

**Report to the Future Melbourne (Planning) Committee**

Agenda item 6.1

**Ministerial Planning Referral: ID-2022-1  
Punt Road Oval, Yarra Park, Punt Road, East Melbourne****3 May 2022****Presenter:** Marjorie Kennedy, Head of Statutory Planning**Purpose and background**

1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Future Melbourne Committee of Melbourne Planning Scheme Amendment C421melb, which seeks to introduce an Incorporated Document that allows redevelopment of the land located at Punt Road Oval, Yarra Park (refer Attachment 2 – Locality Plan).
2. The applicant is Richmond Football Club, the land is Crown Land under the management of the Melbourne Cricket Ground Trust (leased to Richmond Football Club), and the architect is Cox Architecture.
3. Amendment C421melb proposes to extend the width and length of the oval and reorientate more along a north / south axis. As a result demolish the Jack Dyer Stand and adjoining 1984 administration building (the Swinburne Centre would be modified, but retained) in addition to the northern car park area and a number of smaller demountable structures surrounding the oval. The amendment seeks to redevelop this land with a new building complex including the 'William Cooper Centre' (a multi-level building with dedicated spaces for Traditional Owner's groups), over a podium that will include an external grand stand providing seated capacity for 1,800 spectators, and a new multi-level car park concealed beneath a landscaped terrace connecting to Yarra Park.
4. The land is located in the Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) and is affected by the Heritage Overlay Schedule HO2 and Schedule HO194, and the Parking Overlay - Schedule 12.
5. Part of the land to the north of the project area is included in the Victorian Heritage Register listing for Yarra Park. Heritage Victoria granted Permit No.35150 for the works associated with the project located within the extent of registration for Yarra Park on 14 February 2022.
6. The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), on behalf of the Minister for Planning, undertook targeted consultation with Melbourne City Council (amongst other stakeholders) between 15 February 2022 and 14 March 2022.

**Key issues**

7. The proposed redevelopment of Punt Road Oval (Richmond Cricket Ground) and intensification of the Major Sports and Recreation Facility at this location will serve to reinforce the Sports and Entertainment Precinct in East Melbourne as a major precinct for sports and events of State wide appeal and will address identified deficiencies with the existing infrastructure, acting to 'future-proof' the sporting facility for the anticipated further growth of AFL and AFLW.
8. A preference for alternative design treatments that retain, or relocate, the Jack Dyer Stand, enabling retention of the historically significant former grand stand on the land has been extensively pursued and explored throughout the planning process. However, a detailed assessment of the demolition of this building against Council's Heritage Policy has been undertaken and it is accepted that retention of the building is not feasible, relocation of the building will not lead to the long term conservation of the heritage place, and that the proposed redevelopment will serve to strengthen the historic narrative of the heritage place in other respects.
9. The feasibility assessment revealed that the Jack Dyer Stand could overcome certain structural and Building Code of Australia requirements with significant intervention, however would substantially alter the original fabric, and have limited function which could not be fully overcome by any refurbishment works, including provision of seating capacity, compliance with accessibility requirements and an inability to provide modern facilities capable of supporting the future demands of the venue.

10. Specifically, the proposed development and associated intensification of Punt Road Oval will serve to further embed and conserve the historic use of the land as a sporting facility supporting Australian Rules football and its historic tenant, the Richmond Football Club. Conditions have also been recommended to require the preparation of an Interpretation Strategy to guide the careful salvaging, re-use and adaptation of red bricks and other key elements of the Jack Dyer Stand into the proposed development.
11. Having considered the full suite of public benefits arising from the proposed redevelopment scheme including upgrading the important historic community infrastructure for contemporary and future use, provision of dedicated spaces within the William Cooper Centre for Traditional Owners Groups / Organisations, relocation of car parking below ground to increase landscaping integrated with Yarra Park and opening up views from key sightlines, the demolition of the Jack Dyer Stand is being recommended to be supported.

### **Recommendation from management**

12. That the Future Melbourne Committee resolves to authorise management to advise the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning that the Melbourne City Council supports Amendment C421melb, subject to conditions being included in the Incorporated Document (refer to Attachment 4 of the report from management).

### **Attachments:**

1. Supporting Attachment (Page 3 of 214)
2. Locality Plan (Page 4 of 214)
3. Selected Plans (Page 5 of 214)
4. Delegate Report (Page 110 of 214)

## **Supporting Attachment**

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### **Legal**

1. The Minister for Planning is the Planning Authority for Melbourne Planning Scheme Amendment C421melb.
2. Melbourne City Council is a prescribed municipal council for Amendment C421melb for the purposes of section 19(c) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Act)*. The Minister for Planning is exercising his powers under section 20(4) of the Act, and the requirements of sections 17, 18 and 19 of the Act do not apply to Amendment C421melb. The Minister for Planning has instead given notice to Council of Amendment C421melb under section 20(5) of the Act.

### **Finance**

3. There are no direct financial issues arising from the recommendations contained within this report.

### **Conflict of interest**

4. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a material or general conflict of interest in relation to the matter of the report.

### **Health and Safety**

5. Relevant planning considerations such as traffic and waste management and potential amenity impacts that could impact on health and safety have been considered.

### **Stakeholder consultation**

6. Council officers have not undertaken public notice of Amendment C421melb or referred this to any other referral authorities. This is the responsibility of the DELWP acting on behalf of the Minister for Planning.

### **Relation to Council policy**

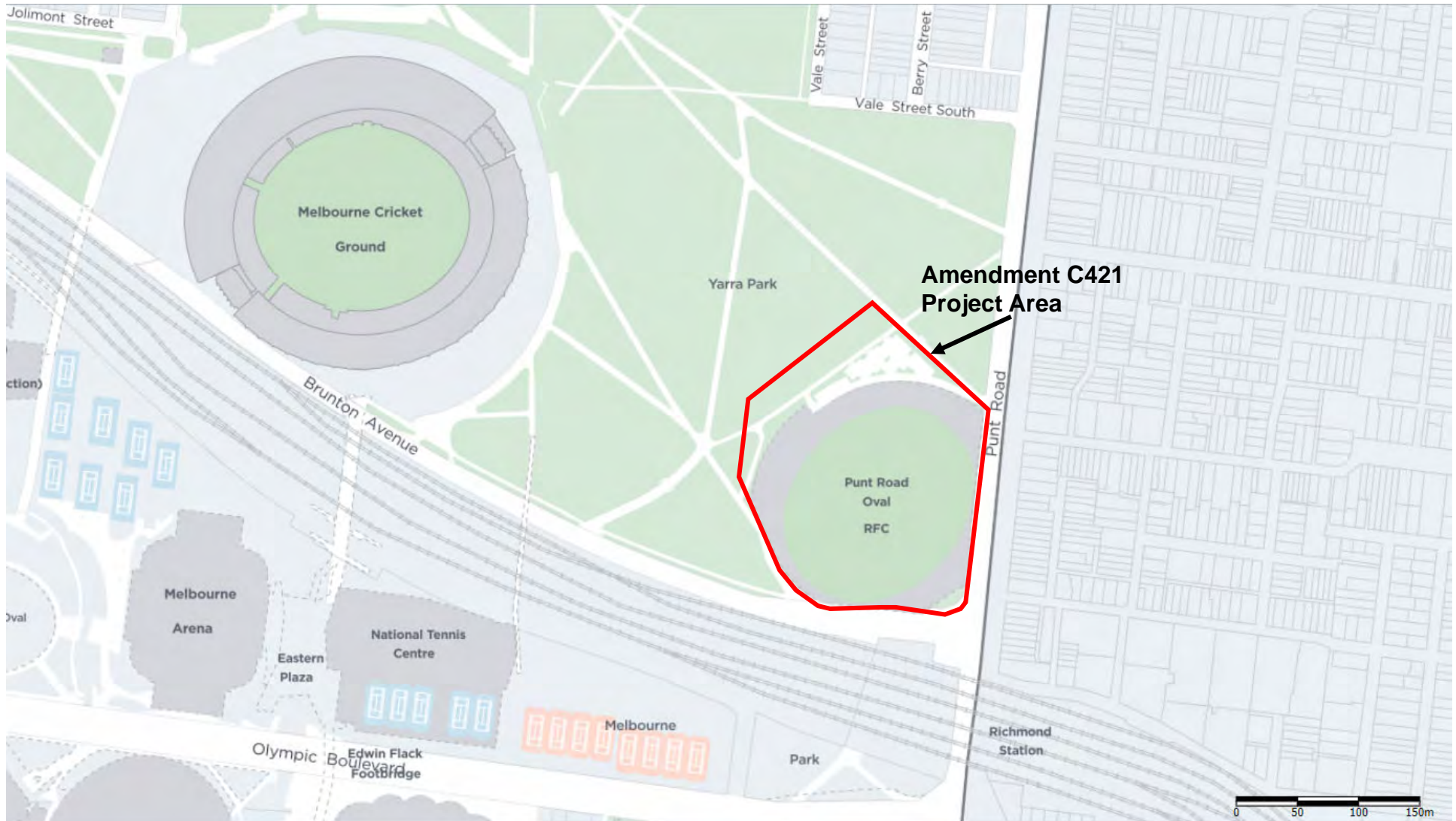
7. Relevant Council policies are discussed in the attached delegate report (refer to Attachment 4).

### **Environmental sustainability**

8. The Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) Report submitted with Amendment C421melb demonstrates that the development can achieve the ESD performance requirements of Clause 22.19 (Energy, Water and Waste Efficiency) and Clause 22.23 (Stormwater Management).

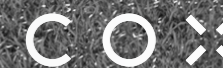
# Locality Plan

## PUNT ROAD OVAL (AKA RICHMOND CRICKET GROUND), YARRA PARK, EAST MELBOURNE



# Richmond Football Club Redevelopment

Architectural Design Response Statement | October 2021





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## Executive Summary

COX Architecture has prepared this document at the request of the Richmond Football Club to support the planning (DELWP) and heritage (Heritage Victoria) processes toward approval of a redevelopment of Punt Road Oval – the Tigers' historic home ground. Our vision is to deliver state-of-the-art facilities that will provide for the long-term needs of the Club and their partners and enable their continuing presence in Richmond.

The design team has collaborated closely with the Richmond Football Club to identify – first and foremost – their core values and vision. These values underpin the development priorities and will shape the design outcome moving forward.

This report represents our findings to date and has been informed by the following key inputs:

- Consultant advice in relation to Heritage, Planning, Traffic, and Building Code Compliance
- Workplace Aspirations Workshop
- Education Aspirations Workshop
- Visit to the Melbourne Indigenous Transition School (MITS)
- Football Department consultation
- Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC) consultation
- Pre-Application meeting with Heritage Victoria
- Pre-application meeting with the City of Melbourne

Our brief was to develop and test a number of Master Plan options from which a preferred approach has been identified and forms the basis of this Development Application. The Brief Development process has highlighted several constraints on the Punt Road Oval site that could impede the Club's potential to procure their ideal Master Plan. These include:

- Lease boundary constraint
- Existing Swinburne Centre
- Existing Jack Dyer Grandstand

In their present condition these constraints impose a major limitation on the Club's capacity to expand their training oval, increase capacity for spectators, and achieve operational efficiency within their facilities.

Our common vision is to build on the legacy of the past 135 years to ensure the continued success of the Richmond Football Club at Punt Road Oval. We believe that the design proposed in this Development Application represents the optimal solution to deliver the long-term aspirations of the Club whilst ensuring the precinct remains a part of a vibrant and attractive parkland for the public to enjoy.

**COX Architecture**





# ONE

## Project Objectives

### 1.1 At Home at Punt Road Oval

Simply put, this is about the Richmond Football Club at Punt Road Oval.

For over 135 years, the Tigers have played, trained and welcomed fans at their famed homeground on the corner of Punt Road and Brunton Avenue. Now colloquially known as 'Tigerland', this pocket of Yarra Park has become synonymous with the yellow and black and is beloved by leagues of fans.

As Australian Rules Football continues to evolve, venues must too. The Richmond Football Club seeks to secure their long-term future at Punt Road Oval through redevelopment of their existing facility to meet contemporary functional requirements and achieve parity with their competitors.

### 1.2 An Asset to Yarra Park

The listing of Yarra Park on the Victorian Heritage Register is attributed to its association with several historical and cultural elements. Included in the citation is an acknowledgement that Yarra Park is historically significant as the 'village green' for Melbourne and for its role in the development of Australian Rules Football. Yarra Park is the place where the earliest games were known to be played in 1858. In May 1859, Thomas Wentworth Wills, a renowned cricketer and the greatest proponent of the new game, was one of seven members of the Melbourne Cricket Club who established a set of rules.

Australian Rules Football continued its growth in the mid-19th century, with both Gaelic football and an Aboriginal game (commonly referred to as 'marngrook') being cited as inspiration. It established a following within the public schools of the day, before transferring to the parklands of Melbourne, including Richmond Paddock (now Yarra Park).

By the 1870s crowds of 10,000 people were attending games at the Melbourne Cricket Ground to watch this uniquely Australian game. The sport experienced steady growth over the years and by 1990 the Victorian Football League (as it had been known) formalized itself into the national game and was re-named the Australian Football League (AFL).

The history of Australian Rules Football is culturally significant as it reveals a preference for a uniquely Australian game and a willingness to break with the traditions inherited from the United Kingdom. The evolutionary nature of the game is well known, with each year bringing a review of the rules, as well as new players, new tactics, and new technologies.

The recognition of the Melbourne Cricket Ground as the spiritual 'home' of the AFL is widely recognized, and the MCG is by default the greatest asset within Yarra Park. Similarly, the Richmond Football Club with its longstanding presence at Punt Road Oval is testament to the unique history of Yarra Park and in particular its contribution to the Australian sporting landscape.

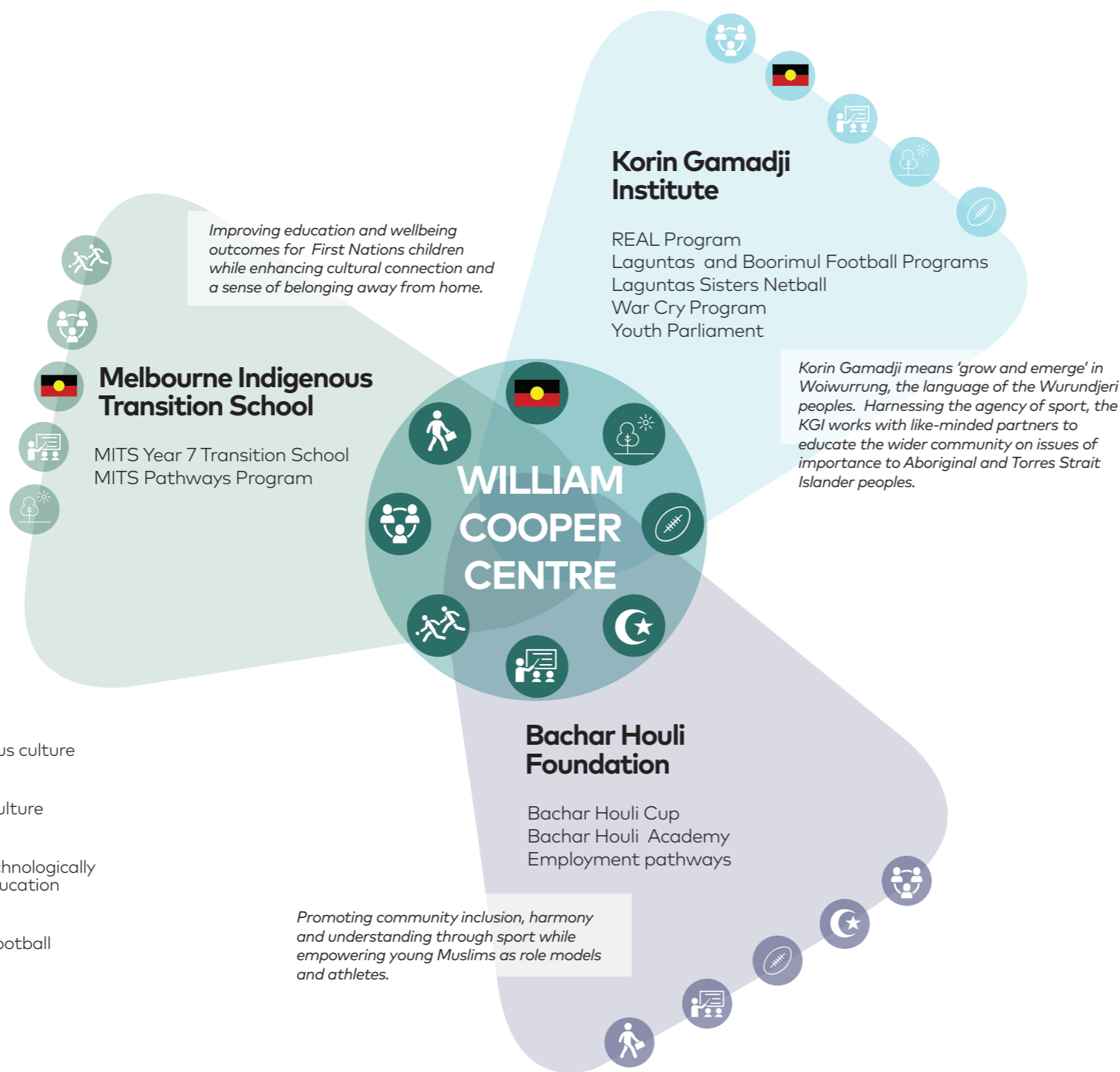
By enabling the long-term future of the Richmond Football Club in Yarra Park we are supporting a community and a legacy that is both historically and culturally important to our city.

Economically  
E n g a g e d

C u l t u r a l l y  
C o n n e c t e d

S o c i a l l y  
E m p o w e r e d

-  Support networks
-  Connection to Indigenous culture
-  Connection to Islamic culture
-  Access to advanced, technologically assisted, and flexible education
-  Engagement through football
-  Connection to Country
-  Employment pathways
-  Space to be kids



### 1.3 The William Cooper Centre

A priority for the Richmond Football Club is their ongoing relationships with several partner organisations who share a vision to engage and support a wide sector of the community through a common passion for footy. These partners represent an integral part of the Richmond Football Club community and the promotion of their programs is of central importance.

A primary driver for the redevelopment works is to provide a home for the Korin Gamadji Institute, the Bachar Houli Academy, and the Melbourne Indigenous Transition School (MITS) in the proposed 'William Cooper Centre' at Punt Road Oval. This new Centre will incorporate teaching facilities and outdoor learning environments for a variety of different student groups including children from remote regions of Australia.

The underlying objective of this new facility is to equip young people with the tools they need to be economically engaged, culturally connected, and socially empowered.

## 1.4 Growing AFL Womens

In 2020 the Richmond Football Club entered a team in the AFL Women's competition for the first time. Whilst the Club has a limited history of participation in women's football, there is a common aspiration to promote their presence in the league and develop a team that can compete at the highest level.

In late 2019, the Richmond Football Club investigated the opportunity for their inaugural women's team to play home games at Punt Road Oval. Accordingly, a review of their existing facilities was undertaken with respect to safety standards for public events. The advice received was that the venue in its current condition cannot accommodate more than 4,000 spectators, which falls short of the target 5,000 capacity deemed feasible for AFLW matches. Restricted passageways within the Jack Dyer Grandstand meant that the seating terraces could not be fully occupied and meet code compliance for safe egress. In addition to this, the AFL are currently making concessions for any competition to be held at Punt Road Oval, as the field boundary condition is not compliant with their standards (see Section 2.5.2). It was therefore determined that in its current form Punt Road Oval would not be a viable venue for AFLW.

A core requirement of the redevelopment is to address the current deficiencies of Punt Road Oval as a competition venue in order to facilitate the hosting of AFLW matches. There is also a need to provide elite training facilities to support the women's team including dedicated locker room and change facilities, access to high-performance training, and space for their administrations and support staff.

## 1.5 The Best Facilities for Football

Fundamental to any future investment is to promote the Tigers' continued on-field success, whilst nurturing the growth of women's football through provision for their AFLW team.

Punt Road Oval in its current form exhibits a significantly narrower field-of-play to that of the MCG. In order to assist the transition of VFL players moving onto the Senior Team list and support elite athlete preparation, the Club has identified parity between the two venues as one of their key development priorities.

Increased field of play dimensions will allow the Club to meet AFL regulations to facilitate hosting AFLW and VFL games at Punt Road Oval (the AFL is currently making concessions to enable games to be played at the venue). Moreover, an expanded field-of-play will protect turf against over-use, enabling the surface to adequately cope as an elite training facility and match day venue.

## 1.6 Spectator Capacity

An expressed desire of the Richmond Football Club is to host AFLW matches in the future and enhance the experience for spectators at Punt Road Oval on game day. In order to promote AFLW as a vibrant and safe event for fans to attend, there is an aspiration to increase seating and standing area available for spectators, and in so doing, increase the capacity of the venue.

In its current condition, Punt Road Oval can safely accommodate up to 4,000 spectators. The objective of the redevelopment is to provide capacity for 5,000, with a view to increasing to 8,000 spectators as part of the long-term Master Plan. Increased spectator capacity will enable AFLW games to be permanently hosted at Punt Road Oval



Yarra Park and Melbourne Cricket Ground, 1928  
Charles Pratt, State Library Victoria

# TWO

## Site Context

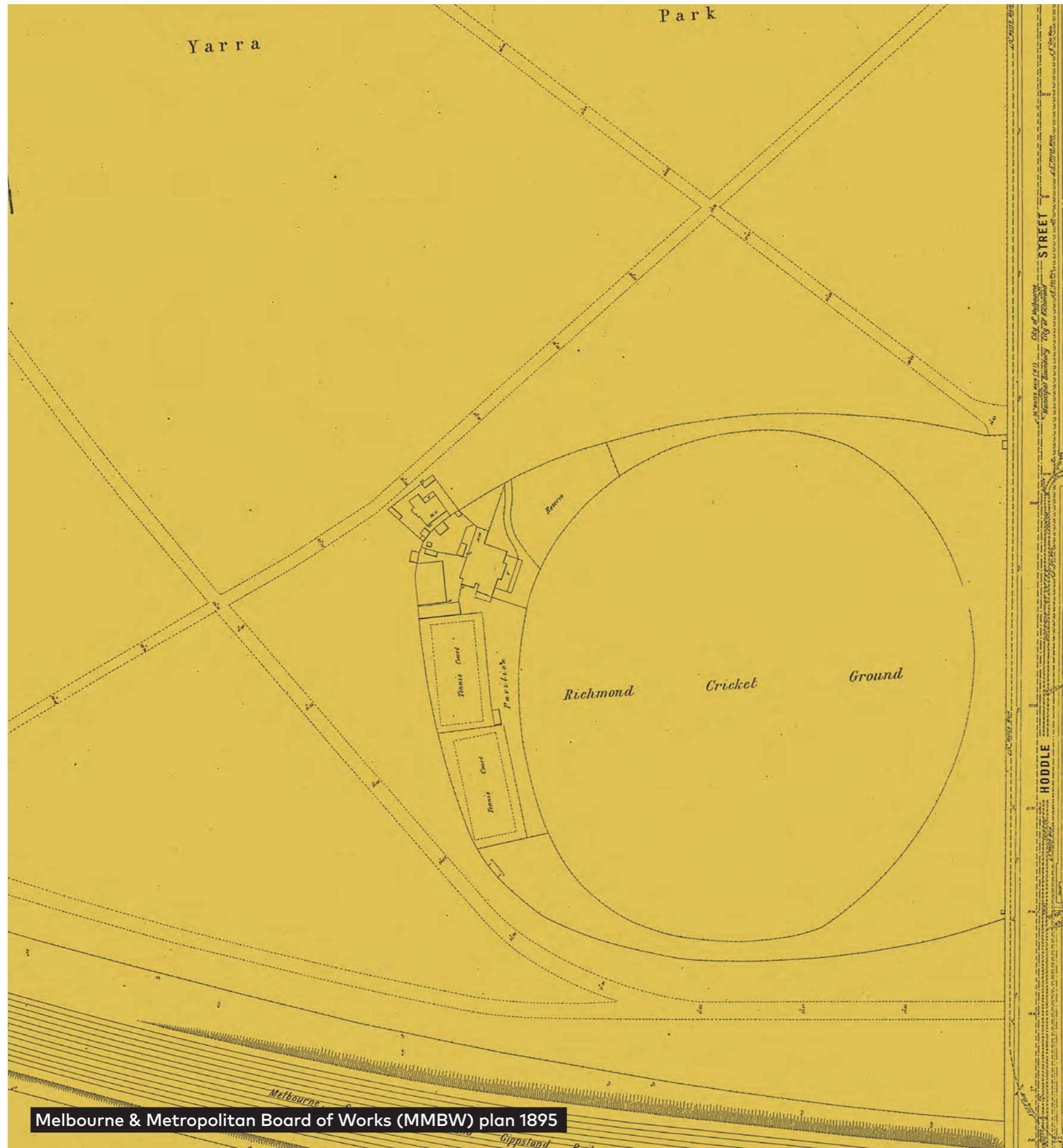


Football at Punt Road Oval, 1904

## 2.1 The Richmond Football Club in Yarra Park

The Richmond Football Club has been at home at Punt Road Oval since 1885. As the years have passed, the distinctive yellow and black buildings have come to signify 'Tigerland', the spiritual home for the Club and their fans.

Punt Road Oval occupies the south-eastern corner of Yarra Park and accordingly the Club has a strong affiliation with the Melbourne Cricket Club who are land managers for the historic parklands. The Tigers have played their home games at the neighbouring MCG since 1965 which better provides for their large supporter base.



Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) plan 1895

## 2.2 The Significance of Yarra Park

Yarra Park is a listed place on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) for its historical significance to the state. The extent of registration is denoted as place number H2251 and includes all of the land comprising Yarra Park but excludes both the Punt Road Oval and the MCG. The listed place incorporates the at-grade parking and roadway areas to the west, north-west, and north of the Punt Road Oval.

Yarra Park is recognised as a place of historical significance to Victoria for the following reasons:

- The area was an important Aboriginal ceremonial, camping and contact site and retains evidence of Aboriginal use.
- Yarra Park forms part of an early government reserve that established a 'ring' of parks around the city of Melbourne.
- The parklands are associated with prominent, historical figures from colonial society.
- The parklands provide a 'village green' for Melbourne, and have a strong sporting history and association with the origins of Australian Rules Football.

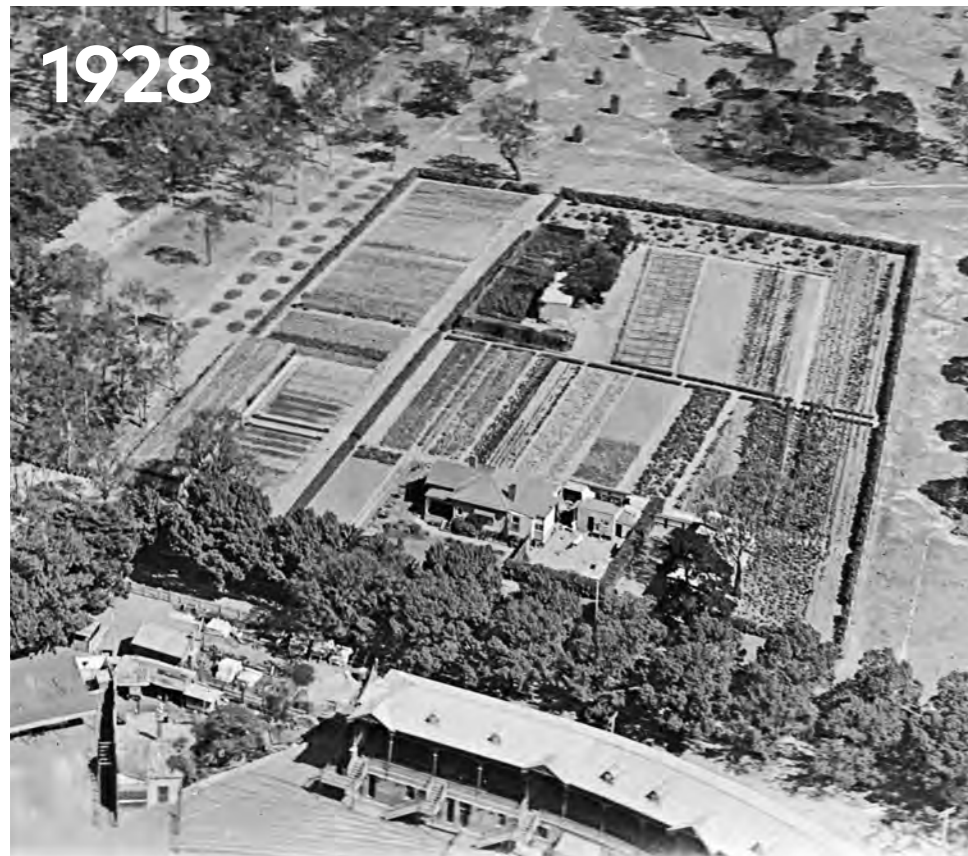
Yarra Park has several defining attributes that together characterise the listed place. These include:

- A network of paths providing pedestrian connections through the park and links to the sporting facilities.
- A mix of open space with turf and trees, and some tree-lined avenues along pathways.
- Mature specimen trees, remnant Indigenous trees, and park structures.

Whilst formally outside the VHR extent, Punt Road Oval has had a presence in Yarra Park since the 1850s. Its strong historical association with the registered place should be maintained.







1928  
Large area of Yarra Park extending west of Punt Road Oval enclosed and cultivated as a Melbourne City Council nursery complex (developed from 1924 around the existing caretaker's residence). Club building complex shown to the south of Jack Dyer Stand.



1952  
Nursery relocated 1948. Use of the parklands for carparking on a match day, and caretaker's house and depot buildings shown to rear of Jack Dyer Stand.



1974  
Immediate environs used for parking. Caretaker's residence and works buildings later occupied by the Richmond Football Club.

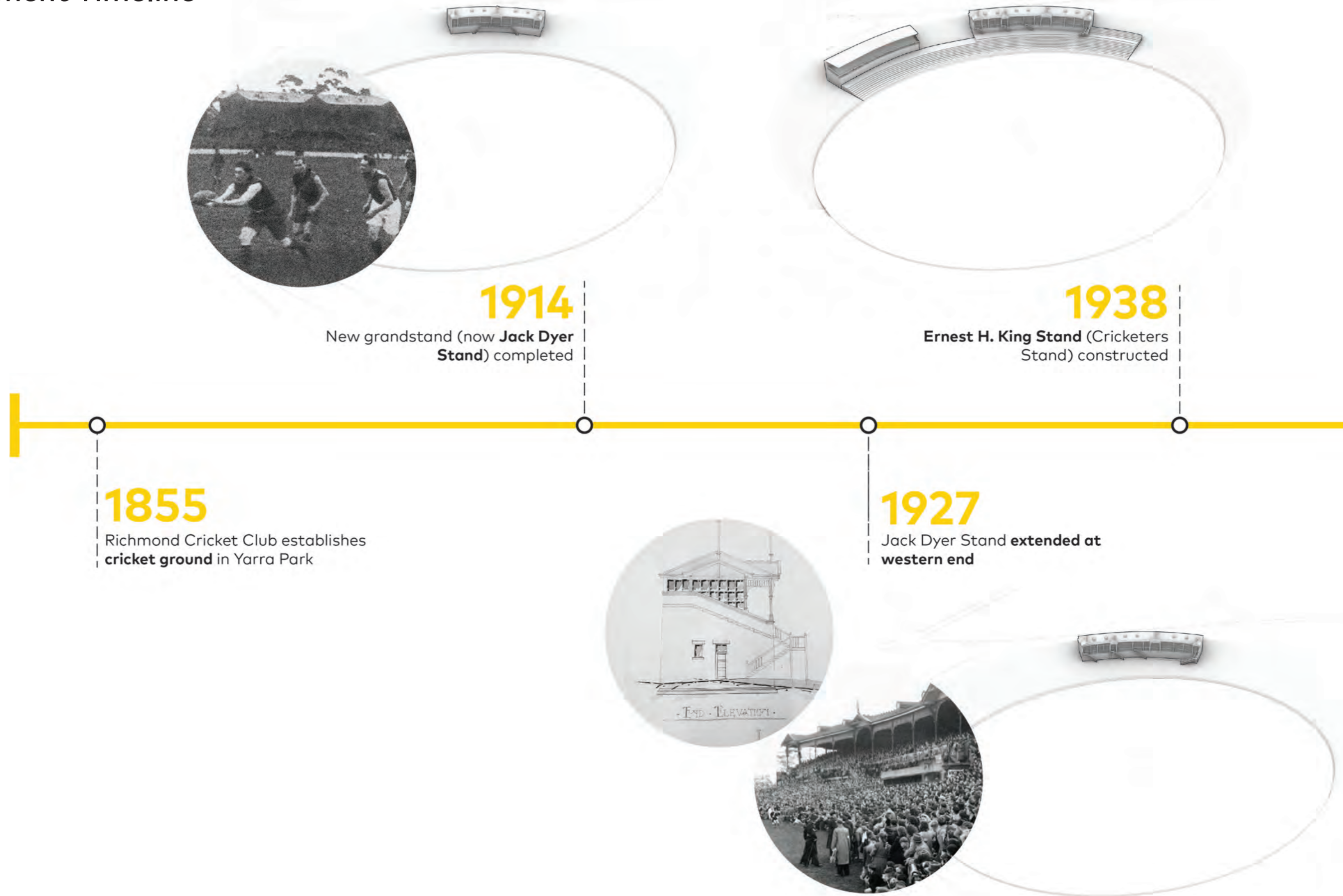


## 2.3 Current Uses of Yarra Park

The interface between Punt Road Oval and Yarra Park has continually evolved over the past 150 years. Historically there has been limited direct park interface to the north-west of Punt Road Oval. At various times the area has accommodated buildings and structures, the park nursery, an operations depot and, more recently, Richmond Football Club car parking.

The current interface between Punt Road Oval and Yarra Park is largely represented by degraded landscape that makes minimal contribution to heritage values of the parklands.

# Punt Road Oval Development Timeline



**1855**

Richmond Cricket Club establishes **cricket ground** in Yarra Park

**1914**

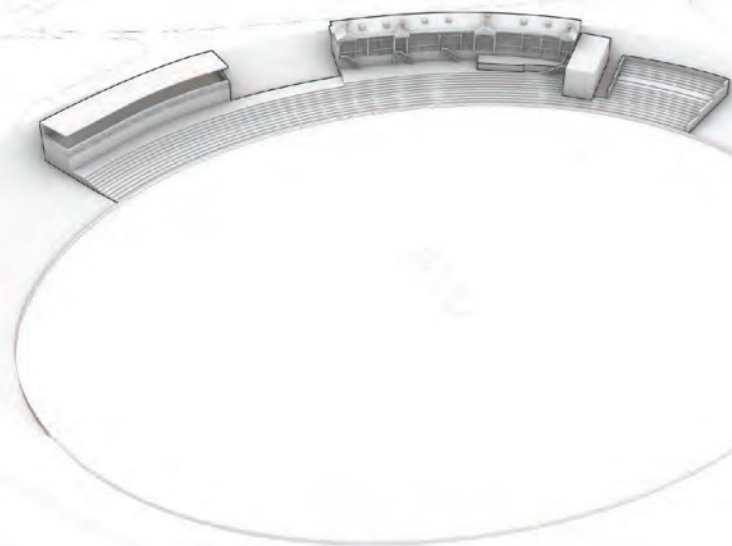
New grandstand (now **Jack Dyer Stand**) completed

**1938**

**Ernest H. King Stand** (Cricketers Stand) constructed

**1927**

Jack Dyer Stand **extended at western end**



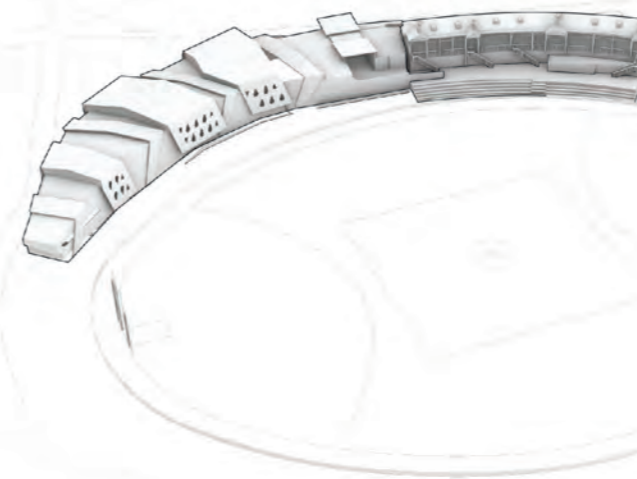
**1960**

Brick additions to the Jack Dyer Stand



**1974**

Depot on site of current MCG Turf Nursery



**2011**

The David Mandie Building (now Swinburne Centre) opens



**1964**

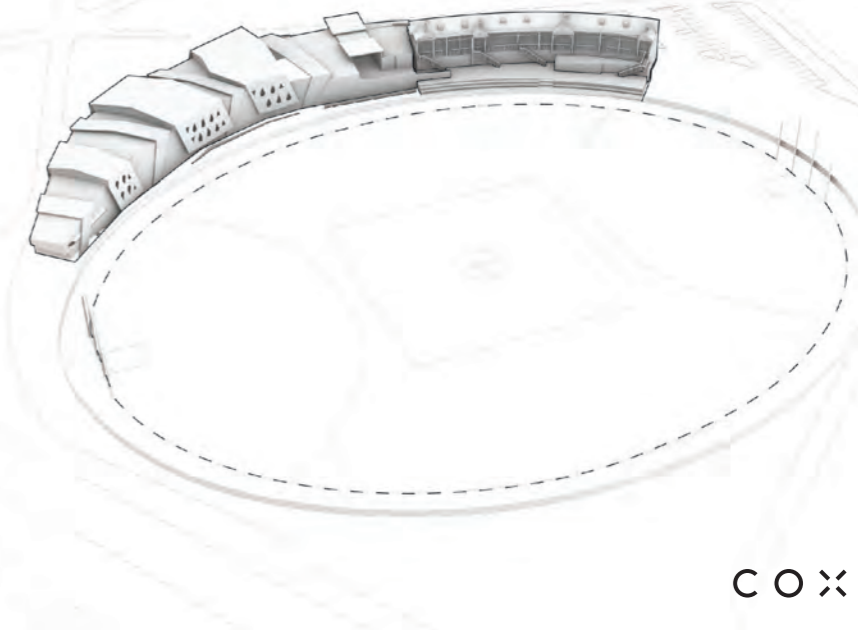
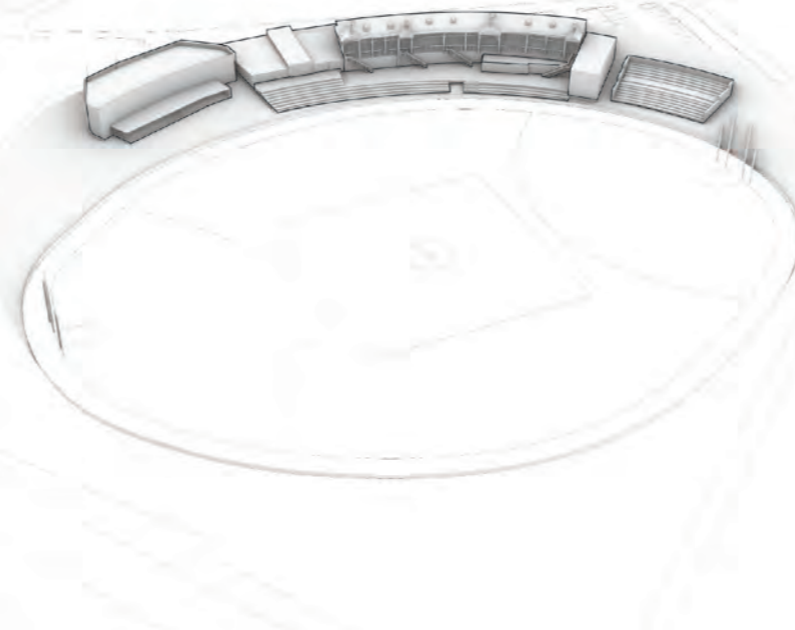
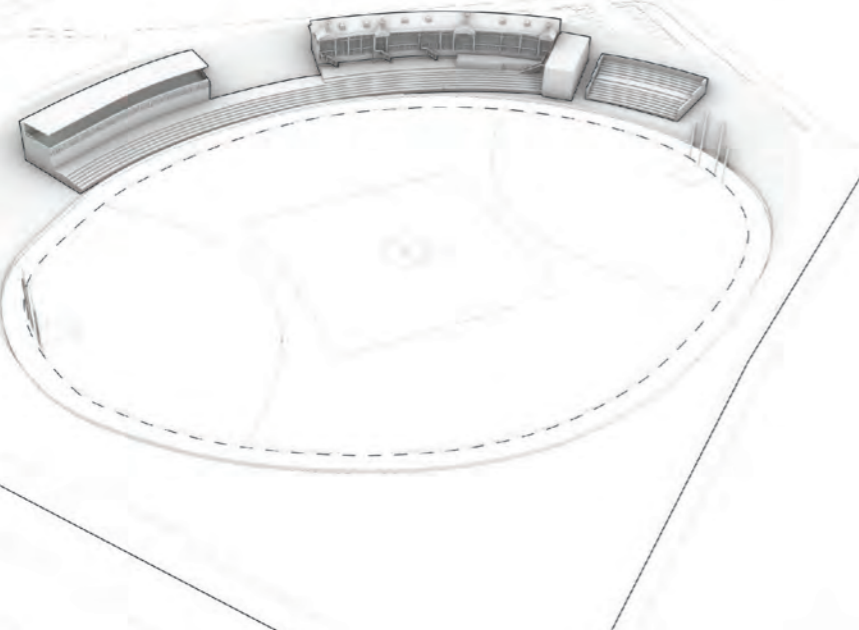
Punt Road is widened, and oval shifts west toward stands

**1980**

Ernest H. King Stand converted to Social Club

**2011-12**

Richmond Cricket Club relocate and oval is resized





Existing Site Plan

## 2.4 Site Opportunities

### 2.4.1 Topography

The Punt Road Oval is located at the south eastern corner of Yarra Park in a low-lying area of the parkland. The land slopes gradually from Jolimont towards Richmond, with a natural ridge running north-south to the western edge of the site.

The playing oval is embedded into a naturally sloping site. Over time the natural levels of the area have been augmented and adjusted through various 'cut and fill' projects associated with the widening of Punt Road, the formalization of the MCC wicket nursery, and the flattening of Punt Road Oval itself in the early 2010s. As a result of all these works, the current site consists of a series of 'benched' levels that present an opportunity to embed the bulk of the new accommodation into the hillside, and recreate an elevated parkland terrace roughly at the level of the existing wicket nursery. The existing topography supports a design solution that can conceal up to two floors of accommodation between the levels of the oval and the wicket nursery. This allows the establishment of an extended parkland over car parking, and the reinstatement of public open space on a new landscaped terrace.

### 2.4.2 Cultural Heritage

Yarra Park is part of the traditional land of the Wurundjeri-Willum people of the Kulin Nation. It was an important ceremonial, camping, and contact site that retains evidence of Aboriginal use, including scarred river red gum trees. The area remains a significant place for Aboriginal people today.

The cultural heritage of Yarra Park is in an important consideration for any future work at Punt Road Oval. The Richmond Football Club has long-established relationships with Traditional Owner groups including the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, the Melbourne Indigenous Transition School (MITS), and the Korin Gamadji Institute – the latter two organisations operating alongside the Club at Punt Road Oval.

The Richmond Football Club are undertaking a voluntary Cultural Heritage Management Plan ahead of any development work at Punt Road Oval.

### 2.4.3 Traffic and Car Parking

Punt Road Oval is located on the intersection of Punt Road and Brunton Avenue. There is an existing at-grade carpark that serves the site (located within Yarra Park) that is a mix of bitumen and gravel surfaces. This carpark is accessed via Gate 6 located at a signalized intersection off Punt Road at the northern corner of the site at the convergence of Marathon Way. This intersection is shared with Gate 6 of Yarra Park.

The intersection is currently managed on MCG game day to provide access to event parking on the grass of Yarra Park. In the long-term Yarra Park Master Plan, event parking on the grass is anticipated to be discontinued.

## 2.4.4 Site Access

The Richmond Football Club facilities are well-connected to the public transport network. Richmond Station is a premium station on the suburban rail network and is located directly opposite the site on Brunton Avenue. Bus line 246 provides a bus stop within 30 metres of the Punt Road entry to the site. Additionally, multiple tram routes run along nearby Olympic Boulevard / Swan Street to the south, and Wellington Parade / Bridge Road to the north.

The primary vehicle access to the site is via the Gate 6 entry on Punt Road. The existing car park provides access to approximately 150 parking spaces which are predominantly occupied by the Club.

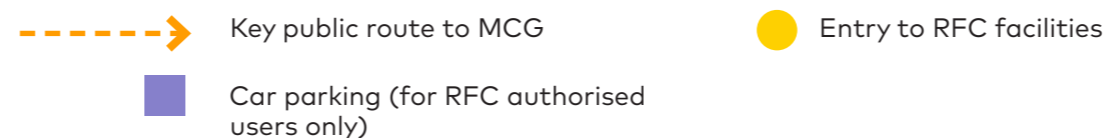
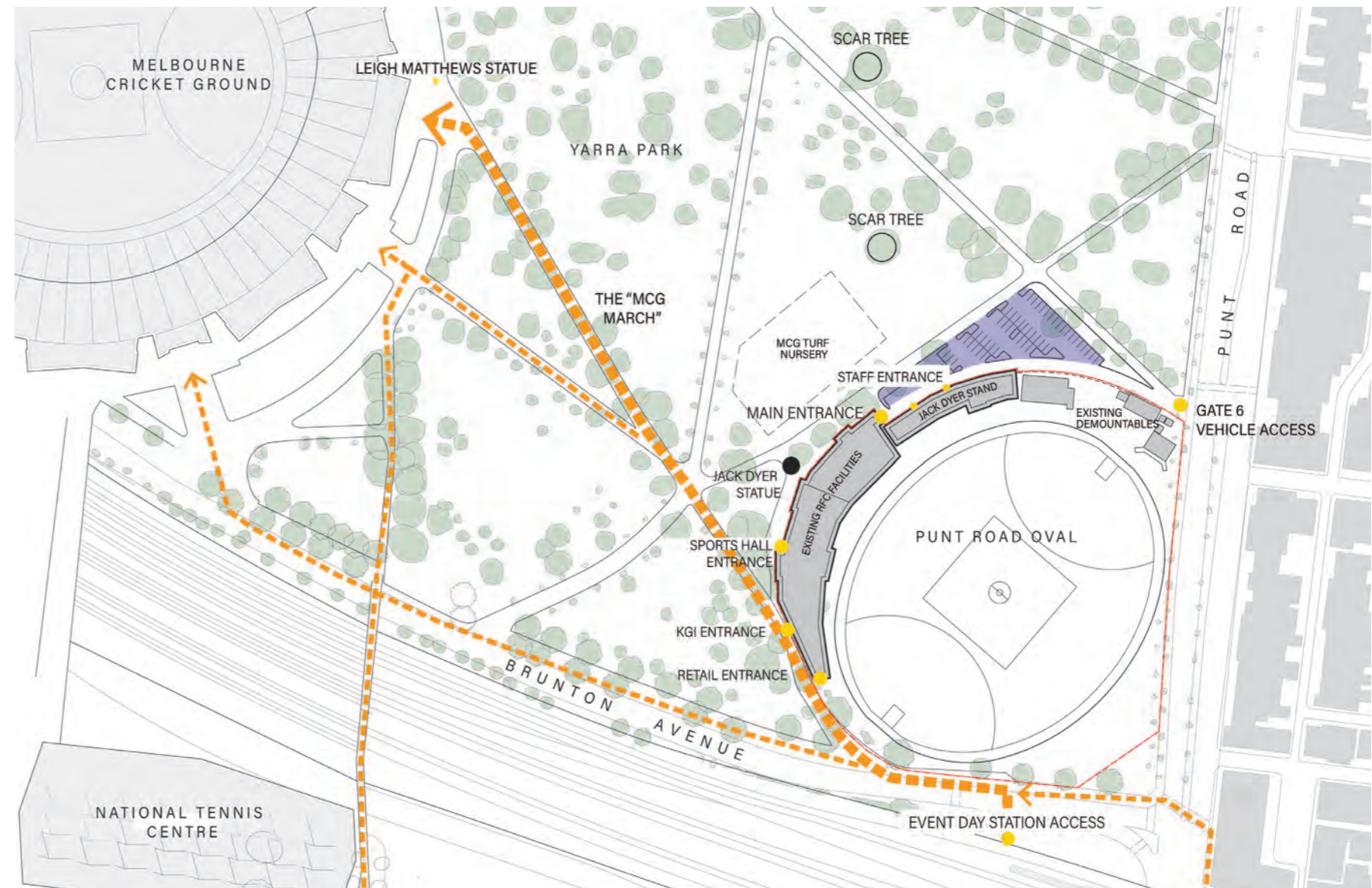
A promenade running from north-east to south-west (part of Yarra Park pathway network) connects Brunton Avenue to the Richmond Football Club and can be used as a secondary access for pedestrians and cyclists. Vehicle access is restricted at this location with fixed bollards.

The redevelopment proposal has reviewed access to Punt Road Oval in three different modes:

1. Weekday users
2. Punt Road Oval Event Day
3. MCG Event Day

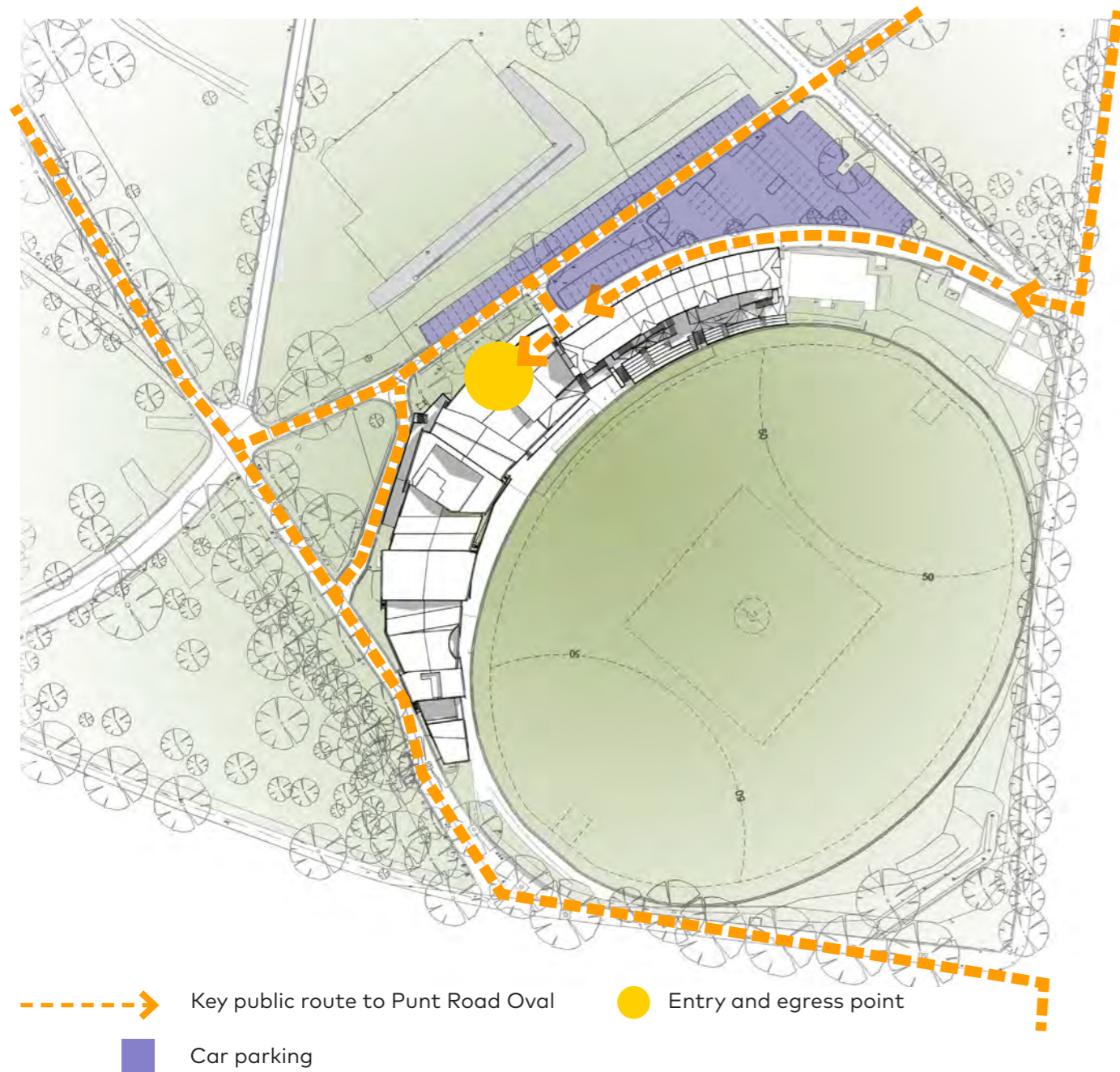
Both the Richmond Football Club and the Melbourne Cricket Club emphasise the significance of the 'MCG March' which represents the primary pedestrian route for fans accessing the MCG from Richmond.

## MCG Event Day

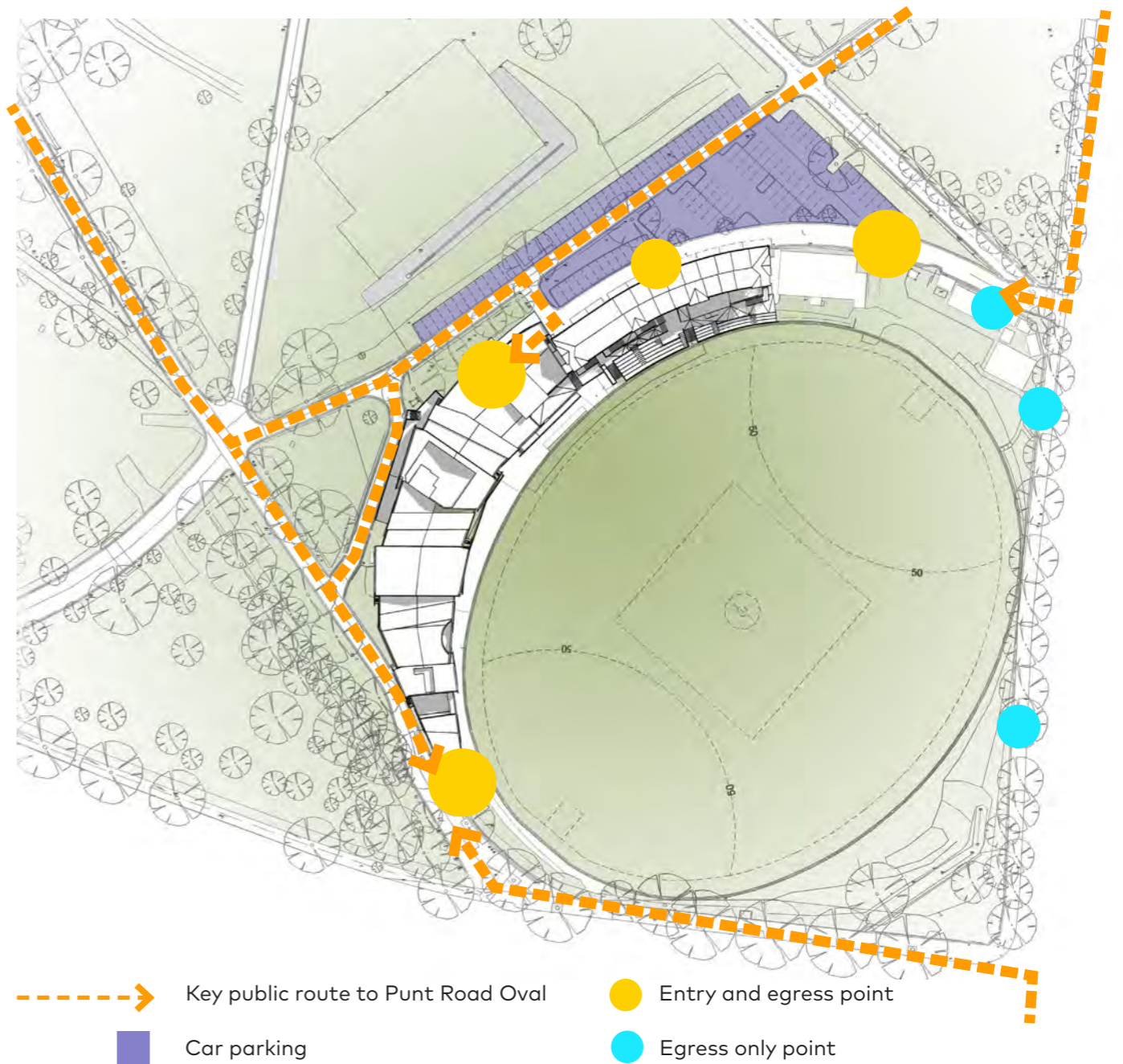




### Weekday Users



### Punt Road Oval Event Day



## 2.5 Site Constraints

### 2.5.1 Lease Boundary

The Punt Road Oval site is the subject of a lease agreement between the Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC) as the public land manager for Yarra Park and the Richmond Football Club. The current leased site incorporates the playing field and the existing buildings, nominally the Jack Dyer Grandstand, the Swinburne Centre, and some smaller utility buildings adjacent to the Gate 6 entry to Yarra Park.

The lease boundary coincides with the southern edge of the existing access road and then traces the external walls of the Jack Dyer Stand and the Swinburne Centre. Brunton Avenue and Punt Road represent the southern and eastern borders respectively of the leased area.

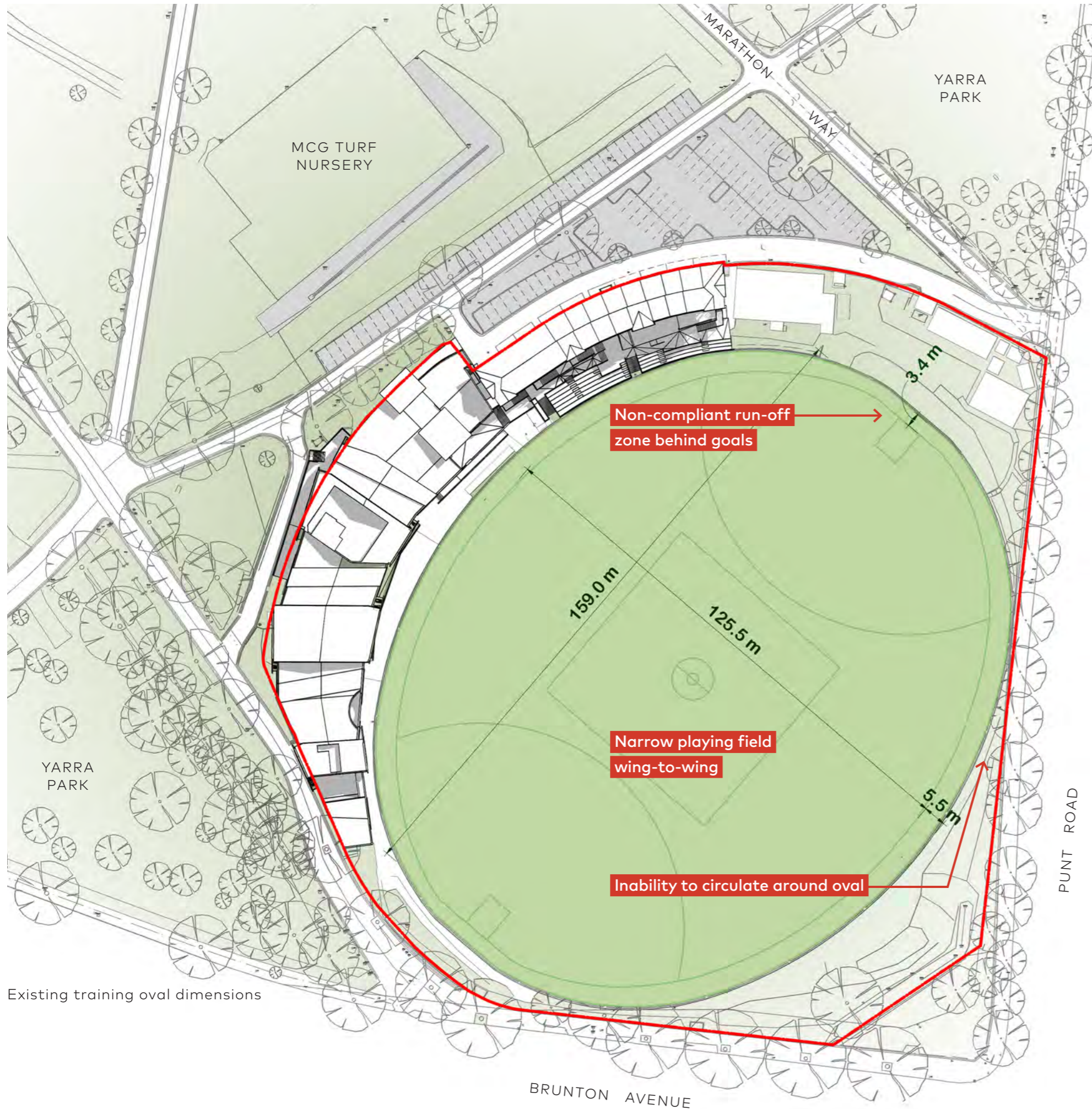
Historically this lease boundary has not been fixed, and the alignment has adjusted over time to accommodate changes to the abutting roads and to existing buildings on the site. Whilst the Richmond Football Club is a registered user of the parklands, their current leased area is excised from the Yarra Park listing on the Victorian Heritage Register.

The details of the existing Richmond Football Club lease are as follows:

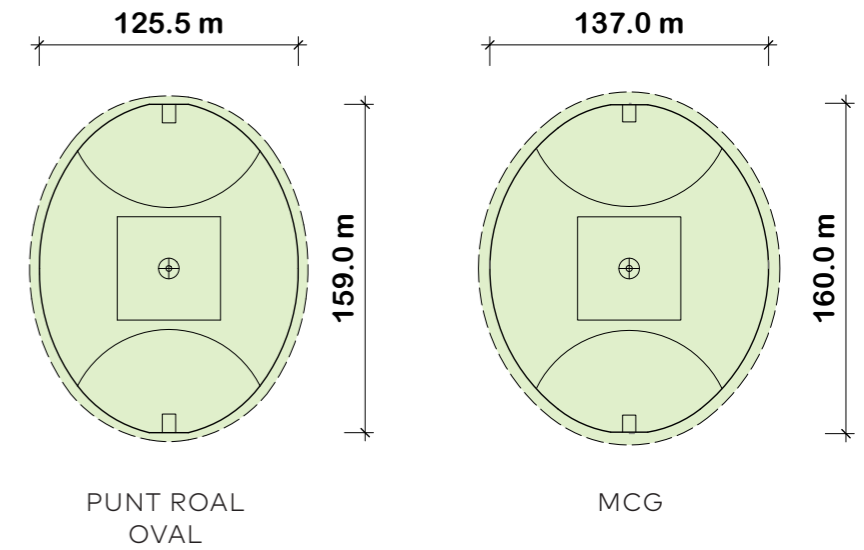
Section 3(1) Melbourne (Yarra Park) Land Act 1980 (Non Retail) Lease dated 12 August 2014. Document reference number 220164705.20.



Existing Richmond Football Club Lease Boundary shown red



Existing training oval dimensions



### 2.5.2 Oval Configuration

The Richmond Football Club's training oval has been reconfigured on multiple occasions throughout their long history on the site. The original location of the former Richmond Cricket Ground was significantly further east of its current location but was modified in 1964 to accommodate the widening of Punt Road. Historic roadworks to both Punt Road and Brunton Avenue have resulted in a loss of land for the Richmond Football Club, and consequently the training oval has been considerably reduced in width. On its eastern edge, the oval abuts the perimeter fence and there is no ability to circulate around the field in this location. This in turn limits capacity for spectators and impedes safe movement and servicing of the site.

The 2021 AFL Venue Guideline stipulate that for competition the boundary line must be no less than 5.5 metres from the perimeter fence. To accommodate this requirement, the Punt Road Oval field of play reduces to 125.5 metres across its width, and 159 metres from goal to goal. By comparison, the MCG is 137.0 metres across its width, and 160 metres in length. The disparity between the Tiger's training field and the MCG as their primary competition venue impacts player preparation. For their VFL players who never play at the MCG, transition onto the senior list means they have limited experience of matches on a wider field of play and at a ground with deeper pockets. It is a core project objective to achieve parity with the MCG to support player preparation and ensure that the Tigers are not disadvantaged in comparison to their competitors who are increasingly developing MCG sized training ovals.

For an overview of the proposed, optimal training oval, see Section 4.3.

## 2.5.3 Existing Buildings

### The Jack Dyer Grandstand

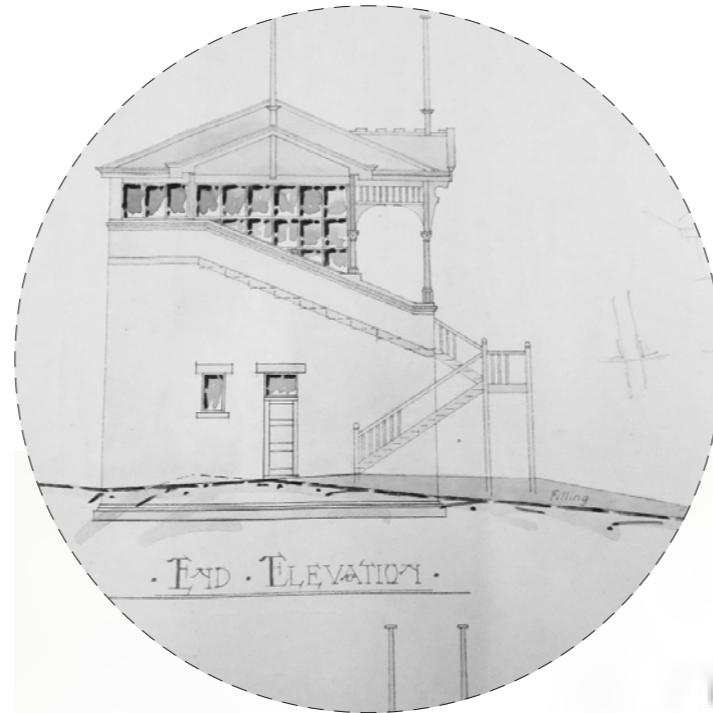
The Jack Dyer Grandstand is a single tier stand located at the northern end of Punt Road Oval. It was originally constructed in 1914, with a major extension to its western end in 1926-27 and a series of subsequent alterations and additions being made right through to the present day.

The stand comprises a masonry base in face red brick with a timber and cast-iron structure supporting tiered seating and the roof above. Three original decorative gables from 1914 remain legible. A fourth 'unifying' gable at the western end of the roof dates from the 1926-27 additions and adopts slightly different proportions. The grandstand was named the 'Jack Dyer Stand' in 1996 in honour of the former coach and legend of the Club.

The Richmond Football Club is obliged to ensure the safe use of the Jack Dyer Grandstand as both a spectator facility and a staff workplace. The building does not meet current Building Code standards and accordingly requires significant alterations to achieve Code compliance.

The Jack Dyer Grandstand, whilst in poor condition, signifies the proud heritage of the Richmond Football Club at Punt Road Oval. The Club has duly investigated multiple possibilities for the grandstand's future. In its current location the building impedes the Club's ability to expand their training oval to its optimum dimensions. It does however exhibit some notable architectural features of the Edwardian period, and whilst the building itself is not included on the Victorian Heritage Register, its longstanding presence in Yarra Park warrants due consideration.

A building relocation specialist was engaged to advise regarding the relocation potential of the grandstand. A preliminary assessment of the building recommended repair and restoration be undertaken before relocation is attempted. It was concluded that relocation, whilst structurally viable, presents a high degree of complexity and associated cost. This option is discussed further in Section 3.1 (Option 5).



Grandstand additions, end elevation by Frank Stapley (Architect), 1926



Punt Road Oval showing Grandstand (now Jack Dyer Stand) circa 1930s



The Swinburne Centre, completed 2011



The Jack Dyer Grandstand today

## The Swinburne Centre

The primary operations of the Richmond Football Club are currently accommodated in the Swinburne Centre. The Centre comprises the remnant of a 1980s brick building to the north, and a landmark extension circa 2011 by Suters Architects, colloquially known as the 'Tiger Tail'. The northern end of the building incorporates the main entry to the Club, as well as their boardroom and aquatic facilities at field level.

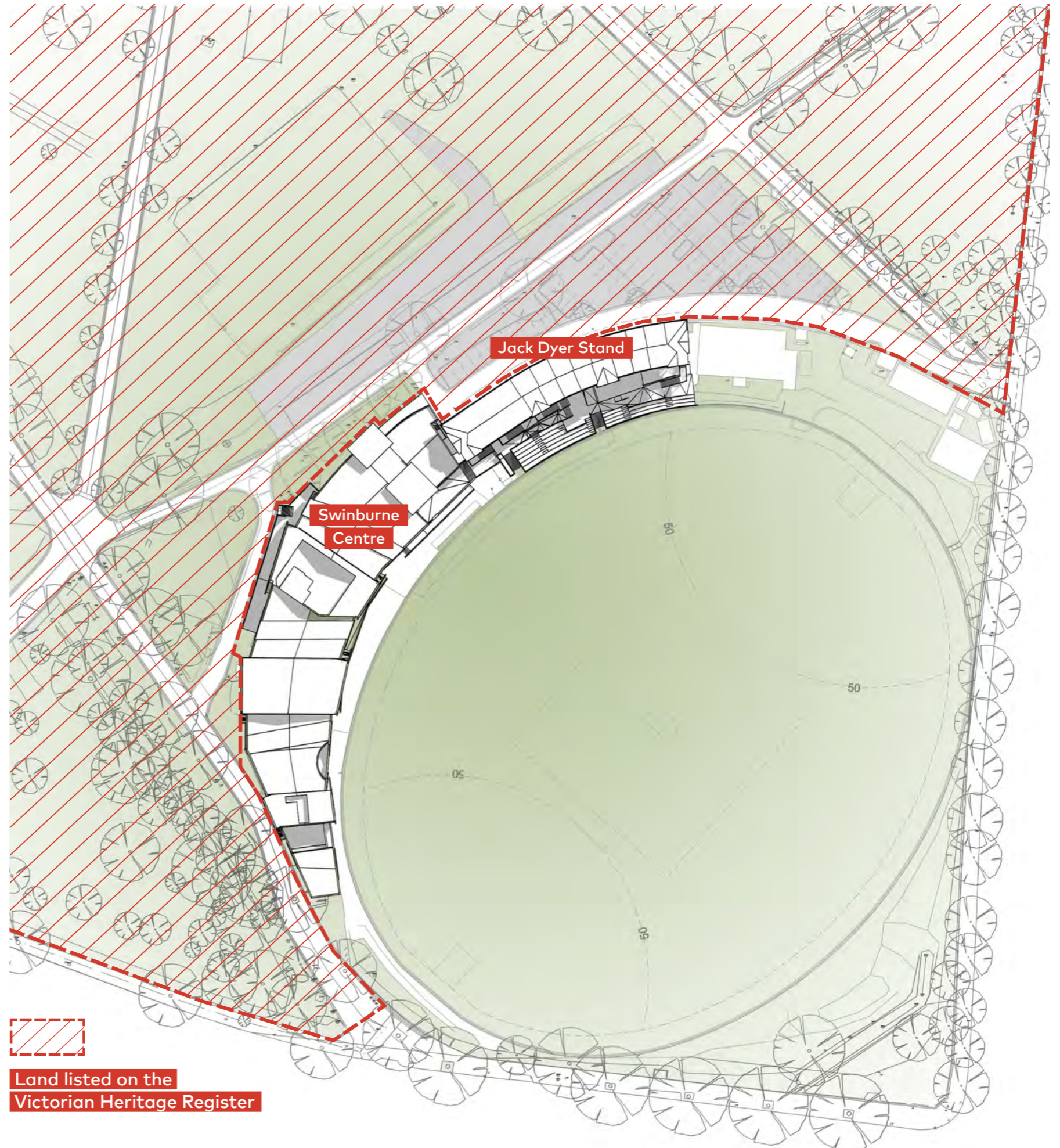
The Tiger Tail extension is a three-story metal-clad building that houses all the team and training facilities for the football department at field level. The Club's administration functions are located on the level above, and the Maurice Rioli Function Room as well as some teaching spaces occupy the top floor. The Club's Tigerland Superstore is situated at the southernmost extent of the Swinburne Centre with a prominent address toward Brunton Avenue.

At 10 years old, the Swinburne Centre is regarded as a functional facility that has serviced the needs of the Club adequately for the past decade. With some careful refurbishment, the desire is to retain and optimize the existing building and its infrastructure. The older component of the Centre is thought to be at the end of its working life, and with its desirable location on the centerline of the field it is regarded as a prime redevelopment opportunity.



# THREE

Development Options  
Consideration



### 3.1 Options Summary

The Master Plan development process has highlighted several constraints on the Punt Road Oval site that impede the Richmond Football Club's potential to deliver their ideal facility, and incorporate an optimal training field that better reflects the playing surface of the MCG. These constraints include:

- Current lease boundary
- Adjacent land listed on the Victorian Heritage Register (Yarra Park listing H2251)
- Existing Swinburne Centre
- Existing Jack Dyer Grandstand

In its present condition the development potential of the site is severely limited if works are not permitted to encroach beyond the leased land and into the heritage listed site. COX has diagrammed multiple options that respond to the removal of some - or all - of the above listed constraints.

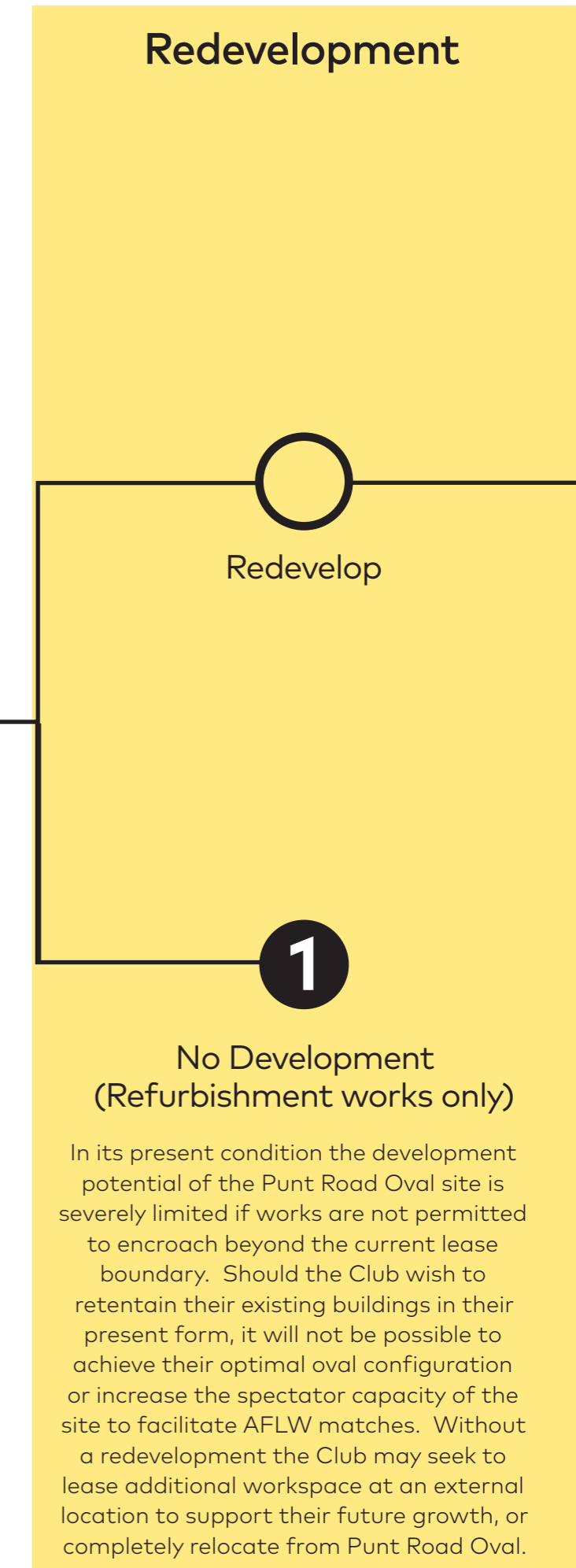
The Richmond Football Club in collaboration with the Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC) have identified an opportunity to co-develop the existing car park site which currently sits outside the Tiger's leased land and is incorporated within the Yarra Park title. Given the degraded condition of the car park, the opportunity exists to reinstate landscape on an elevated terrace in this location and introduce parking to an undercroft.

This solution offers the dual benefits of increasing landscaped area, whilst providing dedicated parking for the mobility impaired attending the MCG on match day. Any works in this location are subject to the approval of Heritage Victoria.

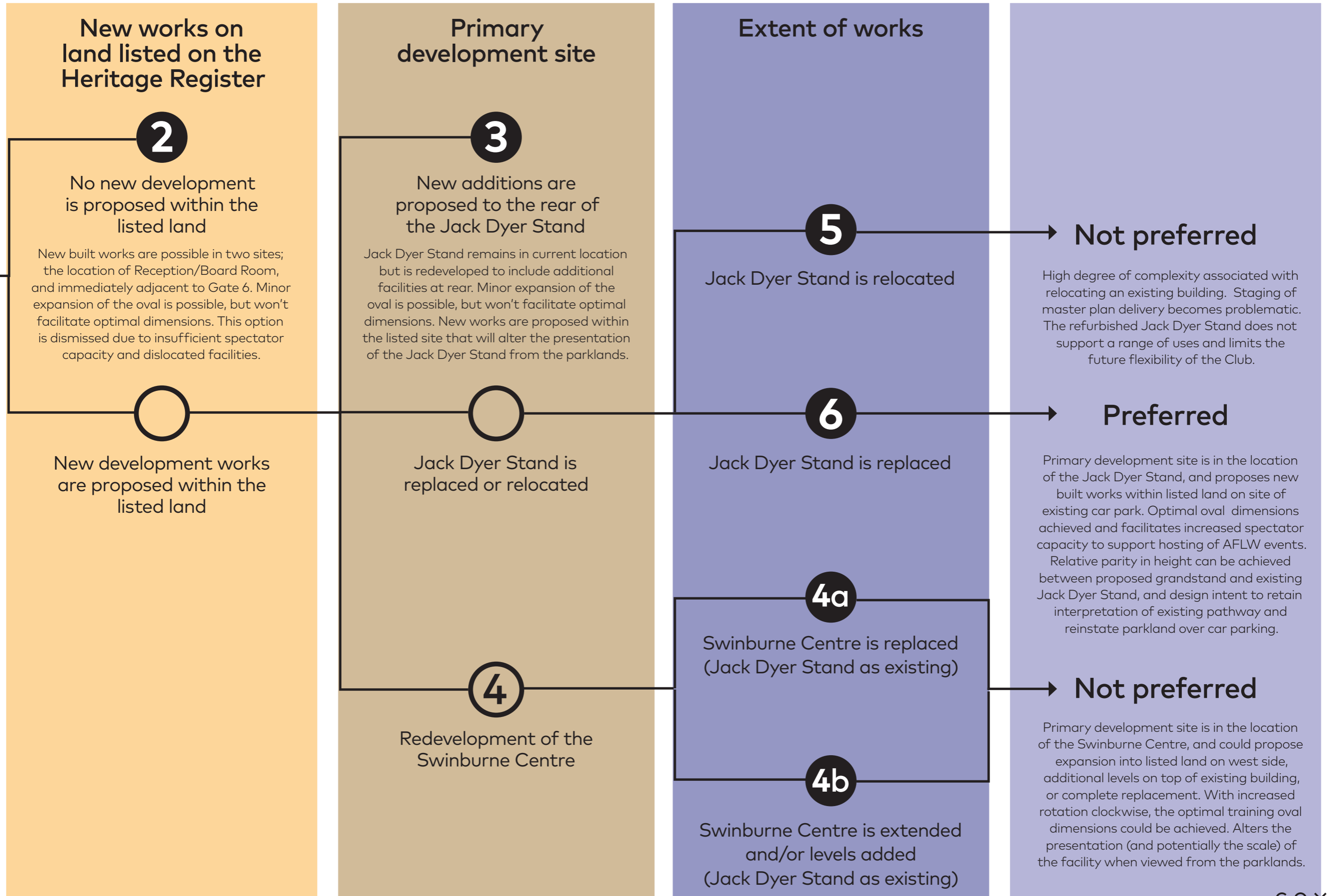
The following pages illustrate six (6) development options that have been duly considered. Each scenario has been evaluated against an objective to limit the visual impact from the parklands, whilst delivering the core project objectives and brief requirements of the Club. The development options are:

1. No development (refurbishment works only)
2. No new development is proposed within the listed land
3. New additions proposed to the rear of the Jack Dyer Stand within the listed land
4. Swinburne Centre is replaced or extended
5. Jack Dyer Stand is relocated
6. Jack Dyer Stand is replaced

The implication of Option 1 (no development) is that the Club will consider relocation from Punt Road Oval to an alternative site that can accommodate their longterm needs.





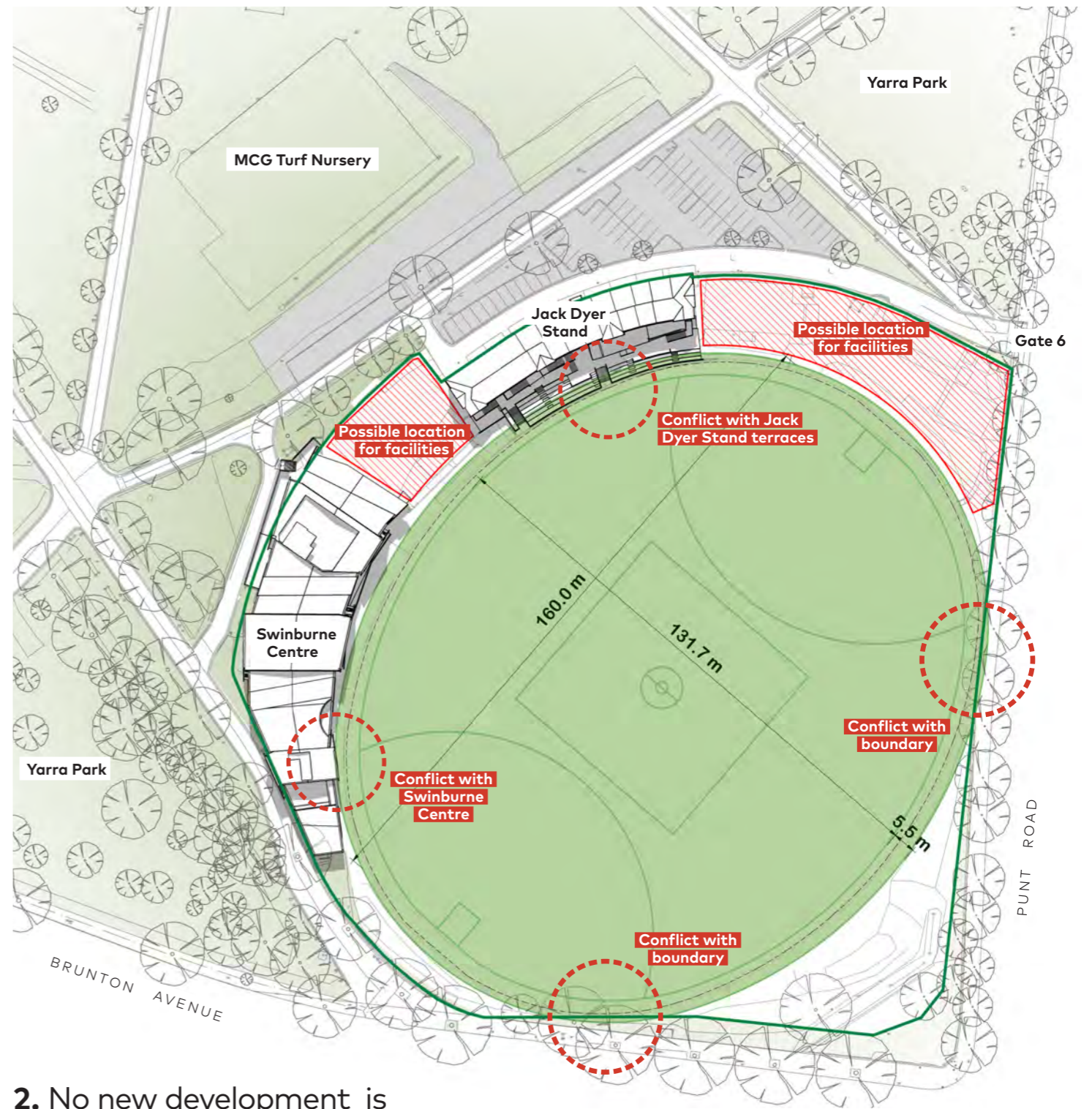




**1. No Development (Refurbishment works only)**

In its present condition the development potential of the Punt Road Oval site is severely limited if works are not permitted to encroach beyond the current lease boundary. Should the Club wish to retain their existing buildings in their present form, it will not be possible to achieve their optimal oval configuration or increase the spectator capacity of the site to facilitate AFLW matches. Without a

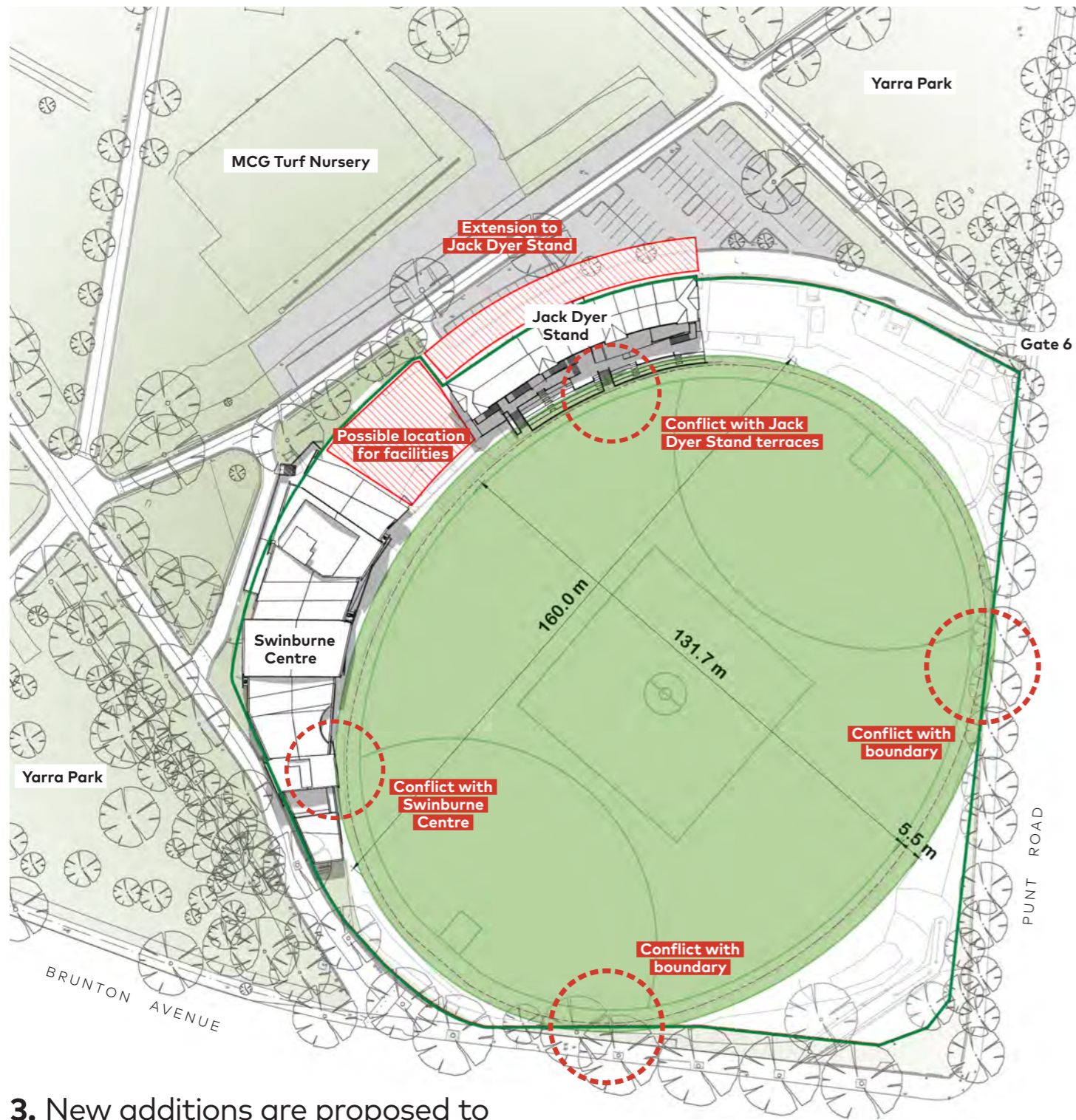
redevelopment the Club may seek to lease additional workspace at an external location to support their future growth, or completely relocate from Punt Road Oval.



**2. No new development is proposed within the listed land**

New built works are possible in two sites; the location of Reception/Board Room, and immediately adjacent to Gate 6. Minor expansion of the oval is possible, but won't facilitate optimal dimensions. A refurbishment of the Jack Dyer Stand could be undertaken, but does not support a range of uses and limits the future flexibility of the Club.

This option is dismissed as it fails to accommodate the optimal oval dimensions, and provides insufficient spectator capacity and dislocated facilities.

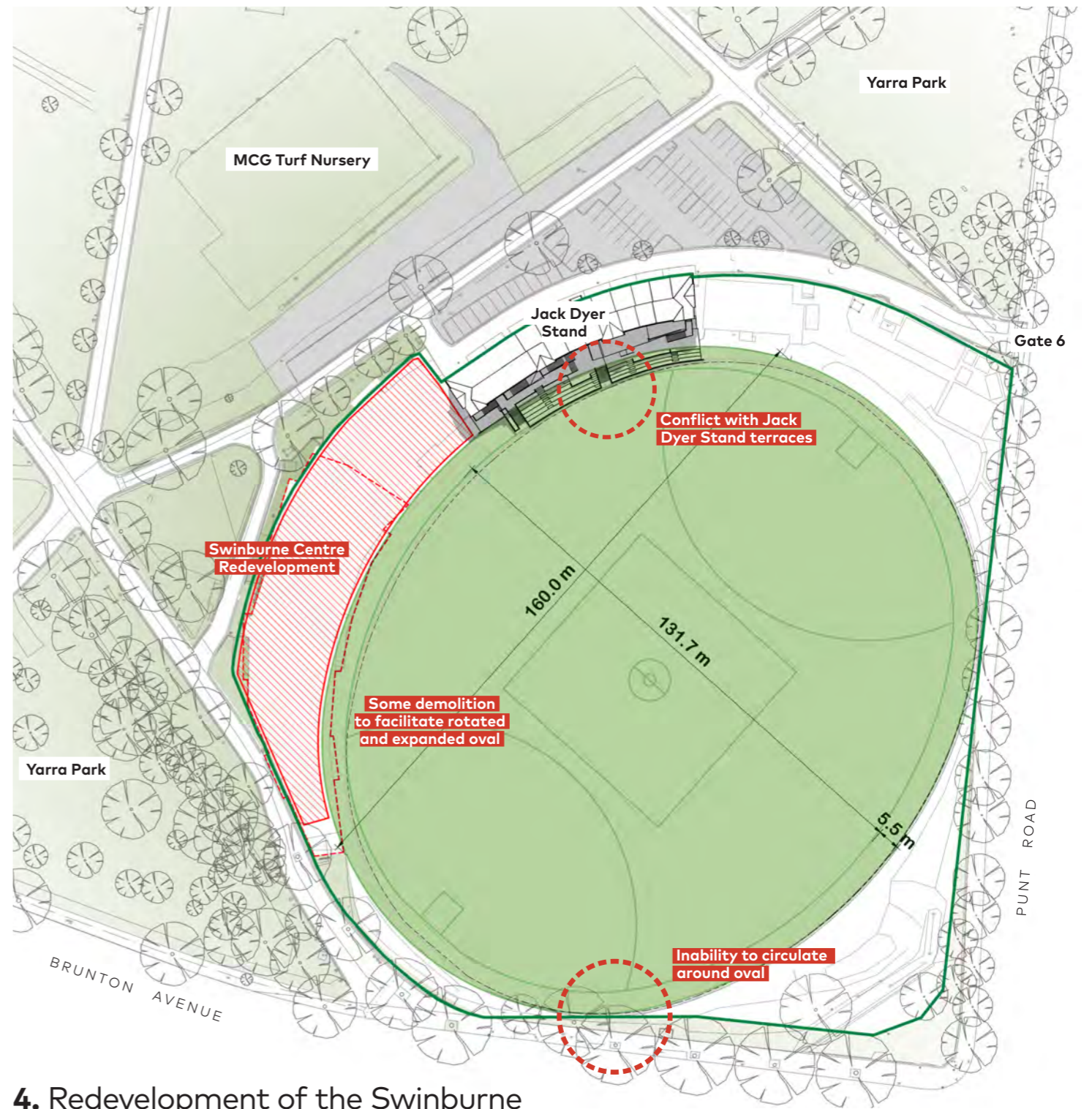


### 3. New additions are proposed to the rear of the Jack Dyer Stand

Jack Dyer Stand remains in current location but is redeveloped to include additional facilities attached at the rear. Minor expansion of the oval is possible, but won't facilitate optimal dimensions. New works are proposed within the listed site that will alter the presentation of the Jack Dyer Stand from the parklands.

This option is dismissed as it fails to accommodate the optimal oval dimensions,

and provides insufficient spectator capacity. Additions to the Jack Dyer Stand may still be inadequate to support a range of future uses.

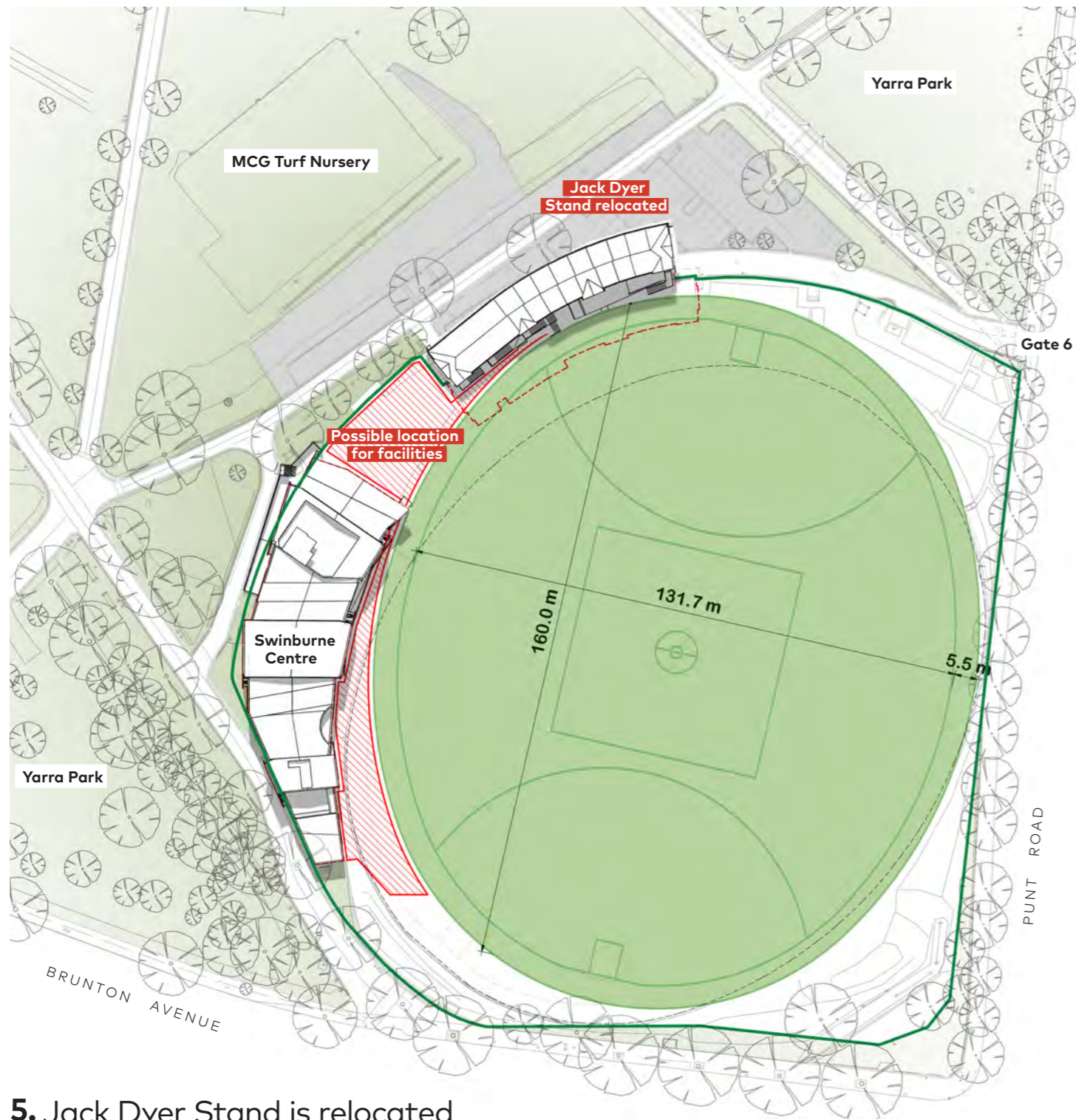


### 4. Redevelopment of the Swinburne Centre

The primary development site is in the location of the Swinburne Centre. Redevelopment works could propose expansion into the listed land on the west side, additional levels on top of the existing building, or a complete replacement of the existing building. In this scenario, the area of the on-grade car park would not be reduced and parking capacity could remain as existing. With increased rotation clockwise, the optimal training oval dimensions could be achieved. This option

would alter the presentation (and potentially the scale) of the facility when viewed from the parklands and along the prominent pathway for the 'MCG March'.

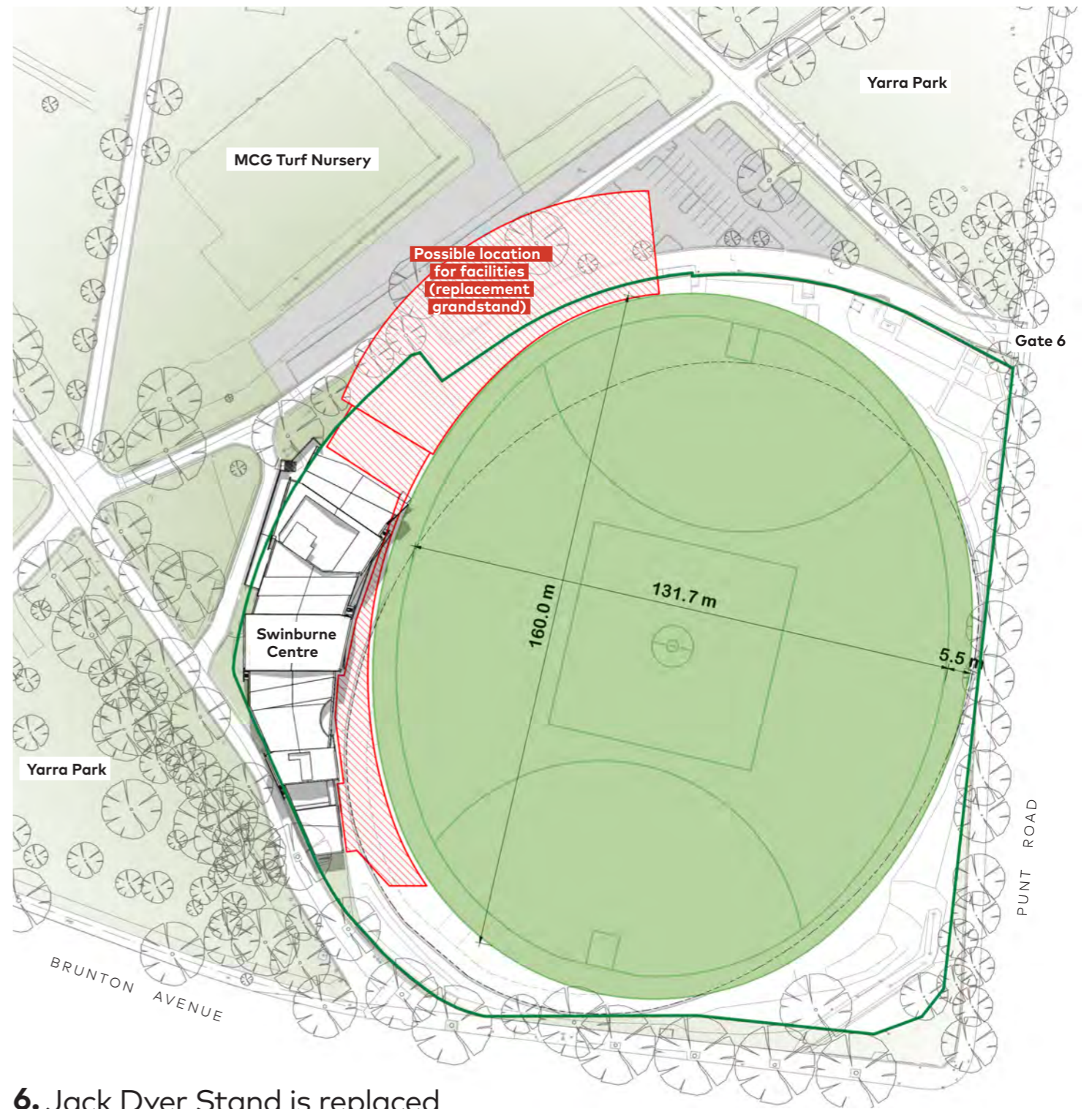
This option is dismissed as at 10 years old the Swinburne Centre is considered to have considerable years remaining of its functional life, and the cost and sustainability concerns of replacing it are not supportable.



### 5. Jack Dyer Stand is relocated

A high degree of complexity and cost associated with relocating an existing building. Staging of master plan delivery also becomes problematic. The refurbished Jack Dyer Stand does not support a range of uses and limits the future flexibility of the Club.

As a refurbishment of the Jack Dyer Stand cannot provide the additional area required for the Club's operations, it would be necessary to lift the building on top of a podium to provide for new accommodation. This would alter the presentation of the building and increase the scale.



### 6. Jack Dyer Stand is replaced

Primary development site is in the location of the Jack Dyer Stand, and proposes new built works within listed land on site of existing car park. Optimal oval dimensions achieved and facilitates increased spectator capacity to support hosting of AFLW events. Relative parity in height can be achieved between proposed grandstand and existing Jack Dyer Stand, and design intent to retain interpretation of existing pathway and reinstate parkland over car parking.





# FOUR Design Drivers

The following section describes the 6 key ideas behind the design proposal for the redevelopment of the Tigers' training and community facilities at Punt Road Oval.



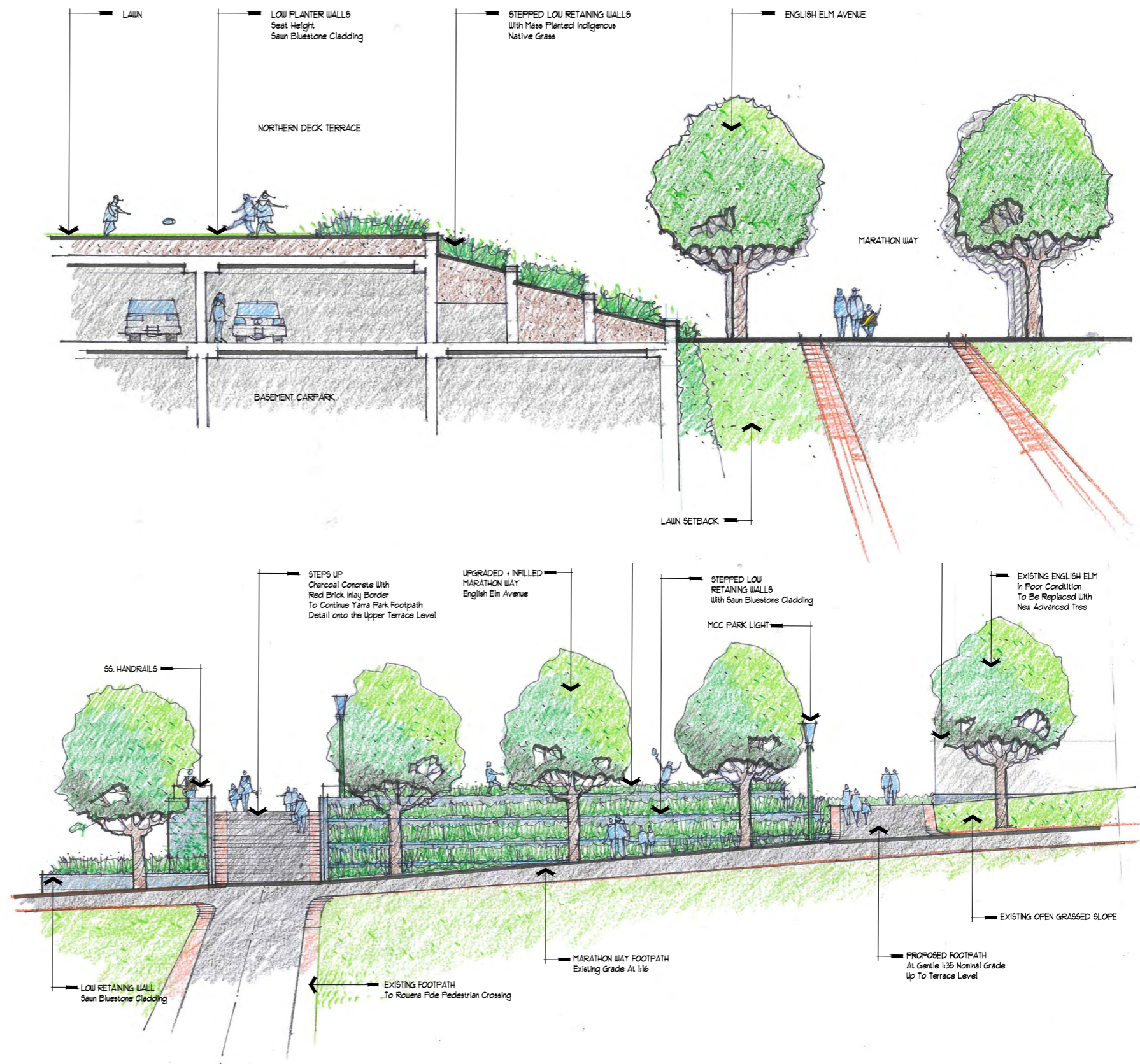
## 4.1 Reinstating the Parklands

The Richmond Football Club propose to develop new facilities around the boundary of an expanded oval on land currently occupied by an at-grade carpark. This existing car park is located between Marathon Way and the back of the Jack Dyer Stand, and is currently used by the Club as a weekday car park. As an area of public parkland it makes limited contribution to useable open space as it is always occupied by cars and features limited planting and no grass.

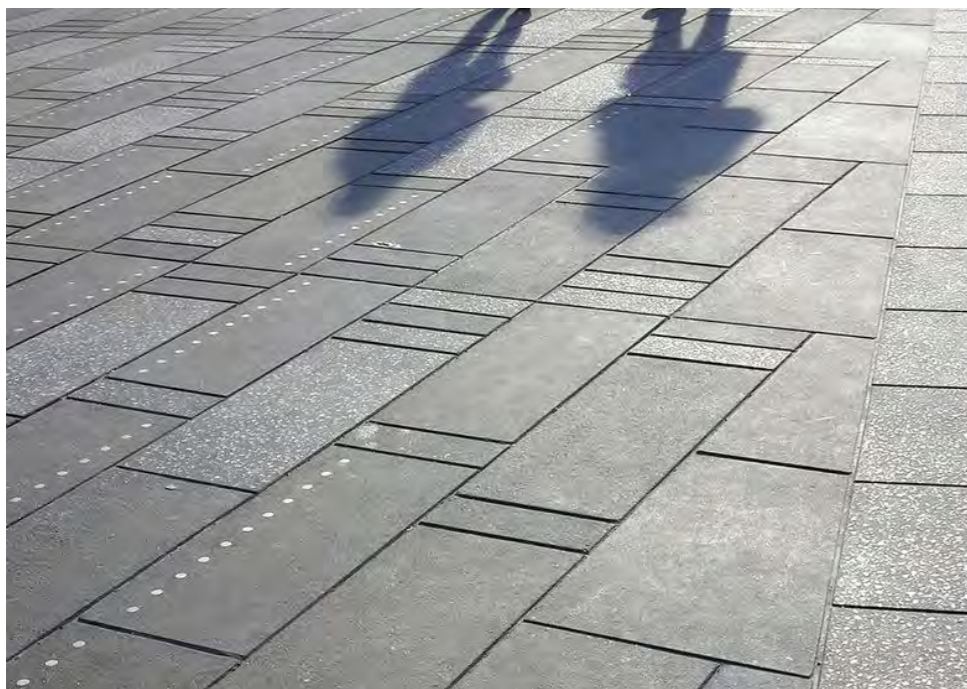
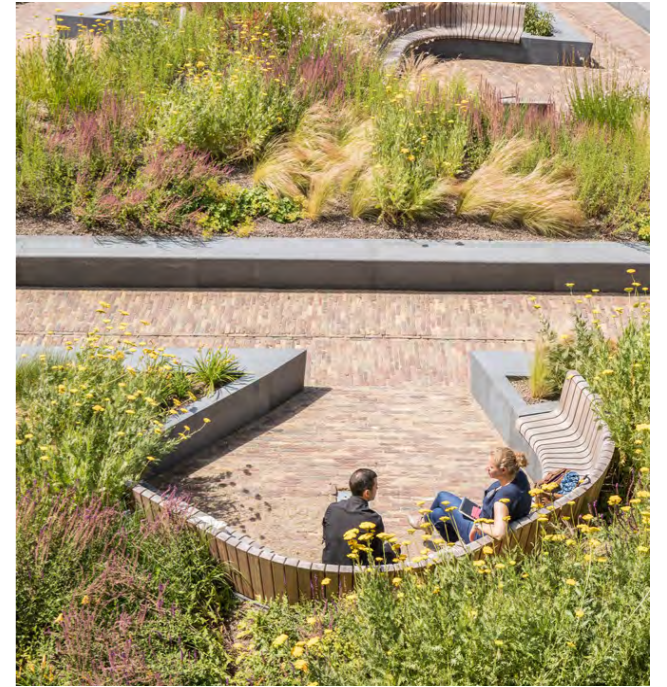
The redevelopment proposes to reinstate an enhanced public open space parkland in this area, on an elevated terrace over concealed car parking. This landscaped podium will be commensurate with the current level of the MCG Turf Nursery and surrounding lawn areas. The impression will be of a seamless green space that flows directly from Yarra Park toward the new grandstand.

The upper terrace will act as both an entry plaza to the new grandstand and provide much improved public open space amenity in comparison to the existing degraded carpark. Parked cars - which are currently a visual blight on the landscape - will now be concealed in the undercroft of this new structure, with all edges gently terraced and landscaped to blend into the surrounding landscape character of the park.

This solution offers the dual benefits of increasing landscaped area, whilst providing dedicated parking for the mobility impaired attending the MCG on match day.







## 4.2 Like the Tiger of Old

The rich history of the Richmond Football Club is centred around its longstanding presence in the heart of Richmond at the junction of Brunton Avenue and Punt Road. The Club acknowledges that they owe their recent success to the strong foundation established by those who've worn the yellow and black before them. The redevelopment will honor the legacy of the Club, and the importance of its place in Richmond. It will celebrate the stories and legends of the past and set a benchmark to inspire future generations.

The new architecture and reimagined spaces will be imbued with the memories of the 'Tiger of Old' through interpretive installations, adaptive reuse of existing building elements, and celebration of a the Tigerland spirit, culture, and identity. The history of the place will be reinterpreted within a new and contemporary architecture. It is proposed to retain some of the original 1910's red bricks and other special elements of the Jack Dyer Stand to be woven into the public areas as a nod to the original character of the former grandstand.

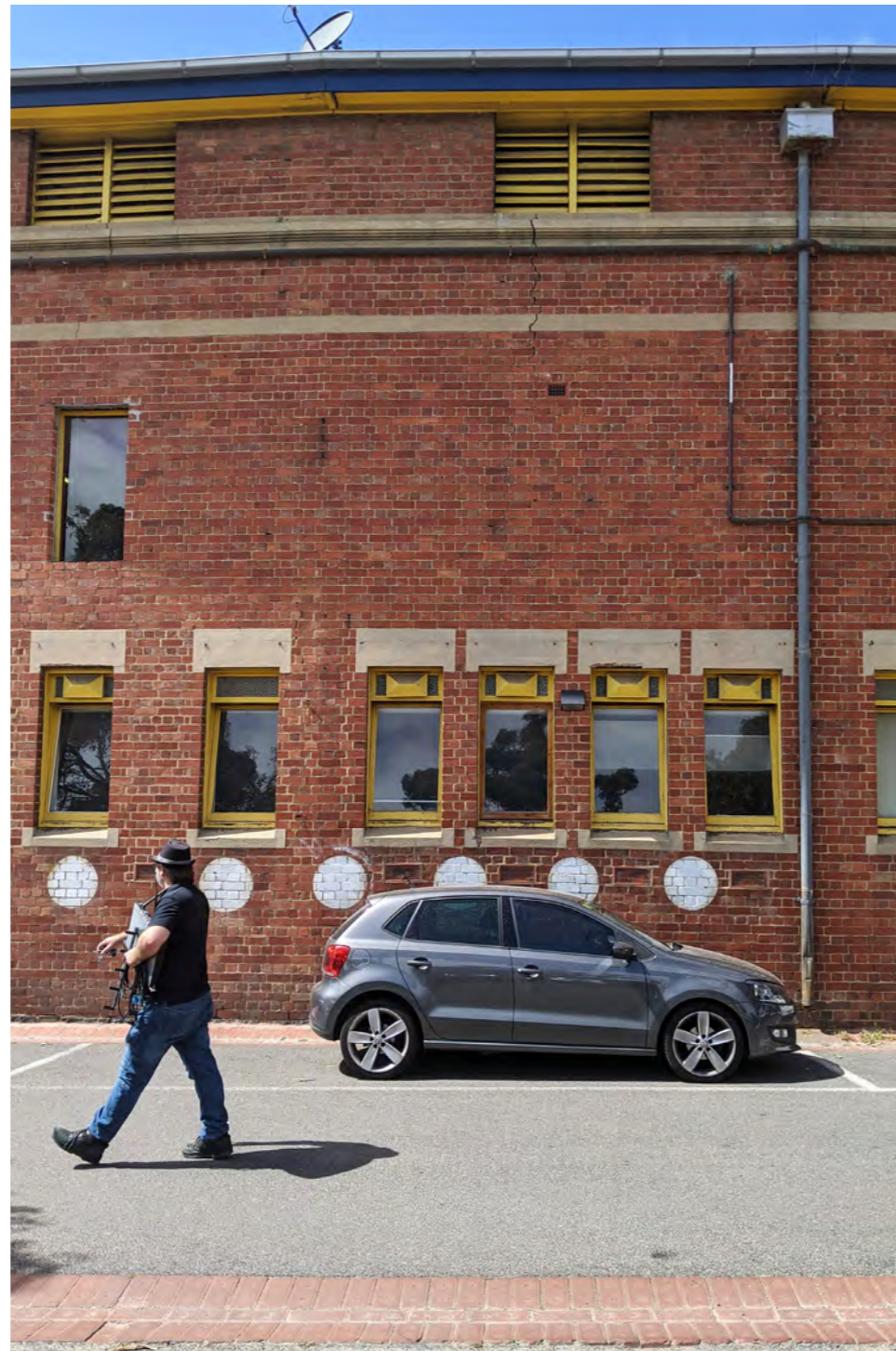
The Richmond Football Club has been the beating heart of this place for over 135 years. This new development is delivering the vital upgrades required for RFC to stay rooted in Richmond for many more years to come.

## Recognising our Heritage

We support a development proposal that recognises and promotes our shared heritage. There are many ways in which a design response can commemorate historical elements - from full restoration of old buildings, to replication of traditional materiality, recycling elements, or introduction of tributes and installations.



Bronze statue of Jack Dyer



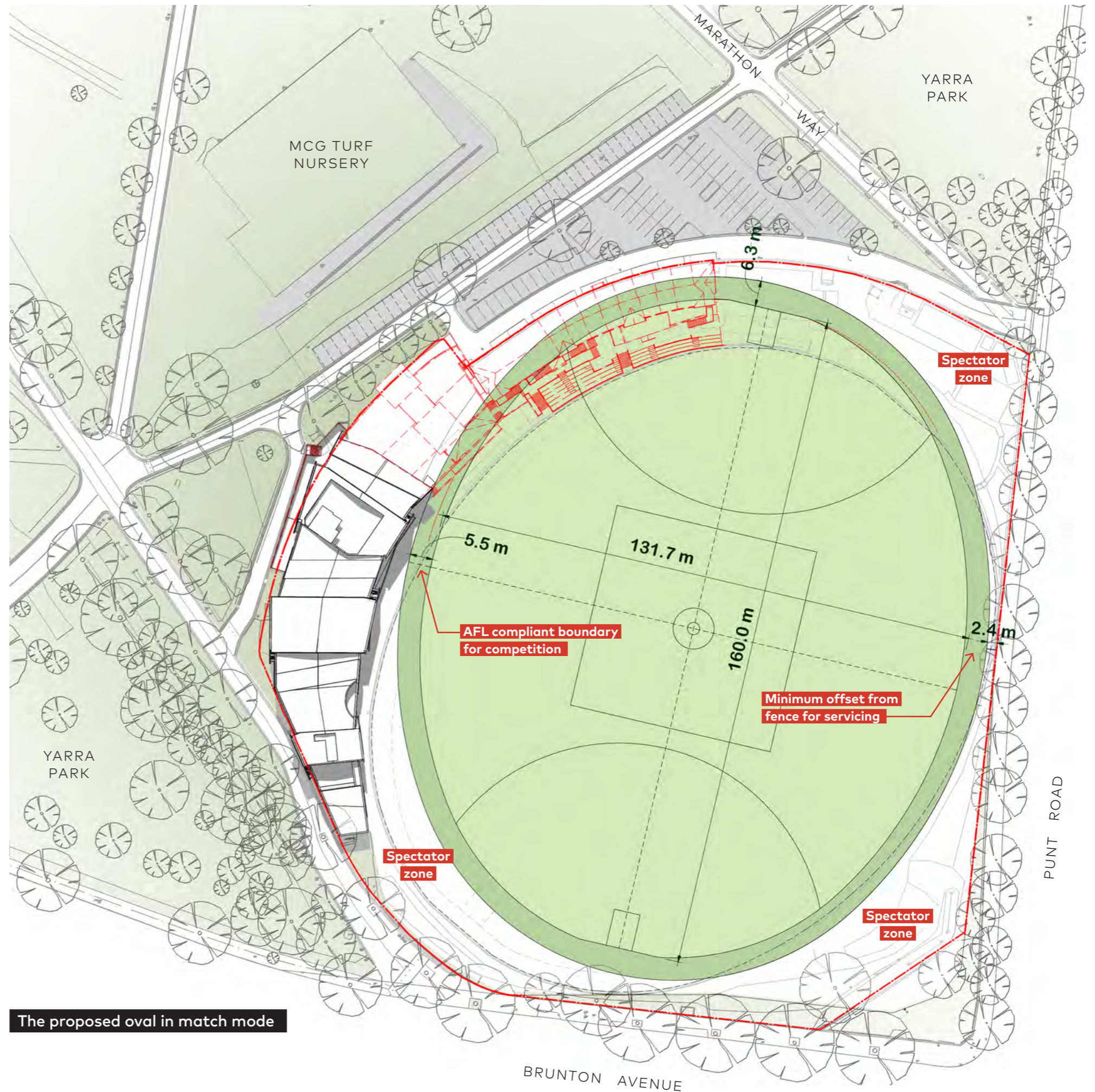
Features of the Jack Dyer Stand in their existing condition

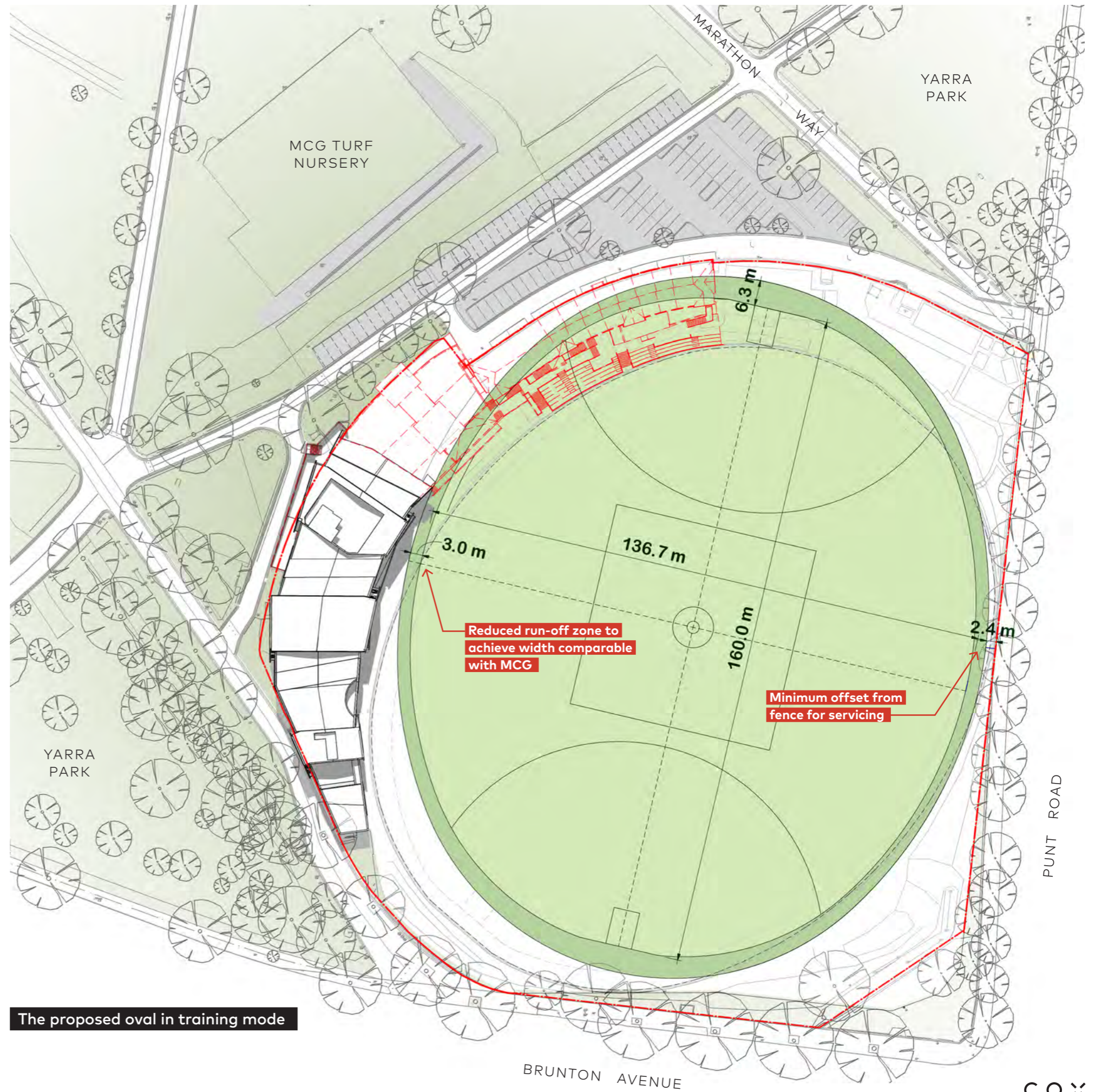
### 4.3 The Optimal Oval (parity with the MCG)

The 2021 AFL Venue Guidelines stipulate that for competition the boundary line must be no less than 5.5 metres from the perimeter fence. For training purposes, the run-off zone between the boundary line and fence can reduce to 3 metres. The proposed oval for the Richmond Football Club must be both competition compliant and achieve parity with the MCG for player preparation and training. For this reason, it is proposed to configure the field in two modes – match mode and training mode – through the ability to adjust the painted field lines.

The objectives that have determined the optimal oval are:

- Increased field of play dimensions will allow the Club to meet AFL regulations to facilitate hosting AFLW and VFL games at Punt Road Oval (the AFL is currently making concessions to enable games to be played at the venue).
- Expanded field of play will support elite athlete preparation and ensure Richmond Football Club remains in Richmond long-term.
- The expanded field of play dimensions will reduce the risk of collision injuries to male and female players.
- Increased field of play dimensions will protect against over use, enabling the surface to adequately cope as an elite training facility and match day venue
- Maximise the spectator zone around the field-of-play to support the hosting of AFLW and VFL matches.
- Provide a service zone around the full circumference of the oval at a minimum of 2.4m to allow small utility vehicles access and support safe movement for spectators in match mode.





The proposed oval in training mode

## 4.4 Elite Football Training

The Richmond Football Club have outgrown their current facility. When the Swinburne Centre was developed in 2011 it was designed for a single men's team. The Club has since expanded to incorporate multiple teams across the AFL, VFL, and AFLW competitions, and they all call Tigerland home.

This growth in numbers necessitates a response in the quality and size of their training facilities. In order to attract the most elite footballers, the Tigers need to develop a world class venue.

The design for the redevelopment has put training at the center and is organized to provide efficient and equitable access to the most important training element; the oval. All player-centric facilities are in prime position at the field level, so that players and coaches can spend less time transiting between disparate locations and more time focused on improving their game.

The new facility will be home to the AFLW teams. With equal access to both high performance facilities (such as the Gym, Pool and Sports Hall), as well as recreational lounges and staff areas, both the women's and men's teams will have equal opportunity to excel. With brand new facilities dedicated to their AFLW team, the Tigers will be poised to attract the best female talent around, providing a strong foundation for success in this thriving new league.



## 4.5 A Connected Club

### 'Tigerland Central' Atrium

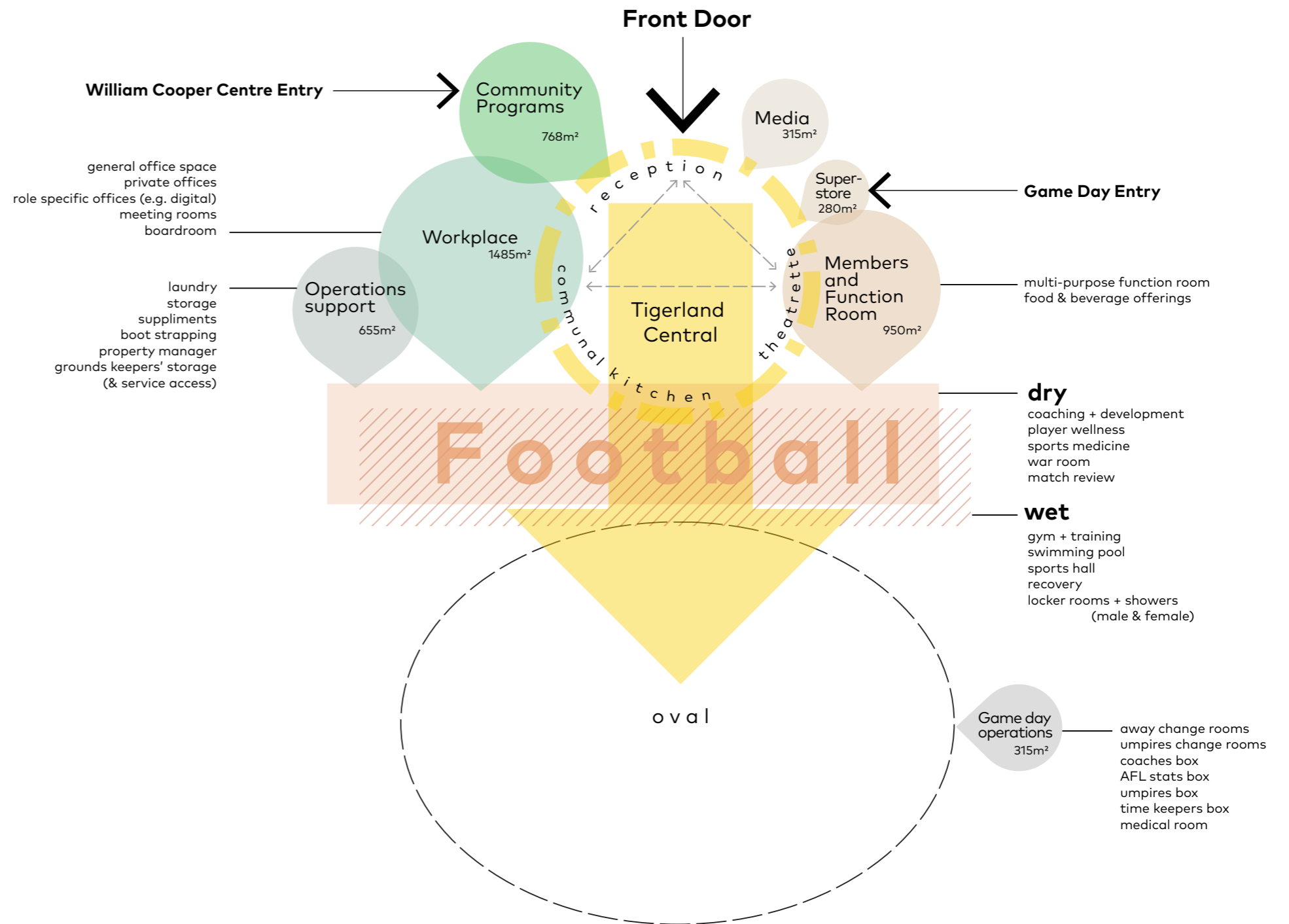
Connectedness between players, coaches, staff, and community programs is an aspiration of the Club and is central to their values. The design draws together the workplace and community functions within the new grandstand, with the football department located in the Swinburne Centre. A new central atrium will connect the two facilities, and will be located at the heart of the precinct on the centreline of the oval. This three-dimensional, multi-level space connects both physically and visually between all key program areas of the Club and acts as a 'hub' for interaction. Key to the sense of connection will be the chance encounters between players, staff and community that are encouraged by the Club.

The atrium will house all public and fan-oriented elements such as the Reception and Museum and will provide vistas into key areas of the football department, including the Gym, Sports Hall, Theatrette, and - most importantly - the oval itself. 'Tigerland Central' will be a place of socialisation and collaboration. It will serve as a celebrated 'display case' for memorabilia and promote the Tigers' unique brand and culture.

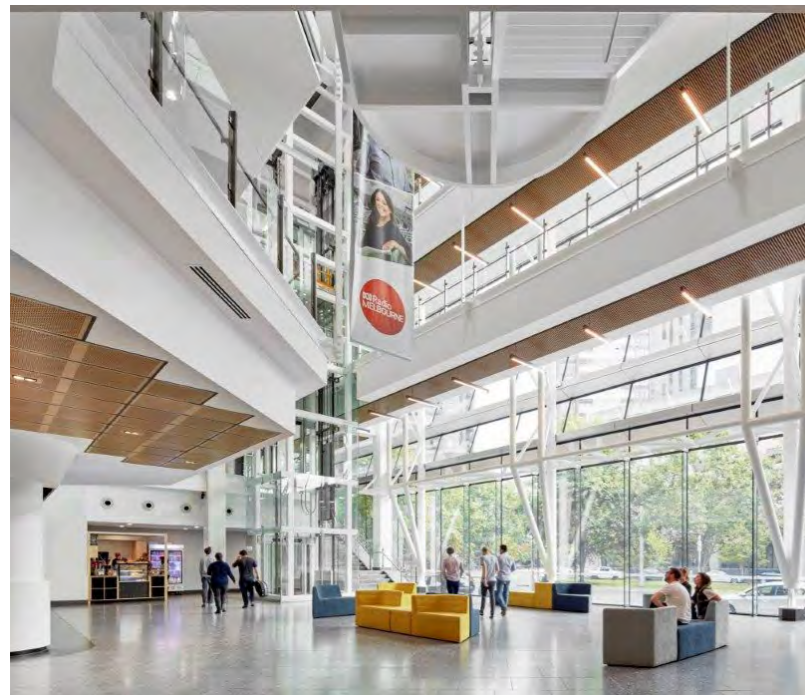
### The New Front Door

The current Richmond Football Club facility is a linear assemblage of buildings that has evolved over time, but lacks a singular identity or 'front door'. Multiple entry points confuse the arrival experience and is incoherent for visitors. The new design is based on intuitive wayfinding, and features a key arrival point in the form of the new atrium front door. This entry will lead directly from the landscaped terrace into the operational and spiritual heart of the Club.

Orientation will be reinforced through clear pathways and a generous landscaped entry plaza that welcomes visitors and regulars alike. This clear arrival sequence builds confidence for users and evokes a strong sense of arrival at Tigerland.







## 4.6 Invitation to Participate

### Fan Engagement

Fans want to be close to the place where their heroes became heroes. They want to be invited behind the scenes to see where the hard work is done. They want to feel included and be part of the Tiger community.

The redevelopment will deliver a fan-focused experience, with opportunities for interaction and participation. The Richmond Football Club has the largest membership base in the league, and the fans are the 'beating heart' of the Club. The new facilities will be exemplary as they deliver fan engagement closer to their home ground than any other team. The design will leverage this home ground advantage and help the Tigers to grow their fan base into the future.

### Community Programs

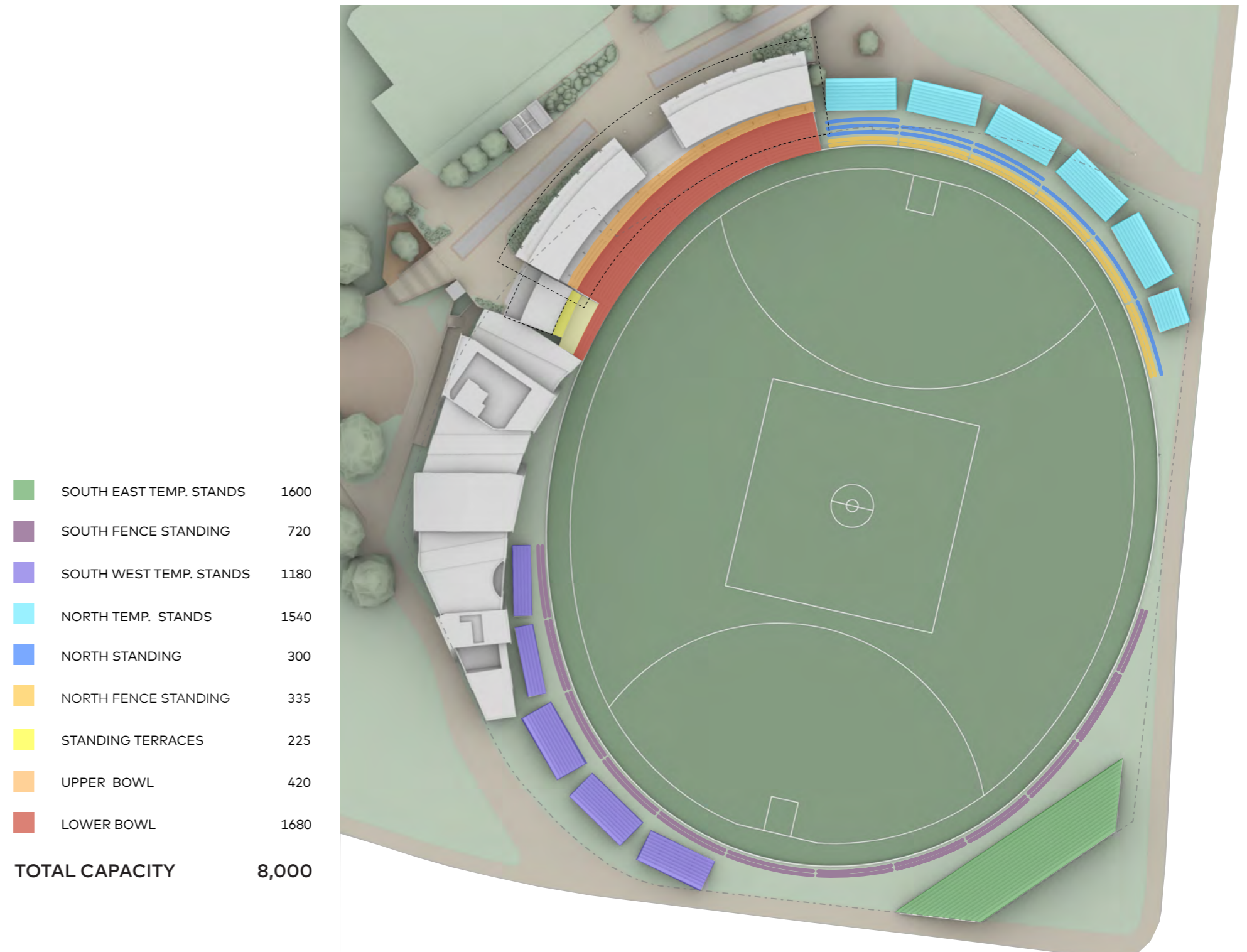
The new William Cooper Center will deliver state-of-the-art facilities to host the various community engagement and education programs that have long been promoted by the Club. The new accommodation for the Korin Gamadji Institute, the Bachar Houli Academy, and the Melbourne Indigenous Transition School (MITS) will be given pride of place in a brand new facility with direct access to the parklands and connected to the heart of the Club's football operations. The aim is to facilitate contact between community groups and players and provide unrivalled access to the 'inner sanctum' of an elite professional football team.

### The Experience for Spectators

Punt Road Oval is uniquely poised to be Melbourne's preferred boutique stadium for hosting AFLW and VFL matches. Situated adjacent the MCG, it is well serviced by public transport and is within walking distance to vibrant Richmond and the CBD. The Punt Road Oval Master Plan will offer all the benefits to fans of a city stadium, whilst maintaining a sense of the grass-roots footy ground. It will offer a mix of formal grandstand seating, with standing terraces and grass seating areas. The future Punt Road Oval will be able to host up to 8,000 spectators in an intimate park setting, unlike any other ground in Melbourne.

## Match Day Spectator Areas

Diagram showing overlay required to accommodate 8,000 spectators







View from Yarra Park toward the entry of the new William Cooper Centre Grandstand

# FIVE

Architectural  
Concept Design



The pedestrian pathway along the future landscaped terrace

# The Future Punt Road Oval Precinct



# Punt Road Oval Master Plan

The future William Cooper Centre will be a pioneering development that introduces purpose-built facilities for the Korin Gamadji Institute, the Bachar Houli Academy, and the Melbourne Indigenous Transition School

New landscaped terrace will be an extension of Yarra Park and reinstate public green space to an area of existing degraded car park

Revitalise the buildings we already have so they are fit and functional for the next 20 years

Expanded training oval to support the continued on-field success of the Richmond Football Club

Increased spectator capacity for our fans around our optimal oval



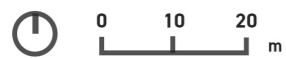
Dedicated MCG access for the mobility impaired will be provided in a new car parking facility beneath Yarra Park

Operational efficiency and connectivity achieved through grade-separated back-of-house zone

The Jack Dyer Grandstand signified our proud heritage at Punt Road Oval. It will be replaced with a new grandstand that recycles materials from the original building.

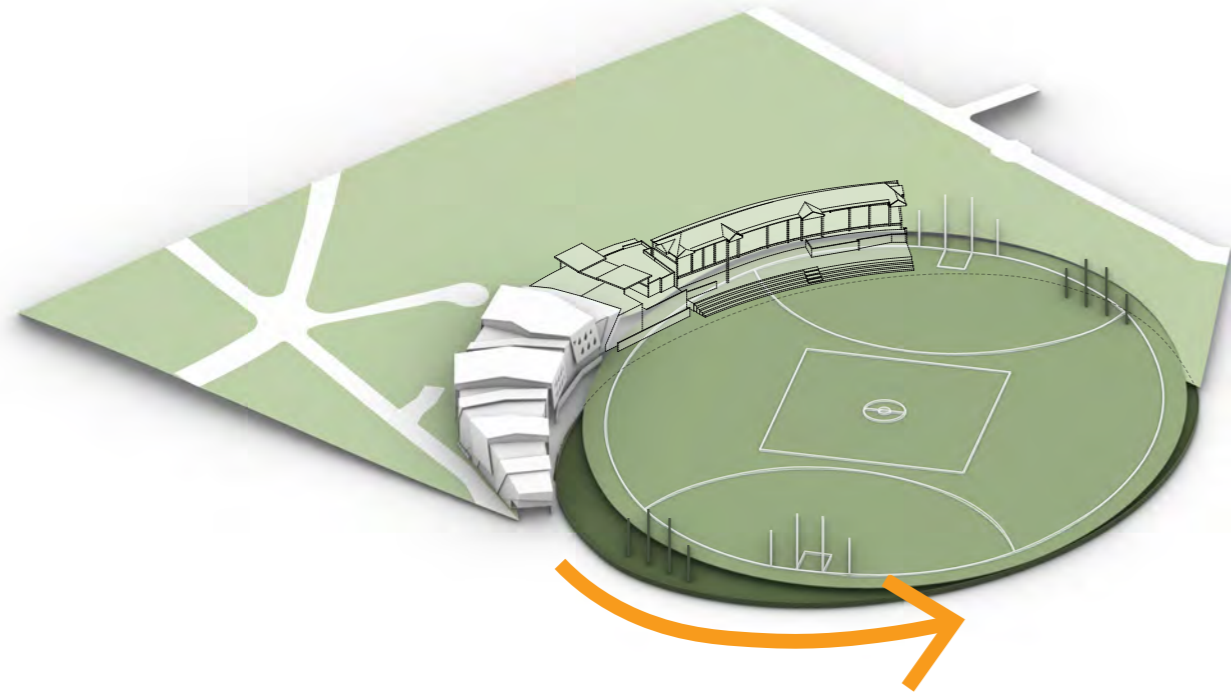
New 'Tigerland Central' Atrium will provide greater connectivity between facilities and user groups

New state-of-the-art facilities for women's football will be introduced at field level

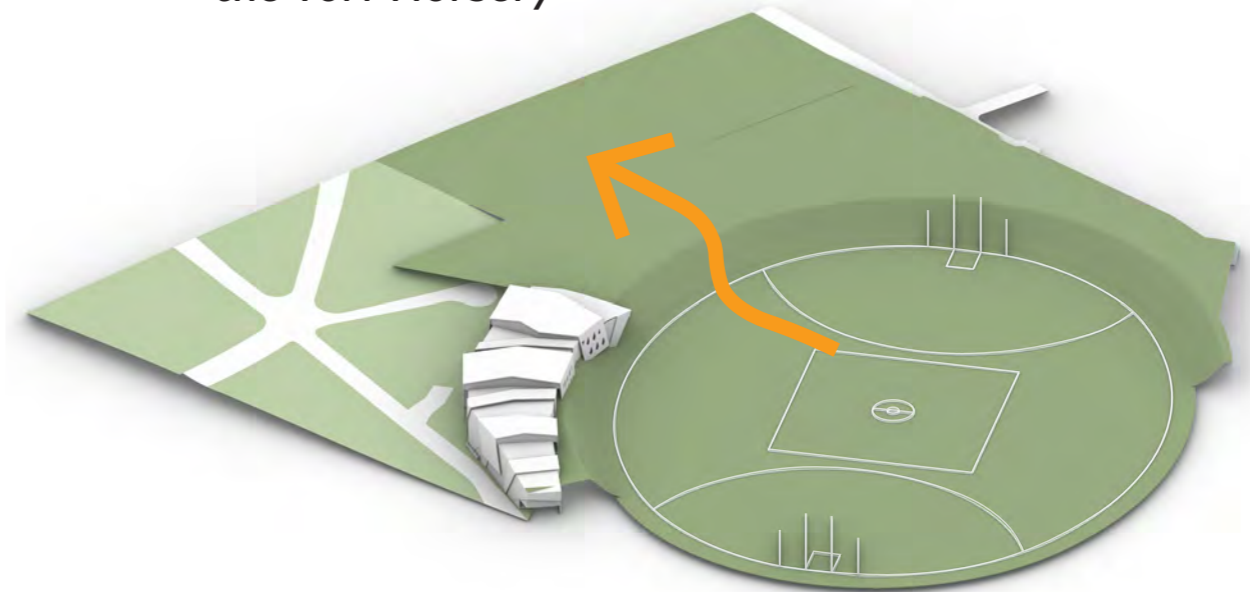


## 5.1 The Key Moves Informing the Design Response

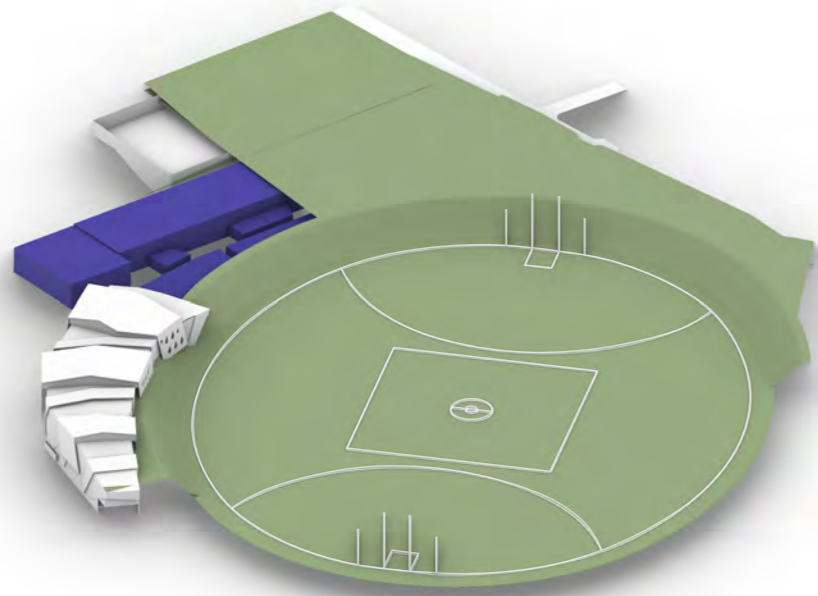
### 1. Rotate and expand the oval



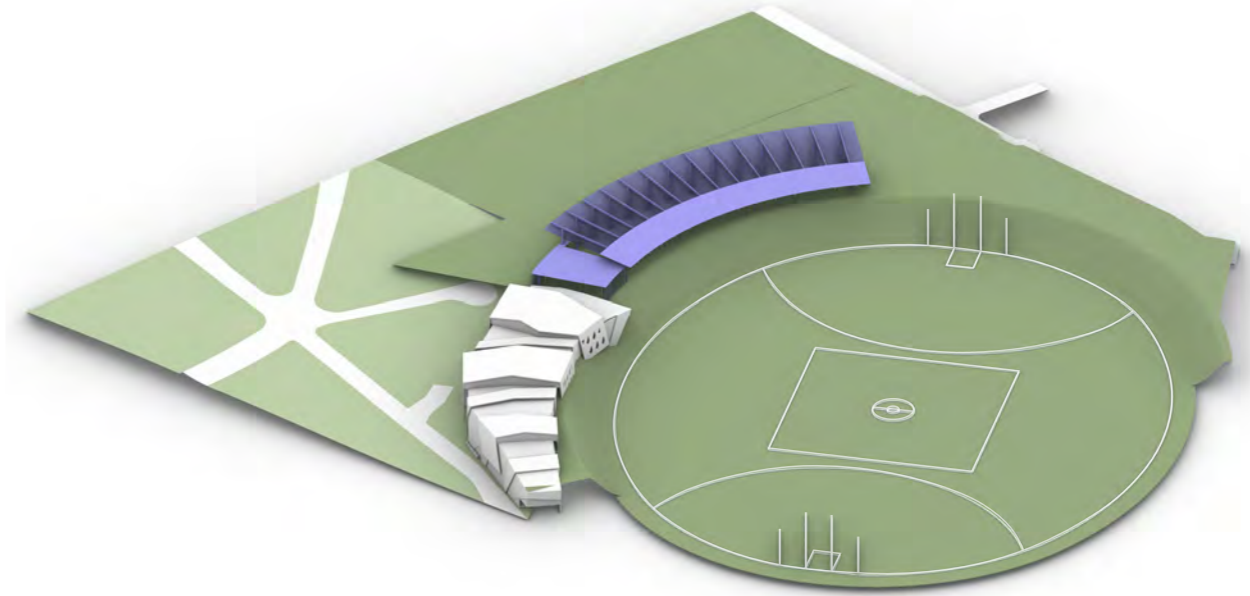
### 2. 'Peel up' park from oval to the Turf Nursery



### 3. Inhabit the slope

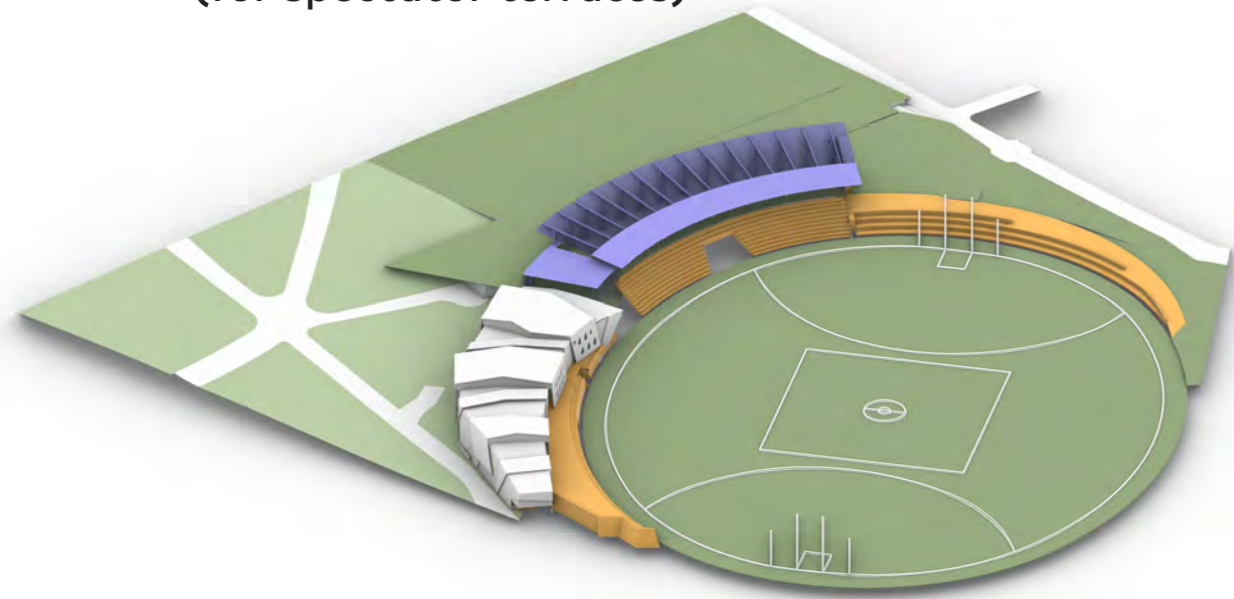


### 4. A pergola in the park

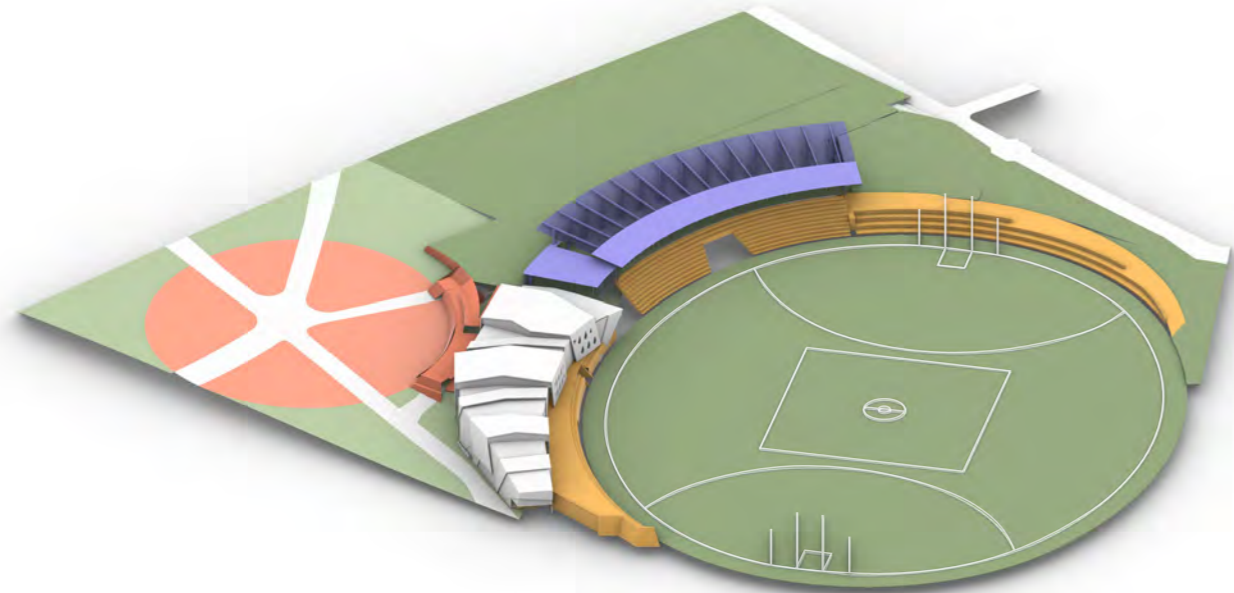




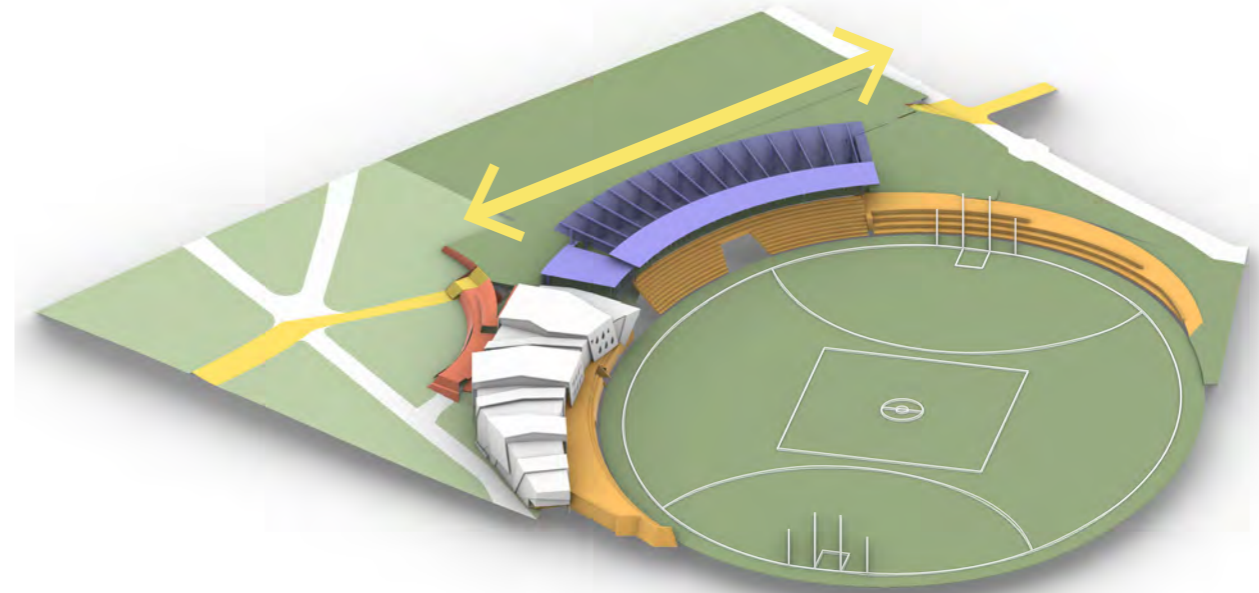
5. Erode the edge around oval  
(for spectator terraces)



6. Carve out the yarning circle



7. Reinterpret the pathway



## 5.2 The Architecture of the new William Cooper Centre

The new William Cooper Centre will be a two-storey grandstand over a podium that provides seated capacity for over 1,800 spectators, as well as dedicated teaching, admin, and recreation spaces for the Korin Gamadji Institute, the Bachar Houli Academy, and the Melbourne Indigenous Transition School (MITS). The podium will incorporate new facilities for the football department that can open out directly onto the playing field. The design intent is to deliver a contemporary building that expresses the same degree of craftsmanship and detail that is evident in the existing grandstand.

### Structural Expression

The architectural language takes its inspiration from the original 1914 grandstand that features a cast iron colonnade in front of seating, with decorative Corinthian capitals to express a finer detail. The new design takes the same approach by incorporating a prominent array of steel columns to both the park and field elevations. Each column is composed of twin vertical elements that are pinned together and incorporate a linear light fitting recessed into a central reveal. In place of a traditional capital, the columns will feature slender steel plate connections to the roof structure above, and a footing detail that expresses its component parts.

### Folding Roof

The simple, folding roof form exhibits gentle angles and falls away toward the field to reduce the perception of height. The roof adopts generous cantilevers over the accommodation below to provide a high degree of shading and improve the thermal performance of the building, whilst also providing weather coverage to seated spectators at the upper level. In the same way that the 1914 grandstand features decorative timber fretwork under the gabled roof, the new roof will also feature repeating timber elements that extend underneath the soffit and provide a prominent element when viewed from afar. Similarly, the new building references the filigree of the original fretwork by articulating the perimeter of the roof as a series of timber pergola screens that allow sunlight to filter through.

### Façade and Reused Elements

The upper level of the grandstand will be clad in fluted terracotta panels, with large picture windows at regular intervals between the columns that take full advantage of the impressive views across Yarra Park. The material palette has been selected based on a preference for natural materials that are both durable and sympathetic in a parkland context. The fawn colour of the terracotta façade is well poised

between the natural timber tones of the roof, and the Tigers' signature yellow (which is represented elsewhere in the precinct). At the terrace level below the façade is predominantly glazed to provide a high degree of amenity into the teaching spaces for the community programs. Where solid walls are required, dark bricks are proposed and intended as recessive elements that don't detract from the architecture above.

The ends of the new grandstand present a wonderful opportunity to reinstate some of the original red brickwork from the Jack Dyer Stand. Remnant signage elements that are still legible on the Jack Dyer Stand today (such as the 'Bar' sign and 'Vickers Gin' that are printed on concrete lintels) will be retained and featured in the new building. The architecture at field level will convey the impression of a masonry plinth and feature piloti in red brick in keeping with the materiality of the original grandstand.

A glazed atrium will connect the new grandstand with the Swinburne Centre and serve as the main entry to the Richmond Football Club. As well as including a Reception and space for Club memorabilia, the atrium is intended as a place to promote social interactions. Its generous proportions and glass façade will support views from park through to the oval and evoke a sense of connection.



Recycled timber beams



Terracotta cladding



Glazing



Red brick



Charcoal metal louvre system



Charcoal steel frames

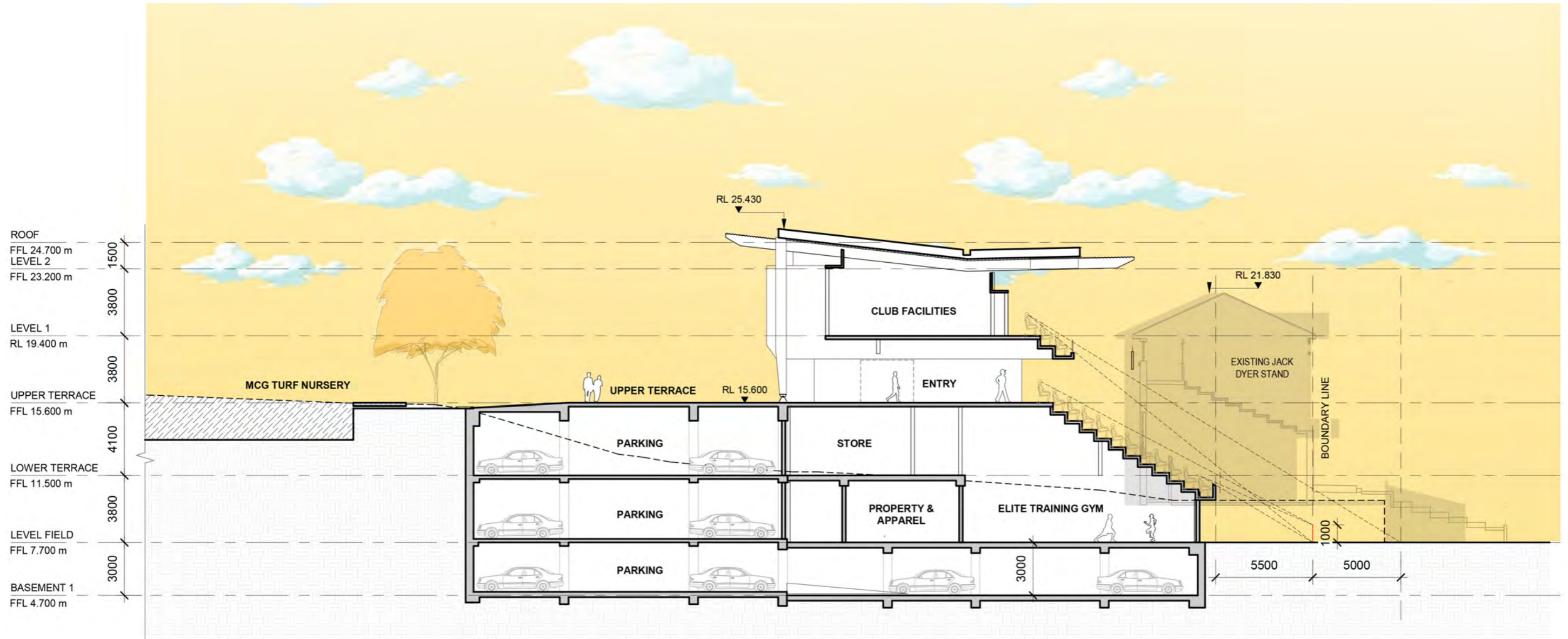


Feature ceiling to Atrium (printed metal)



### 5.3 Building Sections

## New Grandstand



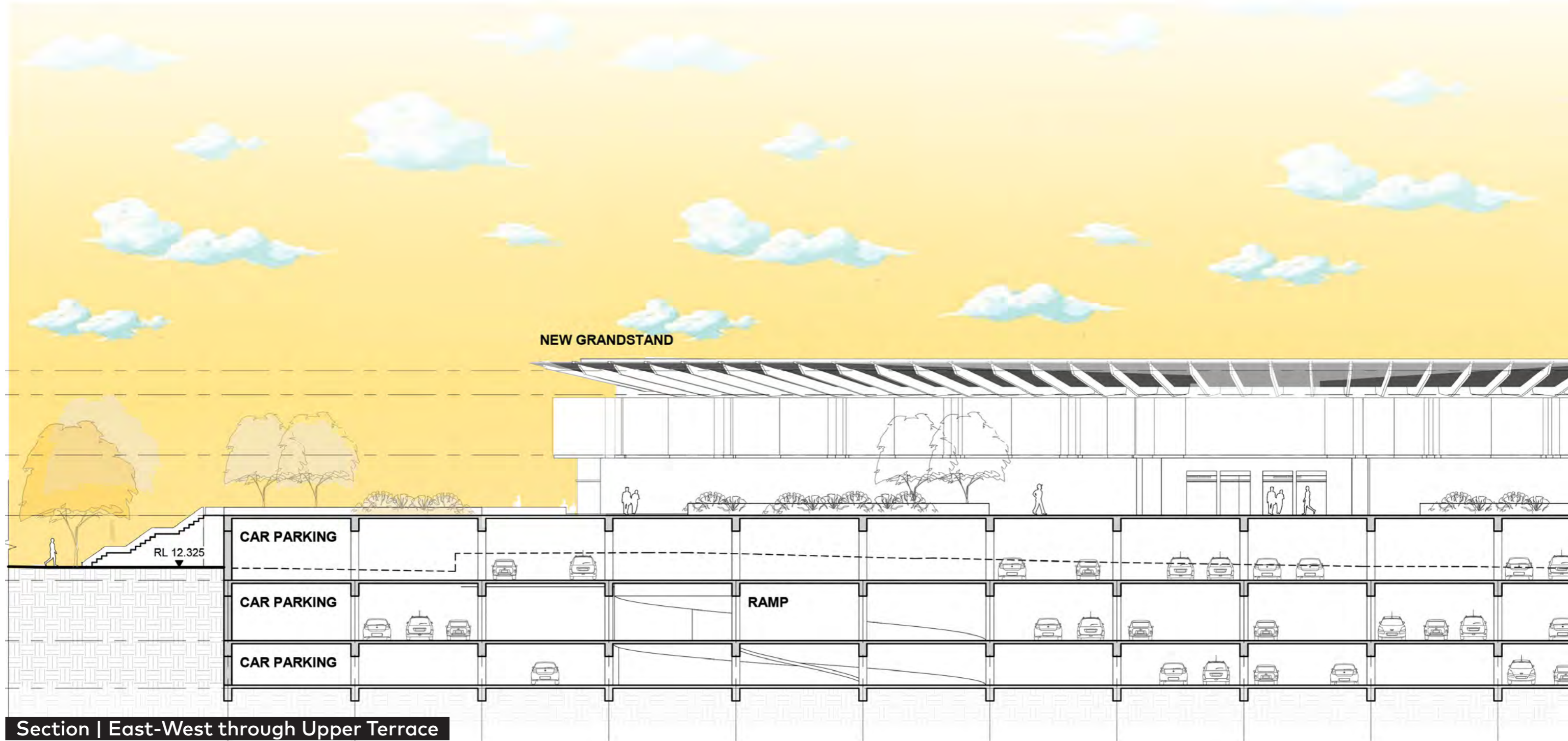
Section | North-South through new Grandstand

## Vehicle Arrival from Marathon Way

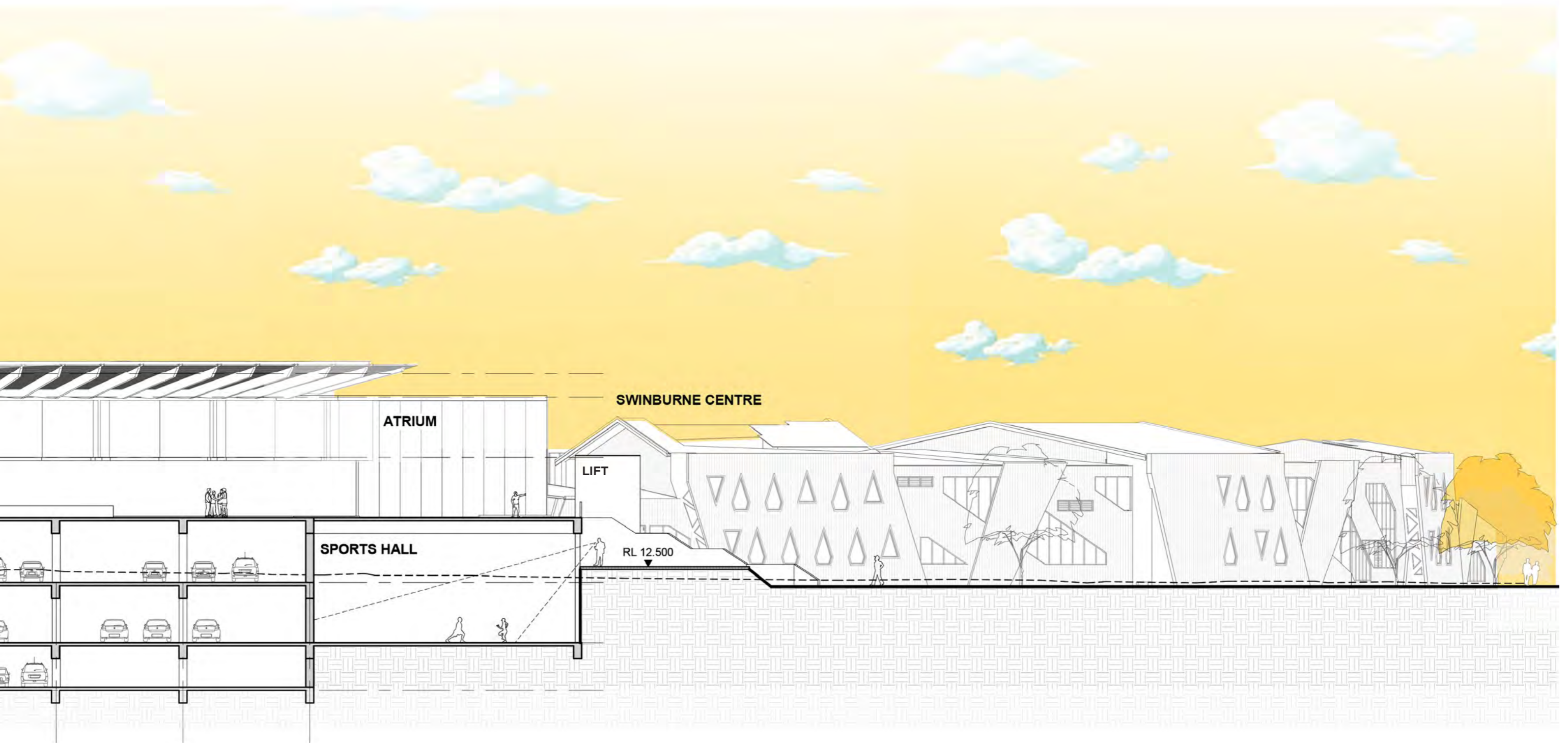


Section | North-South through vehicle entry

# Podium Section



Section | East-West through Upper Terrace












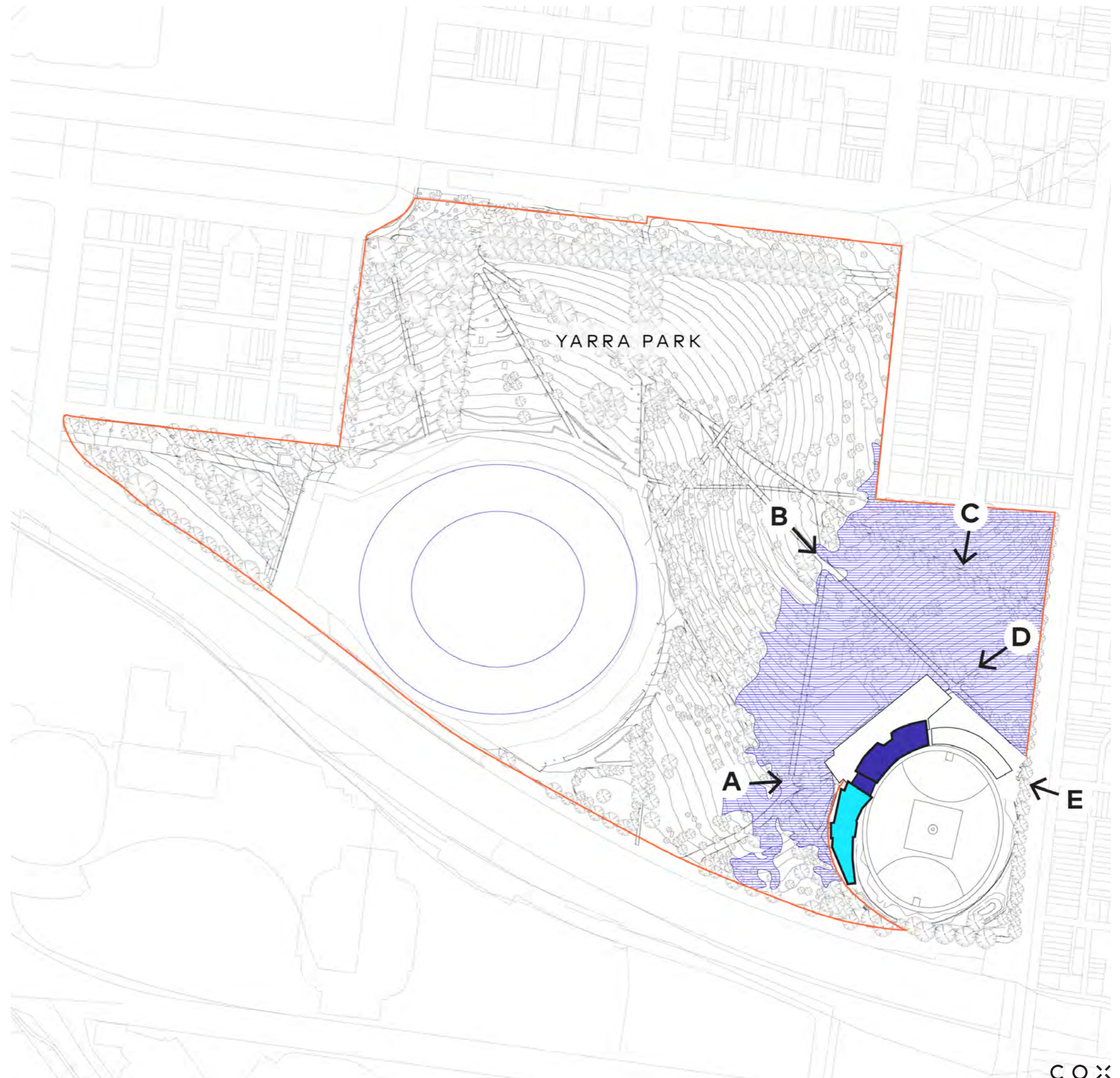


# SIX Perspectives from the Park

## LEGEND

-  YARRA PARK VHR BOUNDARY
-  PARK AREA WITH VIEW TO DEVELOPMENT SITE
-  DEVELOPMENT SITE
-  EXISTING BUILDING RETAINED
-  NEW BUILDING FOOTPRINTS
-  EXISTING TREES
-  HERITAGE PHOTOMONTAGE VIEWS

Percentage of Yarra Park with views to the development site = **24% apx**



# View A

## Current

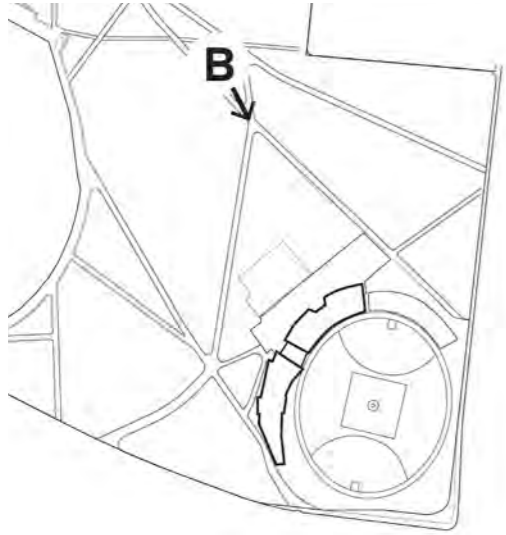


# View A Proposed



# View B

## Current

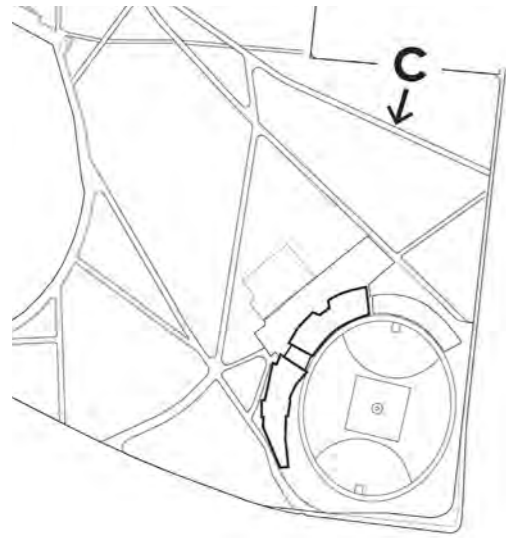


# View B Proposed



# View C

Current



View C  
Proposed



# View D

## Current



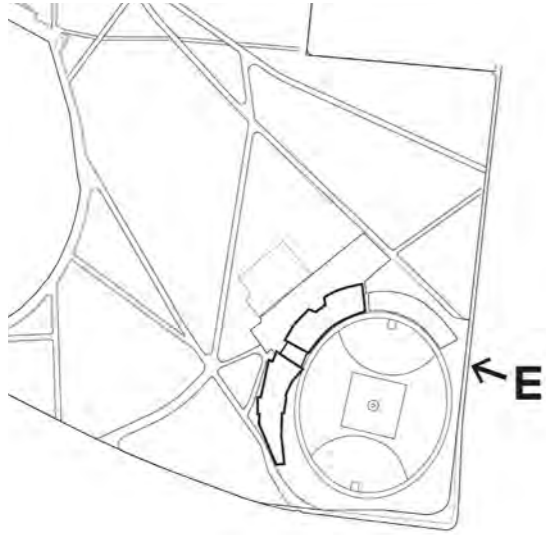


# View D

## Proposed



# View E Current



# View E Proposed

