

3 February 2020

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CITY OF ADELAIDE AQUATIC & RECREATIONAL FACILITY – DRAFT NEEDS ANALYSIS

SECRA welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Draft Needs Analysis of the City of Adelaide Aquatic & Recreational Facility.

That the needs analysis is being put out to public consultation in tandem with a proposal to allow the Adelaide Football Club to build their administrative offices on Park Lands in return for a new aquatic centre is, at best, confusing.

The Council should decide the kind of Aquatic Centre that it wishes to build based on the results of the needs analysis before it considers how the facility could be funded.

We note the history of this 50-year-old facility: an outdoor pool in 1969, redeveloped in 1985 as an indoor state-based aquatic facility, and then given a makeover thirty years ago in 1990.

According to the WarrenGreenConsulting report, *'while the AAC has relatively high annual visitation numbers, the overall financial performance is poor predominately as a result of the design (such as large in size, extensive water areas), the age and condition of the asset.'*

The report also states that compared to 'major facility industry benchmarks' the AAC is failing on most measures.

There seems to be a strong argument for a new aquatic centre (perhaps, the Denise Norton Centre) to be built.

In 2018/19, the Adelaide Aquatic Centre (AAC) had 714K visitations with revenue of \$6.2M but only 7.7% of users of the facility were City of Adelaide residents. The majority of users came from the adjoining three councils of Port Adelaide Enfield (22.6%), Charles Sturt (17.1%) and Prospect (16.5%)

The report suggests four indicative development scenarios for a new centre based on whether the AAC should aim to:

1. increase visitations (to 1.3M+); total area 26,100sqm; building 9,286.
2. increase visitations (to 1M); total area 20,700sqm; building 7,692
3. maintain current visitations (714,000); total area 15,200sqm; building 5,950
4. reduce visitations to 500,000 (with a focus on servicing City of Adelaide residents); total area 11,000sqm; building 4,545.

The indicative cost of these four options are: \$60,200,000; \$49,800.00; \$38,600.00; \$29,500,000 respectively.

The existing AAC takes up a total area of 29,000sqm with a building area of 11,900sqm.

SECRA makes the following comments about these scenarios:

- The AAC is sited on the Adelaide Park Lands. Any new facility should not be to the detriment of the Park Lands with open space being given over to parking (options 1 and 2 require a significant increase in car parking). While some parking could be underground, this will add to the cost. Other options to reduce car parking could be achieved by encouraging people to cycle there or to use public transport by, for example, including the facility in the free Connector bus route. Another strategy is that people could register for a fee discount for not using a parking space.
- All four options reduce the current footprint and building area. Option 4 reduces it the most.
- Option 4 is the cheapest to build and, presumably, to maintain.
- The current site of the AAC is at the extreme northern edge of the City of Adelaide, which makes it difficult for many City of Adelaide residents to access the centre. We believe that many of these residents use other LGA outdoor pools or CBD indoor pools such as the new UniSA 25 metre pool in Hindley Street, the Next Generation pool, or the Flinders Street pool.
- Given that there is already an indoor state-based aquatic facility (at Marion) then there is no need for a new facility to provide components required for such a facility (such as a 50m pool and dive pool). Or if there is, then the State Government should pay for these.
- If the facility is to accommodate school carnivals (usually held in only two months of the year) then the Education Department should contribute to the funding of the facility.
- Adjacent councils should make a substantial financial contribution to a new facility, unless the preferred option is 4, as their residents are the major users of the AAC. SECRA would argue that they should have been required to contribute to the cost of running the existing AAC.
- All councils contributing to the cost and maintenance of the new AAC could offer a discounted entry fee to their ratepayers. Pool users in councils that do not contribute would be required to pay the full fee.
- Both the State and the Federal government should contribute to all 4 options given the health, educational and social benefits of such a facility.
- Given the number of gyms in Adelaide there may be little need for a new facility to have a large gym.
- The AAC is popular with families who could use an improved outdoor space for social events.
- The café should be accessible to people both outside and inside the facility.

It is for the City of Adelaide to decide which of the four scenarios best suits the needs of prospective and current users of such a facility and balance these with the cost of building, maintaining and running the facility, in particular, the cost to City of Adelaide ratepayers, the vast majority of whom do not use the current AAC.

SECRA does not support a new facility being built by any commercial operator like the Adelaide Football Club in return for free land to pursue its own commercial interests.

Yours sincerely,



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