



LEEMING SPARTAN CRICKET CLUB (INC.)

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John Connell Reserve, 11 Dimond Court, Leeming, WA 6149

DEPUTATION TO CITY OF MELVILLE

July 2026 Agenda Briefing Forum

Item M26/93 Special Meeting of Electors – 23 June 2026 Motion Carried

Good evening, Mayor and Councillors,

Thank you very much for the opportunity to present a deputation in relation to our successful motion at the recent Special Electors Meeting on the much-needed John Connell Reserve upgrade.

I'd also like to sincerely thank the City and all Councillors for the considerable amount of work that has gone into this project over many years. We genuinely appreciate the complexity of delivering a project of this scale and recognise the considerable effort that has already been invested.

The Leeming Spartan Cricket Club is not here tonight to ask Council to revisit the merits of the project itself. That question has already been considered on numerous occasions by Council over the years, and most recently by the electors of the City of Melville.

After hearing the arguments, electors emphatically rejected the three motions seeking to pause, revisit or remove funding from the project and instead carried our motion requesting that the City bring forward the commencement of the clearing works and adopt a staged approach to delivery.

Having carefully considered the officer recommendation, we respectfully believe there remains a practical opportunity to stage the project in a way that allows the time-critical works to proceed without compromising the remainder of the development. In our view, those two objectives are not mutually exclusive.

The Club is not asking Council to reduce the scope of the project or bypass any statutory approvals, procurement requirements or environmental obligations. We fully support those processes.

What we are asking is that the sequence of delivery be reconsidered, as supported by electors at the Special Meeting.

As you know, the most immediately critical component of this project is the clearing permit.

By contrast, the floodlighting, revised sporting layouts and other improvements are not constrained by the same immediate timeframes.

There is therefore a logical opportunity to focus first on the components that are genuinely time-sensitive, while delivering the remaining elements in accordance with the broader program.

Importantly, this approach would not alter the current operation of John Connell Reserve. Soccer would continue using the existing pitches, cricket would continue using the existing wicket and field alignments, and the current floodlighting would remain in place until a later stage.

In practical terms, there would be virtually no disruption while the clearing and field extension works were completed.

The officer report notes that detailed design, approvals and procurement are expected to take at least twelve months before clearing can commence.

Our concern is that, under these indicative timelines, there appears to be very little margin before the existing clearing permit timeframe expires, and we would welcome clarification from officers on how that risk is intended to be managed.

That's why our motion tonight is designed to bring the works forward by one quarter to ensure the Council's previously passed decision can be delivered.

We believe that is a far more prudent approach than relying on a program that leaves very little contingency should unforeseen delays arise.

If anything, the need to expand the oval has now become even more urgent.

Just yesterday our Club is in the position where our Under 17 girls have reached an age where they need to move into senior cricket, yet we are struggling to create that additional side because we simply do not have the playing space.

The same pressures are being experienced by many sporting clubs across the City, and with cricket and soccer – the two biggest sports in the world – demand has never been higher.

As has been stated time and time again, additional playing space at John Connell Reserve through this minor field extension will have flow-on benefits well beyond our own club and sport by reducing pressure on other reserves throughout the City.

Ultimately, the request in this motion is actually quite modest.

We are simply asking the City to complete the foundations of the project first.

SLOWLY EXPLAIN THIS POINT:

If we were building a home – we wouldn't be waiting until the roof has been framed, the windows installed and the kitchen delivered before pouring the concrete slab. We'd complete the foundations first because everything else depends upon them. The same principle applies here.

The clearing and field extension are the foundations of this project. Once those works are complete and the permit obligations have been met, the remaining components can continue in an orderly manner without jeopardising the approvals already obtained.

This project has been considered, refined and endorsed over many years. It has been supported by Council through its April decision, by the sporting community that relies on these facilities and, most recently, by the electors of the City of Melville after both sides were given every opportunity to present their case.

Every major project reaches a point where planning must give way to delivery, and after more than a decade of planning, consultation, environmental assessment and compromise, we believe that point has now arrived.

City Officers have invested an enormous amount of time and effort into getting this project to where it is today. Our volunteers have done the same. Together, we have worked through complex planning issues, environmental approvals, funding challenges and community consultation to reach this point.

We sincerely thank everyone involved for that commitment, and we believe the best way to honour that work is to ensure the project is delivered in a timely and practical manner that adheres to the time constraints with clearing.

In closing, this motion does not ask Council to change the project or its previous decision. It simply asks Council to adopt a sequence of delivery that allows the time-critical components to proceed first while the remaining elements continue through the normal process.

We respectfully believe that is the most practical and responsible way to deliver a project that the Council has endorsed, the community has reaffirmed, and the City's sporting clubs have been waiting many years to see realised.

We therefore respectfully ask you to please support our motion.

Thank you, and we'd be pleased to answer any questions.