

**Report to General Manager**Attachments:
Nil**SUBJECT:** Forsyth Park Playground Upgrade and Increased Capacity**AUTHOR:** Martin Ellis, Director, Community and Library Services**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This report proposes an upgrade to Forsyth Park Community Centre's playground. A design will be completed in 2019/20, with construction proposed for 2020/21. The proposal is the final stage in a series of upgrades to important childcare playgrounds in Council facilities, following McMahons Point Community Preschool in 2018 and Greenwood Long Day Care in 2020. Users of the Forsyth Park playground are Forsyth Park Playgroup, Montessori Preschool, Council's Vacation Care and local residents who hire the facility on weekends.

The current playground last received an upgrade in 2004. This minor upgrade was unable to resolve the problem of external storage (capacity, safety, waterproofing and resolving WHS issues for parents and carers) - essential to a multi-user playground.

Current users rely for storage on a dilapidated tin shed in the grounds and the former Park Groundsman's series of cages formerly used for topsoil and fertilizer, housed in the lean-to attached to the main building. The main hard surface play area has reached the end of its life and there is a lack of play equipment delivering developmental opportunities for the children.

The design is following the guidelines of a Feasibility Study that has just been completed for introducing an afterschool care option to the Centre and establishing purpose-built changerooms for the playing fields. This Study has been done in conjunction with the Division of Open Space and Environmental Services

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Design is costed at \$9,000 and is funded in this year's Operational Plan; Construction costs are estimated at \$200,000 for both playground and storage. It is estimated the works will greatly increase the capacity of the centre to cater for playground users. Sufficient funds are available in Section 94 Reserve - Child Care.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. THAT** Council notes the issues associated with the current Forsyth Park playground.
- 2. THAT** Council considers an allocation of \$200,000 from the Reserve - Child Care in the 2020/21 to upgrade Forsyth Park Community Centre's Playground.

LINK TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The relationship with the Community Strategic Plan is as follows:

- | | |
|------------|--|
| Direction: | 3. Our Future Planning |
| Outcome: | 3.4 North Sydney is distinctive with a sense of place and quality design |
| Direction: | 4. Our Social Vitality |
| Outcome: | 4.1 North Sydney is connected, inclusive, healthy and safe |

BACKGROUND

Council's Delivery/Operational Plans require the Director of Community and Library Services to:

4.1.2.03 Implement the Family and Children's Services Strategy 2018-2024

- Revitalise centre-based playgrounds to meet community expectations.
- Commission an architectural review of Forsyth Park Community Centre as a potential Before and After School Care site.

McMahons Point Community Preschool new playground was completed in 2018, leading to better enrolments and a stronger parent committee. The playground has been warmly welcomed and has attracted compliments from other service providers. The previous playground was over 20 years old.

Tenders have been sought for **Greenwood Long Day Care Centre** playground by KU Children's Services on Council's behalf and submissions are currently being assessed. This Centre was built in 1993 and the playground has had only minor alterations since then.

Forsyth Park Community Centre Playground was built in 2004 and is the subject of this report.

Council's rolling program of upgrading the playgrounds to increase capacity as well as amenity dovetailed in 2019/20 with Council's wish to review Before and After School Care options. This report ensures any work on the playground will support any later work on the building, should it be funded in future Delivery Plans.

Note: The playground for **Kelly's Place Childcare Centre** is the oldest in Council's portfolio at 32 years. Finding a new location and better amenity for the children there is a high priority in the Family and Children's Strategy.

CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

Community engagement will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Protocol.

SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

The sustainability implications were considered and reported on during the initiation phase of this project.

DETAIL



Forsyth Park Community Centre



The playground at the rear



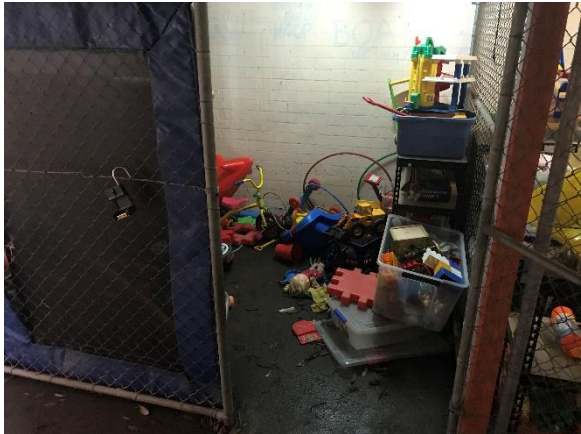
Outdoor play equipment storage



Interior views of the outdoor storage shed



Former Groundsman’s shed



Interior views of the Groundsman’s Shed