

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

HAMLYN PARK RECREATION RESERVE MASTER PLAN

FINAL ENGAGEMENT REPORT
FEBRUARY 2023

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Introduction

The City of Greater Geelong recently invited the community and stakeholders to provide feedback on the Draft Hamlyn Park Reserve Master Plan.

The draft master plan was prepared following an extensive planning process that included a site and needs analysis, issues and opportunities report, an initial first round of community engagement and master plan design process. The first round of community engagement took place from 1 November to 3 December 2021 and involved online and face to face engagement opportunities with key stakeholders and community. This stage one consultation process asked the community about what they liked and what they would like to see improved at Hamlyn Park Reserve. The feedback from the stage 1 consultation was used to develop the draft master plan.

The draft master plan identified several priorities including development of compliant, fit for purpose change rooms to support netball participation, and upgrade of other existing sporting facilities, including the Geelong Ballroom Dance Club building. The plan also includes improvements to pedestrian safety, linkages throughout the reserve, improved play spaces and open spaces to provide greater active recreation and social recreation opportunities within the Hamlyn Park Recreation Reserve precinct.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report summaries the stage 2 community engagement process, which was to seek feedback on the draft master plan, and how that feedback has influenced the final plan.

This report consolidates the feedback received from the community through the engagement process. The report also highlights how this feedback has been incorporated into the final plan.

The information contained in this report is intended to ‘close the loop’ with community members and stakeholders that contributed to the engagement process.

It will also be used by Councillors who will be endorsing the final master plan.



Image 1: Main oval - Hamlyn Park Recreation Reserve



Image 2: Southern open space area - Hamlyn Park Recreation Reserve



Image 3: Main oval - Hamlyn Park Recreation Reserve

How we engaged

The stage 2 community engagement period was conducted over six weeks, from 28 October to 9 December in 2022.

Our core engagement was conducted via the City's Have Your Say online platform, which was supplemented by two face-to-face drop-in sessions.

The engagement was promoted via many channels, including-direct mailout, posters in the park, a media release, and the City's Facebook page. A targeted post on Facebook created a reach of over 6,500.

In total, there were over 1,000 views of the Have Your Say project page, which converted to 125 contributions. To encourage contributions, the platform offered a quick view of the draft master plan, quick and full survey options. This was also supported by phone and email contacts and the onsite drop-in sessions.



44 DAYS

of engagement
(Stage 2)



1048

Page Views on the
HYS platform



95

Number of people
that left feedback



1

print adverts
in local
newspapers

**SOCIAL
MEDIA**



6578

Reach/Impressions



125

Total Contributions



19

People following
the project



632

Advertising
pamphlets
delivered

50

Actions (Clicks, Reactions)

Engagement details

Have Your Say online platform

An online 'Have Your Say' (HYS) project page was designed to share relevant information to encourage community feedback.

A quick view map of the draft master plan was provided on the HYS page to allow respondents to easily view the plan.

Survey (online and hardcopy)

A quick poll and detailed survey was available to understand the level of support for the draft plan.

The survey was available on online and/or in hard copies if required.

The online survey was the core feedback tool provided targeting people with 10-15 minutes of available time. 111 contributions were made through the surveys. The survey sought feedback on the community's support for the plan, any issues with the plans, and any other feedback.

The survey included some information and about peoples use and connection to the park.

Email

The project manager's email address was provided on the Have Your Say Page and posters/flyers enabling people to provide feedback through a more direct method. One email was received providing feedback about the plan.

Phone calls

The project manager's phone number was provided on all posters and flyers that was distributed with the mailout. This enabled people who may not access to the internet to provide feedback. A call back option was also provided on the webpage for those wanting to speak to an officer at a suitable time. We received one phone call about the project.

Drop-in sessions

Two onsite drop-in sessions were held on 15 and 19 of October at the Reserve, to provide face-to-face engagement with our project team. Large format posters were displayed along with copies of the plan. Attendees were encouraged to discuss issues with our team and provide a sticky note comment on the maps about an area of interest. IPads were also provided for attendees to submit their feedback to our online tools. In total 14 individual comments were recorded.

Who we engaged

Hamlyn Park Reserve is an important community asset that is accessed by a wide range of community users for many activities. Due to this we targeted local residents and groups, but also provided opportunities for the broader community to contribute their views.

In total, 95 people participated in the Hamlyn Park Reserve Draft Master Plan (stage 2) engagement process.

Additionally, the Project Reference Group represented all the stakeholder groups actively leasing or licensing space in the park, as well as community representatives.

As a whole, the engagement reached a representative sample of the intended target audience and was a success in terms of its reach amongst the community.

SURVEY RESPONDENT BREAKDOWN

Of the survey respondents 57% said they are a local resident (including 47% from Hamlyn Heights), with 69% members belonging to a community organisation or sporting club and 53% regular users of the reserve. Remaining responses were occasional users of the reserve or other. This data provided some insights into the community and the fact that many people were involved in several groups along with being local residents.

The graph below (Figure 2) shows the spread of respondents from different age groups. Most respondents were between the ages of 35 and 49 years (26.51%), however there was a good representation of views from across all adult age groups.

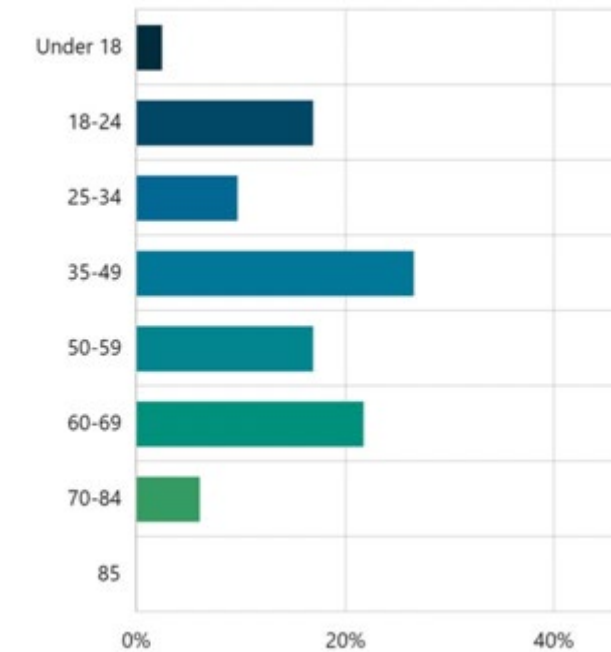


Figure 1: Survey respondent age profile

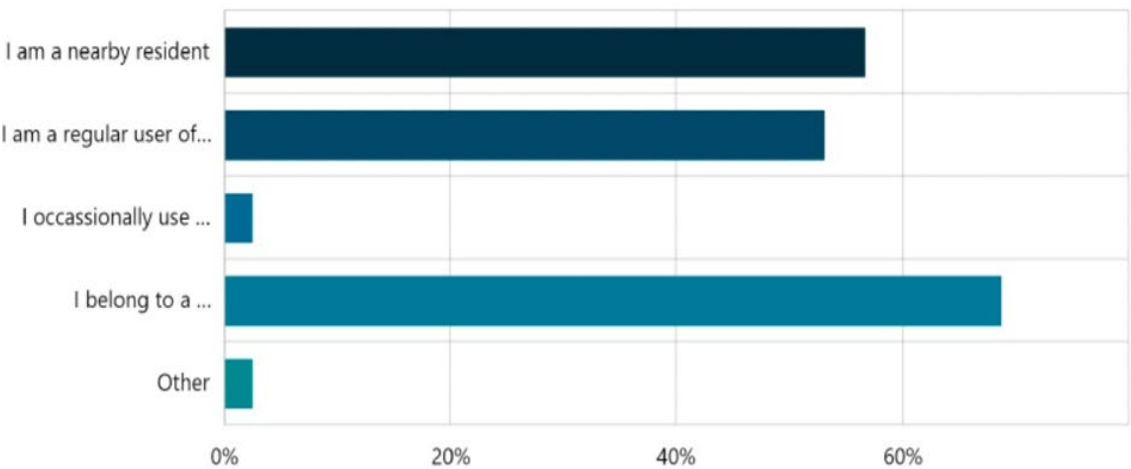


Figure 1: Survey respondents by type

What we heard

The level of engagement gives us a high degree of confidence that the feedback we received was representative of the community's views and aspirations for the park and, importantly, their views on the draft plan.

All feedback was analysed to identify key themes and specific issues that needed to be reflected on and, where appropriate, incorporated into the plan.

There has been a very spirited response to the draft master plan, with respondents from all the different feedback areas showing how passionately they care about their reserve. Even with some contention over specific zones in the reserve, there is significant support overall for upgrading and investing in this important community resource.

The first questions in the survey revealed feedback that was generally very positive with:

- 90% of survey respondents felt that the *draft* master plan reflects the future aspirations / needs of the park in the local area.
- 84% of survey respondents were satisfied with the draft master plan
- 52% of the respondents were very satisfied with the draft master plan.

The feedback was grouped into five key themes, ranked in terms of the level of feedback:

1. Upgrading sport and community facilities
2. Park amenity and passive recreation
3. Pedestrian safety, vehicle movement and car parking
4. Master plan delivery
5. Natural environment.

BREAKDOWN OF FINDINGS

Overall support of master plan

As Figure 4 shows, more than 80 per cent of survey respondents were satisfied with the draft master plan overall.

Of those not satisfied with the plan, 4 respondents were unsure, 7 somewhat dissatisfied and only 2 very dissatisfied.

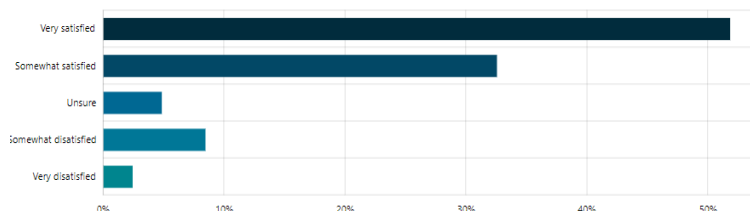


Figure 2: Survey respondent satisfaction with draft plan

Most respondents (90%) felt that the draft master plan reflects the future aspirations / needs of the park in the local area.

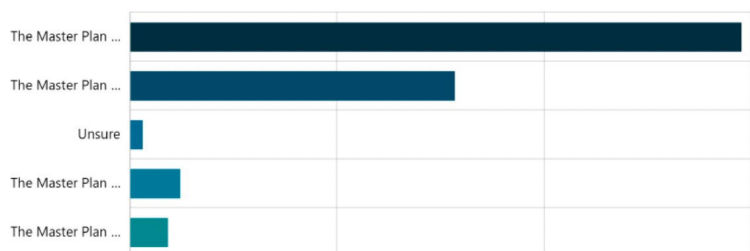


Figure 3: draft master plan reflective of future aspirations and needs

The draft master plan was also strongly supported through the quick poll with 97 percent of respondents supporting the plan.

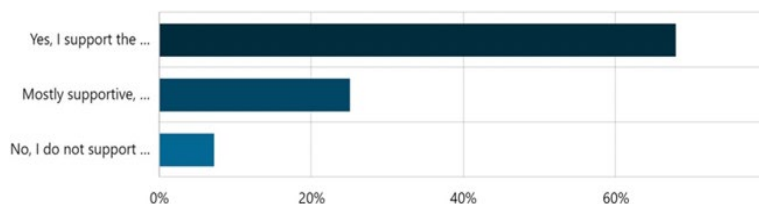


Figure 4: Quick Poll respondents supportive of draft plan

KEY THEMES

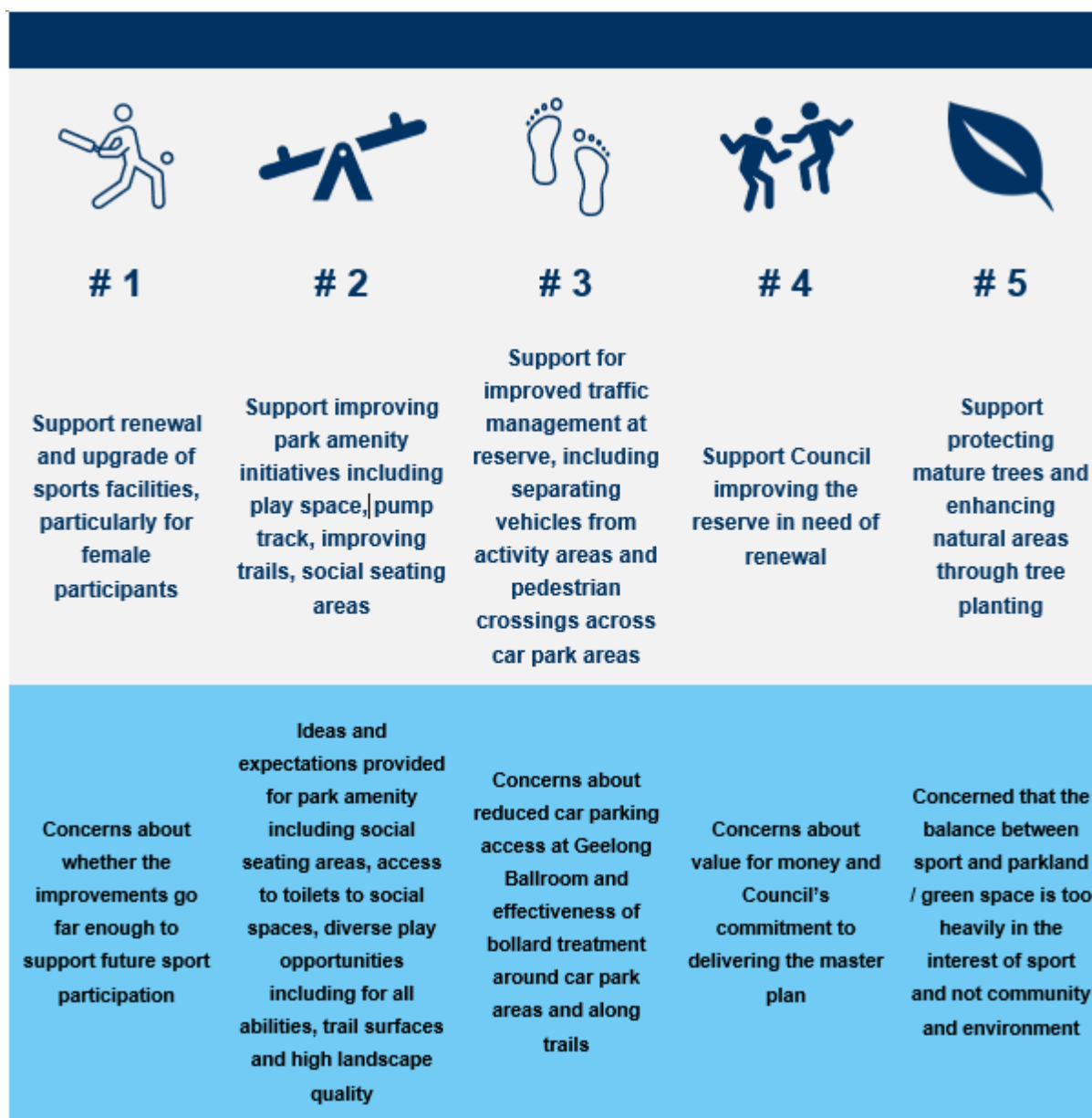
key themes have been determined based on the number of respondents who identified that theme as their prime interest.

Because there were so many comments in each key theme, sub-themes were created to capture the conversation across all feedback. The most common sub-themes are outlined in this report.

Respondents to the second round of consultation supported the improvements proposed to the reserve including increased activation and improving facilities, whilst protecting and enhancing the landscape character of the reserve.

There were concerns about the balance between sport and parkland / green space areas and whether the proposed improvements go far enough to support safe sport and passive participation with parkland and nature.

The infographic below shows the key themes raised during the community engagement process.



KEY THEME 1 – UPGRADING SPORT AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES



Image 4: Alex Rizun Pavilion

This theme generated the most significant amount of feedback from the engagement. There were 65 comments relating to the improvement of sport and community facilities within the reserve.

55 of the discussion points were supportive of improved facilities, particularly for female participants as well as general improvements to facilities within the reserve.

10 points of discussion identified concerns that the improvements did not go far enough including additional facilities, concern for the quality of improvements and they will not be adequate to facilitate all users.

Sub-Theme – Female Friendly Facilities

Of all the topics within 'Key Theme 1' the area that most people were concerned with was upgrading of sporting facilities to support female participation. There were 18 points of discussion on this sub-theme, making it the most discussed topic within 'Key Theme 1'. The feedback suggests that the community feel an overhaul of the facilities is needed, with particular interest in upgrading change rooms (especially women's change rooms) and creating facilities to be proud of.

Sub-Theme – Upgrading Sporting and Community Facilities

16 points of discussion supported the upgrade of sporting and community facilities in general with a further 3 comments specifically referring to improving the Geelong Ballroom. Concerns raised relating to this theme were

providing shelter for spectators (3) the need for larger sporting facilities (2) and the quality of improvements (1).

The feedback relating to this theme clearly indicates community support for improved facilities.

Sub-Theme – General Reserve improvements

There were 14 points of discussion supporting improving components of the reserve that are in need of renewal. A concern was raised that the improvements identified would not be enough to facilitate all users of the park. The feedback again indicates strong support for renewal and upgrade of the reserve.

Verbatim comments

"Finally have netball facilities close to the courts that everyone can enjoy and having some shelter from the weather. Necessary upgrade to support women's sport"

"The upgrade to the Ballroom is exciting. This is a great venue for dancers and needs to be retained. An upgrade will improve access for broader community groups"

"Many improvements that will enhance the park for users"

KEY THEME 2 – PARK AMENITY AND PASSIVE RECREATION

The second largest point of discussion identified relates to the improvement of park amenity and passive recreation opportunities. There were 47 comments relating to this theme, with 25 comments indicating support for the proposed improvements while 22 comments identified concerns with specific items relating to this theme.

Overall, the feedback received is supportive of improvements proposed to the passive open space aspects of the reserve. While concerns are raised with specific details of some improvements, the comments still indicated support but would like clarity on certain details.



Image 5: Passive Recreation Area

Sub-Theme – Improvement to play space and shared spaces

There were 19 points of discussion supporting the proposed improvements to playgrounds and shared spaces with 9 specifically referencing the playground improvements and 6 identifying improvements to the pump track.

The concerns raised relating to the proposed spaces included the following: Request for a public toilet and BBQ facilities in the southern area of the reserve (3), flooding concerns with northern playground proposal (2), seeking a larger playground (2), more seats and tables (2), the inclusion of the additional playground (1), play spaces for people with disabilities (1), impact on neighbours to the proposed northern playground (1), Seek inclusion of water play (1), seek drinking stations and sheltered areas near plays paces (1), Seek all weather play space (1), access to an outdoor basketball court (2), include a soccer minifield (1) and facilities for dog walkers (1).

It was clear in the feedback that many respondents are supportive of improvements to the play spaces and shared passive areas with concerns generally relating to the level of upgrade with some concerns about the additional northern play space.

Sub-Theme – Walking trails

A clear sub theme relating to the improvement of passive open space was the improvement of the trail network within and around the reserve. This theme is also picked up again in theme 3 regarding traffic management and vehicle safety.

13 responses relate to the improvement of the reserve's pathways. 9 comments were supportive of the proposed

improvements while the 4 concerns raised seek the improvement of the trails identify specific improvements they would like to see, these are; retaining the existing diagonal path through the northern open space (2), improving paths for people with disabilities (1) and improvements to the shared trail surface (1).

“Long overdue upgrade of facilities and infrastructure to all of this area to provide much more equitable and necessary set up for all participants and community”

“The positive impact it will have on our community and the children in it”

KEY THEME 3 – PEDESTRIAN SAFETY, VEHICLE MOVEMENT AND CAR PARKING



Image 6: Entry way and pedestrian crossing

20 responses provided feedback that centred around pedestrian safety, vehicle movement within the reserve and car parking.

The responses clearly support improvements to pedestrian safety and vehicle movement, however,

question the detail of the proposals. Comments included; Pedestrian safety around the reserve needs to be improved (3), remove vehicle access from green space and Tom McKean trail (1), improve parking along Calvert Street side of the oval (1), concern around access and amount of parking (1), concern about hoon behaviour in proposed northern play space car park (2), seek speed humps on Bayview Parade (1).

Sub-Theme – Ballroom car parking

10 responses identified concerns about the reduction in parking outside of the Geelong ballroom building to create the pedestrian friendly zone between the ballroom and Alex Rizun Pavilion. The comments centred around there not being enough car parking available for ballroom users and safe access for people with limited mobility and children.

“Much needed parking between The Ballroom and Cricket Club will be lost. Disabled, senior citizens and parents with children really benefit when they can park so close to the Ballroom. When these facilities are operating at the same time, parking is at a premium and the pedestrian movement can be a concern with traffic and people.”

KEY THEME 4 – MASTER PLAN DELIVERY

17 responses related to the City’s delivery of the master plan. These responses clearly indicate the community’s desire for Council to deliver on the master plan priorities to improve the health and wellbeing of residents for the Hamlyn Heights area.

Of the 17 responses, 12 sought for Council to commit funding to the delivery of the master plan. Other comments included a concern for value for money of the master plan and the City’s ability to deliver.

“My major concern is being supported by Council and local political parties to make this happen. We are a growing close-knit club and all we need is the necessary support to ensure this plan is executed”



Image 7: Tom McKean trail

KEY THEME 5 – NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

This theme relates to the protection and enhancement of green spaces and tree canopy at Hamlyn Park Reserve. The theme clearly outlines the balance of protecting and enhancing the important environmental values of the reserve while also improving sport and community facilities on an active sports reserve.

There were 12 discussion points around this theme with 5 responses supportive of the master plan’s proposed improvements to green spaces, landscaping and additional tree planting.

Alternatively, 7 responses indicated that they felt the master plan did not go far enough to increase the reserves environmental values and would like to see further increase green space and planting. They also felt that the plan is too focused on sporting infrastructure.

It is clear through the community consultation that a balance between environmental protection and enhancement, and the improvement of sporting facilities to meet modern standards and expectations is required. The mixed responses received in relation to this theme appears to indicate the master plan is on the right track to achieve that balance.

“It acknowledges the established mature trees and value of open spaces, along with existing sports/community facilities and their need to be modernised”

“The Planned upgrade appears heavily biased toward the interests of the sporting groups and the needs of the WHC”



Image 8: Southern open space area

How we are responding

The key purpose of seeking community input is to ensure the master plan reflects the needs and aspirations of the community.

The project team reviewed and considered all feedback and key themes in preparation of the final plan, incorporating the following amendments.



KEY THEME 1 – UPGRADING SPORT AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The majority of feedback provided was clearly supportive of the proposed upgrades to facilities as shown in the master plan with further consultation with key users to continue during the development of the projects.

No changes have been made to the master plan.



KEY THEME 2 – PARK AMENITY AND PASSIVE RECREATION

Feedback provided was generally supportive of the proposals for the passive open space elements of the reserve. In relation to some of the concerns raised in this theme the master plan identifies:

- Improvement of walking trails
- Enhanced play space in the north with drink stations, sheltered seating and an outdoor multi-use court
- Improved seating, landscaping, planting and surface to southern open space/play space area
- Bollard treatment to remove vehicle access from open space areas
- Open space kick about area

In addition, the following changes have been made to the plan:

- Include reference to provision of a BBQ in northern play space proposal
- Review drainage in northern area as part of play space development and open space improvement

- Consider nature based improvements to the southern playground and open space area that acknowledges the park's connection to the Wadawurrung People as Traditional Owners of the land, as well as the importance of the local environment, to create a distinct and welcoming pedestrian entrance into the southern section of the reserve.
- Note improvement of access and surface conditions as per the City's 'Shared Trails Master Plan as part of pathway improvements and investigate drainage improvements
- Identify the diagonal pathway through the northern open space section on the master plan.



KEY THEME 3 – PEDESTRIAN SAFETY, VEHICLE MOVEMENT AND CAR PARKING

Community feedback supported improvements to pedestrian safety and vehicle movement however, feedback suggested further detail was required and a review of the pedestrian area between the Geelong Ballroom building and Alex Rizun Pavilion. The following changes have been made to the master plan:

- Clearly indicate bollard treatments to remove vehicles from open space areas and Tom McKean Trail and provide access for authorised vehicles
- Identify raised and signed pedestrian crossing where pathways intersect with the car park/road
- Reduce size of proposed new north car park, note existing gate to be retained to reduce antisocial behaviour.
- Investigate car parking improvement on east side of main oval
- Investigate installation of speed humps on Bayview Parade to the south of the reserve.
- Reduce size of pedestrian zone between the Geelong Ballroom building and Alex Rizun pavilion and ensure accessible car parks are suitably located outside of the ballroom building.
- Include security lighting to light high use car parks.



KEY THEME 4 – MASTER PLAN DELIVERY

There are no changes to the master plan required from this feedback. This report notes the community's desire for investment into improvements to facilities and open space at Hamlyn Park.



KEY THEME 5 – NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Feedback identified the need to balance protecting and enhancing the important environmental values of the reserve while also improving sport and community facilities on an active sports reserve.

While the master plan identifies improved landscaping and tree planting in both the northern and southern areas of the reserve, as well as along the Tom McKean trail, the following changes have been made to the master plan:

- Reduction of proposed car park in northern section of the reserve
- Clearly indicate additional tree planting along with landscaping around the northern passive open space and play space area.
- Note the detailed design of the play space should incorporate natural elements where possible and develop natural shaded areas through tree planting.
- The landscape improvement plan should also consider the opportunity to recognise the parks cultural significance and promote reconciliation.

Conclusion

All feedback and proposed responses have been discussed with individual stakeholder groups and the Project Reference Group and incorporated into the final master plan.

Both the updated plan and this report will be tabled for discussion and endorsement at the May 2023 Council meeting.