

Frederick Street Reserve Future Use Plan



Waratah Wynyard Council
2013



PURPOSE

This report provides advice for management options for the use of Frederick Street Reserve.

It includes preliminary findings from the Waratah-Wynyard Recreation Advisory Special Committee and the Frederick Street Reserve Working Group as requested by Council in November 2011.

The recommendations in this report have been informed by a risk assessment, consultation process and future use options as discussed by the Frederick Street Reserve Working Group.

BACKGROUND

The Frederick Street Reserve comprises three land titles totalling 16.82 hectares. The Council has historically leased various titles from the Crown since the late 1970's and mid 1980's. Initially, the site was developed by the Council to cater for soccer, hockey and softball use. Over time the Council has invested in improvements to playing fields and construction of supporting facilities. In 1988, the Council contributed funds toward the construction of the *Barcoo* equestrian arena.

The Council took ownership of the Frederick Street Reserve in 2012 as part of the Crown Land Assessment and Classification (CLAC) program, including all three land titles. The Council supported the transfer of ownership from the Crown in September 2005 on the basis that it demonstrated clear benefit and incurred reasonable costs.

The transfer of ownership raised a number of issues for Council including use of the area, ensuring ongoing public open access for recreation pursuits and risk mitigation. Additionally it provided an opportunity to investigate further uses for the area to maximise this valuable community asset.

In November 2011, a notice of motion was supported by Council to have the Waratah-Wynyard Recreation Advisory Special Committee examine the potential future of Frederick Street Reserve.

CURRENT USE

The Reserve consists of three main areas:

Area 1: 4.047 hectares bounded by Lowe, Atkins, Belton and Sheckleton Street reservations. This part of the Reserve includes the BMX track and walking track. It is used formally by Wynyard BMX Park Inc. and informally by BMX, mountain bike and motorbike riders, recreational walkers / runners, dog walkers and horse riding / jumping.

Area 2: 12.78 hectares bounded by Frederick, Lowe, Kingsmill and Goldie Street reservations. This part of the Reserve includes a vegetated area to the west that includes the *Barcoo* equestrian arena and walking track - *Area 2 (a)*. It is used formally by the Inglis Pony Club and informally by mountain bike and motorbike riders, recreational walkers / runners, dog walkers and horse riding / jumping.

The middle portion of area 2 – *Area 2 (b)* includes the main equestrian riding area that is used formally by the Inglis Pony Club. This area is also used informally for golf practice and dog walking.

The eastern portion of area 2 – *Area 2 (c)* includes the main playing surface for soccer and softball. The NW Junior Soccer Association and Wynyard Softball Club have formal and exclusive use of the playing surface. Dog walkers also use this area informally.

Area 3: Goldie Street Reservation (Frederick Street to Kingsmill Street). This area is incorporated along the southern boundary of Area 2.

Refer to the *Frederick Street Reserve – All Users* map for more detail.

The following activities occur in the Reserve: soccer, softball, BMX, mountain bike and motor bike riding, golf practice, recreational and dog walking, horse riding and jumping and equestrian events. The Central Wynyard Neighbourhood Watch group uses the main building complex for meetings. Various use agreements are in place for formal user groups. The public use the reserve informally for a wide range of activities (see below).

Formal / exclusive use	Area being used	Informal / public use	Area being used
Inglis Pony Club	2(a), 2(b)	Golfers	2(b)
Wynyard Softball Club	2(c)	Dog walkers	All areas
Wynyard BMX Park Inc.	1	Recreational walkers / runners	All areas
Central Wynyard Neighbourhood Watch	2(c)	Horse riders	1, 2(a), 2(b)
NW Junior Soccer Association	2(c)	Motorbike riders, BMX and mountain bike riders	1, 2(a)

The Wynyard BMX Club uses its facilities regularly throughout the year at an average rate of around 18 hours per week (*Area 1*).

The *Barcoo Arena* was used for rodeo purposes on limited occasions however it is now used for training young horses and riders (*Area 2 (a)*).

The Inglis Pony Club uses the equestrian field every weekend between August and May and the *Barcoo Arena* fortnightly to monthly. The Cape Country Riders Association uses the arena regularly throughout the year. The arena does receive some casual use (*Area 2 (b)*).

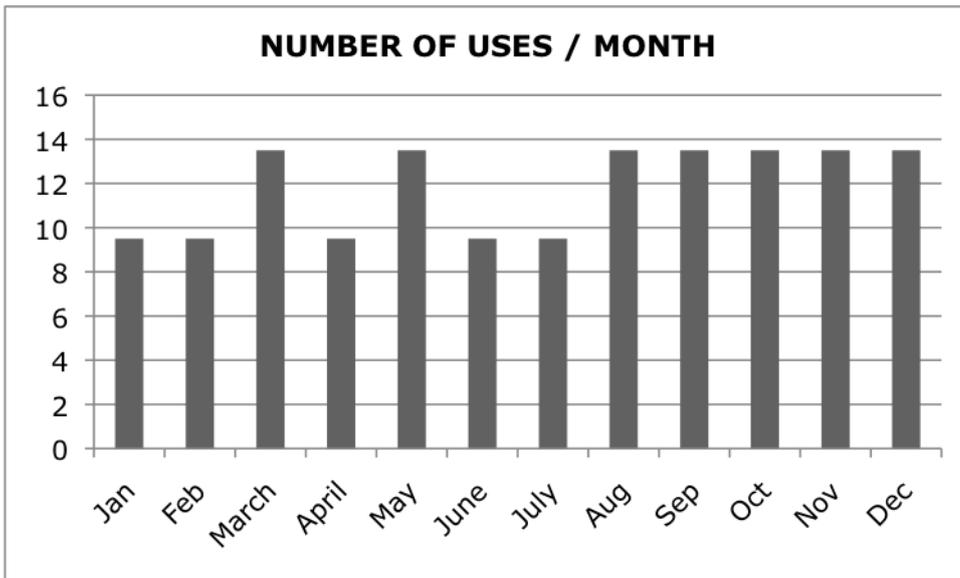
The playing feild is not used for senior soccer as most players are based in the Burnie area. It is however used regularly in winter by the Wynyard Junior Soccer Club and North West Junior Soccer Association conducts representative carnivals at the ground (*Area 2 (c)*). Saturday morning roster games ceased in 2012, but training takes place on the Reserve one night per week.

The Somerset Soccer Club, based at Somerset Recreation Ground, draws most of its players from Burnie and because of the additional distance of Frederick Street from Burnie, the ground has not attracted senior use.

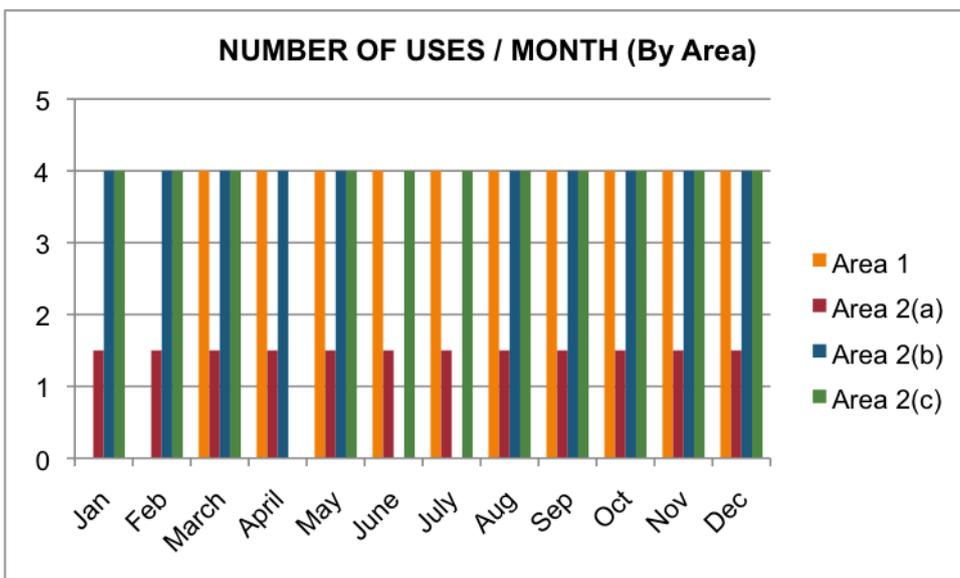
The Wynyard Softball Club use the field every Saturday from October to March (*Area 2 (c)*).

The Central Wynyard Neighbourhood Watch uses the clubroom meeting facilities Bi-monthly.

The total annual formal use (equestrian, softball, BMX and junior soccer) of the Frederick Street Reserve averages around 11 times per month, just under three times per week. The peak use months are March and August to December where the overall site is used on average just over four times per week (see below). No data is available for informal public use.



In terms of specific areas within the Reserve, *Area 2(a) Barcoo Arena* is least used, at once per fortnight or month. The most used area is *Area 2(c)*, the main playing field, which peaks at four times per month (1 per week) over the summer period (see below).



ASSETS

Frederick Street Reserve includes the following assets:

- (a) Area 1
This area includes an embanked earth BMX track principally constructed by the Wynyard BMX Club with some Council financial assistance.
- (b) Area 2(a)
This is the location of the enclosed equestrian arena, the *Barcoo Arena*. It was funded by equal contributions of \$3,000 from the Inglis Pony Club, Wynyard Pleasure and Riding Club and the Department of Sport and Recreation.

Area 2(b)
This is a grass-surfaced area used for pony club activities. The Inglis Pony Club has constructed a separate storage building close to the frontage of the equestrian field to which it has sole access.

Area 2(c)
This includes the main grass surfaced sporting field with a perimeter fence. It caters for softball and soccer fixtures. The Frederick Street Building Complex is located on this site, including: change-room /toilets/ meeting room/kitchen/kiosk facilities building. The Frederick Street Building Complex for the current year has insurance cover of \$748,000 for building replacement and \$6,000 contents. For the 2013/2014 financial year this will increase to \$777,000 building replacement and \$6,200 contents.
- (c) Area 3
This is an extension of the grass surface of *Areas 2(b & c)* and the vegetated extension of *Area 2 (a)*.

ACCESS

The public can freely access all of the Reserve by foot with exception to the clubroom meeting facilities and the Inglis Pony Club storage shed. Low log type fencing barriers along the Lowe Street frontage and the vegetated banks along the Belton Street frontage control vehicular access to the entire Reserve. This does not prevent access by cyclists, motorbike riders or people with horses.

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

All of the existing formal users (Wynayrd BMX Park Inc., Inglis Pony Club, Wynyard Softball Club, NW Junior Soccer Association and Central Wynyard Neighbourhood Watch) have met the

requirements for use of hire of Council facilities. The Wynyard BMX Park Inc. has a license agreement in place with Council for the use of Area 1.

Bookings and charges are controlled through the Council office and only apply to formal users mentioned above.

REVENUE

Financial transactions between 2009/10 and 2011/12 indicate an ongoing operating loss for Council for the entire Frederick Street Reserve. Half of the expenditure is attributed to grass mowing and associated plant and labour costs, representing 51% of total expenditure. No charges are levied for use of the facilities apart from a small charge in relation to the *Barcoo Arena* to assist with maintenance costs which is collected through issue of security coded keys. The Central Wynyard Neighbourhood Watch group has received a Community Assistance Grant to cover the hire charges of the clubroom meeting facilities.

Expenditure for 2011/12 totalled \$60,186 and revenue totalled \$1,890 for the same period. Annual rental hire revenue represents 3.14% of total annual operating and maintenance costs (recovery rate). This is well below Council's target recovery rate of 33%. Annual revenue of around \$18,691 or expenditure reduction of \$54,495 (\$5,727 total annual expenditure) would be required to meet this recovery rate target.

FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS - Frederick Street Reserve 2009/10 - 2011/12

EXPENDITURE	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Wages	12,228	11,718	12,521
Plant	2,755	3,085	5,135
Cleaning	-	476	4,991
Consumables	282	463	279
Insurance	1,106	721	736
Light and Power	2,266	2,470	2,824
Line Marking	210	413	69
Repairs and Minor Improvements	7,029	4,037	3,861
Water/Sewer Charges	8,701	9,136	5,376
Weed Control	-	245	67
Security Services	1,560	1,760	2,120
Turf Maintenance	492	1,240	732
Vandalism Repairs	-	-	274
Contract Clearance	-	243	1,807
Depreciation - Land Improvements	263	263	263
Depreciation - Buildings	8,894	8,894	6,653
Internal Allocations - Engineering	13,308	16,869	12,478
Total Expenditure	59,094	62,033	60,186

REVENUE	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Fees and Charges	1916	2111	1890
Reimbursements	-	-	-
Total Revenue	1,916	2,111	1,890
Profit/Loss	(57,178)	(59,922)	(58,296)
Recovery %	3.24%	3.40%	3.14%

RISKS

A risk assessment commission by Council indicated four key areas for consideration in regard to risk minimisation at the Frederick Street Reserve: inappropriate and incompatibility of users, inappropriate infrastructure, maintenance and signage and agreements between clubs and Council. Risk ratings are based upon the AS/NZS Risk Management Standard. Motorbike use, general incompatibility between users and poorly maintained and located horse jumps and obstacles present the higher risks to Council and the public (see below).

Risk	Description	Rating
Inappropriate use	Motorbike activity in the reserve presents high risks to those carrying out the activity and other users who may collide with them. Given the wide range of users in the reserve motorbike potential exists for accidents.	5B extreme risk
Incompatible users	Walkers, horse riders, BMX cyclists and motorbike riders are using pathways in an uncontrolled manner at the same time. Potential exists for collision and accidents.	3B high risk
Inappropriate infrastructure	Horse jumps and obstacles have been erected throughout the <i>Area 1</i> and <i>Area 2(a)</i> . These pose a risk to other users, especially BMX cyclists and motorbike riders.	4B high risk
Maintenance	Horse jumps and obstacles are poorly maintained.	3C medium risk
Signage	There are no appropriate signs warning users of potential risks from infrastructure and other users.	2B medium risk
Agreements	User agreements are required to manage the multiple and concurrent use of the reserve.	2C medium risk

CONSULTATION

The Council conducted a consultation process in September to October 2012 involving current and potential users as well as the broader community. The following modes of consultation were used: community meeting, letters to residents, letters to formal users, social media, phone calls and newspaper advertisement. Forty-seven people participated in the consultation across all modes. Input was sought on ideas for other sport and recreational activities that could take place in Frederick Street Reserve.

In summary, four key issues were raised: continuation of mixed use, need to address public safety and access, maintenance of the bushland setting and improvement in the sustainable management of the Reserve (see below).

Key Issue	Key message
Mixed use	Provide for passive recreation: dog walking / exercise, informal horse riding
Public safety and access	Assess safety issues of golf practice, disallow motorbikes
Bushland setting	Sensitively maintain the bushland setting
Sustainable management	Increase fixtures / maximise use of field (e.g. bring back soccer)

The Myalla Cricket Club raised interest in relocating from the Wynyard Recreation Ground to the Frederick Street Reserve as a potential co-tenant with softball and soccer users. The Myalla Cricket Club aspires to be located at a facility where they could have social clubrooms as share both building and field facilities.

The Inglis Pony Club outlined a vision for the development of four dressage arenas within the Reserve, including the incursion into the existing soccer field.

These two development concepts are not compatible within the existing grass surfaced area of the site.

MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

The following management options reflect the recommendations of the Frederick Street Reserve Working Group.

The poor financial recovery rate for the Frederick Street Reserve provides limited justification for further improvements and has brought into question its viability. Whilst full cost recovery is not achievable, standard financial contribution is realistic. It is not feasible to raise substantial revenue from current users, which are mainly BMX, junior sports and horse riding clubs. These users continue to pay the current rate for hire of the facilities determined in the annual budget (see below).

SPORTING GROUNDS & FACILITIES		Current fee:
Bond		\$624.00
Key Bond		\$52.00
Sporting ground hire fee - club	per club per season	\$936.00
Sporting ground hire fee - casual user	per day	\$156.00

The separation of uses and users is important to ensure public safety. BMX use could be confined to *Area 1*. Horse riding could be confined to the open grassed footprint of *Areas 2(a) & b)* and excluded from *Area 1* and the bushland of *Area 2(a)*. This will separate BMX and mountain cyclists, horse riders and dog exercisers. Horse jumping should be confined to *Area 2(b)* and all horse obstacles removed from *Area 1* and *Area 2(a)*.

Dog exercising could continue throughout the reserve but perhaps be required to be on a lead in *Areas 2(b & c)* so as to reduce the likelihood of interference with sport fixtures. Free off leash and walking could continue in the bushland of *Area 2(a)* where horse riders and BMX and mountain cyclists would be excluded (see *Frederick Street Reserve – Revised Users map*).

Motorbike riding should be prohibited throughout the entire Reserve.

The now very prevalent informal use of the equestrian field for golf practice is a concern. As the main equestrian use occurs at weekends and golf practice during the week there is no actual physical conflict or disruption as a result of these uses. However, from a user safety perspective it is of concern that golf balls and, more particularly, broken tees, obscured in the grass do present a real potential for injury to horses and riders. Hoof injuries caused by tee penetration can sideline a horse for several months. Prudent risk management would see these uses separated and, accordingly, golf practice at Frederick Street Reserve strictly prohibited. Signage would be required and the prohibition actively enforced.

Another option is to increase the use of the facility by targeting formalised sports where fees can be generated. The relocation of senior soccer to Frederick Street Reserve is unlikely because of the clubroom redevelopment that has been permitted at Somerset Recreation Ground. There are indications, however, that senior soccer would be played if training floodlights were available.

The layout (contoured fields and interval drainage lines and grates) is not particularly conducive to use for other sporting competitions but may be appropriate for lower grade cricket matches where the limitations could be more reasonably tolerated. In such instances matting could be used to temporarily cover the grates.

The facility could also be used for football practice, particularly during wet conditions to reduce wear and tear on the major ovals. The Wynyard Recreation Ground is an obvious example of a ground that would benefit particularly if other teams and sports were co-located at that venue. It is likely there will be resistance if sporting teams are asked to train or practice elsewhere than on their home grounds.

It is highly unlikely that senior hockey would be played at the Reserve as hockey is now regionally entrenched at Burnie's McKenna Park facility with its synthetic playing surface.

The Council could examine the feasibility of redevelopment work that includes the establishment of an oval playing field suitable for football and cricket immediately south of the existing pavilion and the installation of floodlighting both on the oval and the existing large soccer pitch. This would give the facility additional flexibility and allow usage that is currently not possible. Generally it will be difficult to increase revenue substantially but usage can be increased which would permit closure of other grounds with a consequent reduction in present costs. The capital cost of such rationalisation would have to be measured against overall potential reduction in operating costs at other sites.

The Sports Precinct Master Plan recommends that the Wynyard Cricket Club move to the Wynyard football ground. The Myalla Cricket Club would need to vacate the Wynyard football ground to make room for the Wynyard Cricket Club. It is proposed that the Myalla Cricket Club relocate to Frederick Street to make the Wynyard football ground available. A concrete wicket would be required at the Frederick Street Reserve to facilitate their relocation. Council would need to assess the feasibility of pavilion extensions to provide additional clubroom facilities. In

the event the Wynyard Cricket Club remained at the Showground, other clubs may be keen to move to the Frederick Street Reserve with similar scale of redevelopment of the site.

An assessment of the redevelopment potential of the Frederick Street Reserve could also address possible impact on the equestrian field and relocation alternatives (including a westward extension) should this be found necessary to accommodate the oval. The equestrian use is not compatible with other uses because of the presence of manure. It appears that local gardeners ensure the droppings do not remain on the ground for long.

In summary, if more use is to be made of the Frederick Street Reserve it will be necessary for the Council to make policy decisions that may be unpopular in the process of achieving such an outcome. The reality is that more productive use needs to be made of the Reserve and that this is likely to have some impact on current users.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Establish a Frederick Street Reserve Advisory Group to provide input in the implementation of the *future use plan*. And provide advice to officers and council on the management of the site.
2. Continue to charge a seasonal fee for formal users of the Frederick Street Reserve as determined in the annual budget.
3. Investigate an appropriate location for a designated golf practice area and 'off leash' dog exercise area within the municipality.
4. Prohibit motorbike activity throughout Frederick Street Reserve, erect signage communicating such and monitor the use of the Reserve accordingly.
5. Remove horse jumps and obstacles from all bushland areas within Frederick Street Reserve.
6. Separate conflicting uses with Frederick Street Reserve by defining acceptable use/activities for each area and erecting signage and revising user agreements to reflect this.
7. Investigate the potential for a designated and signed horse riding access route through the Frederick Street Reserve to popular horse riding areas nearby.
8. Consider a minor improvements plan where spoon drains and general improvements to the playing surface *Area 2(c)* are made in order to attract cricket matches and overflow football practice.
9. Consider a major development plan based on sustainable, equitable improvements that maximise access and use of the area.

