Evidence Statement

Pakenham East Precinct Structure Plan
Cardinia Planning Scheme Amendment C234

AUTHOR
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1. PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

1.1. Name and Address

Richard James SIMON

Simon Leisure Consulting, Office 1, 655 Nepean Highway BRIGHTON EAST VIC 3187

1.2. Education and Experience

My educational qualifications and membership of professional organisations are as follows:

- Bachelor Applied Science (Physical Education), 1983, Footscray Institute of Technology (now Victoria University).
- Member, Parks and Leisure Australia (Vic/ Tas Region) 1995 – present
- Committee, Parks and Leisure Australia (Vic/ Tas Region) 1997 – 2000
- Executive Officer, Parks and Leisure Australia (Vic/ Tas Region) 2011 – present
- Member, Play Australia 2010 – present

My professional career includes 33 year’s experience as a sports and recreation planner in the local government sector and in the private sector as a consultant, comprising:

- 1985–1995 Coordinator sport and recreation programs and services (City of Melbourne)
- 1995–1998 Manager Leisure Services (City of Knox)
- 1999–2000 Sports Facilities Capital Works Project Coordinator (City of Moreland)
- 2000–2008 Senior Sport & Recreation Planning Consultant (Stratcorp Consulting)
- 2008–present Director, Simon Leisure Consulting

My voluntary involvement in the sporting and community sector is extensive, comprising:

- 1980–2011 Australian Football field umpire with the VFL, AFL, and VAFA competitions
- 1988–1992 Meeting Director, Zatopek 10,000m Athletics Series
- 2005–2010 Junior Cricket Coordinator, Ormond Cricket Club
- 2008–2012 Committee, Ormond Cricket Club
- 2008–2012 Chairman, Ormond-McKinnon Community Bank
- 2014–2012 President, Ormond Amateur Football Club

1.3. Area of Expertise

Sports and recreation facility planning, incorporating needs analysis, master planning, design and management.
1.4. **Expertise to Provide Evidence**

I consider I have the requisite expertise to provide this opinion evidence.

I prepared the *Cardinia Growth Corridor Sports Strategy (2005)* for the Cardinia Shire Council, the foundation strategy that has guided the planning and development of sporting facilities in Beaconsfield, Officer and Pakenham since 2005. I have also completed the following subsequent sports facility planning reports for the Shire:

4. Henry Road Reserve Master Plan (2009)

I have also provided specialist sports facility planning advice for other Melbourne growth area and peri-urban councils:

1. Open Space and Sports Facility Strategy for the Melton City Council 2002

I have a comprehensive overall knowledge and understanding of the provision and use of sporting facilities throughout the Cardinia Shire, and the implications on future facility provision from the projected population growth of Cardinia.

In addition to the studies outlined above, I have completed over 40 other sports facility planning and feasibility studies, and in excess of 15 municipal sport and recreation plans for Victorian, NSW, Queensland and South Australian municipalities. Most of these projects required me to undertake an assessment of the adequacy of the provision of existing sporting and recreation facilities, and to provide advice on future facility provision.

Further, I have prepared over 70 master plans for sporting and recreation reserves, including established sporting reserves and greenfield sites. Some of the reserves accommodate multiple sports and associated facilities, whilst some are single-use sports reserves.
1.5. **Instructions**

I was engaged by the Cardinia Shire Council in May 2018 to assess the adequacy of the provision for active open space (sporting facilities) in the *Pakenham East Precinct Structure Plan* (exhibited version dated December 2017) prepared by the Victorian Planning Authority and the Cardinia Shire Council.

1.6. **Facts and Information Taken into Account**

In undertaking the assessment of the adequacy of the provision for active open space in the Pakenham East Precinct Structure Plan, I have referred to the following documents:

1. Pakenham East Precinct Structure Plan, VPA & Cardinia Shire Council, December 2017
2. Pakenham East Community Infrastructure and Open Space Provision Assessment, VPA, December 2017
3. Pakenham East Background Report, VPA, January 2018
7. Cardinia Recreation Reserve Facility Standards Policy, Cardinia Shire Council, 2012
8. Cardinia Views Development Plan (DP07), Breese Pitt Dixon Pty Ltd, 2014
2. INTRODUCTION

This Statement of Evidence is made for the Cardinia Shire Council in relation to Cardinia Planning Scheme Amendment C234, which affects the Pakenham East precinct. The amendment has been prepared by the Victoria Planning Authority (VPA), which is the planning authority for this amendment, and by the Cardinia Shire Council (Council). The PSP1210 Pakenham East Precinct Structure Plan will be the long-term plan that guides development of the land, and how and where services will be provided to support development.

My Statement outlines my assessment of three components of the Pakenham East PSP:

1. the inadequate area of land currently allocated for Sports Reserve 2 (SR-02).
2. the need to retain the reference in the Pakenham East PSP for a ‘potential future sports reserve’ located outside of the area of the PSP.
3. the inclusion of a skateable space within the design for Hilltop Local Park (LP-01).

My Statement also does not support an alternate concept plan for Hilltop Local Park submitted by Lendlease as part of Submission No. 44 to the amendment tendered by Niche Planning Studio.

2.1. Site and Surrounding Area

Pakenham East precinct is located at the eastern edge of the broader Casey-Cardinia Growth Area, and is approximately 56km southeast of the Melbourne CBD. The precinct is bounded by properties that abut Seymour Road and traversed by electricity transmission line easement to the north, Mount Ararat Road to the east, the Princes Freeway to the south and Deep Creek and Ryan Road to the west. The subject site for the Pakenham East PSP is 629.82 hectares in size.

The following describes the general context of the area surrounding Pakenham East:

- The dominant landform within Pakenham East is foothills and valleys with defined ridgelines.
- A number of physical infrastructure and public utility easements traverse the precinct, and in some instances form barriers of movement. These barriers are Deep Creek, the Princes Highway, the Princes Freeway, high voltage powerlines easement (and associated buffers), two gas transmission pipelines (and associated buffers), Hancocks Gully, and steep slopes around the central ridgeline.
- The Deep Creek corridor that runs north-south through the western part of the precinct is identified as having areas of biodiversity and landscape values.
- Cardinia Lakes residential area is located to the west of Pakenham East and is currently being developed.
- The rural area of Nar Nar Goon and Nar Nar Goon North are to the east of Pakenham East.
- Pakenham South Employment precinct lies to the southwest of Pakenham East.

2.2. Projected Population

Pakenham East will be home to between 20,000-22,200 residents in the next 20-30 years, contributing to the projected population increase to 161,500 within the Cardinia Shire by 2031. The Pakenham East PSP population projection of up to 22,000 people is based on 7,148 dwellings at 3.1 persons per household.

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1 Source: PSP1210 Pakenham East Precinct Structure Plan, VPA and Cardinia Shire Council, December 2017
2 Source: PSP1210 Pakenham East Community Infrastructure and Open Space Provision Assessment, VPA, December 2017
It is anticipated that Pakenham East is likely to attract a profile of resident similar to the residential communities attracted to the other new growth precincts within Cardinia Shire, being Cardinia Road and Officer. The dominant age group in Officer and Cardinia Road are parents and homebuilders (ages 35-49), which exemplifies the popularity of the area for families and future families. The highest household type in these two growth precincts is ‘couples with children’ followed by ‘couples without children’, which further validates that families are highly likely to be the dominant resident type in the area both in the short and long term.

This is relevant as research shows that in Victoria younger people are more likely to participate in organised sport and physical activity than older people, therefore, the Pakenham East PSP needs to allow for good provision of sporting facilities and other active recreation pursuits.

2.3. Land Set Aside for Open Space and Sporting Facilities

The Pakenham East PSP covers a total area of 629.82 hectares, and has a Net Developable Area (NDA) of 436.64 hectares. The following provision is made for local open space and active recreation (or sporting facilities) provision:

- 20.14 hectares for local parks in the form of 13 parks (4.61% of the NDA)
- 23.68 hectares for sporting facilities in the form of two sporting reserves (5.42% of the NDA)

A total of 43.82 hectares or 10.04% of the Net Developable Area is allocated for public open space, which is consistent with the provision standard of 10% of the NDA identified in the Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines Part 2. However, the provision of 23.68 hectares for sporting facilities is less than the 6% of the NDA provision standard.

1.5 hectares is provided for indoor recreation in the form of two indoor courts, and 104.38 hectares of open space is provided in the form of conservation reserves, waterways and drainage reserves, and utilities reserves (uncredited open space).

The Pakenham East PSP provides for sporting facilities within two proposed reserves and as an indoor sports centre on education land.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sporting Facilities</th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Open Space</td>
<td>23.68ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sports Reserve 1 (Northern Area)</td>
<td>10.08ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sports Reserve 2 (Southern Area)</td>
<td>13.60ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor sports</td>
<td>1.5ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25.18ha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of note in the Pakenham East PSP is the provision for a ‘potential future sports reserve’ at a location just outside the subject land for the Pakenham East PSP (east of Mt Ararat Road North).
2.4. **Sporting Facilities Provision**

The Pakenham East PSP allows for the following suite of sporting facilities at the two proposed sporting reserves. The type, number and grouping of facilities is generally acceptable by Council.

**Sports Reserve 1 (Northern Area)**
- 2 senior size soccer pitches, and associated pavilion and car parking
- 2 baseball fields, and associated pavilion and car parking

**Sports Reserve 2 (Southern Area)**
- 2 senior size AFL/ cricket ovals, 1 junior size AFL/ cricket oval, and associated pavilion and car parking
- Cricket practice facility (3 lanes)
- 4 netball courts
- 2 senior size soccer pitches, and associated pavilion and car parking

The Pakenham East PSP also makes reference to a ‘potential future sports reserve’ at a location just outside the defined boundary of the Pakenham East PSP (east of Mt Ararat Road North), as the total provision of 3 AFL ovals within the bounded area of the Pakenham East PSP is less than the planning standard referred to in the VPA’s own community facilities’ reference document, the *Planning for Community Infrastructure in Growth Areas*. 
3. SPORTING RESERVE 2

The land allocated for Sporting Reserve 2 in the exhibited Pakenham East PSP has an area of 13.60 hectares. It is irregular in shape and inadequate in size to accommodate the required sporting facilities and associated support facilities of:

- 2 senior size AFL/ cricket ovals, 1 junior size AFL/ cricket oval, and associated pavilion and car parking
- Cricket practice facility (3 lanes)
- 4 netball courts
- 2 senior size soccer pitches, and associated pavilion and car parking

The exhibited plan does not allow for senior size ovals of dimensions in accordance with Council’s Recreation Reserve Facility Standards Policy of 165m x 135m (boundary to boundary), and the configuration of the sporting facilities is not functional, ie. the soccer pitches are end to end, and the netball courts are not co-located with the football ovals. In addition, the car parking provision of approximately 150 spaces is inadequate. Council’s Traffic Engineer has calculated the minimum requirement for car parking on match days for the above facilities is approximately 455 spaces.

A revised plan was prepared by the VPA (see Appendix 1) in May 2018, which includes an additional 0.5 hectare to the available land, reconfigures the sporting facilities, and increases the total number of car parks on the reserve to approximately 455 spaces. It is my opinion that the design and layout of the revised sports reserve is still not functional for the following reasons:

- the orientation of the soccer pitches and the ovals is not north-south, which is less than ideal.
- both sporting pavilions are poorly located, ie. not central to the fields of play, and in the case of the AFL/ cricket pavilion, it does not directly service either of the ovals.
- no car parking directly service the three ovals.
- the playground is poorly located from a safety perspective, ie. behind the goals of two ovals.

The shape and size of the land for Sporting Reserve 2 in the exhibited plan and in the revised plan are not consistent with the standards identified in the VPA’s Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines Part 2, which states …..

*Active open space should be:*
  - of an appropriate size,
  - appropriate for its intended open space use in terms of quality and orientation;
  - designed to achieve sharing of space between sports;

Council’s Principal Urban Designer has prepared a layout plan that delivers a sustainable sports outcome for the required facilities. It has not been possible to devise a workable plan using the current shape of the land and within the available area of 14.1 hectares (includes the additional 0.5 hectare agreed by the VPA). The only workable solution for the reserve is to modify the shape of the land and to increase the area available by an additional 0.2 hectare (see Appendix 2).

The modification of the land requires 1.3 hectares along the western boundary to be released, and 1.5 hectares to be added to the eastern boundary. This enables the optimum orientation of the soccer pitches and the ovals to be achieved, the placement of the sports pavilions along the sideline of one of the pitches and ovals, the car parking to be evenly distributed around the soccer pitches and the ovals, and the playground to be located in a position that will generally be free from errant footballs.
An alternate plan for Sporting Reserve 2 been prepared by Parklea as part of Submission No. 52 to the amendment (see Appendix 3). The alternate plan shows the southern reserve being split into two smaller sporting reserves.

Active Open Space 1 (10.1 hectares, located on the site of exhibited Sporting Reserve 2)
- 3 x senior AFL/ cricket ovals
- Pavilion
- Cricket practice nets
- Car parking

Active Open Space 2 (3.8 hectares, located within the southeast area of the site just south of town centre)
- 2 x soccer
- 4 x netball
- Pavilion
- Playground
- Car parking

The proposal has merit on the following grounds:
1. Separates two winter codes from the same reserve, thereby eliminating any potential conflicts of use of the same reserve by two football and soccer clubs having to co-locate.
2. More evenly distributes field-based sporting facilities throughout Pakenham East, thereby providing opportunities for more members of the community to have access to quality sports surfaces for informal sporting pursuits, ie. kick to kick, and for other recreational pursuits, ie. personal fitness training.
3. Creates an additional open space area.

The shortcomings from splitting the reserve in accordance with the alternate concept plan include:
1. The netball courts need to be located with the ovals, as the football clubs in this area of Melbourne are all football-netball clubs that conduct football and netball matches simultaneously.
2. There will be an additional capital cost to construct two separate reserves compared to one larger reserve, ie. eliminate economies of scale.
3. There will be higher recurrent maintenance costs to maintain two separate reserves compared to one larger reserve.
4. Consolidating multiple field-based sporting facilities at the same site provides an opportunity for shared use of sports surfaces to occur for one-off events, such as tournaments, or when grounds need to be rested or refurbished.
5. Cardinia Shire has a preference for larger, multi-use sporting precincts compared to single-use sporting reserves.

On the balance of benefits and weaknesses, it is my opinion that Sporting Reserve 2 should be retained as one land parcel in preference to dividing it into two smaller reserves, mainly due to the savings in capital and recurrent maintenance costs, and also to provide some flexibility for the reserve tenants in the future in relation to the shared use of the sporting facilities.
4. POTENTIAL FUTURE SPORTS RESERVE

The Pakenham East PSP includes reference to a ‘potential future sports reserve’ located outside the area of the PSP on a parcel of land east of Mt Ararat Road North. This reference has been included, as the total provision of 23.68 hectares for sporting facilities (or 5.42% of the NDA) is less than the VPA’s own provision standard of 6% of the NDA\(^8\). The future sports reserve is to accommodate as a minimum one AFL/ cricket oval.

The shortfall in the provision of AFL/ cricket ovals within the PSP is validated also by the fact that the total provision for sporting facilities in the Pakenham East PSP is less than the planning standard referred to in the VPA’s own community facilities’ reference document, the *Planning for Community Infrastructure in Growth Areas, 2008 (PCIGA)*. The PCIGA advocates the use of numerous standards or benchmarks for provision of sporting facilities, including most relevant ….

\[\text{One Level 1 active open space reserve of area between 8.0 - 10.0 hectares per reserve …. to accommodate the equivalent of two full-sized AFL/ cricket ovals or 3 full-sized soccer pitches …. per 6,000 people}\]

With the projected population for Pakenham East estimated to be between 20,000 - 22,000 residents, the provision for active open space should be between 3.3 – 3.7 Level 1 active open space reserves. Based on the use of the reserves for ovals and soccer pitches, the total required in accordance with the standard is at least 6 AFL/ cricket ovals or at least 9 soccer pitches. The Pakenham East PSP allows for the following sporting facilities at the two proposed sporting reserves:

- 2 senior size AFL/ cricket ovals, 1 junior size AFL/ cricket oval
- 4 senior size soccer pitches
- 4 netball courts
- 2 baseball fields

Mixing and matching the sporting facilities into the equivalent of the PCIGA provision for a Level 1 active open space reserve, there is a shortfall of the equivalent of a minimum of 1 senior size AFL/ cricket oval.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Level 1 Reserve 1} &= 2 \text{ senior sized ovals} \\
\text{Level 1 Reserve 2} &= 3 \text{ soccer pitches} \\
\text{Level 1 Reserve 3} &= 1 \text{ junior size AFL/ cricket oval, 4 netball courts, 1 soccer pitch, 2 baseball fields}
\end{align*}
\]

The shortfall of 0.3 – 0.7 Level 1 active open space reserve is the equivalent of 1 AFL/ cricket oval. This shortfall assumes the dwelling density will remain at the level identified in the exhibited Pakenham East PSP. The level of provision for active open space (sporting facilities) is already just below the VPA’s standard of provision. It is therefore very important that the PSP retains the reference to and advocacy for the potential future sports reserve located just outside of the defined boundary of the PSP, as the risk is real that the planned suite of sporting facilities in the Pakenham East PSP may ultimately be less than what will be required for the end estimated population of 22,000 people.

It is my opinion that it is critical that the Pakenham East PSP retains the reference to the need for a future sports reserve at a location just outside of the defined boundary of the exhibited Pakenham East precinct, on the parcel of land east of Mt Ararat Road North.

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\(^8\) Source: Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines Part 2, GAA, 2009
5. HILLTOP LOCAL PARK (LP-01)

Hilltop Local Park is a proposed large local park of 10.89 hectares. It is to be provided on the high point of the central ridge line north of the Princes Highway to protect the landscape amenity of the precinct. The Hilltop Local Park concept plan exhibited shows the park containing a playground, a network of both shared and pedestrian paths, extensive tree planting, and an off-road visitor car park. It will be a destination park for families residing in Pakenham East.

It is an appropriate location to integrate a range of skateable elements for young people to enjoy as part of the overall play experience being offered. The topography of the site is favourable for informal skating elements. Council’s Skate & BMX Strategy recommends the following

“…. that an incidental skate space (min 200-300sqm) be included in all new central town parks as part of any new development …”

Many urban spaces contain infrastructure or sculptural components that can be designed to accommodate skating. Any pathway that is used by skateboarders/ cyclists as a thoroughfare has the possibility to have sections of it widened to accommodate skateable items or undulating terrain to create an ‘incidental’ skatepark. An incidental skate element can add value and increase overall function or recreational opportunity to an existing space, such as a playground. Incidental skate elements are not facility based, or aimed at any specific skill level, they are elements integrated with and complementary to the existing landscape setting (see precedent images below)

It is my opinion that the recreational experiences at Hilltop Local Park will be significantly improved with the addition of skateable elements integrated with the playground and adjacent shared path network.
An alternate concept plan for Hilltop Local Park has been prepared by Lendlease as part of Submission No. 44 to the amendment tendered by Niche Planning Studio. The alternate concept plan shows a road splitting the park into two separate open spaces at the southern end of the park. I understand that the key purpose for this road is to provide for better connections between the adjoining residential areas off Dore Road and to the east of the park (see Appendix 4).

This proposed change is not necessary and will significantly impact the quality of the value of Hilltop Local Park as a destination for recreation and relaxation. An area of open space of the proportions shown in the exhibited concept plan will create the opportunity for visitors to experience a bushland setting and a sense of escape.

The balance of the local park provision throughout the Pakenham East PSP is made up 11 smaller open spaces, with the next largest local park after the proposed Hilltop Local Park being only 1.63 hectares. Diversity of open space in relation to function and setting is important, but diversity in size is just as important to enable families and other park users to have half-day and full-day recreational experiences, and to establish meaningful habitat for birds and other fauna.

A larger park such as Hilltop Local Park will also have better capacity to accommodate events and festivals, an important feature for a community of more 20,000 people. Another important consideration is the reduced efficiencies for Council by having to maintain a second open space area separated by road.

It is my opinion that there are no tangible transport efficiencies or gains by dividing Hilltop Local Park with a road through the southern portion of the park; it will only serve to devalue the natural and recreational values and benefits of the only large recreational open space being provided in the Pakenham East PSP.
6. **CONCLUSION**

Several issues have arisen in relation to the provision of sporting facilities and other open space in the Pakenham East Precinct Structure Plan (Cardinia Planning Scheme Amendment C234) on exhibition.

**Sporting Reserve 2**

The shape and size of Sporting Reserve 2 does not provide the land required to accommodate 3 AFL/cricket ovals, a pavilion and car parking, a cricket practice facility and 4 netball courts in a way that is best practice sports facility design and layout, or will provide facilities to facilitate sustainable sporting clubs.

It is my opinion that the shape of the reserve needs to be modified (1.3 hectares along the western boundary to be released, and 1.5 hectares to be added to the eastern boundary) and the land area increased from 13.68 hectares to 14.3 hectares.

Further, an alternate plan for Sporting Reserve 2 been prepared by Parklea that shows the reserve being split into two smaller sporting reserves: one reserve of 10.1 hectares on the site of exhibited Sporting Reserve 2; and a second reserve of 3.8 hectares located within the southeast area of the site just south of town centre. Both options have merit, however, considering the strengths and weaknesses of each option, it is my opinion that Sporting Reserve 2 should be retained as one land parcel in preference to dividing it into two smaller reserves.

**Potential Future Sports Reserve**

The Pakenham East PSP includes reference to a ‘potential future sports reserve’ located outside the area of the PSP. This reference has been included, as the total provision of 23.68 hectares for sporting facilities (or 5.42% of the NDA) is less than the VPA’s own provision standard of 6% of the NDA, and validated by the fact that the total provision for sports facilities in the Pakenham East PSP is less than the planning standard referred to in the VPA’s own community facilities’ reference document, the Planning for Community Infrastructure in Growth Area.

It is my opinion that it is critical that the Pakenham East PSP retains the reference to the need for a future sports reserve at a location just outside of the boundary of the Pakenham East precinct, on the parcel of land east of Mt Ararat Road North.

**Hilltop Local Park**

Hilltop Local Park is the only large open space park (10.89 hectares) not designated as a sports reserve. The exhibited concept plan for the park shows a playground, a network of both shared and pedestrian paths, extensive tree planting, and an off-road visitor car park. It will be a destination park for families residing in Pakenham East. Cardinia Shire’s Skate & BMX Strategy recommends incidental skateable spaces be included in new town parks as part of any new development.

It is my opinion that the recreational experiences at Hilltop Local Park will be significantly improved with the addition of skateable elements integrated with the playground and adjacent shared path network.

An alternate concept plan for Hilltop Local Park has been prepared by Lendlease that shows a road dividing the park into two separate open spaces at the southern end of the park. I understand that the key purpose for this road is to provide for better connections between the adjoining residential areas off Dore Road and to the east of the park. This proposed change is not necessary and will significantly impact the quality of the value of Hilltop Local Park as a destination for recreation and relaxation.

It is my opinion that there are no tangible transport efficiencies or gains by dividing Hilltop Local Park with a road through the southern portion of the park; it will only serve to devalue the natural and recreational values and benefits of the only large recreational open space being provided in the Pakenham East PSP.
Appendix 1

Revised concept plan for Sporting Reserve 2 prepared by VPA
Appendix 2

Alternate concept plan for Sporting Reserve 2 prepared by Cardinia Shire Council
Appendix 3

Alternate concept plan for Sporting Reserve 2 prepared by Parklea
Appendix 4

Alternate concept plan for Hilltop Local Park prepared by Lendlease