



Central Coast Stadium – Rezoning and Reclassification

CONSULTATION REPORT

Central Coast Council

14 September 2021

1 Executive Summary

The aim of the engagement for the rezoning and reclassification of Central Coast Stadium was to provide an opportunity for ratepayers and residents to have their say on the proposal. The engagement included:

- an information package available on Your Voice Our Coast (inform)
- an online form for the community to provide feedback on the proposal (consult).

This consultation report presents the information gathered during the engagement period, in particular:

- the feedback received via the form, which was conducted from 30 April to 21 May 2021
- how the community was made aware of the proposed rezoning and reclassification
- the feedback Council received.

Every piece of self-initiated written feedback (including feedback form submissions, emails and letters), has been read and recorded by Council staff. The results from the submission form and written feedback assists in providing the community and Council with a clear understanding of the issues and concerns that the community need addressed, level of understanding on the purpose of the reclassification and rezoning and the broader sentiment of and impacts to our community in relation to the proposal.

The total number of responses received via the online form was 104. Self-initiated written feedback sent to Council up to 21 May 2021 totalled three emails and letters. Council also received a petition with 948 signatures.

Key findings from consultation

The key findings from the community's submissions included:

- consideration of user groups who may be affected
- stadium management rights could be provided to another party
- support for the rezoning and reclassification process to stimulate the Stadium
- request for more music concerts being held at the Stadium.

Next steps

Comments received during the community consultation process for the rezoning and reclassification of Central Coast Stadium will be used to inform the recommendations moving forward. A report detailing these recommendations as well as a copy of this consultation report will be presented to Council.

The community will be kept up to date as the project progresses.

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2 Introduction

2.1 Public exhibition of the Draft Central Coast Stadium Strategy

Central Coast Stadium is a unique location for sporting, entertainment and community events, overlooking the Brisbane Water. It is a 20,000 all-seated stadium, ideal for a regional population, and has been well-maintained over its history. With the 20-year anniversary of the Stadium in 2020, Council developed a business strategy for the Stadium to ensure it remains a highly valued community asset, delivering significant economic benefits to the region and acting as a focal point for community pride and sense of place within the Central Coast.

The Central Coast Stadium Strategy (Strategy) – which provides Council with a strategic framework to improve the Stadium as the major sporting and entertainment facility in our region and harness commercial opportunities for the benefit of the community – was developed following community consultation.

At Council's meeting on 10 August 2020, Council endorsed the draft Stadium Strategy for the purposes of public exhibition. The draft strategy outlined the objectives and options for the ongoing management of the Stadium, as well as a potential naming rights sponsor – and was placed on public exhibition between 1 September and 28 September 2020.

Council adopted the Central Coast Stadium Strategy on 23 March 2021.

Since the adoption of the Strategy, Council has focused on the delivery of the actions identified within the implementation plan. One of the strategic priorities identified in the plan is Strategic Priority 3 'Precinct', which focuses on:

- enhancing how the Stadium and its patrons engage with the broader precinct
- increasing patron stay and spending.

2.2 Rezoning and Reclassification of Central Coast Stadium

A key component in achieving the goals of Strategic Priority 3 'Precinct', is to develop a precinct masterplan. In order to develop the scope for the masterplan, which will include connectivity to transport links, CBD and local businesses, engagement with Brisbane waters and Leagues Parks, parking and non-event day activation, Council is seeking to have the Stadium lands appropriately rezoned and subsequently reclassified. The current RE1 zoning and sportsground classification are a major roadblock for the Stadium's potential as it limits the potential for the Stadium's further development.

Rezoning and reclassification of the Stadium site will allow complementary uses at the Stadium site and allow greater flexibility in any adopted Masterplan design.

Between 30 April and 21 May 2021, Council sought community feedback on a potential rezoning and reclassification of Central Coast Stadium.

3 Engagement Approach

3.1 Purpose of Engagement

The purpose engagement was to:

- inform the community of Council's continued commitment to implementing the actions identified in its strategic documents
- seek feedback on the proposed rezoning and reclassification of Central Coast Stadium
- understand community sentiment about the proposal, allow ideas to be submitted on the future of the Stadium and broader sentiment about the long-term commitment to the Central Coast Stadium
- work with stakeholders and the community to identify issues which may affect the proposal.

3.2 Our engagement framework

Consultation has been designed in accordance with Central Coast Council's Engagement Framework. This framework is available to view at <https://www.yourvoiceourcoast.com/Central-Coast-CouncilEngagement-Framework>

3.3 How we consulted

Consultation methods

Information package	All residents and stakeholders could view the information package presented on Your Voice Our Coast which provided all of the information relating to Central Coast Stadium and the rezoning and reclassification proposal. A copy of the content can be found in Appendix A
Written feedback	All residents and stakeholders could provide written feedback via email, the online submission form on yourvoiceourcoast.com , or via post. A copy of the feedback form can be found in Appendix B

Promotion of activities

We carried out promotion of the consultation to ensure the community and stakeholders were aware of the opportunity to participate.

Media Releases	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 May 2021 – Central Coast Stadium options – open for public comment• A copy of the media releases can be found in Appendix C
Coast Connect article	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 12 May 2021 – New era for Central Coast Stadium• A copy of the article can be found in Appendix F
Your Voice – Our Coast website	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project page launched on 30 April 2021 under <i>Central Coast Stadium Strategy</i>• www.yourvoiceourcoast.com/central-coast-stadium 71 visits during consultation period• A copy of the online content can be found in Appendix A
Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 11 May 2021 – Have your say!• 6,047 users reached, 22 engagements and 15 link clicks• Copies of the posts can be found in Appendix D

4 What we heard

Council sought feedback from the community between 30 April and 21 May 2021. **104** online submissions were received during this time. These were provided as online submissions through yourvoiceourcoast.com.

4.1 Method 1: Online submission form

On 30 April 2021 an online survey was launched to understand community sentiment on the proposed rezoning and reclassification of Central Coast Stadium. Council received **104** responses via the online submission form.

A note about sampling bias: The online submission form was 'opt-in', which means participants proactively sought to provide feedback as opposed to a sample or respondents being selected to more accurately reflect and represent the population makeup of the Central Coast community.

4.2 Method 2: Petition

On 21 May 2021 Council were presented with a petition signed by 948 people. The statement of subject matter and action requested on the petition was:

"Gosford City Bowling Club (Lot 1 DP101876), currently used by the members of Gosford City Bowling Club and All Ability Bowls and numerous others, should remain under its current zoning of community sportsground (RE1) and not be reclassified as operational."

4.3 Sample of comments from consultation

Below is a sample of comments respondents provided via the online submission form.

Gosford Bowling Club

"I wish to submit my strong objection to the land on which the Gosford Bowling Club sits at the northern end of the Stadium to be rezoned from sports ground to commercial. The Club provides the only active outdoor sport left in the Gosford CBD. Other than the bowlers 6 days a week, it is used for sport by Gosford High School, ET High School, disabled bowlers from Vision Australia, Life Without Barriers, Fairhaven Services and 60 businesses for social barefoot bowls. It is run at NO cost to Council and the Leagues Club pays land rates to Council."

Potential Concert Venue

"I have said for years that we should be utilising that space for live music. The amount of revenue that we would get from having large concerts for local and international (when its allowed) artists would be huge. This was proven when the Lionel Ritchie concert was there. Huge night for Gosford, with accommodation booked out and all local venues packed with patrons. It would be so great to

be able to see international musicians without having to travel to the Hunter or to Sydney. The site is completely wasted being used purely for football and soccer."

"I would like to see the stadium used for more diverse events such as music concerts or entertainment shows. It is a huge space and it would be great to have live concerts and shows in Gosford for the residents of Gosford instead of always having to travel to Sydney to see an event. To have famous performers come to the coast will bring business to the area. The stadium sits there underutilised most of the year while the residents travel to Sydney or Newcastle to attend concerts and shows. Surely a wonderful suitable stage could be built to accommodate this activity. It's great to see sports there too but they only happen a few times a year. This is a wonderful venue and asset to the coast let's use it and everyone enjoy it."

Supportive of the Rezoning

Central Coast Mariners (CCM) are the major tenant utilising the CC Stadium. As the major tenant, CCM needs additional business opportunities to leverage off game day crowds and general exposure of the Stadium. This leverage is important to create a financially sustainable football business. In order to facilitate these opportunities, the Stadium precinct needs a more flexible (Business) zoning. CCM are fully supportive of Council's leadership in initiating this rezone proposal. Without this rezone decision, CCM will struggle to maintain an A League presence on the Central Coast.

4.4 Key findings from consultation

The key findings from the community's submissions included:

- consideration of user groups who may be affected;
- stadium management rights could be provided to another party;
- support for the rezoning and reclassification process to stimulate the Stadium
- request for more music concerts being held at the Stadium.

A full list of themes raised throughout consultation can be found in **Section 5**. Council's response to these themes can also be found in this section.

5 Council's response

Due to the large volume and variety of content contained within community feedback, we have broken the responses up per theme.

Not every issue or theme was able to be included and responded to in the following tables, however all feedback has been read and will be considered by the project team.

Comment category	Key points raised	Council's response
Sell the Stadium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggestions to sell the Stadium to the Mariners 	Council is not considering selling the Stadium to the Mariners or any other party.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggestions to lease the Stadium to the Mariners 	Council will be issuing an Expression of Interest to the open market to understand the interest for the Stadium management rights.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions on where the funds of any sale or lease of the Stadium would be directed 	Council is not currently considering selling the Stadium.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supportive of Council's Rezoning and Reclassification initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for allowing greater community access and use of the Stadium 	Noted.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggestion to incorporate the development of food and 	Council would like to activate the Stadium for complementary uses and for greater community participation.

	beverage outlets into the development of the Masterplan	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive of the proposal to enhance the use of the space 	Noted.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestions for more uses other than sporting codes 	Council will be investigating complementary uses.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouragement for the Stadium potentially reaching its potential 	Noted.
Unsupportive of Council's Rezoning and Reclassification initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about the proposal only being considered because of Council's financial situation 	Council's rezoning and reclassification is not part of the asset sale nor is a sale of the asset being currently considered.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns that this proposal would lead to a loss of greenspace (which is limited within the Gosford CBD) 	Any future development of the site would need to comply with strict planning requirements to be approved.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns that this proposal would lead to management rights being given to a third party which will not have the community's best interest in mind 	Council acknowledges these concerns and the management Expression of Interest will have a returnable schedule to understand the benefits to the Stadium and broader community.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns that the approval of this proposal will lead to the Stadium being included in the asset sales program currently underway 	The rezoning and reclassification is not part of the asset sales program.
Would like to see music concerts held at the Stadium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggestions to use the Stadium for more diverse events such as music concerts and entertainment shows 	Noted.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggestion to cover the Stadium to allow for more concert use 	This could be considered in the future.
Move the Stadium to another location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggestions that the current location is not appropriate 	Council is not considering a relocation of the Stadium.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggestions that the sports stadium should be moved elsewhere so that the current location could become an entertainment centre 	Council is not considering a relocation of the Stadium.
Leave the Bowling Club in situ (don't rezone this particular lot)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggestions to rezone and reclassify the stadium but to leave the Gosford Bowling Club as is 	Council is not currently considering selling the bowling club site.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestions to leave the bowling club as is, as it is more utilised than the Stadium as is 	Council is not currently considering selling the bowling club site.
Don't spend any more money on the Stadium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about Council spending money on the Stadium in its current financial situation 	Noted.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestion that the redevelopment of the Stadium should be of low priority given Council's current financial situation 	Noted. Part of the Management Rights Expression of Interest is to reduce Council overheads.
Put any proposal on hold until Council's financial position improves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestions to place this proposal on hold until Council's financial position improves 	Rezoning and reclassification of the land would have very little financial burden on Council.
Support for alternative uses at the Stadium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestions to diversify the events currently hosted at the Stadium (travel shows, house and garden shows, markets etc.) 	Noted.
Masterplan the site prior to determining if rezone and reclassification is required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestion to develop a masterplan for the site prior to rezoning and reclassifying the site to ensure it is required 	If a masterplan for the site is developed it would be based on its conditions at the time of development (currently RE1 zoning and Community classification). If the current conditions are kept it would restrict the potential opportunities to be included in the Masterplan process.

Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concerns about investment in sport	Noted.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suggestions to use nature-based solutions when considering any works at the Stadium and its surrounds	Noted.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concerns about the commercialisation of Graham Park and potential loss of active and passive recreation	Noted.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suggestions to not impede the views to Brisbane Waters	Noted.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concerns about the reclassification of Crown Land	Council notes the Stadium is not on Crown Land.

6 Next steps

Council will use the feedback received to inform the recommendations put forward in a report to Council.

The community will be kept up to date as this project progresses.

7 Appendices

7.1 Appendix A – Your Voice Our Coast project page

Rezoning and Reclassification

This project is currently open for consultation.

Council is focused in developing a refreshed plan for the Stadium to ensure it meets the community's and hirer's needs for major event facilities, supports the activation of the Stadium precinct, on a sound financial basis for Council.

Strategic Priorities found within the draft Strategy includes Strategic Priority 3 'Precinct', which focuses on:

- Enhancing how the Stadium and its patrons engage with the broader precinct;
- Increased patron stay and spending.

Key to achieving the goals of Strategic Priority 3 'Precinct',

is to develop a precinct masterplan. It is expected the adopted Masterplan will lead to greater community, economic and financial impacts of events held at the Stadium, to both the Stadium and surrounding businesses.

It is intended that Council will develop the scope of the masterplan, including considerations (at a minimum) of:

- Connectivity to transport links, CBD and local businesses;
- Engagement with Brisbane Waters and Leagues Parks;
- Parking;
- Non- event day activation.



Useful Links

[🔗 Asset Sales Program – Tranche 3](#)

[🔗 Council Reports](#)

[🔗 Submit your ideas, suggestions and feedback](#)

[🔗 News](#)

Who's listening

Name: Ben Brown

Email: property@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au

The existing RE1 zoning is a major hindrance to the stadium's potential as it limits the potential for the stadium's further development. Furthermore, the current land classification of Community 'Sportsground' requires modifications to allow additional uses, such as retail activation along Dane Drive. These modifications can be a prolonged process modifying the existing Plan of Management.

Rezoning and reclassification of the Stadium site will allow complementary uses at the Stadium site and allow greater flexibility in any adopted Masterplan design.

How can I get involved?

You are invited to submit your ideas, suggestions and feedback via the [online form](#).

Feedback will be accepted until **5pm on Friday 21 May 2021**.

Council will receive a further report in consideration of all feedback received during the consultation period.

Something you need to know: Under the Government Information (Public Access) Act, 2009 (GIPA ACT), members of the public can seek access to the submissions and Council cannot give assurance that the document will remain confidential.

[Submit Feedback!](#)

You may also be interested in



Asset Sales Program – Tranche 3

[\[READ MORE\]](#)



Draft Operational Plan 2021-22

[\[READ MORE\]](#)



Securing your future with a rate rise

[\[READ MORE\]](#)

7.2 Appendix B – Online feedback form



Feedback form: Central Coast Stadium (Rezoning and Reclassification)

* 1. Name:

* 2. Email:

* 3. Suburb:

* 4. Daytime telephone number:

5. Please let us know about any ideas or suggestions that should be considered for Central Coast Stadium:

Done

7.3 Appendix C – Media release

Central Coast Stadium options – open for public comment

Tuesday, 4 May 2021

Council is seeking community feedback about the next steps towards developing a Central Coast Stadium Masterplan.

This includes looking at the rezoning options for the Stadium and its current land classification of Community 'Sportsground.' These are being reviewed to help facilitate Council's refreshed plan for the Stadium to ensure it continues to meet community's and hirer's needs, and supports the local economy, on a sound financial basis for Council.

Council Administrator, Dick Persson AM said having greater flexibility in any adopted Masterplan design was important if Council was serious about having a Stadium Precinct and providing better connectivity to the city centre and waterfront.

"We need to ensure that Central Coast Stadium reaches its potential – this is an outstanding facility located in an exceptional spot – directly adjacent to the beautiful Brisbane Water and within a short walk to the Gosford CBD."

"Council is currently constrained in how it can improve the site and allow complementary uses such as new retail activity," Mr Persson said.

Submissions can be provided until 5pm 21 May 2021. Go to yourvoiceourcoast.com for more information.

The Central Coast Stadium Masterplan is scheduled for completion by December 2021.

7.4 Appendix D – social media



Central Coast Council ✓

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We want to hear from you! The Your Voice Our Coast online consultation hub is making it easy for the community to provide feedback on projects that interest them 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Projects open now for feedback include:

- 🗨️ Kariong Oval Recreational Area (until 17 May)
- 🗨️ Central Coast Stadium rezoning and reclassification (until 21 May)
- 🗨️ Asset Sales Program – Tranche 3 (until 28 May)
- 🗨️ Draft Operational Plan 2021-22 and Fees and Charges (until 26 May)
- 🗨️ Council Affordable Housing Land Proposal (until 26 May)
- 🗨️ Coastal Management Plans (until 15 June)
- o Tuggerah Lakes
- o Lake Macquarie
- o Open Coast
- o Hawkesbury-Nepean River system including Brisbane Water
- 🗨️ Tuggerah Lakes foreshore restoration works (until 2022)

Please continue to share your thoughts, ideas and opinions with us – Have Your Say at <https://hubs.la/H0N1zC80>



7.5 Appendix F – Coast Connect



Coast Connect

12 May 2021



New era for Central Coast Stadium

As part of the Central Coast Stadium Strategy, we are developing a refreshed masterplan for the Stadium to ensure it reaches its full potential as a major event facility and sporting precinct.

Before we can do this, we must look at rezoning the land and reclassifying it from Community 'Sportsground' so there is greater flexibility in how we can improve the site and allow complementary uses such as new retail activity.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for Central Coast Stadium, we'd like to hear them.

[Share your ideas](#)