

BOTANICA PARK BUNDOORA

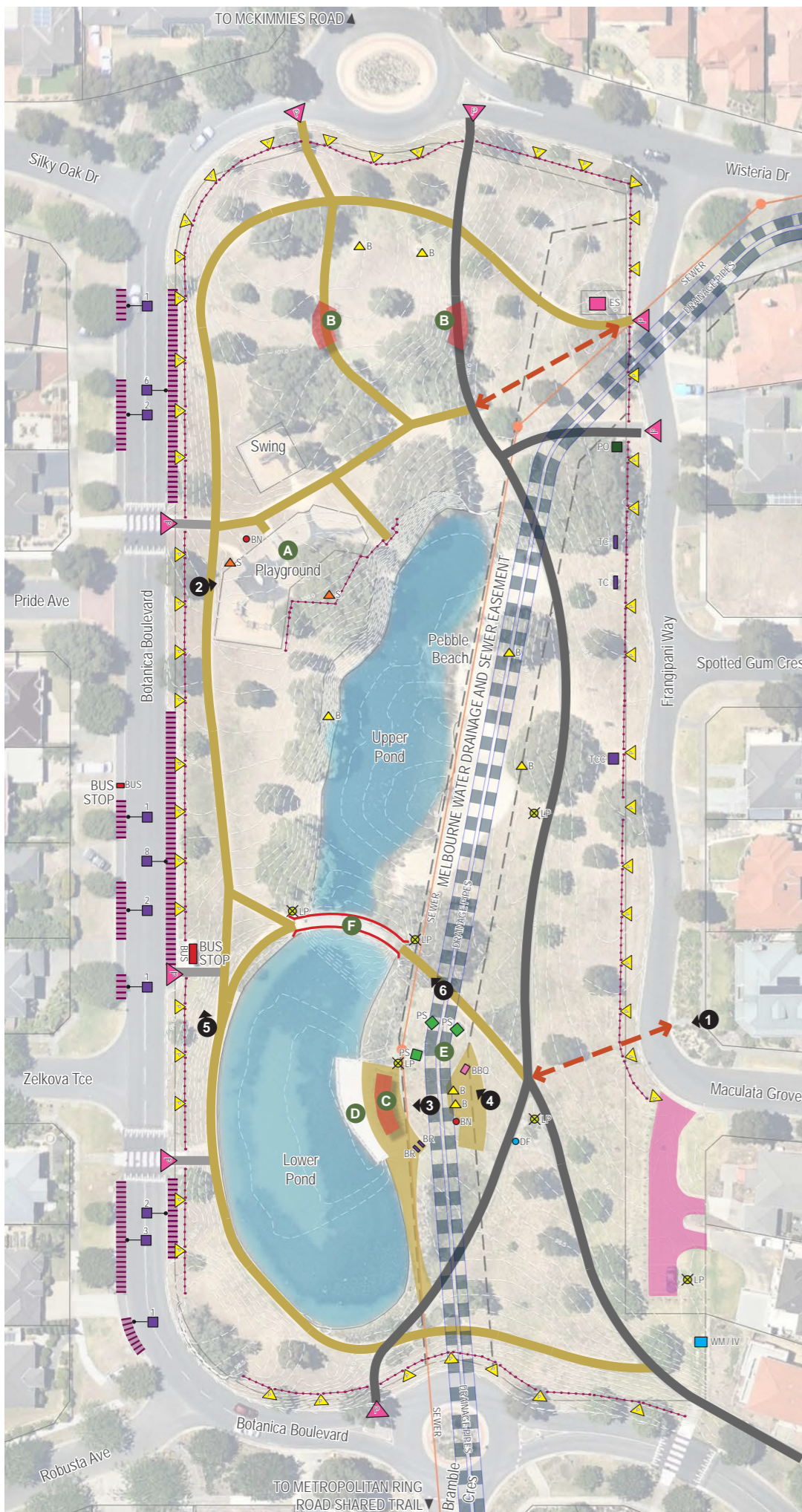
MASTER PLAN

JUNE 2017

The *Botanica Park Master Plan* has been prepared for Whittlesea City Council
by ACLA Consultants in association with Chatterbox Projects.

Submitted to Council 20th June 2017





VISUAL ACCESS
 Botanica Park has a prominent position and is very visually permeable through the Park and also from its boundaries. Though there is passive surveillance on all sides, from houses across the road facing in, it does not feel too exposed.



PHYSICAL ACCESS
 There are three zebra crossing entries to the Park and most major entry points have dedicated paths and kerb ramps. There are also regular openings in the vehicle exclusion fencing to allow informal pedestrian access.



MISSING LINKS
 On the east side of the Park there are no formal pedestrian entries and connecting paths from Wisteria Drive and Maculata Grove.



PATHWAYS
 There is a combination of sealed pathways (asphalt) and unsealed pathways (granitic sand). There are some subsidence issues where granitic sand meets asphalt forming a trip hazard.



PLAYGROUND
 The playground is in need of upgrading and currently only offers play value for the 3-7 year age group. It is also located next to Botanica Boulevard, the busiest road adjacent to the Park.



SHADE / SHELTER
 Existing canopy trees provide year round shade and the existing open shade structure offers partial shade. There is currently no weather proof shelter.



PICNIC FACILITIES
 There are currently no picnic facilities provided near the playspace. The existing picnic facilities east of the lower pond lack shade and shelter and are underutilised.



PARK SEATING
 There are a number of benches provided through the Park though not along pathways. Approximately half have been located under shade trees while the others are in the open. There are two seats with back rests provided near the existing playground.



SPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES
 There are no formal provisions for sport as the Park is mainly for passive recreation. Kids do use the open grass areas for kicking a ball or making up games.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT
 There is a bus stop in the Park on Botanica Boulevard which is serviced by the 564 Bundoora RMIT – South Morang Bus Route connecting the Bundoora RMIT campus and South Morang Train Station.



CAR PARKING
 Botanica Park has no dedicated car park as it is a Neighbourhood level open space under the Open Space Strategy hierarchy. There is on street parallel parking along Botanica Boulevard.



ENVIRONMENT AND LANDSCAPE
 The Park's verdant landscape character fits well with the tree lined surrounding streets. The general planting is characterised by high canopy trees, most of them gums, and low understory planting with some water plants along the margin of the upper pond.



DRAINAGE INFRASTRUCTURE
 Stormwater from the surrounding neighbourhood is discharged in the upper pond which, when full, flows over a weir to the lower pond. Due to intermittent rainfall events the water in the second pond is often not refreshed for some time. This and the number of ducks present mean the quality of the water is frequently compromised and nutrient rich. Opportunities should be investigated, outside the scope of this project, to determine what measures can be taken to improve the water condition.



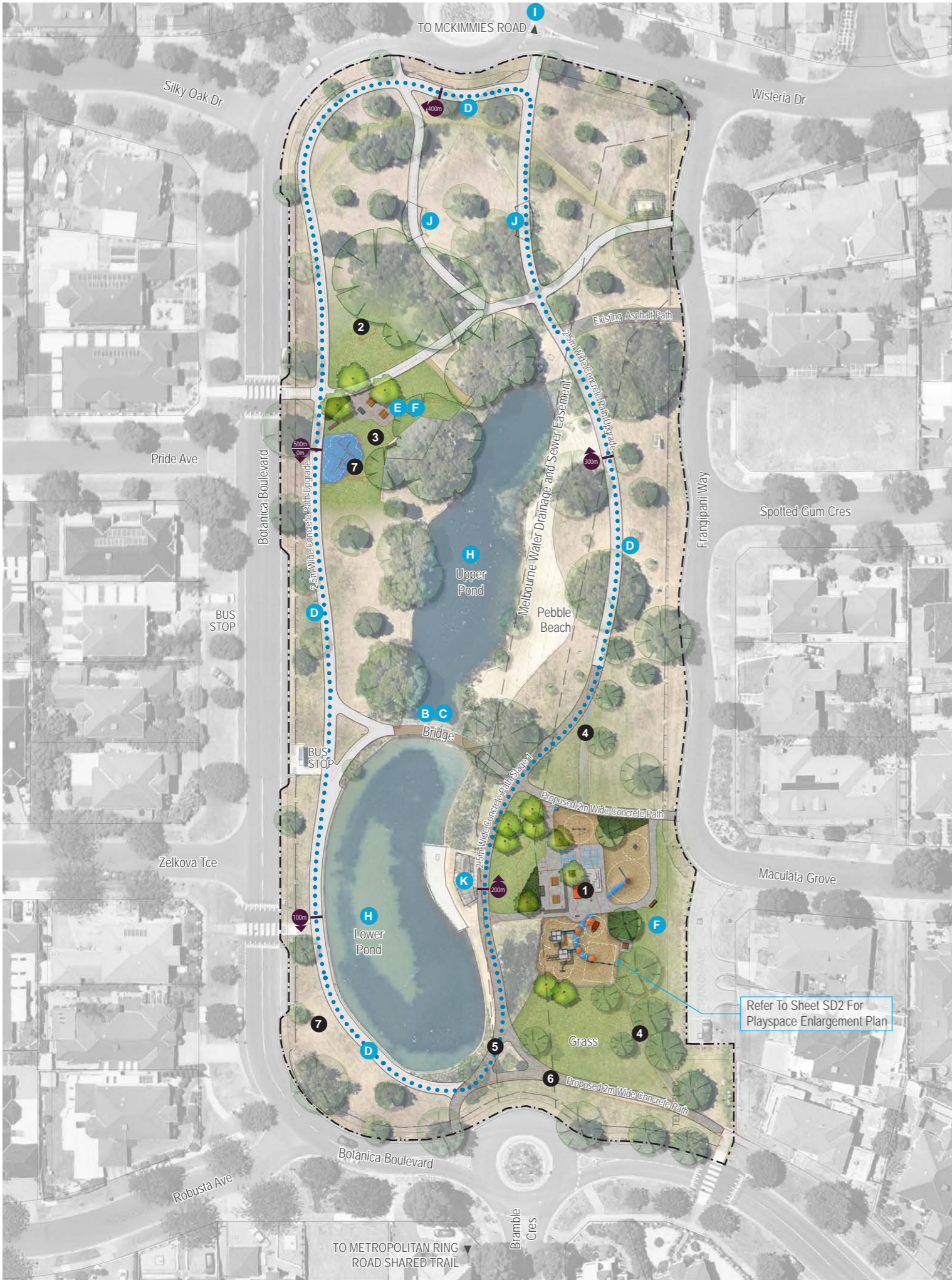
SERVICES
 There are a number of services present through the park. A Melbourne Water easement runs through the site, bypassing the ponds on their east side, which contains two large drains and a sewer line. Along the east side there is also an electrical substation and a number of Telstra service cabinets. The existing irrigation system controller is located in the south-east corner of the site.



BRIDGE
 The bridge spanning the join between the upper and lower pond is due for repairs/upgrading soon to improve its condition. Timbers have weathered and the wire cable balustrades require constant repair and retensioning.

- SITE FEATURES**
- A** Playground
 - B** Arbour
 - C** Shade Structure (open roof)
 - D** Viewing Deck
 - E** Picnic Area
 - F** Bridge and Weir

LEGEND



DESIGN RATIONALE

Through extensive site analysis, community consultation and a review of Council's relevant plans, strategies and policies, the main priority identified for Botanica Park is an upgraded playspace with adjoining picnic / social gathering area. In the proposed plan the playspace is relocated to the east side of the park further away from the traffic along Botanica Boulevard. The space offers an all weather picnic area in addition to play and social activities for children as well as young adults. In addition to this a dedicated exercise area with equipment is proposed in the current playspace location once the new playspace has been constructed and subject to Stage 1 funding.

As part of the Botanica Park Master Plan future improvements have also been identified and prioritised as projects to be implemented in future years.

LEGEND

- Existing Trees
To be protected and retained
- Proposed Tree
- Existing Items to be removed
- Proposed Concrete Path
STAGE 1
- Proposed Concrete Path
FUTURE WORKS
- Proposed Timber Softfall Mulch
- Proposed Grass Reinstatement
- Project Boundary
- Walking Path Circuit
500m
- Distance Marking
Linemarking and bollard every 100m

STAGE 1 WORKS



















Item	Action	Priority
1	Create new sheltered picnic and playground area. Refer to Sheet SD2 for Concept Plan. Remove existing paths which dissect this space as well as old park furniture; picnic settings and seats.	Very High Stage 1 Works
2	Once the new playground has been constructed decommission and remove existing swing and rubber surfacing and re-grass area for general park use. (Subject to Stage 1 funding)	High
3	Once the new playground has been constructed, decommission and remove the existing playground, rubber surfacing, softfall mulch, timber edging and granitic sand paving and re-grass area for general park use. (Subject to Stage 1 funding)	High
4	Remove existing asphalt path and re-grass area for general park use.	Very High
5	Upgrade section of main path to concrete and realign along the east side of the lower pond creating space for the new picnic and playground area.	Very High
6	Upgrade existing granitic sand access path to a concrete path.	Very High
7	Create an exercise station adjacent to the main path once the existing playground has been removed. (Subject to Stage 1 funding)	High

FUTURE WORKS

Item	Action	Priority
A	Perform necessary cleaning/thinning of all understorey vegetation and uplifting of tree canopy works to maintain clear sight-lines and enable passive surveillance through the park.	High
B	Replace deficient bridge cables through Council's park maintenance regime as an interim measure to improve bridge condition.	High
C	Replacement of the existing bridge due to its poor condition.	High
D	Upgrade the asphalt/granitic sand path system to concrete in line with Council's current practice. Create a 2.5m wide 500m long loop track for walking, scooting and cycling with distance marker bollards and distance linemarking on the path every 100m.	Medium
E	Create a secondary picnic area to supplement the primary picnic area if usage patterns of the new area indicate a need for additional facilities in the Park.	Medium
F	Provide irrigation to the grass areas immediately surrounding the playground and in the secondary picnic area.	Medium
G	Install directional, wayfinding and educational signage in the park.	Medium
H	Conduct a stormwater review to improve the water quality of the upper and lower ponds.	Medium
I	Investigate a safe pedestrian crossing at McKimmies Road to enable better access to Mimosa Park. Liaise with and seek approval from VicRoads.	Medium
J	Remove or replace timber arbours at the end of their useful life.	Low
K	Replace the timber shade structure at the end of its useful life.	Low





- LEGEND**
-  Existing Trees
To be protected and retained
 -  Proposed Tree
 -  Existing Feature to be demolished
 -  Proposed Concrete Paving
 -  Proposed Rubber Surface (Orange)
 -  Proposed Rubber Surface (Blue)
 -  Proposed Timber Softfall Mulch
 -  Proposed Garden Bed
 -  Proposed Grass
 -  Proposed Concrete Edge
To Council Standard Detail
 -  Proposed Picnic Settings
To Council Standard Detail
 -  Proposed Platform Bench
To Council Standard Detail
 -  Proposed Seat
To Council Standard Detail
 -  Proposed Drinking Fountain
To Council Standard Detail
 -  Relocated Litter Bin
Existing Council Standard Litter Bin installed in new location
 -  Proposed Bicycle Leaning Rail
To Council Standard Detail
 -  Proposed BBQ
 -  Existing Light Pole
To Be Retained
 -  200m Distance Marking (Future Works)
Linemarking and bollard every 100m

PLAY EQUIPMENT / FEATURES



1.1 Rodeoboard - Dynamic combined spinning and rocking motion



1.2 Hip Hop - Dynamic combined see saw and spinning motion



1.3 3.0m high birds nest basket swing



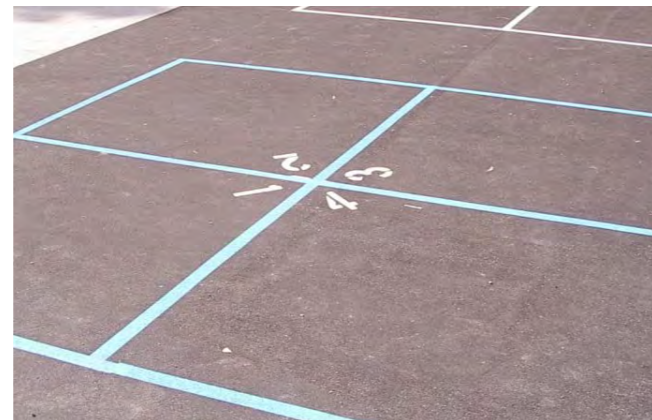
1.4 Wave Rider



1.5 Three bay steel swing with toddler seat, standard seat and all abilities seat



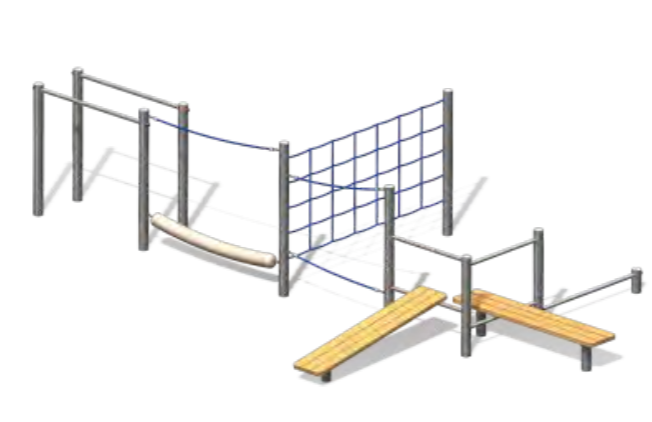
1.6 Combination Play Unit - Perspective View



1.7 Four square court linemarking



1.8 POPP Table Tennis Table with custom pattern

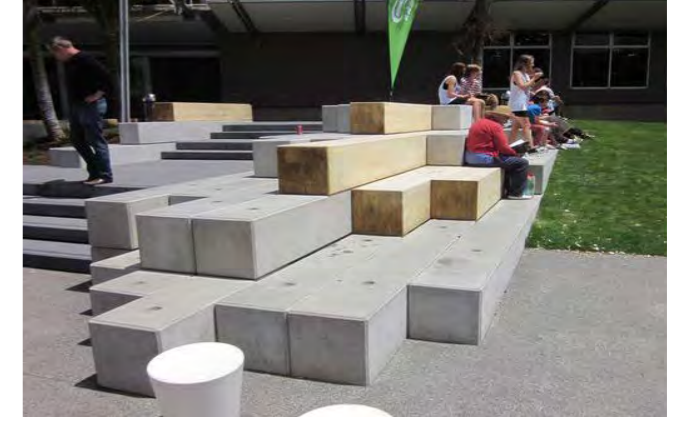


7 Combination Exercise Unit

FURNITURE



1.9 Tiered seating constructed with wood plastic composite



1.9 Tiered seating formation for socialising and spectating



1.10 Bike leaning rail



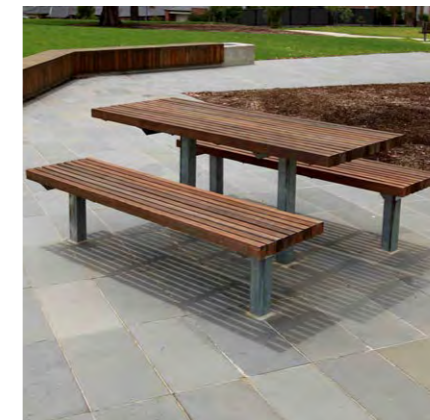
1.11 Distance marker bollards and distance linemarking to path



1.12 Seat with armrests



1.13 Platform bench



1.14 Picnic setting



1.15 Picnic shelter



1.16 BBQ with two hotplates



1.17 Retain existing drink fountain



1.18 Relocate existing litter bin



Botanica Park Gum Trees. Image: ACLA.

Appendices

Council Strategies and Plans

A number of the City of Whittlesea's existing strategic planning documents, policies and strategies have influenced the Botanica Park Master Plan. The following section contains summaries of the main background documents reviewed including any key directions relevant to the Park.

Shaping Our Future Whittlesea 2030 Strategic Community Plan

The City of Whittlesea's *Shaping Our Future 2030 Strategic Community Plan* describes the community's vision for the future of the Municipality and details clear desired outcomes that will assist in guiding Council. The Community Plan outlines seven Future Directions for the community:

Future Directions

- Inclusive and engaged community
- Accessibility in, out and around our City
- Growing our economy
- Places and spaces to connect people
- Health and wellbeing
- Living sustainably
- Good governance

The community consultation undertaken for the *Community Plan* identified twenty-two key themes which were then categorised under the seven Future Directions. Strategic outcomes were then listed against each of these themes.

The fourth Future Direction, places and spaces to connect people, has direct relation to the provision, maintenance and improvement of current and future open space. Listed below are the key themes related to this as well as their associated Strategic Objectives/Outcomes.

- *Open space - We have open spaces that are welcoming and safe for public gathering*
- *Community hubs - We have areas that bring people together around services and entertainment experiences*
- *Planning our space - Our urban design helps build connection to place and the community*
- *Leisure & recreation - Our recreation facilities and open spaces are accessible and respond to local need*



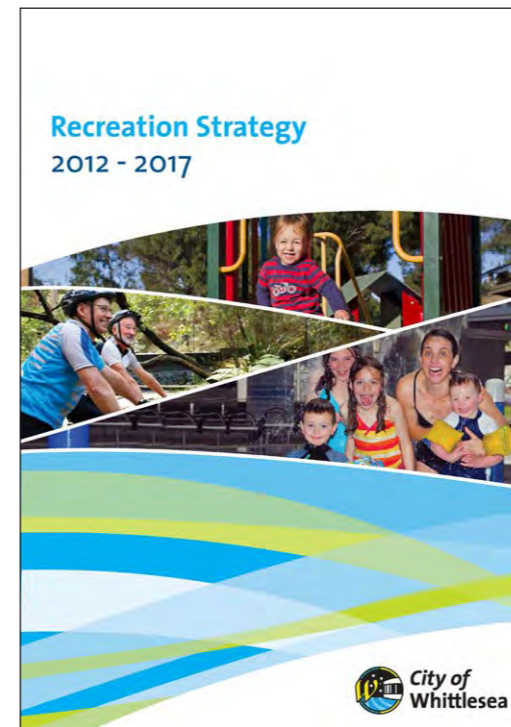
City of Whittlesea Recreation Strategy 2012-2017

The City of Whittlesea's *Recreation Strategy 2012-2017* recognises and responds to the unique characteristics, individual settlements and challenges facing the City and provides Council and the community with a clear direction for creating and achieving an overall vision for leisure in the City of Whittlesea. The *Strategy* is intended to act as a framework for the delivery of recreation programs, facilities and services within the Municipality. It also acts as a strategic reference document to support higher order strategies and statutory planning documents, like the *Precinct Structure Plans* and the *Community Plan* as well as Council policies, plans and documents such as the *Open Space Strategy* and *Playspace Strategy*.

The established/existing areas are projected to retain a relatively stable population and profile though a general aging of the demographic is expected. As such it is important to increase opportunities for participation in informal recreation. Improvements to related facilities and infrastructure should be considered, particularly those supporting participation of adults over 45 years. The *Strategy* recommends a review of existing recreation reserves to identify those opportunities to increase informal community use. This may include improvements/increases to facilities such as picnic areas, dog walking areas, playspaces and walking paths/trails.

The gap analysis undertaken also identified, in the established/existing areas, a potential undersupply of community meeting spaces, Level 1 and 3 multi-purpose community centres, lawn bowl greens, outdoor netball courts and football/cricket ovals.

Another recommendation of the *Strategy* reinforced the importance of stakeholder involvement in facility planning and development as well as the ongoing engagement of the likely users, particularly in rural and established areas to help create a sense of community belonging and pride.



City of Whittlesea Open Space Strategy 2016

The recently endorsed City of Whittlesea Open Space Strategy 2016 outlines the strategic direction for the future planning, provision design and management of open space in the Municipality until 2026. The City of Whittlesea's public open space network is expected to fulfil a number of key roles including provision for formal and unstructured recreation, passive outdoor enjoyment and play, ecological improvement and conservation, mitigation of the urban heat island effect and climate change as well as the protection and promotion of the community's cultural heritage values.

The open space survey undertaken for the Strategy identifies low levels of open space use in established urban areas which is attributed to a number of reasons including a lack of diversity in open space character, poor visibility of open space, lack of trees and shade, lack of path access to existing facilities and the poor condition of facilities. The Strategy therefore focuses on improving the quality of existing open space to improve and encourage usage by the existing and forecast community.

The Strategy identifies Botanica Park as a Neighbourhood open space in an established urban area of the Municipality. Botanica Park is the second most popular open space within walking distance for residents in Bundoora and is in the top seven most popular within walking distance from home within the whole Municipality.

The Strategy recommends an upgrade of the reserve with a focus on providing facilities to augment informal and unstructured open space recreation particularly the facilities for play. The overall precinct plan for Bundoora also recommends improving on-road pedestrian and/or cycle links from the south of the site to the Darebin Creek Trail.

Other suggestions in the Strategy for possible improvement include: providing additional shelters with tables and seats; improving access and the surface condition of paths; regular maintenance of the existing waterbody; providing additional drink fountains and rubbish bins; providing more shade and upgrading and providing additional play areas in accord with the City of Whittlesea's Playspace Planning Framework and Policy 2013-16.



City of Whittlesea Playspace Planning Framework and Policy 2013-16

The City of Whittlesea's Playspace Planning Framework and Policy 2013-16 is a comprehensive document aimed at informing Council officers and developers responsible for providing or maintaining playspaces within the Municipality with an understanding of the value and principles of play. The Policy reflects current research into the importance of play and nature play for children as well as adults and acknowledges that play happens everywhere while providing direction on how to design and provide best practice play environments in delineated municipal playspaces and playgrounds.

As Botanica Park is designated a Neighbourhood open space and under the Open Space Strategy 2016 it is a recommendation in the Strategy that the reserve include a neighbourhood level playspace.

In the Playspace Planning Framework and Policy a neighbourhood playspace caters to family groups, providing facilities for socialising while children and young people play. Neighbourhood facilities generally provide greater play opportunities and include a wider range of accessible facilities than a local playspace.

With regard to provision of new playspaces or upgrades to existing the Policy also clearly states the imperative need to engage with the community and also notes the community's own declared wish to be involved in the planning and design process of their playspaces.

City of Whittlesea Natural and Built Shade Policy

The City of Whittlesea's Natural and Built Shade Policy outlines Council's commitment to taking a preventative approach to protecting the community from over-exposure to ultra violet radiation (UVR) through the adequate provision of best practice public facilities and environments that provide shade and shelter, particularly in high risk areas such as early years facilities, playspaces and outdoor community gathering spaces. Another of the key policy principles includes the prioritisation of the provision of canopy trees and urban forest where possible, to provide shade as well as help reduce pollution, mitigate the urban heat island effect, and improve social and mental wellbeing.



Spaces 8 to 12+: Creating Engaging Places for Young People

The main purpose of the City of Whittlesea's Spaces 8 to 12+: Creating Engaging Places for Young People is to encourage public realm design to consider the needs of young people (ages 12-25) and older children in their middle years (ages 8-12). The report argues that they not only have the right to have access to age appropriate, engaging and challenging places but also to be actively involved and consulted regarding their provision.

Changes in the health of young people such as increasing obesity rates, decreased physical activity and increasing mental health concerns as well as decreased independent mobility owing to parental fears has highlighted the need for a shift in governance and the planning and design process to create more Child Friendly Cities and encourage a move back to safer pedestrianised and connected communities.

Spaces 8 to 12+ outlines five principles for designing places and spaces for young people. The views of young people and related research are detailed under each principle and linked to best practice responses and resources. The five principles identified are as follows:

1. Accessible: Creating the public realm that is accessible to all young people
2. Diverse: Diversity of uses for diverse young people
3. Inclusive: Making the public realm socially inclusive and connected for young people
4. Safe: The public realm must enable young people to feel safe and to be safe
5. Engaged: Young people are experts on things related to young people



City of Whittlesea Heatwave Plan

The City of Whittlesea's Heat Plan outlines Council's proposed actions and responses in regard to extreme heat and heatwave events which have been identified as one of the most serious municipal risks. An assessment of the suburbs most affected by heat identifies Lalor, Thomastown and Bundoora as having extremely high heatwave vulnerability.

Council's longer-term planning for heat uses a framework to examine four environmental components, with impacts and adaptations for extreme heat and heatwaves identified in each. Longer term efforts to mitigate the effects of heat on Council and the community should address each of these.

- *The Built/Physical environment, which includes all components of the human made landscape*
- *The Social environment, which includes all social and cultural interactions, including service delivery and support*
- *The Economic environment, which includes all components that contribute to economic activity, including human resources*
- *The Natural environment, which includes all natural environmental features*

River Red Gum Protection Policy

Within Whittlesea, open plains grassland including mature River Red Gum trees is acknowledged as the defining visual character of the local landscape as well as the most significant environmental feature with some trees estimated at between 200 to 800 years old.

The River Red Gum Protection Policy is aimed at ensuring the heritage and environmental value of River Red Gums is recognised and that all future development of urban areas considers their protection and enhancement. This includes proper assessment of trees near development, the retention of River Red Gum regeneration wherever feasible and adherence to appropriate tree protection zones.