

Princes Park Master Plan





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INTRODUCTION

Princes Park is one of Melbourne's most valued and well-used inner urban parks. Located in the north of the City of Melbourne municipality and less than three kilometres from Melbourne's central city, it includes an attractive landscape of open vistas framed by grand avenues of trees. The park provides a setting for a wide range of recreation and sporting activities for people from both a local and regional catchment.

Like many other parks in Melbourne, Princes Park is under pressure from many different uses and influences. The level of use of the park is increasing, particularly the demand for community sport. Population growth and the impacts of climate change are expected to increase this pressure. The park also faces significant vegetation management issues as a result of its uniformly ageing stock of mature trees.

This plan is based on a review of the 1998 Princes Park Ten Year Plan and sets a vision that protects and enhances the park's inherent qualities into the future.

Purpose of the master plan

The purpose of the Princes Park Master Plan 2012 is to set the strategic direction and guide the management of the park over the next 10 years.

The master plan addresses all areas of Princes Park outside the Carlton Recreation Ground. The stadium and internal spaces of the ground are managed by the Carlton Football Club under a lease separate to the rest of the park. However, the perimeter of the stadium and its relationship to the surrounding parkland are addressed in this plan.

Preparation of the master plan

This master plan has been prepared following a number of processes, including research and data collection on uses and activities, the response to current Council policy, the history of Princes Park and extensive community engagement.

Community engagement 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 March and April 2012. The 300 responses received provided valuable feedback that has informed the development of the Draft Master Plan.

Council endorsed the draft Master Plan on 3 July for community engagement between July and August 2012. The final Master Plan was prepared following consideration of all feedback and submitted to Council for approval.

The preparation of the Princes Park Master Plan was assisted by the City of Melbourne Parks and Gardens Advisory Committee, sporting clubs and community groups associated with the park, users of the park and the wider community.



PRINCES PARK

Description of Princes Park

Princes Park is within the City of Melbourne and borders the City of Yarra to the east and the City of Moreland to the north. Covering an area of approximately 39 ha and stretching for 1.5 km along Royal Parade, the park forms part of one of the most important gateways into central Melbourne.

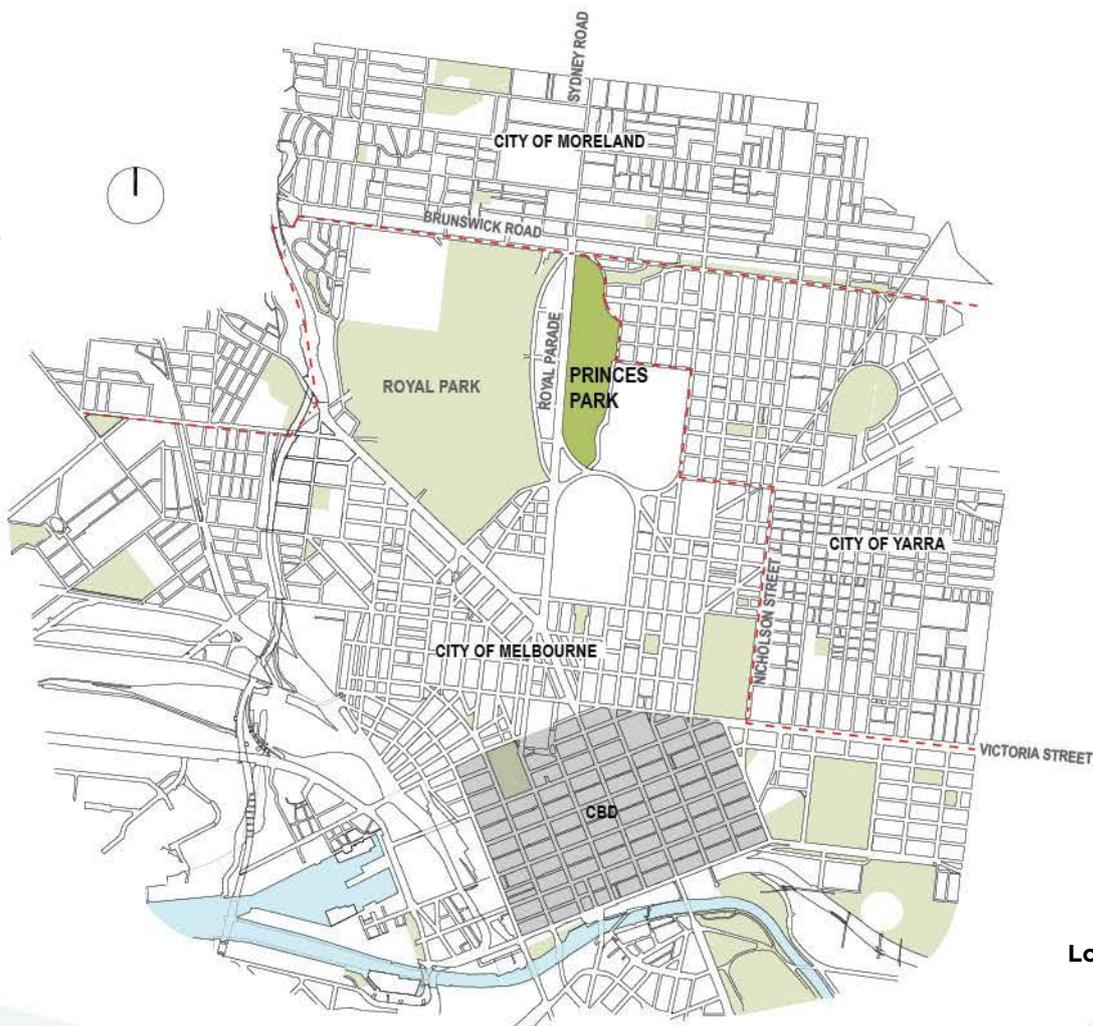
Princes Park is Crown land permanently reserved as a site for a public park. The Melbourne City Council as Committee of Management of the park is responsible for its care and management.

The park's landscape is characterised by a mix of grassed clearings, edged with avenues of mature trees along pathways. The southern part of the park provides open vistas of the city skyline. The northern part of the park is more enclosed with surrounding buildings and tree lined pathways.

A dominant feature of the park is the Carlton Recreation Ground which, in part, visually divides the sports fields to the south with the largely informal recreation spaces to the north.

Throughout its history, sport has been a strong focus in the park. Carlton Football Club, Carlton Cricket Club, Princes Park Carlton Bowls Club and Princes Hill Tennis Club have all been active in the park since the late 19th and early 20th century.

In the draft City of Melbourne Open Space Strategy, the park is identified as a Regional level open space with a primary purpose of catering to a broader Melbourne-wide population, including residents of the City of Melbourne.



Locality Plan

History

Princes Park was part of 2,560 acres reserved from sale by Superintendent La Trobe in 1845, which included land now occupied by Royal Park, Melbourne Cemetery and the University of Melbourne. The land was predominantly grassland, with scattered stands of river red gums, yellow gums and box.

In 1873 a total of 97 acres was reserved as 'Princes Park' and the land permanently vested in the Ministry of Lands and Melbourne City Council to be used 'for the recreation and amusement of our subjects and people'.

In 1885, extensive tree planting took place, including lemon scented gums, Gippsland mahogany and English elms. A brick caretaker's cottage was constructed together with an internal carriage drive, while a strip of land was excised from the northern end of the park for the construction of the North Carlton Railway.

An oval was established in the southern section of the park in 1878 and at the same time Carlton Cricket Club requested to move from its triangular site south of Cemetery Road West into the park. In 1886 land was granted to the Princes Hill Bowling Club to be located north of the North Carlton Railway line. During 1895 the newly merged Carlton Football and Cricket Clubs were granted permissive occupancy of the land now occupied by the Carlton Recreation Ground.

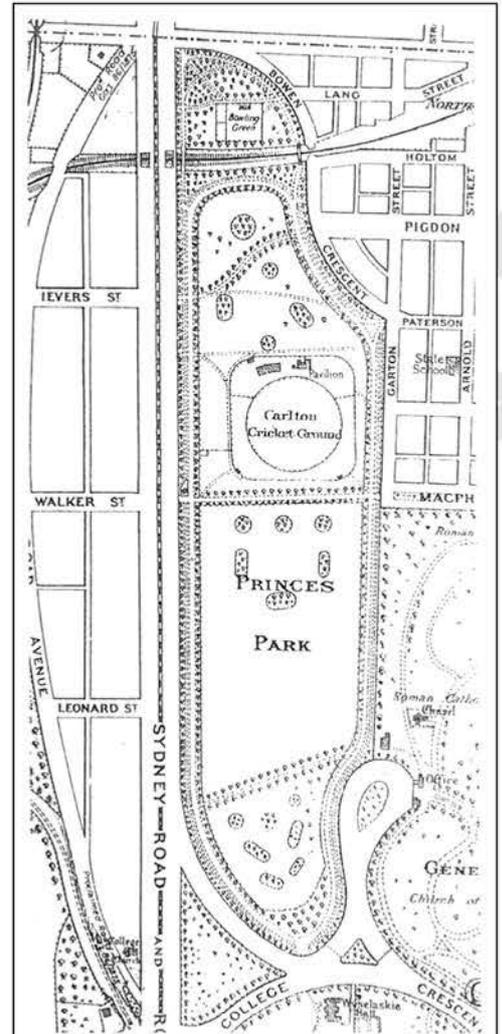
To encourage greater public use, Council removed the boundary fences around the park in 1918, constructed tennis courts in 1919 and established a playground alongside the tennis courts in 1921. Subsequently, a grass walk was constructed in 1922 stretching from the Macpherson Street and Garton Street corner to the railway line, while enhancements were undertaken north of the line, where a lake was constructed that was later converted to a children's wading pool in 1937.

Princes Park Drive was constructed in 1936 and the sports pavilions alongside Sydney Road (now Royal Parade) were constructed in 1938. Little work occurred in the park during the 1940s except for an army depot built in 1942.

Sporting facilities were upgraded in the 1950s while the 1960s saw the construction of Crawford Oval and the nearby soccer pitch, and closure of the wading pool.

Oval One was constructed in 1972 to promote junior sport in the Carlton area as well as act as a playing field for Princes Hill Secondary College and the training ground for the Carlton Cricket and Football clubs.

In 1973, a master plan was completed which resulted in improvements to the children's play area and general upgrading works. In 1976 a fitness circuit was introduced around the edge of the park.



Princes Park site plan, 1905
Reproduced from Whitehead, Pg 8



A second Princes Park Master Plan was developed in 1988. Subsequently, the ornamental pond was reconstructed at the north end of the park, the railway reserve was restored as parkland, a picnic area was established near the children's play area near Garton Street and a gravel running track constructed around the perimeter of the park.

In 1996, the new 'Legends Stand' was erected along the eastern edge of the Carlton Recreation Ground. New children's playground equipment was installed near Macpherson Street, while tree planting was carried out in under-utilised corners throughout the park.

In 1998 a third master plan was approved. The plan set out the strategic direction for management of the park as well improvements to its amenity and appearance. Since 1998 there have been significant improvements to the park. Tree planting has taken place predominately in the southern section of the park, fitness stations have been upgraded and the east-west paths have been renewed along with associated new park lighting. In addition, the pond has been connected to the Royal Park wetlands water storage as a part Council's commitment to water harvesting and reuse.

In 2005, the use of the Carlton Recreation Ground for AFL games was discontinued and in 2006 the redevelopment of the ground began to provide elite training and administration facilities. Additional works in this area of the park include relocation of the Depot to the Carlton Recreation Ground, reinstatement of the caretakers cottage and upgrade of Carlton Recreation Ground Car Park.



Policy context

The Draft Princes Park Master Plan has been developed in the wider strategic framework of the City of Melbourne.

A number of higher level strategies and policies have shaped the draft Princes Park Master Plan. These include:

The Conservation Analysis for Princes Park (2012)

Open Space Strategy (2012)

Draft Urban Forest Strategy (2012)

Water Management Plan - Parks, Gardens & Open Spaces (2009)

Future Melbourne (2008)

Active Melbourne Strategy (2007)

Council Plan 2009-2013 (2011)

Growing Green (2003)

Parks Policy (1998)

Tree Policy (1998)

Princes Park Ten Year Plan (1998)



Photos by Phillip Rogers, 1982
Source: State Library of Victoria



Existing Conditions

- EXISTING TREES 
- DOG OFF LEASH AREA 
- POND 
- BOOKABLE EVENT SPACE 
- BOWLS CLUB **(a)**
- CAPITAL CITY TRAIL **(b)**
- BOOKABLE EVENT AREA **(c)**
- SMALL PLAYGROUND **(d)**
- TEMPORARY CAR PARKING **(e)**
- CARETAKERS COTTAGE **(f)**
- CARLTON RECREATION GROUND **(g)**
- LEGEND STAND **(h)**
- NORTHERN PAVILION **(i)**
- OVAL ONE **(j)**
- DISTRICT PLAYGROUND **(k)**
- TENNIS CLUB **(l)**
- SOUTHERN SPORTS FIELDS **(m)**
- SOUTHERN PAVILION **(n)**
- CRAWFORD OVAL **(o)**
- TOILET 
- TRAM STOP 

Figure 1:
Existing Conditions

VISION AND PRINCIPLES

Vision

Princes Park will provide for a diverse range of high quality passive informal and active recreation and sporting activities in a magnificent landscape of open spaces, surrounded by significant tree avenues and boundary plantings. The park will be accessible, safe and sustainably managed.

Principles

The principles have been divided into key themes.

Cultural heritage

- Ensure conservation of attributes of cultural and historical significance.
- Explore opportunities for cultural heritage interpretation of the park.

Landscape character

- Protect and enhance the landscape values of the park. Conserve the landscape characteristics of tree avenues, pathways and open spaces while strengthening tree planting particularly around the park boundary. Maintain openness and views of the city skyline.
- Unify the visual character of the park and seek to minimise the impact of features which adversely affect the visual character (e.g. Carlton Recreation Ground, bowls club, car parks).
- Conserve, enhance and renew valued features of the landscape rather than making any substantial change. Develop a strategy for staged tree replacement that ensures a healthy tree population while maintaining the landscape character.



Uses and activities

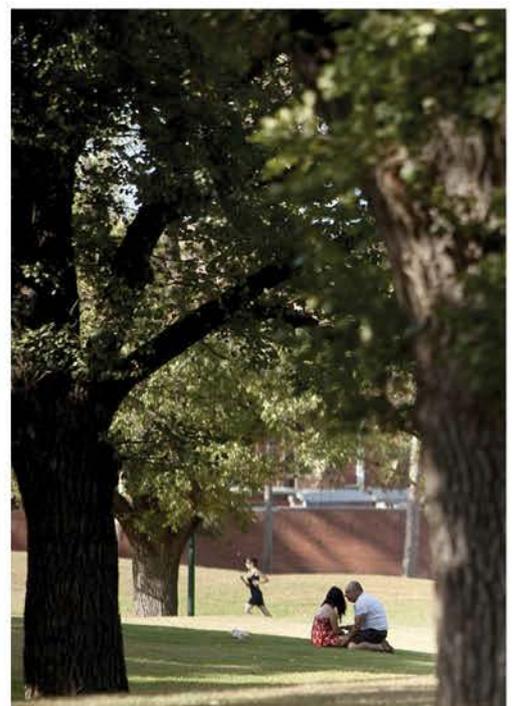
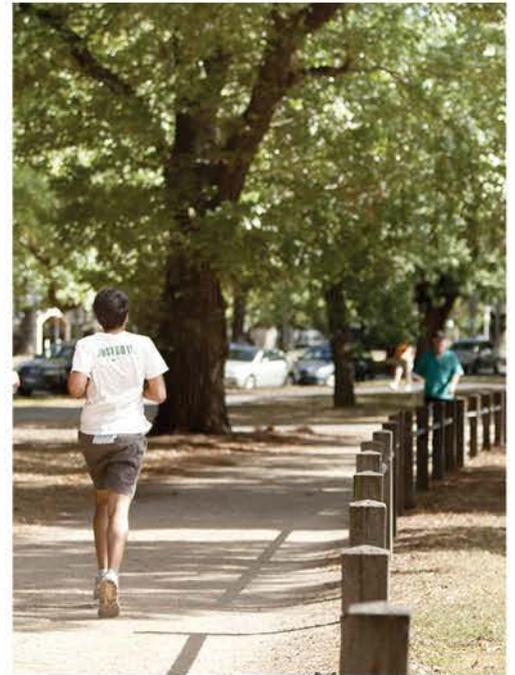
- Encourage public use and enjoyment of the park by maintaining and enhancing a complementary mixture of activities. Support use of the park by people of all ages.
- Provide recreation and sporting opportunities consistent with the park's values and capacity. Introduce additional activities or uses only if these are consistent with park values. Continue to use the park primarily for community-level recreation and sporting activities while maintain free public access.
- Maintain the sporting focus in the south of Princes Park and retain the predominantly passive and informal activity in the north of the park.
- Optimise the use of existing facilities and spaces in the park, reduce unnecessary ancillary uses, and increase access to areas or buildings that are currently either enclosed or unused. Ensure there is no net loss of public open space.
- Reduce the impact of inappropriate uses – especially car parking – on the landscape and desired park uses.

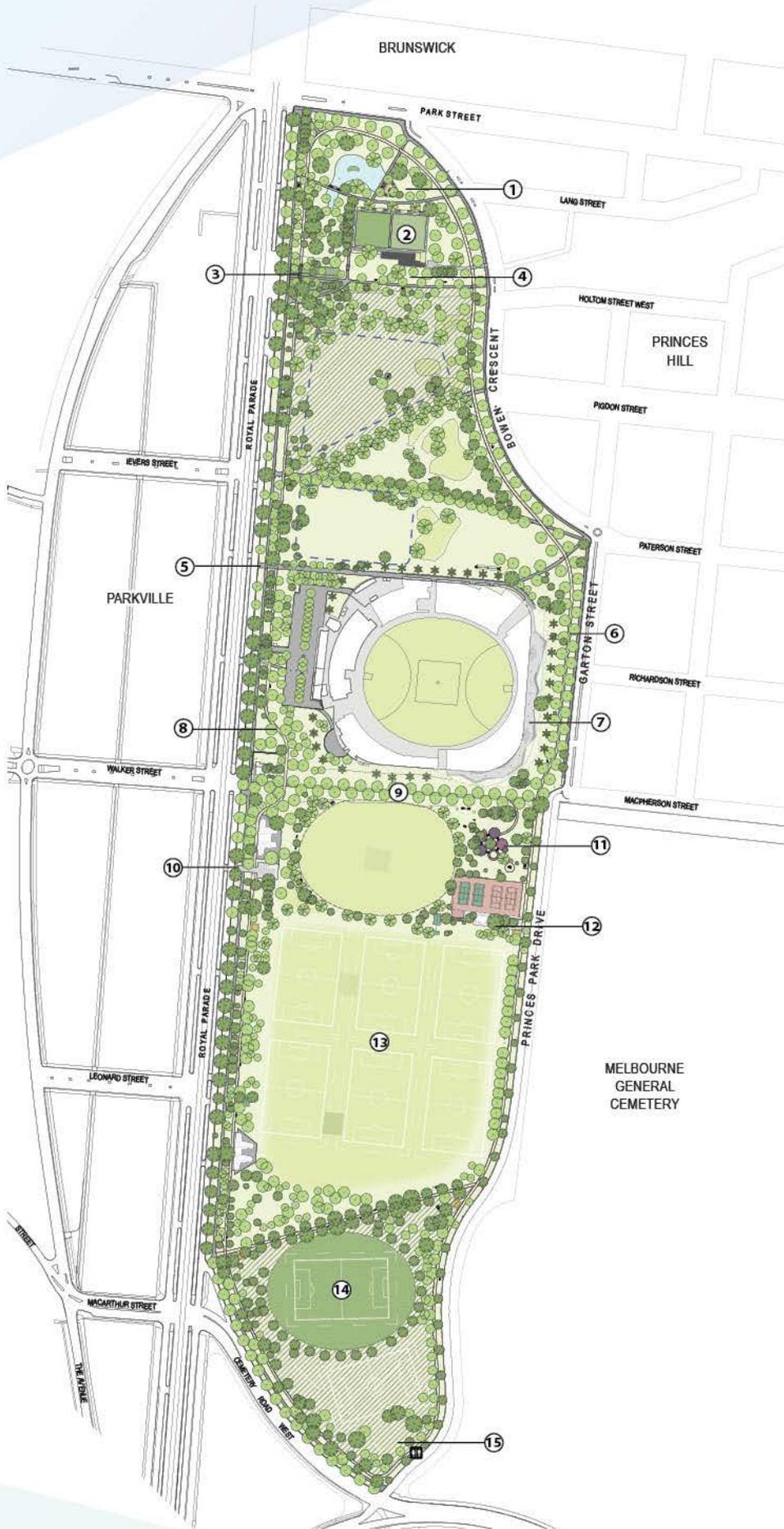
Access, amenity and safety

- Maintain a good sense of perceived personal safety in the park through all aspects of the design, including lighting, the location and size of public toilets, and the types and location of plantings.
- Ensure access into and within the park for all people including those with disabilities.

Environmental sustainability

- Preserve the biodiversity in Princes Park and continue to provide opportunities for people to appreciate its biodiversity.
- Ensure the park adapts to the impacts of climate change.
- Seek opportunities for greater water efficiency, water security, water sensitive urban design and improved soil moisture levels.





Key Recommendations

- EXISTING TREES 
- FUTURE TREE PLANTING 
- DOG OFF LEASH AREA 
- BOOKABLE EVENTS SPACE 
- NEW PLAY & PICNIC FACILITIES **①**
- BOWLS CLUB UPGRADES **②**
- NEW FOOTBRIDGE **③**
- RATIONALISATION OF PARKING **④**
- DEPOT / SERVICE VEHICLE ACCESS **⑤**
- TREE RENEWAL **⑥**
- UNDERCROFT IMPROVEMENTS **⑦**
- JOGGING TRACK REALIGNMENT **⑧**
- CENTRAL ELM WALK RENEWAL **⑨**
- RATIONALISATION OF PARKING **⑩**
- PLAYGROUND RENEWAL **⑪**
- TENNIS CLUB IMPROVEMENTS **⑫**
- SPORTSFIELD UPGRADES **⑬**
- MULTIPURPOSE SYNTHETIC OVAL **⑭**
- NEW TOILET & PICNIC TABLES **⑮**
- TOILET 
- TRAM STOP 

Figure 2: Key Recommendations



FUTURE DIRECTIONS

All recommendations outlined in this master plan have been developed to achieve the overall vision of the park. Future directions and guiding principles are set out under the following headings: landscape character and vegetation; uses and activities; park amenities and services; and environmental sustainability.

Landscape character and vegetation

The landscape character of Princes Park is dominated by open, grassed areas with mature trees lining the perimeter of the park and avenues along the footpaths that cross the park. There are also scattered specimen trees in areas that are not used as sports fields. Many of these features are incomplete remnants of older plantings.

There are very few areas of shrubs, garden beds or other small ornamental plantings. Those that exist include screening hedges around the bowls club and some planting around the tennis club. Dense planting along the capital city trail currently contributes to the separation of the northern park from the south.

The mixture of trees in Princes Park is typical of many of Melbourne's parks today, and includes elms, ash, poplars, Moreton Bay Figs and Canary Island Date Palms. Significantly, there are also many river red gums and pine trees planted alongside the elms of Royal Parade. This combination remains from a planting style that historically dominated most of Melbourne's parks and gardens but has subsequently disappeared from most other areas.

The Conservation Analysis for Princes Park identifies several avenues and plantings that are considered to be of primary significance to the landscape character and local heritage of the area. These include perimeter planting along Royal Parade and Bowen Crescent and several avenues that frame east west paths.

Tree planting over recent years has focused on the southern areas of the park, predominantly around the perimeter of the open sports fields and along Princes Park Drive. This has enhanced the character of the park and increased the tree population significantly, however in some places species type and planting density limits views and affects the perceived safety along the park perimeter.

Managing Melbourne's tree population

Melbourne will face the loss of a large proportion of its mature trees in coming years due to the combined effects of ageing trees and recent prolonged drought. Significant action is required to ensure a healthy tree population for future generations. The draft Urban Forest Strategy has been developed to respond to the combined challenges that tree loss, climate change and urban growth will have on the City of Melbourne's tree population.





As a key strategy informing the Princes Park Master Plan, it sets recommendations to:

- Increase canopy cover - to provide shade and counter the Urban Heat Island Effect
- Ensure a diverse mix of trees - to limit susceptibility to pest and disease outbreak
- Manage the declining population of trees - by implementing tree replacements, and planning for age diversity.

Compared to other City of Melbourne parks, an assessment of the Useful Life Expectancy (ULE) for Princes Park's trees shows a relatively good spread of ages, which is a key part of City of Melbourne's strategy for ensuring a healthy tree population into the future. Despite this, Princes Park is impacted by several declining tree avenues and plantings that are now nearing the end of their life. Many of these have been identified as having local heritage significance and care will be taken to ensure the character and history of these plantings are taken into account when planning replacement plantings.

The tree population of Princes Park is dominated by eucalypts (Myrtaceae family) and elms (Ulmaceae family), largely due to the many elm avenues in the north of the park and along Royal Parade, and the river red gum plantations along the western boundary, both of which are of local heritage significance. There is a need to replace several avenues of declining trees, and areas available for new plantings that provide the opportunity to consider alternate species, genera and family that would diversify the mix of trees in Princes Park and throughout the municipality, in keeping with the character of the park.

While it will be appropriate for some avenues of local significance to be replaced with the same species and layout, other plantings draw their significance mostly from their character and layout, so alternate species of similar form or layout could be considered.

The existing trees within Princes Park provide a canopy cover of approximately twenty two per cent. There are opportunities to increase canopy cover in Princes Park through new plantings. However, as smaller trees mature, it will be important to maintain key open spaces and vistas to protect the landscape character and diverse uses of Princes Park.

The landscape character of Princes Park is a product of landscape features (vegetation, trees, and topography) and activity and use. Future tree planting will reinforce the existing character and use of Princes Park (See figure 3).

Figure 3: **Landscape Character & Themes**

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>1 Village Green: feature trees
Evergreen & deciduous planting with clear sightlines</p> | <p>4 Recreation Ground: formal
Palms and feature trees formally planted around ground & carpark</p> | <p>6 Open Playing Fields: woodlands
Perimeter plantings of evergreen & conifers with clear sightlines</p> |
| <p>2 Open Lawns: mixed native
Perimeter planting with large feature trees to punctuate open lawns</p> | <p>5 Shaded Recreation: deciduous
Large shady trees around oval, and large feature trees beyond.</p> | <p>7 Evergreen Recreation: conifers
Mostly evergreen with feature deciduous, and clear sightlines</p> |
| <p>3 Open Lawns: deciduous
Deciduous avenues with large feature trees to punctuate open lawns</p> | | |

It is recommended to:

- Maintain and enhance the parks established landscape character and values.
- Maintain and protect significant vistas and views towards the city skyline.
- Renew the central elm avenue and raise the path levels to address flooding issues.
- Interpret significant landscape features such as trees and heritage character.
- Plan for the replacement of significant plantings that are facing decline, including many with local heritage significance. The replacement species and planting arrangements should suit climate and local conditions. In some instances replacement plantings may be of alternate species that retain the significant character.
- Reinforce formal planting layout around the Carlton Recreation Ground with additional Canary Island Date Palms. Palms that diminish the impact of the double row of deciduous trees on the east will be transplanted as part of this planting.
- Ensure thin planting along old railway reserve and reinforce native planting character as a way of connecting the north of the park with the south.
- Define the space around Oval One by planting deciduous shade trees along the boundary.
- Open lawn areas and uncluttered vistas should be maintained, especially across the large sports field between Oval One and Crawford Oval but also for smaller spaces north of the Carlton Recreation Ground.
- Identify opportunities for additional informal plantings, particularly around corners of sports fields.
- Plant large feature trees with spreading canopies to punctuate the open lawn areas.
- Tree selection and layout should reinforce character and planting themes (See figure 3). Selection and design should consider human experience as well as site suitability.
- Ensure new plantings do not detract from the perceived safety of the park by blocking sightlines. Assessment of tree form and density of recent plantings in the south may result in some thinning of existing trees to ensure clear sightlines.
- Continue to manage and maintain the trees in Princes Park to ensure ongoing health and longevity.



Uses and activities

Princes Park caters for extremely high levels of use every day of the week. Balancing these uses is an ongoing challenge to ensure the park provides a range of activities for a diverse population, while maintaining the highly valued character of the park.

Informal recreation

Informal recreation is the largest use of Princes Park with non-structured activities including walking, jogging, sitting, picnicking, children's play, cycling and dog walking.

The existing balance between informal recreation and sporting activities appears to satisfy public expectations.

It is recommended to:

- Continue to manage the park for a wide range of informal recreation activities. The current balance of informal recreation and sporting activities should be maintained with no expansion of sporting activities into other areas of the park.
- Ensure informal recreation is supported with adequate facilities including barbecues, seating and lighting (See Park amenities and services)

Play

Current play opportunities in Princes Park include the large playground at the MacPherson Street entrance and the small playground alongside Bowen Crescent in the north of the park.

The playground near MacPherson Street, together with the nearby barbecue and picnic facilities is one of the most popular destinations in the park. It is used by children, young people and families from the local area and from metropolitan Melbourne. The playground is 15 years old and is due for renewal in the next few years.

The small playground in the north of the park receives fewer visitors than the MacPherson Street playground and has limited play options. It is located close to the dog-off-leash area and a number of incidents have been observed of dogs running into the playground. Feedback has suggested the need for a play area in the northern part of the park.

Although children's play is well catered for in Princes Park, play opportunities for young people are limited. Currently Princes Hill Secondary College uses the park during school hours and this will continue for the foreseeable future. While the area available is not exclusively used by students, basic facilities are needed to cater for young people.



Recommendations

- ① New path/vehicle access
- ② Path removal
- ③ Activity/gathering spaces
- ④ Temporary events
- ⑤ Bouldering/vertical play
- ⑥ Links to playground
- ⑦ Redeveloped playground
- ⑧ Mound & flying fox

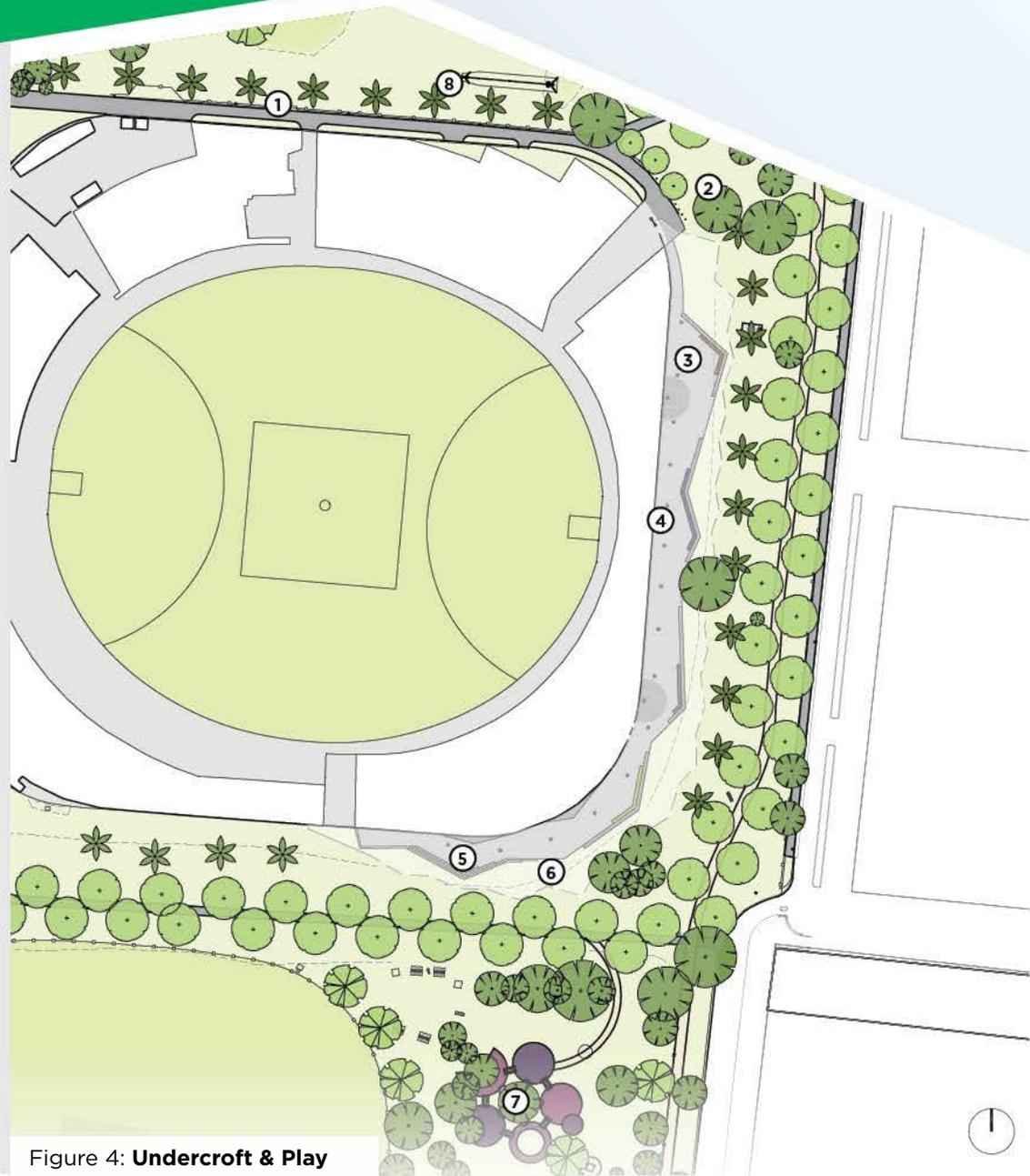


Figure 4: **Undercroft & Play**

It is recommended to:

- Develop play spaces and activities for young people near Garton Street to the north and east of the Carlton Recreation Ground. Investigate further the needs of Princes Hill Secondary College and Princes Hill Primary School.
- Develop a design to improve the amenity and use of the undercroft area including gathering spaces incorporating small-scale recreation, sports (such as basketball half court, outdoor table tennis and a bouldering wall) and opportunities for art. Design for broader informal recreational use and include improved lighting and informal seating. The design will be developed in conjunction with the local community, the Princes Hill Secondary College and the Carlton Football Club.
- Ensure adequate drinking fountains, bins and furniture to the north and east of the Carlton Recreation Ground to support its use.
- Renew the playground near MacPherson Street to provide diversity of place experiences for 0-12 year olds. Design the playground to maximise the use of the natural shade provided by the trees in this area.
- Remove the small playground next to the dog-off-leash area alongside Bowen Crescent. To replace this create a play space near the pond to the north of the bowls club catering primarily for preschool aged children.
- Install additional picnic and barbeque facilities at the MacPherson Street playground.

Walking, cycling and jogging

The existing path network crossing and encircling the park defines a series of linkages that structure many of the activities in the park and provides the basis for the layout of tree planting, lighting and other features.

Pedestrian access is well provided for with established east-west paths providing access into the park and linking areas on either side of the park. The popular jogging track runs predominantly north-south around the perimeter of the park. At two points the jogging track joins the shared bicycle and pedestrian path running along Royal Parade.

Two shared bicycle and pedestrian paths run east-west across the park. The former railway which now forms part of the Capital City Trail is an important link to Royal Park to the west and Merri Creek to the east. The path to the south of the Carlton Recreation Ground links MacPherson Street with the caretaker's cottage and Walker Street.

There is no need to increase the number of pedestrian access points into the park or to increase the number of paths across it. Instead the emphasis should be on upgrading existing entrances and pathways to provide a higher standard of amenity for park users.

It is recommended to:

- Enhance the pedestrian entrances to the park including an upgrade of the entrance at MacPherson Street. Investigate the removal of the path linking MacPherson Street with the Carlton Recreation Ground.
- Complete lighting along the jogging track, internal pathways and the Capital City Trail.
- Work with the Cities of Moreland and Yarra to ensure the park is accessible to pedestrians and cyclists. In particular, investigate with the City of Yarra opportunities to improve pedestrian access at the Patterson Street and Garton Street intersection.
- Bicycle, pedestrian and public transport access should be encouraged. Provide bicycle parking facilities at entrances and at key destinations in the park including at primary park entrances, pavilions and clubs.
- Ensure shared bicycle and pedestrian paths are appropriately signed.



Specific recommendations for the jogging track are to:

- Separate the jogging track from the shared pathway along Royal Parade through:
 - investigate the possibility for the construction of a footbridge over the Capital City Trail alongside Royal Parade
 - the realignment of the jogging track along the east side of the caretaker's cottage and the northern pavilion. Path alignment to be determined through further design investigation.
- Complete lighting around the jogging track.
- Provide additional drinking fountains and distance markers.
- Ensure good levels of natural shade are provided along the jogging track during summer.

Dogs

Princes Park provides two large dog-off-leash areas. The northern dog-off-leash area is popular for dog walking, while the area in the south of the park is used less frequently. The remainder of the park is designated as a dog-on-leash area.

In general, the feedback from consultation indicates the dog-off-leash areas in Princes Park appear to work well and are considered large enough. It is important that the dog-on-leash areas are enforced so people who do not wish to be around dogs can use areas of the park without being bothered by dogs.

It is recommended to:

- Retain the current dog-off-leash and dog-on-leash areas within the park. Maintain effective signage and enforcement of regulations relating to dog walking in Princes Park.
- Ensure dog-off-leash areas are provided with adequate facilities such as bins with dog bag dispensers and drinking fountains with dog bowls.
- Ensure dog-on-leash and dog-off-leash areas are effectively signed.

Events and Commercial activities

In addition to booked sporting activities, two areas of Princes Park are currently available as bookable event spaces (refer to figure 1). Typically bookings are for smaller events such as races, fun runs and personal training. The number of events currently held in the park is low.

The bookable event areas do, however, receive significant levels of informal recreation activity. The number and scale of events therefore needs to remain at a level that does not impact on existing recreation uses.





Figure 5: Existing sportsfields - **Summer**



Figure 6: Existing sportsfields - **Winter**

It is recommended to:

- Ensure the number and size of events is consistent with the park's overall carrying capacity and does not impact adversely on existing park activities.

Community sporting use

Council strongly supports sports participation at Princes Park through the provision and management of sports grounds which are used for competition and training throughout the year. (See plans of summer and winter activity). The grounds are complemented by two pavilions located alongside Royal Parade.

Demand for the use of community sports grounds is increasing throughout the City of Melbourne and Council is currently unable to meet the demand for grounds in Princes Park. Turf sports grounds can be used for approximately 20 hours per week for competition and training because of wear and tear.

The area south of Oval One has historically been used for temporary car parking which has impacted the quality of the surface and flexibility. With this area no longer being used for this purpose, there are opportunities to cater for increased sports use. The size of this large open space provides significant flexibility in the management of sports fields including orientation of fields to manage wear and tear.

There is an undersized soccer pitch close to the southern end of the park. As such it receives a significant amount of informal sporting use, particularly from university students. Council supports this informal sporting use by small groups, however it does present a challenge to manage the use of this ground at sustainable levels.





Figure 7: Proposed sportsfields - Summer



Figure 8: Proposed sportsfields - Winter

It is recommended to:

- Maintain the open character and flexibility provided by the southern sports area.
- Maintain the sporting emphasis of the southern end of the park. Support use of the grounds for casual and informal recreation and organised competition sports.
- Oval One should be improved with new fencing and park seating. Additional natural shade will be provided through deciduous tree planting around the oval. The rationalisation of the area around the northern pavilion will enable the relocation the Oval One cricket nets and improve user experience in this area.
- Develop a new turf cricket oval to the south of Oval One. Create low mounds between Oval One and southern sports field area to provide enhanced views of the ovals. Install seating and introduce additional tree planting for natural shade.
- Upgrade sports surfaces within the southern sports field area to enable flexible community use. Works include regrading, irrigation and drainage improvements and best practice turf surfaces.
- Investigate and implement sports lighting around the perimeter of the southern sports fields in accordance with the relevant Australian Standards.
- Install a multipurpose fully accredited synthetic sports surface on Crawford Oval. This will increase the carrying capacity for the same amount of sports area. Retain sports lighting and upgrade existing boundary fence.
- As a part of Council's pavilion refurbishment program, review the capacity of the southern pavilion to accommodate increased usage.
- Upgrade the cricket nets adjacent to the southern pavilion.
- Develop a new picnic area in the southern area including barbeque facilities, picnic tables and drinking fountains.
- Ensure adequate measures are in place to monitor and control the unbooked use of sports grounds by clubs.

Recommendations

- ① Upgraded pond
- ② Informal play & picnic area
- ③ Landscape reinstatement
- ④ New bowls building
- ⑤ Synthetic bowling green
- ⑥ Hedge & mound removal
- ⑦ Rationalised parking & vehicle access
- ⑧ New path
- ⑨ Embankment planting
- ⑩ Foot bridge



Figure 9: Princes Park Carlton Bowls Club & Northern Park

Princes Park Carlton Bowls Club and northern park

Located in the northern part of the park, the pond and the Princes Park Carlton Bowls Club provides a focus for the area near Park Street. The pond and surrounding landscape provides passive recreational opportunities with no formal sporting fields or events. The bowls club has two turf greens, a clubhouse and private residence. The buildings are in average condition and present a poor image to the surrounding parkland.

It is recommended to:

- Ensure the bowls club continues to be an accessible community facility.
- Increase transparency into and across the bowls club to enhance its visual connection with the surrounding parkland. Works include fence upgrades, rationalisation of mounds and vegetation.
- All existing bowls club buildings will be demolished and car park removed. A new bowls club facility will be located south of the existing bowling greens.
- Install a synthetic surface on the western green of the bowls club.
- Install lighting on the eastern green of the bowls club.
- Provide picnic and barbeque facilities near the pond in the north of the park and improve path network to provide improved links across the Capital City Trail.
- Create a small new play space near the pond to the north of the bowls club.
- Increase the pond size and provide additional opportunities for observing wildlife.



Princes Hill Tennis Club

The Princes Hill Tennis Club is situated near the MacPherson Street playground on the east side of the park. It comprises two hard courts, two en tout cas courts and a small pavilion.

Recommendations relating to the Princes Hill Tennis Club include:

- Retain the mix of hard courts and en-tout-cas courts at the Princes Hill Tennis Club.
- Refurbish the tennis pavilion. Also upgrade the fencing around the tennis courts, the public entrance and lighting on the tennis courts.
- While its primary use is as a tennis facility, investigate opportunities for greater community use of Princes Hill Tennis Club facilities. Explore opportunities to provide greater access to the hard courts, either for casual tennis use or other recreational activity. Ensure any changes do not impact on the operation of the tennis club.

Legend's Stand undercroft

One of the more challenging areas of the park is under the Legend's Stand on the eastern side of the Carlton Recreation Ground. This currently offers a poor level of amenity although the area does provide shelter from rain and summer sun. The area is currently used by students and staff from the Princes Hill Secondary College. One aim is to provide recreational activities that make the area more user-friendly for young people from the school community and for general park users of this age group (Refer to the Play section for recommendations in this area).





Park amenities and services

Caretaker's cottage

The caretaker's cottage is a significant historic feature within the park.

Until recently, the cottage was used by Council's open space contractors who operated from a maintenance depot behind the cottage. Following the relocation of the depot, and the subsequent return of the area to parkland, the cottage is being converted for use as a caretaker's residence.

It is recommended to:

- Use the cottage as a caretaker's residence for the immediate future. If another use consistent with park and heritage requirements is identified and a sound business plan is developed, the cottage could be considered for conversion to accommodate community or interpretive purposes.



Public toilets

Princes Park currently has two public toilets, one near the pond in the north of the park and one near the MacPherson Street Playground.

Two freestanding brick toilets located near Fig Avenue in the south of the park are only open on weekends when sport is being played in the park. Community feedback highlighted the need to provide improved public toilet facilities in the south of Princes Park.

It is recommended to:

- Demolish the freestanding brick toilets located in the south of the park.
- Provide a new public toilet along Princes Park Drive at the southern end of the park. The design of public toilets should be consistent with Council's *Public Toilet Plan 2008–2013*.



Lighting, signs and furniture

Community feedback highlighted improvements to support the use of Princes Park. The following recommendations are in addition to the recommendations outlined above.

It is recommended to:

- Enhance lighting throughout the park.
- Advocate that relevant authorities remove overhead cables and install underground cables along the former railway reserve.
- Review and improve signage within the park to ensure it provides appropriate directional, regulatory and interpretive information. Park signage is to conform to the *City of Melbourne Signage Strategy*
- Investigate opportunities to provide interpretive signage in Princes Park.
- Provide additional seating throughout the park to support a diversity of activities.
- Ensure all artworks, memorials and plaques meet Council's guidelines and in general add value to the park.

Car parking

It is City of Melbourne policy to remove car parking from open space. Since the 1998 Princes Park Master Plan was adopted, car parking arrangements within the park have changed considerably.

Two asphalt car parks have been constructed in Princes Park to the west of the Carlton Recreation Ground and adjacent to the northern pavilion. These car parks are within a short distance of each other and are used largely at different times of the day and week. The rationalisation of these car parks would result in a significant return of land to parkland and improvements to the park landscape.

A gravel car park is located to the south of the bowls club. The 1998 Princes Park Master Plan recommended the reduction in the size of this car park in conjunction with the construction of a new clubhouse to the south of the bowling greens.



It is recommended to:

- Review and manage on-street parking adjacent to the park to ensure spaces are available for park users by designating spaces for short to medium term parking. Provide dedicated on-street parking spaces for people with disabilities around the perimeter of the park.
- Remove the car park adjacent to the bowls club and replace with a small amount of loading/unloading parking and disabled parking. The design and siting of this parking will be determined by further car parking use and need analysis.
- Revise the car park and jogging track adjacent to the northern pavilion as shown in Figure 10.
- Ensure no additional car parking spaces are introduced to Princes Park.

Vehicle access

A road runs around the north of the Carlton Recreation Ground to service the open space contractor's depot and the grounds maintenance functions of the Carlton Football Club. Access to this is currently unsatisfactory as vehicles drive through the car park.

Numerous vehicle access points enter Princes Park from the adjacent streets. All of these entrances cross the jogging and cycling tracks, creating potential for conflict.

It is recommended to:

- Introduce measures to minimise conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians, joggers and cyclists at vehicle entrances.
- Create a new vehicle entrance along the path from Royal Parade to the north-west side of the Carlton Recreation Ground. This entrance would service the open space contractor's depot, the ground maintenance needs of the Carlton Football Club and the grassed area used for car parking during major events at the Carlton Recreation Ground. The road around the north of the Carlton Recreation Ground would be narrowed to reflect the current access needs.
- Remove the vehicle entrance opposite Levers Street.
- Rationalise other vehicle access points whilst ensuring access is maintained for maintenance vehicles to all areas of the park. No other vehicle access points should be opened into the park.



Figure 10: **Parking & Vehicle Access**

Recommendations

- ① New shared path / service vehicle access
- ② Removal of existing service vehicle access
- ③ Realignment of gravel jogging track
- ④ Rationalised parking & vehicle access
- ⑤ Landscape reinstatement, including relocated cricket nets



Environmental sustainability

Council is committed to the sustainable management of its parks. Management of all parks requires a significant amount of resources such as water, chemicals and energy. Climate change is expected to result in warmer conditions and reduced rainfall which presents challenges for managing vegetation in parks.

Sustainability and water security

The pond in the north of Princes Park is currently filled using recycled stormwater piped from the Trin Warren Tam-boore wetlands in Royal Park. This recycled water is not used more widely within Princes Park.

It is recommended to:

- Investigate the use of alternative water sources such as the capture of rainwater and stormwater in Princes Park. Explore further use of recycled water from the Trin Warren Tam-boore wetlands within Princes Park.
- Include Water Sensitive Urban Design in park projects to use rainwater and stormwater to maintain soil moisture content in the park.
- Continue to select tree and grass species that minimise watering requirements, yet ensure Princes Park's heritage values and sports uses are maintained.
- Develop a water management plan for Princes Park to ensure efficient water usage while improving tree and lawn health.
- Install new irrigation systems in the park allowing different parts of the park to be watered.
- Incorporate environmentally sustainable design in park projects to reduce energy use and water consumption.
- Increase the size of the pond and provide additional wildlife habitat opportunities.
- Increase the parks biodiversity value while not compromising the existing character or use of the park.

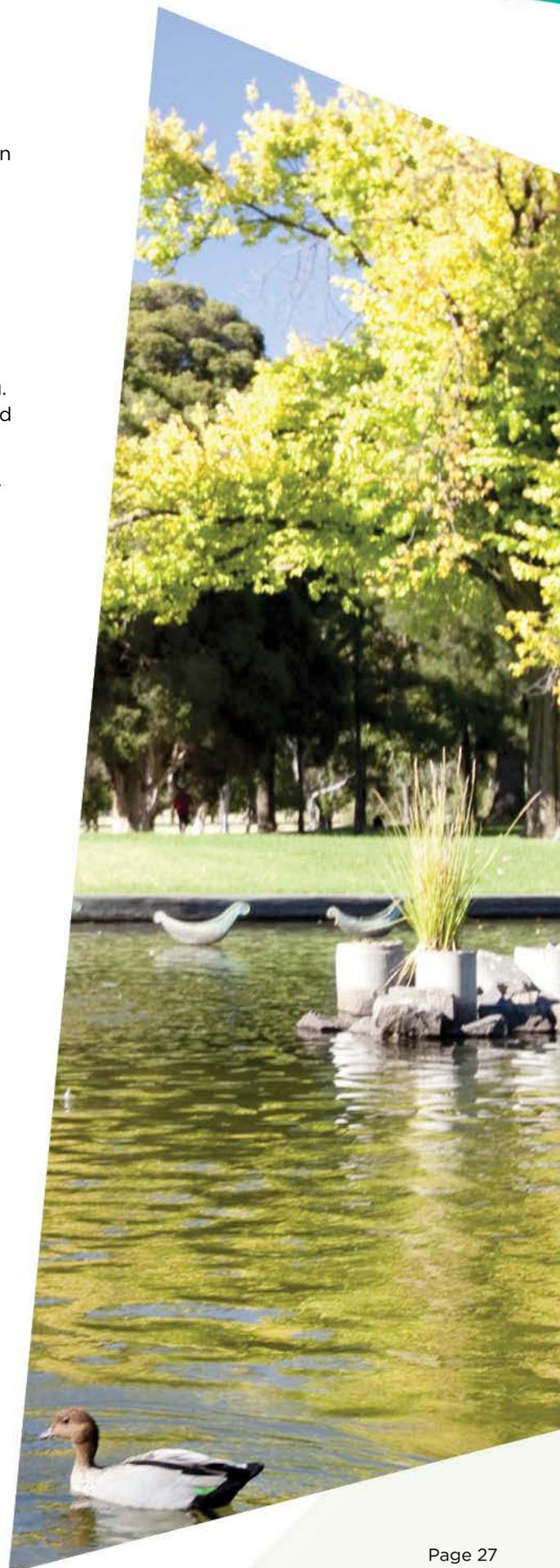
IMPLEMENTATION

A range of projects are recommended 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. The projects will also depend on the availability of resources through Council's annual works program.

REVIEW OF THE PLAN

The vision and broad direction of the Master Plan will be ongoing. The specific proposals of the Master Plan are generally considered to be relevant for a 10-year period after adoption by Council.

The Princes Park Master Plan is proposed to be reviewed in 2023.



Existing Conditions

-  EXISTING TREES
-  DOG OFF LEASH AREA
-  POND
-  BOOKABLE EVENT SPACE
-  BOWLS CLUB
-  CAPITAL CITY TRAIL
-  BOOKABLE EVENT AREA
-  SMALL PLAYGROUND
-  TEMPORARY CAR PARKING
-  CARETAKERS COTTAGE
-  CARLTON RECREATION GROUND
-  LEGEND STAND
-  NORTHERN PAVILION
-  OVAL ONE
-  DISTRICT PLAYGROUND
-  TENNIS CLUB
-  SOUTHERN SPORTS FIELDS
-  SOUTHERN PAVILION
-  CRAWFORD OVAL
-  TOILET
-  TRAM STOP

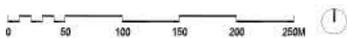
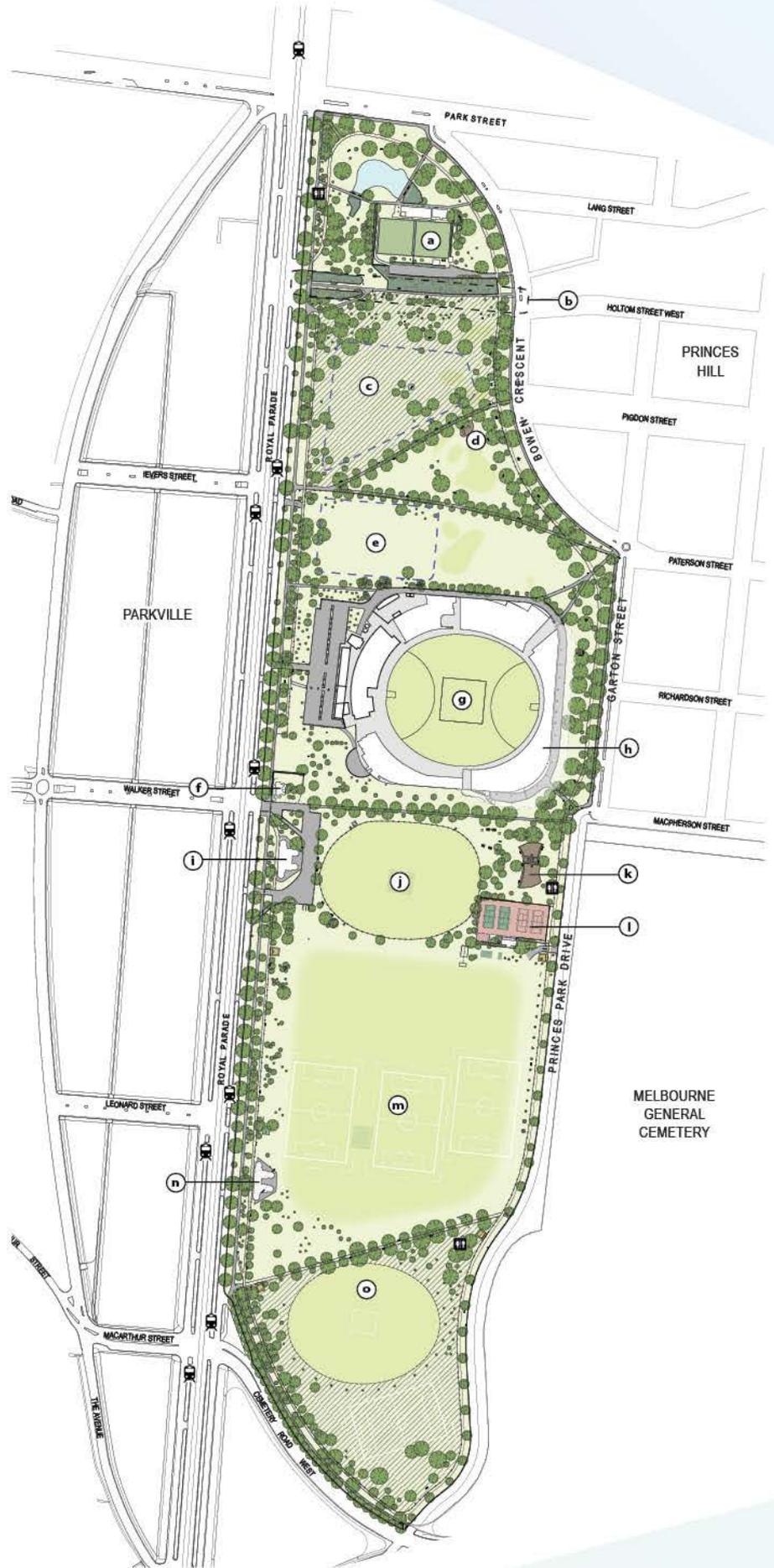


Figure 1:
Existing Conditions

Key Recommendations



- EXISTING TREES 
- FUTURE TREE PLANTING 
- DOG OFF LEASH AREA 
- BOOKABLE EVENTS SPACE 
- NEW PLAY & PICNIC FACILITIES **①**
- BOWLS CLUB UPGRADES **②**
- NEW FOOTBRIDGE **③**
- RATIONALISATION OF PARKING **④**
- DEPOT / SERVICE VEHICLE ACCESS **⑤**
- TREE RENEWAL **⑥**
- UNDERCROFT IMPROVEMENTS **⑦**
- JOGGING TRACK REALIGNMENT **⑧**
- CENTRAL ELM WALK RENEWAL **⑨**
- RATIONALISATION OF PARKING **⑩**
- PLAYGROUND RENEWAL **⑪**
- TENNIS CLUB IMPROVEMENTS **⑫**
- SPORTSFIELD UPGRADES **⑬**
- MULTIPURPOSE SYNTHETIC OVAL **⑭**
- NEW TOILET & PICNIC TABLES **⑮**
- TOILET 
- TRAM STOP 

Figure 2:
Key Recommendations

