



the bushland shire

creating a living environment

BUSINESS PAPER

WORKSHOP MEETING

**Wednesday, 27 April, 2011
at 6.30pm**

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AGENDA AND SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

PRESENT

OPENING PRAYER

Rev. Ann Hogan of St Peter's Anglican Church, Hornsby will be opening the meeting in prayer.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

Statement by the Chairperson

"We recognise our Shire's rich cultural and religious diversity and we acknowledge and pay respect to the beliefs of all members of our community, regardless of creed or faith."

ABORIGINAL RECOGNITION

Statement by the Chairperson:

"We recognise the traditional inhabitants of the land we are meeting on tonight, the Darug and Guringai Aboriginal people, and respect is paid to their elders and their heritage."

AUDIO RECORDING OF COUNCIL MEETING

Statement by the Chairperson:

"I advise all present that tonight's meeting is being audio recorded for the purposes of providing a record of public comment at the meeting, supporting the democratic process, broadening knowledge and participation in community affairs, and demonstrating Council's commitment to openness and accountability. The recordings will be made available on Council's website once the Minutes have been finalised. All speakers are requested to ensure their comments are relevant to the issue at hand and to refrain from making personal comments or criticisms."

APOLOGIES / LEAVE OF ABSENCE

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Clause 52 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice (Section 451 of the Local Government Act, 1993) requires that a councillor or a member of a Council committee who has a pecuniary interest in a matter which is before the Council or committee and who is present at a meeting of the Council or committee at which the matter is being considered must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable. The disclosure is also to be submitted in writing (on the form titled "Declaration of Interest").

The Councillor or member of a Council committee must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting of the Council or committee:

-
- (a) *at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the Council or committee.*
- (b) *at any time during which the Council or committee is voting on any question in relation to the matter.*

Clause 51A of Council's Code of Meeting Practice provides that a Councillor, Council officer, or a member of a Council committee who has a non pecuniary interest in any matter with which the Council is concerned and who is present at a meeting of the Council or committee at which the matter is being considered must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable. The disclosure is also to be submitted in writing (on the form titled "Declaration of Interest").

If the non-pecuniary interest is significant, the Councillor must:

- a) *remove the source of conflict, by relinquishing or divesting the interest that creates the conflict, or reallocating the conflicting duties to another Council official.*

OR

- b) *have no involvement in the matter by absenting themselves from and not taking part in any debate or voting on the issue as if the provisions of Section 451(2) of the Act apply.*

If the non-pecuniary interest is less than significant, the Councillor must provide an explanation of why they consider that the interest does not require further action in the circumstances.

PETITIONS

MAYORAL MINUTES

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MATTERS OF URGENCY

ITEMS PASSED BY EXCEPTION / CALL FOR SPEAKERS ON AGENDA ITEMS

Note:

Persons wishing to address Council on matters which are on the Agenda are permitted to speak, prior to the item being discussed, and their names will be recorded in the Minutes in respect of that particular item.

*Persons wishing to address Council on **non agenda matters**, are permitted to speak after all items on the agenda in respect of which there is a speaker from the public have been finalised by Council. Their names will be recorded in the Minutes under the heading "Public Forum for Non Agenda Items".*

GENERAL BUSINESS

- *Items for which there is a Public Forum Speaker*
- *Public Forum for non agenda items*
- *Balance of General Business items*

GENERAL MANAGER'S DIVISION

Nil

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY DIVISION

Nil

ENVIRONMENT DIVISION

Nil

PLANNING DIVISION

Nil

WORKS DIVISION

Page Number 1

Item 1 WK26/11 REDEVELOPMENT OF HORNSBY AQUATIC CENTRE

RECOMMENDATION

THAT:

1. Council receive the Community Consultation Report by Twyfords.
2. The project budget be confirmed at \$20Million.
3. The design include the provision of a 50m outdoor pool, with indoor Learn to Swim and leisure pools.
4. Parking for a minimum of 60 vehicles be provided with provision for up to 100 vehicles subject to the project budget not being exceeded.
5. Provision be made in the design for additional water based activities to be provided at a later stage.
6. Council progress the design to development application stage, incorporating the principles outlined in this report and the concept plan at Attachment 3 to this report form the basis of a detailed design.
7. The revised project timeline dated April 2011 and attached to this report be endorsed.

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

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1 REDEVELOPMENT OF HORNSBY AQUATIC CENTRE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council is advised of the community consultation process undertaken as part of its consideration of the redevelopment of the Hornsby Aquatic Centre. The process has provided Council with information regarding those features that the community considers to be of importance in the proposed redevelopment of this facility. The features include a 50m outdoor pool, an indoor facility containing Learn to Swim and other recreation facilities, parking on site and provision for additional outdoor active leisure facilities to be provided at a later stage.

It is proposed that the previously agreed \$20M budget be confirmed. For the project to proceed as currently recommended, Council will need to be successful in its application to IPART for a rate increase that will fund this project, among others. It is now proposed that the project proceed to DA stage on the basis of the information now provided. A revised timeline showing construction of a new facility commencing in the second half of 2012 is provided for Council's consideration.

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the outcome of consultations with the community regarding the re-development of the Hornsby Aquatic Centre and for Council to determine those features to be provided in the new facility.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting of 17 March 2010, Council resolved to proceed with planning for reconstruction of the Hornsby Aquatic Centre. Following a selective tender process, at its meeting of 15 September 2010, Council accepted the tender of Peter Hunt Architect for the design and construction management of the new facility.

At its meeting of 1 December 2010, Council resolved to close the Hornsby Aquatic Centre after considering advice regarding the condition of the structure supporting the pool, and the risks associated with its ongoing safe operation. At this meeting Council also resolved to explore opportunities to bring forward the provision of a replacement facility.

As part of the design process, Council agreed to undertake community using a specialist consultant. Twyfords, a consultancy group with specialist expertise in undertaking complex community consultation projects, was engaged to assist Council in this process.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Twyfords was engaged by Council to undertake a community engagement process to obtain input from the community regarding the new facility. Twyfords' report on the community engagement process is included as Attachment 1 to this report.

Public Information Sessions

Public information sessions were held on Tuesday, 15 March 2011 and Saturday, 19 March 2011. The objective of the public information sessions was to provide the community with information regarding the closure of the centre, the design process, and the community engagement process that was being undertaken. At the meetings, criteria to assist in determining the most appropriate range of facilities to be included were discussed. Sixty and 28 people respectively attended these sessions. At these sessions, a number of questions regarding the project were asked. In total, 152 questions were submitted in writing. Answers have been provided to all questions via Council's website and the Bang the Table online discussion forum also established for this project. 55 comments were received in this forum, with 1624 views being recorded.

Deliberative Forum

The information gathered from participants in the public information sessions formed the basis of deliberative forums held on 2 and 9 April 2011. A total of 38 members of the community were involved in these forums which were a structured process to:

- Jointly learn about the project (constraints, issues and potential actions for the site),
- Agree on criteria to evaluate design proposals,
- Identify a preferred design option that meets the criteria,
- Seek feedback on improvements to design options prepared by Council's Architect.

The participants in the forum comprised representatives self selected from the public information sessions, a number that were randomly selected by Twyfords through telephone contact, known stakeholders including lap swimmers, schools, users of the Learn to Swim etc, and a group of other potential users who would not normally engage with Council in matters relating to the use of the Aquatic Centre. A variety of age ranges was achieved. Despite efforts to engage the wider community, lap swimmers and people who had a strong affinity with the former centre were heavily represented. Difficulty was experienced in recruiting those members of the public who did not use the Centre, persons from other culturally diverse backgrounds, and those whose needs were not met by the old centre.

The participants in the deliberative forums inspected the site, received budget information, operational costs and revenues, attendance figures, details of other sites considered and heard from guest speakers representing key user groups (swim club, Learn to Swim, seniors and school). The group was also provided with an overview of aquatic centre design and development trends by a recreational planning consultant. The briefings also highlighted that the site is heavily constrained spatially and the \$20M budget will not enable every desirable element to be included. At the conclusion of the first day, a number of design criteria were determined, and agreed at the beginning of the second day. It was agreed that the draft criteria would be used to evaluate options for recommendation to Council.

Evaluation Criteria

The following evaluation criteria and weightings (shown in brackets) were agreed by the participants in the deliberative forum for use in evaluation of a number of options:

1. How well does the design create opportunities for social interaction? (Low)

2. How well does the design provide a pleasant, comfortable and safe physical Environment for users? (Medium)
3. How well does the design cater for year round use? (Medium)
4. How well does the design facilitate accessibility for the broadest number of potential users? (Low)
5. How flexible is the design to cater for the needs of the maximum variety of users and activities? (High)

Learn to Swim	Lap Swimming
Toddler Area	Squads
Leisure	Water Polo
Aqua	Swim Club
Warm Water	School Carnival

Design Options

Council's architect had prepared a number of design options for consideration by participants in the deliberative forum. These options were developed to reflect site constraints that had been previously identified (from discussions with architect and staff) to stimulate discussion among forum participants regarding the range of facilities to be included in any centre. The four options considered are shown in Attachment 2 in this report. Consistent with the strong theme that has come through every part of the consultation process, participants in the design forum expressed overwhelming support for either Option 1 or 2, which included a 50 metre outdoor pool. The group did not provide a clear preference as to which of Option 1 or 2 best met the criteria. The support for Options 1 or 2 was based on the conclusion of the group that these options best delivered on the key criteria, as they were considered best able to meet the needs of the maximum number of residents, reflecting a desire for outdoor lap swimming, Learn to Swim instruction and the need for friendly, flexible, indoor space for the community. There appeared to be a reluctance to consider those options that did not include a 50m pool, even if such action would enable other facilities for under-provisioned age groups to be provided.

Improvements to design options

After considering the design options against the criteria, the participants at the deliberative forum were asked to provide feedback on improvements that could be made to these options. One design improvement was made against option 1, being the addition of a waterslide (2 comments), and 10 design improvements for option 2. These were:

- Provide additional lanes for 25m indoor pool (6 comments)
- Separate leisure pool from 25m pool (4 comments)
- Provide a larger leisure pool
- Reduce leisure pool shallow water space
- Move 50m pool further north, adding area for additional activities (3 comments)
- Provide an underpass to Old Mans Valley
- Provide additional carparking in preschool site
- Provide an outdoor toddler pool
- Provide some grandstand on the northern side of pool for shade.
- Move change rooms over deck to create more space

Two design improvements were suggested based on option 3. These were changing the 25m pool to a 50m pool while retaining the space proposed for recreational facilities, and also provide an access to Old Mans Valley from the proposed car park entry under the pool.

The comments made by the forum participants have been considered by Council. Responses to the issues raised will be discussed later in this report.

Consultation Process – Summary

It is considered that the community engagement process undertaken by Council was successful in identifying the concerns of users and potential users regarding the facilities to be included in a new centre. The evaluation report completed by the participants identified that 90% of participants, a) learnt a lot over the process, b) considered their criteria reflected the needs of the whole community, c) considered that the best fit option (1 or 2) satisfied their criteria, and d) meets the needs of the community. Further, the participants overwhelmingly considered that the deliberative two day process was an effective process to assist Council in making a better decision.

THE WAY FORWARD

It is now appropriate for Council to consider the recommendations of the participants in the deliberative forum, together with feedback received from Council's website since December 2010, and the discussion reflected in the on-line forum, Bang the Table. The key issues identified by the forum participants are discussed below, with responses provided to assist Councillors to determine a way forward.

Budget

Discussions during the deliberative forum process indicated that where possible, Council should seek to provide the greatest range of facilities consistent with available funds. The basis for the preliminary estimates of costs developed by Council was discussed. The concern was expressed that the budget of \$20M indicated by Council may not be sufficient to provide the desired range of facilities. It was also indicated to forum participants that the budget was contingent upon Council being successful in its application to IPART for a rate increase to fund essential infrastructure replacement. Council was requested to give consideration to increasing this budget.

Response

Whilst the concerns of the group are acknowledged, it is considered that, having regard to the wide range of other issues facing Council, the sum of \$20M represents a significant proportion of the income that will be generated by any rate increase. Other matters such as drainage, footpaths, parks and reserves improvements and public buildings are of equal importance to the community as a whole and these should also be funded. Of greater concern is the action that Council may have to consider in the event that its application for the rate increase is unsuccessful. In the circumstances, it is considered that the \$20M budget is appropriate, and that if necessary, provision should be made for additional facilities to be provided at a later stage.

50m Pool

There has been a clear statement of support by the community that Council should provide a 50m outdoor pool as part of the re-development of the centre. This message has been expressed through the various forums facilitated by Council, and in the local press. A recurring theme throughout the deliberative forum process and the public information sessions was the desire for the community to see an outdoor 50m pool provided.

Response

It is proposed that the design provide for a 50m outdoor pool. In acknowledgement that additional flexibility should be provided in the facility, it is proposed that the structural design provide for the later installation of a shade structure over this pool should same become a priority for the community. This would be provided at a later date.

Indoor Facilities

It has been acknowledged by Council staff and the community, that the provision of Learn to Swim facilities is an essential part of any aquatic centre complex, to provide a much needed community activity, and also to assist in generating sufficient income for the centre to meet its operational costs. Options 1 and 2 preferred by the community both provided for a single body of water capable of a number of complementary aquatic facilities – Learn to Swim, warm water for therapeutic activity, general recreation, lap swimming and an area for general recreational use for toddlers/young people. To assist in providing this maximum flexibility and for operational reasons, the suggestion was made that Council should consider two separate bodies of water.

Response

It is proposed that, provided the budget permits, the indoor facilities include a separate program pool as well as a recreation pool sufficient to accommodate exercise, leisure and an area for toddlers. Both pools would provide warm (32°) water for this purpose.

Facilities for the Teenage Demographic

Participants in the deliberative forum acknowledged that where possible, the new facility should provide recreational facilities for older children and teenagers. It was acknowledged that site constraints and the available budget may present difficulties for Council in achieving this particular objective. Notwithstanding these concerns, it was indicated that priority should be given to the provision of a 50m pool.

The forum participants noted that a small water slide is proposed as part of the indoor facility, as shown in Option 2.

Response

Council staff have met with the architect to further consider this issue. Careful rearrangement of the proposed facilities within the available site indicates that it may be possible to locate the proposed outdoor pool and the indoor facility to provide space at the northern end of the site for outdoor water-based activities (e.g. water slides). The available budget means that it will not be possible to provide this facility as a first stage. The necessary preliminary work to facilitate this should be provided if the budget permits. It is proposed that a water slide be included in the indoor facility as shown in Option 2.

Parking

Accessibility to the centre was identified as a key evaluation criterion, to ensure the broadest number of potential users. The existence of on-street parking as well as the availability of parking at the nearby Dural Street car park was noted.

Response

It is agreed that on-site parking should be provided as part of the development, as a means of improving accessibility to the facility for a significant proportion of users. To this end, it is proposed that parking for a minimum of 60 vehicles be provided, with provision for up to 100 vehicles, subject to the project budget not being exceeded. As parking is proposed under the pool structure, it should be provided within the primary budget of \$20M. Consideration was given to the use of the preschool site for parking or an alternative access as suggested. Topographical issues, heritage concerns and a limit to the parking that could be provided (narrow site approx 10m wide -16 spaces), mean that this option is not supported.

Gymnasium

The possibility of including a gymnasium was included in the background material available for consideration in the public information sessions and later in the deliberative forum. Whilst briefly considered, the forum participants did not identify this facility as important, given the number of other similar facilities available in close proximity to the centre.

Response

Having regard for the additional capital cost, and the need for further parking, it is proposed that a gym not be included in the design.

Concept Design

Following consideration of responses from the community, expressed by the public information sessions, Council's website, Bang the Table and the deliberative forum, a concept design has now been prepared by Council's architect. This concept incorporates, as far as possible within the budget, those issues raised by the community in the public information sessions and through the deliberative forums. This concept is shown as Attachment 3, and it is now proposed that it form the basis of a Development Application. This concept should not be taken as a definitive design solution, but more as a plan that can form the basis of a detail design that is developed further for the Development Application submission.

In addition to the specific issues referred to above, which are subject to budget and any emerging design constraints, the design should also accommodate the following critical elements:

- Noise impacts and air quality within indoor facility (impact on Learn to Swim)
- Interactive static features for toddlers and young walkers
- Warm water to address health and exercise needs
- Ancillary areas to support the centre – administration areas, change facilities, kiosk, seating, storage
- Grandstand seating adjacent to the 50m pool – approx 500 people
- A multi-purpose room to be used for meetings, swim club, dry exercise, crèche etc

The relationship of the replacement facility to Hornsby Park should be provided for in the design. This includes retention of curved paths, entry relating to the central east-west path, retention of access to Old Mans Valley from the northern part of the park, retention of views over the 50m pool to the bushland and the arrangement of the eastern alignment of the facility.

Throughout the consultation process, the community has expressed the concern that it should be without its facility at Hornsby for as short a time as possible. It is considered important to the community that Council move to confirm its intentions for the site and proceed with construction of the new centre at the earliest possible opportunity. In view of the need to meet this concern and progress the design, it is now proposed that Council proceed to prepare a development application on the basis of this concept design, and, when complete to place the development application on exhibition, as provided for in planning legislation. In order to inform the community of Council's decision following the deliberative forum, it is further proposed that this concept plan be placed on Council's website, with the community being informed of the decision now taken.

Timeline

Council most recently considered a timeline for this project in July 2010. This timeline was based on the centre remaining open throughout 2011 and to 2012, with closure taking place immediately prior to demolition and construction of a replacement centre. The closure in 2010 has necessitated a reallocation of resources, pursuant to Council's resolution of 1 December 2010, to explore opportunities to bring forward the design and construction of a replacement facility. The attached timeline dated April 2011 has been prepared on the basis of the extensive consultation that has taken place in March and April, and in anticipation that Council will now approve the concept design for the purposes of preparation of a development application. Subject to adoption of the concept plan at this meeting and there being no unforeseen developments during the design and approval process, it is likely that construction can commence in the second half of 2012. The timeline included as Attachment 4 is now proposed for adoption.

BUDGET

Council has tentatively allocated \$20M for this project to proceed. Funds are currently available in the 2010/11 budget for design purposes, and subject to adoption by Council in the 2011/12 budget, for design and documentation to be completed. Funds for construction have not yet been allocated. Funding of the construction phase is also contingent upon further consideration by Council following advice from IPART of its application for a rate increase.

POLICY

There are no policy implications associated with this report.

CONSULTATION

Extensive consultation has taken place with members of the community. The recommendation that now follows has been developed following consideration by ExCo. The Project Control Group for this project comprises representatives of the Works and Environment Divisions, and this group has worked closely together during the consultation process and in development of the concept plan now proposed for adoption.

TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE SUMMARY

Triple Bottom Line is a framework for improving Council decisions by ensuring accountability and transparency on social, environmental and economic factors. It does this by reporting upon Council's strategic themes.

Ecology – protect and enhance our natural environment

The proposed location is adjacent to a natural area and will incorporate a greater area than that currently occupied by the former facility. Preparation of a Development Application in accordance with the relevant planning instruments will ensure that any adverse impact on the natural environment is minimised. There will be minimal impact on adjacent bushland or biodiversity. The proposal will be designed to be consistent with the existing built and natural environment. Care will be taken to ensure that the character and features of the existing area and the adjacent Hornsby Park are maintained.

Economy – encourage a resilient local economy and sustainable resource use

The proposal is expected to have a small positive effect on economic development in that it is expected to provide local employment opportunities when in operation. Local contractors will have the opportunity to tender for work opportunities that may arise from construction and operation. Local businesses will benefit from the additional passing pedestrian traffic. Where possible, the recovery, reuse and recycling of waste materials will be actively promoted. Water consumption will be minimised by the use of appropriate technology. Initiatives that minimise the quantity of energy and water to be used by the facility will be considered during the design phase.

Society and Culture – enhance our social and community wellbeing

The proposal to construct a new aquatic centre reflects strongly held community expectations that a replacement, enhanced facility is required. The consultation process that has taken place as part of the development of the proposal demonstrates that Council is working with the community to provide these facilities. The proposal promotes social equity by providing enhanced access to quality recreational swimming, learn to swim activities, competitive swimming and other water-based leisure activities at a reasonable cost at a central location for the community. The opportunity will exist for social equity to be promoted in the programs that will be operated at the Centre.

Human habitat – provide effective community infrastructure and services

Previous studies have demonstrated the justification for this facility. It is clearly supported by the community. The proposal now submitted for consideration will require a significant capital investment, and will require a lesser but ongoing financial commitment from Council. Care will be taken with the design to ensure that the use of new technologies will reduce the carbon footprint for this type of facility. The facility will be able to be accessed by all sectors of the community. Asset management considerations will heavily influence the design of the facility.

Governance – guide towards a sustainable future

The capital cost of the facility is proposed to be provided through a rate increase, for which application to IPART has been made. Operational costs are proposed to be covered by entry fees and charges for the variety of activities that will be offered at the facility. It is expected

that the Learn to Swim school will be a significant contributor to the total user fees for the facility. Asset management principles will be taken into consideration in the design of the facility. A facility asset management plan will ensure that appropriate and timely maintenance will proceed in a structured manner over the life of the facility, to the standard agreed by Council.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

The responsible officer for this report is the Executive Manager, Works Division, Maxwell Woodward, telephone 9847 6665.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT:

1. Council receive the Community Consultation Report by Twyfords.
2. The project budget be confirmed at \$20Million.
3. The design include the provision of a 50m outdoor pool, with indoor Learn to Swim and leisure pools.
4. Parking for a minimum of 60 vehicles be provided with provision for up to 100 vehicles subject to the project budget not being exceeded.
5. Provision be made in the design for additional water based activities to be provided at a later stage.
6. Council progress the design to development application stage, incorporating the principles outlined in this report and the concept plan at Attachment 3 to this report form the basis of a detailed design.
7. The revised project timeline dated April 2011 and attached to this report be endorsed.

MAXWELL WOODWARD
Executive Manager
Works Division

Attachments:

1. Report on Community Engagement Process - Twyfords To be included under separate cover
2. Options considered by Deliberative Forum
3. Concept Design April 2011
4. Project Timeline as at April 2011

File Reference: F2009/00386
Document Number: D01654394

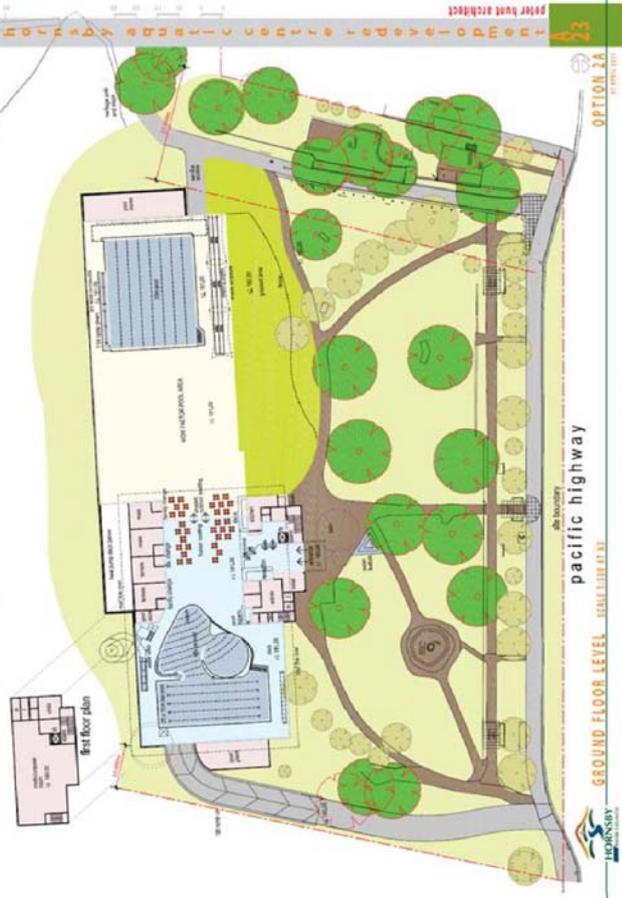
OPTION 2



OPTION 1



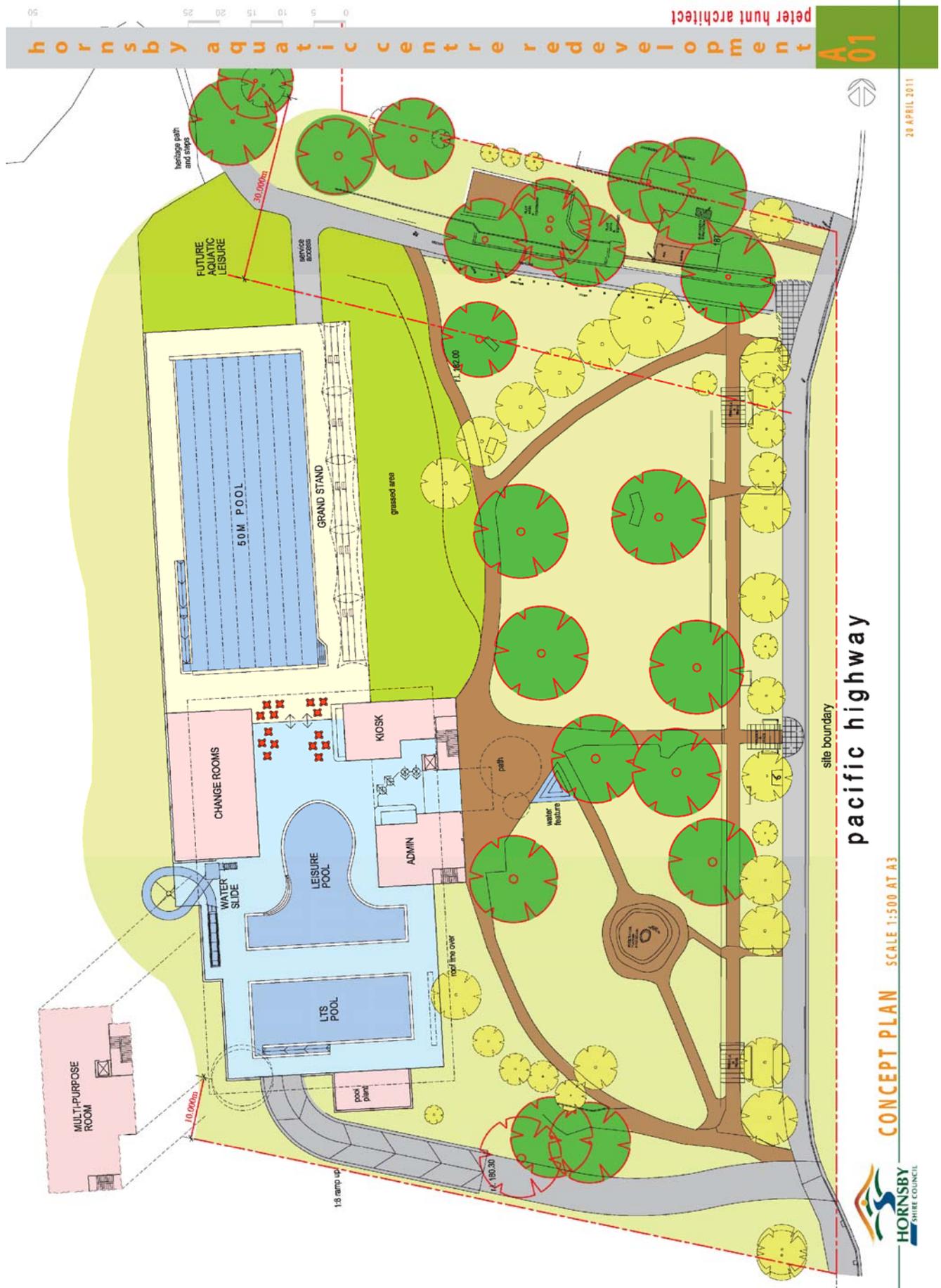
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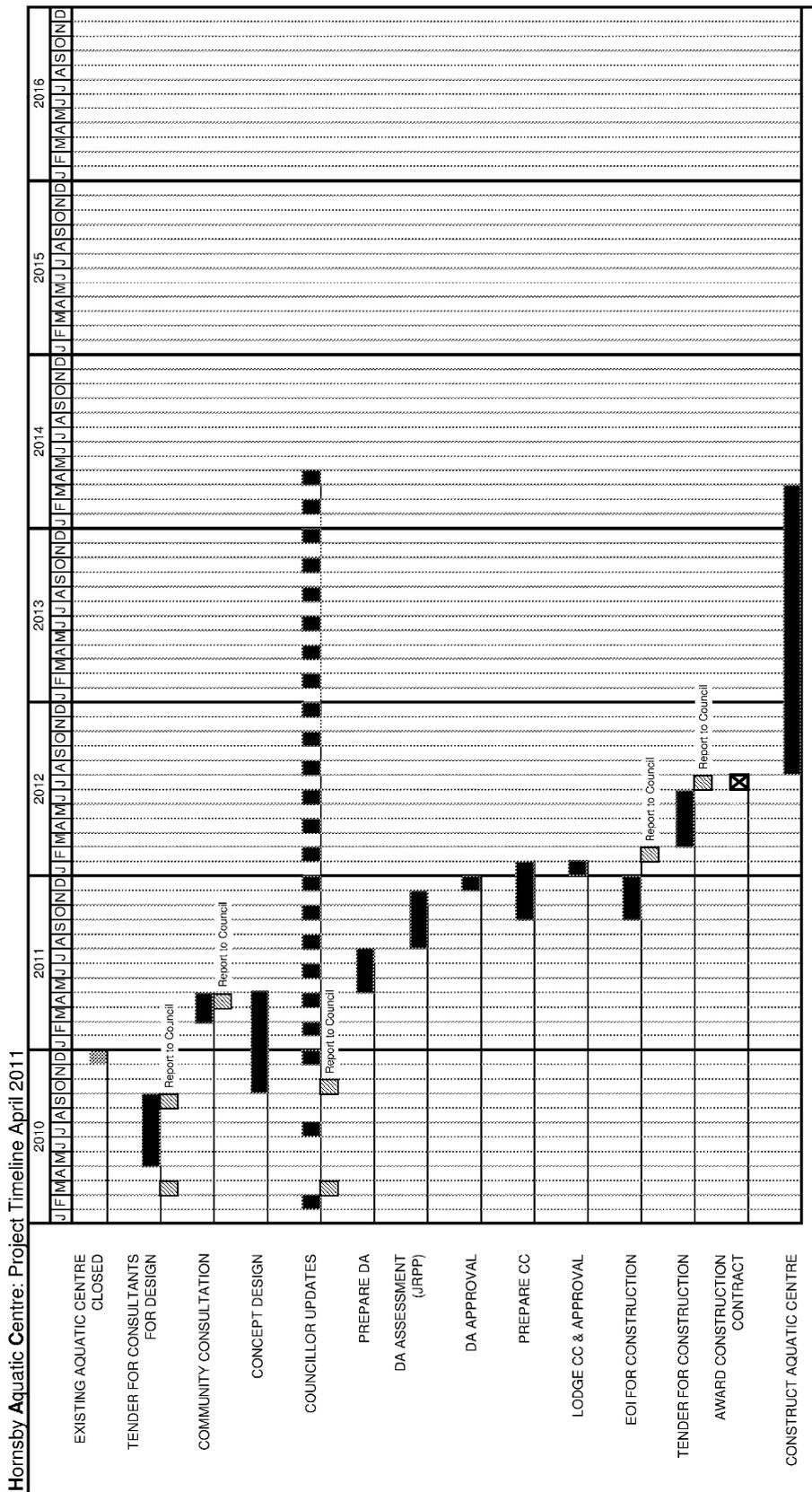
OPTION 3



ATTACHMENT 2 - ITEM 1



ATTACHMENT 3 - ITEM 1



ATTACHMENT 4 - ITEM 1