

4.4 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 Volume 2).

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 consideration in the Master Plan:

- Establishment of multi-use playing fields (2-3 ovals), serviced by a new pavilion/change rooms and public toilets.
- Upgrading road surfaces, primarily for cycling and installation of traffic management measures.
- 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.



4.5 Summary of Design Themes and Objectives

The following design themes and 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.



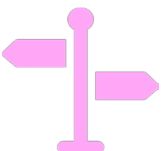
Traffic and Vehicle Management

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 and Signage

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.

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 Precincts Plan



KEY

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

Active Edge	6%
Sports Grounds	23%
Grasslands	20%
Lakes/Wetlands and Arboretum	10%
South East Entry	8%
Equestrian	14%
South West Corner	11%
Mullock Heap and Velodrome	6%
Historic Grove Planting	2%

5.2 Landscape and Vegetation

Victoria Park is highly valued for its landscape character as it is one of Australia's best examples of a 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 a significant landscape feature. 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 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 Wendouree. 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 grass, 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, Pine and Poplar) require a replacement plan.
- Parts of the Park are perceived as unsafe due to enclosed trees. Established trees in high use areas should continue to have canopies lifted for visibility, particularly on Quercus Ave.
- Native grasslands require management improvements and interpretation.
- Some recent plantings of avenue trees (esp. 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.
- Additional tree plantings will be required throughout the Park, where appropriate, to achieve an increased canopy cover.



Existing Open Grassland



Existing Cypress on Cedar Ave



Existing Group of Pines

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

Castanea sativa
Cedrus atlantica f. *glauca*
Cedrus deodara
Crataegus monogyna (weed sp)
Cupressus macrocarpa
Cupressus torulosa
Fraxinus excelsior
Laurus nobilis
Pinus contorta
Pinus coulteri
Pinus halepensis
Pinus pinaster
Pinus radiata
Pinus sabiniana
Platinus x acerifolia
Populus alba
Populus x canadensis
Populus nigra ‘*Italica*’
Prunus sp.
Quercus acutissima
Quercus canariensis
Quercus cerris
Quercis ilex
Quercus palustris
Quercus robur ‘*Fastigiata*’
Quercus robur
Quercus suber
Salix sp.
Sequoia sempervirens
Ulmus carpinifolia ‘*Variegata*’
Elm
Ulmus cornubiensis x *U.glabra*

Sweet Chestnut
Blue Cedar
Himalayan Cedar
Common Hawthorn
Monterey Cypress
Himalayan Cypress
Golden Ash
Portugal Laurel
Shore Pine
Big Cone Pine
Aleppo Pine
Cluster Pine
Monterey Pine
Grey Pine
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 Variagated

Ulmus glabra
Ulmus glabra ‘*Camperdownii*’
Ulmus glabra ‘*Lutescens*’
Ulmus x hollandica

Wych Elm
Camperdown Elm
Golden Wych Elm
Dutch Elm

Native

Araucaria bidwillii
Banksia integrifolia
Callitris sp.
Casuarina sp.
Eucalyptus botriodes
Eucalyptus globulus ssp. *globulus*
Eucalyptus leucoxylon
Eucalyptus sideroxylon
Grevillea robusta

Bunya Pine
Coast Banksia
Native Pine
She-oak
Southern Mahogany
Tasmanian Blue Gum
Yellow Gum
Red Ironbark
Silky Oak

Indigenous

Acacia dealbata
Acacia melanoxylon
Eucalyptus camaldulensis
Eucalyptus ovata
Eucalyptus viminalis

Silver Wattle
Blackwood
River Red Gum
Swamp Gum
Manna Gum



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



Above view looking north of Oak trees along Oak Avenue



Above view looking south west of Caretakers Drive and Cedar Avenue

Existing Vegetation Plan



- SIGNIFICANT TREES
- ① *Pinus contorta* var. *contorta*
 - ② *Quercus* sp.
 - ③ *Quercus michauxii*
 - ④ *Cedrus deodora*
 - ⑤ *Halocarpus biformis*
 - ⑥ *Quercus* 'Mt. Macedon'
 - ⑦ *Quercus robur* 'Fastigiata'
 - ⑧ *Pinus coulteri*
 - ⑨ RARE QUERCUS SPECIES PLANTING IN AREA

KEY

- EXISTING VEGETATION
- NATIVE GRASSLANDS REQUIRING MANAGEMENT
 - TREES REQUIRING MANAGEMENT PLAN
 - CANOPY ZONE REQUIRING LIFTING
 - RECENTLY PLANTED/REPLANTED AVENUES
 - PARK EDGE REQUIRING IMPROVEMENT
 - HERITAGE SIGNIFICANT TREE, REFER TABLE