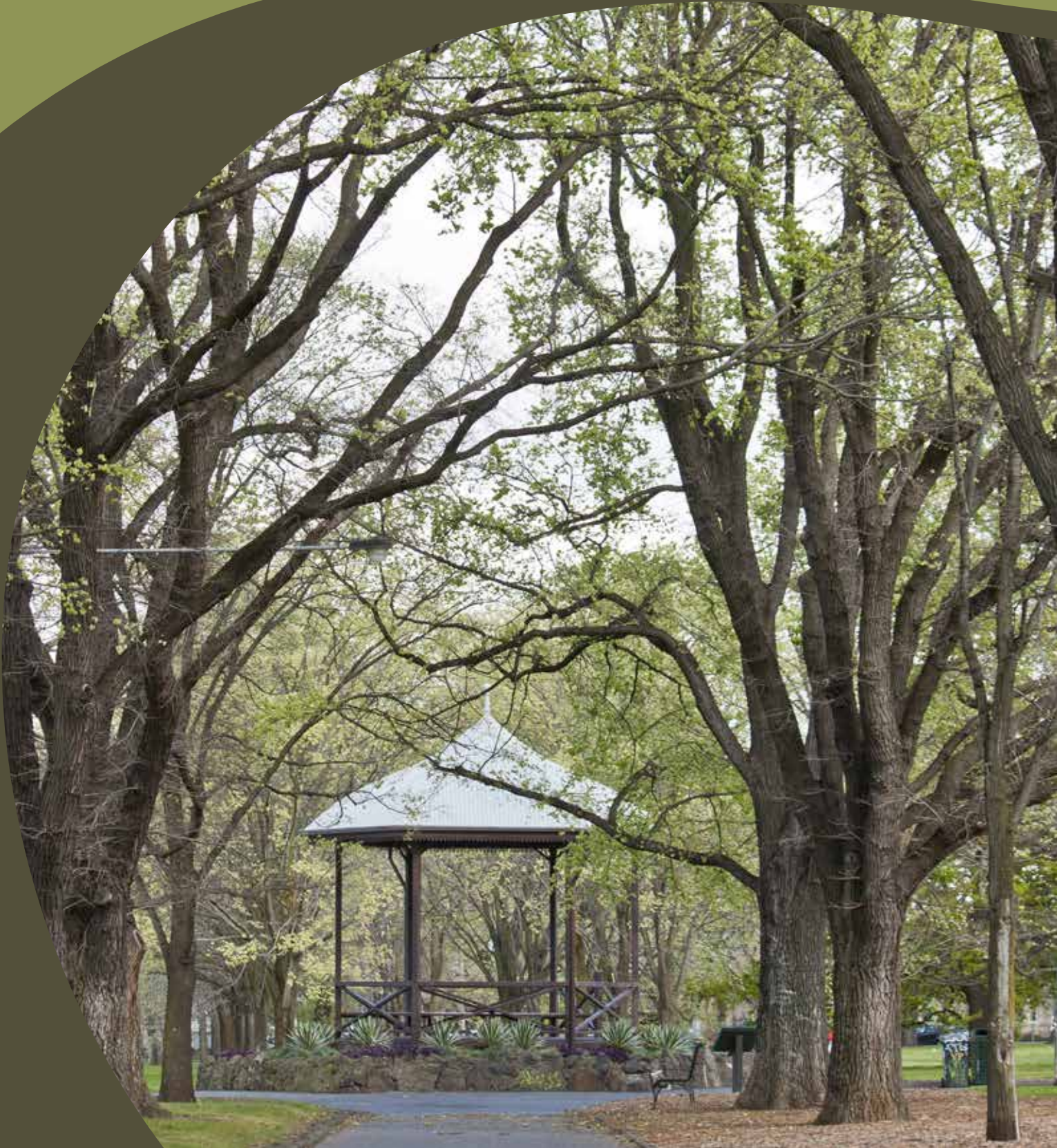




DARLING GARDENS MASTERPLAN 2015





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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Masterplan

The purpose of this masterplan is to set the strategic direction for Darling Gardens and guide its future maintenance, development, and improvement over the next ten years.

1.2 The Masterplan Process

The masterplan has been developed based on a series of consultations with the local community, stakeholders, and Council services associated with the Gardens. A summary of the results of these consultations is provided in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

A preliminary questionnaire was sent to approximately 1,800 surrounding residences in March 2014 asking for input on the masterplan. That information informed the draft plan, which was distributed for further community consultation and comment. A further exhibition period was conducted in August 2015.

Feedback on the draft plan has informed the final masterplan which was adopted by Council at its meeting on 6 October 2015.

The key recommendations of the draft plan have been reviewed by heritage consultants Lovell Chen Pty Ltd to confirm they are in keeping with the Darling Gardens Cultural Significance and Conservation Policies.



2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Site Location and Context

Darling Gardens is a 7ha public open space located in a residential area of Clifton Hill, in the City of Yarra. It is bound by North Terrace to the north, South Terrace to the south, Gold Street to the west and the busy arterial Hoddle Street to the east.

Darling Gardens is one of Melbourne's signature Victorian Gardens and is locally significant as an early and important recreational facility within the Collingwood and Clifton Hill area.

The site is Crown land permanently reserved as a gardens and recreation reserve.

2.2 Existing Conditions

The site is predominantly flat, with a gentle slope to the south and low point located at the south-east corner. The Gardens is crossed by a network of predominantly Elm-lined straight paths which converge at the centre where there is a bandstand. The remaining quadrants are predominantly open lawn areas, containing some scattered specimen trees of mixed species. A circular avenue of Elms around the perimeter of the park reflects the earliest layout of the Gardens. The eastern edge of the site is screened from Hoddle Street by a double row of Elms. This edge of the park is within the Hoddle Street road reserve under the ownership of Vic Roads.

A playground is located near the north-western entrance to the Gardens. The playground is nearing the end of its lifespan and does not meet Council's Open Space Shade policy for the provision of shade.

A barbecue and picnic area is located in the mid-eastern section of the park, near the Maternal and Child Health Centre. Paths in this area are irregular and do not cater to desired pedestrian movements.

A toilet block is located near the south-eastern entrance to the Gardens.

The north-eastern section of the park is a designated dog off-leash area. According to Council by-laws, dogs must be on-leash on the paths and within 10m of a playground, barbecue or picnic facility. Dogs are also prohibited from any mulched areas and Council garden beds.

2.3 Heritage

Darling Gardens is individually identified as HO94 in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay of the Yarra Planning Scheme. As such the Gardens are subject to Clause 43.01 'Heritage Overlay' and Clause 22.02 'Development guidelines for sites subject to the Heritage Overlay', of the Yarra Planning Scheme. According to the definitions in Clause 22.02, the Gardens are a 'heritage place in its own right' and are 'individually significant'. The Gardens are also located within the area of the Clifton Hill Western Heritage Overlay Precinct (HO317).

A landscape citation was prepared for Darling Gardens in Volume 4 of the City of Yarra *Heritage Review*, 1998. This study is listed as a reference document at Clause 22.02 'Development guidelines for sites subject to the Heritage Overlay'.



The statement of significance reads: 'Darling Gardens are locally significant as an early and important recreational facility within the Collingwood and Clifton Hill area. The site has strong associations with the local community, at various times the home to sporting groups and the focus of community activities. The site effectively illustrates its ongoing development since the 1860s, and contains two trees recorded on the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) Significant Tree Register.'

A citation for the Clifton Hill Western Precinct was prepared in the *City of Yarra Review of Heritage Overlay Areas*, 2007. This study is listed as a reference document at Clause 22.02 of the Yarra Planning Scheme. The statement of significance reads in part:

Clifton Hill Western Heritage Overlay Area annexed by East Collingwood Council in 1855 and substantially developed by World War One is significant:

- For its focus on a representative and intact example of a residential garden square (Darling Gardens) based on British and European precedents, with associated significant trees.

In addition to the studies cited above, a report entitled *Darling Gardens Cultural Significance and Conservation Policies*, was prepared in 1993 by Nigel Lewis Richard Aitken Pty Ltd in association with Context Pty Ltd. This document (referred to as the *Conservation Policies*) acts as a guiding document for the draft masterplan. It states that Darling Gardens is of metropolitan cultural significance due to its historical, aesthetic, social, and scientific value.

The *Conservation Policies* states that:

'the scheme implemented from the early 1880s to its maturity in the first half of the twentieth-century be regarded as the period of major significance for Darling Gardens'. This period is selected because during that time:

- the 1863 boundaries had contained development of the site
- the 1880s-90s path layout and avenue tree planting were initiated
- the 1905-06 path layout and bandstand were initiated
- toilets and playground equipment (although not the existing structures) had been added
- all fencing had been removed.

3.0 HISTORY

Two key documents form a thorough reference for Darling Gardens, and should be referred to for a more detailed history of the site. These are *Darling Gardens Cultural Significance and Conservation Policies* (1993), prepared by Nigel Lewis Richard Aitken Pty Ltd, and *The Darling Gardens, Clifton Hill, Victoria: A timeline: 1852-1922* (1995) by Tina Meyer and Graham Loughlin.

The site was reserved for public use in 1863 and Ferdinand Von Mueller, the Director of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens, supplied seed, plants and offered recommendations for the laying out of the site.

The site was leased at various stages in the 1860s and 1870s for grazing purposes, and used for the dumping of night soil.

In 1863 the 'ornamental road' around the perimeter of the site was planned. During the 1890s the bulk of the gardens were laid out, with the construction of perimeter picket fencing, a stone grotto in the southeast corner, and the planting of deciduous trees, particularly Elms and Oaks. The earliest avenues of Elm trees lined a circular path around the perimeter of the Gardens, with the straight radial avenues of trees added in 1907.

The park was a focus for the local Collingwood and Clifton Hill community, used for activities such as music recitals, fetes, and sporting activities. In 1907, a community tree planting day effectively ended the use of the Gardens for organised sport. The bandstand was constructed in the centre of the park in 1906. This was later demolished in the 1950s, and the existing reconstruction was built in 1976.

Also in the 1950s the grotto and rockery was filled in and the caretaker's cottage in the south-east corner was demolished and replaced with the public toilet. The infant welfare centre was built in the south-east section of the site in 1956, and extended in 1966.



* Images reproduced by permission of the State Library of Victoria.

4.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Following the results of the consultation and stakeholder engagement, the following principles have been developed to guide the shape of the master plan and its associated recommendations.

Landscape Heritage

- Retain and respect the heritage character of the Gardens.
- Plan for the future of mature trees in the Gardens.
- Retain the large open lawns and simplicity of the layout of the Gardens.

Environmental Sustainability

- Improve the sustainability of the Gardens and ensure the park is able to cope with the impact of climate change.
- Seek opportunities for greater water efficiency and integrated water cycle management, while improving the health of vegetation.
- Improve the biodiversity of the Gardens through greater variety of plant type and species.

Uses and Activities

- Allow for public use and enjoyment by encouraging a complementary mix of activities.
- Provide for a variety of passive and active recreation uses in the Gardens, whilst maintaining the local feel of the park.
- Consider synergies or conflicts between uses when locating them in the Gardens.
- Provide additional amenities and uses where these are complementary to the character and capacity of the Gardens.
- Look to remove uses inconsistent with passive and active open space.

Access and Safety

- Ensure public access to the Gardens, considering people of all abilities.
- Support equitable use of the Gardens by people of all ages.
- Implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to ensure a safe public space.



5.0 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Landscape, Planting and Maintenance

5.1.1 Trees

The avenues of mature trees are one of the most highly valued elements in Darling Gardens and they provide immeasurable social and environmental benefits to the surrounding community. It is necessary to plan for their eventual replacement over time and before they die to ensure the Gardens do not lose a majority of tree canopy at any one time.

To ensure consistent avenues of healthy trees for future generations, avenues should be replanted in their entirety at the time that the majority of trees in that avenue require replacement. This may mean that some healthy trees are removed in the replacement process. This is thought to be necessary because infill planting only of individual trees would mean that the character of the avenues and the overall Gardens would be lost.

The aim should be to achieve a variety of tree age and maturity to ensure the future benefits of these trees. It is also important to protect against pest and disease such as Elm Leaf Beetle, which can easily attack landscapes which have only one or two dominant species. Therefore a variety and balance in tree species is needed.

It is recommended to:

- Develop a tree succession strategy which plans for staggered replacement of complete avenues to achieve a balance of ages in tree stock and consistency in avenue planting.

- Use a tree palette which ensures an appropriate and sustainable mix of tree species is planted (though retaining single species for each avenue)
- Respect the character of the Gardens by retaining an exotic, deciduous species palette for avenue trees, choosing species which are able to cope with urban conditions and the impacts of climate change.
- Continue to select a diverse variety of feature species for specimen trees that are consistent with the ornamental character of Victoria plant palettes. Locate these specimen trees carefully to retain large open lawn space.



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED

5.1.2 Understorey Planting

A very small amount of understorey or garden bed planting currently exists in the park.

This is located:

- at the kerb outstands at the north west and south-west corners
- a strip along Gold Street near the playground
- in the centre of the Garden, surrounding the bandstand

There was a significant desire expressed through consultation for a greater amount and more diversity in colour and species in garden bed planting. Some increase could be accommodated in the Garden without interrupting sight lines or the predominantly grass and canopy tree character of the Gardens.

It is recommended that:

- a small increase in garden beds be provided, predominantly at the entrances to the Gardens
- the new play spaces incorporate planting into their design to soften their presence in the Gardens and also include opportunities for 'nature-based' play
- planting provide a greater level of diversity, using a mix of native and exotic plants which are drought hardy and ornamental, consistent with species palettes of the Victoria era.

5.1.3 Irrigation

In the mid-2000s during drought conditions, drip irrigation line was installed in Darling Gardens to water the trees during times of water restrictions. This drip irrigation kept the trees alive during the drought, however did not allow them to thrive and the drip line is now in poor condition.

Given there are no current water restrictions on irrigation, Council can explore increasing the level and type of irrigation to the Gardens to provide healthier trees and grass, however a balance must be struck with water saving targets associated with Council's Environment Strategy.

It is recommended that:

- use of the pop-up spray irrigation system be recommended to provide irrigation to trees and some lawn areas.

5.1.4 Integrated Water Cycle Management

There is the opportunity to improve the sustainability of Darling Gardens by exploring the possibility of stormwater harvesting from the surrounding residential catchment to be used as an alternative water source for irrigation. This would involve treating stormwater in a raingarden or wetland and storing treated water in underground tanks connected to the irrigation system.

Several potential catchments and locations have had preliminary assessment in the past indicating that these could be made to function. However the feasibility of such a costly project would be subject to Council receiving contributory funding, as well as the priority of other stormwater harvesting projects in City of Yarra which may yield greater volumes and benefits.

It is recommended that:

- Council further investigate the potential location and funding for a raingarden or wetland in Darling Gardens to harvest and store stormwater for irrigation
- The use of drought-tolerate grass species be increased
- Grass be grown longer in some select lawn 'meadow' areas to reduce watering demand



5.2 Uses and Activities

5.2.1 Walking, Jogging, Cycling

The existing axial path layout provides shaded avenues for movement through Darling Gardens, and is used for a variety of activities including walking, jogging and cycling. The paths also create large open lawn 'rooms' which are used in various ways, including for local school sports and should be retained to provide open un-programmed space.

A strong demand was expressed for the creation of a footpath along the southern edge of the Gardens. There was also some interest in reinstating the circular 'carriage path' which originally ran around the perimeter of the Gardens.

Generally people noted that the mix of uses in the Gardens is balanced and works well. While some feedback cited the speed of cyclists as an issue, there is no plan to ban bicycles from park paths in the City of Yarra and encouraging courteous behaviour is considered the best management option.

It is recommended to:

- retain the existing asphalt pathways with bluestone edges.
- resolve paths near the MCH Centre and barbecue area which do not currently relate to pedestrian movement.
- establish a path along the southern edge, pending impact on the levels in this area
- rationalise the path network to and around the picnic/BBQ area in the mid-east of the Gardens.

- add graphics and/or ephemeral signage to the paths which remind all users to be courteous and mindful of others, consistent with the broader Council strategy.

5.2.2 Play

The existing playground is located in the north-west corner of Darling Gardens and generally caters to toddlers and young children. Given its current condition, the playground will require replacement within the next three years. A large number of respondents requested that additional play equipment be provided to cater for older children.

The existing playground location is problematic because:

- it is immediately adjacent to Gold Street and park users have expressed concern about children playing in close proximity to the road
- it receives very little shade from trees and a built shade structure is not a preferable addition to the Gardens
- it is in close proximity to the dog off-leash area, with many respondents requesting further separation of these uses.
- it is distant from the public toilets

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED

- the play structures are highly visible in this open area of the Gardens, and have some impact on open views from the most elevated part of the Gardens, being the north-west corner.

It is recommended that:

- At the end of its lifespan, the young children's playground be relocated to a location which takes advantage of existing natural tree shade (such as the south-west quadrant of the park, which is gently sloped and provides an opportunity for the play area to be nestled into the slope). This small playground should be naturalistic in its design, and low in scale, fitting into the landscape of the Gardens and providing opportunities for creative and imaginative play.
- A second limited play and active recreation area be added to the Gardens to cater to older children and teenagers may also be located in the south-west quadrant on the east side. This area could contain some more challenging play and climbing equipment and potentially a game such as a ping-pong table.
- Play equipment should utilise natural materials and consider visual impact in determining height and mass.

5.2.3 Other active uses

There is some demand for fitness equipment in the Gardens to support use of the park for exercise, including jogging.

However, these facilities would be more appropriately located in reserves that cater for more active recreational pursuits.

A basketball court is not recommended for Darling Gardens despite some requests during consultation, as it is not considered consistent with the character of the Gardens. It is also noted that a publicly accessible basketball court is located nearby at the Clifton Hill Primary School.

Skate facilities are considered to be adequately provided for in the area, with Edinburgh Gardens skate bowl to the west and Quarries Park skate park to the east, and are not supported for Darling Gardens.

5.2.4 Picnic and Barbecuing

The existing picnic and barbecue facility is distant from the main activity point of the playground, however they provide a popular facility for those wanting to be removed from play areas.

Consultation showed a strong demand for additional picnic tables and barbecue in the Gardens and it is recommended that these be added near the future play spaces in the south-west quadrant.

It is recommended to:

- retain the existing barbecue and picnic area, though the picnic tables should be reoriented to address the park.
- provide additional picnic tables and barbecue near the future play area when this area is implemented.



5.2.5 Dog Exercise

Consultation has confirmed that Darling Gardens is an important dog exercise location for many residents and includes benefits of socialisation for the animals and owners. However, the enforcement of dog rules, such as dogs being let off-leash on paths and near the playground, as well as picking up excrement, was also commonly raised as an issue.

It is recommended to:

- retain existing dog off leash areas, however moving the playground area will eliminate some conflict that arises from the current adjacency
- maintain effective signage to note dog off-leash areas



5.3 Infrastructure and Buildings

5.3.1 Toilet

The existing toilet block has been used in the past for anti-social behaviour and the closure of enclosed men's and women's sections to leave open only one unisex cubicle does not meet the service demand for the Gardens at busy times. The existing building is not in keeping with current CPTED principles (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design).

It is recommended that:

- in the short term remaining cubicles be opened up in peak use times (such as summer weekends) to provide an adequate number of cubicles for park users.
- the toilets be maintained open from dawn to dusk and locked at night as alternative public toilets are located in night time activity locations such as Queens Parade shops and Collingwood Leisure Centre.
- the existing building be replaced by new toilets in the current location as it will serve the increased activity proposed in the south of the park.
- the new toilet building be designed to meet current safety design principles, including: having cubicles which open directly on to the park; making all parts of the facility visually open so as to discourage anti-social behaviour; and to make park users comfortable in accessing the toilets.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED

5.3.2 Maternal and Child Health Centre

The location of a single nurse service in the existing Maternal and Child Health (MCH) building is inconsistent with current best practice and City of Yarra is progressively moving standalone MCH centres to dual centres or multi-service hubs.

The existing MCH building in the Darling Gardens is identified in the Conservation Policies as being of no appreciable cultural significance and its siting as intrusive, and the building is not required for park use.

It is recommended that:

- once the MCH service is relocated the building be demolished and the temporary reserve be reincorporated into the Gardens.

5.3.3 Bandstand

It is recommended that the reconstructed Bandstand in the centre of the Gardens remain.

5.3.4 Substation

It is recommended that the electricity substation located in the north east corner of the Gardens is in use and should remain. The Conservation Policies recommend that even if decommissioned in the future the building should remain in place.

5.3.5 Bluestone Entry Walls

It is recommended that, as a result of recent consultation on these structures, that the bluestone entry walls in the north-east and south-east corners remain in place.

5.3.6 Lighting

Currently, the path from the south-east corner to the north-west corner contains lights which are owned and maintained (from Council payments) by the distributor Citipower. These street light style fixtures on tall timber posts detract from the character of the Gardens.

Consultation revealed a strong demand for better and more lighting to accommodate movement through the Gardens at night and the Yarra Open Space Lighting Policy states that paths receiving high use or providing connection to key destinations such as public transport stations and commercial centres should be lit.

It is recommended that:

- the two main diagonal paths be lit as they receive a high level of use and provide connection to key destinations
- as funding becomes available to provide lighting, the lights be taken over from Citipower to Council ownership, providing the opportunity to install pedestrian scale park lights which are also energy efficient.
- lighting design should be simple and contemporary in nature to distinguish from heritage elements, energy efficient, and in keeping with the Yarra Open Space Lighting Policy.

5.3.7 Signage

Signage has recently been upgraded in Darling Gardens and is located at the four corner entrances to the park and in the centre near the Bandstand. The purpose of park signage is for welcome, wayfinding, and information/regulation.

Consistent with the Council-wide approach to signage in open spaces, signage should be kept to a minimum and information incorporated into single signs wherever possible to reduce visual clutter in the Gardens.

It is recommended to:

- retain existing signage and upgrade when required using Council standard designs

5.3.8 Seating

There appears to be demand for an increased number of seats in the Gardens to further the community's enjoyment of the park as a place to rest, sit, socialise and contemplate.

It is recommended that:

- additional seating be located in the park, particularly near the new play areas to provide for supervision of play.

5.3.9 Rubbish Bins

There was some call through consultation for an increased number of bins to service the Gardens although current provisions are reported by Council operations to provide for the demand.

It is recommended to:

- Council officers review rubbish bin provision to ensure it is consistent with the Yarra Waste Strategy.

5.3.10 Drinking fountains

There were some requests put forward for additional drinking fountains.

It is recommended to:

- review the drinking fountain locations and numbers in Darling Gardens to ensure they meet the needs of park users.

5.4 Land Ownership and Management

5.4.1 Hoddle Street Edge

The eastern section of the path containing the double row of mature elms and pathway are in the ownership of Vicroads and sit within the Hoddle Street road reserve. This area is directly connected to the continuous park area and is utilised and perceived to be part of Darling Gardens.

It is recommended that:











- Council investigate the future possibility of transferring the Hoddle Street edge into the overall Crown reserve for Darling Gardens to ensure its future as park land.





















Existing Conditions Plan



- | | | |
|--|--|---|
|  Existing trees |  Band stand |  Playground |
|  National Trust Significant Trees |  Lights |  Toilet |
|  Dog off-leash area | BBQ BBQ and picnic tables |  Sub Station |
| MCH MCH Centre |  Garden bed areas |  Asphalt paths |

Proposed Recommendation Plan



- | Existing | | Proposed | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|---|
|  | Existing trees |  | Proposed trees |  | Garden bed areas |
|  | National Trust Significant Trees |  | Picnic settings |  | New Lights |
|  | Dog off-leash area |  | New toilet building |  | Improved path network |
|  | Band stand |  | Young children's play area |  | Proposed new footpath along South Terrace |
|  | BBQ and picnic tables |  | Older children's play area | | |
|  | Asphalt paths | | | | |
|  | Sub Station | | | | |

6.0 IMPLEMENTATION



The actions recommended in the Darling Gardens draft masterplan will be funded through the open space capital works budget, with a portion of the funding for some upgrade projects coming from open space developer contributions. While the renewal of existing assets at the end of the lifespan will be automatically funded, other projects may be subject to discretionary funding, in competition with other new works across City of Yarra, and therefore may take longer to implement than the desired timeframe indicated in the table below.

Once the masterplan is endorsed by Council, the responsibility of implementing the masterplan will sit with the Open Space

Planning and Design Unit. Council officers will consult with the local community on the detailed design of new elements in the Gardens, such as the proposed play spaces in advance of these works occurring.

Recommendations and indicative timing and costs are listed below. Where a recommendation is for an existing asset to be maintained in its current location and condition it has not been listed in the table. Estimates are approximate only and will require detailed design and quantity survey to determine exact costs.

Landscape, Planting and Maintenance

Recommendation	Priority	Timing	Approx. Expected Cost	Funding Source
Trees				
Develop tree succession strategy	Medium	3-5 years	\$10,000	Within operational budget
Plant/replace trees according to strategy	TBD following strategy	10 years +	TBD for each ave	Will require additional operational budget
Will require additional operational budget				
Plant new garden bed areas per plan	Low	5-10 year	\$40,000	Within horticulture budget
Irrigation				
Recommence spray irrigation	Urgent	1 year	\$5,000	Within operational budget
Integrated Water Cycle Management				
Further investigate feasibility of stormwater harvesting project	Medium	3-5 years	\$10,000	Within operational budget

Uses and Activities

Recommendation	Priority	Timing	Approx. Expected Cost	Funding Source
Walking, Cycling and Jogging				
Investigate installation of path along southern boundary of the Gardens and implement if feasible	High	2 years	\$270,000	Subject to funding/ bid
Graphics and artwork to encourage sharing of path	Urgent	1 year	\$5,000	Within capital signage budget
Play				
Design and build play areas, including seating	High	2 years	\$320,000	Within open space renewal budget
Picnic and Barbecuing				
Shift existing picnic tables to better address the park and to accommodate a rationalised path system	Medium	3-5 years	\$12,000	Within open space renewal budget
Install new picnic tables and barbecue as part of design of new play areas	High	2 years	\$40,000	Within open space renewal budget

Buildings and Amenities

Recommendation	Priority	Timing	Approx. Expected Cost	Funding Source
Toilet				
Replace toilet block with new building designed to current safety guidelines	High	2 years	\$180,000	Within building renewal budget
Lighting				
Provide lighting along two diagonal cross paths, consistent with open space lighting standards	Medium	3-5 years	\$230,000	Subject to funding/ bid
Seating				
Provide additional seating	Low	5-10 years	\$25,000	Within street furniture budget

Drinking fountains

Recommendation	Priority	Timing	Approx. Expected Cost	Funding Source
Review drinking fountain locations and numbers.	Low	5-10 years	\$15,000	Within street furniture budget

IMPLEMENTATION CONTINUED



REFERENCES

Aitken, Richard and Lewis, Nigel, *Darling Gardens Cultural Significance and Conservation Policies*, Melbourne 1993

Meyer, Tine and Loughlin, Graham *The Darling Gardens, Clifton Hill, Victoria: A timeline: 1852-1922*, Melbourne, 1995

Allom Lovell & Associates, and John Patrick Pty Ltd, *City of Yarra Heritage Review, Landscape Citations*, Volume 4, Melbourne, 1998

APPENDIX 1 – PRELIMINARY QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Approximately 1,800 questionnaires were letter boxed to the surrounding neighbourhood and the questionnaire is available on the Council website. Approximately 150 questionnaires were returned.

A summary of results is provided below.

Q1. What activities do you use the Darling Gardens for?

Most common activities listed (by popularity) were:

1. Walking
2. Picnics and barbecues
3. Playground
4. Relaxing, sitting, reading etc.
5. Dog exercise
6. Cycling
7. Social gathering and meeting friends
8. Lawn games (informal ball games etc.)
9. Jogging or exercise
10. School sports

Q2. What do you most value about Gardens?

Most common responses included:

- Large, open space
- Old trees and heritage layout / character (paths and rotunda)
- Green trees, shade and grass
- Natural beauty, peace, and tranquillity, an oasis in the city
- Simple, restful, quiet space
- Amenities such as playground and barbecue area
- Dog friendly space
- Bike friendly
- Well maintained
- Used mainly by locals and family-oriented, a community gathering space
- Uses function well together / balance of passive and active uses
- Convenience to home
- Space for children and schools

APPENDIX 1 – CONTINUED



Q3. What would you most like to see changed about Darling Gardens + other suggestions

Most common comments and suggestions are shown by theme below.

Maintenance of Landscape	Responses
better care of mature trees	16
better care and more irrigation of grass	20

Planting	Responses
maintain heritage planting / exotic trees	9
plan for succession of mature trees, and plant more trees	22
more native trees	11
more garden beds	17
increase biodiversity of planting	6
more colourful planting	8
change planting around the rotunda (harmful to dogs)	2

Paths	Responses
provide circular / perimeter path (reinstate the 'tan' track under circle of trees)	16
provide path along southern edge	9

Playground	Responses
expand playground (and add equipment to cater to older children)	28
don't expand playground	4
provide shade for playground	5
more separation of playground from road	2
fence playground	16

Additional Recreation Facilities	Responses
provide more for teenagers	6
add basketball court	5
add skatepark	7
no skatepark	3
add fitness equipment	7
other activities eg. Tennis table, foosball table	3
add goals for ball games	2
No additional active facilities	5

Toilets	Responses
open existing toilets	9
upgrade existing toilets	12
provide new toilets near the playground	21

Other Amenities	Responses
Additional barbecue area / picnic tables	27
More seating	16
more drinking fountains	18
More bins	7
more lighting	19
More dog waste bags	8

Irrigation and Stormwater	Responses
harvest stormwater for irrigation use	7
provide raingarden or wetland to capture stormwater	4
provide underground tanks to store stormwater	5

Dog Areas	Responses
more off-leash area	7
better control of dog off-leash rules (especially on paths and near playground)	19
move dog area away from playground and bbq	5

Events	Responses
more programming and people using the park	17
Don't increase usage or events	6
Public concerts and music	6
Farmer's market	2
police laws about no amplified music	3

Urban Agriculture	Responses
incorporate productive food growing	3
new community garden	5

MCHC	Responses
upgrade MCHC	5
remove MCHC building from park	3
Use MCHC building for community uses	2

Other Comments	Responses
change nothing	32
retain open space and reduce structures in park	11
add water feature / pond / reinstate rockery	10
improve pedestrian crossings of Hoddle St	2
have a café / kiosk	5
ban bike riding	9
slow bike speeds	8
restrict cars entering	3

APPENDIX 2 – FEEDBACK SUMMARY TABLE

Darling Gardens masterplan consultation

Council is seeking further community feedback on its Darling Gardens draft masterplan.

The draft masterplan was developed following public consultation in March 2014 and Council is now calling for further community input on the plan.

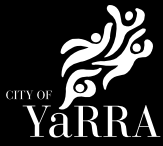
The plan recognises the aspects of the Darling Gardens which are most valued and protected by the community.

It proposes a careful balance between preserving the heritage character of the gardens and introducing minor improvements to enhance the enjoyment and functionality of the park.

The draft masterplan, along with a summary of community feedback received during the March 2014 consultation, can be viewed on Council's website at www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/darling-gardens



Key issues		Support	Oppose	Further comments
	General			
	Support for master plan	16	10	
	Leave Gardens as they are	19		
	Master plan should address wildlife amenity/biodiversity	5		
5.1.1	Trees			
	Retain/maintain existing trees	15		
	Implementation of a tree succession strategy	12	1	One response opposed specimen tree planting
5.1.2	Introduction of additional planting beds	6	1	
5.1.3	Improved irrigation	10		
5.1.4	Prioritise water recycling/stormwater harvesting for irrigation	22		
5.2.1	Installation of circular path/running track	14	86	One response requested the circular path should not be too wide so as to detract from "green" character of park. Another response suggested the path be a woodchip surface
	Establishment of a path along the southern edge of the Gardens	10	1	
5.2.2	Playground relocation and upgrade	8	23	One submission opposed ping pong table. One submission proposed a fenced playground on the site of the current MCHC
5.2.3	Installation of fitness stations	2	38	
5.2.4	Retain current BBQ and picnic area	3		One submission opposed additional picnic tables in the SW corner. A further 2 submissions requested a BBQ near the playground
5.2.5	Retain dog off-leash areas	16	2	A number of responses referenced improvements needed to enforcement and owner behaviour and requested improved signage communicating dog regulations
5.3.1	Improvements to toilet block	10		A further 3 responses requested moving the facility
5.3.2	Removal of MCHC	3	2	One submission recommended retaining the building and engaging an elderly couple as caretakers of the park
5.3.6	New/improved lighting	4	8	
5.3.8	Proposed increase in seating	7		
5.3.9	Provision of additional bins	2		An additional response requested more frequent emptying of bins
5.4.1	Investigate transfer of Hoddle Street edge into overall Crown reserve for Darling Gardens	4		A number of responses called for a delay in adopting the master plan until the VicRoads consultations had concluded
other	Additional drinking fountains	2		A further 3 submissions requested more drinking fountains for dogs



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