

Audience applauds as sites revealed

By DI THOMAS

WODONGA Council yesterday was widely commended for its announcement of four short-listed options for the city's proposed aquatic and leisure facility.

Those attending an information meeting at Wodonga Civic Centre applauded the announcement by Mayor Rod Wangman that Willow Park would no longer be considered a site for the project.

There was further applause when the option to redevelop the existing Stanley Street site through to Elgin Boulevard was announced.

Former Wodonga mayor Graham Crapp congratulated the council for "having the courage to re-examine its initial decision to site the facility at Willow Park".

"It indicates a healthy council which is prepared to listen," Mr Crapp said.

But he said a full economic assessment on the four options would be needed.

"I think a determination of the next phase will be made by assessing what the city might get for what it will spend at each of the sites," he said.

Wodonga chief executive Peter Marshall said a full economic assessment of each of the four options was yet to be completed but a high level assessment had been done on all 13 initial options.

Rex Philpott from the Wodonga Water Polo Club said his own research had found it would cost up to \$10 million to construct a new pool facility complete with 50m pool, filtration infrastructure and change rooms and other facilities.

He said he was reluctant to see the council spend \$4.5 million from the facility's budget to acquire land.

"I would rather put the money into the facility than into a land purchase," he said.

Jean Whitla followed a similar theme, while others urged the council to consider the provision of low-cost facilities, development of a hydrotherapy pool and consultation with Albury Council.