



SMYTHESDALE GARDENS & BREWERY DAM RESERVE MASTERPLAN 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Golden Plains Shire spans the Traditional lands of the Wadawurrung and Eastern Maar people. We Acknowledge them as the Traditional Owners and Custodians.

Council pays its respects to Wadawurrung Elders past, present and emerging. Council also respects Eastern Maar Elders past, present and emerging.

Council extends that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are part of the Golden Plains Shire.



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1. Introduction & Background

Golden Plains Shire Council commissioned the development of new master plans to guide the future planning and development of the Smythesdale Gardens & Brewery Dam Reserves. Key objectives of the master planning process were to:

- Improve and enhance the reserve landscape.
- Improve and enhance recreation opportunities for a range of reserve users.
- Undertake consultation with user groups and residents to establish current and future needs and issues.
- Document options for additional facilities or infrastructure that could help address community needs.
- Ensure each reserve is accessible and appealing to all members of the community.
- Resolve existing circulation and access issues.
- Develop a master plan that provides clear direction for the development of each reserve that is realistic and within resource constraints.

The overarching aim of the master plan is to provide a realistic and achievable vision for both reserves to guide future decision-making, resource allocation and improvement opportunities at each site.



2. Location

Smythesdale Gardens Reserve

Smythesdale Gardens is located at 33 Garden Street, Smythesdale. It is bounded by Garden Street to the south, Willis Street to the north and west, and the Ballarat-Skipton Rail Trail to the southeast. The 3.0 hectare site comprises multiple individual allotments of Crown land. It is zoned 'Rural Living' under the Golden Plains Planning Scheme, and is subject to the Bushfire Management, Design & Development, and Significant Landscape overlays.

The site is Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) owned Crown Land, delegated to Council and managed by a Committee of Management on behalf of Council (i.e. Smythesdale Progress Association). The Community Committee manages the site as an unpowered camping destination ("free camp") and invites donations from users to help fund asset maintenance and improvements (annual revenue reportedly around \$12k p.a.).

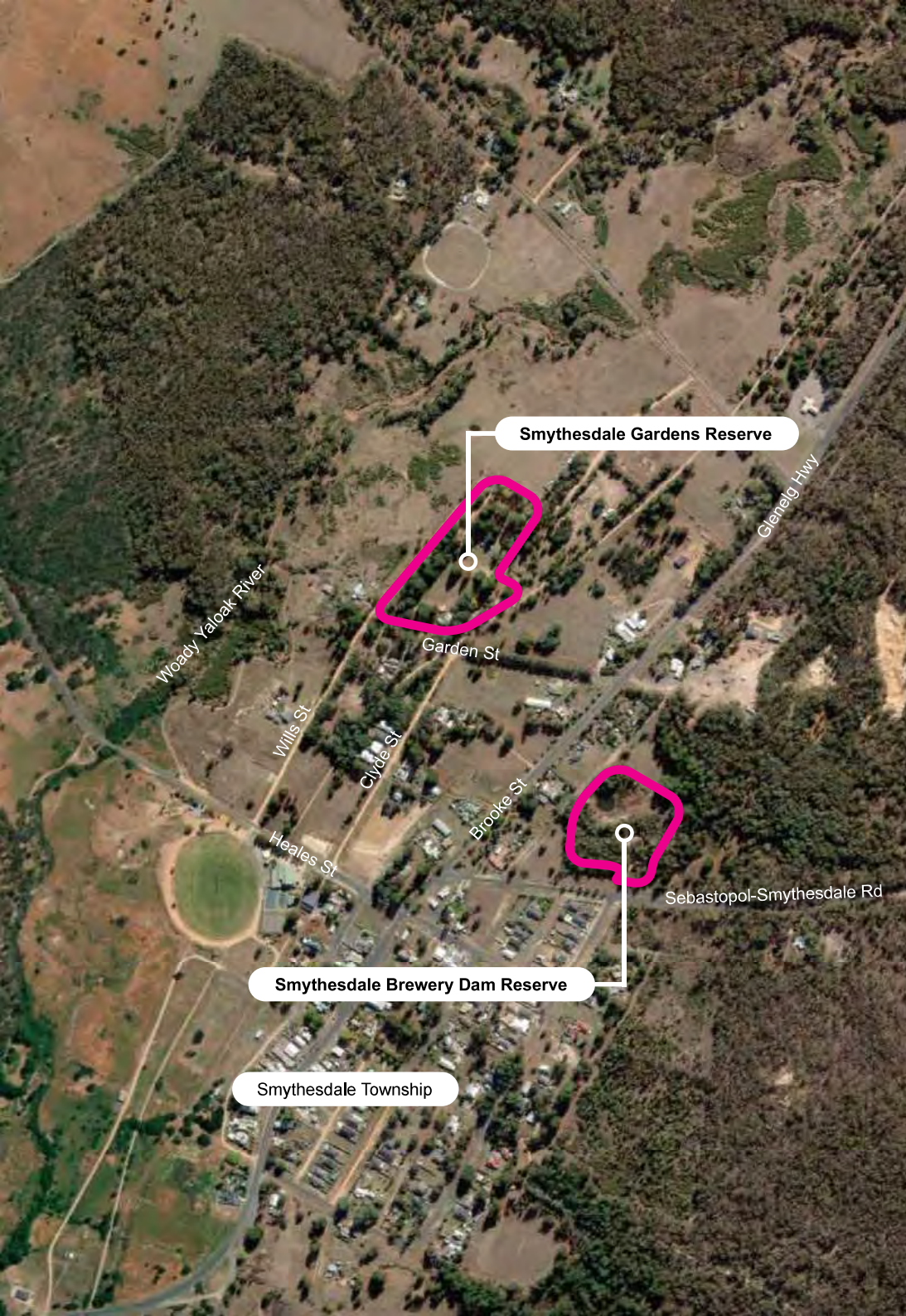
The site has a mix of established native trees and cleared open space. It is an attractive area with a high amenity landscape and is much valued by the local community. Historically the site was established as a modest botanic garden with suggestions the renowned botanist Ferdinand Jacob Heinrich von Mueller was involved in early planning for the reserve in the late 1850's. Regardless of origins, the site retains a mix of native and exotic European trees, many of which are reaching senescence and require strategic removal and replacement.

The site is one of two approved camping sites in the Shire with associated facilities including camp hut, fire pits and shelters, a shower block, public toilets, and local play space. It is also well used by the local community for a range of active and passive recreation activities including community gatherings, family outings, picnicking and informal play.

Smythesdale Brewery Dam Reserve

The Smythesdale Brewery Dam Reserve is situated at 29 Sebastopol-Smythesdale Road, Smythesdale. The site comprises multiple individual allotments of Crown land, delegated to Council and managed by a Committee of Management on behalf of Council.

The Brewery Dam site is a designated community open space area which consists of a mix of established native trees, cleared open space and a large dam with a fishing pier. The site is largely hidden within a bush setting, however provides opportunities for passive recreation including picnicking, nature appreciation, yabbing and fishing. Swimming is not permitted. Council and the community are keen to explore opportunities to increase the use and amenity value of the reserve.





Ecological Vegetation Class

Prior to any infrastructure works Councils Environmental and Sustainability team must be notified to help avoid and minimise impacts on native vegetation through sensitive and sensible design. If infrastructure works are to impact areas of native vegetation then a detailed native vegetation assessment by a consultant may be required.

The Smythesdale Gardens Reserve contains introduced tree species and has mapped Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC) 47 Valley Grassy Forest (Vulnerable) within the site. Characterised as an open forest to 25m tall it may carry a variety of eucalypts, usually species that prefer more moist or more fertile conditions over a sparse shrub cover with a rich array of herbs, lilies, grasses and sedges dominate the ground layer. Much of this has been extensively cleared and smaller remnants are now mainly confined to the area adjacent to the Ballarat Skipton Rail Trail.

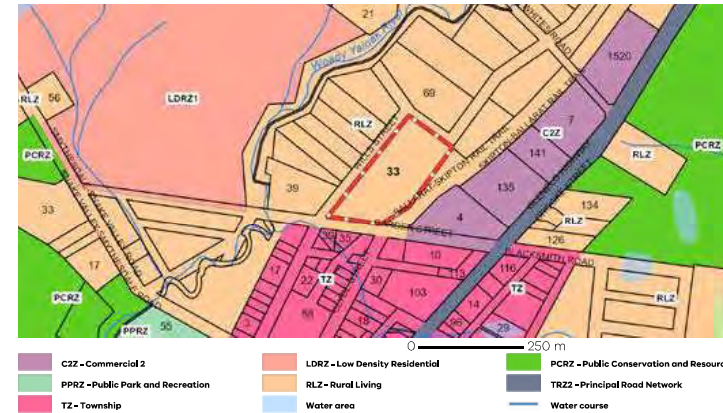
Brewery Dam Reserve contains both native and non-native species. It has mapped EVC Heathy Dry Forest (EVC20) which is characterised as an open eucalypt forest to 20m tall with an understorey dominated by a low, sparse to dense layer of shrubs including heaths and peas and grass ground layer. Brewery Dam has been extensively modified over time and the native vegetation is slowly recovering. The former CFA training site has had much of its overstorey removed and is now dominated by native grassland species Kangaroo Grass (*Themeda triandra*), this is a unique and important attribute to Brewery Dam Reserve.



Land Use Planning Zones and Planning Overlays

Land use planning zones and planning overlays help identify designated land uses, environmental significance, areas of cultural sensitivities and land subject to inundation. Both Smythesdale Gardens and Brewery Dam Reserve are in a designated bushfire prone area. The first set of maps are showing Smythesdale Gardens, following by Brewery Dam Reserve.

Smythesdale Gardens



Smythesdale Gardens is located within the Rural Living Zone and continues into the northern and western boundaries. To the east, there are Commercial 2 Zones and the Smythesdale Township to the South.



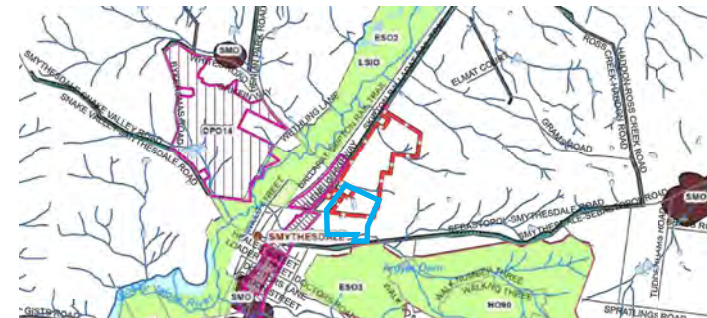
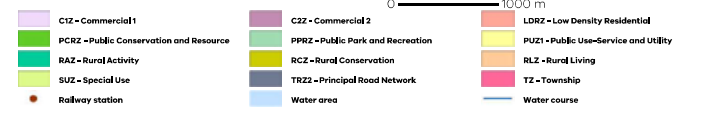
Landscape overlays seek to protect vegetation or landscape features of an area and are used to recognise areas of landscape significance. The SLO through Smythesdale Gardens is to ensure that the significant heritage trees found throughout the site are protected.



The south-western area of this property is an 'area of cultural heritage sensitivity'. 'Areas of cultural heritage sensitivity' are defined under the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018, and include registered Aboriginal cultural heritage places and land form types that are generally regarded as more likely to contain Aboriginal cultural heritage.



Brewery Dam Reserve



Brewery Dam Reserve is located within the Public Conservation and Resource Zone. Rural living Zone is located to the north and east of the reserve, while the Commercial 2 Zone is located to the west. The Smythesdale Township is located to the south-west of the reserve.

— Study area

A small area within the Brewery Dam Reserve is Land Subject to Inundation. It does not have any conflict with Vegetation Protection, Environmental Significance, or Significant Landscape overlays.

— Study area

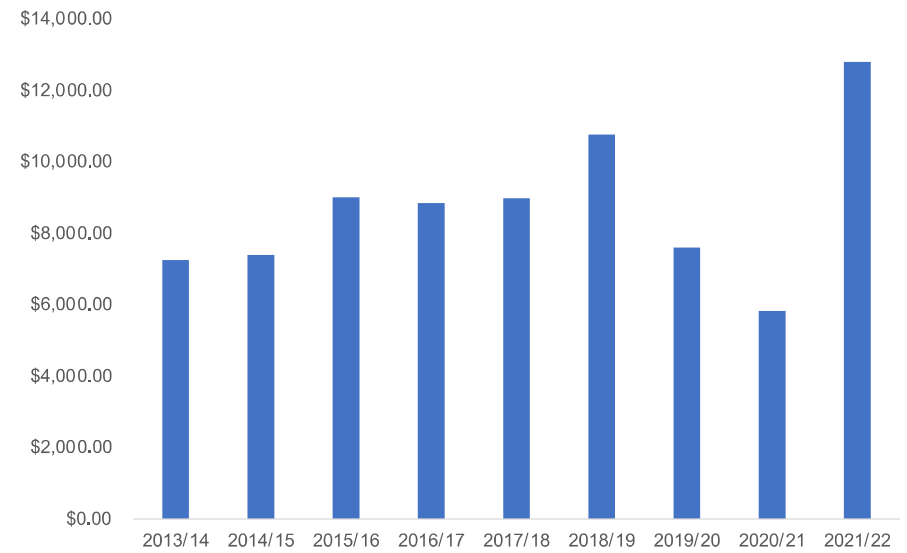


Smythesdale Gardens Camping Income and Patronage

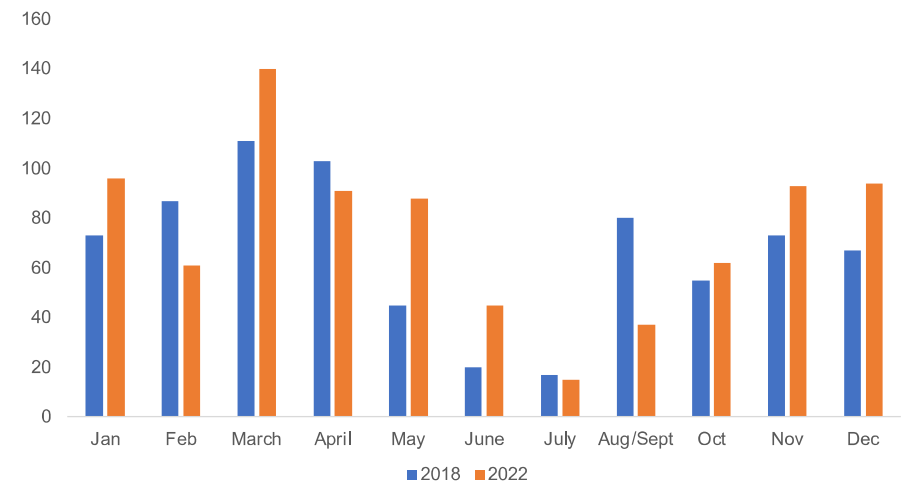
The revenue generated from camping donations can be seen in the rise in annual camping income. There was a steady increase of income from 2013 - 2019. Income then declined due to COVID 19 Patronage and income has increased following cessation of COVID restrictions with total camping income in 2021/22 rising.

In general, usage increases during the warmer months and during major holidays particularly Christmas and Easter.

Revenue from camping donations



Indicative camping numbers



3. Strategic Alignment

It is important that the master plans align with key strategic directions of Council and the community. A snapshot of key influences informing the master plan are outlined below.

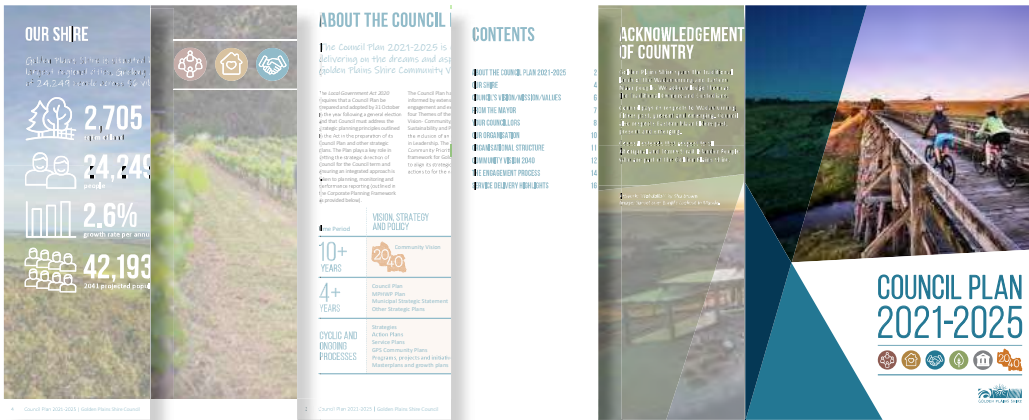
Council Plan (incorporating Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) 2021-2025

The Council Plan details the priority initiatives and actions for Council services, infrastructure, and advocacy to be provided to the Golden Plains Shire community through to 2025.

The Plan supports the themes of the Golden Plains Community Vision 2040: Community; Liveability; Sustainability, Prosperity (and Leadership).

The Council Plan details Strategic Objectives and key actions for delivery during the Council term. Whilst development of the master plans is not specifically referenced, the project aligns with key themes aimed at improving community infrastructure provision, protection of natural, cultural and heritage environments as well as the provision of attractive, functional open spaces that support community health, wellbeing, and recreation. Priority outcomes incorporated into the Public Health and Wellbeing Plan that can be supported in the master plans include:

- Improved access to safe built environments using universal design principles, including community facilities and spaces, open space, and places for active recreation.
- Preserved natural environment and ensuring the community is resilient and responsive to the challenges of climate change and emergency management.
- Healthy and sustainable environments.
- Connected communities.



Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2020-2030

The Strategy identifies strategic priorities for sport and active recreation provision and improvement opportunities to address community needs over a ten-year timeframe.

In relation to Smythesdale, the Strategy recognises that most regional level facilities are provided in neighbouring Ballarat but identifies a significant opportunity to further enhance equestrian facilities in the Shire. It suggests such facilities could attract State and National level events. Smythesdale Gardens could be used to support equestrian events by providing low-cost accommodation / camping options, as well as through equestrian use of the adjacent rail trail.

Available activities listed in the Strategy in Smythesdale include Basketball, BMX, Cricket, Cycling (off road trail), Fitness classes, Football, Horse Riding, Netball, Play, Running, Skateboarding, Tennis, Walking and Petanque. The Strategy does not provide specific direction for Smythesdale Gardens or Brewery Dam reserves, other than continuing to support the informal recreation needs of the local community.

Smythesdale Community Plan 2021-2024

Community Planning is a process that brings people together to consider issues and take action to improve their community. Community members develop a plan that outlines projects they will undertake to make their town a better place to live. Key initiatives relevant to the master plans include:

- Further strengthen opportunities for our community to come together, increase local participation and a sense of community pride.
- Beautification and art initiatives including additional art sculptures at the Smythesdale Gardens
- Advocating for environmental management and improvements as well as supporting fire management and flood mitigation.
- Community working bees that have a focus on the environment.

The study area considers the towns of Scarsdale and Newtown as part of an integrated catchment supporting the commercial and community infrastructure of Smythesdale. Scarsdale is to Newtown to the south and Smythesdale north. Newtown has no township of its own. The nearby localities of Nittinghool, Ross Creek and Smythes Creek are also considered in the study area, however these are likely to have a stronger association with Ballarat through proximity and commuter linkages into Ballarat and other services.

Sustainable Population

The 2001 Census calculated the population of Smythesdale to be 312.

The Smythesdale Urban Design Framework identified a realistic and sustainable population of 312.

The Smythesdale Urban Design Framework identified a realistic and sustainable population of 312.

Figure 1: 5km radius from centre of Smythesdale

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The Smythesdale Structure Plan Background Report (this report) has been prepared to inform and to stimulate discussion during community consultation activities that will result in the Structure Plan being prepared.

The Structure Plan will consider future land use to support the continued growth of Smythesdale whilst maintaining the appeal and unique features of the town.

The Structure Plan is distinct from the Street Profiles which provides concept plans for streetscape beautification works within the stretch of Brooke Street from Verdon Street to the Brewery Dam Road.

Smythesdale is one of two towns in Golden Plains Shire that is seweraged (since 2013), providing the opportunity for some medium density allotments within the sewer district. Smythesdale is strategically positioned with good access to Ballarat.

The Smythesdale Structure Plan will:

- Identify the existing capacity and what there are opportunities to safely support growth, notwithstanding the significant bushfire risk affecting parts of the town
- Identify any additional land uses required

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Smythesdale Structure Plan (Background Report), 2021

The Structure Plan considers future land uses to support the continued growth of Smythesdale whilst maintaining the appeal and unique features of the town.

Smythesdale is one of two towns in Golden Plains Shire that is seweraged (since 2013), providing the opportunity for some medium density allotments within the sewer district. Smythesdale is strategically positioned with good access to Ballarat.

Council and the community considered a population of 2,500 as a suitable size for Smythesdale to improve the sustainability of retailing and other business activities in the township. The 2016 census population for the Smythesdale locality was 1,037 people. A further 744 persons were counted for the Scarsdale district and the Newtown locality recorded a population of 118 persons. The combined total is 1,899 people.

The current population falls short of the 2,000-2,500 identified as realistic and sustainable for Smythesdale in the 2006 Smythesdale Urban Design Framework.

Based on 2016 census data and growth rates, the projected population of Smythesdale and Scarsdale will be near to 3,000 people by 2041. To reach a population of 3000 persons, an additional 440 lots is required. This will service the township for the next 25 years until 2046 at a growth rate of 4%.

Smythesdale is surrounded with an abundance of natural and passive open spaces including the Smythesdale/Ngarinyook State Forest, Woody Yaloak River, Smythesdale Streamside Reserve; Smythesdale Recreation Reserve, Smythesdale Gardens; Brewery Dam; Argyle Dam, Surface Hill Historic Reserve; Watson's Hill Bushland Reserve. All of these provide Smythesdale with ready access to the natural environment and offer unique experiences from horse riding; picnicking; bushwalking, cycling and other outdoor experiences.

The master plans will therefore support continued community access to the Gardens and Brewery Dam sites, the former with an emphasis on supporting tourism and economic development through camping and the later for informal recreation.



CONCEPT MASTERPLAN

PROPOSED ACTION PLAN

1. Remove Monterey Cypress trees (Trees 15-19, 20, 21, 24 & 26) along north & west side of events space, and replant with fast-growing shade trees (eg Wattles) for quick shade, and long-lived evergreens (eg conifers). Mass-plant small areas around picnic area nodes to provide shelter and privacy. Construct perimeter path and gravel picnic area nodes (see 5 below).
2. Undertake urgent actions identified in Arborists report, including tree removal and deadwooding, relocating seats from under high-risk trees.
3. Create a linking pathway between the camping area and toilets/BBQ area.
4. Creating a direct pathway link to the Rail Trail.
5. Create a gravel perimeter pathway linking picnic areas and gravel picnic areas 'nodes' of varying sizes for large and small groups, with tables and benches.
6. Construct two additional picnic shelters for tent campers and other garden users.
7. Upgrade grassed area for events as demand requires.
8. Develop attractive shaded lawn area adjacent to SS Monterey as an alternative picnic space.
9. Install gates and bollards to manage vehicle access to event space.
10. Provide fire pits for campers and other garden users.
11. Screen planting between the camping area and event space.
12. Locate the memorial seats along the perimeter path and install interpretive signage regarding the history of the gardens, and the significance of the local identities who are honoured on the seats.
13. Relocate and screen rubbish bins.
14. Remove the fence around the playground to open up visual connection to the carpark. Plant shrubs and trees around the carpark as a windbreak.
15. Creatively respond to tree removals, creating themed sculptures as the opportunity arises.
16. Undertake drainage improvements of low-lying areas.
17. Create rest area at rail trail entry with signage, water tap and seat.
18. Prepare landscape plan for staged replanting of senescent and high-risk trees, starting with replanting trees on the north side of the events space as noted above (Action #1).
19. Potential location of ornamental garden beds, design and extent to be determined (potentially part of the landscape plan brief noted above). Arrangement shown is indicative only.

KEY

- Evergreen Trees (Conifers, Native)
- Deciduous Trees
- Proposed Trees
- High, Medium Risk Trees
- Screen Planting
- Irrigated Lawn
- Kikuyu grass
- Proposed Path
Concrete paving or ceramic tiles
- Picnic Area Node

CONCEPT MASTERPLAN
Smythesdale Gardens Reserve
(former Smythesdale Botanic Gardens)

Drawing No: SS-49-003 1:500 @ 1:4
Revision: 8
Date: 17/02/16

Perry Mills
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Smythesdale Gardens Concept Master Plan (2016 & 2019)

The Committee of Management previously commissioned the development of a Concept Master plan for the Smythesdale Gardens site in 2016. The plan was not formally adopted by Council, however provided operational management and landscape improvement guidance to the Committee, including selected tree replacement.

The table below extracts the key actions outlined in the 2016 Plan and provides a comment on current implementation status (based on visual inspection) and ongoing relevance to this new master plan for the site.

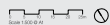
2016 Action Plan	Implementation Status	Ongoing Relevance
1. Remove Monterey Cypress trees (Trees 15-19, 20, 21, 24 & 26) along north & west side of events space, and replant with fast-growing shade trees (eg Wattles) for quick shade, and long-lived evergreens (eg conifers). Mass-plant small areas around picnic area nodes to provide shelter and privacy. Construct perimeter path and gravel picnic area nodes (see 5 below).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partially completed i.e. some selected tree removal, limited replanting and gravel path not established. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review path network, layout and connections. Subject to new Arborist report, remove high-risk senescent trees where required.
2. Undertake urgent actions identified in Arborists report, including tree removal and deadwooding, relocating seats from under high-risk trees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partially completed – unable to confirm Arborist Report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to new Arborist report, remove high-risk senescent trees where required. Review and recommend seating locations.
3. Create a linking pathway between the camping area and toilets/BBQ area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not Completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review path network, layout and connections.
4. Creating a direct pathway link to the Rail Trail.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review path network, layout and connections.
5. Create a gravel perimeter pathway linking picnic areas and gravel picnic areas 'nodes' of varying sizes for large and small groups, with tables and benches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review path network, layout and connections.
6. Construct two additional picnic shelters for tent campers and other garden users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partially completed – 1 shelter completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review locations for picnic shelters.
7. Upgrade grassed area for events as demand requires.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider opportunities to further enhance the 'events' space.
8. Develop attractive shaded lawn area adjacent to SS Monterey as an alternative picnic space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain.



Landscape Site Plan

Smythesdale Garden - Map of Designated Camping Areas

Date Issued: 19/03/2019 | Revision: 0
DMC Project Reference: 3002/0200_00 | Drawing: 01
Drawn by: G.H.S. Checked by: R.Lambert



2016 Action Plan	Implementation Status	Ongoing Relevance
9. Install gates and bollards to manage vehicle access to event space.	• Completed	• Review traffic controls throughout.
10. Provide fire pits for campers and other garden users.	• Partially completed.	• Review possible locations for fire pits (remove undesirable locations).
11. Screen planting between the camping area and event space.	• Not completed.	• Review screen planting.
12. Locate the memorial seats along the perimeter path and install interpretive signage regarding the history of the gardens, and the significance of the local identities who are honoured on the seats.	• Partially completed – not all seats have been relocated from under trees.	• Review seating locations.
13. Relocate and screen rubbish bins.	• Partially completed – limited screening.	• Review rubbish bin 'enclosure'.
14. Remove the fence around the playground to open up visual connection to the carpark. Plant shrubs and trees around the carpark as a windbreak.	• Partially completed	• Review playground location.
15. Creatively respond to tree removals, creating themed sculptures as the opportunity arises.	• Partially completed.	• Support ongoing installation of art and sculptures utilising tree stumps.
16. Undertake drainage improvements of low-lying areas	• Partially completed.	• More significant drainage infrastructure / management required to address ongoing issues.
17. Create rest area at rail trail entry with signage, water tap and seat	• Partially completed – signage and access to water provided.	• Review seating locations.
18. Prepare landscape plan for staged replanting of senescent and high risk trees, starting with replanting trees on the north side of the events space as noted above (Action #1).	• Not completed.	• Subject to new Arborist report, remove high risk senescent trees where required.
19. Potential location of ornamental garden beds, design and extent to be determined (potentially part of the landscape plan brief noted above). Arrangement shown is indicative only.	• Not completed.	• Review locations for additional planting and landscape improvements.

Subsequent to the 2016 Master Plan, a 'site plan' was also documented in 2019 which illustrated designated camping areas and existing infrastructure; however, it did not provide specific actions or recommendations for future improvement.



4. Consultation & Engagement

Initial Engagement

As part of the initial situation analysis, the consultant team met on-site with representatives of the Progress Association/Committee of Management and facilitated a workshop with a selection of Golden Plains Shire staff. Key comments, issues, or suggestions for improvement at each site are summarised below.

Smythesdale Gardens

Committee of Management

- Construction of brick gutters in main parking area (help address drainage and wash-outs).
- Improve road drainage at 3rd entrance off Gardens St.
- Installation of concrete slabs under garden benches.
- Repainting of garden benches.
- Renovate/replace showers and amenities.
- Improve/address drainage throughout site.
- Additional art installations proposed for the tree at the entrance to complement existing Eagle.
- Gravel roads wash out.
- Consider installation of permanent fireplaces in selected locations.
- Maintenance issues – vegetation in drainage lines, wheelie bins need more regular collection (by Council, currently weekly – particularly after weekend camping).
- Adjacent 4WD club/land no negative impact on site. No interest in accruing more land for camping
- Consider traffic speed control – speed humps
- Keep/support European vegetation.
- Replace senescent Pines.
- Horses use the Rail Trail – consider holding yards/trailer parking to support. Existing water trough adjacent to trail.
- Review / install signage at the front entry to the reserve.
- Need a path connection to link to the Creek Trail.
- Consider installation of fitness equipment/features.
- Currently 17 'memorial' park seats throughout the site – require maintenance, concrete pads and define locations – considering safety from trees.
- Committee operates on approx. \$12kp.a. revenue from 'donations/camping fees'.

Council Staff

- Flood and drainage across site to be resolved.
- Better define camping areas, parking and vehicle circulation.
- Amenities outdated, require refurbishment or replacement (possibly include new modern 'camp kitchen')
- Park furniture – review/replace.
- A new sub-regional play space to be developed at the Recreation Reserve, therefore 'local' play only at the Gardens site.
- Improve the reserve to support broader economic development in the town (i.e. 'stay and play').
- Highly used for free camping.
- The site was raised as a possible option to establish 'permanent' accommodation for Windfarm Workers – then transition to camping accommodation. However, this increases management complexity and therefore not supported.
- Tree management and replacement needed. Continue European species (i.e. Former 'botanic garden').
- Significant landscape overlay.
- Bushfire overlay – access, water access considerations.
- Introduce tree protection zones – camping safety.
- Review pedestrian path connections and standards (1.8m wide shared).
- Approx. middle of the Rail Trail route – ideal overnight stop.



Brewery Dam

Committee of Management

- Construction of pathway around the dam. Likely to require a raised walkway/bridge across eastern side of dam.
- Improve entrance track and parking area – grading, additional gravel/road mix. Improve road drainage at entrance.
- Consider recycled plastic park furniture – not wood. Wood often vandalised, burnt or stolen.
- Improve drainage to create better overflow drainage and flow into the dam, to maintain a consistent depth
- Primarily a fishing/picnic site.
- Retain or replace existing fishing jetty.
- Former Fire Training Track at the front of the property no longer used/required.

Council Staff

- Enhance informal recreation opportunities. Potential native garden attraction.
- Dam may be spring fed – rarely/never empty.
- Risk assessment may be required prior to encouraging additional community use.
(NB: a risk assessment was subsequently undertaken by Council staff – refer Appendix).
- 'Uncontrolled' overflowing of the dam an issue – potentially compromising the dam wall integrity. Consider options to resolve.
- Upgrade the gravel car park area – better definition and maintenance (remove 'internal' road).

Public Exhibition

Following consideration of the Smythesdale Gardens and Brewery Dam Reserve Draft Master Plan at its meeting on Tuesday, July 25, 2023, Golden Plains Shire Council sought additional community input via public exhibition of the draft material between Wednesday 26 July to Wednesday 23 August 2023.

The Draft Master Plan was heavily promoted by Council's Communications & Engagement team during the public exhibition period, however, only two formal submissions/survey responses were received. In addition, a further email was received from the Smythesdale Progress Association/Gardens Committee of Management.

All feedback indicated in-principle support for the directions outlined in the Draft Master Plan, however suggestions for improvement and/or clarification were requested in relation to potential for more permanent accommodation at Smythesdale Gardens, treatment of the central overland flood area (at the Gardens) as well as landscape treatments, traffic management, flood flow and rubbish removal at the Brewery Dam site.

All feedback has been considered in the subsequent updating of the Master Plan (i.e. this report), however it is acknowledge that some feedback would need to be considered in future detailed designs for on-ground works at each respective site. There was no feedback, comments or suggestions that warranted any major changes to the initial draft master plans.



5. Site SWOT Analysis

Having regard to the situation analysis, site assessment and initial stakeholder engagement, the following summary Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threat (SWOT) analysis has been undertaken to inform the master plans for each site.

Gardens Reserve:

Strengths:

- Former Botanic Gardens – mix of vegetation and exotic trees.
- Popular ‘free camping’ area.
- Community event space.
- Adjacent to existing Ballarat-Skipton Rail Trail (half-way point).
- Relatively close to central business district and town attractions, including recreation reserve.
- Proactive community-led management.
- Existing sewage dump-point.
- Adjacent to Ballarat and District 4WD Club land.
- Art installations.
- Overall size – generous areas for informal camping.
- Playground / Pirate ship.
- Camp shelters.
- Internal perimeter (gravel) road provides good access to all sites.
- Arborist Assessment recently completed for all trees.

Weaknesses:

- Aged amenities block – showers and toilets.
- Poor drainage throughout site.
- Gravel roads and path washouts.
- Poorly defined pedestrian routes / paths.
- Ageing infrastructure, including park furniture, fencing and bollards.
- Memorial seating – age, condition, and locations.
- Gravel access roads at entry – including swale crossing (drop-off).
- Lack of entry signage.
- Lack vehicle speed controls.
- Unattractive wheelie-bins at front entrance.

Opportunities:

- Improve condition of the event space lawn (e.g. irrigation / watering / grass cover).
- Improve pedestrian circulation and path network.
- Improve site drainage – utilising a combination of engineered infrastructure and natural areas (e.g. overland flow).
- Better define camping areas/sites.
- Review traffic circulation and internal roads – including access to camping sites.
- Enhance landscaping, including garden beds to separate/define areas.
- Improve campfire facilities
- Holding yards for horses using the Rail Trail – overnight camping.
- Path connection to link to Woody Yaloak Creek / River Trail.
- Improve site signage – interpretive and regulatory.
- New consolidated amenities block and camp kitchen.
- Improved management of existing trees and implementation of a tree replacement strategy.

Threats:

- Senescent trees – potential risks from falling tree/limbs. Introduce tree protection zones – camping safety.
- Fire – bushfire and camping fires.
- Flooding impacting on access and use of the reserve.



Brewery Dam Reserve overflowing in October 2022

Brewery Dam:

Strengths:

- Attractive 'natural' area.
- Permanent water – 'spiring fed' dam.
- Native vegetation and bushland character.
- Complements other open space offerings in Smythesdale.

Weaknesses:

- Low levels of use.
- Relatively isolated site, not well known or accessible – i.e. lack signage or entry features.
- Poorly resolved water flow control, including overflow.
- 'Uncontrolled' overflowing of the dam potentially compromising the dam wall integrity. Explore options to resolve.
- Proximity of private property interfaces.
- Lack of perimeter / loop path.
- Poorly defined access and accessibility of entry path.
- Lack defined paths.
- Age, condition, design and location of existing jetty/pier – jetty was fully submerged during one site visit.
- Poor condition and amenity provided by existing car park and furniture – including limited vehicle controls.

Opportunities:

- Support informal community use e.g. yabbing, walking, picnicking etc.
- Improve site signage – including risk mitigation, regulations, and warnings, including No Swimming.
- Establish circuit path, including boardwalk where required.
- Replace existing pier/jetty with best-practice design (as per Risk Assessment, Appendix 1).
- Upgrade car park, access road and entry signage.
- Remove former CFA Training Track and infrastructure from front of the property. (It is acknowledged the CFA infrastructure is technically outside the study area).
- Establish and new entry feature to help identify the site.
- Install / replace park furniture at key locations.
- Reinforce indigenous / native planting and vegetation – including to improve access barriers to the dam edge.
- Better control access to the waters edge to defined locations.
- Establish a new pedestrian connection to / from Brooke Street.

Threats:

- Drowning – water interface.
- Water hazards and risks.
- Vandalism – including park furniture and signage.
- Bushfire / informal fires.
- Antisocial behaviour – relative isolation of the site.
- Periodic risk assessment required.
- Current lack of regular maintenance and the ability to maintain additional facilities

6. Master Plan

Smythesdale Gardens



Recommendations:

- S1 Implement recommendations from arborist assessment and develop a Tree Replacement Strategy to retain the current landscape character as senescent trees need to be replaced. Refer to Appendix C for arborist assessment. Reference on Master Plan refers to all trees.
- S2 Restrict access and revegetate overland drainage area to create a park feature and prevent vehicles being bogged. Detailed design to be completed to minimise the loss of camping spaces.
- S3 Undertake a drainage assessment of all roads including the entry area to identify scope of works required for upgrade. Explore options to transfer management / maintenance responsibilities for internal roads to Council and include on Council's annual unsealed road maintenance program.
- S4 Upgrade existing entrance signage and update existing internal signage. To be in accordance with Council open space reserves identification signage and consistency across the site.
- S5 Add additional historic signage within the gardens to share the rich site history
- S6 Upgrade existing crossover at main entrance to create a safer access for vehicles with caravans i.e. prevent wheel drop-off drainage crossing
- S7 Consider options to upgrade or replace the existing toilet and amenities facility.
- S8 Consider options to upgrade or replace the existing camp kitchen/BBQ shelter.
- S9 Investigate the level of use and ongoing demand for the existing "administration" building. If long-term use is required, upgrade/refurbish the existing building or consider building consolidation and incorporate function/s into potential amenity block upgrade.
- S10 Subject to review of Council Local Laws (i.e. fire restrictions), construct three communal campfire locations.
- S11 Upgrade the event lawn grass surface with irrigation and drainage where required.
- S12 Upgrade path network and connections to the Rail Trail and Woody Yaloak Creek.
- S13 Undertake a traffic circulation review to include internal roads and access to camping sites. Refer to arboist report to avoid conflict with existing trees.
- S14 Enhance landscaping including garden beds to separate / define areas following updated arborist report. Garden beds to act as safety buffer and reduce compaction under existing trees.
- S15 Retain and upgrade existing play equipment when at end of asset life.

If demand or future opportunity arises, explore the feasibility of onsite cabins or tiny house style accommodation.

Brewery Dam



Recommendations:

- B1** Undertake drainage assessment to identify site drainage function and address the recent flooding over the weir during a storm event. Drainage assessment to be completed prior to construction of new infrastructure to avoid visitor facilities being placed in flood prone or unsafe areas.
- B2** Upgrade existing entrance signage to be consistent with Council style guide for open space reserves. Include reference to 'Take Rubbish home'.
- B3** Install appropriate safety signage and barriers as recommended in the council risk assessment.
- B4** Construct a new path connecting bridge to jetty.
- B5** Construct a new path connecting Brewery Dam Road to jetty.
- B6** Revegetate area between path and water to create natural flora barriers.
- B7** Replace existing jetty with a jetty with edging.
- B8** Replace bridge with new bridge built or culvert crossing providing an accessible connection to the car park. This location has high volumes of water during a flood event.
- B9** Install 2 new picnic tables to Council's standard.
- B10** Upgrade / resurface gravel road and car park including vehicle controls to better define circulation and avoid conflict with picnic areas.
- B11** Protect and enhance existing vegetation.
- B12** Eliminate the existing outlet through the dam wall.
- B13** Construct a new circuit path and boardwalk around the dam, NB: drainage works to be undertaken to reduce area of water to allow path to be built on Council land.

Item	Recommendations:	Priority			Indicative Cost
		High	Medium	Low	
S1	Implement recommendations from arborist assessment and develop a Tree Replacement Strategy to retain the current landscape character as senescent trees need to be replaced. Refer to Appendix C for arborist assessment. Reference on Master Plan refers to all trees.				\$10,000 - \$20,000
S2	Restrict access and revegetate overland drainage area to create a park feature and prevent vehicles being bogged.				\$25,000 - \$50,000
S3	Undertake a drainage assessment of all roads including the entry area to identify scope of works required for upgrade. Explore options to transfer management / maintenance responsibilities for internal roads to Council and include on Council's annual unsealed road maintenance program.				\$100,000 - \$150,000
S4	Upgrade existing entrance signage and update existing internal signage. To be in accordance with Council open space reserves identification signage and consistency across the site.				\$20,000 - \$40,000
S5	Add additional historic signage within the gardens to share the rich site history.				\$10,000 - \$20,000
S6	Upgrade existing crossover at main entrance to create a safer access for vehicles with caravans i.e. prevent wheel drop-off drainage crossing.				\$10,000 - \$15,000
S7	Consider options to upgrade or replace the existing toilet and amenities facility.				\$150,000 - \$250,000
S8	Consider options to upgrade or replace the existing camp kitchen/BBQ shelter.				\$70,000 - \$80,000
S9	Investigate the level of use and ongoing demand for the existing "administration" building. If long-term use is required, upgrade/refurbish the existing building or consider building consolidation and incorporate function/s into potential amenity block upgrade.				\$10,000 - \$20,000
S10	Subject to review of Council Local Laws (i.e. fire restrictions), construct three communal campfire locations.				\$20,000 - \$40,000
S11	Upgrade the event lawn grass surface with irrigation and drainage where required.				\$20,000 - \$30,000
S12	Upgrade path network and connections to the Rail Trail and Woody Yaloak Creek.				\$40,000 - \$50,000
S13	Undertake a traffic circulation review to include internal roads and access to camping sites. Refer to arboist report to avoid conflict with existing trees.				\$50,000 - \$100,000
S14	Implement tree protection zones as recommend in the Arborist report to help maintain the health of existing tree stock. This may include extended garden beds and/or mulching and restricting camping access within designated tree protection zones.				\$150,000 - \$250,000
S15	Retain and upgrade existing play equipment when at end of asset life.				\$200,000 - \$300,000
Total:					\$885,000 - \$1.42m

7. Implementation Framework

The following tables provide an indicative framework to guide implementation priorities over the next 10+ years. Prioritisation has considered site assessment needs, asset conditions, stakeholder input and capacity to deliver. The Master Plans provide a vehicle to assist community groups and Council to explore opportunities to source external grants and funding to support implementation.

Brewery Dam

Item	Recommendations:	Priority			Indicative Cost
		High	Medium	Low	
B1	Undertake drainage assessment to identify site drainage function and address the recent flooding over the weir during a storm event. Drainage assessment to be completed prior to construction of new infrastructure to avoid visitor facilities being placed in flood prone or unsafe areas.				\$25,000 - \$50,000
B2	Upgrade existing entrance signage to be consistent with Council style guide for open space reserves. Include reference to 'Take Rubbish home'.				\$5000 - \$10,000
B3	Install appropriate safety signage and barriers as recommended in the council risk assessment.				\$10,000 - \$20,000
B4	Construct a new path connecting bridge to jetty.				\$25,000 - \$30,000
B5	Construct a new path connecting Brewery Dam Road to jetty.				\$5,000 - \$8,000
B6	Revegetate area between path and water to create natural flora barriers.				\$15,000 - \$25,000
B7	Replace existing jetty with a jetty with edging.				\$50,000 - \$70,000
B8	Replace bridge with new bridge built or culvert crossing providing an accessible connection to the car park. This location has high volumes of water during a flood event.				\$120,000 - \$150,000
B9	Install 2 new picnic tables to Council's standard.				\$10,000 - \$15,000
B10	Upgrade / resurface gravel road and car park including vehicle controls to better define circulation and avoid conflict with picnic areas.				\$130,000 - \$180,000
B11	Protect and enhance existing vegetation.				\$15,000 - \$25,000
B12	Eliminate the existing outlet through the dam wall.				\$2,000 - \$5,000
B13	Construct a new circuit path and boardwalk around the dam. NB: drainage works to be undertaken to reduce area of water to allow path to be built on Council land.				\$80,000 - \$100,000
Total:					\$492,000 - \$688,000

Hazard identification Risk Assessment Brewery Dam 7.02.2023

Golden Plans Shire Council - HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT

Department/unit:	Community Infrastructure	Assessment date:	7/02/2023	Incident date:	N/A
Location:	Brewery Dam – 29 Sebastopol-Smythesdale Road, Smythesdale	Risk Assessed as:	7/02/2023	Incident report number:	N/A
Description/context:	<p>It is proposed that there may be a slight re-design of the site to include more bench seating/tables to enable locals and visitors to enjoy the local flora and fauna of the site.</p> <p>It was observed the site does not get much use (observed 0 people at sight on Friday 3rd Feb 2023, and encountered 2 people on risk assessment date).</p> <p>It was observed the site is predominately used for yabbing.</p>	People involved in assessment:	Ryan Supple – Community Infrastructure Planner Kathryn Schneider – Recreation Officer Collen Taylor – Safety and Wellbeing Advisor Mark Bluschke – Senior Business Partner Safety & Wellbeing	Amount of previous same or similar incidents recorded:	N/A
Additional information:	The site consists of a dam at the centre, with a creek/river that typically would fill the dam. This creek/river has been blocked which may have contributed to the depth/size of the dam. This is proposed to be rectified at an unspecified date.	Person responsible for managing hazard/s:	Community Infrastructure in consult with contracted consultant for the site.	Policy/procedures or other documents relevant to this risk assessment:	N/A

Hazard * Situation, task, activity or things that have potential for harm or damage to people or things. What is the source of the risk?	Interaction/Risk *credible situation that links the hazard to the target.	Target/s *people, animals, environment or things that can be impacted.	Existing controls * What are the exact processes or things in place now to control the risk of harm? Refer to Control Hierarchy categories in Risk Matrix	Likelihood *the likelihood of the consequence occurring as a result of the specific interaction with the hazard. Refer to Risk Matrix descriptions for likelihood	Consequence *credible worst-case scenario (must be plausible and reasonable) if hazard interacts with target. Refer to Risk Matrix descriptions for consequence	Current Risk Rating *likelihood and consequence = risk rating Refer to Risk Matrix descriptions for risk ratings	Proposed new control measures *to reduce the current risk rating what new controls will you introduce to reduce the risk harm/damage? Be specific about exact control measures required.	Revised likelihood *the likelihood of the consequence occurring because of the specific interaction with the hazard now new controls are being considered?	Revised consequence *credible worst-case scenario (must be plausible and reasonable) if hazard interacts with target now new controls are being considered?	Residual risk *likelihood and consequence = risk rating	Person responsible for implementing new controls.	Comments and due date for implementing changes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cap Ex Budget allocation Required Staff training to be undertaken Consultant required Referral to Risk Coordinator Referral to Executive / Council
<i>Eg: ladder climbing</i>	<i>Eg: falls while climbing ladder</i>	<i>Eg: worker</i>	<i>E.G. What is the type of ladder in use now? What safety factors does it have (gutter hook, non-slip feet?)</i>	<i>E.G. It is "Likely" that worker will die or suffer serious long-term harm/injury if they fall off ladder (major consequence).</i>	<i>E.G. Worst-case consequence of worker falling is "Major" – worker could die or suffer serious long term harm/injury.</i>	<i>E.G. The current risk rating for "Likely" and "Major" is Very High.</i>	<i>E.G. Now using EWP's for work above 2 metres. Training & licencing of staff for EWP use. Where use is ladder unavoidable, we have new fall restraint systems installed and gutter hooks on all ladders.</i>	<i>E.G. It is "Unlikely" that worker will die or suffer serious long-term harm/injury with new control measures in place.</i>	<i>E.G. Worst-case consequence of worker falling is now "Minor" (minor physical injury with some medical treatment required)</i>	<i>E.G. The risk rating for "Unlikely" and "Minor" is Low.</i>	<i>E.G. Team supervisor</i>	<i>E.G. Team supervisor to organise training for EWP by 1/9/21 Team supervisor to demonstrate and train staff to use fall restraint and gutter hooks by 1/9/21</i>
Varying depths of water within the dam	Potential drowning in the dam	Residents and visitors to the dam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An old sign (Appendix 1) which refers to accessing site at own risk. Natural flora barriers around deep part of the dam 	E (Rare) – there has not been an incident recorded of a person drowning within the dam. There is also no recollection from council or members of the public identifying the space as a place locals would swim	4 (Major) – although it has not happened, the consequence of a drowning would be of major consequence	E4 – Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The use of some extra non-swimming signs at the entry points to site and at the small jetty The use of 'parental supervision' signs 	E (Rare)	3 (Moderate)	E3 (Low) – By providing the signage to visitors, you are educating them of the dangers posed by the dam	Community Infrastructure in consult with contracted consultant for the site.	

Golden Plans Shire Council - HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT

						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A sign depicting why it is a no swimming site (bacterial growth, underwater snags, unpredictable depths) - Please see appendix 1 for more information - Tidy up of natural flora barriers to clearly define walkway to water (appendix 2 provides an example) - NOTE: If the site becomes more popular, addition risk assessment will be required. Provision for the area could be potential fencing in the natural flora as depicted in appendix 2, however, space is not at this level of traffic at this point in time. 					
Small Jetty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potential access point for diving/swimming - Potential area for wheeled objects (prams) rolling off the jetty and into the water 	Residents and visitors to the dam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An old sign (Appendix 1) which refers to being a no-swimming site 	E (Rare) – there has not been an incident recorded of a person drowning within the dam. There is also no recollection from council or members of the public identifying the space as a place locals would swim	4 (Major) – although it has not happened, the consequence of a drowning would be of major consequence	E4 – Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In addition to the above, potential to install edging to the jetty. This edging could be a wooden sleeper that would stop the roll of wheels (appendix 3). - If above is installed, allow for the potential for railing to be installed as the place becomes more popular. 	E (Rare)	3 (Moderate)	E3 – in addition to above, the slight barrier can stop the chance of wheeled objects rolling off the jetty	Community Infrastructure in consult with contracted consultant for the site.

Golden Plains Shire Council - HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT

Appendix 1



Current signage at Brewery Dam



Signage used at Lethbridge Lake, larger area than Brewery Dam.



Proposed to use this type of signage.



Signage used at watering hole in Grampians. Provided as an example.

Appendix 2

Golden Plans Shire Council - HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT

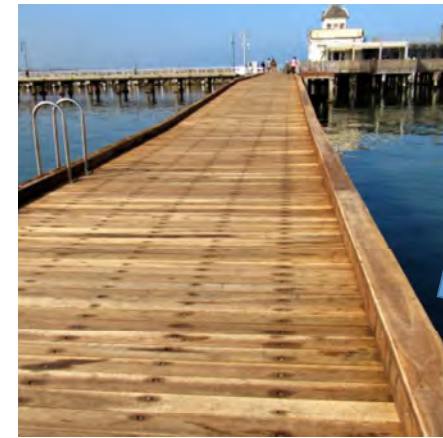


Potential design if space becomes more popular and after an addition risk assessment

Appendix 3



Jetty at Brewery Dam



Proposed type of edging (not as thick) to avoid roll off

Risk Control Action and Implementation Plan

Golden Plans Shire Council - HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT

1. List each of the identified control measures
2. List the due date, the date the control was implemented and by whom
3. Determine a date by which to evaluate the effectiveness of the risk controls
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of the risk controls and determine the residual risk rating

ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN					
Risk Control / Action (List the identified Risk Controls)	Due Date (By what date will this be done?)	Implementation Date (What date was the control implemented?)	Implemented By (Who implemented the control?)	Evaluation Date (When will the control be evaluated?)	Actual Residual Risk Rating (What is the risk level after the evaluation?)
Installation of signs at entry points to dam and jetty. - Signs to be of AS 1319			Community Infrastructure in consult with contracted consultant for the site.		
Tidy-up of natural flora barriers			Community Infrastructure in consult with contracted consultant for the site.		
Potential instal of sleeper around jetty edge			Community Infrastructure in consult with contracted consultant for the site.		

RISK CONTROL EVALUATION:
 Provide comment on the effectiveness of the Risk Control including how the risk control was evaluated?

* If ongoing evaluation, review or checks are required, add to relevant Operational Checklists and/or Training and Preventative Maintenance Schedules

Golden Plans Shire Council - HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT

Table 1: Likelihood Ratings

Likelihood	Category	Description
Almost Certain	A	Event expected to occur most times during formal operations or in most circumstances
Likely	B	Will probably occur at some stage based on evidence of previous incidents. Will probably occur in most circumstances
Possible	C	Not generally expected to occur but may under specific circumstances. Should occur at some time
Unlikely	D	Conceivable but not likely to occur under normal operations; no evidence of previous incidents
Rare	E	Only ever occurs under exceptional circumstances

Table 3: Levels of Risk Matrix

Likelihood	Consequence				
	1 - Negligible	2 - Minor	3 - Moderate	4 - Major	5 - Catastrophic
A Almost Certain	Medium	High	High	Very High	Very High
B Likely	Medium	Medium	High	Very High	Very High
C Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Very High
D Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	High	High
E Rare	Low	Low	Low	Medium	High
Very High - Immediate action required. Executive attention required to ensure appropriate and required controls are in place.			High - Prompt action required. Manager, Coordinator and/or Team Leader close supervision required to implement additional controls and report to Executive on actions.		
Medium - Current identified controls should apply. Managers responsible for ensuring controls are and continue to be effective.			Low - Monitor for changed conditions. Controls are appropriate and to be monitored for ongoing suitability		

Table 2: Risk Consequence Descriptors

Consequence	Category	Description
Catastrophic	5	Extensive financial loss (>\$1M), multiple fatalities, threatens viability of business, extensive litigation, disaster management required, national media attention, loss of function across organisation
Major	4	Major financial loss (\$500k - \$1M), Major physical or environmental impact, fatality or serious long term injury, serious public or media outcry, loss of critical IT functions, major breach of obligations/law leading to litigation
Moderate	3	Significant financial loss (\$50K-\$500K), significant environmental impact, significant injury involving time lost medical treatment and hospitalisation, complaint or breach involving a statutory body and investigation, public criticism with or without media attention
Minor	2	Minor financial loss (\$10k - \$50k), minor physical injury with some medical treatment required, minor event which can be contained and managed internally, heightened community concern or criticism
Negligible	1	Negligible financial loss (<\$10k), first aid only required, isolated complaint with minimal adverse attention, minimal failure of internal controls

Control Hierarchy

The control hierarchy is a list of control measures, in priority order, that can be used to eliminate or minimise exposure to hazards.

Below is the control hierarchy with general examples of each control measure:

Elimination: Avoid the risk by removing the hazard completely.

Substitution: Use less hazardous procedures, substances, equipment or process.

Isolation: Separate the hazard by the use of barriers, enclosures or distance.

Engineering Controls: Mechanical or physical changes to equipment, materials or process.

Administrative Controls: Change procedures to reduce exposure to the hazard

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Gloves, goggles, enclosed shoes etc.

Appendix B

Smythesdale Gardens Arborist report 12.02.2014

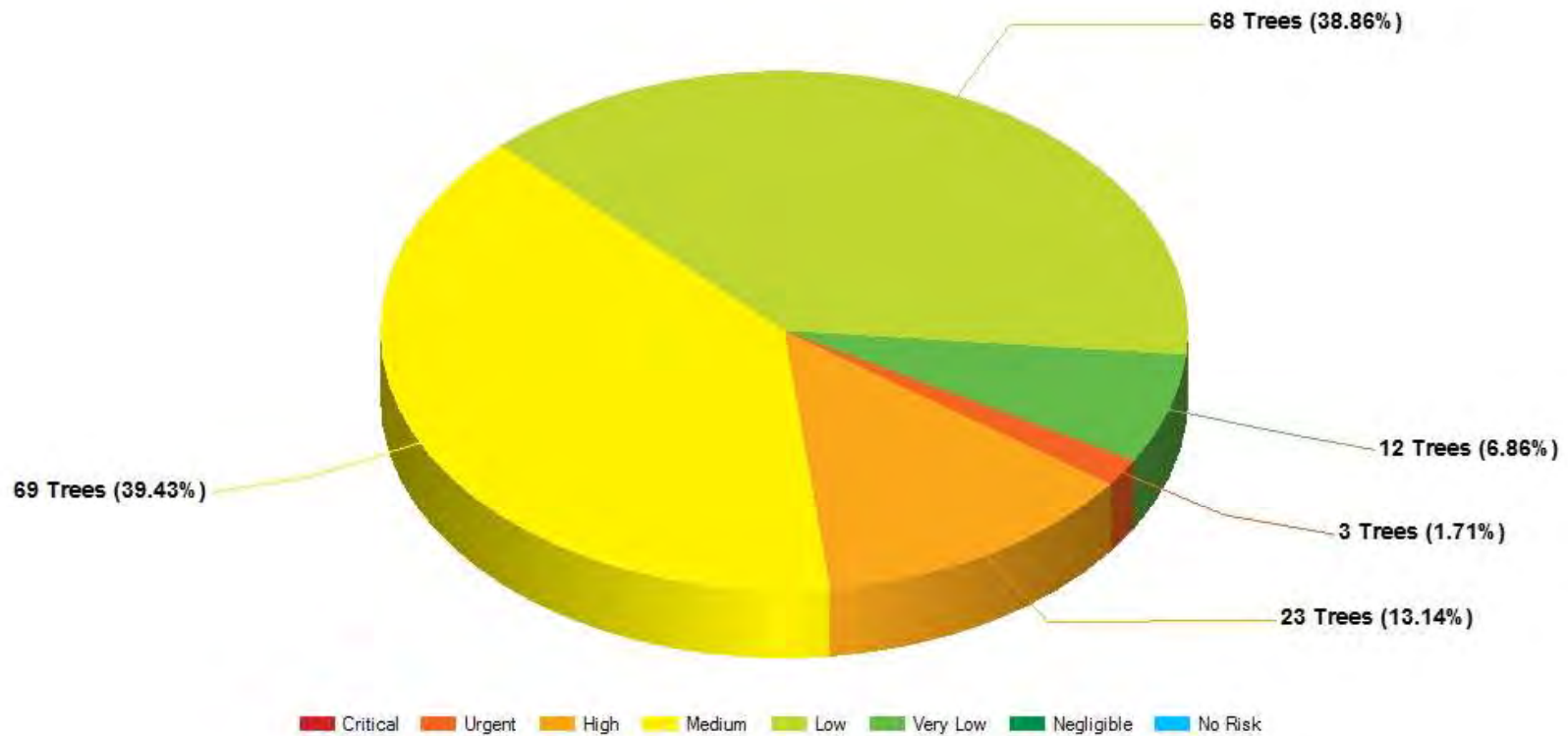


Golden Plains Shire





Golden Plains Shire, Smythesdale Botanic Gardens - Total Tree Inventory by Risk (175 Trees)



Appendix C

Smythesdale Gardens Arborist report 11.05.2023



Tree/s Location: Smythesdale Gardens, VIC 3351

Completed for: Golden Plains Shire

Inspection date: 18, 19 & 20 April 2023

Date of report: 11 May 2023

Prepared by: Jimmy Ross, Consulting Arborist

Diploma of Arboriculture, Fairfield Polytechnic (Level 5)

Phone: 0415 944 987

Email: info@treecareconsulting.com.au

ACN: 637 683 339

ABN: 14 637 683 33



Arboricultural Hazard Assessment. The Grace McKellar Centre, 45-95 Ballarat Road, North Geelong, VIC 3215

5. TREE AUDIT

For the purposes of the audit, trees have been given a colour code to indicate priority. The following timeframes for work to be completed apply to these priorities:

Low	12 months
Moderate	3 months
High	1 month

The colour code within the audit corresponds with the tree numbering on the provided site map.

5. TREE LOCATIONS





2 Pope Street, Bannockburn, VIC 3331
19 Heales Street, Smythesdale, VIC 3351

PO Box 111, Bannockburn, VIC 3331

☎ 5220 7111

@ enquiries@gplains.vic.gov.au

💻 goldenplains.vic.gov.au

CUSTOMER HUB HOURS

Golden Plains Civic Centre, Bannockburn
8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

The Well, Smythesdale

8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

🐦 @GPSCouncilNews

📷 lovegoldenplains

📺 GoldenPlainsShire

👤 GoldenPlainsMayor