



# **HOBSONS BAY AQUATIC STRATEGY**

PUBLIC EXHIBITION –  
CONSULTATION  
SUMMARY REPORT

JUNE 2019

**HOBSONS  
BAY CITY  
COUNCIL**



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# PART 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Further to the March 2019 Ordinary Council Meeting, the Draft Aquatic Facilities Strategy was placed on public exhibition from 1 April to 5 May 2019. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the feedback received from the community during the public exhibition period of the Draft Aquatic Strategy.

Whilst the Draft Aquatic Strategy was on public exhibition, there were three community information sessions held with a total of approximately 45 people attending. During the public exhibition period, the community were directed to Participate, Council's 'have your say' webpage to provide their feedback via an online survey.

During the public exhibition period, over 1,140 people visited the Draft Aquatic Facilities Strategy public exhibition page and a copy of the Strategy was downloaded by 511 people. In total, 76 survey responses and nine submissions were received.

Included within this report are four parts.

- Part 1 Executive Summary;
- Part 2 Findings of the Questionnaire;
- Part 3 Findings of the Public Submissions;
- Part 4 Hobson Bay City Council's Response.

The key themes raised within the feedback focussed on each development option. These included:

## **1. Future aquatic facility proposed within Bruce Comben Reserve**

- Support was received for a new modern aquatic facility for the growing population in the west of Hobson Bay
- There were however concerns about the impacts on the Early Years Centre, traffic and resident amenity

- Council officers have since responded to these concerns and are establishing a stakeholder reference group to help inform the design process for this facility.

## **2. Replacing Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre with a water play and youth facility**

- Most respondents supported the re- placement of Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre with a water play and youth facility
- Respondents were excited about the development of a water play and youth facility expressing the value of such a facility in Laverton
- The Laverton community expressed the value of the Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre in providing for health and fitness programs to the community and wanted to see this continued
- Other comments referred to the Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre being old and dated and that Hobson Bay's west needed a new modern aquatic facility
- There were design ideas and considerations outlined for a water play and youth facility including indoor and outdoor facilities with a diverse range of activities for intergenerational play; and the need to address antisocial behaviour in the park.

## **3. Expanding the Bayfit Leisure Centre with additional lap swimming pool, learn to swim pool and warm water programming pool**

- Support was received for an expanded aquatic centre to service residents in the east of Hobsons Bay

## **4. Provision of a 50m pool**

- The Strategy has considered the catchment population required to service a regional facility

that would include a 50m pool. This catchment of 100,000 people cannot be achieved in Hobsons Bay and therefore a 50m pool has not been recommended.

- There are facilities in the western suburbs within 10km of Bayfit Leisure Centre and the proposed new aquatic facility within Bruce Comben Reserve that provide a 50m pool. These include Aquapulse, Maribyrnong Aquatic Centre and Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre.
- Furthermore, the Bayfit site is landlocked with limited areas to expand meaning the provision of a 50m pool is not possible.





# PART 2 FINDINGS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

An online survey was made available on Participate during the public exhibition period of the Draft Aquatic Strategy. The survey was widely advertised with existing members and users of aquatic facilities within Hobsons Bay, and promoted through online newsletters and Council’s social media platforms. At the completion of the public exhibition period, 76 completed surveys were received. Below is an overview of the feedback that has been received from the online survey. A summary of each survey is included as Appendix 1 within this report.

## 1. Do you agree with the Strategy objectives?

Most respondents (54 out of 76) supported the three objectives developed for the strategy.

For those that supported the objectives, the key reasons were:

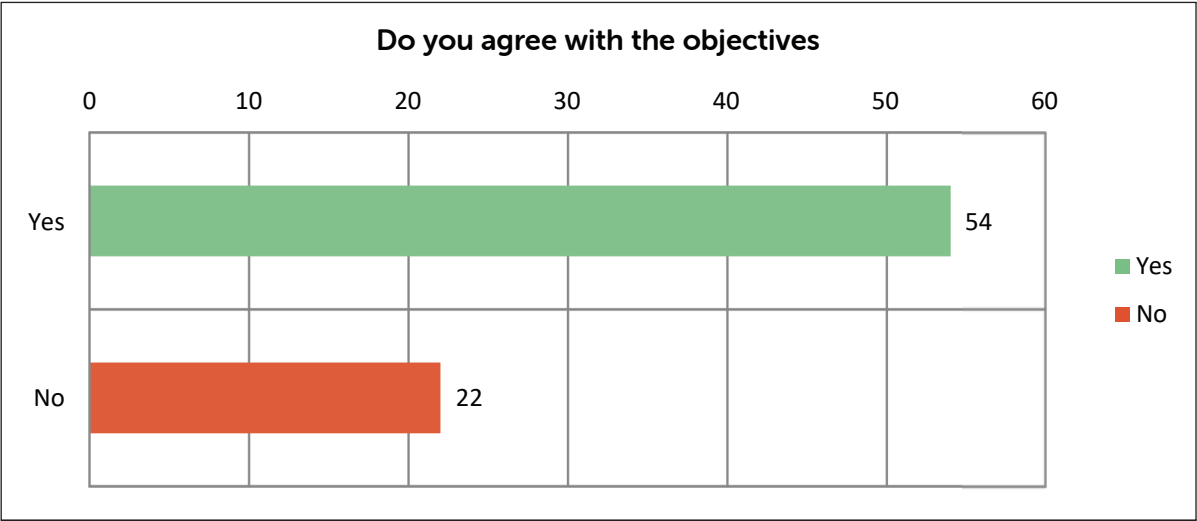
- Growing population in west needs an aquatic facility (10 comment);
- Strategy objectives are clear, great ideas, sensible and achievable (7 comments);
- Support new and expanded aquatic centres to service all residents east and west of Hobsons Bay (4 comments);
- Support objectives, but seek a greater focus on women access and programs e.g. women only

sessions, to facilities (4 comments);

- Laverton Pool is old and dated. Hobson Bay’s west needs a new modern facility (2 comments);
- Objectives will increase employment and be good for economy (2 comments);
- Support the development of high-quality facilities that are well maintained and foster healthy and active living for all residents (2 comments).
- Laverton Swim Club support objectives (1 comment);
- Support objectives but seek a sensory pool in Laverton for the two nearby special schools (1 comment);

For those that did not support the objectives, the key reasons were:

- Do not support the relocation of the Cooraminta Kinder. The Director of Cooraminta doesn’t support the relocation of the Centre identifying 200 families and 15 staff effected (8 comment);
- Need a pool focussed on public access to lap swimming. More pool space is needed. Seek a 50m pool in Hobson Bay (5 comments);
- Don’t support closure of Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre. Would like to see facility upgraded (4 comments);
- Waste of money in relocating Bruce Comben Reserve sport fields and lights for aquatic centre. Seek a better location. Consider near the Baseball Facility (2 comments);
- Objectives show a lack of ambition that doesn’t support my family (1 comment);
- Seek the water play park as part of Aquatic Centres (1 comment).



## 2. Do you support the future aquatic facility proposed within Bruce Comben Reserve?

Half the respondents supported the new western aquatic centre at Bruce Comben Reserve with 36 respondents in support and 38 respondents did not support.

For those that support the recommendation, the key reasons were:

- Support for new centre in west that is desperately needed (9 comments);
- Good location (3 comments);
- Support new facility together with improved change rooms for school groups, families, access and female friendly (2 comments);
- Current facilities are too small, and we need this new centre in west and expanded facility in east to meet our needs (2 comments);
- Support upgrades and seek inclusion of water play,

water slides or wave pool (2 comments);

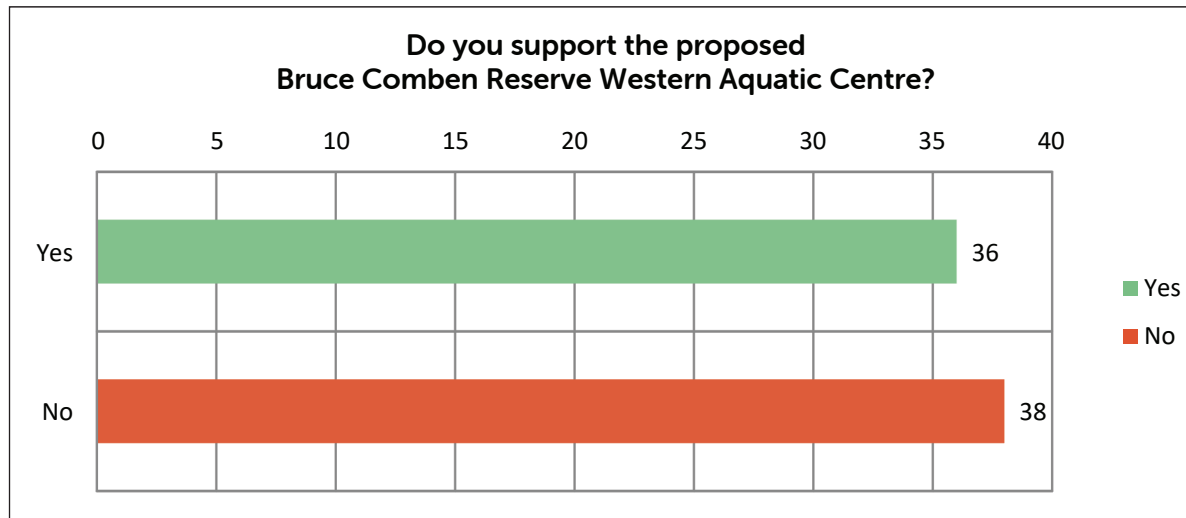
- Support for pool in west but concerned about the impact on resident amenity - open space outlook onto car park and traffic concerns (2 comments);
- Support new facility. They accommodate more learn to swim pools needed for area (1 comment);
- Facility will bring jobs, be good for community and economy (1 comment);
- Support new facility together with upgrades to public transport and active transport lanes (bike lanes and paths) to the precinct (1 comment).

For those that did not support the recommendation, the key reasons were:

- Don't support impact on kinder e.g. Cooraminta (16 comments);
- Seek inclusion of 50m pool (9 comments);
- Traffic concerns (4 comments);
- It is odd to support a pool that would benefit

residents outside Hobson Bay i.e. Point Cook (3 comments);

- Location of new facility is challenging to drive to from Laverton (2 comments);
- Don't support location for fields recently development for rugby (2 comments);
- Don't support loss of Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre for development of new western aquatic centre in Altona Meadows (2 comments);
- Lack of public transport to location (1 comment).
- Don't support unless existing life members at Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre are afforded same deal as what is received presently (1 comment);



### 3. Do you support the proposed development of a water play and youth facility to replace Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre?

Most respondents (47 out of 76) supported the replacement of Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre with a water play and youth facility.

For those that support the recommendation, the key reasons were:

- Support proposal. It is a good idea and good for community (9 comments);
- Youth facilities are desperately needed in area (5 comments).
- Laverton Sport and Fitness Centre is old and outdated (2 comments);
- Waterplay and Youth Park will be good for tourism in Laverton bringing people from outside area and benefiting local economy (1 comment);

- Support proposal together with careful planning for traffic and measures to manage antisocial behaviour currently experienced at the park (1 comment);

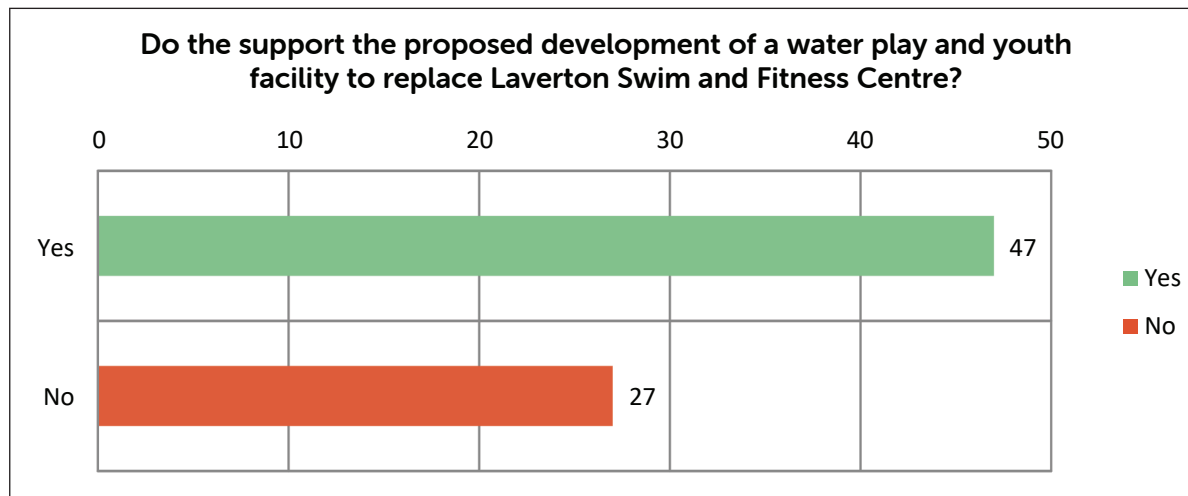
For those that did not support the recommendation, the key reasons were:

- Laverton has a growing population and when level crossing is removed, will be more accessible and easier for people that are south of the railway line and freeway to access. Seek retaining Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre (8 comments);
- Keep pool for it is close to where I live and convenient to use (5 comments);
- Existing members and users will be affected. Laverton already has limited community facilities. Don't support the loss of a valuable recreation asset to local community (3 comments);
- Location is inappropriate for a water play due to small catchment and known site for anti-social behaviour (2 comments);

- There is a shortage of pools in Hobson Bay and the loss of Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre will exacerbate issue (1 comment);
- Keep pool and expand with water play park (1 comment);
- Water play isn't an aquatic facility and should not be in an Aquatic Facilities Strategy (1 comment);
- Site should be developed as medium density housing with a landscaped park and a component of social housing (1 comment).

An additional question was asked of respondents on whether there were ideas they would like considered as part of a water play and youth facility. The following ideas were captured:

- A pool and extra sporting facilities;
- Warm pool and change rooms;
- Learn to swim pool;
- Outside pool with grassed area;
- Fountains, water slides, sensory play, rapid river;
- Multi-purpose rooms for young people activities including: meetings, art and music, language classes, different programming opportunities;
- BMX track;
- Basketball court and fitness station;
- Playground
- Ancillary facilities including public toilet, shade, parking and public seating
- Facility for play that is accessible, easy to maintain and caters for multi-generational activity;
- A safe place for all young people that welcomes the LGBTIQ, different cultures and faiths, people with disabilities, etc
- Examples of water play and youth facilities provided include: The water play parks in Boronia at the Arboretum, Crocodile Park in Point Cook and Riverwalk Estate in Werribee; and Hobson's Bay "UP" service in Newport.



**4. Do you support the redevelopment of Bayfit Leisure Centre**

Most respondents (46 out of 76) supported the redevelopment of Bayfit Leisure Centre.

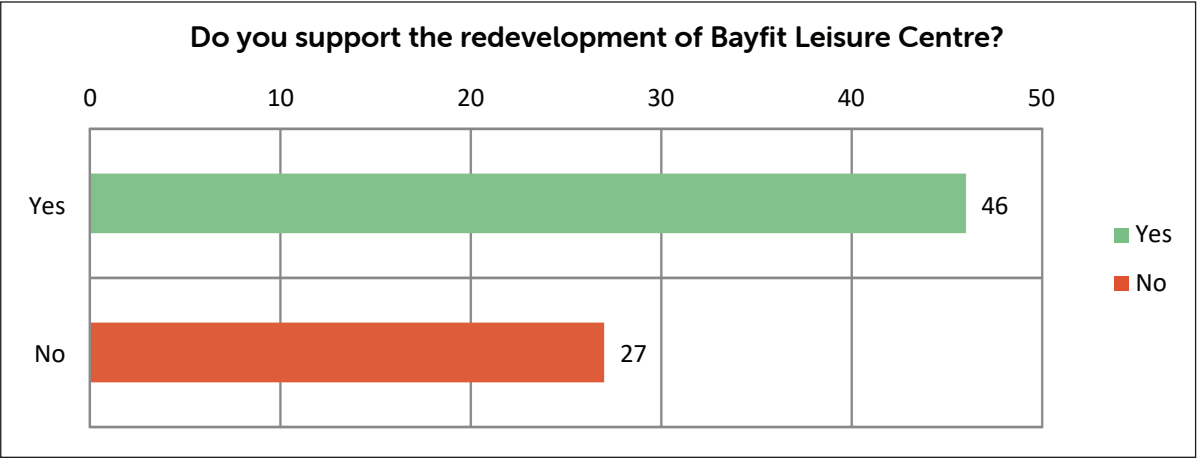
For those that support the recommendation, the key reasons were:

- Upgrades will provide additional facilities to spread the user groups out and alleviate overcrowding (2 comments).
- Support aqua play and water slides (1 comment).
- Support new facility together with improved change rooms for school groups, families, access and female friendly (1 comment);
- Support upgrade together with improved active transport links and improved public transport timetabling (1 comment);
- Support upgrade together with upgrade to the indoor children’s play pool (1 comment).
- Support upgrade and seek a larger steam room (1 comment).

- Continual investment is needed to keep standards and assets in quality condition and able to perform at their best (1 comment)

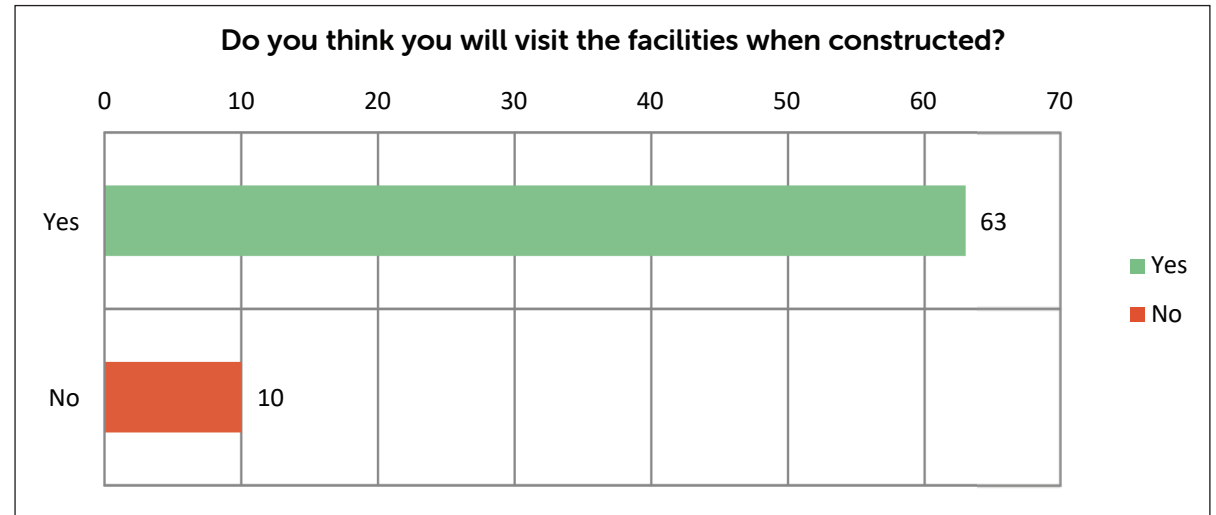
For those that did not support the recommendation, the key reasons were:

- Seek inclusion of a heated 50m pool (indoor or outdoor). It is crowded at Bayfit Leisure Centre and requires additional pool space for lap swimming (11 comments);
- Ratepayers in the east take for granted what they have at their doorstep. Prioritise investment (our rates) into the Western Aquatic Centre (3 comment);
- Bayfit Leisure Centre is over commercialised as it is. The recommendations exacerbate this issue (1 comment).



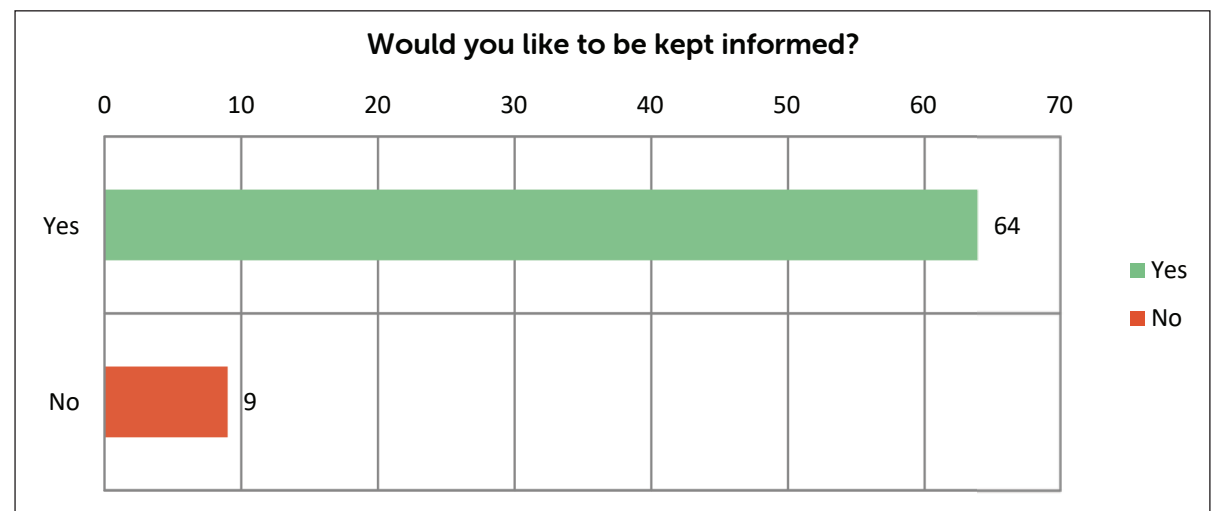
### 5. Do you think you will visit the facilities when constructed?

Most respondents (63 out of 76) said they would visit the facilities when constructed..



### 6. Would you like to be kept informed?

Most respondents (64 out of 76) would like to be kept informed on the Aquatic Strategy, demonstrating a high level of interest in the development from those residents that responded to the survey.





# PART 3 FINDINGS OF THE PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

There were nine submissions received during the public exhibition period. A summary of each submission is included in Appendix 2.

The submissions covered the following:

- There are concerns about the suitability of the land and possible health issues to residents that may be exposed to asbestos fibres from disturbing a former landfill site;
- Concerns around increasing traffic congestion by developing the Western Aquatic Centre on Bruce Comben Reserve with a suggestion to duplicate Central Avenue;
- Impact on residents adjacent the proposed 200-lot car park that will interrupt neighbouring views;
- An additional oval(s) and car park that will need to service the Roosters sporting training, competition and events;
- The impact on families associated with the Cooraminta Early Years Centre. There was a strong message from submissions that the interests of the Early Years Centre needed to be valued and retained;
- The concept designs for Bayfit Leisure Centre require improved changing facilities and particularly for school groups;
- Seek the inclusion of a salt water hydrotherapy pool in the Strategy;
- Seek the inclusion of a 50m pool be included in the Strategy.
- Laverton Swimming Club supported a 50m pool and seek a home base as part of the Strategy. Their submission highlighted that they are one of the

largest swimming clubs in Melbourne's inner west and often lack lap pool space across the various venues they access including Aquapulse, Werribee Outdoor Pool and Victoria University;

- Altona Meadows Community Association supported the new Western Aquatic Centre. Their submission

highlighted the conversation they have been having with their local community about the development proposal and that they found the majority are in support of the Strategy;

- There was a suggestion for increasing the opening hours to provide for more lap swimming times.



# PART 4 HOBSON BAY CITY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK RECEIVED

## 1. Response to future aquatic facility within Bruce Comben Reserve

Council staff have met with Cooraminta Early Years Centre to work with them and other key stakeholders (including sporting groups) about a future aquatic facility within Bruce Comben Reserve.

In response to feedback, the Strategy actions relating to this recommendation has been updated and now includes the following:

In the meeting with Cooraminta, they advised that their preference was:

- to construct an aquatic facility onsite and not touch the Cooraminta Children's Centre; or
- to construct an Early Years Facility onsite (as Stage 1 of the works) so the service can transfer into the new centre before Cooraminta is demolished.

A stakeholder reference group will be established with representation from the Cooraminta Early Years Centre, tenant sporting groups and the community to progress the feasibility study and detailed design process according to key principles outlined within the strategy.

The key principles for the provision of a new Aquatic Centre at Bruce Comben Reserve will be updated to include:

- Provide a modern aquatic and early years facility;
- There will be continuity of early years service provision onsite;
- There will be continuity of service provision onsite for tenant sports clubs;
- The centre will be designed consistent with

Universal Design Principles and Female Friendly Guidelines;

- This design will include change facilities for school groups, people with disabilities and families;
- The design will respond to potential resident amenity impacts including traffic concerns

Council will proceed with establishing the Stakeholder Reference Group and design process in 2019/20 financial year.

In response to traffic concerns, Council will advocate to VicRoads for duplication of Central Avenue and also improve the Point Cook Road and Princess Freeway interchange.

A precinct approach consistent with the finding of the Local Area Movement Plan project (currently underway) will be developed to provide active transport links to the new facility that links to public transport nodes (train stations and bus stops / services).





## **2. Response to replacement of Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre with water play and youth facility**

The Strategy involved a condition assessment of Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre that determined the facility is nearing the end of its useful life and as it would not be cost effective to redevelop. In response, the Aquatic Strategy has reviewed how best to provide an aquatic facility to service the western areas of Hobson Bay. As part of the assessment, locations which provide for the largest number of people within the 5km primary catchment area (driving distance) were prioritised. Of the identified possible sites, Bruce Comben Reserve in Altona Meadows had a catchment of 50,000+ people which is suitable for a successful and sustainable district sized facility. In comparison, the Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre site only provide for a catchment of around 10,000 people.

The community sentiment towards the Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre and the role it has placed in providing for recreation and fitness in the local community is recognised. Reimagining this place and replacing Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre with a water play and youth facility will maintain and enhance these values.

There are also works to improve access to the south of Laverton into Altona Meadows through the level crossing removal project which will make it easier for people to access a new Aquatic Centre at Bruce Comben Reserve.

In response to a comment relating to purchasing land for medium density housing with a landscaped park and social housing initiative. Council has purchased land at Epson Street Reserve (former Primary School site) in Laverton which has been set aside to provide for social housing in Laverton.

## **3. Response to expanding the Bayfit Leisure Centre with additional lap swimming pool, learn to swim pool and warm water programming pool**

The Strategy proposes an additional lap swimming space or capacity, learn to swim pool and warm water programming pool across the new Western Aquatic Centre and Bayfit Leisure Centre. The additional water spaces will help improve access to lap swimming space in Hobson Bay due to learn to swim and aquatic education and aquatic rehabilitation programs having dedicated pools.

The suggested improvements to the concept design for Bayfit Leisure Centre will be considered in the detailed design process.

## **4. Response to the provision of a 50m pool**

The Strategy has considered the catchment population required to service a regional facility that would include a 50m pool. This catchment of 100,000 people cannot be achieved and therefore the 50m pool has not been recommended. Furthermore, the Bayfit site is landlocked with limited areas to expand meaning the provision of a 50m pool is not possible.

There are facilities in the western suburbs within 10km of Bayfit Leisure Centre that provide a 50m pool. These include Aquapulse, Maribyrnong Aquatic Centre and Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre.

