

CM13.3. Draft World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan

DATE	24 February 2021	FIL REFERENCE	FIL18/02981
CONFIDENTIAL	No		
FURTHER ENQUIRIES	David Costello City Landscapes	PHONE	6023 8111
AUTHOR	David Armstrong		

Purpose of Report

To present Council with the draft World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan for consideration, prior to placing the draft Plan on public exhibition for a minimum of 28 days.

Background

Master plans assist in providing a strategic direction for future development of our parks, sports grounds and other defined areas throughout the City. The recent completion of the Monument Hill Master Plan, and subsequent improvements, highlighted the need to upgrade the World War II Memorial Bowl area.

The proposed upgrade to the World War II Memorial Bowl has been well supported by the Albury RSL Sub-Branch, who support the development of a master plan, and have expressed interest in an upgraded play space and the establishment of an exercise zone. A Request for Quotation (RFQ) process was undertaken, with Jeavons Landscape Architects engaged to undertake the master planning process.

Issues

The World War II Memorial Bowl is located on Monument Hill, immediately north of the Murray River. It encompasses public land (zoned E2 Environmental Conservation) and is bound by Memorial Drive, Dight Street and Affleck Street. The site has an extensive historical context, and a chronology of the site's history and construction of the Memorial Bowl is included in attachment 1.

The community was given the opportunity to provide their suggestions for the World War II Memorial Bowl through a 'Have Your Say' process. A summary of the information received through the 'Have Your Say' process for the World War II Memorial Bowl is included in attachment 2, which includes 39 written responses from the community. The feedback was considered by Jeavons Landscape Architects whilst developing the draft World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan (see attachment 3). The key items identified in the draft World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan include:

- enhanced views and access to Monument Hill;
- a proposed new play space that caters for a range of ages and abilities, including installation of a flying fox;
- an outdoor fitness zone with a range of static outdoor strength and conditioning equipment;

- infrastructure to support activation of the space, including accessible drinking fountain and additional car parking spaces;
- new semi-formal memorial garden with seating;
- retention of open space in front of the podium to allow the site to retain the ability to hold small events and performances;
- enhanced garden beds and native planting; and
- upgraded walking track with new informal path to fitness and play areas.

Albury 2030

Theme One – A Growing Sustainable Economy

1.8 Albury's infrastructure and assets are well managed and maintained

- 1.8.1 Determine infrastructure and service levels through balancing community needs, future growth, sustainability and heritage values.*

Theme Three – A Caring Community

3.2 Albury's key community safety indicators continuously improve

- 3.2.1 Develop and implement strategies to improve community safety and amenity.*

3.3 The health and wellbeing of the Albury community improves

- 3.3.4 Ensure appropriate infrastructure including accessible path networks/encourage active lifestyles.*

3.4 Albury offers a diverse and accessible range of facilities and activities for all ages

- 3.4.1 Improve access for all – in relation to systems and processes, transportation, civic buildings, community facilities and parks.*
- 3.4.3 Promote and encourage healthy lifestyles through development and efficient use of sporting, recreational, educational and cultural facilities and infrastructure.*
- 3.4.5 Increase and promote activities and infrastructure available for children and young people.*

Community Engagement

The community engagement through 'Have Your Say' was made available through the AlburyCity website. The surrounding residents also received written notification regarding the upcoming Master Plan and the opportunity to 'Have Your Say'.

Through the online engagement platform, 53 unique stakeholders participated in 'Have Your Say'. This resulted in 39 people completing the survey, while 30 added comments to the ideas wall. Attachment 2 provides the survey responses and comments received, as well as an officer's response. The key points gathered through the 'Have Your Say' process include:

- the majority of respondents visit the site several times a week;
- nearly 50% of people visit the site for informal exercise;
- most people walk/run to visit the site;

- enhancing the landscape, improving the playground and better pedestrian/bicycle tracks were the preferred improvements; and
- the 30-50 age group visit the area the most, followed by the 51-70 and 22-35 age groups.

Some consideration was given to the potential of the site for use as an outdoor entertainment venue, and an area of open space was retained at the front of the podium to cater for small events and performances. However, it was noted the area does not have supporting infrastructure to accommodate long stays (i.e. does not have toilets or power connection, and only has limited parking), and it was decided that nearby venues such as the Botanic Gardens provide greater opportunity for larger outdoor events and performances (e.g. Music in the Gardens).

The resulting feedback from Have Your Say, and the range of comments and suggestions provided on the ideas wall, was used to inform the development of the draft master plan (see attachment 3).

Upon Council endorsement of the draft World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan, the draft master plan will be placed on public exhibition for a minimum of 28 days. At the conclusion of the public exhibition period, comments received will be collated. A report will be presented back to Council detailing comments received and the officer's response, with the final version of the master plan for Council consideration. If there are no comments received during the public exhibition period, it is proposed that the draft World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan be adopted as the final version.

Related Strategies

Monument Hill Master Plan – The Monument Hill Master Plan was endorsed by Council in 2017. The master plan focuses on the main lookout at the western end of Dean Street. Stage One works have recently been completed, which improves the community space and interpretive signage that surrounds the World War I War Memorial.

Plan of Management for Community Land 2016 – The land parcels associated with this master plan are either Council-owned land or unmade road reserves. The Council-owned land parcels have a classification of 'Community' as defined by the *Local Government Act 1993*. Therefore, the land parcels are included in the Plan of Management for Community Land 2016 and are categorised as 'Park'. The draft master plan is consistent with the intent and objectives of the Plan of Management.

Albury LEP (Local Environment Plan) 2010 – The area of interest in the draft master plan is zoned E2 - Environmental Conservation area, as outlined in the Albury LEP 2010. The works proposed are generally consistent with the objectives outlined in the Albury LEP 2010. However, to maintain the views from the top of Monument Hill to Dean Street will require vegetation removal. This will require environmental approvals.

In addition, the draft World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan area also forms part of the (C10) - Monument Hill Parklands Conservation Area, and the proposed draft master plan upgrade is consistent with the Conservation Area objectives, which include:

1. To conserve and enhance the environs of the precinct, as well as the original design intent of the Grand Avenue, extending from Dean Street to the Monument;

2. To integrate the Monument Hill precinct with the riverside parks area and the City Centre;
3. To preserve significant landscape elements within the precinct; and
4. To have regard to views of the Monument, as well as views from the Hill and Memorial Bowl Area, onto the City environs below.

To ensure that the draft master plan and proposed elements align with the objectives of the Monument Hill Parklands Conservation Area, a consultant was engaged to undertake a 'Historical Heritage Assessment' (HHA) and 'Statement of Heritage Impact' (SoHI). The HHA and SoHI assessments revealed that there would not be any direct negative impacts to heritage items located within the vicinity of the study area, caused by the construction of new elements associated with the draft master plan (attachment 1).

Dean Street to Monument Hill pedestrian link – The longer-term goal is to have an improved pedestrian link between Dean Street and the World War I Memorial atop Monument Hill. The link between the World War II Memorial Bowl and the World War I Monument will require the replacement of the path and improved landscaping. The link between the World War II Memorial Bowl and Dean Street (Palm Annex) will require a separate investigation and master planning process.

Financials

The opinion of probable costs to complete the works outlined in the master plan is \$583,209 (ex GST). There is currently \$50,000 identified in the draft 2021/22 (Year 1) New Initiatives to complete detailed design work, and a further \$550,000 proposed in 2022/23 (Year 2) to undertake construction. The proposed construction budget of \$550K can be further refined upon completion of the detailed design process, which will provide a more accurate indication of construction costs.

It is preferred to complete the works in one stage, and grant funding will be pursued to help co-fund the project to reduce the extent of Council investment.

Risk

- **Business Risk** – There is funding identified in 2021/22 for detailed design, and 2022/23 for construction. During the detailed design process, consideration will be given to staging. However, it would be preferred to complete the construction as one project. Grant funding will be sought to offset the associated costs of construction.
- **Corporate Risk** – Developing master plans for sites provides a strategic direction for all key stakeholders and Council. It is also critical to achieving grant funding and this creates a positive image for Council. There may be community expectations that works associated with the Master Plans will occur quickly, and these expectations will require careful management. There has been significant consultation with key stakeholders as part of the stakeholder engagement process, which included the support of the Albury RSL Sub-Branch. In addition, a statement of Heritage Impact has been prepared (see attachment 1), which concluded that the proposals identified within the draft master plan will not have any direct negative impacts to heritage items located within the vicinity of the study area.
- **WHS and Public Risk** – WHS and risk management have been considered at a high level during the master planning process. It has also been identified that the proposed upgrade to the

Memorial Bowl (in conjunction with the recent upgrades to Monument Hill) is likely to result in increased activation and pedestrian traffic in the wider area, and this risk will be further assessed by Council's Traffic and Transport team (including pedestrian crossing locations across Memorial Drive and Dight Street). Further risk management consideration will be undertaken during the detailed design phase and during construction when they occur, to ensure consistency with relevant Australian Standards.

- **Environmental Risk** – The draft master plan site is included in a conservation area (C10) and has an Environmental Conservation Zoning (E2). Generally, the draft master plan aligns with the objectives of both the planning items. Prior to any construction work, development consent will be needed with the application to outline the environmental impacts. Some of the preliminary environmental issues identified include:
 - removal of two existing trees that are growing in close proximity and damaging the integrity of the low wall; and
 - pruning and minor removal of vegetation that is interrupting the views along the axis from Monument Hill to the centre of Albury.

The proposed removal of vegetation as identified above will be largely offset by the enhanced planting proposed across the site, and new plantings proposed for the adjacent Indigenous Garden off Memorial Drive, as well as the open space adjoining Affleck Street. Environmental approvals will be sought prior to the removal of any vegetation.

- **Delivery Program Risk** – The adoption of the final version of the World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan will allow Council to take a considered approach to enhancing the amenity at the site. Following adoption of the draft master plan, consideration can be given to programming and prioritising works through Council's Delivery Program, with funds identified for detailed design and construction in Years 1 and 2 of the four-year Program.

Options

1. Endorse the draft World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan and place the draft master plan on public exhibition for a minimum of 28 days. **This is the preferred option** as it will enable the wider community to have further input into the draft Master Plan prior to finalisation; or
2. Not endorse the draft World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan and request amendments. **This is not the preferred option** as the wider community has already provided extensive input into the development of the draft master plan with feedback incorporated into the draft plan. Placing the draft World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan on public exhibition will provide a further opportunity to allow any additional community feedback and suggested refinements prior to Council endorsement of the final version of the plan.

Conclusion

Master plans assist in providing a strategic direction for future development of our parks, sports grounds and other defined areas throughout the City. The draft World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan has been developed in collaboration with the RSL Albury Sub Branch, and through a wider 'Have Your Say' community engagement process that has targeted surrounding residents.

Endorsement of the draft World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan will allow the draft master plan to be placed on public exhibition for a minimum of 28 days. This will ensure that the community has a further opportunity to review the draft master plan and provide feedback.

If there are no comments received during the public exhibition process, then the draft World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan will be adopted as the final version of the World War II Memorial Bowl master plan.

Recommendation

That Council:

- a. Receives and endorses the draft World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan;
- b. Places the draft World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan on public exhibition for a minimum of 28 days; and
- c. If no submissions are received through the public exhibition process, that the draft World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan be adopted as the final version.

Attachments

1. Statement of Heritage Impact – Proposed Landscape Master Plan for Albury Memorial Bowl (DOC21/21042).
2. *'Have Your Say'* Results – Draft World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan (DOC21/10878).
3. Draft World War II Memorial Bowl Master Plan (DOC21/38166).