

Old Cheese Factory Master Plan

July 2016



Document Control

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Responsible Department – Sport and Leisure

Old Cheese Factory Master Plan – July 2016

Review

The next biennial review of this document is scheduled for completion by 30 July 2018.

Preamble

In accordance with a resolution in Council on 21 June 20015 to includes definitions of Council, Councillors and Council officers in all Council policy documents, the following definitions are provided:

Council – means Casey City Council, being a body corporate constituted as a municipal Council under the Local Government Act 1989

Councillors – means the individuals holding the office of a member of Casey City Council

Council officers – means the Chief Executive Officer and staff of Council appointed by the Chief Executive Officer.

Administrative Updates

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made administratively. Examples include a change to the name of a Council department, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department, and a minor update to legislation which does not have a material impact. However, any change or update which materially alters this document must be by resolution of Council.

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OLD CHEESE
FACTORY
MASTERPLAN

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1.1 Introduction

The Old Cheese Factory (OCF) site comprises 25 acres and provides a unique range of services, venues and grounds for hire, celebratory functions, picturesque gardens and heritage buildings.

The OCF was first managed and developed as a community facility from 1984 to support the historic buildings, gardens and needs of the local community. The City of Casey assumed management of the site in July 2011, with the site subsequently establishing itself as a reputable community facility continuing to grow in use and popularity, as indicated by the rapidly growing attendance numbers over time.

Over the past four years, growth in visitor numbers has been approximately 219%, with over 142,562 annual visitors in 2014/ 2015



1.2 Purpose of the Masterplan

The Old Cheese Factory Master Plan aims to provide a clear and concise strategic direction for the development of this unique parkland featuring heritage buildings, manicured gardens, open lawns and play spaces that is used extensively by the community.

The Master Plan has identified future opportunities that will allow the facility to continue to grow whilst still retaining the essential attributes and elements which make the OCF such a positive and successful community destination.

Successful implementation of the Master Plan will

- Continue to preserve and celebrate the heritage of the site.
- Build on programs, events and services to support the heritage and cultural past, visual and creative arts, parkland and leisure opportunities.
- Enhance the visitor experience through improved aesthetics, accessibility and functionality of the site in building and parkland development.
- Enhance the open, rural character of the surrounding open space farmland, through the network of paths, manicured and playful parklands.
- To be a best practice facility, with a unique point of difference to encourage the broader community to link to the past, Casey's culture and heritage.
- Ensure that the OCF is well utilised, balancing the usage of community, casual and commercial groups

1.3 Scope of the Masterplan

The OCF Master Plan identifies a number of development opportunities to be delivered over the next 10 years. This master plan was developed to respond to the operation of the OCF, and build on its current services, programs and facilities, including:

- Heritage parkland and buildings.
- Dedicated space for community groups and visual and creative arts.
- Homestead Café.
- Nursery.
- Venue hire for celebrations, community groups, and businesses.
- Educational and community programs.
- Farmers markets and events.

The master plan will address the City of Casey's strategic goals as outlined in the following strategies and plans:

- Council Plan
- Casey C21 – Building a Great City
- Sustainability Plan
- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Food Security Policy
- Casey Arts Facilities Plan
- Casey Arts Development Plan
- Casey Open Space Strategy

1.3 History of the Site

'Springfield Homestead, which dates from c1855, has state significance as a notable early homestead property and, with the associated former cheese factory from 1875, as part of an important early dairy farm complex...' — Heritage citation

The estate dates back to 1854 with initial development within the district leading to the construction of the Homestead with handmade bricks in the late 1860's. By 1875 the external kitchen and dairy buildings had been erected with the property being in the ownership of the Clark family at that time. Cheese was manufactured on site within the Old Cheese Factory and taken to Melbourne by horse and dray where it was sold and even exported to Queensland. The site was considered a 'model farm' unique for its innovative farming practices.

For a period in the early 1900's the site also operated as a successful horse training facility.

In 1925 the government purchased the property as a returned soldier settlement where Mr Charles Hatten took up residence until his death in 1980 when the property returned to the Crown.

The property is currently classified as Crown Land under the control of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning with the Casey City Council being the responsible Manager.

1.4 Authority Controls

The site is subject to Casey Planning Scheme Heritage Overlay HO5 covering Springfield (The Homestead and Wash House, and the Old Cheese Factory).

The Overlay outlines specific controls over external paint colours, internal alterations, trees, outbuildings and fences. They identify that the site is not subject to Aboriginal heritage place controls.

In addition, the site is an Historical Interest Reserve under Section 4 of the Crown Land Reserve Act, under the control of the City of Berwick (Casey) as a Committee of Management.

The Cheese Factory building is classified by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) as being of State significance (No B3134), under the category of Factory / Plant within the Manufacturing and Processing Group.

1.5 Background and Research

The OCF Master Plan has been researched and analysed over a six year period from 2009 to 2015 which has been undertaken by Williams Ross Architects.

The research phase for the development of the site highlighted the varying areas that required consideration, including potential opportunities and challenges. This research included extensive consultation with internal and external stakeholders, key agencies, community groups, local residents and the community in relevance to the OCF and also information gathered through the Casey Arts Participation Initiative.

2.0 Vision

The OCF Master Plan outlines a vision, four key pillars and actions that provides direction on the facilities required to support and build on the services and programs offered to the community.

2.1 Vision

Council's vision for the Old Cheese Factory is to provide a unique community destination, retaining and celebrating Casey's heritage and parkland.



2.2 Key pillars

Arts and Culture

A place for artists to work, practice, teach and demonstrate; a unique place for community experiences.



Celebrations and Events

A place for the community to come together and celebrate family functions, activities, milestones and deliver a broad range of events for the community.



Tourism and Heritage

Protects the site's unique heritage values by providing opportunities to celebrate and recognise the City's history and promotion of the facility as a regional tourism destination.



Community and Open Space

A diversity of landscape and open space experiences framing the heritage values of the site, and providing space for the community to participate in informal and formal activities.



3.0 Arts and Culture

In line with Casey's Arts Development and Arts Facilities Plans, the OCF will be a Municipal level facility for visual arts providing arts studios, workshops and creative spaces as well as small exhibition spaces and arts incubators.

Bunjil Place will provide space for regional functions including exhibitions, talks and forums. The OCF will complement these activities with 'making' spaces that encourage the community to further engage in the arts and pursue their passion.



Image 1: Artists in session on the grounds

Key Actions:

- Strengthen current work in the Arts Studio, with storage, wet spaces and appropriate lighting while providing a secondary function as a multi-purpose space.
- Relocate the Berwick District Woodworkers to a new dedicated space alleviating safety and site logistics issues from the core area of the site.
- Convert the current woodworkers building to become the new Visual Arts Building providing additional visual and creative arts making spaces, local exhibition spaces with provisions for storage and secondary use as a multi-purpose space.
- Develop informal networking spaces that encourage and support community groups to meet more at the site, creating a strengthened home base for community groups.
- Develop a new Artists in Residence building / multi-purpose space, for artists in residence programs and also a small retail outlet with public toilets.
- Increase interpretative displays and public art, including refurbishing current public art that displays and tells the story of the history of the site.



Image 2: Relocate woodworkers and refurbish for new visual arts



Image 3: Continue improvements to the Arts Studio building

4.0 Celebrations and Events

The Celebrations and Events pillar seeks to enhance the site as a place for the community to come together and celebrate in attractive and welcoming surroundings.

The Master Plan will enable an improved site layout of buildings, with connecting pathways to key amenities and facilities on site, including Homestead Café, Farmers Market / Events Area, Playground and Secret Garden.

This pillar will also allow for the development of additional infrastructure (gazebos, BBQ areas, picnic tables) providing greater opportunities for current and future community uses.



Key Actions:

1. In the refurbishment of the Visual Arts Building and Arts Studio, ensure spaces provide flexibility as multi-purpose spaces that are versatile for the community to use for celebrations or group activities.
2. Strengthen the Farmers Market / Events Area, with additional gazebos, paths of travel, signage, car parking and landscaping.
3. Upgrade the current function / multi-purpose building to enable enhanced celebrations, events, utilisation and storage space.
4. Install additional gazebos, BBQ areas, picnic tables, enabling increased activation for celebratory functions, event and informal activation
5. Deliver a range of community events that activate the site, while enabling local community groups and businesses to be involved (i.e. Wedding Expo, Children's Week Festival)



Image 4: Events at the Old Cheese Factory

5.0 Tourism and Heritage

The Tourism and Heritage pillar is paramount in protecting and preserving the character of the site, while allowing the community to celebrate, learn and reflect on the heritage of the site and local region.

The site is currently a local destination. This pillar will strengthen the broader community's awareness of the site's heritage, and attract visitors from across Victoria.

Key Actions:

1. Deliver a revised Café / Catering kitchen, toilet facilities, seating layouts, additional outdoor covered areas that support the growth and financial sustainability of the Homestead Café and enhance visitor experience at the site.
2. Develop interpretative displays within and around the historic buildings, telling the history of the site, while allowing visitors to be lead around the site, including researching and linkages to the Aboriginal heritage of the site.
3. Investigate the remains of the milking shed and provide opportunities for interpretative displays for the community to understand its heritage context.
4. Respect and preserve the historic context of the fabric of the site, including ensuring all development is consistent with the International Council on Monuments and Sites, Charter for Places of Conservation Significance, 1999 (the Burra Charter).
5. Respect and promote the open, rural character of the property.

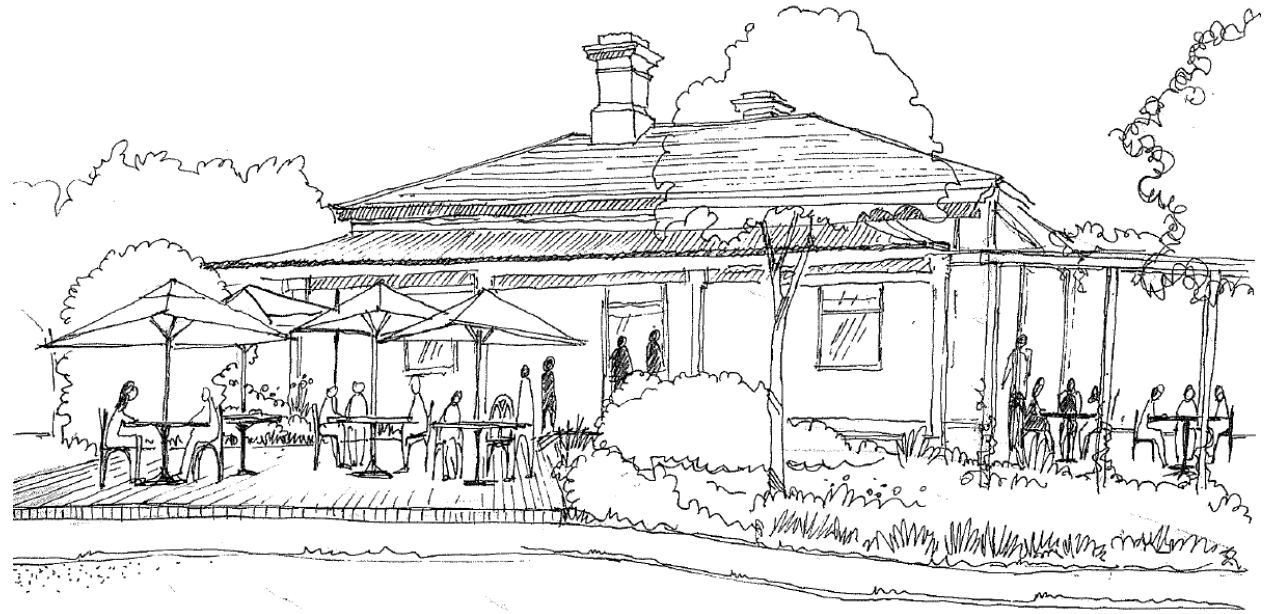


Image 5: Artists Impression of the enhancements to Café within Homestead

6.0 Community and Open Space

The OCF is consistent with a regional 'Social Family Recreation' site in Casey's Open Space Strategy. The 11 hectare site aims to provide multiple social and recreation opportunities to the local community and wider catchment and includes infrastructure that encourages long term stays from visitors.

This pillar outlines improvements for attracting people to the site and how they interact and move around the site, including paths of travel, way-finding and car parking.

This pillar also allows for additional opportunities to strengthen the uniqueness of the site through interactive spaces.



Image 6: Enhance the secret garden

Key Actions:

1. Strengthen and expand the formal gardens in the historic core, including additional garden developments to provide locations for ceremonies and celebrations. Remove plants not relevant to the heritage of the site.
2. Enhance the Secret Garden with additional English and Australian plantings, paths of travel, picnic / shelter areas and engaging children's interactive play spaces; checker boards, hopscotch and connections with the playground.
3. Expand outdoor gathering spaces including gazebos, barbeque areas, picnic tables, as well as the district playground.
4. Deliver improvements to the Farm Paddocks, including windrow planting that creates paddock zones, paths of travel enabling connection within and external to the site and screen planting for neighbouring properties.
5. Deliver a community garden space, separately fenced from the site, allowing groups or individuals to maintain a garden plot.
6. Develop and deliver a revised and strengthened signage strategy for external and internal site / building identification, way-finding and promotional opportunities.



Image 7: Deliver a new community garden space

Key Actions - Continued:

6. Deliver improvements to site entry and creation of a new entry and ring road, allowing improved traffic flow and improved signage to encourage all vehicles to park within the site reducing vehicles on local roads. Will also allow for a new driveway to the historic core for celebrations and events. This includes installing gates to eliminate vehicles in the site after hours.
7. Deliver improvements within the site to assist in traffic circulation, including new paths of travel to separate vehicle and pedestrian movement. This includes reduction of vehicles accessing the core area of the site.
8. Deliver all proposed paths of travel, within the main interior of the site strengthening way finding for visitors, around the perimeter of the site and enhanced connections with neighbouring residential streets and existing paths.
9. Expand existing gravel car parking to serve site users, while ensuring neighbouring properties are not affected by noise, dust and lighting.
10. Improve site security and safety issues, addressing surveillance with additional entry points, provide internal and external gates and additional night lighting.
11. Deliver a revised site maintenance yard including new work shop, nursery, waste management and service equipment to the site, including improved access for service vehicles and removing this from the core of the site.



Image 8: Deliver additional gazebos and strengthen the current playground

7. Concept Plan – Overall Site

Open and Community Space

1. Create a main site entry, allowing for better flow of traffic, which brands, promotes and identifies the site.
2. Create a ring road that will allow improved traffic circulation with increased vehicle traffic onsite.
3. Deliver a new site entry / exit to allow traffic to enter and exit the site with ease.
4. Additional trails around the site for improved pedestrian circulation
5. New path connections to adjoining paths and streets
6. Windrow tree planting
7. Open Multipurpose space

Celebrations and Events

8. Deliver a new prominent driveway to the historic core, for celebrations and events.



- KEY**
-  Site Core
 -  Site Entry / Exits
 -  New pedestrian paths
 -  New path connections to existing paths / streets.

8. Concept Plan – Core Site

Arts and Culture

1. Improve amenities in the Arts Studio for art programs.
2. Establish new custom woodworkers with safety features.
3. Convert the current woodworkers building to a Visual and Creative Arts and multi-purpose space.
4. Deliver a new artist's in residence building, toilets and retail shop.

Tourism and Heritage

5. Develop interpretative displays, telling the history of the site.
6. Deliver improvements to the Café / Catering kitchen, toilet facilities and seating layouts.
7. Investigate the remains of the milking shed for interpretative display



KEY

- Historic Core
Event Spaces

Celebrations and Events

8. Strengthen the Farmers Market / Events area
9. Upgrade the current function room to additional uses
10. Install additional gazebos, BBQ areas and picnic tables

Open and Community Space

11. Extend and improve the secret garden
– children's interactive space
12. Deliver a community garden space
13. Deliver additional gravel car parking
14. Increase formal landscape areas and
strengthen existing vegetable gardens
15. Relocate site workshop and nursery
area
16. Strengthen district play facilities

9. Implementation Plan

The Old Cheese Factory Master Plan is proposed to be implemented over the short to medium term (1-5 years). To successfully achieve all deliverables projects have been divided into 2 key areas; large capital projects and smaller capital / operational projects.

The following large scale projects have been identified in Council's 5 Year Capital Works:

Year	Capital Works Outline
Current	Café and Homestead Works - Café kitchen and new toilet - Outdoor dining / landscaping
Year 1 & 2	Woodworkers relocation (New Shed) Additional services, parking and driveways
Year 3	Refurbish woodworkers for new visual arts building New toilet block near events area Commence landscaping
Year 4	New staff workshop / nursery area Additional car parking, driveways and open space delivery
Year 5	Remaining car parking, driveways and open space delivery

Remaining projects are identified as smaller capital / operational projects and may be funded by operational funding, minor capital works or grant applications.

These projects include:

Project	Funding Source	Priority
Install gates on the front entrance to the site	Minor Capital Works	High
Reduce cars parking on Homestead Road	To be confirmed	High
Development of Secret Garden	Minor Capital Works	Medium
Development of Community Gardens	Minor Capital Works	Low
Development of interpretative signage	Grant funding – to be confirmed	Medium
New Gazebo's	To be confirmed	High
Increase public art onsite	To be confirmed	Low
Increase BBQ areas and picnic tables onsite	Minor Capital Works	Medium
Deliver a range of community events	Operational budget	High
Investigate the remains of the milking shed	To be confirmed	Low
Strengthen site signage and way finding	To be confirmed	High

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