

Fawkner Park Master Plan



Foreword by Lord Mayor

Fawkner Park is among the City of Melbourne's finest parks and gardens and is highly valued by the community. It is characterised by long tree-lined avenues with open grassy spaces that are always being enjoyed by Melburnians.

Thank you for your interest in the development of this first Master Plan for Fawkner Park which will set the scene and guide development of Fawkner Park for many years to come.

I commend this document to you.



A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "John So". The signature is fluid and cursive.

John So
Lord Mayor

Foreword by the Chair

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to the development of this Master Plan for Melbourne's magnificent Fawkner Park.

The plan reflects input provided by the Reference Group and from members of the public who participated in the consultation process.

This has been a highly successful process and has led to the development of a plan that sets the future for one of the great parks of Melbourne.



A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Fraser Brindley". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Councillor Fraser Brindley
Chair, Fawkner Park Master Plan Reference Group

As part of its commitment to Indigenous Australians, Melbourne City Council respectfully acknowledges the traditional people of the Kulin Nation.

For the Woiworing, Boonerwring, Taungurong, Djajawurrung and the Wathaurong that make up the Kulin Nation, Melbourne has always been an important meeting place and location for events of social, educational, sporting and cultural significance. (based on the Acknowledgement Wording endorsed by the Melbourne City Council Aboriginal Consultative Group, 2000)

Acknowledgements

Fawkner Park Master Plan Reference Group

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Cr Fraser Brindley

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This Master Plan was approved by the Melbourne City Council in May 2006.

Master Plan Vision

Fawkner Park is a much loved place where a diverse range of recreation and sporting activity is enjoyed in a magnificent setting of significant tree avenues and open, spacious lawns.

1. Introduction

Fawkner Park is one of Melbourne's best known and well used parks. Located in South Yarra (See Plan 1: Location Plan), Fawkner Park was laid out in 1862 as a place for promenading and watching sporting activities. Its long tree avenues and open lawn layout has remained largely unchanged, and the park continues to provide a setting for a wide range of sporting and recreational activities.

1.1 Purpose of the Master Plan

The purpose of the Master Plan is to guide the future development and management of Fawkner Park over the next 10 years.

1.2 Preparation of the Plan

This Master Plan has been prepared through a number of stages, including historic research, the collection of data on uses and activities at Fawkner Park, and extensive community consultation.

Community consultation has taken place in two phases, each incorporating a range of methods for obtaining community input and ideas.

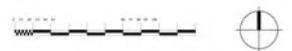
The first phase involved the release of an Issues Paper seeking public comment between April and May 2005, which resulted in a range of valuable suggestions and proposals.

The draft Master Plan was then prepared based on information obtained in the first consultation phase, and was released between September and November 2005 for further public comment. The final Master Plan was prepared following consideration of all feedback and submitted to Council for approval.

The preparation of the Fawkner Park Master Plan was assisted by a Reference Group representing a range of sporting and community groups associated with the park, and chaired by Cr Fraser Brindley, Chair of the Environment Committee of Council.

Other research documents used in preparing the Master Plan included:

- Fawkner Park Conservation Analysis, Hassell Pty Ltd, November 2002;
- Fawkner Park Disability Access Audit Report, HSPC Disability Access Consultancy, Dec 2004; and
- Annual City of Melbourne Parks Satisfaction Survey, Roger James & Assoc., June 2005.



2. Fawkner Park

2.1 Description of Fawkner Park

Located in bustling South Yarra, Fawkner Park is one of inner Melbourne's most popular and significant green open spaces. First reserved in 1862, the park was named after Melbourne co-founder, John Pascoe Fawkner, and is 41 hectares in size. Fawkner Park has road frontages to Toorak Road West in the north and Commercial Road in the south. Except for short sections of Pasley Street and Park Place along the eastern boundary, the eastern and western edges of the park are bounded by a variety of commercial and educational buildings, and residential properties.

The park is roughly rectangular in shape, crossed by a series of straight paths lined with avenues of Moreton Bay Figs, Elms, Poplars and Oaks, many of which were planted in the 19th century. Most of the pathways follow mid to late 19th century pedestrian routes that were in place before the formal development of the park in 1875.

The park is home to a number of buildings and structures, including a community centre, tennis club, pavilions, caretaker's cottage, an electricity substation and three playgrounds. (See Plan 2: Existing Conditions).

2.2 Ownership, Zoning, Planning and Other Controls

Fawkner Park is Crown Land permanently reserved from sale as a site for Fawkner Park pursuant to the provisions of the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*.

The area is also subject to a Restricted Crown Grant for Public Park Purposes granted jointly to the Minister for Planning and the City of Melbourne. Melbourne City Council manages Fawkner Park as a Committee of Management, guided by the Melbourne Parks and Gardens (Joint Trustee Reserves) Regulations (1994).

Fawkner Park lies within the Public Park and Recreation Zone of the Melbourne Planning Scheme. It is also subject to Heritage Overlay 6. An area in the western part of the park is subject to Design and Development Overlay 17 (Shrine Vista Control).

The Melbourne Planning Scheme allows for development within properties on the eastern and western boundaries of the park. Along the eastern boundary, the preferred maximum height is nine metres. Relevant Melbourne Planning Scheme objectives include ensuring new buildings allow for good sun penetration to public spaces.

2.3 History

Aboriginal people used the Fawkner Park area as a favourite camping place. In 1849, European settlers reported Aborigines camping in the area and described corroborees taking place around huge camp fires. At the time, the park was said to provide a range of traditional food sources such as possum and edible native plants.

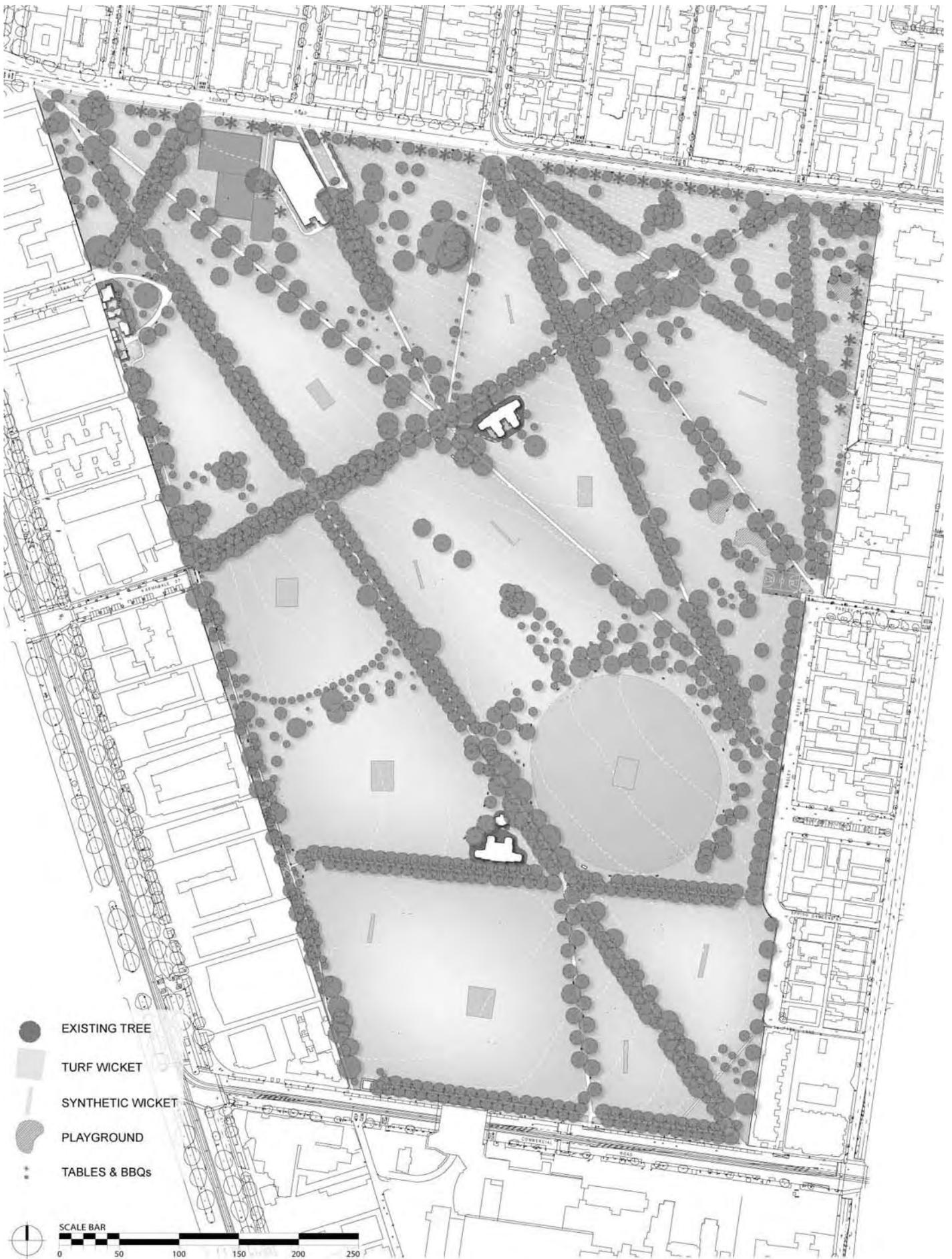
Fawkner Park was proposed as a park in 1859 although it was established in the latter half of the 19th century along with Melbourne's major ring of parks including Royal Park, Princes Park, Yarra Park and Albert Park. Most of these parks contain remnants of late Victorian planting and structures such as gardeners' cottages.

Fawkner Park also retains a substantially intact pathway system and a number of historic avenues dating from 1875. These were laid out by City of Melbourne Parks and Gardens Curator, Nicholas Bickford, who also introduced a range of Victorian plantings.

Since European settlement, Fawkner Park has been used for a wide range of activities and functions, including grazing cattle, training greyhounds, illegal gambling and sports such as golf, football and cricket since the 1860s. For three years the park was the site of the Australian Women's Army Service barracks and, after World War II, these buildings were used as emergency accommodation for newly arrived immigrants. The long history of activities on Fawkner Park's open, spacious lawns and its distinctive, tree-lined avenues are an integral part of the park's history and character.

Fawkner Park also has a long history of boundary changes. In the early 1860s, land fronting St Kilda Road was annexed for private development and land fronting Toorak Road was added to the park. In the early 1970s part of Pasley Street was added to the park. During the 1940s a pocket of land was excised from the park for a preschool centre (now a community centre).

The conservation analysis found that Fawkner Park is of historical, aesthetic and social significance to the State of Victoria.



Plan 2 Existing conditions

2.4 Policy Context

The Fawkner Park Master Plan has been developed within the wider strategic framework of the City of Melbourne. A number of higher level strategies and policies shape the vision created for Fawkner Park. These include:

City Plan 2010

Strategic Direction 1.5

“Enhance the network of Melbourne’s parks and gardens to include a wide range of diverse landscaped areas that are well connected to the community and reflect community values.”

South Yarra Local Area Objectives such as:

“Protect the function and appearance of Fawkner Park as a community recreation reserve serving local and regional active and passive recreation pursuits and community centre functions”

The City of Melbourne’s adopted *Municipal Strategic Statement (2004)*, under the local area St Kilda Road/ South Yarra section states the following:

“1.18 Preserve and enhance the landscape qualities and recreational role of Fawkner Park, and

1.19 Ensure development around Fawkner Park protects the visual amenity of the park and avoids overshadowing.”

Growing Green (2003) outlines a vision for Melbourne’s parks where:

“the assets and the life that they (parks) support will be sustainably managed on behalf of the community and future users with a reduced ecological footprint.”

In *Towards 2006, Sports Policy (2003)*, the City of Melbourne recognises the importance of sport in building and sustaining the health and well-being of communities. In the *Recreation and Leisure Strategy (2003)*, the City of Melbourne seeks to be an “active for all” city.

Other major policies and strategies relevant to Fawkner Park Master Plan include:

- Parks Policy, City of Melbourne (1997);
- Tree Policy, City of Melbourne (1998);
- Draft Open Space Strategy, City of Melbourne (in development);
- Total Watermark, City of Melbourne (April 2004);
- Bike Plan, City of Melbourne 2002–2007;
- Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Parklands supporting events staged in Melbourne’s Parks and Gardens, City of Melbourne (2005);
- Draft Water Management Strategy, City of Melbourne (2005); and
- Public Toilet Strategy, City of Melbourne (1997).

3. Future Directions and Guiding Principles

All proposals outlined in this Master Plan have been developed to achieve the overall vision of enhancing the landscape characteristics of Fawkner Park while managing and balancing its wide variety of uses. Future management of Fawkner Park will be guided by this overall vision (See Plan 8: Concept Master Plan).

The proposals contained in this Master Plan have been developed with regard to public safety, disability access, risk management and sustainable management of parkland.

Future directions and guiding principles are set out under the following headings: landscape character; uses and activities; access, amenity and safety; and environmental sustainability.

3.1 Landscape Character

Fawkner Park's landscape character is primarily defined by a series of long, straight pathways, bordered by avenues of trees. These pathways frame open, spacious lawns and a small number of ornamental gardens and shrub beds. Intended for passive recreation and sporting events, the simple, open character of the lawns was a key component of the original 1875 design and remains a vital part of Fawkner Park's character today.

Some of the specimen tree plantings that survive are typical of park designs of the late 1800s and early 1900s. Grouped into informal or formal arrangements, these plantings are an important part of the park's history.

The 19th century tree avenues in Fawkner Park support and define its major recreational uses. They mark out the most frequently travelled paths across the park and separate several sporting ovals.

Groups of trees also break up large expanses of grass and create more intimate settings for less structured, passive recreation. Unfortunately, the overall impact of this historic pattern has been diluted over time in the following ways:

- Tree canopies have been thinned at the park's major entrances and at path intersections diminishing the impact of tree-lined avenues;
- Planting around the caretaker's cottage is overgrown and encroaching into the park;
- The park's western boundary path is narrow. This path width is not in keeping with the generous path widths that are typical of Fawkner Park. The narrow path confines maintenance access and as a result has a greater number of small outdated rubbish bins, giving the area a cluttered appearance; and
- Planting along the western boundary path is random. This area has a very high proportion of large shrubs and low branching small trees that are planted very close together. This creates a dark, confined environment which is out of character with the open setting of the remainder of the park. The sense of enclosure in this area has a negative impact on perceived and actual safety for those using the path.

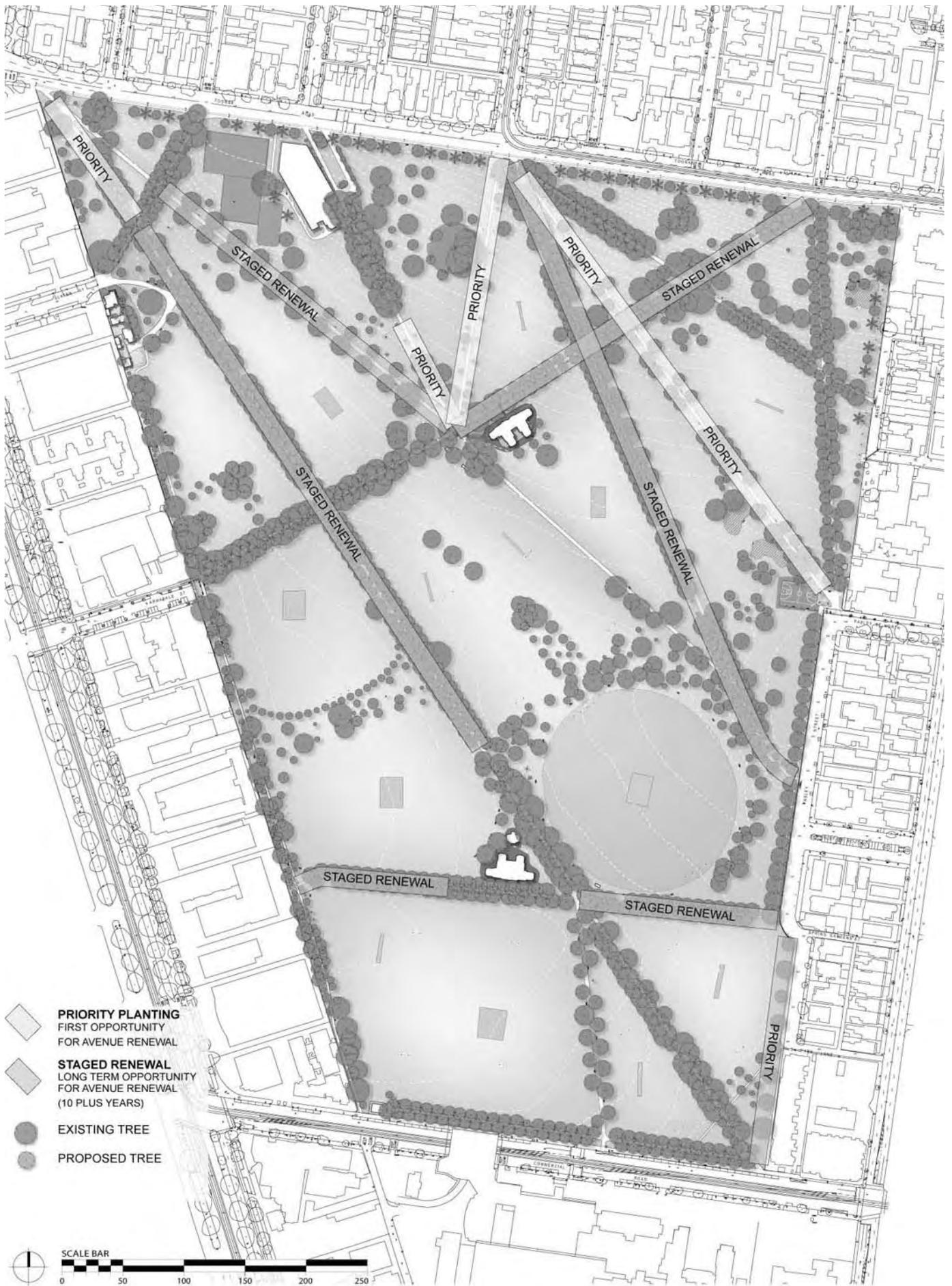
Good management is required to conserve Fawkner Park's tree population, particularly those trees that are planted in avenues. Many avenue trees are more than 100 years old and expected to reach the end of their life over the next 15-20 years. A proactive planting and replacement program is needed to ensure the tree population is sustainable in the long term.

Community feedback during the preparation of the Master Plan indicated tree avenues framing open grassy spaces were highly valued by park users.

Unlike other significant parks and gardens in Melbourne, Fawkner Park has no ornamental statues or fountains. While community feedback indicated little support for a water feature, there was some interest in complementary public art as a way of enhancing the historic and cultural significance of the park.

The caretaker's cottage including the iron picket fence and enclosed area and electricity substation are two buildings of local significance¹ in the park, which contribute to the cultural landscape. However, the interface between the park and the depot, at the rear of the caretaker's cottage, needs improving, as does the gateway entrance next to the cottage. The substation provides a popular sheltered seating area and should be maintained.

1 Fawkner Park Conservation Analysis, 2002



Plan 3 Tree Avenue Planting Priorities

Proposals relating to the landscape character of Fawkner Park are:

1. To conserve the landscape characteristics of tree avenues, pathways and open grassy spaces.
2. To manage the current tree population, including significant trees, to ensure their health and long life.
3. To retain the current mix of 70 per cent exotic and 30 per cent native trees within the park.
4. To plan and implement a tree avenue renewal program for Fawkner Park, considering that:
 - 4.1 healthy, uniform avenues of trees can only be maintained if a number of trees are planted at the same time. Arboriculture best practice for tree avenue management requires the removal and replanting of whole sections of avenues at a time (including apparently healthy trees).
 - 4.2 priority should be given to avenues that are interrupted by tree loss, avenues where most of the trees are declining in health, or where recent, inappropriate specimens have been used (See Plan 3: Tree Avenue Planting Priorities).
 - 4.3 tree avenues will be replaced with the same species, except where later plantings are different from the original species. In these cases the original species or more environmentally appropriate species will be used.
 - 4.4 new trees will be planted near avenues before the tree replacement program starts to reduce the visual impact of the transition phase.
 - 4.5 tree avenue replacement will allow, where possible, for trees to be replanted further back from existing paths to minimise potential damage by path maintenance over the lifetime of the trees.
 - 4.6 prior to any work commencing, further community consultation will be undertaken.
5. To retain and replant specimen trees, where appropriate, following the original planting plan of the park.
6. To introduce new plantings of taller trees, reinforcing the corners of open areas and creating occasional woodland settings.
7. To create a new setting along the western boundary path of Fawkner Park that is more in keeping with the rest of the park. Also improve the interface between the park and neighbouring buildings (visual and physical) and improve perceived and actual safety along this edge. Prepare landscape design plans that clearly demonstrate site specific solutions reflecting the changes in building set backs and uses that occur along the length of the path. (See Diagram 1). Landscape design plans for the western boundary will aim to:
 - 7.1. upgrade the path to allow for better access in this busy area;
 - 7.2. create comfortable seating areas and install new seats, bins and drinking fountains where people gather;
 - 7.3. keep sight lines across the park clear of obstruction by selecting tree species that are tall growing, with trunks clear of low growing branches; Identify and retain all healthy mature trees on both sides of the path that have these qualities; Remove large shrubs and low branching small trees;
 - 7.4. plant new trees on the eastern side of the path at a distance from property boundaries to offer summer shade and winter sun into neighbouring buildings; and
 - 7.5. plant dense ground covers between the widened path and property boundaries in areas too narrow for viable growth and maintenance of grass.
8. To consult with the community on the preparation of landscape design plans for areas of Fawkner Park to be upgraded including the western boundary.
9. To increase tree planting at major entries and path intersections.
10. To reinforce the proposed passive recreation area with tree planting. This may involve planting groups of tall, branching trees to create more intimate spaces, and to provide visual cues to visitors that this is not an area for organised sports.
11. To incorporate public artwork into the playgrounds or public amenities of the park. This artwork should be designed to complement and enhance the cultural heritage of the park.
12. To upgrade the interface between the depot and the park.
13. To improve the entry gateway next to the caretaker's cottage and alter planting around the cottage to better integrate it with the overall character of the park.



Existing Section



Proposed Section

Diagram 1 Western Boundary

14. To maintain the electricity substation and upgrade seating.
15. To protect the landscape character of the park by avoiding new structures or expansion of existing structures such as:
 - 15.1. memorials or monuments;
 - 15.2. expansion of the community centre and car park beyond its current legal footprint;
 - 15.3. construction of an underground car park that would require access and exit structures; and
 - 15.4. any new above ground utility structures associated with electricity, gas or telecommunications.

3.2 Uses and Activities

Fawkner Park has always been a 'people's park'. Throughout its history it has been used for a wide range of passive recreation and structured sporting activities, as well as more formal roles during and after World War II. Today, the park caters for extremely high levels of use every day of the week. It attracts visitors from a wide regional catchment but also serves as a local park for surrounding residential areas.

Balancing these uses with the highly valued character of the park is an ongoing challenge. In many cases, open areas within Fawkner Park are used for several different activities during the day, evening and on weekends.

These differing uses need to be managed so that existing activities do not increase in such a way that disrupts the current balance and gives rise to potential conflict. New management strategies are needed to enable successful continuation of these high levels of use.

Different opinions about sporting uses of the park were expressed during preparation of the Master Plan. Organised sporting and user groups sought greater opportunities for their activities. However, strong responses from the wider community supported the current level of active use within the park and did not want to see any increase in this activity.

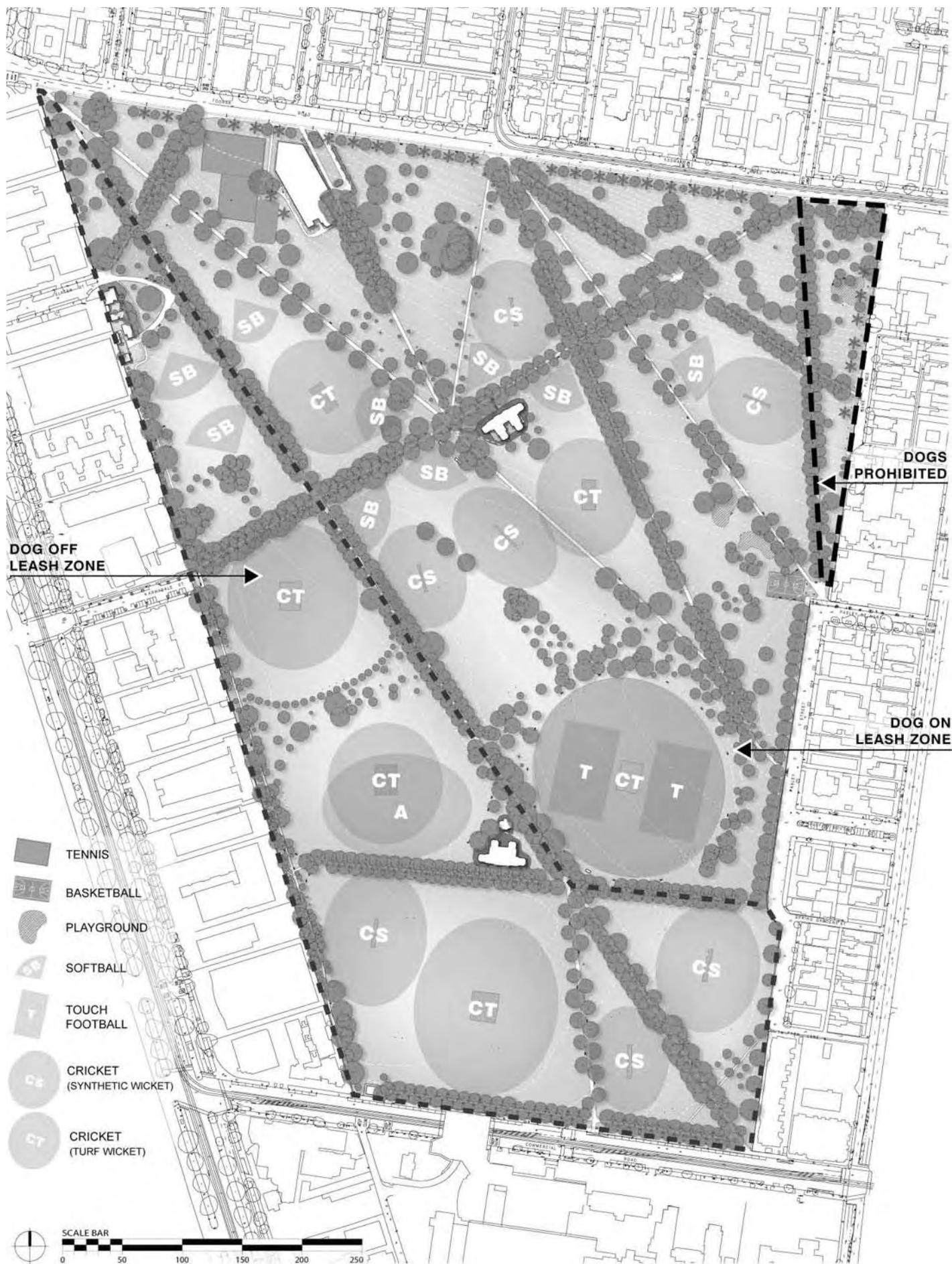
Recreation

Informal recreation is the largest use of Fawkner Park, with non structured activities including walking, sitting, reading, picnicking, children's play, keeping fit, dog walking, cycling, and eating lunch.

Although these uses are predominately unstructured and informal, some common characteristics have been identified. These users are often:

- local residents, including from high density residential areas on the west side of the park;
- office workers, from St Kilda Road and other areas who use the park at lunchtime or at other times;
- staff, patients and visitors from nearby Alfred Hospital, which has no green space of its own; and
- school children and staff from two nearby schools. The park is used daily as the playground for these schools at recess, lunchtime and after school care, as well as for regular sporting activities.

For these reasons, it seems appropriate to establish a space within Fawkner Park where passive recreation is the primary focus. At present, when organised sporting activities are occurring, they tend to occupy almost all of the open space leaving little room for informal, recreational users. To achieve an overall balance of usage, it is proposed that an area be set aside in the northern part of the park where no structured activities would occur. In addition, this area will remain a dog on leash area so that dogs do not interfere with passive recreation users.



Plan 4 Current Park Activity - Summer

Sporting activities

Organised sporting activities, comprising competition and training, take place on Cordner Oval and on a number of grassed sports grounds set aside for seasonal sports (See Plan 4: Current Park Activity – Summer and Plan 5: Current Park Activity - Winter).

Council strongly supports sports participation at Fawkner Park through provision and management of these sports grounds, which are used for different sports during different seasons, and sometimes for different sports in the same seasons. The grounds cope well with a high level of use from a range of sports, and are complemented by two multi-purpose pavilions. One of these facilities, the southern pavilion, needs to be upgraded.

Located in the northern part of the park, the Fawkner Park Tennis Club has six synthetic courts and a café. This is the only facility within the park that supports both sporting and passive recreational users. There are two sets of public toilets in the park, both of which are in poor condition. There are also three playgrounds and a softball shelter, which is of local significance² due to its association with American servicemen during World War II. In addition, the old score box next to Cordner Oval adds to the early character of the area and is also of local significance³. Still in use by sports groups, the score box is functional but needs upgrading inside.

Accepted risk management practices now require most community sports grounds in Australia to meet minimum boundary sizes for higher level adult competition. Many sports grounds at Fawkner Park, particularly in the northern and central sections of the park, do not meet these boundary requirements and are currently used for lower levels of competition and juniors.⁴

While sporting clubs would like to see improved multi-use sports grounds established in the northern and central areas at Fawkner Park, this cannot be achieved without the removal of historic trees and pathways, which would impact on the established character of the park.

Most sports grounds in Fawkner Park do not and cannot meet recommended sizes for higher levels of sport. For example, only two grounds are capable of meeting the requirements for open age cricket. Therefore, while a lot of sport is played in the park, it is primarily used for lower levels of competition and junior sports. In order to continue the current level of sporting activity in Fawkner Park, matching ground allocations with appropriate skill and competition levels will need to continue. As such, the park will remain a community sports facility, rather than an elite or high level sports venue. This sport usage is also considered in keeping with other recreational uses of Fawkner Park.

Managing the current annual sporting program at Fawkner Park in a sustainable way requires flexibility and consistency. To meet this ongoing demand, some sports grounds need improved subsoil drainage and irrigation systems, particularly in the southern and central areas of the park.

Another proposal that will improve flexible management of the park's sports grounds is the installation of additional ground lighting. This will enable more games and training to be scheduled at the same time, and allow play to finish earlier in the evening. In addition, the existing lighting at Cordner Oval must be upgraded to meet safety standards. New lights installed in line with current lighting technology will result in less light spill over the rest of the park.

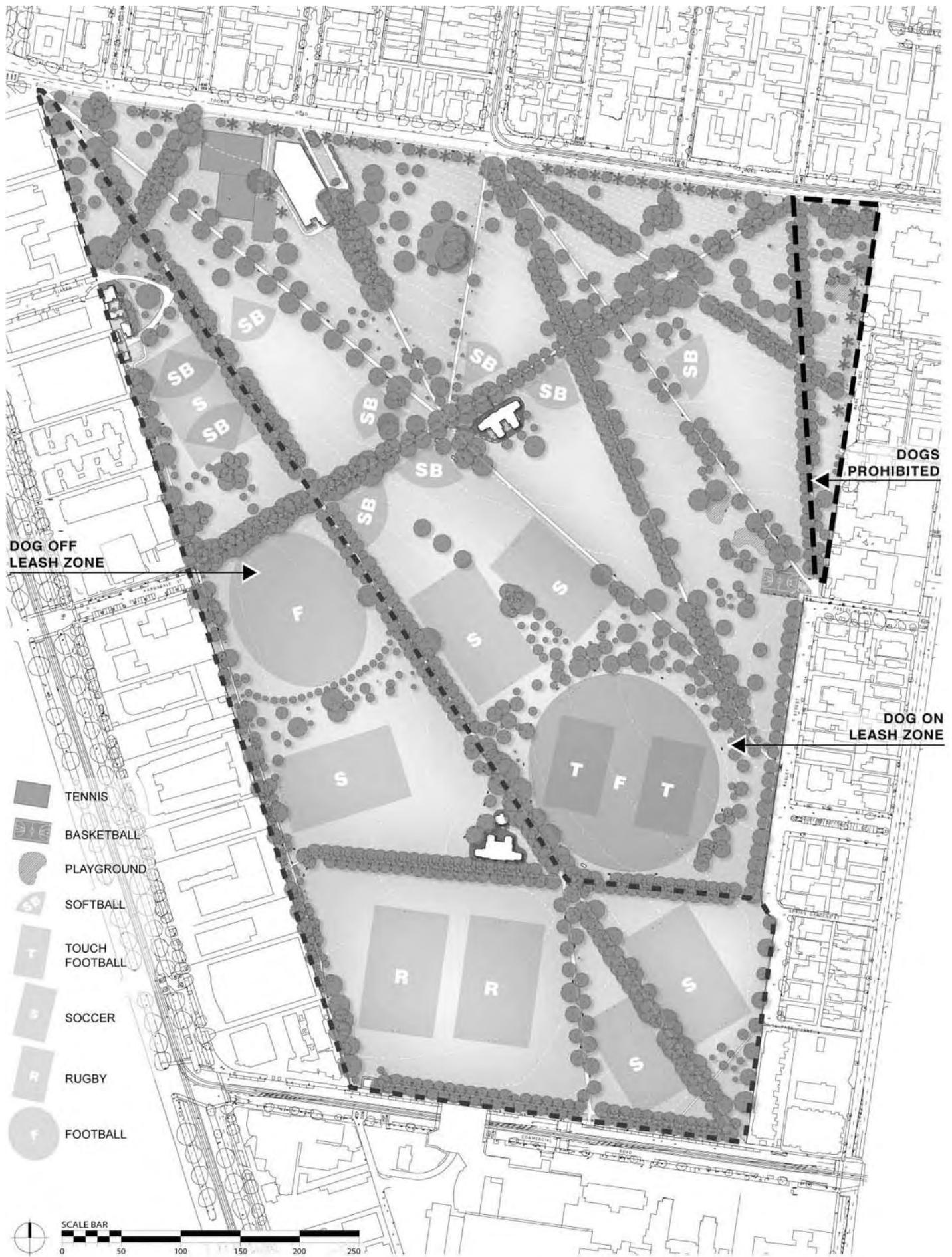
The amount of cricket played at Fawkner Park also justifies the installation of three permanent cricket practice nets, which could be made available for use by the general community. Clubs are currently using temporary nets for training, which present a risk to other park users.

Finally, in order to create a passive recreation space in the northern part of Fawkner Park, cricket and softball activities need to be discontinued in this area. This area has a low level of sports use and these activities could easily be relocated to other sports grounds, ensuring no change to current participation levels.

2 Fawkner Park Conservation Analysis, 2002

3 Fawkner Park Conservation Analysis, 2002

4 The City of Melbourne manages the seasonal sports ground allocations.



Plan 5 Current Park Activity - Winter

Children's Play

Current play opportunities in Fawkner Park include one large and two small local playgrounds. The north and east playgrounds have a key role in supporting local schools, which have limited play areas. The west playground, designed for toddlers, is situated in the dog off leash area which is no longer acceptable.

It is proposed that a specially designed toddler and preschool age playground be created in the newly proposed recreation area of the park, adjacent to the tennis courts and community centre. As users of the new playground approach the park from the western boundary, a 'play journey' could be created to link the new location with these entrances.

Cycling

Fawkner Park is a key link in Melbourne's bicycle network, with major and minor routes (See Plan 7: Access, Amenity and Safety Proposals). During community consultation, some concern was expressed about conflict between commuter cyclists, pedestrians and dogs. An education program needs to be introduced and shared path options explored to minimise conflict. In addition, the major paths used by cyclists should be specified on the park maps.

With car parking extremely limited at and near Fawkner Park, it is important to promote other forms of transport to the park. Secure bicycle parking facilities and improved signage are also needed.

Dogs

Dog walking is a popular activity at Fawkner Park. The park provides a large dog off leash area, while the rest of the park is designated as a dog on leash area, except for an area near the two schools which is prohibited to dogs. Dogs must be brought under control within 20 metres of playgrounds and BBQs in the dog off leash area⁵.

Following consultation, the current area set aside for exercising dogs off leash is considered large enough. Some dog owners were concerned about the area overlapping with sports grounds and suggested that when these grounds were in use there was limited space for dogs. However, examination of use has indicated that there is always a considerable dog off leash area available. As discussed earlier, the high level of use of Fawkner Park depends on an overlap of activities. An information display, showing when different spaces are being used, would give dog walkers more choices about visiting the park when their favourite areas were available.

A major problem in Fawkner Park, highlighted by community feedback, is non compliance with the dog on leash/off leash areas. It is important that people who do not wish to be around dogs can use dog on leash and prohibited areas, knowing they will not be bothered by dogs.

Events and Commercial activities

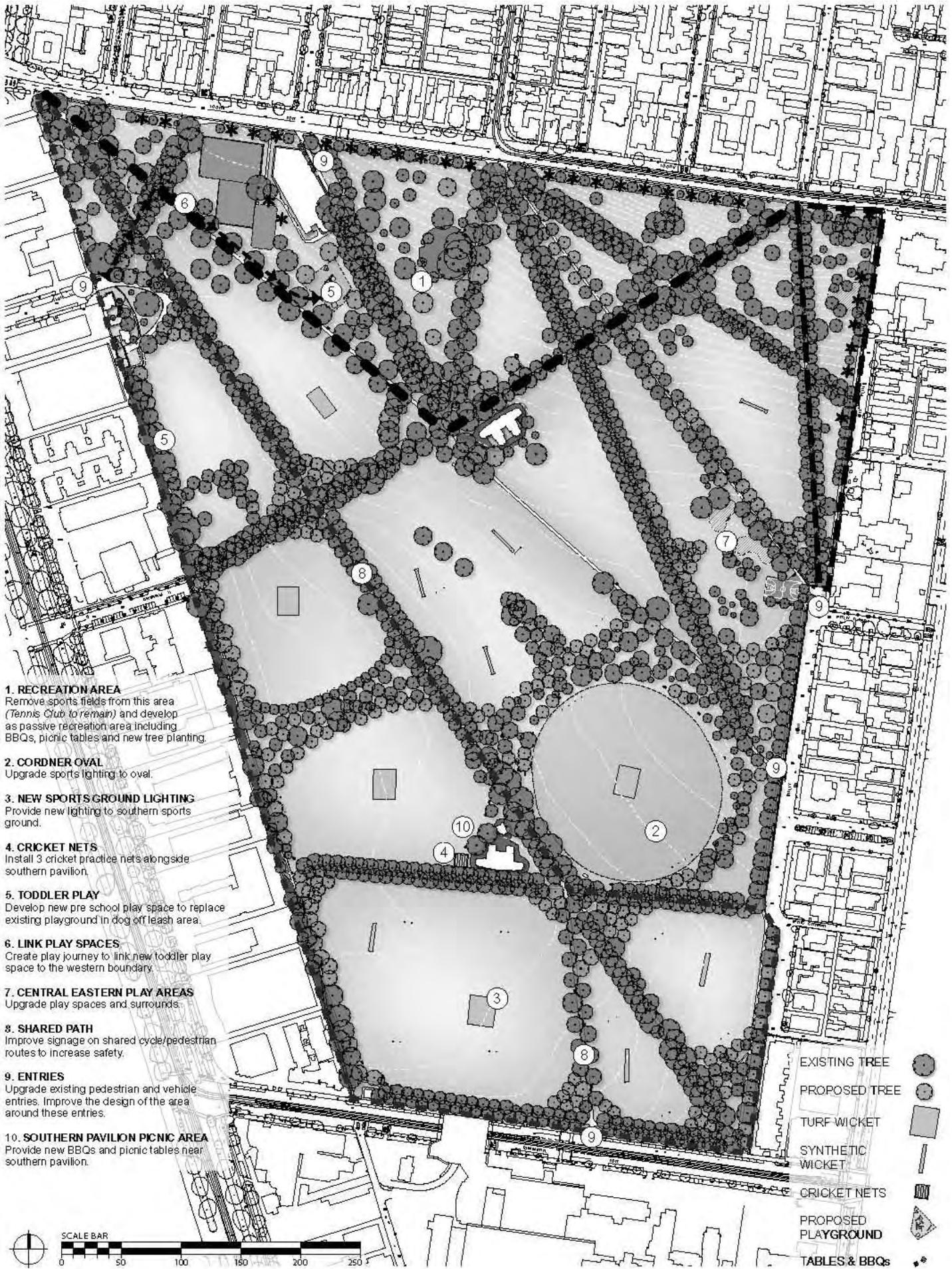
In the City of Melbourne's *Guidelines for the sustainable management of parklands supporting events staged in Melbourne's parks and gardens (2005)*, Fawkner Park is considered suitable for 'low' and 'medium' impact events. Other than sporting events, the major commercial activities currently taking place in the park are corporate functions, filmmaking and personal training functions. The limited number of public toilets and car parking around the park creates some issues that need to be managed when allocating the park for these events. Some concern was expressed by the community about vehicle access when marquees were set up for commercial events. There was also concern about personal training companies using amplified sound, or conducting their activities early in the morning.

In the future these events and activities should be allocated to designated activity areas, be consistent with the carrying capacity of the park for all activities, and fully comply with relevant management strategies.

Community facilities

Fawkner Park Community Centre is located in the northern part of the park and provides a number of community services including child care, maternal and child health and senior citizens services. The building incorporates a café and booking facility for the nearby tennis courts. The interface between the centre and the surrounding park, and the entry from Toorak Road West, needs improving.

5 Requirement is part of Order in Council, August 2000.



Plan 6 Recreation Proposals

Proposals relating to uses and activities within Fawkner Park are:

1. To continue to manage the park for a wide range of recreation activities. The current balance of passive and active uses should be maintained, with no expansion of organised sporting activities.
2. To set aside an area in the northern part of the park (See Plan 6: Recreation Proposals) for passive recreation, with no structured activities permitted. Achieving this would include:
 - 2.1. installing seating, picnic tables and barbeques;
 - 2.2. planting in line with the proposals under landscape character;
 - 2.3. developing a new toddler/pre school aged playground (adjacent to the tennis courts and community centre) to replace the existing western playground. A play journey would also be developed to create a link between the park's western entrance and the playground. The western playground would be removed when the new playground was completed;
 - 2.4. upgrading the east playground;
 - 2.5. retaining the north playground as recommended in the Council's Playground Strategy;
 - 2.6. continuing to liaise with nearby schools about the management of the east and north playgrounds, and recognising them as key users; and
 - 2.7. providing opportunities for events currently permitted in this area to be relocated to other areas in the park such as near the north western boundary.
3. To maintain and manage the current levels, frequency and standard of sporting activities in the park. The current practice of allocating smaller sports grounds to junior and lower levels of competition should continue to minimise the risks of injury or accident. In line with past practice, those grounds that overlap with each other will not be used simultaneously. Facilitating sports use would include:
 - 3.1. upgrading all sports grounds, except the turf wicket near the northern pavilion which should be removed, to allow sport to be maintained at the current levels of use;
 - 3.2. upgrading the southern pavilion to maximise availability of toilet and change facilities;
 - 3.3. improving sports lighting at Cordner Oval;
 - 3.4. installing lighting at another sports ground in the park (See Plan 6: Recreation Proposals); and
 - 3.5. installing three permanent cricket practice nets next to the southern pavilion to provide for club use, and general community use at other times.
4. To designate major and minor routes used by cyclists (See Plan 7: Access, Amenity and Safety Proposals), subject to a speed limit, and improve the shared pedestrian/bicycle path design and signage.
5. To provide secure bicycle parking facilities and other amenities.
6. To retain the current dog on leash, dog off leash and prohibited areas within the park.
7. To ensure events and functions are located in designated activity areas and the level of use is consistent with the City of Melbourne's *Guidelines for sustainable management of parklands supporting events staged in Melbourne's Parks and Gardens (2005)*.
8. To upgrade the area between the community centre and Toorak Road West, and the interface between the building and the park.
9. To ensure that the community centre and associated facilities, including all car parks, not be expanded to encroach further into the park.



3.3 Access, Amenity and Safety

Access to and within Fawkner Park is important for its role as a welcoming, safe and enjoyable place. Entrances are vital for establishing the nature of a park and giving people a feel for the kind of open space they are entering.

There are 17 separate entry points to Fawkner Park. Pedestrian access at all entrances needs improving, as highlighted by the Disability Access Audit Report (2004). Priority should be given to entrances at Slater Street, adjacent to the community centre, Commercial Road and Pasley Street north.

The Pasley Street north entry is a busy area with a high activity level. Therefore it is proposed to relocate the vehicle entry from this point to reduce some pressure on the entry (See Plan 7: Access, Amenity and Safety Proposals).

Although Fawkner Park has a good overall interface with the surrounding network of streets and public transport, some improvements could be made to crossing points along busy roads (See Plan 7: Access, Amenity and Safety Proposals).

Car parking is extremely limited around the park. In Pasley Street and Park Street, in particular, car parking is in high demand due to its proximity to the park. However, these spaces are situated in residential streets where there are nearby schools, creating significant parking pressure. To cater for regular school visits to the park, a bus drop off/pick up area may be needed but this would mean sacrificing a few car spaces.

People need to be encouraged to use alternative forms of transport when visiting the park. Secure bicycle facilities, improved pedestrian links and signage will all help reduce the pressure on car parking.

There is also an opportunity to improve links between Fawkner Park and the surrounding network of green spaces including Albert Park and The Domain Parklands. In particular, an east-west bicycle link to St Kilda should be explored.

One of the key features of Fawkner Park is its historic path network, which must be maintained to a high standard to cater for a large number of park users. In addition, further paths should be developed along the east boundary of the park as these are clearly desired pedestrian routes. The granitic sand path on the southern boundary also needs to be upgraded and maintained.

In line with Council's lighting strategy, lighting within Fawkner Park should be upgraded and maintained. Priority should be given to improving lighting along the main pathway, and along the western boundary pathway.

Public toilet facilities are provided in the northern and southern sections of the park. The northern toilet facilities, which support sports users, consist of separate men's and women's toilet blocks and were built in the early 1930s. The southern toilet block also dates to the late 1930s, is of moderate significance⁶, and is in poor condition. Neither of these facilities comply with Council's current policy for safe location and design of toilet facilities within parks.

The need to improve toilet facilities in the park creates the opportunity to bring the provision in line with Council's Public Toilet Strategy (1997). The strategy recommends that public toilets are placed at the boundaries of parks to improve their safety. Public toilets are proposed for both the northern and southern boundaries of Fawkner Park.

Access to toilets for organised sports users is required more centrally in the park. It is proposed that keyed access to toilets only will be developed at the northern pavilion, and for the current southern pavilion toilets. The existing northern public toilets would then be removed.

Over time a large number of amenities have been installed in the park, which are in varying condition. These facilities need to be progressively upgraded, with specific attention given to the location of seating, drinking fountains and rubbish bins. The circular seating located in some parts of the park is of historical and moderate significance and should be retained⁷.

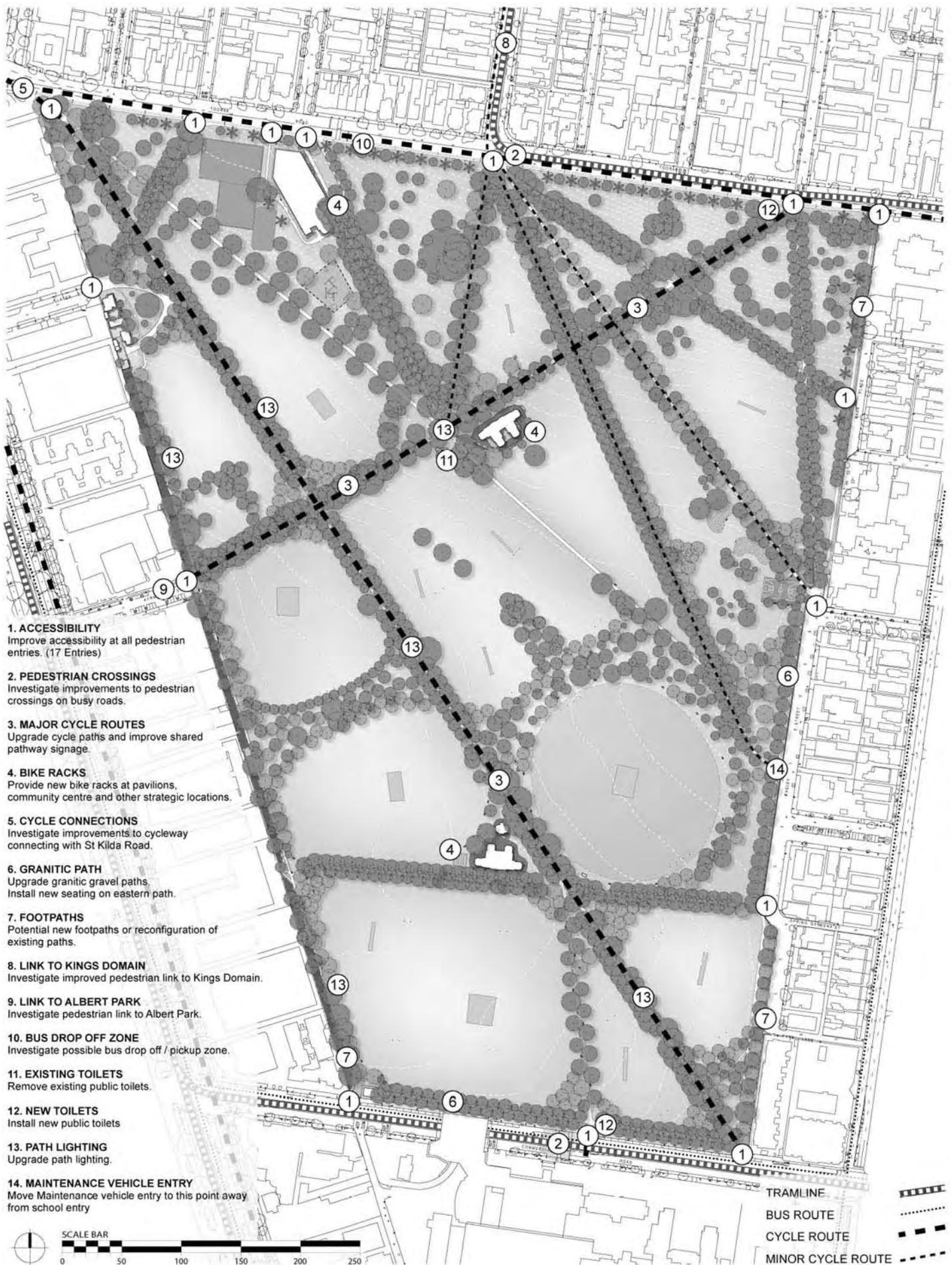
Good design principles are also needed to guide the development of improved signage within the park. Signage should help visitors enjoy their time in the park but also educate them about how to minimise their impact on other users, particularly in relation to dog control and responsible cycling. Likewise, old signage should be replaced with new visitor information about the location of toilets, sports grounds and other amenities.

Community feedback during the preparation of the Master Plan indicated a strong interest in knowing more about the park's history, and its tree and wildlife species. An opportunity exists to develop an interpretative plan.

Path maintenance was also high priority for the community, as was improved lighting on the major paths. There was also demand for access to toilets within the central parts of the park for sports users.

6 Fawkner Park Conservation Analysis 2002

7 Fawkner Park Conservation Analysis 2002



Plan 7 Access, Amenity and Safety Proposals

Proposals relating to access, amenity and safety in Fawkner Park are:

1. To progressively upgrade all entries to the park in line with the recommendations of the Disability Access Audit. To relocate vehicle entry from the Pasley Street north entry.
2. To upgrade crossing points at adjacent roadways and pedestrian linkages to the park (See Plan 7: Access, Amenity and Safety Proposals).
3. To investigate pedestrian and bicycle links between Fawkner Park and other regional destinations including the Domain and Albert Park.
4. To investigate strategies that encourage more people to leave their cars at home and access Fawkner Park by public transport, cycling or walking.
5. To investigate options for a bus drop off/pick up zone (eg. in Toorak Road West).



6. To install new granitic sand paths on the park's eastern boundary (See Plan 7: Access, Amenity and Safety Proposals) and upgrade the granitic sand path on the southern boundary. To maintain the path networks at a high standard.
7. To upgrade and maintain lighting in the park. Priority should be given to the main pathway (See Plan 7: Access, Amenity and Safety Proposals), and the pathway along the western boundary.
8. To improve toilet facilities within the park by:
 - 8.1. providing new public toilets on the northern and southern boundaries of the park, after further consultation on the detailed design;
 - 8.2. removing the existing public toilets in the north of the park; and
 - 8.3. providing access to toilet facilities at the northern pavilion and southern pavilion to organised sports users of the park.
9. To progressively upgrade all park amenities, with particular attention to design and location. The Disability Access Audit should guide selection and location of park furniture. Seating should be maintained along pathways and sports representatives should be consulted to ensure seating locations serve sports spectators. To retain and maintain the existing circular seating.
10. To install more seating, as a priority, on and near the southern boundary of the park. This seating should be installed within the new planting area close to existing sports grounds (refer to Section 3.1).
11. To provide new picnic tables and BBQs in the new passive recreation space in the northern part of the park. An additional BBQ and picnic table should also be installed near the southern pavilion, and should be carefully designed to complement the building's character.
12. To replace rubbish bins and recycling facilities in line with Council's waste management practices.
13. To ensure good design principles drive the development and implementation of improved signage within the park. Priority should be given to signage regarding dog control and cycling.
14. To develop an interpretative plan for the park, including information about its history, and tree and wildlife species.



3.4 Environmental Sustainability

Management of all parks and gardens requires a significant amount of resources such as water, chemicals and energy. Parks also generate a large amount of waste.

Community expectations to reduce water use and manage parks in a more sustainable manner have increased in recent years. Council's commitment to more sustainable management of its parks and gardens is outlined in its *Growing Green (2003)* strategy.

A major problem in some areas of Fawkner Park is drainage, which is due to its location at the lower end of a catchment with relatively shallow outfall through Albert Park and St Kilda Road.

While stormwater retention works on the western boundary of the park have reduced a serious flooding risk to properties along this boundary, there could be occasional, short term flooding in this part of the park from a large storm. One option is to improve subsoil drainage in flatter areas of the park. However this may not be feasible due to the shallow depth and grade of outfall drains. These issues will be investigated further as part of other proposed ground renovation works.

Strong community support exists to investigate water catchment and alternative water sources within the park, such as an underground storage facility. However, there was little support for creating a water feature that could double as a storage area for recycled stormwater, or for lawns being allowed to yellow off as a water conservation measure.

In addition, there was a mixed response to increasing biodiversity within the park by expanding the number of plant species. However, an increase in plant diversity may be appropriate as part of the western boundary redesign.



Proposals relating to environmental sustainability in Fawkner Park are:

1. To develop a water management plan for Fawkner Park that minimises water usage while ensuring the health of trees and maintenance of sports grounds.
2. To mulch the root zone areas under selected trees as required for tree health, yet minimise mulch spillage.
3. To select tree and grass species that minimise watering requirements, yet ensure Fawkner Park's heritage values and sports uses are maintained. Species that demand a high level of resources should be avoided.
4. To investigate and upgrade subsoil drainage systems, where possible, during the proposed major ground renovations.
5. To explore the use of alternative water sources such as stormwater or recycled water to irrigate Fawkner Park.
6. To investigate options for water harvesting and the storing of recycled stormwater underground.
7. To investigate environmentally sustainable design initiatives for reducing energy use and water consumption in building upgrades.
8. To install new irrigation systems in the park allowing different parts of the park to be watered at different rates. Investigate the installation of a system that could be converted to non-potable water.
9. To expand the range of species planted on the park's western boundary as part of the proposed new landscape design (see Section 3.1).
10. To control tree pests and diseases using biological controls, where available.

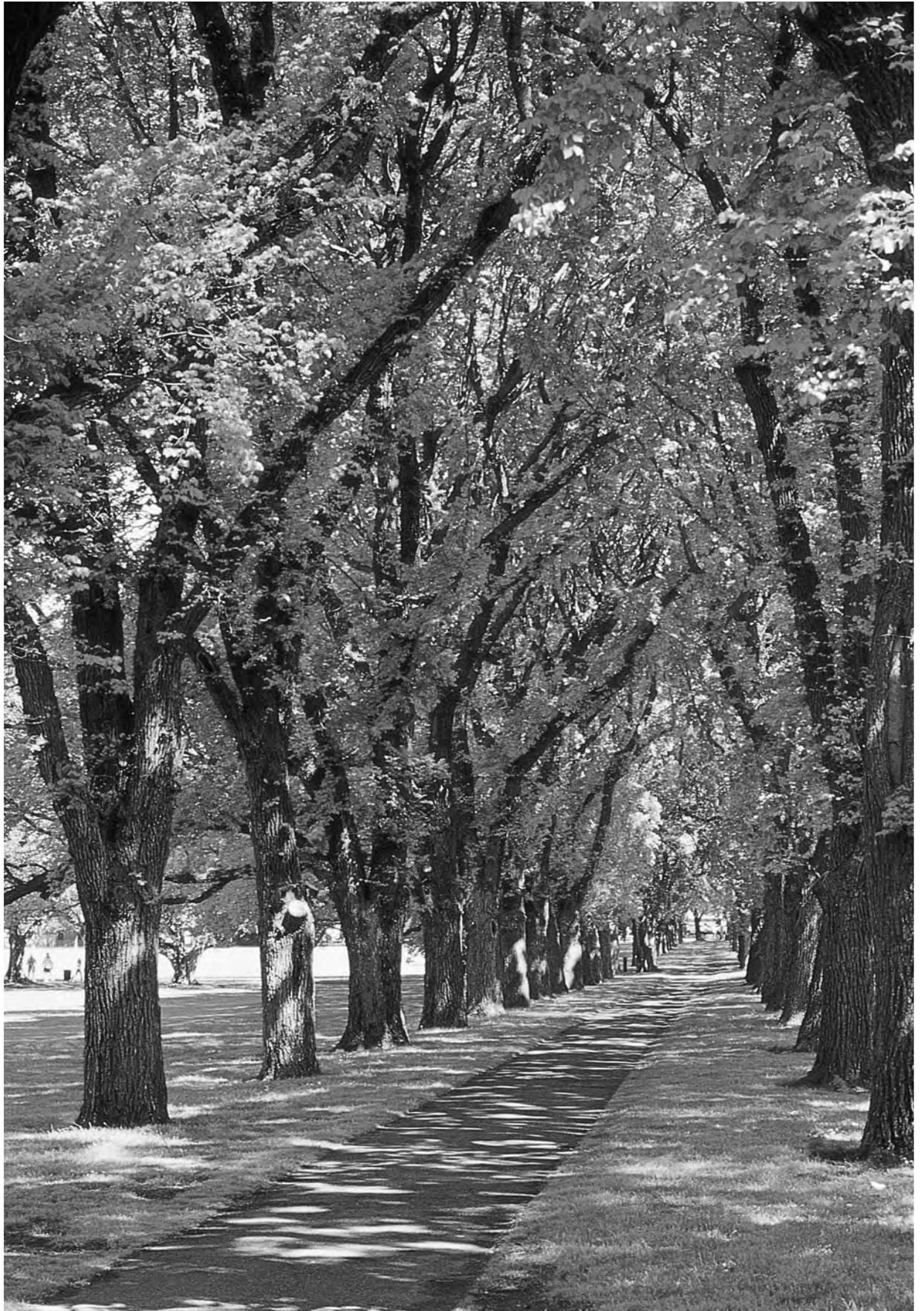
4. Management

Clear, sensible management systems need to be in place to ensure Fawkner Park continues to provide for a diverse range of uses. Community feedback outlined a range of management issues that needed to be addressed, including maintenance, dog control and cycling protocols.

Proposals that address management issues at Fawkner Park are:

1. To ensure the highest standard of work is undertaken by Open Space and Tree Management Contractors in line with the contract specification for the park.
2. To continue to manage the sports ground allocation to match appropriate competition levels with sports ground sizes.
3. To introduce an education program to minimise conflict between commuter cyclists and other uses of the park. Compliance with speed limits should be encouraged.
4. To require compliance with the dog on and off leash areas, ensuring enjoyment of other park users is not diminished. Compliance with these regulations should be monitored.
5. To provide information on seasonal sports ground bookings in the dog off leash area, to enable dog walkers to plan their activities if there is a specific area they wish to use.
6. To ensure that event organisers comply with booking conditions to protect park values and residential amenity.





5. Implementation

A range of projects are proposed within this Master Plan, some requiring significant capital expenditure. An Implementation Plan will be developed outlining a proposed timetable for these projects and establishing a set of achievable priorities.

Community feedback during the preparation of the Master Plan provided guidance on priorities for the Implementation Plan. These priorities include:

1. Implementing a tree planting program, comprising both priority avenue planting and planting in the corners of the open areas.
2. Developing a new landscape plan for the western boundary in full consultation with adjacent residents, and implementation of the plan.
3. Enhancing opportunities for sports users including upgrading of the southern pavilion, renovating sports grounds, re-organising use of sports grounds and upgrading the lighting at Cordner Oval.

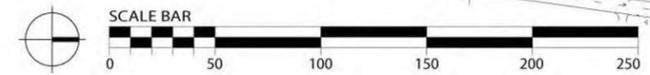
4. Developing a detailed design for the passive recreation area including provision of a new pre school aged playground, BBQs and picnic tables, and implementation of the plan.
5. Upgrading the eastern playground.
6. Provision of new public toilet facilities on the northern and southern boundaries, and access for organised sports users to toilets associated with the northern and southern pavilions.
7. Upgrading park amenities including seats and signage.
8. Developing plans for upgrading the entries and implementation of the plans.

The implementation of the above projects will depend on the availability of resources through either Council's operating program or, for new facilities, through Council's annual capital works program.

6. Review of the Plan

Although the vision and broad direction of the Master Plan should be ongoing, the specific recommendations of Master Plans are generally considered to be relevant for about 10 years after adoption by Council.

Therefore it is proposed that Fawkner Park Master Plan be reviewed in 2016.



MASTER PLAN NOTES

- 1. RECREATION AREA**
Remove sports grounds from this area (*Tennis Club to remain*) and develop as passive recreation area including BBQs and picnic tables. Reinforce passive recreation area with groups of tall branching trees to create more intimate spaces.
- 2. CORDNER OVAL**
Upgrade sports lighting to oval.
- 3. NEW SPORTS GROUND LIGHTING**
Provide new lighting to southern sports ground.
- 4. CRICKET NETS**
Install 3 cricket practice nets alongside southern pavilion.
- 5. TODDLER PLAY**
Develop new pre school play space to replace the playground currently in the dog off leash area.
- 6. LINK PLAY SPACES**
Create play journey to link the play space to the western boundary.
- 7. FOOTPATHS**
Potential new footpaths or reconfiguration of existing paths.
- 8. ENTRY PLANTING**
Increase tree planting at major entries and path intersections.
- 9. BREAK IN AVENUE**
Retain break in tree avenue to maintain unique character.
- 10. CORNER PLANTING**
Plant tall trees in corners near avenues to reduce visual impact of the transition phase when tree replacement is required.
- 11. DEPOT INTERFACE**
Upgrade interface between the depot and the park.
- 12. WESTERN BOUNDARY**
Develop the western boundary path to improve the interface with the park, and develop the landscape character in this area.
- 13. GATHERING POINTS**
Respond to existing uses along the western boundary and develop occasional seating and zones off the path that accommodate people gathering near building entries.
- 14. SOUTHERN PAVILION PICNIC AREA**
Provide new BBQs and picnic tables near southern pavilion.
- 15. PUBLIC TOILETS**
Install new public toilets.

Do you have a question for the Melbourne City Council? Call and speak to us.

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