

ORDINARY MEETING	8
14 AUGUST 2019	

PROPOSAL TO RENAME TENNIS CLUB PARK, FRESHWATER TO RICHMOND PARK - DIVISION 6

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RECOMMENDATION:

That Council resolves to rename Tennis Club Park at Old Smithfield, Lavis and Kamerunga Roads, Freshwater to Richmond Park.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The purpose of this report is to present for Council consideration a proposal to rename Tennis Club Park located at Old Smithfield, Lavis and Kamerunga Roads, Freshwater. The proposed new name is Richmond Park. Richmond Park is the name given to the original railway siding/station called 'Richmond Siding and later Richmond Park Railway Station', this now being a larger station known as Freshwater Station. The park is also part of the original Richmond Park Estate which was an estate that covered the park and surrounding area in the late 1800s.

Under the General Policy Naming of Parks/Reserves, Council may name a park after events, moments and people of historic significance to an area. The proposed name satisfies the relevant criteria in the General Policy. The proposal was notified to residents living in the vicinity of the park. Most submissions received gave strong support for the proposed name. One submission preferred an indigenous name for the park.

Whilst the Policy encourages dual naming of parks to acknowledge traditional owners, no indigenous name was proposed by traditional owners in this instance.

It is therefore recommended that Council resolves to name the park Richmond Park.

BACKGROUND:

Council received a request from the Divisional Councillor to rename Tennis Club Park in Freshwater to Richmond Park (location is shown at Attachment 1). Historic information regarding the proposed name was submitted by Councillor Cooper and is provided below:

Background/Historical Information for Request

"Approximately a year ago, when Council was undergoing a consultation process for a new playground at the Freshwater Tennis Club Park, a number of issues were raised about the park name, including its iterations, which include: Railway Reserve; Railway Square; Freshwater Tennis Club Park; Freshwater Park; and Freshwater Reserve.

At the same time, another long-term resident (Sue Toms) approached Councillor Cooper and asked if Council could consider renaming the park with something that had a more historical context. To that end, Councillor Cooper met up with Dr David Phoenix who is a well-known Cairns historian and helped develop a majority of the data used for the local heritage trails, and is also the author of a number of papers and a book on the history of the Old Smithfield township. Councillor Cooper is very grateful to David for researching the history of Freshwater which, of note, is not publicly displayed either in Freshwater or anywhere else.

- The current land on which the park sits was originally owned (in part) by James Burke (1885).
- In early 1886 the Land Department took eight acres of this land for a Reserve for Railway Purposes.
- The Freshwater Railway Station was originally called 'Richmond Siding' (as referenced in the Cairns Railway time table from 1890). The railway stops were: Cairns, Edge Hill, Stratford, Lily Bank, Richmond, Redlynch, Kamerunga.
- The property portions 70 and 252, owned by James Burke went to auction in May 1886 by renowned auctioneer John 'Mac' McNamara as 'Richmond Park Estate'. Part of the advertisement read:

"Richmond Park Estate, within the municipality of Cairns. Blocks from Quarter Acre Frontages to the Government-road and Richmond Park Railway Station. Scenery is unrivalled in the world. Chatoeiment Grandeur Unprecedented. Soil – Fertility Itself. Gentle aromatic breezes waited from the placid Pacific at the Richmond Park Railway Station, within ten minutes' journey of Cairns."

Portion 70 was specifically the portion that the current parkland now sits on.
- Daniel Patience went on to buy some of Portion 70 and in October 1886 accedes part of the allotment for a railway easement. The southern part of the Railway land then became Railway Reserve.
- In 1936 the Freshwater Progress Association asked the Council to obtain control of the railway reserve for health purposes, which was originally refused, however, the joint efforts of the Progress Association, the Freshwater Branch of QCWA and local member Mr. H Collins, resulted in a health reserve being declared in 1940.
- In 1940 the Freshwater Branch of QCWA pressed for further space for a playground, which was supported.
- In 1941 the Freshwater Public Hall Committee was granted approval for an area to be used for tennis courts.
- In 1955 the QCWA Hall was completed.
- In 1963 the Recreation Reserve was resurveyed with a portion allocated to the Girl Guides.

Given the protracted history of this reserve, including the numerous owners and community groups that have been significantly involved with its formation, it has been suggested that the reserve be renamed 'Richmond Park'. Richmond Park was the original name of both the railway station and the advertised land so its historical context is appropriate. There are no other parks in Cairns with this name but, more importantly, there is very little signage on public display that pays homage to the fact that the Freshwater area was originally known as **Richmond**. The renaming of the park will provide an amazing opportunity to capture this history in situ."

COMMENT:

The site is an important local park located near the Freshwater Train Station, Limberlost Nursery, local shops, and a kindergarten. The park contains several tennis courts and associated tennis club, several small local businesses that are housed inside a large brick two storey building, a CWA hall, a Girl Guides building, a new playground, internal car parking, drainage lines, and landscaping.

Under the General Policy Naming of Parks/Reserves, Park Naming Categories, Parks and Reserves may be named after one of the following categories:

- Geographic/natural features located nearby or flora and fauna endemic or native to the area, for example, Rainy Mountain Park, Smithfield;
- Events, moments or people of historic significance from the local area, for example, significant pioneering families, early settlers, military campaigns or events such as a solar eclipse;
- Names with local Indigenous cultural significance with a strong connection to the subject land, for example, names like Goomboora Park in Brinsmead, Jalarra Park in Stratford and Billy Jagar Environmental Reserve at Holloways Beach; and
- Any other category, subject or topic deemed appropriate at the discretion of Council.

The proposal satisfies the second dot point as the name reflects events and moments in time as well as the historic name for the site.

OPTIONS:Option 1: (Recommended)

That Council resolves to rename Tennis Club Park at Old Smithfield, Lavis and Kamerunga Roads, Freshwater to Richmond Park.

Option 2:

Retain the existing name of the park.

This option is not preferred as it lacks any significant meaning or historic cultural connection to the site.

CONSIDERATIONS:Risk Management:

Risks with this proposal are negligible as the community has been consulted with most respondents supporting it. The only objector preferred an indigenous name. Traditional owners were contacted but did not provide any suggested names.

Council Finance and the Local Economy:

The cost for new signage of the park will be sourced from within the existing budget allocation for signage. It is also proposed to provide an historic interpretive sign detailing the history of the area.

Community and Cultural Heritage

The proposal seeks to revive the original name for the area and park so that a cultural and community connection to the early settlement of the area can be established.

Traditional owners were notified of the proposed park naming and were requested to provide a dual name, however, no names were suggested. Notwithstanding this, a dual name can be given at any time if traditional owners were to approach Council in the future with a suitable name that reflects their cultural values and relates to the area.

Policy

General Policy Naming of Parks/Reserves.

CONSULTATION:

Letters were sent to local residents seeking their input into the naming of the park. On-site signage was displayed during the consultation period. The consultation period ran from 21 June 2019 to 12 July 2019. Details of Council's General Policy for naming parks and reserves were included in the letter, as well as a locality map and background information.

From this consultation process, Council received 7 responses of which most gave strong support to the proposed park name, with one preferring a local indigenous name over the name suggested and one suggesting to add another local's name to the park name.

The Divisional Councillor has been consulted throughout this process.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Location map of the site proposed to be named Richmond Park



Brett Spencer
Manager Community Development



Linda Kirchner
General Manager Community, Sport and Cultural Services

Attachment 1: Location map of the site proposed to be named Richmond Park.

