

7.1 HOSKEN RESERVE

Director Community Development Arden Joseph

Community Wellbeing

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

Thanks the Refresh Group participants for their significant contribution to the draft masterplan design;

Notes the Refresh Group Process Report and the Refresh Group Design excerpt summary reports; and

Approves release of the draft Hosken Reserve Master Plan Concept for public exhibition and a report back to Council in September 2021.

REPORT

Executive Summary

Following a December 2020 Council resolution, a refresh project commenced on the 2009 Hosken Reserve Masterplan.

An extensive community engagement process was undertaken in February/March 2021 and reported to the May 2021 Council Meeting. At the May 2021 Council Meeting, Council resolved that a Refresh Group process commence as soon as possible to inform the design options for a refreshed masterplan for Hosken Reserve.

A Refresh Group consisting of 25 community members was established and met four times between 19 May 2021 and 9 June 2021. The outcome of this process has been the establishment of draft design recommendations for Council consideration. The draft design recommendations have been reviewed with regard to alignment with Council policy, management practices and operational procedures.

A revised draft Hosken Reserve Master Plan (the Master Plan) has subsequently been prepared. It is recommended that Council authorise its release for public exhibition prior to consideration for final adoption at a future Council meeting.

Previous Council Decisions

Hosken Reserve Synthetic Playing Field – 9 December 2020

That Council:

- 1. Conducts an independent, robust and broad community engagement process in 2021 on a refresh of the Hosken Reserve Master Plan.*
- 2. Receives a report by May 2021 on the outcomes of the Hosken Reserve community engagement with options to determine future action.*

Hosken Reserve Masterplan Refresh - Engagement Report and Options – 12 May 2021

That Council:

- 1. Thanks local residents, club members and other community members for their involvement and input into the Hosken Reserve Refresh community engagement process;*
- 2. Notes the Background Report and Engagement Summary Report by the independent consultants;*

3. *Retains the North oval and East field as natural grass and installs a hybrid surface on the South field;*
4. *Installs a low-level 1.1m black chain mesh fence, with gates that will not be locked, to formalise a football pitch on the North Oval that meets Football Victoria standards;*
5. *Confirms that the North and East playing areas at Hosken Reserve are to be shared spaces by the Pascoe Vale Football Club and the general community.*
6. *Confirms that no dogs are to be permitted on to the playing areas on game days and at training times in accordance with the General Local Law 2018; and*
7. *Resolves that the Refresh Group process will commence as soon as possible to inform the design options for a refreshed masterplan for Hosken Reserve.*

1. Policy Context

The 2017-2021 Council Plan establishes priorities and sets an agenda for this Council term while keeping sight of long-term future challenges and opportunities. To achieve this vision, three strategic objectives have been set: Connected Community; Progressive City; and Responsible Council. These three strategic objectives guide a range of priority actions which Council will implement during this term. This report supports the 'Connected Communities' and 'Responsible Council objectives of:

Set a clear vision and strategy for aquatics, leisure and sporting facilities to meet ongoing community needs; and

Maintain and match our infrastructure to community needs and population growth.

The Hosken Reserve Masterplan Refresh project is informed by a range of policies and strategies including, but not limited to:

Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-21

Sports and Active Recreation Strategy

Open Space Strategy

2009 Hosken Reserve Redevelopment Plan

North West Region - Football Venue Strategic Review and Feasibility Study

Park Close to Home: A Framework to Fill Open Space Gaps

Hybrid and Synthetic Sports Surface Needs Study

Zero Carbon Moreland Climate Emergency Action Plan

Urban Heat Island Action Plan

Urban Forest Strategy

Integrated Transport Strategy

2. Background

The history and background to the December 2020 Council decision to refresh the masterplan and engage in community consultation is set out at length in the December 2020 Council meeting agenda.

Similarly, the research and consultation findings from the Background Report (Attachment 3) are detailed in the May 2021 Council meeting agenda.

These can be accessed at <https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/my-council/council-and-committee-meetings/council-meetings/council-meeting-minutes/>

This report focuses on the outcomes of the Refresh Group process that has occurred since May 2021, as documented in the Design Report (Attachment 1) and Engagement Summary Report – Stage 2 (Attachment 2).

3. Issues

Participants

An independently selected group of 25 community members met across four meetings to deliberate on proposed master plan elements and provide recommendations back to Council on design options. The 25 community members included 15 local residents and 10 formal representatives from the following groups:

Keep Hosken Reserve Accessible resident's group (x2)

Australian International Academy (x2)

Merlynston Tennis Club (x2)

Pascoe Vale Football Club (x2)

Climate Action Moreland (x1)

Neighbours United for Climate Action (x1)

Process

The Refresh Group was originally proposed to meet three times in person, however due to recent COVID restrictions and lockdown directions, only the first meeting on 19 May 2021 was able to be conducted in person.

The sessions reverted to an online format via Zoom which posed a number of operational and participant engagement issues. Some participants found the online process challenging and faced technological difficulties, while others embraced the ability to engage in an alternative format. In light of the difficulties faced, a fourth meeting was added to ensure as much content as possible could be covered.

Vision + Design Principles

As part of the first session, the Refresh Group focused on establishing agreed values and behaviours for the conduct of meetings, developed a vision for the future of Hosken Reserve, and set five design principles that they would like to achieve.

The vision developed was:

'Hosken Reserve is an accessible place, where you feel safe, included and part of the community, regardless of who you are or when you visit. It offers diverse experiences to enhance your health and wellbeing, where you can enjoy nature, across the seasons. A sustainable place that we each care for through our shared actions.'

The five design principles established were:

Sustainable: protecting and enhancing the biodiversity of the area.

Access: creating an inclusive space for all ages and abilities to access.

Equal: designing for equal access, shared and multi-use facilities.

Reflection: building in places to pause and reflect in nature to ground yourself after a busy day.

Diverse: allowing for moments of discovery, experiences that evoke the senses and capture the imagination of everyone.

Design Elements

Twenty-six (26) individual elements were identified as part of the draft design prepared by the Refresh Group. The 26 individual elements received varying levels of support, with five (5) not being resolved including:

North pitch

South spectator area

Football pavilion

Community garden

Shepard St road closure

The establishment of a National Premier League pitch on the existing 'North' oval received the most robust discussion. There were strong advocates for both enlarging the pitch size to improve functionality for the conduct of concurrent junior football games and training and reducing the pitch size to maximise provision of open space.

Design Review

The draft design prepared by the Refresh Group was reviewed by Council officers and the independent consultant team against Council policy, management practices, operational procedures and best-practice design. This review focused on a number of outstanding matters including:

North pitch: Confirmation of size

Community garden: inclusion on site

Traffic: Bakers Rd entrance, Shepard St treatment, and Pallet St indented parking

East development sites: relationship of property development on site boundary

General operational matters: bin placement, emergency/ maintenance vehicle access etc.

The following specific changes have been applied, with further detail provided in the Background Report (Attachment 3):

1. North pitch: increased to 105m x 68m

It is Council's goal to increase participation in sport, and as there are no spatial site constraints on this sportsfield, best practice design would align to Football Victoria's preferred pitch size of 105m x 68m on the North Oval which limits the reduction of formal allocated space to 25.96 per cent. This increases functionality and participation opportunities for juniors, allowing more games and training to be played concurrently. It is believed this may reduce the number of hours required to be booked, which may in turn provide additional time for community use outside of formal sport bookings. The reduction in size of the existing East pitch and provision of a dedicated central lawn for public open space offsets the provision of a maximum size North pitch. This is viewed as an extremely positive design outcome that maximises reserve use and functionality for all stakeholders.

2. Carpark: East boundary alterations

There is a design preference for siting the car parking adjacent to the East field rather than the Shepard St boundary as this helps in terms of maintenance of the car park, allows provision of a path along the rear of future residential properties in adjacent development sites, reduces pedestrian/ car conflict in the car park, and would locate lighting of the car park further away from the future dwellings.

3. Central plaza: relocation

It was recommended that the central plaza be shifted further East so that the new trees proposed improve the sight lines from the carpark to the playground and surrounds including sightlines from the football pavilion to the field of play.

4. Vehicle access: clear delineation

To ensure vehicular access is appropriately catered for during detailed design phases, the proposed vehicle access points have been more clearly identified on the map. This includes identification of access to the South pitch on both the East and West ends of the football pavilion for maintenance vehicles.

5. Shared User Path: Ulm St connection

Feedback from the community to formalise the existing desire path from the playground to Ulm St was supported by Council officers. The use of stairs or other treatment down the existing steep ridge is acceptable in recognition of the DDA compliant path provided further South.

Draft Master Plan

A revised design has been prepared that factors in the above review, as depicted in the Design Report (Attachment 1). It identifies twenty-six (26) individual design elements that best achieve the overall vision and design principles for the reserve.

The following key developments are proposed, with further detail to be refined through relevant detailed design processes:

Formalised natural turf football pitch (North) with fence and lights

Formalised hybrid turf football pitch (South) with spectator area, fence and lights

Un-formalised natural turf junior football pitch (East)

Creation of a central lawn area for non-formal sporting use

Football pavilion upgrades

Tennis pavilion complete renewal

Refurbishment of two tennis courts and entire fence structure

New vehicle accessway from Bakers Road

Active Recreation Zone (ball courts, skate elements, tennis wall and fitness area)

Renewed parking with 62 additional spots

Improved path/trail network

Nature play installations

Community/ sensory garden

Improved public amenities (seating, shade, drink taps, BBQ, bike parking)

Significant planting with approximately 199 new trees

Community impact

The aspirations of the draft Master Plan will deliver significant benefits to the local resident community by improving access to contemporary facilities and services that support health and wellbeing outcomes. The members of the community sporting clubs (Pascoe Vale Football Clubs and Merlynston Tennis Club), students and families of the adjacent school (Australian International Academy) will also benefit.

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

The draft Master Plan proposes a number of design elements that contribute to addressing climate change, most notably the creation of a defined shared user path throughout the reserve to encourage active transport choices, significant tree planting to increase tree canopy cover and mitigate urban heat island effects, the use of LED and sensor lighting, and inclusion of various Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) treatments. An environmentally sustainable design assessment overview is included in the Background Report.

Economic sustainability implications

The draft Master Plan proposes numerous development upgrades to the reserve. Research has indicated that investment in public parks and reserves can provide associated uplift in neighbouring property values, and direct economic benefit to the management and operations of tenant sporting clubs, contributing to the City's economic wellbeing.

Legal and risk considerations

There is some reputational risk in Council approving a draft Master Plan for public exhibition as it sets community expectation regarding delivery of the various design elements, which are still subject to future endorsement by Council and subsequent budget allocations for delivery.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been considered in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities and the engagement undertaken supports Sections 12 and 18 of the Human Rights Charter which relate to freedom of movement and taking part in public life.

Gender Impact Considerations

Moreland is a leader within the Victorian local government sector in increasing women's and girls' participation in sport, increasing participation from 5 per cent to 23 per cent in the last ten years. Council is also participating in the YourGround project, *"a crowd-mapping website that enables women, girls and gender-diverse people to identify and share public recreational spaces that make them feel uneasy, scared, unwelcome or happy, safe and included."* The application of a gender lens is crucial in the development of detailed design and delivery of the draft Master Plan, in particular the perceptions of community safety.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Engagement Stage 1

Engagement Stage 1 was undertaken between Thursday 25 February and Sunday 28 March 2021 including a Conversations Moreland project page, community survey, on-site pop-up sessions, stakeholder interviews and online Q and A forum. In addition to this formal engagement process, stakeholders engaged with Councillors and Council staff via a number of written submissions and emails, Council meeting questions and on-line channels.

Engagement Stage 2

Engagement Stage 2 was undertaken between Wednesday 19 May and Thursday 10 June 2021 with the establishment of a Refresh Group. An independently selected group of 25 community members met across four meetings to deliberate on proposed master plan elements and provide recommendations back to Council on design options. It is suggested that this process enabled analysis in further detail than could be done as part of general broad engagement activity to advise on workable solutions for the whole community.

A draft master plan vision, design principles and twenty-seven (27) individual elements have been identified as part of the draft design prepared. The 27 individual elements received varying levels of support, with five (5) not meeting the pre-determined 60% consensus when a survey was conducted.

Engagement Stage 3

Pending the outcome of this report, it is proposed that a revised draft design is tested with the broader community. It is recommended that the draft Master Plan be publicly exhibited for community feedback in July/August before Council considers it for endorsement at a future Council meeting (anticipated in September/October 2021).

Staff engagement

An internal working group has met frequently throughout the life of this project including staff from the Recreation, Open Space, Transport, Strategic Planning, Sustainable Built Environment and Communications teams.

Affected persons rights and interests

The interests of local residents, sporting clubs and the adjacent school are the primary focus of the draft Master Plan. Each group have had numerous opportunities to express their views through a variety of methods during the development of the draft Master Plan including a Conversations Moreland project page, community survey, on-site pop-up sessions, stakeholder interviews, online Q and A forum and Refresh Group process.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

The proposed developments within the draft Master Plan have been estimated at a total cost of \$5,884,963 (excluding GST and contingency) and implementation is subject to future Council Budget and/or external funding opportunities. A costing plan has been developed that provides an estimate of probable costs for each element.

Elements such as picnic areas, community garden, passive recreation, tree planting and car park upgrades need to be considered within existing open space assets budget where applicable.

In line with the original Hosken Reserve Master Plan (2009), Council had included the following items in the previously adopted 5-year Capital Budget plan which have been carried forward to the current endorsed Budget (2021 – 2026):

Hosken Reserve - Merlynston Tennis Club pavilion- \$566,000 (2021/22)

Hosken Reserve - tennis club - court refurbishment - \$100,000 (2021/22)

Hosken Reserve - soccer/football pavilion - \$221,500 (2021/22)

Hosken Reserve - south soccer pitch reconstruction - \$600,000 (\$300,000 in 2021/22 and \$300,000 in 2022/23)

Hosken Reserve - north soccer pitch - \$620,000 (2020/21) *

Hosken Reserve - Sports field lighting - \$200,000 (2020/21)

**Resolved at May Council meeting for this ground to remain natural turf*

The above totals \$2,307,500 of existing allocated funding, meaning there is a shortfall of \$3,577,463 (excluding GST and contingency) in existing funding that must be sourced from future Council budgets and/or external sources.

Officers will continue to seek external funding contributions to projects identified to support implementation, subject to Council approval. Delivery of each stage of works would be subject to approval in Council's annual capital works budget process and ideally be completed by 2025.

7. Implementation

Pending the outcome of this report, Council officers will proceed with public exhibition of the draft Hosken Reserve Master Plan concept as detailed above. The Full background report including the Refresh Group Process and the Design reports will be uploaded to the Conversations Moreland site. A further Council report will be prepared for endorsement of the master plan in September/October 2021.

Attachment/s

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| 1 | Hosken Reserve Refresh Group Process Report June 2021 | D21/271890 |
| 2 | Hosken Reserve Precinct - Prelim Concept Plan July 2021 | D21/271886 |
| 3 | Hosken Reserve Master Plan Refresh - Background Report (Refresh Group Outcomes) | D21/276919 |