



Lodge Road Playground update

Prepared September 2023

1. Introduction

The purpose of this project-specific Communications & Engagement Plan is to outline the ways stakeholders can be involved in the decision-making process regarding finalisation of the concept plans for the upgrade of Lodge Road Playground, in Lodge Road, Cremorne. In accordance with Council's *Playgrounds Plan of Management* and *Playgrounds Methodology*, we are committed to ensuring that the new playground best meets the needs of users and the local community.

1.1 Council's Community Engagement Strategy

This Communications & Engagement Plan has been prepared in accordance with Council's *Community Engagement Protocol*. The Protocol is used to determine the level of 'level(s) of impact' applicable to this project/decision (proposal). This proposal has been determined as:

LEVEL OF IMPACT	LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT
Low/Local	Inform/Consult

Council used the framework shown below in Table 1.1 to select the most appropriate 'level(s) of engagement' for this proposal to ensure an appropriate range of engagement 'levels' and methods are offered:

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
Inform	Providing balanced and objective information to help the community understand problems, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions
Consult	Obtain community feedback on issues, analysis, alternatives and decisions being considered
Involve	Work directly with the community throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered
Collaborate	Partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and identification of the preferred solution

Table 1.1 derived from the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum

2. Background

Council developed a *Playgrounds Plan of Management* in recognition of the importance of playgrounds. The Plan led to the development of a *Playgrounds Methodology*, which prioritise all of the Council's playgrounds according to their need for progressively and strategically upgrading the valued community assets. The *Playgrounds Methodology* is used to inform the Council's Capital Works Program.

The existing Lodge Road playground was last upgraded in 2000/01. Council is keen to revitalise this popular facility while retaining the beautiful, leafy, garden character of the existing playground. The proposed upgrade will retain some of the existing elements balanced with increase functionality and accessibility, and where space permits some new play elements will be added.

The project's objectives are to create a refurbished playground that:

- provides a safe and engaging space to promote physical activity and social development
- retains the existing leafy, garden character of the current playground;
- provides a variety of play equipment, for a range of ages and abilities
- provides a pleasant environment for parents and carers, with adequate (informal) seating positioned to facilitate easy supervision; and
- provides maximum play value by offering many different types of activities (spinning, swinging, sliding, balancing, climbing etc)

3. Community Engagement Strategy

3.1 Who are our community stakeholders?

The Engagement Strategy identifies the following groups to engage within the local community:

- local residents
- park users/visitors
- Precinct Committees, in particular Brightmore Precinct
- Sport & Recreation Reference Group
- Council staff
- Councillors

3.2 Key Communication Messages

- Lodge Rd playground is due for an upgrade, as identified in Council's *Playgrounds Plan of Management* and *Playgrounds Methodology*;
- The community can give feedback on the proposed design option by 27 November.
- If adopted, the new playground would be ready to open in 2024
- the upgrade seeks to retain some of the existing playground elements which have served the community well and have been much-loved, as well as to increase safety, functionality and accessibility. Where space permits, some new play elements will be added

3.3 Timetable

Stakeholder engagement will occur at various times during the project. The key project phases are outlined in the following table:

Phase	Timing
1. Research/Scoping	September 2023
2. Public Exhibition	October to November 2023
3. Post Exhibition - analysis and exhibition outcomes	February 2024
4. Construction	May 2024

3.3.1 Phase 1 - Research/Scoping

This phase involved preparing a playground design option with a unique character and a set of activities that caters for pre-school and school aged children. The proposed upgrade will provide a cohesive play facility that continues to sit neatly into the surrounding landscape, providing parents and carers with comfortable supervision points and children of all abilities with a safe, stimulating and challenging play space where they can interact with their friends and enjoy this beautiful parkland setting.

3.3.2 Phase 2 - Public Exhibition

A detailed concept plan has been prepared within budget constraints for this project. Public exhibition will commence on 17 October 2023 for 42 days, with various inform methods used to ensure stakeholder awareness of the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposal, and allow for participation at times that best suit individual needs and commitments. The methods are not listed in priority order:

Method	Target Stakeholders	Engagement Level	Purpose
Website (includes Your Say web page)	All	Inform	Provide information about the project, opportunity to provide online feedback and detail other methods in which feedback can be provided
Direct letter/email	Sport & Recreation Reference Group		
Letterbox Drop	Properties surrounding the park		
Social Media: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram	Existing followers and local groups with social media accounts		
Existing eNewsletters	Subscribers of Council eNews, Precincts eNews, Business eNews		
Onsite Signage	Park users/visitors	Inform/Consult	Encourage Precinct Committees to promote consultation opportunity to their members and/or to make a submission
Precinct System	All active Precinct Committees, in particular Brightmore		
Submissions	All	Consult	Free form feedback accepted by email or

Method	Target Stakeholders	Engagement Level	Purpose
			posted letter as well as via online form.

Note: In accordance with Council's Community Engagement Framework described on page 1, the 'level of engagement' per engagement method is indicated.

3.3.3 Post Exhibition

At the end of Phase 2, all feedback received will be collated, analysed and reported back to contributors.

3.3.4 Finalising Design/Construction

This phase involves reporting consultation outcomes to submitters, finalising the playground design and construction of the facility and associated landscape. To do this we will undertake the following activities. Not listed in priority order.

Method	Target Stakeholders	Engagement Level	Purpose
Onsite signage	All	Inform	Promote final detailed design
Councillor Bulletin	All Councillors		Inform stakeholders of the timeline and progress
Precinct Committees	In particular Brightmore		
Direct Letter/eMail	To all contributors		Notification of construction works
Social Media	All		
Existing E-newsletters	Precinct and Council eNews		

4. Opportunity Cost/Rationale

Engaging the community in this proposal may entail financial costs to Council to achieve a high-quality engagement process. If the process is robust, community ownership of the decisions made will ensure efficient outcomes. Insufficient or poor-quality engagement can result in poor long-term decisions requiring further resources to rectify. The aim of a high-quality community engagement process is to make sustainable decisions. The engagement process will help Council staff and/or Councillors to understand the related recommendations rationale.

5. Further Information

For further information contact Council's Landscape Architect/ Project Co-ordinator, Landscape Planning & Design, Open Space & Infrastructure Division:

Phone: 9936 8100

Email: yoursay@northsydney.nsw.gov.au
Website: www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au

DRAFT