

GOLDEN SQUARE RECREATION RESERVE MASTER PLAN - DRAFT REPORT



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INTRODUCTION

The Golden Square Recreation Reserve Master Plan will guide the planning, development, maintenance and management of the reserve for the long term.

The development of this master plan has involved an extensive background research, site review and a two-stage engagement process.

The first stage of engagement involved surveys, interviews and workshops with key stakeholder groups including the tenant sports clubs, Golden Square Bowls and Croquet Club, Golden Square Swimming Pool Committee and Golden Square

Primary School. The broader community were engaged through an online community survey that received 409 responses.

The second stage of engagement was held over a two-week period. The process involved the development of a Discussion Paper with five development options. This paper was shared with key stakeholders that were interviewed and widely distributed to Community with over 1502 people responding via a community survey and submission process.

Draft Master Plan

The Project Team has considered feedback received from the engagement processes and developed this Draft Master Plan report.

The Draft Master Plan analyses the social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts of two preferred development options for Council consideration.



THE SITE

The Golden Square Recreation Reserve is a local sport reserve that provides for Australian Rules football, netball and cricket and includes the Golden Square Swimming Pool. The reserve is located within a precinct that includes the Golden Square Bowls and Croquet Club, the Bendigo Creek Trail and Golden Square Primary School.

The Golden Square Recreation Reserve is the major sports reserve in Golden Square. It is one of three sports reserves in Golden Square. The Reserve links with Backhaus Oval, the Golden Square Primary School and onwards to Bendigo CBD via the Bendigo Creek Trail. The reserve is located within walking distance of Golden Square Town Centre.

Golden Square Recreation Reserve is a Crown Land Reserve where the City of Greater Bendigo is the appointed Committee of Management. The reserve is zoned Public Park Recreation Zone and is subject to a Neighbourhood Character Overlays (NCO1) at the entry car park area to the Golden Square Swimming Pool and along the street / reserve boundary on Wade Street. The bowls club is zoned Special Use Zone 4 – Private Sport and Recreation Facility.

Council owns the built assets on the reserve, which includes the sports pavilion, sports oval, the single netball court, competition standard lighting,

fencing, storage, the swimming pool and associated buildings, car parking and cricket nets.

The bowls facility is owned and managed privately by the Golden Square Bowls and Croquet Club. The Golden Square Swimming Pool is now managed by the Golden Square Swimming Pool Committee. The Golden Square Football and Netball Club, Golden Square Junior

Football Club and Golden Square Cricket Club have seasonal tenancy agreements for use of the sports reserve. The Golden Square Primary School book the use of the sports oval and swimming pool.

The Golden Square Recreation Reserve is the ancestral home to all user groups. They have a long-standing relationship and use of the

reserve. All users have respectfully engaged and contributed to the planning process. They have identified challenges, their current and future needs and have collectively contributed ideas for improvements that have helped inform development options for the Master Plan.

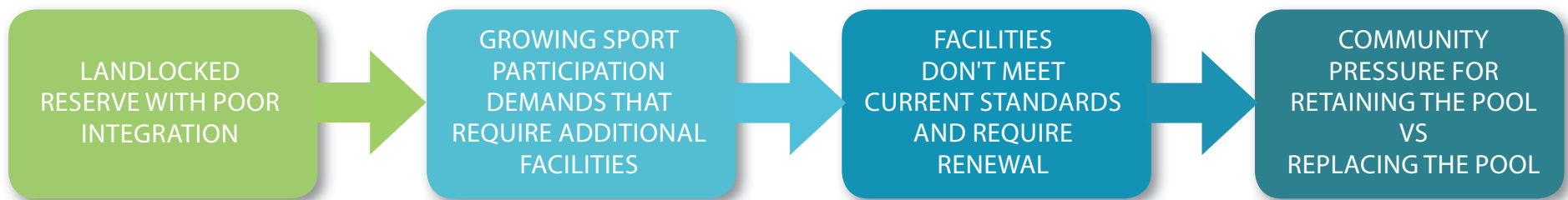


Site Photos



KEY CHALLENGES

Four key challenges have been identified.



Landlocked reserve with poor integration

The Golden Recreation Reserve is landlocked with four distinct public realm areas including:

- The sports oval, netball court, cricket nets and pavilion
- The Golden Square Swimming Pool
- Bowls and croquet facility that is part freehold land owned by the club and part Crown Land leased to the club
- Bendigo Creek.

There is an opportunity through this master plan for these areas to engage with each other and offer a broader range of sport and recreation opportunities to the community, together with celebrating the local character of this areas.

There is an opportunity to enhance the amenity of the Golden Square Recreation Reserve and connected public open spaces via the Bendigo

Creek (essentially turning to face an improved amenity active transport and parkland corridor) and including Backhaus Oval.

Growing sport participation demands that require additional facilities

The Golden Square population will increase by 21.1% from 8,954 in 2016 to 10,845 in 2036. This substantial population growth will mean existing open spaces (Golden Square Recreation Reserve, Backhaus Reserve and Allingham Street Reserve) will need to be developed to increase.

Peak sporting bodies state and regional facilities plans support additional and improved sports fields and courts to cater for the increasing demand fuelled by a growing population and high penetration rates for sport participation in Greater Bendigo.

The demand for improved access and capacity of sports fields, courts and greens is supported by the predicted growth of sports participation at Golden Square Recreation Reserve that will grow from 904 sport participants across Australian Rules football (seniors and junior clubs), cricket, netball, bowls and croquet in 2018 to 1,087 sport participants in 2036, based on current population penetration rates of sports.

There is a current demand and requirement by the competition for two lit netball courts. Further, the sports field is showing signs of heavy traffic and without a second sports field to divert training and competition traffic to, will continue to be a challenge to maintain quality. Backhaus Oval is required for community sport, but currently owned by the Diocese and would need to be purchased by the City of Greater Bendigo. This has become available through the relocation of the YCW Football and Netball Club

to Marist College in Maiden Gully. If this doesn't happen, there will remain a shortage of open space provision for sport in Golden Square. The Backhaus Oval is currently being used by the junior football club as an overflow ground to cater for their current needs.

The existing bowling club will likely require a synthetic bowling green to provide for the projected participation growth of the club as the population ages and grows. There is however limited participation demand projected for Croquet and a relocation and merger with another Croquet club and facilities may provide a more sustainable model of supporting the sport into the future.

Facilities don't meet current standards and require renewal

All buildings (pavilion, bowls clubrooms and swimming pool change rooms) don't meet contemporary sport and leisure facility design standards including Universal Design Principles and Female Friendly Design Guidelines. They are unwelcoming with some facilities having major access issues or now not fit for purpose for new participants e.g. Girls and women netballers and Australia Rules football players.

Retrofitting the existing pavilion is challenging and would require over \$150,000 investment to address asset condition and accessibility concerns.

Further, the existing outdoor pool does not have a ramp or hoist to provide for people with mobility needs.

The netball court is non-compliant with insufficient run offs. The recently resurfaced court surface has addressed some concerns with the court surface; however, it still slopes towards the oval.

The cricket training net run ups are on the ground and cause maintenance and safety issues for players when training and competing. Cricket Victoria Facilities Guidelines require cricket training nets to be orientated north/south and located off the playing surface.

Community pressure for retaining the Golden Square Swimming Pool and for replacing the pool

In 2010, the Aquatic Strategy recommended the closure of Golden Square Swimming Pool, once the Gurri Wanyarra Wellbeing Centre was opened (October 2018). A community consultation process would explore "land based" recreation opportunities for the Golden Square Swimming Pool site. The pool remains open and run by a voluntary community committee, following a recent Council resolution with this master plan to consider two options, an option without the pool and the second option with the pool retained.

Since taking over management, the Golden Square Pool Committee reports a steady increase in swimming pool attendance with the latest full season recording 18,595 visits. The visitation includes: nine major events attracting 3,092 attendances; a school program and swimming carnivals providing 5,741 visits; community programs including swim safe program (96 lessons), pool fit bootcamp (50 participants), yoga and zumba classes (139 participants) and lap club and morning lap swimming (175 participants) and casual swim visits. The Committee now has 50 volunteers, a full events program that includes a live beats music concert series and a range of community partnerships that deliver targeted community programs. The Golden Square Pool Committee seek to retain the swimming pool as a unique community hub offering a place for cooling off and recreation, social gathering and community events and volunteering and targeting programming.

Due to the recommendation to close the pool in the 2010 Aquatic Strategy, the sporting groups see the swimming pool site as an opportunity for sporting facilities desperately needed to provide for the current and future sports participants at the reserve including relocated cricket nets, new netball courts and additional change rooms.

Further, some responses to the community survey raised the concerns about the "value for money (rates)" with Council providing \$50,000 in annual funding to the Golden Square Pool Committee to manage, maintain, repair and replace the Golden Square Swimming Pool and with the opening of the new \$30M Gurri Wanyarra Wellbeing Centre within 2km of the reserve in Kangaroo Flat.



The local tension between those that support retaining the pool and those that want to see the pool site developed for other sport and recreation purposes was reflective in the key stakeholder interviews and community survey results.

The Golden Square Pool Committee seek to retain swimming pool as a unique community hub offering a place for cooling off and recreation, social gathering and community events and volunteering and targeting programming. Interestingly, all groups acknowledge each other's interests and demands.

Of the 409 surveys received in the first stage of engagement, 96% had used the Golden Square Recreation Reserve. The key findings from the survey include:

- The top five activities at the reserve were: Australian Rules football (51.2%), swimming (40.7%), cricket (29%), netball (27%) and social activities (25.2%).
- Most respondents visit the reserve for 1.5 hours (71.5%) two to three times (36.4%) per week from home (92.1%) and between 2pm and 8pm (76.1%). This shows a highly used and popular reserve for community sport and recreation in Golden Square.
- Car travel (72.6%) is the preferred mode of transport meaning car parking and traffic movement is an important consideration for the master plan.
- There is strong importance placed on the oval (77.2%), club rooms (67.9%) and netball courts (50.8%) with more than half of respondents indicating they are very important.

Respondents did not place importance on the croquet greens with 49.6% rating them as not important or not very important.

- While nearly half of respondents identified that the swimming pool (46.4%) was very important, there was also a large number that identified it as not at all important (27.3%). This statistic shows the tension between those that support the swimming pool and those that believe the pool site should be developed for alternative recreation purposes now that the new Gurri Wanyarra Wellbeing Centre has opened.
- Most facilities at the reserve were tired or were of an age, design and condition that required redevelopment to meet the needs of user groups and revitalise the reserve as a community hub.



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The **vision** for the Golden Square Recreation Reserve is a **community sport and recreation hub** offering a range of participation opportunities to all of the community. A place for:

- Formal sport.
- Social and family gathering.
- Unstructured play and activity.
- Community events.

The reserve **improvements** include:

- Two lit netball courts to competition standards. Netball Victoria guidelines supports a north/south orientation that is close to change rooms.
- New cricket training nets to provide for four club and one community pitches. The location of the cricket training nets should consider the Cricket Victoria guidelines that supports a north/south orientation that is close to the sports pavilion.
- Upgrade the sports field, when required for renewal. Scope of works include levelling, drainage, grassing and an additional pitch on the turf.
- New sports field lighting (retaining competition standard level), when required for renewal.
- Retrofit pavilion to provide a welcoming and inviting place for players and supporters. This includes upgrades to make the facility

universal and female friendly in design. Review the old Pioneer administration section of the building to see whether this can be refurbished to provide additional change rooms to support women's Australian Rules football.

- Family and social recreation space including play spaces and shaded grassed areas.

- Improving the section of the Bendigo Creek along the reserve to provide an ecological and art space that engages people with the trail and has a connection to the family and social recreation spaces within the reserve.

There are development opportunities beyond the proposed Golden Square Recreation Reserve:

- Backhaus Oval is required for community sport, but currently owned by the Diocese and would need to be purchased by the City of Greater Bendigo.



Story Board

Sports facility improvements



Social and family recreation spaces



STAGE 2 ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

Five development options supported by concept master plans were presented to key stakeholders and the broader community in a Discussion Paper to understand the pros and cons of each option. The options included:

Development Option 1

Golden Square Swimming Pool is retained, and the Golden Square Bowls and Croquet Club is relocated; and Backhaus Oval Reserve is acquired for junior sport.

Development Option 2

Golden Square Swimming Pool is replaced with two netball courts and informal open space and Backhaus Oval Reserve is acquired for junior sport and croquet and bowls greens and are upgraded.

Development Option 3

Golden Square Swimming Pool is replaced with two netball courts and informal open space and the Golden Square Bowls and Croquet Club are relocated and Backhaus Oval Reserve is acquired for junior sport and informal open space and interactive water play area provided.

Development Option 4

Develop Backhaus Oval Reserve as the main senior sports facilities, whilst maintaining current level of service at Golden Square Recreation Reserve.

Development Option 5

Do nothing.

Option 1 and Option 3 were identified through the research and engagement process including key stakeholder interview, written submissions and a community survey as the preferred options for further analysis.

The key findings of the Stage 2 engagement process are summarised below.

Key Stakeholder Interviews and Submissions

Each key stakeholder's development option preference was based on their group's needs and interests.



Golden Square Bowls Club and Golden Square Croquet Club

OPTION 1

OPTION 3

The Bowls Club is in favour of Option 1 followed by Option 3. The club is interested in being relocated to an alternative site and both these options support this objective. The club requests the development of a new bowls clubrooms and two greens to meet contemporary standards to facilitate these options.

A new site is required for these options. The club requests this site be within Golden Square because their members would be unwilling to travel outside the local area.

The club's preference is to relocate to Backhaus Reserve to take advantage of being adjacent to the new development of the old Central City Caravan Park site. The club has been approached by the owners/developers about providing holiday bowling for visitors to the future resort. The club would like to explore this partnership further and what this might mean for the club operations and a new facility if it were to be relocated.

The Croquet club will be relocated along with the bowls club. The club cannot expand with only one lawn and cannot compete against other clubs. A minimum of two lanes is required. If the clubs relocate a four-lane venue should be provided to attract regional events.

Golden Square Cricket Club

OPTION 3

OPTION 2

The Cricket Club is in favour of Option 3 followed by Option 2.

The club noted that all options apart from Option 5 would provide for the needs of cricket. The preference for Option 3 over other options were about functional relationships between cricket activity areas. Also, Option 3 opens up community spaces that in turn supports cricket club and with strength of junior sport means more families accessing the reserve. All areas of the reserve will be useable 12 months of the year.

Option 3 provides for the needs of cricket including up-grading the turf cricket pitch table, providing new cricket training nets, improving the main sports pavilion, providing a maintenance shed for curating equipment and equipment storage next to the ground and providing shade/sheltered areas around the reserve.

The club seeks a decision for the long-term future of the reserve. Whether the pool stays or goes, the club need a decision because they report to be playing on sub-standard facilities. If there is a delay, it would be detrimental to the growth of the club and plan for the future.

Golden Square Junior Football and Netball Club

OPTION 1

OPTION 4

The Junior Football and Netball Club is in favour of development Option 1 followed by Option 4.

Option 1 improves integration of the site and provides for sports needs and development of Backhaus Reserve for junior sport.

The club have a lot of families use the pool and see the benefits of maintaining the pool. However, this we also need to prioritise the sports reserve improvements for the junior football club because the club continues to grow rapidly. The club has experienced continued growth of junior players and teams over the last five years.

Backhaus Reserve has been used by the club in recent times and would encourage football and netball use if facilities are to be upgraded to junior sport requirements. This would require upgrading the netball courts, sports oval and clubrooms. The Senior and Junior Football Clubs will need to work together to spread the training and competition load over both Backhaus Reserve and Golden Square Recreation Reserve.

Golden Square Primary School

The School Council doesn't have a preferred option and is not in a position to provide one. There would be different views across School Council and school body.

The facilities are of high value to our school community. The pool and sports groups provide a safe and connected place at a low and affordable price. Both objectives need to be supported in the decision-making process.

The school currently use the sports oval for the yearly fun run. It is also the school's emergency site. The school also use the swimming pool for annual swimming sports for it is easier to access, more affordable and reduces the time of students out of class. Only the grade 3 to 6 classes use the pool due to concerns about temperature and depth. The foundation to grade 2 classes use Gurri Wanyarra Wellbeing Centre.

The school has 393 students and is now full. The school is also landlocked so there is an opportunity to explore a closer partnership with the reserve and benefits from use in the future.

There is a high level of support for a play space at the reserve. This is missing in the Golden Square community. Options 1, 2 and 3 open up the site to broader use, however in Option 2 the school will lose use of the pool that is also a community meeting place. The school could use all the proposed sport, pool and social and family recreation spaces in the future.

Golden Square Swimming Pool Committee Inc.

OPTION 1

OPTION 4

The Pool Committee is strongly in favour of Option 1 followed by Option 4 for they are the only options that sees the pool retained. However, Option 1 also responds to the needs and stated upgrades of all other users.

The Pool Committee does not feel that the other options adequately provide a space for all people, of all backgrounds and demographics, to engage as one as the Golden Square Swimming Pool currently provides. The Pool Committee feel Option 1 is the only option that provides an opportunity for people in the Golden Square community who are not interested in other organised sports, to look after their physical health, fitness and social and mental wellbeing.

The Pool Committee believe they provide a vibrant community space and organisation that has taken eight years to establish, that could be difficult to recreate. Option 1 also includes shared use of change rooms that will benefit all users.

The Pool Committee expressed the need to develop the Backhaus Reserve as important to meet future sports needs in Golden Square as uncovered by the research. This should be further scoped and could provide a unique opportunity to link in with retaining the Golden Square Recreation Reserve facilities and enhancing the surrounding paths (Bendigo Creek Trail) in the area, to create innovative health and wellbeing opportunities for all people in Golden Square for now and beyond.

Golden Square Senior Football and Netball Club

OPTION 3

OPTION 2

The Senior Football and Netball Club is strongly in favour of Option 3 followed by Option 2. These options best support the needs of sport and open up the precinct for community and social areas all year round. The club believe these options best provide the spaces that encourage community to play and be active.

A key reason for not supporting Option 1 that retains the pool are that from the club's point of view:

- The pool segregates the site with a big fence whilst the other options open up the site for sport and community
- The pool only runs for part of the year whilst Options 3 and 2 means the reserve is used for 12 months of the year.

Options 3 and 2 provide for a play space and amphitheatre that can carry on the music series and community events that the Pool Committee has successfully run with a focus on all year round.

The club supports the Pool Committee's efforts in delivering community events and believe these aspects should be continued, however the need for a swimming pool should be questioned with the development of a \$30 million Gurri Wanyarra Wellbeing Centre only 2km from the reserve. The club pointed to previous Council decisions noting a key reason for the development of Gurri Wanyarra Wellbeing Centre was that the Golden Square Swimming Pool would close.

Both the Junior and Senior Football Clubs are growing with increasing demand for female sport (AFL and netball). The clubs are in initial discussions about merging and are partnering to ensure a pathway from juniors to seniors is facilitated; and the training and competition use of Golden Square Recreation Reserve and Backhaus Reserve is by football and netball can be managed.

The sports facility improvements proposed are required at Golden Square Recreation Reserve together with acquiring and improving Backhaus Reserve. The improvements and use of both reserves will provide for the continued growth in football and netball in Golden Square, as shown by the research. Option 5 is simply not an option.

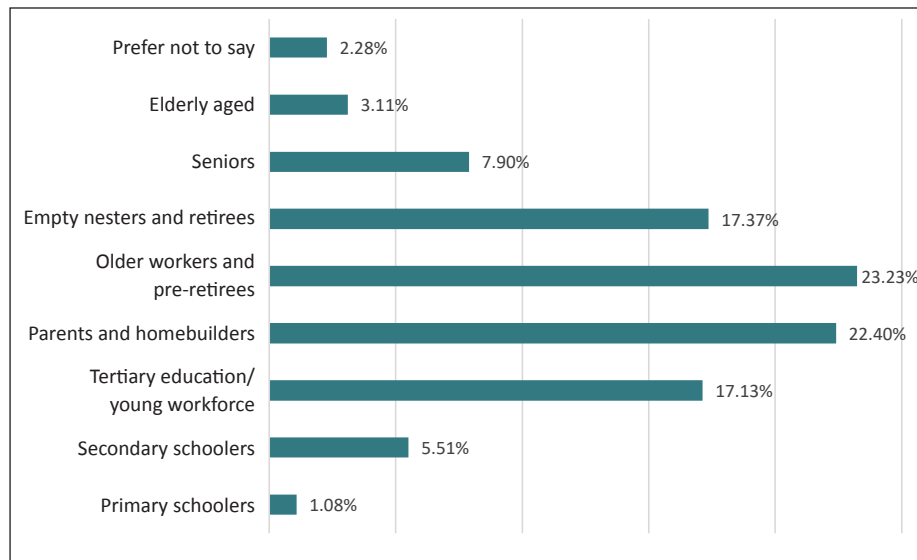
The club seek Council to make an informed decision based on the evidence, what is best for the community and what is fiscally responsible and available for improvements. This can't be a popularity contest between footy and pool people. There is a level of frustration within the community in the series of non-decisions on the pool and this is now impacting the master plan and sports user groups.

Community Survey Results

Of the 1502 responses received to the community survey:

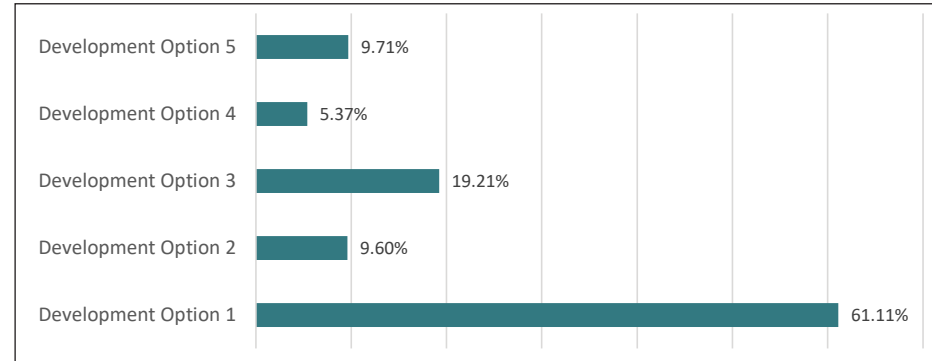
- Most respondents were from Golden Square with 53.06% of responses followed by Bendigo 17.89% and Kangaroo Flat 8.40%.
- 60.50% were female, 35.89% male and 3.36% preferred not to specify.
- 3.61% were from an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin.

The breakdown of service age groups:

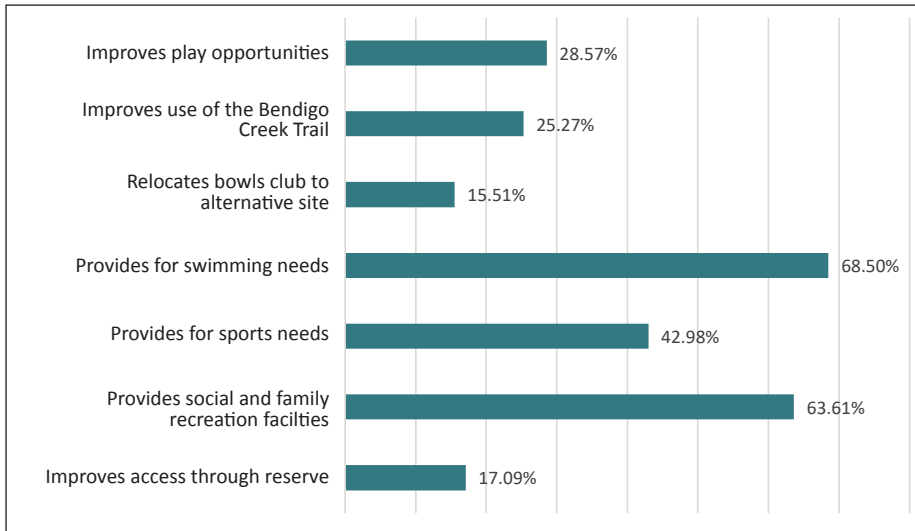


The **key findings** were:

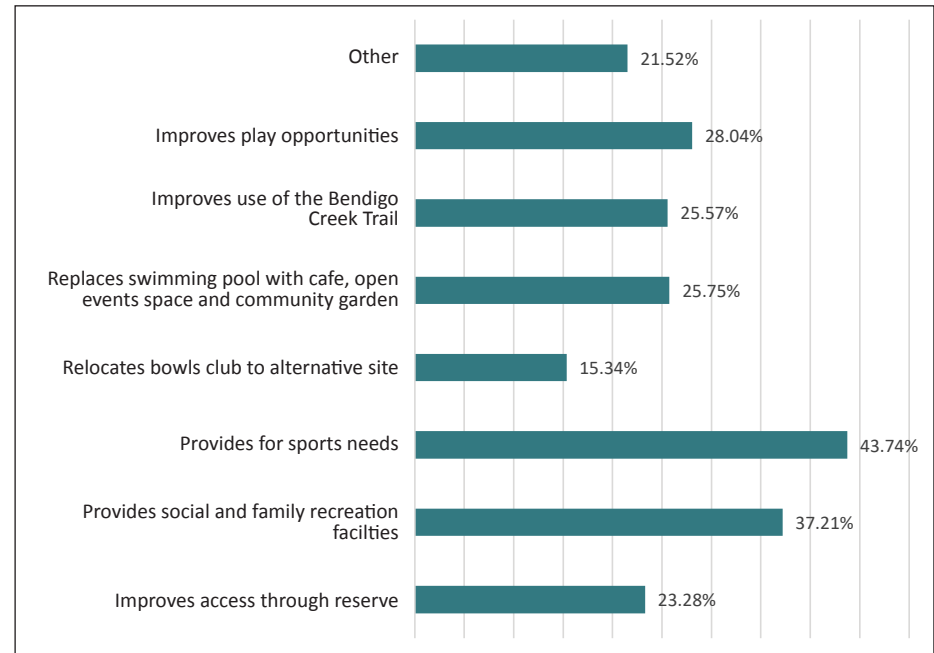
- The proposed vision statement was widely supported with 84.75% in agreement.
- The top two highest-ranking options were clearly Option 1 as the highest-ranked option then followed by Option 3. Option 2, Option 4 and Option 5 were not well supported.



Of the 819 responses received, the top 3 reasons for liking Option 1 were that it provided for swimming needs (68.50%), social and family recreation (63.61%) and sport needs (42.98%).



Of the 567 responses received, the top 3 reasons for liking Option 3 were that it best provided for sport needs (43.74%), social and family recreation activities (37.21%) and improves play opportunities (28.04%).



The surveys received a high number of comments to each question. There was a combination of comments for and against the retention of the pool. Key themes and example comments are provided below:

Retain the Golden Square Swimming Pool

"It keeps the pool with means the vibrant enthusiast committed community that runs the pool will remain also and will be more likely to be involved in the success of the entire space."

"Option 1 offers far better opportunities for social and family sports participation than any of the others. Retention of the swimming pool is essential as its use and popularity during the past three to four years provides irrefutable proof that the community supports its local facility and does not wish to use the pool at Kangaroo Flat for recreational purposes. Option 1 retains the Golden Square Recreation Reserve as the suburb's principal sporting precinct - a status it has enjoyed for many years."

"I would retain the Golden Square pool. It is a great community asset for all ages and abilities, not just for those who play organised sport."

"The pool keeps us oldies active and healthy during winter as volunteers and in the sweltering heat of summer. As locals we ride or walk."



Close the Golden Square Swimming Pool

"Considering the \$30M at Kangaroo Flat this one (Golden Square Swimming Pool) should be closed."

"I am quite tired of the pool in Golden Square being 'propped up' by council when it was made clear that the pool was to shut years ago! There are far better facilities only a few kms away that are state of the art."

"The Area (pool) has reached its use by date. Convert to community space park."

Support for improving sports facility provision and inclusion

"I would like to see for my future family well-developed sports facilities that make them excited to live in Golden Square and want to play sport and exercise"

"Greater focus on women's sport and the extremely poor facilities at the football ground for all users"

"We need a second netball court, we need facilities for female sport both netball and football, we need an oval that does not have the cricket run ups on it - it is unsafe for footballers"

"The development of Backhaus Reserve is a brilliant idea and would give the Golden Square Football Club a ground for junior grades and women's league and a ground for reserves and senior teams."

Value for money concerns

"There needs to be a whole of lifecycle business model for whichever model is developed. Any model presented needs to be financially sustainable."

"Reducing duplication of spending (re- having to upgrade pool and later replace pool - something that is closed for 9 months of the year), thus availing funds for more in demand services."

Support for improving community social and family recreation spaces

"I just want the paths, gardens public spaces to be improved."

"Minimise car access and parking on site - not necessary as plenty of nearby parking. Maximise people space."

Submissions

Thirteen community submissions were received.

Ten of the community submissions supported the retention of the Golden Square Swimming Pool. The submissions provided the following reasons for seeking retention of the pool:

Impressed with the energy and creativity of the Golden Square Swimming Pool Committee and 90 active volunteers in engaging and supporting community. This should be celebrated and supported.

Supporting partners of the pool, for example Bike Bendigo has partnered with the Pool Committee in offering free ride plus swim community events.

Council's decision is not about just another pool. This decision is about the community that has developed around this facility, which passionately serves and welcomes the wider community. The Pool Committee has reinvigorated a community feel and vibe within Golden Square.

Provides an accessible and affordable place for families and all ages (grandparents, parents, children) to come together for a swim in the summer.

The pool is a centre point for the Golden Square community where friends gather to swim, socialise, exercise, share meals and have fun.

The Pool should be left as a community run pool. Why wouldn't Council keep it open when it's entirely run by volunteers. The cost of asset improvement is minimal compared to the benefit to various groups and individuals who utilise the facilities.

The pool is an important community facility now with many activities in addition to swimming, it is also important in serving nearby education facilities.

The pool at that location gives a balance of recreation and sport in the Golden Square.

The Golden Square netball/ football area has more than enough adequate space and facilities.

The three remaining community submission identified concerns about the engagement process. Specifically:

- There are challenges for Senior residents that may be associated with the Bowls Club to contribute to the online community survey. This concern and the needs of the Bowls Club should be taken into account in Council's decision-making process.
- The submitter was concerned that all challenges, opportunities and alternatives has not incorporated broader strategic thinking or any cohesive vision to inform decision-making. A list of principles for future development was provided including: a commitment to a deep and informed discussion with community; openness to the possibility of accommodating the needs of all current sporting facilities at an alternative site; adherence to value for money principles that optimise shared use, multi-purpose facilities; maximise the opportunity for community participation; vision to create suitable recreational amenity for the growing and diverse population; incorporate elements that recognise our Indigenous history; and ensure a mix of uses that ensure vibrancy.
- The Bendigo Football and Netball League wrote in support of the Golden Square Football Netball Club proposal to support a master plan option that redevelops the Golden Square Recreation Reserve as a sporting precinct. The precinct would consist of the current home facilities of the Golden Square junior and senior football and netball teams and support the extensive junior pathway and growing Women's football programs.

Petition

A petition was received with 665 signatures requesting Council make a decision on the future of the Golden Square Swimming Pool.

DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

A quadruple bottom line (QBL) assessment has been used to assess the outcomes of four areas:

- **Social impacts:** These relate to non-monetary impacts on human health and subjective wellbeing. For instance, an increase in active recreation participation that reduced the burden of diseases like obesity and diabetes would have a positive social impact.
- **Cultural impacts:** These relate to non-monetary impacts on people's sense of place and cultural identity. For instance, a facility design that recognised its users' cultural identity and hence increased their sense of belonging would have a positive cultural impact.
- **Economic impacts:** These largely relate to monetary impacts, including construction, land, operating, and maintenance costs borne by facility providers, as well as impacts on economic productivity and labour force participation.
- **Environmental impacts:** These relate to non-monetary impacts on air, soil, water, biodiversity, and the natural environment in general. For instance, a facility that required the paving of a wetland area that provides a habitat for native species would have a negative environmental impact.

Outcomes in each area can be either positive or negative. In some cases, there may be a mix of positive and negative impacts. For instance, a

wastewater infrastructure upgrade may increase up-front capital costs (a negative economic impact) while reducing ongoing operating and maintenance costs (a positive economic impact).

A QBL is a decision support tool, rather than a process that algorithmically determines the 'right' outcome. The aim of a QBL assessment is not to provide a 'yes/no' assessment of projects, but to provide a mix of information to understand the various impacts of alternative options and hence to inform the selection of an option that optimises benefits relative to alternative options.

The QBL framework is intended for evaluating the positive and negative impacts of alternative options for community facilities. Each option has been scored within each sub-category on the following scale:

- Negative impacts of increasing size: -, --, ---
- No impact: 0
- Positive impacts of increasing size: +, ++, +++

However, in doing so we note that it is not possible to directly compare scores across sub-categories.



QBL Community Facility Framework

| Outcome | Sub-category | Notes |
|----------------------|---|--|
| Social | Alignment with Council's strategy levels of service | Facilities are linked to Council's strategy outlining levels of service |
| | Improved accessibility to community facilities | Facilities that are accessible to a larger population via the transport network will score higher in this category. |
| | Improved quality of experience for users | This reflects facility design and the degree to which facilities make it easy for people to access services. |
| | Health and social benefits arising from increased participation | This benefit stream will scale in proportion to patronage – facilities that are situated and designed to attract more users will generate larger benefits. |
| | Passive use benefits | Facilities that are accessible to a larger population will also tend to score higher in this category, as people within the catchment may value availability of facilities even if they do not visit regularly. |
| | Reputational risk for Council | Council response to community engagement, facility conditions, safety, cost may result in reputation risks. |
| Cultural | Sense of place | Facilities that are designed in a way that enhances the local environment may enhance people's sense of place. |
| | Sense of cultural identity | Facilities that are designed in a way that reflects or acknowledges people's cultural values may enhance this. |
| Environmental | Loss of open space benefits due to facility development | Development of existing open space may result in negative environmental impacts. Depending upon the characteristics of that open space, this may include reduced amenity for nearby residents, loss of biodiversity, or loss of environmental services like stormwater regulation. |
| Economic | Cost to construct new or improved facilities | This is a direct financial cost that is incurred by Council. Quantity surveyor estimates provide information on construction costs. |
| | Other whole-of-life costs, e.g. operation and maintenance costs | These are direct financial costs that must be incurred by Council and risk that is attached to the operation of the facilities. |
| | Revenues from facility operation | Revenues from facility operation will tend to scale with patronage (and types of activities supported by facilities). They may offset operating costs. |

Development Option 1

If the Golden Square Swimming Pool is retained and the Golden Square Bowls and Croquet Club is relocated; and acquire Backhaus Oval Reserve for junior sport

- Upgrade the change rooms and entry and provide a different fencing treatment that softens the boundary between the sports reserve and Bendigo Creek trail.
- Relocate the Golden Square Bowls and Croquet Club to an alternative site and provide two new lit netball courts and new cricket training nets.
- The upgraded changerooms on the pool site should also provide for the change room requirements of netball and storage requirements for cricket equipment. There is an opportunity to develop the change room building with a community café and garden with an interface to the Bendigo Creek Trail.

- The remainder of the site should be developed as a family and social recreation space with play space and shaded grassed areas
- Develop Backhaus Oval for junior sport.

Capital Cost Estimate for Development Option 1

The estimated capital cost of priority recommendations is **\$15,625,281**.

The independent Quantity Surveyor has provided a high-level cost plan based on the concept master plan and benchmark costs for similar projects. A detailed design and cost plan will be required for proposed improvements.

| Item | Cost |
|---|---------------------|
| Develop new swimming pool / netball change rooms / cricket storage | \$2,179,160 |
| Relocate the Golden Square Bowls and Croquet Club and build a new club house, grass green and synthetic green | \$2,470,187 |
| Renewal of Golden Square Swimming Pool including 50m pool, toddler pool, plant and services* | \$6,275,000 |
| New netball courts and cricket nets | \$595,100 |
| New playspace | \$500,000 |
| Design and construction contingency (20%) | \$2,403,889 |
| Professional fees and charges (10%) | \$1,201,945 |
| Total | \$15,625,281 |

*The renewal of the pools, plant and services will be required in the medium term (within 10 years) due to the current age and condition



GOLDEN SQUARE RESERVE

Option 1 - Master Plan
June 2020



OBJECTIVES

- ① Retrofit pavilion to provide a welcoming and inviting place for players and supporters. This includes upgrades to make the facility universal and female friendly in design. Review the old Pioneer administration section of the building to see whether this can be refurbished to provide additional change rooms to support women's Australian Rules football.
- ② Convert old netball court site to car parking.
- ③ Soften boundary between sports reserve and Wade Street. Consider alternative fencing treatment, introduce planting and informal seating areas.
- ④ Upgrade the sports field, when required for renewal. Scope of works include levelling, drainage, grassing and an additional pitch on the turf. Maintain sports field lighting (to competition standards), when required for renewal.
- ⑤ Install alternate fencing treatment to soften boundary between sports reserve and Bendigo Creek Trail.
- ⑥ Platforms with planting and social spaces to extend over the Bendigo Creek. To provide historic information and rest areas along the Bendigo Creek Trail.
- ⑦ Provide community building with café and open paved seating area with interface to the play space and Bendigo Creek Trail.
- ⑧ Develop swimming pool change rooms to provide for the requirements of netball and storage of cricket equipment.
- ⑨ Relocate the Golden Square Bowls and Croquet Club to an alternative site.
- ⑩ Two netball courts to competition standards.
- ⑪ New cricket training nets to provide for club and community pitches.
- ⑫ Shaded play space with a variety of equipment for all ages play.
- ⑬ Sheltered social space with seating, BBQ's and cycle stands to provide interface between play space, open grass lawn and Bendigo Creek Trail.
- ⑭ Open grass lawn with informal shaded seating areas.
- ⑮ Connecting path between Wade Street and sports oval, including sheltered social space.
- ⑯ Raised grass mound with informal seating and views over sports oval.
- ⑰ Access around oval to be maintained.
- ⑱ Acquire Backhaus Reserve, upgrade sports field and courts.
- ⑲ Consider storm water treatment, retention and reuse to protect nearby facilities and sports infrastructure throughout the reserve.
- ⑳ Location of scoreboard.
- ㉑ Provide maintenance shed for curator equipment.
- ㉒ Provision of car parking to south west of sports field.
- ㉓ Assess traffic design considerations on Maple Street and MacKenzie Street entrances to provide easier and safer access to the ground.

QBL Assessment for Development Option 1

| Outcome | Sub-category | Score | Notes |
|----------------------|---|-------|---|
| Social | Alignment with Council's strategy levels of service | - | The retention of the pool is not aligned with the Council's Aquatic Strategy levels of service. However, the proposed improvements do support health and wellbeing objectives of the Health and Wellbeing Plan and the Council Plan. Specifically: Goal 1 Wellbeing and Farness that supports inclusive policies, partnerships and projects that increase access improve health and learning opportunities by building better connections and quality of life for all; and Goal 2 Lead and Government where effective community engagement will guide well-informed, responsive decision-making and financially responsible resource allocations, which are transparent and accountable. |
| | Improved accessibility to community facilities | + | Reserve is located centrally to Golden Square community, accessible by bus service and footpath network. Proposed improvements encourage walkability to reserve from school and where people live. |
| | Improved quality of experience for users | ++ | Improves quality of facilities that are universal in design Increases sport, recreation and community experiences. |
| | Health and social benefits arising from increased participation | ++ | The proposed improvements do support health and wellbeing objectives. Provides for sports needs whilst maintains pool's swim and community event activities |
| | Passive use benefits | + | Provides for social and family recreation |
| | Reputational risk for Council | + | There is a high level of support for the swimming pool by the Golden Square community shown through the response to the engagement processes. However, Council also has a responsibility to making sound financially responsible decisions in line with adopted strategic plans. Supporting the retention of the pool will be contrary to this position. |
| Cultural | Sense of place | ++ | Both options support a sense of place. Provides continued support of the Pool Committee in creating community events and use of the pool |
| | Sense of cultural identity | ++ | The option acknowledges and enhances the historic use of the site for sport and swimming. |
| Environmental | Loss of open space benefits due to facility development | + | This option provides an increase in open space area. However, the pool is a restricted use site where users need to pay entry. |
| Economic | Cost to construct new or improved facilities | -- | This option has the higher capital cost. The age of the swimming pool will result in the need within the short to medium term to replace the pool shell and associated plant and equipment. |
| | Other whole-of-life costs, e.g. operation and maintenance costs | --- | This option has the higher asset renewal cost. This option assumes the current Pool Committee manages the pool. The Pool Committee is run by volunteers and well led, however the obligations of operators managing, maintaining and renewing pools is high. The success of the Pool Committee is reliant on the leaderships and success of the volunteer group and research trends indicate that volunteering is on the decline. This presents a potential future risk to Council if the committee disbands. |
| | Revenues from facility operation | - | The retention of the pool will impact the visitation and financial performance of Gurri Wanyarra Wellbeing Centre and Faith Leech Aquatic Centre. |

Development Option 3

If the Golden Square Swimming Pool is replaced and the Golden Square Bowls and Croquet Club are relocated

- Provide two new lit netball courts, new cricket training nets and change rooms with storage from cricket equipment.
- There is an opportunity to develop the change room building with a community café and garden with an interface to the Bendigo Creek Trail.
- The remainder of the site should provide a grassed community event space with play space, free form multisport activity space and shaded grassed areas. Consider a water play concept as part of the play space area.

- Relocate the Golden Square Bowls and Croquet Club to an alternative site.
- The public space is to engage directly with the Bendigo Creek and celebrate the history of the Golden Square Swimming Pool and Golden Square Bowls and Croquet Club.
- Develop Backhaus Oval for junior sport.

Capital Cost Estimate for Development Option 3

The estimated capital cost of priority recommendations is **\$10,968,677**.

The independent Quantity Surveyor has provided a high-level cost plan based on the concept master plan and benchmark costs for similar projects. A detailed design and cost plan will be required for proposed improvements.

| Item | Cost |
|---|---------------------|
| Provide community building with café and open space area | \$1,030,599 |
| Develop new netball change rooms / cricket storage | \$1,844,750 |
| Relocate the Golden Square Bowls and Croquet Club and build a new club house, grass green and synthetic green | \$2,470,187 |
| New netball courts and cricket nets | \$686,500 |
| Community space includes decommissioning pool | \$905,400 |
| New water play | \$1,000,000 |
| New playspace | \$500,000 |
| Design and construction contingency (20%) | \$1,687,487 |
| Professional fees and charges (10%) | \$843,744 |
| Total | \$10,968,667 |



GOLDEN SQUARE RESERVE

Option 3 - Master Plan
June 2020



OBJECTIVES

- ① Retrofit pavilion to provide a welcoming and inviting place for players and supporters. This includes upgrades to make the facility universal and female friendly in design. Review the old Pioneer administration section of the building to see whether this can be refurbished to provide additional change rooms to support women's Australian Rules football.
- ② Convert old netball court site to car parking.
- ③ Soften boundary between sports reserve and Wade Street. Consider alternative fencing treatment, introduce planting and informal seating areas.
- ④ Upgrade the sports field, when required for renewal. Scope of works include levelling, drainage, grassing and an additional pitch on the turf. Maintain sports field lighting (to competition standards), when required for renewal.
- ⑤ Install alternate fencing treatment to soften boundary between sports reserve and Bendigo Creek Trail.
- ⑥ Platforms with planting and social spaces to extend over the Bendigo Creek. To provide historic information and rest areas along the Bendigo Creek Trail.
- ⑦ Sheltered social space with seating, BBQ's and cycle stands to provide interface between community events space and Bendigo Creek Trail.
- ⑧ Replace Golden Square Swimming Pool with open community events space including open lawn, informal seating, community garden and sheltered performance area.
- ⑨ Provide community building with café and open paved seating area with interface to the community events space and Bendigo Creek Trail.
- ⑩ Develop sports building to provide for the requirements of netball and storage of cricket equipment.
- ⑪ Paved connection between sports building, netball courts and cricket nets.
- ⑫ Two netball courts to competition standards.
- ⑬ New cricket training nets to provide for club and community pitches.
- ⑭ Multi-sport activity space including basketball half court, climbing wall and parkour/bouldering elements.
- ⑮ Adventure water play zone with zero depth splash area, sprayers, buckets, towers and slides.
- ⑯ Play space with a variety of equipment for all ages play.
- ⑰ Sheltered social space with seating, BBQ's and cycle stands to provide interface between play space, multi-sport activity space and grass mound.
- ⑱ Raised grass mound with informal seating and views over sports oval.
- ⑲ Connecting path network between Wade Street, activity areas and sports oval.
- ⑳ Access around oval to be maintained.
- ㉑ Acquire Backhaus Reserve, upgrade sports field and courts.
- ㉒ Consider storm water treatment, retention and reuse to protect nearby facilities and sports infrastructure throughout the reserve.
- ㉓ Location of scoreboard.
- ㉔ Provide maintenance shed for curator equipment.
- ㉕ Provision of car parking to south west of sports field.
- ㉖ Assess traffic design considerations on Maple Street and MacKenzie Street entrances to provide easier and safer access to the ground.

QBL Assessment for Development Option 3

| Outcome | Sub-category | Score | Notes |
|----------------------|---|-------|---|
| Social | Alignment with Council's strategy levels of service | ++ | The replacement of the pool is aligned with the Council's Aquatic Strategy levels of service. The proposed improvements do support health and wellbeing objectives of the Health and Wellbeing Plan and the Council Plan. Specifically: Goal 1 Wellbeing and Farness that supports inclusive policies, partnerships and projects that increase access improve health and learning opportunities by building better connections and quality of life for all; and Goal 2 Lead and Government where effective community engagement will guide well-informed, responsive decision-making and financially responsible resource allocations, which are transparent and accountable |
| | Improved accessibility to community facilities | + | Reserve is located centrally to Golden Square community accessible by bus service and footpath network. Proposed improvements encourage walkability to reserve from school and where people live |
| | Improved quality of experience for users | ++ | Improves quality of facilities that are universal in design Increases sport, recreation and community experiences. |
| | Health and social benefits arising from increased participation | ++ | The proposed improvements do support health and wellbeing objectives. |
| | Passive use benefits | ++ | Option provides for most amount of social and family recreation spaces |
| | Reputational risk for Council | - | There is a high level of support for the swimming pool by the Golden Square community shown through the response to the engagement processes. To replace the pool would be contrary to the many of the community's wants. |
| Cultural | Sense of place | + | Both options support a sense of place. Supports continuing with community events created by the Pool Committee. However, this energy has been built around reinvigorating the use of the pool and if the pool is replaced, the impact and loss of the Pool Committee is possible. There is a loss of the bowls club that has a long history with the reserve that is recognised as the club's ancestral home. |
| | Sense of cultural identity | - | The option acknowledges and enhances the historic use of the site for sport. However, the replacing the pool will lose this cultural connection with the site. The development of the Bendigo Creek to respect and celebrate the pool will acknowledge the pool's history and values. |
| Environmental | Loss of open space benefits due to facility development | ++ | This option provides the most open space area. |
| Economic | Cost to construct new or improved facilities | - | This option has the lower capital cost. |
| | Other whole-of-life costs, e.g. operation and maintenance costs | - | This option has the lower asset renewal and maintenance cost. |
| | Revenues from facility operation | + | The replacement of the pool will improve visitation and financial performance of Gurri Wanyarra Wellbeing Centre and Faith Leech Aquatic Centre. |

RECOMMENDATION

A review of the two preferred options against a quadruple bottom line assessment – economic, environmental, social and cultural coupled with the community and stakeholder feedback indicates there are merits and strong support for both options.

The review however has demonstrated that the site does not have the capacity to address all current and future needs of the different stakeholders and therefore change is required for the long-term development and use of the site.

The Pool Committee of Management are to be commended on the time, commitment and success they have made on not only operating the facility but developing a range of community programs and services. The retention of the pool is strongly supported by some sections of the community. However, the pool is nearing the end of its useful life and in the short to medium term will require significant capital renewal funds.

The review of the two preferred options via an assessment of the relative merits of economic and environmental vs social and cultural impacts leads the Consultant Team to recommend Option Three as preferred development option.

This recommendation is based on the fact that the option:

- Aligns with the Council's original strategic direction for the delivery of aquatic facilities and the network of aquatic services across the municipality.
- Continues to provide an aquatic experience at the site via an interactive aquatic leisure water/splash park
- Requires a lower level of capital investment
- Requires a lower level of recurrent operational and maintenance costs
- Provides increased access for local residents to a range of contemporary informal social and family recreation spaces all year
- Provides the opportunity to address a range of current facility gaps in high participation and female activities such as netball
- Provides the opportunity to redevelop a number of facility components to improve capacity and access and address the current and future participation growth such as cricket, football, bowls and croquet.
- Considers the option of relocating the bowls and croquet facilities to an alternate site; enabling the participation growth and necessary facility expansion.



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