

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 Operations Plan that incorporates prescriptive directions for tree management, grassland management and sports field management to ensure that management strategies align and are clearly understood.

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 oval 12 and expand indigenous grassland to include this areas.
- Maintain oval 13 as an existing native grassland for passive use and temporary equestrian events when required.
- Retain existing pine plantation and pines on Mt Holled-Smith.
- Continue to lift canopies of avenue trees.

- Improve bio-diversity of fauna with native plantings throughout native grasslands and around water bodies, where appropriate.

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.
- 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 Councils stated goal of 40% canopy coverage.



Proposed Landscape and Vegetation Plan



- KEY**
- VICTORIA PARK PRECINCTS
- SPORTS GROUNDS AND SURROUNDING MOWN GRASS
 - NATIVE GRASSLANDS
- PROPOSED VEGETATION
- PROPOSED TREE PLANTING
 - PROPOSED GRASSLAND EXTENSION
 - PROPOSED IRRIGATED OVAL
 - REJUVENATED LANDSCAPE

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.

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. The development of this events space is to include redevelopment of the Showgrounds.
- Explore, subject to relocation of Saleyards, 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 a fenced, 'dog off leash' area. This area may require addition of amenities including shelter, single toilet and small car park.
- 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 and form, and integration with surrounds and improvements to amenity such as water bodies, tree planting, 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.

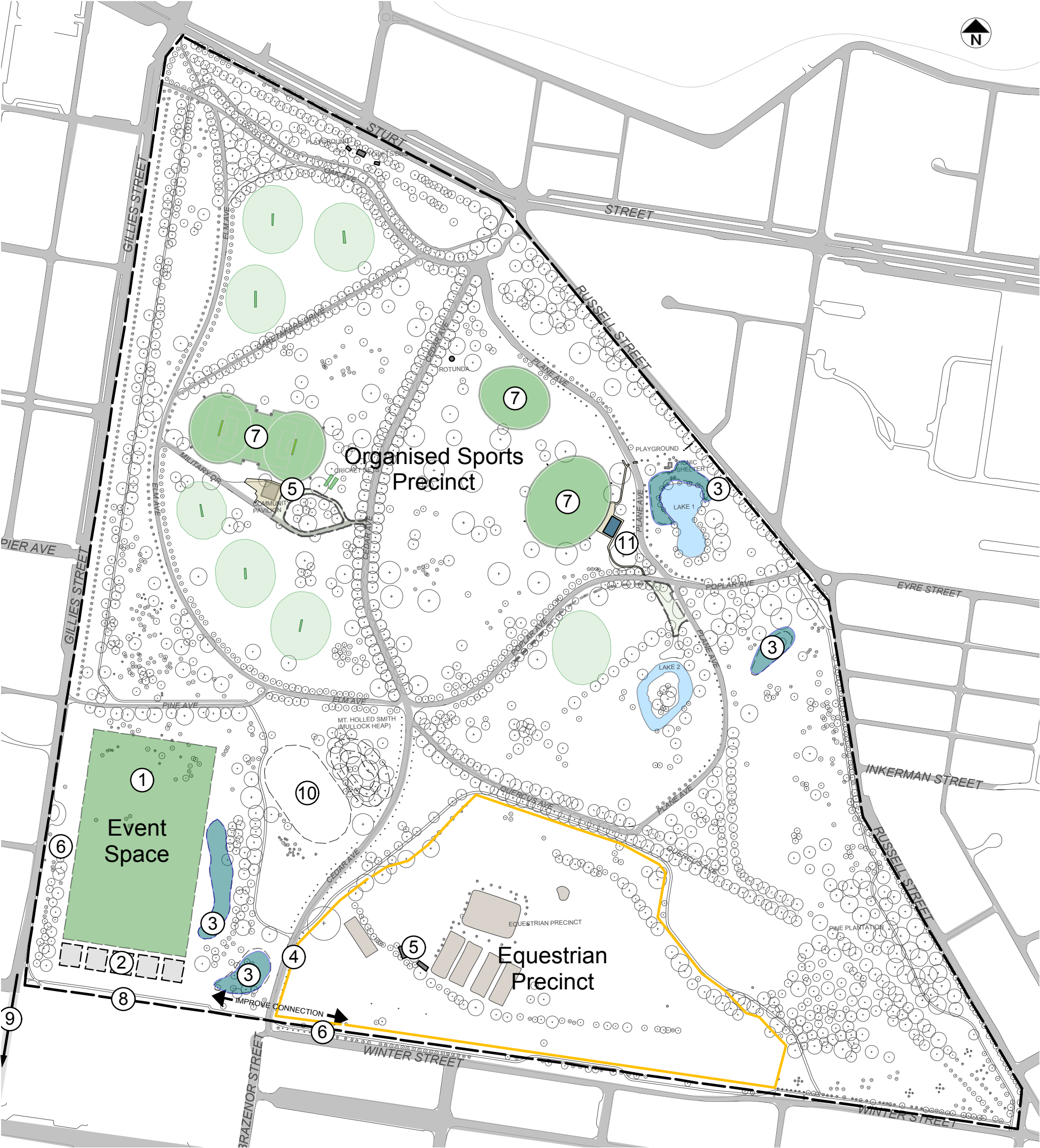
- Provide basic upgrades including accessible toilets and women's change rooms to the existing clubrooms and provide a new pavilion to service ovals and lakes precinct (covered in more detail in Proposed Facility Development).
- Ensure suitable signage and traffic management plans are in place for events.
- 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 near the old Velodrome or within the southern part of the 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; improved landscaping with new water bodies and perimeter tree planting; integration with the adjoining parkland; and indicative parking and traffic interfaces.
- Design and document upgrades to the equestrian precinct including fencing/gates/styles, clubroom upgrades, dressage facilities and tree planting. (See Access Circulation and Connections for more detail).



Proposed Event Infrastructure and Social Amenity Plan



KEY

EVENT INFRASTRUCTURE

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| ① OPEN LAWN EVENT SPACE LOCATION (TO BE OPEN AND PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE WHEN NOT USED FOR EVENTS) | ⑦ IMPROVED OVAL SURFACES FOR ORGANISED SPORTS COMPETITION AND GREATER GENERAL USE |
| ② PAVILLIONS | ⑧ WINTER ST CLOSURE (SUBJECT TO SALEYARDS RELOCATION) |
| ③ POTENTIAL WATERBODY | ⑨ GILLIES ST REOPENED (SUBJECT TO SALEYARDS RELOCATION) |
| ④ IMPROVED EQUESTRIAN FENCE | ⑩ LAWN AREA FOR PICNICS OR FENCED 'DOG OFF LEASH' AREA |
| ⑤ CLUBROOM IMPROVEMENTS | ⑪ MULTI-USE PAVILLION FOR BOTH SPORTING AND RECREATIONAL EVENTS |
| ⑥ IMPROVED LANDSCAPING AND TREE PLANTING AROUND EVENTS SPACE | |

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