SY114-11/24 SITE SELECTION FOR NEW AQUATIC FACILITY

Disclosure of Interest – Cr Wright – Impartial – SY114-11/24 Site Selection for new Aquatic Facility

Cr Wright read the Impartiality Declaration - … With regard to Site Selection for new Aquatic Facility, the matter in Item SY114-11/24, I disclose that I have an association with the applicant (or person seeking a decision). The association is I am a member of the Bowling Club. As a consequence, there may be a perception that my impartiality on the matter may be affected. I declare that I will consider this matter on its merits and vote accordingly.

File Number:	**4.8046**
Author:	**Rebecca Palumbo, Manager Projects & Assets**
Authoriser:	**Lindon Mellor, Executive Manager Infrastructure & Development Services**
Previously before Council:	**17 March 2008 (030811)** **21 March 2016 (050316)** **26 June 2017 (150617)** **29 April 2019 (100419** **28 September 2021 (060921)** **23 April 2024 (090424)**
Disclosure of Interest:	**Nil**
Appendices:	**1. Site Locations ⇩** **2. Geotechnical Report ⇩** **3. SWOT Decision Support Matrix ⇩** **4. Recommended Site ⇩**

NATURE OF COUNCIL'S ROLE IN THE MATTER

Executive

PURPOSE OF REPORT

For Council to select a site for the location for the planning of a new aquatic facility.

BACKGROUND

Council has been considering the future of the York Swimming Pool for some years.

At its April 2024 Ordinary Meeting Council considered the pool renewal and resolved (090424):

"That, with regard to the York Swimming Pool Renewal, Council:

1. ***Receives the Feasibility Study report, as presented in Appendix 9.***
2. ***Resolves to proceed with planning for a new aquatic facility which includes a fifty (50) metre pool.***
3. ***Directs the Chief Executive Officer to undertake site geotechnical investigations at sites as outlined in the Feasibility Study.***
4. ***Directs the Chief Executive Officer to prepare a business case for the new facility and develop a proposal for detailed design work to be considered in the 2024/25 budget.***
5. ***Directs the Chief Executive Officer to investigate sourcing external funding for two-thirds of the expected costs of a new aquatic facility.***

6. ***Directs the Chief Executive Officer to investigate a Shire contribution to a maximum of one-third of the project costs for the construction of a new aquatic facility.***
7. ***Resolves to approve the transfer of $10,000 from the Swimming Pool Reserve to GL: 112302 - Swimming Pool Capital for initial site investigations.***
8. ***Notes further community consultation will occur during the detailed design phase."***

COMMENTS AND DETAILS

Three (3) sites have been identified as potential locations for a new aquatic facility. They are:

Site A – Recreation Precinct South-west Corner Site – 44 (Lot 100) Henrietta Street

Site B – Recreation Precinct North-west Corner Site – 51 (Lot 292) South Street

Site C – Existing site – 5 (Lot 593) Georgiana Street

Appendix 1 shows the site locations.

Following the direction from Council, a scope of works for site geotechnical investigations was developed. Through a Request for Quote (RFQ) process, in June 2024 the consultant, Local Geotechnics, was appointed to assess subsurface conditions at the three (3) identified sites.

The methodology for the site assessments included drilling test pits to a depth of four (4) metres to visually assess the subsurface material and to take soil samples for laboratory testing.

A range of standard soil tests were carried out in a National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) approved laboratory and a report was prepared for each site to identify:

- Subsurface conditions and groundwater levels (if encountered)
- Site classification in accordance with Australian Standard AS2870
- Site excavation conditions;
- Site preparation requirements (earthworks) and construction considerations including the suitability of site materials for re-use as fill and compaction requirements for fill and subgrade materials;
- Foundation design criteria and advice on suitable foundation options;
- Geotechnical parameters for retaining wall design, and
- Soil permeability and suitability of sites for on-site disposal of stormwater (if granular soils are encountered).

The site assessment report included a recommendation as follows:

"7.11 Recommendation on Site Selection

Local Geotechnics is given to understand that one of the sites will be selected for the proposed construction. Based on our findings and in geotechnical point of view, LG is of the opinion that the Site B – Recreation Centre (northwest corner) – 45 South Street will be a better site compare to other two sites for the proposed construction."

The geotechnical report is attached as Appendix 2.

To progress the site selection, a decision support matrix was prepared using a standard SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis. The purpose of this was to consider the strengths and weaknesses of each of the identified sites.

The SWOT Decision Support Matrix is attached at Appendix 3, with key considerations discussed below.

Site A – The corner site in the Recreation precinct adjacent to Henrietta Street is a vacant site with minimal demolition costs, allowing the existing facility to remain operational during construction. While it provides an attractive entry statement, there are limited services to the site and it offers little integration with existing recreational facilities. It is not the preferred site based on geotechnical results.

Site B – The corner of South Street in the recreation precinct offers the best outcomes regarding integration with other recreation facilities. The existing pool can remain operational during construction, and it would provide Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) improvements for staff working in isolation. It is located close to the school providing safer access for students and is preferred based on geotechnical results. The existing outdoor basketball courts would need to be relocated, but a new location to the south of the proposed pool site would accommodate new courts. The disposal of the obsolete infrastructure is a benefit, although the relocation of the Early Years Hub/Play Group usage would need to be considered.

Site C – The existing site on Georgiana Street holds some community sentiment due to its history. However, the geotechnical results revealed highly reactive clays, making it the least desirable site. Constructing a new facility on this site would result in the swimming pool being unusable for one to two seasons, significantly impacting key users such as the swimming club, in-term and Vacswim learning programs, and the school. All school programs, including in-term lessons and the water safety components of the Emergency Services Cadets, would cease during this period. The impact on the swimming club would be lasting, with a potential loss of members and activity. This site offers no integration with existing recreational uses, and all infrastructure would require demolition.

The Administration proposes the best location for a new aquatic facility is Site B – the South Street site as part of the recreation centre. This was also the recommendation from the recent Feasibility Study. Additionally, the geotechnical investigation recommends this site as being the most suitable. The recommended site is shown in Appendix 4.

The reasons for this recommendation include:

- The advantages of having the pool in proximity to other recreation facilities would increase the benefit for the community by offering shared facilities and maximising usage including:
    - Shared use of existing facilities such as the gym and meeting rooms.
    - Ability for current users of the recreation site for other activities can use the pool facility without leaving the site.
    - Increased activation and vibrancy of the recreation centre site including patronage to the restaurant/bar facilities.
    - WHS improvements and resourcing efficiencies for staff in supervising the recreation facilities and the swimming pool together on the same site.
- The location close to the York District High School would provide better access to the site for swimming lessons and other events with safe walking access.
- Having the pool at the Recreation Centre would allow access to the existing facility while construction was in progress:
    - If the new facility was to be built at the existing site, access to a pool may be lost for up to two (2) seasons during the construction phase.
    - Keeping access to a pool during the construction phase will support a range of water safety programs and the Swimming Club ensuring swimming competitions remain in York.
- Existing basketball/ netball courts can be moved and rebuilt on the site:
    - Current courts show cracking and damage which would need to be renewed in the near future, new courts would resolve this issue.
    - There is space for new courts to be located to the south of the proposed aquatic facility site.
- The Early Years Hub is used on a limited basis and this usage can be moved to another site, which is yet to be identified:
    - Other community owned buildings can be considered

  - Vacating the existing site may provide opportunities for further community uses, including a relocated Play Group
  - Current usage can be accommodated in shared facilities
  - It is recognised that relocation would have an impact on this community group and planning for this should commence once the site decision has been made
- The old Bowling Club building is nearing the end of its useful life and while it has been converted for use as a playgroup it is not really fit for that purpose
  - The building is aged and has not been upgraded in many years
  - It is designed as a bar and this is a poor fit for the current usage
  - Occupancy by the Early Years Hub was originally planned as a temporary arrangement
  - In situ non-friable asbestos material was recently found in the Old bowl green site which needs to be removed. By developing this site, the contamination can be resolved improving safety for all users of the site.
- The new aquatic facility is a long-term investment and the decision should consider not just the here and now but what will meet the community's needs for the next 50 years. The old bowling club building and basket-ball courts have a much shorter usable life and should not be seen as a drawback to this location.

OPTIONS

Council has the following options:

Option 1: Council could choose to locate the new aquatic facility on the recommended site.

Option 2: Council could choose to decide that one of the other sites is preferred.

Option 3: Council could choose to make a different decision.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

IMPLICATIONS TO CONSIDER

Consultative

Following on from previous community consultation on the future of the swimming pool, targeted consultation was carried out to inform this report.

The Principal of the York District High School, Trent Lockyer, advised that losing the facility for up to two (2) years would result in water safety programs being cancelled. Time and the cost of travel would prevent relocation to another facility. Water safety also forms a large part of the Emergency Cadets program and this also would be cancelled.

He requested that if the Site B, in the recreation centre, was chosen that consideration be given to safe pedestrian pathways for the school to enter the site. It is worth noting that this site location would reduce the number of roads children would be required to cross to access the pool.

Long term coordinator of the various York water safety programs, Shelley Ashworth, was consulted. Not only was the loss of organised swimming lessons for a period of time a great concern but in her experience reduced access to casual swimming opportunities resulted in poor swimming outcomes for children. Her belief was that this one (1) to two (2) year cancellation would have flow on affects in regard to child water safety.

The York Family Play Group committee was consulted, and they are concerned about losing their current site. They discussed what a new location would need to include. They highlighted the service they provide on Show Day. Their priority is to stay where they are, but they are open to exploring alternative options if an equivalent site could be found. They believe it sends a poor message for a pool to *'be prioritised over a Playgroup that provides essential services year-round, not just for the swimming season'*.

Strategic

Strategic Community Plan 2020-2030

Goal 1: The Place to be.

To be a close-knit community, full of life, in a welcoming and accessible place for all.

Goal 4: Built for Lifestyle and Resilience

To have a built environment which support community, economy and the environment, respects the past and creates a resilient future.

Goal 5: Strong Leadership and Governance

To have effective and responsive leadership and governance, where a sense of collective purpose and shared direction combine to work together.

Policy Related

Nil

Financial

The 2024/25 budget includes $200,000 for the development of Detailed Designs and a Business Case for a new Aquatic Facility.

Following procurement, consultants will draft a business case assessing the facility's benefits and value, as well as a funding strategy to identify external funding sources.

The design consultancy will collaborate with the Shire and community to create concept plans, taking into account key elements and functions, before progressing to the detailed design stage.

Council has resolved to investigate sourcing external funding for the construction of a new aquatic facility.

Legal and Statutory

Nil

Risk Related

Choosing a new facility's location will affect the community. Whichever site is chosen, some community members will need to adapt and change. As change can be difficult and mishandling it may cause reputational harm, engaging with affected stakeholders early and addressing their needs is crucial.

Workforce

Managing the pool renewal project can be undertaken utilising existing internal resources.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Absolute Majority: No

RECOMMENDATION

That, with regard to Site Selection for new Aquatic Facility, Council:

1. Resolves to select site B - Recreation Precinct North-west Corner Site, specifically 44 Forrest Street (Lot 292), for the proposed new aquatic centre as shown in Appendix 4.
2. Directs the Chief Executive Officer to continue to prepare a business case and commence concept design for a new aquatic centre utilising the chosen site.
3. Notes that consultation with impacted community groups will be required to plan for relocation of current uses.
4. Notes that this is a small step in the planning for a new facility and is not a decision to proceed with construction.

Cr Wright moved an Alternate Motion.

RESOLUTION
041124

Moved: Cr Peter Wright **Seconded: Cr Denese Smythe**

That, with regard to Site Selection for new Aquatic Facility, Council:

1. **Resolves to select site A - Recreation Precinct South-west Corner Site, specifically 44 Henrietta Street (Lot 100), for the proposed new aquatic centre as shown in Appendix 1.**
2. **Directs the Chief Executive Officer to continue to prepare a business case and commence concept design for a new aquatic centre utilising the chosen site.**
3. **Notes that consultation with impacted community groups will be required to plan for relocation of current uses.**
4. **Notes that this is a small step in the planning for a new facility and is not a decision to proceed with construction.**

In Favour: **Crs Kevin Trent and Peter Wright**

Against: **Crs Denis Warnick, Chris Gibbs, Kevin Pyke and Denese Smythe**

LOST 2/4

Cr Gibbs moved the Officer's Recommendation with an amendment to Point 3.

RESOLUTION
051124

Moved: Cr Chris Gibbs **Seconded: Cr Denis Warnick**

That, with regard to Site Selection for new Aquatic Facility, Council:

1. **Resolves to select site B - Recreation Precinct North-west Corner Site, specifically 44 Forrest Street (Lot 292), for the proposed new aquatic centre as shown in Appendix 4.**
2. **Directs the Chief Executive Officer to continue to prepare a business case and commence concept design for a new aquatic centre utilising the chosen site.**
3. **Notes that consultation with impacted community groups will be required to plan for relocation of current uses and/or integration into detailed Site B plans.**

4. Notes that this is a small step in the planning for a new facility and is not a decision to proceed with construction.

In Favour: **Crs Denis Warnick and Chris Gibbs**

Against: **Crs Kevin Trent, Kevin Pyke, Denese Smythe and Peter Wright**

LOST 2/4