

APPENDIX C

74-76 Glasgow Avenue, Reservoir (Former Ruthven Primary School)

Background

This site has been vacant since the closure of the Ruthven Primary School at the end of 2012. Prior to this time Council held a joint usage agreement to enable public access to the site which was used as a junior sportsground, play space and picnic area by the local community. This agreement ended prior to the school ceasing operation. When the school closed community access to the site was restricted and since this time it has remained unutilised.

Zoning

The former Ruthven Primary School site is currently zoned as Public Use - Education (PUZ2) however it is currently undergoing a process of rezoning via the Victorian Government's Fast Track Land Rezoning process. The proposed zone for the site is General Residential Zone 2 (GRZ2). The Minister for Planning is yet to make a decision on the proposed rezoning.

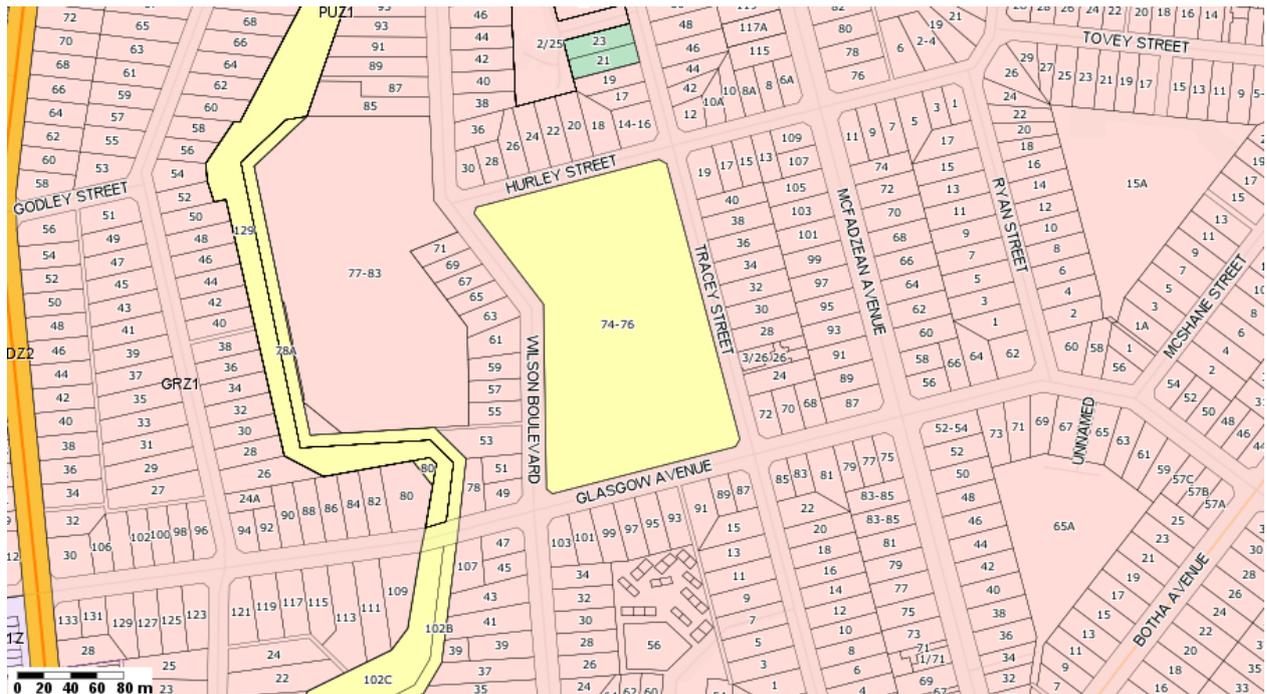


Figure C-1 – Planning Scheme Map of Former Ruthven Primary School, Reservoir

Existing Conditions

The land which comprises the former Ruthven Primary School lies in the north-eastern corner of the municipality. It is bounded (and has frontages on) Glasgow Avenue, Wilson Boulevard, Hurley Street and Tracey Street. Approximately a third of the site is covered with the remnants of school structures, asphalt and concrete. The rest of the site provides open spaces via an oval area and stands of trees along the edges of the site (refer to **Figure C-2, below**)



Figure C-2 – Existing Conditions at the Former Ruthven Primary School, Reservoir

Open Space Strategy

The site is located in an area with a lower level of access to larger sized public open spaces. **Figure C3** shows the mapping of 500m buffers generated from various areas of open space in the wider neighbourhood. The buffers shown in green are generated from the four larger reserves in the vicinity (B.T. Connor, L.E. Cotchin, J.C. Donath, and Edwardes Lake Park). The buffers outlined with a blue dash are generated from smaller reserves (Ludeman, Whitby, and Edgars Creek Wetlands) that lack formalised recreation facilities such as oval, pitches or tennis courts.

The site and adjacent areas to the north, east and south are relatively deficient in their level of access to larger public open spaces. The nearest such facility is L.E. Cotchin Reserve, located approximately 500m to the north-west of the site. The presence of High Street and the adjacent train line, which present a barrier to east-west movement, should also be noted.

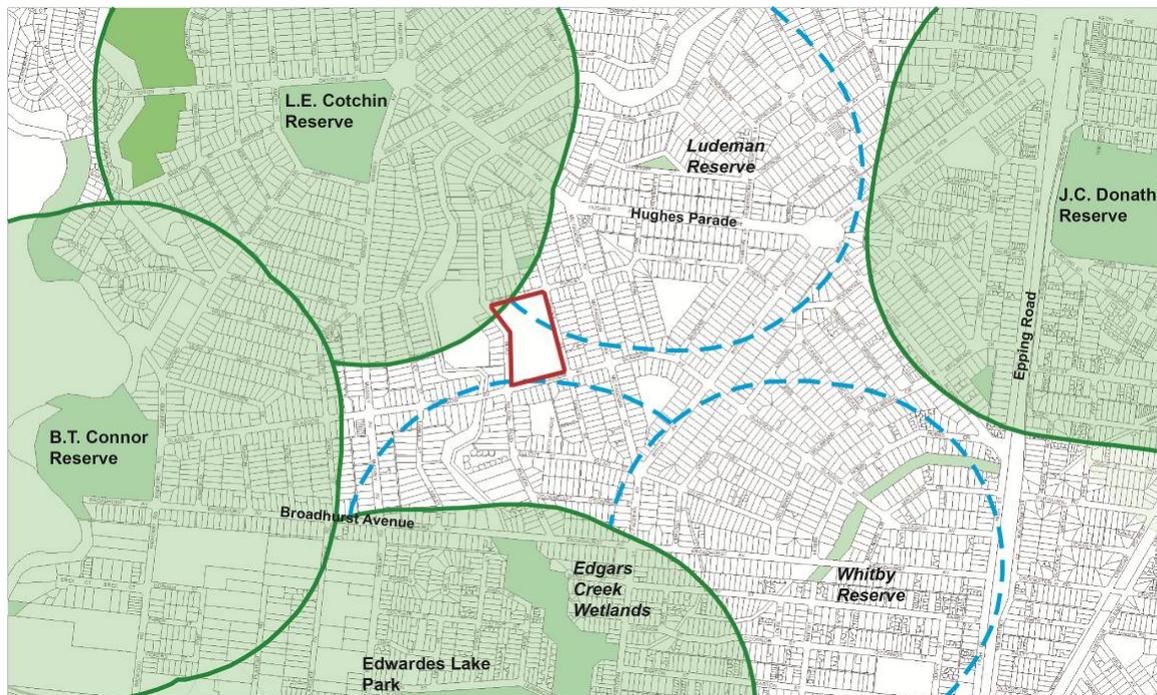


Figure C-3 – Proximity to recreation spaces

Based on the existing population, an open space area of 1.4ha (14,000m²) is required in this area to meet the current and future needs of the population. Existing sportsgrounds in the north-west of the City are operating at close to capacity and will be unable to meet increased demand from expected growth in population and participation in sport.

Decision Logic Map Assessment

Q1 – Is the property required to support an existing Council service?

NO – Land does not currently provide Council service

Q2 – Could the property be developed to meet Council's future service requirements?

YES – Land would fit an unmet strategic need

o Open Space

- o As noted in Figure C-3, there is a gap in the provision of large open space in the north-western quadrant of reservoir.
- o The Leisure Strategy also notes a need for additional oval space for junior sport in this part of Reservoir

Q3 – Could the property be developed in partnership to enhance capacity or future strategic requirements and/or broader service requirements?

YES – Land would require investment from Council to make it suitable for municipal service. This may include opportunities to seek partnership funding from the Victorian Government (through Sport and Recreation Victoria) and local sporting clubs.

HOLD POINT GROW for the purposes of meeting a gap in the provision of open space in the immediate area. The site could be further developed for open space use through the installation

After undertaking a review of the property using the Decision Logic Map, it is clear that the land could be used for Council purposes with an appropriate level of investment.

Land Acquisition Strategy

Option – Public Park

- Provision of a public open space area covering the entire site
- This would require Council to acquire the entire former school area (3.054ha)
- Development of a park masterplan (with the community) and capital investment to clean up areas of remnant demolition from the former school buildings
- May provide surplus public open space beyond demonstrated needs, both now and into the future, particularly given the limited redevelopment potential of the surrounding area (single dwelling covenants), however these may be removed in time placing additional demand on Council services as properties develop.
- A potential layout for the reserve could include a junior oval, a playground and areas of soft landscaping, including retention of substantial established trees that line the perimeter of the site.

Risks

Should Council decide to not acquire this land, it is anticipated that the Department of Education and Training (via the Department of Treasury and Finance) would offer the land to the open market with the likely purchaser being a multi-unit developer or a developer seeking a larger site for an aged care facility. Impacts from such development and uses of the land are expected to be managed through the building and planning permit processes.

Loss of the opportunity to utilise this area for open space would leave a gap in the provision of open space for this section of Reservoir.

Should Council acquire the site, it is estimated that it would cost in the order of \$145,000 (excl. GST) to remove the existing asphalt, concrete and other material from the site, to replace soil removed and to reseed the area for grass. This estimate is based on the assumption that there is no contamination on the site.

It is expected that the site would be provided by the Department of Education and Training with an environmental impact report outlining the presence/absence of any hazardous materials on the site.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council proceed with the purchase of this site from the Department of Education and Training.