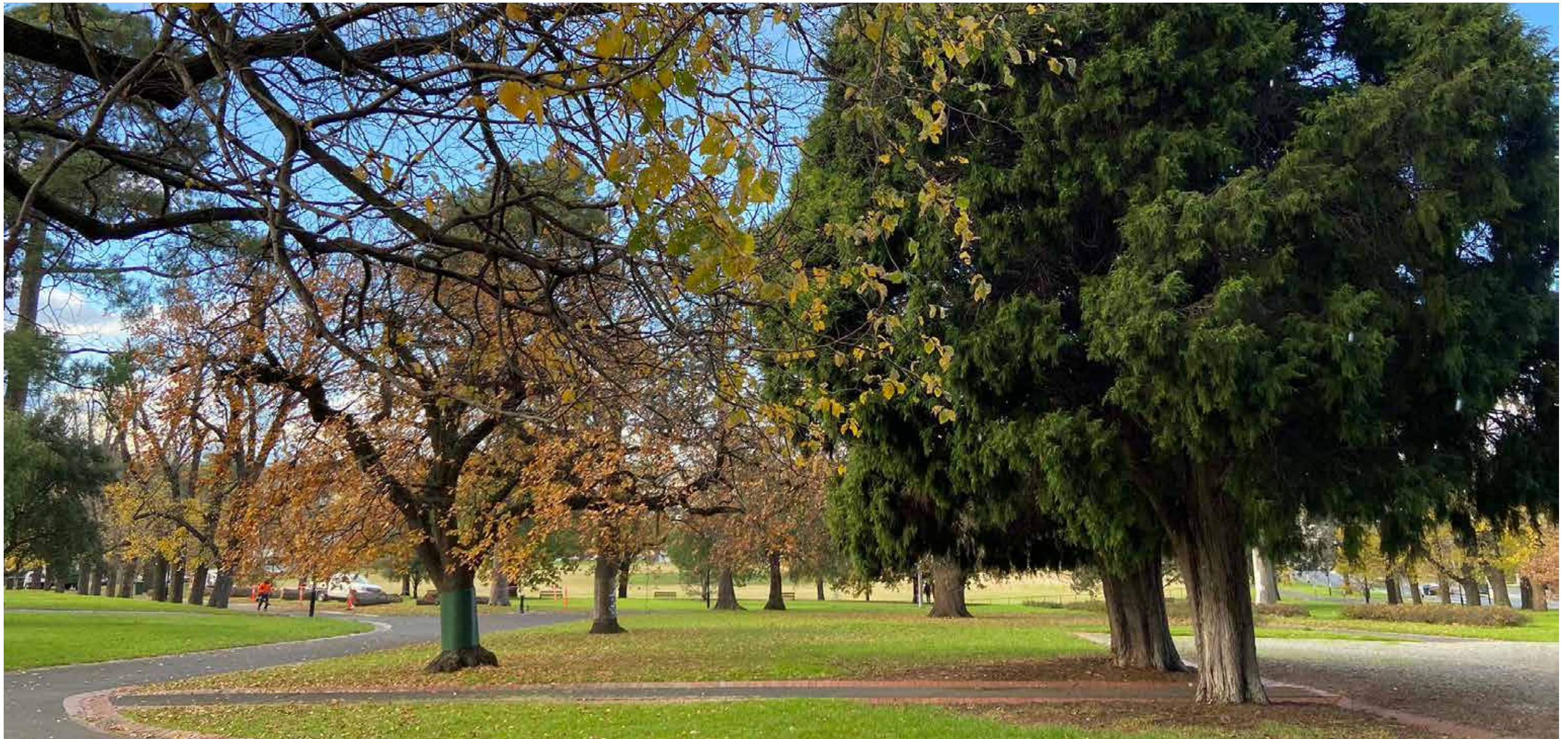


St James Park Master Plan

Draft for community feedback, November 2023



Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Boroondara acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and original Custodians of this land, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

Prepared for:

The City of Boroondara

Prepared by:

Environmental Sustainability and Open Spaces – Open Space Strategic Design team

In collaboration with Internal Project Control Group (PCG) made up of council officers from the following departments:

- Environmental Sustainability and Open Spaces
- Trees Team
- Parks Team
- Environmental Sustainability
- Open Space Strategic Design
- Health and Wellbeing Services
- Sports and Recreation
- Customer and Transformation
- Strategic Communications

Responsible directorate: Environmental Sustainability and Open Spaces, Places & Spaces

Authorised by: <Council or ELT>

Date of adoption: <Date>

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Figure 1. View north-west towards war memorial (carpet roses)

2.0 Executive summary

2.1 Background summary

Through the recommendations drawn up in this master plan (MP), council's management and planning of St James Park will conserve its significant heritage and ensure the community's recreational uses for current and future generations are met. The MP also explores future uses of the disused pétanque green and provides direction on how this space can best be used to meet the community's needs.

Background research, heritage advice, site analysis (to identify issues and opportunities), community engagement and review of council strategies and policies, underpin this MP.



Figure 2. View eastwards of St James Park, c. 1906

Source: State Library Victoria, Accession No: H2016.26/518

A number of key background observations have been identified:

- St James Park has significant heritage value and is one of Boroondara's oldest parks, being over 160 years old
- the park is a highly visited park in Hawthorn, and its treed open spaces are greatly treasured by the community
- recreational use of the park is both structured and informal: organised sports and informal passive recreation such as dog walking, exercising, walking, relaxing, picnicking and a place for children to play. The provision of space for passive and active activities is equally important to the community
- the historic elm avenues are deteriorating and need management and renewal
- to ensure successful renewal of the avenues, replacing 'like with like' is not always an option due to our changing climate, and an alternative resilient species is required for some avenues where they are more exposed to harsh weather
- the disused pétanque green is a rare opportunity to provide additional open space, which is particularly important with increasing housing density in the area
- the existing amenities in the park need improving, such as the outdated park furniture
- existing garden bed plantings do not complement the heritage character of the park.

2.2 Consultation summary

The first stage of community engagement was undertaken to understand how the community currently use the park, to identify any issues and to learn what the community value. The community were also invited to have their say on some tree renewal decisions, for example, choosing their preferred replacement tree from a shortlist of suitable elm replacements and the staging method of tree removals.

In summary, we heard that the community:

- treasured the park as a 'green oasis' in an urban environment
- supported the proposed tree removals and were keen to have the avenues and trees managed for future generations' enjoyment and for the health of the natural environment
- (the majority) preferred to have the former pétanque green used as an active space, e.g. a small basketball/netball court integrated with green spaces and small seating areas.

'My husband has memories of a rotunda that he used to play on, which was located further down on the grass [Burwood Road side] from the War memorial. It was taken down sometime in the 60s we think.'

'I watched sulfur-crested cockatoos raise chicks from the nesting hollow in the large eucalyptus tree over the last 2 years. It would be great if we could have more trees of the same species that would provide future hollows for native birds to use.'

2.3 Master plan recommendation summary

The MP recommends:

- maintaining the park's current structured and informal recreational uses
- a Tree Management Plan is undertaken by Council to ensure that future tree renewals are resilient to climate change and follow heritage advice.
- redeveloping the former pétanque green as public open space for everyone in the community, and not returning the lease to the Hawthorn Bowling Club where it would restrict access to members only
- designing this new area of open space to be complementary to the park's historic character and giving the community a new area for unstructured recreation
- restricting any new structures or buildings being built in the park
- improving visitor experience by updating park furniture, bins and drinking fountains to be more accessible and comfortable
- replanting existing garden beds to complement the history and character of the park, whilst being mindful of maintenance requirements
- planting trees to give more natural shade and provide habitats for wildlife
- investigating the feasibility of harvesting water from the Hawthorn Main Drain
- designing interpretive signage or artworks to communicate the park's pre- and post-settlement history.

3.0 Introduction

3.1 What is a master plan?

A master plan is a long-term guide for the future management and development of a place and ensures appropriate planning and allocation of resources.

3.2 Why do we need a master plan for St James Park?

St James Park has been a vital green space for the Hawthorn community for more than 160 years. Despite its well-documented heritage significance, which includes significant trees as avenues and specimen trees, the park does not have a master plan or conservation management plan. The St James Park Master Plan and Tree Management Project were initiated to fill these gaps.

The St James Park Master Plan (StJPMP) is an outstanding action recommended by Boroondara's Open Space Strategy 2013 to develop a conservation plan to guide ongoing management of the open space.

Increasing population and higher density housing will create pressure on the park. The former pétanque green is currently vacant and presents an opportunity to explore future uses for the community to enjoy.

Although the park has retained its nineteenth century tree-lined avenues and path layout, the trees are growing older (senescing) and some need replacing. The deterioration of historic trees has been exacerbated by climate change and there is the urgent need to manage this vegetation to ensure its resilience so it can be enjoyed by future generations.

The tree renewal management plan, establishing short-term and long-term goals for trees within the park will be developed alongside the StJPMP as a separate internal operational document.

3.3 Strategic context

City of Boroondara strategies and policy framework

The master plan aligns with the following council policies and strategies. Refer to [Appendix 2](#) (page 41) for more detail on relevant themes and recommendations that have underpinned this MP.

- Boroondara Community Plan 2021–31
- Boroondara Open Space Strategy 2013
- Boroondara Reconciliation Strategy 2022–2026
- Climate Action Plan 2021
- Urban Biodiversity Strategy 2013–2023
- Playgrounds Development Strategy 2005 (expired)
- Shade Policy 2017–2027
- Boroondara Bicycle Strategy 2022

3.4 State Government framework

Yarra Strategic Plan 2020

St James Park is within 500m of the Yarra River and as such is considered Yarra River land (Part 1 Working Together to Deliver the Community Vision encompasses approximately one kilometre either side to the river).

3.5 Master plan objectives

The **objectives** of the St James Park Master Plan are to ensure that the management of and any proposed development:

- conserve and celebrate its built and natural heritage character
- conserve the historic tree avenues and specimen trees
- continue to facilitate the community's uses and enjoyment of unstructured and structured recreational activities at the park
- provide amenities to facilitate visitors continued enjoyment of the park
- recommend future use of the former pétanque green that will contribute to the park's heritage character.

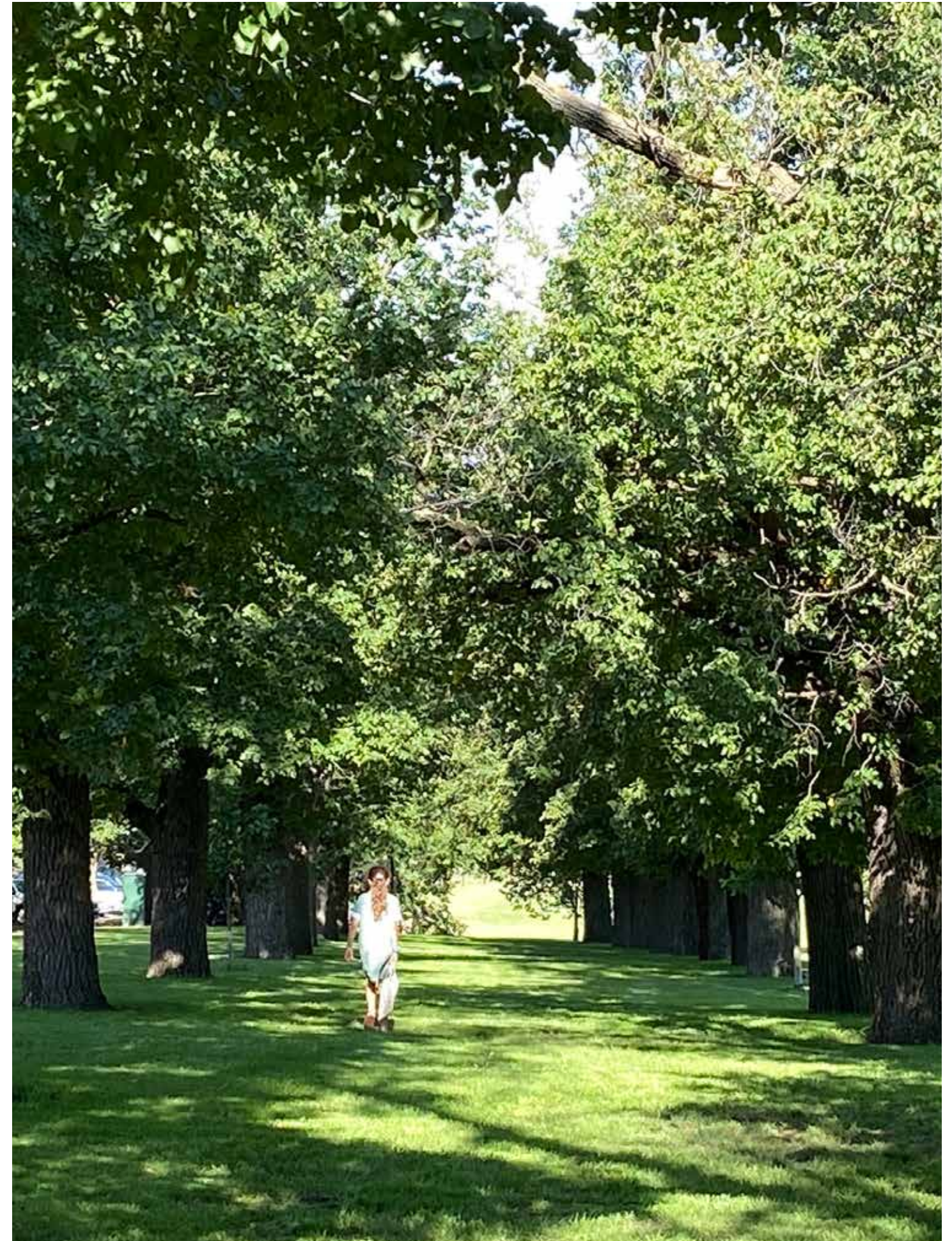


Figure 3. View east from within the northern elm avenue



Vision

‘St James Park’s nineteenth-century character and vegetation are conserved for current and future generations’ enjoyment.

It is a place of natural retreat within an urban setting, providing for the community’s recreational needs, contributing to their health and wellbeing.’

4.0 Background

4.1 St James Park's history

The Wurundjeri Woi wurrung people are the Traditional Owners of the land and waterways of Boroondara, where St James Park now lies. The Yarra River/ Birrarung and its surrounds were an important food source for the Wurundjeri. St James Park sits on its upper slope less than 500m away from the river, with remnant river red gums giving us a reminder of this original landscape and relationship with the Wurundjeri people.

Post-European settlement, Robert Hoddle reserved 4 and a half hectares in 1852 as part of the original Village of Hawthorn(e) Reserve. It was gazetted as a public reserve in February 1861, making it one of the oldest reserves in Hawthorn, along with Yarra Bank and Creswick Street reserves. The reserve was initially used as a town common where cows grazed and locals collected sand and timber.¹

In the 1860s, Baron Von Mueller (Director Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne) provided plants to the gardens including his favourites: *Eucalyptus globulus* (Blue Gum) and *Corymbia ficifolia* (WA Flowering Gum). The Blue Gums were not successful or popular and were removed in the 1880s. In the 1870s, 50 pines, 60 elms and 27 oaks were planted with newly supplied water from Yan Yean Reservoir, helping to establish and keep the new plantings alive and thriving.²

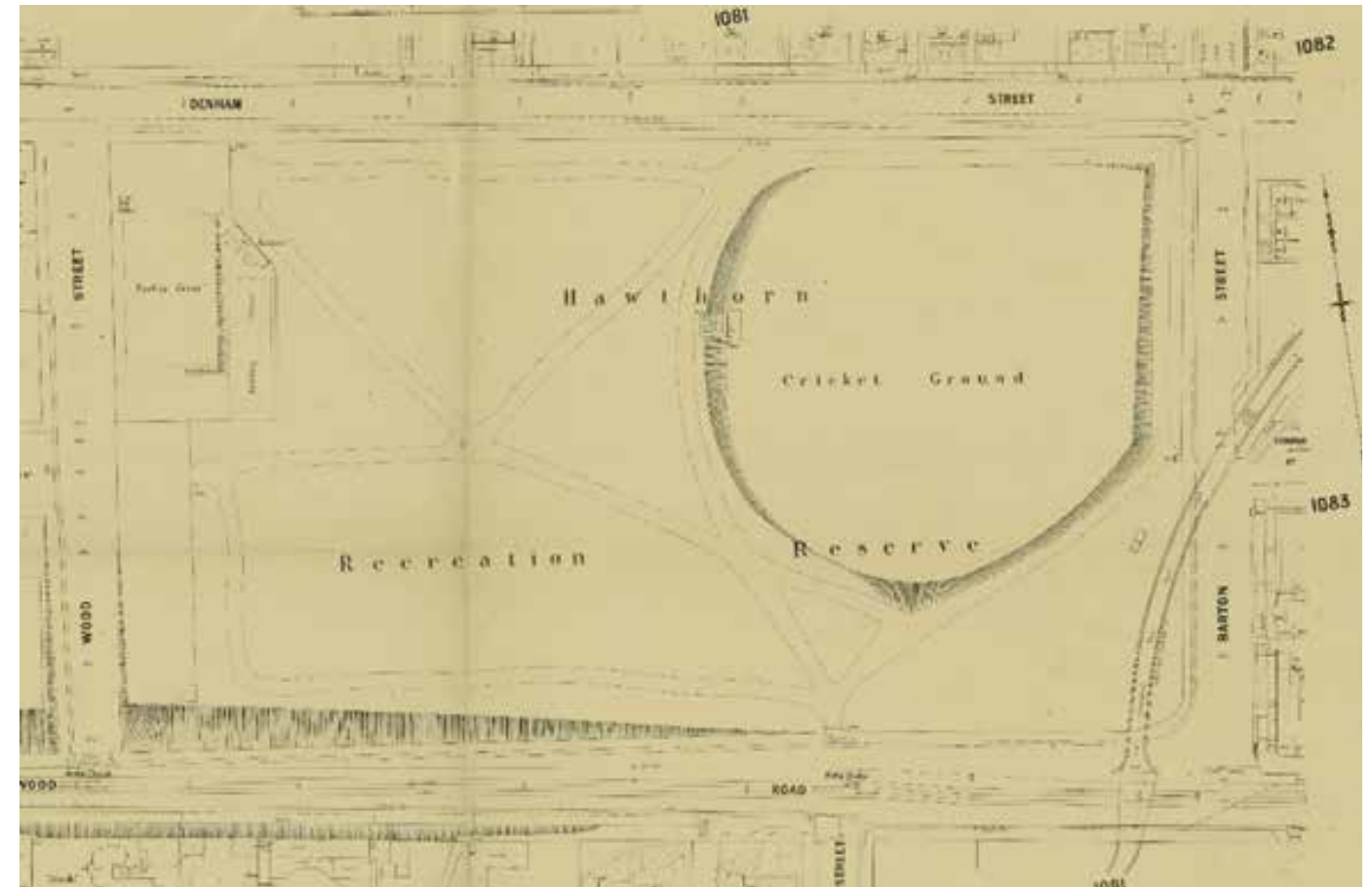


Figure 4. Hawthorn Recreation Reserve (now St James Park), Hawthorn; detail from MMBW plan No. 1084 dated 1900

Source: State Library Victoria



Figure 5. Detail from 'Hawthorn Bridge at Bridge Road showing construction work';

Source: Airspy photograph by Charles Daniel Pratt (1892–1968) dated 'ca1925–ca1940'

Footnote

1 *A History of Hawthorn*, Victoria Peel, Deborah Zion, Jane Yule, 1993, Melbourne University Press.

2 Hawthorn Heritage Study, Meredith Gould, 1992.

Along the designated Lennox Street road reserve between Hawthorn West Primary School and the church, an avenue of honour was planted in the 1930s as a memorial to former students killed in World War I. The road reserve was renamed Honour Avenue in the 1940s in recognition of this avenue of trees. The axis between Lennox Street to the east and Honour Avenue to the west remains an important visual and historic link in the park. Boroondara Creek ran through the lower-lying area in the eastern part of St James Park until it was redirected underground with the construction of the Hawthorn Main Drain (the creek alignment can be seen in Figure 6). In the late 1800s, peppercorn trees were planted along the creek for their drought tolerance³ and those currently located at the north-eastern area of the park are a reminder of these early plantings and the original path of Boroondara Creek.

Most of the original nineteenth-century path layout has been retained. The War Memorial was constructed after World War I and opened in 1929. New paths and tree plantings were associated with the memorial and can be seen in Figure 5. The memorial replaced a bandstand/rotunda, which can be seen in the background of Figure 7 (the cannon shown in this image has since been removed).

For more information, refer [Appendix 3. Chronology of key dates](#) (page 45).



Figure 6. 1852 detail of Subdivision Plan; registered 2 May, 1856

Source: Public Record Office Victoria



Figure 7. Photograph prior to 1929 with bandstand (rotunda) shown in the background

Source: Accession No: H91.160/1718, State Library Victoria

Footnote

3 Seeing Hawthorn I, Gwen McWilliam, 1977, Hawthorn Library.

5.0 Methodology

1 Analysis, issues and opportunities phase

- Develop a scoping document to guide community engagement, tree management and master plans
- Site inspection and analysis
- Review background information and other relevant council plans and strategies
- Council internal project control group (PCG) consultation

2 Community engagement (information gathering)

- Prepare a community engagement plan
- Council internal PCG consultation and input
- Seek community feedback on issues and current use of St James Park
- Seek community feedback on tree management options
- Key stakeholders consultation
- Review feedback and summarise outcomes of consultation

3 Preparation of draft St James Master Plan

- Amend the draft St James Master Plan following councillor, stakeholder and community feedback
- Prepare preliminary costings and implementation plan
- Seek council endorsement of final St James Master Plan

4 Community engagement (feedback on draft MP)

- Incorporate findings from community engagement into draft MP
- Develop draft St James Master Plan vision, guiding principles, recommendations and actions
- Council internal PCG consultation and input
- Councillor feedback and approval on draft St James Master Plan

5 Finalise St James Master Plan

- Seek feedback from community on draft St James Master Plan
- Council internal PCG consultation and input
- Key stakeholder consultation
- Councillor feedback and approval to finalise St James Master Plan

6.0 Profile of Boroondara

6.1 Boroondara

The City of Boroondara's name is derived from the Woi wurrung language meaning 'where the ground is thickly shaded'. It is made up of suburbs including Ashburton, Balwyn, Balwyn North, Camberwell, Canterbury, Deepdene, Hawthorn, Hawthorn East, Kew and Kew East, and parts of Glen Iris, Mont Albert and Surrey Hills.

6.2 Demographic profile of Hawthorn

- The census data (2021) states that the most common ancestries in Hawthorn were English 34.3%, Australian 26.7%, Irish 14.4%, Scottish 12.5% and Chinese 9.2%.
- The median age of people in Hawthorn was 34 years. Children aged 0 to 14 years made up 12.4% of the population and people aged 65 years and over made up 14.3% of the population. 21.6% of the population were aged between 20 and 29 years, compared with 13.6% in Victoria's population.
- 27.1% of households speak a language other than English at home: Mandarin, 4.2%; Greek, 1.6%; Cantonese, 1.4%; Vietnamese, 1.3%; Spanish, 1.0.

This data suggests that the suburb is mostly family oriented, the statistics also suggest that it is an aging population.

Refer to this [link](#) for further data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

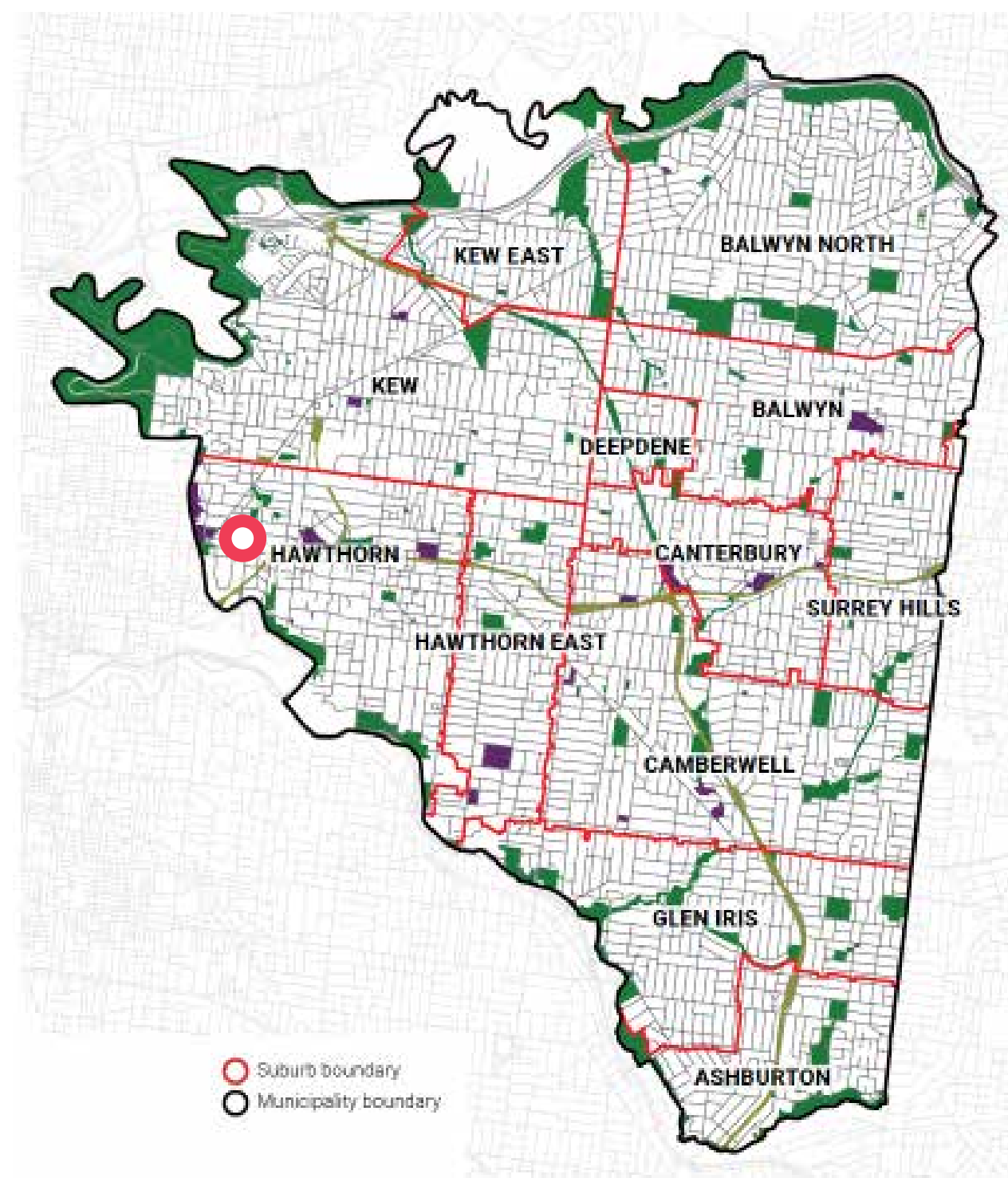


Figure 8. Diagram of the Boroondara municipality
(St James Park location is noted by a red circle)

7.0 Stakeholders

The following stakeholders have been engaged through the development of this Master Plan:

- residents
- Hawthorn West Primary School
- Christ Church Hawthorn
- Barton Milk Bar café
- National Trust
- Heritage Victoria
- Hawthorn RSL
- Boroondara Community Disability Advisory Committee
- St James Park clubs and users
 - Hawthorn Bowls Club
 - Swinburne University Amateur Football Club
 - Group Fitness Hawthorn
 - Hawthorn Cricket Club
 - karate club (operating from bowls club house).

8.0 Community engagement summary

The St James Park Master Plan involved an initial engagement with the community to gather input and inform them about the project. Various methods were employed, including surveys, on-site sessions, tours and meetings with key stakeholders.

Pre-consultation communication: 7 February 2022

A letter to community and stakeholders informed them of the upcoming tree renewal and MP work and how they could be involved in the near future. This was the first step in educating the community on why tree replacement is necessary and how avenue renewal will be managed.

Community consultation: March to April 2022

Council sought feedback on what is important to the community about the park and what improvements could be made. Feedback on replacement tree species and methods of removal were also sought.

The engagement process revealed the following key considerations:

- Most respondents supported removing aging trees and favoured activities such as exercising, sports, relaxation, picnics, and walking their dogs in the park.
- The park's history and age were appreciated by the community, and the input of local school children was particularly valuable. Residents and nearby workers regarded the park as a natural retreat and valued it for relaxation and observing wildlife.
- The community's preference for the future use of the pétanque green area were for a mix of informal recreation and green spaces. The second most popular choice was for a passive recreational space with lawns, trees, and seating.

For a detailed summary, refer the Community Engagement Summary (separate document).



Figure 9. Photograph taken during on-site information session (March to June 2022)



Figure 10. Aerial photograph used at on-site information session showing people's feedback on sticky notes that replicated the online interactive social mapping activity on the Engage Boroondara page

9.0 Design investigations

9.1 Site context

- St James Park is located in Hawthorn at Wood Street, Hawthorn. At 4.6 hectares, St James Park is the largest park in Hawthorn and is a significant area of green open space for the neighbourhood.
- Burwood Road runs along the southern boundary – with significant separation at the western end due to level differences.
- Residential houses are located to the north, south and east of park.

9.2 Planning context

- The planning zone for the park is Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ).
- Heritage overlay clause 43.01-1 outlines that a permit is required to demolish or remove a building. This does not apply to park furniture as they are not considered 'buildings'.
- There are a number of existing trees listed on Council's Significant Tree Register, refer to [Sheet 2a. Landscape Character Plan](#) (page 36).

9.3 Land ownership

St James Park has two parcels of land ownership. Council owns the western side of the park (refer to Figure 12). The remainder of St James Park is Crown land, owned by the Victorian Government with council as Committee of Management.

9.4 Existing conditions

Refer to [Sheet 1, Site Analysis Plan](#) (page 35).

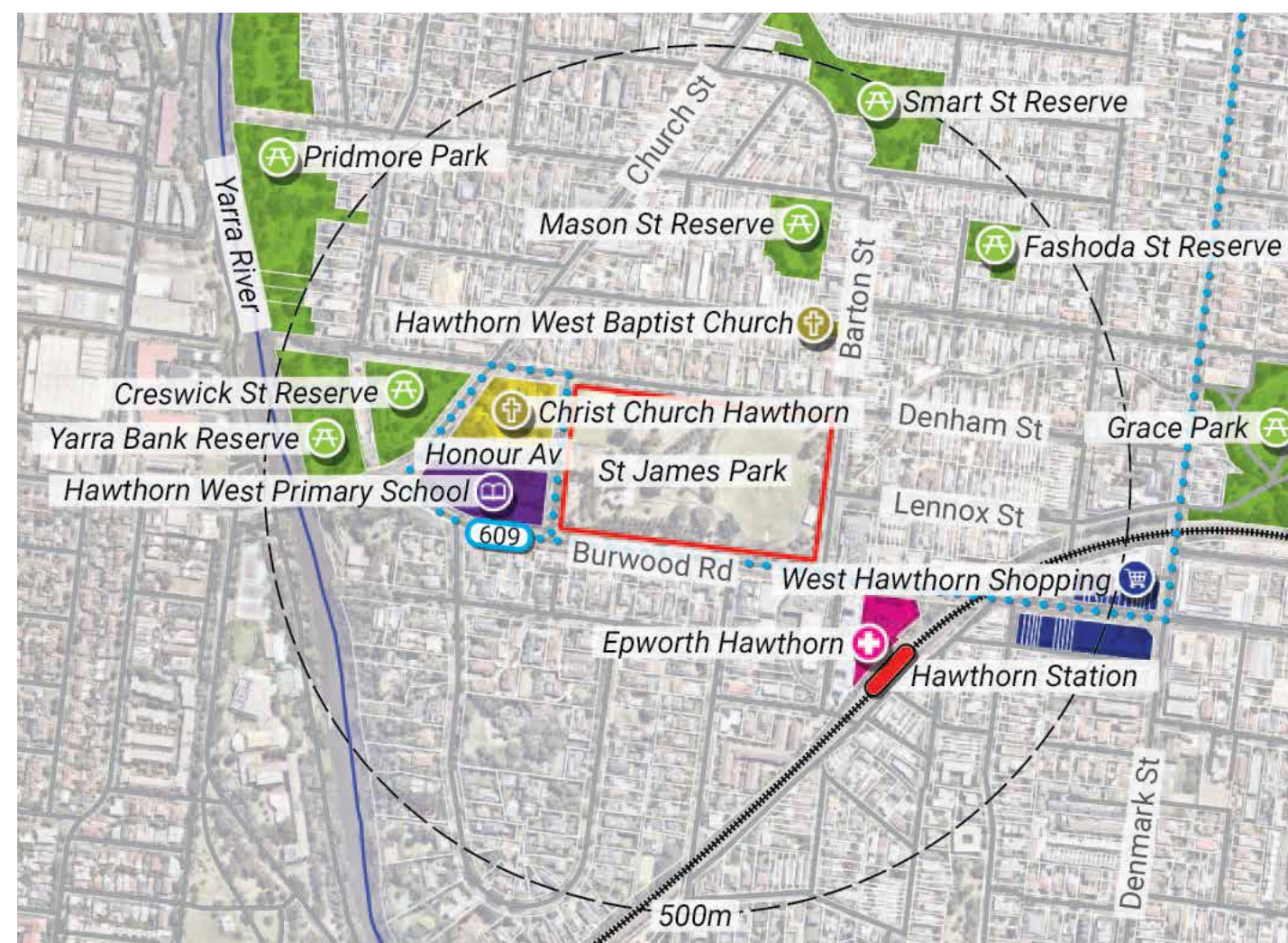


Figure 11. Plan showing geographical context of St James Park in relation to public transport, schools, shops, parks and churches



Figure 12. Aerial of St James Park with red rectangle indicating the parcel of land owned by City of Boroondara

Source: Nearmaps

9.5 Landscape character

- The mature deciduous tree avenues, oval and open lawn areas form the principal character of the park. There is a significant level difference of approximately 15 metres level from the north-west to south-east corners, and this has been modified to create 3 distinctive 'plateaus', each with slightly different characters. The various landscape types within these levels offer visitors a range of recreational opportunities within different landscape settings to interact, socialise, relax or exercise.
- Also refer to Sheet 2a. Landscape Character Plan (page 36) and Sheet 2b. Landscape Character Photographs (page 37).

9.6 Recreation

St James Park is one of the most popular parks in the Hawthorn area for both informal and structured recreation. It attracts a broad range of users including local residents, workers and those coming from further afield to participate in organised sports.

Current uses include:

- structured recreation in the form of sporting clubs – bowling, cricket, AFL football, fitness classes
- informal, unstructured recreation such as walking, dog walking (off-leash), exercising, picnics, children's play and informal gatherings
- events such as Anzac Day memorial service and Council's Summer in the Parks on the upper triangular lawn
- Hawthorn West Primary School families walk through the park before and after school and hold their annual cross-country event and lunchtimes on oval.

Community engagement in April 2022 indicated that those participating in organised sports tend to live further away than those visiting for informal recreation.

The entire park allows dogs to be exercised off-leash and it is a very popular pastime in the park.

Key issues include:

- balancing needs and providing for informal, passive recreation and organised sports
- providing for a diverse community with a range of interests and abilities
- occasional conflict between those using the playground and dog owners allowing their dogs within the playground or roaming free in its vicinity, despite local laws' regulation for dogs to be on a leash within 10 metres of a playground.

9.7 Heritage

Hawthorn Heritage Study, 1992

The 1992 [Hawthorn Heritage Study](#) classified St James Park with metropolitan heritage significance.

The following is the report's statement of significance for the park:

'St James Park, reserved in 1861 as a Crown Land Reserve, and continuously maintained since then as a public park. The park is significant for its remnant native vegetation, its mature native and exotic trees (particularly the elm and oak avenues), for the retention of a significant portion of its nineteenth century path layout and for its war memorial of cultural significance.'

For more details on elements contributing to the park's heritage significance, refer to [Appendix 3](#) (page 45).

Heritage Study, consultant report, 2022

St James Park Heritage Advice, GML Heritage Consultants, 2022

Available at document library on [Engage Boroondara St James Park project page](#).

Prior to engaging with the community in April 2022, council sought heritage advice from GML Heritage Consultants (GML) to inform both the master plan and tree renewal of historic avenues. The consultants also provided direction in relation to any heritage constraints and opportunities associated with the future use of the former pétanque green.

Building on the 1992 Hawthorn Heritage Study, GML investigated which individual elements contribute to the heritage significance of St James Park.

This included:

- *the park boundaries and early park layout*
- *the landscape character of the park, defined by mature large trees, avenues planted with exotic deciduous trees, open lawn areas planted with a diverse collection of trees with strong evergreen forms*
- *the remnant River Red Gums*
- *mature native and exotic trees, particularly the elm and oak avenues*
- *the provision of passive and active recreation opportunities to the citizens of Hawthorn and neighbouring areas*
- *the footprint of the oval*
- *the footprint of the bowling greens*
- *the Hawthorn War Memorial and its symmetrical landscaped setting.*

Elements that are not significant are:

- *self-sown trees*
- *modern bricks used in spoon drains and steps*
- *children's playground (fabric not significant)*
- *lamps (fabric not significant)*
- *seats (fabric not significant).*

For more detail on significant elements identified in this report, refer to [Appendix 3](#) (page 45).

Tree management

The St James Park Heritage Study (2022) notes the following advice on tree management:

‘As avenues and some specimen trees are significant heritage elements at St James Park, it is not feasible to preserve trees in their current state. Due to trees senescing, they need to be replaced. The heritage advice is not always to replace “like with like” species as it is unlikely that elms planted in today’s and our future climate will thrive or even survive.’

The report provided a list of suitably climate-resilient tree selections to replace the elms, incorporating heritage criteria. Three species were short-listed by council’s Trees team and the community voted for their preferred species (refer to separate community engagement summary).

Pétanque green heritage recommendations

The following excerpt states the report’s advice on the future use of the former pétanque green:

‘Because of changes to the footprint and layout of the bowling greens, in particular at the south end in the location of the former pétanque green, there is some tolerance for change in this part of the park without compromising significance, providing the following specific criteria are met:

- Maintain use of the former pétanque green as a public park.
- Maintain use for active or passive recreation.
- Retain the footprint of the former pétanque green so its historic use and association with bowls and then pétanque can be interpreted.

- Retain the bluestone retaining walls (south and east). Some change/ interventions into the bluestone retaining walls and rockery to create access between the former pétanque green and the park would be appropriate as long as the footprint of the green is retained and remains legible.
- If fencing is required for a future use, ensure it is transparent to maintain views across and between the former green, other bowling greens, the club house and the park on all sides.
- Ensure vegetation planted around the edges maintains the visual relationship between the greens and the park.
- Ensure new development of the former green does not adversely impact the St James Park setting (overall landscape character, trees, public use for passive recreation).

‘Conservation and enhancement of the rockery and garden beds adjacent to the east end of the former pétanque green in the style of an inter-war rockery or garden bed would be appropriate, re-using the extant bluestone.

‘The garden bed on the south side ... does not contribute strongly to the landscape character or heritage significance of St James Park. Landscape works and planting that enhance the contribution of this garden bed to the significance of the park would therefore be desirable and appropriate.

The cantilevered decking on the south side of the former pétanque green is not significant and could be removed.’⁴

Footnote

4 GML Heritage Advice Report, section 6.1.2

10.0 The master plan

The major objectives of the master plan are to retain St James Park's heritage value and character, and ensure the park remains a much-treasured place for the community's diverse recreational needs.

The Master Plan incorporates findings from:

- site investigations and conditions
- current recreational uses
- community and stakeholder engagement
- heritage reports and advice
- council strategies and policies.

10.1 Master plan guiding principles

The following themes form the framework for the master plan and underpin its recommendations for the park's management and future works.

Historical and cultural heritage: understand, conserve and celebrate the park's significant natural and cultural heritage and its historic character.

Recreation: provide amenities and facilities that meet the community's existing and future recreational needs for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy.

Resilience and sustainable design: manage the park's natural and built landscapes to ensure they are well-maintained, resource-efficient and resilient.

Connections: strengthen physical and visual connections between the park and its surrounding neighbourhood, with improved access and wayfinding. Manage and develop the park to be welcoming for all members of the community, where they can connect with one another in a natural, historic setting.

Recreation and community use recommendations

The Recreation and Community Use section of this master plan identifies a number of recommendations aimed at revitalising St James Park as a vibrant and welcoming hub for our community.

It focusses on elements such as pathways, entrances, park furniture, playgrounds, sports infrastructure, wayfinding/signage, and the incorporation of opportunities for art throughout the park. These recommendations collectively aim to enrich the park’s role as an essential community asset by fostering a sense of belonging, promoting physical activity, offering cultural enrichment, and ensuring ease of access for all.

The following table indicates a list of general recommendations that do not pertain to any of the previously mentioned elements and are regarded as holistic in nature.

Table 1. Recreation and community use – general recommendations

Ref.	Description	Priority
1.1	Maintain current structured and unstructured uses of park such as sporting activities, walking, dog walking, exercising, and picnicking.	Ongoing
1.2	Apply CPTED principles through park’s design, management and maintenance of vegetation.	Ongoing
1.3	Undertake an accessibility audit that identifies how to improve universal access wherever feasible.	High
1.4	Continue to provide areas to exercise dogs off-leash but ensure these areas are well-defined and identifiable.	Ongoing
1.5	Specify any new materials to ensure minimal impact on the environment, embodied energy and fit for purpose to promote longevity of the materials.	Ongoing
1.6	Conserve landscape and built elements that contribute to the heritage value of the park.	Ongoing
1.7	Do not construct any new permanent structures within the park unless proposed in this master plan.	Ongoing
1.8	Preserve and enhance views of Hawthorn valley to the east and vistas within the park.	Ongoing
1.9	Review frequency bins are emptied in peak times to ensure rubbish bins do not overflow with rubbish (Council’s policy is not to provide dog waste bins in parks, except for specialised dog parks such as Gordon Barnard Reserve in Balwyn).	Ongoing
1.10	Investigate power supply opportunities at the war memorial to support dawn service.	Ongoing
1.11	Renew the war memorial cenotaph to address impacts from weathering. Update the cenotaph to reflect more recent theatres of war and conflict (in collaboration with Hawthorn RSL).	Ongoing

Paths

Generally, the paths within the park have retained their nineteenth century layout and contribute to the heritage value of the park (refer to section 9.7). The original east–west orientated path towards Hawthorn West Primary in Wood Street once aligned with the Honour Avenue axis, dissecting the space where the pétanque green was later located. It’s likely this path was shifted south when the pétanque green was constructed in the early 1900s. Some of the existing brick edging has been constructed with contemporary red bricks and is unsympathetic to the historic character. Original path edging may have been bluestone, however, brick was also used in this period (from Heritage Advice Report, GMH Heritage Consultants). Due to the sloping topography of the site, universal access cannot be achieved throughout the park, especially when moving between the western and eastern ends. However, accessible links to the surrounding neighbourhood and within the park are possible on the lower level near the oval, from Denham, Barton and Wood streets to the park (refer to [Sheet 4. Proposed Amenities Plan](#), page 39).

The following table outlines the relevant recommendations related to paths.

Table 2. Path recommendations

Ref.	Description	Priority
2.1	Preserve the surviving nineteenth and early twentieth centuries path layout.	Ongoing
2.2	Retain asphalt paving on all paths.	Ongoing
2.3	Phase out and replace unsympathetic modern brick edging with recycled bricks complementary to park’s older-style brick edging treatment as part of council’s ongoing path renewal project.	Low
2.4	Undertake a lighting audit to determine if the park’s current path lighting meets Australian Standards for pedestrian paths and is sufficient for current recreational uses such as jogging and walking.	High
2.5	Construct new accessible asphalt or granitic gravel paths to link main paths to picnic settings wherever feasible (width of linking asphalt paths to be between 1200mm to 1500mm with no brick edging).	Ongoing

Park entrances

Many pedestrian entrances to the park and links to the surrounding neighbourhood remain unchanged from the original nineteenth century park layout.

These entrances can be seen on Sheet 1. [Site Analysis Plan](#) (page 35) and Sheet 4. [Proposed Amenities Plan](#) (page 39).

It is probable that the design detail, materials and orientation of these entrances have been altered over time. The central entrance from Burwood Road was constructed at the time of the war memorial.

The following table outlines the relevant recommendations related to park entrances.

Table 3. Park entrance recommendations

Ref.	Description	Priority
3.1	Retain locations of all park entrances.	Ongoing
3.2	Highlight primary and secondary park entrances to make all entrances identifiable with consistent landscape treatments, amenities and signage. Primary entrances Refer reference 4.5 for furniture Refer reference 7.7 for wayfinding and signage Refer reference 10.8 for tree planting Secondary entrances Refer reference 7.7 for wayfinding and signage	Low
3.3	Reconstruct Burwood Road’s central entrance stairs with more sympathetic materials and enhance the connection with the war memorial.	Low
3.4	Restore the bluestone rockery at the south-west entrance at the corner of Burwood Road and Wood Street. Refer reference 11.5 for garden bed planting	Low
3.5	Create a new accessible entrance from Wood Street into the new open space area (former pétanque green), opposite the school and church – refer to Sheet 5. ‘The Green’ Concept Plan (page 42).	Ongoing



Figure 13. Existing Burwood Road entrance stairs are an important axis to the war memorial path network

Park furniture

St James Park’s furniture includes:

- bench seats
- picnic settings
- lights
- rubbish bins
- drinking fountains
- bollards
- signage (also refer to section Wayfinding).

The majority of the current furniture is unsuitable with seats too low to meet current universal access requirements.

Community feedback requested more comfortable seats and more picnic settings, especially near the playground and opposite the café on the corner of Benton and Denham streets.

More seats were requested near the oval to view sport and at the western end of the park to enjoy views of the valley and sunrises.

Some respondents complained that rubbish bins smell and requested dog waste bins be provided.

The following table outlines the relevant recommendations related to park furniture.

Table 4. Park furniture recommendations

Ref.	Description	Priority
4.1	Upgrade and/or supply park seats, picnic settings, bins and drinking fountains in accordance with City of Boroondara’s Public Realm Asset Manual 2023 (to improve accessibility and to update styles).	High
4.2	Upgrade or supply new park seats, picnic settings, bins and drinking fountains in accordance with Sheet 4. Proposed Amenities Plan (page 41) .	Low
4.3	Audit existing signs and other park furniture – remove redundant signs, bollards or other furniture to declutter the park.	Medium
4.4	Any existing or proposed plaques on park furniture will comply with council’s current Plaque Policy.	Ongoing
4.5	Install bins and bicycle parking hoops at primary entrances wherever feasible (refer to Sheet 4. Proposed Amenities Plan , page 41).	Medium
4.6	Investigate new locations for bench seats and picnic settings in the oval’s vicinity.	Low

Playground

The playground was upgraded in 2013–14 and included accessible equipment as the playground strategy recommended.

One of the Boroondara Open Space Strategy’s recommendations was to consider relocating the playground further east to the main area of the park. However, the playground is well-located close to the school, and frequently used by the community before and after school. In addition, with the potential for the pétanque green to be redeveloped as parkland, there will be opportunities to extend play experiences into this space.

The playground’s surrounding facilities and amenities could be improved with additional natural shade, seating, and informal and formal gathering spaces. Some of these elements can be located within the former pétanque green when it is developed.

The following table outlines the relevant recommendations related to park furniture.

Table 5. Playground recommendations

Ref.	Description	Priority
5.1	Provide informal seats which may be repurposed timber from the some of the older, deteriorated elms.	Ongoing
5.2	Investigate whether particular zones within the park should be reclassified as on-leash e.g., upper level at playground, war memorial and pétanque green areas.	Ongoing
5.3	Do not install any new fences and gates where they create a cumbersome barrier for those in a wheelchair.	Ongoing



Figure 14. St James playground, view from Wood Street

Oval and sports pavilion

There are no proposed changes to the use of the oval and sports pavilion. Community feedback requested more seating to watch sport played on the oval and picnic settings on the corner of Denham and Barton streets. Children reported poor drainage and slipperiness a problem on the oval. They also told us that they liked to roll down the hill near the oval and somersault on the horizontal bars of the perimeter fence.

The following table outlines the relevant recommendations related to the oval and sports pavilion.

Table 6. Oval and sports pavilion recommendations

Ref.	Description	Priority
6.1	Retain existing formal and informal recreational uses of the oval.	Ongoing
6.2	Investigate improvements to the oval's poor soil profile and ageing irrigation system.	Ongoing
6.3	Investigate feasibility of water harvesting from Hawthorn main drain and surrounding streets' runoff.	Ongoing
6.4	Retain gentle grassed slope down to the oval.	Ongoing
6.5	Refer reference 4.6 for furniture.	

Wayfinding and interpretive signage

There are no wayfinding or interpretive signs within the park. Wayfinding signage would improve legibility for visitors to navigate both within the park and to the surrounding neighbourhood. Signage would include distances to encourage people to walk or cycle to the park. Interpretive signage could be incorporated into these signs.

The following table outlines the relevant recommendations related to wayfinding and interpretive signage.

Table 7. Wayfinding and interpretive signage recommendations

Ref.	Description	Priority
7.1	Engage a wayfinding specialist to design a wayfinding signage package displaying pedestrian and cycling links between St James Park and its surrounding community facilities including West Hawthorn shopping strip, Yarra River, schools and public transport nodes.	Low
7.2	Wayfinding signage to display a map of the park, showing facilities and their locations in the park to help visitors navigate within and around the park.	Low
7.3	Engage a consultant to design interpretive signage in the form of artworks or digital technologies to communicate the park's history.	Low
7.4	Investigate using local Aboriginal languages on new signage, in consultation with representatives of Wurundjeri Woi wurrung community.	Low
7.5	Develop stories to interpret the history of the park, involving local children and capturing their favourite things (the trees and playing in the park).	Low
7.6	Develop a self-guided cultural and natural history walk of the park and the surrounding area, linking it to Creswick and Yarra Bank reserves and the Yarra River.	Low
7.7	Design new park entrance signs incorporating information from existing signs to reduce the need for multiple sign types. Provide the following at entrances: Primary entrances <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Main sign with park facilities, sporting clubs, wayfinding, interpretive information, local laws regulations and QR code to council website. Secondary entrances <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Park entrance sign with local laws regulations and QR code to council website.	Low

‘Art in the park’ opportunities

Art can heighten people’s interest and connection to a place by providing a ‘bridge’ between them and their surroundings, enhancing a ‘sense of place’. It can help form connections within a community, and between people and the natural environment. This boosts people’s wellbeing and their appreciation of and engagement with the park.

Art can tell stories of a place, stimulate the imagination, engage the senses or evoke an emotional response. It can ‘wake up’ people: make them laugh, muse on the meaning of a work, discuss it with a friend or interact with it. Installing artworks at St James Park would add a valuable dimension in the planning for the park. Temporary, not permanent, art installations are the most suitable form. This ensures the art cannot affect the park’s heritage, and keeps the art new, interesting and relevant to the community.

The following table outlines the relevant recommendations related to public art in the park.

Table 8. ‘Art in the park’ recommendations

Ref.	Description	Priority
8.1	Investigate the ability to host a biennial art exhibition in the park.	Low
8.2	Investigate a large-scale ephemeral or ecological art, potentially on the southern boundary’s grassy embankment, to catch travellers’ attention when viewing from Burwood Road: improving awareness of the park; encouraging people to visit the park and brightening people’s days (Refer to Figures 15 and 16 for examples).	Low
8.3	Host a trial installation, reusing the (council-owned) poppies originally created for the 100th Armistice Project, Greythorn Community Centre in 2018. The poppies’ artist could be engaged to refresh the artwork and collaborate with the community (including the local RSL) to make it site-specific for St James Park, connecting with the historic war memorial and its associated memorial, in consultation with the RSL (refer to Figure 17).	Low



Figure 15. *Dandelion Circle on Bluebells*, Brough, Cumbria, Wood Line’, Andy Goldsworthy, 1985



Figure 16. *Girona’s Shores*, Spain, 2020, Landscape Architects EMF, Estudi Marti Franch



Figure 17. Poppies at Greythorn Community Centre for 100th Armistice Project, 2018

Trees, garden beds and lawn recommendations

In this section, we will discuss recommendations related to trees, garden beds and lawn. These suggestions aim to maintain and enhance the natural beauty of St James Park, ensuring that it remains an inviting and vibrant space for the community. We will provide specific details on each recommendation and how they contribute to the park’s overall maintenance and aesthetics.

The following table indicates a list of general recommendations and are regarded as holistic in nature.

Table 9. Trees, garden beds and lawn – general recommendations

Ref.	Description	Priority
9.1	Council will use the St James Park Heritage Study (2022) and the City of Boroondara Significant Tree Study to develop an operational tree management plan for St James Park. This will document current trees, current and future renewal programs, and plan succession plantings of significant specimen trees. Tree planning for the park must incorporate heritage considerations and identify opportunities for new plantings that are appropriate to the park’s character, build species/genus/family diversity, and provide habitat to encourage wildlife.	High
9.2	All trees to incorporate considerations of heritage, climate resilience and maintenance. Seek external advice on soil management if required to promote successful planting outcomes.	Ongoing
9.3	Retain large, healthy trees as long as possible, and where this is not feasible, any tree renewal is undertaken in a way that maintains the park’s character, shade and habitat values (i.e. staged removal of trees).	Ongoing
9.4	Investigate the efficiency of the current irrigation system and upgrade or adjust as required. Manage and maintain lawn areas to retain their green, healthy appearance by irrigating with pop-ups (refer to water management plan – separate document).	Ongoing
9.5	Generate agreed practices for event organisers to avoid damaging trees during events (e.g., avoiding compaction, vehicles driving into park, parking, etc).	Ongoing

Tree management – significant avenues

In regard to the management of significant tree avenues, the following actions were determined based on the St James Park Heritage Study (2022) and assessment undertaken by council’s trees team:

- Existing avenue trees are generally suitable for short to medium-term retention. Some mature tree removals are necessary in the southern and diagonal avenues, with pruning of all other elms to remove deadwood and reduce risk.
- Elms are considered suitable for future plantings in the southern avenue, due to some protection provided by scattered large trees in the open areas of the park, and the downslope of land toward Burwood Road from the high point at the Hawthorn Bowling Club/pétanque green. The use of the drip irrigation system installed in the park in 2020–21 to improve turf quality will also benefit tree growth and health.
- The diagonal avenue of elms running north-east to south-west (Denham Street side) to the centre of the park is in poorest condition overall. Replacement with elms is considered inappropriate given the higher elevation and exposure of this north-central side of the park.
- The northern elm avenue (along the Denham Street side of the park) is in reasonable condition overall, though new plantings during the Millenium Drought showed very limited growth. This is likely due to the more elevated and exposed location and root competition from mature trees. The northern avenue is considered suitable for retention in the medium term (5 to 10 years).

For a detailed summary on the consultation undertaken for tree management of the existing avenue trees, refer the Community Engagement Summary (separate document).

The following table outlines the relevant recommendations related to tree management for the significant avenues.

Table 10A. Tree management – avenues recommendations

Ref.	Description	Priority
10.1	Renewal of the northern avenue is a medium to long-term project, as most trees continue to offer valuable canopy. Trees will be managed in the medium-term through pruning, with further community consultation on the approach to renewal and species options to occur.	Ongoing
10.2	Replace central avenue with <i>Quercus castaneifolia</i> . Replace elms with elms at southern avenue due to sheltered microclimate.	In-progress
10.3	Continue to manage all retained elm trees within the park through annual inspections of their health, structure and overall condition. Ongoing pruning and tree removal (with new plantings) to occur as required.	Ongoing
10.4	Continue to review approach to tree renewal in light of success and failure. Modifications to this approach to occur if necessary to support the best chance for tree establishment and success.	Ongoing

Tree management – significant specimen trees

The City of Boroondara’s Significant Tree Register recognises significant specimen trees in St James Park

- *Pinus canariensis* x 2 specimens
 - 88, centre to northeast corner of park
- *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* x 4 specimens
 - 248, remnant, north–east corner of the park
 - 249, remnant, north–east corner of the park
 - 251, remnant, south of the war memorial lawns, near the south avenue
 - 252, in the west of the park
- *Quercus robur* x 1 specimen
 - 250, centre of the park.

Significant specimen trees may require additional care to promote their health and longevity in the landscape.

We will strive to retain significant specimen trees by balancing risk of tree retention against practicable and reasonable efforts required to manage them in a high-use park setting. For instance, management options for a significant tree with structural defects could involve tree retention with exclusion fencing and more frequent scheduled inspections, to reduce risk to park users. Except in the case where a significant tree poses an immediate major hazard that cannot be managed otherwise, council will notify the community about major works or removal of a significant tree through installation of signage in the park. If removal is necessary, like for like replacement of significant trees will be sought wherever possible.

Opportunities to plant significant trees for the future should be investigated, including tree plantings associated with the war memorial. Options here include sourcing a specimen Lone Pine (*Pinus halepensis*, Aleppo Pine) through the Australian War Memorial and Yarralumla Nursery, and replacing conifers around the southern, western and northern faces of the memorial as required, to be undertaken in consultation with the RSL and Legacy Victoria.

Within the St James Park Hawthorn – Heritage Advice Report,⁵ an opportunity was identified to plant a new evergreen specimen tree in the central lawn area, between the northern and diagonal avenues. A new specimen tree in an open site has the potential to become a future significant tree and will increase shade and interest for park users.

Table 10B. Tree management – specimen recommendations

Ref.	Description	Priority
10.5	Investigate feasibility of sourcing a true to type Lone Pine in association with war memorial and consultation with Hawthorn RSL and Legacy Victoria.	Ongoing
10.6	Refer reference 12.2 for lawn areas.	
10.7	Investigate opportunity to plant a new evergreen specimen tree in the central lawn area between the northern and diagonal avenues.	High

Footnote

Tree management – other park trees

Trees in St James Park are subject to council’s standard annual inspection regime for a high use park. Reactive inspections may be triggered by requests from council officers, contractors or the public at any time. Tree works and/or removals are undertaken reactively in response to inspection outcomes. Hazardous trees continue to be pruned to reduce risk, or removed if the risk cannot be managed through pruning. No resident or council management notification is required prior to the removal of non-significant trees in St James Park.

Within the St James Park Hawthorn – Heritage Advice Report,⁶ an opportunity was identified to increase canopy through tree planting along the north side of the central path as trees were evident in this location in the 1945 aerial image of the park. Council staff identified opportunities for additional tree planting, including the southern embankment along the Burwood Road frontage, and along the northern path near the Hawthorn Bowling Club.

Gateway tree planting at the entrance at the Barton and Denham Street corner can also be investigated, taking into account mature tree size relative to available ground space and required clearances from overhead electric distribution and supply lines along Denham Street. The heritage significance of the landscape features at this end of the park is less obvious, with changed land form due to removal of flood embankments at the eastern and southern ends of the oval,⁷ and replacement of mature peppercorn trees along the Barton Street frontage of the park.⁸ More recent changes include construction of sports facilities (pavilion and storage areas). Tree selections in this area could therefore consider non-heritage (modern cultivar) options.

Table 10C. Tree management – park tree recommendations

Ref.	Description	Priority
10.8	Infill tree plantings along the north side of the central path as well as the park’s southern boundary (Burwood Road frontage).	High
10.9	Highlight park entrance at Baron and Denham Street with distinctive gateway tree plantings.	High

Footnote

6 Note A, St James Park Hawthorn – Heritage Advice Report (p.14, Fig 2.10)
7 1900 MMBW map, St James Park Hawthorn – Heritage Advice Report (p.11, Fig 2.6)
8 St James Park Hawthorn – Heritage Advice Report (p. 11)

Garden bed plantings

St James Park has few garden beds – its mature trees and lawns form the principal character of the park.

The current garden style and species mix are not in keeping with the historic character of the park – all garden beds are in need of renewal.

Council’s Parks team visits the park 13 hours per month to maintain the garden beds.

Community feedback indicates a preference for a mix of Australian and exotic plants (46%) or Australian plants only (45%) in the gardens along the ceremonial path.

Existing garden beds include:

- those adjacent to the ceremonial path leading up to the war memorial, lining the heritage significant vista to the cenotaph
- burwood Road gateway rockery planting
- plantings along the retaining walls to the south and west of the pétanque green.

Refer to [Appendix 5. Proposed Planting Palettes](#) (page 49) and [Sheet 3. Avenue Renewal and New Planting Opportunities Plan](#) (page 38).

The following table outlines the relevant recommendations related to garden bed plantings.

Table 11. Garden bed recommendations

Ref.	Description	Priority
11.1	All garden bed locations within the park will remain unchanged but their layouts and planting styles modified.	Ongoing
11.2	Widen ‘ceremonial walk’ garden beds as shown in Figure 18 and plant with a mixture of native and exotic plants, as the community prefers.	Ongoing
11.3	Replant garden beds with robust species that are resilient to climate change and complement the original form and character of the horticultural styles of the nineteenth century (as displayed in figures 19 to 21).	Ongoing
11.4	Plant a variety of exotic, native and indigenous plants, suited to the specific site conditions of the garden bed.	Ongoing
11.5	Replant the south-west Burwood Road corner entrance garden beds with eye-catching plants to highlight this pedestrian gateway to the park.	Ongoing



Figure 18. War memorial showing wider garden beds along the ceremonial path.

Source: Boroondara Library, photographer Stuart Tomkins, date unknown, however size of Bhutan Cypress indicates c. 1920s to 30s



Figure 19. Park England, 1864.

Source: Penelope Hobhouse, *Plants in Garden History*, 1992, p.252



Figure 20. Illustration of rockery planting, 1884, Chiswick, England



Figure 21. Photograph of Kings Park, Perth WA, 1908 rockery planting, showing the English trend using subtropical sculptural plants dotted within the planting.

Source: Georgina Whitehead, *Planting the Nation*, 2001, p.48

Lawn areas

The lawn areas are important contributors to the landscape character and heritage fabric of the park and are typical of the nineteenth century gardenesque style, popular when St James Park was first laid out. The lawns’ open green spaces contrast with the enclosed shaded avenues, and their predominantly evergreen tree species planted within these spaces are distinct from the deciduous oaks and elm avenues.

Some of council’s significant trees are found within these lawn areas: English Oak, *Quercus robur*; remnant River Red Gum, *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*; and Canary Island Pine, *Pinus canariensis*.

These open areas are important in providing for passive recreation, where visitors relax, picnic or meet friends. The park’s lawns also provide large permeable areas to reduce runoff and help with urban cooling.

(Refer to [Proposed Amenities Plan, Sheet 4](#). page 39).

The following table outlines the relevant recommendations related to lawn areas.

Table 12. Lawn area recommendations

Ref.	Description	Priority
12.1	Conserve open lawn areas by limiting trees planted in these areas, retaining its open lawn and scattered trees character.	Ongoing
12.2	Any new trees planted in lawn areas should provide a contrast to the deciduous species along the avenues. Examples of suitable contrasting trees are evergreen trees with striking architectural forms and habits such as Araucaria or conifers (refer to Appendix 5. Proposed Planting Palettes).	Ongoing
12.3	Manage and maintain lawn areas to retain their green, healthy appearance including irrigating.	Ongoing



Figure 22. View south-west towards war memorial and central avenue (adjacent to oval)

Former pétanque green recommendations

Former pétanque green

The former pétanque green has not been used since Camberwell Pétanque Club relocated in 2011 and offers the opportunity to be redeveloped as a recreational space. Preferences on its future use were sought from the community and stakeholders as part of community engagement in April 2022 (refer to Community Engagement Summary – separate document).

Due to the significant heritage value of the park, heritage advice was sought to ensure that any future use of the pétanque green does not detract from the park’s heritage character (refer to Section 9.7 for the consultant’s recommendations regarding the pétanque green).

With its Wood Street frontage, and close proximity to the school, playground and bowls club, the space has potentially good passive surveillance during the daytime, particularly if the screening vegetation and fences are removed.

Community feedback indicated that an active space such as a basketball/netball small court within a park setting is the most popular option for the pétanque green, with over a third of respondents preferring this. A treed, grassy space to unwind and relax was the second most popular choice.

A return to the Hawthorn Bowling Club lease was supported by fewer respondents (21%). The club would like to install a new synthetic grass surface bowling green to increase their capacity to play club bowls and in addition, to rent the green for private social events, helping to raise the club’s revenue. However, this use would restrict access to those with club membership or those hiring the space, subsequently preventing public access for all members of the community in a prime part of the park.

With increased housing densities and populations in the neighbourhood, there is more stress on our existing open space areas. The disused pétanque green gives the neighbourhood a rare opportunity to increase its public open space. Refer to [Sheet 5. ‘The Green’ Open Space Concept Plan](#) (page 40).

The following table outlines the relevant recommendations related to the former pétanque green.

Table 13. Former pétanque green recommendations

Ref.	Description	Priority
13.1	Return pétanque green to public open space to be shared and accessed by all members of the community.	High
13.2	Undertake a soil analysis to determine the green’s contamination risk.	High
13.3	Recondition existing soil and restore the green with lawn for short-term use.	High
13.4	Improve visual connections to the parkland and Wood Street by removing existing fences and self-seeded trees.	Medium
13.5	Remove cantilevered decking on southern boundary to reveal and restore the original bluestone wall.	Medium
13.6	Design the former pétanque green area to provide for a half basketball court with associated green spaces and seating areas.	Medium
13.7	Create a visual connection to Honour Avenue through the layout and design of new open space. Consider planting trees along the east–west original axis within the pétanque green to symbolise original path layout and strengthen visual link to Honour Avenue. (Refer to Sheet 5. ‘The Green’ Concept Plan , page 42).	Medium
13.8	Integrate the pétanque green space into the park by creating new pedestrian connections, especially to Wood Street, the playground and the park to the east.	Medium
13.9	Create a new rockery garden to the east of the former pétanque green, linking this space to the rest of the park. Replant with rockery species in a planting style typical of nineteenth century rockeries. Replant garden bed to the south of the pétanque green with species that have interesting sensory qualities as part of a natural play area.	Medium
13.10	Install a mixture of formal and informal furniture at the new pétanque open space area to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• facilitate interactions within the community.• provide for informal outdoor learning.• link uses between the playground and park. (Refer to Sheet 5. ‘The Green’ Concept Plan , page 42).	Medium
13.11	Investigate installing a barbecue in the new open space area at the former pétanque green, seeking community and stakeholder feedback on its need and preferred location.	Medium

11.0 Next steps

Community engagement and feedback from internal and external stakeholders will be sought. This will be analysed and incorporated into a revised final master plan.

An implementation plan and staging plan, with associated cost plan, will be developed after feedback from the community and stakeholders has been received. Once this feedback is incorporated into the master plan, the master plan will be submitted for approval and endorsement by council.

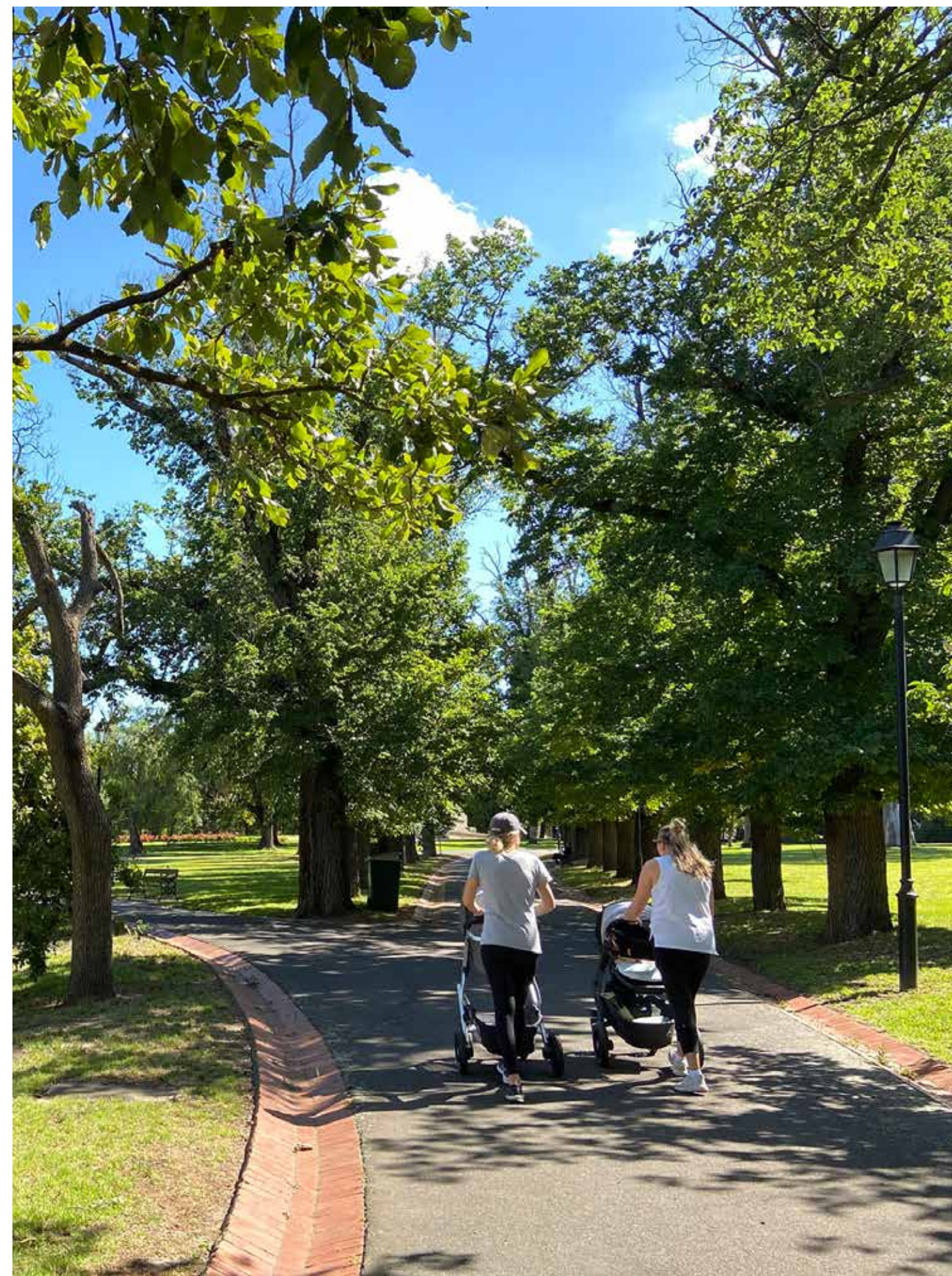


Figure 23. View of central avenue (facing south-west)

Appendix 1. Plans

SHEET INDEX

Sheet 1. Site Analysis Plan

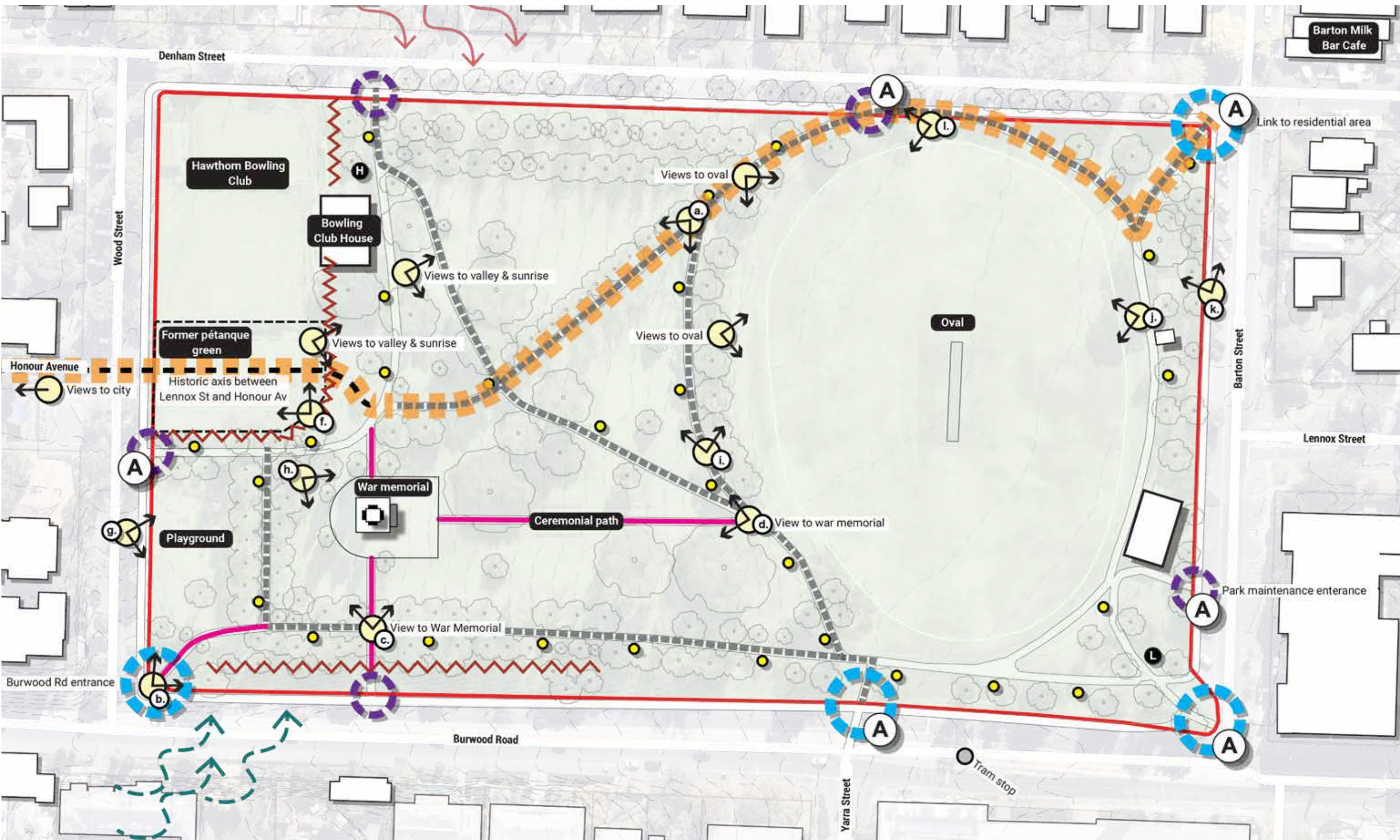
Sheet 2a. Existing Landscape Character Plan

Sheet 2b. Existing Landscape Character Photographs

Sheet 3. Avenue Renewal and New Planting Opportunities Plan

Sheet 4. Proposed Amenities Plan

Sheet 5. 'The Green' Concept Plan (former pétanque green)



Legend

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---------------|-----------------------|
| Primary main entrance | Views | Significant path linkage | Buildings | High/low point |
| Secondary entrance | Accessible entrances | 19th century path layout | Tram stop | Contour lines |
| Physical or visual separation to access or views | Photograph viewing location (refer to Sheet 2b) | Historic axis path alignment | Boundary Line | North prevailing wind |
| | | Paths associated with war memorial construction in 1929 | Light pole | South prevailing wind |

Scale: 1:1000 @A3
0 10 20 30m





Upper Level
 Consists of the playground, Bowling Club and disused petanque green. The petanque green forms a visual and physical barrier between the Bowling Club and the playground.

Middle Level
 Enclosed, shaded avenues contrast with the open lawn areas. The majority of the park's significant trees are at this level within the lawn areas. The evergreen River Red Gums and Canary Island Pine have distinctive, striking, architectural forms, contrasting with the deciduous avenues. The war memorial with its associated paths creates a formal symmetrical layout, different in character to the original nineteenth century paths.

Lowest Level
 The most open of the three levels, with its oval and trees planted around its periphery. The path encircling the oval is a popular walking and exercise route. This level is at the same grade as the surrounding streets, consequently all its entrances are accessible with good connections to the neighbourhood. The gentle grassy embankment between the oval and the middle level is a popular place to sit and watch sport matches.

Existing Trees Legend

- Existing trees (marked with a 'o')
- Significant tree (overlay)
 - Deciduous tree avenues
 - Evergreen trees
 - Palm trees

Significant tree species list

- (Ec) River Red Gum *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*
- (Pc) Canary Island Pine *Pinus canariensis*
- (Qr) English Oak *Quercus robur*
- (Up) English Elm *Ulmus procera*

Existing Understory Legend

- Trees removed
- Lawn
- Mature peppercorn plantings
- War memorial ceremonial walk planting
- Rockery
- Buildings

- Grassy embankment
- Lowest, Middle and Upper Level boundaries





a.



b.



c.



d.



e.



f.



g.



h.



i.



j.



k.



l.



Proposed trees (marked with a '+')

Evergreen trees

Deciduous trees

Existing Boundary Line

Proposed understory

Rockery planting

Ceremonial walk: widened garden beds

Restored physical connections

Existing trees (marked with a 'o')

Significant tree (overlay)

Existing deciduous trees

Existing evergreen trees

Existing palm tree

Significant tree species

River Red Gum
Eucalyptus camaldulensis

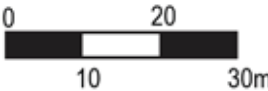
Canary Island Pine
Pinus canariensis

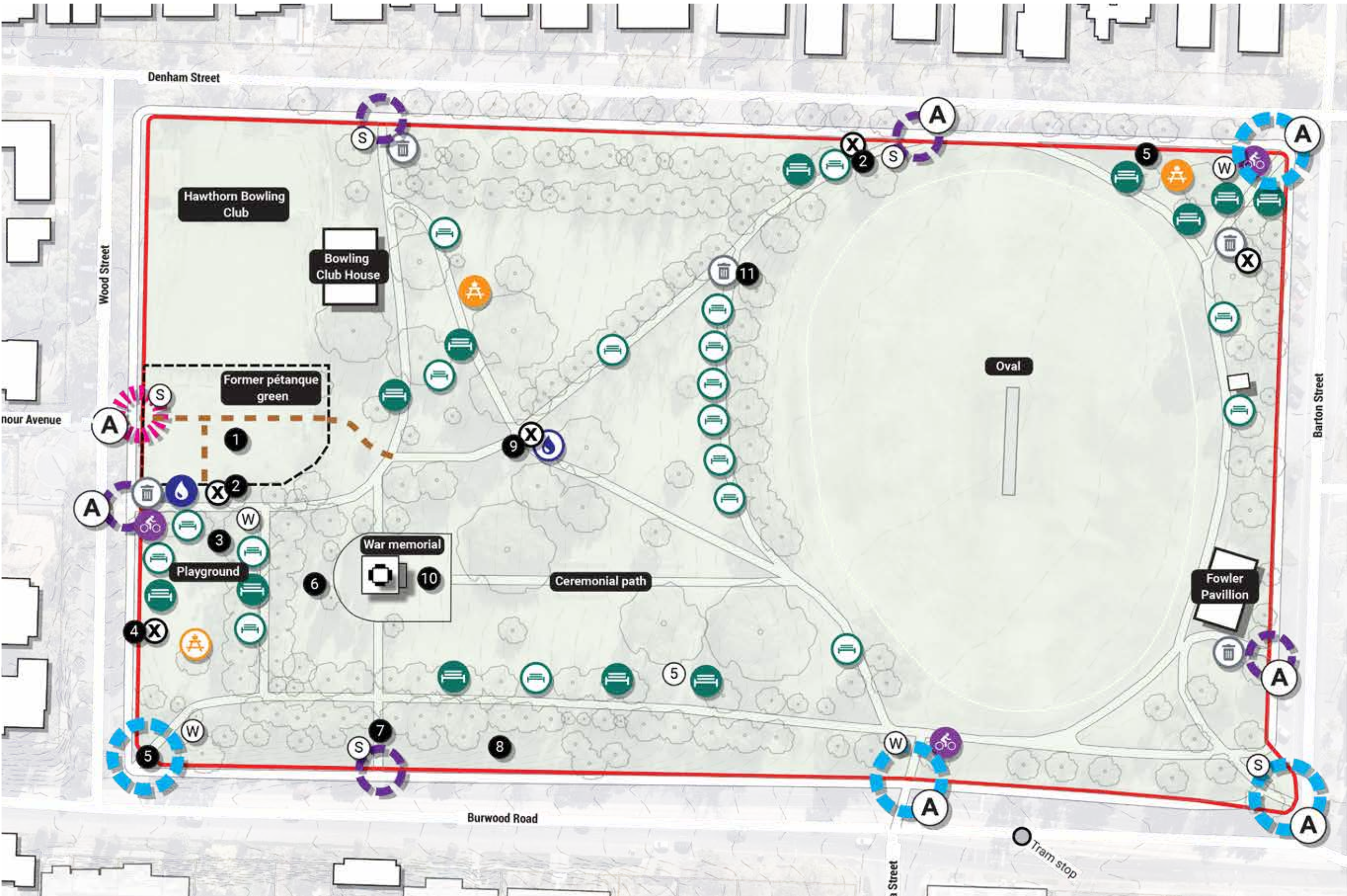
English Oak
Quercus robur

English Elm
Ulmus procera



Scale: 1:1000 @A3





- Notes:**
- 1 New public open space, approx 1,200 square metre area. Refer to Sheet 5. Concept Plan, for more detail on proposed amenities in this space
 - 2 Remove redundant water tanks
 - 3 New informal log seats sourced from trees removed from the park or elsewhere within Boroondara
 - 4 Existing bluestone steps in grassed embankment removed
 - 5 Restore Burwood Road's entrance rockery
 - 6 Restore time capsule's stonework
 - 7 Reconstruct entrance stairs, widen and use more sympathetic handrails and paving materials, e.g. concrete with recycled brick or bluestone edging
 - 8 Opportunity for ephemeral art to be displayed on grassy embankment, viewed from Burwood Road
 - 9 Remove redundant signs
 - 10 Investigate power supply to the war memorial
 - 11 Renew and relocate existing bin further north-east to increase space for new avenue tree plantings.

Legend

- | | | | | |
|----------------------|--|----------------------------------|---|--|
| Primary entrance | Remove redundant element (e.g. water tank) | New drinking fountain | New picnic setting | New seat |
| Secondary entrance | Renew existing bin enclosure | Renew existing drinking fountain | Renew existing picnic setting | Renew existing seat |
| New entrance | Restored physical connections | New bike racks | New entrance sign with wayfinding, local laws, sporting clubs | New park entrance sign with local laws information |
| Accessible entrances | | | | |

Scale: 1:1000 @A3
0 10 20 30m



- 1 Entrance paving
- 2 Sensory walk through native garden
- 3 Retreat garden with views to city
- 4 Fence between Bowling Club and new park
- 5 Entrance steps
- 6 Small native tree grove
- 7 Children's 'hidden' nook seating area with informal logs and large boulder seats along the path
- 8 New rockery planting
- 9 New rows of trees to reflect axis between Honour Av & Lennox St
- 10 Secret leaf litter dirt path for children to explore
- 11 Open lawn
- 12 Barbecue and seating area with views to city
- 13 Gathering space with central deck
- 14 Sensory planting adjacent to playground



Concept design for former Pétanque Green

Existing trees	Proposed gateway trees	Lawn	Concrete basketball court	Crushed rock	Rockery	Asphalt path	Existing bluestone wall	Curved seat	Rock seat	High fence	
Proposed deciduous trees	Proposed native shrubs	Understory planting	Garden bed	Dirt path	Bluestone block seat	Log seat	Seat with back	Square deck seat	Low fence	Picnic setting	

Appendix 2. Project's strategic context

The following corporate documents relevant to this project are detailed below.

Boroondara Community Plan 2021–2031 (BCP)

The project responds to the following BCP's priority themes.

Theme 1. Community, services and facilities, in particular strategies:

- 1.1 Neighbourhoods and community spaces facilitate social connections and belonging by providing, maintaining and activating places for people to meet, organise activities and celebrate events.
- 1.4 Facilities and sports precincts encourage equal access through social planning, delivery, asset maintenance and renewal activities.
- 1.6 Residents and visitors feel safe in public spaces through encouraging local activity and creating and maintaining civic areas.

Theme 2. Parks and green spaces, in particular strategies:

- 2.1 Parks and green spaces enable sport and recreation opportunities by maintaining and improving recreation spaces and equipment.
- 2.2 Our sustainable urban forest is preserved and increased through managing and renewing our open space trees and understorey growth.
- 2.3 Parks and green spaces are accessible and appealing through maintaining, improving and increasing amenities.
- 2.4 Green spaces are maintained and increased through management practices and investigating opportunities to acquire or modify existing land.

Theme 3. The environment, in particular strategies:

- 3.1 Community resilience and capacity to live sustainably is increased through advocacy, education and resources.
- 3.2 The environmental impact of council facilities and assets is further reduced through implementing sustainable practices.
- 3.5 Our leafy streetscapes are maintained and improved through advocating for careful project planning by government regulatory and project authorities, supported by the increased planting of resilient species.
- 3.6 Our biodiversity is conserved and maintained through improving the way we manage our diverse plants, animals and natural spaces.

Theme 4. Neighbourhood character and heritage, in particular strategies:

- 4.1 Boroondara's heritage places are protected through ongoing implementation of heritage protection controls in the Boroondara Planning Scheme.
- 4.2 The history of Boroondara's heritage places is respected and celebrated through community education.

Theme 5. Moving around: in particular strategies:

- 5.3 Shared paths and footpaths are fit for purpose through continued improvements to surface condition and lighting.

Theme 7. Leadership and governance, in particular strategies:

- 7.1 Decision-making is transparent and accountable through open governance processes with timely communication and reporting.
- 7.4 The voices of our community are heard through engagement strategies to allow effective representation on current and long-term community needs.
- 7.8 Celebrate and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, knowledge and heritage through implementing initiatives in partnership with our community and stakeholders.

Health priorities:

- Improving mental wellbeing and social connection.
- Tackling climate change and impacts on health.
- Increasing active living.

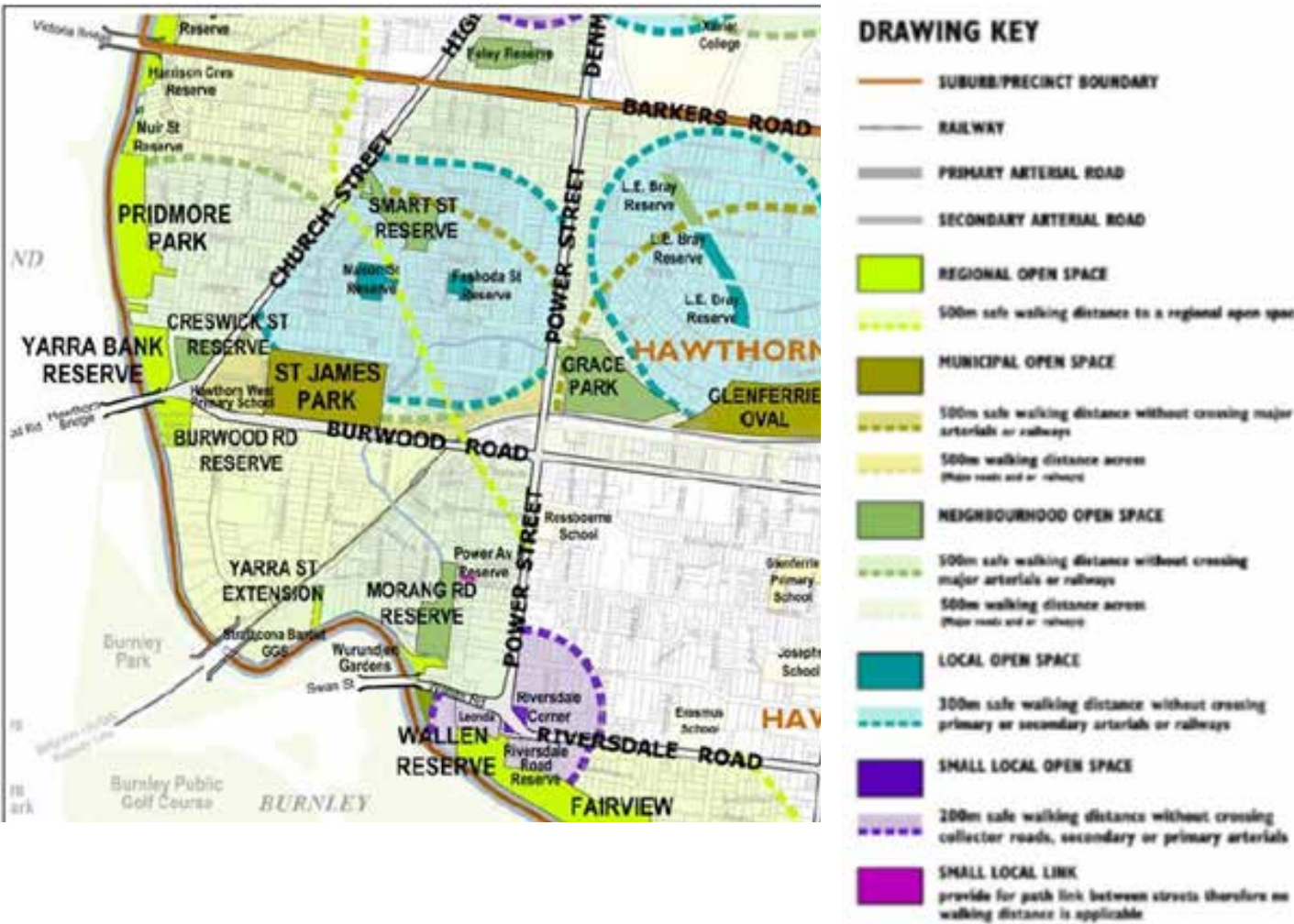
Boroondara Open Space Strategy (BOSS) 2013

St James Park is classified in BOSS’s hierarchy as municipal and is the second most visited park in the Hawthorn precinct after Central Gardens.

The following is an excerpt from BOSS on St James Park:

‘St James Park offers a diversity of character and use with a formal public garden layout that integrates sports facilities with unstructured informal recreational use. The community identified St James Park as the second most visited open space for a diversity of reasons, including walking, trees, exercising, relaxation, dog walking and ambiance.’

Summary distribution of open space in Hawthorn:



BOSS recommended action:

79D-5 Prepare and implement a conservation management plan for this park to guide ongoing management of the open space. Once completed, investigate provision of additional informal recreational facilities consistent with the conservation management intent. In the longer term, consider relocating the playground further east into the main area of the park so that it is more accessible from other park facilities, including access to the open grassed areas.

Responsibility: Council

Indicative priority: Higher

Shade policy 2017 – 2027

Policy statement: 'The City of Boroondara is committed to improving the safety, comfort and appearance of the city's public spaces and ensuring the level of service is appropriate to the place. This includes the provision of shade measures along with other sun protection strategies to encourage healthy active lifestyles in comfortable, cool, shaded spaces.'

We will achieve this by:

- *prioritising the use of natural shade in open space (above that of built shade) as a long-term shade solution*
- *prioritising the use of shade at selected key assets and places including:*
 - *playgrounds*
 - *along key walking and cycling routes.*

Excerpts of the Shade Policy relevant to this project include:

- Prioritise the use of natural shade in open space.
- Plant additional trees when upgrading open space to increase shade where needed.
- Plan ahead and plant additional trees on routes into and around key park destinations, and around the periphery of sports grounds (ensuring any tree planting does not impact on existing or future).
- Prioritise the use of natural shade along key walking and cycling routes.
- Utilise natural shade to encourage physical activity and sustainable transport by making key walking and cycling routes more inviting and shaded.
- Prioritise the use of shade at facilities and places where a particular need has been identified.
- Provide shade where possible to BBQs and picnic tables, making use of shade from existing trees and incorporate new tree planting.
- Provide shade at sites where a particular need for built and/or natural shade has been identified during the development of a master plan or landscape concept plan.
- Incorporate tree planting where possible when upgrading carparks, shopping centre streetscapes and civic spaces to provide shade as well as other amenity, environmental and health and well-being benefits.

Playground Development Strategy 2005

Recommendations regarding St James Park's playground are out of date as the playground was replaced in 2013 as part of Council's Playground Replacement project.

However, some of the findings of the strategy are worth noting including:

- 'The park is large, formal and open. Its character is derived largely from its historic layout, the cenotaph war memorial and the framework of large, mature, exotic trees.
- Informal surveillance is good.
- There are no barbecue facilities or shelter but there are seats located in shade.
- Public toilets are located in the sports pavilion but these are not located in close proximity to the playground.
- Some shade from existing trees is provided from morning sun. New trees on Wood Street will provide afternoon shade in the future.'

Site recommendations

- *It may be worth considering the installation of a barbecue facility and drinking fountain in the lawn area next to the playground.*

Yarra Strategic Plan 2020

This project responds to the following YSP's vision:

The river corridor ...

'is a valued place of connection to Wurundjeri culture and community, with a network of hubs of learning, play and celebration. It benefits from a united and integrated approach to governance and land management, guided by the wisdom and practices of Traditional Owners, keeping culture not just in the past but alive into the future.'

And relates to the YSP's priorities and values:

- 'Expand the river's local parklands and trails to improve continuous access, increase biodiversity and enhance river health.
- Celebrate our spiritual connection to the river and its surrounds.
- Establish new habitat for endangered birds, fish and wildlife.
- Employ collaborative planning processes for development to ensure changes are for the benefit of the river and the advantage of all in the community, not just the few.
- Collaborate to provide innovative immersive experiences with nature by expanding natural river tracks and creating environmental playgrounds along the corridor.
- Explore opportunities for community education and connection to Wurundjeri knowledge and cultural practice and significant sites.'

Urban Biodiversity Strategy 2013 – 2023

This strategy is a comprehensive plan designed to enhance and protect biodiversity within urban environments. It recognises the importance of maintaining diverse biological communities in cityscapes and seeks to integrate natural ecosystems into urban planning and development. The strategy outlines actions and policies aimed at conserving native species, habitats, and ecological processes, while also promoting community engagement and awareness of biodiversity issues.

Stepping stone corridors are a crucial component of urban ecological networks. These corridors consist of smaller, often isolated natural areas that function as ‘stepping stones’ for wildlife movement across urban landscapes. They provide essential habitats and resources for native species, facilitating their movement and dispersal between larger natural reserves or green spaces. This connectivity is vital for the survival and health of various species in urban areas, aiding in genetic exchange and reducing the risks of local extinctions.

Located at position 48 (Figure 24) within a stepping stone corridor, St James Park plays a significant role in this urban ecological network. It is recognised for having significant trees, which contribute to the biodiversity and ecological value of the area. These trees not only enhance the aesthetic appeal of the park but also serve as critical habitats and resources for local wildlife, supporting the overall goals of the Urban Biodiversity Strategy by maintaining and enhancing natural elements within the urban setting.



Figure 24. Boroondara’s biodiversity corridors, biogeographical zones and biologically significant sites (St James Park is noted as a site with significant trees reference 48, circled red)

Source: Urban Biodiversity Strategy 2013 – 2023

Appendix 3. History: chronology of key dates

Source: Heritage Advice Report by GMH Heritage Consultants, 2021.

‘The following chronology is summarised from the 1992 Hawthorn Heritage Study by Meredith Gould, other accessible secondary sources and targeted primary research.’

St James Park, Hawthorn: chronology

Year	Event
1852	The land for St James Park Hawthorn was part of the Crown land reserve for the Village of Hawthorn, laid out by Robert Hoddle in 1852. Unsold blocks became known as common land.
1861	The Reserve (historically known by various names, currently St James Park) was laid out by English-born James Scott (1819–1879), florist and nursery proprietor, using trees distributed by Melbourne Botanic Gardens director Ferdinand von Mueller (1825–1896). Scott had established a nursery in Burwood Road, Hawthorn (known as the Royal Nursery after receiving patronage during the 1867 visit of the Duke of Edinburgh) on land purchased in 1854
1860s–70s	Plants supplied by von Mueller, including Blue Gums, WA Red Flowering Gums
1870	50 pines, 60 elms, 27 oaks planted
1870s	Oval used from this time for cricket
1880	Bowling club established
1887	Some trees replaced. The 1992 citation suggests Moreton Bay Figs and Monterey (Radiata) Pines in the park in 1992 may date from this time. Other trees introduced were Peppercorn Tree (<i>Schinus molle</i>), Monterey Pine (then <i>Pinus insignis</i> , now <i>P. radiata</i>) and Sweet Pittosporum (<i>Pittosporum undulatum</i>)
c.1887	Football was also played at the oval
1900	By 1900, the Hawthorn Recreation Reserve was fenced, with 6 entry gates. There was a fountain at the centre of the park ⁹
1901–45	Layout of bowling greens changed (extended to south)
1929	Freestone and granite Hawthorn War Memorial constructed, comprising the cenotaph and lawn and a symmetrical grove of Bhutan Cypress (<i>Cupressus torulosa</i>), dedicated Sunday 10 March 1929. Designed by M Finlayson. ¹⁰
c1929	Depression era works to paths, edging, and associated plantings including Bhutan Cypress
1930s	Extant bowling club building built
c.1945–70	Bowling green extended to south
1998–2011	Camberwell Pétanque Club commenced use of southern green, moving to Lynden Park in 2011
2020	Weatherboard pavilion in the northwest corner of the park (replaced c.1960s with a brick building)

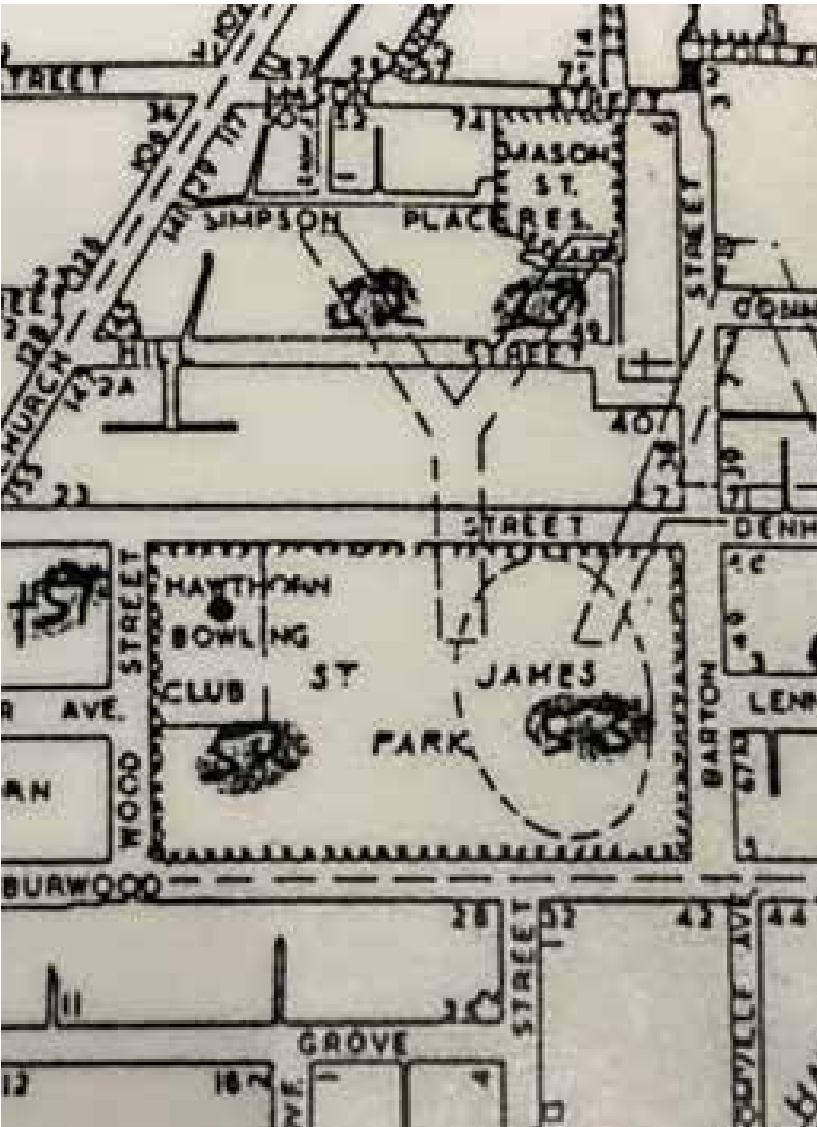


Figure 25. 1917 MMBW plan showing St James Park’s oval and Bowling Club

Source: Hawthorn Library Historical Collections

Footnote

9 Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, Detail Plan No. 1804, dated August 1900.

10 Age, 11 March 1929, p.10.



Figure 26. Detail of 'Residential area of Richmond with Richmond Pony Track and parks' Airspy photograph by Charles Daniel Pratt (1892–1968), dated 'ca1925–ca1940', this image was taken in winter, after 1929 when the Hawthorn War Memorial monument and lawn were constructed at St James Park

Source: Accession No. H91.160/1604, State Library Victoria

Appendix 4. Heritage studies

1992 [Hawthorn Heritage Study](#) by Meredith Gould.

The report states that the park is significant due to:

- *St. James Park, reserved in 1861 as a Crown Land Reserve, and continuously maintained since then as a public park is of metropolitan significance:*
- *For its association with the original village of Hawthorn Reserve.*
- *For the retention of remnant native vegetation.*
- *For its mature native and exotic trees, particularly the elm and oak avenues.*
- *For the retention of a significant portion of its nineteenth century path layout.*
- *For its role in providing passive and active recreation opportunities to the citizens of Hawthorn and neighbouring areas.*
- *For its war memorial of cultural significance.*

St James Park Heritage Advice, GML Heritage Consultants, 2022

Available at document library on [Engage Boroondara St James Park project page](#).

Building on the 1992 Hawthorn Heritage Study, GML investigated which individual elements contribute to the heritage significance of St James Park. They identified the following:

- The park boundaries, early park layout established by 1900, and improvements into the inter-war period (pathways, oval, area for lawn bowls expanded in the inter-war period, the war memorial).
- The landscape character of the park, defined by mature large trees, avenues planted with exotic deciduous trees, open lawn areas planted with a diverse collection of trees with strong evergreen forms.

- The remnant river red gums.
- Mature native and exotic trees, particularly the elm and oak avenues, but also other trees that provide evidence of early planting phases into the inter-war period and which contribute to the park's landscape character.
- The provision of passive and active recreation opportunities to the citizens of Hawthorn and neighbouring areas.
- The footprint of the oval.
- The footprints of the bowling greens.
- The Hawthorn War Memorial, including the war memorial, formally arranged Bhutan Cypress trees, symmetrical landscaped setting, forecourt and paths, the east–west view corridor terminating in the monument.
- Hard-landscaping introduced in the inter-war period, including steps and rock edging and landscaping associated with the war memorial.
- The pathway layout.
- The brick spoon drains that edge the paths are consistent with the historic character of the park. Some pathways have spoon drains made of early bricks that, if not early fabric, are sympathetic to the park's historic layout and contribute to understanding the significance of the park.

Elements that are not significant are:

- self-sown trees
- modern bricks used in spoon drains and steps
- children's playground (fabric not significant)
- lamps (fabric not significant)
- seats (fabric not significant).

Intrusive elements are:

- Two large water tanks.

Lost elements are:

- some density of tree canopy in the central triangle of lawn
- fountain, extant in 1900
- bandstand (replaced by the war memorial)
- cannon, visible in early photographs.’¹¹

Footnote

- 11 GML Heritage Advice Report, section 6.1.2.

Appendix 5. Proposed planting palettes

General

- Garden bed locations within the park will remain unchanged, but their layouts and planting styles will be modified.
- Replant garden beds with robust species that are resilient to climate change and complement the original form and character of the nineteenth-century horticultural styles.
- New plantings will be mindful of maintenance requirements.

War memorial – ceremonial path palette

- These garden beds currently experience a variety of extreme site conditions from full sun to near complete shade, species selection and siting will be sympathetic to these conditions.
- Widen 'ceremonial walk' garden beds and plant with a mixture of native and exotic plants (as the community preferred). Species origin to be a combination of native and indigenous planting as well as exotic species with influence from locations where Australians have participated.
- Plant forms to include shrubs, grasses, and groundcovers for a diverse garden bed with year-round interest.
- Create a linkage between colour and form across all ceremonial path garden beds.
- Manage planting heights to avoid obstructing views to the war memorial (and broader park).
- Consider 'plunge planting' for seasonal interest such as for Anzac Day or Remembrance Day.
- Plant selection will not impact passive surveillance.

Burwood Road gateway – rockery planting palette

- Replant the south-west Burwood Road corner entrance garden beds with rockery species in a planting style typical of nineteenth century rockeries
- Proposed species to be eye-catching plants to highlight this key pedestrian gateway to the park.
- Plant forms to include a mixture of shrubs and groundcovers that are formal in character. Encourage sprawling groundcovers over rockery areas.
- Plant selection will not impact passive surveillance.

Pétanque – interface palette

- Garden beds adjacent to the pétanque area currently experience significant dry shade due to mature elms planted in these beds. Species selection and siting will be sympathetic to these conditions.
- Create a new rockery garden to the east and south of the former pétanque green, linking this space to the rest of the park.
- Replant the garden bed to the south of the pétanque green with species that possess interesting sensory qualities to encourage nature play. This may include plants with vibrant colours, pleasant fragrances, and/or textured foliage.
- Plant forms will consist of a mixture of formal shrubs and groundcovers.
- Plant selection will not hinder passive surveillance, and sight lines through to the new open space (pétanque) will be encouraged.

Pétanque – internal palette

- The pétanque site is flat, open, and lacks trees or existing garden beds. Any proposed plantings will be exposed to full sun, and species selection and siting will consider this condition.
- Given the former use of the site, further assessment of the soil profile is essential.
- Plant forms will include a mixture of formal shrubs, grasses, and groundcovers. For garden beds closer to the playground, select species that offer interesting sensory qualities to promote nature play.
- Plant selection will not hinder passive surveillance, and sight lines across the site will be promoted.
- Emphasise a flat and open lawn area in the middle of the site.
- Proposed tree species will be in harmony with the existing character of St James Park and complement the original form and character of nineteenth-century horticultural styles.

Contact us:

Website: www.engage.boroondara.vic.gov.au/st-james-park-master-plan

Email: boroondara@boroondara.vic.gov.au

Telephone: 9278 4444

After hours emergencies: 9278 4444

Postal address:

Private Bag 1 Camberwell VIC 3124

Customer Service centre:

Camberwell office

8 Inglesby Road, Camberwell

For speech or hearing impaired:

National Relay Service: TTY 13 36 77

Speak and Listen: 1300 555 727

Free interpreting service: 9278 4002