



ELTHAM HIGH SCHOOL

SPORTING AND RECREATION PRECINCT MASTER PLAN

FINAL REPORT

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SPORT + LEISURE

Prepared by
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1. Introduction

Eltham High School is a public secondary school located in Eltham, 18km north east of the Melbourne CBD. The Eltham High School Council wished to develop a master plan to guide the future provision and development of the sporting facilities and the associated support infrastructure within the school. The School Council identified the value that quality-sporting infrastructure provides to both the school physical education curriculum and sports program and the benefits to the wider sporting community.

As a result the development of the master plan has been a collaborative project between Eltham High School, Nillumbik Shire Council, the local Eltham sporting groups and the local member.

1.1 Background

Eltham High School is situated on 7 hectares in the heart of the leafy environs that surround Eltham and the neighbouring suburbs including Montmorency, Lower Plenty, Briar Hill and Research.

The school is a single campus, co-educational Year 7-12 School which offers a wide range of programs and curriculum choice at all levels. Enrolment demand at the school has consistently exceeded the ceiling level (which currently sits at 1300) and a strong demand continues to exist for placements at the school. The current enrolment figure is approximately 1,400 students. The school generally has an even gender distribution of students throughout each year level.

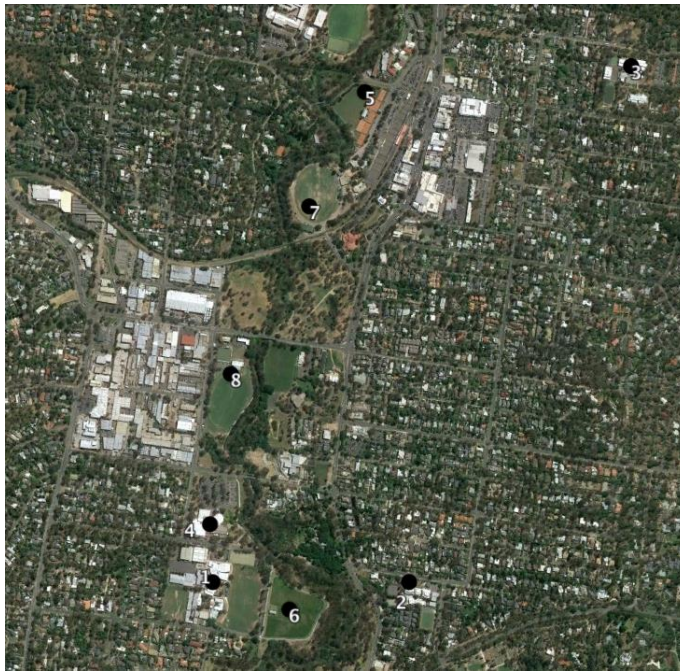
The student intake comes from a wide variety of feeder schools extending out from the Eltham area to Kinglake, Hurstbridge and the more urban areas of Greensborough and Montmorency

The school is known for the creativity of its students with strong arts, dramas and music programs. It also provides access for participation in a wide range of sporting program including the house-based in-school program and the inter- school competitions. The school is well known for its elite volleyball program where students participate in a range of local, interstate and international competitions.

The school has active links with the wider school community including a significant relationship with the Eltham Wildcats Basketball Association and a strong working partnership with the Nillumbik Shire, the local school network, the Nillumbik Community Health Centre and the Eltham Living and Learning Centre.

The school is located adjacent to the Eltham Leisure Centre. The Centre provides students with access to a range of alternate sporting opportunities including a state of the art health and fitness area and an aquatic area, which is currently being redeveloped.

The diagram on the following page indicates the position of the Eltham High School in relation to other key facilities in the Eltham area.



- 1 Eltham High School
- 2 Eltham Primary School
- 3 Eltham East Primary School
- 4 Eltham Leisure Centre
- 5 Andrews Park
- 6 Bells Reserve
- 7 Eltham Central Park
- 8 Town Park West

Figure 1 Eltham Precinct

2. Current School Sporting Facilities

The current sporting facilities provided at Eltham High School include:

- Five synthetic all weather tennis courts
- Asphalt area for ball sports - including one basketball/netball court and a hand ball court
- Turf sporting oval with a synthetic cricket wicket and disused practice cricket wicket
- Second smaller outdoor area used for soccer with cricket.
- Indoor stadium - 3 full size courts with line markings for basketball, netball, volleyball and badminton and a gymnasium and classroom area

The following diagram details the current sporting facilities across the school.

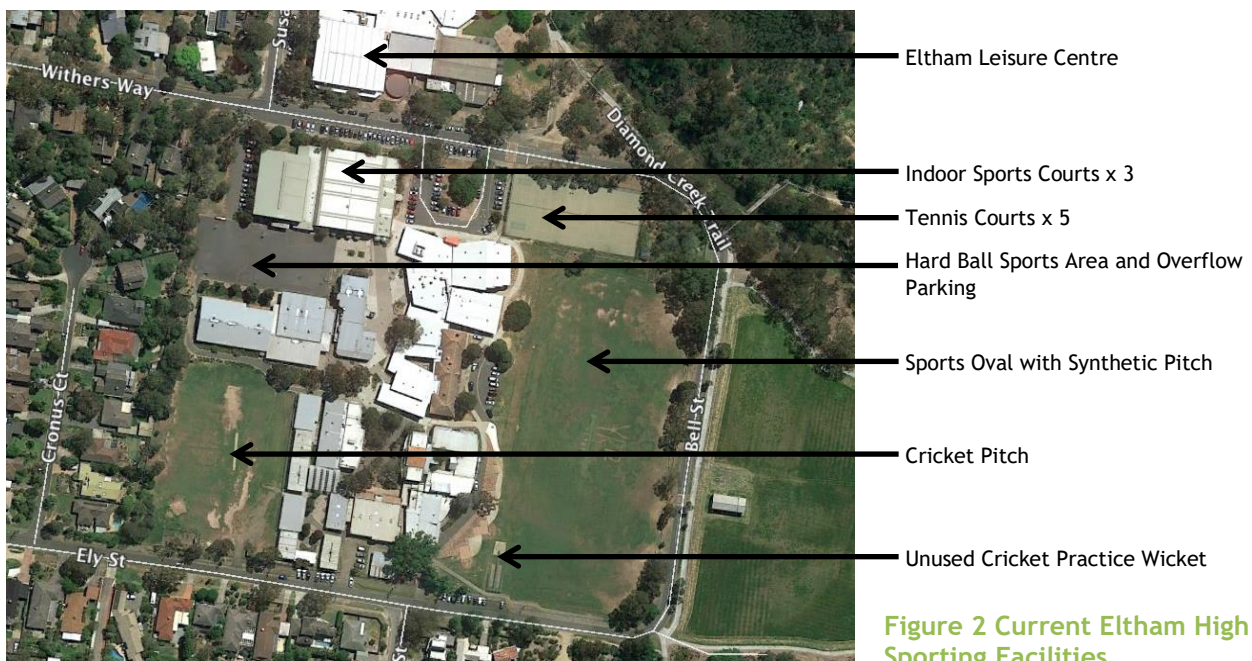


Figure 2 Current Eltham High Sporting Facilities



2.1 Review of Current Sporting Facilities

A review of the current sporting facilities by the Project Team was undertaken to determine the capacity and life span of each area. The review identified the following:

- The surface of the multipurpose synthetic outdoor tennis court area is compacted making it a hard surface for use by either the school sports programs or the community organisations. The local fauna including the rabbits and the cockatiels have attacked the surface and caused significant damage.
- Both of the turf sports playing fields are in need of refurbishment. During the winter-wet periods it is reported that the surface retains water and during summer the surface is hard. There is currently no irrigation to either of the playing areas and the drainage is poor. Local fauna including rabbits, ducks and cockatiels have also attacked the turf-playing surfaces.
- There are currently no amenities within close proximity to the tennis courts or turf sporting ovals, which impacts the use of the facilities after school hours.
- Neither the school or local sporting clubs use the practice cricket wickets located in the southwest corner of the oval due to the poor condition of the wickets and the surrounding fencing.
- The indoor stadium is heavily used seven days a week by both the school and the local basketball association, the Eltham Wildcats. Funding has been provided to upgrade a number of components of the stadium including the front entrance and administration area, change rooms and the provision of a staff room.
- Access to car parking was identified as a major constraint. The high use of the indoor stadium coupled with the location of Eltham Leisure Centre adjacent to the school results in a high demand for car parking spaces. The hard court asphalt area to the side of the stadium is used after school hours and on weekends as overflow car parking. The pending redevelopment of the Eltham Leisure Centre will exacerbate the car parking congestion in the area as it will mean the loss of approximately 40 existing spaces in the precinct and it is anticipated use of the Centre will increase.

2.2 Use of Current Sporting Facilities

The following provides a summary of the school and community use of the Eltham High School sporting facilities.

2.2.1 School Use

The school uses the sporting facilities as part of the physical education curriculum and the intra school sports program.

The students also use the facilities during recess and lunch times for social play and relaxation. Students, particularly year 8 and 9, use the back turf area that has soccer goals located at each end as a “kick about” space. The younger students heavily use the asphalt area including the basketball, netball and handball courts.

Students also heavily use the indoor stadium during lunchtime breaks with in excess of 80 students using the courts during this period.

Students are permitted to use the synthetic tennis court area however due to the current condition of the surface it is rarely used.

The front oval is used for football and cricket however the poor condition of the playing surface can make it unusable at certain times of the year.



2.2.2 Community Use

The school sporting facilities are also hired to a number of local sporting organisations for both training and competition activities.

The school tennis courts are used by the Eltham Tennis Club as an over flow to their home base at Andrew Reserve. Three of the five courts are used for some limited coaching during weekdays and for competition on weekends.

The Eltham Wildcats Basketball Association is a key tenant of the indoor stadium. The administration office is based within the stadium and the association conducts training and competition on the courts Monday to Friday after school hours and all day Saturday and Sunday.

The Eltham Juniors Football Club makes use of the front oval for training activities. This use is however restricted by the lack of lighting on the oval.

3. Consultation and Market Research

This section of the report summarises the key findings identified through the study's market research and consultation and includes:

- Internal Focus Group with School staff
- Local Primary Schools
- Discussion with Nillumbik Shire Council
- Community Key stakeholders
- Relevant sporting facility trends

3.1 Internal School Focus Group Workshop

Eltham High School has a current student population of approximately 1,400 students and 110 staff. Over the last five years student numbers have increased significantly. The current student population exceeds the ceiling level of 1,300.

The current outdoor sporting facilities are tired and in need of upgrade and refurbishment to meet the needs of the students for the physical education program and school sports program.

The poor condition of the multi purpose synthetic surface area and the practice cricket wickets results in these areas not being used as part of the school program.

The physical education program would like to see the facilities upgraded to provide a range of multipurpose flexible spaces to support the expansion of the sporting activities and programs offered to the students. There is the potential to build on the successful volleyball program and create the school as a “school of sporting excellence”, similar to the Rowville and Maribyrnong schools.

It is also essential that the school be seen as a community asset that should be used by local sporting clubs and organisations. Any upgraded facilities need to meet the needs of the local sporting organisations.

The opportunities that the school would like to see as part of the master plan to support the school curriculum include:

- Redevelopment of a multipurpose/flexible synthetic area suitable for a range of sports including; tennis, netball, hockey and soccer. The opportunity to include a sixth tennis court and line markings for netball and futsal would be well supported.
- Refurbished of the front oval including the provision of drainage, irrigation and lighting.



- Development of a small change/storage room overlooking both the synthetic area and the playing field. The area could include a “drive up” storage area for the storage of the outdoor education equipment.
- Redevelopment of the back turf area as an all weather playing surface including the provision of a soccer area and where possible an athletics track.
- Provision of new practice cricket wickets
- Development of a softball/baseball area with back netting that could also be used for athletic activities such as shot put and discus

3.2 Local Primary Schools

Eltham Primary School is located approximately 450 metres from Eltham High School. The school has a current student population of approximately 405 students.

With the exception of a small synthetic soccer area there are no playing fields at the school. The school football program is held off site and the netball program operates from the two school asphalt netball courts.

The students can walk to the Eltham High school site and currently make use of the oval for inter school sports. If the area was upgraded the facilities could become a centralised sporting precinct for inter school sports for all primary schools in the local area.

If the tennis courts were upgraded the parents and students of the primary school may make use of the courts after school hours.

3.2.1 Eltham East Primary School

Eltham East Primary School is located approximately 2.6km from Eltham High School. The school has a current student population of approximately 630 students.

With the exception of a small synthetic soccer area there are no playing fields at the school.

Due to the location of the schools students would not be able to walk to the school to make use of the facilities, however if the facilities were upgraded the students could be bussed to the school for inter school sports.

Any facilities that are developed on the site should be multipurpose.

3.3 Shire of Nillumbik

A meeting was held with representatives for the Shire of Nillumbik’s Recreation and Property area. The following is a summary of the key issues identified.

A number of recreation and sports strategies have indicated that Nillumbik residents have high participation levels in sport and recreation when compared to Victorian averages, which means there is ongoing pressure for access to quality sporting facilities. The current Council resources however do not reflect the high participation levels and asset maintenance requirements.

The redevelopment of the aquatic area of the Eltham Leisure Centre is about to commence. The redevelopment will include a new aquatic area including a 25 metre pool, warm water pool and a program leisure pool. The redevelopment will result in a reduction in approximately 40 car parking spaces in the precinct.

Council is currently reviewing the sporting assets across the Shire- the review has identified that there is limited flat land for the development of sporting fields. Council supports multi use facilities and any opportunities to develop shared facilities should be optimised.



The opportunity to develop outdoor sporting facilities with sustainable surfaces to support high use should be considered.

The Diamond Creek trail that runs between school and Bell street may be extended to link to the Hurstbridge trail.

The master plan for Bell Street does not propose any further works. The plan does not include the development of any structured sporting activities on the site.

3.4 Local Sporting Clubs

3.4.1 Eltham Junior Football Club

The Eltham Junior Football Club is based at Central Park and share with the senior club. The Club also share the Susan Street Reserve with the rugby and cricket club.

During the 2016 winter season the club had 20 junior football teams, including three female teams and 220 Auskick participants. Participation has grown over the last three years from 14 teams in 2013 to 20 teams in 2016. It is anticipated that there will be 22/23 teams including five all female team in 2017.

There is a significant lack of sporting fields in the Eltham area due to the topography of the area. The opportunity to develop two sports fields - one at the school and one at Bell Street Reserve would alleviate the pressure on existing facilities and provide the additional facilities needed to support the growth in participation.

Ideally the football club would like a sporting area 140m x 110m with a summer turf surface, automatic irrigation and efficient drainage.

Any potential sporting facilities develop that will also support community use will also require access to support infrastructure such as amenities, change rooms, a kiosk and storage

3.4.2 Research Football Club

The Research Football Club is based at Research Park. The club is a junior club only but is affiliated with the Lower Plenty Senior Football Club

During the 2016 winter season the club had 13 junior football teams and 207 Auskick participants. It is anticipated that there will be 14/15 teams including two all female team in 2017.

The catchment of players is beyond the boundary of the Eltham High School facility.

3.4.3 Eltham Tennis Club

The Eltham Tennis Club is based at Andrew Reserve Eltham. The facility includes 7 en tu cas tennis courts and club rooms. The club has a current membership of approximately 400 people (22 teams).

The Club has used three of the five courts at Eltham High School for coaching on weekdays and competitions on weekends for the past twenty years. They also use a further three courts in Templestowe.

The club have put in a proposal to council for permission to expand their current home facility by three courts to provide a ten-court facility. A 10 courts facility would provide a regional facility in the northern region as defined by Tennis Victoria.

The quality of the Eltham High School tennis court playing surface is poor and two of the five courts are unplayable.

The preference for the tennis club would be to develop the three proposed additional courts at their home base however they are supportive of the redevelopment of the Eltham High facilities.



3.4.4 Eltham Wildcats Basketball Association

The Eltham Wildcats Basketball Association is based at the Eltham High School indoor stadium. The Association also use six other facilities for both training and competition activities including:

- Montmorency Secondary College
- Eltham Leisure Centre
- St Helena Secondary College
- Eltham College Community Association
- Montmorency South Primary School
- Viewbank Primary School

There are currently 5,500 players affiliated with the basketball association, competing in the junior and senior domestic competition and the junior and senior representative competition.

The Association leases the indoor stadium from the school and has use of the facilities after school hours and weekends.

The association has developed plans to undertake a refurbishment of the stadium at a cost of \$1.8M. Funding of \$100k was received from the State Government under the Female Friendly Facilities Funding Program.

The refurbishment will include

- New change rooms/club rooms
- New administration areas and merchandise
- Referee room
- School entrance / staff room

The lack of car parking and the traffic management around the precinct is a major issue for the users of the indoor stadium both on weeknights and weekends. The asphalt area is used as overflow however additional parking spaces are required.

There is a need for access to additional indoor courts to support the ongoing growth in basketball. The Association membership is continuing to increase and there are no other courts in the area.

3.4.5 Eltham Panthers Netball

The Eltham Panthers Netball Club are affiliated with the Eltham Junior Football Club. The Club has only been in operation for 18 months but already has 9 teams (86 players).

The teams train and compete at the Templestowe Leisure Centre outdoor netball courts. All teams train on a Thursday night and compete on a Saturday.

Access to two all weather netball courts in the Eltham area for training would be fully supported by the Club. The club anticipate that they could make use of netball courts for at least two nights per week. Lighting, car parking and access to amenities would be required to support the netball use.

3.5 Sports Facilities Trends

The study's key findings combined with the consultant team's previous leisure research experience, current industry trends and latest research findings indicate the following trends may impact upon the study area.

With ongoing Government economic constraints and limited capital and operational budgets, many new sports facilities may have to be joint venture arrangements between private and public sectors and sports clubs.



Due to restricted rate and other revenue bases, local Councils may have to encourage greater private investment in leisure facilities and services. A mix of rate concessions, payback loans, management rights in return for investment, provision of land and planning concessions may achieve this.

Facility provision is changing from single-purpose to multi-purpose. However there is an emphasis on ensuring facilities are designed to meet the specific needs of the key user groups. A great deal of infrastructure expenditure is now being directed to the development of larger public and private complexes providing aquatic, health, fitness and indoor sports facilities because of the higher utilisation which can be achieved. There is less emphasis on the development of traditional single purpose outdoor sports facilities.

More flexible designs are being created and there is a growing expectation that facilities will need to be renovated/upgraded on a periodic basis. There is a realisation that facilities have a “customer interest life-span” which is much less than the facility life-span.

The planning process for new facilities has improved significantly with the conduct of effective feasibility studies being the norm. These studies have generally included management/ marketing/financial plans with demand projections based on sophisticated survey data.

There has been considerable improvement in the management of leisure facilities, with increased expectations of managers to produce better financial outcomes and generate higher attendance. Public sector facility managers now need higher skill levels, face broader roles, need access to better training and professional networks and improved financial reporting systems.

As competition increases there will be an increased emphasis on programming and target marketing based on adopting consumer driven strategies and performance evaluation techniques. This indicates a greater resourcing of local area planning, knowing who are your customers and how to attract them. summarised below.

4. Summary of Key Issues and Strategic Directions

The following provides a summary of key issues that will guide the development of the master plan for the Eltham High School sporting facilities. Based on the site reviews and consultation process with the key stakeholders the following key issues and requirements have been identified:

Facility condition - the outdoor sporting facilities are “tired” and in need of refurbishment. The playing surfaces are in poor condition and lack both appropriate drainage, irrigation and lighting. The all weather multi purpose area is compacted resulting in two of the five tennis courts being unusable.

Maximisation of community assets - Any facilities developed should provide for dual school/community benefit. The facilities should be multi use and flexible to adapt to the needs of the high school and local primary schools physical education and school sports inter and intra school programs.

School / community collaboration - the redevelopment priorities should include opportunities for collaborative developments between the school, the Council and the local sporting clubs to maximise the school as a community facility. One of the opportunities is to redevelop the playing surfaces to increase the available sporting grounds in the Eltham area.

Sustainable playing field surfaces - the redevelopment of the sporting playing surfaces should consider sustainable playing surface options including both warm season turf and synthetic surfaces to maximise usage and help maintain the assets.

Support infrastructure - There is a need to develop support infrastructure such as amenities, change rooms and storage areas to support community access to the facilities. These facilities should however as a priority support the educational programs i.e. vehicle accessible storage area for outdoor education equipment.



New sporting opportunities - The redevelopment should create sporting opportunities that are currently not available to the school thereby expanding the sporting curriculum options.

Car parking - Due to the high school and community use of the precinct there will be ongoing pressure for car parking spaces and traffic management measures. The redevelopment of the Eltham Leisure Centre and the loss of 40 existing car parking spaces will impact the Eltham High car parking demands. Opportunities to increase on site car parking should be implemented as a priority.

4.1 Master Plan Directions

The following provides a summary of the key directions identified for the reserve within the draft master plan.

4.1.1 Front Sports Ground

Recondition the school sports oval to provide a junior playing field (140m x 95m) to cater for junior AFL, cricket and school use. A synthetic cricket wicket, improved drainage and training lights to be provided as part of redevelopment of the area.

Development of a shot/discuss put area and softball/baseball area to provide alternate sporting opportunities for the school sporting program should be included.

4.1.2 Multi purpose synthetic area

Upgrade the surface and extend the multi purpose synthetic playing area to include six tennis courts, two full size netball courts and two futsal pitches.

4.1.3 New Club Rooms

Develop a small clubroom located between the sporting oval and the multi purpose synthetic to enable shared use of the facility. Clubrooms to include change rooms, canteen/kiosk, storage area and veranda for student protection from hot and wet weather.

Public amenities for use by casual users of the reserve to be integrated as part of club rooms.

4.1.4 Cricket Practice Wickets

Provide two new synthetic practice cricket wickets with safety netting to the south of the sporting oval.

4.1.5 Back Sports Ground

Redevelopment of the back sports ground with a synthetic all weather multi purpose surface. The area to be marked with a soccer pitch (52m x 34m) and a two lane running track, including a 50 metre straight.

4.1.6 Unstructured Recreation Opportunities

Provide a range of facilities to support unstructured sporting and recreation opportunities on the asphalt area including a resurfaced area, two basketball/netball courts, a new handball court and tables and seating.

Provide integrated pathway around the school to improve access and connect the key sporting facilities across the school campus.

4.1.7 Car Park and Traffic Management

Upgrade existing car park at the rear of the stadium to provide 26 car parking spaces to cater for the indoor stadium and the upgraded sporting oval and multi purpose area.

Develop two additional car-parking areas to the south of the school - 81 at the rear of the front oval and 20 at the rear of the back multi purpose area.

Development of car parking along Bell Street to provide increased access for the multi use area.



4.2 Master Plan

Based on the recommended directions the project architects have developed a master plan, detailed on the following page for the sporting facilities at the Eltham High School.

4.3 Staging Priorities

The Project Working Group reviewed the master plan and identified the following three priority stages for the implementation of the master plan.

Stage One: Upgrade and development of the multi purpose areas, change rooms, asphalt area, lighting to the oval and car park off Withers Way.

Stage Two: Redevelopment of the front oval and associated car park on Bell Street and Ely Street. This includes the baseball/softball diamond, shot put and discus throwing areas

Stage Three: Development of the synthetic soccer and running track and associated car parking on Ely Street.

4.4 Indicative Capital Cost

Quantity Surveyors Tuner and Townsend have completed independent construction cost analysis for the Master Plan. The indicative capital costs to implement the total master plan is **\$7,816,379**.

The cost for each stage is:

Stage One: \$3,373,139

Stage Two: \$2,786,499

Stage Three: \$1,656,840

It should be noted that these costs are escalated to October 2017.

Appendix One of this report provides a detailed quantity surveyors report.



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**ELTHAM HIGH SCHOOL
CONCEPT**

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5. Warranties and Disclaimers

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