

VICTORIA PARK **PRELIMINARY DRAFT MASTER PLAN**

Volume 1



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1 Executive Summary

Executive summary to be provided in final draft.



2 Introduction

2.1 Victoria Park

Victoria Park is 120 Ha in size and located at the heart of the city's existing urban areas and major growth areas to the west. The Park fronts onto Ballarat's principal avenue, Sturt Street, to the north which provides connection to Lake Wendoree and the Gardens Precinct. Russell Street bounds it to the east, Winter Street to the south and Gillies Street to the west. The immediate surrounds include a number of schools - Ballarat High School, Loretto College, St Patricks College, Urquhart Park Primary School - and commercial/industrial areas (including the Sale Yards) and residential properties.

The Park is a significant asset that provides numerous recreational opportunities. It is heavily utilised for both passive and active recreation and is equipped with a range of facilities including playing fields and clubs. A portion of the southern part of the Park is used for equestrian events and the numerous ovals and existing clubrooms currently service junior cricket, school sports and the Ballarat Dog Obedience Club. The Park is also heavily used for dog walking, cycling, picnics, children's playgrounds and various other pastimes.

It is a culturally and historically rich landscape and a notable example of European style parkland in Australia with significant exotic tree plantings as well as indigenous grasslands. The landscape is predominantly flat and open with curving avenues of established European trees and open grassed areas and clumped plantings of large tree species. The Park was the site of Victoria's first Arbor Day planting which took place in 1890. Historically the Park has accommodated a variety of activities including gold mining, motor racing events and the 16th Australian Scout Jamboree, as well as operating as a base for the military during World War Two.

Council managed the Park under a restricted Crown Grant from 1888 to 2006. It is now under a Committee of Management arrangement which allows a greater degree of flexibility in terms of leasing arrangements and funding opportunities. It is classified as a regional open space asset in the Ballarat Open Space Strategy due to its size, location and the diversity of recreational opportunities it presents. It is currently zoned Public Park and Recreation Zone and is a designated heritage precinct.

2.2 Master Plan Background

Numerous reports have been prepared over the years detailing proposed future directions and management strategies for the Park. Proposals have raised issues around competing interests that require further resolution, and strategies for management including traffic and vegetation require updating.

The City of Ballarat has carried out extensive consultation with stakeholders and the community including a comprehensive visioning exercise in 2012 which developed a community backed vision for the future of the Park. Issues have arisen about the appropriate type, scope and scale of improvements, and the desire to preserve and enhance the existing landscape character. The Master Plan aims to clearly articulate how these issues can be resolved to achieve the best possible outcome for all users.

In recent years Victoria Park has been subject to increasing and often competing infrastructure development challenges and opportunities including:

- Preserving and enhancing the Parks historical plantings, landscape character, native grasslands and environmental and historical values.
- Addressing increasing traffic issues and flooding issues throughout the Park.
- Existing user group and stakeholder desires for improved ovals, upgraded or new clubrooms, lighting, improved road surfaces and car parking.
- Community desires for improved access, connections, passive leisure opportunities and improved amenity and safety.
- The need for a venue for a major events facility within the Ballarat region.
- Community demand for new and improved facilities for shared and multi -functional use to cater to Ballarat's growing population.

The Victoria Park Master Plan considers these challenges and opportunities and provides the next level of detail required to move the project forward and consolidate the prior work into a cohesive plan for the Park. It will be used to guide Council in the prioritisation and provision of funding for upgrades and on going maintenance to the Park. It will also equip Council and stakeholders with visual material that clearly illustrates the potential to achieve the multiple aspirations for the Park without compromising its character.



2.3 Master Plan Format

The Master Plan consists of two parts:

Volume 1

The Master Plan report which provides summaries of issues, consultation process, vision, principles, objectives, directions, recommendations and drawings.

Volume 2

The supporting documents and reports.

2.4 Site History

European Settlement

Prior to European settlement, the site of Victoria Park is thought to have been Plains Grassy Woodland and was occupied by the Wathaurong (Wadda-Warrung) people. While the site has been significantly altered in both character and land management since European settlement, indigenous grasslands and trees (including River Red Gums, Blackwood and Drooping She-oaks) exist on site as an indication of that history.

Park Designation

In 1858 the Chairman of Ballarat Council appealed to the President of the Crown Lands and Survey to have the area 'specifically reserved for a park and Gazetted as such'. As part of process, Council agreed to compensate owners of small tenements located within the park area and the land was temporarily gazetted on August 12. The Park was known and referred to as 'Royal Park' during this period.



Aerial Photo 1930 - The white areas show where mining spoil was dumped.

Mining

In 1866 the largest mining companies of the time - United Hand-in-Hand and Band of Hope (who later jointly became Park Company) - sunk a shaft within the Park as part of exploration of the Inkerman Lead. The value of gold obtained from this area was 4517 pounds. By 1898 the site had been mined intensively by Park Company. The mullock heap known as Mt Holled Smith was formed during this time from the dumping of mining spoil.

Crown Grant

On August 6th 1888 the Governor in Council approved the Crown Grant for permanent reservation of the park and the name was changed to Victoria Park. The Crown Grant was 'for the purpose of a public park and offices and convenience connected therewith and for no other purpose whatsoever'. In 2006 the City of Ballarat surrendered the Crown Grant and was appointed 'Committee of Management' of Victoria Park as a 'Permanent Public Park Reserve' by the Minister for Planning.

Park Design and Planting

The original design layout of the parkland was modelled on popular English country estates and London parks. It was designed by Messrs Clegg and Nicholls and modified by William Guilfoyle (curator of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne).

On 23 May 1890 Victoria Park was the site of Victoria's first Arbor Day Planting, a large-scale event initiated by William Little (mayor at time). Citizens were invited to share the planting of 3000 trees, including species such as elm, plane, cedar, oak, poplar, eucalyptus and indigenous trees. The planting commenced at the sound of a bugle and within ten minutes many of the avenues and clumps of trees which characterise the Park today were planted.

By 1914 considerable public works and improvements had been carried out within northern sections of the Park. Established tree lined avenues were interspersed with flowers, paths and roadways that provided public access through the Park and to playing fields (three grounds for football and cricket). Two shelters, fencing, hedges and a curator's residence had also been installed. Cedars in the central drive were in poor condition, so Golden Cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*) were planted in-between them with the aim of eventually replacing them.

The original park plan did not include the southern part of the Park that now incorporates the equestrian precinct and Winter Street frontage. Southern portions of the Park were given to commercial plantations of *Pinus radiata* until 1929, a remnant of which exists today as a dense forest of pines in the southeast

corner.

A specimen tree was planted in 1944 in memory of W.O Allen, a curator who faithfully served the Ballarat community for 60 years, making his death. The Victorian Tree Planters Association erected the tree.

Local printing company F W Niven & Co. produced a souvenir plan of Victoria Park to commemorate Arbor Day (See page 6).

Military Use

The mullock is known locally as 'Mount Holled-Smith' and was named in honour of Major General Sir Charles Holled-Smith (British commander of the Victorian Defence Force) who supervised military exercises involving 3000 men at the Park during Easter 1898.

During the Second World War part of the Park facing Sturt Street and extending south towards Eyre Street became occupied by 'Military Authorities'; this served as an army base to house United States servicemen, home to 8000 US troops until May 1943. A military hospital was also established.

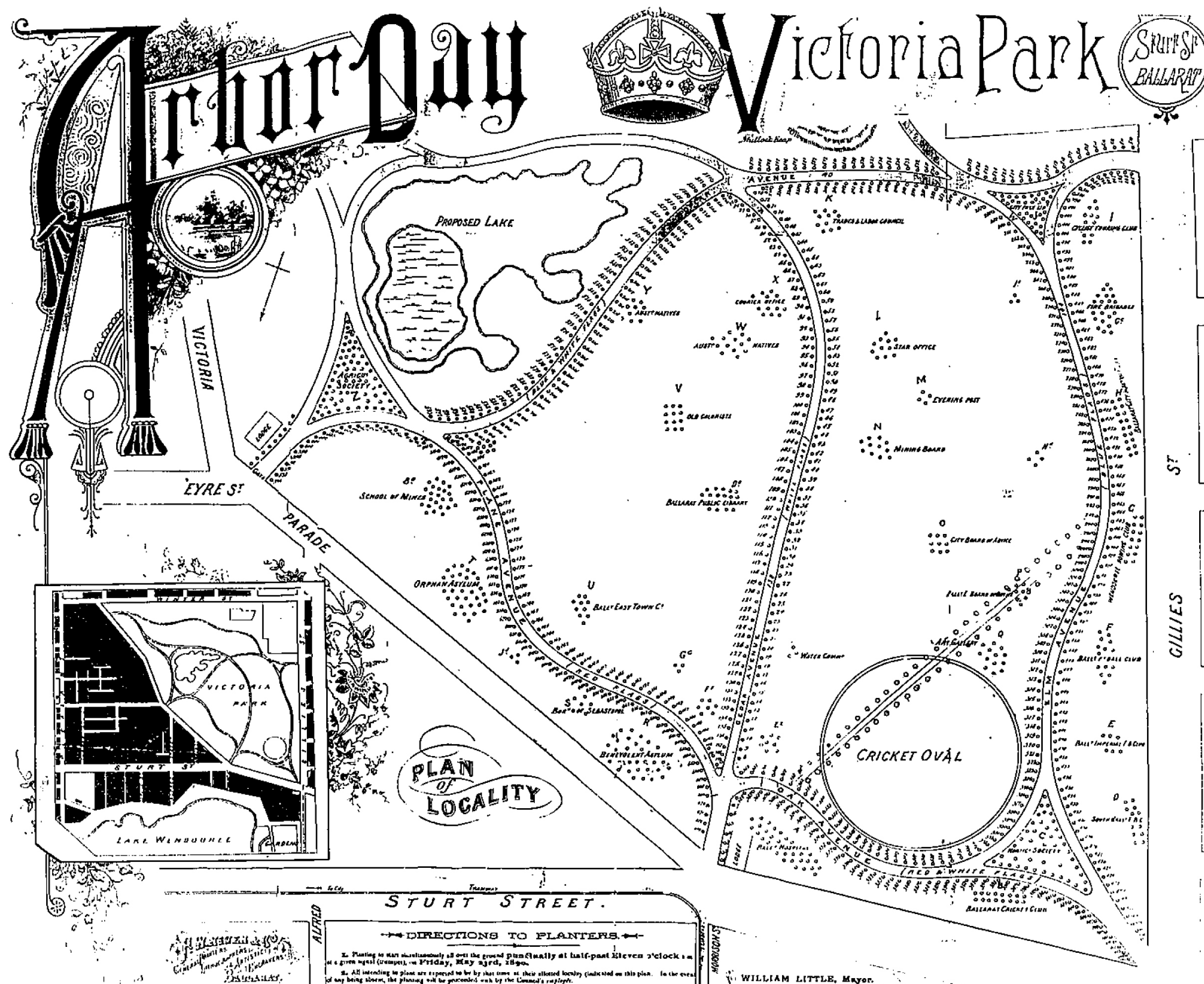
Events

Over the years the Park has been used for various large-scale events including:

- Car rallying and motor cycle racing (1940's - 60's)
- 16th Australian Scout Jamboree (1992)
- Equestrian Events (present)

Site History sources include:

- Ballarat Historic Trees and Gardens Part 1 Department of Crown Lands and Survey, 1983.
- Victorian Heritage Database Report - Victoria Park Precinct, City of Ballarat, 2015.



Arbor Day Plan 1890 - This plan shows the original layout of avenue trees and specimen clumps. This design is largely intact today with many of the original trees in place.

3 Background Documents

3.1 City of Ballarat Strategic Documents

City of Ballarat Open Space Strategy City of Ballarat (2014)
Summary yet to be included.

City of Ballarat Recreation Strategy City of Ballarat (2014)
Summary yet to be included.

3.2 Victoria Park Documents

Victoria Park – A Vision Sharon Sykes (2012)

Summary of document given in Chapter 4.1 Prior Consultation.

Victoria Park Inclusive Regional Play Space Jeavons Landscape Architects and City of Ballarat (2015)

A new inclusive play space will be developed in the northwest corner of Victoria Park. The works will include a large fenced play space with a broad range of inclusive play equipment and design features including: water play areas, musical interactive zones, a flying fox and swing complex, and a main play structure. Supporting infrastructure will include shelters, BBQ's, toilets, paths, open lawn areas, tree planting and car parking.

Concept designs have been completed in consultation with key stakeholder groups. The project is currently in a detailed design and specification phase with construction due to commence before June 2015.

Victoria Park, Ballarat Equestrian Precinct - Master Plan Report Planisphere (2007)

The Equestrian Precinct Master Plan was developed in consultation with the Ballarat Pony Club, other Ballarat based equine groups, and representatives of the City of Ballarat and the Crown. The Master Plan provides strategic guidance for the ongoing management and development of facilities and landscaping within the southern portion of Victoria Park informally occupied by the Ballarat Pony Club since 1956, otherwise known as the Equestrian Precinct. Council adopted it in 2007.

Victoria Park - Vegetation Management Plan- Remnant Grassland Site Practical Ecology Pty Ltd (2006)

This document was prepared to identify the ecological values of the native grasslands found in sections of Victoria Park and to assist the City of Ballarat to appropriately and effectively manage those ecological values.

Council's Park's department believe that the document provides a good guidance for management of the grasslands but would now like to see it refreshed so that it provides a concise program of works to 'improve' the grasslands ecology.

Victoria Park Management, Use and Development Framework City of Ballarat (2004)

The Victoria Park Management, Use and Development (MUD) Framework was developed by the City of Ballarat to ensure that the integrity of Victoria Park, and particularly its historical, environmental and cultural values would be protected and enhanced for the public's use and enjoyment. The MUD Framework was considered to be a better tool than a Master Plan to achieve this objective at the time given that a number of significant development proposals had been proposed for Victoria Park in the preceding years.

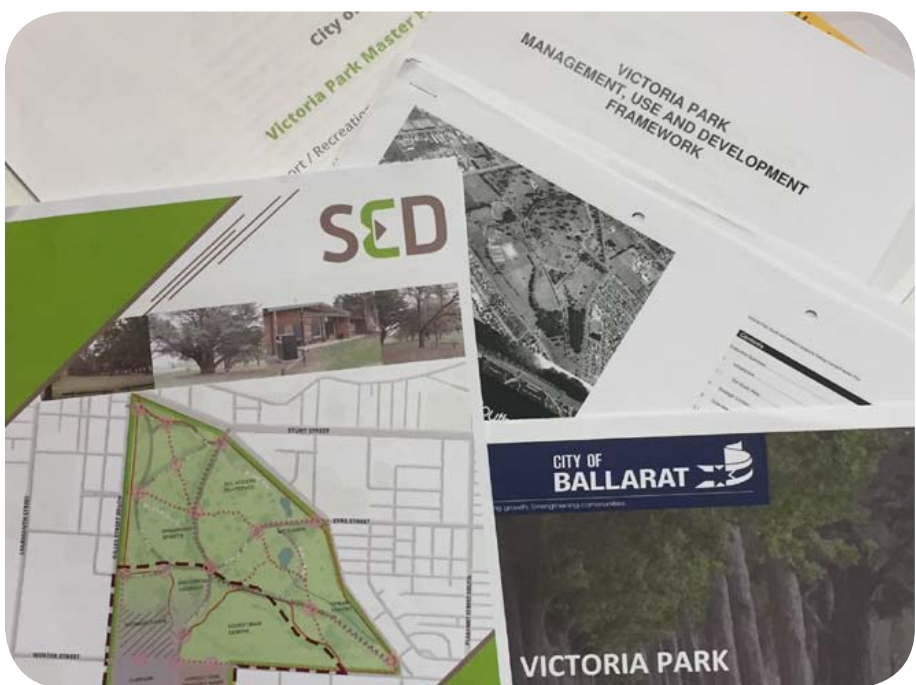
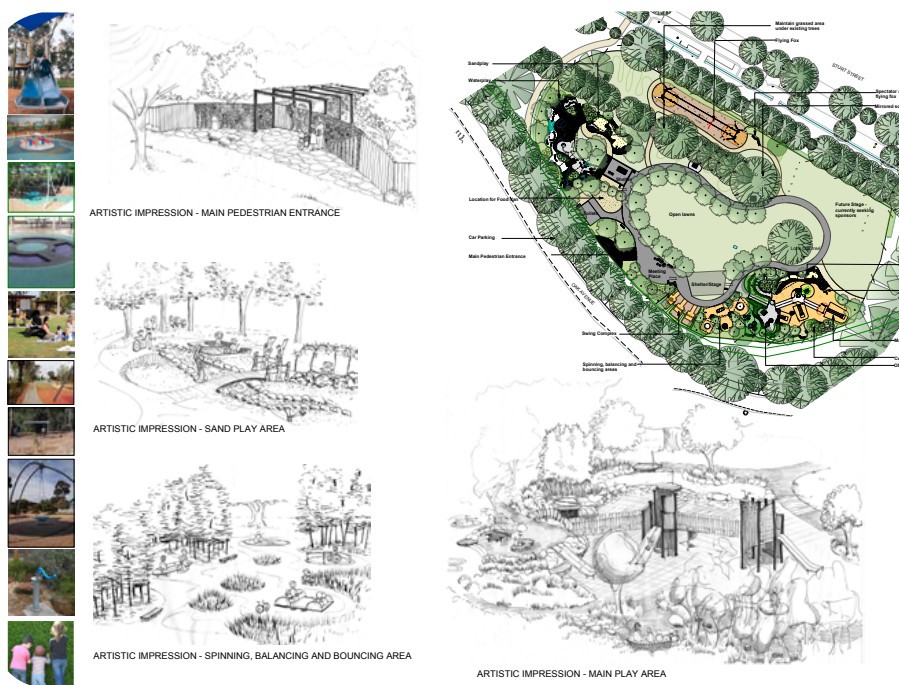
The MUD Framework included some detailed policy recommendations, some of which have since been implemented including the change of land status from a Crown Grant to Committee of Management. The Framework was undertaken with stakeholder and community input and was adopted by the City of Ballarat in 2004.

Victoria Park Community Pavilion – Feasibility Study Morton Dunn Architects (2009)

The Community Pavilion Study and design concepts were undertaken for the brick clubroom building located in the central west side of Victoria Park. The Ballarat Dog Obedience Club, the Lucas Cricket Club, and the Victoria Park Soccer Club currently occupy the building. Each tenant has their own facilities (e.g. meeting room, kitchen and toilets) within the building and each have desires to expand or modify those facilities.

The Study was undertaken in consultation with the tenants and identified that the current building has poor connectivity, is dysfunctional, and is in relatively poor condition. The Study concluded that a new purpose built facility would be more economically viable and would not only be capable of providing the growing needs of the current tenants, but could also have a broader public use for meetings, public functions and as a base for community events in Victoria Park.

The estimated cost for building the Community Pavilion, excluding car parking and associated road works, was approximately \$2 million.



Ballarat City Council Reports

3.3 Showgrounds Relocation Documents

A number of reports have been prepared for the City of Ballarat in relation to the Proposal to relocate the Showground's proposals for future developments within the Park and these have been reviewed in the preparation of the Master Plan. These include:

Ballarat Showground's Preliminary Business Plan Birru Pty Ltd (2015)

The Ballarat Showgrounds Preliminary Business Plan was developed for the Ballarat Agricultural and Pastoral Society (BAPS) in recognition that the current Showgrounds facilities are in poor condition, that the current site is no longer suited to their present use, and that there are significant strategic opportunities for consideration of relocation and redevelopment of the Showgrounds and events facility in the southern end of Victoria Park, near and potentially including the existing Ballarat Saleyards.

This Business Plan builds upon and reviews a 2004 Master Plan for the Showgrounds in the context of the current strategic and issues opportunities, and will be subject to further detail pending community consultation as part of the Victoria Park Master Plan process.

Victoria Park South and Ballarat Livestock Selling Centre Precinct Plan and Draft Victoria Park Precinct Volume 2: Background Report Planisphere (2007)

This Plan was commissioned by the City of Ballarat and the Department of Planning (DSE) to build on the directions of Council's Management Use and Development Framework (MUD Framework) and to provide guidance in relation to development pressures affecting the southern end of Victoria Park and the adjoining Ballarat Livestock Selling Centre (BLSC) site.

It was prepared through 2006 at a time when Council has resolved to relocate the BLSC and considering the potential use of that site, and a southern portion of Victoria Park for the relocation and redevelopment of the Ballarat Showgrounds. The latter was subsequently withdrawn.

The Plan included comprehensive community consultation and identified guiding principles, and detailed strategies and actions for the future development and use of the southern precinct of Victoria Park. It was presented to Council in 2010 with the recommendation that it be used to inform further strategic

planning work in Ballarat West and the Delacombe Industrial Area.

Ballarat Showgrounds Master Plan Stratcorp (2004)

The Ballarat Showgrounds Master Plan provided a detailed analysis of the condition of the Ballarat Showgrounds and reviewed opportunities for redevelopment of the Showgrounds facilities, both on the existing site and at a number of other potential sites in the Ballarat area.

It helped to inform the preferred option to relocate and re-develop the Showgrounds facility in Victoria Park however it was not adopted by Council, and due to a number of other issues the Ballarat Agricultural and Pastoral Society (BAPS) withdrew their proposal to relocate to Victoria Park at that time.

4 Community & Stakeholder Consultation

4.1 Prior Consultation

Victoria Park – A Vision (2012) - Sharon Sykes
The Victoria Park Vision was the culmination of an extensive community engagement process with Victoria Park users, stakeholder groups, students, neighbours and residents.

The engagement process was undertaken over a 6-month period with the key focus on the park features, values, opportunities, and challenges. It included discussion papers, stakeholder interviews, walk and talk sessions, questionnaires, park surveys and 3 separate ‘spaceshaper’ workshops.

This represented the most extensive community engagement process undertaken in Ballarat for a public park and resulted in a series of statements around:

- Access
- Activation and use
- Circulation and Entrances
- Connections
- Information and Promotion
- Infrastructure
- Landscape
- Safety

It also validated the previously adopted Management Use and Development Framework resulting in the Vision statement:

The Lungs of the City - A Park for the People

‘The City of Ballarat will preserve and enhance the historic features of Victoria Park while encouraging the community’s use and enjoyment of the parks diverse range of facilities and landscapes’

Council adopted the Victoria Park Vision in September 2012 as a document for the future development of Victoria Park. Council also adopted recommendations to undertake supporting strategies for a:

- Tree Replacement Management Plan
- Traffic and Access Management Plan
- Drainage and Storm Water Management Plan

4.2 Master Plan Vision

Developed by Sharon Sykes in consultation with Community 2012

• The Lungs of the City - A Park for the People

‘The City of Ballarat will preserve and enhance the historic features of Victoria Park while encouraging the community’s use and enjoyment of the parks diverse range of facilities and landscapes’



Photo from within Victoria Park, Ballarat

4.3 Development Statements

Developed by Sharon Sykes in consultation with Community 2012 and verified in 2015 consultation.

Landscape and Vegetation

- Preserve the Park as environmental and sustainable green space.
- Preserve and enhance trees and avenues to maximise shade, amenity, windbreak, and separation of Park areas.
- Native grasslands to be preserved, well maintained and interpreted.

Access

- Access to and within the Park to be suitable for people of all ages and abilities.
- At some times access may be restricted to allow for specific activities and events.

Circulation and Entrances

- Traffic management measures will minimise vehicle

impacts for pedestrians, cyclists and park users.

- Safe and good quality pathways will improve circulation and movement through the Park.
- Entrances to the Park will be standardised to create a park identity and sense of arrival.
- Provision of appropriate car parking areas.

Connections

- Victoria Park will be well connected to Lake Wendoree and other local open space in central Ballarat.
- Linkages for walking and cycling will connect with Victoria Park where possible.
- Safe road crossings will improve the connection to Victoria Park for the local community.

Information and Promotion

- The Park will be well promoted to the community through signage and media.
- The heritage and environmental significance of the Park will be interpreted for all park users and the community to learn and understand the qualities of Victoria Park

Activation and use

- Families, individuals and groups will be encouraged to use the Park year round for a wide range of activities.
- Multiple activities take place in shared spaces at all times, days and seasons.
- The Park will be able to host major events in a natural open space setting.

Safety

- The Park will be a safe and comfortable space that people want to spend time in.
- Minimising vehicle impacts and seeking to improve visibility and passive surveillance will improve public safety.
- Activation of spaces in the Park will improve confidence in the safety of Victoria Park

Infrastructure

- High quality facilities to be provided to support open space activities.
- Built development to be minimised to ensure open space qualities are preserved.

4.4 Project Control Group

The contribution of the Project Control Group (PCG) was integral to the development of this report. The following City of Ballarat Staff formed the PCG for this project:

Adam Parrott - Senior Landscape Architect
Terry Demeo – Manger Planning Implementation
David Grant – Vegetation Planning Officer
Jim Leonard – Coordinator Traffic and Transport
Chris Gardner – Senior Recreation Planning Advisor
Daryl Wallis – Coordinator Parks and Gardens

4.5 Community Consultation 2015

Council conducted a community ‘Open House Drop In Session’ in April 2015 to allow stakeholders and the community to contribute ideas and discuss potential issues to be addressed in the Master Plan. The session was run by Council staff from Planning Implementation, Community Engagement, Parks and Gardens, Recreation and Infrastructure and was attended by approximately 250 people.

Each area of concern was represented at a station and attendees were encouraged to view the 2012 Victoria Park Vision and to move around the room, talking to Council staff,

sharing ideas and thoughts, making comments on plans, and filling in survey forms for the Park.

While there were various conflicting desires represented, overall there was broad support for the previously defined directions of the vision. The detailed ideas, comments and graphic representations of the information gathered was collated by Council into the Victoria Park Master Plan - Community Engagement Summary Report June 2015 (refer appendix).

4.6 Sport & Recreation Stakeholder Consultation

In 2012 Sharon Sykes interviewed numerous stakeholders with regard to their existing and future sport and recreation requirements. In 2015 SED conducted follow up interviews with many of these stakeholder to confirm their requirements for the preparation of the Master Plan. The results of these interviews are summarised in the Victoria Park Master Plan - summary of Sport / Recreation Considerations for the Victoria Park Master Plan SED May 2015 (refer appendix).

The following stakeholders were interviewed in 2012 and 2015:

- Ballarat Association of Schools
- Ballarat Cricket Association
- Ballarat Dog Obedience Club
- Ballarat Fly Fishers
- Ballarat Football League
- Ballarat Pony Club and Friends of Ballarat Eventing Association
- Ballarat Regional Athletics Centre
- Ballarat Sebastapol Cycling Club
- Ballarat Triathlon Club
- Lucas Cricket Club
- Sport Climbing Victoria
- St Patrick’s School
- Victoria Park Soccer Club
- Wendoree Archery Club

The following stakeholders were interviewed in 2012 only:

- Loreto College
- Ballarat Adult Riding Club
- Eureka Orienteers
- Ballarat Environmental Network (BEN)
- Ballarat race Walkers
- Ballarat Triathlon Club
- Ballarat Bicycle User Group

- Urquhart Park Primary School
- Weekly Park Run
- Ballarat Agricultural and Pastoral Society

Consideration was given to the suitability of each request in relation to the Park history and character and whether the desired facilities / activities were in alignment with the Park vision and directions. Council approved the following directions for inclusion in the Master Plan:

- Establishment of multi-use playing fields (2-3 ovals), serviced by a new pavilion/change rooms and public toilets - potential for shared use/development partnership with schools (e.g. St Pat’s) should be explored (better distribution and access to amenities to service playing fields is needed).
- Upgrading road surfaces, primarily for cycling, but also common request by several groups, and installation of traffic management measures to help facilitate event use.
- Improve the condition of playing surfaces - i.e. primarily irrigation for summer cricket use.
- Install seasonal soccer goals and additional pitch.
- Improving path networks, connections and standards.
- Upgrading (potentially replacing) the existing ‘soccer’ pavilion (more change rooms, public toilets, shelter, etc.).
- Upgrading fencing and pony club pavilion.
- Establishment of a ‘feature’ cricket ground.
- Installation of training lights for soccer ground and possible new multi-use oval.
- Improve signage and interpretive info (including distance markers).
- Establish a bus drop off zone.

4.7 Summary of Design Objectives

The following design objectives have been developed based on Community & Stakeholder Consultation Material, City of Ballarat Directions and background reports. These objectives underpin the Master Plan and enable the clear communication of broad issues and directions proposed in the Victoria Park Master Plan.



Landscape & Vegetation

Ensure the existing historic landscape character, including native and exotic trees and indigenous grassland, is preserved and enhanced. New landscape elements should be sustainable and in keeping with the Park character.



Event Infrastructure and Social Amenity

Build on the social and cultural heritage of the Park in providing for varied activities, events and healthy outdoor recreation for the whole community.



Facility Development

Provide equitable use of Park space, maximise use and improve safety and access to facilities for all users.



Organised Sports and Clubs

Provide improved facilities (including sports pavilions) that balance the needs of various organised user groups, schools and clubs at different times so as to maximise use and minimise the park space required.



Traffic management

Improve safety and amenity for all Park users including pedestrians, cyclists, drivers and all other recreational users by reducing the impacts of vehicles and traffic congestion both within and around the Park.



Access, Circulation and Connections

Improve access, circulation and connections, both within the Park and to surrounding landscapes, to improve safety and amenity for pedestrians and cyclists.



Public Appreciation

Enhance public knowledge about the Park, its character, vegetation, points of interest and history through improved interpretative and way finding signage.



Hydrology & Lake Improvements

Enhance the amenity and sustainability of the Park waterbodies to improve the landscape experience, mitigate flooding and increase water capture and storage for re-use. Consolidate the lakes precinct into an improved area that reflects the design intent of the original plans.

5 Site Analysis and Existing Conditions

5.1 Existing Precincts

The existing landscape can be divided into various precincts based on character and use. These include:

Sturt Street Frontage - The Active Edge

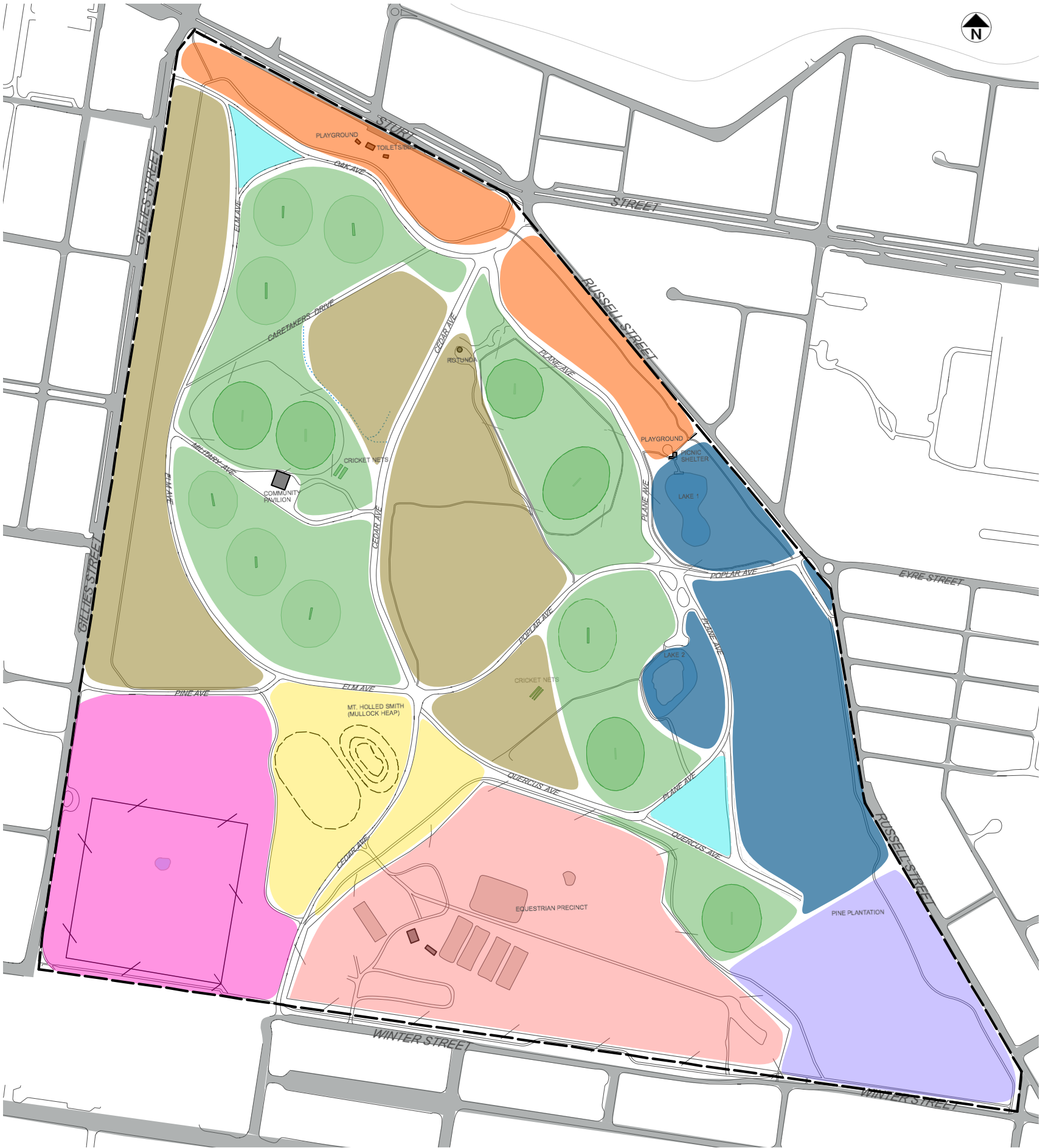
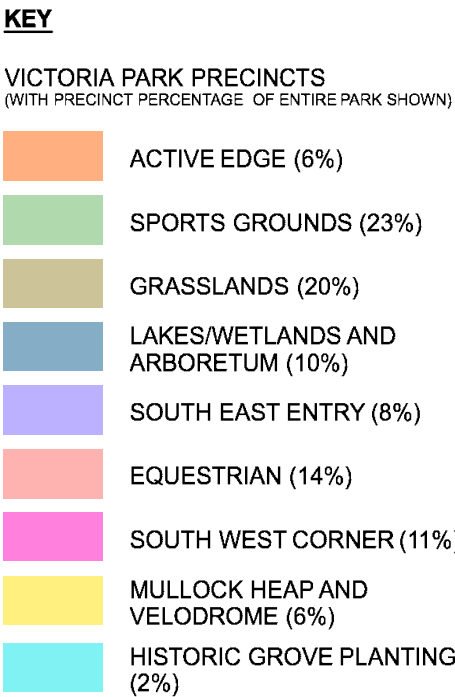
This edge is the most prominent frontage of the Park and currently incorporates the only publicly accessible toilets in the Park, along with a playground, picnic shelter, BBQ area with tables, seating, rubbish bins and Park signage.

Sports Grounds

The existing park signage identifies 13 ovals within the Park however only 11 of these are currently in use. The ovals closest to the southeast corner of the Park (Ovals 12 and 13) are currently not maintained as such and native grassland species are returning.

Grasslands

Significant indigenous grasslands exist across the site and require strategic management and interpretive signage.



Existing Precincts Plan

Lakes and Arboretum

The two small lakes have potential to provide greater amenity and more sustainable water storage and filtration. The area to the west is relatively open with plantings of rare oaks in the 1990's.

South-East Entry

This area has a strong character with established deciduous avenue trees and a forest of pines however there is a lack of defined pedestrian paths into the Park at this corner.

Equestrian Precinct

Access to this precinct is currently restricted however there is potential for greater synergy with adjacent parkland and opportunities for additional tree planting to be explored.

South-West Corner

Currently an under-utilised paddock and dumping ground for lakeweed from Lake Wendoree this area could be improved to cater for large-scale events and increase park amenity for everyday users.

Mullock Heap and Velodrome

These two features are the only significant areas of topographic variation in the Park and are interesting historical relics that add interest and varied spatial experiences from the rest of the Park.

Historic Groves

These triangular groves of trees are strong design elements from the 1890 Arbor Day Plan, some of which are no longer legible on site and could be re-established.



Existing Cypress on Cedar Ave

5.2 Landscape and Vegetation

Victoria Park is highly valued for its landscape character as it is one of Australia's best examples of large European style parkland. It provides for varied recreational activities in a carefully planned landscape setting that incorporates significant historic trees and remnant indigenous grasslands.

The northern half of the Park retains the original design layout and most of the planting that occurred between 1890 and 1910. This part of the Park is expansive, relatively flat and contrasts large open areas with multiple grassed sports fields and grasslands with areas of densely planted trees, including sweeping tree lined avenues and woodland clumps and groves. The layout of the Park and particularly the tree-lined avenues make up a large part of the Park's character and are of major significance. Original tree species include a mix of large exotic deciduous trees (Elms, Planes, Oaks and Poplars), evergreen conifers (Cedars, Pines and Cypress) and some re-established indigenous species including River Red Gums.

In recent years Council has lifted the canopies of many of the established trees and this has greatly improved visibility in treed areas which were previously felt to be unsafe. The lack of shrub layer plants in the Park is a distinctive part of its character in that it enhances the vistas of open grassland framed by trees.

The southern areas of the Park are quite different in character to the north as they were not part of the original European style park. The most distinctive aspect of this area is Mt. Holled-Smith, a large mullock heap (formed by the dumping of mining spoil) now covered in mature pines. Adjacent to this is



Existing Group of Pines

a grassed depression, the remnant trace of an old velodrome. The less developed areas include a flat open partially fenced paddock on the corner of Gillies and Winter Streets that is currently under utilised and used as a dump for lakeweed from Lake Wendoree. The fenced equestrian precinct has post and wire fencing around the perimeter and, although not accessible to the general public, it is visually open and the landscape character with grassing, clumped trees and horse jumps generally in keeping with the Park surrounds. The street frontages on Gillies and Winter Streets do not have the consistency of large avenue trees of Sturt and Russell Streets though some tree planting has been undertaken in recent years.

Council is aiming to increase tree cover to approximately 40% across the municipality. Victoria Park currently has a tree cover of 21% with room to increase this. The large areas of grassland also perform carbon uptake and contribute significantly to the environmental value of the Park.

Key Issues:

- Senescing trees (esp. Cypress and Pine) require a replacement plan.
- Parts of the Park are perceived as unsafe due to enclosed trees. Established trees should continue to have canopies lifted for visibility, particularly on Quercus Ave.
- Grasslands require management improvements and interpretation.
- Some more recent plantings of avenue trees - Planes and Poplars - are not doing well and need remedial work or to be replaced with another species.
- Park edge condition is not consistent in terms of vegetation - Winter and Gillies Street frontages need further tree planting for shade and improved amenity.



Existing Open Grassland



Existing Vegetation

Trees of particular significance include:

Trust Significant Trees List

- Two small groups of *Pinus contorta* var. *contorta* listed on the Northern Territory Significant Tree List) located between Gillies Street and Elm Avenue north of Military Drive.
- Three *Halocarpus biformis*, Yellow Pine, between the southwest edge of Oval 9 and Cedar Avenue
- Two groups of *Quercus robur* 'Fastigiata' between Plane Avenue and Cedar Avenue, west of Oval 10.

National Register of Big Trees

- One very large *Quercus michauxii* near the Sturt and Russell Street Entrance (Entrance 2).

Commemorative Trees

- Victorian Tree Planters Assoc. planted one *Cedrus atlantica* to commemorate W O Allen in 1944. This tree is marked with a plaque at its base.

Rare Trees

- One very rare *Quercus* 'Mt Macedon' Tree that is healthy but has poor structure is located just east of Cedar Avenue south of Oval 9.
- One very rare *Pinus coulteri* which is in quite poor condition is located between Cedar Avenue and Oval 10.
- A large area on the Russell Street edge south of Eyre Street is planted with small groups of a variety of rare *Quercus* sp. obtained from an Oak enthusiast in Warragul in the 1990's.x
- One unidentified *Quercus* sp. just west of Cedar Avenue at the intersection of Oak Avenue. The tree is small and stunted.

Existing Tree Species

The tree list below is sourced from the Ballarat Historic Trees and Gardens Part 1, Department of Crown Lands and Survey, 1983. This is the latest and most up to date tree inventory. A more recent and detailed inventory is recommended.

Exotic

<i>Castanea sativa</i>	Sweet Chestnut
<i>Cedrus atlantica f. glauca</i>	Blue Cedar
<i>Cedrus deodara</i>	Himalayan Cedar
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i> (weed sp)	Common Hawthorn
<i>Cupressus macrocarpa</i>	Monterey Cypress
<i>Cupressus torulosa</i>	Himalayan Cypress
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Golden Ash
<i>Laurus nobilis</i>	Portugal Laurel
<i>Pinus contorta</i>	Shore Pine
<i>Pinus coulteri</i>	Big Cone Pine
<i>Pinus halepensis</i>	Aleppo Pine
<i>Pinus pinaster</i>	Cluster Pine
<i>Pinus radiata</i>	Monterey Pine
<i>Pinus sabiniana</i>	Grey Pine

<i>Platinus x acerifolia</i>
<i>Populus alba</i>
<i>Populus x canadensis</i>
<i>Populus nigra 'Italica'</i>
<i>Prunus</i> sp.
<i>Quercus acutissima</i>
<i>Quercus canariensis</i>
<i>Quercus cerris</i>
<i>Quercis ilex</i>
<i>Quercus palustris</i>
<i>Quercus robur 'Fastigiata'</i>
<i>Quercus robur</i>
<i>Quercus suber</i>
<i>Salix</i> sp.
<i>Sequoia sempervirens</i>
<i>Ulmus carpiniifolia 'Variegata'</i>
Variagated Elm
<i>Ulmus cornubiensis x U.glabra</i>
<i>Ulmus glabra</i>
<i>Ulmus glabra 'Camperdownii'</i>
<i>Ulmus glabra 'Lutescens'</i>

London Plane
White Poplar
Canadian Poplar
Lombardy Poplar
Sawtooth Oak
Algerian Oak
Turkey Oak
Evergreen Oak
Pin Oak
Columnar English Oak
English Oak
Cork Oak
Willow
Californian Redwood
Smooth Leaf
Wych Elm
Camperdown Elm
Golden Wych Elm

<i>Ulmus x hollandica</i>	Dutch Elm
Native	
<i>Araucaria bidwillii</i>	Bunya Pine
<i>Banksia integrifolia</i>	Coast Banksia
<i>Callitris</i> sp.	Native Pine
<i>Casuarina</i> sp.	She-oak
<i>Eucalyptus botriodes</i>	Southern Mahogany
<i>Eucalyptus globulus ssp. globulus</i>	Tasmanian Blue Gum
<i>Eucalyptus leucoxylon</i>	Yellow Gum
<i>Eucalyptus sideroxylon</i>	Red Ironbark
<i>Grevillea robusta</i>	Silky Oak
Indigenous	
<i>Acacia dealbata</i>	Silver Wattle
<i>Acacia melanoxylon</i>	Blackwood
<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i>	River Red Gum
<i>Eucalyptus ovata</i>	Swamp Gum
<i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i>	Manna Gum



Above view looking north of Oak trees along Oak Avenue



Above view looking south west of Caretakers Drive and Cedar Avenue



Above view looking east of Victoria Park with Cedar Avenue running through

5.3 Event Infrastructures and Social Amenity

The Ballarat Open Space Strategy classified Victoria Park as a Regional Park however it is currently lacking the facilities and infrastructure to cater for large-scale events. Most of the existing facilities have been provided to service specific local users, such as sports groups, or low volumes of passing visitors and do not have the capability of flexibility required for larger events. There is limited water and power supply throughout the Park, further reducing the Parks capacity to stage a variety of events.

The southwest corner of the Park is under-utilised, publicly inaccessible and a number of reports have been prepared detailing and assessing proposals for the Ballarat Agricultural and Pastoral Society to relocate the showgrounds to the Park. Community responses to this possibility have been varied and there is a need for more exploration as to how this might be incorporated into a multi-purpose event space for the Park that is available for local community use when not in use for a major event. Issues requiring further resolution include traffic management, fencing and integration with surrounding parkland.

Dog Use

The Ballarat Dog Obedience Club has been operating in Victoria Park, utilising the clubrooms and Oval 6 and 7 surrounds since 1977. During this time the Club has helped to educate over 4000 members in the proper care and control of their dogs and to promote a more responsible dog owning community. The existing clubrooms no longer meet the needs of the Club and are in poor condition. Plans for redevelopment of the clubrooms have been developed but require further development in liaison with the Club before being finalised.

Dog owners have traditionally used the area around Oval 11 and Lake No 2 as a 'dog off leash area' for many years. It is still well used by dog owners to regularly socialise with other dog owners and let their dogs run around off a leash. Unfortunately this has the potential to conflict and cause safety concerns with bike riders using the criterion circuit which adjoins and surrounds this area.

In 2014 all of Victoria Park was designated as a 'dogs off leash' park, with conditions and exemptions identified on signage at all major vehicle entry points. Further public education is still required to ensure responsible dog owners comply with their requirements in designated 'dogs off leash' Ballarat Parks.

The concept of providing a fenced dog park area within Victoria Park was raised during the community consultation process and considered in preparing the Master Plan. Although the concept received limited support, a fenced dog park area could potentially be incorporated into the Events area in the southwest corner of the Park where support infrastructure could be available, and where the visual impact of the fencing would be minimal.

Key Issues:

- Existing facilities do not accommodate large-scale events.
- Lack of water and power supply reduces the Park's capacity to accommodate a variety of events and activities.
- Community concerns about access to designated events space and loss of park space.
- South-west corner of Park is currently degraded, under utilised and inaccessible.
- Facilities need to be improved and provided to a suitable level to service a regional scale park.
- Small scale events such as cycling criterion should be facilitated in such a way that part of the Park can be closed off with minimal disruption to other users.
- Traffic changes for events must be safe for other users and free of conflicts.



Photo of under utilised southwest corner

5.4 Facility Development

Most of the existing publicly accessible facilities are concentrated in the Lakes Precinct and the Sturt Street frontage on the northern boundary of the Park. These include picnic areas with picnic tables, BBQ's and shelters, play equipment, seating, and information signs. The amenities block on Sturt Street houses the only publicly accessible toilets in the Park and there is a need for the provision of more toilets, particularly to service the playing fields, picnic area and lakes further east (toward Eyre St). The existing clubrooms currently service the northeastern sports fields but are only able to be accessed by the three clubs using the building - the Dog Obedience Club, Soccer Club and Lucas Cricket Club.

The running circuit Vic Track is a well used, good quality path surface, however, there is a need for shorter loops to supplement this as the 5km track is too long for less able-bodied users. There is also a need for more frequent directional signage, drinking fountains and seating along this track. In general there is a lack of DDA compliant path connections within the Park (this is addressed in more detail later in this report).

An all abilities playground has been designed and is to be located on the corner of Sturt Street and Cedar Avenue (west of entrance 3).

The southern part of the Park has very little in the way of facilities and this should be addressed in the development of the events space in the south west corner.

Key Issues:

- Minimal co-use of facilities between clubs promotes unnecessary facility duplication.
- Current facilities do not cater for all users.
- There is a need for more toilets that are accessible to the general public.
- More furniture and shelter is required throughout the Park - seating, drinking fountains, BBQ etc.
- Existing clubroom facilities are in poor condition, not accessible to the general public and have poor functionality and amenity.



Existing public toilets on Sturt Street frontage



Existing playground and picnic area near lakes



Existing club rooms



Existing picnic shelter on Sturt Street frontage

5.5 Organised Sports and Clubs

Sports Ovals

The SED report identified the needs of all user groups in relation to current and potential organised sports and recreation within Victoria Park. The existing sports ovals (1-11) are currently primarily used for cricket and soccer by associated clubs and neighbouring schools. South of the clubrooms, ovals 6, 7 and 8 are also used by The Ballarat Dog Obedience Club for their activities.

Stakeholders have identified the poor condition of playing surfaces as a major issue. None of the ovals are currently irrigated. Cycling and walking groups require that paths and road surfaces be improved. The shared clubrooms are not flexible enough to accommodate varied user groups, do not have public toilets and are without female change rooms. Generally the sports activities are spread over a large area with a lack of provision of associated facilities. In addition, the sports fields cannot be utilised to their maximum potential due to both the physical limitations and management issues.

Criterion

The Ballarat Sebastopol Cycling Club currently utilise a road circuit bordered by Plane Avenue to the west, Quercus Avenue to the south and Poplar Avenue to the north for criterium training and events through summer. Although the course is closed to vehicle traffic during use, it is in poor condition and has the potential to conflict with vehicle use and dog off leash areas adjoining the circuit near Poplar Avenue. There is also a lack of toilet and change facilities near the circuit which inhibits the clubs capacity to grow and promote both junior and women's programmes.

Alternative sites for a purpose built criterium circuit and associated infrastructure within Ballarat are also currently being investigated. If an alternative site is identified and supported the criterium circuit may no longer be required in Victoria Park in the longer term.

Key Issues:

- Oval surfaces in poor condition and not irrigated.
- Not all of the ovals are in use despite heavy demand.
- Demand for upgrades to cricket and soccer ovals.
- Schools would invest in upgrades to sports ovals and associated facilities.
- Existing sports pavilion does not have female change rooms.
- Existing pavilion toilets are not publicly accessible.

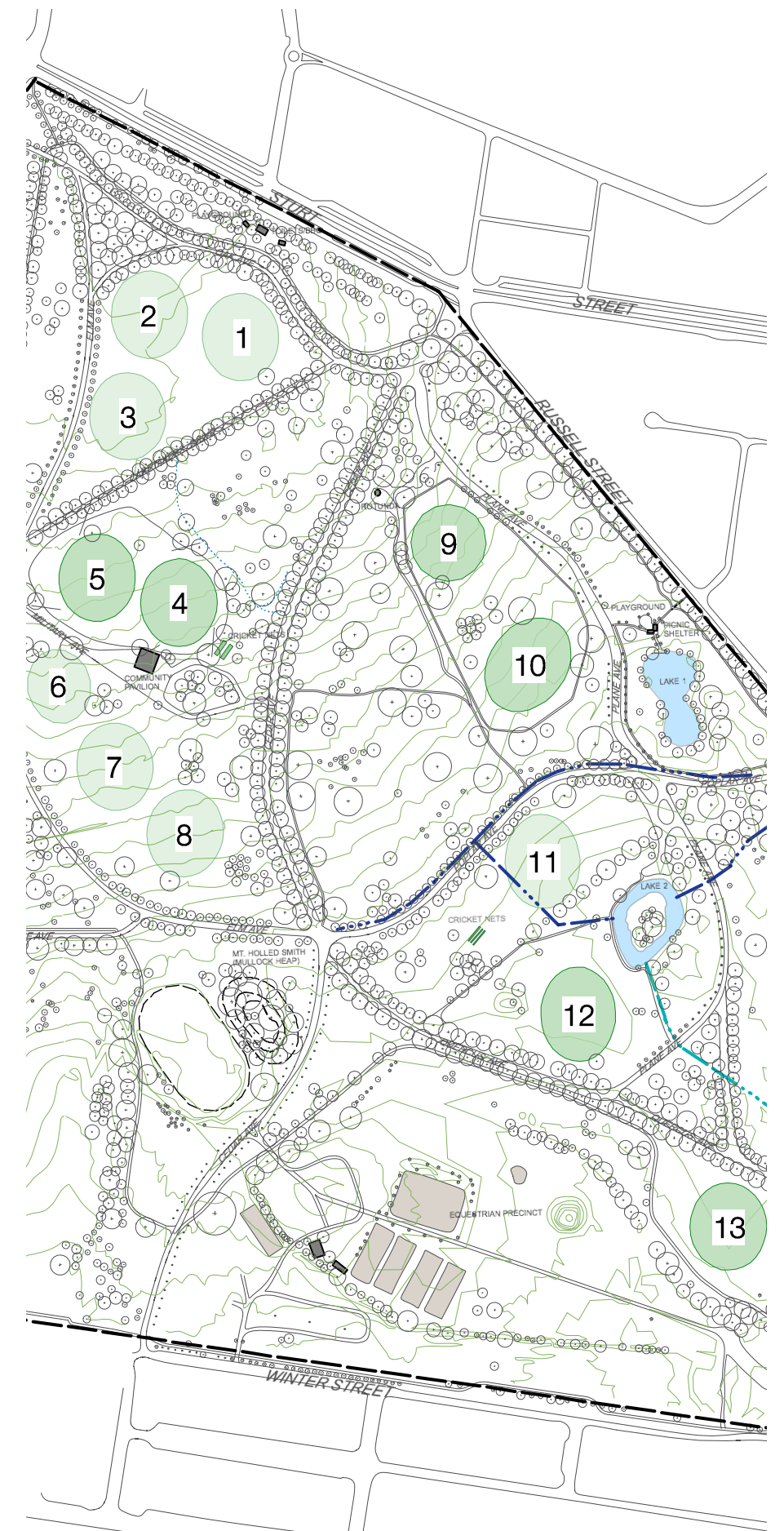
- Cricket nets located in grasslands and near the clubrooms are in poor condition and not well located for practical use.
- More shelter and seating required for spectators.
- Amenities building required closer to Eyre St.
- Criterium course in poor condition and conflicts with do of leash area.
- Poor traffic conditions where criterium course intersects with roads and paths of movement.



Existing sportsfield used for cricket



Existing cricket nets near club rooms



Existing Ovals

5.6 Traffic and Vehicle Management

Sealed Roads

The Park currently has a number of vehicular roads running through it, the majority of which are asphalt sealed. Most of the roads were part of the original park plan and are two way curved avenues with a gravel shoulder and avenue tree plantings, some of which are significant established trees and others which have been more recently replanted. Pine Avenue, Military Avenue and the southern extension of Cedar Avenue are more recent additions to the road network.

Unsealed Roads

The section of Plane Avenue between Cedar Ave and Poplar Avenue is unsealed gravel as are the Lake 2 car park and access roads, the car park and loop access at the clubrooms on Military Ave, and smaller loops at the rotunda and opposite Lake 1. The gravel areas lack clearly defined edges and are uneven with potholes and puddles.

Entrances

There are five vehicular entrances to the Park; Gate 1 at Gillies Street and Oak Avenue, Gate 2 at the intersection of Sturt and Russell Streets, Gate 3 at Russell and Eyre St, Gate 4 at Winter St and Cedar Avenue and 5 at Gillies Street and Pine

Avenue. Each entry has way-finding signage and gates that are generally open day and night and are used to restrict entry when required for events. There is currently no vehicle access to the south-east and south-west corners of the Park and the Equestrian Area on Winter St is fenced and only accessible to Pony Club users.

Intersections, Traffic Controls & Safety

There are no speed signs or traffic slowing measures within the Park and vehicle speeds within the Park present a safety risk to both pedestrians and drivers. Intersections within the Park are unsigned and there is a lack of delineation between vehicle and pedestrian paths which increases the risk to safety.

Car Parking

Generally there is sufficient car parking opportunities throughout the Park, conveniently located to service the higher use areas such as the active edge along Sturt Street and the clubrooms and sports ovals either side of Military Avenue.

In other areas throughout the Park where sufficient parking is not provided, parkland has been co-opted causing significant degradation to the land. Most notable instances of this occur near the rotunda at the parks north, behind the clubrooms at the end of Military drive and throughout the lakes precinct.

The provision of suitable car parking should be included when considering future works that will encourage greater levels of use. This must be a considered approach which does not jeopardise the Park's character.

Key Issues:

- Unsafe entry / problem points for traffic flow - Gillies / Oak Ave entry (Gate 1), Sturt / Russell St Entry (Gate 2), Gillies St / Pine Avenue Entry (Gate 5).
- Unsafe intersections within Park particularly the central intersection - Oak Ave / Cedar Ave / Elm Ave / Poplar Ave.
- Condition of road surfaces and shoulders in need of improvement, including sealing gravel roads and car parks which are currently very uneven.
- Traffic speeds are a problem and measures to slow traffic need to be undertaken to increase safety of pedestrians and drivers.
- Unrestricted vehicle access to grassed areas needs to be reduced and Council is currently implementing timber post and rail barriers.
- Safer pedestrian crossing points are required and the interface between pedestrians and cars improved.
- Insufficient car parking in areas and vehicle access to the Parks interior.



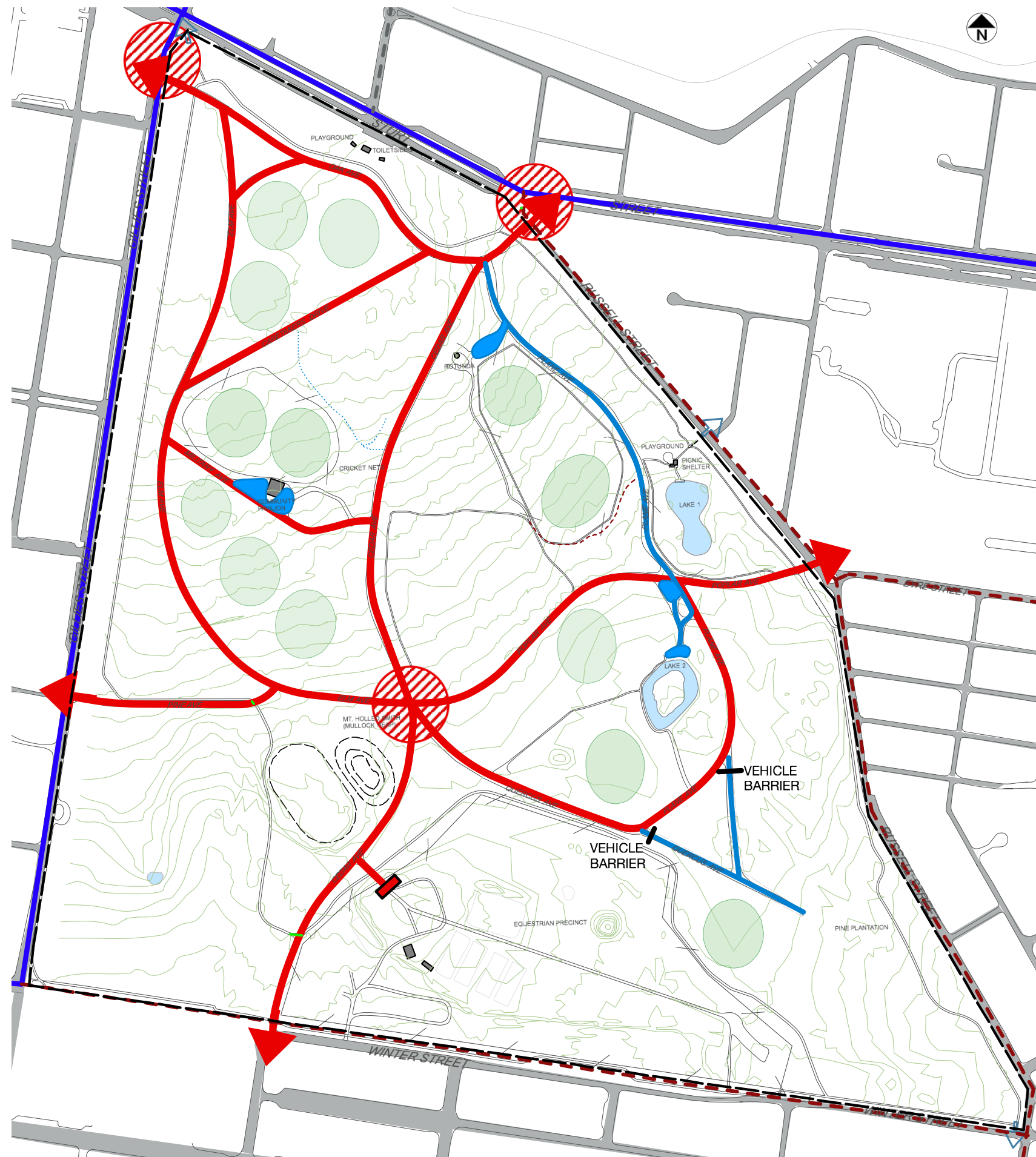
Example of uncontrolled vehicle movement



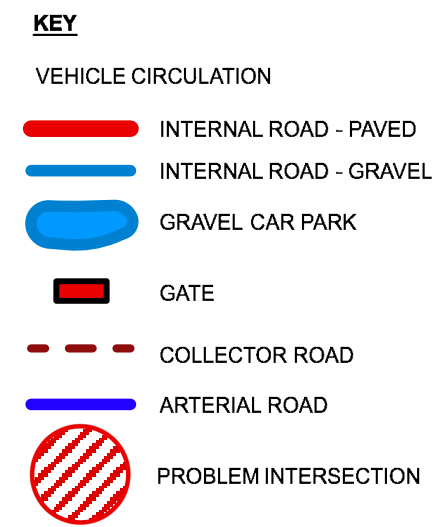
Unsealed car park



Roadside marker that has been hit by vehicle



Existing Traffic Conditions



5.7 Access, Circulation and Connections

Internal Paths

The main clearly defined and complaint pedestrian path within the Park is the 5km circuit track known as Vic-Track. The path is gravel surface with sections of bitumen and has steel distance markers every 500m. There is minimal seating and one drinking fountain along the length of the track. Other paths within the Park do not provide sufficient connections, particularly for less able bodied users. The lack of dedicated pedestrian/cycle paths within the Park means the choice for users is to share the road with cars, walk along the road verge, rough tracks or on the grass. There is a need for improvements to road and path surfaces and the provision of better connections and shorter loop walks. Generally there is a lack of way finding signage for pedestrians throughout the Park.

Perimeter Paths and Connections

There are a limited number of pedestrian entry points to the Park from surrounds, particularly at the western and southern interfaces which are relatively under developed. Pedestrian entries need to be improved, particularly to cater for kids riding to and from school, and the safety of road crossings needs to be improved, particularly for older and disabled users. Sturt Street has the most clearly defined pedestrian entries with arched metal park name signage. Other pedestrian entries have limited or no signage, except in the case where the signage is shared with road entries.

The pedestrian conditions along the perimeter of the Park vary and there is no consistent path link around the perimeter. There is a dedicated pedestrian path along the Park perimeter at Winter Street from Gillies to Russell Streets. Typically entry paths aligned with road crossings connect with VicTrack where it runs close to the Park edge. Otherwise they connect with road/verges that double as path connections.

Key Issues:

- Lack of designated pedestrian path connections to existing network, facilities and surrounds.
- Risk to safety for pedestrians using roads as walking paths.
- Quality of path and road surfaces needs improving.
- Shorter loop walks required and increased seating and drinking fountains along pathways.
- Lack of way finding signage for pedestrians.
- More DDA compliant paths to improve access for the elderly and disabled.



South east corner - no path



Victrack



Goat track connection to Russell St



Permeable boundary to Russell St

5.8 Existing Signage

Park Entry Signage

At each vehicle entrance, a park entry sign exists which sufficiently details where you are in relation to the Park, what the Park has to offer and local laws. They are large and, generally, set back from the road enough to allow cars to pull up beside them. In some instances, footings are exposed but otherwise they are in good condition.

Interpretative Signage

There is currently a lack of up to date quality interpretative signage in the Park. There is an interpretive sign outside the amenities block on Sturt Street with information about the Park history, however, historic elements within the Park are otherwise unsigned. Historic elements including the Mullock heap, canons, significant trees, and pine plantation offer opportunities to educate park users through the addition of minimal, well designed signs. Existing interpretive signs for the grassland areas are in poor condition and could be more strategically located and increased in number. There is currently no virtual signage such as mobile phone apps or augmented reality in the Park however this should be considered in future.

Way Finding Signage

Way finding signage within the Park caters better for vehicles than for pedestrians. As well as existing signs at each of the vehicular entrances, basic street name signs mark the avenues. Arched park name signs frame the pedestrian entrances from Sturt Street, one at the corner of Gillies St and one at the Russell St intersection. Distance markers on Vic Track occur every 500m and work well at the pedestrian scale but the distance between them should be reduced to meet the needs of the less able bodied.

Key Issues

- There is a lack of way finding signage, particularly at the pedestrian scale.
- Historic elements such as the mullock heap, and historic events, including gold mining, Arbor Day etc. are not currently signed and interpretative information is lacking.
- Indigenous grasslands are under appreciated partially due to a lack of education and promotion; something improved signage would facilitate.
- Significant trees cannot be easily identified.
- More distance markers required on Vic track.



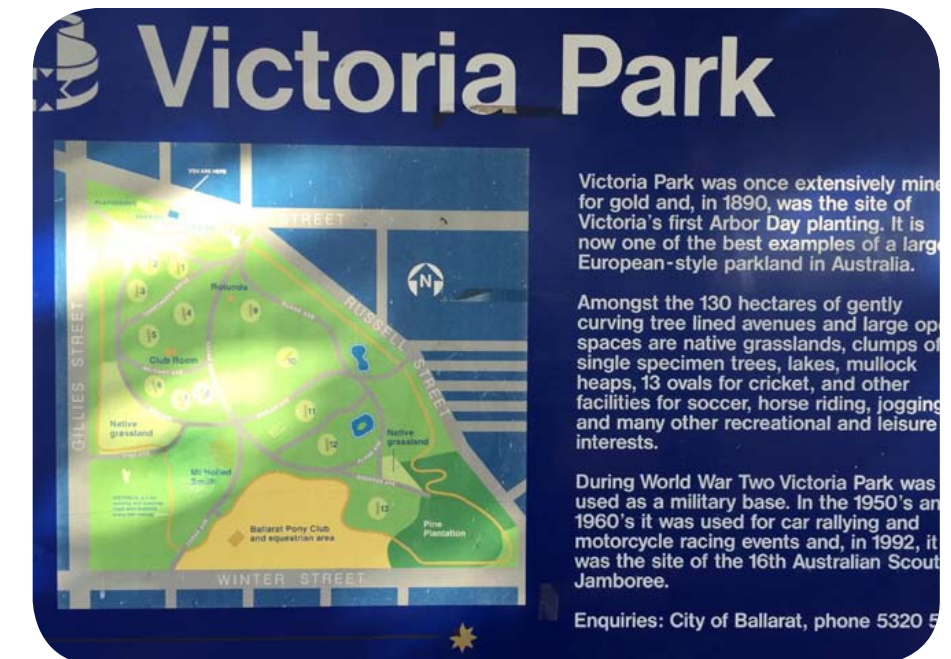
Existing distance marker



Mt Holled Smith currently has no interpretative signage



Existing park entry sign



Existing interpretative sign on Sturt Street frontage

5.9 Existing Hydrology and Lakes

Public Amenity

The two existing Lakes provide significant amenity value for the Park but do not function as efficiently as they could for water retention and water quality improvement. Although they were not constructed until the 1980's a larger version of the southern lake was depicted on the 1890 Arbour Day Plan. The lakes area is popular for picnicking, walking, fly-fishing and attracts ducks and other water birds.

The northern lake, known as St Leger Pond, is used for fly-fishing and has grassed banks with intermittent stands of willow. There is a timber platform with seating at the waters edge.

The southern lake has a bluestone pitcher edge along its eastern edge, installed to prevent erosion at the lakes edge. It presents as hard and synthetic and methods of suring up the lakes edges using more natural methods should be explored. This lake has a diversity of tree types and a central island that is dense with vegetation. The northern edge of this lake is flanked by an uneven gravel car park which allows cars to pull up on the waters edge.

The lakes are currently used for water supply to parks and gardens during dry periods during which time the lakes hold their level.

Hydrology and Flooding

Southern areas of the Park are prone to localised flooding in wet weather as reflected in the flood mapping report, Bonshaw Creek Flood Study prepared by Engeny in March 2013. The areas most affected are the south-west corner, old velodrome and surrounds, equestrian precinct, Plane Avenue around the southern lake and the Winter Street edge, though the whole Park is prone to surface ponding during heavy downpours and prolonged rainfall.

Generally, the Park drains to the south. While the west side of the Park drains across land toward the south-east, the east side of the Park drains through a system of open grassed swales that direct water into the lakes. St Leger Pond picks up untreated storm water from the surrounding residential catchment. This overflows to the southern lake, which picks up two additional inflows from St Patricks College and from a small area of the Park to the south. The overflow then drains through an open swale to the south-east corner at Russell Street. The system does not currently have capacity to deal with flood events resulting in flooding near the southern lake.

Due to insufficient crossfall and drainage systems, the roads edges experience drainage issues also.

There is potential to increase the capacity of the existing lakes and for multiple new wetlands in the lakes precinct and along

the southern and south-eastern edge. This would assist in improving water storage, water quality and habitat, and reduce localised flooding throughout the park and along its roads. Water quality could be further improved with modifications to swales and increased swale planting.

Key issues

- Flooding is an issue in low-lying areas and ponding across the whole Park.
- Road edges experience flooding due to insufficient crossfall and drainage systems.
- Vehicle access and car parking requires consolidation to improve lake edge landscape experience.
- Planting around lakes could be improved to increase amenity value.
- There is a lack of defined pedestrian paths around lakes.
- Existing system of open drains and lakes does not allow for significant water capture and storage on site.
- Water quality could be improved through additional wetlands and increased swale planting.
- Catchment near St. Legers Pond needs wetland to filter water.
- Stormwater holding capacity is insufficient for irrigation of nearby ovals.



Existing Lake 1




Existing Lake 2





Existing open swale outlet drain

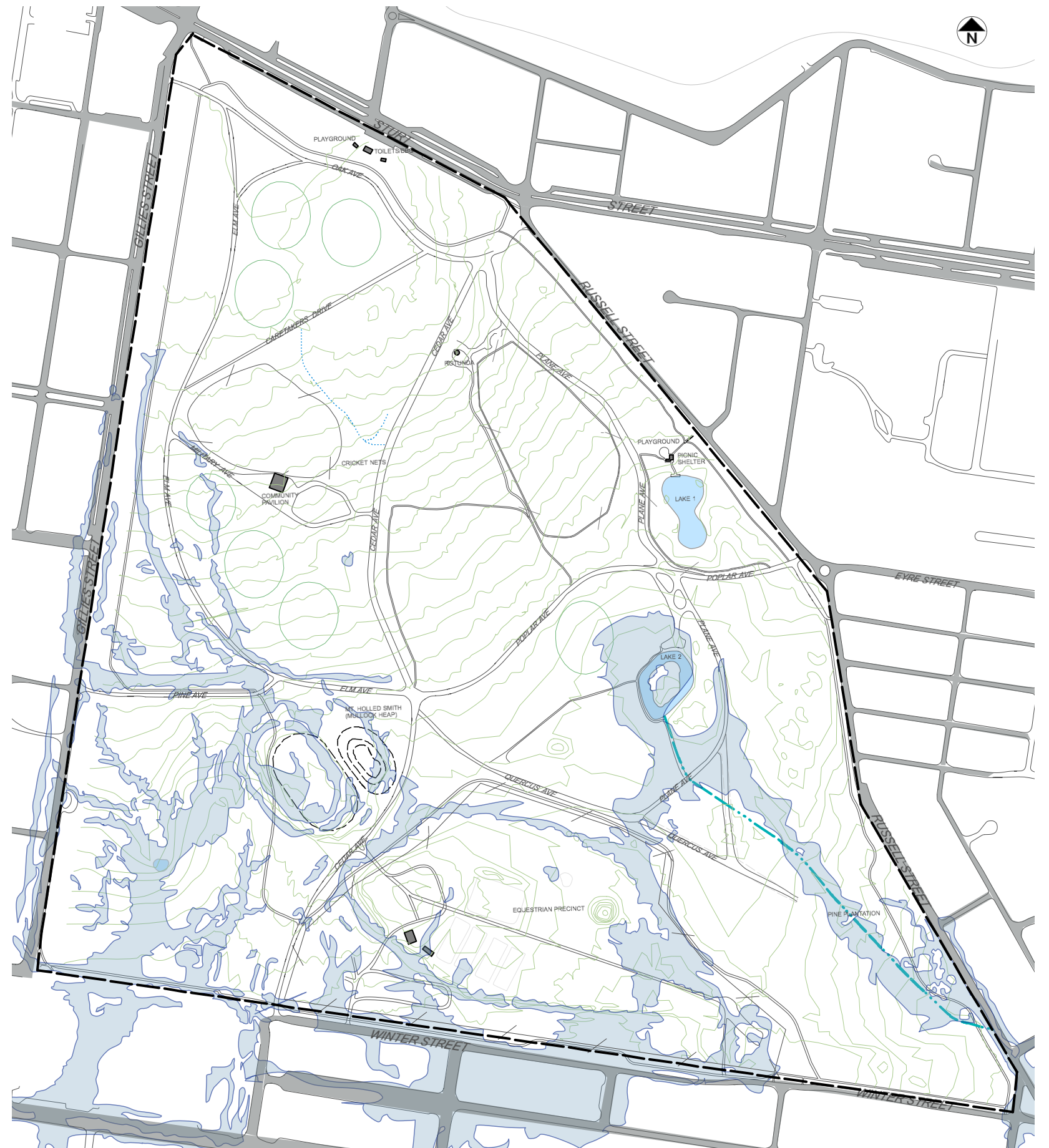
KEY

EXISTING HYDROLOGY CONDITIONS

 GRASS OR VEGETATED SWALE (WITH OR WITHOUT AG. DRAINAGE)

 AREA PRONE TO FLOODING

 EXISTING LAKE



KEY

Existing Hydrology Conditions

6 Master Plan and Management Recommendations

6.1 Proposed Landscape and Vegetation

Objective

- Ensure the existing historic landscape character, including native and exotic trees and indigenous grassland, is preserved and enhanced.

Design Principles

- New landscape elements should be designed by suitably qualified designers in consultation with relevant specialists so as to achieve outcomes that are sustainable, unobtrusive and sympathetic with the Park character.
- Increase tree canopy cover in line with City of Ballarat's Urban Forest Strategy.
- Build on the history of community involvement in large scale planting events.
- Ensure new tree plantings include a suitable mix of native and exotic trees and that species diversity is maintained and improved.
- The original 1890 Arbor Day Plan should guide the development of future planting concepts with particular regard to formal elements such as the balance of grassed and treed spaces, arrangement of single species clumps, avenues and the lack of shrub layer planting.
- Maintain a balance between active sports fields, grasslands, trees and mown passive grass areas.

Recommendations:

Management

- Undertake a Tree Management Plan that aims to preserve and enhance the existing landscape character. This should include a full arboricultural assessment of all trees including location, size, age, significance, pruning and maintenance requirements and outline a tree replacement strategy for senescing trees. The protection and management of heritage-listed trees should be prioritised.
- Develop a detailed Vegetation Management Strategy for the future management of indigenous grasslands. This

should include a review of prior management based on Practical Ecology Report from 2006 and incorporate the management of areas that have been managed as sports fields that are to be returned to grasslands.

- Prepare an overall Park Management Plan that incorporates prescriptive directions for tree management, grassland management and sports field management to ensure that management strategies align and are clearly understood and enacted in such a way that equity of spaces is retained.

Design

- Develop an arboretum on the Russell Street edge south of Eyre Street to increase tree cover in line with Council's Urban Forest Strategy. This should incorporate a diverse range of medium to large tree species (a mix of native and exotic) that are in keeping with the existing park character.
- Establish new and consistent avenue plantings along the park edges at Gillies and Winter Streets.
- Re-introduce triangular groves of trees as shown on the 1890 Arbor Day Plan. This includes tree planting and delineating paths.
- Condense sports ovals into area of original 1890 Arbor Day Plans and improve surfaces so as to maximise use in minimal footprint. Remove ovals 12 and 13 and expand indigenous grassland to include these areas.
- Retain existing pine plantation and pines on Mt Holled-Smith.
- Continue to lift canopies of avenue trees.

Implementation

- Prepare landscape concept plans for all new tree plantings including the proposed arboretum, the new avenue planting to the Gillies Street and Winter Street frontages and the triangular groves of trees as shown on Arbor Day Plans.
- Implement grasslands management strategies and improvements to oval surfaces.
- Add heritage listed trees to an appropriate app.
- Make a large-scale event of the planting of the proposed arboretum, new avenue trees and triangular groves by inviting the community to participate.
- Increase tree planting throughout the Park to achieve Council's stated goal of 40% canopy coverage.





Ensure the existing historic landscape character, including native and exotic trees and indigenous grassland, is preserved and enhanced. New landscape elements should be sustainable and in keeping with the Park character.

KEY

VICTORIA PARK PRECINCTS

- SPORTS GROUNDS AND SURROUNDING MOWN GRASS
- GRASSLANDS

PROPOSED VEGETATION

- PROPOSED TREE PLANTING
- PROPOSED GRASSLAND EXTENSION
- PROPOSED IRRIGATED OVAL
- REJUVENATED LANDSCAPE

Proposed Landscape and Vegetation

6.2 Proposed Event Infrastructure and Social Amenity

Objective

- Build on the social and cultural heritage of the Park in providing for varied activities, events and healthy outdoor recreation for the whole community.

Principles

- Develop the southwest corner of the Park as an outdoor events space, minimising building footprints, and maximising outdoor events space available for day-to-day community use with restricted access for major events.
- Explore, subject to the Saleyards relocating, the closure of Winter Street and reopening of Gillies Street and the use of the Saleyards site for all built infrastructure and car parking associated with the events space.
- Explore opportunities for synergies and shared use of facilities between the events space, equestrian precinct, and potentially an enclosed dog park area in the southern part of the Park.
- Ensure the planning, design and development of the events space results in improved landscaping, improved public access and use and improved integration with the adjoining parklands. Ensure new events facilities offer increased amenity for all users at all times and for a variety of events, big and small.
- Consolidate managed sports into selected areas and provide for greater versatility within these areas. Maximise use of existing sports fields by improving surfaces and irrigation to selected fields. (See Organised Sports and Clubs Section)
- Improve opportunities for casual recreation - both active and passive - by maintaining access to designated sports and events spaces when not in use for specified events.
- Further explore the viability of developing the former velodrome as high quality sunken picnic lawn for improved social amenity, or as wetland.
- Improve dog owners understanding of their requirements in designated 'dogs off leash' parks.
- Provide water and electricity supply to all parts of the Park to encourage a multitude of events and uses.

Recommendations

Management

- The Park should continue to host large scale events (such as the International Equestrian Event) outside of designated areas (e.g. equestrian precinct & events space) provided they are legitimate, temporary and do

not compromise the character, significance or vision for the Park. Large-scale events should be assessed on a case-by-case basis and the potential impacts carefully considered.

Design

- Develop a grassed event space in the south-west corner of the Park that is well integrated with surrounds that is flexible and allows for shared use. This should include path connections, traffic management, building locations, integration with surrounds and improvements to amenity such as sunken passive lawn, water body, possible playground, public toilets, furniture, fencing and signage.
- Maintain equestrian precinct and undertake minor upgrades in line with the Equestrian Precinct Master Plan including improvements to fencing, clubrooms and dressage facilities.
- Provide basic upgrades including accessible toilets and women's change rooms to the existing clubrooms and provide a new pavilion to service ovals and lakes precinct (covered in more detail in Proposed Facility Development).
- Create a water bodies that captures and treats storm water (possibly for occasional irrigation), and improves amenity.
- Ensure suitable signage and traffic management plans are in place for events.
- Provide power and water outlets throughout the Park.
- Should the criterion circuit remain or be consolidated within Victoria Park, install a low transparent safety fence along Poplar Avenue to the north of oval 11 to reduce the potential for conflict between dogs and bike riders.
- Consider inclusion of a fenced area for a dog park within or near the events space in the south west corner of Victoria Park.

Implementation

- Development of the southwest corner of the Park for a major events space, minimising building footprints, and maximising outdoor events space available for public access and use when not used for events.
- Consideration of, subject to the Saleyards relocating, the closure of Winter Street and reopening of Gillies Street and the use of the Saleyards site for all built infrastructure and car parking associated with the events space.
- More detailed planning of the events space to consider: shared facilities with the equestrian precinct; opportunities for an enclosed dog park area; improved landscaping with new water bodies and perimeter tree planting; integration with the adjoining parkland; and

indicative parking and traffic interfaces.

- Undertake further consultation with Ballarat Pony Club, Friends of Ballarat Eventing Association, and Ballarat Adult Riding Club to establish times when the equestrian precinct does not contain horses and could be accessed by general public.
- Design and document upgrades to the equestrian precinct including fencing/gates/styles, clubroom upgrades and dressage facilities. Include design of a signage or flagging system that notifies park users when it is safe to access, and prepare concept for gates/styles to be implemented with fencing upgrades. (See Access Circulation and Connections for more detail).



Build on the social and cultural heritage of the Park in providing for varied activities, events and healthy outdoor recreation for the whole community.



- KEY**
- EVENT INFRASTRUCTURE**
- 1 EVENT SPACE LOCATION (TO BE OPEN AND PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE WHEN NOT USED FOR EVENTS)
 - 2 PAVILLIONS
 - 3 POTENTIAL WATERBODY
 - 4 IMPROVED EQUESTRIAN FENCE
 - 5 CLUBROOM IMPROVEMENTS
 - 6 IMPROVED LANDSCAPING AND TREE PLANTING AROUND EVENTS SPACE
 - 7 IMPROVED OVAL SURFACES FOR ORGANISED SPORTS COMPETITION AND GREATER GENERAL USE
 - 8 WINTER ST CLOSURE
 - 9 GILLIES ST REOPENED
 - 10 HIGH QUALITY LAWN AREA FOR PICNICS OR WETLAND AREA - FURTHER VIABILITY STUDIES REQUIRED
 - 11 MULTI-USE PAVILLION FOR BOTH SPORTING AND RECREATIONAL EVENTS

Proposed Event Infrastructure and Social Amenity



Artists Impression - Events Space with Pavillions

6.3 Proposed Facility Development

Objective

- Provide equitable use of Park space, maximise use and improve safety and access to facilities for all users.

Design Principles

- Ensure new infrastructure and facilities, including new pavilion, are multi purpose and provide for varied age groups, genders and abilities.
- Improve facilities in the proximity of existing high use areas including Sturt Street frontage, sports ovals and VicTrack.
- Prioritise upgrades that will improve park usability by the general public. This includes improved access to toilets, all abilities facilities and the provision of women's change rooms.
- Upgrades to facilities must be sustainable, durable and underpinned by Ecologically Sustainable Design (ESD) and Healthy by Design principles.
- New custom designed elements such as signage and shelters must be appropriately designed and located to be sympathetic with the Park character.
- New off the shelf furniture items such as drinking fountains, seating, rubbish bins, picnic tables etc. should be in keeping with the City of Ballarat Street and Park Furniture Guidelines.
- Lighting is to be restricted to selected sports facilities and associated car parks only.

Recommendations

Design

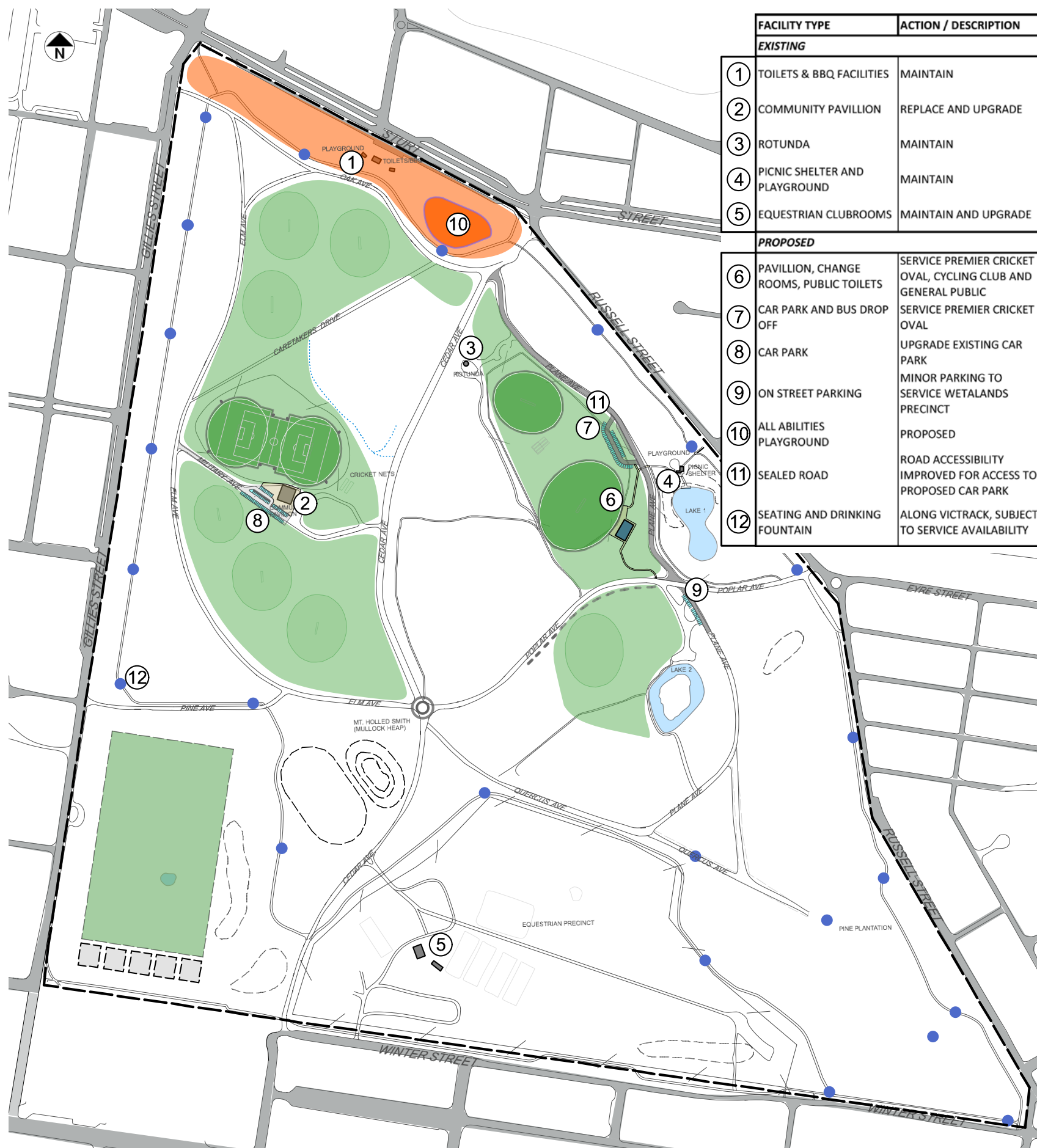
- At a minimum, provide basic upgrades including accessible toilets and women's change rooms to the existing clubrooms. Further consultation with user groups is required to determine the extent of upgrades/ replacement in the long term however the provision of toilets and women's change rooms should be prioritised.
- Provide a new pavilion to service ovals and lakes precinct. This should have publicly accessible toilets and needs of users of all abilities and genders must be considered in the design (refer Organised Sports and Clubs section for more detail).
- Provide two new DDA compliant gravel paths connected to VicTrack - 1.5km and 3km circuits with associated furniture, signage, seats and drinking fountains (See Access, Circulation and Connections for more detail).
- Implement the construction of the existing plans for an all-abilities playground at the corner of Sturt St and Cedar Ave.

- Provide new signage including way finding, distance markers (every 250m), and interpretation. Signage should be subtle and locations well considered such that the amount of new signage installed is kept to a minimum. See Public Appreciation section for more detail).
- Improve crossings and pathway connections (See Access, Circulation and Connections for more detail).
- Consider provision of facilities to service new infrastructure including all-abilities playground, and events space.
- Upgrade lighting to competition grade ovals (Ovals 4 and 5 for soccer and oval 10 cricket) and associated facilities. Lighting should be restricted to these areas only.
- Improve path connections including swale crossings (see Circulation, Access and Connections)

Implementation

- Undertake further consultation with user groups to determine the extent of upgrades to existing clubrooms.
- Prepare new concept for redevelopment of existing clubrooms - provision of toilets and women's change rooms and upgrades to forecourt and car park (See Traffic Management Section for detail).
- Prepare concept design for new pavilion
- Prepare landscape concept plans for upgrades to sports fields and associated access, lighting, shelters, new cricket nets, car park & road upgrades and furniture.





Provide equitable use of Park space, maximise use and improve safety and access to facilities for all users.

Proposed Facility Development

6.4 Organised Sports and Clubs

Objective

- Provide facilities that balance the needs of various organised user groups, schools and clubs at different times so as to maximise use and minimise park space required.

Design Principles

- Reduce overall footprint of sports ovals but increase use by improving the quality of surfaces and providing for flexible use.
- Consolidate sports facilities (this will reduce servicing costs) and remove defunct infrastructure.
- Ensure sports facility availability is equitably split between sports users, other user groups and the general public.
- Consider proximity to existing lakes to take advantage of irrigation potential.
- Locate sports ovals in close proximity to active edge to maximise potential for shared facilities in high use areas.
- Locate premium oval within close proximity to St Patrick's to maximise potential for school use and financial input.
- Maintain existing open landscape quality and accessibility by ensuring ovals remain unfenced with the exception of the length of low transparent fencing between the dog off lead area (oval 11) and the criterium course (Poplar Avenue).
- Determine the long term future of the criterium circuit in Victoria Park and appease associated conflicts.

Recommendations:

Management

- Undertake a detailed review of existing oval surfacing including sub soil and turf type to optimise playing surfaces - this should form part of overall vegetation management plan.
- Undertake detailed assessment of usage levels, capacities and time allocations of various active sports groups in line with consultation feedback.

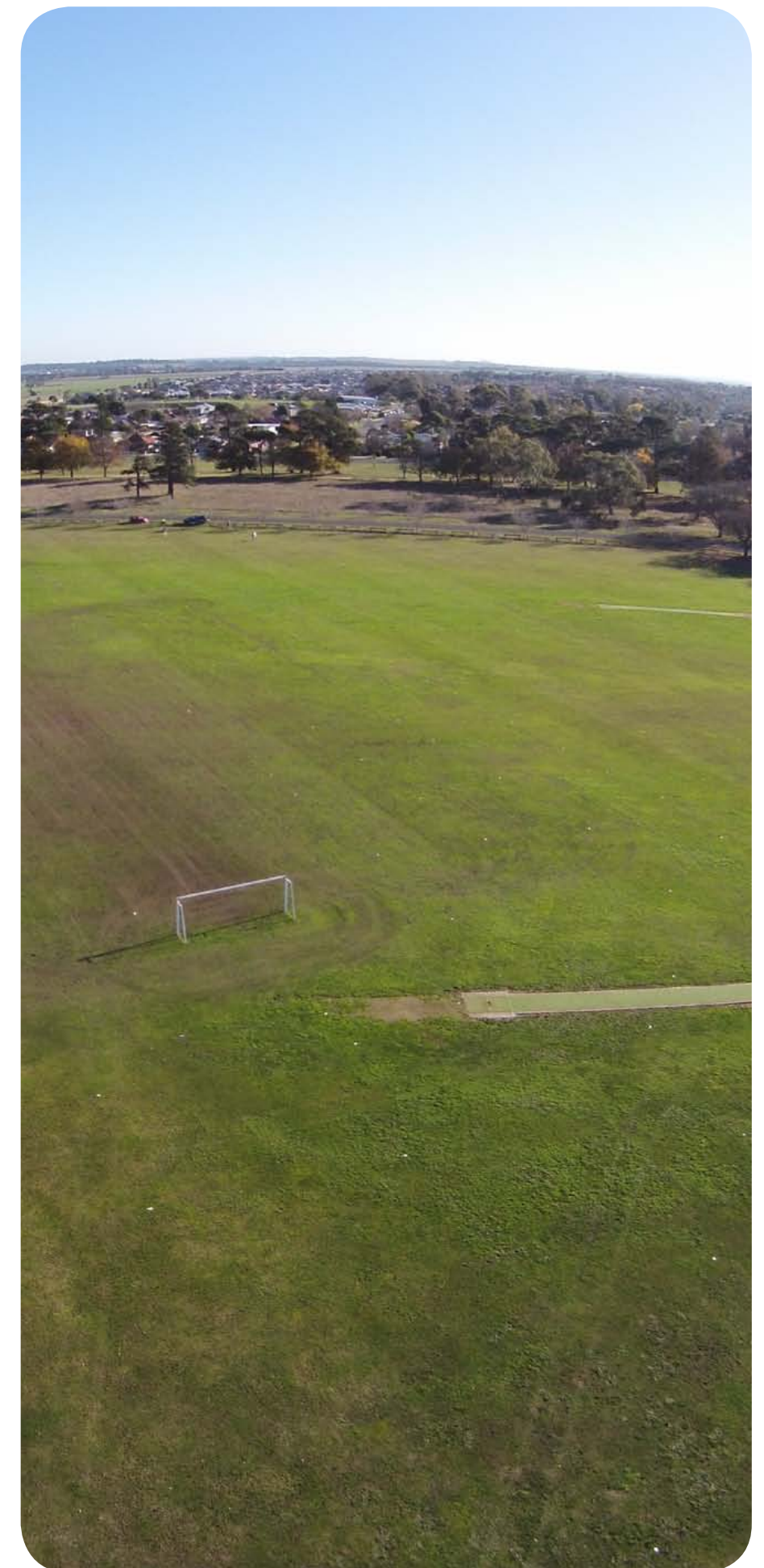
Design

- Review condition of ovals 1, 2 and 3 and establish strategy to improve surface. This may include top-dressing, grass species changes and/or minor regrading.
- Ovals 4 and 5 consolidated to create a multipurpose soccer (junior and senior) and cricket field with new lighting and possible irrigation (if sufficient storm water is captured and made available through hydrology and drainage improvements).

- Ovals 6, 7, and 8 remain unchanged.
- Develop two higher priority cricket / football ovals (9 and 10), located near to St Patricks, to be improved in partnership with the School. These fields will be increased in size and irrigated using water from wetlands.
- Provide new pavilion incorporating publicly accessible toilets, change rooms, and spectator area adjacent to two irrigated ovals.
- Provide sealed car parks to both existing and new pavilions and restrict car access to grassed areas.
- Establish bus drop off zone on Plane Ave.
- Remove existing defunct cricket nets from grasslands and near existing club rooms and provide new cricket nets closer to the enlarged irrigated ovals (Ovals 9 and 10).
- Define criterium course and modify intersections to improve safety during cycling events.
- Upgrades to facilities in line with Facility Development section of this report.
- If the criterium circuit is to be retained in Victoria Park prepare detailed plans to upgrade the existing course, improve surfaces, install traffic management treatments at intersections, install fencing alongside the dog off leash area, and make the proposed new pavilion adjacent to oval 10 available and suitable for use during training and events.
- If the criterium circuit is to be relocated to another site in Ballarat in the longer term, carry out short term remedial works to improve the road surface and reduce the potential for conflict with the adjoining dog off leash area.
- Retain dog off leash area at oval 11 and install approximately 150-200 metres long low impact transparent fence along Poplar Avenue to keep dogs away from road (if criterium circuit remains). Install dog of leash area signage in the upgraded lakes precinct car park.

Implementation

- Design and documentation of irrigation using recycled water to ovals 9 and 10 (see Hydrology and Lake Improvements).
- Basic surface amelioration works to ovals as required (details to be covered in oval surfacing report).
- Prepare landscape concept plan for sports precinct upgrades (including sports related facilities outlined in previous chapter).
- Remove redundant cricket nets and consider redevelopment of new nets in a more appropriate location.





Provide improved facilities (including sports pavillions) that balance the needs of various organised user groups, schools and clubs at different times so as to maximise use and minimise park space required.

KEY

VICTORIA PARK PRECINCTS

SPORTS GROUNDS PRECINCT

ORGANISED SPORTS

PROPOSED IRRIGATED PLAYING FIELD

EXISTING PLAYING FIELD

REMOVED PLAYING FIELD

PROPOSED CRICKET NETS

LOW FENCE FOR DOG OFF LEASH AREA

CRITERIUM

Proposed Organised Sports



Artists Impression - Premier Oval Upgrade

6.5 Traffic and Vehicle Management

Objective

- Improve safety and amenity for all park users including pedestrians, cyclists, drivers and all other recreational users by reducing the impacts of vehicles and traffic congestion both within and around the Park.

Design Principles

- Improve traffic flow in and around the Park and for major events.
- Prioritise safety and amenity for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.
- Minimise car access to grassed areas.
- Implement traffic slowing measures.
- Improve road surfaces, access to facilities and car parking.

Recommendations:

Management

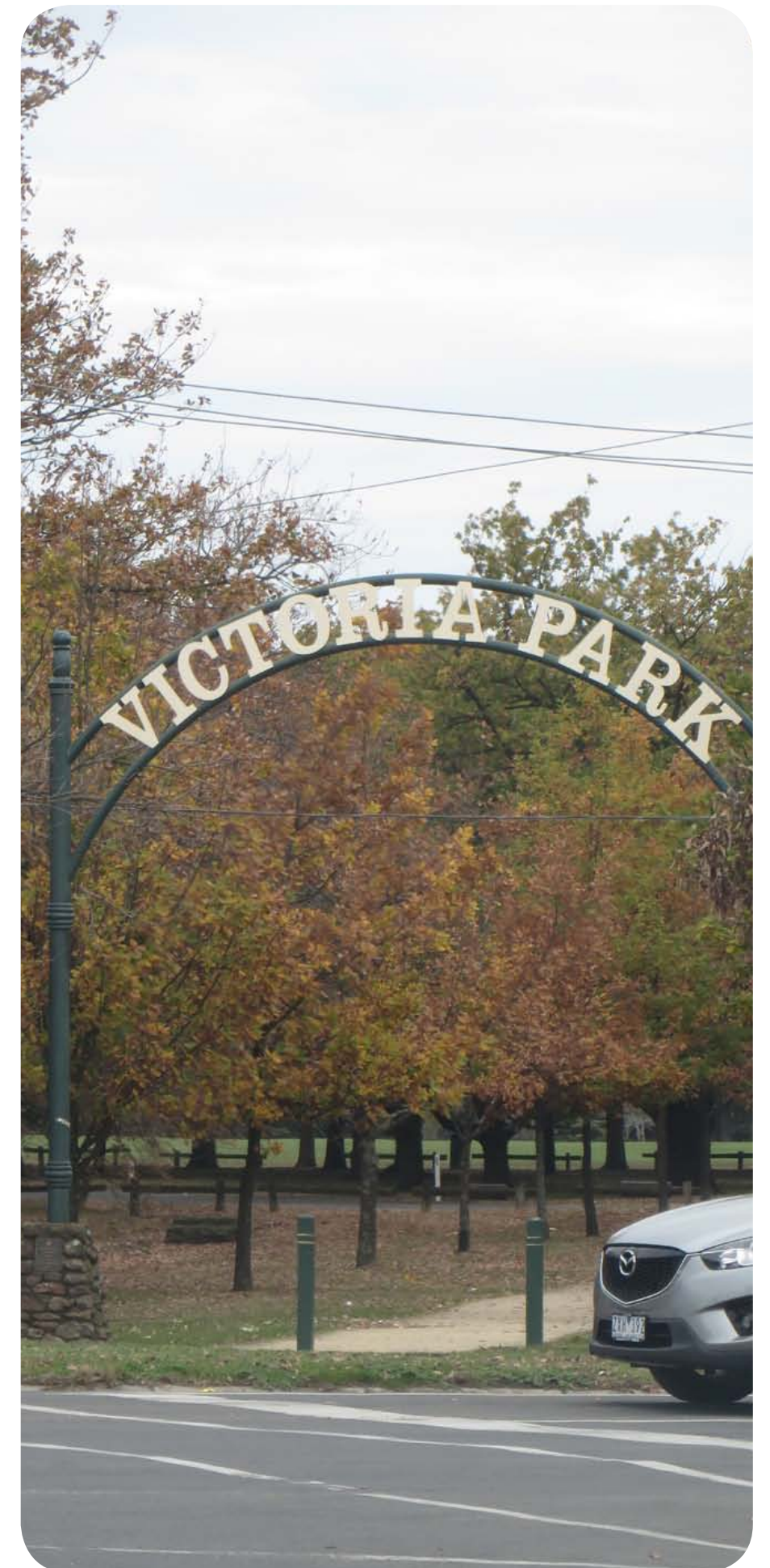
- Develop Traffic Management Plan that provides direction around problem intersections and traffic speeds both within and outside the Park. This should consider:
 - Turning in and out of Entrance 1 (Gillies Street).
 - Turning in and out of Entrance 2 (Sturt Street).
 - The creation of a pedestrian and cyclist crossing point on Sturt Street from Entrance 2 to Morrison Street. This would require traffic lights subject to Vic Roads Approval.
 - Closing Winter Street and re-opening Gillies Street.
 - The installation of a roundabout at the central intersection.
 - Sealing/resurfacing of roads and car parks to improve drainage and access.

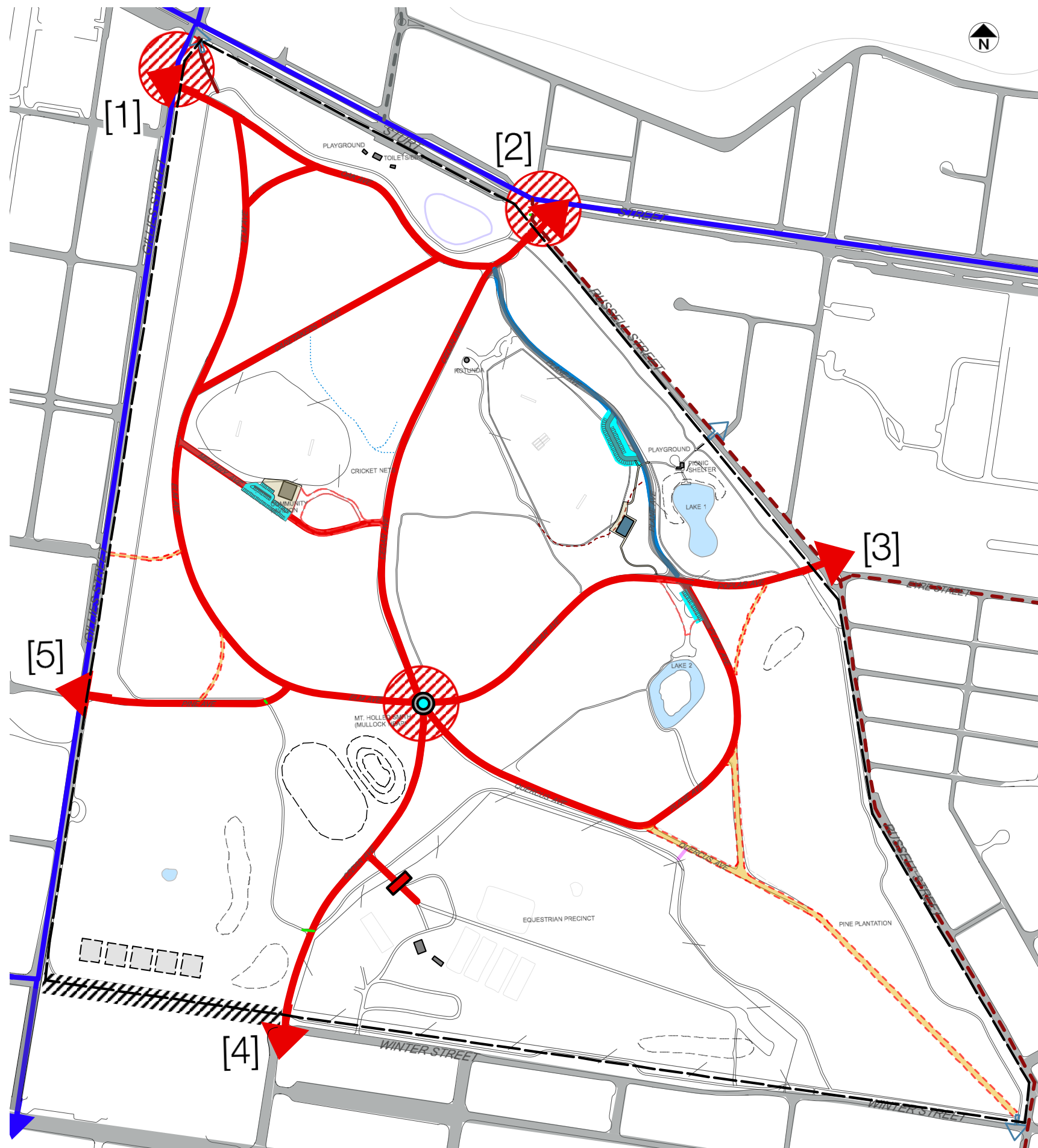
Design

- Prepare plan to undertake traffic modifications at Entrances 1 and 2 to improve flow and safety.
- Install roundabout at central intersection.
- Consolidate and seal car park at existing clubrooms.
- Seal gravel section of Plane Avenue and provide new sealed car park and bus drop off area to service the new pavilion.
- Continue to implement post and rail barriers and consider alternative means of restricting vehicular access to grassed areas.
- Consider traffic calming measures that will not hinder cyclists.
- Consider closing Winter Street, re-opening Gillies St connection at south-west corner / events space and relocation of saleyards.

Implementation

- Design and document above mentioned modifications to roads and car parks.





Proposed Traffic Management Measure

Improve safety and amenity for all Park users including pedestrians, cyclists, drivers and all other recreational users by reducing the impacts of vehicles and traffic congestion both within and around the park.

KEY

VEHICLE CIRCULATION

- INTERNAL ROAD
- PROPOSED SEALED CAR PARK
- GATE
- FEEDER ROAD
- ARTERIAL ROAD
- POTENTIAL CLOSURE
- / PROBLEM INTERSECTION
- PROPOSED ROUNDABOUT

6.6 Access, Circulation and Connections

Objective

- Improve access, circulation and connections, both within the Park and to surrounding landscapes, to improve safety and amenity for pedestrians and cyclists.

Design Principles

- Ensure path system is suitable for pedestrians of all abilities.
- Improve path connections to new and existing facilities within the Park.
- Improve surface quality of paths and increase the number of DDA compliant paths.
- Improve connections to the wider surrounds including Lake Wendoree, surrounding schools and the development area to the west for pedestrian and cyclists.
- Improve pedestrian connectivity to southern areas of Park

Recommendations

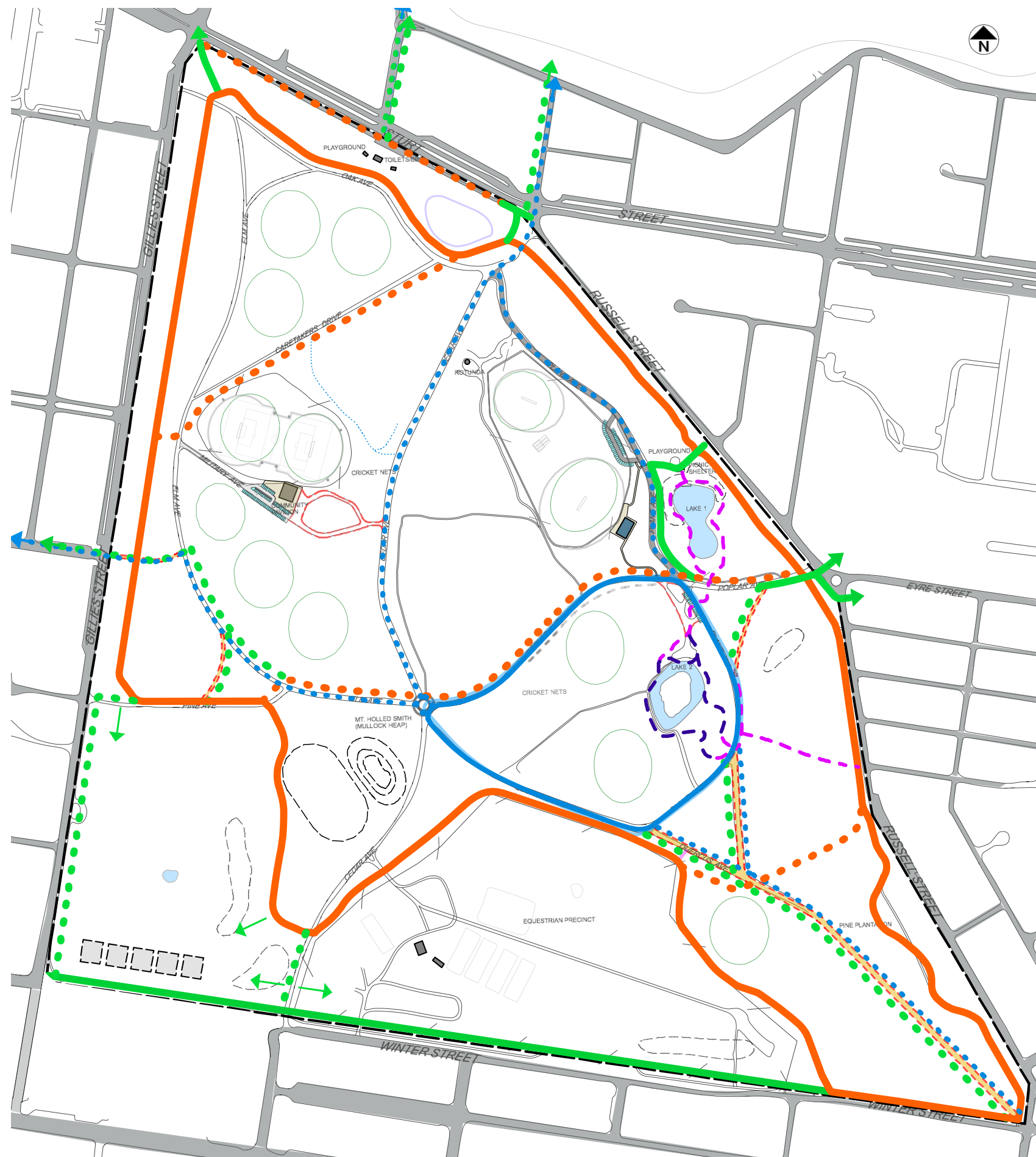
Design

- Continue to maintain VicTrack as the key passive walking loop and provide integrated medium and short circuit gravel path loops. Gravel type and width should match the existing VicTrack circuit.
- Install drinking fountains and seating to VicTrack, particularly at nodal points (as per Facilities Management Chapter).
- Create major pedestrian and cyclist boulevard entry to Park from south-east corner (Russell and Winter Streets).
- Create new bicycle & pedestrian entry on Gillies St connecting Napier Ave to Elm Ave.
- Create new pedestrian crossing point on Sturt Street at Entrance 2
- Explore opportunities to improve connections through equestrian precinct (in consultation with Pony Club and Council).
- Create path connections to new event space in south-west corner (as part of events space master plan).
- Clearly sign pedestrian and cyclist crossing points.
- Provide quality gravel paths in place of existing goat tracks.
- Implement way finding signage at path intersections for pedestrians.

Implementation

- Undertake a strategic review of existing path connections and access points, particularly where small, unformed goat tracks indicate high use, to determine localised improvements.
- Undertake further consultation with equestrian clubs and Council regarding public access to the equestrian precinct when not in use.
- Design and document new pedestrian paths including new circuit loops to VicTrack, south-east boulevard and Gillies St / Napier Street connection.





Improve access, circulation and connections, both within the park and to surrounding landscapes, to improve safety and amenity for pedestrians and cyclists.

KEY

PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

- VICTRACK
- ... PROPOSED NEW VICTRACK 3KM & 1.5KM LOOPS
- EXISTING PEDESTRIAN PATH
- ... PROPOSED NEW PEDESTRIAN PATH
- PROPOSED SECONDARY PEDESTRIAN LINKAGE PATH
- BOARDWALK
- PEDESTRIAN PROMENADE
- CRITERIUM
- ... CYCLE CONNECTION
- PEDESTRIAN DESIRE LINES

Proposed Access, Circulation and Connections

6.7 Public Appreciation and Signage

Objective

- Enhance public knowledge about the site, it's character, vegetation, points of interest and history through improved interpretative and way finding signage.

Design Principles

- Signage should be kept to a minimum and limited to key information only.
- Signage should be designed by qualified professionals with the ability to produce high quality outcomes that are appropriate to the setting, have clear graphic content, and are fabricated from suitable and durable materials.
- Minimal interpretative signage and pedestrian / cyclist scale way finding signage should be prioritised.
- Opportunities for augmented reality (i.e. signage incorporation into phone apps / web based interfaces etc.) should be explored.
- There is no precedent for sculptural elements in the Park to date. If sculptural elements were proposed they would need to be carefully assessed and sited so as not to impact on park character.

Recommendations

Design

- Maintain existing vehicular entry signs with updates to maps as required.
- Retain existing arched pedestrian entry signs on Sturt Street.
- Add significant trees to app.
- Develop a signage layout plan indicating the number and locations of each sign type or include all signs in an asset management plan.
- Increase number of distance markers on VicTrack to every 250m.
- Provide new dog off leash area signage to the lakes precinct car park near oval 11.
- Provide interpretive signage of historic elements including gold mining and mullock heap, Arbor Day, military use, major events incl. motor racing and Scout Jamboree etc.
- Provide grasslands interpretation signs at strategic locations. The number of grasslands signs should be increased to cover all grassland areas.
- Provide simple low impact labels for significant trees.

Implementation

- Design and document a park signage suite for pedestrian

- / cyclist level way finding and interpretative signage including history, grasslands, significant trees and entry sign as described above.
- Supply and install new distance markers to VicTrack including new medium and short loops to match existing.
- Add significant trees to app.
- Install new dog off leash area signage to the lakes precinct car park near oval 11.



Studio Binocular way finding sign

6.8 Hydrology and Lake Improvements

Objective

- Enhance the amenity and sustainability of Park water bodies to improve the landscape experience, mitigate flooding, increase water capture and storage for re-use and improve water quality. Consolidate lakes precinct into improved area that reflects design intent of original plans.

Design Principles

- Improve Park sustainability by improving drainage, capacity of lakes and implementing natural filtration and water harvesting.
- Enhance the amenity of existing water bodies through improvements to access, edge conditions, vegetation, and circulation.

Recommendations

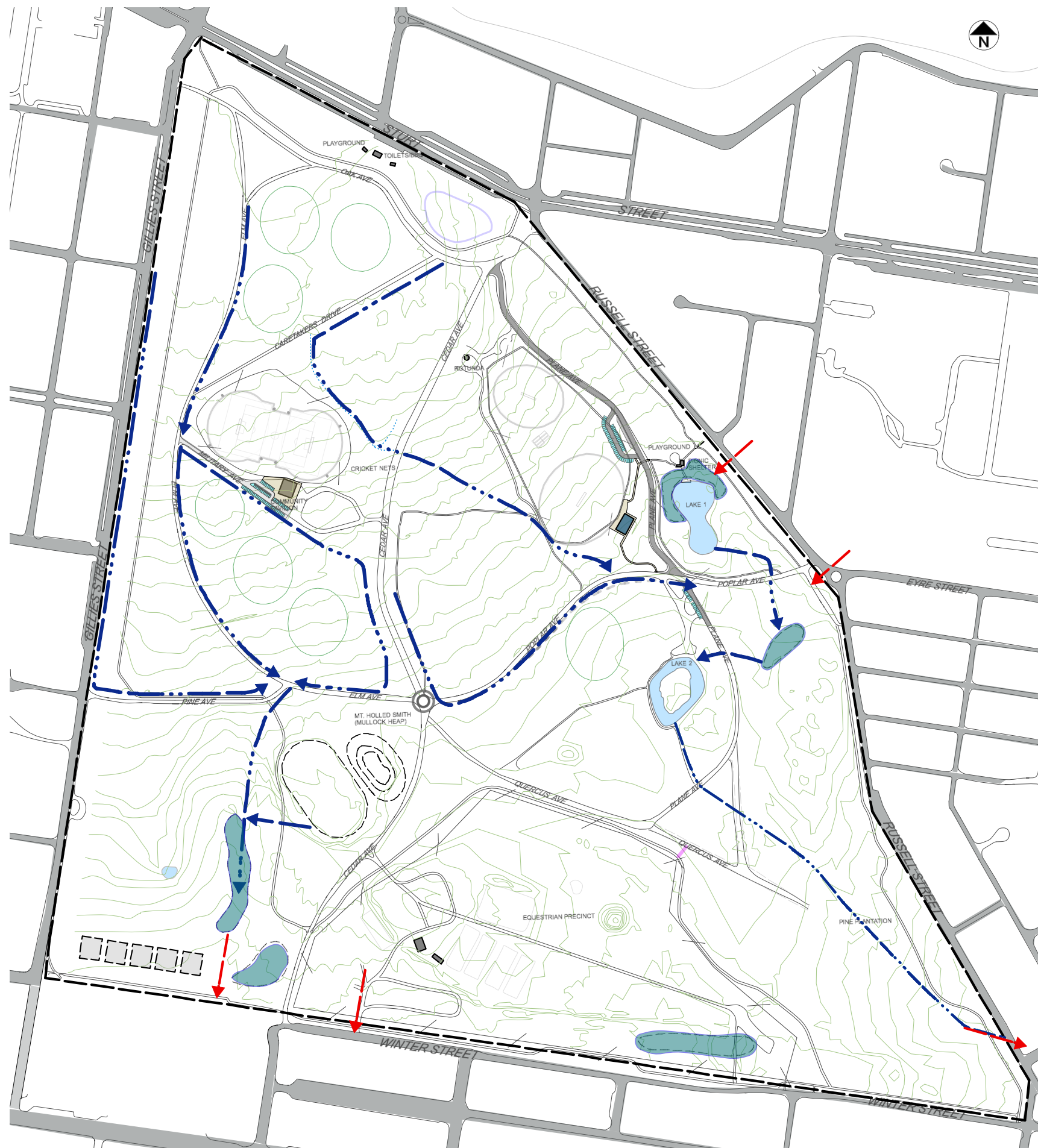
Design

- Introduce planting, boardwalks and loop path connections around lakes.
- Provide new sealed car parking along Poplar Avenue road edge and return existing gravel lake edge parking at the southern lake (lake 2) to park landscape.
- Upgrade the network of grassed swales to direct flows toward lake areas for capture and storage.
- Create new wetlands/lakes east of St Leger's Pond, in the equestrian precinct and in the events space (southwest corner) to improve water quality of storm water run off.
- Create water body in low point in local topography in new events area for increased amenity and flood mitigation.

Implementation

- Review and refine hydrological concepts for existing lakes including storage and re-use capacity, proposed wetlands, and event space water body and swale refinements.
- Develop concept for events space water body (this should form part of events precinct master plan)
- Develop concept plans for lakes precinct including improved circuit paths, new sealed road edge car parking, boardwalks, vegetation, edge conditions, furniture and wetlands.
- Incorporate water re-use into A Park Management Plan (Refer Landscape and Vegetation Chapter).










Enhance the amenity and sustainability of Park waterbodies to improve the landscape experience, mitigate flooding and increase water capture and storage for re-use. Consolidate lakes precinct into improved area that reflects design intent of original plans.

KEY

DRAINAGE AND LAKE IMPROVEMENTS

-  EXISTING GRASS OR VEGETATED SWALE (WITH OR WITHOUT AG. DRAINAGE)
-  PROPOSED GRASS OR VEGETATED SWALE (WITH FLOW DIRECTION)
-  PROPOSED WETLAND
-  PROPOSED WETLAND VEGETATION
-  INFLOW / OUTFLOW

Proposed Hydrology and Lake Improvements



Artists Impression - Lake Precinct Improvements

6.9 Key Improvements Master Plan and Proposed Precincts

Proposed Precincts

This plan shows the proposed precincts which reflect the broad changes to character and use as a result of the key improvement recommendations (page 45).

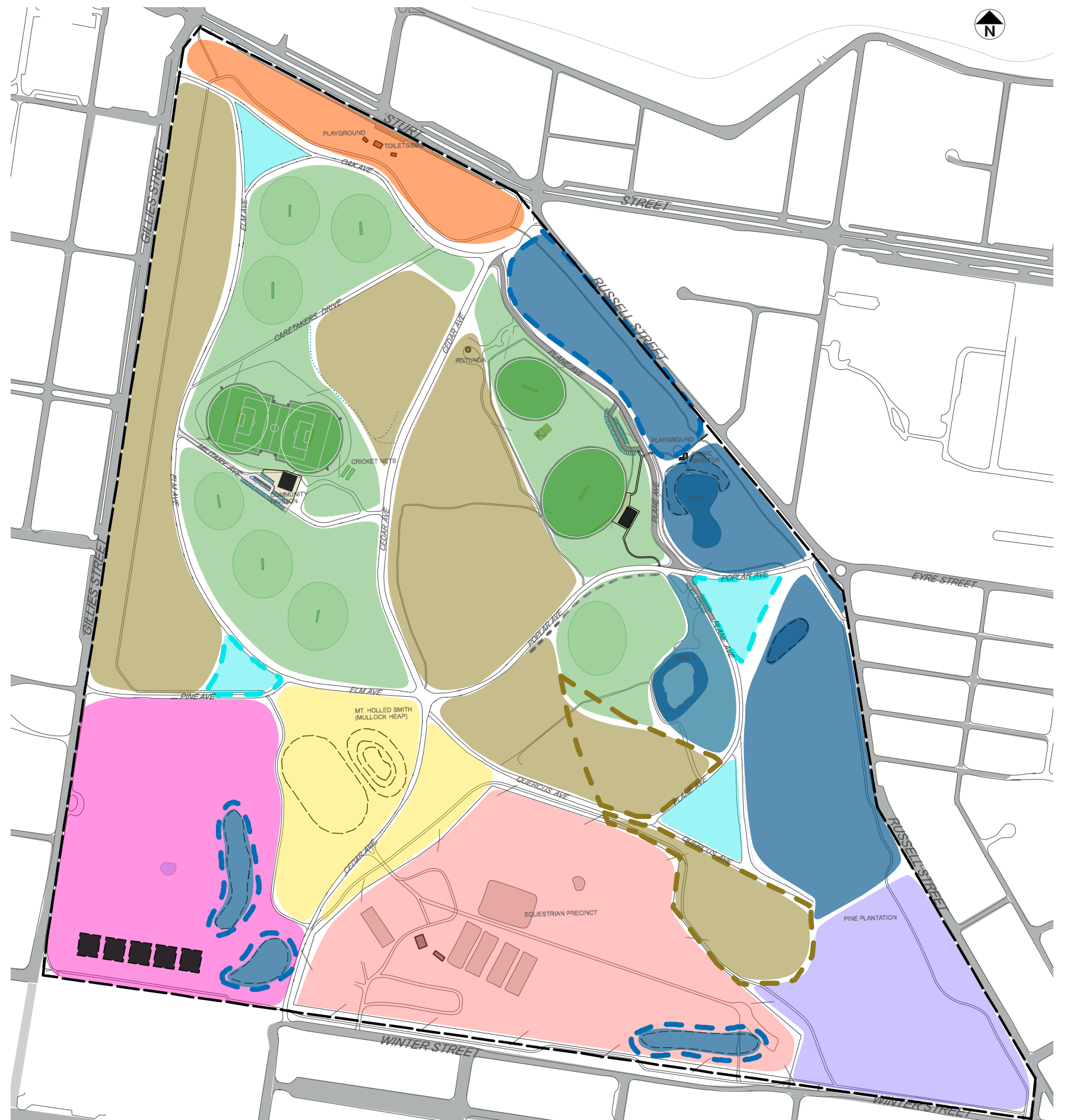
Key Improvements Master Plan

This plan is a summary of the key improvement recommendations discussed in greater detail in this chapter (page 46).

KEY

PROPOSED PARK PRECINCTS
(WITH PRECINCT PERCENTAGE OF ENTIRE PARK SHOWN)

- ACTIVE EDGE (3%)
- SPORTS GROUNDS (20%)
- GRASSLANDS (23%)
- LAKES/WETLANDS AND ARBORETUM (13%)
- SOUTH EAST ENTRY (8%)
- EQUESTRIAN (14%)
- SOUTH WEST CORNER (11%)
- MULLOCK HEAP AND VELODROME (6%)
- HISTORIC GROVE PLANTING (2%)



Proposed Master Plan Precincts

KEY

PROPOSED PARK PRECINCTS (WITH PRECINCT PERCENTAGE OF ENTIRE PARK SHOWN)

- SPORTS GROUNDS (20%)
- GRASSLANDS (23%)
- BUILDING FOOTPRINT (<1%)

VEGETATION IMPROVEMENTS

- EXISTING SPORTS GROUNDS AND SURROUNDING MOWN GRASS
- PROPOSED TREE PLANTING
- PROPOSED IRRIGATED OVAL
- REJUVENATED LANDSCAPE
- PROPOSED CRICKET NETS

EVENT INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

- EVENT SPACE LOCATION
- PAVILLIONS
- IMPROVED EQUESTRIAN FENCE
- CLUBROOM IMPROVEMENTS
- ALL ABILITIES PLAYGROUND - REFER SCHEDULE
- PROPOSED SEALING OF ROAD - REFER SCHEDULE
- SEATING ALONG VICTRACK (ESTIMATED LOCATIONS ONLY) - REFER SCHEDULE
- PROPOSED CAR PARK

PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION IMPROVEMENTS

- VICTRACK
- PROPOSED NEW VICTRACK 3KM & 1.5KM LOOPS
- EXISTING PEDESTRIAN PATH
- PROPOSED NEW PEDESTRIAN PATH
- PROPOSED SECONDARY PEDESTRIAN LINKAGE PATH
- BOARDWALK
- PEDESTRIAN PROMENADE
- CRITERIUM

DRAINAGE AND LAKE IMPROVEMENTS

- EXISTING GRASS OR VEGETATED SWALE (WITH OR WITHOUT AG. DRAINAGE)

DRAINAGE AND LAKE IMPROVEMENTS

- EXISTING GRASS OR VEGETATED SWALE (WITH OR WITHOUT AG. DRAINAGE)
- PROPOSED GRASS OR VEGETATED SWALE (WITH FLOW DIRECTION)
- PROPOSED WETLAND



Key Improvements Master Plan

7 Proposed Interventions Priority List

To be developed as part of the Final Draft. Refer to Section 6 for detail about recommendations.