

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why is the City proposing to renew Fitzroy Gardens and Lawrence Hargrave Reserve?

The City is continually looking at ways to improve public spaces for our local communities. We strive to create quality public spaces that meet the needs of everyone in our diverse city. Kings Cross is the most densely populated area in Australia and we are committed to ensuring that Fitzroy Gardens and Lawrence Hargrave Reserve are linked and remain green, vibrant and safe for community use now and in the future.

2. What is the outcome of the City's consultation to date?

In 2006 we undertook extensive consultation across the local government area to identify community priorities as part of the local action planning process. During the consultation for the City East Local Action Plan, many Kings Cross, Woolloomooloo and Potts Point residents told us that both Fitzroy Gardens and Lawrence Hargrave Reserve needed to be improved.

Consequently, we undertook preliminary design work and identified a number of possible options to upgrade Fitzroy Gardens. We invited the local community to give us feedback at public forums and public information sessions throughout 2008 and also undertook street surveys and focus groups.

All feedback received through the planning process was collated and assessed to inform the concept design. We consistently heard that the community wanted the City to:

- Make the park more welcoming for a wider diversity of people, including families and the elderly
- Improve accessibility for everyone
- Remove dark and hidden areas to improve safety
- Create a multi-use space that can be used by the community and the markets, particularly the grassed area
- Emphasise El-Alamein Fountain as a focal point of the park
- Increase accessibility and usage of Lawrence Hargrave Reserve
- Communicate regularly throughout the design process.

Community feedback helped us to develop a concept plan, which was placed on public exhibition in September 2010. In response to the strong level of community interest in the concept plan, the Council extended the exhibition period to give members of the community additional time to give their thoughts on the plans. The extended exhibition period remains open until 25 February 2011. Feedback received through the public exhibition process will be collated and presented to Council for endorsement to proceed to the next stage of planning.

3. What does the City mean by Concept Design?

The upgrade of Fitzroy Gardens is in concept design phase. The concept design or concept plan outlines general uses and layout, but does not show the exact placement of features or provide details of materials that will be used such as plants, play equipment, seats and pavers.

Once a concept plan has been approved, the detailed design phase will commence to look at the plan in detail and resolve every aspect of the design. The community will be involved throughout the detailed design phase so that everyone can have a say on details of the park.

4. What are the City's plans for the trees in Fitzroy Gardens?

Where possible, we will preserve existing mature trees and minimise removals or relocations. The concept plan shows that a total of 48 trees and one palm tree will be retained, including:

- The central fig
- Plane trees along Macleay Street
- Trees from the 1930's alongside the Rex Building
- Casuarina trees in Barncleuth Square.

The concept plan shows four trees and 11 palm trees will be removed, including:

- Three Weeping Figs - these figs were planted as part of the establishment of the Police Building redevelopment and will be removed to reinstate Elizabeth Bay Road as a pedestrian walkway. New trees will be planted to provide a double avenue of trees lining the walkway
- One Box Elder – this tree will be removed to enable the ground level to be regraded to improve accessibility around the park
- Seven Cocos Island Palms - these palms sit within a raised planter and will be removed to open up views to the fountain
- Four Alexandria Palms (subject to further assessment) - these palms are growing up through the central fig tree, and will be removed to ensure they do not limit growth of the central fig tree.

In addition, a number of other trees will be transplanted within the park.

5. How will the proposed design impact the heritage features of the park?

Fitzroy Gardens has a rich and layered [history](#).

Many of the park's original features have been changed through refurbishment and upgrade works undertaken over many decades.

The concept plan aims to reveal and reinterpret many of the park's original features, including preserving the magnificent central fig and other significant trees. The plan also aims to restore the original alignment of Elizabeth Bay Road as a pedestrian walkway, to provide clear views of the El Alamein Fountain from both Macleay Street and Elizabeth Bay Road.

To inform the concept plan, a heritage assessment was undertaken by an external specialist. For more information on heritage, please refer to the [Heritage Report](#) for Fitzroy Gardens.

6. What will happen to existing artworks in Fitzroy Gardens and Lawrence Hargrave Reserve?

There are six existing public art installations in Fitzroy Gardens and Lawrence Hargrave Reserve. An independent art curator drafted a strategy to identify a management approach for the public art in the Gardens. The strategy proposed:

- **El Alamein Fountain** – the fountain will be reinforced as the pre-eminent heritage element in the park
- **Angled Wheels of Fortune** – the bronze sculpture will be relocated within the park
- **Bernie Houghton bust** – the sculpture of the founder of the iconic restaurant and night spot will be relocated to the front of the Bourbon and Beefsteak building
- **Historic bricks** – bricks from the 19th century will be salvaged and reused within the park
- **Mosaic** – the mosaic will be relocated or decommissioned in liaison with the original artist
- **Sea King Helicopter Crash Memorial** – the memorial will be relocated within the reserve in liaison with the Kings Cross Bikers Club.

Feedback received through the public exhibition of the concept plan will be considered before plans for the art installations are finalised.

7. What are the City's plans for the playground?

The concept plan shows a new playground in the northern part of the park adjacent to the Rex Building promenade. The playground will have new play equipment and will integrate better into the surrounding park.

Specific details of the playground such as seating and type of play equipment will be determined in consultation with the community during the detailed design phase.

8. How will the markets be affected by the park upgrade?

The concept plan provides sufficient space for the existing number of market stalls to continue to operate in the park. The design also allows for flexibility in the layout of stalls and better vehicle access to assist with setup. We will work with the market operators and the community to integrate the power and water supply for the markets.

Works will be carefully planned and staged so the markets can continue to run each week throughout the construction period.

9. How much and what type of seating is planned for the park?

The concept plan includes a substantial increase of both formal and informal seating in the park. The seating strategy includes custom-designed seats, with some arranged in groups to encourage community interaction, and others intended for more passive use. Park users will also be able to use the wall terraces for informal seating.

The specific types of seating will be developed with the community during the detailed design stage.

10. What area of lawn is proposed in the new design?

As part of the concept plan, we plan to merge the existing separate grassed areas into one large lawn. The concept plan shows that the lawn will be about the same size as the current grassed area and will be located on the eastern side of the park.

11. What is the extent and type of paving proposed for the park?

The concept plan proposes the pavement be redesigned to complement the new consolidated lawn area and to support both the markets and social activities in the park. The specific type of paving has not been decided yet and will be determined in consultation with the community during the detailed design phase.

12. How will the upgrade to the parks affect parking in the area?

To improve accessibility to the park, some parking will be lost to create a shared zone for vehicles and pedestrians in Baroda Street directly adjacent to Fitzroy Gardens. We are looking at ways to provide additional parking spaces in surrounding streets such as Ward Avenue, Amos Lane and Barncleuth Square to make up for any parking losses in Baroda Street.

We are also considering the removal of the top level of the Kings Cross Car Park at Lawrence Hargrave Reserve to improve the connection between the reserve and the street. We will complete a comprehensive feasibility study to determine the social impacts from any loss of parking as well as determine the overall efficiency of the car park before making a decision to proceed with this proposal. The study will investigate opportunities to make up any loss of parking by increasing the number of car parking spaces on the remaining levels of the car park, and by creating new spaces in areas that are currently not operating efficiently.