

Ringsend Park & Playground Upgrading Programme Report

Arts, Culture & Recreation Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) June 2021

Introduction

The overall aim of Dublin City Council's Parks & Landscape Services Play Strategy is to support and uphold UNCRC Article 31; *the child's right to play* by providing high quality play facilities and supporting everyday play opportunities for children and young people as a rights based issue. A key measure has been the adoption and implementation of the principle of 'Play Sufficiency' which involves the provision of high quality and adequate quantity of a citywide infrastructure of play facilities and opportunities for play throughout Dublin city.

Background

Dublin City Council Annual Playground Capital and Upgrading Programmes are an ongoing priority for the city. This involves public engagement that includes children and young people in re-imagining existing and the design and planning of new play facilities. During 2020 Ringsend Park Senior Playground has been the focus for a major playground upgrading. Ringsend Park is operating for over 70 years and includes:

- 2 x Playgrounds; 1 x junior and 1 x senior.
- 1 x Full Size Synthetic football Pitch
- 1 x 7-a-side Synthetic Pitch
- A Number of Soccer Pitches
- 1 x GAA Pitches
- 4 x Tennis Court
- 1 x 400m Athletics Track (part of stadium)
- 1 x Orienteering Circuit
- 3 x Outdoor Gym Circuits
- 5 x All Weather 5-a-side Football Pitches (part of stadium)
- 1 x Basketball Court
- Community Allotments
- DCC Sports & Leisure Centre

During 2020 it was identified that the senior playground was in need of upgrading and repair and a major renewal works programme was developed to include opportunities for play for older children/ teenagers. And as much as is practicable also includes accessible and have inclusive play elements.

Progress to date

Public Engagement

The extent and uncertainty of Covid 19 restrictions has presented many challenges with regard to ensuring the involvement and participation of children and young people in the design and planning of new and upgrading of existing play facilities. This has influenced how the city council carried out the 2020 AND 2021 Playground Upgrading Programmes. In order to overcome these issues, notice and details of upcoming works as well as facilitating the opportunity for comments are provided. As much as was practicable, engagement with local residents is carried out through online information on DCC Parks Facebook page, DCC website as well as articles in local newsletters and e-zines in addition to providing signage at playgrounds locations where works are due to commence. The design brief for each project was based on information gleaned from previous consultations with children and young people living within the project catchment area and results of DCC Citywide Play Strategy Online Survey 'Have Your Say About Play'. One of the key issues that came up within this survey was the provision of play and recreational space and opportunities for older children/teenagers, equality of access in terms of opportunities for inclusive play and provision

and access to natural environments as part of play provision in order to facilitate sensory, tactile, and open-ended play experiences.

Engagement with Ringsend College Students regarding 'Project Park Proposal'

During the development of the design plans for the upgrading of Ringsend Park Senior Play Area, two students from Ringsend Technical College had been developing a proposal for the redevelopment of the overall park. The students were encouraged by the successful consultation process of another DCC Playground project; the final design and installation of the new playground at Sean Moore Park, and wanted to engage in a similar process for Ringsend Park. The initial aim of the project was to look at the play and recreational facilities for older children/teenagers, but as the project developed, the students have taken into consideration the benefits of a more intergenerational approach that will benefit the wider community.

Following on from this, as Play Development Officer I had a number of meetings (virtually) with the students, local councillors, teachers and Google community liaison officer. This resulted in the students gaining the opportunity to present their 'Project Park' proposal at the 2021 April South East Area Committee Meeting where it was received with great positivity by all councillors etc. I have also agreed to continue to work with the students as key liaison and realise as much of their proposal as is reasonably practicable and in alignment with DCC Parks and Landscape Services overall parks upgrading programme and associated Budgets for Ringsend Park. It is also hoped that there will be some collaborative work with Ringsend Tech, Google etc.

The outcome to date has been in identifying similarities in elements of the student's proposal to those included in the upcoming 'Youth Space', street workout/ninja warrior, trampolines and hang out spaces etc. and also identifying additional elements for inclusion in the design proposal for the overall Ringsend Park Upgrade and the Senior Playground Renewal.

Additional Funding

The Ringsend Park Senior Playground Renewal Project was allocated a substantial budget of €114,000 in order to provide a high quality play facility for older children/teenagers. However, a review of tender submissions has presented the benefits of additional funding with regard to completing a second phase of this project in order to include additional elements to further enhance and complete this type of facility – Youth Space. This is part of an ongoing process that will see the park become a destination site for older children that will provide age appropriate challenging and exciting opportunities for play for this age cohort. Therefore an opportunity to secure additional funding was provided by Department of Children Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DECDIY) with regarding to capital funding for play facilities. The funding application 'Play Sufficiency Phase 4 – Teenage Kicks at Ringsend Park' was completed by DCC Play Development and submitted to DECDIY. Subsequently, the amount of €16,833 has been awarded to provide some of the outstanding elements for Ringsend Senior Play Area which in turn will take on board some of the elements within the Ringsend College 'Park Project' proposals.

The tables below set out comparative elements of both DCC Ringsend Park Senior Playground Upgrade, DCC Annual Parks & Upgrading Programmes and Ringsend College Students 'Park Project' proposal.

Comparative Table Re: Elements of Ringsend Park Senior Playground Upgrading & Ringsend College Students 'Project Park' Proposal

Elements of DCC Ringsend Park Senior Playground Upgrading Proposal	Elements of Ringsend College Students 'Project Park' Proposal	Comments
<p>Street Workout Area - JWO-0103 Configuration Street Workout 3 Parkour Wall Going forward this equipment has the potential to be extended</p>	<p>Ultimate Warrior Course which could inspire which could inspire people to improve fitness and increase course completion times</p>	<p>This has been researched and is similar if not the same equipment as requested in @Project Park Proposal.</p>
<p>Amphitheatre seating around the trampoline play unit plus which includes oak sleepers to create an informal social of viewing space for teenagers (seats approx. 16 people) 4 x JME-0001 Leaf Seats Picnic Benches</p>	<p>New benches with charging ports and maybe even WIFI</p>	<p>Does not include charging ports but this may be something that can be explored in the future</p>
<p>Modulus Circle 60; Large Circular Trampoline with 6 x components</p>	<p>Built in trampolines and/or rock climbing wall</p>	<p>Similar idea of trampoline No rock climbing wall but idea can be reviewed and agreed pending sufficient budget and further <i>consultation</i>.</p>
<p>Additional Equipment – V-Bridge; additional element to existing space net</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Similar idea as climbing units provide dynamic active play for teenagers</p>
<p>Hammock swing including entry post; additional element to existing space net</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Play for teenagers or dual purpose of informal seating</p>
<p>Ancillary Items: bike rack, bins, fencing, gates, Incorporating natural landscape in overall design</p>	<p>General Upgrading of the overall park</p>	<p>Providing ancillary items and improving and utilising existing parkland contributes to overall park improvement</p>

Comparative Table Re: Elements outstanding from 'Project Park' Proposal and alignment with DCC Annual Park & Playground Upgrading Programmes

Elements Outstanding Re: Ringsend College Students 'Project Park' Proposal	DCC Annual Park & Playground Upgrading Programmes	Comments
Built in Volleyball or Spike Ball nets – inclusive	Concrete Fooseball (concrete outdoor – inclusive)	Both Proposed elements can be reviewed and agreed pending additional funding (DCEDIY) and further consultation
Built in Concrete Ping Pong tables(Concrete Outdoor – inclusive)	Teq One Table (Curved table tennis/soccer table – inclusive)	Both Proposed elements can be reviewed and agreed pending additional funding (DCEDIY) and further consultation
N/A	Inclusive Interpretive Boards	Can be provided through 2021/2 DCC Playground Upgrading Programme.
N/A	Inclusive Percussion and musical element	Can be provided through 2021/2 DCC Playground Upgrading Programme.
Skate Park or Skate Bowls	Additional Parkour Elements for senior and junior play areas	Requires further research see 'next steps'
New Gym Equipment specifically for the elderly with build in wipes and sanitizers	Possibility	Requires Further Research see 'next steps'
Splash Pads – inclusive	Possibility	May require further research; If the splash pads are the jet fountains DCC would be unable to install as the cost for construction and maintenance of the pumps would be significant and not appropriate to the park. These are normally seen in urban plazas where they are designed as part of a civic space with the added value of being interactive for play.
Fountain	Possibility	See above

Overall the newly designed 'Youth Space' will creatively maximize the potential of Ringsend park to provide the addition of challenging, interesting , accessible and partly inclusive play experiences for older children/teenagers aged approximately 12 – 16 years and provide a springboard for similar projects in the city's park and public spaces. Please see preferred

tenderer 'Creative Play Solutions' final design proposal for the first phase of this upgrading programme attached.

Next Steps

- DCC Play Development Officer will continue to liaise with Ringsend College Board and students to move this project forward. This will involve:
 - o Further consultation with children and young people and the wider Ringsend Community
 - o DCC will carry out an in-house scoping exercise to confirm and agree the potential for further upgrading element.
 - o The students – Darrel Poole and Malcom Denby will continue to be involved in this project and are also key contacts for Ringsend Youth Club where they volunteer and it is planned to include this group in future consultation.

Debby Clarke –
Dublin City Council Play Development Officer
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