



Bass Coast Shire Council

**Wonthaggi Aquatic and
Leisure Centre Feasibility Study**

**Feasibility Report
25th February 2011**



Final Report by

InSynch Consultancy Group and
Inside Edge Sport and Leisure Planning

to Bass Coast Shire Council

25th February 2011



Acknowledgements

The consultants wish to acknowledge the support and assistance provided by all individuals, community members and groups that participated in stakeholder meetings, interviews, workshops and surveys.

In particular, consultants would like to acknowledge the significant level of information and knowledge contributed to this feasibility study by members of the Project Steering Group, and for their support and direction. Project Steering Group members included:-

- Ella Angarane Recreation Planner
- Jenny Churchill Arts and Leisure Manager
- Trevor Dando Building Projects Coordinator – Infrastructure Projects
- Ashley Crimmins Bass Coast YMCA Manager

Thanks are also extended to the following people for providing ongoing research and support throughout the project:-

- Rod Potts, Building Maintenance Officer – Infrastructure Projects – Bass Coast Shire
- Rebecca Wilson, Centre Director - Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre
- Paul O'Connor, Operations Coordinator – Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre

Table of contents

LIST OF TABLES.....	4
LIST OF FIGURES.....	6
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	7
SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION.....	10
1.1 Local context.....	10
1.2 Project background.....	11
1.3 Project methodology.....	13
SECTION 2: PROJECT CONTEXT	14
2.1 Local policy context.....	14
2.2 Regional facility provision.....	19
2.3 Bass Coast facility provision.....	21
SECTION 3: THE EXISTING WALC	23
3.1 WALC Overview.....	23
3.2 Facility catchment.....	25
3.3 WALC facility attendance.....	28
3.4 WALC financial performance.....	30
3.5 Operational Considerations.....	31
SECTION 4: WALC TECHNICAL AUDITS.....	34
4.1 Mechanical, services and electrical audit.....	34
4.2 Pool Plant audit.....	35
4.3 Water and Energy Audit.....	37
4.4 Summary of audit findings.....	37
SECTION 5: COMMUNITY CONSULTATION.....	38
5.1 Consultation overview.....	38
5.2 Community and stakeholder survey findings.....	38
5.3 Stakeholder consultation findings.....	43
5.4 Key consultation themes.....	49
SECTION 6: MARKET AND DEMAND ANALYSIS.....	52
6.1 Population overview.....	52
6.2 Demographic overview.....	54
6.3 Leisure participation trends.....	58
6.4 Competitor analysis.....	59
6.5 Likely facility catchment.....	62
6.6 Likely visitor segments.....	64
6.7 Identified Priority Groups.....	67

SECTION 7: SITE ANALYSIS.....	70
SECTION 8: FUTURE AQUATIC AND LEISURE CENTRE PROVISION	72
8.1 Provision criteria.....	72
8.2 Bass Coast Shire recreation provision principles.....	73
8.3 Role of a redeveloped WALC.....	74
8.4 Impact of the Phillip Island Aquatics Feasibility Study	74
8.5 Facility and service matrix.....	80
8.6 Facility management considerations.....	87
SECTION 9: WALC REDEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS.....	88
9.1 Development considerations.....	88
9.2 Design considerations	89
9.2 Facility component summary.....	95
9.3 Capital cost estimate.....	97
SECTION 10: MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS.....	99
10.1 Preliminary operating budget	99
SECTION 11: LIKELY FUNDING SOURCES	103
11.1 Government grant programs.....	104
11.2 Bass Coast Shire contributions	105
11.3 Private or commercial funding	107
11.4 Management organisation funding	107
11.5 Community fundraising.....	107
11.6 Possible funding scenarios.....	107
SECTION 12: PRELIMINARY REPORT FINDINGS	109
12.1 Basis for redevelopment.....	109
12.2 Implications of future development	110
12.3 Summary	113
APPENDICES.....	114
Appendix 1: List of stakeholders consulted	114
Appendix 2: List of documents reviewed	117
Appendix 3: Estimated capital development costs.....	118
Appendix 4: Possible ESD initiatives for the redevelopment of WALC	119

List of tables

Table 1: Existing local government provided aquatic and leisure centres, outdoor pools, dry and stadium facilities	19
Table 2: Local government facility to population and land area provision ratios.....	20
Table 3: Existing provision of Bass Coast leisure and aquatic centres and stadiums	22
Table 4: Existing WALC facilities	23
Table 5: Existing WALC programs	24
Table 6: WALC hours of operation	24
Table 7: WALC member post codes that dissect Bass Coast municipal boundary	25
Table 8: WALC subsidy per visit.....	30
Table 9: Summary of project consultation undertaken	38
Table 10: Current activities undertaken at WALC	41
Table 11: Facility components that would encourage use of WALC if it were to be redeveloped	42
Table 12: What people would like to see at WALC if it were to be redeveloped.....	42
Table 13: Other user group feedback.....	44
Table 14: YMCA recommendations for WALC redevelopment	49
Table 15: Past and projected population, 2006 – 2026	53
Table 16: Bass Coast Shire population forecasts, 2005 – 2030.....	54
Table 17: Overview of WALC competitors	61
Table 18: Estimated number of Aquatic Education participants in Bass Coast	63
Table 19: Estimated number and breakdown of potential WALC members	64
Table 20: Estimated number of Aquatics Visits for WALC	64
Table 21: Proposed funding model for Phillip Island Aquatic Centre.....	76
Table 22: Component comparison between proposed Phillip Island Aquatic Centre and proposed WALC aquatic area	77
Table 23: Membership impact on WALC.....	77
Table 24: Aquatic Education impact on WALC	77
Table 25: Casual swim and aquatic classes' impact on WALC	78
Table 26: Swim club impact on WALC.....	78
Table 27: School visits impact on WALC.....	79
Table 28: Overall impact on WALC.....	79
Table 29: Aquatics (Stages 1, 2 and 3) facility and service matrix.....	81
Table 30: Dry (Stage 4) facility and service matrix.....	82
Table 31: Comparison of proposed and existing facility components at WALC	95
Table 32: Proposed facility component schedule for WALC redevelopment – Stage 1	96

Table 33: Proposed facility component schedule for WALC redevelopment – Stage 2.....	96
Table 34: Proposed facility component schedule for WALC redevelopment – Stage 3.....	96
Table 35: Proposed facility component schedule for WALC redevelopment – Stage 4	
Table 36: Estimated probable development costs of Stage 1 (based on component summary).....	97
Table 37: Estimated probable development costs of Stage 2 (based on component summary).....	98
Table 38: Estimated probable development costs of Stage 3 (based on component summary).....	98
Table 39: Estimated probable development costs of Stage 4 (based on component summary).....	98
Table 40: WALC probable operating budget	100
Table 41: Proposed WALC redevelopment stages and estimated probable capital costs	103
Table 42: Possible Council loan repayments and borrowing criteria	105
Table 43: Total revenue and household impact of possible residential rate rises	106
Table 44: Possible development option funding scenarios.....	108

List of figures

Figure 1: Bass Coast location map	11
Figure 2: WALC member postcodes of residence (all centres).....	27
Figure 3: WALC overall attendance figures.....	28
Figure 4: Breakdown of aquatic and dry visits	29
Figure 5: Breakdown of casual and membership visits.....	29
Figure 6: Gender breakdown of survey respondents	39
Figure 7: Age breakdown of survey respondents	39
Figure 8: WALC utilisation	40
Figure 9: Time of attendance at WALC.....	40
Figure 10: Breakdown of likely visitor markets for WALC.....	66
Figure 11: Proposed site plan for the WALC redevelopment.....	93

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre Feasibility Study was commissioned by the Bass Coast Shire Council to explore the future development options, potential design concepts and overall costs and benefits of redeveloping the Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre (WALC).

WALC provides the Shire's only integrated indoor aquatic and leisure centre and provides an indoor 25m pool, toddler's pool, health club and a single indoor court stadium. The Centre also provides a community meeting room and pavilion for the adjacent tennis courts. WALC is currently managed by the YMCA under a management agreement, the YMCA have managed the facility since 1998.

A range of redevelopment works at the WALC have been discussed and analysed for the Centre over the past 10 years. A feasibility study undertaken in 1999 recommended a staged redevelopment to incorporate a greater range of aquatic facilities and associated centre amenities, in addition to upgrading of buildings, pool plant and mechanical services. Some minor improvement works recommended in the 1999 study have been actioned and implemented however identified major redevelopment works have not yet been undertaken.

The core purpose of this study was to review the findings, recommendations and design proposals provided in the previous feasibility and to test them against the present day community needs for a redeveloped facility. To achieve this, extensive resident, community and stakeholder consultation was undertaken, with clear directions and core facility elements identified.

The study's market assessment identifies a very strong local market for the current use of the WALC and its facilities, programs and services. The centre is currently operating at capacity within its pools, health club and stadium and additional use cannot be accommodated without undertaking facility redevelopment. An assessment of the WALC's primary and secondary catchment areas also identified significant future growth across the Shire over the next 10 to 20 years, adding further pressure to expand the facility and its current offering.

The Bass Coast community identified a range of additional facility components and programs that would encourage use of a redeveloped centre. Core elements include:

- Increased water space for lap swimming, warm water programs, Aquatic Education and children's water play
- Improved centre amenities, particularly new change rooms and toilets
- The addition of crèche and cafe services
- An expanded health club and dedicated group fitness area
- The addition of health and well programs and spin classes.

The WALC has now reached 30 years of age and technical and service audits commissioned as part of the feasibility study have identified a range of building condition, service efficiency and safety issues that will need attention in the short to medium term. WALC is fast approaching the end of its functional life and addressing these issues will be required regardless of any proposed or adopted redevelopment plan.

In its current form and condition, WALC cannot service the increasing needs of the Bass Coast Shire. With strong local growth, an identified demand for additional services and the ageing nature of the existing facilities and amenities, there is very strong evidence for Council to undertake a redevelopment of the WALC to better meet the community's long-term needs.

To capture these needs, a four staged redevelopment concept has been developed that retains the existing 25m pool and increases water space to include a warm water/program pool and a beach entry water play area as well as expansion of the car park in Stage 1. Additional water space is supported by new wet and group change rooms, repositioned entry and reception area and the addition of a cafe and crèche facility.

Stages 2 includes the development of group change facilities, with Stage 3 providing a full redevelopment of the 25m pool and the addition of spectator seating. These three stages will see the total redevelopment of the aquatics area of the centre.

Stage 4 focuses on expanding health club, providing a dedicated group fitness area, dry change rooms, health club and centre office space and increased storage areas. To aid health club expansion, the existing indoor stadium court is proposed to be relocated to an alternative venue (most likely the proposed Wonthaggi Education Precinct), allowing Stage 4 redevelopment to be undertaken within the existing building footprint. This provides for no interruption and encroachment into the Wonthaggi Recreation Reserve and ensures the retention of the existing tennis pavilion and amenities.

Facility redevelopment and refurbishment design proposals presented within this report incorporate the latest methods and principles in universal and environmentally sustainable design, ensuring that Council's strategic objectives for environmental sustainability, access and inclusion and liveability are met.

The staged capital development costs include an initial \$12.36 million for the aquatics redevelopment (inclusive of Stages 1, 2 and 3) and a further \$3.538 million for the dry facility redevelopment (Stage 4). The significant overall development costs will need to be met through a mix of government and community sources.

Probable facility operating budgets for the first six years of operation have been prepared for the proposed concept, incorporating centre operations post Stage 1 completion, with Stage 2 to come online by the commencement of Year 3 and Stage 3 development projected to be completed part way through Year 5. Stage 4 development is not proposed during this six year period so operational costs have not been prepared for this stage of the redevelopment.

The operating budget projects a significant increase in facility income with an additional 38% in Year 1 alone. This will help to offset the increased expenditure with preliminary budget projections indicating a deficit of \$378,837 in Year 1.

It is projected that a redeveloped WALC would accommodate an estimated 29% (for Stage 1) to 39% (following Stage 3) increase in current Centre usage and attendance, while expanding opportunities for Bass Coast Shire residents to participate in aquatic and leisure programs.

The facility has been designed in line with Universal Design principles to maximise opportunities for all sections of the community to access the facility, and to significantly expand its range of programs and services to better meet specific user groups and visitor segments, including children and families, youth, older adults, women and girls, clubs and communities and Access for all Abilities.

Ultimately any redevelopment of the WALC should ensure that future development meets the Shire's current strategic directions for community and recreation facility provision, its capacity to manage initial capital and ongoing financial commitments (including borrowings, loan servicing and operational subsidies) and the ability of proposed facilities, programs and services to best meet the Bass Coast Shire community needs.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Local context¹

Less than two hours drive from Melbourne, Bass Coast is a unique combination of unspoiled coastline and picturesque rural hinterland. A popular holiday destination, quaint rural villages, bustling holiday towns, rolling hills and world renowned surf breaks provide a breath taking getaway for over three million visitors each year.

Serviced by the Bass Highway, the Shire provides many attractions and facilities including the Phillip Island, Churchill Island, Phillip Island Penguin Parade, Phillip Island Grand Prix Circuit Superbike Championships, The Nobbies, Seal Rocks, Koala Conservation Centre, Wonthaggi State Coal Mine Reserve, Chisholm TAFE (Bass Coast Campus), Bass Coast Regional Health (Regional Hospital), Cowes Golf Club, The Golf Club Bass Coast, Wonthaggi Golf Course, George Bass Coastal Walk, Bass Coast Rail Trail, Bunurong Marine National Park, Cape Woolamai State Faunal Reserve in addition to many more commercial, industrial, government, education and health services.

The four major urban centres of Wonthaggi, North Wonthaggi, Inverloch and Cowes make up the majority of the Bass Coast population. Wonthaggi and North Wonthaggi are the main population centres, accommodating more than 44% of the Shire's residents. The Shire also has many smaller townships.

Bass Coast Shire currently the second fastest growing area in regional Victoria and has a permanent population of approximately 30,000², although in peak season the population is almost triple that.

The Shire shares its municipal boundaries with the Shires of South Gippsland and Cardinia.

¹ Bass Coast Shire Council website, Community Profile, <http://profile.id.com.au/Default.aspx?>

² Department of Planning and Community Development, 'Victoria in Future' population forecasts, 2008

Figure 1: Bass Coast location map



1.2 Project background

Bass Coast Shire Council has two existing leisure facilities, a leisure and recreation facility with spa and sauna facilities in Cowes and an aquatic and leisure facility in Wonthaggi. There are three outdoor pools in the municipality on Education land, one in Wonthaggi which is school use only, one in Cowes which is open to the public over Christmas and New Year and one in Corinella in which a Feasibility Study was recently completed to look at the viability of opening this pool to the public.

The facilities at Council's centres vary but both have a health club, group fitness area and stadium while Phillip Island Leisure Centre has a crèche, spa and sauna. The Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre (WALC) also has an indoor 25m pool, toddler's pool, small meeting room and a pavilion for the tennis club. There is also a single court stadium at the Inverloch Community Hub.

Both Council owned facilities are currently managed by the YMCA who entered into a new contract in April this year. The centres offer a range of services, which include Aquatic Education programs, lap swimming, casual swimming, swim club activities, aqua aerobics, school group bookings, group fitness, personal training, gymnastics, vacation care and stadium sports.

A feasibility study was conducted in 1999 to determine the feasibility of redeveloping the aquatics section of WALC. This study recommended that the aquatics area of the centre be redeveloped in two stages. The purpose of this feasibility study was to review Stage 2 recommendations. The Wonthaggi and Bass Coast landscape has changed significantly in the past 11 years since the previous study. This study will look broadly at both the aquatic and leisure needs of the Wonthaggi and Bass Coast residents.

The project has also been driven by the following local factors and recent changes, including:

- The **ageing condition of WALC (31 years since construction of the aquatics area)**. Buildings, structures and mechanical services require significant upgrade to prolong their useful life and efficient operation. Additionally, the provision of aquatics facilities and amenities fail to meet contemporary community expectations and the functionality of existing water space is significantly limited in terms of program provision and service delivery;
- The existing centre is **not meeting the needs of the community**, with the aquatics, health club and sports stadium all currently at capacity and limited room for expansion other than through a redevelopment;
- The projected **residential and population growth** in and around Wonthaggi and the need to provide opportunities to expand and grow participation in aquatics and leisure and contribute to health, well-being and liveability of residents.

1.3 Project methodology

The following tasks were undertaken in the preparation of this Feasibility Study:

- Reviewed the 1999 Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre Feasibility Study and other relevant documents;
- Reviewed relevant local and regional demographic projections and participation data;
- Audited WALC mechanical, electrical, services and pool plant to assess its potential to meet proposed improvement needs;
- Analysed existing WALC operations and reviewed local competitors;
- Consulted with a broad range of community representatives, stakeholders and Council staff (refer to **Appendix I** for list of stakeholders consulted);
- Assessed the capability of the existing site to meet the needs of the redevelopment without impacting on the Wonthaggi Recreation Reserve;
- Engaged the Department of Planning and Community Development's (DPCD) Universal Design Consultant in facility planning phases and design elements;
- Prepared concept options, designs, site layouts and estimated probable costs, including six year operational costs;
- Prepared Draft Feasibility Report for Project Steering Group review.

SECTION 2: PROJECT CONTEXT

2.1 Local policy context

WALC is the only integrated aquatic and leisure facility within the Bass Coast Shire and is now 30+ years of age. Some capital improvements have been made in recent years, however the facility is in need of major capital upgrade and refurbishment to better meet the changing needs of the Bass Coast community and to ensure the long-term use and viability of an important community asset.

The awareness for the redevelopment of the WALC has been strengthening over the past 10 years following a feasibility study in 1999 that investigated the potential redevelopment and improvement opportunities for the Centre. The feasibility study highlighted strong community demand for the improvement of existing aquatic facilities and associated amenities, with additional technical reports identifying critical condition issues with pool plant, water treatment and air handling services.

A number of local and municipal strategic plans, policy and support documents have been reviewed as part of this Feasibility Study. A full list of documents is provided in **Appendix 2**. In addition, a range of local, regional and state level project stakeholders and organisations were consulted on the strategic context, likely constraints and opportunities related to the future upgrade and redevelopment of WALC. A full list of stakeholders consulted is provided in **Appendix 1**.

The following provides a summary of local policy context gathered through review of available literature and stakeholder discussions that may influence the future WALC redevelopment.

2.1.1 Council Plan 2007 - 2011

The Bass Coast Shire Council Plan provides a vision for the Shire and identifies how the Shire will be valued by the community for its leadership and as a provider of quality services to ensure Bass Coast is a safe, healthy and enjoyable place to live, work and visit.

The Council Plan provides five strategic objectives that will guide action planning and Council operations, being *advocacy, good governance, environmental sustainability, business prosperity and cohesive communities*.

The redevelopment of the WALC contributes to the meeting all these strategic objectives, in particular enhancing Council's cohesive communities goal of *'improving lifestyle opportunities and options by managing the built environment and encouraging cohesive communities'*.

2.1.2 Municipal Recreation Plan 2009 - 2014

Council's recreation and leisure planning and provision is guided by the *Bass Coast Municipal Recreation Plan 2009 - 2014*, which was adopted by Council in August 2009. The Plan clearly defines the Shire's vision for supporting recreation in Bass Coast as, *'a welcoming and diverse high quality recreation environment across Bass Coast that supports a healthy lifestyle and is enjoyed by all who live, work and holiday in the Shire'*.

The following five business and recreation principles underpin Council's role in the planning, provision and delivery of recreation services across the Shire:

1. **Increase participation and choice** in activities through the provision of infrastructure, information and programming.
2. Enhance the **value of opportunities** through increased access, awareness and quality.
3. Provide a **wide range of benefits** through recreation and an **enhanced focused on identified target groups**.
4. Support **not-for-profit providers to deliver** direct services, activities and competitions.
5. Work in **partnership with community organisations** to enhance program and service delivery.

All five business and recreation principles provide relevant guidance in the redevelopment of WALC and on the design, management considerations and scope of programs and services proposed in this Feasibility Study.

Enhancing water based recreation opportunities across the Shire is an identified priority and objective of Council's Recreation Plan, predominately due to high demand for swimming and the ageing nature and quality of existing aquatic facilities.

Respondents to recreation plan community consultation identified swimming as the top activity that people would like to participate in, but did not currently. Additionally, the Bass Coast community identified 'swimming pool' as the third priority facility that they would like to see upgraded (third behind bike paths and rail/walking trails).

A key policy within the Bass Coast Municipal Recreation Plan is to 'develop the Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre as the main facility for the whole of the Shire'. Provision within this policy included the key action of upgrading the WALC as the Shire's key aquatic asset, which incorporates the preparation of design concepts and associated costs and the future securing of internal and external funding to support redevelopment. The WALC Feasibility Study is currently delivering on this specific action.

2.1.3 Access and Inclusion Action Plan 2007 – 2010

The Bass Coast Shire Access and Inclusion Action Plan 2007 – 2010 (AIAP) has been developed in response to Council's ongoing commitment to the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). The AIAP supports the principles of; *equity, inclusion, participation, access and accountability*.

AIAP principles are consistent with Municipal Recreation Plan principles and have been considered through all elements of the WALC concept design process. This Feasibility Study also supports Council's AIAP and its principles, in addition to supporting the revision of the Disability (access to premises / buildings) Standards 2010 through the inclusion and adoption of Universal Design elements in the proposed facility redevelopment.

A range of specific tasks and actions from AIAP that focus on the equitable provision, promotion and delivery of programs, services and facilities have been considered within the Feasibility Study. A redeveloped WALC will also better support the equitable access and provision of a greater range of physical activity opportunities for the Bass Coast community.

Addressing and improving inter-township connectivity and transport networks is also a focus of Council policy and a specific target area of the *Gippsland Regional Development Strategy*. Providing a greater level of accessibility to WALC across the catchment area, and locally within Wonthaggi, will also assist in maximising participation opportunities for the Bass Coast community.

2.1.4 Wonthaggi Aquatic Centre Feasibility Study 1999

The 1999 *Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre Feasibility Study* identified a significant need to upgrade and improve the existing WALC. At the time of writing, the facility was approaching 20 years old and significant recommended capital works (including pool plant, filtration systems and mechanical services) and facility expansion projects were identified. A range of minor works to improve pool functionality, operational efficiency and overall visitor amenity have been completed over the past five to ten years in response to report findings.

The 1999 study identified an ageing population across the Bass Coast Shire, with resident survey responses indicating a strong demand for indoor heated aquatic facilities. In particular, a high demand increased water space for Aquatic Education activities and a spa / steam room facility were identified. Some additional demand was identified for an improved toddler's pool and the addition of a water slide.

A key driver for increasing heated water space at the WALC was the high usage of the existing indoor 25m pool, with significant pressure being placed on available lane and water space to cater for the large range of programs offered. The inability to control pool temperature effectively within a single body of water was identified as a significant constraint to the Centre's operation.

Council has completed some improvements to building and service provision in the past five years, however many of the recommended developments from the 1999 study remain current and have been reinforced through project consultation and audits. These key elements include:

- Increased indoor heated water space for Aquatic Education, warm water programs and expansion of toddler's pool.
- Improved visitor amenity including Centre temperature control, natural light and quality of change rooms and other amenities.
- Continued improvements to mechanical services and plant and equipment upgrades to increase operational efficiency and safety.

Demand for a water slide and spa / steam room (identified in the 1999 study) were also identified through 2010 Feasibility Study consultation. However, through the refinement of priorities, these facilities were replaced with community preference for more functional children's water play area and increased warm water space for older adult, rehabilitation and recreational programs.

Original costs detailed in the 1999 study identified a \$1.99 million overall project budget. These costs were identified on a staged basis and prepared against the complete facility refurbishment and redevelopment concept plan. In today's figures, the same scale redevelopment is likely to be in the order of \$8 to \$10 million.

Cost escalations over the past ten years in aquatic and leisure centre design and development have been significant. Legislative requirements in design, management and operations have increased significantly to provide better environmental, accessibility and shared use and participation outcomes. In addition, consumer and market expectations for community facilities, particularly swimming pools, has increased dramatically and demand for clean, safe and contemporary amenities is paramount to the success of any aquatic and leisure facility today.

2.1.5 Wonthaggi Recreation Reserve Master Plan 2010

The Wonthaggi Recreation Reserve Master Plan was prepared in 2010 and provides a guiding vision for the reserve and identifies a range of potential future uses and capital works projects, as well as highlighting key opportunities for the medium to long-term development of the precinct.

Master Plan principles developed for the Wonthaggi Recreation Reserve are consistent with the development objectives of WALC, which are reflected within this feasibility study. Key principles enhanced by WALC redevelopment include maximising:

- *Site functionality* - WALC redevelopment design proposals provide for reconfiguration to site ingress and egress, vehicle circulation, car parking and Centre / School bus pick-up and drop-off.
- *Space for outdoor sport* - WALC redevelopment design proposals do not encroach on existing precinct facilities or dedicated sport and recreation space within the Reserve.
- *Opportunities to share facilities* - WALC redevelopment design proposals provide for the retention of the existing tennis pavilion, the retention of access to external public toilets and continuing to share a bus turning area for the adjacent Wonthaggi North Primary School.

The Master Plan further identifies the opportunity to '*relocate the indoor stadium to another site with multiple courts to facilitate viable clubs and focus on swim, gym and fitness at the leisure centre*'. WALC redevelopment design proposals do not include provision for the stadium in Stage 4 as it is proposed that the users relocate to a multi court stadium that is planned for the Education Precinct (subject to funding).

2.1.6 Bass Valley Primary School Pool Feasibility Study 2010

The Bass Valley Primary School Pool Feasibility Study was recently completed to investigate the feasibility of providing public access to the existing Bass Valley Primary School Pool. \$52,702 in funding was recently received from the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust to make necessary capital upgrades to the pool amenities in order to align it with current industry operating guidelines. The report provided additional considerations and risk factors to be considered by the Board prior to proceeding with the project. It is anticipated that the Board will endorse the report in the near future.

2.1.7 Phillip Island Aquatic Feasibility Study 2010

A key action within the 2009 – 2014 Bass Coast Municipal Recreation Plan was to conduct ‘an investigation of an aquatic facility to service Phillip Island and the northern parts of the Shire’. The Phillip Island Aquatic Feasibility Study was commissioned by the Phillip Island Aquatic Committee and was conducted independently to the WALC feasibility study. At the time of writing, the draft report for the study was nearing completion. Refer to **Section 8.4** for an impact analysis of the preliminary recommendations from this study and how they impact on the redevelopment of WALC.

2.1.8 Proposed Wonthaggi Education Precinct

Current planning for the development of a major Education Precinct adjacent the existing Wonthaggi Secondary College is underway. The site incorporates 20ha of Department of Sustainability and Environment (Crown Land) land, gazetted for educational purposes. The site is approximately 2.5km from WALC.

In July 2010 the key Precinct partners signed the Bass Coast Education and Learning Precinct Concept Paper giving their in-principle commitment to the project.

The key partners include Apprenticeships Group Australia, Bass Coast Adult Education Centre, Bass Coast Shire Council, Bass Coast Specialist School, Chisholm Institute of TAFE, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Education Centre Gippsland, Monash University, Phillip Island Nature Park, South Gippsland/Bass Coast Local Learning and Employment Network, Newhaven College and Wonthaggi Secondary College.

Preliminary Precinct planning has identified a need for an indoor sports centre and hydrotherapy pool. Precinct planners propose to conduct further detailed consultation with the community and project stakeholders (when project funding levels are committed) to confirm specific elements of the proposed sports centre. Preliminary consultation however identified the need for a minimum three court stadium facility.

Consideration would be given to the relocation of WALC to the proposed Precinct, however financial contributions for an integrated aquatic and leisure facility are unlikely to include funding of pools and health club space. Whilst the opportunities to provide an extended opportunity for an integrated aquatic and leisure centre are attractive, the stakeholders identified a priority for use and allocation of funding towards indoor sports courts and not facilities, programs and services associated with an aquatic and leisure facilities.

The development of the Education Precinct does however support the relocation of the existing indoor sports court from WALC and integrating existing sporting programs and competition within a larger multi-court venue. This will promote increased viability of programs and enhance opportunities for local club development and competition activities.

2.1.9 Stadium Feasibility Study 2010

The Stadium Feasibility Study identifies a need in Wonthaggi for the provision of additional court space to accommodate increased demand for basketball. The study also identifies a need for

additional court space to better cater for netball and badminton. Currently these sports are played at WALC and a range of other school stadium facilities, none of which meet current industry guidelines for basketball or netball court size and run-off standards.

The Stadium Feasibility Study was commissioned in February 2010 and has been driven by the Wonthaggi Basketball Association and funded by Basketball Victoria. The key implication for the WALC redevelopment is the future use and location of indoor sports courts within Wonthaggi.

At the time of writing the study had only been progressed in draft. However, preliminary development options proposed the future provision of indoor courts at the proposed Education Precinct.

2.2 Regional facility provision

This section of the Feasibility Report provides an overview of aquatic and leisure centres, outdoor pools, dry and stadium facilities currently provided within Bass Coast Shire and throughout the Gippsland Region.

Existing aquatic and leisure centres, outdoor pools, dry and stadium facilities were reviewed across Bass Coast Shire, and across Gippsland. The following table provides a summary of existing facilities by municipality.

Table 1: Existing local government provided aquatic and leisure centres, outdoor pools, dry and stadium facilities

Facility Component	Bass Coast Shire	Baw Baw Shire	East Gippsland Shire	Latrobe City	South Gippsland Shire	Wellington Shire
Gym	2		2	3		1
Group Fitness	2	1	2	3		1
Cycle Classes	1	1	2	2		1
Indoor 25m Pool	1	2	2	3	2	1
Outdoor 25m Pool	1	3		1	4	4
Outdoor 50m Pool		1	2	2	1	2
Diving Pool				1		1
Learners Pool			2		4	4
Toddlers Pool	1	5	2	4	5	4
Spa	1		2	2		
Sauna	1		2	2		1
LTS Pool				2		1
Hydro/Warm Water Pool		1				1
Stadium	3	5	3	15	2	11
Creche	1	1	2	1		1

Note: The numbers in the table refer to the total number of identified facility components currently provided within each Shire's portfolio of facilities. One indoor pool in South Gippsland is only 15m and outdoor 25m pools in Baw Baw, South Gippsland and Wellington Shires vary from 18m to 38m in pool size.

Table 1 shows that there is a broad mix of facilities available across the Gippsland region with Bass Coast and Wellington Shires being the only two that do not have a second body of indoor water. Bass Coast is well provided for with dry programs such as health club and group fitness however underrepresented with provision of a toddlers or learners pool and also at the low end of provision with stadiums.

The following table provides an overall summary of aquatic and leisure centres, outdoor pools, dry and stadium facility provision against 2006 municipal population figures and land area. Facility to population and facility to land area ratios are used as a comparative guide only to ascertain an average level of provision across the region. They are not used as a performance benchmarks or goal that Council must work towards.

Table 2: Local government facility to population and land area provision ratios

LOCAL COUNCIL FACILITIES	Total 2006 Population	LGA Area (m2)	Population to Leisure and Aquatic Centres	Area (m2) to Leisure & Aquatic Centres	Population to Outdoor Pools	Area (m2) to Outdoor Pools	Population to Stadium Courts	Area (m2) to Stadium Courts
Bass Coast Shire Council	27,524	864	27,524	864	27,524	864	9,175	288
Baw Baw Shire Council	38,484	4,028	38,484	4,028	7,697	806	9,621	1,007
East Gippsland Shire Council	41,361	20,931	20,681	10,466	20,681	10,466	13,787	6,977
Latrobe City Council	72,075	1,426	24,025	475	24,025	475	4,805	95
South Gippsland Shire Council	26,675	3,295	-	-	6,669	824	13,338	1,648
Wellington Shire Council	41,591	10,989	41,591	10,989	8,318	2,198	3,781	999
Regional averages	41,285	6,922	25,384	4,470	15,819	2,605	9,084	1,836

Notes: Population figures have been taken from 2006 Census data published in Victoria in Future 2008 – Gippsland Region.³ There is no integrated aquatic and leisure centre provided in the South Gippsland Shire (SPLASH does not provide health club facilities and indoor pools and stadium courts are considered as individual facilities).

Table 2 figures highlight that Bass Coast's provision of leisure and aquatic centres is mid range for Gippsland per head of population as is the case with stadium provision. Outdoor pool provision is lowest in Bass Coast per head of population but it is situated on the coast and provides many beautiful beaches.

³ Victoria in Future 2008 – Gippsland Region, Victorian State Government Population and Household Projections, Information Booklet on Gippsland, 2006-2026.

2.2.1 Provision of Indoor 50m Pools in Regional Victoria

Geelong is the only location in regional Victoria to have an indoor 50m pool with all other indoor 50m pools being in Melbourne and its suburbs. This is due to the additional capital cost required to build an indoor 50m pool (approximately 2.8 times more than an indoor 25m pool) and the significant increase in operational costs over the life of the facility, which means that the facility needs to attract substantially more patrons than a 25m pool to run at the same operating costs. All of the existing 50m pools in Victoria are built where there are large catchments, with smaller catchment areas being unable to sustain the cost of operating these facilities.

2.3 Bass Coast facility provision

This section provides an overview of the aquatic and leisure facilities that are currently provided within Bass Coast Shire.

2.3.1 Council provision

Council owns the following leisure and aquatic facilities, which are currently managed by the YMCA with the exception of the Inverloch Community Hub:

- Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre
- San Remo Leisure Centre
- Inverloch Community Hub – it should be noted that the hub consists of Tourist Information Centre, Library, meeting rooms, a small community gym and a skate park (which is managed by the YMCA). Council staff manages the hub and takes bookings while the YMCA run programs on an as required basis.

WALC has the only indoor pool in Bass Coast Shire with the closest indoor pool being at SPLASH in Leongatha (38kms or approximately 30 minute drive). Health club and group fitness facilities are provided in both Wonthaggi. Single court stadium facilities are available in Wonthaggi, Phillip Island and Inverloch with additional stadium space being available at six schools in Bass Coast and the San Remo Leisure Centre. There are no multiple courts in the Shire.

The following table provides a summary of facility components provided at each Bass Coast aquatic and leisure centre and stadium.

Table 3: Existing provision of Bass Coast leisure and aquatic centres and stadiums

Facility Component	Wonthaggi Aquatic & Leisure Centre	Phillip Island Leisure Centre	Inverloch Community Hub
Gym			
Group Fitness			
Cycle Classes			
Indoor 25m Pool			
Outdoor 25m Pool			
Outdoor 50m Pool			
Diving Pool			
Learners Pool			
Toddlers Pool			
Spa			
Sauna			
LTS Pool			
Hydro/Warm Water Pool			
Stadium (no of courts)	1	1	1
Creche			

Note: The numbers provided for the stadium row refer to the number of courts provided at each facility.

2.3.2 Private provision

There are two private competitors for health and fitness in Wonthaggi which are Curves and Feel Good Fitness. Refer to **Section 6.4** for a competitor analysis.

Single court stadium facilities are provided at Wonthaggi Secondary College (2 courts), Wonthaggi North Primary School, St Josephs, Wonthaggi Primary School, Cowes Primary School and Bass Valley Primary School.

The Cowes school pool is also made available to the public during the summer months, this facility is managed by the YMCA and is independent of Council.

SECTION 3: THE EXISTING WALC

3.1 WALC Overview

The aquatics section of WALC was built in 1979 with a further development in 1986 to build the dry component of the facility. The aquatics area was refurbished in 2001 in line with some of the recommendations from the 1999 feasibility study. The facility is located at 41 Wentworth Road in Wonthaggi.

Until recently WALC has had relatively little competition with Curves being the only competitor in town. A private health club, Feel Good Fitness opened in August 2010.

The desalination plant has increased the number of workers to the area significantly (refer to **Section 6.1.2** for further information) and has also had a significant impact on memberships at WALC. The centre increased memberships from 455 to 607 members between January and July which led to overcrowding, particularly in the health club. This has seen regular and long term members being dissatisfied and leaving the centre. New competitor, Feel Good Fitness, have come to the area at a good time to capitalise on the additional people in town with 750 members in just three months of operation. WALC's membership numbers have reduced from 602 to 551 from August to October, which can more than likely be attributed to both overcrowding and their new competitor.

Council and the YMCA are currently working on a temporary strategy to meet the additional demand by installing a portable at the back of the Centre. This would allow them to turn the existing meeting room into additional health club space with the portable being used as a multi-purpose space for spin classes (subject to a demand analysis), Body Balance, yoga, pilates and a meeting/social area. The YMCA will be supplying the additional equipment required while the cost of the portable is to be shared between Council and the YMCA. Council are currently applying for a building permit.

3.1.1 Existing facilities

Table 4: Existing WALC facilities

Facility Component	Comment
25m pool	Indoor and heated
Toddlers pool	Small and limited in its functionality
Meeting room	Mainly used by staff and aqua aerobic participants after classes
Single court stadium	Shared between stadium sports, gymnastics, dance, vacation care and group fitness
Health club	228sqm
Tennis pavilion	Tennis club has a long term lease for this space
Girl Guides room	Existing lease will not be renewed
Skate Park	Located 100m from the centre in the recreation reserve this is managed by YMCA under the same contract

3.1.2 Existing programs

Table 5: Existing WALC programs

Program	Area of Centre
Aquatic Education	Pool
Aqua Aerobics	Pool
Underwater Hockey	Pool
Personal Training	Health Club
Teen Gym	Health Club
Living Longer Living Stronger	Health Club
Disability Programs	Health Club
Challenge Fitness Camps	Health Club & Recreation Reserve
Basketball	Stadium
Badminton	Stadium
Junior Soccer	Stadium
Group Fitness	Stadium
Gymnastics and Ed Gym	Stadium
Vacation Care	Stadium

3.1.3 Hours of operation

Hours of operation have been recently expanded to meet the increase in memberships and demand due to the large number of desalination plant workers. **Table 6** outlines both the prior and current operating hours of the facility.

Table 6: WALC hours of operation

Health Club	Current Hours	Prior Hours
Monday - Thursday	6am - 9pm	6am - 8pm
Friday	6am - 8pm	6am - 8pm
Saturday - Sunday	9am - 4pm	9am - 4pm

Pool	Current Hours	Prior Hours
Monday - Wednesday	6am - 8.30pm	6am - 8pm
Thursday	6am - 7pm *	6am - 7pm *
Friday	6am - 8pm	6am - 8pm
Saturday - Sunday	9am - 4pm	9am - 4pm

* *The pool closes to the public and is used by Underwater Hockey.*

3.1.4 Fees and charges

Proposed annual fees and charges are submitted to Council each year by the YMCA. Price increases are generally based on a CPI increase unless there is a reason to vary this. These are signed off by Council.

3.1.5 Existing management and staff structure

The Centre has been managed by the YMCA since 1998 and their contract with Council was renewed in April 2010. They have a 5 x 5 x 5 contract which means they have a guaranteed contract until April 2015 with two x five year extensions at Council's discretion.

WALC has a dedicated Centre Manager to oversee operations of the facility with an Area Manager in place to oversee all of the YMCA managed facilities and services in Bass Coast, which includes Phillip Island Leisure Centre, Cowes Outdoor Pool, Wonthaggi Skate Park, Inverloch Skate Park, Cowes Skate Park and Bass Coast Youth Services.

3.2 Facility catchment

An analysis of existing WALC memberships⁴ indicated that the current membership base reside across 46 different Victorian post code areas, spreading from Bass Coast into South Gippsland and Latrobe City, and to outskirt suburbs of Melbourne.

The following table provides a breakdown of total 2010 member postcodes of residence and the number residing within each particular post code area. **Table 7** following identifies the main geographic population catchment of WALC members. Of the 592 WALC memberships reviewed, 555 (or 93.8%) reside within post code areas that are wholly or partially located within the Bass Coast Shire.⁵

Table 7: WALC member post codes that dissect Bass Coast municipal boundary

Postcode	Suburb / Township	Number of members	Percentage (%) of total members
3995	WONTHAGGI	262	44.3%
3996	INVERLOCH	140	23.6%
3995	CAPE PATERSON	36	6.1%
3992	DALYSTON	14	2.4%
3922	COWES	13	2.2%
3995	WATTLE BANK	10	1.7%
3995	KILCUNDA	9	1.5%
3995	SOUTH DUDLEY	7	1.2%
3995	WOOLAMAI	7	1.2%
3995	GLEN ALVIE	6	1.0%
3922	CAPE WOOLAMAI	6	1.0%
3995	ARCHIES CREEK	4	0.7%

⁴ Figures relate to 2010 WALC members.

⁵ It should be noted that post codes do not neatly fit within municipal boundaries and postcodes 3996, 3951, 3945 and 3984 overlap into the neighbouring South Gippsland Shire.

Postcode	Suburb / Township	Number of members	Percentage (%) of total members
3951	KONGWAK	4	0.7%
3951	OUTTRIM	4	0.7%
3995	HARMERS HAVEN	3	0.5%
3991	BASS	3	0.5%
3984	CORINELLA	3	0.5%
3984	CORONET BAY	3	0.5%
3922	RYANSTON	3	0.5%
3984	GRANTVILLE	2	0.3%
3984	PIONEER BAY	2	0.3%
3923	RHYLL	2	0.3%
3995	ANDERSON	1	0.2%
3995	LANCE CREEK	1	0.2%
3995	NTH WONTHAGGI	1	0.2%
3979	ALMURTA	1	0.2%
3945	WOODLIEGH	1	0.2%
3922	SUNSET STRIP	1	0.2%
n/a	POST CODES OUTSIDE BASS COAST	43	7.3%
TOTALS		592	100.0%

Of particular note is the relative lower number of members residing in areas outside of the 3995 and 3996 areas (Wonthaggi and Inverloch and their adjacent townships respectively). Collectively, the 3995 (347) and 3996 (140) post code areas provide more than 88.7% of total WALC members. Across all unique post areas analysed, 82.8% of members (or 490) live within 15km of the WALC and 84.1% (or 498) of members live within a 20 minute drive.

The remaining existing members that reside further than a 20 minute drive from the WALC (94 members) are Phillip Island and Western Port Bay residents, as well as others living outside the Bass Coast Shire boundary.

It should be noted that memberships account for 53% over overall facility visits and there is no mechanism in place to record where casual visitors live.

Figure 2 provides a snapshot of WALC membership catchments by postcode. WALC provides a distinct catchment area that is predominately centred in the main local urban population areas. This finding is reflective and consistent with the Bass Coast Shire settlement pattern and proposed growth management hierarchy provided in the Bass Coast Shire planning scheme.

Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre Feasibility Study

Postcode analysis of Aquatic and Leisure Centre Members (2010)

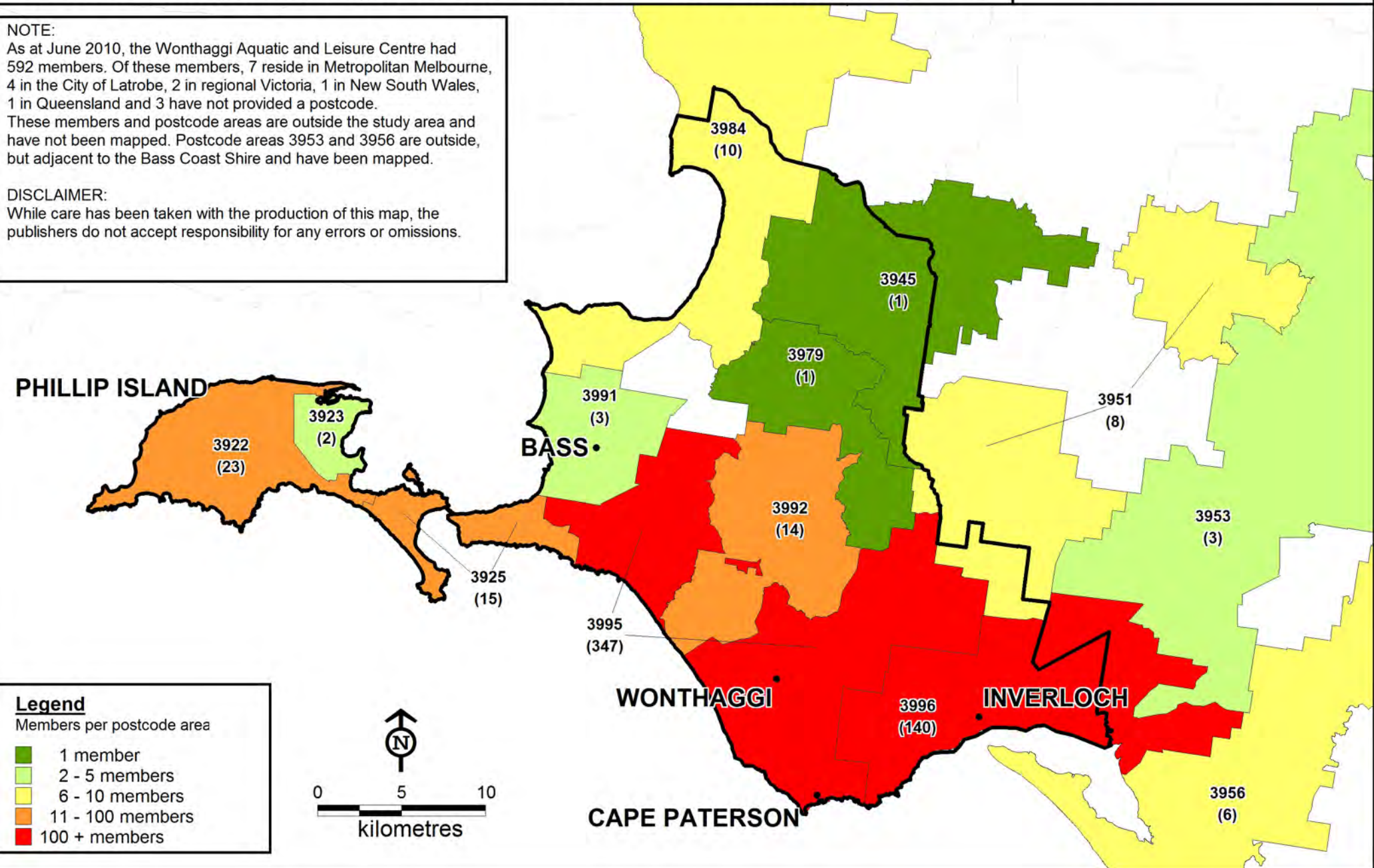
NOTE:

As at June 2010, the Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre had 592 members. Of these members, 7 reside in Metropolitan Melbourne, 4 in the City of Latrobe, 2 in regional Victoria, 1 in New South Wales, 1 in Queensland and 3 have not provided a postcode.

These members and postcode areas are outside the study area and have not been mapped. Postcode areas 3953 and 3956 are outside, but adjacent to the Bass Coast Shire and have been mapped.

DISCLAIMER:

While care has been taken with the production of this map, the publishers do not accept responsibility for any errors or omissions.



3.3 WALC facility attendance

The following section provides an overview of historical trends in visitation and looks at the breakdown between aquatic and dry visits and membership and casual usage at the centre.

Figure 3: WALC overall attendance figures

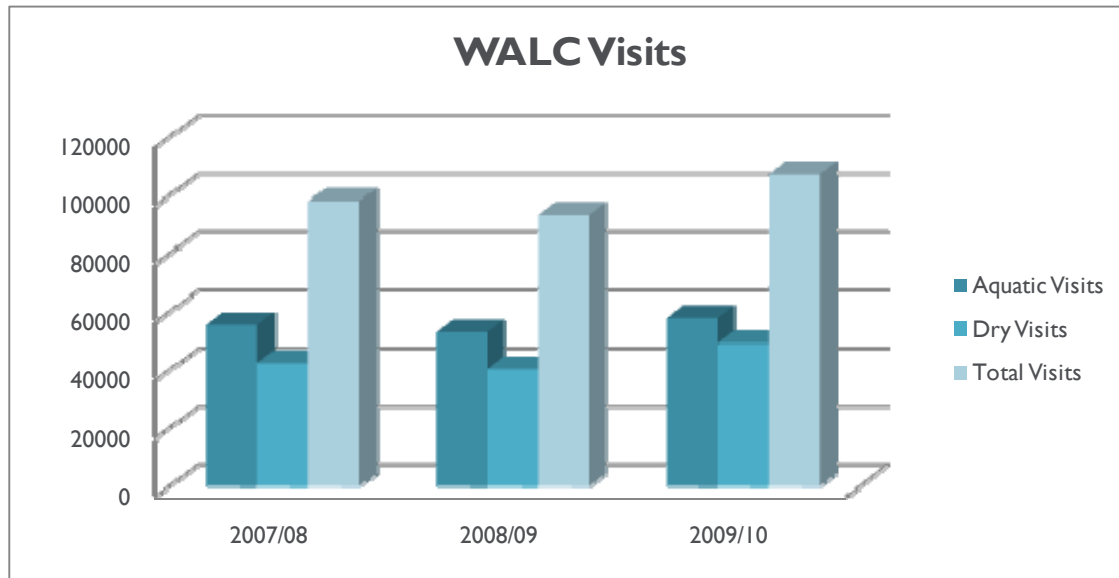


Figure 3 provides an overview of visits over the past three years at WALC. It shows a 5% reduction in total attendances between 2007/08 and 2008/09 with both aquatics and dry visits reducing, followed by a 15% increase in attendance in 2009/10. The YMCA attributed the reduction in attendances in 2008/09 to their method of recording attendances, Links was introduced in 2008/09 so these figures would be the most accurate with some estimates being used to calculate the 2007/08 figures.

Increases in membership due to desalination workers started to be noticed in February 2010 with membership numbers increasing from 455 to 607 in a six month period. The last four months membership numbers has seen membership numbers reduce by 51, which is likely to be a combination of overcrowding and the new competitor in town.

Figure 4: Breakdown of aquatic and dry visits

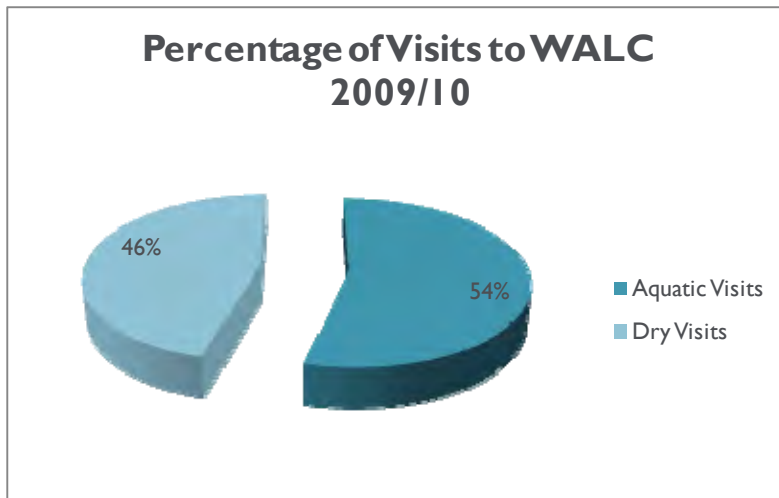


Figure 4 shows that more than half of Centre visits are related to the aquatic side of the facility although the percentage of dry visits has increased from previous years. It should be noted that a split of membership visits was included in both aquatic and dry visits (22% aquatic members and 78% dry members) and that this split has a high percentage of aquatic members in comparison to industry 'norms'.

Figure 5: Breakdown of casual and membership visits

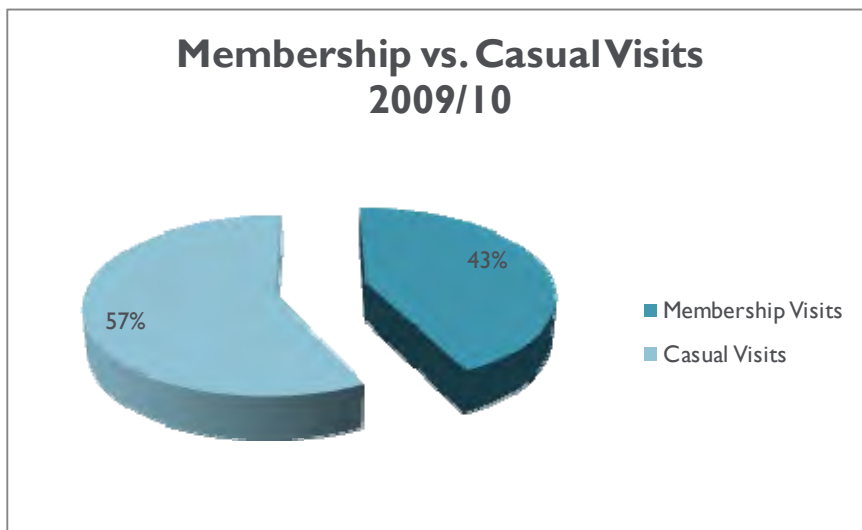


Figure 5 provides a breakdown of membership and casual visits at WALC in 2009/10. Membership visits are slightly higher than casual visits and these include both dry and wet memberships in addition to Aquatic Education memberships. Membership visits per week in June 2020 were 1.5 which is in line with the industry average of 1.5 to 2 visits per week, this figure excludes Aquatic Education members.

3.4 WALC financial performance

Income trends at WALC over the past three years show growth of 12% in 2008/09, and 21% in 2009/10 with the most significant increases being in the areas of health club, aquatic education, group fitness and recreational swimming (in that order). Although the Centre has shown strong income growth this has not been sufficient to offset the increasing cost of operating the centre, hence the increase in net subsidy by Council over this period.

This strong income growth is expected to continue, particularly while the desalination plant is being built and there are so many additional people in Bass Coast. The YMCA have a guaranteed contract with Council which means that any surplus they make they are entitled to keep, they may agreed to reinvest any surplus back into the Centre.

Expenditure trends for the past three financial years show that expenses have been increasing steadily each year (10% in 2008/09 and 17% in 2009/10). Budget projections for 2010/11 are for a slight decrease in expenditure.

Council's overall subsidy for WALC has increased by 14% over the three year period between 2007/08 and 2009/10 with a 6% increase in 2008/09 and an 8% increase in 2009/10. Budget projections for the new contract period reflect a decrease in the operational subsidy of the next three financial years.

Table 8: WALC subsidy per visit

Subsidy per visit	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Subsidy per visit	-\$ 2.51	-\$ 2.67	-\$ 2.88

Table 8 shows an increase in the subsidy per visit by 16 cents in 2008/09 and 21 cents in 2009/10 bringing the subsidy per visit to \$2.88. 2009 CERM indicators for similar facilities in regional areas show an average subsidy per visit of \$1.25, which is significantly less than WALC.⁶

** It should be noted that individual centre locations were not able to be identified for other regional centres.*

⁶ University of South Australia – National Benchmarking Survey for Sports and Aquatic Centres 2009. Group 7 medians have been applied and these have been further broken down to include only regional centres to make it comparative to Wonthaggi. n=13

3.5 Operational Considerations

There are a number of considerations that restrict or inhibit the current use of the Centre, either from a capacity or an operational perspective, these include:-

3.5.1 Aquatics Area

- **Water temperature** – the water temperature in the 25m pool is currently maintained at 30 degrees except on Wednesdays when it is increased to 32 degrees to accommodate aqua aerobics and toddler’s Aquatic Education classes. The process to increase the temperature by two degrees takes a day and means that the pool is too warm for lap swimmers on this day.
- **Lack of water space** – the 25m pool does not adequately cater for the community demand, between trying to cater for three separate swim clubs who all want to use the pool after school and weekday evenings and after school Aquatic Education lessons this often means there is inadequate lane space provided for lap swimmers and people who wish to use the pool for recreation reasons.
- **Pool turnover rates are quite slow** which can affect water clarity, particularly on busy days. The filtration system was upgraded in 2005 to improve the turnover rate to 4.5 hours, but no allowance was made to increase the soiled water return flow-rate into the balance tank to accommodate the increased filtration rate, and as a result only two of the three filters are able to operate at any one time.⁷ This has reduced the turnover rate to 6.5 hours which is similar to original filtration rates.
- The **lack of group change rooms** for school groups along with the lack of male school teachers means that often students have to change in and out of their bathers on pool deck.

3.5.2 Stadium

- **Lack of programmable dry space** – the stadium is being shared by several programs, many of which would like to increase their time available but are not able to. The two programs that are most affected by this are basketball and group fitness. Now that there is a new competitor in town, the restricted group fitness timetable may be something that causes people to join Feel Good Fitness if aquatics is not important to them.
- Given the multi use of the stadium there is **inadequate storage space** to cater for gymnastics, group fitness, basketball, badminton and junior soccer with all equipment

⁷ Roejen Services Filtration Plant Condition Audit & Review July 2010

currently being stored in the same area. This creates an OH&S and manual handling risk.

- As with any facility that runs **gymnastics without having a dedicated area**, the 'set up' and 'pack up' of gymnastics equipment is time consuming. The YMCA try to offset this by setting equipment up on a Saturday for classes and then leaving it there over the weekend until Monday when it is packed up. This reduces 'set up' and 'pack up' time for gymnastics but also reduces the availability of the stadium for other activities during this time.
- The **stadium is a less than ideal location** to run classes such as Body Balance which requires participants to stretch and relax, particularly in winter when it is exceptionally cold

3.5.3 Reception area

The layout of the existing reception area:-

- Provides an ongoing challenge for management at the centre as there is no way of controlling access into the health club or stadium when staff are busy. This means that people may not be paying for their visit and makes it difficult to record accurate attendance figures. Ideally the reception area needs to be at the entrance to the Centre so that it controls traffic through the centre and ensures that everyone entering the centre either pays or swipes their membership or visit card.
- Only allows for one Point of Sale terminal to service both reception and the kiosk. During busy times this is inadequate and staff often have a line of people waiting to scan through reception or purchase something from the kiosk. As people get impatient they tend to go through to other parts of the Centre without coming to reception. For example health club patrons may see a line and not bother going to reception and Aquatic Education parents have been known to tell staff they will come back after class to scan through and there is no way of knowing whether they do this or not. It does not allow staff the time that is required to join up new members and do tours of the facility for prospective members, something which is more important than ever with a 'real' competitor in town.

3.5.4 Health Club

- As is the case in a lot of regional facilities the **health club is only supervised at busy times** (4pm to 8pm weekdays and 9am to 12pm Saturdays) and during programmed times (Living Longer Living Stronger (LLLS) classes). Particularly with the reception desk where it is and the lack of a dedicated reception staff person during this time it gives people the ability to walk straight into an unsupervised health club without signing a disclaimer which poses a risk issue to the YMCA.

- The **size of the health club is inadequate** to cater with the current demand. The Centre has increased its operating hours but peak times from 4pm until 7pm see the health club overcrowded leading to unhappy members and OH&S risks at times, particularly in the free weights area.

SECTION 4: WALC TECHNICAL AUDITS

A number of technical audits have been completed on the Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre that have relevance to this study, details of how the findings of these audits impact on both the existing operations and any planned redevelopment are included in this section.

4.1 Mechanical, services and electrical audit

Heath Robinson Consulting Engineers were commissioned to undertake a mechanical, services and electrical audit of WALC in August 2010 as part of this feasibility study to look at the existing services and determine whether they can meet the needs of any proposed improvements. Refer to Volume 2 Technical Audit Appendices for full audit report and findings.

4.1.1 Overview of existing operations

The audit identified a number of areas where the Centre is operating outside regulations, some of which will only require rectification at the time of redevelopment, with immediate priorities identified in **Section 4.1.2**.

If a redevelopment does not proceed within the next 5 to 10 years a heat recovery system should be installed within the pool ventilation system to transfer heat from the exhaust to the outside air to reduce heat load on the plant and provide significant energy savings.

4.1.2 Immediate priorities

The following items identify the immediate priorities that need to be addressed regardless of whether the Centre is redeveloped:-

- Electrical and communications services do not comply with current regulations, standards and codes of practice and need to be upgraded (Section 3.2 - Heath Robinson Existing Building Services Report for Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre).
- There is minor corrosion on the casing of the hot water heaters and severe corrosion on the steel supports under the heaters, both of which should be repaired (Section 4.2 - Heath Robinson Existing Building Services Report for Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre).
- Pool hall heating and ventilation plant needs to be assessed and rectified (Section 4.2 - Heath Robinson Existing Building Services Report for Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre).
- Pool change room heating and ventilation systems are not in line with current regulations (Section 4.2 - Heath Robinson Existing Building Services Report for Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre).

- A number of compliance issues for provision and installation were identified (Section 5.2 - Heath Robinson Existing Building Services Report for Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre).
- Fire Services do not meet current regulations with regard to provision and installation, this is an OH&S issue and needs to be rectified immediately (Section 6 - Heath Robinson Existing Building Services Report for Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre).

4.1.3 Implications for redevelopment

Assuming that all of the immediate priorities have been addressed, the following improvement would be required at the time of redevelopment:-

- New switchboard as there is no spare capacity on existing switchboards
- Most of the existing electrical and communications services infrastructure will require upgrading or replacement
- Mechanical services would need to be reinstalled as they complied with regulations and relevant Australian Standards that were current at the time of their construction but would not fully comply with current regulations and standards
- The existing lighting installations do not comply with the current requirements of the BCA – Energy Efficiency regulations

4.2 Pool Plant audit

Roejen Services were commissioned to undertake a pool plant audit of the Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre in July 2010 as part of this feasibility study to assess whether current pool plant would meet the needs of any proposed improvements. Refer to Volume 2 Technical Audit Appendices for full audit report and key findings

4.2.1 Overview of existing operations

This audit identified a number of issues with existing pool plant and included recommendations on equipment repair, maintenance and capital expenditure with the following inclusions:-

- A 10 year capital expenditure budget of \$124,100.
- A 5 year equipment repair and maintenance budget \$46,250.

4.2.2 Immediate priorities

The following items identify immediate priorities that need to be addressed:-

- Discharge of backwash water currently goes to storm water rather than sewerage, this is in breach of EPA regulations and requires immediate attention (refer Section 5.1

of Roejen Services Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre Filtration Plant Condition Audit and Review).

- Inadequate safety signage in plant room, this is an OH&S issue and requires immediate attention (refer Section 5.1 of Roejen Services Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre Filtration Plant Condition Audit and Review).
- A number of compliance issues were identified with electrical services and further investigation through an electrical safety inspection, carried out by a qualified electrical services contractor is recommended. Electrical issues were identified as an OH&S issue and require immediate attention (refer Section 5.2 of Roejen Services Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre Filtration Plant Condition Audit and Review).
- Chemical disinfection systems and associated monitoring and safety systems require immediate upgrading (refer Section 5.3 of Roejen Services Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre Filtration Plant Condition Audit and Review).
- Chemical storage – compliance issues identified with chemical loading, storage and safety which poses an OH&S risk (refer Section 5.3 of Roejen Services Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre Filtration Plant Condition Audit and Review).
- Corrosion issues with the casing of the hot water heaters and steel supports under the heaters that require attention (refer Section 5.5 of Roejen Services Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre Filtration Plant Condition Audit and Review).
- Installation of a water meter to record usage and ascertain if there are any water leaks (refer Section 5.6 of Roejen Services Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre Filtration Plant Condition Audit and Review)
- Replacement of the rusted floor pit cover, this is an OH&S issue (refer Section 5.6 of Roejen Services Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre Filtration Plant Condition Audit and Review)

4.1.3 Implications for redevelopment

Assuming that all of the immediate priorities have been addressed, the following would need to be upgraded at the time of any future WALC redevelopment:-

- New pool plant and filtration systems
- New balance tank
- New boiler
- Installation of new air handling system
- New backwash retention tank

4.3 Water and Energy Audit

Council commissioned EnergyetiX to conduct an energy and water audit of the Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre in July 2010. Their report identifies recommendations that will reduce WALC's energy and water usage and greenhouse gas emissions.

Council should consider the recommendations in this report in line with capital costs and payback period of each initiative (which is included in the report), particularly if the proposed redevelopment at WALC is to proceed.

Refer to **Volume 2 Technical Audit Appendices** for full audit report and key findings.

4.4 Summary of audit findings

The above audits identified a number of issues that need to be addressed immediately and that significant investment would be required in the next five years if the aquatics area of the Centre is not redeveloped.

There are also a number of issues that need to be addressed at the time of redevelopment as existing plant and services will not be able to accommodate future facility expansion.

SECTION 5: COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

This section of the Feasibility Report provides an overall summary of consultation tasks undertaken throughout the project consultation phase, delivered during July and August 2010. It provides a summary of overall community demand for the redevelopment of WALC, key determinants for provision and use and a summary of qualitative information provided by a range of stakeholders on a variety of project topics.

5.1 Consultation overview

Table 9 provides an overview of consultation methods, key stakeholder groups and number of responses for each group.

Table 9: Summary of project consultation undertaken

Stakeholder	Consultation method	Number of responses
Current Members and Users	Surveys	239
General Community	Surveys and street stalls	121
Council Staff	Surveys and meetings	81
Sporting Clubs	Surveys and phone interviews	34
Schools	Phone interviews	11
Community Groups and Organisations	Meeting and phone interviews	10
YMCA Staff	Meetings	8
WALC User Groups	Meeting and phone interviews	8
Government Departments	Meetings and phone interview	3
Other Consultants (as relevant)	Phone interviews	3
Neighbouring Council	Phone interview	1
Phillip Island Pool Committee	Phone interview	1

5.2 Community and stakeholder survey findings

5.2.1 Survey respondents

429 survey responses were received and analysed during the project consultation process. The following figures and tables provide an overview of key findings related to these surveys.

Figure 6: Gender breakdown of survey respondents

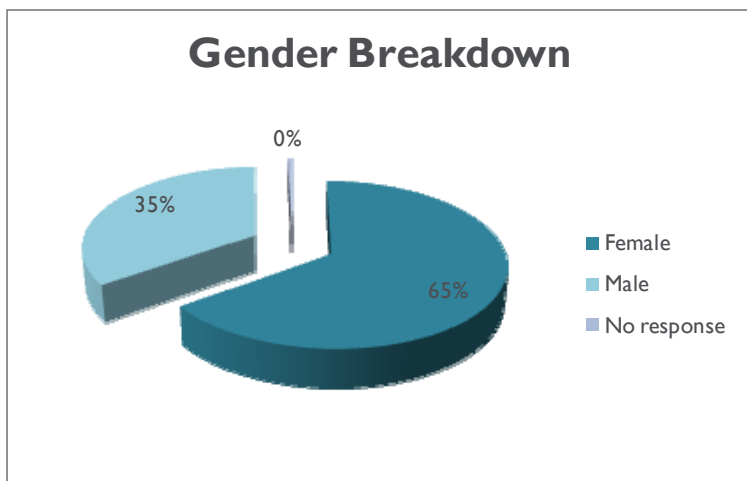
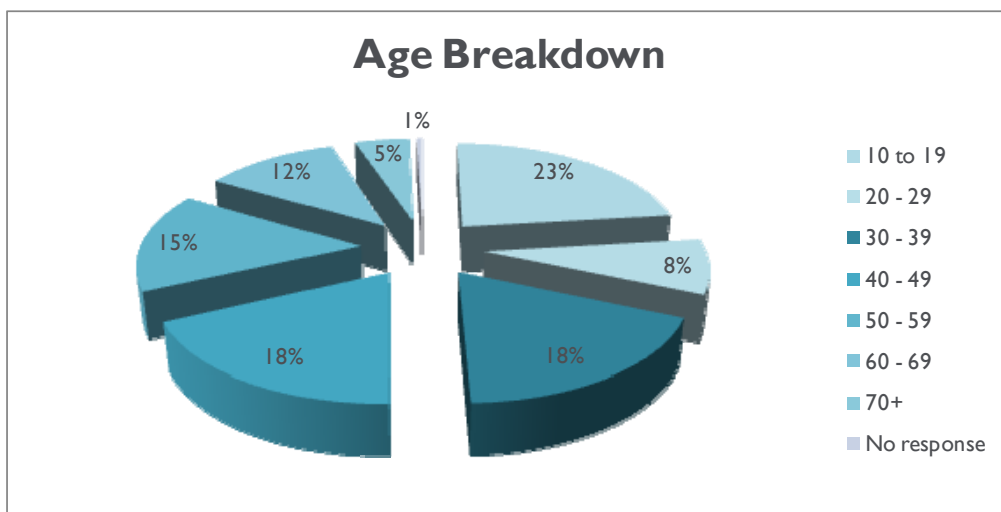


Figure 6 shows that significantly more females than males completed community and stakeholder surveys.

Figure 7 below shows that a diverse cross section of age groups was achieved through the survey process. This is important as it will help to ensure that if redeveloped, WALC will cater for a wide cross section of the community.

Figure 7: Age breakdown of survey respondents



5.2.2 Key survey responses

Figure 8 on the next page represents the responses received regarding current usage at WALC. A significant 76% of all survey respondents currently use WALC in some capacity with 23% of respondents that do not currently use the Centre.

Figure 8: WALC utilisation

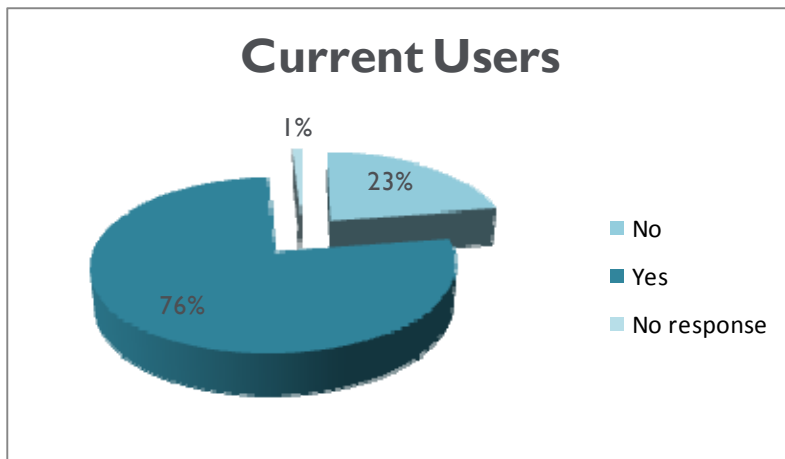


Figure 9 below provides a clear outline of the times respondents are currently using the Centre. The combination of Teen Gym members, desalination plant workers and other shift workers makes the 4-6pm in the health club an extremely busy time, while Aquatic Education lessons and swim club makes the aquatics area extremely busy also with 40.6% of respondents visiting the centre during that time.

The next most popular timeslot is weekday mornings, followed closely by weekday evenings and then weekday afternoons. Survey respondents do not tend to utilise the centre as much on weekends. Promotion of off peak membership at a cheaper price may help to encourage people to use the Centre at quiet times.

It should be noted that multiple responses were received for this question.

Figure 9: Time of attendance at WALC

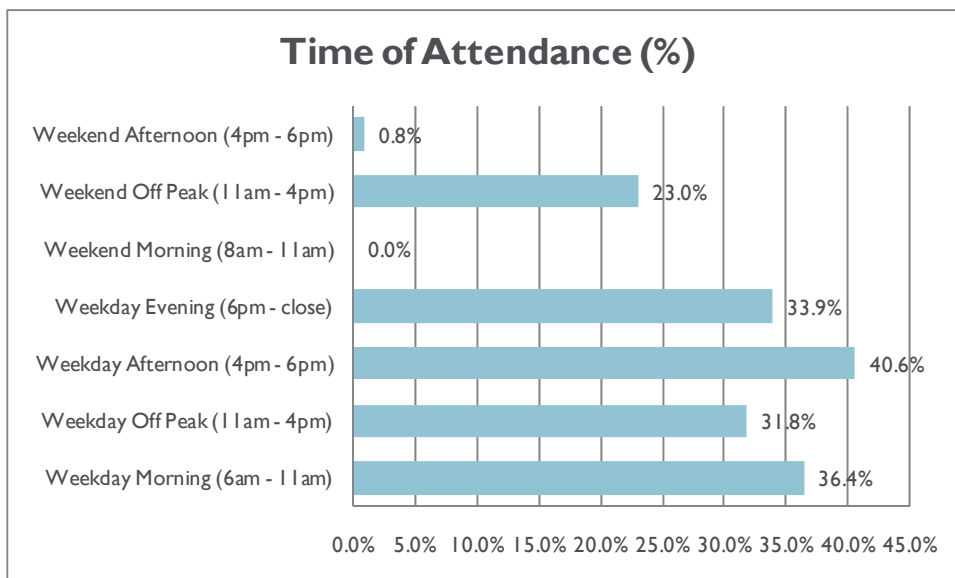


Table 10 provides a breakdown of survey respondents that currently use WALC and what they do at the centre. The most popular activity from these respondents is lap swimming, followed by use of the pool for fun and recreation and the health club. More than half of all survey respondents indicated that they lap swim (51.9% member, 52.1% general community), close to half use the pool for recreation/fun (41.8% member, 47.9% general community) and 31.4% of members using the health club and 18.8% of general community respondents. This demonstrates that the surveys were filled out more by users of the aquatic facilities than the dry facilities as the Centre attracts more aquatics visits than dry visits.

It should be noted that multiple responses were received for this question.

Table 10: Current activities undertaken at WALC

If you currently attend WALC what do you do there?		
	Total	% of respondents
Lap swim	170	23%
Use the pool for fun/recreation	136	19%
Use the gym	102	14%
Participate in group fitness classes	76	10%
Participate in swimming lessons	64	9%
Aqua aerobics	46	6%
Take part in a club activity	45	6%
Use the toddlers pool	39	5%
Use the stadium	33	5%
Attend Personal Training sessions	11	2%
Come and spend time with friends	10	1%
Total Responses	732	

The figures in **Table 11** give a clear indication of facility components that would encourage survey respondents to use WALC if it was to be redeveloped. These were predetermined areas of the centre that people chose. A warm water/hydrotherapy pool features highly with 13% of respondents, followed closely by additional lap lanes (12%) and a larger health club (11%). Interestingly more than half of the members (51.5%) and close to half (47.9%) general community that responded to this survey wanted a warm water pool, with 50.2% of members and 24% of general community wanting additional lap lanes and 42.7% of members and 21.5% of general community wanting a larger health club. These figures correlate with the findings in **Table 10** in regards to respondent's current usage of the centre.

It should be noted that multiple responses were received for this question.

Table 11: Facility components that would encourage use of WALC if it were to be redeveloped

If WALC was to be redeveloped what would encourage you to attend?		
	Total	% of respondents
Warm water/ hydro pool	203	13%
Additional lap lanes	175	12%
Larger gym	161	11%
More extensive group fitness programs	153	10%
Water slide	153	10%
Water play area	143	10%
More extensive café	143	10%
Health and wellness programs	126	8%
Other	88	6%
Cycling classes	85	6%
Health practitioners	75	5%
Total Responses	1505	

The question below in **Table 12** was in relation to things that people had seen at other facilities that they would like to see at WALC so these responses were additional to any previous questions. The figures in **Table 12** represent the top 10 things that people said they would like to see at WALC.

It should be noted that not all respondents answered this question.

Table 12: What people would like to see at WALC if it were to be redeveloped

What would you like to see at WALC?		
	Total	% of respondents
Water play	27	11%
Café	25	10%
Upgraded change facilities	24	10%
Water slide	19	8%
Warm water pool	18	8%
Wave pool	11	5%
Creche	10	4%
Spa/sauna	9	4%
50m pool	8	3%
More lap lanes	7	3%
Total	239	

5.3 Stakeholder consultation findings

The following section includes a summary of all the key stakeholders that were consulted as part of this project.

5.3.1 Swim Clubs

There are three different swimming clubs that currently use WALC, the South Gippsland Bass Swimming Club, Wonthaggi Amateur Swimming Club and the Phillip Island Swimming Club. All of these clubs use WALC weekly and said that they would like to have additional access to lanes to grow the club but weren't able to currently due to lack of additional lane space. Combined, the clubs use up to 40 hours per week of lane space (this varies over summer when Phillip Island Swimming Club uses Cowes Outdoor Pool) in *peak times*. This usage puts considerable strain on the pool and other groups' ability to use the pool during these times.

5.3.2 Other user groups

A number of other key user groups were consulted as part of the feasibility study, refer to **Table 13** on the following page for key comments from these groups.

Table 13: Other user group feedback

User	Area of Centre	No of Participants	Key Comments about Existing Provision	Key Comments around Redevelopment
Wonthaggi Underwater Hockey	Pool	20	Happy with current hours but would like an additional night to play	Ideally we would like the pool to be wider, deeper and 50m
Aqua Aerobics	Pool	50	Would like more class times to be available, need a pool separate to the 25m pool, change facilities need refurbishment, different class types to cater for all people, the social aspect after class is important as is any redevelopment being staged so they are not without a pool for an extended period of time	Separate warm water/hydrotherapy pool, new change rooms that are clean and heated, private change area so they don't have to change in the communal area, inclusion of a social space where they can meet after class is important
Wonthaggi Badminton	Stadium	55 - 60	Happy with existing times and not looking to expand or require additional time	Larger stadium space would be good to allow for the 4 courts to play at the same time, this would reduce the time required for the booking
Wonthaggi Basketball Assoc	Stadium	440	Unhappy with times available as this means they need to play at the Primary School. No facilities in town that are the correct size to meet industry regulations for run off. Unable to grow the club due to limited space. Lack of a meeting room means they have to pay to use one	Wonthaggi needs a multi court stadium with 4 - 5 courts, a new reception area and multiple line marking so that it can be multi use. Wonthaggi is under provided for on a population to court ratio compared to Korumburra (3 courts for 5,000) and Leongatha (2 courts for 4,550)
Dance Design	Stadium	30	Would like to introduce a night booking between 4pm - 10pm for older dancers and think the centre needs to be more affordable	More extensive café with seating so that parents can go there during classes and a viewing area for parents to see their children would be good
YMCA Gymnastics	Stadium	30	Current storage is not adequate and not safe for staff to be climbing over other equipment to find gymnastics equipment	Would like dedicated storage space, would like to remain at the centre but understand that if the stadium is to be relocated they will not be able to so would need to seek an alternate location
Vacation Care	Stadium	30	Use stadium daily during school holiday periods	Would need somewhere big enough for 30 children if the stadium was to be relocated
Group Fitness	Stadium	77	The current arrangement means that class times are limited and particularly in winter the stadium is not ideal for yoga and pilates as it is so cold	Require a dedicated space for group fitness and health and wellness programs to compete with Feel Good Fitness and offer a full range of programs

* It should be noted that the number of participants for group fitness is based on last year's total divided by 52.

** It should be noted that the number of participants for gymnastics is based on last year's total divided by 40.

5.2.3 Other sporting clubs

Sporting clubs are a key group of potential users for any indoor aquatic and leisure centre particularly where facilities exist for them to cross train and conduct recovery sessions. 84 sporting clubs were emailed a link to the online survey as part of the consultation process with 34 responses received representing 27 different clubs (multiple responses were received from four clubs). 18 of the 27 clubs currently use WALC in some capacity, with a combination of pool, stadium and health club facilities used. Of the clubs that don't use the centre distance was the main reason followed by it not really being appropriate to their club activities.

The other locations currently being used by these clubs included Inverloch Community Hub, Cowes Outdoor Pool, SPLASH, Korumburra Indoor Pool, Phillip Island Leisure Centre and School Gyms. Of the clubs that said they would use WALC if it was redeveloped, the main things that would attract them included a larger health club (12), warm water pool (10), additional lanes (10) and more extensive group fitness program (10).

5.3.4 Schools

11 primary and secondary schools (private and public) located in Bass Coast were interviewed as part of these project. 10 of these schools currently use WALC and indicated that they would continue to use the Centre if it were to be redeveloped, but three of these were located on Phillip Island and said that they would prefer an aquatic centre to be built on the island.

The main barriers for school participation were distance (1 school) and lack of adequate space around the pool to cater for carnivals (1 school). Key things that would attract schools to attend WALC and potentially increase their student numbers at WALC were water play (7 schools), additional lane space and availability (5 schools), larger health club (2 schools) and a warm water/hydrotherapy pool (1 school). The majority of schools interviewed said that they would be prepared to pay an equivalent cost to what their overall cost of swimming is currently, incorporating the cost of transport. **Appendix I** provides a list of schools contacted.

5.3.5 Community, health and disability agencies

Five disability and health agencies were contacted as part of the consultation process (refer to **Appendix I** for a list). All of these agencies or their clients either use the centre currently or have in the past. Their key needs from the Centre for their clients were:-

- Warm water and better access to the 25m pool
- An inclusive health club (not too large as it will not be as inviting) with more stationery bikes
- Crèche and occasional care facilities
- Group fitness programs that cater for different levels of fitness and ability without being specific 'special needs' classes
- Family/accessible change facilities

Other elements that would be supported include a more extensive café, health and wellness programs and health practitioners. Staff training and an inclusive environment was also important.

Two gaps in provision in town that were identified were adequate childcare and youth provision.

All of these agencies indicated that they or their clients would use the facility if it was redeveloped to include a warm water exercise pool as long as costs were reasonable.

5.3.6 Aged care facilities

Seven seniors groups and organisations were contacted as part of the consultation process (refer to **Appendix I** for a list). None of these groups currently use WALC as a group but Coalfields Caravan Park and Probus Club of Wonthaggi Inverloch indicated that they know of individuals that use the Centre for aqua aerobics and health club. Several of these clubs indicated that they had discussed aquatics as a group but there had been no interest to date and only three of these groups said that they, or individuals as part of their group would be likely to use the Centre if it was redeveloped. A warm water pool was the key thing that would draw them there with one club indicating that if there was a community room where they could play cards that might be of interest.

5.3.7 Council staff

Meetings and a focus group were held with relevant Council Managers, officers and maintenance staff, in addition to 69 surveys being completed by Council staff. Feedback on the project included:-

Council Managers

A focus group was held with Managers from a range of different areas in Council to gauge the impact of the redevelopment on different areas within Council. Some of the key comments raised included:-

- An important role of the Centre is to connect communities in line with Council's Municipal Health Plan
- The redevelopment is in line with Council's hierarchy of settlement with Wonthaggi being the Shires largest township
- The redevelopment should provide quality facilities that enhance liveability for current and future residents
- It is important that the study identifies the true cost of the redevelopment (ongoing operational and maintenance costs) and does not focus purely on the capital costs
- Council needs to find a balance between asset renewal and development of new facilities
- Geo-technical tests will be required and drainage will be an important consideration
- Finding capital funds for such a project was identified as challenging within Council's current capacity to develop major projects
- Ensuring that the Centre is accessible and meets all DDA requirements is a priority

Several gaps in provision within town were identified that should be considered as part of this project, they included:-

- Hydrotherapy/warm water pool – due to the ageing population
- Lack of crèche and occasional care facilities in town
- Lack of public transport options – particularly for older adults
- Provision for youth activities – with the exception of the skate park there is no dedicated youth space within Wonthaggi

The key challenges identified related to the redevelopment were:-

- Service interruption during development given the lack of other indoor aquatic facilities within the municipality
- Limited capital works budget will make funding the project difficult, external funding will be required

Council staff survey respondents

69 Councils staff completed in online surveys, of these, 59% currently use WALC. 90% of respondents said they thought that WALC should be redeveloped, reasons for this varied but the key reasons included '*current facilities are old, tired and unappealing*', '*current facilities are at*

capacity', 'it is a regional facility, it should be reflective of this' and 'to cater for the increasing population within the shire'. Only three (3) respondents thought that the redevelopment should not go ahead with two (2) of them stating that 'Phillip Island needs an aquatic centre first' and the other stating they don't use the Centre so can't comment.

When asked what they thought the key challenge around redeveloping the Centre was, 58% of respondents stated 'funding' with the other key responses being 'avoiding closure of facilities during redevelopment' and 'maintaining members during the redevelopment'.

5.3.8 YMCA Staff

As incumbent managers of WALC it was important to speak to a range of YMCA staff to get an accurate understanding of some of the issues they face in the daily management of the Centre and what they see as the priorities for the Centre going forward. The Area Manager, Centre Director, Coordinators, Team Leaders and a range of service staff were all consulted as part of this process. We also spoke to YMCA staff regarding the provision of Youth Services within Bass Coast.

5.3.8.1 WALC Management

Feedback from the YMCA as part of the consultation was that the current demands on the Centre provided an ongoing challenge from a management perspective with the key issues being:-

- The centre is at capacity during peak times in the health club, pool and stadium and the current facilities are not able to meet community demand for various programs and services e.g. stadium sports, group fitness, aquatic education, aqua aerobics, swim club access, public access to the pool
- The design of the existing reception/kiosk area makes it difficult to manage and traffic flow through the centre with people entering the health club without scanning or signing in. It also creates a bottle neck at key times as there is only one POS
- Risk management issues around people using the health club without signing in at reception (refer to above point), current storage issues and roof leaks in the stadium and pool area
- Change rooms are dated and not heated and no group change rooms are available for school groups
- Lack of group change facilities for school groups mean that students have to change on pool deck
- There is insufficient provision for office space, staff room, health consultation rooms, first aid room or storage

The YMCA thought that key elements to consider for a Centre redevelopment were:-

Table 14: YMCA recommendations for WALC redevelopment

Centre Amenities	Dry Side	Aquatics
Central reception that allows for two POS terminals	Group Fitness room that would cater for 40 participants with storage	Dedicated pool to cater for Aquatic Education and aqua aerobics
Updated change facilities	Spin room	Beach entry and water play
Additional car parking	Larger gym	Warm water pool
First aid room	Creche	
Group change facilities	Health consultation rooms	
Café area with seating	Double court stadium	
Lockers		
Meeting room/multi purpose space		
Staff room		
Additional office space		
Bi-fold doors with access to outside area		

5.3.8.2 Youth Provision

As part of their Youth Services contract with Council the YMCA provides the following services:-

- Teenage school holiday programs
- Freeza events
- Youth mentoring in schools
- Youth privilege card which provides youth with discounts at local businesses
- Support and referral service for youths and families in need
- 'Victoria Rocks' program is a new music program they are currently developing

WALC currently caters for some youths who wish to be active through their Teen Gym program although their ability to cater for this market is limited by the lack of available time and space in both the pool and the stadium. The skate park is also managed under the aquatic and leisure contract by the YMCA, and along with Teen Gym and youth events provide the main activities for young people in town. Existing provision has been identified as a significant issue for Council to address.

5.4 Key consultation themes

A number of key themes became evident through the analysis of consultation data. The following summaries provide a consolidated overview of critical consultation themes to consider regarding the redevelopment of WALC.

5.4.1 Strong expressed need for the redevelopment of WALC from all stakeholders and the community

The majority of feedback received through the consultation process was that WALC facilities are 'old and tired' and that the Centre 'does not adequately meet the needs of the community', with issues raised around the age, appearance and functionality of the Centre and its ability to accommodate the required number of people, groups and programs, given that nearly every area within the existing centre is at capacity.

The strongest demand was for warm water, water play, additional lap lanes, larger health club, dedicated group fitness and improved support amenities e.g. change rooms and café.

Given the site limitations at WALC and the demand for additional stadium facilities within town, relocation of the stadium in Stage 4 to the proposed Education Precinct was identified from a number of sources.

5.4.2 WALC should be a regional facility

The Municipal Recreation Plan has a key priority to 'Develop Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre as the regional facility for the whole shire'. As the major township within the Shire, with significant population growth forecast and as the most centrally located population centre, Wonthaggi is the ideal location for a regional facility. This was identified through Council surveys and staff focus groups.

Note: the local definition of a regional facility used in this report is a facility that services the Bass Coast Shire municipality.

5.4.3 Lack of child care facilities in Wonthaggi

This was identified by Council staff, community organisations and the YMCA who are often asked whether they have crèche and occasional care facilities available. There are currently no casual child care facilities available in Wonthaggi for parents to utilise and with a high number of single parents this is a much valued service for the community.

The general consensus was that WALC was the ideal location to accommodate these facilities as it would enhance their membership offering and still offer a service to the broader community through occasional care.

5.4.4 Lack of youth facilities in Wonthaggi

This need has been previously identified by Council and was reinforced as part of the consultation process with YMCA Youth Services, skate park staff and WALC management as well as Mitchell House and various Council staff. Existing facilities at WALC don't cater very well for this age group, particularly with the pool and stadium heavily utilised, there is very little recreational time available. WALC does have a Teen Gym program but the health club is so busy at this time and does little to encourage more youth to attend. Other than the skate park there is no other dedicated 'youth space' in town.

Council have submitted a funding application to undertake a feasibility study for a 'shared multi-use youth community hub' in Wonthaggi.

5.4.5 Maintaining continuity of service through the redevelopment is important

This theme came through from survey respondents, user groups, Council and the YMCA. The lack of indoor aquatic facilities elsewhere within the Shire means that Council may wish to consider redeveloping the aquatics area in two parts:-

- Development of the new warm water/program pool/water play, reception, café, change rooms and crèche while the new 25m pool is open to the public. Temporary change facilities would be required for this stage
- Development of the new 25m pool while the warm water/program pool is still open to the public

The strategy to redevelop the dry components of the Centre would include provision of portables at the back of the Centre which can be used for health club and group fitness. Although there is another health club in Wonthaggi, both Council and the YMCA would like to minimise any disruption to business for the members and users of the Centre.

SECTION 6: MARKET AND DEMAND ANALYSIS

This section of the Feasibility Report provides a summary of the key trends in local and regional demographic and population change, and in recreation and leisure participation. It also identifies the likely catchment market and user characteristics and provides an estimate of the potential future demand for a redeveloped WALC.

Due to the limited data available at the time of writing, the detailed population projections by age used within this report are based on figures provided by a report for Bass Coast Shire prepared by the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (October 2006), *Development Options - Bass Coast Shire 2005 to 2030*.

The report provides three development options for projections, 1) Bumbling Along, 2) Grey Power Rules and 3) Connecting with the World. For the focus of this feasibility we have used the third level of development projections. Projections cover the years 2002, 2005, 2015 and 2030. These figures have been accepted by the Bass Coast Shire Council.

The figures within this section show the population projections for the localities of the Bass Coast Shire Council by the 'Connecting with the World' development option.

6.1 Population overview

6.1.1 Gippsland regional population

The population in Gippsland is projected to experience growth between 2006 and 2026 consistent with Regional Victoria trends (23.4% compared with 23.6% respectively) although lower than Victoria's expected growth of 30.9% change over the same period.

By 2026, the population of Gippsland is anticipated to reach 305,700 providing an additional 58,000 residents and contributing 4.4% of the total growth projected across Regional Victoria and 3.7% across Victoria as a whole. The following table provides a summary of Gippsland Regional population projections to 2026.

The Bass Coast Shire is projected to contribute around 26% of Gippsland's estimated regional residential growth between 2006 and 2026.

Table 15: Past and projected population, 2006 – 2026

Local Government Area	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026
Bass Coast (S)	27,524	31,675	34,528	38,203	41,919
Baw Baw (S)	38,484	41,890	45,806	49,712	53,769
East Gippsland (S)	41,361	44,637	47,769	50,997	54,224
Latrobe (C)	72,075	73,147	74,801	76,232	77,505
South Gippsland (S)	26,675	27,545	28,710	29,831	31,024
Wellington (S)	41,591	43,007	44,317	45,762	47,283
Gippsland Total	247,710	261,901	275,931	290,737	305,724
Regional Victoria	383,937	1,466,939	1,545,995	1,628,058	1,711,142
Victoria Total	5,128,310	5,549,810	5,942,911	6,332,776	6,711,190

Note: Figures from above population summary, Table 15, have been sourced from Victoria in Future – Gippsland Report 2008 and may show some slight variation to other data sources used within the following section.

6.1.2 Bass Coast Shire population projections

Currently the second fastest growing area in regional Victoria, Bass Coast has a permanent population of approximately 30,000⁸, although during the peak holiday season and major events the transient population of the municipality more than triples that amount.⁹ Bass Coast, including the iconic Phillip Island hosts 35% of Victoria's international tourists each year. Between 2006 and 2010 the population of Bass Coast Shire grew by 12.1%.¹⁰

The three major urban centres of Wonthaggi, Inverloch and Cowes make up the majority of the Bass Coast population.¹¹ Wonthaggi is the main population centre, accommodating more than 43% of the Shire's residents.

In addition, the Victorian Desalination Project located in Wonthaggi has brought an additional 1,260 short-term local residents to the area who are currently living in rented accommodation. When operational in 2012, the Desalination Plant will accommodate an estimated 50 full-time roles.¹²

The following table provides a summary breakdown of population projections for Bass Coast Shire for 2005, 2015, and 2030. Figures have been sourced from the 'Connecting with the World' development option for Bass Coast Shire 2005 to 2030, a report for Bass Coast Shire prepared by the national Institute of Economic and Industry Research (October 2006).

⁸ Department of Planning and Community Development, 'Victoria in Future' population forecasts, 2008.

⁹ Bass Coast Shire Council website, http://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/About_Bass_Coast

¹⁰ Department of Planning and Community Development, 'Victoria in Future' population forecasts, 2008.

¹¹ Bass Coast Shire Council website, http://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/About_Bass_Coast

¹² Of the visiting Desalination Plant workers and their families, an estimated 39% are living in Inverloch, 14% in Cape Paterson, 14% in Wonthaggi, 7% in San Remo, and 5% in each of San Remo and Cowes. The remainder are scattered in various other parts of the Shire.

Table 16: Bass Coast Shire population forecasts, 2005 – 2030

Bass Coast Shire Population Projection Summary							2005 to 2030	
Subset Area	2005	(%)	2015	(%)	2030	(%)	Change (#)	Change (%)
Wonthaggi [1]	12,817	43.9%	16,330	43.3%	25,255	43.6%	12,438	97.0%
Phillip Island [2]	9,726	33.3%	13,291	35.2%	20,083	34.7%	10,357	106.5%
Rural Balance	4,778	16.4%	5,669	15.0%	8,363	14.5%	3,585	75.0%
Bass Valley [3]	1,900	6.5%	2,449	6.5%	4,165	7.2%	2,265	119.2%
Bass Coast Shire Total	29,221	100.0%	37,739	100.0%	57,866	100.0%	28,645	98.0%

Note: [1] Wonthaggi comprises the areas of: Cape Paterson, Inverloch, Kilcunda, Wonthaggi and Wonthaggi North.

[2] Phillip Island comprises the areas of: Cowes, Newhaven, Rhyll, Smiths Beach, Sunset Strip, Surf Beach - Sutherland Bay, Wimbledon Heights and San Remo.

[3] Bass Valley comprises the areas of: Corinella, Coronet Bay and Grantville.

Table 16 indicates that the wider Wonthaggi area will experience the greatest increase in population numbers, as well as one of the greatest overall percentage population changes between 2005 and 2030.

Projected population increases are based on Bass Coast Shire 'Connecting with the World' development option projected growth with an estimated 28,645 additional residents by 2030.¹³

Projected increases in household and population numbers indicates that there will be a greater demand for recreation, leisure and aquatic facilities and services across the Bass Coast Shire over the next 10 to 20 years.

6.2 Demographic overview

The following provides an overview and comparison of key Bass Coast Shire and Wonthaggi township demographic characteristics and their potential implications on the development and the future redevelopment of the WALC.¹⁴

¹³ Population projections for the localities of the Bass Coast Shire Council by the 'Connecting with the World' development option (2005 locality comparisons).

¹⁴ Population projections for the localities of the Bass Coast Shire Council by the 'Connecting with the World' development option (2005 locality comparisons).

6.2.1 Age profile

In 2005 the Bass Coast Shire had a relatively high percentage of people aged between 0 and 18 (22% compared across the entire age structure). Minimal growth across this age group is projected from 2005 to 2030, providing an estimated 108 additional children and teenagers over this period. The 19 to 24 year age structure is projected to experience substantial growth with an additional 1,548 people with 101% overall growth.

The single largest increase in population is expected for the 55 and over age group with an additional 14,292 people with 152% overall growth. Significant growth is also projected in 25 to 54 year olds with an increase from 9,840 in 2005 to 12,697 in 2030.

The Wonthaggi area is projected to experience an overall decrease in the percentage of young children aged between 0 and 4 from 5.4% in 2005 to 2.7% in 2031. In comparison, a slight increase is expected for the 5 to 18 year age group which will provide an additional 208 children for the same period.

As a result of projected changes in pre-school and primary school aged children, the Wonthaggi area is anticipated to experience a shift in their overall population towards an ageing demographic by 2030.

Participation in physical activity in sport and recreation is generally very high in the 5 to 14 age group. Providing opportunities for this market segment will be critical for WALC. There is likely to be an increased need for targeted programs involving schools, especially Aquatic Education and swimming carnivals.

In-line with an ageing population, Wonthaggi will continue to experience growth in adults (aged 25 to 54 years and 55+ years). In 2005, 34.9% of the population was aged between 25 and 54 (4,291 residents), which is projected to increase substantially by 5,210 people to 9,684 a 116% growth in residents by 2030.

The single largest increase in population in Wonthaggi is expected for the 55 and over age group with an additional 6,354 people to provide a total 11,033 residents. Wonthaggi will experience growth in these age groups in-line with municipal averages.

According to Council's, Bass Coast Shire Community Profile (2006) population trends for Bass Coast Shire reflect similar traits to wider Regional Victoria with major differences identified in the older adult age groups with a larger percentage of people between 60 and 84 years and a smaller percentage of 18 to 34 year olds.

These trends indicate that there is a need for Council to provide a range of physical activity and facility access opportunities. To achieve this Council will have to consider the appropriateness of facilities, programs, pricing and accessibility in centre management and operation. This includes the provision for older adults and access for all abilities programs and related infrastructure and services.

6.2.2 Household structure

The number of couples with children under 15 years of age in the Shire is 1,724 (24.7%) with the total number of couples with children totalling 2,380 (34.1%), this is slightly lower than Regional Victoria trends with 30.2% and 42.7% respectively.

The number of single parent families is reflective of Regional Victoria trends, being 1,009 (14.4%) with children under 15 years compared with 15.4% in Regional Victoria. The number of couples without children was quite high and totalled 3,516 (50.3%) compared to 40.7% across Regional Victoria and again with 30.0% (3,303) people living in lone person households compared with 25.7% in 2006.

The Wonthaggi District and surrounds provides a slightly more independent household structure than the overall Bass Coast Shire, with the number of lone person households being 1,651 (31.1%) and the number of couples without children being 1,655 (or 49.1%) both slightly higher than the Bass Coast Shire average.

The number of single parent families with children is 512 (15.2%) and the total number of couples with children totalling 1,149 (34.1%) are both reflective of the Bass Coast Shire total averages.¹⁵

Recreation and leisure opportunities will need to consider not only the requirements of families but also the requirements of single people and couples too, including convenient programs, access and flexible hours of operation. For families and single parents with children, child minding and family related programs with crèche facilities and flexible hours of operation will help to encourage family participation, as will the promotion of range of activities and programs and family concession schemes.

6.2.3 Cultural diversity

In 2006, the country of birth of the population in Bass Coast Shire shows that there was a larger proportion of people born overseas but a similar proportion of people from a non-English speaking background when compared to Regional Victoria.

Overall, 14.1% of the population was born overseas, and 5.3% were from a non-English speaking background, compared with 10.1% and 5.0% respectively for Regional Victoria. The top five countries of birth are the United Kingdom (7.0%), New Zealand (1.1%), Italy (1.0%), Netherlands (0.9%) and Germany (0.6%). The dominant non-English speaking country of birth in Bass Coast Shire was Italy.¹⁶

¹⁵ Bass Coast Shire Council website, Community Profile, <http://profile.id.com.au/Default.aspx?>

¹⁶ Bass Coast Shire Council website, Community Profile, <http://profile.id.com.au/Default.aspx?>

6.2.4 Employment and income

Approximately 10,360 people constitute the labour force in the Bass Coast Shire and of that working age population, 93.7% were employed in 2006, leaving an unemployment rate of 6.3% in 2006. In Wonthaggi District and surrounds, 94.2% of people were employed in the same period with an unemployment rate of 5.8%.

A large portion of household income falls within the \$1 to \$399 and \$400 to \$999 ranges (44.0% and 30.9% respectively compared to the Regional Victoria average of 39.6% and 33.6%). Bass Coast Shire households considered low income earners (those earning \$399 or less per week) is relative to the Regional Victoria average. In comparison, Wonthaggi District and Surrounds had a slightly higher proportion of households that are considered low income earners with 46.5% earning less than \$400 per week.

Low incomes are likely to be influenced by the high proportion of retirees residing within the area and this age demographic is projected to increase significantly by 2030.

Overall analysis of the 2006 individual and household income levels in the Bass Coast Shire compared to Regional Victoria indicate that there was a slightly smaller portion of residents earning a high income and a larger proportion earning a low income. 8.4% of Wonthaggi District and Surrounds residents earned a high individual income (\$1,000+ per week) reflecting similar trends to the Bass Coast Shire total average of 9.0%.

On average Bass Coast Shire residents have a high proportion of residents who are low income earners and this should be considered when developing a municipal pricing strategy and concessional rates for WALC attendance. Should the Centre's catchment provide a high proportion of users from the Wonthaggi District and Surrounds area, their income structure indicates a lower than average weekly disposable income and lower capacity to pay for aquatic and leisure services.

6.2.5 Transport

In 2006, 84.0% of Bass Coast Shire households and 84.3% of Wonthaggi District and Surrounds households owned at least one car. Bass Coast Shire can be considered a very independently mobile population with 62.6% in 2006 stating that they drive using their own car to get to work daily and 5.3% are a passenger in a car each day. Only 0.9% of people in Bass Coast Shire and 1.7% of the population in the Wonthaggi area use any form of public transport to commute to work. Car ownership and mode of transport trends are consistent with the remainder of Regional Victoria.

Due to the heavy reliance on personal motor vehicles across Bass Coast Shire, additional car parking and associated infrastructure should be considered through Centre redevelopment.

The geographical location of the WALC and the increased numbers and ageing nature of the Bass Coast Shire and Wonthaggi District and Surrounds population is likely to contribute to an increased demand for public transport services and options. To maximise the use of

WALC, public transport services should be strategically linked with the Centre and include promotion of pedestrian and cycling connections where possible.

6.3 Leisure participation trends

The following information provides an overview of the aquatic and leisure participation trends likely to influence the future provision, use and development WALC.

6.3.1 Adult participation in recreation and leisure activities

Participation information sourced through the Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey (ERASS) defines participation as both organised and non-organised activities engaged by persons aged 15 years and over. In 2009, there were 3,548,900 adults in Victoria who participated in a sport or physical activity – an estimated participation rate of 82.6% of the adult population.

This comprised 1,747,500 males and 1,801,400 females - participation rates were slightly higher for males (82.6%) than females (82.5%). The participation rate for adults declines with age. The Victorian rate of 82.6% was identical to the national average also being 82.6%.

Victorian participation data showed that since 2001, overall participation has remained stable. Victoria experienced a decrease across the population until 2003 only to increase and continue to maintain a healthy participation rate of low 80's, with the exception of 2007 where the rate was 79.7%, through to 2009.

The top ten physical activities in Victoria in 2009, with reference to the total participation rate, were walking (35.9%), aerobics / fitness (23.5%), swimming (13.9%), cycling (12.8%), running (11.7%), tennis (6.9%), golf (6.5%), basketball (5.4%), AFL football (5.1%) and netball (5.1%).

Swimming both ranked 3rd most popular physical activity in Victoria and nationally in terms of participation, where aerobic and fitness activities rated slightly higher in Victoria with 23.5% compared to 22.9% nationally (both ranking 2nd most popular physical activity).

Stadium sports rated higher in Victoria with basketball rated 8th most popular in Victoria compared to no rating on the 'top ten' list of physical activities nationally. Netball ranked 10th most popular in Victoria and nationally in 2009.

The total participation in non-organised physical activity was 70.9% in 2009 compared to the total participation in an organised physical activity of 40.9% in 2009.

Other statistical influences of note include:

- Although 82.6% of adults in Victoria participated in sport or physical activity at least once, the weekly participation rates show a different trend.
- Less than half of adults in Victoria (48.3%) participated in a sport or physical activity three or more times per week - the recommended amount to achieve health-enhancing benefits.

- More females (51.1%) than males (45.5%) participated in a sport or physical activity three or more times per week.
- The Victorian rate of 48.3% was slightly higher than the national average of 47.7%.
- National data showed that people aged 15 to 24 and 55 to 64 years had the highest rate (with 31.1% and 31.0% respectively) of participation in a sport or physical activity participated in five times a week or more by these age groups.

6.3.2 Children's participation in recreation and leisure

In 2009, there were 1,717,800 children aged 5 to 14 years in Australia who participated in an organised sport or physical activity - a participation rate of 63.1% of the total population of children respectively.

This comprised 970,900 males and 746,900 females nationally - participation rates were higher for males (69.6%) than females (56.3%). The participation rate for children increases with age with respect to males and females up to the age of 11 years, then experiences a slight decrease during the ages 12 to 14 years. This general trend is reflected across the total population of children.

Swimming rated one of the most popular organised leisure activity by children aged 5 to 14 years nationally, with a participation rate of 18.5% overall. Swimming was most popular amongst females with 19.8% compared to second most popular amongst males with 17.2% participation.

6.4 Competitor analysis

There are two private health club competitors in Wonthaggi – Curves, which is a women's only health club specialising in 30 minute circuits, and Feel Good Fitness who is a fitness chain that offers health club, group fitness, cycling, boxing and women's only facilities.

Curves has been identified as a low risk competitor to WALC as their offering is quite specific and they do not offer the range of programs and services available at WALC, but Feel Good Fitness, which opened in late August 2010 should be seen as a high risk competitor offering similar services to WALC but in a larger and newer environment. Feel Good Fitness have 750 members after three months of operation and during that time memberships at WALC have reduced by 51.

As mentioned previously, WALC has been close to capacity in the health club for some months now with the additional people in town. This level of memberships has led to overcrowding in the health club which results in people being dissatisfied and cancelling their membership. A more sustainable level of memberships for WALC in its current form is around 500 members, this would see the Centre able to better service their members and reduce congestion in the health club in key times.

The opening of Feel Good Fitness at a time when there is a population surge in Wonthaggi can be seen as positive as they are servicing the additional demand that WALC has been unable to. The true impact of the new competitor will be felt when the desalination plant opens and more than 2,000 people leave town, although WALC has the advantage of the aquatics side of the facility.

Feel Good Fitness run similar dry programs to WALC but have a more comprehensive group fitness timetable, not being constrained in their programming by conflicts and space demands between competing interests for the same space. They also have a spin room so are the only place in town to offer cycling classes.

Feel Good Fitness are similarly priced to WALC with WALC being slightly cheaper (\$4 per month and \$30 cheaper joining fee).

The other dry competitor is the Phillip Island Leisure Centre although with the distance between the centres people are more likely to go to the facility that is closest to where they live or work.

Table 17: Overview of WALC competitors

	Wonthaggi Aquatic & Leisure Centre	Phillip Island Leisure Centre	Curves	Feel Good Fitness	SPLASH Leongatha
FITNESS & GYM					
Gymnasium	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Group Exercise Studio	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
Spinning / Cycle Studio	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Women's Only Gym	X	X	X	✓	X
Kinda Gym	✓	X	X	X	X
COURTS & INDOOR SPORTS					
Multi-Purpose courts / hall	✓	✓	X	X	✓
Squash courts	X	✓	X	X	X
Indoor Cricket	X	X	X	X	✓
Basketball	✓	✓	X	X	X
Netball	✓	✓	X	X	✓
Soccer	✓	✓	X	X	✓
Badminton	✓	X	X	X	X
Soft Tennis	X	X	X	X	X
Dodgeball	X	X	X	X	✓
ANCILLARY & ROOMS					
Massage	X	X	X	X	X
Physiotherapy / Chiro / Osteos	X	X	X	X	X
Creche	X	✓	X	X	X
Occasional Care	X	X	X	X	X
Café / Kiosk	✓	✓	X	X	X
Meeting/Function Rooms	✓	X	X	X	X
ACCESSIBILITY					
Accessible parking	✓	✓	X	X	✓
Wheelchair access to venue	✓	✓	X	X	X
Accessible change rooms	✓	✓	X	X	✓
Adult change tables / hydrolic lift	X	X	X	X	X
Hydraulic pool hoist	✓	X	X	X	X
Gradual railed step pool entry	✓	X	X	X	X
Ramp leading into pool	X	X	X	X	X
AQUATICS					
Indoor 25 metre pool	✓	X	X	X	✓
Indoor Toddlers pool	✓	X	X	X	✓
Learn to swim pool	X	X	X	X	✓
Warm Water Exercise Pool	X	X	X	X	X
Spa	X	✓	X	X	X
Sauna	X	✓	X	X	X

In addition to the previous facilities SPLASH Leongatha has been identified as a competitor as it is the closest indoor pool and multi court stadium. Although SPLASH is 38.7kms from Wonthaggi and approximately a 30 minute drive, consultation has shown that people living in and around Wonthaggi do travel to SPLASH for a range of activities including Aquatic Education, casual swimming and stadium sports. Some schools in the area use SPLASH for their school carnivals as it has 10 lanes and caters better for larger numbers, and a recent postcode survey at SPLASH (of which figures are available in **Section 6.5 Facility Catchment**) provides statistics of Bass Coast residents that used the centre during the month of September. SPLASH is the closest competitor for Aquatic Education so parents that were unable to book their children in for lessons at Wonthaggi would more than likely go to SPLASH, they currently have between 500 and 600 children in their program.

South Gippsland Council have identified the need for a warm water/hydrotherapy pool in the municipality as they currently do not have one. This is in their five to ten year plan. Should WALC be redeveloped prior to this it is likely that some South Gippsland residents would use the facility.

SPLASH does not have a health club or group fitness but there are two private competitors in town and Council does not see provision of a Council dry facility as a priority at this time given significant contributions are required to maintain their outdoor pools.

6.5 Likely facility catchment

An analysis of WALC member post codes identified that an estimated 86% of the total current (2010) membership reside within 20km of the Centre. This geographic spread provides the basis for the primary catchment area for WALC. Key townships within the primary catchment area include Wonthaggi, Inverloch, Cape Pattison, Dalyston, Woolamai, Glen Alvie, Wattle Bank, Kilcunda, South Dudley, Harmers Haven, Archies Creek and other immediate surrounding areas.

Secondary catchments assume a broader range of residents that are drawn from the remaining Bass Coast Shire population centre of Phillip Island (including Cowes, San Remo and Newhaven) and the Western Port Bay townships of Grantville, Coronet Bay, Corinella and Pioneer Bay. These catchments are all within 40km of the WALC. While many of these townships are located between 25km and 35km from Wonthaggi (a considerable distance for a secondary catchment area), there is no other integrated indoor aquatic and leisure centre within an hour drive of the region. The next closest centres are located in Pakenham, Cranbourne and Leongatha.

Secondary catchments have also been identified into the neighbouring South Gippsland Shire townships, including Outtrim, Kongwak, Tarwin Lower and Venus Bay. These catchments also sit within a 20km to 40km radius of the WALC and offer residents an equidistant travel choice between attending the WALC or the SPLASH facility located in Leongatha.

In addition, an analysis of casual swim and Aquatic Education visitors for SPLASH indicate that a small proportion of members travel from within the Bass Coast Shire to attend the Centre. 11% of casual swim visits at SPLASH during September were contributed from Cowes, Wonthaggi and Inverloch residents and 14% of Aquatic Education attendees were from Wonthaggi and Inverloch (69 in total). This is considered an important number for the WALC, with many potential Learn-to-Swim patrons travelling 15 to 20 minutes further than required to access a comparable Aquatic Education service.

Over 95% of WALC customers are projected to reside within the Bass Coast Shire or in townships located close to the South Gippsland Shire boundary. A small proportion of users will be derived from people living further afield that work and attend school in the Wonthaggi area, as well as a number of users that will attend the Centre over the peak holiday period. However, the visitor market will be strongly competing with the range of beach and coastal activities that are offered for visitors.

Table 18 below outlines the estimated number of Aquatic Education participants, based on current usage figures in line with postcode data and population projections. Operational budget **Section 10.1** in the following report chapters provide a further overview of these figures and the basis upon which they have been derived.

Table 18: Estimated number of Aquatic Education participants in Bass Coast

	2010	2015	2020
Children in catchment in LTS age group	4,197	4,499	4,874
LTS participation - based on current programs	11%	13%	15%
Estimated number of LTS students	449	585	731

Table 19 provides a breakdown of the expected membership types and projected number of members for WALC after the redevelopment. Operational budget **Section 10.1** in the following report chapters provide a further overview of these figures and the basis upon which they have been derived.

Table 19: Estimated number and breakdown of potential WALC members

Membership category	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Health and wellness members	295	289	283	278	272	265
Aquatics members	134	136	138	69	123	145
Older adults	66	67	68	67	68	69
Teen members	39	40	40	40	41	41
Corporate members	41	40	39	39	38	37
Total estimated number of members	575	572	568	493	542	557

Table 20 provides a breakdown of estimated aquatics visits for WALC after the redevelopment. Operational budget **Section 10.1** in the following report chapters provide a further overview of these figures and the basis upon which they have been derived.

Table 20: Estimated number of Aquatics Visits for WALC

Aquatics users	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Casual and Multi Visit pass	19,898	20,196	20,499	10,249	18,295	21,524
Aquatic Education	23,203	24,339	25,515	22,245	26,087	28,945
Aqua Aerobics	8,517	8,925	9,129	9,302	9,435	9,435
Swim Club	11,480	11,480	11,480	3,220	11,468	13,978
School and community bookings	11,980	12,076	12,173	2,646	11,524	12,015
Birthday parties	260	270	300	260	280	320
Total estimated number of users	75,338	77,286	79,096	47,922	77,089	86,217

6.6 Likely visitor segments

Through analysis of Wonthaggi and Bass Coast Shire demographics, review of recreation and leisure participation statistics and through review of existing WALC user and member demographics, the following visitor segments are those most likely to be captured and serviced by a redeveloped WALC:

- Recreation and leisure users
- Health and well-being users
- Education program attendees
- Fitness, training and competition users

6.6.1 Recreation and leisure users

Recreation and leisure users consist of people of all ages from young children through to older adults. They range from lap swimmers, to occasional pool users and health club attendees. The market for recreation and leisure users is considerable at most community aquatic and leisure centres and facility provision must cater for, and be flexible to meet, their broad range of needs and interests.

This segment is currently affected by a lack of available pool space for lap swimming and recreation in the pool during key times and overcrowding in the health club. The proposed redevelopment will provide them with a more appropriate and comfortable health club, additional lap lanes in peak times and a water play area to attract families to the Centre.

6.6.2 Education program attendees

Education program attendees are predominately Aquatic Education participants, and are generally aged between 6 months and 12 years. Customers attend Aquatic Education programs as individuals, with families or as part of larger school groups. This segment makes up approximately 25% of overall facility attendances in Year 1.

The Aquatic Education program at WALC is currently impeded by the lack of available water space after school and appropriate pool temperature for toddlers. The program is currently at capacity with a waiting list and some residents are attending SPLASH because they are unable to secure a place at WALC. The proposed redevelopment will provide this group with additional water space of an appropriate temperature, in the program pool, for younger swimmers to attend lessons which will also free up room in the 25m pool. This will enable more classes to be scheduled and the program to grow.

The redevelopment may have a slight impact on school usage with increased numbers expected from some schools but it is not expected to be significant.

6.6.3 Fitness, training and competition

The majority of this segment consists of local swim club members who regularly train and lap swim, sporting clubs and group fitness users and schools who use aquatic facilities for carnivals. It should be noted that this segment will reduce in Stage 4 when the stadium facility is removed from the Centre.

This segment is also affected by lack of space, both in the pool and in the stadium. The three swim clubs that use the pool would all like additional pool space in peak times. The addition of the program pool and the new 25m pool, while only a six lane pool, will give the ability to create eight lanes for educational and program purposes. While the additional water space will ease congestion in peak times, the overall availability of lane space in the 25m pool should be carefully considered to ensure a better balance of activities with adequate public access. This might mean that additional laps for swim clubs may need to be negotiated in off peak times.

The stadium is another area of the Centre that is significantly impacted by conflicting needs a range of programs being conducted from this space. The key areas that are affected in this segment are basketball and group fitness who would both like additional space to expand their programs. This is likely to be rectified in 2014/15 with the opening of the proposed three court stadium at the Education Precinct which would see basketball and badminton relocated to this facility.

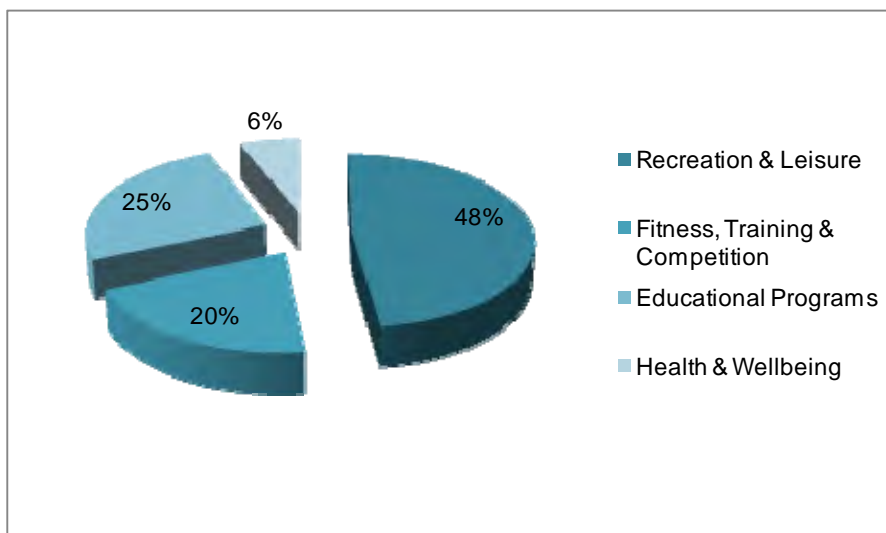
6.6.4 Health and well-being users

In the context of the WALC, health and well-being users present the smallest potential customer segment. Those attending the centre for health and wellness programs are generally aged between 20 and 65 and activities consist of aqua aerobics, warm water classes and body balance programs.

This small but growing segment is currently impacted by the lack of available water space and the temperature of the current pool. The proposed redevelopment will significantly advantage this group and will also provide dry participants with an appropriate area for classes.

Figure 10 following reflects the potential percentage breakdown of likely facility visitor segments. This percentage breakdown is based around industry trends and project consultation responses and is reflected throughout operational budgeting.

Figure 10: Breakdown of likely visitor markets for WALC



6.7 Identified Priority Groups

In addition to identified visitor segments, redevelopment proposals for WALC have considered the future program delivery and access opportunities for a range of specific and targeted customer groups.

6.7.1 Older adults

The single largest area of population growth within Wonthaggi is projected by people aged 55 years and over. Projections indicate an additional 6,354 older residents will live in Wonthaggi and surrounding areas over the next 20 years and catering for their needs will be important. Many new residents are also likely to follow the trend of retiree's or sea change residents looking for an alternative to inner city and suburban living.

Older adults are already very active within the existing WALC and new residents will arrive with a heightened sense of expectation around facility and service provision. Proposed warm water/program pool will be critical for this age group to participate in aqua aerobics and warm water classes, and improved health club facilities will enable expansion of existing dry programs.

This is a group that will benefit significantly from universal design and management principles.

6.7.2 Young people

The Bass Coast Shire has identified a lack of participation and active opportunities for young people in Wonthaggi. Sport and recreation clubs provide the main source of active opportunities, but there is currently limited unstructured recreation and leisure provision accessible to young people. At the time of writing Council was investigating a shire-wide strategy to address the gaps in the provision, places and services for youth. In the future, the redeveloped WALC will provide greater access to a more welcoming facility for recreational swimming and additional space for young people to swim, recreate and socialise.

6.7.3 Children

Children aged from 6 months to 12 years form a key age group for water familiarisation and Aquatic Education programs. Ensuring the competency and education of local children in pools and open water is a key strategic direction of Council and the redeveloped WALC provides a significant focus on creating opportunities for an expanded aquatic education program.

Additional features to cater for children at the Centre will include fun and interactive water play and toddlers area, increased opportunities for birthday parties, continued vacation care, dance lessons and gymnastics (until Stage 4 redevelopment).

6.7.4 Access for All Abilities

The proposed WALC concept design has been developed in-line with current Universal Design principles that promote access to all areas of the facility for everyone. By designing spaces, services and pools that are accessible to all, the range of programs and activities delivered through the Centre can be significantly expanded to introduce new programs and activities dedicated to people with disabilities, parents and families, schools and older adults.

6.7.5 Women and girls

Women and girls are traditionally less represented in sport and physical activity so it is critical that they are catered for at aquatic and leisure facilities such as WALC. Whilst the centre will cater for all women and girls through programs such as Aquatic Education, dance lessons, gymnastics, Teen Gym, aqua aerobics, personal training, group fitness, spin and health and wellness classes, rooms such as the group fitness room and spin room provide opportunity for women's only sessions to be conducted.

Common barriers to women's participation that need to be taken into account include:-

- Program times that meet women's fragmented time availability e.g. avoid meal, work and school time commitments; and
- Sessional payment options rather than term or yearly costs

Key considerations around programming and facility management that will encourage females to participate include:-

- Access to networks and social interaction
- Opportunities to improve fitness
- A venue for safe and organised activity

With a large number of single parents in the Wonthaggi district crèche and occasional care facilities will also be important, as will ensuring that the current concessional scheme is maintained.

6.7.6 Socio-economic disadvantage

The Bass Coast Shire has a significant challenge in meeting the needs of all residents and in balancing the requirements for Centre access with affordability. The Municipal Recreation Plan identified a higher than the regional average number of low income earners in Bass Coast, as well as significant variances in indicators of disadvantage between localities, with Wonthaggi and the Waterline townships recording higher rates of social disadvantage than other areas including Phillip Island and Inverloch.


Existing WALC concession attendances are also currently higher than general industry averages and Council's pricing and concessions policy and applicable discounts afforded to eligible users will be retained through Centre redevelopment in order to continue to serve the entire Bass Coast community.

A scholarship program at the Centre may also provide an opportunity for people to participate in activities who cannot afford to pay e.g. children's Aquatic Education lessons.

SECTION 7: SITE ANALYSIS

The existing WALC site was the only site considered as part of this study. This section of the Feasibility Study investigates site characteristics and development issues associated with the site. It also focuses on the existing conditions, issues, constraints and opportunities.

The following table provides an overall summary of the WALC site and its potential to cater for redevelopment.

Site characteristic	Site analysis comments	
Existing site facilities	The site currently has an existing aquatics and leisure centre with a 25m pool and toddler's pool, health club, stadium, meeting room, reception/kiosk area, tennis club rooms and toilets and change rooms.	Aerial image of the existing WALC site, the proposed redevelopment area is marked within the red outline.
Key existing connections	<p>The Centre sits within a recreation precinct that has two (2) croquet greens to the south, two (2) shared AFL/cricket ovals (to the south and west), eight (8) tennis courts to the west, seven (7) netball courts on the southern boundary, a skate park adjacent to the netball courts and cricket nets on the western oval.</p> <p>Wonthaggi North Primary School is located directly behind the centre on the north side and the Centre caters for the school buses with its bus turning circle.</p> <p>There is an asphalt track/road that runs through the reserve that is used for the annual Wonthaggi Energy Innovation and Human Powered Vehicle festival.</p> <p>The centre is 1km north west of the Wonthaggi town centre with pedestrian access through the reserve from Korumburra Road and vehicular access via Wentworth Road. There is a bus stop located at the front of the Centre on Wentworth Road.</p>	

Site considerations	Comments
Land ownership and zoning	The Wonthaggi Recreation Reserve is currently zoned PPRZ (Public Park and Recreation Zone) and is owned by Bass Coast Shire Council.
Planning overlays	There are no current planning overlays on this site.
Estimated land area	The Wonthaggi Recreation Reserve is approximately 15 ha in size.
Site considerations	<p>Stages 1, 2 and 3 (Aquatics components):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Current ground and soil conditions are unknown at this stage and may influence design, development and overall costs. ▪ Bus turning circle is maintained with improved access from Wentworth Road with roundabout to direct traffic and dedicated bus zones. ▪ There will be no impact on the usage of tennis courts, croquet greens or playing fields and the road through the reserve will be maintained to enable the annual Wonthaggi Energy Innovation and Human Powered Vehicle festival. ▪ A pedestrian walkway has been introduced for tennis players to move between their club room and the courts. ▪ There will be a slight increase in traffic flow commensurate with increased facility usage but this will have no significant impact on residents. ▪ Some trees located north and east of existing building will need to be removed in line with existing Council policy to accommodate redevelopment. <p>Stage 4 (Dry components):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The external toilet facilities near the tennis club room have been maintained so that they can be utilised by the sporting clubs. ▪ Traffic flow will change slightly with the relocation of the stadium which should ease traffic in what were peak game times.
Overall site capability	<p>The site provides opportunity to provide a *regional scale aquatic and leisure facility on-site, within existing land areas and retaining all existing sporting infrastructure. Provision of car parking areas will require reconfiguration of existing car parks and internal roadways to provide better traffic flow and functionality.</p> <p><i>* Note: the local definition of a regional facility used in this report is a facility that services the Bass Coast Shire municipality.</i></p>

SECTION 8: FUTURE AQUATIC AND LEISURE CENTRE PROVISION

This section of the Feasibility Report provides an overview of the provision criteria, development principles and likely service requirements of a redeveloped WALC. The criteria, principles and requirements proposed following set the design brief parameters to inform the site configuration and facility design concepts provided in Chapter 9 following.

8.1 Provision criteria

The following criteria were developed to assess the range of different development possibilities identified for the Centre. The criteria were used to determine the priority for future provision for facilities and services and the preferred redevelopment model is one that best meets the following criteria:

8.1.1 Meeting long-term sustainability

- Consistency with Bass Coast's main aims in recreation and leisure facility provision;
- A facility that services the entire Bass Coast Shire municipality;
- The Bass Coast Shire can demonstrate capacity to provide ongoing annual subsidies to support centre operations post-development;
- The Bass Coast Shire can demonstrate capacity to renew Centre assets and equipment over its projected life-cycle;
- A facility that promotes the training, education and employment of local staff and residents;

8.1.2 Diversifying use and participation

- Facilities provided meet the needs of the local Wonthaggi community and those across Bass Coast;
- Facilities provided foster use from infants to older adults;
- Provides improved facilities that are publicly accessible and affordable;
- Considers the integration of community services and holiday programs.

8.1.3 Accessible design and efficient functionality

- Adequately addresses any identified site constraints and requirements;
- Increases the potential for universal and environmentally sustainable design practices;
- Considers community facility development principles, including potential for co-location;
- Retains (and, where possible, improves) valued open space areas within the precinct;
- Design considers the practicalities and efficiencies of management and operation.

8.2 Bass Coast Shire recreation provision principles

The following principles for a redeveloped WALC have been identified to ensure that the preferred redevelopment option is mindful of the continuing community need and existing policy directions of the Bass Coast Shire. Centre development principles have been aligned with Council's existing principles for supporting recreation and definition of how a redeveloped Centre can assist in delivering on these principles.

1. **Diversity of opportunity:** Providing a breadth of programs and opportunities to support residents and visitors to increase participation in their chosen sport, recreation and physical activity is paramount to delivering on Council's core recreation objectives. Making the Bass Coast community aware that activities and opportunities are available is critical to the success of any aquatic and leisure Centre, as is ensuring that opportunities are capitalised on. Providing opportunities to swim and learn how to swim away from the beach is also a key objective in delivering responsible aquatic education messages and programs for Shire residents.
2. **Environmental sustainability:** Protecting and enhancing the existing Wonthaggi Recreation Reserve precinct, its public open spaces and the current sport and recreation clubs and facilities is important. Their retention without encroachment helps to maintain the local area environment, as well as enhance the environmental sustainability of the WALC and the surrounding area. This will be achieved through utilising Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) principles that also focus on water re-use and recycling for the benefit of the precinct.
3. **Cost effectiveness:** Cost effectiveness in delivering the redeveloped Centre will be managed through the proposed staged design process. This will ensure that priority aquatic areas are upgraded initially and that subsequent stages are dependent on access to funding and performance of the facility. Proposed staged designs also incorporate much of the development within the existing building footprint, allowing for more cost effective internal refurbishment rather than complete rebuild in some areas. The retention of YMCA management in facility operation also allows Council to manage and project its operating budget with some control of the overall financial outcomes.
4. **Accessibility and inclusion:** The provision and allocation of recreation facilities and services shall be equitable according to age, gender, cultural background and ability. Activity and programming within the Centre will be community focused and provide formal activities for the Bass Coast community. Universal Design principles have been incorporated into concept designs and make provision for additional accessible facilities and amenities, including ramped pool access, beach entry, accessible family change rooms, group change rooms to meet school needs and safety requirements. An increased range of water space, including warm water program pool will assist in diversifying the mix of users from the existing provision.

5. **Equitable distribution:** Servicing the Bass Coast Shire with an integrated aquatic and leisure facility is challenging when matched with affordability and capacity to sustain and renew assets. Providing a single facility within a primary catchment of the Shire's main population areas, being Wonthaggi and Inverloch, ensures accessibility for a vast majority of the population. The WALC also remains the closest aquatic and leisure centre for the majority of Bass Coast Shire residents and is balanced against the provision and distribution of swimming and surf beaches across the municipality.

8.3 Role of a redeveloped WALC

Over 95% of projected WALC customers are anticipated to reside within the Bass Coast Shire or in townships located close to the South Gippsland Shire boundary. A redeveloped WALC is expected to service the Bass Coast Shire community and its residents, schools and core user groups.

The WALC will provide the only integrated indoor aquatic and leisure centre within the Bass Coast Shire, in-line with the Shire's township hierarchy strategy, growth plan and settlement pattern. The WALC is proposed to be a *regional scale facility with a focus on promoting a mix of community based programs and services.

In-line with the Shire's adopted Municipal Recreation Plan, WALC will provide a focus on developing a strong and well regarded aquatic education program and culture within the Centre.

Local Wonthaggi and surrounding township residents and schools will need to be significant supporters and users of the WALC for the Centre to be sustainable in the long-term and to reach its potential of achieving Stage 4 development.

** Note: the local definition of a regional facility used in this report is a facility that services the Bass Coast Shire municipality.*

8.4 Impact of the Phillip Island Aquatics Feasibility Study

The Phillip Island Pool Committee recently commissioned a feasibility study for an indoor aquatics facility on Phillip Island. This section will provide a brief overview of the process undertaken and will look at the impact on the proposed redevelopment of WALC should this proposed centre on Phillip Island go ahead.

8.4.1 Consultation process

Sport and Leisure Planning were commissioned to undertake the Phillip Island Aquatics Feasibility Study on behalf of the pool committee. Their consultation process consisted of an online survey (700 responses) and hard copy survey (200 responses) followed by a random telephone survey (50 responses) to check the validity of their survey results. The key consultation outcomes from this study that are relevant to WALC were identified as:-

- 91% of respondents were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with existing facilities and provision;
- 82% of respondents said it was important to have an aquatics centre on Phillip Island;
- 41.9% responded that they would be happy to pay a 7% rate increase to have an aquatics centre on the island;
- 68% responded that travel was their barrier to participation;
- A key factor that would increase usage include a less than 15 minute drive time to a facility;
- 20% of respondents currently use WALC (*this figure is consistent with survey findings from this feasibility study*);
- Older adults were identified as a key market that current provision does not provide for and travel for this age group is difficult ,so a lot of them would not travel to Wonthaggi;
- The surrounding schools identified that a significant number of children could not swim and do not currently attend lessons. This is a concern given that they live on an island and one of Council's priorities in their Municipal Recreation Plan is to increase the number of children that can swim, through the promotion of water safety initiatives.

Two questions which were not asked were:-

- Whether they would swim at the beach or at an indoor aquatic centre on a nice day; and
- Whether they currently use the Cowes Outdoor Pool during summer and if an indoor aquatic centre opening would affect their use of that facility.

8.42 Recommendation

The draft report recommended an eight (8) lane 25m indoor pool with hydrotherapy pool / program pool and water play with beach entry to be located at the Adventure Park located between San Remo and Cowes.

8.4.3 Capital and operational costs of proposed facility

Due to budgetary constraints with the Phillip Island feasibility study, a qualified quantity surveyor was not engaged to determine the estimated capital cost of the proposed facility. Instead the consultants worked with their architects, Mantric Architects to develop capital costs for the proposed facility.

The capital cost of the proposed facility was estimated to be \$8.5M to \$10M by the architects and the anticipated operating deficit for the first four years of operation is \$1.5M, excluding set up costs. This equates to an annual operating deficit of approximately \$375,000.

Some of the key assumptions behind these budget figures include:-

- Facility catchment of 10,000 which incorporates Phillip Island and San Remo only;

- 100,000 visits per year (Sport and Leisure Planning were not able to confirm the number of tourists at the time of our discussion but tourist attendance was said to play a minor role whilst the majority of visits would come from residents);
- 23,000 visits per year from children staying at the Adventure Camp;
- 400 aquatic education students (excluding schools);
- Newhaven, San Remo and Cowes schools would use these facilities.

It should be noted that at the time of writing, the proposed Phillip Island Aquatic Centre budget was being revised by Sport and Leisure Planning.

8.4.4 Funding the proposed facility

The proposed model to fund the capital component of the facility is outlined below:-

Table 21: Proposed funding model for Phillip Island Aquatic Centre

Funding Source	Amount	Comment
State Government	\$2.5M	Committee has a commitment from the State Government
Federal Government	\$4M	Local member is currently in discussions with Federal Government
Community Support	\$1M	The board is confident that they will be able to raise \$1M from the local community
Rate Increase	\$800,000 - \$1M	Based on 2% rate increase (to be confirmed with Council's finance department)
Council Contribution	\$1.5M	Shortfall that the committee would require Council to fund

A preferred management model for the facility has not yet been determined.

8.4.5 Council Implications on proposed WALC redevelopment

Table 22 below provides an overview of the proposed components for both the proposed Phillip Island Aquatic Centre and proposed aquatic components at WALC. As can be seen, the recommendations for both sites are very similar, with Phillip Island recommending an additional two lanes in the 25m pool than WALC. If both of these facilities were built, there would be similar facility provision in both locations with two separate centres in Phillip Island (San Remo Leisure Centre and the proposed Aquatics Centre) instead of one consolidated centre in Wonthaggi (WALC).

Table 22: Component comparison between proposed Phillip Island Aquatic Centre and proposed WALC aquatic area

Proposed WALC redevelopment	Proposed Phillip Island Aquatic Centre
6 lane 25m pool	8 lane 25m pool
Warm water/program pool with water play and beach entry (217m2)	Warm water/program pool with water play and beach entry

Several factors need to be considered when looking at both of the feasibility studies, they include:-

- How building both of these centres aligns with Council's strategic priorities around aquatic and leisure provision in the municipality
- Council's ability to contribute capital funding to both projects
- Investigation of the opportunities to package both facilities to attract maximum State and Federal Government funding and reduce competition between facilities for the same funding

8.4.6 Financial Implications on proposed WALC redevelopment if the proposed Phillip Island Aquatic Centre is to be developed

The development of the proposed Phillip Island Aquatic Centre will have an impact on the financial and attendance projections outlined in **Section 10.1** of this report. Based on data obtained from WALC, the following tables show the impact on centre attendances and probable budget projections.

Table 23: Membership impact on WALC

	Membership Numbers	Membership Visits	Financial Impact
Projections for WALC Year 1 - Stage 1	575	44,881	\$ 337,183
% of members that live on Phillip Island	3.7%	3.7%	3.7%
Impact if Phillip Island Aquatic Centre is built	21	1661	\$ 12,476

The percentage of members that live on Phillip Island in **Table 23** is derived from membership postcode reports at WALC in line with projected budget figures. As can be seen there is a financial impact of \$12,476.

Table 24: Aquatic Education impact on WALC

	Aquatic Education Visits	Financial Impact
Projections for WALC Year 1 - Stage 1	23,203	\$ 306,102
% of WALC users that live on Phillip Island	15.0%	15.0%
Impact if Phillip Island Aquatic Centre is built	3,480	\$ 45,915

The percentage of Aquatic Education users that live on Phillip Island in **Table 24** is derived from Aquatic Education postcode reports at WALC in line with projected budget figures. As can be seen the development of the Phillip Island Centre is likely to have a significant impact on the financial viability of the WALC Aquatic Education program.

Table 25: Casual swim and aquatic classes' impact on WALC

	Casual Aquatic Visits	Financial Impact
Projections for WALC Year 1 - Stage 1	28,415	\$ 143,290
% of WALC users that live on Phillip Island	11.3%	11.3%
Impact if Phillip Island Aquatic Centre is built	3,211	\$ 16,192

The percentage of WALC users that live on Phillip Island in **Table 25** is derived from survey results from both this feasibility and the Phillip Island Aquatic Feasibility. This consultation process identified that 15% of people who currently use WALC live in Phillip Island, the percentage of members has then been deducted (3.7%). As the table shows an aquatics centre on the island would have a significant impact on both the number of visits to the centre and the financial performance of WALC with 11.3% of current casual users and class participants.

An assumption that all casual visits by people living on Phillip Island are aquatic visits has been made as specific data was not available.

*The Phillip Island Aquatics Feasibility consultation results identified that 20% of people who currently use WALC live in Phillip Island so the figures in **Table 25** may be slightly higher. The above figures have been based on the results of this consultation process.*

Table 26: Swim club impact on WALC

	Swim Club Visits	Financial Impact
Projections for WALC Year 1 - Stage 1	11,480	\$ 9,608
% of WALC users that live on Phillip Island	19.0%	19.0%
Impact if Phillip Island Aquatic Centre is built	2,181	\$ 1,825

The data in **Table 26** is an estimate of visits per year that the Phillip Island Swimming Club currently has at WALC based on information provided by the club and assumptions around club growth. As the table shows there is minimal financial impact on WALC if the club were to relocate to another centre.

Table 27: School visits impact on WALC

	School Visits	Financial Impact
Projections for WALC Year 1 - Stage 1	10,316	\$ 36,577
% of WALC users that live on Phillip Island	15.0%	15.0%
Impact if Phillip Island Aquatic Centre is built	1,547	\$ 5,487

Not all of the schools were able to provide accurate data in relation to number of students and visits per year to WALC so the data in **Table 27** is based on the information that was provided with some assumptions around overall school usage.

Table 28: Overall impact on WALC

	Overall Visits Affected	Financial Impact
Projections for WALC Year 1 - Stage 1	118,295	\$ 832,760
Impact if Phillip Island Aquatic Centre is built	12,081	\$ 81,895

Table 28 outlines the overall impact on WALC from both a visits and financial perspective if the proposed aquatics centre at Phillip Island is to be built. The figures in this table clearly show that the addition of a competing aquatic centre on Phillip Island would have a significant impact on both attendances (12,081 visits less than projected) and the financial viability of the proposed WALC facility with an impact of \$81,895 in Year 1.

8.4.7 Summary

While this study did not research aquatic needs in Phillip Island, the findings from the Phillip Island Aquatic Feasibility appear to demonstrate a need for some aquatic provision in Phillip Island. With that being said, the impact of building the proposed aquatic centre on Phillip Island is significant to the financial performance of WALC.

In determining the most appropriate aquatic provision across the Shire, Council may wish to consider the future development options that:-

- Best meet the overall needs of the Bass Coast Shire community;
- Provides the most efficient use of Council's available resources; and
- Best addresses Council's strategic directions in recreational, financial and asset planning and management.

8.5 Facility and service matrix

Universal design principles have been applied to the proposed designs to ensure that the facility is inviting and accessible to the whole community. These principles will flow through to the management and programming of the facility which will maximise programming opportunities and participation at the Centre

The proposed WALC redevelopment will provide the following mix of facilities and services, aimed at providing a broad range of leisure and recreation opportunities for all members of the local and municipal community.

The following facility and service matrix is separated into *Aquatics (Stages 1, 2 and 3)* and *Dry (Stage 4)* facilities and services. Centre management and operational budgets for each proposed development have been built around the provision of the following range of services. User types identified in the tables below have been derived from the *likely visitor markets presented in Section 6.6*.

Table 29: Aquatics (Stages 1, 2 and 3) facility and service matrix

Component	Service/Program	Target Audience	User Type
25 m pool	Squad training	Local swimming clubs (ages 5-55)	Fitness, Training & Competition
	Underwater hockey	Underwater hockey players	Fitness, Training & Competition
	Learn to Swim	7 - 60 years	Educational programs
	School LTS	School aged children	Educational programs
	School carnivals	School aged children	Fitness, Training & Competition
	School fun days	School aged children	Recreation & Leisure
	Aqua Aerobics	Adults and older adults	Recreation & Leisure
	Lap swimming	12 - 60 years	Recreation & Leisure
	Birthday parties	4 - 13 years	Recreation & Leisure
	Pool inflatable/fun days	4 - 18 years	Recreation & Leisure
	Lane Hire	Local groups (10 - 80+)	Recreation & Leisure/ Fitness, Training & Competition
Recreational use	Babies - 80 years	Recreation & Leisure	
Program/Warm Water/Toddlers pool	Learn to Swim	6 months - 7	Educational programs
	Rehabilitation programs	13 - 80+ years	Health & Wellness
	Aqua Aerobics	Adults and older adults	Recreation & Leisure
	General use	13 - 80+ years	Recreation & Leisure
	Kids play	birth - 2 years	
Beach Entry/Water Play	Kids play	birth - 5 years	Recreation & Leisure
Creche	Child care	Babies & young children	Recreation & Leisure
	Vacation care	School aged children	Recreation & Leisure
Café	General public	All ages	Recreation & Leisure

Table 30: Dry (Stage 4) facility and service matrix

Component	Service/Program	Target Audience	User Type
Gym	Teen Gym	13 - 16 years	Recreation & Leisure
	Gym memberships	16 - 70 years	Recreation & Leisure
	Casual usage	16 - 70 years	Recreation & Leisure
	Personal Training	20 - 50 years	Recreation & Leisure
	Older adults programs	60 - 80 years	Recreation & Leisure
	Disability groups	16 - 60 years	Recreation & Leisure
Group Fitness Room	General Group Fitness classes	16 - 55 years	Recreation & Leisure
	Older adults programs	60 - 80 years	Recreation & Leisure
	Teen classes	13 - 16 years	Recreation & Leisure
	School classes	School aged children	Recreation & Leisure
	Disability groups	16 - 60 years	Recreation & Leisure
	Dance classes	2- 50 years	Recreation & Leisure
	Wellness programs (Pilates, Yoga, Tai Chi)	20 - 65 years	Health & Wellness
Spin Room	Vacation care	School aged children	Recreation & Leisure
	General spin classes	16 - 55 years	Recreation & Leisure
	Sporting club classes	15 - 45 years	Fitness, Training & Competition
	School classes	School aged children	Recreation & Leisure
Meeting Room	Vacation care (without bikes)	School aged children	Recreation & Leisure
	Sporting clubs	15 - 45 years	Fitness, Training & Competition
	Aqua Aerobics (social)	Adults and older adults	Recreation & Leisure
	General public	All ages	Recreation & Leisure

The proposed Education Precinct, including a three court stadium, is expected to open in 2014/15 which would see the following impacts on WALC after the Stage 4 development:-

- Basketball and badminton would move to the new stadium facility (this would happen after Stage 1);
- Group fitness would have a dedicated room at WALC;
- Vacation care is a YMCA managed program that has a maximum of 30 children per day. This program would be run from the group fitness room, crèche and spin room around other program times;
- Dance classes would be conducted in the group fitness room, although this does not allow for expansion to a 4pm to 10pm timeslot as they are hoping (the stadium does not allow for this either);

- Gymnastics is a YMCA run program that started in October 2009 and has had attendance of approximately 400 students per term. Should the YMCA still be managing the facility at the time of the Stage 4 redevelopment, they would need to work with Council to look at alternate options for where they could run this program. There are a number of possibilities for this including school stadiums in town that are currently used for basketball that would not be required when the three court stadium at the Education Precinct is built. The main requirement for gymnastics would be storage space for the equipment.

8.5.1 Facility use overlays

From the priority groups identified earlier, the following facility floor plan overlays of key facility usage areas for the following target visitor groups have been prepared:

- Children and families
- Youth
- Adults
- Older adults
- Clubs and community groups
- Access for all abilities.

Shading of areas represents the main areas of the redeveloped facility each identified target group is mostly likely to use on a regular basis.

Refer to **Appendix 5** for full size overlays.

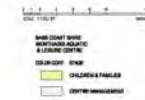


CHILDREN & FAMILIES

**BASS COAST SHIRE
WONTHAGGI AQUATIC &
LEISURE CENTRE
DEVELOPMENT**

**CONCEPT DESIGN
PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN**

INFORMATION ISSUE
Project No. 2010085ICP103-2 (P2)



M.L. Design (AC/PL) Limited
Level 2, 267 Princes Lane, Melbourne VIC 3000
A.C.N. 102 327 328
T 61 3 895 3127 F 61 3 895 3177
info@ml-design.com
www.ml-design.com



YOUTH

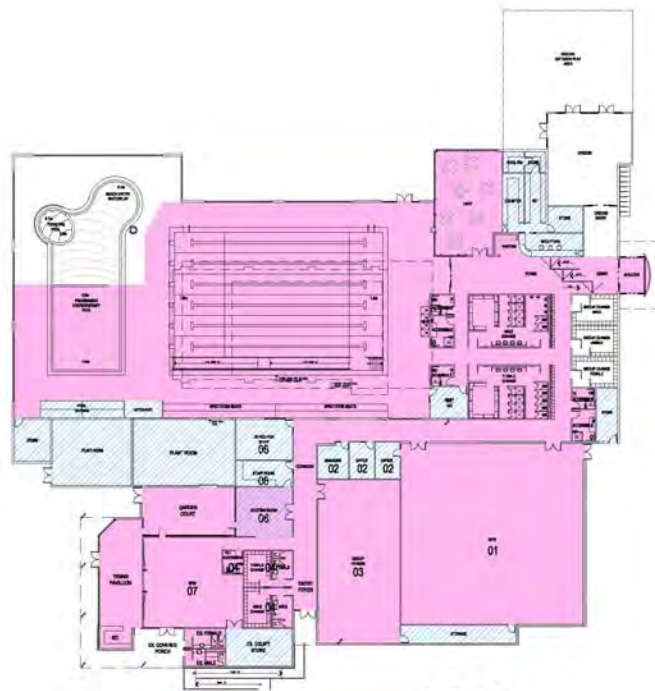
**BASS COAST SHIRE
WONTHAGGI AQUATIC &
LEISURE CENTRE
DEVELOPMENT**

**CONCEPT DESIGN
PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN**

INFORMATION ISSUE
Project No. 2010085ICP103-3 (P2)



M.L. Design (AC/PL) Limited
Level 2, 267 Princes Lane, Melbourne VIC 3000
A.C.N. 102 327 328
T 61 3 895 3127 F 61 3 895 3177
info@ml-design.com
www.ml-design.com



ADULTS

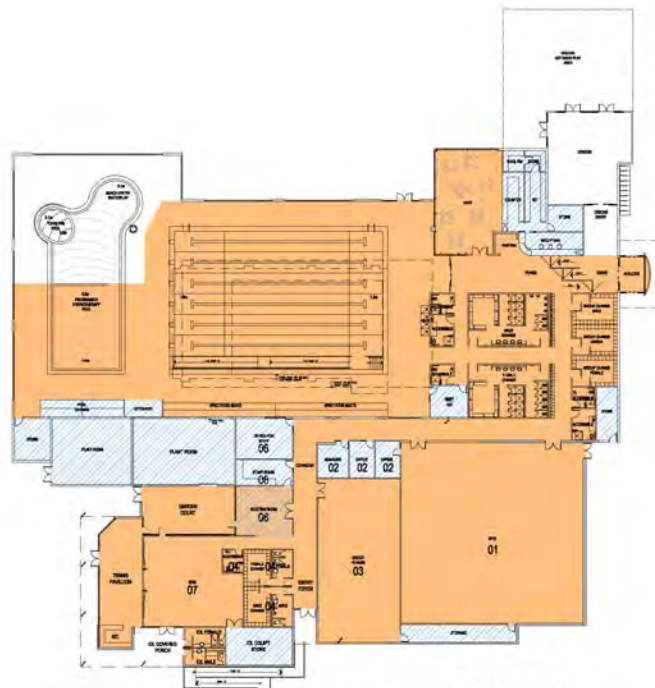
**BASS COAST SHIRE
WONTHAGGI AQUATIC &
LEISURE CENTRE
DEVELOPMENT**

**CONCEPT DESIGN
PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN**

INFORMATION ISSUE
Project No. / Drawing no. / Revision no.
2010085/CP103-4 (P2)



ML Design (PAC) Pty. Limited
Level 2, 301 Phillip Lane, Wollaveille VIC 3992
AGL 185 501 021
T: 03 9452 3303 F: 03 9452 3377
info@mldesign.com.au
www.ml-design.com.au



OLDER ADULTS

**BASS COAST SHIRE
WONTHAGGI AQUATIC &
LEISURE CENTRE
DEVELOPMENT**

**CONCEPT DESIGN
PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN**

INFORMATION ISSUE
Project No. / Drawing no. / Revision no.
2010085/CP103-5 (P2)



ML Design (PAC) Pty. Limited
Level 2, 301 Phillip Lane, Wollaveille VIC 3992
AGL 185 501 021
T: 03 9452 3303 F: 03 9452 3377
info@mldesign.com.au
www.ml-design.com.au



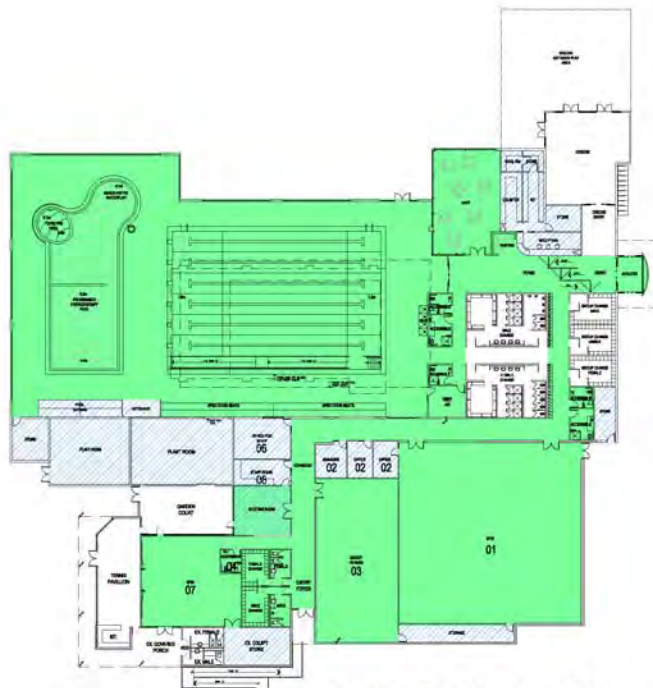
CLUBS & COMMUNITY GROUPS

**BASS COAST SHIRE
WONTHAGGI AQUATIC &
LEISURE CENTRE
DEVELOPMENT**

**CONCEPT DESIGN
PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN**

INFORMATION ISSUE
Project No. 2010085/CP103-6 (P2)

MLDesign
ML Design (PAC) Pty. Limited
Level 2, 301 Franklin Lane, Wollaveille VIC 3202
AGL 100 501 020
T: 03 9215 2000 F: 03 9215 2177
info@mldesign.com.au
www.ml-design.com.au



ACCESS FOR ALL ABILITIES

**BASS COAST SHIRE
WONTHAGGI AQUATIC &
LEISURE CENTRE
DEVELOPMENT**

**CONCEPT DESIGN
PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN**

INFORMATION ISSUE
Project No. 2010085/CP103-7 (P2)

MLDesign
ML Design (PAC) Pty. Limited
Level 2, 301 Franklin Lane, Wollaveille VIC 3202
AGL 100 501 020
T: 03 9215 2000 F: 03 9215 2177
info@mldesign.com.au
www.ml-design.com.au

8.6 Facility management considerations

There are a number of management considerations for Council to consider once WALC is redeveloped. A brief overview of each of these follows.

8.6.1 Existing management arrangement

The YMCA were awarded a new contract (5 x 5 x 5) for the management of WALC in April 2010 and would therefore be managing the Centre when Stage I is built, according to the timeframes put forward by Council in this study.

Council's current contract with the YMCA is a guaranteed contract where the YMCA retains 100% of any profit each year. Council should consider reviewing both the budget and the contract prior to the redevelopment of WALC. The current YMCA budget for the next four years does not provide any growth and targets in the budget are below current attendances. This budget should be redeveloped in line with the proposed Centre redevelopment to show strong growth once the redevelopment has been completed.

8.6.2 Universal Design

Ensuring that universal design and management principles are incorporated into facility management will maximise the benefit of the building and site design. Important elements to consider include appropriate:-

- Reception and café layout
- Equipment fit out and layout of equipment to ensure adequate spacing
- Signage
- Centre marketing
- Program opportunities
- Program scheduling
- Staff training and education

SECTION 9: WALC REDEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

This section of the Feasibility Report provides an overview of the design and development concept for the redevelopment of the Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre. It reviews the detailed option proposed and the estimated probable development costs and associated assumptions.

9.1 Development considerations

The existing WALC is reaching the end of its functional and efficient operating life, with the majority of the Centre and its assets and equipment reaching 30 years of age. The 1999 Wonthaggi Aquatic and Leisure Centre Feasibility Study identified a number of capital works and plant and equipment upgrades that would provide some extended life for the facility. A range of upgrades have been made in recent years, however, increased building codes, guidelines, legislative requirements and community requirements have all increased significantly in the past 10 years and a complete redevelopment is proposed to better meet current day expectations.

In redeveloping the Centre, a range of staged options have been considered, including the retention of the existing 25m pool in its current form and condition. Ultimately its replacement as part of the site redevelopment was considered essential in meeting long-term facility sustainability and in achieving best value from the redevelopment. With the WALC providing the only indoor heated water space in Bass Coast, its long-term viability and increased presentation and functionality will be essential.

Replacement of existing pool plant, water treatment systems and mechanical operate to service the refurbished and newly constructed areas is critical to achieving proposed ESD design and efficiency in water, power and lighting outcomes within the Centre. Bringing these services in-line with safe operations and OH&S guidelines is a key element of facility design proposals.

Through Stage 4 development, a key consideration has been limiting the overall encroachment and impact in existing Wonthaggi Recreation Reserve users and facilities. Much of the Stage 4 development re-uses the existing building footprint, mainly through the proposed relocation of the stadium court to an alternative location (currently proposed at the Wonthaggi Education Precinct). This allows for the re-use and upgrade of the facility within the existing building footprint, as well as the retention of other precinct support amenities including the tennis pavilion and public access toilets.

One of the challenges when redeveloping a facility is the loss of members during redevelopment if alternate facilities are not offered during the refurbishment, and subsequent ability to attract members back to the centre once the redevelopment is complete. It will be desirable for Council to consider the provision of temporary health club and group fitness facilities during the time of Stage 4 refurbishment to minimise the loss of members. The provision of alternative aquatic facilities during Stage 3 development is not possible, however, negotiation with other aquatic

providers across the Shire and in South Gippsland would assist in the community's access to necessary recreation, leisure and aquatic education services.

9.2 Design considerations

The proposed staged redevelopment concept provides for a *regional scale facility that would replace the existing WALC aquatic facilities and amenities in Stages 1, 2 and 3, and then expand and enhance the existing health club facilities and support areas into the existing stadium court area during Stage 4.

The proposed redevelopment provides expanded car parking areas to what currently exists within the Wonthaggi Recreation Reserve precinct and offers traffic management alternatives and improvements through internal roadways. The existing bus pick-up and drop-off area currently used by the Wonthaggi North Primary School will be retained and enhanced through the proposed design concept.

** Note: the local definition of a regional facility used in this report is a facility that services the Bass Coast Shire municipality.*

Core facilities proposed by stage include:

Stage 1

- Beach entry water play area, flowing into a warm-water program / LTS pool
- Wet male and female change rooms and toilets
- Wet and dry family and accessible change rooms and toilets
- Reception, entry and foyer
- Café
- Crèche and outdoor play area
- First-aid room, lifeguard station and pool storeroom
- Retention and upgrade of existing pool plant, plus addition pool plant room
- Car parking (178 spaces, including accessible parking)
- Reconfigured bus pick-up, drop-off and parking area.

Stage 2

- Group male, female and unisex change rooms

Stage 3

- Replacement of the existing 6-lane 25m pool with an 8-lane pool with ramped entry
- Spectator seating for 110 patrons

Stage 4

- Health club (530m²) – reconfigured within the existing stadium area
- Group fitness / program room (190m²) and Spin class room (120m²)
- Health club and group fitness storage
- Staff room (1), staff and health club offices (4) and meeting room (1)
- Retention of the existing tennis clubrooms
- Retention of the existing external precinct public toilets
- Retention of the garden courtyard
- Provision for an additional 124 car parking spaces

The proposed staged design concept allows Council and facility operators to focus on delivering the priority aspects of the facility redevelopment, being improvements to the aquatics area and water space, change facilities and an integrated reception and entry control point.

Through the relocation of the indoor stadium court to an alternative venue, its large floor area and building structure can be utilised for refurbishment and reconfiguration to accommodate Stage 4 development works. This has three considerable benefits for design and development:

1. It retains the existing building footprint with no encroachment into the Wonthaggi Recreation Reserve or into existing car parking areas, roadways or sporting fields.
2. It promotes cost savings through internal reconfiguration rather than requiring a complete new build approach.
3. It retains the existing tennis clubrooms and maintains access to the adjacent tennis courts.

9.2.1 ESD Considerations

A range of Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) initiatives have been considered through concept plan development for the WALC (refer to **Appendix 4**). Opportunities exist to introduce a range of environmentally friendly and efficient materials and equipment into architectural, water treatment, electrical, hydraulic and mechanical services associated with the facility.

Preliminary costs estimates indicate that around \$600,000 worth of ESD related initiatives have been included within the proposed concept design. Specific initiatives will be factored into the detailed design of the project and will be assessed and incorporated based on budget availability and overall benefit to the Centre, the users, the environment and the operational bottom line (e.g. Council's ongoing subsidy).

9.2.2 Universal Design Considerations

Universal design refers to broad-spectrum architectural planning ideas meant to produce buildings, products and environments that are inherently accessible to both the able-bodied and the physically disabled.

The principles of universal design are outlined below:

1. **Equitable use** – the design does not disadvantage or stigmatise any group of users;
2. **Flexibility in use** – the design accommodates a wide range of individual presences and abilities;
3. **Simple and intuitive use** – use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level;
4. **Perceptible Information** – the design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities;
5. **Tolerance for error** – the design minimises hazards and the adverse consequences do accidental or unintended actions;
6. **Low Physical effort** – the design can be used efficiently and comfortably, and with a minimum of fatigue;
7. **Size and Space for Approach and use** – appropriate size and space is provided for approach/reach/manipulation, and use, regardless of the user's body size, posture, or mobility.

Universal design has the following goals:

1. **Body fit** - accommodate a wide a range of body sizes and abilities;
2. **Comfort** - keeping demands within desirable limits of body function and perception;
3. **Awareness** - ensuring that critical information for use is easily perceived;
4. **Understanding** - making methods of operation and use intuitive, clear and unambiguous;
5. **Social integration** - treating all groups with dignity and respect;
6. **Personalisation** - incorporating opportunities for choice and the expression of individual preferences;
7. **Appropriateness** - respecting and reinforcing cultural values and the social and environmental context of any design project.

Council understands the importance of universal design and aims to develop a facility that is both accessible and attractive to the entire community. DPCD's Strategic Project Manager has been an integral part of the design process and has worked closely with the project consultants, architects and Council to ensure that the proposed designs address the critical elements of a universally accessible facility.

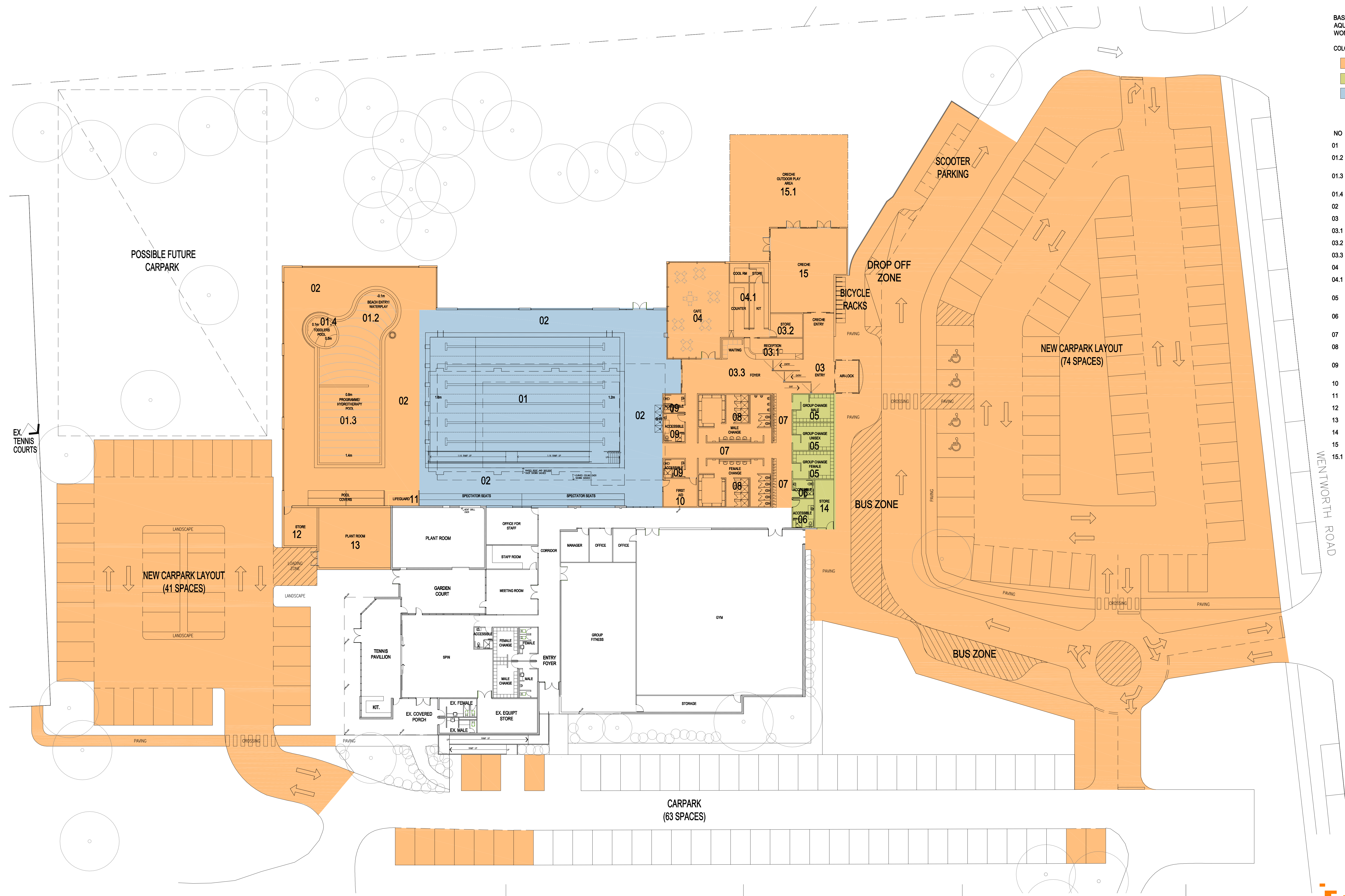
These above principles and goals will be incorporated into the detailed design phase for this facility and then in to subsequent facility fit out, programming and operations.

**BASS COAST SHIRE
AQUATIC CENTRE
WONTHAGGI**

COLOR CODE STAGE

- STAGE 1
- STAGE 2
- STAGE 3

NO	Facility	Proposed Area
01	25m Pool	465m ²
01.2	Beach Entry/ Water Play	217m ²
01.3	Program/ Warm Water	
02	Pool Concourse	825m ²
03	Entry Lobby	55.0m ²
03.1	Reception	118.0m ²
03.2	Store	
03.3	Foyer/ Waiting	
04	Cafe	149m ²
04.1	Counter/ Kitchen Store	
05	Group Change (Male, Female, Unisex)	60m ²
06	Family & Accessible Changerooms	17.5m ²
07	Circulation/ Lockers	76m ²
08	Change Rooms & Amenities (Male, Female)	120m ²
09	Family & Accessible Changerooms	23.5m ²
10	First Aid	16.5m ²
11	Lifeguard	9m ²
12	Pool Store	25m ²
13	Plant Room	74.5m ²
14	Gym Store	16m ²
15	Creche	100m ²
15.1	Creche Outdoor Area	210m ²



**BASS COAST SHIRE
WONTHAGGI AQUATIC &
LEISURE CENTRE
DEVELOPMENT**

**STAGING
CONCEPT DESIGN
PLAN**

INFORMATION ISSUE
Project No. -Drawing no. Revision no.:
2010085\CP101 (P6)



MLDesign (VIC) Pty. Limited
Level 2, 347 Flinders Lane, Melbourne VIC 3000
A.C.N. 100 387 326
T 61 3 8610 3700 F 61 3 8610 3777
mldesign@mldesign.biz
www.mldesign.biz

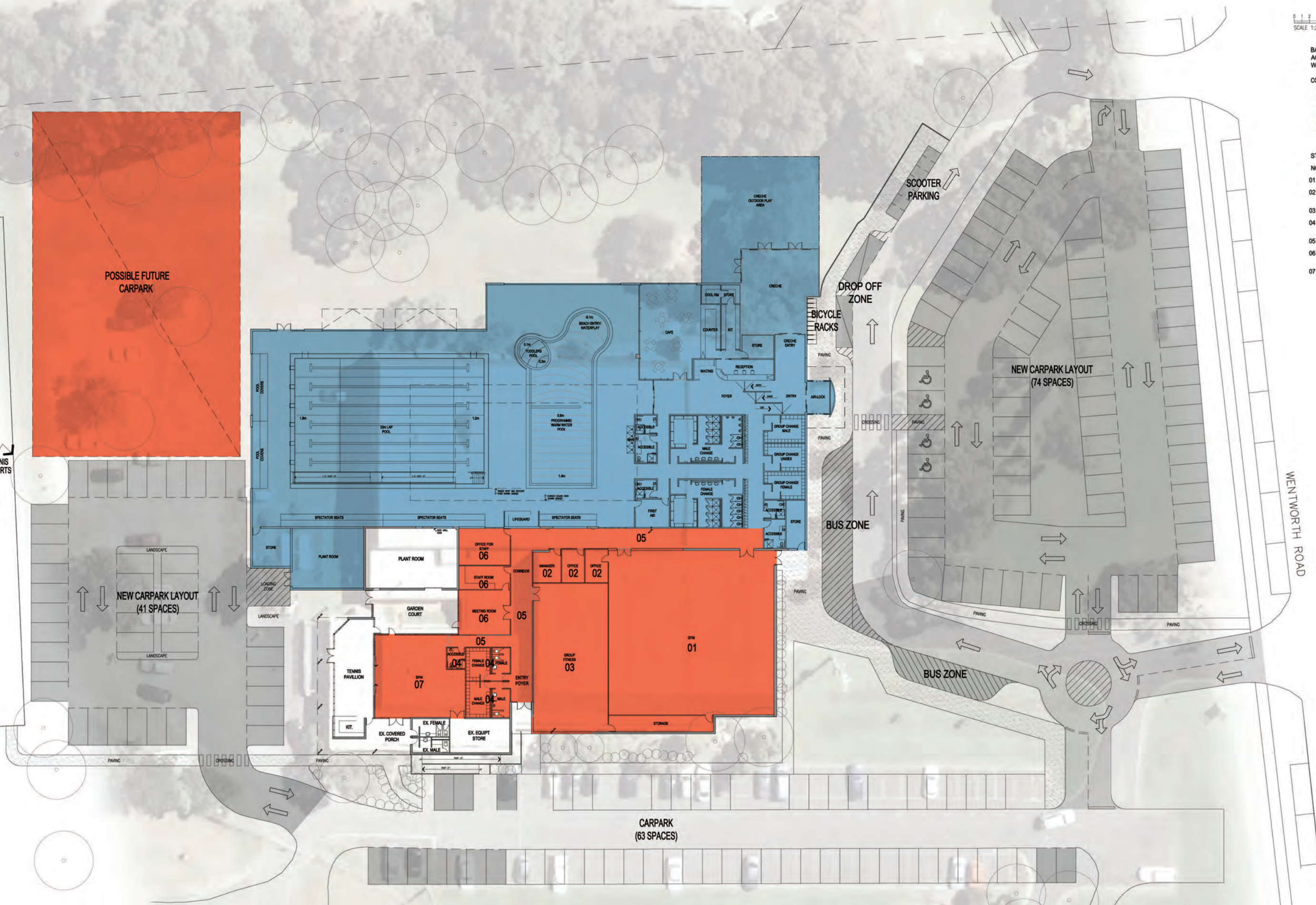
**BASS COAST SHIRE
 AQUATIC CENTRE
 WONTHAGGI**

COLOR CODE STAGE

- STAGE 1
- STAGE 1 - CARPARKING
- STAGE 2 - DRY AREAS & FUTURE PARKING

STAGE 1 DEVELOPMENT

NO	Facility	Proposed Area
01	Health Club Gym	530m ²
02	Manager & Health Club Offices	42.5m ²
03	Group fitness	194m ²
04	Change Rooms & Amenities (Male, Female, Accessible)	60.5m ²
05	Circulation	158m ²
06	Staff Room, Meeting Room, Staff Office	95m ²
07	Spin Room	120m ²



**BASS COAST SHIRE
 AQUATIC CENTRE
 DEVELOPMENT
 WONTHAGGI**

**CONCEPT DESIGN
 PROPOSED SITE PLAN
 STAGE 2**

INFORMATION ISSUE

Project No. - Drawing no. Revision no.:
 2010085\CP102 (P5)



ML Design (VIC) Pty. Limited
 Level 2, 347 Flinders Lane, Melbourne VIC 3000
 A.C.N. 100 387 326
 T 61 3 8610 3700 F 61 3 8610 3777
 mdesign@mdesign.biz
 www.mdesign.biz

9.2 Facility component summary

The following tables detail the existing and proposed components of WALC.

9.2.1 Comparison of existing and proposed facilities

Table 31: Comparison of proposed and existing facility components at WALC

Facility Components	Existing	Proposed Aquatics (Stages 1, 2 and 3)	Proposed Dry (Stage 4)	Comments
25m pool	✓	✓		Existing pool has no ramp
Program pool		✓		There is currently only a toddlers pool
Wark water pool		✓		There is currently only a toddlers pool
Toddlers pool	✓	✓		There is currently only a toddlers pool
Lifeguard station		✓		
First aid		✓		
Spectator seating	✓	✓		Increased seating of 70
Wet change rooms	✓	✓		
Group change rooms		✓		
Accessible change	✓	✓		
Pool storage	✓	✓		
Plant room / chemical store (additional)	✓	✓		
Stadium storage	✓	✓		Inadequate storage currently as it is shared with group fitness and gymnastics
Reception (including storage)	✓	✓		Inefficient area, no storage
Café (including storage) & café seating		✓		Very limited kiosk with no seating currently
Creche		✓		
Health club	✓		✓	
Health club offices			✓	
Manager office			✓	
Group Fitness			✓	
Change rooms and amenities (dry side)	✓		✓	No change facilities and only 1 male and 1 female toilet
Staff room			✓	
Meeting room	✓		✓	
Staff office	✓		✓	Inadequate space for existing staff
Spin room			✓	

External Areas				
Number of car parks	54	178	220	
Creche - external play		✓		
Bus zone		✓		

9.2.2 Proposed component schedules for WALC redevelopment

Table 32: Proposed facility component schedule for WALC redevelopment – Stage 1

Facility Components	Estimated m ² area
Aquatic Area - Internal	1266
Program/warm water/toddler pool	217
Lifeguard Station	9
First Aid	17
Wet Change Rooms	120
Accessible Change	42
Pool Storage	25
Plant Room / Chemical Store (additional)	75
Stadium Storage	16
Reception (including storage)	118
Café (including storage) & café seating	149
Creche	100
Circulation	131
Total - GFA (excluding external spaces)	2285
	6622
External Areas	
Development car parks	3439
Creche - external play	210
Landscaping - paving	534
Bus zone	154

Table 33: Proposed facility component schedule for WALC redevelopment – Stage 2

Facility Components	Estimated m ² area
Group Change Rooms	60
Total	60

Table 34: Proposed facility component schedule for WALC redevelopment – Stage 3

Facility Components	Estimated m ² area
25m pool	466
Spectator Seating	110 permanent seats
Total	466

Table 35: Proposed facility component schedule for WALC redevelopment – Stage 4

Facility Components	Estimated m ² area
Health Club	530
Manager and health club offices	43
Group Fitness	194
Change rooms and amenities	61
Circulation	158
Staff room, meeting room and staff office	95
Spin Room	120
Total - GFA (excluding external spaces)	1201

Total Building GFA	2454
External Areas	
Development car parks	1253

9.3 Capital cost estimate

Capital development costs are estimated at \$12.36 million for the Aquatics Stages 1, 2 and 3 and \$3.538 million for Stage 4. **Appendix 3** provides a full breakdown of construction costs by component, including square metre rates and allowances assumed.

9.3.1 Estimated Capital Costs

The following tables detail the estimated capital cost for each proposed stage of redevelopment.

Table 36: Estimated probable development costs of Stage 1 (based on component summary)

Development Components	Estimated probable capital costs
Total Building Works	\$ 2,497,700
Total Swimming Pools	\$ 1,097,000
Total External Works and Services	\$ 1,424,000
Allowances and Contingencies	\$ 903,500
Professional Fees and Charges & FFE	\$ 670,204
Upgrade Substation	\$ 100,000
Total estimated probable development costs	\$ 6,692,404

Note: All costs provided are exclusive of GST

The capital costs in **Table 36** are based on the existing pool remaining open during development of Stage 1. There would be an additional cost of approximately \$1,005,000 for temporary change facilities and infrastructure required to redevelop the facility while keeping the existing 25m pool open to the public.

Table 37: Estimated probable development costs of Stage 2 (based on component summary)

Development Components	Estimated probable capital costs
Total Building Works	\$ 203,000
Allowances and Contingencies	\$ 38,000
Professional Fees and Charges & FFE	\$ 28,870
Total estimated probable development costs	\$ 269,870

Note: All costs provided are exclusive of GST

Table 38: Estimated probable development costs of Stage 3 (based on component summary)

Development Components	Estimated probable capital costs
Total Building Works	\$ 2,280,300
Total Swimming Pools	\$ 1,828,000
Allowances and Contingencies	\$ 738,500
Professional Fees and Charges & FFE	\$ 550,926
Total estimated probable development costs	\$ 5,397,726

Note: All costs provided are exclusive of GST

The capital costs in **Table 38** are based on the warm water/program pool remaining open during development of Stage 3. There would be an additional cost of approximately \$810,000 for temporary infrastructure to complete Stage 3 while the other water space is open.

Table 39: Estimated probable development costs of Stage 4 (based on component summary)

Development Components	Estimated probable capital costs
Total Building Works	\$ 2,018,000
Total External Works and Services	\$ 583,000
Allowances and Contingencies	\$ 571,000
Professional Fees and Charges & FFE	\$ 366,000
Total estimated probable development costs	\$ 3,538,000

Note: All costs provided are exclusive of GST

SECTION 10: MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

10.1 Preliminary operating budget

To determine the viability of the proposed redevelopment of WALC, a six-year probable operating budget has been prepared with optimistic and pessimistic scenarios included for each year of operation. Financial figures and estimated participation levels used in budget preparation are considered conservative.

The baseline figures represent the expected performance of the Centre, with the optimistic scenario including a 15% increase in income and associated increases in expenditure and the pessimistic scenario including a 15% reduction in income and associated expenditure reductions. Relevant fixed costs have been retained through all levels of scenario analysis. Refer to **Table 40** below for an overview of these figures.

There are limitations to the operating budget provided and it should only be used as a general operating guide. Figures presented have been prepared from a detailed review of existing YMCA operating budget and attendance statistics in line with demographic and participation statistics for Wonthaggi and the Bass Coast Shire. Consultation with both Council and YMCA staff has been undertaken to refine costs and to 'reality check' the proposed budget.

Years 1 and 2 provide an operational budget for Stage 1 with Stage 2 occurring in Year 3. There will be an eleven month closure of the 25m pool during Stage 3 which will see eight months in Year 4 and three months in Year 5 with no access to the 25m pool. Year 6 assumes that the entire aquatic redevelopment is complete. Due to the anticipated timeframes of Stage 4 this redevelopment does not impact on the six year probable operating budget.

It is important to note that the current spike in memberships and attendances at WALC due to the desalination workers will not present in these budget forecasts as the desalination plant will be operating by the time Stage 1 is built.

Table 40: WALC probable operating budget

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6
Income	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Optimistic	\$ 1,252,745	\$ 1,321,503	\$ 1,381,203	\$ 1,176,357	\$ 1,442,833	\$ 1,585,288
Baseline	\$ 1,089,343	\$ 1,149,133	\$ 1,201,046	\$ 1,022,919	\$ 1,254,637	\$ 1,378,511
Pessimistic	\$ 925,942	\$ 976,763	\$ 1,020,889	\$ 869,482	\$ 1,066,442	\$ 1,171,735
Expense	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Optimistic	\$ 1,519,345	\$ 1,586,822	\$ 1,655,185	\$ 1,692,582	\$ 1,820,230	\$ 1,934,360
Baseline	\$ 1,468,181	\$ 1,539,580	\$ 1,605,006	\$ 1,633,895	\$ 1,779,139	\$ 1,877,873
Pessimistic	\$ 1,423,370	\$ 1,483,640	\$ 1,554,826	\$ 1,584,494	\$ 1,712,981	\$ 1,809,102
Net Operating Result	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Optimistic	\$ (266,600)	\$ (265,319)	\$ (273,982)	\$ (516,225)	\$ (377,397)	\$ (349,072)
Baseline	\$ (378,837)	\$ (390,447)	\$ (403,960)	\$ (610,975)	\$ (524,501)	\$ (499,361)
Pessimistic	\$ (497,428)	\$ (506,877)	\$ (533,937)	\$ (715,012)	\$ (646,539)	\$ (637,367)

10.1.1 Budget income highlights

Aquatics income

47% of overall income in Year 1 is derived from aquatics income which is made up of casual swims and multi visit passes, Aquatic Education, aqua aerobics, swim club, school and community bookings. Attendances for casual swim and multi visit passes are based on existing visits per annum with a 5% increase.

The percentage of adult, child/concession and family swims has been calculated using existing attendance trends as there is a higher than 'normal' percentage of child/concession swims. This is most likely representative of the demographics of the area and will ensure that the Centre will continue to meet the needs of the local community.

The redevelopment of the existing 25m pool will mean an 11 month closure of this pool which has been scheduled in Year 4 (8 months) and Year 5 (3 months) so that the capital cost of this development can be split across the two financial years. This closure period sees a decline in aquatics income with an increase of 5% in aquatics attendances when the new 25m pool is open.

Aquatic Education income

WALC cannot currently meet the needs of the community in relation to Aquatic Education. The current program is at capacity and has a waiting list of approximately 20 students, in addition 69 Bass Coast residents were completing Aquatic Education at SPLASH in September 2010. The current demand is 11% of the catchment for Aquatic Education aged children. Forward projections for the first four years are based on 13% of the catchment of future population projections with further increases in Years 5 and 6 to 15% of the catchment as the additional two lanes of the 25m pool become available.

These increases are due to the additional water space available at the completion of Stage 1 and Stage 3 with new facilities and an increased marketing budget to attract this market. Attracting children to learn to swim and promoting water safety is a priority of Council in their Municipal Recreation Plan.

Dry facility income

Dry facility income includes health club, group fitness, crèche, vacation care and other dry programs. Dry attendances are projected to decrease slightly across the six year budget period. With a three court stadium expected to open at the Education Precinct in 2014/15, no immediate plans to redevelop the older dry facilities, and a competitor in town that has newer facilities, it is anticipated that the dry facility attendances would reduce by 317 visits over the six year period.

Memberships

Membership assumptions are based on the existing split of memberships (22% aquatics, 78% health and wellness). Health and wellness and corporate memberships are projected to decrease by 2% each year over the six year period. As the facilities become older and there are no immediate plans to redevelop this area it is expected that some members will transfer to Feelgood Fitness.

Teen and older adult memberships are expected to grow by 1% each year and aquatics memberships are projected to increase by 5% (compared to projections in the YMCA's budget) in Year 1 with increases of 1.5% in Years 2 and 3, a further increase of 5% in Year 5 when the new 25m pool is open and an increase of 2.5% in Year 6. Aquatics memberships will be impacted during the 11 month closure period to redevelop the 25m pool but it is expected that these members would return when the new pool is open given that there is no other indoor water space within Bass Coast.

Secondary spend income

Secondary spend income is comprised of café and merchandise income and is based on the CERM benchmark for regional sites in 2009¹⁷ of \$0.61 per visit, with 70% allocated to café sales and 30% allocated to merchandise.

10.1.2 Expenditure highlights

Expenditure has been budgeted conservatively to ensure a prudent approach to cost management is taken. More aggressive budgets and expenditure control can be undertaken through detailed design and construction phases.

¹⁷ University of South Australia – National Benchmarking Survey for Sports and Aquatic Centres 2009. Group 7 medians have been applied and these have been further broken down to include only regional centres to make it comparative to Wonthaggi. N=13

The following key expenditure assumptions and considerations have been drawn into budget preparation:

- Maintenance costs are assumed at 0.9% for the first 3 years then increasing to 1% from Years 4 to 9 and 1.5% from Year 10 onwards. Maintenance costs are based on the capital cost of each stage of the redevelopment and as such increase significantly after the completion of Stage 3 in Year 5
- The staffing structure for this centre is based on the YMCA's existing current staff structure with additional staff as required to provide the additional service. Key staffing changes that are not program related include:
 - The addition of full time Customer Service staff during all operating hours with additional staff rostered on at busy times for reception and café
 - Full time equivalent cleaning staff

These are significant costs to the Centre but will address the existing gaps in provision and help to achieve income targets.

- YMCA management fee and corporate overheads have been included
- An increase in marketing expenses to promote the new facility to the community and meet income and attendance targets
- CPI increase each year of 3.5%
- Wage increase of 3.5% each year in line with YMCA's EBA
- Utilities, water and insurance increase each year by 5% in line with the YMCA's group purchasing arrangements
- The cost of refilling the 25m pool at the completion of Stage 3 has not been included in the probable operating budget.

10.1.3 Budget summary

The probable budget for the WALC redevelopment would see Council's annual subsidy increasing by \$127,198 in Year 1. Additional customer service wages and programmed maintenance costs have a significant impact on Year 1 expenditure, with increased Aquatic Education numbers and income helping to offset this cost.

The total probable net subsidy required by Council over the first six years of operation of the new Centre is \$2,808,082. The closure of the 25m pool in Years 4 and 5 will have a significant impact on Council's subsidy for those two years. Year 6 provides Council with an indication of the actual operating deficit for the Centre at the completion of the aquatics redevelopment until Stage 4 is completed. It should be noted that the deficit will increase each year.

While the six year budget has been developed for this study Council may have the opportunity to renegotiate the budget during this period with the YMCA to try and reduce their subsidy.

SECTION 11: LIKELY FUNDING SOURCES

This section of the Feasibility Report provides a summary of potential project funding avenues relevant to the WALC redevelopment proposed in Chapter 9. The total projected development costs of \$15.9 million will need to be sourced from a range of funding partners and contributors. To assist in funding acquisition, the proposed development incorporates a four staged approach over the 10 year period 2011/12 to 2021/22 in order to fully realise facility development objectives. The following table provides a summary of stages and likely magnitude of capital funding required.

Table 41: Proposed WALC redevelopment stages and estimated probable capital costs

Stage	Key development components	Estimated stage cost
Aquatics Stage 1	Construct warm water pool, creche, entrance and car parking and upgrade pool plant and services	\$6,692,404
Aquatics Stage 2	Redevelop change rooms	\$269,870
Aquatics Stage 3	Replace existing 25m pool (ramp entry to enhance accessibility and an additional two lanes), spectator seating	\$5,397,726
Dry Side Stage 4	Redevelop facility dry area including gym, office and meeting rooms and stadium court	\$3,540,000
	Total estimated capital costs	\$15,900,000

In addition to the capital costs outlined in Table 41, an allowance of 15% will need to be made for additional costs to stage the development of the aquatics area in Stage 1 and Stage 3 to enable part of this area to be open while the other is being developed. This equates to an additional \$1,005,000 for Stage 1 and \$809,659 for Stage 3.

It should be noted that a capital project of this magnitude would represent a project of significant scale for a community sport and recreation facility within the Bass Coast Shire. The allocation of Council funds would need to be considered in the context of Council's long-term (ten year) financial plan, its considerable existing infrastructure renewal program and the relative low annual rate revenue received by Council.

Financing options identified below provide overall commentary on possible sources of funding specifically for the staged WALC redevelopment. A summary table of likely funding levels is provided in **Section 11.5**.

All identified figures were unconfirmed at the time of writing and represent funding opportunities and not recommendations.

The core project funding mix is likely to consist of contributions from:

- Government grant programs
- Bass Coast Shire contributions
- Private or commercial funding
- Management organisation funding
- Community fundraising.

11.1 Government grant programs

Key government grant sources that are likely to provide funding contributions towards redevelopment of the WALC include Sport and Recreation Victoria via its *Aquatic Access / Better Pools Program*.

Sport and Recreation Victoria's Community Facility Funding Program contributes to the provision of high quality and accessible community sport and recreation facilities across Victoria. In recent years the *Aquatics Access / Better Pools* and associated *Seasonal Pool Renewal Program* has contributed over \$46 million annually into aquatic centre development and improvement projects across Victoria. At the time of writing the criteria and state government funding commitment for this program was under review. New guidelines and criteria are anticipated to be released by Sport and Recreation Victoria early in the 2011/12 financial year with the next round of funding to be allocated for projects that will commence in the 2012/13 financial year.

Under previous program criteria, maximum grants of up to \$2.5 million were provided to aquatic and leisure centre development projects. In the context of the Bass Coast Shire being a rural municipality, a funding ratio of \$1 from SRV to every \$1 of local funding would be required to support state government investment. To achieve maximum grant funding, a minimum local commitment of \$2.5 million would be required.

The *Aquatic Access / Better Pools Program* is extremely competitive and is targeted towards projects that can demonstrate the improvement of access and participation opportunities for communities, as well as demonstrate a justified need within the local and regional community. Collaboration through planning and enhancing community partnerships through ongoing facility operation and programming, are also critical to accessing this funding.

Federal Government funding and grant programs are available from time-to-time for infrastructure development projects. The inclusion of Universal and Environmentally Sustainable Design components within community infrastructure planning and design may provide additional attraction for Federal Government funding. WALC redevelopment costs have identified an estimated \$600,000 of Universal and Environmentally Sustainable Design initiatives and aspects that have been incorporated into the WALC redevelopment concepts.

At the time of writing, Regional Development Victoria's *Regional Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF)* provided a focus on improving community and cultural infrastructure that support regional

growth and prosperity and contribute to improving the attractiveness and lifestyle benefits of living and working in regional Victoria.

Community and Cultural Infrastructure grants may be provided for capital projects that seek to build on the existing community assets of regional communities, as well as projects that aim to expand the cultural offering to both residents and visitors alike. The Bass Coast Shire provides important Council objectives towards increasing resident and visitor amenity and liveability, and in accommodating local industry growth.

11.2 Bass Coast Shire contributions

Contributions from the Bass Coast Shire towards redevelopment will be essential in meeting funding requirements, as well as providing match funding to support any government investment. Council's contribution may need to be as large as 50% to 80% of total aquatic stage funding, depending on the attraction of State and Federal Government grant funding and other investment to support the proposed three staged aquatic development.

Capital contributions are likely to be sourced through future planned capital works budgets, special project contributions, rate rises and/or Council loans. In the context of Council budgeting and priority focus on asset renewal, careful consideration will need to be given to diverting an annual capital allocation towards the proposed development over the next 10 budget years.

The following information represents potential financial scenarios, they do not form recommendations as to how Council may fund capital development. Allocation for detailed design work in Council's 2011/12 budget will need to be considered in-line with the overall agreed facility development model and associated costs.

11.2.1 Council borrowing

The undertaking of large loans and associated payback periods and interest payments will need to be factored into operational modelling to ensure return on centre investment can be monitored and maintained against operational performance and any potential operational subsidy requirements. **Table 42** provides a summary table of potential loan amounts, borrowing criteria and likely payback amounts.

Table 42: Possible Council loan repayments and borrowing criteria

Borrowing criteria	Loan Amount		
	\$2,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$4,000,000
Average annual interest rate	9.5%	9.5%	9.5%
Term of loan (in years)	10	10	10
Payment frequency	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
Total monthly payments	\$25,879	\$38,819	\$51,759
Total loan interest	\$1,105,541	\$1,658,311	\$2,211,083
Total loan payments	\$3,105,541	\$4,658,311	\$6,211,083

Borrowing criteria presented aligns with Council's general borrowings principles. However, the amounts clearly exceed Council's historical annual average borrowings level of \$1,000,000. Recently Council's borrowings increased by an additional \$2,000,000 (to \$3,000,000), to help fund the development of the Phillip Island Children's Community Hub.

Under the current economic climate and in-line with existing financial strategies, Council does appear to have the capacity to increase borrowing levels and service an estimated additional debt that a \$3 million loan would attract. Council's debt management currently operates within documented legislative guidelines and operating percentages. However, increasing annual ongoing borrowings currently works against Council's strategic financial policy to reduce overall debt as a priority.

11.2.2 Council rates

As Councils' main source of revenue, it is likely that rate increases may be required as a contribution towards capital development costs. Council has implemented an average 7.9% increase in rates over the past five years to help address current gaps in infrastructure renewal funding. This increase has been an open commitment from Council.

In order to generate a significant level of capital funding from residential rates, a potential one-off increase of 5.0% would produce a \$1.43 million contribution towards capital development costs.

Council would need to consider if the entire revenue generated by this rate increase could be attributable to the WALC redevelopment. Considering the annual increased costs in service provision for Council, it is foreseeable that a rate increase related to an individual project would need to be 'above and beyond' any historical rate increases required to maintain current community service levels and reduce the current infrastructure renewal gap. Ultimately, Council's long term financial plan will need to consider the potential and capacity for a proposal of this magnitude.

The following table provides a general schedule of percentage rate increases and the likely impacts on rates.

Table 43: Total revenue and household impact of possible residential rate rises

Potential % rate increase	Total revenue impact
5.0%	\$1,429,400
6.0%	\$1,715,280
7.0%	\$2,001,160
8.0%	\$2,287,040
9.0%	\$2,572,920
10.0%	\$2,858,800

Note: Figures presented are based on Bass Coast average rate information. Figures should be used as a guide only to project the annual average contributions that could be expected from the Bass Coast Shire rate base. They are not a recommendation.

11.3 Private or commercial funding

Investigation into the potential of establishing a Public Private Partnership may be beneficial in identifying any opportunities to access private sector and commercial investment. Minimal joint investment opportunities may exist for the facility, particularly until Stage 4 work is complete, and levels of investment from non-government parties will be heavily dependent on pay-back periods and likely long-term return on their investment.

11.4 Management organisation funding

The YMCA currently has a long-term management agreement with the Bass Coast Shire to manage and operate WALC. The first term of tenure renewal of this agreement will be complete in 2015. The YMCA has a long history of managing WALC, commencing their original management term in 1998.

There are a number of examples of management companies contributing anywhere from \$50,000 to \$3,000,000 into a project such as this but there are many variables around which companies are willing to contribute this capital and they look at each facility on a case by case basis. In all instances the management company would look for an extended contract period of 10 years or more to consider contributing capital into the facility.

Given the proposed facility would have an operating deficit, there is limited benefit in Council seeking funding from the YMCA, as the nature of the agreement would still be a management contract where a management fee would apply and Council would need to pay the capital amount back to the YMCA over the period of the agreement.

11.5 Community fundraising

Through project consultation, community fundraising commitments were raised as a potential funding source, albeit a likely minimal contributor. Coordinated fundraising efforts may be achievable through the Bass Coast Community Foundation or via the establishment of an Australian Sports Foundation project to allow tax deductible donations to be made via the local community and/or business network.

Community based fundraising on behalf of Council developed facilities traditionally don't have a history of significant funding levels and will require a Community Champion (or Champion Group) to drive the fundraising activities. Concurrent Council advocacy to the private, government and community sector will also be required to assist in developing interest in community fundraising activities.

11.6 Possible funding scenarios

Table 44 following provides a summary of *potential funding opportunities* for the staged redevelopment of the WALC. Figures are best estimates based on information available at the time of writing and are to be used as general guide only. Funding levels provided assume that the full capacity of each funding source can be achieved, however figures remain unconfirmed.

The majority of external project funding is likely to be committed for Stage 1 and Stage 3 development, with the majority of Stage 2 and Stage 4 funding vesting with Council. This may however change over time. Stage 4 (dry side development) funding will also be influenced by the operational performance of the redeveloped aquatics area, overall facility and service delivery outcomes achieved and by the nature of additional programming and community benefits that can be demonstrated through the staged aquatics area development.

Table 44: Possible development option funding scenarios

Potential maximum funding source	Aquatics Stage 1	% of Stage 1 funding contribution	Aquatics Stage 2	% of Stage 2 funding contribution
Federal Government	\$600,000	8%	\$0	0%
State Government Grant	\$2,500,000	32%	\$0	0%
Bass Coast Shire contribution	\$4,505,000	58%	\$269,870	100%
Community fundraising	\$100,000	1%	\$0	0%
Estimated known funding opportunity	\$7,705,000	100%	\$269,870	100%
Funding shortfall (unidentified sources)	\$0		\$0	

Potential maximum funding source	Aquatics Stage 3	% of Stage 3 funding contribution	Dry Side Stage 4	% of Stage 4 funding contribution
Federal Government	\$0	0%	\$0	0%
State Government Grant	\$2,500,000	40%	\$500,000	14%
Bass Coast Shire contribution	\$3,710,000	60%	\$3,100,000	86%
Community fundraising	\$0	0%	\$0	0%
Estimated known funding opportunity	\$6,210,000	100%	\$3,600,000	100%
Funding shortfall (unidentified sources)	\$0		\$0	

It should be noted that the funding scenarios in the above table provide an example of the likely funding under each funding source that *may* be available. Each of these funding sources should be looked at in the context of this project and with other observations and recommendations that have been made within this report to determine whether Council wishes to source project finance from these funding sources.

It should also be noted that the amount of SRV Better Pools Funding is currently under review and is subject to change following the change of Government following the Victorian State Election held on 27th November 2010. The outcomes of program review and scale of any change to funding programs will not be known until July 2011.

SECTION 12: PRELIMINARY REPORT FINDINGS

This *Feasibility Study* has identified and highlighted a number of critical findings and important considerations in assessing the ultimate feasibility of redeveloping WALC.

The following provides commentary on the basis on which the Centre should be redeveloped, as well as the likely implications for its provision on financial, environmental and community outcomes.

12.1 Basis for redevelopment

Defining a role within the Bass Coast Shire for the WALC is an important factor in determining what the Centre should provide and for whom. For this reason, extensive research, analysis and consultation with the local and municipal community and stakeholders and Bass Coast Shire staff was conducted to assist in determining the Centre's future role and provision.

It is the view of the consultants that a redeveloped WALC should focus on providing leisure, recreation and Aquatic Education opportunities for the Bass Coast Shire community, and serve as the primary integrated aquatic and leisure centre within the municipality. It should, as a priority, offer a broad mix of facilities and provide an increased range (on current provision) of programs and services to better cater for the growing community.

This view is supported and reinforced through Council's existing planning scheme and development strategies, its adopted Municipal Recreation Plan and from the extensive project consultation conducted during this feasibility study.

12.1.1 Redevelopment priorities

Five clear priorities have been identified for the future redevelopment of a quality, affordable and inclusive WALC. They are to:

1. Secure the **long-term use and improve the functionality, safety and efficiency** of WALC;
2. Through the incorporation of Universal Design principles, **expand and diversify the existing programs and services and improve access** to WALC;
3. Support the **projected growth in population and identified local demand** for indoor aquatic and leisure facilities, programs and services;
4. **Best meet Bass Coast Shire community needs**, giving consideration to Council's existing strategic, financial and recreation priorities;
5. Increase the **lifestyle and liveability opportunities** for new and existing residents and visitors to the Bass Coast Shire.

Commitment to undertaking identified improvement, maintenance and capital works projects at WALC to meet safety requirements and address gaps in meeting recommended guidelines for OH&S, environmental management and environmentally sustainable operations should be a consideration of Council in determining the ideal facility redevelopment model.

Further consideration of future capital development expenditure should also be carefully undertaken in line with the potential timing of facility redevelopment and with any required short-term capital improvements recommended for the WALC. Refer to *Technical Audit Appendices in Volume 2* for detailed assessment of short-term works required.

12.2 Implications of future development

In planning for the redevelopment of the WALC, clear and sound decisions must be made on financial viability and benefit to the Bass Coast community. The following impacts should be considered by Council through further development stages prior to determining the overall viability and success criteria for the WALC redevelopment.

Impacts to consider are:

- The total capital cost of redevelopment and ability to achieve funding goals;
- The ongoing maintenance and capital improvement requirements for the existing WALC;
- Subsidies associated with the proposed redevelopment operations;
- Maintaining service continuity through redevelopment;
- The community and existing users;
- The potential provision of an indoor aquatic facility in Phillip Island.

12.2.1 Capital costs

The estimated probable cost for the proposed centre redevelopment is \$15.9 million for the complete four staged development. The complete three staged aquatics area development costs are estimated at \$12.36 million and incorporate new and redeveloped pools, upgraded plant and visitor amenities and new crèche and reception areas.

Meeting the required funding commitments for Stages 1, 2 and 3 will be challenging for Council and funding availability may also be impacted by the proposed facility at Phillip Island and the capacity of Council to meet borrowing and loan servicing commitments.

A focus on Stage 1 outcomes in the short-term will however provide significant inclusive aquatic participation opportunities and benefits for the Bass Coast community. Outcomes identified should continue to drive funding requirements, particularly where benefits displayed meet Council strategy and directions, address gaps in existing provision and diversify the Centre's overall use and access.

12.2.2 WALC maintenance and capital improvement

Project research and technical reports commissioned through this Feasibility Study identified some significant issues with existing WALC building structures and function, service efficiency and adherence to safety guidelines.

WALC has reached 31 years of age and it no longer meets the purpose that it was originally built for or current community needs. Its medium to long-term use and functionality cannot be secured without a significant contribution being made towards the Centre's capital improvement.

Should the WALC redevelopment not be undertaken within the next three to five years, Council will need to consider a significant investment into improving the existing facility to secure its immediate short-term, and then ongoing use. Committing funds towards short-term improvements would need to be carefully considered in-line with ongoing asset renewal programs and competing interests for future community, aquatic and recreational facility provision.

12.2.3 Operational subsidies

The operating budget projects a significant increase in facility income with an additional 38% in Year 1 alone. This will help to offset the increased expenditure with preliminary budget projections indicating a deficit of \$378,837 in Year 1.

Over the past three financial years Council has provided more than \$790,000 towards operational subsidies for WALC (an average of \$263,333 per year). The fully redeveloped facility, incorporating Stage 1 operations from Year 1, Stage 2 from Year 3 and Stage 3 from Year 5, identify a six year operating deficit of \$2,808,082 million (average of \$468,013) that would need to be subsidised by Council.

The initial operating period deficit is heavily influenced by service disruption in Years 4 and 5 for Stage 3 construction of a new 25m pool and spectator seating, and considers the loss of existing members and users during this time. Council may have the opportunity to renegotiate the budget during this period with the YMCA to reduce their subsidy.

12.2.5 Maintaining service continuity through redevelopment

The proposed redevelopment will require compromises in the both the construction method and in the way the Centre is managed and operated throughout the redevelopment phase to cater for the staged approach but will ensure that at least some water space is available at all times.

Stage 1 will require temporary change facilities and will create some management challenges but should provide minimal disruption to patrons while this stage is being built, as should Stage 2.

Stage 3 will mean the closure of the existing 25m pool for 11 months. While the warm water/program pool will be available during the construction of the new pool, Council will need to assist existing members and users of the 25m pool to source alternative indoor aquatic facilities within a reasonable distance to the WALC. Negotiation with SPLASH operators to ensure service continuity in aquatic programs will be important if the Centre is to regain patrons post redevelopment.

Similar previous stages, the proposed Stage 4 development will require some facility closure to accommodate the refurbishment. Through the proposed six month redevelopment period, temporary health club and group fitness facilities and any required toilet and change amenities could be located on site to maintain health club and dry program service.

12.2.6 Community and existing users

The proposed redevelopment identifies some significant changes in facility use and possible impacts on, and benefits for the local and Bass Coast Shire community.

The proposed relocation of stadium sports and gymnastics from WALC to alternative and yet to be built facilities provides some uncertainty in the tenure of these programs at WALC and creates a dependency on other proposed facilities to be developed at other sites first, and for similar levels access to be provided to existing user groups.

The proposed redevelopment will create significant additional opportunities for community access, program attendance and increased participation in physical activity. Year 1 projections identify an estimated 144,595 attendances for the redeveloped Centre, growing to an estimated 178,413 by Year 6. Initial projections provide an approximate 31% to 44% increase on three year historical averages for existing WALC operation which averaged 99,766 visits over the past three years.

12.2.6 An aquatic facility in Phillip Island

A new indoor aquatic facility has been proposed in Phillip Island to service the local and surrounding community.

The proposed facility is projected to have a significant operational impact on the proposed WALC redevelopment – an estimated \$81,895 in income loss in Year 1 alone. While the Phillip Island catchment area is considered a secondary catchment for a redeveloped WALC, **Section 8.4** provides a detailed breakdown of possible impacts on the WALC budget that the proposed facility in Phillip Island may have.

Planning, development and sourcing funding for two similar scale facilities within the Bass Coast Shire may also have economic and financial impacts and implications for Council through competing interests for development support.

12.3 Summary

This Feasibility Study has found there to be sufficient projected community demand and support for the redevelopment of WALC. The current condition of the existing building and mechanical services and the identified short-term maintenance requirements and capital works program at WALC has hastened the need for the redevelopment to be completed within the next three to five years to avoid any duplication or excessive capital spending.

Findings suggest that the significant capital cost of the proposed development options will need to be supported by external government and partnership funding to complement the substantial commitment required of Council and the community.

Significant ongoing financial resources will also be required to service Council's existing operational subsidy provided to the Phillip Island Leisure Centre, in addition to an increased subsidy at the redeveloped WALC.

Any redevelopment of WALC will need to be considered in-line with aquatic facility proposals in Phillip Island. Improvement projects should ensure that future development of any aquatic facility initially meets the Shire's current strategic directions for community and recreation facility provision, its capacity to manage initial and ongoing financial commitments (including borrowings and loan servicing) and the ability of facilities, programs and services to best meet the Bass Coast Shire community needs.