

MICHAEL SMITH & ASSOCIATES

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN DESIGN

CURRENT PROJECTS

Cobblebank Subdivision Rockbank- Framework Planting

We recently completed stages 1, 1B, and 2 of the formative street tree layouts for the new light industrial estate south-east of Melton. We prepared opinions of probable costs for the preparation of nature strips in terms of cultivation, soil preparation, grassing, and tree planting. We worked closely with Paul Farrell of PGF Projects Planning to Development, who is coordinating the consultant team, which includes traffic, lighting and civil engineers.

WH Robinson Reserve, Reconstruction - Preston

Darebin City Council engaged our practice and subconsultant Brent Gordon from Sports Design Group (SDG) to undertake the review of the existing site conditions of the combined cricket and soccer field.

The system requires reprofiling, the provision of well laid out drainage lines and retention of the irrigation system. We engaged Surfcoast Surveying to undertake the feature and levels survey, taking 10-metre grids for location and spot levels, to enable an accurate assessment by SDG to prepare a 3D model and to calculate accurate volumes of cut and fill soil.

Under our direction, Ground Science based in Thomastown, took several soil profile samples to then undertake laboratory tests to determine drainage capacity, conductivity and nutrients analysis to enable amelioration of the existing soil. Ground Science made recommendations as to the depth and quality of the growing medium required to establish warm season grass of Santa Ana Couch.

SDG prepared a couple of iterations of Opinion of Probable Costs for the reconstruction of the field. Darebin City Council tendered the work in late November, to have the successful contractor commence on site in early January 2024.

AH Capp Reserve, Preston and JC Donath Reserve, Reservoir

Darebin City Council engaged our practice to review the current soil and drainage conditions to each reserve.

We engaged Brent Gordon of Sports Design Group to review soil reports prepared by our subconsultant Ground Science. We engaged Surfcoast Surveying to undertake the feature and levels survey at 10-metre grid intervals to enable accurate 3-D computer modelling and calculations of cut and filling required.

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Photo of the existing site conditions of WH Robinson Reserve, Preston



WH Robinson Recreation Reserve; concept for irrigation by SDG, as our subconsultant to Council

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DR Atkinson Playspace Replacement - Concept and Documentation, Reservoir

Darebin City Council engaged our practice to prepare the concept plan followed by contract documentation of the replacement of dated playspace apparatus to an existing playspace approximately 36 by 11 metres, within a 2-hectare reserve in Reservoir.

Council's Recreation Planner requested the preparation of a concept layout of a range of interesting and suitable play apparatus, including removal of the existing apparatus all within a set budget. Council intends to display the concept layout for community review, then we are to prepare the contract documentation to include a defined set out of new apparatus, inclusion of drainage and a concrete path to allow wheelchair access to a swing.

A large existing Spotted Gum tree provides shade to part of the playspace and the idea is to shift the entire playspace further east, to take advantage of the shade cast by the tree and shade ultimately cast by a further five new trees to the north and west sides of the rectangular space. We have prepared a concept plan with images of intended apparatus for the exhibition plan accompanied by the opinion of probable costs for supply and installation of play apparatus, mulch, a path and drainage.

Princess Hill Secondary College - Site Works

Following the City of Yarra's requirements for road permits and despite our difficulties in obtaining precise costs of various permits and charges by council, the project is about to go to tender for the third time.

Kiewa River Community Park- Concept Design

As reported in our Spring Newsletter, Indigo Shire Council appointed our office to work closely with Council's Project Team and the local community, to prepare the preliminary concept layout for improvements to the existing park. We recently prepared a range of staged concept plans of the 0.5-hectare park which has the fast-flowing Kiewa River to its northern edge.

The site is the former Catchment Management Authorities (CMA) depot and administration office and as such, has a small house-like administration office and two large galvanized iron sheds centrally located on the flat grassed site. One is used as the men's shed. Some of the longer-term options are to potentially relocate the men's shed to Tangambalanga, two kilometres to the east of Kiewa, and retain the concrete pad as a small sports court ie: netball, basketball, down ball and performance space. Other design ideas are to provide space for a regular community market, create an indigenous plant display garden, provide an inspired nature-based playspace and some space for carparking.

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Existing drone shot of Kiewa River Community Park.



Photo of the existing men's shed and the administration building in Kiewa River Community Park.

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Rollo Street Park- Yarragon

The community consultation and engagement brought in line with the consultation process with the local community on the main street design. Our team will be undertaking the consultation engagement in February 2024.

Kerang to Koondrook Rail Trail

Our team is in the process of the preparation of the final contract documentation for the 2.5 metre wide concrete trail part of the length on the existing railway tramway formation and part within the existing road reserve.

Tulip Street Park

Frog habitat - Sandringham Family Leisure Centre

We worked with Lui Martino, Associate Architect at Bickerton Masters, the local friends group, Bayside City Councils' Project Team and Biodiversity Team in the design and documentation to enhance the existing frog connection and habitat. Frogs migrate from the existing pond close to the basketball stadium to the adjoining Sandringham Public Golf Course.

We included habitat stags (uprights) and logs from the several dead gum trees that were cut down. Most of the indigenous grasses, Dianellas and Lomandras were supplied from Bayside City Council's Nursery, less than a kilometre from the site.

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Photo of the newly built frog habitat connections beside the Sandringham Leisure Centre.

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NEW PROJECTS

Yarra Ranges Special Development School

Bickerton Masters Architects engaged our office to work closely with several of the schools' senior staff and the principal to review some existing play apparatus to make conditions safer and balanced at the same time, challenging for children. We discussed the physical improvements and several items of apparatus that can be accommodated within the fall zones of both the existing and new apparatus. The VSBA has set a budget for the project to which we cannot exceed.

Woolamai to Nyora Rail Trail Feasibility Study

We received exciting news in early November that Bass Coast Shire Council in conjunction with South Gippsland Shire Council have engaged our practice and large subconsultant team, to undertake firstly the consultation and engagement with the several rural communities along the 25 kilometres of former rail trail, then meet with property owners to discuss the infrastructure required. The consultation and engagement process will take place in February and March next year. There will be field inspections by our team in March and April next year to ascertain the condition of the existing timber trestle and concrete bridges, environmental and cultural heritage, safe road crossings.

The purpose of the study is to determine whether a proposed walking/cycling trail over the 25 kilometres length of Crown land corridor between Woolamai and Nyora is feasible. The 25 kilometres of trail is the missing link in the 1,100 kilometres Gippsland Odyssey Trail, extending from Cowes on Phillip Island in the west, to Orbost in the east. The Odyssey Trail will connect rural communities throughout Gippsland, with much of the route following the former branch railway lines. The benefits include tourism growth, creation and activation of local business, fostering employment, improved health and well-being and including greater opportunity for social and physical connection between local communities.

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One of the existing trestle bridges along the Woolamai to Nyora rail trail that will need to be inspected in detail.



The historic buildings of the Nyora Railway Station.



Kernot General Store is centrally located along the trail.



Evidence of the former railway line formation, rear.

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Western Heights Secondary College

In early November, Workshop Architecture engaged our office to assist with preparation of the masterplan for the well-established school. There are some really interesting well laid-out spaces for students and staff to enjoy. In parts, some areas don't function well and we prepared analysis notes to the opportunities the college presents. Some of the key attributes of the college are the well treed avenues of mainly native tree species, the large produce garden including fruit trees, vegetables and flowers. The existing oval is well grassed with Santa Ana Couch, Workshop Architecture have identified three zones within the college, where a new gymnasium building will be located.

New Evangelical Church

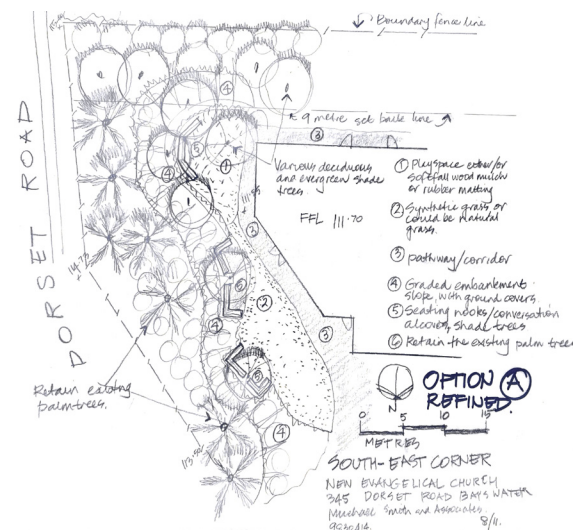
We are working closely with Henry Wong of WE Architecture in preparation of concept layouts for the outdoor break-out alcove/ courtyard spaces associated with the church's functions. Creating meeting and discussion spaces for people surrounded by a canopy of shade trees and enclosed by shrubs and plantings is a key component. Providing a couple of areas for playspace apparatus within the courtyard spaces was a priority by the church's committee. Once the church committee has approved our sketch concepts and opinion of probable costs, they will be transferred onto AutoCAD and the landscape development plan will be lodged with Knox City Council for their approval.

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A corridor of Ornamental Pears and concrete seats in Western Heights Secondary College.



Concept Sketch Stage 1 for the courtyard break-out spaces of Evangelical Church.

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