



DRAFT Elaine Recreation Reserve Master Plan

January 2026



CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. PLANNING CONTEXT	5
2.1. Implementation of the 2013 Master Plan	5
2.2. Background Reports and Plans.....	5
2.3. Demographic Characteristics – Elaine	8
2.4. Land Ownership and Zoning.....	9
3. EXISTING CONDITIONS	10
3.1. Review of Facilities	10
3.2. Car Parking and Landscaping.....	14
3.3. User Groups.....	14
3.3.1. Elaine Cricket Club.....	15
3.3.2. Elaine Tennis Club	15
4. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	16
4.1. First Round of Stakeholder Engagement.....	16
4.2. Elaine CAC and Elaine Cricket Club.....	17
4.3. Sports Peak Bodies	18
4.3.1. Tennis Victoria.....	18
4.3.2. Ballarat Cricket Association.....	18
4.4. Community Survey	18
5. ASSESSMENT OF KEY ISSUES	21
5.1. Condition of the Oval Playing Surface	21
5.2. Cricket Pavilion.....	21
5.3. Reserve Access Road and Car Parking.....	22
5.4. Increased Activation of the Reserve.....	22

6. MASTER PLAN DIRECTIONS.....	23
6.1. Plan Development	23
6.2. Reserve Improvement Projects	23
6.3. Project Prioritisation.....	27

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Elaine Recreation Reserve Master Plan

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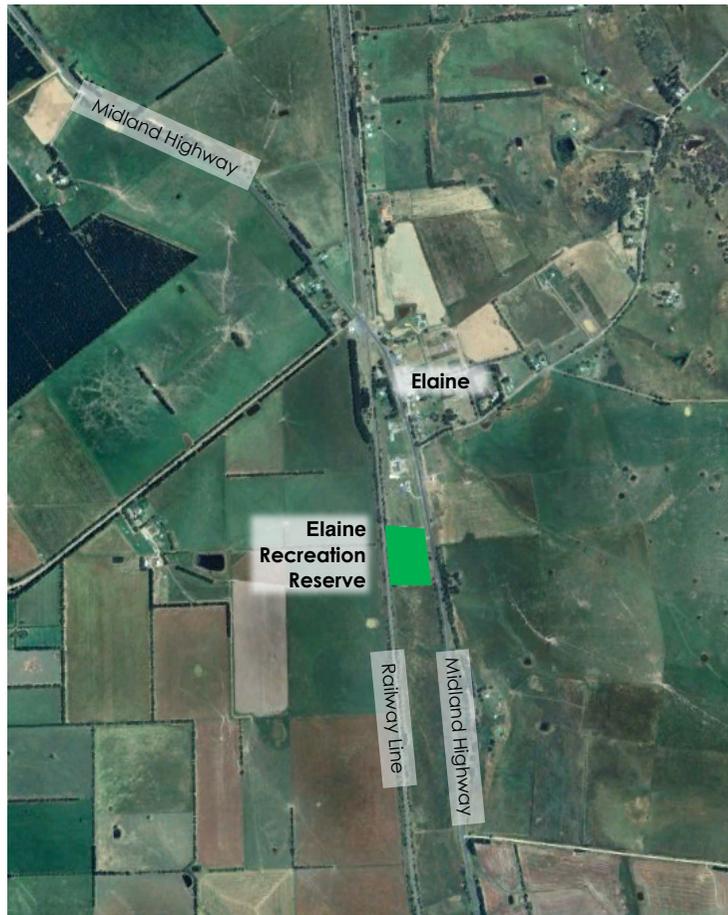
Acknowledgement of Country

Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land which includes the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung people. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging.

1. INTRODUCTION

Elaine Recreation Reserve is the primary sporting reserve servicing residents from Elaine and district. The reserve is located at 5213 Midland Highway, approximately 500 metres south of the Elaine town centre (see Figure 1), which is approximately 30 km southeast of Ballarat.

Figure 1 – Location of Elaine Recreation Reserve



Elaine Recreation Reserve is owned by Moorabool Shire Council and is managed on behalf of Council by a volunteer community committee appointed by Council, the *Elaine Recreation Reserve Community Asset Committee (CAC)*. A previous master plan was prepared for the reserve but was not adopted by Council (the Elaine Recreation Reserve Master Plan 2013-2018).

In May 2025, Council commissioned a project to prepare a new master plan for Elaine Recreation Reserve. The aim of the master plan study is to establish a new vision for the reserve that will guide and inform future development and Council investment at the reserve for the next 10 years.

Key considerations during the development of the master plan were:

1. Changing aspirations and priorities of the reserve user groups and the broader Elaine community.
2. Assessment of the condition and adequacy of existing sporting and recreation facilities at the reserve to meet current and likely future needs of residents.
3. Alignment with Council planning policies and strategy plans.
4. Council's future role in the planning and management of the reserve.

The master plan directions have been informed by the condition and quality of existing facilities, and from input received from the CAC, reserve user groups, the broader Elaine community and Council staff.

2. PLANNING CONTEXT

The Elaine Recreation Reserve Master Plan was informed by several planning considerations.

2.1. Implementation of the 2013 Master Plan

The 2013-2018 master plan was not adopted by Council. Table 1 shows the status of the implementation of the recommendations contained in the master plan. In summary, of the 16 improvement projects:

- 7 have been completed (44%).
- 8 were referred to 2025 master plan study for consideration (50%).
- 1 was considered no longer relevant (6%).

Table 1 – 2013 Elaine Recreation Reserve Master Plan Implementation Status

Legend ■ Actioned ■ Referred to 2025 MP ■ No Longer Required

Improvement Project	Status
New accessible toilet block and removal of old	Actioned
New multipurpose community facility to replace the cricket clubrooms	Referred to 2025 MP
Undertake a facility condition audit	Actioned
Improve drainage at reserve	Referred to 2025 MP
Improve entrance to the reserve with new signage and lighting	Referred to 2025 MP
Cricket practice nets upgrade	Actioned
Formalise car parking within the reserve	Referred to 2025 MP
Establish a pedestrian path to the reserve from town centre	Actioned
Install shade at the playground	Actioned
Construct a second entrance close to the CFA infrastructure	Referred to 2025 MP
Provision of 250,000L water tank	Actioned
Install an oval irrigation system	Referred to 2025 MP
Extend the netball court to include appropriate run-offs	No Longer Required
Install tennis court lighting	Referred to 2025 MP
Install basketball rings at the tennis courts	Referred to 2025 MP
Install seating at the playground and pavilion	Actioned

2.2. Background Reports and Plans

The following planning reports and strategies were important references to inform the future planning for the Elaine Recreation Reserve.

State Plans

- Active Victoria 2022-2026, Sport and Recreation Victoria
- Value of Community Sport & Active Recreation Infrastructure, Sport and Recreation Victoria (2020)
- State Sporting Association facility standards/ guidelines

Council Plans and Strategies

- Council Vision 2030
- Council Plan 2025-2029
- Moorabool Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029
- Moorabool Recreation and Leisure Strategy 2025-2035
- Helping Moorabool Thrive (2024)
- Moorabool Open Space Strategy 2025-2030
- Moorabool Female Friendly Sport and Recreation Participation and Infrastructure Strategy 2022-2032
- Moorabool Shire Fair Access Policy (2024)

A summary of each background report follows.

Key Findings from Victorian Government Plans



Active Victoria has the objective that all Victorians have access to high quality environments and appropriate participation opportunities, and that the sport and active recreation workforce create positive experiences for people.

Policy outcomes include that Victoria will have inclusive, accessible, and respectful places and spaces for sport and active recreation.



Value of Community Sport and Active Recreation Infrastructure Report outlines the economic, health and social benefits that community sport and active recreation infrastructure provides for individuals, communities and society.

The findings make the case at a micro-level for Moorabool Shire that community sport and active recreation infrastructure make people happier, healthier and more productive to improve social cohesion, and to contribute directly and indirectly to a stronger local economy.

cohesion, and to contribute directly and indirectly to a stronger local economy.



Fair Access Policy Roadmap provides clear directions for organisations to build a gender equitable access and use policy. Victorian local government authorities were required to have a Fair Access Policy in place by 1 July 2024.

The outcome of the policy is to ensure women and girls will have equitable access to and use of community sport infrastructure which is welcoming and safe and they can fully participate.

Refer below to the Moorabool Shire Fair Access Policy.

Key Findings from the Council Plans and Strategies



Council Vision 2030 was developed from a range of deliberative engagement activities undertaken between December 2020 and March 2021. The vision provides the structure and focus for Council for the period to 2023, and reads

We embrace our natural environment and lifestyle options to create an inspiring place for everyone to live, work, and play.

During the development of the Council vision, the following 5 themes emerged:

- Maintaining our rural charm.
- Connected communities.
- Well planned neighbourhoods.
- A strong local economy.
- Embracing sustainability.



Council Plan 2025-2029 provides the strategic focus for Moorabool Shire for the next 4 years.

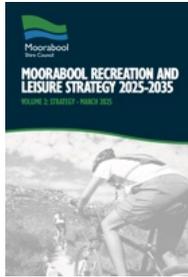
The Plan outlines four strategic objectives:

1. Healthy, inclusive and safe communities.
2. A dynamic and resilient local economy.
3. Places and spaces that meet the needs of our many and varied communities
4. A Council that engages and adapts.



Moorabool Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 is a 4-year plan for enhancing the health and wellbeing of the community. Outcomes include:

- Physical activity is safe, inclusive and accessible for all.
- Active recreation opportunities provide physical, social and health benefits.
- Moorabool Shire residents have access to infrastructure that supports active recreation.



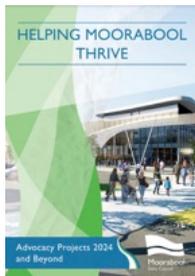
Moorabool Recreation and Leisure Strategy 2025-2035 aims to create an active community that is connected to its people, providers and places.

A strategic framework has been developed to guide the development of the strategy with the 3 strategic priorities being:

1. Utilise community insights to understand community need.
2. Identify priority projects for delivery and advocacy.
3. Identify ways to increase participation and activation of community spaces.

The strategy's Implementation Plan includes the following projects for Elaine Recreation Reserve:

1. Upgrade the amenities in the existing pavilion in alignment with Female Friendly Strategy actions (major project).
2. Car park upgrades as identified in the Helping Moorabool Thrive advocacy document (minor project).



Helping Moorabool Thrive - Advocacy Projects 2024 and Beyond

Council has identified several key projects and many medium to small size projects to facilitate the best infrastructure and access to services for its community.

Upgrades at the Elaine Recreation Reserve which have been identified as a major project are:

- Community pavilion upgrade
- Artwork and cultural heritage signage
- Upgrades to the car park

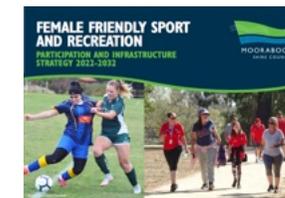


Moorabool Open Space Strategy 2025-2030

establishes a framework for the planning, development and management of open space throughout the shire. The framework includes an overall vision and principles for open space, an open space classification system, outlines the different landscape settings, and describes the various open space catchment types.

The strategy contains no specific directions for Elaine Recreation Reserve, but does acknowledge its importance as the main sporting and recreation space in the town.

The strategy notes that one of the priorities for Elaine is *“enhancing reserve facilities”*.



Moorabool Female Friendly Sport and Recreation Participation and Infrastructure Strategy 2022-2032

identifies opportunities to increase and retain the number of women and girls who are active in Moorabool.

Desired outcomes and deliverables of the strategy include:

- A framework of principles to guide Council's future decision-making to maximise female participation in sport and recreation.
- Identify a pipeline of contemporary infrastructure projects that enables inclusive opportunities.
- Create greater diversity in participation and programming opportunities.
- Identify social and gender barriers and drivers not related to infrastructure.
- Create more welcoming and inclusive activity environments.
- Identify opportunities for promotion and exposure of women and girls in sport and recreation within Moorabool.



Council’s **Fair Access Policy** outlines the steps for positive action towards achieving gender equity in the access and usage of community sports infrastructure and participation opportunities.

The policy is based on 6 principles of inclusivity, participation, equal representation, equitable access, encouraging and supporting user groups, and prioritising user groups committed to equality. The principles relevant to the development of the master plan are:

Principle 1

Community sports infrastructure and environments are genuinely welcoming, safe, and inclusive for all community members, regardless of gender.

Principle 2

Women and girls can participate in all aspects of community sport and active recreation, including as a player, coach, administrator, official, volunteer, and spectator.

Principle 3

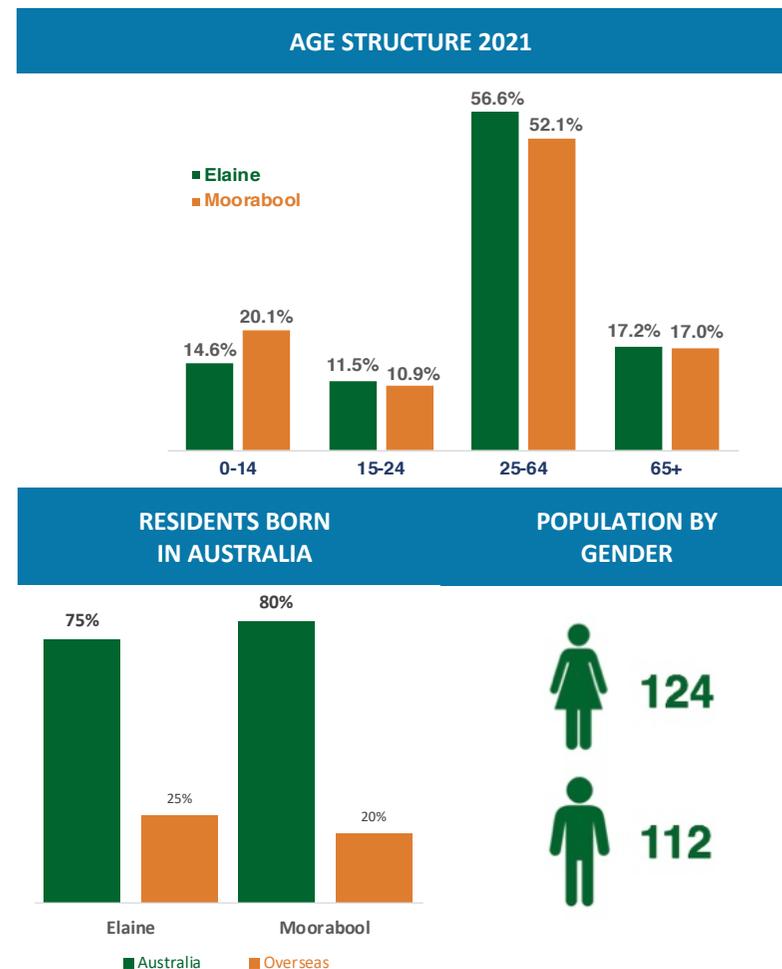
Women and girls will have equitable access to, and use of community sport infrastructure:

- of the highest quality available and most convenient.
- to support existing and new participation opportunities, and a variety of sports.

2.3. Demographic Characteristics – Elaine

Demographic data¹ for Elaine was a consideration during the development of the master plan.

Elaine had a population of 232 in 2021, and there is projected to be minimal population growth by 2041.



¹ Source: ABS 2021 Census all persons QuickStats and ID Consulting, 2025

IMPLICATIONS FOR SPORT AND RECREATION PLANNING

The **demand for sport and active recreation in Elaine will remain stable** as the proportion of 0-14 year olds is low compared to all Moorabool Shire and the population is projected to remain stable.

With just below half of the population aged 5-39 years (40%), **the provision of sport and active recreation facilities is important**, as this cohort has the highest rate of participation in club sport and physical activity². However, the low population suggests a small range of physical activities is appropriate to ensure whatever facilities are available will remain viable and well-used.

A high proportion of the population is Australian born which suggests that cricket and tennis will continue to be popular sports for the Elaine community given the strong historic participation in both sports throughout Victoria.

Elaine has a **higher proportion of females than males**, therefore sports and physical activities popular with females should be considered during the development of the master plan, such as tennis, pickleball and walking.

2.4. Land Ownership and Zoning

Elaine Recreation Reserve is Council-owned land of approximately 2.8 hectares in size.

Figure 2 shows that the reserve is zoned *State Transport Infrastructure Zone (TRZ) Schedule 1*. A reserve such as the Elaine Recreation Reserve would be typically zoned *Public Park and Recreation*, an appropriate zone for the current function and use of the reserve.

² AusPlay 2024 (AusPlay is a national sport and physical activity participation tracking tool funded and coordinated by the Sport Australia)

The recreation reserve has been subject to a transport zone for more than 25 years. It is likely that at some stage the land was owned by the Victorian Government and used as a railway siding for the adjacent rail line, and at some stage the land has been vested in Council for recreation³.

Figure 2 – Elaine Recreation Reserve Planning Zone



The reserve is subject to one planning overlay, the *Environmental Significance Overlay*. The purpose of the overlay is:

1. To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
2. To identify areas where the development of land may be affected by environmental constraints.
3. To ensure that development is compatible with identified environmental values.

The Environmental Significance Overlay is unlikely to overly impact projects recommended in this master plan.

³ Source: Moorabool Shire Council Town Planner

3. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Figure 3 shows the current facilities and open spaces that exist at Elaine Recreation Reserve.

Figure 3 – Elaine Recreation Reserve and Facilities



3.1. Review of Facilities

The following descriptions and overview of each asset have been informed by the consultant team’s observations and investigation.

PAVILION



Type of Construction

Timber frame structure with corrugated iron walls and metal deck roof.

Condition

- Poor

Compliance and functional issues

- The pavilion lacks change rooms and amenities
- It does not meet building code compliance and Cricket Australia guidelines for a community cricket pavilion

Usage

Elaine Cricket Club

Tenancy Arrangements

Seasonal licence

Comments

Facility is a former shed converted to a clubroom; it is estimated to be 100 years old, and has several issues, including not being vermin-proof.

OVAL



Size

Estimated 115m long x 103m wide, north-south orientation

Whilst within acceptable dimensions for open age community club cricket, the width is close to the minimum acceptable 50m radius. It does not meet dimensions for a senior football oval, but is of sufficient dimensions to accommodate a senior soccer pitch.

Surface

- High weed content with varying levels of turf health and density
- No sub-surface drainage or irrigation systems

Supporting Infrastructure

- Concrete cricket pitch is in good condition but is too narrow at 1.82m wide (min. preferred by Cricket Australia is 2.4m)
- Goal posts are installed at both ends for recreational use but are not compliant for matches

Usage

Elaine Cricket Club

Tenancy Arrangements

Seasonal licence

Comments

The poor condition of the oval and lack of sub-surface drainage and irrigation makes it very difficult for volunteers to maintain the oval to the desired standard. The oval ideally needs to be rebuilt.

TENNIS CLUBROOM AND BBQ AREA



Type of Construction

Timber frame structure with corrugated iron walls and metal deck roof
BBQ shelter is a steel frame structure with metal deck roof

Condition

- Tennis clubroom: Good (renovated in 2012)
- BBQ shelter: Good

Compliance and Functional issues

- Tennis clubroom: lacks change rooms and amenities, and does not meet Tennis Australia guidelines for a 'Local' tennis clubroom
- BBQ shelter: is a well-designed space with ample seating and a double hot plate BBQ

Usage

Tennis clubroom: community meeting space

BBQ shelter: public BBQ and picnic area

Tenancy Arrangements

Elaine Tennis Club

Comments

Both facilities are sufficient to cater for the local needs of the Elaine community.

TENNIS COURTS



Size

Dimensions and run-offs of all tennis courts are compliant.

Surface

Acrylic

Condition

- Both court surfaces are in good condition; some soil is on the northern end of the courts and should be cleaned off
- Perimeter fence is in good condition

Usage

Elaine Tennis Club

Pickleball casual users

Public use

Comments

Tennis courts are in good overall condition.

One pickleball court has been painted onto each court (yellow line markings) at the centreline.

CRICKET NETS



Type of construction

Steel posts and flexible netting to create the enclosure

Concrete base with a synthetic grass cover for the pitches

Comprises 2 lanes.

Condition

- Surface is in good condition

Compliance and Functional Issues

- The length and width of each lane meets Cricket Australia standards for an outdoor training facility
- The steel poles behind the flexible netting create a potential safety risk for batsmen and bowlers from rebounding cricket balls hit at speed

Usage

Elaine Cricket Club

Tenancy Arrangements

Annual; the club owns the asset

Comments

The cricket nets were installed in 2024 and are in good condition; whilst there is a potential safety issue the risk of injury is relatively low given the low numbers at training and the level of cricket played

PLAYGROUND



Classification

District level

Condition

- Playground is in average condition
- Leaf litter is in the sand pit and the playhouse

Compliance and Functional Issues

- Shade cloths are installed and are in good condition, and provide excellent coverage over the equipment

PUBLIC TOILET



Type of construction

Modular facility with a concrete base fabricated from corrugated iron
Comprises 2 x unisex cubicles and 1 x accessible cubicle

Condition

- Excellent

Usage

All user groups
Public usage

Comments

The public toilets were recently installed and are in excellent condition. The toilets are on a septic system with three settling lines located in the northeast corner of the oval, adjacent to the reserve entrance.

3.2. Car Parking and Landscaping

The internal road is gravel (right) and the car parking undefined to service the various uses within the reserve.



The reserve entrance lacks an arrival experience; the gate is locked other than when the reserve is being used for organised sporting activities. This is to prevent unauthorised vehicle access onto the oval as there is no fence along the internal road.

The landscaping in the reserve is dominated by bushland along the western boundary (screening the railway line) and avenue planting of exotic deciduous trees along the internal road and the eastern and southern boundaries (right). The boundary planting could be further strengthened, and many of the species planted in the northern area of the reserve are only small and will not provide the scale and shade required.



There is a small orchard on the eastern side of the cricket nets that comprise of 10 fruit trees. The orchard is not in an ideal location and impacts the cricket club's training activities. Council's Parks team assessed the health of the trees in early November 2025 and advised that the fruit trees were not in good health due to leaf curl, exposed roots and poor drainage. If the trees are to be relocated, it should be done in winter while the trees are dormant; another option is to start again with healthy trees.

Stormwater management throughout the sporting and recreational infrastructure in the northern section of the reserve is controlled via a network of open swales and drains. Its effectiveness is reduced at present due to a lack of maintenance which includes leaf build-up in drains and sedimentation in the swales (below). The fall of the land is marginal so inundation over a wide area occurs when these drains are ineffective.



Two large water tanks are located adjacent to the pavilion. The tanks were installed by the CFA in 2018 as a back-up water supply during emergencies and to enable the CFA to conduct fire hose training drills at the reserve. It was confirmed during the study that the tanks are now not required by the CFA to conduct training drills, however, it was agreed that they be retained but at a different location to enable easier access when required.



3.3. User Groups

3.3.1. Elaine Cricket Club

The Elaine Cricket Club is over 100 years old.

The club has been in recess several times and reformed for the 2010/11 season following a long period of inactivity, and again in 2022/23 following a couple of seasons in recess. The club previously had 3 junior teams.

The club has one senior team playing in the Ballarat Cricket Association competition. It uses the reserve for training on Thursday evenings and for matches on Saturdays.



3.3.2. Elaine Tennis Club

The Elaine Tennis Club went into recess in 1998 following the closure of the Elaine Primary School.

The club reformed in 2010 with 3 junior teams but went into recess in about 2020 and has not re-formed. The courts are occasionally used by the Meredith Tennis Club as overflow courts.

Today, an estimated 6 – 7 adults play social tennis 1 – 2 times per week.

The tennis facility is classified as a Tier 6 facility, meaning it is available for community use only; no active club⁴.



⁴ Source: Tennis Victoria's Regional Tennis Manager – Country Victoria

4. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

An important component to inform the development of the master plan was the stakeholder engagement carried out with the Elaine Recreation Reserve CAC, the Elaine Cricket Club, the broader Elaine community, Council officers, and other stakeholders.

The stakeholder engagement program has to date comprised two rounds of engagement; the first round at the commencement of the study; and the second round to receive feedback from the reserve committee on the draft master plan. Additional community engagement will occur during the exhibition of the draft master plan, anticipated to occur early 2026.

Table 2 is a chronological summary of all consultation completed to date.

4.1. First Round of Stakeholder Engagement

The first round of engagement focused on the following:

1. Who is using Elaine Recreation Reserve and when, and for what purposes?
2. Are existing facilities and open spaces meeting needs?
3. Suggestions for improving Elaine Recreation Reserve.



Table 2 – Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

Date	Engagement
First Round of Engagement	
19 June 2025	Site review and meeting with Council officers
7 July 2025	Meeting with Elaine Recreation Reserve CAC and representatives from the Elaine Cricket Club
8 July	Liaison with Ballarat Cricket Association and Tennis Victoria
1 August – 31 August 2025	Community Survey on Council’s ‘Have Your Say’ portal (52 completed surveys)
Second Round of Engagement	
20 October 2025	Meeting with Elaine Recreation Reserve CAC and representatives from the Elaine Cricket Club to review of the 1 st draft master plan

The dates and consultation methods of any further stakeholder engagement will be added as the public exhibition period is undertaken.

A summary of the findings from the first round of stakeholder engagement follows.

4.2. Elaine CAC and Elaine Cricket Club

ELAINE RECREATION RESERVE COMMUNITY ASSET COMMITTEE

- There are drainage/ stormwater flow issues throughout the reserve
- Would like to have the reserve permanently open for public use, however a fence is required along the north side of the oval to restrict vehicle access onto the oval; the CAC has been allocated a grant of approx. \$11,000 to install a bollard fence
- Need a sustainable solution for oval irrigation
- Potential reserve improvement projects identified:
 - Convert one tennis court into pickleball courts
 - Install outdoor exercise equipment
 - Install active recreation facilities, such as a tennis hit-up wall, a basketball-netball half-court
 - Remove the CFA wooden frame
 - Improved security lighting is required at strategic locations within the reserve for 'last leavers'
 - Install additional shelters and picnic tables
 - Install public art and interpretive signage
 - Formalise the car parking within the reserve
- An estimated 20 visitors/ passers-by use the reserve per week; mostly the toilets, playground and BBQ, and to exercise dogs (Council is responsible for maintaining public toilets)
- Reserve is used recreationally by local residents for dog walkers, children playing kick to kick, and children using the playground
- Local residents do not utilise the reserve as much as they should; removing the gates and increased promotion of the reserve may help
- Need to catch and harvest rainwater for re-use

ELAINE CRICKET CLUB

- The cricket pavilion is in poor condition; there are pest issues, it lacks change rooms and toilets (club and visitors have to use the reserve public toilets)
- Improved amenities is one strategy to attract girls and women cricketers to the club
- Oval surface is in poor condition; uneven, poor grass cover, weeds, and lacks sub-surface drainage and irrigation
- Car parking is ad hoc
- The club would like a fence installed around the oval to better denote the oval and to prevent balls being lost amongst the bushland area along the eastern boundary; the fence alignment has been previously pegged
- The club store near the nets has no access to power

4.3. Sports Peak Bodies

The peak bodies of tennis and cricket were invited to contribute to the master plan project.

4.3.1. Tennis Victoria



Tennis Victoria acknowledges that the Meredith Tennis Club and the Buninyong Tennis Club will be the preferred clubs for tennis players from Elaine and district seeking competition tennis or other pathway programs.

It supports the future use of the tennis courts as multipurpose hard courts that could also accommodate pickleball, basketball or netball.

4.3.2. Ballarat Cricket Association



The Ballarat Cricket Association (BCA) noted the competitiveness of the Elaine Cricket Club.

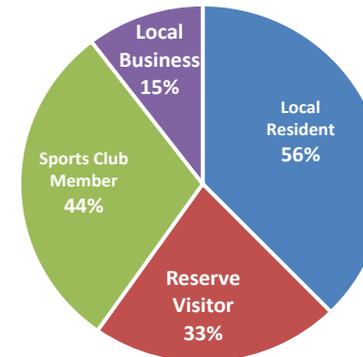
The BCA is aware that the centre pitch is too narrow and does not comply with the Cricket Australia guidelines of pitch widths of between 2.4m – 2.8m. The BCA recommends that when the pitch needs to be replaced that a wider and conforming pitch is installed.

4.4. Community Survey

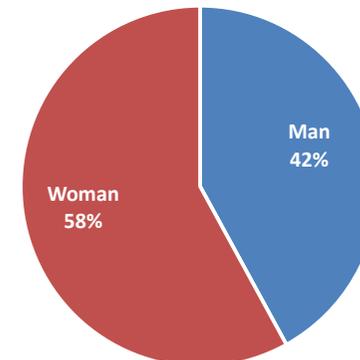
A community survey was administered to enable residents to have input into the master plan. The survey was available on Council’s ‘Have Your Say’ portal and was open from 1 – 31 August 2025. Fifty-two (52) completed surveys were received.

WHO WE HEARD FROM

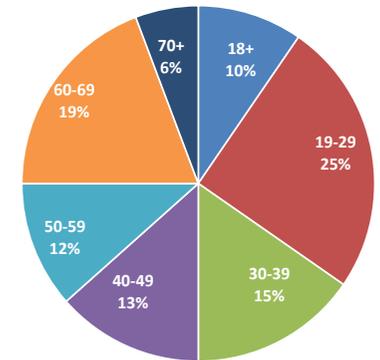
Q: Connection to Elaine?



Q: Gender



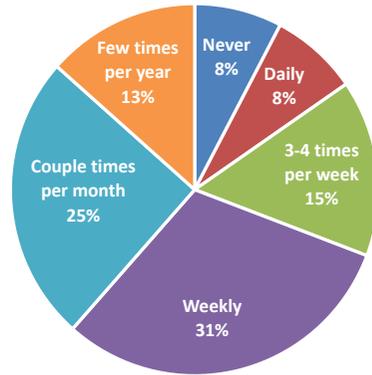
Q: Age



USE OF THE RESERVE

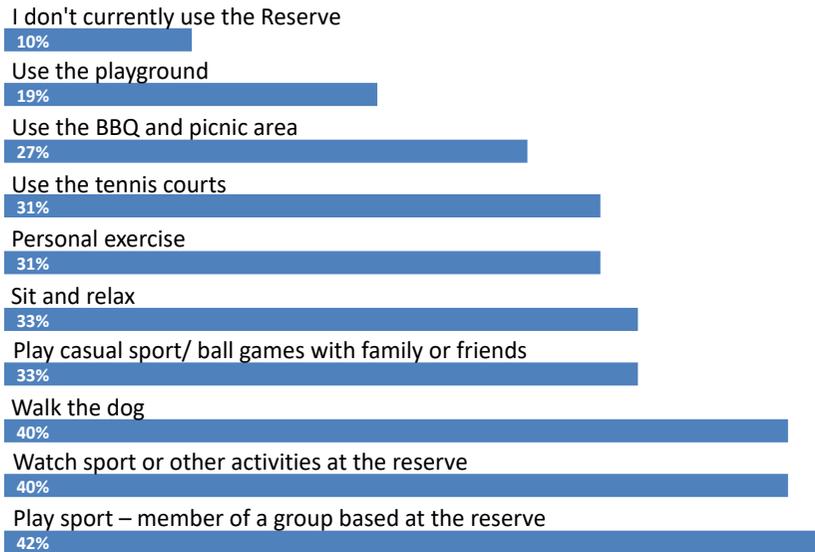
Q: How often do you or your family use Elaine Recreation Reserve?

23% of respondents use the reserve either daily or 3-4 times per week and 31 % use it weekly.



Q: What do you mainly use Elaine Recreation Reserve for?

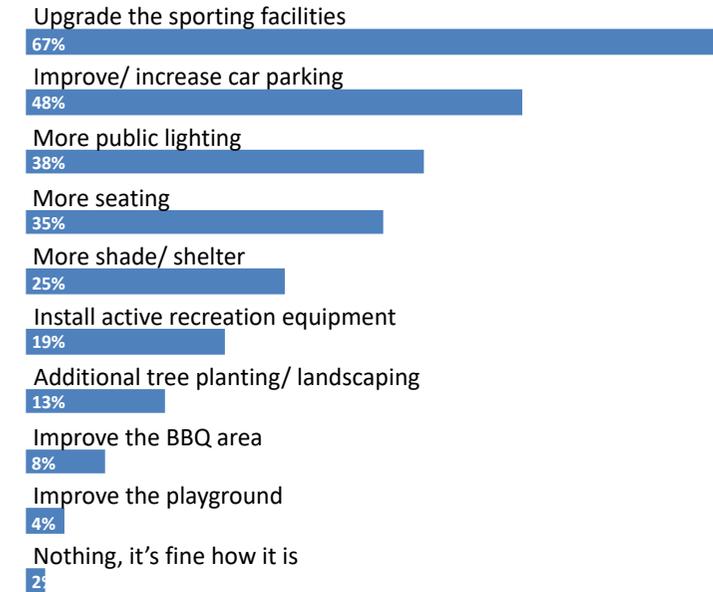
42% of respondents use the reserve to play sport, and 40% use the reserve to watch sport and walk the dog.



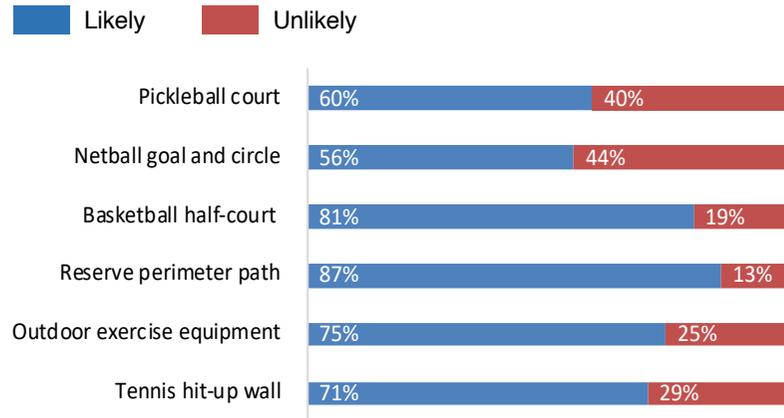
IMPROVEMENTS TO THE RESERVE

Q: What are your three key improvements for Elaine Recreation Reserve?

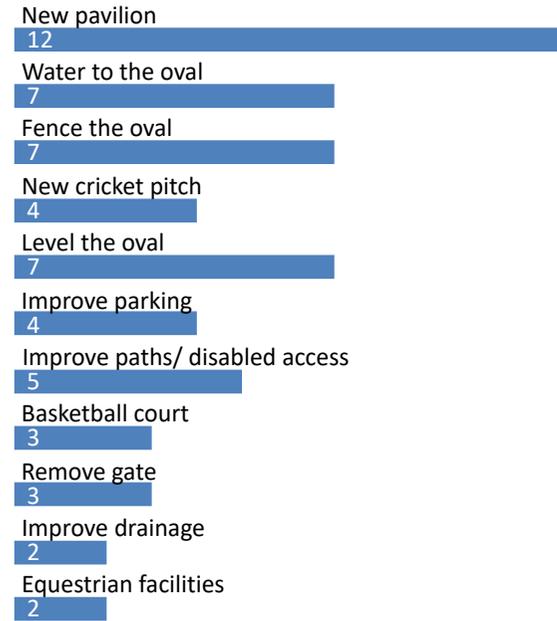
Over two-thirds of all respondents (67%) nominated 'upgrade the sporting facilities', followed by 'improve/ increase car parking' (48%), 'more public lighting' (38%) and 'more seating' (35%).



Q: How likely or unlikely are you or your family to use the following facilities if they were available at Elaine Recreation Reserve?



Q: Do you have any other suggestions or comments about the Elaine Recreation Reserve?



5. ASSESSMENT OF KEY ISSUES

The following issues and opportunities identified as the key items to be considered following input from the Elaine CAC and Cricket Club, and the broader Elaine community.

5.1. Condition of the Oval Playing Surface

An ongoing issue at the Elaine Recreation Reserve has been the poor condition of the oval playing surface; uneven surface, poor grass cover, weeds and water pooling. The poor grass cover and weeds can be largely attributed to the lack of an effective irrigation system.

The master plan is supporting an upgrade to the oval playing surface given its importance to the only sports club still operating in town and it being the only publicly accessible recreational open space.

The key addition is an ability for the Elaine Cricket Club members to be able to irrigate the oval. The installation of a sub-surface irrigation system would be a significant cost (approx. \$250,000) and difficult to justify in the short-term given the current low use of the oval. It is recommended that a mobile pump and spray unit be purchased (see example right), which could be hooked up to the tank water onsite. The oval could then be sprayed for weeds, top-dressed and oversown, as the benefits of these would otherwise quickly diminish if the oval is unable to be watered regularly.



A strategy to mitigate the oval flooding at the northern end is to better control the stormwater run-off from the tennis courts, and to improve the reserve drainage system with more regular maintenance – both of these items are supported by the master plan.

The master plan also supports the relocation of the oval southwards in the reserve. This will result in the following benefits.

- It will incorporate the reserve land to the south which is largely underutilised and will create an area of open space at the north of the sport field area that can be utilised by the public during cricket matches.
- It will create a larger footprint for the new pavilion and will enable additional car parking to be provided inside the reserve between the pavilion and the tennis courts.

The east-west dimension of the oval's playing area can be slightly increased to a minimum of 106 metres by relocating it south, whilst the north-south dimension has the flexibility to be increased beyond 115 metres if required to form a more true oval shape. The cricket pitch will need to be replaced and provides the opportunity to install a pitch of compliant width (2.4m – 2.8m).

5.2. Condition of the Pavilion

The pavilion is not fit for purpose in relation to both its condition and lack of change rooms and amenities, and is not female friendly or accessible. Council's Recreation and Leisure Strategy and its Fair Access Policy both highlight the poor condition of the pavilion and it potentially being a barrier to encourage girls and women to participate in cricket and other club activities at the reserve.

Notwithstanding this, a sensible and financially responsible approach is required to replace the pavilion given its current low use and limited prospects of increasing organised sport at the reserve in the future. The development of a new pavilion would be undertaken in consultation with users of the facility, the CAC and state sporting associations to ensure it meets the unique needs of the Elaine community.

The current location of the pavilion is generally in the desired location for any new pavilion, ie. northwest of the oval. With the oval recommended to be relocated southwards, the pavilion should also be moved southeast to ensure it remains close to the oval; this will also enable a formal car park to be sited between a new pavilion and the tennis courts. A water tank to capture and store rainwater off the pavilion roof should also be included to provide a water source for drinking and to service the amenities. The design and development of the new pavilion should investigate the potential to incorporate sufficient storage to accommodate the equipment currently being stored in the container next to the cricket nets. The container will be replaced by a storage shed to house the equipment used by the Cricket Club.

The development of a new pavilion with a community/social space and a kitchen may provide the opportunity to re-purpose or retire the current tennis clubroom in the future to avoid any unnecessary duplication of 'like' facilities at the reserve. An assessment of the need for the tennis clubroom should be undertaken following the development of the new pavilion. The need for a new pavilion creates the opportunity to develop a new and contemporary facility that will be available to be shared between all reserve groups and the broader community.

5.3. Reserve Access Road and Car Parking

Currently, there is no designated or formal car parking within the reserve, with the result being that car parking is occurring in areas where it should not. It is better to corral the cars and maximise areas within the reserve for pedestrians. The master plan is supporting the retention and alignment of the existing internal road, with provision for a new car park between a proposed new pavilion and the tennis courts. This will provide convenient access to the pavilion, the tennis courts, and to the oval.

The CAC also supports the expansion of the reserve's external car park, and this has been shown in the master plan by utilising the unused space in the northeast corner of the reserve. Whilst this expansion will help increase the total car parking capacity at the

reserve for community events, it will also provide more convenient access for visitors who are wanting to utilise the playground and the public toilet.

The reserve entrance could be upgraded to enhance the arrival experience and to better landmark the importance of the reserve to the Elaine community. Once the new bollard fence is installed along the south side of the reserve internal road, the entry gates can either be removed or left open to encourage visitors into the reserve.

5.4. Increased Activation of the Reserve

The stakeholder engagement was consistent in its support for the introduction of facilities and infrastructure to increase the activation of the reserve. The master plan is supporting the following new facilities which are designed to encourage residents and visitors to use the reserve more frequently.

- New gravel pedestrian path network throughout the playspace area and around the oval, with occasional bench seating around the oval.
- Installation of outdoor exercise equipment along the new pedestrian path around the oval.
- Installation of a basketball backboard and ring at a location inside the tennis court perimeter fence (suggested at the southern end).



6. MASTER PLAN DIRECTIONS

6.1. Plan Development

The draft Elaine Recreation Reserve Master Plan has been developed through consideration and analysis of information collected during the project, particularly the review of the reserve by the consultant team and input from all stakeholders.

All improvement projects identified in the master plan are listed below and should be read in conjunction with the master plan drawing (see Appendix 1). The focus for improvements is to ensure that the core needs of the cricket club and hardcourt user groups are being met, and to encourage a broader cross-section of the Elaine community to increase their usage of the reserve.

6.2. Reserve Improvement Projects

The numbers below correspond with the numbers on the master plan drawing, and a brief rationale is provided for each project.

1. Install a basketball backboard and ring

The Elaine CAC is supportive of additional active recreation facilities being introduced to the reserve, such as a basketball half-court, and the community survey found that up to 81% of respondents would use a basketball half-court if one was available at Elaine Recreation Reserve (Second highest ranked improvement proposal). The master plan is supporting the installation of a basketball backboard and ring within the tennis enclosure.

2. Install a concrete spoon drain to re-direct stormwater off the courts

The Elaine CAC and the Elaine Cricket Club have identified that the stormwater run-off from the tennis courts is causing flooding to occur in front of the pavilion and the adjacent section of the oval. The master plan is supporting the installation of a concrete spoon drain along the eastern boundary of the tennis court enclosure and re-directing it to the existing

drainage swale along the reserve access road. The project could be included with the project to seal the strip of land between the tennis courts and the Tennis Clubroom (see No. 3).

3. Seal the area between the tennis clubroom and the tennis courts

The area is currently a gravel surface; it is untidy with weeds and water pools on the surface from stormwater run-off from the tennis courts. The Elaine CAC supports the sealing of this section of land between the tennis courts and the tennis clubroom to provide a more usable space and to enhance the area. It is suggested that the area beyond the tennis clubroom and the gateway onto the courts be cultivated into shrub planting to further enhance the space. This project and the installation of the spoon drain (see No. 2) could be undertaken as one package of works.



4. Renew the drainage infrastructure to improve its effectiveness

The current stormwater management system throughout the northern section of the reserve is currently not performing to its optimum, with the consequences being flooding and water pooling in various locations following heavy or constant rainfall.

The consultant team inspected and reviewed the system of open swales and drains, and believes that a lack of maintenance has contributed to its current low performance. The master plan is recommending that a renewal of the existing system be undertaken by Council, and then appropriate and regular maintenance be scheduled.



5. Formalise car parking within the reserve

There is no formalised car parking within the reserve. Establishing a formal car park south of the tennis courts will improve pedestrian safety and convenience for reserve users (refer Section 5.3 for additional information).

6. Existing pavilion

The current pavilion is not fit for purpose and is not an inclusive or female friendly facility. The cricket club requires appropriate facilities for its members, visiting teams and officials. The need for a new pavilion creates the opportunity to develop a new and contemporary facility that will be available to be shared between all reserve groups and the broader community as a social/ meeting space (refer Section 5.2 for more information).

The site for the new pavilion should be just southeast of its current location to ensure it remains close to the oval which is proposed to be moved southwards (refer No. 12). A water tank to capture and store rainwater off the pavilion roof should also be included to provide a water source for drinking and to service the amenities.

7. Install bollards along the reserve road

A secure fence treatment along the south side of the reserve access road is required if the reserve is to remain unlocked to vehicles, which is the aspiration of the Elaine CAC as a strategy to increase visitations and use. A fence is required to prevent unauthorised vehicle access onto the oval and the resultant damage that such access could cause to the oval surface.

8. Install external sensor lights

The Elaine CAC and the Elaine Cricket Club identified a high need to install sensor lights at strategic locations within the reserve for those people who are last to leave in darkness. Sites nominated for external sensor lights are the tennis clubroom/ BBQ shelter, the public toilets, and the new pavilion to illuminate the area towards the proposed new car park (see No. 5).

When the reserve is accessible at all times (refer No. 7), the additional lighting will assist visitors to the reserve needing to access the public toilets at night time.

9. Install additional picnic tables

The BBQ shelter has one picnic table. Additional picnic tables have been recommended for the playground area. The installation of additional seating at the reserve was the fourth ranked improvement project nominated in the community survey, and new picnic tables will support this direction.

10. Expand the car parking into the reserve and install a new connecting path

The Elaine CAC supports the expansion of the reserve’s external car park by utilising the space in the northeast corner (see image below). This will require the removal of some semi-mature trees and the construction of a new paling fence around the western and southern boundaries of the new car park. An estimated 16 additional car parks will be created.



11. Upgrade the reserve entrance

The reserve entrance could be upgraded to enhance the arrival experience and to better landmark the importance of the reserve to the Elaine community. This could include repainting the existing wooden fence prior to the car park expansion project (see No. 10), replacing the wire fence on the south side with a wooden fence to match existing, and a new reserve sign. The gates could be removed after the bollards along the internal road have been installed to encourage visitors (see no.7).



12. Relocate the oval southwards and upgrade the surface

Along with the tennis courts, the oval at Elaine Recreation Reserve is the most important asset for the community from a sporting and recreational perspective. As a cricket oval it is in poor condition with an uneven surface, poor grass cover and weeds (right). The poor grass cover and weeds can be largely attributed to the lack of an effective irrigation system.



As noted in section 5.1, the installation of a sub-surface irrigation system would be difficult to justify, however a mobile pump and spray unit would be a viable alternative and could then support the oval being top-dressed and oversown.

A key challenge for the introduction of irrigation will be a sustainable source of water. The two former CFA tanks onsite could be re-purposed to become the source for water, but it may require a commitment from Council to purchase water for the Elaine CAC.

Council supports the relocation of the oval southwards in the reserve to create usable open space in the northern section of the total oval area during times when the oval proper is being used for cricket and other activities.

Relocating the oval southwards also enables a larger footprint for the proposed new pavilion to be possible (see No. 6) and the opportunity to provide a new car park inside the reserve (see No. 5). With the relocation of the oval southwards, the goal and behind posts will need to be reinstalled into new locations.

13. Install a new compliant cricket pitch

The oval cricket pitch is too narrow at 1.82m wide and should be provided to a width of between 2.4m – 2.8m. A wider pitch will better support player development and will encourage spin bowling. A replacement pitch can be installed when the condition of the current pitch surface declines and/or at the time when the oval is relocated southwards (see No. 12).

14. Install an oval perimeter fence

The Cricket Club identified this improvement project. A fence along the western boundary will certainly assist in preventing cricket balls being hit into the adjacent bushland, an ongoing issue identified by the cricket club during matches. If the installation of the perimeter fence is unable to be completed as one project, an option is to install the oval perimeter fence in stages, with stage 1 being the western boundary. This project could be undertaken as a combined project with the relocation of the oval southwards (No. 12).

15. Install a gravel path with occasional bench seating and a divided trail of exercise equipment

The installation of a gravel path around the oval with a divided trail of exercise equipment will significantly increase the potential to activate the reserve by local residents and visitors. For local residents, the oval perimeter path can become a turnaround point for a walking circuit that incorporates the gravel path along the west side of the Midland Highway to access the reserve (approx. 1.7 km round trip). See precedent image below.



The installation of additional seating at the reserve was the fourth ranked improvement project nominated in the community survey, and occasional bench seating along the oval perimeter path will support this direction and will be useful additions for cricket spectators.

16. Upgrade cricket storage and remove the existing storage container once constructed
An assessment of the cricket equipment storage needs for the Cricket Club needs to be undertaken to enable the equipment currently stored in the container next to the cricket nets to be replaced with a more permanent solution. The storage container would then be removed from the reserve.



17. Relocate the orchard from the cricket practice nets precinct (or re-plant new)

The Cricket Club raised concerns that the orchard of fruit trees which is located just east of the cricket nets was attracting bees and as a result created a safety risk for cricketers and others using the nets. Council's Parks team assessed the orchard trees and found that some trees were not in good condition and others not planted well (roots exposed). They identified a new location in the reserve for the orchard trees to either be relocated or new trees planted, as referred to in the concept map.

18. New reserve second entrance from the Midland Highway

Council supports the establishment of a new second reserve entrance off the Midland Highway in the southeast corner of the reserve; the double gate just south of the main entrance can be relocated. This entry will provide a convenient access to the water tanks which are proposed to be relocated (see No. 19).

19. Relocate the water tanks

Two large water tanks are located adjacent to the Cricket Pavilion and are proposed to be relocated to the southeast of the reserve for greater ease of access (see Section 3.2 for more information). The relocation will require a turning circle for trucks to be provided in front of the water tanks.

20. Explore opportunities to incorporate public art in the reserve and cultural heritage signage

The Council publication 'Helping Moorabool Thrive' describes several key projects and many medium to small size projects to facilitate the best infrastructure and access to services for its community. The report supports the inclusion of artwork at the Elaine Recreation Reserve. Artwork could be in the form of a mural or other public art mediums (see precedent image below), and cultural heritage signage could be installed to tell the history of Elaine and district.



6.3. Project Prioritisation

Table 3 shows an indicative prioritisation of all reserve improvement projects. The key considerations for the prioritisation of projects are risk/ safety, fair access/ gender equity, and increased reserve activation.

All projects have been prioritised using the following hierarchy.

Short-Term 0-3 years

Medium Term 4-5 years

Long Term 6-10 years

The prioritisation is an indication of the relative importance of a project compared to all other master plan projects.

Table 3 - Master Plan Project Prioritisation

Master Plan No.	Project	Project Description	Priority
Access and Movement			
5	Formalise car parking within the reserve	- Construct gravel car park south of the tennis courts - Renew the reserve road	Medium
7	Install bollards along the reserve road	- Supply and install bollards to the south of the reserve road to prevent unauthorised vehicles accessing the oval open space area	Short
10	Expand the external reserve car parking	- Remove the trees in the northeast corner of the reserve - New timber fence along the western and southern sides of the new car park	Long
11	Upgrade the reserve entrance	- Remove the gates when the bollards have been installed (see No.7) - Supply and installation of a new reserve sign	Long
18	New reserve second entrance from the Midland Highway	- Relocate the double gates near the main entrance southwards to the proposed new location	Medium

Master Plan No.	Project	Project Description	Priority
Sports Facilities			
1	Install a basketball backboard and ring	- Supply and install a post, backboard and ring at a location along the perimeter fence inside the tennis court enclosure	Medium
6	Existing pavilion	- Demolish the current pavilion - Install a new pavilion with external decking and ramp - Remove and replace the old water tank	Short
12	Relocate the oval southwards	- Plot the dimensions for the oval in its new location - Upgrade the surface and install sub-surface irrigation in the long-term - Relocate the goal and behind posts	Short
13	Install a new compliant cricket pitch	- New concrete slab and synthetic surface - Pitch to be compliant dimensions (28m x 2.8m)	Short
14	Install an oval perimeter fence	- Include a fence opening at the end of the cricket practice nets to allow for bowlers' run-ups during cricket practice	Short
16	Upgrade cricket storage	- Investigate and introduce alternate cricket equipment storage solutions - Remove the storage container at the cricket nets	Short
Community Improvements			
8	Install external sensor lights	-Supply and install sensor lights near the pavilion, tennis clubroom/ BBQ shelter, and public toilet	Short
9	Install additional picnic tables	- Install picnic tables on a concrete base around the playground	Short
15	Install a gravel path around the oval area	- New 1.5 metre wide granitic gravel path - Install bench seats on a concrete base along the path - Install exercise stations along the path	Medium
17	Relocate the orchard from the cricket practice nets precinct (or re-plant new)	- If the existing trees can be re-planted do so in the cooler months - If the existing trees are too poor a condition, re-plant new fruit trees	Short
19	Relocate the water tanks	- Relocate the 2x CFA water tanks to the southeast corner of the reserve	Short
20	Explore opportunities to incorporate public art in the reserve and cultural heritage signage	- Public art could in the form of a mural or other art medium - Cultural heritage signage could tell the history of Elaine and district	Long

Master Plan No.	Project	Project Description	Priority
Drainage Infrastructure			
2	Install a concrete spoon drain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Install a spoon drain along the full length of the eastern side of the tennis courts to re-direct stormwater off the courts - Connect to existing pit outside the southeast corner of the tennis court enclosure 	Short
3	Seal the area between the tennis clubroom and the tennis courts (in conjunction No. 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concrete the area between the tennis clubroom and the tennis courts - Cultivate shrub planting to the north 	Short
4	Renew the drainage infrastructure to improve its effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear pipes of dirt and debris - Undertake minor excavation of soil from open swales to achieve desired 	Short

APPENDIX 1

Elaine Recreation Reserve Master Plan



Elaine Recreation Reserve Master Plan

JANUARY 2026



PROJECT	Elaine Recreation Reserve Master Plan		
CITY	Moorabool Shire	DATE	2025
PROJECT	MP1	DATE	2025
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