



St Helens Sports Complex Draft Master Plan

Community Feedback

Version: 2 – Date July, 2022

This 'Community Feedback' report outlines:

A background on the consultation process to date and a summary of Community Feedback; what the community told us they did and did not like about the Draft St Helens Sports Complex Master Plan including compliments, suggestions, queries and concerns.



Background

User Group Feedback

The current users of the facility met on Tuesday 23rd February, 2021 at 5 pm at the Bendigo Community Stadium to ensure that the draft plan met the needs of their organizations for the next ten (10) years.

A number of changes were made after this session:

- Additional access point to the stadium carpark has been removed and trees along street to be retained
- Possible pool site has been left as is
- Possible gym site has been left as is
- Helicopter landing pad has been removed
- Cricket pitch to stay in current location
- Soccer pitch to stay in current location
- Tennis + netball to be shared courts
- Position of football oval lighting amended
- New amenities shown between the athletics track and the football ground, adjacent proposed playground
- Additional parking shown around southern end of football oval
- Community garden added adjacent to dog exercise yard
- New access road to community garden from existing Eagle Street access
- Event space removed

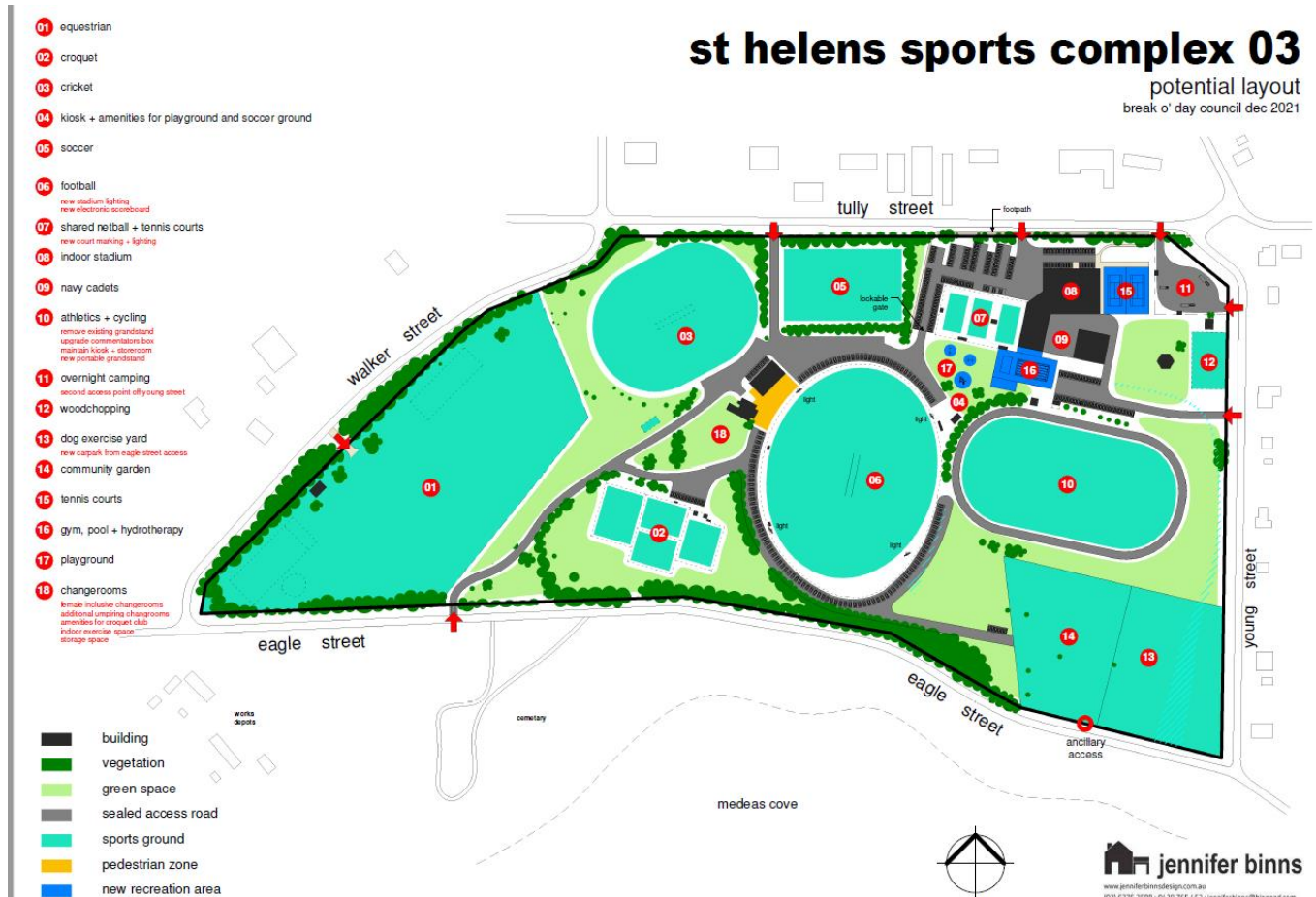
After the above amendments were incorporated, the updated document was again forwarded to user groups for their sign off before progressing to community feedback. Additional suggestions were provided by the user groups and further amendments made including:

- Access road between 03 and 05 to have an arrow showing an entry point
- A gate which can be locked between 05 and 07 (netball courts) there are currently barriers there
- Change 15 to reflect tennis courts
- Extend 16 to the left and right to reflect gym, pool and hydrotherapy - to the ease of the existing 16 will impact on some car spaces but we need the space for all three pieces of infrastructure - hopefully you can where I have drawn on the attached

- The grassed area between the football ground and 02 - if we can build identify this space as being the following: change rooms to be inclusive of girls/women, increased umpiring change rooms including women umpires - inside exercise space and storage room - also include amenities to be used by Croquet Club

Updated Plan

Below is the Draft Master Plan for community feedback, incorporating 2 rounds of feedback from user groups.



Summary of Community Feedback

Council sought feedback from the community on the draft concept plan from 28 March, 2022 to the 13 May 2022. Feedback was promoted on Council's community engagement webpage and social media on 4/5, 25/4, 10/5 and in Council's April Newsletter. Feedback was received via letters and email, discussions at the St Helens township plan community session and via social media comment.

Feedback was generally positive and supported the Draft Master Plan, a summary of how feedback was received is outlined below.



- 46 responses were received via a combination of letter and email
- 5 responses were received during the St Helens Township plan community session
- Approximately 33 comments were made on social media

What you said

We have categorized community feedback into the following overarching themes:

Leisure Facilities	Gym, pool and hydrotherapy facilities
Sporting Facilities	Infrastructure that supports our local clubs including cricket and croquet
Public Amenities	Such as playgrounds, public toilets and community centers
Accessibility	Safe access to facilities for all
Natural Values	Enhancing the natural values of the site

Leisure/Aquatic Facilities

36 responses were received with regards to leisure facilities representing the majority of community feedback. Responses were overwhelmingly supportive of the inclusion of gym, pool and hydrotherapy facilities.

Questions were raised in relation to the design of the pool, hydrotherapy and gym - how many lanes, length of the pool, hydrotherapy and pool – should they be 2 separate builds, separate showers and toilets. Location of a swimming pool, hydrotherapy and gym will be significant in this project. If we are not able to utilise existing toilets and showers which are located in the Stadium facility – this will add to the cost of the build considerably. Car parking is another important factor which will need to be considered – as the current car parking may either be too far away or too small to cater for both facilities.

Comments
“My main interest is the inclusion of a pool, hydrotherapy pool and gym. I believe these are essential for our community and hopefully if the plan goes ahead these will be a priority”
“This facility will be available to the Break O Day community providing essential modern sporting facilities to support the community’s health and well-being.
“We desperately need this”.

“Would like to put our support behind council putting a pool gym and hydrotherapy into the forward plan for the sports complex.”
“The whole town benefits, the pool covers every demographic and all levels of ability or non-ability”
“Fantastic, especially on the therapy pool! Much needed and looked forward to”
“I am particularly over the moon to see provision being made for a public swimming pool and gym”
“With an ageing population we all need to have a hydrotherapy pool for exercise and for better health and mind set”
“I believe this facility will be a fabulous resource for not only our St Helens community, but also for visitors to the area”
“The only thing that I feel is missing out in this beautiful town is a gym”
“Really looking forward to the gym & pool”
“Wanted to say how much a sports complex would benefit our community”

Suggestions
“It should definitely be as big or bigger than the pool at St Mary’s, and also include a toddler pool and hydrotherapy pool with wheel chair access a must”
“You need warm showers (and ideally heated or very well insulated) change rooms too”
“I hope the pools will be housed indoors so it can be accessed all year”
‘Hydrotherapy that is wheel chair/hoist suitable this would benefit so many people in the community”
“It would also be great to see a small splash pool for younger children or a smaller pool to be used for learn to swim classes”
“Have you considered something similar to the Scottsdale set up for kids in regards to pool set up?”
“Are we in any way able to model our facility off Scottsdale’s Aquatic Centre? This is a truly amazing facility and I think would be a great guide for our Municipality”

Sporting Facilities

3 responses were received with regards to sporting facilities.

Suggestions
“a BBQ or Kiosk type facility closer to the cricket oval”
“the tennis courts, I think that’s a great idea, however I would put a decent fence between it and the caravan stopover”

“Why do we need a second tennis court - the existing one is not fully utilized”

The re-formed Cricket Club have provided some good input into the draft concept plan identifying much needed upgrades of their facility. Their feedback is not identified on the current draft plan but believe it should be considered as part of the overall facility. The St Helens Cricket Club is awaiting/applying for a community sports grants to fund the following:

- Relocate the nets approx 90 degrees, so players are not bowling into the sun and can have required run up area for bowling ect, also provides safe car parking area with practice balls being hit adjacent to the oval area.
- Removal of self-sown trees around the cricket oval for the safety vision of players, coaches and parents during game and training, Currently this is a safety hazard with balls going directly into the bushes and players having to enter bushes to get balls out with tree branches sticking out and currently a dumping ground for bottles, glass and rubbish ect., also jack jumpers have nested within the tree roots which is also a hazard as we have players anaphylaxis to jack jumpers at current.
- Removal of tree roots on the far side of the cricket oval, currently forming a trip hazard for fielding players.
- Proposed new fence, to help maintain the quality of turf, ball retrieval ect, approx 400m around the boundary line of the current oval, with the allowance of 1x ambulance access gate, 4x pedestrian gates for players access and ball retrieval.
- Combined outdoor BBQ area to be used by cricket and also the football club, currently BBQ's are our form of revenue raising for our club, and provides lunch for our senior and tea for our junior players.
- Proposed watering system, the oval during cricket season is under turfed and forms a dust bowl, proposing something similar to the football club oval watering system of some sort.

Public Amenities

10 responses were received with regards to public amenities. Responses clearly identified concerns around access to toilet facilities for members of the Croquet club. Support for a toilet facility closer to or part of the Croquet Club was mainly due to the aging members of the community who played croquet.

There were also suggestions around location of the community gardens and camping area and well as a suggestion for a community meeting room with storage.

Comments

“The location of amenities, such as toilets, needs to be prioritized in conjunction with the use of the space”

“Very concerned that the toilets are being moved away from the lawns where croquet is played”

“Lack of toilet facilities for people playing croquet”

Suggestions

“Without this facility (toilet) within a short walk from our club (croquet) many members would not be able to attend. We hope an adjacent toilet will be included in the new plan”
“Would like more accessible toilets for those who play croquet”
“I find that putting a community garden in the School grounds would be more effective than at the Recreation grounds”
“I'd prefer to have the overnight camping area very well away from the sports-ground complex, given the number of children who would be participating in activities and potentially roaming around”
“Is there a community meeting room for visiting community talks ie nutrition and a commercial kitchen next to it - and a multipurpose room for yoga, salsa dancing etc. Storage for bikes etc for spin classes, put away chairs , trestle tables etc”

Accessibility

2 responses were received with regards to accessibility including elderly and female participation.

A walking track around the Sports facility was suggested as this would allow better connectivity to the township of St Helens as well as existing sporting facilities and provide another safe trail for people to walk and improve the safety issue between cars and pedestrians which has been raised.

Suggestions
“It would be good to see a consistent walking track around whole facility for elderly citizens, one with no bumps or tree roots or path traffic, suitable also for mums with prams”
“With all sport facilities at one place (Recreation Ground) how about safety - particular for female individuals in evening - (isolation area)”

Natural Values

2 responses were received with regards to natural values.

A suggestion was that Council undertake a management plan for the whole site focusing on the natural values of the area as well as weed management, run off and silt management.

Comments
“Don't support the proposed increased amount of bitumen”

Suggestions
“The Day Camping Area would benefit greatly with the addition of shade trees”

“Maintaining grass, trees and gravel roads maintain the aesthetic and rural feel of the site.”

“The Sports Complex is both a valuable sporting venue but also valuable open space. There needs to be a comprehensive Management Plan developed for the whole site which considers natural values, landscaping, stormwater etc”

Next Steps

The next steps of this project will be:

1. Work through feedback and make any final changes/ amendments to master plan.
2. Review the options for siting of public amenities within the Sports Complex to ensure that a balance is achieved between necessary access and duplication of facilities (e.g. best location to service the Croquet Club area)
3. Develop a tree planting and vegetation management plan for the Sports complex
4. Options to improve and develop pathways servicing the various areas of the Sports Complex
5. Review information provided by sporting groups and work with the respective committees to explore suggestions made and opportunities relating to the provision of facilities including sharing of infrastructure
6. Initiate a feasibility study in relation to an Aquatic Centre type facility potentially including a hydrotherapy pool and gym.