

The stage is set – finally

\$5.7m centre to be built at Rec Area

By LOUISE THROWER

G OULBURN'S prolonged quest for a performing arts complex has finally taken centre stage, with concrete plans to build a facility.

Strictly speaking, it's not solely a performance venue, but a "multi-use complex," the Council says will partly fit the bill.

Councillors decided at their most recent meeting to accept Bathurst firm, Hines Constructions' tender for the \$5.7 million facility at the Goulburn Recreation Area.

The company was selected from seven tenders.

Mayor Geoff Kettle acknowledges the larger space won't suit all groups but it's a step forward after so many years of debate.

"The town is crying out for a bigger facility and this is big," he said.

"The design we accepted will cater for a broad range, including sports in the hall, but it also lends itself to a portable stage."

On a separate front, the council is resuming talks with the Goulburn Regional Conservatorium about conversion of an old ceramics room for a more intimate performing arts venue. The thinking is this will help plug any gaps. (See separate story).

In the meantime, the Recreation Area plan is ramping up after a couple false starts. Council called for modified tenders from all parties after it discovered a funding shortfall.

The design includes two buildings to be constructed in two stages - a 2200 square metre area for sporting activities, performance, conferences and events, all connected to the existing basketball courts, and an 1100 square



THE PLAN: Council has accepted Bathurst based firm, Hines Constructions' plan for a multi-use complex at the Goulburn Recreation Area. The venue comprises two buildings – one for indoor sports and performance, and the other a function and viewing area for the Greyhound and Harness Racing clubs.

metre entertainment and viewing area overlooking the harness and greyhound tracks.

The hall in the first stage is 55 metres long by 40m wide, allowing some entertainment uses, engineering services director Terry Cooper says.

"It does have its limitations when it comes to performing arts," he said.

"It (the hall) is a large volume area suitable for some performance but if you're talking about a musical concert, it's not one of the greater venues. The same



goes for plays; it loses its appeal by being bigger."

Both buildings include storage and office space and amenities. Mr Cooper said he was pleased with the design as it gave thought

Performing arts venue at Conservatorium?

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to these aspects but it also distinguished the multifunction area from the harness/greyhound facility.

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