

VICTORIA PARK LAKE

Master Plan Review



Greater
Shepparton
City
Council

FINAL REPORT
31 August 2016

SED

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Executive summary

The previous Victoria Park Lake Master Plan was developed in 2008. The Master Plan has successfully guided a number of improvement initiatives that have reinforced Victoria Park Lake as an important open space precinct that supports a range of sport, recreation, leisure, community and tourism opportunities, including major events. The reserve is well used and highly valued by the community.

The majority of recommendations from the 2008 Master Plan have been implemented, however others which remain outstanding require review in order to assess their ongoing relevance having regard to changing community needs and increasing demand pressures.

In addition, since the 2008 Master Plan, Council has been presented with outcomes from a feasibility study into the establishment of a new Shepparton Art Museum (SAM) to be located in the park, as well as a report on the Shepparton Caravan Park to guide opportunities for future improvement.

The vision for the SAM building is to contribute to a strong sense of arrival to inner Shepparton, whilst maximising relationships to the surrounding parkland, including opportunities for interpretive information, cultural expression, public art, community gathering and hospitality (e.g. cafe, visitor information centre). The Business Case recommends the construction of an elevated iconic building, up to five stories high, however with a modest ground floor footprint of around 1260m².

Therefore this project has involved a review and update of the previous Master Plan to:

- Assess the ongoing relevance of any outstanding actions having regard to changing community needs and demand pressures for the reserve;
- Outline opportunities to accommodate the proposed Shepparton Art Museum (SAM) and Visitor Information Centre;
- Support opportunities for future enhancement of the caravan park / tourist accommodation precinct;

- Review earlier proposals for service lane / car parking along Wyndham Street, having regard to the high community use of this zone;
- Review previous proposals for a significant function/cafe/boat-house facility at the northern end of the Lake in light of the SAM and outline recommendations to address the long-term facility needs of existing user groups;
- Consider opportunities to retain capacity for hosting large scale outdoor events within the park; and
- Outline opportunities to increase community use, benefit and amenity of Victoria Park Lake.

The successful transformation of the Victoria Park Lake precinct in the past decade has been built upon an overarching vision and underlying principles. It is important that these principles continue to form the basis for decision-making regarding the ongoing management of the precinct. The guiding principles identified are therefore described below:

Scenic value:

Victoria Park Lake shall be maintained as a high quality open space and scenic attraction, contributing positively to Shepparton's image and encouraging usage.

Recreation & health:

Victoria Park Lake shall be a focus for passive and active recreation, contributing to the physical and mental health of residents and visitors.

Water quality:

Victoria Park Lake shall be a water body that uses natural processes to ensure high water quality, providing conditions suitable for both wildlife habitat and compatible recreational use.

Education:

Victoria Park Lake shall provide an educational tool to teach people about indigenous flora, fauna, land management and cultural traditions of the original inhabitants.

Safety and accessibility:

Victoria Park Lake shall be a safe place that provides access and recreation opportunities for the whole community.

Economic vitality:

Victoria Park Lake will provide an asset for the city that encourages high use and economic activity from visitors and locals.

The recommendations made in this document have these broad principles as a starting point. For ease of presentation, the Master Plan has broken the site into distinct (but interconnected) precincts. A summary of key features, issues and recommendations for each precinct are presented throughout the Master Plan. The key precincts include:

- Accommodation precinct;
- Wetland precinct;
- S.A.M. precinct;
- Lake edge precinct;
- Family precinct;
- Event space precinct;
- Northern lake edge precinct;
- Aquatic facility precinct;
- Western Park & play space precinct;
- River edge precinct; and
- Community clubs precinct.

In addition to the precinct-specific recommendations, there are a number of broader circulation issues that have been identified and addressed including large vehicle turning movements, Wyndham Street vehicle parking, Aquamoves car parking and ongoing use of the reserve for cycling criterium events.

This project has reviewed the previous 2008 Master Plan and documented a new Master Plan to guide the future use and development of the reserve. The ongoing enhancement of facilities at Victoria Park Lake will help contribute to positive physical and mental health outcomes for the community, as well as the economic vitality and sustainability of the region. Importantly, well used, high quality open spaces such as Victoria Park Lake also contribute to a sense of community belonging, identity and pride which can have positive flow-on impacts on population retention, growth and regional investment.

The review has identified opportunities for Victoria Park Lake to accommodate a new iconic SAM, as well as support further improvements to infrastructure, facilities and functionality to reinforce the reserve as a critical and highly valued open space reserve whilst continuing to protect and enhance natural values, features, amenity and overall appeal.



Introduction

The previous Victoria Park Lake Master Plan was developed in 2008. The Master Plan has successfully guided a number of improvement initiatives that have reinforced Victoria Park Lake as a pivotal open space precinct that supports a range of sport, recreation, leisure, community and tourism opportunities, including major events. The reserve is well used and highly valued by the community.

The majority of recommendations from the previous Master Plan have been implemented, however others require review to assess their ongoing relevance having regard to changing community needs and increasing demand pressures. Two specific examples include:

- growing demand to retain access to a large outdoor grassed space capable of accommodating a range of community events. These activities have traditionally been staged in the north east corner of the park, however a number of proposals outlined in the 2008 Master Plan would reduce the operational viability and flexibility of this site to continue to host large scale events.

- Secondly, the 2008 Master Plan suggested the creation of a service lane and additional car parking along the length of Wyndham Street, however this is a highly visible and highly used area of the reserve. There is concern that any loss of green-space in this area for roads and car parking could have significant unintended negative consequences.

In addition, since the 2008 Master Plan, Council has been presented with outcomes from a feasibility study into the establishment of a new Shepparton Art Museum (SAM) to be located in the park, as well as a report on the Shepparton Caravan Park to guide opportunities for future improvement.

These reports were considered by Council which led to the resolution in February 2015 to “*review and update the Victoria Park Lake Master Plan to incorporate the potential for a new Shepparton Art Museum and visitor/tourist accommodation precinct*”.

Furthermore, in May 2015, Council also resolved to *“accept the findings of the Feasibility Study and Business Case for a new Art Museum in Shepparton and endorse the proposed location at the site selected at the southern end of the Victoria Park Lake”*.

The Shepparton Art Museum is also the intended site of a new Visitor Information Centre. The previous facility was damaged beyond repair by fire in 2013, and is currently operating from a temporary premises.

The identified site is currently occupied by the Shell Service Station and Lakehouse Cafe. Both of these facilities will be removed to accommodate the SAM development.

The vision for the SAM building is to contribute to a strong sense of arrival to inner Shepparton, whilst maximising relationships to the surrounding parkland, including opportunities for interpretive information, cultural expression, public art, community gathering and hospitality (e.g. cafe, visitor information centre). The Business Case recommends the construction of an elevated iconic building, up to five stories high, however with a modest ground floor footprint of around 1260m².

Commitment to the development of a new Shepparton Art Museum and endorsement of the location within Victoria Park Lake has also given

cause to review the previous 2008 Master Plan proposal for a significant function/boat-house facility at the northern end of the Lake. The proposed cafe, function and community event space associated with this proposal will now be accommodated within the SAM facility.

Therefore this project has involved a review and update of the previous Master Plan to:

- Assess the ongoing relevance of any outstanding actions having regard to changing community needs and demand pressures for the precinct;
- Outline opportunities to accommodate the proposed Shepparton Art Museum (SAM) and Visitor Information Centre;
- Support opportunities for future enhancement of the caravan park / tourist accommodation precinct;
- Review earlier proposals for service lane/car parking along Wyndham Street, having regard to the high community use of this zone;
- Review previous proposals for a significant function/cafe/boat-house facility at the northern end of the Lake in light of the SAM and outline recommendations to address the long-term facility needs of existing user groups;
- Consider opportunities to retain capacity for hosting large scale outdoor events within the park; and
- Outline opportunities to increase community use, benefit and amenity of Victoria Park Lake.



Existing conditions

The Victoria Park Lake precinct comprises the lake itself and the land immediately surrounding it, bordered by the railway line to the south, Wyndham Street to the east, Sabraon Street and Tom Collins Drive to the north and the Goulburn River to the west. The precinct is shown in figure 1.

The lake includes a constructed wetland system in the south-eastern corner. This system provides multiple benefits, including cleaning the lake water, providing habitat for wildlife, and providing interesting and attractive views for park visitors.

The majority of the land surrounding the lake is public open space, however also includes:

- land devoted to public recreation facilities (such as Aquamoves, incorporating indoor and outdoor pools and other recreation facilities)

- land leased for commercial activities (including the Victoria Lake Holiday Park caravan park, the Lakehouse Cafe and a service station fronting Wyndham Street).

Key facilities provided within the open space include:

- An all-abilities play space located on the western edge of the lake next to Aquamoves.
- A skate facility (S-cape) located at the north-eastern end of the lake
- Sheds housing clubs, mostly related to water-based sports, at the southern end of the lake.

In addition to these facilities, the lake surrounds also provide a variety of open spaces, from well-maintained lawns, to areas of indigenous vegetation.



Figure 1
Victoria Park Lake - existing conditions

Strategic context

Historical development and use of the site

Victoria Park Lake was established on low-lying land to the south-west of the city centre in the early years of the twentieth century. The development of the lake included the creation of open spaces surrounding the lake for passive recreation uses. The eastern side of the lake was planted with exotic species (including poplars and willows), creating strong contrast to the indigenous riverside vegetation on the western side.

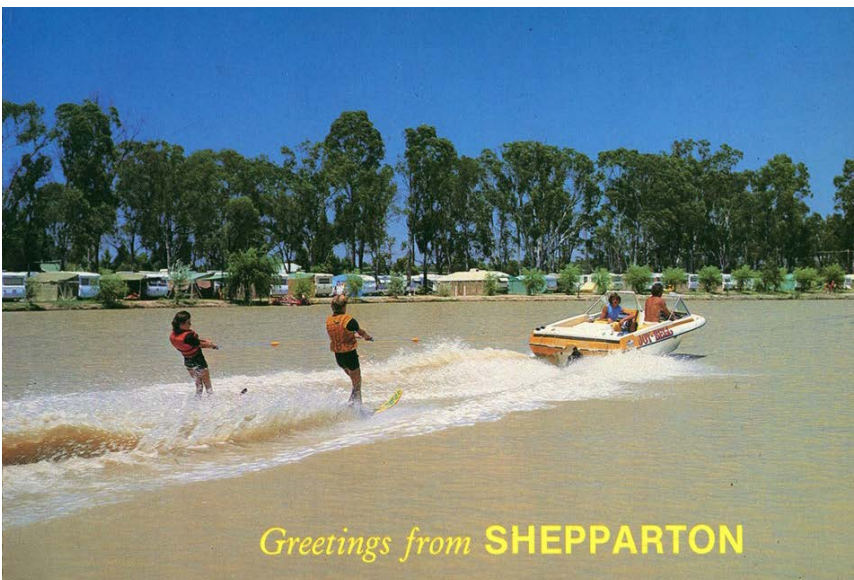
Active recreation facilities were also developed around the lake including bowling and croquet greens and swimming facilities. While the bowling and croquet facilities have since been removed, the swimming facilities have been progressively upgraded. The Olympic-sized Raymond West pool opened in the 1950s, and the indoor Aquamoves facility was opened in 1997.

The development of Aquamoves marked the start of a decade of significant change and investment

for the precinct. The S-cape skate facility opened in the north-eastern part of the precinct in 2001, and the all abilities play space opened on the west side of the lake in 2004.

The lake itself became a focus for motor boats and water skiing that continued into the 1990s. But the use and future of the lake came into focus in around 2007 after a prolonged drought highlighted water quality issues. It is a terminal lake, meaning that it has no natural flow through of water. Combined with a lack of other beneficial natural processes that one might find in a healthy shallow body of water (such as the range of vegetation found in a wetland), the lake was highly susceptible to problems such as algal blooms.

Council resolved to substantially remodel the lake to ensure the long term viability and health of the water body. The lake was designed to include wetlands that the water is circulated through. The changes to the lake were supported by a vision for



Postcards of Victoria Park Lake prior to the lake improvements works, showing motorised water sports and high levels of turbidity.

(source: www.myshepparton.com.au/lost-shepparton.html)

the whole precinct, including a circuit walking path and a series of high-quality open spaces. These were detailed in a master plan document that was adopted by Council in 2008.

Works commenced on the lake improvement works in 2009 and were completed by 2011. The change in the physical lake environment also required a change in focus from motorised to non-motorised water sports.

2008 Master Plan

The 2008 Master Plan outlined thirty (30) main recommendations to guide future development of Victoria Park Lake. An internal review of the Master Plan was undertaken in 2011, resulting in an Issues and Options paper, however this was not intended to replace the earlier Master Plan and was not formally presented to Council.

The 2008 Master Plan has led to a number of important improvements to the Victoria Park Lake precinct including, but not limited to:

- Completion of a 3m-wide shared path system.
- Welsford Street South entry improvements.

- Upgrade to paths and infrastructure in Western Park.
- Lake edge renewal and upgrade where required.
- Development of a recirculating wetland at the southern end.
- Dredging / excavation of the 500m rowing and canoeing course to improve depth consistency.
- Aquamoves car park sealing and upgrade.
- Improvements to Tom Collins Drive, including bollards and defined parking areas.
- Ongoing maintenance of the skate park facilities.
- Development of the lake view boardwalk, including viewing and fishing platform.
- Access improvements to the All Abilities Playground.
- Vegetation management, landscaping and tree planting initiatives.

Key recommendations from 2008 (and 2011 review) that are yet to be implemented are summarised in the following table, along with a comment as to how they are being responded to in this updated Master Plan.



Figure 2
Previous master plan recommendations key
Numbers cross-reference to numbered items in the
table on the following pages)
(Image source: 2008 Master Plan)

2008 Master Plan - key proposals that are yet to be implemented	Internal review of the Master Plan (2011) suggested changes Ref - relates to recommendations in 2011 report.	2016 Master Plan Review - response and directions
1. Wyndham Street Upgrade		
Proposed construction of a parking lane separated from existing through lanes by a tree-lined grass median to the western side of the street. The master plan provides for new bike lanes on both sides of the street, and retention of two traffic lanes in each direction. Safe angle and parallel parking is to be provided along the park edge. This layout is subject to VicRoads approval.	Ref: 24.4.1 Unchanged.	This proposal has been superseded by the need to find an alternative car parking solution providing a greater number of spaces to support the SAM proposal. It is also noted that the proposed parking location shown reduces the amount of usable public open space in a highly-used area.
2. Northern Park Improvement		
This area can be completed as an attractive, flexible open village green space with shelter and picnic facilities along both east and west edges. Open lawns at the centre of the space can provide for events and informal games.	Ref: 24.3.1 Unchanged - noting requirement for minimal earthworks (cut and fill only) to avoid any potential flood implications. Recommended the area incorporate a Sound Shell.	Developments proposed in the previous master plan iterations (play space, floral axis, earthworks and Sound Shell) reduce the size and flexibility of this space. The area currently successfully hosts a wide variety of events that take advantage of the scale of the space. It is proposed that this area be retained as an event space and enhanced for informal family recreation. Provide infrastructure to support event bump-in and out (3-phase power, sewer connection, water, etc). There is limited evidence of demand for a permanent Sound Shell, temporary staging can be provided as required within the event space.
3. Club facilities, cafes and lake edge terraces		
A group of two level buildings is proposed above wide gravel terraces that extend down to the waters edge. The intention is to provide commercial and public facilities which support use and activity within the park. Council will carefully control the development and management of these buildings (with any income helping to offset park maintenance costs). All sporting club training, storage and social facilities should be developed on the western end of this site on a shared-use basis. Buildings developed on this flood free site must be of high quality and architect designed. They should be light and transparent and take full advantage of the northern aspect and views down the lake.	Ref: 24.2.1, 24.8.2 Development of a club facility at the Northern edge was not supported. Recommended a commercial cafe/ function facility be developed and operated by Council.	Support development of a club facility at an alternative location (i.e. Southern end). Do not support development of a commercial facility as this will be accommodated with the SAM building. A grove of trees is proposed in this location instead, imitating the kind of visual mass that was envisioned for the building. This grove complements the floral axis proposed and also forms a shady area able to accommodate picnic tables and activities such as bocce.

Note: Numbered items in the table are shown on a site plan in figure 2.

2008 Master Plan - key proposals that are yet to be implemented	Internal review of the Master Plan (2011) suggested changes Ref - relates to recommendations in 2011 report.	2016 Master Plan Review - response and directions
4. Viewing Peninsula		
This new viewing promontory could be further developed in the future with stairs and an illuminated seating terrace at the centre of the mound.	Ref: 24.8.3 Unchanged	It is questionable what additional use or presentation value would be gained by adding steps and formal seating areas to the mound. Alterations may also reduce the pleasing contrast between this pure geometric form sitting next to natural wetland areas. It is proposed that the mound remain in its current form.
5. Future children's playground		
An elevated new playground to cater for children from toddler age upwards is proposed on the Wyndham/ Sobroan Street intersection to terminate the view axis.	Ref: 24.3.2 Unchanged	The playground is proposed to be moved to be more closely aligned with the skate park and picnic facilities. Moving the playground also maintains the size of the current events area. An alternative element with which to terminate the view axis will be investigated. Moving the playground and reinforcing the Family Precinct, means the existing toilet block can also be retained (and refurbished) to continue to service public amenity.
6. Floral Axis		
This is a linear garden and promenade that will link east and west sides of the park. The existing toilet will be replaced by new facilities close to Wyndham Street and also eventually within commercial development at the end of Welsford Street. Metal pergolas are proposed along sections of this axis to provide for displays of climbing plants and shade. Plants used in these gardens will transition from exotic species at the eastern end to indigenous species at the western end.	Ref: 24.3.2 Unchanged	The idea of the floral axis is maintained at the western end, but has been truncated to avoid impacting upon the large event space. Public toilets to be retained and refurbished.
7. Performance stage		
This stage has been developed to also provide shade in the skate park. Power and AV facilities are partially provided for performance events. They can be expanded in the future following the removal of the public toilet block. Lawn areas require regrading to further expand the spectator area.	Ref: 24.3.4, 24.3.5 Unchanged	The scale and form of the existing stage is unsuitable for large scale performance events. It is instead proposed as a venue for smaller audience located within a new family precinct. It is proposed that larger performances would be undertaken with the use of temporary stage facilities on one of the larger spaces within the precinct. No additional performance or Sound Shell facilities proposed. Toilet block to be retained and Family Precinct reinforced.

2008 Master Plan - key proposals that are yet to be implemented	Internal review of the Master Plan (2011) suggested changes Ref - relates to recommendations in 2011 report.	2016 Master Plan Review - response and directions
8. Lake view axis, boardwalks & new Visitor Information Centre		
The south eastern corner of the site is proposed to be reconfigured to open views to the lake to visitor and residents travelling north along Wyndham Street. Modification of the existing service station, access roads and car parking is suggested to provide a framed view through to the lake. This is emphasised by new paths and tree planting either side of open grassed space. The existing lakeside cafe can be retained and improved. The proposed new information centre would be built outside the current lease boundary and would include new public toilet facilities. Access would extend as a generous boardwalk across the wetland to a fishing jetty that projects into the lake proper.	Ref: 24.5.1, 24.5.2, 24.5.3, 25.4.4, 25.5.5 Unchanged	Significant changes are proposed in this area, triggered by the end of the service station/café lease, SAM development and a review of the caravan park operations.
9. Caravan Park entry modification		
Relocation of the Caravan Park entrance to the west is proposed to provide additional parking capacity around the tourist information, café and service station complex.	Ref: 24.6.2 Unchanged	Significant changes are proposed in this area, triggered by the end of the service station/café lease, SAM development and a review of the caravan park operations.
10. Native Garden		
A native garden is proposed within red gum woodland at the south-western end of the lake. This garden could feature regionally indigenous vegetation. Removal of all sporting club sheds and vehicle access from this section of the park is recommended.	Unchanged, although noting that the report recommends redevelopment of club facilities at the southern end of the lake.	Support development of club facilities at southern end of lake, therefore an alternative location for a native garden closer to SAM will be investigated (e.g. native garden to soften car park impacts and extend the natural values throughout the southern precinct).
11. Wyndham/Hayes Street signalisation		
The possible future signalisation of the Wyndham/Hayes Street intersection is recommended subject to further design investigation and VicRoads approval.	Ref: 24.4.2 Unchanged	Demand for a pedestrian crossing will increase with the SAM development. A safe crossing point will be identified in consultation with Vic Roads.
12. Southern playground & picnic area		
A new playground and picnic area to be developed for shared use by residents of the caravan park and general users.	Ref: 24.6.3 Unchanged	This proposal is superseded by the SAM proposal, which will provide adequate interest within this area of the precinct. A small play space is recommended with the revised Caravan Park / Accommodation Precinct.

2008 Master Plan - key proposals that are yet to be implemented	Internal review of the Master Plan (2011) suggested changes <i>Ref - relates to recommendations in 2011 report.</i>	2016 Master Plan Review - response and directions
Other items		
Council Depot - not mentioned in 2008 Master Plan.	Currently located within the Aquamoves site. Recommended relocation and incorporation into proposed boat club facility at Southern end of the lake.	Relocation of the depot is not supported, however options for complete removal of depot facilities/ activity from the park as part of the Aquamoves Master Plan should be explored by Council. Adequate alternative Council depot facilities exist and it is not essential to operations that this function remain within the park.

Existing Council strategic directions and planning

Ongoing development and enhancement of Victoria Park Lake is consistent with strategic directions and objectives outlined in a range of existing planning documents, including (but not limited to):

- 2013-2017 Council Plan
- 2015 SAM Feasibility Study
- 2015 Victoria Park Lake Caravan Park Feasibility Study
- 2008 Victoria Park Lake Master Plan
- 2011 Victoria Park Lake Master Plan review: Issues and Options Paper (NB: not presented/ endorsed by Council)
- 2012 Greater Shepparton Accommodation Opportunities Study
- 2006 Economic Development Strategy (currently being updated)
- 2011-2014 Tourism and Major Events Strategy (currently being updated)

Previous planning work reinforces Victoria Park Lake as a highly valued and important community open space asset for residents, visitors and tourists. This project therefore builds on the solid foundation and strategic directions outlined in previous planning to provide a revised Master Plan that can guide Council priorities over the next 10 years. In line with existing strategic directions, improvements are aimed at maximising benefits to the local community whilst supporting sustainable economic and environmental outcomes.

Community Benefits

Providing quality public open spaces supports a range of community benefits. Open spaces facilitate increased levels of participation in physical activity, social gathering and active recreation, each of which is strongly aligned to health and wellbeing benefits.

In addition, open spaces contribute to the character and amenity of townships, increase liveability, support environmental outcomes - including biodiversity and natural area protection, enhance ecological corridors and systems, support effective waterway management, contribute to air quality and management of greenhouse gas impacts as well as provide vital habitat areas. Quality open spaces also support economic development opportunities and tourism activity.

These benefits were acknowledged in a recent report (2011) by the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) which identified that public open space contributes to:

- Physical health by providing opportunities for physical activity and children's play in parks, sportsgrounds, playgrounds and along walking and cycling paths;
- Mental health by providing opportunities to undertake informal activities such as relaxing and being in natural environments;
- Social capital and community connections by providing opportunities for group gatherings (such as picnics and barbecues), socialising and meeting new people and integrating new community members in parks, playgrounds and sports venues;
- Stimulated and sustainable economies by providing a venue for a variety of community, tourism and commercial activities, which in turn generate employment;

- Environmentally sustainable urban areas through the protection of nature values in parks, provision of ecosystem services and reduction in the urban heat island effect; and
- Artistic expression and cultural diversity through the provision of venues for community, sporting and cultural events and festivals which contribute to the diversity and liveliness of urban areas.

Community clubs, facilities and infrastructure at Victoria Park Lake also support a range of sport and physical activity participation opportunities. The health benefits of participation in regular physical activity have been well documented and include:

- Reduced incidence of cardiovascular disease, stroke, obesity and other preventable illnesses.
- Increased life expectancy.
- Reduced incidence of bowel cancer and certain other cancers.
- Reduced incidence of stress, anxiety, depression and improved overall mental health.
- Reduced incidence of chronic conditions such as diabetes, arthritis and asthma.

Physical activity participation builds self-esteem and positive self-image, enhances life satisfaction

and perceived quality of life. Evidence also suggests that regular club based participation can assist in reducing destructive behaviour and negative social activity, build understanding between diverse cultures and reduce isolation, loneliness and alienation.

Quality parks and recreation opportunities also provide safe developmental opportunities for children and young people, build social skills and stimulate participation in community life. Recreation facilities are recognised as important physical assets that contribute to providing a social focus and influencing people's perception of their community. Quality facilities facilitate broad community use, events, tourism and contribute to overall economic sustainability of the communities in which they exist.

Therefore ongoing enhancement of facilities at Victoria Park Lake will contribute to physical health, mental health, community connectedness, general wellbeing and economic sustainability. Importantly, well used, high quality open spaces such as Victoria Park Lake also contribute to a sense of community belonging, identity and pride which can have positive flow-on impacts on population retention, growth and regional investment.



Victoria Park Lake provides many opportunities for passive and active recreation.



Design Principles

Overall Principles

The transformation of the Victoria Park Lake precinct in the past decade has been built upon an overarching vision and underlying principles. It is important that these principles are identified and continue to form the basis for decision-making regarding the management of the precinct. The principles identified are as follows.

- **Scenic value**
Victoria Park Lake shall be maintained as a high quality open space and scenic attraction, contributing positively to Shepparton's image and encouraging usage.
- **Recreation & health**
Victoria Park Lake shall be a focus for passive and active recreation, contributing to the physical and mental health of residents and visitors.
- **Water quality**
Victoria Park Lake shall be a water body that uses natural processes to ensure high water quality, providing conditions suitable for both wildlife habitat and compatible recreational use.
- **Education**
Victoria Park Lake shall provide an educational tool to teach people about indigenous flora, fauna, land management and cultural traditions of the original inhabitants.
- **Safety and accessibility**
Victoria Park Lake shall be a safe place that provides access and recreation opportunities for the whole community.
- **Economic vitality**
Victoria Park Lake will provide an asset for the city that encourages high use and economic activity from visitors and locals.

Within this document, the Victoria Park Lake study area has been broken down into functional precincts (as shown in figure 4) to allow detailed discussion of the particular issues associated with particular locations and functions. It is also important to step back and look at the larger scale

issues and spatial relationships that impact upon the precinct as a whole. Figure 3 illustrates the location of the precinct within the broader context, including the close relationship with the city centre, the main access road into the city centre from the south, and the Goulburn River.



Figure 3
Victoria Park Lake Precinct
Context Plan

Precinct by Precinct

The recommendations made in this document regarding the future of the Victoria Park Lake precinct have these broad principles as a starting point. The site also presents a range of issues of varying degrees of complexity that need to be addressed. In some cases, it is appropriate for the recommendations of this document to include design responses. In such cases, the design principles help to describe the logic behind the decisions made.

In some other cases, detailed design responses are not possible due to uncertainties relating to inputs from external parties. Two examples of this are:

- the Shepparton Art Museum (SAM) proposal, where the design for this facility is currently not resolved, and it is undesirable for there to be too many limitations placed upon the design
- the accommodation precinct, which shall be developed and managed by an external party.

In such cases, these principles form the key recommendations of this master plan.

Most recommendations and principles relate to specific areas. The site has therefore been broken down into precincts as identified in figure 4 and listed below (anti-clockwise from the southern edge) to allow each of these to be addressed separately.

- Accommodation precinct
- Wetland
- S.A.M. precinct
- Lake edge
- Family precinct
- Event space
- Northern lake edge
- Aquatic facility
- Western Park & play space
- River edge
- Clubs precinct



Figure 4
Victoria Park Lake -
functional precincts

Accommodation precinct

The accommodation precinct is based around the existing Victoria Lake Holiday Park. Council has recently decided to lease this facility to a new operator. The principles proposed here are intended to provide guidance for the redevelopment expected to occur when the facility falls under new management.

Principle 1.1

Accommodation shall continue to be provided at the southern edge of Victoria Park Lake.

There is a long tradition of caravan and camping accommodation being provided in this location. The provision of accommodation is highly compatible with traditional uses of the precinct and will also complement the SAM development proposal.

Principle 1.2

The area available for accommodation shall remain at the current levels.

As noted elsewhere in this document, locating the SAM facility on the south-eastern edge of the lake creates spatial pressures in the vicinity. This master plan recommends that some of the area currently under the management of the Victoria Lake Holiday Park be used for circulation and parking associated with the SAM development. The extent of this area will need to be determined through the detailed design of the SAM building and surrounds. It is proposed that any land taken from the accommodation precinct in this way be offset by the extension of the accommodation precinct to the south-west, into freehold land abutting the Goulburn River owned by Council. The location of this land is shown in figure 5.

Principle 1.3

Development of the accommodation precinct should reflect the high quality setting.

The development of the SAM, a significant cultural facility and tourism destination, will change the character of the southern part of the Victoria Park Lake precinct. The accommodation precinct can take advantage of this character, and also needs to contribute to it in a positive way.

A caravan park feasibility study noted that a 4-star standard of accommodation would be the most complementary fit for the visitor market segment being targeted by the SAM development.

Principle 1.4

Development of the accommodation precinct should reflect and be sensitive to the natural setting.

The accommodation precinct will require modification and development to create a sustainable business on the site. Any development should be sensitive to the strong visual character created by the natural elements so that it continues to be a desirable location for locals and visitors alike.

Principle 1.5

Development of the accommodation precinct should contribute positively to its public open space setting.

The current Victoria Lake Holiday Park has little fencing, meaning that the boundaries between it and the surrounding public open space are

Potential SAM development impacts upon accommodation precinct (refer to figure 4)

Extent of existing Victoria Lake Holiday Park

Potential extension of accommodation precinct into adjacent land owned by Council (offsetting any loss associated with the SAM development)



Figure 5 Potential extension of accommodation precinct

blurred. This blurring of boundaries is a desirable part of the character of the precinct. This blurring is made possible by the nature of the public open space adjoining the accommodation precinct. The adjoining parcels of public open space have an informal 'woodland' character that are not intensively used in ways that could create conflict with accommodation precinct users. Retaining a woodland buffer between the accommodation precinct and intensively-used public open space should be considered as a way to avoid visually dominant fencing where possible. Where fencing is required, the design needs to be sensitive to the parkland surrounds and the flood-plain setting.

The key issue with the interface between the accommodation precinct and the public open space at the moment is the routing of shared trails in close proximity to the accommodation uses. Within the existing Victoria Lake Holiday Park, recreational vehicles are located very close to the circuit path in one location, and there is the potential for confusion among residents and visitors as to the status of the path in this location (ie. is it a public path, or a part of the commercial accommodation operation?). A circuit path around the lake is a key community recreation asset that needs to remain accessible and public.

Principle 1.6

The accommodation precinct shall retain an entry from Wyndham Street that is sensitive to both the parkland setting and the iconic cultural facility (SAM) in close proximity.

To be viable, the accommodation precinct needs convenient and legible access from Wyndham Street, including for large vehicles (such as cars towing caravans). These access requirements need

to be balanced with a number of factors including:

- sensitivity to the parkland setting.
- sensitivity to the character of the SAM facility. The SAM development is envisioned as an iconic building. The accommodation precinct should not visually compete with it.
- consideration of traffic impacts, given the increased amount of traffic that will be generated in this vicinity by the SAM development.

Wetland

The wetland was developed as a part of the lake reconstruction works. It is an integral part of the water quality treatment system, as well as being an area of habitat for a wide range of fauna.

The birdlife and other wildlife are of great interest to visitors, providing opportunities for integration with the SAM development. The collection of indigenous art held by SAM also provides an opportunity for the gallery experience to extend beyond the walls of the building, and incorporate interpretive trails through the park, highlighting natural history and indigenous culture of the region.

Principle 2.1

The wetland should continue to be managed in a way that provides functional benefits (including water quality treatment and wildlife habitat) and visual benefits.

Principle 2.2

The abundant flora and fauna of the wetland should be recognised as an attraction of interest to visitors and locals, and highlighted (for example through public art) and interpreted accordingly.



Left: An example of an accommodation types that may better meet the demands of the visitor market upon the completion of the SAM development. Elevated cabin options could both offer river views over the levee and address flooding potential.



Right: The existing conditions at Victoria Lake Holiday Park, where recreational vehicles park in close proximity to the public circuit path.

S.A.M. precinct

The Shepparton Art Museum (SAM) development proposal for the south-eastern part of the Victoria Park Lake precinct has been approved by Council. The impacts of this development upon the precinct will be significant. The proposal presents great opportunities to replicate in this vicinity the high quality of presentation and function that characterises much of the rest of the Victoria Park Lake precinct. There are also issues that need to be resolved, particularly relating to potential impacts upon existing natural and recreational assets, and the need to accommodate increased levels of circulation and parking that will be generated by the development.

The business case for the SAM development noted a likely requirement for approximately 150 car parking spaces and 5 bus parking spaces. Figure 5 shows the approximate footprint of this level of provision relative to the building footprint and the site. It should be noted that the figure shows an efficient parking arrangement, however final designs will need to consider turning movements for long vehicles, existing trees and other site conditions.

Due to limitations on the building footprint size dictated by the catchment management authority, the SAM building will largely be located within the site currently housing the service station. The construction of the SAM building therefore should not involve the loss of vegetation or existing public

open space. The car parking and other supporting infrastructure footprint is not restricted by any authority but should be carefully managed to ensure the impact upon surrounding public open space and other land uses is appropriate.

There is a commitment to achieving an iconic building for the SAM facility. It is vital that the associated infrastructure including car parking also works toward this goal and that funding be allocated accordingly.

It is the design of the supporting infrastructure such as car parking that presents the greatest risk to the character and function of the Victoria Park Lake precinct.

Regarding visual presentation and physical access to the building, it is important that the uniqueness of the proposed development site is recognised. The site does not have an obvious front and back for the purposes of presentation and locating main entry points and obscuring loading bays. The most visually sensitive interfaces are arguably those facing away from the main street address (being the western interface with the wetland and lake, and the northern interface with the well-used parkland between Wyndham Street and the lake edge).

Given the sensitivity of these interfaces and the lack of space available elsewhere in reasonable proximity to the SAM site, this master plan recommends that some of the area currently under



Figure 6

A comparison in size between the SAM building footprint, and the area required to accommodate 150 car parking spaces and 5 bus parking spaces.

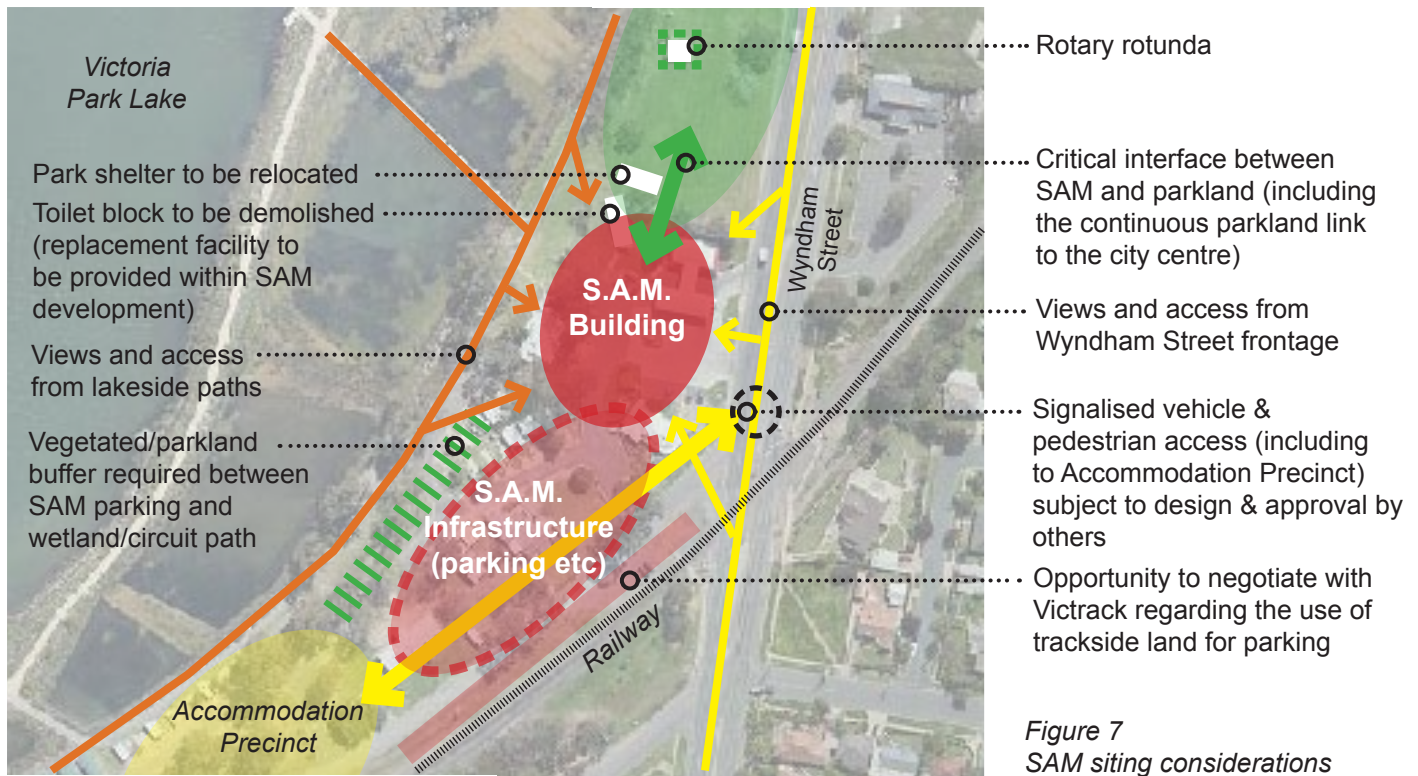


Figure 7
SAM siting considerations

the management of the Victoria Lake Holiday Park be used for circulation and parking associated with the SAM development. The extent of this area will need to be determined through the detailed design of the SAM building and surrounds. It is proposed that any of the accommodation precinct used in this way be offset by the extension of the accommodation precinct to the south-west, into freehold land abutting the Goulburn River owned by Council.

The location of parking to the south of the SAM building provides an opportunity for pedestrians to use the lake edge when walking from their cars to the SAM entrance. This route could be supplemented by a garden, such as the native garden proposed in the 2008 Master Plan in a different location.

The following principles are intended to provide direction for the design and management of the SAM facility.

Principle 3.1

Development of the whole SAM facility (including car parking provision) should reflect the high quality setting.

The SAM development has the potential to considerably raise the presentation value and character of the southern edge of the Victoria Park Lake. The design process for the building includes a design competition, providing confidence that the building will meet this potential. It is vital that design consideration is also given to the integration of supporting infrastructure such as car parking and loading areas.

Principle 3.2

Development of the whole SAM facility (including car parking) should protect the natural setting and contribute positively to it's public open space setting

It is the natural beauty of the southern edge of the lake that contributed to this location being chosen as the site for the SAM development. The natural elements that are the key to this beauty are vulnerable to human impacts if sufficient care is not taken to protect them.

The desired iconic nature of the SAM development means that the building works are likely to seek to contrast against the natural backdrop, rather than blend into it. This contrast will be maximised if the car parking can be integrated into the natural setting.

The aim should be for the existing passive and recreation value of the park to be enhanced, not diminished, by the SAM development.

There are a number of existing elements that should be retained within the vicinity of the SAM development:

- the circuit path located along the lake edge
- the lawn spaces to the north of the SAM development site that forms the southern end of the band of well-used parkland between Wyndham Street and the lake edge.

Opportunity for park spaces around the building to be a part of the day to day functioning of the facility, including visitor break-out spaces and small-scale events.

Opportunity for interpretive trails highlighting the environmental and cultural offerings of the area.

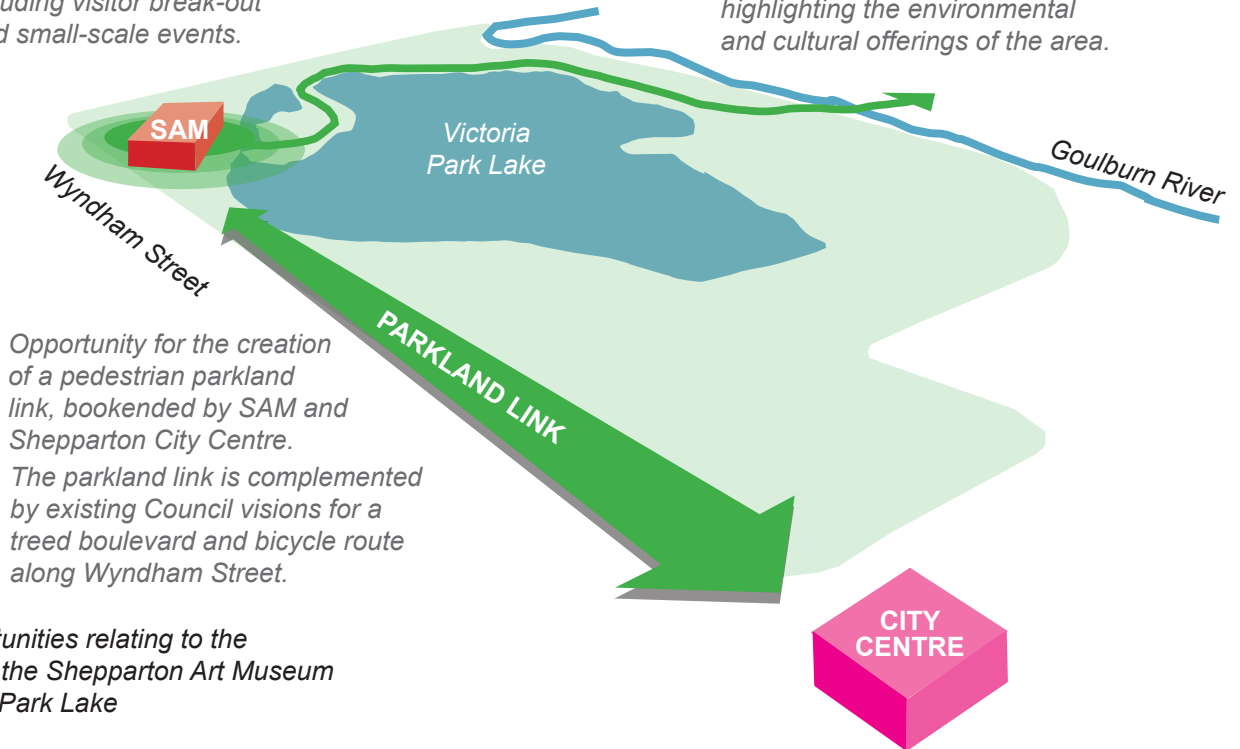


Figure 8
Key opportunities relating to the location of the Shepparton Art Museum at Victoria Park Lake

There are a number of ways that the SAM development can contribute to the quality of the public open space within this vicinity:

- providing improved visual presentation and an iconic attraction.
- providing facilities of value to park users, including public toilets, convenient car parking, a cafe, a Visitor Information Centre, interpretive information and sculptural elements.
- providing a distinctive meeting point or destination for park users.
- 'Bookending' the Victoria Park Lake frontage to Wyndham Street, with the other bookend being the Shepparton City Centre. The parkland between these two activity nodes has the potential to be a key pedestrian route and promenade.
- Creation of a native garden

The public open space also has a lot to offer the SAM development, including:

- providing an attractive setting for an iconic building
- providing park spaces abutting the building that can be used for small-scale events and visitor 'spill-out'.
- providing opportunities for environmental and cultural education and interpretation, such as the opportunities provided by the flora and fauna in the lake and wetland, and along the Goulburn River.

Lake edge

The predominantly grassed area between Wyndham Street and the lake edge is well-used for a variety of passive recreation functions. The 2008 Master Plan included a proposal to reduce the area of public open space by introducing a parking lane separated from existing Wyndham Street through lanes in this area. This proposal has been superseded by the need to find an alternative car parking solution providing a greater number of spaces to support the SAM proposal. While the car parking will need to be in close proximity to the SAM development, it is proposed that this be provided in locations that are currently not well used for active or passive recreation, or currently offer low amenity value.

Principle 4.1

The retention of existing functional public open space should be prioritised over parking provision.

The large lawn area in the north-eastern corner of the Victoria Park Lake precinct is proposed to be retained as a large and flexible space suitable for a wide range of events, as pictured here. (photos supplied by Greater Shepparton City Council)



Family precinct

The family precinct defined by this document is located between the north-eastern edge of the lake and Wyndham Street. The area currently includes the well-used skate facility (S-cape) and some scattered picnic and play facilities. This area has long been a focus for picnics and play activities, however the current facilities provided in this location no longer meet the presentation level achieved elsewhere in the precinct.

It is proposed that these picnic and play facilities be upgraded and co-located with the skate facility to create a family precinct. Upgrades to the play facilities should consider catering for a broad range of age groups and people of all abilities.

Principle 5.1

The Victoria Park Lake precinct should be a family-friendly environment offering a range of recreational facilities for people of all age groups and abilities.

Event space

The area referred to as the event space is a large area of lawn commonly used for a range of civic events. Developments proposed in the previous master plan iterations (play space, floral axis, earthworks and Sound Shell) would reduce the size and flexibility of this space, and have the potential to be located elsewhere. It is therefore proposed that this area be retained and enhanced as an event space. Potential enhancements include providing infrastructure to support events (3-phase power, sewer connection, water, etc).

The large lawn area provides potential for informal passive and active recreation when not being used for formal events.

An existing toilet block currently services this area. It is proposed that this toilet block be refurbished to



service both the event space and the previously-noted family precinct, and provide a hub for event infrastructure (such as power & water connections and a sewer dump point). It is also proposed that grading works be undertaken to the event space to remove remnant levels from previous site uses that restrict the use of some areas of the site.

Principle 6.1

Retain an area within the Victoria Park Lake precinct that is able to host a wide range and scale of events and functions.

Northern lake edge

The northern edge of the lake is currently relatively undeveloped. The 2008 Master Plan proposed the construction of a high-quality multi-purpose facility combining commercial functions with facilities for water-based sport clubs.

Council has since committed to the construction of the SAM development, which includes the kind of commercial facilities proposed for the northern lake edge. Without the commercial component, the quality and scale of building originally proposed for the northern edge of the lake is unlikely to be viable.

This master plan review recommends two alternatives to the previous proposal. The first is that the existing sporting club sheds be combined into a shared facility located in the less prominent location where they currently operate (refer to 'Clubs Precinct' section following for more details).

The second recommendation is that the desired form of the previously proposed building at the northern end of the lake be replicated with a grove of trees. The trees provide a cost-effective way to achieve a visual mass at the northern end of the lake. This proposal is further explained in the following *Design Response* chapter.

Principle 7.1

The northern edge of the lake should have a visual mass to mark it's northern extent, which should also act as a 'hinge' between the different spaces that surround this site.

Principle 7.2

The northern edge of the lake should be an activity node that acts as a destination on the circuit path around the lake, and an urban interface between the parkland and the Shepparton City Centre.

Aquatic facility

The aquatic facility comprises a range of assets, including indoor and outdoor pools. The facility is subject to a separate master planning process.

Western Park & play space

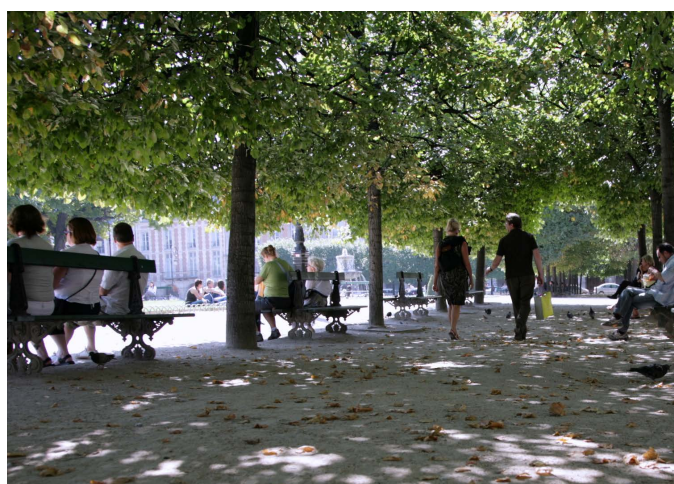
The all abilities play space was opened in 2004, and the mounded viewing peninsula was created as a part of the lake works following the 2008 master plan recommendations. The space immediately to the south of the play space, known as Western Park, has been developed more recently, including the construction of seating and shelters.

While the 2008 master plan suggested that the viewing peninsula could be further developed in the future with stairs and an illuminated seating terrace at the centre of the mound, these works could have the effect of visually cluttering the mound, which is striking because of the purity of it's geometric form. Therefore, there are no significant changes proposed for this area by this document.

River edge

The area defined as the river edge in this document includes the area between Victoria Park Lake and the Goulburn River. This includes Tom Collins Drive, the circuit path around the lake, and the pedestrian bridge over the Goulburn River.

While vehicle access and parking is restricted on the lake side of Tom Collins Drive, there is less formalised parking and restriction of access on the river side. This is partly due to the areas being under different management (Council on the lake side and Parks Victoria on the river side) and the different management approaches of each. While the informal parking on the river edge does not seem to be an issue at present, increased development of the precinct (such as the SAM development and any future redevelopment of the



The building proposed for the northern end of the lake in the 2008 master plan (number 14 in the image of the left), and an example of the kind of tree grove now proposed for this location (right).

aquatic facilities) could increase traffic and parking demands and make the current situation less tenable. The preferred outcome in the longer term is to have both sides of Tom Collins Drive managed by Council, so that management of issues such as parking can be done in an integrated way.

While the wetland at Victoria Park Lake contains many of the indigenous flora and fauna species that define the area, the wetland and lake are human constructions. The Goulburn River is the natural home of these species, and of the indigenous culture associated closely with them. While the river is an important asset, it's deeply incised channel means that it is not particularly visible except when in flood. There is an opportunity for the Victoria Park Lake precinct to more overtly recognise the proximity and importance of the river. The SAM development could be a useful catalyst in creating walking circuits and interpretation that allows residents and visitors to see more of the river and to understand it better.

Principle 8.1

Draw attention to the proximity of the Goulburn River and encourage locals and visitors to experience it's natural and cultural offerings.

Clubs precinct

Recreational use of the lake in ways compatible with its habitat role is strongly supported. There are a number of sporting and recreational clubs who currently base their operations from sheds located at the south end of the lake. The sheds are located close to a beach which provides useful access to the water for many kinds of water craft and for swimmers. As previously noted under the 'northern lake edge' heading, the 2008 master plan proposals for a high-quality shared facility including commercial components at the northern end of the lake are now unviable.

This master plan review instead supports the construction of a shared facility in the same location as the current sheds.

Discussions with the clubs have revealed a willingness to share an appropriately designed facility. Sharing a facility provides a number of key benefits, being:

- pooling the resources of the clubs will allow for a higher quality facility (both in facilities provided and appearance) than the clubs would be able to achieve individually, providing functional benefits to the clubs and aesthetic benefits to the precinct.
- a carefully designed facility will allow safety concerns regarding the unstructured movement of people and vehicles between the existing sheds and the lake edge to be addressed.
- sharing facilities will allow the overall built footprint of the new facility to be less than the combined footprint of the existing separate sheds, thereby returning some open space to the park.

Principle 9.1

Water-based sport clubs should share a facility at Victoria Park Lake.

Principle 9.2

Any development of the clubs precinct should reflect the high quality setting, and protect the natural elements that are the key contributors to this character.

Principle 9.3

Any development of the clubs precinct facility should contribute positively to it's public open space setting.

Club facilities located near the lake edge should be designed in a way to avoid opportunities for conflict between user groups, functions and use of the area.

Providing club facilities also creates a need to manage the water body in a way that makes these recreational uses possible, including weed control and managing water quality.



Non-motorised water sports on the lake provide multiple benefits, including visual interest for visitors and health benefits for participants. These uses of the lake would likely increase if facilities such as boat storage and club facilities were improved.

Design response

The master plan review process has identified five key areas where significant change is proposed, as identified in figure 9. For two of these (the accommodation precinct centred around the existing Victoria Lake Holiday Park and the Shepparton Art Museum precinct to be constructed on the site of the existing service station), it is not appropriate to be providing detailed concepts in this document (although design principles for these

have been outlined in the previous section). The design of the accommodation precinct will be the responsibility of the commercial operator running it, and the SAM development will be subject to a design competition. This section therefore deals with the other three areas of significant change identified: the family precinct, the clubs precinct, and the northern end of the lake.



Areas of proposed significant change with design concepts presented in this section:

1. Family precinct
2. Northern lake edge
3. Clubs precinct

Areas of proposed significant change with design concepts by others, guided by design principles outlined in this document:

4. Accommodation precinct
5. SAM precinct

Figure 9
Proposed areas of significant change

Family precinct

Figure 10 shows the proposed general layout of space to be created. The design concept combines existing and new elements to revitalise the north-eastern corner of Victoria Park Lake.

Existing elements proposed to be retained include:

- the toilet block, which is proposed to be refurbished to better meet current best practice in public toilet design, and as a hub providing additional event space services (such as 3-phase power and a sewer dump point).
- the existing skate park, S-cape.
- the existing stage/shelter integrated with the skate facility. This stage could host small-scale performances, but larger events requiring a stage are proposed to be held in the larger event space nearby using temporary demountable stages suitable to the occasion.
- existing trees.

New elements proposed to be added include:

- play equipment creating a variety of play opportunities catering for children of all ages. This new equipment is intended to replace existing play equipment in the area. The

location of the play spaces is intended to be suitably distant from both the road and the lake edge so that fencing is not required.

- a half court basketball court, diversifying the range of recreation opportunities available for older children, teenagers and adults. The location of the half-court close to the stage provides opportunities for hard paved stage viewing areas.
- new picnic settings, barbecue facilities and shelter structures. These are intended to replace existing scattered facilities existing in the area.

Other compatible activities that do no impact upon event capacity could be considered within this precinct if demand arises, including outdoor table tennis tables and beach volleyball courts.

The proximity of this precinct to the city centre and the availability of public toilet facilities also makes it the logical location for the start of a fitness trail, following the existing trail around the lake. The fitness trail could include distance markers on the path and fitness equipment located at points along the path.

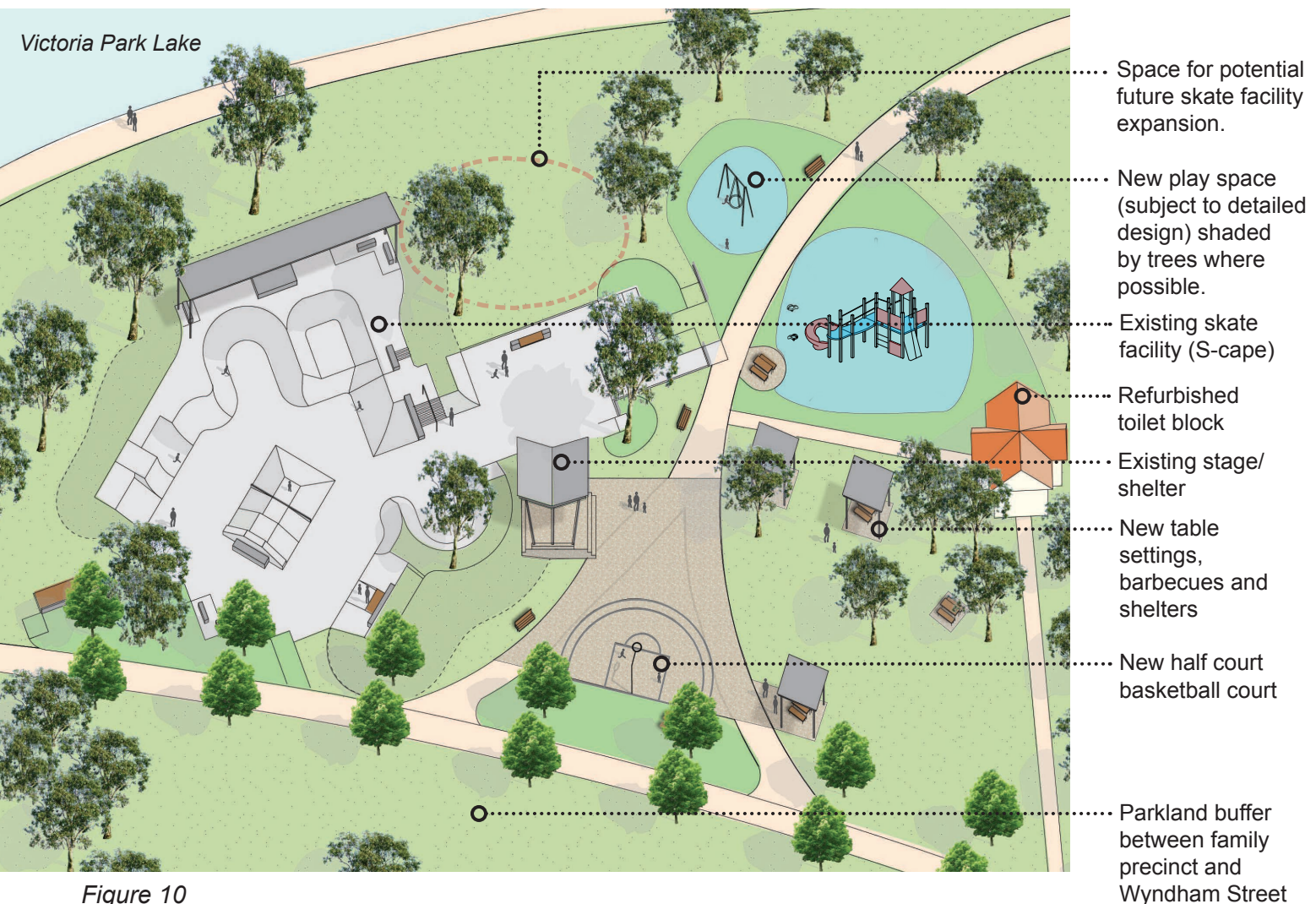


Figure 10
Family precinct - indicative concept

The key benefits of the design proposed are:

- Creating a variety of recreation opportunities for people of all ages, encouraging use of this key open space.
- Creating a high quality play space in a location that is highly visible to residents and visitors. The indicative concept (figure 10) shows the proposed location of a play space, however the design of play experiences offered is subject to further design work. The final design should consider a range of factors including:
 - differentiating this space from available play opportunities located nearby
 - the use of tall or visually striking elements to help draw attention to the presence of play facilities for visitors to the region
 - thematically integrating the play experience with the context (potentially referencing the lake or SAM).
- Encouraging greater usage of existing infrastructure assets. This includes the toilet block, which is currently isolated within the park, but will become more central to an activity zone. Another example is the existing shelter/stage, which will become a focus for more activity.
- Better spatial arrangement of activities, such as replacing existing play facilities close to the busy Wyndham Street with a play space behind a parkland buffer to the road. The indicative concept (figure 10) shows play spaces for children located at least 80 metres away from the road, and separated from the road by activities aimed at older users, such as the half court basketball court and the skate facilities. The play spaces are located in close proximity to the lake, which does introduce an element of risk, however a fully-fenced all-abilities play space is located nearby for parents with concerns about the proximity to the road or lake.



The existing play equipment is proposed to be replaced with a new play space located further away from busy Wyndham Street, and better matching the scale and significance of the Victoria Park Lake Precinct.



The design of the new play space needs to differentiate itself from the play opportunities offered at the nearby all-abilities play space. This existing play space also offers a fully-fenced play alternative for parents concerned about the proximity of the proposed new play space to the road and/or lake.

Northern lake edge

Figure 11 shows the proposed general layout of the space to be created at the northern end of Victoria Park Lake. The design concept proposes the activation of this end of the lake by the creation of an urban plaza defined by a grove of trees.

Existing elements proposed to be retained include:

- the existing car park
- the existing lake edge treatment

New elements proposed to be added include:

- the planting of a grove of trees. This grove is intended to provide an attractive and shady space for people to use, as well as providing a visual mass that defines the edge of the lake.
- urban furniture within the grove area, including seats and table settings that allow the space to be used for a range of informal recreation.
- paved terraces fronting the lake edge, comprising new paving to expand the existing paved area and lake edging. The terraces incorporate the lake circuit path and provide

convenient lake edge access for water sports and other events.

- A garden buffer between the car park and the tree grove. This garden could have the highly ornamental character of the 'floral axis' that was proposed in this location in the 2008 master plan.

The key benefits of the design proposed are:

- the tree grove provides a visual mass that terminates the linear lake axis and view lines up the lake.
- the visual mass of the grove acts screens views and acts as a buffer between different uses that surround this area (such as the car park, event space, and swimming pool)
- the space proposed is urban in nature, creating an appropriate interface with the Shepparton city centre.

The proposal does not include permanent buildings on this site, however the space could accommodate a small cafe or kiosk. The area is well-served by the existing nearby toilets in the family precinct.



Figure 11
Northern lake edge - indicative concept



Shady spaces under the grove of trees could accommodate informal recreation activities such as bocce and petanque.



While no permanent buildings are proposed for this area, it could accommodate a 'coffee cart' or similar commercial enterprise, servicing this area and the nearby family precinct and events space.

Clubs precinct

The clubs precinct located at the southern end of Victoria Park Lake is proposed to remain the home for the sporting clubs currently located there. It is proposed that the existing club sheds be replaced by a shared facility that is designed to provide presentation, functional and safety improvements compared to the current situation. Figure 12 shows the general layout of space proposed to be created.

Existing elements proposed to be retained include:

- existing trees
- existing beach

New elements proposed to be added include:

- a new shared club facility, replacing the existing sheds. The new facility would incorporate storage facilities as well as meeting and social spaces. The facility is also proposed to include decks providing water access.
- Tom Collins Drive is proposed to be terminated at this point with a turning circle able to accommodate bus turning movements and providing opportunities for bus drop-offs. The use of Tom Collins Drive as a part of a road circuit for cycling events is addressed under circulation issues later in this section.



The new club house and boat shed facility is proposed to have higher presentation than the existing sheds, but needs to be robust and functional.

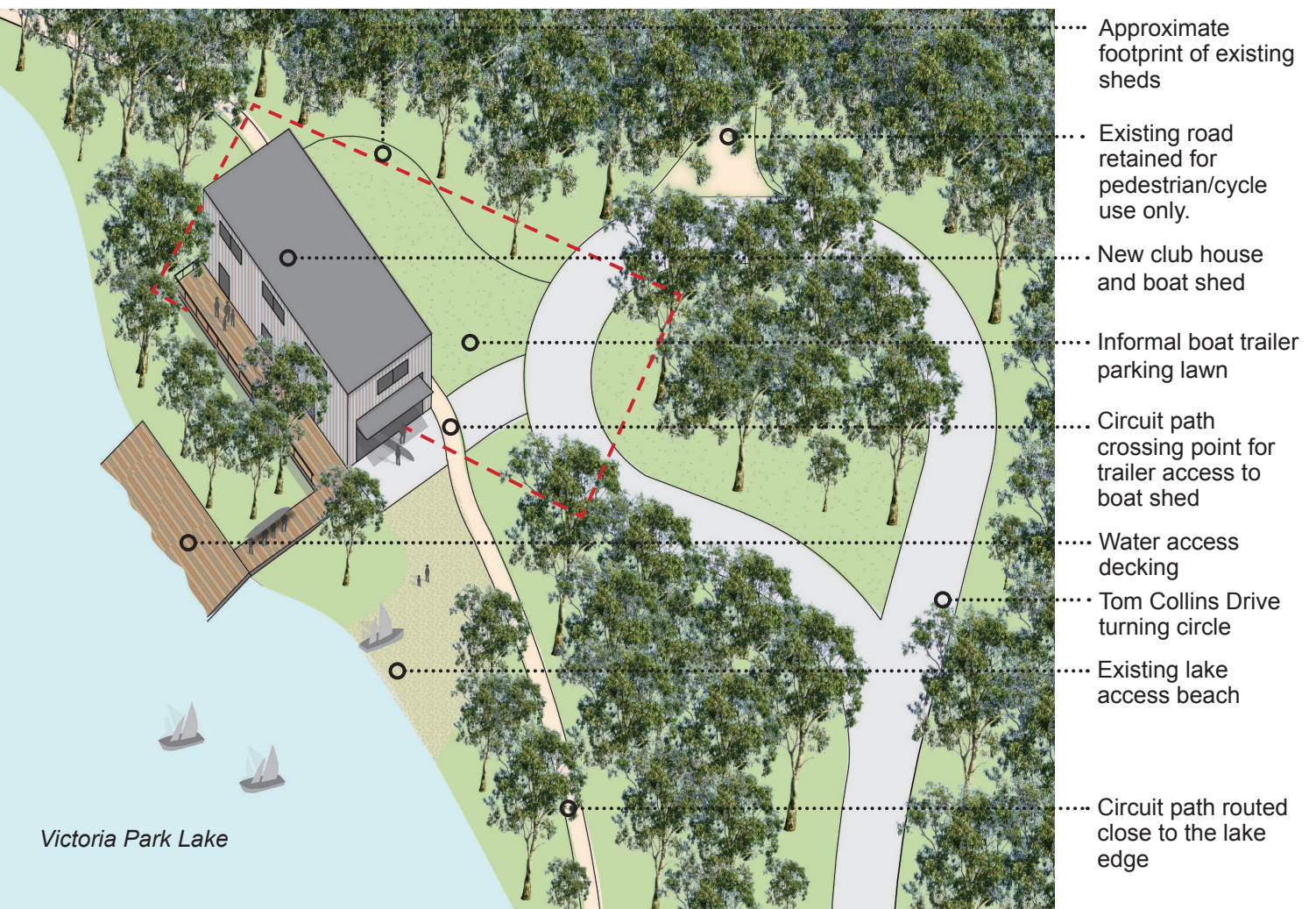


Figure 12
Clubs precinct - indicative concept

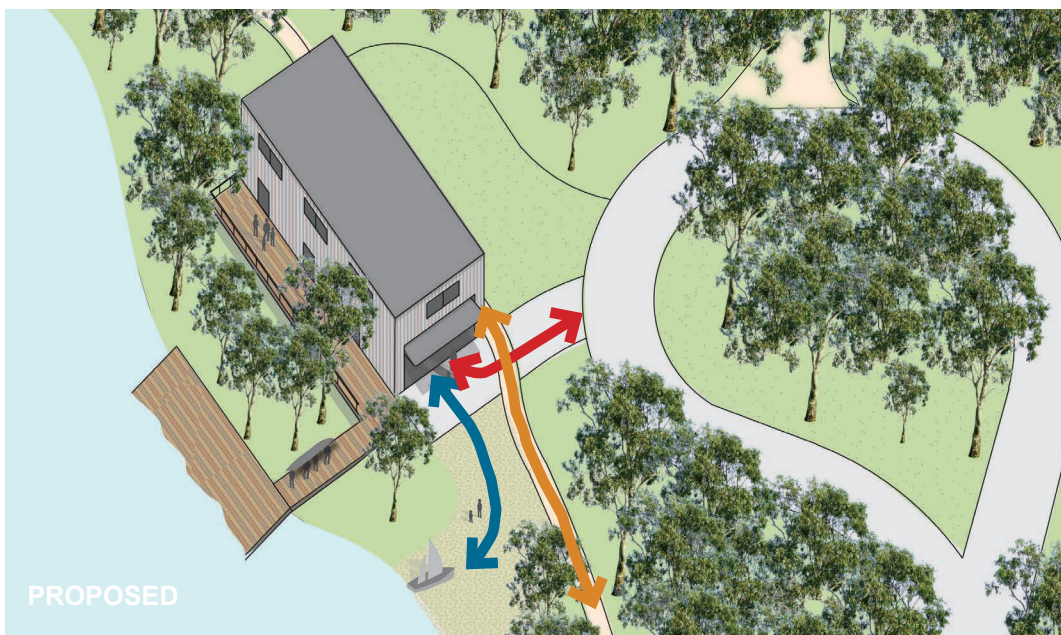


Figure 13

A comparison of existing and proposed circulation patterns in the club precinct, including the interaction between:

- pedestrians using the circuit path (orange)
- vehicles accessing the boat sheds (red)
- boats moving between the boat sheds and the water (blue)

- the circuit path around the lake is proposed to be formally routed close to the lake edge, with a defined single crossing point for trailers accessing the club facility. An informal path currently exists in front of the sheds, creating some conflict with the clubs use of the area (as shown in figure 13).

Car parking for users of this precinct will be considered during the detailed planning and design of this space.

The key benefits of the design proposed are:

- improved presentation of the area, which currently comprises multiple sheds with low presentation value.

- improved facilities (including change rooms, meeting room and social space) for the clubs using this site, on a shared basis.
- formalisation of the circuit path along a desirable route close to the water edge, designed to minimise conflict with clubs use of the site.
- improved safety for all users, based upon the formalisation of the spaces and the creation of a single clear crossing point for pedestrians using the circuit path and vehicles accessing the boat shed (refer to figure 13).
- improved site access for groups using the facilities, including a bus drop off and turning circle.

River connections

The Goulburn River is an important part of the Victoria Park Lake precinct, but the deeply incised river channel means that the river itself is not visually prominent or easily accessed. The desire to have the river visually and physically accessible needs to be weighed against the high potential for flood damage to access infrastructure and public safety concerns.

This review proposes two approaches:

- Viewing points located at the top of the river embankment off Tom Collins Drive, creating locations to view the river and for interpretation

about a range of issues including indigenous culture, flora and fauna, and river health.

- A pathway to the river edge, allowing access to the water edge for a range of activities including small unmotorised water-craft launching. The location proposed is at the bend in the river in the south-western corner of the Victoria Park Lake precinct. This location is proposed due to the less steep river bank in this vicinity, and the views along the river afforded by this location.

The proposed locations of these elements are shown in figure 14. These proposals are subject to approval by Parks Victoria, the manager of the land on which this infrastructure would be located.

Proposed river viewing point
This location provides convenient access from the nearby facilities (Aquamoves, car parking, all-abilities play space) and the city centre.

Pedestrian bridge
(existing river viewing point)

Proposed river viewing point. This location provides convenient access from the lake circuit path, the Clubs Precinct and the Accommodation Precinct.

Proposed river access point, including a path to the river edge for river viewing and water-craft launching.



Figure 14
River connections

Circulation issues

In addition to the precinct-specific issues addressed above, there are a number of broader circulation issues that have been identified. These are described below and illustrated in figure 15.

- *Large vehicle turning movements*

The Victoria Park Lake Precinct attracts many different visitors, including school groups and other visitors who arrive in buses. There are a number of locations where narrow road space makes bus access and turning difficult. The area near the Clubs Precinct has been identified and addressed in the recommendations for this precinct. Another area of concern is the entry to Tom Collins Drive from Welsford and Sobraon Streets. The lack of alternative routes to Tom Collins Drive means that this location is likely to require road modifications to address this issue. The design of any modifications must be sensitive to the parkland setting and existing uses.

- *Wyndham Street vehicle parking*

One of the reasons that the 2008 master plan suggested the installation of a service road to access parking from Wyndham Street was to address a lack of car parking in this vicinity and the difficulty in accessing the available car parking spaces on this busy road. In the southern part of the precinct, the on-street parking on Wyndham Street is indented. This indentation provides some maneuvering space. This is not the case north of Hayes Street (in the location identified in figure 14), making access to parking spaces more difficult. The installation of a service lane as proposed by the 2008 master plan is not supported by this review, partly due to the reduction in public open space that this would entail. Modifications to improve parking access in the northern part of Wyndham Street would also impact upon open space provision and is not supported. The design of the northern part of Wyndham Street should instead be examined in a strategic way, incorporating consideration of other potential enhancement works such as the addition of bicycle infrastructure and additional boulevard trees. Such enhancement works would require additional space and could require the removal of the relatively small number of parking spaces along the park frontage north of Hayes Street. Increases in car parking have been proposed away from this key park frontage, including at the southern end of the lake as a part of the SAM development, at the end of Welsford Street, and in the vicinity of Aquamoves.

- *Aquamoves car parking*

Works have recently been undertaken to formalise car parking in the vicinity of the Aquamoves facility. The master plan for this facility to be undertaken separately should consider future car parking needs and the options available to increase car parking provision if necessary.

- *Criterium circuit*

A number of roads around the Victoria Park Lake Precinct are currently used to form a criterium circuit for cycling events. The circuit currently comprises the use of Wyndham Street to the east, Tom Collins Drive to the west, Fitzjohn Street to the south, and Sobraon and Welsford Streets to the north. This review supports the continued use of the precinct for active recreation and the sporting clubs who use this circuit are keen for this circuit to remain in place. However, there are a number of challenges that will need to be addressed in the medium to long term to enable the circuit to continue to be used.

- The SAM development will make vehicle traffic movements more numerous and complex in the south-eastern corner of the precinct. This facility is intended to be of great cultural and tourism importance to the region, which will make the negotiation of road closures more difficult.
- The proposed redevelopment of the accommodation precinct, which is expected to increase usage of this facility compared to current levels, creating greater potential for conflict between these uses.
- The proposed works in the 'Clubs Precinct' recommended by this review, which includes the construction of a turning circle on Tom Collins Drive.
- Development of the Aquamoves facility over time is likely to involve increased patronage during the periods that cycling events would normally occur (ie. weekend mornings).

The combination of these factors makes the regular use of the existing criterium circuit around the Victoria Park Lake Precinct more difficult in the longer term, particularly for regular small-scale events. Potential alternatives should be explored that minimise conflicts with other precinct uses and reduce traffic management requirements.

One alternative is to use a circuit of reduced size within the Victoria Park Lake Precinct that avoids the key conflict areas identified (eg. concentrated around Tom Collins Drive).

The opportunity may exist to supplement this shorter circuit by the construction of a new surfaced loop on land owned by Council to the west of the Accommodation Precinct (shown indicatively in Figure 14). The design of this loop will need to consider cost (which will increase for a longer circuit), the extent of suitable land available, and compatibility with any proposed use of this land to extend the Accommodation Precinct (proposed elsewhere

in this Master Plan). Depending upon its length, a constructed loop could be a stand-alone circuit, or could be linked to Tom Collins Drive (eg. with turn-around point located just south of Aquamoves, therefore maintaining convenient access to this facility during events).

Another alternative is finding a circuit elsewhere in a location where traffic management requirements and the kinds of usage conflicts identified here are minimised.

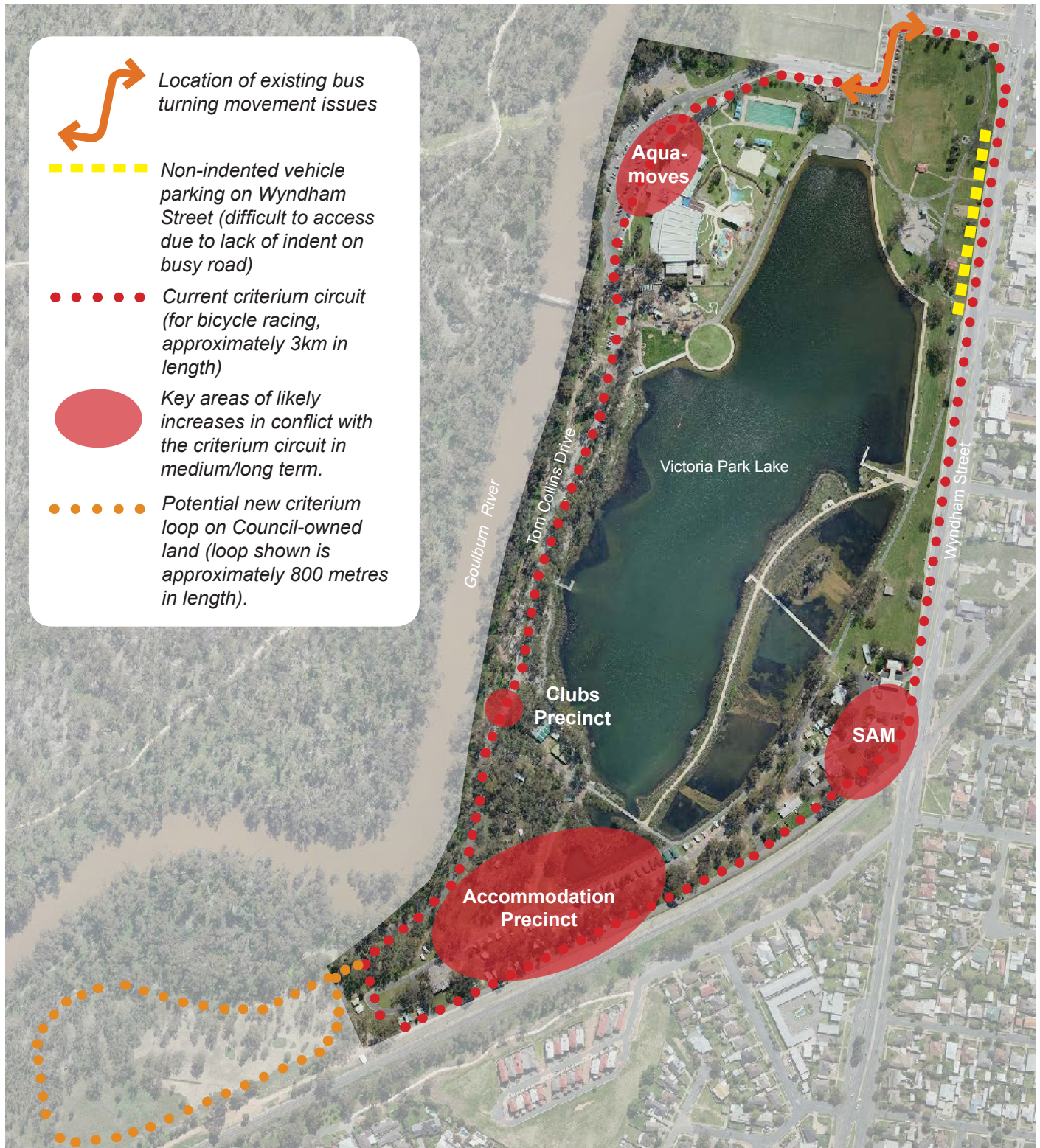


Figure 15
Victoria Park Lake Precinct Circulation issues

Implementation plan

The recommendations made in this document are collated here in a way that allows their implementation to be planned and monitored. To do this, this section itemises the various actions required and identifies:

- relative prioritisation
- resources required
- responsibilities
- and any approvals or prerequisite works required.

The prioritisation of the different actions is based upon the assessment of each against the following criteria:

- *Safety and risk considerations* - where issues have been identified that present a risk to health or safety, these items have been given a high priority.
- *Amenity impact* - actions with greater positive impacts upon functional and visual amenity will be prioritised higher.
- *Ease of implementation* - actions that can be easily and cost-effectively undertaken (the 'low-hanging fruit') may be prioritised in order to quickly progress the recommendations.

Individual projects will need to be considered as part of Councils annual financial planning and capital works budget process. Ultimately funding and timing of implementation will be subject to Councils financial capacity, competing demands, partnership opportunities and availability of external grants.

The implementation framework is not intended to represent the level of importance of individual actions rather, the framework is intended to provide Council and stakeholders with a guide to assist staged implementation of all recommendations in an order which is likely to provide maximum benefit to the community within realistic operational parameters.

Furthermore, certain actions may need to be implemented in a sequential order to maximise economic efficiencies, logical construction staging and minimise possible negative impacts on reserve usability / disturbance. These factors have been considered in determining the recommended order of implementation.

The prioritisation categories and approximate target timeframes used are outlined below:

- High priority – target implementation within 2-3 years (i.e. 2016-2019).
- Medium priority – implementation within 4-6 years (i.e. 2020-2022).
- Low priority – implementation within 7+ years (i.e. 2023-2026+).
- Ongoing – relate to recommendations that should be addressed as part of ongoing operations.

Indicative costs provided here are for planning purposes only, based upon a low level of design resolution.

Many of the projects listed in this Implementation Plan will require approvals during the detailed design phase. This potentially includes approvals for:

- Native vegetation removal
- Planning approval for buildings and signs
- Building approval for buildings and other structures
- Approval from the Catchment Management Authority for building works or earthworks.

This document is a master plan review that has been prepared after engagement with some key stakeholders in relation to specific issues, but has not included broader community engagement and review. While many of the recommendations here mirror recommendations of the previous master plan that were consulted upon, new recommendations should include a community engagement process as a part of the design process.

This plan should be reviewed annually by Council staff in order to identify key projects for consideration in Councils annual budget process, with a more formal review occurring every five years in consultation with key stakeholders to ensure outstanding actions remain relevant and appropriate.

Projects	Notes	Priority	Indicative cost	Responsibility	Approvals/ Prerequisite works required
Precinct: Family Precinct					
Family precinct design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed design and documentation of family precinct, including integration of new and existing elements. Additional details relating to individual elements included below. Design to allow for staged implementation of the individual elements. 	High	\$40,000	GSCC, potentially working with consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community engagement
Existing toilet block refurbishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substantial refurbishment of the toilet block to meet contemporary standards and provide a safe and attractive facility. Modifications to allow the toilet block to be used as a services hub for events, including 3-phase power and a sewer dump point. 	High	\$150,000	GSCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family precinct design
New play space installation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of a range of play opportunities suitable for a wide range of age groups. Including tall/visible elements to advertise the facilities to passers-by. Play space design to include access paths, play surfacing, planting and structures to provide shade. 	High	\$150,000	GSCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family precinct design Removal of existing play equipment along Wyndham Street
Half court basketball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of a half court basketball facility. 	High	\$50,000	GSCC	
Furniture and shelters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of seating, table settings, barbecues and shelters. 	High	\$100,000	GSCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family precinct design Removal of existing nearby table settings and shelter.
Fitness trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signage to identify the start point of the fitness trail at the family precinct Installation of distance markers on the path around the lake Installation of fitness equipment at appropriate locations adjacent the path around the lake 	Medium	\$50,000	GSCC	

<i>Projects</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Indicative cost</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Approvals/ Prerequisite works required</i>
Precinct: Northern Lake Edge					
Northern lake edge design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed design and documentation of northern lake edge. Additional details relating to individual elements included below. Design to allow for staged implementation of the individual elements. 	Medium	\$20,000	GSCC, potentially working with consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community engagement
Lake edge paved terraces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of paved terraces to water edge (including retention of existing lake edging and existing paving). 	Medium	\$50,000	GSCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern lake edge design
Tree grove planting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of grove of trees (species to be selected as a part of the design of the space). Tree grove installation to include installation of a trafficable paving surface beneath. 	Medium	\$50,000	GSCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern lake edge design
Furniture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of seating and table settings beneath the tree canopy and on the lake edge terraces. 	Medium	\$50,000	GSCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern lake edge design
Garden bed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of an ornamental garden bed separating the tree grove and the car park. 	Medium	\$20,000		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern lake edge design

Projects	Notes	Priority	Indicative cost	Responsibility	Approvals/ Prerequisite works required
Precinct: Clubs precinct					
Clubs precinct design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed design and documentation of the clubs precinct. Additional details relating to individual elements included below. Design to allow for staged implementation of the individual elements. 	High	\$50,000	GSCC, working with consultants (including an architect for the club house/ boat shed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Club and community engagement
Replacement of existing sheds with new combined club house/boat shed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of existing sheds. Construction of new club house and boat shed facility, including water access decking. 	Medium	\$800,000	GSCC/ State Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clubs precinct design Organisation of temporary storage/ meeting facilities for clubs CMA approval for building Planning approval for building
Tom Collins Drive modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of a turning circle to existing road 	Medium	\$100,000	GSCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clubs precinct design Engineering design of road Parks Victoria approval (land manager of river corridor)
Path modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of circuit path through the precinct, including a defined boat shed access vehicle access crossing point. 	Medium	\$50,000	GSCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clubs precinct design

Projects	Notes	Priority	Indicative cost	Responsibility	Approvals/ Prerequisite works required
Precinct: Accommodation precinct					
Redevelopment/ upgrade of existing Victoria Lake Holiday Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade of accommodation options Including consideration of access arrangements and shared Wyndham Street frontage with the SAM development Consideration of site boundary modifications to allow for SAM visitor parking. 	High	To be determined by operator	New facility manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement of site boundaries, site access, and interfaces with SAM and public open space with GSCC.
Precinct: Wetland					
Interpretation & sculpture relating to flora, fauna and indigenous culture.		Medium	\$50,000	GSCC (with input from SAM regarding coordination with exhibits/ programs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with indigenous community
Precinct: Shepparton Art Museum (SAM) precinct					
SAM precinct design & delivery (outside the scope of this project)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design of the SAM precinct, including building, access and parking provision. 	High	(\$34.5M - outside the scope of this project)	SAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vicroads agreement regarding site access. Car parking location agreement (potentially requiring caravan park boundary alterations).
Interpretive trails (nature/indigenous culture focus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design & installation of interpretive trails that complement the programs and exhibits at the SAM facility. 	Medium	\$50,000	GSCC & SAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with indigenous community
Native garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Native garden (as proposed in 2008 master plan) relocated to be near SAM development. Potentially including sculptural elements. Opportunity for the garden to be a part of the SAM entry experience, with people passing through it on their journey from the car park. 	Low	\$30,000	GSCC & SAM	-
Wyndham Street pedestrian crossing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crossing location to be determined in consultation with VicRoads. Potentially incorporated into signalised SAM vehicle entry, or at Hayes Street as recommended in the 2008 master plan. 	High	unknown	Vicroads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement with Vicroads on crossing location.

<i>Projects</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Indicative cost</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Approvals/ Prerequisite works required</i>
<i>Precinct: Lake edge</i>					
Reinforcement of pedestrian parkland link between SAM and the Shepparton City Centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for consistent design treatment to emphasise link, including signage, furniture, sculptural elements, etc. 	Low	\$30,000	GSCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil
<i>Precinct: Event space</i>					
Toilet refurbishment allowed for in Family Precinct works.					
Allowance for grading/levelling to increase usability of space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of awkward levels that are remnants of previous uses on the site. 	Medium	\$15,000	GSCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CMA approval
Improved lighting to event space		Medium	\$30,000	GSCC	
Allowance for event infrastructure, including sewer dump point (integrated with toilet facility), 3-phase power supply, and water connection.		High	\$20,000	GSCC	
<i>Precinct: Aquatic facility</i>					
Aquatic facility alterations to be in accordance with separate strategy outside the scope of this project.					
<i>Precinct: Western Park & play space</i>					
No actions proposed					
<i>Precinct: River edge</i>					
Interpretive river trail (refer to allowance under SAM Precinct for interpretive trails)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement of pedestrian links between the lake and the river Interpretation & sculpture relating to flora, fauna and indigenous culture. 	Medium	Refer to allowance under SAM Precinct for interpretive trails.	GSCC (with input from SAM regarding coordination with exhibits/ programs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with indigenous community
River connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of river viewing nodes Construction of river edge access path 	Low	\$50,000	GSCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parks Victoria (as manager of riverside land)

<i>Projects</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Indicative cost</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Approvals/ Prerequisite works required</i>
Circulation					
Road modifications at Welsford Street to address bus turning movement issues.		Medium	\$200,000	GSCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires detailed engineering design
Criterion circuit extension loop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of a road loop to allow bicycle racing/training within the precinct while minimising the increasing conflict with other uses. 	Medium	\$100,000*	GSCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison with cycle/ triathlon clubs regarding requirements Liaison with Accommodation Precinct operator.

* cost subject to detailed design, including length, existing ground conditions, surface type and width, etc.

Indicative costs summary table

<i>Precinct</i>	<i>Indicative costs</i>			<i>Precinct subtotals</i>
	<i>High priority actions</i>	<i>Medium priority actions</i>	<i>Low priority actions</i>	
Accommodation precinct.	-	-	-	-
Wetland	-	\$50,000	-	\$50,000
Shepparton Art Museum (SAM) Precinct	(\$34.5M - outside the scope of this project)	\$50,000	\$30,000	\$80,000
Lake edge	-	-	\$30,000	\$30,000
Family precinct	\$490,000	\$50,000	-	\$540,000
Event space	\$20,000	\$45,000	-	\$65,000
Northern lake edge	-	\$190,000	-	\$190,000
Aquatic facility	-	-	-	-
Western Park & play space	-	-	-	-
River edge	-	-	\$50,000	\$50,000
Clubs precinct	\$50,000	\$950,000	-	\$1,000,000
Circulation		\$300,000		\$300,000
Subtotals by priority	\$560,000	\$1,635,000	\$110,000	\$2,305,000

