JJ HOLLAND PARK CONCEPT PLAN 2008

Division: Design and Urban Environment

Presenter: Rob Moore, Manager Parks and Urban Design

Purpose

1. To seek Environment Committee endorsement of the JJ Holland Park Concept Plan 2008 (Attachment 1).

Recommendation from Management

2. That the Environment Committee endorses the JJ Holland Park Concept Plan 2008.

Background

3. JJ Holland Park provides an important area of public open space in Kensington. Totalling 11 hectares, it is the largest park in the Kensington suburb and the only park in the area with community sports grounds.

4. The first Concept Plan for JJ Holland Park was developed in 1998 and was intended to guide the park’s development for a period of five years. In the 10 years since the development of the Concept Plan, Kensington has experienced significant change and residential growth.

5. The Concept Plan has been updated to ensure it meets the future needs of park users.

6. The purpose of the JJ Holland Park Concept Plan 2008 (“Concept Plan”) is to outline the vision for JJ Holland Park and guide its future management and development over the next five years.

7. The development of the Concept Plan has included a comprehensive program of community consultation. A draft Concept Plan was prepared in consultation with the JJ Holland Park Concept Plan Advisory Committee and was released for public consultation in February 2008.

Key Issues

8. The Concept Plan proposals and the key issues raised during consultation are summarised below.

Car Parking

9. An asphalt car park currently occupies a large area in the centre of JJ Holland Park. The original Concept Plan produced in 1998 recommended the removal of this central car park, with the land reverting to green space. This is in line with Council’s Parks Policy which seeks to reduce the use of parkland for car parking through the provision of alternative parking facilities. This proposal maximises the area available for informal and passive recreation within the Park. The design for this area would include park benches, picnic tables and barbeque facilities.
10. Alternative parking spaces for 120 cars have recently been completed along Childers Street which forms the southern boundary to the Park.

11. The issue of car parking received the highest number of responses during public consultation with two thirds of respondents in favour of the car park’s removal. Responses received against this recommendation expressed concern that insufficient car parking has been made available and any removal of car parking should be limited. A small number of respondents were concerned the removal of all car parking would have an impact on parking levels in adjacent residential streets.

12. Management considers that the additional car parking in Childers Street provides adequate space for park users. The retention of any car parking in the centre of the Park would adversely impact on Council’s ability to develop a high quality passive recreation area. The Concept Plan therefore recommends the removal of all car parking from the centre of JJ Holland Park.

13. The draft Concept Plan recommended relocating the 16 car parking spaces at the front (park-side) of the Kensington Community Children’s Centre, thereby improving traffic management and pedestrian links between the Park and the Centre. This proposal was strongly opposed by the Committee and parents of the Children’s Centre. The recommendation has been removed from the Concept Plan.

**Dog Management**

14. Dog walking is a popular activity in JJ Holland Park which provides a large dog off leash area. The remainder of the Park is designated as a dog on leash area.

15. The draft Concept Plan did not propose any changes to the current dog off-leash areas. However, during consultation, a significant number of respondents sought to confirm that the off-leash areas remain unchanged.

16. Public consultation also revealed issues regarding the management of dogs around the children’s playground. A number of respondents requested some form of fencing between the playground and the dog off leash area. This issue was raised at the public meeting where it was highlighted dogs often go in search of food at the barbeques in the playground.

17. The *Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act* 1994 (“the Act”) is the legislation that provides for the management of dogs in public places. The Act allows for dog off leash areas to be designated through a Municipal Order. The off leash areas are provided on the condition that the dog remains under ‘effective voice or hand control’ of the owner, and must be brought under ‘effective control by means of a leash, cord or chain’ within 20 metres of playgrounds and barbeques.

18. The Concept Plan recommends the current dog off-leash areas in JJ Holland Park be retained with a review of these areas to be undertaken in the medium term. It is considered there are benefits of conducting such a review across all parks within the Kensington area which is beyond the scope of the JJ Holland Park Concept Plan.

19. The Concept Plan does not include a recommendation to fence the playground. The review of the dog off leash area would consider the proximity of the playground and the need to provide physical barriers to separate activity. It is noted the fencing of playgrounds can lead to children receiving less parental supervision. The Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria (PRAV) reports experience which suggests that children who enjoy quality play environments in the company of their parents or adult carers will experience significantly less injury than those who play in isolation from supportive adults.
20. While PRAV acknowledges that in some cases fencing is needed to enable adequate supervision of children with special needs, it does not encourage Councils to erect structures such as fences or gates intended to separate children from adults.

**Park Activities and Uses**

21. JJ Holland Park accommodates a diverse range of uses. The role of the Park manager is to balance opportunities for all park users including sporting and passive recreation activities.

22. The recommendations outlined in the Concept Plan for passive and unstructured activities include:

   22.1. upgrading park lighting. This received strong support through consultation;

   22.2. retaining the existing children’s playground and the extreme sports area;

   22.3. constructing a new building for the ‘Venny’ adventure playground;

   22.4. improving the path network, picnic facilities and park signage; and

   22.5. upgrading park entrances and the interface between the Park and the South Kensington Railway Station.

23. JJ Holland Park receives significant levels of use by community sports clubs. The recommendations in the Concept Plan for the sporting facilities within the Park include:

   23.1. refurbishing the sports pavilion;

   23.2. upgrading sports lighting;

   23.3. relocating the cricket practice wickets; and

   23.4. investigating the installation of a synthetic sports surface on sports field number three to trial its effectiveness.

24. Community consultation revealed strong support for the completion of the jogging track around JJ Holland Park.

**Vegetation**

25. Consultation revealed strong support for increased tree planting within JJ Holland Park.

**Environmental Sustainability**

26. The Concept Plan recommends initiatives to improve environmental sustainability. Opportunities include:

   26.1. reducing the use of potable water in irrigating JJ Holland Park;

   26.2. incorporating Water Sensitive Urban Design initiatives; and

   26.3. introducing solar lighting and solar hot water into park facilities.

**Time Frame**

27. The Concept Plan outlines a vision for JJ Holland Park with proposals to be implemented over the next five years. An Implementation Plan will be developed although specific projects will be subject to Council funding.
Relation to Council Policy

28. The preparation of the Concept Plan is in line with City Plan 2010’s Strategic Direction 1.7 to:

   “Build an integrated and connected park system.”

29. This Strategic Direction includes the following Objective:

   “Manage all City parkland to provide a balanced mix of active and passive recreation facilities.”

Consultation

30. The draft Concept Plan for JJ Holland Park was prepared in consultation with the Holland Park Concept Plan Advisory Committee.

31. In February 2008 the draft Concept Plan was released for public consultation. 115 written responses were received and six people attended a public meeting. Additional meetings were held with key stakeholders including representatives from the Kensington Maternal and Child Health Centre, the Kensington Community Children’s Cooperative and the Kensington Community Recreation Centre.

Finance

32. The cost of implementing the Concept Plan is estimated at $5.5 million over five years. Funding will be sought through Council’s annual capital works program, within existing program funding of Parks and buildings.

Legal

33. The subject matter of the report and the recommendation are within the objectives and functions of Council.

Sustainability

34. Growing Green Council’s Environmental Sustainability Strategy for Parks and Recreation facilities managed by the City of Melbourne provides a key underpinning policy framework for the JJ Holland Park Concept Plan.

35. The Concept Plan proposes a range of sustainability initiatives designed to reduce energy use and water consumption in JJ Holland Park.
**Concept Plan General Recommendations**

- **Purpose of the Concept Plan**: The JJ Holland Park Concept Plan will guide improvements to the park over the next five years.

- **Upgrade lighting on all paths in the park**.

- **Tree Planting**:
  - Introduction
  - Existing tree
  - Proposed tree

- **Park Entrances**: Provide good external path connections to enable access for all potential park users, including people with disabilities.

- **Park Signage**: Review and improve park signage to include a set of directional signage and appropriate signage on the new jogging track.

- **Toilets**: Explore opportunities to reduce the use of potable (drinking) water in irrigating Holland Park and incorporate water sensitive urban design into the park.

- **Sustainability**: Opportunities for solar lighting and solar hot water will be introduced.

- **Environment Committee**
  - 2 September 2008

**Attachment 1**

**Agenda Item 5.1**

**Environment Committee**

**2 September 2008**
1 Children's Centre
Retain car parking on park-side of the Children's Centre. Formalise a turning area at the end of the car park.

2 'The Venny' Adventure Playground
Retain the Adventure Playground in its current location. Construct a new building for indoor activities on the south east side of the Playground. Demolish existing building and return the area to parkland.

3 Sports Field Number 1
Retain existing fenced oval and upgrade sports lighting.

4 Sports Field Number 2
Realign oval to accommodate the jogging circuit.

5 Sports Field Number 3
Realign and upgrade the sports field. Consider installing a synthetic surface and underground water tanks. These tanks would collect rain run-off from the synthetic sports field for use in irrigating other areas of Holland Park. Investigate the installation of lighting for night time use of the sports field.

6 Kensington Road Passive Recreation Area
Create a new passive recreation area adjacent to Kensington Road. The design of this area is to include picnic facilities.

7 Pathways
Create additional paths to improve access into, and circulation through the park.

8 Jogging Track
Complete the granitic gravel jogging circuit through the park.

9 Pavilion and Depot
Renovate the existing pavilion to meet the needs of sports clubs and enable the facility to be utilised for a broad range of uses. Reduce the size of the depot to allow for completion of the jogging track along Childers Street.

10 Cricket Nets
Relocate the cricket practice nets to remove the run-ups from the sports oval.

11 Play Precinct
Retain the existing playground, basketball court and associated facilities.

12 Extreme Sports Area
Retain the skate ramp, BMX track and associated facilities in the extreme sports area.

13 Car Park Removal
Remove the internal car park and return this area to parkland. The provision of car parking for park users has recently been completed along Childers Street. Potential location for picnic facilities.

14 Interface with Sth Kensington Railway Station
Provide a safe, well-lit and welcoming interface with South Kensington Railway Station.

15 Open Native Woodland
Retain and enhance the open native woodland character of this area.
FINANCE ATTACHMENT

JJ HOLLAND PARK CONCEPT PLAN 2008

Funding for the works will be subject to the normal Council budget process.

Joe Groher
Manager Financial Services
The subject matter of the report and the recommendation are within the objectives and functions of Council.

Section 3C(1) of the Local Government Act 1989 (“the LG Act”) provides that the:

“… primary objective of a Council is to endeavour to achieve the best outcomes for the local community having regard to the long term and cumulative effects of decisions.”

Further, section 3C(2)(a) of the LG Act sets out that in seeking to achieve its primary objective a Council must have regard to certain facilitating objectives, including:

“(a) to promote the social, economic and environmental viability and sustainability of the municipal district;

…. 

(c) to improve the overall quality of life of people in the local community;”

Section 3E(1) provides that the functions of a Council include:

“(b) planning for and providing services and facilities for the local community;

…

(d) undertaking strategic and land use planning for the municipal district;”

Kim Wood
Manager Legal Services