

2.1 MONASH PLAYGROUND AND PLAYSPACE STRATEGY 2020

(Author: JG)

Responsible Director: Russell Hopkins

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the 26 May 2020 Council Meeting, Council endorsed the draft Playground and Playspace Strategy for public exhibition and community feedback. The draft Strategy was subsequently advertised in the June 2020 Monash Bulletin distributed to every Monash household and exhibited online at *Have Your Say* from 28 May to 3 July 2020. At the close of consultation, 57 on-line submissions were received.

PURPOSE

To seek Council endorsement of the Monash Playground and Playspace Strategy 2020 (Attachment 2).

KEY CONSIDERATIONS/ISSUES

The Monash Playground and Playspace Strategy was developed in stages as follows:

- Stage 1 (June - August 2019): Research and Data Review
- Stage 2 (July - September 2019): Community Consultation
- Stage 3 (October - November 2019): Data Analysis and Synthesis
- Stage 4 (28 May – 3 July 2020): Public exhibition of draft Strategy
- Stage 5 (25 August 2020): Report to Council.

Stages 1-4 have been completed and a final Strategy (Stage 5) is now presented for Council consideration and endorsement.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Monash Playground and Playspace Strategy (the ‘Strategy’) is aspirational and not all of the recommendations will be implemented in the life of the Strategy.

The development of new playspaces is reliant on a number of factors including the availability of open space in appropriate locations (i.e. gap areas), site suitability and budget approval.

Playground Upgrades will continue to be funded through Council’s annual Playground Upgrade Program where six to eight playgrounds are upgraded annually (subject to funding).

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

Following a lengthy period of community consultation, including public exhibition of the Council-approved draft, a final Monash Playground and Playspace Strategy 2020 has been developed for Council consideration and endorsement (Attachment 2).

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RECOMMENDATION*That Council:*

1. *Note the submissions received in response to the public exhibition of and recommended changes to the draft Strategy as detailed in Attachment 1; and*
2. *Endorse the Monash Playground and Playspace Strategy 2020 (Attachment 2).*

INTRODUCTION

This report considers the feedback received through the consultation period for the draft Monash Playground and Playspace Strategy 2020, and seeks Council endorsement of the revised Strategy being presented for adoption.

BACKGROUND

At its Meeting held 26 May 2020, Council endorsed a draft Playground and Playspace Strategy for public exhibition and community feedback.

The draft strategy was subsequently advertised in the June 2020 Monash Bulletin distributed to every Monash household and exhibited online at *Have Your Say* from 28 May to 3 July 2020. At the close of the consultation period, 57 on-line submissions were received. A summary of submissions received is included as Attachment 1 to this report.

All submissions have since been reviewed, and where appropriate, have informed the development of a final Strategy (Attachment 2) which is now presented for Council consideration and endorsement.

DISCUSSION

Overall feedback on the draft Strategy was very positive. The major themes of the consultation included:

- The need for more public toilets (22 submissions)
- Feedback on specific playgrounds (12 submissions)
- Lack of playground provision (12 submissions; Oakleigh Ward 11, Glen Waverley Ward 1)
- Positive feedback (7 submissions)
- Design considerations (7 submissions)
- Other (3 submissions)

A full report detailing the community feedback on the draft Strategy is provided in Attachment 1: Summary of Key Findings and Community Consultation.

Recommended Changes to draft Strategy

All submissions were reviewed as part of the consultation period with the following changes proposed as a result of the feedback:

1. **New recommendation (#26)** - Wilson Street (Oakleigh) to be upgraded in accordance with its open space classification (*Ornamental / Cultivated Garden*) as detailed in the Monash Open Space Strategy (2018, p11).
2. **New classification for Princes Highway Reserve playspace** – based on community feedback and reserve capacity, Princes Highway Reserve playspace has been upgraded from a Neighbourhood scale to a District scale playspace.
3. **Westerfield Drive playspace (Nottinghill) to be included in the 5 year Playground Redevelopment Program (Appendix 2)** – a design budget of \$47,000 has been carried forward to 2020/21 for recommendation 25 of the Strategy: *Review play provision at Nottinghill Neighbourhood House (including Westerfield Drive pocket park) with the view to consolidating play equipment on-site and developing a new local scale public playground on the corner of Samada Street and Westerfield Drive.*

With consultation and detailed design for Westerfield Drive playspace (inclusive of Nottinghill Neighbourhood House) to be completed by June 2021, construction of a new local scale playspace for Nottinghill can occur in 2021/22 (subject to funding).

4. **Argyle Reserve playspace to be included in the 5 year Playground Redevelopment Program (Appendix 2)** – Based on community feedback and the recognised gap in open space and playground provision in the Oakleigh Ward (especially Hughesdale), Argyle Reserve playspace has been elevated in priority and included in the Playground Redevelopment Program (Appendix 2 of the Strategy) for design in 2023/24 and construction in 2024/25 (subject to funding).

The final Strategy, inclusive of the above mentioned changes, is now presented for Council consideration and endorsement (Attachment 2).

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are a number of Council policies, strategies and plans that provide an important framework for the Strategy. In particular, the Council Plan, A Healthy and Resilient Monash, Monash Open Space Strategy, Gender Equity Strategy and Action Plan, Age Friendly Monash, Active Monash Capital Works Priorities Framework and Council's Asset Management Policy. This Strategy is consistent and aligns with each of these key documents.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The social implications of adopting and implementing the Strategy include -

- a) enhancing a sense of community – e.g. playground upgrades, playground openings, active recreation opportunities for families and social cohesion;

- b) improving community health and well-being – e.g. improved playgrounds (intergenerational and accessible playspaces) for active recreation will contribute to happy and healthier communities; and
- c) education and skills development – e.g. SRV's Good Play space Guide (2007) acknowledges that through play children develop qualities necessary in adulthood, such as: problem solving; independence; self-awareness; creativity; resilience; spatial knowledge; and flexibility and ability to deal with change.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Monash Playground and Playspace Strategy (the 'Strategy') is aspirational and not all of the recommendations will be implemented in the life of the Strategy.

The development of new playspaces is reliant on a number of factors including the availability of open space in appropriate locations (i.e. gap areas), site suitability and budget approval.

Playground Upgrades will continue to be funded through Council's annual Playground Upgrade Program where six to eight playgrounds are upgraded annually (subject to Council budget adoption).

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The United Nations (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 31) states...*every child has a right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child, and to participate freely in cultural life and arts.*

Sport and Recreation Victoria's Good Playspace Guide (2007) also acknowledges...*all children have the right to play. When children play they are not just filling in time, they are learning to interpret their world. Play facilitates the learning of life skills, and for this reason, the provision of quality outdoor playspaces is vitally important in local communities.*

CONCLUSION

The Monash Playground and Playspace Strategy 2020 will guide the future planning, provision, design and management of playgrounds in Monash for the next decade. The Playground and Playspace Strategy is a high level strategic document that seeks to identify the playground needs of existing and future residents of Monash and identifies potential gaps in the provision and opportunities to address those gaps.

The Strategy is cognisant of and reinforces the key directions and findings detailed in the Monash Open Space Strategy (2018), and like open space provision, recognises that current playground provision levels are insufficient in some areas to address the future needs of population growth and residential development in Monash.

The Strategy is aspirational, and it is acknowledged that not all of the recommendations will be able to be implemented in the life of the Strategy. Implementation (new playgrounds) relies on a number of factors including budget, the pace of redevelopment and population growth, site suitability and the availability of land to purchase in appropriate locations.

It is recommended Council endorse the Monash Playground and Playspace Strategy 2020 (Attachment 2).

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Summary of Key Findings and Community Consultation.

Attachment 2 - Monash Playground and Playspace Strategy 2020