Samford Equestrian Group

Facility Usage Plan

July | 2023

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1. INTRODUCTION

Samford Equestrian Group (SEG) members have long held aspirations to cover one of the club's existing arenas at Samford Showgrounds. This aspiration has been expressed within a majority of stakeholder responses to the club's strategic planning survey. The need for the covered arena is supported by the club's size of 442 members in 2022, the high level of use the facility currently receives and Moreton Bay Regional Council's Equine Network Report and Action Plan. Council's action plan recommended that Samford Showgrounds should be uplifted from a local level to a regional level equestrian facility, which would justify installing a covered arena[1].

However, installing such a significant piece of infrastructure should be carefully considered and planned for. Not only must investment of this magnitude be justified with high utilisation and community value, the capacity to fund the long term repairs, maintenance and eventual replacement of the building must also be considered.

This report investigates the feasibility of installing a covered arena at Samford Showgrounds. A detailed investigation into the facility's capacity limitations and likely demand are provided. A high level cost benefit analysis is also provided.

1 Note that all approvals processes must still be undertaken with Council for the construction of a covered arena to proceed.

WHAT IS A COVERED ARENA?

Within this report, the term covered arena has been used rather than indoor arena. This distinction points to a covered arena as a simpler shed-like structure with a roof and potentially none or only partially covered sides.

Figure 1: Example covered arena

2. BACKGROUND

Samford Equestrian Group Inc (SEG) occupies Samford Showgrounds along with Samford and District Show Society Incorporated (SDSS) and Samford Riding for the Disabled Inc.

While the facility boasts the best set of outdoor competition level sand arenas in Queensland, the under embellishment of other components of the facility means it barely achieve a Tier 4 rating within the Equestrian Queensland Statewide Facility Plan (2018), despite it delivering competitions at Tier 3 level. Recent improvements, such as installing shade structures, water, wash bays and lights are positive embellishments. The addition of relocatable cattle panel day and round yards, and mobile catering and administration facilities are a testament to SEG's ability to find alternative solutions to deliver successful activities and competitions, and meet the expectations of nearly 500 members.

The SEG lease area has four excellent and well maintained 70m x 30m dressage arenas. Additionally, a 90m x 68m grass jumping arena, top dressed with sand, provides a surface that is highly regarded by showjumpers.

Outside the SEG licence area between the sand arenas and the show ring, there is an unused grassed polocrosse field previously used by a folded club. It is still in reasonably good condition (good original base and drainage). It would still accommodate a modified polocrosse field (90m x 45m), which with rectification could also accommodate a full sized field (146.5m x 55m). Polocrosse is a sport in decline, which has consolidated into regional level clubs across Queensland (closest club to Samford is at Kilcoy). Therefore, there is unlikely to be demand for polocrosse on the rectified field. With permission from SDSS, SEG has been using this area to run working equitation events.

The facility's fencing is high quality. Several combined sheds provide storage that is not large enough to accommodate the club's mobile facility trailers. The storage sheds are in an overland flow path and would benefit from strategic relocation when replacing or upgrading.

Figure 2: SEG's arenas

There are no amenities within SEG's licence area. The SDSS PWD toilet block is between 100m and 500m away, depending on where the participant is parked or competing. SEG improves this situation by parking a portaloo in the eastern part of the parking grounds and using a golf buggy to ferry judges, officials and people with a disability to the toilets.

There is room to park 180 horse vehicles within SEG's fenced licence area alone. Parking for horse vehicles could increase to 300 if the showgrounds are only partially used. These are unwatered, unpowered sites with room to tether horses to floats. Preserving the intensive parking space is important not only to SSDS (for car parking at show time) but also for SEG for accommodating large competitions.

Rather than having multiple clubs for multiple disciplines, SEG cleverly offers a large range of disciplines under one club. The main disciplines are dressage, showjumping and working equitation. Competitions, clinics and daily riding see the facility utilised almost every day of the week. Members of the previously active carriage club also now operate as part of SEG.

Figure 3: Parking at Samford Show time

2.1 MORETON BAY EQUINE NETWORK REPORT AND ACTION PLAN

The Moreton Bay Equine Network Report and Action Plan undertaken in 2023 revealed that Samford is the highest equestrian participation area in Moreton Bay.

This is because Samford is the home of SEG, Queensland's second largest Equestrian Queensland affiliate (442 members in 2022, up from 170 in 2017 and still growing), the largest Riding for Disabled Association (RDA) in Moreton Bay—Samford RDA (58 clients and 80 volunteers) and one of Queensland's largest pony clubs—Samford-Golden Valley Pony Club (109 riding members).

SEG and the Samford RDA are based at the Samford Showgrounds and Samford-Golden Valley Pony Club is based at Harold Brown Park (7km from the showgrounds).

Based on existing facility embellishment, the Moreton Bay Equine Network Report and Action Plan categorised the Samford Showgrounds as a local level facility. However, the report and action plan recognised that participation at Samford Equestrian Group is of a regional scale, that some of its competition is at a regional level, and that the site has the scale to accommodate a regional facility. Therefore, the Moreton Bay Equine Network Report and Action Plan recommended that the Samford Showgrounds be uplifted to a regional level, as per existing regional level facilities Caboolture Showgrounds and Burpengary Equestrian Centre, but below Moreton Bay's state level facility, the Queensland State Equestrian Centre.

While this recommendation would support the construction of a covered arena, all approval processes would still need to be undertaken with Council for construction to proceed.

2.2 SAMFORD AND DISTRICT SHOW SOCIETY INCORPORATED

At Samford Show time, SEG's equestrian facilities (arenas) are commonly used for show-time equestrian events. Additionally SEG's own parking area is also used for the show.

Any facility improvements delivered by SEG are likely also to benefit the Samford and District Show Society Incorporated, however planning to prevent parking space, important for both groups, from being compromised is important.

If SEG were to construct a covered arena, it would be used at the Samford Show.

3. MEMBERSHIP AND EVENT PARTICIPATION ANALYSIS

2022 membership and competition data were analysed to better understand the interests and participation trends of SEG members.

This data showed that the majority of members were most interested in attending clinics, with the balance fairly evenly distributed between dressage, working equitation and jumping, with dressage being only slightly more popular.

Table 1 shows the full SEG 2022 event schedule, including a total of 37 events over 52 days with a total of 1,696 entries.

Membership Category	Interested in Dressage	Interested in Working Equitation	Interested in Clinics	Interested in Jump Club	Total
Committee	11	11	12	6	17
Non Rider	2	3	3	2	9
Rider Family	102	81	124	91	175
Rider Individual	168	117	171	115	226
Samford RDA Coach	2	2	2	0	2
SEG Coach	12	6	10	5	13
Total	**297**	**220**	**322**	**219**	**442**

Table 1: Members' interests

The activities include 25 one-day events, 9 two-day events and 3 three-day events. Two of the three-day events were clinics, and one was a working equitation competition with 78 entries. Two-day events were mostly clinics, plus one jumping event with 272 entries and a working equitation fund weekend with 9 entries.

Discipline	No. of activities	Total Entries	No. of Days
Jumping competition	3	480	4
All disciplines competition	2	379	2
Clinics	22	360	33
Working equitation competition	6	203	9
Dressage and working equitation competition	1	100	1
Dressage and jumping competition	1	97	1
Dressage competition	2	77	2
Grand Total	**37**	**1696**	**52**

Table 2: Numbers of activities

The chart below shows the 2022 entries by date and discipline, demonstrating well distributed peaks for larger events and the highest entries in jumping and all discipline events.

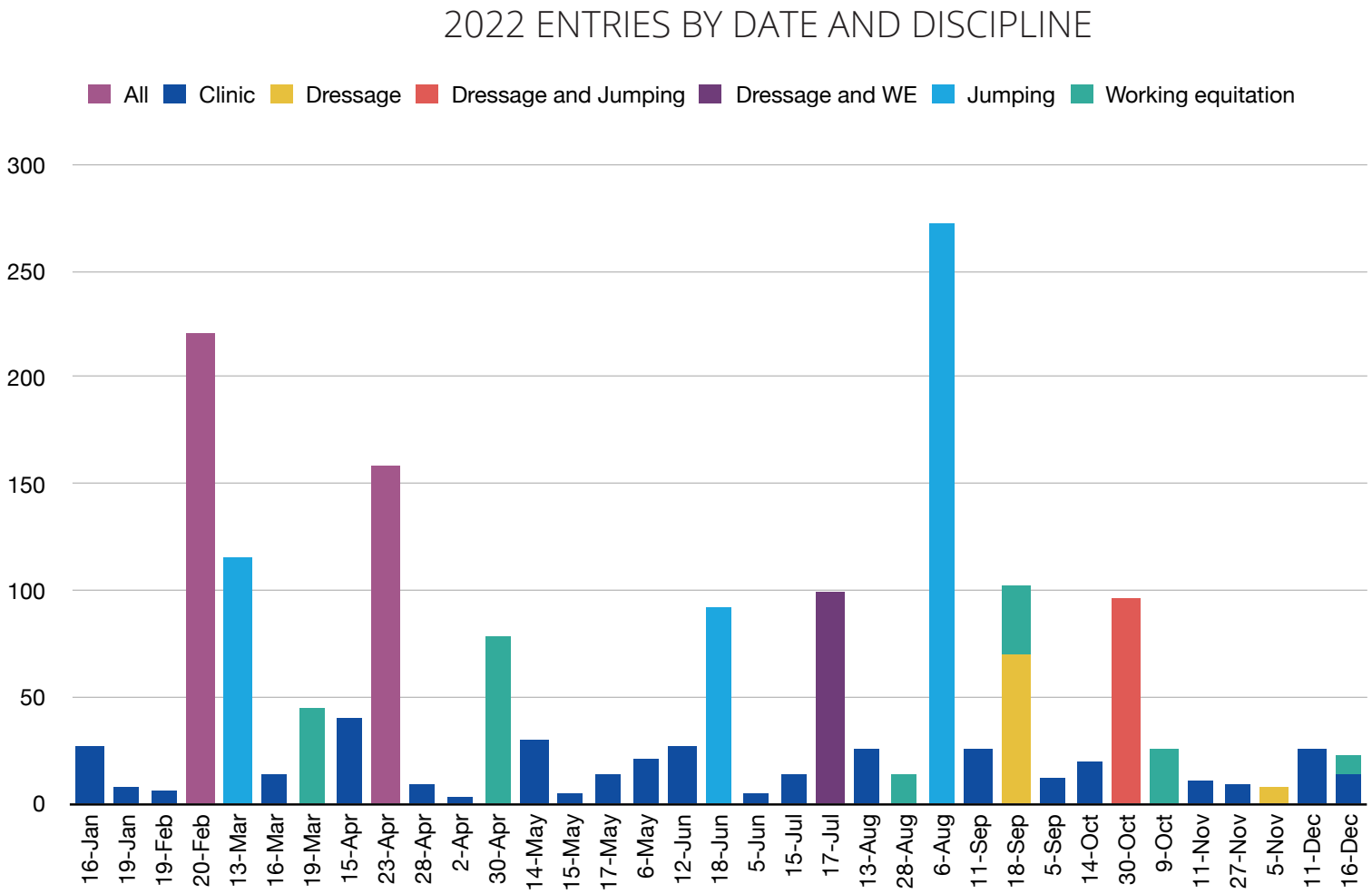


Figure 4: 2022 entries by date and discipline

The table below analyses the maximum entries for each activity type (discipline) compared to member and interest numbers. This data indicates the proportion of entries received compared to the member numbers. This data can be used to predict the demand for competitions and activities if membership grows. For example, if the ratio of entries to members for jumping remains at 62% and membership grows to 600 members, then 372 entries could still be accommodated at the SEG facility (see Arena capacity section), provided the number of volunteers and officials doesn't become a limiting factor. Based on this methodology, arena capacity would be challenged once membership reaches 645, resulting in 400 jumping entries. This analysis sufficiently indicates that membership growth could be accommodated, despite factors that may change the ratio of membership to competitors and, consequently, the accuracy of this methodology.

Alternatively, these numbers indicate an untapped competition and clinic participation market within the existing membership base.

Discipline	Max of Entries#	% of Total Members (442)	% of Total Members with Interest
Jumping competition	272	62%	124%
All discipline competition	220	50%	50%
Dressage and working equitation competition	100	23%	19%
Dressage and jumping competition	97	22%	19%
Working equitation competition	78	18%	35%
Dressage competition	69	16%	23%

Table 3: Maximum activity entries compared to member and interest numbers
#This data reports the competition with the highest number of entries for the discipline.

There were 360 clinic participants, with the largest clinic accommodating 40 participants. 322 members indicated an interest in clinics. It is unlikely that each member who attended a clinic was a unique individual, and more likely that some members attended more than one clinic, and some with more than one horse. Some coaches delivered up to four clinics for the year and would have likely attracted some of the same participants. While the data is not sufficient to confirm this, it is expected that there is also an untapped market for clinic participation within the existing membership.

Event Start Date	Days	Discipline	Entries
16/1/2022	1	Clinic	26
19/1/2022	1	Clinic	8
16/3/2022	2	Clinic	13
19/2/2022	1	Clinic	6
20/2/2022	1	All	220
13/3/2022	1	Jumping	116
15/4/2022	2	Clinic	40
6/5/2022	2	Clinic	21
19/3/2022	1	Working equitation	44
23/4/2022	1	All	159
2/4/2022	1	Clinic	3
28/4/2022	1	Clinic	9
30/4/2022	3	Working equitation	78
12/6/2022	1	Clinic	27
5/9/2022	3	Clinic	12
17/5/2022	1	Clinic	14
14/5/2022	2	Clinic	29
15/5/2022	1	Clinic	5
5/6/2022	1	Clinic	5
18/6/2022	1	Jumping	92
6/8/2022	2	Jumping	272
15/7/2022	1	Clinic	14
17/7/2022	1	Dressage and WE	100
11/9/2022	1	Clinic	25
13/8/2022	2	Clinic	25
18/9/2022	1	Working Equitation	33
28/8/2022	1	Working Equitation	14
18/9/2022	1	Dressage	69
14/10/2022	2	Clinic	20
5/11/2022	1	Dressage	8
11/12/2022	1	Clinic	25
30/10/2022	1	Dressage and Jumping	97
9/10/2022	1	Working equitation	25
11/11/2022	3	Clinic	11
27/11/2022	1	Clinic	9
16/12/2022	2	Clinic	13
16/12/2022	2	Working Equitation	9

Table 4: 2022 event schedule

The rural community of Samford has a high level of horse ownership, reflected in SEG's growing membership numbers (430 in 2022, up from 170 in 2017). In 2021, Samford Valley (SA2) had a population of 12,385 people, up from 12,283 in 2017. Samford Valley has a total area of 166.1km^2 and a population density of five people per square kilometre. Considering that SEG had close to 420 members in 2021, SEG's membership represents an amount equivalent to 3.39% of the Samford Valley 2021 population.

Compared to AusPlay's national participation figures, which state that only 1.0% of the adult (15+) population participate in equestrian sport, Samford Equestrian Group has secured a comparatively large proportion of the Samford Valley population as members. However, as outlined in the member location section below, some members are from outside the region.

ArcGIS Online[2] suggested the Samford Valley may experience a projected population growth rate of 20.2% between 2016 and 2041, with an expected average annual rate of population change from 2016 to 2041 of 6.43%. Population profiler .id reports a more conservative growth rate between 2021 and 2022 of 1.31%[3]. Regardless of the high or low measure, population growth is predicted, likely to lead to increased equestrian participation in the region. This is coupled with a growing participation trend for Equestrian Queensland statewide, which has seen participation rise from 15,000 in 2015 to 17,300 in 2022[4].

3.1 MEMBER LOCATION

The map to the right charts the residential suburb location of SEG members. It shows that the majority of members are from the Samford region. However, it also identifies many members outside of the area.

Local members can more easily participate in SEG activities as day trippers, even if they are multi-day activities, travelling home at the end of each day's competition and then travelling back in the morning for the next day's competition. Once participants (members or non-members) have to travel over a certain distance and time, this becomes less feasible, with participants preferring the option to camp and stable overnight. Increased travel increases demand for safe yards, stables and amenities. The provision of these facilities is an opportunity to increase participation, targeting participants from a larger catchment area and facilitating larger multi-day competitions.

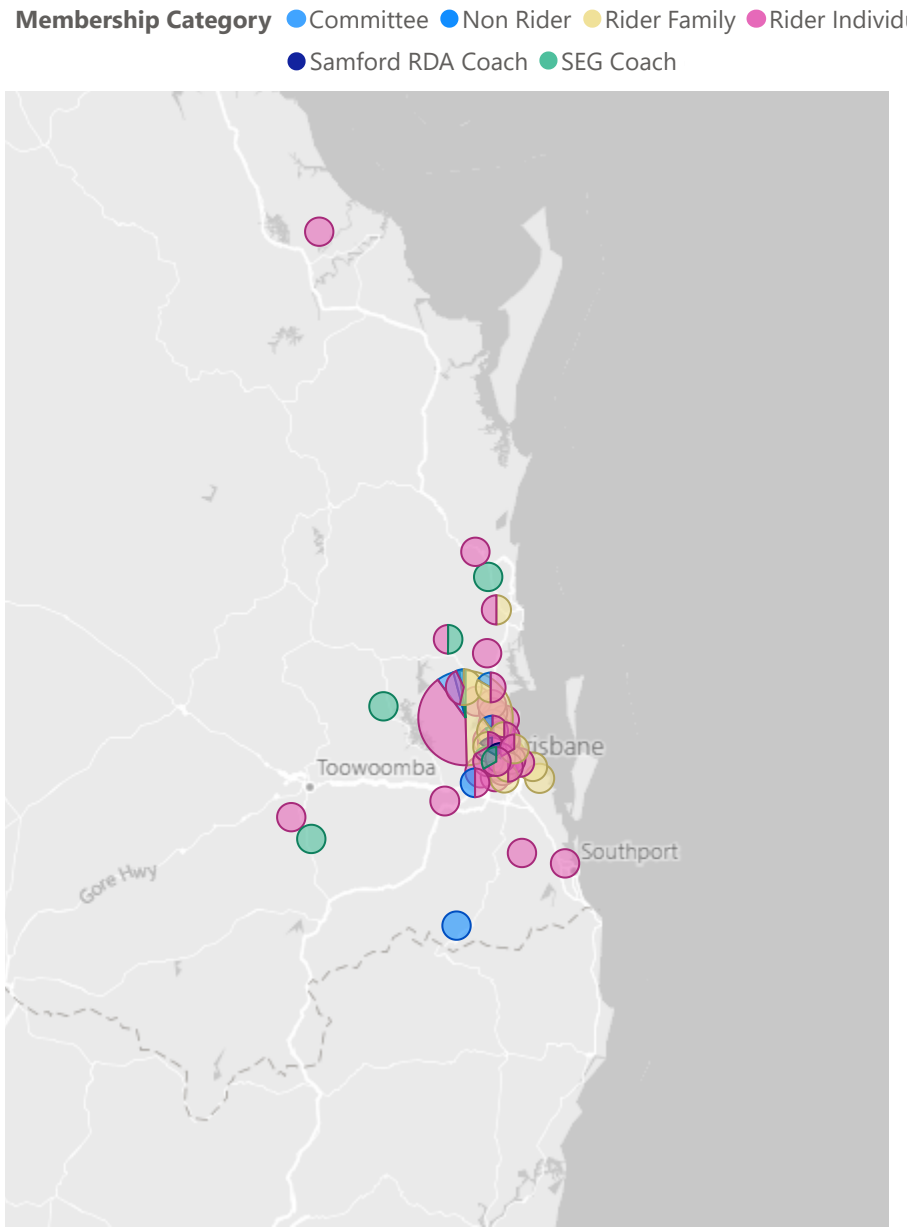


Figure 5: Suburb location of SEG members

2 https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/bcabf98ae1624b43a80f4a277dc6a9ca
3 https://profile.id.com.au/moreton-bay/population-estimate?WebId=450&BMID=400
4 Equestrian Queensland Annual Reports

4. FACILITY DEVELOPMENT ASPIRATIONS

SEG developed a facility plan in 2020 (still in draft). This plan includes the construction of a covered arena along with other improvements such as day yards, stables, amenities and support infrastructure.

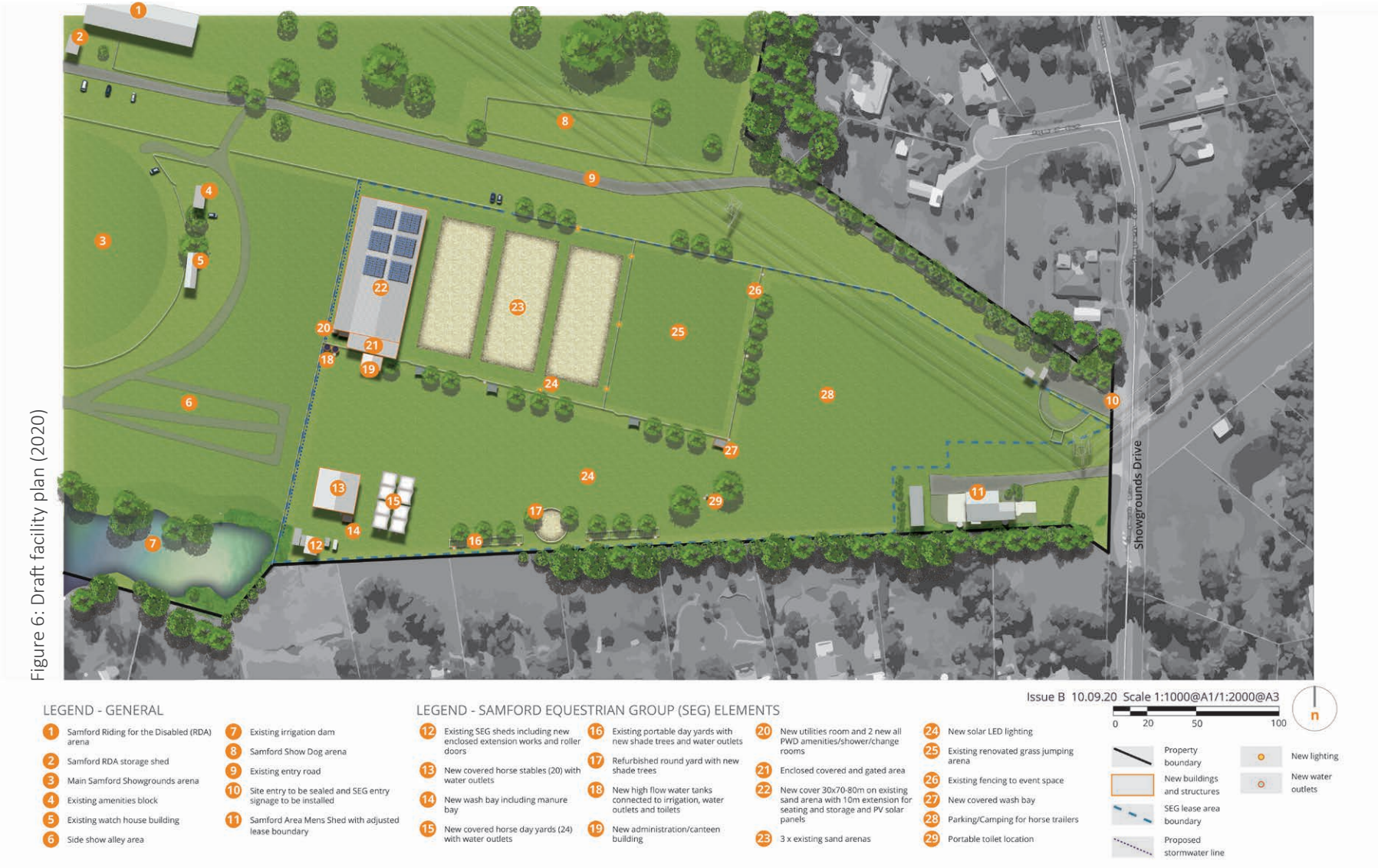


Figure 6: Draft facility plan (2020)

5. STRATEGIC PLAN

Vision

We are here to encourage safe participation in equestrian sport, ensuring the welfare of the horse is paramount, so that our members can achieve excellence in equestrian sports.

Mission

To facilitate equestrian education, training and competitive events. To build and maintain facilities that provide a safe environment where we can conduct our activities and enable our members to achieve excellence in equestrian sports.

	Pathways for all participants	Excellence in equestrian sport	Sustainability of the sport	Governance and culture
Strategies and initiatives	Education & Clinics	Regional Equestrian Hub	Sustainable membership	Good governance
	Club activities	Develop facilities	Sustainable competition	Effective administration
	Access to competition	Maintain grounds & facilities	Develop future Olympians	Communicate regularly
		Safety of horse & rider is our top priority	Develop the club's future leaders	Stakeholder engagement
				Manage risk proactively

Strategic Priorities

Lighting Project Arena 3 & 4	Facility Plan & Covered Arena feasibility	Facility building fund	Equestrian Education & Event Management	Sponsorship & Marketing plans	Asset Management & Maintenance Program	Membership Management

5.1 STRATEGIC PLAN SURVEY RESULTS

The results of the Samford Equestrian Group Strategic Plan Survey revealed that a significant majority of members are in favour of and support the installation of a covered arena. Among the 50 respondents to the question “Please describe what you think should be the priority for facility development at Samford Equestrian Group and why”, 33 identified a covered arena as the top priority. The reasons provided varied, but the consensus was that such an arena would greatly benefit the facilitation of comfortable events throughout the year, regardless of weather conditions.

According to the Equestrian Queensland Preferred Facility Standards, indoor arenas are desirable in regions with extreme weather conditions, such as high UV, heat, day length and rain. These conditions are experienced regularly across South East Queensland, including at Samford Showgrounds. One survey respondent summed this up well, stating that the top priority at the Showgrounds should be “covering 1 sand arena with a roof so we have some weather and heat protection”.

The accompanying graph shows that 86.90% of survey respondents are actively involved with SEG as event competitors. These competitors strongly support the construction of a covered arena at Samford Showgrounds, as it would allow them to participate in competitions more comfortably, especially during the hot summer months. One competitor commented that “more shade and lighting is required to make use of the grounds in the warmer weather”.

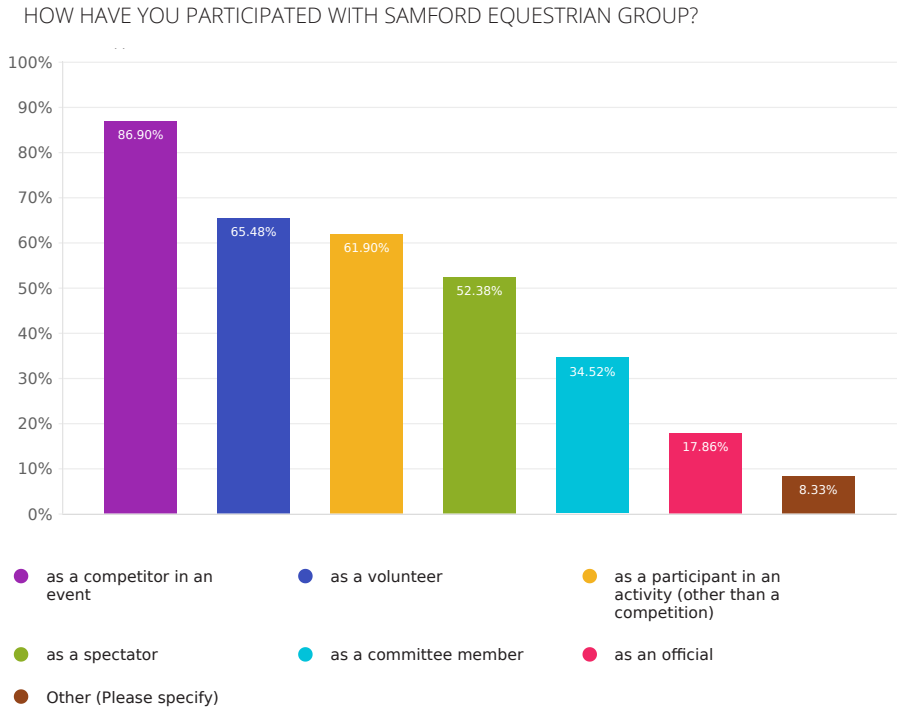


Figure 7: Survey results to question ‘How have you participated with Samford Equestrian Group?

6. FACILITY CAPACITY

There can be several limiting factors to the capacity of an equestrian facility. The following discussion considers the capacity limits of the SEG facility.

6.1 ARENA CAPACITY

The number of arenas available dictates the number of potential competitors. The Equestrian Queensland Preferred Facility Standards[5] provides some recommendations regarding the number of entries per arena.

As a maximum capacity indicator, the availability of four dressage arenas, with three used for competition and one for warm up, provides the ability to run 60 entries per arena per day, totalling 180 entries per day. In 2022 SEG's largest single discipline dressage competition had 69 entries.

SEG could expect 200 rounds per day, per arena, for jumping. 400 entries could be accommodated at SEG if two jumping arenas are set up, with dressage arenas used to warm up. In 2022, SEG's largest single discipline jumping competition had 272 entries.

Working equitation is slightly more complex because the various phases undertaken within the discipline have a variable completion and judging time, between 3 minutes and 12 minutes. As a rule of thumb, 80 entries can be accommodated if two arenas are used simultaneously (approximately 40 horses per arena). Provided equipment, volunteers and officials are not a limiting factor, the SEG grounds could be set up to accommodate up to three dressage arenas and two or three obstacle arenas, with the capacity to accommodate 240 entries. The popularity of working equitation is growing, but demand is unlikely to be as high as the 240 entry capacity. In 2022, SEG's largest single discipline working equitation competition had 78 entries.

For a multi-disciplinary event, all arenas could be activated in the following manner:

Discipline	Arenas	Entries	Horses
Working equitation	• Polocrosse arena • Dressage arena 1 • Warm up arena 2	80 entries	80 horses
Dressage	• Dressage arena 3 and 4 • Warm up arena 2	120 entries	60 horses
Jumping	• Jumping arena • Sectioned warm up	200 entries	40 horses
TOTAL		**400 entries**	**180 horses** **120 vehicles**

Table 5: Multi-disciplinary event activation of arenas

In 2022 SEG's largest all discipline competition had 220 entries. Other combined discipline competitions held in 2022 included dressage/working equitation with a maximum of 100 entries and dressage/jumping with a maximum of 97 entries.

Depending on the discipline and level of competition, one horse could compete in a number of classes within an event—for dressage two classes per horse is typical and for jumping it can be five. With 180 dressage entries or 400 jumping entries per day this equates to 90 dressage horses or 80 jumping horses. For working equitation, one horse per entry has been assumed since the competition includes multiple phases.

5 https://www.qld.equestrian.org.au/sites/default/files/190916%20Equestrian-QLD%20Preferred%20Facility%20Standards%20optimised.pdf

6.2 EXTENDED WITH LIGHTING

The arena capacity can increase by a few hours each day with the addition of lights, provided that volunteers and officials are available to support an extended competition schedule.

An additional 20 entries per dressage arena (total of 60 additional entries), 75 entries per jumping arena (total of 150 additional entries) and 15 entries per two working equitation arenas may be possible if an extra 3 hours of competition time is provided.

With lights (backed by required volunteers and officials) the SEG arenas could accommodate 240 dressage entries per day or 550 jumping entries per day, so approximately 120 dressage horses and 110 jumping horses.

6.3 OVERNIGHT CAPACITY

Stables or yards are required to accommodate horses staying overnight. Since SEG currently has limited yard capacity, overnight camping with horses is very limited.

This situation restricts SEG's catchment area for competition, since competitors need to live close enough to travel to the competition on the day of the competition (as outlined in the member location section of this report).

Since arena surface standard is not a limiting factor, providing more overnight horse accommodation options would likely increase SEG's catchment area and participation. The provision of toilets and showers is also important to support overnight stays.

It should be noted that the provision of yards would take up parking space, so it requires careful planning.

The hire of yards or stables during competitions can be an important revenue source. Stables and yards can be hired from between $10 and $35 per night at other facilities, depending on style and quality.

6.4 PARKING SPACE

The number of horse vehicles that can be parked at a facility can limit capacity. Typically 150sqm per vehicle is allocated when horses are expected to be tethered to the side of horse floats, rather than stabled.

Horse vehicles can be more densely parked at approximately 100sqm if stables are provided for horses.

The SEG lease area provides a conservatively estimated 27,000sqm for parking, giving maximum capacity for 180 vehicles. If other parts of the showgrounds are used, parking space could increase to 300 vehicles.

Depending on the discipline, an average of 1.5 to 2.5 horses per vehicle can be applied. These numbers indicate a parking space capacity of 270 to 450 horses if all parking space is utilised.

Furthermore, it is expected that approximately two people accompany each horse. At maximum capacity, this would amount to 540 to 900 people on site.

Other limitations (or requirements to meet), such as the number and proximity of amenities and the provision of catering, need to be considered with more people on the grounds.

6.5 AMENITIES

It is recommended to have one toilet per 50 people at events.

SEG has no toilets within its lease area, although three female and three male toilets are available nearby. Based on one toilet per 50 people, the current toilets would allow for an event size of approximately 200 people (since equestrian has a 90% female participation rate). With around two people accompanying each horse, this equates to existing amenities capacity for a 100 horse competition.

Since these toilets could be more than 500m away from the furthest parking area, alternative portable toilets would be recommended in the camping area for larger events.

6.6 WASH BAYS

A ratio of one wash bay for every 20 to 30 horses is typically provided on site. Since the current maximum number of horses on site is estimated at 80 horses, three to four wash bays are required. Therefore, six to nine was bays would be required for a maximised, all discipline event.

6.7 FOOD OUTLETS

Event planners recommend one food truck for every 200–300 attendees for events focused around eating. If it is not primarily an "eating" event, that ratio should be closer to one food truck for every 400–500 attendees.

This ratio equates to approximately one food outlet per 200 horses.

6.8 VOLUNTEERS

The number of available volunteers and officials required to deliver an event can limit the capacity of an equestrian site. Due to a limited judging pool and events scheduled on the same weekend, equestrian clubs often report challenges securing judges.

The list of required volunteers and officials to operate an event can be significant, often including several of the following, depending on the discipline:

- Event Director
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Stewards
- Gate Steward/Gate Keeper
- Scorekeepers or Pencillors
- Announcer
- Show Office/Administration
- Grounds crew (arena raking and jump building)
- Course Designer
- Parking Attendants and Stable Allocator
- Hospitality/Refreshments

It is important to support volunteers who are also competitors by providing some safe yards for their horses. It may be unreasonable to expect volunteers to leave their horses tethered to floats unwatched while volunteering. Safe yards for volunteers may improve their willingness to volunteer and could be used as an incentive.

6.9 CASUAL ARENA USE

With so many arenas available, it would be unlikely that SEG's casual arena use would exceed capacity. However, there may be times of peak demand after work, especially under lights, when all arenas are utilised.

With 12 hours of daylight and four arenas, there is capacity for 48 separate hourly arena uses per day. If lights extend the use of two out of four arenas by an additional 4 hours, this extends to 56 hours.

Currently, casual arena use is free to SEG members, which is an important incentive for members to join the club. Therefore, it is recommended that consequential arena maintenance and replacement costs are incorporated into membership fees.

Currently, the arenas are well utilised, with multiple casual users on site every day.

To manage the future provision of lights and a covered arena, usage and access could be coordinated electronically and charged in addition to a membership fee allowance.

As a guide, the 2023 Queensland State Equestrian Centre fees are as follows:

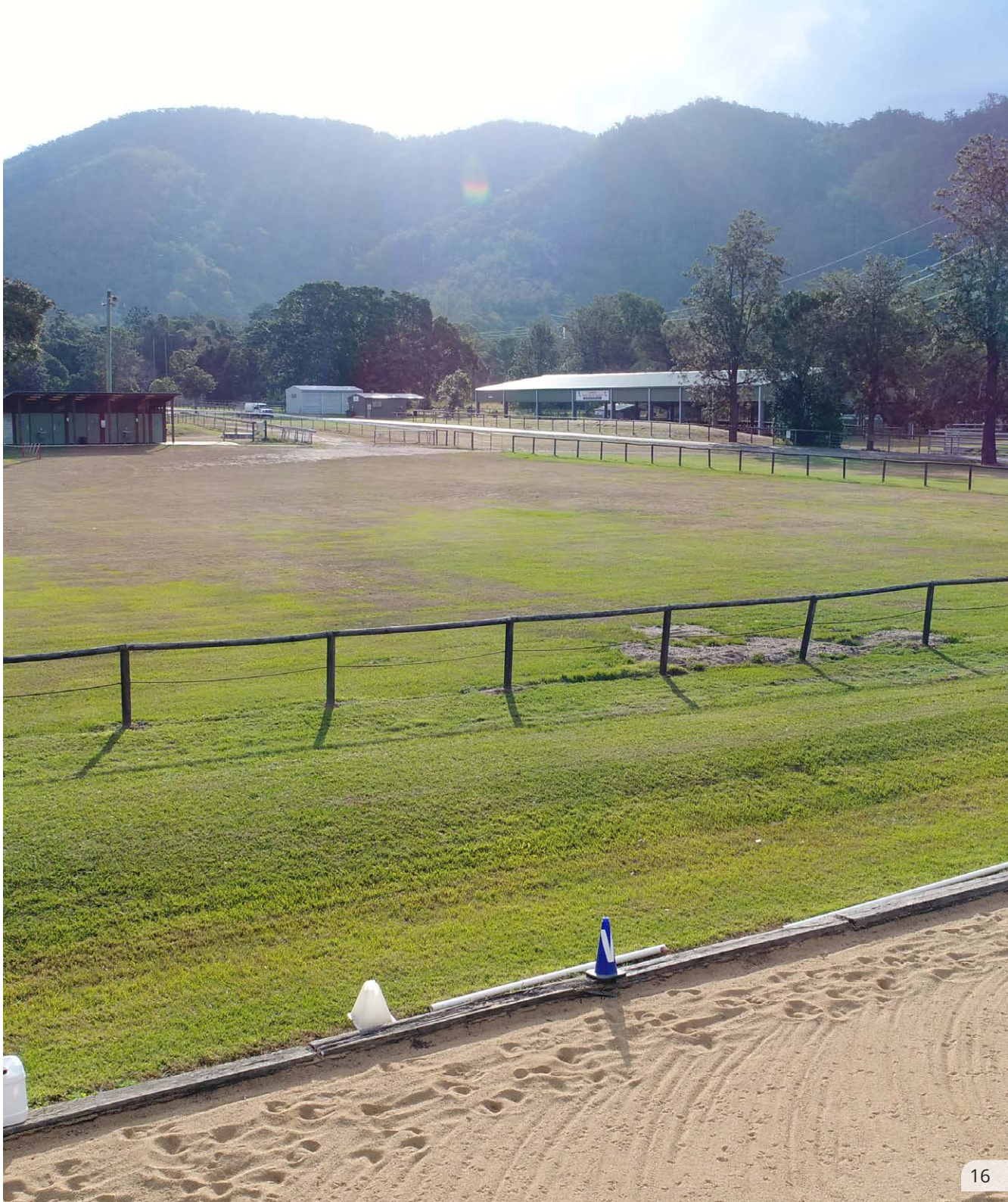
- Main arena or Arena 2 (covered) (including lights)—$28.00 per hour
- Main Park (grass) (lights not included)—$16.00 per hour
- Park 2 (grass) (lights not included)—$10.50 per hour
- Outdoor arena (sand)—$12.00 per hour per arena
- Outdoor arena (grass warm up)—$10.50 per hour

6.10 CATTLE FACILITIES

SEG does not currently have cattle facilities. However, the Samford Showgrounds has facilities that are used at show time. SEG does not currently deliver the cattle phase of the working equitation discipline at Samford Showgrounds. SEG might have the option to run this phase at an alternative location, such as the Dayboro Memorial Grounds, which has excellent cattle facilities (31km away).

If a discipline that uses cattle is delivered, typically one head of cattle is required per entry with some spares (up to 25% more) to cater for suitability. Entry numbers will determine the size of cattle yards required and the footprint required for the yards (even if temporarily installed). Cattle are typically trucked in multiples of 30 head. The truck size that can feasibly enter and turn around at the facility is also a determining factor. Road load limits and turning circles should be considered.

Loading and unloading facilities, and the presence of livestock proof fencing in arenas are also essential.



7. MARKET ANALYSIS

The disciplines and arena quality offered by SEG make the club and the facility appealing to members, as evidenced by SEG's high membership.

While a covered arena is not required for equestrian competition, covered arenas are desirable to provide all-weather riding (ie. high UV / heat / day length / rain) and make participation and volunteering in all conditions more comfortable. The use of a covered arena is a likely driver of increased participation.

Safe, covered, fit-for-purpose day yards would likely increase competition participation and see more competition participants travelling to the venue from afar.

Eventually, as expectations and the levels of horse and rider increase, there may be demand for one or more of the arenas to provide a fibre surface. However, this would not be a priority.

SEG's arena quality and disciplines provide pathways for horses and riders with Olympic and Paralympic aspirations. The club provides grass roots to high level competition.

With Samford RDA also occupying the Samford Showgrounds site, SEG can provide a competition pathway for the two options for RDA participants—Special Olympics and Para-Equestrian.

7.1 MARKET EXTENT

The diagram on the next page shows the myriad of clubs, organisations and representative bodies for equestrian in Moreton Bay and Queensland. The diagram also demonstrates the potential market for equestrian facility use, provided facility sharing and the balance of multi-use and discipline specific requirements can be met. This diagram can be utilised to ensure all disciplines and aspects of the sport are considered during facility planning.

While SEG does not deliver all of these disciplines, SEG may have opportunities to sub lease its facilities to other clubs during the limited weekends when SEG is not using the facility. Sub leasing represents a potential revenue stream for SEG to contribute to facility maintenance.

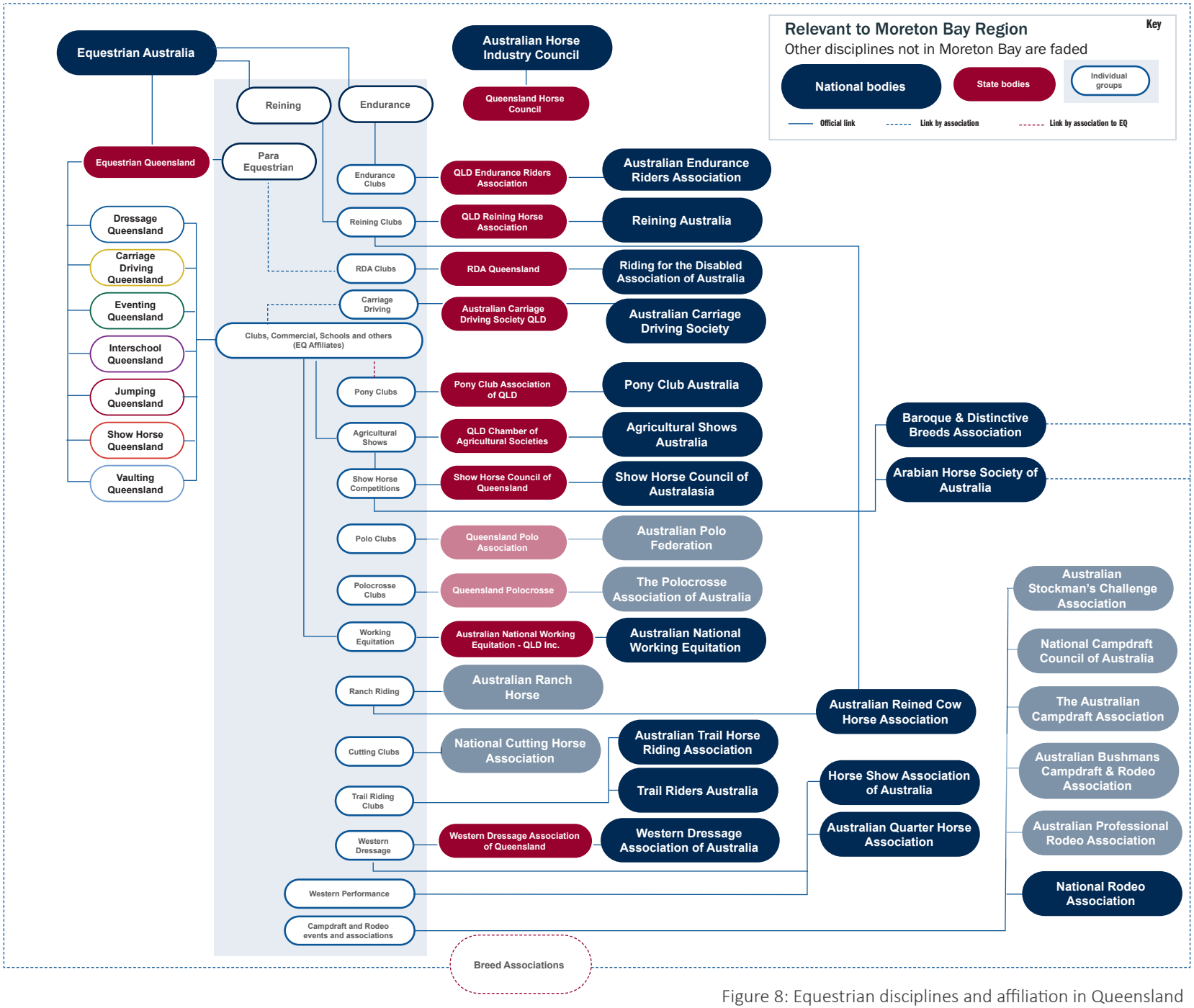


Figure 8: Equestrian disciplines and affiliation in Queensland

7.2 DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

The following table provides the specification for several of the most popular horse sport disciplines. SEG currently delivers dressage, jumping and working equitation from this list, and has previously partnered to deliver driving.

Other possibilities include:

- **Polocrosse—**the old polocrosse field would still provide for this sport, but demand is unlikely
- **Gymkhana—**existing jumping arena is ideal for gymkhana, typically participated in by pony clubs
- **Show horse—**would be easily accommodated at the SEG facility and show horse classes are already part of the Samford Show
- **RDA—**delivered at Samford RDA but further opportunities exist for facility sharing and pathway events
- **Vaulting—**typically held in a covered arena, but possible on SEG's sand arenas

Unlikely or not possible:

- **Cross country—**there is currently no cross country course at Samford Showgrounds. A portable training course would be possible if portable cross country jumps were available. There is a midlevel cross country at nearby Harold Brown Park.
- **Polo—**the field size required to offer polo puts it out of the question and sufficient demand would be unlikely.
- **Barrel racing—**while barrel racing could be conducted in the same arenas, barrel racing is typically held as an event within a rodeo, so is more likely at a rodeo venue such as Dayboro Memorial Grounds or Caboolture Showgrounds
- **Campdrafting—**cattle facilities including cut out camp and fenced arena for course are not available
- **Reining—**unlikely, especially at higher levels as surface needs to support a sliding stop
- **Cutting and working cow horse—**only if cattle facilities and livestock proof fencing were provided

Discipline	Size	Surface
Dressage[6]	Minimum 60mx20m (1,200m^2)—with 10 to 15m buffer 1 dressage arena per max 60 competitor tests per day	For lower levels can be flat, consistent, non-slip, well maintained grass For medium to higher levels a sand surface is expected (moist, firm and shallow—depth dependant on sand type and maintenance) At the highest levels a sand artificial surface is required
Jumping[7]	Indoor minimum 1,200m^2 with short side minimum 25m Outdoor minimum 4,000m^2 with short side minimum 50m	For lower levels can be flat, consistent, non-slip, well maintained grass For medium to higher levels a sand surface or excellent grass surface heavily top dressed with sand At the highest levels a sand artificial surface is required
Cross country[8]	Cross country course 650m–3,575m (longer-7000m, for higher levels) Depending on the landscape and competition level, courses could be accommodated on 4 to 20 hectares	Track between jumps should be consistent, non-slip, well maintained grass/turf or earth, over undulating ground with water jumps, steps and banks Road crossings should be covered with shavings, sand, soil or similar to provide safe, non slip footing

6 Equestrian Queensland Preferred Facility Standards https://www.qld.equestrian.org.au/dressage/sites/default/files/Preferred%20Facility%20Standards%201.0%2027%20March%202019_2.pdf
7 Equestrian Queensland Preferred Facility Standards https://www.qld.equestrian.org.au/dressage/sites/default/files/Preferred%20Facility%20Standards%201.0%2027%20March%202019_2.pdf
8 Equestrian Queensland Preferred Facility Standards https://www.qld.equestrian.org.au/dressage/sites/default/files/Preferred%20Facility%20Standards%201.0%2027%20March%202019_2.pdf

Discipline	Size	Surface
Polocrosse[9]	Field size is 146.5m long and 55m wide Goal scoring area is 27.5m long, centre area is 91.5 long, radius of the goal circle is 10m. Goal posts are a minimum of 3m high and are 2.5m apart and flexible enough to be pushed over if collided with. The run-off area measured from the sidelines is a minimum of 3m. At the end of the field it is a 12m clearance. If more than one field, the clearance between fields is a minimum of 10m and the clearance end to end is a minimum of 24m	Flat, consistent, non-slip, well maintained grass In some cases fields are ploughed to provide sufficient traction and softness
Polo[10]	274m long (goal posts to goal posts) by 183m wide if unboarded and 146m if boarded. The minimum length is 229m. Goal posts 7.3m apart (inside measurement) and 3m high and light enough to give way if collided with. Run-off area extends 9m beyond the boards or sidelines and 27.5m beyond the back line	Flat, consistent, non-slip, well maintained grass

Discipline	Size	Surface
Gymkhana	Gymkhana events vary greatly in their size requirements depending on the games (as specified within the rule book[11]). As a result, gymkhanas are set up based on the number of competitors, number of events and available space and equipment. Examples include bending race 42mx11m, barrel race 47mx27m, keyhole 24mx6m, Shuddo Ho 31m x 17m—with 5m buffers for all	Flat, consistent, non-slip, well maintained grass In some cases fields are ploughed to provide sufficient traction and softness
Driving[12]	Minimum 120mx70m (8,400m^2) to allow for driven dressage and obstacle/cones Dressage arena 100mx40m, in some cases a smaller arena 80mx40m may be used—buffer of at least 5m Marathon – CAI2* 10.8km–17km Combined marathon/cones – CAI2* and CAI1* 600m–800m	For lower levels can be flat, consistent, non-slip, well maintained grass At higher levels and for indoor competition, a specially prepared shallow and firm sand or sand and artificial surface

9 https://www.dlgsc.wa.gov.au/sport-and-recreation/sports-dimensions-guide/polocrosse
10 https://www.dlgsc.wa.gov.au/sport-and-recreation/sports-dimensions-guide/polo
11 https://ponyclubqld.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/2019-Rules-for-Sporting-Formal-Gymkhana.pdf
12 Equestrian Queensland Preferred Facility Standards https://www.qld.equestrian.org.au/dressage/sites/default/files/Preferred%20Facility%20Standards%201.0%2027%20March%202019_2.pdf

Discipline	Size	Surface
Show horse[13]	1 main ring 60mx30m (1,800m^2) For 2 or more rings min 40mx20m (800m^2)/ring	Flat, consistent, non-slip, well maintained grass At higher levels and for indoor competition, a specially prepared sand or sand and artificial surface could be used. For led classes a moist rolled surface may be desirable
Barrel racing[14]	38mx70m according to Australian Barrel Horse Association Inc. rules Courses can be made smaller and local "times" recorded for smaller arenas	Sand surface (dry and deep (up to 10cm))
Campdrafting	Main ring ideally 80m diameter—minimum 40m x 70m Camp (or cut out) area approximately 16m x 25m Supported by cattle handling facilities—ideally to accommodate 500 head per day to maximise competition entries	Sand surface (over a base) at sufficient consistent depth for traction and grip Less ideal, native soil may be ploughed to provide sufficient traction and softness

Discipline	Size	Surface
RDA	Ideal minimum fenced 30mx30m and ideally covered for client, horse and volunteer comfort and safety. Supported by fenced mounting area equipped with ramps and close saddling enclosures	Commonly undercover so therefore a sand surface Reduced depth (up to 3cm) to avoid leg fatigue in volunteer handlers Horses only walking and trotting reduces surface cushioning and impact requirement
Reining[15]	Minimum 30mx60m with flexibility	Sand surface (to support sliding stop) (dry and shallow approximately 5cm)
Cutting	Minimum 30mx30m plus cattle handling facilities	Sand surface (dry and deep (up to 10cm))
Working cow horse	Minimum 20mx40m plus cattle handling facilities. Ideally, no bigger than 25mx55m[16]	Sand surface (dry and deep (up to 10cm))
Working equitation	Dressage arena 60mx20m (1,200m^2)—with buffer Open field for obstacles Cattle facilities if cattle phase included	Sand or grass dressage arenas Flat, consistent, non-slip, well maintained grass

13 Equestrian Queensland Preferred Facility Standards https://www.qld.equestrian.org.au/dressage/sites/default/files/Preferred%20Facility%20Standards%201.0%2027%20March%202019_2.pdf
14 https://abha.com.au/
15 https://www.equestrian.org.au/Reining
16 http://www.reinedcowhorse.net/membership_n_forms/checklist.pdf

Discipline	Size	Surface
Vaulting[17]	The arena must be a circle with a diameter of at least 18m and must be of a soft and springy material (not grass). Indoors height must be a minimum of 5m. The public must be a minimum of 2m away from the circle and a minimum of 13m away from the centre of the lunging circle. Warm up circle must be of equivalent surface quality to the competition circle	Sand or sand artificial surface

Table 6: Specifications of popular horse sport disciplines

7.3 COMPETITIONS SIZE

Competition size is generally dictated by the type of activity or event being conducted. In Queensland, however, the limited availability of large scale facilities has, in some cases, artificially capped competition size. In other cases, event organisers hire additional stables or spread competitions over a longer period. Most competitions above 150 to 200 horses run over multiple days.

The following provides a reasonable guide to competition size:

No. horses	Activity or competition example
<50 horses	• Clinics (private and hirers) • Club come and try • Squad training • Club social and activity days • Pony club rally days and local competitions
<150 horses	• Local club members competitions and championships • Small breed society, affiliate body or discipline regional, state or national championships • Pony club zone competition • Interschool competitions
<250 horses	• Pony club state championships • Discipline specific high level competitions and championships • Regional Interschool competitions • Medium sized breed society, affiliate or discipline state or national championships • Regional jumping and eventing competitions • Regional stockman's challenge competition
<400 horses	• State and grand prix jumping • International, state and national dressage • State and national eventing • Interschool state and national championships • Campdraft • Western all disciplines show
Up to 750 horses	• Commercial campdraft and horse sales • Horse of the Year (multi-disciplinary) • Jumping world cup and nationals

Table 7: Competition size estimate per activity type

17 https://www.equestrian.org.au/sites/default/files/MARKEDUP_NATIONAL_VAULTING_RULES_1_JUL_2019_Version.pdf

8. COVERED EQUESTRIAN ARENA

While not required in the rule books of any official equestrian competitions or within the Equestrian Queensland Preferred Facility Standards (other than for National level show horse), a covered equestrian arena offers numerous benefits for both horses and riders.

Advantages include:

- **Weather protection**: One of the primary benefits of a covered equestrian arena is protection from inclement weather conditions such as rain, wind and extreme temperatures. Covered arenas allow riders to train and exercise their horses consistently, regardless of the weather. This option also relies on all road access and parking proximate to the facility.
- **Extended training season:** A covered arena can extend the training season beyond the usual fair-weather months, which is particularly beneficial during extended periods of wet weather and hot summer months. A covered arena provides a more controlled environment for year-round training, keeping horses and riders active and fit.
- **Increased training opportunities:** With a covered arena, riders can train at any time of the day, regardless of daylight hours. Extended hours are particularly advantageous during the winter months when daylight is limited.
- **Versatility:** Covered equestrian arenas can be designed to accommodate various disciplines and activities. They can be equipped with appropriate equipment, such as jumps or dressage letters, which can be adjusted and arranged according to specific training needs.
- **Hosting events:** A covered arena is suitable for hosting equestrian events, competitions, clinics and shows. The controlled environment and weather protection make organising and managing such events easier without worrying about weather-related disruptions.
- **Increased participation and membership:** Due to the advantages of a covered arena, increased participation and club membership are likely for equestrian clubs who have one.
- **Revenue earner:** Covered arenas can be hired to members and other competition hosts or clubs. The revenue generated from arena hire will be an important contributor to maintenance and replacement costs.

8.1 COST

The cost of covered arenas can vary widely depending on the size, required steel grade/strength and load-bearing capacity, level of finish etc. Cost per square metre can range from $500 to $4,000.

A professional cost estimate is yet to be obtained for this project. However, for the purposes of exploring possible costs and financial implications, a cost of $800 per square metre and a total cost of $1,680,000 is estimated.

This estimate is based on:

- Size of 70m x 30m (2,100sqm)
- Straightforward structure—no walls or fencing or inclusions such as internal structures
- Retention of existing sand arena surface

Detailed design and costing is recommended to obtain accurate cost estimates.

The cost of an indoor equestrian arena varies based on the required importance level (the level of consequences in the event of a building failure). The higher the level, the greater consequences there could be to a person or public. Since Samford Showgrounds is a public place, Council may require a structure suitable for assembly shelter (importance level 3 or above). A class 9b building caters for assembly for social, political, theatrical, religious or civic purposes, e.g. churches, schools, universities, sports facilities, night clubs[18]. This requirement may increase the construction cost. The fire safety requirements in a public place will also be greater.

18 https://www.qbcc.qld.gov.au/resources/guide/building-classes-building-codes-australia

Other considerations that may impact cost include the topography described by terrain category (in the instance of Samford Showgrounds, most likely—TC2 Open terrain, grassland with few, well-scattered obstructions having heights generally from 1.5m to 10m). The wind rating may also impact. While Samford Showgrounds is situated in Wind Region B (57 metres/second), local wind conditions may need to be accommodated.

Other hidden costs, such as detailed design, technical investigations, project management, connection of services etc. should be considered.

BUILDING DESCRIPTION	BCA CLASS	FAILURE CONSEQUENCES		IMPORTANCE LEVEL
		HUMAN HAZARD	PUBLIC IMPACT	
Isolated farm building	10a	Low	Low	1
Residential shed or garage	10a	Mod	Low	2
Small school shade structure	9b	Mod	Mod	2
Produce sales building	6	Mod	Mod	2
Shearing shed	8	Sub	Mod	2
Large commercial storage warehouse	7	Mod	Sub	3
Large (250+) school assembly shelter	9b	Sub	Sub	3
Shed housing hospital emergency generator	10a	Sub	Ext	4
Emergency vehicle shed	10a	Sub	Ext	4

Figure 9: Shed importance level [19]

8.2 SPECIFICATIONS

The technical requirements for a covered equestrian arena can vary depending on factors such as its intended use, location, budget and personal preferences. There are some general technical specifications to consider when planning the construction of a covered equestrian arena:

- **Size and dimensions:** The arena's size depends on the intended use and available space. The minimum arena size for competition dressage is 20 metres wide and 60 metres long. For jumping or larger-scale events, the dimensions may need to be larger. The height of the arena should provide sufficient clearance for riders and horses, typically around 4.5 to 5 metres. SEG's existing sand arenas are 70m x 30m.
- **Construction and design:** A qualified structural engineer may be required to design or verify the shed's structural framework. The design should consider the local building codes, wind loads, and any specific requirements for the area. The structural components should withstand the anticipated loads and provide sufficient strength and stability. The roofing material may be translucent or opaque to allow natural light to enter while protecting from the elements—durability and maintenance should be considered with this option. Ensure that the roofing and drainage system can effectively manage rainwater runoff.
- **Foundation and anchoring:** The foundation of the building is vital for its stability and longevity. Depending on the soil conditions and shed design, considerations include the type of foundation and the anchoring system to secure the shed to the ground. Proper foundation design and anchoring methods ensure the shed remains secure under various loads and environmental conditions.
- **Footing surface:** The specific type and depth of footing depends on the discipline and personal preferences. SEG has existing high quality surfaces, which ideally would be retained and covered.

19 https://shedblog.com.au/glossary-of-terms-used-in-shed-industry/what-does-importance-level-mean/

- **Lighting and electrical:** Adequate lighting is important for covered arenas. A lighting system will allow riding at all hours and should provide uniform illumination throughout the arena without creating shadows or glare. LED lighting should be used due to its energy efficiency and longevity. Sufficient power outlets, circuits, and electrical capacity should be incorporated to meet the covered arena's operational needs.
- **Accessibility and amenities:** The arena should have appropriate entry and exit points for horses, riders and spectators. Considerations include ease of access, security needs, the size of vehicles or equipment that need to enter or exit the shed, placement of judges, potential connection to cattle yards etc. Adequate parking spaces, proximate toilets, and viewing areas are also important.
- **Safety considerations:** Safety features such as proper fencing, fire suppression systems and emergency exits should be incorporated into the covered arena design to ensure the well being of both horses and humans, and compliance with building codes and regulations.
- **Compliance with regulations:** Ensure the building complies with all relevant local building codes, zoning regulations and permits. Engage with architects, engineers and construction professionals knowledgeable about the local regulations to guide the construction process.
- **Approvals:** The covered arena building works will fall under the jurisdiction of the Council, so a development application needs to be submitted. This application includes detailed plans, specifications and supporting documents outlining the proposed works. Council will review the development application and assess its compliance with various factors, such as zoning regulations, building codes, environmental considerations, and neighbourhood impacts.

Importantly from a Council-wide network planning and strategic perspective, the Moreton Bay Regional Council's Equine Network Report and Action Plan recommended that Samford Showgrounds be uplifted from a local level to a regional level equestrian facility. This uplift would justify installing a covered arena. Nonetheless, all approvals processes must still be undertaken with Council for the construction of a covered arena to proceed.

8.3 COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

The cost benefit analysis calculations aim to recover the costs to maintain the facility and invest in a sinking fund for facility replacement. Benefits of the project include economic benefits from construction, increased visitation, and increased revenue from facility use and facility hire.

The cost benefit analysis aims to achieve a benefit to cost ratio over 1. This ratio is achieved at the low (4%) and base (7%) scenario discounting scenario (which accommodates likely inflation, since the analysis applies today's values).

The following assumptions and calculations have been applied:

- Capital cost of $1,680,000.00
  - 2,100sqm at $800 per sqm
- Annual maintenance cost of $16,800.00 per annum
  - 1% of construction costs
- Asset replacement sinking fund of $44,217.60 per annum
  - 40 year useful life, straight line 2.632% depreciation
- Requires earnings of $61,017.60 annually to cover maintenance and replacement
  - Additional event hosting revenue of $25,000.00
  - $10 per competitor levy
  - Assumes an increase from 1696 to 2,500 competitors
- Additional hire revenue from events of $24,000.00
  - $600 per hire
  - 40 hirers per year
- Additional facility hire revenue of $15,600.00
  - Hourly hire $20
  - 780 uses (52 weeks, 5 days per week, 3 hires per day)
- Construction economic benefit (value added) of $863,160.00
  - Calculated using economic modelling tool .id
- Additional event economic benefit (value added) of $60,183.00 per annum
  - An additional 800 entries, each with 2 people attending
  - Spending $85/day
  - Calculated using economic modelling tool .id
- Residual/Depreciated Asset Value of $840,000.00
  - 40 years useful life
  - 50% residual, straight line depreciation

It should be noted that all figures are in today's values and in reality, the club will need to apply inflation to the competitor levy, venue hire fee and hourly hire fee to ensure future costs are still covered.

Costs				
Cost name	**Totals**	**Year 1**	**Years 2 to 19**	**Year 20**
Capital costs	$1,680,000.00	$1,680,000.00		
Required asset replacement sinking fund	$840,134.40		$44,217.60	$44,217.60
Additional maintenance costs (1%)	$319,200.00		$16,800.00	$16,800.00
Undiscounted Costs	**$2,839,334.40**	**$1,680,000.00**	**$61,017.60**	**$61,017.60**
Total Cost (Present Value)	**$2,321,294.98**	**$1,680,000.00**	**$56,746.37**	**$17,084.93**

Quantifiable Benefits				
Benefit name	**Totals**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 20**
Additional event hosting revenue ($10 per competitor, 2,500)	$475,000.00		$25,000.00	$25,000.00
Additional hire revenue from events ($600, 40 hirers)	$456,000.00		$24,000.00	$24,000.00
Additional facility hire revenue (hourly hire $20, 780 uses)	$296,400.00		$15,600.00	$15,600.00
Construction economic benefit (value added)	$863,160.00	$863,160.00		
Additional event economic benefit (value added) ($85/day, 1,600)	$1,143,477.00		$60,183.00	$60,183.00
Residual/Depreciated Asset Value (40 years useful life)	$840,000.00			$840,000.00
Undiscounted Benefits	**$4,074,037.00**	**$863,160.00**	**$124,783.00**	**$964,783.00**
Total Benefit (Present Value)	**$2,385,133.58**	**$863,160.00**	**$116,619.63**	**$266,770.54**

Cost Benefit Analysis (NPV and BCR)		
Discount rate	**NPV**	**BCR**
Undiscounted	$1,234,702.60	1.43
Low (4%)	$413,924.39	1.17
Base (7%)	$74,480.36	1.03
High (10%)	$(146,100.81)	0.93

Table 8: Cost benefit analysis—discounted cash flow

8.4 FUNDING

With an estimated investment in the order of $1,680,000 external funding is likely to be required to cover the capital costs of the project.

Typically major funding programs expect a financial contribution from the grant applicant. This contribution is typically 20% but may also be 40%. If the project cost is $1,680,000, 20% is $336,000 and 40% is $672,000 of matching funding that the club would need to raise.

Importantly, from a Council-wide network planning and strategic perspective, the Moreton Bay Regional Council's Equine Network Report and Action Plan recommended that Samford Showgrounds be uplifted from a local level to a regional level equestrian facility. Combined with membership, participation data and growth capacity, Council's recommendation justifies installing a covered arena. Furthermore, it provides confidence to funding providers that constructing a covered arena is a sound investment.

The club should apply effective project and cash flow management procedures, ensuring cash reserves or borrowings can cover costs incurred between construction or funding milestones, accounting for some delays in payment or milestone completion if required.

9. CONCLUSIONS

This facility usage plan provides a detailed analysis of Samford Equestrian Group's membership and activities in 2022, along with an investigation into the capacity of the SEG facility at Samford Showgrounds.

Facility improvement plans previously undertaken, combined with the club's strategic plan backed by a member survey, indicate a desire to develop the SEG facility strategically. This aspiration is supported by the Moreton Bay Regional Council's Equine Network Report and Action Plan (2023), which recommends that Samford Showgrounds be uplifted from a local level to a regional level equestrian facility, due to the facility's capacity and level of use.

The investigation into the capacity of SEG's facilities shows that the most likely restriction of competition size is arena availability, as the facility's parking capacity suitably supports the available arenas' maximum capacity.

Currently, no SEG events exceed the existing arena capacity. Furthermore, they only include less than 62% of the membership, indicating a capacity for growth. The high quality arena surfaces make SEG's facility appealing to all levels of competitors, providing participation opportunities.

If competition and participation growth is desired to support the development of SEG's facilities, the availability of safe yards for overnight stay is likely to be a limiting factor. Membership numbers (compared with population numbers) and catchment area suggest that SEG already attracts much of the available local membership market with slight expected growth from population growth. For members outside of the region to be more likely to attend competitions, they must travel a distance to attend, and safe yards would facilitate this. Yards are also appealing for owners with horses that can't be safely tethered to horse vehicles and for competing volunteers.

There is significant potential for competition hosting in addition to SEG's own events possibly to a scale of 250 horses or more. However, most large scale events are multi-day competitions, and yards are required to accommodate this. Access to showers within amenities blocks is also important. While the facility is already well used, there is still availability to hire SEG's facility to other competition hosts, as SEG currently runs 37 activities over 52 days, from an available 96 weekend days.

All other aspects that may limit the facility's capacity are less significant, or can be catered for with temporary measures and minor facility improvements. These include toilets, food outlets, wash bays and cattle facilities.

More volunteers and officials are required for larger competitions to be run by SEG. Their availability could place a non-infrastructure related barrier to higher facility utilisation.

This report investigated the feasibility of a covered arena, which is highly desired by members. For a covered arena to be feasible, the club needs to be able to maintain and eventually replace the structure.

Since covered arenas are not a requirement for competition but support participation by providing all weather and more appealing facilities, a sound user-pays cost recovery strategy should form part of the justification.

Due to a suggested capital cost of $1,680,000, the annual maintenance cost of $16,800 per annum and the annual contribution to an asset replacement sinking fund of $44,217.60, annual earnings of at least $61,017.60 are required to cover maintenance and replacement.

There is potential to cover the maintenance and replacement costs via $25,000 earnt from a $10 per competitor levy, $24,000 from additional hire revenue from events other than SEG's events and facility hire revenue of $15,600 from hourly hire by members.

The club's continued membership growth and available capacity to grow both competition size and frequency provide confidence that, if required, increased participation can support SEG's financial position. Further investment in yards may be required to support this, along with a positive club culture that results in active volunteering.

External funding will be required to construct an indoor arena. Funding is more likely to be received if SEG secures sufficient matching funds. Furthermore, funding is more likely to be obtained for a project with high utilisation, which aligns with strategy and region-wide planning. Importantly, from a strategic perspective, the Moreton Bay Regional Council's Equine Network Report and Action Plan recommended that Samford Showgrounds should be uplifted from a local level to a regional level equestrian facility, which supports installing a covered arena.

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