



GANNAWARRA
SHIRE COUNCIL

2011

Recreation Asset Management Plan



About this document

This document is a Review of Recreation Assets for Gannawarra Shire. It has been prepared by @leisure on behalf of the Gannawarra Shire.

This plan has considered all recreation assets but focuses only on those that are Council owned and operated.

The plan examines information collected about recreation assets on both Council and non-Council owned and operated land. Comments made in relation to overall condition relate to the total picture and in many instances assets in the poorest condition are those that are not the responsibility of Council.

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Cover Image: Koondrook Apex Park

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1. Executive summary

Recreation assets are essential for the health and wellbeing of all communities. They promote civic pride, encourage people to participate in a wide range of social and physical recreation, facilitate child development and a sense of wellbeing.

Throughout Gannawarra Shire there are now 109 identified recreation reserves that are under various ownership. Of these 62 are considered to be Council owned and operated, however only 51 are included in this plan as 11 are included in other strategies eg Pools.

Close to 1600 individual assets were identified across the 51 recreation reserves with a total replacement value of \$5.4 million. Of these, only 35 were considered to be in an unacceptable condition and require immediate replacement estimated at close to \$70,000. There were a further 200 assets that will in the coming years quickly approach a condition where the asset will become unusable. Future planning and upgrades must take these assets into account.

Ownership and Responsibility

Management complexities of recreation assets within the Municipality are common as there are a significant number of assets that are not controlled by Council. These include assets located in reserves that are either owned and operated by others, or are on reserves owned by Council but the asset is managed by a committee or other entity, ie Kerang CFA firetrack.

It is important that there is clear communication and coordination with the various groups regarding ownership arrangements to ensure assets are well maintained and not unnecessarily duplicated.

Climate Variability

Northern Victoria has recently experienced unprecedented weather events. Our proximity to the Murray River, it's tributaries, numerous lakes and significant wetlands provide excellent opportunity for water based recreation, tourism and events. It is however, this proximity to the natural wetlands and river systems that exposes the region to greater risk of extensive flooding or variable water levels.

Addressing the implications of climate change will be advantageous for users of recreation reserves by limiting the effects of climate change in the relatively harsh environment of the region. This could be achieved with a Greening Gannawarra program that aims to enhance livability, civic pride and generate economic benefits through both protecting and enhancing biodiversity and ecological coherence. Further, Council should work closely with community groups and land managers to ensure infrastructure provided on lake and river foreshores is fit for purpose and situated to accommodate possible changes in water level.

Demand and Location of Assets

Our demographic profile presents an ageing and declining population. Given this it is important to provide a wide range of infrastructure to support diverse recreational activities while maintaining the mainstream sports that have a broad appeal and community support.

Consideration should be given to creating hubs ie putting more facilities in the same location such as playgrounds and sports facilities. This will provide a critical mass so that is more cost effective to maintain assets at higher quality and be more attractive to users. This would allow a reduction in the total number of assets that Council would have to maintain, however it could disadvantage some residents that maybe required to travel further.

With the creation of recreation hubs the need for many smaller facilities is reduced. It is recommended that these smaller facilities or items not be replaced when they reach the end of their useful life.

External Management Contributions

Council provides approximately \$60,000 annually to some community groups and committees of management for the maintenance of recreational and sporting facilities. The amounts provided to each group vary dramatically, some facilities are fully maintained by Council and some committees do not receive a cash contribution. There are some in the community that see this model as inequitable.

The contribution or management of reserves throughout the municipality has remained almost constant since the amalgamation of three municipalities in 1995, and in many instances Council has increased the funding provided to clubs since this time. It would be beneficial for Council to review the allocation of funds and how contributions to the management of assets on reserves are made, including the support provided to committees and establish a consistent rationale for each.

Expenditure and Revenue

Industry standards suggest that 2-4% per year of an assets value is required for asset renewal. Council's 2010/11 capital budget for recreation assets was \$232,000 which equates to 4.3% of the assets replacement value, in line with industry standards.

Council was fortunate to have received \$190,000 of that years program through external funding sources for a large number of the projects. This compares favorably to the previous year where Council received only \$45,000 in grants for a \$173,000 capital works program.

To maintain all recreation assets to the desired service level Council needs to maintain a capital expenditure over \$200,000 annually. Given Councils limited ability to raise additional funds internally it is important that Council continue to actively seek external funds to replace assets, minimise ongoing costs, replace functionally obsolete facilities and enhance participation rates.

2. Introduction

Recreation Assets are essential for the health and wellbeing of all communities. They promote civic pride, encourage people to participate in a wide range of social and physical recreation, facilitate child development and a sense of wellbeing.

Throughout Gannawarra Shire there are now 109 identified recreation reserves that are under various ownership. Of these, 62 are considered to be Council owned and operated, however only 51 are included in this plan as 11 are included in other strategies eg Pools.

Gannawarra Shire Council was formed in 1995 following the amalgamation of the Shire of Cohuna, the Borough of Kerang and the Shire of Kerang. Each of these three areas managed their reserves in a slightly different manner resulting in varying service level across the Municipality. Since amalgamation, Council has generally maintained the status quo of these management arrangements which, are perceived by some to be somewhat inequitable.

Changing demographics, rising customer expectations, competing demands for funding and an increasing regulatory environment have contributed to a situation where it is essential for Council's to make well-informed asset management decisions.

This plan has been developed using the best practices in asset management using a four step process, summarised as:

Step 1:

Determine ownership and condition of assets including the current levels of service (The level of service determines an asset's development, operation, maintenance, replacement and disposal characteristics. applied to these assets). Calculate the costs to maintain these assets if known.

Step 2:

Consider any increased demand and costs for services from development or growth or rising expectations – or the impact of declining or other changes in population.

Predicted future levels of service need to be defined.

Step 3:

The preparation of a life cycle management plan for all the assets that Council owns and an understanding where the assets are in their life cycle.

Step 4.

Preparation of risk and financial projections to assist in determining which assets are most important to the community.

Other related strategies

During the development of this plan the following previous studies were taken into account:

- The Recreation Strategy 2002
- The Riverside Park Master Plan 2003
- The Tracks and Trails Strategy 2004
- The Pools Strategic Plan 2009
- The Hockey Facility Feasibility 2009
- The Community Satisfaction Survey Results for Gannawarra 2010
- Victorian Population Health Survey 2008 - Gannawarra Shire, and
- The Strategic Community Plan, Gannawarra 2025
- Council Plan – 2009-2013.

The assets

There are four main categories of recreation reserves within Gannawarra Shire being:

1. Shire Owned and Operated (50)
2. Shire Owned and Operated but included in other strategies (11) *
3. Shire Owned, Managed by Other Body (1)
4. Owned and Operated by Other Body (47)*

*These reserves are included in this strategy to enable a total level of service across communities and towns to be established. Their condition and financial information is not included.

Factors that have been used to determine the level of service are primarily:

- Whether alternative options or facilities exist
- Strategic and Corporate Goals. Council's goals and values as stated in policies, strategies, and the Council Plan
- The usage of the facility and predicted growth or decline
- Community safety
- Economic development potential

A significant number of assets included in the plan fall into other asset classes but are considered here because they are located on recreation reserves or support recreation and sporting activities. These can include roads, car parks, fences, buildings etc.

Only a small number of assets are provided primarily for recreation or sport. These include such assets as courts, goal posts, grass playing fields, play equipment, boat ramps and jetties.

Assumptions

There are a number of assumptions made within this plan including:

- a) The financial plan models the scenario of all assets being replaced overtime. This includes all assets being replaced whether they are required or not. As discussed elsewhere in this plan it is important to assess the requirement of an asset prior to replacement. This method will increase the reported required expenditure which must be taken into account when applying the figures.
- b) The intervention level for all asset classes has been set to condition 8 for the purposes of financial modeling. In reality the actual intervention level may vary slightly by asset class, for example a playground may be considered for replacement at a condition 7, while goal posts may be replaced at condition 9.
- c) Both sporting grounds and play equipment standards are governed by various codes of practice and standards. While these change regularly, Council is not required to comply with the standards until the asset is replaced.
- d) The replacement value data is limited to assets on Council owned and managed land that are not included in other asset management plans (such as buildings).
- e) This asset data in this plan does not include all public recreation assets within the Shire. This could lead to an inconsistency in levels of service and how recreation assets are managed across the Shire. This will need to be considered further in the Recreation Reserve Strategy.
- f) Limited data is available for detailed expenditure on individual assets. It is generally assumed that as an asset ages the maintenance costs increase.
- g) The financial modeling, in particular for playgrounds, includes those located at pre-schools and Council run childcare centers. While these are not available to the general public they are not included in other plans and have similar risks and costs to those in public reserves.

3. Key findings

3.1 Condition of assets

Recreation asset data was collected by DMC and @leisure in late 2010, this data was then mapped and imported into Council's GIS system. The data was collected for all Council owned and operated recreation assets in the Shire with the following exceptions:

- Trees and informal garden beds
- Buildings on Council's Building Register
- Fences between reserve boundaries and private property
- Assets Owned and Operated by another Authority
- Aerodromes

Close to 1600 individual assets were identified across the 51 of the recreation reserves owned and operated by Council that are covered in this plan.

All assets on recreation reserves were assessed and given a condition rating from 0 (just built, in excellent condition), to 10 (needing immediate attention). Data relating to the condition of assets included in this plan are a summary only, the actual condition of a particular assets can be obtained using Council's corporate GIS applications.

Of the 51 reserves that Council owns and operates, 40 of these contain assets that require intervention in the short term. Further there are other recreation assets within the Municipality operated by other groups or organisations that are in relatively poor condition. It is important that these groups understand the condition of their assets and work in collaboration with Council to ensure assets are provided in a serviceable condition.

Of the 1600 identified assets, only 35 were considered to be at an unacceptable condition rating of 9 or 10 as shown in Table 2. However, almost 200 individual assets were considered to be at condition 7 or greater and will in the coming years quickly approach a condition where the assets will become unusable.

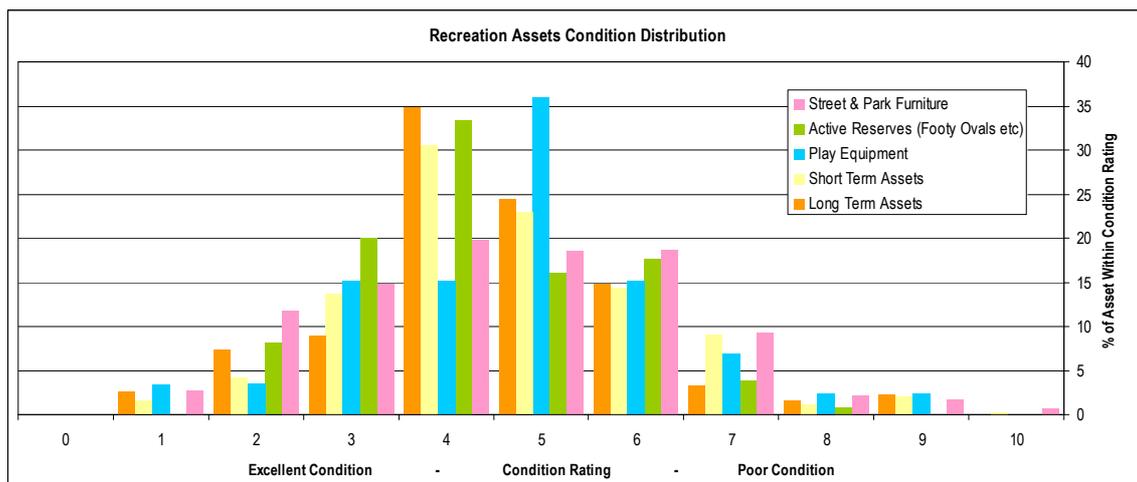
Based on the estimated replacement value for items that scored 9 or 10, just under \$70,000 would be required to immediately replace these assets. However it must be noted that not all these assets will be replaced to their original condition as discussed in section 4 of this plan.

Table 1: Number of assets with a condition 9 or 10

Asset type	Number of assets with condition rating 9-10
Bin	1
Signage	3
Playground	2
Art/Heritage	1
Bench	2
Fence	6
Utility	1
BBQ	2
Post/Pole	5
Sporting	1
Building	3
Water Feature	3
Table	5

Each of the 1600 recreational assets can be grouped into functional categories to enable condition information and degradation profiles to be applied to like assets. The following graph shows the present condition of assets, as a percentage within each condition rating.

Figure 1: Present condition of assets, as a percentage of the asset base within each condition rating



The condition profile displays a typical bell shape curve with no major anomalies in the data collected. The peaks of long/short term assets and active reserves in condition 4 indicate that their overall condition is good. A large proportion of play equipment is at condition 5 and will quickly deteriorate.

Expected asset life

For the purposes of modelling the long term financial requirements of recreation assets, the following life expectancies have been adopted for each asset class:

- Street & Park Furniture – 25 years
- Active Reserves (Footy Ovals) – 50 years
- Play Equipment – 15 years
- Short Term Assets – 20 years
- Long Term Assets – 50 years

Factors affecting condition of assets

The three key factors that affect the condition of assets are:

- Climate
- Sufficient funding to maintain all assets in good order, and
- The range of organisations responsible for recreation assets in the Shire

Climate

A number of factors are likely to negatively influence the condition of sports facilities in the Shire. These include:

- The Mediterranean climate with hot dry summers
- The previous drought and ongoing issues associated with access to water
- Damage from Corellas and other fauna
- Susceptibility to flooding on the many recreation reserves located along the river systems

Access to water and shade for participants will require additional resources. Additional maintenance as a result of storm events and turf damage or hardness can be anticipated due to climate. Robust materials are necessary especially for seating, trails, fencing, bollards and outdoor furniture, due to the relatively harsh climate.

Funds available

With a relative small rate base, Council struggles to ensure the consistent monitoring and maintenance of all recreational assets in the Shire.

In some cases maintenance costs have been deferred due to the previous lack of resources to identify all assets and program works. Other factors such as insufficient resources being put into maintenance or the need to use these resources for the provision of new assets will all contribute to the degradation of other assets prior to their expected life.

In many cases the deferral of routine scheduled maintenance will mean assets will deteriorate faster, increasing the amount of funds required to serve routine maintenance costs in the longer term will allow the asset to reach its anticipated life.

Reserve and Asset Ownership

Management complexities within the Municipality are common as there are a significant number of recreational assets that are not controlled by Council. These include assets located in reserves that are either owned and operated by others, or are on reserves owned by Council but the asset is managed by a committee or other entity, ie Kerang CFA firetrack.

It is important that there is clear communication and coordination with the various groups regarding ownership arrangements to ensure assets are well maintained and not unnecessarily duplicated.



The positive aspect of a number of public recreational assets not being owned and operated by Council, is that Council does not have to find resources to maintain, upgrade or replace these assets. Further it is highly likely that there will be strong local ownership and stewardship of these recreation reserves.

Recommendations: asset condition

Council should:

1. Seek to urgently remove or replace the assets in poor condition as outlined
2. Investigate external sources of funds to upgrade key play spaces and sports parks, and undertake works that fit into current funding programs; ie netball court compliance
3. Formalise the paths of communication between other recreation asset owners and Council

3.2 Risk management

An asset risk management approach is based on assessing the likelihood and consequence of a recreational asset failing. The aim of a risk assessment approach is to identify areas where the risk of failure and consequence is greatest. The four primary stages of risk management are:

- Identification of risk
- Assessment of the risk
- Treatment of the risk
- Monitoring of risk

An example of the risk management matrix used in a risk assessment is shown:

		Consequence				
		1	2	3	4	5
Likelihood	5	Moderate	Moderate	High	Significant	Significant
	4	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High	Significant
	3	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High
	2	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate
	1	Low	Low	Low	Low	Moderate

Because of the extensive number and nature of assets, it is outside of the scope of this project to assess the risk of each. However, the condition of assets is a key indicator of risk, in conjunction with other three main factors as outlined.

Recreation assets that need to be monitored regularly

Different types of recreation assets will need to be monitored more regularly than others. These assets that need to be monitored more regularly are:

- Facilities used by an activity that is inherently risky: such as competitive contact sports, water based recreation, and skateboarding
- The condition of an asset that is subject to rapid change due to weather or use (ie. softfall)
- The asset has a regional catchment (high use)
- The user may be more vulnerable (ie children or elderly)

Risks related to poor asset condition

As noted earlier there are almost 200 assets recorded as requiring intervention in the short term. These main asset categories include:

- Signage
- Bollards
- Fences
- Jetties
- Seats
- Play equipment
- Paths

Recommendations: risk management

Council should:

1. Investigate the risk issues identified in this report
2. Address those assets that are in the poorest condition as a priority
3. Confirm ownership and management of all assets identified focusing on perceived high risk assets
4. Formalise agreements for non-Council assets on Council controlled land
5. Develop an asset risk hierarchy and schedule inspections accordingly
6. Develop a procedure to inform asset owners of risks identified through regular Council inspections

3.3 Recreation assets and climate change

Gannawarra Shire is situated in the Mallee Region of Victoria. The Mediterranean climate is hot and dry, and evaporation is high. The the topography is relatively flat with a number of river systems influencing the soil types within the region. The soils west of the Loddon River are generally Mallee sands while the eastern river flats are composed mainly of expansive clay.

The climate can be harsh and is likely to impact on the life of recreation assets, particular turf sports fields, and timber structures. The climate variables may also impact on the use and amenity of facilities given exposure to sun and heat.

Gannawarra sits within the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District which is the largest system feeding off the Murray Darling Basin. The Torrumbarry Irrigation System provides critical water infrastructure to the region.

The weather and environment provide extensive opportunities for water sports, walking and fishing. These aspects of the Gannawarra lifestyle are highly valued by residents. The fact that international water sports events are now held on Gannawarra's lakes is a source of local pride.

Proximity to the Murray River and the presence of a number of lakes and significant wetlands some which are RAMSAR listed, provide significant opportunity for water based recreation, tourism and events. It is however this proximity to the natural wetlands and river systems that exposes the region to extensive flooding. This is exacerbated by the relatively flat topography.

Potential effects of climate change

Potential effects of climate change as summarised in the Climate Change in Victoria: 2008 Summary ¹include the following:

- Higher global and regional temperatures, more hot days, fewer cold days
- Decreasing rainfall in winter and spring
- Increasing potential evaporation
- Declining soil moisture
- Increased risk of bushfire
- Increasing storm surge heights
- Increasing intensity of extreme rainfall in summer and autumn in Victoria

These implications for sport and recreation in Gannawarra Shire are outlined in more detail.

1. Climate Change in Victoria: 2008 Summary, Victorian Government, Department of Sustainability and Environment, June 2008

Table 2: Potential climate change impacts ²

Potential climate change effects	Impacts for communities
Frequent storm events More intense storm events Increased rainfall Flooding and inundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage to infrastructure • Damage to ecosystems from storm water and agricultural runoff • Water contamination • Erosion of tracks and trails and water courses
Increased temperatures Increased humidity Increased drought	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased bushfire frequency and intensity • Sun and heat exposure to sports participants • Disease vectors • Food spoilage • Affect on ability of some species vegetation to thrive • Threat to fisheries and recreational fishing

Frequent more intense storm events, increased flooding and inundation, has significant potential to damage public and private infrastructure, trees and riparian ecosystems that are important for sport and recreation.

Erosion may also impact on the maintenance of tracks and trails.

Careful selection of plant species, additional planting of trees for cooling, access to water for drinking, permanent shade for participants, and access to recycled or harvested water for selective sports turf irrigation will be important to lessen the impacts of climate change on parks and sport.

The maintenance and replacement of riparian infrastructure for water based recreation activity and sports facilities close by to rivers may need to be more regular due to flooding and storm events, and the design of infrastructure replaced should be more robust.

Following the sustained drought, the condition of infrastructure at many lakes and along the Murray was relatively poor at the time of assessment. Much of this water based infrastructure is located on land managed by others. As Council is not responsible for this infrastructure it should advocate on behalf of the user groups when this infrastructure should be replaced.

The likely exposure of recreation assets to climate change and the elements in a relatively harsh climate, mean that there is a greater need for rigorous risk management processes, as well as monitoring and replacement programs. Heat and lack of water will effect playing surfaces conditions and hardness, and has the potential to decrease the expected life of other physical assets.

2. Adapted from Planning for climate change, National Sea Change Taskforce, 2008 – www.seachangetaskforce.org.au

Types of recreation assets that may be vulnerable to climate change include:

Irrigated sites – lack of water

- Ovals
- Cricket wickets
- Tennis courts
- Lawn bowls
- Golf courses
- Parks and playgrounds

Lake and riverside infrastructure – subject to variable water levels

- Kangaroo Lake Foreshore
- Gorton Point
- Lake Tutchewop
- Lake Meran
- Cohuna Ski Run River Reserve
- Patchell Reserve
- Murrabit River Reserve

Assets in river corridors not dependant on a riverside setting – vulnerable to flooding

- Benjeroop Tennis Club
- Lake Meran Tennis Club
- Quambatook Recreation Reserve
- Quambatook Lawn Bowls
- Quambatook Tennis Club
- Quambatook Swimming Pool

Greening Gannawarra program

Addressing the implications of climate change will be advantageous for users of recreation reserves. For example, if there was a “greening” program for Gannawarra that could plant a large number of trees in recreation reserves and streetscapes, it will help limit the effects of climate change and the relatively harsh climate of the region, in addition to:

- enhance livability, civic pride and provide economic benefits to the shire
- protect and nurture biodiversity and ecological coherence
- assist in involving and connecting residents with nature and the outdoors, and
- provide improvements sought by residents

Greening Gannawarra will create greater civic pride as well as generate psychological benefits from open space, and enhance the amenity of recreation assets that otherwise may be affected by climate change.

Recommendations: climate change

Council should:

1. Ensure all park furniture and water based recreation assets are designed and constructed to withstand high temperatures
2. Assist clubs and committees where possible to plant suitable turf and introduce a management regime for turf
3. Advocate that infrastructure provided on lake foreshores and in riparian corridors is fit for purpose and situated to accommodate possible changes in water level
4. Provide additional permanent shade structures and shelters in parks to reduce risk of heat exposure and storm events and encourage higher use.
5. Ensure the design of tracks and trails considers drainage and use of materials less susceptible to erosion and removal by wind
6. Prioritise assessment for infrastructure that is most vulnerable to the effects of climate
7. Advocate for the upkeep and design of recreational infrastructure adjacent to lakes and waterways
8. Consider undertaking a greening program for the Shire

4. Demand for recreation assets

4.1 Demographic influences on demand

Total population

The population of Gannawarra Shire Council is estimated at 11,665 persons³. There is expected to be a decrease by approximately 855 people by 2026, or at a rate of -0.4% annually.

The declining population and geographic spread creates an issue for Council being able to adequately provide and maintain assets. Expectations about the quality of assets and asset management practices are typically increasing. Residents also expect that recreation assets are not just provided in one central place; but are well distributed across the Shire's townships.

Whilst the total number of people may indicate a relatively small market for a particular asset class, such as competition sports facilities, it may not be practical for all assets to be hubbed, as people will not be prepared to, or able to travel long distances to sport.

Council should ensure a diversity of opportunities are available to suit people of different ages and abilities, with a mix of facilities of different hierarchies available across most townships.

Age

Gannawarra's demographic profile presents an ageing population. 41% of the population are aged 50 years and older, compared with 31% for Victoria as a whole. In other comparable regional municipalities, Gannawarra has a greater percentage of those aged 60-84 years and a smaller percentage of those aged 18-24 years and 35-40 years.

Given this demographic profile, it is important for Council to provide a wide range of infrastructure to support diversity of recreational activities while maintaining the mainstream sports that have a broad appeal and community support. However, these clubs will have to work hard to maintain participation rates as according to projections there are likely to be 750 less children in the junior age group by 2026.

Opportunities may exist for sports that target older users, and for Council to support appropriate infrastructure for sports that can be played socially by older adults. This includes tennis, lawn bowls, golf, croquet, walking and cycling.

Volunteers and community engagement

The aging of residents in the Shire will have a dramatic impact on the management of sports clubs and committees of management. Fewer young people are available or willing to sit on committees and to undertake maintenance of sports grounds.

Whilst the residents of the Shire have had a strong commitment to volunteerism, the number of volunteers and participants may not be sufficient to sustain the current number of clubs. This is especially true of the smaller clubs using single-purpose facilities and those operating under a committee of management.

Localities

Gannawarra Shire comprises the main townships of Kerang, Cohuna, Koondrook, Leitchville, Murrabit, Quambatook and Lalbert. The estimated populations for each main town are:

Table 3: Population in Gannawarra townships 2006

Township	Population
Kerang	3,671
Cohuna	1,816
Koondrook	759
Leitchville	255
Murrabit	400 est
Quambatook	232
Lalbert	100 est

The number of clubs and recreational facilities maintained by the small populations of those townships is high. These provide a considerable social outlet to immediate communities and the Shire as a whole.

As there are significant distances between townships, it is important that a diverse range of recreation facilities exist in a town where there is sufficient demand. In these situations it is important that the infrastructure is designed to be multi-use and located in a central hub.

Several major regional centres are approximately one hour away travel by road that provide diverse sporting and recreational opportunities. The provision of these facilities should be considered when planning any additional infrastructure within Gannawarra.

Changes in demand for activities and facilities

Since the Recreation Strategy was completed in 2003, there are a number of clubs have ceased to operate, or have merged. Other clubs have very small membership levels and may find it difficult to survive.

Declining club memberships are likely to be the result of:

- the decline and aging of the population
- aging or lack of infrastructure
- the lure of better infrastructure or bigger clubs within an hours drive
- a decline in paid club memberships to a more casual pay as you play
- less routine sport and physical activity

A decline in participants playing organised sports as paid members may mean the facilities are still in demand; however, there may not be a club proper to provide the service or run the facility. This may be a challenge for Council should committees of management and clubs fold, or seek to hand back facilities to Council as has been the case in other municipalities.

Whilst there may be a decline in the number of people using recreational there is unlikely to be a corresponding decline in demand for the number and distribution of current facilities, unless their condition declines to a point where the facility is unusable.

Key issues raised in the recreation strategy include the need for improvement to recreation facilities, especially for the young and people with a disability. These improvements are still required, particularly playgrounds even with an aging population. Given the current quality of facilities and their imminent replacement, the opportunity to rationalise assets into larger parks in strategic locations should be considered.

One option for Council is to hub more facilities in the same location such as play grounds and sports facilities. This will provide a critical mass that is more cost effective to maintain assets at a higher quality and be more attractive to users. A disadvantage of this approach would mean they are less accessible to those residents who can't drive or walk longer distances.

A number of previous studies have indicated the need for more tracks and trails throughout both the municipality as a whole and within individual towns. These tracks may off-set some of the disadvantages generated by rationalisation of some other facilities.

Recommendations: demand for recreation assets

Council should:

1. Review responsibilities and current levels of support for maintenance tasks on reserves where Council already undertakes this service
2. Review the option for Council to hub more facilities in the same location such as play grounds and sports facilities to provide critical mass
3. Consider prioritising types of assets for management if additional funds cannot be provided, including
 - a. focusing on assets that can generate participation
 - b. consolidating and enhancing the quality of assets in select locations
 - c. embellishing the smaller parks where structures may not be viable by planting and design rather than through provision of equipment.
4. Continue to extend the recreational trail network to include off road trail circuits around the main townships, connecting existing sporting reserves and community facilities and at key riverside and lakeside reserves
5. Continue to actively promote recreational facilities and sporting clubs through its Community Directory both online and through more traditional methods

5. Maintaining core service levels

Factors that determine levels of service for recreational facilities are primarily:

- Whether alternative options or facilities exist
- Council's Strategic and Corporate Goals
- The usage of the facility and predicted growth or decline
- Community safety
- Economic development potential
- Available funding

5.1 Residents perceptions of performance

The Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey for Gannawarra Shire tracks residents perceptions of Council services and overall performance.

The survey findings for 2011 indicate that the majority of residents' rated Recreation Facilities and The Appearance of Public Areas (including parks) good or highly adequate, however some areas needing improvement were identified. These included:

- Better maintenance of parks and gardens
- Better maintenance of sporting facilities
- More support for recreation sporting facilities
- More or better sporting complexes and or facilities in smaller towns
- More and better sporting complexes (excluding pools)
- More and better/safer playgrounds or equipment with sun shade
- More facilities for young people/ teenagers

Recreation Facilities and Appearance of Public Areas increased in the satisfaction rating from 2010 following a decline in 2009 which could be attributed to the drought conditions.

The Community Satisfaction Surveys are not able to track specific recreation services, infrastructure that the community perceives as important, or how well each is performed by Council. The surveys do however, provide a strategic overview.

5.2 Level of service across areas and types of facilities

Service levels relate to quality, quantity, reliability, responsiveness, environmental acceptability and cost.

In order to provide a clear rationale for service levels Council needs to determine what level of service should be provided at each reserve and provide a consistent approach. To ensure there is no over serving it is recommended that each recreation site be classified according to:

- a. Hierarchy of settlement (township) where the asset is located
- b. The sphere of influence or catchment of the asset or reserve
- c. The function of the reserve
- d. The landscape of the reserve

Settlement

The reserves with recreational assets were categorised according to their residential settlement type (township size) and the population they serve.

Towns in the Shire can be classified into four tiers:

Table 4: Hierarchy of towns with examples

Hierarchy of towns	Examples
Tier one town >1500 people	Kerang, Cohuna
Tier two town 500 - 1500	Koondrook
Tier three town 200 - 500	Murrabit, Leitchville, Quambatook
Locality <200	All other localities

For larger towns multiple recreation assets would be required. Playgrounds for example need to be distributed across the town so they are within walking distance of most residents, rather than located at one central hub. The quality of assets provided within a central hub should be of a higher standard (scale and complexity) than smaller facilities. However, there are minimum standards required for some classes of asset, such as sports fields; these would need to be considered on a case by case basis for community need and benefit.

For rural areas and small towns recreation assets would typically be provided in one central hub, to ensure their provision and management is cost effective. It is important to create a critical mass that enhances the sphere of influence of the facility. It should also be noted as stated above, that some classes of asset require a minimum standard that is above what a small community or region can support, this is particularly true for assets such as pools.

In some cases there is only one regional standard facility serving a locality that is not owned or managed by Council such as the Quambatook Recreation Reserve. Should community funds to maintain assets in reserves not owned and operated by Council be insufficient, Council could review opportunities to assist these reserves and reduce other smaller Council owned and operated reserves within that locality.

The distance people are required to travel to specific reserves, especially a social / family recreation park or sports reserve, is important in relation to the settlement type and population served.

Using this distribution technique it is possible to divide the municipality into five districts that distribute reserves according to settlement type and population.

Gannawarra Recreation Facilities

Heirachy

-  Tier 1
-  Tier 2
-  Tier 3
-  Tier 4

-  Regional Playground
-  District Playground
-  Local Playground

-  Regional Sport
-  District-sport
-  Local Sport

Facilities

-  Regional Park
-  District Park
-  Local Park

-  Regional other
-  District Other
-  Local Other



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	Cohuna	Kerang	Koondrook	Lake Meran	Lalbert	Leitchville	Macorna	Murrabit	Mystic Park	Quambatook	Wandella
Cohuna		37 km 28 mins	23 km 17 mins	54 km 41 mins	88 km 66 mins	17 km 13 mins	35 km 26 mins	45 km 34 mins	63 km 47 mins	69 km 52 mins	41 km 31 mins
Kerang	37 km 28 mins		24 km 18 mins	22 km 17 mins	56 km 42 mins	45 km 34 mins	29 km 22 mins	26 km 20 mins	31 km 23 mins	40 km 30 mins	8 km 6 mins
Koondrook	23 km 17 mins	24 km 18 mins		47 km 35 mins	81 km 61 mins	40 km 30 mins	47 km 35 mins	23 km 17 mins	56 km 42 mins	75 km 56 mins	33 km 25 mins
Lake Meran	54 km 41 mins	22 km 17 mins	47 km 35 mins		67 km 50 mins	66 km 50 mins	29 km 22 mins	49 km 37 mins	50 km 38 mins	37 km 28 mins	16 km 12 mins
Lalbert	88 km 66 mins	56 km 42 mins	81 km 61 mins	67 km 50 mins		100 km 75 mins	84 km 63 mins	82 km 62 mins	45 km 34 mins	34 km 26 mins	48 km 36 mins
Leitchville	17 km 13 mins	45 km 34 mins	40 km 30 mins	66 km 50 mins	100 km 75 mins		32 km 24 mins	62 km 47 mins	75 km 56 mins	84 km 63 mins	52 km 39 mins
Macorna	35 km 26 mins	29 km 22 mins	47 km 35 mins	29 km 22 mins	84 km 63 mins	32 km 24 mins		55 km 41 mins	59 km 44 mins	68 km 51 mins	36 km 27 mins
Murrabit	45 km 34 mins	26 km 20 mins	23 km 17 mins	49 km 37 mins	82 km 62 mins	62 km 47 mins	55 km 41 mins		34 km 26 mins	67 km 50 mins	34 km 26 mins
Mystic Park	63 km 47 mins	31 km 23 mins	56 km 42 mins	50 km 38 mins	45 km 34 mins	75 km 56 mins	59 km 44 mins	34 km 26 mins		52 km 39 mins	35 km 26 mins
Quambatook	69 km 52 mins	40 km 30 mins	75 km 56 mins	37 km 28 mins	34 km 26 mins	84 km 63 mins	68 km 51 mins	67 km 50 mins	52 km 39 mins		32 km 24 mins
Wandella	41 km 31 mins	8 km 6 mins	33 km 25 mins	16 km 12 mins	48 km 36 mins	52 km 39 mins	36 km 27 mins	34 km 26 mins	35 km 26 mins	32 km 24 mins	
Swan Hill	91 km 68 mins	59 km 44 mins	83 km 62 mins	77 km 58 mins	43 km 32 mins	103 km 77 mins	87 km 65 mins	62 km 47 mins	37 km 28 mins	59 km 44 mins	63 km 47 mins
Echuca	65 km 49 mins	96 km 72 mins	88 km 66 mins	118 km 89 mins	151 km 113 mins	51 km 38 mins	88 km 66 mins	110 km 83 mins	126 km 95 mins	136 km 102 mins	103 km 77 mins
Bendigo	133 km 100 mins	129 km 97 mins	155 km 116 mins	132 km 99 mins	187 km 140 mins	121 km 91 mins	116 km 87 mins	155 km 116 mins	159 km 119 mins	181 km 136 mins	136 km 102 mins

Catchment

Reserves are classified according to whether their catchment is local, district or regional. Local facilities have a catchment based within a town or in close proximity, while district facilities will attract people from a larger area surrounding the towns. Regional facilities are those that attract people from across the whole Shire and beyond.

Of the 51 reserves within Gannawarra 33 are classified as local, with the other 16 are split equally between district and regional status reserves.

Table 5: Catchment of Recreation Reserves

Catchment	Number
Local	33
District	8
Regional	8

Assets on reserves with a regional catchment should be provided to a higher level of service than assets with a smaller catchment in keeping with the requirements of the activity or nature of the asset.

There are three identified regional sporting reserves that are Council owned and operated Cohuna, Leitchville Recreation Reserves, and Atkinson Park. Atkinson Park is also considered to be a regional social/family park due to its location and facilities available to the public.

A number of lakes are also considered to be of regional status as they offer quality water based recreation opportunities or have a significant conservation value, however they may not have significant infrastructure requirements.

To meet the recreational needs of the municipality with limited resources for assets Council should utilise and implement the regional, district and town level facilities model.

Recreation Functions

Recreation assets include a wide range of specialised furniture , equipment, sporting and other facilities generally located on recreation reserves. These reserves are classified according to function and landscape setting. This will assist Council in understanding the distribution of facilities by type, the diversity of opportunities available to local people, and therefore where they may be over or under servicing a community.

As mentioned previously it is important that large town recreation reserves are evenly distributed so they are conveniently accessed. Smaller rural facilities may be located at a single point in a central location.

As the population ages single purpose built reserves may not be viable to service. It may be more economical and equitable to provide larger regional reserves in a more central location to a higher standard. These would include a number of facilities that serve multiple age groups rather than smaller single purpose areas such as playgrounds. There are some small local parks for example in Kerang, where relocation of the play equipment and redevelopment of the space for relaxation would provide the community with increased benefit. This would reduce the overall number of assets but allow an increase in the level of service provided to assets in regional reserves, such as Atkinson Park.

Reserves are classified by function to enable core service levels for asset management to be clearly identified for each reserve class. The table below describes the type of recreation facility that should typically be provided given the defined catchment area.

Table 6: Catchment level at which different types of recreation facility should be provided

Function Of Outdoor Recreation Facilities	Local	Township/ district	Regional
Play	X		
Visual amenity	X		
Relaxation, contemplation, escape	X	X	
Social family recreation	X	X	X
Sport		X	X
Off-road trail	X	X	X
Water based recreation		X	X
Building forecourt /Civic Gathering	X	X	
Memorial park		X	
Wayside stop		X	

Where funding does not allow the full allocation of recommended recreation facilities as described to meet the needs of the population, asset provision and management should focus on ensuring there are reserves providing the following functions:

- social / family recreation (these would include play facilities)
- off road trails
- sport
- water based recreation facilities

Landscape setting types

It is important to offer a diverse range of landscape setting across recreation reserves, not only across the municipality but within each reserve catchment. This would include a combination of managed turf and ornamental gardens to more naturally vegetated areas such as bushland, and open grasses.

Replacing some turf within local parks in township areas with mulched and treed parkland would dramatically reduce maintenance costs. Council should identify and implement opportunities to enhance the diversity of reserves in this manner which would redirect valuable resources to higher status regional reserves.

5.3 Strategies to maintain service levels with limited resources

Strategies to maintain service levels with limited resources can include the following:

- Analysing and rationalising the location of recreation assets by district, settlement type, and population
- Analysing the recreation function of the reserve where the assets are provided
- Analysing the efficiency of how assets and reserves are provided
- Analysing the contribution of the asset to increasing participation and membership rates

To enhance the viability of recreation asset provision and maintenance in the context of a declining population, recreation facilities need to be:

- Located in hubs
- Co-located with other community facilities
- Co-located with other sports facilities so support facilities can be shared
- Planned to provide a hierarchy of facilities consistent with the level of competition played
- Designed to accommodate a range of different users and activities that may change over time
- Designed and sited in such a way as to reduce the cost of provision over the asset's life without reducing functionality or life but enhance usability

Location of recreation assets by district, settlement type, and population

Council should seek to support assets that have a wide reach without extensively overlapping the catchment of a similar reserve.

Council should focus on providing assets within district level facilities enabling efficiencies to be generated. These would have a broader sphere of influence, service a wider range and number of users and would have a critical mass for multiple activities.

This strategic focus would provide a cost saving simply by not providing or maintaining multiple support facilities such as toilets or shelters on the majority of local level reserves.

Efficiency of how assets are provided

Council should using the regional model consider not providing or removing toilets, BBQ's and play equipment on small single purpose reserves, or those reserves with only a local catchment. These facilities should only be provided where the reserve caters for multiple age groups and in conjunction with other services.

Council should continue to consolidate the number of building footprints on reserves ie consolidating public toilets into pavilion envelopes as detailed in the Buildings Asset Management Plan and removing separate buildings such as storage sheds etc. This will require capital investment before savings can be made, however could be accommodated in the building renewal program.

Recommendations: core service levels

Council should:

1. Consider the core service levels as provided in the following table attached tables
2. Seek to support assets that have a wider reach – without overlapping the catchment of a similar reserve in the same district
3. Focus on providing assets of district level significance which service a wider range and number of users that have a critical mass for multiple activities
4. Consider not providing or removing BBQs, toilets and play equipment on small single purpose reserves or those reserves with a local catchment
5. Consider consolidating the number of building footprints on reserves consistent with the Building Asset Management Plan
6. Identify sites where turf can be replaced with trees and mulch
7. Focus on reserves that provide the following functions which are essential to community needs:
a) social / family recreation
b) off road trails
c) sport, and
d) water based recreation facilities

Table 14: Core service levels: for assets on recreation sites with a sport, social / family recreation and water based recreation function

FUNCTION	SPORT		
	LOCAL	TOWNSHIP / DISTRICT	REGIONAL
CATCHMENT			
Provision Size, Location / Equality of Distribution	<p>Only provide in conjunction with social / family recreation reserve such as kick about / social or junior sports, or for training / over flow / irregular activities</p>	<p>One major sports reserve in addition to support building / pavilion and car park and ancillary space offering pleasant landscape settings for non sporting, recreation opportunities, dog exercise etc</p> <p>Multiple playing fields for each sport (where demand dictates) at the one location, generally 8-10ha in size, in each major town: Tier 1 and 2, (eg Kerang, Cohuna, Leitchville, Koondrook) and where no other such towns exist in the district: the highest level town with sports facilities (Mystic Park Recreation Reserve)</p> <p>Other district level outdoor sports facilities may not be needed in every town because of a smaller participation base: eg croquet, equestrian, model aeroplanes, hockey etc. Where possible co-located with school site</p> <p>Served by an small indoor <u>multicode</u> sports court, in a hall / community centre or school preferably</p>	<p>Top level of sports played in the municipality and may include 25 - 50m swimming pool, skate park, etc.</p> <p>Includes facilities with spectator facilities or synthetic surfaces such as athletics track or hockey facility</p> <p>One showground within the Shire</p> <p>One tractor pull site within the Shire</p> <p>Infrastructure may be provided in part by another stakeholder</p>
ASSET Quality & design and assessment	<p>Only basic turf quality unless required by shared club use. Playing fields may be junior in size</p> <p>Low level irrigation from recycled or harvested water (not outfields)</p> <p>May not require fencing and off street car park, pavilions, and only basic support facilities such as toilets</p> <p>Ancillary space offering pleasant landscape setting, seating and shade</p> <p>May or may not include lighting depending on the code and if used for training</p> <p>Assets would be assessed each year for condition and budget purposes</p>	<p>Playing fields preferably at the same grade and where possible unfenced individual fields for flexibility with All playing fields meet code requirements: dimensions, surface quality, distances between playing field and structures</p> <p>Seating and shade, play facilities provided where demand</p> <p>Playing fields will have irrigation and drainage to provide Quality of turf and support facilities determined by code and level of competition played</p> <p>Onsite car park (may be sealed), training lights, shared pavilion, kiosk, publicly accessible toilets, shade, shelter at least minimal spectator facilities, seating, signage and rubbish collection system</p> <p>Recreation assets would be assessed at the end of each season; preferable by committee of management or users. Note this assessment may determine funds allocated to the ground or works the users / committee of management may be required to undertake</p> <p>Swimming pool, and skate park and water based recreational assets should be assessed at least quarterly</p>	<p>Higher quality support facilities, playing surfaces able to be enclosed to take a gate fee, competition lights, pavilion including club and social rooms where applicable</p> <p>Onsite sealed car park. Some spectator facilities possibly undercover, accessible public toilets, shade, seating, signage, and rubbish collection system</p> <p>May include a synthetic or specialised playing field such as hockey / athletics, water sports, turf wickets etc</p>

FUNCTION	OFF-ROAD TRAIL		
CATCHMENT	LOCAL	DISTRICT / TOWNSHIP	REGIONAL
<p>Size, Location / Equity Distribution</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local circuits for fitness walking and jogging / dog walking where open space corridors exist ▪ Connect with destinations such as community facilities, in pleasant landscapes, streets and parks ▪ Perimeter paths around large parks - with local links to district and regional trails ▪ Within 400m of every dwelling ▪ Where trail is the primary function, the trail corridor width shall be 10m wide 	<p>Trails at a district level are likely to include two types of trails that serve district sports and recreation uses: unsealed tracks and trails in natural areas, and along waterways, and sealed off-road trails within townships (suitable for cycling, skating and wheelchair users for example)</p> <p>Each tier one, two and three township should have one key district / township level trail</p>	<p>Good distribution of different types of trail: sealed for wheeling / skating, unsealing for park perimeters / jogging tracks for bushwalking and mountain biking</p> <p>A trail at key lake foreshores and in tier one and tier two towns</p>
<p>ASSET Quality & design and assessment</p>	<p>Visually pleasant, linear or contiguous trails in open space, typically no fencing, signage, or break out facilities</p> <p>Basic level may be foot tracks / mountain bike trails in rural areas</p> <p>Surface of formed paths compacted material not to include screenings or loose material unsuitable for older pedestrians</p> <p>Surface quality to be monitored for erosion and storm damage annually or after major storm events</p> <p>Over head clearance to be monitored annually for overhanging branches</p>	<p>Trails designed to link more than one community and / or provide a link to a regional trail. They are likely to include, unsealed shared trails for use by horse riders, cyclists and pedestrians, and sealed trails designed for cycling skating and assessable to people using wheelchairs and mobility aids</p> <p>Circuits around the perimeter of major sports facilities where adequate space; in a consolidated gravel pavement</p> <p>Keep away from sensitive riparian areas / river banks.</p> <p>Provide a buffer and a single approach to the watercourse in sensitive areas - so there is only single impact point and to minimise flood damage</p> <p>Access to seating and drinking water at sporting or SFR nodes. Signage in areas where risk management dictates; ie adjacent to water</p> <p>Formed paths including consolidated gravel pavement or granitic sand (not screenings or toppings) or asphalt, or concrete depending on key activities to be accommodated Minimum width 2.5 metres</p> <p>Monitor trail surface and condition of seating, signage, and overhanging branches six monthly</p>	<p>Region trail routes and connections to other municipalities at select regional parks</p> <p>May include trails and facilities, that include car parking, toilets, links to local trails at other sport, conservation or SFR sites</p> <p>Path and entry points road intersection are accessible by wheelchair</p> <p>Networks have directional, interpretative and information signs and distance markers in select locations</p> <p>Way side stops at key intervals for rest and break out activities</p> <p>Sealed trails 2.5 metres with directional signage at nodes.</p> <p>Monitor trail surfaces, and condition of seating, signage, and overhanging branches six monthly</p> <p>Service toilets weekly</p>

FUNCTION	SOCIAL / FAMILY RECREATION		
CATCHMENT	LOCAL	TOWNSHIP	REGIONAL
<p>DESCRIPTION</p> <p>Size, Location / Equitable Distribution</p>	<p>One social/ family recreation reserve to serve each rural hamlet and within 800 metres of every household in townships</p> <p>Centrally located in community activity node e.g. adjacent to sports, shop or community meeting facilities</p>	<p>One in each town, plus local level facilities within 400m catchments</p> <p>Typically in large garden, lake or riverside settings and 2ha in size. May include play, social sports, picnic facilities and facilities such as skate facilities</p>	<p>Not on encumbered land</p> <p>Served by a shared path or off-road trail</p> <p>Provide in each activity centre</p> <p>May be in form of plaza, regional accessible play space or ornamental garden</p>
<p>ASSET Quality & design and assessment</p>	<p>Includes areas for co-operative play and games, some props and range of surfaces, kick about space, loose materials / contact with nature, equipment for exercise, areas with places to hide and retreats from activity, screened from boisterous play</p> <p>Shade to include mature trees and may include some structures, seating, paths</p> <p>Caters to a range of age groups. At least families, children and older adults</p> <p>No BBQ or toilets at this level</p> <p>Irrigation to basic level</p>	<p>Meeting place; shade and shelter, seating and drinking water, access to nature / loose materials, all accessible to people with a disability</p> <p>Some areas to have picnic / BBQ, toilets, additional facilities</p> <p>To include some hard court ball courts e.g. free access tennis and basketball courts etc where in conjunction with a sporting facility</p> <p>May include skate facilities, or mountain bike or BMX facilities</p> <p>To include some space with irrigated green lawns, formed paths (not necessarily sealed), lights and rubbish collection system. Provision of toilets (may be in conjunction with sporting fields)</p> <p>May include areas of synthetic or natural surface soft fall etc to be inspected fortnightly and serviced monthly</p>	<p>As per district provision</p> <p>Significant shade and shelter, seating, BBQ, public toilets</p> <p>Support facilities such as picnic toilet fully accessible to people with disability, formed paths</p> <p>Possibly access to refreshments and other commercial services</p> <p>To be inspected fortnightly and serviced monthly</p>

FUNCTION	WATER BASED RECREATION		
CATCHMENT	LOCAL	DISTRICT	REGIONAL
<p>DESCRIPTION</p> <p>Size, Location / Equitable Distribution</p>	<p>Provision for secondary contact activities i.e. shore based fishing and non motorised boating, river based recreation</p> <p>Access to water only, no support facilities</p> <p>Provision of seating only</p>	<p>At least one lake, pool, river, or coastal node per locality where possible</p>	<p>One or two per Council associated with river or coastal ownership</p>
<p>ASSET Quality & design and assessment</p>	<p>The edge of any open water deeper than 350mm should not be obscured</p> <p>No formal access to water shall be invited unless there is appropriate safety benching</p>	<p>Boat ramp and / or accessible jetty / fishing platform at smaller lake if appropriate</p> <p>All boardwalks, piers, bridges and / or structurally treated edges installed to meet BCA and designed as accessible paths of travel</p> <p>Range of edge treatments to provide for specific uses and safety</p> <p>Provide for waterway trail (if not provided at other district facility location within the district): minimum three metres from water edge at average depth if unfenced</p> <p>Provide permanent fencing adjacent to deep water (of 350mm, where distance to paths are less than 3m and where high velocities may be encountered or batters are steeper than 1:5)</p>	<p>Provision of accessible public toilets, BBQ, picnic facilities and shelter - at least 5m from waters edge, if water body not fenced</p> <p>Seating, shelter and some formed paths. Boat launching area or jetty</p> <p>Fish cleaning facilities if fish are present</p> <p>Monthly inspection of assets</p> <p>All boardwalks, piers, bridges and / or structurally treated edges installed to meet BCA and designed as accessible paths of travel</p>

6. Costs and funding sources

The availability of funds and equitable distribution of resources to manage recreation assets are key issues for Gannawarra Shire.

The 2002 Recreation Strategy identified possible inequalities in funding, charges and roles associated with asset management in the Shire, brought about by the amalgamation of three municipalities in 1995.

Council provides approximately \$60,000 to community groups and committees of management for recreational and sporting facilities. Riverside Park and other smaller reserves receive an annual grant for maintenance. The Cohuna and Leitchville Recreation Reserves are maintained by Council and different fees levied.

Reserve	2010/11 Annual Contribution
Riverside Park	\$22,000
Alexandra Park	\$2,200
Leitchville Rec Reserve	\$5,970
Koondrook Rec Reseve	\$4,950
Quambatook Rec Reserve	\$4,950
Lalbert Rec Reserve	\$4,950
Murrabit Rec Reserve	\$4,400
Macorna Rec Reserve	\$4,400
Mystic Park Rec Reserve	\$4,400
Wandella Rec Reserve	\$4,400

Further, Council spends approximately \$70,000 annually on maintaining recreational assets in general, which equates to \$6 per head of population.

Council's capital works budget for 2010-11 shows approximately \$232,000 was allocated for recreation and environmental projects including numerous walking tracks, public toilets etc.

The replacement value of assets within the 51 Council owned and operated recreation reserves associated with this plan is approximately \$5.4 million. Not all of these assets are the responsibility of Council ie. the CFA fire track in Atkinson Park.

How much should it spend on recreation asset management?

Industry standards suggest that 2-4% per year of an assets value is required for asset renewal. This relates directly to the expected life of most of the assets being between 25 and 50 years. Current expenditure of \$232,000 equates to 4.3% of asset value, in line with industry standards.

The following graph illustrates the estimated renewal requirement for the next 20 years. It is based on life expectancies and the varying condition of current assets but does not include maintenance. While the graph shows varying values each year, actual asset replacement spend should be averaged.



Further the above graph only allows for current assets. The replacement cost of any additional assets would increase the required annual renewal expenditure. The same holds true in reverse for assets that are decommissioned when they are no longer required. As the addition and removal of asset stock has a dramatic impact on the required renewal expenditure these assets must be identified, this could be done in conjunction with the assessment of ownership.

Council's 10 year Capital Program identifies a number of projects that will ensure the majority of assets that require replacement in the near future can be replaced. The majority of these projects include a significant proportion of external funding. It is imperative that Council continue to advocate that additional funding sources are provided for the renewal of recreation assets.

Sources of funds

It is imperative that Council continue to seek addition funds for the replacement of assets which will reduce the maintenance requirements and costs, as well as enhance use of assets.

Of the \$232,000 of recreation capital expenditure in 2010/11, Council was fortunate to receive \$190,000 of this through external funding sources for a large number of projects. However in 2009/10 only \$45,000 of a \$173,000 capital recreation works program was received in grants. Without the additional funds received as grants, Council would not be able to spend the amount required on renewal of recreation assets without increasing rate revenue.

Many recreation facilities operated by others are also dependant on grant income or fundraising to replace their assets. It can be difficult for clubs to find resources to sustain this level of fundraising and Council should continue to assist clubs to source these grants.

Community planning groups and Council's community funding has assisted many clubs and recreation organisations to source external grants and provide much needed seed funding.

Recommendations: costs and funding sources

- 1.** Continue to actively seek additional funds to replace assets that will reduce the needs for regular maintenance, minimise ongoing costs, replace functionally obsolete facilities, reduce their vulnerability to damage and enhance participation.
- 2.** Undertake further strategic planning and budgeting to determine funds required for capital works and replacement of recreation assets
- 3.** Review the allocation of funds and who contributes to the management of recreational and sporting assets on reserves including the support provided to committees of reserves, and establish a consistent rationale for each
- 4.** Replace or rationalise assets in poor condition worth up to \$70,000 immediately
- 5.** Upgrade assets on some reserves to a higher quality so as to be able to withdraw others less viable (an option commonly undertaken with playgrounds)

7. Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation	Link to Council Plan
1. Seek to urgently remove or replace the assets in poor condition	5.2.3
2. Investigate external sources of funds to upgrade key play spaces and sports parks, and undertake works that fit into current funding programs	1.2.23
3. Confirm ownership and management of all assets identified and formalise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Paths of communication between other recreation asset managers and Council b) Agreements for non-Council assets on Council controlled land Develop a procedure to inform asset owners of risks identified through regular Council inspections c) Responsibilities and current levels of service for maintenance tasks on reserves where Council already undertakes this service 	5.2.1
4. Develop an asset risk hierarchy and schedule inspections accordingly	5.2.6
5. Ensure all park furniture and water based recreation assets are designed and constructed to withstand high temperatures	4.2.5
6. Advocate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) For the upkeep and design of recreational infrastructure adjacent to lakes and waterways b) That infrastructure provided on lake foreshores and in riparian corridors is fit for purpose and situated to accommodate possible changes in water level 	1.2.6
7. Assist clubs and committees in a varying climate where possible by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Planting suitable turf and introduce a management regime for turf b) Providing additional permanent shade structures and shelters in parks to reduce risk of heat exposure and storm events and encourage higher use. c) Ensuring the design of tracks and trails consider drainage and use of materials less susceptible to erosion and removal by wind d) Prioritising assessment for infrastructure that is most vulnerable to the effects of climate e) Undertaking a greening program for the Shire 	5.2.6

<p>8. Prioritising Assets</p> <p>a) Review the option for Council to hub more facilities in the same location such as play grounds and sports facilities to provide critical mass</p> <p>b) Consider rationalising types of assets for management if additional funds cannot be provided, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. focusing on assets that can generate participation ii. consolidating and enhancing the quality of assets in select locations iii. embellishing the smaller parks where structures may not be viable by planting and design rather than through provision of equipment. <p>c) Seek to support assets that have a wider reach – without overlapping the catchment of a similar reserve in the same district.</p> <p>d) Focus on providing assets of district level significance which service a wider range and number of users that have a critical mass for multiple activities.</p> <p>e) Consider not providing or removing BBQs, toilets and play equipment on small single purpose reserves or those reserves with a local catchment</p> <p>f) Consider consolidating the number of building footprints on reserves consistent with the Building Asset Management Plan</p> <p>g) Focus on reserves that provide the following functions which are essential to community needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. social / family recreation ii. off road trails iii. sport, and iv. water based recreation facilities 	<p>4.2.7</p> <p>5.2.3</p> <p>5.2.7</p>
<p>9. Identify sites where turf can be replaced with trees and mulch</p>	<p>2.2.2</p>
<p>10. Continue to extend the recreational trail network to include off road trail circuits around the main townships, connecting existing sporting reserves and community facilities and at key riverside and lakeside reserves</p>	<p>2.2.14</p> <p>5.2.7</p>
<p>11. Continue to actively promote recreational facilities and sporting clubs through its Community Directory both online and through more traditional methods</p>	<p>3.2.11</p>

Recreation Reserves Listing

(This listing is subject to confirmation)

ID	Reserve Name	Township	Reserve Category
RES73	Channel Frontage	Cohuna	Owned and operated by other body
RES15	Cohuna Bowling Club	Cohuna	Owned and operated by other body
RES42	Cohuna Pony Club Reserve	Cohuna	Owned and operated by other body
RES68	Cohuna Railway Reserve	Cohuna	Owned and operated by other body
RES44	Cohuna Scouts and footbridge	Cohuna	Owned and operated by other body
RES111	Cohuna Tennis Club	Cohuna	Owned and operated by other body
RES47	Cohuna Weir and Channel Frontage	Cohuna	Owned and operated by other body
RES82	GMW Land	Cohuna	Owned and operated by other body
RES46	Golf links	Cohuna	Owned and operated by other body
RES110	Kangaroo Lake Caravan Park	Kangaroo lake	Owned and operated by other body
RES94	Alexander Park	Kerang	Owned and operated by other body
RES103	Ibis Caravan Park	Kerang	Owned and operated by other body
RES100	Kerang Caravan Park	Kerang	Owned and operated by other body
RES93	Kerang Golf Club	Kerang	Owned and operated by other body
RES99	Kerang Lawn Bowls	Kerang	Owned and operated by other body
RES03	Kerang Shooters Club	Kerang	Owned and operated by other body
RES98	Kerang Tennis Club	Kerang	Owned and operated by other body
RES65	Riverside Park	Kerang	Owned and operated by other body
RES95	St Patricks Tennis Club	Kerang	Owned and operated by other body
RES29	Koondrook Lawn Bowls	Koondrook	Owned and operated by other body
RES69	Koondrook Main St Median	Koondrook	Owned and operated by other body
RES09	Koondrook recreation Reserve	Koondrook	Owned and operated by other body
RES52	Koondrook River Frontage - North (James Park)	Koondrook	Owned and operated by other body
RES18	Koondrook Tennis Club	Koondrook	Owned and operated by other body
RES108	Foreshore Caravan Park	Lake Charm	Owned and operated by other body
RES109	Pelican Waters Caravan Park	Lake Charm	Owned and operated by other body
RES60	Lalbert Golf Course	Lalbert	Owned and operated by other body
RES59	Lalbert Recreation Reserve	Lalbert	Owned and operated by other body
RES54	Leitchville Lawn Bowls Club	Leitchville	Owned and operated by other body

RES57	Leitchville Recreation Reserve	Leitchville	Owned and operated by other body
RES58	Letchville Tennis Club	Leitchville	Owned and operated by other body
RES92	Trigg park	Leitchville	Owned and operated by other body
RES89	Macorna Recreation Reserve	Macorna	Owned and operated by other body
RES78	Murrabit Anzac Memorial park	Murrabit	Owned and operated by other body
RES50	Murrabit Golf Course	Murrabit	Owned and operated by other body
RES79	Murrabit Lions Park	Murrabit	Owned and operated by other body
RES80	Murrabit Recreation Reserve	Murrabit	Owned and operated by other body
RES71	Avoca River Reserve	Quambatook	Owned and operated by other body
RES66	Quambatook Lawn Bowls	Quambatook	Owned and operated by other body
RES75	Quambatook Recreation Reserve	Quambatook	Owned and operated by other body
RES83	Quambatook Tennis Club	Quambatook	Owned and operated by other body
RES85	Quambatook Tractor Pull	Quambatook	Owned and operated by other body
RES87	Quambatook Weir	Quambatook	Owned and operated by other body
RES61	Reedy lake Reserve	Reedy lake	Owned and operated by other body
RES106	Sandhill Lake Tennis Club	Sandhill Lake	Owned and operated by other body
RES88	Wandella Recreation Reserve	Wandella	Owned and operated by other body
RES97	Wandella Rifle Club	Wandella	Owned and operated by other body
RES74	Cohuna Caravan Park	Cohuna	Owned and operated by Shire - In other strategy
RES48	Cohuna Swimming Pool	Cohuna	Owned and operated by Shire - In other strategy
RES45	Gannawarra Public Hall Reserve	Gannawarra	Owned and operated by Shire - In other strategy
RES35	Kerang Childrens Precinct	Kerang	Owned and operated by Shire - In other strategy
RES56	Kerang Swimming Pool Reserve	Kerang	Owned and operated by Shire - In other strategy
RES38	Koondrook Caravan Park	Koondrook	Owned and operated by Shire - In other strategy
RES07	Koondrook Swimming Pool	Koondrook	Owned and operated by Shire - In other strategy
RES16	Leitchville Maternal and Child Health	Leitchville	Owned and operated by Shire - In other strategy
RES90	Leitchville Swimming Pool	Leitchville	Owned and operated by Shire - In other strategy
RES76	Quambatook Caravan Park	Quambatook	Owned and operated by Shire - In other strategy
RES84	Quambatook Swimming Pool	Quambatook	Owned and operated by Shire - In other strategy
RES77	Murrabit Market Reserve	Murrabit	Shire Owned - Managed by other body
RES107	Beauchamp Tennis Club	Beauchamp	Shire Owned and Operated
RES32	Apex Park	Cohuna	Shire Owned and Operated

RES67	Belmont/Livinstone Road Reserve	Cohuna	Shire Owned and Operated
RES102	Cohuna Aerodrome	Cohuna	Shire Owned and Operated
RES31	Cohuna Recreation Reserve	Cohuna	Shire Owned and Operated
RES53	Cohuna Ski Run River Reserve	Cohuna	Shire Owned and Operated
RES14	Garden Park	Cohuna	Shire Owned and Operated
RES12	King Edward St Nth Park	Cohuna	Shire Owned and Operated
RES10	Kings Park	Cohuna	Shire Owned and Operated
RES13	Lions Park	Cohuna	Shire Owned and Operated
RES17	Martin Place Reserve	Cohuna	Shire Owned and Operated
RES19	Sampson and Cullen Median	Cohuna	Shire Owned and Operated
RES37	Youngs Park	Cohuna	Shire Owned and Operated
RES28	Kangaroo Lake - Gorton Point	Kangaroo Lake	Shire Owned and Operated
RES27	Kangaroo Lake Fore shore	Kangaroo Lake	Shire Owned and Operated
RES64	Atkinson Park	Kerang	Shire Owned and Operated
RES26	Back Swamp Reserve	Kerang	Shire Owned and Operated
RES02	Hastie Court Park	Kerang	Shire Owned and Operated
RES101	Kerang Aerodrome	Kerang	Shire Owned and Operated
RES96	Kerang Table Tennis Centre	Kerang	Shire Owned and Operated
RES06	Levi Bank - Southern kerang	Kerang	Shire Owned and Operated
RES04	Lyll Avenue	Kerang	Shire Owned and Operated
RES33	McCann Park	Kerang	Shire Owned and Operated
RES40	Ninth Street Public Recreation	Kerang	Shire Owned and Operated
RES39	Patchell Reserve	Kerang	Shire Owned and Operated
RES104	Scoreby St toilets	Kerang	Shire Owned and Operated
RES36	Shadforth St Public Park Reserve	Kerang	Shire Owned and Operated
RES34	Sir John Gorton Library	Kerang	Shire Owned and Operated
RES41	Water tower (egg) Park	Kerang	Shire Owned and Operated
RES49	Apex Park	Koondrook	Shire Owned and Operated
RES30	Koondrook Public Toilet Reserve	Koondrook	Shire Owned and Operated
RES05	Koondrook Wetlands Reserve	Koondrook	Shire Owned and Operated
RES43	Toilet Block at Kow Swamp	Kow Swamp	Shire Owned and Operated
RES70	Lake Meran	Lake Meran	Shire Owned and Operated
RES62	Lake Meran Tennis Club	Lake Meran	Shire Owned and Operated
RES63	Lake Tutchewop Frontage Reserve	Lake Tutchewop	Shire Owned and Operated

RES51	Lalbert Median Reserve	Lalbert	Shire Owned and Operated
RES21	Lalbert Rest Stop	Lalbert	Shire Owned and Operated
RES22	Smith Rd Reserve	Lalbert	Shire Owned and Operated
RES11	Keath Street Park	Leitchville	Shire Owned and Operated
RES91	Leitchville Rest stop	Leitchville	Shire Owned and Operated
RES08	Gonn Avenue Vacant land	Murrabit	Shire Owned and Operated
RES81	Murrabit River Reserve	Murrabit	Shire Owned and Operated
RES24	Mystic Park Recreation Reserve	Mystic Park	Shire Owned and Operated
RES20	Bev Nalder Memorial Park	Quambatook	Shire Owned and Operated
RES72	Guthrie St Lions Park	Quambatook	Shire Owned and Operated
RES86	Guthrie St Median	Quambatook	Shire Owned and Operated
RES23	Williamson Park	Quambatook	Shire Owned and Operated
RES105	Ibis Rookery	Reedy Lake	Shire Owned and Operated
RES55	Tragowel Swamp Rest Stop	Tragowel	Shire Owned and Operated