



MacPherson Park Recreation Reserve Future Directions Paper

Draft Concept Plan

A study to prepare a Future Directions Paper for MacPherson Park Recreation Reserve has reached the stage where a draft concept plan for the reserve is available for public exhibition and comment

Project Background

MacPherson Park Recreation Reserve is Melton City Council’s primary sports and recreation reserve. It is located 6km north of the Melton Township and is sited between Coburns Road and Bulmans Road in Harkness. The reserve has been the home venue for many sport and recreational groups since the reserve was established in the 1970s. The following 16 groups are currently based at MacPherson Park.

- Melton Football Netball Club
- Melton Superules Football Club
- Melton Cricket Club
- Riddell District Umpires Association
- North West Titans Baseball Club
- Melton Phoenix Football Club
- Melton Rugby Union Football Club
- Melton Rugby League Club
- Melton Wolves Gridiron Club
- Melton Racing Pigeon Club
- Victorian Blokart Association
- Melton & District Pony Club
- Melton & District Adult Riding Club
- Warranooke Riding Club
- Friends of Melton Equestrian Park
- Melton Greyhound Racing Club

A master plan was completed for MacPherson Park Recreation Reserve in 2010, however, the following factors contributed to Council’s decision in February this year to commission the preparation of the Future Directions Paper, and to review the current master plan.

- The increased population of the City of Melton has created new demand for sport and recreation spaces.

- The condition and functionality of much of the infrastructure is not fit for purpose, including the pavilions.
- The former jet boat racing course has ceased being used and presents an opportunity for a future use(s).
- Council’s 2016 Open Space Plan identifies the need to update the MacPherson Park Recreation Reserve Master Plan as a priority project.
- The prevalence of vandalism and other anti-social behavior is impacting upon the broader community’s perception of the reserve as a safe place to visit.

The primary aim of the Future Directions Paper is to provide a strategic analysis of the site and its surrounds in order to prepare a series of recommendations for its future use and development, and strategies to increase the activation of the reserve.

Project Consultation and Key Findings

Nearly 1,500 people are active members of the 16 sport and recreation groups based at the reserve. A range of consultation activities have been conducted since March 2017 to inform the Future Directions Paper:

- Review of facilities, spaces and infrastructure by the consultant team.
- Melton City Council staff workshop.
- Meetings with the reserve’s sport and recreation groups.
- Presentation and feedback session with the Melton Leisure Advisory Committee.
- Discussions with peak sports bodies and local sporting associations.
- Discussions with Council’s project working group to seek feedback on preliminary reserve layout plans.

The key outcomes from the consultation and the site review were grouped into the following themes, and helped inform the design development of the draft concept plan for the reserve.

Inadequate Facilities

Most pavilions require improvements to be fit for purpose, particularly in relation to change rooms, canteens, kitchens and storage, and some sporting infrastructure requires renewal, replacement or upgrade.

Security

The isolation and easy access into the reserve, its low usage other than by sporting clubs, and the lack of night lighting have contributed to high incidences of vandalism, pavilion break-ins, and prevalence of anti-social behavior.

Passive Recreation and Linkages

There is little provision of spaces within the reserve to encourage unstructured and informal recreation pursuits, and the lack of attractive, safe and functional internal pedestrian paths inhibits personal exercise opportunities, and way finding.

Traffic Management

The sporting facilities section of the reserve is currently serviced by a confusing internal road network lacking directional signage, and much of the car parking is ad hoc, unsealed and without connection to the key destinations (pavilions and sports fields).

Landscape Amenity

The overall landscape amenity is poor, with the key issues being a lack of consistent tree planting to provide shade and enclosure around facilities, and the high prevalence of earthworks and embankments constrain secondary surveillance opportunities.

New Opportunities

The scale and location of the reserve, and its existing diversity of sport and recreational infrastructure, provides a significant foundation to further build on the variety of experiences possible within the reserve.

Three principles underpinned the design process:

Key Directions of the Draft Concept Plan

1. Maximise the opportunity for colocation and shared-use of pavilions and sporting facilities that are fit for purpose.
2. Improve safety, and the perception of safety, for current user groups and as a strategy to attract more visitations by the community to the reserve.
3. Enhance the amenity and attractiveness of the reserve for non-sport uses, whilst not detracting from the quality and functionality of the sporting areas.

Some key strategic directions proposed in the draft MacPherson Park Recreation Reserve concept plan are:

1. Install a new path network throughout the reserve.
2. Create a new feature reserve entry and rationalise the internal road network, including formalising the car parking within each sport and recreation node.
3. Undertake avenue tree planting throughout the reserve, and establish native grasslands.
4. Replace existing sports pavilions that are no longer fit for purpose with centrally located precinct community sporting pavilions to service current tenants, community groups, and other regular users of the reserve.
5. Establish a new regional play space and family recreation area by rationalising the existing dams and vegetation along the Coburns Road frontage.
6. Re-use the site of the former jet boat racing circuit to establish a new large-scale, flexible, outdoor events space for the City of Melton.
7. Provide a flexible use synthetic sports field to accommodate overflow and reallocated training for clubs from all field-based sporting codes.

Draft Concept Plan Feedback

The MacPherson Park Recreation Reserve draft concept plan is now on public exhibition and Council is seeking community feedback on the plan until 15 September 2017.

To view the draft concept plan and to make comment:

- Visit the project page on Council's website – [‘MacPherson Park Recreation Reserve Future Directions Paper’](#).
- Visit the Melton Civic Centre, 232 High Street, Melton

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All feedback received will be considered during the preparation of the Final MacPherson Park Recreation Reserve Future Directions Paper, inclusive of master plan.

Next Steps

The Future Directions Paper will include costed and prioritised improvement projects and management directions, suggested responsibilities for stakeholders to implement recommendations, and potential funding opportunities. Council anticipates that the MacPherson Park Future Directions Paper will be finalised in October 2017.



AFL/ Cricket/ Netball Precinct

- 1 Main AFL/ Cricket Oval: remove the existing pavilion, related infrastructure and the car park mounding.
- 2 Provide two rows of car parking around the ground at grade
- 3 Second AFL/ Cricket Oval: reshape the oval to a more uniform shape (175m x 130m), upgrade the sub-surface irrigation and drainage, where required. Remove the existing change room and social buildings following completion of the proposed new community sports pavilion
- 4 Redevelop the existing cricket practice nets to provide a combination of turf and synthetic practice nets with power bollards for bowling machines
- 5 New curator's shed
- 6 Third AFL/ Cricket Oval: future new senior size oval with synthetic centre wicket to replace the existing small Oval 3, subject to demand
- 7 Two new netball courts with provision of ball protection fencing, shelters, storage and lighting to Australian Standards (training) to replace the existing netball courts (refer No. 2)
- 8 New community sports pavilion to service the user groups and other external groups utilising the ovals and courts within this precinct
- 9 New car park to service the AFL/ Cricket/ Netball precinct, including pedestrian drop-off zone

Rectangle Field Precinct

- 10 Retain existing main soccer pitch
- 11 Retain the two existing soccer training pitches overlaid onto open space with a synthetic centre wicket. Consider rotating the pitches and wicket to the preferred North-South orientation in the future
- 12 New sports pavilion to service the user groups and other external groups utilising the pitches within this precinct
- 13 New car park to service the Soccer facilities
- 14 Designate the two existing rugby fields to rugby union and gridiron (co-locate), but reduce the scale of the mounding around the eastern field
- 15 Two new rectangle fields for rugby league, with floodlighting to Australian Standards (training)
- 16 Remove the existing pavilion following completion of the proposed new pavilion (refer No. 17)
- 17 New sports pavilion to service the user groups and other external groups utilising the fields within this precinct
- 18 New car park to service the rugby/ gridiron fields

Other Sporting and Recreation Facilities

- 19 New flexible use synthetic sports field with floodlighting to Australian Standards (training) to accommodate the training needs of clubs from all sporting codes throughout the City of Melton, as required, and for potential use as an overflow cricket ground
- 20 Add a second baseball field (junior or senior), subject to demand

- 21 New sports pavilion to service baseball, with meeting space opportunity for the Melton Racing Pigeon Club, the Victorian Blokart Association, and other community groups, as required
- 22 New car park to service the Baseball facilities and the proposed dog off leash area (refer No. 36)
- 23 Reinstate the land used for the former jet boat racing facility to grade, and investigate the feasibility of converting the space into a new outdoor events and trades expo venue
- 24 Continue to support the use of this land by the Victorian Blokart Association, and integrate the space with the proposed new outdoor events venue (refer No. 23)
- 25 New public toilet, shelter and storage building to service the the Victorian Blokart Association and the Melton Racing Pigeon Club, and usage of the outdoor events area, and a new car park
- 26 With Greyhound Racing Victoria, investigate the feasibility of expanding the greyhound facilities to establish a regional greyhound training centre, or the upgrade of the existing coarsing track and associated facilities
- 27 Continue to support the upgrade of the Melton Equestrian Park, including the feasibility of expanding the cross-country course to become an integrated component of the proposed new outdoor events venue (refer No. 23)
- 28 Future location for permanent dressgae arenas
- 29 Future location for expanding the available car and float parking, subject to the expansion of the cross-country course (refer No. 27)

General Landscape Improvements

- 30 Retain the existing dam
- 31 Retain the existing water storage dam
- 32 Downgrade the existing vehicle entry to an entry for service and maintenance vehicles only
- 33 Rationalise the existing dams to create two lakes contained in a natural setting with trees and way finding paths, as part of a broader strategy to open-up the front of the reserve
- 34 New regional play space with associated BBQ/ picnic facilities and shelters, and car park to service users
- 35 New dog off leash exercise area
- 36 New 2.5m unsealed path throughout the reserve (with occasional bench seating) to connect sub-precincts and to also encourage recreational and fitness uses
- 37 Create a feature entry for the new main access into the reserve
- 38 Shared path link to Melton town centre

Legend

- Gravel Road
- Pedestrian gravel path 36
- Native feature trees
- Indigenous trees
- Indigenous trees and native grassland



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