

# New ideas for oval take shape on blank canvas

## Community has say on Seafront future

By JESSICA GREWAL

Brainstorming in groups of five with a fresh sheet of butcher paper may bring back bad memories of high school for some.

But for those attending the Seafront Oval meeting in Main Street yesterday, the exercise was a breakthrough.

More than 30 Hervey Bay residents turned out to the Pialba Memorial Hall to have their say on the revamp of Seafront Oval.

Hervey Bay City Council's senior architect Helen Latham asked the residents to think of the oval as a "blank canvas".

Ms Latham said the council's aim was to build a "high quality outdoor venue in a high profile location".

"I haven't started designing anything yet," Ms Latham said.

"So I would appreciate any input from the community."

Attendees were asked to split into groups and were given sheets of butcher paper and a packet of permanent markers to list their ideas or draw concept maps.



Tony Baker and Amanda Weeks from the Boatshed and Helen Latham and Trevor Franklin discuss ideas for Seafront Oval at the meeting in the Pialba Memorial Hall yesterday.

Photo: ALISTAIR BRIGHTMAN 07h2715

Strong emphasis was placed on incorporating the oval's history into the design of infrastructure and landscaping.

A list of important historical events included the drought, the railway and soldier training for World War I.

Ms Latham said recognition also needed to be given to the Butchulla people who were the traditional land owners.

Ideas for the revamp included a remodelled open air stage, extra parking and the proposed water park.

A draft concept map will be brought back for community consultation on January 31, 2008.

A master plan is expected to be finalised by April.

The Hervey Bay City Council has put \$600,000 toward the project.