

# Hosken Reserve--Letter from CEO (6 October 2020)

## In Summary:

- Moreland Council has long supported installation of a synthetic pitch at Hosken Reserve and approved the project to occur in 2020/21.
- Unfortunately, there hasn't been recent consultation with nearby residents.
- The tender process for the project will proceed. After the coming election, it will be up to the newly elected Council to consider awarding the tender, and decide whether further consultation will take place.
- The project would see continued public access to the synthetic pitch (outside of formal games and training) and Hosken Reserve would continue to be a designated dog off leash park.

## Note about communications during election period

- Moreland Council is currently in the election period (or caretaker period), ending 24 October.
- This means that Moreland Council as an organisation is heavily restricted in how it can provide public information about any topic that is the subject of election campaigning.
- For instance, during the election period, we cannot add information to the website on an election campaigning topic.
- I am providing this "statement of clarification" as permitted under Moreland Council Governance Rules. This advice is being provided to Councillors and to all candidates for the Moreland Council elections.

## Background to the Hosken Reserve project

Council has long held a position that there should be a synthetic pitch installed at Hosken Reserve, since the 2009 adoption of the Hosken Reserve Redevelopment Plan which included provision for a new synthetic pitch.

## More recently:

- The Sports Surface Needs Analysis was formally noted by Council in April 2018, which referred to installation of a synthetic pitch in Hosken Reserve (north).
- The 9 October 2019 Council meeting received a report which briefly summarised the Hosken Reserve Redevelopment Plan, including "the construction of a full sized synthetic pitch".
- The Moreland Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2020 was adopted by Council on 13 November 2019 and included a section about how synthetic fields help to meet growing and unmet sporting demand. The Strategy includes a specific action to install a synthetic pitch at Hosken Reserve (north), including lights, at a cost of \$1.2 million in 2021/22.
- In March 2020, Council staff submitted a grant application to the State Government World Game Facilities Fund in March 2020.
- The Council budget for 2020/21 adopted by Council in July 2020 included an allocation of \$1 million for a synthetic pitch project at Hosken Reserve.

- The Council Plan Action Plan for 2020/21 adopted by Council in July 2020 included as an action: construction of the Hosken Reserve pitch, with completion date June 2021, “subject to state government funding”.
- A forward allocation for the synthetic pitch at Hosken Reserve for 2020/21 was included as part of the Strategic Resource Plan (forward capital works plan) and was approved by Council in the budget papers for each of the budget years 2018/19 and 2019/20. The allocation was approved for the year 2020/21 in the 20/21 budget.
- In late August 2020 the State Government announced a grant of \$500K for the project under the World Facilities Fund.

## **Consultation**

- The Hosken Reserve project has been in the forward capital works plan and approved by Council for years. As part of the budget, the forward capital works plan is formally subject to public consultation every year. The Sport and Active Recreation Strategy was also subject to public consultation in 2019.
- However, residents near Hosken Park would not have been aware of the proposed synthetic pitch unless they participated in the 2009 consultation process, or unless they checked recent consultation documents in detail.
- The Hosken Reserve Redevelopment Plan or details about the synthetic pitch project are not available on the Moreland Council website, which is unfortunate.
- In my view, it would have been preferable that recent consultation occurred with local residents about changes planned for Hosken Reserve (north). Council’s Community and Engagement and Public Participation Policy would suggest that such consultation should have occurred. I acknowledge the frustration and disappointment felt by local residents.
- I also acknowledge that as a project under the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy, there has been ongoing engagement with the Pascoe Vale Football Club about the Hosken Reserve project.
- Please note that public access to the synthetic pitch will be retained (outside of formal games and training). Hosken Reserve will continue to be a designated dog off leash park.

## **Tender process**

- In line with Council’s prior approval of the project, and the funding confirmation from the State Government, Council staff authorised the release of a tender for construction on 19 September 2020. This was prior to the election period (caretaker period) starting on 22 September.
- The tender will close on 13 October - that is, tenderers must submit their tender proposals by that date.
- No decision will be made on the tender until a future Council meeting, to be held after the local government elections on 24 October.

## Advice

- The elected Council has repeatedly resolved to support the installation of a synthetic pitch at Hosken Reserve, and has approved the project. As a result, I do not believe it would be appropriate for me to take action to suspend or delay the current Hosken Reserve tender.
- The next decision about the tender will take place at a Council meeting after the Council elections, most likely in December 2020.
- Presuming appropriate tender/s are received, I expect the officer report to the Council meeting will include a tender assessment and recommend a successful tenderer to Council.
- At the same Council meeting, officers may also recommend an additional consultation process prior to construction starting (e.g. about public access and refinements to design).
- Elected Councillors will vote to make a decision. The Council may vote to adopt the officer recommendation or may adopt a different course of action, for example to not award the tender.

Thankyou,

**Cathy Henderson**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Moreland City Council**

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[www.moreland.vic.gov.au](http://www.moreland.vic.gov.au)

Moreland City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Moreland. We pay respect to their Elders past, present, and emerging, as well as to all First Nations communities who significantly contribute to the life of the area.