

# **Sturt and Acacia Park Upgrades, Telopea**

Review of Environmental Factors  
Post Exhibition Report  
November 2020



**CITY OF  
PARRAMATTA**

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# 1. Project background

The NSW Government has identified Telopea as a priority growth area for urban renewal. It recently rezoned the precinct for high density residential with increased building heights to accommodate 3,500-4,500 new homes (8,000 – 10,500 new residents) within a vibrant new community. Acacia and Sturt Parks are the most significant public open spaces within the precinct and require major upgrade to provide accessible, high-quality open space for the increased future surrounding population. The City of Parramatta's (Council) assessment of Social Infrastructure in the precinct highlights that both Acacia Park and Sturt Park are *"unable to keep up with demand"* for the present population.

Sturt Park is a 3-hectare well-used centrally located public open space within the precinct on Sturt Street, between Telopea Public School and The Ponds Creek. It is currently surrounded by medium and low density residential dwellings, with existing facilities such as amenities requiring upgrade and relocation, as well as improved entry points and an internal pathway network. The Ponds Creek traverses the southern portion of the park and contains, with a registered Aboriginal heritage site and Blue Gum High Forest Critically Endangered Ecological Community occurring within a riparian corridor.

Acacia Park is a 1.5-hectare local park that is currently underutilised as it contains minimal facilities other than an existing playground that requires upgrade. It is currently surrounded by low-density residential dwellings and sits atop a ridgeline, with sweeping views west and stands of mature trees that offer excellent opportunities for picnicking and other passive recreational activities. The park requires and improved network to create a welcoming, engaging public space that better meets the needs of the current and future community. It also has a registered Aboriginal heritage site and is listed as a local archaeological heritage item associated with Kishnaghur House (c. 1836), which provides opportunities for interpretation.

The location of Sturt and Acacia Park is shown below in Figure 1.



- - - - Parramatta Light Rail Line (Under Construction)     
  Telopea Light Rail Station (Under Construction)     
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Figure 1 - Location of Sturt and Acacia Parks

Council has been allocated State Government funding under the 'Precinct Support Scheme' to upgrade both parks to cater for the demand of the increased future surrounding population. Design and approvals are scheduled to occur during 2020, with construction to commence in 2021 (pending any required approvals).

A Review of Environmental Factors (REF) has been prepared for the upgrades of both parks. An REF is an assessment of the potential environmental impacts of the park upgrades, both during construction and after completion. The REF has identified a range of environmental safeguards and mitigations to protect archaeology, heritage (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) as well as flora and fauna. This is a planning process known as Part 5 under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

## 2. Engagement Evaluation

The below provides a snapshot of the communications and engagement channels used to promote the feedback opportunity to the community from **Tuesday 20 October 2020 until 9am on Monday 16 November 2020**.

Numerous channels were activated to reach as many community members as possible and direct them to the project page on Council's engagement portal, 'Participate Parramatta' to provide feedback.

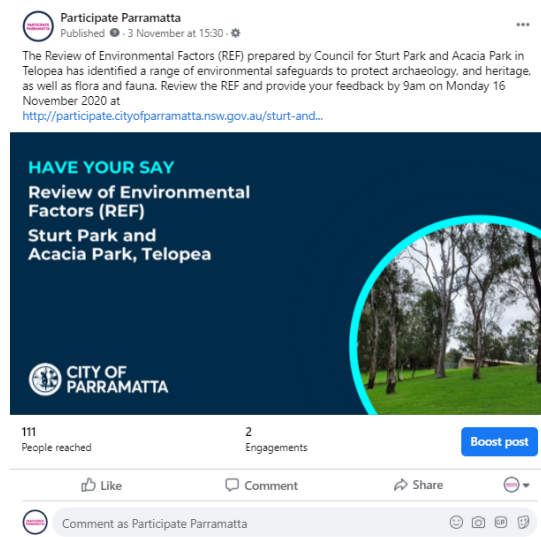
The project page was viewed 250 times during the consultation period by 192 visitors, with one contribution made using the online submission option. A second submission was received via email.

Overall, **approximately 22,944** people saw the opportunity to share feedback based on the data captured from the following engagement channels.

### Social Media

Promoted across Council's social media channels, including the City of Parramatta Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts, and Participate Parramatta Facebook account.

Paid advertisements	
Reach	6,758
Engagements	119
Impressions	15,672
Link clicks	101
Total spend	\$94.81
Organic advertisements	
Reach	5,193
Engagements	47
Link clicks	300



### Email Databases

- Sent to 9,978 Participate Parramatta Community Panel members on Thursday 5 November 2020.

### Mail-out

- A postcard advising of the consultation was sent out to 1015 households in the surrounding streets around Sturt Park and Acacia Park at the commencement of the consultation period. A unique trackable QR code that was included on the postcard was scanned 28 times over this period.



# 3. Key Findings

Council received two submissions during the REF exhibition period.

One of these submissions was an individual online form submission from a local resident who commented that the REF has identified the impact/risks of this project to an extent. No additional information was provided in this submission.

The second submission was an individual email received from a local resident in respect to the proposed upgrades at Acacia Park. The issues raised in this submission and a response from the project team is provided in the table below.

Issue raised in submission	Response
<p><b>Parking</b> – comment made in relation to the provision of car parking and the required turning circles to allow for residents to drive in and out of their driveway.</p>	<p>This project does not propose any additional car parking spaces, rather, it is proposed to undertake relining of the existing car parking areas to provide for two new central disabled parking spaces with shared zone and new kerb ramp, which has received approval from the Parramatta Traffic Committee. There is not anticipated to be any amendment to the ability of local residents to access their private car parking from what is currently existing.</p> <p>No additional parking is proposed to be provided, as the existing 90 degree parking on Lord Avenue is currently underutilised. Council will review the operational parking demand of the site once the upgrade is completed to determine if additional parking is required to support the park. It is recommended that if additional parking is deemed to be required, that either of the following solutions are imposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If 90 degree parking is proposed, that 'no stopping' signs be installed in the equivalent location on the opposite side of Lord Avenue; or</li> <li>• The car park be converted to 45 degree angle parking, depending on further design investigations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>View loss</b> – comment made in relation to view loss for private residents associated with the construction of the viewing mound.</p>	<p>The proposal for a 3.3m viewing mound allows for improved public viewing of the Parramatta CBD. It also allows for the flattening of the adjacent area to make it more usable for ball sports and the like, by using the cut materials to form the viewing mound.</p> <p>Acacia Park has existing undulating topography and mature tree planting that currently restricts sight lines to the Parramatta CBD from properties on Lord Avenue. Whilst some elements of the Parramatta CBD can be seen from up to two private properties, they do not benefit from clear, uninterrupted views of the CBD as existing. The private view loss associated with the mound is anticipated to be outweighed by the benefit of improving public views of the surrounding landscape.</p>

<p><b>Safety, security and maintenance</b> – comment made in concern about the maintenance of the proposed toilet block at Acacia Park and that this would attract antisocial behaviour.</p>	<p>The new amenities building that is to be provided at Acacia Park will be regularly maintained commensurate with other similar facilities provided throughout the Local Government Area. Toilets are required to encourage a longer length of stay for users of the park, including parents with small children.</p> <p>The amenities building was specifically requested to be included within the project scope following consultation undertaken with the community, internal staff and Councillors. It has been designed in accordance with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles which seek to minimise the potential for antisocial behaviour.</p> <p>The small proposed amenities building has been placed near the new playground, which will be the most frequented area by visitors to the park and will also be visible from Evans Road providing optimal passive surveillance. It will have standard Council opening and closing times to minimise the potential for anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>It is further anticipated that proceeding with the upgrade works that the park will receive a higher number of visitors increasing indirect community observation and surveillance.</p> <p>Monitoring and enforcement of penalties associated with illegal activities is undertaken by the NSW Police Force.</p>
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# 4. Recommendations

This report presents and analyses the key findings and sentiment from community consultation regarding the Sturt and Acacia Parks upgrade.

Overall, the level of engagement with the Review of Environmental Factors exhibition was low, with only two submissions received. Based on these submissions, some suggestions for future improvements include:

- Ongoing monitoring of parking supply and demand at Acacia Park post construction. If it is determined that additional parking is required, it is recommended that:
  - If 90 degree parking is proposed, that 'no stopping' signs be installed in the equivalent location on the opposite side of Lord Avenue; or
  - The car park be converted to 45 degree angle parking, depending on further design investigations.
- Ongoing monitoring of anti-social behaviour occur at Acacia Park, with the NSW Police Force to be involved if required.

These recommendations are in line with Council's engagement principles and commitments outlined in the Community Engagement Strategy and Community and Stakeholder Engagement Policy, which state that:

*"We make our decisions in an open and transparent way and provide feedback to our stakeholders in order to explain our decisions and let them know how their impact has been considered".*