

Australian –Turkish Friendship Memorial - Proposal

29 July 2014

Presenter: Ian Shears, Manager Urban Landscapes

Purpose and background

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the installation of a memorial sculpture in Kings Domain acknowledging the special relationship between Turkey and Australia which has evolved from the Gallipoli campaign of 1915.
2. The memorial applicant is Tectura Architects on behalf of the Turkish Sub-branch of the Victorian RSL. The memorial proposal has been developed and assessed by an external reference panel in keeping with the aims and requirements of the City of Melbourne Policy for Memorials and Monuments in the City of Melbourne Parklands (2003).

Key issues

3. Consultation on the proposal has occurred within the Turkish community and via an external reference panel established by the administration as required by the Policy for Memorials and Monuments in the City of Melbourne Parklands. The proposed location and the recommended artist are supported by the external reference panel. Refer to Attachment 2 for the design, proposed location and the Reference Panel Report.
4. Council approval is required for any major new memorial in the city's parks and gardens. A timely decision on the proposal is requested as it is the intention of the applicant to have the project completed and installed by April 2015, in time for the 100 year commemoration of the Gallipoli landing.
5. All costs associated with the memorial will be borne by the applicant and the proposal will not proceed until all the funding is in place. It is proposed that the Council officers the installation of the memorial on site, at the cost of the applicant. On completion, the memorial will be transferred to the Council Arts and Heritage Collection and the city would then be responsible for the on-going care and maintenance.
6. A Heritage Victoria permit will be required for the installation of the memorial, as the proposed location is within the state heritage registered area for Domain Parklands.

Recommendation from management

7. That Council:
 - 7.1 approves the installation of a memorial structure acknowledging the special relationship between Turkey and Australia, in Kings Domain
 - 7.2 notes that a donation agreement enabling the transfer of the artwork to the Council will be negotiated and entered into under delegation.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment
2. Reference Panel Report Australian – Turkish Friendship Memorial

Supporting Attachment

Legal

1. The proposed site for the memorial is in Kings Domain, east of Birdwood Avenue. The Council is the committee of management for this area under the *Crown Land Reserves Act 1978* and as such is responsible for the care and maintenance of the land.

Finance

2. No direct financial assistance is being sought for this project, and no allocation had been made for the project in Council's 2014–15 budget.
3. The estimated total cost for the project is in the order of \$400,000. The proponent has received a grant of \$100,000 and intends to raise the balance of funds required through public fundraising and the project will not commence until such time as all the funding is secured.
4. The Council will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the memorial. A sum for maintenance of memorial art works is already provided for in the Budget.

Conflict of interest

5. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a direct or indirect interest in relation to the matter of the report.

Stakeholder consultation

6. An initial proposal for this memorial was received by Council in 2010. As per the requirements of the Policy for Memorials and Monuments in the City of Melbourne Parklands (2003) Council Officers established an external reference panel to provide advice to Council on the proposal. The advice was provided to both Council and the applicants in July 2010.
7. In response to this advice, the applicants developed a detailed project brief and established a process to further develop the proposal which included an invitation to artists to submit concept designs and the creation of a community reference panel to review four potential designs for the memorial. One of these designs was then recommended to Council for consideration.
8. The CoM external reference panel re-convened in July 2014 to review this recommendation against the advice provided in 2010. The panel concluded that all requirements had been met and that the design is supported. The panel report can be found at Attachment 2.

Relation to Council policy

9. Policy for Memorials and Monuments in the City of Melbourne Parklands (2003)
10. Arts Strategy 2014–17.

Environmental sustainability

11. Environmental sustainability issues or opportunities were not specifically considered as part of this proposal as the impact on matters such as water, waste, greenhouse gas levels and energy consumption are minor and the opportunities for mitigation of these negligible.

AUSTRALIAN TURKISH FRIENDSHIP MEMORIAL

REPORT FROM THE EXTERNAL REFERENCE PANEL

Recommendations from the meeting held on Thursday July 3, 2014 at 3pm and later confirmation of minor issues.

Reference group members: Chair: Ian Shears (Manager, Urban Landscapes Branch), Prof. Kate Darian-Smith (Professor of Australian Studies and History, Melbourne University), Thomas Dixon (National Trust of Victoria), Mike O'Brien, Denis Baguley (Chief Executive, Shrine of Remembrance)

In attendance: Eddie Butler Bowdon, Angela Hill, (City of Melbourne)

The Panel resolved that:

1. The proposal submitted by the applicants fully meets the criteria for harmony, scale and respect to the site and existing sculptures, as outlined in the Reference Panel report of July 2010.
2. It supports the recommended sculpture by Matthew Harding at the site proposed adjacent to Birdwood Avenue, Kings Domain. The concept submitted on July 7 which includes minor design revisions to address comments about potential vandalism is supported.
3. The size of the completed piece should be contained to a total area 3m wide, 3 m deep and up to 3.8m high.
4. The proposed materials were approved as follows:
 - A granite base plate with a phyllotactic mosaic of white stone pebbles and engraved text on the top surface.
 - A lighter coloured granite for the hand carved pine and casuarina cones
 - 6mm woven marine grade stainless steel for the wreath/crescent

The material palette was approved for aesthetic reasons and also because of the suitability of these materials for use in a public environment.

5. Interpretation- The proposal to inscribed text attributed to Mustafa Ataturk on the base plate and a standard C of M art plaque are recommended as sufficient for this art work.
6. Specifically the idea of inscribing a website or similar into the base was not supported, as these features are probably of a relatively short term nature, compared to the art work itself. It was noted that there would be other avenues for interpretation of the piece, but these do not form part of the art work process or this application.

7. The Reference Panel had no comment to make about the timelines and funding required for the project.

In Summary: The memorial concept by Matthew Harding and the continuation of this project is recommended to Council.

Recommended memorial location

East side of Birdwood Avenue, and south of Government House Drive, Kings Domain.

1. Context plan –red marker indicates general location



2. Specific location indicated by the red cross



Recommended memorial design

“Seeds of Friendship” by Matthew Harding

“Perhaps the most moving aspect of the Gallipoli story and the Australian-Turkish relationship is the manner in which soldiers of both countries were able to keep their humanity in the most inhumane conditions. This humanity became the seed for the remarkable respect and dignity shown not only in battle, but which gave rise to the deep bond of friendship that is as strong and vital today as it was a century ago.” (extract from the sculptor’s submission).

The key elements of the proposed design are the two seed pods (from the ‘Lone pine’ and the casuarina) which are of a similar form. The wreath/crescent shape invites both commemoration and connection. A section of text by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, (commanding officer at Gallipoli and subsequently the first President of Turkey) acknowledging the bond between the two countries will be engraved into the base of the memorial.

