

**10.2 IRISH HARP RESERVE - DRAFT CONCEPT PLAN FOR COMMUNITY CONSULTATION ROUND 2****File Number:** IC22/4**Author:** Nina Phillips, Landscape Architect**Responsible Executive:** Vincent Cammell, Director Infrastructure & Environment**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Council's Open Space Strategy identifies the priority parks for upgrades, with Irish Harp Reserve scheduled for an upgrade in the 2021/2022 financial year. In preparation for the redevelopment, Council Administration facilitated an initial (Round 1) community consultation from 25 March 2021 to 18 April 2021, to obtain background information on how the park is currently used, in addition to what users would like to see as part of the upgrade.

Following the Round 1 consultation, two Council Workshops were held on 11 May 2021, and 6 July 2021, to discuss the consultation outcomes and provide suggestions and indicative costs for the upgrade of the Reserve.

In mid-2021, the Administration submitted two grant applications to financially assist with the upgrade of Irish Harp Reserve. In late 2021, Council was advised that the application for funding from the State Government's Open Space Grant Program 2021-2022 was successful for the amount of \$325,000. This was the full amount sought in the application to assist with costs for lighting, accessible paths/laneways, play equipment and nature play, park furniture, basketball half-court, and improved irrigation, garden and lawn areas. On 11 January 2022, Council was notified that we were unsuccessful in our application for the Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing grant for the lesser amount of \$185,000. Therefore there are no other new financial implications for Council to consider.

A draft concept plan (costing a total of \$650,000) was refined and presented at a further Councillor Information and Workshop Session on 7 December 2021, where it received positive feedback and commentary. In response to Elected Member feedback at that session, this draft concept plan was further refined and can be seen in **Attachment 2**.

The main refinement since the December 2021 workshop is switching the basketball court and swing set, to enable the swing set to be located in a position that receives the additional shade of an existing tree. Some minor concerns from this change have been highlighted and addressed in the discussion section of the report.

The Administration recommends proceeding to Round 2 community consultation (second and final round) to gather further feedback and the level of support on the draft concept plan as revised and shown in **Attachment 2**.

Round 2 community consultation will run in February 2022, with the next steps and timing for delivery against grant conditions presented to Council in March 2022 / April 2022 (depending on the feedback received).

**RECOMMENDATION****That Council:**

1. **Having considered Item 10.2 Irish Harp Reserve - Draft Concept Plan for Community Consultation Round 2 receives and notes the report.**
2. **Endorses, in principle, the Draft Concept Plan – Option 2 (as presented in Attachment 2) for the purposes of Round 2 community consultation.**

3. **Is provided with a further Report in March 2022 / April 2022 advising the outcomes of community consultation on the Draft Concept Plan – Option 2 and the next stages to proceed towards delivery.**

## DISCUSSION

Council's Open Space Strategy identifies the priority parks for upgrades, with Irish Harp Reserve scheduled for an upgrade in the 2021/2022 financial year. In preparation for the redevelopment, Council Administration facilitated Round 1 of community consultation from 25 March 2021 to 18 April 2021, to obtain background information on how the park is currently used and what users would like to see as part of the upgrade.

A summary infographic was prepared with the results from the Round 1 consultation, which is provided in **Attachment 1**. The infographic shows the number of responses for each item from a total of 34 responses that were received for the survey.

Further items to note as outcomes of the first round of consultation conducted include:

- The most common use of the reserve was informal recreation on the lawn, e.g. exercising dogs (21 respondents). The next most common uses included ball games on the lawn (12 respondents), using the play equipment, and seating and picnic settings (all receiving 11 respondents each).
- There were a small number of responses that raised the safety issues currently inhibiting their use of the space, including poor lighting in the evenings, and the seating being used by people who are engaging in dangerous or illegal behaviour.
- Just over 50% of respondents bring children to the park.
- The most common requests for park furniture included picnic settings and/or benches, followed by bins, a drinking fountain (with a dog bowl), a BBQ, and some undercover shade.
- The most raised requests for additional items to consider in the upgrade included improvements to safety (like lighting and fencing), improvements to landscape design, and retaining the lawn area.

Following the Round 1 consultation, Council Workshops were held on 11 May 2021, and 6 July 2021, to discuss the consultation outcomes and provide suggestions and indicative costs for the upgrade of the Reserve.

Council indicated support for the draft concept plan referred to as – 'Option 2' (\$650,000 option) as the ideal scenario, conditional on the Administration being able to obtain external financial support. As a result, at the 27 July 2021 Council Meeting, Council resolved to submit two grant applications for financial support for the upgrade of Irish Harp Reserve.

Staff submitted the two applications and the project was put on hold pending the outcomes of each. In late October 2021, Council was advised of being successful in the grant application that was made through the State Government's Open Space Grant Program 2021-2022. This meant that Council's preferred 'Option 2' concept plan was viable to be pursued further.

A revised concept plan was refined and presented at the 7 December 2021 Council Workshop where it received positive feedback, with some comments for consideration including:

- Pedestrian crossing and wayfinding opportunities;
- Specimen trees to be planted along the narrow strip of lawn adjacent the Kindy, e.g. Claret Ash;
- Public art to consider larger projects, including community art mosaic projects. Art elements and discovery space to be discussed in further detail – investigate using the full art allocation of \$25k to Irish Harp Reserve
- Grass pitch could be used as a miniature soccer field (futsal),

- Prominent entry points – suggest a double width entrance to the main road, the Clown will add extra attraction
- Play equipment shade – consider new tree plantings, established canopies will take time to mature. Shade sails are costly. Reconfiguration of the play equipment and half-court basketball could maximise existing tree canopy to create shade over the equipment from the outset of the project
- Plant sizes implemented vary on the species. Recommend Administration to return to Council Members with examples of ideas – suggest purposeful protection for the plants or well-established sizes. Consider creating a desired pathline and create a physical barrier e.g. circular loops for plant protection
- What additional items could benefit the design? E.g. Specimen trees and grass, additional fencing for the sporting area and fencing across the Kindergarten.

The Administration has made some refinements to the draft concept plan 'Option 2' since the December Councillor Information and Workshop Session. The main change is switching the basketball court and swing set to enable the swing set to benefit from the shade of the existing tree canopy. As a result, the play tower positioning has been adjusted but is still visible centrally from the laneways and Regency Road.

Furthermore, the basketball court is now closer to the safety lighting of the new path. A risk of this amendment is that it may encourage use of the court at night (under the minimal safety lighting of the path). To mitigate this risk, the basketball court has been reorientated so that the light will be directly behind the backboard, focusing light spill on the path and making it more inconvenient to use the ring at night.

The Administration recommends proceeding to Round 2 community consultation to gather feedback and the level of support on the draft concept plan Option 2 as revised and shown in **Attachment 2**.

### **Public Consultation**

Round 2 consultation will also include options for the different types of playground tower that can be considered for installation. Users will be able to choose which type of tower they prefer based on the various play value and features specified for each tower type.

The catchment of the consultation area will be consistent with Round 1 and Council will continue to engage closely with locals and neighbours who have shown a keen interest in helping shape design outcomes of the project based on their experiences and knowledge of the reserve. Respondents to the first round will also be contacted and encouraged to provide their thoughts.

Round 2 community consultation will run in February 2022 with the next steps presented to Council in March 2022 /April 2022 (depending on the feedback received).

### **Implications, Related Questions and Further Information**

Due to the project being placed on hold in order to allow a response for the grant applications and the increased budget and scope of works, the Irish Harp Reserve upgrade can no longer be fully constructed as originally intended by June 2022. The following timeframe is an indication of the development of the project as presented at the December 2021 Councillor Workshop (which will not compromise the grant funding deliverables):

- Seek endorsement on design to proceed to consultation – January 2022
- Community consultation – Round 2 - February 2022
- Refine the concept plan based on consultation feedback - March 2022
- Council Report for endorsement of the concept plan - April 2022

- Project Documentation finalised – May-June 2022
- Tender for Construction – June-July 2022
- Construction (depending on availability of contractors and materials) - August-November 2022

**Relevance to Core Strategies / Policy**

- Open Space Strategy
- Indicative Park Priorities Timeline – 2018-2037
- Irish Harp Reserve listed as Medium Term (6 – 10 Years) Neighbourhood Park Upgrade scheduled for upgrade in 2021-22 Financial Year as part of Annual Business Plan.

**Community Plan: Towards 2040****► Responsible & Sustainable****2 to 5 year timeline**

- RS2.4 Understand and increase levels of annual tonnes of recycled materials used in our civil infrastructure projects
- RS2.7 Demonstrate innovation in the supply and delivery of infrastructure projects

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. **Summary of Feedback from Community Consultation - Infographic** [↓](#)
2. **Draft Concept Plan - Option 2 - Irish Harp Reserve Upgrade** [↓](#)

# IRISH HARP RESERVE UPGRADE

Summary of feedback from 34 respondents from community consultation undertaken from 25 March to 18 April 2021.

## MOST LOVED ASPECTS NOW

- OPEN SPACE FOR KIDS/DOGS, SECLUDED LOCATION FROM ROADS (23 RESPONSES)
- LAWN FOR PLAYING ON/RUNNING ON (28 RESPONSES)
- ACCESS TO PLAY EQUIPMENT FOR KIDS (12 RESPONSES)

## FREQUENCY OF USE



## VISITING WITH CHILDREN



## TOP 3 AREAS OF CONCERN

1. SAFETY/SECURITY AT NIGHT (11 RESPONSES)
2. LANEWAY ACCESS (6 RESPONSES)
3. ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (5 RESPONSES)



## RANKED PRIORITIES FOR THE UPGRADE

1. IMPROVED LIGHTING (25 RESPONSES)
2. NEW PLAY EQUIPMENT (20 RESPONSES)
3. NATURE PLAY (18 RESPONSES)
4. ENCLOSED DOG PARK (15 RESPONSES)
5. MORE PARK FURNITURE (14 RESPONSES)
6. PUBLIC ART + BASKETBALL GOAL (10 RESPONSES EACH)
7. FITNESS EQUIPMENT - MIXED (8 RESPONSES)

## TOP 3 PIECES OF PLAY EQUIPMENT REQUESTED

1. CLIMBING EQUIPMENT/TOWER (26 RESPONSES)
2. FLYING FOX (15 RESPONSES)
3. SWINGS (14 RESPONSES)

## ADDITIONAL REQUESTS

- GREEN LAWN RETAINED (28 RESPONSES)
- SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS (9 RESPONSES)
- IMPROVED GARDEN DESIGN (4 RESPONSES)

## FREQUENCY OF USE AFTER UPGRADE





