

## RUNNYMEDE ACTIVATION

**Dataworks Filename:** The Runnymede Project

**Authorising Officer:**



**Louise Rusan**  
**General Manager Community and Customer Services**

**Responsible Officer:**

**Greg Jensen**  
**Manager Community & Cultural Services**

**Author:**

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**Principal Adviser Strong Communities**

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## PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to highlight the ongoing Runnymede activation process and to seek Council endorsement to develop a joint venture proposal with Horizon Foundation Inc. to be presented to Councillors for consideration.

## BACKGROUND

The Runnymede Project is based on land dedicated through a development approval (with Court imposed conditions) to Council at 377-385 Redland Bay Road, Capalaba, on the corner of Runnymede Road and described as Lot 1 on Registered Plan 154965. The aim of the project has been to look at the future potential of the site for a range of community based activities. After resolving not to appoint a tenderer to develop the site at the General Meeting February 2013 a workshop for councillors was held to discuss future opportunities for the Runnymede site in March 2013. At the workshop Councillors provided broad direction to re-engage the community with a view to securing community use of the site. In November 2013 a briefing note was circulated outlining an eight step process to activate the Runnymede site. This process has been followed up until this point, but officers are now seeking a slight divergence from the proposed process to allow the development of a joint venture proposal before re-engaging with the general community.

## ISSUES

In accordance with the project plan proposed through the November briefing note the responsible officers have undertaken targeted engagement with a number of stakeholders who have expressed interest in the Runnymede site. These stakeholders have included the two organisations who originally submitted expressions of interest: Horizon Foundation Inc. and the Career Employment Australia Group, a representative of the original Runnymede community steering group and officers from the Environment and Education unit who have outlined their desired outcomes and needs for the Runnymede site.

These conversations have identified the possibility that the site could be developed as a joint venture project between Council and Horizons Foundation. Under this proposed approach Horizons Foundation could be allocated space on the site where they would establish their own operations as well as contributing to an integrated development. The amount of space allocated and nature of the governance could be determined through the joint venture process. The approach has the following advantages:

- Horizons Foundation have indicated they are sympathetic to broader community aims for the site and prepared to make arrangements to share facilities they develop with community groups
- This joint venture approach allows for the exploration of a seamless integration of the Runnymede site with IndigiScapes accommodating its future expansion and allowing for expansion of its function and facilities, as well as addressing the IndigiScapes traffic flow, entrance and parking issues. The ability to negotiate at this point in time gives the best opportunity for this seamless integration.
- Horizons Foundation have indicated they will have significant cash reserves available to complete their proposal, and have the capacity to address the associated site infrastructure requirements.
- It is projected that after space is allocated to the joint venture partner and for future IndigiScapes expansion there will still be a significant portion of the site available for the additional community group use, which could then be managed through the joint venture process.

This joint venture approach will remove the need for Council to engage in another open Expression of Interest process, saving time and avoiding the potential of raising undeliverable community expectations. Horizons Foundation have indicated through the engagement they are keen to move quickly on this project.

The concept has been put to procurement / legal services who affirmed this approach was viable under section 236 1.b ii of the Local Government Regulations 2012.

It is proposed that given the endorsement of Council to pursue this approach, negotiations would be entered into with Horizon Foundation and Indigiscapes to develop a proposal that would then be brought back to Council for their consideration and endorsement.

## **STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS**

The parcel of land at 377-385 Redland Bay Road is a valuable asset and Council remains committed to securing the best community outcomes for this site. This approach addresses both the long term needs of IndigiScapes and provides for additional community facilities in the city.

## **Legislative Requirements**

The proposed joint venture process complies with the provisions of the Local Government Regulations 2012.

## Risk Management

A significant risk arising from a joint venture arrangement is the potential inability of one or more of the joint venture partners being unable to fulfil the commitments of the partnerships. To mitigate this risk, a thorough due diligence process will be undertaken as part of the joint venture process, including financial sustainability checks prior to any commitment being finalised.

The joint venture itself would be governed through leases separately provided to the individual entities, which would contain additional lease conditions outlining such things as community access, responsibility for common spaces, financial contributions and joint management provisions.

## Financial

It currently costs Council in the order of \$10,800 per year to keep the site mown, costs which would be saved if the site was leased to joint venture partners.

Further estimates of any cost to Council will be provided with the joint venture proposal, keeping in mind Council's desire for this to be a cost-neutral exercise.

## People

To launch a joint venture approach will require approximately six to twelve months support from the responsible officer (Principal Adviser Strong Communities). After the set-up phase is completed IndigiScapes officers would have a continuing role in the ongoing activation of the site that was aligned to ongoing core business.

## Environmental

A joint venture approach caters for the future expansion needs of IndigiScapes, enhancing the continuation of the valued environmental education role undertaken by the centre. Land use planning provisions will ensure that further development of this site is undertaken in an environmentally sensitive manner.

## Social

In addition to the significant community outcomes which will be delivered by the joint venture partners, the opportunity for additional community uses will be embedded into the joint venture agreements. This approach allows for the long term delivery of some of the more aspirational ideas for the site while still progressing financially viable site activation in the short term.

## Alignment with Council's Policy and Plans

This proposed approach, aligns with Council Corporate Plan goal 7.2 *Provide access to quality services, facilities and information that meet the needs of all age groups and communities, especially disadvantaged and vulnerable people*

## CONSULTATION

Consultation has occurred with stakeholders from the original Expression of Interest process and the following groups:

- Environment and Education Unit
- General Counsel
- Group Manager Customer and Community Services
- Group Manager City Spaces
- Group Manager Environment and Regulation

## OPTIONS

1. That Council resolve to note the progress of the Runnymede activation process and endorse the development of a joint venture proposal with Horizon Foundation to be presented to Councillors for consideration, or
2. Note the progress of the Runnymede activation process and instruct officers to proceed with an Expression of Interest process open to all community organisations; or
3. Discontinue the Runnymede activation process

## OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve as follows:

1. To note the progress of the Runnymede activation process;
2. To endorse Option 1 of the report; and
3. That this report remain confidential.

## COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved by: Cr M Elliott

Seconded by: Cr A Beard

That Council resolve as follows:

1. To note the progress of the Runnymede activation process;
2. To endorse Option 1 of the report;
3. To investigate a business case as soon as possible for other ancillary uses that compliment Indigiscapes and the environmental significance of this area; and
4. That this report remain confidential.

## CARRIED 8/2

Crs Talty and Gleeson voted against the motion.

Cr Bishop was not present when the motion was put.