FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

6 February 2014

1. **Where is the project at in terms of planning, public input etc?**
   Garnett Lehmann Park and Ballin Drive detention basins are in final preliminary design stage with significant public input already considered during an extensive community consultation process. Further, the Mayor, Cr Carol Taylor and other project representatives met with concerned community members yesterday to hear their concerns and further discuss Council plans. Council appreciates the community’s passion for the park and the social amenity it provides and needs to balance that with providing improved flood mitigation for the city.

2. **Is there a construction start date?**
   Though the construction date is not yet finalised, following completion of detailed design, Council is aiming to commence construction by May/June this year.

3. **Who was Garnett Lehmann?**
   Garnett Lehmann Park was named after a long-serving Toowoomba City Council staff member who planted most of the trees in what was originally a horse paddock.

4. **Can you give me a brief response as to council’s philosophy on this particular detention basin and how it will work.**
   Toowoomba Regional Council has a duty of care and a responsibility to improve flood mitigation across the region to protect property and infrastructure and potentially save lives. This responsibility was clearly outlined in the Qld Floods Commission of Inquiry following the 2010/11 floods.

   Council is undertaking landscaped detention basins, reshaping Garnett Lehmann Park and Ballin Drive Park to deliver flood mitigation benefits to the city of Toowoomba. These projects are being undertaken as part of a holistic approach to flood mitigation and not in isolation.

   The Garnett Lehmann Park and Ballin Drive Park sites were chosen following Gowrie Creek catchment studies that date back to 1998 and have been updated in 2007 and again following the 2011 floods.

   Various combinations of detention basins and various locations, including South and Long streets, were considered but studies showed the best flood mitigation along East Creek would be achieved with detention basins in both Garnett Lehmann Park and Ballin Drive Park.

5. **Could you also explain how a detention basin would be better than, say, a flow across the park being slowed by the close planting of mature trees.**
   Detention basins temporarily hold water during storm events and restrict the speed at which water continues moving down stream. They reduce flooding
by allowing water to be collected and released in a controlled manner. The detention basins will have an earth embankment and the low-flow channel will be maintained. Comparatively, the close planting of mature trees would only have a negligible effect on flood mitigation and would be structurally unstable in any major flood with high potential to fall over and cause further damage.

6. I understand detention basins work well when there is a major rain event. How does it work if we have an event similar to January, 2011? Will the flow at James St and downstream be reduced or will the basin simply fill up and overflow?
   The detention basins are being designed to handle a one in 100-year flood event. The 2011 flood is considered to be in the order of up to a one in 500-year event. The existing basins along West Creek reduced peak flow by about 30% in the 2011 flood. The East Creek detention basins are also expected to reduce peak flow by about 30% in a one in 100-year flood event.

7. Reports suggest that more than 400 trees will be lost, but that council will replace them. Will these be planted in this park or will they be spread out over a wider area?
   While Council is committed to improving flood mitigation, it also respects the environmental and social value of all parks to the community.
   A significant number of trees will need to be removed but the design team is working hard to save as many trees as possible. Considerably fewer than 400 trees are now likely to be removed. Council has listened to community feedback and changed the parkland/detention basin design to allow a significant number of trees to be retained.
   Council has undertaken that for every tree being removed, a minimum of two will be planted within the East Creek catchment, and where possible within Garnett Lehmann Park. Based on community input, the replantings will be a mix of semi-mature trees, shade tree species and shrubs to attract birds and other wildlife.
   Council’s Parks and Gardens Branch staff - including an arborist and landscape architects - are playing a key role in the parkland design process.

8. Will the detention basin be bunded by earth or will there be concrete used?
   The detention basin will be turfed and earth bunded. The area within and around the detention basin will be fully landscaped with significant design input from the community. Only the outlet structure of the detention basin will be structural concrete. Some concrete footpaths will also be constructed within the park.

9. Will the stream be concreted over as has happened in other areas?
   The stream will not be concreted over and will be constructed as naturally as possible, and will be integrated into the landscaping of the park.

10. Can you give me a similar example of what this particular basin will look like?
   Council’s Murray Clewett detention basin on West Creek between Spring and Alderley streets is a good indicator to that proposed at Garnett Lehmann Park.
11. There appears to be considerable wildlife (particularly birdlife) in the area. What is being done to mitigate disruption to them?

Council will engage an independent expert to evaluate the existing wildlife on the site and any possible impacts from construction. A wildlife management plan will be developed to minimise any impacts during the construction works.