

IPWEA Excellence Awards 2012 Nomination

Category 1
Capital Project Awards (Large Scale)



BACCHUS MARSH CIVIC & COMMUNITY HUB REDEVELOPMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Moorabool Shire is a semi-rural municipality nestled between Melbourne, Geelong and Ballarat with an area of 2,110km². The largest urban area within our boundary is Bacchus Marsh located on 45km from Melbourne. Bacchus Marsh has experienced significant growth; given its affordability, high amenity values and good transport access to the regional centres of Ballarat and Geelong, and to the Melbourne CBD. It is anticipated that growth will continue at a significant pace.

In 2007, through the adoption of the Moorabool Shire Recreation and Open Space Strategy, Council acknowledged a significant gap in the provision of passive and active open space and sporting facilities for the community. Council's 2006 Local Area Plan had also identified deficiencies in community health care, particularly in the Bacchus Marsh area.

Following the consolidation of the Darley Junior Secondary School Campus to the Maddingley Secondary College site, Council purchased the vacated site for the purpose of redeveloping the almost 6.5 hectares into a **Civic & Community Hub**. The acquisition of the campus provided an opportunity to develop a multi purpose community facility and co-locate a number of services on site including Council staff and community service providers.

The project comprises of four key elements:

- Project planning & design
- Office accommodation refurbishment and staff relocation
- Development of the grounds of the site through Regional & Local Community Infrastructure Program funding projects
- Leasing of surplus space to community service providers

THE REDEVELOPMENT

Situated in the suburb of Darley and abutting a significant parcel of Council owned land (which is also highlighted for future potential redevelopment) the site consisted of a number of stand-alone buildings and some passive and active recreational facilities including a grassed playing oval, asphalt basketball courts, gymnasium and open space.

The objective of this project was to enhance and improve functionality and accessibility for the community to the elements within the precinct. The redevelopment of the site addresses a number of Moorabool Shire's key Council Plan actions and is supported by multiple strategic documents.

Incorporating Council office accommodation, community service providers and recreation space, the 'Bacchus Marsh Civic & Community Hub' project brings together a range of important civic facilities, leading to improved services through more integrated delivery models and greater access to services.

The range of facilities developed at the site provides multi-functional outcomes, delivering a range of Council administrative, recreational and community health elements in a cost effective manner.

The project consisted of four major components driven by Council, in partnership with the Federal Government, government agencies, key user groups, and the community:

1: Project Objectives

To create a Civic and Community Hub that incorporated municipal office, accommodation for a range of government and private agencies that provide community services, creation of passive and active recreation spaces for public use in a growing community.

2: Project Outcomes

- Refurbishment of school administration building to a municipal office to accommodate Council staff located at multiple sites.
- New fire service to all buildings
- Provision of office space for community service providers.
- Refurbishment of existing gymnasium for community activities
- Installation of public art (using local artists) across the site.
- Extensive plantings and landscaping
- Fencing and lighting of existing oval
- Construction of terraced seating wall for spectator viewing
- Footpath and DDA upgrades across the site
- Construction of access roads and carparking across the site to service office buildings, oval and recreation spaces, adjoining scout hall. 86 parking spaces were created via three separate carparks.
- Design and construction of a stormwater harvesting and irrigation system with access to stormwater, irrigation water and potable water in that order.
- Construction of new cricket training nets
- Installation of junior and senior playground equipment

- Installation of shelters, picnic and BBQ facilities.
- Upgrade of existing toilets for public use.
- Relocation of approximately 90 staff and associated furniture to the site including IT systems without disrupting service to the community.
- Decommissioning of old buildings.

3: Planning

Prior to the purchase of the site, valuation, building condition audits and financial analysis including whole of life costing were undertaken to enable informed purchase negotiations to commence. An office accommodation study and comparative cost analysis was produced to inform the potential relocation of staff to the Civic & Community Hub site.

A concept Master Plan of the site was developed in conjunction with local sporting clubs and associations, local schools, Councillors, Council staff and local LandCare groups to identify site potential.

Following the successful purchase negotiations with the state Department of Treasury and Finance, the application process for rezoning of the site was undertaken, and subsequently applications for planning and building permits were lodged.

4: Office Accommodation Refurbishment

Council previously maintained two offices in Bacchus Marsh and another in Ballan. To improve the coordination of effective service delivery and access to the community, the main administration building at the former campus was refurbished to accommodate the 85 staff, previously located at the two Bacchus Marsh offices, to a single location.

The refurbishment component of the project, funded by Council, included some key features such as the installation of a new mechanical system, double glazed windows and insulation to maximise heating efficiency, and the installation of automatic lighting in an effort to reduce energy consumption. The project focussed on employing services from the local and adjoining areas as a priority to encourage job creation and support of local businesses within the Shire.

5: Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program (RLCIP) Funding

Through the adoption of the Moorabool Shire Recreation and Open Space Strategy, Council acknowledged the significant gap in the provision for passive and active open space and sporting facilities for the community.

As part of the Federal Government's Nation Building Stimulus Package, Council was successful in obtaining more than \$2M of funding to contribute toward the development of the community areas and facilities at the site.

Project components delivered as a result of the federal grant are listed below:

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE	
Vegetation and Landscaping	<p>Preparation of a landscape master plan in keeping with the local area, and complimenting existing vegetation and style of proposed site infrastructure.</p> <p>Significant plantings of native tube stock around the site, in addition to planting of street trees around the perimeter and relocation of existing vegetation.</p>
Stormwater Management System (Water Harvesting)	<p>Collection of stormwater runoff from buildings and roadways within the site.</p> <p>Installation of a retarding basin and water quality treatment system for collected water. Installation of above ground tanks with total storage capacity of 500,000L of water.</p> <p>Connection to the nearby Southern Rural Water irrigation channel with telemetry system for automatic top up when channel is running and tanks are dry.</p> <p>Stormwater treatment system consists of a simple train including:</p> <p><i>Primary treatment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect both major stormwater outlets to a common drain collection point to essentially harvest all runoff from paved surfaces. • Installation of a small gross pollutant trap to collect litter and large debris <p><i>Secondary treatment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basin of 500m³ capacity. Water is then pumped through a bioretention bed to filter and remove pollutant. This basin will also drop out sediment and act as a settling basin. • Bioretention 'vegetated sand filter' to remove pollutant and ensure that only high quality water is stored for reuse. • Telemetry and pump system calculated with differential flow rates to ensure system functionality from system treatment train through to irrigation. <p>Harvested water is used for irrigation of the grassed oval and landscaping on the site.</p>

RECREATION FACILITIES	
Gymnasium upgrade	<p>Significant upgrades to the internal fabric of the existing gymnasium building were undertaken, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of a composite timber playing surface • Cosmetic upgrade to the interior including paint and new wall linings • Refurbishment of the existing change facilities and installation of disabled toilet • Refurbishment of the existing kitchen to commercial standard
Upgrade to Existing Sports Facilities (Oval)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of training standard lighting tower to the oval area • New fencing to the oval area • Construction of terraced seating to the South side of the oval • Installation of viewing shelter with BBQ facilities • Establishment of playground and fitness equipment
Upgrade to Community Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of seating and picnic tables around the site • Creation of community spaces through the installation of public art following an 'expression of interest' process
ACCESS FACILITIES	
Car parking and access ways, including lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and construction of additional entry roads and sealed and unsealed car parking to service the existing buildings and recreation areas including playing oval, gymnasium and site buildings. • Upgrade to lighting to car parking areas.
DDA and directional signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant upgrades to disabled access across the site, including demolition and reinstating of concrete steps, walkways and landings, and installation of handrails and tactile indicators. • Installation of directional signage throughout the site.



6: Leasing of Additional Buildings

The remaining buildings, surplus to the areas required for accommodating Council staff, were highlighted as having the potential to collocate a number of community health providers and specialist service agencies on the site.

In 2006, Council's Local Area Plan identified deficiencies in community health care; particularly in the Bacchus Marsh area. The co-location of these service providers at the site works toward filling those gaps and providing community access.

Expressions of Interest have been advertised for accommodating the other buildings and as a result a number of tenants are currently in the process of locating to the site.

PARTICULARS

Innovation

The project is a prominent demonstration of an innovative and responsive approach to infrastructure development. It also illustrates an exemplary collaboration between Federal, State and Local Government, in how the re-use of surplus assets can result in widespread community benefit.

Incorporating a range of high level sustainability principles into the redevelopment, the project also aims to be a leader in environmental enhancement by incorporating elements such as energy conservation and water sensitive design.

A summary of innovation used for the various project comprising the overall development were:

- Use of various procurement methods; traditional design-tender-construct, design and construct, Expression of interest.
- Obtaining water for irrigation purposes from three sources; stormwater harvesting and re-use, irrigation channel and potable supply in that priority order.
- Use of telemetry technology to coordinate and automate water storage, treatment and irrigation.
- Incorporation of public art into various components of the project.
- Use of a composite pre-fabricated gymnasium floor thus saving on future maintenance costs.
- Modelling the functionality of the mechanical system and building fabric for the refurbishment project to identify savings for requirements of Part J of the BCA.
- Conversion of an eroded batter to a terraced seating wall for spectator viewing of sports oval.

Project Cost

Description	Cost (Million)
Purchase of former secondary school site	\$2,600,000
Office refurbishment project	\$3,000,000
RLCIP – federal government grant for community infrastructure projects	\$2,023,000
Melbourne Water	\$85,000
Sport and Recreation Victoria	\$50,000
TOTAL	\$7,758,000

Project Delivery – A Challenge

In addition to the purchase of the site and office refurbishment component, Council were advised of the success of the Federal Government funding application with an 11 month completion time. With no real design or pre-planning commenced in earnest, a considerable challenge was faced to design, procure, deliver and commission the grant funds. This challenge was exacerbated by multiple high intensity storm events resulting in over \$13M worth of damage to Council assets that further stretched existing thin resources.

In addition to Council's Capital Improvement Program, which was in excess of \$16M for the 2010/11 financial year (significantly more than our standard program), all components of the Bacchus Marsh Civic & Community Hub project have been delivered alongside the Flood Recovery Program as a

result of those weather events. This has been the largest capital works budget that Council has delivered and the receipt of Federal Government grant funding was an element that was not initially anticipated to be successful. Concurrently, Council was also constructing a new \$4M library.

A further challenge to the project delivery was numerous contractors having site possession over different, and in some cases overlapping, sections of the site. This presented issues in regard to access, timing, coordination of works, OHS and communication.

It is anticipated that the overall development of the site will continue over a number of years as additional grant funding opportunities and partnerships arise.

Statutory Requirements

Planning and building permits required for such a complex site, with multiple projects, was an extensive process with a large amount of information required. In addition, the statutory timeframes for these approvals applied, which had the potential to cause delays.

The procurement process was also complex as there were a number of projects being undertaken on the one site, which resulted in several tender and evaluation processes running concurrently.

Funding Body Requirements

The announcement of Federal Government grant funding was an element of the project which was not initially anticipated to be successful, and the strict time requirements imposed by funding bodies with regard to project reporting and delivery added additional pressure to ensuring the project was tracking on time and within budget.

Additional partnerships were entered into with Melbourne Water and Sport & Recreation Victoria to enhance the outcomes for the stormwater harvesting and recreation facilities being developed.

CONCLUSION

The Bacchus Marsh Civic & Community Hub project was delivered for the purposes of achieving a viable solution to the current and future demands for community & recreation infrastructure and social services.

The hub is an innovative and forward thinking approach to the reuse of facilities that has the potential to benchmark future thinking in Local Government when planning for the provision of integrated services to local communities.

