

6.2.7 Jim Parkes Reserve Growing Suburbs Fund grant application

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Recommendation(s)

That Council retrospectively approve of the grant application lodged under the Victorian Government's Growing Suburbs Fund for an amount of \$250,000 to part fund the upgrade of Jim Parkes Reserve in Beaconsfield.

Attachments

Nil

Executive Summary

Jim Parkes Reserve is identified in the 2023/2024 Council budget for upgrade and renewal. The renewal will align with the reserve's classification as a Township Park and include an exciting new playspace, accessible pathways, shelters, seating and landscaping. As well as supporting people to be physically active, the upgrade will provide additional gathering areas and social opportunities for the community. To support the delivery of this project Council Officers have applied to the Victorian Governments Growing Suburbs Fund for \$250,000 to bring the project delivery budget to \$500,000. As part of the funding guidelines, a Council resolution is required to demonstrate support for the application.

Background

Jim Parkes Reserve was identified as a Township Park through the Cardinia Shire Open Space Strategy (2023), as was the need for an upgrade. The reserve was also previously highlighted in the Beaconsfield Structure Plan (2013) as a key open space within Beaconsfield.

The renewal of the playspace was identified in Council's playground renewal program and will align to a Township Park standard. To fund the upgrade, Council officers identified the opportunity to seek additional funding through the Victorian Government's Growing Suburbs Fund. The grant application and associated concept design was informed by a comprehensive community engagement process. To comply with the State Government's funding criteria, Council is requirement to provide a letter of support from Council's CEO, followed by a retrospective Council resolution to support the funding application. It is expected that the outcome of Council's application will be announced by the State Government within the next two months.

Policy Implications

There are several strategies pertinent to this report, including the following:

Open Space Strategy 2023

Beaconsfield Profile Area

To further enhance the open space network in Beaconsfield Area, Jim Parkes Reserve has been reclassified as a Township Park and a master plan will be prepared to reflect this classification.

Recommendation

The following recommendation is proposed to enhance the open space network in Beaconsfield Area.

- Prepare a master plan for Jim Parkes Reserve to appropriately reflect its classification as a Township Park. Subsequent delivery will be dependent upon available funding and resources

General Recommendations:

Adaptable

- Engage the community in the planning for Council open space projects and initiatives to ensure they respond to their needs and aspirations in a sustainable way within the scope of the project.
- Explore opportunities to increase the flexibility of our open spaces creating dynamic places that can be used by multiple age groups and people of all abilities, for physical, social and environmental activities.

Sustainable

- As part of Council's project management framework, consider whole of life costs when undertaking Open Space projects (including construction, ongoing maintenance, and renewal costs) to ensure financial sustainability of services provided.

Equitable Planning

- Develop a network of public open spaces that supports our community to have access to open space within 500m walking distance in residential areas.
- Develop quality, innovative, community-driven master plans for district, township and regionally classified open space to provide a diverse open space network offering the community a range of opportunities to be active and stay for longer periods of time.
- Planning for new open space or enhancements to existing open space will look to provide diverse types of open space, taking into consideration nearby types of open space and community needs.

Playspace Strategy 2014

1.1 Classify all existing and proposed future play spaces in accordance with the play space hierarchy and design framework, to ensure communities are provided with complementary and varied levels of play spaces and recreational opportunities for the whole family.

2.1 Ensure residents have reasonable access to play spaces, by ensuring neighbourhood play spaces are distributed within a walkable distance of approximately 500m of households and district play spaces within approximately 2km of households within the residential areas of Cardinia Shire.

3.1 Ensure the development / redevelopment of all play spaces is undertaken in accordance with the guiding principles for play space provision, and the design framework for the various levels of provision (i.e. neighbourhood, district etc.)

Beaconsfield Structure Plan 2013

13.2 Jim Parkes Reserve Located between Beaconsfield's two major commercial precincts, Jim Parkes Reserve is a green space in the town centre that serves surrounding residential areas. Currently developed with children's play equipment and a picnic shelter. The site has potential to offer amenity to a wider spectrum of the community and become a highly valued public space in Beaconsfield. The land immediately to the north of the park is privately owned commercial land which interfaces with Princes Highway. The opportunity exists to provide a better relationship between the commercial land and the park and significantly increase passive surveillance of the space.

Action

- Prepare a masterplan, and obtain funding, for the revitalisation of Jim Parkes Reserve generally in accordance with Figure 9 of the Beaconsfield Structure Plan.

Relevance to Council Plan

2.1 We support the creation of liveable spaces and places

2.1.1 Advocate, plan for and deliver accessible community infrastructure and services that address community need.

2.1.2 Plan and maintain safe, inclusive, and connected open spaces, places and active travel routes.

5.1 We practise responsible leadership

5.1.1 Build trust through meaningful community engagement and transparent decision-making.

Climate Emergency Consideration

The Jim Parkes Reserve upgrade will include increased planting to help reduce the urban heat island effect, use local contractors and suppliers and source local, sustainable materials where possible.

Consultation/Communication

Council officers have held an on-site pop up, a workshop with the local primary school and communication with the Beaconsfield Progress Association to gain thoughts, ideas and feedback on the draft concept plan. An online survey was also available and promoted through Council's social media platforms. Through the online survey and onsite pop up, Council officers were made aware that there was a strong desire to see the inclusion of a quiet sitting space.

The workshop at Beaconsfield Primary saw 180 grade 5 and 6 students submit their feedback on the draft design and contribute their ideas for the project. Some of the key points of feedback from the students were: We would like to see the inclusion of a big tunnel slide, we like the existing sandpit and digger and would like to see a sandpit and digger retained as part of the new design, and we would like a large main climbing piece which can also serve as a hang out space for older children.

All feedback received has being considered and incorporated where possible, in the development of the detailed design plans for the site.

Financial and Resource Implications

Council's allocated budget for this project is \$430,000 in the 2023/24 financial year. Should the Growing Suburbs Fund application be successful, and Council is awarded the full \$250,000 requested, Council will be required to contribute matching funding of \$250,000. The GSF grant opportunity means the overall project budget can be increased to \$500,000, allowing Council to be better positioned to meet the community needs, whilst also achieving the Township Park outcome desired.

Conclusion

Council officers are seeking support for a retrospective Council resolution to support the Jim Parkes Reserve upgrade Growing Suburbs Fund application of \$250,000. This upgrade will provide many physical and social benefits for the Beaconsfield community as well as support local businesses within the area.