

8.15 Forestville Park Plan of Management – Public Exhibition

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

To seek Council's approval to publicly exhibit the draft Forestville Park Plan of Management.

Summary

Forestville Park comprises several parcels of land, three of which are Crown reserves with Council the reserve trustee for all three parcels. The remaining parcels are owned by Council and classified as 'Community Land'. To provide a consistent approach to the management of all parcels, Council has included the Crown reserves and community land parcels in the one Plan.

As part of the preparation of the initial draft Forestville Park Plan of Management (hereafter referred to as "the draft Plan"), community consultation was undertaken. The results of the consultation have been incorporated into the current draft Plan where appropriate.

The current draft Plan includes management actions which are consistent with the dedicated public purpose of the Crown Reserves whilst also maintaining and protecting significant biodiversity, environmental features and heritage items.

Under s.38 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, the draft Plan must be placed on public exhibition for a minimum of 28 days and any submissions made within 42 days be considered in the preparation of the final Plan. As such, it is proposed to place the draft Plan on Public Exhibition for total period of 42 days. As the current draft Plan proposes to categorise/re-categorised community land, a Public Hearing is also required and is proposed for the fourth week of the public exhibition period.

Financial Impact

The final plan will have minor implications regarding financing ongoing maintenance of the reserve. No significant new works are expressly required in the plan.

Policy Impact

The management actions identified within the draft Plan are consistent with Council' Bushland *Policy ENV-PL 005* and *Local Habitat Strategy 2007*.

RECOMMENDATION OF DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER ENVIRONMENT

That Council exhibit the draft Forestville Park Plan of Management for a period of 42 days and note that a further report will be brought to Council following the exhibition period.

REPORT

Background

During 2008/2009 Council commenced the preparation of a draft Plan of Management for Forestville Park which included community consultation. Due to resource limitations and competing priorities, including draft Warringah Biodiversity Conservation Study, work on the draft Plan progressed slowly. The draft Plan was finalised during 2011 with updates to the mapping and management actions undertaken and incorporated into this final draft.

Forestville Park has high biodiversity values and contains significant environmental features such as watercourses, rock outcrops, various types of vegetation and fauna habitat (including potential threatened species). It also shares a boundary with Garigal National Park to the south, further reinforcing its highly significant biodiversity values.

Bushland condition varies across the site, however the majority of the vegetation on the site is considered to be in good condition with poorer areas generally restricted to urban boundaries, drainage lines, and areas of significant disturbance.

The area identified as Forestville Park within the Plan of Management comprises 15 parcels of land. Three of these are Crown reserves with Warringah Council the reserve trustee. The remaining parcels are owned by Council and classified as 'community land'. The attachment booklet contains a table of all land parcels and map of the draft Plan of Management area.

Significant areas of bushland are present on both the Council owned and the Crown reserves. To provide a consistent approach to the management of all parcels, Council has also included the Crown reserves into the draft Plan. Two Crown reserves are currently reserved for 'public recreation', while another is reserved for 'plantation'.

Generic Plans of Management currently apply to some parts of Forestville Park, therefore some parcels have already been categorised; currently as Natural Area – Bushland, Park, Sportsground and General Community Use. This draft Plan is seeking to categorise and/or re-categorise land, and subsequently the reserve has been categorised and/or re-categorised without discriminating between Crown and Council owned land. Areas proposed to be categorised as 'Natural Area - Bushland', 'Natural Area – Watercourse' and 'Park' will be covered by this draft Plan (noting that Crown Land cannot officially be recategorised through Plans of Management in the *Local Government Act 1993*, but it does guide Council's management of the land on behalf of the Crown).

All areas categorised as 'Sportsground' will continue to be managed in accordance with the Council's *Sportsgrounds Plan of Management (2009)*. Areas categorised as 'General Community Use' will continue to be managed in accordance with Council's *General Community Use Plan of Management (2005)*. No changes are proposed to land previously categorised as Sportsground or General Community Use. The Land Categorisation Map (see Attachment booklet) shows proposed categorisation.

The current draft Plan includes management actions which are consistent for the public purpose of public recreation and plantation for which the land is reserved, whilst also maintaining and protecting significant biodiversity, environmental features and heritage items. Management direction was developed based on a thorough infrastructure survey (including mapping) as per section 6.4 of the plan. Key actions of this draft Plan include continued management of environmental pests (including weeds, foxes and rabbits), management of recreation access, maintenance of facilities, and bushfire management.

Consultation for the draft Plan was undertaken in 2008 to capture the ideas and issues of the community. Consultation undertaken included letterbox drops, reserve signage and drop-in briefing sessions advising of the draft Plan's development and garnering views so as to inform future management.

The reserve holds high recreational value with a network of tracks traversing through the site. Whilst providing recreational access to the community, these tracks are however impacting on local biodiversity. Whilst recreational access will be maintained under this draft Plan, the closure and/or re-direction of certain tracks will be a management priority to minimise impacts to significant biodiversity and heritage sites.

Core management actions include: bush regeneration, weed control, pest animal control, community education, liaison, and regulatory controls for domestic pets and dumping of rubbish.

While the draft Plan has been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*, it is also consistent with the Land and Property Management Authority Trust Handbook, and therefore provides a consistent policy approach for Crown Land in the Reserve.

Under the *Local Government Act 1993* a draft Plan of Management is required to be placed on public exhibition for a minimum of 28 days to allow for any submissions by the public and relevant stakeholders in regards to the draft Plan. Further, as the draft Plan proposes categorisation of community land, a Public Hearing will be required.

Following approval from Council to place the draft Plan on public exhibition, letters will be sent to relevant authorities, agencies, utility providers, reserve users and adjacent residents to notify them of the status of the draft Plan and public exhibition period. An advertisement will also be placed in the Manly Daily.

Timing

Upon approval of the draft Plan for public exhibition, the document will be made publicly available for a period of 42 days.

Policy Impact

The management actions identified within the draft Plan are consistent with Council's *Bushland Policy ENV-PL 005* and *Local Habitat Strategy 2007*.

Financial Impact

The final plan will have minor implications regarding financing ongoing maintenance of the reserve. No significant new works are expressly required in the plan.

Conclusion

The draft Forestville Park Plan of Management provides a consistent framework for the management of Crown and community land – allowing Council to maintain and enhance the recreational and ecological values of Forestville Park.

Group Manager Natural Environment

Attachment Booklet - Draft Forestville Park Plan of Management – January 2012

