

## 10.6. Hume Street Park - Expansion Project

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<b>ATTACHMENTS</b>	Nil
<b>CSP LINK</b>	<div>1. Our Living Environment</div> <div>1.3 Clean and green places</div> <div>1.4 Well utilised open space and recreational facilities</div> <div>2. Our Built Infrastructure</div> <div>2.1 Infrastructure and assets meet diverse community needs</div> <div>2.2 Vibrant public domains and villages</div> <div>3. Our Innovative City</div> <div>3.1 Our commercial centres are prosperous and vibrant</div> <div>3.3 Distinctive sense of place and design excellence</div> <div>4. Our Social Vitality</div> <div>4.1 North Sydney is connected, inclusive, healthy, and safe</div> <div>5. Our Civic Leadership</div> <div>5.2 Strong civic leadership and customer focussed services</div>

### PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's direction in relation to the expansion of the Hume Street Park project to ensure timely progression in the context of expected accelerated growth following changes introduced by the NSW Government in Crows Nest.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- With the impending density increases resulting from the Crows Nest Transport Oriented Development (TOD) initiative of the NSW Government, it is important that supporting infrastructure is able to be delivered responsibly without delay.
- The NSW Government has announced \$520M funding to be shared amongst eight TOD precincts for upgrades to roads, active transport, and open space. It is important that Council ensure it is in the best possible position to attract such funding.
- Council developed a series of growth and placemaking plans for the St Leonards/Crows Nest precinct (St Leonards/Crows Nest Planning Studies Precincts 1-3), between 2011 and 2015. The first of these was adopted by Council in October 2012. The Studies identified opportunities for improved urban design outcomes in this precinct whilst accommodating managed increases in height and density.

- One key component of the Precinct 1 Study was the identification of a new area of open space to be delivered as an expanded Hume Street Park, to provide for the open space requirements of a growing population.
- As part of that process, three Hume Street Park expansion options were developed for consultation and after that engagement process, “Option 3” was selected as the preferred option by Council in September 2015. This option was an aspirational design which included the relocation of the existing indoor sports centre and parking in an underground format.
- In 2015, the project was to be broken into three stages. Stage 1 is now complete. Stage 2 was amended in 2021 to include additional open space; however, design and delivery has been delayed due to competing demands.
- To ensure maximum open space delivery in a timely manner, it is recommended Stage 2 of the project be further amended and declared the priority project for TOD related State Government Funding.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**1.THAT** Council commence immediate detailed planning and consultation for the expansion of the Hume Street Park that retains the existing indoor sports centre and public parking in their current location as an expanded stage 2 of the previously endorsed concept plan for the park.

**2.THAT** Council allocate a budget of \$1 million within the 2025/26 budget from the development contributions reserves towards the project, to advance to approval stage.

**3. THAT** Council make representations to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces to prioritise the necessary funding from the available \$520M Transport Oriented Development fund to deliver the Hume Street Park expansion project.

**4.THAT,** despite pursuing a shorter-term open space project as per 1 above, Council continue to work towards the long-term and aspirational vision for the expansion of the Hume Street Park consistent with its 2015 preferred option which includes the undergrounding of the indoor sports centre and public parking and in doing so, consider design modifications that account for changing strategic directions.

## 1. Background

### 1.1 Planning Studies

In 2010, Council resolved to commence a planning process to manage jobs and housing growth and create a stronger sense of place in St Leonards and Crows Nest. The first of the two comprehensive studies that occurred in the precinct was the *St Leonards/Crows Nest Planning Study - Precinct 1*. This was adopted by Council in October 2012 following extensive community and stakeholder consultation.

The endorsed Planning Study included a capacity to consider planning proposals for increased building height and density that were supported by contributions (outside of the development contributions framework of section 94 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act of the time) of public benefit, typically through Voluntary Planning Agreements (VPA).

The upgrade and expansion of the Hume Street Park was conceptually identified as an important public need for which VPA funds would be sought to address the acute shortage of open space in the precinct and cater for its growing demands (Diagram 1 below).



Diagram 1 – Extract of a concept for the Hume Street Park Expansion  
(*St Leonards/Crows Nest Planning Study Precinct 1 - 2012*)

In 2015, Council developed and exhibited three Concept Design Options to achieve expansion of the Hume Street Park. Options 1 and 2 were generally consistent with the preliminary concept put forward in the Planning Study (as conceptually shown in Diagram 1 above) that proposed relocating Kelly's Place Children's Centre, upgrading the park, and establishing a new link to Willoughby Road. Option 3 was a more ambitious scheme that also included undergrounding the Hume Street car park and the indoor sports centre, and the creation of a new underground cinema.

Following public consultation, Option 3 (as shown in Diagrams 2 and 3 below) was endorsed as the preferred option.



Diagram 2 - Concept plan of "Option 3"

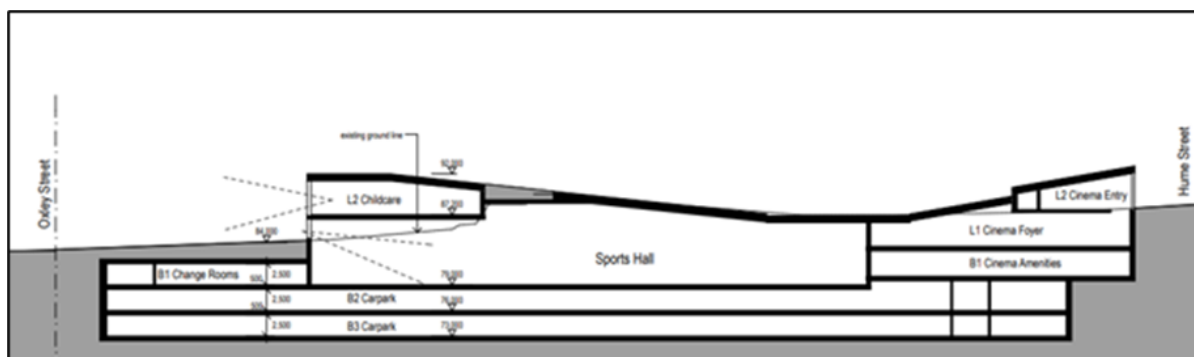


Diagram 3 – Cross section of “Option 3”

## 1.2 Staging

The preferred option 3 represented a large undertaking and was therefore broken into three distinct stages. The staging plan was developed in 2015 but was revisited by Council in 2021 where it adopted an amended staging plan as depicted in Diagram 4 below.

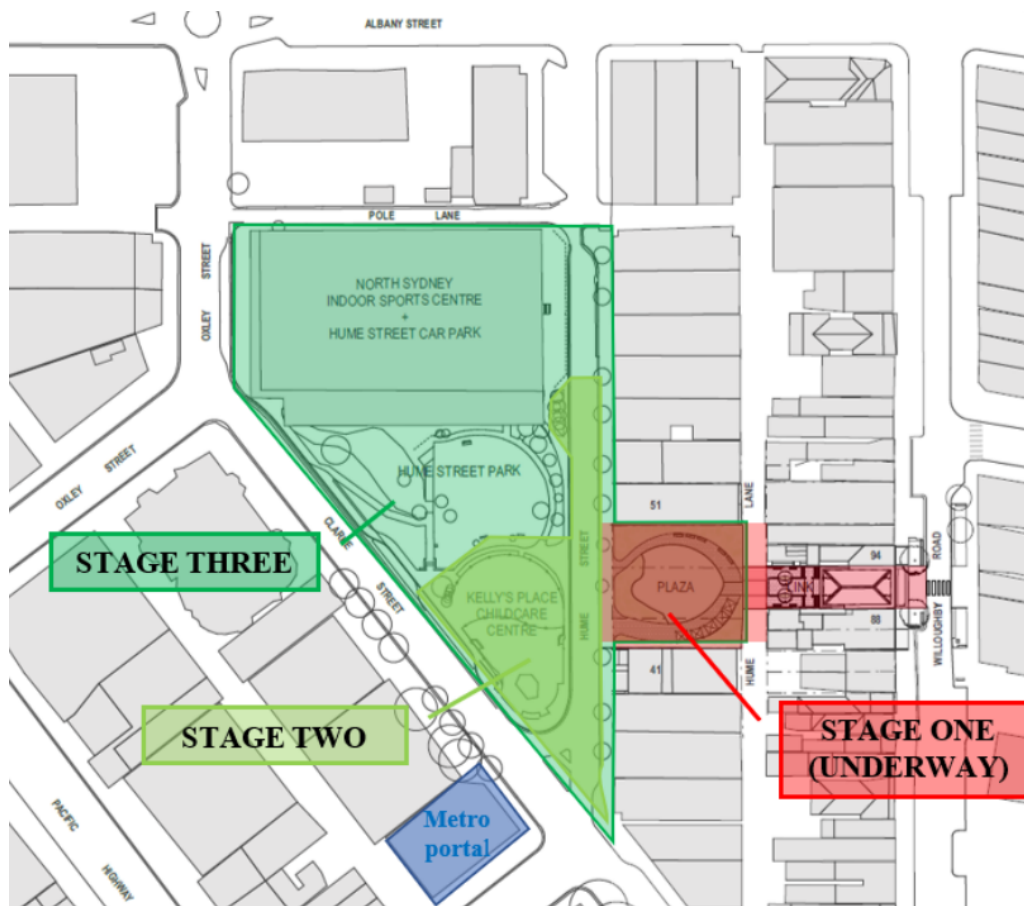


Diagram 4 – Amended Staging Plan as adopted by Council in 2021

**Stage 1** of the expanded park was delivered in 2022 which represents approximately 1,200sqm of new public space and has been a welcome addition to both the Crows Nest centre and the open space network (see Diagrams 5, below, and 6 on the next page). This first stage created the critical link between Hume Street Park, Willoughby Road, and the new Metro portal on Clarke Street.



Diagram 5 – Stage 1 of the Hume Street expansion project delivered in 2022





*Diagram 6 – Stage 1 of the Hume Street expansion project delivered in 2022*

The amended Staging Plan included, as part of **Stage Two**, the closure of Hume Street between Clarke Street and the southern side of the indoor Sports Centre, pedestrianisation of the road space, demolition of Kellys Place childcare centre, and filling & landscape works (turfing, paving) over the footprint of the demolished Kellys Place building.

**Stage 3** was the most significant component of the project and involved:

- demolishing the existing parking and basketball centre structure;
- creating new underground car parking and indoor sports facilities, allowing for a minor expansion of both;
- a new underground commercial space, to potentially be used as a cinema;
- a green roof over the underground facilities, allowing for more usable open space;
- creation of a new childcare facility located above the new indoor sports facility, in the middle of the expanded park; and
- the provision of approximately 5,300sqm of new open space.

### 1.3 NSW Government Planning

In 2020, the NSW Government announced the introduction of the *St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 Plan* (“2036 Plan”). This was a strategic plan that would guide the consideration of planning proposals and infrastructure investment for the precinct. It notionally identified that a Hume Street park expansion would be required to support the growing precinct. The package of changes included a *State Infrastructure Contribution* (SIC) requirement for new development in the precinct to assist with the funding of infrastructure.

The 2036 Plan was superseded by the *Crows Nest Transport Oriented Development* (TOD) which rezoned the precinct in November 2024. The SIC was replaced by the Housing Productivity Contribution (HPC) which is applied more widely throughout the metropolitan region.

To support the Crows Nest and seven other TODs, the Minister announced that there would be \$520M to be funded by the NSW Government for supporting infrastructure. It is understood that there is a desire to distribute such funding throughout the eight TOD areas including Crows Nest through NSW Government project delivery and Council grants. It is important that Council determine its priority for a future grant funding application, as this is anticipated to be highly contested.

## **2. Report**

The St Leonards and Crows Nest precinct is undergoing significant change. The Crows Nest TOD initiative is set to deliver 5,900 new dwellings (equating to 11,200 additional residents) and 2,500 new jobs. This is on top of the measured growth that Council had carefully planned for since 2012 as part of its various planning studies.

In this context, and in recognition of the lack of open space in the precinct, new open space infrastructure is much needed and has long been planned for.

The NSW Government has acknowledged the need for additional open space to support the population growth, both in the *2036 Plan* and in supporting documents associated with the Crows Nest TOD.

The NSW Government has signalled its intention to distribute \$520 million amongst the eight TOD precincts for road upgrades, active transport, and open space. To put Council in the best position to apply for this funding, work needs to get underway now to prepare 'shovel ready' open space projects (i.e., detailed design documentation and approvals) that are achievable and deliverable.

### **2.1 Option 3 - Short Term Challenges**

The 2015 adopted Hume Street Park expansion project, whilst transformational, includes various delivery challenges and associated risks if aspired to be delivered in the short term. These are largely associated with cost and timing. It is a large and complex project and one that requires further planning and consultation. For these reasons, an amended Stage 2 was endorsed by Council in 2021 to make progress on this project both more achievable and timely.

The planned increases in population density in the precinct clearly necessitate the delivery of new open space. This has been Council's commitment for some time and has been reinforced in Council's 10 Year Strategic Plans. Action 1.2 of the *Open Space and Recreation Strategy* includes the following:

*Prepare and deliver a Hume Street Park expansion project that includes removal of the childcare centre, closure of part of Hume Street, and improvements to the quality of open space in Hume Street Park.*

## 2.2 Short Term and Long-Term Goals

In adopting the Open Space and Recreation 10-year strategy, Council has endorsed the progression of the Hume Street expansion project.

In principle, the aspirational plan adopted by Council in 2015 meets many long-term placemaking objectives for the precinct and remains a highly desirable outcome in a rapidly changing precinct. The project is clearly not a short term one, and much planning is required to reduce the significant risks and manage expectations associated with a project of this scale and significance.

In the meantime, Council's aspirations to deliver more and better open space in this precinct need more immediate attention, particularly in the context of the NSW Government's funding commitments under the TOD Program.

Given the delay thus far in the design and delivery of Stage 2, along with the aspirational and longer-term nature of Stage 3, it is recommended that the Stage 2 project scope be expanded as broadly described in Diagram 7 below. This scope would include the surface of the existing park, combined with the area currently occupied by the childcare centre in combination with partial closure of Hume Street, to create full connection between Hume Street Park and the new plaza, connecting the space to Willoughby Road.

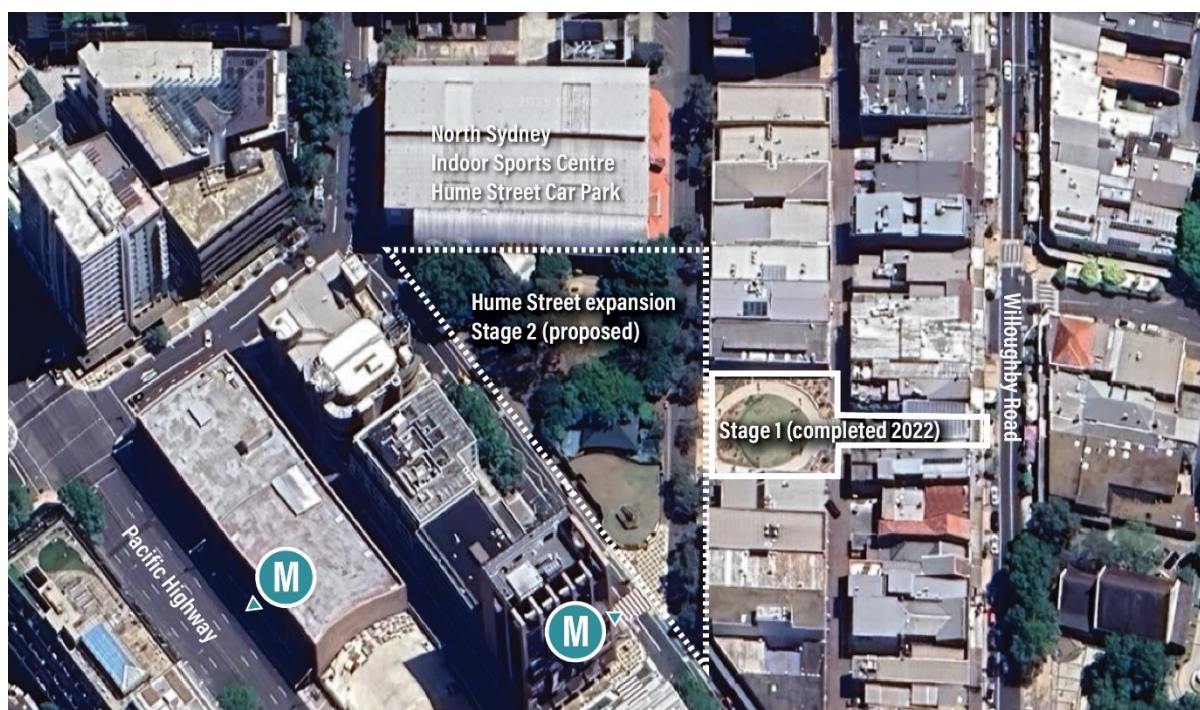


Diagram 7 - Hume Street expansion shorter term alternative

Whilst design work and consultation would be required, this would represent an eminently more achievable project in the shorter term and not undermine the broader aspiration in the longer term. It also represents a slightly more ambitious scope than the 2021 endorsed stage 2 scope.



## **2.4 Kellys Place Child Care Centre**

Kellys Place is an independently run childcare centre licenced for 45 children. It operates on Council land. It should be noted that this shorter-term open space option, like all other options previously explored, necessitates the displacement of this childcare centre.

Whilst efforts will be made to accommodate the existing childcare centre in alternative accommodation, Council's limited stock of potentially suitable buildings must also be acknowledged. The exploration of open space opportunities in the precinct has occurred for more than a decade. It is a reality that difficult decisions requiring the prioritisation of community infrastructure are required to be made in a highly constrained and growing precinct like Crows Nest.

### **Consultation requirements**

Community engagement is not required now; however, comprehensive consultation will be conducted at the design stage of the process.

### **Financial/Resource Implications**

There is an opportunity to make a strong case for funding for this project through the NSW Government as the project is essential to support the TOD growth expectations.

However, funding will be required for initial design and project management. No allowance was made in the special rate variation proposal for this project, with an expectation that it would be funded from government grants and developer contributions.

Acknowledging that this project has not yet been designed, even to a concept stage, it is estimated that this will represent a cost of up to \$10M to deliver.

The scoping, consultation, approvals, tendering, and delivery of this open space project would be conceptually and indicatively progressed and able to be delivered within approximately three years.

### **Legislation**

Use of the Hume Street Park is legislated under the provisions of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* and its various instruments, and the procurement of the necessary resources to design and construct a future park is governed by the provisions of the *Local Government Act*.