

# Loxton Sporting Precinct Master Plan





# Loxton Sporting Precinct

*The premier destination for indoor court sports and recreation in the Riverland offering a range of structured and unstructured opportunities for the whole community*



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February 2013

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## Section One: Introduction

### 1.1 Background

The Loxton Sporting Precinct (LSP) is located on Bookpurnong Terrace in the town of Loxton in the District Council of Loxton Waikerie which is situated on the southern bank of the Murray River in South Australia, approximately 250kms north-east of Adelaide and 185kms west of Mildura.

One of two sporting hubs in the City with the other being located at Loxton North; the LSP is approximately 15 hectares (ha) in size and is home to:

- Loxton Netball Association
- Loxton Junior Netball Association
- Loxton Basketball Association
- Loxton Softball Association
- Loxton Baseball Association
- Loxton Agricultural & Horticultural Society (Loxton show)
- Loxton Football Club
- Loxton Cricket Club
- Loxton Hockey Club
- Loxton United Soccer Club
- Loxton Swimming Club
- Nippys Gift
- Auskick
- Net Set Go
- Loxton North Netball Club
- Riverland Basketball Association
- Loxton Gumtree Cricket
- Riverland Netball Association



Figure 1: Precinct Location

## 1.2 Motivating Factors

While the site itself is a well used reserve catering for a number of sporting and recreation groups; the main instigating factor behind its development has been the ageing Loxton Show & Recreation Centre which is in need of constant repair to ensure it meets the needs of the community.

Due to its state, many games have been postponed or relocated to alternative venues within the district which has had a significant impact on the Loxton community and overall viability of the facility. Additionally, the Basketball Association has outgrown the centre and is in need of new facilities if it is to continue to meet demand and offer sporting competition.

New facilities would also enable the town to host significant regional and state events and therefore it is crucial that Council now considers the overall requirements for a new facility whilst at the same time ensuring current and future needs are being met at the whole site.



*The Loxton Show & Recreation Centre was built in 1975 and has remained unchanged since this time. As a result, the facility now requires ongoing maintenance and is not meeting the needs of the sporting and broader*

## 1.3 Aims and Objectives

In response to the need to upgrade the recreation centre, Council has convened a steering committee comprising key representatives of the Loxton Sporting Community to oversee the development of a master plan for the whole site. The 'Loxton Sports and Recreation Committee' comprises stakeholders from across the sporting and recreation community and has an aim to:

**'Develop the precinct into a regional level facility recognised as the primary indoor sports stadium in the Riverland with the capacity to host State and National events.'**

Given the above the aim, the objectives of the project are to:

- Develop a master plan which will guide the consolidation, future development and further support for recreation and sport within the Loxton Sporting Precinct over the next 15 to 20 years.
- Consult with members of the Loxton Sports and Recreation Facilities Group to determine gaps between the existing and future sport and recreation needs of the local community.
- Develop a sustainable and equitable plan for the upgrade of the Loxton Sporting Precinct, with a view to develop a regional level sport and recreation complex.
- Create a united, shared vision of the Loxton Sporting Precinct to ensure user groups work toward a common goal.
- Prioritise and cost strategies which address identified needs and which maximise the utilisation and provision of recreation and sport across the precinct
- Provide advice on funding sources and mechanisms.
- Assess options for management structures within the precinct

## Section Two: The Precinct

### 2.1 Site Overview

Facilities at the Loxton Sporting Precinct (Figure 2) include:

1. Loxton show and recreation centre (one court facility)
2. Four outdoor netball courts
3. Six outdoor tennis courts (and disused clubroom)
4. Community playground
5. Football and Cricket clubrooms and Loxton show office
6. Grandstand
7. Main oval
8. Secondary Oval / Hockey / Soccer Pitch
9. Side Show Alley (powered sites for the Loxton Show)
10. Cricket nets
11. Youth (Skate) park and BBQ facilities
12. Loxton Show sheds
13. Hockey clubrooms
14. Disused soccer pitch
15. Caravan Park (powered sites)
16. Swimming centre

Located adjacent to the site and also catering to the community is the Loxton Club (17). This facility offers viewing and catering opportunities for the sports clubs located at the site but is a freehold land parcel owned by the not for profit organisation. Adjacent to the Community Club is a private residence (18) which sits within the precinct but for obvious reasons is outside the scope and boundaries of the study area. The site also has four entrance points (19) which provide opportunities as gateways to the precinct.



Figure 2: Loxton Sporting Precinct

# Loxton Sporting Precinct

## 2.2 Site Components

The site comprises seven (7) land titles owned by the District Council of Loxton Waikerie (DCLW), key components of which are highlighted in Figure 1 and include:

### Indoor Recreation Centre (1)

Built in 1975, the Loxton Show and Recreation Centre is a traditional 1 court complex with change rooms, toilets, kitchen and modest administration and storage facilities. It also has a storage area to the eastern side of the building which has been converted into a gymnasium for use by the football club. Challenges associated with the current facility include:

- No air conditioning or heating
- Leaking roof
- Limited storage
- Limited capacity for community access
- No direct management meaning lack of targeted programming
- Show society use causing some concern to potential damage to court surface
- Sub standard change facilities
- Limited catering and administrative facilities
- Sub standard sports lighting
- Limited spectator areas

The main users of the facility are the Loxton Basketball and Netball Associations, both of which have witnessed considerable growth in recent years. The one court facility is therefore not meeting their needs with anecdotal evidence suggesting at least two indoor courts are needed to cater for current and future users.



*The Show and Recreation Centre was built in 1975 and is in need of constant maintenance for it to meet the basic needs of users and sporting groups.*

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### Outdoor Courts (2 & 3)

The site has four dual lined netball and basketball courts located between the recreation centre and the Loxton Club with the latter providing excellent viewing opportunity from the bar area known as 'the Wool Shed'. These courts are floodlit and have retractable backboards for basketball which is played in the summer and netball posts installed for winter competitions.

The courts have limited spectator viewing areas and provide no shelter from the elements with player benches being open and potentially causing a hazard in run off areas from the courts. Wire fencing also surrounds the courts which limits access to the broader precinct and isolates the courts as a standalone facility.

The southern part of the recreation centre is used for netball and basketball administration including match day referees and umpiring and whilst change facilities are available for both sports, these are generally in poor condition are not used by players or officials. A canteen is also attached to the kitchen within the recreation centre and is used on match days to serve refreshments and snacks.

To the east of the fenced courts are six tennis courts that have no formal access for the sport but are used by netball for its junior 'hotshots' development programme. The courts are not in a good condition and would benefit from being re surfaced.



*Courts are dual use marked for both basketball (summer) and netball (winter) with retractable basketball and removable netball rings*



*Access to the main precinct is restricted by mesh fencing surrounding the courts meaning no synergy with the precinct itself*



*The Loxton Community Club 'Wool Shed' serves as a spectator and viewing area.*



*Six disused tennis courts provide opportunity for use for netball development but are in need of resurfacing.*

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### Sports Fields (7, 8 & 14)

The site has two formal sporting ovals used predominantly for football, cricket and hockey. The primary oval is the western area (7) located immediately in front of the Loxton Sporting Club which comprises the football and cricket clubs. This oval is floodlit and has a turf wicket used by the Loxton Cricket Club. It is also used on occasions by the soccer club for higher level games and the show society for their annual event. There has however been some concern over the wear and tear on the playing surface with regards to animal activity due to heavy divots and potential damage to sub surface irrigation systems.

The eastern oval (8) is home to the hockey club and is also used by soccer. The hockey club do however play some of their games at the neighbouring town of Berri as this town has a synthetic surface. There is also a concrete cricket pitch located between pitches and used by the cricket club during the summer months. This oval has limited lighting and therefore not sufficient for training or night games

A third playing surface is located in the south eastern corner of the precinct immediately adjacent to the caravan park. This area (14) was once used by the Loxton Soccer Club but due to the standard of the surface, is no longer used. The club have however expressed an interest in re establishing this space as a primary soccer pitch and this warrants further consideration within this master plan.



*The primary oval is located immediately in front of the Loxton sporting Club and is the primary home ground of the football and cricket clubs*



*Oval 2 is used primarily for hockey and soccer with a concrete cricket pitch used for junior cricket*



*A disused soccer pitch is located immediately to the east of the caravan park and will be considered within the context of sports surfaces and uses within the*

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### Club Facilities (1, 3, 5, 12, 13 & 16)

There are two formal club buildings on the site with other smaller facilities located throughout which are used by a number of sporting groups. The primary club rooms house the Loxton Sporting Club (5), with the second being home to the Loxton Hockey Club (13). The former is a larger licensed facility commanding good views across the ovals with the latter being a small clubroom meeting only the basic requirements of the hockey club.

Netball and basketball use the recreation centre (1) as their 'home base' but do not have any formal administration facilities at the site. The Loxton Agricultural & Horticultural Society have access to a office behind the Loxton Sporting Club change rooms equipped with phone, fax and office fittings. A small disused clubroom is located adjacent to the Pine Avenue tennis courts (3) and the Loxton Agricultural & Horticultural Society has access to the sheds (12) for the Loxton Show which is run annually each October. The soccer club does not have any formal facilities on the site and the swimming club use the pool (16) but do not have any clubrooms within the complex.



*The Loxton Sporting Club is the primary clubroom at the site and is home to cricket and football*



*The Hockey Club is a small facility meeting only the basic requirements of the club*



*A disused tennis club sits idle adjacent to the tennis courts in the south west corner of the precinct*



*The Show Society has access to a number of sheds which are primarily only used during the annual event in October*

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### Swimming Pool (16)

The swimming pool is approximately 40 years old and is one of only two pools in the Riverland. A council run facility, the pool is home to the Loxton Swimming Club and in the 2012/12 financial year cost Council almost \$100,000 to operate making an operational loss of approximately \$73,000

### Community Recreation (4 & 11)

The site has a number of opportunities for unstructured and casual recreation including access to the sports surfaces outside of structured sporting use and:

- Junior Playground (fenced)
- Youth park (skate area)
- BBQ and picnic areas



*A junior playground is located adjacent to the Loxton sporting Club but is accessible to the broader community.*



*The pool is the only 8 lane outdoor 50m pool in the Riverlands*



*The skate park is located in the northern end of the precinct*



*Family picnic area is located adjacent to the skate park*

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### Loxton Club (17)

The Loxton Club is a community run not for profit facility that serves the broader community of Loxton. A licensed facility with gaming machines, restaurant and catering facilities and covered playground, the club provides services to the existing user groups at the site by way of sheltered areas for spectators of basketball and netball and also as a venue for presentations and group gatherings.

### Park Entry Statements (19)

The site has three formal entry points with the main one being off Bookpurnong Terrace and the remaining two off Pine Avenue (adjacent to the tennis courts) and Coral Avenue (adjacent to the pool). To the northern end but just located outside of the precinct, is a community art project recently installed by Council which whilst outside of the physical boundary, is a prominent feature which could be developed into another formal entry to the precinct.

### Traffic

Car parking is located throughout the precinct with the majority of car parks located along Bookpurnong Terrace both angle parking on the precinct side and 90 degree parking in the central reservation that divides the wide strip. Whilst this provides ample parking opportunity, safety is a concern when children and parents have to cross the road to access the facilities at the site.



*The Loxton Club caters to the broader community and the sporting groups at the site.*



*The Wool Shed is part of the Loxton Club and provides good viewing points to the outside courts*



*Community art to the north of the precinct provides a good entry statement to the area*



*Car parking is predominantly along Bookpurnong Terrace with a central reservation also used which for safety reasons is not ideal.*

## 2.3 Site Viability

Community land, open space and facilities developed and managed for sport and/or recreation tend to be subsidised due to the nature of use. Whilst this is generally accepted due to the social and community benefit they bring, Councils do have a duty to ensure costs are minimised and management and use optimised.

The Loxton Sports Precinct in its entirety costs Council approximately \$367,289 per year, averaged across the past 4 years (Table 1)

Year	Income	Expenditure	P&L
2011/12	\$45,579	\$363,301	-\$317,722
2010/11	\$62,893	\$478,716	-\$415,823
2009/10	\$34,137	\$509,999	-\$475,862
2008/09	\$57,256	\$317,004	-\$259,748
<b>Mean</b>	<b>\$49,966</b>	<b>\$417,255</b>	<b>-\$367,289</b>

Table 1: Precinct Costs

The majority of the deficit is attributed to grounds maintenance whereby the only income is derived from minor lease repayments by clubs, followed by the pool which cost Council \$72,619 to operate and the recreation centre which cost Council \$5000. The skate park had minor maintenance and does not provide a source of income for Council.

2011/2012 Breakdown	Income	Expenditure	P&L
<b>Pool</b>	\$26,203	\$98,822	-\$72,619
<b>Grounds Maintenance</b>	\$5,896	\$245,071	-\$239,175
<b>Recreation Centre</b>	\$13,480	\$18,480	-\$5,000
<b>Skate Park</b>	\$0	\$928	-\$928
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$45,579</b>	<b>\$363,301</b>	<b>-\$317,722</b>

Table 2: 2011/12 Breakdown of Precinct Costs

A critical component of this master plan is to ensure any development of the site is undertaken with its overall feasibility in mind both in terms of social and economic outcomes. That is whilst it is acknowledged that ongoing subsidy is likely to continue, the way in which the site and facilities are used and managed should address:

### ▪ Social

- A well programmed and managed recreation centre to ensure optimum use during semi and off peak periods.
- Developing regional sporting and community events
- Reducing the dependency on volunteers through consolidated management of the site
- Partnering and targeting specific population groups (children, teenagers, unemployed, people with disabilities, older adults, new migrants etc) to access and use facilities particularly in off peak periods

### ▪ Economic

- Ensuring a fair and equitable lease and licence policy is developed. This may be met with resistance from user groups but should be considered if and when new facilities are built but is outside the scope of this study.
- Introducing a user pays system (based on ability to pay) of the recreation centre
- Capitalising on off peak periods of the recreation centre through subsidised and targeted programming.
- Secondary spend opportunities associated with the recreation centre, e.g. canteen, merchandising, sports store.
- Venue hire for community activities.
- Ensuring facilities are optimally utilised through shared use agreements.

## 2.4 Centre Viability

In line with the site viability is the need to determine whether any new or proposed facility should:

- Continue to meet just the needs of clubs and be a venue for such or
- Be fully developed into a well managed and programmed recreation centre for optimal use by the broader community.

Whilst there is opportunity to develop the facility with a mix of the above, the level of development can be determined by benchmarking national data of similar facilities. The University of South Australia's Centre for Environment and Recreation Management (CERM) is a set of national benchmarks for recreation centres which are classified according to their nature of use as being one of the following:

- Dry (court based)
- Wet (aquatic)
- Wet and Dry (court and aquatic)

Facilities are discussed in terms of size with levels 1-4 being primarily dry, and levels 5-7 being aquatic including some dry elements with the higher classifications (Table 3)

Facility Level	Size	Component Examples
1	<1000m <sup>2</sup>	One court facility with change rooms
2	1000m <sup>2</sup> - 1999m <sup>2</sup>	Two court facility with change rooms
3	2000m <sup>2</sup> - 2999m <sup>2</sup>	Two -Three court with small gym
4	>3000m <sup>2</sup>	Three or more courts plus health and fitness suites, cafes and ancillary services etc
5-7	>3000m <sup>2</sup>	Aquatic facilities attached to include 25–50m pools and associated leisure facilities

**Table 3:** Facility Type

In addition to understanding the possible size and type of facility is the need to link this with its identified catchment or matching the community size to the facility level and vice versa, i.e.

- Level 1 Facility would meet the needs of a Local community of up to 5000 people
- Level 2 Facility would be a neighbourhood facility servicing approximately 5 – 10,000 people
- Level 3 Facility would be district catering for the needs of between 10,000 and 60,000 people
- Level 4 Facility would be classed as a regional facility catering for over 60,000 and
- Level 5 – 7 Facilities likely to meet the needs of a statistical division or higher (State) and include both wet and dry facilities

Additional information provided by CERM<sup>1</sup> identifies a number of data sets associated with the various levels of facility. This information is averaged across all centres that subscribe to the CERM programme and used to determine likely operational costs and subsidies associated with recreation centres.

Data sets are based on:

- Catchment mean: Average population within a 5km radius of the centre
- Catchment multiple: Total expected visits per year based on the catchment
- Fees per visit: Based on entry and secondary spend
- Gross receipts: Averaged across all centres within each level
- Gross expense: Averaged across all centres within each level

Table 4 shows these data sets and highlights that all facilities regardless of size, catchment mean and multiple require some form of operational subsidy.

<sup>1</sup>CERM; National Benchmarking Survey for Sports and Leisure Centres and Golf Courses; Vol 17 No.1; University of South Australia 2008.

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Level	Catchment Mean	Catchment Multiple	Total Visits <sup>2</sup>	Fees Per Visit	Sec Spend	Total Spend	Gross Receipt	Gross Exp	Ave Subsidy	Subsidy Per Visit
1&2	29,340	2.2	60,962	2.49	0.34	2.83	306,974	486,361	-179,387	1.42
3	50,715	2.1	120,554	2.64	0.65	3.29	514,000	565,653	-51,653	0.39
4	50,879	4.1	196,733	4.04	0.36	4.40	693,832	895,177	-201,345	0.72

**Table 4:** Facility Viability

Given the above and the population of Loxton of approximately 12000 people, it can be assumed that the following would apply (Table 5)

Level	Catchment (pop)	Catchment Multiple	Total Visits <sup>3</sup>	Fees Per Visit	Sec Spend	Total Spend	Gross Receipt	Gross Exp	Potential Subsidy
1&2	12,000	2.2	26,400	2.49	0.34	2.83	74,712	486,361	-411,649
3	12,000	2.1	25,200	2.64	0.65	3.29	82,908	565,653	-482,745
4	12,000	4.1	49,200	4.04	0.36	4.40	216,480	895,177	-678,697

**Table 5:** Loxton Recreation Centre

Whilst these figures are indicative and based on a full commercial facility with ancillary services and full time staff etc and therefore dependent upon a number of factors, it is highly unlikely that a full commercial recreation centre would be a viable proposition in Loxton. A more sensible option would therefore be a reduced footprint that caters predominantly for community sporting group use but is well managed to allow additional events and income generating initiatives to offset subsidy.

<sup>2</sup>Based on mean across all centre's

<sup>3</sup>Based on mean across all centre's

### Section Three: Influencing Factors

A number of factors continue to influence the way community sport and recreation infrastructure is designed and managed both in a broader societal context and a more localised 'Loxton Community' perspective. The following has therefore shaped the development of the master plan and the future design and management of the site.

#### 3.1 Trends in Sport and Recreation

- **Competing pressures for open space:** Open space today particularly in the more densely populated urban areas, is under increased demand and pressure for a number of uses and Councils are finding it difficult to provide space for new and emerging sports. The way land is used and managed is therefore critical for and innovative means of optimising use whilst minimising impact is a crucial factor in the day to day management.
- **Ageing infrastructure:** much of the community infrastructure witnessed today was constructed over 40 years ago in a time when community groups were granted long term use of land (in some instances for 99 years) under peppercorn arrangements. Facilities were often developed by volunteers who committed many hours to the development of their club facilities. Whilst this is commendable, modern demands on facilities have changed and the community in general want and expect more from public infrastructure. Given a limited shelf life for community facilities, Councils now have an opportunity to look at and redesign facilities to cater for modern needs and which will last another 40-50 years.
- **Management agreements:** Leases were also common practice and entered into for lengthy periods of time in some instances for periods of 99 years. Such agreements legally bound land owners and thus restricting access by the broader community. Modern day practices reflect shorter more flexible tenures to ensure optimal use and access to land, open space and where possible facilities themselves.
- **Competing leisure time activities:** Leisure, or the time outside of work and daily chores is under increased pressure through longer working hours and generally busier lifestyles than those of forty years ago. This combined with the dawning of a 'leisure industry' and competition for the leisure dollar means that people have greater choice and therefore a higher expectation from the sport and leisure market.
- **Professionalism of Clubs:** Added to high expectation by the community is the need for clubs to be accountable in the way their 'business' is managed. The introduction of the GST; higher insurance premiums, risk management requirements; professional training of volunteers and strategic rather than reactionary planning is all common place in community sport today and therefore additional pressures to operate as businesses is commonplace in community sport and recreation.
- **Volunteer Decline:** In line with the above and considering the busy lifestyles and demands of the 21st Century, sports administration and volunteers are increasingly harder to find and retain. This places increased pressure on community sport and recreation with many looking at ways of sharing and centralising administrative duties to alleviate the need for additional volunteers.
- **Centralising Facilities:** A recent trend in sporting infrastructure is to centralise sporting infrastructure whereby clubs are encouraged to share grounds and facilities. Whilst this is not necessarily a new concept, the way in which precincts are being managed is. That is, while many groups currently share centralised areas for sport; individual management agreements tend to isolate rather than consolidate use and therefore a rationalisation approach toward management agreements is today becoming more common.
- **Climate Change:** Combined with the increased pressure and demand for open space is climate change and prolonged wet or dry periods which places increased pressure on the use and maintenance of open space and facilities. It is such that consolidated (optimum) use of sports grounds is today a common principle for management.
- **Statutory Requirement:** Under the 1999 Local Government Act, all local authorities in South Australia are required to develop management plans for all community land. Master planning is a therefore critical stage in this process particularly for major strategic sites such as the Loxton Sporting Precinct.

### 3.2 Primary Community Groups Needs

Primary community groups are those that currently have a direct lease or management arrangement with Council to use the site for their activities. One on one meetings with these groups highlighted their current and desired expectations for the site to include the following:

- **Loxton Netball**

The Loxton Junior Netball Club caters for primary school netball and plays all games at the recreation centre ('The Stadium') on Saturday mornings. The Loxton North Netball club has its own grounds (1 undercover plus 3 outdoor courts) but use the stadium for A1 and A2 games on Friday nights. The Loxton Netball Club also plays its home games at the Stadium but have fewer teams than Loxton North. The requirements of the club are:

- Covered outdoor courts
- Increased storage (ideally approx. 20m<sup>2</sup>)
- Spectator areas for parents (covered)
- Playground near courts
- 2 indoor courts
- Disabled toilets
- Change room facilities

- **Loxton United Soccer Club**

The club has approximately 90 players from junior through to senior both men and women and plays its games on both ovals from April - Sept. on Sundays due to Australian Rules being played on Saturdays.

The club would like to use the motor home pitch as a dedicated home ground as they require 1 full size pitch under lights. There is potential to share with the Hockey Club if the playing surface was lit as both sports are compatible. Priorities for the club include:

- Access to 3 full size pitches with one being permanent
- Storage and access to a club facility
- Would like to introduce 5 a side during the summer or even sand football

- Would access and use an indoor facility for training and competition over summer and as a pre season preparation if available

- **Loxton Agricultural and Horticultural Society (Loxton Show)**

The Loxton Show is one of the only remaining events of its kind in the Riverland which is run over the long weekend in October each year. The current committee comprises approximately 20 people although there are over 300 members who pay \$20 per annum.

The committee accept that there is concern regarding the impact the event has on sports surfaces and is happy to accommodate changes to current practices to ensure this is minimised. This may include putting in underground conduits so the Sideshow alley can accommodate other uses and erect temporary marquees instead of permanent facilities that are only used once a year. The Committee also see greater use of Oval 2 over the primary sports surface due to the concerns of damage to sub surface irrigation. However, given the changes in the community's profile, the future of the show is not known and the committee support the development of the precinct to be multi use whilst in the short to medium term, still giving consideration to their needs which as a minimum would be:

- Access to open space for horses in action, vintage machinery displays, food/trade stalls, entertainment, yard dog championships and log chopping (e.g. ovals).
- Access to a facility at least the size of a 1 court complex with the possibility to expand to 2/3 courts. Noting that trolleys instead of vehicular access should be used.
- Power for side shows could be via underground conduits necessary to optimised opportunity for other uses.
- Access to administration facilities (office) and storage area.
- Vehicular access around the precinct.

- **Loxton Sports and Social Club**

The club comprises the cricket and football club and is ideally located with good viewing of the sporting precinct. There are 6 teams in the Riverlands with Loxton having 2 A Grade teams. There is potential for other regional football teams to play at the precinct including

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Brownsell and Wunkar, Moorook Kingston and East Murray who (anecdotally) are 'struggling due to oval standard and membership'. Priorities for the club include:

- Better change rooms
- Access to a training / weights room

### ▪ Loxton Hockey Club

The club has access to 3 grass pitches with 3 lights on the northern eastern side which illuminate only half of the ground. With approximately 120 members comprising 9 teams plus a 'hook into hockey' team, the club has its own club room and pays Council a peppercorn fee for use.

The club plays 4 home games a year at this site but also use the synthetic surface at Berri. Issues with the Loxton facility include lack of lighting and access to a good sports surface; potential damage to cars that park around the oval when hockey is being played (netting required especially behind the goals), and general vandalism. Priorities for the club therefore include:

- 3 hockey / soccer fields (one fully lit)
- Clubroom and toilets (currently use Council public toilets)
- Storage

### ▪ Loxton Basketball Club

The club supports the concept of a centralised facility but needs as a minimum access to 2 indoor courts but feel that at least 6 are required but these could be outdoor and covered for both basketball and netball. The local high school has a very strong volleyball programme but do not have a local comp due to lack of facilities and therefore a new centralised facility could cater for this. Priorities include:

- Minimum 2 indoor courts
- Minimum 4 outdoor courts (some covered)
- Storage with most equipment currently stored at member's homes.
- Function room

## 3.3 Secondary Community Groups Needs

Secondary groups are those that either have an interest in, or have potential to be accommodated at the site for their own activities and include:

- The Loxton Club (located within the precinct site but on freehold land)
- The Loxton Bowls Club and
- The Loxton Tennis clubs



Figure 3: Secondary Sporting Groups

### ▪ Loxton Club

The club was established in 1959 and whilst having no formal link with the site does provide a valuable social and community outlet for groups and club members. The club accepts that if any development was to occur, bar and catering facilities would be included and give it's age and location, the committee see this as an opportunity for the club to be involved in the future use and management of the precinct.

### ▪ Bowls Club

The bowls club has two synthetic greens, a full size disused green and a 'half sized' disused green. The club is 'self sufficient' and located on freehold land and has considered relocation to the site but feels that there are too many unknowns and has therefore stated its intent to remain at its current location.

### ▪ Tennis Club

Located approximately 1.5km from the LSP is the Loxton Tennis Club which has 12 lawn courts and a small clubroom. The land is zoned residential (retirement village) and is leased by Council to the club but there is opportunity to relocate the tennis to the LSP and potentially develop the site. The club has expressed an interest in this and should therefore be considered in any concepts for the precinct and would require at least 12 courts but is willing to share hard surface courts with netball.

## 3.4 Community Feedback

The broader community were also provided with an opportunity to input into the desired future for the precinct via both community forums and a survey. Key aspects raised by the community for the precinct use and design included the following:

- At least 2 indoor courts are needed.
- The football clubroom does not meet demand
- Recreation centre is 'tired' and used for a number of events which do not meet standards
- kitchen and general amenities are poor in the existing centre
- The tennis club used to be located at the motor home site and could be located back at the site
- A pool is being considered in Berri and maybe that should be the primary aquatic centre in the Riverlands and the LSP noted as the principle indoor venue.
- Soccer does not currently have a home but could be included in the precinct
- The community club needs to be considered and included in the precinct and maybe used in some form of management for the site.
- The Loxton North precinct should complement rather than compete with this site and this is considered as one of the unique aspects of region with 2 viable football clubs at separate precincts
- The Loxton Sporting Precinct and Loxton North Precincts should be of a standard that encourages all football clubs in the region to play their home as there are currently five ovals within Loxton which is considered non viable.
- There is a real opportunity for the LSP to act as a regional facility for larger events e.g. the Loxton Gift

## 3.5 Community Need

A total of 31 surveys were completed and returned which sought information on general use, access and future design of the LSP. The majority of respondents (71%) were female aged between 26 – 45 which may be attributed to a high number of respondents that were affiliated to netball and basketball.

Figure 4: Gender

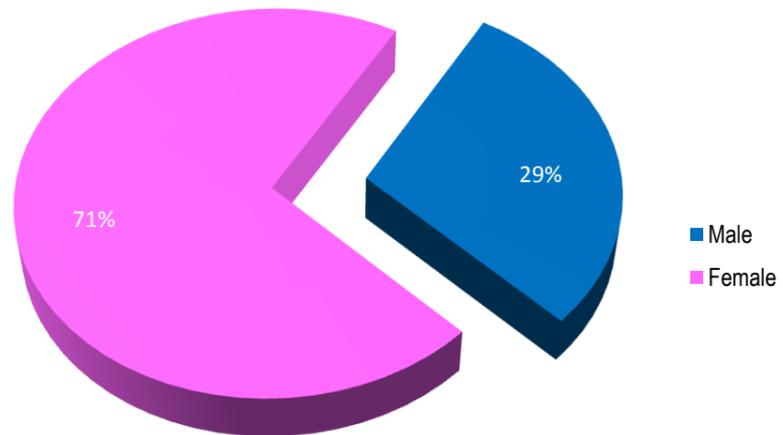


Figure 5: Club Affiliation

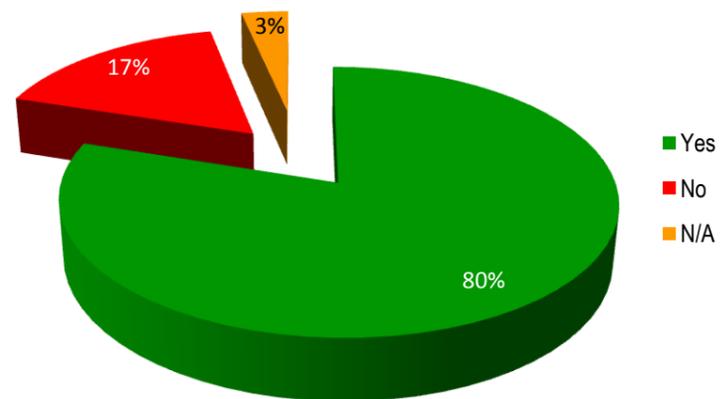
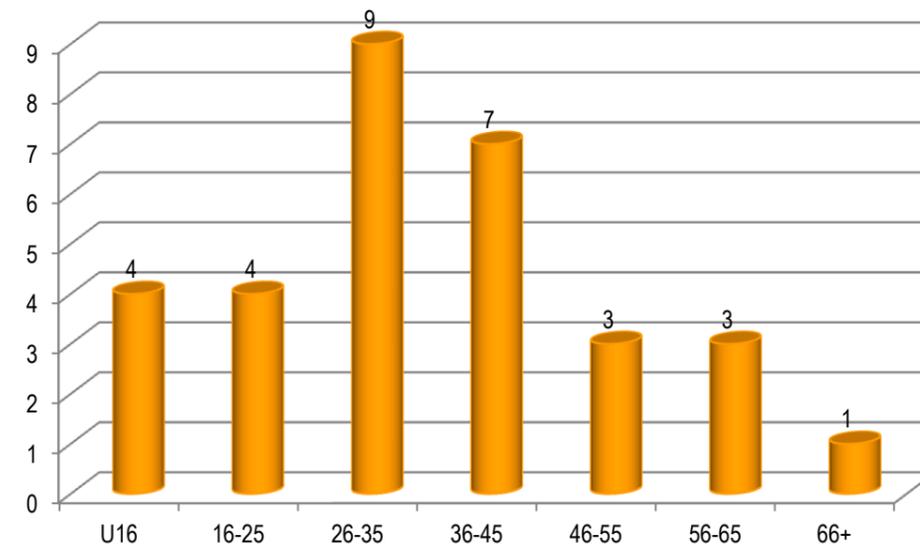


Figure 6: Age

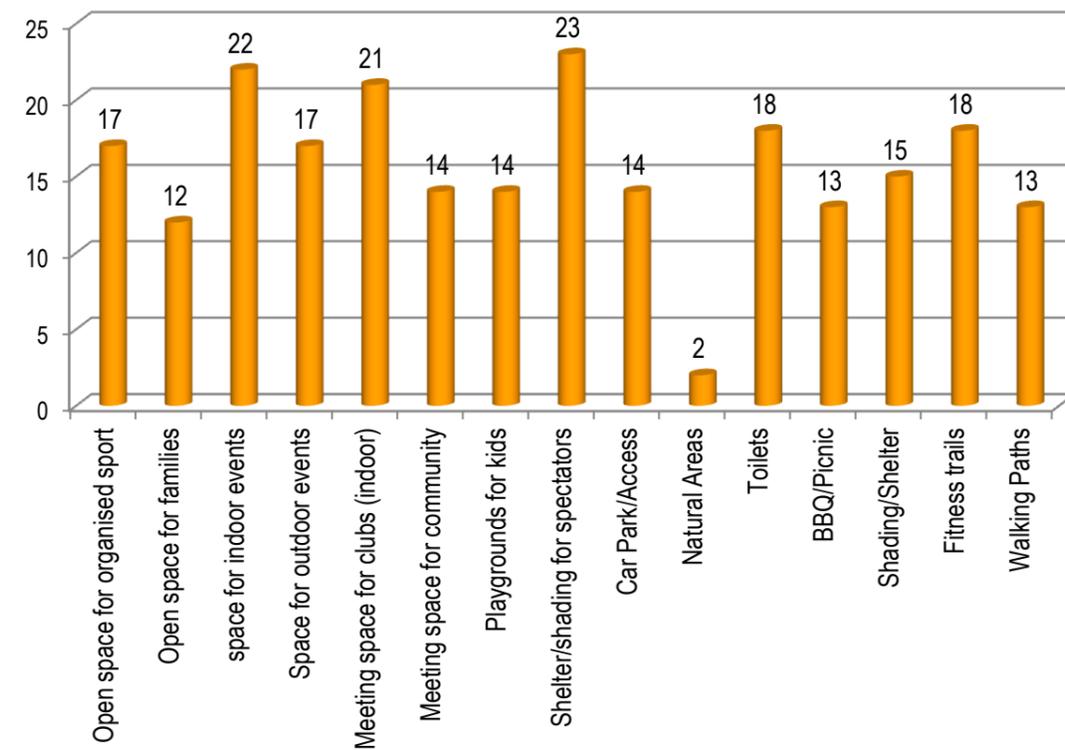


# Loxton Sporting Precinct

When asked what facilities people would like to see more of at the precinct, the majority of responses revolved around:

- Shelter and seating for spectators
- More indoor space
- Meeting spaces for clubs
- Fitness trails
- Public toilets and
- More playing space for clubs

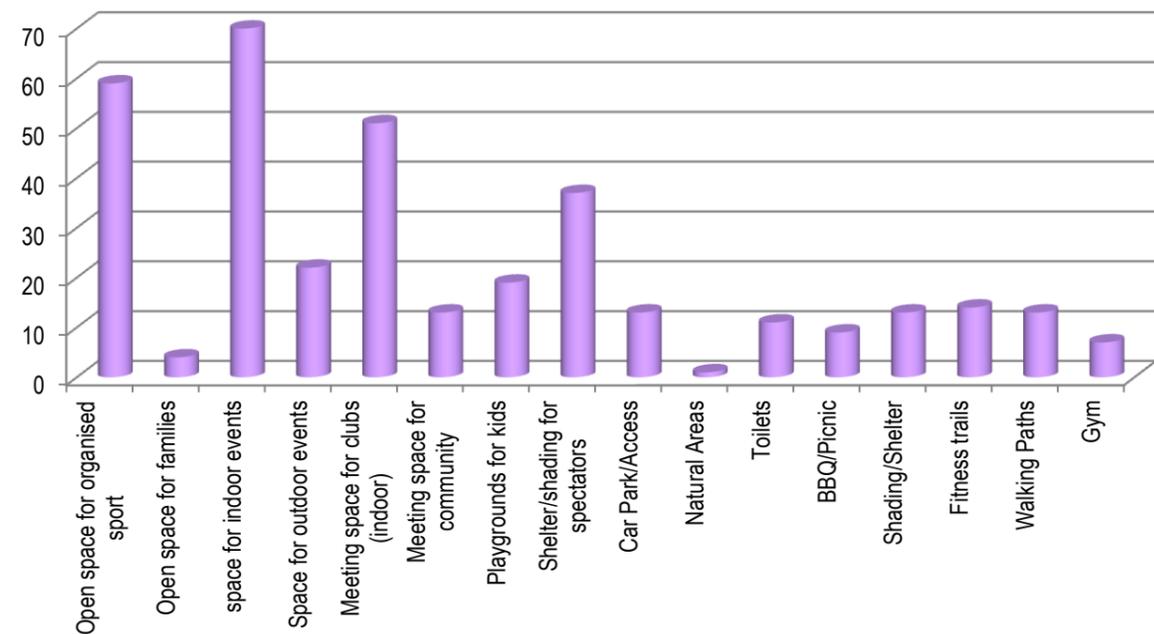
Figure 7: What facilities would you like to see more of at the precinct?



When ranked the following were seen as being of importance:

- Indoor space
- More playing surfaces for outdoor sports
- Meeting spaces for clubs and
- Shelter and shading for spectators

Figure 8: Most important ranked from 1-5 (5 points being highest)



### Section Four: Master Plan

#### 4.1 Theme Development

From the findings from the previous sections of this report a number of themes have emerged which will shape the master plan to include:

- There are still a number of unknowns that could affect the overall site layout and master plan to include
  - The future and viability of the Aquatic centre is a separate study and needs to be considered regarding its ongoing viability.
  - The future of the show
  - The potential but not confirmed relocation of the bowls club who are currently content with their current location
  - The potential relocation of the caravan park
- Given some unknowns and potential rather than confirmed opportunities for the site, the focus should remain on the recreation centre and outdoor courts but consideration given to the site as a whole. This will allow the master plan to evolve rather than be prescriptive whilst at the same time meeting immediate and confirmed needs of the court based sports and the Loxton Sports and Social Club
- The recreation centre design and use needs to be a more 'community based' facility due to the likelihood that it will not be commercially viable due to the size of the catchment in the District.
- However, it should include components to optimise community use and viability to include:
  - Kiosk and catering facilities
  - New and improved gymnasium
  - Change facilities
  - Increased storage
  - Optimal access for events and bookings
- There is an expressed demand to enhance family recreation and space
- Entry statements should be considered in the design of the precinct

The structure of the master plan is to establish a collective long term **vision** for the site based on the findings in this report. Required **infrastructure** is then highlighted and **management** components discussed to ensure the site remains viable and the vision realised.

It must however be reiterated that the vision is a long term strategy and should be worked toward and staged over a period of time and is the responsibility of all stakeholders to adopt, own and implemented in line with current and future needs and securing of funding from a number of sources.

#### 4.2 Vision Development

The Loxton Sporting Precinct is and will continue to be a key sporting and recreation destination for the community but should grow to become regionally recognised destination for events and activities. The vision therefore states:

### **Loxton Sporting Precinct**

*The premier destination for indoor court sports and recreation in the Riverland offering a range of structured and unstructured opportunities for the whole community*

This vision is a long term objective that will only be realised if all stakeholders embrace the concept and collectively strive towards implementing a master plan that will comprise the following component, zoning and stages:

### 4.3 Infrastructure Components

In line with the need to focus on the recreation and outdoor court aspects of the precinct, the site has been divided into six zones to ensure a staged and planned process can be adopted (Figure 9). It must be noted that these zones and associated works are at this stage indicative and that refined concepts should be developed as and when the master plan and its vision have been endorsed and embraced by all stakeholders.

A key principle of all development at the site is to consolidate into quality infrastructure to avoid duplication and provide assets which are optimally utilised for a number of uses. This will ensure facilities meet the needs of a wider community, are sustainable and ensure the ongoing viability of community sport and recreation groups in Loxton.

Figure 10 on the following page highlights a more detailed plan of the site as a whole and is followed by a brief summary of key development sand inclusions within each zone and estimated costs.



ZONING PLAN

**LEGEND:**

- ZONE 1: COMMUNITY AND RECREATION
- ZONE 2: PASSIVE RECREATION
- ZONE 3: SHOWGROUNDS
- ZONE 4: SOCCER/HOCKEY/CRICKET
- ZONE 5: TENNIS
- ZONE 6: AQUATIC

Figure 9: Site Zoning



Figure 10: Site Master Plan

# Loxton Sporting Precinct

## 4.3.1 Zone 1

Zone 1 (unshaded area Figure 9) is the primary area of focus for the master plan and the priority stage for development. Components in this zone include:

- A two court indoor facility (discussed in 4.4) which has the capacity to be developed into a three court facility should the need arise.
- Four outdoor dual lined basketball and netball courts, two of which are covered. Opportunity also exists to develop an additional two courts as and when a third indoor court is developed and added to the existing centre
- Potential to relocate the Loxton Club to the new facility to act as the primary club room and management for the facility.
- A public plaza will surround the proposed new facility and can act as a platform for community events and viewing of all outdoor ball sports played in this zone.
- Grandstand viewing area built into the proposed new facility.
- Enhanced lighting to ensure rotation of training and night games for football and soccer.
- 110 formalised off road car parking to include:
  - 51 to the west of the proposed new facility
  - 59 to the south east of the proposed new facility
- Landscaped open space and BBQ / Picnic areas to the south west of the outdoor courts with rationale being this area to act as a buffer between the neighbouring resident and form a quieter area away from the main field sports played on the oval
- The existing playspace has been relocated to the south west of the oval although there is opportunity to relocate this within the above landscaped family area.



Figure 9: Zone 1 Concept Plan

		Works	\$	Comment
Zone 1	1A	Loxton Club (Bar and Dining)	3,472,610	Potential sale of existing site to offset development
	1B	2 Court Recreation Centre	5,730,880	Approx 1,500,000 for additional court if required
	1C	Carparks	573,670	Approx 110 and associated paved areas
	1D	Outdoor and Under Cover Courts	1,004,470	Includes lighting, fencing, tiered seating and fittings
	1E	Outdoor Equipment and Bike Path	280,460	BBQ's, sports field lighting upgrade
	1F	Demolition	355,005	Club room, existing rec centre, grandstand
	1G	Treatment to Balance of Area	57,860	Roads, footpaths, landscaping
	1H	Infrastructure	245,000	Utilities, stormwater, plumbing etc
<b>Sub Total (Inc Loxton Club)</b>			<b>\$11,719,955</b>	
Other Fees and Charges			1,757,994	Design and Contingencies @15%
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$13,477,949</b>	
<b>Sub Total (Ex Loxton Club)</b>			<b>\$8,247,345</b>	
Other Fees and Charges			1,237,102	Design and Contingencies @15%
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$9,484,447</b>	

Table 6: Zone 1 Indicative Costs

# Loxton Sporting Precinct

## 4.3.2 Zone 2

Zone 2 (unshaded area Figure 10) is the passive and unstructured recreation area that does not have any formal sports but remains focussed on informal access by the community

- Relocated cricket nets from the North West to the South west of the site noting orientation and final location is to be determined but should ensure balls can be hit onto the oval.
- community park which should cater for all forms of unstructured recreation including:
  - Open informal space with underground power conduit for show and community events if required
  - Fenced playspace for toddlers – seniors with neighbouring BBQ's, shelters and seating for family gatherings, birthdays, picnics etc.
  - Public toilet (ecoloo)
  - Half court basketball / netball area
  - 3 fitness stations located at strategic points within this section of the park and integrated along a proposed internal trail network



Figure 10: Zone 2 Concept Plan

		Works	\$	Comment
Zone 2	2A	Demolition	2,488	Cricket nets
	2B	Outdoor Equipment	372,930	Roads, BBQ, shelters, playspace etc
	2C	Treatment to Balance Areas	46,290	Roads and landscaping
	2D	Infrastructure	20,000	Utilities, stormwater etc
	2E	Other Fees and Charges	755,000	Professional Fees and Contingencies
<b>Sub Total</b>			<b>\$1,196,708</b>	

Table 7: Zone 2 Indicative Costs

## Loxton Sporting Precinct

### 4.3.3 Zone 3, 4 and 5:

Zone 3, 4 and 5 are the eastern most areas of the precinct and comprise the showground Zone (3), Soccer and Hockey (Zone 4) and the Tennis / Court Zone (5)

Rationale behind the development of this area includes:

- Meeting the current needs of the show whilst acknowledging that its future is uncertain. That is the precinct should still be seen as the home of this event but infrastructure designed and used in a manner that is flexible and used for other activities and uses as, when and if the show ceases.
- Additional underground power outlets are recommended in Zone 3 that can be used for the show.
- It is also acknowledged that high impact activities associated with the show should be relocated from the main oval in Zone 1 to zone 3 and areas of Zone 4 on the hockey and soccer pitches.
- Enhanced sports surface to cater for winter and summer sports including cricket
- A centralised 'two way' clubroom is recommended and shared by soccer, hockey and the relocated tennis club to the site. This venue would act as a satellite to the proposed new centralised main facility in Zone 1.
- 18 tennis courts are earmarked for development although it is suggested that these be staged to include an initial 12 courts, four of which could be lawn and the remainder acrylic to meet the clubs needs.
- Whilst the Loxton Bowls Club has stated its intent to remain at its current site, there is potential for it to be collocated in Zone 5 and share the centralised facility if required. This would require some minor reconfiguration of the tennis courts and facility but could be included should the club decide to relocate to the precinct.



Figure 11: Zone 3, 4 and 5 Concept Plan

	Works	\$	Comment	
Zone 3	3A	Outdoor Equipment and Paving	32,580	Bike path
	3B	Treatment to Balance of Area	20,650	Paths and Paved Areas
	3C	Landscaping and Improvements	2,700	General Landscaping
	3D	Infrastructure	15,000	Utilities, power, stormwater etc
	3E	Other Fees and Charges	65,000	Professional Fees and Contingencies
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>135,930</b>		
Zone 4	4A	Demolition	22,945	Hockey Clubrooms
	4B	Clubrooms	1,004,700	Hockey, Soccer, Tennis
	4C	Oval / Pitch	89,500	Level and irrigate
	4D	Equipment	173,400	Lights, Cricket Nets, Bike Path
	4E	Paved Areas	57,130	Roads and Footpaths
	4F	Infrastructure	100,000	Utilities, power, stormwater etc
	4G	Other Fees and Charges	606,000	Professional Fees and Contingencies
		<b>2,053,675</b>		
Zone 5	5A	Demolition and Renovation	97,320	Caravan Park
	5B	Roads and Paved Areas	172,150	Car park, lighting, bike path etc.
	5C	Tennis Courts	861,122	14 acrylic, 4 lawn plus groundwork's
	5D	Landscaping	4,800	Evergreen tree planting
	5E	Infrastructure	140,000	Utilities, power, stormwater etc
	5F	Other Fees and Charges	661,500	Professional Fees and Contingencies
		<b>1,936,892</b>		

Table 8: Zone 3 - 5 Indicative Costs

### 4.3.4 Zone 6

By their very nature, aquatic facilities require careful consideration regarding their location, use, management and ongoing subsidy. Whilst within the precinct, the viability of the pool is outside the scope of this project and it is therefore recommended that the Aquatic Zone 6 is isolated and any proposed enhancement be subject to a more detailed study being undertaken. Costs associated with this Zone have therefore been excluded.

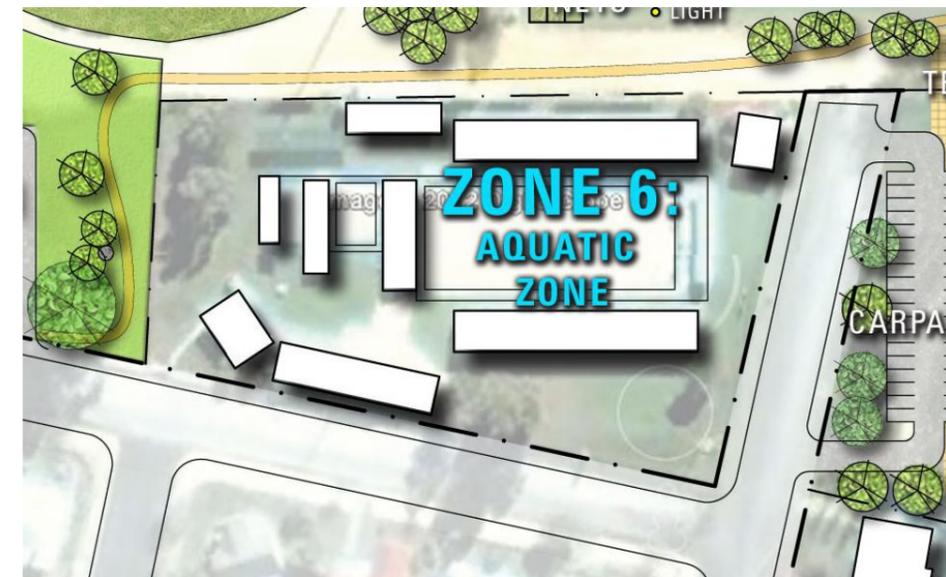


Figure 12: Zone 6

# Loxton Sporting Precinct

## 4.4 Recreation Centre

A key aspect and one of the motivating factors behind this master plan is to develop a centralised facility that will meet both the needs of sports and the broader community. However, in order to establish a better understanding of the concepts of a community hub, an indicative facility layout has been developed which will be refined at a later stage but for the basis of discussion includes the following components:

- Two court complex with the capacity to develop a third court should the need arise
- Gymnasium for community and sporting groups uses
- Administration areas for sports clubs (basketball and netball)
- Two way male and female change facilities servicing both indoor and outdoor courts
- Retractable seating for a events and centre court finals
- Sports and social club player change facilities
- Large entrance to the west to allow for easy access for the show and community events noting that trolleys should be used to manoeuvre heavy equipment over vehicular access to the facility which could damage the indoor court surfaces.

The above inclusions consider the two court complex (Figure 13) but would need to be reconfigured should a third court be developed. That is, the design and layout of a two court facility would allow greater flexibility and space for the above components, but should a third court be developed then this would affect the layout and design of the centre and therefore may not be a viable option.

A second consideration is the development of a clubroom or facility that would be home to the sporting groups at the precinct and an opportunity to include the Loxton Club into the design of the facility. Preliminary discussions with the club and associated stakeholders have shown this to be a favourable option and could include a centralised management model under a community umbrella. The community clubroom would be designed to have views over the indoor courts and the oval, as well as providing panoramic views across the community open space in Zone 2 (Figures 14-17).

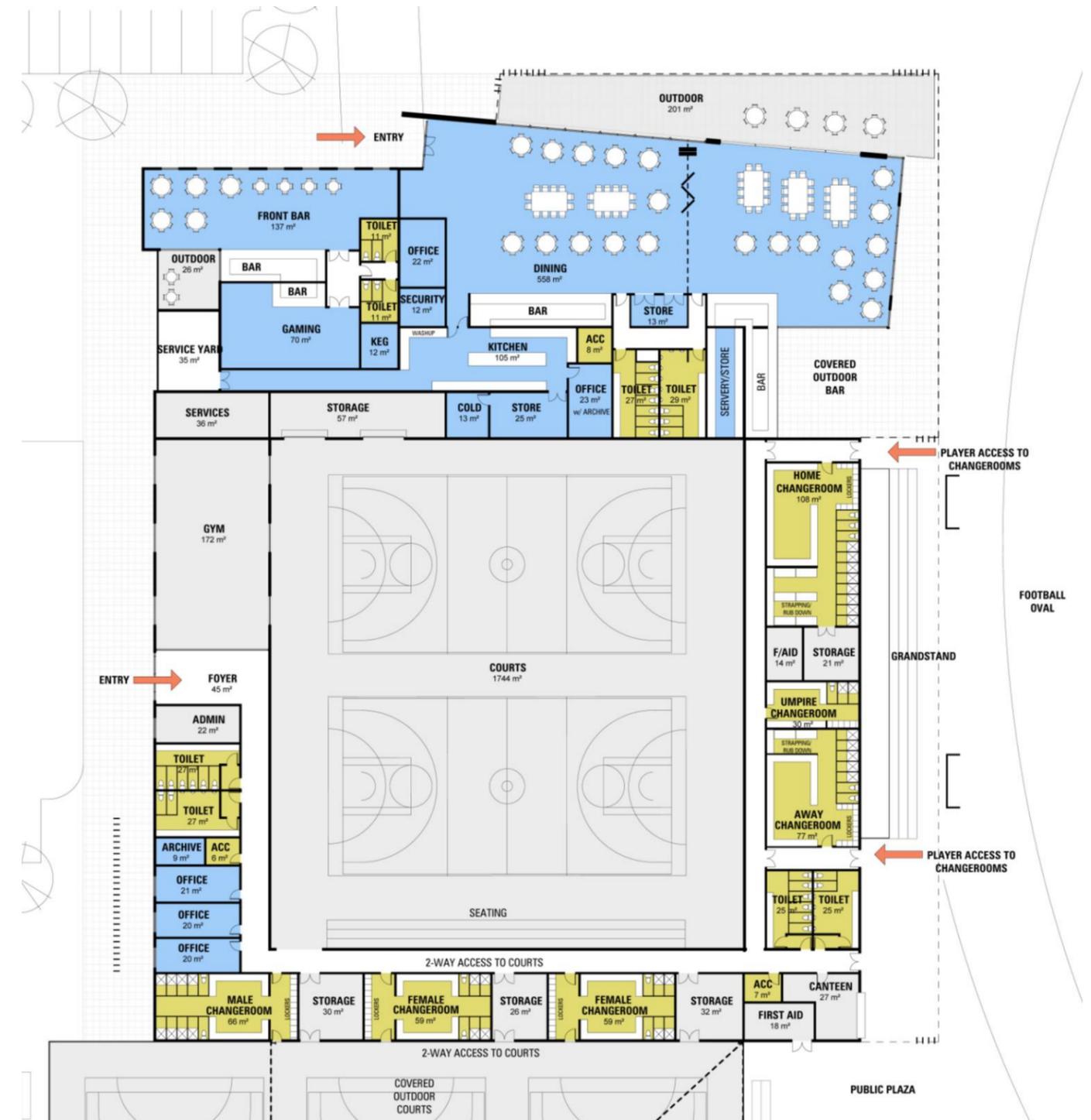


Figure 13: Facility Footprint



NORTH EASTERN PERSPECTIVE FROM OVAL

Figure 14: North East Perspective



SOUTHERN PERSPECTIVE

Figure 15: Southern Perspective



NORTH WESTERN PERSPECTIVE

Figure 16: North West Perspective



NORTHERN PERSPECTIVE

Figure 17: Northern Perspective

### 4.5 Cost Summary

Whilst the total cost for the whole precinct is estimated at \$22,342,860; it must be noted that this includes \$7.4m in design fees, contingencies and escalation costs as well as almost \$3.5m attributed to the Loxton Club which would more than likely be self funded and offset through the sale of their existing site in the South West corner of the precinct (Table 9)

	Works	Contingencies	Total	Comments
<b>Stage 1</b>	11,719,955	5,300,000	17,019,655	Includes \$3,472,610 for the Loxton Club
<b>Stage 2</b>	441,708	755,000	1,196,708	
<b>Stage 3</b>	70,930	65,000	135,930	
<b>Stage 4</b>	1,447,675	606,000	2,053,675	
<b>Stage 5</b>	1,275,392	661,500	1,936,892	
	<b>14,955,660</b>	<b>7,387,500</b>	<b>22,342,860</b>	

**Table 9:** Summarised Indicative Costs

Stage 1 is the main area of focus and as with all stages could be reduced from the proposed \$17,019,655 with a more streamlined contingency budget and allocation of funding from the proposed sale of the Loxton Club site.

### Section Five: Management Options

A critical aspect of any community facility and/or open space used for structured sport is the way in which it will be managed and programmed to ensure optimum access. This is often overlooked in the early stages of planning as the zeal for new or refurbished facilities often overrides the reality of the cost to construct and ultimately manage to ensure they remain viable. The following are therefore some of the critical aspects which will assist the site users and Council in establishing a foundation on which to build a management structure for the precinct.

#### 5.1 Management Principles

The following principles form the foundation of proposed future management of the precinct:

1. Facilities and open space should be optimally utilised to avoid duplication and ultimately reduce capital and operating costs.
2. Where possible volunteer resources should be shared to alleviate pressures on community groups.
3. Minimise and centralise management responsibilities between Council and user groups thereby reducing the number of individual agreements.
4. Ensure the community has access to a range of services that are professionally managed.
5. Ensure ongoing dialogue and communication between users to allow flexible programming and reduce potential conflicts of use.
6. Ensure clubs can focus on developing their sports and activities rather than administering them.
7. Ensure clubs remain financially viable.
8. Ensure clubs retain their identities.
9. Allow for group bargaining power when applying for funds or grants to develop community facilities.
10. Allow for flexibility with regards to future uses and changing trends in participation.

These principles should form the basis of current and future management models and agreements with and between Council and user groups.

#### 5.2 Management Options

Given the broad principles there is a need to identify a number of options that will require further consideration between all user groups and Council. However it must be understood that management should also consider both facilities and open space (sports surfaces) with the latter requiring careful consideration with regards to optimal use. The following however are management models available which will be explored further at a later stage.

##### Lease

Clubs have traditionally entered into lease agreements with Council for their own facilities. This normally also includes sports areas but issues can arise as leases in particular offer a relatively high level of autonomy to clubs which can also lead to working in isolation and ultimately either under or over use.

##### Licence or Permits

A licence or permit normally refers to use of a facility or ground for a specific period of time whether this is seasonal or an identified allocated time or day for training or competition purposes. This allows more flexibility and control by Council whereby facilities are programmed 'in house' but issues arise with regards to resourcing.

##### Committee of Management

A Committee of Management is a common model particularly for facilities which have community access outside of club use. Normally associated with recreation centres or community facilities, a Committee of Management usually includes a Board of Management that oversees the strategic operations of the facility and employs a direct manager to operate the centre. Representatives on the Committee are normally individuals from the community and Council with no direct agenda other than ensuring facilities are managed in the best manner for broader community benefit and operational effectiveness.

### **Incorporated Sports Body**

An Incorporated Sport Body is similar to a committee of management but with representatives from user groups rather than community and/or Council. Individual groups still maintain their own constitutions but also come under that of the association which holds the direct management agreement with Council. Programming, fundraising and revenue / budget allocations to each user groups becomes the responsibility of the incorporated body and not each individual user group.

### **Outsourced Management**

In instances where facilities are focussed on servicing the broader community or where a specific management expertise is required, opportunity exists to outsource the operation to a third party, normally from within the private sector. This is undertaken on a fee for service basis and performance measures agreed based on social and economic outcomes and often for a financial return to the operator. Outsourced options can be for whole facilities or specific areas such as catering, events or programmes etc.

### **In-House Management**

Some facilities such as recreation centres or community halls are managed in house by Council which appoints an employee to either manage or be responsible for an aspect of the service or facility. This is not common practice for community sports facilities and clubrooms but should a centralised facility include areas for community access and recreation such as meeting rooms, halls or recreation facilities as is becoming more common with sports precincts, then this management model is a possibility.

### **Anchor Tenant**

An anchor tenant model is also becoming more common in precinct planning or where new buildings are being proposed. This model is normally developed when a larger more well established organisation is present with the capacity to assist with the administration of facilities through larger operational budgets and resources.

The model involves one direct lease between Council and a community organisation which would then be responsible for sub leasing to other sporting groups. An explicit management agreement would be required to identify the lessees responsibilities for use

of the facility but all operational matters becomes the responsibility of the anchor tenant themselves. An operational consideration with this model is also the remuneration and lease payments passed to sub lessees and the management principles applied whereby clubs remain viable and retain their own identities.

### **5.3 Potential Management Model**

Given the notion that the recreation facility would more than likely not be a commercially viable option, the management of this aspect of the centre should be carefully considered. That is, should Council decide to outsource the day to day management of the centre to ensure optimal access, it is highly likely that an operational subsidy would be required given the catchment and potential draw to the facility. This is not to say optimising use should not be a key consideration should Council decide that this is not a valid option as number of opportunities to target disadvantaged sections of the community, schools, and other uses during off peak netball and basketball periods should still remain; but rather a more effective management model employed.

The link with the Loxton Community Club would be an obvious opportunity as this facility has staff on site at peak and off peak periods and therefore an opportunity arises to negotiate some form of responsibility for access, programming and management of the facility particularly in off peak periods. In turn, the community club becomes the home of all sporting codes that use the site and a centralised, professional management model employed.

It is also suggested that all user groups come under the one umbrella of a Loxton Sporting Precinct Incorporated Body although each could retain their own identity and constitutions. However, there are a number of benefits of centralising the management model to include ensuring sports can focus on developing rather than managing their own activities. This requires ongoing dialogue and negotiation between all users and becomes a key recommendation for further discussion.

### Section Six: Summary

#### 6.1 Conclusion

It is clear to see that the Loxton Sports Precinct plays a significant role in the lives of the local and regional community. As the main parcel of land in the area it also has great potential to be recognised as major regional facility renowned for its indoor stadium and court based activities as well as its field sports. This will only happen however if this master plan is embraced by all concerned and a staged, systematic process adopted with funding strategies employed by all concerned parties. That is, the responsibility for funding any or all stages of the project is not solely the responsibility of Council, but more so is a partnership between all stakeholders to ensure the vision becomes a reality.

The staged process will also require careful consideration with some aspect of the site able to be developed before others, but the motivating factor for the plan should not be lost and the indoor facility and courts seen as a priority. However, given the opportunity to consolidate some sports the need for facilities for some sports that are currently growing as well as an opportunity for Council and other stakeholders to divest some land parcels which could assist in funding development at the precinct; the tennis and soccer co location should also be seen as a priority and therefore Zones 4 and 5 be developed after or in parallel to Zone 1.

#### 6.2 Recommendations

To ensure the master plan can be implemented and the vision achieved, the following forms the basis of recommendations for the Loxton Sporting Precinct:

1. The Concept Plan for the Loxton Sporting Precinct be endorsed and accepted by the Reference Group and Council.
2. The Reference Group be formalised into the Loxton Sporting Association (LSA) and comprise all current and proposed users of the site
3. A business plan be developed for the LSA to ensure all user groups are fairly represented and remunerated accordingly
4. Formal negotiation commence between the LSA, Council and the Loxton Community Club regarding relocation within the site and potential overarching management of the facility
5. Pending the outcome of the above negotiations, the Loxton Community Club considers the sale of their existing site to assist with the development of a new centralised community facility.
6. The Loxton Community Club (LCC) becomes the anchor tenant of the proposed new facility and a management arrangement entered into noting the facility would ultimately be owned by Council and leased back to the club for a suggested peppercorn arrangement.
7. The LSA, LCC and Council develop a strategic plan to ensure optimal use and access of the site and the long term viability of all community groups associated with the precinct.
8. The LSA, LCC and Council seek funding opportunities for Zone 1 projects
9. The LSA and Council seek funding for the development of zones 4 and 5 giving consideration to potential sale of the existing tennis club site to offset relocation of the club.
10. That an annual review of the master plan be adopted to ensure its relevance and staged implementation.