



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding commits the Buckley Park Bowls Club Inc.(BPBC), the Essendon Bowls Club Inc.(EBC) and the Maribyrnong Park Bowls Club Inc.(MPBC) to merge as one club entity should their shared vision for the establishment of a modern Bowls Complex Development in Essendon be realised. Should the proposed facility not attract the desired support and funding then EBC will remain at “Windy Hill”, MPBC will remain at Maribyrnong Park and BPBC will remain as is at Buckley Park.

- The plan for a Bowls Complex Development in Essendon (ABCDE) makes provision for greater participation in the sport while reducing the “footprint” taken up for bowls within the City of Moonee Valley. This in turn frees up other significant space for public use as determined by Moonee Valley City Council.
- The facility would see the City of Moonee Valley play host to a leading edge bowls centre without reliance on poker machine income as do other such complexes elsewhere. Inherent in the planning is that the new Club would not only host bowlers of all abilities but would serve as a welcoming community hub.
- The state-of-the-art facility supports participation all year round on synthetic greens under cover and includes enhanced facilities for all members and the community. It is intended that the rejuvenated club facilities would make participation more gender and age inclusive for all.
- In addition the under-cover facility will massively reduce water consumption, reduce the use of chemicals required for grass bowling greens and reduce the impact of harmful UV rays on players.

The preferred site for the development is in Cooper Street, Essendon at the current home of the Buckley Park Bowls Club. The Club already has a 3 green “footprint”, sound clubrooms, a strategic Essendon location and good car-parking space. Specific elements in the proposed development include:

- Two synthetic greens under modern domes adjacent to the existing clubrooms
- One tifdwarf grass green
- Spectator and community use al-fresco viewing decks along the clubroom frontage and beside the new synthetic greens

- A new landing and front entrance to the Club from the car park with the club exterior being rendered, modernised and welcoming for the community
- Interior redecoration and upgrades
- A commercial bistro
- An upgraded bar and social areas

Provisional estimates of the cost of the redevelopment of the site are around \$5M.

The three clubs committing to the project each have proud histories but have been frustrated in recent years in trying to attract funds for improvements of their facilities. It is perceived that the lack of support has been in large part due to the significant concentration of bowls clubs within the City of Moonee Valley. It is seen that the move to provide a new state-of-the-art facility provides a win-win for the City, all citizens and for bowlers.

- Buckley Park Bowls Club was founded in the 1950s and was first known as the Essendon Citizens Bowling Club. While the Club was progressing its own agenda of upgrading its greens, the Club's location within Essendon and meeting the strategic requirements of the proposal, means that the "bigger picture" will deliver state of the art facilities that one club acting alone could not achieve. Club leaders briefed all members at Annual General Meeting held 16th May 2021 and has unanimous support for the proposal.
- Essendon Bowls Club was a section of the former Essendon Club at Windy Hill from 1885 till 1992 when it became an independent entity. The Club has a long and proud history of achievements, boasting many state and national champions and attracting talented players with club pathways to competition at elite levels. After years of frustration seeking developments at Windy Hill the Club resolved to explore other options to improve facilities for members and expand capacity. Members of EBC have been briefed on the potential development and at the Annual General Meeting on 15th July, 2021 voted unanimously in support of pursuing the development of a bowls complex development elsewhere in Essendon and a willingness to relocate if and only if the proposed complex was fully funded.
- Maribyrnong Park Bowling and Croquet Club has been a very active club for nearly 60 years, established in 1964. The Club commenced bowling on the 2nd of October 1965 when 80 bowler's commenced bowling on the newly laid turf. Membership in 1978 grew to 198 men and 150 women thus creating an environment that fostered and encouraged participation that still today provides a great deal of enjoyment to many bowlers of all ages and gender.

We the undersigned Presidents of the Buckley Park Bowls Club, the Essendon Bowls Club and the Maribyrnong Park Bowls Club hereby confirm that if, and only if, the proposed development at Cooper Street is supported and funded by Moonee Valley City Council and governments, that our Clubs would merge to a new entity at that site.

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Signed this...day of ,, 2021....

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