

Riverside Sport and Recreation Precinct Plan Ascot Vale



November 2022



City of
Moonee Valley

Acknowledgment of Country

Moonee Valley City Council respectfully acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land - the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation, their spirits, ancestors, elders and community members past and present.

Council also extends this respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who call Moonee Valley home.

Preface

In October 2022, the Riverside Sport and Recreation Precinct was inundated by flood water from the Maribyrnong River during an extreme weather event. The flooding caused water damage to many of the older and low-lying facilities contained within the precinct including the netball and tennis courts, golf driving range, golf course, mini-golf course, bluestone pavilion, playground and public toilets. Fortunately due to more recent flood-responsive design, only the lower storage areas of the Fairbairn Park (middle) Pavilion were impacted.

Flood events have also been recorded at this precinct in 1906, 1974 and 1993. Council acknowledges the significant impact that flood events have had on the users of the precinct and the surrounding community. As a result of climate change, Council also acknowledges that these flood events are likely to be more frequent and intends to ensure the precinct is more resilient in future.

The Riverside Sport and Recreation Precinct Plan was adopted by Council in the month immediately following the 2022 flood event. A key guiding principle of the Precinct Plan is 'Green and Climate Resilient' which is intended to influence a more climate-adaptive future precinct. All future precinct proposals will be assessed against this principle, including the design and type of infrastructure. Together with key partners including Melbourne Water, Council will also continue to look for more effective ways to increase resilience to inundation including incorporating water sensitive urban design within the precinct.



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Version 5

Date: November 2022

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Glossary of Abbreviations

MVCC	Moonee Valley City Council
The OCD	The Office for Collective Design
SBP	SBP Advisory
OCM	Ogilvy Cocking Mead Golf Architects

1 Introduction

1.01 Riverside Sport and Recreation Precinct Overview

The Riverside Sport and Recreation Precinct is a multi-use sporting, recreation, leisure and open space precinct located within the suburb of Ascot Vale. It sits in a picturesque location within the Maribyrnong River corridor and adjacent to Fairbairn Park.

The precinct currently includes the following facilities, which are open to the public.

- 9-hole golf course
- Driving range
- Mini golf
- Tennis courts
- Netball courts
- High-ropes challenge course
- Golf pro shop
- Golf maintenance facility
- Café, restaurant and function venue
- Walking/cycling trails
- Play space (Fairbairn Park)
- Community buildings
- Public toilets
- Informal recreation zones

The City of Moonee Valley engaged SBP Advisory, The OCD and OCM in 2021 to develop an updated Riverside Sport and Recreation Precinct Plan ('Precinct Plan') for the precinct.

The Precinct Plan will establish parameters for the future development of the precinct and guide Council through its decision making over a 10-15 year period. Future investment in the precinct will need to align with the vision and principles but there is flexibility regarding the design outcome.

1.02 Purpose of the Precinct Plan

The Precinct Plan has been developed with significant research, analysis, consultation and collaboration with key stakeholders. The main user groups of the precinct include:

- Essendon District Netball Association
- St John's Netball Club
- Ascot Vale Tennis Club
- Riverside Essendon Golf Club
- Essendon 9-Hole Golf Club
- Victoria Police
- PGT Programs
- Netball Victoria
- Golf Australia
- Tennis Victoria



The Precinct Plan has been developed to address the key issues and opportunities for the precinct that have emerged through the project. These include:

- Addressing the safety issues associated with the errant balls from the golf course and driving range.
- Enhancing and strengthening the precinct's environmental amenity and sustainability.
- Addressing the ageing building structures and assets within the precinct such as the golf pavilion, maintenance shed and tennis clubhouse.
- Improving connectivity and way-finding across the precinct.
- Providing enhanced passive open space and leisure opportunities for the whole community to enjoy.
- Investigating the co-location and consolidation of complementary amenities - such as a cafe, public toilets and community play space.

The Precinct Plan has been developed to ensure there is an agreed vision for the precinct which supports the realisation of its full potential, while protecting what is important to the community.

The Precinct Plan seeks to improve the safety and functionality of the multiple sporting and recreation uses existing at the precinct, while also improving the community access and environmental protection of the precinct. The plan will be used to guide Council decision making and ensure future operations and capital investment is done in the context of clear principles and objectives.

The realisation of the full suite of precinct improvement opportunities identified in the draft plan would require significant capital works investment over the 15-year life of the plan. The feasibility and prioritisation of these options will be worked on over time with relevant precinct partners.

1 Introduction

1.03 Development of the Precinct Plan

The key stages and deliverables for the project are outlined below.

Stage 1: Project Establishment

- Review previously completed studies and material relevant to the study area, including master plans, precinct maps and other associated documents.
- Review existing precinct conditions and consider various components to be included in the Precinct Plan.
- Review relevant Local, State and Federal Government policies, strategies and other relevant material.

Stage 2: Consultation and Engagement

Consultation with the local community and key stakeholders including:

- Survey with the local community to understand local needs and seek feedback on the main issues and opportunities identified.
- Direct letter to property owners/occupiers around the precinct.
- In-depth interviews with key stakeholders and user groups.

Stage 3: Issues and Opportunities Analysis

- Review consultation and summarise key themes.
- Analyse short-listed options for financial and non-financial impacts including the indicative costs of required works to bring the assets to the agreed service level.
- Establish synergies and identify facility developments that can accommodate multiple user groups and needs.
- Prepare options for how the proposed facilities can be shared amongst users.
- Meet with Council and external Stakeholders to present information.

Stage 4: Draft Precinct Plan and Engagement

- Develop the draft Precinct Plan for Council endorsement and community consultation.
- 4.5 week community consultation period seeking feedback on the draft Precinct Plan, including in-person drop-in sessions and online engagement activities.

Stage 5: Final Precinct Plan Report

- Update the Precinct Plan based on the feedback received through the community consultation period.
- Provide the final Precinct Plan to MVCC for adoption.



2 Background and Context

2.01 Planning Policy and Context

This Precinct Plan has been developed with consideration of the broader planning context, including the following strategic documents, which have been reviewed by SBP and The OCD:

- MV2040 Strategy
- Sports Development Plan 2014-23
- Riverside Golf and Tennis Centre Master Plan (2015)
- Driving Range Realignment Concept Plan and QS Report
- Integrated Water Supply Plan - Walter St Reserve, Fairbairn Park and Riverside Golf Course
- Riverside Golf Clubhouse Engineer Report
- Riverside Golf Driving Range Interim Dispersal Study
- Riverside Golf Course Safety Audit
- Fairbairn Park Master Plan
- Victorian Government DTPLI – Creating Livable Spaces
- Active Victoria Strategy 2017 – 2021
- Planning for Golf in Victoria Strategy
- VicHealth – Physical Activity Strategy 2019-2023
- Sport Australia – Sport 2030
- KPMG – Value of Community Sport Infrastructure in Victoria 2020
- HSBC – Golf’s 2020 Vision Report 2012
- Golf Australia – Vision 2025
- Golf Australia/PGA Australia – Golf Inclusion Research Project 2018
- Australian Golf Industry Council – Golf Benefits to the Environment 2020
- England Golf – Customer Focused Facility Guidance

2 Background and Context

2.02 Precinct History

The Wurundjeri people are the traditional owners of the land on which the Riverside Sport and Recreation Precinct is situated, and have inhabited the area for at least 40,000 years.

There is evidence of human habitation in the area over 15,000 years ago, however the first Europeans to explore along the river were Charles Grimes (1803) and John Batman.

As Melbourne developed into a large city, areas such as the Riverside Sport and Recreation Precinct and Fairbairn Park were used for sheep grazing. The Maribyrnong River, Moonee Ponds Creek and Steele Creek were also important resources for fishing, transport and food.

The following timeline gives a high-level overview of the precinct, post European settlement.

- 1906 – The largest flood on record in the Maribyrnong River occurred.
- 1910 – Essendon City Council proposed to erect shelter sheds along Saltwater River for use of bathers on land leased by Mr. Fairbairn.
- 1913 – Saltwater River renamed Maribyrnong River.
- 1942 – The Council accepted a tender of 80 pounds from Mr R. Bullen for sheep grazing rights in Fairbairn Park, Maribyrnong Park and Holmes Road Reserve.



The vegetable garden at Fairbairn Park

1943 – Cr. H Gibbs, Chairman of the Vegetable Growing Committee, reported that the garden at Fairbairn Park had produced 2,000 cabbages, seven tons of potatoes, seven tons of onions, 3,000 dozen carrots, 3,000 dozen beetroot and varying quantities of tomatoes, pumpkins, lettuces, and cucumbers.

1944 – Because the need for growing vegetables had passed the Victory Vegetable Garden project at Fairbairn Park was closed. The Committee decided to place the land in the hands of the curator.

1946 – Mr. F Williams of Ascot Vale, in a letter to Council on behalf of the ratepayers advocated the development of Fairbairn Park as a sports and recreation area incorporating football grounds, cricket facilities and a golf course.

1974 – The second largest flood on record occurred on 15-16 May 1974. Approximately 385 hectares of urbanised and industrial lands were inundated.

1988 – The new Essendon Golf Club Driving range was opened to the public.

1993 – The Essendon Council was forced to ask Melbourne Water to examine the costs of building the Arundel retarding basin on the Maribyrnong River in the aftermath of the worst flooding in the area since 1974. Following heavy rains, floodwater reached the building line in Woods Street and inundated most of Fairbairn Park and parts of the Riverside Golf Course.

Source: Fairbairn Park Master Plan



Hand-drawn plan of the golf course and surrounds



Historical aerial view of the precinct

2 Background and Context

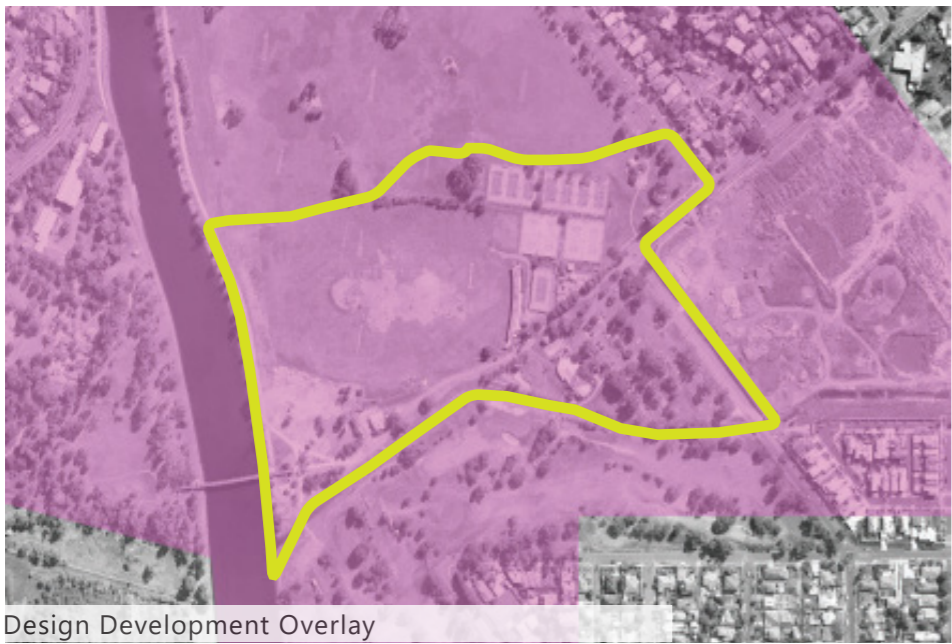
2.03 Planning Overlays

The Riverside Sport and Recreation Precinct is owned by the City of Moonee Valley.

Under the MVCC Planning Scheme, the precinct is zoned as a Public Park Recreation Zone (PPRZ).

As shown below, the main overlays include the Design and Development Overlay (DDO) and the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO). Prior to any future development, due diligence including liaison with Melbourne Water for advice and approvals shall be undertaken at concept design stage for projects within this site.

The Riverside precinct is not included in the Heritage Overlay. Pipemakers Park and Maribyrnong Park are included due to significant heritage items located at the precinct.

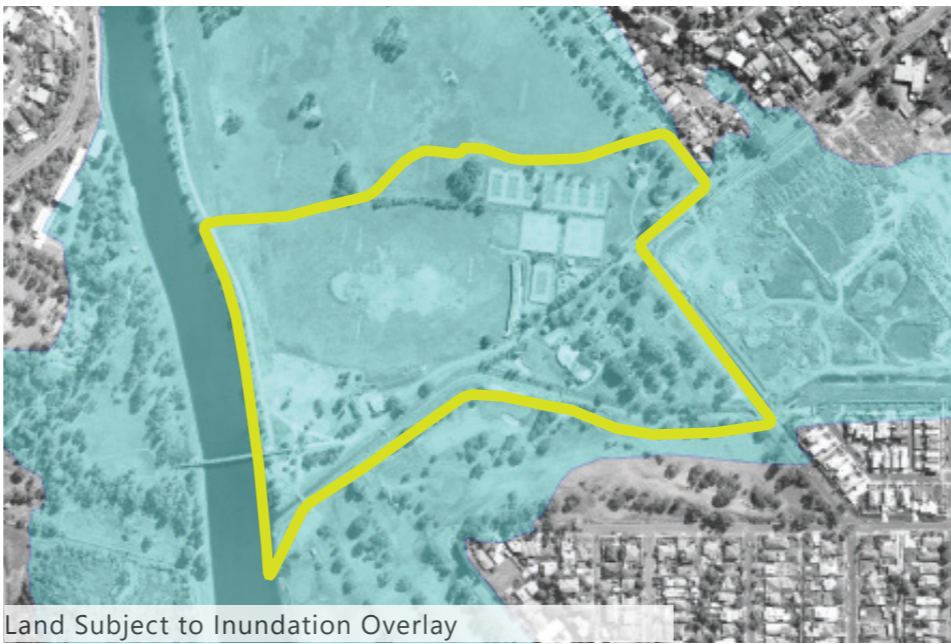


Design Development Overlay

This overlay protects areas along the Maribyrnong from visual intrusion, caused by inappropriate siting or appearance of buildings and works. It is also to protect the skyline when viewed from the river and its banks. Exemptions apply if a building is less than six metres high.

Part of the precinct is within 200m of the Maribyrnong River corridor and therefore an area of cultural sensitivity. Conditions may apply to any new works proposed under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 for managing and protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage. Due diligence to determine conditions or restrictions shall be undertaken on detailed designs, and implemented as required.

The Integrated Plan Overlay is also applicable to the rivers edge and there are height restrictions for trees and structures due to the AusNet powerlines.



Land Subject to Inundation Overlay

This overlay identifies land which is subject to a 1 in 100 year flood. This overlay ensures that developments allow for the free passage of water and do not hinder flood levels or flow velocity.

2.04 Strategic Alignment

Open Space Strategy 2011

Open space is all public land set aside for outdoor enjoyment, recreation and nature conservation. The vision for the strategy is a linked, sustainable and accessible system of quality open spaces comprising the waterway corridors that are highly valued for their native habitat and recreational use.

The aim of the plan is to:

- Create a diverse and connected open space network
- Enhance our ecological values
- Provide open spaces to meet the varied needs of our community
- Celebrates our unique landscape setting of valleys and waterways.

The document also notes the importance of linkages provided from the river trail to the local area, and the need to address gaps in these linkages south of the golf course.

Ensure the Precinct Plan supports community access and improved connections to open space and the river, and also the protection and enhancement of the ecological values of the precinct.

2 Background and Context

MV2040 Strategy

The MV2040 Strategy (the Strategy) is MVCC’s long-term plan for improving the health, vibrancy and resilience of the city over the next two decades. It has been prepared to shape the type of city and neighbourhoods its residents want to live in.

The strategic direction for the five central themes of the strategy are defined as **Fairness Thriving Connected Green Beautiful**.

The strategy also outlines Council’s approach to delivering 20 minute neighbourhoods - and the importance of Fairbairn Park as one of the key anchors of the Ascot Vale community. The following actions are most relevant to this Precinct Plan:

- Transform Fairbairn Park into a regional sporting destination. This will include a new multi-purpose community pavilion (south), new netball courts, and advocating to State Government for funding to develop a new sports pavilion at the Riverside Golf and Tennis Centre.
- Deliver the Ascot Chase wetland stormwater harvesting to irrigate Walter Street Reserve and Fairbairn Park.
- Revitalise and activate the Maribyrnong River environs to create connections across and to the broader river corridor, including a continuous connection between Ascot Vale and Aberfeldie.
- Undertake improvements to open space by implementing the master plan for Fairbairn Park.



Sports Development Plan 2014-23

The Moonee Valley Sports Development Plan 2014-23 (SDP) has been prepared to guide current and future provision of facilities and services to meet the needs of Moonee Valley’s diverse communities over the next ten years.

From the stakeholder engagement, five themes for sports development emerged to address gaps in the Moonee Valley sports offer:

Provision of sports facilities – Sports facilities need to be fit for purpose, for multiple groups and a broad range of community activities.

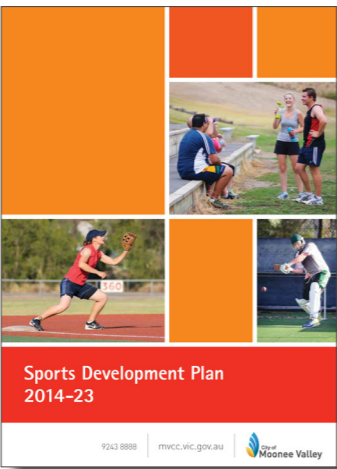
Club management and development – Supporting local clubs to build management skills, develop strategically and be sustainable.

Growing participation – Increasing the sports participation levels of people whose age, gender, culture or ability can be a barrier.

Different ways of participating – Supporting both traditional club-based, as well as casual sports participation models.

Building partnerships – Supporting and strengthening partnerships between the people and organisations that make sport happen.

Implication: With a variety of sports preferences emerging, a multi-sport precinct will maximise potential engagement, activation and visitation.



Fairbairn Park Master Plan 2013

Fairbairn Park is located adjacent to the Riverside Sport and Recreation Precinct and comprises 25.7 hectares of public open space. This makes it the largest open space reserve in Ascot Vale, and the precinct is used for both structured sports and informal recreation. The Master Plan outlines the existing conditions at the precinct and identifies a series of recommended improvement opportunities.

Implications:

Fairbairn Park and the Riverside precinct together form a continuous section of open space along the Maribyrnong River and a number of proposals and actions overlap or apply to both precincts. The Fairbairn Park Master Plan recommends consolidating pavilions and the Riverside Precinct Plan has been developed with this consideration in mind.

There is an opportunity to strengthen plantings throughout the park to define spaces, provide more shade for users and enhanced habitat for local fauna.

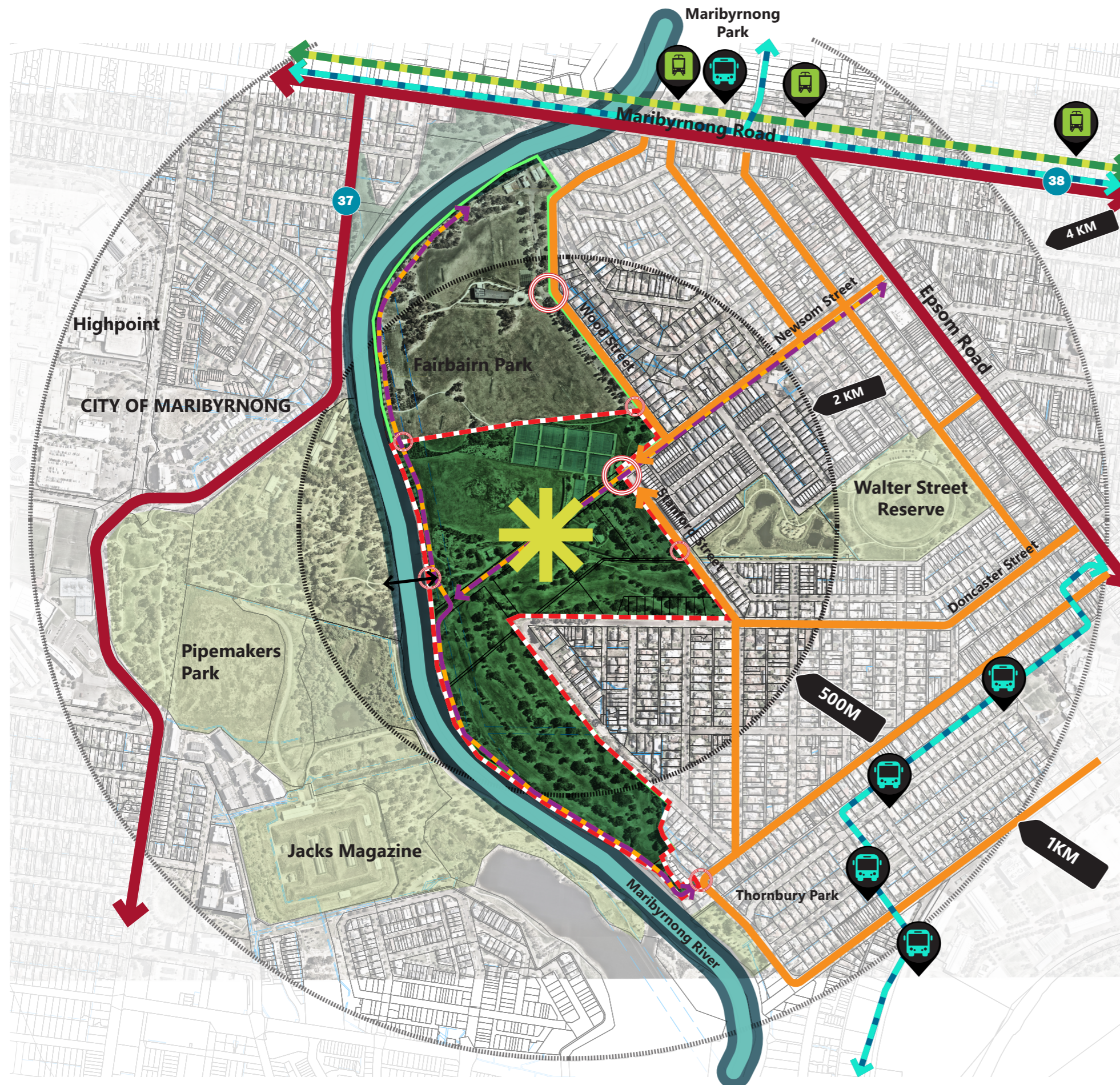
Riverside Golf and Tennis Centre Master Plan 2015

The 2015 Master Plan for the precinct was developed to establish a clear vision for the potential future development of Riverside to meet the changing needs and aspirations of the community. While some of the recommendations have been implemented, there are numerous initiatives that remain outstanding.

Implications:

Some of the recommendations that have been reflected in the Precinct Plan include:

- A new arrival plaza to provide convenient access to a new multi-recreation building, sporting facilities and existing pavilion.
- A way-finding strategy including references to ‘user safety’.
- Create a cycling/bike riding and walking feature entry/exit portal to the Maribyrnong River trail network.
- A multi-recreation building to service sport participants and the general community.



3 Precinct Considerations and Analysis

3.01 Precinct Access and Connections

The Riverside Sport and Recreation Precinct lies within a greater context of parklands and openly accessible public spaces and reserves located along the Maribyrnong River valley. The subject precinct is located centrally within this open space network and is a key hub for the greater community.

Fairbairn Park and the Riverside Sport and Recreation Precinct have a combined street frontage of 1.8km to the east and a combined 1.67km of open river frontage to the west. Riverside makes up for over half of the frontages respectively being 1.29km on the eastern boundary and 1km on the river.

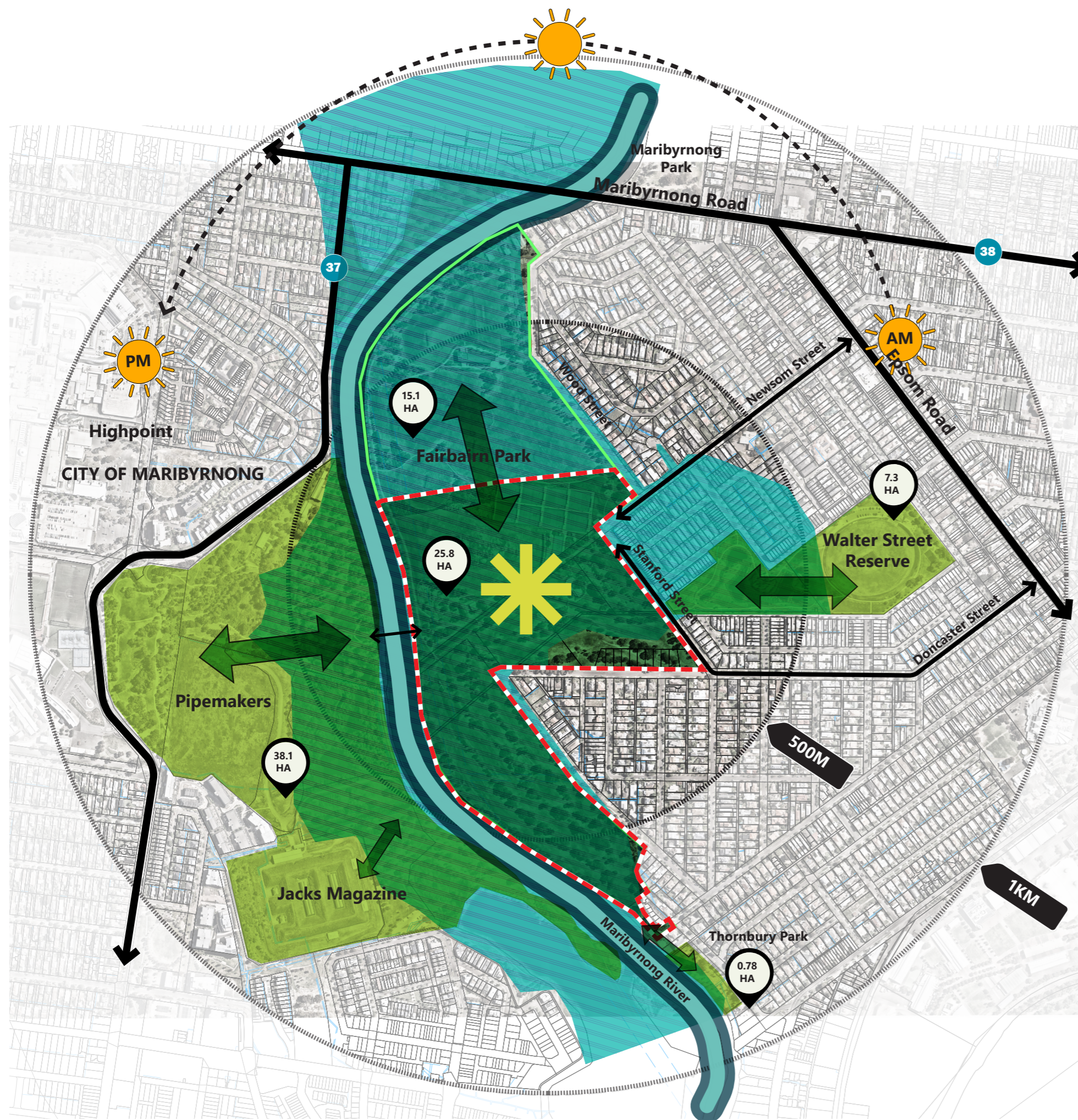
The precinct has only one river crossing at Pipemakers Park Footbridge, which was completed in 1994. To the east, there are two main precinct entry locations and another two secondary car parking entry points.

The precinct is a recognised node of activity, and general pedestrian distances from the precinct to key locations surrounding the precinct are:

- Epsom Road: 600m.
- Highpoint Shopping Centre: 650m.
- Maribyrnong Rd. Bridge: 720m.

LEGEND

- SUBJECT SITE
- SUBJECT SITE BOUNDARY
- ENTRY NODES
- MAJOR ROADS
- MAIN ROADS
- TRAM LINE ROUTES
- BUS ROUTES
- BICYCLE ROUTES



3 Precinct Considerations and Analysis

3.02 Environmental Context

The topography of the precinct is a low lying flood plain with a small area of higher land located on Doncaster Street to the south-eastern corner of the Riverside Golf Course.

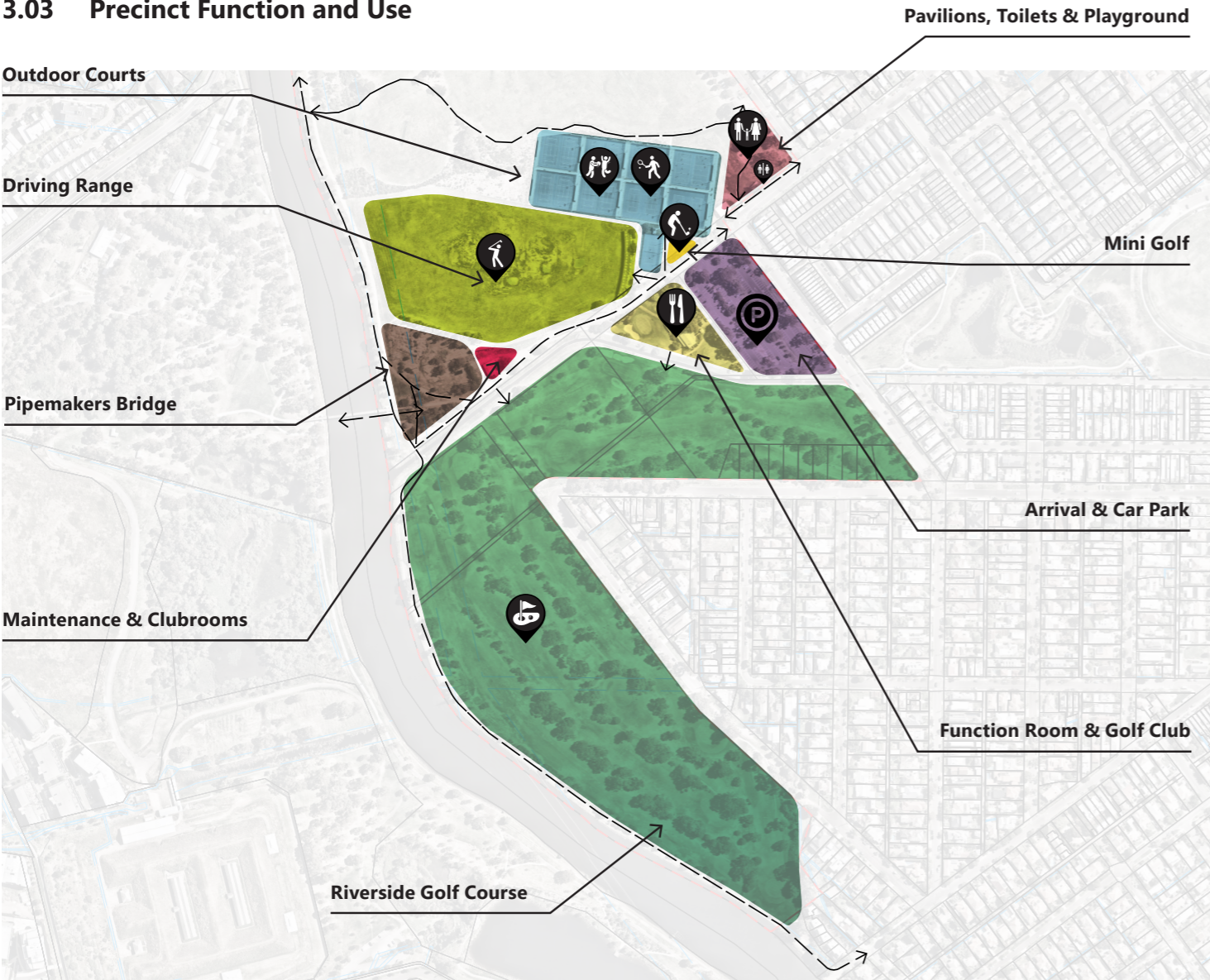
The precinct is almost entirely subject to flood inundation. Flood events may occur more frequently as a result of climate change. The most recent inundation of the precinct occurred in October 2022.

There are multiple land owners/asset owners within the precinct, including Melbourne Water who oversees the waterways. Future development is subject to Melbourne Water approval.

The total combined area of accessible public open space including surrounding parks is approximately 80 hectares, which for reference, represents approximately half of the Melbourne CBD.

3 Precinct Considerations and Analysis

3.03 Precinct Function and Use



- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| DRIVING RANGE | CAR PARKING |
| OUTDOOR COURTS | GOLF COURSE |
| GOLF COURSE PAVILION AND PRO SHOP/CAFE | MAINTENANCE YARD/GOLF CLUB HOUSE |
| PLAY SPACE/PUBLIC TOILETS/PAVILIONS | PIPE MAKERS BRIDGE PRECINCT |
| MINI GOLF | |

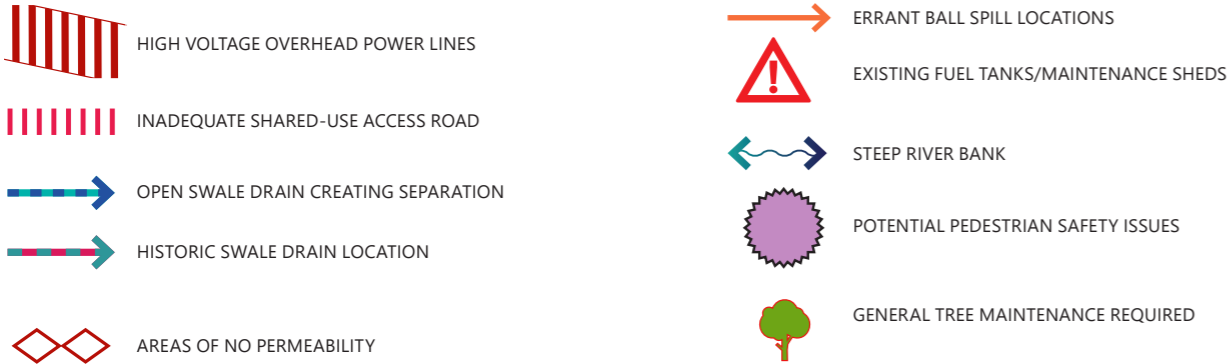
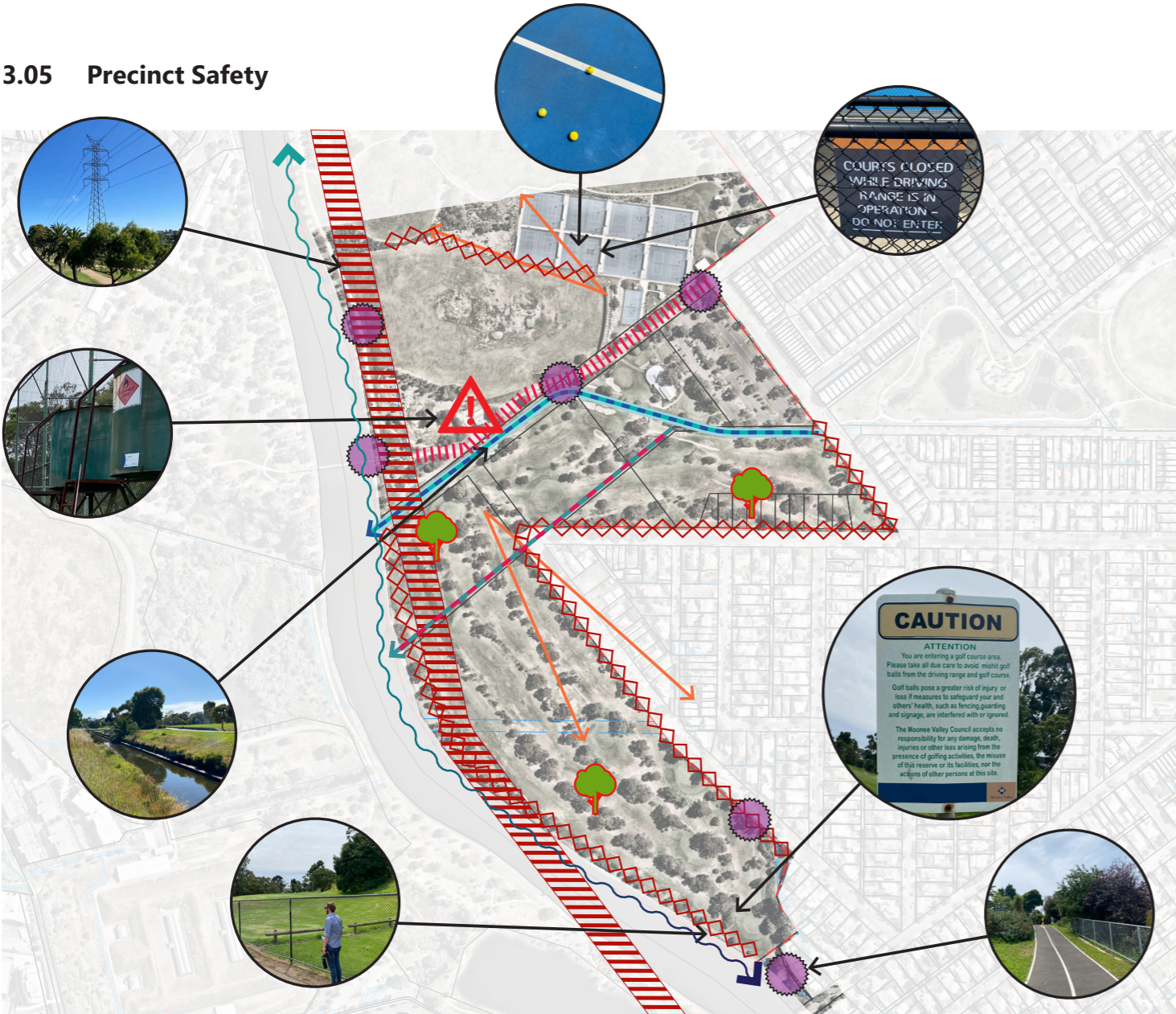
3.04 Precinct Entry Points



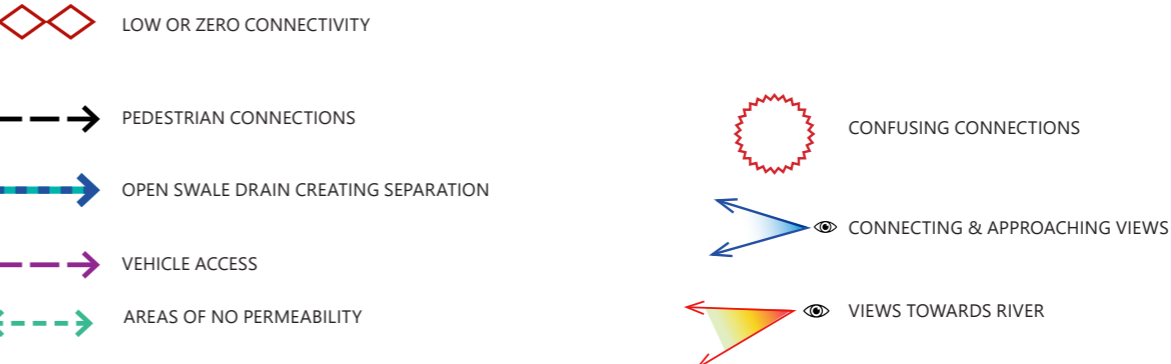
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|--|------------------------------------|
| | Precinct BOUNDARY |
| | OPEN CHANNEL |
| | SENSITIVE INTERFACES |
| | ENTRY NODES |
| | VEHICLE ENTRY POINTS |
| | PEDESTRIANS/BICYCLES & OTHER ENTRY |

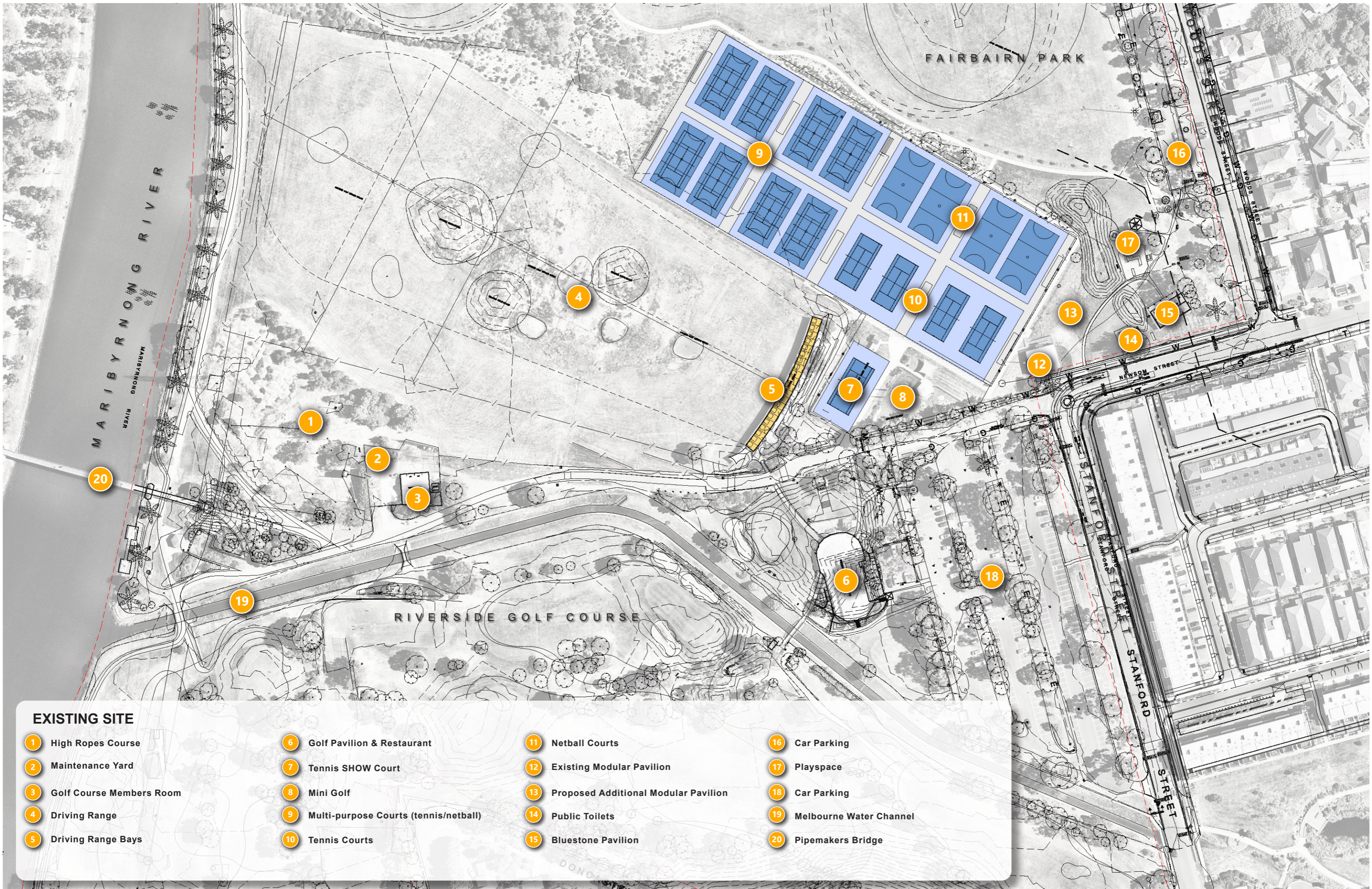
3 Precinct Considerations and Analysis

3.05 Precinct Safety



3.06 Connections and Site Lines





EXISTING SITE

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|----------------------------|
| 1 High Ropes Course | 6 Golf Pavilion & Restaurant | 11 Netball Courts | 16 Car Parking |
| 2 Maintenance Yard | 7 Tennis SHOW Court | 12 Existing Modular Pavilion | 17 Playspace |
| 3 Golf Course Members Room | 8 Mini Golf | 13 Proposed Additional Modular Pavilion | 18 Car Parking |
| 4 Driving Range | 9 Multi-purpose Courts (tennis/netball) | 14 Public Toilets | 19 Melbourne Water Channel |
| 5 Driving Range Bays | 10 Tennis Courts | 15 Bluestone Pavilion | 20 Pipemakers Bridge |

4 Existing Precinct Conditions



Slippage hazards along the riverbank and open swale



Golf balls can fit through the tennis/netball court fencing



Open swale

4.02 Safety

- The alignment of the driving range means that errant golf balls can land on the tennis and netball courts.
- The mesh size of the fencing is too large to prevent balls penetrating the fence.
- There is a conflict of pedestrians, vehicles and bicycles on the Newsom Street extension within the precinct.
- Some locations have potential pedestrian safety issues with reduced passive surveillance.
- There are potential slippage hazards on the riverbank and open channel edges.
- Many holes on the golf course are in close proximity to each other, and several are very close to Stanford Street, Doncaster Street and Angler Parade.
- Some holes do have protective fencing, but positioning is ad-hoc with many areas unprotected.
- Several protective nets are in very poor condition.
- Some vegetation poses a safety risk to golfers.
- Fuel is stored on-site at the maintenance facility.
- River bank erosion in some locations impacting shared path.

4.03 Environment and Amenity

- There is evidence of asbestos in the soil under the driving range.
- The drainage/irrigation channel that runs through the precinct poses a safety issue and constrains the precinct.
- Poor vegetation management across the golf course impacts the overall experience.
- Shade negatively impacts the turf (particularly on greens and tees)
- Tree roots have encroached and are causing problems in some areas of the golf course.
- The power-lines detract from what would otherwise be an idyllic setting along the banks of the Maribyrnong River.
- Previous developments within the precinct removed substantial amounts of vegetation.
- The site relies on potable water and is not yet connected to the Ascot Chase Wetland.
- The precinct is almost entirely subject to flood inundation which may occur more frequently as a result of climate change.

4 Existing Precinct Conditions

4.04 Traffic and Accessibility

- Poor sense of arrival and entry across the precinct.
- Pedestrian access across the precinct is hampered due to functional requirements of the various usages.
- Confusing way-finding across the precinct.
- Lack of directional signage and conflicting pedestrian and vehicle uses.
- The precinct has only one river crossing access, at the Pipemakers Bridge, which has several confusing paths and access ways leading to conflicts.
- Existing access ways are narrow.
- The shared use pathway is narrow and inadequate for differing functions.
- The open water channel creates a barrier.
- Poor DDA access to the clubhouse and pavilion, and access to golf course from the clubhouse is inadequate.
- Car parking access and entry is confusing and the main entry location is potentially dangerous.
- Site flooding and flood recovery may pose access risks.

4.05 Building Condition

- The golf course maintenance facility is ageing and poorly located away from the golf course.
- The building used by the tennis club is outdated and does not meet user requirements.
- The high ropes course is run-down and underutilised.
- The golf pavillion/clubhouse building is at the end of its useful life. Significant upgrade works are required to rectify the existing undulating floors, reduce the amount of building movement, address water ingress issues and replace building sections that are open to weathering.
- The irrigation system within the golf course is outdated and in need of renewal/replacement.
- Any expansion to the driving range structure is limited due to the flood overlay.
- The mini golf area was recently refurbished, however it is separated from the other golf functions and is underutilised.
- The existing modular pavilion does not have enough space to accommodate the current number of netball and tennis users. To address demand, a new additional modular pavilion is planned to be located adjacent to the existing one.



Sense of entry and arrival requires improvment



Connectivity and traffic conflicts



Golf clubhouse

4 Existing Precinct Conditions

4.06 Golf Course

The size of the property set aside for golf at Riverside (excluding the driving range) is approximately 15.4ha. It is bordered on the east and south by roadways and residential properties, while the west is bordered by the Maribyrnong River and a public walking track. The north borders the driving range and high ropes course.

As a result of the irregular shape of the property many holes are in close proximity and several of the holes are very close to Stanford Street, Doncaster Street and Angler Parade. For example the edge of one green is located only 15m from Angler Parade.

Some holes do have protective fencing but their positioning seems to be very random in nature with many areas unprotected. There were also a number of nets in very poor condition.

Any changes to the course layout should aim to reduce the risk zone. The current risk zone shown to the right equates to:-

- Internal =157,105m²
- External =66,055m²

The darker the orange shading (internal safety) on the plan the greater the risk, and several holes overlap as a result of multiple safety problems from more than one other hole.

To address the safety issues associated with the golf course (and detailed in a background study by OCM), a significant investment into safety netting and fencing is required, or a redesign of the golf course.

A series of case studies have been developed for internal planning purposes that demonstrate potential ideas for updating the golf course in an innovative way and improving the quality of the course and enhancing its community appeal.

Future design proposals for the golf course will be considered in the context of the Precinct Plan vision and principles.



Safety overlay shows the areas of potential risk of errant golf balls - darker shading indicates greater risk.

5 Issues and Opportunities







5.01 Community & Stakeholder Consultation Findings

To develop the Precinct Plan, the consultation process involved:

- In-depth interviews with user groups, including:
 - Netball Victoria
 - Golf Australia
 - Tennis Victoria
 - Essendon District Netball Association
 - St John’s Netball Club
 - Ascot Vale Tennis Club
 - Leisure Management Services
 - Riverside Essendon Golf Club
 - Essendon 9-Hole Golf Club
 - Victoria Police
 - PGT Programs

- An online survey with the community and local residents, receiving a total of 420 complete responses.
- Project information on Council’s YourSay page, which resulted in 769 total visits to the precinct page, and 91 contributions to the question regarding the vision for the precinct. In addition, there were 16 comments on social media.
- The Draft Precinct Plan was also displayed on the Moonee Valley Council YourSay page for a 4.5 week period over September 2022. An on-site drop-in session was held on Saturday 17th September.

The following is an overall summary of the key findings that have emerged from the consultation.

 Strengths	 Weaknesses	 Key Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large precinct with green open space and sport offerings close to the city.• Environmental amenity, natural biodiversity and peace and quiet.• Recreation trails and connections.• Diverse appeal and opportunity for everyone.• Accessibility for a broad catchment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Precinct layout and integration of existing infrastructure.• Signage, way-finding, and congestion on paths.• Inconsistent condition of sports facilities.• Community safety issues with golf/paths/courts.• Mini-golf and high-ropes are underutilised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance and strengthen the precinct’s environmental amenity and sustainability.• Investigate complementary amenities – cafe, public toilets, play spaces.• Improve community safety and congestion issues.• Improve flow and navigation across the precinct.• Provide additional seating options and rest areas.
 Top 5 Reasons for Visiting	 Top 5 Barriers to Increased Utilisation	 Top 5 Improvement Suggestions
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Large precinct with green open space and To walk (91%).2. To be outside (59%).3. To exercise my dog (50%).4. To sit and relax (43%).5. To run/jog (42%).	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The facilities are outdated and ageing (36%).2. Not enough rest areas/seating options (32%).3. The driving range is not open at suitable times (26%).4. Lack of female friendly toilets, change rooms and amenities (21%).5. Safety concerns about stray balls from the driving range (15%).	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Providing a café/restaurant/function facility (65%).2. Improving the precincts environmental values (55%).3. Ensuring new or upgraded facilities are environmentally sustainable (54%).4. Upgrade the existing golf clubhouse to provide better community facilities (49%).5. Reduce car movement within the precinct and improve cycling/walking access (47%).

5 Issues and Opportunities

5.02 Feedback on the Draft Precinct Plan

‘Overall the Draft Precinct Plan was positively supported by the community and 82% of survey respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the draft vision for the precinct’. Feedback on the principles and design initiatives included:

Strengths

- Enhances the sport and recreation opportunities for all
- Focusses on safety and addresses the current issues across the site
- Recognises and builds on the environmental benefits and green open space

Concerns

- Further improvements to key sporting areas will always still be required
- Current plan could have more emphasis on passive recreation opportunities
- Not enough focus on flooding and climate change impacts

Ideas

- Enhance the environmental elements of the site
- Investigate additional activities and infrastructure for all ages to share the space.
- Improve traffic flow and congestion on the site

This feedback has been considered and incorporated into the final Precinct Plan.

5.03 Community Consultation Comments

Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Future Ideas
<p>"The big open spaces along the river, it's a lovely place to escape the urban jungle. It provides a safe, clean environment for exercise for all ages. Free from traffic, it's a unique space."</p>	<p>"The overall look, feel and maintenance. Maintenance of the golf course and the golf related facilities. Opening the cafe to provide service to the community. Opening the driving range to a fully operational timeframe."</p>	<p>"More native trees would provide shade during summer. The high ropes course is a nice idea but seems impractical. The recently installed bouldering wall in Footscray can be used without booking or supervision which means it is a highly used facility in comparison to the high ropes course which I have never seen in use."</p>
<p>"It provides a large space with active recreation facilities. It's connection to the walking/cycling trail, and it's capacity to provide access to food, beverage and cafe."</p>	<p>"The driving range needs better technology and lighting so that it can be used for longer periods. Segregation of the driving range and the netball courts so that they can open independently. Course condition needs significant improvement."</p>	<p>"Better interface with Fairbairn Park and the waterfront. Improved activation of waterfront - e.g. a cafe."</p>
<p>"We bought our home nearby to enjoy the outlook and the proximity to the river, the golf course, the tennis, walking tracks and the view to the city. We love the cafe at the golf course and can't wait for it to re-open."</p>	<p>"More reminders for cyclists to slow down (or add speed humps to the walking path along the river). Improved lighting. It does not come on when it is dark - the timing sensors are all wrong. More fencing between the edge of the golf course and the walking track along the river - it can be hazardous walking along with golf balls flying."</p>	<p>"Resolve safety issues caused by poor planning of new courts such that the courts and the driving range are both free to operate during whichever hours best suit them. The high ropes area currently seems to be poorly maintained and under-utilised."</p>
<p>"It's a large outdoor area where you can be away from traffic while exercising. The river is a nice break from the built-up areas. Lots of different users can enjoy the space (i.e. not a single purpose for people of limited interests only)."</p>		<p>"Areas around the pathways could be better maintained or re-done to reduce the need for maintenance while improving the overall aesthetic. The drainage that runs between the golf course and driving range could be improved so it's not such a visual impairment of the area and physical barrier."</p>

5 Issues and Opportunities

5.04 Key Consultation Findings and Proposed Precinct Plan Amendments

Priorities to be Addressed from Consultation Findings	Suggested Precinct Plan Amendments
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enhance and strengthen the precinct’s environmental amenity, sustainability and resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop sustainability principles for water retention and recycling, increase planting and re-wilding, and climate resilient buildings.Flood resilience to be incorporated into precinct proposals.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Investigate complementary amenities – cafe, public toilets, play spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Create a centralised community and patron hub with good access to facilities, amenities and car parking.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improve community safety and congestion issues¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improve and increase shared access to the river through the creation of a central shared pathway activity zone extending from Newsom Street to river.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improve flow and navigation across the precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Create a dedicated and spacious shared path boulevard to the river. Include new planting, paving and seating.Deliver new car park design and entry upgrades.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide additional seating options and rest areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Create a new meaningful passive open space for the community for flexible use.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Address the safety issues associated with the driving range, and its proximity to the netball and tennis courts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Re orientate driving range to reduce ball spill and improve design and functionality.Consolidate court functions to reduce noise impact and improve player amenity.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Address the ageing building structures and assets within the precinct such as the golf pavilion, maintenance shed and tennis clubhouse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide new maintenance access to golf course and relocate existing shed and yard.Remove and relocate existing F&B pavilion and golf pro shop.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Focus on providing fun and family friendly areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improve play space and enhance picnic facilities.Relocate and increase mini-golf offering.

5.05 Trajectory Study Findings

As part of the development of the Precinct Plan, the City of Moonee Valley commissioned the development of a trajectory study to understand how the realignment of the driving range may impact the safety requirements of the precinct.

This document considers the potential for, and mitigation of, errant balls after the proposed design changes, taking into account the adjacent courts facility and other public areas.

Recommendations Provided

The recommendations outline the requirement for the installation of significant fencing and netting, including the following:

- Left hand side – 15m high by 30m long blinker barrier, plus 20m high by 150m long boundary barrier
- Right hand side – 25m high by 140m long boundary barrier
- End of range – 8m high by 80m wide barrier (if possible depending on power line requirements)

Context and Comparison

- The report discusses management options available to reduce risks, and how these could create flexibility in barrier size requirements
- The study details and analyses an extensive range of barrier scenarios (and wind conditions), which were tested, including those proposed in the draft Precinct Plan (different heights, lengths, angles, etc.)
- When compared with a previous study, the significant difference is the additional tennis courts did not exist when the previous study was conducted. Rotating towards the right would increase the right hand side protection requirements recommended.

6 Precinct Plan

6.01 Vision, Principles and Implementation Guidelines

Vision



The Vision for the Riverside Sport and Recreation Precinct is

“A welcoming place for community sport and recreation, and enjoyment of the river and natural environment.”

The vision and principles are to inform future design and development of the precinct and guide Council decision making.

Key Principles



Green and Climate Resilient

- Enhance tree canopy, landscaping and re-vegetation
- Protect and maintain the riverbank and maximise public open space
- Adopt sustainable energy use and integrated water management approaches
- Flood resilience including capability to recover from inundation to be incorporated into design for structures, infrastructure and all other precinct proposals



Safe

- Address the safety issues associated with errant balls from the driving range and golf course
- Reduce pedestrian-vehicle conflicts and address car parking safety issues
- Respond to flood inundation overlays and work with Melbourne Water and other partners on best outcomes



Multi-use and Community Focused

- Support multi-use of the precinct for both formal and informal activities
- Promote inclusive participation in sports and recreation activities and ensure facilities continue to be accessible for all
- Enhance the sense of place and recognition of connection to country throughout the precinct in consultation with Wurundjeri representatives



Connected and Accessible

- Improved site wide accessibility, active travel connections and way-finding
- Enhanced sense of arrival and overall precinct experience
- Create links from the precinct to the surrounding neighbourhood and improve the community access to the riverfront



Functional and High Amenity

- Enhance the amenity of the precinct for all users including complementary amenities such as public toilets, seating, food/ beverage and play areas
- Enhance the functionality of facilities and improve the opportunity for maximum utilisation
- Review and update maintenance service levels to improve alignment with community expectations



6.02 Precinct Opportunities for Investigation

1. Integrate built form in a central multipurpose community sporting hub that maximises open space
2. Relocate the maintenance shed
3. Relocate the golf members clubroom closer to main hub and car park
4. Upgrade the existing restaurant and golf pro shop
5. Relocate and improve high-ropes
6. Redesign the driving range to reduce errant ball spill
7. Relocate and improve mini-golf
8. Investigate removal/relocation of tennis show court
9. Create a central shared pathway activity zone extending from Newsom Street to the river
10. Improve river and precinct-wide pedestrian connections and experience
11. Explore re-wilding and long-term opportunities for the open water swale
12. Enhance the play space
13. Resurface the driving range
14. Enhance safety and amenity including additional vegetation



DESIGN INITIATIVES

- 1 River Access and Viewing**
Improve community access and views to the river. Explore opportunities for a river viewing platform or terraced and paved areas, and potential re-alignment of existing pedestrian bridge across the channel

2 Pipemakers Bridge
Explore opportunities to upgrade Pipemakers Bridge.

3 Shared Pathway Connection
Enhance the walking and cycling network through improved connections to the existing river trail, including possible realigned channel bridge.

4 River Edge
Protect river bank from erosion, increase habitat and improve amenity with planting and other landscape treatments.

5 River Trail
Increase walking and cycling by improving the shared path along the river.

6 Landscaping
Increase habitat and amenity with new trees and other plantings of native species, including lower plants under the power line.

7 Community Recreation Area
Allow for passive recreation by providing a new informal open space area or community green.

8 Shared Space Boulevard
Improve pedestrian and cycling experience and connections within and through the precinct by formalising the existing road as a central shared space boulevard for pedestrians, cyclists and recreational use (No public vehicle access).

9 High Ropes Course
Investigate the opportunity to relocate within the site and explore expanding offerings to broaden use and improve utilisation.

- 10 Melbourne Water Channel**
Re-vegetate to increase habitat and improve amenity along this existing channel. Explore opportunities for future channel re-wilding.

11 Driving Range
Address the safety issues of errant balls through driving range realignment and upgraded facility.

12 Community Sports Hub
Consolidate buildings within the precinct where possible and investigate opportunity for centralising sport and community uses including public toilets around the Shared Space Boulevard.

DESIGN INITIATIVES

- 13 Golf Facilities**
Rebuild a new consolidated golf facility including quality café/restaurant for precinct users, members club, pro shop and cart storage. Relocate mini golf.

14 Entry and Car Park
Improve the sense of arrival with a new entry and upgraded car park. Provide DDA spaces, pedestrian access, bus drop off and bin storage. Underground treated stormwater tank for sports field irrigation to be included, subject to feasibility.

15 Maintenance Area
Improve public safety and maintenance access by relocating the maintenance area closer to Stanford Street and the golf course. Design the maintenance area to be fit for purpose.

16 Netball and Tennis Courts
Investigate relining of courts in response to competition requirements and to reduce noise impacts.

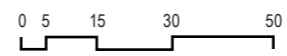
17 Play Space
Improve amenity and enhance passive recreation by upgrading the existing play and picnic facilities in line with Council's Playspace Plan, incorporating basketball half court, adjacent mown grass open spaces, planting and path connections and upgrades if required. Include pram crossing on Newsom Street.

18 Existing Cricket Pavilion

19 Existing Golf Course
Increase tree canopy and biodiversity through additional native tree and ground cover planting where possible. Improve safety through design and mitigation measures.
- General Precinct Notes:**
Enhance amenity and safety with seating and lighting across the precinct. Improve way-finding with improved directional and way-finding signage. Provide Indigenous cultural and heritage recognition and interpretation. Find opportunities to increase tree canopy throughout the precinct.

RIVERSIDE SPORT AND RECREATION PRECINCT

6.03 Potential Future Precinct Initiatives
Note: This plan is indicative only and subject to further feasibility, detailed design and budgetary priorities.



Date: NOVEMBER 2022

Landscape viewing opportunities



Hardscape areas



Pedestrian areas



Shading trees in hardscape



Stream reinstatement



Directional pathways



Passive pedestrian pathways



Watercourse crossings



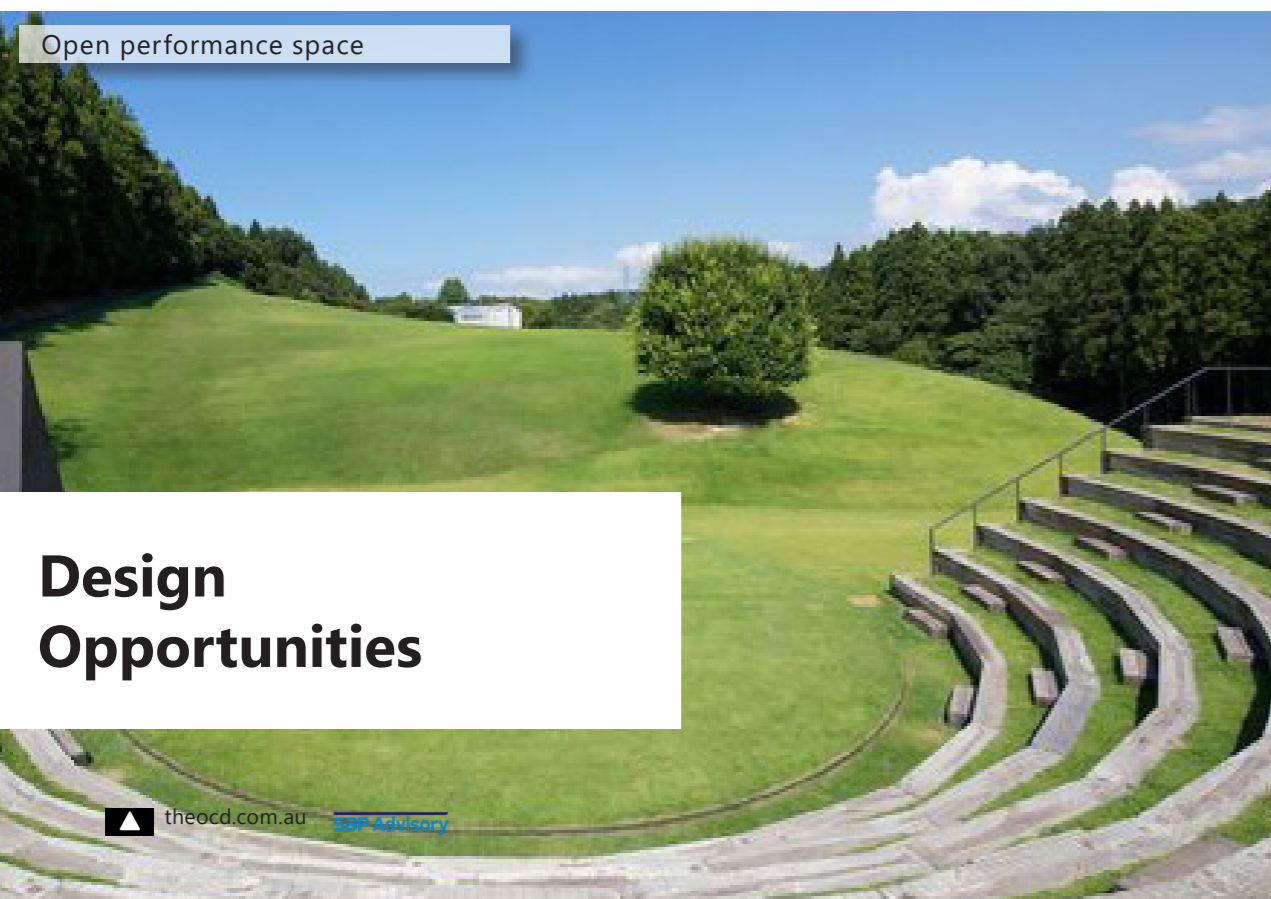
Intuitive landscape design



Embedded way finding



Open performance space



Waterway passive crossings



Water sensitive urban design



Design Opportunities

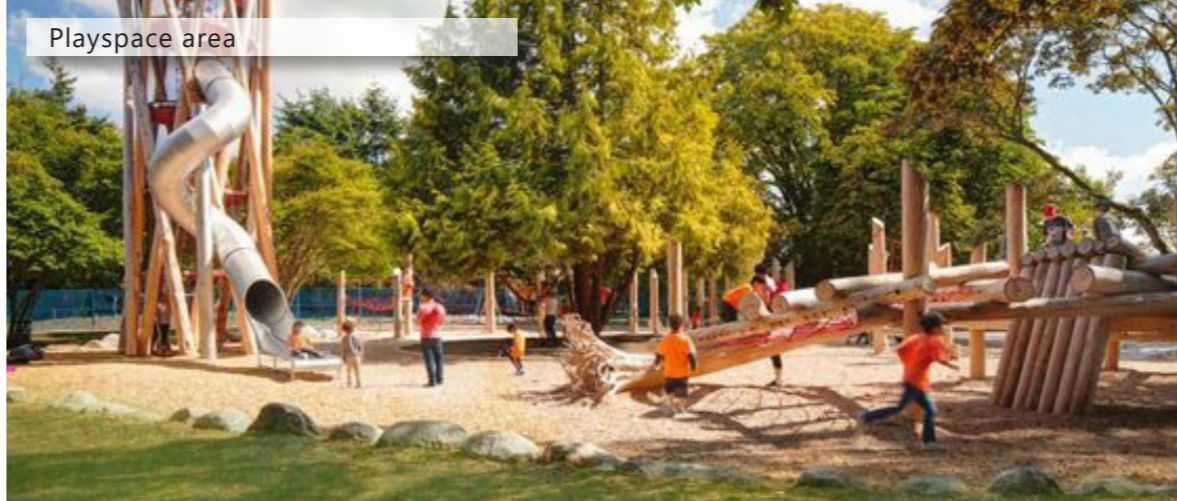
Integrated seating



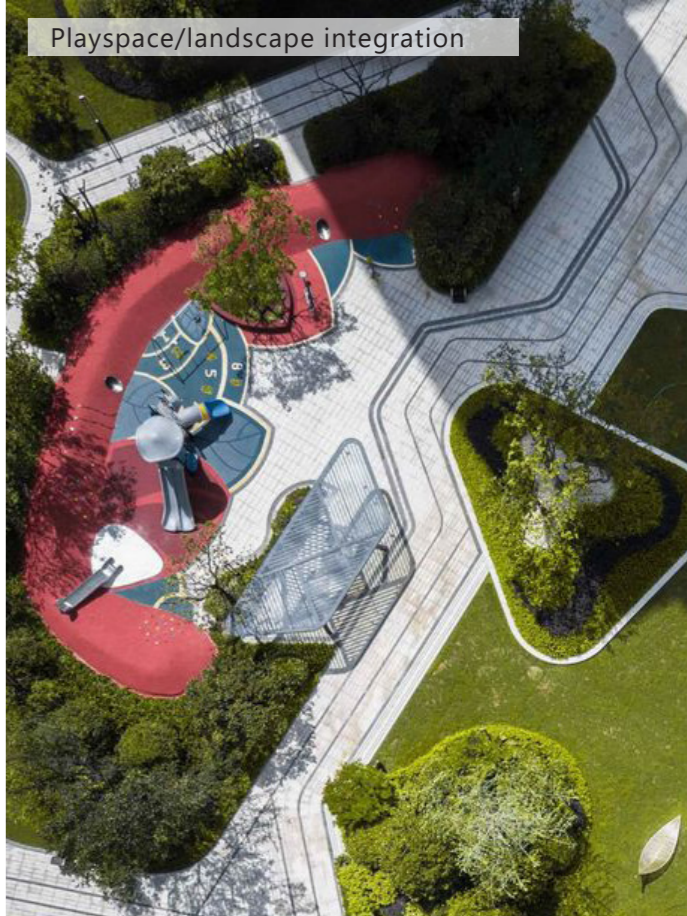
Lightweight crossings



Playspace area



Playspace/landscape integration



Shared pathways surfaces



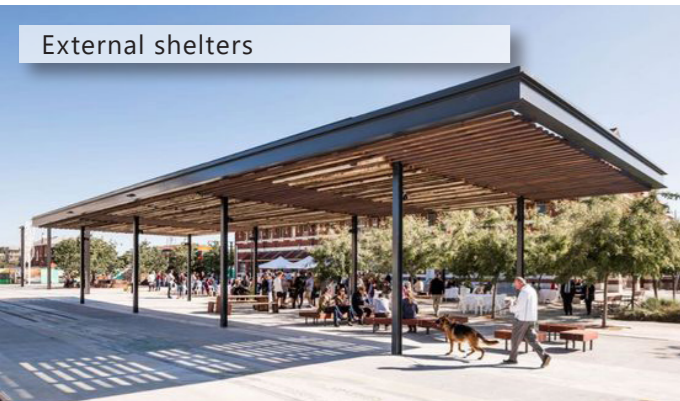
Shelter structures



Building ground levels



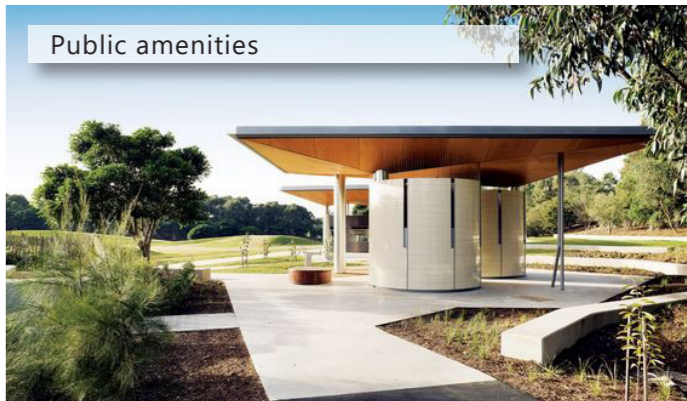
External shelters



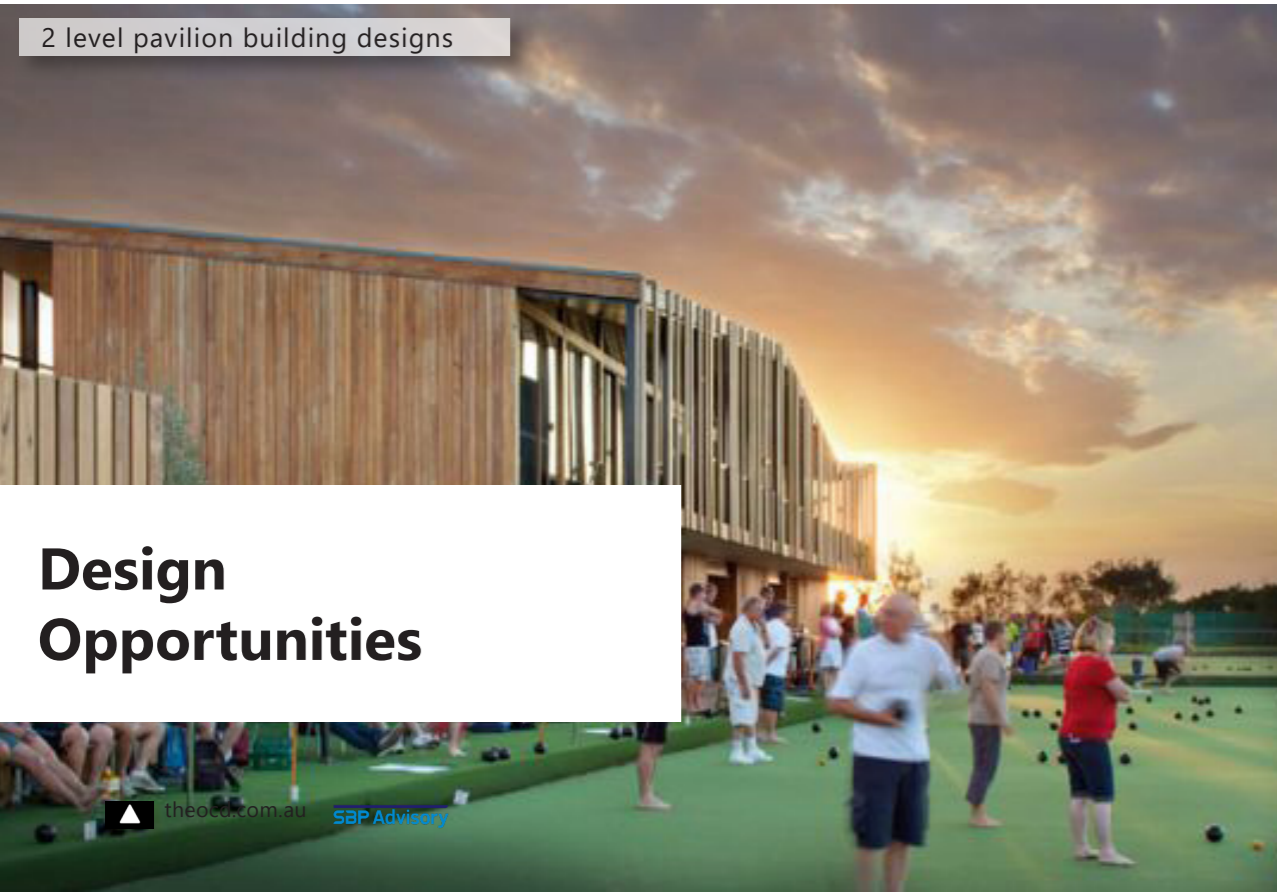
Playspace/landscape integration



Public amenities

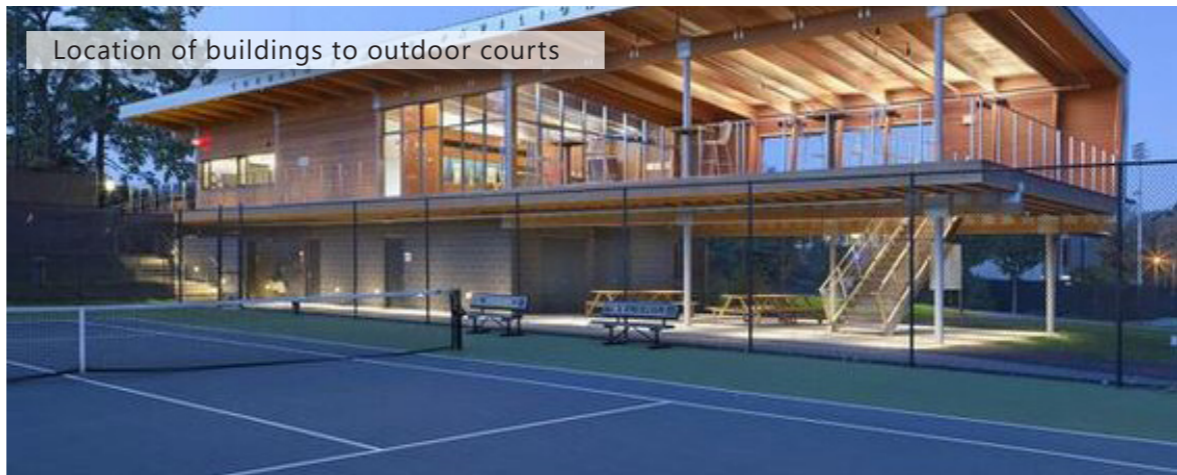


2 level pavilion building designs



Design Opportunities

Location of buildings to outdoor courts



Dedicated cycleways



Integrated active functions



Directional pathways



Accessible water hardscape design



Integrated street furniture



Mixed materials in hardscape areas



Pedestrian bridge design



Outdoor fitness stations



Building designs



River platform opportunity



Design Opportunities

Playspace area



High ropes area



7 Implementation

7.01 Precinct Plan Approach

The Precinct Plan is to guide the planning, development and operations of the precinct for the next 10-15 years. The Precinct Plan remains in place until such time as Moonee Valley City Council decides to review and update the document.

The Precinct Plan sets the parameters for future design of the precinct (vision, objectives, principles, priorities, etc. – all evidence and research based). The potential future precinct design is an illustrative example of how the precinct could look by following the specified parameters.

As has been highlighted through this report, the current interaction and coordination of the many functions of the precinct is sub-optimal and has been the major challenge for its past operations.

It is suggested that a staged approach is taken to address the current issues of the precinct and that the vision and principles are used as a guiding compass for Council decision making over the life of the plan.

An example of how this could be staged is outlined below:

- **High-priority** initiatives to improve safety, community usage and environmental enhancements.
- **Medium priority** initiatives to enhance the operational functionality of the precinct.
- **Additional ideas and considerations**, subject to further planning, feasibility studies and operating considerations.

Implementation will be subject to further feasibility and detailed design work, as well as future Council budgeting processes. Council will continue to work with key partners, including future precinct operators, on improving the precinct in line with the vision and principles.

7.02 Funding Strategy

As there are a number of projects included within the Precinct Plan with varying priority levels. A range of funding opportunities will need to be considered as each project progresses into planning and detailed design phases.

The following table shows the various funding streams that may be used to finance the initiatives proposed in the precinct plan.

Option	Benefits	Implications
Direct Council Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain complete control over project delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competing with other Council projects and priorities.
Co-funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to external commercial expertise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long-term commitment.• Reduced control over project delivery as well as on-going operations.
Government and Other Agency Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large funding opportunities.• Opportunity to access multiple funding grants for a single project.• Increases public profile of the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Subject to identifying suitable grants which align with Precinct Plan time frames.• Significant time and resources required to complete documentation and advocacy.






7 Implementation

7.03 Project Initiatives

A series of project initiatives have been prepared to deliver on the vision for the precinct. They are intended to be indicative with the understanding that a specific scope would be developed for each project, along with feasibility and financial analysis.

Specific initiatives for the golf course are not included in the Precinct Plan however golf course case studies have been prepared to provide ideas to Council for future golf course enhancements. These shall be considered by Council in collaboration with the future operator.

Further development of project initiatives shall be assessed against their flood resilience including capability to recover from inundation.

Key Principles	Suggested Project Initiatives
 Green and Climate Resilient	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Re-vegetate to increase habitat and improve amenity along this existing channel. Explore opportunities for future channel re-wilding.• Protect river bank from erosion, increase habitat and improve amenity with planting and other landscape treatments.• Increase habitat and amenity with new trees and other plantings of native species, including lower plants under the power line.• Stormwater storage and irrigation.
 Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Address the safety issues of errant balls through driving range realignment and upgraded facility.• Improve public safety and maintenance access by relocating the maintenance area closer to Stanford Street and the golf course. Design the maintenance area to be fit for purpose.• Improve functionality and reduce the sound impact to surrounding residential areas by re-aligning the net-ball and tennis courts. Consider introducing landscape screening to reduce light spill.
 Connected and Accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance the walking and cycling trail, including possible realigned channel bridge.• Increase walking and cycling by improving the shared path along the river.• Improve pedestrian and cycling experience and connections within and through the site by formalising the existing road as a central shared space boulevard for pedestrians, cyclists and recreational use (Maintenance vehicle access only).• Explore opportunities to upgrade Pipemakers Bridge.
 Multi-use and Community Focused	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consolidate building facilities within the precinct and investigate opportunity for a new community sports hub for tennis, netball and public toilets.• Investigate the opportunity to relocate high ropes within the site and explore expanding offerings to broaden use and improve utilisation.• Improve the sense of arrival with a new entry and upgraded car park. Provide accessible parking spaces, pedestrian access, bus drop off and bin storage. Underground treated stormwater tank for sports field irrigation to be included, subject to feasibility. Undertake detailed design to protect existing trees.• Rebuild a new consolidated golf facility including quality café/restaurant for precinct users, members club, pro shop and cart storage. Relocate mini golf.
 Functional and High Amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allow for passive recreation by providing a new informal open space area or community green.• Improve community access and views to the river. Explore opportunities for a river viewing platform or terraced and paved areas, and potential re-alignment of existing pedestrian bridge across the channel drain.• Improve amenity and enhance passive recreation by upgrading the existing play and picnic facilities in line with Council's Playspace Plan, incorporating basketball half court, adjacent mown grass open spaces, planting and path connections and upgrades if required. Include pram crossing on Newsom Street.• Enhance amenity and safety with seating and lighting across the precinct, in line with Council policies.• Improve way-finding with improved directional and way-finding signage.• Provide Indigenous cultural and heritage recognition and interpretation in consultation with Wurundjeri representatives.• Find opportunities to increase tree canopy throughout the precinct.

