

Report by Leigh Burrell, Sustainability Programs Officer

RECOMMENDATION

That the report concerning the completion of Stage 1 of sustainability upgrades at Hudson Park Golf Course be noted.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Council of the completion of Stage 1 of sustainability upgrades at Hudson Park Golf Course.

REPORT

Hudson Park Golf Course has been identified as Council's largest user of water. Council has identified projects to improve the sustainability of the Hudson Park Golf Course. To do this, Council's Sustainability Unit and Parks Operations have partnered with Sydney Water under the Irrigation and Landscape Efficiency Project (ILEP) to design projects that will deliver:

- A better quality facility for the community
- A reduction in environmental impacts associated with the operation of the course
- A reduction in operating costs and improved capacity to generate income

Delivery against objectives and indicators is identified in strategic documents including Council's Management Plan 2011-2014, Vision 2020, Hudson Park Plan of Management and Water Savings Action Plan (2006-2011).

The projects include:

(a) Irrigation Upgrades

The irrigation system has undergone basic repairs to ensure that it is serviceable and that water is being applied uniformly across playing surfaces.

A centrally controlled monitoring and command system has been installed that will allow for automatic shut-down functions when soil or air moisture content is too high, thereby reducing water use and root disease associated with over application. The monitoring system will provide Council with real-time data and allow the utilisation of automated irrigation regimes.

Irrigation pumps have been fitted with variable speed drives that allow the operator to control water pressure. This greatly reduces strain on fittings and heads as pressure is increased gradually, reducing recurring repair costs. As the drives will only operate the pumps when greater pressure is required in the irrigation lines, it will reduce electricity costs and loss of water through misting.

(b) Resurfacing of Greens

Due to the unreliability of the existing bent grass greens and poor suitability to Sydney's climate, a drought resistant, disease tolerant, aesthetically superior turf has been selected for resurfacing. This turf will reduce water consumption, chemical and fertiliser consumption, requirements for ongoing maintenance, and will maintain good playing conditions through the hottest and coldest months of the year. The reliability of the new turf is particularly significant as heat stress has been the cause of extensive green closures in recent years.

(c) Tree and Root Pruning

As a number of trees are drawing water from underneath the greens and poor light on drenched greens is contributing to water logging and disease. A root and tree pruning project has been undertaken to alleviate these stresses.

Project Implementation

In order to implement Stage 1 of this project, 9 fairways and 2 practice greens closed on 12 September 2011. The project implementation was negotiated and agreed with the licensee of the Golf Course. The fairways and greens are expected to be ready for play by late November 2011, and will be reopened to the public soon after. Pending a favourable assessment of the resurfacing of these greens, it is planned that the remaining greens will be resurfaced at a later stage. Stage 2 will require the closure of the remaining nine (9) fairways.

The total project cost of stage one came to \$124,885 and attracted a 50% contribution from Sydney Water. Given the relatively low cost of this project and broad range of savings that are now achievable, it is believed that the payback period for the project will be less than five years.

Indicators

The strength of this project lies in its ability to deliver across a range of indicators, as well as the collaborative manner in which it is being delivered. With this new infrastructure in place, Council is now able to set clear efficiency targets in the areas of water use, energy use, labour costs, and material costs such as pesticides and herbicides. The project also has the potential to generate revenue through providing a better quality facility, thereby attracting greater business to the course.

Council can expect to see the project pay for itself in under five years, and this is without placing a monetary value on the environmental benefits the project is expected to deliver such as the staged eradication of invasive species, reduced resource consumption and a reduced flow pollutants into our water ways.

Sydney Water have audited the project along with all other works completed under ILEP and have expressed their satisfaction with Council's proactive approach and timely delivery of the project.

The Sustainability Unit is working on a range of capital projects across departments that will deliver along a quadruple bottom line with an emphasis on ensuring that projects will enable Council to continue to provide a high level of service to the community whilst decreasing operating costs.

REFERRAL FROM OTHER DEPARTMENT

No referral was required.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Proposed Expenditure: \$62,442.50

Funding has been provided in the current budget for this purpose as set out below:

Program	Approved Budget	Expenditure to Date
Sustainability Capital Expenditure	\$500,000	\$133,482

Report approved by:

Cathy Jones	Jason Andrew
Policy and Planning Coordinator	Group Manager Organisational Performance