

EAST WARD MEETING

Meet your Councillors Wednesday 19 April 2017, 7pm

**NOTES OF STONNINGTON COUNCIL EAST WARD MEETING
PHOENIX PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE, MALVERN EAST
WEDNESDAY 19 APRIL 2017
Commencing at 7.00pm**

Facilitator: Jane Nathan

Present: Crs Atwell, Davis and Klisaris (Mayor)

Officers: CEO, Warren Roberts
CEO
GM Assets and Services, Simon Thomas
GM Planning and Amenity, Stuart Draffin
GM Corporate Services, Geoff Cockram (left at 9.35pm)
A/GM Community and Culture, Tony Oulton
Mgr Advocacy, Performance and Improvement, Tracey Limpens
Coordinator Transport and Parking, Peter Kyrkylis
Coordinator Statutory Planning, Phillip Gul

Approx. 410 persons in attendance.

Please note this document is a summary of the meeting only, from the notes taken at the East Ward meeting. The meeting was not recorded and this is not a transcript of the meeting nor a Hansard-style set of minutes of the meeting.

The meeting opened with a history of the Indoor Sports Stadium Proposal and the selection of the Chadstone Bowls Club site that was presented to Council in November 2016.

- The proposed site is confined to the Chadstone Bowls Club site and does not consider any other area of Percy Treyvaud Memorial Park.
- No decision has been made to construct the indoor sports stadium on this site.
- The Feasibility Study will take 6-12 months and will look at such points as parking and traffic, a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) and options to relocate the bowls club.

- Consultation with stakeholders had commenced and there is further consultation to be held including with the community.
- No consultation has been undertaken with Chadstone Shopping Centre on any aspect of the proposal.
- The SIA will look at the positive and negative aspects of the proposal and a consultant has been engaged to assist Council with this.
- Information sessions will be held with smaller groups to give all interested parties the opportunity to speak.
- A survey will be available on Council's website and Council will continue to receive written submissions over the period.

What planning zone is this proposed site in?

The proposed site is within a Public Park and Recreation Zone that dictates what activities can be undertaken there.

Why is the Council Report from 21 November 2016 not a public report?

The Report was tabled as a matter of Confidential Business so that Councillors could consider its contents before any information about the selection of the preferred site was public.

The subsequent report on 5 December 2016 is the public version of the same report and includes all the information about the sites that were considered in the report under confidential business.

Are Councillors able to say whether they support this proposal?

No, Councillors cannot say how they will vote beforehand due to their obligations as Councillors under the Local Government Act 1989.

Why are you developing a plan for how the stadium would operate if the decision to build it hasn't been made yet?

The reason for undertaking a Feasibility Study is to understand what both the positive and negative impacts of the stadium proposal are likely to be. Consideration of how the new facility would be used is an important part of the feasibility study in order to inform any decision.

Why are we paying for a Feasibility Study if we don't want it?

Council has resolved to undertake a Feasibility Study on the preferred site and that is appropriate and standard practice for a proposed development of this nature. The estimated cost of the Feasibility Study when it commenced was \$100k.

Why isn't the Indoor Sports Stadium being built on sportsgrounds in Prahran?

This proposal is not just about the Prahran Netball Association. There are already 4,500 netball and basketball playing Stonnington residents. Council has an obligation to the people of the whole of the municipality. Stonnington's population is forecast to increase by 30,000 people in the next 20 years and demand for sports facilities will continue to increase.

Why does the Chadstone Bowls Club have to be impacted?

There are opportunities for the members of Chadstone Bowls Club to continue to play lawn bowls within Stonnington and these options will be explored through the feasibility study.

Stonnington Council has the highest rate of matters considered as Confidential Business. Why was this discussed as Confidential Business before anything was communicated to residents?

The majority of items considered under confidential business are regarding the purchase of land for Public Open Space and parks, and contracts. These matters are considered in Confidential Business so Council does not prejudice the outcome.

Will questions and answers (from this meeting) be on the website for those who could not attend?

Yes, notes of questions and answers will be on the website.

If 51 sites were assessed on criteria that none of them met, were the 51 sites assessed against the amended criteria?

Councillors removed the option of using Open Space and Sportsgrounds. Some carparks weren't an option, thus 6-8 sites were left to consider and resulted in the choice of the Chadstone Bowls Club site.

Has a decision already been made on this proposal?

All Councillors will be making the final decision, and not just the Mayor of the day. The concluding points of the Council resolution of 21 November 2016 state that once the Feasibility Study is complete, Council will decide to either proceed, amend or abandon the proposal.

Councillors are listening to the concerns of residents as evidenced by the tabling of a petition against the Feasibility Study in December.

Council Officers are compromised as they are the ones who are writing the reports. How can the CEO let this biased approach stand?

Officers will be professional in exercising their responsibilities. Council has not made a decision and while this is the preferred site it is not the Officers who make the decision, it is the Councillors, and Officers are not biased and unprofessional.

Why is the Officer in charge of the Project not here?

Ward Meetings are attended by Councillors and the Executive Management Team. The Acting General Manager, Community and Culture is here tonight and in his regular role as the Manager Community Facilities is the Manager in charge of this Project.

Have any of the Councillors or Officers here tonight been to the Chadstone Bowls Club?

A number of officers indicated that they had been inside building.

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How can you say that traffic is not an issue in this area?

Traffic and parking issues will be looked at as part of the feasibility study. Council does have recent data from Chadstone Shopping Centre and will make this available with all the traffic data that will be collected.

The Cato Street Development has been announced with a Public Forum. When will we have this as it has been 4 months already?

Cato Street was already well progressed to be able to go to the community.

Why has my suggestion for an alternative site on the 9th green at Malvern Valley Golf course sent in a letter to Council on 25 January not been responded to?

The officers responsible for this project are not aware of the proposal but are happy to follow up on this suggestion. No sites are perfect and this site was looked at. The land is subject to inundation as is most of the golf course.

In the Council report of 21 November 2016 it stated that there was limited residential impact. Council is already looking at the school courts and night lighting so how is this not affecting the residential amenity?

The existing primary school courts will be assessed to determine their capacity and these findings will be included in the Feasibility Study.

Soundproofing the indoor courts might be possible but how do you sound proof outdoor courts if the use is going to increase?

Currently the outdoor courts at the primary school are available for use by agreement between school and Council.

When exactly will Council make a decision either to proceed further or abandon this project?

It is expected that a report on initial options will be presented to Council in the last quarter of this calendar year.

How many times have Councillors met the Bowls, Netball and Tennis Clubs?

Cr Atwell indicated that he has played tennis at the Tennis Club but has never been to the Prahran Netball Club. He sent apologies to a recent invitation to visit the Bowls Club and looks forward to visiting in the near future.

Cr Davis indicated that she has not met the netball club, but has been to the information day at the Bowls Club and had contact with their members.

Cr Klisaris indicated that she has never been to the Bowls Club or the Netball Association. She has declined the Netball Association's invitations and has received one invitation to the Bowls Club but it clashed with another Mayoral duty.

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Have the Councillors met with other users of the park such as lacrosse?

Chadstone Lacrosse Club did approach the Mayor but did not meet with them and passed the request on to Officers.

Has Council agreed in principle that a four court netball stadium be somewhere in Stonnington?

Yes, Council has made a commitment in our Recreation Strategy to have a Feasibility Study for a Stadium somewhere in Stonnington.

Where are the hard figures re: participation in netball?

Based on the State figures for participation, Stonnington has a shortage of courts and is under resourced in its provision for Netball and Basketball.

Do you have any unbiased figures from State Government to support this?

Yes, there are Australian Bureau of Statistics and Australian Sports Commission figures and Council is willing to share these.

Was only Government land considered for a site?

All parcels of land within Stonnington of at least 2000m² were looked at.

Have any industrial sites been considered that Council can buy to build a multilevel facility with car parking underneath?

Council was hopeful of finding an industrial site but there are not many in Stonnington and all are very small. The Masters site was suggested and Council did make inquiries however it was not on the market as a single site to purchase.

If the stadium is built there will be an increase in traffic to unmanageable levels, especially on weekends. Land near Golf Course or other areas is more suitable. Why can't the people that want these facilities go to other Councils to use theirs?

Councillors know the traffic is already an issue and the opening of Lego Land at Chadstone is not helping. Traffic studies will be done as part of the Feasibility Study.

Has anyone met with the various women's groups to assess what they need? Why spend \$20m on netball stadium when that could be spent on social services?

The rise of women's sport such as football illustrates the pressure right across the municipality for access to facilities that have been dominated by male sports. Councillors need to make the right decision on where to put the stadium.

Why not downsize the stadium to reduce the \$20m cost?

The Feasibility Study is still to be undertaken and a decision made after that before Council commits to spending \$20m on a stadium.

A brochure has been received for the current proposal which mentioned an online survey. When will this be happening?

The survey will be out in the next few weeks.

The Mayor is there to represent all residents and yet has made comments that are supportive of the stadium.

The Mayor does not instruct the Councillors on how to vote and cannot do so. The Mayor has commented publically that this is the preferred site not the final site.

Why was the brochure (received in February) an update on the stadium when there had not been any previous information and we did not know about it?

At the time the information was sent out it was an update following the public report to Council in December. It was an update to let residents know where Council was at with the proposal. There was a lot of information known out there already as Council has received a lot of comment from residents.

In your electoral material Madam Mayor you said you would stand up to developers taking away from the area so how can you support this proposal that will result in a 2000% increase in traffic? Is this fair?

The claim of a 2000% increase in traffic is not a figure that came from Council. Chadstone Road carries at least 17,000 traffic movements a day. This will be measured as part of the feasibility study. If four indoor courts were built and the outdoor courts used as well there could be up to 400,000 visits per year. It is estimated that there are currently 20,000 visitations for Bowls participation.

Are there options to accommodate bowls and netball?

Options to provide facilities for both sports will be explored as part of the feasibility study.

Why has Council engaged consultants At Leisure for this study who have supposedly worked with Bowls Clubs before? Who are they?

Sally Jeavons is the Director of @Leisure and they have done numerous Bowls Club studies in Victoria.

A motion from the floor that an independent Review Board should be set up to review the material, assessment and the outcomes.

This is an informal Ward meeting and a motion from the floor directing Council business cannot be made. Councillors are quiet at this meeting because they cannot make commitments, and while this commenced under the previous Council they were then prevented under the Electoral

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Period rules from making comments about this and so the proposal was presented to the new Council after the election.

Two Councillors and the Mayor are here and they already support the stadium. We need another person to go to.

The Councillors are your elected representatives.

There are physical and mental benefits of playing bowls and nearby residents have not been a consideration.

A significant percentage of Stonnington residents are considered overweight or obese and are failing to meet recommended levels of exercise. This proposal would provide an opportunity address this problem.

Will Council undertake a study of bowls and netball with other Councils so that a second site is considered before any decision is made?

Stonnington is not alone on these issues and we do liaise and speak with our neighbouring Councils on sporting matters. We know from this that a large number of people do travel to other locations to play sport.

Can you look at other Councils to see if this stadium can be co-shared?

Opportunities for joint partnerships will be investigated as part of the feasibility study.

Will the decision on the stadium be committed at a public, open meeting of Council so everyone can see how each Councillor voted?

The decision will be made in a public meeting of Council that anyone can attend.

Is there still active searching for alternative grounds?

Not within Stonnington at this stage, but Council will pursue options with neighbouring councils.

If the proposal proceeds will the stadium protrude on the walking track in the park?

Cannot say exactly as no design has been prepared, but would anticipate that it would not.

There has not been transparency regarding this to date. Will Council commit to having some process so that all attendees will have the opportunity to be informed going forward?

Work was undertaken with the previous Council but further work could not be considered or released during the election period. The new Council was presented with a report recommending a site for the feasibility study as the need for more courts was well known.

In relation to confidential business considered by Council, there is nothing wrong with wanting to inform Councillors before going public. As explained previously, property purchases are considered under Confidential Business which has been the main item of business there. Going

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forward we would see this issue being considered in the public domain but if there are any matters of contractual commercial in confidence then Council reserves the right to put this under Confidential Business as per the Local Government Act.

Does this show that Councillors are not accommodating the aged community?

Council is seeking a solution that can accommodate the needs of the lawn bowlers and users of indoor courts.

There are netball courts in Murrumbeena and Ashwood that are both only half an hour drive away and are not used on Saturday nights and on Sundays. The lack of transparency and the information to date suggests the decision has been made. Why do you think the community is making this noise? What about using those netball courts?

Clearly Councillors are hearing the concerns of residents as they have heard from many in the community.

Will you consider increasing transparency?

The commitment has been made already, there will be transparency going forward with public debate, four Councillors are here tonight and there is a public community consultation process commencing and it will be nine Councillors who make a decision on this.

Due process for the 51 sites would have shown each of these sites were looked at and for this to be out in the public. Kelly O'Dwyer promised \$4m for the building of this facility but not necessarily here. Before you destroy the Bowls Club you need to have another site to go to.

Council has released the 51 sites publically and is happy to highlight it on the website. The \$4m commitment is not tied to a site and an option for the Bowls Club is a key component of the feasibility study. Parking on the site will also be considered.

Should the preferred site no longer be called the preferred site?

The Council resolution is that this is the preferred site and Officers have to follow that and conduct the Feasibility Study.

Council will look at the option for co-sharing with other municipalities.

What is the benefit of this proposal to this community?

The Feasibility Study is underway that includes a Social Impact Assessment to consider the impacts on the community. It may take up to 12 months in total to complete this.

If a resolution has gone through why not amend the resolution?

Council can change resolutions by a Notice of Motion to Councillors to amend them but as the resolution has already been acted upon it cannot be rescinded.

What gives these Councillors the right to spend \$22million and why not announce this before the election?

Council had not considered this proposal prior to the election period and was not able to make any details about it public. It was presented for the first time to the new Councillors following the election.

Is the Tennis Club safe?

Options for a new tennis pavilion will be looked at as part of the Feasibility Study but there is no loss of tennis courts.

Will the parking be taken?

Council will look at a stadium model that would provide for up to 150 car parks under the new building in addition to the car parks currently on site.

Meeting Closed 10.21pm