



collaborations

Bayside City Council:
Hampton Our Place
Options Consultation
Summary (August 2019)

Hampton our Place: Options Consultation Summary

Background & Purpose

In March 2019 an inter-disciplinary planning and research team led by Navire Pty Ltd, was engaged to undertake research and strategic planning for the future of community infrastructure in the Hampton Centre. Following extensive research regarding future community service needs, spatial requirements and the capacity of existing infrastructure to respond to projected demand, a number of spatial concepts for future service provision were developed. Two options were nominated as the most viable responses to community needs. These options were presented for community feedback.

The purpose of the Stage II Community & Stakeholder Engagement is reflected in the following objectives:

- To **provide clear and accessible information** for community members and stakeholders regarding the proposed redevelopment of community facilities in central Hampton.
- To provide opportunity for **community feedback on the proposed options** in relation to the agreed 'Place Values' framework.
- To facilitate the opportunity for stakeholders who are impacted to **assess the proposed options against the agreed 'Place Values'** framework.
- To provide the opportunity for stakeholders who are impacted to **identify and discuss any impacts of change** on their members and operation.
- To provide an **analysis of community and stakeholder feedback** that can inform the final project report.

This report provides a summary of the consultation undertaken in relation to proposed options for future provision of community facilities and services in Hampton. From the outcomes of the consultation, a number of recommendations are proposed for Council to pursue an approach which best responds to the values and preferences of existing residents and offers the flexibility to meet the community infrastructure needs of future generations.

Approach

The approach to consultation and engagement acknowledged the different interests in the project including; current and future facility users, facility operators, community groups, traders and residents.

In developing an Engagement Strategy the following challenges were also considered:

- The highly conceptual nature of the proposed options.
- Community concern regarding the pace and nature of change.
- Broader community interests outside the scope of the study (eg. existing residential development, connections to the foreshore).
- Future divestment of community assets.
- Loss of separate facilities for individual organisations.

To support an accessible and inclusive process, the following strategies were adopted:

- Meetings with individual facility users and managers.
- Briefing the Hampton Residents and Traders Associations.
- Four open community information and feedback sessions.
- On-line information and feedback option.
- Distribution of project information sheet to all households and traders in Hampton.

The two options presented were Option 1 (a centralised model) and Option 2 (a dual site approach).

The nature of the process involved gathering qualitative information regarding responses to two options, particularly in relation to the Place Values identified in earlier consultation and the impacts and opportunities for community groups. The intention was not to 'vote' on a preferred option, rather to gather feedback, prompted by the proposals, for consideration in a more detailed future proposal.

Community Briefings

Stakeholder Briefings

To ensure the provision of accurate information about the project and the proposed options, the following organisations were invited to small group briefings with key project staff:

- Hampton Residents Association.
- Hampton Community Centre
- Hampton Senior Citizen's
- Hampton Playhouse Committee
- Traders Association
- University of the Third Age
- Hampton Library

Four separate briefings were held to accommodate the different groups. Project information was provided about the identified community needs, the assessment of existing facilities and the proposed options. Those attending were also encouraged to provide feedback on the options and the impact of these proposals on individual groups and facility operations.

Integration of key services and groups

There was general support for improved integration of groups and services and the cross- fertilisation/ referrals this would support. Some concern was expressed regarding the loss of autonomy and an aggregation of activities which might be overwhelming for some groups eg. older people. Future facilities must be welcoming of all users and designed with a scale in mind which accommodates a diversity of groups and needs.

Key Functions offered and spaces required

A number of comments were made regarding the functions to be accommodated in the future facilities and the specifics of the spaces required to accommodate these uses. Consideration needs to be given to specific amenities for key activities (eg. The quality of the floor for dance groups, access to outdoor areas for children's play) and the practicalities of shared use (including storage, security and access). The relationship between desired functions and built form will be critical to the success of any integrated approach.

Governance

There was some discussion regarding the governance model for a future integrated facility, acknowledging the complexity of successfully integrating diverse community functions. Some of the existing facilities have professional management, others are run by voluntary organisations. Managing the transition of existing groups and services into a different model of operation will be critical to success.

Community focal point

For some groups it was acknowledged that Hampton lacks a community focal point and that a new integrated facility could place this role into the future. This would require careful integration of built form and public spaces to complement the other activities in the Hampton Centre.

Ownership of community assets

There is some strong attachment to community assets such as the Senior Citizen's Centre and the Hampton Playhouse. This is based on continued use and access over a long period of time and perceptions of 'ownership' and guardianship of community assets on behalf of others. Implementation of a new approach to community infrastructure will require council to consider which land/facilities are required to meet future needs. Through discussion there was a willingness to consider change, however the process of transition will be important to manage to maintain the vitality and integrity of community activity.

Community displays & feedback

Overview

Four community information and feedback displays were held at different locations to capture a range of views and interests.

Tuesday 6th August (am)
Hampton St (outside Woolworths)

Monday 12th August (pm)
Hampton Community Centre

Thursday 15th August (pm)
Hampton Community Centre

Saturday 17th August (am)
Hampton Farmers Market

A display of the key elements of background research and the proposed options was provided. Staff and members of the consultancy team were available to discuss the options, answer questions and note feedback. Over 200 people participated in these sessions.

Of the two options presented, there was more significant support for the 'centralised option', however what is most important in the feedback provided, is the information regarding the strengths and challenges of each option in relation to the Place Values. It is this information that can guide council in the development of a more detailed plan (spatial and functional) for community facilities and services in Hampton, particularly managing this important and sensitive process of urban and community change.

Hampton is safe and accessible

There was strong support for an improved **pedestrian environment**, including an additional pedestrian crossing for Hampton Street, although some people were concerned about the number of crossings creating more traffic congestion.

There was overwhelming support for **improved parking** and Option 1 was acknowledged as offering more parking spaces. However, concern was expressed regarding the visual impact and additional traffic generated by a multi-deck carpark in Thomas Street. Feedback was divided regarding the proposed underground carparking, with concerns expressed regarding safety, cost and accessibility. The small carpark on Willis Street is highly valued and people wanted to see a clearer rationale regarding its proposed closure.

There is a desire to minimize traffic congestion and in this regard concerns were expressed regarding both options. With Option 1, feedback related to the increase in traffic along Willis St with the integration of all services in the one destination. Similarly the Willis St/Hampton St intersection was identified as particularly busy and likely to be more so under Option 1. The creation of library/community hub in Option 2 was also seen as potentially overloading traffic along Service Street. Overall there was a clear message for more attention to be paid to traffic circulation and impacts in any future planning.

People commended the opportunity for multi-modal access with bus, train, private vehicles, walking and cycling all identified as important. More detail was requested regarding bus access under both options.

Consideration of access for all ages and abilities was also highly valued.

Community displays & feedback

Hampton has a village scale and feel

There is clearly strong community concern regarding the pace and scale of **built form and population change** in Hampton. Many people were unable to separate the focus of this project on community facilities and services from the impacts of private development. There was particular sensitivity regarding the risk involved in the sale or divestment of council owned land resulting in higher **densities of development**. A number of people wanted clarification on the controls that would be applied to private development if any council owned sites were sold.

The **amenity of Willis Street** and the area around the station was mentioned as worthy of protection. Although most people preferred the 'centralised' option, some suggested that the same community services outcomes could be achieved with lower heights. Others preferred the 'dual site' option because of the lower scale proposed.

It became clear through the feedback and discussions that careful consideration of the design of new facilities would be required to ensure the **urban design outcomes** deliver an appropriate **scale of built form**, presentation to the street and a mix of spaces in response to this community value. The clustering of services and functions does not necessarily imply a single, large facility.

The **interface between the buildings and public spaces** was also mentioned as making an important contribution to the 'village scale and feel' of both options. With better integration of public space and community facilities encourage in the next stage of planning.

There were some vocal **opponents of both options** who attended the sessions and provided feedback that neither option should proceed. Their objections related to the cumulative impact of increasing densities on Hampton, the uncertainty of development outcomes if council sites are sold, the rationale of council investment in future infrastructure, mistrust of council's motives and increased traffic congestion/lack of parking.

Hampton will be welcoming, green and friendly

The feedback showed **strong support for improvements to green space** and a proposed new park in the study area. Some people questioned the location of the park on the Scout Hall site as being 'out of the way' and 'unsafe'.

There was also a desire for additional green space, with suggestions including the conversion of the carpark beside Woolworths to open space. It was suggested that the public spaces around any new buildings could also be designed to provide green space.

Those providing feedback wanted to **minimise any loss of existing established trees** and provide more trees as part of any future detailed design. Some people preferred Option 2 on the basis the it showed greater protection for established trees.

The **functionality of open space** was also mentioned to cater for all ages and establish a relationship with the services in any new facilities such as childcare.

Additional opportunities were identified for green space and recreational open space, including use of future rooftops.

Provision of additional opens space and green space was seen to enhance **opportunities for community interaction**.

Community displays & feedback

Hampton will have quality public space and community amenities

The community feedback strongly supports an **integrated approach** to community facility and service provision. There was acknowledgement that many services require enhanced facilities, particularly the library. A number of people identified opportunities for service enhancements and referrals as a result of an integrated approach.

For many people the **'centralised option' offered the greatest benefits** including intergenerational interaction, facilities for multiple uses and activating the 'triangle area'. For some people the potential level and scale of activity in Option 1 was not seen as desirable, the 'dual site' option was identified as logical grouping of activities and functions recognising the different requirements of different services.

Additional opportunities identified included space for young people, arts facilities, co-location of open space and children's services, a hydrotherapy pool, facilities for cyclists and roof-top gardens. These can be considered in future detailed design and feasibility work.

Hampton will offer an active community life

There is a desire to **optimise open space opportunities** in any future design, including the provision of additional open space. Concern was expressed regarding the under supply of open space in Hampton, particularly with increasing population and density.

There was support for **innovative approaches** such as basketball courts on rooftops and multi-use facilities.

Whilst many people drive to the Centre, there was support for **improving pedestrian access** and amenity. Many people agreed an additional crossing would support safer access across Hampton Street.

Consideration of providing safe and accessible spaces for all ages was also highly valued. Particular mention was made of the needs of an **ageing population** to remain active.

Community displays & feedback

Hampton facilities will be sustainable and ready for the future

Most people accepted the ***need for proactive planning*** to meet existing and future community needs, although some people challenged the whole rationale regarding population growth in Hampton.

Strong concern was expressed regarding the ***sale or divestment of community assets*** and the lost opportunity if these were required again in the longer term. Particular reference was made to long-term open space needs.

The twenty-year planning horizon was also challenged, with the suggestion that there needs to be enough space provided to ***'future proof' facilities*** and services for unexpected change.

The opportunity was also identified to integrated some community spaces into private and commercial development and to ***partner with the private sector*** on the future to achieve the desired outcomes.

On-line Feedback

Overview

The format for the on-line feedback involved respondents nominating their priorities from the 'place values' and then nominating their preferred option from the two presented, including reasons for their choice.

There were one hundred and seven on-line responses received between the launch date of 29th July and the closing date of 18th August. Respondents were fairly evenly split by gender, however over half were between the ages of fifty and seventy years old. Less than six percent were under the age of thirty-five. This is important to consider when thinking about the future of this planning process and the likely growth in young families and older adults.

Over ninety percent were residents and ratepayers, a small proportion rent in Hampton. Almost one-third identified as a user of existing community facilities.

Place Values

Although the place values were designed to be complementary and support an integrated approach to planning for the future, respondents were asked to prioritise these values.

On-line respondents gave highest priority to the following values:

- Hampton will have a village scale and feel.
- Hampton will have high quality public spaces and amenities.

This was followed by:

- Hampton will be safe and accessible.
- Hampton will be welcoming, green and friendly.

Lowest priority was given to:

- Hampton will offer an active community life.
- Hampton facilities will be sustainable and ready for the future.

Options Assessment

Seventy-one percent of respondents expressed their preference for Option 1 (centralised), whilst twenty-nine percent nominated Option 2 (dual site). A number of respondents expressed frustration at having to nominate a preference.

Summary of Comments

The following strengths were identified by respondents:

- Co-locating services and functions.
- Providing improved quality and amenity of facilities.
- Bringing a long-term vision to reality.
- Providing capacity for future provision.
- Increasing carparking capacity.
- Creation of local open space and new gathering spaces.
- Opportunity to locate council services locally.
- New opportunities for adult education.
- Improved library services a big advantage.

The following concerns and weaknesses were nominated in the feedback:

- Location and size of the proposed open space.
- Disposal or sale of council assets is short-sighted.
- Retain existing, established trees.
- Proposed car parks are not in keeping with 'village scale and feel'.
- Need more spaces for quiet contemplation.
- Retain the community centre site in community ownership.
- Willis Street cannot cope with more development and congestion.
- More certainty is required regarding the built form outcomes.

These comments provide Council with an understanding of some of the potential benefits which can be optimised and the challenges which need to be carefully understood and managed.

Written Submissions

Overview

Council received a total of twenty-eight written submissions in relation to the consultation on the options.

Key organisations/entities who provided written comments included:

- Hampton Traders Association
- Body Corporate 8 Willis Street
- Hampton Neighbourhood Association.

A number of the submissions supported neither of the options, of those which did express a preference, the centralised options received the greatest support. Those who did express a preference for the Dual Site Option did so because they identified it as more in keeping with the 'village scale' of Hampton. There was some support for the redevelopment of existing facilities as an alternative.

A number of points were raised in relation to the research, consultation and planning process, including:

- Lack of detail in the plans and concepts.
- Resistance to the notion of consulting on two options.
- Need for a clear timeline and funding model.
- Lack of justification for carparking requirements

There were a small number of submissions which addressed broader issues such as development, residential density, retail mix and viability, public transport and strategic planning for Hampton.

Summary of Comments

The following strengths were identified in the submissions:

- Improving the quality, flexibility and availability of community spaces for all ages.
- Integrating services and functions for different ages.
- A vision for the future rather than just an 'upgrade'.
- Increasing carparking capacity.
- Underground carpark creates more public space and community gathering spaces at ground level.
- Opportunity to create a state of the art library service.

The following concerns and weaknesses were nominated in the submissions:

- Increased priority for pedestrians.
- More facilities for cyclists.
- Safety and accessibility of basement and multi-deck car parking.
- Scale of multi-deck carpark in appropriate for Hampton.
- Loss of carpark beside Woolworths.
- Wisdom of sale of carparks in the face of population growth and increasing demand for public transport.
- Bus and train interchange not identified.
- Opposition to sale of council assets as a 'short sighted' strategy.
- Desire to see a more centralised location for the proposed open space, to link to the library and children's services.
- A strong desire to avoid the loss of established trees.
- More green space and vegetation eg. community garden.
- Concern regarding increased development and traffic congestion on Willis Street and impacts on residential amenity.
- Certainty required regarding future height limits and the quality of built form outcomes.

These comments indicate the need for a clear rationale for change and the communication of a vision for the project which protects and enhances the amenity of the area. Building community understanding of the need for change will be critical to the future success of the planning process.

Recommendations

Future Directions for Community Facilities and Services in Hampton

Based on the range of community feedback, the following recommendations are made:

1. That an integrated approach to community facilities and services be further developed to optimise the opportunities for complementary service provision, including a detailed functional service brief.
2. That a viable service model be developed with key stakeholders and service providers.
3. A detailed Master Plan be prepared to respond to the functional service brief and community expectations regarding improved open space, lively public spaces, 'village scale' development and enhanced parking facilities.
4. That Council carefully consider the traffic management and amenity impacts of any future option.
5. That multi-modal public transport and active transport be integrated into the Master Plan.
6. That Council develop and communicate a clear rationale for its management of existing assets, including any potential divestment of assets.
7. That council adopt a change management methodology to work with community and stakeholders to facilitate the transition to a new approach which minimizes disruption to service provision and supports the on-going viability of community groups.
8. That the strengths identified through this consultation process inform a clear communications plan for future planning.
9. That future community engagement and consultation ensures a diversity of voices is represented, including likely future users and residents.
10. That consultation and engagement continues with the Playhouse and Senior Citizen's Centre to ensure the on-going viability and vitality of their activities.

