

**IN2 – Warragamba Inclusive Playground**

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TRIM 7164

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- The intent of this report is to formalise the proposed Inclusive Playground Project at Warragamba following the confirmation of a funding pledge made by the Federal Member for Hume and Assistant Minister for Cities & Digital Transformation, the Hon Angus Taylor MP.
- The strategic cost estimate for the project is \$1.2m and the proposal is for detailed design process to be undertaken and procurement initiated in the 2016/17 and construction in 2017/18, subject to securing the required funding.
- Negotiations have commenced with the Touched by Olivia Foundation to partner in the project to seek sponsorship in the form of cash or works in-kind, and to assist in pursuing additional grants.
- This report recommends:
  - That Council allocate funding of \$100,000 in 2016/17 towards the consultation, detailed design and procurement of the inclusive playground at Warragamba sourced from Council's Recreation Restricted Cash Reserve.
  - That the General Manager be delegated the authority to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Touched by Olivia Foundation to work in partnership on the development of an inclusive playground at Warragamba (within the financial limits set out in the report).
  - That Council pursue the Project in terms of design, procurement and sponsorship with the view of commencing works in 2017/18.
  - That Council consider funding allocation as part of the 2017/18 annual budget process, which would include the Federal Government Grant, an allocation of Section 94 funding, an appropriate amount from Council's Asset renewal programs, any confirmed funding from appropriate Voluntary Planning Agreements plus sponsorship won through the partnership through Touched by Olivia.

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**REPORT**

**BACKGROUND**

Council has previously resolved to support the concept of an inclusive playground being re-established in Warragamba.

Council's most recent resolution in relation to this matter was at its May 2014 meeting:

1. *That Council prepare concept designs and associated costing and financial plan for the development of an inclusive playground at Warragamba Civic Park and that a further report come to Council.*
2. *That Council works toward entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Touched by Olivia Foundation, dependent on the findings of the above investigations.*
3. *That Council continues to support the established Steering Committee as the "community driver" for this project.*

The Australian Government has confirmed the \$350,000 pre-election pledge will be delivered under the Community Development Grants programme, subject to the execution of a funding agreement (not yet received).

**Proposal**

The proposed site is Warragamba Civic Park, a triangular reserve to the north of the Town Hall currently used as a park with playground equipment. This location is visually prominent and is located in the heart of town so has potential to be a catalyst for revitalising the town centre. A range of community buildings and uses are nearby including a primary school, pre-school, child care and neighbourhood centre. The site also has ready access to on-street parking around its perimeter.

The establishment of an inclusive playground within the central business district of Warragamba would assist in the reinvigoration and revitalisation of the town centre and local businesses. This would be achieved through: increased general visitation to Warragamba CBD, visitation by Disability Organisations, economic benefits through purchases at local business, promotion and marketing of the Inclusive Playground as a regional attraction.

A concept plan has been prepared that includes play components, earthworks, concrete pathways, car parking and accessibility improvements, fencing and an amenities facility. Preliminary costings indicate that the project would have an overall cost of approximately \$1.2m.

Detailed designs and a full scope of works will need to be prepared to determine an accurate cost for the project.

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**Location of Proposed Infrastructure Playground**



**Memorandum of Understanding with Touched By Olivia Foundation**

The Touched By Olivia (TBO) Foundation was founded in 2006 by the parents of a young girl, Olivia Perkins, who died of a rare illness. TBO works with local councils, communities and corporations to upgrade or build inclusive playgrounds giving all people, regardless of ability, the opportunity to play side by side. These playgrounds are called “Livvi’s Place”.

The first “Livvi’s Place” was opened at Five Dock in 2009 (a partnership project with Canada Bay Council). Numerous additional playgrounds have been since been developed by local councils in partnership with TBO.

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TBO are keen to work with Council towards establishing an inclusive playground in Warragamba. The partnership would be formed through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU would set out the key requirements to be achieved by the playground, expectations of the roles of the partners e.g. confirming that Council is responsible for consultation, design, procurement and construction.

It is understood that the general financial “model” used by TBO, documented in the MOU, is to seek at least 50% funding from Local Government, 25% from State / Federal Government and 25% from Corporate and Community Fundraising (coordinated by TBO). However, we note that the limits of the agreement would be ‘within the fence line’ (i.e. works outside the fence line such as parking improvements and amenities would be outside the partnership and as such Council’s sole responsibility to pursue). Further the MoU is not a legal relationship and as such is not binding and, accordingly, Council will retain all project delivery risks, including funding.

### **Relevance to Community Strategic Plan Outcomes**

The establishment of an Inclusive Playground supports the following Community Strategic Plan 2033 Outcomes:

- *Access to a range of activities, services and facilities*
- *A connected and supported community*
- *Safe maintained and effective infrastructure*
- *A strong local economy providing employment and other opportunities.*

The proposal is also highly consistent with the Social Justice Principles contained in Wollondilly Community Strategic Plan 2033.

### **Policies & Legislation**

Council’s adopted Open Space, Recreation and Community Facilities Strategy identifies the establishment of a regional inclusive playground facility as a strategic objective.

A range of legislative standards apply to the development, establishment and maintenance of playgrounds.

The Local Government Act, contains provisions in relation to the possible future allocation and use of Council open space lands.

### **CONSULTATION**

Council supported the formation of a community led Steering Committee in 2013. The Steering Committee have connected with TBO and have led informal community dialogue with community representatives, Warragamba business community, Council’s Disability Advisory Committee and other interested parties. Broad community support for the proposal is evident.

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As the project progresses more community consultation will be required, particularly in relation to the specific design of the playground. It is expected that the Steering Committee will therefore continue to represent the local community and:

- Have input into the concept proposal
- Identify possible funding opportunities
- Undertaking fundraising
- Identifying other possible partnerships.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The estimated cost of the project (including associated works) is approximately \$1.2m.

Description	Year	Estimated Cost
Design, documentation and procurement	2016/17	\$100,000
Sub-total		\$100,000
Construction	2017/18	
Earthworks		\$150,000
Internal and external pathways		\$150,000
Car Parking improvements		\$100,000
Fencing		\$40,000
Accessible amenities/toilet		\$150,000
Playground construction		\$255,000
Sub-total		\$845,000
Contingencies (30%)		\$255,000
<b>Total estimated cost</b>		<b>\$1,200,000</b>

As the project proceeds more detailed plans and costings will be developed.

The current proposed funding regime is:

Source	For	Amount	Limitation
Touched by Olivia			
- Direct funding	Internal works	\$200,000	
- Via sourced sponsorship	Internal works	\$200,000	Subject to successful fundraising
Australian Government	Project funding	\$350,000	Subject to funding agreement
Sub-total		\$750,000	
Wollondilly Council*	Project funding	\$450,000	Minimum contribution

\* Should sponsorship not be forthcoming after construction is committed, Council's contribution may have to be increased to fully fund the committed works.

Infrastructure

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Further to Council's Ordinary Meeting of 18 July 2016, Council has written to the Member for Wollondilly, Mr Jai Rowell MP, seeking State Government funding towards the Project, ideally dollar for dollar matching the Federal Government contribution.

Council's potential funding source options include:

- Asset Management funds – which can be allocated towards the replacement of existing assets such as the existing small playground, fences and perimeter footpaths – this could be as much as \$100,000
- Section 94 funds – Development Contributions (under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act) can be used towards the upgrade or provision of new infrastructure such as part of the new playground equipment, earthworks, and amenity block. This could be as much as \$600,000 and the project has been included in the scope for the upcoming Section 94 Plan review
- Voluntary Planning Agreements (VPA's) – Council has received interest from proponents of re-zonings within the Warragamba area, and this project can be included as part of those discussions. The timing of payments under the VPA's may differ to project expenditures and as such borrowing against Reserves may be required.
- Recreation Restricted Cash Reserve.

Confirmation of funding sources will need to occur as part of the annual budget process. If funding sources are not confirmed in time for the 2017/18 annual budget process, the project may need to be staged to match available funding.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Warragamba All-abilities Playground & Commemorative Garden Concept Plan

**RECOMMENDATION**

1. That Council allocate funding of \$100,000 in 2016/17 towards the consultation, detailed design and procurement of the inclusive playground at Warragamba sourced from Council's Recreation Restricted Cash Reserve.
2. That the General Manager be delegated the authority to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Touched by Olivia Foundation to work in partnership on the development of an inclusive playground at Warragamba (within the financial limits set out in the report).
3. That Council pursue the Project in terms of design, procurement and sponsorship with the view of commencing works in 2017/18.

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4. That Council consider funding allocation as part of the 2017/18 annual budget process, which would include the Federal Government Grant, an allocation of Section 94 funding, an appropriate amount from Council's Asset renewal programs, any confirmed funding from appropriate Voluntary Planning Agreements plus sponsorship won through the partnership through Touched by Olivia.

