



WELLINGTON
SHIRE COUNCIL



Master Plan

Meerlieu Recreation Reserve

MAY 2016

Council's 2030 Vision

In 2008 the Wellington Shire Council was involved in producing a vision to guide the development of the Wellington Shire 2010-2030. A web site and background paper were produced which highlighted the challenges that Wellington faced into the future.

People were invited to respond via a survey attached to the background paper. Over 1,000 responses were received. Surveys were returned from a wide variety of age groups and locations across Wellington. Public meetings were held across the Shire in addition to workshops within schools and forums for stakeholders in the environment, infrastructure, community and economic spheres.

Based on feedback received and through close community consultation, Council developed a written document entitled 'Wellington's 2030 Strategic Vision' - supporting nine themes reflecting the main areas of interest that the community identified through the consultation process. These themes include; Natural Environment, Economy, Transport and Roads, Population, Development, Wellbeing and Safety, Culture, Liveability and Council.

The development of sporting infrastructure throughout Wellington will give consideration to the following aspects as identified in the 2030 plan:

- Market Wellington as a quality lifestyle and tourism destination
- Support communities to attain a sustainable level of local infrastructure reflecting the needs of communities
- Support community initiatives that promote participation and working together
- Work in partnerships to promote and facilitate healthy lifestyles
- Develop our network of walking and cycling paths
- Improve the quality and accessibility of our open space and community facilities
- Develop our sport and recreation infrastructure

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Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In May 2014 the Wellington Shire Council initiated the preparation of the Meerlieu Recreation Reserve Master Plan. This master plan is designed to address the need for facility improvements and identifies the key infrastructure priorities for the reserve. The master plan also identifies a wide-range of infrastructure priorities, including aspirational projects and goals of the user groups that will require future investigation to ensure feasibility. This strategic approach to facility planning will assist all stakeholders to guide the long term planning and development at Meerlieu Recreation Reserve.

1.2 Demographics

Meerlieu is located 253 km east of Melbourne in the Wellington Shire, Gippsland. According to the 2011 census Meerlieu has a population of 194 people residing in the surrounding area.

According to the 2011 SEIFA measure of disadvantage Meerlieu has an index of 1039, which ranks it at number 960 in level of disadvantage among the 1516 suburbs of Victoria. This places Meerlieu placing it among the least disadvantaged 36% of suburbs in the state.

1.3 Study Purpose

This report presents the Wellington Shire Council's master development and management plans for the reserve, and therefore will be used to guide decision making and strategic development for the period 2010 – 2020. The master development and management plans will provide a number of benefits, including -

- Complete facility management/development plans for the next 10 years, in line with Council's policy framework and recreation facility management & development.
- Establishing a set of recommended actions and infrastructure priorities, based on identifying where resources should be allocated in order to improve the Reserve's facilities.
- Reflecting the current and future community needs and which provide a long term integrated direction and strategy for the reserves to guide all decision making processes by the committee of management.
- Providing a guide for growth in participation and increased involvement by the wider community
- Providing a clear and useful resource for venue managers seeking potential partnering arrangements and funding sources such as Council and corporate sponsors.

2. Facility Hierarchy Overview

The concept of 'facility hierarchy' is based on the acknowledgment that there needs to be a level of strategic compromise between infrastructure demand and supply within Wellington. All sport and recreation facilities throughout the Shire have been categorised accordingly based upon a mix of the following components:

- Capacity and quality of the facility's infrastructure
- Surrounding population levels
- Level of primary use of the facility

There are four levels within the facility hierarchy schedule, these are outlined below.

2.1 – Level 1 Regional Facilities

Level 1 facilities are of a regional significance and capable of hosting state and/or national events. These facilities will be professionally managed, with Council contributing to all maintenance costs to ensure a high standard of service. Council will determine appropriate user group fees to ensure appropriate cost recuperation.

2.2 – Level 2 District Facilities

Level 2 facilities are of important district or shire significance. These facilities may be managed directly by council or by a Committee of Management, with Council contributing towards maintenance costs to ensure an appropriate standard of service.

2.3 – Level 3 Significant Local Facilities

Level 3 facilities are local venues that have multiple users which compete in district or regional competitions. These facilities are managed via a committee of management with Council contributing towards ongoing maintenance costs.

2.4 – Level 4 Local Facilities

Level 4 facilities provide for casual recreation and lower level or junior competition with limited number of user groups and usage. These facilities are locally managed via a Committee of Management, with cost of management and maintenance responsibility of the local management, funded by way of local managers charging fees to users.

The Meerlieu Recreation Reserve is listed as a Level 3 Significant Local Facility.

3. Meerlieu Recreation Reserve - Existing Infrastructure Overview



4. Reserve Usage

4.1 Committee of Management

The Meerlieu Recreation Reserve (Reserve) is owned by Wellington Shire Council and is managed via a Committee of Management. The Reserve is located on the Lindenow-Meerlieu Road. Council provides annual maintenance allocations to the Reserve which are designed to meet the scope of the works involved in maintaining the site and its facilities, and the Committee of Management is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the venue.

4.2 Regular User Groups

The main users of the Reserve are outlined below:

- Meerlieu and District Rural Community Group – meet twice a month and deliver a quarterly newsletter to approximately 200 residents
- Meerlieu Cricket Club – over 100 members with 3 senior and 2 junior teams in the Bairnsdale Cricket Association league
- Bengworden-Meerlieu Home Produce Group
- Bengworden Landcare – membership of 23 families
- Meerlieu CFA Brigade – meetings are held several times a year and the facilities are also used for training

4.3 Alternate Users

In addition to these regular user groups, the centre is also available for hire. This enables the centre to service community meetings and private functions as required.

- Weddings and family reunions
- Film nights
- Presentation days
- Socials
- Meerlieu Primary School - concerts and fundraisers – *school is closed in 2015*
- Yoga classes
- Farmer group seminars and short courses
- Perry's Bridge Ladies Inc. social events

5. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 3 Reserve on Council's Sporting Infrastructure Facility Hierarchy Schedule • Major meeting point in the area - central and accessible for participants • The committee and tenant user groups work well together to provide the best possible complex for a variety of users. • Committee is proactive in maintaining and improving existing facilities • Utilised by a wide variety of user groups on a regular basis • Flourishing Cricket club with a high quality turf wicket 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of resources and available funding • Inadequate toilet facilities and amenities • Distance from major towns • Maintaining membership and ongoing involvement and maintenance support in a small and ageing community • Difficulty attracting people outside the area to social events • Cricketers do not have access to suitable change room facilities
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a recreation reserve master plan provides the strategic framework to guide future decision making and underpin funding proposals • Funding from local, state and federal authorities available to upgrade facilities. • Maintain and continuously improve the facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of accessible public amenities prevents universal access to the facilities. This is a potential barrier to participation and/or involvement. • Rising costs and time associated with the ongoing operational maintenance activities. • Lack of financial assistance to undertake required upgrades/general maintenance

6. Infrastructure Priorities

6.1 The Plans

The charts and plans on the following pages illustrate the venue's priority actions and record the recommended works for the Stadium and, where appropriate, the indicative cost associated with such works. The table presents strategic, long term master plans to guide the future development of the reserve and the allocation of Council and other funding resources.

The detailed design and positioning of many of these items will require consultations with external agencies, user groups and Council and, in some instances, approval from external agencies or Council. In other instances, the extent of works undertaken will be determined by the budgets available and as such, staged initiatives may need to be investigated.

The master plans are not designed to include operational and minor maintenance issues which are part of the annual or day-to-day responsibilities of the committees of management. These include items such as internal air conditioning and lighting, building maintenance, painting etc. Council provides the Committee of Management with annual operational subsidies which are designed to address minor maintenance issues and assist with the general upkeep of the facilities.

6.2 Planning Principles

The **key principles** which have been used to guide the development of the master plans are:

- Retention of existing amenities and enhancement of existing uses
- Improved participation/usage
- Improved accessibility
- Improved safety and traffic management
- Improved environmental management and sustainability
- Improved amenity so that more casual use is attracted; and
- Improve or provide disability access to all buildings and structures, in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act (1992).

6.3 Recommended Actions (High Priorities)

Priority	Recommended Actions	Description & Recommended Works	Indicative Cost Estimates	Proposed Funding Stream
6.3.1	Pavilion extension to add additional change rooms	The current pavilion change room does not accommodate two teams and limits the ability to attract outside clubs for practice matches.	To Be Determined	Federal Government Stronger Communities Program (Received \$15,000 2016) Wellington Shire Council Community Assistance Grants or Quick Response Grant, other grants and local fundraising.

6.3 Recommended Actions (High Priorities)

Priority	Recommended Actions	Description & Recommended Works	Indicative Cost Estimates	Proposed Funding Stream
6.3.2	Hall extension and amenities upgrade	<p>The proposal is to extend the hall to provide storage and appropriate amenities (toilets and showers) while ensuring the facility meets current universal design standards. The existing hot water service is also insufficient and requires upgrading.</p> <p>There is currently no secure storage area for equipment and furniture. It is essentially left in the hall itself, stored on the veranda or in the accessible toilet.</p> <p>The existing toilets are aged, inappropriately located and do not meet accessibility access requirements.</p> <p>This priority requires further investigation to determine the project's scope and feasibility.</p>	To Be Determined	WSC Community Assistance Grants or Quick Response Grant, other grants (FRRR) and local fundraising

6.4 Recommended Actions (Medium Priorities)

Priority	Recommended Actions	Description & Recommended Works	Indicative Cost Estimates	Proposed Funding Stream
6.4.1	Replace stove and install range hood	When the kitchen was upgraded a few years ago limited funds prevented the replacement of the stove which is old and dilapidated. It is currently inadequate for the Farm Produce Group and events where catering is required. Replacement with a commercial grade stove and range hood is preferred.	Completed	Completed
6.4.2	Improve Cricket facilities	The Cricket club has identified a number of improvements which would support the ongoing viability and attractiveness of the club. This includes: replacement of the nets and installing a roof cover, fence upgrade, sight screens at each end of the turf oval, new covers for the wicket oval and an electronic scoreboard.	To be Determined	Commonwealth Bank Cricket Grants WSC Community Assistance Grants (Projects) Cricket Victoria Club Capacity Grants

6.5 Recommended Actions (Low Priorities)

Priority	Recommended Actions	Description & Recommended Works	Indicative Cost Estimates	Proposed Funding Stream
6.5.1	Purchase a defibrillator	Due to the isolated nature of the reserve and distance from medical facilities the provision of a public access defibrillator (AED) is warranted.	\$3000	Completed
6.5.2	Purchase a generator	It is important to ensure power availability for the bore and hall, especially as it is being utilised by emergency services. This could be addressed through the purchase of a backup generator.	No longer required	No longer required
6.5.3	Upgrade road access	Frequent use of the gravel track has led to potholes being created and there are also drainage issues in certain spots. The committee desires to seal the gravel road.	To be Determined	WSC Community Assistance Grants or Quick Response Grant, other grants and local fundraising. WSC Built Environment

6.5 Recommended Actions (Low Priorities)

Priority	Recommended Actions	Description & Recommended Works	Indicative Cost Estimates	Proposed Funding Stream
6.5.4	Development of a Passive Open Space	<p>There is currently no provision of outdoor areas within the Reserve. The Reserve serves as an excellent area to provide active/non-active recreational programs and activities such as a playground, BBQ and seating areas.</p> <p>Investigate options for the development of passive open space including a playground and park furniture to promote usage by families.</p>	To be Determined	WSC Community Assistance Grants
6.5.5	Improve insulation qualities and overall energy efficiency of the hall and reserve	To ensure long term viability and sustainability of the building the installation of environmental saving initiatives is desired. This includes additional water storage, solar hot water, double glazing, under floor insulation, LED lighting and a watering system.	To Be Determined	WSC Community Assistance Grants or Quick Response Grant, other grants and local fundraising

6.5 Recommended Actions (Low Priorities)

Priority	Recommended Actions	Description & Recommended Works	Indicative Cost Estimates	Proposed Funding Stream
6.5.6	Replace and restump the floor	The current floor is undulating and inadequately ventilated leading to dampness and mildew developing. The floor is also highly scratched and patchy due to previous white ant infestation. Installing under floor insulation whilst being replaced would also improve the energy efficiency of the building.	To Be Determined	WSC Community Assistance Grants or Quick Response Grant, other grants and local fundraising

All infrastructure priorities and projects identified in Section 6 have arisen from consultation with the Reserve's user groups.

7 Capital Funding

7.1 Funding Ratios

Council is committed to the development of sporting infrastructure and endeavours to improve the planning and support for proposed developments at a community level. Funding is a critical component of all infrastructure planning and development. Funding is normally a combination of the following:

Venue / User Group Funding – Venue/User Groups are normally required to contribute to project funding. Contribution rates can vary depending on project and conditions of grant/s being sourced.

Other Government (i.e. Federal, State) – The primary source of support funding for sporting infrastructure development is from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) – Sport and Recreation Victoria.

7.2 Project Prioritisation

The Scoring Assessment Matrix (SAM) is a quantified assessment tool which has been developed to assess and rate individual infrastructure priorities to determine a project's overall ranking within Council's Sporting Infrastructure Capital Program.

This process has been developed to enable Council to rate a specific project with consideration given to a variety of factors and variables, such as:

- 20% - Project Validation
- 40% - Venue Usage, and
- 40% - Planning Principles used to support the project (i.e. master plan)

The Scoring Assessment Matrix enables projects of a similar nature to be objectively compared with one another, thus forming the basis of Council's Sporting Infrastructure Capital Program. Used in an effective and consistent manner, the SAM process will benefit both Council and facility users/managers in the management of sporting infrastructure through the objective and consistent prioritisation of sport infrastructure.