

NEWS

Council wants ideas about Fortuna's future

THE future of Fortuna Villa has come another step closer to being known as the city council has sought expressions of interest.

It said that after a long process with the Defence Department and the thorough examination of a due-diligence report, it was ready to hear public and private submissions on the future of the site.

Council CEO Craig Niemann said

this would determine the council's involvement in the future ownership and development of Fortuna.

"Before the council can submit a proposal to assume ownership and responsibility for Fortuna, it needs to know what other public or private entities are interested," he said.

"We need to know a raft of information, such as who is inter-

ested, what their plans for the site are and if they have the financial capacity to assume ownership or management for all or part of the property, with or without the financial support of government."

The department has made a series of detailed investigations into Fortuna's significant heritage values, environmental assessment and the character of the buildings

and grounds. The Fortuna Villa Action Group also released its response to the due-diligence report.

The five-page document divided the response into four major considerations.

These were: the condition of the buildings and the costs of refurbishment and maintenance; the heritage management plan and its

restrictions and opportunities; the integrity of the site and the landscape; and the environmental situation and risk management.

"It is clear that the Defence Department has cared for the site over the years and is offering Fortuna for sale in good condition, but there is inevitably the question of restoration, refurbishment and on-going maintenance," the report said. — RICHARD WILLINGHAM