



Ross Watt Reserve Master Plan

A study to develop a Master Plan for Ross Watt Reserve has reached the stage where a draft Master Plan has been prepared and is ready for public exhibition to receive community feedback.

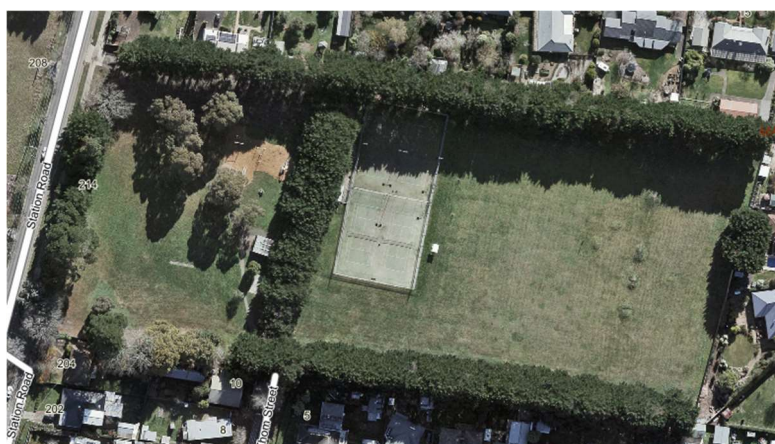
Ross Watt Reserve is located on Station Road, New Gisborne, and is an important passive and active recreation reserve for residents. The reserve is home to the New Gisborne Tennis Club (NGTC). In 2015, NGTC commenced the development of a club Master Plan. The club-developed Master Plan did not progress to Council for endorsement.

Study Background

Ross Watt Reserve currently offers large grassed areas, a children's playground, public toilets, car park, BMX humps and tennis facilities with four (4) courts.

Ross Watt Reserve is located on Council owned land.

In August 2022, Macedon Ranges Shire Council commissioned a study to review the tennis club developed Master Plan for the site. The study aims to establish a current vision for the reserve to guide its future development.



The following drivers triggered the need to undertake the study:

1. In 2015, the NGTC (with assistance from Council) presented a draft Master Plan for community feedback. This included consultation with surrounding neighbours and holding three resident information sessions. However, the draft plan did not proceed to Council for endorsement.
2. In April 2022, NGTC organised another community meeting to engage the New Gisborne community for comment regarding the club's proposed reserve Master Plan;
3. NGTC is the reserve's only formal tenant sports club, and they have expressed a need for improved facilities. An endorsed Master Plan will guide the future development of the reserve and will support any future funding bids; and
4. Consideration of options to enhance non-sporting opportunities at the reserve.

The study has been undertaken in three stages to date:

- Stage 1: Information gathering, research, and initial engagement with NGTC.
- Stage 2: Issues and opportunities analysis and development of draft master plan for review by Council officers.
- Stage 3: Develop a draft Master Plan for endorsement by Council for community consultation and feedback.

Council is now inviting community feedback on the draft Ross Watt Reserve Master Plan. It is on public exhibition until 5.00pm 30 June 2023. To view the plan and provide feedback go to Council's website www.mrsc.vic.gov.au and then to the 'Have Your Say' webpage.

For further information, email recreationsubmissions@mrsc.vic.gov.au

Following community consultation, the draft Ross Watt Reserve Master Plan will be reviewed and where appropriate revised based on feedback received, with the aim of presenting the final plan to Council later in 2023 for adoption.

Consultation Undertaken to inform the draft Master Plan

- Sept 2015 - draft club Master Plan was presented by the club (in partnership with Council) for community feedback.
- March 2016 - public consultation with surrounding neighbours and three local resident information sessions held at New Gisborne tennis clubrooms.
- April 2022 - a community meeting held at NGTC to engage New Gisborne community for comment regarding the Club's updated Ross Watt Reserve Master Plan including additional tennis court plans, walking paths and playground facilities. The meeting was advertised via social media, and local residents, NGTC representative and broader community members attended.
- 7 Sept 2022 - meeting with NGTC representatives.
- 21 Sept 2022 - onsite review of Ross Watt Reserve facilities.
- Oct 2022 - one on one discussions with Council officers.
- 23 Nov 2022 - workshop with Council officers.



The key issues and opportunities identified by the consultant and raised during the initial consultation are grouped into the following themes:

Role and quality of the reserve

The reserve has several roles - a visual break along Station Rd, school drop off /pick up, informal play, dog off leash area, family/social area, toilet stop/break and thoroughfare from Thom Street to Station Road and a local community tennis facility. This reserve is an important passive and active open space. The existing facilities are aging and the need to address the quality of the infrastructure has informed the draft Master Plan.

Town growth

The population of New Gisborne is forecast to grow over the next 20 years. Ross Watt Reserve will be centrally located and its importance will grow. The amount and quality of the infrastructure in this reserve will need enhancement.

Tennis Facility Provision

The tennis facility has been located at Ross Watt Reserve for 35 years. New Gisborne Tennis Club has occupied the facility over this period and contributed significantly to its development and maintenance.

Two of the four courts at the reserve are in poor condition, and the club would like upgraded tennis infrastructure at the site.

Other opportunities

The initial consultation process suggested:

- There is a limited path network in the reserve, which requires the extension of the path network and the construction of a circuit path
- Improved drainage and provision of upgraded park furniture and other reserve infrastructure
- The main entry points to the reserve could be more attractive and welcoming through improved signage and landscaping.

Directions of the Draft Master Plan

The purpose of a master plan is to provide a vision for how the reserve will look and function in the long term.

The draft Ross Watt Reserve Master Plan includes several directions for enhancing active and passive use of the reserve, including:

Overall vision for the reserve

- Enhance the appearance of the reserve and make it more attractive, welcoming and accessible.
- Retain the openness and uncluttered nature of the reserve.

Tennis facilities

- Enhance the reserve's capacity for structured sport, by nominating Ross Watt Reserve as the location for tennis facilities in New Gisborne.
- Relocation of courts 3 and 4 (due to their current structural condition). The relocation of courts 3 and 4 to the east of courts 1 and 2, and with future provision for an additional four courts (providing up to eight courts in total, subject to growth and demand) will open up sight lines and access to the eastern side of the reserve.
- Retention of courts 1 and 2.
- Provide a new tennis clubroom facility.

Other

- Improve reserve infrastructure (car park, drainage, public toilets, park furniture, boundary fencing).
- Enhance informal play and passive recreation opportunities.
- Achieve a suitable balance between developed and natural areas of the reserve.
- Enhance the entrances to the reserve through improved signage and landscaping.
- Raise the reserve profile and encourage greater use of and community pride in the reserve.
- Retain the dog off leash area.
- Undertake tree works to improve the visibility and function of the reserve.
- Removal of north-south row of Cypress trees that create a barrier across the middle of the reserve.