

**STRATEGY AND POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE**  
**4 AUGUST 2008**

**POLICY AND PLANNING**

<b>A5</b>	<b>PROPOSED RE-DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH PORT OVAL (AKA PORT MELBOURNE CRICKET GROUND)</b>
<b>LOCATION/ADDRESS:</b>	<b>INGLES ST AND WILLIAMSTOWN RD, PORT MELBOURNE</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:</b>	<b>GEOFF OULTON EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING</b>
<b>AUTHOR:</b>	<b>FIONA BLAIR, YOUTH AND RECREATION CO-ORDINATOR</b> <b>IAN HICKS, MANAGER CULTURE AND RECREATION</b>
<b>FILE NO.:</b>	
<b>ATTACHMENTS:</b>	<b>LETTER OF PORT MELBOURNE FOOTBALL CLUB (DATED 8 JUNE 2005)</b> <b>LETTER OF CITY OF PORT PHILLIP (DATED 17 SEPTEMBER 2007)</b>

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**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. Council's 2007 Sport and Recreation Strategy aims within 4 years to:
  - increase participation in sport and recreation by 10%
  - ensure all sports facilities are 100% fit for purpose.
- 1.2. Council's Sport and Recreation Guidelines identify Councils hierarchy of investment in sport, which proportionally encourages greater investment from Council in community ('grass roots') sports and facilities. Councils level of investment is proportionally decreased where facilities are utilized at a more elite level of sports and are more exclusively used for elite level sport.
- 1.3. During 2005/06 a draft Masterplan was developed for North Port Oval. This was prepared at the request of Football Victoria and included Port Melbourne Cricket club and City of Port Phillip, being Committee of Management for the site. The interest of Football Victoria at this time was to prepare a document that would look at the future needs of North Port Oval and position the facility as part of a package of facilities being put to Government for consideration.
- 1.4. In May 2008 it was announced that the State Government was to contribute \$1M to the re-development of North Port Oval as part of a series of VFL venue refurbishments and re-developments.

- 1.5. The funds available for redevelopment of North Port Oval include:
- \$1M Department of Sport and Recreation (State Government)
  - \$500K Football Victoria
  - \$1.5M Port Melbourne Football Club
- 1.6. This report recommends that Council agree 'in-principle' to contribute \$1.7M (for a total project of \$4.7M) to achieve a range of community benefits that would result from the redevelopment of North Port Oval.

## **2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

- 2.1. In 2005 Council was requested by Port Melbourne Football Club and Football Victoria to part fund the preparation of plans for the redevelopment of North Port Oval based on achieving a series of objectives (refer to attachment 1).
- 2.2. In 2006 the working group drafted a 'North Port Oval Redevelopment masterplan'. Council has not formally adopted this masterplan and it is not recommended that Council do so at this time.
- The purpose of the masterplan was to indicate a potential scope of works for North Port Oval, and for it to be used as a 'positioning' paper by Football Victoria in its quest to obtain funding for the redevelopment of North Port Oval.
- Now that a budget has been identified it is more appropriate that the draft masterplan be used as an input into a design and feasibility study that will determine a new plan, within a known budget to deliver clear and agreed community benefits.
- 2.3. In September 2007, the Port Melbourne Football Club and Football Victoria indicated to City of Port Phillip that a bid for funds to complete works on a number of 'VFL' venues was to be presented to Government.
- 2.4. On 25 September 2007, the City of Port Phillip provided 'in-principle' support to making a significant financial contribution for the project subject to ratification by Council (refer to attachment 2).
- 2.5. In May 2008 the Government announced capital funding for a number of 'VFL' venues, including \$1M toward the redevelopment of North Port Oval.
- 2.6. On 6 June 2008 the City of Port Phillip affirmed 'in principle' support for the project at \$1.7M subject to Council ratification.

### 3. RECOMMENDED OPTION

Council agrees 'in-principle' to commit \$1.7M to achieving the community benefits outlined in this report resulting from the redevelopment of North Port Oval.

#### 3.1. Criterion for recommendation

##### 3.1.1. ***Council's investment is consistent with Council Policy – specifically the 'Sport Strategy' and City of Port Phillip's 'Sport and Recreation Guidelines'.***

The Council's investment will be consistent with Council's Sport Strategy and Guidelines with regard to:

- all Council sporting facilities being 'fit for purpose' within the next 4 years;
- consistency with Council's financial principles and approach for investment in sport and recreation facilities (as outlined in Council's *Sport and Recreation Strategy Guidelines* adopted November 2007).
- Consistency with Council's Open Space Strategy 2006
- City of Port Phillip maintains land manager status for North Port Oval

##### 3.1.2. ***Council's investment minimises risk and increases compliance with Council statutory obligations associated with public venues, as applicable.***

The risks and statutory compliance issues to be minimised through the redevelopment of North Port Oval including:

- Rectification of any structural/ building integrity issues where there is a identified risk to user and / or public safety;
- Improvements in the environmental performance of the venue, consistent with Council policy.

##### 3.1.3. ***Council contribution delivers value for money and a demonstrable benefit to the community.***

The demonstrable community benefits to be delivered by the redevelopment of North Port Oval include:

- Renewal of the Gross Grandstand and retention of it's heritage values;
- Provide for the future sustainability of both Port Melbourne Football Club and Port Melbourne Cricket Club.
- Develop and improve Club rooms and player change facilities in a manner consistent with the AFL Preferred Facilities Guidelines 2006;

- Increase use and accessibility by the public through improving both visual and physical permeability from the public realm into the venue, thereby increasing the attractiveness of the reserve as a public open space;
- Increase access to the facilities and expand the services at the ground for example by providing infrastructure that encourages greater use of the venue by the community and increased physical activity opportunities (eg: consideration to a playground facility, consideration for use by athletics and/or local schools etc).
- Promote connection and exchange between the Club and the existing local community for example increasing opportunities for residents to meet and interact at the ground and in club activities

**3.2. Sustainability assessment**

<p>Economic Pillar</p>	<p>North Port Oval is the responsibility of the City of Port Phillip in it's role as Committee of Management under the <i>Crown Land Reserves Act 1979</i>.</p> <p>The recommended option would provide for an investment of \$1.7M from CoPP toward a \$4.7M redevelopment of North Port Oval – being 40% of the anticipated total project investment / cost.</p> <p>The potential to also reduce Council's ongoing and yearly maintenance costs for the venue will be investigated as part of this project.</p>
<p>Environmental Pillar</p>	<p>The redevelopment of North Port Oval will provide an opportunity to improve the environmental performance of the existing facilities through the application of Council's Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) principles and policies.</p> <p>Although the application of ESD may have some limitations, with most of the current facilities dating between 40 and 80 years in age, significant improvements in environmental performance would be anticipated.</p>
<p>Cultural Pillar</p>	<p>North Port Oval has been utilized as a sporting facility for 137 years. The venue has a deep cultural heritage as the home to Port Melbourne Cricket Club for 137 years and home to the Port Melbourne Football Club for 123 years.</p> <p>The venue also retains the Norm Goss Grandstand, which not only acts a facility for viewing but also retains some heritage importance to the local community.</p> <p>The redevelopment of North Port Oval will ensure that it's use as a major sporting facility and the retention of the heritage values of the Norm Goss grandstand are retained.</p>

Social Pillar	<p>The project is intended to improve connections between the facility and the public realm, particularly vehicular access and visual permeability.</p> <p>The project also aims to increase the level of general public use of the facility through the incorporation of additional functions and activities, which may include incorporation of a public playground.</p>
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**3.3. Policy and legislative implications**

This alternative position is likely to be deemed consistent with Council's stated policy position in the *Sport Strategy 2007*.

**3.4. Risk implications**

There is an outstanding backlog of works maintenance on facilities at North Port Oval. This option would deal as a matter of priority through the rectification of identified risks associated with various building structures within North Port Oval.

**3.5. Resource implications**

The resource implications that 'in-principle' Council would contribute \$1.7M to the renewal of North Port Oval and the delivery of a range of community benefits.

Council in the City of Port Phillip Strategic Resource Plan that was adopted as part of the 2008/09 Budget process has identified \$200,000 in 2008/09 and \$1.5M in 2010/11 for redevelopment of North Port Oval.

**4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

**4.1. Alternative 1**

Council reduce the scope of the works to community benefit and commensurately reduce the level of 'in-principle' financial support.

**4.1.1. Sustainability assessment**

Economic Pillar	<p>As a priority Council would be advised (under this alternative) to undertake the 'backlog' maintenance works as a matter of priority. These works are currently estimated at \$600,000.</p> <p>Under this option it is likely that the State Government's contribution of \$1M would be withdrawn.</p> <p>However, Council may still wish to invest in a much more limited scope of community benefit, the scope of which would need to be determined dependant on the level of financial support Council was wishing to contribute.</p>
Environmental Pillar	<p>The environmental performance of the facilities at North Port Oval will retain the status quo and are unlikely to undergo any significant improvement.</p>

Cultural Pillar	The facility in the short to medium term is likely to be able to continue to be utilized for football and cricket. Notwithstanding this, there is currently some concerns raised by officials attending matches at North Port Oval with regard to the 'fitness of this facilities to service their purpose *(eg: umpire change facilities for men and women).
Social Pillar	The objectives of Councils own Sport Strategy, specifically with regard to ensuring all Council facilities are 'fit for 'purpose' would be compromised. It is the authors/officers view that at present the facilities at North Port Oval are not of a standard that would deem them fit for purpose.

**4.1.2. Policy and legislative implications**

This alternative position is likely to be deemed inconsistent with Council's stated policy position in the *Sport Strategy 2007*.

**4.1.3. Risk implications**

There is an outstanding backlog of works maintenance on facilities at North Port Oval. Also, some preliminary structural assessments indicate that there are a number of aged facilities and buildings at North Port Oval that require remediation works in the short to medium term to obviate potential risks to public safety should these facilities continue to deteriorate.

**4.1.4. Resource implications**

The resource implications of this alternative are that the rectification and remediation works would still be required. These works are currently estimated at \$600,000.

**4.2. Alternative 2**

Council seek to just minimize risk and meet statutory obligations, while not endeavoring to gain any broader community benefit from the North Port Redevelopment.

**4.2.1. Sustainability assessment**

Economic Pillar	Council will still retain a 'backlog' of maintenance works currently estimated at \$600K that is required to be completed at North Port Oval to address risk and statutory obligations.  Under this alternative the State Government is very likely to withdraw is \$1M of funds towards the North Port Oval redevelopment.
Environmental Pillar	The environmental performance of the facilities at North Port Oval will retain the status quo and not undergo any improvement.

Cultural Pillar	The facility on the short to medium term is likely to be able to continue to be utilized for football and cricket. Notwithstanding this, there is currently some concerns raised by officials attending matches at North Port Oval with regard to the 'fitness of this facilities to service their purpose *(eg: umpire change facilities for men and women).
Social Pillar	The objectives of Councils own Sport Strategy 2007, specifically with regard to ensuring all Council facilities are 'fit for 'purpose' would be compromised. It is the authors/officers view that at present the facilities at North Port Oval are not of a standard that would deem them fit for purpose.  The level of obvious community benefit to be derived from Council's \$600,000 investment will be limited. The objectives of improved access, increased use and improved environmental performance would not be achieved.

**4.2.2. Policy and legislative implications**

This alternative position is likely to be deemed inconsistent with Council's stated policy position in the *Sport Strategy 2007*.

**4.2.3. Risk implications**

There is an outstanding backlog of works maintenance on facilities at North Port Oval. Also, some preliminary structural assessments indicate that there is a number of aged facilities and buildings at North Port Oval that require remediation works in the short to medium term to obviate potential risks to public safety should these facilities continue to deteriorate.

There is a potential risk to public safety should the rectification and repair of these structures not be attended to as would be the case under this alternative option.

**4.2.4. Resource implications**

The resource implications of this alternative are that the rectification and remediation works would be outstanding and remain uncompleted. These works are currently estimated at \$600,000.

**5. PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

**5.1. Internal**

5.1.1. The people who will be engaged with in relation to this issue are:

- Kathy Dillon – Manager Asset Management
- Chris White – Co-ordinator Open Space
- Sam Hewett – Manager Capital Works

**5.2. External**

5.2.1. The external people and/or organisations who have and will continue to be engaged in relation to this issue are:

- Sport and Recreation Victoria
- Port Melbourne Football Club representatives
- Port Melbourne Cricket club representatives
- Football Victoria representatives

5.2.2. A North Port Redevelopment Working Group has been established and includes membership from Sport and Recreation Victoria, Port Melbourne Football Club, Football Victoria and City of Port Phillip.

**6. IMPLEMENTATION**

6.1. Stage one of the Project Plan will be implemented including:

6.1.1. A Working Group comprising of City of Port Phillip, the Port Melbourne Football Club, Football Victoria and Sport and Recreation Victoria has been established.

6.1.2. A consultant has been appointed to undertake the design and feasibility study that will identify the scope of project and the community benefits to be derived within the total budget allocated for construction (approximately \$4.7M).

6.1.3. A Report will be prepared for Council's consideration at the conclusion of the design and feasibility study for Council to determine whether the criteria underpinning Council's 'in-principle' financial support have been met.

**7. COMMUNICATION**

7.1. Dependant on Council's resolution, it is intended that a community project / information board will be placed on site to both inform and seek feedback from the community, with particular regard to the community benefit elements of the project.

**8. RECOMMENDATION**

That the Strategy and Policy Review Committee recommend that Council resolve:

- 8.1. That the Council resolve to support 'in-principle' the redevelopment of North Port Oval with a commitment of \$1.7M.
- 8.2. That the Council's 'in-principle' commitment assumes that a range of community benefits and objectives will be achieved, including:
- 8.2.1. Consistency with Council Policy – particularly the '*Sport Strategy*' and City of Port Phillip's '*Sport and Recreation Strategy Guidelines*' (adopted November 2007) with specific regard to:
- Council sporting facilities being 'fit for purpose' within the next 4 years;
  - consistency with Council's financial principles and approach for investment in sport and recreation facilities (as outlined in Council's *Sport and Recreation Strategy Guidelines*);
  - consistency with Council's *Open Space Strategy 2006*;
  - consistency with Memorandum of Understanding between City of Port Phillip and Sport and Recreation Victoria;
  - City of Port Phillip maintaining public land manager status for North Port Oval.
- 8.2.2. Minimisation of risk and increased compliance with statutory obligations associated with public venues, as applicable, including:
- Rectification of any structural/ building integrity issues where there is a identified risk to user and / or public safety;
  - Improvements in the environmental performance of the venue, consistent with Council policy.
- 8.2.3. Deliver value for money and a demonstrable benefit to the community, including:
- Renewal of the Goss Grandstand and retention of it's heritage values;
  - Provide for the future sustainability of both Port Melbourne Football Club and Port Melbourne Cricket Club.
  - Develop and improve Club rooms and player change facilities in a manner consistent with the AFL Preferred Facilities Guidelines 2006;
  - Increase use and accessibility by the public through improving both visual and physical permeability from the public realm into the venue, thereby increasing the attractiveness of the reserve as a public open space;

- Increase access to the facilities and expand the services at the ground for example by providing infrastructure that encourages greater use of the venue by the community and increased physical activity opportunities (eg: consideration to a playground facility, consideration for use by athletics and/or local schools etc).
- Promote connection and exchange between the Club and the existing local community by increasing opportunities for residents to meet and interact at the ground and in club activities

8.3. That Council seek a further report for its consideration at the conclusion of the design and feasibility study in order for Council to determine whether the community benefits and objectives outlined in 8.2 (above) have been met, with a view to confirming the level of financial support to be provided for the redevelopment of North Port Oval.