

Attachment 1 to Item 11.3.1.2

# TOWN OF PORT HEDLAND

Needs Assessment, Concept Design  
and Implementation Plan for the  
Port Hedland Turf Club

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

FINAL REPORT  
SEPTEMBER 2012



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background

The Town of Port Hedland engaged A Balanced View (ABV) Leisure Consultancy Services to conduct the “Needs Assessment, Concept Design and Implementation Plan for the Port Hedland Turf Club” study. This study will provide a long term vision for the future of equestrian sports in Port Hedland.

The first component of this study is the Needs Assessment. Detailed research and consultation has been conducted to develop clear findings regarding the facility requirements for the equestrian community and the preferred location of the Port Hedland Turf Club (PHTC).

The Town of Port Hedland is planning for the transformation of the Port/South Town sites into a major urban population of 50,000 persons over the next two decades and land for residential development is scarce. A decision on the future location of the PHTC is of key importance for the planning and future development of the Port Hedland town site given its size and impact on the form and function of the area. This study identifies and assesses multiple potential site locations, including the current site, to identify a viable future location for the PHTC and for the other current and potential future equestrian groups of the Town.

### Facility Needs

Ideally, equestrian activities would be catered for in a specialised equestrian precinct promoting the benefits of collocation of compatible users and reducing unnecessary duplication of resources. It is envisaged that a total area of approximately 200 ha would allow the development of a comprehensive equestrian precinct that provides adequate room for growth in the future. Such a precinct would include:

- Fully turfed racing track
- Irrigated dirt training track (with fast and slow lanes)
- Multi-use clubhouse including function/conference facilities and potential collocation of a recreation club.
- High standard male/female jockey and horse facilities for race meetings.
- Agistment lots/stables with comfortable accommodation for trainers and staff visiting for the racing season. Potential would exist for the accommodation to be hired out on a short term basis for the FIFO workforce outside of the racing season as a means of generating additional income.
- Potentially disabled accessible facilities to accommodate a Riding for Disabled program.
- Multi-purpose arenas for Pony Club activities, gymkhanas, show jumping, polo etc.
- A covered arena to enable all weather use and better accommodate disabled riders.
- Cross country trails for juniors and seniors.
- Turn out paddocks for spelling horses.

It is acknowledged, however, that such a large area of suitable land would be very difficult to identify given the topographical constraints of the region. As such, it is likely that multiple sites will be required to cater for the various equestrian groups for the foreseeable future.



## Site Analysis Key Findings

The Site Analysis sought to identify the preferred location for the Port Hedland Turf Club. This is a key planning issue for the Port Hedland town site as it encompasses an area of 43 hectares in the centre of town.

SHOATA has long been regarded as a potential site for the relocation of the PHTC; however, investigations reveal that this site falls within the Boodarie Industrial Buffer Special Control Area. TPS 5 does not permit the development of dwellings or facilities that attracts persons within this area. Furthermore, the entire area of land is utilised by the SHOATA organisation and any further loss of land would negatively impact on their ability to accommodate a sufficient number of horses to race in the North West racing season.

Of the identified potential sites for the future location of the Port Hedland Turf Club, the current site appears to be the most suitable solution that balances expressed user group needs and financial considerations, and is considerate of indicative forward planning.

The benefits of retaining the race track in its current location are as follows:

- Lowest cost to reconstruct PHTC facilities in this location. It would not require a complete rebuild as it would at the other identified locations.
- Potential to provide an impressive entry statement into Port Hedland.
- Retains and continues the operation of a historically significant facility for the Town of Port Hedland, having been in operation for over 100 years in its current location.
- The centre of the race track can be used to meet a large proportion of the town's active open space requirements as per the Active Open Space Strategy 2011 (identified need for 40 ha).
- Does not adversely impact on the operations/capacity of other equestrian groups (i.e. SHOATA).
- Benefits from sea breezes and does not have odour issues that the SHOATA site has, providing an improved level of amenity for spectators.
- Is located in an area that will provide a useful buffer from dust blowing in from the adjacent BHP stockpiles.
- Is agreeable to all equestrian user groups.

A major challenge for retaining the PHTC in its current location is ensuring that use of the area in the centre of the track is maximised for community benefit. It would require innovative design solutions to enable substantial active, and potentially passive, public open space and recreational facilities to be developed that are readily accessible to the growing community.



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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

The Town of Port Hedland engaged A Balanced View (ABV) Leisure Consultancy Services to conduct the “Needs Assessment, Concept Design and Implementation Plan for the Port Hedland Turf Club” study. This study will provide a long term vision for the future of equestrian sports in Port Hedland.

The first stage of the report is this Needs Assessment. Dependant on the need being established and opportunities being identified, this study will progress to the Concept Design phase to develop design options that respond to the identified needs. The feasibility of the preferred option will then be assessed in the Business/Implementation Plan phase.

This study has been underpinned by a broad consultative approach, researching and establishing the current and future needs of key stakeholders and matching them with current provision and industry trends to ensure that appropriate facility needs are identified.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

The Town of Port Hedland has an active equestrian community with a long history at Port Hedland. The Port Hedland Turf Club is one of the original institutions of Port Hedland having been formed in 1896 and racing conducted at the present venue since 1908.

Currently there are four equine related venues that exist in Port Hedland; South Hedland Owners and Trainers Association (SHOATA), Port Hedland Pony Club (PHPC), the Port Hedland Turf Club (PHTC) and the Drovers Rodeo Equestrian Centre.

The Town of Port Hedland is experiencing a major transformation into a regional city. The Town is planning for a target resident population of 40,000 residents, plus a further 10,000 workers and visitors by 2035. This is a substantial increase from the Town’s current resident population of 15,000 and will likely cause a significant increase in persons participating in equestrian activities and horse ownership.

The major changes that are being planned for the Town of Port Hedland have significant implications for the Town’s equestrian organisations. There is a need for large areas of land suitable for residential housing to be identified and developed to ensure there is sufficient capacity for the growing population. The PHTC has a footprint of some 40 ha and is located centrally within the Port Hedland town site. Recent planning documents including the Active Open Space Strategy and the Pilbara’s Port City Growth Plan suggest the relocation of this facility to make way for urban commercial and residential development. These plans are subject to a detailed master plan being undertaken. Relocation of the PHPC has also been identified as a means to make way for residential development at Pretty Pool.

A decision on the future location of the PHTC is of key importance for the planning and future development of the Port Hedland town site given its size and impact on the form and function of the area. This study identifies and assesses multiple potential site locations, including the current site, to identify a viable future location for the PHTC and for the other current and potential future equestrian groups of the Town.

This planning process will ensure that the Council can make an informed decision on the facility developments that will best meet the requirements of the Town’s equestrian groups ensuring that residents have the best possible opportunity to be involved with equestrian based sports at all levels.



### 3 DEMOGRAPHIC REVIEW

#### 3.1 Town of Port Hedland Demographic Overview

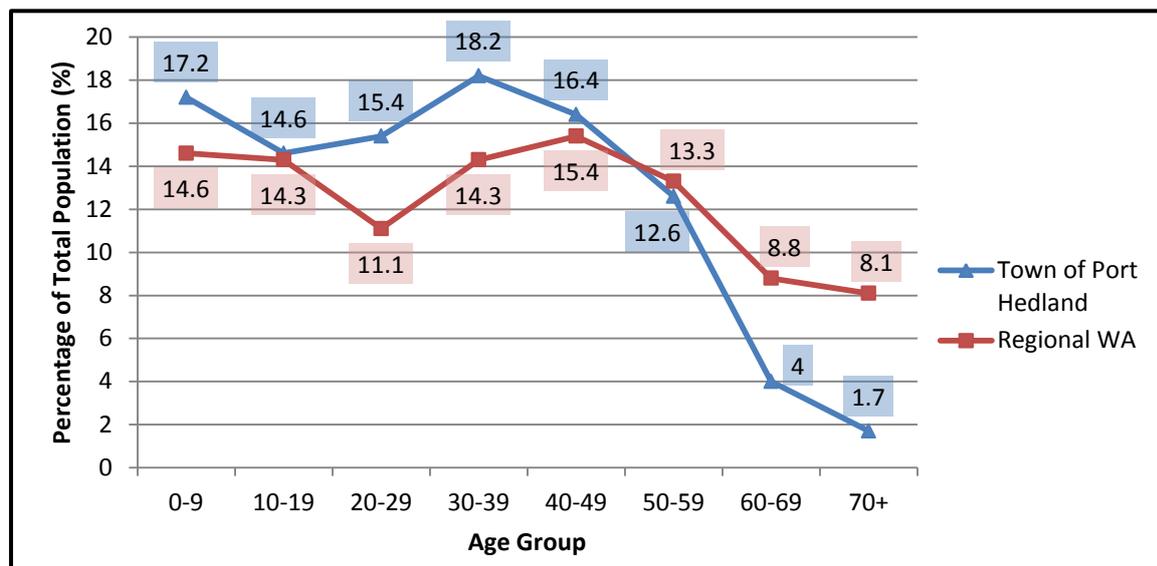
Over the decades the population of Port Hedland has fluctuated with the fortunes of the resources industry, which is now going through an immense expansion phase. To provide some context for this study, key demographic data is compared with the Regional WA average below:

**Table 1. Town of Port Hedland Demographic Overview**

| Category  | Town of Port Hedland        | Regional WA |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Population (Estimated Resident Population 30 June 2011) | 15,046                      | 597,445     |
| Indigenous Population                                   | 15.0%                       | 7.3%        |
| Overseas Born   | 14%                         | 15%         |
| Median Age  | 31                          | 37          |
| High Income Households (Greater than \$1,700 per week)  | 15%                         | 20%         |
| Low Income Households (\$649 per week or less)          | 12%                         | 30%         |
| Index of Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage      | 84 <sup>th</sup> Percentile | -           |

\* Compared to other West Australian LGA's, the Town of Port Hedland ranks in the 84th Percentile (1 being the lowest, 100 being the highest).

**Figure 1. Town of Port Hedland Age Profile Comparison**



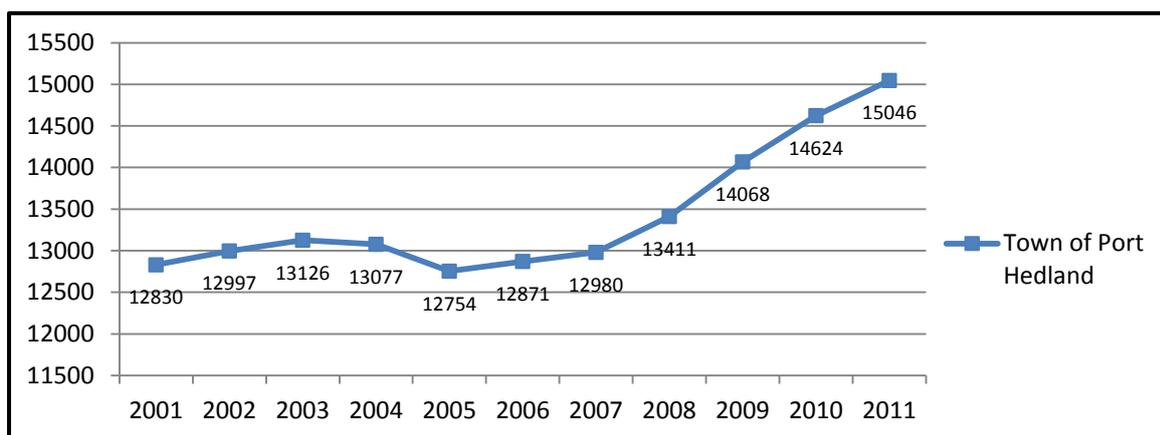
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2006.  
Regional Population Growth Australia, 3218.0 (ABS – March 2012)

Key demographic differences between the Town of Port Hedland and the Regional WA average include:

- Port Hedland has a much higher proportion of the population under 40 years of age, and a much lower proportion of the population over 40 years of age. This is likely due in large part to the resources industry attracting many younger working age people/families to the Town of Port Hedland. In many other regional towns, the populations are often older due to younger people leaving for Perth or the mines for tertiary education or employment.
- Port Hedland has a significantly smaller proportion of low income households, and lower proportion of high income households than the Regional WA average – signifying a larger proportion of middle income households.
- The Socio-Economic Index for the Town is quite high at the 84<sup>th</sup> percentile. In conjunction with the income data, it appears that Port Hedland is relatively affluent; however, it is known that there are significant areas of disadvantage in parts of the community. Housing costs and shortages of housing are a source of significant social issues. Overall, it is known that the residential areas of the Port Hedland township are significantly more affluent than the South Hedland township which is reflected in real estate property values.

### 3.2 Population Projections

The Town of Port Hedland is undergoing substantial growth the graph below demonstrates.



Source: Regional Population Growth, Cat. 3218.0, Australian Bureau of Statistics, March 2011.

The Town of Port Hedland Population has begun to grow rapidly since 2007, adding approximately 500 persons per year since that time. This represents population growth of approximately 3.5% per annum.

The development of the Town of Port Hedland as a regional city of the north is a major priority for the State Government as evidenced by the Pilbara Cities Vision which aims to build the population of Karratha and Port Hedland into cities of 50,000 people, and Newman to 15,000 people by 2035. This will ensure that skilled workforces can be accommodated for major economic projects in the Pilbara. The State Government has committed over \$1 billion dollars through Royalties for Regions funding to help achieve this aim.

The Town of Port Hedland is working with the State Government to plan for a population of 50,000 (40,000 permanent residents) being reached by 2035 which will require modern facilities and services. The Town's Growth Plan shows a need for over 20,000 new dwellings to be developed of which Port Hedland will accommodate one third and South Hedland accommodating two thirds.



The large population growth will likely result in increased demand for use of equestrian facilities, and greater spectator capacity requirements for major race days held by the Port Hedland Turf Club. Increased numbers of people involved with equestrian activities would also be expected to rise with a significantly increased population.

The need for a large volume of land suitable for residential development to meet expected demand is also be an issue for consideration within this study given the large footprint area required for a racetrack.



## 4 INDUSTRY TRENDS

Horse racing has a strong standing in Australia's sporting history which continues through to the current day. Horse racing began with the first colonists of Australia, and by 1836 races were being organised in Western Australia. Today, Australia ranks behind only the USA in the number of horses starting in races (27,000 individual horses raced 2008/09), and third behind the US and Japan in prize money (\$401 million in 2008/09), but has the most race tracks of any country (354) with a ratio of approximately one track per 62,000 persons. In 2009, \$14.5 billion was wagered on Australian horse races. (WA Thoroughbred Strategic Plan 2010, RWWA; [www.progroup racing.com.au](http://www.progroup racing.com.au))

Within Australia, horse racing is the second most popular sport for spectator attendance, with only Australian Rules Football being more popular. Over 11% of the population attended a race meeting during 2009/10 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 4174.0, 2010).

It is evident that horse racing is an integral feature of Australia's sporting culture.

### 4.1 Spectator Attendance Statistics

The Australian Bureau of Statistics produced the *Spectator Attendance at Sporting Events 2009/10 (4174.0)* report which provides statistical information relating to attendance at sporting events. The survey collected data about the characteristics of persons aged 15 years and over who attended sporting events as spectators (excluding junior and school sport), including attendance at horse races.

#### 4.1.1 Australia

Over two-fifths of the Australian population aged 15 years and over (43% or 7.6 million) reported that they had attended a sporting event at least once during the 12 months prior to interview in 2009-10. The highest attendance rates were reported for Australian Rules football (16.2%) and horse racing (11.1%, 1.94 million persons).

The Australian attendance rate at horse races has declined from 2005/06 levels of 12.5% (2.00 million) indicating that whilst the population is growing, the number of spectators attending horse races has not.

The majority of persons who attend a horse race do so only once or twice per year (74% of race goers).

#### 4.1.2 Western Australia

Within Western Australia, the number of spectators attending horse races in 2005/06 was similar to the Australian average (12.5%, 195,800); however, this number has declined significantly in the 2009/10 survey (9.2%, 162,800). WA's population grew by 11.3% over the same time period, whilst the number of persons attending a race event declined by 17%, indicating that population growth is not resulting in higher spectator attendances at races in WA.



## 4.2 Western Australian Thoroughbred Racing Strategic Direction

Racing and Wagering Western Australia (RWVA) has produced a Thoroughbred Strategic Plan for WA, with key findings released to the public in the *Securing the Future: A Vision of Sustainability for the WA Thoroughbred Industry*. This report highlights the following two key challenges facing the WA thoroughbred racing industry: financial sustainability; and infrastructure funding.

The financial sustainability of thoroughbred racing requires improvement to ensure its viability into the future. Distributions to the thoroughbred industry paid by RWVA are heavily subsidised (65%) by wagering on racing and sports events from interstate and international jurisdictions, with net income derived from wagering on WA thoroughbred racing comprising 35% of distributions. With the proliferation of online gambling options providing aggressive competition to the RWVA, in addition to the increased competition resulting from progressive deregulation of wagering across Australia, RWVA reports this level of subsidisation is unlikely to be sustainable into the future.

Funding for infrastructure development and improvements in Western Australia's racing venues is a significant issue to ensure WA racing clubs remain viable into the future. Optimal thoroughbred venues are facilities that:

- Address occupational health and safety standards.
- Provide suitable protective stalls for horses whilst on-course.
- Provide modern on-course public amenities (stands, food and beverage, betting facilities and toilets) to maximise on-course patronage and income.
- Ensure compliance with environmental standards both current and emerging
- Maintain adequate access to raw material supplies such as water, turf and sand for racing and training surfaces.
- Provide an attractive entertainment option for the community and meeting the needs of the horses, owners and trainers.

An area of significant focus for the RWVA is that of training sustainability. RWVA places a high degree of importance on the ability of the provincial race venues – Bunbury, Pinjarra, Northam, Albany, Geraldton and Kalgoorlie, to provide high quality training facilities and will continue to be the focus of track and training investment.

RWVA reports that from a country and community perspective (such as the Port Hedland Turf Club and other north west clubs), these venues will need to rely strongly on government and Royalties for Regions funding for further track and facility enhancements as the level of capital infrastructure investment from RWVA will be minimal.

Overall, the key strategic direction for the WA thoroughbred racing industry is to improve the quality of the product as opposed to increasing the quantity. From a facilities perspective, this means a club's focus should be on providing improved facilities for both participants and spectators including jockey and stewards rooms, track surface, pavilion and other supporting amenities, stables etc. The Strategic Plan document states that there is limited scope for increasing the number of country or community race meets of which the Port Hedland Turf Club is included.

It is important to note that the strategic directions for harness and greyhound racing are similar to that of thoroughbred racing, with the focus being placed on improving the current facilities rather than developing new facilities. The implication for this study is that RWVA is unlikely to support the development of a greyhound or trotting facility in Port Hedland in the foreseeable future.



## **4.3 Interstate Thoroughbred Strategic Direction**

### **4.3.1 Racing Victoria**

Racing Victoria has developed a strategic direction document entitled *Racing To 2020: Racing Victoria's Vision for the Victorian Thoroughbred Racing Industry, November 2008*.

The key challenges noted in this document are similar to that in the WA report, with competition from online gambling and a deregulated wagering market having a large impact on the long term financial viability of racing in Victoria, and the need for substantial capital infrastructure improvements to renew existing venues.

A key facilities based strategy identified in this report is the revitalisation of racecourses as multi-use community facilities. This strategy incorporates more effective use of limited resources, minimising duplication of expensive facilities such as substantial social and amenities. Multi-use facilities have access to a greater range of funding opportunities and are more attractive projects for State or Federal grant programs due to the increased number of user groups that will benefit.

### **4.3.2 Racing NSW**

Racing NSW has developed the Racing NSW Strategic Plan 2010 to guide the future development of thoroughbred racing in NSW.

As with its Western Australian and Victorian counterparts, the key challenges facing the industry in Victoria are threats to financial sustainability and the need to improve the quality of facilities provided.

The NSW Strategic Plan specifically notes that a key characteristic of Generation X is that it is more discriminating in its expectations than preceding generations. As such, an important element of engaging with Generation X is to improve facilities for racegoers, corporate customers and sponsors.

It is expected that suitable facilities will become even more important in coming years as this generation moves toward middle age and will likely become more discerning and seek greater levels of comfort.

## **4.4 Summary**

Overall, it can be seen that horse racing is an integral component of Australian sporting culture being the second most popular sport for spectator attendance, with over 11% of Australians aged 15 and over attending at least one race in a year.

The industry is facing significant challenges to its revenue stream with the advent of internet gambling and the deregulation of the wagering market, and with the number of spectator attendees declining as a proportion of the population.

There is a clear focus by RWWA and its Victorian and NSW counterparts for the upgrade and improvement of existing race venues to assist in the retention of existing participants and spectators as well as attracting new participants and spectators to the sport.

In summary, the overriding trend for country racing facilities in Western Australia is for the thoroughbred industry focus to be placed on improvement of the quality of the facilities as opposed to increasing the quantity of facilities.



## 5 FACILITY REVIEW

### 5.1 Port Hedland Turf Club



Port Hedland Turf Club Aerial View



Race Track on Main Straight



Licensed Area and Pavilion

#### 5.1.1 Description

- 1950m irregular oval circuit including a 100m chute on the south western bend for 1600m races.
- The track is part turf (650m along main straight and western bend) and part dirt.
- There is 6 hectares of sporting fields (cricket) inside the track, on the north western boundary including three synthetic wickets and a four wicket practice net facility.
- 50m x 6m sheltered horse bays.
- Temporary Jockeys Facility.
- Pavilion with outdoor licensed area, servery and small office accommodation.
- Tote area.
- Turfed spectator area along the length of the main straight.
- Informal gravel parking area



### **5.1.2 Condition**

- The condition of all supporting facilities to the race track including the pavilion are generally ageing and in poor to very poor condition. Replacement of most built facilities is required.
- The track is in good condition overall but provides two surfaces for horses to negotiate (grass and dirt).
- The ovals are reticulated and in good condition for sports competition and training.

### **5.1.3 Strengths**

- Located in the Port Hedland town site. Close proximity to supporting facilities such as restaurants, bars etc for patrons before and after race meetings. Many people are able to walk to the races due to its proximity to much of the residential area of Port Hedland.
- Close to the coastal area, benefits from sea breezes.
- Close proximity to existing stabling and training track at Pretty Pool.
- Historical significance of over 100 years of racing history

### **5.1.4 Weaknesses**

- Unable to grow grass around south eastern part of track due to salinity problems.
- Most supporting facilities are in need of replacement.
- The site is constrained, the shape of the track does not allow for 1,000m or 1,800m race distances.

### **5.1.5 Opportunities**

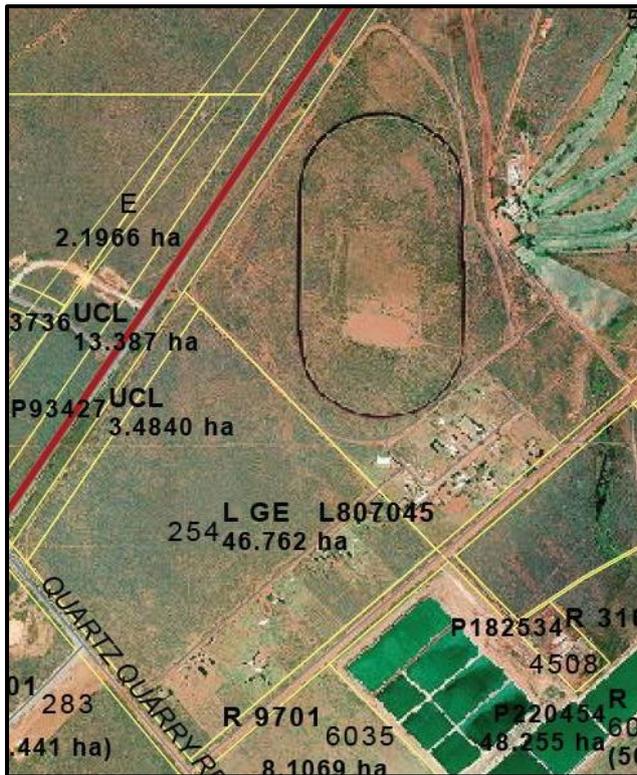
- Potential to redevelop with modern, multi-purpose facilities that can be shared with other Port Hedland based sporting groups such as rugby, soccer, tennis, Pony Club events etc.
- Provide the Town with a high quality formal function community facility.
- Multi functional facilities fully fenced, enabling large events (music, circus etc) and to house various community groups – i.e. skydivers

### **5.1.6 Threats**

- The development of the Town of Port Hedland into a regional city of 50,000 total population will significantly increase pressure for the land the Club occupies to be released for urban development due to its central location.
- There is significant pressure for the Pretty Pool agistment and training track facilities to be relocated for residential development within the short term to assist in meeting current and future housing requirements.
- State Government funding support will likely be required for any redevelopment plans for the facility due to the costs involved.



## 5.2 SHOATA Complex



SHOATA Complex Aerial View



Stables



Main Arena

### 5.2.1 Description

- Large 100 hectare site consisting of two leased areas, Lot 254 SHOATA Road and part of Lot 5164/Reserve 35915 shared with the golf course. Currently caters for approximately 40 horses (in agistment).
- Located east of South Hedland Township, within Boodarie Industrial Buffer Special Control Area.
- 24 hectares of the site consists of agistment lots with stabling and some basic accommodation for trainers.
- Large open spaces used as short and long term spelling paddocks.
- 1,800m oval dirt training track (oiled in the past) for fast work.
- 2,500m training track for slow work, irregular shape.
- Main arena - 140m x 70m, dirt, fully fenced.
- Small arena – 65m x 30m, dirt, fully fenced.

### 5.2.2 Condition

- Stables and sheds on agistment lots are in varying condition.
- The training tracks and arenas are adequate.

### 5.2.3 Strengths

- Limited as a potential equestrian precinct venue due to limited capacity to accommodate growth and the Town Planning Scheme not permitting such developments.



#### **5.2.4 Weaknesses**

- Location within Boodarie Industrial Buffer Special Control Area prohibits any development of dwellings or facilities that attract persons as stated in the Town Planning Scheme.
- Smell from sewage treatment on particular days.

#### **5.2.5 Opportunities**

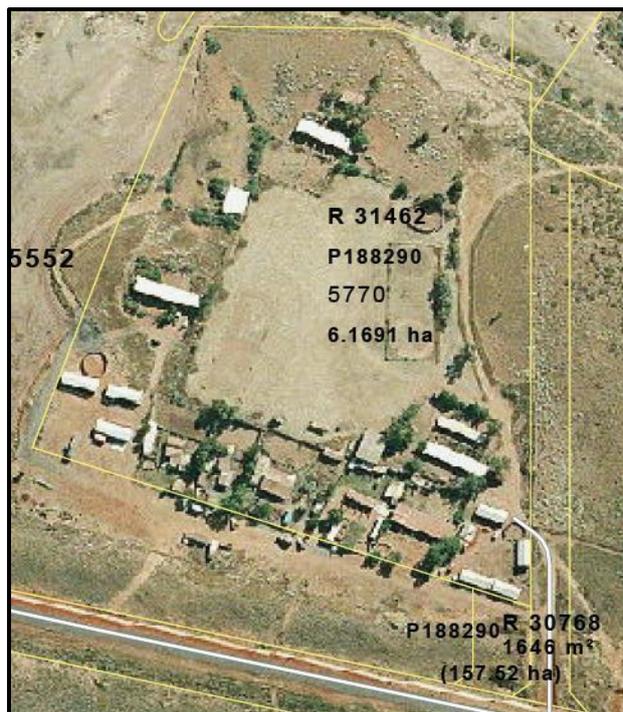
- None due to Town Planning Scheme restrictions.

#### **5.2.6 Threats**

- Current developments on the site are non-conforming because the developments that exist attract persons.
- It appears that an upgrade to the golf course would also be subject to being non conforming on the same grounds as above, however these facilities would appear to be protected under the Non Conforming Use Rights (Section 8.1) part of the TPS text, however, future additional facility development on these areas may be not be permissible.



### 5.3 Port Hedland Pony Club



Port Hedland Pony Club Aerial View

#### 5.3.1 Description

- 6 hectare site consisting of agistment sites and stabling, a main central arena approximately 90m x 130m and a smaller dressage arena 65m x 25m.
- Agistment sites include some temporary accommodation facilities including dongers for trainers to use during the racing season.
- Located in Pretty Pool area, 1km via dirt track to the beach.
- Training track

#### 5.3.2 Condition

- Stables and short term accommodation are in varying condition.
- Fencing and arenas are adequate.

#### 5.3.3 Strengths

- Close to the ocean providing highly desirable horse exercising opportunities.
- Close proximity for Port Hedland residents.
- Currently provides nearby agistment opportunities for PHTC members and visiting trainers.

#### 5.3.4 Weaknesses

- There is significant pressure for the Pretty Pool agistment facilities to be relocated for residential development within the short term to assist in meeting current and future housing requirements.
- Use of the Town beach areas by horses is prohibited under the Reserves and Foreshores Local Law as the Town has not designated any areas on the foreshore for equestrian use.
- Limited power to sections of the site.



### **5.3.5 Opportunities**

- Limited due to future residential development plans for the area.

### **5.3.6 Threats**

- Future residential development plans for the Pretty Pool area require relocation of the PHPC.



## 6 CONSULTATION KEY FINDINGS

Extensive consultation with key stakeholders and relevant organisations and individuals has been undertaken for this study. Furthermore, a 200 response phone survey of the general community was undertaken.

### 6.1 Key Stakeholder Groups and Individuals Consultation

Consultation has occurred with the following parties:

- Project Control Group
- BHP Billiton
- Pilbara Institute
- Port Hedland Chamber of Commerce Inc
- RPS Planners
- Kelly Howlett, Mayor of Port Hedland
- Racing and Wagering Western Australia<sup>4</sup>
- Port Hedland Golf Club
- Dixie Solly, Former Chairman of Country Racing WA
- Landcorp
- Water Corporation
- Port Hedland Pony Club
- Port Hedland Turf Club
- South Hedland Owners & Trainers Association
- Drovers Rodeo Equestrian Centre
- Hedland Canine Club
- Port Hedland Tennis Club
- Port Hedland Hockey Association
- Hedland Junior Soccer Association
- Port Hedland Hawks Rugby League Club
- Broome Turf Club
- Carnarvon Race Club
- Norwest Jockeys' Club
- Cranbourne Football and Netball Club
- Newman Gymkhana and Polocrosse Association
- Darwin Touch Association
- Shire of Plantagenet
- Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club
- Equestrian Western Australia
- Australian Bushmen's Campdraft and Rodeo Association Ltd
- Pony Club Association of Western Australia
- Dave McGowan, Local Resident



The full Key Stakeholders and Relevant Organisation and Individuals Consultation Report can be seen attached as Appendix 1 to this report. The key consultation findings of this report are as follows:

- All Port Hedland equestrian organisations have a preference for the status quo.
- Noise along the railway lines in Port Hedland (south of Turf Club) will significantly increase as output is doubled. There will also be increased dust from larger stockpiles occurring at the port. A buffer area is required along Wilson Street to limit the impact on residents.
- The east end precinct including the race track location is currently under detailed design phase by Landcorp. Current structure planning shows the PHTC race track area as active public open space serving as a buffer from future BHP stockpiles to be located directly adjacent to the railway lines.
- The sewage ponds in Port Hedland are due to be removed and the South Hedland waste water treatment plan upgraded by mid 2014. The upgrade will include odour control measures to reduce the smell; however, the more than doubling the size of the ponds may negate any improvements.
- The PHTC vision for the turf club track is for a major racing/equestrian facility with all the facilities in place, including being fully turfed and having multiple users on site.
- With strong population growth, it is a possibility that the PHTC could become a provincial venue and host more race meetings each year.
- Large investment by the State Government in the Pilbara region presents as a rare opportunity for the PHTC and other equestrian groups to have upgraded facilities.
- The race tracks in the North-West region have a unique requirement to provide accommodation at their agistment lots for trainers who reside at the track for the racing season, including at Port Hedland. Racing horses must be under the care of their trainers at all times to ensure their horses are not compromised for the races.
- The land from the race track to the Pretty Pool location is subject to flooding and storm surges. Considerable landfill will be required to make this land suitable for development; however, it is simply a matter of time before it will become economical for developers to develop this land including the substantial fill requirements.
- The PHTC would not like to be located at the SHOATA complex due to:
  - No breeze to help cool horses
  - No water for hosing horses down
  - Too far from ancillary features such as restaurants, night life etc which compliment the race events.
  - Strong odour from the sewage treatment ponds which are to be expanded.
  - It would be a 50km round trip for people from Port Hedland to feed the horses.
  - It would be too far from the training track and agistment grounds at Pretty Pool.
- SHOATA oppose any further loss of their leased area of land as it would not allow them to accommodate and train a sufficient number of horses to service the NW racing season.
- The SHOATA site is within the Boodarie Industrial Buffer Special Control Area which prohibits the development of dwellings or facilities that attract persons (Town Planning Scheme 5). The Department of State Development would likely be strongly opposed to any changes to the Town Planning Scheme that weakens these conditions.
- The owner of Drivers Rodeo Equestrian Centre has invested approximately \$500,000 (and approximately same amount for in-kind labour) in the existing facilities and therefore has a strong preference to remain in current location.



- An equine industry training package provided by the Pilbara Institute would require a significant need to be expressed from the local industry. To date there has not been any need expressed to the Institute.
- There is little desire for regional training opportunities for the equine industry amongst other North West turf clubs. This is due to the limited time frame of the racing season.
- Facility development planning should take into consideration anything that can help keep the horses cool and out of the sun where possible.
- There is an opportunity to collocate groups that can benefit from a licensed community meeting place.

## 6.2 Port Hedland Race Track Community Survey

A random community phone survey of 200 households within the Town of Port Hedland was conducted by the Hello Marketing Department of Royal Life Saving WA in July 2012.

Respondents were asked questions in regards to their attendance to the races, race track facility upgrade requirements and their preference for the location of the race track. The full results summary from the survey can be seen attached as Appendix 4.

Key findings from the survey are as follows:

### Demographic Characteristics

Survey Respondents had the following characteristics:

- 52% Male, 48% Female
- Age Profile

| Age   | Proportion |
|-------|------------|
| 15-24 | 4.8%       |
| 25-39 | 31.3%      |
| 40-54 | 35.6%      |
| 55-64 | 22.6%      |
| 65+   | 5.8%       |

- Household Type

| Household Type              | Proportion |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Single                      | 14.5%      |
| Couple - no children        | 27.5%      |
| Family 1-2 Children         | 36.2%      |
| Family more than 2 Children | 18.8%      |
| Shared House                | 2.9%       |

- Awareness of the Port Hedland Race Track – Yes 97%, No 3%



### Race Track Attendance

- 70% of respondents have visited the Race Track in the past 3 years, 30% have not.
- Of those that have attended a race in the past 3 years, in 2011:
  - 17% did not attend a race
  - 51% attended 1-2 races (36% of all respondents)
  - 21% attended 3-5 races (15% of all respondents)
  - 11% attended 6 races (full race season) (8% of all respondents).
- Of those that have attended a race in the past 3 years, in 2012 at the time of the survey (3 races conducted):
  - 25% had attended a race (18% of all respondents), 75% had not.

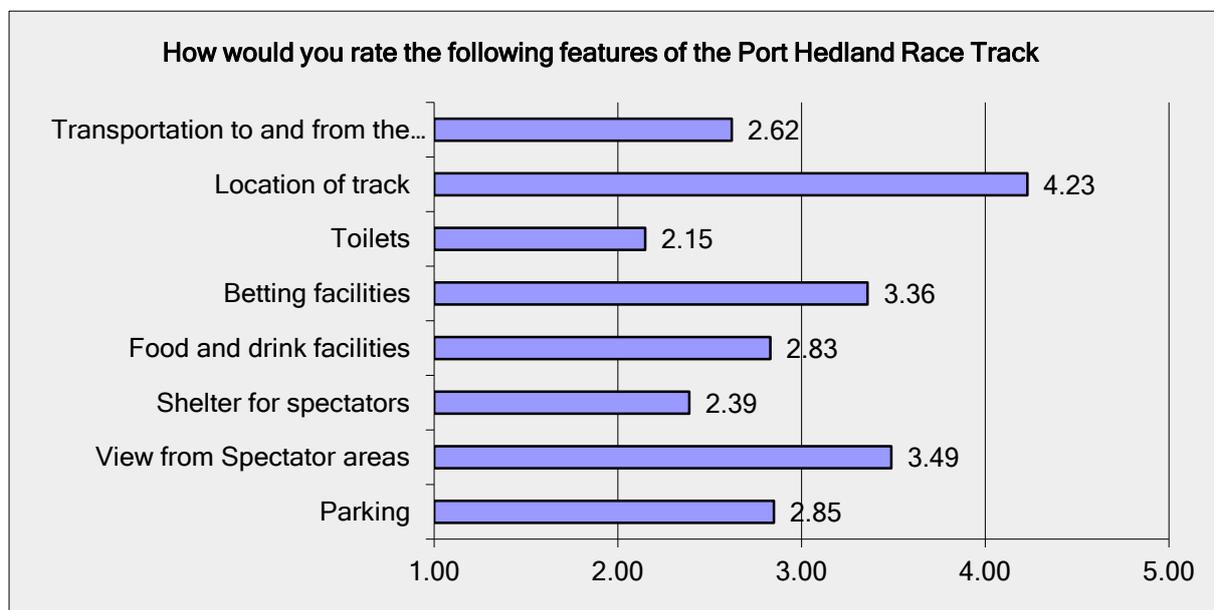
These attendance figures support the view that the race meets are community events, with over half of those surveyed having attended at least one race in a calendar year.

### Overall Experience at Race Track

- When asked to rate their satisfaction level of the overall experience at the race track on a scale of 1-5 (1 being lowest, 5 being highest), the average rating response was 3.4.
- Only 15% of respondents rated the overall experience 1 or 2, indicating respondents are generally satisfied.

### Satisfaction with Existing Features

When asked to rate their satisfaction level of the following features of the race track on a scale of 1-5 (1 being lowest, 5 being highest), the average rating responses were as follows:

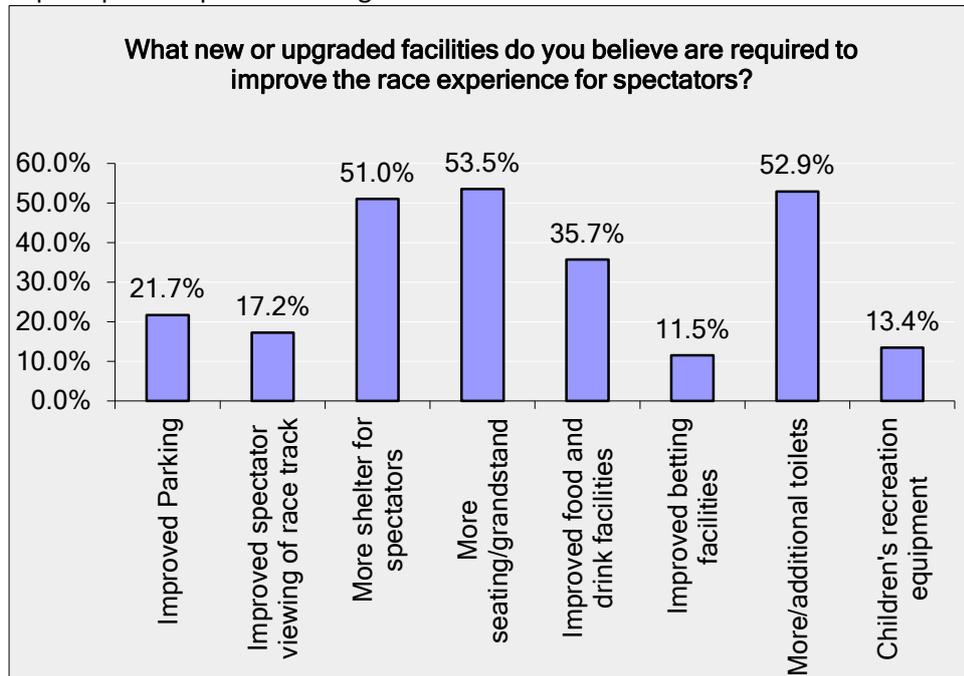


These ratings indicate that respondents generally find the features of the race track substandard with the exceptions being the location of the track which received the highest rating (4.23), view from spectator areas (3.49) and betting facilities (3.36).



### Desired New or Upgraded Facilities

When asked what new or upgraded facilities the respondent believes are required, the following unprompted responses were given:



Each of these responses should be considered in planning for a new or upgraded race track facility, with special consideration given to improved spectator shelter, seating and toilet facilities.

### Agreement with the Following Statements

Respondents generally strongly agreed with the following statements:

- The Port Hedland Race Track in its current location is important for the Town.
- The Port Hedland Race Track provides a great visual entry statement for the Town.
- The Port Hedland Race Track had great historical significance for the Town.
- The Port Hedland Race Track plays an important social role in the Town.
- The Port Hedland Race Track can be an important shared sporting facility.
- The Port Hedland Race Track should be located in the Port Hedland Town area.
- The Port Hedland Race Track could be the location for a number of community activities and not just horse racing.

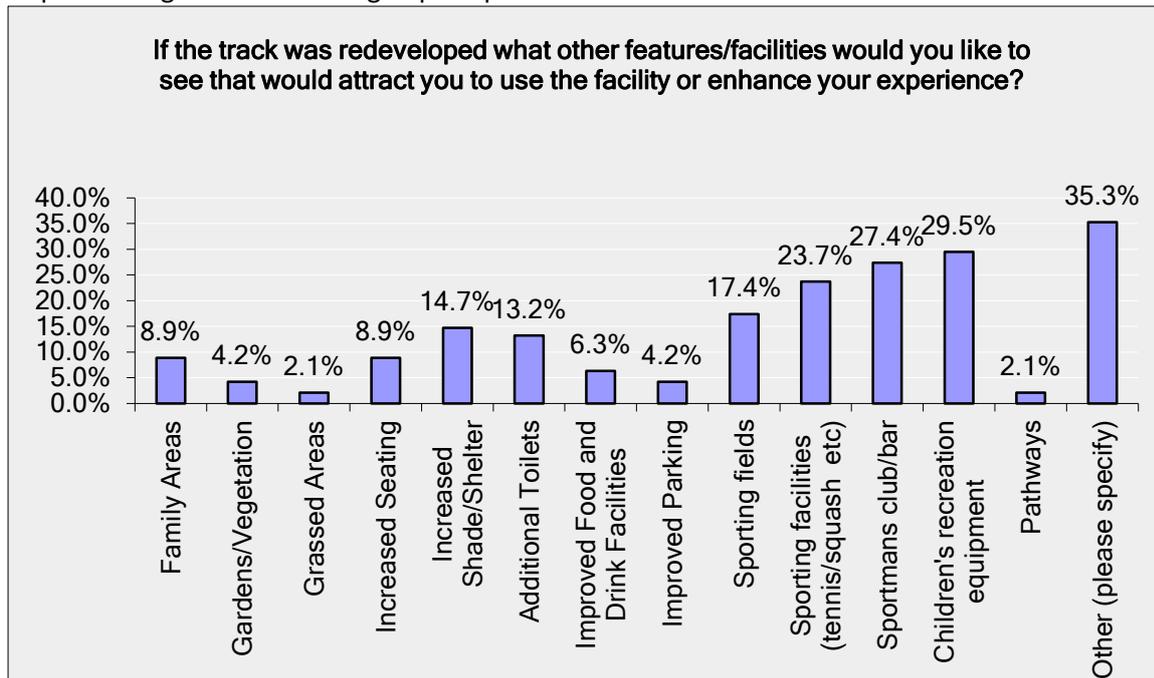
### Track Location Preference

- 62% of respondents prefer the current location of the race track, 22% would prefer it to move, 16% have no preference.
- The primary reasons given by respondents for the track to stay in its current location is its historical significance, proximity to their homes, and the perception that there are no other sites as good as the existing.
- When asked if they would be as likely to attend the races if the track was moved, 45% said yes, 46% said no, 9% did not know.



### Other Desired Facilities for the Race Track

When asked what other facilities they would like to see at a redeveloped race track facility, respondents gave the following unprompted answers:



These responses show a wide range of facilities that respondents desire for a redeveloped race track which should be considered in any future plans. Special emphasis should be given to children's recreation equipment, a sportsman club/bar, sporting facilities, sporting fields and passive parkland features.



## 7 LAND VALUE OF PORT HEDLAND TURF CLUB SITE

Professional analysis of the land value of the current Port Hedland Turf Club site was undertaken by the AEC Group to ascertain a more accurate understanding of the potential financial impact of making this land available or not available for residential development.

A high land value could mean that the sale of this land to developers could raise funds for developing a race track and sporting facilities elsewhere, whereas a low or negative land value will make sale of the land and relocation of the facilities less feasible.

The *Port Hedland Race Course Site Evaluation, AEC Group 2012* document can be seen attached as Appendix 3 to this report. Key findings from this site evaluation are as follows:

- The site (43 ha) could accommodate around 1,160 dwellings (in a range of lot sizes). This would equate to an average yield of around 27 dwellings per hectare which would make it one of the most densely populated parts of the town.
- Using a range of market metrics and averages, AEC Group estimates the average lot price on the Race Course site to be around \$108 m<sup>2</sup>. At this rate the total value of the site is estimated to be around \$37.3 million, if it were unconstrained.
- The area is low lying and would require an estimated 3 m<sup>3</sup> of fill across the site (1.29 million cubic metres of fill total) at an estimated total cost of \$51.6 million @ \$40m<sup>3</sup>.
- When taking fill costs into consideration, the net site value is -\$14.3 million. This makes the land effectively worthless to a developer.

It can be seen from this analysis that the release of the Port Hedland Turf Club land at McGregor Street does not represent a potential source of revenue from which to fund the relocation costs of the Turf Club and development of other sporting facilities. Rather, it is apparent that the developer would require a significant financial incentive to be enticed to develop the land.



## 8 THOROUGHBRED RACECOURSE KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

The key success factors of thoroughbred racecourses have been identified through the consultation process and from the Comparative Review which can be seen attached as Appendix 2 to this report. The following summarises these findings in relation to the Port Hedland facility:

- In general – a successful venue requires quality facilities for participants including the track design and surface quality, jockey facilities, horse facilities and officials facilities; and also for spectators including a function room with a bar and catering facilities, adequate toilets and large spectator viewing areas with plenty of shelter,
- A high quality track surface is integral to a successful race venue. A fully turfed surface is ideal. Plentiful water supply is required.
- A large turfed spectator area along the finishing straight, with the provision of large shade sails is important for feature events that attract large crowds.
- Most tracks have a track circuit distance of 1,800m – 2,000m with the addition of chutes to enable various distances to be raced. Wide turns and long straights are highly desirable.
- Shapes of race tracks vary, often depending on the constraints of the site. An oval shape is the most common.
- Pavilions are typically located on the western side of the track so spectators are not looking into the afternoon sun.
- Turf Club's are well suited for utilising their facilities as function venues as they often have substantial function room and kitchen facilities to cater for race meetings and generally have considerable spare capacity for their increased utilisation.
- Sporting fields on the interior of race tracks can operate successfully with appropriate planning and facility design. Features such as an underpass (thus reducing wear and tear on the track from crossings) reduces the impact and the use of the sporting fields as overflow fields for training needs and games as required.
- Most race courses are single use, with the interior of the race track often only featuring a training track and other equestrian activities.
- Several tracks in the northern parts of Australia use oiled dirt tracks for ease of upkeep compared to turf. These tracks do not have a need for training tracks.
- Agistment sites with accommodation for trainers and their staff is required during the racing season. Whilst there are a few local trainers at these venues, many trainers come from other locations and stay for the North West racing season held over the winter months. Reasonably well appointed facilities will be required to attract new trainers in future years.
- Locales near ocean provide cooling effects for the race track users.
- Location in close proximity to the outskirts of town.
- Located within close proximity to agistment properties to allow ease of access.



## 9 NEEDS ANALYSIS

Extensive research and consultation has been undertaken to identify the current and future needs of the key stakeholders of this study. Potential options have been proposed that take into consideration the challenges and constraints that impact on how these facility needs can be met.

### 9.1 Facility Needs

The facility needs of the key stakeholders, interpreted from extensive research and consultation, have been identified as follows:

#### 9.1.1 Port Hedland Turf Club

Overall, the Port Hedland Turf Club venue is in need of a major redevelopment of its facilities. Whilst the track itself is satisfactory, almost all supporting facilities are in poor/very poor condition and are in need of replacement. This includes the pavilion and spectator facilities, jockey facilities and horse facilities. Ideally, modifications could also be made to the track to allow a full range of distances to be raced and the full track be upgraded to turf.

With the planned transformation of the Town of Port Hedland into a regional city, the Port Hedland Turf Club has potential to become a provincial level racing venue similar to Bunbury, Albany and Kalgoorlie-Boulder. Demand for additional races to be held is likely to increase as the population within Port Hedland and the greater Pilbara region grows. A provincial level facility will bring with it an expectation of higher standard facilities across the board, including a fully turfed track, substantial spectator facilities such as a large sheltered grand stand, a pavilion with high standard function/conference facilities and appropriate jockey and horse facilities to ensure all participants and horses are comfortably accommodated.

The collocation of a Recreation Club or similar at the PHTC facility is also highly desirable. Major facility components such as a commercial kitchen, large function room and toilets could be shared and would enable year round use of the PHTC facilities. It would help develop a strong social culture amongst the equestrian community and other potential community groups that may be based at the PHTC in the future and facilitate the venue operating as a premium function/conference facility.

#### 9.1.2 McGregor Street Reserve Sports Facilities

The sporting facilities located at the McGregor Street Reserve are basic and ageing. This includes the rugby, soccer, tennis, scout and dog obedience facilities. The Hockey Club lacks a hockey field to play on, and currently use the synthetic tennis courts. Previous planning has been undertaken for redevelopment of the McGregor Street Reserve including the Active Open Space Strategy 2011 and the Hedland's Future Today 2010 reports. A decision on the future location of the PHTC facility should be made before any final decisions and actions can be made for the redevelopment of the reserve sports facilities.

#### 9.1.3 Pretty Pool Equestrian Facilities

The Pretty Pool equestrian facilities including the Pony Club facilities and agistment lots are located on highly desirable residential development areas as indicated in the ToPH Growth Plan and specific site planning by Landcorp. A new location for the Pony Club and agistment lots is required to allow for their future relocation.



The training track on the southern side of Styles Road is situated on unallocated Crown Land that Landcorp will soon be releasing to the market. There is potential that the training track may become unavailable for use by members of the PHTC in the short term. There will then be a need for access to an alternative training track.

There is considerable doubt as to whether the SHOATA complex would be able to accommodate the Pretty Pool equestrian facility users. The site would require the development of additional agistment and riding facilities which are not permitted for this site under the current Town Planning Scheme (5) due to the conditions of the Boodarie Industrial Buffer Special Control Area.

In the long term, population growth may see a considerable increase in the number of horse owners. More land will likely be required for agistment and for a fully functional Pony Club facility than is currently provided at Pretty Pool.

#### **9.1.4 SHOATA Complex**

The SHOATA facilities are adequate for the current needs of the SHOATA organisation. The entire area of land is utilised for agistment lots, training tracks, gymkhana arena and turn out paddocks, however, there is capacity for some of the paddock space to be developed into additional agistment lots in the future.

There is considerable doubt as to the future development capacity of the SHOATA Complex due to its location within the Boodarie Industrial Buffer Special Control Area. All dwellings and developments that attract persons are not permitted according to TPS 5. Whilst existing non-conforming uses are protected, additional new developments would not be.

#### **9.1.5 Rodeo and Campdraft**

The facility needs for rodeo and campdraft events can be accommodated at SHOATA or any other equestrian precinct location if the need arose in the future. A multi-use arena and livestock yards would adequately accommodate rodeo and campdraft events.

It is noted, however, that the Drovers Rodeo Equestrian Centre intends to remain in its current location for the long term and continue to develop its facilities, therefore it is anticipated that rodeo and campdraft activities will be adequately accommodated at this facility into the future.

#### **9.1.6 Potential Future Equestrian Groups**

An increased horse owner population in the future is likely to result in new equestrian groups forming. The Riding for Disabled organisation is a potential group that could significantly benefit the Pilbara region, and the State body, RDWA, has indicated it would be interested in investigating such an opportunity for Port Hedland.

There are a range of specialised equestrian groups that could form in the future such as dressage, show jumping, reining and carriage driving groups to name a few. A polo and polocrosse club is another future possibility.

There is a need for multi-use arenas to cater for a range of equestrian groups, both current and yet to form. Access to amenities and a pavilion will be important as these organisations develop and grow.



## 9.2 Potential Options for Meeting Needs

There are two obvious development options for the accommodation of current and future equestrian facility needs of the community:

Firstly, a single equestrian precinct could be developed to collocate all equestrian users and agistment needs in the one location. This would facilitate the development of high quality facilities that all user groups can share, maximising utilisation and minimising duplication of resources.

Alternatively, the equestrian facility needs of the community can be met through the provision of facilities at multiple sites. This may be a necessary option if a suitable parcel of land for single equestrian precinct cannot be identified or other options are proven to be more feasible and have more support from stakeholders.

These two options are further explored in the following sections:

### 9.2.1 Single Equestrian Precinct

Ideally, all equestrian groups and agistment lots would be accommodated in a comprehensive equestrian precinct. This would require a very large, flat area of land to be identified that is not subject to regular flooding and suitable for developing a range of facilities.

Currently, the SHOATA complex (110 ha), Port Hedland Turf Club (40 ha) and Pretty Pool Facilities (Pony Club 6 ha, training track 20 ha) have a combined total land area of approximately 176 hectares, however, there is some duplication of land area that would not need to occur if a single precinct was created. Mainly, only one training track facility would be required, as opposed to the current two. A single training track facility would result in a land area savings of approximately 20 ha.

In the short term, a 150 - 160 ha site would be sufficient for all current equestrian groups (including the PHTC) and agistment lot requirements. In the longer term, additional area will be required for a likely growing horse population. An additional 40-50 ha would allow for a significant increase in the accommodation of horses through the provision of additional agistment spaces and a turning out paddock.

It is envisaged that a total area of approximately 200 ha would allow the development of a comprehensive equestrian precinct that provides significant room for growth in the future. Such a precinct would include:

- Fully turfed racing track
- Irrigated dirt training track (with fast and slow lanes)
- Multi-use clubhouse including function/conference facilities and potential collocation of a recreation club.
- High standard male/female jockey and horse facilities for race meetings.
- Agistment lots/stables with comfortable accommodation for trainers and staff visiting for the racing season. Potential would exist for the accommodation to be hired out on a short term basis for the FIFO workforce outside of the racing season as a means of generating additional income.
- Potentially disabled accessible facilities
  - To accommodate a Riding for Disabled program.
  - Multi-purpose arenas for Pony Club activities, gymkhanas, show jumping, polo etc.



- A covered arena to enable all weather use and better accommodate disabled riders.
- Cross country trails for juniors and seniors.
- Turn out paddocks for spelling horses.

It is acknowledged, however, that such a large area of suitable land would be very difficult to identify given the topographical constraints of the region and the planned land developments.

### **9.2.2 Multiple Sites**

If a feasible 200 ha site that is suitable for all user groups cannot be identified, multiple sites will be required to accommodate current and future equestrian groups and agistment lot requirements.

The location determined for the PHTC will influence how the equestrian user groups would be distributed across the multiple sites.

#### Inner Urban Location

If an inner urban location for the PHTC is identified, such as the current location, it would result in a high level of need for the inner track area to be utilised for sporting fields. The Active Open Space Strategy has identified an ultimate future need of approximately 40ha of active open space for the Port town site. It would be logical and efficient for the inside of the race track to be utilised for active open space enabling the Town of Port Hedland to meet a significant proportion of this objective. The current ToPH Growth Plan shows provision of a 23 hectare district level active open space site, 17 hectares short of the need identified in the Active Open Space Strategy. A significant proportion of this shortfall could be made up utilising land within the interior of the race track.

Sporting clubs would benefit from high level social facilities that could be shared with the PHTC. With appropriate design, some supporting amenities are able to be located in the track centre to support sporting fields located there.

A separate parcel of land for a training track, agistment lots and other equestrian group facilities would be required. The SHOATA complex may not be able to serve this function in the long term due to the conditions of the Boodarie Industrial Buffer Special Control Area.

Ideally a larger parcel of land that allows for long term growth in equestrian activities and agistment requirements is required. An additional 50 ha to the existing 110 ha available at SHOATA would provide significant room for future growth.

Again, it is acknowledged that finding such a large, suitable parcel of land could prove difficult given the topographical constraints of the region. An equestrian precinct that caters for all user groups (apart from the PHTC) would be more efficient and effective for the equestrian community than a separate location being utilised to accommodate growth as this would result in further duplications of facilities.

#### Out of Town Location

If a location outside of the current Port or South Hedland town-sites was chosen for the relocation of the PHTC, it would be advantageous to collocate the Pony Club and any other equestrian organisations that may form in the future (i.e. Riding for Disabled, Polo etc) at the new race track venue.



The Pony Club and other groups would be able to share the high level clubhouse facilities of the PHTC and construct their arenas within the centre of the track. Ideally, the available parcel of land would allow for the development of cross country tracks also.

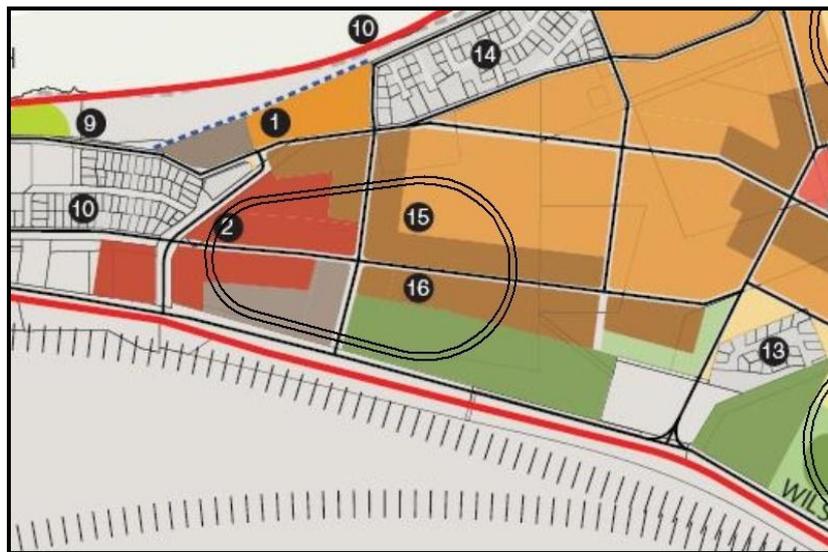
The training track facilities would be best collocated with the primary agistment site to enable ease of access for owners and trainers. This is currently the case at the SHOATA complex.



## 10 SITE ANALYSIS

An initial assessment of the identified potential sites for the future location of the Port Hedland Turf Club has been made. The site analysis has been conducted with the primary aim of identifying a new location for the PHTC and, ideally, a location for a single equestrian precinct. The advantages and disadvantages of each site have been identified and listed below:

### 10.1 Current Site



#### Advantages

- The current site is of historical significance to the Town of Port Hedland. It has been the site of the Turf Club for over 100 years.
- It has great potential to provide an impressive entrance statement to the Town.
- Capital costs to redevelop will be significantly lower than the cost to build new elsewhere as it is already established and much of the facility can be utilised.
- Sporting ovals are already developed there.
- It will continue to provide buffer from significantly increased rail traffic noise and dust for new and existing residents.
- Time to start construction will be shorter due to the avoidance of pre-construction work including gaining relevant permits, re-zoning, change of ownership etc.
- Is the preferred location of the Port Hedland Turf Club. All key stakeholder groups have expressed a strong desire to remain in their existing locations.
- Benefits from the sea breezes being in close proximity to the ocean.
- It is within walking distance of many Port Hedland town residents and in close proximity to the supporting facilities (shops, restaurants etc) that the CBD area of the town provides.
- Landcorp has identified the current site as the preferred location for the PHTC if no other site outside of town can be identified as it would provide a buffer from the BHP stockpiles in this location.



### Disadvantages

- The site is constrained and does not allow for the development of chutes to accommodate the 1,000 and 1,800m track lengths.
- Grass is difficult to grow at the south east end due to flooding and salinity.
- Dust coming from the dirt track may become an issue in future as housing is developed around it.
- It is not a suitable location for agistment due to its urban location.
- It does not enable the creation of an equestrian precinct as it is not ideal to have horses located in highly populated areas due to safety risks. This will become an increasing issue in future years as the East End precinct experiences in-fill with urban residential and commercial development.
- It will not be ideal from a town planning perspective to have a fully fenced 40+ hectare facility in an increasingly populated area. The facility would need to be utilised for active open space to assist the Town in meeting the 40 hectares of active open space requirements identified in the Active Open Space Strategy 2011. Equestrian facilities need to be fully fenced to ensure horses cannot escape and cause serious injury to themselves or the public.
- Sports utilising a racing venue space is workable but not ideal due to the racing season coinciding with the sporting season, sensitivities of disturbing the track from frequent crossing to the centre and the considerable distance from the centre oval to the clubhouse facilities including public toilets and changerooms.
- The likely future relocation of the Pony Club facilities at Pretty pool including agistment/stabling facilities means that the current Turf Club location could be a significant distance from where the horses are kept in the future.
- The training track used by the PHTC south of Styles Road is located on unallocated crown land. Landcorp is planning for its release to the market for around July 2012. This could potentially mean the loss of the training track in the short term which will disadvantage PHTC members. It will likely require all training to occur at the SHOATA training track.
- Retention of the track (some 40 hectares) will impact upon the urban development targets of the Town's Growth Plan, as it is situated in an area of identified developable land. A lack of land suitable for housing is a major issue for the Town of Port Hedland.



## 10.2 Athol Street / Cooke Point Road Location



### Advantages

- Within walking distance from the Port Hedland town site, good proximity to supporting facilities including shops and restaurants.
- Good ambience being close to ocean, benefitting from sea breeze.

### Disadvantages

- Increasing pressure in future for land to be released for residential use. This location would reduce 40+ ha of developable urban area in the East End Precinct as identified in the Growth Plan. This impact on housing is greater than at sites along Wilson Street, as none of this land is required for a buffer zone.
- Lot 5552 – Crown Land vested in ToPH is not large enough to fit a full size race track. It would require use of the adjacent unallocated Crown Land that surrounds the waterway.
- The land is subject to extensive regular flooding, evidenced by its lack of vegetation. It would require major site works to develop a racetrack facility.
- Requires a complete rebuild of facilities.
- This area does not have any significant advantages over the current turf club site.
- Low level of the land likely requiring significant levels of fill.



### 10.3 Wilson Street / Styles Road



#### Advantages

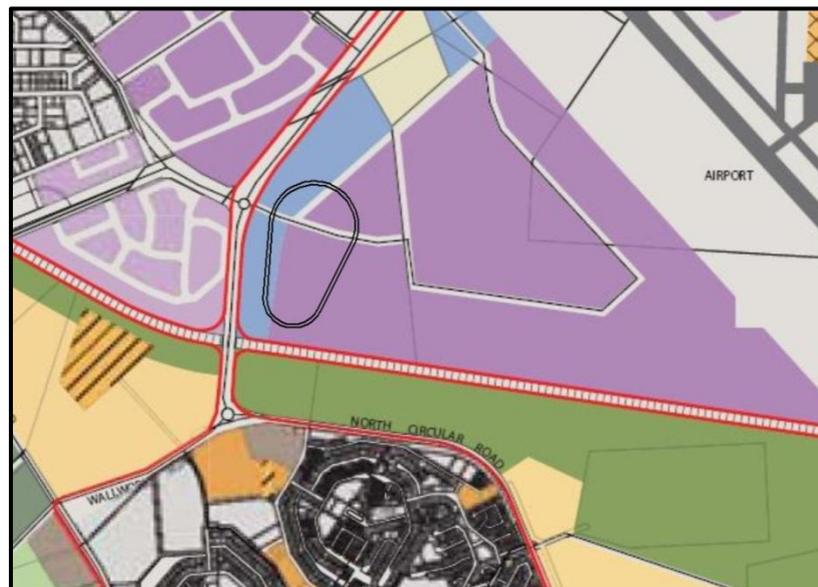
- Similar benefits to current site location;
- Provides extended buffer area for planned residential development from train line and traffic.
- Partially fits in with Growth Plan priorities, by covering some area that has been identified as sporting ovals/buffer zone for new residential areas. It also frees up the western end of the race track site for the development of a neighbourhood centre and high density residential development as per the Growth Plan.
- Town location provides good access to supporting facilities such as shops and restaurants.
- Close to ocean, gain benefits of proximity to ocean with cooler temperature.

#### Disadvantages

- Similar disadvantages to current site location including conflict of residential/equestrian uses of land in an urban setting.
- Is reliant on substantial remodelling of the road network and lot boundaries being completed prior to construction. (Could take a considerable amount of time).
- Requires complete rebuild of PHTC facilities without resolving many of the issues of the current site location. A large volume of costly fill would be required. Note: Landcorp advises \$40 per m<sup>3</sup> of fill to be imported. The cost of fill for a new turf club site is likely to be measured in the millions of dollars.



## 10.4 Airport



### Advantages

- There is currently large area of undeveloped land (unallocated Crown Land) that could potentially fit an entire equestrian precinct.
- It has good access to the highway between Port and South providing ease of access from both directions.
- Frees up land for residential development in Port Hedland.

### Disadvantages

- Requires complete new facilities build.
- Low lying land may require substantial fill.
- Aircraft noise, increasing over time, may not be compatible for equestrian use.
- It is not appropriate use of airport zoned land. This location would impact on planning being conducted for airport site, including plans for FIFO accommodation.
- Inland location is considered to be warmer than the Port Hedland sites due to increased distance from the ocean.
- Land is reserved for air transport/accommodation related developments.



## 10.5 SHOATA



### Advantages

- It is a large site (110 ha), however, some of the land is being lost to new road works and realignment of the Great Northern Highway.
- Has easy access from Great Northern Highway.
- The land is already being used for equestrian purposes including a training track and agistment lots.

### Disadvantages

- Is located within the Boodarie Industrial Buffer Special Control Area as identified in the current Town Planning Scheme. TPS 5, Section 7.2.1 states that dwellings and developments that attract persons are not permitted within this area. The development of further equestrian facilities including agistment with provision for short term accommodation and a race track would be contrary to the TPS text.
- The Department of State Development (DSD) states that the Boodarie Industrial Estate has long been planned to support the growth of downstream processing in the Port Hedland area and that appropriate zoning and infrastructure plans are in place to allow resource processing projects to locate on the estate. It appears highly likely that DSD would strongly oppose any changes to the TPS text regarding weakening of the conditions related to the Boodarie Industrial Buffer Special Control Area if the Town wished to do so.
- The whole site is being utilised by SHOATA members for training on the training tracks and turning out on the paddocks. Any further loss of land would negatively impact on their potential to accommodate horses. The SHOATA complex plays an integral role in providing a sufficient number of horses for the North West racing season.
- There is a significant odour noticeable from the waste water treatment plant. Odour control is planned in the upgrades and expansion but the Water Corporation cannot say at this stage how much of an improvement there will be.
- If the odour is not improved significantly, it would be a significant issue for race day events.



- Requires complete rebuild of racetrack facilities with likely need for importation of fill (significant expense).
- A shared pavilion with the golf club is unlikely to be a viable location for the PHTC. Spectators along the main straight and at the pavilion would be facing the full glare and heat of the afternoon sun from this location, creating an inhospitable environment for spectators.
- The inland location results in significantly warmer conditions than the Port Hedland sites due to increased distance from the ocean (anecdotal evidence of this difference only).
- Does not have close proximity to shops or restaurants as the current location does.
- Significant distance from current track – current PHTC members are likely to be inconvenienced due to additional travel time. The majority of PHTC members are currently from Port Hedland (although this is possible that it could change over time).
- Is an undesirable location for Pony Club and Turf Club members.
- FMG planned road being developed will intersect the south western corner of the site. This reduces the capacity of SHOATA to accommodate additional horses.



## 10.6 North East of Golf Course



### Advantages

- Further away from waste water treatment plant, therefore less odour, better ambience than SHOATA location.

### Disadvantages

- Located within the Boodarie Industrial Buffer Special Control Area which has conditions that does not permit the development of any facilities that attract persons.
- Requires complete new build of all PHTC facilities.
- Site constrained by seasonal creek. Would not be possible to develop a full equestrian precinct for all user groups in this location.
- Low lying area will require significant fill to develop track.
- Site has been identified as a potential golf course residential area in Growth Plan.



## 10.7 Key Findings

Overall, it is readily apparent that there is no single ideal future location for the Port Hedland Turf Club. The Port Hedland locations will face increasing pressure for development as residential areas and the removal of the training track and potential relocation of the Port Hedland Pony Club in the future will make these locations less convenient for users. The other identified sites around South Hedland have significant constraints that may make each unsuitable for development as a new race track venue. Relocation of the PHTC to South Hedland is not supported by any of the key stakeholder groups.

All sites other than the existing are likely to face considerable construction costs due to the flood/storm surge prone nature of the available land. The importation of fill alone could cost many millions of dollars. There will be no funds raised from the sale of the existing PHTC site to contribute to construction costs of a track elsewhere as the cost of development (including over \$51.6 million of fill) significantly outweighs the potential sale value of the land.

SHOATA has long been regarded as a potential site for the relocation of the PHTC; however, investigations reveal that this site falls within the Boodarie Industrial Buffer Special Control Area. TPS 5 does not permit the development of dwellings or facilities that attracts persons within this area. Furthermore, the entire area of land is utilised by the SHOATA organisation and any further loss of land would negatively impact on their ability to accommodate a sufficient number of horses to race in the North West racing season.

Additionally, previous plans of a racing venue at the SHOATA complex have shown a shared use pavilion with the golf club. In its current layout positioning, this would result in very poor spectator viewing for the race track which is a critical element for successful race events to be conducted. Changes to golf course design would require significant course changes and expense to accommodate a suitable race track clubhouse facility.

Of the identified potential sites, only the Wilson Street/Styles Road site (Port Hedland) offers a reasonable opportunity for the development of a racing facility (apart from retaining the existing site).

An area of land large enough for the ideal development of a single equestrian precinct has not been identified (150-200 ha required), however; consultation with Landcorp and RPS reveals that the Southern Precinct, as identified in the Growth Plan may be suitable for investigation as it is on the outskirts of South Hedland and would be a compatible use of rural residential zoned land.

Of the identified potential sites for the future location of the Port Hedland Turf Club, the current site appears to be the most suitable solution that balances expressed user group needs and financial considerations, and is indicative of forward planning.

The benefits of retaining the race track in its current location are as follows:

- Lowest cost to reconstruct PHTC facilities in this location. It would not require a complete rebuild as it would at the other identified locations.
- Potential to provide an impressive entry statement into Port Hedland.
- Retains and continues the operation of a historically significant facility for the Town of Port Hedland, having been in operation for over 100 years in its current location.
- The centre of the race track can be used to meet a large proportion of the town's active open space requirements as per the Active Open Space Strategy 2011 (identified need for approximately 40 ha)



- Does not adversely impact on the operations/capacity of other equestrian groups (i.e. SHOATA).
- Benefits from sea breezes and does not have odour issues that the SHOATA site has, providing an improved level of amenity for spectators.
- Is located in an area that will provide a useful buffer from dust blowing in from the adjacent BHP stockpiles.
- Is agreeable to all equestrian user groups.
- Is fenced and suitable for major events.

A major challenge for retaining the PHTC in its current location is ensuring that use of the area in the centre of the track is maximised for community benefit. It would require innovative design solutions to enable substantial active, and potentially passive, public open space and recreational facilities to be developed that are readily accessible to the growing community.

It appears a greenfields site is likely be required for the long term relocation of users of the Port Hedland Pony Club facilities in order to allow the Pretty Pool residential development plans to progress. Short to mid term, the relocation of the Pony Club and supporting agistment facilities could be relocated to SHOATA. Further mid to long term development of the SHOATA complex appears to be impermissible according to the conditions of the Boodarie Industrial Buffer Special Control Area as per TPS 5. Any identified greenfields site should provide capacity for significant future growth in demand for agistment sites. Ideally, a suitable greenfields site could also allow for the future collocation of SHOATA and all other potential equestrian groups that may form in the future.

Further works on facilities concept design will explore the specific potential for the preferred site.



## **11 APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1. Consultation Report**
- Appendix 2. Comparative Review**
- Appendix 3. Port Hedland Race Course Site Evaluation**
- Appendix 4. Port Hedland Race Track Community Survey Results**

