

Colac Memorial Square Master Plan Supporting Documentation

Colac Otway Shire Council

May 2017

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1- Summary of Existing Strategies and Planning Documents

The following is a summary of existing Colac Otway Shire Council strategies and planning documents that are relevant to Colac Memorial Square.

- 2011 Colac Otway Public Open Space Strategy
- 2012 Colac CBD and Entrances and Implementation Plan
- 2014-2017 Colac Otway Shire Physical Activity Strategy
- 2014 Arborist Report – Memorial Square
- 2015 Arborist Report – Memorial Square
- 2015 Conserving the War Memorial

It is imperative that the Memorial Square Master Plan aligns with these documents.

Two Arboricultural Assessment Reports were prepared by Tree Watch LTW Pty Ltd based in Lorne. Trees were inspected from a visual assessment from the ground (Visual Tree Assessment). No climbing of trees was undertaken at both inspections of nearly a year apart.

Arborist Report (23rd November 2015)

The report documented photos of before and after pruning and listed the status of 32 Elm trees and one Oak tree.

The trees were assessed against a Matrix for determining level of risk taking into account Likelihood against consequences. The Likelihood scale is categorised from Almost certain failure to unlikely failure.

The consequences scale has ratings ranging from Fatality to negligible damage.

Actions

- A fully qualified and experienced Arborist to undertake other pruning works as specified in the document.
The minimum qualification to undertake tree works is:
 - An Advanced Certificate of Arboriculture
 - A National Certificate in Horticulture (Arboriculture) Level 4All pruning work is to be in accordance with the Australian Standards – Pruning of Amenity Trees (AS 4373-1996)
- The trees in the square are to be inspected every six months by an experienced Level 5 Arborist.
- Inspect soil moisture within the square every two weeks.

Arborist Report (19th December 2014)

Actions

- Remove one Elm tree to the south of Memorial Square within the next 9 months.
- Undertake pruning works to two Elm trees to the north and one Elm tree to the south within the next 9 months.
- Undertake pruning works to one Elm tree to the south within the next 18 months.
- A fully qualified and experienced Arborist to undertake other pruning works as specified in the document.
The minimum qualification to undertake tree works is:

- An Advanced Certificate of Arboriculture
- A National Certificate in Horticulture (Arboriculture) Level 4
- Check and treat four elm trees for termites.
- Install a possum guard on one Elm tree to the south.
- Inspect soil moisture within the square every two weeks.

Conserving the Colac War Memorial (May 2015)

A report prepared by David Young, a Heritage Consultant based in Clifton Hill followed his ground inspection and an inspection by a cherry picker in March and April 2015.

The report advises the War Memorial was completed in 1924 and is 'one of the most impressive and aesthetically outstanding structures in Victoria' and is 'only bettered by the larger walk-in structures at Geelong and Melbourne'.

The main walling is of sandstone from Ballan and features swirling patterns of natural iron oxides. Plinth coursing and steps are of basalt bluestone. Limestone from Waurn Ponds was used in forming the lintels and columns flanking the entrance.

Unfortunately the memorial has suffered from vandalism through scratching initials and names in the soft sandstone including painted initials, splashes of food, drinks, etc.

Graffiti from 2010 was removed by grinding out, but left lighter-coloured patches. Older scratchings from 1967 and 1974 have become partly obscured by the gradual build-up of wind-blown dirt and dust. No attempt should be made to remove them. It is hoped that recent installation of CCTV will reduce the incidences of vandalism. Previous advice was provided in 2011 by an independent person which included cleaning with phosphoric acid and hydrochloric acid, high pressure water cleaning and repointing mortar joints. The 2015 report by David Young advises none of these treatments should be used as they would cause irreparable damage to the memorial.

The 2015 report documents works required for the conservation of the memorial in steam cleaning and use of biocide, desalination, strengthening stone through limewater consolidation, patch repairs of limestone, repointing, special sheltercoating and repainting of inscriptions.

The works need to be undertaken by specialist building or stone masonry contractors who are familiar with this type of conservation. Due to Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) reasons considerable scaffolding is required to safely undertake conservation works. The costs will be high and hence a commitment from Council in project managing the works. A proposed works programme set priorities and suggested detailed improvements.

In August 2015, David Young prepared an Opinion of Probable Costs for the conservation of the war memorial. Two scenarios for complete works except lettering or staged works except lettering were provided to Council

The complete works as of August 2015 for conservation works excluding repainting and regilding lettering was \$189,000. Staged works to the west wall and remaining works except repainting and regilding lettering was \$204,000. The separate costs for repainting and regilding lettering was \$226,500.

Colac CBD and Entrances Report and Implementation Plan (May 2012)

The report by Planisphere documented many streetscape and townscape improvements for central Colac. A chapter discusses and provides specific strategies and actions pertaining to Memorial Square and its interface to four surrounding CBD streets. Specific mention to Memorial Square include:

Objectives

- Maintain Memorial Square as the 'green heart of Colac's CBD'
- Provide improved tourist facilities around Memorial Square
- Protect and enhance tree canopy of the park and surrounding roads
- To restore views to the Memorial from Gellibrand Street
- To develop a pedestrian friendly area within and around Memorial Square
- To enliven the western edge of Memorial Square for community and tourism use

Actions identified for Memorial Square in the report include:

- Develop and implement a Conservation Management Plan
- Protect existing trees
- Install uplighting of trees within the square
- Improve safety of the taxi rank, including provision of CCTV
- Investigate car parking options for the streets surrounding the space
- Review trailer and coach parking on Dennis Street
- Redevelop amenities at the western end of the square and interface to Gellibrand Street.
- Replace the existing toilet block.
- Construct new amenities buildings, incorporate a bus stop, taxi rank, visitor information display, public toilets, new pavements to include a shared zone to Gellibrand Street, new street tree planting and undergrounding of powerlines.
- Install new street furniture of seating, litter bins, bike hoops within streets surrounding Memorial Square
- Promote and enhance existing events programmes to better utilise the square, and
- Encourage and assist businesses or building facades adjoining Memorial Square, thereby improving the amenity of the area.

Colac Otway Public Open Space Strategy (October 2011)

Colac Memorial Square is classified as a regional level open space and categorised as a formal garden.

Below are the recommendations specific to Memorial Square:

ACTIONS

- Improve Memorial Square as a destination for events and casual use.
- Investigate the viability of constructing a café/kiosk near the existing toilet block.
- Improve events infrastructure.
- Review options to either remove or restore the existing fountain.

Colac Otway Shire Physical Activity Strategy (2014-2017)

Below is the recommended action specific to Memorial Square:

ACTIONS

- Develop a works program for a staged upgrade of the square.

2- MEETINGS WITH KEY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

On Monday and Tuesday June 20th-21st, Michael Smith and Gianina Lopez of Michael Smith and Associates met with key stakeholder groups to discuss the Colac Memorial Square Master Plan project.

The members and representative of the groups are as follows:

Ernie Andres, Treasurer of Colac & District Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Andrew Searle, Organiser Custom Car and Bike Show

Brian Lloyd, Rodney Amos, Norm Dowie and Chris Potter, representatives of the Colac RSL

David Anderson, Carols by Candlelight

Ken O'Brien, Secretary of Colac Kana

Jan Dowie (Secretary), Glenys Myers and Sandra Grant, representatives of the Colac Lions Club

Robert Missen, Colac and District Historical Society

Mark Robinson, Team Leader – Colac Otway Shire Council Parks and Gardens

Responses were separated into:

- (a) Key Attributes
- (b) General Analysis
- (c) Key Issues
- (d) Key Opportunities

(a) KEY ATTRIBUTES

Colac & District Chamber of Commerce and Industry

- Many tourists
- Colac Memorial Square is a special park partly, due to its centrality - surrounded by shops with convenient car parking surrounding the square.
- 1 hour's drive from Ballarat, Geelong and Warrnambool.
- Chamber of Commerce are encouraging new businesses in vacant shops.
- Third Sunday of the month market conducted at the southwest corner.

Custom Car and Bike Show

- Annual car show 3rd Saturday in January.
- Financial evidence contributes to the retail economy particularly food shops.
- In organising and conducting the car show over one day, the organisers engage several local groups: Colac Rotary, Colac Fire Brigade, Venturers (Scouts) and Colac East Primary School.

Colac RSL

- Valued the cultural significance of the war memorial, the Elm trees and associated open areas.

Carols by Candlelight

- The square is a convenient and suitable space to conduct Carols by Candlelight toward the east end.

Colac Kana

- The Colac Kana Festival and Fair the Square are held every March. During the event day, vehicles are blocked from driving or parking in Murray Street.
- The southwest part of the southern quadrant of the square is where the Colac Kana stage with a marquee is set up, measuring approximately 8 x 5 metres.

Colac Lions Club

- The market is held every third Sunday of the month in Memorial Square, except during Lent when it is moved on Good Friday when it is held in conjunction with a family fun day and the Royal Children's Hospital Appeal.

Colac and District Historical Society

- Originally market square (produce market) with the lawn bowls club on current playground area. There was a library on the Hesse Street side. In the 1960's the Historical Society fought to keep the library in the square as a history centre and the bowling club fought to retain the bowls club. Council during that time wanted the square to be all clear.

(b) GENERAL ANALYSIS

Colac & District Chamber of Commerce and Industry

- Summer and spring are the main tourist periods. The square is very convenient for tourist due to its central location. During the warmer months, the long vehicle parking spaces are fully occupied.

Custom Car and Bike Show

- 250-300 cars and some motorbikes. Cars also displayed in Hesse Street and Dennis Street.
- Playspace and toilets are still accessible to general public.
- Fence off the bulk of perimeter to charge an entry fee.
- The organisers line mark the dripline of the elm trees as no-go zones and the organisers monitor to make sure no cars are parked within the driplines of trees. Dennis and Hesse Streets are used for additional display parking.

Colac RSL

- The Elm trees need to remain in the square to keep the character.
- Approximately 2,000 people come for the ANZAC Day Dawn Service every year

Carols by Candlelight

- Around 500-600 people, mostly families attend the Carols by Candlelight and they make use of the eastern 'quadrant' of the square

Colac Kana

- The southern quadrant of the square is the only flat area in the square that is large enough to fit the stage and has access to power. The drinking fountain on the south is in the wrong spot. There are currently only two locations with 3 phase power cylinders in the square.

Colac Lions Club

- Trees in the square used to be denser from years ago.

Colac and District Historical Society

- Elms are the main feature. Phasing out of the ageing trees with progressive replacement is good.

(c) KEY ISSUES

Colac & District Chamber of Commerce and Industry

- Vacant shops – several along Murray Street – encourage niche businesses in Colac CBD.
- Tired or outdated shopfronts
- More long vehicle parking.
- Branches of tree falling (older elms).

Custom Car and Bike Show

- Trees – cars avoid each elm's tree root system though line marking the day prior therefore avoiding compaction around trees.
- If it's wet weather leading up to the Saturday event inspection of grass are made by Council's Parks and Gardens staff.
- Long vehicle parking is taken up by display cars, so if tourists arrive with caravans or buses, they are displaced.

Colac RSL

- Don't create structures within the square as they will detract from the war memorial.
- Improve presentation of the fountain and the rotunda area.

Carols by Candlelight

- Apart from the major events, the square does not get too much use.
- Parents watching their children in the playspace are too exposed to sunlight due to lack of shade.

Colac Kana

- Needs more covered areas.
- During Colac Kana and 'Fair in the Square', the traffic and car parking are 'painful'. All the cars are blocked from Murray Street. Stall vendors for the fair park their vehicles in Dennis Street, near St. Vinnies, and stay for the entire day.
- The bushes around the rotunda are just litter traps.

Colac Lions Club

- Power box in the western 'quadrant' of the square has always been a problem, that's why it's not used anymore.
- Drainage is a problem, particularly puddles.

Colac Otway Shire Council Parks and Gardens

- Trees, especially aging trees, are a real danger when they're in full leaf.
- Some of the seats are not DDA-compliant

Colac and District Historical Society

- Playspace is out of date.
- Inadequate picnic tables and seats.
- Lack of incremental works for maintenance.
- Problem of implementation of previous plans.

(d) KEY OPPORTUNITIES

Colac & District Chamber of Commerce and Industry

- Clean up shop facades to Murray Street.
- Encourage niche businesses to set up their business in Colac CBD.
- More seats within the internal part of the square.
- More barbecues.
- Playspace is very popular update and can be potentially enlarged in the future.

Custom Car and Bike Show

- Retain the car show and contribute to local business economy. The group wants to keep the square for its annual car show display.

Colac RSL

- Pressure/steam/sand blast the upper level fountain cupola structure of the war memorial.
- Retain the mature elms and only elms to be used as the key features in the square.

Carols by Candlelight

- There are other dance groups and choirs who can utilise the square throughout the year if there was a more permanent structure (e.g. amphitheatre) that they can make use of. This structure doesn't have to be big nor intrusive. It can be made to a similar material or colour to the war memorial.
- It would be good if Council makes the square a free-to-use space that can be booked in advance, especially in summer.
- Provision of shade near the playspace.

Colac Kana

- More cover, more flat ground to utilise for performances, no holes and wet spots in the ground.

Colac Lions Club

- Additional BBQs, chairs and tables

Colac and District Historical Society

- The square could do with more colour.
- Young families travelling through Colac buy and eat food and entertain their children, so more picnic tables is needed to be added on the Murray Street side.
- Addition of more seats throughout the square.
- Small incremental works are required so that big master plans are needed in the future.

3- DROP IN TO LOCAL BUSINESS FRONTING COLAC MEMORIAL SQUARE

On Tuesday June 21st 2016 (9:45am till 1:45pm, 4-5pm), Michael Smith and Gianina Lopez of Michael Smith and Associates visited local businesses fronting the square to discuss the Colac Memorial Square Master Plan project. Discussion loosely revolved on the agenda below:

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER MEETING AGENDA

- Introduction of the project
- Introduction of the consultant team, including subconsultants.
- What are the square's attributes?
- Are there detracting elements in amenity, use and function of the square?
- How do you as an individual or group use the square?
- What improvements to the square can you suggest for both the short-term to long-term?
- Further comments and suggestions to be made to Council's Project Manager, in turn they will be provided to the consultant. Copies of the base plan and Nicole Frampton's business cards were provided to people who wanted to give further comment.
- Traders were informed of the community drop-in session on 7th July 2016.

The details of the local businesses and summary of information collected are on the following pages. All the businesses listed on the following page were visited, except for Culture Café, St. Vinnies Centre, Australian Hearing and Future Restaurant, which were closed when Michael Smith and Gianina Lopez visited businesses.

Local Business	Address	Contact Details
Ladies and Gents Clothing Alteration and Repairs	47 Gellibrand Street	Ph: 5231 2115
Ritcho's Bakery	51 Gellibrand Street	Ph: 5231 2813
Apollo Seafoods	53 Gellibrand Street	Ph: 5231 2824
Hickey's Central Meats	55 Gellibrand Street	Ph: 5231 2515
SLM Law	119-121 Murray Street	Ph: 5231 9400
Union Club Hotel	110-116 Murray Street	Ph: 5231 5644
ANZ Bank	108 Murray Street	
Dimmeys	106 Murray Street	Ph: 5231 5740
Spoils Clothing, Manchester and Toys	96-98 Murray Street	
Scentral Park Artificial Flowers, Incense and Gifts		
Trocadero Café and Deli	90 Murray Street	Ph: 5231 2211
Whizzes with Scissors	80 Murray Street	Ph: 5231 4135
Cowlick Bookshop	86-88 Murray Street	Ph: 5232 1072
Mudge's Shoes	82 Murray Street	Ph: 5231 3226
Bluesky Outdoor Experts and Park View Games and Toys	76 Murray Street	Ph: 5231 2347
Captain George's Fish and Chips	74 Murray Street	Ph: 5231 6371
The Footman/Jo's Pantry Organic Wholefoods	72 Murray Street	Jo de Lorenzo Ph: 5231 1111
Studio 92	70 Murray Street	Heather Mob: 0407 818 932
Hulm's Bakery	66 Murray Street	Ph: 5231 2080 Email: hulmsbakery@hotmail.com
Culture Café-Lounge-Bar	62-64 Murray Street	Ph: 5231 4111
Future Café	60 Murray Street	Ashraf Elabde Ph: 5231 3247 Mob: 0418 868 686 Email: Ashrafelabde@yahoo.com
Fusion Restaurant	58 Murray Street	Ph: 5232 2789
Treasure Hunters	54 Murray Street	Ph: 5231 4428
Colac Chiropractor	50 Murray Street	Ph: 5231 5594
LJ Hooker	48 Murray Street	Chris Peeters Ph: 5234 5000
NAB	42 Murray Street	
Southwestern IT Computer Sales and Repairs	50 Hesse Street	Ph: 5231 5900
Corangamite Catchment Management Authority	64 Dennis Street	Greg Ph: 5232 9100
Rosie's Dry Cleaners	46 Gellibrand Street	Ph: 5232 1222
Australian Hearing Clinic	33 Dennis Street	Ph: 5233 9100
Colac Electric Motor Co	35-37 Dennis Street	Ph: 5231 3981
(Ian Simpson Builder)	39 Dennis Street	
St. Vinnies Centre – Op Shop	41 Dennis Street	Ph: 5231 2738
AEC		
St. Laurence Employment Services	55 Dennis Street	Ph: 5231 9500

KEY ATTRIBUTES

- Playspace and toilets are the most used elements in the square
- A good place to sit during the warmer months.
- Many tourists make use of the toilets.
- There used to be an Aboriginal community who used the square.
- Presentation of the square is good, it never appears neglected. During the last 12 months, it appears more well-maintained by the Council.
- Colac Kana, the Car Show and other major events in the square are good for business for most of the traders.
- CCTV has improved safety in the square.
- The square is perceived as a social area for people to stop and have lunch.
- Local businesses facing southern side of the square consider the space a major asset.
- Very quiet in winter.

KEY ISSUES

- Underutilised, especially the northern 'quadrant' of the square.
- There is no fence around the playspace, making it difficult for parents or carers to watch their children playing. They can easily run to the road.
- The square looks old and tired. It would need updating to make it more welcoming.
- During Colac Kana and other major events in the square, sound bounce off the buildings. It would be good to have a permanent PA System and a structure to contain events sound/music.
- The monthly market in the square is not well attended. It's mostly locals who go to the market. Potential stall holders are discouraged from participating because of public liability issues and initial outlay of money to set up a stall.
- Too many vacant shops.
- The rotunda is underutilised.
- Colac is the home of Bulla Ice Cream. Perhaps some informational signage or a themed shop can be built about it.
- There is not much going on in the square on a Sunday.
- More parking spaces for long vehicles.
- There is not much on offer in the square for younger people. During Kana day, the atmosphere is amazing. It will be good if market day was like that.
- There are young people who come to the playspace at night, and use the play equipment.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- More picnic tables and seats, especially near to the playspace and to the southern quadrant of the square. More seats inside the square near footpaths. More seats away from the playspace for people who want to be away from children playing there.
- More barbecues, especially in the western side of the square where the playspace and toilets are.
- More attractions, activities and events. This would be a very welcome change for the eateries surrounding the square. Suggestions for activities include the addition of a hedge maze and mini golf,
- Fencing for either the playspace or the entire perimeter of the square.
- More plants and flower beds to add colour to the square and especially during winter.
- More bins, especially to the eastern side of the square.
- Addition of elements such as colourful murals and sculptures to make the square more pleasing to the eye. Some locals would be happy to contribute furniture and sculpture or artwork for the square if they are recognised with a plaque.
- Stormwater could possibly be recycled in the square.
- Addition of stationary exercise and fitness equipment.
- Perhaps the monthly market can be made more versatile and spread the stalls in the square more and offer more variety in the kinds of products and services on offer.
- Make the square more accessible for people in wheelchairs.
- Upgrade the toilets.
- Addition of a footpath parallel to the road on the northern side of the square.
- Addition of CCTV or a safety light near the playground for safety.

4- COLAC OTWAY SHIRE COUNCIL STAFF WORKSHOP SESSION

On Tuesday 21st June 2016, a staff workshop was held in COPACC Meeting Room 2 to discuss the Colac Memorial Square Master Plan project. The list of people who attended and the agenda covered are as below.

Attendees

Nicole Frampton, Co-ordinator Recreation and Open Space
Michael Smith, Landscape Architect, Horticulturist and Urban Designer
Gianina Lopez, Landscape Architect
Stewart Anderson, Manager Environment and Community Safety
Ian Seuren, Manager Arts and Leisure
Vige Satkunarajah, Acting Manager Planning, Building and Health
Adrian Healey, Manager Economic Development and Events (including Tourism)
Clive Booker, Co-ordinator Assets and Property Services
Mark Robinson, Team Leader Parks and Gardens

Staff Workshop Agenda

- Introduction of the Consultant team including subconsultants.
- Aims and objectives of the study process including completion date. What are the square's attributes?
- Are there detracting elements in amenity, use and function of the square.
- What are the opportunities for further promotion and identity?
- What improvements to the square can you as a group or individual suggest?
- Time frame, further comments can be made to Council's Project Manager.

Suggestions made for the improvements on Colac Memorial Square

- Picnic tables around the playspace.
- Fence around gardens might detract from European-ness of it, but it's important for safety
- That Sunday market is not for profit, the RSL does it a community service
- Toilets and playground need upgrading. Playground needs renewal in the next two years. Square needs interpretation in terms of history, as well as the environmental work Council has done so far.
- Indigenous history. Shop fronts can do with a lick of paint.
- Custom Car and Bike Show has been an issue.
- During wet weather, they were reluctant to shift.
- Identify other possible users and what infrastructure is needed. Refer to Colac 2050 Growth Plan. Safety, accessibility and heritage are all important issues to consider. Accessibility between Lake Colac and Colac Memorial Square. What makes the square unique? Appropriate landscape. Safety needs to be enhanced. Suggestions are low fences, separation of activities, CEPTED. More passive recreation needs to be considered, so that people of all ages and all abilities can come and relax in the square. There is an integrated water management plan that can be utilised for the Master Plan.
- There is a document with costings on restoring the war memorial in the square. A heritage expert, Greg Anderson was the consultant.
- Look at 'Green Spine' from Gellibrand Street to Barongarook Creek. Link to Lake Colac is important in addition to link to the Botanic Gardens. European History. Art. Photo of what it looked like years ago can be painted on as a cladding to the existing toilet building. Make use

of clever lighting (e.g. lighting incorporated in pathways) and lighting effects. Think of the playspace in the square as a regional playspace – use earthy colours rather than McDonalds fluoro. Perhaps a military themed playspace that can tie in with history can be considered. What kind of events is suitable for the square? Is the Custom Car and Bike Show an appropriate event for the centre of Colac? What is the Consultants' plan to get community engaged?

- Survey questionnaire to be issued. Dedicated webpage where questions are posted to get more info (perhaps a My Colac Memorial Square Facebook page?). Make use of school network. Citizens' Jury is an opportunity to tap into, Awareness raising through local radio station.
- A historic anchor was found in Lake Colac that can be placed in Memorial Square as an attraction.
- There are so many opportunities for a facelift. Need to consider short term, medium term and long term strategies. Drinking fountains, shade structure, flagpoles (as a permanent structure for events signage).
- Trees are not discussed. These are vital to the character and presentation of the square. Materials used in the square is also important.
- It's important that locations of services (electricity, water, etc.) are known by people who hold events at the square.
- As with the master plan of Lake Colac, it's important to get the fundamentals right (bins, seats, etc.). Everything else is just icing on the top.
- Need a better understanding of power. Ants nest in the power boxes. Consider better Christmas decorations in the street, especially lighting.
- The corner trees on Murray Street are a problem.
- Consideration of wifi infrastructure.
- More events in the square.
- Identity in the precinct. Where is the best place for caravans/long vehicle parking?
- Long vehicles are actually not allowed to park in the angle parking, but some people still do it and take up 3-4 spaces for their caravans. Maybe some signage on where alternative long vehicle parking is would be good. Serious discussion with Custom Car Show people where they can park and not take up four long vehicle parking spaces during the event day.
- More colour for the square. Key areas of gardens for annual and perennial displays.
- Consider seasonality of plants, so there'll be something colourful during winter.
- RSL might have a problem with the square being too colourful.
- Outside of Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance, the war memorial at Colac Memorial Square is one of the most significant war memorials in Victoria.
- Staging of improvements is essential. It's particularly important to have tangible elements installed during the early implementation stage.

5- COLAC OTWAY SHIRE COUNCILLORS BRIEFING MEETING

On Wednesday 7th July 2016, a Councillor briefing was held in COPACC Meeting Room 2 to discuss the Colac Memorial Square Master Plan project. The list of people who attended and the agenda covered are as below:

Attendees

Cr Lyn Russell
Cr Frank Buchanan (Mayor)
Cr Stephen Hart
Cr Brian Crook
Cr Terry Woodcroft (Deputy Mayor)
Ian Seuren, Manager Recreation, Arts and Leisure
Ingrid Bishop, General Manager Infrastructure and Leisure
Mark Lyons (Acting CEO), General Manager Corporate Services
Brydon King, General Manager Development and Community Services
Daniel Fogarty, Manager Financial Services
Nicole Frampton, Recreation and Open Space Co-ordinator
Michael Smith, Landscape Architect, Horticulturist and Urban Designer
Gianina Lopez, Landscape Architect

Councillor Briefing Agenda

- Introduction of the Master Plan project and the Consultant team.
- Summary of consultation activities done so far and the key strengths, issues and opportunities that were found in each activity.
- Further community engagement activities planned.
- Time frame, further comments by Council's Project Manager.

Discussion

- Appreciated the opportunity to work on the Master Plan due to its historic/cultural significance and because it's an important space.
- The anchor discovered in Lake Colac should be located at the lake. Don't install at the square.
- Lone Pine opportunity to celebrate with audio/QR code technology for better interpretation. Speech. Small plaque, better interpretation. WiFi suggestion from staff workshop was just to have a Wifi hotspot to attract people to the square, instead of them having to go to McDonalds to use the internet.
- What does it mean to be DDA compliant? Likes square. Not sure about the need to mention shops. Special place. Can cater for 1 or 2 more events.
- Old pipes galvanised. Water pressure is low is because there is a history of leaking pipes. There is no available plan of where services are located underground e.g. water, power – can a services map be provided to assist event organisers. All outer seats look to the street or road, no seats look inward. Near Memorial, no permanent seats are provided for older participants of Anzac and Memorial Day services are held – this could be done to provide permanent seats for reflection when visiting the Memorial. Need for upgrade of power outlet and possible second outlet at other end of square. Outlet works but history of shut off when overloaded. **No** anchor to be displayed. No anchor should be at the lake. **No** increased car parking invading the square. Retain the open space, with no permanent structure(s). There are complaints about capeweed which when flowering causes asthma and allergies. Path edges are uneven and difficult to navigate. Path surface needs to be even and alleviate low areas that are subject to retaining water.

- Legitimate corner long vehicle parking. East end picnic tables.
- Memorial is not finished, need to add missing names. Need Boer War.
- Picnic tables on Murray Street side. Seats face road, some should be in the park. Wifi hotspot. Fence to playspace. Aging/mature trees need to be phased out but there's a need for more new trees. Good to see new trees are doing well.
- Have you spoken to the Neighbourhood House?
- Engage young people through the Rotaract group.
- How else can we engage youth?
- School newsletters.

6- INFORMAL INTERVIEWS DURING THE COMMUNITY DROP-IN SESSION

On Wednesday 7th July 2016 (11am-2pm), Michael Smith and Gianina Lopez of Michael Smith and Associates together with Council's Project Manager spoke to people who attended the Drop-In Session/Sausage sizzle at the square. The summary of their comments are as below.

KEY ATTRIBUTES

- It's a good stopover when driving to/from Geelong and Warrnambool.
- Playspace is well used.

KEY ISSUES

- Underutilised, there is a need for people to use the square more.
- Lack of Unisex toilets.
- Not enough shade, especially around playspace.
- Lack of fencing around playspace makes it hard to watch 2-3 children.
- Poor drainage within the square.
- Colac is not equipped for the Great Ocean Road closures, in terms of public toilets.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- Fence around playspace.
- Toilet facilities should be replaced/upgraded.
- Addition of playspace equipment such as a dinosaur slide. Addition of playspace elements that are suited for smaller children.
- More direct path to playspace.
- Installation within the square of the anchor that was found in Lake Colac, as signage for people to go to the lake.
- Hire out Frisbees, balls and minor play equipment for children.
- Addition of Unisex toilets.
- Addition of more colourful elements.
- Addition of shade structure.
- More picnic tables.
- Addition of more tables and seats on Murray Street side.
- More information (e.g. information board) on what's in the area.
- Duplicate rotunda to east end.
- Clean up the war memorial.
- Parking for taxis and disabled need better policing. They should be marked on road surface.
- More parking spaces for long vehicles.
- Addition of zebra crossing to Hesse and Murray Streets.
- Addition of a threshold to link to Murray Street shops.
- Improve drainage within the square.

7- SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM TRINITY COLLEGE YEAR 8 HUMANITY STUDENTS

In July 2016 Cr Brian Crook had undertaken a project with his Year 8 Humanity students from Trinity College, Colac. They were provided with an A3 base plan of the existing conditions of the square on which they wrote and drew improvements and features they would like to see in the square. The summary of the results are as below.

IMPROVEMENT	TOTAL
Upgrade playground (larger? flying fox/zipline, trampoline, workout station, gym at east end, bars, shelter, carousel, maze, double-sided climbing wall, treehouse)	31
Flower beds, gardens (colour, poppy bed/flowers around the war memorial, each side of park, rose garden, daffodils)	20
BBQ's\BBQ area (add or upgrade)	17
Toilets (upgrade or add more, east end of park, all sides of square, clean)	16
Seating (war memorial/playground/near a stage/all over park)	14
Free Wi-Fi	13
Aboriginal art (mosaic on paths, paintings, near rotunda)	10
Tables and chairs (near park, east side of square, close to fountain)	9
Trees\plants (pathways, new trees, natives)	9
Additional fountain, pond and fish, play fountains, splash pad, lazy river/moat, pool	8
Improve rotunda, provide shelter, Undercover area for families, undercover seating	8
Drinking taps	7
Upgrade fountain (natural looking, clean up)	7
Additional paths (change to cobbled, one around the war memorial)	5
Statue/art pieces/sculpture (local artists) (like Brunt's trucks, Keep memorial crosses in garden all year round)	5
Lighting (paths, improved, change)	4
Garden walk	4
Fairy lights and Christmas lights December, big Christmas tree	4
Bike track, bike jumps	4
Additional playground (east end of park)	3
Better entrance	3
More bins	3
Feature wall (mural), handball	3
Maintenance (painting, cleaning, change colour scheme)	3
Reflection garden	2
Info board about Colac	2
Stage	2
Basketball ring	2
Vegie garden (public use)	2
Restore clock (add lookout)	2
Mural on Toilet Block	1
Visitor Centre	1
Creek	1
Dogs off leash zone	1
Rentable bikes	1
Fix bike racks	1

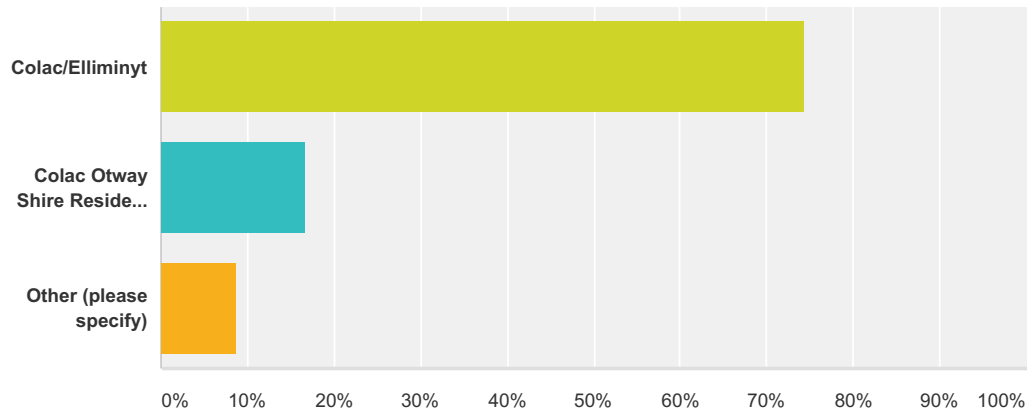
A fence all around the boundaries	1
Soccer nets	1
Skate park	1
Cricket pitch	1
Newsagency stand	1
Car park	1
Ponies	1
Coffee van, Ice-cream truck (summer)	1

8- Summary of responses to the online survey (Survey Monkey)

The following pages are the summaries of responses received from each of the 11 questions from the online survey (Survey Monkey) for the Colac Memorial Square Master Plan from July 7th to August 3rd 2016.

Q1 Where do you live?

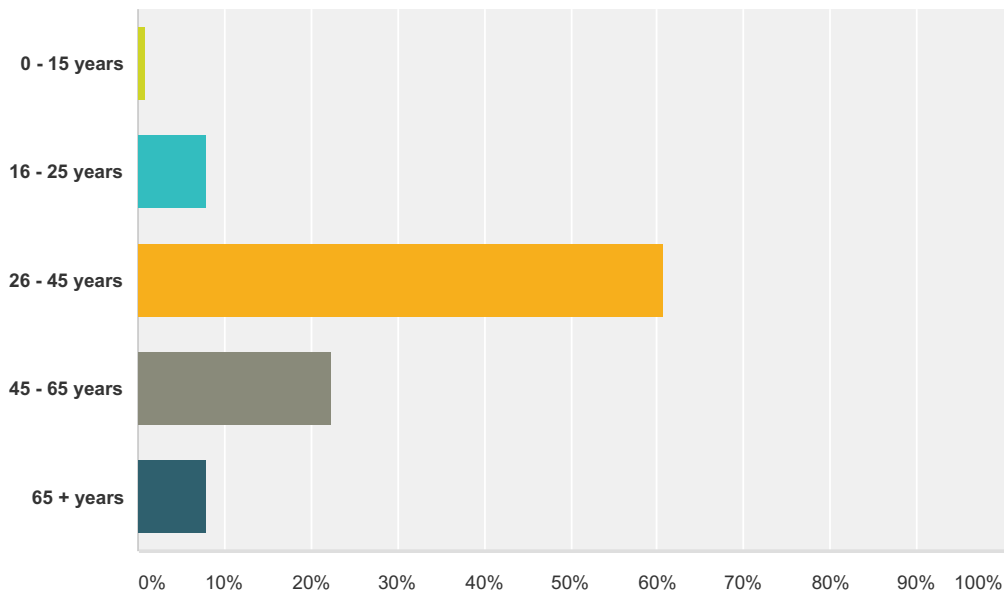
Answered: 125 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Colac/Elliminyt	74.40% 93
Colac Otway Shire Resident but does not live in Colac or Elliminyt	16.80% 21
Other (please specify)	8.80% 11
Total	125

Q2 How old are you?

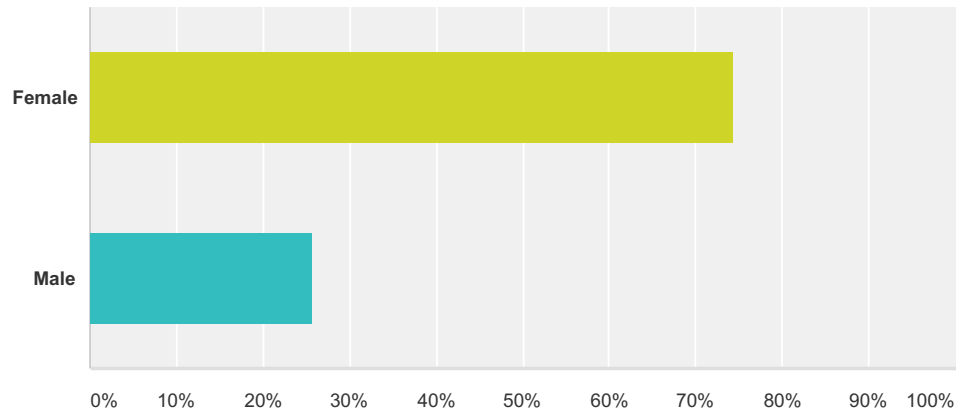
Answered: 125 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
0 - 15 years	0.80% 1
16 - 25 years	8.00% 10
26 - 45 years	60.80% 76
45 - 65 years	22.40% 28
65 + years	8.00% 10
Total	125

Q3 What is your gender?

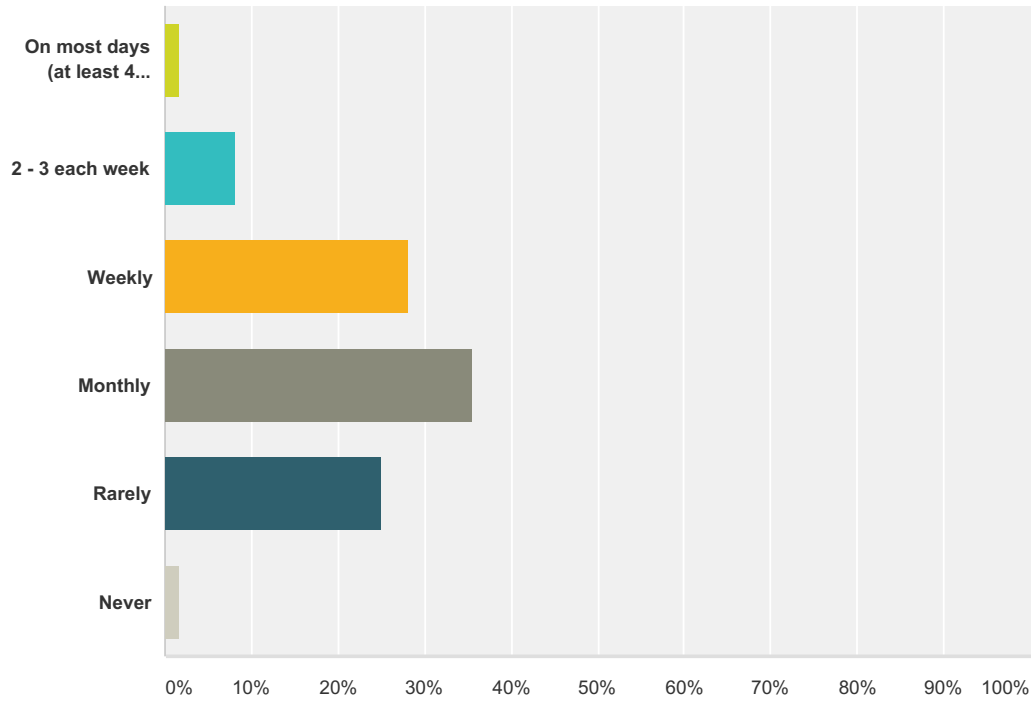
Answered: 125 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Female	74.40% 93
Male	25.60% 32
Total	125

Q4 How often do you visit Colac's Memorial Square? Please tick one option only.

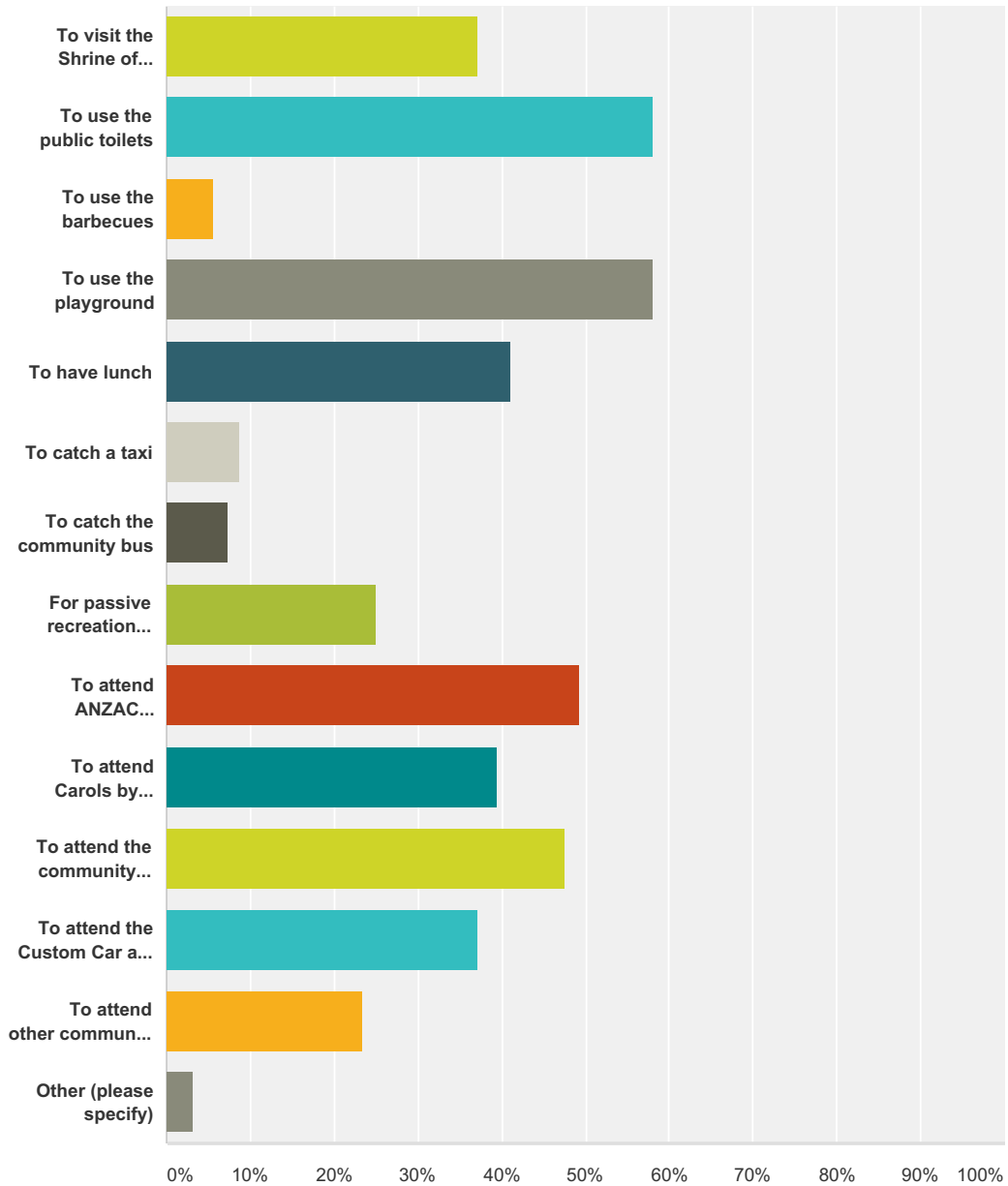
Answered: 124 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses
On most days (at least 4 times each week)	1.61% 2
2 - 3 each week	8.06% 10
Weekly	28.23% 35
Monthly	35.48% 44
Rarely	25.00% 31
Never	1.61% 2
Total	124

Q5 In the past 12 months, why have you visited Memorial Square? Please tick all applicable.

Answered: 124 Skipped: 1

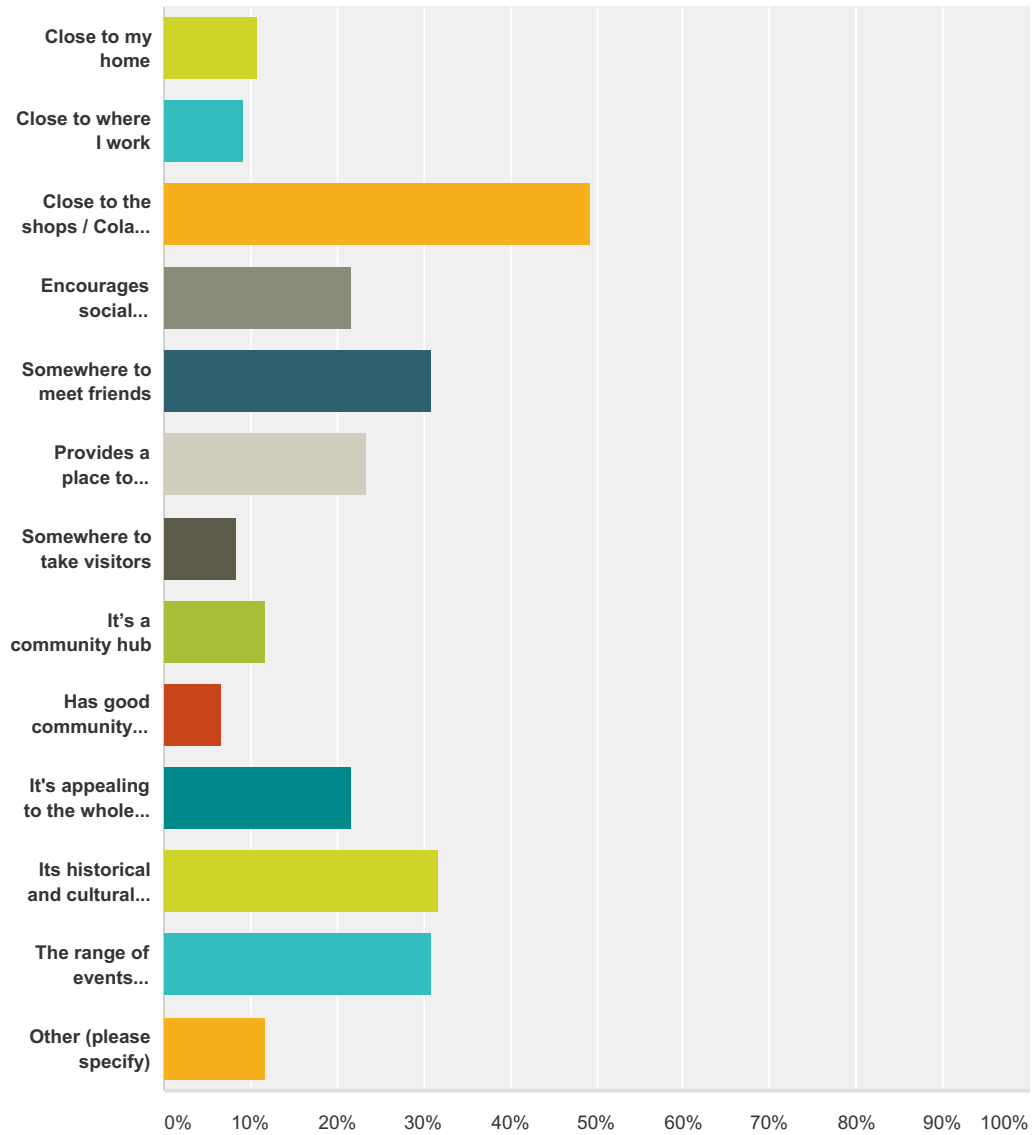


Answer Choices	Responses
To visit the Shrine of Remembrance	37.10% 46
To use the public toilets	58.06% 72
To use the barbecues	5.65% 7
To use the playground	58.06% 72
To have lunch	41.13% 51
To catch a taxi	8.87% 11
To catch the community bus	7.26% 9

For passive recreation activities such as walking	25.00%	31
To attend ANZAC Day/Remembrance Day activities	49.19%	61
To attend Carols by Candlelight	39.52%	49
To attend the community markets	47.58%	59
To attend the Custom Car and Bike Show	37.10%	46
To attend other community events	23.39%	29
Other (please specify)	3.23%	4
Total Respondents: 124		

Q6 Why is Memorial Square important to you/your family? Please tick up to 3 options.

Answered: 120 Skipped: 5



Answer Choices	Responses
Close to my home	10.83% 13
Close to where I work	9.17% 11
Close to the shops / Colac CBD	49.17% 59
Encourages social interaction	21.67% 26
Somewhere to meet friends	30.83% 37
Provides a place to unwind/rest/relax	23.33% 28
Somewhere to take visitors	8.33% 10
It's a community hub	11.67% 14
Has good community facilities	6.67% 8

It's appealing to the whole family	21.67%	26
Its historical and cultural features	31.67%	38
The range of events conducted within the square	30.83%	37
Other (please specify)	11.67%	14
Total Respondents: 120		

Q7 What do you like best about Memorial Square?

Answered: 105 Skipped: 20

Central location to the CBD – 46

Playspace – 19

Trees – 18

The Shrine – 16

Special space – 12

Historical significance – 7

Community and event space – 7

Fountain – 6

Memory and iconic to Colac – 5

Q8 If you could change, add or improve three (3) things at Memorial Square, what would they be?

Answered: 105 Skipped: 20

Update the playspace – 35

Fence the playspace – 21

Sheltered seats and tables – 20

More barbecues and covered – 16

Feature garden beds/more colour – 12

More picnic tables strategically located – 11

Upgrade the toilets – 8

More shade/shelter – 7

More events – 5

Lighting upgrade – 5

Q9 Council understands the cultural and historical significance of Memorial Square to the community. What shouldn't change at Memorial Square?

Answered: 104 Skipped: 21

The shrine – 57

The Elm trees, but remove unsafe trees – 18

The Fountain – 16

It's fine, leave as is – 9

Shrine should be honoured and be the focus – 6

Retain children's spaces – 4

Paths – 3

Q10 Do you have any other ideas or comments you would like to share regarding Memorial Square?

Answered: 79 Skipped: 46

Fence the playspace – 8

More events, including community events, i.e. live shows, concerts, picnic days and exhibitions – 7

**9- ASSESSMENT OF MERIT OF IDEAS RAISED DURING THE
CONSULTATION PROCESS**

COLAC MEMORIAL SQUARE MASTER PLAN

The following document is the consultant team's assessment of merit of key opportunities identified during the consultation with community organisations and groups, the general community (through informal interviews and the online survey), business owners in the perimeter of the square, Colac Otway Shire Council staff and councillors sessions.

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSULTANTS ASSESSMENT OF MERIT		PRIORITY		
	Yes	No	High	Medium	Low
INFRASTRUCTURE					
Restore and maintain the Colac War Memorial. <i>The focus and the main feature of the square is the war memorial. It should be restored and be better presented.</i>	✓		✓		
Re-render/paint the perimeter base of the existing circular fountain. <i>The fountain is in a prominent location within the square and Colac CBD. It should be better presented.</i>	✓			✓	
Install seats on the eastern side of the rotunda. <i>If the rotunda is to be used for more events, additional seating is needed.</i>	✓			✓	
Upgrade the paved and dated surface and steps at the rotunda. <i>Some of the steps are cracked and are safety hazards.</i>	✓			✓	
Increase the size of the playspace to facilitate additional play experience opportunities. <i>This could be a long stay playspace as other supporting infrastructure such as toilets, picnic tables and seating are already currently on site.</i>	✓		✓		
Replace/renew some/all of the playspace equipment to provide a greater range of play experience. <i>It is necessary that the playspace be able to keep older children engaged.</i>	✓		✓		
Install long bench curved seating combined with shrubs to the west and north sides of the playspace. <i>It is a good idea to provide physical barriers to the playspace to keep young children safe. It is especially useful when events are on to keep children safe and easily supervised. This could be achieved through long seating and garden strips.</i>	✓		✓		
Install CCTV or a safety light near the playspace for safety.	✓			✓	
Provide natural shade to the playspace. <i>This would assist in making the playspace a long stay destination in the warmer months.</i>	✓		✓		
Install a giant chessboard on the ground and on several picnic tables. <i>It could add an interesting dimension to the town square character and will appeal to a range of ages.</i>	✓				✓
Prepare a style guide for a consistent look for seats, barbecues, picnic tables and bins. <i>Site furniture should be consistent and take reference to the existing street furniture within Colac and/or Colac's history.</i>	✓			✓	
Install picnic tables near the playspace and to the park, i.e. the Murray and Hesse Street Section. <i>All the existing picnic tables are located on the Dennis Street side away from the most utilised areas of the square (toilets and the playspace).</i>	✓		✓		
Construct additional overhead and weather protection to some picnic tables and certain space. <i>This would encourage more people to visit even during hot or wet weather.</i>	✓			✓	
Consider the installation of more seats within the central part of the square. <i>This would encourage more people to visit and stay longer within the square. It would also benefit the elderly who come to the war memorial during ANZAC Day dawn service.</i>	✓			✓	
Orientate some of the Murray Street seats to face into the square. <i>All the existing Murray Street face outwards.</i>	✓		✓		
Consider the installation of two additional barbecues. <i>Additional barbecues will meet peak period use demands.</i>	✓			✓	
Construct new amenities (toilet facility) on Gellibrand Street. <i>Better toilets are needed if the square is to be utilised more and hold more events in the future.</i>	✓		✓		
Relocate the commemorative drinking fountain on the southwest section near Murray Street to a more accessible location. <i>This would be subject to a review of where the underground pipes are and where the best location for it would be considering the existing footpath network and entry point for vehicles.</i>	✓		✓		
Install drinking fountains with taps for filling water bottles. <i>Additional drinking fountains will make visitation more enjoyable. Taps for filling water bottles will be more hygienic than bubblers and less wasteful of water.</i>	✓			✓	
Upgrade the lighting to include uplighting and budlighting of selected trees.	✓			✓	

COLAC MEMORIAL SQUARE MASTER PLAN

The following document is the consultant team's assessment of merit of key opportunities identified during the consultation with community organisations and groups, the general community (through informal interviews and the online survey), business owners in the perimeter of the square, Colac Otway Shire Council department staff and councillors session.

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSULTANTS ASSESSMENT OF MERIT		PRIORITY	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
INFRASTRUCTURE				
Install festive decorations during Christmas time especially on the Murray Street side. <i>Murray Street is a prominent street where vehicles travelling to and from other destinations along Princes Highway would pass through especially during summer. It is an ideal location for installing eye-catching Christmas decorations such as a Christmas tree and fairy lights.</i>	✓			✓
Install more litter / recycling bins. <i>Most of the litter bins are located near the footpath on the Murray Street side and near the barbecues on the northern perimeter (Dennis Street).</i>	✓			✓
Construct a concrete footpath to the northern perimeter (Dennis Street). <i>This is a missing section of footpath network of the square.</i>	✓			✓
Fill and repair depressions in the existing footpaths. <i>There are potholes in some footpaths. A compliant footpath system will facilitate access for those pushing prams, wheelchair users and the elderly.</i>	✓			✓
Remove the tripping hazard of bluestone edging on footpaths. In the same process re-sheet the asphalt paths to establish a well defined junction to grassed areas. <i>Removing tripping hazards will ensure that the square is a safer destination for everyone.</i>	✓			✓
Round off the internal path intersections. <i>Vehicles requiring access into the space except authorised, are required to remain on the existing path system. This will facilitate smoother vehicle loading/unloading and bump in/bump out during events and minimise damage on the existing path system.</i>	✓			✓
Construct a sealed driveway to the north side (Dennis Street) for vehicle access during events. <i>There is a depression on the north side of the square which is already regularly used as an access point for vehicles. Formalising this vehicle access point would assist in general maintenance and in events.</i>	✓		✓	
EVENTS INFRASTRUCTURE/PROMOTION				
Construct a performance space as a concrete stage pad. <i>There is a demand for a flat area near a power supply that can be used during events (especially Colac Kana and Carols by Candlelight).</i>	✓			✓
Upgrade the square's permanent power supply (3 phase power). <i>This will specifically reduce the current safety issues for events and will allow the square to become a venue for more and/or larger events/activities.</i>	✓		✓	
Develop a Memorial Square services map to be made available to event organisers. <i>A services map will help in booking and holding events.</i>	✓		✓	
Conduct more community events within the square such as picnic days, exhibitions, concerts and other music events. <i>The square is underutilised.</i>	✓		✓	
Encourage local dance groups and choirs to use the square in other times (non-major events) of the year. <i>Dependent on Council reconsidering its event booking policies.</i>	✓		✓	
Encourage greater activity to the eastern half of either permanent or temporary activities. <i>There is a disparity in the use pattern within the square since the majority of the CBD is at the west end of the square as are the toilets and the playspace are at the western edge.</i>	✓			✓
Review the process for booking events and activities in the square. <i>Council to review its event booking policies, specifically relating to the use of Memorial Square. Ensure that all events are booked to allow programmed works.</i>	✓		✓	
Install community noticeboards of upcoming events on to the southwest and southeast corners. <i>This is a high profile site which is ideal to promote community information.</i>	✓			✓
Install flag poles along the Murray Street side for displaying event flags. <i>Flags should not be located near the war memorial.</i>	✓			✓
Manage vehicle access within the square. <i>This will assist during preparation for events/festivals in set up and removal of displays and infrastructure. Limit vehicle (event) access to high use pedestrian areas to prevent compaction of soil.</i>	✓		✓	

COLAC MEMORIAL SQUARE MASTER PLAN

The following document is the consultant team's assessment of merit of key opportunities identified during the consultation with community organisations and groups, the general community (through informal interviews and the online survey), business owners in the perimeter of the square, Colac Otway Shire Council department staff and councillors session.

OPPORTUNITIES	CONSULTANTS ASSESSMENT OF MERIT		PRIORITY	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
HERITAGE AND ART				
Install signage on the former use and history of the square. Include signage for other close by attractions. <i>This can link to the artwork and stories established along the Lake Colac Foreshore.</i>	✓			✓
Install information and incorporate aboriginal art within the square's infrastructure to recognise the Coladjin people. <i>The stories of the aboriginal people (Coladjin) from pre-European settlement should be better represented on the square. This can link to the artwork and stories established along the Lake Colac Foreshore.</i>	✓			✓
Incorporate a mural from a historical perspective on the toilet block.	✓			✓
Provide art installations both temporary and permanent involving local artisans.	✓			✓
PARKING AND TRANSPORT				
The Memorial Square Master Plan supports the implementation of the Colac Otway Shire - Colac CBD and Entrances Project Final Report's Actions relating to the redevelopment of the amenities, vehicle parking and pedestrian flow.	✓			✓
TREES AND LANDSCAPING				
Improve the existing planting around the rotunda. <i>It will provide visual interest especially during winter.</i>	✓			✓
Maintain the Elm trees as the dominant tree species within the square. <i>This is critical to facilitating tree succession.</i>	✓		✓	
Provide flower beds to the corner entrances. <i>It will provide visual interest especially during winter.</i>	✓			✓
TURF, DRAINAGE AND WATER				
Remove the cape weed within the grassed areas. <i>It will encourage people with asthma and allergies to visit the square more often.</i>	✓		✓	
Replace the lawns with kikuyu turf to provide an immediate grass cover and oversow with Rye grass if winter colour is required. <i>This will improve grass cover especially during winter.</i>	✓			✓
Design and install a new irrigation system. Undertake an intensive audit of the current water supply to determine the options available to improve the pressure and flow. <i>A new irrigation system would ensure a more sustainable use of water and labour.</i>	✓		✓	
Improve the drainage system in problem areas such as the western section in front of the toilets. Reshape the surface levels as required as other turf works are occurring. <i>Consider problem areas such as the western section in front of the toilets. This needs to be in conjunction with re-profiling surface depressions.</i>	✓			✓

Other issues to be considered:

- Presentation of shopfronts in the vicinity of the square, particularly on Murray Street.
- Passive or active surveillance in key areas.
- Vandalism.
- Maintenance of existing and future infrastructure elements.

**10- EXISTING GRASS COVER ASSESSMENT BY RON
MACCARTNEY OF SPORTSTURF CONSULTANT**



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12 September July 2016
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**MEMORIAL PARK
COLAC**

At your request I visited the Memorial Park in Colac on 21 June to inspect the lawn areas as part of the development of the Master Plan. At that time I met with Mark Robinson from the Parks Department who provided an insight on the infrastructure such as irrigation, drainage and requirements of for the lawns areas including use and vehicle access.

The following comments are provided:

Existing Condition

- There is a mix of grass types in the lawns – kikuyu, ryegrass, wintergrass (*Poa annua*).
- The kikuyu is present as quite large areas as a monostand eg on the mound around the War Memorial ; or as a mix with the other grasses;
- At the time of inspection, the kikuyu had visibly yellowed off due to the recent cold, winter temperatures;
- The other grasses, being cool-season types, were maintaining a green canopy;
- There was no distinct or obvious planning in the location of the various grass types;
- There was some indications of new grass seeding in areas of less dense cover.
- There was significant wear damage resulting from recent vehicle and foot traffic, particularly at the west end of the lawns;
- Significant surface rutting had occurred where vehicles had accessed the the park via the vehicle entry point on the north side.
- There are many localised depressions across most of the lawn areas. These are collecting and holding water; and consequently are becoming churned up with vehicular traffic.
- At the time of inspection there was generally a good cover of grass across all lawn areas.
- It was reported that while a sub-surface sprinkler irrigation system was present, it was not able to adequately supply water to the lawns due to a reduction in supply pressure and flow.
- A further report indicated that in late summer the north side of the park had extremely poor cover of grass due to the dry summer conditions.

Comments

-
- In order to maintain the lawn areas with a full cover and in a healthy condition throughout the year, a an adequate water supply is required to support strong grass growth through the summer months.
- Kikuyu is proving to be a grass that will tolerate the local weather conditions to provide a strong growth and dense sward throughout the year. However its main disadvantage is the yellowing off in winter due to winter dormancy.

- The ryegrass is able to provide a green cover during winter, but requires significant irrigation from spring through to the following autumn.

Recommendations

1. Undertake an intensive audit of the current water supply to determine the options available to improve the pressure and flow.
2. Design and install a new irrigation system to provide better control and application of water in the various lawn and garden areas to support the respective plantings.
3. Reshape the surface levels as required to remove the depressions and create slight ridges to allow surface movement of water into perimeter spoon drains.
4. Regrass the lawns with kikuyu turf to provide an immediate grass cover; and oversow with ryegrass if winter colour is required. This will provide the opportunity to possibly develop feature lawns of other grass types to provide variation as part of the overall aesthetics of the park.
5. Undertake interim weed control measures to control the incidence of broadleaf weeds.
6. Oversow with turf-type ryegrass into the poorly grassed areas to provide a dense cover for overall appearance and amenity.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me on 0418 176 758.



Ron MacCartney

Attach: photographs



1. South-east area - Good cover with a mix of grass types



2. Centre, south side with dense grass cover



3. Lawn area to east of memorial – mix of grass types



4. Mound around Memorial – mainly kikuyu, dense and thatchy



5. South west of Memorial – mix of grasses providing dense canopy



6. North-west area – dense cover of grasses



7. North-east side – kikuyu yellowed off showing visible effects of dormancy



8. North-west side



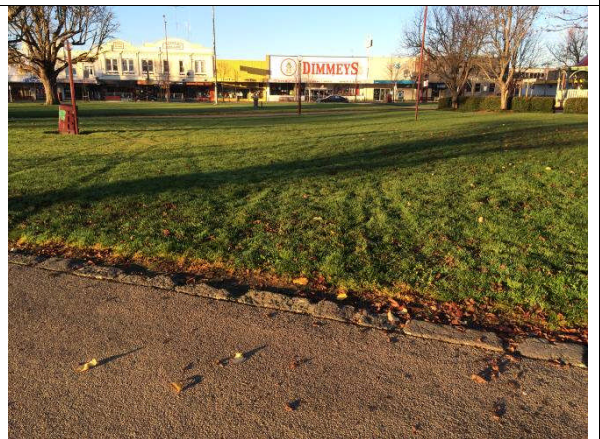
9. Vehicle track damage on lawns beside path



10. Damage from foot traffic around market stall area



11. Damage from foot traffic around market stall area



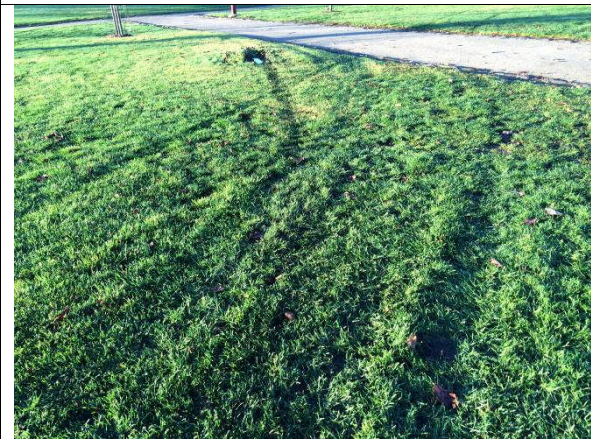
12. Vehicle damage to lawns servicing market stalls



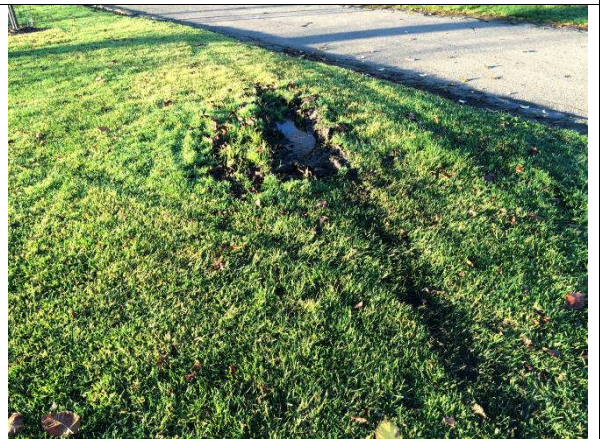
13. Vehicle damage along west end



14. North side vehicle access point, showing rutting in lawns as vehicles move off sealed area



15. Wheel ruts caused by vehicles



16. Wheel ruts caused by vehicles not using paths