



Contents

CONTENTS	1
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
1.0 INTRODUCTION	3
2.0 BACKGROUND	6
2.1 COST ESTIMATES	6
2.2 COMMUNITY PROFILE	6
2.3 METHODOLOGY	7
2.4 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	7
3.0 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS	8
3.1 User Profile.....	8
3.2 Alternative Facilities	9
3.3 Social Impact.....	10
4.0 COLLOCATION OF THE TENNIS, BOWLING, FOOTBALL, CRICKET, AND THE BOWLING AND AMENITIES CLUB AT THE ALEX REID PAVILION	10
4.1 Justification.....	10
4.2 Formation of a Sporting Club	10
4.3 Stakeholders	10
4.4 Liquor Licenses.....	12
4.5 Implementation.....	13
4.6 Need	12
4.7 Management Issues	13
4.8 Usage	13
4.9 Target Group	13
4.10 LOCATION RATIONALE	13
4.11 CAPITAL COSTS.....	14
4.12 SOURCE OF FUNDING.....	15
4.13 OPERATIONAL COSTS AND INCOME	16
5.0 RESURFACING THE BASKETBALL PLAYING SURFACE	16
5.1 JUSTIFICATION.....	16
5.2 NEED	17
5.3 MANAGEMENT ISSUES.....	17
5.4 USAGE	17
5.5 TARGET GROUP	17
5.6 CONCEPTUAL DESIGN	17
5.7 LOCATION RATIONALE	17
5.8 CAPITAL COST AND FUNDING	17
5.9 OPERATIONAL COSTS AND INCOME	17
6.0 OTHER OPTIONS	18
6.1 PASSIVE RECREATION	18
6.2 OFF-SITE AND SHARED OPTIONS	18
6.3 REDUNDANT FACILITY RETIREMENT STRATEGY.....	18
7.0 APPENDICIES	20
7.1 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK REPORT	20
7.2 FEEDBACK FORMS.....	23



Executive Summary

In November 2007, the Shire of Dowerin agreed to support the Tennis Club's application to the Department of Sport and Recreation for the relocation of the tennis courts to the Bowling Club through the contribution of one third of the project cost. Since the submission and approval of the application, Council have expressed that the most suitable, central location to co-locate sport and recreation activities is at the Recreation Grounds. Council have also indicated plans to redevelop the existing Bowls Club site for senior citizen residential purposes. While none of these plans are officially recognised, the Shire of Dowerin has come to realise the inconvenience that the relocation of the tennis courts will inflict on these long term intentions. As a result of these events, the need for a long term sport and recreation strategy has become very apparent and has therefore resulted in the development of this strategy. While the Shire of Dowerin Strategic Plan recognises that existing community facilities may not continue to provide for community and recreational needs, there is now a need for future options and direction to be established.

The purpose of this recreation strategy is three fold. Firstly, the strategy will assess the current sport and recreation facility situation for the Shire of Dowerin. Secondly, the strategy will identify where the Shire of Dowerin will be situated, regarding sport and recreation facilities in 2015. Thirdly, the strategy will outline the necessary changes and procedures required to ensure the vision for sport and recreation facilities of Dowerin in 2015 become a reality.



1.0 Introduction

The provision of recreation and community facilities is an important and long-standing component of Local Government as it is well placed to respond meaningfully to the needs of the communities that it represents. The Shire of Dowerin has a strong history of community infrastructure provision and this is exemplified by the range and quality of facilities available in Dowerin. By any standard, the range of community facilities in Dowerin is impressive compared to most comparable communities. In previous years, Shire expenditure on recreation and community facilities equates to almost \$600 per person per year however that figure dropped to \$410 per person in 2007/08 based on a population of 861 people.

The Recreation Strategy identifies the need for rationalisation of sporting facilities in Dowerin and an upgrade of the Dowerin Memorial Swimming Pool. Co-locating the maximum amount of reasonable sporting organisations to the one clubroom will be of a great benefit to the Shire and to the sporting fraternity of Dowerin. This is the priority of the Dowerin Recreation Strategy 2008 - 2015. The Shire of Dowerin recognises that the town's recreation grounds are to be situated at the football and hockey oval and their surrounding amenities. The Recreation Grounds are nominated to be the long term central location for all possible and appropriate sport and recreation facilities.

During the development process of the Recreation Strategy, four potential facility development options have been identified. These four options were as follows:

Option One

Option One proposed the Shire's commitment to existing plans to relocate the tennis courts to the Bowling and Amenities Club. The project included the installation of four synthetic tennis courts at the Bowling and Amenities Club and for the shared use of the clubroom by the Tennis Club, Bowling Club, and the Bowling and Amenities Club.

Option Two

Option Two involved the installation of four synthetic tennis courts on the existing turf courts. This option required minor renovations to the interior of the clubrooms and the installation of a disability access ramp.

Option Three

Option Three proposed the installation of four synthetic tennis courts, and a synthetic ten rink bowling green on the existing turf courts at the existing tennis courts site. This project required major redevelopments to the tennis club rooms and the installation of a disability access ramp.

Option Three was to be implemented in three stages. The first stage was to involve the resurfacing of the tennis courts and the installation of lighting. The second stage was the redevelopment of the clubroom. This will require significant expansion to cater for the needs of the Bowling Club. The second



stage will was the installation of a disability access ramp. The third and final stage was the installation of a synthetic ten rink bowling surface, and the relocation of the Bowling Club to the tennis clubrooms.

Option Four

Option Four proposed the installation of four synthetic tennis courts and a synthetic ten rink bowling green at the Alex Reid Pavilion. This Option has been identified to require major redevelopments to the Pavilion.

Option Four was to be implemented in three stages. The first stage was outlined to involve the installation of four synthetic tennis courts, lighting, fencing, seating and a playground to the South side of the Pavilion. The second stage was the redevelopment of the Alex Reid Pavilion. This was to include an extension to the function area and sheltered spectator viewing of the oval, tennis courts and future bowling green. The third stage was the installation of a synthetic ten rink bowling green, fencing, seating, and lighting to the North of the Pavilion.

Each potential facility redevelopment has been outlined in further detail in a draft Recreation Strategy, which was publically advertised requesting comments and feedback for a period of three weeks. Based on the results from public comment submissions, Option Four has been identified as the most preferred strategic direction for the development of sport and recreation facilities in Dowerin by the absolute majority of community groups and individual community members (See Appendix One). As a result of this overwhelming community preference for Option Four, this strategy outlines the Shire of Dowerin's commitment to the development and implementation of Option Four over the next seven years.

This report includes the following considerations:

- ▶ Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study for the Shire of Dowerin, produced by GHD Pty Ltd in September 2004.
- ▶ Identification and assessment of future sporting infrastructure developments.
- ▶ Market analysis in the context of recreation and demographic trends.
- ▶ Assessment of identified deficiencies in current opportunities.
- ▶ Presentation of an appraisal of proposed sporting infrastructure developments to be further developed as a concept plan.

1.1 Summary of Issues

The following issues will be of significance to the provision of community and recreation facilities in Dowerin over the next 5 – 15 years:

- ▶ The current facilities provide for a broad range of community activities.
- ▶ Many of the existing facilities are aging and required increased maintenance expenditure.



- ▶ The existing swimming pool requires significant expenditure within the immediate future to maintain operational and safety standards. While a swimming pool is highly rated as a community facility, the operational cost of an eight lane Olympic-size swimming pool is not justifiable for the current and prospective user population. A re-design and redevelopment of the pool is required.
- ▶ An over-supply of existing halls and clubrooms is an increasing drain on financial and volunteer resources. There is a need to rationalise existing facilities and focus resources on a limited number of facilities.
- ▶ Priority of future recreation facilities should encourage co-location with various community facilities and the Dowerin Field Days.
- ▶ Future development of sporting infrastructure will incorporate relocation of the tennis club and the bowling club to the Alex Reid Pavilion to be co-located with the football and cricket clubs.
- ▶ Redevelopment of the Alex Reid Pavilion should incorporate installation of lighting for the tennis courts and bowling green upon relocation. The installation of artificial playing surfaces should be considered as a favourable alternative to grass for the bowls and tennis courts.
- ▶ Any new facilities should take advantage of existing infrastructure and minimise extension of services.
- ▶ Management of community facilities should be rationalised to reduce the number of individual committees and reduce the demand on volunteers.
- ▶ The floor surface at the basketball stadium was illustrated as unsafe for sporting activities. Any new floor surface would need to withstand traffic associated with the Dowerin Field Days.
- ▶ There is a need for a strategic approach to recreation and community facilities provision and management.
- ▶ The opportunity to generate income from user fees is limited and unlikely to provide sufficient income to reduce the demand for subsidisation to cover the majority of capital and operational expenses.

1.2 Proposed Options

The Feasibility Study produced by GHD Pty Ltd in 2004 identified five options for the redevelopment of the Dowerin Recreation Centre. Upon adoption and commencement of implementation of Option Three identified in the Feasibility Study, the severity of the upfront costs and ongoing onus upon the Shire became vividly apparent. As a result of this the project was dismissed. In 2008 the Shire of Dowerin continues to face the issues of increasing maintenance costs, an over-supply of halls and clubrooms and serious operational and safety issues associated with the swimming pool. Given the reasons associated with the project abortion in 2004/2005 this Recreation Strategy proposes a similar initiative with the same considerations, but to a smaller more realistic scale. The facility developments identified in the Recreation Strategy are deemed more feasible, appropriate and necessary for the Dowerin community over the next thirteen years.



2.0 Background

This Recreation Strategy is based on the issues identified in the Feasibility Study conducted by GHD Pty Ltd in 2004. While the Shire of Dowerin's Strategic Plan has recognized that existing community facilities may not continue to provide for community and recreation facility needs, the Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study produced in 2004 represents the first quantification of the availability, suitability and need for community facilities, to be undertaken in Dowerin.

Dowerin has a broad range of recreation facilities for a rural community of its size however many of the recreation and community facilities are dated, under utilised and entering a phase of accelerated maintenance demand. This recreation strategy identifies opportunities for improved economic and equitable provision of community facilities. Existing community facilities were assessed by GHD in 2004 for current condition, suitability for purpose and future demand and viability.

This Recreation Plan examines the proposed development of community facilities and identifies the most appropriate strategy for the development of community recreation facilities that are necessary to meet the needs and financial resources of the Dowerin community. The strategy provides a framework for the provision of facilities that best meet the needs of the community and provide the most economic and social benefit.

2.1 Cost Estimates

Cost estimates in this report are based on generally accepted 'orders of cost' for comparison purposes only. There are many factors that impact upon construction cost and these can vary from place to place and from time to time depending on prevailing circumstances. The broadly recognized cost estimating guide: Rawlinsons Australian Construction Handbook 2004 has been used as a reference.

2.2 Community Profile

The Shire of Dowerin is a stable but slowly diminishing and aging community. It is essentially similar to other communities in the Central Wheatbelt region. The local events calendar is dominated by the Dowerin Field Days held in the last week of August each year. This event provides considerable input for local retail and community organisations.

The Dowerin community profile indicates a stable population with small but consistent population decrease over an extended period. Similarly, the age profile of the community indicates a steady aging of the local population. The community profile has persisted for almost two decades and current trends are considered likely to persist. No significant events are forecast that are likely to interfere with those trends.



2.3 Methodology

The development of the Recreation Strategy was carried out as follows:

- ▶ Identification of redevelopment options for sport and recreation facilities.
- ▶ The economic & social benefits and costs of the selected options were assessed against suitability, demonstrated need and financial viability.
- ▶ Generic guidelines prepared by the Ministry of Sport and Recreation were consulted to ensure that the proposed Options complied with regulations outlined by the Ministry.
- ▶ A Draft Recreation Strategy was advertised for public comment requesting input regarding the most favourable Option.
- ▶ Feedback from community groups and individual community members revealed Option Four as the most favourable Option for the development of recreation facilities in Dowerin by the absolute majority.
- ▶ Based on the results from the Public Comment period, this Recreation Strategy has been tapered to reflect the expressed needs and wants of the Dowerin community.

2.4 Acknowledgements

A significant amount of background research previously conducted by GHD Pty Ltd through the development of the Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study was greatly beneficial throughout the drafting of the Dowerin Recreation Strategy.



3.0 Contextual Analysis

3.1 User Profile

Dowerin has a broad range of community and recreation facilities for a community of its size and location. The current circumstance is characterised by duplication, accelerating deterioration and maintenance cost. This situation is not economically sustainable. Future facilities and services need to be more effectively designed and managed in order to meet community needs and expectations. Provision must encourage use by people of all ages and take account of the advancing median population age. This indicates a trend away from vigorous activities to more passive recreational pursuits.

There are a range of factors that require serious consideration when assessing emerging recreational demand and the appropriate provision of recreation and community facilities and services:

- ▶ Dowerin is remote from city facilities, located two hours away from Perth
- ▶ Most residents depend on facilities within Dowerin for their recreation.
- ▶ The presence of the Dowerin Field Days provides an extraordinary opportunity for co-operative funding and use of any new facilities.
- ▶ Any proposed future facilities development should be designed to supplement the existing facilities and build upon existing user preferences.
- ▶ The existing facilities have made little advantage of the opportunities presented by co-location and sharing of services and amenities by different groups and activities.
- ▶ There are numerous recreation and community organisations and clubs but there is no over-riding committee or organisation to represent these groups as a single entity.
- ▶ There is no indication of any circumstance that will induce a significant change in population numbers or preferences in the foreseeable future.
- ▶ Future development should be located where extension to existing road, sewer, water and power services is minimal.
- ▶ Existing facilities may have few potential alternate uses if not retained for community purposes. Others may offer opportunities for sale or redevelopment.
- ▶ Many facilities are old, under utilised and in need of repairs and maintenance.
- ▶ There is evidence of duplication in some areas and gaps in others.
- ▶ There is an absence of leases and/or management agreements and roles and responsibilities between lessee and lessor are not clearly defined. This is seen as a major contributing factor to the deterioration in the quality of the facilities.
- ▶ An absence of quantifiable management systems to measure and monitor quality and overall performance in the provision of sport and recreational programs and services and facilities.



- ▶ There is a need for local and regional co-ordination of the provision and development of facilities.
- ▶ There is an oversupply of halls, meeting rooms and clubroom/function facilities.
- ▶ The swimming pool is very old and require revitalisation to meet community needs, improve safety and increase utilisation.
- ▶ There is a shortage of floodlit all weather multi-purpose courts.
- ▶ Most organisations do not have strategic development plans and support systems to ensure their long-term sustainability.
- ▶ Few organisations have adequate insurance cover.
- ▶ The increasing demands and responsibility placed on volunteers is stressing the volunteer resource.
- ▶ There is little regional co-ordination to minimise duplication and intra-regional competition.
- ▶ There is an increasing demand for unstructured recreation opportunities.
- ▶ There is a shortage of recreation opportunities for youth and seniors.
- ▶ Access to training programs for volunteers and staff is limited.
- ▶ Many organisations survive on limited resources and volunteers are suffering from burnout.
- ▶ The absence of public transport restricts access to sport and recreation programs and services
- ▶ Walking and cycling are emerging exercise pursuits but most roads are unsafe for cyclists and walkers (especially with prams). There is a need for strategic development of footpaths and cycle ways.
- ▶ Training in the acquisition and management of funding and sponsorship is a priority in the region.

The pattern of sports usage in Dowerin indicates regular participation in relatively small groups at a variety of venues. Trends in Dowerin and elsewhere at similar communities indicate that recreation planning needs to focus on rationalisation of facilities and flexibility in delivery. Development of infrastructure and facilities that cater for unstructured physical activity such as walking trails, footpaths, a gymnasium and the like should be encouraged. Rationalisation and flexibility in delivery has the significant benefit of reducing the demand on local volunteers.

3.2 Alternative Facilities

Other than the recreation facilities in Dowerin, alternative recreation and community facilities are limited. Residents seeking facilities and services other than those in Dowerin must travel to adjoining communities such as Goomalling. The available facilities at those localities generally duplicate those at Dowerin. As a consequence Dowerin residents seeking specialist facilities and services must travel to Perth, a drive of around 2 hours in duration. Some regional facilities are available at Northam.



3.3 Social Impact

Community and recreational facilities and services play an essential role in the development of community cohesion, sense of place and healthy lifestyles. The removal or non-replacement of facilities would have a considerable negative impact on the community of Dowerin.

4.0 Collocation of the Tennis, Bowling, Football, Cricket, and the Bowling and Amenities Club at the Alex Reid Pavilion

4.1 Justification

Relocating the Bowling Club to the Recreation Centre will complement the existing sport and recreation facilities already centrally located at the Recreation Grounds, which will enhance the sporting fraternity of Dowerin. The relocation of the Bowling Club, the Tennis Club, and the Bowling and Amenities Club will support the Shire's decision to nominate the existing recreation grounds as the future location for all possible and reasonable sport and recreation groups in Dowerin. To support the Shire's long term plans, all consultations with individual community members and community groups have identified the Alex Reid Pavilion as the most suitable location to centralise these clubs.

4.2 Formation of a Sporting Club

All community groups who will be relocating to the Alex Reid Pavilion will be required by the Shire of Dowerin to form a single incorporated entity as a representative body of each stakeholder group. The formation of the Sporting Club will be to act as an umbrella entity for all of the community groups based at the Pavilion, to hold the liquor license, engage in a Lease Agreement with the Shire, and oversee the management and operation of the Alex Reid Pavilion and associated facilities. The formation and incorporation of the Sporting Club will be the responsibility of all community groups who are to be located at the Alex Reid Pavilion. The Shire will deal directly with the Sporting Club with matters regarding the Pavilion. It will be the Sporting Clubs responsibility to disseminate any necessary information to individual clubs.

4.3 Stakeholders

Tennis Club

The collocation of the Tennis, Bowling, Football, Cricket, and the Bowling and Amenities Club at the Alex Reid Pavilion will involve the relocation of the Tennis Club, the Bowling Club, and the Bowling and Amenities Club. Consultation with the Tennis Club has indicated that the Club is willing to relocate to the Alex Reid Pavilion and collocate with other community groups. The Tennis Club is aware that the relocation will involve downsizing from the current six turf courts to four synthetic courts. The Tennis Club has indicated that four synthetic courts (with lighting) will be sufficient to cater for predicted



Club membership numbers into the foreseeable future. The provision of lighting at the new courts will enable night games, which will increase the availability the courts. Once redeveloped, the Alex Reid Pavilion will provide a direct viewing area for two tennis courts, and visibility of the second two courts, from inside the Pavilion and the outside veranda area.

Bowling Club

The Bowling Club has also expressed their willingness to relocate and collocate with other community groups. The Bowling Club has identified the Alex Reid Pavilion as the ideal location for the Clubs future clubrooms and green. The Bowling Clubs existing turf greens are becoming impractical due to increasing maintenance costs and the decreasing availability of human and water resources. For this reason, the Bowling Club has expressed their need for a synthetic surface at the new location. Based on the Bowling Clubs membership trends, the Bowling Club has indicated that a ten rink synthetic green will be sufficient for the Clubs needs. The Bowling Club has indicated their preference to have the bowling green located to the South of the Pavilion, rather than the North with North/South facing rinks and maximum width. This request will be considered in the concept planning and design of the redevelopment. Included in the installation of the bowling green will be sufficient floodlighting to enable twilight bowling, direct viewing of the green from within the Pavilion and the outside veranda area, and access to toilet facilities.

Bowling and Amenities Club

The Bowling and Amenities Club have indicated their willingness to relocate and collocate with other community groups. The relocation of the Bowling and Amenities Club would require the provision of an adequately sized commercial kitchen and sufficient space to cater for large functions. The most appropriate length and shape of the bar will need to be established during the development of the Concept Design in consultation with all stakeholder groups.

4.4 Liquor Licence

The Bowling and Amenities Club is aware that the relocation will require the Club to relinquish the Dowerin Bowling and Amenities Club License subject to the approval of a Club License at the Alex Reid Pavilion from the Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor. The Club License application for the Alex Reid Pavilion is required to be issued by an incorporated body consisting of representatives from each of the community groups located at the Pavilion. The operation of the bar and the division of bar revenue amongst the stakeholder groups will need to be determined by the incorporated body. The Shire will not accept responsibility for the day to day management and operation of the bar.



4.5 Implementation

Council will implement this project in three consecutive stages. By implementing the project over three stages. This will enable the Shire to stagger capital costs. Funding requested from the Department of Sport and Recreation for the whole project will be submitted in the one funding application as a single project. The funding application will indicate that the project is to be implemented over two to three years. The implementation of the project will be in the following stages:

Stage One

The first stage will involve the installation of four synthetic tennis courts, lighting, fencing, seating and a playground to the Pavilion. The exact location and layout of the tennis courts and playground will depend on a Concept Design, which will be developed in consultation with all stakeholder groups. The Pavilion will be adequate to cater for the Tennis Club, Football Club and Cricket Club. Given the alternate seasons for the Tennis and Football Clubs, and the small membership numbers of the Cricket Club, each of the clubs will sufficiently coexist at the current Pavilion. The tennis courts will be the first stage of construction given that the Tennis Club are already facing significant delays to their original relocation plans.

Stage Two

The second stage will involve the redevelopment of the Alex Reid Pavilion. While the existing change rooms at the Pavilion are in good condition, both female and visitor change rooms will be required. Further to this the social/function area and public amenities will be inadequate to cater for the needs of the Bowling and Amenities Club, and the increase in the year round demand once all intended Club's have relocated to the Pavilion. This second stage of the project will commence following the completion of Stage One. This will include an extension to the function area, new kitchen and bar facilities, sheltered spectator viewing of the oval, tennis courts and future bowling green.

Stage Three

The third stage will be the installation of a synthetic ten rink bowling green, fencing, seating, and lighting at the Pavilion. The exact location and layout of the bowling green will be in accordance with the original Concept Design, which will be developed in consultation with all stakeholders. The exact synthetic surface type will be determined at a later date in partnership with the Bowling Club.

4.6 Need

Current water shortages across Australia have called for a desperate need to reduce water consumption. As a result, there is an environmental need for the Shire to decommission the existing turf tennis courts, and the Bowling Club to decommission their greens. The Alex Reid Pavilion and the current tennis clubrooms are tired and have reached a point of accelerated maintenance



costs. By co-locating these Clubs and leasing the current tennis clubrooms out, the number of clubrooms the Shire are required to maintain will be reduced. This option will greatly enhance the sporting fraternity of Dowerin, and significantly reduce the pressure on volunteers in each individual club.

4.7 Management Issues

The Shire will enforce the incorporation of a group of delegated representative from the Bowls, Tennis, Cricket, Football, and Bowling and Amenities Clubs. This will create a single body for which the Shire can communicate with and enter into a User or Lease Agreement. This will enable the Shire to hold the single incorporated body accountable for any damage to the facilities, rather than multiple agreements with each of the stakeholder groups. The User Agreement or Lease Agreement will outline the conditions of use and any management issues associated with the operation of the facilities. The day to day operation of the facility will be the responsibility of the Leasee.

4.8 Usage

With the reduction in the number of tennis courts available from six to four, and the provision of lighting to enable night matches, it is likely that the use of the relocated synthetic courts will increase. Through the amalgamation of five clubs into the one clubroom, the use of the Alex Reid Pavilion will significantly increase all year round. During the winter months, the Pavilion will predominantly be used by the Bowling and Amenities Club (to be renamed) and the Football Club. During the summer months, the Tennis Club, Bowling Club, Cricket Club and the Bowling and Amenities Club will predominantly use the Pavilion. The Pavilion Management Committee will need to establish a roster to enable effective and fair shared use for each Club year round.

4.9 Target Group

The needs of the five community groups and the Shire are well catered for in this option. The co-location of five groups to the one clubroom will provide a new facility for a wide range of community groups and age brackets. The variety of sports nominated to share the Alex Reid Pavilion includes age groups ranging from the junior members in the tennis and football to the senior members in the bowls.

4.10 Location rationale

The location of the proposed redevelopment is ideal. The relocation of three or more community organisations to the Alex Reid Pavilion will further enhance the centralisation of recreation facilities at the Recreation Grounds and complement the Shire's recognition of the area as the future location for all possible recreation facilities. The relocation of the Bowling Club and the Bowling and Amenities Club will suit the Shire's plans to use the bowling club site for future senior citizens purposes. There is a pre-existing need for the redevelopment of the Pavilion, the decommissioning of the turf tennis courts and bowling greens, and the need for the eventual relocation of the Bowling Club and the Bowling and Amenities Club to suit the Shire's long term plans. The nominated location resolves all of these needs.



4.11 Capital Costs

This proposal strongly supports co-location initiatives and maintains the opportunity to amalgamate the Tennis and Bowling Club to the one clubroom. Council's adoption of this Recreation Strategy is a confirmation of Council's commitment to the adoption of the Recreation Grounds as the long term location of all possible and reasonable sporting and recreational facilities in Dowerin. Council's commitment to this Strategic Plan, which supports co-location, creates a possibility that the Tennis Club may not be required to relinquish their pre-approved funding from the Department of Sport and Recreation. However, if the Tennis Club is required to relinquish their funding, the Shire of Dowerin may reapply for funding assistance for this project in the November 2008 CSRFF round. DSR may contribute to one third of this project cost. The estimated costs are listed below

2009	Installation of four synthetic tennis courts	\$ 220,000
2011	Redevelopment of the Alex Reid Pavilion	\$ 900,000
2013	Installation of synthetic ten rink bowling green	\$ 280,000
	TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$1,400,000

4.12 Sources of Funding

General Rates

Council may choose to set aside funds raised through the imposition of the general rate.

Reserves

Council has \$152,346 in the Recreation Facility Development Reserve as of 30th June 2008. The budget projection as or 30th June 2009 is \$186,876. Council will be required to consider making further significant contributions to this Reserve in order to finance this project.

Loans

Council may borrow funds for specific purposes, including development of community facilities. The current loan portfolio is very low.

Community Sport and Recreation Facilities Fund (CSRFF)

The CSRFF scheme provides financial assistance from the WA Government for the development of infrastructure for sport and recreation and is administered by the Department of Sport and Recreation. The scheme provides for grant funds up to one third of the project cost to an upper limit of \$1.5 million. In special circumstances this limit may be raised. Grants are available for new facilities and for the upgrading of existing facilities that increase the opportunities for physical activities and to better suit current and future needs. Enquiries at the Department of Sport and Recreation indicate that projects that support collocation initiatives are highly regarded and are more likely to be approved by the Department than stand alone facility projects.



Youth Grants

Grants of up to \$25,000 are available through the Youth Spaces and Facilities Fund (YSFF). These grants are available to regional communities for projects that enhance the provision of cultural, recreational and sporting facilities for young people. Youth Grants WA is an initiative of the WA Government that provides grants of up to \$5,000 for projects that *'encourage the participation of young people in innovative and challenging community projects and activities.'*

Lotteries Commission

The Lotteries Commission does not provide funds for sport specific facilities. However, funds are available for multi-purpose community facilities such as: meeting rooms and community facilities geared towards youth, children and families. Funding is available for assistance with operational costs as well as capital projects.

Joint Venture

Funding may be available through joint venture arrangement. For example, at Dowerin, there are opportunities for incorporating Dowerin Field Days usage (and therefore funding) into community infrastructure projects.

Community Fundraising

Community groups could raise funds through a variety of fundraising initiatives. Given the current volunteer workload and limited local population, there seems little scope for significant fundraising through this avenue unless fundraising could tap resources from outside the district. Amery Acres is a possibility which would need to be considered by the Shire.

User Fees

Current fees for facility usage at Dowerin are comparatively low. For most facilities at Dowerin, the user fees provide a small percentage of operational revenue and those facilities and services will continue to require subsidisation. It is important to structure user fees so that they are set low enough to discourage patronage by local residents but high enough so that user fees are realistic. In the situation with the Alex Reid Pavilion redevelopment, an annual Lease fee will be determined by the Shire, and agreed upon by the Sporting Club. The division of that fee amongst each of the Clubs based at the Pavilion will be determined by the Sporting Club.

Contribution by Sporting Groups

Contributions would be required from the Tennis and Bowling Clubs for the development of their new synthetic playing surfaces. It is expected that this would be required to be a one third contribution as per CSRFF grant policy.

Regional Development Australia Program

The proposed Regional Development Australia Program is the new Federal Government initiative which is due to replace the former Regional Partnerships Program as of 1st July 2009. Due to the fact that this program is currently in the development stage the extent of funding opportunities available from this program are not yet confirmed.



Asset Sales

The sale of shire assets presents an opportunity for generation of revenue. Rationalisation of facilities could create an opportunity for the disposal of under-utilised assets. However, any revenue strategy based on the sale of assets needs to consider limited property values and potential markets. Local property market conditions are characterised by low land values and limited market demand. There are a number of vacant lots and empty commercial premises within the town. The strategy would need to consider the potential redevelopment opportunities for facilities identified for disposal.

Sponsorship

There are limited opportunities for sponsorship due to the small population and limited use rates by target markets. The influx of visitors for the Dowerin Field Days does provide an opportunity to market advertising associated with various prominent facilities. There is some potential for new facilities to negotiate discounts on construction materials and equipment on the basis that these will be given prominence at the Field Days.

Dowerin Field Days

The Dowerin Field Days is a significant factor in the consideration of the development and rationalisation of community facilities at Dowerin. The Field Days offer opportunities for facility and cost sharing and also for revenue raising by local organisations. The Dowerin Field Days present a significant opportunity for community fundraising that is not often available to rural communities. However the future of the Field Days and the opportunities for fundraising activities should not be taken for granted. It would be difficult to resource all local community clubs and activities if fundraising was restricted to within the Dowerin community.

4.13 Operational costs and income

The Shire will receive minimal income generated from the hire/lease of the facility to the user groups. The Shire along with the Tennis and Bowling Clubs will need to allocate a minimum of \$5,000 each per annum towards the eventual resurfacing of the playing fields in an estimated 10 – 12 years time. Operation costs are estimated to increase by a four fold minimum. Lighting costs are expected to triple compared to previous years. The maintenance costs of the pavilion are expected to increase to \$10,000 per annum. Despite this however the decommission of turf tennis courts and bowling greens will result reduced maintenance and water ensuing an annual saving to the Shire of approximately \$30,000.

5.0 Resurfacing the Basketball Playing Surface

5.1 Justification

The existing asphalt surface of the basketball courts is an unsuitable playing surface for active sports. The asphalt could be treated with a low impact surface to provide a safer playing environment.



5.2 Need

The basketball courts offer two of the few indoor active recreational opportunities in the region, basketball and netball. The courts are reasonably well patronised but this remains well short of full commitment. It has been suggested, but not demonstrated, that an improved playing surface would result in greater patronage. This could be tested by treatment of one court at first and then use rates gauged over time before proceeding on to resurface the two remaining courts. The surface treatment would need to be capable of withstanding traffic associated with the Dowerin Field Days.

5.3 Management Issues

There are no significant management issues associated with resurfacing the basketball courts. A safer playing surface would reduce the exposure of the Shire to injury claims.

5.4 Usage

The courts are currently used for practice by local netball teams and for competition against regional visitors. The courts are reasonably well patronised but the current provision of three courts far exceeds any reasonable need for a community the size and demographic composition of Dowerin.

5.5 Target Group

The target group is young adults, teenagers, and mothers.

5.6 Conceptual design

The proposed low impact surface should be suitable for direct application over the existing asphalt floor, withstand ambient temperatures of around 40 degrees and be capable of withstanding traffic expected during the Field Days, including tyred vehicles and large numbers of visitors wearing street shoes.

5.7 Location rationale

It is suggested that the court nearest the Rec. Centre be treated first as this would be the most conveniently accessed court.

5.8 Capital cost and funding

The capital cost is estimated to be approximately \$90,000 for one court. Funding may be partly available from grants due to the safety enhancement component of the project. It is likely that the community would be required to partly fund the project. During the public consultation there was little demonstrated public willingness to provide significant funding for this purpose.

5.9 Operational costs and income

The operational costs are not considered significant with this proposal. However the maintenance requirement of a synthetic surface will be higher than that of an untreated asphalt floor. This will vary depending on the nature of the surface.



6.0 Other Options

6.1 Passive Recreation

Assessment of the overall provision of these facilities should also consider those activity options that require little or no infrastructure. Activities such as bushwalking, horse riding, jogging and sight seeing can offer significant recreational benefit without the demand for infrastructure. The monotonous terrain and wholesale clearing of land vegetation (only 2% of remnant native forest exists within the Shire of Dowerin) limits the scope of activities such as bushwalking, bird watching and the like. However the encouragement of such activities can reduce the demand on built infrastructure.

The Tin Dog Creek nature trail walk offers a very good example of successful passive recreation. The Shire of Dowerin should continue to redevelop and maintain the Tin Dog Creek walk trail, and explore further marketing options to encourage both local and tourist patronage of the passive recreation facility.

6.2 Off-Site and Shared Options

Rationalisation of existing community facilities can be balanced against the prospect of tapping into community facilities available outside Dowerin but within the local region. The provision of community facilities can be rationalised without detriment to the availability of facilities to the community by good regional planning and judicious use of regional facilities. By this use of regional facilities, opportunities are available to the local community at low cost compared to having a duplicate facility at Dowerin.

6.3 Redundant Facility Retirement Strategy

It is strongly recommended that any buildings or other facilities made redundant by the proposed recreation strategy be demolished or leased out to minimise Council's maintenance responsibilities of the facilities. Redundant facilities continue as a maintenance and management liability to the community even if they are no longer in regular use. It is recommended that:

- ▶ The existing tennis clubrooms be demolished or leased. The nature of the lease agreement would need to stipulate all building maintenance be the responsibility of the lessee.
- ▶ The CWA meeting rooms are not an essential facility and could be suitable for conversion into a house or some light commercial activity.
- ▶ The Bowling Club to be redeveloped. Redevelopment as a retirement residence complex. It is not known whether sufficient demand exist for this proposal to be viable. It is recommended that, if this were contemplated, that access from the site to other services be improved. Current access from the site to shops and civic services requires crossing the main road and travel along unsympathetic footpaths.
- ▶ The Town Hall and Lesser Hall currently attract limited use, particularly the Town Hall. This complex will continue to drain community resources with little opportunity to recoup losses through user fees. As time passes, the cost of maintaining this facility will accelerate. There currently seems little opportunity for conversion to another use or for sale in a very limited



market. Redevelopment of the Rec. Centre will further reduce the viability and community need for this facility.

- ▶ The hockey sheds demand on community resources is insignificant. They are well located adjacent to the hockey ground and are well utilised during the Field Days and the hockey season. They should be retained for the foreseeable future.
- ▶ The Golf Club, Rifle Club and Kart Club facilities stand-alone and are not recommended for any further consideration in this report.



7.0 Appendix One

Community Feedback Report

The Dowerin Recreation Strategy 2009-2015 was opened for public comment on Thursday 17th July 2008 for a period of three weeks. The strategy was sent to all sporting clubs and was advertised in the local paper, on the Shire of Dowerin website and displayed for public viewing in the Shire Administration Offices. The document has provoked a volume of feedback from both clubs and individual members of the community. A total of 20 submissions were made and the following sporting organisations made their submissions as a club.

Dowerin Combined Bowls
Dowerin Football Club
Dowerin Cricket Club
Dowerin Netball Club
Dowerin Swimming Club
Dowerin Hockey Club
Dowerin Tennis Club
Dowerin Badminton Club

Based on the results from public comment submissions, option four has been identified as the most preferred strategic direction for the development of sport and recreation facilities in Dowerin by the absolute majority of community groups and individual community members. A collaboration of comments both of support & concern are listed below.

Question 1

What is your overall impression of the Dowerin Recreation Strategy?

- All bases and scenarios are covered
- Very informative and well presented.
- All bases and scenarios are covered well
- Well presented with all feasible options put forward
- Very good merit, addresses the long term issues which are extremely important
- Good as a basis for future input from all concerned sporting bodies
- Good but what gets decided needs to have community input and go ahead, don't go so far and stop like previous ideas
- Easy to understand
- Positive
- No mention is made of the Badminton & Squash Courts

Question 2

The Dowerin Recreation Strategy identifies four new options for the development of sport and recreation facilities in Dowerin, which option does your club deem as most viable?

- Absolute majority of responses deem option 4 as most viable



Question 3.1

Support

- Only logical option to ensure the survival of all associated sporting clubs in the future
- Reduced maintenance costs for clubs & the Shire
- This type of facility has the ability to touch a large percentage of the community
- Lets make it happen
- Sounds great and very achievable
- Will bring juniors and seniors together
- Practical
- Positive
- In our life times there will never be an opportunity presented to us like this
- A new recreation facility would be great for our young people
- In keeping with future plans for the senior residence at the existing bowling club
- Long term benefits out way the negatives
- A combined sports council would have greater power in obtaining community and federal grants
- The overall benefits to the community are huge but each individual group has to look outside the square and think about the community as a whole.
- Excellent, great and everything in one place would be very efficient
- Option 4 is most viable option
- By combining all major sporting groups to the one area this will generate a greater spectator base which is also essential for the future of ongoing sports in Dowerin
- Option 4 makes use of the available human resources in relation to the running of sporting club administration and facilities
- A move to synthetic surfaces in water wise
- Option 4's location is idea as it located within the Field Days site and those facilities could be used during Field Days for catering and ablutions.
- The most visionary proposal
- Once tennis courts & bowling greens are built they will have a 30+ life span
- Best interest of all sporting organisations in Dowerin

Question 3.2

Concerns

- Previous lack of leadership from the Shire
- Small issues bogging the process down
- As this will stop clubs fundraising through bar profits consideration needs to be made with regard to funding and financial support to ensure ongoing viability of clubs
- Should be a combined project and not in three stages
- Areas for memorabilia



- No mention is made of the badminton and squash courts
- Removal of tennis function room will deprive squash and badminton of kitchen and meeting room facilities
- Our current facilities desperately need work
- Time frames are too long

Question 4

Further Comments or Recommendations

- A commercial style kitchen will be required
- Kitchen in the function centre could either be leased to private contractor or let to different sporting bodies or associations on a roster basis to run weekly meals for their own profit.
- A U shaped bar would be more workable
- Experience shows that a sporting council should be formed and this would consist of a management committee with a president secretary and treasurer
- Quarterly meetings are a must even monthly meetings until the transition stage has been completed
- Each organisation associated with the Sports Council would still require to have subscriptions to cover insurance costs however subs would be lower because each group would no longer have their own building to maintain
- Each organisation would still organise their fundraising to cover the affiliation fees with their state body, equipment purchases, uniforms etc. For large purchases or large upgrades they could approach the sports council to help funding this particular project in part
- Sports Council would require public liability insurance cover of \$20 million & workers compensation insurance
- It is not about how much money each club makes over the bar, it's not about who uses the building more often or who contributes more money each year by patronage it's about the future of our community as a whole.
- Hope the shire move with the same enthusiasm towards this project as they have done with the motorplex
- Solar heating for the swimming pool to be installed on top of the basket ball shed