



Bicentennial Lakes Masterplan

2018

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1. Background

The Bicentennial Lakes is a dedicated Mareeba Shire Council parkland located conveniently in the township of Mareeba. It is positioned a short walk away from the CBD. Approximately 1.5km in length, the open space provides a recreational area for the residents of Mareeba Shire and for its visitors. With established trees, grassy open spaces, footpaths and a waterway backdrop, the parkland is a great asset to the Shire.

The Mareeba Bicentennial Lakes project (1988-1989) was initially undertaken to beautify a large, narrow strip of urban watercourse, which had become overgrown and unsightly. The area of interest included a series of small shallow lakes, islands, vegetation areas, pathways, open grassed areas and a connecting waterway. While the lakes provide significant local amenity, they were not designed with a specific water quality function at the time and as a result, the overall water quality in the lake is poor, resulting in increased weed growth and reduced aesthetics. The Bicentennial Lakes also suffers at times from some undesirable community behaviour.

However, Council shares the view with other community minded organisations that revitalisation of this open space through the provision of facilities, services and improved water aesthetics will be beneficial for Mareeba Shire.



The Bicentennial Lakes parkland.

2. The Opportunity:

A revitalised Bicentennial Lakes could provide for:

- A focal point for the Mareeba CBD,
- Encourage business in CBD, particularly for Food and Beverage retailers
- Visitor Attraction

The Opportunity is presented in Attachment 1- The Mareeba Bicentennial Lakes concept drawing.

3. The Current Constraints:

3.1. Waterway Aesthetics

- A report commissioned in 2016 by Council identified that sediment and nutrient accumulation contributed to the nuisance weed growth, impacting on aesthetics, and that the layout of the waterway needs to be reconfigured. That is, overall retention time in the water way system needed to decrease; channels require narrowing and lake areas consolidated.

This has been confirmed by the recent removal of the weir slat trial. Before the wet season the removal weir slats improved the clarity of water downstream.



The weir removal has resulted in a lower detention time and water is flowing clear downstream. Upstream (photo RHS) water is flowing clear in a smaller channel.

This has been further confirmed by the before 2018 wet season and after 2018 wet season photos:



Bottom Lake Before



Bottom Lake After



Keeble Street Before



Keeble Street After

3.2.Undesirable community behaviour.

- Undesirable activity such as public drunkenness in groups, graffiti and littering discourages active leisure. It is envisaged that with addition of features that attract desirable usage that this element will be discouraged from the area. Street safety lighting will also assist. Into the future, Council may wish to consider CCTV in any problem areas. The vegetation in the park should not create screens or niches for undesirable public behaviour.

3.3.Lack of features to attract visitors and usage.

- The park is presently 1.5 km open space that has a footpath with some resident geese and ducks. The parkland is quite an attractive area with mature established trees. It has the bones of a great 4 star park that will be a great asset to the Mareeba community.

3.4.Flying foxes.

- Flying foxes have been known to roost in trees in the Bicentennial Lakes for many years. Flying foxes favour trees near watercourses and the founding tree plantings have made the park a desirable location causing neighbours to complain and people to not be able to use the footpath where the bats hang overhead.
- MSC will continue to implement its Statement of Intent in regards to Flying Fox management in this parkland.
- No further tall trees should be planted following the tree clearing in early 2018. Replacement vegetation should be limited to isolated small trees consistent with the vegetation management section in this Masterplan.

4. Community Consultation

Community consultation was realised through letters and presentations to key community organisations, and a Survey Monkey made available on the Council Website from mid-January to mid-March 2018. The survey results highlighted that the community support the revitalisation and that of the proposed features (Attachment 1) the following were ranked of the highest importance:

1. Lighting and safety
2. Playgrounds
3. Water and toilet amenities,
4. Footpath and bridge upgrades.

These were followed by the waterway aesthetics, café, exercise areas, flying fox management and picnic features of equal importance.

The rankings maybe used to inform Council in prioritising any future actions.

5. A Shared Vision

Bicentennial Lakes will become a Premium recreation reserve that provides a key public focus for Mareeba and is a defining icon of Council service through realising the following opportunities:

Recreation

- Promotion of active leisure
- Walking, running, cycling
- Adventure playgrounds
- Exercise stations
- Complements pool, fitness trail

Events

- Natural sound theatre / amphitheatre
- Weddings
- Markets
- Funruns

Environment

- Provides a place for the study of the environment
- Provides a place where the community can value a natural landscape
- Artistic opportunity

Connection

- Connects to other Council open spaces like Mary Andrews park, Granite Creek
- Allows pedestrian traffic from the CBD to Mareeba west.

This will be achieved through the staging and prioritisation of areas for revitalisation by introducing the following Bicentennial Lakes Precincts:



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**Amphitheatre
Precinct**

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**Keeble Street Lake
Precinct**

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**Adventure Playground
Precinct**

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Mareeba Pool Precinct

.....

**Mason Street Lake
Precinct**

.....

**Island Playground
Precinct**

.....

Dog Park Precinct

6. Amphitheatre Precinct

Location: Between 1st causeway downstream from Keeble Street and Granite Creek



Potential Amphitheatre Area

Opportunities:

- Natural earth formation lends towards an amphitheatre
- Minimal affected housing nearby
- Rotary park nearby with ample car parking and toilet
- Connection to Byrnes Street footpath, Granite Creek bridge
- Lower bed of foot causeway is an easy remedy to reconfigure waterway in this section.

Constraints:

- Some houses on Abbott Street north may be affected by proposed events.
- Significant earthworks to reconfigure waterway as is (no causeway works).



This section of the waterway needs significant reconfiguration or lowering of causeway bed.

Potential Uses: walking, running, amphitheatre.

Vegetation requirements:

Edge plantings required such as lomandra.

7. Keeble Street Lake Precinct

Location: Keeble Street - Foot causeway



View from Keeble Street



View from Foot Causeway to Keeble St

Opportunities:

- Bird feeding
- Already well visited
- Existing infrastructure: footpath, Foot bridge to island
- Consolidation of lake area relative to water flow
- Ideal spot for charity type "rubber duck" races
- Hill formation would support deck overlooking lake area
- Niche for wedding with lake background.
- Open accessible marshalling area for fun run events.
- Opportunity near Boxing Hall to add value to fitness trail and further add value throughout the park through bollards marking circuit distances & installing a pace clock.
- View from lookout hill.

Constraints:

- Earthworks required to improve water aesthetics and reconfigure lake.
- Fun Run events require a temporary road closure or traffic control to cross Keeble Street and Rankin Street to make use of full length of the park.

Potential Uses:

Walking, running, exercise stations and stairs next to boxing hall, bird feeding, wedding, café, information signage, secondary contact water activities.

Vegetation requirements:

Some edge plantings like lomandra species required for high flow sections.



Exercise Stations & Stair next to Boxing Hall



Wedding Niche



View from Lookout Hill

8. Adventure Playground Precinct

Location: Keeble Street - Pool



View from Keeble Street carpark



View towards proposed BBQ and adventure playground area

Opportunities:

- Existing infrastructure: picnic tables, shelter, sewer and water line.
- No water quality improvement needed in this area.
- Close proximity to pool and gymnastics hall.
- Connection to Abbott Street.
- Leopard tree lined pathway entrance.

Constraints:

- Potential flooding in a 50year event - retaining wall needed for playground)
- Children crossing road to move between bird feeding and playground

Potential Uses of this space:

- Adventure playground akin to Gumburra Park Cairns
- Open space recreation eg frisby immediately behind pool
- BBQs & picnics
- Bird feeding
- Water wheel to power tree lighting
- Toilet block, water taps.
- Street safety lighting



Gumburra Park Cairns - adventure rope park

9. Mareeba Pool Precinct

Location:

Abbott Street - includes Mareeba Pool area and existing Perfume Garden.



Mareeba Pool Precinct



Existing Scented Garden - commemorative of Emerald Hill Crash but attracts undesirable behaviour

Opportunities:

- Develop the area into a complex that provides for adequate lap lanes, recreational swimming and a meets community aspiration to have a safe place for small children to have water fun.
- Integrate an upgrade of the Mareeba Pool into the landscape of the parkland.
- Land space available to upgrade to a complex complete with splash park and café.

Constraints:

- Current memorial areas (tree and scented garden)
- Frequent inappropriate behaviour in area
- Imminent need for upgrade to aspects Mareeba Pool
- Cost prohibitive and whole of life costs may not be sustainable for Council.

Potential Uses:

- Mareeba swimming complex with café



10. Mason Street Lake Precinct

Location:

Between Hort Street foot causeway and Ferguson Street



Large linear open space perfect for markets



Mason Street Lake with weir out

Opportunities:

- Large open area suitable for markets
- Minimal water reconfiguration works needed.
- Small lake area aesthetically functions the best but may require some weed management
- Aesthetic areas for wedding niches with minimal earthworks.
-

Constraints:

- Undesirable community behaviour around fragrance garden
- Bats may relocate to environmental area.

Potential Uses:

- Works for Queensland Pathway proposed.
- Markets
- Environmental Area for trees.
- Street safety lighting for footpath between Warren Street and O'Donnel Street & for night markets
- Footbridges downstream of lake provide areas for open air painting.



The Japanese Footbridge



Potential wedding niche

11. Island Playground Precinct

Location: Between Rankine Street and Mareeba State High School



Opportunities:

- Open area with park bench established
- Parking available Abbott Street (South off Rankin Street)
- Water and Wastewater infrastructure
- Earthworks not technically challenging.
- "Island" nature play background.

Constraints:

- Earthworks required to reconfigure waterway and make island accessible.



Channel to the left requires filling (high flow channel). Island requires expansion and some landscaping but would make an excellent natural play area.

Potential Uses:

Playground, natural play area with access to island, bbqs / picnics, running, walking path.

This area has potential for street safety lighting.

Vegetation Requirements:

The high flow channel will require lomadra type planting and the "island" to be planted by native high flow type species eg weeping callistemons, lillipillies.



Nature playground

12. Dog Park Precinct

Location: Stewart Street

Opportunities:

- Majority of fencing in place from the residents on Casey Street
- Large open area that is not much use for anything else.

Constraints:

- Consultation maybe required with residents along Casey Street.
- Flying Fox management.

Potential Use:

- Fenced dog park
- Community Garden for Kindergarten

Vegetation requirements:

Tall trees are to be replaced overtime with short tree species or large isolated shrubs. No



Proposed fenced dog park location

13. Water Quality Maintenance Strategy

The provision of facilities and services needs to coincide with water aesthetics improvement works and a new water quality maintenance strategy. The recent weir sluice removal trial has resulted in Council understanding that the following maintenance regime needs to be trialled.

Before Wet Season:

- December each year remove all weir boards to allow for wet season flush
- Remove bulky rubbish from water way eg trolleys, bikes, tyres

After Wet Season:

- Remove debris caught behind weir walls.
- Remove floating sludge and objectionable matter.
- April each year reinstate weir slats at 2 weir sites:
 - Lake 1 - 1st foot causeway downstream of Keeble Street (first, and allow to water level to build up and overflow)
 - Lake 2 - Weir between Hort Street and Warren Street
- Dose with aquatic herbicide if required.



Weir with slats removed

14. Vegetation Strategy

Following the clearing of trees in the parkland in response to the flying fox management issue early 2018, it is critical that vegetation needs to be managed to discourage flying foxes returning. Management of the vegetation over recent years has also been useful in preventing undesirable community behaviour. These needs however need to be balanced with the natural aesthetics of the area.

Expert advice should be sought to confirm selection of species however the following concepts should guide the overall intent for the vegetation management:

1. Overall the vegetation should reflect a native Australian tropical savanna reflective of the wider Mareeba natural vegetation.
2. Open grassy parkland should be planted sparsely with small trees, the odd taller tree and some areas of grasslands. Areas of grasslands would reduce the amount of mowing required also.



3. Waterway planting is required to minimise weed infestation and improve water quality and aesthetics. Plantings would involve native grasses and sedges in the water edge and bank. The grasses act to protect the banks from erosion by the grass foliage laying over in higher flows.



Attachment 1 - Bicentennial Lakes Masterplan concept drawing.

Mareeba Bicentennial Lakes



E X I S T I N G	Entrance	Toilets	P R O P O S E D	Reclaimed land (previously lake)	Cafe
	Road	Undercover picnic table		Redirected water	Exercise area
	Footpath	Picnic table		Information sign	Security lighting
	Foot bridge/causeway	Bench seat		BBQ	Amphitheatre
	Trees	Waterway/lake		Water wheel to power tree illumination	Playground
	Car park	Island		Tap	Fenced dog park
		Perfume garden		Wedding site	Footpath
					Sediment basin

