

Consultation Summary – Marks Park and Coastal Walk Works

From: Andrew Chau, Senior Landscape Architect

Subject: Consultation Summary

File: A16/0747

Date: 18 April 2017



Purpose

This Consultation Summary Report has been prepared to document findings of the community consultation of the Marks Park and Coastal Walk upgrade works. Consultation occurred from 24 February 2017 to 24 March 2017.

The report details the activities undertaken to ascertain community opinions during this period and provide a summary of the respondent surveys.

Background

The community consultation undertaken encompassed two active projects in the 2017 Capital Works Program (the upgrade of Marks Park and the upgrade of the Coastal Walk). These projects were combined for consultation due to their direct relationship to each other through proximity and recreational use. The combined survey was also effective in eliminating duplication of data collected and reducing consultation fatigue in the community.

The Marks Park works propose to:

- implement infrastructure to better accommodate users with limited mobility;
- address the ongoing erosion and slope stability issues towards Mackenzie's Point; and
- upgrade the furniture to align with the standard furniture suite as guided by the *Public Domain Technical Manual* (PDTM).

The Coastal Walk works propose to:

- renew assets and furniture between Tamarama and Bondi. In particular, the four fitness stations along the Coast Walk which are in need of repair or replacement to meet Australian Standards;
- replace outdated amenity furniture with new furniture aligned with the PDTM;
- widen the path where possible; and
- implement additional turf to path edges.

The work noted above is to precede the programmed playground upgrade in the 2017-18 financial year.

Consultation Methodology

The community were primarily engaged through Council's consultation and engagement website, *Have Your Say Waverley*. This site was updated on 24 February 2017 with key information on the project, which included draft plans, concept imagery, and a direct link to the online survey. Submissions to the survey closed on 27 March 2017.

Consultation Summary – Marks Park and Coastal Walk Works

Council promoted the consultation and online survey on Waverley Council's website, Social Media accounts (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), on-site advertising (posters and floor decals), in the Mayoral Column in the Wentworth Courier (in the 1 March edition), and with a letter box drop.

To effectively attain a variety of feedback, the letterbox flyers were distributed to an estimated 2500 local households within a 500m distance from the Tamarama to Bondi section of Coastal Walk, Facebook posts were also 'boosted' to actively target social media users who had 'liked' Waverley Council, or had friends that had 'liked' Waverley Council, and eleven 600mm diameter latex pavement stickers advertising the consultation were also located at key locations on the Coastal Walk and at Marks Park to help capture regional users.

Consultation Feedback Summary

Council's *Have Your Say* webpage received 281 visits, with 86 of those visitors downloading the draft plan. The online survey received 64 submissions in total.

The survey aimed to gather information on how people accessed and used Marks Park, the Coastal Walk, and the Fitness stations. The survey also asked what aspects of the draft designs were supported or opposed. Key findings from the received surveys for the two projects are outline below.

Marks Park:

- Most people visit Marks Park weekly (32%) or visit daily (29%).
- Most people visit for a short period, 15mins to 30mins (43.5%).
- Most visitors walk to the park (87%), entering from either the Coast Walk at Mackenzie's Point (43.6%) or near the playground (43.6%).
- Low intensity or passive activities were the most common at Marks Park, in order of popularity, walking, relaxing, and sightseeing.
- All aspects of the draft plan were supported by the majority, with the path access to Mackenzie's point and associated embankment planting the most popular elements.
- The most contentious aspect of the plan is the proposed circuit path and Marks Park lookout. Submissions raised concerns regarding the function of the perimeter circuit path, and the extent of concrete works, referencing anecdotal evidence the existing park functions well, and the fear of lost 'green' space.
- General comments about the proposed works include:
 - Welcome upgrade to slope stabilisation, and connection to the Coastal Walk at Mackenzie's Point.
 - Appeals for less hardscaping, to retain the 'green' of the existing park, and have materials complement the 'natural' character of the park.
 - Request for additional food related amenities, including a café, picnic settings and barbeques.

Coast Walk and Fitness Stations:

- Most people visit the Coastal Walk weekly (43.8%) or visit daily (40.6%).
- Most people visit for an extended period, 30mins to 1 hour (46.9%) or 1 to 2 hours (39.4%).
- Almost all people walk to the Coastal Walk (75.8%), and of the respondents, majority entered (31%) and exited (26.6%) at Marks Park.
- The most popular activities on the Coastal Walk are, in order of popularity, walking, sightseeing, and running.
- Majority of the respondents did not utilise the existing fitness stations (67.2%).

Consultation Summary – Marks Park and Coastal Walk Works

- Of those that do utilise the fitness station, most create an exercise circuit between the stations (57.9%), with the eastern most Gaerloch Reserve fitness station being the least utilised.
- Most respondents are receptive of the proposed fitness station concepts, and proposed upgrades to rubber surface and equipment variability.
- General comments about the proposed fitness stations include:
 - Consensus on an adequate variety of proposed exercise equipment, and not needing to vary extensively from the existing equipment.
 - Request for drinking fountains, water bottle refill, and dog hydration along the Coastal Walk.

Action Required / Decision Required

The community are very positive about key aspects of the works proposed, in particular, the stair connection from Marks Park to the Coastal Walk at Mackenzie's Point, and the associated embankment stability works. The remainder of the proposed works is generally accepted by the majority of respondents. Concerns raised in this consultation will be investigated by Council and amendments will be made to the proposed concept design where possible.

A key concern raised by the community is the extent of concrete works proposed at Marks Park in the form of the circulation path and viewing platform, and the consequent loss of green space. These were commonly mentioned when respondents specified their reasons for disliking the proposed elements.

A main objective of this works is to provide an equal access path to users of the park, allowing the view at Mackenzie's Point to be accessible to all users. We will work with stakeholders and consider community responses in determining the path extent and size of the viewing platform, whilst ensuring that best practice for accessibility is achieved.

Next Steps

- Councillors and the community will be provided with a summary of the feedback received.
- The plans will be further developed based on community consultation comments and results.
- The plans will be developed with collaborative input by Sculptures by the Sea.
- The concept plan will be circulated to Councillors and the community once finalised, and approved by the PCG.
- The concept design will be documented in preparation for construction.
- Coastwalk Fitness station construction is programmed to begin in Winter 2017 (June/July), works are anticipated to last 3-4 months.
- Marks Park construction is programmed to begin after Summer 2018 (March/April) and is anticipated to last approximately 4-5 months.
- The community will be notified of any updates to the construction program as works progress.