

Davis Oval light project – community information

We know how important it is that our community has enough time to consider the project rationale and voice their feedback on projects that impact Town residents.

What is equally important is ensuring our community has sufficient information to better understand how and why money is being spent in the Town.

As this project is addressing serious safety issues with existing Town infrastructure and has been approved by Council, community consultation is discretionary and the Town chose to follow an inform approach when engaging with the community on this project.

However, we do realise that more time should have been given for the community to ask questions and receive responses before the project was due to commence – for this, we apologise. We are committed to do better, in line with what our community expects and deserves.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

These FAQs address queries and concerns relating to the **Davis Oval light replacement** project that were scheduled to begin on **15 February 2021**.

What work is being done?

The existing lighting (three poles) will be removed and four new poles will be installed near the corners of Davis Oval.

Can you confirm that the replacement of the deteriorating lights is not associated or will not lead to the development of a large-scale ‘sporting precinct’ at Davis Oval?

- Yes, this lighting replacement project is ONLY being carried out at Davis Oval to support its current use and nothing more.
- There are currently no plans to turn Davis Oval into a larger sporting precinct.
- The infrastructure previously supporting soccer training on Davis Oval was not up to standard. No viable opportunity presented itself to provide the minimum standard and the Town did what was possible to keep the current.
- Access to LRCI funding gives the council an opportunity to remove risk with what it was providing by improving the lighting to meet minimum standards.
- Davis Oval and the proposed lighting improvement is not unique, there are many grounds of similar size, even smaller, which provide the same infrastructure for what is being proposed all being similar distance to residential housing.

There must be lighting of all sizes for different spaces. Davis Oval is not a full sized oval, so shouldn't lighting cater for that purpose and context?

- Yes there is different lighting for use and space of areas, however, lighting is ultimately design on its intended use.

- As the Town provides use for sport training at night, the design of 25m poles is best placed to deliver the minimum requirement needed.
- Davis Oval is able to accommodate a full size AFL football field measuring 135m by 110m, it is also able to fit two full size soccer fields measuring 64m by 100m.
- As the current use of Davis Oval is to provide soccer training at night, there is ample room for a full sized field to be placed within Davis Oval.

Why do the lights need replacing at Davis Oval?

- The existing lighting poles have extensive deterioration and are recommended by external experts to be removed/replaced as soon as practicable. They pose an unacceptable risk to the public and to the Town.
- The existing lighting also does not provide an adequate and safe level of lighting for Davis Oval's current use (sport and recreational activity).
- Failure to replace these deteriorating poles can lead to injuries sustained by users of the Oval.
- The Town is legally required to comply with the *Occupational Health & Safety Act* and the *Local Government Act 1995* in order to provide a safe environment for everyone.

What is the risk of not replacing the lights?

- Poles can fall over causing potential injury to the public and most certainly will have a detrimental financial impact.
- Therefore, the appropriate course of action for the safety of the community and users of the Oval is to remove the existing poles that have extensive deterioration.
- These lights are due for replacement – as they are considered to pose an unacceptable risk to the community.

What benefits do the new lights offer to the Mosman Park community?

- The Town takes its duty of care to the public seriously. The current lights pose an unacceptable risk to the community and the Town.
- Davis Oval is currently used for public recreation, dog walking, soccer training; evidently serving a variety of purposes in the community.
- A safe environment for anyone who wishes to use the Oval at night. If these lights are not replaced, there is a risk of injury to users of the park (whether it be for leisure or sport). This may result in financial liability to the Town – the cost of which will need to be absorbed through rates revenue.
- The new lighting system is more efficient and economical to run than the current outdated system.
- The new lighting system will be solely operated by an automated control program that will eliminate lighting being accidentally left on past booking use hours. Bookings are only available from 7am-9pm in accordance with the Town's booking terms and conditions.

Can the proposed position of the new light poles be changed?

- We are currently pursuing an alternative design concept which considers moving the two eastern light poles (along the Hope Street side) more towards the boundary.
- As the Town provides a service for sporting activity at Davis, the design of the lighting must be done in accordance with Australian Standards 2560.1 Sport Lighting General and 2560.2.3 Sport Lighting Football. This design also addresses requirements for safe levels of lighting for other activities on the Oval.
- The location of the existing poles do not allow for uniformity of lighting required for Davis Oval's current use. This can cause individuals to hurt themselves and the Town to potentially be held liable.
- At the time the lights were installed the Australian Standards were not in place. The replacement of lights should follow the Australian Standards – for the safety of users.
- The location of the new poles ensures that correct uniformity is achieved for how the Oval is currently used.
- The location of these poles have also been designed to use the natural screening of the Norfolk Pines (between Davis Oval and Hope Street) to minimise visual impact of the poles themselves from Hope Street properties.

The proposed new lights reach a height of 25m. Does it need to be this high?

- We acknowledge concerns about light spilling into neighbouring properties.
- Poles are designed at 25m high to mitigate and control light spill into properties.
- If the poles are not at 25m high, more poles will be required or may cause even greater light spill issues.
- Australian Standards 2560.1 Sport Lighting General and 2560.2.3 Sport Lighting Football indicates the minimum level of light – four poles on corners of playing area (absolute minimum level to be provided); 4282 Control of Obtrusive Effects of Outdoor Lighting (to mitigate light spill issues).

Can the intensity of the lights be adjusted?

- The new lights will be set at an intensity that provides the minimum required standard only for how the Oval is currently used and nothing more.

Will the lights be on every day and during what times?

- No, the lights will not be turned on every day.
- Once the lights are replaced, they will only be turned on two nights a week (Tuesday and Thursday, unless otherwise advised). This is the same as the current usage pattern.
- Once the lights are replaced, they will be on no later than 8:30pm under current booking arrangements.
- The new lighting system will be solely operated by an automated control program that will eliminate lighting being accidentally left on past booking use hours.
- As part of the 22 September 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting, it was suggested by the Town that Council may consider lighting the Oval for a limited time during winter months to support general recreation use for residents. Currently this has not been considered by Council.

How is this project being funded?

- The light replacement project is being partially funded by a Federal COVID-19 grant.

What is the link between a 'COVID-19 grant' and the replacing lights at a sports oval?

- The COVID-19 grant unlocks funding to improve community infrastructure.
- The replacing of the lights will work to maintain and improve community infrastructure for the benefit of the local and wider community.

Has Council endorsed this decision?

- Yes, Council agreed to replace the lighting at Davis Oval at the September 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting.

I am concerned your independent impact and environmental review on how this lighting will impact houses on the boundary of the Oval as it is not a simple replacement of an existing resource but a significant redevelopment.

- The design of the lights for the Davis Oval replacement project has carefully considered the effects of light spill on houses on the boundary of the oval – along with the relevant Australian Standards.
- In relation to placement of the poles and the risk they pose to injury or death; the Town takes its duty of care responsibility to residents seriously and will continue to monitor these assets to ensure they are safe for use.

Why are ratepayers' money being spent on maintaining facilities that are used by non-local sporting groups such as the Western Knights Soccer Club?

- As specified in the Town of Mosman Park Sport and Recreation Plan 2017-2027, the Town provides a service for organised sporting activities outside of daylight hours.
- We know that many of the Senior Soccer Club players are not local to Mosman Park. It's important to note that the majority of members of the Club are local residents (or from surrounding suburbs) and they use Davis Oval on a regular basis.

Do you have independent documentation that confirms that Davis Oval is the legal and correct size to be labelled a full-size sporting field?

- The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries' Sports Dimensions Guide for Playing Areas identifies recommended field dimensions of 105m long and 68m wide for a senior football (soccer) pitch.

Do you have evidence of bookings of Nash Oval by organisations or other sporting groups other than the Western Knights for the past five years?

- Nash Field is leased to Western Knights and available to be booked by other local community and sporting groups. The Town does not keep a record of these bookings but we are aware of use by several local schools.

Can the lighting not be installed at Nash Field, Mann Oval, or Tom Perrott Reserve?

- Davis Oval is identified as a sporting facility in the Town's Sport and Recreation Plan 2017-2027, and already provides the service.
- Davis Oval's trees provide the best outcome for going above and beyond the minimum design requirements for spill of lighting and control of background.
- Mann Oval does not provide the same setting as Davis Oval – properties border right against Mann Oval's surface and there are no trees to further benefit minimum design requirements such as light spill.
- Nash Field's limited space would result in extensive work to the surrounding embankments and building to accommodate the poles. This extra cost would be considerable.
- Tom Perrott is used by the local AFL club. Due to how both clubs operate throughout the year, there is inevitable overlap between the two clubs.
- The Town is best positioned to spread out use of its sporting facility grounds and not concentrate use to one single location for current active clubs based in Mosman Park. This is likely to lead to premature wear of playing surfaces creating safety issues and costing more to maintain.

Can you explain the need for this in a densely housed area when Tom Perrott Reserve can provide this lighting and use especially for people who wish to exercise their dog when dark?

- The Town's Sport and Recreation Plan 2017-2027 identifies the need for lighting at the Town's sporting facilities to be brought up to minimum Australian Standards.
- The Town has many dog exercise areas throughout Mosman Park; access to Davis Oval as a dog exercise area is highly valued by the community.

What is the rationale for Davis Oval out of the three ovals being chosen to have this high-grade sport lighting pole system to be installed when all have pre-existing lighting infrastructure?

- The Town's Sport and Recreation Plan 2017-2027 identifies Davis Oval as a sporting facility to support formal sporting activities. The design of this lighting meets the minimum requirement for existing activities conducted on Davis Oval.
- For lighting to be classed high-grade, more poles and light fittings would be required – something the Town is not looking to do.

In relation to pole no. 3, why is it not obscured by the pines to minimise its visual impact to Hope Street residents – as stated to be occurring in your council correspondence and documentation?

- Pole number 3's original location was directly between two Norfolk Pines which offered no screening. The pole has been relocated as far as practicable so it is screened by the pines.

I'm concerned about the anti-social behaviour that seems to coincide with the nights the soccer club trains. What is the Town doing (or has done) to address this?

- The Town has, in the past, received complaints about noise, parking and hooning.
- We always endeavour to respond to these complaints in a timely and appropriate manner and remain committed to addressing these issues as they arise.
- Please continue to let us know of any inappropriate anti-social behaviour.

By sharing this information with you, we strive to ease your concerns about this project and keep you better informed.

If, after reading this information, you'd like to speak to us directly, please phone our Customer Service team on 9383 6600 to arrange a meeting with our Chief Executive Officer.

Last update: 25 February 2021