

### 10.6.3 Resubmitted Report - Master Plan for Con O'Keefe and Russell Street Precinct, Albion Park

To the Chief Executive Officer

**Directorate:** Planning and Environment

**Business Unit:** Strategic Planning and Environment

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#### Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to respond to a Council resolution dated 24 October 2023, where it was resolved:

*That:*

- 1. Council defers consideration of Agenda item 10.6.1 to the next Ordinary Council Meeting, and*
- 2. Council staff arrange an on-site inspection inclusive of councillors prior to the relevant pre-meeting briefing for the next Council meeting in order to clarify planning and address councillor concerns*

An onsite Councillor inspection facilitated by Council staff was held on 30 October 2023 to address part two of the above resolution.

A focus of discussion was the proposed removal of the former Tongarra Museum building and the possible loss of community meeting space. Councillors were advised that a new community meeting space of similar size would be incorporated into the adjacent expanded and upgraded Albion Park Library.

No changes to the Draft Con O'Keefe and Russell Street Precinct Master Plan (**Attachment 1**) have been made as a result of the inspection.

Apart from this revised executive summary, Council report (Item 10.6.1) of 24 October 2023, is resubmitted for Council's consideration and determination.

#### Recommendation

**That:**

- 1. Council endorse the draft Master Plan for Con O'Keefe and Russell Street Precinct, Albion Park to be placed on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.**
- 2. If no submissions are received as a result of public exhibition that require further consideration, that Council adopt the draft Master Plan for Con O'Keefe and Russell Street Precinct, Albion Park, as attached to this report.**

## **Background**

Shellharbour City Council's Open Space and Recreation Strategy (OSR Strategy) identifies that Council will continue to initiate, resource and implement master plans for key open spaces.

Council appointed Group GSA consultants to assist with the preparation of this master plan. The master plan has been informed by community and key stakeholder consultation, input from Council staff, and analysis of the existing area and its usage.

The master plan guides how the area may develop into the future and ensures that any future upgrades are undertaken strategically, taking into consideration all potential uses and opportunities. The key components of the master plan are discussed below and outlined in further detail in the draft Master Plan for Con O'Keefe and Russell Street Precinct (**Attachment 1**).

### **Master Plan for Con O'Keefe and Russell Street Precinct, Albion Park:**

The areas subject to this master plan include Con O'Keefe sports field and Di Gorman Oval, Melaleuca Park, Community facilities buildings including Albion Park Pool, Community Centre and Library, the Former Tongarra Museum and other areas including Albion Park Pioneer Cemetery, community garden, skate park and carpark. These areas are collectively referred to as the 'Con O'Keefe and Russell Street Precinct' throughout the master plan.

The Con O'Keefe and Russell Street Precinct is bounded by residential and commercial uses, with Albion Park Shopping Centre and Albion Park High School in close proximity, the area provides key open space opportunities for the communities of Albion Park and surrounds.

The master plan identifies the following key areas and opportunities:

#### Improved connectivity and accessibility

The master plan identifies the Con O'Keefe Park and Russell Street Precinct as a key open space resource for the communities of Albion Park and surrounds and aims to improve connectivity and accessibility both to and within the area. The master plan aims to enhance the role of Russell Street within Albion Park to increase safety of pedestrians and create a sense of place upon arrival to the area. Through the inclusion of signage, seating, shade, lighting and landscaping opportunities, the usability and accessibility of the park are enhanced.

#### Sporting, recreation and leisure opportunities

The master plan proposes to improve the existing sporting, recreation and leisure opportunities at Con O'Keefe and Di Gorman sports fields. The master plan includes improved pedestrian linkage around the sports fields, a fitness loop around Con O'Keefe field and informal basketball hoops.

The master plan identifies a new play space to be located close by to the sports fields and library, with opportunities for built and natural shading and close proximity to new amenities. Two proposed locations are identified within the master plan for the new amenities, both are nearby to the sports fields, library and play space.

#### Albion Park Library, Community buildings and Plaza

The Albion Park Library, Community facilities buildings, and the Albion Park Pool are fixed elements and as such, the Master Plan has been designed around this fixed infrastructure. However, the former Tongarra Museum Building is not proposed to remain. This is due to the condition of the building, lack of appropriate use and the opportunities created for the overall site through its removal. This was considered against a number of factors during the development of the Master Plan, including, the current remaining useful life of the buildings, financial implications, Council's existing strategies such as the Shellharbour Community Facilities Study and Strategy and also the final design outcome for the entire site.

The master plan identifies a central space between the library and community centre to be developed as a connecting plaza to the adjacent buildings and an entry to the park. The plaza is an open and active space which provides areas for seating and gathering as well as spaces for activity.

#### Extension of the Albion Park Library

The master plan recommends improved connection of the Library to the Plaza and the other buildings within the precinct. Critical to this, is the removal of the Former Tongarra Museum building. During implementation of the master plan, detailed design of the upgraded library should consider creating a new front entrance to the building off the plaza with greater visibility to and from Russell

Street, it is considered this will improve presence of the library.

### Albion Park Pioneer Cemetery and Melaleuca Park

The master plan highlights the historical and social values of Albion Park Pioneer Cemetery and identifies opportunities for informal path and landscape improvements in the cemetery to enhance interpretation and appreciation of the local history.

The master plan recognises the ecological and social values of Melaleuca Park and promotes opportunities for activation through increased pedestrian access, revegetation, seating and artwork opportunities.

### Community Garden

The master plan recommends the established Albion Park community garden be relocated to the northern area of the site. The proposed relocation and development of the community garden should occur in accordance with Council's Community Gardens Strategy and associated documents.

## **Council Implications**

### **FINANCIAL / RESOURCES**

The master plan has been prepared with staff resourcing and the assistance of consultants, Group GSA. Council entered into a contract with Group GSA funded through Council's Consultancy budget.

Council's Local Infrastructure Contribution Plan has already collected over \$2.7M for the Albion Park Library Extensions. The Calderwood Planning Agreement has allocated approximately \$550,000 for the Albion Park Library Extension. Council has an obligation to the community and developers that this money will be spent on the library upgrade.

Once adopted, there would be a number of financial and resource implications arising from the implementation of the Master Plan. The options identified in the Master Plan will be subject to detail design and funding, these works are also required to be incorporated into Council's Long Term Financial Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

The master plan is a long-term planning document, and as such the identified options and upgrades will be delivered over the next 10 to 15 years.

The master plan will be delivered in stages which will assist with the future

programming of works. However, there will be a level of flexibility to deviate from the staging in the event where funding opportunities arise for certain works and/or priorities change.

### **LEGISLATION AND POLICY (INCLUDING ADVOCACY, STRATEGIC AND OTHER PLANS)**

Shellharbour City Council's Open Space and Recreation Strategy (OSR Strategy) sets the policy direction for the future direction of open space, sporting facilities, aquatic facilities and a range of recreational needs and identifies Council will continue to initiate, resource and implement master plans for key open spaces. The development of the master plan assists with the implementation of the OSR Strategy.

### **SOCIAL IMPACT**

The preparation of this master plan has required technical advice and input from Council's Community and Culture Directorate, regarding principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design and proposed social impacts. Additional social impact assessments will be required during implementation of the master plan.

### **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

Shellharbour City Council is committed to building resilience across Shellharbour City for current and future generations in the face of a changing climate. A range of sustainability considerations have been incorporated into the development of the Con O'Keefe and Russell Street Precinct Master Plan, this helps to ensure the master plan recommendations meet current and future community needs in alignment with Council's Climate & Sustainability Policy.

The Con O'Keefe and Russell Street Precinct Master Plan identifies the following sustainability initiatives, including the provision of built and natural shade to enhance amenity at the Con O'Keefe and Russell Street Precinct. Recognition of the ecological value of Melaleuca Park and proposed revegetation to enhance biodiversity at the park. The inclusion of solar technology in lighting and to support the inclusion of future EV charging stations and provide renewable energy options to users of the precinct. The master plan also identifies any future upgrades to car parking should ensure capability to provide electric vehicle (EV) charging stations to assist in achieving Council's target of net zero emissions by 2050.

### **LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

No legal considerations are associated with the preparation of this master plan, however when implementing this master plan, legal consideration of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 will be required.

## **RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

Should the Council resolve not to endorse the public exhibition of the Draft Master Plan, the progression and future adoption of the master plan would be compromised.

This would impact on Council's ability to deliver services as identified in the master plan to stakeholders and have negative impacts on the Community, Customers and the Council.

Council must ensure risks are managed and provide assurance that Shellharbour City Council's strategic plans are achieved, lessen the potential for adverse outcomes to occur and maximise the likelihood of beneficial outcomes.

It is recommended that Council resolve to endorse the public exhibition of the Draft Master Plan for Con O'Keefe and Russell Street Precinct, Albion Park (**Attachment 1**).

## **Link to Community Strategic Plan**

This report supports the following objectives, strategies and actions of the Community Strategic Plan:

### **1.2 We are a liveable community**

1.2.1 Inclusive, accessible and safe spaces for our entire community

1.2.1.06 Provide welcoming library spaces and experiences that meet community needs

1.2.2 Promote healthy living and high-quality public spaces that are well maintained and activated

1.2.2.02 Implement the Shellharbour City Open Space and Recreation Needs Study and Strategy

1.2.3 Construct and upgrade buildings and infrastructure that meet current and future community needs

1.2.3.01 Provide best practice community facilities through the implementation of the Community Facilities Strategy and Action Plan

1.2.3.02 Maintain Council parks, open spaces, sportsfields and recreational facilities

## **Previous Council Resolutions (including type and date of meeting)**

[24 October 2023](#)

### **Consultation**

#### **Internal**

A key component of the master plan preparation was the establishment of a working group, consisting of relevant staff who are involved with open space and community facility provision. Staff from a number of directorates have provided advice and insights throughout the development of the master plan through working group meetings and workshops.

Councillors were also consulted at briefings on the master plan project, which were held on 4 April 2023 and 21 November 2023. As per the Council resolution of 24 October 2023, an on-site meeting was held with Councillors on 30 October 2023.

#### **External**

Community engagement activities were undertaken early in the project and have informed the master plan. These included letters to adjoining residents, direct stakeholder consultation with community facilities operators, Albion Park High School and multiple sporting groups. Community feedback and responses from a Lets Chat survey identified a range of facilities and opportunities for the site.

Public exhibition of the master plan will enable further opportunity for the community to provide input into the master planning process. Adjoining residents and key stakeholders will be notified of the public exhibition and invited to make a submission. During the exhibition period, notices will also be placed on Council's website and social media.

Additionally, there will be future opportunities to engage with the community, as consultation will occur during detailed planning and implementation of each stage identified in the master plan.

### **Political Donations Disclosure**

Nil

### **Options**

### Option 1

That Council endorse the Draft Master Plan for Con O’Keefe and Russell Street Precinct, Albion Park (**Attachment 1**), for public exhibition for a period of 28 days calling for submissions, to allow for the progression, future adoption and implementation of the master plan.

### Option 2

That Council endorse the Draft Master Plan for Con O’Keefe and Russell Street Precinct, Albion Park (Attachment 1), with any amendments considered appropriate, to allow for public exhibition for a period of 28 days calling for submissions. This will allow for the progression, future adoption and implementation of the master plan.

### Option 3

That Council resolve not to endorse the public exhibition of the Draft Master Plan for Con O’Keefe and Russell Street Precinct, Albion Park (Attachment 1). This would compromise the progression and future adoption of the master plan and have negative impacts on the Community, Customers and the Council.

## **Conclusion**

It is recommended that Council resolve to endorse the public exhibition of the Draft Master Plan for Con O’Keefe and Russell Street Precinct, Albion Park (**Attachment 1**).

The exhibition period will allow opportunities for stakeholder and community feedback.

Should no valid opposing submissions be received, it is recommended the Chief Executive Officer be granted delegation to adopt the master plan on behalf of the Council.

If valid opposing submissions are received, it is recommended a future report be prepared and submitted to the Council following public exhibition. This report would detail the outcomes of the public exhibition and any changes to the document, for final consideration of the draft master plan.

## **Attachments**

1. Draft Master Plan - Con O'Keefe and Russell Street Precinct - Albion Park