

# Christison Park Water Tank Project

## What We Heard Report – October 2023



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## Project background

To ensure consistent irrigation to the sports fields at Christison Park and prepare for variable climatic conditions, Woollahra Council consulted the community on the proposal to install a 107 kilolitre (kL) water tank on the south side of the amenities/grandstand building, adjacent to Old South Head Road.

To meet Council's environmental targets to reduce the use of potable (drinking) water in Council operations, a water conservation study was conducted at Christison Park. This led to the installation of a storm water harvesting system and irrigation for two sports fields. The study recommended the installation of an additional 107kL water tank to increase storage capacity at the park.

Currently, irrigation of the fields is dependent on potable water and a small amount of stormwater collected via the stormwater harvesting system. The collection of stormwater is limited by the current 55kL storage capacity at the park, which means that mostly potable water is used for irrigation. This uses vital resources and in dry conditions is increasingly expensive.

The community was invited to provide feedback on Council's proposal to install a 107kL water tank on the south side of the grandstand at Christison Park from 18 September to 8 October, 2023.

Community consultation included:

- Letter drops to nearby residential dwellings and businesses
- 3 'Notice of Proposed Work' posters near the site with QR code
- Dedicated [Your Say](#) page including an overview of the consultation, project background, FAQ's, and a submission upload section

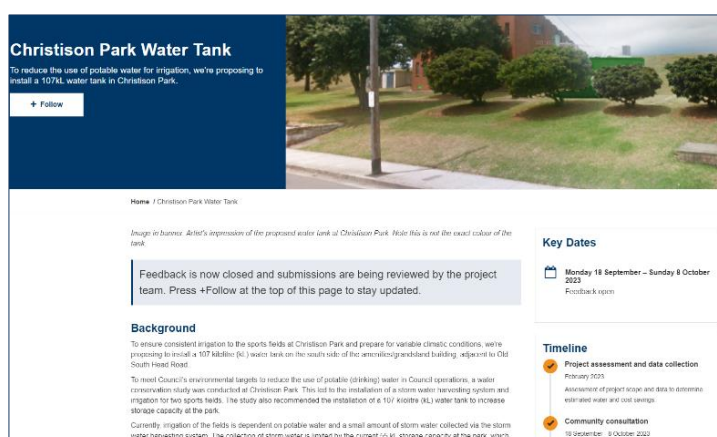


Figure 1: Your Say Page on WMC Website

## Overview

Results from the consultation included:

- 104 views, 84 page visits and 69 unique visitors to Your Say page
- 2 submissions via Your Say page
- 8 e-mail submissions to [records@woollahra.nsw.gov.au](mailto:records@woollahra.nsw.gov.au)
- Of the 10 total submissions:
  - 9 out of 10 (90%) responses did not support the proposal as it was presented, due to the concerns listed in Table 1 below. 2 out of 9 (22%) objections supported the proposal in principle
  - 1 out of 10 (10%) responses supported the proposal

From the responses, the following themes were identified in table 1, noting some responses addressed multiple themes.

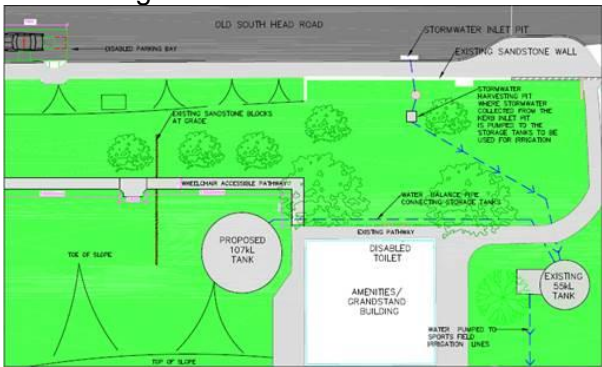
Table 1: Key Themes from Community Consultation

No. of Responses	Theme
8	Location due to visual impact and use of park space
3	Negative impact to views and property value specifically to apartment block 777 Old South Head Road, Vaucluse
3	Proposal has insufficient plantings to screen out tank
3	Blocked access to amenities (bathrooms, stairs) and related safety concerns
2	Noise from equipment
1	Risk of vandalism and graffiti

## Feedback and Responses

Feedback from residents and council's response are listed below. Additional detail and themes have been included to address specific concerns amongst respondents.

Theme	Staff Response	Recommended Change to Draft Proposal
<b>Location due to visual impact and use of park space (includes suggestions to expand existing tank or relocate proposed tank next to the existing one)</b>	<p>While there are concerns that the tank will be visible from many angles in the park, the intention is that the tank would only be visible from Old South Head Road and areas immediately adjacent to the tank. Once walking into Christison Park and the sports fields, the tank shouldn't be visible as it will be below the height of the sports fields, similar to the existing 55kL tank. This is also subject to screening from plants and trees.</p> <p>The existing 55kL tank has been in place since 1981, though has had some infrastructure upgrades to be in line with relevant standards and updated technology. While a suggestion to expand the existing tank is technically possible, it would result in considerably higher costs to remove and replace, would demolish an already working system and its infrastructure, and have the potential to increase excavation works. Options to bury or relocate the proposed tank next to the existing one were also looked into, however past investigations identified an area of contaminated fill in the vicinity of the existing tank, so we want to avoid disturbing soil in this area.</p> <p>The southern side of the grandstand has been selected as it is flatter and requires less excavation, avoiding disturbance of the contaminated area. The tank is expected to be partially built into the hill given the slight slope, however given the potential presence of contaminated fill any additional excavation can significantly increase costs to safely remove and dispose of this material. A Remediation Action Plan and Environmental Management Plan will be in place to ensure the safe removal and disposal of any contaminated material where required.</p>	Assess the feasibility of building the tank further into the hillside with contractors to reduce visual impact, while also ensuring the project is delivered on budget and with minimal risk to human and environmental health.
<b>Negative visual impact to views and property value specifically to apartment block 777 Old South Head Road, Vaucluse</b>	Noted	Update the proposal to include enhanced planting of native vegetation including trees so that the tank is properly screened from Old South Head Road, the apartment block on 777 Old South Head Road, and the park. This will be in collaboration with Councils Open Space and Trees team to ensure native vegetation species selection is able to provide suitable screening of the tank.

<b>Proposal has insufficient plantings to screen out tank</b>	Noted	Update the proposal to include enhanced planting of native vegetation including trees so that the tank is properly screened from Old South Head Road, the apartment block on 777 Old South Head Road, and the park. This will be in collaboration with Councils Open Space and Trees team to ensure native vegetation species selection is able to provide suitable screening of the tank.
<b>Blocked access to amenities (bathroom, stairs) and related safety concerns</b>	The proposed location of the tank does not restrict any access to the amenities building via the footpath or stairs, however feedback has highlighted this could obscure visibility. As accessibility and safety is paramount to Council's operations, Council will ensure both visibility and safety can be maintained at the site.	Liaise with the contractor regarding signage, markings, and safety features to ensure safety and visibility of the grandstand and surrounding tank.
<b>Noise from equipment</b>	Council has not experienced any noise issues from the existing tank infrastructure and will liaise with contractors to ensure noise from the proposed tank equipment is minimised or negated.	Liaise with the contractor regarding any noise from equipment and if necessary develop measures to minimise or negate noise as required.
<b>Increased traffic due to maintenance</b>	The park is frequently attended by Woollahra Council ground staff already, and maintenance to the tanks would be minimal and only during routine maintenance requirements or a malfunction of the equipment. Given maintenance of the existing tank occurs seldomly, we do not expect any increases in traffic or disturbance following installation of the tank.	No action required.
<b>Inquiry on connection between the two tanks and collection of stormwater</b>	<p>The tank will be connected by water balance pipes connecting the two storage tanks. This is illustrated in the following diagram, which can also be found on the <a href="#">Your Say</a> webpage. The location of the pipes will be reviewed by contractors quoting for the works to ensure there is no disturbance to the existing pathway and root zones of the nearby trees. The diagram also shows how the stormwater harvesting system collects water and pumps it into the existing tank.</p>  <p>The diagram is a site plan of Christison Park. It shows a proposed 107kL tank (a large circle) and an existing 50kL tank (a smaller circle). A water balance pipe connects the two tanks. A stormwater inlet pit is shown near the existing sandstone wall. The diagram also shows a disabled parking bay, a wheelchair accessible pathway, an existing sandstone wall, a disabled toilet, and the amenities/grandstand building. Arrows indicate the flow of water from the stormwater inlet pit to the existing tank and from the proposed tank to the existing tank. A note states that stormwater harvested at the inlet pit is pumped to the storage tanks to be used for irrigation. Another note indicates that water is pumped to sports field irrigation lines.</p>	Work with the Tree Maintenance Coordinator and contractors to ensure the balance pipe between the two tanks is installed carefully and does not disturb the Structural Root Zones of the mature trees in front of the grandstand.
<b>Risk of vandalism, graffiti</b>	The tank will be treated with an anti-graffiti coating. Council has not experienced any issues of vandalism on the existing tank or surrounding area.	No action required.

## Recommendations

Following a review of feedback from the community consultation, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Assess the feasibility of building the tank further into the hillside with contractors to reduce visual impact, while also ensuring the project is delivered on budget and with minimal risk to human and environmental health.
2. Update the draft proposal to include an improved planting of native vegetation and trees so that the tank is properly screened from Old South Head Road, the apartment block on 777 Old South Head Road, and the park. This will be in collaboration with Councils Open Space and Trees team to ensure native vegetation species selection is able to provide suitable screening of the tank.
3. Liaise with the contractor regarding signage, markings, and safety features to ensure safety and visibility of the grandstand and surrounding tank.
4. Work with the Tree Maintenance Coordinator and contractors to ensure the balance pipe between the two tanks is installed carefully and does not disturb the Structural Root Zones of the mature trees in front of the grandstand.

## Next Steps

Recommendations arising from the community consultation will be incorporated into the project brief, to ensure minimal negative impact to Christison Park, local residents, and park users. All respondents will be provided with this consultation summary report.

Council will seek quotes from qualified and experienced contractors to deliver the works. Following appointment of a contractor, installation of the tank will be carried out in accordance with the final proposal and quoted works. Respondents will be notified of the final proposal and works when available.