



City of Greater Geelong

Myers Reserve Master Plan – Capacity Analysis

SBP ADVISORY – COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE – APRIL 2022



SBP Advisory
Your strategic business partner

The City of Greater Geelong has appointed SBP Advisory and The OCD to develop a Master Plan for Myers Reserve. The Master Plan will ensure:

- Understanding and alignment with the changing population, demographics, new plans, strategies, emerging needs and higher expectations of the community.
- A contemporary and holistic approach to planning for future sport and recreation design including planning for people and place (i.e. gender-neutral provision, positive ageing and access for all abilities).
- A user-friendly plan that sets clear direction for the development and infrastructure needs at Myers Reserve that are realistic and within resource constraints.

In developing the Capacity Analysis, the following activities have been undertaken:

- Initial briefing, Q&A with key Council staff.
- Two site visits by the consultant team.
- Consultations with Council staff members.
- Consultation with the Project Reference Group (PRG).
- Detailed review of Council and industry documents.

The purpose of the needs assessment is to determine whether current facilities will cater to anticipated future demand.

Please note, the key issues and opportunities for the site and the assessment of existing building structures against the Fit For Purpose (FFP) Assessment Framework will be reported in the Issues and Opportunities paper, as part of the key deliverables for Stage 3.

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Background and Planning Context

- Myers Reserve is located within a strategically important planning area of Geelong, which is expected to see significant population increases in the future.
- Myers Reserve is home to organised sports including AFL, cricket, lawn bowls, netball and soccer.
- The participation data provided from the tenant clubs at Myers Reserve has been reviewed to understand current demand for facilities:
 - Overall, participation across all sports (when considered in aggregate), has remained stable.
 - Soccer has the largest participant base, with over 400 players in 2021.
 - Netball participation has increased 2.6% over the last five years from 76 in 2017 to 78 in 2021.
 - Cricket participation has declined by 6.6% over the last five years from 151 in 2017 to 141 in 2021.
 - Australian Rules participation rates have fluctuated the most year-on-year, and have declined by 6.6%, from a high of 201 in 2018 to 157 in 2021.
 - Bowls participation saw a decline of 12 members in 2021.
- Extensive planning is being conducted across the industry, by each sport and at the local government level to identify community organised sports provision requirements for the future.



Master Plan Implications for further investigation

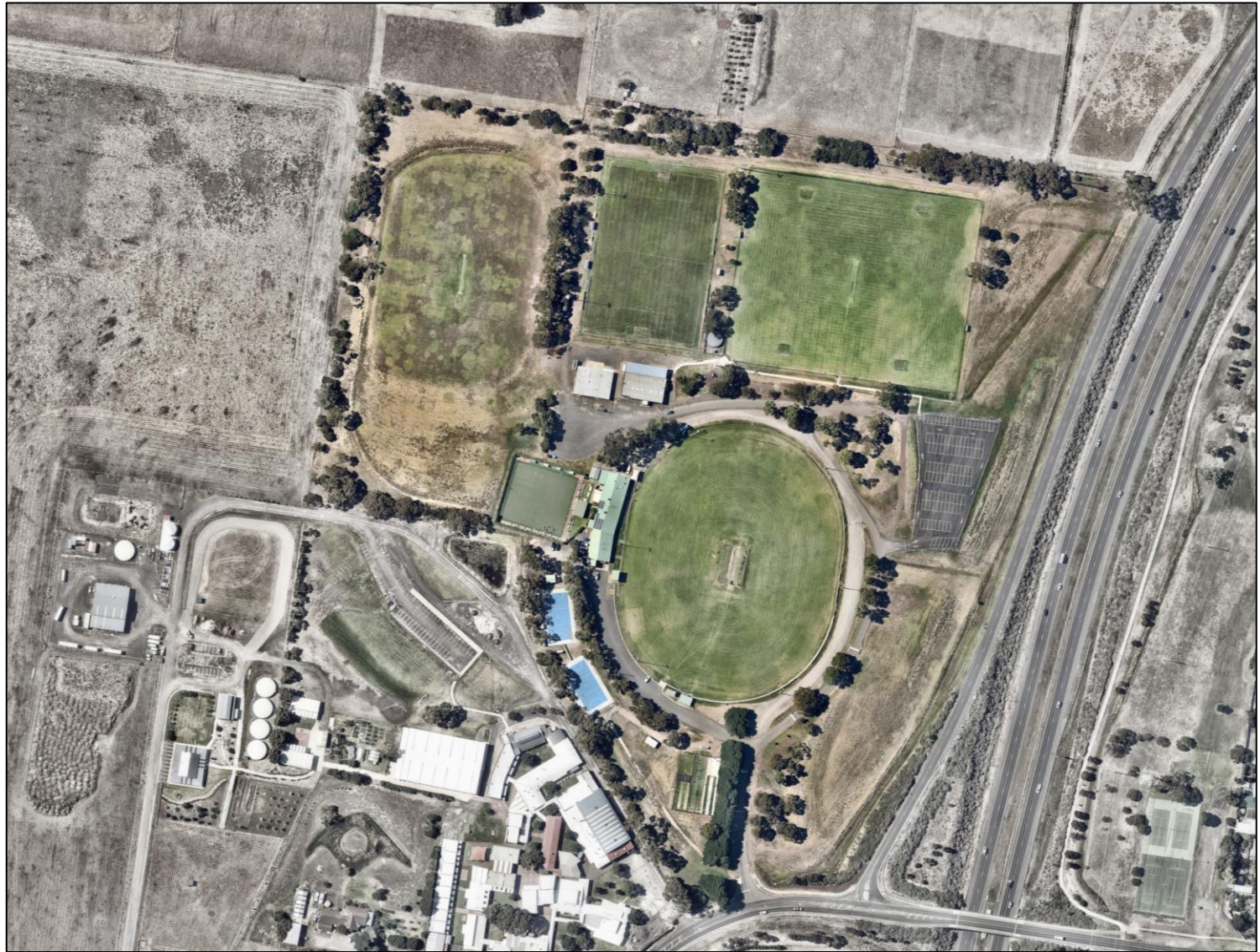
- The key macro trends impacting industry planning for organised sport reinforce the need for flexibility when planning for future community uses.
- The capacity of Myers Reserve to meet the requirements of the existing sporting user groups is almost certain to become a challenge in the future.
- The current membership and participation of AFL, Bowls and Netball clubs within Myers Reserve can be accommodated by the current facilities.
- The soccer fields and cricket fields are currently at capacity and likely to already be a significant constraint on:
 - The ability for these user groups to be able to grow/cater to any additional community demand.
 - The ability to maintain an appropriate playing surface condition without mandating reductions in weekly activity.

Situation and Context

Myers Reserve is situated on Wadawurrung Country, at 125 Creamery Road, Bell Post Hill.

It is a large reserve, with a total area of 16.5 hectares, and is a key asset within the northern suburbs sport and recreation network.

The Reserve is also located in proximity to the Northern and Western Geelong Growth Areas (NWGGA).



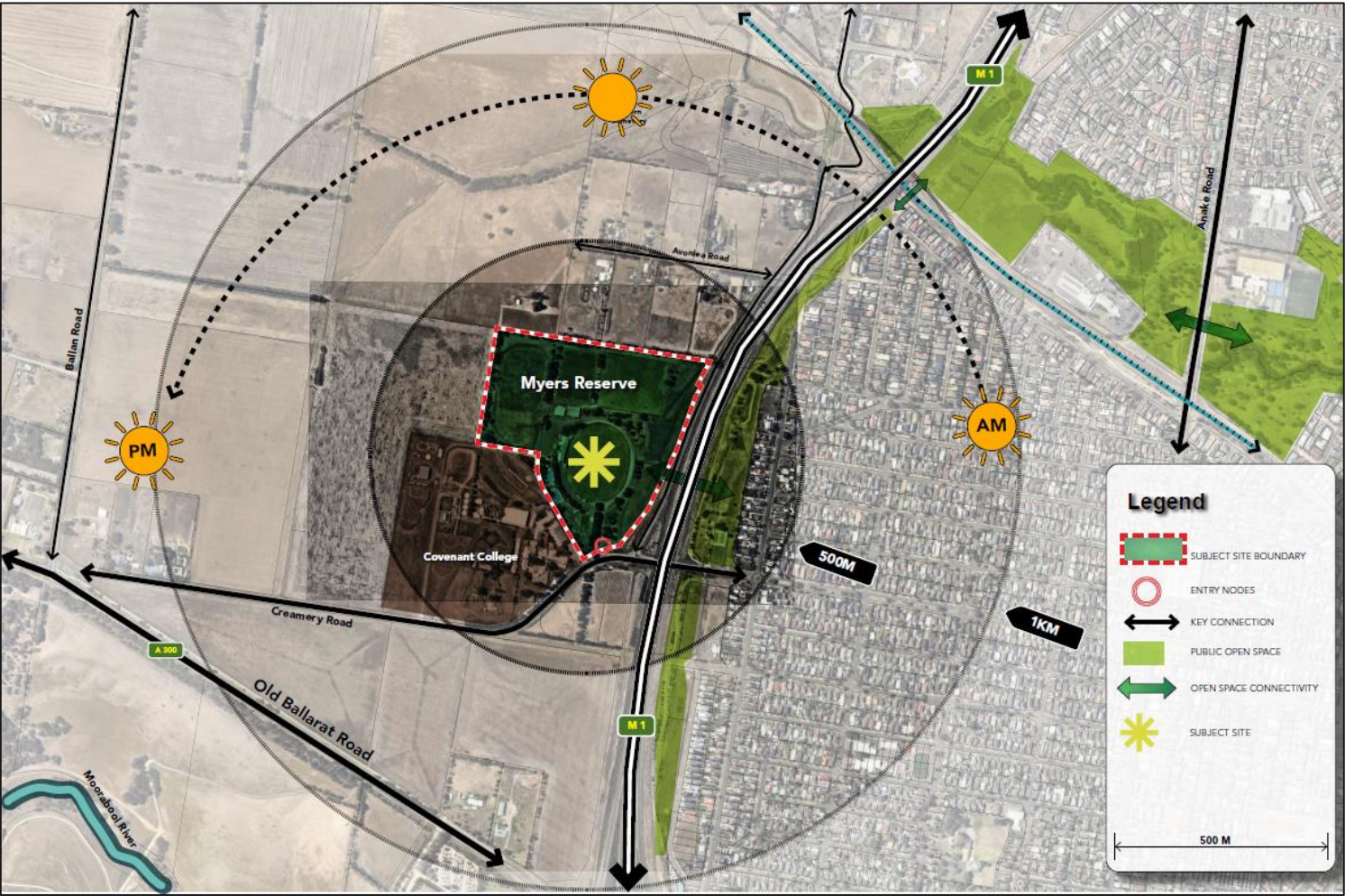
Precinct Overview

The reserve is located in what was traditionally a rural area, with most of the reserve zoned under as PPRZ – Public Park and Recreation Zone.

A small area (approximately 3.6ha) to the North-West of the Reserve is zoned as UGZ – Urban Growth Zone and the lots surrounding Myers Reserve are also designated as Urban Growth Zones.

Traffic and Accessibility

The main entrance to the site is located near the intersection of Bluestone Bridge Road and Creamery Road.



Facilities and Infrastructure

Myers Reserve comprises of the following key infrastructure elements (numbered in the image right):

1. Heritage trees
2. 2 x Cricket/Football fields, 2 x Netball courts with shared social rooms/change rooms
3. Cricket practice nets
4. 1 x Bowls green and social rooms
5. 3 x Soccer fields and change rooms
6. Soccer social room and public toilets
7. Play space
8. 2 x designated car parking areas

There is also a designated dog off leash area (the open space between main oval and Bluestone Bridge Road).

Myers Reserve is classified as a Community Level 1 Active Open Space Reserve and provides a variety of functions for the community.

The two playgrounds within the reserve are also classified as a Local Level.



Greater Geelong is the largest of Victoria’s ten regional cities and provides the most substantial contribution to non-metropolitan population growth in the state.

Knowledge of how the population and age structure of the community will change is important for analysing capacity of existing sport and recreation open space.

Between 2021 and 2036, the population in the City of Geelong is expected to grow by 92,030 residents or 34.21%, which is in line with Geelong’s Settlement Strategy, anticipating a 2.5% annual growth rate.

A local level demographic overview is provided on the following page.

Bell Post Hill

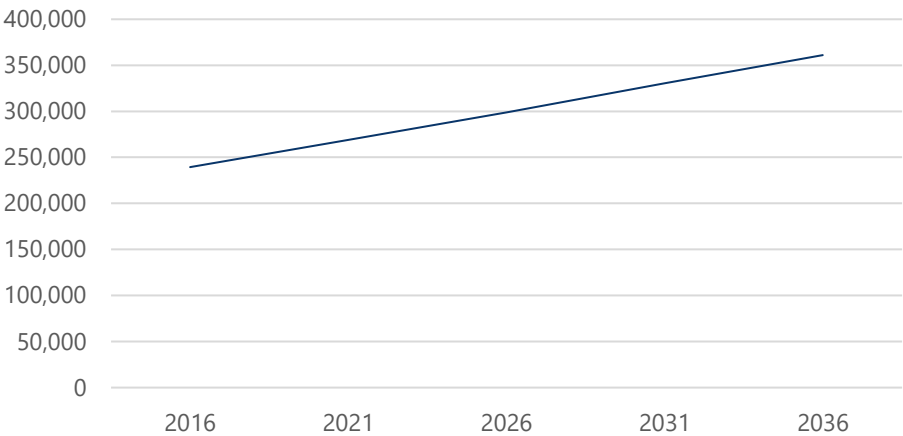
The population estimate for Bell Post Hill, which is the suburb where Myers Reserve is located, in 2022 is 5,225. The population in Bell Post Hill is expected to grow by 147% between 2022 and 2041.

Sources:

- 1. .idcommunity Demographic Resources (2021). City of Greater Geelong Population Summary.
- 2. Forecast.id

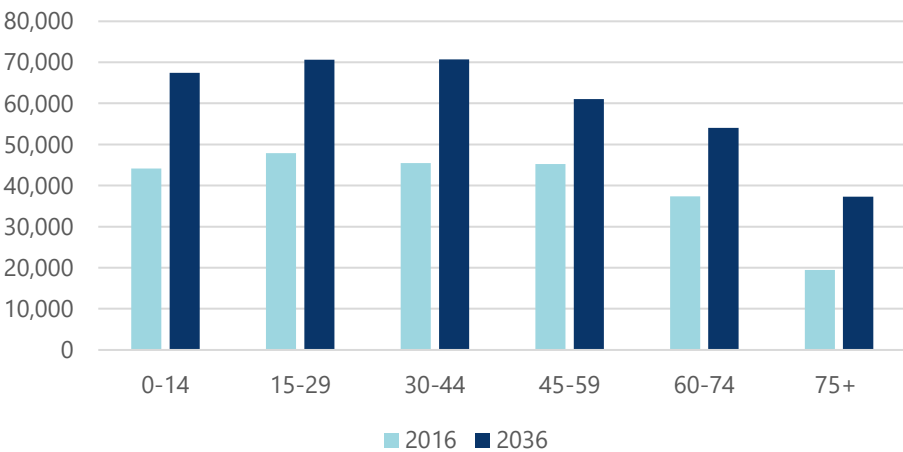
Geelong Forecast Population Change 2016-2036

Source: id.community



Geelong Forecast Population Change by Age 2016-2036

Source: Forecast.id



Myers Reserve has facilities for Australian Rules football, bowls, cricket, football (soccer) and netball. The main user groups at the reserve are:

- Bell Post Hill Bowls Club
- Bell Post Hill Cricket Club
- Bell Post Hill Football Netball Club
- Geelong Rangers Soccer & Sports Club
- Covenant College




The City of Greater Geelong participation rates for each sport and how these compare to state averages are provided to the right.

Comparison of the high-level participation rates for each of the sports played at Myers reserve show that participation rates are higher than state averages for Netball and Cricket, and lower than state averages for Football/Soccer, AFL and Bowls

High-level Provision Analysis (By Sport)

Sport	CoGG Participants	CoGG Participation Rate	State Ave. Participation Rate
Netball	4,555	1.77%	1.05%
Football/Soccer	4,310	1.4%	7.0%
Cricket	5,718	2.2%	1.3%
AFL	11,509	4.4%	6.3%
Bowls	7,252	0.1%	2.9%

Macro trends in consumer lifestyles and decision-making are important considerations when analysing the capacity of sport and recreation spaces. The following overview of key trends reinforces the need to allow for flexibility when planning for the needs of the community.

Key Trend or Issue	Overview	What does this mean for our facilities?
 <p>Increasingly Time Poor Society</p>	<p>Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, many people's lives were filled with work and social commitments. This drove the trend towards short, quick and fast sport participation products. For many, the pandemic gave back some of this time by eliminating the need to commute to the office and reducing social and sporting commitments on the weekends.</p>	<p>When planning facilities and infrastructure, considering the needs of organised sports, semi-structured sports, and passive recreation users will be important to ensure a flexible approach to facility planning.</p>
 <p>Highly competitive sport and recreation market</p>	<p>People are looking for more flexible sport and recreation choices that fit around their busy lifestyle. The rise of unstructured recreation activities have provided Australians with more choices for active pursuits than ever before. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic reduced access to organised sport, and across Victoria, entire seasons of community sport were cancelled. In the absence of organised sport, Australians searched for alternatives to be physically active – accelerating the trend toward non-organised, or social, sport.</p>	<p>Providing facilities and infrastructure that is flexible in its use and caters to multiple sports, activities and user groups will be important to service a changing profile of participants.</p>
 <p>Reduced interest in joining clubs and organised sport</p>	<p>While the trend away from organised sport participation to more recreational activities has accelerated during the pandemic, especially for women and older Australians – adult men were more likely to increase participation in socially distanced sports such as golf and surfing.</p>	<p>The traditional membership model is becoming less appealing to a new wave of participants. Working with clubs to provide fun, flexible and casual participation options will ensure that sports facilities can appeal to a broader market.</p>

State sporting associations are increasingly providing direction and advice to assist and guide local government future facility planning. The following overview outlines the current direction provided by the respective state sporting associations represented at Myers Reserve for the Geelong region.



AFL and Netball

The G21 and AFL Barwon *Towards 2030* Strategy provides facility provision projections to 2030 for both AFL and netball. The report identifies that by 2030, the City will require an additional 13 ovals and 9 netball courts to cater for the future population and increased demand for both sports.



Football/Soccer

FV's Facilities Strategy examines current and projected participation between the organic growth of 1.1% and a potential 5% growth rate, in conjunction with LGA and Australian Bureau of Statistics predicted population growth until 2026.

Based on the predicted growth in both population and participation, FV has also forecast the required number of pitches across Victoria. The City of Greater Geelong is projected to require 21 additional pitches in 2026 to meet projected participation demand based on a 5% growth rate.



Bowls

There are 18 bowls facilities within the City of Greater Geelong, including one regional facility (City of Geelong Bowls Club), two district and 15 local level facilities. Based on BV's facility hierarchy, the Bell Post Hill Bowls Club is classified as a local level facility.

Bowls Victoria's Facilities Strategy identifies that the Geelong region has an adequate supply of bowls facilities to meet future demand.



Cricket

Greater Geelong has one of the highest cricket participation rates in the State. The Cricket Victoria infrastructure Strategy identifies key facility priorities for the Region, including a more strategic approach to turf pitch provision, delivery and activation of a regional level Cricket and Community Centre and the utilisation of National Facilities Audit data to develop upgrade, renew and replace training net facilities and center-wicket synthetic pitches.

Participation

The participation data provided from these tenant clubs demonstrates consistent community activation of the reserve, including:

- Overall, participation across all sports (when considered in aggregate), has remained stable.
- Soccer has the largest participant base, with over 400 players in 2021.
- Netball participation has increased 2.6% over the last five years from 76 in 2017 to 78 in 2021.
- Cricket participation has declined by 6.6% over the last five years from 151 in 2017 to 141 in 2021.
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- Bowls participation saw a decline of 12 members in 2021.

Year-by-year Organised Sport Memberships

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total Change
Soccer	371	375	420	366	406	9.4%
AFL	166	201	131	121	157	-5.4%
Cricket	151	125	163	141	141	-6.6%
Bowls	97	95	95	93	81	-16.5%
Netball	76	75	77	74	78	2.6%
Total	861	871	886	795	863	0.2%

Capacity

There are many factors which influence the carrying capacity of sporting and recreation fields, rinks and courts, including but not limited to:

- Type of soil and surface;
- Level of drainage and irrigation;
- Amount of use (intensity and duration);
- Quality and regularity of maintenance, rest and rejuvenation works;
- Local climate and conditions;
- Community demand, organised participation rates and population rates.

The following table provides an indicative estimate of the number of team hours of field/court/rink usage for each of the organised sports at Myers reserve. It shows:

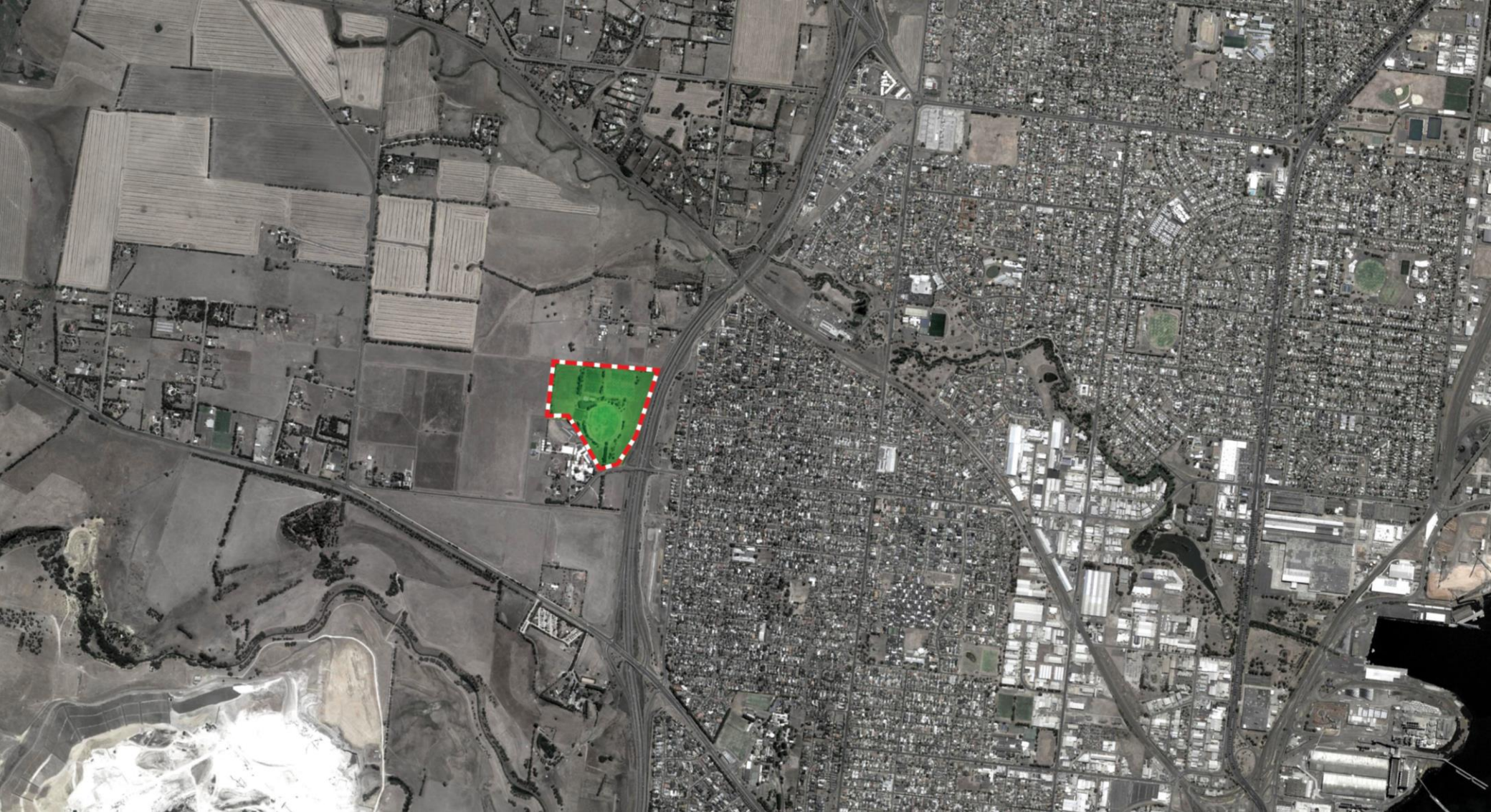
- The soccer fields and cricket fields are currently at capacity.
- Bowls is at moderate/high weekly usage.
- AFL and Netball are currently at low/moderate weekly usage.

The implications for the current capacity will be further explored in the Myers Reserve Masterplan project.

General weekly usage of sporting fields/rinks/courts at Myers Reserve

	Fields/Courts/ Rinks	2022 Members/ Players	2022 number of teams (estimated)	Hours of play/training per team per week (estimated)	Total weekly team usage hours (estimate)	Weekly team usage hours per field/court (estimate)	Seasonal usage
Soccer	3	406	29	3.5	102	34	High usage (>25 hours)
AFL	2	157	7	3.5	25	12	Low/moderate usage (<15 hours)
Cricket	2	141	11	6	65	33	High usage
Bowls	4	81	20	4.5	91	23	Moderate/high usage (15-25 hours)
Netball	2	78	9	3	26	13	Low/moderate usage

Note: This analysis does not include usage by the general community and Covenant College, which would also impact overall carrying capacity of the sportsfields.



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