

An aerial photograph of the Portarlington Recreation Reserve. The image shows a large, green, oval-shaped sports field in the foreground, surrounded by trees and smaller structures. In the background, a residential suburb is visible, with houses and streets leading towards the ocean on the left side of the frame. The sky is blue with some light clouds.

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

PORTARLINGTON RECREATION RESERVE

MASTER PLAN (DRAFT)

REPORT
JUNE 2021

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Wadawurrung People of the Kulin Nations. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of the Greater Geelong community today.

Disclaimer: This Master Plan Report was prepared by an independent consultant in conjunction with the City of Greater Geelong. The Master Plan Report provides an overview of the context, need and community engagement methods undertaken which have helped to form the Draft Master Plan. This report is also subject to further consultation and consideration by the City of Greater Geelong.

The contents of this report are approved by the City of Greater Geelong, however, may require revision over time to reflect current council policy.

All illustrative plans, perspectives and imagery contained within this report are indicative artists impressions to illustrate conceptual ideas only and are subject to further resolution, consultation, detailed design, and approvals.

All images throughout this document have been credited where required.

The City of Greater Geelong wish to acknowledge contributions to this report made by the Project Reference Group, Project Control Group, Project Working Group, and the greater Geelong community.

The Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan is supported by the Victorian Government.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan (Draft) has been developed to provide a clear direction for the overall improvement of Portarlington Recreation Reserve. Following broad consultation with stakeholders, the Draft Master Plan aims to strike a balance between the embellishment of the Reserve and its intended future use as a local level facility. In addition, the Plan also considers the capability and capacity of potential investment partners and future resources required for implementation.

Portarlington Recreation Reserve is a 38-hectare allotment which serves a variety of purposes for the community including sport, recreation, event, and flora and fauna uses. The Reserve is situated within the township of Portarlington, which has a current population of 4,046. The township offers an enviable combination of rural and coastal lifestyles, maintaining a small town feel even throughout the summer months when there is an influx of holiday makers.

It is anticipated that the current Portarlington population is expected to experience growth of 26% to 2030, at an average annual change of approximately 2%. This equates to approximately 1,087 additional persons living in Portarlington in 2030. Most of the population growth will be experienced within the 60 – 75 year old age cohort.

Portarlington sits just outside of the City of Greater Geelong's growth boundaries, and therefore, according to the 2017 Portarlington Structure Plan, the town's role over the next 10 years will be as a popular holiday destination, along with an acknowledgement that elderly persons will continue to comprise a very high proportion of permanent resident population.

The Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan (Draft) and its recommendations have been considered and shaped around the future likely use and demographic of the Reserve over the next 10 years. These considerations have resulted in the shaping of recommendations that are both aspirational and achievable.

The Reserve currently offers a diverse range of uses and activities across the sporting and active recreation area and throughout the passive recreation area. As discovered through the findings within this report, both active and passive areas of the Reserve are highly valued by the community and, as such, a balanced approach to their improvement, activation and management has been actively considered throughout the development of the Draft Plan.

The Recreation Reserve has a strong organised sporting contingent, with tennis, netball, football, and cricket codes all represented. The Reserve is also home to Girl Guides as well as an agricultural society, who host the town's popular annual event, the Bellarine Agricultural Show.

The passive recreation area, as previously mentioned, holds significant environmental and biodiversity values, and is located to the west of the active sporting precinct. Trails and habitat

throughout this area can be found, and is well utilised by walkers, joggers, and nature enthusiasts alike.

The Draft Master Plan's recommendations have utilised the findings from engagement through a Project Control Group, Project Working Group and Project Reference Group, along with a four week community consultation period. In addition, this report has reviewed relevant literature, facility inspections and participation analysis to provide supporting background information.

The Draft Master Plan has been driven by four development principles and six goals, of which each of the recommendations align. These include sustainability, accessibility, multi-use and fit for purpose. In line with these, key themes of the Draft Master Plan and its recommendations, include:

Refurbishment of identified sporting facilities where they do not align with recommended guidelines. The Draft Plan recognises that most sporting infrastructure at the Reserve is in good structural condition, particularly with regards to the various pavilions, however there are some deficiencies in their quality and function. Several opportunities exist also for the associated sporting amenities and playing surfaces to be upgraded to encourage their multi-use and to contribute to greater programming and participation opportunities.

Improvement in vehicle and pedestrian movement and connections, making access safer and more inclusive. Throughout the Reserve, draft recommendations have been made to enhance car parking areas and to formalise access routes that experience high volumes of traffic. Connectivity throughout the Reserve as well as to neighbouring land parcels including the Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve and the Portarlington Holiday Park are recommended to increase visitation and the safety of pedestrians.

Greater improvements to the passive recreation area to enhance the biodiversity aspects of the Reserve, as well as contribute to a better user experience. The western area of Portarlington Recreation Reserve has been improved through the regeneration of vegetation and habitat. Combined with the Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve adjacent, this represents the largest area of native vegetation of the northern Bellarine Peninsula. The Draft Master Plan's recommendations include improving vegetation and habitat whilst elevating the quality of recreation access and enjoyment of the area.

A better variety of community activities throughout the Reserve such as diversified play for a broader age group of children and adolescents as well as community garden, will contribute to increased opportunities for involvement.

Additional tree canopy and landscaping commensurate with the character and context of the site, will make the Reserve more visually appealing and offer greater amenity and habitat. Strategically placing new plantings in areas which improve the overall value of the Reserve, but that does not hinder the deliverability of community events, is recommended.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following summary provides a high-level overview of the key recommendations of the Draft Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan:



Refurbishing the existing main (football/cricket) pavilion as well as small extensions to the tennis and netball pavilions will ensure that essential sporting infrastructure components including change rooms and amenities, are meeting the requirements and expectations of the modern game.



Improvements to car parking and vehicle movement throughout the site will enhance connectivity, make it safer for pedestrians, and encourage more active modes of transport.



Upgraded entrances will make the Reserve more visually appealing and improve the management of foot and vehicle traffic.



Additional community activities have been recommended throughout the Draft Master Plan including improved play space, multi-use sporting surfaces, BMX/bike jumps and community garden.



Upgrading the cricket practice nets will enable multi-use opportunities whilst providing a more up to date and safer facility for players and spectators.



Draft recommendations for the passive recreation area aim to improve the Reserve's biodiversity properties and value whilst creating opportunities for greater visitation and passive recreational activities.



Recommendations to provide additional tree canopy throughout the Draft Master Plan aim to enhance the amenity of the Reserve whilst contributing to a greener parkland.



Undertaking small improvements to the open space and events area within the Reserve will ensure it is well serviced to host current and future community events.



Consolidating and replacing, where appropriate, old infrastructure that is past its useful life and no longer fit for purpose has been recommended.



Accessible pathways and connections, including wayfinding signage is recommended both within the Reserve and to adjacent land parcels and neighbouring properties. Connections between the active recreation and passive recreation areas are highlighted throughout.



Functional upgrades to the tennis and netball courts, including lighting and spectator seating, as well as the provision of a netball warm up area, will provide greater participation and programming opportunities.



Improving community amenity within the Reserve, including park benches and picnic facilities will offer greater opportunities for other recreational activities including unstructured play and nature appreciation.



Image 1: Portarlington Recreation Reserve – image of active recreation area including tennis courts and new netball courts

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The City of Greater Geelong, with funding from the Victorian Government, has commissioned the development of a Master Plan for Portarlington Recreation Reserve. The Master Plan (Draft) aims to assist in guiding the community's vision for the site and to provide clear strategic direction for future investment and development.

With growing demand for improved sporting and community infrastructure, better pedestrian and vehicle accessibility and enhanced open space and passive recreation areas, a coordinated approach to development is required.

This report provides the supporting context to the Master Plan and a summary of the issues and opportunities that have been addressed as part of the process. Through the analysis of supporting information and consultation undertaken to date, the Draft Master Plan will enable greater function, activation, and participation at the Reserve.

1.2 STUDY AREA

The project study area for the Portarlington Recreation Reserve is identified in 'Map 1' on the adjacent page. The study area includes the ovals, netball and tennis courts, playground and the open space area to the south which is commonly used for events. The area to the west of the active precinct is known, for the purposes of this report, as the 'passive recreation area' and is also included within the Master Plan's scope. This area is primarily used for the creation and retention of habitat and for more passive recreation pursuits including walking, jogging, nature appreciation and for overflow event parking.

It should be noted that the original scope for the Master Plan's development did not include the passive recreation area. A change in scope throughout the masterplanning process has seen the inclusion of this precinct.

1.3 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Through broad consultation with user groups, the community, Council and other stakeholders, the objectives of the project are to:

- Provide a strategic vision and future direction for the Reserve which responds to community need;
- Understand the role Portarlington Recreation Reserve plays in the local community and its diverse range of uses including for active, passive and nature-based activities;

- Highlight the most appropriate approach to the activation and programming of the Reserve so that capacity and utilisation is maximised;
- Understand improvement opportunities that enhance user experience, sentiment, and sense of place;
- Optimise sports facility and open space usage and increase multi-use of recreational facilities;
- Plan for the protection and enhancement of the passive recreation area of the Reserve;
- Identify infrastructure development opportunities for the Portarlington Recreation Reserve for the next 10 years;
- Provide a preliminary concept plan showing potential layouts and various options to address identified priorities;
- Identify the broad costs and staging opportunities associated with the implementation of proposed Master Plan recommendations; and
- Identify areas where a soft transition in use, from active sport to informal recreation, can be achieved.

1.4 RECENT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

At the time of writing this report, investment has been confirmed for the delivery of the following infrastructure projects at Portarlington Recreation Reserve:

- Upgrade to sports lighting on Oval 1 (underway)
- Upgrade to sporting lighting on netball courts (completed)

Funding for these projects has been received through various funding streams including the Commonwealth Government, Victorian Government, and the City of Greater Geelong.



Map 1: Portarlinton Recreation Reserve – image of study area

1.5 PROJECT METHODOLOGY

STAGE	TASKS	DATES
1	Project Establishment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project commencement Project inception meeting Site inspections 	Completed
2	Needs Analysis and Stakeholder Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> User group (Project Working Group, Project Reference Group) consultation Demographic review Literature review Site inventory and existing conditions assessment Community engagement 	Completed
3	Issues and Opportunities Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation summary and findings Issues and Opportunities Report Project Working Group, Project Reference Group and Project Control Group meetings 	Completed
4	Draft Master Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Master Plan options identified Preliminary cost estimates and investment opportunities outlined Draft Master Plan for review and approval by PCG Draft Master Plan for review by PRG and PWG 	This document
5	Public Exhibition Period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Master Plan considered by Council and released to Public Exhibition. 	July-August 2021
6	Final Master Plan and Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of Public Exhibition feedback Development of Final Master Plan and Cost Estimates Review of final Master Plan and approval by PCG Review of final Master Plan by PRG and PWG Council Endorsement of final Master Plan 	October-November 2021

1.6 MASTER PLAN DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

The following principles and goals have underpinned and guided the Master Plan's development. These principles were shaped following the strategic literature review, site inspections, demographic analysis and community consultation outcomes outlined throughout this report.

1. SUSTAINABILITY

Economic Sustainability

- Utilising resources efficiently and responsibly, including technological advancements, through the recommendations in the Master Plan to deliver long term economic growth without any negative impact.
- Facility investment that increases the capacity of not-for-profit organisations to drive revenue and fundraising initiatives and deliver infrastructure upgrades that can demonstrate financial responsibility to the rate payer and offer opportunities for collaborative investment.

Environmental Sustainability

- Enhancing and protecting the values of the Reserve and its environmental properties and to make contributions towards managing the impacts of climate change.

Cultural Sustainability

- A need to understand and protect areas of cultural heritage sensitivity, and to work with traditional owners, throughout the management and development of the Reserve.

Social Sustainability

- Through the provision of facilities that support community participation that enhances social cohesion and capacity.

2. ACCESSIBILITY

- Improving opportunities for all people of all backgrounds, genders, abilities, cultures, and beliefs to utilise the facility in a manner that avoids segregating people and makes the facility more appealing and intuitive to use.
- Improving the connectivity of the Reserve with adjacent land parcels to create a more vibrant sense of place.

4. MULTI-USE

- Offer opportunities to maximise community participation through flexible facilities that are available for a wide range of uses.
- Building the capacity of facility's existing attributes including improved utilisation.

5. FIT FOR PURPOSE

- Use activity and industry specific, universal design, strategic and informing documents to determine facility and infrastructure needs to address facility gaps and needs.
- Continue to ensure Portarlington Recreation Reserve provides a balance of sporting activity, event, community and environmental uses and functions.

GOALS

- See page 51



STRATEGIC CONTEXT

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

The following pages provide a high-level summary of the documents and key strategic influences which have guided the development of the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan.

2.1.1 STATEWIDE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

ACTIVE VICTORIA: A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR SPORT AND RECREATION IN VICTORIA 2017-2021

This document, developed by the Victorian Government, aims to provide a consolidated approach to the improvement in participation in sport and recreation from a state-wide perspective.

The vision for participation outcomes in sport within the document are based upon five key areas;

- **More active:** increased proportion of Victorian's regularly participating in sport or active recreation.
- **More diverse and inclusive:** providing opportunities for all to become involved.
- **Robust, flexible, sustainable, and affordable:** providing flexible and affordable choices for participants.
- **Collaborative:** well-planned and connected investment that maximises participation and other community benefits.
- **Broad-based and connected:** A system that addresses the different demands, contributors and structure of sport and active recreation and maximises connections across the system.

The Master Plan's development has considered these focus areas throughout. The importance of delivering a Plan which drives multi-use and offers diverse and broad participation outcomes will be imperative to its success and implementation.

PROTECTING VICTORIA'S ENVIRONMENT – BIODIVERSITY 2037

This document provides a strategic approach to stop the decline of biodiversity and to see its improvement over the next 20 years.

The Biodiversity Plan outlines priorities which aim to see more Victorian's valuing nature and for Victoria to have a healthy natural environment.

The Plan states that biodiversity in Victoria is experiencing a number of threats, with many plants and vertebrate animals considered as rare, threatened or near-threatened. It is outlined within the document that there is a continued decline in the quality and extent of habitat due to habitat loss, weeds, pest animals and changes in fire and water regimes – all of which will be exacerbated by the effects of climate change.

Biodiversity is considered fundamental to the health, wellbeing and prosperity of current and future generations, and it has an intrinsic value and right to exist.

The Key Priorities outlined in the Plan to protect and improve Victorian biodiversity, include:

- Increase opportunities for all Victorian to have daily connections with nature.
- Increase opportunities for all Victorians to act to protect biodiversity.
- Embed consideration of natural capital into decision making across the whole of government.
- Help to create more liveable and climate-adapted communities.
- Better care for and showcase Victoria's environmental assets as world-class natural and cultural tourism attractions.
- Engage with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians to include Aboriginal values and traditional ecological knowledge in biodiversity planning and management.

The Master Plan's development relies on the directions in the Biodiversity 2037 Plan to guide recommendations, particularly for those surrounding the passive recreation area. Demonstrating the commitment to achieving a number of the noted key priorities will be important in the Master Plan's future directions and implementation.

2.1.2 REGIONAL STRATEGIC CONTEXT

G21 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY 2014-2017

This document is a region-wide approach to improving opportunities for physical activity and participation in a range of passive and active sports.

The G21 Physical Activity Strategy provides an overview of the importance of physical activity and the way in which the G21 Region can help to create environments to support it. Key actions within the Strategy as they relate to the Master Plan include:

- Work within local sport and active recreation settings to address barriers to participation for vulnerable groups within our community.
- Encourage broader community access to tenanted sport and recreation facilities.
- Ensure that all active sport and recreation settings such as recreation reserve, stadiums, tennis courts are planned, designed, managed, and maintained to be accessible and appropriate to the needs of all user groups.

The Master Plan has a strong focus on opportunities for broader community benefit and involvement through its implementation. This includes for all genders and abilities.

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG COUNCIL PLAN 2018-2022

This document provides the overall direction for Council, outlining their responsibilities and commitment to providing services, infrastructure, and opportunities to the community. The Council Plan supports the development of social infrastructure that provides opportunities for participation by a wide range of people, of all ages and abilities.

The City's Council Plan outlines 11 strategic priorities towards making Greater Geelong a clever and creative city-region. The Plan aims to guide resources to deliver infrastructure, services, and programs to the community in a sustainable way.

Key focus areas which will be considered in the Master Plan's development include: 1) Informed social infrastructure and planning – through providing more quality spaces that support active lifestyles as well as supporting the growth of localised sporting facilities 2) A more inclusive and diverse community through promoting gender equity and diversity in sporting facilities and improving access to facilities for people of all abilities.

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN (GENERATION ONE) 2020-2023

This document sets the strategic drivers for decision making and prioritisation in relation to the planning, development, and investment of social infrastructure in the City of Greater Geelong.

Five (5) directions for the strategic development of outdoor community sporting facilities are identified in the Plan, including the investment in infrastructure that improves the quality, functionality and carrying capacity of venues and the activation of facilities to increase participation and maximise use. The completion of the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan is listed as a priority under the 'sport and recreation planning projects' within the Outdoor Sport and Recreation Network Report.

The principles within the Social Infrastructure Plan have assisted in guiding and recommending the projects identified within the Master Plan. Ensuring projects align with the major objective identified in the Network Report being to 'build capacity in the network', including increased capability of facilities.

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY 2020-2030

This document outlines a roadmap to improving the region's environment and reducing its environmental footprint. The Strategy outlines several planning and decision-making initiatives to improve the health of the local environment over the next 10 years.

The Strategy acknowledges that to respond to population growth estimates for the City, that it must lead, educate, advocate and support for the improvement, retention, development, and restoration of the natural environment. Following extensive community consultation, five key goals were identified, including:

- Become a zero-emission, climate ready city and region;
- Create greener community spaces;
- Contribute to a circular economy by reducing waste;
- Protect, enhance, and restore our region's biodiversity; and
- Achieve better integrated water management through planning and design.

The Master Plan includes recommendations that align with improving the goals outlined within this Strategy. To ensure these objectives are met, the Draft Master Plan has demonstrated commitment to contributing to a healthier natural environment for the present and future community.

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG URBAN FOREST STRATEGY 2015-2025

This document outlines the key actions and tasks associated with increasing the urban tree population throughout the City of Greater Geelong to improve the City's look, feel and liveability as well as the health of the community.

The City of Greater Geelong's Urban Forest Strategy has a vision for Geelong to be a 'cool, green city for the future'. This vision aims to be achieved through the development of healthier and more dynamic urban forests and improved tree canopy in streetscapes, urban growth areas, open space areas and reserves.

The addition of tree planting, vegetation, and landscaping within Draft Master Plan recommendations will improve the Reserve's environmental properties will contribute to achieving this vision.

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG PLAY STRATEGY 2012-2021

This document provides a strategic approach to the need, role, and function of Geelong's play spaces to ensure children receive equitable access to quality playgrounds and can also participate in a range of play experiences.

The Play Strategy outlines a range of principles regarding the provision and design of places of play, including:

Improving supporting infrastructure at play spaces.

Creating better connections to cycling/walking networks.

Improving play opportunities throughout the municipality by focusing on delivering diversity in play for all ages and abilities. The Draft Master Plan has considered the above in its recommendation for new or redeveloped play facilities within the Reserve.

2.1.3 LOCAL STRATEGIC CONTEXT

PORTARLINGTON RECREATION RESERVE MASTER PLAN 2011

The 2011 Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan has guided the development and improvement of the Reserve over the last 10 years. The document aimed to enhance opportunities for community participation at the Reserve through sports, events, and informal recreation. The review of this document has been undertaken and consideration will be given to any outstanding, relevant actions that need to be considered in the updated Plan.

The 2011 Master Plan has been included within the strategic review, like all other informing and strategic documents, to further understand where the new Plan will need to address any outstanding items and/or where actions have been superseded. The new Master Plan refers to the new context and environment that it relates to, and to respond to newer and emerging trends that may not have been apparent or required within the previous Plan.

BELLARINE BAYSIDE COASTAL MANAGEMENT - DRAFT NORTHERN BELLARINE COASTAL AND MARINE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Draft Plan aims to reflect the objectives and long-term aspirations for the sustainable management of the northern Bellarine foreshore. Specific to the Master Plan's development, the following is noted within:

- Contribute to CoGG's Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan to improve connections to Portarlington Holiday Park.
- Work with CoGG to promote use of Portarlington Recreation Reserve for events during the peak holiday period.

The Master Plan's development includes representation from the Bellarine Bayside Coastal Management Committee on the Project Reference Group to provide input and to assist in achieving collaborative aspirations.

PORTARLINGTON RECREATION RESERVE DRAFT WORKS PLAN 2016

This document led by the City of Greater Geelong's Environment Department, highlights improvements to be undertaken within the western section of Portarlington Recreation Reserve, otherwise referred to as the 'passive recreation area'. These recommendations aim to expand the environmental properties and habitat within this area and make a clear distinction between the active and passive spaces.

Recommendations within the Draft Works Plan have been utilised alongside an ecological assessment, to inform the Draft Master Plan which includes actions for the passive recreation area.

BELLARINE PENINSULA DISTINCTIVE AREAS AND LANDSCAPES

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning is currently developing a draft Statement of Planning Policy for the Bellarine Peninsula. This Policy aims to acknowledge and protect the Peninsula which is currently noted by DEWLP as 'under significant urban development pressure as well as threat from climate change risks. In addition, the Policy will include a 50 year vision and land use strategies to better protect the unique features of the Bellarine Peninsula, and designate long-term protected settlement boundaries to provide greater certainty for current and future generations. The Draft Policy is expected to be released for public consultation in late 2020.

The progress of the Distinctive Areas and Landscapes Policy for the Bellarine Peninsula has been monitored throughout the development of the Draft Master Plan. Where recommendations and the final documentation is released, alignments to the Plan will be made.

PORTARLINGTON STRUCTURE PLAN 2017

The Portarlington Structure Plan aims to identify and address several purposes to determine the application of local planning policies, planning zones and overlays, and to assist the City of Greater Geelong when considering applications for planning permits. The key purposes of the Structure Plan, include:

- Identify the strategic planning issues facing the township, including community aspiration and needs:
- Articulate the preferred future planning directions for the township, and
- Identify appropriate planning controls which will protect and enhance the distinctive elements of the township, biodiversity, and landscape features.

The Structure Plan, based on the above principles and underpinning information, created the following vision for Portarlington - *'Portarlington will be the jewel of the Bellarine Peninsula. Our focus is a commitment to nurturing a vibrant, sustainable community, enhancing, and maintaining our lifestyle, heritage, and artistic pursuits'.*

The Draft Master Plan aligns with the recommendations within the Structure Plan to ensure Portarlington maintains a balance coastal-rural lifestyles, community, environment, and economic opportunity.

2.1.4 SPORT SPECIFIC STRATEGIES

The City of Greater Geelong and the G21 Geelong Region Alliance have several strategic documents that have been developed in conjunction with peak sporting bodies and are relevant to the Portarlington Master Plan. In addition, state-wide strategic sporting documents also provide support and justification.

These include:

- AFL Victoria 'Growing the Heartland' Football Facilities Development Strategy (2014-2020);
- Victoria Cricket Infrastructure Strategy (2018-2028);
- Netball Victoria Statewide Infrastructure Strategy (2019-2022);
- Tennis Australia: Tennis 2020 Facility Development and Management Framework for Australian Tennis;
- G21 & AFL Barwon Regional Strategy (2015);
- G21 & Cricket Victoria Barwon Regional Strategy (2019); and
- G21 Regional Tennis Strategy (2015-2025).

These documents have been summarised and utilised to help create and shape the recommendations within the Draft Master Plan.

AFL VICTORIA 'GROWING THE HEARTLAND' FOOTBALL FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2014-2020

The 'Growing the Heartland' Strategy aims to provide a planned approach to the provision of infrastructure across the State. One of the key development pillars of the Strategy is 'Great Infrastructure' which includes the objective to 'advocate for and collaborate in facility development for the network of community football leagues, their clubs and schools'.

The Strategy notes that Geelong is its highest participation region for Country Victoria which, at the time of the Strategy's development, boasted an additional 5,000+ players than the next highest region.

The development of the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan fits the AFL's planning facility hierarchy identified in the Strategy, seeing venue improvement plans and master plans as a key component to infrastructure development.

VICTORIAN CRICKET INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 2018-2028

This Strategy provides the Victorian cricketing community and its stakeholders with a detailed assessment and analysis of the Victorian cricket facility landscape and identifies future planning and development priorities. The Strategy highlights critical actions for cricket participation and growth. Those most relevant to the development of the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan, includes:

- Prioritise and support the upgrade and development of facilities at sites with identified and potential female participation growth.

The Geelong/Barwon region, similarly to AFL, had the highest participation of any Country Region and the Geelong LGA had one of the highest saturations of cricket players to population ratios.

The Strategy highlights a low provision of inclusive, all gender facilities along with 59% of cricket practice nets in the Barwon Region presenting potential safety concerns.

The aspirations to improve facilities including the delivery of all gender change facilities and safer, multi-use cricket practice facilities at Portarlington Recreation Reserve align with the directions within this Strategy.

NETBALL VICTORIA STATEWIDE FACILITIES STRATEGY 2019-2022

The Plan outlines how Netball Victoria aims to deliver on their key strategic drivers for the future direction, demand, and investment into netball facilities.

The Strategy indicates that two courts be provided for local outdoor club-based netball competition as well as supporting infrastructure including:

Floodlighting;

Accessible change rooms and amenities; and

Player and officials shelters.

The G21 Region is recorded as having the highest number of participants of any Rural & Regional area in Netball.

TENNIS AUSTRALIA - TENNIS 2020: FACILITY DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR AUSTRALIAN TENNIS

Key priorities identified within the Framework are:

- Better planning;
- More and better national infrastructure; and
- Better management practices.

This aims to result in:

- Healthier communities;
- More active players;
- More great champions; and
- More devoted fans.

The Framework identifies that community expectations of tennis facilities is changing and that certain standards must be met to attract and retain new participants. It notes that there is opportunity in offering multi-use facilities which promote broader community outcomes. The key role that facilities with greater than four courts, such as Portarlington Recreation Reserve, play is to host interclub tournaments and grass roots development and to help improve the sustainability of tennis and community health improvements.

G21 & AFL BARWON REGIONAL STRATEGY 2015

This document provides the principles and framework to support the future development, governance and growth of football and club-based netball throughout the Region. It also investigates issues facing the sport and makes recommendations for both regional and local priorities.

One of the priorities within the document is to 'Increase the quality and functionality of facilities to maximise carrying capacity' and that investment into facilities to meet minimum requirements will ensure participation growth can be accommodated for.

Currently, a 2020 update to the Strategy is underway, which will focus on what is changed since 2015, most notably being the significant increase in female participation and the introduction of the AFL Preferred Facility Guidelines and Netball Victoria Facilities Manual.

The 2020 Strategy will continue to focus on infrastructure and enhanced participation opportunities and will utilise the Sports Facility Auditor data as one method to prioritise improvements. It is likely that the clubroom facilities at Portarlington Recreation Reserve will be identified as a priority.

G21 & CRICKET VICTORIA BARWON REGIONAL CRICKET STRATEGY 2019

This Strategy investigates issues and opportunities facing cricket both 'on-field' (facilities and infrastructure) as well as 'off-field' (sport development, increasing participation and partnerships). The key strategic priority within the Strategy is 'Improved Governance and Cricket Activity Management' through developing an aligned and collaborative structure to manage cricket. Subsequent priorities include participation growth and facility provision, capacity, and renewal.

In terms of facility development for the Region, the Strategy recommends utilising facility audit data to identify gaps in provision and site-specific renewal programs. Projects that increase carrying capacity, functionality and activation of existing facilities including change room refurbishment should be prioritised.

This priority further supports and underpins the opportunity to improve cricket facilities at Portarlington Recreation Reserve including practice nets and change rooms. With Portarlington Cricket Club's steady growth in female participation, the improvement to these facilities will prove integral to the sustainability and prosperity for women in sport.

G21 REGIONAL TENNIS STRATEGY 2015-2025

The Strategy provides key directions to support the growth of tennis through the implementation of key priorities including infrastructure. The Strategy has a vision to see the G21 Region being the fastest growing and most accessible region for tennis. Key priorities including developing an aligned approach and structure to tennis as well as participation and facility provision and renewal are identified.

A key infrastructure focus within this Strategy is the provision of floodlighting to improve capacity. The Portarlington Tennis Club recently received investment to install improved floodlighting which supports flexible programming and greater participation opportunities. The upgrade to the supporting tennis amenities will further support their operations and offer modern infrastructure for players.

2.2 DEMOGRAPHIC REVIEW

The City of Greater Geelong has an average growth rate from 2020-2030 of 2.1%, which is higher than that of metropolitan Melbourne.

The City of Greater Geelong has an estimated population of 263,280 in 2020*. This is expected to grow to 324,289 in 2030 and 386,890 in 2040, primarily because of several growth areas to the south and north-west of the municipality.

Whilst the City of Greater Geelong boasts several residential growth areas, the township of Portarlington, as identified in the 2017 Portarlington Structure Plan, is set outside of this boundary. The Structure Plan recognises the uniqueness of Portarlington and sees its role over the next 10 years as a popular holiday destination, but with an acknowledgement that elderly persons will continue to comprise a very high proportion of the permanent population.

Portarlington itself has a total population of 4,046 in 2020 and is anticipated to reach 5,133 in 2030**. The average population growth rate of Portarlington is approximately 2%.

Portarlington and neighbouring towns including St Leonards and Indented Head have the smallest population base, with a total of 7,877 residents occupying the three towns with an expected population of 10,062 in 2030.

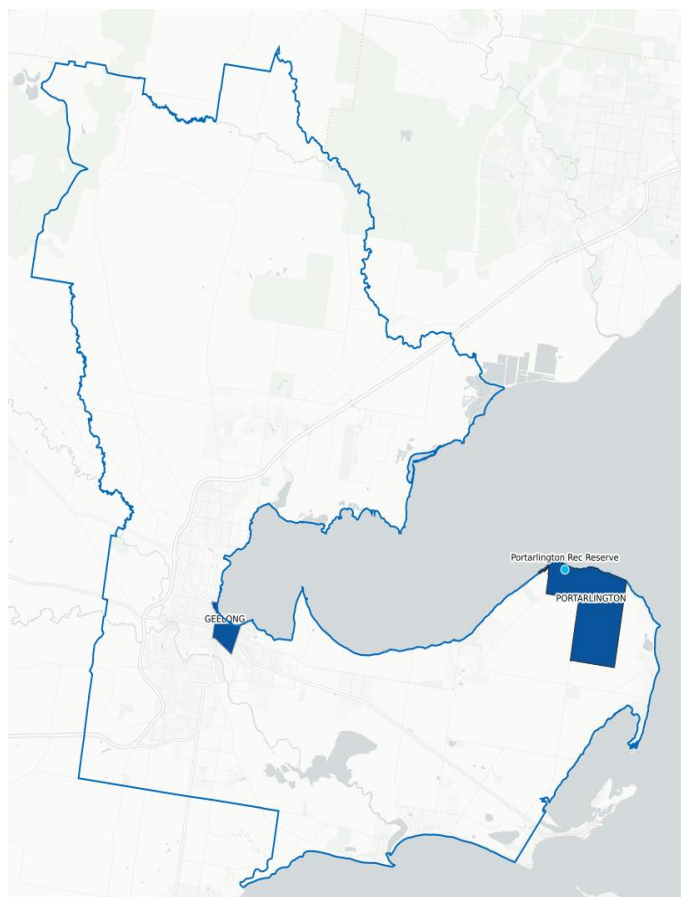
Portarlington experiences significant population growth in the summer months. It is estimated that an additional 6,000 – 8,000 people visit the seaside towns of Portarlington, St Leonards, and Indented Head from December to February each year.

2.2.1 LOCAL DEMOGRAPHIC INFLUENCES ON RECREATION

- The majority of population growth expected between 2020 and 2030 in Portarlington is within the 60-74 year old age cohort. In 2030, this age group will make up approximately 32% of the total Portarlington population.
- The largely older age demographic will present more demand for targeted activities that generally attract older people. This includes activities such as cycling, nature appreciation, tennis, and walking. Aging is inevitable, and the ability for active sports such as AFL, netball, and cricket to adapt to a point where they can continue to offer suitable and/or appealing programs for older adults is unlikely. It is therefore important that the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan considers participation opportunities and facilities that can service younger people, but flexible enough to cater for the diversity of its demographic profile.
- In terms of the younger age demographic, it is forecasted that population growth of 4.2% in the 5-9 year old age cohort will be experienced. This is a change of approximately 24 persons from 2020 to 2030. The 5-9 year old age group is considered a key introductory market for organised sporting programs. The limited growth in this age cohort will likely decrease demand for junior programs. Attracting participants from neighbouring towns where appropriate may be necessary to support greater participation into the future.
- There will be an average growth of 4%, or an additional 60 persons, from 2020-2030 in the 15-19 year old age cohort. This group is one where retention of active participants or players is important, as generally there is a decline or drop off in organised sport between these ages. A focus on modified formats, social and flexible participation opportunities will assist in the ongoing engagement of this demographic.
- The 5-39 year old age cohort is considered the key market for organised sport, and particularly with the rise in female participation, the attraction and retention of females is imperative to both community health and the sustainability of the game. There will be an additional 115 females within this age group residing in Portarlington and opportunities to engage them in sport and recreation via welcoming and inclusive facilities will be crucial.
- The seasonal population of Portarlington, particularly during summer months, offers opportunity to engage visitors in informal, social sport and recreation. Whilst these participants are unlikely to be retained post-holiday, it does offer more opportunities to improve health and activity outcomes as well as generate financial outcomes for Clubs.

“Portarlington will see an additional 24 people aged between 5-9 and 60 people aged between 15-19 living within the township between 2020 and 2030”

“An additional 115 females aged 5-39 will reside in Portarlington by 2030. This age cohort is considered the key market for organised sport”



Map 2: The City of Greater Geelong indicating the location of the Geelong CBD and Portarlington Recreation Reserve

Source:

*City of Greater Geelong population projections

**Forecast.id

2.3 DESIGN TRENDS

Current design trends have influenced the development of the Master Plan as they inform modern, accessible, and efficient facilities that achieve the objectives of the community and the City, as well as potential future investment partners. These trends and associated strategic design documents include:

2.3.1 UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Universal Design involves a holistic approach to the design of an environment so that it is accessible, intuitive, and understood by all people regardless of age, ability, gender, or culture.

- **Sport & Recreation Victoria's Design for Everyone Guide**
The Guide aims to instil the principles of Universal Design to make the built environment more simplified and inclusive of as many users as possible. Equitable design, for people of all genders, all abilities and of all cultures should be at the forefront of any design process and have been incorporated throughout the development of the Master Plan.

2.3.2 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE DESIGN (ESD)

Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) aims to improve the health and comfort of the built environment for user groups and occupants whilst concurrently reducing negative impacts on the environment. ESD helps future proof communities against rising utility costs and reduces the impact of climate change.

- **Sport & Recreation Victoria's Environmentally Sustainable Design Fact Sheet** – This Fact Sheet outlines some key design opportunities that can be considered during design development to reduce operational and environmental impacts while increasing building resilience. These include, but are not limited to:
 - Renewal energy generation
 - Utilising environmentally friendly products
 - Water efficient and water saving
 - Reducing construction waste
 - Optimising site potential and reduced operating costs through north facing elements
 - Natural light and cross flow ventilation
 - Optimising operational and maintenance costs
 - Finding sustainable trades people and professionals

2.3.3 GENDER NEUTRAL FACILITIES

The inclusion of facilities that are inclusive of all people and gender is imperative to any modern development. For sporting facilities, the rise in female participation has created increased demand for amenities that cater to the diversity of people attracted to sport. Guiding documentation for the development of gender-neutral facilities in the active sport setting, include:

- **SRV Female Friendly Infrastructure Guide** - The Guide aims to provide information on developing facilities which offer more gender equitable environments. This occurs through three main components, including facility planning and design, maximising use and policy that drives change.
- **Sporting Facility Guidelines** - Most peak sporting bodies have guidelines relating to facility development that include information in relation to the provision of gender-neutral amenities.
- **AFL Preferred Facility Guidelines 2019** - These Guidelines outline the preferred facility requirements for venues which are utilised for AFL training and competition. The Guidelines are to be used as a key tool during the planning phase of a project to identify the spatial requirements for facilities to support male and female teams, umpires, officials, and the broader AFL community. The Guidelines also provide recommendations for the specification of supporting infrastructure such as floodlights.
- **Tennis Australia Infrastructure Planning 2018** - This resource is designed to educate, inform, and guide tennis facility planning and development for existing venues and new builds.
- **Netball Victoria Facilities Manual 2017** - Netball Victoria's Facilities Manual contains technical information on netball courts and associated infrastructure. It is Netball Victoria's expectation that all new and redeveloped facilities are constructed to meet the standards outlined within the Manual.

- **Cricket Australia Community Cricket Facility Guidelines 2015** - The Cricket Australia Community Cricket Facility Guidelines provides facility planning, development, management, and maintenance information for use by the community, government and national cricket industry partners and stakeholders.

2.3.4 MULTI USE

Providing flexible spaces that offer multi-use opportunities for the community will see better social outcomes and returns on investment. Encouraging broader use of facilities by the community, outside of traditional uses such as sport, will be an important consideration in the Master Plan's development.

- **City of Greater Geelong's Social Infrastructure Plan** – This document, as referenced in the Strategic Context section of this Report, provides a framework as to how the City will prioritise and invest in social infrastructure. A key component guiding this decision making is the principle of 'multi use'. The Plan outlines that a focus on moving standalone facilities to more flexible and multipurpose community hubs should be considered, and that community infrastructure should be developed where shared use and integration of other services and users can be adapted.

2.3.5 OPEN SPACE DESIGN

The design of the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan aims to create opportunities for unstructured recreation in a manner that is safe and integrates the balance of the Reserve's activities.

- **Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria (Local Parks)** – These Guidelines developed by the Victorian Government offer principles for a range of settings in the public realm. For the purposes of this Report however, those relating to the development of local parks, include:
 - Ensuring convenient and safe access to and through local parks.
 - To encourage use of local parks at different times of the day by a wide range of users.
 - To ensure amenity and safety for local park users.
 - To emphasise a sense of place and character in local parks.
 - To ensure local parks are well maintained.

2.3.6 NATURE DESIGN

Nature design is the concept of incorporating native plant communities into the designed landscape. The success of vibrant, public open spaces which offer diversity and respond to their contextual setting can be attributed to the principles of nature design. Nature design includes improving aesthetics as well as creating an ecological relationship to the indigenous landscape. Creating spaces that improve a connection to nature through better mental and physical wellbeing along with better habitat that supports native species and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the criticality of providing spaces that contribute to a healthier community and environment have never been more apparent.

Incorporating nature design within a strategic planning document such as a Master Plan, according to ecolandscaping.org, can include:

- Fostering a visual connection and contrast between the landscape and its surroundings;
- Minimising the disturbance of existing native vegetation;
- Allocating areas for varying landscape types including woodlands and open spaces;
- Incorporating native plant communities found in similar conditions in the surrounding areas;
- Using and planning for natural processes of change to modify the landscape;
- Preserving rainwater on site including the use of ponds, irrigation catchments, and wetlands.

2.3.7 CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design poses the idea that by using knowledge and creativity in the approach to the built environment, crime can be lessened or prevented. These ideas stem from the concept that where more people are around a public space, then incidents of crime are less likely to occur. The following guideline outlines this in further detail:

- **Victorian Government Safer Design Guidelines** – These Guidelines were developed to help planners and designers apply principles that will improve the safety of the built environment, minimise the opportunity for crime and promote safe, accessible, and liveable places. The public spaces principles within the design guide framework include:
 - Ensuring all users have convenient and safe access to and through public spaces
 - Achieving and creating vibrant public spaces
 - Establishing and supporting activity at the edges of public spaces
 - Ensuring safety and amenity in public spaces
 - Ensuring comfortable and enjoyable public spaces
 - Supporting a strong sense of place and local character
 - Ensuring public spaces are well utilised and maintained

SITE OVERVIEW

3.1 SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

Land Tenure: Portarlington Recreation Reserve is a 38-hectare Crown Land allotment with the City of Greater Geelong as the responsible land manager. As designated public land, it is provided to the community for a range of uses including recreation, cultural, conservation and government services.

Zoning: Portarlington Recreation Reserve is zoned Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) under the Geelong Planning Scheme which encourages enhancement and use of the land in support of appropriate recreation activities.

Cultural Significance: The traditional custodians of Portarlington Recreation Reserve are the Wadawurrung People, with the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation as the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for the land.

A property report for the Reserve generated through the Victorian Government's Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) website identified that the Reserve as an area of cultural sensitivity.

Under the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations (2018), the development of a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) may be required for the delivery of infrastructure developments should they be designated as high-risk activities.

Regional Setting: Portarlington Recreation Reserve is located 31km from Geelong's CBD on the popular Bellarine Peninsula.

Local Setting: The Reserve is adjacent to Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve which is Public Conservation Reserve and Marine and Coastal Act zoned land. The Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve contains significant vegetation, environmental and coastal properties. The western area of Portarlington Recreation Reserve, which borders Point Richards, supports important habitat for a range of coastal bird species and hosts important biodiversity properties (*source: Portarlington Recreation Reserve – Environmental Draft Works Plan 2016*).

The Portarlington Holiday Park to the north of the Reserve is touted as the largest holiday park in Australia with many of its occupants utilising the recreation reserve for activities and meals during their stay. Further north of the Holiday Park is the Portarlington Foreshore, with its natural coastal environment attracting recreational fishing, boating and beachgoers, particularly during summer.

Study Area: The project study area for the Portarlington Recreation Reserve consists of two parts - the active sporting area including playing fields and open space to the east, and the passive recreation area to the west of the Reserve.

Bordering land, including the Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve and Portarlington Holiday Park, will be considered in terms of their interface with the study area.



Map 3: Map of the Portarlington township boundary

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The existing conditions summary provides an overview of observations obtained through on-site inspections by the project team. These inspections were conducted in February 2020 and their findings have assisted in shaping the Draft Master Plan's recommendations.

4.1 ACTIVE RECREATION AREA

FOOTBALL/CRICKET PAVILION



Asset age: Circa 1970

Building description: The building is generally single level and consists of a slab on ground, double external walls, and a gable truss framed roof with metal/Colourbond roof cladding.

Building condition: Building appears to be in good condition structurally however the finishes and fixtures are dated.

Building Owner: City of Greater Geelong

Building Maintainer: City of Greater Geelong and Clubs

Tenancy Arrangement: Seasonal Licence

Building Code compliance: The internal public amenities would not cater for maximum function room use/occupancy based on the current Code calculations. In addition, there is no accessible WC compartment or ambulant WC facilities. Provision of these facilities would be a high priority for any refurbishment project.

DDA compliance: DDA access is not compliant in terms of door opening sizes and circulation space.

Sporting code compliance: The home and away change rooms are large in size, however the finishes are poor/dated. The amenities associated are not suitable for all genders. The umpire facilities are very undersized and internally accessed, which is not ideal from a functional perspective.

Opportunity: Overall the building is relatively large for a local pavilion and in good structural condition. The building could be retained and refurbished (internally and externally) and possibly extended to address several functional requirements. Extensions or enhancement to the second storey of the pavilion must be fully funded by club or other external sources.

TENNIS PAVILION



Asset age: Circa 1980

Building description: Slab on ground, single level, metal/Colourbond roof cladding.

Building condition: Building is in good structural condition. Finishes and fixtures are generally in good condition but are dated.

Building Owner: City of Greater Geelong

Building Maintainer: City of Greater Geelong and Club

Tenancy Arrangement: Seasonal Licence

Building code compliance: The accessible WC does not meet current standards (i.e. 2009 Australian Standard/NCC requirements).

DDA compliance: Some limitations existing with the building, pathways and access to the facility require improvement to ensure DDA compliance.

Sporting code compliance: There are no dedicated player change rooms which are recommended within the Tennis Vic planning guidelines.

Opportunity: The upgrade to the amenities block can provide compliant toilets and change facilities for both players and umpires. May also provide additional ancillary facilities such as improved storage and a first aid area.

NETBALL PAVILION



Asset age: Circa 2012

Building description: The facility was recently constructed and is in good condition internally and externally. The construction type is modular and consists of 8 square light weight modules in total.

Building condition: Excellent condition

Building Owner: City of Greater Geelong

Building Maintainer: City of Greater Geelong and Club

Tenancy Arrangement: Seasonal Licence

Building code compliance: The building appears to meet DDA compliance.

DDA compliance: DDA access provisions appear to meet current Code requirements and the accessible WC meets the 2009 Australian Standards.

Sporting code compliance: The player and umpire change rooms are split into 3 equal sized (13m² each) compartments, with roller shutter access between each space. This is a functional design in terms of maximising space/usage, however the change rooms are undersized and should ideally be 20m² each. It should be noted that the design/construction pre-dates the release of the 2017 Netball Victoria Facility Manual.

The umpire's room does not include any dedicated amenities (2 WC's would be preferable) and are presumably shared with the player amenities.

The player amenities contain one WC and shower in each compartment – ideally two WC's should be provided to meet both Code and Netball Victoria Facility requirements

There is currently no medical / first aid room within the facility, which is recommended under the Netball Facility standards at 10m².

Opportunity: The building whilst in excellent condition, is slightly smaller than the recommendations of current sporting code guidelines. There is opportunity for a small footprint extension to ensure compliance, particularly with player and umpire change rooms and medical room.

GUIDE HALL



Asset age: Circa 1980

Building condition: Based on external observations, the building is in good condition structurally. The finishes are dated externally, and some maintenance repair is required, particularly to the eaves, gutters and downpipes.

Building Owner: Club

Building Maintainer: Club

Tenancy Arrangement: Ground Lease

Building Code compliance: Unsure – internal access was not available during the inspection.

DDA compliance: Unsure – internal access was not available during the inspection

Sporting code compliance: The facility is not currently used for sporting purposes hence no player change rooms or amenities are provided. Based on the existing conditions plan and external building site measurements, the hall and kitchen appear to be large / functional in size.

Opportunity: A refurbishment to this facility could provide improve functionality and usage opportunities.

AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY SHED



Asset age: Unknown

Building condition: Based on external observations, the shed is in good structural condition and appears to be fit for purpose.

Building Owner: Club

Building Maintainer: Club

Tenancy Arrangement: Ground Lease

Building Code compliance: Unsure – internal access was not available during the inspection.

DDA compliance: Unsure – internal access was not available during the inspection

Sporting code compliance: Not applicable.

Opportunity: Retain shed in existing condition to continue to service the needs of the Agricultural Society and for community events. Consider expansion of existing footprint of facility.

PATHWAYS AND CONNECTIONS



Description: There are no current defined pathways linking key features of facilities in the sporting precinct of the reserve.

Issues: Pedestrian pathways for general circulation, fitness and connectivity between recreational facilities and buildings are non-existent. Pedestrians share the use the gravel access roads. As a result, access for people in wheelchairs and reliant on mobility aids is difficult. Conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians are possible.

Connectivity to the caravan park and adjoining residential areas east of Sproat Street is ill defined.

The asphalt hardstand between the Main Sports Pavilion and Oval is in reasonable condition and provides ample spectator opportunities and good access from the main pavilion to the sports oval.

Opportunity: Address and improve pedestrian pathways and connections as part of the Master Plan to improve equity, accessibility, and safety.

Define connections to delineate clear access and egress to the Holiday Park and recreation and passive recreation area.

CAR PARKING AND VEHICULAR CIRCULATION



Description: There is limited hard stand parking at the Reserve. Informal car parking is unrestricted and disorganised throughout the reserve

Issues: The asphalt car park on the north side of the pavilion is broken up with gravel hardstands and could be made more efficient if it were sealed and line marked.

Vehicular movement and parking is generally unrestricted. Parking can occur anywhere in the reserve except for spectator areas around the pavilions and playground which are either fenced or safe guarded using timber bollards and post and rail fencing.

The nature of the car parking and vehicular movement throughout the site presents safety concerns due to a lack of safe access routes and pathways for pedestrians, along with the disorganised nature of the carparking throughout the site.

It is acknowledged that, particularly during peak use times including football, that some informal parking will continue to occur.

Opportunity: Address, organise and formalise vehicular circulation and parking to improve traffic flow, parking congestion and safety.

ENTRANCES



Description: Entrances for vehicles exist on Sproat Street (x1) and Boat Road (x2). These are poorly defined and visually lack appeal.

A ticket booth is located at the main entrance along Boat Road to control ticketed access during football match days.

The footpath on the west side of Sproat Street provides opportunity for additional dedicated pedestrian entry points from nearby surrounding areas into the reserve. This could connect to a broader pathway network if it were established.

Issues: Pedestrians would precariously (in busy times) share the same entrances into the reserve as vehicles, those arriving on foot are met with a confusing entry way to the reserve.

Opportunity: Improved entrances and wayfinding signage will improve safety and pedestrian experience. Separating vehicle and pedestrian entrances where appropriate should be explored. Improving and maintaining access for emergency vehicles will continue to be a priority.

RESERVE FRONTAGES



Description: The Reserve frontages consist of those along Boat Road and Sproat Street. There is a mix of fencing types and several advertising signs are scattered within entrances and along the Reserve boundary.

Issues: The residential interface along the site's southern boundary is visually unappealing which may impact on visitor experience.

Opportunity: Addressing the interface of the Reserve along its residential and road boundaries with additional planting would improve the views to adjoining residential properties. Whilst the frontages to Boat Road and Sproat Street afford good views into the Reserve which should be maintained, the frontage could be softened to make it more visually appealing.

PARK LIGHTING



Description: Park lighting is limited to the car park north of the main pavilion. A solar light exists near the public toilets, however its effectiveness is unknown. Lighting to the car park is aged and most certainly non-compliant in achieving minimum levels of luminance at night.

Issues: Inadequate park lighting can present a safety concern, particularly during winter months when daylight is limited. It also can increase the risk of trips and falls, particularly for people with mobility concerns. With the current path network through the Reserve undefined, it is difficult to ascertain where additional park lighting would be best placed. In addition, there is a need to balance the amount of park lighting for visitor safety and amenity, without enabling light pollution.

Opportunity: The adequacy of lighting to the car park and other passive open spaces should be reviewed in accordance with Council policy and relevant Australian Standards. Lighting should be kept away from flora and fauna areas with lighting spill minimised.

CRICKET PRACTICE NETS



Description: The existing cricket practice nets are sited south of Oval 1 and comprise 4 synthetic grass lanes. The nets support training and provide opportunities for community participation also. The current fencing separating the lanes and the practice facility from the Reserve shows some signs of wear and does not encompass the entirety of the bowlers run up area.

Issues: There may be an element of potential risk to passers-by when the nets are in use. The location of the playground adjacent to the nets is questionable given there is the possibility of errant balls potentially causing injury.

Sporting code compliance: Cricket Victoria guidelines recommend the complete enclosure (i.e. chain link fencing around all four sides as well as the top) of cricket practice facilities where a ball may damage property or cause injury to pedestrians. A minimum of 3 synthetic training wickets are recommended.

Opportunity: Consider the redevelopment of the existing cricket practice nets into an outdoor multi-purpose training facility. Opportunities to include retractable, soft netting and line marking for sports such as half court netball and basketball. This opportunity will provide for greater use of this facility, and address safety concerns, for usage both within and outside of cricket season.

A rainwater tank is located north of the cricket nets. It is visually obvious and could be partially screened\ with vegetation or relocated to reduce its visual impact and/or removed if redundant.

OVAL 1



Description: Oval 1 measures approximately 170m x 115m and has a cool season turf profile with automatic irrigation system, perimeter pipe and rail fence, synthetic centre wicket and sports lights. There is a spectator area attached to the main pavilion.

Issues: No issues evident, the playing surface is in good condition with well-established grass cover.

Sporting code compliance: Oval 1 falls slightly short of the AFL's preferred guideline of 165m x 135m boundary to boundary however this would not affect use. The sports lighting on Oval 1 has less than 50 lux which is lower than the recommended average of 50 lux (minimum) for football training (upgrade currently underway).

Opportunity: Although Oval 1 is slightly smaller than recommendations, this is a guide only. Any recommendation for expansion would be considered a low priority. The sports lighting identified as not meeting training standard recommendations is soon to be upgraded to 50 lux. This will therefore deem it adequate for AFL training activities.

OVAL 2



Description: Oval 2 measures approximately 135m x 115m and consists of a warm season turf profile, an automatic irrigation system, post and rail perimeter fence and synthetic centre wicket. There is also a small spectator/scorer's shelter located in the northern pocket on the oval.

Issues: The perimeter fence shows some signs of age.

Sporting code compliance: Oval 2 is mostly used for junior football and lower grade cricket. Its measurements comply with the recommended guidelines for football as well as requirements for open age community cricket. The oval has good grass coverage and overall is in a very satisfactory condition. The oval does not have any sports lighting however this is not a requirement.

Opportunity: The development of the Master Plan should consider the inclusion of sports lighting (to training standard) on Oval 2. Providing sports lighting on Oval 2 could increase the capacity and programmability of the oval and broaden participation opportunities. A schedule of use demonstrating that Oval 1 is experiencing capacity, along with projected participation outcomes as a result of the installation of lights on Oval 2 should support this proposal. In addition, should future demand necessitate there is opportunity to extend Oval 2 in length to the south of its current footprint.

SPORTS LIGHTING: TENNIS AND NETBALL COURTS



Description: Sports lighting is presently provided on 3 x tennis courts and the new netball courts. Some lighting is provided on old asphalt netball courts however this facility is not presently utilised.

Issues: The current provision of sports lighting is of a high standard on three tennis courts as well as the new netball courts, with both facilities having upgraded lighting recently installed. The lighting on the old asphalt netball courts does not likely meet minimum requirements.

Sporting code compliance: The current sports lighting on the 3 eastern tennis courts is commensurate with recommendations for training and competition. The two western courts are not lit.

Opportunity: Maintain existing sports lighting on new netball and three tennis courts.

Should a sixth tennis court be developed (see page 28 for further information) floodlighting should be provided to all western courts to further facilitate participation and use.

NETBALL COURTS (NEW)



Description: There are two acrylic surface netball courts situated between the tennis club rooms and the main football/cricket pavilion. These courts are serviced by the netball pavilion and include bench areas for players, separate scorers' shelter, covered spectator viewing area and perimeter fence. There is sports lighting on both courts which has recently been upgraded.

Issues: Both courts physically present in very good condition however the Club notes that at times, capacity issues are being experienced due to high demand. Also there is presently no spectator seating within proximity to the courts.

Sporting code compliance: The two new netball courts comply with sporting code guidelines

Opportunity: Consider opportunity to additional spectator seating within close proximity to the netball courts. Consideration should be given to ensure recommended distances for court-run offs are maintained.

NETBALL COURTS (OLD)



Description: There are four old netball courts located along the southern boundary of the Reserve which are constructed from asphalt. There is sports lighting on these courts however its condition is unknown.

Issues: The four old netball courts are underutilised, no longer compliant with guidelines for the sport and are not aesthetically pleasing. The courts have also been superseded by the two newer acrylic courts within the Reserve.

Sporting code compliance: All four courts do not comply with current sporting code guidelines.

Opportunity: The netball court area could be more widely activated, and the space reinvigorated for broader activity opportunities that appeal to the wider community. Opportunities including community garden, bike discovery area and netball warm up spaces all present valid opportunities and have been suggested through the community consultation process.

TENNIS COURTS



Description: There are five tennis courts with acrylic surfaces at the reserve. New perimeter fencing has been installed on first three courts (pictured right in above image). These three courts also have a high standard of sports lighting provision. The other two courts (to the left of above image) have an acrylic surface however it shows some signs of wear and requires cleaning. These two courts do not have any sports lighting. The courts are separated by a hit up wall (also pictured) which shows signs of age however is in good structural condition.

Issues: Some cracking is evident on the two courts (pictured left in above image) however this is still considered playable and fit for purpose. Some slip issues may occur on these courts should cleaning be delayed.

Sporting code compliance: All courts comply with sporting code guidelines.

Opportunity: Monitor the cracking on the acrylic playing surface and program cyclical maintenance to improve asset performance and longevity. Consider upgrading lighting to training standards on two western courts.

Consider developing a sixth tennis court to the west of existing two court bank if demand necessitates.

HALF SIZE BASKETBALL COURT



Description: There is a half-size basketball court located at the western end of the old netball courts.

Issues: The court's use is unknown, and its positioning suggest it is not located in the most ideal location to facilitate use. The line marking is considerably faded, and the ring and back board are aged.

Opportunity: Consider transforming this area for broader community activities such as BMX and/or bike jumps area.

PARK FURNITURE



Description: Seating within the reserve is minimal and generally located near the netball and tennis courts and the main sports oval for spectating purposes. Two new styled seats existing near the playground, presumably installed as part of the previous playground upgrade.

Issues: The existing park seats are not consistent in style and there is a lack of seating throughout the Reserve. In addition, there are no other supporting picnic facilities, shelter, bike racks, drink fountains or bottle refill stations within the Reserve.

Opportunity: Consideration should be given to the installation of park furniture where demand is deemed highest. Aged seating should be removed and/or replaced where required. A consistent approach to style should be taken for uniformity and aesthetic purposes.

PLAYGROUND



Description: There is a local level playground located at the Reserve which has recently been upgraded and caters for children under the age of 12. The playground is centrally located and includes perimeter seating and soft fall.

Issues: The playground is in good condition with some natural shade and amenity. The location of the playground may present a safety concern due to the cricket practice nets not being enclosed.

Opportunity: Consider the location of the playground in the context of the cricket practice nets and the broader public amenities of the Reserve including toilets, park furniture, BBQs etc. Improve natural shade through landscaping of its surrounds. Opportunity to incorporate playground into broader play space which appeals to a wider demographic including innovative features that are different from the main Portarlington playground located in the township. Opportunity to incorporate play elements that appeal to children and teens of all genders.

EVENTS AREA INCLUDING PUBLIC TOILETS



Description: The open space area to the south of the Reserve is used primarily for the Bellarine Agricultural Show but also for parking for the Portarlington Mussel Festival and other events. Due to the diverse use of the area, the grass cover appears varied and the surface is uneven in places. The event space is supported by several amenities including public toilets, horse/cattle tethering/yard area and a livestock loading ramp.

Issues: The post and rail area for tethering horses and livestock shows is currently fit for purpose. The public toilet block located between the main oval and the old netball courts is unroofed and generally non-compliant in terms of accessibility and standard amenity provision. The grass in the area appears to be Kikuyu with varying levels of condition.

Opportunity: Consider initiating improvements to the event grass area to enhance condition including levelling the surface to create more flexible usage and programming opportunities. Retain toilet block until end of useful life, and then replace for updated, compliant facility which will continue to support the area. Replace livestock tethering rails when they reach end of useful life.

OPEN SPACE AREAS AND LANDSCAPING



Description: There are vast amounts of open space within the active Reserve area which offer varied opportunities for passive recreational pursuits. Within the active Reserve at present, a grove of Cypress trees (pictured above) line a small section of the landscape. Other than this however, there is minimal other vegetation to support and improve the environmental aspects of the Reserve including habitat, biodiversity, and aesthetic. The wide open space areas of the Reserve are considered a key feature and that future recommendations for landscaping need to retain part of this character.

Issues: Vegetation coverage within the active reserve area is sparse and open. Understory planting is minimal except for several floral garden beds around the main pavilion. The Reserve has limited natural shade coverage around the active sport areas.

Limited landscaping makes the Reserve look and feel as though it is lacking in general amenity, with minimal natural shade and wind breaks. The tree species presently occupying the Reserve are non-native or non-indigenous and potentially create weed issues and possibly reduced biodiversity outcomes.

In terms of passive recreational opportunity, there is ample space for activities throughout the open space areas, however amenity is limited given the lack of landscaping that would contribute to the user's experience.

Opportunity: Improve landscaping through the active Reserve area. A strategic approach to planting should be undertaken to minimise interference with any Reserve activity that requires a designated amount of space. That said however, greater plantings and improved landscaping will complement the Reserve when undertaken in a considered manner and should be a priority of the Master Plan's implementation.

4.2 ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES AND PASSIVE RECREATION AREA EXISTING CONDITIONS

The passive recreation area of Portarlington Recreation Reserve hosts a range of values and habitat which have been considered within the Draft Master Plan's development. As part of the initial planning process, an Environmental Report undertaken by an independent ecologist was completed. This report aimed to understand the status of the area and has assisted in the Draft Master Plan's recommendations. There are no recognised environmental values remaining in the active sport and recreation area and therefore the focus of the assessment was on the passive recreation area only.

Description: The 25 hectare passive recreation area is situated in the western section of the Reserve (as highlighted in Map 4 adjacent) and adds significantly to the environmental values and landscape character of the Bellarine Peninsula and the City of Greater Geelong. It is particularly important as it extends the values of the adjoining Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve, which combined, represent the largest extant area of native terrestrial vegetation remaining on the northern Bellarine Peninsula.

The passive recreation area contains three depleted Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVC); EVC 3 Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland, EVC 821 Tall Marsh and EVC 891 Plains Brackish Sedge Wetland. These EVC's are listed as 'vulnerable' within the Otway Plain Bioregion and when combined with the adjacent Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve represent the only significantly sized area of EVC 3 (Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland) on the Bellarine Peninsula and within the City of Greater Geelong.

The survey by Mark Trengove Ecological Services in July 2020 identified 40 indigenous plant species including Austral Crane's-bill (*Geranium solanderi* var. *solanderi*) which is listed as 'rare' on the Victorian Rare and Threatened Advisory Species List. Another species of note was the identification of a single Native Sow Thistle (*Sonchus hydrophilus*) which is of regional significance and potentially state significance.

The Victorian Biodiversity Atlas has recorded five bird species in the study area but as many as 118 fauna species combined with the Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve. These findings provide an indication of the value of the remnant habitat. Thirteen species exist on the Department of Environment Water Land and Planning advisory list of threatened flora and fauna. The vulnerable Grey Goshawk and Great Egret are also recorded from the area. A significant population (greater than 50) of Growling Grass Frog (listed under the FFG and EPBC Acts) is present in the adjoining reserve, and likely utilised wetland habitat in the passive area.

The condition of vegetation and diversity of native flora species across the study area varies considerably, transitioning from good in the north to poor in the south. Whilst the vegetation in the Reserve has previously been quite degraded due to neglect, effective weed control efforts in recent years has significantly improved its quality and resulted in prolific natural regeneration of the indigenous vegetation.

Public consultation for the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan revealed the importance of the passive recreation area to the community (see *Consultation Summary section of this report for further detail*), with environmental and landscape amenity deemed one of the most valued aspects of the Reserve via the Quick Poll.

Consultation has also shown that, although most people surveyed use the Reserve for playing or watching sport, almost 28% use the Reserve for appreciating nature and walking with or without their dog. This was reinforced by the Social Map engagement tool, where nearly half of the responses indicated they highly value this area and its passive recreational opportunities.

Uses: At present, the passive recreation area is utilised for walking, jogging, cycling, bird watching and nature appreciation. It is currently zoned as an on-leash dog walking area. The area is also presently used for overflow event parking.



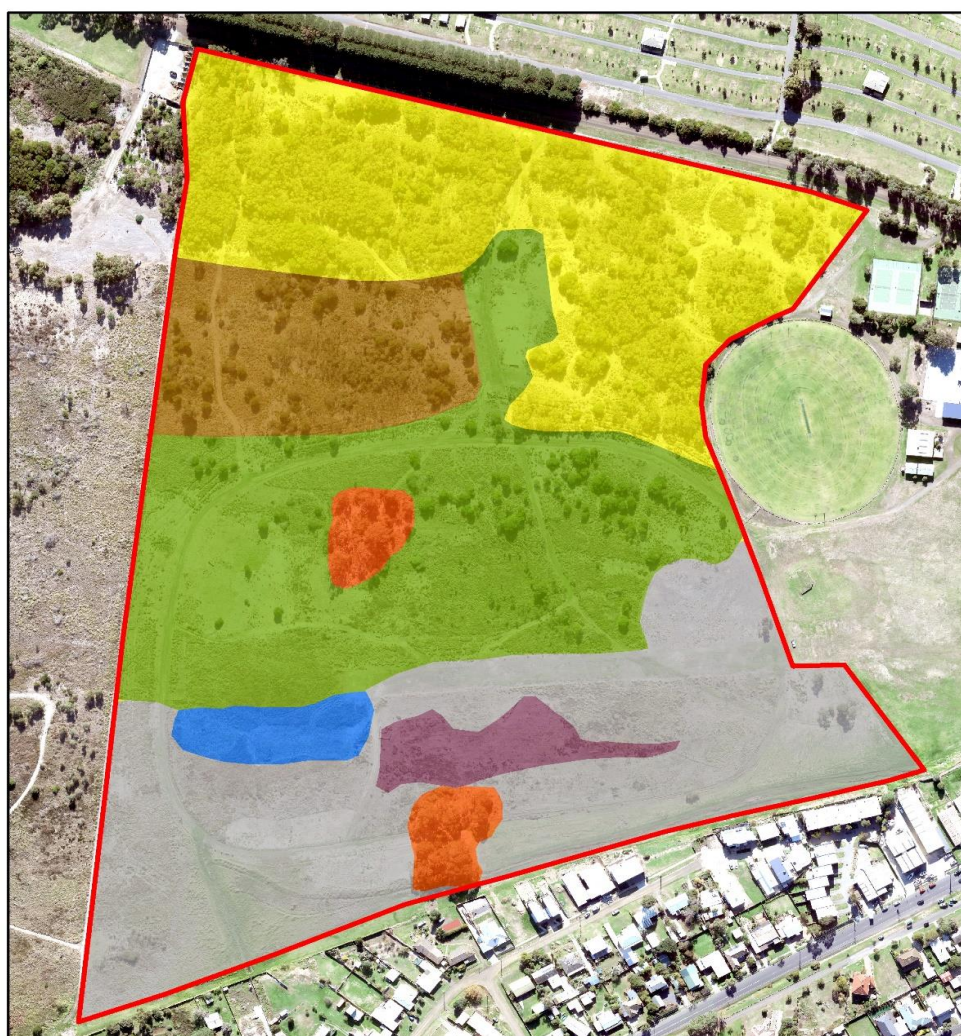
Map 4: Passive recreation area of Portarlington Recreation Reserve

Risks: To effectively protect the environmental values within the area, identifying and addressing the threats to its values must be considered. Through a risk evaluation process, each risk can be assessed based on its likelihood of occurring and the potential consequences associated. Through the development of a comprehensive risk assessment, strategies to assist in mitigation and action can be developed. A risk assessment for the area has been developed which will assist in the creation of the Draft Master Plan. **A summary of the risk assessment is provided on pages 33-34 of this report.**

Past disturbances and land use have had a significant impact on the diversity and quality of values in the passive recreation precinct and ongoing and future risks will continue to make this area a challenge to manage. The relatively small size of the Reserve and fragmented nature will limit the ability for many of the natural processes to occur. In this regard the adjoining Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve plays a critical role creating a larger body of vegetation and habitat. As a small Reserve, the loss of vegetation within the passive recreation area has a proportionally larger impact and therefore the variety of threats from trail expansion and other activities, particularly in better quality areas, is a high risk. The biodiversity and habitat values of the Reserve are important with vulnerable vegetation communities present, albeit in a variety of states of regeneration and recovery. The past and ongoing impacts of weeds and changes in fire regimes have had a deleterious impact on the diversity and condition of vegetation and habitat. Weeds continue to be the major threat to vegetation in this area due to their type and abundance. The changes in vegetation have also had significant impacts on the habitat values which have limited the presence and diversity of fauna in the Reserve.

Opportunity: Continued investment and responsible management of the passive recreation area will ensure the ongoing preservation of this regionally significant site, which will be for the benefit of current and future generations. Several opportunities exist to protect and enhance the environmental values of the area, which will assist in the Draft Master Plan's development. These include:

- **Weed Management** – a holistic and integrated approach to weed control to encourage the regeneration of native vegetation and increase flora diversity.
- **Biodiversity Management** – introduce targeted revegetation activities consistent with findings in the ecological report to supplement natural regeneration of indigenous species. Undertake further flora and fauna surveys and studies to improve knowledge of species, values and habitat. Review previous fire management plans to identify a suitable regime that promotes positive ecological outcomes and fuel management objectives. Consolidate trails for pedestrians and cyclists and create a formalised network.
- **Collaborative Management** – investigate opportunities for a more integrated and collaborative management of values and risks across this precinct and adjoining public land.
- **Water and Wetland Management** – consider re-establishing a wetland system along the southern end of the Reserve to enhance the EVC 821 Tall Marsh and EVC 891 Plains Brackish Sedge Wetland as well as improve run off from adjacent residential properties.



Conservation & Recreation Precinct - Portarlington Recreation Reserve

Native Vegetation Areas

- | | |
|--|--|
| Area 1 - Golden Wattle dominated Woodland | Area 4 - Common Reed dominated wetland |
| Area 2 - Lightwood dominated Woodland | Area 5 - Brackish Sedge Wetland |
| Area 3 - Spiny Mat-rush dominated open sedge | Area 6 - Manna Gum dominated woodland |
| | Area 7 - Highly disturbed areas |
| | Conservation and Recreation Precinct |

Vegetation data supplied by Mark Trengove



Prepared by the City of Greater Geelong

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Map 5: Study area and distribution of vegetation areas based upon July 2020 survey

Key Risks:	Threats	Description of threat	Rating
Loss of vegetation and habitat	Re-opening horse trails	Loss of vegetation can result from new infrastructure, creation of new trails, trampling of vegetation from vehicles or people.	High
Loss of flora biodiversity and habitat	Invasion of native vegetation by 'noxious weeds'	<p>An assessment of weed species within the reserve found 59 species of exotic species and 3 native species that pose a threat to native vegetation. Whilst it is acknowledged that the historical EVC is significantly altered, weed species will continue to threaten both the extent of native vegetation and quality by occupying greater space as they compete with and smother native vegetation.</p> <p>The large variety of weed species makes this a greater challenge as the control techniques for one species may create a space for other exotic or environmental weeds to take over.</p> <p>Aggressive weeds such as Flax-leaf Broom and Gorse have had large populations in the past and have significant annual seed set colonising areas quickly suppressing native regeneration and biodiversity.</p> <p>An ongoing source for weeds will come from both those areas that are more highly infested and adjoining private land where garden weeds may escape.</p>	Extreme
	New and emerging weeds	New and emerging weeds such as Bridal Creeper and Chilean Needlegrass pose one of the largest future threats to the reserve biodiversity due in part to its smothering nature and the difficulties in treating this weed.	Extreme
	Inappropriate fire regimes causing disruption to sustainable ecosystem processes and resultant loss of biodiversity	Fire has been part of the Australian landscape for thousands of years. With colonisation those fire regimes and purposes have significantly altered along with the change and loss of vegetation. Fire regimes need to have clear objectives with fire frequency and intensity maintained within the tolerance limits of the desired native vegetation characteristics. Inappropriate use of fire could further alter the desired vegetation diversity and structure or trigger major weed events from dormant species such as Broom, Gorse and Coast Wattle.	High
	Loss of biodiversity as a result of the spread of invasive plants native to Victoria, such as Coast Wattle (<i>Acacia longifolia</i> subsp. <i>sophorae</i>) and Sallow Wattle (<i>Acacia longifolia</i> subsp. <i>longifolia</i>), into areas outside their natural range	Coast Wattle is recognised as a particularly invasive and aggressive coloniser of disturbed areas. It is widely distributed across the study area and potentially has a large dormant seedbank. Further disturbance and/or the use of fire could trigger major colonisation events that would need to be carefully managed if they were to be used for other objectives.	High
	Spread of <i>Pittosporum undulatum</i> in areas outside its natural distribution	Sweet Pittosporum is like many other native plants that have expanded beyond their range initially as garden escapees. The additional challenge of this species is the allelopathic effects it has on soil and the suppression of other plants species growing under its canopy. There are relatively few plants in the reserve.	Moderate
	Fragmentation	The passive recreation area, is quite fragmented with a high edge to core ratio. Fragmentation further reduces the ability for natural processes to occur with disturbance along edges being a source of further weed invasions and weed spread.	Moderate
	Trail use spreading weeds	The use of trails may be a source of new weeds coming in or spread of weeds along tracks further reducing biodiversity values.	Low

	Trail maintenance spreading weeds	Machinery brought into the reserve for maintenance, particularly slashing activities can be a source of weeds such as Chilean Needlegrass and potentially new weed species and or spread weeds along tracks and vegetation edges.	Low
Wetland loss and degradation	Change in water regime, dredging, draining, filling and grazing	<p>Past and future changes to drainage at the Reserve dry out previously wetter areas reducing natural flooding and inundation regimes changing vegetation characteristics in key EVC's.</p> <p>Past changes to drainage have reduced the frequency and duration of ephemeral wetland events reducing the wetland habitat for a range of bird and frog species.</p>	High
Loss of fauna biodiversity	Predation of native wildlife by the cat, <i>Felis catus</i> .	Cats are a highly aggressive and effective hunter of native wildlife. Although there are a small number of fauna species listed and an unknown cat population, they remain a risk to the presence or increase of fauna populations.	Moderate
	Predation of native wildlife by the introduced Red Fox <i>Vulpes vulpes</i> .	Foxes are a highly aggressive and effective hunter of native wildlife. Although there are a small number of fauna species listed and an unknown fox population, they remain a risk to the presence or increase of fauna populations. Trails increase the access to habitat reducing core areas that may afford greater protection against predation.	Moderate
	Off-lead dog disturbing or causing loss of wildlife	Dogs off-lead have the potential to reduce bird diversity and abundance through predation and disturbance. Under the current controls, dogs off-lead are not permitted, however evidence suggests this still may occur, but the frequency is uncertain. There is likely to be a higher consequence from dogs off-lead with potential bird mortality and a greater area impacted. This may also be a risk factor to other small mammals if they exist.	Moderate
	Motorbikes	Motorbikes have the potential to reduce bird diversity and abundance through disturbance with higher speed and noise.	Moderate
	Dogs on lead disturbing wildlife	Dogs on-lead have the potential to reduce bird diversity and abundance through disturbance. No data has been collected on the frequency or duration of dog walking but from the community consultation and anecdotal evidence suggests it is a common activity. The level of disturbance is unknown as no research has been undertaken on the abundance of birds, but research indicates this is a risk factor.	Low
	Walking and cycling disturbing wildlife	Walking and cycling has the potential to reduce bird diversity and abundance through disturbance. No data has been collected on the frequency or duration of walking but from the community consultation and anecdotal evidence suggests it is a common activity. The level of disturbance is unknown as no research has been undertaken on the abundance of birds, but research indicates this is a risk factor.	Low
	Impacts of climate change	Changes in climate may put further pressure on fauna through impacts on migratory species, changes in vegetation and habitat and increased risk of extreme weather events and fire. There are likely to be impacts over and above other impacts.	Low

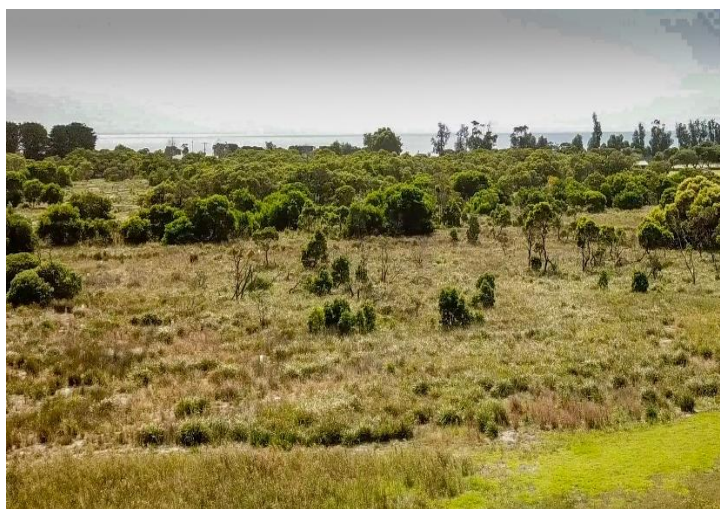
PASSIVE RECREATION AREA IMAGES



Lightwood Dominated Woodland



Manna Gum Dominated Woodland



Spiny Mat-rush Dominated Open Sedge/Grassland



Spiny Mat-rush



Common Reed Dominated Wetland



Brackish Sedge Wetland

SITE USAGE

5.1 SPORTING CLUB PARTICIPATION

The 2020 Sport Australia AusPlay Survey data found that the top activities for sports club participation within the City of Greater Geelong are:

1. Australian Football
2. Golf
3. Netball
4. Basketball
5. Football/soccer
6. Tennis
7. Cricket
8. Bowls

All four sports tenanted Portarlington Recreation Reserve are represented within this listing, demonstrating a strong demand for participation and access to clubs and programs, as well as facilities that are modern, accessible, welcoming and fit-for-purpose.

To assist in identifying current and future demand for sport at Portarlington Recreation Reserve, an overview of participation for all active sporting user groups is provided below.

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP – 2019								
CLUB	TOTAL	SENIOR MALE	SENIOR FEMALE	JUNIOR MALE	JUNIOR FEMALE	JUNIOR PROGRAMS MALE	JUNIOR PROGRAMS FEMALE	SOCIAL MEMBERS
PORTARLINGTON FOOTBALL NETBALL CLUB (FOOTBALL)	615	79	-	163	11	46	16	300
PORTARLINGTON CRICKET CLUB	280	85	15	80	14	18	-	68
PORTARLINGTON FOOTBALL NETBALL CLUB (NETBALL)	255	-	56	-	70	-	29	100
PORTARLINGTON TENNIS CLUB	44	13	17	7	7	-	-	-
TOTALS	1,194	177	88	250	102	64	45	468

The previous table shows active participation numbers (i.e. registered players) per club, including social members and officials such as coaches, trainers, support staff and volunteers. The table demonstrates that there is a healthy number of junior and female participants which is considered imperative to the sustainability of any sporting club.

The Portarlington Recreation Reserve is one several sporting venues that host local competition finals. This includes for all four sports, i.e. AFL, Tennis, Cricket and Netball. During weekends in February/March and September/October the Reserve has an influx of spectators and competitors utilising the venue for final's matches. These events attract a greater crowd than the home and away season, and there is recognition that the venue should continue this function. Finals games also offer a financial incentive for the hosting club and are an excellent way to raise revenue.

The AFL has detailed, historical participation information that demonstrates trends over a four-year period. The following table demonstrates the positive trend Portarlington Football Club has experienced since 2016:

FOOTBALL CLUB PARTICIPATION TRENDS				
	2016	2017	2018	2019
No of players	250	251	277	315
Change %	-	+0.4%	+10.4%	+13.7%

In addition, AFL Barwon has supplied detailed participation data for Portarlington Netball Club as follows:

NETBALL CLUB PARTICIPATION TRENDS				
	2016	2017	2018	2019
No of players	135	146	186	155
Change %	-	+8.2%	+27.4%	-16.6%

It should be noted that other current users such as the Bellarine Agricultural Society and Portarlington Girl Guides will further bolster participation numbers and reserve attendance numbers through their relevant activities. It is estimated that combined these activities, particularly the Bellarine Show and associated events, would attract thousands to the Reserve each year.

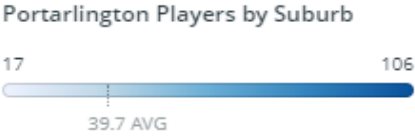
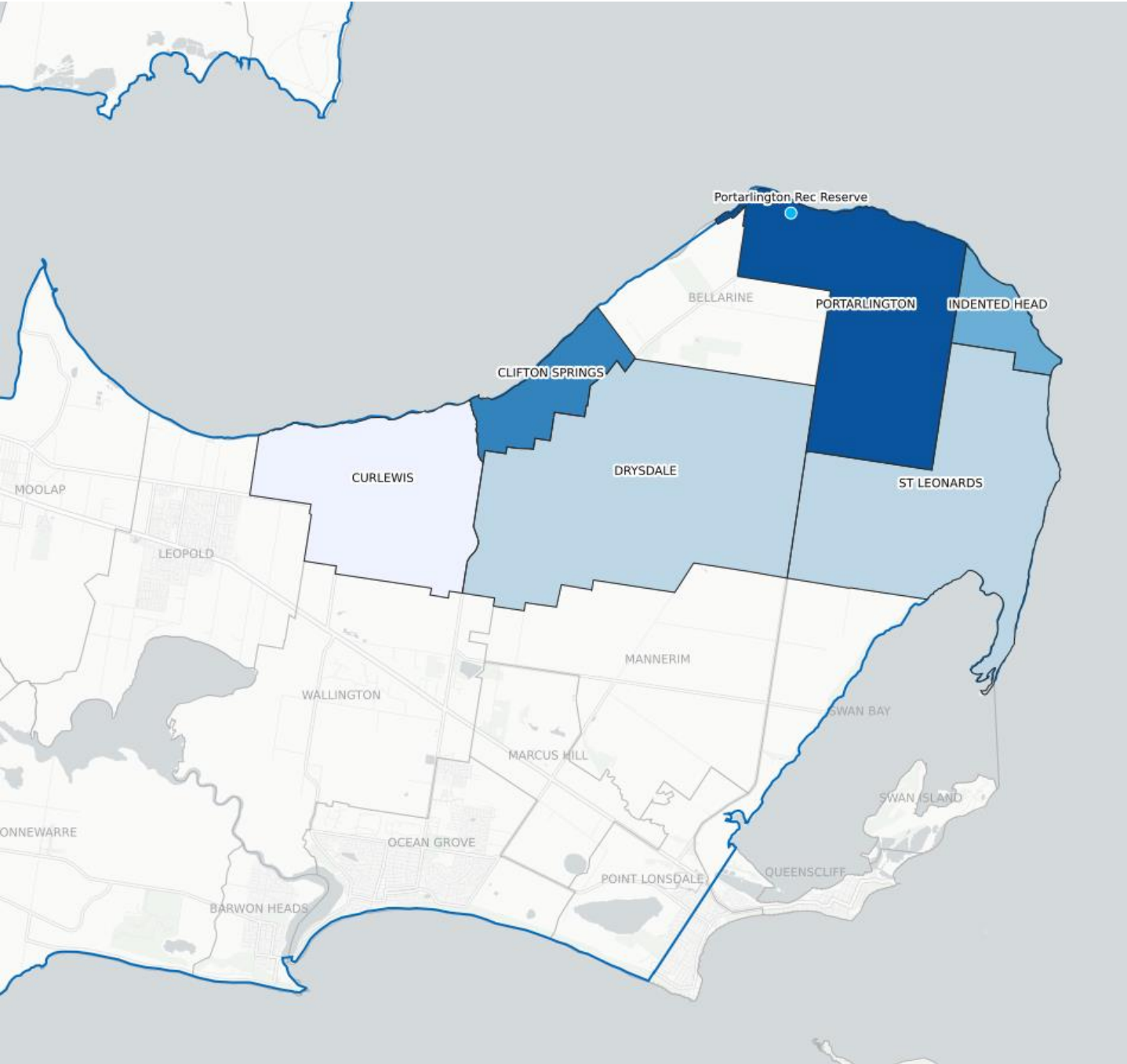
As previously mentioned within this report, due to the largely older demographic permanently residing in Portarlington that there will likely be demand for more unstructured activities and opportunities that appeal to the older age groups. Whilst participation trends remain healthy, it must be acknowledged that there may be a potential cap on the expansion of these sports purely due to demographic projections. The retention of players and a focus on no net loss of participants in the future can be viewed as a measure of success for these sports.

5.2 SPORTING PARTICIPATION CATCHMENT (AFL)

Whilst the future total population growth in Portarlington of 26% is high, the actual rate of change is approximately 2%, meaning that the number of additional people to 2030 within the township is minimal. In addition, a higher number of people will be aged over 60. It is therefore likely that future participation in organised sport at Portarlington Recreation Reserve will need to be drawn from the township as well as surrounding areas. This participation catchment is consistent with current trends, particularly in terms of the Portarlington Football Club who have the highest participant base of any tenant club at the Reserve. AFL also have detailed participation data available for analysis including the residential postcodes of registered participants. This data has demonstrated that in season 2019, the highest number of AFL players at Portarlington Football Club resided in the following locations:

PORTARLINGTON	116
CLIFTON SPRINGS	38
INDENTED HEAD	27
DRYSDALE	30
ST LEONARDS	25
CURLEWIS	17
ELSEWHERE	62

The Clifton Springs and Curlewis areas will continue to be important localities for the Club to source participants, with both suburbs set to experience population growth. Curlewis alone is forecast to double its population from 3,328 in 2020 to 6,583 in 2030. Both Clifton Springs and Curlewis do not have designated active recreation reserves and will become more reliant on facilities at Portarlington, Drysdale, and Leopold to accommodate demand.



Greater Geelong

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Map 6: Portarlington Football Club map of player catchment areas

For comparison, a participation catchment analysis was also conducted for neighbouring football clubs Drysdale and Leopold. The aim of this exercise was to understand whether many players residing in Portarlington were travelling outside of the township to participate elsewhere. As evident in the following tables, both clubs only attracted a minor number of participants from Portarlington. This will likely indicate that Portarlington Football Club has a strong culture, is competitive and offers programs that retain and attract local participants. The viability and sustainability of Portarlington Football Club will continue to depend upon its ability continue to attract participants from the local area. Strong junior introductory and player pathway programs along with girls' and women's' teams are now the cornerstone of modern football. To remain competitive, the Club must proactively pursue these initiatives. Many clubs on the Bellarine Peninsula have access to modern facilities, which also contributes to participant experience and provides a welcoming and inclusive environment. As demonstrated in the tables below, these neighbouring clubs also attract a high number of their participants from their immediate local area. Therefore, it will be difficult for Portarlington to compete for and attract players from these areas given the strong local connection to all townships being experienced. The upgrade to Portarlington amenities along with program development however will assist the Club in staying competitive and on an equal playing field to the neighbouring clubs and others across the Bellarine.

DRYSDALE FOOTBALL CLUB

PORTARLINGTON	7
CLIFTON SPRINGS	164
DRYSDALE	148
CURLEWIS	70
ST LEONARDS	10
LEOPOLD	28
ELSEWHERE	71

LEOPOLD FOOTBALL CLUB

PORTARLINGTON	1
MOOLAP	10
CURLEWIS	6
LEOPOLD	351
ELSEWHERE	76



5.3 SPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPLY AND PROVISION RATIOS

Supply and provision ratios are useful in assisting to understand, along with other influencing factors, the likely requirements for infrastructure. Ratios utilised within this report have been derived from industry benchmarks, recommended peak sporting body guidelines as well as other strategic infrastructure documents developed for sport. The ratios applied are those used for local sporting provision, which is consistent with the classification of Portarlington Recreation Reserve as a local level venue.

Provision ratios should be considered in conjunction with other influences such as participation, facility condition and community access. Other considerations when assessing provision ratios should include:

- Any localised strategic planning that identifies gaps in facility provision based on need;
- The proximity of like venues to those within the township and the geographical spread of infrastructure;
- Access and ownership limitations of existing facilities; and
- Condition of existing assets and their level of capacity to host sport.

The table on the following page indicates the current infrastructure provision at Portarlington Recreation Reserve against the township's population ratios and future forecasts. From the analysis, the current provision of sporting ovals and courts is sufficient to meet the future needs of the community for the next 20 years considering a growth rate at the higher end of the forecast population projections and participation scenarios.

A focus of the Draft Master Plan should be given to improving the quality and capacity of infrastructure through potential playing surface improvements, lighting upgrades and access rather than the inclusion of additional playing surfaces.

Given most sports are deemed to be well-served from a provision perspective, this provides ample opportunity to enhance other recreational aspects at the Reserve which encourage informal participation, particularly within the older age demographic. The Master Plan for the Reserve should focus on a balanced approach to both organised and unstructured recreation to better service the community now and into the future.

“The current provision of sporting ovals and courts is sufficient to meet the future needs of the community for the next 20 years considering a growth rate at the higher end of the forecast population projections and participation scenarios”

SPORT	Total no. of assets at PRR	2020 Portarlington population	2019 Participants	Recommended Industry Population/Provision Benchmark*	2020 Playing area to population ratio	Recommended Industry Participant/Provision Benchmark **	2020 Playing area to participant ratio	Does supply meet, exceed or is less than benchmark	2031 Portarlington population	2031 Playing area to population ratio	Does supply meet, exceed or is less than benchmark
AFL	2	4,046	315	1:5,000	1:2,023	1:175 participants	1:127	Exceeds population ratio and participant ratio	5,133	1:2,567	Exceeds
NETBALL	2	4,046	155	1:7,070	1:2,023	1:60 participants	1:78	Exceeds population ratio Small need using participant ratio	5,133	1:2,567	Exceeds
TENNIS	5	4,046	44	1:3,000	1:809	N/A	N/A	Exceeds	5,133	1:1,027	Exceeds
CRICKET	2	4,046	212	1:4,000	1:2,023	N/A	N/A	Exceeds	5,133	1:2,567	Exceeds

*Recommended industry population/provision benchmark ratios utilised within the above table have been derived from the City of Greater Geelong's Social Infrastructure Plan (Generation One) 2020-2023

**Recommended industry/participant provision benchmark ratios utilised have been supplied by the relevant peak sporting body (where available)

CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Community consultation for the Master Plan's development aimed to understand what the community like, and what they think could be improved at Portarlington Recreation Reserve. The broad consultation program resulted in a high level of engagement and responses received. The findings from the initial consultation have assisted in developing insights and recommendations for the Draft Master Plan.

The below provides a summary of the various consultation methods undertaken.

6.1 PROJECT REFERENCE GROUP

The Project Reference Group was engaged through several meetings including an initial onsite discussion in February 2020, a subsequent meeting in September 2020 and a presentation of the Draft Plan in December 2020. Additional engagement has also occurred with the group through until June 2021, working collaboratively to develop the recommendations within the Draft Plan. This group consists of representatives of key user groups and stakeholders of the Reserve. The purpose of this group is to provide information to assist in forming the recommendations within the Master Plan, including guidance around the functionality and future infrastructure requirements as the main user of the facility.

Representatives of the group, include:

- Portarlington Football Netball Club
- Portarlington Cricket Club
- Portarlington Tennis Club
- Portarlington Pony Club
- Bellarine Agricultural Society
- Portarlington Girl Guides
- Portarlington Community Association
- Portarlington Community Garden Group
- Bellarine Bayside Foreshore Committee
- Office of Lisa Neville MP, Member for Bellarine

The PRG summary of engagement has been categorised into three consultation themes and feedback, as below, these include:

- Sporting Infrastructure
- Community Infrastructure
- Open Space Infrastructure

Sporting Infrastructure

- Previous history of site planning and development, that **now requires collective alignment and joint investment** to ensure successful implementation.
- **Buildings onsite are old but in good structural condition** including football/cricket, tennis and guide hall however are lacking in modern amenity. Desire for second storey improvements to main pavilion.
- Internal **public amenities do not align with current standards** in both football/cricket and tennis club pavilions.
- **No accessible facilities in football/cricket and tennis club pavilions.**
- **Umpire facilities are undersized** in football/cricket pavilions.
- **Provision of gender-neutral change facilities**, particularly for cricket and football, **would further support and provide opportunities for females to participate** given the existing facilities do not support this adequately at present.
- **No dedicated umpire change facilities** in tennis or netball pavilions.
- **Floodlights and maintaining access around Oval 2 would increase capacity** and opportunities for participation. Expansion of Oval 2 length by 20m. Increase 30m access around Oval 2 boundary for cars and spectators.
- **Current kitchen in football/cricket building sub-standard** – no longer compliant needs to be upgraded.
- **Pony Club have indicated that they do not desire to relocate to the Reserve**, noting that they are comfortable at their current home facility in Willis St, Portarlington.
- **Upgrade to cricket nets – consider a multi-use facility** e.g. with retractable nets and synthetic surface for more opportunities such as netball to use for warm up. Include storage facility as part of upgraded nets. An indoor basketball/multipurpose building is also desired.

- **Installation of fence on Oval 1** – using local fencing product.
- **Tennis court resurfacing and Book A Court to be installed** onto three courts shortly. **Remaining two tennis courts require resurfacing.** Make allowance for an additional two tennis courts to the existing western bank.
- **Netball courts experiencing capacity issues**, consideration towards providing an additional courts to the east of the existing two netball courts should be given. Under cover netball spectator seating also requested.
- **The netball change facilities whilst in good condition, have the potential to be expanded** to increase the change room and umpire room sizes to current standards as per the 2017 Netball Victoria Guidelines. **Facility also does not have a medical/first aid area or separate showers for umpires.**
- **Plan for potential sporting infrastructure to be included in the passive recreation area.**

Community Infrastructure

- **Ill-defined connectivity** between caravan park and reserve.
- **Consider all abilities access throughout the site** and connectivity to Portarlington Holiday Park.
- **Consider footprint for community garden** which would require supporting amenities including storage, water connections and an area for meeting. The old netball court area could be repurposed for this use.
- **Other recreational activity options to be considered** in the development of the Master Plan outside of organised sport such as BMX, skate, scoot, basketball etc.
- Improvements to **existing public toilet block closest to old asphalt netball courts.**

Open Space Infrastructure

- **No accessible connections within reserve** for pedestrians, participants or vehicles.
- **Upgrade surface in open space/event area** so it is more suitable for events during the Bellarine Agricultural Show and other multi-purpose opportunities.
- **Vehicle management and access across the site requires improvement.**



Image 3: Tennis practice at Portarlington. Photo credit: Portarlington Tennis Club

6.2 STATE SPORTING ORGANISATIONS

Interviews with State Sporting Organisations including AFL Barwon, Cricket Victoria, Tennis Victoria and Netball Victoria were undertaken to understand their aspirations for the sports who tenant the Reserve, including questions relating to participation, programs, infrastructure and alignment to their strategic documentation. A summary of the responses to these questions is provided below.

Netball Victoria

- Netball Victoria (NV) describes netball participation at Portarlington Recreation Reserve as relatively stable between season 2016 to 2019. NV indicates that the Netball Club has demonstrated the ability to grow their junior program through the delivery of NetSetGO and supports nine junior teams and five senior teams.
- The Netball facilities at Portarlington Recreation Reserve host finals matches for the Bellarine Football Netball League and is considered an important venue for this purpose. Access to two netball courts and supporting infrastructure is integral to the netball games played at the Reserve during the finals period.
- NV indicates that minor improvements to the netball facilities including a dedicated change area and amenities for umpires, greater storage space and bigger and better structured player and official benches would provide greater benefits. NV noted that should additional netball court provision be explored as part of the Master Planning process, they would be supportive of this however would encourage multi-purpose, multi-lined playing surfaces. Shade and shelter for spectators and volunteers is also seen as priority.
- In terms of participation, NV notes that a strong NetSetGO program at Portarlington Recreation Reserve including both girl's and boy's participation is key to the sustainability of the sport. Supporting the development of coaches, umpires and officials would also improve the participation experience. NV also notes that the holiday population of Portarlington also presents an opportunity to run informal, summer programs.
- NV recognises the importance of the facilities at Portarlington Recreation Reserve as it provides opportunities for local participation in the sport. Strong junior participation will continue to be a focus for the Club and NV moving into the future.

The current facilities at the Reserve are adequate for to service the demand for netball, however NV notes that the future population and development on the Bellarine Peninsula may alter the need or increase demand. Parking and traffic management improvements at the reserve are supported.

Tennis Victoria

- Tennis Victoria (TV) describes tennis participation at the Reserve as steadily increasing. There is presently a new Executive Committee who are focusing on participation outcomes through junior, senior, ladies mid-week and in-house competitions.
- TV noted that outside of local competition, Portarlington Recreation Reserve tennis courts also host the Tennis Geelong finals which attract greater numbers of spectator and competitors than would the regular games or events.
- TV sees that improvements to the pavilion, particularly the change room facilities, would provide a more welcoming environment for both existing and future participants.
- The local level tennis venue at Portarlington Recreation Reserve is supported by the G21 Tennis Strategy (2015-2025) and is regarded as an important venue to service local demand.
- TV indicates that the current provision of tennis courts adequately services the demand for the sport. TV supports the installation of their Book-A-Court technology to increase capacity and opportunities to participate, particularly during the summer months with the seasonal visitors.

Cricket Victoria

- Cricket Victoria (CV) notes that there has been a steady growth in participation at Portarlington Cricket Club. This is largely due to the Club's tireless work in increasing participation, in both junior and senior formats. The Club has also been successful in fielding a senior women's team in the first season of the Barwon Women's Cricket Competition.
- The Reserve has hosted several Bellarine Peninsula Cricket Association senior cricket finals as well as tournaments such as junior country week. CV notes that the main playing oval at Portarlington would be suitable to host junior representative cricket.
- CV notes that improvements to infrastructure, programming and increasing population will have the greatest impact on participation. More specifically:
 - Infrastructure – An improvement in the cricket training nets at the Reserve would add to the overall appeal of the venue and address safety concerns.
 - Programming – The continued growth in junior and female programs will positively impact on participation.
 - Population – As Portarlington is a smaller town and somewhat segregated from the larger growth areas on the Bellarine, this number of people who may potentially play cricket may be limited.
- CV indicated that the current facilities at the Reserve service demand adequately however an upgrade to the change facilities, practice nets and drainage on Oval 2 would further support participation for both males and females.

AFL Barwon

- AFL Barwon have conducted Football and Netball finals for Geelong Junior Football League and the Bellarine Football Netball League over the past 20 years, and in recent years for Senior Female Football Finals. The venue is a good option as it has expansive carparking and a consistently good playing surface for football. The relatively new netball facility provides an excellent venue to conduct the netball finals matches, with the ability to use the tennis courts also for warm up.
- The current facilities at Portarlington Recreation Reserve are adequate for football and netball purposes, but whilst well maintained, some of the building infrastructure is aging and in need of an update. In particular, the away team football change rooms.
- There is inadequate provision for facilities for umpires, with little to no provision to cater for female umpires.
- The venue would benefit from an extension to the veranda area to cater for inclement conditions and some form of elevation to enhance viewing.
- The coach's boxes need replacing as they are too close together and do not adequately cater for the teams' bench personnel.
- Secure perimeter fencing that would facilitate the potential to effectively monitor patron admission without the need for temporary fencing hire would also enhance the Reserve as a preferred finals venue. More sealed, designated carparking areas would also provide more carparking options for days of inclement weather.
- The social rooms and upstairs corporate area are excellent and provide a great facility to entertain official guests.

6.3 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The initial community engagement for the Master Plan commenced on May 13, 2020. The consultation was open for a six-week period and welcomed responses via a survey, quick poll, and interactive map. Feedback received from the community, the methods of engagement and distribution are outlined below, and the consultation summary Report appears on page 45.

Community Engagement Distribution

45	Days of engagement
340	Residential dwellings contacted via mail
	Social media posts – including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn.
	YouTube video
	Newspaper advert
	Posters at Portarlington Recreation Reserve

Engagement Methods

The City of Greater Geelong's Have Your Say page was the main platform for the community to provide feedback and ideas to contribute to the Draft Master Plan's development. The methods to collect this feedback included:

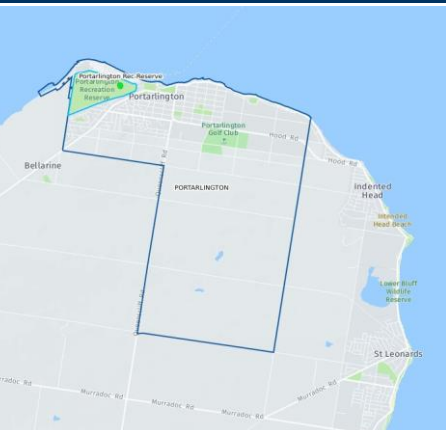
Survey	192 responses
Quick Poll	191 responses
Interactive Map	75 comments
Email	6 responses

All engagement touch points aimed to collect information from responders about what they like about the Reserve presently, and what they would like to see improved into the future. The following summary provides an outline of the responses received:

User Profile

- 91% of people responding to the survey were current users of Portarlington Recreation Reserve
- 55% of these respondents were a local resident of the community, 32% were a member of a community organisation or club based at the Reserve, and 14% were visitors
- 76% of those who belonged to a community organisation or club at the reserve were affiliated with a sporting club.
- 62% of those were connected with Portarlington Football Netball Club
- 17% of those were connected with Portarlington Cricket Club
- 13% of those were connected with Bellarine Agricultural Society
- 54% of people surveyed live in Portarlington
- 24% of people live elsewhere on the Bellarine.
- Most respondents (30%) were aged 35-49
- 52% were male, 37% were female and 11% did not disclose their gender.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT



The City of Greater Geelong is inviting the community and stakeholders to help set a new vision for the Portarlington Recreation Reserve through a new Master Plan.

The current plan for the Reserve was developed in 2011 and changes since then have highlighted a need for its review. The updated Master Plan will include recommendations that consider the cultural and environmental values of the Reserve, landscape and amenity, sporting infrastructure requirements, needs of tenant clubs and groups, trail connections and community events. Engagement with the community to understand what they like, and what they would like to see improved, through the Master Plan has been undertaken. A summary of the consultation process and feedback received is provided below.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STATISTICS – 13 MAY TO 26 JUNE 2020



45 DAYS

of engagement



340

residential dwellings contacted



7000

Facebook post views



53

Facebook comments



1,105

Have Your Say website views



1

Print advert in local newspaper



39

YouTube views



243

Twitter views



36

LinkedIn reactions



4

email responses



458

interactions with the Have Your Say engagement platform



75

Social Map comments



192

Survey responses



191

Quick Poll responses

SNAPSHOT OF SUBMISSIONS

SURVEY RESPONSE PROFILE



32%

of people surveyed belong to a community organisation or club at the Reserve



54%

of people surveyed live in Portarlington



24%

of people surveyed live elsewhere on the Bellarine

AGE



30%

of people surveyed were aged 35-49

GENDER OF RESPONDENTS



52% MALE

37% FEMALE

11% did not disclose their gender

VISIT

57%



of people surveyed visit the Reserve between 1 to 5 days per week

75%



of people surveyed travel to the Reserve by car

PURPOSE

70%

of people surveyed feel the Reserve has a combined role providing for sport, open space, and events



Sporting venue



Open Space



Events venue

What the community loves about Portarlington Recreation Reserve



Sporting facilities



Environmental values



Open Spaces



Community events



Playground

"The community loves the football, netball, cricket and other sports played here"

"It is a wonderful area to walk in and extends the unique vegetation of Point Richards Reserve. I love listening to the frogs when it rains"

"The area provides constant joy. There are always people, dogs, bikes, kites, football, and cricket being played. The Reserve provides a general sense of space and well-being"

"Portarlington Recreation Reserve is an amazing space for sports and events"

"The atmosphere is magnificent during the evenings and weekends when the Reserve is full of young kids in the playground"

#1

most valued aspect of the Reserve in the Quick Poll was the sporting facilities

#2

most valued aspect of the Reserve in the Quick Poll was the environmental and landscape amenity

#3

most valued aspect of the Reserve in the Quick Poll was using the open space areas for passive recreation

#4

most valued aspect of the Reserve in the Quick Poll was attending community events

44%

of people surveyed are either satisfied or very satisfied with the playground

What the community likes to do at Portarlington Recreation Reserve



Play sport

35%

of survey respondents like to play sport at the Reserve whilst 23% like to watch sport



Walking and Dog Walking

20%

of people like to visit the Reserve to walk



Attend Events

8%

of people like to attend events at the Reserve



Play

4%

of people like to take their children to the playground



Nature Appreciation

5%

of people like to visit the Reserve to enjoy and appreciate nature

What the community think could be improved at Portarlington Recreation Reserve



Sporting club rooms – condition and capacity

“Over the years the facilities have become tired and worn with the need to revamp them to keep up with community and safety needs”



Better trails and connections

“The walking paths throughout the Reserve are not accessible for all people. There is great potential to provide better connections to encourage more walkers and cyclists”



More accessible areas and car parking

“The amenities are not up to standard; there are not enough toilets and the car parking is ordinary. Better car parking including safe pedestrian crossings and public lighting is needed”



Increased vegetation, habitat, and landscaping

“The landscaping throughout the sports area needs improvement, as it is very bare at present”
“The passive recreation area would benefit from increased native vegetation and more trees being planted”



Quality passive open space areas

“There is certainly room for improvement to make it more appealing and inviting for continued use”



Include areas for other community activities

“Providing areas for wider community interests including activities such as BMX and community garden would get more people involved”

PERFORMANCE



36%

of survey respondents feel the Reserve is achieving its purpose well or very well



20%

of survey respondents feel OK about how well the Reserve is achieving its purpose

















32%

of respondents feel the Reserve is performing poorly or very poorly



12%

of respondents did not answer this question

ISSUE		SATISFACTION RATING	 IMPROVEMENT IDEA
 Trails and Connections		Presently there is a lack of accessible pathway connections throughout the entire Reserve	Create a better network of trails throughout the Reserve that are compliant and suitable for people of all abilities. Create safe connections to encourage more people to use for recreational pursuits including walking, running, cycling and nature appreciation
 Cars and Car Parking		39% of survey respondents were very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the car parking throughout the Reserve	Formalise car parking and vehicle movement to assist in greater safety for pedestrians and better traffic flow
 Sports Facilities		40% of people surveyed indicated that they were dissatisfied or extremely dissatisfied with the sporting club rooms, particularly the main pavilion	Consider ways to increase the capacity of the sporting club rooms to facilitate broader and more diverse participation opportunities.
 Vegetation, habitat, and landscaping		36% of survey respondents indicated that there were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the landscaping at the Reserve	Explore opportunities to improve the landscaping and vegetation throughout the active reserve area Within the passive recreation area, explore opportunities to improve the biodiversity properties and habitat commensurate with use
 Passive Open Space Areas		Passive use of the Reserve, including for non-organised activities such as walking, playing and kite flying was the third most valued attribute in the Quick Poll	Consider improving the open space areas for informal activity as well as community events
 Other Community Activities		Development ideas for the Reserve within the survey included more opportunities for community activities outside of organised sport	Consider including additional and diverse activities in the Master Plan. These activities could be both active and passive in nature allow for a broader range of involvement

WHEN ASKED TO RANK THE CURRENT ISSUES AT PORTARLINGTON RECREATION RESERVE, THE FOLLOWING RESPONSES WERE IDENTIFIED, IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE:

- 1 Facilities in poor condition**
- 2 A lack of facilities where there is an established demand**
- 3 Facilities no longer fit for purpose**
- 4 Over capacity – facilities not keeping up with demand**
- 5 A lack of vegetation and landscaping**
- 6 Reserve is underutilised**
- 7 Lack of trail connections**
- 8 A lack of safe pedestrian access**



Image 4: Portarlington Recreation Reserve Oval 1, Events Area/Open Space

“There are some of my favourite trails through the (passive) Reserve. It is a beautiful oasis of plant and animal life”

“I enjoy walking through the Reserve and the freedom and tranquillity it provides”

“The Bellarine Agricultural Show - what a great community event - showcasing and celebrating our local farming community!”

“The current infrastructure could be upgraded while keeping the environmental values and open space requirements for community events”

“The community loves the football, netball, cricket and other sports played here”

“The venue is not fit for purpose. The facilities are very old and need an upgrade. The facilities are not disability or gender diverse accessible”

DRAFT MASTER PLAN

7.1 WHAT IS PROPOSED?

The Draft Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan has considered all consultation, background information, strategic context and other drivers in its development. The Draft Plan has aimed to respond to the needs, aspirations and challenges captured to date, to provide a clear approach to enhancing Portarlington Recreation Reserve.

The Draft Plan provides a balanced approach that is in line with community expectations as well as the City's strategic direction. The Draft Plan looks to enhance the Reserve's existing features, whilst maintaining a close connection to its long history and function as a local level reserve. The Draft Plan recommends improving facilities and attributes that will make the Portarlington Recreation Reserve a more appealing place to visit, with modern facilities that enhance safety and amenity, as well as better environmental properties through tree planting and habitat creation.

The project objectives and Draft Master Plan principles have been used to create a vision and goals to guide the strategic development of the Reserve.

The following section provides an overview as well as a more detailed summary of the draft recommendations. This section begins by introducing the recommendations through the proposed Landscape Plan, followed by a summary of key recommendations and themes.

For the purposes of this report, the summary of recommendations has been broken down into individual areas to highlight the outcomes associated, particularly around key directions. An overview of these areas is provided on page 55 followed by a summary of each from page 56 onwards.

7.2 VISION AND GOALS

DRAFT MASTER PLAN VISION

Portarlington Recreation Reserve is a spacious coastal recreation reserve in a rural setting providing contemporary facilities for sport, community use and events, balanced with passive recreation areas set amongst coastal bushland.

DRAFT MASTER PLAN GOALS

Sporting & Social Infrastructure

Sporting and other social infrastructure will be redeveloped and replaced in line with the City's Social Infrastructure Policy to ensure they are compliant, inclusive, accessible, support multi use and are fit for purpose.

Social infrastructure will be designed and developed in a way that is creative, sustainable, and responsive to the character and scale of the reserve.

Social infrastructure and trail connections will be developed to improve safety, wayfinding, and encourage more engaging experiences.

Places and Community Use

Maintain the diversity of opportunities and spaces including organised sport, other community use and informal recreation to support community connections, health, wellbeing, and enjoyment of the reserve.

Environment & Amenity

The reserves amenity and environmental values will be improved providing a more inviting and richer landscape.

Cultural Heritage

The cultural heritage values of the reserve will be protected, and opportunities provided to improve awareness and understanding of the history and stories of the Reserve.

Park Management

The planning, development and management of the Reserve will be done in a holistic manner integrating all current uses and functions in consultation with the community.

New and emerging uses will be assessed according to the goals for the Reserve, local needs and the regional context to determine whether they are suitable.

Park Character

The Reserve will be managed in a way that protects the rural coastal character blending sporting and community use facilities with wide open spaces, scattered trees and areas of natural bushland explored through a winding trail network.

7.3 FUTURE CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Portarlington Recreation Reserve is the primary home for the town's sporting and recreation activities and an important area for tourists during the holiday season. It extends across the coastal flats fringed by the Portarlington Holiday Park and Port Phillip Bay, with houses overlooking the Reserve along its southern and eastern boundaries. The active sport and recreation area is the hub of the Reserve, built around a more developed core that includes the main ovals, pavilion, netball courts, tennis courts, Guides Hall, and Agricultural Society buildings. More formal and organised parking, roads and paths provide access and movement between the key facilities. The sporting facilities are surrounded by wide open spaces that are the basis for its important role as an events destination. The loose informality of the roads, parking and trails in the area creates a relaxed atmosphere and sense of freedom. Indigenous tree plantings enhance the amenity of the open spaces, improving shade and shelter from the elements. The Reserve has a strong connection and transition between spaces with the active sport and recreation precinct blending into regenerating coastal bushland, providing a natural backdrop to the more developed pockets. This passive recreation area provides opportunities to explore wetlands, pockets of Manna Gums and coastal bushland through a web of interlinked trails. Usage of the Reserve ebbs and flows across the day, the week, and the seasons. It is a place where sporting trials, tribulations and memories are made. Events bring a burst of life to the Reserve, gathering the community together to celebrate the history, diversity and creativity of people and the town. It is also a place that provides opportunities for quiet reflection and the appreciation of nature, or a casual moment spent walking the dog.



Image 6: Current view of active recreation area

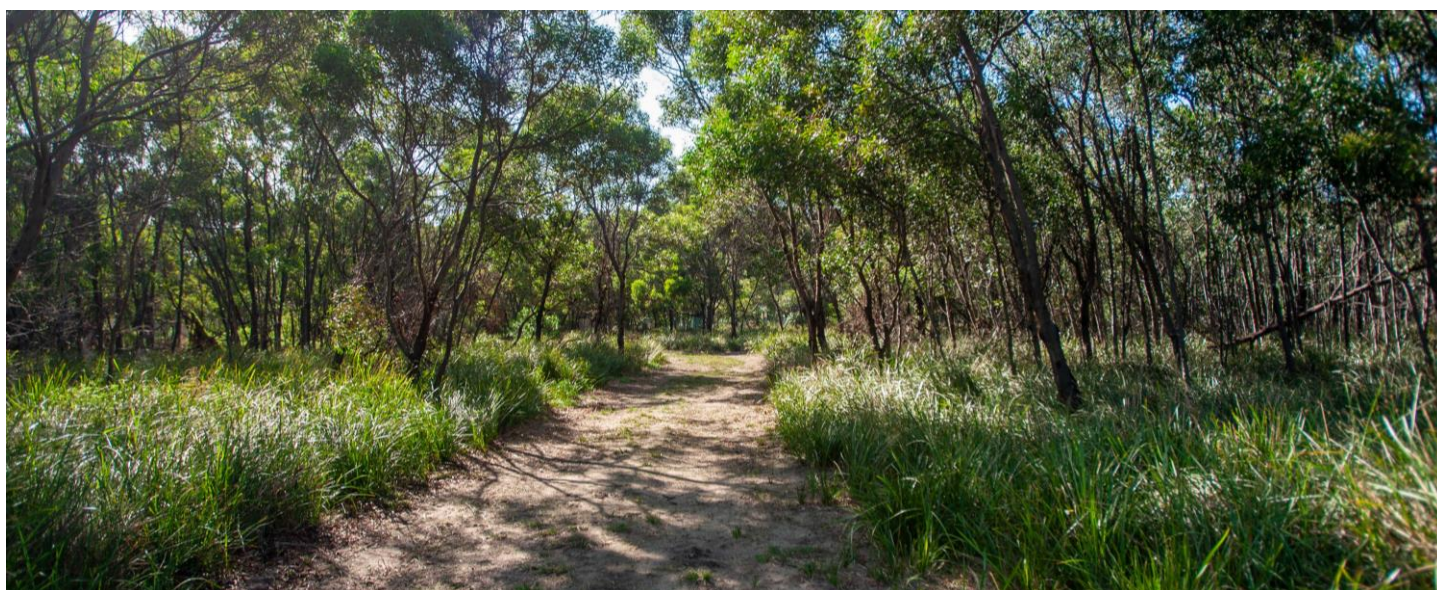


Image 7: Current view of passive recreation area

7.4 DRAFT MASTER PLAN (LANDSCAPE PLAN)



EXPLANATORY NOTES

ACCESSIBILITY AND SITE CONNECTIVITY

- 1 Formalise and expand the car park at the main entry utilising the existing car park and gravel road alignment. Include garden bed planting, trees and lighting. Approximately 100 proposed car parking spaces. Construction of the car park could potentially occur in two stages. Include traffic calming measures/safe pedestrian crossing points.
- 2 Standardise informal car parking around Ron Evans Oval, utilising existing informal tracks and desire lines, to provide distinction between vehicle and pedestrian movement. Include traffic calming measures/safe pedestrian crossing points.
- 3 Formalise the main entry by providing a new ticket booth, landscaping and consolidating existing signage, maintaining appropriate emergency services access.
- 4 Provide feature landscaping and signage to pedestrian entry points into the Reserve and Passive Recreation Area. Install dog litter bins at trailheads into the Passive Recreation Area.
- 5 Provide pedestrian connections throughout the reserve which are DDA compliant and provide universal access.
- 6 Provide a pedestrian crossing and new pedestrian footpaths for safe connectivity from the Reserve's main entry to residential areas and the Holiday Park. Continue to liaise with Bellarine Bayside to provide signage connections to the Holiday Park.
- 7 Retain existing overflow parking north of tennis courts and consider formalising if wear and tear warrants it.
- 8 Further investigate the feasibility of extending Oval 2 to the south to create a larger oval.
- 9 Liaise with sports clubs to provide greater definition for informal parking around southern and eastern sides of Oval 2.
- 10 Maintain maintenance and emergency vehicle access across the site.
- 11 Retain existing informal vehicle access to access open space and events area.

SPORTING FACILITIES

- 11 Upgrade the main pavilion based around improvements to the kitchen, bar, accessible toilets, changerooms, player amenities, first aid and umpire facilities to address gender accessibility, compliance with current code requirements and enhance the functionality of the main social rooms.
- 12 Replace existing asphalt area with concrete spectator area between the pavilion and Ron Evans oval.
- 13 When required, replace the main oval fence with suitable materials that reflect the character of the reserve but are long-lasting and sustainable.
- 14 Consider providing new sports lighting to Oval 2 to enable it to accommodate overflow from Ron Evans Oval.
- 15 Provide a new shelter to Oval 2.
- 16 Provide new sports lighting to existing western tennis courts and make allowance for a potential sixth court if demand necessitates.
- 17 Provide soft netting to the north-east side of Oval 2 to prevent errant balls from entering vegetated area.
- 18 Consider an extension to existing netball club pavilion to ensure it meets the recommended guidelines outlined by Netball Victoria for a local level facility. Extension to the end of the pavilion will likely require tree removal.
- 19 Provide additional 3-tier seating to the western side of the existing netball courts.

- 20 Consider an extension to existing tennis club pavilion to ensure that amenities are meeting modern day and accessible standards.
- 21 Consider fully enclosing existing cricket nets to increase safety. Consider incorporating basketball half court line marking, backboard and ring to allow multi-purpose use of the nets and to replace the informal basketball area at the existing asphalt netball courts. Consider providing a netball ring for warm-up opportunities. The enclosed facility is to meet Cricket Australia guidelines for a local level facility.
- 22 Consider undertaking surface improvements to the old asphalt netball courts to provide a netball warm up area.

PARK INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPEN SPACE

- 23 Provide new boundary fencing along Boat Road, 4th Avenue and Sproat Street to improve visual amenity while restricting vehicles and pedestrians to allocated entry points.
- 24 Investigate alternative solutions for water tanks north of the cricket nets.
- 25 Improve passive recreation opportunities by providing new picnic area and scooter track targeted at younger children. Consider providing additional play targeted at teenagers such as a bouldering wall or other suitable activity for all genders.
- 26 Provide a duplication of the current Agricultural Shed as a new footprint adjoining the current shed.
- 27 Investigate options to level the event space to create more multi-use options.
- 28 Retain existing cattle/horse tie up rails and replace with like for like at the end of their useful life.
- 29 Consider re-purposing areas of the existing asphalt netball courts into a community garden and potential bike discovery area. Re-purpose the existing building and water tanks for storage and irrigation for the community garden. Provide open space around the proposed community garden for potential future expansion if circumstances demanded it.
- 30 Provide additional seating around Reserve at regular intervals as indicated on this plan. Upgrade existing seats if required. Seats to have back and arm rests and be aesthetically consistent across the Reserve.
- 31 Retain existing loading ramp.
- 32 Retain existing toilet block and replace at end of useful life.

LANDSCAPING AND ENVIRONMENT

- 33 Provide new canopy trees which are consistent with the biodiversity of the area to provide shade, blur the boundary between the Reserve and the Passive Recreation Area, and to increase the vegetation character of the site.
- 34 Provide low tree and shrub planting on southern boundary residential fences to improve visual amenity while also maintaining sightlines and reducing maintenance, fire hazard and likelihood of snakes. Species to be consistent with the biodiversity of the area.
- 35 Consider the removal of a select number of existing cypress trees to allow for cricket net expansion.
- 36 Provide water sensitive urban design (WSUD) in the form of a vegetated swale to capture car park run-off and to target drainage issues that currently occur between tennis club building and the existing car park.

Map 8: Draft Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan – Landscape Plan – image 1 of 2



EXPLANATORY NOTES

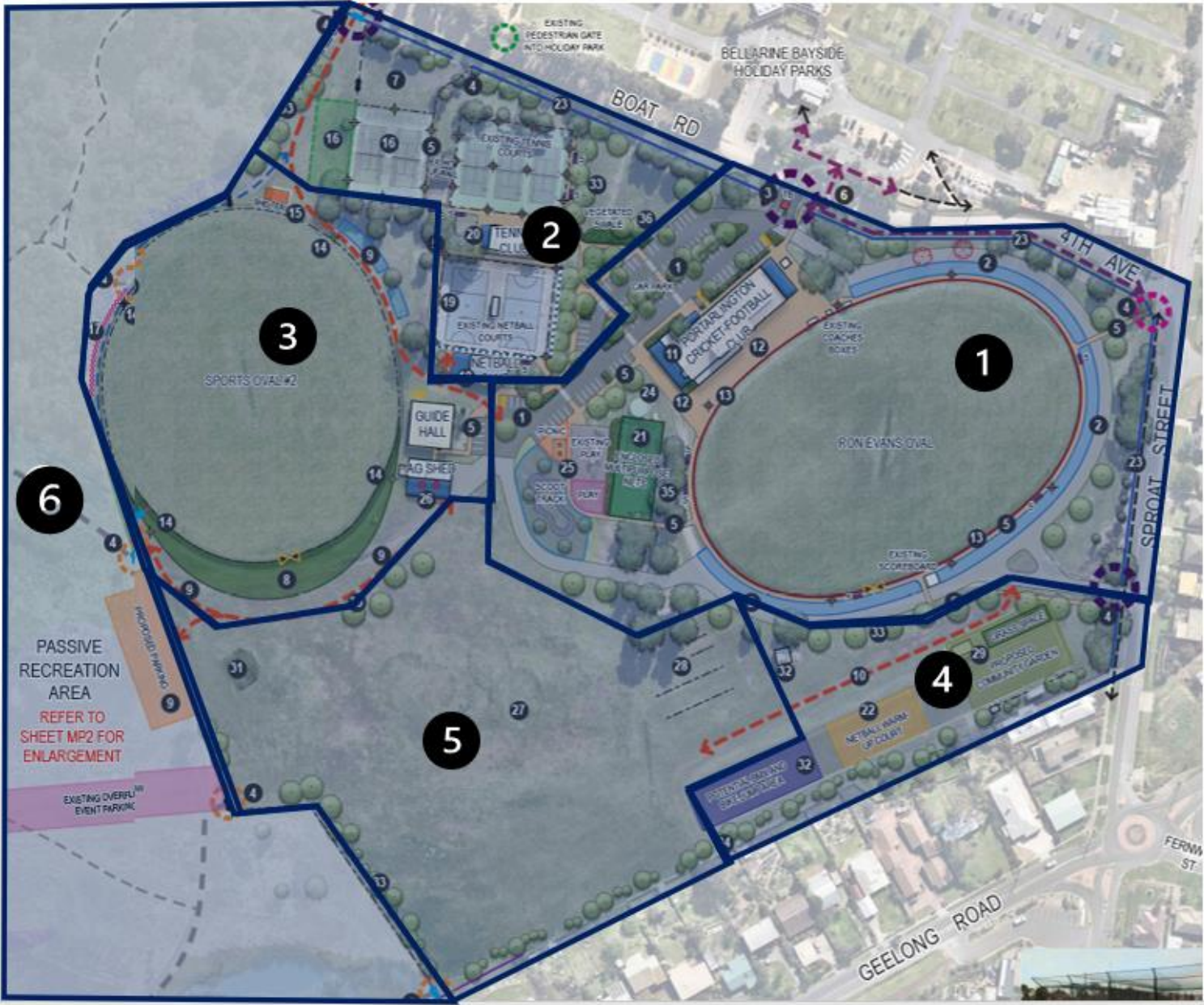
ACCESSIBILITY AND SITE CONNECTIVITY

- A** Liaise with Bellarine Bayside to improve fire and maintenance access into the Reserve from Traum Street. Investigate the steepness of Traum Street and the viability of providing pedestrian access into the Reserve including a viewing platform and fencing on the north side of the path to stop dogs entering Point Richards Reserve
- B** Work in partnership with Bellarine Bayside to improve fire access into the western side of the Passive Recreation Area from Point Richards Reserve.
- C** Provide maintenance and fire access along southern boundary including gated access into the Active Sport and Recreation Area. Coordinate with the proposed potential wetland works and location of stormwater outlets.
- D** Consolidate existing trails for pedestrians and cyclists. Primary trails to potentially be gravelled for shared fire, maintenance and pedestrian use. Secondary trails to largely remain as grass tracks.
- E** Provide pedestrian stair access to the Reserve from Welfare Street.
- F** Continue to liaise with Bellarine Bayside to provide improved and consistent signage and connections to Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve.
- G** Provide signage, rubbish bins and dog litter bins at access points into the Passive Recreation Area. Signage to depict ways to sustainably explore the precinct.
- H** Investigate establishing a system of sediment ponds and deeper wetland pools at the southern end of the Reserve to improve stormwater quality management, biodiversity values and expand habitat for the Growing Grass Frog and other threatened fauna. Stormwater outlets entering the Reserve from adjoining residential areas to have gross pollutant treatment traps.
- I** Continue to maintain and improve environmental conditions within the Passive Recreation Area in line with recommendations from the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Environmental Report October 2020.
- J** Investigate providing a boardwalk over new wetland area to provide recreational and educational opportunities as well as a potential connection to Welfare Street and residential areas.
- K** Create a new parking area for access to the Passive Recreation Area that also functions as event parking.
- L** Set aside the area marked within the Passive Recreation Area for temporary event parking. Permit conditions will apply. Encourage regeneration of indigenous vegetation west of this area along the former gallop track.
- M** Develop interpretative signage regarding flora and fauna values at the Reserve in consultation with the Bellarine Bayside Committee. Provide interpretative signage and seating at key locations in the Passive Recreation Area which depict the various Ecological Vegetation Classes.

Map 9: Draft Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan – Landscape Plan –image 2 of 2

7.5 SUMMARY OF DRAFT MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

For the purposes of this report, a summary of Draft Master Plan recommendations are discussed in further detail as per the six areas identified below. Due to the size and expanse of Portarlington Recreation Reserve, the following layout provides a more succinct way to summarise the recommendations and their associated outcomes. **It should be noted that the below areas do not constitute the priority order of the Draft Master Plan’s implementation.** A recommended approach to staging and prioritisation will be considered in the Final Master Plan.

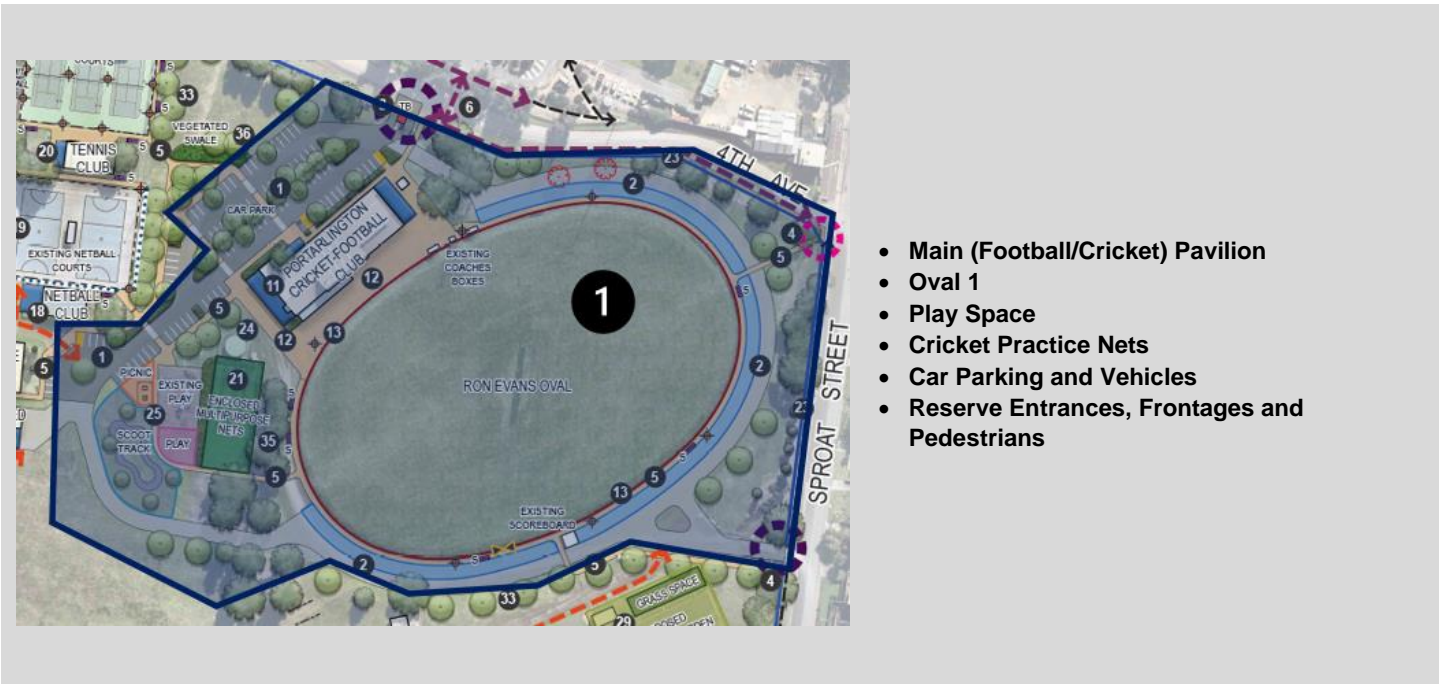


Map 10: Identification of areas used to separate and discuss the Draft Master Plan’s recommendations

Within each area summary and recommendation, a key is included to provide the reader with a reference back to the Draft Master Plan Landscape Plan (see pages 53 & 54 of this Report). In addition, the theme of each recommendation is represented by an infographic. A summary of these graphics can be found below.

Sporting Infrastructure	Sporting Activities	Vehicle Movement and Car Parking	Community Activities	Open Space	Environment and Nature	Walking and Pedestrians

AREA 1





MAIN (FOOTBALL/CRICKET) PAVILION

A refurbishment and extension to the main pavilion is recommended to improve the core functions of the building. Whilst the pavilion has good structure and size, amendments to the player and umpire facilities is will ensure the building is consistent with modern standards. This includes the provision of all gender, universally designed, change rooms and amenities. Small improvements are also recommended for the kitchen, kiosk and foyer/entrance areas to improve functionality and accessibility. Upgrades to the internal social room toilets are also likely to be required to ensure building code requirements are being met. Consideration should also be given to providing externally accessible toilets for broader community use outside of scheduled activities.

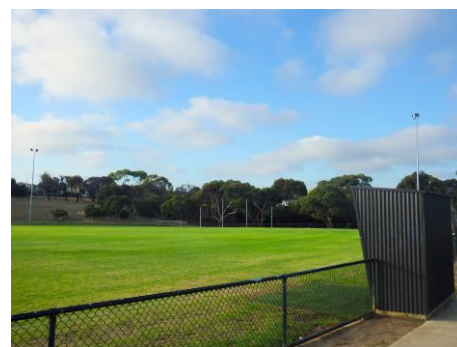


Sample image

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
11	Upgrade the main pavilion based around improvements to the kitchen, bar, accessible toilets, changerooms, player amenities, fist aid and umpire facilities to address gender accessibility, compliance with current code requirements and enhance the functionality of the main social rooms. The enhancement and/or extension to the second storey of the main pavilion may be considered however club and/or external funding must be sought.	
12	Replace existing asphalt area with concrete spectator area between the pavilion and Ron Evans (Oval 1) Oval.	

OVAL 1

Recommendations for Oval 1, also known as Ron Evans Oval, include improvements to the informal parking area around the oval's perimeter. This recommendation aims to improve pedestrian and spectator safety, as well as create efficiencies in traffic flow and vehicle movement. Improved parking areas will assist in removing the current ad-hoc flow of cars and informal tracks throughout the Reserve. It is recommended that the perimeter parking however remain unsealed to retain the character of the reserve. In addition, consideration should be given to the installation of a new oval perimeter fence to improve visual amenity and to improve condition and reduce ongoing maintenance liability.



Sample image

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
2	Standardise informal car parking around Ron Evans Oval, utilising existing informal tracks and desire lines to provide distinction between vehicle and pedestrian movement. Include traffic calming measures/safe pedestrian crossing points.	
13	When required, replace the main oval fence with suitable materials that reflect the character of the reserve but are long-lasting and sustainable.	

PLAY SPACE

Providing additional supporting infrastructure to the existing play space is recommended within the Draft Master Plan to produce greater amenity and increase play offerings for a broader age range of children. Opportunities to explore additional play and active recreation components along with supporting infrastructure for park users, including parents, children and teens of all genders, will add to the broader value of this area, making it a more inviting and inclusive hub of activity. The existing playground serves the precinct well and will continue to be upgraded and maintained as per the City's cyclical programs. Toilets and amenities to service the play area are recommended to be incorporated into the design of the main pavilion and/or the extension to the netball pavilion which are both in close proximity. The play space will continue to be supported with opportunities for informal recreation and unstructured play in the adjacent open space area. There is also opportunity to extend park furniture to include suitable facilities for picnics etc.



Sample image

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
25	Improve passive recreation opportunities by providing new picnic area and scoot track targeted at younger children. Consider providing additional play targeted at teenagers such as a bouldering wall or other suitable activity for all genders.	

CRICKET PRACTICE NETS

The Draft Master Plan recommends the redevelopment of the existing cricket nets and the construction of a new, safer and multi-purpose facility that can facilitate cricket training as well other activities such as basketball, and/or as a warm up area for netball. Servicing a range of active pursuits including organised sport and information community participation will also complement the proposed play area. It is recommended that the new facility is enclosed to enhance the safety of Reserve users, and that it is constructed to the recommendations for sport for a local level venue. Investigating alternate solutions for water tanks presently located to the north of the cricket nets may improve sightlines and visual amenity of this area.

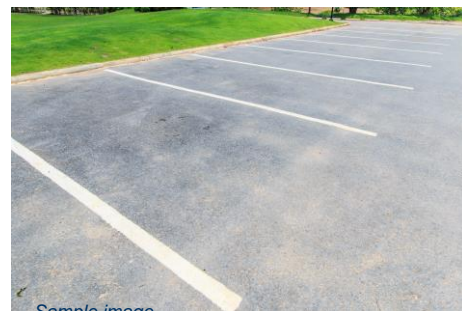


Sample image

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
21	Consider fully enclosing existing cricket nets to increase safety. Consider incorporating basketball half court line marking, backboard, and ring to allow multi-purpose use of the nets and to replace the informal basketball area at the existing asphalt netball courts. Consider providing a netball ring for warm-up opportunities. The enclosed facility is to meet Cricket Australia guidelines for a local level facility.	

CAR PARKING AND VEHICLES

Widespread improvements to car parking and vehicle movement are recommended throughout the Draft Master Plan, including within Area 1. These recommendations aim to improve traffic flow and organisation of vehicle management throughout the Reserve and maintain access for emergency vehicles. The draft recommendations aim to keep vehicles on designated roads and car parks, and to improve the safety of all pedestrians as well as encourage more active modes of travel. The Draft Master Plan has proposed accommodating the majority of cars through a centralised car park that would replace the existing, ad-hoc car park behind the main pavilion. Up to 100 car parking spaces are proposed which would service the main pavilion, tennis facilities, netball facilities, Oval 2, Guide Hall, Agricultural Society Shed and play space. The car park will have the ability to be constructed in a staged fashion where necessary.



Sample image

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
1	Formalise and expand the car park at the main entry utilising the existing car park and gravel road alignment. Include garden bed planting, trees and lighting. Approximately 100 proposed car parking spaces. Construction of the car park could potentially occur in two stages. Include traffic calming measures/safe pedestrian crossing points.	

RESERVE ENTRANCES, FRONTAGES AND PEDESTRIANS

Improved entrances to the Reserve will contribute to its overall visual appeal, and improve sightlines for vehicles as well as better management of pedestrians. This includes during regular, daily use of the Reserve as well as during levels of increased visitation, such as annual events, holiday periods and football and cricket finals.

The use of signage and separating pedestrian and vehicles where appropriate will contribute to safer outcomes for all users. Improvements to pathways that are compliant with guidelines for people of all abilities are also essential. The provision of enhanced crossing points, connections to neighbouring residential areas and the Bellarine Bayside Holiday Park will provide a safer and more enjoyable experience for all.



Sample image

The main entrance off Boat Road is recommended to be improved both functionally and visually and will be the main entry point to the Reserve and car park. Secondary entrances from Boat Road are recommended to be utilised to service the proposed informal car park for the tennis club in the event that overflow parking is required.

Emergency vehicle access points will be available to service all areas from the main entrance from Boat Road, with all facilities accessible from this entry point.

Maintenance vehicle access points will remain accessible via the main entrance for the active Reserve precinct, as well as via the current access point on Boat Road into the passive recreation area.

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
3	Formalise the main entry by providing a new ticket booth, landscaping and consolidating existing signage and improving emergency services access.	
4	Provide feature landscaping and signage to pedestrian entry points into the Reserve and into the passive recreation area. Install dog litter bins at trailheads into passive recreation area.	
5	Provide pedestrian connections throughout the Reserve which are DDA compliant and provide universal access.	
6	Provide a pedestrian crossing and new pedestrian footpaths for safe connectivity from the Reserve's main entry to residential areas and the Holiday Park. Continue to liaise with Bellarine Bayside to provide signage and connections to the Holiday Park.	
23	Provide new boundary fencing along Boat Road, 4 th Avenue and Sproat Street to improve visual amenity while restricting vehicles and pedestrians to allocated entry points.	

AREA 2





- Tennis Courts
- Tennis Club Rooms
- Netball Club Rooms
- Open Space Area (east of tennis courts)

TENNIS COURTS

The three existing tennis courts directly north of the tennis club rooms are currently well provisioned with good quality surface, fencing and sports lighting to competition standard. There is opportunity however for the remaining two tennis courts to the west to undertake surface and lighting upgrades to provide greater programming opportunities. There is also opportunity to identify a space for a sixth tennis court to the western bank of the existing courts to facilitate future participation if demand necessitates.




Sample image

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
16	Provide new sports lighting to existing western tennis courts and make allowance for a potential sixth court if demand necessitates.	
7	Retain existing overflow parking north of tennis courts and consider formalising if wear and tear warrants.	

TENNIS CLUB ROOMS

A small extension to the existing tennis club rooms is recommended to ensure amenities meet accessible, modern standards that can be universally accessed. The proposed extension recommends the demolition of the existing amenities block attached to the tennis club rooms, and the construction of new, compliant facilities. Additional access points via the proposed pathway network will provide better access and egress into the facility.





Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
20	Consider extension to existing tennis club pavilion to ensure that amenities are meeting modern day and accessible standards.	

NETBALL CLUB ROOMS

Whilst netball is well provisioned with new, modern courts and club rooms, there is a small deficiency in the size of the change facility. The current rooms are slightly undersized in accordance with Netball Victoria facility guidelines for local level venues. A small extension, utilising a similar, modular construction as the existing building, would see the facility present greater functionality and flexibility. This includes providing dedicated umpire change rooms and improved storage areas. Extension to the facility can be made to the east or west of the existing building and should consider the provision of an externally accessible toilet to support Oval 2 and the play space. In addition, the provision of a formalised spectator area for netball, by way of 3-tiered seating, would enhance amenity for supporters.




Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
18	Consider extension to existing netball club pavilion to ensure it meets the recommended guidelines outlined by Netball Victoria for a local level facility. Extension to the end of the pavilion will likely require tree removal.	
19	Provide additional 3-tier seating to the western side of the exiting netball courts.	

OPEN SPACE AREA (EAST OF TENNIS COURTS)

The open space/grassed area between the existing tennis courts and main entrance is utilised during the Bellarine Agricultural Show for display purposes. The area is also important to the Reserve's drainage function, capturing run off from the car park and both tennis and netball courts. To improve its function, and to maintain the area's importance for events, the Draft Master Plan recommends the incorporation of a vegetated swale drain. The swale would consider an appropriate location that does not encroach onto the area utilised for the Show and utilise water sensitive design principles to minimise environmental impacts.



Sample image

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
36	Provide water sensitive urban design (WSUD) in the form of a vegetated swale to capture car park run-off and to target drainage issues that currently occur between tennis club building and the existing car park.	

AREA 3



- Oval 2 and surrounds

OVAL 2 AND SURROUNDS

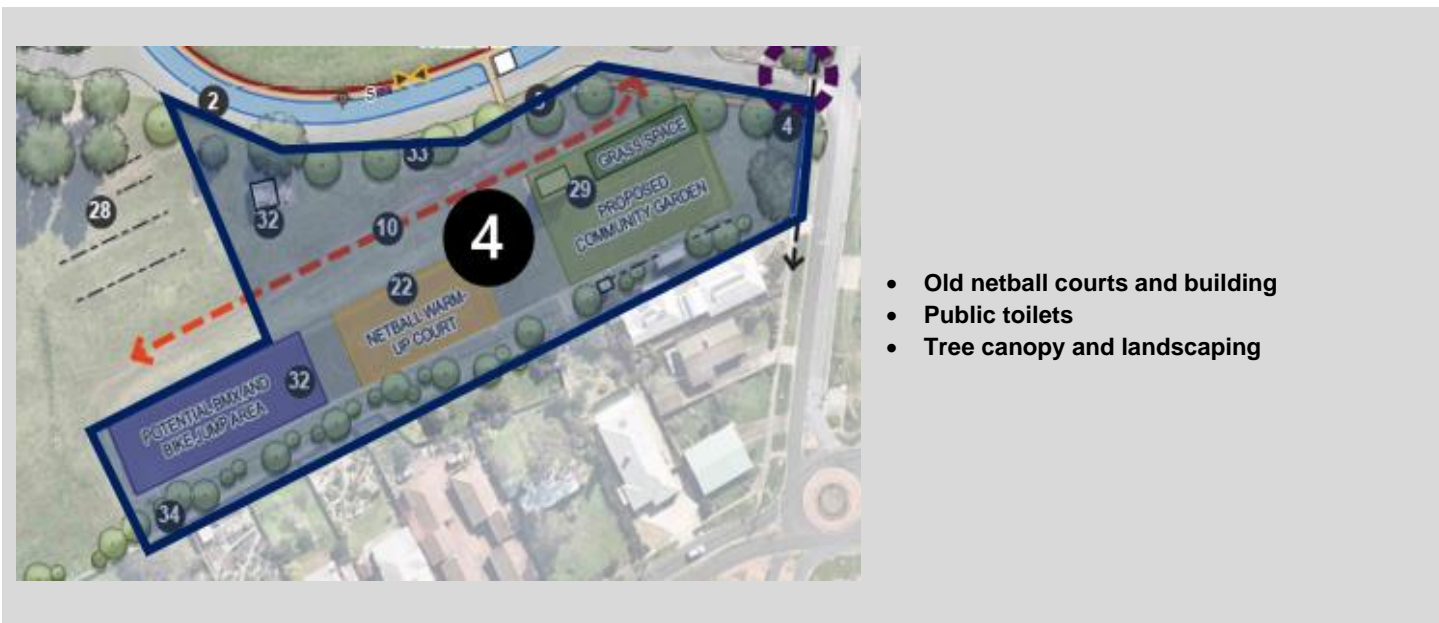
The Master Plan includes recommendations for this area which are focused around Oval 2. This includes consideration towards the inclusion of sports lighting on this oval. Sports lighting, commensurate with AFL guidelines for local level facilities, can provide greater capacity for training, participation and programs, particularly during the winter months. The provision of lighting however needs to be supported by a detailed analysis of future use, to demonstrate the return on potential investment (both social and financial). Furthermore, investigations into the expansion of Oval 2, particularly its length to the south of its existing boundary, could assist in further facilitation of participation should demand necessitate.

To support participation and the amenity of spectators, it is also recommended that the existing shelter on Oval 2 be replaced. It is recognised that a new, basic structure would replace the existing shelter which is nearing the end of its useful life.



Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
14	Consider providing new sports lighting to Oval 2 to enable it to accommodate overflow from Ron Evans Oval (i.e. Oval 1).	
15	Provide a new shelter to Oval 2.	
9	Liaise with sports clubs to provide greater definition for informal parking around southern and eastern sides of Oval 2.	
17	Provide soft netting to the north-eastern side of Oval 2 to prevent errant balls from entering the vegetated area.	
8	Further investigate the feasibility of extending Oval 2 to the south of its existing footprint to create a larger oval.	

AREA 4



OLD NETBALL COURTS AND BUILDING

It is recommended that a portion of the old asphalt netball courts be transformed into a community garden that provides raised garden beds within a small plot. A small number of informal car parks should be provided as well as use of the existing utilities connections. The previous netball club rooms which are non-compliant with DDA requirements, present an opportunity to be repurposed, given they are in an ideal location to the proposed garden. The ground level of the facility, consisting of a mostly brick construction, could likely be retained for the purposes of storage for the community garden. The second level of the building should be removed so that future public access is prevented.

The remaining section of old netball courts could be considered for surface improvements to provide a space for netball warm-up. This area should be limited to the equivalent of one full size netball court only.

In addition, a recommendation for the construction of a bike play area should be considered. This aims to provide diversity in community activities on offer at the Reserve, in a location that is well activated by the proposed community garden, netball warm up area and passive surveillance from houses along the southern boundary.

Finally, the redundant water tanks alongside the old netball courts, previously used by the CFA for training, should be consolidated and re-used (where appropriate) for water harvesting by the community garden.




Sample image

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
29	Consider re-purposing areas of the existing asphalt netball courts into a community garden and potential bike play area. Re-purpose the existing building and water tanks for storage and irrigation for the community garden. Provide open space around the proposed community garden for potential future expansion if circumstances demand.	
22	Consider undertaking surface improvements to the old asphalt netball courts to provide a netball warm up area.	

PUBLIC TOILETS

The existing public toilet block, located north-west of the old asphalt netball courts, is reaching the end of its useful life as it no longer meets the expectations or standards of a modern facility. It is recognised that these public toilets are utilised during events, particularly the Bellarine Agricultural Show, and anticipated to be used by the proposed community garden. Therefore, it is recommended that this facility is replaced once the asset is no longer fit for purpose.



Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
32	Retain existing toilet block and replace at end of useful life.	

TREE CANOPY AND LANDSCAPING



Improving landscaping throughout the Reserve will create a better aesthetic, deliver more shade for users, and generated enhanced environmental properties. Selecting trees which are consistent with the biodiversity of the area as well as those which can connect and provide a sense of unity between the active recreation and passive recreation areas is recommended. Additional tree planting will contribute to a cooler and greener parkland and municipality, which is both a priority of the Victorian Government and the City of Greater Geelong.

Landscaping throughout the Reserve should connect to the local identity and context and be strategically placed throughout. Selecting species that are fit for purpose, can be well managed and maintained, and that do not impede on sightlines and on key activity areas throughout the Reserve is recommended.



Sample image

Whilst the subject of providing additional tree canopy and landscaping is discussed within this specific area of the Reserve, it remains a common theme throughout the Draft Master Plan and should be given an equal and holistic approach to its implementation.

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
33	Provide new canopy trees which are consistent with the biodiversity of the area to provide shade, blur the boundary between the Reserve and the passive recreation area, and to increase the vegetation and character of the site.	
34	Provide low tree and shrub planting on southern boundary residential fences to improve visual amenity while also maintaining sightlines and reducing maintenance, fire hazard and likelihood of snakes. Species to be consistent with the biodiversity of the area.	

AREA 5



- Events/Open Space Area
- Livestock tie up rails
- Park furniture

EVENTS/OPEN SPACE AREA

The existing Events/Open Space area makes the Reserve unique, providing it with the ability to host broader community events including the Bellarine Agricultural Show. Recommendations within the Draft Master Plan include expanding the existing shed utilised by the Agricultural Society, to enable greater function and utilisation.

In addition, supplementary tree canopy around the perimeter of the area that does not encroach into the programmable event space will be important. The overall retention of this open space area aligns with broader open space planning principles regarding the value of green infrastructure and offering greater non-structured recreation including activities such as kite flying, dog walking and informal play. To improve the quality of the events area, opportunities to level and fill (where appropriate) the grassed area surface will further support show activities and other future opportunities.



(Image courtesy of the Bellarine Agricultural Show)

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
26	Provide a duplication of the current Agricultural Shed as a new footprint adjoining the current shed.	
27	Investigate options to level the event space to create more multi-use options.	

PARK FURNITURE

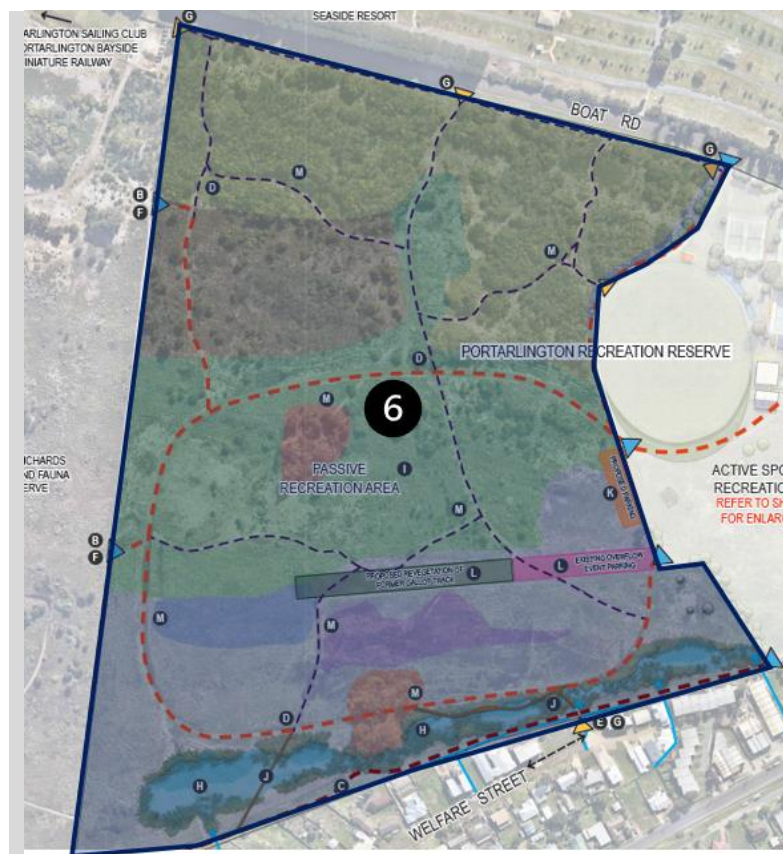
Within Area 5 and throughout the entire Reserve, the provision of park furniture, including bench seats, rubbish bins and picnic tables are recommended at strategic intervals to improve user amenity and encourage greater visitation. All park furniture should be installed with a consistent style that adheres to the City’s guidelines.



Sample image

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
Referenced throughout Master Plan	Provide additional seating around Reserve at regular intervals as indicated on this plan. Upgrade existing seats if required. Seats to have back and arm rests and be aesthetically consistent across the Reserve.	

AREA 6



- Passive recreation area

PASSIVE RECREATION AREA

The whole of the passive recreation area has significant value as a large patch of native vegetation that is limited across the Bellarine Peninsula. The area varies in its condition, however as a whole it holds significant environmental value through the combination of depleted EVC's, rare and threatened species, wetland values and habitat. Legislation and policy require that the area is currently managed for those values, which is consistent with the City's Environment Strategy.

Assessment process

Should there be an identified need to remove native vegetation in this area for another purpose, the proponent (the City or a person with consent from the City) will need to apply for a Planning Permit under Clause 52.17 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. In addition, any proposal may also trigger the need to apply for a permit under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 and also be referred to the Commonwealth to assess if plans significantly impact on matters of national significance under the EPBC Act 1999.

Assessment of need

As the land manager, the City's obligations are to establish a need and find alternatives for the use or development that avoid impacts to native vegetation in line with the objectives of the Native Vegetation Management Framework.

An assessment of the existing facilities, provision standards, benchmarking, changes in population and current and future demand indicate that the existing provision of sporting infrastructure at Portarlington Recreation Reserve is largely sufficient to meet future need. The assessment indicates that any new infrastructure for active sport can be met within the active sport and recreation precinct. A range of other recreation opportunities can be undertaken in the passive recreation area including walking, dog walking, running, trail running, cycling, nature appreciation and bird watching.

Page 2 of the Draft Master Plan – Landscape Plan (see page 54) outlines the recommendations for the passive recreation area. As an expansive precinct, this area offers ample opportunity to improve the biodiversity and environmental properties of the Reserve, whilst creating an enhanced visitor experience, and encouraging more activities and recreational pursuits. The Draft Master Plan has acknowledged the importance of balancing community access and use of the area for activities including overflow parking, in conjunction with protecting the vast environmental values of the area.











Accessibility and Site Connectivity

An improved and consolidated trail network, including wayfinding and interpretative signage will attract and enhance the local community's connection with the area whilst providing greater protection to the areas under greatest threat.

Improved pedestrian access via Traum and Welfare Streets, will promote more foot traffic and active modes of off-road travel, including recreational cycling. Connecting trails aim to improve the interface with Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve, the active sporting and recreation area and surrounding residential areas. It is recommended that a variety of made and unmade trails be incorporated to encourage recreation and active travel, as well as offer passive experiences and to deter users from creating informal tracks through vegetated areas.

The Draft Master Plan recommends retaining a large portion of the existing overflow parking area, also known as the 'old gallop track', as well as establishing an additional parking area on the fence line that borders the open space/events area. This recommendation aims to provide better connection and proximity for events, whilst minimising the environmental impact on the passive recreation area.

The Draft Master Plan does not make any recommendation for the re-opening of former horse trails following consultation with stakeholders and the recommendations within the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan Environmental Report (2020).

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
D	Consolidate existing trails for pedestrians and cyclists. Primary trails to be potentially graveled for shared fire, maintenance, pedestrian and cyclist use. Secondary trails to largely remain as grass track for pedestrian and cyclist use only.	
E	Provide pedestrian stair access to the Reserve from Welfare Street	
F	Continue to liaise with Bellarine Bayside to provide improved and consistent signage connections to Point Richards Reserve.	
G	Provide signage, rubbish bins and dog litter bins at access points into the passive recreation area. Signage to depict ways to sustainably explore the precinct.	
J	Investigate providing a boardwalk over new wetland area to provide recreational and educational opportunities as well as a potential connection to Welfare Street and residential areas	
K	Create a parking area for access to the passive recreation area that also functions as event parking.	
L	Set aside the area marked within the passive recreation area for temporary event parking. Permit conditions will apply. Encourage regeneration of indigenous vegetation west of this area along the former gallop track.	
M	Develop interpretative signage regarding flora and fauna values at the Reserve in consultation with the Bellarine Bayside Committee. Provide interpretative signage and seating at key locations in the passive recreation area which depict the various Ecological Vegetation Classes.	


Weed, Environment and Biodiversity Management

The Draft Portarlington Recreation Reserve Works Plan (2016) and the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan Environmental Report (2020) remain important reference points and guiding documents for the area, particularly in regard to the management of existing vegetation communities, weeds and flora and fauna. Within the passive recreation area, there are environmental and ecological values of varying degree, which presents opportunities to improve condition and quality as well as enhance education and knowledge of the importance of the area to the community.

Broad scale weed control to address specific weed threats in areas identified as having high environmental properties will continue to be an ongoing management priority. Encouraging the regeneration of highly disturbed areas, such as the western portion of the 'old gallop track' with indigenous species is recommended. Targeted revegetation and indigenous tree planting within the area, in partnerships with local community groups, is also recommended to encourage regeneration and improve value of the area.





Surveying, monitoring and evaluating flora and fauna changes as a result of management activities will create a measure of success, as well as a continued focus on identifying opportunities for improvement over the life of the Master Plan.

The establishment of sediment ponds and deeper wetland pools at the southern end of the area aims to create and expand habitat whilst providing drainage solutions and improving stormwater management and quality. Including pollutant traps within the future design of the wetlands will assist in preventing stormwater pollution from entering the waterway. The establishment of a boardwalk area across the wetland area which connects to proposed pedestrian connection points to residential areas is also recommended.

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
H	Investigate establishing a system of sediment ponds and deeper wetland pools at the southern end of the Reserve to improve stormwater quality management, biodiversity values and expand habitat for the Growling Grass Frog and other threatened fauna. Stormwater outlets entering the Reserve from adjoining residential areas to have gross pollutant treatment traps.	

Collaborative Management

Draft recommendations include continuing to liaise with adjacent land managers, Bellarine Bayside Foreshore Committee, in collaborative management of both the passive recreation area and the Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve. Recommendations to improve connectivity between the two sites will increase the value of the two land parcels as well as ensure access for maintenance and emergency vehicles remains.

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
A	Liaise with Bellarine Bayside to improve fire and maintenance access into the Reserve from Traum Street. Investigate the steepness of Traum Street. Investigate the steepness of Traum Street and the viability of providing pedestrian access into the Reserve including a viewing platform and fencing on the north side of the path to stop dogs entering Point Richards Reserve.	
B	Work in partnership with Bellarine Bayside to improve fire access into the western side of the passive recreation area from Point Richards Reserve.	
C	Provide maintenance and fire access along southern boundary including gated access into the active sport and recreation area. Coordinate with the proposed potential wetland works and location of stormwater outlets. Work closely with traditional owners in the implementation management of the reserve.	
I	Continue to maintain and improve environmental conditions within the passive recreation area in line with recommendations for the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Environmental Report October 2020.	

NEXT STEPS

8.1 NEXT STEPS

The following process outlines the next steps to be undertaken in progressing the Portarlinton Recreation Reserve Master Plan.

TASKS	DATES
Public Exhibition of Draft Master Plan	July-August 2021
Review of community feedback and preparation of Final Master Plan	August-September 2021
Endorsement of the Final Master Plan by the PCG, PWG and PRG	October 2021
Endorsement of Final Master Plan by Council	October-November 2021

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