NOTE: This technical note presents the current NELP position on the relocation of the Yarra Junior Football League (YJFL) in response to matters raised in the EES panel presentation by the YJFL on 4 September 2019.

REQUEST: N/A

RESPONSE:

1. Background

(a) Bulleen Park consists of land within the City of Manningham and the City of Boroondara and also includes the private land at the Veneto Club (refer to Figure 1).

(b) Based on the NELP reference project, a section of oval 1 will be required to accommodate part of the project (tunnel portal) and part of the Bulleen Park access road. Another section of this oval is proposed to be used to offset the car parking impacts at the Veneto Club (refer Figure 2). The alternate Bulleen design option (Tabled Documents 102 and 113) also has similar impacts.

(c) As outlined in the Sport and Recreation Preliminary Options Assessment (SRPOA) included in the Social Impact Assessment (SIA), and the further update provided in Tech Note 37, extensive consultation and assessments have been undertaken with Manningham and Boroondara Councils, impacted user groups and State Sporting Associations.

(d) NELP commenced consultation with Yarra Junior Football League (YJFL) in August 2017. Since that time, NELP have worked closely with the land owners - Manningham City Council and Boroondara City Council and the user groups within the area to find suitable replacement options. Throughout the process, the YJFL has been assured that a suitable replacement facility would be provided.

(e) In early 2019, NELP and Manningham Council reached in principle agreement on the strategy to deliver the northern aspect of Bulleen Park. This includes reconstructing ovals 2 and 3 and fields 4 and 5 (Refer to Figure 1), resulting in 3 AFL / 2 cricket fields in Bulleen Park (refer to figure 3). This requires relocating the two soccer fields and Templestowe United Football Club (TUFC Soccer) to land located at 27-33 & 37-59 Templestowe Road. This land consists of two properties, the crown land (managed by Parks Victoria) and private land (Driving Range) that will need to be acquired by the NELP (refer figure 4). This results in no net loss of AFL, cricket and soccer ovals for Manningham Council.

(f) It is acknowledged that NELP has been unable to seek agreement with both
2. Current YJFL usage

(a) YJFL have existing use during various timeslots at Bulleen Park on ovals 1, 2 and 3. These ovals are shared community facilities and they are heavily utilized by the Bulleen Lions, Yarraleen Cricket club, Bulleen Templestowe District Junior Football Club and Marcellin Old Collegians College. YJFL total allocation of usage in the winter season is:

- 28 hours on oval 1,
- 4 hours on oval 2 and
- 4 hours on oval 3.

(b) YJFL also have an allocation for usage during summer season for 28 hours on oval 1 only. YJFL allocations are to accommodate their umpire training, representative team training and grand final matches.

(c) The 33 clubs within the YJFL operate across approximately 85 reserves, located across the north-west to south-eastern suburbs. These are where week-to-week training and matches occur for the majority of club members. The relocation of the YJFL headquarters from Bulleen Park does not impact on the weekly training and games for the YJFL member clubs.

(d) YJFL also host umpire training and other events in Ashburton, Ivanhoe, Camberwell and Kew which demonstrates the League can operate successfully across a wide region.

3. Suitability of Ford Park

(a) The assessment of Ford Park has identified this site to be a suitable venue for the YJFL Headquarters for the following reasons:

- Ford Park is 6.5kms from Bulleen Park and situated within the area that the YJFL service. Ivanhoe Junior Football Club who use this site as a secondary overflow ground is also a member club of the YJFL.

- Ford Park has an existing Masterplan that was endorsed by Banyule Council in 2016. The YJFL was involved in this masterplan development as Council was exploring its suitability for different sporting codes. Although this site was not considered for the YJFL headquarters, the Masterplan includes a reference on page 15 that YJFL noted this site as being centrally located and having two ovals provides flexibility.

- In 2017, the State Government committed $2M to Banyule Council to contribute towards the cost to implement the Ford Park Management Plan, which was costed at approximately $10M.

- Banyule Council endorsed the shared use of Ford Park by YJFL at the August
2019 Council meeting. Banyule Council are able to accommodate YJFL’s existing allocation at Bulleen Park (Oval 1, 2 & 3) which enables YJFL to consolidate their 38 hours from Bulleen Park to shared use of the two fields at Ford Park. Banyule Council have agreed to this usage as a temporary or permanent relocation.

- NELP, Banyule Council, AFL Vic and YJFL have met on numerous occasions to discuss the requirements for the upgrade to Ford Park and to ensure the site is upgraded in time for their relocation in March 2021.
- Both existing users at Ford Park, (Ivanhoe Junior Football Club and Bellfield Cricket Club) will continue to use the site and will benefit from the redevelopment of the site.
- Based on current allocations, there is also the ability for YJFL to negotiate with Banyule Council for some increased hours to the 38 hour allocation pending demand.

(b) The works proposed to be undertaken at Ford Park include:

   Stage 1:
   - Reconstruction of the southern oval including resizing of the oval to meet the size of oval 1 at Bulleen Park, installation of drainage, irrigation, floodlights, fencing, realignment of the trail and a new regional level pavilion and YJFL headquarters (office space).
   - Demolition of the existing grandstand and pavilion once the new pavilion has been built.

   Stage 2:
   - Reconstruction of the northern oval to synthetic turf including resizing of the field, installation of floodlights, fencing, realignment of walking trails, fitness equipment and upgraded cricket wicket and nets.

(c) Facility scope has been confirmed for the site. NELP has appointed an architect and the concept plans are being developed for the pavilion including the YJFL headquarters (office). Design meetings are underway with Banyule Council, YJFL and existing clubs of Ford Park. Given the tight timeframes required to deliver the facility upgrade in time for March 2021, the NELP are committed to finalise the detailed design within coming months and to commence construction early 2020.

(d) The new pavilion will be modern, accessible and will be larger than the existing facility at Bulleen Park. It will provide regional level facilities that comply with current AFL facility standards for training and games. These facilities will provide gender neutral change rooms and amenities and double the number of change rooms compared to existing facilities to support the growing female program.

(e) The capital cost to deliver the Ford Park masterplan is estimated at $10M, of which $2M has previously been committed to Banyule Council in 2017 by the State Government. NELP will ensure funding is secured for the balance of $8M providing
Suitability of Bulleen Park

(a) NELP, in collaboration with Manningham Council, is undertaking the masterplans and facility scoping for the northern section of Bulleen Park (refer Figure 3) and the new soccer facilities at 27-33 & 37-59 Templestowe Road (Driving Range and adjoining crown land).

(b) The current YJFL headquarters is located on land covered by the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) and is therefore prone to flooding. The proposed location would also be covered by the LSIO and any development would have to satisfy Melbourne Water requirements.

(c) Throughout this year, NELP has consistently maintained to YJFL that there are two long term options secured for the YJFL which include Ford Park or Bulleen Park. This message was also reiterated in tech note 37.

(d) A Bulleen Park masterplan is being developed collaboratively with Manningham Council based on the assumption that YJFL will come back to Bulleen Park. This will provide expanded and reconstructed ovals to create 3 AFL/2 cricket ovals a regional pavilion including the YJFL headquarters, a local level pavilion and expanded car parking to accommodate the league and existing community use within the site.

(e) If the decision is made that the YJFL do not come back to Bulleen Park, NELP and Manningham will update the masterplan to rationalise the scale of the pavilion/s to accommodate the existing community use. This decision will be required by early 2020 to ensure there is adequate planning time to undertake the design and construction required within the Bulleen Park area.

Koonung Reserve, Bulleen

(a) Koonung Reserve is located in Bulleen (Manningham Council) and accommodates a range of sporting clubs’ usage. YJFL have winter allocation of this shared site for 20.5 hours, on Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 5-9pm and Sunday 8.30-5pm.

(b) NELP will not impact on Koonung Reserve and have consulted with Manningham regarding future use at this site. Manningham have confirmed that YJFL can continue to use this site.

Henderson Seed Farm

(a) YJFL and AFL Victoria preference is for the Henderson Seed Farm site on Templestowe Road to be provide for YJFL. This site is 14.4 hectares and is approximately 3.6km from Bulleen Park. This site is Crown land and zoned as Public Park and Recreation zone (refer figure 5).

(b) This site has been occupied by the Henderson Family for over 50 years and is the existing tenant (HM Clause - Seed Farm). NELP understands from discussions with Parks Victoria that a new lease was signed in 2017 for a 15 year term and Parks Victoria do not support use of the site for active recreation

(c) Given that this site is subject to an existing lease with a business tenancy this site is not considered to be a feasible option in the short term as it would require the
existing lease to be divested and the existing business to be displaced. This is reinforced by the short timeframe available to relocate YJFL from oval 1 to allow for the delivery of the project.

(d) NELP have not communicated directly with the Henderson Seeds business operating on the land as they are a tenant of Parks Victoria.

(e) NELP can confirm that YJFL requirements can be satisfied through upgrades to Ford Park or reinstatement of Bulleen Park, without needing to acquire the lease at the Henderson Seeds site.

(f) Finally, it is noted that the draft Yarra River – Bulleen Precinct Land Use Framework Plan (Framework Plan) identifies the site as proposed ‘open space/recreation/conservation’. The site is also declared as Yarra River Land under the Yarra River Protection Act. As the IAC will be aware, the Minister for Planning has appointed an Advisory Committee to consider the Framework Plan after the Minister’s Assessment for the North East Link Project has been completed.

7. Shared use facilities

(a) NELP, Manningham Council, Banyule Council, AFL Victoria, and Sport and Recreation Victoria are each committed to the key principle of achieving shared facilities. As long as YJFLs allocations can be met at another location, YJFL’s request for an exclusive use site is not supported, at any location.

(b) The two relocation options that have been secured - Bulleen Park and Ford Park, can provide all of the existing hours of allocations that YJFL currently have at Bulleen Park (38 hours) to ensure that they are provided with suitable replacement facilities and would not be disadvantaged.

8. Summary

(a) Given that the NELP would be investing significant resources to develop purpose-built facilities for the YJFL and the sporting community at Ford Park, it is recommended that these facilities become the permanent headquarters. If YJFL do not accept this the YJFL can relocate back to Bulleen Park (to the new relocated Oval 1 and oval 2 at the back of Bulleen Park) once the site has been upgraded (approx. 2025). This decision will need to be made by early 2020 to ensure the relevant planning and design can be undertaken at Bulleen Park.

(b) Given the collective investment into sporting facilities at Ford Park, Sport and Recreation Victoria support that Ford Park become the permanent home for the YJFL on the provision that the site can accommodate their allocations, with some provision for growth and delivers facility upgrades in line with the AFL Preferred Facility Guidelines.

CORRESPONDENCE: N/A

ATTACHMENTS:
Figure 1. Bulleen Park study area
Figure 2. Potential impact to Bulleen Park area
Figure 3: Bulleen Park AFL ovals redevelopment option extract from SRPOA
Figure 4. Potential offset sites – short term option Crown Land and Bulleen Driving Range
Figure 5. Bullen Park relocations sequencing diagram