pm to 10pm. The trial did generate a strong increase in visitation to the park. At the conclusion of the trial the City consulted with the community however a low level of participation meant there was not a meaningful number of responses for consultation purposes.
5. On 15 May 2023, Council resolved (Item 11.2) that the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:
  - (a) undertake further consultation with the Zetland community on the need for, and type of, lighting required in Joynton Park during winter;
  - (b) expedite the report of the previous lighting trial to report back to Council in a timely manner; and
  - (c) engage the Zetland community to discuss the installation of lights at Tote Park and Nuffield Park to aid community safety and utility of these spaces during the dark winter months, if required.
6. This report responds to the above resolved actions and considers the merits of a Park Evening Lighting service for Joynton, Tote and Nuffield Parks.

## Open Space Provision

7. There are 348 parks in the City of Sydney. The provision of services and facilities in parks is based on a hierarchy to ensure the City provides a sustainable and equitable service to the community. The City's parks are classified as either Iconic, Neighbourhood or Pocket parks based on their size and suitability to support services and facilities.
8. A Neighbourhood Park is typically provided within a ten-minute walk of most homes in the City, they are larger in size and they support a broad range of passive recreation needs. There are 40 Neighbourhood Parks in the local government area. Joynton Park, Nuffield Park and Tote Park are all classified as Neighbourhood Parks. There are 285 Pocket Parks in the City of Sydney and these are often within a 5 minute walk of most homes. Pocket parks are small in size, suited for a short stay, often adjoin private land and they support a limited number of services and facilities.

9. Joynton Park, Zetland is a 1.3 hectare Neighbourhood Park that supports a diverse range of recreational activities. It provides important social and recreational green space for the Green Square community and the adjacent suburbs of Waterloo, Beaconsfield, Rosebery and Alexandria. Joynton Park is an off-leash dog park with a large passive recreation turf area of approximately 8,118 square metres. The park also has other amenities including barbecues, picnic tables, water features and toilets. The park has the largest turf area within a 1.5 kilometres radius.
10. Tote Park and Nuffield Park are also Neighbourhood Parks that are within a 100 metre distance of Joynton Park. These parks are smaller in size than Joynton Park. Tote Park incorporates a children's playground, has a total area of 3,956 square metres and is adjacent to the Tote Building. Nuffield Park has a total area of 5,135 square metres and incorporates active recreation facilities including a basketball court and a rebound wall.
11. Since opening to the community, the use of Joynton Park, Nuffield Park and Tote Park has significantly intensified due to an increase in the number and density of the surrounding population. This population is projected to increase further placing additional pressure on the parks to support community needs.
12. The City's Open Space, Sports and Recreation Needs Study 2016 identifies a shortfall in the City's open space provision, based on the standards set in the State Government's Recreation and Open Space Planning Guidelines for Local Government. The Study incorporates a series of strategic directions to enhance the City's open spaces. Strategic Direction 2, Better Parks, Sport and Recreation Facilities, promotes an increase in the quality and capacity of open spaces. Better park lighting is identified as a key action to support the strategy. Strategic Direction 4, Access to Recreation in the City will be Inclusive and Accessible for All, supports equitable access to open spaces regardless of age, income, ability or background. Nighttime activation of open spaces (where appropriate) with lighting is an identified action to achieve this strategic direction.
13. Residents of the City of Sydney routinely seek the use of community facilities over a broader span of hours. Over recent years community interest in using parks in evening hours has grown. Providing a greater span of hours where our open spaces may be used does support the actions set in the Open Space, Sports and Recreation Needs Study 2016.

### **Park Lighting**

14. The Sydney Lights Public Domain Design Code (Sydney Lights Code), adopted by Council in 2015, specifies that park lighting schemes should consider main park entries, park perimeter, main pedestrian and cycle through pathways and path surrounds and selected landscaped areas. The Sydney Lights Code also considers the impact that illumination can have on anti-social behaviour, sustainability and fauna and flora species.
15. The 2015 Sydney Lights Code states that large areas of open space should not be lit to a high level unless used for programmed/organised activities at night. Accordingly, a proposal to light the open areas of a park is not aligned to the current intent of the Sydney Lights Code.

16. The existing lights in Joynton Park, Nuffield Park and Tote Park illuminate perimeter paths, through paths and areas where outdoor tables are positioned. This standard of lighting is in keeping with the 2015 Sydney Lights Code.

### **Joynton Park Evening Lighting Trial Outcomes**

17. Between April and October 2022, the City trialled park evening lighting in Joynton Park Zetland from 5pm to 10pm. Five solar powered temporary light fixtures operated during this time.
18. Visitation to Joynton Park increased during the park evening lighting trial. The community sought to use the lit area for a mix of passive uses including walking, resting, social interaction, exercise and dog walking.
19. The trial demonstrated that the provision of the service generated impacts that were tolerable to the nearby community. During the trial and in subsequent consultations community feedback has been largely supportive of evening lighting. This feedback has not justified the need for the service to operate throughout the night, and 10pm does afford ample additional time for use of the open space to meet the level of demand. By limiting the service to 10pm in the evening, the quiet night hours are preserved for the community.
20. The position of the light poles during the trial was an important consideration. The lights were positioned around the perimeter of the activated open space which ensured the open space was unobstructed and kept flexible for all intended uses. To limit intrusive light to nearby homes, the lights were relatively low in height and orientated to shed light away from homes and towards the activated open space. The trial lights were at least 30 metres from any property, and they were mostly screened by perimeter park trees.
21. The increased use of Joynton Park during the trial did result in increased wear of the turf surface. A large area of turf was closed to the public after the trial to allow for re-turfing and renovation for a period of 13 weeks.
22. The Joynton Park Evening Lighting Trial is considered a success, noting the increased visitation, tolerable impacts to the nearby community and the feedback received from the trial.

### **Permanent Park Evening Lighting**

23. The lessons learnt from the Joynton Park evening lighting trial assist in informing any future permanent evening lighting installation in the City's parks. This particularly relates to the positioning of lights and the hours of operation.
24. Demand for visiting parks in evening hours is not limited to only months of the year when there is less daylight. The community often seek reprieve from the summer heat by visiting our parks in the evening. Regular working times and routine passive recreation needs of the community do apply consistently across the year and there is no valid basis to limit the provision of the additional service to only months of the year when there is less daylight. On this basis it is considered appropriate that any permanent provision of Park Evening Lighting would apply throughout the year.

25. Park evening lighting is only intended to light a limited area of the open space. This approach is in response to the limited demand for passive recreation in the evening, and to limit the impacts of the lighting on nearby homes. It is considered appropriate that where Park Evening Lighting is provided, that it is limited to an area up to 1,500 square metres.
26. Tote Park and Nuffield Park are both within 100 metres of Joynton Park. Each of these parks provide different amenity to the community but as a network they service the local community need. From a network perspective, due to the smaller scale of Tote and Nuffield Parks and the closer proximity to homes, it is preferable for lighting to be installed only in Joynton Park. Community sentiment from the recent public consultation suggests Joynton Park is the only park of the three that has majority support for park evening lighting. By providing the service enhancement only at Joynton Park, residents in the area can access the additional amenity of the lighting at Joynton Park within a ten-minute walk. This approach also ensures the City is not overservicing one part of the local government area.
27. Based on the success of the trial, strong community support and the growing demand for open space, it is recommended that park evening lighting is installed in Joynton Park. The park evening lighting is intended to operate throughout the year, and for a limited area of 1500 square metres within the park. These works are proposed to be completed within the 2024/25 financial year, following completion of the design and all necessary approvals.
28. The Sydney Lights Code does not currently support park evening lighting. It is recommended that the Sydney Lights Code is reviewed with consideration of a new Community Service Level, being Park Evening Lighting for passive recreation.
29. The City progressively renews our parks on a cyclic basis, and as this occurs, the design and consultation will consider the merits of park evening lighting in keeping with a revised Sydney Lights Code.

## Key Implications

### Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

30. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. 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 2 - A leading environmental performer - lighting that is sustainable, low energy and that minimises impacts to nearby homes.
  - (b) Direction 3 - Public places for all - provision of open spaces in parks to suit the changing needs of all members of the community.
  - (c) Direction 4 - Design excellence and sustainable development - supporting the needs of an increasing population without acquiring more land.
  - (d) Direction 6 - An equitable and inclusive city - consideration of an enhanced evening park lighting service for all members of the community.

### Organisational Impact

31. During the 2022 park evening lighting trial a significant decline in turf condition corresponded with the trial period. At completion of the trial a limited area of the park was closed for renovation, re-turfing and to provide time for the turf to re-establish. While the community gained additional amenity during the trial, they lost access to areas within the park after the trial. In 2023, when there was no lighting trial operating, and re-turfing was not required.
32. The provision of park evening lighting will lead to a range of operational impacts:
- (a) Increased weekly maintenance services and remedial work (turf resting, fertilising, aeration, topdressing) to build resilience of turf.
  - (b) Increased likelihood that a limited area of the park will be closed for re-turfing.
  - (c) Increased water use of approximately 65,000 litres each year to cultivate and establish new turf.
  - (d) Increased ongoing operational costs and resourcing for turf and lighting assets, including switchboards, underground cabling, service pits, poles and lights.

### Risks

33. Based on the 2022 evening park lighting trial, community consultation and further analysis, the risks associated with a permanent service change are summarised below, with proposed mitigation controls also listed.

Risk	Risk Control/ action plan/ proposed response
Increased Energy Use	A park evening lighting service, operating at appropriate locations within the Local Government Area would result in less than a one per cent increase in the City's lighting network. Low energy LED light fittings would be used. Lights would only operate to 10pm. The lighting design would be optimised. The City continues to purchase green power.
Increased Capital Cost	The City would use a mix of internal staff and contractors procured through a competitive procurement process to deliver the works and ensure value for money is achieved.
Operational Capacity	The City's resourcing is routinely reviewed to ensure the growth in asset base is properly managed. Additional maintenance of the surface and the lighting systems will be required.
Light Pollution	The Sydney Lights Code requires each park location to have a lighting design prepared to Australian Standard AS1158.3.1. Lighting open space would be to the PA3 light category. This ensures light installations will not generate intrusive light or upward light pollution. By limiting the area to be lit, using LED lights and only operating lights to 10pm, light pollution is minimised.

Risk	Risk Control/ action plan/ proposed response
Noise	Areas that are activated would be at least 30m from a home which was shown in the 2022 trial to be a tolerable distance. The lighting will operate on a timer and will be switched off at 10pm.
Safety	The principles of the lighting design will consider passive surveillance and other Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CEPTED) principles. Lights would only operate to 10pm.
Anti-social Behaviour	Only a limited clear open space area will be lit. Playgrounds or other areas with a higher risk of anti-social behaviour will not be activated. Only Neighbourhood or Iconic Parks would be considered. Anti-social behaviour will be monitored. Lights will operate only to 10pm.

### Social / Cultural / Community

34. The City's Social Sustainability Policy and Action Plan 2018-2028 promotes a vision where people from all walks of life can live, work, learn, play and grow. It supports an inclusive and equitable city that offers all people opportunities to realise their full potential and enjoy a great quality of life.
35. By providing access to open spaces for more hours each day the City will be making Joynton Park more inclusive. Joynton Park will be available to a more diverse range of community members who may otherwise have difficulty using the open space in daylight hours.
36. The community provided strong support for park evening lighting in the recent public consultation. The majority of respondents to the survey advised that they will make more visits to the park once park evening lighting is installed. They considered the park will be a safer and more enjoyable place to visit once the evening lighting is operating.

### Environmental

37. The City's Environmental Strategy 2021-2025 Strategic Direction 1 supports initiatives to enhance energy efficiency and carbon-neutral outcomes. This proposal may be viewed as increasing energy use, however by leveraging greater use of an existing open space the City is reducing the pressure to acquire more land for parks, which as an alternative, would have a far greater carbon footprint than the additional lights, energy and maintenance activities generated by a Park Evening Lighting service. The City does purchase green power for lighting. The light fixtures used for this service would be energy saving LEDs and the lights would only operate to 10pm each night to limit energy consumption.
38. The additional lighting and park activation resulting from a park evening lighting service has potential to negatively impact and disturb local fauna. In line with the City's Urban Ecology Strategic Action Plan light spill will be minimised for new lighting.
39. The Generic Plan of Management for Parks, Sportsgrounds and General Community Use Land applies to Joynton Park. This Plan of Management supports the operation of park evening lighting to meet safety and risk management objectives.

### Financial Implications

40. Funds required for Park Evening Lighting in Joynton Park would be sourced from the Lights, Poles and Electrical Additions capital works program for the 2024/25 financial year. Funding approval will be considered by Council as part of the 2024/25 budget.
41. Operating costs to provide the Park Evening Lighting service would be an annual allowance including for re-turfing worn park areas, lighting maintenance and energy costs. All ongoing costs will be considered by Council as part of the 2024/25 budget

### Relevant Legislation

42. Relevant legislative requirements include:
  - (a) Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
  - (b) State Environmental Planning Policy Infrastructure 2007
  - (c) Crown Land Management Act 2016
  - (d) Local Government Act 1993

### Critical Dates / Time Frames

43. Park evening lighting projects require long lead times for design, community consultation and approvals to be completed prior to the commencement of installation works. As community consultation has already been undertaken for Joynton Park, it is possible for this lighting installation to be completed during the 2024/25 financial year. It is anticipated that lighting can be installed in Joynton Park by June 2025.

### Options

44. In contemplating a possible service enhancement for Park Evening Lighting at Joynton Park, the following options were considered:
  - (a) Night activation in some areas of Joynton, Tote and Nuffield Park - The level of demand for passive recreation after dark is modest. Tote and Nuffield Parks are situated closer to homes and the impacts of this change are unlikely to be tolerable to the community for these locations.
  - (b) Do Nothing - This option retains the current service provision, however it does not meet the preference expressed by the majority of the community.



## Public Consultation

45. The City conducted a trial of park evening lighting in Joynton Park Zetland between April and October 2022 from 5pm to 10pm each night. The community were informed of the trial on 24 March 2022 via a letterbox drop. During the trial the City continued to monitor the use of the open space. The City did not receive feedback during this time that noise was an issue for nearby residents. At the conclusion of the trial a further letterbox drop was conducted to the local community advising of the removal of the temporary lighting and seeking feedback on the trial. The City also placed signs on-site that referenced further information about the consultation on the City's website. During the consultation period only 12 responses were received, which is not considered to be a meaningful number of responses for consultation purposes.
46. From 25 September to 23 October 2023, the City asked the community for feedback on a proposal to install permanent lights to the open lawn areas of Joynton Park, Tote Park and Nuffield Park in Zetland. Consultation activities included online engagement, a letter to residents, intercept surveys and project signage at the park.
47. During the consultation period, 360 submissions were received including 165 online surveys, 192 intercept surveys and three email submissions. The Engagement Report relating to this survey is included in Attachment A.
48. Over 87 per cent of people responding to the survey supported park evening lighting to 10pm in the open grass area of a park as a permanent feature. The proposal was not supported by 40 respondents (11 per cent of people) and a further 4 respondents were unsure.
49. Making a safer, more enjoyable space was the most popular reason (89.45 per cent) people selected for lighting parks in the evening. Also, 61.7 per cent of people said they expect to visit a park more often if permanent lighting was installed.
50. The reasons given by people who did not support permanent park evening lighting were more noise (78.05 per cent), more light pollution (75.61 per cent) and more wear and tear on the turf (65.85 per cent). About 29 per cent of the people objecting to the evening park lighting also selected "Other" as a reason, however no additional data was collected in these circumstances.
51. Of the three parks proposed, Joynton Park was selected by 78.65 per cent of people as the most popular park to have permanent lighting installed. Only 32.16 per cent of people responding to the survey supported evening lighting in Tote Park, and 47.37 per cent of people supported evening lighting in Nuffield Park.

**VERONICA LEE**

Director City Services

Peter Shields, Chief Engineer