



June 2008

Tennis Facilities Plan

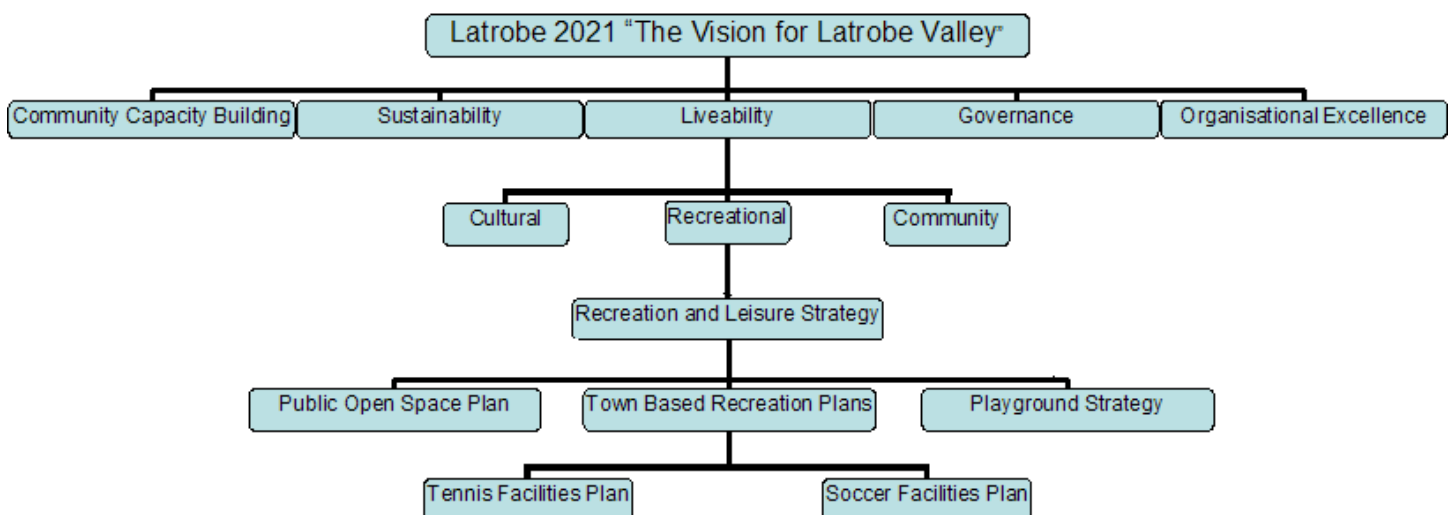
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1. Background

The Tennis Facilities Plan has been developed to provide a strategic approach to addressing the current and future needs of tennis, and to cater for the growth and development of the sport in Latrobe City. The plan is consistent with the Liveability Strategic actions identified in “Latrobe 2021 The Vision For Latrobe Valley”, these are:

- Assess and evaluate future recreational opportunities to address community aspirations.
- Promote and maximise the utilisation of recreation, aquatic and leisure facilities and services and discourage the duplication of facilities and services and ensure they meet the needs of residents.
- Encourage greater participation in all recreation pursuits.
- Increase the accessibility of Latrobe City’s recreation and sporting facilities.
- Develop and maintain high quality recreation facilities in partnership with the community.
- Promote active living and participation in community life.

The plan has been developed in the context of existing and proposed town based recreation plans. The majority of opportunities for tennis facility improvements will therefore be addressed through the development and implementation of these town based plans. The figure below shows how this plan fits into the overall strategic direction of Latrobe City.



1.1 METHODOLOGY

The Tennis Facilities Plan has been undertaken in three stages.

1. **Project Establishment and Analysis**, which included a review of relevant strategies and reports, analysis of participation and industry trends, demographic analysis and audit / assessment of public tennis facilities.
2. **Stakeholder Consultation** including surveys, submissions, interviews, workshops and a public meeting. Consultation was undertaken with tennis clubs, local, State and National associations, private facility operators, Councillors / Council officers and other key stakeholders.
3. **Report preparation.** Preparation of draft report following an analysis of information gathered.

The plan primarily focuses on public tennis facilities in Latrobe City however consideration is also given to private facilities in Moe and Traralgon. School facilities are not included in the project, however it is acknowledged that many schools have tennis and/or multi-use courts that are available for community use.



1.2 DOCUMENT REVIEW

The Tennis Facilities Plan has been developed in the context of the “2006 Recreation and Leisure Strategy” and the recommended principles and strategic objectives. The Strategy noted that tennis was the 6th most popular sport in Latrobe City and had experienced a significant growth in membership over the previous 3 years, particularly in the junior membership categories. Tennis participation in Latrobe City was reportedly below the Victorian average (in 2004) and benchmark data identified that there may be an oversupply of tennis courts across the City, especially in the four main townships.

The Tennis Facilities Plan has been informed by a number of other strategic documents which are detailed in Volume 2. Such documents include the Moe Newborough Outdoor Recreation Plan (Nov. 2007) and Draft Morwell Outdoor Recreation Plan due to their findings and recommendations relating to tennis facilities in these areas.

1.3 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Latrobe City is a regional city encompassing an area of 1,422 square kilometres and an estimated population of 72,075 residents (as at 30 June 2006). Based on 2006 Census data the population has experienced a growth of 1.7% (1,172 persons) since 2001 and is expected to be relatively stable in the future.

The City has four major centres, the largest being Traralgon with 21,961 residents. Moe / Moe South / Newborough is the second largest area with a total of 15,581 residents, followed by Morwell 13,401 residents and Churchill 4,587 residents. The City also has a number of smaller townships and rural outlying areas which make up the remainder of the population. These resident numbers are based on 2006 census data.

The demographic profile of Latrobe City has a number of implications for tennis participation and provision which are detailed below.

- The geographic distribution of the population and a lower proportion of car ownership (compared to the Victorian average) highlights the importance of tennis facilities being appropriately distributed throughout the municipality to ensure they are accessible to the community.
- Latrobe City has a larger proportion of children and young people (aged between 0 to 17 years) compared to Victoria, which are the most active sector of the population for participation in sport and physical recreation.
- The proportion of people aged 50 and over is expected to increase significantly in the future (from 32.1% of the population in 2006 to 49.7% in 2031). This sector of the population has a lower level of participation in sport and physical recreation, however there is likely to be an ongoing / increased demand for mid-week and social competitions and the desire for “softer” court surfaces such as synthetic grass.

2.1 NATIONAL PARTICIPATION

Research undertaken by the Australian Sports Commission as part of the “2006 Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey”, identified tennis as the 7th most popular activity in Australia. Furthermore:

- Males have a higher level of participation in tennis (7.2%) than females (6.4%).
- Participation in ‘non-organised’ tennis is higher (4.7%) than ‘organised’ tennis (2.7%).
- Tennis is ranked the 4th most popular ‘organised’ activity (behind aerobics / fitness, golf and netball).
- Tennis participation has decreased by 18.2% from 2001 to 2006 (by number of participants). As a percentage of the population, participation in tennis has decreased from 9.2% in 2001 to 6.8% in 2006.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics; “Children’s Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia” (2006) found that tennis was the 5th most popular sport for children aged 5 to 14 years with a participation rate of 7.3% (behind swimming, soccer, netball and Australian Rules football). Furthermore:

- Tennis was the 3rd most popular sport for girls with a participation rate of 6.6%.
- For boys, tennis was the 5th most popular sport, with a participation rate of 8.0%.
- Tennis participation decreased from 8.5% in 2000 to 7.3% in 2006.

2.2 STATE PARTICIPATION – TENNIS VICTORIA


The “2006 Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey” (Australian Sports Commission) estimated that 318,700 people or 7.7% of the Victorian population participate in tennis (for persons aged 15 and over), which has decreased from 9.2% in 2001.

Tennis Victoria is the peak body for tennis in Victoria and has approximately 1,000 affiliated clubs and 100,300 affiliated members (in 2007). Membership numbers have grown by 1.5% (+1,271 members) from 2002 to 2007, which excludes approximately 12,000 new members from the recent amalgamation with the Victorian Country Tennis Association. Other participation trends that have been noted by Tennis Victoria include:

- Junior membership is stable / increasing.
- Senior membership (associated with Saturday afternoon competition) has declined.
- Participation in night and mid week competition has increased.
- Similar proportions of boys and girls are playing junior tennis, however anecdotal evidence from Tennis Victoria suggests more senior females are playing than senior males due to the introduction of flexible participation opportunities (i.e. mid week competitions).

Other relevant trends / information that have been provided by Tennis Victoria include:

- There is a tendency towards ‘hard’ courts in Regional Victoria (i.e. acrylic and asphalt surfaces), particularly for smaller clubs due to their lower maintenance requirements.
- The drought and subsequent water restrictions is an issue affecting lawn and red porous courts.
- The provision of ‘soft’ courts (i.e. synthetic grass) can be beneficial in communities with large numbers of seniors / older players.

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- Tennis Victoria has no policy on court surfaces, but states that surfaces should reflect the needs of local communities and clubs. Tennis Australia has a policy which identifies 'Grand Slam' surfaces (i.e. lawn, clay or acrylic courts) as preferred for player development.
 - There is an increased number of clubs / associations scheduling junior competition outside of traditional Saturday morning time-slots to cater for high player numbers (i.e. Friday night, Sunday morning).
 - The Tennis Hot Shots Program for children aged 7 to 12 years is increasing in popularity. This grass roots program enables beginners to play a game of tennis using modified equipment (i.e. lower nets and slower bouncing balls) and provides a stepping stone into competitive tennis and skill development.

2.3 REGIONAL PARTICIPATION

There are four tennis associations that co-ordinate competition for tennis clubs and players in Latrobe City. These include:

- Latrobe Valley Tennis Association (LVTA)
- Loy Yang Tennis Association (LYTA)
- Yinnar & District Tennis Association (Y&DTA)
- Traralgon Tennis Association (TTA)

All tennis associations have reported a decline in membership over the past five years, with the exception of the Latrobe Valley Tennis Association who has experienced a slight increase.

Junior and senior competition is coordinated by LVTA (juniors only) and LYTA and Y&DTA. The total number of registered members who belong to these associations has decreased by 12% (-85 players) over the past five years. More specifically this includes:

- Juniors – a decrease of 6% (-35 members).
- Seniors – a decrease of 25% (-50 members). LYTA and Y&DTA have merged their competition due to the low numbers of senior members.

3. Tennis in Latrobe City

3.1 CURRENT SITUATION

The following table summarises the provision and distribution of tennis facilities in Latrobe City, which includes 15 active tennis clubs / associations, 20 tennis venues (2 private) and 126 tennis courts (7 private).

Township	Venue	No. Courts	Club / Association	Members (2007)
Boolarra	Boolarra Recreation Reserve	4	Boolarra Tennis Club	35
Churchill	Gaskin Park	11 (4 unusable)	Churchill Tennis Club	62
Flynn	Flynn Recreation Reserve	4	Flynn Tennis Club	52
Glengarry	Glengarry Recreation Reserve	4	Glengarry Tennis Club	49
Hazelwood Nth	Hazelwood North Tennis Club	4	Hazelwood North Tennis Club	30
Moe	Moe Botanic Gardens	15	Moe Tennis Club	145
	Latrobe Indoor Tennis Centre (Private)	5	N/a	N/a
Newborough	Monash Reserve	8	Newborough Tennis Club	31
Morwell	Keegan Street Reserve	4	-	-
	Ronald Reserve	5	Morwell East Tennis Club	18
	Ronald Reserve	10	Morwell Tennis Club	138
Toongabbie	Toongabbie Recreation Reserve	2	Toongabbie Tennis Club	50
Traralgon	Maskrey Reserve	4	Pax Hill Tennis Club	51
	Eric Taylor Reserve *	2		
	Traralgon Tennis Centre	24	Traralgon Tennis Association	324
	V-Line Reserve, Queens Pde. (Private)	2	N/a	
Traralgon South	Traralgon South Reserve	4	Traralgon South Tennis Club	43
Tyers	Tyers Recreation Reserve	4	Tyers Tennis Club	48
Yallourn North	Yallourn North Rec. Reserve	4	-	-
Yinnar	Yinnar Recreation Reserve	4	Yinnar Tennis Club	90
	Albert Deppeler Reserve Yinnar South *	2		
TOTAL		126		1,166

* Used as a secondary venue by the nominated tennis club.



3.2 LATROBE CITY PARTICIPATION

In 2007 there were 1,166 registered tennis players in Latrobe City, which has decreased by 2% over the past five years. The number of senior and junior players has decreased, however the number of casual players (i.e. mid-week and night tennis) has increased. Based on club membership data, more females play senior and casual tennis, whereas more males play junior competition.

Nine out of the fifteen active tennis clubs in Latrobe City have experienced a decline in membership over the past five years. Clubs attribute this decline to the increased availability of mid-week and night tennis, increased work and family commitments and the reluctance of people to commit to weekend sport. Facility constraints and poor transition between juniors and seniors were also identified as contributing factors.


3.3 CLUB OPERATION

Tennis clubs in Latrobe City share a number of common issues and challenges relating to the operation of their club and in providing opportunities for tennis participation within the community.

- Volunteer recruitment and retention is an issue for most clubs.
 - The majority of clubs have a small dedicated Committee responsible for the operation of the club, but have trouble recruiting new volunteers.
 - Majority of clubs have a long serving coach or success with obtaining quality coaches, whilst some have difficulty attracting coaches to their club.
- Clubs have a limited ability / capacity to develop business and strategic plans.
- Most clubs have some involvement with local schools (promotion and school use of club facilities) however acknowledge this relationship could be strengthened.
- The majority of clubs could be more proactive in marketing themselves within the community.
- The financial position of clubs is varied. Most clubs are able to meet costs but have difficulty saving and fundraising.
- Membership fees range from \$55 to \$150 for seniors and \$30 to \$70 for juniors. Some clubs offer discounted fees for students and if more than one child is playing from the same family.
- All clubs except one are affiliated with Tennis Victoria.

Opportunities exist for local tennis clubs and associations to work with key stakeholders to improve the administration and viability of their organisation. This could be achieved through various clubs development programs and initiatives (i.e. strategic business planning, mentoring programs etc.) and through increased communication / awareness about the availability of existing resources and support networks. In addition to Latrobe City Council, tennis clubs and associations have access to the following local support networks:

- The **Tennis Regional Development Officer program** is funded by Tennis Victoria (and VicHealth) and designed to address issues facing local tennis clubs and develop program initiatives in the Central Gippsland region. This program provides clubs and associations with information and assistance on a broad range of topics such as grants and funding opportunities, facility planning and design guidelines, risk management procedures, and general policy information.

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- **Gippsport** is a Regional Sports Assembly that supports sporting clubs and associations by providing programs, resources, training and advice on a broad range of topics relating to club management and development.
 - The **Central Gippsland Tennis Regional Council** is supported by Tennis Victoria and Gippsport and aims to promote the growth and development of tennis through managing, promoting and coordinating tennis activities within the Central Gippsland Region. The Council offers additional programs to local tennis associations including squad and tournament opportunities which enable players to be involved in higher levels of competition.
 - The **Gippsland Sports Academy's Tennis Program** is also supported by Tennis Victoria and provides advancement pathways for promising junior players in the region.

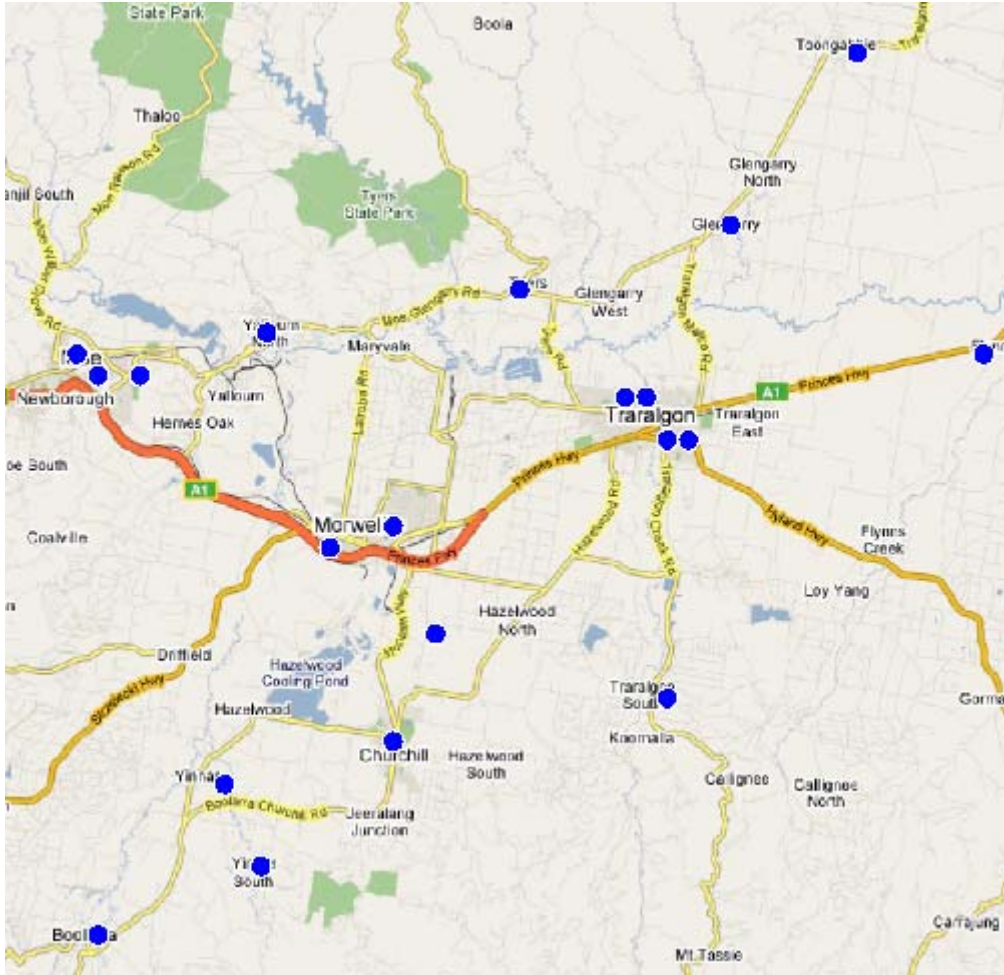
As previously mentioned, lack of strategic planning and budgeting is a significant issue for tennis clubs in Latrobe City. Most clubs aim to keep their membership fees low to make tennis participation affordable to the community. Whilst this is commendable, membership fees at some clubs do not allow for future maintenance and replacement costs. The Central Gippsland Tennis Regional Council has a "Membership Fee Calculator" on their website, which provides clubs with a tool for calculating realistic membership fees. This resource is designed to assist tennis clubs to become more sustainable and includes funding requirements for the maintenance of courts and facilities.

Whilst it is acknowledged that clubs have limited resources and volunteers to operate their club, it is important for them to adopt sound business practices in operating their facilities and in administering club activities. In addition to annual membership fees, it is also important for clubs to raise funds by developing a broader range of revenue generating opportunities. Clubs also need to be more proactive in marketing themselves and working with local schools in an attempt to attract more players and address the decline in participation.

Finally, affiliation with Tennis Victoria enables clubs to access a greater range of programs and support services (including specialised technical advice) and ensures adequate insurance cover for players and officials. It is therefore recommended that all tennis clubs in Latrobe City affiliate with Tennis Victoria.

3.4 FACILITY PROVISION AND DISTRIBUTION

The following plan illustrates the distribution of tennis facilities in Latrobe City which are spread across 20 different locations. As shown, these tennis venues are widely distributed throughout the municipality with tennis facilities located in each township and several smaller localities. Larger tennis facilities are located within the four main townships of Traralgon, Moe, Morwell and Churchill.



There are 119 public tennis courts in Latrobe City that are available to approximately 72,075 people that reside in the municipality. Whilst there is no officially recognised standard for provision, industry benchmarks of 1 court per 1,000/1,500 people are often used as a measure in tennis facility planning. Based on these benchmarks, there is currently a high level of tennis provision in Latrobe City (1 court per 606 people) and a potential oversupply of tennis courts in some areas.

The current level of provision, together with projections for limited population growth and an ageing community, indicates that there is unlikely to be any future demand for additional tennis courts based on demographics alone. Furthermore, there is likely to be a need to rationalise some tennis facilities in the future.

It is generally acknowledged that larger tennis facilities are more viable than smaller facilities (i.e. with 2 courts) due to their ability to provide a wider range of programs and cater for more participants. Opportunities exist within Latrobe City to consolidate some tennis facilities, particularly those that are in close proximity to other



venues. However consideration must be given to the role tennis courts play within a small rural community including the benefits associated with sport and physical activity and in bringing the community together. The needs of individual tennis facilities and clubs must therefore be considered on a case by case basis to ensure an appropriate level of tennis exists in Latrobe City. Furthermore, facility usage levels and club participation numbers must also be considered in determining the current and future demands for tennis facilities.

3.5 FACILITY HIERARCHY

A natural hierarchy of tennis facilities exists within Latrobe City including four major tennis facilities in each of the four main townships of Traralgon, Moe, Morwell and Churchill. A large number of medium sized club based tennis facilities are also provided in the municipality, in addition to small “public use” tennis courts that are not supported by an active tennis club.

Major Tennis Facilities

Major Tennis Centres have a high number of courts and provide a broad range of tennis programs. As a result these facilities cater for large population catchments, accommodate high usage levels and are capable of hosting large events and tournaments. Major tennis facilities in Latrobe City include the Traralgon Tennis Centre (24 courts), Moe Botanic Gardens (15 courts), Ronald Reserve in Morwell (15 courts) and Gaskin Park in Churchill (11 courts, 4 unusable).

Due to the high level of infrastructure provided, it is important that these major tennis facilities achieve maximum use through the continued growth of existing programs, introduction of new activities and expansion of supporting infrastructure (i.e. court lighting).

The Traralgon Tennis Centre is the premier tennis facility in the region, consisting of 24 tennis courts and provides a range of tennis programs, services and competition opportunities. The Centre operates on a commercial basis, employs a part-time manager and hosts major events and tournaments. The Centre also provides for local junior and senior competition, weekday and night competition, junior tournaments, casual hire and lessons / coaching.

It is therefore important for Council to continue to support this facility due to the range of benefits it provides for tennis in the region and the economic benefits it provides to the general community. This need is reinforced by the Recreation and Leisure Strategy (2006) which recommends that Council provides effective support and resources to maximise opportunities for economic development through recreation and leisure.

Medium Size Tennis Facilities

Medium sized tennis facilities typically include 3 to 6 courts and cater for club based tennis including competition and coaching. These facilities should be geographically spread throughout the municipality and provide access for residents living in each township (unless where a major tennis facility is otherwise provided).

Public Use Facilities

Public use tennis facilities refer to 1 or 2 tennis courts that are not supported by a tennis club but are available for the community to use free of charge. These facilities may be required in some rural areas where residents do not have access to a local tennis club, and would be provided as an informal recreation facility (like a playground or skate park) that is available for the community to enjoy.



This hierarchy provides the community with access to a range of tennis facilities and a variety of opportunities for tennis participation. The hierarchy is designed to ensure that facilities complement rather than compete against one another and by ensuring they are evenly distributed and developed to an appropriate level. More specifically, tennis facilities should not be located in close proximity to one another and facilities should be developed within their level of classification (as summarised in the following table).

Facility Components	Tennis Facility Hierarchy		
	Major Facility	Medium Size Facility	Public Use Facility
Number of Courts	7+	3 - 6	1 - 2
Court Lighting	✓	✓ (pending demand)	-
Clubroom Facility	✓	✓ (or access to)	-
Car Parking	✓	✓	-
Spectator Facilities (i.e. seating & shade)	✓	✓	✓
Catchment	Several townships / localities	Single township	Small township or locality
Type of Use	Full range of programs and competitions incl. tournaments	A range of tennis competitions and coaching	Informal casual use, secondary competition venue

This hierarchy represents the ideal long term situation for tennis in Latrobe City. It is acknowledged however that several existing facilities do not meet this classification, as they may have too many or too few courts, or located in close proximity to another tennis venue. Tennis facilities will therefore need to be assessed on an individual basis.

Private Tennis Facilities

There are two private tennis facilities and numerous courts located on Education Department land in Latrobe City, which include:

- Latrobe Indoor Tennis Centre: This Centre is located in Haigh Street in Moe and consists of five sand filled artificial grass courts. The Centre has been in operation for 17 years and provides a range of tennis programs including night competition, mid-week ladies competition, round robins and casual hire. Centre Management reports that participation has been steadily declining.
- Victorian Railway Institute Courts, Traralgon: This reserve is located at Queens Parade in Traralgon and consists of two en-tout-cas courts which are in poor condition.
- Schools include Lowanna Secondary College, Sacred Heart Primary School and Gippsland Christian College.

The Latrobe indoor tennis facility plays a significant role for tennis participation within the community, however the long term future of these courts cannot be guaranteed as they are privately operated and outside Council's control. The future planning for tennis facilities in Latrobe City must therefore be mindful that these courts could become unavailable in the future.



3.6 FACILITY USE AND DEMAND

The use of tennis facilities varies between clubs and venues. The following information provides a summary of facility usage levels, as provided by tennis clubs in Latrobe City.

- Facilities are generally at capacity for junior competition on a Saturday morning. Some clubs need to use secondary venues to cater for numbers including Glengarry, Toongabbie, Pax Hill, Yinnar and occasionally Flynn.
- Senior competition takes place on Saturday afternoon and in most instances does not require use of all available courts.
- Competition at most venues is restricted to summer only.
- Training and/or coaching is provided at most venues.
- Night competition is provided at 5 tennis club venues (excluding private facility) including Churchill, Moe, Morwell, Traralgon and Yinnar (there is no floodlighting at Yinnar).
- Mid week / weekday competition is held at 6 tennis club venues (excluding private facility), including Churchill, Glengarry, Newborough, Morwell, Pax Hill and Traralgon.
- Several courts are shared / multi-use with netball. Multi use facilities are considered essential particularly at rural recreation reserves where single use only facilities are unjustifiable.
- Arrangements for public access vary amongst clubs with half leaving the gate unlocked for the public, whilst the other half hire out courts for a fee (ranging from \$4 to \$10).
- There is no active tennis club located at Yallourn North Recreation Reserve or Keegan Street Reserve in Morwell. Tennis courts in these locations are not formally used for competition.
- There is no active tennis club based at the Albert Deppeler Reserve, Yinnar South or the Eric Taylor Reserve in Traralgon however these facilities are used as secondary venues for Yinnar TC and Pax Hill TC respectively.

The usage of tennis courts varies in intensity between each venue. Based on ratios of players per court (club membership numbers divided by the number of available courts), usage levels at tennis venues vary from 1:4 to 1:25, with an average of 12 players per court across the municipality. Toongabbie Tennis Club (1:25) and Yinnar Tennis Club (1:23) have the highest ratios (Yinnar TC ratio is based on courts at Yinnar Recreation Reserve alone). There is currently no recognised standard for provision however other municipal tennis plans quote minimum standards that range from 1:20 to 1:50.

Despite this seemingly low level of facility usage, most tennis facilities are at capacity on a Saturday morning for junior competition and several clubs are required to use other venues to cater for high numbers. Several clubs have also expressed a need for additional courts to help cater for this demand. In most instances, any additional courts that are developed for junior competition are unlikely to receive high levels of use throughout the remainder of the week and are therefore difficult to justify. ;

As previously discussed, Latrobe City is currently well provided for with tennis courts and has a potential oversupply of courts, highlighted by the low or lack of use of a number of tennis courts in the municipality. Many tennis facilities in Latrobe City receive minimal use and opportunities exist for increased programming and utilisation (i.e. mid week competition, night tennis, coaching, clinics etc.). It is important for tennis clubs to provide a variety of programs to attract a wider range of tennis participants and to improve the financial viability of the club. The provision of floodlighting will help to maximise court usage by enabling clubs to schedule tennis programs at night, increase access to the growing number of casual participants and generate additional revenue to help the club become more self sufficient.



It is acknowledged that some clubs do not have the resources or population base to support such programs, and clubs located in close proximity to one another are likely to compete for the same participants. The individual needs of each club will therefore need to be considered in determining the most appropriate ways that facility usage can be maximised.

Finally, the ongoing availability and use of tennis courts by members of the public is required to ensure that all residents can benefit from local sport and recreation infrastructure. This is currently being achieved through free access to unlocked facilities or casual hire of tennis courts.

3.7 FACILITY STANDARDS

The following table summarises results from facility assessments that were undertaken at each public tennis venue in Latrobe City. It should be noted that these results are based on detailed visual observations only, which were undertaken in January 2008.

Tennis Venue	Type of Surface	Condition of Surface			Lighting
		Good	Fair	Poor	
Boolarra Recreation Reserve	Asphalt	4	-	-	2 limited
Gaskin Park, Churchill	Acrylic & Asphalt	7	-	4	3
Flynn Recreation Reserve	Asphalt	2	2	-	-
Glengarry Recreation Reserve	Asphalt	-	4	-	2 limited
Hazelwood North Tennis Club	Acrylic & Asphalt	-	2	2	-
Moe Botanic Gardens	Acrylic	15	-	-	15 (2 limited)
Monash Reserve, Newborough	Acrylic & Asphalt	3	4	1	-
Keegan Street Reserve, Morwell	Asphalt	2	-	2	-
Ronald Reserve, Morwell (MTC)	Acrylic	10	-	-	5
Ronald Reserve, Morwell (METC)	Acrylic & Concrete	-	3	2	-
Toongabbie Recreation Reserve	Acrylic	2	-	-	-
Maskrey Reserve, Traralgon	Asphalt	-	4	-	-
Eric Taylor Reserve, Traralgon	Asphalt	2	-	-	-
Traralgon Tennis Centre	Acrylic	24	-	-	12
Traralgon South Reserve	Asphalt	2	2	-	-
Tyers Recreation Reserve	Asphalt	2	2	-	-
Yallourn North Rec. Reserve	Concrete	-	-	4	-
Yinnar Recreation Reserve	Asphalt	2	-	2	2 limited
Albert Deppeler Reserve, Yinnar South	Asphalt	2	-	-	-
Total (no. courts)	-	79	23	17	33*

* Excludes courts with limited lighting.

The results of stakeholder consultation and the above mentioned facility inspections identified a number of key issues pertaining to the standard of tennis facilities in Latrobe City. More detailed information is provided for each tennis venue in Section 5, however the following information provides a summary of the key findings and potential future opportunities.



Condition of Court Surfaces:

- A total of 40 public tennis courts at 12 venues are in either 'fair' or 'poor' condition. The remaining 79 courts are in 'good' condition.
- Eight clubs reported problems with the surface of their courts ranging from cracking and pot holes to the need for total redevelopment of the court and base structure.
- Many courts will need to be resurfaced within the near future (i.e. 5 years). The need for timely resurfacing (before courts become a risk management issue) was identified as an issue by clubs.

The ongoing resurfacing and maintenance requirements of tennis courts in Latrobe City is an issue that is compounded by the large number of courts in the municipality. There are currently 40 courts at 12 different venues that are currently in 'poor' or 'fair' condition and which will need to be addressed in the short to medium term through either upgrading or decommissioning.

It is recommended that Council develop a longer term replacement schedule for the resurfacing of all tennis courts in Latrobe City. Courts with a rating of 'poor' should be addressed as a high priority, followed by courts with a 'fair' rating. This is due to potential risk management issues associated with substandard court surfaces and the difficulty attracting players to such facilities. Disused courts and courts that are no longer required should have their nets removed to deter future use. Courts with a rating of 'good' should then be prioritised according to the condition of the court, type of surface and the date the court was constructed or last resurfaced. These courts should also be inspected periodically to monitor their condition.

Clubs should be consulted about the proposed timelines for court resurfacing so they can plan and fundraise accordingly. Tennis Victoria Technical Services has prepared information on court lifecycle and replacement costs to assist with capital reserve planning. This resource is included in Volume 2 (Appendix 1) and is available on the Central Gippsland Tennis Regional Council website.


Finally, it should be noted that where courts show evidence of significant cracking, specialist technical advice should be sought to assess the structural condition of the court and determine the need to repair sections of the base and possibly the foundation.

Type of Court Surface:

Public tennis courts in Latrobe City are currently restricted to acrylic, asphalt or concrete which are all classified as 'hard' court surfaces. The lack of 'soft' court alternatives (i.e. sand filled artificial grass, cushioned acrylic or red porous) provides limited options for players, particularly older players who have a preference for soft courts due to a lower impact on joints. Consideration should therefore be given to diversifying the type of court surfaces in the municipality to ensure a broader range of needs and preferences are catered for among tennis players.

There is a variety of tennis court surfaces available and consideration needs to be given to a range of factors to determine their suitability including player preferences, maintenance requirements, replacement costs and local environmental conditions. For example whilst Grand Slam surfaces such as lawn, red porous and acrylic courts are preferred for player development, lawn and red porous courts are not ideal for many communities due to their high maintenance and water requirements. (NB: It should be noted that only courts with Grand Slam surfaces are eligible to host national events.)

- Acrylic coated tennis court surfaces are suited to all levels of coaching, training and play and are recognised by Tennis Australia as being suitable for player development. They can generally be described as being non-slip, medium paced with an extremely true ball bounce of medium height. The



shock absorption qualities are hard to moderate depending on cushioning. The lifespan of an acrylic surface is between 10 and 15 years depending on maintenance regimes and court usage levels.

- Sand Filled Artificial Grass surfaces are becoming increasingly popular as the chosen surface for veteran and older recreational players because the surface appears easier on the body. Playing conditions vary according to the type of product, but courts generally have the ability to be used in all weather, have a firm footing, medium slow to very fast ball speeds, and a variable trueness of ball bounce of low to medium height. The lifespan of a sand filled artificial grass surface is between 10 and 18 years depending on the quality of the carpet, maintenance regimes and court usage levels.
- Asphalt and concrete are very basic hard court surfaces and tend to be the least preferred surface of tennis players. These courts however have a life span of 30 to 40 years and have lower maintenance requirements and associated costs compared to other surfaces.

Consideration should therefore be given to upgrading existing asphalt and concrete courts in the future, where the club can contribute an appropriate amount towards the conversion and can demonstrate an ability to adequately maintain the courts in the future.

Court Lighting

- Court lighting is provided at the four major tennis venues in Latrobe City including Churchill, Moe, Morwell, and Traralgon. A total of 33 courts have lighting at these four venues.
- Three clubs hope to expand lighting to include additional courts (Churchill, Morwell and Traralgon).
- Limited lighting is provided on multi-use tennis / netball courts at Boolarra, Glengarry and Yinnar, which are predominantly used for netball training purposes.
- Clubs planning / hoping to install court lighting in the future include Tyers, Glengarry, Pax Hill, Yinnar and Traralgon South.

The popularity of night tennis is increasing, particularly for casual participants with time constraints and who prefer a more flexible approach to tennis participation. Court lighting enables clubs to schedule a range of tennis programs at night (i.e. night competition, coaching) which results in increased use and revenue and helps club to become more vibrant and self sufficient.

The expansion of tennis court lighting in Latrobe City is supported within the Tennis Facilities Plan due to the range of benefits they provide including an increased use of existing facilities, increased availability of tennis within the community, expanded range of tennis programs and generation of additional revenue to assist with the operation of tennis clubs.

Clubs seeking Council support for court lighting should be capable of contributing significant funds towards the cost of installation and demonstrate their awareness and ability to meet ongoing maintenance and replacement costs including increased electrical costs, changing of lamps and long term replacement costs. The impact of court lighting on neighbouring properties will also need to be considered.



Clubroom and Spectator Facilities

- Most clubs are satisfied with their clubrooms facilities. Half of the tennis clubs reported a 'high' level of satisfaction with their facilities, with several clubrooms being new or recently renovated.
- Many clubrooms require improvements to toilet facilities.
- There is limited access for people with disabilities.
- Facilities for spectators are generally well provided for however there is a need for more shade and seating.

Clubroom facilities are generally the most heavily utilised facilities within any tennis club and play a significant role in attracting and retaining members. It is therefore important for clubrooms to provide the necessary facilities for members and be maintained to a high standard. Clubroom and spectator facilities should also complement the public open space in which they are situated and contribute to a positive perception of the local community.

Based on site observation and stakeholder consultation, the majority of clubrooms are inaccessible for people with disabilities and many toilet facilities need to be upgraded.

3.8 FUNDING FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Tennis clubs are the primary users and beneficiaries of tennis facilities and consequently should contribute towards any capital works undertaken at their facilities. At present, tennis clubs on Council owned and / or managed land are eligible to apply to Latrobe City Council for funding assistance for capital improvements (i.e. court resurfacing). There is however no policy stipulating the funding contribution required from clubs. Ideally clubs should contribute at least one third of the total cost, with the exact amount dependent on the scope and total cost of works, contributions from external agencies, consistency with Council's strategic planning and the ability of clubs to contribute.

Clubs affiliated with Tennis Victoria / Australia are also eligible to apply for funding under the "National Court Rebate Scheme" for the purpose of developing new, or upgrading existing court surfaces and associated infrastructure. Funding of up to \$11,000 is available per court with a maximum rebate of 50%, however only courts with an acrylic, clay or natural grass surface are eligible to receive funding.

Other major funding opportunities include the Tennis Australia Facility Loan Scheme and Sport and Recreation Victoria Minor Facilities Grants Program.

3.9 FACILITY MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

Tennis clubs in Latrobe City have varied management arrangements. Some have a lease or tenancy agreement with Council, whilst others belong to a Reserve Committee of Management. Clubs are reasonably satisfied with facility management arrangements, however have varied levels of satisfaction with maintenance practices and standards.

It is evident that some confusion exists about who is responsible for various maintenance tasks and clarification is required on this issue. In most instances, clubs are responsible for the cyclical maintenance requirements of their tennis courts and associated infrastructure (i.e. clubrooms, lighting) and are eligible to apply to Council for funding assistance for major / structural maintenance tasks and capital improvements.

These maintenance requirements should be clearly stipulated in lease / management agreements and communicated to clubs to ensure they are fully aware of their responsibilities and associated costs and plan for



them accordingly. Furthermore, applications for capital improvement projects should be accompanied by a proposed maintenance schedule with details of periodic maintenance requirements, replacement costs, timelines and a commitment to establish a maintenance and replacement fund. This will ensure that clubs are aware of the maintenance requirements and associated cost implications of the proposed capital project and are capable of meeting those requirements. This will also ensure that resources are allocated appropriately and facilities are maintained to a high standard.

As previously discussed, the Central Gippsland Tennis Regional Council has resources on their website to assist clubs, including typical lifecycle costs for various court surfaces and ancillary items (i.e. lighting, fencing, nets etc.). This also includes annual replacement and maintenance costs. Similar resources are also available from Tennis Australia and technical advice is available from Tennis Victoria for affiliated clubs.

In summary, the following basic maintenance tasks are required at tennis facilities:

- Acrylic Courts: The most important factor in prolonging the useful life of a tennis court is keeping it clean. It is therefore important to regularly remove dirt and debris and wash courts annually with high pressure water sprays. Lines should be repainted every few years and acrylic resurfacing undertaken every 7 to 10 years. The lifespan of an acrylic court is 10 to 15 years and the estimated total annual replacement and maintenance cost is \$1,350* (for a non-cushioned acrylic surface on new base).
- Sand Filled Artificial Grass Courts: Maintenance required to prolong the lifespan of the surface includes regular grooming / brushing, removal of debris and annual treatment of moss and algae. Courts should be rejuvenated by removing and replacing the sand approximately 4 to 7 years after installation. The lifespan of a sand filled artificial grass court varies between 10 to 18 years however inadequate maintenance could reduce the life of this surface by as much as half. The estimated total annual replacement and maintenance cost is between \$1,800* to \$2,050*.
- Asphalt Courts have a lifespan of between 30 to 40 years and an estimated total annual replacement and maintenance cost of \$700*. Maintenance requirements are minimal and include keeping the surface clean and free of debris.
- Court lighting: Maintenance requirements include the replacement and adjustment of lamps and cleaning of reflectors and visors. The life expectancy for lights varies between 30 to 40 years and the estimated total annual replacement and maintenance cost varies between \$700* and \$1,140* depending on the type of lighting (i.e. low level side lights or high corner towers).

Clubrooms, fencing, nets and net posts are other items which have some degree of maintenance and will need to be factored into the operation of a tennis club.

* *Annual maintenance and replacement costs are based on estimates from "Typical Life Cycle Assumptions for Nominated Court Surfaces and Selected Ancillary Items", prepared by Tennis Victoria Technical Services.*

4. Summary of Future Opportunities

The Tennis Facilities Plan seeks to ensure access to tennis opportunities throughout the municipality, equitable distribution of resources and the development of sustainable facilities.

4.1 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Court Resurfacing

The need to undertake timely maintenance and resurfacing of tennis courts has been identified as an issue in Latrobe City. Tennis players are not attracted to facilities that have poor, undulating and cracked court surfaces and poor quality surfaces can be unsafe and increase the risk of injury to players. The following opportunities for court improvements have been identified:

- Upgrade courts in 'poor' or 'fair' condition in the short or medium term by undertaking necessary resurfacing / reconstruction works and following a structural assessment of the courts (where there is evidence of significant cracking). Issues associated with insufficient run-off distances should also be rectified at the time of resurfacing. Courts in 'poor' condition should be addressed as a high priority, including those located at Hazelwood North Tennis Club (2), Monash Reserve, Newborough (1), Ronald Reserve, Morwell (2), Yallourn North Recreation Reserve (2) and Yinnar Recreation Reserve (2).
- Decommission courts in poor condition that are no longer required for formal competition and are surplus to future needs, including Gaskin Park, Churchill (4), Keegan Street Reserve (4) and Yallourn North Recreation Reserve (2).
- Develop a replacement schedule for the resurfacing of all tennis courts according to their condition, type of surface and date the court was constructed or last resurfaced. These courts should also be inspected periodically to monitor their condition.
- Maintain a flexible approach to the provision of tennis court surfaces by nominating 'acrylic' and 'sand filled artificial grass' court surfaces as preferred, but allowing low maintenance court surfaces for clubs with limited resources. Clubs should be encouraged to upgrade existing asphalt and concrete courts where they can contribute towards the conversion and can demonstrate an ability to maintain the courts into the future.

Court Lighting

The expansion of tennis court lighting in Latrobe City will help to maximise court usage by enabling clubs to schedule tennis programs at night, increase access to the growing number of casual participants and generate additional revenue to help clubs become more self sufficient. Opportunities therefore exist to expand lighting at major tennis venues and install court lighting at medium sized tennis venues. However support should only be provided where clubs can demonstrate a sound business case and ensure any proposed night tennis programs does not unduly compete against existing programs. Clubs should also be required to contribute significant funds towards the cost of the lighting installation.

Clubroom and Spectator Facilities

High quality clubroom facilities play a significant role in attracting and retaining members and necessary improvements should therefore be undertaken to bring existing facilities up to an appropriate standard. Where necessary, toilet facilities should be upgraded and facilities should comply with relevant regulations / legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act (to occur as part of any building upgrade / refurbishment). The provision of improved facilities for spectators is required at most venues including shade and seating.



4.2 FACILITY DEMAND AND PROVISION


Latrobe City is currently well provided for with tennis courts and has a potential oversupply of courts in some areas, highlighted by the low or lack of use of a number of tennis courts in the municipality. The following factors should therefore be considered in determining future priorities for tennis provision.

- Many tennis facilities in Latrobe City receive minimal use and opportunities exist for increased programming to attract a wider range of tennis participants and to improve the financial viability of clubs.
- The scheduling of junior competition outside of traditional Saturday morning time-slots should be considered by tennis clubs and associations to cater for demand, relieve pressure on existing tennis facilities and reduce the need for additional courts (i.e. Friday night, Sunday morning).
- Shared, multi-use of tennis courts should be encouraged to maximise use of available facilities and consolidate resources from sporting groups (i.e. tennis and netball).
- A hierarchy of tennis facilities should be provided within Latrobe City consisting of 'Major', 'Medium Size' and 'Public Use' tennis facilities and the Traralgon Tennis Centre should be recognised and supported as the premier tennis facility in the region.
- Facilities should complement rather than compete against one another by ensuring they are evenly distributed throughout the municipality and developed to an appropriate level.
- There should be no net increase in the number of tennis courts in Latrobe City and any new court development should involve the consolidation of other tennis facilities / venues. Proposals for additional courts should not be considered for the sole purpose of junior competition and not until all other options (including scheduling changes) have been exhausted.
- Opportunities exist to consolidate some tennis facilities that are located in close proximity to other tennis venues. Opportunities also exist to rationalise some tennis facilities that are no longer used for formal competition or to downgrade them to 'public use' tennis facilities.
- Tennis courts should continue to be made available to members of the public through free access to unlocked facilities or casual hire, due to the benefits associated with participation in sport and physical activity.

4.3 CLUB OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities exist to improve the operation and viability of tennis clubs in Latrobe City, including the need for key stakeholders (i.e. Council, Central Gippsland Regional Tennis Council, Gippsport and local tennis associations) to work together and undertake the following:

- Improve communication and raise awareness about the availability of existing resources and support networks.
- Provide club development programs targeting strategic business planning, marketing, mentoring programs and succession planning.
- Assist clubs to develop strategic plans and budgets, with the goal of becoming more self sufficient.
- Promote the benefits of fostering better relationships with local schools as a way of attracting more players to local clubs.
- Promote the benefits of being affiliated with Tennis Victoria.

- 
- Raise awareness of the needs of disadvantaged population groups and continue to improve the inclusive practices of clubs.
 - Ensure clubs have adequate risk management policies and procedures in place.

There is also a need to clarify the maintenance requirements of clubs to ensure they are fully aware of their responsibilities and plan for them accordingly. Furthermore, applications for capital improvement projects should be accompanied by a proposed maintenance schedule with details of periodic maintenance requirements, replacement costs, timelines and a commitment to establish a maintenance and replacement fund. Applications for facility improvements should also require a significant funding contribution from tennis clubs to ensure a consistent approach across all facilities and to enable clubs to plan / budget accordingly.

5. Facility Issues & Opportunities

5.1 Boolarra Recreation Reserve (Park Road, Boolarra)

Club:	Boolarra Tennis Club
No. Members:	35 playing members (10 Senior + 25 Junior)
Courts:	4 asphalt tennis courts (2 multi-use with netball)
Lighting:	Multi-use courts have lighting for netball
Other Facilities:	Tennis clubrooms (expanded several years ago) and BBQ shelter for spectators Facilities are located in a larger recreation reserve which consists of a football / cricket oval and various buildings (including public toilets)
Classification:	Medium Size Tennis Facility

Key Issues:

- Fencing around courts 1 and 2 is in poor condition.
- Courts are in good condition, with the exception of some patching on sections of courts 3 and 4. Lines on courts 3 and 4 are fading.
- Risk management issue associated with protruding net winding handles on courts 3 and 4.
- Disability access is limited.

Discussion:

Boolarra Tennis Club is a small club that has major facility constraints.

Opportunities:

- Repair / upgrade fencing around courts 1 and 2.
- Address risk management issue associated with net winding handles.
- Undertake minor maintenance tasks including repainting of lines on courts 3 and 4.
- Provide disability access.



5.2 Gaskin Park (Switchback Road – Manning Drive, Churchill)

Club:	Churchill Tennis Club
No. Members:	62 playing members (15 Senior + 40 Junior + 7 casual)
Courts:	7 acrylic tennis courts and 4 unusable asphalt courts
Lighting:	Lighting on 3 courts
Other Facilities:	Tennis clubrooms. Facilities are located within a larger reserve consisting of two football / cricket ovals, hockey field and various buildings
Classification:	Major Tennis Facility

Key Issues:

- 4 asphalt courts are in poor condition and unusable.
- 3 acrylic courts have some cracking, but are otherwise in good condition.
- Club would like to extend lighting to remaining 4 acrylic courts and expand their night competition.
- Clubrooms lack disability access (including disabled toilet) and toilets reportedly need updating.
- Minor maintenance is required to fencing on the western side of court 9.
- Potential for more shaded areas.

Discussion:

This venue is one of four major tennis facilities in Latrobe City based on its location, number of courts and range of programs offered. The continued growth of this facility to achieve maximum use is therefore supported including the expansion of court lighting and provision of disability access.

The 4 asphalt tennis courts are in poor condition and pose a risk management issue in their current state. Net posts should be removed and courts decommissioned to deter future use. That said, there may be potential for the long term reinstatement of 1 or 2 of these courts in line with the provision of ‘Major Tennis Facilities’. The need for these courts however would require substantial growth in club membership / participation levels and be dependent on the availability of tennis facilities in surrounding areas.

Opportunities:

- Remove net posts and decommission 4 disused, unrepairable, courts.
- Install lighting on remaining 4 acrylic courts to enable the expansion of night competition.
- Renovate clubrooms to include access for people with disabilities and improved toilet facilities.
- Provide more shaded areas for spectators.
- Undertake minor maintenance tasks including the repair of fencing on western perimeter of court 9.

5.3 Flynn Recreation Reserve (Widdis Way, Flynn)

Club:	Flynn Tennis Club
No. Members:	52 playing members (18 Senior + 22 Junior + 12 casual)
Courts:	4 asphalt tennis courts
Lighting:	Nil
Other Facilities:	Tennis clubrooms, playground and picnic facilities, hall and CFA shed
Classification:	Medium Size Tennis Facility

Key Issues:

- Courts 3 and 4 are in fair condition due to cracking, an uneven surface and a large patch on court 4. The remaining 2 courts were recently resurfaced (October 2007) and are in good condition.
- Nets have non-standard posts that are in poor condition.
- Fencing around the courts is poor.
- Clubroom lacks toilet facilities and disability access is limited. (Club uses toilets located in the hall.)

Discussion:

The Flynn Tennis Club has no major capital development plans other than the future resurfacing of courts 3 and 4.

Opportunities:

- Upgrade fencing around courts.
- Upgrade net posts.
- Plan for the resurfacing of courts 3 and 4.
- Upgrade clubrooms to include toilet facilities and disability access.

5.4 Glengarry Recreation Reserve (Cairnbrook Road, Glengarry)

Club:	Glengarry Tennis Club
No. Members:	49 playing members (7 Senior + 30 Junior + 12 casual)
Courts:	4 asphalt tennis courts (2 multi-use with netball)
Lighting:	Limited lighting between courts 1 and 2
Other Facilities:	Tennis clubrooms. Facilities located within a recreation reserve that includes a cricket / football oval and various buildings (including public toilets)
Classification:	Medium Size Tennis Facility

Key Issues:

- Courts are in 'fair' condition. There is a large patch on court 1 and line marking has not been reinstated in this area.
- Net winding handles protrude and create a risk management issue on all courts.
- Toilet facilities lack disability access and need upgrading.
- The tennis and netball clubs would like to install / upgrade court lighting.

Discussion:

The tennis and netball club have identified court lighting as a future priority to facilitate night competition and assist training and coaching for both sports. This proposal is supported due to the ability of court lighting to enable more flexible participation opportunities and improve the viability of local tennis clubs.

Opportunities:

- Address risk management issue associated with net winding handles.
- Plan for the resurfacing of all courts.
- Install lighting to enable the scheduling of night programs / competition (pending the ability of clubs to contribute to the lighting installation and justify the demand).
- Upgrade toilets and provide access for people with disabilities.



5.5 Hazelwood North Tennis Club (Church Road, Hazelwood North)

Club:	Hazelwood North Tennis Club
No. Members:	30 playing members (6 Senior + 24 Junior)
Courts:	4 tennis courts (2 acrylic, 2 asphalt)
Lighting:	Nil
Other Facilities:	Clubrooms / Community Hall, public toilets, cricket oval and nets
Classification:	Medium Size Tennis Facility

Key Issues:

- Net winding handles protrude and create a risk management issue on all courts.
- Insufficient run-off distance at the northern end of court 1 and both ends of courts 3 and 4.
- Acrylic courts (3 and 4) are in 'fair' condition. There are cracks along line markings (grass is evident along join lines) and courts require cleaning.
- Public toilet block is exposed to the elements and difficult to keep clean.
- Limited disability access.

Discussion:

Hazelwood North Tennis Club is a small club that has no major issues or capital development plans for their facilities. There is a need however to address the identified risk management issues and the two acrylic courts will need to be resurfaced in the future.

Opportunities:

- Address risk management issue associated with net winding handles.
- Enclose and upgrade public toilet block and provide disability access. Consider consolidation with neighbouring Community Hall.
- Undertake minor maintenance tasks including cleaning of acrylic courts.
- Plan for the resurfacing of the two acrylic courts and address non-compliance issues relating to run-off distances.

5.6 Moe Botanic Gardens (Botanic Drive, Moe)

Club:	Moe Tennis Club
No. Members:	145 playing members (33 Senior + 112)
Courts:	15 acrylic tennis courts
Lighting:	Lighting on all courts (limited lighting on courts 12 and 13)
Other Facilities:	Clubroom. Tennis facilities are located in the botanic gardens which includes walking paths and picnic facilities
Classification:	Major Tennis Facility

Key Issues:

- All courts are in good condition. All courts have minor non-compliance run-off distances between courts (20mm to 50mm).
- Net winding handles protrude and create a risk management issue on court 7.
- Fencing around the courts need improvement. Problem with vandalism.
- Potential for improved / additional shelters around courts to better cater for spectators.
- Trees around courts reportedly create problems with debris and cracking of court surfaces.
- Clubroom facilities reportedly need improvement including toilets and canteen facilities. Disability access is limited.
- There is potential for improved maintenance around the courts.

Discussion:

The Moe Tennis Club is one of the major tennis facilities in Latrobe City due to its location, large number of courts and range of programs offered. The continued provision of high quality and well maintained facilities is important to ensuring the ongoing growth of the club and in achieving maximum use of available infrastructure. This is particularly important due to the close proximity of the commercially operated Latrobe Indoor Tennis Centre which is a year-round competitor, particularly for night and mid week competition.

Opportunities:

- Implement recommendations of the Moe Newborough Outdoor Recreation Plan including:
 - Assess trees in close proximity to courts for potential removal.
 - Improve fencing around courts.
 - Install seating.
- Address risk management issue associated with net winding handles.
- Undertake minor renovations to clubroom facility to include improved toilet and canteen facilities and disability access.



5.7 Monash Reserve (Monash Road, Newborough)

Club:	Newborough Tennis Club
No. Members:	31 playing members (8 Senior + 21 Junior + 2 casual)
Courts:	8 tennis courts (acrylic and asphalt)
Lighting:	Nil
Other Facilities:	Clubroom. Tennis facilities are located within a recreation reserve consisting of a multi-use cricket / soccer ground and associated buildings and infrastructure.
Classification:	Medium Size Tennis Facility

Key Issues:

- Court 1 is in poor condition due to extensive cracking in the acrylic surface. Courts 2, 3 and 4 are in fair condition and cracking is evident on courts 2 and 3. Courts 5, 6, 7 and 8 are relatively new and are in good condition, however some cracking is evident between the courts.
- Run-off distances between courts are non-compliant.
- Net posts are in average condition.
- Disability access is limited.

Discussion:

The Newborough Tennis Club is a small club with a large number of courts that are currently underutilized. The ability of the club to attract new members is likely to be effected by the close proximity of the Moe Tennis Club and commercially operated Latrobe Indoor Tennis Centre.

There may be an opportunity to downsize this facility in the future (i.e. to 6 courts) and/or diversify the type of facilities and programs offered. For example the provision of sand filled artificial grass court surfaces would distinguish this facility from the major tennis centre at the Moe Botanic Gardens.

Opportunities:

- Implement recommendations of the Moe Newborough Outdoor Recreation Plan including:
 - Resurface four tennis courts (courts 1 to 4).
 - Improve spectator facilities (i.e. seating).
 - Explore the potential for tennis clubrooms to accommodate users of neighbouring oval / open space in the future (shelter and public toilets).
- Address condition of court 1 and non-compliance issues relating to all run-off distance at the time of court resurfacing.
- Monitor future need / viability of all 8 tennis courts and consider downsizing if demand does not increase
- Provide disability access.



5.8 Keegan Street Reserve (Keegan Street, Morwell)

Club: Nil
No. Members: Nil

Courts: 4 asphalt tennis courts

Lighting: Nil

Other Facilities: Clubroom. Tennis facilities are located adjacent to the bowls club and within a recreation reserve consisting of a football / cricket ovals, netball court and associated buildings and infrastructure.

Classification: Public Use Tennis Facility (current classification)

Key Issues:

- Courts have no regular users and are not used for formal competition.
- Courts 1 and 4 are in poor condition due to cracking, patching and general deterioration of some areas. Courts 2 and 3 are in good condition.
- Run-off distances between courts are non-compliant.
- Net winding handles protrude and a create risk management issue on all courts.
- Disability access is limited.

Discussion:

These courts are not supported by an active tennis club and have no regular users. Furthermore, the neighbouring bowls club is interested in purchasing the site. Major tennis facilities are located at Ronald Reserve in Morwell, which provide opportunities for local residents to participate in a range of different tennis programs and competitions (including juniors, seniors, mid-week and night competition). This facility which includes 15 courts is deemed to provide sufficient opportunities for tennis participation in the Morwell community. The Keegan Street tennis facility is therefore surplus to needs and is recommended for decommission.

Opportunities:

- Decommission tennis facilities and consider potential disposal of land in the context of the Open Space Plan.



5.9 Ronald Reserve (Vary Street, Morwell)

Club:	Morwell East Tennis Club	Morwell Tennis Club
No. Members:	18 playing members (17 Senior + 1 Junior)	138 playing members (63 Senior + 75 Junior)
Courts:	15 tennis courts (10 acrylic and 5 asphalt)	
Lighting:	5 courts have floodlighting	
Other Facilities:	2 Clubrooms. Tennis club facilities are separated by a car park and are situated within a larger reserve that includes a netball court, football / cricket oval, soccer pitch, playgrounds, walking track and various buildings.	
Classification:	Major Tennis Facility	

Key Issues:

- There are two tennis clubs located at Ronald Reserve which presents opportunities for facility sharing and consolidation of resources to achieve facility improvements.
- Morwell East Tennis Club (METC):
 - Courts are in 'poor' to 'fair' condition and require resurfacing.
 - Courts 1, 2, 4 and 5: Run-off distances are non-compliant and of a different surface to the court area, which presents a risk management issue (slip hazards). Fencing is in average condition.
 - Net winding handles protrude and create a risk management issue on court 3.
 - Spectator facilities are limited.
- Morwell Tennis Club (MTC):
 - Clubrooms require underpinning (as reported in Draft Morwell Outdoor Recreation Plan).
 - More shaded areas are needed for spectators.
 - Club would like to expand lighting to an additional 5 courts to cater for the growing popularity of night tennis.
 - Club has plans for two additional courts with synthetic grass surfaces to provide a softer / alternative surface and appeal to a wider market (including older players).
- Both facilities have limited disability access.

Discussion:

Ronald Reserve is one of the major tennis venues in Latrobe City due its central location, large number of courts and range of programs provided. The continued growth of this facility is therefore supported, including the expansion of lighting and provision of synthetic grass courts, to attract a broader range and increased number of participants.

The expansion / upgrade of tennis facilities at Ronald Reserve should be undertaken with the long term view for a united approach to tennis at the reserve, either through partnership / sharing arrangements between clubs or the future amalgamation of clubs. The provision of additional courts for one club is therefore not supported, but rather the sharing and increased utilisation of existing facilities between both clubs.

Opportunities:

- Encourage tennis clubs to continue to work together to upgrade and expand facilities (as per Draft Morwell Outdoor Recreation Plan).
- Resurface 5 courts associated with METC and address problems with run-off areas. Future court resurfacing to consider use of sand filled artificial grass surface.
- Address risk management issue associated with net winding handle.
- Install lighting on additional courts to enable the expansion of night competition.
- Improve spectator facilities through the provision of additional seating and shade.
- Address requirement for clubroom underpinning and provide access for people with disabilities.



5.10 Toongabbie Recreation Reserve (Main Street, Toongabbie)

Club:	Toongabbie Tennis Club
No. Members:	50 playing members (17 Senior + 27 Junior + 6 Casual)
Courts:	2 acrylic tennis courts
Lighting:	Nil
Other Facilities:	Clubroom / storage shed and shelter for spectators. Tennis facilities are situated within a larger reserve that includes a cricket oval, skate park and associated infrastructure.
Classification:	Medium Size Tennis Facility (due to competition usage)

Key Issues:

- Courts have some minor cracking on the playing surface but are otherwise in good condition.
- Metal 'box' fixed to the fence (western side of court 1) may pose a risk management issue to players.
- Club uses tennis courts at Cawwarr to cater for playing numbers on a Saturday morning. Club would like to develop 2 additional courts in the future to accommodate players.
- Clubroom / shed facility is very basic and there is a lack of shade for players and spectators.
- Disability access is lacking.

Discussion:

The Toongabbie Tennis Club has the highest player / court ratio in Latrobe City and the club would like to develop additional courts to cater for Saturday morning junior competition. Whilst it is acknowledged that 2 courts are not ideal for the viability of the tennis club, the development of an additional court is difficult to justify based on the small size of the surrounding population. The provision of additional courts for the sole purpose of junior competition is also not supported, without firstly exhausting scheduling changes in junior competition to alleviate pressure on courts on a Saturday morning.

The existing clubroom facility is a basic shed-like structure that includes an adjoining shelter for players and spectators. The club is considering relocating this facility to a more suitable location (west of the tennis courts) and an opportunity therefore exists to develop a new clubroom facility to better cater for club members and the local community. Shaded areas and seating should also be improved for spectators.

Opportunities:

- Upgrade clubroom facility in new location (west of tennis courts) and provide disability access.
- Improve spectator facilities through the provision of shade and additional seating.
- Address risk management issues associated with metal box on court 1.
- Monitor the potential long term future need for an additional tennis court.



5.11 Maskrey Reserve (Barker and Chenhall Crescents, Traralgon)

Club:	Pax Hill Tennis Club
No. Members:	51 playing members (8 Senior + 43 Junior)
Courts:	4 asphalt tennis courts
Lighting:	Nil
Other Facilities:	Clubroom, public toilets and playground facilities.
Classification:	Medium Size Tennis Facility

Key Issues:

- All courts are in 'fair' condition. Run-off distances at the ends of all courts are non-compliant.
- Net winding handles protrude and create risk management issues.
- Fencing around courts 1 and 2 is in poor condition.
- There is a lack of disability access and toilet facilities require improvement (to meet with public expectations).
- Potential for improved spectator facilities, including shade.
- The number of courts is insufficient for Saturday morning junior competition and the club uses other secondary venues to cater for numbers (including courts at Eric Taylor Reserve). The club would like to consolidate facilities and develop two new tennis courts at the reserve.
- The club has expressed some interest in installing court lighting.

Discussion:

The Traralgon Tennis Centre is located in close proximity to this venue which has 24 tennis courts and provides a broad range of tennis programs and for local residents. Additionally, Traralgon has tennis facilities at the Eric Taylor Reserve and privately owned V-Line reserve. Traralgon is therefore well provided for with tennis facilities and there is potential to rationalize some existing facilities.

The Pax Hill Tennis Club would like to consolidate their facilities by developing an additional two courts at Maskrey Reserve. Whilst there is room for an additional two courts within the reserve, this expansion would impact on the amenity of the reserve. The development of additional courts is also difficult to justify based on the size of the club and its close proximity to the Traralgon Tennis Centre. The provision of additional courts for the sole purpose of junior competition is also not supported without firstly exhausting scheduling changes in junior competition to alleviate pressure on courts on a Saturday morning.

Finally, the provision of court lighting needs to be considered in relation to its impact on the neighbouring residential area and night competition currently offered at the nearby Traralgon Tennis Centre. As with all proposals for court lighting, the club would be required to demonstrate a sound business case and contribute towards the proposed lighting installation.

Opportunities:

- Plan for the resurfacing of all tennis courts and address run-off distances.
- Address risk management issue associated with net winding handles.
- Upgrade fencing around courts 1 and 2.
- Upgrade toilet facilities and provide disability access.
- Investigate the potential installation of court lighting, including an assessment of the potential impact on neighbouring residential properties and on existing night programs offered at the Traralgon Tennis Centre.
- Monitor the potential future need to consolidate tennis courts in Traralgon.



5.12 Eric Taylor Reserve (Shakespeare Street, Traralgon)

Club:	Secondary venue for Pax Hill Tennis Club
No. Members:	N/A
Courts:	2 asphalt tennis courts
Lighting:	Nil
Other Facilities:	Small Bore Rifle Clubrooms
Classification:	Public Use Tennis Facility (current classification)

Key Issues:

- Both courts are in good condition, however run-off distances around courts are non-compliant.
- Net winding handles protrude and create a risk management issue.
- Fencing around courts is in average condition.
- There is no clubroom or toilets. Potential to access rifle clubroom facility.
- Lack of spectator facilities and disability access.
- Signage is outdated.
- The Pax Hill Tennis Club would like to consolidate tennis facilities at their home venue, Maskrey Reserve.

Discussion:

These courts are used as a secondary venue for junior competition only and are likely to receive some informal / casual use. The Traralgon Tennis Centre is located in relatively close proximity to this venue which has 24 tennis courts and provides a broad range of tennis programs and for local residents. Additionally, Traralgon has tennis facilities at the Maskrey Reserve and privately owned V-Line reserve.

As mentioned, the Pax Hill Tennis Club would like to consolidate their facilities at the Maskrey Reserve, which would result in these courts at the Eric Taylor Reserve no longer being required for formal competition. Regardless of the outcome, these courts are in good condition and located south of the Princes Highway, providing recreational opportunities for the surrounding area. It is therefore recommended that these courts be retained in the short to medium term as a “public use facility” to be available for casual use, in addition to formal use by tennis clubs as required.

Opportunities:

- Retain tennis courts in the short to medium term as a ‘public use facility’. Consider long term decommissioning of courts when they start to become run-down.
- Address risk management issue associated with net winding handles.
- Update signage and provide seating and shade.



5.13 Traralgon Tennis Centre (Cnr. Franklin and Davidson Streets, Traralgon)

Club / Association: Traralgon Tennis Association

No. Members: 324 playing members (163 Senior + 161 Junior)

Courts: 24 acrylic tennis courts

Lighting: 12 courts have floodlighting (2 courts have limited lighting)

Other Facilities: Clubrooms, kiosk, crèche, skate park and Traralgon Creek pathway

Classification: Major Tennis Facility (Regional)

Key Issues:

- All courts are in good condition and the site is well maintained.
- The Association is reported to require additional lighting to cater for the increasing demand of night competition. A lighting upgrade on existing courts has also been reported.
- Spectator facilities are required along the rear bank of courts and there is an increasing need for more shade / shelters.
- The Association is investigating the potential development of two new “show courts” to attract additional tournaments.

Discussion:

The Traralgon Tennis Centre is the premier facility in the region catering for local programs and competitions, in addition to larger tournaments and events. The continued growth of this facility is supported, including the expansion of court lighting to cater for the increasing popularity of night tennis.

The provision of additional courts at the Centre is difficult to justify given the high number of courts that are currently provided (24) and the likelihood that the additional courts will not receive continuing high levels of use (i.e. throughout a typical week). Furthermore, the site appears to have little room for expansion based on the size of the site and existing infrastructure and vegetation surrounding the tennis facility. Consideration should therefore be given to upgrading existing court/s to enable them to be used as “show courts” and support larger numbers of spectators.

Opportunities:

- Install lighting on additional courts to enable the expansion of night competition.
- Improve spectator facilities through the provision of additional seating and shade.
- Investigate the need / feasibility of upgrading an existing court for use as a “show court”.



5.14 Traralgon South Reserve (Traralgon Creek Road, Traralgon)

Club / Association: Traralgon South Tennis Club

No. Members: 43 playing members (25 Senior + 18 Junior)

Courts: 4 asphalt tennis courts

Lighting: Nil

Other Facilities: Tennis facilities are located in a larger reserve consisting of a football / cricket oval and pavilion / hall.

Classification: Medium Size Tennis Facility

Key Issues:

- Courts 3 and 4 are in 'fair' condition and court 3 has some cracking and moss growing on the surface. (NB: These courts have been recently resurfaced.) Fencing around courts require improvement.
- Net winding handles protrude and create a risk management issue on all courts.
- There is no dedicated clubroom facility and the club uses the neighbouring hall.
- Disability access at the site is limited.
- Seating for spectators need repair and there is no shade. The site requires some improvements to the retaining wall and drain.
- Club has expressed some interest in installing court lighting.

Discussion:

The tennis club currently uses the neighbouring community hall as a clubroom facility. This hall is in close proximity to the tennis courts and there are no reported issues with current access arrangements. Due to the size of the club and rural nature of the facility, it is recommended that the tennis club continue to work in partnership with the neighbouring hall committee to facilitate long term access arrangements and undertake facility maintenance / improvements as required.

The provision of court lighting would increase programming and use of the courts and improve the club's viability and should therefore be supported. The club would however be required to demonstrate a sound business case and ensure any proposed night tennis programs / competitions would not unduly compete against other existing programs. The club would also be required to contribute towards the proposed lighting installation.

Opportunities:

- Improve spectator facilities through the provision of improved / additional seating and shade.
- Work in partnership with the neighbouring hall committee to ensure ongoing / long term access to the building and undertake facility maintenance and improvements as required.
- Install lighting to enable scheduling of night programs / competition (pending the ability of the club to contribute to the lighting installation and justify the demand).
- Undertake general site improvements (drainage , retaining wall and court fencing)

5.15 Tyers Recreation Reserve (Moe-Glengarry Road, Tyers)

Club / Association: Tyers Tennis Club

No. Members: 48 playing members (24 Senior + 24 Junior)

Courts: 4 asphalt tennis courts (1 multi-use with tennis)

Lighting: Nil

Other Facilities: Clubrooms. Tennis facilities are located within a larger recreation reserve which consists of a football / cricket oval, soccer pitch and associated infrastructure.

Classification: Medium Size Tennis Facility

Key Issues:

- Courts 1 and 2 are in 'fair' condition and the run-off distances at the ends of these courts are non-compliant. Courts 3 and 4 were built approximately 4 years ago and are in 'good' condition.
- Funding has reportedly been allocated to install floodlighting on two courts to enable the introduction of night tennis.
- Clubroom lacks toilet facilities. Club uses toilets located in the football clubrooms. Disability access is limited.
- Lack of signage and information about casual hire of courts.
- Spectator facilities could be improved including more seating.

Discussion:

Tyers Tennis Club is a small club that is working with other reserve users to expand their facilities and the range of programs offered (including the installation of lighting for night tennis). Following the lighting installation, the club will reportedly work towards installing toilet facilities within their clubroom facility.

Opportunities:

- Install lighting to enable scheduling of night programs / competition by tennis and netball clubs (funding reportedly allocated).
- Improve spectator facilities through the provision of additional seating and shade.
- Install signage to notify the public of arrangements for casual court hire / use.
- Plan for the resurfacing of courts 1 and 2 and address run-off distances.



5.16 Yallourn North Recreation Reserve (Reserve Street, Yallourn North)

Club: Nil
No. Members: Nil

Courts: 4 concrete tennis courts (with grass run-off area)
Lighting: Nil
Other Facilities: Clubroom. Tennis facilities are located within a larger recreation reserve consisting of a cricket oval, nets and pavilion.
Classification: Public Use Tennis Facility

Key Issues:

- Courts have no regular users and are not used for formal competition.
- All courts are in poor condition. Grass run-off areas pose risk management issues (potential trip / slip hazard).
- Facilities lack disability access and signage.

Discussion:

These courts are not supported by an active tennis club, have no regular users and are in poor condition. Whilst major tennis facilities are located in Moe and Morwell (approx. 15 minutes drive) it is desirable for residents in rural townships to have access to local tennis facilities to enable casual tennis participation. It is therefore recommended that two tennis courts be upgraded / resurfaced as “public use” courts for the community and the remaining two courts be decommissioned.

Opportunities:

- Resurface courts 1 and 2 to provide ‘public use’ tennis facilities for the township of Yallourn North.
- Decommission courts 3 and 4 and associated clubroom facility and reinstate parkland.



5.17 Yinnar Recreation Reserve (Jumbuk Road, Yinnar)

Club:	Yinnar Tennis Club
No. Members:	90 playing members (6 Senior + 36 Junior + 48 casual)
Courts:	4 asphalt tennis courts (2 multi-use with netball)
Lighting:	Limited lighting on courts 3 and 4
Other Facilities:	Clubrooms shared with sports club. Football / cricket oval is also located at the reserve.
Classification:	Medium Size Tennis Facility

Key Issues:

- Courts 1 and 2 are in 'poor' condition. The Club reports that the courts have been inspected by Tennis Victoria and have an unstable base and need to be totally redeveloped.
- Problem with sharing of multi-use tennis and netball courts.
- The Club would like four acrylic courts with lighting.
- The club uses tennis courts at Yinnar South as a secondary venue when required for Saturday morning junior competition.

Discussion:

The redevelopment of the existing courts and the provision of court lighting will improve the standard of facilities at the reserve and enable a broader range of programs to be provided. The proposed development of two additional courts at the reserve however needs further consideration. The provision of additional courts for the sole purpose of junior competition is also not supported, without firstly exhausting scheduling changes in junior competition to alleviate pressure on courts on a Saturday morning. Finally, the decision to develop additional courts should be made in the context of the Yinnar South tennis venue and consider the potential consolidation of this facility. This is due to the limited capacity of Council to support additional courts and based on the size of the population which the courts would be required to service. More specifically, the potential provision of 8 courts in Yinnar / Yinnar South for an estimated 1,269 residents would be excessive (based on 2006 Census data for post code area 3869).

Opportunities:

- Address issue associated with shared use of multi-use courts to enable regular use by the tennis club.
- Plan for the redevelopment of courts 1 and 2 with an acrylic or sand filled artificial grass surface.
- Install lighting to enable scheduling of year-round night programs / competition (pending the ability of the club to contribute to the lighting installation and justify the demand).
- Monitor the potential long term consolidation of tennis courts in Yinnar / Yinnar South.



5.18 Albert Deppeler Reserve, Yinnar South (Middle Creek Road, Yinnar South)

Club:	Yinnar South Tennis Club is currently inactive Secondary venue for Yinnar Tennis Club
No. Members:	N/A
Courts:	2 asphalt tennis courts
Lighting:	Nil
Other Facilities:	Clubrooms and public toilets.
Classification:	Public Use Tennis Facility (current classification)

Key Issues:

- Both courts are in good condition, however run-off distances at the southern end of the courts are non-compliant.
- Nets are in poor condition.
- Disability access is lacking.
- Club officials for the Yinnar South Tennis Club are reportedly investigating the potential reformation of the club. The Yinnar South community had tennis teams competing approximately two years ago.

Discussion:

These courts are used as a secondary venue for junior competition only and may also receive some informal / causal use by local residents. Tennis facilities at Yinnar Recreation Reserve are in relatively close proximity to these courts (5 minutes drive) and provide a range of tennis programs including coaching and junior, senior and night competition.

Potential therefore exists to consolidate these facilities with those located at the Yinnar Recreation Reserve to enable the expansion of a single facility and growth of tennis in the area. However due to the 'good' condition of the courts at Yinnar South, it is recommended that these facilities continue to be available in the short term as 'public use' tennis courts. Finally, any further discussions about the potential reformation of the Yinnar South Tennis Club should involve consultation with Council and the Yinnar Tennis Club to determine long term priorities for the area.

Opportunities:

- Upgrade nets to enable courts to continue to be used as a 'public use' tennis facility.
- Monitor the potential long term consolidation of tennis courts in Yinnar / Yinnar South.



6. Conclusion

Tennis is a sport that caters for a broad cross-section of the community and is enjoyed by both males and females, and people of all ages and abilities. The nature of how people play tennis however is changing from formal Saturday competition to more casual / social participation opportunities including mid-week and night competition. More specifically, Saturday afternoon 'senior' competition is declining, Saturday morning junior competition is strong but stable, and casual competition is experiencing substantial growth.

The ability of tennis clubs and facilities in Latrobe City to cater for these participation trends is a challenge, as is the ability to manage the large number of tennis courts that are currently available in the municipality.

The Tennis Facilities Plan seeks to ensure access to tennis opportunities throughout the municipality, equitable distribution of resources and the development of sustainable facilities. As previously mentioned, Latrobe City currently has more tennis courts than it can adequately sustain based on the standard of some facilities, population and participation numbers, and low or lack of use of some facilities. Decisions about the rationalisation of some facilities need to be considered to enable resources to be effectively allocated towards developing / maintaining high quality facilities that can attract and retain tennis participants. A range of club development and programming initiatives also needs to be considered to increase tennis participation, maximise the use of tennis facilities and make clubs more self sufficient.

A detailed facility audit and consultation process was undertaken as part of the Tennis Facilities Plan which identified a range of issues and opportunities specific to individual tennis venues. This information is designed to assist Council and tennis clubs with the long term planning of their facilities. The majority of opportunities for tennis facility improvements will therefore be addressed through the development and implementation of these town based plans. The implementation of the identified opportunities will be reliant on funding partnerships between clubs, Council and other external agencies (i.e. Tennis Victoria). Finally, the Tennis Facilities Plan will also need to be considered in the context of other Council priorities to ensure an equitable allocation of resources across all sports in Latrobe City.