

2.2 7 DORRINGTON DRIVE MOUNT WAVERLEY – FUTURE USE

Responsible Director: Russell Hopkins

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approves the use of the site at 7 Dorrington Drive, Mount Waverley for the development of an Early Years Hub which will contribute to the community's access to kindergarten and additional supports for young children and their families.

INTRODUCTION

This report presents an option for the future use of the Council-owned property at 7 Dorrington Drive, Mount Waverley following the recent relocation of the Waverley Gymnastics Centre (WGC) to the Oakleigh Recreation Centre (ORC).

BACKGROUND

At the Ordinary Council meeting on 13 December 2016, Council considered a report on the Oakleigh Recreation Centre Indoor Stadium and Waverley Gymnastics Facility Redevelopment Project.

Council resolved in part:

... that the Dorrington Drive site be maintained in community use and any future use of the site must be less intrusive than the current use of the site so that residential amenity of surrounding residents can be improved. Council further resolves to direct officers to begin consulting with residents in relation to future community-use options for the site.

WGC vacated the building in late April 2021. The building was handed back to Council in a manner consistent with the Tenant having complied with their obligations under the lease.

DISCUSSION

1. Land Status

The land is shown highlighted in red on the map below.



The Council is the registered proprietor of the land described as a Reserve 1 on Plan of Subdivision 412046D on Certificate of Title Volume 10360 Folio 013.

The land measures approximately 5,700m² accommodating a public carpark and a large building.

Drainage and Sewerage easements are noted on Title, along with a right of Carriageway from Dorrington Drive to Huntingtower School. The school use this carriageway for access from Dorrington Drive and access to the car park.

A number of double storey properties adjoin the property with most screened by vegetation.

2. Building Status



The building was originally constructed in 1970.

Council engaged the services of Macutex to provide a Building Condition Assessment Report (July 2021). The report shows that while the building is in a reasonable condition, remediation works to allow its use for community purposes by Council or another entity are significant and costly.

3. Future Use Consideration

The State Government, through the Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA), has requested that Council consider the provision of an increase in the supply of kindergarten places in, amongst others, the Statistical Areas of Mount Waverley North and South as shown in Council's adopted Early Years Infrastructure Plan. Council's property at 7 Dorrington Drive, Mount Waverley is within these areas. An additional 132 places can be provided through a proposed two-room kindergarten at Dorrington Drive, Mount Waverley, significantly reducing the shortfall in available spaces.

In acknowledgment of the collaborative approach and advocacy by the City of Monash, the VSBA has offered funding to Council for the support of priority projects in four identified Statistical Areas which includes Mount Waverley to support the roll-out of the three-year-old kindergarten reform through its Building Blocks Grants scheme. Preliminary discussions with State Government representatives indicate in-principle support for this project.

Additionally, the Dorrington Drive Early Years Hub could also provide the community access to:

- A uniquely designed area for playgroups that provides for children with additional needs such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) by including an outdoor education area with a sensory focus.
- A bespoke immunisation area for children with additional needs who are unable to attend the general community sessions.
- A purpose designed area for the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Sleep and Settling Service which would include the co-location of the MCH lactation program.
- A community space for provision of programs such as Family Services.

Further design work will need to be undertaken to accommodate these components should Council support the development of an Early Years Hub.

The identified uses align with the Council Plan, the Integrated Health and Wellbeing Plan as well as the underlying principles of the Early Years Infrastructure Plan. This proposed build was not included in the 2021 Early Years Infrastructure Plan due to the timing of the release of the building for consideration of future uses.

A major driver for the relocation of Waverley Gymnastics Centre from 7 Dorrington Drive to the Oakleigh Recreation Centre was the impact of the WGC upon the amenity of the local residents. The future use of the property for early years provision is considered a less intrusive use.

Huntingtower School

The Huntingtower School (HS) has expressed an interest in the property and its adjacency to the property makes the school an important external stakeholder.

Part of the western portion of the land provides vehicular and pedestrian access to HS and this access will need to be recognised.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This proposal aligns with the Council Plan, the Integrated Health and Wellbeing Plan as well as the underlying principles of the Early Years Infrastructure Plan.

CONSULTATION

Council's Community Engagement Policy will guide the external consultation with the local community and other stakeholders such as Huntingtower School. This consultation will be an important factor in ensuring that the development of any new facility is beneficial to the local community, both in terms of access to services and residential amenity.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

A major driver for the relocation of Waverley Gymnastics Centre from 7 Dorrington Drive to the Oakleigh Recreation Centre was the impact of the WGC upon the amenity of the local residents.

The future use of the property for Early Years provision has regard for the local neighbourhood and aims to enhance their amenity through a less intrusive use.

Importantly, it will provide a range of services for families and children which will meet an identified demand in this area.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

There are no Human Rights considerations associated with this Report.

GENDER EQUITY ASSESSMENT

A gender impact assessment is not required on this initiative.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council can apply for a grant from the VSBA through the pipeline of projects agreement which is currently being negotiated. Council would also need to consider inclusion in future budgets of funding of between \$2 – 3M for this project.

CONCLUSION

The demolition of the current building at 7 Dorrington Drive, Mount Waverley and the construction of an Early Years Hub will contribute to the community's access to kindergarten and additional supports for young children and their families. It is consistent with Council's commitment to the early years and the earlier resolution regarding the use of the site, and is supported in-principle by the State Government as part of preliminary discussions.