

Mary Lee Park (Park 27B) – Community Sports Building Draft Concept Design and Exemption to EOI

Strategic Alignment - Our Community

Public

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City Community Services and Culture Committee

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Community

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for:

- The Draft Concept Design for a Community Building located in Mary Lee Park (Park 27B)
- Exemption of the West Adelaide Soccer Club (WASC) from the requirement to undertake an expression of interest process; and
- Public consultation on the draft of a 21-year Park Lands Community Lease Agreement between the City of Adelaide (CoA) and WASC for community sports facilities at Mary Lee Park (Park 27B).

The provision of community sporting facilities in Park 27B aligns with the Adelaide Park Lands Management Strategy (APLMS) and Adelaide Park Lands Community Land Management Plan (CLMP).

WASC uses Park 27B as their junior base, with 302 registered players across 28 teams, consisting of both male and female players aged 4 to 17 years.

The Draft Community Building Concept Design is consistent with the Adelaide Park Lands Community Buildings (Sport and Recreation) Policy and demonstrates a strong commitment to enhancing the precinct by aligning with the policy objective to create high-quality, welcoming and inclusive spaces, incorporating core elements that are accessible to all Park Lands visitors.

WASC has been based in Park 27B for over 49 years and currently holds a 12-month Lease, which is due to expire on 30 June 2026. Maintaining the WASC tenure in Park 27B through a 21-year Lease ensures ongoing sport and recreational outcomes envisaged by the Adelaide Park Lands Management Strategy and the CLMP.

This report outlines the rationale for considering exempting the WASC from the Expression of Interest (EOI) process required under the Adelaide Park Lands Leasing and Licensing Policy and outlines the statutory public consultation process, parliamentary approval requirements, and timeframes to enact a 21-year Lease.

Further reports, including the outcomes of public consultation and the Detailed Design, will be presented to Kadaltilla and Council in 2026.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation will be presented to Council on 9 December 2025 for consideration

THAT THE CITY COMMUNITY SERVICES AND CULTURE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL THAT COUNCIL

1. Approves the draft concept design for the new Community Building at Mary Lee Park (Park 27B), as contained in Attachment A to Item 5.1 on the Agenda for the Special meeting of City Community Services and Culture Committee held on 2 December 2025.
 2. Approves the exemption of the West Adelaide Soccer Club from the requirement to undertake an Expression of Interest process in accordance with section 13.1 of the Adelaide Park Lands Leasing and Licensing Policy 2016.
 3. Authorises a draft 21-year Park Lands Community Lease Agreement between the City of Adelaide (Lessor) and the West Adelaide Soccer Club (Lessee) for community sports facilities at Mary Lee Park (Park 27B) as contained in Attachment B to Item 5.1 on the Agenda for the Special meeting of City Community Services and Culture Committee held on 2 December 2025, for the purpose of public consultation.
 4. Notes that a public consultation report and a Detailed Design of the Community Building will be presented to Kadaltilla and Council in 2026.
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IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2024-2028 Strategic Plan	Strategic Alignment – Our Community A key action of the Strategic Plan is to 'enable community led services which increase well-being, social connections and participation in active lifestyles, leisure, recreation and sport.
Policy	Consistent with the Adelaide Park Lands Community Land Management Plan, the Adelaide Park Lands Leasing and Licensing Policy (2016), and the Adelaide Park Lands Community Buildings (Sport and Recreation) Policy.
Consultation	The draft concept design for Park 27B has been developed in consultation with the West Adelaide Soccer Club (WASC). Aboriginal Urban Design has been engaged to work in partnership with the Kaurna Yerta Aboriginal Corporation (KYAC) to identify opportunities for cultural expression within both the building design and the surrounding landscape.
Resource	This project and the granting of a new Park Lands Community Lease Agreement (Lease Agreement) will be undertaken within current operational resources.
Risk / Legal / Legislative	<u>Local Government Act 1999 (SA)</u> Public consultation on the draft Lease Agreement will occur over a three-week period. <u>Adelaide Park Lands Act 2005 (SA)</u> Subject to public consultation and further consideration by Kadaltilla and Council, the draft Lease Agreement will be placed before both Houses of Parliament for 14 sitting days (concurrently) before execution.
Design	The draft concept design for Park 27B has been developed in accordance with the Adelaide Park Lands Building Design Guidelines and the Good Design Principles established by the Office for Design and Architecture South Australia (ODASA). Aboriginal Urban Design (AUD) has been engaged to identify opportunities for cultural expression within the building design and the surrounding landscape.
Opportunities	The project enables a redeveloped Community Building to better support community sports and provide accessible facilities for all Park Lands visitors. By maintaining the West Adelaide Soccer Club (WASC) in Park 27B, the project ensures the ongoing delivery of sports and recreational benefits, in line with the Adelaide Park Lands Management Strategy (APLMS) and the Community Land Management Plan (CLMP).
25/26 Budget Allocation	The Community Building redevelopment, including the disposal of the existing facility, will be funded through a combined investment of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$2.125 million from Council's 1.5% rates revenue allocation \$2 million secured through a State Government grant \$800,000 in renewal funding from Council's Buildings Asset Management Plan, allocated specifically for Park Lands building renewals (\$200,000 in 2025/26).
Proposed 26/27 Budget Allocation	\$600,000 in renewal funding, reflecting the remaining balance of Council's Buildings Asset Management Plan allocation for Park Lands building renewals.
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	The 21-year Lease agreement and the provision of the Community Building will be reviewed in accordance with the Buildings Asset Management Plan (BAMP).
24/25 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Not as a result of this report.
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	The Lessee will undertake maintenance of the leased and licensed assets in accordance with the Lease.
Other Funding Sources	The WASC has contributed \$2m towards the project through a State Government grant. A condition of the grant is that the project be completed by 30 April 2027.

DISCUSSION

Background

1. The West Adelaide Soccer Club (WASC) holds a Park Lands Community Lease Agreement (Lease Agreement) for 2.51ha of sports grounds and a Community Building located in Mary Lee Park (Park 27B).
2. The existing Community Building at Park 27B was constructed in the 1960s and has a building footprint of approximately 150sqm.
3. WASC has been based in Park 27B for 49 years and is affiliated with Football South Australia, the state governing body.
4. The Club uses Park 27B as their junior base, with 302 registered players across 28 teams, including 51 female and 251 male players.
5. On 10 November 2020, following an extensive stakeholder and community engagement process, Council adopted a new Community Land Management Plan for Park 27B. This plan supports the renewal of the existing clubrooms and is referenced in the latest [Adelaide Park Lands Community Land Management Plan](#).
6. In 2022, the WASC secured a \$2 million State Government grant to upgrade the clubrooms and sports ground lighting at Park 27B. To date, approximately \$700,000 of this funding has been allocated towards the replacement of sports lighting, with the existing lighting infrastructure at the end of its useful asset life.
7. On 12 November 2024, Council resolved (in part):
'That Council:
 7. Approves Golden Wattle Park / Mirnu Wirra (Park 21W) and Mary Lee Park (Park 27B) as the first priority Park Lands Community Buildings projects and to receive the 'Park Lands Buildings Upgrades' capital budget allocations for 2024/25 and 2025/26.

Draft Community Building Concept Design

8. The Draft Community Building Concept Design (Concept Design) for Mary Lee Park (Park 27B) is contained in **Attachment A** to this report.
9. Administration's analysis of the Draft Concept Design against the Adelaide Park Lands Community Building Policy is summarised in the table below:

Policy Objective	Design Response
Maximise investment and community benefits by consolidating buildings and creating shared-use facilities and amenities accessible to the public.	<p>The proposed Community Building in Park 27B will replace the existing facility, providing a modern, flexible space that can accommodate multiple community groups at once.</p> <p>The preliminary Concept Design aims to deliver an inclusive, multi-use facility that reflects the needs of the city's growing and evolving community and its surrounding suburbs.</p>
Enable the provision of Community Buildings that fulfil their intended purpose, with a building footprint and scale, that minimises the impact on the Adelaide Park Lands.	<p>The proposed Community Building comprises of a low-scale, single-level form that fits sensitively within the Park Lands.</p> <p>Existing trees and new landscape treatments further integrate the building into the park setting.</p> <p>A community area extends to a covered outdoor space that connects directly to the playing fields, providing flexibility for larger gatherings and community use.</p>
Create quality, welcoming and inclusive facilities to maximise community benefit.	<p>The Community Building incorporates publicly accessible amenities, including toilets, handwashing facilities, a drinking fountain, shelter, and seating.</p> <p>The Community Building is located near Park Terrace and the Park Lands Trail, providing connections to nearby community facilities such as the community courts, skate park, play space and parking areas.</p>

Policy Objective	Design Response
Foster diverse participation in sports and recreation by investing in facilities that meet the needs of users and the public.	<p>The Community Building incorporates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two unisex changerooms and amenities that can be divided into four separate spaces to service a range of community sports across the four playing fields. • Building elements are designed to support both formal and informal use of the Park Lands. • Facilities that comply with the Building Code of Australia, the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, and relevant sporting facility guidelines for community-level competition.
Optimise the sustainable development, efficient use and environmental performance of Community Buildings.	<p>The Community Building is proposed to be fully electric and designed to maximise natural light within the community spaces and changing rooms, reducing reliance on artificial lighting.</p> <p>The design aims to enhance local biodiversity and strengthen connections with the adjacent landscape.</p> <p>The building has been carefully sited to avoid the removal of existing trees, subject to arborist review.</p>
Ensure a consistent approach to designing and redeveloping the upgrade and redevelopment of Community Buildings.	<p>Administration has managed the development of the Draft Concept Design in consultation with the Lessee.</p> <p>The proposed Community Building incorporates materials and landscape treatments consistent with the Adelaide Park Lands Building Design Guidelines, ensuring it complements its park setting.</p>

Community Building Footprint

10. The provision of a Community Building in Park 27B is consistent with the Adelaide Park Lands Community Land Management Plan and the purpose for which the land is held, including 'providing sporting fields and fit-for-purpose support facilities'.
11. The existing Community Building in Park 27B, constructed in the 1960s to service a single playing field, does not:
 - 11.1. service the needs of existing users
 - 11.2. provide accessible, inclusive amenities for players, officials and spectators (including disability access as per the *Disability Discrimination Act (1992)*)
 - 11.3. align with relevant community sports facility guidelines
 - 11.4. provide benefit to Park Lands visitors not associated with the WASC.
12. The original facility was not designed for current levels of use, which continue to grow as WASC invests in playing surfaces and sports lighting, increasing carrying capacity and programming opportunities.
13. A larger building footprint is required to meet contemporary community expectations, provide fit-for-purpose facilities for multiple users and playing fields, and satisfy legislative requirements, factors not contemplated when the original building was constructed.
14. Park 27B's total area is 8 hectares. The proposed maximum building footprint is 378 sqm, which equates to approximately 0.47 % of the Park's total area.
15. The building incorporates publicly accessible toilets, drinking water, seating and shelter to support formal and informal use of Park 27B, generating benefits to all visitors to this precinct.
16. The inclusion of a common area enables community use of the building when sport is not scheduled, most training and competition occurs on weeknights and during daytime on weekends. These spaces extend mental and physical health benefits beyond on-field participation, strengthen community connections and support diverse activities
17. The proposed kiosk/kitchen area allows for dry storage, heating and refrigeration of food and beverage supplies to service the estimated 73,000 annual participants.

18. The terms and conditions of the Lease Agreement will inform the nature of activities that the common area and kiosk/kitchen will service, and Council will consider this separately.

Section 13.1 of the Adelaide Park Lands Leasing and Licensing Policy 2016

19. The Adelaide Park Lands Leasing and Licensing Policy requires the selection of a new lessee for vacant land and/or buildings through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If such circumstances exist, a Council resolution is needed.
20. Exceptional circumstances are reviewed on a case-by-case basis, depending on the particulars of the situation.
21. An assessment has been undertaken to determine if exceptional circumstances exist in this case and key considerations are presented below:
 - 21.1. The WASC has been based at Park 27B for 49 years.
 - 21.2. The WASC received a \$2 million grant from the State Government in 2022 to improve sporting facilities in Park 27B including redevelopment of the existing clubroom. To date, approximately \$700,000 of this grant has been spent on installing new sports lighting.
 - 21.3. Maintaining the WASC's tenure in Park 27B ensures ongoing sport and recreational outcomes envisaged by the Adelaide Park Lands Management Strategy and the Community Land Management Plan.

Proposed Lease Agreement – Community Consultation

22. Should Council approve an exemption to the WASC from the requirement to undertake an EOI process, it is recommended that the following high-level terms and conditions inform a new Lease Agreement with the WASC:
 - 22.1. The proposed term is 21 years, structured as 7+7+7, with the Lessee having the option to exercise rights to renew a second and third seven-year term.
 - 22.2. If the Lessee does not comply with the Lease terms, they will forfeit their renewal entitlement. This gives the WASC security to realise the benefits of acquiring external funding while ensuring CoA retains oversight of compliance and performance at each renewal stage.
 - 22.3. Building Rent: As per the City of Adelaide's (CoA) annually endorsed Fees and Charges, applied from 1 July each year.
 - 22.4. Licence Fees: As per the CoA's annually endorsed Fees and Charges, applied from 1 July each year.
 - 22.5. Permitted Use: Community sport and associated community development (not-for-profit) activities.
23. **Attachment B** contains a draft 21-year Park Lands Community Lease Agreement ('Lease') for the community sports facilities located in Park 27B. The foundational elements of the draft Lease have been developed as per the Adelaide Park Lands Leasing and Licensing Policy (2016). There will be some immaterial amendments or refinements as the project matures, including the addition of approved Development Plans and maintenance schedules, prior to the execution of the Lease.
24. The proposed 21-year term reflects WASC's \$2m contribution to redeveloping the existing Community Building, which forms part of the proposed Lease area.

Lease Consultation

25. Public consultation on the draft Lease will occur over a three-week period per the CoA's Community Consultation Policy, including Publication of public notes (Gazette and The Advertiser), information on the CoA website, and copies of the draft Lease Agreement available for viewing at all CoA libraries and community centres.

Next Steps – Community Building

26. Subject to the approval of Council of the Draft Park Lands Community Building Concept Design for Mary Lee Park (Park 27B), Administration will commence the detailed design phase of the project in early 2026.

Next Steps – Lease Agreement

27. Executing a long-term Lease is critical to delivering this Community Building redevelopment project in Park 27B. The findings of the Lease consultation will be presented to Kadaltilla and Council in 2026.
28. If supported and subject to any amendments, the draft Lease will be laid before both Houses of Parliament for 14 sitting days with an obligation for the Presiding Members of each House to lay a copy before the respective House within six sitting days of receiving.

29. If required, Administration will arrange under delegation for a short-term Lease as an interim measure. WASC's existing Lease will end on 30 June 2026.
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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Draft Park Lands Community Building Concept Design – Mary Lee Park (Park 27B)

Attachment B – Draft Park Lands Community Lease Agreement for Mary Lee Park (Park 27B)

- END OF REPORT -