

BRUCE COMBEN RESERVE MASTER PLAN

DRAFT



JULY 2020

HOBSONS
BAY CITY
COUNCIL



Prepared by Otium Planning Group
in association with Peddle Thorp,
SportEng, JWC Engineers, Ground Science
and Alpha Environmental

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Introduction

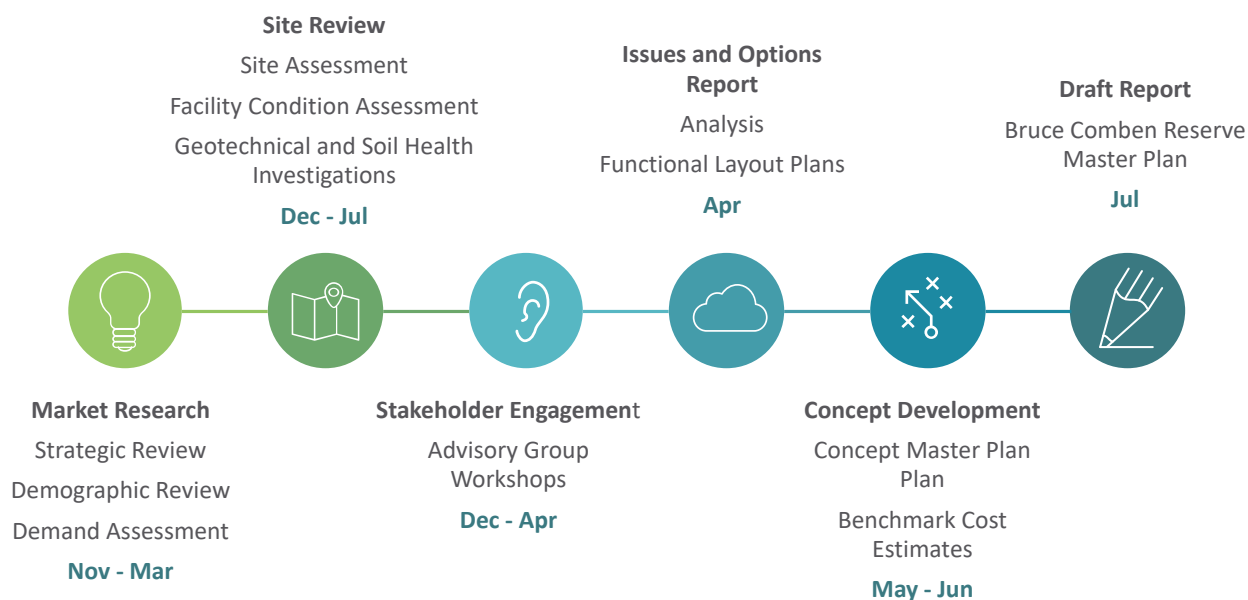
The Hobson Bay City Council has prepared a draft Bruce Comben Reserve Master Plan.

The Master Plan considers the impact of Council's recent decision to develop a new aquatic centre at Bruce Comben Reserve and will guide the planning, development, maintenance and management of the reserve for the long term.

This Master Plan report identifies the key challenges facing Bruce Comben Reserve and recommends a set of improvements.

The project has involved background research, a demand assessment, site review and detailed geotechnical and soil health investigation, a stakeholder engagement process and design options analysis. The engagement process has involved workshops with an appointed Stakeholder Reference Group represented by tenant clubs, local residents and local interest groups.

The Hobson Bay City Council now seeks input from the broader community and invites residents to make submissions through the public exhibition period.



The Site

Bruce Comben Reserve (BCR) is located off Central Avenue, Altona Meadows.

The reserve is bounded by Central Avenue to the north; Skehan Boulevard to Henry Drive to the east; Ascot Street to the south and Skeleton Creek to the west. The reserve is approximately 17ha in area and principally accessed from Central Avenue.

The reserve functions as an active and passive recreation reserve. The active elements are located in the northern section of the reserve and comprise three playing fields, cricket nets, sports pavilion and four tennis courts.

The passive elements of the reserve include an extensive path network, a playground, treed areas and a large open grassed area.

In addition, Cooraminta Children's Centre is located at the north-eastern corner of the reserve. The facility is identified as 97 Central Avenue with street frontages to Skehan Boulevard and Central Avenue.



Soil Condition

Bruce Comben Reserve is a reclaimed wetlands area where “clean fill” has been used to establish the active and recreation reserve.

There is also an identified asbestos area and new fill area that is subject to a Soil Management Plan.

A detailed review of the all previous site assessment reports together with additional targeted geotechnical and soil health investigations has been undertaken. The site investigations conducted have been comprehensive and include over 100 samples taken from across the reserve and different depths. Samples have targeted areas being considered for development onsite including the proposed aquatic and leisure centre and sports fields.

The material across the site has been found to be either imported ‘Fill Material’ or disturbed natural soils down to the depth of investigation. Undisturbed natural soils were not encountered during this investigation.

The geotechnical results shows the fill comprises:

- A topsoil layer with apparently reasonably controlled filling to a nominal depth of 0.5m, underlain by
- Variable and less controlled filling for the 0.5m to 1.5m interval, underlain by
- Poorly controlled filling from 1.0m / 1.5m to 2.5m. This will be a consideration for the design and construction of the aquatic facility and sports fields.

The soil health results identified some exceedances of the adopted ecological assessment criteria. However, the reported exceedance **does not** exceed ecological or human health investigation levels of soils and therefore don’t preclude the development of the aquatic and leisure centre and sports fields.

In addition to the geotechnical and soil health investigations undertaken:

- JWS Engineers (Structural Engineers) notes that the Cooraminta Children’s Centre is a precedent for future building development. The footings are of a depth that is below the fill and wetlands soils
- SportEng (Sports Field Engineers) noted undulations in the playing fields that point to poor ground conditions. The design requirements of proposed sports fields will need to consider this issue.

Site Photos



Key Challenges

Six key challenges have been identified.



Sport participation growth means additional sports fields are needed

The three tenants cater for over 1,000 players at Bruce Comben Reserve, all of which are growing. If participation growth occurs in line with population growth, an additional 294 players will be playing at the reserve by 2041.

The provision of four rugby fields, three cricket fields and six touch footy fields in a shared field arrangement is recommended to cater for this demand.

Providing access to two Sepak Takraw courts in a shared court arrangement with public tennis courts will adequately cater for this sport in Hobsons Bay.

Future demand for a contemporary Early Years Centre in Altona Meadows

The Cooraminta Children's Centre has 67 children registered. These numbers have fallen in recent years with a surge of private operators. However, State Government now fund three and four-year old kindergarten as part of a 10-year reform. This initiative will be introduced in Hobsons Bay in 2022 and will likely lead to a resurgence into these types of Early Years Centres.

There are two rooms that currently cater for 55 children. The current optimum standard room size is to cater for 33 children per room. This relates to a 1 carer to 11 children. The higher number capacity rooms are desired in Early Years Centres to cater for future demand.

There is a demand to maintain and improve the Early Years Centre in Altona Meadows.

Future demand for a contemporary Aquatic and Leisure Centre in Altona Meadows

The proposed new aquatic facility will provide for a current primary catchment of 57,212 people and when taking into account a secondary catchment will reach a 'district' facility catchment of 70,000 to 100,000 people. This facility catchment will increase as population grows in Hobsons Bay and the bordering neighbourhoods to the north and west of Hobsons Bay in Wyndham City Council.

A modern aquatic and leisure facility will cater for all key user groups including for leisure/adventure, fitness and training, education and therapy.

Opportunity to create a community heart in Altona Meadows

Key stakeholders have identified the need for a community heart in Altona Meadows and view the aquatic centre as an opportunity to deliver this idea. The facility design will consider spaces and activities that bring community together to socialise in addition to the traditional aquatic facilities.

Varied site conditions

The soil health investigation results identified some exceedances of the adopted ecological assessment criteria. However, the reported exceedance **does not** exceed ecological or human health investigation levels of soils and therefore don't preclude the development of the aquatic and leisure centre and sports fields.

Resident amenity impacts

There is support for an aquatic centre that can deliver a community hub and heart for Altona Meadows. However, the location and design of the centre and car parking must consider the impacts on local residents. Concerns raised were the impact of increased traffic, noise, built form on site lines to the open park areas and lighting.

The site related resident impact concerns will be considered as an overarching design principle for the aquatic centre when preparing concept plans.

In response to neighbourhood traffic concerns, Council has prepared an Integrated Traffic Management Plan that includes:

- Council advocacy to VicRoads for duplication of Central Avenue and also improve the Point Cook Road and Princess Freeway interchange.
- A Local Area Movement Plan project is being developed to provide active transport links to the new facility that links to public transport nodes (train stations and bus stops and services).

Development Options

The **vision** for the Bruce Comben Reserve Master Plan is to create a **community heart**. A place for:

- Sport and recreation
- Aquatic and leisure
- Early years learning
- Community gathering
- Play and adventure
- Community health and wellbeing.

The reserve **design principles** include:

- Provide a modern contemporary indoor aquatic and leisure facility of district size capacity. The design will include change facilities for school groups, people with disabilities and families
- Continuity of an early years' service provision onsite
- Continuity of service provision onsite for tenant sports clubs
- The Aquatic Centre, Early Years Centre and Sports Pavilion will be designed consistent with Universal Design Principles and Female Friendly, and environmentally sensitive and water sensitive design principles to be included
- The design will respond to resident amenity impacts including traffic concerns
- The improvements should be developed to future proof for the needs of the community.

The reserve **improvements** include:

- A new aquatic and leisure centre with outdoor plaza space and cafe
- An Early Years Centre
- Two new sports fields that can provide for four rugby fields, two cricket ovals and six touch footy fields
- Maintain the turf cricket oval and install sports lighting. Provide a new maintenance shed to service the main field
- Develop the sports pavilion. The design should provide additional change rooms, a public toilet, improved storage, a covered viewing area offering shelter/shade and consider the relationship with the new sports fields
- Provision of two Sepak Takraw courts on a shared court arrangement with two public tennis courts as part of a new multisport activity space
- Provide a multi-sport activity zone and co-locate with a 'district' level play space and family/social area
- Support landscaping improvements recommended in the 2011 master plan. These include improved signage, park furniture, enhance visual amenity to entry, seal access roads and car parks, construct a pathway network around and through the reserve and plant additional trees. Provide for people with disabilities in improvements.
- Create an off-leash dog park area that is defined outside the sports field boundary
- Maintain the vegetated parkland along Skeleton Creek
- Increase car parking within the park to service the new aquatic and leisure centre and new sports fields
- Investigate traffic design for providing pedestrian crossings for safe access from residential areas to the park across Central Avenue, Skehan Boulevard, MacNeil Avenue and Henry Drive.



Implementation Plan

The recommendations have been prioritised as short, medium or long-term actions:

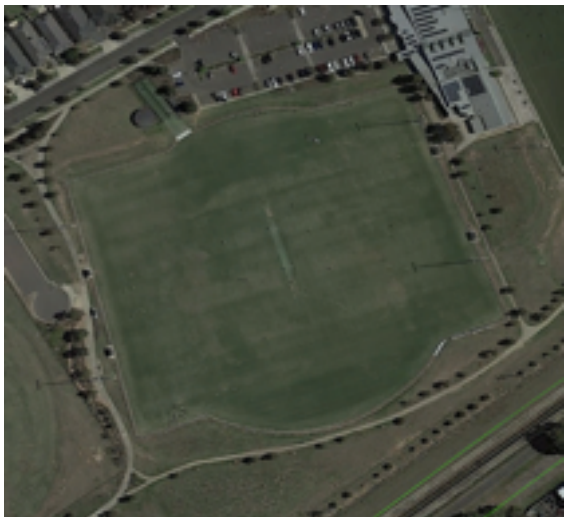
- **Short term** – 1 year
- **Medium term** – 2 to 3 years
- **Long term** – 4 to 5 years

The total estimated cost to implement the master plan over the next five years is **\$7,890,000**.

Plan Reference	Recommendation	Priority	Benchmark Cost Estimates*
1	Proposed site for a new aquatic and leisure centre and early years centre. Design to consider market square and park interface with cafe	Short to Medium - Design Long - Implementation	Independent cost estimate to be obtained as part of detailed design stage of project
2	New multi-sport activity zone and 'district' level play space and family/social area. Provide public tennis courts in a shared court arrangement with two Sepak Takraw courts	Medium	\$1,100,000
3	Create a dog off lead park	Short	\$50,000
4	Maintain the turf cricket oval and install sports lighting.	Short	\$150,000
5	Modifications to junior cricket, rugby and touch fields	Medium	\$400,000
6	New senior cricket, rugby and touch fields and cricket nets	Long	\$1,700,000
7	Develop a new or upgraded sports pavilion with additional change rooms, public toilet, improved storage and covered viewing area	Medium	\$2,000,000
8	Improve Central Ave entrance with wayfinding signage and landscaping	Long	\$20,000
9	Upgrade and extend pathway network	Medium	\$100,000
10	Improve landscaping with shade trees and seating along pedestrian path	Short	\$20,000
11	Maintain the vegetated parkland along Skeleton Creek	Ongoing	Operational budget
12	Increase car parking along Central Avenue entrance road	Long	\$1,200,000
13	Increase car parking west of sports pavilion	Long	\$400,000
14	Increase car parking west within the reserve along Henry Drive	Medium	\$400,000
15	Emergency vehicle access	Long	Cost incorporated in 1
16	Investigate traffic design for providing pedestrian crossings for safe access from residential areas to the park across Central Avenue, Skehan Boulevard, MacNeil Avenue and Henry Drive.	Short - Planning Medium - Implementation	\$50,000
17	Provide a new maintenance shed to service the main field	Medium	\$100,000
18	Opportunities for increased tree planting, seating and outdoor fitness equipment	Short	\$200,000

* Independent cost estimates will be obtained as part of detailed design stage for reserve improvements.

Story Board



Warranties and Disclaimers

The information contained in this report is provided in good faith. While Otium Planning Group has applied their own experience to the task, they have relied upon information supplied to them by other persons and organisations.

We have not conducted an audit of the information provided by others but have accepted it in good faith. Some of the information may have been provided 'commercial in confidence' and as such these venues or sources of information are not specifically identified. Readers should be aware that the preparation of this report may have necessitated projections of the future that are inherently uncertain and that our opinion is based on the underlying representations, assumptions and projections detailed in this report.

There will be differences between projected and actual results, because events and circumstances frequently do not occur as expected and those differences may be material. We do not express an opinion as to whether actual results will approximate projected results, nor can we confirm, underwrite or guarantee the achievability of the projections as it is not possible to substantiate assumptions which are based on future events.

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