



DIRECTOR SHIRE SERVICES REPORT

12th December 2006

DSS6	JOHN 'YAKKA' WATSON RESERVE FILE: 447, COPY LA7216 JM {Folio No. *}
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SUMMARY:

Reporting on proposals for the development of the John 'Yakka' Watson Reserve on Crown Reserve 72371.

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BACKGROUND

On 8th July 2006, a meeting of the community was held expressing concern that the central business district of Smithtown has no accessible public toilets, and that users of the riverside facilities often approach shopkeepers and hoteliers for use of their private facilities. At the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 18th July 2006 Council resolved "*that further investigation be given to the provision of toilet facilities*" at the John 'Yakka' Watson Reserve at Smithtown.

The following three options were investigated in relation to the provision of public toilets at the reserve:

- 1 Modification to existing Tennis Club House – an inspection of the existing building indicated that the existing foundations were in a poor state and the external cladding required replacement.

Considerable modifications to the building would also need to be made in order for the building to meet the requirements of the Building Code of Australia for disabled friendly public toilets including the construction of an access ramp and the provision of internal lining including the wet areas. The cost of these repairs and modifications is estimated at \$50,000.
- 2 Construction of a new amenities building with separate male and female toilets. The estimated cost of this option is \$40,000.
- 3 Construction of a single unisex amenity that meets the requirement for disabled persons. This preliminary is estimate for this option is \$21,600.

The results of the above investigation were provided to the community prior to a recent public meeting which was held on 28 October 2006. Eighteen people attended this meeting.

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Discussions with a representative of the community have indicated that the community consider that a single unisex toilet would serve their needs and that the community is prepared to raise the necessary funds for the project.

Council has received a letter [Appendix F](#) from the 'Yaka Watson Memorial Park Committee' pledging to provide financial support for the project and to maintain the toilet facilities for a twelve month trial period. Attached to the letter was a list of 159 residences who had pledged support for the construction of public amenities. Also attached was a separate petition containing 160 signatures (some of whom are included in the list of residences pledging support) in support of the construction of toilet facilities at the reserve.

The Yaka Watson Memorial Park Committee propose to seek funding from NSW Fisheries to establish fish cleaning tables adjacent to the boat ramp and wharf.

A preliminary landscaping plan for the site has been prepared. No funds, however, have been provided at this time for the development of the reserve.

Based on the estimated costs to repair and upgrade the existing tennis clubhouse compared with the costs to construct a new facility, it is recommended that the existing tennis clubhouse be relocated. Council will recall that an expression of interest for the removal of the building was received from the Hat Head Dune Care Group. At the present time Council is finalising arrangements with the group for a Development Application for the erection of the building to be submitted and for a lease agreement of a portion of Council land off Les Dunford Road.

In the 2006 / 2007 budget, funds have been provided for the following projects at Gladstone Sports fields:

- \$10,000 – Fence soccer oval
- \$19,000 – Mobile canteen
- \$25,000 – Tennis Courts and Fields Development

Recent discussions with the Gladstone sports fields user group have identified that they are undecided about the need for a mobile canteen and are reconsidering the proposal and their options. The user group have indicated that at this time further development of the sports fields and tennis courts is not required and that they would have no objection to the relocation of funds from this project.

The source of funds for this project is from Section 94 Developer Contributions for Open Space & Recreation and could be used for the provision and development of facilities in a recreation reserve. It is recommended that \$25,000 be reallocated from Gladstone Tennis Courts and Field Development project to the development, including the provision of amenities and landscaping, of Crown Reserve 72371.

The adjacent boat ramp and historic wharf make this location ideal for use as a riverside park.

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

- ***Environmental***

The environmental implications of this report would be the enhancement of the current riverside area.

- *Social*

The social implications of this report would be the enhancement of a community facility.

- *Economic (Financial)*

The financial implication of the recommendation is that Council reallocate \$25,000 from Gladstone sports field project to the development of John 'Yakka' Watson Memorial Park. The Yaka Watson Memorial Park Committee has committed to the cleaning of the new amenities for the first twelve months after opening.

- *Policy or Statutory*

All policy and statutory requirements will be met.

- *Director's Review*

The proposed developments on the Reserve have community support, with local residents establishing the need for a new toilet block.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That \$25,000 be reallocated from Gladstone Tennis Courts and Field Development project to the development of Crown Reserve 72371.
2. That the first option for the removal and relocation of the Smithtown Tennis Clubhouse building be given to the Hat Head Dune Care Group subject to that group obtaining the necessary approvals for this proposal.

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A P Vermeulen
DIRECTOR SHIRE SERVICES