

Media Release

25 May 2023

Draft plan a key milestone for Deans Marsh Community Hub

Deans Marsh Community Hub reached an important milestone as Surf Coast Shire Council endorsed the release of the Draft Facility Development Plan for public comment. The plan aims to build a community hub that reflects the current and future needs of the Deans Marsh community, while maintaining the unique characteristics and local significance of the existing site in Deans Marsh Memorial Reserve.

The public feedback period will open on 5 June, and people are encouraged to comment on the preferred design option. The chosen design will provide a new multi-purpose community hub that offers quality spaces that are sympathetic to the rural and historic location and character, and is an environmentally-sustainable design.

The community hub will also provide an Emergency Relief Centre venue and the design will incorporate lightweight fire-resistant materials, making it a safe place for the community during emergencies.

The proposed design also includes a large central foyer, edible garden to service the kitchen, courtyard, outdoor plaza, children's playground for the daycare centre, accessible paths, new hall which has potential to closely replicate the existing design, and a performance space where the existing Marjorie Lawrence memorial curtain replica can be reinstated.

The plan has been developed over a long period with community input from surveys, listening posts, community meetings, and online submissions, in addition to a Project Steering Group of key community stakeholders - all of which have highlighted the need for fit-for-purpose facilities.

"I appreciate the heritage of this building is significant, and believe that heritage is more than just physical elements, it's also about the memories and it's social significance, and I hope that they will live on in a redevelopment that meets community needs over the coming decades," Cr Libby Stapleton said.

Cr Stapleton thanked community members who provided input.

"The existing community hall is the only community facility in Deans Marsh and is a vital, much-loved space, highlighted by the great local response so far during the project," Cr Stapleton said.

"The result is a plan for a facility that is going to serve the community in numerous ways, including enabling additional services and activities with the multi-purpose spaces.

"Now that the facility development plan has been drafted, we invite people's feedback before Council considers a final plan at a future meeting. Council will then work towards securing the funding to deliver this major project, which we hope we'll achieve within three to five years."

Large capital projects are timed to funding opportunities, such as state and federal government elections, budget and grant cycles. The project is likely to cost between \$8m and \$8.5m.

"We recognise that even though the current facility is approaching the end of its useful life, it is still required by the community in the meantime, so Council will ensure it remains safe to use," Cr Stapleton said.

Feedback on the Draft Deans Marsh Community Hub Facility Development Plan will be open between 5 June and 3 July. To learn more and to have your say, visit **surfcoast.vic.gov.au/DMhub**.

Meanwhile, Council also adopted the Tree Risk Management Plan 2023-2027 and Graffiti Management Policy at its May Council meeting.

ENDS

Not for publication

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