

FAQs for Fawckner Drive Precinct Masterplan Project

1. What is the Fawckner Drive Masterplan Report?

The Fawckner Drive Precinct Masterplan focusses on establishing a well-connected, green, sustainable, and inclusive precinct that caters to diverse age groups and abilities. The masterplan aims to promote community participation by providing a wide range of recreational opportunities and fostering community engagement.

To ensure accessibility and functionality, the precinct features an interconnected network of accessible paths that connect various facilities such as swings, a flying fox, picnic tables, the skate park, the pump track, and other amenities. The design incorporates flexibility, prioritising multi-use spaces. For instance, the multi-sports court can be transformed into a community market area through the use of removable bollards. Additionally, the main social area, equipped with shelters, a stage, and modular furniture, enables the hosting of community events.

By unifying the reserve and offering flexibility, recreational value, and community activations, the precinct becomes an integral part of the Benalla community, providing a vibrant space for residents to enjoy.

2. Why is the Fawckner Drive Precinct important to Council?

The Fawckner Drive Masterplan will allow Council to:

- ensure future improvements are well planned
- opportunities and challenges are identified
- assist Council to advocate to other tiers of government for funding
- incorporate community and user groups feedback
- to create a space that encourages use for all community members
- enhance and protect natural assets within the precinct
- capitalise on tourism and economic development opportunities
- improve pedestrian connections and link existing infrastructure
- align recreational planning with other planning strategies and processes
- establish priorities and costings for any improvements to the precinct.

3. How is the project funded?

The development of this Masterplan has been funded by the Council. Council has also allocated funding from its 2023/24 budget to revitalise the BMX track. This initial Council funding is a result of community feedback identifying the BMX pump track as a priority. The Masterplan, once completed, will then be used by Council to seek additional external funding to deliver further improvements in a staged approach.

4. Who is Playce, and what is their role in the project?

Playce is an open space specialist engaged by the Council to assist in the consultation and design process of the precinct masterplan. They have developed the Draft Benalla Fawckner Drive Masterplan Report which includes key project information and the Masterplan Concept image.

This 'Masterplan Concept' image is the diagram that many may have seen on the project signage currently on display around the precinct and also online. This 'Masterplan Concept' is not a final project design and should be thought of as a reflection of feedback received from the first round of consultation and a conversation starter rather than a detailed design.

The final detailed design of each element of the precinct will be undertaken following each stage being funded.

5. How can the community provide input for the project?

Council encourages community participation and feedback throughout the project. Various consultation methods, such as surveys, public meetings, workshops, and online platforms, will continue to be used to gather community input.

6. What will potentially be included in the final Fawckner Drive Precinct Masterplan?

- Better pedestrian linkages with a focus on accessibility.
- Recreation and exercise spaces.
- Upgrades to Skatepark and BMX track.
- Improved Market space.
- Family picnic and BBQ areas.
- Increased tree planting.

7. How will the project affect the existing facilities in the precinct?

The project aims to enhance the existing facilities, ensuring they better serve the needs and preferences of the community. Both the Library and Senior Citizens buildings will be more easily accessed through the proposed new footpaths.

Any other key changes or impacts to a facility within the precinct will be discussed with the user groups.

8. What is the timeline for the project's completion?

The Fawckner Precinct Drive Masterplan is a long-term strategic document. The Masterplan will be used by Council to seek and secure future funding to develop the precinct in a staged approach.

While the exact timeline may vary based on the complexity of the project, Council will strive to provide a clear timeline during the consultation process and project development stages. The current round of community consultation ends Friday 11 August.

9. Will the community be updated on the progress of the project?

Yes, Council will regularly update the community on the progress of the Fawckner Drive Precinct Masterplan Project. Updates will be shared through social media, local media and Council's official website.

10. Can community members propose initiatives not mentioned in the 'Ideas Plan'?

Absolutely! Council welcomes innovative ideas from the community beyond what is outlined in the 'Masterplan Concept'. The best way to put a suggestion forward is to head online to haveyoursay.benalla.vic.gov.au/fawckner-drive-precinct-plan.

11. Will the project improve the accessibility and inclusivity of the precinct?

Yes, the project aims to improve accessibility and inclusivity throughout the precinct. This will include considerations for wheelchair access, diverse recreational activities, and facilities that accommodate various age groups and abilities.

12. How can community members stay involved and engaged during the project?

Community members can stay involved by participating in public listening posts, attending workshops, providing feedback through online surveys, and keeping an eye on official updates from Council.

13. Will the Fawckner Drive Precinct remain open during the revitalisation process?

Council will strive to minimise disruptions and maintain access to the precinct during the various stages of the revitalisation process. However, there may be temporary closures or restrictions in certain areas to ensure public safety and facilitate construction work.

14. What is included in the Fawckner Drive Precinct?

The precinct consists of various amenities, such as the Skatepark and BMX track, community event spaces, Lake Benalla walking track, RV Camping site, Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop Learning Centre (Benalla Library), and the Senior Citizens Centre.

15. How was community input gathered for the Masterplan?

Community engagement has involved various methods including, online and paper-based surveys, participation at events like the Benalla Lakeside Craft and Farmers Market, Benalla Skate Park competition, meetings with the Age Friendly Reference Group, presentations at U3A Benalla Annual General Meeting and presentations to Council's Leadership Team, Councillors, and staff. QR codes on-site also facilitated feedback.

16. Why is community feedback important for the Masterplan?

Community feedback ensures that the Masterplan aligns with the ideas and aspirations of the people who use and value the precinct, making it a more inclusive and reflective document.

17. Will the natural environment be considered in the Masterplan?

Sustainability and protecting the natural environment is a key consideration in the development this Masterplan. Retaining natural shade and increasing the number of trees in the precinct will both important factors once detailed project designs are undertaken.

18. Will the Masterplan address the needs of an ageing community?

Yes, the Masterplan aims to be inclusive and consider the needs of ageing community members to ensure accessibility and usability for all demographics.

19. How will the Masterplan be presented to the community for approval?

Before formal adoption by the Council, the Masterplan is currently being exhibited to the community to gather their input and ensure it aligns with their ideas and aspirations for the precinct.

20. What happens after the community engagement phase?

After the community engagement phase, the Masterplan may be refined based on the feedback received. Once finalised, it will be submitted to the Council for formal adoption.