

Greetings everyone,

On behalf of the **Friends of Collier Reserve**, I wish to express our strong opposition to the proposed **WASP Hockey development at Collier Reserve** and urge the Council to support the officer's recommendation **not to grant an option to lease on any portion of Collier Reserve to Wesley South Perth Hockey Club (WASPs)**.

The **Friends of Collier Reserve** is a community group dedicated to preserving the public open space, natural environment and wildlife at Collier Reserve and its surrounding areas. Over **nearly three years**, we have engaged with **hundreds of residents** in Como and the neighbouring suburbs.

This engagement has consistently shown strong opposition to the proposed WASP development, as demonstrated by the **petition** we submitted and referenced in the officer's report.

Unlike the club's survey feedback, this petition can be verified and accurately reflects widespread opposition, as evidenced by the **359 signatures from City of South Perth electors**. It also contradicts the suggestions made by some councillors that the opposition is limited to a few residents living opposite the park.

Cr Coveney, who made this assertion, went on further to say that a South Perth community page on social media, presumably Facebook, **'attracted support for WASP 3:1'** and claimed that you **'couldn't ask for more evidence about community sentiment'**.

Given my experience working with **social media specialists** and **data analysts** as part of a **community engagement team**, I would **caution** Cr. Coveney against relying on Facebook comments, as they are not considered reliable data. Rather than focusing on the **opinions of a few 'keyboard warriors'**, councillors should base their decisions on **the facts**.

As you may be aware, the City is in the process of developing a new Public Open Space strategy, and the current draft figures reveal a significant shortfall in our local POS. The district has approximately **4% POS**, while Como has even less **at 2.97%**. This is starkly below the recommended level of **10%**, representing a shortfall of approximately **60% across the City and 70% in Como**.

The shortage of POS is already a pressing issue and will only worsen with increased urban infill. Yet, despite widespread concern, some councillors continue to **hold the outdated belief** that every club is entitled to **its own single-use facility**. While allocating land exclusively to community groups may have been feasible in the past, this practice is **no longer sustainable**.

We are all familiar with the club's **narrative**, supported by the catchy **tagline 'WASP wants a home'**, which, concerningly, some councillors have adopted in their campaign for the club. Cr. Waugh's Notice of Motion is a **prime example**.

It needs to be pointed out that **WASP is not homeless**. They already have an established home at Richardson Reserve, complete with a 21-year lease, a clubroom, and access to six grass pitches. The oval is also set to receive a **\$1.3 million sports lighting upgrade** and **\$740,000 in changeroom improvements**.

Their need for synthetic turf can be met at the future **\$135 million High Performance Hockey Centre at Curtin University**, which will have **four synthetic turfs** that WASP can use for all their home games. The centre will also offer world-class amenities, including shared clubrooms and activity spaces for **socialising**, and opportunities to display club memorabilia, allowing them to retain their **identity**.

Despite the ample provisions at Richardson Reserve and the new centre, WASP insists on having its own **expensive, all-in-one facilities at Collier Reserve**.

They are not just seeking a new '**home**'; they are pursuing a premium '**dream home**' at the expense of the entire community.

As demonstrated by the **numerous deputations** made tonight by community members and the strong representations from community groups – including:

the City of South Perth Residents' Association, Salter Point Community Group, South Perth Tree Canopy Advocates, and South Perth United Football Club –

their pursuit of this **dream 'home'** disregards the diverse needs of the broad community, which are currently being met by Collier Reserve.

This vital greenspace provides a range of sporting, recreational, and nature opportunities, all of which are crucial for supporting **mental and physical well-being, fostering social cohesion**, and creating a **strong sense of belonging**.

Allocating **12,000m²** of land to the club for exclusive use would reduce the accessible active open space by **43%**. This **substantial loss** would not only **undermine fair access** to this vital community resource but also diminish the reserve's ability to meet the city's **growing demand for sports spaces**, particularly for the **cricket, baseball, and soccer clubs that currently use the oval**.

This loss of accessible public open space is especially concerning for the local area, since nearby land in **Kensington is slated for high-density development**, which would likely increase the demand for public open spaces and further **strain scarce community resources**.

At the February Ordinary Council meeting, several councillors made bold statements about their commitment to representing our community.

Cr. Coveney asserted that it was his job to **'represent our community, all of them, not just the loudest'**.

Cr. Prendiville emphasised that she was **'elected on the promise of listening to the community and responding to their needs'**.

And Cr. Waugh said she **cares 'about our community's needs,' and thinks it's time for South Perth to 'level up.'**

This raises the question: **exactly which community are you referring to?**

The City of South Perth has **over 46,000 residents**, with more than **14,000 living in Como alone**. In contrast, WASP has fewer than **800 members**, with **less than 400** residing in the district.

It's clear that the **five elected members** who supported the option to lease motion and revived the WASP agenda **DID NOT listen to the community or represent the broader needs and interests of all residents**.

It's **time for these councillors to 'level up'** and **restore public trust** by voting decisively **against the option to lease**.

Thank you.