

## 2.2 DRAFT MOUNT WAVERLEY RESERVE MASTERPLAN (JG)

Responsible Director: Russell Hopkins

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

*That Council:*

1. *Note the draft Mount Waverley Reserve Masterplan (Attachment A) is underpinned by extensive planning work and consultation as detailed in:
  - Background Report (Attachment B)
  - Integrated Site Plan (Attachment C)
  - Consultation and Engagement Report (Attachment D).*
2. *Approve the draft Mount Waverley Reserve Masterplan as presented in Attachment A for public exhibition on Council's website and invite community feedback via written submissions.*
3. *Note that following the public exhibition period of the draft Mount Waverley Reserve Masterplan, the masterplan will be revised where necessary, and a final masterplan subsequently presented to Council for consideration.*
4. *Note that the Mount Waverley Reserve site is made of multiple parcels of land and agree that the further design and planning work for the site should include a plan to consolidate these parcels of land.*
5. *Note that some of the parcels of land referred to in item 5 above have the legal status of a Road and that a further report to Council will discuss commencing the statutory procedures pursuant to Sections 207A and 223 of the Local Government Act 1989 to remove the Road status as part of the plan of consolidation process.*

**INTRODUCTION**

This report provides an overview of the Mount Waverley Reserve masterplanning process and seeks Council approval to publicly exhibit the draft masterplan for community feedback.

**BACKGROUND**

In 2020, on the back of strong advocacy from the tenant clubs, Council received a \$150,000 grant from the State Government to develop a masterplan for Mount Waverley Reserve, 8-26 Charles Street, Mount Waverley.

The reserve is owned by Monash Council and is zoned public park and recreation zone (PPRZ).

**Existing Facilities & Users**

The reserve features include:

- a public asphalt tennis court
- tennis hit-up wall
- four en-tout-cas tennis courts and clubroom
- basketball half court
- sports oval and pavilion
- turf centre wicket (B grade) and turf and synthetic practice nets
- local playground
- off-street car park
- off-lead dog area.

Current tenants of the reserve include:

- Waverley Community Learning Centre (Fleet Street Neighbourhood House)
- Mount Waverley Cricket Club
- Waverley Blues Football Club
- Mount Waverley Tennis Club

The masterplan is to be delivered in *five* key stages:

- *Stage 1:* Background Research and Needs Assessment - Information Gathering, Research and Literature Review
- *Stage 2:* Integrated Site Plan (ISP) & Consultation – ISP development, Stakeholder Engagement and Community Consultation
- *Stage 3:* Development Options – Strategic analysis of site issues and opportunities and development of a preferred functional layout
- *Stage 4:* Draft Masterplan – development of a draft masterplan for the study area including concept layout for public exhibition
- *Stage 5:* Final Master Plan - Final masterplan presented to Council (inclusive of business case and cost estimates) for endorsement.

Stages 1-4 have now been completed and a draft masterplan is presented to Council for consideration and approval for public exhibition.

**PURPOSE/DISCUSSION**

The draft masterplan has been developed for Council approval in Attachment A. The draft masterplan has been directly informed by:

- Research evidence and demonstrated community needs e.g. local demographics, forecasted population growth, trends in sport and active recreation, current Council policy and strategy frameworks, and sport and infrastructure provision standards.

Refer to **Attachment B - Background Report**

- Site conditions, accessibility and sustainability, including reserve issues and opportunities, strategic options analysis and preferred functional layout.

Refer to **Attachment C – Integrated Site Plan**

- Community survey findings, community drop-in session feedback and discussions with key internal and external stakeholders.

Refer **Attachment D – Consultation and Engagement Report**

**Key Issues****1. The Site and Existing Services**

Mount Waverley Reserve is a single oval reserve with limited open space situated in a local residential setting. On game days, off-street car parking is at capacity and cars park along the adjoining residential streets.

Consultation with Melbourne Water Corporation to ascertain their plans for the adjacent reservoir at 426-476 High Street Road has confirmed there is no opportunity to expand the footprint of the reserve.

The site is also made up of various parcels of land, including land that has the status of a road. There are existing underground services along the northern and eastern boundaries of Mount Waverley Reserve as well as through other parts of the reserve. The apportionment is shown on the Plan of Title Compilation and underground services are detailed in Section 2.05 Land Title (p. 21) of the Integrated Site Plan (Attachment C).

Planning for the future development of the site would need to include liaison with the respective authorities to ascertain which service infrastructure will remain in place or may need relocating to achieve the preferred design of the site. It is recommended that a plan of consolidation is prepared to consolidate the multiple land parcels that make up the site and create easements in favour of the respective service authorities to protect their assets. This process would also include commencing the statutory process to remove the road status from the roads shown as Gwynne Street, Fleet Street, Regent Street and Hotham Street.

The creation of easements over service authority assets potentially limits the nature, scale and location of future development opportunities within the reserve.

## 2. Trends in sport and recreation

Active recreation and sport are major contributors to overall levels of physical activity. Sport involves structured, competitive activity, while active recreation can be defined as leisure time physical activity undertaken outside of structured, competitive sport. Active recreation makes up 67 per cent and sport 18 per cent of the total time spent on discretionary physical activity.<sup>1</sup>

Broadly speaking, participation in organised sport is decreasing whilst participation in active recreation is increasing. The decrease in sport participation is partially made up by increased participation in active recreation. Participation levels among women are significantly higher than men in non-competitive activities.<sup>1</sup>

In Monash, this has been evidenced in Australian Rules Football where the number of teams has dropped by 26% since 2018.

Year	AFL team numbers	Percentage Change
2018	115	
2019	103	↓ 13% from 2018
2020	n/a*	
2021	91	↓ 26% from 2018

\* AFL season impacted by COVID-19

Team numbers for the seasonal tenant clubs, Mount Waverley Cricket Club (MWCC) and Waverley Blues Football Club (WBFC), have remained comparatively stable.

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
<b>MWCC</b>	22	24	26	29	32	30	34
<b>WBFC</b>	13	14	15	15	13	-*	11

\* AFL season impacted by COVID-19

## 3. Long-term sustainability

The club-operated tennis facility at Mount Waverley Reserve has four undersized en-tout-cas courts with 2.5 courts lit. There is no room to expand the existing courts due to the minimal buffer (<1m) between the courts and the adjacent residential properties.

An independent Tennis Facility Audit and Condition Report (2018) confirmed all the existing club-operated courts and enclosures are non-compliant and too small to meet current standards. The report also noted that existing infrastructure, such as steps and light towers, make this problem worse (i.e. impact the run-off zone) and the tennis coach raised this as a concern when coaching youths who play at a high standard.

<sup>1</sup> [Active Victoria Strategic Framework for Sport and Recreation in Victoria 2017-2021](#)

The Monash Tennis Plan (2021) recommends a minimum of 6 courts for sustainable clubs. Existing spatial constraints make it near impossible to develop 6 compliant courts at Mount Waverley Reserve without severely impacting the functionality, accessibility and local amenity, and significantly reducing the amount of public open space available in the reserve.

As a result, a club-operated tennis facility is not considered strategically sustainable at this site over the longer-term. The installation of new infrastructure (such as additional light towers) in the run-off zones on the existing courts is also not supported. It is recommended that any investment in club tennis at Mount Waverley Reserve would be better spent supporting the club's relocation to a new site in accordance with the principles and priorities detailed in the Monash Tennis Plan (2021).

Officers have met several times with tennis club representatives to discuss the long-term sustainability of tennis at the reserve, for example:

- 16 September 2020 – meeting held to discuss the implications of Monash Tennis Plan 2021 and the findings of the Mount Waverley Tennis Facility Audit & Condition Report 2018
- 18 December 2020 – meeting held to present the preliminary findings of the options analysis and present the preferred functional layout, which due to site constraints, identified the reserve could not accommodate 6 compliant courts. At this meeting, a committee member shared that the club had had preliminary conversations with Essex Heights Tennis Club regarding a possible co-location or merger.

Understandably the tennis club wants some guarantees around their future. Officers have reassured the club representatives that the club would not be 'forced' to relocate or be left without a home, but from longer-term strategic perspective, tennis was not considered sustainable at this site.

It is recommended officers continue to assist and support the Mount Waverley Tennis Club to identify possible future relocation and/or merger opportunities with the view to facilitating an acceptable outcome, with the understanding that the club will continue to operate from Mount Waverley Reserve until a feasible option is identified.

#### **4. Club Feedback**

Further meetings with all clubs were held on the 10 March and 21 April 2021 to discuss the independent findings, including the options analysis and the preferred functional design option. At these meetings the clubs expressed an understanding of the strategic planning framework and general support for the rationale and options presented, including the suggested improvements for informal community use of the reserve. However, the clubs have also indicated they were underwhelmed with the scale and scope

of the options considered and presented. The clubs were particularly disappointed that the findings and preferred layout did not propose:

- **New pavilion** – a larger new contemporary pavilion facility developed e.g. double-storey community facility with expanded social space (200+) and undercover spectator viewing
- **Cricket nets** - additional synthetic and turf cricket practice wickets (in addition to possible alternative training venues)
- **Tennis Club Facilities** - an integrated solution for tennis with the long-term retention of the tennis club on-site.

The clubs' feedback was acknowledged and has been clearly presented in this report and in Attachment D – Consultation and Engagement Report for Council consideration.

More recently, the clubs have acknowledged that a more modest extension to or renovation of the existing pavilion may meet their needs.

### ***5. Intensification of Use***

An intensification of structured (i.e. organised sport) use of the reserve will need to be considerate of the turf carrying capacity of the surface to ensure it is not overused.

It is acknowledged that the tenant football and cricket clubs are relatively strong, vibrant and well-run clubs. The Mount Waverley Cricket Club is one of our largest with 34 registered teams last season (2020/21), and the Waverley Blues Football Club has 11 registered team this season (2021).

At Mount Waverley Reserve, the existing cricket practice nets (3 synthetic wickets and 6 turf practice strips) are compromised by significant trees that cause undesirable shading, leaf litter and impact the turf wicket surface and do not run in a true north-south direction. The draft masterplan recommends new cricket nets be developed north-south on land freed up by the future possible relocation of the tennis club.

Due to the nature of cricket training and practice, to accommodate current team numbers, the cricket club requires access to additional cricket practice facilities at alternate venues. Building more practice nets on a site that is already heavily constrained is not considered a feasible solution. It is important to note that officers have been working with the Mount Waverley Cricket Club to identify suitable alternate venues with adequate cricket facilities to meet demand e.g. officers have identified Wellington Reserve as a possibility – with three synthetic nets for training, Mount Waverley Cricket Clubs could utilise this reserve Monday to Friday for training and match play on Friday pm, Saturday am, and Sunday am.

The draft masterplan has also been considerate of the active recreation needs of the local community (i.e. those who do not participate in organised sport or sports club activities) by recommending the development of a

circuit path, multi-sport hard court, fitness equipment, barbeques, picnic shelter and public toilet.

### **6. Pavilion redevelopment**

The existing pavilion at Mount Waverley Reserve generally meets AFL standards and Council's service provision standards. The existing pavilion has a 148m<sup>2</sup> social room – this size exceeds current AFL local facility standards (100m<sup>2</sup> social room) and Council's Active Reserve Facility Hierarchy standard for an A grade pavilion (120m<sup>2</sup> social room).

The Mount Waverley Reserve pavilion is not listed in any forward capital plan, nor is it considered a priority for redevelopment under Council's Capital Works Priorities Framework (2018) and currently sits thirteen in Council's priority order for new pavilions. This project has not been flagged in Council's long-term capital works program nor has any funding been allocated to commence design work necessary to meet grant funding conditions.

In Council's Active Reserve Facility Hierarchy (2018), the Mount Waverley Reserve Pavilion is classified as an A grade pavilion based on its size. The sportsground is classified as a B grade surface which is deemed adequate based on level of sport being played (EFL div. 3 & 4, local/district cricket) and there being only a single oval.

Whilst the draft masterplan does not support the development of a new 2 storey pavilion with capacity to cater for 200+ spectators, it is recommended the existing pavilion be redeveloped and the footprint expanded and the interior partially reworked to enable:

- Female and family friendly amenities upgrade
- Separate unisex umpires change and amenities
- Improved spectator viewing area
- Consider improvements to functionality and flexibility with the view to enhancing social space where appropriate and feasible to do so e.g. operable walls to open change rooms into extended social space
- Interior refurbishment and functionality improvements
- Additional storage.

Council's current policy position does not support the funding of gyms and/or bars in Council sports pavilions.

An opportunity exists to advance the pavilion priority for upgrade if external funding is secured.

### **7. Local Amenity Considerations**

The draft masterplan has been mindful of the residential setting of the reserve and the potential impact of noise, light and traffic on neighbouring properties.

The proximity of the club-operated courts to the adjacent residential properties is not appropriate (i.e. minimal buffer zone <1m). The tennis club's request for new floodlights on their unlit courts would enable play to extend into the evenings and generate additional light spill impacting residents. It is unlikely that current standards for sports lighting and managing spill can be achieved here in accordance with AS 4282-1997 Control of the obtrusive effects of outdoor lighting.

### **8. Council Policy and Strategy Frameworks**

The draft masterplan is consistent with existing Council policy and strategy frameworks including:

- Active Reserve Facility Hierarchy 2018
- Tennis Facility Audit and Condition Report (2018)
- Monash Tennis Plan (May 2021)
- Draft Public Toilet strategy (2021)
- Monash Sports Floodlighting Policy (2021)
- Draft Cricket Wicket Policy (2021)
- Draft Cricket Discussion Paper (2021)
- Draft Active Recreation Opportunities Strategy (in development).

Whilst the clubs acknowledge their aspirations for the reserve exceed Council's current policy and strategy frameworks, they are confident they can secure funding from other levels of government for a new pavilion with expanded social and spectator viewing. If external funding was secured, Council would likely be required to match funding dollar for dollar and as previously mentioned, this pavilion is not listed in any forward capital plan, nor is it considered a priority for redevelopment.

It is not recommended Council exceed its adopted facility provision standards as this would set a precedent for facility development beyond Council's current policy framework. The draft masterplan recommends a suite of reserve improvements considered appropriate for the site and in accordance with the level of sport being played. In stating this, officers are committed to working with the clubs to obtain the best possible outcomes within our policy and strategy frameworks.

### **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The draft masterplan and associated development priorities are cognisant of and align with key government and State Sporting Association (SSA) strategies and plans including but not necessarily limited to:

- Active Victoria Framework
- Safe and Strong - A Victorian Gender Equality Policy
- SRV Female Friendly Sports Infrastructure Guidelines
- AFL Facilities Guidelines
- Cricket Australia Community Cricket Facility Guidelines
- Victorian Cricket Infrastructure Strategy 2018-28
- Tennis Victoria Strategic Plan to 2020
- AFL Eastern Region Football Strategic Business Plan 2019-2023

- Safe and Strong - A Victorian Gender Equality Policy

Relevant Council strategies and plans that impact on this project include:

- Council Plan 2017-2021
- A Healthy and Resilient Monash: Integrated Plan 2017-2021
- Monash Tennis Plan 2021
- Monash Playground and Playspace Strategy 2020
- Active Reserves Facility Hierarchy 2018
- Active Monash Capital Works Prioritisation Framework 2018
- Asset Management Strategy
- Monash Open Space Strategy 2018
- Draft Active Recreation Opportunities Strategy (in development).

### ***SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

The recommendations in the draft masterplan, when implemented, will enhance social connectiveness and community wellbeing by providing improved and accessible amenities and facilities at the reserve.

### ***HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS***

No human rights implications inform this proposal.

### ***FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

The development of the draft masterplan was funded through a 2020/21 State Government (DJPR) Local Sports grant of \$150,000 excl. GST.

### ***Implementation Plan***

The draft masterplan is aspirational, and implementation of the recommended works packages are subject to Council budget approval and/or external funding, detailed design and community consultation.

The preliminary and indicative capital costs (excluding GST) for recommendations in the draft masterplan are provided in *Section 16 Indicative Costs and Staged Implementation* (Attachment A, p. 42) and summarised in Table 1:

**Table 1: Draft Masterplan - Indicative Costs and Staged Implementation**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Indicative cost: planning/ design</b>	<b>Indicative cost: construction</b>	<b>Total indicative cost: planning/design &amp; construction</b>
<b>Package 1:</b> Preliminary planning & design	\$205,000	-	\$205,000
<b>Package 2:</b> Oval upgrades	-	\$930,000	\$930,000
<b>Package 3:</b> Main pavilion upgrade	\$45,000	\$3,026,400	\$3,071,400
<b>Package 4:</b> Play space destination and supporting elements	\$100,000	\$440,000	\$540,000
<b>Package 5:</b> Tennis club relocation (including new cricket nets)	\$40,000	\$2,104,000	\$2,144,000
<b>Package 6:</b> Community activity hub (including multi-purpose hard court and outdoor fitness equipment)	-	\$480,000	\$480,000
<b>Total indicative cost</b>	<b>\$390,000</b>	<b>\$6,980,400</b>	<b>\$7,370,400</b>

These indicative costs will be verified by an independent Quantity Surveyor (cost plan A) in Stage 5 and updated in the final masterplan presented to Council.

**GENDER****IMPACT****ASSESSMENT**

A full gender impact assessment was not conducted, because the bulk of this work was undertaken prior to the commencement of the Gender Equality Act 2020. However, in undertaking the research and in the background report, as well as in the final Business Case, gender has been considered. For example, it has been acknowledged that the participation of women and girls in club sport is lower than that of men and boys, and seeks to address this through upgraded 'female friendly' facilities in the pavilion. This work also acknowledges that different people have different needs from the reserve not just because of gender but also intersecting characteristics. For example, through the provision of upgraded play spaces, public toilets, and pathways, the reserve will be more accessible to children and their parents and carers, as well as people with mobility issues or a disability.

While the recommended removal of the tennis club (with 46 female players) to accommodate more cricket nets (20 female players) may seem to be of greater benefit to male users of the reserve, it is understood that a) the tennis club will be relocated and b) this will allow the introduction of the community activity hub. This hub will provide greater opportunities for informal physical activity (such as through walking paths, fitness facilities and hit up walls) and social gathering, which will also be beneficial to people (often including women) who want to stay active but do not wish to take part in formal sport. The consideration of new lighting and ensuring Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles are used is also

important for the perception of safety, which is often a barrier to women undertaking physical activity.

The background reports note that the majority of respondents to the survey (over 75%) were male; however female voices were sought out and included in the consultation through direct meetings. Where objectives for future packages include more stakeholder engagement (such as in package 1), it will be important to ensure that women's voices are heard at this point. For example, while the Business Case suggests that, "proposed pavilion improvements will proactively support female sports participation and help contribute to an equitable distribution of resources across target groups", experience has shown that simply having female friendly facilities is not enough to encourage female participation. This reserve is already above its carrying capacity in both winter and summer, and we often see that when clubs are required to use different reserves for training/games, it is the female teams that miss out on time on the 'home' ground. Therefore, any infrastructure upgrades need to go hand in hand with culture change at clubs or these improvements, including new female friendly facilities, may largely go unused by women and girls.

### **CONCLUSION**

Significant planning and consultation have been undertaken to inform the development of a draft Mount Waverley Reserve Masterplan.

Numerous meetings have been held with key stakeholders including the Mount Waverley Cricket Club, Waverley Blues Football Club and Mount Waverley Tennis Club regarding the issues and opportunities and recommended functional design layout for the reserve. Whilst the clubs have indicated they are underwhelmed with the draft masterplan, there are a range of strategic and sustainable improvements recommended that are considered appropriate for the reserve based on: existing site constraints; the level of sport played; facility provision standards; minimising impacts on local amenity; and considerate of participation trends especially in active recreation.

The proposed development priorities and conceptual layouts as detailed in the draft masterplan (Attachment A) are consistent with State Sporting Association standards such as the AFL Facility Guidelines and Council policy and strategy frameworks.

Subject to Council approval, officers recommend Council invite community submissions and feedback on the draft masterplan (which would be exhibited on Shape Monash for a period of approximately 4-6 weeks).

All submissions and comments received would then be reviewed and considered in the preparation of a final masterplan for Mount Waverley Reserve which will be presented to Council for consideration and endorsement at a future Council meeting.

***ATTACHMENTS***

Attachment A – Draft Mount Waverley Reserve Masterplan (Strategic Business Case)

Attachment B – Background Report

Attachment C – Integrated Site Plan

Attachment D – Part A: Consultation and Engagement Report & Part B: Community Survey Results