

Report to the Future Melbourne (Environment) Committee

Agenda item 6.1

Domain Parklands Master Plan 2019–2039

19 February 2019

Presenter: Claire Ferres Miles, Director, City Strategy and Place

Purpose and background

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval of a contemporary Master Plan for Domain Parklands (Attachments 2 and 3). This Master Plan is the culmination of extensive research, analysis, consultation and stakeholder engagement with the community, land managers and Traditional Owners.
2. The Domain Parklands encompass a collection of individual and unique destinations occupying an area of over 123 hectares. Five Land Managers are responsible for different areas within the parklands as listed below:
 - 2.1. Melbourne City Council (Council) – a number of Reserves including Alexandra Gardens, Alexandra Park, Kings Domain and Kings Domain South which equates to 47 percent of the parklands.
 - 2.2. Office of the Governor – Government House and Grounds.
 - 2.3. Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria Board – Melbourne Gardens and Melbourne Observatory.
 - 2.4. Shrine of Remembrance Trustees – Shrine of the Remembrance monument and Shrine Reserve.
 - 2.5. Victorian Arts Centre Trust – Sidney Myer Music Bowl.
3. The Master Plan is focused on the areas managed by the Council, but also guides management for the areas of common interest for all Land Managers.
4. The Master Plan has a 20 year vision of “*Valuing the treasured parklands at the heart of Melbourne and celebrating their past, present and future*” and incorporates five key values to guide the evolution and management of the parklands; which are
 - 4.1. A healthy and resilient parkland.
 - 4.2. A parkland of history and cultural heritage.
 - 4.3. A parkland for people.
 - 4.4. A parkland that connects.
 - 4.5. A parkland of partnerships.
5. Proposals within the master plan will ensure contemporary Council policy and strategy directions are embedded into the ongoing management, capital improvement and maintenance of the parklands.

Key issues

6. With over 125 actions, an implementation plan will be prepared for the master plan to support the allocation of priorities and budget planning.

Recommendation from management

7. That the Future Melbourne Committee:
 - 7.1. Approves the Domain Parklands Master Plan 2019–2039.
 - 7.2. Authorises the Director City Strategy and Place to make any further minor editorial changes to the Domain Parklands Master Plan prior to publication.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment Page (2 of 54)
2. Domain Parklands Master Plan 2019-2039 (Page 4 of 54)

Supporting Attachment

Legal

1. All the Domain Parklands are Crown Land, permanently reserved from sale for a specific public purpose pursuant to the provisions of the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*. The Melbourne City Council (Council) has been appointed Committee of Management for a number of the Reserves within the parklands.
2. The Council manages a number of leases and licences for facilities within the Domain Parklands including the Yarra Boathouses, La Trobe's Cottage, and the Domain House.
3. Pursuant to S15 (1)(c) of the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* a Committee of Management may carry out works and improvements on the land.

Finance

4. Implementation of the final master plan is subject to future Council budget allocations. An implementation plan will be prepared following endorsement of the final master plan to guide future expenditure.

Conflict of interest

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

Occupational Health and Safety

6. The Master Plan sets long term actions in place to progressively upgrade the parks and reserves managed by the Council. In developing the Master Plan, opportunities to improve public safety have been identified. These include recommendations to improve lighting and the boat landing in Alexandra Gardens, improved wayfinding and signage, and actions to further separate commuter cyclists from pedestrians. Changes proposed to the internal road network will improve pedestrian safety and experience through slowing road speeds, introducing new pedestrian crossings, improving visibility for road crossings, and future road closures on internal roads. Longer term proposals to work with the Sidney Myer Music Bowl will improve public safety in this setting.

Stakeholder consultation

7. The Master Plan was prepared following wide stakeholder and community engagement, which further informed the detailed research and analysis. A two phase community engagement program obtained community input and ideas for the Domain Parklands. A third phase of engagement sought feedback on the Draft Master Plan.
8. The first phase was conducted from September to November 2015. It gathered information about what people value about the Domain Parklands by inviting them to share memories, prompting conversations about themes and their aspirations for the future of the parklands. Specific programs were held to engage with children.
9. The second phase of engagement from July through August 2016 involved the release of a discussion paper seeking public comment on key themes to set the direction for the future of the Domain Parklands.
10. The third phase of engagement was held from August to October 2018. This engagement sought feedback on the Draft Master Plan through a variety of methods including walks in the park, meetings and through Participate Melbourne. Specific input was sought through activities with children and young people. The feedback from this engagement was the subject of a report to Council in December 2018.

11. Preparation of the master plan was guided by a management steering group representing each of the Land Managers, community members, Traditional Owners and the Victorian Government. Other organisations consulted included Parks Victoria, Heritage Victoria and the National Trust. More detailed consultation was undertaken with some groups including the rowing clubs for specific analysis on Alexandra Gardens and the rowing precinct.
12. Discussions were held with three Traditional Owner groups that informed values, recommendations and themes. These discussions will be ongoing to explore further ways to work together and ways to represent the Aboriginal cultural heritage in the parklands.
13. The City of Melbourne Parks and Gardens Advisory Committee gave extensive assistance to develop the Master Plan. The City of Melbourne Disability Advisory Committee provided valuable advice and input, with members taking part in site visits.

Relation to Council policy

14. The Master Plan is consistent with Council's broader policy objectives particularly those aimed at enhancing the current urban environment, preparing the parklands for the major challenges of climate change and supporting all people to visit the parklands. Major strategies include but are not limited to the Urban Forest Strategy (2012), Open Space Strategy (2012), Nature in the City Strategy (2017), Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2017), Transport Strategy (2012), City Road Master Plan (2016) and Bicycle Plan (2016 – 2020).

Environmental sustainability

15. This Master Plan provides the framework to strengthen the environmental service function of the Domain Parklands.

DOMAIN PARKLANDS MASTER PLAN

2019-2039

Attachment 2
Agenda item 6.1
Future Melbourne Committee
19 February 2019



The Domain Parklands encompasses a collection of individual and unique destinations managed by five different Land Managers. While recognising the outstanding cultural heritage of each destination, the Domain Parklands Master Plan seeks to strengthen the precinct as one Domain.

Each of the Land Managers has responsibility for the areas they manage. The Shrine of Remembrance and Melbourne Gardens have landscape master plans for the areas they manage. While this Domain Parklands Master Plan focuses on the areas managed by the City of Melbourne, it also guides management for the areas of common interest for all the Land Managers.



CITY OF MELBOURNE



A CITY THAT CARES FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Environmental sustainability is the basis of all Future Melbourne goals. It requires current generations to choose how they meet their needs without compromising the ability of future generations to be able to do the same.

Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land, the Boon Wurrung and Woiewurrung (Wurundjeri) people of the Kulin Nation and pays respect to their Elders, past and present.

For the Kulin Nation, Melbourne has always been an important meeting place for events of social, educational, sporting and cultural significance.

Today we are proud to say that Melbourne is a significant gathering place for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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Disclaimer

This master plan is provided for information and it does not purport to be complete. While care has been taken to ensure the content in the master plan is accurate, we cannot guarantee it is without flaw of any kind. There may be errors and omissions or it may not be wholly appropriate for your particular purposes. In addition, the publication is a snapshot in time based on historic information which is liable to change. The City of Melbourne accepts no responsibility and disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information contained in this report.

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FOREWORD FROM THE LORD MAYOR OF MELBOURNE AND COUNCILLOR



Domain Parklands Master Plan 2019-39

The Domain Parklands is a treasured part of Melbourne. Rich in history, the parklands are highly valued by the city and its people. We have developed this master plan to guide our future management of the parklands, balancing increased use with the need for passive recreation spaces.

It's well-established that open space is vital to a city's liveability and to the wellbeing of all who enjoy our parks and gardens. However climate change, extreme heat and water restrictions present significant challenges, demanding well-informed approaches to how we manage our landscapes.

Recognising these challenges, the City of Melbourne takes a lead in strategic planning to manage our green spaces well into the future. Our Urban Forest Strategy and Nature in the City Strategy are embedded in this master plan. When implementing these strategies, we will prepare for future climate challenges and support biodiversity in the city.

We also have many opportunities to partner with other land managers such as the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria to expand our arboretum, cool the city and improve the resilience of environments that nourish our mental and physical well-being.

Significantly, the Domain Parklands Master Plan identifies what additional services we should provide for our visitors. Improving access in and around the parklands is a high priority. Working with the Traditional Owners to better acknowledge the significant Aboriginal cultural heritage of

the parklands is also of utmost importance to us. Many people across our community have contributed to the development of this master plan, and they deserve our warm thanks. We are confident this master plan will help us retain the qualities of the much-loved parklands, while also managing the needs of a growing city. Caring for the parklands in this way ensures they will flourish for current and future generations.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sally Capp".

Sally Capp
Lord Mayor
City of Melbourne

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy Oke".

Cr Cathy Oke
Portfolio Chair, Environment

1. OVERVIEW

One of Melbourne's most beautiful open spaces, the Domain Parklands are rich in history, unique and special for their location and presence. This master plan will help us manage the parklands for the next 20 years and ensure these defining spaces remain contemporary.

They are part of the 'emerald necklace' of parklands which were set aside with such vision by Governor La Trobe.

Together with the sports and events precinct area immediately north of the Birrarung (Yarra River), the Domain Parklands form part of Melbourne's green heart, a meeting place for more than 40,000 years and the cornerstone of Melbourne's reputation for liveability.

The name Domain Parklands describes the collective parks and gardens known individually as Alexandra Gardens, Alexandra Park, Queen Victoria Gardens, Kings Domain, Kings Domain South, Sidney Myer Music Bowl, Melbourne Gardens (Royal Botanic Gardens), Melbourne Observatory, Shrine of Remembrance Reserve and Government House Reserve.

The Domain Parklands Master Plan encompasses areas managed by five different Land Managers. It seeks to recognise the individual and unique destinations while also strengthening the parklands as one Domain.

Note: Where there is mention of the term Melbourne Gardens, it is in reference to the area commonly known as the Royal Botanic Gardens, managed by the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria.

Note: In this master plan the Yarra River is called by its traditional name Birrarung meaning 'river of mists' in the Boon Wurrung and Woiwurrung languages.



Key places and roads referenced throughout the master plan

1.1 WHY DO WE NEED A MASTER PLAN?

The Domain Parklands Master Plan guides the future management of the Domain Parklands – a treasured and important part of Melbourne.

Before European settlement the area was of great importance to Aboriginal people. Since Victoria's first Lieutenant-Governor Charles La Trobe set aside land for the Domain Parklands in the 1840s they have played a major role in the life and development of Melbourne.

Today the Domain Parklands remain one of Melbourne's favourite destinations with strong visual connections to the CBD and surrounding city, containing some of its most iconic spaces and places.

The first Domain Parklands Master Plan was endorsed by the Melbourne City Council in April 1997. This was the first document to combine the various 'Parks and Gardens' and river corridor into a cohesive plan and describe the area as the Domain Parklands.

Much has occurred since 1997, including drought, water initiatives, a dramatic growth in visitation, the Observatory Gate development, Victorian heritage registration, greater provision of events and increasing residential density in the area. Many trees in the Domain Parklands are in decline and there is a need to plan for their replacement. The broader context for parks management has evolved with climate change, extreme heat, and water restrictions demanding different approaches.

This master plan incorporates contemporary Council policies such as the Urban Forest Strategy 2012, Open Space Strategy 2012, Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2017 and the Nature in the City Strategy 2017.

It embeds city strategies and policy directions to prepare the parklands for the major challenges presented by population growth and climate change. It responds to the significant changes in the surrounding areas including the Arts precinct, Southbank, the central city, Birrarung Marr and the Sports precinct across the Birrarung (Yarra River).



**BROAD RANGE OF USERS:
RESIDENTS, WORKERS
AND VISITORS**



**THE FACE OF MELBOURNE
KEY VIEW LINES INTO AND
OUT OF THE CITY**



**OVER 120 HA OF
PUBLIC REALM**



**DIVERSE ECOLOGY
CREATING LUNGS FOR
THE CITY**



**HISTORIC LIVING
VEGETATION**



**1.8 KM OF RIVER
FRONTAGE**



**1.5 KM OF
BOULEVARD
FRONTAGE**



**HISTORY AND CULTURE
THAT HAS CHANGED
SIGNIFICANTLY
OVER TIME**



**A COLLECTION OF
SIGNIFICANT MELBOURNE
DESTINATIONS**



**A PLACE FOR PASSIVE AND ACTIVE
RECREATION, FORMAL EVENTS AND
INFORMAL GATHERINGS RANGING
FROM A FEW PEOPLE TO OVER
50,000!**

1.2 VISION

Valuing the treasured parklands at the heart of Melbourne and celebrating their past, present and future.

The master plan outlines a vision for the Domain Parklands that will:

- Respect and reveal the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the area, and reflect the broader cultural values of historical and contemporary significance to Melbourne.
- Provide a centre of excellence in urban horticulture where contemporary and diverse landscapes are resilient, resource efficient, well managed and maintained. These landscapes will acknowledge heritage values, support ecological and biodiversity aspirations and be landscapes that are enjoyed by the community.
- Strengthen 'One Domain' where accessible journeys support all visitors to explore and use the parklands.
- Provide amenities that support the needs of all visitors and encourage positive experiences of the parklands.
- Reflect the experience people are seeking in the Domain Parklands in the planning, management and balancing of priorities.
- Enhance and elevate the important relationship between the parklands and the Birrarung.
- Foster partnerships between the Land Managers to improve the parklands and enhance visitor experiences.



1.3 DOMAIN PARKLANDS MASTER PLAN SNAPSHOT

1.3.1 Key Values

The Master Plan sets five key values to guide future management of the Domain Parklands over the next 20 years.

- A healthy and resilient parkland
- A parkland of history and cultural heritage
- A parkland for people
- A parkland that connects
- A parkland of partnerships

Fundamental to all the values is the principle that there be no net loss of parkland and that future change should bring positive benefits to the Domain Parklands.

These values will form the base for decision making over the life of the 20 year master plan, as it is not possible to anticipate all influences and changes that will arise.

1.3.2 Themes

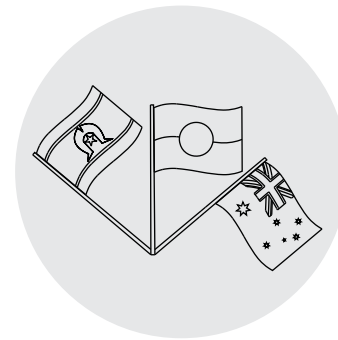
Proposals in the master plan have been described within five themes, each with a number of action areas:



1. Nurture a diverse landscape and parkland ecology

Key action areas

- Elevate horticultural complexity and management
- Support a healthy ecosystem
- Manage a city arboretum
- Manage soil and water



2. Acknowledge history and cultural heritage

Key action areas

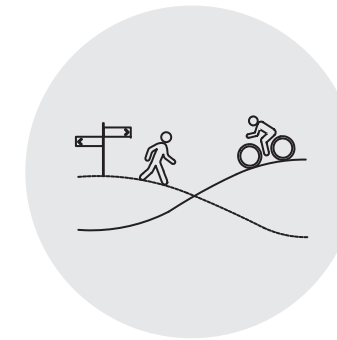
- Respect and celebrate Aboriginal cultural heritage
- Reflect cultural values and historical significance
- Manage memorials in the Domain Parklands (areas managed by City of Melbourne).



3. Support exceptional visitor experience

Key action areas

- Provide facilities (amenities) to meet future needs
- Enhance visitor experience
- Manage organised activity spaces
- Manage events



4. Improve pedestrian movement and access

Key action areas

- Improve parklands entrances
- Improve internal pathway networks
- Reduce barriers and improve access over roads
- Support access by public transport
- Network approaches to improve cycling routes
- Contemporary wayfinding in the Domain Parklands
- Create journeys in the Domain Parklands
- Rethink the use of existing road space
- Car parking – support visitor access while adapting to future trends



5. Management and partnerships to build resilience

Key action areas

- Make one parkland of many unique destinations
- Create a framework for priorities and decision-making
- Commitment to future management and collaboration
- Manage uses in the areas managed by the City of Melbourne
- Reduce the impact of services

1.4 PREPARATION OF THE MASTER PLAN

The master plan has been created to reflect the multiple layers which make up the place and how it is used. Wide community and stakeholder consultation was conducted, along with detailed research, analysis and planning.

The consultation explored the opinions and ideas of community members and stakeholders for the future of the Domain Parklands. The technical analysis examined uses and activities, heritage, landscape character, traffic and parking, horticulture and other social and environmental values of the parklands. The relationships between the individual parts of the Domain Parklands were explored along with opportunities to improve interfaces and visitor services.

Specific research prepared to inform the master plan included the Domain Parklands Parking and Traffic Study 2016, Domain Parklands Conservation Management Plan 2016 and Domain Parklands: a shared values study 2017.

Other strategic documents which informed the master plan include:

- Urban Forest Strategy 2012 (UFS), Open Space Strategy 2012 (OSS), Park Policy, 1997 (PP)
- Shrine Reserve Landscape Management Plan (2015)
- Melbourne Gardens Master Plan (draft 2019)
- Active Melbourne Plan (2018)
- Reconciliation Action Plan 2015 – 2018, Aboriginal Heritage Action Plan 2015 – 2018
- Total Watermark – City as a Catchment (update 2014)
- Climate Change adaptation strategy 2017
- Nature in the City Strategy 2017
- Transport Strategy 2012
- City Road Master Plan 2016
- Bicycle Plan 2016 -2020



urban context



parkland ecology



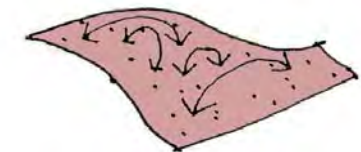
visitors



cultural heritage



access and movement



land management



landscape characters



uses and activities



trees and vegetation

1.5 COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

This master plan was prepared following wide stakeholder and community engagement, which further informed the detailed research and analysis.

A two-phase community engagement program obtained community input and ideas for the Domain Parklands:

Phase 1 - Share your memories of Domain Parklands

The first phase was conducted in September to November, 2015. It gathered information about what people value about the Domain Parklands by inviting them to share memories, prompting conversations about the themes and aspirations for the future of the parklands. Specific programs were held to engage with children.

Phase 2 - Discussion Paper

The second phase in July - August 2016 involved the release of a discussion paper seeking public comment on key themes to set the direction for the future of the Domain Parklands.

Phase 3 - Draft Domain Parklands Master Plan

A third phase of engagement in August - October 2018 sought feedback on the draft master plan.

Key project partners and stakeholders

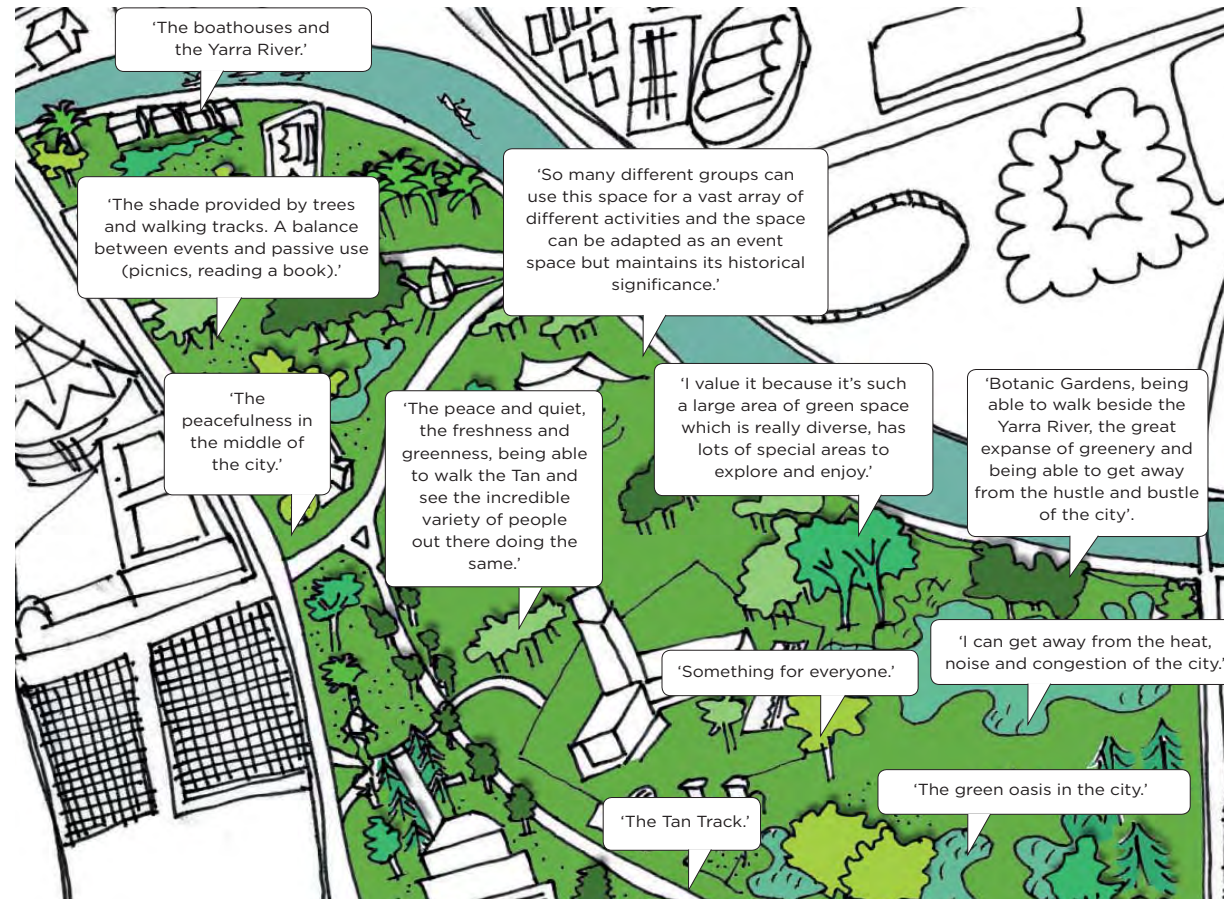
Preparation of the master plan was guided by a management steering group representing each of the Land Managers, community members, Traditional Owners and the Victorian Government.

Other organisations consulted included Parks Victoria, Heritage Victoria, VicRoads and the National Trust. More detailed consultation was undertaken with some groups including the rowing clubs for specific analysis on the Alexandra Gardens and the rowing precinct.

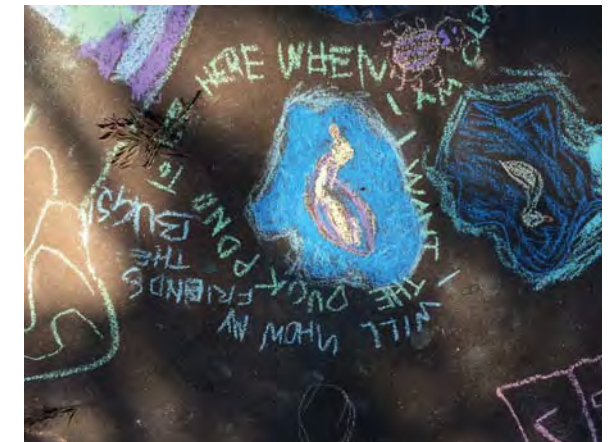
Discussions were held with three Traditional Owner groups which informed values, recommendations and themes. It is acknowledged that these discussions will be ongoing, to explore further ways to work together and ways to represent the Aboriginal cultural heritage in the parklands.

The City of Melbourne Parks and Gardens Advisory Committee gave extensive assistance to develop the master plan.

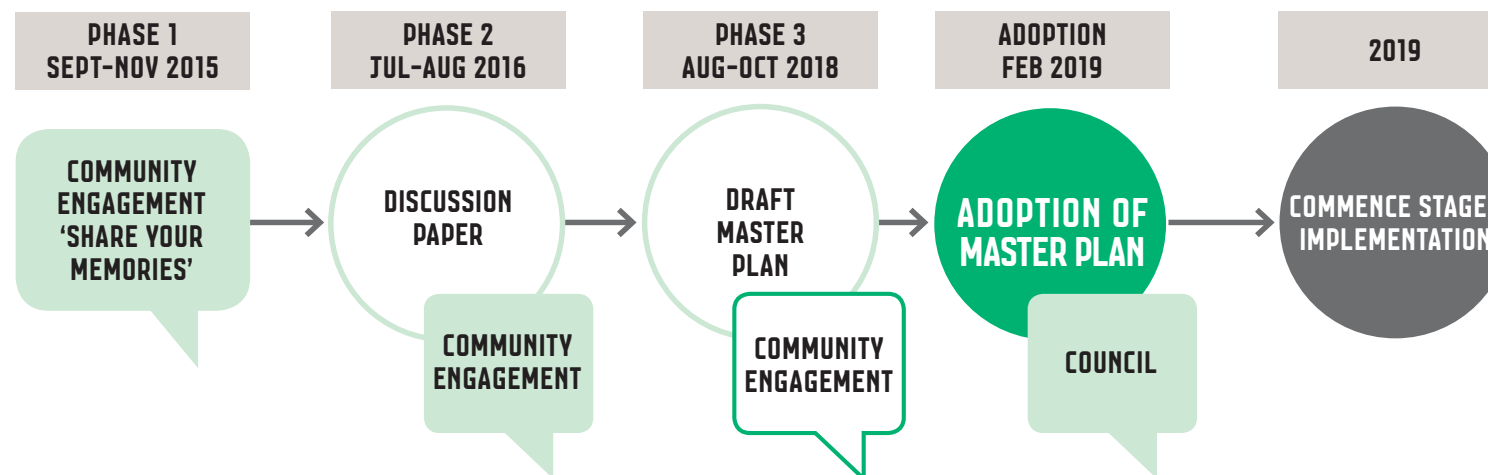
The City of Melbourne Disability Advisory Committee provided valuable advice and input, with members taking part in site visits.



Community Engagement responses: 'What do you value most in the Domain Parklands?' 2015



'Share your memories' children's consultation September 2015



Domain Parklands master plan project timeline

2. DOMAIN PARKLANDS

2.1 THE HISTORY OF THE SITE

Cultural landscape history

Before European settlement, the land surrounding the Birrarung (Yarra River) was a life source for the Aboriginal people. Vegetation would have included open grasslands and grassy woodland, including River Red gums, and on the higher areas most likely plains grassland. The Birrarung would periodically flood and replenish a series of billabongs and wetlands. The swampy south bank was also a place of beauty, with lagoons fringed with native grasses, the riverbank edged with tea-tree scrub, and a sprinkling of large eucalypts.

Aboriginal people managed the land and its resources carefully and respectfully, according to ancient lore. This was the Traditional Country of the Boon Wurrung and Woiwurrung (Wurundjeri) peoples of the Kulin nation. For Aboriginal people, the river was Birrarung ('River of Mists'); central to their identity and their livelihood.

The area had long been an important meeting place for the Aboriginal population. Further downstream along the river were 'the Falls', then a relatively substantial ledge of volcanic rock than spanned the river. This was significant as a crossing place and a fishing place, and marked the divide between the salt water and fresh water. The central high ground in the landscape was important with views in several directions and a good place to see the sky.

Aboriginal people have seen vast environmental variation and change as the sea advanced and retreated and rainfall oscillated from very dry to very wet periods. In the same way the flora and fauna would have changed. The wetlands were rich sources of food and other important materials. Aboriginal people enjoyed a varied and plentiful diet on this rich flood plain. Eels and fish were caught in the broad lagoons, and it was a good place to camp. Along with fish, abundant water birds, a range of small to medium or large mammals (kangaroos, wallabies, possums) and tubers and fruits provided a diverse diet.

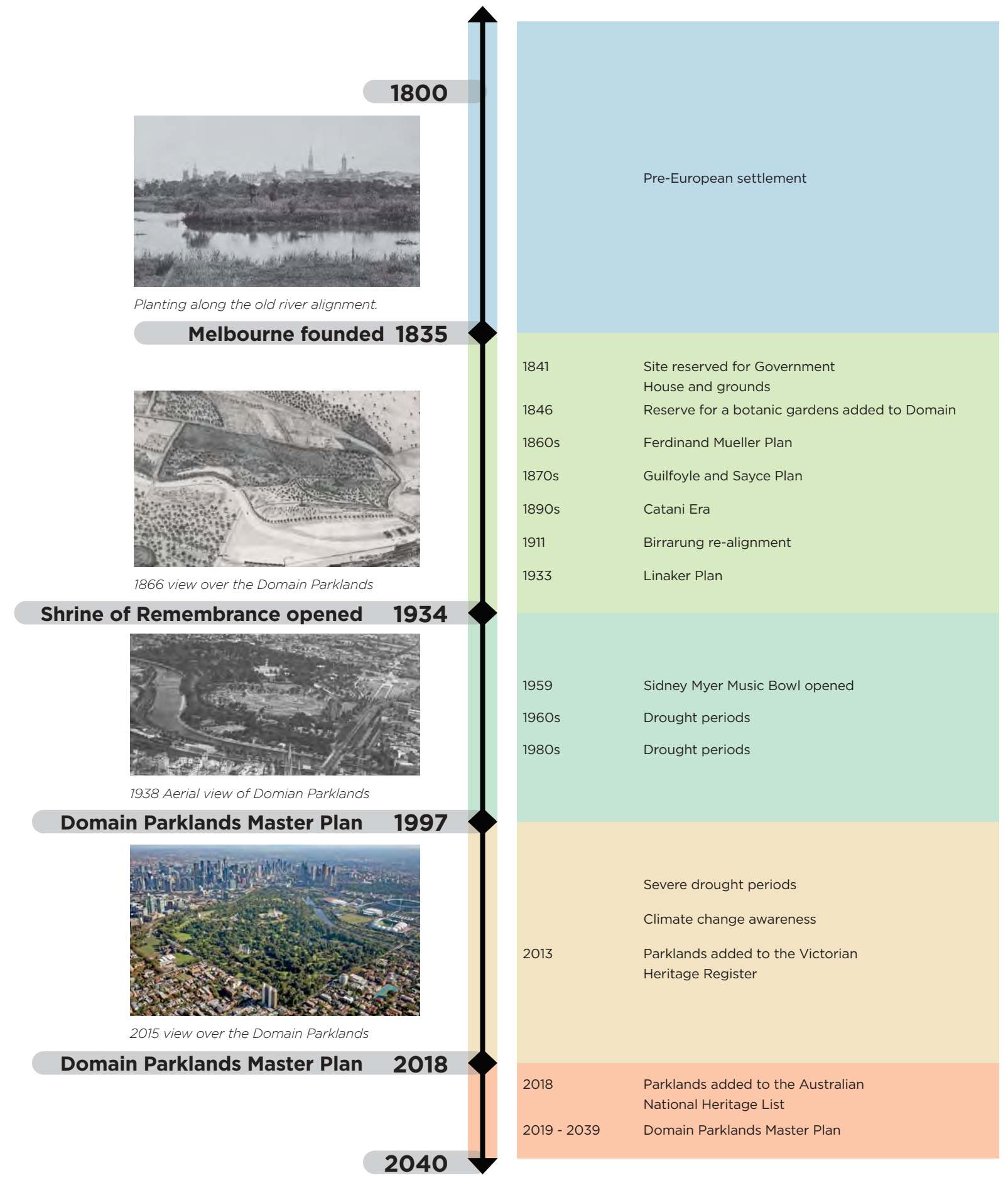
The historic landscape

In 1841, following British colonial planning tradition, high ground overlooking Melbourne was reserved as land for a vice-regal residence. In 1846 additional land was reserved for a botanic gardens. The natural vegetation was modified and replaced, wetlands were filled in and topography was altered. The river flooding was substantially controlled by the early 1900s through the straightening of the Birrarung (Yarra River) north of Princes Bridge. These works in turn created new areas in the Domain, including Alexandra Gardens, Alexandra Avenue, Alexandra Park and Queen Victoria Gardens.

Over time formal gardens were established, trees were planted, and as time progressed there were adaptations and changes reflecting something of Melbourne's evolution. Over an extended period several significant directions in design have been implemented, some of which remain intact today. Key periods include:

- 1860 - Ferdinand Mueller plan
- 1874 - William Guilfoyle and Sayce plan
- 1890's - Catani plan
- 1933 - Linaker plan.

The lesser told story occurring as Melbourne was establishing was the displacement of Aboriginal people, and the hardship and misery experienced by immigrants. A Canvas Town and Immigrants home were located on land within the parklands. A missionary reserve was established. But the stories of the Aboriginal people and Melbourne's early European settlement was largely forgotten. Melbourne became a prosperous city and the Domain Parklands reflected how Melbourne wanted to see itself.



Timeline of key moments in the history of the Domain Parklands

2.2 THE DOMAIN PARKLANDS TODAY

The Domain Parklands occupy an area totalling 123 hectares generally bounded by the Birrarung (Yarra River), Anderson Street, Domain Road and St Kilda Road.

The Domain Parklands are identified as Capital City and State open spaces in the City of Melbourne's Open Space Strategy 2012. It describes these as iconic and synonymous with the character and identity of Melbourne and often used to stage activities and events of international, national, state and metropolitan importance.

The Domain Parklands are important for physical and mental health and wellbeing of the community and social connectedness. They cool the city,

support biodiversity, profile cultural heritage and character, and are important for economic development, tourism, river users, events and the arts. The parklands shape Melbourne's cultural relationship with the Birrarung (Yarra River), and make a significant contribution to the quality and diversity of the city's open spaces.

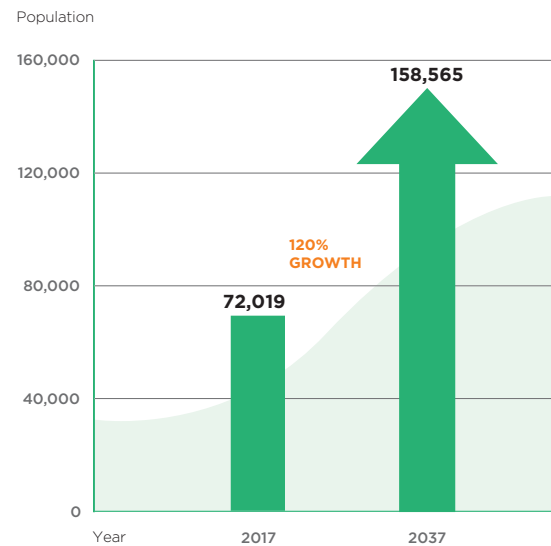
Visitors to the parklands are increasing as the municipality's resident, worker and visitor populations grow. The Domain Parklands are the major open space within walking distance to many residents in Southbank, the CBD and South Yarra. There is a particularly high dependence by Southbank and CBD residents on the Domain Parklands as most people live in apartments and there are few local parks.

The population within these areas was 72,019 in 2017 and is expected to grow by 120% to 158,565 by 2037, with most of the residential growth in Southbank and the CBD.

2.3 STRATEGIC CONTEXT AND INFLUENCES

The parklands connect with surrounding areas including the Arts precinct, Southbank, the central city, Birrarung Marr and the Sports precinct across the river. These areas are developing and changing and all experiencing growth.

Key city-shaping projects underway will also dramatically influence the urban context for the Domain Parklands over the next few decades. These projects include the Metro Tunnel project, the Swan Street Bridge redevelopment, Southbank Boulevard redevelopment and continued development of the Sports precinct and Arts precinct.



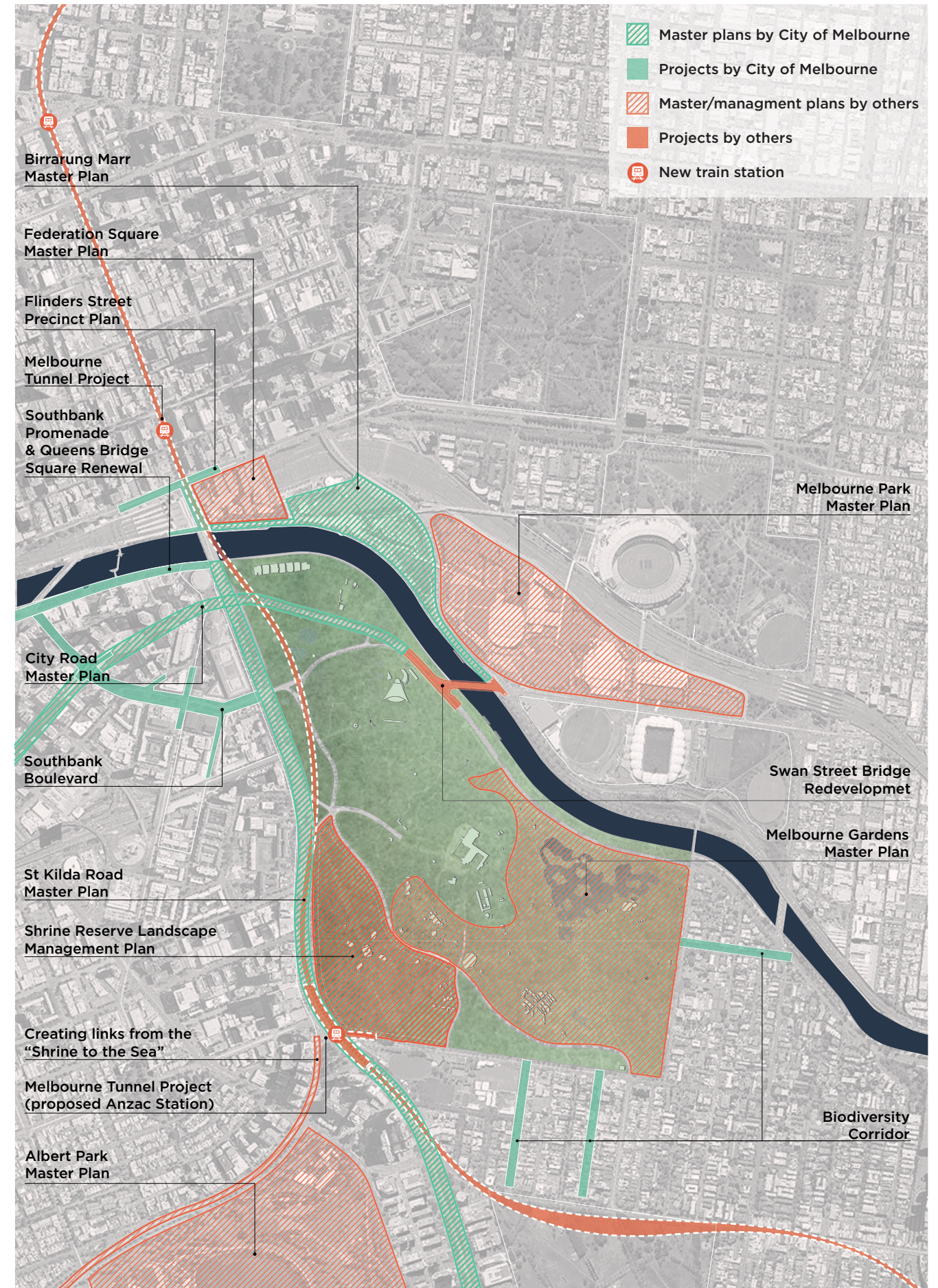
Population growth in Southbank and the CBD



Domain Parklands location with the City of Melbourne municipality



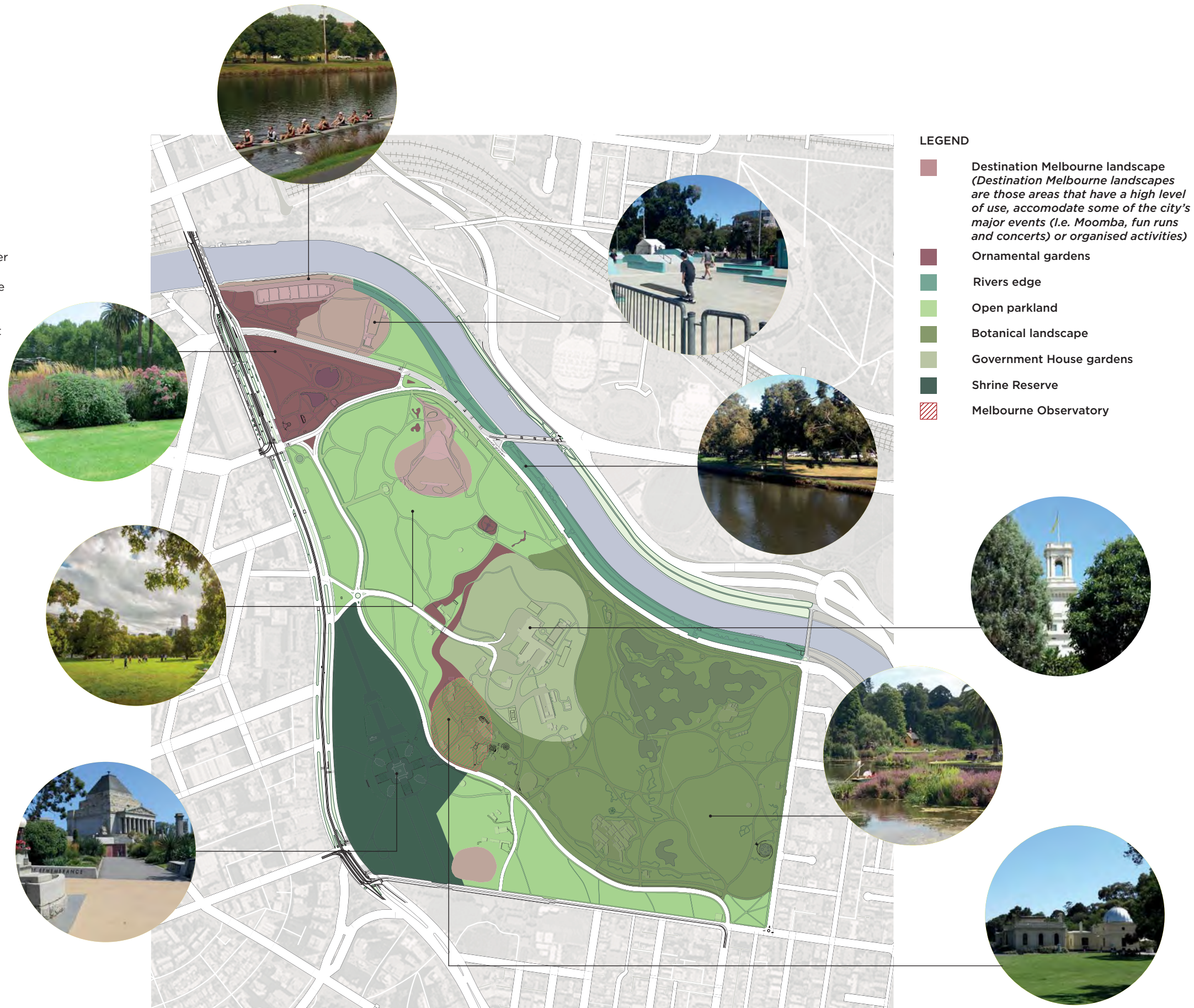
Domain Parklands surrounding context



Surrounding projects affecting the Domain Parklands

2.4 LANDSCAPE CHARACTERS

The landscape of the Domain Parklands comprises a number of distinct character areas within it. Landscape characters contribute to the experiences people have and value. The master plan will seek to retain experiences people enjoy while diversifying the landscape where appropriate, for example along the river corridor. In the future planting plans will continue to complement landscape characters and preserve significant view lines, while also allowing for testing and monitoring plants to adapt to a changing climate.



Landscape characters within the Domain Parklands

2.5 LAND MANAGEMENT AND STATUS

All the Domain Parklands are Crown land, permanently reserved for sale for a specific public purpose pursuant to the provisions of the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*.

Some Reserves comprise several allotments set aside for different purposes including public parks and gardens, ornamental plantations, memorials and statues. The Melbourne City Council has been appointed Committee of Management of most of the Reserves. The Government House Reserve, Shrine of Remembrance Reserve, Sidney Myer Music Bowl, Melbourne Gardens and Melbourne Observatory have more specific purposes and under this remit are managed by other Land Managers.

The City of Melbourne manages a number of leases and licences for facilities within the Domain Parklands for community benefit. These include the Yarra Boathouses, leased to rowing clubs, La Trobe's Cottage, leased to the National Trust, and the Domain House, licenced by the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria.

The Domain Parklands primarily lie within the Public Park and Recreation Zone of the Melbourne Planning Scheme.

The Domain Parklands were added to the Victorian Heritage Register as a Heritage Place/Archaeological Place (H2304) in 2013 pursuant to the Heritage Act 1995. This indicates the historic values of the place are at a State level of importance.

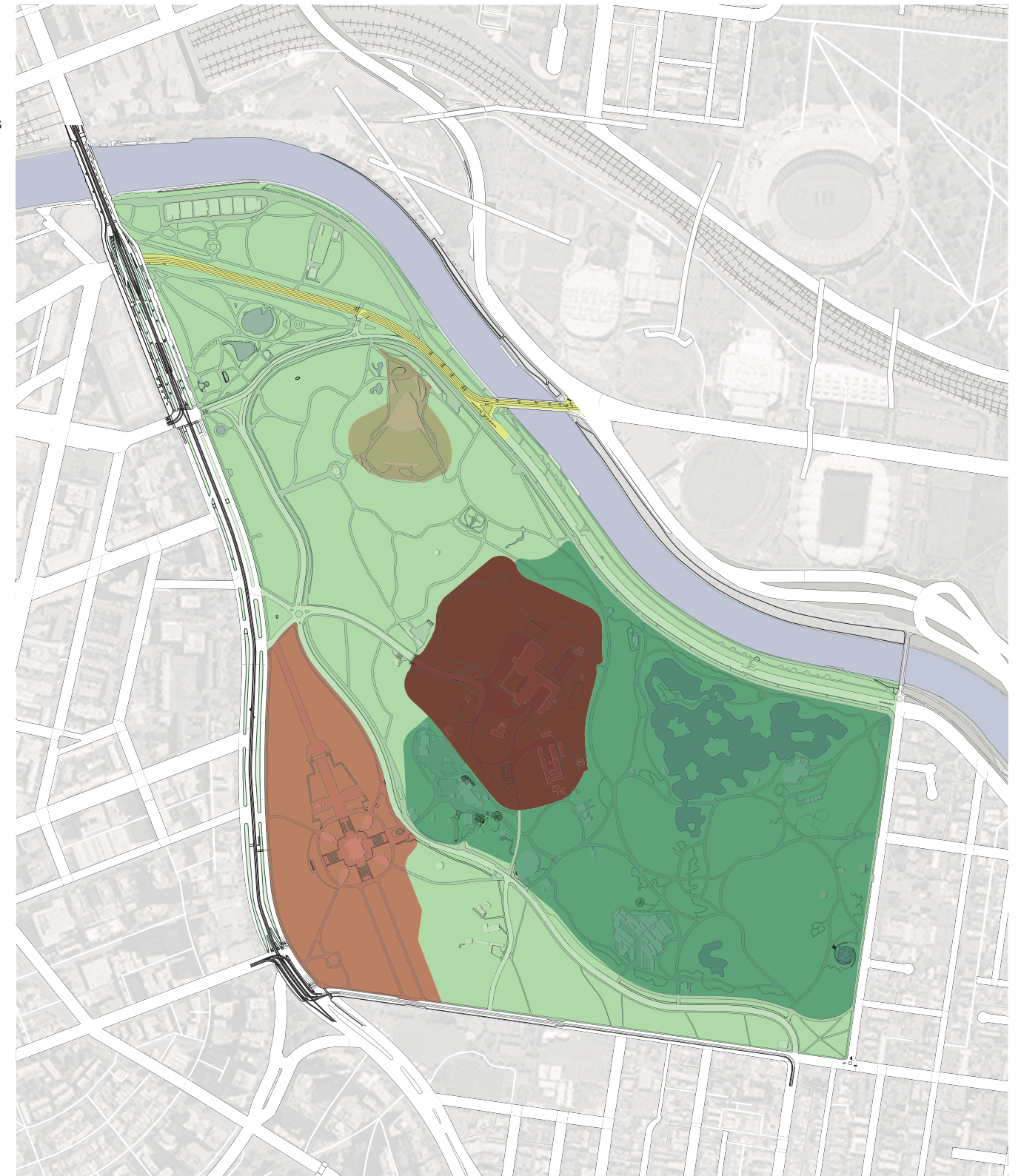
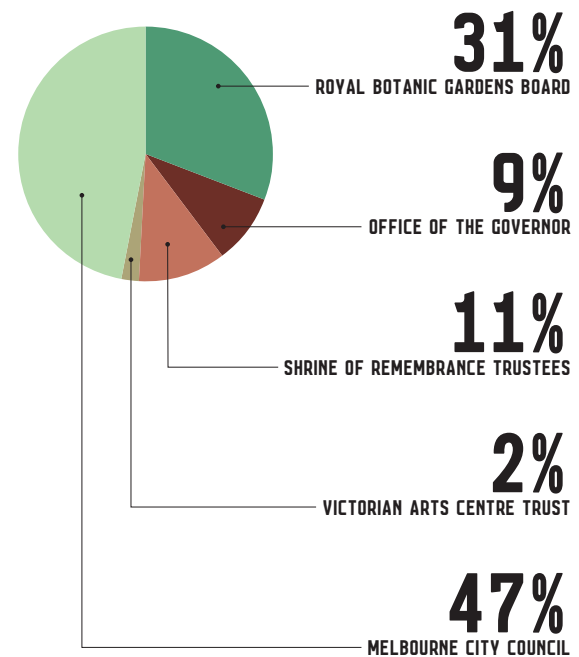
Government House, Royal Botanic Gardens, Sidney Myer Music Bowl, the Shrine of Remembrance Reserve, Melbourne University Boat Club, the Melbourne Observatory, La Trobe's Cottage and various monuments were already listed on the Victorian Heritage register.

The Sidney Myer Music Bowl and its setting are included on the National Heritage List (place ID 105743). The parklands, St Kilda Road, and the Melbourne Observatory but excluding the Melbourne Gardens, were placed on the National Heritage List as part of the Melbourne's Domain Parkland and Memorial Precinct (place ID 106305) on 12 February 2018.

The Melbourne Observatory was one of only four nineteenth century observatories in the southern hemisphere and provided critical infrastructure for the functioning of the colony and the wider scientific world. Its functions included providing meteorological data essential for predicting weather, providing accurate longitudinal data for the continent and was Melbourne's key time keeper.

The King's Domain Resting Place has outstanding national heritage value to the nation for its association with Australia's national repatriation story.

- LAND MANAGERS**
- Melbourne City Council
 - Royal Botanic Gardens Board
 - Shrine of Remembrance Trustees
 - Office of the Governor
 - Victorian Arts Centre Trust
 - VicRoads
 - Parks Victoria/Melbourne Water



Land managers within the Domain Parklands

2.6 LANDSCAPE CONDITIONS



Course of Lower Yarra River during colonisation (1864)



Aerial image of Domain Parklands (2018)

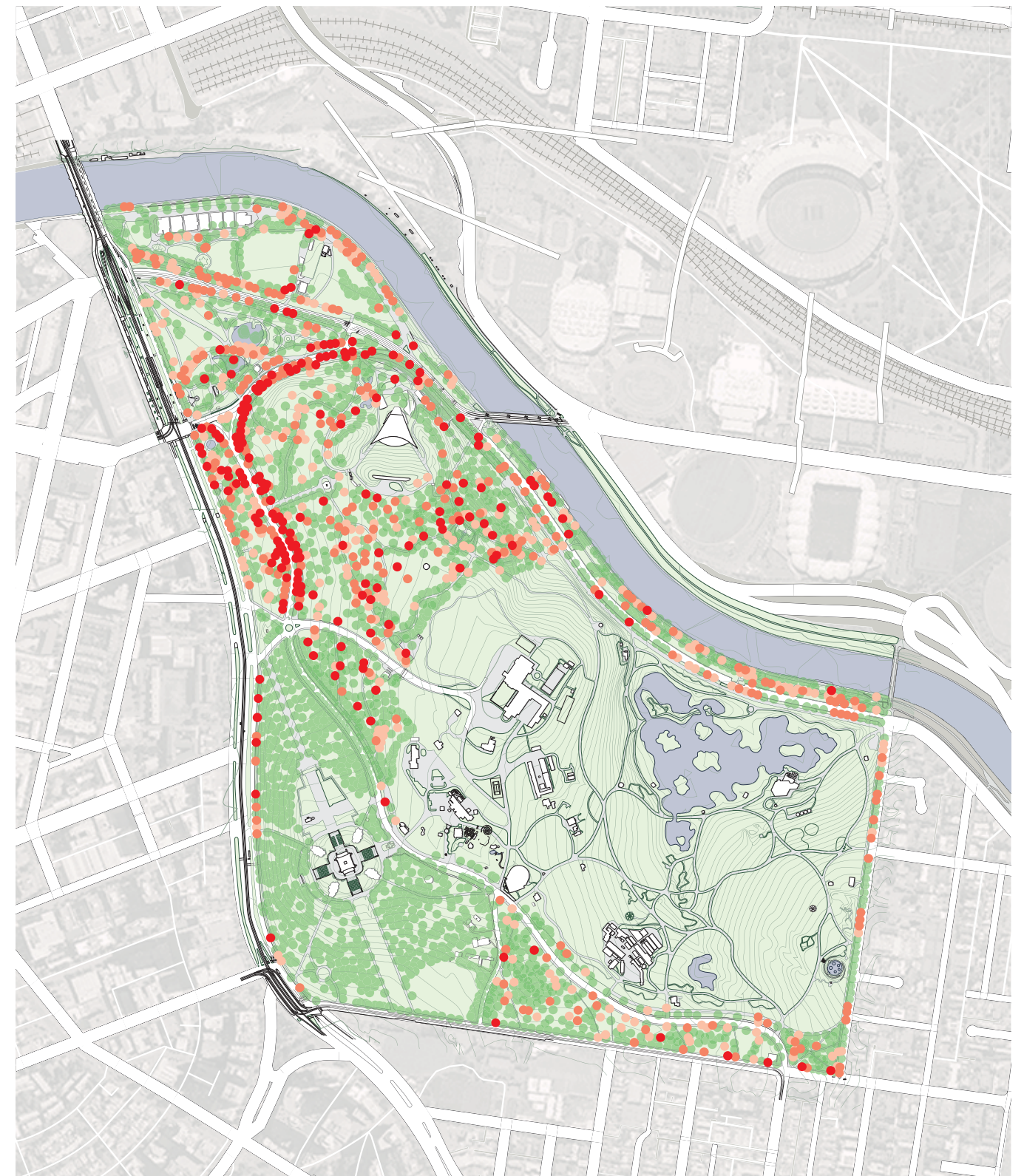
LEGEND
→ Significant view
— Contour line

TREE USEFUL LIFE EXPECTANCY

- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-20 years
- 20+ years



Significant view lines within and around the Domain Parklands



Trees within the Domain Parklands in red and pink nearing their useful life expectancy (The City of Melbourne manage the trees in the Shrine reserve on their behalf).

3. MASTER PLAN VALUES

The Domain Parklands Master Plan sets five key values to guide the evolution and management of the Domain Parklands over the next 20 years.

Fundamental to all the values is the principle that there be no net loss of parkland and that future change should bring positive benefits to the Domain Parklands.

3.1 A healthy and resilient parkland

The Domain Parklands will have an even more important role in the future as climate change brings greater challenges. We recognise that healthy parklands contribute essential environmental services to urban environments. To support a healthy and resilient parkland we need to increase canopy cover and urban forest diversity, improve vegetation health, habitat and improve soil moisture and water quality.

Climate change will influence the future planning and management of the parklands.

We know:

- Tree canopies and root systems reduce stormwater flows and nutrient loads that would end up in waterways during weather events. Trees intercept rainfall and unpaved areas absorb water, slowing the rate of runoff and contributing to the stormwater management.
- On days of extreme heat, the trees in the Domain Parklands provide respite from the heat and cool the city.

- Planning for landscape succession is integral to managing healthy landscapes.
- Trees play many essential roles, providing beauty, creating landscape settings, stimulating the senses and positively influencing our mental health and wellbeing.
- The parking of vehicles on the landscape is detrimental to the health of trees, reduces visual amenity and is inconsistent with park purposes.
- Urban ecology and biodiversity are important indicators and contributors to healthy parklands.
- Selecting the right plants for the right place will support biodiversity in the city.
- Horticultural elements provide some of the pleasure enjoyed by people visiting the parklands.
- Managing levels of use is important to maintain a healthy landscape.
- Healthy parks are an essential ingredient for healthy people.



3.2 A parkland of history and cultural heritage

We recognise that the parkland is a place of cultural and historic interest to the people of Victoria as evidenced by various listings on the Victorian Heritage Register, National Heritage List and Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register. In addition to the official histories, monuments and structures there is also the 'other' history the stories and memories of people over generations, which influences what people value today. This is also a place of living culture, not just one reflecting the past.

We know:

- The area that is now the Domain Parklands is significant to Aboriginal People. It is a place of shared Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal history and cultural heritage values.
- All people value the cultural diversity and heritage of the parklands as it connects and gives them a sense of place.
- The role of the parklands as the setting for Government House, the Shrine of Remembrance, the Melbourne Gardens, Melbourne Observatory, Sidney Myer

Music Bowl, Boathouses, and its association with the history of Melbourne is important and needs to be maintained and enhanced.

- Managing the parklands as a heritage place while allowing it to evolve to reflect contemporary values and continue to meet the needs of the city.
- There are unique parts of the parklands which contribute to the cultural significance.
- The opportunity to recreate elements of indigenous landscape and places for gathering, reflection and education will be explored. Development of opportunities for education about Aboriginal culture in the parklands will be supported.
- The important civic, ceremonial, recreational and landscape experiences and features that this place provides for the capital city should be celebrated.



3.3 A parkland for people

Parks are critical for physical and mental health and wellbeing. By improving access and balancing uses we support equity and facilitate participation by all. We recognise the importance of encouraging participation in physical activity and promoting opportunities for relaxation, community and learning.

We know:

- The beauty of the landscape setting is an essential part of the quality of the visitor experience.
- People visit the parklands from near and far. The parklands are important for people who live nearby as well as for people from across the State who may visit less frequently. Recognising the different ways the parklands are used is an important part of supporting visitors.
- Visiting parks is good for the physical and mental health and well-being of the community.

- Places of quiet reflection and landscape beauty provide relief from the urban environment.
- Recognise that people of all ages and abilities visit the parklands.
- New journeys, improved path links and better public transport connections are needed to improve access to the key destinations within the parklands.
- Provision of well-located amenities encourages participation by all and makes the visit a positive experience.
- Good wayfinding supports the visitor. It allows people to discover new experiences as well as helping them get to their destination.
- Play in parks is important for the healthy development of children and young people.



3.4 A parkland that connects

The Domain Parklands are valued well beyond their boundaries. They are an essential ingredient to the liveability of the city, and contribute to who we are as a city. Viewed from the ground and above, they provide layers of joy and discovery for residents and visitors from all over the world. They connect us to the city and the Birrarung (Yarra River) and are part of our knowledge of Melbourne.

We know:

- The Domain Parklands contribute significant health, environmental, economic and social benefit to the city.
- The Domain Parklands are a major factor in our international reputation as an attractive and liveable city and desirable tourist destination. They are a major contributor to property values in the city, Southbank and South Yarra and contribute significant direct economic value to the city.
- The Domain Parklands provide economic benefits through cultural services including recreation, health and tourism. Additionally they provide ecosystem services

such as air filtration, storm water cleaning, climate regulation and cooling the city. Their contribution to the city economy is substantial.

- The wider economic benefit of the parklands contributes to our present and future quality of life, health and prosperity. To continue to capture the economic benefits the city must invest in the renewal and care of the parklands.
- The Alexandra Gardens provide a primary point of access for river users.
- Prominent landmarks in the parklands connect with the city and help people navigate.
- Access and movement to and within the parklands is best planned with the pedestrian as the priority.
- Good access to and around the parklands is an essential ingredient for the quality of the visitor experience.
- A network and hierarchy of accessible paths, journeys, wayfinding, access by public transport and links to surrounding parks and the Birrarung (Yarra River) are integral to good access.



3.5 A parkland of partnerships

The Domain Parklands are one special place, created by the distinct character of the individual destinations within it. We recognise there is opportunity for Domain Parklands Land Managers to collaborate to enhance the broader destination management.

We know:

- Strengthening the environmental services role for the city and improving the visitor experience of the place, will benefit from collective oversight and direction.
- There are unique destinations with specific purposes. Together they create 'Parklands' to be celebrated.
- Common values and a united vision for the Domain Parklands will elevate innovative management for the parklands.
- Partnerships in management will help to build resilience.
- Collaborative approaches to management will incorporate strategic direction, guidance and communication.





4 MASTER PLAN THEMES

4.1 NURTURE A DIVERSE LANDSCAPE AND PARKLAND ECOLOGY



The City of Melbourne is currently facing three significant challenges: climate change, urban heating and population growth. These will place pressure on the fabric, services and people of the city. We need to respond to these challenges by proactively building healthy resilient landscapes for future generations.

The Domain Parklands play a critical environmental health role, acting as lungs for the city. All its natural elements—soil, water, trees and plants—require effective management and resourcing over the short and long term. We want to maximise the environmental contribution of the parklands and incorporate this into future decision-making.

The parklands are also significant in that they provide pleasure, respite and contact with nature to people visiting the parklands. The quality of the experience is enhanced through landscape design and horticultural expertise.

4.1.1 Elevate horticultural complexity and management

Enhancing horticultural elements in the landscape and connecting to other significant landscapes such as the Melbourne Gardens and Birrarung (Yarra River), will attract visitors, and enhance visitor experience through appreciation of the landscape. Technical expertise and good management is needed to support a healthy landscape, respect heritage and achieve cost effective maintenance. A management plan and guiding principles will be developed to enable operational decision making, to inform park renewal, routine maintenance and operational plans, including where garden beds should be reinstated or removed. The management plan will include all asset classes (such as horticulture, paths, infrastructure, and water features). The plan will guide selection of a healthy mix of exotic and native species as well as functional aspects such as shade for the Tan Track. Through the master plan we will continue to ensure the parklands are a centre of excellence in urban horticulture.

Master Plan Actions

- Implement City of Melbourne Eco-City strategies while retaining landscape design elements that have been assessed as having primary conservation significance.
- Develop and implement a management plan and guiding principles that facilitates horticultural excellence for planting styles, locations and maintenance regimes for the parklands.
- Strategically introduce native plant palettes in key areas including the Birrarung (Yarra River) edge.
- As part of the detailed designs for Kings Domain South, Kings Domain (Toms Block) and Alexandra Park, improve landscape character and planting diversity.

4.1.2 Support a healthy ecosystem

The Domain Parklands are one of the major biodiversity hotspots in the Melbourne municipality. They contain diverse vegetation that supports animals and other living creatures, forming unique urban ecosystems. These ecosystems are crucial for maintaining health and wellbeing by filtering air and water and providing shade and places for recreation.

We need to understand, monitor and facilitate the many ways the Domain Parklands promote and support urban ecology and biodiversity in the municipality and ensure our management protects and improves these values.

Master Plan Actions

- Implement the principles of the Urban Forest Strategy and Nature in the City Strategy to improve biodiversity and urban ecology.
- Partner with Land Managers on initiatives to improve biodiversity outcomes, integrate approaches to water management and advance the arboretum.

4.1.3 Manage a city arboretum

Ferdinand Mueller, the first director of the Royal Botanic Gardens planted an arboretum through the parklands in the 1850s and 1860s. An arboretum is a collection of trees, cultivated and managed for conservation, scientific, research and educational purposes.

Trees play an essential role in defining the character of the Domain Parklands. They provide beauty, habitat, create landscape settings, stimulate the senses and positively influence our mental health and wellbeing. Trees are vital for cooling the city and the tree canopies and root systems reduce stormwater flows and nutrient loads that would end up in the Birrarung (Yarra River) and our waterways.

Many trees in the Domain Parklands are reaching the later part of their life and will need replacing in the coming decades. New tree planting and planting renewal will be informed by research identifying trees which are better at coping with future climate conditions.

Master Plan Actions

- Develop and manage the city arboretum in partnership with the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria.
- Recommend funding for program delivery of science, research and education for the arboretum.
- Develop a detailed tree planting and maintenance plan and collections policy for the arboretum.

4.1.4 Manage soil and water

Management of soil and water in the landscape will continue to be of critical importance in nurturing a healthy and resilient parkland. Soil moisture is influenced by rainfall and irrigation as well as the soil structure. Adapting and improving soil management and irrigation practises increases the absorptive and water holding capacity of the soil. We will continue to work toward integrated water management systems throughout the parklands, including investigating alternative water supplies.

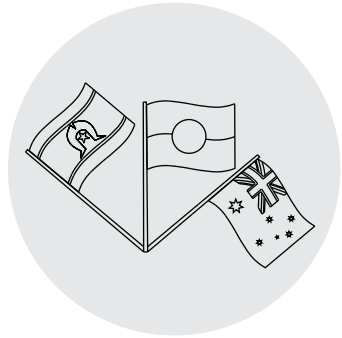
It is proposed to further expand the city arboretum in partnership with the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria. Through the city arboretum, a stronger emphasis will be placed on science, research and education. The trees will be managed at a higher level of cultivation than usual, to facilitate leading research. The learning from this will be applied to tree selection and management across the municipality. Selection of planting locations will be guided and designed carefully to coordinate with landscape character, heritage influences, view lines and open areas to retain, and how the area is used.

Opportunities to develop an education centre to promote understanding of the role of the urban forest will be explored (see Visitor Experience - section 4.3).

Master Plan Actions

- Continue innovative approaches to soil management
- Continue to work towards integrated water management.
- Investigate and recommend investment in alternative water supply systems in partnership with Land Managers to achieve a 50 per cent target of all irrigation water used in the parkland being from a non-potable source.

4.2 ACKNOWLEDGE HISTORY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE



There are many cultural values and characters within the Domain Parklands. The Domain Parklands have evolved over time, boundaries have changed, important places have been built, and the Birrarung (Yarra River) has been a constant connection. It is a place of shared Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal history and cultural heritage values.

- The Aboriginal cultural heritage is a missing layer in the current Domain Parklands.
- The Kings Domain Resting Place has outstanding National Heritage value to the nation for its association with Australia's national repatriation story. The resting place represents Indigenous communities asserting control to ensure the return and (re)burial of their ancestors in accordance with their community's cultural protocols.
- Unique parts of the parklands contribute to the cultural

significance.

- The parklands were set aside as the 'domain' for Government House. They were also the place for other important government functions including the Melbourne Gardens and Observatory.
- The Shrine of Remembrance monument is evidence of the high profile role of the Domain Parklands.

4.2.1 Respect and celebrate Aboriginal cultural heritage

The area that is now the Domain Parklands is significant to Aboriginal people. There are two distinct communities represented in the parklands. The Kings Domain Resting Place is important for all the nations in Victoria. There are also specific groups with stated connection to the area.

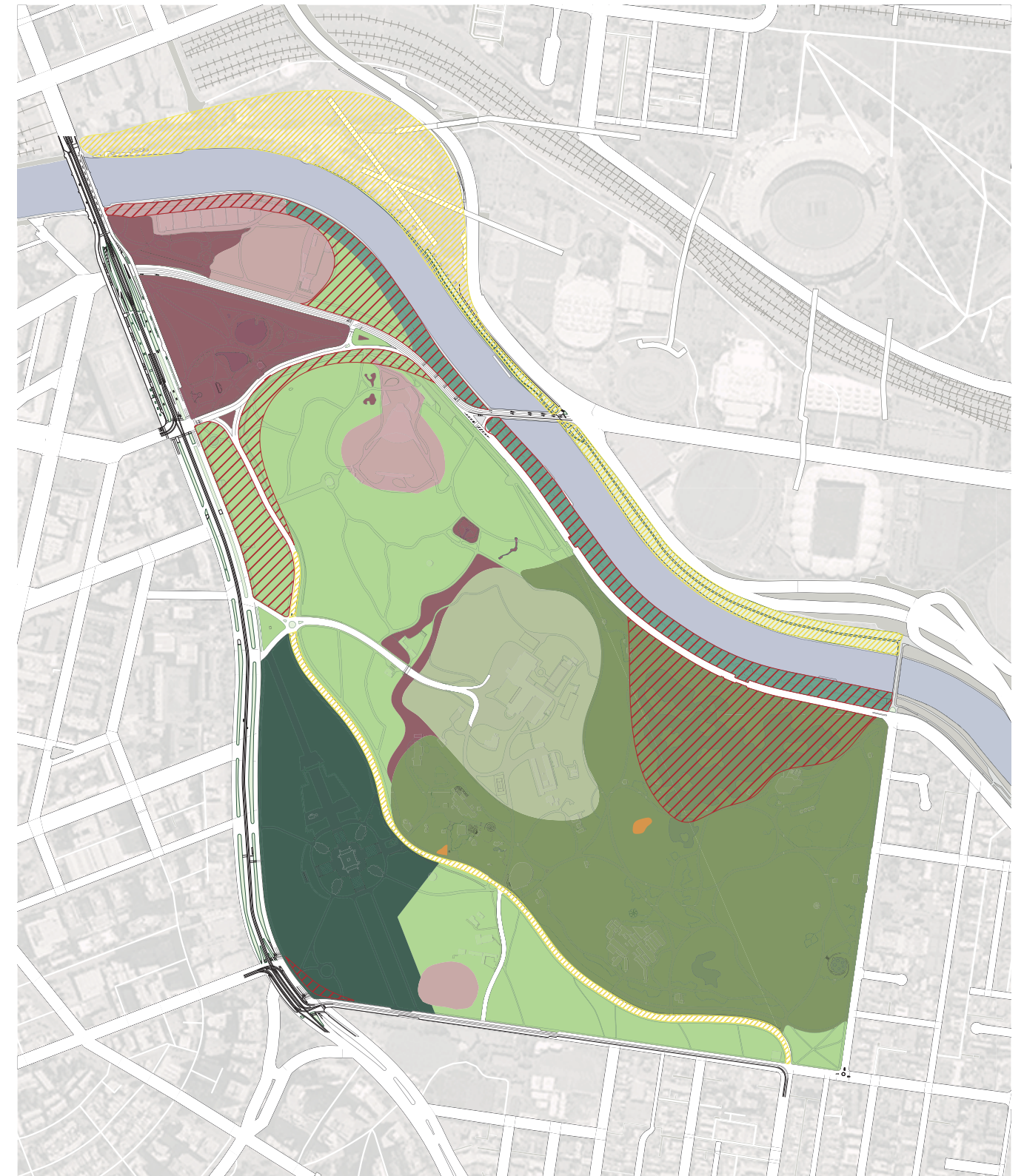
Before European settlement the land known now as the Domain Parklands was a rich and fertile landscape. The Birrarung (Yarra River) followed a different course, with extensive wetlands along much of the lower parts of the area. It provided food supplies and was an important meeting place.

This master plan will acknowledge the Aboriginal history of the Domain Parklands, while also creating a platform to celebrate Aboriginal culture in Melbourne in the 21st century. People want to know the story of this country.

In the future the use of Aboriginal place names to recognise history will be explored.

Master Plan Actions

- Work collaboratively with the Traditional Owner groups to build a stronger story of the Aboriginal connection to the area of the Domain Parklands, Birrarung (Yarra River) and it's banks.
- Commission further research of historical data from primary sources and the Lower Yarra landscape's cultural values, with a focus on the Domain Parklands.
- Explore and strengthen the link to Tromgin (Indigenous social gathering site) and along the Birrarung (Yarra River), in collaboration with Traditional Owners and Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria.
- Develop a self- guided Melbourne walk in collaboration with Traditional Owners and Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria.
- Working with all the Land Managers and Traditional Owners, develop a joint Cultural Heritage Management Plan to guide the management of the place.
- Explore renaming places within the parklands to recognise Aboriginal history and culture.



Key areas for enhancing native plant palette

LEGEND

- Existing indigenous planting
- Opportunity for indigenous /native planting
- Proposed opportunity to enhance indigenous / native planting
- Destination Melbourne landscape
- Ornamental gardens
- Rivers edge
- Open parkland
- Botanical landscape
- Government House gardens
- Shrine Reserve



Kings Domain Resting Place is a commemorative site of remembrance holding 38 Victorian Aboriginal people's remains.

4.2.2 Reflect cultural values and historical significance

The Domain Parklands, Government House, the Shrine of Remembrance, Sidney Myer Music Bowl, Melbourne Observatory and St Kilda road are included in the National Heritage List of Melbourne's Domain Parkland and Memorial Precinct. This precinct is recognised for outstanding heritage value to the nation because of its historic significance and rare characteristics. Of particular importance is the Kings Domain Resting Place for its association with the national repatriation story. The precinct also demonstrates a rare government Domain with strong Victorian era components.

The Domain Parklands is of historical, archaeological, aesthetic, architectural, scientific (horticultural), and social significance to the State of Victoria. The Domain Parklands were listed on the Victorian Heritage Register in July 2013.

The parklands are particularly noted as a setting for places of outstanding value, being Government House and Grounds, the Shrine of Remembrance, the Sidney Myer Music Bowl, the Melbourne Gardens and Melbourne Observatory.

Unique parts of the Domain Parklands that contribute to the cultural significance also include:

- Places such as the Pioneer Women's Memorial Garden, La Trobe's Cottage, the fern gully, the Tan Track, the Queen Victoria memorial, and Janet Lady Clarke rotunda.
- The Boathouses and the historic association of rowing with the City of Melbourne and the Birrarung (Yarra River).
- Specific journeys or path links, particular views, elements of Aboriginal cultural significance, horticultural places such as the floral clock and unusual features such as the Robinette rockeries.

- Fountains and water features, artwork and sculptures.

Of enormous importance is the use of the parklands by the people of Victoria and beyond. The parklands are highly valued by all. The parklands are used for passive and active recreation, for celebration and commemoration, for ceremonial and civic functions. These are of ongoing importance to the city and its people.

A number of elements such as fountains, artworks, sculptures and rockeries enhance the recreation experience for visitors as well as being of cultural and historic value. They are, and should continue to be, maintained and restored as part of the cultural collection.

The City of Melbourne has an important role to promote and protect the cultural heritage values of the areas it manages, including the National Heritage values recently recognised on the National Heritage List. It is proposed to prepare a Heritage Management plan to assist in this role, recognising the complexity of management responsibilities and other important values to support in the parklands. It is proposed to work with the Land Managers to prepare a Heritage Management Framework which coordinates the heritage management principles for the National Heritage List sites.

Master Plan Actions

- Promote an increase in community understanding and recognition of cultural heritage. Increase the public visibility of the history of the parklands through information and interpretation.
- Continue to maintain and restore the unique parts of the cultural collection.
- Prepare a Heritage Management plan for the Domain Parklands National Heritage place.
- Working with the Land Managers, prepare a Heritage Management framework for the Domain Parklands National Heritage List sites.



4.2.3 Manage memorials in the Domain Parklands

There are many memorials within the Kings Domain. Due to its location, character and high profile, the Kings Domain is frequently requested as the location to place new memorials. While each existing memorial has merit, the ad hoc accumulation over time has resulted in visual clutter and limitations on the way the parklands can be used.

In order to manage and protect the landscape values and uses of all the parklands, the City of Melbourne has developed a Plaques and Memorials policy (2016) which establishes criteria to guide decision-making.

Any future proposals for memorials within the areas of the Domain Parklands which City of Melbourne manages, other than within the Shrine Reserve, need to be managed within the policy and alternative methods of commemoration should be considered.








It is proposed that no further large memorials be placed in the Kings Domain, and any future memorialisation only be considered where it could become part of the landscape rather than as a specific element. Alternative methods for commemoration could be considered such as horticultural memorials (including display garden beds) which would be more consistent with the park setting and contribute to the ecological diversity and visitor experience. De-accession or rotation policies for existing memorials, similar to galleries, are other possibilities.

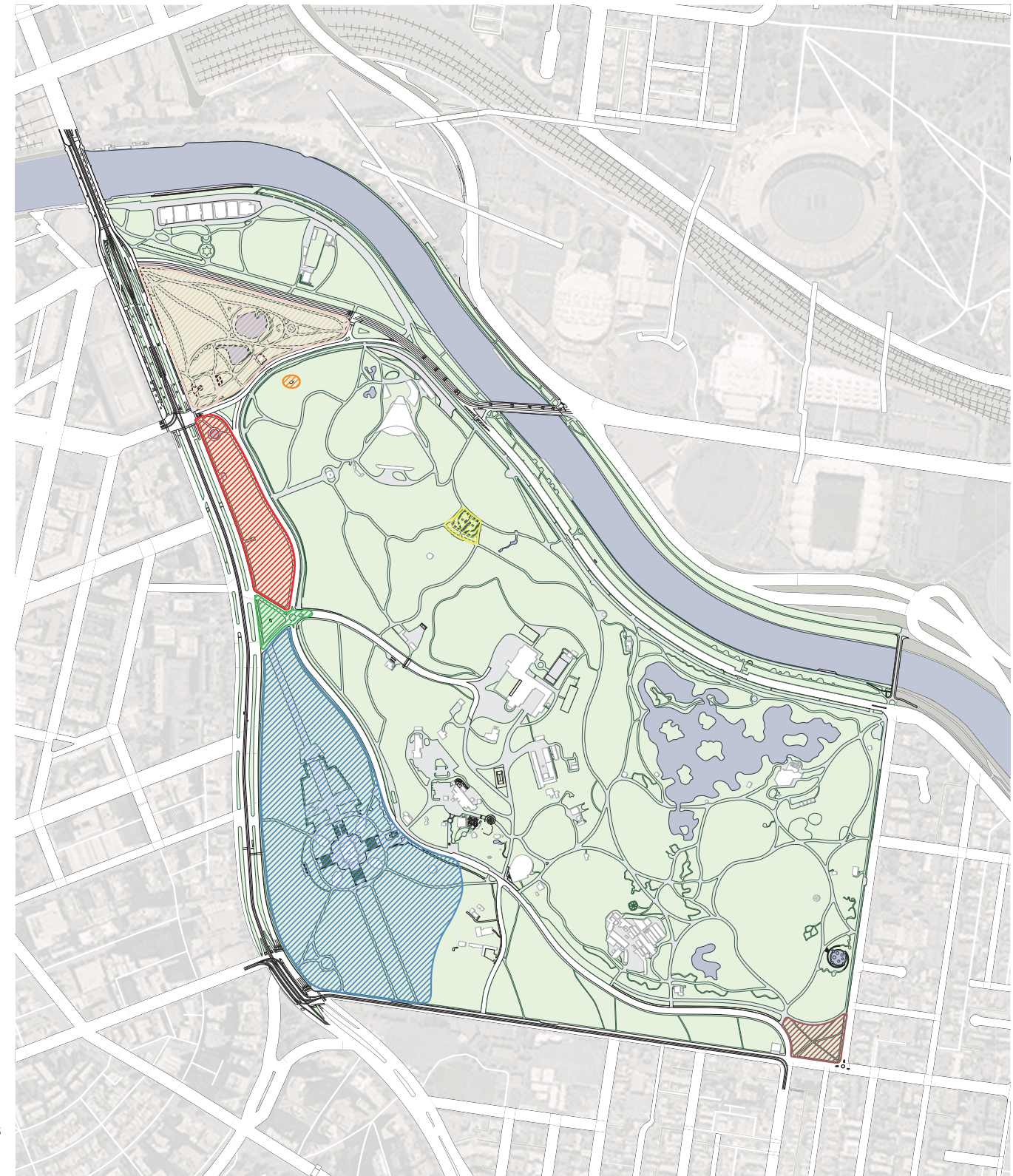
Future plaques for Rotary commemoration are ideally located within Rotary Corner, which has capacity to support additional dedications.

Master Plan actions

- Requests for future memorialisation, other than within the Shrine Reserve, are only considered if in keeping with the Plaques and Memorials policy (2016).
- No additional large memorials or monuments, unless replacing existing ones, be permitted within areas of the Domain Parklands managed by the City of Melbourne.

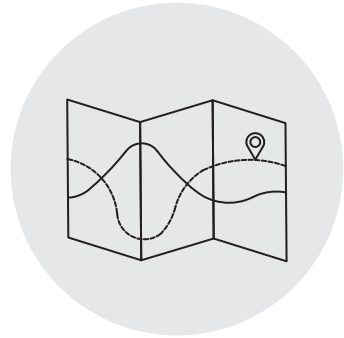
LEGEND

-  Queen Victoria Gardens - royal memorials
-  Tom's Block - civic/institutional memorials
-  Shrine Reserve - war memorials
-  Rotary corner - community groups
-  Pioneer Women's Memorial Garden
-  Government House Drive+Anzac Avenue - government and military leaders
-  Kings Domain resting place - Aboriginal commemorative site



Areas characterised by memorials in the Domain Parklands

4.3 SUPPORT EXCEPTIONAL VISITOR EXPERIENCE



People come to visit particular destinations in the Domain Parklands including the Melbourne Gardens, the Shrine of Remembrance and the Sidney Myer Music Bowl. People also visit the parklands for a range of sport and recreation activities, both formal and informal, e.g. to relax, walk, exercise, for picnics and gatherings, to row, to skate, for play, walk the dog on a lead, attend events and public programs, concerts, ceremonies and commemorations and to generally explore and enjoy the parklands. Visitors include residents, workers, local, interstate and international tourists.

While actual visitor numbers are difficult to collect, it is clear they are high. The Melbourne Gardens have over 1.9 million visitors and the Shrine of Remembrance (monument and Reserve) also receive around 1.5 million visitors each year. The Sidney Myer Music Bowl has around 200,000 visitors a year. Recent Tan Track counts have from 4,000 to 6,000 people using the track each day, which equates to 1.7 - 2.2 million visitors per year.

The rowing clubs have between 200,000 and 300,000 individual visits a year, and this number increases with external rowers visiting the precinct for regattas.

Places of quiet reflection and landscape beauty provide relief from the urban environment. Enhancing the visual amenity and landscape setting of the Domain Parklands to provide this respite is a high priority. Provision of well-located amenities encourages participation by all and makes the visit a positive experience.

The number of visitors to the parklands will continue to grow. There is increasing pressure regarding the levels and types of uses in the parklands and the effect of some activities on the passive enjoyment of the parklands. A balanced approach, to enable different activities to occur while retaining experiences, is essential to supporting exceptional visitor experience.

