



SPORTING COMPLEX MASTER PLAN





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1 | Introduction: George Town sporting complex

1.1 The project

The municipality-wide Sport and Recreation Strategy informs future capital works, priorities and specific projects, including this sports master plan. This plan will be used to provide a strong platform for advocacy efforts for funding, and will assist Council to:

- Determine what infrastructure projects are the priority if funds become available
- Decide how facilities can be designed so they meet the greatest need, are sustainable and cost effective to run
- Encourage more people to be active, close to home, and
- Attract sports and events back to George Town.

Methods

The following methods were used to seek input from local residents and community organisations about the sporting complex.

- Preparation of web and social media content by Council to invite comments and submissions
- Telephone discussion with staff
- A World Café round table consultation session with school children and residents
- An online community survey (183 responses)
- Facebook (5 comments)
- Club survey for sports clubs by phone (12 clubs)
- Club survey for state sports association by phone (7 clubs)
- Interviews with elected members (8 members).

Clubs interviewed for this project included:

- George Town Cricket Club
- Saints Netball

- Bass and Flinders Community Bowling Club
- George Town Junior Soccer
- AFL Tasmania
- Northern Vets Cycling club
- Cycling Tasmania
- George Town Swimming Pool
- Tam O'Shanter Golf Club
- Hillwood Football Club
- George Town Community Bowls Club
- George Town Little Athletics

Sports peak bodies interviewed for this project included:

- Cycling Tasmania
- Football Tasmania
- AFL Tas
- Tennis Tasmania
- Netball Tasmania
- Cricket Tasmania
- Sport and Recreation Tasmania.

2 | The site and social context



Figure 1. George Town Sporting Complex Location
Aerial Photo: Google Earth



Figure 2. George Town Sporting Complex; The Site:
Google Earth

Demographic and local influences

The population is likely to have slow growth in the next decade, unless new industry or migration draws new families to the town.

Relatively low incomes and a high level of social disadvantage experienced by some George Town residents will limit participation opportunities but increase the need for physical activity and sports club membership.

This trend of having to travel to Launceston for sport and recreation will have repercussions for the health and wellbeing of the population in years to come, unless local population growth and resourcing can stimulate participation in sport and physical activity.

Relatively low willingness to pay by some sections of the community and an aging population mean different opportunities other than sport club competition may be sought and limit participation to the local area. These factors provide an opportunity for the sporting complex to deliver more social and program related activities.

With the cost of managing aging assets and new capital works increasing, as well as increased consciousness about sustainability and the changing nature of volunteers, a change or consolidation of some uses will be required on the reserve. The need for sharing and greater access and inclusion of the whole community will be important. Greater outputs in the terms of use of existing facilities will need to be shown.

Recreation potential

There are opportunities for the sporting complex to generate greater benefits in terms of restorative value through the enhancement of visual amenity and environmental benefits through additional trees and landscaping.

Greater participation benefits can be achieved by running development programs in conjunction with schools to provide children with a pathway to sports – even if that means they ultimately will travel to higher levels of competition in later years.

More people are using the facilities casually for walking, cycling, dog walking, socialisation and programs. Other casual use of the facilities

includes evening training, social tennis and basketball. Community organisations also use available rooms for activities, and gentle exercise may be possible with new access arrangements, supported programs and agreements.

The existing velodrome and available space provides an opportunity for more cycling events, including cyclocross, summer carnivals and junior development programs.

The site

The George Town sporting complex is located on Marguerite Street in George Town. The open space is also known as Blue Gum Park.

The sporting complex is on a large site on the fringe of town. It was previously reserved Crown land. The site is now Council land. It is in two parcels, one parcel being the area where the current netball and tennis courts are located, the other holds the remainder of the reserve (cricket, AFL, soccer-football, etc).

The site is zoned for Recreation in the Interim Tasmanian Planning Scheme. See the large green hatched area on the following plan.

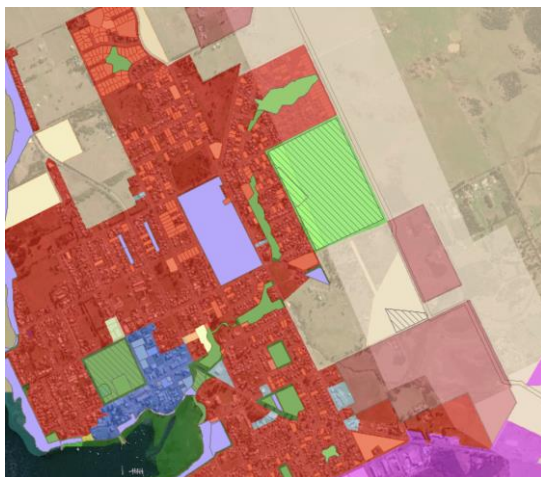


Figure 3. George Town Sporting Complex and surrounds; Zoning

The George Town sporting complex is located on the eastern fringe of the town.

On the west side of the reserve is relatively new subdivision with multiple streets perpendicular to Marguerite Street ending in cul-de-sacs that back onto the internal linear reserve. Accessibility through this residential area to the reserve is constrained by this layout.

To the north, open spaces in the residential areas are relatively undeveloped corridors along drainage lines.

The following image shows the site in context with other open spaces in the George Town District Service Centre, and the Tasmanian Gas Pipeline Easement and Planning Corridor.



Figure 4. George Town Sporting Complex and surrounds; local government reserves

The Port Dalrymple School (Kindergarten to Year 12) is located some 300m west of the sporting complex. The school has a small oval but appears to be well irrigated, with two tennis/basketball courts on the school boundary. The school also has an indoor swimming pool and a single court gymnasium.

There is additional land on the north side of the school that appears to previously have been a soccer pitch. These are the closest sports facilities to the sporting complex.

Immediately east of the reserve boundary is the Tasmanian Gas Pipeline Easement, and approximately 330m either side is the Declared Gas Pipeline Planning Corridor. The sporting complex sits within this planning corridor.

The pipe line and corridor are shown in the magenta shade on the following image. The purpose of the corridor is to notify TGP of all developments in the vicinity of the pipeline so as to inform Councils of pipeline safety and the appropriateness of proposed developments when deciding on such applications. The Custodian of the pipeline needs to be informed of future developments on the sports complex.



Figure 5. George Town Sporting Complex and surrounds; Tasmanian Gas Pipeline Easement, and Declared Gas Pipeline Planning Corridor

To the east of the reserve land is currently undeveloped. Residential development may be constrained immediately to the east, due to the Tasmanian Gas Pipeline Easement and Planning Corridor.

Discussions with the Custodian of the pipe line indicate that the pipe line sits in a 30m easement, and this cannot be built on. A residential street would not be sited over the easement.

However, it may be possible to integrate the easement into the park and include a car park on it, for example.

The pipe line planning corridor may include low density residential, as is the case north of the sporting complex. However, the land would need to be rezoned.

Therefore, residential uses could abut and overlook the sporting complex from the rear and a new entry to the football club could be created if required. It is highly desirable to have residences overlooking the reserve on all sides.



3 | Facilities at the sporting complex

Overview of features

The sporting complex has seven distinct areas: The soccer-football area, cricket ground, Australian rules football oval, the dog park, a velodrome, (Max Leslie Cycling Track), the old archery/pony club area, and the tennis and netball courts. There is also a caretaker's cottage at the entrance to the park.

- A number of uses of the sporting complex have changed over time. Between the football ground and velodrome was previously a woodshop area. The dog park was previously a hockey ground. The tennis and netball areas was a caravan park and the area adjacent to the velodrome was previously used for pony club and then archery.
- Several support buildings have been demolished over recent years including the old cycle club building, which was located at the fork of the entry road and adjacent to the velodrome.

The sporting complex currently has one entry and vehicles drive through the reserve from the west.

The site is fenced, and fencing is in relatively poor condition.

3.1 Sports facilities

The facilities on the reserve include the following:

- Two netball courts, which are separated by a perpendicular support building in between.
- Four tennis courts, two of which are asphalt and two are acrylic coated hard court. There is a tennis pavilion between the two sets of courts. The tennis courts are well positioned on the road frontage.

The tennis and netball courts appear to be on one area of hard stand that has been resurfaced in different locations over a period of time and are in varying conditions. Any reconfiguration of these courts should investigate whether or not the base is of a suitable nature to upgrade.

One of the netball courts has lights, just one single post on the east and west. The tennis courts do not have lights.

- Three oval playing fields. These include:
 - A cricket ground with a turf wicket. The oval has 5 turf tables and a radius of approximately 57m. There are practice wickets in the southern area of the oval. There is also a smaller field adjacent to the cricket ground used for training.
 - A main football ground in the east of the reserve, which is irrigated and has training lights.



- The third oval ground is in the middle of the velodrome. It is not irrigated, and it has a concrete wicket in it.
- There is a long rectangular playing field approximately 200m long, which is used for soccer-football.
- In the north east corner, there is a rectangular area which has a cricket wicket on it.
- The large area on south east of the reserve has been developed as an off-leash dog park.
- In the south western corner, there is a rectangular ground which does not appear to be irrigated.
- There is an asphalt velodrome). It has a very gentle camber and therefore is well suited to low skilled riders. The surface is in fair condition.
- A caretakers cottage is located on Marguerite Street adjacent to the entrance and the velodrome.

3.2 Access and roadways

The main entry to the reserve is off Marguerite Street. The road enters the reserve halfway along the block between the hardcourts and the velodrome and travels directly to the football ground. One fork in this road goes to the cricket ground and soccer areas, and the other goes straight ahead to the Aust. rules football oval in the middle. Vehicles appear to be parking and moving around the reserve largely unrestrained.

3.3 Support facilities

There are several small and separate buildings on the site – reflective of past usage. These vary in condition and quality. These buildings include:

- Tennis club building - the building running east-west between the two sets of tennis courts
- Netball building - a building running east-west between the two netball courts
- The old soccer club building which appears to have good potential to repurpose. This is adjacent the east side of the most northerly netball court
- A small grandstand building adjacent to the soccer pitch
- The main football pavilion is relatively extensive and of good quality. To the north of that are a number of small adjoining buildings behind which a female change room is planned
- The cricket ground has club rooms and an equipment shed.
- The former archery field has a large shed adjacent to the road
- A caretakers house at the entry.



3.4 What the community said

Do you use the George Town Sporting Complex – if so what for?

About half those surveyed **did not** use the George Town Sporting Complex (52%). However, men (58% of men surveyed) were more likely to use the sporting complex than women (40%). Responses were evenly spread across age cohorts, while younger people surveyed (under 35 yrs.) were more likely to use the sporting complex than not.

Access to the sporting complex is important to local residents, and residents of George Town not surprisingly, used the sporting complex at a higher frequency (55.8% of residents) than residents of other towns in the area (28%).

Couples with children represented the highest frequency of usage, while couples without children were much less likely to use the sporting complex.

Most respondents use the sporting complex for Australian rules football (27%), 19% of whom use the facility 1-2 times a week.

The second most identified usage of the sporting complex was in an informal recreational context (19%), with all responses evenly distributed amongst all attendance categories.

This was followed by the accompaniment of a child to a sporting activity (17% of respondents), with the vast majority of those surveyed taking their child 1-2 times a week (15%). Some 8% of respondents participated in cricket 1-2 times a week, however residents did not use the sporting complex very frequently, with 30% only using the sporting complex once or twice per year.

A number of people (7%) use the reserve for dog walking.

Additional activities required at the sporting complex

When asked what additional activities should be provided at the sporting complex if funds are available in the future, respondents highlighted 3 key activities:

- Gym/indoor fitness (32%)
- Basketball (22%), and
- Tennis (17%).

A number of people also identified athletics (10%), indoor cricket, BMX (pump track), mountain biking and family friendly activities (all 7% respectively) as additional activities that they would like to see introduced.

Clubs also identified additional activities required. The main one was the addition of a gym (10%). Specific comments about improvement are provided under the facility heading below.

Other general comments included:

- Location: (2) Too far out of town. Barrier to get to the facility - sporting complex is on the edge of town and difficult to get to.
- Communication and promotion (2) Communication could be better about what is available there, activities promoted. Signage needs to be updated.
- Lack of Activation: (3) Many grounds do not get used.
- Too many gaps - don't need all that space.





4 | Issues and opportunities

This section outlines the comments made by the community and clubs on different issues and the recommended actions for the master plan.

4.1 Tennis and netball courts

There is a major opportunity to grow tennis and netball by upgrading facilities, creating community access and running development or social programs.

Tennis

Comments and improvements to be made recommended by the community included: “Tennis is one of Australia's top sports. Unbelievable that there are no tennis courts available here. The courts can be used for other sports such as netball and basketball.”

“The tennis complex is in desperate need of an upgrade; people do not want to play on the courts. They are so bad.”

“Tennis, netball facilities are poor, Tennis courts need addressing/renewal.”

“Provide proper synthetic tennis courts.”

The clubs also suggested: “Distance is too far from everything. Combine tennis and netball courts to combat distance from other facilities.”

Netball

Comments and improvements recommended made by the community included:

“Saints netball have been knocked back for grants to run Net-Set-Go programs which aims at providing younger children the opportunity to participate in netball free of charge.”

“The little building in between the two courts became the netball clubs building. We have installed a disability ramp.”

“Lockable storage. Looking to fix up the other side. Try and train outside as much as they can.”

“Co-locate netball facility with football club, rebuild netball and soccer court/fields, only train – can share, inclusion of playground equipment. Bring back social netball.”

The club also suggested: “Happy to combine tennis court and netball courts.”

Actions:

1. Open tennis courts at Blue Gum for public use.
2. Redevelop the tennis and netball courts to provide a good court base, surface and lights, adjacent to a shared support facility, as demand requires.
3. Retain a minimum of four side by side tennis and netball courts in a compliant acrylic coated hard court. At least two good quality tennis courts should be suitable for competition with lights. A card/pin access system, and booking system is required as well as at least one competition lit netball court and one additional basic or shared netball/tennis court.
4. In the short term, open up the asphalt tennis courts for free access community use, provide nets and a small associated car park directly off the street.
5. Provide a functional, family friendly building, to support social and competition uses on the netball and tennis courts.
6. Consider retrofitting the old soccer building for shared netball and tennis clubrooms. Provide windows facing the netball courts and a landscaped area in front of the building overlooking courts. If this facility is not feasible to upgrade, or cannot over-look the courts, construct a new facility.
7. Remove the current netball building and replace with a shelter with seats between two courts.



4.2 Dog park

The dog park is highly valued. It has the capacity to cater to different type of dogs and their owners. Some additional amenities, shade and seating are desirable. The division of the area to create a smaller area for small dogs would also cater for more users.

Improvements recommended by the community included: "Better facilities". "Proper high fence and border around dog park". "Split the dog park into two or three separate sections so dogs can be exercised separately, and more people can use it at the one time.

Actions:

8. Consider providing a smaller enclosure suitable for small dogs and owners who principally seek a social experience or do not want to mix with large and more active dogs.
9. Provide some additional seating in the dog off-leash area and plant strategic shade trees across the site.

4.3 The velodrome

The velodrome has a high potential to increase casual use and support development programs for children and regular carnivals in the season.

The cricket wicket in the centre of the velodrome offers an opportunity over-flow or school use. Some additional track-side basic facilities are required.

The velodrome does not have a power source, undercover seating or shelter for a commissaire.

Improvements recommended by the community included: "Change the cycling track to multi use - athletics and cycling". "Cycling track fence upgrade". "Cycling upgrade (3), 'Old velodrome - used to be popular and is in poor condition". "Cycling track, only a couple of events per year, "Need to activate the centre of cycling track".

Key improvements to the sporting complex that were identified by club representatives included: The provision of additional formal events at the cycling club for children and adults, perhaps even a regular, weekly track evening, and Mountain Bike hub to be placed at the cycling track.

The track needs to have a legal height fence and a power supply.

Actions:

10. Retain the cricket wicket in centre of the velodrome for overflow cricket for juniors or veterans if needed.
11. Remove the old cycling building and replace with a track side shelter commissaire's box, appropriate fencing and arrange for velodrome users to share toilet facilities in old soccer building.
12. Provide a power source to the track, and undercover seating, track side.



4.4 Exercise circuit

The site is large enough to provide an off-road exercise circuit for walkers and joggers.

Actions:

13. Provide a perimeter exercise circuit around the park than minimises any road crossing or connecting with vehicles and is separate to a footpath.
14. Surface this off-road trail with a consolidated gravel pavement suitable for running and walking and use by people with a pram or mobility device.

4.5 Playing fields

Soccer-football facilities

There would seem to be demand for at least foundation and social level football as well school skill development games at the sporting complex. Whilst they are well constructed the grounds are not maintained to a high standard. A number of children say they play in Launceston. The club rooms appear be suitable to improve for multiple clubs to use and open up for other community uses.

Improvements recommended by the community included: "Upgrade the soccer surface as it is uneven." "Lights on soccer ground for training." "Rebuild the Soccer grounds." "Home soccer games." "Upgrade soccer fields." "Combine athletics and soccer club rooms." "More public soccer/hockey fields." "Upgrade the sporting complex so that junior soccer and cricket can have games here not travel to Launceston. Athletics and soccer club facilities upgraded and combined."

Clubs also made the following comments: "Would love to be able to play some tournaments or other comps in George Town but the facilities are not up to standard. Both grounds and facilities."

"Need to work with the schools to develop programs and pathways through the sport. The club once asked to use the AFL ground for training and was then charged \$200 for the privilege. No agreement that they know of with Council."

Actions:

15. Retain the playing fields in a basic condition and maintain them all year (old soccer grounds and old grandstand) for school, over-flow sport and preseason use etc. The old grandstand requires full renovation (this is in progress).
16. Development of a second oval/re-use of an existing oval to compliment aspirational infrastructure, dependant on future budgets, grant and advocacy opportunities.

Cricket ground

The facilities for cricket are good and have potential to be used more - especially in winter for soccer-football for example. An entry off Davies Street would be very practical.

If it becomes difficult for the club to continue to maintain the turf wicket on the ground, then they may need to migrate to a synthetic wicket competition in the longer term.

The community said: "Always need to consider the needs of equipment (roller needs to be replaced in 3-4 years.)" "The ground is relatively small, but this is not really an issue. Training nets are in a good condition."

Improvements recommended by the community included: "Combine football and cricket facilities into one ground."

Clubs also identified: "Would like to have access to cricket from Davey Street rather than coming into the main entrance. Would like to see a more defined road network through the precinct."

Actions:

17. Retain the cricket training area (and ensure access for community use)
18. Consider reviewing ground allocations if the cricket club no longer requires a turf wicket
19. Move football-soccer, Little Athletics, Touch football (training) to the cricket ground and so they can share facilities.

Australian Rules football ground

Football is very important to the community and improvement of facilities – lighting and female friendly facilities is essential. Female change rooms should be part of the main club room that can be shared for other activities, rather than as an add-on in the vicinity. Access and parking arrangements need to be addressed to limit their impact on the rest of the reserve. Seating and ground improvements are needed in addition to an agreement with the Council over the use and sharing of facilities as this appears to be the most resourced facility, and other club and community use should be encouraged. Lighting and irrigation improvements are in progress.

What the community said about football:

“AFL is the most popular sport in George Town.” “The AFL ground can be hard at times and gets wet in the pockets during winter. Have to cancel training sometimes.” “Female change rooms – coming, and really needed, New lights getting put up at AFL ground - some funded by Council, some funded by Bell Bay.”

Improvements recommended by the community included: “Combine football and cricket facilities into one ground.”

The clubs said improvements needed included: “Seating and field upgrades for the football club”. “The need for a grandstand at footy club and seating around the grounds”.

Actions:

20. Demolish the multiple single-use facilities around the ground and develop one combine pavilion/club room, with the female friendly change rooms – (as an extension to the main pavilion not a separate structure), allowing for shared use.
21. Provide formalised car parking around the oval and in a car park to the north.
22. Provide additional seating with shelter at the ground.



4.6 Visual quality

There are some trees in clusters around the grounds and around parts of the precinct's perimeter - but there could be a more considered approach to landscaping, and especially around the road edges.

Part of the reserve could be planted with specimen trees to create a different landscape setting (forest) that would attract bird life and provide a new and interesting setting for walking trails. Alternatively, the site could be used for community horticulture - for example a community orchard, or gardens.

The community survey respondents suggested there is need to improve the visual quality of the precinct. Comments included:

"Make the sports complex inviting/Improve the general look. The street appeal is poor. It needs a general upgrade. It looks tired and run down. Make the grounds more attractive. Make the appearance better."

A number of similar comments were made about the entry to the reserve.

Actions:

23. Prepare a planting and street edge plan for the reserve perimeter with limbed-up native trees. Incrementally implement as resources allow, for example with clubs and schools.
24. Replant a portion of the reserve, from the dog park to the front of the reserve.



4.7 Fencing

The nature and condition of fencing around the reserve detracts from its visual quality and is restricting access to facilities such as tennis, where there is demand for free access.

The fencing of the park perimeter consists of green wire, which is difficult to see past, and it has barbed wire on top. In conjunction with the inside fencing around the courts, fencing is unwelcoming and is largely unnecessary. While there are a range of trees around the reserve, it does not present as a consistent landscape treatment and anything other than a fringe area of land, rather than a sporting complex that encourages community use.

The fence does not encourage people to use facilities such as the courts and the velodrome which have the ability to be used on a social and casual basis.

Apart from the AFL ground, the dog park and tennis courts, fencing is largely unnecessary.

Improvements recommended by the community included: "Improved and better-quality fencing." "Landscaping and fencing needs to be improved". "A good clean up... Roads/plants/gardens. It looks bad." "Better looking entrances/frontage".

Improvements to fencing were also recommended by the clubs: "Fencing upgrades", "Fencing around football ground, Crothers Oval (cricket)", "Cycling track at sports complex."

Actions:

25. Consider incrementally replacing or removing sections of the fence to allow public access to the tennis courts, while retaining a fence around the football ground.
26. Retain the fence around the dog off-leash area.



4.8 Access road and parking

The current and proposed access and parking arrangements dissect the park and creates risks for pedestrians. The extent of the roadways planned in the previous master plan appears unnecessary and will be very expensive.

Improvement to parking and access was the major improvement recommended by the community and clubs. Improvements recommended by the community included: "Parking is not logical - lots of space but no real parking areas." Fix up roads and make it tidy. Sealing of road surfaces." "Improve the road, especially get rid of the gravel." "Upgrade entrance to the grounds." "Better parking and sealed areas." "Improved parking area at football club" Road access/maintenance/car parking (30% of respondents), was the main improvement recommended by clubs.

Club representatives also suggested: Improved road access (from Davies Street) in addition to better road networks throughout the complex.

Actions:

27. Upgrade the main entry to reserve in conjunction with a street tree planting program around the precinct.
28. If the land to the east of the reserve is developed, create a new road along the boundary of the complex so houses can overlook the precinct.
29. Rather than creating a central spine roadway and car park –introduce a small designated car park immediately adjacent to each facility with an entry off the road.

30. Create a formalised car park for the football ground to the north east of the oval and in association with the clubrooms, and one at the rear of the cricket oval clubrooms.
31. Create a small car park for the tennis club off Marguerite Street.
32. Create pathways and trails in outlying areas as required.

4.9 General maintenance

The sports fields do not appear to all have regular maintenance, other than mowing etc.

If it is not possible to manage all the current playing fields to a standard required, improving two main fields at a higher quality and leaving the others as more overflow space may be more achievable.

Clear arrangements should be agreed with users about what maintenance can be done and by when.

Only one comment was made by a community member relating to general maintenance: "Having all the grounds mowed and watered and generally looked after better."

General maintenance and upkeep (including tidiness and aesthetics) was the second highest ranked improvement (26%) suggested by clubs.

Actions:

33. Review maintenance tasks undertaken by clubs and Council and determine what is affordable in the future, in terms of the number of playing fields, quality, accessibility and include in a use agreement with users, schools etc.
34. Put in place a more regular turf management program for the sports fields.

4.10 Lighting

It is imperative that fields of play are lit to maximise the opportunities for the community to participate and ensure public recreation facilities are utilised to their full extent.

Some basic security lighting around key club rooms may also encourage use. Wherever possible lighting should be solar and sensor lighting.

The lighting of the tennis courts is a priority to encourage social use.

Improvements recommended by the community related to lighting included: "Better sport field lighting arrangements for night football and possibly twilight cricket."

Improvements recommended by the clubs relating to lighting included: Field lighting and electricity upgrades. "Provide lighting on the soccer ground."

Actions:

35. Continue to upgrade the sports lighting on the main football ground.
36. Provide lighting to all playing surfaces following any consolidation where increased use is likely.
37. Provide basic security lighting in the precinct associated with main building, entries etc., using solar where possible.
38. Light at least two tennis and one netball court.



4.11 Support facilities and toilets

Some buildings on the reserve are functionally obsolete or in poor locations to serve future uses. Facilities and especially toilets are not accessible when the community and clubs need them.

A focus on three strategically located family friendly clubrooms that offer community access and shared used by clubs is important for sustainability, in addition to ensuring some modest satellite shelters and seating structures are available at each of the playing spaces to facilitate community use (including the velodrome).

The general community made a large number of comments about change facilities and toilets, and their accessibility: "Upgrade toilets" (6 responses). "Open public toilets" (2 responses). "Access to facilities owned by Council but run by clubs." "Change room and toilet facilities need to be accessible for everyone not just football." "Upgraded change rooms facilities/buildings" (8 responses). "Better football change rooms (4 responses)".

"Combined athletics and soccer club rooms/Multipurpose indoor facility."

"Better change rooms" (2 responses), "especially for females but overall, they all need an update/When we hire it for school the toileting facilities are terrible." "Multi use facilities for merging of smaller clubs/Make a communal clubroom with room for all clubs for gear, functions etc." "More toilet/shower facilities. Kitchen upgrade. Need to share facilities."

Clubs also identified the need for: Better public toilets (22%) and "Better change room facilities for clubs" (18%). These received the third and fourth highest responses for improvements needed. A multi-use building is needed with

areas for different activities and multi-functional spaces.

Actions:

- 39. Focus on upgrading three main buildings at the sporting complex, to provide family friendly toilets and change facilities, access and space for community group uses and public toilets for reserve users, as well as compliant change rooms for competition sports for each club in season.
- 40. Proceed with female friendly change rooms and incorporate these as part of the main football club building.
- 41. Upgrade the old soccer building for use by multiple clubs and the public, and encourage community use of the social areas for gentle exercise, community clubs/meeting spaces etc.
- 42. Maintain the cricket building for use by cricket, soccer-football and little athletics and other community uses.



4.12 The caretakers house

There is a former caretakers house adjacent to the main entrance on Marguerite Street, that is currently unoccupied. Under the planning scheme it cannot be used for permanent accommodation as the site is zoned for Recreation.

The house is well located close to the main entrance, the netball and tennis courts and the cycling velodrome. During events it could act as a control centre.

With the need to activate the sports precinct, the house has the potential to become a site for a variety of community and recreational programs such as those associated with the Active George Town program, and other sports development programs and initiatives.

There may be opportunities for other stakeholders and external support services such as YMCA to base programs and services at the house, to help activate and bring new people to the sports complex.

Assuming there are no major problems with the building, potential improvements to the house may need to include basic upgrades to the kitchen and toilet facilities to make them accessible. The building could support events and operations at the velodrome and host suitable small program or meeting /office spaces. If minor modifications can be made to building cost effectively to make it suitable for public use, the house could be used for small groups to do programs. Gentle exercise, club meetings or events support are desirable uses. etc., Alternatively, if the house cannot be satisfactorily be made a public building, it could be let as a curators or care takers house.

Actions:

- 43. Investigate the use of the caretakers house for recreation programs, sports club meetings and events related activities.



4.13 Programming and club development

There are opportunities to grow sports such as soccer-football, cycling, tennis and netball and to create more opportunities and use through sports development programs and casual use.

It may be possible to hold some of the Healthy George Town programs at the sporting complex and to work closer with peak bodies and schools to reinvigorate clubs and multiple social sport activities, as well as to develop a program of events for the reserve.

It may also be possible to establish a combined sports club at the site with different groups instead of developing a number of separate clubs that are too small to be cost effectively run and rely on additional volunteers.

Providing shared spaces that can be used by casual users for events and programs that might include an upgraded caretakers house should facilitate greater use.

Actions:

44. Facilitate program and club development opportunities at the sporting complex and create access to shared facilities through user agreements that encourage casual use.
45. Work with peak bodies and schools to investigate competitions and events at the reserve and support the growth of groups or a combined sports club.



5 | Master plan principles and objectives for change

In preparing the master plan a number of principles have been identified to guide decision making, as well as key objectives for change.

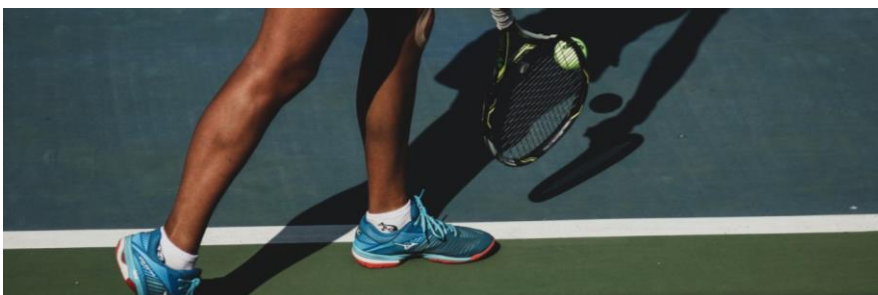
5.1 Principles

1. Maintain a fewer number of sports grounds at a higher quality, to encourage safe competition and training for sports and reduce the overall costs to the community.
2. User agreements should acknowledge the costs to Council and clubs, encourage shared use and increase participation in sport.
3. Participation can be increased through increasing the attractiveness of the site as a place to be; visual quality and amenity and sense of value of the facilities.
4. Encouraging use from schools may encourage students to later play sport and use the sports complex more.
5. The sports complex should be accessible to the whole community (with the exception of the football ground, which is restricted on game days if there is a gate to be charged).
6. Minimise the provision of any additional separate buildings. If fewer more functional and shared access buildings are provided, they will be better used, and more cost effective to manage and maintain in the long term.
7. All fields of play should be lit, as the primary use is training on weekday nights.
8. Provide a smaller number of car spaces close to specific destinations within the sporting complex, and short entryways from the nearest road. Sealed roads will divide the park, and require considerable funds to implement, as well as create a risk for pedestrians especially children during sport days.
9. External fencing where required should be black in colour to enable clear views through the fence. Support this fencing with limbed up trees to enhance its appearance.
10. Some form of program and one event per sport once a year, will encourage use and support existing clubs.

5.2 Summary of overall objectives for change

1. Improve the welcoming and landscape character of the site by upgrading and removing unnecessary fences
2. Provide a consistent pattern of street trees around the perimeter of the sports complex
3. Formalise and improve the entry to the site and in particular to the Australian Rules football oval.
4. Redesign access road entry and parking facilities to minimise the cost and impact on the site. Provide convenient direct access entry to each facility on the park, at the tennis club the cricket ground and the football ground.
5. Consolidate sports activities onto fewer shared better quality playing fields until usage grows.
6. Rebuild the netball/tennis courts side by side providing a minimum of two lit tennis courts and one lit netball court suitable for competition and one further shared court for multiple activities including basketball. These should be served by a car park of the street, a shared pavilion, shelter, lights and at least one accessible to the community.
7. Provide a perimeter shared path around the outside of the reserve.
8. Facilitate the sports present at the reserve to work more closely together, and in conjunction with schools and Healthy George Town activities grow each sport present.
9. Work with the clubs, peak bodies and schools to facilitate development programs and devise at least one event/carnival for each sport per year.
9. Utilise the caretakers cottage (where possible) for programs, physical activities, club meetings and event related activities.
10. Plant additional specimen trees throughout the reserve.
11. Facilitate residential land uses overlooking the reserve over a road, at the rear in the long term, and where possible integrate the pipeline easement into the reserve.

Development of a Hillwood Recreation Master Plan.





6 | The master plan

Fencing

- Selectively replace sections of the fence to encourage public access and make more welcoming, while retaining a fence around the football ground and dog park.
- Replace green wire with black wire

Netball and tennis courts

- Redevelop the courts with a good base, and acrylic coated hard court and lights
- Retain minimum of four courts side by side for tennis and netball
- Open up asphalt tennis courts for free access community use with nets and parking and include basketball hoops
- Retain two good quality tennis courts suitable for competition with lights and with a card/pin access and booking system plus a competition netball and a shared netball /tennis court.
- Provide a functional, family friendly shared rooms by retrofitting the old soccer building

Velodrome

- Replace the old cycling building with a track side shelter/ commissaire's box and fencing
- Share toilet facilities in the old soccer building
- Retain the cricket wicket in centre
- Provide a power source to the track

Access and car parking

- Upgrade the main entry
- Design street tree planting around the precinct
- Create a new road along the eastern boundary of the complex if developed, and in any new residential area, ensure houses can overlook the complex
- Introduce a new entry for cricket from Davies Street
- Create a small designated car park immediately adjacent to each facility with a direct entry off the road, rather than one main roadway through the park
- Create a small car park for tennis/ netball off the street for casual use.



Exercise circuit path

- Provide a perimeter exercise circuit around the park - minimise road crossings
- Surface this with consolidated gravel pavement suitable for running and walking and used by people with a pram or mobility device.

Soccer-football pitches

- Retain the playing fields and grandstand in a basic condition for school and over-flow sport and preseason use etc.
- Provide lights and irrigation only if use of existing facilities increases to include competitions.

Lighting

- Continue to upgrade sports lighting for football, netball and tennis
- Provide basic security lighting associated with main buildings, entries etc., using solar where possible.

Cricket oval (main)

- Move football-soccer, Little Athletics, touch football to the cricket ground
- Maintain a good quality surface and share facilities
- Create a direct entry of Davies Street.

Visual quality- tree planting

- Prepare a planting plan for the perimeter with limbed-up native trees
- Consider replanting a corridor of trees from the dog park to the front of the reserve
- Provide selective specimen trees throughout.

Dog off-leash park

- Create an enclosure for small dogs
- Provide additional seating and plant shade

Caretakers Cottage

- Where possible upgrade for community uses: programming, club and community meetings and support facility for events.

Main oval (AFL)

- Demolish the single use facilities around the ground and develop one combined pavilion/club room, with the female friendly change rooms, and encourage shared use
- Provide formalised car parking around oval and a car park to the north.
- Provide additional seating with shelter at the ground.



7 | Summary of Actions

Actions 1-7 refer to Page 9 of the Background Report

1. Open tennis courts at Blue Gum for public use.
2. Redevelop the tennis and netball courts to provide a good court base, surface and lights, adjacent to a shared support facility, as demand requires.
3. Retain a minimum of four side by side tennis and netball courts in a compliant acrylic coated hard court. At least two good quality tennis courts should be suitable for competition with lights. A card/pin access system, and booking system is required as well as at least one competition lit netball court and one additional basic or shared netball/tennis court.
4. In the short term, open up the asphalt tennis courts for free access community use, provide nets and a small associated car park directly off the street.
5. Provide a functional, family friendly building, to support social and competition uses on the netball and tennis courts.
6. Consider retrofitting the old soccer building for shared netball and tennis clubrooms. Provide windows facing the netball courts and a landscaped area in front of the building overlooking courts. If this facility is not feasible to upgrade, or cannot over-look the courts, construct a new facility.
7. Remove the current netball building and replace with a shelter with seats between two courts.

Actions 8-12 refer to Page 10 of the Background Report

8. Consider providing a smaller enclosure suitable for small dogs and owners who principally seek a social experience or do not want to mix with large and more active dogs.
9. Provide some additional seating in the dog off-leash area and plant strategic shade trees across the site.
10. Retain the cricket wicket in centre of the velodrome for overflow cricket for juniors or veterans if needed.
11. Remove the old cycling building and replace with a track side shelter commissaire's box, appropriate fencing and arrange for velodrome users to share toilet facilities in old soccer building.
12. Provide a power source to the track, and undercover seating, track side.

Actions 13-16 refer to Page 11 of the Background Report

13. Provide a perimeter exercise circuit around the park than minimises any road crossing or connecting with vehicles and is separate to a footpath.
14. Surface this off-road trail with a consolidated gravel pavement suitable for running and walking and use by people with a pram or mobility device.
15. Retain the playing fields in a basic condition and maintain them all year (old soccer grounds and old grandstand) for school, over-flow sport and preseason use etc. The old grandstand requires full renovation (this is in progress).



16. Development of a second oval/re-use of an existing oval to compliment aspirational infrastructure, dependant on future budgets, grant and advocacy opportunities.

Actions 17-22 refer to Page 12 of the Background Report

17. Retain the cricket training area (and ensure access for community use)
18. Consider reviewing ground allocations if the cricket club no longer requires a turf wicket
19. Move football-soccer, Little Athletics, Touch football (training) to the cricket ground and so they can share facilities.
20. Demolish the multiple single-use facilities around the ground and develop one combine pavilion/club room, with the female friendly change rooms – (as an extension to the main pavilion not a separate structure), allowing for shared use.
21. Provide formalised car parking around the oval and in a car park to the north.
22. Provide additional seating with shelter at the ground.

Actions 23-26 refer to Page 13 of the Background Report

23. Prepare a planting and street edge plan for the reserve perimeter with limbed-up native trees. Incrementally implement as resources allow, for example with clubs and schools.
24. Replant a portion of the reserve, from the dog park to the front of the reserve.

25. Consider incrementally replacing or removing sections of the fence to allow public access to the tennis courts, while retaining a fence around the football ground.
26. Retain the fence around the dog off-leash area.

Actions 27-34 refer to Page 14 of the Background Report

27. Upgrade the main entry to reserve in conjunction with a street tree planting program around the precinct.
28. If the land to the east of the reserve is developed, create a new road along the boundary of the complex so houses can overlook the precinct.
29. Rather than creating a central spine roadway and car park –introduce a small designated car park immediately adjacent to each facility with an entry off the road.
30. Create a formalised car park for the football ground to the north east of the oval and in association with the clubrooms, and one at the rear of the cricket oval clubrooms.
31. Create a small car park for the tennis club off Marguerite Street.
32. Create pathways and trails in outlying areas as required.
33. Review maintenance tasks undertaken by clubs and Council and determine what is affordable in the future, in terms of the number of playing fields, quality, accessibility and include in a use agreement with users, schools etc.
34. Put in place a more regular turf management program for the sports fields.



Actions 35-38 refer to Page 15 of the Background Report

35. Continue to upgrade the sports lighting on the main football ground.
36. Provide lighting to all playing surfaces following any consolidation where increased use is likely.
37. Provide basic security lighting in the precinct associated with main building, entries etc., using solar where possible.
38. Light at least two tennis and one netball court.

Actions 39-43 refer to Page 16 of the Background Report

39. Focus on upgrading three main buildings at the sporting complex, to provide family friendly toilets and change facilities, access and space for community group uses and public toilets for reserve users, as well as compliant change rooms for competition sports for each club in season.
40. Proceed with female friendly change rooms and incorporate these as part of the main football club building.

41. Upgrade the old soccer building for use by multiple clubs and the public, and encourage community use of the social areas for gentle exercise, community clubs/meeting spaces etc.
42. Maintain the cricket building for use by cricket, soccer-football and little athletics and other community uses.

Actions 44-45 refer to Page 17 of the Background Report

43. Investigate the use of the caretakers house for recreation programs, sports club meetings and events related activities.
44. Facilitate program and club development opportunities at the sporting complex and create access to shared facilities through user agreements that encourage casual use.
45. Work with peak bodies and schools to investigate competitions and events at the reserve and support the growth of groups or a combined sports club.