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## Gardens Reserve Master Plan 2019

### About this document

This report describes the process undertaken to prepare the Gardens Reserve Master Plan, including background information about the reserve, outcomes from research undertaken, the key findings from consultation carried out, analysis of key issues, and a description of the proposed improvement projects for the reserve.

A master plan determines a broad vision for an area and outlines a number of projects and strategies that are required to be implemented to achieve the vision. Further investigation and feasibility of some of the proposed projects may be required depending upon their scale, likely impact and estimated cost.

It is important to note that projects proposed in the master plan do not directly commit Moyne Shire Council, user groups, Agencies, or any other organisation to a responsibility for their funding and implementation. Projects identified in the master plan will need to be considered against other Council priorities and the availability of external funding opportunities.

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- Kim Freeman, Recreation Development Officer (and Project Manager)

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### Study Consultant Team

Richard Simon  
Director, Simon Leisure Consulting (Project Leader)

Lindsay Fraser  
Director, Land Design Partnership (landscape architect)



Simon Leisure Consulting Pty Ltd  
Office 1, 655 Nepean Highway, Brighton East, Victoria 3187  
M 0458 957 824  
E [richard@simonleisure.com](mailto:richard@simonleisure.com)  
[www.simonleisure.com](http://www.simonleisure.com)

## CONTENTS

<b>1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1. Study Aim and Objectives .....	14
2.2. Study Context and Drivers.....	14
2.3. Study Approach .....	14
<b>3. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND.....</b>	<b>15</b>
3.1. Background Reports and Plans .....	15
3.2. Demographic Characteristics of Port Fairy.....	17
3.3. History of Gardens Reserve .....	17
3.4. Land Ownership, Zoning and Management .....	18
3.5. Public Open Space Context .....	20
<b>4. GARDENS RESERVE EXISTING CONDITIONS .....</b>	<b>21</b>
4.1. Caravan Park.....	21
4.2. Sport and Recreation Facilities.....	24
4.3. Port Fairy Botanic Gardens .....	27
4.4. Access and Circulation.....	27
4.5. Existing Use of the Reserve .....	28
<b>5. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION.....</b>	<b>31</b>
5.1. Overview of Consultation.....	31
5.2. Stakeholders – User Groups .....	31
5.3. Stakeholders – Community .....	32
5.4. Stakeholders – Agency .....	33
<b>6. ANALYSIS OF ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES .....</b>	<b>34</b>
6.1. Netball Courts .....	34

6.2. Sporting Pavilion .....	35
6.3. Recreation Facilities .....	36
6.4. Caravan Park Accommodation .....	38
6.5. Access and Circulation.....	39
<b>7. GARDENS RESERVE MASTER PLAN .....</b>	<b>42</b>
7.1. Plan Development.....	42
7.2. Key Directions.....	42
7.3. Other Recommendations.....	45
7.4. Master Plan Cost and Prioritisation Plan.....	45

## APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Plan Showing Accommodation Options at the Caravan Park
Appendix 2 – Plan Showing Reserve Access and Circulation Features
Appendix 3 – People and Organisations Consulted
Appendix 4 – Port Fairy Connections Plan
Appendix 5 – Gardens Reserve Tree Planting Themes Plan



## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Study Background

Gardens Reserve has been an important public open space for residents and visitors to Port Fairy since first reserved as a botanic gardens for recreation in 1859. Since then, the reserve has been expanded in size to its present 11.5 hectares, with its main uses being a botanic gardens, a sporting reserve (from 1881), and a caravan park from the 1950s.



In February 2018, the Moyne Shire Council commissioned a study to develop a master plan for Gardens Reserve in order to respond to several issues and opportunities that had emerged for the site. Issues included ageing Caravan Park infrastructure, inadequate facilities for the sporting and recreation uses, competing uses between Caravan Park patrons and sporting uses, unsafe and ad hoc vehicle circulation, heritage and environmental factors, and vegetation management. Opportunities included building on the reserve's natural setting, providing enhanced recreation options for reserve users and the broader Port Fairy community, and upgrading the Caravan Park to better meet the contemporary needs and aspirations of campers and caravaners.

The aim of the study was to establish a shared vision for Gardens Reserve that not only built on the existing natural features and history of the site, but also strengthened the shared-use of the reserve as a community recreation space, a Caravan Park, and a sports reserve. The master plan has been informed by an extensive review of existing facilities and spaces, inclusive engagement with a range of stakeholders and with Port Fairy residents, and a review of the management and operations of the reserve.

### Strategic Context and Management

Port Fairy has an estimated population of 3,300 people, with a significantly higher proportion of residents aged over 60 years compared to the rest of the Shire and Regional Victoria. Port Fairy is projected to experience up to 25% population growth to 2041, compared to an estimated growth of just over 7% for the whole Shire for a similar period.

Gardens Reserve is the primary public open space on the north side of the Gipps Street bridge, with the only other usable open space being the coastal reserve along East Beach. It also incorporates one of the four caravan parks available in Port Fairy, and the sporting facilities provide for the only football-netball club in town.

Gardens Reserve is made up of four Crown land allotments and a Council-owned land parcel. It is zoned *Public Park and Recreation Zone*, which is the appropriate zoning for the current functions and uses of reserve. The reserve is subject to the following four planning overlays:

1. Design and Development DDO21 (whole reserve).
2. Heritage Overlay HO56 (excludes the Council land abutting Ritchie Street).
3. Land Subject to Inundation LSIO2 (whole reserve).
4. Floodway Overlay FO2 (majority of the reserve).

The Moyne Shire Council is the delegated Committee of Management for the reserve, and manages and maintains the areas used for caravanning and camping, and the Botanic Gardens. The Port Fairy Football and Netball Club is licensed to use the oval, the netball-tennis courts, and associated buildings for 12 months of the year. The Club is responsible for maintaining the oval, and is generally responsible for the maintenance of the other spaces and infrastructure located within the licenced area. The Licence Agreement with Council expired in 2011, and is currently in over-holding.

The preparation of the master plan is supported by various Council planning reports and strategies. They identify Garden Reserve as having several shortcomings with its current infrastructure, and also recognise the opportunity for the reserve to further activate the community in sport and recreation through the provision of improved facilities.

The *Botanic Gardens and Griffiths Street Heritage Citation Report (2012)* defines and describes the key heritage characteristics of the reserve and the adjoining areas, and the *Port Fairy Botanic Gardens Conservation Plan (1997)* outlines a planning context and policy for the management of the Botanic Gardens and the broader Gardens Reserve site. Both reports were important informant documents to shape the directions and recommendations of the master plan.

### Existing Situation

Gardens Reserve is bounded by the Moyne River on its western and southern boundaries, Ritchie Street to the north by, and by Griffiths Street and the back fences of private dwellings to the east. The reserve largely comprises three precincts, however there are no fixed barriers and generally no access restrictions that prevent reserve users and visitors from moving between the precincts. The three precincts are:

1. Caravan Park – outlined in red
2. Gardens Oval and associated sporting facilities – outlined in yellow
3. Port Fairy Botanic Gardens – outlined in green

#### Caravan Park Infrastructure and Operations

The Caravan Park comprises 371 powered sites, 23 unpowered sites (143 additional unpowered sites are utilised only during the Folk Festival), 10 self-contained cabins (3 deluxe, 7 standard), and 49 sites with permanently located vans/ annexes used by patrons with Annual holdings. Council has an aspiration to increase and diversify the accommodation offering to support market attraction and encourage extended seasonal occupancy.

Some of the Caravan Park amenity blocks and other infrastructure are not fit for purpose or are outdated, and require renewal or replacement. Examples are the powerheads, the underground water and electrical services, and some ablutions blocks. The 10 cabins are more than 20 years old and need to be either upgraded or replaced with more contemporary facilities. The



Caravan Park Reception is in good condition but does not meet all needs, as it lacks a meeting room and sufficient secure storage.

The internal road network is predominantly sealed, although some sections of the road pavement are beginning to fail. The main vehicle entrance into the Caravan Park is off Griffiths Street, and brings patrons into the main caravan and camping area.

The secondary vehicle entrance off Bourne Avenue is the entrance through which all Port Fairy Football Netball Club traffic enters the reserve, and is also used by patrons with Annual holdings. The entrance is also used as a second entry during peak demand periods and for events. For this reason, there are some occasions during the year when confusion and conflict occurs at this entrance, ie. when it is servicing both the Caravan Park and the sporting uses simultaneously. All reserve traffic exits the reserve using the Bourne Avenue entrance.

There are no defined pedestrian paths around or through the reserve. Feedback from the Caravan Park management suggests that this contributes to safety issues between vehicles and pedestrians. There are three pedestrian entrances: the Botanic Gardens entrance at the Gipps Street bridge; off Bourne Avenue; and off Ritchie Street. The Botanic

Gardens entrance is the primary pedestrian entrance for people moving between Gardens Reserve and the Port Fairy township, the Wharf Precinct, and other areas of town.

The Caravan Park has continued to grow its profitability since the 2010/11 financial year, growing by approximately 8% per annum. The annual surplus from the operation of the Caravan Park was \$392,542 in 2010/11, and grew to a high of \$726,592 in 2017/18.

For the eight year period from 2010/11, there was a gross operating surplus of \$4,535,716, however, only \$366,953 (or 8%) was available for reinvestment into the Caravan Park. This is due to the current practice of Council each year transferring 33% of annual gross operating surplus into general revenue, and 5% of annual gross operating surplus being levied to subsidise the operations of the Belfast Aquatic Centre (the Port Fairy indoor pool). Given increasing overheads such as wages, utilities and maintenance, the net return to the Caravan Park for park reinvestment and proactive development continues to reduce.

#### Sport and Recreation Facilities and Use

The formal sporting facilities include an oval, two asphalt courts with line marking for netball and tennis, shelters, netball change rooms, the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Grandstand (incorporates undercover seating, a social room, a kitchen/ canteen, and internal toilets), and the sports pavilion with change rooms, a gymnasium, an office, and storage.



Football oval, grandstand and sports buildings

The netball facilities and oval are in good condition, whilst most of the football facilities within the grandstand and pavilion are in average to poor condition, and present with some functional constraints. There are no showers for the netballers and the football amenities are not female friendly, and there are no accessible (disabled) facilities available for players and spectators throughout the existing sports facilities.

The oval floodlighting generally meets the minimum 50 lux required for football training, and the netball court floodlighting exceeds the minimum 100 lux required for netball training.

The Port Fairy Football Netball Club has an aspiration to increase the number of netball courts to four, and generally supports the design principle that any new amenities for male and female players should have the capacity to be utilised by Caravan Park patrons during the summer period, as a strategy to reduce the total number of buildings across the reserve and to avoid unnecessary duplication of amenities.

The sports precinct is used almost exclusively by the Port Fairy Football Netball Club for organised sport during the period between April to August. The Club has two senior football teams and four junior teams, a girls' team (15-18 years), and an Auskick program. The Club also has four senior netball teams, three junior teams, and a NetSetGo program.

The Port Fairy Tennis Club has been a regular user of the netball-tennis courts on Monday and Wednesday evenings for coaching and for social play by members. However, this use is likely to decrease in the future following the recent upgrade of the Club's courts at Southcombe Park, and the soon to be installed floodlighting. The tennis club also uses the Gardens Reserve courts for an annual program of tennis coaching and other tennis activities in January, and this use is likely to continue.

Other regular users of the sports precinct managed by the Port Fairy Football Netball Club include gymnasium users and a personal fitness group, a playgroup, a bridge club, and sheep dog trials.

Gardens Reserve also includes several other sporting and recreation facilities that are available for Caravan Park patrons and local residents to utilise: two cricket practice nets, a recreational tennis court, a basketball court area, three playgrounds, and three BBQ areas.



The tennis court and cricket practice nets are not fit for purpose and need to be removed and/or replaced. The small playground adjacent to the main entrance of the Caravan Park has a poor setting next to the road and behind buildings, has only limited equipment, has no seating, and should be removed. The other playgrounds whilst larger, have no seating and only limited shade, and require upgrading. The Council and the Port Fairy Football Netball Club have identified safety as the key issue for the playground behind the grandstand, as during the football netball season children accessing the playground from the oval/ grandstand area have to cross the internal road and car park.

#### Botanic Gardens and General Landscape

The overall landscape character of the reserve is dominated by Norfolk Island Pines along the Moyne River and Bourne Avenue, and by the Cypress hedge along Ritchie Street. Selective additional plantings along the reserve boundaries and throughout the interior of the reserve will further enhance the landscape value of the site.

There are now only two sections of Gardens Reserve that are referred to as the Botanic Gardens: the southern triangle area and the central lawn area containing the rotunda. The features and qualities of both areas as botanic gardens have been compromised over the years by the introduction of camping in the 1950s. The southern Botanic Gardens area is highly valued by the community, and there is an opportunity through the master plan and its implementation to restore these gardens.



Botanic Gardens southern entrance

### **Analysis of Issues and Opportunities**

Five key issues or opportunities emerged during the master planning.

#### 1. The need for additional netball courts

The Port Fairy Football Netball Club advocated for two additional courts to accommodate the growing number of junior age netballers. It noted that the number of NetSetGo participants has increased from 35 a few years ago to the current 70 participants. The key issue identified by the Club is that two netball courts are inadequate to provide quality training sessions for all teams, ie. some teams have to share a court. It is important to note that teams sharing courts is a common occurrence at most sports reserves and indoor centres accommodating netball clubs, as the key determinant used by most land owners/ managers for providing netball courts is the number required to host competition. At Gardens Reserve, two additional courts will require a substantial area of land that will result in the loss of camping sites.

However, at Gardens Reserve, an opportunity exists to provide a new netball training court in the form of a multipurpose and flexible-use hardcourt. Such a court can consolidate the uses of the other courts that are failing (tennis and basketball), and won't unduly impact upon the loss of camping sites. The proposed multipurpose court could be located adjacent to the existing netball-tennis courts to consolidate all court-based sport and recreation activities, and at the same time provide the additional training court required for the Port Fairy Football Netball Club. The offset to the loss of the camping sites at the location of the proposed site for the court is to convert the existing basketball courts and recreation tennis court into new camp sites.

A fourth netball court is not required and would be a substantial over provision. On any given night, three courts can accommodate a one hour full-court training session for each of the 7 netball teams over a three hour period – this scheduling possibility is considered very generous, ie. one team using a whole court for an hour, even U13 age children. If additional court time is required to accommodate additional teams then training can be scheduled on other week nights.

2. The need for a fit for purpose sporting pavilion and Caravan Park support amenities

As previously mentioned, most facilities and spaces in the grandstand and pavilion are in average to poor condition, are not fit for purpose. Some functional constraints with the present provision and layout of these facilities is also evident. In addition, the women's and men's toilet blocks, which currently service the needs of netballers and netball spectators (and campers in summer), are in average condition.



There is an opportunity to consolidate the separate amenity buildings that currently exist adjacent to the sports precinct with new amenities provided for the Port Fairy Football Netball Club. Consolidating and sharing the facilities would be possible, as the Club mainly requires use during the winter season when this area of the reserve is not being used by Caravan Park patrons, and vice versa during summer.

Whilst the location of the grandstand is fixed, any new change pavilion and social rooms should be more centralised with the netball courts. It is proposed that any new community pavilion comprise of three separate but interconnected pods with different functions:

- a. Community function space and canteen located between the oval and netball courts.
- b. Sports storage and administration, south of the community function space pod.
- c. Change rooms and amenities, south of the sports store and administration pod.

One rationale to separate the functions and spaces, is to maximise the integration and connection of the community function space and canteen with the oval and the netball courts, particularly the opportunity to create

views across both the oval and the netball courts from the facilities. Another advantage to plan for permeability between the three proposed building pods, is that it supports a building design and development performance criteria that buildings in a floodplain should minimise the potential to disrupt flood water flow, and should be aligned with their longitudinal axis parallel to the direction of flood flow.

The estimated total area required for the community social room and pavilion is 750sqm. This includes an allowance for a small over provision of toilets and showers and accessible facilities to accommodate their dual use by the sports precinct users and campers. A key to the functional and aesthetic success of any new building will be that it is permeable and doesn't present as a large barrier between the oval and the courts and the proposed family recreation space. In addition, it will be important that the building respects the heritage features of the grandstand, and that both sides of the building are attractive and welcoming.

3. Improving the offerings of active and passive recreation and leisure facilities throughout the reserve, and the integrated relationship with external infrastructure within close proximity of the reserve

An opportunity exists to integrate all sporting and recreation infrastructure into the one location within the reserve, and to maximise the potential for it to be flexible and have multiple uses. As previously mentioned, the ageing recreational tennis court, cricket practice nets and basketball courts can be replaced with new infrastructure that can be integrated with the proposed additional netball training court. Activity options that can be incorporated into the multipurpose court include a basketball half-court, a tennis hit-up wall with cricket stumps painted on them, a rock climbing wall on the rear of a hit up wall, and four squares painted onto the court surface.

The benefits of integrating the facilities is that they become part of a new sporting and family recreation precinct on the reserve, which includes the oval, the two existing netball-tennis courts, the proposed multipurpose court, a proposed new playground, and a new BBQ/ picnic area with seating.

The sporting and family recreation precinct will become a new 'attractor' for the Caravan Park and a destination for the reserve. The proposed new playground and BBQ/ picnic area will work in tandem with the proposed upgrade of East Beach with the playspace being upgraded to regional standard. A strong path and visual connection between each site will avoid



the unnecessary duplication of playspaces having to be installed at both locations.

Building on the possibilities to introduce new informal recreation opportunities within Gardens Reserve, it is proposed that two jetties be installed along the Moyne River. The jetties will significantly improve camper access to the river for water-based activities, as well as facilitate new experiences for campers and other visitors to the reserve. The jetties will become vantage points to enjoy new views and to better appreciate the environmental values and features of the Belfast Lough and Moyne River environs, and be new places to fish, sit and relax.

#### 4. Re-assessing the mix of accommodation options within the Caravan Park

An overall business objective for the Caravan Park is to increase the number of visitations annually, the length of stay of visitors, and the dispersal of business beyond peak seasonal usage periods and events. This will be achieved by a combination of factors: improving/ upgrading the ageing infrastructure; adding new features or 'attractors' into the site; and offering different accommodation options.

Whilst the income from cabins has been reasonably consistent over the past three years, the master plan study investigated the potential to increase the number and diversity of cabins in response to:

- the current condition and limited offerings of the existing cabins,
- the demand for more contemporary cabins,
- the demand for a mix of cabins that can suit a range of needs, including family cabins, double cabins to accommodate groups of friends, smaller/ intimate cabins for couples, and cabins that are wheelchair friendly, and/or
- eco-cabins that are environmentally sustainable by being built and operated with minimal impact on the environment and are designed to blend in with the surrounding landscape.

On the site of the current cabin village, it is proposed to increase the number of cabins from 10 to 18. Other proposals are to create a 'village' environment by introducing a new cabin layout plan, improving the landscaping and plantings, and by establishing a central social/ garden area within the village. The unpowered camping area within the current cabin

precinct will be lost with the proposed expansion and reconfiguration of this area. However, all sites are expected to be replaced with new sites possible on the land that will become available after the relocation of the Caravan Park Depot to the basketball court area.

The master plan is also proposing to establish a smaller cabin accommodation area to assist in orientating the park onto the strengths of the river environment to capture the views across the Moyne River, and for holiday makers to better experience the unique setting created by the Norfolk Pines along the western edge of the reserve. Two to four cabins are recommended initially, possibly focused as eco-cabins to complement the proposed site.

It is estimated that up to 27 powered sites will be lost as a result of the proposed new multipurpose netball court and river cabin accommodation area. However, there will be an overall net gain of an estimated 30-35 new powered sites in areas that become available following the removal of the recreational infrastructure at the southern end of the oval (the recreational tennis court, the cricket practice nets, the playground, and the BBQ shelter).



Example of a new deluxe cabin

5. Enhancing access and circulation throughout the reserve and connection with other local sites

The key issues relating to vehicle access and the road network are:

- Confusion and conflict created between campers and sports precinct users entering the reserve at the Bourne Avenue entrance.
- General safety of pedestrians throughout the reserve.

A strategy to separate the vehicles of sports precinct users and campers during the winter season, is to eliminate the opportunity for 'sports' traffic to turn left out of the Bourne Avenue entrance. This will prevent sports traffic from accessing the oval, netball courts and pavilion from the east side of the oval. A response to this is to utilise the caravan and camping area immediately north of the oval as the designated sport precinct car park in winter, and in the process assigning a dual purpose to it. This will mitigate the current ad hoc car parking occurring under the Norfolk Pines between the netball courts and the Moyne River.

Other changes proposed for the road network include road surface repairs as required, and the installation of additional 5kmh signs throughout the reserve.

Several pedestrian links are proposed within Gardens Reserve to improve safety and to better link sub-precincts. Connections between the reserve and local sites outside of the reserve are proposed in order to encourage broader community and visitor use of the sporting and recreation facilities within the reserve. Some of the proposed connections include a new path along the Moyne River to connect the Botanic Gardens to the sports precinct, and extensions to this path to Ritchie Street and to the Bourne Avenue reserve entrance, which will significantly strengthen the link between the Caravan Park and East Beach. To supplement these linkages between the Caravan Park and East Beach, it is recommended that new pedestrian crossing points over Griffiths Street should be installed at the intersections with Hughes Avenue and Bourne Avenue.

A more visionary approach for the section of path between the Botanic Gardens and the sports precinct is to install it as a boardwalk along the edge of the Moyne River within the estuarine wetland and saltmarsh. The boardwalk would become an iconic feature of not only Gardens Reserve and the Caravan Park, but for Port Fairy as well with its inclusion within the broader path network throughout Port Fairy.

## Key Master Plan Directions

The overall objective of the Gardens Reserve Master Plan is to establish an integrated planning framework for the balanced improvement of the sporting facilities and the Caravan Park, and to facilitate and enable increased community use of the reserve.



The key directions of the master plan are listed below, and should be read in conjunction with the master plan drawing and annotations on pages 11 and 12. To read a brief rationale for each recommendation contained in the master plan, refer Section 7.2.

1. Expand and reconfigure the existing cabin village layout by adding up to 8 new cabins (for a total of 18 cabins), establishing a central social/ garden area, and improved landscaping and plantings.
2. Establish a second cabin accommodation area with two to four cabins (possibly as eco-cabins) in the area south of the oval with views across the Moyne River.
3. Upgrade the rotunda and develop a new Village Green/ meeting place for campers, which could host performances, social games, events, and small markets.
4. Install a new Camp Lodge with views across the Moyne River, incorporating a kitchen, a camper lounge to support social engagement and group activities, toilet amenities, a BBQ area, and a small playground.



5. Progressively repair/ replace ageing and non-compliant Caravan Park infrastructure.
6. Remove the existing sports buildings and replace them with a new Community Sporting Pavilion, with change room amenity areas and public toilets located to enable them to be dual-use sporting and camper amenities.
7. Install a new multipurpose court (for a total of three netball courts), and include infrastructure and line marking to facilitate a variety of active recreation uses other than netball. Consider covering the court.
8. Create a new sporting and family recreation precinct incorporating the oval, the multipurpose court, a new playspace to regional standard, informal seating, and sheltered BBQ/ picnic facilities.
9. Remove the ageing recreational infrastructure located at the southern end of the oval (the cricket practice nets, recreational tennis court, the playground, and the BBQ shelter), and re-route the park road around the oval, and install new plantings to visually separate proposed the new camping sites from the sporting precinct.
10. Enhance the Botanic Gardens through new plantings, path upgrades, and new furniture, in accordance with the directions of the 1997 Botanic Gardens Conservation Plan.

### Master Plan Implementation

The Gardens Reserve Master Plan recommends more than 40 separate projects for the reserve. The total estimated cost for full implementation of the master plan is approximately \$8,680,000.

The practicality and order of implementation of most projects will be subject to a number of factors and criteria before proceeding, including availability of funding, future priorities of Council and other stakeholders, the broader needs of the community, and further investigation, research and consultation concerning recommended projects.

The directions contained in the master plan do not commit Council or other organisations to a responsibility for funding.









Caravan Park	Sport	Other Reserve Improvements
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Replace the chain-mesh fence along Griffiths Street with one that complements the Botanic Gardens fence.</li> <li>2 Enhance the caravan park entry, including matching the fence and gate treatments at the Botanic Gardens entrance.</li> <li>3 Extend the Caravan Park Reception to provide a meeting room and store room, and provide staff car park.</li> <li>4 Remove the existing small playground</li> <li>5 Reconfigure the cabin village layout to provide a central meeting space. Add up to 8 new cabins and upgrade/replace the existing 10 cabins (for a total of 18 cabins).</li> <li>6 Relocate the caravan park depot and combine with a bin store</li> <li>7 Develop the existing depot site into new camping sites.</li> <li>8 Relocate the boom gate to incorporate the proposed new camping sites and provide a new boom gate at the existing car park.</li> <li>9 Re-purpose the existing second office/store to become a ticket booth for the Port Fairy FNC.</li> <li>10 Provide additional powered caravan and camping sites</li> <li>11 Relocate the two Annual vans/ cabins to the Annuals' area.</li> <li>12 Upgrade the existing playground and include a new BBQ &amp; picnic shelter and seating.</li> <li>13 Treat the ground surface to establish a shared-use camping area (summer) and designated football spectator car park (winter).</li> <li>14 Remove the existing toilet blocks (x 2) and shower blocks (x 2)</li> <li>15 Use plantings to provide the Annuals' area with a landscape setting</li> <li>16 Remove the existing pittosporum hedge, recreational tennis court, cricket practice nets and playground, and develop the space into new caravan and camping sites.</li> <li>17 Establish a second cabin accommodation area possibly focused as eco-cabins with views across the Moyne River. Will require removal of existing sites 95, 97, 99, 99A &amp; 100.</li> <li>18 Demolish the Amenity Block, and replace it with a new Camp Lodge, incorporating a camp kitchen, a camper lounge to support social engagement and group activities, toilet amenities, a BBQ area, and a small playground with views across the Moyne River.</li> <li>19 Extend the Laundry to provide a new Amenity Block (replaces Amenity Block removed in No. 18)</li> <li>20 Develop a new Village Green / meeting place to accommodate performances, social games, events and small markets. Upgrade the rotunda, and install recreation features suitable for adults, such as volleyball court, tables with chess tops, etc. Continue to monitor the use of the 8 camping sites along the southern edge in the context of impacting the meeting, social and recreational values of the Village Green.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>21 Upgrade the oval floodlights to 150 lux</li> <li>22 Remove the existing sports buildings and replace with a new Community Sporting Pavilion comprising of change rooms for footballers, netballers and umpires, a canteen/ kitchen, a function room, and storage. Locate the change room amenity areas and public toilets to enable them to be used as dual-use sporting and camper amenities (replaces toilet blocks removed in No. 14). This complex will be defined by three indicative pads: 1. Community function space and canteen, 2. Sports storage and admin, 3. Change rooms/ amenities</li> <li>23 Retain the two netball-tennis courts, upgrade the floodlighting to 200 lux</li> <li>24 New multipurpose netball court (with floodlights to 200 lux) to include infrastructure/ line marking for other active recreation uses, eg. basketball half-court, tennis hit-up wall/ climbing wall and four squares. Consider installing an all weather shelter over this court</li> <li>25 New family recreation precinct incorporating a new playground, shelter, informal seating, and BBQ/ picnic facilities to a regional standard</li> <li>26 Continue to maintain the heritage features of the grandstand. Investigate the re-use of the understorey to accommodate the players gymnasium, community meeting room(s), and an office for the Port Fairy Football Netball Club</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*With any redevelopment of the sporting pavilion and associated buildings, install separate utilities' meters</li> <li>*Commence a rolling program to replace the powerheads throughout the caravan park</li> <li>*Introduce public art where appropriate within the caravan park, and where possible develop them to also be used as informal playspaces</li> <li>*Install interpretive signage throughout the reserve, to note features such as the historic grandstand, the sporting precinct (history), the rotunda, the Moyne River (habitat &amp; history of flooding), and the Botanic Gardens</li> <li>*Strengthen the tree planting around the perimeter of the caravan park where it interfaces with residential properties</li> <li>*Install new pedestrian crossing points over Griffiths Street at the intersections with Hughes Avenue and Bourne Avenue</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Circulation</b></p>	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>27 Upgrade the internal road surface, and install 5 kmh speed signs</li> <li>28 Re-route the park road around the oval, and install new planting to visually separate the new sites and the sporting precinct. Include a turnaround point adjacent to the Amenity Block (No. 19), and convert the space between the bowl and the north-south internal road to grass.</li> <li>29 Install a 2.0 metre path around the oval to connect the proposed new path (No. 30) and the Bourne Avenue entrance to East Beach</li> <li>30 Install a new 2.0 metre gravel path between the Botanic Gardens and the sports precinct</li> <li>31 Install two jetties to enable fishing, small water craft access to the water, and lookouts over the Moyne River</li> <li>32 Investigate the feasibility of installing a boardwalk along the river bank with consideration for the sensitive salt marsh vegetation and cost</li> <li>33 Install a new 2.0 metre path from the sports precinct along the Moyne River to Ritchie Street, and along Ritchie Street to East Beach</li> </ol>	
	<p><b>Botanic Gardens</b></p>	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>34 Enhance the Botanic Gardens through new planting, new furniture and path upgrades, in accordance with the directions of the 1997 Port Fairy Botanic Gardens Conservation Plan (see separate reserve tree planting themes plan)</li> <li>35 Repair the Botanic Gardens historic gate and front fence</li> <li>36 Investigate the feasibility of re-establishing the historic rock wall along the edge of the Moyne River</li> </ol>	

**Gardens Reserve**

Annotations

25.02.19



## 2. INTRODUCTION

Gardens Reserve is located on the banks of the Moyne River, and is an important sporting, recreation, and tourist site for Port Fairy residents and visitors. The reserve incorporates the Gardens Caravan Park, the Port Fairy Botanic Gardens (established in 1859), and various facilities used by the Port Fairy Football Netball Club and Port Fairy Tennis Club.

Port Fairy is one of the three major towns of the Moyne Shire, and is a coastal tourist town well known for its major events, including the Port Fairy Folk Festival. Gardens Reserve is located in the northeast area of town, approximately 600 metres from the Central Activities District and the historic Wharf Precinct, and 200 metres from the popular East Beach swimming area (see Figure 1).

In February 2018, the Moyne Shire Council commissioned a study to develop a master plan for Gardens Reserve. The overall aim of the study was to provide a shared vision for the reserve, including the renewal and development of the Caravan Park facilities, the sporting and recreation facilities, and other open space and associated infrastructure throughout the reserve. The Botanic Gardens has local heritage and cultural significance, therefore, the future directions for this section of the reserve are guided by the Port Fairy Botanic Gardens Conservation Plan (1997).

The resultant Gardens Reserve Master Plan responds to the current and future recreation and leisure needs of the Port Fairy community, whilst balancing requirements for the sustainable commercial operation of the Caravan Park (a key component of the town's overall tourist accommodation offerings) and the historic and cultural significance of the Botanic Gardens.



Figure 1 – Location of Gardens Reserve in Port Fairy



## 2.1. Study Aim and Objectives

The study aim was to develop a master plan for Gardens Reserve that provides a framework for its management, renewal and development to ensure it continues to meet required standards, and community and visitor expectations, for a high use park.

The objectives for the study were:

- Develop a master plan for Gardens Reserve, which meets the future recreation and leisure needs of the Port Fairy community and its visitors, whilst providing where appropriate, the development of community facilities.
- Direct future improvement, development and management of Gardens Reserve.
- Prepare a master plan that is realistic and achievable.

## 2.2. Study Context and Drivers

The need to undertake the master plan was driven by a number of issues and opportunities for Gardens Reserve that had been identified by Council, the Port Fairy Football Netball Club, and other groups with an interest in the management and use of the reserve, including the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority and the Port Fairy Rotary Club.

Key drivers and factors for consideration during the master plan included:

- Ageing infrastructure, eg. amenity blocks, powerheads, and the sporting and recreation infrastructure.
- Competing uses between Caravan Park patrons and sporting uses.
- Inadequacy of the football-netball facilities, eg. the need for additional netball courts, lack of amenities for female footballers and netballers, lack of storage, and the non-compliance of some of the buildings with the DDA and building code.
- Opportunities for the shared-use of facilities between the caravan patrons and the sporting groups.
- Traffic management within the reserve, eg. the condition of internal roads, and the ad hoc car parking by sporting patrons.

- Lack of pedestrian connections both within the reserve and to other areas within the township.
- Heritage considerations associated with the Botanic Gardens.
- Flood risks associated with the adjoining Moyne River.

Another key consideration was how the master plan could influence the overall operational sustainability of the Caravan Park business through growth in patronage, length of stay, and dispersal of business beyond peak seasonal usage periods and events.

## 2.3. Study Approach

The study comprised of five main phases:

1. Review of relevant background reports and plans.
2. Site investigation and first round of community and stakeholder engagement.
3. Needs and issues analysis and preparation of reserve concept plan options.
4. Development of draft master plan, and public exhibition of Council endorsed master plan (second round of community and stakeholder engagement).
5. Finalise master plan and study report.

An internal project team oversaw the direction of the study, which was undertaken by sports and recreation planning consultant, Simon Leisure Consulting.

### 3. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The Gardens Reserve Master Plan was informed by a number of planning considerations. This section provides an overview of the key planning and contextual factors considered and assessed during the study.

#### 3.1. Background Reports and Plans

The following planning reports and strategies are important references to inform the strategic development of Gardens Reserve.

- Moyne Shire Council Plan 2017-2021.
- Active Recreation Reserves Review (2009).
- Moyne Shire Recreation Strategy 2014-2024.
- Great South Coast Regional AFL, Cricket and Netball Strategy 2019 to 2033 (draft November 2018).
- Botanic Gardens and Griffiths Street Heritage Citation Report, an excerpt from the Port Fairy Heritage Review (2006 - 2012).
- Port Fairy Botanic Gardens Conservation Plan (1997).

The following is a summary of the key information and directions for Gardens Reserve from the above reports.

##### [Moyne Shire Council Plan 2017-2021](#)

The Council Plan 2017-2021 guides the work of Council to 2021. The Plan is grouped into seven categories of services, each with a strategic goal and supporting objectives. The relevant goals and objectives are noted below.

#### 1. Infrastructure

- Objectives:
- Partnering with community to improve buildings and other infrastructure
  - Providing infrastructure that suits community needs
  - Delivering infrastructure that helps the community come together and share experiences
  - Providing accessible and sustainable facilities
  - Ensuring new developments have appropriate infrastructure to cater for future growth.

#### 2. Communities

- Objective:
- Providing activities for people of all ages and abilities
  - Preventing or responding to major emergency events and incidents (floods).

#### 3. Economy

- Objective:
- Continuing to work with Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism (GORRT) and other regional groups to increase and enhance tourism.

#### 4. Liveability

- Objective:
- Providing pathway networks to encourage families to walk and cycle together.

##### [Active Recreation Reserves Review \(2009\)](#)

The scope of the Active Recreation Reserves Review was to review 17 active sport and recreation reserves within the Moyne Shire and develop a long-term strategic direction for how Council should support reserve committees in the future. For Gardens Reserve, the report identified the following three priority directions for the sporting area:

- Gaining income from the Caravan Park and having it spent on the reserve.
- Maintenance of the grandstand.
- Maintenance of the surrounds of the pavilion.

##### [Moyne Shire Recreation Strategy 2014-2024](#)

The Recreation Strategy outlines principles, goals and strategies for Council to continue leading, facilitating, advocating for, and partnering with others for the delivery of quality sporting infrastructure and services. The Strategy identifies the following recreation objectives:

1. Increase participation in physical activity and recreation.
2. Support partnerships with clubs, groups and committees.
3. Provide recreational facilities that meet the changing needs of residents.
4. Inspire all members of the community to realise the benefits of sport, recreation and physical activity participation.

5. Provide and/or facilitate community access to an appropriate range of places, settings and built facilities that support sport and recreation.
6. Adopt a place-based framework for service delivery that provides tailored responses for the specific needs of individual townships and/or the stage of developmental of community clubs, groups or organisation/s.
7. Work in partnership with State and Federal governments and their agencies to attract funding resources.

Whilst there are no specific directions or recommendations for the sporting and recreation infrastructure available at Gardens Reserve, the Strategy does recommend ...

*Develop a master plan for high use recreation reserves to guide future facility and infrastructure provision, including consideration of additional facilities that support informal recreation, physical activity and social gathering. (Ref: p. 20)*

#### [Great South Coast Regional AFL, Cricket and Netball Strategy 2019 to 2033](#)

The Strategy provides the strategic framework to guide the future development of AFL, cricket and netball across the Great South Coast Region (includes the municipalities of Glenelg, Moyne, Warrnambool, Corangamite, and Southern Grampians). Four priorities have been identified to guide future facility provision and sports development throughout the region:

1. **Priority 1 Existing Facilities**  
Achieve agreed facility standards and functionality, and maximise the use and carrying capacity of existing facilities.
2. **Priority 2 Regional Facilities & Talent Pathways**  
Plan and develop regional facilities in key areas, considering regional needs, innovation in facility provision, and support for talent pathways, programs, and competitions.
3. **Priority 3 Build Capacity**  
Develop the capacity of clubs, their people, and their culture.
4. **Priority 4 Enhance Relationships**  
Continue to enhance the relationships between AFL, cricket, netball, and government in the planning and provision of facilities and programs.

The report notes that Gardens Reserve is a Local level in a three-tiered facility hierarchy for AFL venues (Local, Regional, State), and identifies the following issues with available football facilities at Gardens Reserve:

- Poor condition of umpire change rooms, and are not female friendly.
- Average condition of away player change rooms, and are not female friendly.

#### [Botanic Gardens and Griffiths Street Heritage Citation Report \(2012\)](#)

The report defines and describes the key heritage characteristics of the area known as the Botanic Gardens and Griffiths Street Precinct Port Fairy, which is of historical, social, aesthetic and architectural significance to the Shire of Moyne.

The master plan study area contributes a majority of the land within this Precinct, with the balance being the private residential allotments in Griffiths Street and Bourne Avenue, and their respective streetscapes. The relevant information from the Citation Report is included Sections 3.3 and 3.4.

#### [Port Fairy Botanic Gardens Conservation Plan \(1997\)](#)

The Conservation Plan outlines a planning context and policy for the management of the Botanic Gardens and the broader Gardens Reserve site (ie. the sporting precinct and Caravan Park), which acknowledges and reflects the historic and cultural significance of the Botanic Gardens and the adjoining Griffiths Street historic precinct.

The report notes that the Moyne Shire Council in 1997 determined that the conservation policy and management plan sections of the report be concerned only with the southern triangular section of the reserve. The Gardens Reserve Master Plan is consistent with the directions of the Conservation Plan for the Botanic Gardens (which is the southern triangular section of the reserve), however, has applied the themes of the historic and cultural significance of the larger reserve precinct to the future planning for the balance of Gardens Reserve.

#### [Other Reports Reviewed](#)

- Moyne Shire Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021.
- Economic & Tourism Land Use Analysis – Issues & Opportunities (2017).



- Translation of Port Fairy Coastal Hazard Assessment (2017).
- Port Fairy Local Floodplain Development Plan (2014).
- Port Fairy Coastal & Structure Plan *Consultation Report* (2017).
- AFL Preferred Facility Guidelines (2012).
- AFL Preferred Facility Guidelines – ADDENDUM (2015).
- Netball Victoria Facilities Manual (2017).

### 3.2. Demographic Characteristics of Port Fairy

A review was carried out of the population characteristics of Port Fairy<sup>1</sup>, being the residential area predominantly serviced by the facilities and spaces available within Gardens Reserve. The review identified the following relevant demographic characteristics:

- The population of Port Fairy was 3,028 people in 2016, or 18.6% of the total population of Moyne Shire (16,272).
- Port Fairy has a higher median age compared to other surrounding regions and all of Regional Victoria:
  - Port Fairy 50 years
  - Moyne Shire 43 years
  - City of Warrnambool 41 years
  - Regional Victoria 43 years.
- The age profile of Port Fairy confirms that the town is a residential location that is popular for retirees, with a significantly greater proportion of residents within each age bracket from 60+ years compared to the City of Warrnambool and Regional Victoria.
- The SEIFA score<sup>2</sup> of disadvantage shows that Port Fairy residents are slightly disadvantaged in terms of socio-economic profile (998 score) compared to all of Moyne Shire (1,005), but more advantaged compared with the City of Warrnambool (970).

Population projections show that there may be up to 25% growth for Port Fairy to 2041 (an increase of 1,000 people to 4,000 people), compared to an

estimated growth of just over 7% for the whole Shire for a similar period. However, the population of Port Fairy is projected to age, with a much greater proportion anticipated to be over the age of 65 years (27%, compared with 18% in 2016).

These demographic characteristics have implications for the directions for provision of sporting and recreation facilities in the master plan. Notwithstanding the projected population growth, the ageing population will result in a weakening of local demand for sporting facilities to 2041.

The continuing ageing profile of the Port Fairy community will continue to reinforce the importance of Gardens Reserve as a destination that can be easily accessed by residents to participate in low intensity physical activity and recreation, such as walking. The provision of a well-connected pedestrian path network and appropriate park furniture (seating, shade, drinking fountains), and convenient access to toilets, will be the infrastructure and facilities that will become increasingly more important to service this age cohort.

### 3.3. History of Gardens Reserve

The first plot of land that was to become the Gardens Reserve in Port Fairy was a Crown Reserve known locally as the 'Police Paddock'. It comprised of 24 acres and had been used by the Belfast<sup>3</sup> mounted police to graze horses from about 1851, and before that the site had been used as a racecourse from 1845. The land was reserved in 1859 for '*botanic gardens for the recreation of the subjects and people and for no other purpose whatsoever*'.

Plants were donated and purchased, and applications were also made to the Botanic Gardens in Adelaide and Melbourne. It is estimated that between 1859 and 1873, Baron Ferdinand Von Mueller (Director of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens) donated 4,100 plants and 800 packets of seeds to the Belfast Botanic Gardens.

In 1873, the Belfast Botanic Gardens was permanently reserved as botanic gardens by the then Belfast local council, and a further 3 acres fronting

<sup>1</sup> Source: Economic and Tourism Land Use Analysis, Urban Enterprise (August-2017)

<sup>2</sup> SEIFA score is derived from attributes that reflect disadvantage, such as low income, low educational attainment, high unemployment, and jobs in relatively unskilled occupations. A higher score on the index means a lower level of disadvantage

<sup>3</sup> Belfast was the original name for Port Fairy when it was founded in the 1820s. The Belfast municipal council was formed in 1856, and the town was renamed Port Fairy in 1885

Griffiths Street was added to the Botanic Gardens reserve in 1875. Various alterations and additions occurred to the gardens in the 1880s, including the formation of the sports oval in 1881 when vegetable growing was ceased on a central area of the reserve and the land fenced, ploughed and sown. In 1887 when Bourne Avenue was extended to form an access road to East Beach, the sand from the cutting was used to level the surface of the oval. In July of that year, the local cricket and football clubs first applied to use the oval for sporting purposes. Athletics meets and lawn tennis were first conducted/ played in the gardens in 1893 and 1895, respectively.

The Soldiers and Sailor's Memorial Pavilion was erected beside the oval in 1923, as another memorial to the First World War. The central mound area of the gardens was embellished in 1934 with the erection of the Annie Williams Memorial Bandstand.

In 1952, the reserve for a botanic gardens was revoked by the Belfast local council, and re-reserved for the purpose of a 'public park and recreation' to enable the Council to give occupancy to other sporting clubs. Recreational camping in the reserve appears to have occurred very seldom, if at all, until 1953 when caravans were first permitted in the area around the oval. The introduction of caravans into the reserve was accompanied by the gradual decline of the reserve as a botanic gardens.

In order to extend the area available for camping and caravan sites at the reserve, the Council purchased an area of about 8 acres along the northern edge of the reserve in 1964. Further development of the reserve as a caravan park in the late 1980s and 1990s included the addition of new amenity blocks and 10 timber cabins.

[Refs: the Botanic Gardens and Griffiths Street Heritage Citation Report (2012) and the Port Fairy Botanic Gardens Conservation Plan (1997)]

### 3.4. Land Ownership, Zoning and Management

#### Ownership

Gardens Reserve combines four Crown land allotments and a Council-owned land parcel for a combined area of approximately 11.5 hectares.

#### Zoning

All areas of the reserve are zoned *Public Park and Recreation Zone* (PPRZ) – see Figure 2. The PPRZ is an appropriate zoning for the current primary functions and uses of Garden Reserve.

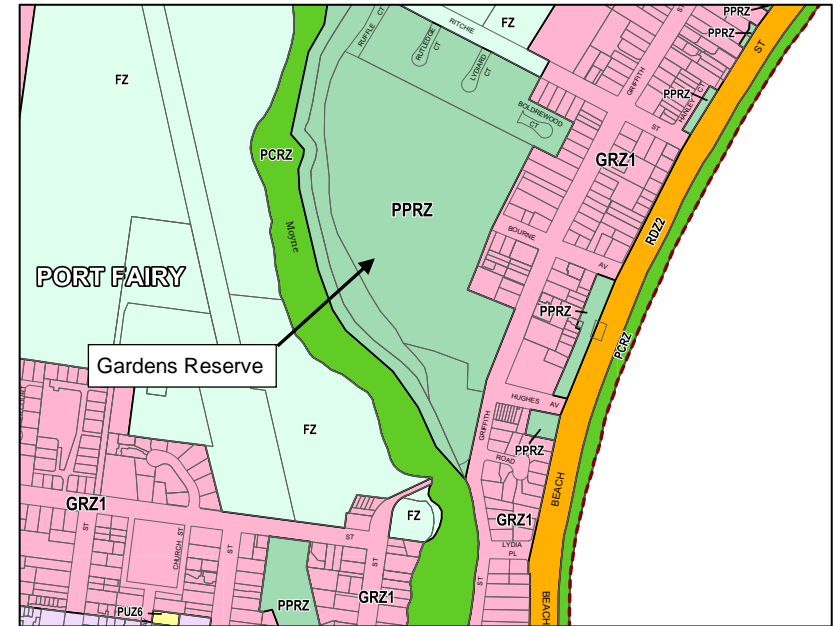


Figure 2 – Gardens Reserve Planning Zones

The reserve is subject to the following planning overlays:

1. Design and Development DDO21 (whole reserve).
2. Heritage Overlay HO56 (excludes the Council land abutting Ritchie Street).
3. Land Subject to Inundation LSIO2 (whole reserve).
4. Floodway Overlay FO2 (majority of the reserve).

Developments occurring on land under **DDO21** are subject to the following design objectives:

- To ensure development respects the historic scale and pattern of residential and commercial areas of Port Fairy
- To respect the historic scale and pattern of residential and commercial development of Port Fairy
- To ensure new development around the character areas provides an appropriate setting for those areas

- To encourage development which does not have a detrimental effect on the high scenic and environmental values of the area
- To protect existing native coastal vegetation and to encourage additional appropriate planting.

The land under **HO56** is part of the larger Heritage Overlay for the Shire of Moyne, and has the following purpose:

- To conserve and enhance heritage places of natural or cultural significance
- To conserve and enhance those elements which contribute to the significance of heritage places
- To ensure that development does not adversely affect the significance of heritage places
- To conserve specified heritage places by allowing a use that would otherwise be prohibited if this will demonstrably assist with the conservation of the significance of the heritage place.

Whilst none of the places and buildings within Gardens Reserve and subject to HO56 are included on the Victorian Heritage Register, the following places are noted as 'significant':

- Botanic Gardens
- Norfolk Island Pines and Aleppo Pines
- Botanic Gardens Lodge and garden
- Soldiers and Sailor's Memorial Pavilion
- Annie Williams Memorial Bandstand.

The whole reserve is subject to inundation as a result of flooding of the Moyne River and the Belfast Lough. One extreme flood in March 1946 and a number of minor floods have been recorded in Port Fairy. The 1946 flood caused severe impacts in Port Fairy, including destroying bridges and damaging the Wharf Precinct, and completely inundated Gardens Reserve. Other major floods are reported to have occurred in 1870 and 1894, with the most recent flood to have impacted Gardens Reserve occurring in 1978.

The Port Fairy Floodplain Development Plan incorporates land under the **LSIO2** and **FO2** and establishes minimum design and development performance criteria for buildings and works in Port Fairy affected by the Floodway Overlay and the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay.

These include:

- Be on the highest available natural ground
- Be constructed to minimise potential for disrupting flood water flow
- New dwellings must not obstruct natural flood flow paths or drainage lines
- The floor level of any new or replacement dwelling must be finished at least 0.6 metres above the 100 year ARI flood level
- Dwellings should be aligned with their longitudinal axis parallel to the direction of flood flow.

In addition to the above criteria for buildings and works, the Plan also notes that fences should be designed and constructed to minimise the likely effects of flooding, that is, fences should not divert or obstruct floodwater unduly, and not have the potential to trap debris.

With Gardens Reserve being a public recreation facility there are exemptions that apply under the planning provisions relating to flooding.<sup>4</sup>

### Management

The Moyne Shire Council is the delegated Committee of Management for the reserve, in accordance with the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978. It manages and maintains the areas used for caravanning and camping, and the Botanic Gardens at the southern end of the reserve.

The Port Fairy Football and Netball Club is licensed to use the oval, netball courts, and associated buildings for 12 months of the year (see right the licenced area denoted by the black line).



The Club is responsible for oval maintenance, and is generally responsible for the maintenance of the other spaces and infrastructure within the licenced area. The Licence Agreement with Council expired in 2011.

<sup>4</sup> Source: Floodplain & Work Team staff member, Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority



### 3.5. Public Open Space Context

Public open space on the north side of the Gipps Street bridge crossing of the Moyne River is restricted to Gardens Reserve and the coastal reserve along East Beach.

The East Beach coastal reserve is largely contained within the stretch along Beach Street between Hughes Avenue and Bourne Avenue, and comprises:

- the Port Fairy Surf Life Saving Club and supporting infrastructure.
- the sloped lawns from Beach Street to the basalt batters edging the beach.
- a sealed path along the beach.
- a public toilet block.
- a number of paths, including a sealed path along the top of the basalt batters between the Surf Life Saving Club and the public toilet.
- formed car parking, most of which has views to the ocean.

The coastal reserve does not contain any formal playspaces and BBQ areas.

East Beach is currently being master planned to improve the landscape amenity of the coastal reserve, and to incorporate improved pedestrian connections, seating, BBQ/ picnic facilities, public amenities, and car parking.

Gardens Reserve is a publicly accessible space, including the three playgrounds, the BBQs, and the sporting and recreation facilities. The design direction for the master plans for Gardens Reserve ('recreational') and East Beach ('environmental') will create a point of difference for the public spaces within each site, and in doing so, will avoid any unnecessary duplication of infrastructure.

Other key areas of public open space available throughout Port Fairy, include the Wharf Precinct, Griffiths Island, Southcombe Park, and the coastal reserve along Pea Soup Beach. Improving the walkability between these areas and Gardens Reserve is a separate project being undertaken by Council.



#### 4. GARDENS RESERVE EXISTING CONDITIONS

A review of the existing conditions at Gardens Reserve was carried out by the project team during site visits conducted in February and March 2018. The site analysis focused on identifying issues and opportunities for the reserve that could be further investigated during the study, particularly when consulting with stakeholders.

Gardens Reserve is bounded by the Moyne River on its western and southern boundaries, to the north by Ritchie Street, and to the east by Griffiths Street and back fences of private dwellings along Griffiths Street.

The reserve largely comprises three precincts, however there are no fixed barriers and generally no access restrictions that prevent reserve users from moving between the precincts. Figure 3 shows the three precincts:

1. Caravan Park – outlined in red
2. Gardens Oval and associated sporting facilities – outlined in yellow
3. Port Fairy Botanic Gardens – outlined in green

##### 4.1. Caravan Park

In relation to the accommodation options, the Caravan Park precinct comprises 371 powered sites (71 in the Gardens area and 300 in the Reserve area), 23 unpowered sites (with 143 additional unpowered sites utilised only during the Folk Festival), 10 self-contained cabins (3 deluxe, 7 standard), and 49 sites with permanently located vans/ annexes used by patrons with Annual holdings. See Appendix 1 for a map delineating the zones for each of the four accommodation types.

Other facilities and infrastructure used mainly by the Caravan Park staff and patrons, includes the Caravan Park Reception, a second office/store at the Bourne Avenue entrance, 4 Amenity Blocks (two of which include Laundries), 2 Men's Toilet-only Blocks, 2 Women's Toilet-only Blocks, 1 Men's Shower-only Block, 1 Women's Shower-only Block, 1 Laundry Block, a Camp Kitchen, the Annie Williams Memorial Bandstand, and a Depot compound. Figure 4 shows the location of this infrastructure.

The condition of much of the Caravan Park infrastructure is average to poor, does not comply with current building standards and codes, and generally does not meet the expectations of 'today's' caravanners and campers.



Figure 3 – Precincts with Gardens Reserve







The key issues with the Caravan Park infrastructure are:

- The powerheads are old and some are failing.
- The ablutions blocks and toilet blocks are ageing, with issues including leaking roofs, cement cancer, and poor quality fixtures and fittings (eg. hot water services are unable to cope with peak demands). In addition, most are not DDA compliant, have poor functional layouts, and lack the necessary number of showers. The exception is the most recently constructed ablutions block adjacent to the Annuals' area.
- Notwithstanding the general poor condition of the ablutions blocks, their general distribution throughout the Caravan Park appears suitable.
- There is an opportunity to consolidate the toilet, shower and laundry blocks in the area along the Moyne River and adjacent to the sporting facilities, as a strategy to reduce the overall number of amenity blocks throughout the Caravan Park.
- The 10 cabins are more than 20 years old and need to be either upgraded or replaced with more contemporary facilities. The setting of the cabin area and adjacent unpowered camping area is only average. This area would benefit from a new landscape layout and additional plantings, which would improve the vistas into the reserve from Griffith Street, an important consideration given that this section along Griffiths Street is the only boundary providing views from the street into the Caravan Park.
- A Camp Kitchen is located within the main area of the Caravan Park between the cabins and the powered sites. It is in fair condition, but is relatively small and has only limited cooking facilities and furniture.
- The Caravan Park Reception at the main entrance off Griffiths Street is in good condition but does not meet all needs, as it lacks a meeting



room and sufficient secure storage. A second office/store building is located at the Bourne Avenue entrance, but is only used by contract security during peak periods and as a ticket booth during the football season.

- The Annuals' area in the northwest corner of the Caravan Park has no vegetation or other landscaping (except the final two rows of vans), which detracts from the overall presentation of this precinct. Introducing some additional plantings would improve the look of the precinct and add shade.
- There are two Annuals located immediately north of the Bourne Avenue entrance, which are disconnected from the formal Annuals area and need to be transferred to the Annuals' area.
- The wheelie rubbish bins are currently stored behind the second office at the Bourne Avenue entrance, along the hardcourt and in the open. This storage option detracts from the overall presentation of this area. A secluded central bin store, or distributed bin enclosures throughout the reserve, would be preferable.
- The services (water, power, gas) supplying the Caravan Park infrastructure and the sports facility infrastructure are not separately metered, which prevents Council being able to recover costs based on the true usage of services by each of these two main user groups. Where possible, any new buildings or sports floodlighting infrastructure should incorporate the capacity for them to be separately metered.
- Water and electrical services infrastructure underground has aged, and is progressively failing. Notably, the first electrical infrastructure along the river was installed in the 1960s 200mm below ground level, and comprises galvanised pipe housing PVC cable with a bare earth wire. This infrastructure is corroding with age and water inundation, and couplings break and shear under the weight of vehicles driving over them. Cables are also undersized for the current supply requirements for caravans.



## 4.2. Sport and Recreation Facilities

The sport and recreation facilities can be grouped into two categories:

1. Facilities utilised by the Port Fairy Football Netball Club (PFFNC).
2. Other facilities.

Figure 5 shows the location of the sporting and recreation facilities.

### Port Fairy Football Netball Club Facilities

The outdoor facilities in this category are available for use by Caravan Park patrons and the local community when not being used by the Club for organised sporting uses.

The oval has approximate sports field dimensions of 165m x 120m. Whilst the narrow pockets at each end of the oval make the overall playing area on the small side for senior football, the dimensions are well within the acceptable range for a senior football oval. Little opportunity exists to either widen or extend the oval without impacting upon existing powered sites, the tree planting around the oval, and existing spectator standing areas. The surface of the oval is good, and water ponding issues in the southwest corner of the oval were rectified by Council works in 2018.

The oval floodlighting generally meets the minimum 50 lux required for football training, however, could be improved if all globes were functioning (lighting audit carried out by Musco in February 2018 identified 5 globes of the total of 20 globes were not working). The AFL recommended lux level for community football night matches is 150 lux. The scoreboard was recently converted to digital and is in good condition.

There are two asphalt courts with line marking for netball and tennis. The surfaces of both courts are in good condition. A shelter extends along the full boundary of the southern end of the courts, and whilst it restricts the permeability of the court area, the benefit for players and spectators is the protection it provides from the prevailing south winds during winter. The netball court floodlighting exceeds the minimum 100 lux required for netball training (Musco light audit, 2018). The Netball Victoria recommended lux level for community netball night matches is 200 lux.

The off-court facilities for netballers include the Rebekah Moroney Memorial Netball Changerooms and a combined netball canteen/ player shelter

building. Both buildings are adjacent to the courts and are in good condition. They meet the needs of the netballers, except that the changerooms do not have toilets and showers. Women's and men's toilet blocks are located either side of the changeroom building, but are in average condition only.

The off-field facilities servicing the football section of the Club include:

- The Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Grandstand (includes undercover seating, the social room with separate bar and combined kitchen/ canteen, and internal toilets).
- The pavilion adjoining the grandstand (includes two change rooms and amenities, the umpires changeroom, a gymnasium, and an office).
- A store/ external bar building.
- A spectator shelter.

All facilities and spaces in the pavilion are in average to poor condition and some functional constraints exist with the present layout of facilities, eg. the social rooms have no direct sightlines to the oval. The amenities are not female friendly, and there are no facilities that are accessible-compliant.









### Other Sporting and Recreation Facilities

The reserve also includes the following sporting and recreation facilities that are largely available for Caravan Park patrons and local residents to utilise:

- Two cricket practice nets (south of the oval).
- A recreational tennis court (south of the oval).
- Hardcourt with basketball backboards (adjacent to the Bourne Avenue entrance).
- Three playgrounds.
- Three BBQ shelters.

The sporting facilities are in average condition and should be upgraded or replaced: the fencing surrounding the cricket nets and the tennis courts needs repair; and the surface of the tennis court is failing. The basketball hardcourt area contains four backboards, and whilst the condition of the backboards and the court surface are good, only limited basketball play is possible as there is no line marking.

All of the playgrounds have constraints in relation to their condition and functionality. The playground adjacent to the main entrance of the Caravan Park has a primary purpose to accommodate the patrons using the cabins and the adjacent unpowered camping site. The playground has a poor setting next to the road and behind buildings, has only limited equipment, and has no seating. It should be removed and the space incorporated into a new layout for the cabin precinct.

The playground located towards the north of the reserve requires maintenance, has no seating, and has only limited shade. It is utilised only during peak periods, so is well located in the reserve to cater for the patrons using the northern caravan and camping sites.

The playground adjacent to the sports precinct and the Moyne River has the most use due to its association with the sports precinct and its location along the Moyne River. It also requires maintenance, has no seating, and has only limited shade. The Club and Council identified safety as the key issue for this playground when being used during the football netball season. Being located across the road from the sporting facilities means that children are often having to compete with vehicles using the internal road and car park. There is an opportunity for this playground to be better located in the future, and to potentially be upgraded to become the main

playground in Port Fairy for public use, and servicing the area north of the Gipps Street bridge, including East Beach.

The three BBQ and picnic facilities are all in good condition and well distributed throughout the reserve. Two of the BBQ shelters are co-located with playgrounds, and this dual provision should continue to encourage break out spaces for campers, sports spectators, and other reserve visitors.



### 4.3. Port Fairy Botanic Gardens

The area denoting the Port Fairy Botanic Gardens has varied considerably since land now known as Gardens Reserve was initially reserved in 1859 for a botanic gardens. There are now only two sections of the reserve that are referred to as the Botanic Gardens: the southern triangle area and the central lawn area containing the bandstand/ rotunda structure (see map in Section 4.1).

The features and qualities of both areas as botanic gardens have been compromised over the years by the introduction of camping in the 1950s. Therefore, when the former council agreed in 1986 that camping cease in the southern triangle area of the Botanic Gardens, it provided an opportunity for this section to be restored as the primary component of the Port Fairy Botanic Gardens.



The Port Fairy Botanic Gardens Restoration Committee was formed in 1986 (now known as the 'Friends of Port Fairy Botanic Gardens'). The group has completed various horticultural projects, maintenance tasks and plantings as part of a longer term objective to restore the gardens. In 1988, the cast iron gates were installed at the southern entrance, being replicas of the gates washed away in the 1946 flood.

Plants within the southern triangle area include a row of 5 Norfolk Island Pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*), 8 Norfolk Island Hibiscus trees (*Lagunaria patersonia*), 3 Canary Island Palms (*Phoenix carariensis*), 1 Olive tree (*Olea europea*), 8 Stone Pines (*Pinus pinea*), 1 Aleppo Pine (*Pinus halepensis*), and 1 Canary Island Pine (*Pinus canariensis*). An asphalt path with a lining of small volcanic rocks divides at the gardens' entry and re-joins at the northern end of the gardens, defining the pedestrian route through the gardens. 'Collins Street' style lights have been installed throughout the gardens, as well as occasional bench seats.

The central lawn area is defined by the hedge of Mirror Bush (*Coprosma repens*) along the northern edge, the 3 Moreton Bay Figs (*Ficus macrophylla*), the remnant Monterey Cypress trunks, and the Annie Williams Memorial Bandstand (erected in 1934). The mound in this area was first proposed in 1883 and completed in 1885. It was top dressed and planted with a specimen tree (Norfolk Island Pine).

The central lawn area was historically used as a picnic and play space during the 1900s, and the space still retains this function as an informal gathering space for Caravan Park patrons. Camping is not permitted within the lawn area (except during the Folk Festival), so the powered sites along the southwest edge are inconsistent with this overall function and use. Continued monitoring of the use of these sites should occur in the context of the open space function of this area to ensure the continued enhancement of the value of this area as a 'meeting and recreational place'.

Other plantings throughout Gardens Reserve with heritage significance, and which define the character of the reserve, are the two strong formal avenue plantings of Norfolk Island Pines in Bourne Avenue (First World War Avenue of Honour) and adjacent to the Moyne River on the western boundary (Lovers' Walk). Some of the gaps in the Lover's Walk avenue have been interplanted with Aleppo Pines.

### 4.4. Access and Circulation

The main vehicle entrance into the Caravan Park is off Griffiths Street, and brings patrons into the main caravan and camping area. This is the main area of the Caravan Park, as it is the section operated and utilised 365 days of the year, including the off-peak periods. The main caravan and camping area is defined by the cabins' area, the central lawn area, and the powered and unpowered sites south of the oval. There is a boom gate at the main entrance to regulate all vehicle entries.

The secondary vehicle entrance is off Bourne Avenue. This entrance is the exit for all reserve traffic, and is used by Annuals and as a supplementary entrance by the Caravan Park management during peak demand periods and events. It is also the entrance through which all vehicular traffic generated by the activities of the Port Fairy Football Netball Club enters the reserve, including training and matches when an admission fee is collected from patrons. For this reason, there are some times during the year when confusion and conflict occurs at this entrance, when it is servicing both the Caravan Park and the sporting uses.

Currently sports precinct visitors can access the sporting areas (oval, netball courts, grandstand and pavilions) by turning right or left out of the Bourne Avenue entrance. A boom gate is installed on the internal road to the off-peak caravanning and camping area to prevent sports visitors driving through this area. Refer Appendix 2 for a map showing existing access and circulation features within Gardens Reserve.

The internal road network is predominantly sealed, including most of the roads servicing the Caravan Park off-peak area and the sports precinct. A network of secondary access roads services the northern area of the Caravan Park, and these roads are unsealed. Sections of the road pavement are beginning to fail.

There is no defined pedestrian path network around or through the reserve, therefore it is important that vehicle speeds are contained to walking pace. Feedback from the Caravan Park management suggests that safety is an issue between vehicles and pedestrians, so the master plan should be recommending strategies to reduce the safety risk.

There are three pedestrian entrances: the Botanic Gardens entrance at the Gipps Street bridge; off Bourne Avenue; and off Ritchie Street. The Botanic Gardens entrance is the primary pedestrian entrance for people moving between Gardens Reserve and the Port Fairy township, the Wharf Precinct, and other areas of town. The entry is well defined by the heritage gates and fence.

An opportunity exists to formalise the walk along the Moyne River, and to incorporate such a walk into a broader pedestrian network throughout Port Fairy by creating a link between the Gipps Street bridge, Ritchie Street and East Beach, via the Moyne River.

The other two pedestrian entrances largely facilitate the walk between Gardens Reserve and East Beach, via Bourne Avenue and Richie Street, respectively. Feedback from Council indicates that there are safety issues for people crossing Griffiths Street at the intersections with Bourne Avenue and Hughes Avenue. Although beyond the study area, the master plan should refer to the need for safe crossing points to be installed along Griffiths Street.

New and prominent information and directional signage at all entrances, and leading to them, would assist to strengthen the link between Gardens Reserve, East Beach, and other destination sites throughout Port Fairy.

#### 4.5. Existing Use of the Reserve

##### Gardens Caravan Park

The Caravan Park is open 365 days a year for business. Its peak occupancy occurs during the summer holiday period, the Labour Day weekend, and Easter, all being the most popular periods for campers and caravanners. The popularity of Port Fairy as a holiday destination is seeing increased business, especially during annual festivals and special events periods, such as Moyneyana Festival (January), Sheep Dog Trials (February), Jazz Festival (February), Folk Festival (March), and Spring Music Festival (October).

The emergence of independent international traveller markets in the region, the growth in 'grey nomads' (September – May/ June), and the extension of shoulder seasons attributable to increased intrastate travel/ weekend escapes, are factors further increasing occupancy levels outside of high-volume seasonal periods.

As previously mentioned, the Caravan Park comprises the following accommodation types:

- 371 powered sites
- 166 unpowered sites (includes the 143 sites utilised only during the Folk Festival)
- 10 self-contained cabins (3 deluxe, 7 standard)
- 49 sites for Annuals

Of the powered sites, 71 are located in the main caravan and camping area, with the balance throughout other areas of the reserve. Similar to the powered sites, 23 unpowered sites are located in the main caravan and camping area, with the balance throughout other areas of the reserve.

Figure 4 shows the per month occupancy rates for 2018 for the cabins, the powered and unpowered sites in the main area, and the powered sites throughout other areas of the reserve. The data for unpowered sites throughout other areas of the reserve is not included as there is only limited usage (Folk Festival weekend only).



The graphs confirm the seasonal nature of the Caravan Park business, and also shows that:

- the highest occupancy rates are recorded by the cabins and the powered sites in the main area of the reserve.
- the powered sites in the main area of the reserve perform at a higher rate of occupancy than the unpowered sites for all months of the year.
- the use of the powered sites available throughout the balance of the reserve drops to little or no use for seven months of the year (May – November).

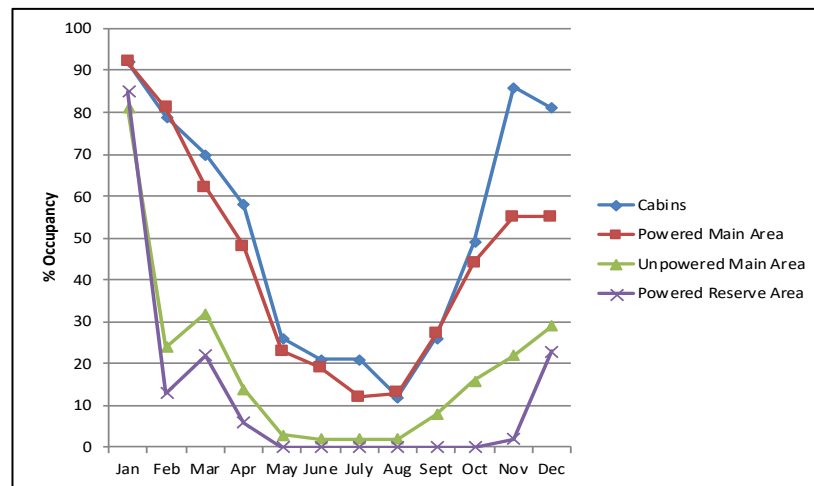


Figure 4 – Occupancy Rate 2017 – All Accommodation Types

The average occupancy rate of the cabins for 2018 was 51.8% (in 2017: 42.5%), which is below the average occupancy rate for all cabins in Victoria at 64.5%.<sup>5</sup>

The Caravan Park has continued to grow its profitability since the 2010/11 financial year, growing by approximately 8% per annum. Figure 5 shows that the annual surplus from the operation of the Caravan Park has grown from \$392,542 in 2010/11 to a high of \$726,592 in 2017/18.

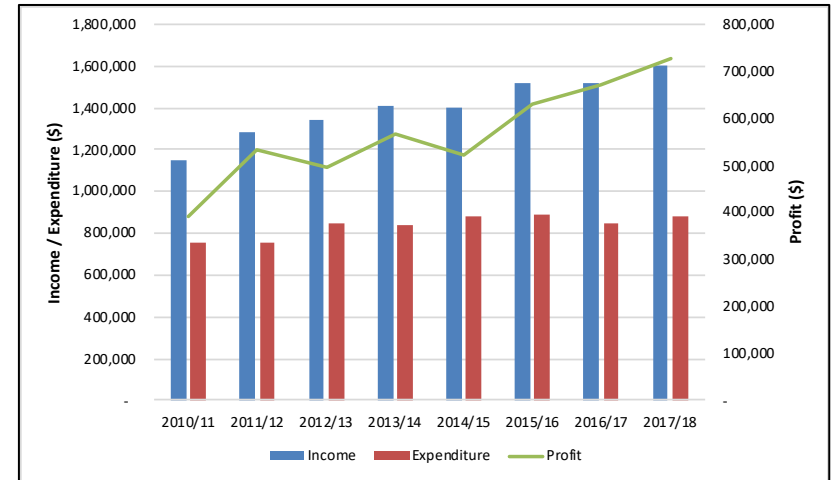


Figure 5 – Income/ Expenditure/ Profit (2010/11 – 2017/18)

It has been Council practice that the annual gross operating surplus from the Caravan Park is shared as follows:

- 33% transferred into Council's general revenue (via a dividend accounting practice)
- 5% levied to subsidise operations of the Belfast Aquatic Centre (the Port Fairy indoor pool).

These allocations create outgoing expenses to the Caravan Park, thereby reducing the net return for the Caravan Park. Given increasing overheads such as wages, utilities and maintenance, the net return to the Caravan Park for park reinvestment and proactive development continues to reduce.

For the eight year period 2010/11 to 2017/18, there has been a gross operating surplus of \$4,535,716, of which \$3,621,787 was transferred to Council general revenue and \$546,976 provided to the Belfast Aquatic Centre, resulting in only \$366,953 available for reinvestment into the Caravan Park over the same period (or just \$45,869 annually on average).

<sup>5</sup> Source: Caravan and Camping Industry Association Newsletter (January 2019)

### Sports Precinct

The Port Fairy Football Netball Club was founded in 1868 and has a long history of occupation at Gardens Reserve since 1887.

The sports precinct is now used almost exclusively by the Club for organised sport, with the main period of use being April to August to coincide with the Hampden League football and netball home and away season (or to September if teams are in the finals). The Club has additional use of the oval and netball courts during the pre-season period (November to March), with the intensity of use and the facilities used varying between the football and netball sections of the Club.

In 2018, the Club had a total membership of approximately 1,150 people, and fielded the following teams:

- Football: Seniors, Reserves, U18s, U16s, U14s, U12s, a girls' team (15-18 years), and an Auskick program (80 participants).
- Netball: Seniors (Open and Divisions 1-3), U17s, U15s, U13s, and a NetSetGo program (70 participants).

The Port Fairy Tennis Club has been a regular user of the netball-tennis courts on Monday and Wednesday evenings for coaching and for social play by members. The courts provide a point of difference to the Club's courts at Southcombe Park, as the Gardens Reserve courts are floodlit. The Club explained that this regular tennis use has reduced in recent seasons, for a combination of three reasons:

- the requirement for the tennis-netball court equipment to be set-up and dismantled with each use.
- the increased use of the courts for organised netball by the Port Fairy Football Netball Club to accommodate increased numbers of netballers.
- the recent upgrade of the courts at Southcombe Park.

The Tennis Club also uses the courts for an annual program of tennis coaching and other tennis activities in January. This program capitalises on the high number of summer campers at Gardens Reserve during this period.

Other regular users of the sports precinct are:

- Port Fairy Football Netball Club members use of the gymnasium.
- a Playgroup of approximately 20 families (the social room).
- a bridge club (the social room).
- personal fitness group (gymnasium and the oval).
- sheep dog trials (oval and social room).

The above uses are managed/ coordinated by the Port Fairy Football Netball Club, and these will be required to be incorporated into any new Licence Agreement for the Club with Moyne Shire Council as the Committee of Management of Gardens Reserve.



Views from the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Grandstand



Player gymnasium

## 5. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

A combination of meetings, interviews, and site inspections were carried out with stakeholders during the study, which included reserve user groups, the Caravan Park management, local residents, Agencies, and Council personnel. Some of the consultation was undertaken during the research phase of the study, whilst other meetings and interviews were designed to receive feedback on preliminary concept plans and the draft master plan. See Appendix 3 for list of people and organisations consulted.

This section reports the key findings from the stakeholder engagement.

### 5.1. Overview of Consultation

The following is a chronological summary of the consultation process.

February	Meeting: Project Control Group
March 2018	Meeting: Project Control Group Meeting: Port Fairy Rotary Club Meeting: Gardens Caravan Park management Meeting: Port Fairy Football Netball Club
April	Telephone: Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority Community Drop-In Session (onsite at reserve)
May	Telephone: Port Fairy Tennis Club Meeting: Port Fairy Football Netball Club Meeting: Project Control Group Telephone: Port Fairy Football Netball Club
June	Councillor Workshop
August	Council Meeting (presentation of draft master plan)
Sept/ Oct	Public Exhibition of draft master plan
October	Teleconference: Project Control Group

Council endorsed a draft Gardens Reserve Master Plan to be placed on public exhibition for a period of six weeks from 3 September to 12 October 2018. As well as the formal meetings and interviews with stakeholders listed above, numerous discussions were held with Council staff during the study.

### 5.2. Stakeholders – User Groups

The key information collected from stakeholders to inform the development of the master plan follows.

#### Gardens Caravan Park Management

- The Gardens Reserve master plan is one component of a broader strategic assessment/ direction for Port Fairy.
- Key strategic objectives for the Caravan Park which need to be considered during the master plan study are:
  - Increase the number of visitors, especially during the period prior to Christmas
  - Expand the dispersal of visitations throughout a 12 month period
  - Increase the length of stay of visitors
  - Increase visitor satisfaction levels.
- Key issues/ opportunities identified:
  - Historically, there has been a lack of strategic focus/ direction/ marketing for the Caravan Park
  - Existing accommodation options lack diversity
  - Opportunity to explore the introduction of a higher standard of cabin (supported by industry research data that shows increased use of cabins, including by international tourists)
  - Poor quality and condition of amenity blocks and other infrastructure
  - Ongoing issues between campers and football use
  - The current inability to separate the utilities' charges incurred by the Caravan Park from those incurred by the Port Fairy Football Netball Club.

#### Port Fairy Football Netball Club

- 2018 is the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Club.
- The Club has a long history of occupation at the reserve, and a strong relationship with the caravanners and campers during the main holiday periods by conducting raffles, fun runs, catering, and other fundraising activities.
- Key issues/ opportunities identified:
  - Floodlighting levels for oval and netball courts need upgrading
  - Netball change room building has no showers



- Pavilion is not fit for purpose, including the size and condition of the player and umpire change rooms and amenities, lack of change rooms to accommodate female footballers, gym space is inadequate, kitchen/ canteen is too small
- Would prefer the oval to be longer
- Two additional netball courts to meet the increased demand for netball, and advocates that a shelter be installed over them
- Location of the playground is a safety issue.
- The Club is currently undertaking concept planning for a new sports pavilion that not only includes improved player amenities, but allows for a larger multipurpose social space capable of better accommodating Club needs and community/ private uses, as a strategy to increase revenue from the hire of the facility.
- The Club supports an improved path network between the sports precinct and the township, as many supporters walk to and from matches. With any new path system, it also supports a new feature entry sequence into the sports precinct from the Moyne River.

#### Port Fairy Tennis Club

- The information collected from the discussion with the Club is largely reported in Section 4.5 in the description of uses of the sports precinct.
- The Club is planning to install floodlights at its courts in Southcombe Park, and this will likely result in all tennis coaching and social play at the Gardens Reserve ceasing. However, the Club wants to continue to have access to the courts for its summer program of tennis coaching and other tennis activities in January, which are largely targeted to campers.

### 5.3. Stakeholders – Community

#### Port Fairy Rotary Club

- Rotary Australia is supporting 'environmental initiatives' in 2018.
- Port Fairy Rotary Club has identified the Botanic Gardens restoration as a preferred community project for the Club. The Club has received a grant for the works and will also commit Club funds.
- The Club is aware of the Port Fairy Botanic Gardens Conservation Plan (1997), and also of the Friends of Port Fairy Botanic Gardens group.

- Key areas identified by the Club to improve the Botanic Gardens include:
  - Continue to plant out the gardens
  - Reinstate the remnant rock wall along the east bank of the Moyne River adjacent to the Botanic Gardens
  - Reinstate/ renew the paths, including the feasibility of re-establishing Lover's Walk
  - Introduce educational signage (botanic names of plants).

#### Community Drop-In Session

The Community Drop-In Session was held at Gardens Reserve during the afternoon of Sunday 22 April 2018. The project consultant was present to speak to attendees, and 'issues and opportunities' plans prepared by the consultant team were displayed.

There were five attendees, and they generally represented the Port Fairy Football Netball Club, the Moyne Shire Council, and the Friends of Port Fairy Botanic Gardens.

Feedback and input raised during informal discussions included:

- Support for a river boardwalk
- Support for the reinstatement of the former rock wall along the east bank of the Moyne River adjacent to the Botanic Gardens
- Support for the development of a central hub in the Caravan Park for campers by retaining the bandstand/ rotunda and the surrounding lawn area
- Investigate options for safer access to and from the playground adjacent to the sports precinct and the Moyne River, or relocate it
- Support for the removal of the old tennis court and cricket nets
- Support for further increasing public art throughout the reserve, eg. wood carvings
- Support for increasing regulatory signage throughout the reserve, eg. road signs 'keep left' and 5km speed limit
- Canteen/ kitchen in the sports precinct is too small to cater for demand on football days and functions in the social room.

#### 5.4. Stakeholders – Agency

##### Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

- DELWP confirmed that the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change acts as landowner for the Crown land parcels within the Gardens Reserve, and that DELWP represents the Minister in this role.
- DELWP provided important information about the existence of native vegetation and some threatened bird species within the Moyne River environs, and noted that any proposals for new infrastructure along the river will require planning approval from DELWP.
- Prior to any works commencing on the Crown land allotments in Gardens Reserve, Land Owner Consent will be required from DELWP to permit the use and development of Crown land.

##### Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority

- The information collected from the discussion with the Glenelg Hopkins CMA is largely reported in Section 3.4 in the description of planning zones and overlays, and the Port Fairy Floodplain Development Plan.
- It was noted that with Gardens Reserve being a public recreation facility, there are exemptions to flood mitigation conditions that will apply under the current planning provisions.



Views to the Moyne River



## 6. ANALYSIS OF ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Five key issues or opportunities emerged during the master planning.

1. The need for additional netball courts.
2. The need for a fit for purpose sporting pavilion and Caravan Park support amenities.
3. Improving the offerings of active and passive recreation and leisure facilities throughout the reserve, and the integrated relationship with external infrastructure within close proximity of the reserve.
4. Re-assessing the mix of accommodation options within the Caravan Park.
5. Enhancing access and circulation throughout the reserve and connection with other local sites.

The following sections review the issues and considerations for these items, and propose recommendations for them.

### 6.1. Netball Courts

The Port Fairy Football Netball Club is the main sporting tenant based at the reserve and comprises a football and netball section. For netball, the Club is currently serviced by two asphalt and floodlit netball courts that have dual line marking for tennis.

In 2018, the Club had the full complement of netball teams for its participation in the Hampden League: 4 senior teams and 3 junior teams, and a NetSetGo program. The Club also enters teams into competitions at the Southcombe Park Stadium.

The Club advocated for two additional courts to accommodate the growing number of junior age netballers with the Club. It noted that the number of NetSetGo participants has increased from 35 a few years ago to the current 70 participants, and that the number of girls wanting to play in the U13 and U15 teams is greater than the number of places available.

The key issue identified by the Club is that two netball courts are inadequate to provide quality training sessions for all teams, ie. some teams have to share a court. Teams sharing courts is a common occurrence at many

reserves and indoor centres accommodating netball clubs, as the key determinant used by most land owners/ managers for providing netball courts is the number required to host competition. The cost of providing courts, and the land area required for courts, often makes it unviable (and unnecessary) to simply provide courts to accommodate all training needs. At Gardens Reserve, two additional courts will require a substantial area of land that would result in the loss of camping sites.

In this instance, however, there is a further consideration when assessing the need and justification for additional hard courts at Gardens Reserve. The two recreational hardcourts in the reserve (the basketball court area and the tennis court) are mainly for the benefit of campers, and are reaching the end of their functional use. An opportunity exists to consolidate these uses with the need for additional netball training space by providing a multipurpose and flexible-use hardcourt.

Such a multipurpose court could be located adjacent to the existing netball-tennis courts to consolidate all court-based sport and recreation activities, and at the same time provide an additional training court for the Port Fairy Football Netball Club. It is proposed that a multipurpose court be provided that meets the court dimension standard for a competition netball court, but which also has capacity for recreational basketball, tennis (hit-up wall), and other informal ball games such as Four Squares. The court will need to be floodlit and by installing a shelter over it will provide a point of difference for netball training compared to the other two courts. A shelter will also benefit campers by providing protection from rain and sun when utilising the court space.

The offset to the loss of camping sites is the potential to convert the existing basketball courts and tennis court into new camp sites.

A fourth netball court is not required and would be a substantial over provision. On any given night, three courts can accommodate a one hour full-court training session for each of the 7 teams over a three hour period – this scheduling possibility is considered very generous, ie. one team using a whole court for an hour, even U13 age children. If additional court time is required to accommodate additional teams then training can be scheduled on other week nights.

## 6.2. Sporting Pavilion

Most facilities and spaces in the grandstand and pavilion are in average to poor condition and some functional constraints exist with the present provision and layout of facilities, such as:

- whilst male footballers are using the change rooms, there is no opportunity for females to shower.
- the amenities are not female friendly, ie. the showers are not cubicled and there are urinals.
- umpires' change rooms are inadequate and do not meet current AFL guidelines for gender equity (recommended size is 25sqm for a Local level facility<sup>6</sup>).
- the social room does not have direct sightlines to either the oval or the netball courts (AFL recommended size is 100sqm for a Local level facility).
- kitchen/ canteen is too small (AFL recommended size is 20sqm for a Local level facility, excludes kitchen store).
- there are no accessible toilet and shower facilities available within the grandstand and pavilion.
- there is little evidence of environmentally sustainable fixtures, fittings and design.

In addition, the women's and men's toilet blocks, which currently service the needs of netballers and netball spectators (and campers) are in average condition only.

There is an opportunity to consolidate the separate amenity buildings that currently exist adjacent the sports precinct with any future new amenities provided for the Port Fairy Football Netball Club (PFFNC). Consolidating the facilities would be possible, as the PFFNC mainly requires their use during the winter season when this area of the reserve is not being used by Caravan Park patrons, and vice versa during summer.

Whilst the location of the grandstand is fixed, any new change pavilion and social rooms could be more centralised with the netball courts. Whilst new sport pavilion facilities are a recommendation in the reserve master plan, it

is proposed that any new community pavilion comprise of three separate but interconnected pods with different functions:

- a. Community function space and canteen located between the oval and netball courts.
- b. Sports storage and administration, south of the community function space pod.
- c. Change rooms and amenities, south of the sports store and administration pod.

The rationale to separate the functions and spaces, is to maximise the integration and connection of the community function space and canteen with the oval and the netball courts, particularly the opportunity to create views across both the oval and the netball courts from the facilities. It is also important that storage and administration is relatively central and conveniently located to both sporting areas. The other advantage in planning for permeability between the three proposed pods, is that it supports a building design and development performance criteria that buildings in a floodplain should minimise the potential to disrupt flood water flow, and should be aligned with their longitudinal axis parallel to the direction of flood flow.

The change room and amenities need to be located to be able to provide good access for campers as well as the sports groups, so the entrances to these spaces should not be 'buried' amongst the community social spaces, the administration areas, and the PFFNC store rooms. Siting the amenities on the southern side of the building will orientate the amenities to the area of the Caravan Park where a majority of the campers and caravaners that need to access these facilities will be based, ie. the area west and south of the oval. Campers using sites north of the oval, the courts, and the proposed community pavilion already have good access to the Amenity Block adjacent to the Annuals' area. Externally accessed public toilets (including an accessible toilet/s) should also be incorporated within the design for the shared amenities and be available for spectators on football netball match days.

By consolidating the toilets and showers for joint use by campers and sports people into the one location will enable the two sets of women's and men's toilet blocks adjacent to the sports precinct to be removed, the set of women's and men's shower blocks to be removed, and possibly the laundry

<sup>6</sup> Source: AFL Preferred Facility Guidelines (2012)



block also. The removal of these buildings will not only help to de-clutter the built-form in this area of the reserve, but will also provide the potential for some additional camping sites.

The understorey of the grandstand currently accommodates the social room/ bar, the kitchen/ canteen, and internal toilets. This space could be converted and used for the players' gym, community meeting rooms and/or an additional administration/ office space for another community group (not necessarily for the PFFNC).

The estimated total area required for the community social room and pavilion is 750sqm, which includes an allowance for a small over provision of toilets and showers (including accessible facilities) to accommodate their dual function for use by campers. A secure but discreet bin store should also be designed into the new building.

A key to the functional and aesthetic success of any new building will be that it is permeable and doesn't present as a large barrier between the oval and the courts and proposed family recreation space. Also, that the building respects the heritage features of the grandstand, and that both sides of the building are attractive and welcoming.

### 6.3. Recreation Facilities

The following recreation facilities and infrastructure are currently available throughout Gardens Reserve:

- Two cricket practice nets
- A recreational tennis court
- A hardcourt with basketball backboards
- Three playgrounds
- Three BBQ shelters.

As noted in Section 4.2, the condition and functionality of the current informal sporting facilities is fair, and they need to be upgraded or replaced. An opportunity exists to integrate all sporting infrastructure to maximise the potential for it to be flexible and to have multiple uses. As previously mentioned, there is an opportunity to replace these facilities with new infrastructure that can be integrated with the proposed additional netball training court. Activity options that can be incorporated into the

multipurpose court include a basketball half-court, a tennis hit-up wall with cricket stumps painted on them and a rock climbing wall on its rear, and four squares painted onto the court surface.

The benefits of integrating the facilities is that they become part of a new sporting and family recreation precinct on the reserve, which includes the oval, the two existing netball-tennis courts, the proposed multipurpose court, a proposed new playground (designed and constructed as a regional playspace), and a new BBQ/ picnic area with seating. The multipurpose court is also recommended to be covered, which will significantly extend the usability of the court during both summer and winter.

The sporting and family recreation precinct will become a new 'attractor' for the Caravan Park and a destination for the reserve. The proposed new regional level playground and BBQ/ picnic area will work in tandem with the proposed upgrade of East Beach by providing visitors with close access to a significant playground. A strong path and visual connection between each site will avoid the unnecessary duplication of playspaces having to be installed at both locations.

The area proposed for the installation of the multipurpose court, playground, and BBQ/ picnic area is the space immediately south of the existing two netball-tennis courts. This will require the removal of 11 camping sites, however, they can be replaced with new sites in the areas vacated by the cricket nets and recreational tennis court, the basketball hardcourt area, and the playground and BBQ shelter behind the grandstand.

Whilst the opportunity to play informal cricket on the multipurpose court will be reduced compared to the current provision of two cricket nets, informal/ social cricket between campers, families, and children can be played on the oval. Temporary cricket pitches can be set up using the oval perimeter fence to function as a ball stop. To further promote casual cricket on the oval and in others areas throughout the Caravan Park, all wheelie bins should have stumps painted on their front.

Other possibilities for informal recreation within the Caravan Park are listed below, and include a brief comment on their feasibility.

Jetties

Some campers are directly accessing the Moyne River from the reserve to fish and to launch recreational watercraft, such as canoes and kayaks. The installation of one or two jetties along

the Moyne River will significantly improve camper access for these water-based activities, as well as facilitate new experiences for campers and other visitors to the reserve. The jetties will become vantage points to enjoy new views and to better appreciate the environmental values and features of the Belfast Lough and Moyne River environs, and be new places to fish, sit and relax.

The ideal locations for the jetties would be adjacent to the proposed new Camp Lodge (which provides a convenient river access location for patrons using the main camping area), and west of the sports precinct (which provides a convenient river access location for patrons using the balance of the reserve).

Installing the jetties and accessing them across the saltmarsh will need careful consideration (refer Section 6.5), however, their inclusion will create a new 'attractor' for the Caravan Park and new destination potential for the reserve.

Mini golf course Not possible due to the area of land required, and the likely high cost to maintain.

Skate park It might be possible to include 2-3 concrete skatable elements within the proposed family recreation precinct that could also double as seats when not being used for skating. Noise generated from the installation of concrete skatable elements may be in conflict with close campsites, and this will need to be considered before any decision to include skatable elements.

Giant jumping pillow and trampolines These items are better suited to caravan parks designed for and marketed to families with young children. In addition, the financial feasibility of providing a jumping pillow might be questionable given the high proportion of older adults that are attracted as visitors to Port Fairy.

Volleyball /bocce These could be suited to a proposed Village Green space utilising the existing central lawn area, but not in the form of permanent courts, rather, played on grass with temporary nets, line marking, etc.

A response to improving the safety of the existing playground behind the grandstand, is to relocate it to become part of the proposed new family recreation precinct integrated with the sporting area. The BBQ and shelter adjacent to this playground could also be relocated to the family recreation precinct. As mentioned, the relocation of these two pieces of infrastructure creates an opportunity for new caravan and camping sites.

It is proposed that the combined northern playground and BBQ shelter, and the BBQ shelter adjacent to the Amenity Block next to the Annuals' area, all be retained and upgraded, as required.

As noted in Section 4.2, the playground adjacent to the main entrance of the Caravan Park needs to be removed. A replacement playground is recommended for the main caravan and camping area in the reserve. It is proposed that this playground be larger and co-located with a proposed new Camp Lodge strategically sited adjacent to the Moyne River and opposite the main entrance, to replace an existing Amenity Block that is in poor condition.

The proposed Camp Lodge will comprise a camp kitchen and lounge, a BBQ, public toilets, and decking and seating with views across the Moyne River. The co-location of the playground with the Camp Lodge will further enhance this space as a meeting place, whilst also providing improved access to a playground for patrons and visitors in the main caravan and camping area of the reserve. The proposed Camp Lodge will become a new 'attractor' for the Caravan Park.



#### 6.4. Caravan Park Accommodation

An opportunity existed through the master planning study to assess the existing mix and distribution of accommodation options available within the Caravan Park. Currently, the Caravan Park comprises of the following accommodation options:

- 371 powered sites
- 166 unpowered sites (includes the 143 sites utilised only during the Folk Festival)
- 10 self-contained cabins (3 deluxe, 7 standard)
- 49 sites for Annuals

Factors considered when assessing the accommodation mix and distribution include:

1. industry trends in relation to caravan types, cabin types, and preferences of caravaners and campers.
2. past and current occupancy rates and revenue from all accommodation.
3. other accommodation options available in Port Fairy, including at other caravan parks.
4. impacts of seasonality and associated demands on infrastructure and available occupancy.
5. the impact on existing sites from proposed improvement projects within the sports precinct and other areas within the reserve.

The income from cabins has been reasonably consistent over the past three years. However, the master plan study is recommending an increase in the number and diversity of cabins in response to:

- the current condition and limited offerings of the existing cabins,
- the demand for more contemporary cabins,
- the demand for a mix of cabins that can suit a range of needs, including family cabins, double cabins to accommodate groups of friends, smaller/ intimate cabins for couples, and cabins that are wheelchair friendly, and/or
- eco-cabins that are environmentally sustainable by being built and operated with minimal impact on the environment and are designed to blend in with the surrounding landscape.

On the site of the current cabin village, it is proposed to increase the number of cabins from 10 to 18. This will increase the number of cabins for people seeking a more private camping experience and utilising more contemporary buildings, as well as the possibility to create a 'village' environment. The village feel will result from a new layout, improved landscaping and plantings, and by establishing a central social/ garden area within the village. This area could include a rotunda and function the same way as the proposed larger Village Green.

The master plan is also proposing to establish a smaller cabin accommodation area to assist in orientating the park onto the strengths of the river environment to capture the views across the Moyne River, and for holiday makers to better experience the unique setting created by the Norfolk Pines along the western edge of the reserve. Initially, two to four cabins are recommended, possibly focused as eco-cabins to complement the proposed site. The improved cabin accommodation and their location will create a new 'attractor' for the Caravan Park and new destination potential for the reserve, including international tourists travelling in groups.

Whilst the initial capital investment alone for the cabins will be significant, the financial benefit through increased revenue and occupancy rates should justify the investment. The table on the following page shows the estimated capital cost to supply and install 18 new cabins and 4 new river cabins (\$2,885,000), and the comparison of actual cabin revenue in 2017 with the projected cabin revenue after installation of the 22 new cabins (2017 data has been used as some cabins were not available for hire in 2018 due to maintenance).

It is projected that an estimated additional revenue of just over \$300,000 per annum could be raised by replacing the existing cabins and increasing the total number of cabins to 22. If the occupancy rate can be increased from the 2018 average of 52% to the industry average of just over 64%, then annual revenue from cabins will increase significantly.

A range of options to finance the purchase of the new cabins are available to Council, as an alternative to an upfront capital payment of \$2,885,000. These include leasing, hire purchasing, and taking out a loan, and should be investigated as part of any detailed feasibility assessment of the proposed cabin investment.

Capital Cost	Item	No.	Total
Deluxe cabins	\$120,000	4	\$480,000
Standard cabins	\$100,000	18	\$1,800,000
Services, connections	\$20,000	22	\$440,000
Landscaping	\$7,500	22	\$165,000
Total investment			\$2,885,000

Revenue	Net per Cabin/ Yr	No.	Total
Deluxe (2017)	\$19,555	3	\$58,665
Standard (2017)	\$19,671	7	\$137,697
Total (2017)			\$196,362
Deluxe (projected)	\$24,444	4	\$97,775
Standard (projected)	\$22,622	18	\$407,190
Total (projected)			\$504,965

Note: The annual revenue per cabin for the new cabins is based on a 25% increase in the per night rate for the deluxe cabins and a 15% increase for the standard cabins, but assumes the same occupancy levels as 2017

The master plan shows that there will be a loss of some of the existing powered and unpowered sites, however, there will be an overall net gain of sites after the proposed new caravan and camping sites are developed. It is estimated that 27 powered sites will need to be relocated from the following areas designated for alternate uses:

- 8 sites south of the Village Green (Sites 67 - 74). Due to the popularity of these sites, it is recommended that their use be monitored before their potential removal to determine how their retention might impact the meeting, social and recreational values of the Village Green site.
- 5 sites in the area proposed for the second cabin village (Sites 95, 97, 99, 99A and 100).
- 11 sites in the area proposed for the new multipurpose court and family recreation precinct (Sites 246 - 256).
- 1 site next to the Port Fairy Football Netball Club store (Site 245).

The loss of these sites is offset by an estimated additional 30-35 powered sites to be installed in the area where the existing recreational infrastructure located at the southern end of the oval is to be removed (ie. the cricket nets,

recreational tennis court, the playground, and the BBQ shelter), and the area south of the Annuals' area and west of the netball courts.

The unpowered camping area within the cabin precinct will be lost with the proposed expansion and reconfiguration of this area. All sites are expected to be replaced with new sites possible on the land that will become available by the relocation of the Caravan Park Depot to the basketball court area, and within the site where the existing recreational infrastructure is to be removed at the southern end of the oval.

### 6.5. Access and Circulation

The key issues relating to vehicle access and the road network are:

- Confusion and conflict created between campers and sports precinct users entering the reserve at the Bourne Avenue entrance.
- General safety of pedestrians throughout the reserve.

A strategy to separate the vehicles of sports precinct users and campers during the winter season (ie. Caravan Park off-peak period), is to eliminate the opportunity for 'sports' traffic to turn left out of the Bourne Avenue entrance. This can be achieved by relocating the boom gate to the main camping area closer to the Bourne Avenue entrance, thereby preventing sports traffic from accessing the oval, netball courts and pavilion from the east side of the oval.

To complement this, it is also proposed that the caravan and camping area immediately north of the oval have the dual purpose of being the designated sport precinct car park in winter. This will mitigate the current ad hoc car parking occurring under the Norfolk Pines between the netball courts and the Moyne River. Nose-to-fence parking around the oval will still be permitted, and the formed car park behind the grandstand is to be retained.





Other changes proposed to the road network within the sports precinct include:

- Cease through traffic between the netball courts and the proposed new pavilion and grandstand to enhance pedestrian safety.
- Realign the road around the perimeter of the oval at the southern end, following the removal of the cricket nets and recreational tennis court, and close this road at the section adjacent to the Amenity and Laundry Block in the main camping area. This will prevent sports traffic accessing the road network within the main camping area. Whilst vehicles will be required to then travel back around the oval to exit the reserve, it is consistent with the strategy to have all sports traffic enter and exit the reserve from the north side of the Bourne Avenue entry.

Hedge planting along the southern side of this realigned road will create a visual separation between the proposed new camping area and the sports precinct, and the sports precinct traffic.

- Form a new access road into the main camping area from the southwest corner of the car park behind the grandstand. The road will service the proposed new deluxe cabins' area and the proposed expanded caravan and camping area south of the oval made possible with the removal of the cricket nets and recreational tennis court. It is recommended that a boom gate be installed at the commencement of this new road to prevent sports traffic from entering this area.

Other improvements to the road network include road surface repairs as required, and the installation of additional 5kmh signs throughout the reserve. One strategy to reduce the number of speed signs having to be installed, whilst still maximising the message of slow speed, is to use the sides of the wheelie bins for messaging, as shown right (cricket stumps on the front).



These strategies to enhance pedestrian safety throughout the Caravan Park should prevent the intrusive and costly need to install a dedicated path network throughout the reserve. However, given the volume of pedestrians using the southern entry and the paths through the Botanic Gardens, consideration has been given to extending the path network to enhance connections to the key destinations within the reserve.

One of the key destinations for visitors is the sports precinct, particularly local supporters of the Port Fairy Football Netball Club on match days. The Club has advised that once in the reserve and through the Botanic Gardens, most supporters currently walk on the road located between the Botanic Gardens and the south of the oval. It is proposed that a dedicated path be installed to link the Botanic Gardens to the sports precinct, via the banks of the Moyne River. Such a path has the following advantages:

- Redirects visitors/ spectators away from the Caravan Park patrons using the main caravan and camping area.
- Improves pedestrian safety.
- Provides a more scenic walk.
- Has the potential to create an improved sense of arrival for spectators walking to the football and netball facilities, and approaching the sports precinct from the west.

Another advantage of this proposed path along the Moyne River is that it can be extended beyond the sports precinct to Ritchie Street to create the potential for a new circuit walk in the broader context with other walks available throughout the town (see Appendix 4 for the Port Fairy Connections Plan).

This path can become part of an extended path network within the reserve to connect to other destinations. Many campers at the reserve frequent East Beach, located just over 200m along Bourne Avenue from the reserve entrance. It is proposed that a new path be installed around the oval, which can have the function as a 'collector' path for campers walking to East Beach. A pedestrian safe crossing could be installed over the reserve road (Sealers Driver) to improve safety.

With this section of path, a continuous off-road pedestrian link would be possible between the full length of the Gardens Reserve boundary along the Moyne River, the sports precinct, Bourne Avenue and East Beach. Similar to the proposed new sporting and family recreation precinct, the proposed

new Camp Lodge, and the proposed jetties, the integrated path network also becomes a new 'attractor' for the Caravan Park and new destination potential for the reserve. Not only will campers and sports precinct visitors benefit from the new path network, but town visitors and tourists spending time at East Beach can be encouraged to walk to Gardens Reserve to experience the Moyne River, the jetties, and the playgrounds within the reserve.

A more visionary approach for the section of the path between the Botanic Gardens and the sports precinct is to install it as a boardwalk along the edge of the Moyne River within the estuarine wetland and saltmarsh. The boardwalk would become an iconic feature for Gardens Reserve and the Caravan Park, and for Port Fairy generally. It would be a popular inclusion within the broader path network throughout Port Fairy.

Given the environmental values and sensitivities of the Belfast Lough and Moyne River environs, and the history of flooding, the proposal would require a comprehensive feasibility assessment before proceeding (including a biodiversity assessment study along the river frontage, as recommended by DELWP), and would likely require external funding support to proceed. A practical benefit of the boardwalk is that it would formally manage the way through the estuarine wetland and native vegetation by people currently accessing the water for recreational use from the reserve.



Example of a riverside boardwalk

## 7. GARDENS RESERVE MASTER PLAN

### 7.1. Plan Development

The Gardens Reserve Master Plan was developed in response to the following design drivers, some of which were evident prior to the master plan process commencing, and some that emerged during the study:

- The opportunity to improve the diversity of the accommodation available within the Caravan Park, to respond to industry trends and user needs, and to grow the Caravan Park business.
- Ensuring that facilities and infrastructure throughout Gardens Reserve are fit for purpose and comply with industry standards and guidelines, including facilities supporting the campers and the sports participants.
- Acknowledging the historic and cultural importance of Gardens Reserve, particularly the Botanic Gardens and other remnant features and characteristics of the reserve's history.
- The opportunity to influence the status and reputation of the Gardens Caravan Park to become a 'destination' caravan park, not just a place for an overnight stay.
- Improving traffic management and pedestrian safety throughout the reserve.
- Maximising options to improve the connectivity between precincts within the reserve, and walkable links between the reserve and other destinations within Port Fairy.

### 7.2. Key Directions

The key recommendations and projects identified in the Gardens Reserve Master Plan are listed below, and should be read in conjunction with the master plan drawing on pages 11 and 12 (as part of the Executive Summary). A brief rationale is provided for each recommendation, or the reference in the report has been provided where discussion about the recommendation can be found.

### Caravan Park

1. Replace the chain-mesh fence along Griffiths Street with one that complements the Botanic Gardens fence.  
This direction is designed to improve the views into the Caravan Park at this location, which is the only vista into the reserve from Griffiths Street.
2. Enhance the Caravan Park entry, including matching the fence and gate treatments at the Botanic Gardens entrance.
3. Extend the Caravan Park Reception to provide a meeting room, staff office, store room, improved circulation for visitors, and retail space, and provide staff car parking.  
This direction will improve staff conditions and efficiencies.
4. Remove the existing small playground.  
Refer Sections 4.2 and 6.3.
5. Reconfigure the cabin village layout to provide a central meeting space. Add up to 8 new cabins and upgrade/ replace the existing 10 cabins (for a total of 18 cabins).  
Refer Section 6.4.
6. Relocate the Caravan Park Depot and combine with a bin store.  
The Depot currently divides an unpowered camping in the main caravan and camping area. The need for the basketball court will reduce following the completion of the proposed combined sporting and family recreation precinct behind the grandstand. The existing basketball hardstand area will be an ideal area to relocate the Depot to being adjacent to the Bourne Avenue entry.
7. Develop the existing depot site into new camping sites.  
This will help to offset the proposed loss of camp sites within the cabin village.  
Refer Section 6.4.
8. Relocate the boom gate to incorporate the proposed new camping sites, and provide a new boom gate at the existing car park.  
The relocated boom gate will ensure the new camping sites noted in No. 7 above will be secure. The new boom gate is designed to control access onto a proposed new access road into the main camping area from the southwest corner of the car park behind the grandstand. The road will service the proposed new 'deluxe cabins' area and the proposed expanded caravan and camping area south of the oval, with the gate serving to prevent access to sports precinct users. Refer Section 6.5



9. Re-purpose the existing entry control building to become a ticket collection point for the Port Fairy Football Netball Club.  
This building is only used by the Caravan Park staff as a controlled entry for caravanners and campers during peak demand periods. In order to get greater use from the building, it is recommended that it be modified to the needs of the Port Fairy Football Netball Club as a ticket box for senior competition days.
10. Provide additional powered caravan and camping sites.  
This will help to offset the proposed loss of up to 27 powered sites for other uses, by installing new powered sites in the area south of the Annuals' area and west of the netball courts. Refer Section 6.4.
11. Relocate to two Annuals' vans/ cabins to the Annuals' area.  
This will correct an anomaly by relocating two Annuals' vans currently in two sites just north of the Bourne Avenue entrance, to the correct area in the reserve for Annuals.
12. Upgrade the existing northern playground, and include a new BBQ and picnic shelter and seating.  
This direction refers to the playground and BBQ shelter in the northern are of the reserve. Refer Sections 4.2 and 6.3.
13. Treat the ground surface to establish a shared-use camping area (summer) and designated football spectator car park (winter).  
Refer Section 6.5.
14. Remove the existing toilet blocks (x 2) and shower blocks (x 2).  
This rationalisation is possible by constructing the amenities to service the proposed new change rooms within the sports precinct, as dual-use for the campers during the peak season in summer, and for other periods when they are not being used by the footballers and netballers. Refer Section 6.2.
15. Use plantings to provide the Annuals' area with a landscape setting.  
Refer Section 4.1.
16. Remove the existing pittosporum hedge, tennis court, cricket practice nets and playground, and develop the space into new caravan and camping sites.  
This will help to offset the proposed loss of up to 27 powered sites for other uses, by installing new powered and unpowered sites. Refer Section 6.4.
17. Establish a second cabin accommodation area possibly focused as eco-cabins. Will require the removal of Sites 95, 97, 99, 99A and 100.  
This direction creates a new accommodation offering at the Caravan Park not currently available, but consistent with industry trends. The lost sites can be replaced by the additional sites noted in No. 16. Refer Section 6.4.

18. Demolish the Amenity Block and replace it with a new Camp Lodge, incorporating a kitchen, a camper lounge to support social engagement and group activities, toilet amenities, a BBQ area, and a small playground with views across the Moyne River.  
This Amenity Block is in poor condition and does not meet building codes. The proposed new Camp Lodge has the potential to become a new 'attractor' for the Caravan Park. The amenities lost through the demolition of the current Amenity Block will be partially replaced in the Camp Lodge and also as part of an extension and upgrade of the Amenity Block located north of the central lawn area. Refer Sections 4.1 and 6.3.
19. Extend the Laundry to provide a new Amenity Block (replaces the Amenity Block removed in No. 18).
20. Develop a new Village Green/ meeting place for campers to accommodate performances, social games, events and small markets. Upgrade the rotunda, and install recreation features suitable for adults, such as a beach volleyball court, tables with chess tops, etc. Continue to monitor the use of the eight camping sites along the southern edge in the context of impacting the meeting, social and recreational values of the Village Green.  
This recommendation is designed to further enhance the function of the central lawn area as a gathering place, and a space for socialising and informal recreation. Refer Section 4.3.

## Sport

21. Upgrade the oval floodlights to 150 lux.  
Refer Section 4.2.
22. Remove the existing sports buildings and replace them with a new Community Sporting Pavilion comprising of change rooms for footballers, netballers and umpires, a canteen/ kitchen, a function room, and storage. Locate the change room amenity areas and public toilets to enable them to be dual-use sporting and camper amenities (replaces amenity blocks removed in No. 14).  
This complex will be defined by three indicative pods: 1. Community function space and canteen, 2. Sports storage and administration offices, 3. Change rooms/ amenities.  
This direction is one of the major recommendations of the master plan, and respond to the need for most of the off-field sporting infrastructure to be replaced due to it being not fit purpose. Some of the new facilities should be provided as shared spaces for use by campers and the broader community. Refer Sections 4.2 and 6.2.

23. Retain the two netball-tennis courts, upgrade floodlighting to 200 lux.  
Refer Section 4.2.
24. New multipurpose netball court (with floodlights to 100 lux) to include infrastructure/ line marking for other active recreation uses, eg. basketball half-court, tennis hit-up wall/ climbing wall, and four squares. Consider installing an all-weather shelter over this court.  
  
Another key recommendation of the master plan, and one that also facilitates and promotes shared use of facilities between the members of the Port Fairy Football Netball Club, campers, reserve visitors, and local residents. Refer Sections 4.2, 5.2, 6.1, and 6.3.
25. New family recreation precinct incorporating a new playground, shelter, informal seating, and BBQ/ picnic facilities to regional standard.  
  
Is possible from the need to relocate the playground and BBQ behind the grandstand to a safer site, but which complements the proposed multipurpose netball court. The playspace and BBQ/ picnic facilities should be designed and constructed in the context that they also form part of the overall offerings to visitors using East Beach as well. Refer Sections 4.2, 5.2, 5.3, 6.3 and 6.5.
26. Continue to maintain the heritage features of the grandstand. Investigate the re-use of the understorey to accommodate the players gymnasium, community meeting room(s), and an office for the Port Fairy Football Netball Club.  
  
Refer Sections 3.3 and 6.2.

### Circulation

27. Upgrade the internal road surface, and install 5 kmh speed signs.  
This direction to enhance safety. Refer Sections 4.4 and 6.5.
28. Re-route the park road around the oval, and install new plantings to visually separate the new camping sites from the sports precinct. Include a turnaround point adjacent to the Amenity Block (No. 19), and convert the space between the bowl and Squatters Place to grass.  
  
This road realignment opportunity follows the removal of the cricket nets and recreational tennis court. The recommended road closure is one part of a broader traffic management solution to separate sports traffic and camping traffic, and to better control the flow and direction of the sports traffic. Refer Section 4.4 and 6.5.
29. Install a 2.0 metre path around the oval to connect the proposed new path (No. 30) and the Bourne Avenue entrance to East Beach.  
  
A key opportunity for Gardens Reserve is to improve the connectivity between the sub-precincts within the reserve, and to also enhance commuter links between the reserve and other destinations in Port Fairy. Refer Section 6.5.

30. Install a new 2.0 metre gravel path between the proposed Camp Lodge (No. 18) and the sports precinct.  
  
As per No. 29 above. Refer Section 6.5.
31. Install two jetties to enable fishing, small water craft access to the water, and lookouts over the Moyne River.  
  
Some campers are directly accessing the Moyne River to fish and to launch recreational watercraft, so the installation of one or two jetties would significantly improve access for these water-based activities, as well as facilitate other new visitor experiences. Refer Section 6.3.
32. Investigate the feasibility of installing a boardwalk from the sports precinct along the river bank, with consideration for the sensitive salt marsh vegetation and cost.  
  
A visionary project that would become an iconic feature for Gardens Reserve and the Caravan Park, and for Port Fairy generally. It would be a popular inclusion within the broader path network throughout Port Fairy. Refer Section 6.5.
33. Install a new 2.0 metre path from the sports precinct along the Moyne River to Ritchie Street, and along Ritchie Street to East Beach.  
  
Complements No.s 29 & 30 by further improving the connectivity between precincts within the reserve, and formalises a link between Gardens Reserve and East Beach. Refer Section 6.5.

### Botanic Gardens

34. Enhance the Botanic Gardens through new planting, new furniture and path upgrades, in accordance with the directions of the 1997 Botanic Gardens Conservation Plan. (See Appendix 5 for Gardens Reserve tree planting themes plan).  
  
The Botanic Gardens is one of the iconic features of the reserve, and one of the oldest, relatively intact, sections of the reserve. The master plan supports the continued restoration of the Botanic Gardens, with reference and guidance from the Conservation Plan. Refer Sections 3.3, 3.4, 4.3, and 5.3.
35. Repair the Botanic Gardens historic gate and front fence.  
  
Refer Sections 3.3, 3.4, 4.3, and 5.3.
36. Investigate the feasibility of re-establishing the historic rock wall along the edge of the Moyne River.  
  
Refer Sections 3.3 and 5.3.

### 7.3. Other Recommendations

- With any redevelopment of the sporting pavilion and associated buildings, install separate utilities' meters.  
It is not possible at present to separate the utilities' charges incurred by the Caravan Park from those incurred by the Port Fairy Football Netball Club. Installing separate meters will enable accurate apportionment of utilities' costs to respective user groups. Refer Sections 4.1 and 5.1.
- Commence a rolling program to replace the powerheads throughout the Caravan Park.  
Powerheads are one item of infrastructure that are ageing and need to be replaced throughout the Caravan Park. Refer Sections 4.1, and 5.2.
- Introduce public art where appropriate within the Caravan Park, and where possible, develop them to also be used as informal playspaces.  
Wooden carvings are scattered around the Caravan Park, and there is potential to build on these existing pieces but to also create playspaces from those pieces of timber that are at ground level. Refer Sections 5.3.
- Install interpretative signage throughout the reserve to note features such as the historic grandstand, the sporting precinct (history), the rotunda, the Moyne River (habitat and history of flooding), and the Botanic Gardens.  
Only a couple of interpretive signs are installed in the Caravan Park environs, ie. a flood information sign at the inner entrance to the Botanic Gardens, and a Botanic Gardens identification sign in Griffiths Street. Installing additional information and interpretive signs will add interest for campers and visitors to Gardens Reserve, and are a means to celebrate the unique history of the site.
- Strengthen the tree planting around the perimeter of the Caravan Park where it interfaces with residential properties.  
The boundary planting can be strengthened along most of the reserve edges along the eastern boundary and northeastern boundary. The additional planting will provide screening between the Caravan Park and adjoining properties, valuable opportunities for introducing shade, and will generally enhance the aesthetics of these sections of the reserve. Refer Sections 5.3.
- Install new pedestrian crossing points over Griffiths Street at the intersections with Hughes Avenue and Bourne Avenue.  
These installations are required to improve the safety of people moving between Gardens Reserve and East Beach.

- As a strategy to create an annual capital reserve fund for new and upgraded Caravan Park infrastructure, Council should review the current practice and formulas used to apportion surplus funds from the annual operation of the Caravan Park.  
A review would be timely as the costs to operate the Caravan Park continue to increase, which is now having the effect of reducing the annual net return for park reinvestment and proactive development. A review would also enable Council to utilise a greater proportion of the annual operating surplus to fund some of the improvements identified in the master plan.

### 7.4. Master Plan Cost and Prioritisation Plan

The Gardens Reserve Master Plan recommends more than 40 separate projects for the reserve. The total estimated cost for full implementation of the master plan is approximately \$8,680,000.

The practicality and order of implementation of most projects will be subject to a number of factors and criteria before proceeding, including:

- Availability of funding.
- Current and future priorities of Council, the user groups, and other stakeholders, and the broader needs of the community.
- Further investigation, research and consultation.

The Master Plan Cost Plan is shown on the following pages. The item number assigned to each project is the same as the numbered symbols on the master plan.

Prioritisation of projects will be undertaken by Council officers in conjunction with the various stakeholder groups, and where required, the broader community as well.



**Master Plan Cost and Staging Plan**

Item No. on Plan	Sub-Precincts / Projects	Project Description / Specification	Estimated Costs
<b>Caravan Park</b>			
1	Replace the fence along Griffiths Street	- Approx. 70m @ \$200	\$14,000
2	Enhance the Caravan Park entry to match the fence and gate treatments at the Botanic Gardens entrance	- Allowance only	\$10,000
3	Extend the Caravan Park Reception to provide a meeting room, staff office, improved visitor circulation, retail space, and store room	- Convert the existing store into a meeting room, including installation of a kitchenette (\$25,000) - Store of 20sqm @ \$2,500 (\$50,000)	\$75,000
4	Remove the small playground	- Remove the playground	\$2,500
5	Reconfigure the cabin village layout	- Demolish existing infrastructure, tree removal (\$15,000) - Supply and install 8 new cabins @ \$100,000 (\$800,000) - Installation of services for 8 new cabins (\$160,000) - New spray seal road, landscaping (\$50,000) - Relocate and upgrade existing cabins, and connect to services @ \$10,000 per cabin (\$100,000)	\$1,110,000
6	Relocate the Caravan Park depot	- New depot building, storage sheds and fenced compound	\$250,000
7	Develop the existing depot site into new camping sites	- Demolish existing infrastructure (\$15,000) - Reinstate surface to grass (\$7,500) - Install power bollards (est. 15 No.) @ \$3,500 (\$52,500)	\$75,000
8	Relocate and install boom gates (2 No.)	- Relocate the existing boom gate (\$5,000) - Supply and install a new boom gate (\$15,000)	\$20,000
9	Re-purpose the existing entry control building	- Minor upgrades to building	\$5,000
10	Provide additional powered caravan and camping sites	- New gravel road, landscaping (\$20,000) - Install power bollards (est. 15 No.) @ \$3,500 (\$52,500)	\$72,500
11	Relocate two Annuals' vans/ cabins	- Not costed (owner's expense)	\$0
12	Upgrade the existing northern playground	- Supply and install new play equipment (\$50,000) - Supply and install new BBQ (\$7,500) - New/ upgrade picnic shelter and seating (\$25,000)	\$82,500
13	Treat the ground surface to provide a sustainable car parking solution	- Supply and spread crushed rock, oversow 5,000sqm @ \$15	\$75,000
14	Remove existing toilet and shower blocks (x 4)	- Demolish toilet blocks (2 No.) and shower blocks (2 No.)	\$25,000
15	Improve the landscape setting of the Annuals area	- Supply and plant 75 semi-mature plants @ \$300	\$22,500
16	Re-purpose the existing recreational area into a new powered caravan and camping site	- Demolish existing infrastructure, hedge removal (\$45,000) - Install power bollards (est. 20 No.) @ \$3,500 (\$70,000)	\$115,000
17	Establish a second cabin accommodation area	- Supply and install 4 new cabins @ \$120,000 (\$480,000) - Allowance for services connections (\$80,000) - Allowance for landscaping (\$30,000)	\$590,000
18	Develop a new Camp Lodge precinct	- Demolish the Amenity Block, other infrastructure (\$10,000) - Construct a new Camp Lodge with a camp kitchen, camper lounge, toilets of est. 300sqm @ \$3,500 (\$1,050,000) - Supply and install BBQ, seating, a small playground (\$80,000)	\$1,140,000
19	Expanded Amenity Block	- Extend the Amenity Block est. 100sqm @ \$3,500	\$350,000
20	New Village Green/ meeting place	- Allowance for rotunda upgrade (\$75,000) - Allowance for landscaping, tree planting, and minor recreational infrastructure (\$75,000)	\$150,000
	Consultant Fees (design, documentation, administration)	@ 10% of project cost	\$418,400
	<b>Sub Total Caravan Park Infrastructure</b>		<b>\$4,602,400</b>

Att01. Gardens Reserve Master Plan March 2019, Page 48 of 54

Item No. on Plan	Sub-Precincts / Projects	Project Description / Specification	Estimated Costs
<b>Sport</b>			
21	Upgrade the oval floodlights	- 4 new poles and lamps to 150 lux (Port Fairy Football Netball Club responsibility)	\$250,000
22	Build a new Community Sporting Pavilion	- Demolish existing sport buildings (\$30,000) - Construct new Community Sporting Pavilion comprising of 4 change rooms for footballers and netballers, umpires change, a canteen/ kitchen, a function room, and storage of est. 650sqm @ \$3,000 (\$1,950,000) - Allowance for paving, landscaping (\$55,000)	\$2,035,000
23	Upgrade the netball floodlights	- Install floodlighting to 200 lux for both courts (Port Fairy Football Netball Club responsibility)	\$125,000
24	New multipurpose netball court	- New multipurpose netball court (\$150,000) - Floodlights to 100 lux (\$80,000) - Additional recreational infrastructure, such as basketball backboard, tennis hit-up wall/ climbing wall, and line marking (\$35,000) - Consider installing an all weather shelter over this court (not costed)	\$265,000
25	New family recreation precinct	- Supply and install BBQ, 2 shelters, 2 bench seats (\$40,000) ‡ Paving (\$10,000) ‡ Supply and install playground (\$75,000) - Allowance for removal of existing infrastructure, landscaping (\$35,000)	\$160,000
26	Retain the heritage grandstand and redevelop the internal areas	- Investigate the feasibility of the re-use of the understorey to accommodate a players gymnasium, community meeting room(s), and an office for the Port Fairy Football Netball Club - Allowance for internal works and fit-out	\$150,000
	Consultant Fees (design, documentation, administration)	@ 10% of project cost	\$298,500
	<b>Sub Total Sport Infrastructure</b>		<b>\$3,283,500</b>
<b>Circulation</b>			
27	Upgrade the internal road surface	- Allowance for asphalt pavement and repairs (\$35,000) - Supply and install speed limit signs estimated 15 @ \$2,500 (\$37,500)	\$72,500
28	Re-route the park road around the oval	- Re-route the park road around the oval, and install new planting to visually separate the new camping sites and the sporting precinct. ‡ Approx. 180m x 6.0m = 1,080 @ \$100 (\$108,000) - Allowance to demolish existing road (\$15,000) ‡ Turf reinstatement/ levelling around the oval and beyond the turnaround bowl (\$10,000)	\$133,000
29	Install a new path around the oval	Install a sealed path around the oval to connect the proposed new boardwalk to the Bourne Avenue entrance estimated 650m x 2.0m = 1,300sqm @ \$85	\$110,500
30	Install a new path along the Moyne River between the Botanic Gardens and the sports precinct	- Gravel path estimated 350m x 2m = 700sqm @ \$50	\$35,000
31	Install two jetties	- Construct 2 jetties @ \$75,000 (\$150,000) - Allow connecting boardwalks, estimated 40m @ \$700 (\$28,000)	\$178,000
32	Investigate the feasibility of installing a new boardwalk along the Moyne River between the Botanic Gardens and the sports precinct	- Feasibility Study - No allowance for works	\$35,000
33	Install a new path along the Moyne River from the sports precinct to Ritchie Street, and east along Ritchie Street to Griffiths Street	- Unsealed gravel path estimated 775m x 1.5m = 1,165sqm @ \$50	\$58,125
	Consultant Fees (design, documentation, administration)	@ 10% of project cost	\$62,213
	<b>Sub Total Circulation Infrastructure</b>		<b>\$684,338</b>

Item No. on Plan	Sub-Precincts / Projects	Project Description / Specification	Estimated Costs
<b>Botanic Gardens</b>			
34	Continue to develop the Botanic Gardens in accordance with the directions of the 1997 Botanic Gardens Conservation Plan and separately supplied reserve planting themes plan	- Path replacement est. 325m x 2.0m = 650sqm @ \$100 (\$65,000) - Supply and install park furniture (allowance \$25,000) - Tree planting (allowance \$15,000) - Total estimated works = \$105,000, but annual contributions/ donations from Port Fairy Rotary allowed for	\$40,500
35	Repair the historic gate and front fence	- Allowance only	\$30,000
36	Investigate the feasibility of re-establishing the historic rock wall along the Moyne River	- Feasibility Study - No allowance for works	\$30,000
	Consultant Fees (design, documentation, administration)	@ 10% of project cost	\$10,050
	<i>Sub Total Botanic Gardens</i>		<b>\$110,550</b>
<b>Other Reserve Improvements</b>			
	Install separate utility meters in sports and caravan park buildings	- Allowance only	\$25,000
	Replace the powerheads in the caravan park	- Allowance of \$75,000 per annum for 5 years	\$375,000
	Introduce public art	- Allowance of \$10,000 per annum for 5 years	\$50,000
	Install interpretive signage	- Install interpretative signage throughout the reserve to note features such as the historic grandstand, the history of the sporting precinct, the rotunda, the Moyne River (habitat and history of flooding), and the Botanic Gardens. - Allowance for supply and install 8 signs @ \$5,000	\$40,000
	Strengthen the tree planting throughout the caravan park	- Supply and plant 25 semi-mature plants @ \$250	\$6,250
	Install new pedestrian crossings over Griffiths Street	- Recommended two crossings: Bourne Ave and Hughes Ave, but not costed as outside master plan scope	\$0
	Consultant Fees (design, documentation, administration)	@ 10% of project cost	\$49,625
	<i>Sub Total Other Reserve Improvements</i>		<b>\$545,875</b>
<b>TOTAL MASTER PLAN COSTS (ex GST)</b>			<b>\$ 8,680,788</b>

Notes about the Master Plan Cost Plan

- **The directions contained in the master plan do not commit Council or other organisations to a responsibility for funding.**
- All capital cost estimates shown in the tables are based on works being undertaken by professional contractors. Consultant fees associated with design development, contract administration and project management have been averaged at 10% of construction costs.
- The cost estimates have been provided as indicative costs, based on similar projects undertaken in the past 18 months. No detailed plans have been prepared for any of the proposed upgrades, which are typically required to calculate more accurate cost estimates from a Quantity Surveyor

- The cost estimates have been provided as indicative costs, based on similar projects undertaken in the past 18 months. No detailed plans have been prepared for any of the proposed upgrades, which are typically required to calculate more accurate cost estimates.  
Cost exclusions include:
  - Construction contingencies.
  - Any costs/ loss of income, which may be incurred by user groups or Council during construction of projects.
  - Goods and Services Tax (GST).
- It should be noted that some capacity might exist for cost savings during the implementation of the capital improvement program by packaging projects into one larger contract.



## Appendix 1 Plan Showing Accommodation Options at the Caravan Park





## Appendix 2 Plan Showing Reserve Access and Circulation Features



## Appendix 3 People and Organisations Consulted

Gardens Reserve tree planting themes plan

### Project Control Group (Moynes Shire Council)

Name	Position
Trev Greenberger	Director Physical Services
Jacque Anderton	Manager Recreation and Community Development
Adam Boyle	Manager Corporate Business and Tourism
Kim Freeman	Recreation Development Officer (Project Manager)

### Other Council Staff Consulted

Name	Position / Department
Jenny Madden	Coordinator Corporate Business & Tourism Development
Danielle Christians	Gardens Caravan Park Caretaker
Damian Dineen	Gardens Caravan Park Assistant Caretaker
Richard Hodgins	Environment Officer
Michelle Grainger	Manager Planning

### Gardens Reserve User Groups Consulted

Name	Organisation
Ashley King	Port Fairy Football Netball Club
Anthony Kelly	Port Fairy Football Netball Club
Mark Carbury	Port Fairy Football Netball Club
Ralf Leutton	Port Fairy Football Netball Club
Noel Black	Port Fairy Football Netball Club
Alison Zehir	Port Fairy Tennis Club

### Other Groups Consulted

Name	Organisation
David Digby	Port Fairy Rotary Club
Margaret Whitehead	Friends of Port Fairy Botanic Gardens
Robert Whitehead	Friends of Port Fairy Botanic Gardens
Tatjana Bunge	Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority
Geoff Brooks	Dept Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)
Clare Laine	Dept Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)

### Submitters - Public Exhibition of the Draft Master Plan

Name	Organisation
Geoff Brooks	Dept Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)
Clare Laine	Dept Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)
Jaimie Mailes	Resident
Angela Cunningham	Resident
Carl Thompson	Resident
Andrea Coney	Resident
Committee	Port Fairy Football Netball Club



## Appendix 4 Port Fairy Connections Plan





## Appendix 5 Gardens Reserve Tree Planting Themes Plan

