

Development of walking track and open space / play space in Spring Farm and Whitewater Park Estates

Purpose of Petition:

1. Kingborough Council to provide a walking track along Whitewater Creek through Spring Farm and Whitewater Park Estates, including the provision of connectivity to the Kingston shopping precinct and Huntingfield area.
2. Kingborough Council to develop and implement open space provision, including play spaces and recreation areas, along Whitewater Creek through Spring Farm and Whitewater Park Estates.

Development of a walking track along Whitewater Creek through Spring Farm and Whitewater Park Estates to Huntingfield

Outcomes

1. Complete the final link of the walking and bike access between Kingston Park and Snug following the implementation of the State Government's 'Channel Highway (Algona Road to Sandfly Road) Corridor Study Report' bike and pedestrian track.
2. Pedestrian safe access to schools - (Kingston High School, Tarremah School, St Aloysius School).
3. Provide safe and pedestrian friendly access between Spring Farm and Whitewater Park Estates and the Huntingfield Park and Ride Facility.
4. Pedestrian friendly connection between Kingborough Sports Precinct and large public open spaces – existing Kingston Park, Coffee Creek, proposed Public Open Space within Spring Farm and Whitewater Park Estates and the new Huntingfield Land Release Subdivision.
5. Help reduce congestion at the Fork in the Road/Algona Road roundabout.
6. Connectivity between Kingston Shopping Precinct and the new Huntingfield Land Release Subdivision.
7. Benefit to future Kingborough retail businesses in Spring Farm and Whitewater Park Estates and Huntingfield areas.

Council and Government Supporting Documentation

- **The Tasmanian Government's, Trails Tasmania Strategy (2007):** Found that the highest priority needs are for trails close to where people live and that they are easily accessible to them.
- **Kingborough Tracks and Trails Strategic Action Plan 2017 – 2022:** 'Due to considerable growth expected in the Kingston and Huntingfield areas, including new large subdivisions just south of Kingston, it will be important to continue to update and improve recreational infrastructure including recreational cycling and walking track linkages in this area.'
- **Kingborough Tracks and Trails Strategic Action Plan 2017 – 2022:** 'In considering the guiding principles the following criteria guides the priority of proposed new tracks and linkages, and priority of actions. For example, tracks that are close to population areas, provide a missing link, have the ability to be multi/shared use, with community support and on Council owned land will have the highest priority rating for future development.'
- **Spring Farm Public Open Space Report to Council 13 January 2020:** A track through Spring Farm is considered a Priority 1 project under the criteria set out in the Council's Tracks and Trails Strategic Action Plan, as it connects population centres and completes missing links in existing trail networks.
- **Council Strategic Plan:** 'Provide pathways that improve safety and accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists and other users to make it easier to choose active transport for local trips and recreation.'
- **Council Key Priority Area:** 'Encourage and support a safe healthy and connected community.'
- **Kingborough Annual Plan 2020-21 - Council Strategic Outcome – 1.5:** 'An active and healthy community, with vibrant, clean local areas that provide social, recreational and economic opportunities.'
- **Kingston Place Strategy March 2020 – Central Kingston Place Objectives:** 'A connected walking and cycling network within and beyond central Kingston.'

- **Kingston Place Strategy March 2020 – Decision Making Tool:** ‘Does the action / project prioritise generous, green, engaging and safe paths that encourage active transit and public transport connections into and around the centre?’
- **Kingston Place Strategy March 2020 – Recommendations – Infrastructure Investment Priorities – Improve the walking links to Public Transport Nodes:** ‘Designate new pedestrian priority links connecting the centre with residential areas.’
- **Kingborough Sport & Recreation Facilities Strategy 2013:**
A key issue from consultation at the time of developing the strategy, in relation to tracks and trails was:
 - ‘The need to continue to link existing networks of tracks for walking, cycling and mountain biking.’

The key findings regarding tracks in Kingborough were:

- ‘The importance of providing quality, connected recreational trails close to where people live.’
- ‘These tracks usually provide connections to larger areas of public open space and greatly assist in encouraging local residents and visitors to enjoy an outdoor experience. Future development proposals should also provide for these connections and linkages within their design and ultimate construction. This needs to be incorporated into the assessment of future development applications where relevant.’
- ‘That community support and involvement be demonstrated for any new track development.’

Development of open space provisions including play spaces

Current Status

Spring Farm and Whitewater Park Estates are two adjacent recent subdivisions of relatively small lots and a population on par with Snug but with no recreation areas or play spaces. However, Council-owned areas are available within the Estates to develop these provisions.

Outcomes

1. Provide an open space system that contributes to social inclusion, community connectivity and community health and well-being for the 1,800+ residents that will be housed in this community.
2. Create safe play environments that provide opportunities for the many children to engage with other children who also live locally.
3. Will provide a destination / stop along the Whitewater Creek Track which currently finishes just outside Spring Farm Estate, however is hoped to link through to Huntingfield and beyond in the future.
4. Utilisation of the existing natural landscape features (natural bushland, creek) into the open space and playground design.
5. Developed open space will provide opportunities to connect and engage with community and help to develop a sense of place and community pride.
6. Will enable child development through quality age appropriate play opportunities.
7. Greater opportunity for a more active lifestyle and improved health, fitness and wellbeing.
8. Facilitation of participation and social interaction between a diversity of community members, age groups, individual and families, and multi-users.
9. Benefit to future Kingborough retail businesses in the Spring Farm and Whitewater Park Estates.

Council Supporting Documentation

Kingborough Open Space Study & Strategy 2019: 'Council's open space vision is to meet the current and future needs of residents, visitors and tourists and the environment by providing and protecting and enhancing well planned spaces for increased physical and social activity, enjoyment and environmental protection'.

Kingborough Open Space Study & Strategy 2019: 'OBJECTIVE 3: To support an open space system that contributes to social inclusion, community connectivity and community health and well-being.'

Kingborough Open Space Strategy 2019: 'Provide a neighbourhood park or two small local play spaces within the new subdivisions south east of the Kingborough Sports Centre Precinct to meet gaps in provision and encourage social interaction and engagement.'

Kingston Play Space Playground Strategy 2020-2025:

'By 2022, Kingborough's population is likely to reach 41,000, representing approximately 5,000 additional residents (based on 2016 ABS census data), most likely in the over 40 age group. This will place significant demands upon existing public facilities, including play spaces, natural landscapes, tracks and trails, recreational, and community facilities.'

- 'Higher population densities are found in Kingston, Tarooma, Blackmans Bay and Margate. Population densities decline sharply outside of these areas. Growth areas include Huntingfield, Whitewater Park and Spring Farm, Snug, with populations also growing on Bruny Island, including a sharp increase in daytime visitors to the island.'

- 'Guiding Principle 24: Where open space becomes available to meet a gap in service provision, the development of a new play space at that site will be prioritized in Council's Capital Works program.'
- 'Action 5: New play spaces are developed at sites where there is a gap in local level service provision (where appropriate and where feasible).'
- 'Kingborough Council seeks to provide play spaces that reflect community values and the positive public health outcomes that stem from play and recreation. Public play spaces and recreational facilities should, therefore, be equitably distributed throughout the municipality, well designed, and adequately maintained.'
- 'Council strongly supports and prioritises a connected, supportive and thriving community and recognises the need to support increased participation in physical activity through the planning, delivery, and maintenance of appropriate play spaces, playgrounds and recreational facilities. Council seeks to foster community pride and a strong sense of belonging by delivering convenient, quality, and attractive play spaces, playgrounds, and recreational facilities throughout Kingborough.'
- 'Guiding Principles: The following principles should be considered when maintaining existing assets and when planning and designing new public play spaces and playgrounds within Kingborough:
 - Allocation of play spaces and recreational facilities throughout the municipality should be equitable and within appropriate and reasonable travel distances of the majority of residences.
 - Urban local playgrounds will be located within easy walking distance of residents, ie. within 500 to 800m (or equivalent to a 5 to 10 minute walk) of households.
 - Local suburban and township facilities will be located within a 15 to 20 minute walk (or approximately 2 km) of households.
 - Natural assets (landscape elements) also have play value, such as: gullies; creeks; natural bushland; and beaches. As such, existing natural landscape features should be protected and incorporated into play space and playground design.
 - Identified gaps in play space provision will be rectified (through provision of additional facilities, upgrades of existing facilities and / or through land acquisition) where possible. If land is not available to accommodate a new play space or playground then improvements will be made to the nearest suitable play space or playground.'

Kingborough Council Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025:

- 'A Council that engages with and enables its community.'
- 'An inclusive community that has a strong sense of pride and local identity.'
- 'A resilient community with the capacity to flourish.'
- 'Service provision meets the current and future requirements of residents and visitors.'
- 'Infrastructure development ... [is] underpinned by strategic planning.'
- 'Community facilities are safe, accessible and meet contemporary standards.'
- 'The organisation ... encourages innovation ... '

Funding Opportunities

- **Spring Farm Public Open Space Report to Council 13 January 2020:** ‘Developers to carry out track works equivalent to their \$353,000 in public open space contribution associated with spring farm development.’
- **Question on Notice November 2020 Council Meeting:** Notes a \$909,913 balance available in the Public Open Space account as at September 2020.
- **Funds received from the sale of 4 council owned blocks of land:** Balance of funds following the completion of the four playground upgrades currently underway. Of particular relevance would be funds remaining from the sale of Lot 2, Mt Pleasant Road which is located in close proximity to Spring Farm Estate.
- **2021-22 Capital works budget - Kingston Play Space Playground Strategy 2020-2025:** ‘Guiding Principle 24: Where open space becomes available to meet a gap in service provision, the development of a new play space at that site will be prioritized in Council’s Capital Works program.’
- **State Government - State Growth – Community Infrastructure Fund:** Delivering infrastructure to enhance the liability and cohesion of communities around Tasmania.
- **Commonwealth Government - Building Better Regions Fund Round 5:** Due to be announced shortly.
- **State Government - Department of Communities - Improving the Playing Field Grant Program:** Funding available for 2021-2022 financial year.
- **Hobart Living City Deal / Kingston congestion package:** Funding from the bus exchange, Kingston Shopping Precinct enhancement budget to assist people to use active transport to get to these destinations.
- **State Government contribution:** To enhance connectivity to the Huntingfield Land Release Subdivision.
- **Kingborough Council 2020/21 Budget Line Item:** Design Survey Future Works - \$100,000 budget with \$17,000 spent as at 30 October 2020. Potential for use of funds for a track feasibility study.