

COMMUNITY GARDEN 3231 MASTERPLAN

Since the beginning of the garden in May 2010, Community Garden 3231 has grown significantly. It became clear to the committee that we needed to improve a few things to meet the needs of our growing membership.

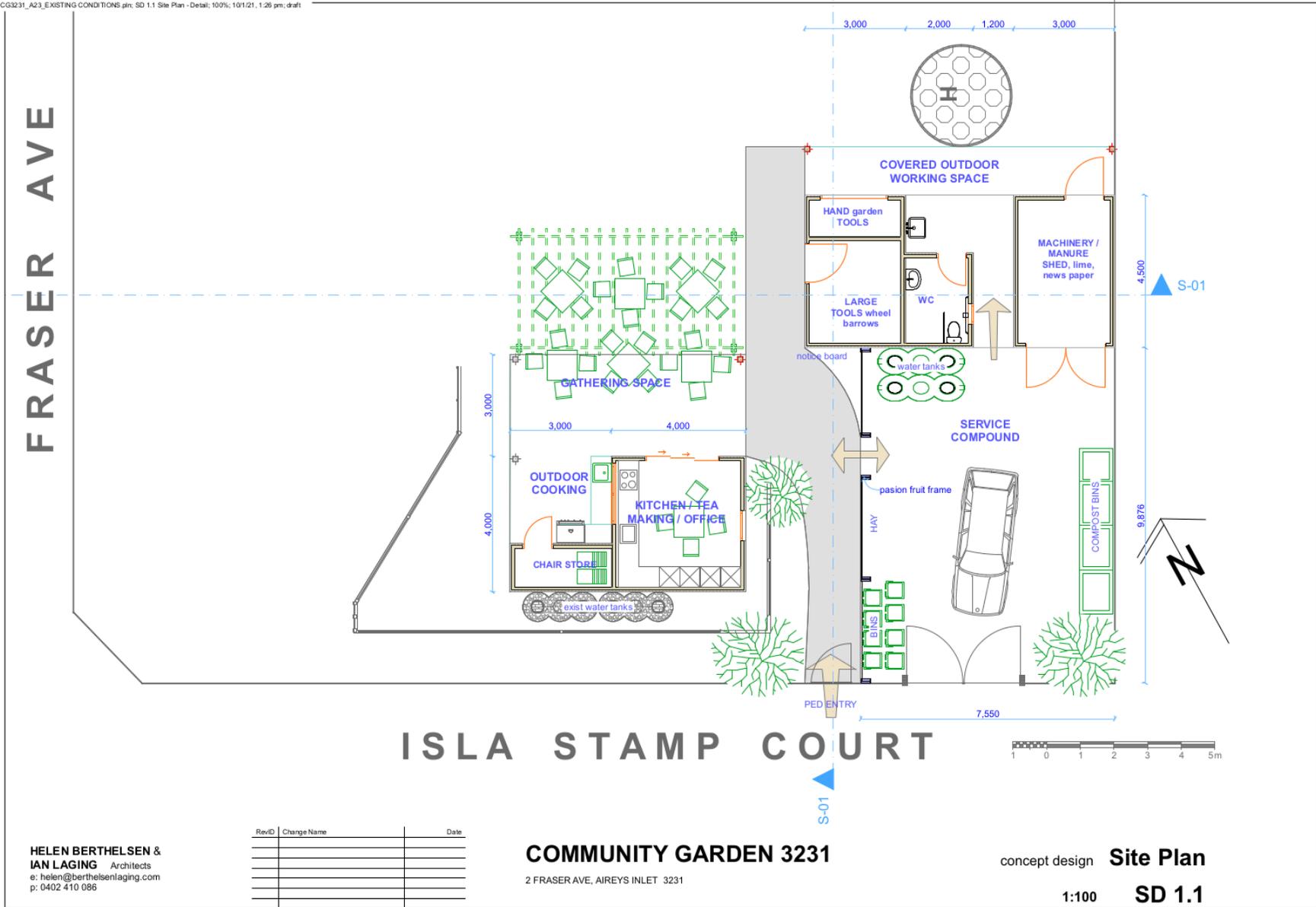
During 2020 we undertook a significant strategic planning exercise and developed a masterplan for the garden. The aim of the masterplan was to provide a strategic, logical and staged approach for the current and future development of the community garden. Working with our community we identified 6 key objectives:

1. To create a more welcoming entry.
2. To improve storage for garden equipment, materials, tools and furniture (i.e., chairs and tables for events).
3. To create a clean, fit for purpose shed which houses office and kitchen functions.
4. To develop a versatile social gathering space which enables both smaller and larger gatherings in all weather conditions.
5. To plan for improvements to existing garden beds/infrastructure where needed
6. To maintain the philosophy of the garden.

We also felt it was time we had a flushing toilet to adequately cater for visitors and members!

In 2021 our membership peaked at 192 members.

Please note the following concept plan focusses on the south-east corner of the garden where the entry area and the service yard are located.



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RevID	Change Name	Date

CG3231 MASTERPLAN CONCEPT PLAN



Figure 1 - aerial of site (source: Google Maps)



Figure 2 - existing site conditions

1. WELCOMING ENTRY

The garden aims to be an informal, friendly and inclusive place, connected to its community. At present, the entry from the southern gate has a double gate for deliveries of bulky garden items (straw bales, soil, screenings, construction materials etc). Nearby are the composting bays and rubbish bins are also close to the entry. Whilst this is very practical, this gate has become the main entry for members and visitors. Very few people use the beautiful gates that are located adjacent to the double gate and on the northern corner of the garden at Fraser Drive.

SIGNAGE

Both entries to the garden need space for better signage to both welcome and inform. The main entrance area should be able to accommodate a garden plan, information for members and community notices.

COMPOSTING

The compost bins are approaching the end of their useful life, so there is an opportunity to consider their location on the site. On the one hand, they are located close to a gate that makes it very easy for people delivering items for compost. Vehicles can reverse into the site. The compost also needs to be close to straw bales, sheep poo, newspaper and lime storage areas. However sometimes the compost smells and it's not the best thing to encounter as you first walk into the garden.

The compost bins need space around them for wheelbarrows to move material in and out, piling of organic material for the shredder and space for people to turn the compost from one bay to the next. Whilst we are making good compost the turning requires a lot of manual labor. Is there a better design? Is there a better location?

STRAW BALES

Where is the best place to store bulky items like the straw bales and other mulch?

RUBBISH BINS

The rubbish bins are close to the gate for emptying but are also amongst the first things you see when you walk in. There are currently 6 bins but we will be getting 2 more under the new recycling arrangements. Can they be stored more discreetly but still be nice and accessible to use and manage?

PIZZA OVEN

The pizza oven was a wonderful addition to the garden some years ago. However it was located poorly blocking physical and visual access from the social area to the entry area. The pizza oven was difficult to get working - often not reaching a high enough temperature and with a large group it only cooked one pizza at a time. It wasn't being used a lot and given the valuable real estate it occupied we felt it didn't represent good value to garden members. Reluctantly we agreed the pizza oven should be removed.

2. GARDEN STORAGE SHED

Our existing small aluminium shed (the poo shed) is used to store sheep poo (this can take up 1/3 of the shed when we get a delivery). It also stores things we add to the compost like lime and shredded newspaper. Sometimes we store blood and bone and green manure in it too. The wheelbarrows no longer fit in the shed and were quite difficult to manoeuvre in and out because of lack of space and a lip on the door entry.

Currently garden tools and fertilizers, snail pellets, bulbs and seeds are stored in the same shed (Main Shed) where we store crockery, glassware, cutlery, morning tea snacks, tea and coffee, kettles, gas stove, water cooler, books, petty cash money etc. We have nowhere to store chairs and tables we use regularly for garden events throughout the year.

We need to have a larger garden shed that will be the designated 'dirty shed' and is able to store a lot of useful stuff.

3. CG MAIN SHED

The main shed has a dirt floor with old carpets on top. It's hard to keep clean when garden activity requires constant access to tools etc. Dirty boots march right in. We're also having regular visits from four legged critters which has to be dealt with severely to maintain a level of hygiene. This is not an acceptable situation.

As outlined above, we currently have functions that are intermingled which are not well suited to cohabiting. Food preparation mixed with snail pellets, garden tools, bird netting, vermin and a floor surface that can't be readily cleaned.

We have a large collection of crockery, cutlery and glassware that we regularly use for garden events and we also make these items available on loan to our members for parties (reducing the need for disposable party ware or expensive party hire). The shed can become quite dusty over summer and our cupboards don't close very well so our clean kitchen stuff gets covered in dust.

We currently have no power to the site and this limits the use of power tools and means we use gas bottles and a camp stove to both make tea and coffee and heat washing up water. Events at night rely on daylight savings and a small solar system we have installed ourselves to run LED lights. From time to time we have to ask our neighbours if we can hook up to their power with a long extension cord. From a safety perspective it's probably time we considered going on-grid.

We need a fit-for-purpose 'clean shed' suitable for storing basic food stuffs and food related equipment. Our outdoor sink works pretty well but hot water on tap would be a nice thing to have (although not essential). The BBQ area next to the sink is very congested and access to this could be improved.

4. VERSATILE ALL WEATHER SOCIAL GATHERING SPACE

Gathering around the large outdoor table is an important feature of every working bee. We also run a number of social and community events incorporating food - such as BBQs, pizza nights and twilight working bees. Soup in the Garden and Art in the Garden are events we host where we invite the community into the garden.

Working bees typically have up to 20 people and garden social events of up to 30-40 people. We need seating space and plenty of table area for serving food, an area for cooking and also cleaning up. Sometimes it can be windy and it is important to be able to take shelter if rain sets in. We also have a portable outdoor fire but finding just the right spot for this is tricky.

We need a second table for more flexible social gatherings. The bench incorporated into the Main Shed verandah is very well used for a range of activities and functions.