

**BANKSTOWN CITY COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE**  
**MEETING OF COUNCIL**  
**HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS**  
**ON 24TH FEBRUARY 2009**

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- (b) Transfer the building height controls from the Draft DCP Amendments to the Draft Bankstown Local Environmental Plan 2001 (Amendment No 43) in the form of a Height of Buildings Map.

2. The matter be reported to Council following the exhibition.  
- CARRIED.

**For:-** Mihailuk, Asfour, Downey, Gavin, Kuskoff, Najjar, Parker, Tadros, Winterbottom, Waud

**Against:-** Nil

**ITEM 5.12 PROPOSED ACCESS ROAD TO THE RIVERLANDS REZONING SITE THROUGH DEEPWATER REGIONAL PARK. (BCC001024)**

THIS MATTER WAS DISCUSSED PREVIOUSLY. SEE RESOLUTION NO. 133 ON PAGE NO. 4 OF THESE MINUTES.

**ITEM 5.13 RIVERLANDS DRAFT LEP AND REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL. (BCC/001024)**

THIS MATTER WAS DISCUSSED PREVIOUSLY. SEE RESOLUTION NO. 132 ON PAGE NO. 4 OF THESE MINUTES.

**ITEM 5.14 FUTURE OF WHITEHALL SITE (BCC/000188)**

COUNCILLOR WARD TEMPORARILY RETIRED FROM THE MEETING AT 9.11 P.M. AND RETURNED AT 9.14 P.M.

COUNCILLOR WINTERBOTTOM TEMPORARILY RETIRED FROM THE MEETING AT 9.11 P.M.

**CLR. TADROS:/CLR. WAUD:**

**MOTION**

That the matter be deferred for a site inspection.  
- LOST.

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(147)

**CLR. PARKER:/CLR. KUSKOFF:**

RESOLVED that -

1. Council agrees in principle to sell the three sites known as 75A, 75B and 75C Marco Avenue Revesby (Lots 1, 2 & 3, DP 214260, Marco Avenue, Revesby).
2. Council proceed with the demolition of the buildings and structures located on the Whitehall site, excluding the Scout Hall, as matter of urgency and this project be listed as a capital work project in the current year's program.
3. Council identifies funds of up to \$160,000 to cover the cost of the building demolition and reflects the budget variation in its next quarterly review.
4. Demolition be subject to Council's normal tender procedures.
- 5(i) Council resolve to prepare and exhibit a Draft Local Environmental Plan to amend the zone and FSR of the sites known as 75A, 75B and 75C Marco Avenue in Revesby (Lots 1, 2 & 3, DP 214260).
- (ii) Council resolve to prepare and exhibit a Draft Local Environmental Plan to reclassify the sites known as 75A, 75B and 75C Marco Avenue in Revesby (Lots 1, 2 & 3, DP 214260) from Community land to Operational land within the meaning of the Local Government Act 1993.
- (iii) Council advise the Department of Planning of this decision in accordance with section 54 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, and request delegation under sections 65 and 69 of the Act in accordance with the Best Practice Guidelines published by the DoP entitled "LEPs and Council land - Guidelines for councils using delegated powers to prepare LEPs involving land that is or was controlled by Council".
- (iv) Council hold a public hearing following exhibition regarding the proposed reclassification of the sites known as 75A, 75B and 75C Marco Avenue in Revesby (Lots 1, 2 & 3, DP 214260) in accordance with section 68 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act.

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- (v) Council consider a further report on the matter at the closure of the exhibition period and after the report from the public hearing has been received.
6. All proceeds from the future sale be placed in the Land Investment Fund and held for Community purposes in accordance with future Cityplan priorities and the relevant Budget process.
7. Discussions and negotiation on options for the existing scout activities conducted at the Revesby Scout Hall be held with the Scout Association.

- CARRIED.

**For:-** Mihailuk, Asfour, Downey, Gavin, Kuskoff, Najjar, Parker, Tadros, Waud

**Against:-** Nil

**SECTION 6: STANDING COMMITTEES**

**ITEM 6.1 MINUTES OF THE YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD 13 NOVEMBER 2008, 11 DECEMBER 2008 AND 5 FEBRUARY 2009**

**(148) CLR. ASFOUR:/CLR. GAVIN:**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Youth Advisory Committee Meetings held on 13 November 2008, 11 December 2008 and 5 February 2009.

- CARRIED.

**ITEM 6.2 MINUTES OF THE BANKSTOWN TRAFFIC COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10TH FEBRUARY, 2009 (BCC/000363)**

**(149) CLR. PARKER:/CLR. ASFOUR:**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Bankstown Traffic Committee Meeting held on 10th February, 2009 be adopted.

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## Report of the General Manager - 24th February, 2009

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**ITEM 5.14**                      **Future of Whitehall site**

**FILE**                              **BCC/000188**

**AUTHOR**                      **Service Planning and Commission**

**ISSUE**

The purpose of this report is to propose options for the site occupied by the former Whitehall Children's Home at Revesby. The report recommends that the site be identified for sale.

### **BACKGROUND**

#### **History of the site**

In 1961, Council leased the land to the intellectually and Physically Handicapped Children's Association of NSW for a nominal rent. The lease allowed for the construction of a building on site with the condition that the Association would be fully responsible for all costs involved with the facility and its operation. This lease was renewed in 1982 for a further 21 years until June 2003, under the same terms and conditions.

In late 2002, the intellectually and Physically Handicapped Children's Association of NSW informed Council that the association would disband and that the Association would like to assign the responsibility of the lease to the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care.

This request was considered by Council and Council resolved that the deed of assignment be granted until 30 June 2006.

#### **Establishment of a Working Party**

A report was submitted to Council on 27 June 2006 on the future uses of the former Whitehall Children's Home, Revesby and Council resolved the following (report attached as appendix A):

- 1. A Councillors inspection of the former Whitehall site and its facilities be arranged at a suitable time.*
- 2. Following that inspection, a further report be brought back to Council on the preferred options for the site.*
- 3. A Working Party of Councillors and staff be convened to provide a recommendation to Council on the future use of the site.*

In response to Council resolution, a Working Party of interested Councillors and staff was established and the Working Party met on a number of occasions to consider future uses of the land and buildings.

One of the issues considered by the Working Party was the accommodation of Coolaburoo Neighbourhood Centre. The Working Party requested that the staff carry out investigation into the potential to accommodate the Neighbourhood Centre in a Council-owned community facility in the South Ward and subsequently, the Working Party recommended that Council proceed with the refurbishment of the Padstow Park Progress Hall. It was then resolved at the Council meeting of 18 December 2007 that Coolaburoo be accommodated at the Padstow Park Progress Hall. The refurbishment of the Hall is now complete and the Coolaburoo Neighbourhood Centre is currently moving to the Hall to be operational by March 2009.

## **REPORT**

### **Site considerations**

The Whitehall buildings physically occupy Lot 2 in a triangle of land bounded to the south by the railway and to the north by Marco Avenue. It adjoins older style, residential areas to the east and is directly opposite Amour Park that includes Revesby Swim Centre, sporting field, tennis courts and the new skatepark. The whole triangle consists of 3 lots described as Lots 1, 2 and 3 in DP 214260 and has an address of 75A (Scout Hall) 75B (Whitehall) and 75C (open space associated with Whitehall) (Attachment B). The site is located about 600 metres from the Revesby Town Centre (Attachment C).

The Scout site on Lot 1 comprise an area of 1056 sq m, the Whitehall site on Lot 2 is around 5,526 sq m and the open space on Lot 3 is around 366 sq m, making a total of 6,948 square metres for the whole site. The improvements on the land include a scout hall building on Lot 1 and a part single and part 2 storey main building of brick and weatherboard construction. The rear of the main Whitehall building has a disused in-ground swimming pool with additional outbuildings and carports set to the rear of the site. The balance of the site is vacant land with no improvements. The site contains a number of significant trees.

### **Considerations of the Whitehall Working Party**

It should be noted that the Working Party was of the view that the Scout Hall was to remain and dealt only with the actual site of the Whitehall complex on Lot 2 and the adjoining vacant Lot 3.

Given the review of the potential offered by the site and its buildings, 4 options were initially identified and considered by the Working Party:

#### Option 1

Refurbishment of the building to accommodate appropriate community services.

#### Option 2

Sale of the site with existing building on it.

#### Option 3

Demolition of the building, sale of part of the site and construction of an appropriate community facility with the proceeds of the sale.

#### Option 4

Demolition the building and return of the total site within the adjacent parkland.

At the last meeting of the Working Party in late 2007 and following consideration of these 4 options, it was agreed that the following 2 options presented the most feasible opportunity for the site and were to be put to Council.

### **Option 1 – Refurbishment of the existing buildings**

This option considered retaining the community land classification, zoning and the buildings and investigating its potential for adaptive re-use by various community groups. This could have been achieved by either allocating the site to selected groups or through an expression of interest process to openly identify community demand and interest.

Within the constraints of community land classification and current zoning, the buildings may have the potential to accommodate a number of programs and services that could be conducted by various not-for-profit organisations. This process would be limited to community organisation supporting the Bankstown community.

Given the age and condition of the existing facility (that would require an investment valued (in 2006) of around \$420,000 to bring it to the current Building Code of Australia requirements), and the potential minimal return on the facility, the Working Party considered this option the least viable of the two options.

### **Option 2 – Sale of the site**

A valuation was obtained for the site in August 2006 as a preliminary assessment of options for the facility and for forward planning purposes.

The valuation report identified that the site could potentially achieve a yield of 16-18 villas or townhouses on the area of about 5,526sqm. As such, the valuation was considered to be in the range of \$2.4 - \$2.8 million. This valuation assumed that it was operational land, vacant of all improvements, zoned 2(a) residential and achieving 16-18 villa dwelling sites. It should be noted that since the valuation was obtained (August 2006), the market has experienced significant movement in prices.

This option was the preferred option of the majority of members of the Working Party, subject to the following conditions:

- Council provide an offer of suitable accommodation for Coolaburoo Neighbourhood Centre at the Padstow Park Progress Hall, Ryan Road, Padstow. This matter was previously reported to Council and refurbishment completed with Coolaburoo Neighbourhood Centre due to relocate during February.
- Demolition of the buildings on the site be the responsibility of the site buyer

This option would provide Council with a greater one-off financial return while at the same time dealing with and working towards meeting some of the requirements of the new planning legislation.

### **Planning considerations**

The property is currently zoned 6(a) Open Space and is classified Community Land. The property mainly comprises buildings built in 1961. Preliminary investigations indicate this property is surplus to community needs.

A review of future options for this property must consider planning reform legislation introduced by the State Government in 2005. Specifically, Council must explore ways to make Revesby a Town Centre and accommodate up to 4,500-9,500 dwellings within 800 metres of the railway station.

Council is currently preparing a Residential Development Strategy, which will help decide future options for this property as it forms part of the Revesby study area.

The Department of Planning has advised it will not accept an application to rezone or reclassify open space unless the changes are justified by an endorsed citywide strategy.

### **DISCUSSION**

Given the very specific nature of the previous use of this facility, the site has not played a significant role in the provision of general community services accommodation for the organisations servicing the south of Bankstown.

Council now needs to determine the most appropriate future use of this site. Consideration has been given over a period of time to a number of options identified by the Working Party and the 2 options identified and considered in this report were recommended for future consideration by Council.

At the time of its meeting, the Working Party did not unanimously support either option and recommended that both options be put to Council for a decision. Since the Working Party discussions, for various reasons the matter has been delayed in being brought back to Council for resolution. This delay has allowed the accommodation of Coolaburoo Neighbourhood Centre to be finalised. However despite efforts taken to secure and patrol the site, the Whitehall facility has been subject to some level of vandalism and this presents potential risks for Council.

## **SCOUT HALL SITE**

Council leased the property at Lot 1 to the Scout Association of NSW for use by the 1st Revesby Scouts in 1962. Council resolved in 1961 to lease the land to the Scout Association, build the hall and sell the building back to the scouts at a value of 1,000 pounds. That payment was made by the Scouts in 1967, fulfilling all their obligations. The Scout Association have since maintained the scout building at their cost and leased Council's land at no cost to the Association. They have also borne 100% of the cost of rates and other outgoings.

When the 1st Revesby Scouts were deregistered the hall management was transferred to the East Hills Pipes and Drums Scout Fellowship which is a registered formation within the Scout Association. The Scout group in turn have sublet the hall for use by non-scouting groups for activities such as dancing and fitness classes with Council's approval. Like many other leases, the Scout Association lease expired on 20 June 2003 and it has been operating on a month by month basis ever since.

Given the history of the site, and ownership of the hall, if Council were to now consider incorporating Lot 1 in any decision made on the future of the Whitehall site, discussions and negotiation on options for the existing Scout activities at the Revesby Scout Hall would need to be held. It would be appropriate for those negotiations to include the provision for Scout activities to be retained for as long as possible at their existing hall and alternate potential accommodation options be investigated.

## **CONCLUSION**

The nature of the Whitehall buildings and their age presents a number of constraints that are likely to restrict their ability and suitability to provide cost effective and efficient accommodation for community service providers. Potential sale of the site and a straight financial return could deliver to the wider Bankstown community and the Council the better long term outcome. The opportunity the site presents, given its proximity to the railway line and town centre for potential residential development that could complement the Revesby town centre, should also be recognised. Given the site's configuration and its location, incorporation of all three lots in the sale proposal (including the scout site) is preferred rather than leaving it isolated at the western edge of the site.

Given the current market conditions, the opportunity for further development at Revesby, the ongoing costs of securing the buildings and risks associated with keeping the site vacant and the positive financial opportunity the sale of this site would present for Council, it is recommended that Lots 1, 2 and 3 be identified for sale as vacant land at a future date. This would involve incurring costs to clear the site and demolish the Whitehall buildings in the short term and the scout building in the longer term.

Prior to proceeding to sale, the whole site would require re-classification from Community to Operational land and rezoning. It is proposed to carry out these actions to allow for disposal of the site at an appropriate time.



All proceeds from the sale of the three lots should be placed in a reserve fund for community purposes associated with the future construction of the Revesby multipurpose centre.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

Council has not received any income from the Whitehall facility since its original construction and was also not responsible for its maintenance. Over the past 12 months, Council has incurred costs of around \$40,000 to secure and hold the site. The Scout Association has had free use of the site since 1962.

The estimated cost of demolition of the Whitehall buildings was obtained in 2006 for the Working Party but will need to be tested by calling for tenders or quotations to confirm the actual cost. The indicative cost to demolish and remove all structures including asbestos disposal allowed for stripping and was for \$113,000. Given price movements and tipping fee increases, the current cost of demolition for this facility is estimated to be around \$160,000. No funds are available in the existing budget for these works and the project is not listed as a capital project in Cityplan.

Should Council decide to proceed with the Whitehall demolition quickly for safety reasons, funds for this project could be identified from existing reserves and the budget and project variation reflected in the next quarterly budget review.

Under this proposal, depending on the state of the real estate market and which way values move, if the sale proceeds in say 1 - 2+ years Council could expect to receive a net return well in excess of \$2 million.

If the site were to be retained for community uses, then funding of around \$500,000 is estimated to be required to bring the buildings up to standard. This cost would also need to be tested by calling for tenders to complete the required works. This cost may be offset by future income if the buildings were then leased for community use.

## **POLICY IMPACT**

The sale proposal will require reclassification and rezoning of the site in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act. Development would also be subject to the Department of Planning's West Central Subregional Strategy and Council's Residential Development Strategy.

Community use would be subject to the provisions of the (yet to be adopted) Community Facilities Policy.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

That -

1. Council agrees in principle to sell the three sites known as 75A, 75B and 75C Marco Avenue Revesby (Lots 1, 2 & 3, DP 214260, Marco Avenue, Revesby).
2. Council proceed with the demolition of the buildings and structures located on the Whitehall site as matter of urgency and this project be listed as a capital work project in the current year's program.
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## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment A Report on Future Use of former Whitehall Children's Home, Revesby.
- Attachment B Aerial photo of the Whitehall Children's Home.
- Attachment C Cadastral map of Revesby.