

DRAFT EASTERN HILL ACTIVATION MASTER PLAN FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Why do we need a master plan for Eastern Hill?

Eastern Hill does not currently have an endorsed master plan to guide the future use, management, and proposed activation of the site. The need for a master plan has become a priority following feedback from the community requesting improvement to the facilities and offerings.

A master plan will provide a coordinated approach to protect and enhance the natural environment, whilst allowing for some infrastructure improvements to improve accessibility and provide a range of other benefits for the broader community.

What has been the consultation process so far?

In early 2022, consultation was undertaken to ask the community how they use the area, and what they see as key opportunities to enhance this popular location.

The Draft Eastern Hill Activation Master Plan was developed taking into consideration this feedback from the community, to activate the space for everyone to enjoy.

The draft plan was put back out to the community for feedback in August 2022. An independent consultant has been engaged to review and evaluate all submissions.

In April 2023, Council endorsed a review of the plan by a Community Advisory Panel. The panel will bring together community members from key stakeholder interest groups to review key elements in the draft plan, discuss differing views, share opinions, and identify potential solutions.

The resulting recommendations will then be presented to Council for further consideration, acknowledging technical expertise will be required to refine the designs.

Who will be on the Advisory Panel?

The panel will consist of:

- Access Committee (1 representative)
- Sustainability Advisory Committee (1 representative)
- Albury Wodonga Mountain Bikers (1 representative)
- Friends of Eastern Hill (1 representative)
- Mungabareena Aboriginal Place Management Group (1 representative)
- Rotary Club of Albury (1 representative)
- Youth Council (1 representative)
- AlburyCity Councillors (2 representatives) - one Councillor will chair the meetings

What if the Panel cannot reach consensus on any of the items?

The Advisory Panel will meet fortnightly for a period of up to three months. If consensus and resolution is not possible on any of the items, decisions will be made by the majority rule of members present.

There have been some reports that East Albury residents have not been consulted as part of the process. Is that true?

As part of the initial 'Have your Say' in early 2022 Council received 554 contributions from residents, which represents one of our highest response rates to date for the 'Have Your Say' platform. Of the 554 survey responses, 36% (200) of these were from community members that reside in East Albury.

During the extended 56-day Public Exhibition period, AlburyCity conducted four community information sessions dedicated to Eastern Hill engagement. The information sessions were part of a larger campaign that included social media, on-site signage at all reserve entrances, local advertising, traditional media and the AlburyCity website.

Is concrete being widely used throughout Eastern Hill concept proposals?

No. The plan proposes to predominantly use natural materials or materials that “sit lightly” in the landscape. Some areas may include some harder materials to improve accessibility for people with mobility issues.

I have heard that the Trig Point lookout will be made from concrete?

No. Trig Point lookout is proposed to be a floating transparent mesh screen structure – much like the stairs proposed on the Gunbower Close walking trail.

Will mountain bike trails be created down to Devils Glen?

No. Walking trails between Doctors Point and Devils Glen and Eastern Hill will have floating stairs and boardwalk sections. The trail between Gunbower Close and Eastern Hill is proposed to have signage allowing for walkers only.

Why are you widening the trail out to Trig point?

The access path from the car park to Trig point will be upgraded to improve access for people with mobility issues so all members of the community can enjoy the views. AlburyCity’s Disability Inclusion Action Plan states that Council aims to offer an inclusive and accessible community for people to live, work and play.

Will a road be constructed along the ridge line?

No. The trail from Trig Point to the Kiewa Valley lookout seat and the Hume and Hovell Walking Track alignment will remain as a natural surface trail with minor improvements. The 10m wide Asset Protection Zone (APZ) will be retained for emergency vehicle access as it is now.

Will mountain biking use all of the trails on Eastern Hill?

No. The draft master plan has identified specific trails for use by mountain bikers, with separation from existing trails. Trails will be signposted accordingly, and an education campaign will be undertaken on trail usage and etiquette, should the master plan be endorsed.

Will pedestrian access be improved to the lookout from East Street?

Yes. The new entrance road will also include the construction of a separate pedestrian access path.

Will the plan create new wildlife corridors?

Yes. The plan has identified the need for extensive revegetation to be undertaken on the eastern face of the reserve to improve wildlife connectivity from the ridge down to Mungabareena and the Murray River. Additional corridor areas have been identified in Devils Glen and Doctors Point Reserve also.

Will the memorial chair be removed and replaced with interpretive signage?

The memorial chair will not be removed. We’ll be looking for opportunities to include additional furniture at the Kiewa Valley lookout to ensure multiple people can concurrently enjoy the stunning views. Given the significance of the location, interpretive signage is also proposed at this location that tells the story of the sites’ history and heritage.

Who will pick up the rubbish with the additional use of the area?

One of the General Recommendations for the Master Plan was to “Improve ongoing maintenance by implementing Council’s maintenance regime for high profile sites.” The Master Plan also talks to the possible inclusion of CCTV and new amenities such as rubbish bins being installed.

Are all the things on the master plan going to be built?

The master plan, if endorsed, provides a guide for new projects to be submitted in future Council budgets. Any works undertaken would be staged as planning and environmental approvals are granted and budget is made available. There is no guarantee that all projects will be constructed.