

Media Release

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Ball continues to roll on exciting Marley Brown Oval redevelopment plans

Gladstone Coal Exporters Sports Complex, commonly referred to as Marley Brown Oval, is set to be the focus of future sporting development in the region with Gladstone Regional Council about to commence consultation with facility users and stakeholders as part of the next stage of planning for the site.

The redevelopment aims to provide Gladstone with a major sports and event facility suitable for national sporting games and large outdoor events.

Council's intention to upgrade Marley Brown Oval was announced following the successful hosting of an NRL game between the Gold Coast Titans and Manly Sea Eagles in April 2018.

The region's appetite for high-profile sporting fixtures was evident with almost 5200 fans packing Marley Brown Oval to watch the Titans defeat the Sea Eagles.

The venue continued to host high-profile sporting fixtures following the NRL match, seeing the Brisbane Roar and Queensland Reds play pre-season matches in 2019 and 2020 respectively, plus a round of the National Rugby Championship played in September 2019.

Local sporting organisations, mainly rugby league and rugby union, continued to use Marley Brown Oval during this period and will continue to do so during 2021. The venue has also hosted outdoor music concerts.

While recent redevelopment plans for Marley Brown Oval have focused on the facility's capacity to host NRL games, Gladstone Region Mayor Matt Burnett said the next round of consultation with the users of the facility will consider the whole sports precinct.

"Gladstone has hosted the Jason Hetherington Gary Larson Cup for over 10 years, attracting nearly 30 teams to the three-day carnival, so it's important that any facility plans for Marley Brown Oval not only allow the hosting of NRL games or other sporting codes, but also improve Gladstone's capacity to host carnivals and play field sports during the season," Councillor Burnett said.

"Plans to upgrade the facility will include extending the crowd capacity up to or about 10,000 people, ensuring an easy transition from day-to-day operations to hosting an NRL game, extending the facility's capacity to host regional carnivals, and providing Gladstone with a venue for large outdoor events such as concerts and festivals.

"Redevelopment of the facility will help attract large-scale events to the Gladstone and Central Queensland region, while providing stimulation to the local economy and enhancement our region's economic prosperity and diversity."

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Cr Burnett said the next step for the project includes the preparation of revised concept plans and the development of a business case to consider whole-of-life costs, risks and benefits and options prior to seeking funding and development of the project.

“Stakeholder engagement with facility users is a major component of the business case and explores how day-to-day facility use can align with major event transition,” Cr Burnett said.

“Feasibility will also be a major aspect for the successful advancement of the project as financial investment and funding is still required to bring the project to a shovel ready state.”

Please visit <https://conversations.gladstone.qld.gov.au> for more information about the Gladstone Coal Exporters Sports Complex (Marley Brown Oval) redevelopment.

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