

22 September 2023

Submission in response to Senate Inquiry

Australia's preparedness to host Commonwealth, Olympic and Paralympic Games

Prepared by Redland City Council



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Executive Summary

Thank you to the Senate Committee for allowing this late submission regarding *Australia's preparedness to host Commonwealth, Olympic and Paralympic Games*.

In light of submissions and accounts delivered by community groups at the Senate Hearing – and the Interim Report findings – we felt it imperative that the comprehensive research and planning conducted for the Redland Whitewater Centre and the Birkdale Community Precinct be highlighted for the Senate Committee and general public.

We recognise the passion displayed by a small number of local and related Redlands community groups in their representation at the Senate Hearing as part of our valued democratic society.

Since the purchase of the site, there have been 14 resolutions of Redland City Council which confirm our commitment to delivering the Birkdale Community Precinct and Redland Whitewater Centre, the most recent being at its General Meeting on 13 September 2023.

Redland City Council remains committed to the Delivery Partner Agreement and being an event city for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

This submission aims to provide the Senate Committee with a forensic view of the work undertaken by Redland City Council in ensuring its decision making is evidence-based, including both technical reports and community engagement outputs, noting that the Queensland Government is undertaking an independent Project Validation Report process for the Redland Whitewater Centre.

Addressing assumptions and comments in prior submissions

Redland City Council acknowledges that three community and advocacy groups local to Redlands Coast made submissions to the Senate Committee.

In our review of the submissions, Redland City Council has identified a number of unfounded assumptions and claims made about the Redland Whitewater Centre, Birkdale Community Precinct as well as the planning and community consultation processes that Redland City Council has undertaken.

It is imperative that accurate information is available to the Senate Committee and broader community. This submission provides reference information that is available via Redland City Council websites including Your Say (<https://yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au/imagine>) and Redland Coast Today news site (<https://www.redlandscoasttoday.com.au>).

This information is also compiled in Table 1 (Appendix 1) for ease of reference. This table outlines our response to the various unfounded claims made to this Inquiry.

About Redlands Coast

Redlands Coast is located in the eastern corridor of the Greater Brisbane region and is characterised by an archipelago of islands, sandy beaches, green landscapes and vibrant village centres.

Home to 161,730 people, our city covers an area of 537km², bordering Brisbane, Logan and the Gold Coast. This includes more than 335km of coastline along southern Moreton Bay, as well as seven distinct islands. Yep,

Redlands Coast includes renowned Minjerribah/North Stradbroke Island – the world's second largest sand island, and is also home to the Quandamooka People, who have cared for this region for more than 21,000 years.

The city is approximately 35 minutes' drive, or 26km, from the Brisbane CBD and approximately 50 minutes' drive, or 96km, from the Gold Coast.

Introducing Birkdale Community Precinct

Our legacy story begins when Redland City Council saved Willards Farmhouse from being demolished for housing when we bought it in 2016. Separately we also purchased the neighbouring property (where the whitewater venue will be located) in 2019 after a decade of lobbying the Federal Government who had earmarked the land as potentially accommodating 400 houses.

Bounded in part by Tingalpa Creek to the west and south, and by Old Cleveland Road East to the east, the street address is 302 Old Cleveland Road East (known as Willards Farm) and 362-388 Old Cleveland Road East, Birkdale.

Redland City Council is proud to be the steward for this land on behalf of our community for the direct benefit of improving social, recreational and conservation outcomes.

Since acquiring the land, Redland City Council has undertaken rigorous independent scientific studies of the values associated with the 62-hectare Birkdale Community Precinct and been involved in extensive community engagement for the site, with two of the most significant engagement projects in the history of Redlands Coast informing the Birkdale Community Precinct Master Plan (Appendix 2 and Appendix 3).

These studies of environmental, heritage and cultural significance and the far-reaching engagements, which are independently verified and available publicly online, provided the basis for all decision making on the use of the Birkdale Community Precinct.

After learning about the land and listening to our community, a clear vision emerged for the site: ***Birkdale Community Precinct – A Place with a Space for Everyone.***

Birkdale Community Precinct is being shaped into something truly wonderful in a collaboration between the community and Redland City Council.

The Birkdale Community Precinct Master Plan maps out a 20-year journey of developing real legacy – so it has specifically been designed with our youth in mind – providing a place for kids to play and get active, local bands to take to the stage and where youth can meet up with their friends.

Importantly, Birkdale Community Precinct includes significant cultural heritage that will be retained and celebrated, including the restoration of the 1870s Willards Farm and breathing new life into the heritage-listed World War II Radio Receiving Station that sits at the heart of the precinct; delivering an historical precinct that commemorates Redlands' role in the conflict in the Pacific.

Redland City Council is committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental values of the site, which is about two-thirds conservation area. This has and will continue to be achieved through best practice environmental research and stewardship.

Birkdale Community Precinct – designed for and by the Redlands Coast community – will feature seven hubs:

- Cultural Hub – a meeting point and launching pad for all the precinct offers
- Willards Farm (Food) Hub – a celebration of farming heritage with a restored Willards Farmhouse, classic Victorian garden and space for outdoor food markets, restaurant, café and cooking school
- Innovation Hub – an exhibition space showcasing the future of farm methodologies and techniques, agricultural technology and food production
- Entertainment Hub – multiple outdoor spaces for local performers and touring artists as well as BBQs, picnic areas, oversized games and outdoor movies
- Communications Hub – memorial and contemplation space paying homage to war and peace-keeping services, anchored by the former US Army-built World War II Radio Receiving Station
- Recreation, Resilience & Adventure Sports Hub – Redlands Coast's first public lagoon, whitewater centre as well as an adventure playground and running track
- Conservation Hub – 2.8km of walking trails, interactive tours, wilderness experiences and enhanced koala habitat.

Birkdale Community Precinct incorporates the Redland Whitewater Centre, the proposed Canoe Slalom event venue for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, which was confirmed in the Brisbane 2032 Master Plan during the candidature process.

The investment in the Redland Whitewater Centre is an investment in our community. The venue will deliver outdoor recreational activities, opportunities for recreational/beginning and elite paddlers and water safety education programs.

In legacy mode, the venue is being specifically designed as a swiftwater and resilience training facility that will train emergency service agencies from across the world.

Birkdale Community Precinct is Redlands Coast's largest, most diverse and exciting community project that will rival Roma Street Parklands and South Bank in providing a unique destination for local residents and visitors alike.

Redland City Council remains committed and accountable to our community – scientifically understood values of the land and the independent, expert-led community engagement undertaken to inform the diversity of community uses are captured in the Birkdale Community Precinct Master Plan.

Our 'Legacy First' approach

The Redland Whitewater Centre will deliver a local, regional, national and international destination that has the potential to unlock enduring social value as well as economic, cultural and environmental outcomes, leaving a positive legacy for Redland Coast before, during and after the Games for future generations.

Council of Mayors, South East Queensland

Redland City Council is a member council of the Council of Mayors (SEQ). Redland City Council and Mayor Karen Williams have been instrumental in working to secure the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic games, and this was acknowledged in the Senate Inquiry hearing.

With the projected increased population figures and the pressure on housing, Mayors across South-East Queensland saw an opportunity to leverage an Olympic and Paralympic Games to address lagging infrastructure across the region.

What has ensued is an opportunity far greater than the Mayors envisioned. For the Redlands community, the Redland Whitewater Centre and the Birkdale Community Precinct will deliver much-needed community amenity to address a growing population of young people, and the need for outdoor activity centres, complemented by becoming a leader in addressing one of the world's greatest challenges – increasing natural disasters.

Alignment with the New Norm

The Brisbane 20032 Olympic and Paralympic Games Masterplan is focused on achieving optimal legacy outcomes and utilises 84% of existing or temporary infrastructure to sustainably reduce costs.

At the grassroots level, our local sporting clubs punch well above their weight. With incredible growth through the COVID pandemic and increasing numbers of world-class talent coming through local clubs, Redlands Coast is fast becoming the home of future sporting champions.

Investing in new and upgrades to existing sporting infrastructure will promote regional and community development in the Redlands and attract local, national and international events pre and post Games. With access to top-tier facilities, we will attract talent and boost the calibre of local teams, inspire the next generation of Olympians and Paralympians, and promote health and wellbeing by enabling active communities.

With the Redland Whitewater Centre being one of only a few new venues, we have embedded legacy and sustainability principles into our planning framework to ensure continuity of these outcomes for our Redlands Coast community before and beyond 2032.

Importantly, the Redland Whitewater Centre complements the Sydney venue. Australia will have two world-class whitewater facilities come to fruition within the next five years, providing unrivalled opportunities for accessibility to this sport for all ages and abilities including staging of elite competition including future national, Oceania and World Cup events in the lead up to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Both facilities will be national centres of excellence for the sport of Canoe Slalom and will promote and grow the sport.

Partnerships

Consultation and co-design with peak international, national and state sporting organisations as well as a range of legacy stakeholders, has given the design process of the Redland Whitewater Centre and broader Birkdale Community Precinct a 'legacy first' lens. This approach is imperative in ensuring that the planning and investment in the project and associated local infrastructure will serve elite sporting disciplines, beginner to more experienced athletes, the wider community as well as specialist training agencies.

Redland City Council remains in conversation with a range of legacy partners such as Surf Life Saving Australia, Surf Life Saving Queensland, State Emergency Service (SES), Queensland Fire and Emergency Service and Queensland Police Service, while memorandums of understanding have been signed with a range of legacy stakeholders including the International Canoe Federation, Paddle Australia and City of Penrith to share learnings and inform our planning.

Emergency preparedness

Over the past two years, Queensland and its interstate neighbours have battled with the unprecedented effects of climate change. In 2022 alone, 339 people drowned in Australian waterways and beaches.

There is currently a shortage of swiftwater facilities in the Pacific region, resulting in emergency services personnel having to travel interstate or internationally for training. Australian emergency service personnel currently participate in training within live environments (usually in Tasmania) with increased risk.

The Sydney facility is located 900km away, is not operational year-round due to climate, and has limited capacity for types of emergency training uses, while international facilities such as the New York State Emergency Preparedness Centre operated by the United States of America's Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services in Oriskany, New York experiences freezing conditions during the year that limit its operational calendar to facilitate this kind of rescue training.

Beyond potential as a Games venue, the Redland Whitewater Centre presents significant opportunities as a swiftwater rescue training facility for state, national and Asia Pacific emergency services personnel. The state-of-the-art complex will provide an environment for swift water and flood rescue training including emergency boat operations, rescues requiring high-rope operations and submerged vehicle rescues.

Further, adjacent to the main channel there is capacity to include a floodable channel flanked by mock buildings and streetscapes that could simulate conditions for search and rescue training.

The Redland Whitewater Centre will provide opportunity for training in a controlled environment with controllable risks that would make it an attractive facility for the training of volunteers from beginners to experts. It will also offer opportunities for defensive swimming programs for young people and a recreational water facility for the community to enjoy lazy river activities. It will be the only urban flood simulator in the world operational year-round due to Queensland's climate.

Financial viability

Redland City Council understands the sentiment from some in our community to not pursue delivery of Games infrastructure that cannot perform a legacy function, ultimately becoming a financial burden to the local government that inherits the asset.

We share that same intent on behalf of our ratepayers and we would not have pursued – nor would we continue to pursue – realisation of the Redland Whitewater Centre if we were not confident in the long-term financial sustainability of that investment decision, and for the wider economic benefit it will bring to our city.

In 2019 Redland City Council commissioned a detailed pre-feasibility study by Deloitte Access Economics and Whitewater Parks International as part of our investigations and deliberations prior to becoming a Games Partner. That analysis provided Redland City Council with the confidence that a whitewater venue in South East Queensland can and would generate the demand to make it a viable venue.

We note the references within both testimony and the Interim Report to the performance of a number of Olympic whitewater venues and suggest such commentary fails to then also identify and discuss why other venues are viable and successful.

In particular, Augsburg (Munich 1972 Olympic venue) La Seu d'Urgell (Barcelona 1992 Olympic venue) Penrith (Sydney 2000 Olympic Venue) and Lee Valley (London 2012 Olympic venue). These venues and other non-Olympic venues in the USA demonstrate the longevity and viability of whitewater venues under effective governance and operating models.

We accept that not all prior Games venues (across many sports) continue to attract investment, major events or even operate post Games.

Redland City Council has undertaken a critical review of whitewater venues of both successful and unsuccessful venues to understand the design and operating elements that have contributed to performance over time.

Our observation is that integrating a whitewater venue with other adventure experiences, community infrastructure, natural parkland and proximity to a customer base are critical elements for success.

The Redland Whitewater Centre will be part of the larger Birkdale Community Precinct, our city's premium parkland space, delivering an integrated parkland and adventure precinct.

It is this integrated venue, located within 30-45 minutes of much of the Greater Brisbane population and tourist base that is fundamentally different to those venues identified by community groups as having failed post-Games.

Beyond our pre-Games Partner feasibility work, and prior to adopting our whole of precinct master plan in March 2023, Redland City Council commissioned and completed further financial due diligence and demand benchmarking and modelling to again inform ourselves as to the ability for the venue to operate in a financially sustainable manner before Redland City Council proceeded with the adoption of the final Master Plan for the precinct.

Having undertaken extensive engagement and benchmarking of patronage and user groups of comparable venues from around the world, Redland City Council built its financial due diligence around a well-established and defensible expected set of demand figures as well

as a robust future operational cost modelling exercise. This process determined that the venue will deliver positive financial returns for Redland City Council into the future.

However, we recognise our own work was based on our 'base case venue design' and would be subject to change and evolution through the Project Validation Report process, which includes development of an evolved reference design for the venue.

It is important to ensure the Senate Committee understands that the Queensland Government – on behalf of the State, Commonwealth Government and Redland City Council – is undertaking a Project Validation Report process for the Redland Whitewater Centre.

Critically, this process will include a comprehensive business case and financial deliberations as to the long-term operating costs and operating model for the Redland Whitewater Centre based on an evolved reference design for the venue.

The State and Federal Government's independent reviews will make final determinations in regards the financial implications for Redland City Council as well as other councils with Games venues. Commentary and assumptions around the long-term financial viability of the venue should be considered pre-emptive until the Project Validation Report process is completed.

Engaging with our community

Redland City Council has formally engaged with our community on two separate occasions in 2021 and 2022 in regards the Birkdale Community Precinct.

In both engagement exercises Redland City Council facilitated five-week intensive community engagements using a broad range of mediums, which clearly informed what should be part of an integrated community precinct and ultimately delivered as part of the Birkdale Community Precinct.

There was strong community support for an integrated Redland whitewater venue as part of the mix of hubs within the Birkdale Community Precinct.

On average, three out of four respondents to the online survey agreed or strongly agreed with what the draft Birkdale Community Precinct Master Plan proposed. The results also showed a clear indication that the precinct will be visited frequently by residents and visitors to Redlands Coast.

The results of both engagement exercises were included in independently prepared summary reports adopted by Redland City Council at respective Redland City Council meetings in May 2021 (Appendix 4) and August 2022 (Appendix 5).

Creating social value

Birkdale Community Precinct is a significant investment in community infrastructure and has the potential to deliver outcomes that go beyond the boundaries of the precinct for generations to come.

Investment in community infrastructure has obvious financial and economic impacts and benefits including operational costs, benefits to the local economy, the health and wellbeing of the community, stewardship and appreciation of the natural environment, and the preservation and celebration of our living First Nations culture.

At the heart of the precinct is the creation of social value for the Redlands Coast community. Redland City Council commissioned an in-depth social values study to guide master planning (Appendix 6).

Underpinning the master planning for the precinct are three core social value concepts that are inherent in all aspects of the Birkdale Community Precinct Master Plan:

- 1) Birkdale Community Precinct is one integrated precinct with multiple and varying types of uses, activities and experiences proposed. The precinct must be planned, delivered and managed as one location with a space for everyone.
- 2) The environmental and social stewardship of Birkdale Community Precinct leaves a positive legacy for future generations. Birkdale Community Precinct provides its own identity with a place that offers spaces for all ages and abilities. The precinct will benefit by having a permanent resilience training centre and an Olympic venue, but the legacy it creates is based on all of its components.
- 3) The views of the Redlands Coast community have been embedded throughout the precinct and Hubs. The community has continued to be involved in the shaping of Birkdale Community Precinct.

Protecting the environment – our Naturally Wonderful Redlands Coast

Redland City Council takes its environmental responsibilities seriously, and we have a strong history of environmental stewardship, with 63% of the 62-hectare Birkdale Community Precinct site to remain as conservation land. The remaining 37% is shared amongst six hubs as part of the broader precinct, including the Redland Whitewater Centre.

The Birkdale Community Precinct is a 62-hectare site that features high conservation values that will be protected and enhanced. Within the site, 23 hectares is available for community uses as previously cleared agricultural land. Of that cleared land, about five (5) hectares of the precinct area is allocated to the Recreation, Resilience and Adventure Sports Hub, which includes the Redland Whitewater Centre.

Location of the Redland Whitewater Centre

Critically, we feel it worth visually demonstrating via aerial drone photography, that the site of the parkland is well cleared and has been in this form since it was purchased from the Commonwealth Government.

Since purchasing the site, Redland City Council has undertaken maintenance and weed and non-endemic species management tasks, however, no native vegetation has been removed. The portions of the site to be used for the venue and parkland are far from being natural state habitat.



Conservation and biodiversity values

Environmental assessments conclude the design of the Birkdale Community Precinct avoids the majority of habitat features within the non-conservation zone.

Redland City Council – in the design process for the Birkdale Community Precinct Master Plan – will enhance the conservation and biodiversity values and features on the land, particularly for koalas.

In summary this is represented by commitments including:

- The avoidance of tree removal by maintaining and restoring habitat, maintaining and enhancing fauna connectivity, and support and enhancement of existing fauna populations within and adjacent to the Birkdale Community Precinct.
- Individual and patches of locally important koala habitat are being retained in the community facility (development) footprint.
- Substantial revegetation will be occurring on the edges of the designated conservation area within the development footprint, prioritising locally important koala trees to increase habitat and food trees for koalas.
- Revegetation of more than two (2) hectares of the development footprint to be allocated to the conservation area.
- Design provision for wildlife connections through the development footprint and fauna sensitive fencing as well as precinct management actions such as 30km/h vehicle speed limits and closure periods at night.
- A robust koala management plan including electronic monitoring, health checks and smart innovations in partnerships with multiple universities such as Australian National University, University of the Sunshine Coast and Griffith University.

Based on a combination of Redland City Council's strong existing city-wide conservation programs and detailed understanding of the inherent environmental values and opportunities that exist on the Birkdale Community Precinct, we have been able to develop a master plan that will be best practice in achieving those matters considered paramount for biodiversity.

In relation to koala management, Redland City Council's Koala Conservation Plan 2022-2027 (Appendix 7) includes initiatives relevant to the precinct such as population monitoring, disease management and community education.

Redland City Council's planning and actions for conservation on the Birkdale Community Precinct sets a blueprint for how to deliver outcomes expected under the up-listing of koalas to endangered, which has significant associated benefits for the spectrum of fauna and flora associated with the land.

Patches of koala habitat and trees will be retained in the development footprint to support movement and foraging, with enhancement of green infrastructure to promote wildlife movement across the site. The broader precinct will include a range of community conservation and education opportunities including Redland City Council's innovative environmental and koala protection programs and research activities.

Various scientific environmental reports Redland City Council has commissioned include:

- Birkdale Community Precinct Local Government Infrastructure Designation Environmental Assessment Report (Appendix 8)

- Birkdale Community Precinct Local Government Infrastructure Designation Environmental Assessment Report - Ecology Assessment Report prepared by Raptor Consulting (Appendix 9)
- Ecological Assessment Report Birkdale Land Survey prepared for Redland City Council 18 June 2020 (Appendix 10)
- Land in Birkdale, Capalaba, Queensland Environmental Investigation June 2018 (Appendix 11)
- Site Environmental Report (Appendix 12).

Protecting our heritage and history

The Birkdale Community Precinct will honour and celebrate our First Nations culture and European history, with dedicated spaces for reflection and engagement with historical fixtures of Redlands Coast.

The land on which the Birkdale Community Precinct exists holds significant heritage attributes for Aboriginal (Indigenous) and historic (European) values.

Birkdale Community Precinct Master Plan embraces these heritage values as a cornerstone of the overall concept, ensuring a careful balance exists between the important elements from the past, while allowing for change for the future.

The Quandamooka People, the Traditional Owners of much of Redlands Coast, will have an important role in delivering the Birkdale Community Precinct.

The Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation (QYAC) undertook a Part 6 Study which identified sensitive areas and values, which has been utilised to understand indigenous cultural heritage during the development of the Birkdale Community Precinct Master Plan.

With rich Indigenous history existing on the site, the Birkdale Community Precinct also contains two heritage places entered in the Queensland Heritage Register (QHR) and Redlands Local Heritage Register (Schedule):

- **Willards Farm:** Also known as 'The Pines', this property holds historic heritage significance, as one of the oldest surviving farms and residences within Redlands Coast. Willards Farm demonstrates a rare and intact example of early phase rural settlement and land-use within the Capalaba area, illustrating the history, growth, and evolution of the surrounding region. Willards Homestead and its dairy outbuildings are currently undergoing a multi-million-dollar restoration program to return them to their former glory.
- The former US Army-built World War II Radio Receiving Station is of historical importance for its role in the US-Australian collaboration in the South West Pacific Area radio communications from 1942, servicing General Douglas MacArthur's office in Brisbane and survives as the only intact example of a US Army receiving station of this type in Australia.

Both Willards Farm and the former US Army Radio Receiving Station are no longer in use for the purpose in which they are historically significant. In such circumstances, an approach which considers the conservation of key elements of the place is generally coupled with the 'adaptive re-use' of these places, so they live on for future generations.

To facilitate this function, Redland City Council engaged Australian Heritage Specialists (AHS) to undertake detailed study of these places, including the development of a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for each place. These documents, along with the QYAC Part 6 Study, have directly informed the Birkdale Community Precinct Master Plan and act as the guiding document for managing heritage values into the future.

Redland City Council has entered into a formal heritage agreement with the Queensland Heritage Council and State Department of Environment and Science (Heritage Branch) in regard to how these state significant heritage places are managed. This heritage agreement acknowledges that the Birkdale Community Precinct Master Plan has put in place

appropriate measures to continue to protect and celebrate these important State heritage places.

This is indicative of Redland City Council's deep understanding of the site and its values and how these values form the foundation of Birkdale Community Precinct Master Plan, including opportunities for facilities such as the Redland Whitewater Centre.

Opportunities for economic and community uplift

Birkdale Community Precinct and the Redland Whitewater Centre will deliver long lasting economic and community uplift to the Redlands community and broader South East Queensland.

Tourism

We recognise that tourism on Redlands Coast is everyone's business, that visitors travel for enriching experiences, that travel across the city and region should be seamless and convenient, and that sustainability and community values must sit at the heart of the city's brand.

Over the past five years, Redlands Coast has had the strongest growth rate of international visitors of any local government area in the Brisbane region. The industry employs more than 2607 people, which equates to 5.4 per cent of the city's employment; generates more than 1.2 million visitors annually and contributes \$234 million to our economy.

Home to 335km of coastline and an archipelago of islands, Redlands Coast is the jewel of South of East Queensland. We boast exceptional island and hinterland experiences, Quandamooka culture, unique stories, natural encounters and eco-sustainable experiences, adventure possibilities and a friendly, relaxed lifestyle.

Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors per year, as does the award-winning Sirromet Winery, who host world-class entertainers and large-scale events.

Our strong local business community is the lifeblood of our city, and we are excited about the potential for growth in emerging industries and development of our local businesses and supply chains.

With a focus on retaining our human capital nurtured in the award-winning and diverse schools of Redlands Coast, Redland City Council is committed to realising opportunities for young people to engage in local employment.

Birkdale Community Precinct, incorporating the Redland Whitewater Centre, will add to the diversity of visitor experiences on Redlands Coast and create education, training, and employment opportunities for our community.

Transport

An integrated transport strategy is essential to maximise the benefits of hosting the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and the large-scale events and attractions that will be part of Games legacy.

Investment in transport infrastructure is imperative to ensuring Brisbane 2032 legacy opportunities are realised. This includes upgrading existing infrastructure and temporary solutions to ensure the efficient and safe movement of participants, visitors and residents while continuing to support our community long after the Games have concluded.

As singular projects, the Birkdale Community Precinct and the Capalaba Town Centre Revitalisation will be significant placemaking centres. Collectively, these precincts become important landmarks that create intrinsic links to existing sport infrastructure networks from Belmont Shooting Range, the Sleeman Centre (Chandler Indoor Sports Centre, Anna Meares Velodrome and Brisbane Aquatics Centre) as well as strengthens the opportunities for connectivity of sport, recreation and tourism on the east coast.

With the potential for the Brisbane Metro network to be extended to Capalaba, Redland City Council is committed to ensuring investment in infrastructure enables this experience, reduces on-road transport, and provides our community with improved connectivity to South East Queensland into the future.

Redland City Council has long advocated for the duplication of the train line to Cleveland, which will drive economic growth and regional opportunities for our community.

Accommodation

We have a proven track record in hosting elite athletic teams. In the lead up to the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games (GC2018) for pre-games training and during the GC2018 Games period, the Team England cycling and shootings teams based themselves locally at the Alexandra Hills Hotel Suites and Conference Centre.

With the culmination of some very exciting temporary accommodation projects in the pipeline, due for completion prior to the Games, the Redlands Coast is primed to become a global host as the world's eyes turn towards Brisbane.

Revitalisation of Capalaba Town Centre

A revitalised Capalaba – the gateway between Redlands Coast and South East Queensland – will include short-stay accommodation options to cater for the growing number of visitors to Redlands Coast.

The \$250 million project will see the principal activity centre (Appendix 13) to become the commercial, entertainment, cultural and civic heart of Capalaba. It will incorporate exemplar public spaces including community assets such as a new library, customer service centre, arts centre and community hall. This will be complemented with a renewed public realm that is activated and innovative, using best practice architecture and sub-tropical design.

Offering a diverse mix of dining, retail and entertainment uses to create a day/night economy, it will deliver improved pedestrian and vehicular connectivity in the urban heart.

The revitalised Town Centre will also include short-stay accommodation options, complementing the increased number of visitors to Redlands Coast before, during and after the Games.

Toondah Harbour

Toondah Harbour presents a rare opportunity to create a new waterfront destination that will help transform the Redlands Coast as a key tourism destination within South East Queensland.

'Unlocking' the opportunity at Toondah Harbour (Appendix 14) will enable Cleveland City Centre to combine with the twin harbours of Raby Bay and Toondah Harbour, commencing a transformation from a traditional retail-based CBD into a more diversified and sustainable coastal lifestyle, commercial, tourism, hospitality and entertainment hub within the broader Redlands Coast.

The Project will feature a 150 to 180-room 4-to-5 star hotel as a central feature to the new Toondah Harbour Coastal Village servicing business and leisure tourists, seeking to enjoy the unique natural attractions of Redlands Coast including the Birkdale Community Precinct, Minjerribah, and the Southern Moreton Bay and Islands.

Catalyst for private investment

Critically, a whitewater venue in the city would generate thousands of accommodation nights which are not currently being generated, and equally, not capable of being accommodated due to a lack of accommodation opportunities in the city.

A venue with a consistent flow of accommodation demand will be the catalyst for private investment in such accommodation, which will in turn unlock additional indirect tourism and economic benefit for the city. The whitewater venue is a key foundation to the effect occurring.

Detailed information sharing with Penrith City Council under our memorandum of understanding, and additionally with the local Western Sydney Chamber of Commerce, has revealed the significant economic benefit the city receives particularly with large teams base themselves at the venue for several months, over and above tourism accommodation benefits.

Most recently in 2023 autumn period, ahead of the European summer paddle season, two international teams comprising 15-to-20 members were based at Penrith for several weeks, resulting in hundreds of accommodation nights and expenditure in the local economy as a direct result of the venue. This will occur in the Redlands and, while not of direct benefit to Redland City Council, it will generate significant economic opportunity for our businesses to capitalise upon.

Sharing our evidence base

There are more than 20 reports and technical studies that have been completed for the Birkdale Community Precinct site and, of these, the vast majority have been focused on the site's environmental values and demonstrate that the proposed parkland and whitewater venue can occur without a detrimental impact to the existing site values.

These documents can be found here on Council's Your Say Birkdale Community Precinct Project site (Appendix 15):

<https://yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au/imagine/widgets/324331/documents>.

Our request

We encourage the Senate Committee to cite the plans, independent reports and studies – including those provide in the Appendices – that Redland City Council has invested in to ensure that Redland Whitewater Centre and Birkdale Community Precinct leave a lasting legacy for our community.

Appendices

1. Table 1 – Redland City Council response to submissions
2. Birkdale Community Precinct Master Plan
(<https://yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au/65591/widgets/324331/documents/253897>)
3. Birkdale Community Precinct Master Plan Foundation Report
(<https://yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au/65591/widgets/324331/documents/253898>)
4. Birkdale Community Precinct Community Engagement Summary Report Prepared for Redland City Council May 2021
(<https://yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au/65591/widgets/324331/documents/204938>)
5. Draft Birkdale Community Precinct Master Plan Community Engagement Summary Report Prepared for Redland City Council July 2022
(<https://yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au/65591/widgets/324331/documents/242198>)
6. Beyond the Boundary Unlocking the enduring social value of the Birkdale Community Precinct April 2022 (<https://yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au/65591/widgets/324331/documents/231423>)
7. Redlands Coast Koala Conservation Plan 2022-2027
(https://www.redland.qld.gov.au/download/downloads/id/4743/redlands_coast_koala_conservation_plan_2022-2027.pdf)
8. Birkdale Community Precinct Local Government Infrastructure Designation Environmental Assessment Report
(<https://yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au/65591/widgets/324331/documents/259898>)
9. Birkdale Community Precinct Local Government Infrastructure Designation Environmental Assessment Report - Ecology Assessment Report prepared by Raptor Consulting
(<https://yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au/65591/widgets/324331/documents/259908>)
10. Ecological Assessment Report Birkdale Land Survey prepared for Redland City Council 18 June 2020
(<https://yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au/65591/widgets/324331/documents/192989>)
11. Land in Birkdale, Capalaba, Queensland Environmental Investigation June 2018
(<https://yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au/65591/widgets/324331/documents/193001>)
12. Site Environmental Report
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13. Capalaba Town Centre Revitalisation Project webpage – Redland City Council website
(https://www.redland.qld.gov.au/info/20186/redland_investment_corporation/924/capalaba_town_centre_revitalisation_project)
14. Toondah Harbour website
(<https://www.toondah.com.au/>)
15. Your Say Birkdale Community Precinct Project site
(<https://yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au/imagine/widgets/324331/documents>)

16. Redland City Council General Meeting of 13 September 2023 – report 14.2
(http://redland.infocouncil.biz/Open/2023/09/CO_20230913_MIN_2334_AT_WEB.htm)
17. Our Future Redlands – A Corporate Plan to 2026 and Beyond
(https://www.redland.qld.gov.au/download/downloads/id/3852/our_future_redlands_-_a_corporate_plan_to_2026_and_beyond.pdf)
18. Redland City Council media release - Go East! Study to investigate taking Brisbane Metro to Capalaba - November 11, 2022
(<https://news.redland.qld.gov.au/2022/11/go-east-study-to-investigate-taking-brisbane-metro-to-capalaba/>)
19. Redland City Council Koala Conservation web page
(https://www.redland.qld.gov.au/info/20301/koala_conservation)
20. Redland City Council Your Say Birkdale Community Precinct Project website
(<https://yoursay.redland.qld.gov.au/imagine>)
21. Redland Coast Today – News from Redland City Council website
(<https://www.redlandscoasttoday.com.au/>)
22. Letter of Support – Surf Life Saving Australia
23. Letter of Support – Redlands Coast Legacy Working Group Member John Simpson
24. Letter of Support – Redlands Coast Legacy Working Group Member Dr Caroline Riot

