



# Recreation and Leisure Strategy 2015-2021

## Volume 3: Background Report

November 2014



**Simon**Leisure



# Moorabool Shire Recreation and Leisure Strategy 2015-2021

## Volume 3: Background Report

(November 2014)

### About this document

This report is the Background Report for the Moorabool Recreation and Leisure Strategy, and informed the two accompanying reports:

1. Volume 1: Facilities Strategy Plan
2. Volume 2: Moorabool Play Strategy 2015-2021

The Facilities Strategy Plan incorporates an overview of all research information used to inform the facilities strategy plan, and includes a series of recommendations for new and upgraded sporting and recreation facilities, and recommendations for the development of a number of new policies.

The Moorabool Play Strategy was principally prepared by communityvibe, using some of the information and research collected during the Recreation and Leisure Strategy planning process. It supports and advocates for the incremental upgrade of existing play spaces and provision of new, all underpinned by a hierarchy of facilities and associated standards of provision.



**Simon Leisure Consulting Pty Ltd**  
ABN 38 314 852 941  
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)



**communityvibe**  
5 Allison Street  
Bendigo Victoria 3550  
0438 433 555  
[wendy@communityvibe.com.au](mailto:wendy@communityvibe.com.au)  
[www.communityvibe.com.au](http://www.communityvibe.com.au)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. Community and Stakeholder Involvement .....	1
1.2. What will the Strategy do? .....	2
1.3. What is the scope of the Strategy? .....	2
1.4. Policy Context .....	2
1.5. Key issues considered during the Study .....	3
1.6. How has the Background Report been prepared?.....	4
<b>2. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF MOORABOOL SHIRE.....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1. Shire Overall .....	5
2.2. Population Projections and Age Cohorts .....	6
2.3. Implications for Sports and Recreation Planning .....	7
<b>3. CURRENT SUPPLY OF SPORTING &amp; RECREATION FACILITIES .....</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1. Current Provision and Distribution of Sporting Facilities .....	9
3.2. Adequacy of the Provision of Sporting Facilities .....	10
<b>4. CURRENT SUPPLY OF LEISURE FACILITIES.....</b>	<b>17</b>
4.1. Discussion.....	19
<b>5. CURRENT SUPPLY OF PLAY SPACES.....</b>	<b>21</b>
5.1. Current Policies and Procedures .....	22
5.2. Discussion.....	23
<b>6. RECREATION RESERVE MANAGEMENT .....</b>	<b>24</b>
6.1. Discussion.....	26
6.2. Fees and Charges Principles .....	27
6.3. Capital Works Contribution Framework .....	28
<b>7. SHIRE-WIDE STRATEGIC ADVICE AND INPUT .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>8. POLICY AND STRATEGY PROVISION .....</b>	<b>31</b>

## APPENDIX

Appendix 1 – Inventory of Sporting and Recreation Facilities

Appendix 2 - Inventory of Play Spaces

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This Background Report is Volume 3 of the Recreation and Leisure Strategy (2015-2021). It has informed the two accompanying reports:

- Volume 1: Facilities Strategy Plan
- Volume 2: Moorabool Play Strategy 2015-2021

The Background Report is a revised version of a Discussion Paper that was prepared early in the study process to develop the *Moorabool Shire Recreation and Leisure Strategy (2015-2021)*. It summarises the key issues and opportunities for recreation and leisure in the Shire that were identified from research conducted for the Strategy. The Background Report has the following three purposes:

1. Consolidates into one report the research findings relating to the current provision of recreation and leisure facilities and services throughout the Shire.
2. Identifies issues and potential opportunities for the current and future provision of recreation and leisure facilities and services in the Shire.
3. Outlines preliminary directions or themes to improve the future provision, standard and management of recreation and leisure facilities in Moorabool Shire that were then reviewed and discussed by Council representatives, and which subsequently formed the basis for the development of the *Recreation and Leisure Strategy*.

Recreation and sports planning consultants, Simon Leisure Consulting and communityvibe jointly prepared the earlier Discussion Paper for the Moorabool Shire Council.

### 1.1. Community and Stakeholder Involvement

Council has undertaken a number of recreation and leisure facility planning processes in the past 3–4 years, including sports facility needs analysis, policy and facility management reviews, and recreation reserve master planning studies. Many of these incorporated extensive community and stakeholder consultation and input, and much of the information gathered from the consultation has been useful in understanding the broad recreational and leisure needs of the Moorabool community.

As an alternative to duplicating the community consultative process during the ‘front-end’ of the process to prepare the *Recreation and Leisure Strategy*, it was decided that the development of the Discussion Paper would utilise existing information collected from the community and other stakeholders during other planning work. The Discussion Paper would then be considered initially by Council staff and then Councillors at an Assembly, after which the draft *Recreation and Leisure Strategy* would be prepared. The draft Strategy would then be presented to an Ordinary Meeting of Council early in 2015 and placed on public exhibition, with a series of community and stakeholder workshops, meetings and forums coordinated to encourage and facilitate community input into the final Strategy report.

Feedback and comment on the draft Strategy will be encouraged and welcomed from all people and groups utilising, providing or managing recreation and sporting facilities in Moorabool Shire, including:

- Residents.
- Councillors and Council staff.
- Sporting and recreation clubs and associations.
- Recreation reserve committees of management, and other service providers (public and private).
- Schools.
- Other community groups.

## 1.2. What will the Strategy do?

The *Recreation and Leisure Strategy* provides the framework for the future planning, development and management of recreation and sporting facilities, services and open space within the Shire. The Strategy:

1. Identifies the current and projected sporting, recreation and leisure needs of residents.
2. Documents gaps expected in service and facility provision and recommend approaches to meet these gaps in infrastructure provision.
3. Determines the role of Council and other stakeholders in the provision and management of sporting and recreation services.
4. Reviews existing policies and gives direction for the formulation of new policies and procedures pertaining to the provision and management of recreation and leisure facilities and open space.
5. Identifies and prioritise strategies and directions for specific sports, including both indoor and outdoor sporting facilities.
6. Outlines club development needs and requirements, and the optimal communication mediums.
7. Documents and reviews existing recreation and leisure facility management arrangements for Council owned and managed facilities, and recommends a tenancy framework model that reflects equitable maintenance responsibilities and cost recovery principles for the various tenancy arrangements, including commercial and community leases, seasonal allocations/licences, and school use.
8. Recommends strategies for Council to address gaps in open space provision, and to better utilise passive open spaces.
9. Develops a strategic framework to guide the future provision of and standards for play spaces and related infrastructure throughout the Shire (refer the *Moorabool Play Strategy 2015-2021*).
10. Guides the future master planning of reserves and open space, including active recreation spaces, leisure facilities, passive open space and play spaces.
11. Provides direction for Council when working with developers to inform the provision for open space and recreation facilities in future housing estates, including the use and priorities for developer contributions.

## 1.3. What is the scope of the Strategy?

The scope of the Strategy includes recreation and leisure facilities, services, activities, open space and play spaces provided at both Council and non-Council owned and managed recreation, sporting and leisure facilities. Active (sport) and passive recreational pursuits are also included within the study scope, as are both structured and unstructured recreational activities.

## 1.4. Policy Context

**Moorabool 2041** is the adopted framework by Council which sets the vision for the type of community Moorabool Shire will be in 2041, and which will guide the development of the Shire to allow for population growth whilst at the same time embracing strategies and actions that will enhance community connectedness, character and the sense of place so valued by Moorabool Shire residents.

Moorabool 2041 will be a key document to:

1. Guide Council's planning scheme content to deliver sustainable development and the protection of the Shire's agricultural, environmental and cultural resources.
2. Plan for the augmentation of social and physical infrastructure and identify the role for state and federal governments in closing the infrastructure gap.
3. Ensure that as the population grows, the employment and retail available also grows to reduce the need to commute to Melbourne and Ballarat for work or personal services.

The following list identifies strategies and policies that Council currently has in place to guide and inform its provision of recreation and leisure facilities and services:

- Council Plan 2013-2017.
- Small Towns Services Study: Bungaree, Dunnstown and Wallace (2014).
- Moorabool West Small Towns Residential Assessment (2014).
- Hike and Bike Strategy (2014).
- Health and Well Being Plan (2013).
- Youth Strategy (2013).
- Ballan Structure Plan (2013).
- Urban and Rural Growth Policies (2012).
- Appointment and Delegations Policy (2012).
- Gordon Structure Plan (2011).
- Recreation and Open Space Strategy (2007).
- Community Halls Funding Policy (2005).
- Reserve Funding Policy (2004).
- Reserve Master Plans (various reserves).
- Community Infrastructure Plan (currently under development).

### **1.5. Key issues considered during the Study**

There are a range of issues, constraints and opportunities that exist or are emerging within Moorabool Shire, relating to sport, recreation and open space. Some of these that the Strategy considered include:

- The changing recreation and leisure needs and aspirations of residents, particularly given the impact of both an ageing population and the increase in junior sport participation.
- The increasing participation levels in selected sports and activities, including emerging and new recreation activities, and the impact of this upon the existing suite of facilities.
- Open space provision, including the limited supply of land for accessible open space, and the increased use of public land for commercial activities by community groups and private sector.
- The need for sporting reserves to also provide for unstructured and informal recreation activities.
- The increasing cost to provide, maintain and manage sporting and recreational infrastructure.
- The increasing demand and expectation for higher quality facilities by sporting clubs and other user groups.
- The need to increase the clarity of the roles and responsibilities of Council, Reserve Committees of Management, tenant groups, residents and other reserve users for the management of reserves and other facilities.
- Balancing competing recreational needs for access to open space.
- Determining the broader community benefits of commercial arrangements for the management of Council owned sporting and recreation facilities.
- Determining appropriate tenancy arrangements and financial models for the use of Council owned and managed recreational facilities and land.

- The historical use of Council owned and managed recreational facilities and land, and whether community outcomes are still beneficial when balanced against other competing recreational needs.
- The lack of a strategic basis or framework for the planning and management of Council's passive open space, including play spaces.
- The importance of cross-Council strategy and operational co-operation and support.
- The opportunities for joint-use and development of sporting and recreation facilities with education and private providers, and public private partnerships.

## **1.6. How has the Background Report been prepared?**

The Background Report was prepared following extensive desktop review of the Shire's community profile (2011 Census) and population projections, the analysis of available sports participation data and club memberships, a review of recreation reserves and other sporting and recreation facilities, the analysis of reserve usage data, review and updating of play spaces inventory, the review and assessment of existing reserve master plans, and a review of relevant Council policies and planning reports.

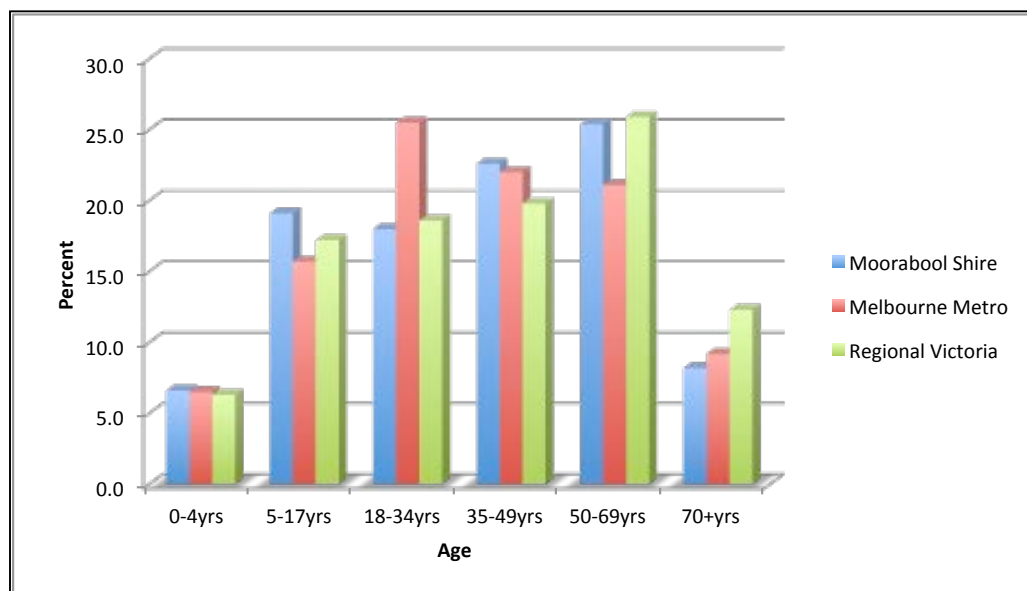
## 2. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF MOORABOOL SHIRE

### 2.1. Shire Overall

The demographic characteristics of Moorabool Shire relevant to leisure planning are outlined below.

- The estimated population of the Moorabool Shire in 2011 was 28,125 people<sup>1</sup>. This is an increase of 10.4% since 2006, being a marginally lower rate of population growth than for Metropolitan Melbourne (10.9%) over the same period, but significantly higher than Regional Victoria (5.5%).
- The age profile of the Moorabool Shire is varied when compared to Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria (see Table 1). It has:
  - a 'younger' profile for the 0-17 year age cohort,
  - a higher proportion of people in the mid-age cohort that includes parents, older workers and early retirees (35–69 year olds), and
  - a 'younger' profile for people aged over 70 years.

Table 1 – 2011 Population Profile of Moorabool Shire compared to Metropolitan Melbourne & Regional Victoria



- Further, Moorabool Shire has a relatively low level of cultural diversity compared to Metropolitan Melbourne, with 83.1% of residents Australia-born compared to 63.3%, but similar to Regional Victoria (84.3%). Of all people born overseas in Moorabool Shire (12.2% of the population), a majority were born in the English speaking countries of the United Kingdom and New Zealand.
- Average weekly household income levels are lower in Moorabool Shire when compared to Metropolitan Melbourne but are significantly higher than all of Regional Victoria, as shown by the proportion of households earning less than \$1,000 per week at 38.0% in Moorabool Shire, compared to 34.3% in Metropolitan Melbourne but a high 47.1% in Regional Victoria.
- In relation to socio-economic disadvantage, Moorabool Shire has a SEIFA Index<sup>2</sup> score of 1008.5, placing it 52<sup>nd</sup> of the 79 municipalities in Victoria, meaning it is in the least disadvantaged 35% of all municipalities. However, there are pockets of disadvantage in the Shire, including Bacchus Marsh, Maddingley and Ballan.

<sup>1</sup> Profile i.d.

<sup>2</sup> SEIFA Index is the Socio-Economic Index for Australia and is derived from attributes such as low income, low educational attainment, high unemployment, jobs in relatively unskilled occupations and variables that reflect disadvantage. The lower the index value, the greater the relative disadvantage of an area.



- There is a slightly higher proportion of Moorabool Shire residents who live in households with children (46.0%) compared to Metropolitan Melbourne with 44.0%, and 37.5% in Regional Victoria. This validates the 'younger' population profile and higher mid-age adult population.

## 2.2. Population Projections and Age Cohorts

A key to predicting the future sporting and recreational needs of a local government area is to understand the projected growth of the population, particularly the growth within different areas of a municipality and within specific age cohorts.

The population of Moorabool Shire is projected to grow to 51,730 people by 2041 (or an 81% increase between 2011 and 2041)<sup>3</sup>.

The projected population growth will not be uniform across the Shire, with a significant proportion of the growth to occur in the east. Table 2 shows that Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds<sup>4</sup> will experience 76% of all projected growth in the Shire to 2041, whilst Moorabool Central (Ballan)<sup>5</sup> will experience 21% and West Moorabool<sup>6</sup> 3%<sup>7</sup>.

Table 2 – Comparison of Projected Population Growth between Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds, Ballan and West Moorabool

Location	2014 Population	Projected 2021	Change '14 to '21	Projected 2041	Change '14 to 2041
Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds	20,280	24,920	4,640	35,870	15,590
Central (Ballan)	7,350	8,190	840	11,590	4,240
West Moorabool	3,550	3,620	70	4,270	720
Total Shire	31,180	36,730	5,550	51,730	20,550

Of note are the findings of the *Small Towns Services Study: Bungaree, Dunnstown and Wallace* by Aecom (2014), which was a planning and engineering study to assess the opportunities, challenges and viability of providing reticulated utility services (water, gas and sewage) to the three townships of Bungaree, Wallace and Dunnstown in order to sustainably develop land. The study concluded that by 2036 an additional 5,000 people could reside in Bungaree and Wallace, compared to the population projections outlined in the *Moorabool Retail Strategy* report. The potential additional population of 5,000 people has been taken into account in Section 3.2 when assessing the adequacy of the current supply of sporting facilities in Ballan and West Moorabool.

Another important characteristic of the projected population growth between the eastern and the western areas of the Shire, is the projected growth by age cohorts. Table 3 shows that there is significantly more growth expected to occur in the age cohorts of 0-11 years and 5–39 years in Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds compared to Ballan and the Rural Balance, even allowing for any additional growth in Bungaree and Wallace that may occur as a result of the connection of additional services to the land in and around these townships. (This analysis has used Forecast id data, as the population projections sourced from the *Moorabool Retail Strategy* by MacroPlanDimasi does not drill-down to age cohorts).

<sup>3</sup> Source: Moorabool Shire Council Retail Strategy, MacroPlanDimasi, 2014.

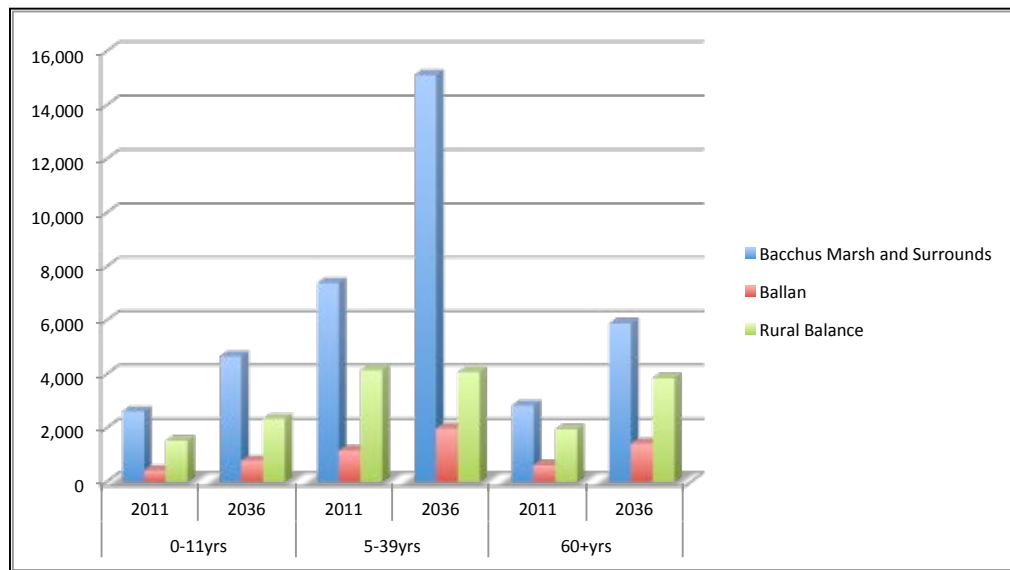
<sup>4</sup> Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds = the urban area of Bacchus Marsh, including the suburbs of Darley and Maddingley, as well as the towns of Myrning, Hopetoun Park, Balliang and Balliang East.

<sup>5</sup> Moorabool Central (Ballan) = Ballan, Gordon, Mount Egerton, Morrisons, Beremboke, Greendale, Blackwood and Spargo Creek.

<sup>6</sup> West Moorabool = Wallace, Bungaree, Dunnstown, Yendon, Lal Lal, Clarendon and Elaine.

<sup>7</sup> Source: Forecast id. (Please note that the 2041 population projections outlined in the Retail Strategy do not provide age breakdowns, so the Forecast id projections have been used in Table 2 & 3).

Table 3 – Comparison of Projected Population Growth by Age Cohort between Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds, Ballan and the Rural Balance



### 2.3. Implications for Sports and Recreation Planning

The net projected population increase in Moorabool Shire to 2041 will result in a corresponding increase in demand for access to sporting and recreation facilities.

Research shows that the rate of participation by people in ‘organised physical activity’<sup>8</sup> and ‘club-based activities’<sup>9</sup> is highest for young people and declines with age. This is evidenced by longitudinal research conducted by the Australian Sports Commission that shows that younger people are significantly more likely to participate in club-based activities compared to older people<sup>10</sup>. Given that the number and rate of population growth in the Central and West Moorabool regions will be relatively low for the next 25 years, including in the active age cohort of 5-39 years, it can be asserted with some confidence that if the provision of sporting facilities in Ballan and the other larger townships is adequate now, then it should remain adequate for the forecast period.

The higher growth in the younger age cohort in Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds will have significant implications for the future planning for sporting facilities, given the higher rate of participation in club-based sport by people in younger age cohorts. **This area of the Shire should have extra focus for the planning for new sporting facilities or the upgrade and expansion of existing sporting facilities in the next 25 years**, particularly Maddingley and the urban area of Bacchus Marsh, which are projected to gain an additional 2,813 people and 2,511 people aged 5-39 years, respectively (Darley 490 people).

Similarly, research shows that Australian-born people have a higher rate of participation in physical activity compared to people born overseas, particularly people born in countries that speak a language other than English<sup>11</sup>. Moorabool Shire has a relatively high proportion of Australian-born residents so the overall level of participation in sport will be higher. A community’s cultural diversity can also influence the preferred type of sports played, so again, given Moorabool Shire’s high Australian-born population, **it can be reasonably expected that the traditional sports of Australian football, cricket, golf, soccer, swimming, tennis, basketball and netball will continue to be popular.**

<sup>8</sup> ‘Organised physical activity’ is activity for exercise, recreation or sport that was organised in full or in part by a fitness, leisure or indoor sports centre that requires payment for participation; a sport or recreation club or association that requires payment of membership, fees or registration; a workplace; a school; or any other type of organisation (ERASS 2010).

<sup>9</sup> ‘Club-based physical activity’ is any activity for exercise, recreation or sport that was organised in full or in part by a sport or recreation club or association that required payment of membership, fees or registration (ERASS 2010).

<sup>10</sup> Source: Participation in Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey (ERASS), ASC, 2010.

<sup>11</sup> Source: Migrants and Participation in Sport and Physical Activity, ABS, 2006.

Notwithstanding the likely need for new and upgraded sporting facilities to service expanding 'young' communities in the eastern area of the Shire, there is projected to be an overall increase in the number of older adults (nearly double the current number of people aged 60+ years). The implications of this are that **the demand for sporting facilities and services historically attractive to older people, such as swimming, tennis and lawn bowls, may increase**, and may also trigger an increased demand for 'veteran' or 'masters' sporting competitions and activities in sports such as Australian football, cricket and basketball.

**The increased number of older adults can also trigger new demand for parks, walking paths and open space with shade and seating.** Good access to play spaces for residents will continue to be important, not only for young families but for areas in the Shire where older adults have a dominant profile, due to the increasing trend for grandparents to be a preferred carer during the day for families where both parents are working, or in the case of single parent families, the sole parent is working.

Affordability to participate in sport and recreation activities and services that require a fee is similar throughout all areas of the Shire, and is considered average when based on weekly household income levels. This is an important consideration when setting user fees and charges, and for Moorabool Shire **there appears to be capacity to set fees based on a 'user pays' principle, albeit acknowledging that there are pockets of low socio-economic disadvantage in the main townships.**

### 3. CURRENT SUPPLY OF SPORTING & RECREATION FACILITIES

#### 3.1. Current Provision and Distribution of Sporting Facilities

An audit of the existing provision of sporting facilities was undertaken by site inspections (refer Appendix 1 for full inventory). A summary of the quantity and distribution of facilities for key sports is shown in Table 4 below. The data shows the distribution of existing facilities by township and planning region<sup>12</sup>.

Table 4 - Sporting Facilities by Township and Planning Regions

Township / Planning Region	AFL Ovals	Athletics	Baseball	BMX / Skate	Indoor Court	Cricket	Equestrian	Golf	Lawn Bowls	Netball	Soccer	Swimming	Tennis
Bacchus Marsh	-	1	1	1	-	2	-	-	4	-	2	1	-
Darley	2	-	-	1	1	2	-	1	-	2	5	-	3
Maddingley	1	-	-	-	2	3	1	1	-	1	-	-	9
Myrning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Balliang	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
<b>Bacchus Marsh Region</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>
Ballan	1	-	-	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	6
Blackwood	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Greendale	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Gordon	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	3
Spargo Creek	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mount Egerton	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Beremboke	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
<b>Ballan Region</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>
Wallace	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Bungaree	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	2
Bullarook	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Dunnstown	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	2
Millbrook	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Navigators	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Yendon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Clarendon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Elaine	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
<b>West Moorabool Region</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>41</b>

Note: Ovals have been counted as cricket ovals where a pitch is installed. Conversely, where the size of an oval is too small to accommodate senior football, it has not been included as an AFL oval. Of the cricket ovals, 14 have synthetic wickets and 1 has a turf wicket.

Tennis courts shown in red have non-compliant run-offs and are not suitable for competition.

Netball courts shown in red have non-compliant run-offs and are not suitable for competition.

Of the 5 bowling greens, 4 have a synthetic playing surface.

<sup>12</sup> Planning regions are as defined in the Community Profile id consulting.

Table 4 shows that from a Shire-wide perspective:

- A majority of all sporting facilities are located within the townships of Bacchus Marsh (includes Darley and Maddingley) and Ballan.
- AFL ovals, cricket ovals, netball courts and tennis courts are the most widely distributed of all the nominated sports.
- Tennis has the largest number of courts (54) of all facilities, largely due to the extensive provision of courts throughout the smaller rural communities and districts.
- Soccer does not have a dedicated purpose-built sportsground within the Shire.
- There is a locational relationship between the provision of netball courts and AFL ovals, due to the dual-code organisational structure of the local football leagues.



### 3.2. Adequacy of the Provision of Sporting Facilities

A high-level assessment was undertaken of the adequacy of the number of existing facilities for selected sports. The sports assessed represent those sports with current high participation by Shire residents, or those that are emerging in popularity. The assessment was based on a benchmark of facility provision per thousand people for each sport.

[Note: benchmarks are not available for athletics tracks, baseball fields, skate parks, equestrian facilities, outdoor pools and golf courses].

The application of provision ratios based on populations is one planning tool commonly used to assess the adequacy of the number of sporting facilities within a defined area (such as a shire or municipality), or to predict the number of sporting facilities that might be required to support population growth.

Provision ratios differ for each sport and work on the basis of calculating the population size that is required to sustain one sports field, one court, one green, etc. For example, the provision ratio commonly used for cricket ovals is one oval per 3,000 people, and for tennis courts is one court per 2,000 people.

The assessment of the adequacy of the number and distribution of existing sporting facilities was undertaken for the Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds region<sup>13</sup>, being the area of the Shire that accommodates the most people now and will likely in the future, and the combined areas of Ballan (Central Moorabool) and West Moorabool<sup>14</sup>. Ballan and West Moorabool have been combined as not only does Ballan (with its existing suite of facilities) provide a relatively central location for the combined region, but the network of major roads/highways throughout the region provides good connections between Ballan and the many small communities. As a result, most people will have reasonable access to existing and future sporting facilities within the combined region.

Six tables have been prepared and are shown on the following pages. Tables 5, 6 & 7 compare the existing provision of sporting facilities to the theoretical provision required to meet the needs of the Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds population in 2011, 2021 and 2041, after applying the provision ratios for the specific sports<sup>15</sup>. Tables 8, 9 & 10 compare the adequacy of the existing provision of facilities in Ballan and West Moorabool compared to the theoretical provision required for 2011, 2021 and 2041.

[Note that only the total number of compliant tennis and netball courts have been used in the benchmarking, as these are suitable for competition purposes. Generally, the benchmark provision has been rounded up, as legitimate needs cannot be accommodated by fractions of provision of facilities]

<sup>13</sup> Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds = the urban area of Bacchus Marsh, including the suburbs of Darley and Maddingley, as well as the towns of Myrmiong, Hopetoun Park, Balliang and Balliang East.

<sup>14</sup> Ballan (Central Moorabool) and West Moorabool = Ballan, Gordon, Mount Egerton, Morrisons, Beremboke, Greendale, Blackwood and Spargo Creek, and Wallace, Bungaree, Dunnstown, Yendon, Lal Lal, Clarendon and Elaine – and for both regions includes the districts and smaller communities adjacent to these townships.

<sup>15</sup> Population projections for 2041 have been sourced from the Moorabool Shire Retail Strategy (2014), which are described in more detail in Section 2.

### Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds

The benchmarking to assess the adequacy of the current number of sporting facilities within Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds identified that for the 2014 population (refer Table 5) there were:

- enough cricket ovals and indoor sports courts,
- not enough Australian football ovals, netball courts and soccer fields, and
- a possible oversupply of tennis courts and bowling greens.

Table 5 - Adequacy of the Number of Sporting Facilities for Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds in 2014 (20,280 people)

A	B	C	D	E
Sport / Activity	Sport Benchmark / Standard for Provision	Total Facilities Required for 2014 Population as per Benchmark (2014: 20,280 people)	Existing Facility Provision	Assessed Oversupply (+) or Shortfall (-) of Facilities to Meet Needs of Current Population (Column D - C)
AFL Football	1:4,000	5 ovals	3 ovals	-2 oval
Cricket	1:3,000	7 ovals	7 ovals	0 oval
Lawn Bowls	1:10,000	2 greens	4 greens	+2 greens
Soccer	1:5,000	4 fields	2 fields	-2 fields
Tennis	1:2,000	10 courts	14 courts (2 non-compliant courts are not counted or the 12 lawn courts as they are not available all year)	+4 courts
Netball	1:3,500	6 courts	3 courts (5 non-compliant courts are not counted)	-3 courts
Indoor Courts	1:10,000	2 courts	2 courts (Civic Hub Stadium court is not counted as its not currently available for indoor sports)	0 court

The results of the benchmarking to assess the adequacy of the provision of sporting facilities in Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds identified that for the projected 2021 population (refer Table 6) there may be:

- just enough tennis courts and bowling greens, and
- not enough cricket ovals and indoor sports courts, and
- a distinct shortage of Australian football ovals, netball courts and soccer fields.

Table 6 - Adequacy of the Number of Sporting Facilities for Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds in 2021 (24,920 people)

A	B	C	D	E
Sport / Activity	Sport Benchmark / Standard for Provision	Total Facilities Required for 2021 Population as per Benchmark (2021: 24,920 people)	Existing Facility Provision	Assessed Oversupply (+) or Shortfall (-) of Facilities to Meet Needs of Current Population (Column D - C)
AFL Football	1:4,000	7 ovals	3 ovals	-4 ovals
Cricket	1:3,000	9 ovals	7 ovals	-2 ovals
Lawn Bowls	1:10,000	3 greens	4 greens	+1 green
Soccer	1:5,000	5 fields	2 fields	-3 fields
Tennis	1:2,000	13 courts	14 courts (2 non-compliant courts are not counted or the 12 lawn courts as they are not available all year)	+1 court
Netball	1:3,500	7 courts	3 courts (5 non-compliant courts are not counted)	-4 courts
Indoor Courts	1:10,000	3 courts	2 courts (Civic Hub Stadium court is not counted as its not currently available for indoor sports)	-1 court

The results of the benchmarking to assess the adequacy of the provision of sporting facilities in Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds identified that for the projected 2041 population (refer Table 7) there may be:

- just enough bowling greens,
- not enough indoor courts, and
- a distinct shortage of Australian football ovals, cricket ovals, tennis courts, netball courts and soccer fields.

Table 7 - Adequacy of the Number of Sporting Facilities for Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds in 2041 (35,870 people)

A	B	C	D	E
Sport / Activity	Sport Benchmark / Standard for Provision	Total Facilities Required for 2041 Population as per Benchmark (2041: 35,870 people)	Existing Facility Provision	Assessed Oversupply (+) or Shortfall (-) of Facilities to Meet Needs of Current Population (Column D - C)
AFL Football	1:4,000	9 ovals	3 ovals	-6 ovals
Cricket	1:3,000	12 ovals	7 ovals	-5 ovals
Lawn Bowls	1:10,000	4 greens	4 greens	0 green
Soccer	1:5,000	7 fields	2 fields	-5 fields
Tennis	1:2,000	18 courts	14 courts (2 non-compliant courts are not counted or the 12 lawn courts as they are not available all year)	-4 courts
Netball	1:3,500	10 courts	3 courts (5 non-compliant courts are not counted)	-7 courts
Indoor Courts	1:10,000	4 courts	2 courts (Civic Hub Stadium court is not counted as its not currently available for indoor sports)	-2 courts

### Ballan and West Moorabool

The forecast population for Ballan and West Moorabool (combined) for 2041 includes the additional 5,000 people that may reside in Bungaree and Wallace over and above the forecast number calculated by id consulting and MacroPlanDimasi, if reticulated utility services are connected<sup>16</sup>.

The results of the benchmarking to assess the adequacy of the current number of sporting facilities within Ballan and West Moorabool (combined) identified that for the 2014 population (refer Table 8) there was:

- just enough bowling greens,
- not enough indoor sports courts and soccer fields, and
- a possible oversupply of tennis courts, netball courts, Australian football ovals and cricket ovals.

The significant oversupply of tennis courts can be partly explained by the provision of tennis courts at recreation reserves located in many of the small townships and rural areas. This direction would have been supported during the early years of settlement due to the relatively low cost to construct and maintain tennis courts, and the fact that tennis is a whole-of-life activity, so investment in tennis courts would have been considered a cost effective strategy to benefit people of all ages.

There are remnants of two tennis courts each at Mt Wallace (at the Mt Wallace Hall site) and at Morrisons Recreation Reserve. Due to the very poor state of these courts and the associated supporting infrastructure, they have not been included in the tennis court inventory.

Similar to tennis, the theoretical oversupply of Australian football ovals, cricket ovals and netball courts can be partly explained by the provision of some of these facilities in small rural towns with populations that are less than what is required for them to be used at capacity, being towns such as Gordon, Wallace, Bungaree and Dunnstown.

<sup>16</sup> Source: *Small Towns Services Study: Bungaree, Dunnstown and Wallace*, Aecom (2014).

Table 8 - Adequacy of the Number of Sporting Facilities for Ballan and West Moorabool in 2014 (10,900 people)

A	B	C	D	E
Sport / Activity	Sport Benchmark / Standard for Provision	Total Facilities Required for 2014 Population as per Benchmark (2014: 10,900 people)	Existing Facility Provision	Assessed Oversupply (+) or Shortfall (-) of Facilities to Meet Needs of Current Population (Column D - C)
AFL Football	1:4,000	3 ovals	7 ovals	+4 ovals
Cricket	1:3,000	4 ovals	8 ovals	+4 ovals
Lawn Bowls	1:10,000	1 green	1 green	0 greens
Soccer	1:5,000	2 fields	0 fields	-2 fields
Tennis	1:2,000	6 courts	27 courts (11 non-compliant courts are not counted)	+21 courts
Netball	1:3,500	3 courts	8 courts (2 non-compliant courts are not counted)	+5 courts
Indoor Courts	1:10,000	1 court	0 courts	-1 court

The results of the benchmarking to assess the adequacy of the current number of sporting facilities within Ballan and West Moorabool (combined) identified that for the projected 2021 population (refer Table 9) there may be:

- just enough bowling greens,
- not enough indoor sports courts and soccer fields, and
- a possible oversupply of tennis courts, netball courts, Australian football ovals and cricket ovals.

Table 9 - Adequacy of the Number of Sporting Facilities for Ballan and West Moorabool in 2021 (11,810 people)

A	B	C	D	E
Sport / Activity	Sport Benchmark / Standard for Provision	Total Facilities Required for 2021 Population as per Benchmark (2021: 11,810 people)	Existing Facility Provision	Assessed Oversupply (+) or Shortfall (-) of Facilities to Meet Needs of Current Population (Column D - C)
AFL Football	1:4,000	3 ovals	7 ovals	+4 ovals
Cricket	1:3,000	4 ovals	8 ovals	+4 ovals
Lawn Bowls	1:10,000	1 green	1 green	0 greens
Soccer	1:5,000	3 fields	0 fields	-3 fields
Tennis	1:2,000	6 courts	27 courts (11 non-compliant courts are not counted)	+21 courts
Netball	1:3,500	4 courts	8 courts (2 non-compliant courts are not counted)	+4 courts
Indoor Courts	1:10,000	1 court	0 courts	-1 court

The results of the benchmarking to assess the adequacy of the current number of sporting facilities within Ballan and West Moorabool (combined) identified that for the projected 2041 population there may be:

- not enough bowling greens, cricket ovals, indoor sports courts and soccer fields, and
- a possible oversupply of tennis courts, Australian football ovals and netball courts.



Table 10 - Adequacy of the Number of Sporting Facilities for Ballan and West Moorabool in 2041 (20,860 people)

A	B	C	D	E
Sport / Activity	Sport Benchmark / Standard for Provision	Total Facilities Required for 2041 Population as per Benchmark (2041: 20,860 people)	Existing Facility Provision	Assessed Oversupply (+) or Shortfall (-) of Facilities to Meet Needs of Current Population (Column D - C)
AFL Football	1:4,000	5 ovals	7 ovals	+2 ovals
Cricket	1:3,000	7 ovals	8 ovals	+1 oval
Lawn Bowls	1:10,000	2 greens	1 green	-1 green
Soccer	1:5,000	4 fields	0 fields	-4 fields
Tennis	1:2,000	11 courts	27 courts (11 non-compliant courts are not counted)	+16 courts
Netball	1:3,500	6 courts	8 courts (2 non-compliant courts are not counted)	+2 courts
Indoor Courts	1:10,000	2 courts	0 courts	-2 courts

The longitudinal analysis through the period from 2011 to 2041 shows that there may be a shortage in the Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds region to 2041 of the following key sporting facilities:

- Australian football ovals,
- Cricket ovals,
- Soccer fields,
- Indoor courts,
- Tennis courts, and
- Netball courts (this shortage somewhat offset by the preference of residents in Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds to play competition netball indoors rather than outdoors).

For the combined Ballan and West Moorabool region, there may be a shortage to 2041 for the following sporting facilities:

- Bowling greens,
- Indoor courts, and
- Soccer fields.

Whilst the benchmarking process is one tool to assess the adequacy of the number of sporting facilities available, another is to analyse the participation numbers of sporting clubs and their usage profile of facilities. Council's Recreation Development Unit has undertaken some research in the past 2 – 3 years, and this research shows that "a majority of sporting clubs across the Shire have experienced significant growth over the last two years. This growth has been in junior participation, the establishment of senior clubs and from an increase in women's and youth girl's participation in active sport."<sup>17</sup>

Table 11 shows the total number of participants and players in organised sporting activities in Moorabool Shire in 2013, and includes sports club members and people involved in organised sport that is not necessarily club-based, e.g. leisure centre users. The table also shows the total number of participants and players from Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds for comparative purposes.

<sup>17</sup> Source: Council Briefing Paper, August 2013.

Key information from the table is:

- There is just less than twice as many juniors (5 – 18 years) participating in organised sport compared to seniors.
- However, for junior soccer participation, there are more than three times as many juniors to seniors participating, which may indicate that soccer could experience greater demand for senior teams in the future. Conversely for cricket, there are fewer junior players than seniors (excludes In2Cricket participants), so there may be a softening of demand for senior cricket in the future.
- Football, netball and basketball are the most popular sports for juniors, whilst for senior players, football and netball are significantly more popular than the other sports.
- Overall, approximately 72% of all sports participants in Moorabool Shire that are members of sporting clubs are based in Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds, or are participants in sporting activities conducted at the Bacchus Marsh Leisure Centre. (Important, as only 52% of all sporting facilities are located in Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds, excluding tennis courts).
- Participation in organised athletics, baseball, pony club, korfbal, badminton and basketball is only available in Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds.

Table 11 – Total Participant Numbers in Organised Sport in Moorabool and in Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds (2013)

Sport	Introductory Program Participants	Estimate Junior Players	Estimate Senior Players	Total Players	Total Players Bacchus Marsh
Australian Football	300	780	420	1,500	820
Netball	70	390	350	810	460
Soccer	20	240	85	345	345
Cricket	40	235	250	525	365
Tennis	40	170	260	470	350
Athletics	0	275	0	275	275
Baseball	40	30	40	110	110
Pony Club	0	75	0	75	75
Korfbal	0	0	40	40	40
Badminton	0	0	10	10	10
Basketball	20	360	160	540	540
<b>Total</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>2,555</b>	<b>1,615</b>	<b>4,700</b>	<b>3,390</b>

Another important consideration in assessing the adequacy of the number of sporting facilities is to understand their profile of use, particularly important for turf-based facilities where overuse can lead to a degraded playing surface.

As part of the research undertaken by the Recreation Development Unit in August 2013, the total hours per week that sporting facilities are being used was investigated and confirmed. Of significance, is the current profile of use of sports fields by the winter clubs for training and matches. Table 12 shows the results of this research, and it confirms that some sports fields are at (or exceed) capacity, which industry-accepted benchmarks have set at 20 - 25 hours of use per week. The impact on the usage profile of selected reserves is evident where tenant clubs have multiple junior teams.

There are three key negative outcomes for the football and soccer clubs situated in Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds, which are directly related to the shortage of grounds:

1. Grounds degrade during winter due to overuse.
2. Clubs are required to cap the number of junior players and teams.
3. Coaches of some junior teams are only able to use half grounds (or less) for training, which is not ideal when set plays and match simulation drills are being conducted.

Table 12 – Estimated Hours of Use Per Week of Moorabool Sports Fields – Winter (2013)

Reserve Location	Club	Hours per Week
Maddingley Park	Bacchus Marsh Football Club	28
Darley Park	Darley Football Club	30
Darley Civic and Community Hub	Bacchus Marsh Soccer Club (15) Darley Football Club (11)	26
Masons Lane	Bacchus Marsh Soccer Club	28
	Bacchus Marsh Obedience Dog Club	5
	Bacchus Marsh Baseball Club	20
Ballan	Ballan Football Club	18
Gordon	Gordon Football Club	15
Wallace	Wallace Football Club	15
Bungaree	Bungaree Football Club	15
Dunnstown	Dunnstown Football Club	15

For other facilities, such as indoor sports courts, where there is high patronage or demand but inadequate provision of courts, the impact on people and groups can include training having to be restricted to half-courts only (or none at all) and some sporting or recreation activities not being offered at all to the community – typically the ‘minor’ or low participation sports, such as volleyball, badminton and futsal.

## 4. CURRENT SUPPLY OF LEISURE FACILITIES

The leisure facilities listed in the following table are either owned by Council, or in the case of the Bacchus Marsh Leisure Centre, is subject to a joint-use agreement with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Bacchus Marsh College that permits the community's use of the centre during an agreed spread of hours each day. At each facility, a range sporting, health & fitness and recreational activities are available for residents and groups of all ages and abilities to participate in. A summary of the leisure facilities and the main activities available at them is provided in Table 13.

Table 13 – Leisure Facilities and Activities Currently Offered

Centre / Facility	Facilities Available	Activities Available
Bacchus Marsh Leisure Centre	Two indoor sports courts Health club Group fitness area Circuit training area Crèche	Basketball, netball, korfball, badminton and casual hire of the courts Cardio and free weights Group fitness classes Personal training Childcare (for patrons only)
Darley Civic and Community Hub Indoor Stadium	Indoor sports court Commercial kitchen	Acrofun (recreational gymnastics) and birthday parties
Bacchus Marsh Seasonal Outdoor Pool	30m x 6 lane outdoor lap pool (seasonal)	Recreational swimming
Ballan Seasonal Outdoor Pool	25m x 6 lane outdoor lap pool (seasonal)	Recreational swimming

[Single indoor sports courts are also available at the following schools: Bacchus Marsh PS, Pentland Hills PS, St Bernards PS, Bacchus Marsh Grammar School, and Ballan PS. All courts are managed internally by the respective schools, and no formal arrangement exists between Council and the schools for community access to them. Enquiries carried out with each school in April 2014 identified that all courts are currently close to (or are) being fully utilised by a combination of school-based activities, or uses by external groups arranged directly with the schools]

The benchmarking for the provision of indoor sports courts for Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds identified that there is a satisfactory supply for the current population, but a possible shortfall of two courts for the future population to 2041 (see Section 3.2). However, the court at the Darley Civic and Community Hub Indoor Stadium is not currently being used for indoor court sports, so the predicted shortfall of courts could be mitigated if this court can be accessed for indoor sports. In mid-2014, Council commenced a plan to cease the exclusive use of the stadium for gymnastics in order to free-up time for basketball and other indoor sporting activities.

The usage profile of the two indoor sports courts at the Bacchus Marsh Leisure Centre in 2013 confirmed that the existing provision of two courts was inadequate, with the two courts used at an average 73% of capacity<sup>18</sup> for basketball, netball and korfball. (Most of the time slots that are currently available are the least preferred times for organised training and competition by the regular user groups, being Friday afternoons and Sunday mornings). The main tenant groups using the indoor courts are:

1. Bacchus Marsh Basketball Association (BMBA)  
Has more than 500 participants (up from 460 in 2012) and is now unable to meet demand for court time for training and competition. The BMBA is currently using the stadium for approximately 1,550 hours per annum.
2. Bacchus Marsh Netball Association (BMNA)  
Has more than 500 participants (440 in 2012) and has had to cap the number of teams due to

<sup>18</sup> Capacity is calculated by the hours of use on Monday to Friday between 4.00pm – 9.30pm, and on Saturday & Sunday between 8.00am – 5.30pm.

the restricted access to courts for training and competition. The BMNA is currently using the stadium for approximately 700 hours per annum.

3. Bacchus Marsh Korfbal Association (BMKA)  
Has approximately 40 participants. The BMKA currently uses one court on Friday evenings for 2 hours between March to October.

Using the same spread of hours used to calculate capacity for the leisure centre, the court at the Darley Civic and Community Hub Indoor Stadium was being used at 30% capacity in 2014 for Acrofun. Acrofun equipment is permanently set up and the stadium was being used for the activity Monday to Friday, whilst children's birthday parties were occasionally booked to use the stadium on Saturdays and Sundays. Acrofun had just over 90 participants enrolled in 2013 and Belgravia Leisure was hoping to grow the program to more than 160 participants. The decision to operate the centre as a permanent venue for Acrofun impacts the flexibility of the use of the stadium. For example, in early 2014 there was no use of the stadium on Thursdays, and with Acrofun being predominantly conducted between 4.00pm – 7.00pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, it left the stadium unused in the later evening timeslots.

The current demand for an indoor court at Ballan identified by the sports facility benchmarking in Section 3.2 (and increasing to 2 courts in West Moorabool by 2041), is perhaps a false demand given the close location of Ballan and the small communities in West Moorabool to Ballarat's Miner Dome and the full range of basketball activities provided by the Ballarat Basketball Association. The court at the Ballan Primary School has the capability to accommodate local training demand by juniors.

The health club at the Bacchus Marsh Leisure Centre experienced a 12% decline in attendances 46,500 members in 2011 to 40,500 in 2013. At the same time gym membership reduced from 900 to 772. Feedback from patrons and the Centre Manager<sup>19</sup> indicates that the poor performance of the health and fitness areas can be attributed to the small size of the gym room, the out dated gym equipment, the less than desirable location of the crèche in relation to the reception and change room areas, the use of the stadium for group fitness (rather than smaller purpose-built spaces), and the lack of car parking during peak periods. Another factor impacting the performance the health club, particularly the group fitness area, is the proliferation of new private gyms and group fitness venues opening in Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds in the past 3 – 5 years, which has significantly increased the level of competition.

The two outdoor pools are restricted in their health and fitness potential, as both are seasonal pools only. Neither is heated, and the formal shape and configuration of the pool spaces offers only limited options for programming, other than as pools for use for recreational swimming, lap swimming and swimming carnivals. Both pools experienced an increase in the number of visitations between 2001 and 2013: the Bacchus Marsh Seasonal Outdoor Pool increased from 7,600 visits to just over 9,800 visits; and the Ballan Seasonal Outdoor Pool increased its visitations from 2,100 to 3,500 visits. Both pools are approaching the end of their functional lives, and will require significant capital injections to enable them to continue to operate.

Council has undertaken a planning process with residents and other stakeholders (including the Bacchus Marsh Community Consortium) for the development of a new indoor aquatic centre in Bacchus Marsh. The Council endorsed site for the new centre is the current location of the Bacchus Marsh Seasonal Outdoor Pool in Peppertree Park, and the project will result in the permanent closure of the outdoor pool. It is currently proposed that the centre be constructed in three stages:

1. Stage 1  
25m x 8 lane heated pool, a learn to swim pool, café, and associated change rooms, administration areas and pool plant.
2. Stage 2  
Fitness gymnasium, two group fitness rooms, crèche, and additional change rooms and administration areas.
3. Stage 3  
Leisure pool, hydrotherapy pool, sauna and spa, and additional change rooms.

<sup>19</sup> Source: *Leisure Services Review, Moorabool Shire Council, 2013.*

The construction of the first stage and subsequent stages of the proposed new aquatic centre are subject to the availability of funding. The centre will provide the community with a substantial health and fitness facility for people of all ages and abilities, however, whilst there is general community support for the project there are other sport and recreation projects with higher priority.

#### 4.1. Discussion

The indoor courts at the Bacchus Marsh Leisure Centre are operating at close to full capacity (as at 2013), but provide only a relatively small range of indoor sporting options for residents, being basketball, netball, korfbal, and badminton. Other indoor activities that would typically be available locally for a community of 15,000 – 20,000 people would be futsal, volleyball and table tennis. In addition, there is little opportunity currently available for individuals or groups to hire a court for casual play or training. (This situation is further compounded by the high utilisation of the five indoor sports courts currently available at Shire schools).

Notwithstanding the lack of diversity of indoor sporting activities currently available in the Shire, there is demonstrated demand from the Bacchus Marsh Basketball Association (BMBA) and the Bacchus Marsh Netball Association (BMNA) for access to additional court time. The basketball association is not able to fully develop its participation and involvement in Friday night rep ball competitions, and the netball association has had to cap the number of teams participating in its competitions.

Basketball and netball participation has grown significantly in the past three years, and will continue to grow as the population also continues to increase. More court time for these associations will also allow them to further develop and diversify the range of basketball and netball activities, services and competitions, e.g. adult competitions, competitions/ activities for players with special needs, and pathway programs for elite players.

A couple of 'low-cost' options currently exist to increase the available court time for basketball, netball or other indoor sporting activities:

1. Make available the two courts at the Bacchus Marsh Leisure Centre on Friday evenings to either the BMBA or the BMNA, by relocating the korfbal activities to another time-slot at the centre, or relocating the korfbal activities to another centre. The Bacchus Marsh Korfbal Association (BMKA) utilise one court for 2 hours. Even though the second court is available for use by the basketball and netball associations during this time, both associations require the use of both courts concurrently to make any new competitions viable.
2. Either restrict or cease the use of the Darley Civic and Community Hub Indoor Stadium for gymnastics, and schedule the use of the stadium for the Bacchus Marsh Korfbal Association (BMKA), the BMBA, the BMNA, or other activities (e.g. futsal). A key impact from gymnastics not retaining exclusive use of the stadium would be that Belgravia Leisure would need to allocate resources to pack-up and set up the gymnastics equipment, as required, or pass on this responsibility to parents involved in the gymnastics program. However, the additional uses of the stadium for basketball, netball, korfbal and other indoor sporting activities would offset some of the financial impacts, and would ease somewhat the current demand for court space both now and into the future.
3. Relocate the gymnastics program on a permanent basis into another room within the Darley Civic and Community Hub. Gymnastics is not reliant on an indoor stadium space to operate, although it is acknowledged that the sense of space inside a stadium compared to a low-ceiling room space will be different. This scenario considerably improves the issue of a lack of court space in Bacchus Marsh, as the stadium would become available for indoor sports on some days each week. Again, it is acknowledged that there will be some constraints with this scenario, such as the need for additional volunteers from the BMBA and the BMNA to operate sporting competitions across two venues simultaneously, the possible additional cost to Belgravia Leisure to operate a satellite indoor venue for sporting competitions, and the reduced potential for generating income from second-spend options (e.g. canteen) at the Darley Civic and Community Hub Indoor Stadium.

The sports facility benchmarking identifies the need for additional indoor courts within the Shire to meet demand by 2041. In accepting that access is required in the short to medium term to at least one new indoor court, a more sustainable option to immediately resolve the current demand for indoor sporting space is to extend the Bacchus Marsh Leisure Centre by 1-2 courts. An extension will also provide an opportunity to reassess the functionality of the existing layout of the centre, and could provide a cost-effective opportunity to expand the fitness gym and provide a multipurpose room whose core use will be as a group fitness space. Any future planning to improve the provision of health and fitness facilities at the leisure centre should be undertaken in the context that eventually all of these services may be relocated to purpose-built facilities in the proposed new aquatic leisure centre.

The benefit of planning for improved health and fitness facilities in the short-term at the leisure centre, if it is extended, is that these areas can generate good profits to offset the deficit typically associated with managing stadiums. Notwithstanding this, there will be economies of scale possible from the management of 3-4 indoor courts located together at the leisure centre, compared to operating two courts at the leisure centre and a third court at the Darley Civic and Community Hub Indoor Stadium. The extension of the leisure centre will also allow the gymnastics program to be retained at the Darley Civic and Community Hub Indoor Stadium in the medium term, which should assist it to grow and develop further as the population and demand for junior gym also grow.

### **Possible Directions**

Some potential directions for consideration include:

1. Investigate options to better utilise the Darley Civic and Community Hub Indoor Stadium, including reducing the use of the stadium for gymnastics and introducing indoor court sports.
2. Plan for the extension of the Bacchus Marsh Leisure Centre by 1-2 courts, and provide new or upgraded space for the fitness gym and group fitness.
3. Construct a new aquatic leisure centre in Bacchus Marsh that will provide an integrated aquatic and health and fitness facility when fully built and operational.
4. Retain and upgrade the Ballan Seasonal Outdoor Pool.

## 5. CURRENT SUPPLY OF PLAY SPACES

Council's inventory of play spaces has been expanded and updated as part of this study. It has been expanded to include a more comprehensive inventory of the equipment available at each play space, and the availability of associated amenities, such as seats, toilets, shade, etc. The updating of the inventory was undertaken by a combination of site visits, reviewing aerial photographs of play spaces, and input from Council staff.

There are currently 58 play spaces across the Shire, which includes the BMX track at Darley and the skate parks located in Bacchus Marsh and Ballan. The play spaces are located on a combination of Council land, Crown land, education land, and private land. A summary of the quantity and hierarchy of play spaces by township and planning region is shown in Table 14 (excludes the 12 play spaces located at pre-schools, schools and the Bacchus Marsh McDonalds store, as these are not freely available to the public at all times).

An abbreviated inventory of play spaces is available in Appendix 2, whilst the complete inventory has been created as a separate file for Council.

Table 14 – Location, Hierarchy and Distribution of Play Spaces in Moorabool Shire (2014)

Township / Planning Region	Local	District	Regional	BMX Track	Skate Park
Bacchus Marsh	3	1	-	-	1
Darley	5	4	1	1	-
Maddingley	3	3	-	-	-
Coimadai	-	-	1	-	-
Hopetoun Park	1	-	-	-	-
Balliang	1	-	-	-	-
<b>Bacchus Marsh Region</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Ballan	3	1	-	-	1
Greendale	1	1	-	-	-
Gordon	1	1	-	-	-
Mount Wallace	1	-	-	-	-
Beremboke	-	1	-	-	-
<b>Ballan Region</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Wallace	1	-	-	-	-
Bungaree	1	-	-	-	-
Spargo Creek	-	1	-	-	-
Bullarook	1	-	-	-	-
Millbrook	1	-	-	-	-
Dunnstown	-	1	-	-	-
Navigators	-	1	-	-	-
Yendon	1	-	-	-	-
Lal Lal	1	-	-	-	-
Elaine	-	1	-	-	-
<b>West Moorabool Region</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

- Local = contain opportunities for solitary, parallel and group play, generally designed for 3-7 year olds
- District = provide a wider range of play opportunities than local play spaces, typically service a number of neighbourhood areas, and are usually strategically located within larger reserves
- Regional = generally large and provide a broad mix of different play opportunities and experiences for all ages and abilities, or may be larger, single purpose facilities



Greendale Reserve play space



The summary of the number, hierarchy, distribution and ownership of play spaces is:

- Over half of all available play spaces (25) are classified as 'local' play spaces.
- There are only two 'regional' play spaces available throughout the Shire, and both are located in East Moorabool Region.
- There are 12 play spaces located at pre-schools, schools and the Bacchus Marsh McDonalds store, and are not freely available to the public at all times.
- Just over half of the available play spaces (25) are located in Bacchus Marsh and Surrounds.
- There are no BMX or skate parks in the West Moorabool Region.
- Most of the rural play spaces are associated with other community facilities, such as halls, tennis courts, and recreation reserves.

Research undertaken by Council in 2012 identified that 90% of all Bacchus Marsh, Darley and Maddingley residences are within 500m of a play space (Council's current policy), and over 95% of rural residences are within a 10km radius of a play space. In relation to condition of equipment, the Council's *Standard Operating Procedures for Playgrounds* report (2009) states that "as at December 2009, all existing playground equipment complies with the relevant Australian Standards."

As residential areas within the Shire continue to expand, Council will need to plan for additional play spaces to meet the demand by residents. Many of the new play spaces may be funded and constructed by developers.

## 5.1. Current Policies and Procedures

Council has produced several documents related to play spaces:

1. *Standard Operating Procedures for Playgrounds (2009)*  
This document identifies a hierarchy for play spaces, i.e. local, neighbourhood, regional and specialised; safety issues; audit schedules; play equipment; risk management; accessibility checklist; and an audit inspection template.
2. *Playground Management Policy*  
This document provides a framework to guide Council's decision-making processes for play spaces.
3. *Playground Register*  
This document contains details about each play space, including its components and inspection records.



Mill Park (Ballan) play space

## 5.2. Discussion

Council's current system of managing play spaces appears to be primarily based on replacement of play equipment at the end of its lifespan and regular risk assessments and audits. Whilst both of these tasks are important, there appears to be a gap in relation to the development of play value, diversity of play opportunities, inclusion and accessibility, i.e. strategic planning for play spaces.

The assessment of current standards table produced as part of the *Standard Operating Procedures for Playgrounds (2009)* refers to diversity of activities as high, medium or low (based on the number of activities provided). Diversity of play opportunities at a municipal level translates to each play space offering something slightly different to all other play spaces. Diversity within a play space ensures that there is a range of different activities on offer, such as space for ball games or running; quiet, contemplative areas; different types of activities, such as climbing, balance, spinning, and sliding, and areas where people can congregate and socialise. A classification based on catchment, diversity and scale is recommended to be considered when preparing the Play Spaces Strategy.

There is no reference to natural play features in the mix of opportunities, nor any mention of activities that provide an element of challenge for participants. There is a strong focus at present on the provision of both natural features and challenging play opportunities for children of all ages.

The *Standard Operating Procedures for Playgrounds* report assesses a majority of play spaces in the Shire as 'low' for people with a disability, although recognises the processes that need to be incorporated to ensure accessibility. This criteria needs to be put into action to ensure that more play spaces in the Shire are inclusive and accessible for people of all abilities.

The *Playground Management Policy* identifies the need for draft guidelines for the provision of play spaces in new subdivisions and a strategic plan for the provision of new or upgraded play spaces within the Shire by August 2010. Both of these documents would be of great value to Moorabool Shire, but neither task appears to have been undertaken to date.

### Interim Directions

Some potential directions for consideration include:

1. Prepare a Play Space Strategy to help inform future planning, design, management and maintenance of play spaces by Moorabool Shire Council and others (such as developers), focussing on accessibility, diversity (including natural play spaces), inclusion and improved play value.
2. Review play space and capital works budgets to ensure sufficient funds are being budgeted to maintain and develop play spaces.
3. Consider developing joint-use agreements with schools to facilitate after hours access to play spaces on Department of Education and Early Child Development land.

## 6. RECREATION RESERVE MANAGEMENT

There are 23 recreation reserves located in Moorabool Shire that have spaces or facilities that accommodate sport or active recreation. There are several ownership and management arrangements:

- One is Council-owned and managed.
- Six are Council-owned and managed by a Section 86 Committee.
- 13 are owned by the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) and are managed by DEPI appointed Committees.
- One has parts Council-owned and DEPI owned, and is managed by a Section 86 Committee.
- One is owned by DEPI and is managed by Council.
- One is owned by DEPI, and Council has been delegated responsibility for its management, but has re-delegated its management responsibility to a Section 86 Committee.

Table 15 – Ownership and Management Arrangements of the Sporting and Active Recreation Reserves in Moorabool Shire

Reserve	Owner	Governance Arrangements
Darley Civic and Community Hub	Council	Council
Dunnstown Recreation Reserve	Council	Council – Section 86 CoM
Elaine Recreation Reserve	Council	Council – Section 86 CoM
Greendale Reserve	Council	Council – Section 86 CoM
Maddingley Park	Council/DEPI	Council – Section 86 CoM
Masons Lane Reserve	Council	Council – Section 86 CoM
Navigators Community Centre	Council	Council – Section 86 CoM
Wallace Recreation Reserve	Council	Council – Section 86 CoM
Bacchus Marsh Racecourse & Recreation Reserve	DEPI	Council – Section 86 CoM
Ballan Recreation Reserve	DEPI	DEPI - CoM
Beremboke Recreation Reserve	DEPI	DEPI - CoM
Blackwood Sports Ground	DEPI	DEPI - CoM
Bullarook Recreation Reserve	DEPI	DEPI - CoM
Bungaree Recreation Reserve	DEPI	DEPI - CoM
Clarendon Recreation Reserve	DEPI	DEPI - CoM
Darley Park	DEPI	Council
Gordon Public Park (Tennis Courts)	DEPI	DEPI - CoM
Gordon Recreation Reserve	DEPI	DEPI - CoM
Korweinguboora Recreation Reserve	DEPI	DEPI - CoM
Morrison's Recreation Reserve	DEPI	DEPI - CoM
Mt Egerton Recreation Reserve	DEPI	DEPI - CoM
Myrniong Recreation Reserve	DEPI	DEPI - CoM
Yendon Recreation Reserve (Tennis Courts)	DEPI	DEPI - CoM

For those reserves managed by committees, Council currently provides an annual operating grant to contribute to the costs of management and maintenance of the reserves, but primarily to meet the cost of maintaining the sportsgrounds. However, Council acknowledges that its funding contribution to most reserves has not kept pace with the actual cost to the committees to satisfactorily maintain them. This shortfall is compounded at those reserves that are experiencing increased sporting use as a result of expanding populations and the ongoing trend of increased participation in junior sport. These factors are creating a need for more access to sportsgrounds for training and matches, hence additional maintenance. As a result, the funding model outlined in Council's *Reserve Funding Policy* requires review.

Council's *Appointments and Delegation Policy* outlines the role and function of the reserve committees of management appointed by Council. The role of the committees is to:

1. Manage the operations (maintenance and usage) of the reserve on behalf of the Council.
2. Act in accordance with Council policies and within the Committee Instrument of Delegation.
3. Communicate with reserve users and the broader community regarding the management and access of the reserve.
4. Generally act in the best interest of user groups.

Under the powers and responsibilities vested in the committees of management, the committees undertake the management and maintenance of reserves, ensure facilities are available for public use, and commit to liaising with Council in relation to all major works and capital development to ensure compliance with legislative requirements. In relation to fees and charges paid by permanent reserve user groups, Council collects and retains all fees payable at reserves located in the east of the Shire, whilst the respective reserve committees retain all fees payable at reserves located in the west of the Shire.



Darley Park sportsground



Wallace Recreation Reserve cricket practice nets



Bacchus Marsh Tennis Club

## 6.1. Discussion

In recent years, some committees have experienced difficulties in satisfactorily fulfilling their obligations under the terms of the delegation. In fact, a review undertaken by Council last year that assessed the functionality and effectiveness of the then 11 Council-appointed committees found that seven committees were functioning adequately, three were not functioning, and one was semi-functional. Of significance is the fact that three of the four reserves located in the eastern part of the Shire were assessed as not functioning adequately, or were semi-functional.

The key issues impacting the committees responsible for the reserves in the eastern part of the Shire are as follows.

- The increased effort required by club volunteers to manage the increasing number of teams in their respective clubs is resulting in a reduced number of volunteers who are willing and available for membership of reserve committees.
- The increased number of teams and subsequent increased use of sportsgrounds requires a corresponding increase in the level of maintenance of the playing surfaces, and new skills and expertise to improve the capacity and capability of grounds to absorb an increased use.
- The lack of committee succession plans and willingness of committee members to assume roles of responsibility, such as President and Secretary, has reduced the size and functionality of some committees to a level where meetings are not being held regularly, if at all.
- The increased awareness of volunteers of the risks associated with using machinery and equipment for which they are not qualified has reduced the pool of available volunteers to undertake maintenance tasks that require the use of machinery.

A direct impact on Council has been the increased need for Recreation Development staff, Assets/Infrastructure staff and Parks staff to become involved in arbitrating conflicts between reserve committees, user groups and other hirers, and to undertake sportsground maintenance tasks. Council now undertakes the sportsground maintenance at Darley Park, Maddingley Park and Masons Lane.

With the population projected to continue to increase in East Moorabool, **a more sustainable and strategic reserve management framework is required for Maddingley Park, Masons Lane and the Bacchus Marsh Racecourse & Recreation Reserve, and any new active sportsgrounds constructed in future in this growth area.**

As mentioned, in the past couple of years, Council has taken over the responsibility for the maintenance of some sportsgrounds at selected recreation reserves where there are reserve committees still in place, and which previously maintained the grounds and buildings. Council commenced this practice partially as a result of the inability of the reserve committees to maintain grounds to an acceptable standard, and partially due to the increased usage of some grounds creating an unsustainable burden on the human and financial resources of reserve committees.

East Moorabool continues to expand rapidly and is attracting families who have grown up in Melbourne. As a result, many have high expectations for the standard and quality of sporting facilities and they have not previously been in situations where local community members are responsible for directly managing and maintaining sportsgrounds. As East Moorabool continues to urbanise, it will become increasingly more difficult for reserve committees to remain viable and to therefore fulfil all duties and responsibilities historically carried out by them.

It is timely for Council to develop and adopt a strategic framework to determine the appropriate management model required for each of the Council's community facilities. Council should also introduce a formal policy to levy fees and charges at recreation reserves where it has assumed the responsibility for maintaining the sportsgrounds. The policy should be rolled out across existing reserves, as required, and be adopted for any new reserves developed in East Moorabool for which Council will be the management authority.

## Interim Directions

Some potential directions for consideration include:

1. Continue to assess the future of committees of management on a case by case basis to ensure the most appropriate management and maintenance model is in place therefore maximising the benefits to the community.
2. Where committees of management are dissolved at reserves (or in the case of the Darley Civic and Community Hub where there has never been a committee), introduce reserve reference or advisory groups. The purpose of such groups would be to facilitate a formal process of dialogue between tenant groups, to facilitate a formal process of information exchange between Council and tenant groups, and to assist Council and user groups to prioritise capital upgrades and major maintenance items.
3. Review the current policies and processes for the annual allocation of sportsgrounds and other facilities located on reserves to user groups, including defining maintenance responsibilities between Council and the tenant groups, determining fees and charges (see Section 7.2), and preparing a capital works contributions framework for upgraded and new facilities on reserves (see Section 7.3).
4. Continue to delegate the management of sporting and active recreation reserves in West Moorabool to volunteer committees of management, as the majority are working effectively.

## 6.2. Fees and Charges Principles

Pricing policies for sportsgrounds and pavilions should be underpinned by a clearly defined set of principles. It is proposed that the following principles underpin a sportsground fees and charges policy for the Moorabool Shire Council, which are principles and foundations utilised in best practice policy implemented by other local government authorities.

- a) Council should manage and control all costs associated with the maintenance and renovation of sportsgrounds and pavilions to agreed standards for which it is responsible.
- b) Council should manage and control the setting and collection of fees and charges, and they should be reviewed annually via Council's budget process.
- c) All user groups on Council-owned or Council-managed reserves that have been transferred back to Council to maintain should be levied appropriate fees and charges.
- d) Any fees and charges system should endeavour to recover a percentage of sportsground and pavilion maintenance costs.
- e) Consider providing reduced fees and charges for selected target groups that use sportsgrounds as a means to encourage participation in physical participation.
- f) Sportsgrounds have a residual benefit to the community as open space, and as a consequence, the cost of providing the resource should be shared between sports clubs and ratepayers where the general public have access to the reserve.
- g) Costs to be recovered through the proposed pricing policy should focus on a percentage contribution towards the direct costs of maintaining the sportsground resulting from usage.
- h) The cost of capital works to upgrade playing fields and pavilions should not be taken into consideration in determining sportsground fees and charges.
- i) Seasonal fees and charges levied for use of a sportsground and pavilion should be shared proportionately between tenants, if more than one seasonal user group shares a facility.
- j) User groups using better standard sportsgrounds and pavilions should contribute more than groups using basic standard grounds and facilities, to ensure equity and access for all to facilities.
- k) Seasonal fees and charges should be consistent for the same grade and quality of sportsgrounds and pavilions across the Shire.

- l) Commercial organisations, semi-commercial clubs, or user groups generating revenue from Council-owned or Council-managed sportsgrounds and pavilions should be required to pay a negotiated rate for use of their facilities.

It is recommended that the principles outlined be used to underpin any future sportsground fees and charges policy for Moorabool Shire Council.

In addition, if a percentage of recoupment of maintenance costs does become the basis for determining annual fees, Council should determine what the percentage of recoupment should be. Further, Council may need to consider a staged approach for the introduction of a new fees and charges policy, particularly if the new fee schedules are significantly greater to what user groups are currently being charged.

### 6.3. Capital Works Contribution Framework

A common issue for many local governments when assessing requests for capital improvements to existing or new sporting facilities, is deciding what projects should be its sole responsibility to fund, what projects should be the applicant's (or sports club's) responsibility to fund, and what projects should be jointly funded in a partnership approach.

Council requires a clear delineation and distinction between what might be the Moorabool Shire Council's responsibility to fund, and what might be a club's or reserve committee's responsibility to fund in relation to the standard provision of sporting infrastructure at Council-owned or managed reserves and sporting facilities<sup>20</sup>. In some instances there may be shared responsibility and this should be clarified within any new framework for capital works contributions.

There is likely to be progressive upgrade of existing sporting facilities as well as the development of new ones. Any proposed new framework should recognise that there has been (and continues to be) a shared responsibility between Council and the community for the development of sporting facilities in the Shire. The proposed framework should also acknowledge that it may not always be possible for the Council or the community to independently fund the full cost of the development of sporting facilities to a level that both the Council and/or the community aspires.

One of the intended outcomes for any new capital works contribution framework should be to create or enhance positive user attitudes, responsibility, and ownership for publicly owned sporting facilities, especially where users have contributed to their development.

The following Principles provide a basis or context for the development and application for any new capital works contribution framework.

- a) Council acknowledges that it has a responsibility for the provision of the 'core' infrastructure at community sporting facilities, being the components of an overall sporting facility that are required for the "game to be played". This includes the playing surface/area, basic change rooms and associated amenities, storage, and provision for some car parking located within a reasonable distance of the facility.
- b) Sporting facilities will comprise of a range of infrastructure suitable and appropriate for the sport to be played at the level it has been designated, that is, commensurate with the standard of competition of the affiliate league or association.
- c) All new sporting facilities will provide access for people with a disability, and it shall be the aim of Council, reserve committees and sporting groups to have all existing facilities made accessible.
- d) Council recognises the value of (and may provide incentives for) user group contributions towards the capital development of sporting facilities and the maintenance of facilities.
- e) User groups will finance any approved capital works projects that are designed to gain income considered to be over and above what would be considered to be a club's 'normal operations', such as reserve perimeter fences (for the purpose of charging a ground admittance), extensions to canteens, and the construction of and/or improvements to social club areas with exclusive use.

<sup>20</sup> It is acknowledged that there are some recreation reserves that are publicly accessible and community managed but are not Council-owned, nor is Council the delegated committee of management (in the case of DEPI reserves). It would be at Council's discretion whether it would choose to incorporate such reserves within any proposed capital works contribution framework.

- f) Council will enhance the long-term viability of sporting facilities, reserve committees and community sporting groups by ensuring that:
  - Groups do not unnecessarily overcapitalise on developments.
  - Groups are able to demonstrate a sound history of fiscal responsibility and develop appropriate and achievable funding plans, prior to approval being granted for large capital improvement projects being undertaken by groups.
  - Facilities are located and designed so as to strengthen the sport and the existing group's membership/ participant base.
- g) Clubs undertaking minor maintenance works must comply with relevant building codes and regulations, including OH&S and risk management.
- h) Prior to the commencement of any significant capital improvement project, user groups shall require written support from all other regular user groups at their respective recreation reserve or leisure facility, and approval from Council.
- i) Floodlights will be approved (subject to Town Planning approval) where an increase in sports participation is likely to result and/or to minimise the risk of injury through a club's capacity to better manage the utilisation of all areas of a playing field.



## 7. SHIRE-WIDE STRATEGIC ADVICE AND INPUT

As outlined in the previous section, most of Moorabool Shire Council's sporting and recreation reserves, facilities and spaces have management arrangements in place that support a model of direct management by community members. The focus of these various management committees typically relates exclusively to the operation of the specific reserve, facility or building for which the committee has been appointed to manage, and the use of the asset by the regular users.

However, recreation and leisure facilities and services are a focus of interest for a variety of groups and individuals, including a diverse range of junior and senior sporting groups, walkers and cyclists, families and children using play spaces and other passive recreation facilities, environmentalists actively involved in developing and maintaining parks and reserves, and individuals enjoying quiet space. For this reason, there is merit in considering a broader and more strategic approach to engaging with and involving community members in the delivery of recreation and leisure facilities and services.

As is the case in other Victorian local governments, Moorabool Shire Council resolved in August 2014 to establish the Moorabool Recreation and Leisure Strategic Advisory Committee, and it aims to have the Committee in place and functioning by early 2015. The Committee will assist the Council to plan and implement recreation and leisure services from a municipal-wide perspective. Such committees typically assist councils to better understand community views, to be a mechanism to efficiently seek responses to or input into emerging issues, and to provide input into facility and open space planning, management and development to achieve an overall aim of increasing the community's participation in physical activity.

The establishment of the advisory committee will build community leadership and greater ownership around the implementation of various strategies and plans dealing with recreation and leisure, and will offer a focus for community participation in their review, and in the development of associated policies and guidelines.

Membership of the advisory committee should actively reflect the diversity of Moorabool's community by taking into account gender, age, ability, culture and geographic location, as well as interest or participation in the recreation and leisure sector.

## 8. POLICY AND STRATEGY PROVISION

One of the overall objectives of Council in relation to the provision of recreation and leisure facilities and services, is to improve the health and well being of residents through increased participation in physical activity. To enable Council to effectively plan, develop and provide recreation and leisure opportunities, a range of up to date policies and strategies in this field are required to underpin Council's roles and responsibilities.

Table 16 provides an inventory of policies and strategies important for any local government authority to have in place to guide and inform its provision of recreation and leisure facilities and services. The table also shows the status of provision of relevant policies and strategies in Moorabool Shire by indicating if they are completed, under development, or are recommended for development.

These policies and strategies will also collectively support *Moorabool 2041*, the strategic framework adopted by Moorabool Shire Council, and which provides the vision for the type of community Moorabool Shire will be in 2041. *Moorabool 2041* allows for both population growth and for the enhancement of community connectedness, character and sense of place, characteristics valued by Shire residents.

*Moorabool 2041* has two core elements: firstly, a rural growth strategy, which will encompass a strategy for each of the smaller settlements throughout the Shire, by advocating and facilitating opportunities to asset-share and cluster community services, whilst at the same time fostering resilient communities, encouraging growth, and providing a sustainable base for these towns.

The second element is an urban growth strategy, which will focus on Bacchus Marsh (including Darley and Maddingley), being the commercial and settlement centre of the Shire. Given the growth expected in Bacchus Marsh to 2041 (doubling of the current population), the strategy will take a proactive approach to planning and managing the pressures of growth to ensure that a sustainable environment will be created where people can live and work, and access a range of necessary retail, social and recreational services.

Table 16 – Existing and Proposed Policies and Strategies for Moorabool Shire Council's Leisure Sector

Policy or Strategy	Status		
	Recommend to Review	Under Development	Recommend to Develop
<b>Exists Now (Date)</b>			
Recreation Open Space Strategy 2007	In progress		
Appointment and Delegations Policy (2012)	In progress		
Community Halls Funding Policy (2005)	✓	Community Facilities Funding Policy (combine existing policies)	
Reserve Funding Policy (2004)	✓		
Standard Operating Procedures for Playgrounds (2009)	✓	Play Strategy (incorporating BMX and skate facilities)	
Playground Management Policy (2010)	✓		
Reserve Master Plans (various reserves)	✓ (specific reserves)	Recreation Reserves Development Plan (incorporating reserve master plans)	
Social Infrastructure Planning Strategy		✓	
Hike and Bike Strategy (2014)	Recently Adopted		
Health and Well Being Plan (2013)	Recently Adopted		

Policy or Strategy	Status		
	Recommend to Review	Under Development	Recommend to Develop
Youth Strategy (2013)	Recently Adopted		
<b>In Progress or Recommended</b>			
Reserve and Facility Management Framework			✓
Seasonal Tenancy & Occupancy Policy and Guide			✓
User Fees and Charges Policy			✓
Capital Contribution Policy			✓
Community Facilities Funding Policy (combine existing policies)			✓
Play Strategy (incorporating BMX and skate facilities)			✓
Leisure Facilities Strategy (incorporating indoor facilities and pools)		✓	
Recreation Reserves Development Plan (incorporating reserve master plans)			✓
Use of School Land/ Facilities Policy			✓
Active Participation Strategy			✓
Tennis Facilities Development Strategy			✓
Australian Football and Cricket Facilities Strategy			✓
Football (Soccer) Facilities Strategy			✓
Developer Contributions Plan			✓

The table above essentially shows the strategic work already completed by Council and the strategic work still to be completed in order to drive Council's future strategic planning program, and for which the *Recreation and Leisure Strategy* will inform.

# Appendix 1

## Inventory of Sporting Facilities (as at November 2014)