

7. SHELDON PARK PLAYGROUND RENEWAL

General Manager responsible:	General Manager, City Environment Group DDI 941-8608
Officer responsible:	Unit Manager, Transport and Greenspace
Author:	Mary Hay, Consultation Leader

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Sheldon Park Playground Renewal plan and seek a financial contribution from the Community Board for an additional piece of equipment that was requested in the community consultation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Sheldon Park is a large sports park located on Main North Road, next to the Belfast School. The park is home to a number of sports clubs. The rugby, netball, softball, boxing and bowling clubs use clubrooms on the park. The park also has a swimming pool, car parking, toilet facilities and two playgrounds. Sheldon Park is located in Belfast and future planning in the draft Belfast Area Plan identifies the park as the 'hub' of the area.
3. The existing fort in Sheldon Park is at the end of its useful life and no longer complies with the playground standards. Funding has been allocated to replace it. The existing swings, see saw and half court are all in good condition and it is proposed to retain them. The skate ramp needs to be modified in order to be more appealing to skaters.
4. A concept has been designed incorporating ideas from local youth about what kind of play equipment they preferred. The proposed concept includes a large climbing structure that can accommodate a number of users at one time. Other play items have also been included to provide more variety. Local children were also keen to have an improved skate area in Sheldon Park so a plan to extend the skate area into a skate path has been developed. However, funding has not yet been allocated to this project through the LTCCP process.
5. The public consultation indicated a strong level of support for the proposed concept and the proposal has been amended in response to feedback received from the community. Minor amendments have been made to the location of the playground and proposed new path to improve accessibility. A note has also been included on the plan to advise that outdoor gym equipment will be investigated for the site, as funding allows. The amended plan is included and recommended for approval by the Community Board (refer **attachment**).
6. If approved, the attached plan will be implemented in two stages. The project team plan to install the new playground by 29 October 2010, in time for the Belfast Big Bang event. The skate path could be built in 2014, if the Council approves the funding in the next Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7. The proposed playground in Sheldon Park is programmed in the LTCCP for implementation in the 2010/11 financial year. Based on current estimates, staff believe there is sufficient funding in the budget to implement the proposed plan.
8. The funding for the proposed skate path is yet to be secured. The earliest possible budget allocation for the skate path is in 2014 and this is subject to confirmation through the Council LTCCP process.

Do the Recommendations of this Report Align with 2009-19 LTCCP budgets?

9. Yes. Funding is provided from within the Sports Parks Programme in the 2009-19 LTCCP (refer page 239).

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

10. The Shirley/Papanui Community Board has delegated authority to approve the attached concept plan.

11. All necessary Resource Consents and Building Consents will be obtained before any construction is undertaken.
12. All work will be carried out by a Council approved contractor with the appropriate health and safety and work site management controls in place.

Have you considered the legal implications of the issue under consideration?

13. Yes, as above.

ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

14. LTCCP 2009-2019

Parks, Open Spaces and Waterways – Page 116

- (a) Safety – by ensuring our parks, open spaces and waterways are healthy and safe places;
- (b) Community – by providing welcoming areas for communities to gather and interact;
- (c) Governance – by involving people in decision-making about parks, open spaces and waterways;
- (d) Health – By providing areas for people to engage in healthy activities;
- (e) Recreation – by offering a range of recreational opportunities in parks, open spaces and waterways;
- (f) City Development – by providing an inviting, pleasant and well cared-for environment.

15. Parks and Open Spaces Activity Management Plan

- (a) Council's objective with urban parks is to provide and manage Community Parks, Garden and Heritage Parks, Sports Parks and Riverbanks and Conservation Areas throughout the city that provide amenity values, areas for recreation and organised sport, garden environments and green corridors, that contribute to the city's natural form, character, heritage and Garden City image.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES

16. Safer Christchurch Strategy

This strategy aligns injury prevention, road safety and crime prevention under the overarching aim of Christchurch becoming the safest city in New Zealand. One of the goals of this strategy is to enhance safety from crime through preventative and supportive actions, such as:

- (a) Ensure the phased adoption of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Principles (CPTED) into city-wide planning and policy;
- (b) To promote CPTED principles for application by owners and occupiers of existing buildings and spaces;
- (c) Provide active support to locally led initiatives that make significant contributions to reducing the incidence and effect of crime.

17. Parks and Waterways Access Policy

- (a) Improved access to parks and open space will increase equity as promoted by the City Council Policy on Equity and Access for People with Disabilities. Additionally, improved access has the potential to increase park use by enhancing comfort and convenience for all users and providing significant safety benefits.

CONSULTATION FULFILMENT

Consultation Process

(a) Community Input into Plan Development

18. Two workshops were held with local youth. This included 17 members of the Belfast Community Network Youth Group (aged 8-14) and with 12 members of the Belfast School Leadership Group (ages 12-13). This provided an opportunity for the project team to show these young adults a range of play items, which was categorised into three groups – skate items, high volume play items and low volume play items. During the workshops the participants advised the project team of their preferences in terms of play equipment for Sheldon Park. The project team then developed a concept based on this feedback.

(b) Community Consultation on Concept Plan

19. Once the concept plan was drafted, the project team held a seminar with the Community Board to advise them that the plan was ready to go out to full public consultation. This seminar discussed the proposed concept, consultation stakeholders, project timeline and provided an opportunity for Board members to comment on the consultation programme.
20. The consultation on the concept plan was open from 31 May to 14 June 2010. A public information leaflet was delivered to adjoining residents and a number of other interest groups and key stakeholders. This leaflet included a summary of the concept, an initial concept plan and a feedback form. The project team sought feedback from the community to see whether the proposal was supported and asked for any comments. Also included was an offer to meet onsite, if requested. The proposal was posted on the Christchurch City Council Have Your Say website.
21. Council staff met with the Belfast Community Network and Belfast School Leadership Group to discuss the plans and seek feedback.
22. Each submission received an interim reply letter, which acknowledged that the submission had been received and that it would be considered, once the consultation period had closed. Submitters were also advised that they would receive further correspondence prior to a decision being made. This would outline the outcome of consultation, the project team's preferred concept plan, the decision making process and how they could be involved in this and the expected timeline for the project.

CONSULTATION OUTCOME

(a) Community Input into Plan Development.

23. The workshops with the two local youth groups indicated a clear preference for an improved skate area, with details provided about the kind of skate elements that were preferred. They also identified a preference for the BLOQX play structure and many participants expressed support for the Yo Yo Swing and Lunar Spinner. These items were therefore included in the proposed concept plan.

(b) Community Consultation on Concept Plan.

24. The consultation on the concept plan received 34 responses (12% response rate), which is a moderate response to this proposed concept. Of note was the high number of submissions from key stakeholders (Belfast Community Network, Belfast Community Trust, Belfast School, Belfast Area Residents' Association and the Disability Reference Group) and directly from local young people (largely through their association with the Belfast Community Network Youth Group and Belfast School Leadership Group).
25. Given the degree of consultation in the plan development stage, it was anticipated that the proposed concept would be well received by the community. The feedback received was largely very positive, as indicated by the following:

Number of respondents		Feedback option selected
27 respondents	(79 % of submissions)	<i>"YES – I fully support the proposal"</i>
6 respondents	(18 % of submissions)	<i>"MIXED VIEWS – I have some concerns that I would like to be considered"</i>

1 respondents	(3 % of submissions)	<i>"NO – I completely oppose the proposal"</i>
---------------	----------------------	--

26. The quantitative responses above clearly indicate support for the proposal, with 79 per cent indicating that they fully support the proposal and 3 per cent completely opposed to it.
27. The one submission that indicated that it did not support the proposal because of concerns about the type of behaviours that might be associated with the proposed skate path.
28. Numerous positive comments were also received about this proposal. The qualitative community feedback and project team responses will be circulated to submitters and elected members, prior to the meeting.
29. The key issues raised in the public consultation, and project team responses, were as follows:
 - (a) Concerns about access to the playground for caregivers with disabilities.
 - (b) Strong support from local youth for the skate path and requests for the skate path to be constructed sooner.
 - (c) Requests for lighting of the proposed skate path.
 - (d) Concerns raised by a few submitters about the type of behaviours that might be associated with this kind of facility.
 - (e) Requests for a BBQ.
 - (f) Requests for additional seating near the skate path.
 - (g) Requests for outdoor gym equipment to be included in this proposal.

Note: an issue was also raised at the Community Board seminar about the design of the skate path's southern corner. The issue raised was that the corner needs to direct skaters back into the skate path. This will be investigated at the detailed design phase.

30. The project team considered this consultation feedback and responded in the following way:
 - (a) Concerns about access to the playground. In response to this feedback, minor amendments have been made to the location of the playground and new path to improve access for people with limited mobility.
 - (b) Timing of the construction of the skate path. The funding for the proposed skate path is yet to be secured. The earliest possible budget allocation for the skate path is in 2014 and this is subject to confirmation through the Council LTCCP process.
 - (c) Request for lighting. It is not proposed to install lighting in this area because that would signal to the public that this is a safe area to use at night time, which may not be the case.
 - (d) Concerns about the behaviour of skate path users. The skate path proposal has been developed at the request of local youth and community networks. It is anticipated that the focus of the skate path users will be on skating rather than interacting with passers-by.
 - (e) Requests for barbeque. It is not proposed to include a barbeque in this plan, which cost in the order of \$7,000 to \$10,000 to install. These facilities are a target for vandalism and are recommended for high use areas, such as regional parks. It is understood that there is one in the pool site at Sheldon Park, which could potentially be used in the summer months.
 - (f) Requests for additional seating near the skate path. The request for more seats will be considered at the time that the skate path is installed.
 - (g) Requests for outdoor gym equipment. The project team acknowledges the community's desire for outdoor gym equipment in the reserve and agrees that it would be a welcome addition to this space. This equipment could be located adjacent to the path between the

playground and the skate path. In other cities it has been used successfully in conjunction with skate facilities (as indicated in the photographs below). However there is insufficient funding in the budget for this project to provide this equipment.



31. Therefore in response to this feedback the plan has been amended to note that this equipment will be investigated in the future and installed if funding becomes available. However, given that outdoor gym equipment is about to be installed in Englefield Reserve and Northwood parks, it is unlikely to be a priority to install it in Sheldon Park as part of the Capital Works Programme, which is endeavouring to provide a balance of this type of equipment around the city. The Community Board is therefore asked to provide funding for one piece of outdoor gym equipment, such as the photograph on the right, which has three fitness elements included in it.
32. The final concept plan, which includes the above amendments, is included (refer **attachment**).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Shirley/Papanui Community Board:

- (a) Approve the plan for the Sheldon Park Playground and Skate Area Renewal Project as shown on plan LP327302; and
- (b) Consider allocating up to \$10,000 from the Shirley/Papanui Community Board 2010/11 Discretionary Response Fund for the provision of a piece of outdoor gym equipment near the new Sheldon Park playground.

CHAIRPERSON'S RECOMMENDATION

That the staff recommendation be adopted.