

RE: Ocean Grove Structure Plan

1. What is a Structure Plan?

A structure plan is a strategic planning document drawn up to guide growth and development of a town or urban area.

In the hierarchy of planning documents, it sits below a broad regional strategy like the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) for the City of Greater Geelong or the Bellarine Peninsula Strategic Plan.

And it sits above the detailed land use planning set out in the Geelong Planning Scheme, which is the legal framework used for statutory planning purposes – ie issuing and enforcing planning permits.

It's important to be clear that a Structure Plan is about growth and development.

It provides a strategic outline of what development should occur, where it should occur and where it should not occur, as well as the infrastructure, facilities and services that will be required to support that development.

The strategies set out in a Structure Plan are informed by a range of technical studies – eg traffic, parking, recreation, cultural, sporting, social, environmental, retail, tourism etc

A Structure Plan is also informed by extensive public consultation and discussion.

While obviously everyone will not agree on every aspect of the plan, it should reflect a broad community consensus.

2. Outline of the current Ocean Grove Structure Plan

The existing Ocean Grove Structure Plan was completed in 1993.

In the opinion of the Ocean Grove and District Community Association, the plan has been out-of-date and in need for review for several years and we have lobbied Council persistently for a review to be undertaken.

So we welcome the fact that the City of Greater Geelong recently commenced the review process.

In 1993, Ocean Grove was the largest town on the Bellarine Peninsula with a resident population of 8540.

This was predicted to almost double to 15,000 over the following 17 years – ie by 2010.

The current resident population is around 11,000, so the growth has been somewhat slower than predicted.

Nevertheless, the new Structure Plan will be based on an expectation that the town's population will double again over the next 20 years – ie by 2026.

So 20 years from now, we can expect Ocean Grove to have a resident population of more than 20,000.

That's consistent with Ocean Grove's role as a coastal dormitory town, a resort town and a major service centre, and as one of three major growth centres on the Bellarine (along with Drysdale-Clifton Springs and Leopold).

Much of what was predicted in the 1993 Ocean Grove Structure Plan has occurred – but there are also significant predictions that have not come to pass.

Some examples of what has happened:

- Larger supermarket and streetscape works in The Terrace
- Residential subdivision and development of Kingston Downs
- New neighbourhood shopping centre at Kingston Downs
- Development of the industrial estate and business park (started 1983)

Some examples of what has not happened:

- Construction of full drainage in old Ocean Grove to overcome flooding problems
- Walking link from north of Thacker Street to the river
- Development of a medium density housing and more intensive tourist accommodation along the foreshore opposite the Main Beach (effectively slowed by SLO introduced by the State Government following community pressure)
- Traffic management proposals for the town centre - including the proposed links between the Parade and the Terrace east of Hodgson Street to divert traffic around the town centre, and the closure of Hodgson Street between the Parade and the Terrace to create a town square.
- Development of additional retail space east of Hodgson Street.

3. The review process

The OGDCA was recently briefed by Council planning staff and representatives of Hansen Partners, the consultants engaged to prepare a new Structure Plan.

Council plans to use the Ocean Grove review to draw up a template for future reviews of other town structure plans.

We were advised that a discussion paper was being prepared for public release by July.

Any person or group will have an opportunity to lodge a submission about any aspect of the discussion paper.

We were pleased to be assured by the consultants that they intend to be innovative and proactively look for opportunities to improve the town.

They particularly mentioned that they are keen to identify vacant land that could be put to better use.

They are also focusing on opportunities to renew and develop the town centre, and opportunities to establish a proper community centre for the town.

Following the exhibition of the discussion paper, the submissions will be considered and a draft revised Structure Plan put to Council.

Once the new Structure Plan has been approved by Council, a Planning Scheme Amendment will be prepared and put on exhibition. This will be a further opportunity for people or groups to make a submission.

Eventually the new Structure Plan will be incorporated into the Geelong Planning Scheme as law.

Issues put forward as priorities by OGDCA included:

- Traffic management solutions
- Community and recreation facilities
- Potential for quality redevelopment of the town centre
- Streetscape improvements
- Footpaths and pedestrian links
- Public transport links
- Getting the balance right between development of the town centre and Shell Road Reserve
- Resolving the apparent conflict between the Structure Plan and the SLO re foreshore development

We urge everyone interested in the future of Ocean Grove to take a close interest in the Structure Plan review and submit their ideas and concerns.

RE: Ocean Grove Traffic Study and Parking & Access Study

The Ocean Grove & District Community Association (OG&DCA) Traffic Sub Committee has reviewed both studies and provides the following comments:

1. GENERAL COMMENTS

As per the last community meeting for the traffic study at which it was commented by the consultants 'we will meet with the OG&DCA prior to finalising the report' and as per Key Tasks noted in the 7th dot point – page 2 of the Traffic and Access Study 'Present and discuss the results of the above to the OC&DCA' we request a meeting with the consultants and CoGG representatives to discuss the findings and our response.

2. TRAFFIC STUDY

We provide the following comments on the recommended works:

Notional Priority	Location	OG&DCA Comments
1	Grubb Rd, north of Sinclair St	Agree with recommendation
2	Presidents Ave at Orton St	Agree with recommendation
3	Field Street at Orton St	Agree with recommendation, but need more details on how residents access their properties south of Orton St.
4	Eggleston St at The Parade	Not required if one-way solution adopted – see item 14 below
5	Wedge St at The Parade	Not required if one-way solution adopted – see item 14 below
6	Thacker St	Agree with recommendation
7	Grubb Rd	Agree with recommendation at 3 roads (Smithton, Adco & Sinclair) but should be expanded to include left hand turn lanes at Smithton and Adco.
8	Tuckfield St at Marlin Dve	Agree with recommendation, but need to consider school crossing
9	Shell Rd, at John Dory Dve & Sunset Strip	Agree with recommendation
10	Wallington Rd at Thacker St	Agree with recommendation, but can be lowest priority
11	Thacker St at Bellvue Dve	Agree with recommendation
12	Wiltons Rd	Agree with recommendation
13	Blue Waters Dve	Agree with recommendation

The following are additional comments provided by OG&DCA:

14	The Parade V's The Terrace	Place high priority on linking Tuckfield Street with The Parade as proposed in the study.
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		Do not rezone this link Consideration be given to making The Parade one-way (west to east) and The Terrace one-way (east to west) which could occur later as traffic volume increases.
15	Shell Rd at Bonnyvale and Banks Rd	Install left and right hand turn lanes in Shell Road in both directions
16	The Terrace	Seal shoulders of The Terrace and create angled parking at west and towards Hodgson Street.

3. PARKING AND ACCESS STUDY

We provide the following comments on the recommended works:

Notional Priority	Location	OG&DCA Comments
1	Reorient existing main car park and provide additional 45 degrees parking in The Terrace	Agree with reorientating existing main car park so that the traffic aisle will run north-south. Agree with providing 45 degrees angled parking in The Terrace but want to discuss design details.
2	Construct 3 roundabouts with zebra crossing along Presidents Ave	Agree with principle of proposal but would recommend only installing one at a time with priority on worst intersection (i.e. question if all 3 roundabouts needed)
3	Signalise The Parade and Hodgson Street intersection	This is not required as the development of new intersection has significantly improved safety.
4	Convert The Terrace to two-way traffic	Strongly opposed
5	Upgrade The Avenue	No to current proposal of parking both sides but could re-arrange to have 90 degrees parking on one side. Agree with remodelling Hodgson Street intersection.
6	Roundabout at Hodson St and The Parade (west)	Agree with recommendation
7	Reposition light poles and toilet block to integrate The Parade into larger car park.	Agree with principle of proposed but would want to discuss detail design. This includes The Parade possibly being one-way and how delivery vehicles (semi-trailers) access Coles and one Hardware.

Other Considerations:

Item	Works	OG&DCA Comments
8	The Terrace and Hodgson Street intersection	Continue bollards around east side of Hodgson Street to Tuckfield Street. Reconfigure traffic signals so

		there is a pedestrian crossing <u>only</u> time in all directions.
9	Main Car Park	In lieu of expanding main car park to north implement multi-level (max 3 levels) car park over existing car park.
10	Parking for caravans trailers & buses (i.e. holiday makers)	The study does not make mention of or provide for parking for holiday makers with vans etc.
11	Staff parking	The study does not provide for long term retail staff car parking
12	Ocean Grove Structure Plan	The study makes certain assumptions on the possible outcomes of the OG Structure Plan which may prove to be incorrect.

4. CONCLUSION

We believe that both the Traffic Study and Parking & Access Study have identified most of the issues surrounding Ocean Grove. The OG&DCA supports a significant number of the recommendations, (some support subject to clarification by consultants) but also disagrees with some recommendations. In addition the OG&DCA wants additional recommendations included in the studies.

Of some concern is that both these studies have been completed prior to the Ocean Grove Structure Plan and hence the consultants have had to make certain assumptions.

It is therefore recommended that following course of action be undertaken.

1. Meet with OG&DCA Traffic Sub Committee and Ocean Grove Business Association (OGBA).
2. Take on board all community feedback.
3. Prepare Final Draft Report.
4. Review Final Draft report and recommendations after the Ocean Grove Structure Plan is completed.

RE: Bellarine Aquatic Centre

Background: Bellarine Recreation & Leisure Needs Study May 05

Recommendations included:

- Council develop a **multi-purpose**, indoor, heated aquatic complex at Shell Rd
- Project as a **short-term priority** for council
- As a **minimum** to include a 25m x 8 lane main pool, beach entry leisure pool (150m²) and a small program pool (10m x 15m)
- Design options should include possibility of a **small public gym** (add to financial performance of the Centre)
- Design in the R&LN Study based on Leongatha facility even though its catchment population only 12,000 – our catchment population is **39,000 in off peak season and growing**

Also noteworthy:

- A proportion of residents requested **a 50m pool** (hence petition to seek community interest - 2,000 signatures in ONE MONTH ie 20% of OG pop.)
- Research showed **64% of Peninsula residents** would likely use pool at Shell Rd
- Feasibility Study in 1994 (community-funded) showed new pool likely to **reduce Splashdown revenue by as much as 30%** = annual operating loss of \$300,000 (so why build similar facility instead of complementary facility – ie bigger pool).
- Re ageing population – currently **34% is between 0-24 years**, predicted to be 30.8% by 2016; currently 16.8% over 65 years, predicted to be 22.8% by 2016.

1. First round community consultation - November/December 2005

This first round of consultation raised key issues, activities and amenities wanted via.

- Public meetings (6 on Bellarine Peninsula):
- Focus groups conducted (with users of Splashdown, swimming clubs etc)
- School questionnaires – average age 12yo
- Meetings with Bellarine Community Health and OG Neighbourhood Centre
- Surveyed Portarlington and OG Caravan Park residents (in January)

Summary of first round consultation as presented by CoGG:

- Focus groups identified Lap Lanes as THE most important activity to be provided
- Focus groups also said Lap Lanes and pool depth, transport, hydrotherapy and disability access (in that order) are the most important key services to be provided
- Public meetings identified 50m pool, hydrotherapy, lap swimming, learn to swim, older people, transport and disability access as the key issues (in that order).
- School surveys showed 47% of children currently use Splashdown – over 88% said they would use Bellarine Aquatic Centre
- School surveys showed most wanted to generally be able to swim and have fun. 30% believed a waterslide was the most important component of a new aquatic centre (was this prompted?)
- Caravan park residents – 80% of OG caravan park residents and 60% of Portarlington caravan park residents said they would use Bellarine Aquatic Centre if it offered lap swimming and water play.
- Some of the older caravan park residents showed some interest in hydrotherapy.

2. Second round consultation – February/March 2006

Concept plans

Concept plans displayed for two weeks at Surfside Centre and The Grove Centre, then presented to focus groups (one person attended – me) and at a public meeting 29 March.

Option 1 – 25m x 6 lane x 1.5m depth

Cost \$4.7M

Attendance 140,000

\$300,000 loss

Option 2 – 50m x 10 lane x 1.82m depth (FINA compliant competition pool)

Cost \$7.4M

Attendance 120,000

\$600,000 loss

Option 3 – 25m x 6 lane x 1.5m depth, plus waterslide, hydro/LTS pool, toddler pool and splash area

Cost \$7.6M

Attendance 220,000

\$150,000 loss

Costs were noted as estimates and attendance/projected annual loss figures based on "research by experts". There is no intention for the evidence/research behind these figures to be transparent/made public.

Public meeting seeking community feedback on concept plans:

Overwhelming support for revised versions of Options 2 and/or 3, to address the issues of lap swimming/bigger pool and multi-purpose nature of centre. The reaction from the vast majority of attendees was either:

- Option 3 with a 50m pool, or
- Reduce Option 2 to 8 lanes and graduated depth, add toddler pool, hydro/LTS pool and more seating.

Also noteworthy:

- A lot of comment about lack of carparking space
- Many questions about location and orientation of pool (west side of Centre and north-south layout preferred)
- No one was particularly interested in a waterslide

Questions about costs (answers were rough estimates/ballpark figures):

- toddler pool (\$100-200K) so why not add to Option 2 (still under \$8M)?
- waterslide (\$200K)
- cost to add two lanes to Option 3 (\$200K); so why not remove waterslide and expand pool?

CoGG Scoping Study Report:

Official report on the response to concept plans at Surfside and Grove Centres not finished by June 2006. Briefing to council scheduled for 13 June delayed to 27 June.

CoGG Budget 2006-2007:

\$400,000 allocated to detailed design of pool in 2006-07 CoGG budget.

3. Things that concern OGDCA

1) Concept plans do not reflect community consultation feedback.

- Concern about the consultation process and 'wool being pulled over our eyes' – it appears that someone's mind is made up about what type of aquatic centre OG will have, regardless of community needs/opinions/preferences.

2) No vision or innovation in the 3 options presented to the public and certainly not any strategic planning which is a must for such a project.

- Concept plans lack master planning – ie location of pool, future population growth, carparking, buses, ESD, OGNC/BCHS, etc. (MH to present masterplan)

3) Delay with the scoping study report to council is a concern. If the project is not costed and designed, CoGG is not in a realistic position to seek State Govt funding for the project prior to State election later this year.

4) Just learned the Project Control Group has recommended a 25m x 8 lane pool, plus a separate hydro/LTS pool, splash area and slide. Will go to Council on 27 June.

4. Decisions to be made

- We need CoGG to come back with a proposed design that is adequate for the growing community and all users of the facility. See what Council adopts at 27 June meeting.
- We need to determine what is acceptable to the community (eg the Association does not find Option 1 acceptable).
- We need to unite as a community towards an acceptable design for the Bellarine Aquatic Centre and get behind the CoGG in the push for State Govt funding asap.

RE: Shell Rd Reserve, Surfside Centre Precinct Master Plan

1. Introduction

The Bellarine Peninsula Recreational and Leisure Needs Study (May 2005) has been endorsed by the City of Greater Geelong. This study included a Strategic Concept Plan for the Shell Road Reserve, Ocean Grove, which in principle is supported by the community.

As a consequence priority has been given to the development of 2 soccer fields on the western Tuckfield Street boundary of the reserve and the development of the Bellarine Aquatic Centre within the Surfside Centre Precinct. Works on the soccer fields have now commenced and are anticipated to be completed by October 2006. Stephanie has already advised you of the status of the Aquatic Centre.

2. Surfside Centre Precinct Requirements

The Surfside Centre precinct (i.e. east of the oval) includes the following existing and proposed facilities:

Recreational

- Surfside Centre (2 basketball courts, meeting/activity rooms, child care and change rooms)
- Tennis Courts (5 courts and club house)
- Skate Facility

Community (Proposed)

- Bellarine Community Health
- Ocean Grove Neighborhood Centre

Education

- Bellarine Secondary College
- Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School
- Surfside Primary School

To date a detailed master plan of the development of this precinct has not been undertaken by the CoGG. Yet council offices are trying to develop the Aquatic Centre with no reference to how it relates to the current and future development of the entire precinct.

The key issues which need to be incorporated into master planning the Surfside Precinct (ie planning for the next 20 years)include:

- Functional Relationships between the various activities/services;
- Allowance for future growth;

- Orientation, particularly for outdoor activities;
- Pedestrian, bike and vehicle (including buses) movement; and
- Car parking:

For the master plan study the following spatial allocations and assumptions have been made for the various facilities, which are to be located within the precinct.

□ Recreational

- Surfside Centre – Allow to expand by 1 more basketball court. Plus allow for slight expansion of number of Child Care Centre places. Requires good vehicle access, (including buses).
- Tennis Courts – remain as is.
- Skate Facility – Allow 2000m². Requires relatively high visibility and good bike and pedestrian access. Needs linkage to public toilets.
- Bellarine Aquatic Centre – Allow 5000m² including 50 metre pool, pod, hydrotherapy pool, outdoor recreational space, plant and change rooms. Requires good vehicle (including buses), pedestrian and bike access. To maximise solar efficiency must have good exposure to north.

□ Community

- Bellarine Community Health – Gross floor area 1200m² and total site area of 4100m² including 50 car park spaces. Will have linkages to child care centre and OGNC. Requires good vehicle access and high visibility.
- Ocean Grove Neighborhood Centre – Gross floor area 1000m² and total site area of 4000m² including 50 car park spaces. Will have linkages to child care centre and BCH. Requires good vehicle access and high visibility.
- These two facilities could be collocated in a single building complex which could be part 2 storey. As a consequence and assuming some sharing of spaces such as entry, reception, meeting rooms and staff amenities the gross floor area would be 2000m² with say 1400m² on the ground floor and 600m² on the first floor. The total site area required (excluding car parking) would be approximately 2500m². Car Parking is not included.

□ Education

It is assumed all 3 schools would remain as is and if they do expand it would be within their own sites. Their prime linkages will be with the recreational facilities.

□ Vehicles/Car Parking

Currently there are 97 car park spaces provided on site. This will need to be expanded to cater for the BCH, OGNC and Aquatic Centre.

It has been identified that a total of 100 car spaces will be required for the BCH and OGNC as individual stand alone facilities.

However given that their peak times of usage will be Monday-Friday 8.30 am to 5.00pm whilst the Surfside Centre's and Aquatic Centre's peak times of usage will be evenings and weekends plus school holidays. The demand on car parking will not generally be competing.

Hence for the allowance of 53 additional car spaces (i.e. total 150 car spaces) is incorporated into the master plan study.

This equates to approximately 1800m² of site area.

Another key element will be provision for bus parking, particularly given that the Aquatic Centre is a whole of the Bellarine Peninsula's facility.

3. The Proposal (Refer to Plan)

The Surfside Centre will remain basically as is. But includes expansion to the south for one additional basketball court and ancillaries.

The collocated BCH and OGNC facility is located on the northern part of the existing car park.

This provides very good linkages to the existing child care centre and surfside centre Activity Spaces. It also maximises access to north sunlight for internal meeting rooms and external spaces. Being at the front of the site people do not have to compete with cars.

The area in front of the Surfside Centre and Community Building has been designed for people to be dropped off/picked up at the main entry points.

The Bellarine Aquatic Centre is located to achieve maximum exposure to sun light and open space. It will also include public toilets which can be accessible externally for those using the skate facility.

The Tennis Club Room has been relocated.

The vehicle flow allows for buses to park near the Aquatic Centre main entry whilst also being relatively close to the Surfside Centre and Community Building main entry.

An 80 space car park is provided to the south west corner.

The Skate facility is located to the north providing high visibility good bike and pedestrian access and a link back to the Community Building for youth services.

In summary this is just one idea for developing the Surfside Centre. But it demonstrates the extreme importance of planning for the future and not in an adhoc manner that limits the ability for growth and other development to occur at a later date.