
Officers' Reports



Doveton Pool in the Park Master Plan

ITEM: 5.4.

City Planning and Infrastructure

City and Asset Planning

Joanna Noesgaard

Purpose of Report: To present the outcomes of community and stakeholder engagement and seek endorsement for an Options Analysis to be completed as part of the Doveton Pool in the Park Master Plan development.

Recommendation

That Council:

- 1. Notes the Engagement Outcomes Report summarising the Draft District Park Concept Plan community engagement, held 26 March to 14 May 2021.**
- 2. Endorses an Options Analysis to further understand financial implications including benchmarking, capital, operational, and maintenance costs of the below options:**
 - Option 1 – Renew Existing Site: Retain and renew the seasonal outdoor 50m pool and existing infrastructure (where heritage permits), including minor updates to amenities, change rooms, splash play, Gambetta Room, and the removal of the water slides and three smaller pools.**
 - Option 2 – Outdoor Pool and Year-Round Accessible Park: Redevelop and fence the seasonal outdoor 50-metre pool and upgrade amenities (where heritage permits) including change rooms. Removal of the water slides, three smaller pools, Gambetta Room and Portable building to allow for the development of a year-round accessible park on the remainder of the site.**
 - Option 3 – Year-Round Accessible Park (No Aquatics): Remove aquatics facilities and create a District Level Park, including demolish existing pools and buildings (where heritage permits) and develop a year-round accessible park with splash play, playground, youth play, barbeque, picnic shelters, and toilet facilities.**
- 3. Notes that following completion of the Options Analysis, an ensuing report be presented to Council in the first quarter of 2022.**

Officer General or Material Interest

No Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have a general or material interest in matters for consideration.

Council Plan Reference

1 - Drive stronger connections and places

1.1 Deliver sustainable and adaptable infrastructure and activate places

Executive Summary

Community engagement to seek community feedback on the future of the Doveton Pool in the Park site was held between March and May 2021. A range of diverse community engagement activities were undertaken which included community pop-up sessions, letterbox drops, online engagement, and stakeholder meetings.

The engagement findings demonstrate a strong community association with the site, with some desire to integrate elements of the Draft Concept Plan, whilst retaining the pool.

Based on the Engagement Outcomes Report along with the previous reports undertaken including the Doveton Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment, Aquatic Facility Demand Analysis, Open Space Assessment, and Heritage Assessment, three options are proposed to be further investigated via an options analysis. This Analysis will provide Council with concept plans, cost estimates, and a financial analysis to understand the respective capital, operational and maintenance costs.

The findings of the Options Analysis will be presented to Council early 2022 to inform the final direction for the site.

Background

In 2019, Council commenced the Doveton Pool in the Park Master Plan (the Master Plan) with Phase 1 of community engagement taking place in September and October that year. This engagement was to notify the community that Council was undertaking a Master Plan for the site and to seek preliminary thoughts on the future of the site. 328 participants contributed through visitations at the Doveton Show, community pop-up sessions and online engagement.

In addition to the insights obtained from the first phase of consultation, Council undertook several key targeted assessments to help make an informed decision around the future of aquatics and other community facilities at the site. The findings of the assessments indicated that an aquatics facility is not a priority at the site due to low utilisation, demand, and proximity to surrounding aquatics facilities. There was however an identified need for increased district level open space within the Doveton - Eumemmering area.

At the Council meeting on 16 March 2021, Council in adopting Officer's Report item 5.4, resolved an alternative recommendation as follows:

1. *Council notes the Doveton Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment, Aquatic Facility Demand Analysis and Open Space Assessment attached to this report.*
2. *Council notes the findings of these reports that indicates that an aquatic facility is not a priority at this site, but that there is a need for increased district open space within the Doveton Eumemmering area.*
3. *That Community and Stakeholder engagement commence to test the scope of facilities outlined in (2) above as the basis for the development of a master plan for public open space at the site.*
4. *That a report be presented to Council following the community engagement process.*

A Draft Concept Plan proposing a district level park at the site was then developed to seek further feedback from the community.

Community Engagement

Phase 2 of community engagement took place from 26 March to 14 May 2021, for a duration of seven weeks. This engagement provided opportunity for participation and community feedback into the Draft Concept Plan. The community were asked to share their thoughts on park elements for future consideration at the site, following the 2019 engagement insights.

A range of diverse community engagement activities were undertaken. This included community pop-up sessions, letterbox drops to every household in Doveton and Eumemmerring, online engagement, and stakeholder meetings. Translated content was also available. This engagement resulted in the following:

- 63,545 social media engagements and 11,000 electronic newsletters sent to community members
- 8,500 mailouts to local residents and businesses
- 4,875 visits to the Casey Conversations webpage, with 60 project followers
- 523 surveys completed of which 34.6% of surveys completed were Doveton and Eumemmerring residents
- 21.5 hours of face-to-face engagement (includes Zoom and Teams meetings)
- Translated video produced in five languages (Serbian, Tamil, Hazaragi, Arabic, Dari)
- 117 emails sent to various groups and organisations

Throughout the engagement it was clear amongst those who participated, that there is a strong community association with the Doveton Pool in the Park site, and significant pride in the pool as a community facility in Doveton.

While this sentiment resulted in community feedback to retain the pool, some community members were hopeful for an opportunity to bring the best of both (pool and park) together, for a future redevelopment of the Doveton Pool in the Park site.

The Engagement Outcomes Report (Attachment 1) and a Summary Engagement Outcomes Report (Attachment 2) are available on the Casey Conversation engagement portal for the Doveton Pool in the Park project site. Key stakeholders and community members involved in the engagement have been sent a copy of the reports.

Stakeholder Engagement

Engagement with representative stakeholder groups has occurred via the Project Control Group (PCG) which includes members from The Colman Foundation, Our Place, Doveton College, Hallam Senior College, Doveton Eumemmerring Township Association, YMCA, and the Doveton Neighbourhood Learning Centre.

Council officers met with the PCG on Wednesday 3 November 2021 to present the Engagement Findings Report and discuss a proposed options analysis for the site. The PCG indicated general agreement with the community engagement findings and expressed a desire for Council to only consider completing an options analysis on proposals that include retaining a pool.

Based on this feedback, Councils Administrators invited the PCG to meet and discuss their aspirations for the site in relation to the proposed options. A meeting was held on Tuesday 16 November 2021 with PCG members who wished to attend, as well as a relative of Sydney Pargeter, former City Mayor and advocate for the pool in the 1960's.

During this meeting the group individually expressed their preferences for the site. Various views were put forward, including a staged approach to renew the pool to increase seasonal use, reduce the depth of the pool, renew the 50m seasonal pool, and support for an indoor year-round facility.

Options Analysis Proposal

Based on the community engagement findings as well as the Doveton Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment, Aquatic Facility Demand Analysis, Open Space Assessment, and Heritage Assessment it is recommended that an Options Analysis be undertaken on three proposals. The Options Analysis will allow Council to understand the capital, operational, and maintenance costs for each option prior to seeking a final direction. These proposals include:

- **Option 1 – Renew Existing Site:** Retain and renew the seasonal outdoor 50m pool and existing infrastructure (where heritage permits), including minor updates to amenities, change rooms, splash play, Gambetta Room, and the removal of the water slides and three smaller pools.
- **Option 2 – Outdoor Pool and Year-Round Accessible Park:** Redevelop and fence the seasonal outdoor 50-metre pool and upgrade amenities (where heritage permits) including change rooms. Removal of the water slides, three smaller pools, Gambetta Room and Portable building to allow for the development of a year-round accessible park on the remainder of the site.
- **Option 3 – Year-Round Accessible Park (No Aquatics):** Remove aquatics facilities and create a District Level Park, including demolish existing pools and buildings (where heritage permits) and develop a year-round accessible park with water play, playground, youth play, barbeque, picnic, shelter, and toilet facilities.

The Options Analysis will be completed by external consultants and include the development of high-level concept plans, cost estimates, and a financial analysis to understand the respective capital, operational and maintenance costs for each option.

While some stakeholders suggested the need for an indoor aquatic facility on the site, this is not being included in the options analysis. As per the findings of the Aquatic Facility Demand Analysis Report, Dandenong Oasis Regional Indoor Aquatic Facility is within 5km of Doveton and Eumemmerring residents and provides learn-to-swim, warm water therapy and health and fitness services. Furthermore, based on initial estimates, an indoor aquatics facility would have an approximate capital costing of \$40M which is not achievable within Council's 10-year capital program.

The Options Analysis report is anticipated to be presented to Council in early 2022.

Financial Implications

Development of the Master Plan has been funded through Council's Public Open Space Reserve (Reserve) of \$2,171,400, set aside for future improvements to the site.

Remaining funds in the Reserve account will be allocated to implement the Master Plan which could vary significantly depending on an aquatic or non-aquatic option for the site.

Conclusion

Community engagement on the Draft District Park Concept Plan indicated that there is a strong community association with the Doveton Pool in the Park site, and significant pride in the pool as a community facility to be retained. Some community members were hopeful for integration to bring the best of both (pool and park) together, for a future redevelopment of the Doveton Pool in the Park site.

Taking into consideration the outcomes of the community and stakeholder engagement, performance and operational data, and targeted site assessments, an Options Analysis is recommended. This will include the development of high-level concept plans for the three options including, cost estimates, and a financial analysis to understand the respective capital, operational and maintenance costs.

Attachments

1. Engagement Outcomes Full Report - June 2021 [**5.4.1** - 69 pages]
2. Engagement Outcomes Community Summary Report - June 2021 [**5.4.2** - 4 pages]