



DRAFT

SUNBURY PARK MASTER PLAN 2014-2019

February 2014

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1. Executive summary

The Sunbury Park Master Plan has been prepared to provide a framework for enhancing the recreation and environmental opportunities associated with Sunbury Park. In particular, the master plan identifies opportunities to preserve and enhance the ornamental garden and other vegetation features, capitalise on the interesting gully landscape at the western end of the park, provide nature based play and reinstate an area for active play.

The master plan also identifies how opportunities for dog owners will be integrated in line with the recommendations from the *Feasibility Study - Dog Parks in Hume City* report.

The master plan refers to four zones within the park. These zones are:

Zone 1 – the Ornamental Garden and Gully at the western end of the park (adjacent to Jacksons Street)

The key directions proposed for this zone include:

- Consolidation of the area as an ornamental collection of exotic and native tree species with additional plantings throughout to complement existing trees.
- Landscaping to emphasis the appeal of the zone.
- Incorporation of exploratory landscaping and vegetation features that provides children's play and family play.
- Enhanced picnic facilities.
- Seating throughout the zone.
- Sealed pathway from the car park to picnic facilities.
- Visual and vegetation linkages with pathways external to the park.
- Enhanced maintenance regimes taking into account the requirements of a historical and unique natural environment.

Zone 2 – the Woody Grassland and Kick-about area in the open central section of the park

The key directions proposed for this zone include:

- Removal of some trees to reinstate the open ball play/kick-about area.
- Grouped tree plantings to create banks of shade around the kick-about space.
- Landscaping, using rock and sensory vegetation features that create exploration environments for children and dogs.
- Seating throughout the zone.

Zone 3 - the car park and toilet area

The key directions proposed for this zone are:

- Removal of existing toilet block and replacing with new toilets.
- Formalising the car park and upgrade the surface.
- Tree/vegetation plantings along the fence line with the cemetery.
- Provision for occasional access to equestrian area by horse floats.

Zone 4 – 'The Corner' of parkland on the opposite side of Harker Street (to the north-west of the main area of parkland)

The key directions proposed for this zone are:

- Provision of a fenced dog off leash area (dog park) that includes:
 - Low scale landscaping that builds on the natural rock features of the site. This will provide environments that are attractive to dogs e.g. rock scramble areas.
 - Vegetation planting that is robust and non-toxic to dogs.
 - Dog education/training area/equipment.

- Amenities including seating and water.
- More prominent tree and vegetation plantings and low scale landscaping, including rock features that emphasis the pathway through the zone.
- Seating throughout the zone.
- Off street parking.
- Directional signage to pathways and nearby destinations.

Zone 5 – The Equestrian Clubs’ site at the eastern end of the park

The key directions proposed for this zone are:

- Demolition/relocation of existing buildings off the road reserve.
- Incorporate into Sunbury Park with landscaping and vegetation features to create a strong physical and visual link between the park and pathways that connect to Jacksons Creek.

It is estimated a budget of \$639,763 is needed to implement the master plan. Council will stage the implementation of the master plan as follows:

Stage 1 includes the development of the dog park in ‘The Corner’ (eastern end of zone 4) and the relocation/demolition of equestrian club buildings, in line with the requirements of the new lease. The estimated budget for stage 1 is \$207,548.

Stage 2 includes upgrading car parking along Jackson Street, installation of a post and chain fence along Jacksons Street (zone 1) and Harker Street (zone 2), and upgrading of the main car park and replacement of the toilets in zone 3. The estimated budget for stage 2 is \$99,297.

Stage 3 includes significant upgrades to amenities in the Ornamental Garden and Gully (zone 1) with the installation of a larger shelter; addition of BBQ facilities and picnic and seating amenities; and the construction of informal pathways and seating throughout the zone. The estimated budget for stage 3 is \$104,937.

Stage 4 includes landscaping, pathways and seating in the area of ‘The Corner’ (zone 4) that is outside the proposed dog park; landscaping of the ornamental Garden and Gully Area (zone 1) and incorporation of a children’s exploratory/nature area. The estimated budget for stage 4 is \$108,658.

Stage 5 includes significant landscaping, tree planting, installation of seating in the Woody Grassland and Kick-about Area (zone 3) and signage. The estimated budget for stage 5 is \$119,323.

Recommendations

1. Implement the master plan in line with priorities outlined.

Action No.	Description	Zone
1	Dog park and associated works	4
2	Pony Club building demolish/relocation	5
3	Car park and toilets	3
4	Fencing – proposed car park areas and perimeter of park	1-3
5	Furniture – seating, picnic tables, BBQ, litter bin, shelter & signage (Ornamental garden & gully)	1
6	Paths – Tuscan topping paths & boardwalk	1
7	Planting, mulch, & site preparation (Ornamental garden & gully)	1
8	Soil, earthworks, turf, plantings, mulch, furniture, and paths (the corner)	4
9	Signage	1-4
10	Natural play elements	1
11	Kick about area/Woodlands	2

2. Review the maintenance standards for Sunbury Park focusing on the maintenance and protection of the trees and plants in the Ornamental Garden and Gully Area (zone 1); and the management of under growth.
3. Provide a 5-year licence agreement for the Sunbury Pony Club and Sunbury Riding Club to tenant the existing site.
4. Commence discussions with the Sunbury Pony Club and Sunbury Riding Club regarding the clubs' longer-term location needs and associated opportunities. Consideration could be given to co-locating with another club/clubs, amalgamating with another club/s, or relocation of both clubs to a greenfield site.
5. Under take community consultation in relation to the possible renaming of zone 4 ('The Corner) of Sunbury Park
6. Incorporate the site currently occupied by the Sunbury Pony Club and Sunbury Riding Club into Sunbury Park when or if the clubs relocate out of Sunbury Park.

2. Why a Master Plan for the Sunbury Park precinct?

The Sunbury Park Master Plan has been prepared to provide a framework for enhancing recreation and environmental opportunities associated with Sunbury Park. In particular the master plan identifies opportunities to preserve and enhance the ornamental garden and other vegetation features, capitalise on the interesting gully landscape at the eastern end of the park, provide nature based play and reinstate an area for active play.

The master plan also identifies how opportunities for dog owners will be integrated in line with the recommendations from the *Feasibility Study-Dog Parks in Hume City* report.

The precinct includes the parkland generally known as 'Sunbury Park'. The master plan refers to four zones within the park. These zones are:

Zone 1 – the Ornamental Garden and Gully at the eastern end of the park and adjacent to Jacksons Street

Zone 2 – the Woody Grassland and Kick-about area in the open central section of the park

Zone 3 – Car park and toilets

Zone 4 – 'The Corner' of parkland on the opposite side of Harker Street, to the north-west of the main area of parkland

Zone 5 – The Equestrian Clubs' site at the eastern end of the park.

3. About Sunbury Park

3.1 Where is Sunbury Park?

Sunbury Park is located to the south of the Sunbury town centre and approximately 40 kilometres north-west of the Melbourne central business district. The township of Sunbury is separated from the Melbourne urban fringe by approximately 12 kilometres of semi-rural landscape.

3.2 A snapshot history of the Sunbury Park precinct¹

Sunbury Park was gazetted as a 'Public Park and Recreation Reserve' in 1897. It is thought the planting of well-established trees at the western end of the site commenced about this time given the age of the trees.

The way in which the trees were planted indicates there was a layout plan for the plantings, which included cypress, elms, ash, English oak. It is thought some of the original trees were removed when approximately half an acre of the park on the corner of Shields and Jackson Streets was annexed for the town's new power station and engineers house.

In 1926 when Sunbury was connected to the SEC power grid the redundant power station was removed. The original engineer's cottage



Figure 1: Sunbury Park Precinct

¹ Heritage Study of the former Shire of Bulla District, 1998

remains within the boundary of the park.

In the 1920s the Sunbury Progress Association suggested the installation of lights, seats and a fireplace and connection to water to encourage use by locals and visitors. In subsequent years various proposals for the development of the park were voiced but never acted on.

The park originally had timber fencing which was removed and later replaced by post and rail fencing to prevent cars accessing the site. In the 1970's the eastern section of the park was fenced for use by the Sunbury Pony Club.

In 2009 council declared Sunbury Park as a dog off leash park.²

3.3 Management and ownership of the Sunbury Park precinct

Sunbury Park is owned by the Victorian State Government and is classified as 'crown land'. The site is managed and maintained by Council under an agreement with the state government³.

Before any development occurs at Sunbury Park Council will determine if there are any Native Title requirements in relation to the site. Native Title is the recognition by Australian law that some indigenous people have rights and interests to their land that come from their traditional laws and customs.⁴

Native Title is relevant to the site thus Council will need to make application to the Federal Government⁵ if buildings are to be constructed on the site. However, approval is not required if works at Sunbury Park preserve the natural features of the site and only involve landscape works.

3.4 Who uses Sunbury Park?

Sunbury Park does not currently attract a high level of use but is highly regarded by local residents because of its natural features and calm reflective environment. Pedestrians and dog walkers are the most frequent users of the park and most likely to use the park as a link to other destinations. A number of dog walkers visit the park specifically to let dogs run off leash.

The park is used occasionally for picnics and visits by local families and grandparents with children, by nature observers, and by others for relaxation and to enjoy the natural beauty of the site. The park is also used as lunch break wayside stop by workers during the week.

Regular sports or recreation activities occurring at Sunbury Park include equestrian activities and Little Athletics Cross Country events three times a year. The park offers a variety of terrains that are attractive and suitable for junior cross-country competition and the treed areas and toilets provides an appealing setting for spectators.

3.5 Sunbury Pony Club and Sunbury Riding Club

Since 1971 the Sunbury Pony Club has occupied the far eastern end of the precinct under a lease agreement with council. In later years the Sunbury Riding Club joined the pony club as a user of the site. This lease agreement has expired and a new license agreement is being negotiated between the clubs, Council and the Department of Environment and Primary Industries. As part of a new agreement the clubs' buildings must be relocated within the area defined in the license agreement.

Both clubs also use the southern section of the land owned by the Sunbury Cemetery Trust under a 5-year lease agreement. This lease has recently been renewed.

In the longer term the clubs will not have access to the cemetery trust site. The clubs agree that their medium to long term options will need to be reviewed and alternative site options

² Hume Council Local Law 1

³ Department of Environment and Primary Industries/DEPI

⁴ nntt.gov.au/Information-about-native-title/Pages/Nativetitlerightsandinterests

⁵ National Native Title Tribunal

incorporate into the clubs' and Council's planning and budget process. This may include co-tenanting with another equestrian group/s in the region, amalgamating with another group, or relocating to a green field site.

Both clubs have modest memberships of approximately 15 members. The pony club reports it is often difficult to engage instructors because the club is so small. The small membership also means there are generally not enough volunteers to assist on event days and with maintaining and developing facilities.

3.6 Adjoining land uses

The Sunbury Cemetery Trust has an adopted master plan in place for the cemetery. The Master Plan proposes that eucalyptus and pine trees be planted along the cemetery's boundary with Sunbury Park and a water body is also proposed for this area. The Master Plan recommends the sealing of Shields Street, which is currently gravel and does not extend past the park's public toilets.

A new main entrance is proposed halfway along Shields Street, which lies between the park and the cemetery. The Master Plan flags the use of the park's car park for overflow cemetery car parking. There are no toilets at the cemetery although they are proposed in later stages of development. Visitors to the cemetery currently use the toilets at the park.

The southern sector of the cemetery runs parallel with Shields Street. The area is leased to the Sunbury Pony Club who uses the site approximately 11 times a year.

4. Planning considerations relevant to the Sunbury Park precinct

The Sunbury Park Master Plan is informed by a number of important research and planning considerations. The following Council plans and strategies provide valuable base information relating to broad strategic directions for the Sunbury area and for the reserve specifically, and identified the broad recreational and open space needs of Hume residents.

- Hume City Council Plan 2009-2013 (2012 Action Update)
- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2009-2013
- Hume City Open Space Strategy 2010-2015
- Hume City Leisure Strategy 2013-2018
- Playspace Planning Framework and Reference Guide, April 2012
- Hume City Walking and Cycling Strategy 2010-2015
- Hume City Development Principles: Recreation and Community Facilities (2006)
- Sunbury HIGAP Delivery & Infrastructure Strategy 2012
- Sunbury HIGAP Spatial Strategy 2012
- Natural Heritage Strategy 2011-2015
- Hume Planning Scheme – Heritage Overlay schedule
- Feasibility Study – Dog Parks in Hume City 2012
- Sunbury Cemetery Master Plan

4.1 The Hume Open Space Strategy 2010-2015

The Hume Open Space Strategy provides the vision for parks and open space. The Sunbury Park Master Plan has been developed in line with this vision and these principles.

The vision for open space in Hume

Hume will have a diverse range of open spaces that satisfy the needs of people of all ages, cultural backgrounds, and abilities. The open space network will reflect Hume's natural and cultural heritage, protect indigenous flora and fauna, and enhance the visual quality of the urban landscape."

Reference: Hume Open Space Strategy p14

Sunbury Park is not specifically referenced in the Hume Open Space Strategy however for park planning purposes it is recognised as:

- A 'sub-district' level park

These parks generally are 5-6 hectares in area and cater for residents within a 2-3 km catchment. They will generally include a number of different activity spaces, for example playspaces, kick about areas, places for relaxation and reflection, picnic areas, and toilets.

- A 'natural' area

The landscape and plantings at these parks are generally not uniform or formalised and includes shrubs, trees, and exotic or native grassed areas. These parks might also have a role in protecting and enhancing flora, fauna environments, and cultural features. These parks may incorporate opportunities for social activities, informal (e.g. kite flying, ball games) and can provide play features.

The proposed landscape design for the different areas within Sunbury Park and the type of built features proposed will need to be consistent with these directions.

4.2 Draft Playspace Development Plan

Council is preparing a Playspace Management Plan that will guide the type and level of play infrastructure that will be provided at playspaces. The Playspace Management Plan will define:

- the different play opportunities at any one site e.g. playground, ball play area, exploratory landscapes
- whether play environments will include play equipment and if so, the type of play equipment
- whether play environments will include or be mainly natural play environments
- the type of picnic and social infrastructure that may be considered for each site e.g. BBQs, toilets, tables and seats.

Preliminary work for the Playspace Development Plan indicates that a formal playground will not be recommended for Sunbury Park because of the close proximity of the Galaxy playground and The Avenue Reserve playground. However consideration may be given to the inclusion of natural or exploratory playspaces for children as part of the overall landscape design for Sunbury Park. Natural play elements may include plants, trees, edible gardens, sand, rocks, and other natural elements.

4.3 Feasibility study – Dog Parks in Hume City

In 2011 Council identified a number of sites that may be suitable for incorporating a fenced dog park. Sunbury Park was identified as one of these sites because it already has a high level of off-leash activity, it satisfies the planning requirements for a dog park, it has the area to accommodate a dog park and Sunbury has a high level of dog ownership.

The inclusion of a dog park on the sites identified in the Feasibility Study requires additional site-specific consultation. The development of the Sunbury Park Master Plan has included specific consultation about if and how a dog park might be incorporated at the site.

4.4 Naming of Sunbury Park

Records show that 'Sunbury Park' is the title that has been used for many years to define the area of parkland covered by this master plan.

In March 2012 Council received a request to rename zone 4 of Sunbury Park ('The Corner') to 'Vicarage Hill Reserve'. Council sought public feedback on the naming proposal during which several other names were proposed.

Council proposes to undertake further public consultation in relation to the possible renaming of this part of Sunbury Park.

5. Existing Conditions

5.1 Vegetation in Sunbury Park

This section incorporates information from the 'Due Diligence Fauna and Flora Assessment' undertaken in 2013⁶.

Vegetation at Sunbury Park has been developed over time as a botanical collection and comprises a wide variety of tree species from numerous places of origin including:

- Locally indigenous
- Australian native
- Exotic including deciduous and coniferous.

There are also significant remnants of indigenous vegetation and fauna habitat. These include populations of the following rare and threatened plant species:

- Tough Scurf-pea
- Melbourne Yellow Gum
- Pale-flower Crane's-bill
- Rye Beetle-grass
- Small Milkwort
- Matted Flax-lily
- Small Golden Moths

Zone 1 – Ornamental garden and gully

One of the park's most distinctive features is its collection of coniferous species, many of which are very mature with a number demonstrating signs of senescence.

The mature exotic species are primarily located around the slightly incised gully to the west of the park near Jackson Street.

As the mature vegetation declines, dead or poor species have been removed and replaced with trees of a similar species to ensure the character of the western part of the park is retained.

The typical overall health condition of trees in the gully area is poor to fair with the coniferous species generally being of the poorer quality.

⁶ Due Diligence Fauna and Flora Assessment, Biosis, 2013



Image 1: View north to mature, mixed species vegetation along the gully adjacent to Jackson Street



Image 2: Mature Pinus radiata displaying significant damage and lopping associated with maintaining power line clearances



Image 3: Recent planting of Pinus canariensis in the gully

Zone 2 – Woody grassland and kick-about area

The mature planting of the gully slowly transitions, as elevation increases to the east, to a more open landscape setting comprised of rough grassing with evenly spaced plantings of a range of drought tolerant, native, exotic and indigenous species, consistent with the practice to date of establishing a botanical collection of plants. The plants in this area are generally immature and approximately 2 metres in height.



Image 4 - To the east of the gully on more elevated topography, the landscape transitions to an open landscape with recent plantings

The typical overall condition of trees on the upper slope is fair to good, indicative of the immature nature of the planting.

Rare and threatened grasses are most prominent in the kick-about area. The mowing regime should be designed to allow grasses and herbs to flower mainly during spring and set seed mainly during early summer to allow these species to maintain their populations.

Perimeter Planting

The perimeter planting along all boundaries is primarily comprised of mature native and indigenous species, typically Eucalyptus species. These plantings are generally in fair to good condition.



Image 5 - Eucalyptus cladocalyx on the cemetery land, adjacent to the park's southern boundary



Image 6 - Mature planting along the parks northern boundary interface on Harker Street

Zone 4 – ‘The Corner’ / dog park

A heavily treed reserve is located to the north-east of Sunbury Park at the intersection of Harker and Jackson Streets. The gully extends from the main park into ‘the corner’.

Planting is evenly distributed across the reserve and comprises primarily Australian native species with the occasional exotic deciduous species. The trees in the area are generally in fair to good condition.

This area has the lower botanical values but still provides potential habitat for Golden Sun Moth.



Image 8 - View north into ‘the corner’ reserve along the continuation of the gully

Summary

Council has undertaken a detailed condition audit of all trees within the park. The audit indicates that progressive replacement of exotic species will be required if the character of the gully area is to be maintained.

Given the relative immaturity of planting on the upper slopes, future development of Sunbury Park should not necessarily be compromised by the need to retain this vegetation. However, the vegetation of the gully is a significant asset with a distinctive character, which should be managed for its long-term preservation.

The collection of plants in Sunbury Park contributes to the character of ‘ornamental parkland’ rather than a ‘botanic garden’.

Some of the species and communities present at Sunbury Park are listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* and *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Appendix 2 provides an overview of the condition of the trees in Sunbury Park.

Appendix 3 provides an overview of the ecological values of the Sunbury Park study area.

6. The future

6.1 What we want Sunbury Park to be

The following summarises the aspirations for the Sunbury Park precinct as reflected in Council planning documents, through project research, and in discussions with the community and Council staff.

Sunbury Park

A community gathering place:

- where people and nature come together
- with a unique variety of native and exotic trees that supports wildlife
- that is inviting to families, friends, and the pet dog
- with places for running about in, for clambering through, for exploring, and for creating magic places
- with places for quiet chats, daydreaming, or taking in nature
- that has a relaxed and natural appeal.

6.2 Community consultation

Consultation for the project (23 survey respondents and 16 workshop attendees) indicates a real desire for the park to strongly reflect the natural environment and any recommended development be in keeping with these aspirations. The most highly valued features of the site as reflected through the onsite meeting and the project survey (23 respondents) are the quietness of the park (20 survey respondents), the large shady trees and undulating terrain at the western end of the park (19), the park's openness and size (19) and the proximity to places of residence (19).

Survey respondents identified the following as the most important considerations for the Master Plan:

- Improved toilet facilities (17)
- Water (15)
- Minimising built structures, including colourful play equipment for children (15)
- Improved picnic and undercover facilities (12)
- Additional plantings of significant trees at the western end of the reserve, including more large shady trees (12)
- Improving maintenance standards (11)
- Better trails and paths leading to the park (11)
- Tracks and trails in the park to walk around and where children can ride bikes (10).

One of the challenges for the project was to find a site within the park to accommodate a fenced dog off leash area. The project attracted varying opinions in relation to the need for a fenced area for dog off leash activities and, the location for such an area.

Refer to Appendix 3 for a summary of consultation.

6.3 Planning zones within Sunbury Park and general features for each zone

Sunbury Park is a site that is approximately 5.7 hectares, which includes the main park (4.7 hectares) and the 'corner' of parkland to the north of Harker Street (1 hectare). For the purpose of the master plan five zones have been identified. The zones correspond to the different landscape features of the site.

The key directions proposed for each of the five zones and rationale for these directions is discussed below.

Options for incorporating additional opportunities and environments, including a fenced dog off leash area is considered separately in section 5.3.1.

Zone 1 – The ornamental garden and gully (western end of the main park)

This is an area of 1.95 hectares and is defined by the plantings of local indigenous trees, Australian native trees, and exotic trees including elms and English oaks and the gully that traverses the zone from north to south between Harker Street and Shields Street. The former engineers cottage, now privately owned, is in the southern sector of the zone. Basic picnic infrastructure including picnic tables and a very small shelter are also located in this area.

- Key directions proposed for zone 1:
 - Consolidation of the zone as an ornamental collection of exotic and native tree species with additional plantings throughout the zone to complement existing trees.
 - Landscaping throughout the zone, but particularly in the gully, using rock and low scale landscape features to emphasis the appeal of the zone.
 - The incorporation of exploratory landscaping and vegetation features that provides for children's play and development, and family play e.g. clambering rock areas, sensory vegetation, trees for climbing and hills for rolling down.
 - Enhanced picnic facilities to include additional picnic settings including wheelchair accessible seating, BBQ facilities, a larger shelter suitable for large family gatherings and small community events.
 - Seating throughout the zone (backs and arm rests).
 - Sealed pathway to picnic facilities from the car park to assist accessibility.
 - Visual and vegetation linkages with popular walking routes, particularly along Shields Street and over Harker Street through 'the corner' (refer zone 3).
 - Enhanced maintenance regimes that take into account requirements of a historical and unique natural environment.
- The rationale for the proposed directions:
 - The western end of the park is well used, attractive and highly regarded because of the unique collection of trees, gently sloping terrain and natural open gully. The area reflects the changing seasons, cool and shady in summer, and colourful and playful in autumn.
 - The trees are unique to the park and Sunbury's history. There is opportunity to enhance the zone with additional and complementary plantings of trees and native vegetation to attract more birdlife into the park.
 - The zone is particularly attractive for sitting and picnics, however the existing picnic facilities are very basic and the shelter very small. Enhanced facilities would increase use of the park and benefit existing activities such as the Sunbury Little Athletics cross country events.
 - Enhanced access from the car park to facilities such as the picnic area and toilets will make the park more accessible for people with restricted mobility and for parents/carers with prams.
 - The park is a popular thoroughfare for people walking to and from destinations in the area. By strengthening vegetation and tree planting along streets and pathways leading to and from the park, creates natural signposts indicating pathways and walking routes.
 - Existing maintenance standards do not reflect the significance of the heritage listed trees, the unique nature of the environment and the importance of the site to the local community.

Zone 2 – Woody grassland and kick-about area (central to the main park)

This is an area of 2.7 hectares and is defined by open grassland interspersed with plantings of young stand-alone trees (native and exotic species) throughout.

- Key directions proposed for zone 2:
 - Removal of some trees to reinstate the open ball play, kite flying, kick-about area.
 - Grouped tree plantings to create banks of shade around the new open kick-about space, to green the area and to create outdoor spaces which are defined by the plantings.
 - Landscaping throughout the zone using rock and sensory vegetation features that create exploration environments for children and dogs.
 - Seating throughout the zone (backs and arm rests) in shade areas.
- The rationale for the proposed directions:
 - In the past the area was a popular family venue for activities such as kite flying, running about and playing with balls. The planting of trees in this zone over the past 5 years removed the opportunity for these activities. Many of the trees are small and in poor condition so their removal would not be create a significant environmental or visual impact. Proposed tree and vegetation plantings around the perimeter of the open area will significantly enhance the zone and offset the removal of these trees.
 - The area is open with very sparse vegetation and no shelter from seasonal weather conditions. As a result this zone is primarily used for dog walking and as a thoroughfare.
 - The area is popular for off leash dog activities but has limited sensory environments for dogs. A number of dog walkers take their dogs to the adjoining cemetery/pony club area because it is fenced and it has different sensory attractions (e.g. rubber car tyres, horse scents) on site.
 - The possible inclusion of dog education/agility equipment provides an additional focus for dog owners in terms of dog obedience training and confidence development activities. This would complement the exploratory and sensory features in the zone that are provided through appropriate landscaping and vegetation plantings.

Zone 3 – Car park and toilet area

- Key directions proposed for zone 3
 - Remove existing toilet block and replacing with new toilets.
 - Formalising of the car park including the upgrading of the surface and the addition of fencing. Consider sealing in the future.
 - Tree/vegetation plantings along the fence line with the cemetery.
 - Provision for horse floats to occasionally access the equestrian area.
- The rationale for the proposed directions:
 - To minimise the opportunity for inappropriate/anti-social activities that occur around the old and poorly designed and located toilets.

Zone 4 – ‘The Corner’ of parkland on the opposite side of Harker Street (north-west of the main park)

This is an area of approximately 1.0 hectare and provides a link to ‘the Nook’, which is part of the Jacksons Creek regional parklands.

- Key directions proposed for zone 4:
 - Provision of a fenced dog off leash area (dog park) that includes:
 - Low scale landscaping that is attractive to dogs will build on the natural rock features of the site e.g. rock scramble areas.

- Vegetation that is robust and non-toxic to dogs
 - Dog education/training area/equipment
- Amenities including seating and water
- More prominent tree and vegetation plantings and low scale landscaping, including rock features that emphasis the pathway through the zone.
- Off street car parking in Harker Street.
- Directional signage to pathways and nearby destinations, including Sunbury town centre and other dog off leash areas such as 'The Nook'.
- The rationale for the proposed directions:
 - Tree/vegetation planting and landscaping to strengthen the visual connection of the zone with Sunbury Park (zones 1, 2 and 3).
 - Creation of an alternative sitting area.

Zone 5 – Equestrian clubs' site (far eastern end of the main park)

This area of the park is occupied by the Sunbury Pony Club and Sunbury Riding Club. This is an area of approximately 0.92 hectares.

- Key directions proposed for zone 5:
 - Demolition/relocation of existing buildings.
 - Explore alternative avenues for the equestrian clubs long term location needs.
 - In the long term incorporate into Sunbury Park appropriate landscape and vegetation features to create a strong physical and visual link between the park and pathways that connect to Jacksons Creek.

All zones - A summary of considerations that applies to the park as a whole

- Facilities that encourage more people to use the reserve will in turn increases passive surveillance and lessen the likelihood of antisocial behaviour.
- Appropriate provision for car parking and treatment of roadsides along Jackson and Harker Streets. The roadside areas often become deformed and muddy because there is no drainage/guttering. Increased use of the reserve will exacerbate this issue.

5.3.1 Provision for dogs

Hume City Council⁷ has designated zones 1, 2, and 3 of Sunbury Park as a dog off leash area. This means dogs are allowed to run off leash but dog owners are required to have their dog/s under effective voice control at all times.

In 2011 Council completed the *Feasibility Study-Dog Parks in Hume City*. The purpose of the project was to find sites that could best accommodate fenced dog off leash areas to complement existing unfenced dog off leash environments. Consideration was given to finding locations within each of the planning districts.

The benefits of fenced dog parks over unfenced dog off leash areas include: new or young dog owners learning to manage their dogs; training and socialising of young or uneducated dogs; older or less mobile people who still want to enjoy the outdoors with the security to manage their dogs.

A list of parks that have the potential to accommodate a dog park was prepared. These parks were assessed in line with key open space and dog park planning criteria.

⁷ Hume City Council Local Law No.1

Six sites in Hume went through a primary and secondary evaluation process⁸. These sites included Sunbury Park and 'the Nook' at Jacksons Creek Reserve. The Nook was not recommended for further consideration because of the lack of space and the gradient of the site.

Sunbury Park presents a realistic opportunity to provide the residents of Sunbury with access to a fenced dog off leash area.

On-site consultation carried out for the master plan indicates there are some local residents who do not support the concept of a fenced area for dogs in Sunbury Park. However, if a fenced dog off leash area was to be incorporated into the precinct, the preference was for the fencing of part of 'the corner' (zone 4 of the master plan)⁹.

There was support for the incorporation of features at the eastern end of the reserve that would provide for both dog and human play and exploration. These features include rock scramble areas, vegetation features and other sensory features.

Other feedback and submissions shows support for a fenced dog off leash area in the precinct. Some residents attending the onsite consultation use the adjoining fenced cemetery area with their dogs because it is secure, and has a sensory environment associated with other animal activity and pony club structures e.g. old car tyres.

However, the Sunbury Cemetery Trust will eventually use the land as a cemetery. Therefore consideration should be given to preserving the opportunity for a fenced dog off leash area in the precinct.

As part of the project the following options for incorporating additional sensory and educational environments for dogs in the precinct, including a fenced dog off leash area, were considered.

- Option 1 - A fenced dog off leash area in the south-east corner of zone 2 (Woody Grassland and Kick-about zone), which is on the western side of the boundary fence shared with the equestrian clubs.

This is not a recommended option because it would require the fencing of a large area of the zone in order to create an effective dog park.

- Option 2 - A fenced dog off leash area in zone 5 (area occupied by the equestrian clubs) once they vacate the site.

This is not a recommended option because the clubs are unlikely to vacate the site in the near future.

- Option 3 - The incorporation of environmental play and exploratory features for people and dogs surrounding the proposed open 'kick about' area in zone 2.

This is a recommended option because it caters for a range of opportunities including informal seating (rocks/rock seats) and gathering places across the zone, rock scramble features/sensory environments for children that can be observed from the picnic area in zone 1 and rock scramble features/sensory environments for people with dogs.

The placement of these features at each 'corner' of the open area also defines the space and creates a more embracing space that attracts people up into the zone from other zones in the park.

- Option 4 - A fenced dog off leash area within zone 4 (the corner)

This is a recommended option because any fencing will not impact on the amenity of the site, and there are no other regular activities occurring in this section of the park. Fencing would be to the east of the pathway that traverses through the zone. The site is also large enough to provide for the key components of a dog park.

- Options three and four have been incorporated into the master plan because together they:

⁸ Feasibility Study-Dog Parks in Hume City, 2011, p13

⁹ Refer zone 4 in section 6.4.1

- make provision for a fenced dog off leash area on 'the corner/zone 4, an area that is away from the main park. This means the size of the open kick-about area/zone 2 does not have to be reduced in order to incorporate the fenced dog off leash area. It also means zone 2/woody grassland and kick-about zone retains its openness.
- Include landscaping that gives shape or definition to zone 2/woody grassland and kick-about zone and creates environments for casual sitting and exploratory play for both people and dogs. It also increases natural shade in the zone with the proposed additional tree planting.

7. Concept plan and cost estimates

7.1 Concept Plan

The site concept plan on the following page provides an overview of the development and enhancements proposed for Sunbury Park.

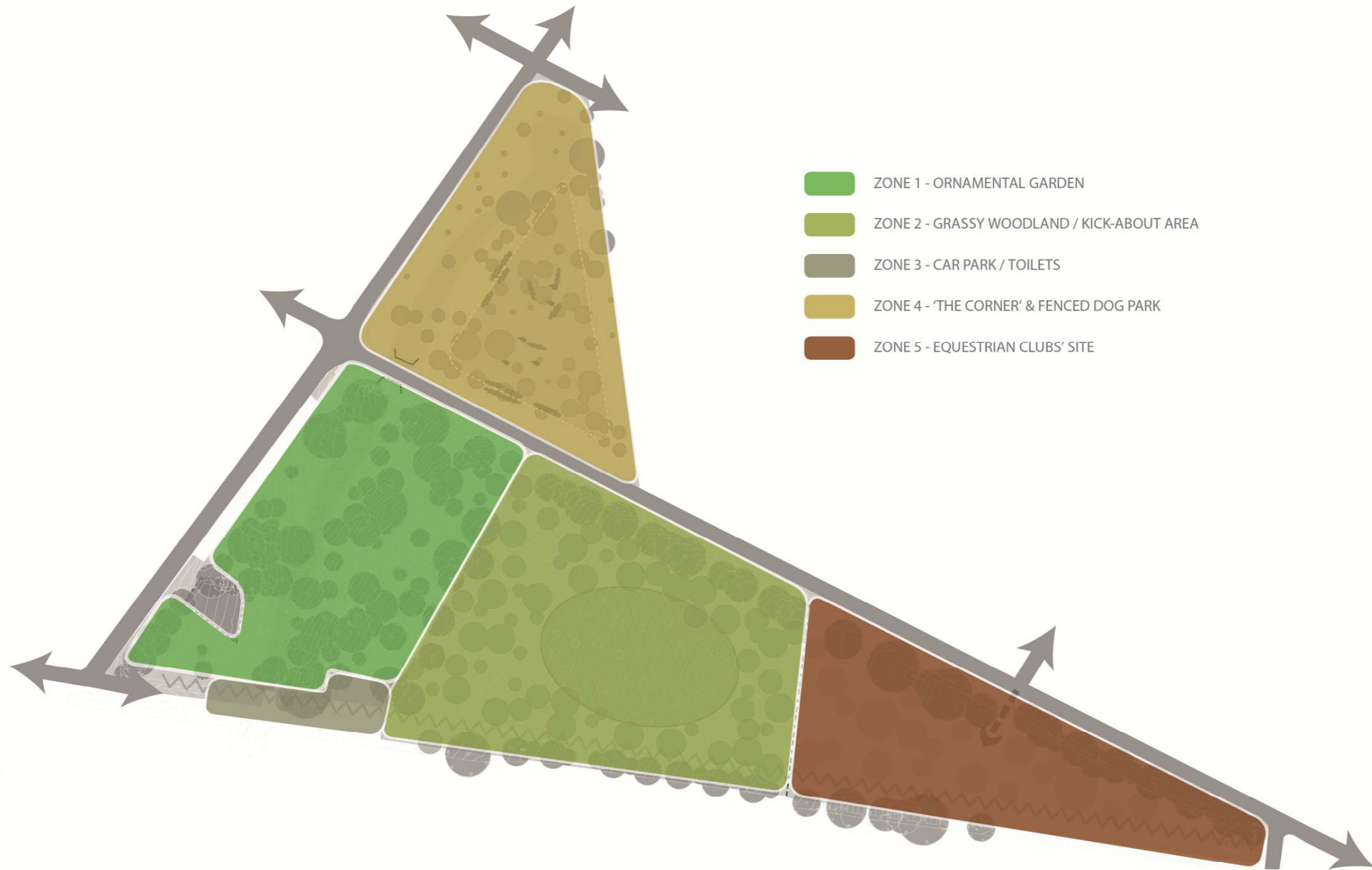
DESIGN FEATURES:

- Design features reinforce the entire park being a family and dog friendly environment
- Landscape and vegetation features that build on the attractive setting of the ornamental garden and gully area (zone 1). To include natural rock features, additional plantings (including bird attracting species) upgraded social and picnic facilities, and the incorporation of children's nature based play zone
- A fenced dog park, landscaping and additional seating along the pathway on 'the corner' (zone 4)
- The reinstatement of the open runabout/ kickabout area (zone 2) and landscaping around the perimeter of the zone to provide informal seating and exploratory features (rocks/vegetation) for people and dogs.
- The retention of the equestrian area for club activities in the short to medium term. If clubs relocate, then vegetation and plantings will visually connect and link the zone to the rest of the park.
- The upgrading of the car parking and access road and replacement of the toilet block with appropriately designed toilets.
- The retention of the cross-country running courses to incorporate park design elements.
- The strengthening of pathway links through to the reserve.



HUME CITY COUNCIL SUNBURY PARK MASTER PLAN DRAFT CONCEPT PLAN





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SUNBURY PARK MASTER PLAN
DRAFT CONCEPT PLAN



7.2 Cost estimates

It is estimated that a budget of \$639,763 will be required to implement the master plan. It is proposed Council will stage the implementation of the master plan as follows:

Stage 1 includes the development of the dog park in 'The Corner' (eastern end of zone 4) and the relocation/demolition of equestrian club buildings in line with the requirements of the new lease, in zone 5.

Stage 2 includes upgrading the car parking along Jackson Street, installation of a post and chain fence along Jacksons Street (zone 1) and Harker Street (zone 2), upgrading of the main car park and replacing the toilets in zone 3.

Stage 3 includes significant upgrades to amenities in the Ornamental Garden and Gully (zone 1) with the installation of a larger shelter; addition of BBQ facilities and picnic and seating amenities; and the construction of informal pathways and seating throughout the zone.

Stage 4 includes landscaping, pathways and seating in the area of 'The Corner' (zone 4) that is outside the proposed dog park; landscaping of the ornamental Garden and Gully Area (zone 1) and incorporation of a children's exploratory/nature area.

Stage 5 includes significant landscaping, tree planting, installation of seating in the Woody Grassland and Kick-about Area (zone 3) and signage.

TABLE 1: COST ESTIMATES

Priority No.	Action No.	Description	Zone	Priority Year	Estimated \$	Total \$
1	1	Dog park and associated works	4	2014/15	\$162,668	\$207,548
	2	Pony Club building demolish/relocation	5	2014/15	\$44,880	
	SUB TOTAL – STAGE 1					
2	3	Car park and toilets	3	2015/16	\$61,037	\$99,297
	4	Fencing –car park, perimeter of park and refurbish fencing b/w pony club site & main park	1-3,5	2015/16	\$38,260	
	SUB TOTAL – STAGE 2					
3	5	Furniture – seating, picnic tables, BBQ, litter bin, shelter & signage (Ornamental garden & gully)	1	2016/17	\$77,530	\$104,937
	6	Paths – Tuscan topping paths & boardwalk	1	2016/17	\$27,407	
	SUB TOTAL – STAGE 3					
4	7	Planting, mulch, & site preparation (Ornamental garden & gully)	1	2017/18	\$74,859	\$108,658
	8	Soil, earthworks, turf, plantings, mulch, furniture, and paths (the corner)	4	2017/18	\$33,798	
	SUB TOTAL – STAGE 4					
5	9	Signage	1-4	2018/19	\$18,738	\$119,323
	10	Natural play elements	1	2018/19	\$29,396	
	11	Kick about area/Woodlands	2	2018/19	\$71,189	
	SUB TOTAL – STAGE 5					\$119,323
	TOTAL COSTS (Ex GST)					\$639,763

8. How did we go about the project?

The following steps were taken to prepare the master plan:

- Review of Council documents relevant to the project, and in particular those documents that establish the framework council uses to plan parks and urban areas. These included the Open Space Strategy, the Feasibility Study – Dog Parks in Hume and various urban and asset planning documents.
- A review of relevant consultation undertaken for other council projects/research
- Meetings and workshops with council staff and consultation with state government representatives.

- Community survey, meeting, interviews and submissions.
- Assessment of the site.
- Collection of information relating to the management and ownership of the park.
- Analysis project research and review opportunities and challenges associated with the site.
- Preparation of a concept plan and cost estimates.

9. Implementing and reviewing the master plan

The timing of various tasks outlined in the master plan may vary depending on a number of factors including:

- the capacity of the community to raise local funds
- the availability of state and federal government grants
- the availability of council grants and other competing council budget items and
- changing community priorities and needs

The cost items in the master plan are estimates only. Final costs will be subject to the final scope of works approved/agreed and detailed design findings. They will also vary depending on fluctuations in the price in materials and labour, access to volunteer labour and in-kind support, and environmental conditions identified as part of detailed design process.

The master plan should be reviewed every two years to ensure the proposals in the master plan are still relevant to the community and to identify additional opportunities.

10. How have we determined the priorities for the Sunbury Master Plan?

The following considerations have influenced the priorities for the Sunbury Master Plan:

- The opportunity to enhance recreation, social and environmental values and opportunities at the park.
- The opportunity to address risk management or amenity issues at the park.
- The opportunity to address the findings or recommendations of other council planning documents, including the *Feasibility Study-Dog Parks in Hume City*.
- The need to address matters of non-conformity, for example, those relating to existing tenancy arrangements.

Priorities will be reviewed before detailed planning commences for each stage of development. This will identify if priorities have changed or if there is a need to consider additional opportunities or issues associated with the park.

11. Recommendations

1. Implement the master plan in line with priorities outlined.

Action No.	Description	Zone
1	Dog park and associated works	4
2	Pony Club building demolish/relocation	5
3	Car park and toilets	3
4	Fencing –car park and perimeter of park	1-3
5	Furniture – seating, picnic tables, BBQ, litter bin, shelter & signage (Ornamental garden & gully)	1
6	Paths – Tuscan topping paths & boardwalk	1
7	Planting, mulch, & site preparation (Ornamental garden & gully)	1
8	Soil, earthworks, turf, plantings, mulch, furniture, and paths (the corner)	4
9	Signage	1-4
10	Natural play elements	1
11	Kick about area/Woodlands	2

2. Review the maintenance standards for Sunbury Park with particular attention to the maintenance and protection of the trees, plants in the Ornamental Garden and Gully Area (zone 1); and the management of under growth.
3. Provide a 5-year licence agreement for the Sunbury Pony Club and Sunbury Riding Club to tenant their existing site.
4. Commence discussions with the Sunbury Pony Club and Sunbury Riding Club regarding the clubs' longer-term location needs and associated opportunities. Consideration could be given to co-locating with another club/clubs, amalgamating with another club/s, or relocation of both clubs to a greenfield site.
5. Under take community consultation in relation to the possible renaming of zone 4 ('The Corner) of Sunbury Park
6. Incorporate the site currently occupied by the Sunbury Pony Club and Sunbury Riding Club into Sunbury Park when or if the clubs relocate out of Sunbury Park.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Documents reviewed for the project

Document 1 – Hume City Council Open Space Strategy 2010 - 2015

Document 2 – Hume City Leisure Strategy 2013-2018

Document 3 – Sunbury HIGAP Spatial Strategy, July 2012

Document 4 – Sunbury HIGAP Delivery & Infrastructure Strategy, July 2012

Document 5 – Sunbury Cemetery Master Plan 2003

Document 6 – Heritage Study VI4 Part 5 1998 Sunbury Park

Appendix 2 – Overview of the condition of trees at Sunbury Park



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Appendix 4 – A summary of consultation

Section 1 – Sunbury Park Master Plan community consultation (14/9/2013) summary notes

The following provides a summary of the key points of discussion from the consultation.

Gully / ornamental garden area

- Maintenance of vegetation
 - Trees are suffering from a lack of proper maintenance over a long period.
 - Maintenance levels overall need increasing.
 - Grass under low hanging branches can be a fire hazard.
- Vegetation/Wildlife
 - Opportunity to increase vegetation/trees that attracts wildlife, particularly birds, back into the park/area.
 - Bird life is disappearing. Eucalyptus trees important habitat for birds.
- Children's play
 - Kids collect pine cones and love playing in the autumn leaves.
 - Would be good to have a nature exploratory play / natural play area for young children.
 - No formal play equipment needed. Need to maintain natural features of the park. Play features should be incorporated into landscaping using natural features.
- Picnic and social facilities
 - The existing shelter is too small and does not have any seating or tables under it.
 - BBQ facilities would be good and additional seating and tables.
 - Facilities are well located such that parents can monitor children over a large area
 - Toilets need upgrading.
 - Access to water needed for people and dogs.
- Community information/education
 - Sign post trees with common names & significance.
- Other comments
 - Gully floods after rain.

Grassland area

- It was better before trees were planted throughout the area because kids could fly kites and play kick-about. The trees have restricted these activities. Important to have an open kick-a-bout area
- Maintain openness
- Create pockets of vegetated areas/sheltered areas/features where people can sit, dogs can explore and/or kids can explore
- Need pockets of trees for shade. Seating under trees is required

'The triangle' (on the opposite corner)

- Dogs/dog park
 - If a formal/fenced dog park is to be considered at the park it should be in the triangle here and not in the main section of the park.
 - Lots of people let their dogs off leash here and dogs love running up and down the sloping terrain.
 - Area for car parking along Harker Street.
- Additional seating would be good in this area
- It is a linkage through to 'the Nook' and other off-leash areas

Dog activities

- Retain the whole park as an off-leash park, except for any area that is developed as a play area for children.
- The main park should not have a fenced dog park but rather environments and features that are attractive to both dogs and people e.g. rock scramble areas, sensory vegetation, clusters of vegetation and informal dog environments using interesting vegetation.
- If a fenced dog park is to be developed consider the 'corner'.
- Some dog owners often take their dogs into the equestrian/cemetery area because it is fenced/partially fenced and has things for dogs to smell and investigate around.
- Recognised that parkland/children's activity needs can conflict with off-leash dog activities. However overwhelming support was to retain the park as an off-leash area apart from any children's activity area.
- Consider dog waste bag dispensers and bins.

General/other comments

- Retain the 'undeveloped' low key nature of the park
- Traffic Management
 - Cars get into 'the triangle' also, needs fencing.
 - Harker Road needs speed restraining measures. Traffic assessment has been conducted.
 - Car parking area floods, gravel washes away – needs upgrade.
- Fencing/boundary barriers
 - Fencing important to keep cars out. Fencing needs to be discrete
 - Consider hedge planting as fencing to perimeter
- Anti-social behaviour/security
 - Litter, drug use, dumped rubbish common
 - Toilets attract inappropriate behaviour
- Other users/potential users
 - Sunbury Little Athletics Centre
 - The three course layouts have been received and will be referred to during the design phase of the project
 - The three events attract over 100 children and in excess of 70 cars
 - Participants come from across Melbourne. Site is a favourite cross country course
 - Enhanced shelter and picnic facilities and play features incorporated into the natural environment would be an added attraction for families
 - Sunbury Pony Club
 - The pony club would like to use park and incorporate a course once a year for an event. They would like access to the gully area but recognises the area would become chopped up.
 - Connections to and from the park
 - Good to have visual and pathway connections to/with the cemetery, asylum site etc.

Note post meeting investigation

A further examination of 'the corner' site (zone 4) indicates it may have the capacity to accommodate a small fenced dog off leash area.

Section 2 – Submissions to the project

Submission 1 – Summary of a letter from Harker Street resident 22/09/13:

Summary:

- Visitors to Sunbury Park and Sunbury Cemetery should experience ‘boundary integration’ physically, botanically and with the built environment.
- Sunbury Park should use recycled water.
- Council and Sunbury Pony Club should work together to identify a preferred site to relocate the Pony Club once the lease with the cemetery expires.
- Park users include dogs & their walkers, joggers, bikes riders, kite flying, game games, walkers, groups picnicking and the Little Athletics Club.
- Flexibility of use for the park is important.
- Consider designs that lower maintenance costs.
- Establish a Sunbury Park trust fund.
- Establish a ‘Friends of Sunbury Park’ group.
- If the engineer’s cottage becomes for sale, Council should consider purchasing the property and use as an interpretive center/café.
- Flora and Fauna are common in the main park area. Council should consider removing recent plantings which remain stunted.
- Park planning and development for recreational and leisure needs are given precedence over exclusive use for any one activity.
- The Sunbury Park Master Plan should show a vision for the entire site, including staged development, timelines and indicative cost estimates.

Submission 2 – Summary letter from a member of the Sunbury Obedience Dog Club:

Summary:

- A dog park at Sunbury Park would allow my dogs to run free within a controlled environment.
- The community with dogs would be able to train their dogs using the agility equipment.

Submission 3 – Summary letter from Sunbury & District Obedience Dog Club

Summary:

- Sunbury & district Obedience Dog Club have discussed the proposed dog park at Sunbury Park with club members, who regard the proposal as an asset to the area.
- The facility would enhance safety, be beneficial to our members and their dogs and facilitate additional training.
- Fencing should be minimised and concealed by appropriate planting.

Section 3 - Submissions received as part of the Feasibility Study Dog Park in Hume City relevant to the Sunbury Park Master Plan

Submission 1 – Response from Department of Sustainability and Environment 22/2/2012 feasibility study

Summary:

- DSE was asked to comment on the feasibility study conducted in 2012.
- The reserve is Crown land temporarily reserved for public land and recreation. It is managed by Hume City Council.
- DSE has no objections to the proposed dog park
- Regulations however state dogs must be on leash.
- Victorian Government Gazette 11 April 1984, regulation 10:
 - No person shall cause, suffer or permit any dog belonging to him or in his charge- a) to be brought into or enter or remain in the reserve unless such dog is and continues to be at all times under proper control on a chain, cord or leash, and is effectively restrained from causing annoyance to any person and from damaging or interfering in any way with any property of the reserve.
- If council would like the reserve to remain off-leash a request to amend the regulations by an Order in Council, which must then be gazetted in the Victorian Government Gazette in accordance with Section 13(4) of the *Crown Land Reserves Act 1978*. DSE will need to be consulted.
- Native title has not been extinguished for this land and native title assessment will be required for any structures needing to be built to meet *Native Title Act 1993* requirements.

Submission 2 – Summary of a letter from Harker Street resident 6/02/2012

Summary:

- Support the provision of a dog park.
- Has known the park for 52 years.
- Feel personal duty to maintain park for enjoyment and recreational use.
- Currently used by many and varied groups.
- Challenges of the site include rubbish, graffiti, dog faeces, undesirable behaviour around the public toilets, ageing trees, lack of watering facilities, pony club outgrowing their site (which includes part of the cemetery extension) and increased usage due to population growth.
- A Master Plan of Sunbury Park is required to determine the parks function and infrastructure requirements.
- A Master Plan should include a planned replacement of ageing trees to ensure botanical diversity.
- Will the park remain off-leash if a dog park is established?

Submission 3 – Response from Sunbury and District Obedience Dog Club on the feasibility study conducted in 2011

Summary:

- The club strongly supports the development of a fenced dog park at Sunbury Park and suggests the facility would be well used by the club's members and the general public
- Notes the success of dog parks in other municipalities
- Supports any site that Council determines to incorporate a dog park but asks if consideration could be given to the Emu Bottom wetlands.

Submission 4 – Sunbury Little Athletics Centre (LAC) Inc 5/03/2012 summary:

Summary:

Cross Country Course – Jackson St Reserve, Sunbury



Cross Country Course – Jackson St Reserve, Sunbury



Cross Country Course – Jackson St Reserve, Sunbury



- The maps provide the layout of the athletics club cross country courses.
- Sunbury LAC focuses on family friendly events.
- The Cross Country course at Sunbury Park is considered by most participants to be an excellent course offering a hilly and treed challenging trail that represents the essence of cross country running.
- Do not oppose the proposal to install a dog park at Sunbury Park.
- The needs of the club to be considered include:
 - Location of cross-country courses, which are used for three events per year.
 - Access to toilets and rotunda area.
 - Allow for the use of the starting gun.
- Advantages of proposal include:
 - The dog park would increase park usage and dissuade unsavoury types.
 - Increased usage should see park maintenance increased.
 - The possible relocation of the dog obedience club, if the proposal goes ahead, will remove the current need to reschedule events that run past 1pm at Boardman Reserve to Sundays.
- Are open to improvements to the park and would like to continue to be consulted throughout the process.

Submission 5 – Letter from Sunbury and District Obedience Dog Club Inc 27/03/2012,

Summary:

- This letter was provided in response to a meeting with council officers
- Strong support for a dog park in Sunbury both for their members and the public
- If Sunbury Park is not an option then request that consideration be given to Emu Bottom wetlands, an existing off-leash area which is used extensively

Submission 6 – Native Title Extinguishment summary

Summary:

- As public works will be required to erect fences or earthworks in Sunbury Park, the question of whether native title is active is important.
- Certain situations in existence before 1 January 1994 would have caused native title to have been extinguished e.g. leases granted for exclusive use or public works. This is not the case for Sunbury Park. DSE (in another letter) has identified that native title has not been extinguished.
- Refer to National Native Title Tribunal www.nntt.gov.au for further information.