



Dear Resident

Update on Orphan School Creek — Wood Street Landscaping

I write to update you on plans for increased native plantings and wildlife habitat on the Wood Street site adjacent Orphan School Creek, in response to community requests.

Beginning with a public meeting in Glebe Town Hall in September 2006, the City of Sydney held a series of community consultations during 2006 and 2007 to develop detailed plans for the Wood Street site. These plans build on the 2003 Leichhardt Council Master Plan, which provided for native habitat, public open space, access paths and a children's playground.

The work to implement these plans involves two major components:

- **Remediation and landscaping:** The developer, Frasers, will complete most work on the site as a condition of approval for the "City Quarter" development. Frasers' development application for the work to remediate and landscape the site was based on the City's consultations, and was independently assessed prior to approval by Council in August 2007.
- **The playground and remaining work:** Once Frasers' work is finished, the City will install the playground and complete remaining works. Public consultation was held on the playground and adjacent link from Hereford Street to Wigram Road in October and November 2007 (including a community open day). Council endorsed the final plans in February 2008 and appointed a contractor to do the work in November 2008.

In mid-2008, Frasers began the remediation work approved in its development application. Site contamination has now been removed; the ground prepared for new plantings; drainage and retaining walls upgraded; and landscaping is now ready to start.

In November 2008, Council asked City staff to review the landscaping plans for the site (for both Frasers' and the City's works), in response to concerns raised by local residents about the adequacy of native plantings and habitat on the site, the size of the playground area, and the impact of the path linking the creek bed with the upper part of the site.

City staff have done that review and, following further discussion with City Councillors, the following improvements to the landscaping design will be made (see the diagram over the page for details on each numbered item):

1. **Additional native plantings**, particularly low and mid level plantings, will be included. Species and locations are in line with expert **ecological advice on wildlife habitat plants** appropriate for the local area.
2. **The children's playground** will be **slightly relocated and reduced** (while retaining play equipment) to **consolidate native habitat planting areas**. The playground has a nature play style to fit in with the local environment.
3. Elements of **historical interpretation**, reflecting the area's history as a children's hospital, will be **relocated into the playground area** to further consolidate native habitat and provide for **additional low-level native plantings**.
4. The planned **shade tree will be a native species**—*Eucalyptus tereticornis* (Forest Red Gum) or *Acmena smithii* (Lily Pily)—rather than the fig tree proposed previously.
5. The small **turf area** for passive recreation and children's play will be **planted with a native grass lawn mix as a trial** to see if a native turf can establish and be maintained.



Wood Street plan

- The **single accessible path** between the upper and lower levels will be **narrowed to one metre width with a colour and texture** appropriate for the bushland setting, and **increased mid-storey native plantings** between the stages of the ramp. **Protective fencing** will be initially installed to ensure these plantings properly establish in their early growth stages.

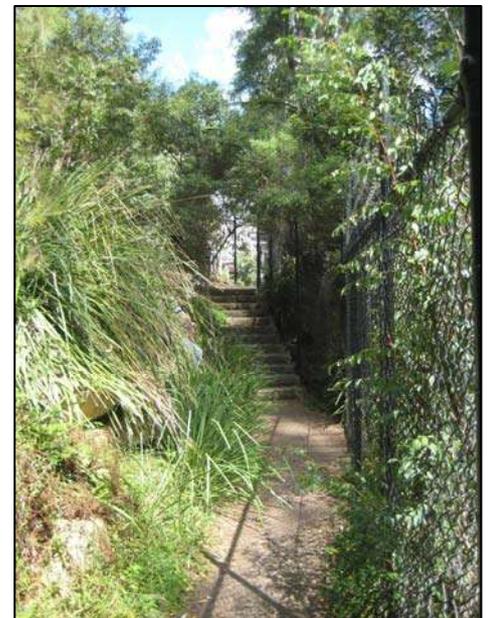
To match the path to the new bushland environment, we will take a similar approach to the nearby paths that link the creek bed to Sterling Circuit (see picture at right). These allow the tree canopy to grow over the top and are hidden by low plantings once you move a few steps away.

While the Leichhardt Council 2003 Master Plan included three paths up from the lower level, the City of Sydney Council has approved only one path. The final design for that path is based compliance with the *Disability Discrimination Act*. It requires a gentle slope (1:20 gradient) so it is accessible to people of all abilities, including parents with prams or strollers.

You can view the revised plan in higher resolution on the City's website at www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/Development. If you would like to speak with a Council Officer about the Orphan School Creek landscaping, you can contact Stephen Merchant, telephone 9265 9333 or email smerchant@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Clover Moore
Lord Mayor



A comparable existing path from Orphan School Creek to Sterling Circuit, adjacent to Foss Street, which was planted with native seedlings in 2003.

city of villages