1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

By August 2019, the City of Prospect must vacate the former Nailsworth Primary School site at 1 Thomas Street, Nailsworth, which has housed a Council library service for more than 35 years. The Council has been ‘on a journey’ to identify a preferred site for the replacement library.

This journey has included a qualitative and quantitative analysis of a number of candidate sites (reducing them to a field of 4), fact finding visits to leading examples of library services elsewhere, community consultation programs and structured discussions with Councillors and staff about the level of service expected from Prospect’s new facility.

More recently, Council has further narrowed the list of candidate sites for the new library to 2 possibilities; the Prospect Civic Centre on Prospect Road and the Tram Barn/Depot Site at the corner of Main North Road and Johns Road.

The next step in this journey is to subject the two candidate sites to more detailed assessment from an economic impact or benefit perspective. This work is the focus of the current brief. It is expected to cover a range of criteria, broadly described to include “market analysis, consideration of site opportunities and constraints, opportunity cost assessment, staff / operational impact and financing options”. Moreover, “risk considerations and social benefit are to underpin the research”.

The brief makes clear that the work in question must empower Councillors and management to make the decision on the best site for the replacement library. Accordingly, the analytical methods and consultancy process applied by the appointed team must directly involve Councillors and management in the scoping and validation of all key assumptions, logic trails and data.

1.2 This proposal

SGS Economics & Planning Pty Ltd (SGS) is pleased to have this opportunity to respond to Council’s brief.

We come to the task with nationally leading expertise in three areas critical to the brief:

- Understanding the role and function of municipal library services
- Applying rigorous discounted cash flow analysis to simulate the financial performance of the options for Council as an operator / investor in the library service, and
- Applying advanced cost benefit analysis to comprehensively explore the wider social, economic and environmental impacts of the options at hand.

Furthermore, SGS is very familiar with the South Australian and Adelaide environments having delivered successful consultancy services to a wide range of public sector agencies in the State over more than 2 decades. These services have dealt with housing, economic development, community facilities planning and cost benefit analyses.

Our proposal in response to the City of Prospect’s brief is in 6 parts.

Following this introductory section, we discuss, in Section 2, our understanding of the brief and our conceptual framework for answering the question posed by Council.
Section 3 builds on this conceptual framework and provides a detailed account of the methodology we will apply to meet the brief.

Section 4 profiles SGS and our relevant assignment experience, while Section 5 introduces the team of consultants we propose to undertake the work for Prospect.

Finally, in Section 6, we provide our analysis of project costs and our tendered fee.
2 APPRECIATION OF THE BRIEF

2.1 Specific provisions

Council’s brief is calling for “a balanced approach to the true costs and benefits (and options) for the delivery of a new Library & Innovation Centre facility which has significant opportunity to be a community hub”.

More specifically, the brief requires the options assessment process to address a range of issues including but not limited to the following:

- Opportunities for consolidating or otherwise streamlining Council library operations, given that there are presently 3 locations in service (including Thomas Street)
- Achievability of commercial closure at the two candidate sites, acknowledging that Council must deal with a fixed deadline for vacating Thomas Street
- Site analysis including:
  - physical capacity
  - engineering services
  - existing building attributes and scope for adaptation or re-use
  - environmental encumbrances
  - development approvals and Local Government Act compliance
- Indicative floor plans
- Commercial opportunities on the sites
- Property valuations
- Staff/operational impact
- Funding and financing arrangements formatted to support future preparation of a full Prudential Report
- Social benefits, and
- Risk analysis.

This is a broad scope of work to be delivered in a relatively short time frame and with limited resources. To successfully meet this challenge a suitable multi-disciplinary team is required, along with a very clear conceptual framework to guide the project. This is essential to minimise time and resource loss in clarifying scope and appropriate analytical methods.

We now turn to our conceptualisation of the challenge posed by Council.

2.2 Conceptual framework

Based on the business case processes routinely pursued by governments across Australia, the exercise of finding the best site for Prospect’s replacement library would comprise of four elements as illustrated in Figure 1 overleaf.

Firstly, any option must be shown to be compliant with Council’s policies and objectives. Secondly, options should be tested for their contribution to net community wellbeing, taking into account the full gamut of financial and non-financial cost and benefits. Thirdly, the financial implications of each option for Council must be properly analysed to confirm that Council can, indeed, ‘afford’ the preferred option.
Finally, the contemplated preferred option must be demonstrably deliverable, given the practicalities of the site in question and the nature of Council library operations.

**FIGURE 1  ELEMENTS OF OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

Based on our understanding of Council’s brief, we can safely assume that, having survived the appraisal journey so far, the two sites under consideration are wholly compliant with Council’s policy framework.

What is needed now is testing against the other three parameters in Figure 1 with a particular focus on cost benefit analysis and financial analysis.

**Cost benefit analysis**

The cost benefit analysis (CBA) element must address the full spectrum of environmental, social and business impacts of the options under consideration. Positive and negative effects are quantified and monetised (expressed in dollar terms) as far as possible. They are then compared so that we may arrive...
at a conclusion as to whether the option in question is likely to make the community better off, or worse off, in net terms compared with persevering with a defined base case.

The principal steps in the cost benefit analysis method include:

1. Differentiating between the outcomes under a ‘base case’ scenario and those arising with the option under consideration
2. Identifying the economic, social and environmental costs and benefits that might arise in moving from the ‘base case’ to the alternative option
3. Quantifying and monetising these costs and benefits, where possible, over a suitable project evaluation period (in this case 20 years is suggested)
4. Generating measures of net community impact using discounted cash flow techniques over the 20 year duration of the project; this requires expression of future costs and benefits in present value terms using a discount rate that is reflective of the opportunity costs of resources diverted to the implementation of the reforms
5. Testing the sensitivity of these measures to changes in the underlying assumptions utilised, and
6. Supplementing this quantitative analysis with a description of costs and benefits that cannot be readily quantified and monetised.

It is particularly important to note that all impacts of the option under consideration versus the base case must be taken into account, whether or not they are ‘traded’ effects or ‘externalities’.

As the name implies, traded effects have a price in the market. Externalities on the other hand are unpriced costs and benefits sustained by third parties in any market transaction. The cost benefit analysis must account for these impacts even though they are not directly mediated (bought and sold) in the market. The monetised value of these external effects needs to be imputed using a variety of techniques as advised by the SA Treasury.

**Financial analysis**

*Financial analysis is sometimes confused or conflated with CBA. Financial analysis is undertaken from the narrow perspective of an investor, or buyer, or seller in the market and only tracks market transacted costs and benefits. It also takes into account tax liabilities. In contrast, CBA is undertaken from a society wide perspective and, as noted, considers all impacts on welfare, whether priced or unpriced. Moreover, because CBA is concerned with net effects, tax impacts are typically set aside as they are simply transfers within the wider community.*

Accordingly, financial analysis can be seen to be a subset of CBA or net community benefit assessment.

**2.3 Suggested order of analysis**

Commonly, in evaluations of this nature, the sequence of tests runs from appraisal of policy alignment, then to CBA, then to financial analysis and finally to deliverability.

In determining a preferred site for Prospect’s new library, however, we recommend running the financial analysis ahead of the CBA. This is because, as noted, CBA is a marginal analysis versus a base case. We understand that Prospect is committed to replacing the Thomas Street library somewhere. Therefore, the base case for CBA purposes cannot be a ‘zero’ proposition where Prospect is left with only 2 library service outlets. Nor can the base case be ‘business as usual’ at Thomas Street as Council must vacate by 2019.

Our approach, therefore, will be to undertake a financial analysis of both options against a zero base case, as this will fully reveal Council’s direct exposure to this service commitment. The option that is superior from a financial perspective will then form the base case for the marginal CBA.
The ultimate ‘preferred option’ will be a matter for Council to judge, but laying out the analysis in the fashion outlined above means that Councillors can strike a conscious balance between what it can afford and what is best for the community. Alternatively, the analysis will be capable of a ‘mathematical solution’ being the option that maximises benefits for the costs incurred regardless of where these costs and benefits fall.

**Figure 2 Sequence of Financial and Economic Tests**

- **Undertake financial analysis against 'zero base'**
  - Opportunity cost of land
  - Construction costs
  - Operating costs
  - Organisational synergies

- **Best financial option**

- **Undertake cost benefit analysis using best financial option as 'Base Case'**
  - Social impacts
  - Environmental impacts
  - Local business impacts

- **Preferred option**

Source: SGS Economics & Planning Pty Ltd

In the next section of this proposal we describe in detail how we will put this conceptual framework into practice.
3 METHOD

3.1 Overall approach

In line with the discussion in Section 2, SGS proposes to undertake this options assessment by applying two sets of analysis; one focussed on the financial consequences for Council and one focussed on the wider social, economic and environmental impacts of the alternative locations. Our approach is summarised in the chart overleaf.

The *financial* appraisal will consider the two sites purely from the perspective of cash flows and balance sheet impacts for the City of Prospect as a corporation. This will have regard to comparative building costs, any variations in operating costs between the sites, impacts on the value of Council’s land portfolio and so on.

Meanwhile, the *economic* analysis will cast a wider net and look at the two options from the perspective of the Prospect and regional community. This will take into account several non-financial or non-traded impacts, including differences in visitation levels between the options, travel times for people using the library, opportunities to leverage the library investment to boost local economic activity, traffic congestion and other externalities.

These two perspectives will be synthesised into a single report, so that Council can judge which option is best for Prospect on balance.

In populating both analyses, our method involves facilitated workshopping with the Councillors and officers so that the logic and data are owned and understood by the City, and not seen as the result of a ‘black box’ exercise, or the pronouncements of remote experts.

As discussed, we anticipate that the financial analysis will be carried out on the assumption of a ‘zero base case’; that is absolute costs and benefits of both options versus closure of the library will be measured and compared. The economic analysis will then use the better performed financial option as the base case for a marginal appraisal of non-financial effects including library visitation, private travel and local business effects etc.

We elaborate on the various tasks in the chart in the following pages.

3.2 Details of study tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task 1</th>
<th>Project mobilisation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>As part of the mobilisation process, SGS will prepare a draft project management plan. This will be prepared ahead of a formal Inception Meeting, but following due consultation with Council’s project manager. This project management plan will set out anticipated data requirements for both the financial and economic analyses and propose a set of key project milestones. All these matters will be discussed and confirmed (or amended) after a face to face Inception Meeting. On the same visit, SGS will undertake site inspections and document the context of the two candidate sites as well as the current location of the library.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Deliverables |
| A project management report, confirming method, timelines and expected outputs. |
Task 2 | Resolve option details
--- | ---
Description | This task will be focussed on marshalling and validating all the data for the financial and economic analyses as identified in the project management plan. We would work closely with Council’s valuers, designers, quantitative surveyors and planners to identify relevant sources and secure the required information. **Note that we have made no provision for architectural design work in our budget** on the assumption that Council can already access these resources. However, we could sub-contract these skills, if necessary, at an additional cost.

Source: SGS Economics & Planning Pty Ltd
A key challenge in this task will be to understand in detail what it will cost to build, own and operate the library in each location in turn. This includes due scrutiny of whether the two options differ in terms of specification / quality aside from the location.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverables</th>
<th>Working paper for circulation to the Council Project Manager for noting, and for ultimate incorporation in SGS’s final report.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Task 3**  
**Analyse financial impact**

**Description**  
The financial analysis will involve discounted cash flow analysis built from the perspective of Council as ‘investor and operator’. This will measure the relative performance of the options by the usual measures of net present value (NPV), internal rate of return (IRR) and pay back period (though the latter may not be relevant as the library is not a major revenue generator from users).

Ordinarily, Councils would choose the best performing financial option – as this is best for ratepayers – **UNLESS** the less well performed financial option delivers more than compensating non-financial benefits including, for example, better utilisation rates, lower vehicular travel and better local economic stimulus effects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverables</th>
<th>Working paper for circulation to the Council Project Manager for noting, and for ultimate incorporation in SGS’s final report.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Task 4**  
**Cost benefit analysis**

**Description**  
SGS would carry out a cost benefit analysis (CBA) following the methodology prescribed by the SA Treasury. As per Treasury guidelines, the CBA will be performed on a marginal basis, with the better financial option acting as the Base Case. Costs and benefits offered by the other option versus this Base Case will be measured by the SGS team. Some of these marginal impacts will come straight from the financial analysis, for example, pluses and minuses in terms of build and operational costs. But mostly, the marginal variations will be external to the financial analysis and look to wider effects on the Prospect community and broader region. As noted, these will cover social, environmental and cultural effects.

SGS will nominate and quantify these external marginal effects wherever possible. Also, wherever feasible, SGS will monetise these marginal effects, by using a range of acknowledged tools like the travel cost method, application of shadow prices and ‘willingness to pay’ surveys, reported in the literature.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverables</th>
<th>A preliminary findings report and PowerPoint presentation for use in the Council workshop (see below).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Task 5**  
**Council workshop**

**Description**  
SGS will facilitate a comprehensive workshop with Councillors, designed to make sure they can understand and critique the assumptions, data, method and findings of both the financial and economic arms of the options appraisal.

The workshop will be used to explore Councillor views on how each of these parameters (assumptions, data and method) might be varied to ensure that the ultimate findings from this consultancy are robust, believable and communicable to the Prospect community.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverables</th>
<th>Workshop report, including directions for warranted changes to the financial and economic analyses.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Task 6  Synthesis and report**

**Description**

Following the Council workshop, the SGS team will undertake the necessary additional research and consultation to implement the warranted adjustments to the financial and economic analyses.

The results of these adjustments, in terms of the rating of the options, will be provided to the Council project manager in draft form for further feedback and direction.

Pending this input, the SGS team will finalise the study report. This will synthesise all the relevant task outputs in a concise but comprehensive account of the relative merits of the options, including a finding on the option that is best from a total value perspective.

| Deliverables | Final project report |
Introduction

There are two purposes of this work plan:

1. To provide the SGS team with a framework for completing agreed project tasks
2. To provide the Prospect Council team with key milestones, invoicing dates and our data requests.

The project management plan is a valuable way for each party to understand their responsibilities and to keep track of their own involvement in each of the tasks. Any modifications/additions/comments in relation to this document should be made clear to the consultants as soon as is practicable.
**TABLE 1. WORK PLAN TABLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Task</th>
<th>Sub-task</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Deliverable</th>
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<th>Venue</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Source</th>
<th>Date required</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<td>Project mobilisation</td>
<td>- Draft project management plan</td>
<td>Issued</td>
<td>Project management report</td>
<td>26/08</td>
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<td>26/08/16</td>
<td>Requested</td>
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<td>- Undertake site and locality inspections</td>
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<td>Jo &amp; Nathan</td>
<td>25/08/16</td>
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<td>- Arrange for data inputs from Council’s valuers, designers, quantitative surveyors, engineers and planners</td>
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<td>TC, RM &amp; JD</td>
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<td>M3 Property</td>
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<td>- Understand land values of each site</td>
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<td>- For each option understand and outline future services, build costs and operating costs</td>
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<td>- Compare and contrast findings</td>
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<td>TC &amp; RM</td>
<td>JD &amp; MS</td>
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<td>- Identify lower (NPV) cost option as base case for CBA to follow</td>
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<td>TC &amp; RM</td>
<td>JD &amp; MS</td>
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<td>- Compare and contrast findings</td>
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<td>TC &amp; RM</td>
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<td>- Nominate and identify measurement and monetisation strategy and rationale for anticipated wider costs and benefits offered by the other options versus base case wherever possible.</td>
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<td>- Monetised marginal effects wherever feasible (in a table).</td>
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<td>- Apply DTF recommended discount rates.</td>
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<td>- Undertake sensitivity testing (increase costs by 20% &amp; decrease benefits by 20%).</td>
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## Timing schedule

### TABLE 2. TIMING

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- **Beginning Monday**: Monday dates listed in the following order: 22/8, 29/8, 5/9, 12/9, 19/9, 26/9, 03/10, 10/10, 17/10, 24/10, 31/10, 07/11, 14/11, 21/11, 28/11.