

11.2.3 Draft Seven Creeks Master Plan

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2022 Euroa Community Action Group (ECAG) submitted a Pitch My Project proposal to complete an updated master plan for the Seven Creeks Park area, incorporating the space from the Butter Factory Bridge to the newly erected bridge at the Rockies. An allocation of \$15,000 was included in the 2022-23 budget to update the 2016 Seven Creeks Master Plan incorporating detailed design of a nature play space at the Seven Creeks Park. Concurrently, there was a budget allocation made to develop a Play and Open Space Strategy. This Strategy is currently out for community consultation and will also inform the master plan.

The Play and Open Strategy and the draft Seven Creeks Master Plan (*the Master Plan*) are the result of a comprehensive review completed by an external consultant, JF Studio Pty Ltd, and community engagement with Friends of the Sevens group, Euroa Chamber of Business and Commerce, schools, kindergartens, event organisers and a survey through the Share Strathbogie engagement hub.

This report recommends that the draft Master Plan be placed on public exhibition for a further consultation period from 17 July 2024 to 16 August 2024 via Council's Share Strathbogie hub and promoted on Council's various communications platforms.

This feedback will then be collated and reviewed to inform the final Master Plan for presentation and consideration by Council at the December 2024 Council Meeting and insertion as an appendix into Council's Play and Open Space Strategy 2024-2034.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Endorse the release of the draft Seven Creeks Master Plan for broad community consultation and feedback, commencing on Wednesday 17 July 2024 and closing on Friday 16 August 2024 at 5.00 pm; and***
- 2. Receive a further report at the December 2024 Council Meeting for the consideration of the final Seven Creeks Master Plan and insertion as an appendix into Council's Play and Open Space Strategy 2024-2034.***

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The draft Seven Creeks Master Plan was a result of a successful Pitch My Project submission from Euroa Action Group. The submission requested that Council update the 2016 Seven Creeks Master Plan and for the plan to include a nature play space. The Seven Creeks Park area is of great significance to the Euroa community, visitors to the region and to the traditional owners of the land.

11.2.3 Draft Seven Creeks Master Plan (cont.)

The draft Seven Creeks Master Plan (*the Master Plan*) extends the work completed by community group; friends of the sevens, who first established a master plan and prioritisation of works in 2016.

Extensive community consultation was undertaken to inform the development of the draft Seven Creeks Master Plan. The purpose of the draft master plan is to set the direction for the future investment and management of the Seven Creeks area and will determine what is required to meet the demands of our communities as they grow and change over the next 10 years as well as servicing the high number of visitors to the park.

ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

A comprehensive master plan assists in guiding Council to address the diverse needs of our community by enhancing access and use of the Seven Creeks Park, promoting active lifestyles, and fostering social interaction while also preserving and enhancing the natural environment.

All improvement works identified in the draft Master Plan were developed with reference to the 2016 Seven Creeks Master Plan and Council's Play and Open Space Strategy 2024-34.

The draft Master Plan identifies the following key priority actions:

- Replace/upgrade of Twomey's bridge;
- Revegetation and vegetation management;
- Education and awareness;
- Interpretative signage;
- Trail enhancements;
- Installation of a nature play space; and
- Lighting.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Broad community engagement has been undertaken in the development of the draft Master Plan. Community consultation has included discussion with Council's Community Panel, our Share Strathbogie Engagement Hub, a social media campaign, officer representation at local markets and direct engagement with Euroa Chamber of Business and Commerce and Friends of the Sevens group.

The next step is inviting further community feedback and comment on the draft Master Plan.

Submissions will be open from Wednesday 17 July 2024 and close on Friday 16 August 2024 and will be used to complement the Play and Open Space Strategy 2024-34.

11.2.3 Draft Seven Creeks Master Plan (cont.)

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Plans and Policies

The report is integrally linked with, and supports, other Council plans and strategies and aligns with the following policies and key strategic focus areas of the Council Plan, in particular:

- 2021-2025 Council Plan, specifically:
 - Strategic focus area 1: Engage. Create. Unite
 - Strategic focus area 2: Live. Access. Connect
 - Strategic focus area 3: Protect. Enhance. Adapt
 - Strategic focus area 4: Inclusive. Productive. Balanced
 - Strategic focus area 5: Strong. Healthy. Safe

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision-making.

There are no regional, state, or national plans or policies relevant to this report.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Impact to Council's reputation if master plan not delivered	Possible	Minimal	Low	Continued communication with key community stakeholders on progress, requirements and next steps
Poor strategic management of Seven Creeks Park without a master plan to guide decision making	Unlikely	Moderate	Low	Regular reporting of developments in the park and responsible chain of management on key decisions

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

There is no specific legislation governing the draft Master Plan, however, under the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council must be accountable for how public funds are spent and governance arrangements around decision making.

11.2.3 Draft Seven Creeks Master Plan (cont.)

Conflict of Interest Declaration

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

Transparency

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

The subject of this report is to be considered in an open Council meeting which the public may attend. The draft Master Plan is to be published for final community feedback.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

Economic

Council plays an important role in managing capital investments in play and open spaces across the municipality. The draft Master Plan along with Council's Play and Open Space Strategy will inform Council's development strategy for the Seven Creeks Park area supporting responsible fiscal management of public funds by effectively prioritising allocation of resources.

The Seven Creeks Park area between Templeton Street and Bury Street, Euroa, attracts visitors to Euroa given the premier location and facilities, the draft master plan will continue to inform on the development of the area to ensure the natural environment is maintained while also considering economic development opportunities.

Social

Open spaces provide social, health and wellbeing benefits for the whole community. Spaces that are well-designed will encourage community connections and provide opportunities to play and socialise.

Environmental

The draft Master Plan considers the environmental impact of developments in this space. Council will consider environmental risks, heat, flood, drought, climate change considerations and the need to create habitat corridors in future designs.

Where possible Council will preserve remnant vegetation and consider the selection of planting species to have appropriate environmental tolerance to ensure survival rates and provide positive impacts under climate change and extreme weather events.

Climate change

Open spaces help to cool our towns, build resilience to climate change, and create and maintain healthy biodiversity across our environment.

11.2.3 Draft Seven Creeks Master Plan (cont.)

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is the pursuit of innovation and continuous improvement.

The draft Master Plan encourages a culture of continuous improvement and innovation. The draft Master Plan provides direction for development and supports Council's commitment to building strong, healthy communities.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

This report does not limit any human rights under the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and encourages participation in civic life by our community.

CONCLUSION

The draft Seven Creeks Master Plan has been developed in consultation with the community to provide further guidance to Council on this significant and important open space managed by Council.

This report seeks Council endorsement to release the draft Master Plan for broad community consultation for the period from Wednesday 17 July 2024 to Friday 16 August 2024, with a further report to be presented to the December 2024 Council Meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Draft Seven Creeks Master Plan