

What is a masterplan?

A masterplan is a document that guides the management and future renewal of an area. It is a process that defines what is important about a place and how its character and quality can be conserved, improved and enhanced.

What is included in the scope of the Gregson Park Masterplan?

The draft Masterplan includes community priorities for facilities such as the former bowling green, a new play space and amenities. The draft Masterplan also addresses current and future use of the park for events, activities and heritage interpretation.

Are there plans for the current infrastructure?

The development of the draft Masterplan has allowed us to review the existing park infrastructure such as pathways, memorials, tennis courts, greenhouse, maintenance building and provision of amenities. Based on community feedback, the draft Masterplan proposes enhancements and changes to the existing infrastructure including:

- Enhanced street entries and heritage items
- New inclusive playspace in the existing location
- Seating steps and accessible ramp to former bowling green
- Upgrade of the existing amenities building
- Potential for a kiosk in the existing maintenance building, subject to the relocation of the maintenance building
- Re-surfaced tennis courts
- Re-aligned pathways
- Removal of the glasshouse subject to heritage assessment.

What other improvements are proposed in the Masterplan?

In response to community feedback, the draft Masterplan also proposes the following improvements to Gregson Park:

- New community shelter on the former bowling green
- New multi-sports halfcourt near the existing tennis courts
- New swale, footbridge and wetland area for water detention
- New tree planting
- New accessible pathway connecting to existing pathways
- New larger inclusive playspace.

Who is developing the Gregson Park Masterplan?

City of Newcastle has engaged Phillips Marler, an award-winning landscape architecture firm, to work with the community and develop the draft Masterplan for Gregson Park.

What about the fig trees?

The historic fig trees are a much-loved aspect of the park and the fig trees will be retained under the draft Masterplan. We recently developed a plan with expert arborists to save a 100-year-old Port Jackson fig tree in the park.

What's planned for the glasshouse?

The draft Masterplan proposes the removal of the glasshouse due to structural issues. Future removal will be subject to a heritage assessment of the glasshouse.

Has an off-leash dog park been considered for Gregson Park?

We prepared a Dogs in Open Space Plan in 2019 and Gregson Park was not identified as a suitable area for off leash dogs, given the size of the site, and the multiple user groups and special features of the site (e.g. playspaces, picnic areas).

There are plenty of grassed areas and paths for dogs on leads to enjoy at Gregson Park, and the Islington off-leash dog park is only 2km away. A fully fenced off leash area is available at Acacia Avenue North Lambton, and there is also an off leash area at West End Park Adamstown.

We are currently investigating other areas within the Local Government Area that are suitable for an off leash area in accordance with the Dogs in Open Space Plan.

How has the community been involved?

Throughout the development of the Masterplan City of Newcastle has sought community feedback to ensure it meets the needs of the community.

Phase 1 engagement took place in September 2020, when City of Newcastle invited community input into the Masterplan process via a survey, online interactive mapping tool, and onsite community drop-in sessions.

The draft Masterplan has been developed based on the values and aspirations the community hold for Gregson Park.

Phase 2 Engagement will see the draft Masterplan placed on public exhibition for a period of 42 days, during which the community will be invited to provide feedback.

Will the Indigenous community be consulted?

Yes, traditional owners have been consulted as part of the preliminary investigations and will continue to have input into the City's plans for the area.

Will any historical or traditional heritage elements be considered in the Masterplan process?

Yes, Gregson Park is steeped in history and as such heritage interpretation will be considered appropriately during the development of the Masterplan.

Why is the Heritage Places Plan of Management for Gregson Park being updated?

In accordance with Section 36 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, a Plan of Management is requirement for all Community Land.

Gregson Park is community land and managed under the Heritage Places Plan of Management (Heritage PoM). The Heritage PoM provides clear guidelines for the future management and direction of land in the care and control of Council.

The *Local Government Act 1993* requires all community land to be categorised as either park, sportsground, general community use, natural area or area of cultural significance. Uses and leases on community land are to be in alignment with the categorisation of the land and are to be expressly authorized within a plan of management.

As the draft Masterplan proposes change to the use of different spaces within the park, it is timely to amend the Heritage PoM in line with the masterplan.

What are the main changes to the Plan of Management?

The main changes to the Heritage Plan of Management are updates to the wording and actions to reflect the vision of the draft Gregson Park Masterplan and community input. The recategorisation of Gregson Park is proposed to be amended to park, general community use and sportsground. The whole park will have an overlay of the category of area of cultural significance to reflect the landscape heritage value of the park.

When will upgrade work take place?

The draft Masterplan is intended to be implemented across a ten- year period. Short-term priorities earmarked for implementation within five years (subject to funding) include the playspace, realigned paths, plantings and community shelter. Work on the playspace featuring nature play, water play and small yarning circle, will start in 2022 under the city's annual asset renewal program.

Long-term priorities include the active recreation area, community garden and stormwater retention tank.