

COUNCIL MEETING

AGENDA

(Open to the public)

8.30pm, Monday 1 May 2023

Council Chamber, 8 Inglesby Road, Camberwell

Date of Issue: 28 April 2023

Please note: No audio, video, photographic or any other recording of proceedings at Council or Delegated Committee meetings is permitted without written authority from Council.

Order of Business

- 1 Declaration of conflict of interest of any councillor or council officer**
- 2 Presentation of officer reports**
 - 2.1 Temporary Occupation of Former Balwyn Leisure Centre
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2 Presentation of officer reports

2.1 Temporary Occupation of Former Balwyn Leisure Centre

Executive Summary

Purpose

This report outlines options to ensure kindergarten services can continue to operate during planned building renewals, including an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of each option.

Background

A report on this issue was prepared for the Council meeting of 17 April 2023 and this report is provided in **Attachment 1**. Councillors resolved at the 17 April 2023 Council meeting to lay the question on the table in accordance with Council's Governance Rules (Procedural Motion No. 4) and a revised report (this report) has been prepared which details options to utilise the Balwyn Leisure Centre (BLC) to deliver kindergarten programs while a number of building renewals take place over the next few years.

Key Issues

This report outlines four options to ensure programs can be delivered while renewal projects take place at a number of kindergartens and include:

- **Option 1** – Utilise the BLC to deliver kindergarten services prior to demolition in 2029. Option to bring forward to 2028 through a revised foreshadowed kindergarten renewal program.
- **Option 2** – Utilise nearby kindergarten services to absorb capacity while renewals take place.
- **Option 3** – Build a purpose-built temporary facility for kindergarten services to operate during planned building renewals.
- **Option 4** – Utilise BLC to deliver the renewal of two double room kindergartens and demolish the BLC in 2026. Provide a purpose-built temporary facility for Glass Street and Bellevue to operate from during planned building renewals.

Key implications and assessment for each option are outlined below. In summary this report recommends **Option 1** for the following key reasons:

- It is an effective use of resources to utilise a building that already exists and is fit for purpose.
- BLC is a suitable location (close to all services), is maintained as a licenced early years facility, and has good access to parking.
- **Option 2** has significant challenges given a lack of capacity within other nearby licenced facilities and the impact it would have on both the services and community.

- **Option 3** proposes a functional temporary accommodation to be built on an alternate open space location. This option has a high cost and will impact on a significant amount of open space during works.
There are also challenges with parking at the identified locations. It should be noted that legal advice as to planning permit requirements is currently pending and will be provided to Council as soon as available.
- **Option 4** supports demolition of BLC in 2026, it comes at a high cost (although less than Option 3) to provide functional temporary accommodation for two centres and impacts open space during works. This option also requires the legal advice regarding planning permit requirements as per option 3.

Next Steps

Following consideration from councillors, officers will continue to liaise with the impacted services and community members as required.

Officers' recommendation

That Council resolve to:

1. Continue to utilise the Balwyn Leisure Centre to temporarily accommodate community-based early years services during building renewal works until 2029.
2. Return the land currently occupied by the Balwyn Leisure Centre to open space and that this process will commence in 2029 (pending allocation of the required budget for demolition, design and rectification works).

Responsible director: Daniel Freer, Director Places and Spaces

1. Purpose

This report seeks Council's approval to continue the temporary occupation of the former Balwyn Leisure Centre (BLC) by several community-based early years services while planned building redevelopment works occur over the coming years.

The report also provides alternate options to ensure services can continue to operate during building renewals, with associated benefits and risks, should Council determine not to continue the use of the BLC for this purpose.

2. Policy implications and relevance to community plan and council plan

The temporary use of the former Balwyn Leisure Centre to support the renewal of Council's early years buildings, and then return to open space commencing 2029 is aligned with the following strategic objectives, identified within the Boroondara Community Plan:

Strategy 1.4 - Facilities and sports precincts encourage equal access through social planning, delivery, asset maintenance and renewal activities.

Strategy 1.5 - Life-long learning is supported by delivering and working with our community and partners to meet the broad range of interests within the community.

Strategy 2.4 - Green spaces are maintained and increased through management practices and investigating opportunities to acquire or modify existing land.

Strategy 7.2 - Resources are responsibly allocated and used through sound financial and asset planning, procurement and risk management practices.

3. Background

A report on this issue was prepared for the Council meeting of 17 April 2023 and this report is provided in **Attachment 1**. Councillors resolved at the 17 April 2023 Council meeting to lay the question on the table in accordance with Council's Governance Rules (Procedural Motion No. 4) and a revised report (this report) has been prepared.

This report details options to utilise the BLC to deliver kindergarten programs while a number of building renewals take place over the next few years. A Council decision on this matter is required in order to provide the community clarity in opening the 2024 kindergarten enrolment process.

This report outlines three additional options which could be considered if Council determines not to use the BLC for this purpose. While the three options will allow for service provision to be maintained, there are various issues associated with them which are outlined in section 4.

The foreshadowed kindergartens that are impacted by this proposal are:

- JJ McMahon Memorial, 16A Argyle Rd, Kew (2023/24 to 2024/25)
- Deepdene Pre-school, 7 Terry Street, Deepdene (2024/2025 to 2025/26)
- Glass Street Kindergarten, 16 Glass St, Kew East (2026/27 to 2027/28)
- Bellevue Kindergarten, 49 Bulleen Rd, Balwyn North (2027/28 to 2028/29)

Each of these renewal projects are complex due to site constraints. There is no opportunity for temporary buildings to be located on site or for the services to continue to operate while renewal works take place.

4. Outline of key issues/options

Further to the report from the 17 April 2023 Council meeting (**Attachment 1**), officers have given consideration to a number of options to facilitate the delivery of ongoing kindergarten programs while buildings are renewed.

The below table provides a summary of the four options for consideration:

Option	Cost Estimate*	Parking	Service/Family outcome	Positives (+) and Negatives (-)
1. Use BLC for 4 kindergartens & demolish in 2029 with option to bring forward 1 year, pending revised renewal program for kindergartens	\$1M	Good availability	Good	+ Lowest cost + Proven site suitability for kindergarten services + Close proximity to kindergartens being renewed - Delays prior public commitment to demolish - option to reschedule current renewal program, to 'swap out' Estrella to enable BLC demolition in 2028 (instead of 2029). However, delays a facility identified as a higher priority in condition audit
2. Cease use of BLC and use nearby kindergartens to absorb additional places	\$1M	Site dependent	Poor	+ Enables demolition of BLC + Lowest cost - Complications with services in hiatus for a year (viability, volunteer committee, staffing) - Highly disruptive for children changing services between 3 and 4 year old - Reduces overall supply of kindergarten places - Displacement of children from other kindergartens - Parents less likely to receive an offer for kindergartens they put higher on the preference list
3. Cease use of BLC and build temporary accommodation in another open space location	\$3.1-3.5M	On street parking	Good	+ Minimises disruption by keeping families/services together + Close proximity to kindergartens being renewed + Enables demolition of BLC - Highest cost option - Planning approval may be required - Impact in placing infrastructure of significant size in open space - Time required to procure, build and

				fit out and licence temporary facility. - Contaminated soil management requirements and costs (if applicable-Community angst
4. Use BLC for two kindergartens & demolish in 2026 and build temporary accommodation in another open space location	\$2.4-2.8M	Good availability at BLC and on street at Bellevue & Glass St kindergartens	Good	+ High cost, whilst some savings may be realised, the high cost is largely associated with site set up, and cost escalation over time may erode potential savings + Proven site suitability for kindergartens at BLC + Close proximity to kindergartens being renewed - Additional expenditure is required for the kindergarten not using BLC - Alternative sites for temporary accommodation need to be explored for the third and fourth site, potentially at Cascade Park - Delays prior public commitment to demolish (less than option 1 however)

*cost escalations to be applied for works in future years, using construction industry index

Current kindergarten enrolments

Using 2023 enrolments as a benchmark, there is limited capacity within existing sessional kindergartens to accommodate additional enrolments should an existing kindergarten program be closed while renewal works take place.

Table 1 below demonstrates kindergartens within 3kms would be unable to absorb the additional enrolments, with the exception of 3-year-old enrolments for Glass Street Kindergarten. In addition, it is important to acknowledge that:

- 2023 enrolments may not equate to 2024 or later enrolments. 2024 enrolment registrations for round one offers close at the end June 2023.
- Population within the listed suburbs (0-4 year olds) is growing (as shown in table 2 below), which will further increase demand.

Should a kindergarten close for the year while renewal works take place, a shortfall of places would occur based on 2023 indicative vacancy rates.

Attachment 2 contains a map of sessional kindergartens located across Boroondara.

Table 1 – Potential kindergarten places shortfall if option 2 adopted (based on 2023 indicative vacancy rates)

Kindergarten	Number of 3-year-old places	Number of 4-year-old places	Shortfall of 3-year-old places within 3kms	Shortfall of 4-year-old places within 3kms
JJ McMahon Memorial Kindergarten (Kew)	44	56	15	48

Deepdene Preschool (Deepdene)	22	22	16	15
Glass Street Kindergarten (Kew East)	22	22	0	9
Bellevue Kindergarten (Balwyn North)	22	22	12	10

Table 2 – Population growth 0–4-year-olds

Suburb	Growth in 0–4-year-olds by 2026
Kew	128
Deepdene	12
Kew East	51
Balwyn North	139

Future viability of kindergartens

Given this option will in effect see kindergartens close for a year whilst building renewal works are undertaken, there are real concerns about the viability of the kindergartens when they reopen. Kindergarten services would not be able to retain staff if they went into hiatus for one year and the complications from a committee of management effectively standing staff down should be considered.

Given the short-term nature of parent tenure on kindergarten committees, it is unlikely a committee would maintain continuity or likely exist moving forward if it went into hiatus. Each facility would effectively need to open as a new service after construction, including the forming of a new volunteer committee and then recruitment of teachers who would normally be available to advertise, promote or take enquiries from prospective families.

The recruitment of early childhood teachers is a particular concern given a current industry wide shortage of staff. There would also be a risk of reputational damage to Council regarding the perceived threats on the viability on these community services.

Transition of 3-year-old enrolments to 4-year old

Closing a service would mean children may attend a different kindergarten for three and four-year-old kindergarten. Almost all children complete their two years of kindergarten at the same service. This would impact children currently in 3-year-old in at JJ McMahon in 2023, and parents were not aware of kindergarten not operating in 2024 when they enrolled at the service.

Impact on social connections for children and parents

Moving children from their current to a new kindergarten at a new location will disrupt connections created by both children and parents, particularly as children may no longer attend kindergarten alongside children who will transition to the same school as them.

Reduction in choice

All kindergartens are slightly different in their key values and teaching philosophies and importantly the fees and days services offered. While there may be some capacity to absorb users from kindergartens which close, they may not be on preferred days or at preferred times.

Not all kindergartens within Boroondara offer 'free kindergarten'. Parents may be required to pay for kindergarten due to there not being enough free places available.

Budget

Option 2 would not require additional budget from Council. However, on intended basis to commence demolition of the BLC later in 2023/24, this project would cost approximately \$1 million to demolish and provide basic landscape works. Additional improvements to the realised open space would require funding with the cost depending on intended use, for example a local playground would cost approximately \$300,000. Alternatively, the space could remain simple with seats, grass and trees. Consultation on future use would also be required to determine any substantial change.

Demolition and landscape improvements are not currently included in the draft budget.

Open space

Option 2 would realise a net gain in open space when considered alongside the demolition of the BLC. It is consistent with the previous commitment from Council to demolish the Balwyn Leisure Centre.

Option 3 considers building temporary accommodation in one location for all kindergartens to utilise, via a specific modular building. A number of locations have been explored.

Following review of the four kindergarten sites flagged to use the BLC, two are located next to existing open space, and two are located next to residential properties. Glass Street and Bellevue Kindergarten are located next to open space.

Harrison Reserve South, next to Glass St Kindergarten, is constrained by numerous trees, a playground and shared user path. To install accommodation, it is likely trees and possibly the playground will need to be removed.

Cascade Park, next to Bellevue Kindergarten, has larger areas of grassed space, more suited to sitting temporary accommodation.

Other nearby parks, such as Macleay Park and Hislop Park have sports grounds, which restrict opportunity for temporary kindergarten facilities without impact to current use.

Officers considered other opportunities such as commercial buildings, however regulatory requirements of education and care services impacted finding an alternative commercial location.

Kindergartens require a set amount of indoor and outdoor space per child, as well as specific toilet amenities. It is unlikely that an alternative commercial property would be found that meets regulatory requirements. Should a space be available, the space would attract a commercial rent, where our current services are on a peppercorn lease. Additionally, there would be significant cost in ensuring the fit-out meets a kindergarten's requirements.

A Soil Hygienist Report is required for any project that disturbs the soil to determine the suitability of the site for the proposed purpose of an early learning centre. Soil Hygienist Reports must:

- be performed by a qualified environmental professional
- align with standards such as the National Environmental Protection (Assessment of Contaminated Sites) Measure (NEPM)
- involve a desktop review of past site history and soil investigation samples for analysis of contaminants with particular focus on where project soil works are proposed
- compare contamination results against NEPM human health and ecological investigation levels as well as Victoria EPA Industrial Waste thresholds
- include a statement to indicate if the site is suitable for the intended use as an early learning centre and/or potential project risks
- specify if contaminated soil is identified above the levels specified for the intended use as an early learning centre

If contaminated soil is identified above the levels specified for the intended use as an early learning centre, recommendations for a soil management plan must be developed (e.g. for safe management or removal and disposal of the contaminated soil). This work has not been undertaken for any identified site at this stage. A preliminary assessment of Cascade Park to support temporary accommodation is provided in Table 3.

Table 3 - Cascade Park

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Cascade Park	Drainage in nearby proximity	Site has gentle slopes with limited flat sections and may require ramps. Best location for portables may be off Cascade Street, where flatter land and access better from the street.
	Only one private property / resident on west boundary of park	Cascade street closest to nearby residents, opposite park
	Two street frontages - Cascade Street and Bulleen Rd	North section of reserve has overland flow zone. Due to flood zone and special

	Advantages	Disadvantages
		building overlay, south section off Cascade best option for temporary accommodation
	Potential to fence off public play area and use the southern section of Cascade Reserve, outside of Special Building Overlay and flood zone	Significant loss of public space (estimated around 1,000-1,200m ²)
	South section of park has large areas of open space, where impact on trees can be managed	No off street parking. Whilst this is the current situation, change in building location may trigger parking concerns.
	Adequate area for outdoor play space	Anticipated community concern regarding loss of open space on a temporary basis.

Image of Cascade Pak



Implications

Use of open space

This option will still require the use of open space for temporary accommodation, due to the constrained kindergarten sites being renewed. Given this, the demolition of the BLC will not lead to any substantial increase in net public open space whilst temporary occupation is maintained. There is also likely to be significant community opposition should Council use open space for accommodation in a location currently enjoyed more broadly by the community.

Building suitability

While the BLC has been used before for the delivery of kindergarten services and functioned well, adding a purpose-built facility to open space somewhere may provide a similar or slightly improved functional building for the delivery of programs.

Parking

The options noted above have been selected with consideration of a number of factors including parking, none of the options provide a good outcome in terms of parking for parents or educators. This is likely to cause significant angst in the community.

Whilst there is currently no off-street parking for Bellevue Kindergarten, the location of temporary accommodation is likely to move parking and traffic to streets not currently impacted.

Planning Permit

Council's Planning Department has stated temporary accommodation may not apply under section 36.02-2 for building or works carried out by or on behalf of a public land manager, under the Local Government Act. However, legal advice is currently being sought to confirm the proposed works are able to be carried out under the Local Government Act or the Crown Land Act. Should this not be the case, a planning permit process will be required, and project timeframes are likely to be impacted for delivery. Legal advice on these matters is pending and effect the viability of option 3 and 4.

Budget

The cost to provide temporary modular accommodation as advised by the Victorian State Government is:

- a one-room (33 Approved Places) modular kindergarten facility and associated works, delivered by the Department and valued up to \$1.35 million;
- a two-room (66 Approved Places) modular kindergarten facility and associated works, delivered by the Department and valued up to \$2.0 million;
- a three-room (99 Approved Places) modular kindergarten facility and associated works, delivered by the Department and valued up to \$3.0 million. A two room facility is required to accommodate the JJ McMahon facility need.

These costs do not account for contaminated soil management (if required).

\$1 million is estimated for the demolition and basic landscaping of the BLC site. Additional funding would be required for consultation on the future of open space and significant open space improvements.

5. Consultation/communication

A number of Council departments have worked together on the options outlined in this report.

At this stage discussions have not taken place with all the impacted kindergartens, given a number of the projects are still a few years away. Discussions have however taken place with the JJ McMahon committee, who are supportive of temporary relocation to the BLC.

Registrations for 2024 kindergarten enrolments are open, and close at the end of Term 2, 2023. Throughout May, kindergartens hold open days, and families make decisions regarding their preference for kindergarten enrolment.

As of 18 April 2023, Council has received over 1000 registrations for kindergarten for 2024. Any changes to the operation of a kindergarten, such as temporary closure, will create uncertainty for families and require significant engagement and communication with families.

Pending feedback from councillors, officers will need to liaise with the JJ McMahon kindergarten prior to enrolments being confirmed in July 2023, to allow families to have certainty around where they enrol their children.

Option 3 and 4 will also require broader community engagement due to impact on existing open space. In addition, if statutory planning obligations require a planning permit then engagement and advertising would be required in line with permit application processes.

6. Financial and resource implications

Given limited financial capacity in the Council budget in coming years, consideration would be required to identify savings elsewhere of the deferral of projects to create capacity to fund options 2, 3 and 4. Budget allocations would be subject to annual budget deliberations and mid-year budget reviews and escalation.

Option	Estimated Approx capital cost \$*	FY when funds required
Option 1: Temporary accommodation	No cost	
Option 1: BLC Demolition and basic open space rectification	\$1 million	2028/29
Sub-total Option 1	\$1 million	
Option 2: Temporary accommodation	No cost	-
Option 2: BLC Demolition and open space rectification	\$1 million	Commence late 2023/24
Sub-total Option 2	\$1 million	
Option 3: Temporary accommodation for 4 kindergartens	\$2.1 - \$2.5 million Soil management to be determined (if required). Allowance	2023/24 to 2028/29

Option	Estimated Approx capital cost \$*	FY when funds required
	for consultants	
Option 3: BLC Demolition and open space rectification	\$1 million	2028/29
Sub-total Option 3	\$3.1 - 3.5 million	
Option 4: BLC temporary accommodation for 2 kindergartens and temporary accommodation for 2 kindergartens.	\$1.4 -1.8 million Soil management to be determined (if required). Allowance for consultants	2026/27 to 2028/29
Option 4: BLC Demolition and open space rectification	\$1 million	2028/29
Sub-total Option 4	\$2.4-2.8 million	

*cost escalations to be applied for works in future years, using construction industry index

7. Governance issues

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have a general or material conflict of interest requiring disclosure under chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Boroondara City Council.

The recommendation contained in this report is compatible with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 as it does not raise any human rights issues.

8. Social and environmental issues

Option 1, as recommended by officers, does not require additional building to take place on other open space and provides social benefits by keeping kindergarten communities together and supports the viability of these community services.

Option 1 would see broader benefits with limited impacts on parking given existing facilities and net gain in open space in the financial year commencing 2029.

Option 2 also does not require additional building on open space and would see environmental benefits via net gain in open space earlier than option 1 and commencing later in 2023/24.

There are however significant social impacts from this option, as it would reduce the viability of kindergartens in both the short and longer term and negatively impact their communities.

There is additional reputational risk associated with this option. To date, minimal customer complaints have been received on use of BLC, whereas closure of kindergarten centres may generate significant community complaints.

Option 3 would have some negative environmental impacts as there would be the need to place buildings in existing open space, however this would be offset by the demolition of the BLC.

Parking in residential streets is also likely to impact surrounding residents.

Social impacts would be limited as the kindergarten communities would be able to stay together. There may also be some reputational risk with open space being converted to kindergarten use for a temporary period.

Option 4 similar to option 3, however for less time in temporary occupation of open space (2 years).

Graffiti and vandalism

Any community building uninhabited for an extended period of time is at risk of attracting unwanted graffiti, vandalism and squatters, even with security patrols.

There is a risk, should the BLC not be used for temporary accommodation and funding not provided for demolition and base landscape works, that the building sits unused. Local community will likely complain about adverse impacts on their amenity and sense of area being unsafe.

9. Conclusion

The use of the vacant, licenced section of the BLC building to provide temporary accommodation for several nearby early years services while building renewal works are undertaken is an effective use of Council resources and has the least impact on community and the operations of key early years services. As such it is officers' recommendation to proceed with **Option 1** as outlined in this report.

Manager: **Christine White, Manager Capital Projects**

Report officer: Graeme Mawson, Senior Coordinator Children, Young People and Families and Christine White, Manager Capital Projects

7 Presentation of officer reports

7.1 Temporary Occupation of Former Balwyn Leisure Centre

Executive Summary

Purpose

This report seeks Council's approval for temporary occupation of the former Balwyn Leisure Centre by community-based early years services while planned building renewal works occur over the coming years.

Background

The Council-owned Balwyn Leisure Centre (BLC) is located at 230 Balwyn Road in Balwyn North, and includes an internal sports court, childcare centre and administrative spaces. The facility was originally intended to be closed and demolished following the completion of works at the Boroondara Sports Complex. Since this time, the site has continued to be utilised by a range of community groups, early years service providers and Council services as a temporary accommodation solution, due to its adaptability to suit a range of needs, accessible location, convenience and cost effectiveness.

The BLC has provided temporary accommodation to Greythorn Early Childhood Centre, Balwyn Library, Through Road Early Learning Centre and Interchange Inner East. The overall project costs to date, are estimated to have saved Council approximately \$1.5M by providing suitable temporary portable accommodation.

The BLC has been maintained as a licenced childcare and kindergarten facility, enabling the use of the site to support community services while Council owned early years infrastructure is renewed. Council's Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) includes several kindergarten building redevelopment projects in coming years which require temporary accommodation to support continuity of service.

Key Issues

At the Council meeting on 23 August 2021, Council resolved to:

1. Endorse the proposal to temporarily accommodate Through Road Early Learning Centre and other community groups that require temporary accommodation during the construction period of the Canterbury Community Precinct.
2. Receive budget bid for the demolition of the Balwyn Leisure Centre and open space conversion as part of the 2022/23 budget process.
3. Undertake community engagement to shape the future open space development of this site in the 2022/23 financial year.

With recent construction cost escalations and associated budget impacts, the use of existing assets for accommodation to reduce overall project costs is recommended.

Council's LTFP includes several kindergarten building renewal projects in coming years which require a temporary accommodation solution and are listed in **Table One** of this report.

Each of these services' existing sites are considered physically constrained and not practical to maintain uninterrupted delivery of kindergarten services at the same time as significant construction works.

Further, setting up temporary accommodation facilities, to the satisfaction of licencing requirements, will be costly and is not considered good value for money. It is estimated that operating the nominated services from BLC during construction would save Council between \$1.5-\$1.8 million over the next five years.

The BLC building remains suitable for temporary accommodation by early year service providers. It is anticipated each site will be delivered in successive calendar years, where possible, to minimise service disruption. The demolition of the BLC and community engagement on new open space will be referred to Councils LTFP for consideration, with demolition of the BLC anticipated in 2029, pending budget approval.

Next Steps

Council officers continue to work closely with the Committee representatives of JJ McMahon Memorial Kindergarten to finalise the design and documentation of the proposed redevelopment project. The works are planned to be tendered in July-August 2023, with Council to be presented with recommendation to award the contract in late 2023. The kindergarten is supportive of relocating to BLC as temporary accommodation during construction.

Planning, design, and delivery of the remaining kindergarten projects will proceed in accordance with Council's adopted Budget.

Confidentiality

There is no confidentiality consideration relevant to this proposal.

Officers' recommendation

That Council continue to utilise the Balwyn Leisure Centre to temporarily accommodate community-based early years services during building renewal until early 2029.

Responsible director: Daniel Freer, Director Places and Spaces

1. Purpose

This report seeks Council's approval for temporary occupation of the former Balwyn Leisure Centre (BLC) by several community-based early years services while planned building redevelopment works occur over the coming years.

2. Policy implications and relevance to community plan and council plan

The temporary use of the former Balwyn Leisure Centre to support the renewal of Council's early years buildings is aligned with the following Strategic Objectives, identified within the Boroondara Community Plan:

Strategy 1.4 - Facilities and sports precincts encourage equal access through social planning, delivery, asset maintenance and renewal activities

Strategy 7.2 - Resources are responsibly allocated and used through sound financial and asset planning, procurement and risk management practices

3. Background

The BLC, located at 230 Balwyn Road in Balwyn North, is a Council-owned building which includes an internal sports court, childcare centre and administrative spaces. The facility was originally intended to be closed and demolished following the completion of works at the Boroondara Sports Complex. Since this time, the site has continued to be utilised by a range of community groups, early years service providers and Council services as a temporary accommodation solution, due to its adaptability to suit a range of needs, accessible location, convenience, and cost effectiveness.

The facility has been maintained to enable licenced childcare and kindergarten services to operate at BLC, enabling the use of the site to support community services while Council owned early years infrastructure is renewed. Council's draft foreshadowed budget includes several kindergarten building redevelopment projects in coming years which require an accommodation solution to support continuity of service.

4. Outline of key issues/options

At the Council meeting on 23 August 2021, Council resolved to:

1. Endorse the proposal to temporarily accommodate Through Road Early Learning Centre and other community groups that require temporary accommodation during the construction period of the Canterbury Community Precinct.
2. Receive budget bid for the demolition of the Balwyn Leisure Centre and open space conversion as part of the 2022/23 budget process.
3. Undertake community engagement to shape the future open space development of this site in the 2022/23 financial year.

Despite Council's 2021 resolution, the building remains suitable for temporary accommodation by other community groups. With recent construction cost escalations and associated budget impacts, there are some significant financial management and resource allocation opportunities to use existing assets for temporary accommodation to reduce overall project costs.

Council's Long Term Financial Plan indicatively includes several kindergarten building renewal projects in coming years which require a temporary accommodation solution. These projects are listed in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Kindergarten renewal projects

Kindergarten	Address	Approx distance to BLC	Approx travel time by car to BLC	Indicative planned renewal date
JJ McMahon Memorial Kindergarten	16A Argyle Street, Kew	3.1km	6 min	23/24
Deepdene Pre-School	7 Terry Street, Deepdene	2.3km	5 min	24/25
Glass Street Kindergarten	16 Glass Street, Kew East	3.3km	7 min	25/26
Bellevue Kindergarten	49 Bulleen Road, Balwyn North	2.8km	5 min	26/27 - 27/28

Each of these services' existing sites are considered physically constrained and not practical to maintain uninterrupted delivery of kindergarten services concurrent with significant construction works.

Further, setting up temporary accommodation facilities to the satisfaction of licencing requirements, will be very costly and is not considered good value for money. It is estimated that temporarily operating the nominated services from BLC would save Council between \$1.5 - \$1.8 million.

This estimated savings combined with savings from services accommodated to date, has provided a combined financial savings of approximately \$3M-3.3M.

Next Steps

Subject to a Council resolution reading use of the BLC, Council officers will continue to work closely with the representatives of the JJ McMahon Memorial Kindergarten Committee to finalise the design and documentation of the proposed redevelopment project. The works are planned to be tendered in mid-2023, with Council to be presented with recommendation to award the contract in late 2023.

Planning, design, and delivery of the remaining kindergarten projects will proceed in accordance with the successive budgets and Council's LTFP. An indicative renewal projects timeframe is outlined in **Table 1** of this report.

Demolition of the BLC and conversion of the site to public open space will be considered as part of Councils LTFP process and anticipated to be undertaken in 2029, subject to funding.

5. Consultation/communication

Officers from a range of Council departments have worked collaboratively on this proposal. The committee of the JJ McMahon Memorial Kindergarten is seeking to inform families of the 2024 temporary accommodation arrangements as early as possible.

No public community consultation is required to inform this decision.

6. Financial and resource implications

The cost to provide temporary accommodation for the nominated early years services at BLC is considered minimal since the facility is already an established and licensed early years facility.

Estimated total savings to Council of between \$1.5 - \$1.8 million are forecast due to the avoided need to procure, fitout, licence and maintain temporary 'portable' accommodation for early years service for the duration of each renewal project.

It is estimated a total saving of approximately \$3M - 3.3M will be achieved through the continued use of BLC since 2016, as a temporary solution to accommodation of community and kindergarten services nearby during construction of respective facilities.

7. Governance issues

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have a general or material conflict of interest requiring disclosure under chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Boroondara City Council.

The recommendation contained in this report is compatible with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 as it does not raise any human rights issues.

8. Social and environmental issues

There are no issues relevant to this proposal.

The proposed temporary accommodation solution avoids the need for Council to build portable facilities on open space, which may detract from the open space amenity to accommodate the nominated early years services.

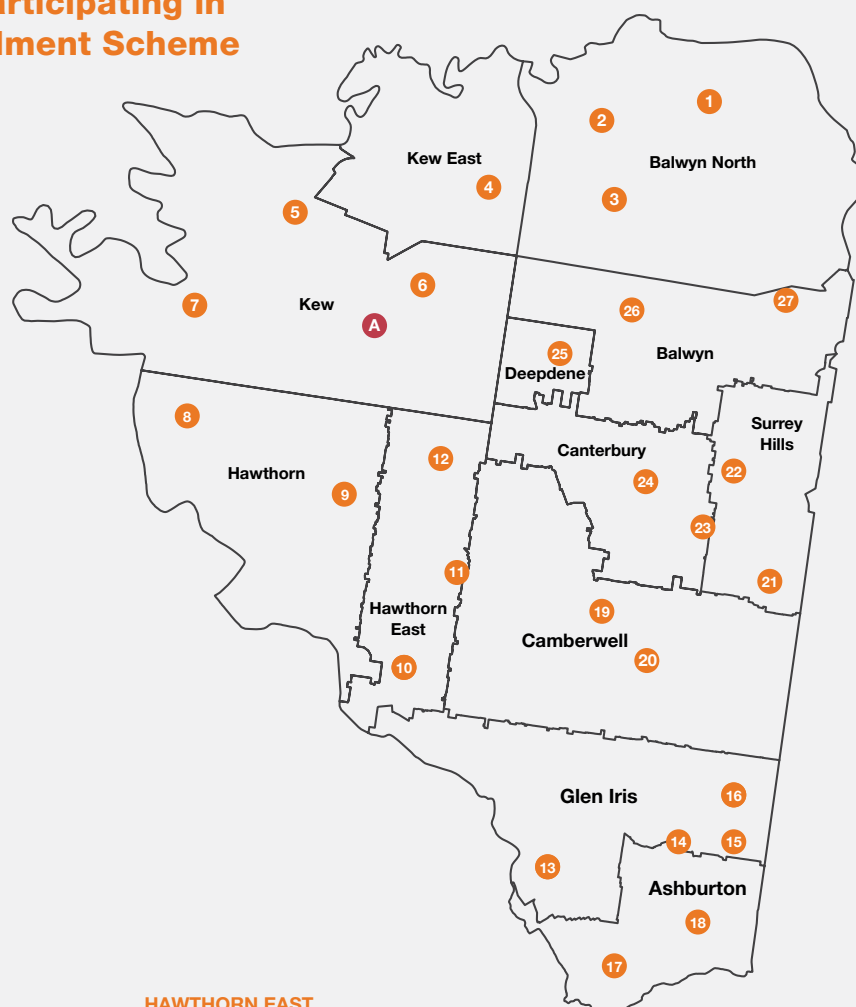
9. Conclusion

The use of the vacant, licensed section of the BLC building to provide temporary accommodation for several nearby early years services while building renewal works are undertaken at their usual sites is an effective use of Council resources.

Manager: Christine White, Manager Capital Projects

Report officer: Jarrod Filosa, Coordinator Building Projects

Kindergartens participating in the Central Enrolment Scheme



BALWYN NORTH

- 1 **Boroondara Preschool**
24 Midvale Avenue, Balwyn North
- 2 **Bellevue Kindergarten**
49 Bulleen Road, Balwyn North
- 3 **The Merrell Kindergarten**
92 Maud Street, Balwyn North

KEW EAST

- 4 **Glass Street Kindergarten**
16 Glass Street, Kew East

KEW

- 5 **North Kew Kindergarten**
152 Pakington Street, Kew
- 6 **JJ McMahon Memorial Kindergarten**
16A Argyle Road, Kew
- 7 **Studley Park Kindergarten**
31 Stawell Street, Kew

HAWTHORN

- 8 **West Hawthorn Preschool**
39 Brook Street, Hawthorn
- 9 **Robert Cochrane Kindergarten**
2A Minona Street, Hawthorn

HAWTHORN EAST

- 10 **Auburn South Preschool**
5 Anderson Road, Hawthorn East
- 11 **Camberwell Baptist Church Kindergarten**
1A Wills Street, Hawthorn East
- 12 **Cara Armstrong Kindergarten**
169 Rathmines Road, Hawthorn East

GLEN IRIS

- 13 **Glen Iris Road Kindergarten**
200 Glen Iris Road, Glen Iris
- 14 **Summerhill Park Kindergarten**
46 Audrey Crescent, Glen Iris
- 15 **Rowen Street Kindergarten**
27 Rowen Street, Glen Iris
- 16 **Alfred Road Kindergarten**
48A Alfred Road, Glen Iris

ASHBURTON

- 17 **Estrella Preschool**
32 Chamberlain Street, Ashburton
- 18 **The Craig Family Centre**
7 Samarinda Avenue, Ashburton

CAMBERWELL

- 19 **Fordham Avenue Kindergarten**
24 Fordham Ave, Camberwell
- 20 **St Dunstan's Kindergarten**
163B Wattle Valley Road, Camberwell

SURREY HILLS

- 21 **Surrey Hills Preschool**
18 Verdun Street, Surrey Hills
- 22 **Canterbury and District Preschool**
26 Guildford Road, Surrey Hills

CANTERBURY

- 23 **St Paul's Anglican Kindergarten**
Corner Highfield Road and, Church Street, Canterbury
- 24 **Canterbury Gardens Kindergarten**
2 Kendall Street, Canterbury

DEEPDENE

- 25 **Deepdene Preschool**
7 Terry Street, Deepdene

BALWYN

- 26 **Yongala Preschool**
25 Nott Street, Balwyn
- 27 **Balwyn East Kindergarten**
2A Caravan Street, Balwyn

OTHER KINDERGARTENS

- A **David Street Kindergarten**
40 Davis Street, Kew