

Victoria Park Reserve Management Plan



STRATFORD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Part 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

1.1. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT

In 2011, in accordance with Section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977 (“the Act”) Stratford District Council prepared and adopted a District-wide Reserve Management Plan for all reserves owned and/or administered by Council. That plan outlined Council’s general intentions in respect of the use, development, maintenance, protection and preservation of reserves. It also established policies in this regard and referred to the Parks Activity Management Plan 2006 for details of planned developments.

Section 41(4) of the Act requires Council to *“keep its management plan under continuous review so thatthe plan is adapted to changing circumstances or in accordance with increased knowledge”*.

Six years on and with Victoria Park one of Stratford’s principal reserves, it is considered appropriate to carry out a review of the District-wide Management Plan as it affects this reserve and adopt an individual Management Plan.

This document is the result of that review and supersedes the District-wide Reserves Management Plan 2011 and the Parks Activity Management Plan 2006 in respect of Victoria Park.

1.2. PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

Reserve Management Plans are not simply created for reserve design purposes. Essentially the function of a reserve management plan is to create a set of objectives and policies through which design proposals can be critically and effectively assessed.

Within regions and communities there exist different needs and social demands in terms of resource availability. One of the primary goals of a reserve management plan is to manage available resources in a way that will meet the District’s current and future needs.

To achieve this, management plans must be objective and critical in their analysis. Opportunities for outdoor recreation experiences must be identified and classified. Present and future uses of reserve land must be critically examined and analysed and the public must be given the opportunity to participate in the planning process through consultation and the public submission process.

Council has prepared this Management Plan to:

- Satisfy the statutory provisions of the Reserves Act 1977;
- Provide a comprehensive planning document with clear policies and objectives to enable it to manage the reserve for the purpose it is set aside for;
- Provide the community with an opportunity to have quality input into the future of the reserve.

1.3. FORMAT OF THE PLAN

Part 1 of the Plan outlines the philosophy and methodology behind the development of the document and its objective.

Part 2 of the Plan provides an introduction to Victoria Park, its history and development through the ages, a physical description, and analysis of current usage.

Part 3 sets out the objectives and policies under five principle sections:

- Recreation and use
- Natural values
- Social and cultural values
- Furniture and facilities
- Administration and management

Part 4 comprises a schedule of proposed future actions and by whom it is anticipated these will be carried out.

Part 5 contains a concept development plan and perspective drawings relative to a significant proposed future development within the park.

1.4. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The development of this Plan is guided by legislation that has relevance to the management and use of reserves and other public open spaces within the District. These include:

- Reserves Act 1977
- Conservation Act 1987
- Resource Management Act 1991
- Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014
- Local Government Act 2002

Reserves Act 1977

Victoria Park is classified as a Recreation Reserve under the Reserves Act 1977. The purpose of the Act in regard to such reserves, as set out in Section 17(1) thereof is, *“for providing areas for the recreation and sporting activities and the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public, and for the protection of the natural environment and beauty of the countryside, with the emphasis on retention of open spaces and on outdoor recreational activities, including recreational tracks in the countryside.”*

More specifically Section 17(2) of the Act requires that:

- The public shall have freedom of entry and access to the reserve, subject to the specific powers conferred on the administering body by sections 53 and 54, to any bylaws under this Act applying to the reserve, and to such conditions and restrictions as the administering body considers to be necessary for the protection and general well-being of the reserve and for the protection and control of the public using it:*
- Where scenic, historic, archaeological, biological, geological, or other scientific features or indigenous flora or fauna or wildlife are present on the reserve, those features or that flora or fauna or wildlife shall be managed and protected to the extent compatible with the principal or primary purpose of the reserve provided that nothing in this subsection shall authorise the doing of anything with respect to fauna that would contravene any provision of the Wildlife Act 1953 or any regulations or Proclamation or notification under that Act, or the doing of anything with respect to archaeological features in any reserve that would contravene any provision of the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014:*
- Those qualities of the reserve which contribute to the pleasantness, harmony, and cohesion of the natural environment and to the better use and enjoyment of the reserve shall be conserved:*
- To the extent compatible with the principal or primary purpose of the reserve, its value as a soil, water, and forest conservation area shall be maintained.*

Conservation Act 1987

The Act established the Department of Conservation, the role of which as set out in Section 6 is to, inter alia:

“... preserve so far as is practicable all indigenous freshwater fisheries, and protect recreational freshwater fisheries and freshwater fish habitats” and “to advocate the conservation of natural and historic resources generally”.

Accordingly, while not having direct involvement in the management of reserves, the control and management of which are vested in local authorities, the department has a generic interest through its advocacy role and more particular interest in the management of the lake within Victoria Park.

Resource Management Act 1991

The Resource Management Act regulates the management and use of land and other natural resources and empowers local authorities to make rules, standards, policy statements and plans in this regard. It therefore has implications for the development of this plan and its implementation. These implications include the need to comply with the provisions of the Stratford District Plan.

Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014

The Act provides protection for places of historical and cultural value and, inter alia, prevents without authority any modification or destruction of archaeological sites.

Accordingly, it is appropriate that Heritage New Zealand be consulted in regard to this plan and recognition be given to the Act's provisions in carrying out any physical development of the reserve.

Local Government Act 2002

Under the Act, Council's role as local government is *“to meet the current and future needs of communities for good quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses.”* (Section 10) *“Good quality”* is defined as being efficient, effective and appropriate to present and anticipated future circumstances.

1.5. PLANNING FRAMEWORK

1.5.1 REGIONAL LEVEL

At a regional level the development of this plan is influenced to a degree by a number of plans and strategies developed by Taranaki Regional Council (“TRC”). These include:

- TRC Regional Fresh Water Plan
- TRC Pest Animal Strategy
- TRC Pest Plant Strategy

TRC Regional Fresh Water Plan

A number of drains flow into a stormwater detention pond (“the lake”) in Victoria Park that discharges into an unnamed creek that, in turn, flows into the Patea River some 3.4 kilometres to the east. The Regional Fresh Water Plan (currently under review) prepared by TRC identifies important issues derived from environmental monitoring of Taranaki’s fresh water resources and contains regional rules putting activities that impact on these resources into permitted, controlled, discretionary and prohibited categories.

TRC Regional Pest Management Plan

This document sets out management or eradication programs relative to pest animals and plant organisms warranting TRC intervention within the Taranaki region. It contains rules imposing obligations on land owners to control or destroy identified pest animals and plants.

TRC Regional Biosecurity Strategy

This document sets out the TRC’s strategic direction relative to its biosecurity responsibilities in the region and how it will deal with the risks to the environment posed by pest animals and plants.

1.5.2 DISTRICT LEVEL

At a district level the development of this plan is guided by a variety of policies, bylaws, and strategies developed by Stratford District Council (“SDC”) which are relevant to the development and management of reserves and other public open spaces. These include:

- SDC District Plan
- SDC Long Term Plan 2015-2025
- SDC Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy (including Council’s Response/Action Plan)
- SDC Community Development Strategy
- SDC Parks, Reserves, and Cemeteries Asset Management Plan 2015-2025
- SDC Control of Dogs bylaw and Dog Control policy
- SDC Control of Advertising Signs bylaw
- SDC Parks and Reserves bylaw
- SDC Public Places bylaw

SDC District Plan

The District Plan 2014 prepared under authority of the Resource Management Act 1991 provides objectives, policies and rules that guide land development within the Stratford District. Under the District Plan, Victoria Park is accorded the status of Protected Area Zone and it acknowledges that the Reserves Act 1977 “provides the most appropriate management regime for protected areas or reserves owned by the District Council.”

As such, in determining rules for the Protected Area Zone, the District Plan defers to the Act and, perforce, this Management Plan with the exception of some building and land development controls.

SDC Long Term Plan 2015-2025

The Long Term Plan (“LTP”) is prepared under authority of the Local Government Act 2002.

The purpose of a long-term plan is to:

- (a). describe the activities of the local authority; and*
- (b). describe the community outcomes of the local authority’s district or region; and*
- (c). provide integrated decision-making and co-ordination of the resources of the local authority; and*
- (d). provide a long-term focus for the decisions and activities of the local authority; and*
- (e). provide a basis for accountability of the local authority to the community.*

In terms of Council’s current LTP, determined levels of service relative to parks and reserves require Council to provide parks, sportsfields and other open spaces that meet community demand and playgrounds that meet New Zealand safety standards.

The LTP also identifies any future capital projects and this management plan is an integral part of this identification and budgeting process.

SDC Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy

In December 2013 Council commissioned the development of this strategy that resulted in a number of recommendations relative to sporting facilities within the District, including those provided within Victoria Park. Those recommendations endorsed by Council in the resulting Response/Action Plan are embodied in the reserve management plan.

SDC Community Development Strategy

Developed in 2013, the Community Development Strategy outlines Council’s role in supporting Stratford’s community organisations and promoting activities that contribute to the “wellbeing” of the community. This includes community events and activities held periodically in Victoria Park.

SDC Parks, Reserves and Cemeteries Asset Management Plan 2015 – 2025

The purpose of this plan is to *“show how Stratford District Council infrastructure assets will meet legislative requirements, achieve organisational objectives and fulfil community expectations efficiently and effectively”* in regard to parks reserves and cemeteries. It is a document constantly under review and in this role sits alongside and must mirror this management plan and the objectives and policies that evolve from it.

SDC Control of Dogs, Control of Advertising Signs and Parks and Reserves Bylaws

Bylaws are rules and regulations developed under authority of the Local Government Act to, inter alia, protect the public from nuisance, promote and maintain public health and safety, minimise negative affects on the environment and protect community assets. These bylaws are acknowledged and guide specific and related objectives and policies within this management plan.

1.6. PLANNING CONTEXT

The Reserve Management Plan provides a strategic link between the Long Term Plan and The District Plan by feeding into them identified issues and determining what resources are required for proposed solutions into the Parks, Reserves, and Cemeteries Asset Management Plan as illustrated below.

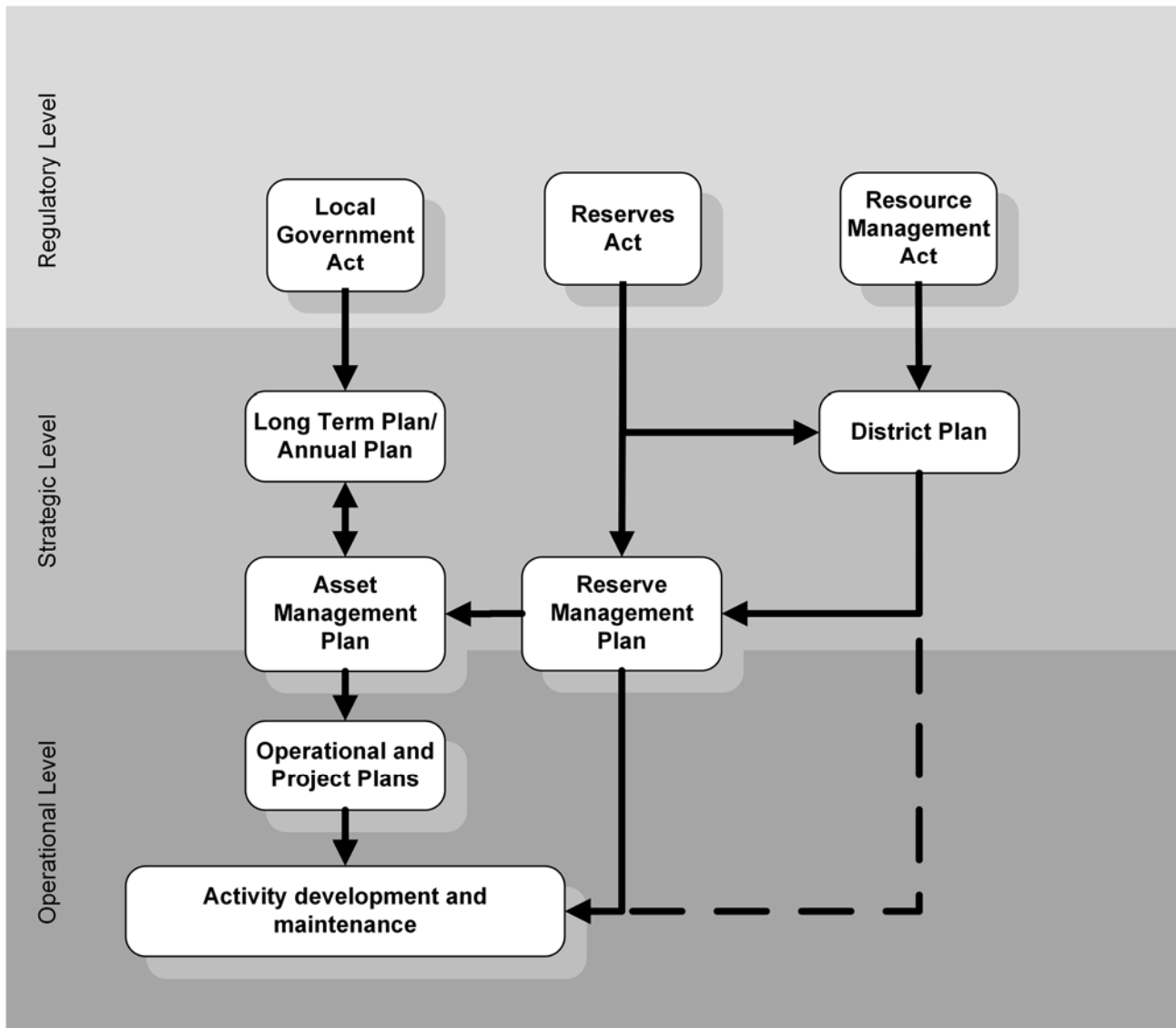


Figure 1 - Reserve Management Plan Document Position

Part 2. INTRODUCTION TO VICTORIA PARK

2.1. LOCATION AND ACCESS



Figure 2 - Victoria Park Location.

Victoria Park is located two blocks east of Broadway. The Park occupies virtually all of the block of land bounded by Regan Street and Fenton Street to the north and south with Orlando Street and Cordelia Street forming the west and east sides. It comprises almost 7 hectares and is the second largest park in the Stratford township after King Edward Park.

There is minimal fencing around the park enabling numerous pedestrian access points with four gates to facilitate vehicle access; one off Regan Street to access the northern sportsfields, one off Cordelia Street to access the southern sportsfields and one each at the corners of Orlando/Fenton Streets and Cordelia/Fenton Streets.

Formal pedestrian access through the park is provided by a walking track around the lake in the centre of the park linking Orlando and Cordelia Streets and a concrete path from the entrance at the corner of Orlando and Fenton Streets leading to the skate park.

2.2. LAND STATUS AND LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Victoria Park occupies land that is contained within one certificate of title as detailed in the table below. All areas are recreation reserve subject to the provisions of the Reserves Act 1977.

Table 1 – Land Status and Legal Description

Legal Description	Sections 24-38, 67-81, 111-124, 151-163 and 1039, and Part Section 150 Town of Stratford
Area	6.9108 hectares
Computer Freehold Register	495616
Status	Recreational Reserve – NZ Gazette 1981 page 3659
Vesting	Stratford District Council – Vesting Order 8292359.1
Zone	Protected Area
Primary Use	Informal recreation and organised sports

2.3. HISTORY

Victoria Park was reserved for recreation purposes in 1891/92 under the provisions of the Land Act 1877, became known originally as the Stratford Domain and the Stratford Town Board appointed by the Crown as the Domain Board. This role later evolved to the Stratford Borough Council and then the Stratford District Council.

In 1897, in commemoration of the 60 years reign of Queen Victoria, trees were planted on the reserve and it was renamed Victoria Park. Contemporaneously, on the initiative of the Stratford Acclimatisation Society, a lake was formed by damming the creek running through the park at the Cordelia Street frontage and stocked with perch. In its early days it became a popular spot for anglers, boaters and swimmers before finally adopting the more passive role it enjoys today as a stormwater detention pond and home of waterfowl.

In 1902 the first sports facilities were established with the development of basic playing fields south of the lake and in 1923 these were further developed with the addition of a grandstand on the lake side and raised terraces around the other three sides. At the same time an athletics track was established along with tennis courts and a children’s playground north of the lake. Some of these facilities have since been removed and over the years a variety of other facilities have been developed, but today Victoria Park remains as primarily a sporting and active recreation venue.

Table 2 - Chronological History

Date	Action
1891	Sections 24 – 33, 67 – 76, 111 – 124 and 150 – 163 Town of Stratford reserved for recreation purposes by Gazette 1891 page 3.
1892	Sections 36 – 38 and 79 – 81 Town of Stratford reserved for recreation purposes by Gazette 1892 page 1071
1892	Reserve brought under Public Domains Act 1881 by Gazette 1892 page 1653 and the Stratford Town Board appointed as the Domain Board. Became known as the Stratford Domain.
1897	In commemoration of Queen Victoria’s 60 years as reigning monarch, trees were planted and the reserve named Victoria Park. A lake was also developed at this time and stocked with perch by the Stratford Acclimatisation Society.
1902	Basic sports fields were developed on the south side of the lake.
1920	Stratford Borough Council appointed as the Domain Board.
1923	The sportsfields were enhanced with the addition of a grandstand, raised terracing and an athletics track and tennis courts and a children’s playground developed north of the lake.
1926	Victoria Park Memorial Gates unveiled by General Sir Andrew Russell, C.M.G., K.C.M.G. ANZAC Day 25 th April 1926.
1954	Stage built over the lake in recognition of Stratford’s 75 th Jubilee – used for concerts and band recitals.
1958	135 square metres of reserve revoked and sold to adjoining owner (Gazette 1958 page 1141)

Date	Action
1960	Unformed portion of Ariel Street between Regan and Fenton Street stopped and along with Sections 34, 35, 77 and 78 Town of Stratford formally added to the reserve by Section 10 Reserves and Other Lands Disposal Act 1960.
1968	Stage over lake demolished.
1989	Reserve classified as recreation reserve pursuant to Reserves Act 1977.
1996	Sporting facilities that had been developed over the years came under review leading, in subsequent years, to the relocation of the croquet greens, removal of an old roller skating rink and the development of the northern sportsfield, the skatepark and the children's playground.
1997	Fenton Street boundary was planted in rhododendrons and flowering cherry trees.
1997	Exeloos installed in Victoria Park.
1999	The old grandstand was demolished and a new Grandstand was built.
2009	Reserve formally vested in Stratford District Council.
2015	The skatepark was extended.



Figure 3 - Victoria Park Lake (1937)

2.4. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION AND USE

Victoria Park is the second largest park in Stratford, covering an area of almost 7 hectares and providing facilities for primarily active recreation. It is divided into four distinct areas – the northern sportsfields, the “play” area comprising a skatepark and children’s playground, the central lake and the southern sportsfields.

The northern sportsfields comprise fenced-off croquet greens, a rugby ground and a cricket wicket.

Centrally situated, the lake with its surrounding trees provides a natural barrier between the north and south sportsfields. Besides serving as a stormwater detention pond, the lake and surrounding vegetation are important visual assets, providing the only significant contribution to the “natural” landscape.

To the west of the lake is a children’s playground comprising a wide variety of play equipment from standard swings and slides to a recently installed “mouse wheel”. Adjacent the playground is a skatepark comprising a similarly wide variety of equipment including a bowl, half and quarter pipes and a range of ramps, ledges and rails.

To the south of the lake is a large playing field area that provides for two rugby grounds and a cricket wicket located between them.



Part 3. OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

3.1. RECREATION AND USE

Victoria Park is classified as a recreational reserve under the Reserves Act 1977. This means its purpose is to:

Provide areas for the recreation and sporting activities and the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public, and for the protection of the natural environment and beauty of the countryside, with emphasis on the retention of open spaces and on outdoor recreational activities, including recreational tracks in the countryside.

While its primary use is for active recreation including organized sport (currently the home of the Stratford Eltham Rugby and Sports Club, the Stratford Cricket Club and the Stratford Croquet Club) and casual sport in the form of skateboarding, it also provides for more informal recreational activities that benefit the physical welfare and enjoyment of the community.

3.1.1 ORGANISED SPORT

Currently Victoria Park provides facilities for rugby in the winter and cricket and croquet in the summer.

RUGBY

The Stratford Eltham Rugby and Sports Club are currently catered for with the provision of three fields, one with basic lighting facilities for evening training. With these three fields and two further fields in King Edward Park available to rugby there is considered adequate supply for the number of teams fielded by the club. This management plan anticipates a possible future alternative development of the field on the northern side of the lake which is covered in Section 3.4.1. However, the proposed development will still leave sufficient playing field space for training purposes and junior play.

CRICKET

The Stratford Cricket Club utilises the two southern fields as its principal ground and maintains its premier turf wicket between the two rugby fields. It also enjoys the use of an artificial wicket on the northern field that will be impacted by the proposed redevelopment. However, in recent seasons this wicket has had little use and with the availability of an artificial wicket at King Edward Park both Council and the club consider cricket would be adequately catered for without it.

CROQUET

The croquet greens occupy approximately 2,200 square metres of reserve land dedicated to that sport and not available to any other use. Croquet is very much a minority sport and the Stratford Croquet Club has a very limited membership, currently only around twenty players. It is fair to say that because of this its future will be constantly under review as required by the Reserves Act 1977, particularly as the area of reserve it occupies is not available to any other user.



Figure 5 - Victoria Park South Sportsfields

OBJECTIVES

- To encourage the optimum use of developed sports fields by local clubs, associations and regional and national sporting bodies in a manner that does not negate any informal uses of such facilities.
- To provide quality sports fields for both senior and junior sport.
- To maintain the current provision of croquet greens providing the current demand levels are at least maintained.
- To develop, or allow codes to develop facilities ancillary to the current sports fields such as storage facilities, changing rooms and/or toilets and sports field lighting.

POLICIES

- Liaison will be maintained with sporting organisations at local, regional and national levels to ensure the use of the current sports fields is optimised or to determine whether it is appropriate that an alternative use be made of any particular facility.
- Sports fields will be maintained to ensure the requirements of sporting organisations to, at least, a local level are met.
- Liaison will be maintained with sporting organisations at local, regional and national levels to determine what, if any, ancillary facilities are necessary to optimise the use of the current sports fields and to explore funding opportunities for such developments.

3.1.2 RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES

The Reserves Act 1977 imposes restrictions on various activities within Recreation Reserves without consent of either the Minister of Conservation or the local authority in whom the reserve is vested and empowers local authorities to develop by-laws imposing further restrictions or prohibition on those or any other activities. These include, but are not limited to camping or otherwise staying overnight on a reserve, taking animals of any kind onto a reserve, taking, destroying or injuring any animal, bird or other fauna, planting or removing any trees or plants, carrying out any commercial activity without a permit or licence, lighting any fires other than in an area designated for that purpose.

As listed in Section 1.5.2 above, Stratford District Council has developed three specific bylaws that impose certain further restrictions on activities or authorises certain conditional activities within reserves or other public places, namely the Control of Dogs bylaw, the Parks and Reserves bylaw and the Public Places bylaw.

Control of Dogs bylaw and Dog Control Policy`

The Control of Dogs bylaw prohibits dogs in designated public places and requires dogs to be constrained by leash in a “leash controlled public place”. In accordance with this bylaw, dogs are prohibited within 20 metres of any children’s play equipment.

Under Council’s Dog Control Policy, dogs are permitted to be exercised unleashed but under continuous control in all areas of the District except areas where dogs are prohibited and leash controlled areas, these being any footpath or adjacent berm and any part of a street or public place that has been declared a leash controlled area by resolution of Council.

Accordingly, in the absence of such a resolution dogs are permitted to be exercised off-leash but “under continuous control” within Victoria Park, except within 20 metres of the children’s playground where they are prohibited.

Parks and Reserves bylaw

The Parks and Reserves bylaw prohibits a range of dangerous and/or anti social activities, all of which are endorsed by this management plan. Cycling is a conditional activity and is dealt with in 3.1.3 below.

Similarly, the bylaw prohibits the parking, riding or driving of any motorised vehicle within the park “except where special approval is granted and then on those areas set aside specially for such purpose”. It is considered that motorised vehicles have no place in the park other than:

- Mobility scooters
- Emergency vehicles
- Maintenance and event support vehicles provided specific approval is obtained from an authorised officer of Council
- Cars, motorcycles and light trucks in designated carparks or other designated or authorised access points

Public Places bylaw

Like the Parks and Reserves bylaw, the Public Places bylaw puts restrictions on a number of activities within public places (which include reserves) and helps reinforce the provisions of the Reserves Act 1977. It impacts specifically relative to Victoria Park in that it prohibits the use of skateboards, scooters and similar human-propelled wheeled devices other than in designated areas such as the skate park.

OBJECTIVE

- To prevent activities occurring that have an adverse impact on the natural environment and amenity values of Victoria Park or detract from the enjoyment of other park users

POLICIES

- In addition to those activities that are prohibited or restricted in terms of the Reserves Act 1977 and/or Council bylaws, the following controls shall apply:
 - a) Dogs are permitted within the park, apart from within 20 metres of children’s play equipment, provided they are under the continuous control of a responsible handler.
 - b) Motorised vehicles will not be permitted within the park other than mobility scooters, emergency vehicles, maintenance and event support vehicles (provided prior approval is obtained from an authorised Council officer). Other cars, motorcycles and light trucks are restricted to designated access or parking areas.
 - c) Skateboards and scooters are permitted within the park but their use is restricted to the skate park only.

3.1.3 INFORMAL USE OF THE RESERVE

Although it doesn’t offer the same opportunities as King Edward Park, informal use of Victoria Park could include such activities as family and friends picnicking, enjoying the tranquillity of strolling around the lake while feeding the ducks, any activity that benefits from the large open spaces of the sportsfields while they are not in use for organised sport or children enjoying the playground equipment.

In terms of Council’s Parks and Reserves bylaw, cycling is prohibited within any of Council’s parks and reserves “...*except where special approval is granted and then on those areas set aside specially for such purpose.*” Currently there is no special approval in place for cycling within Victoria Park nor is there any area specially set aside for such purpose.



The path along the northern side of the lake is not considered suitable for cyclists; however the path along the southern side is suitable and does get such use as a thoroughfare linking Orlando and Cordelia Streets for which it is considered suitable.

There are, however some other activities that are either not permitted in terms of either the Reserves Act 1977 or Council by-laws or should be restricted so as not to impact adversely on the enjoyment of the park by the majority of users. These are covered in more detail in Section 3.1.2.

OBJECTIVES

- To encourage and maximise the public use of Victoria Park in accordance with its reserve classification as Recreation Reserve.

- To maintain the existing network of paths in a safe, clean and readily accessible state.
- To provide further paths or upgrade the existing where Council is satisfied there is a demand for more or better facilities.

POLICIES

- Cycling through the park using the path on the south side of the lake will be permitted and designated as a dual walking/cycling path.
- Facilities such as barbeques, tables and lighting will be provided and maintained in appropriate locations in order to enhance casual public use and enjoyment of the reserve.

3.1.4 MOTORHOMES AND CAMPING

By virtue of the activity prohibitions contained in the Reserves Act 1977, overnight camping within the boundaries of Victoria Park is prohibited. However, while Council at the time of preparing this management plan does not have a freedom camping policy or bylaw, Stratford District Council is “freedom camping friendly” and overnight stays in the Victoria Park car park adjacent the children’s playground by visitors in motorhomes have become relatively common, this site having been noted on at least one web site devoted to promoting freedom camping.

OBJECTIVE

- To prohibit overnight camping within Victoria Park other than within the car park adjacent the children’s play ground due to the lack of suitable facilities and the potential impact of this activity on the reserve and other reserve users.

POLICY

- Overnight parking or camping in a vehicle, tent, caravan, motorhome or similar is prohibited within Victoria Park other than in motorhomes certified by the New Zealand Motor Caravan Association as self-contained and then only within the car park adjacent the children’s play ground.

3.2. NATURAL VALUES

While Victoria Park is primarily a sport and active recreation complex it does contain a lake surrounded by a small area of native and exotic trees that occupy approximately 15% of the park's land area.

Accordingly, while the park is classified as a recreation reserve, its natural and scenic values cannot be ignored and are as equally important as its recreational values. Protection of these values is therefore important.

3.2.1 TREES AND GARDENS

While there are no notable trees within Victoria Park that are afforded protection under Council's District Plan, there are a number of native and exotic trees and shrubs surrounding the central lake. Principal among these are a variety of beech (mainly *Nothofagus menziesii*), Japanese cedar (*Crypto japonica*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), lemonwood (*Pittosporum tenuifolium*) and Himalayan dogwood (*Cornus capitata*). Many of these have historical value in that they were planted in 1897 in commemoration of the record reign of Queen Victoria. They give character to the park and careful management is necessary for the survival of these trees.

Over time however plants and shrubs on the lake's northern edge have grown to the point where they are crowding each other and blocking views of and access to the lake. Some work needs to be done to open up the lake edge through the removal of selected species while not destabilising it, at the same time ensuring the survival of the remaining plants.

Further complementing the planted landscape is a 10 metre wide strip of mainly rhododendrons along the entire Fenton Street frontage, a number of native and exotic trees around the skate park and two phoenix palm trees at the Regan Street gate entrance.

Not only do these trees and gardens provide a bird habitat, they form an important part of the environment and contribute to the amenity value of the reserve and warrant preservation.

The preservation of trees and bush within the park is further aided by the provisions of Section 42 of the Reserves Act 1977 which provides that *"The trees or bush on any recreation reserve shall not be cut or destroyed, except in accordance with a permit granted under Section 48A or unless the administering body of the reserve is satisfied that the cutting or destruction is necessary for the proper management or maintenance of the reserve or for the management or preservation of other trees or bush or in the interests of the safety of persons on or near the reserve...."*. It also provides that *"Where in the case of any recreation reserve the administering body is satisfied that the cutting or destruction of trees is necessary for any of the reasons mentioned in subsection (2) the administering body shall not proceed with the cutting or destruction except in a manner which will have minimal impact on the reserve and until, as circumstances warrant, provision is made for replacement planting or restoration*". Accordingly, the aim of this legislation is to preserve as much as practicable areas of bush and there has to be good reason to remove same.

OBJECTIVES

- To protect, preserve and enhance, as much as possible, the ecological and amenity values provided by the trees and plants within the reserve.
- To protect and preserve the large, mature trees of historical significance.
- To take all practicable steps to eradicate all pest plants that threaten the ecological values of the reserve.

POLICIES

- Trees and plants will only be removed where it is necessary to improve the amenity value of the reserve, ensure the survival of retained species or for reasons of public safety and security.
- Regular inspections by a qualified arborist will be carried out on the trees and plants within the reserve in order to monitor their health.

3.2.2 WATERWAYS

The once natural waterway (creek) bisecting the park has long been piped and now forms part of a stormwater system that feeds into the central lake at the western end before continuing on its way out at the eastern end from where the stormwater journeys to the Patea River. The lake serves primarily as a stormwater detention pond that needs to be de-silted from time to time (approximately every three to five years) but also provides scenic value and is home to waterfowl (principally ducks) that provide a source of entertainment for young and old alike.

OBJECTIVES

- To preserve the scenic and recreational values of the central lake while recognising its role as a stormwater detention pond.

POLICIES

- No activity on the reserve will be approved if there is any possibility of any measurable adverse affect on water quality or adverse impact on aquatic ecosystems.
- Notwithstanding the above policy, periodic draining and de-silting of the lake to maintain its role as a stormwater detention pond is allowed, subject to any necessary resource consent in terms of the TRC Regional Fresh Water Plan.

3.2.3 LANDSCAPES

Visual landscape qualities are an important aspect of the public's enjoyment of a reserve. The landscape features of Victoria Park consist primarily of large grassed areas of the sports fields surrounding the central lake and trees and the rhododendron plantings along the Fenton Street frontage that provide a pleasant visual aspect from outside the reserve.

As mentioned in Section 3.2.1, views of the lake from the northern side are practically obliterated by dense vegetation. It is proposed to open up view shafts in this area by removing some of this vegetation without risking destabilising the lake edge.

OBJECTIVES

- To enhance the scenic value of the central lake by creating appropriate view shafts through the removal of selected and/or inappropriate plant species.
- To ensure any future building development, earthworks or future plantings do not visually compromise any of the natural landscapes and are appropriate to the setting.
- To maintain and, where practical, further develop formal cultivated areas in keeping with established or carefully considered new landscape themes.

POLICIES

- No further development of the reserve will be approved that impacts negatively on the view of the central lake from within the reserve.
- Landscape plans must accompany any application to further develop the reserve or extend any existing building or facility on the reserve.

3.3. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL VALUES

As the principal sports park for many years within Stratford, Victoria Park holds high social and cultural significance to the community, the park featuring prominently in the sporting history of the town.

With its large grassed areas, the park also provides a facility for summer activities such as the Summer Nights Movies, “Baldrick’s Big Day Out”, the odd travelling circus and other similar community events. Events such as these, whether organised by Council or privately with Council approval, contribute to the diversity and vibrancy of the community.

3.3.1 HISTORIC AND COMMEMORATIVE FEATURES

The only formal historic or commemorative feature in Victoria Park is the entrance arch and gates at the intersection of Orlando and Fenton Streets, built in 1926 as a memorial to soldiers killed in World War One. This structure contributes to Stratford’s heritage in a tangible way and is listed as a Category 2 Historic Place by Heritage New Zealand.

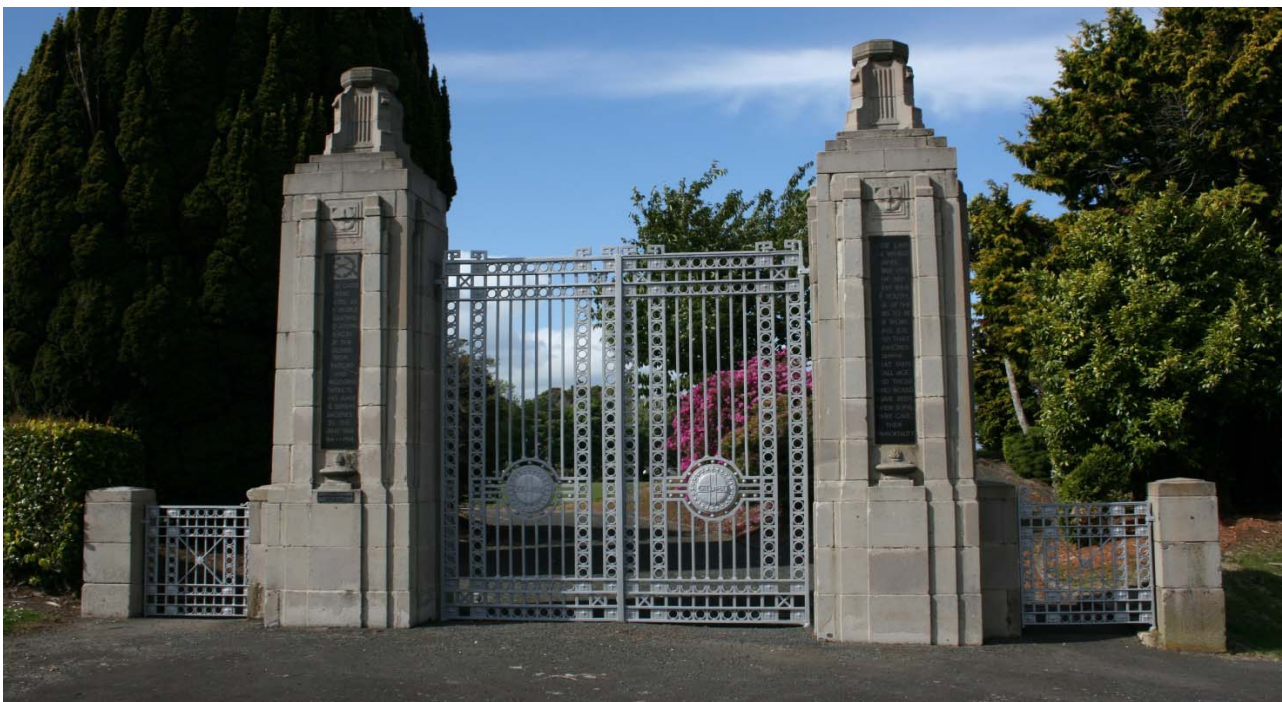


Figure 7 - Victoria Park Memorial Gates

Undoubtedly proposals will be put forward in the future for further commemorative features and, while these can assist in developing community values and mark important historic events, they need to be properly managed. They also add to the ongoing maintenance costs associated with the reserve and Council needs to be in a position to control the nature, number and location of such features.

OBJECTIVES

- To preserve for future generations all known significant cultural, historic, heritage or commemorative features.
- To consider any future request for commemorative features within the park to ensure they are of substantial benefit to the reserve and the community and do not detract in any way from the natural values of the reserve or inhibit any potential future development.

POLICIES

- Every effort will be made to protect, preserve and highlight any known cultural, historical, heritage or commemorative structures or features within the park.
- Any request for future commemorative features will take into consideration the appropriateness of the proposed feature and its compatibility with the character and use of the reserve, whether there is any benefit to the community in the use of the reserve and the ease and cost of ongoing maintenance.

3.3.2 SOCIAL EVENTS

The sportsfield to the north of the lake has over the years been used to stage various public social and cultural events including Baldrick's Big Day Out, "gypsy" fairs and the odd travelling circus. The proposed development of this sportsfield as outlined in 3.4.1 below will impact on the use of this area by reducing the available space substantially. There will still be sufficient area for small events such as fairs or markets but larger events may need to relocate elsewhere. Page Street Sportsground in King Edward Park is not used in the summer and could quite easily accommodate the likes of Baldrick's Big Day Out and a travelling circus and, with the holiday park right next door, could very well prove a more suitable venue in any event.

The sportsfields south of the lake have more recently been used for Summer Nights movies, utilising the grandstand for seating. Use of these sportsfields for such events is limited however as they are used throughout the year for rugby and cricket, which uses take precedence.

Generally speaking, these social and cultural events are considered appropriate activities within the park provided they do not impact adversely on the use of the sportsfields for their designated sports. Accordingly, such events need to be managed so as to not to create any impact and must accord with the Reserves Act 1977 in regard to conditions of use.

OBJECTIVE

- To continue to permit the use of the open space areas within the park for social or cultural events provided there is no adverse affect on the sportsfields and subject to any policy or bylaw relative to the use of public places current at the time and to conditions of use contained in the Reserves Act 1977.

POLICY

- Social or cultural events in the park will be subject to Council's approval at all times and conditions of use will be imposed on private events so as to minimise disruption to the general public's use of the reserve.

3.3.3 TANGATA WHENUA

Sites of significance to Maori, such as waahi tapu and other taonga, are protected under the Stratford District Plan and legislatively through the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014. To date, no sites of cultural, historic or spiritual significance to Maori have been identified within Victoria Park. If any are identified in future the requirements of the above-mentioned Act will prevail and all local iwi (Ngati Ruanui, Ngati Maru and Nga Ruahine) will be consulted and invited to be involved in the preservation and ongoing management of the site as appropriate.

OBJECTIVES

- To consult with Maori in a mutually appropriate way with respect to any future development of Victoria Park not envisaged by this plan.
- To ensure any sites discovered within the park that potentially could be of significance to Maori are fully investigated to determine such significance and afforded appropriate protection as required by the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014.

POLICY

- Maori participation in the preparation and review of this and any future management plan will be sought and advice taken into account in regard to all matters of significance to tangata whenua.

3.4. FURNITURE AND FACILITIES

An integral part of any reserve development is the extent to which Council provides park furniture and other facilities. This is determined both by recreational uses of the reserve that create the need for various items of furniture and facilities and also Council's aspirations in regard to its optimum use.

Currently Victoria Park contains a variety of facilities including simple park furniture such as seating and picnic tables, playground equipment and sporting facilities. However there is scope for further development as outlined below and some of the furniture and playground equipment could be upgraded to meet changing demands in this area

3.4.1 DEVELOPMENT

Any further development within Victoria Park to provide enhanced recreational facilities and increase the enjoyment of reserve users needs to be in keeping with the purpose of the reserve and carried out in a coordinated fashion while ensuring it is safe, sustainable and fit for purpose.

It is also appropriate, in taking any further developments to design stage, to give consideration to CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles advocated in the National Guidelines for Crime Prevention through Environmental Design in New Zealand in order to minimise opportunities for crime and the fear of crime potentially experienced by users of the reserve.

As indicated in Section 3.1.1 above, the sportsfield north of the lake is one area within the reserve that is under utilised and warrants some further development in order to make it more attractive, particularly to families, and to encourage more use. Such development incorporating a children's bike park and a barbeque and picnic area is proposed as indicated in the concept development plan included in Part 5. Also under consideration is the establishment of an outdoor fitness trail involving the construction of exercise stations at various points on the track around the central lake. These developments will be carried out over successive years as budgets allow to further enhance the recreational value of the reserve.

OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that any further development of Victoria Park does not impact adversely on any landscape features, natural values or built heritage, meets the needs of reserve users while having no adverse effects on neighbouring properties and is environmentally sustainable in terms of its design, construction, long term maintenance and intended function.
- To provide additional facilities where Council is satisfied there is sufficient demand and it is clear they will be of benefit to the public.

POLICIES

- Any future development of the northern sportsfield will be generally in keeping with the concept development plan included in Part 5.
- Any other future development not covered by this management plan, apart from the installation of minor items of park furniture, track development that does not require any indigenous plant or tree removal or the replacement of existing facilities, will be subject to prior public consultation and Council approval by way of formal resolution.
- In approving any future developments within the reserve, due consideration will be given to the principles outlined in the National Guidelines for Crime Prevention through Environmental Design in New Zealand.

3.4.2 BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Existing buildings on Victoria Park include a cricket pavilion (owned by the Stratford Cricket Club), an adjoining concrete block storage shed (formerly owned by the Stratford Athletic Club but acquired by Council when the club relocated to the Stratford Primary School), a clubhouse and ancillary structures adjacent the croquet greens (all owned by the Stratford Croquet Club), a grandstand adjacent the southern sportsfields and a twin-unit Exeloo public toilet (both Council-owned).



Other, minor structures within the park include the playground equipment (see 3.4.3 below), the skate park facilities, various fences and two practice cricket nets (owned by the Stratford Cricket Club) and an old concrete ticket-box adjacent the memorial gates that will shortly be demolished.



The extremities of the reserve are delineated by a variety of fences and other structures, the majority of which are not actually on the surveyed boundaries, by quite a way in some instances.

For security purposes the Orlando Street frontage from the Exeloo toilets to the intersection of Orlando and Fenton Streets is fenced with a 2.5 metre high wire mesh fence, albeit approximately 3.5 metres into the legal road.

The boundary with the residential properties on Regan Street are fenced with a variety of structures (subject to encroachments either way as outlined in Section 3.5.3 below) while the adjacent croquet greens are surrounded with a 1.8 metre high corrugated iron fence. This fence is old and becoming rather unsightly and needs to be replaced in the short to medium term.

The Regan Street boundary is delineated by a mix of stone wall and low wire mesh clad post and rail fence, the latter being almost 4 metres inside the reserve boundary while the Cordelia Street frontage is lined with either timber bollards or hedges (the former being approximately 3.5 metres inside the reserve boundary) and the Fenton Street boundary is undefined.

For safety reasons, there is also a low wire mesh clad post and rail fence around the western edge of the lake adjacent the skate park.

The Stratford Cricket Club has sought approval from Council to construct a new indoor training facility adjacent its pavilion. It is proposed that this facility will be predominantly for wet weather and pre-season indoor cricket training and conducting coaching clinics, however the club has indicated it would also be available to other codes such as rugby, netball and football for indoor training when not in use by the cricket club.

In relation to the objectives below, this proposal is considered justified in terms of demand as outdoor training, particularly for cricket, is obviously weather dependant and the facility would be of immense benefit to other, winter codes that are similarly constrained during particularly adverse conditions. Its proposed location adjacent the existing pavilion and the eastern boundary of the reserve do not impact adversely on any landscape feature or any natural, social or cultural values.

OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that existing buildings and other structures are maintained on a regular basis to preserve their good condition and aesthetic values.
- To ensure that any new buildings or other structures or additions or alterations to any existing buildings are justified in terms of demand for them, the design and scale is suited to the environment and appropriate to facilitate public recreational use of the reserve and their location and construction is such that they do not impact adversely on any landscape features and natural, social or cultural values.

POLICIES

- The owners of existing and new buildings on the reserve will be required to provide asset management plans that detail medium term maintenance programs.
- The proliferation of buildings on the reserve will be discouraged as a general principle with the sharing of buildings being encouraged where possible.
- New buildings and substantial structures not envisaged by this management plan will be subject to prior public consultation and Council approval by way of formal resolution as to all aspects of location, design and construction.
- The degree of use of existing buildings will be continuously reviewed to ensure such use is justified and no better use of the reserve land is warranted.
- The Stratford Cricket Club's proposal for a new indoor training facility is endorsed subject to Council's consent as to the final design, any building or resource consent requirements and all funding being confirmed before any construction work commences.

3.4.3 PLAYGROUND AND SKATE PARK

Victoria Park provides the largest and most popular formal playground in the District. It is situated adjacent the croquet greens on Orlando Street and contains 14 pieces of play equipment ranging from simple swings and slides to climbing structures, a mouse wheel and a basketball hoop.

It is intended this facility will remain with the play equipment maintained, replaced, upgraded or added to as appropriate and in accordance with use demand.

The skate park comprises a number of concrete structures including a skate bowl; three half pipes; two quarter pipes; seven ramps, rails or ledges; a set of stairs and a wave.

There is insufficient space for additional facilities but, over time some of the existing could be modified or replaced if and when they become unpopular.

OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that the play equipment in Victoria Park meets the needs of reserve users and is maintained in safe working order.
- To provide further diverse play equipment as appropriate to meet the demands of reserve users.

POLICIES

- All play equipment will be maintained so as to meet the requirements of New Zealand Standard 5828 as updated.
- The Victoria Park playground and skate park will be maintained and developed in such a manner so as to provide a challenging and interesting environment for children and to encourage community use.

3.4.4

The floodlighting of the northern sportsfield is barely adequate for rugby training purposes and in all likelihood does not comply with the Australian and New Zealand Standards for sportsfield lighting. While the rugby club has no plans at present to upgrade this lighting, the preference being to upgrade the Page Street Sportsground lighting in King Edward Park where the bulk of training takes place, should the proposed redevelopment of this ground go ahead the lighting will need to be relocated if it is intended to maintain evening training facilities at Victoria Park.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide or approve lighting within King Edward Park only to improve safety and security and/or deter repeated vandalism, to facilitate night time use of the reserve where deemed necessary or to highlight important features.

POLICIES

- Lighting within Victoria Park will only be provided or approved where there is a clear public benefit and no adverse impact on any particular reserve user or neighbouring property.
- The cost of providing and maintaining sports field lighting is the responsibility of the sports club or code so requiring the lighting.
- All lighting designs shall be in accordance with Standards AS/NZS1158, AS/NZS4676, AS2560 or AS4282 as appropriate and approved by Council prior to installation.

3.4.5 SIGNAGE

Section 94(1) of the Reserves Act 1977 constitutes it an offence to erect any sign on a reserve without the consent of the administering body. Similarly, Council's Control of Advertising Signs Bylaw provides that no person may erect any advertising signage within a public place without the prior consent of Council in writing.

While it acknowledged that some signage is required for public information and/or safety purposes and sports clubs rely to a degree on sponsorship funding that, in turn, requires some corporate advertising, controls over signage are important to protect the aesthetic values of Victoria Park and inhibit a general proliferation of signage.

With only two sporting codes domiciled on the reserve (cricket and croquet, rugby having its clubrooms on its own land opposite the reserve), there is currently very little commercial signage within the reserve. This is currently limited to two sponsor signs on the Cricket Club deck railing.

OBJECTIVES

- To limit the proliferation of signs within Victoria Park to protect the amenity values of the reserve.
- To generally allow some permanent signage of a commercial nature associated with sports club sponsorship subject to controls over location and size.
- To develop and implement standardised styles and types for public information signage so as to improve the aesthetic qualities of such features and the information provided.

POLICIES

- Permanent signs depicting purely commercial advertising not associated with sports club sponsorship or advertising events not taking place at the park will not be permitted within Victoria Park.

- Sports clubs or organisations with buildings on the park will be permitted, with Council's prior written approval as to size and content, to erect club or organisation facility signage with a sponsor logo or name, provided that such logo or name does not occupy more than 10% of the sign area.
- Sports clubs required to maintain facilities within the park that receive corporate financial support will be permitted, with Council's prior written approval as to size and content, to erect corporate advertising signage on fences or railings surrounding such facilities but not reserve boundary fences.
- All corporate sponsorship and advertising signage shall be maintained in a safe, clean and presentable condition at all times and shall be removed immediately upon the cessation of any associated sponsorship or other financial agreement.
- All new or replacement public information signage will be in accordance with a sign template approved by Council.

3.4.6 RESERVE FURNITURE

Reserve furniture such as seating, barbeques and barbeque tables, rubbish bins and drinking fountains enhance the experience of reserve users by providing facilities for rest, picnicking and services. As with signage, it is appropriate that such facilities should be consistent in design so as to improve amenity.

Reserve furniture within Victoria Park is currently limited to a number of picnic tables around the playground, bench seats around the lake and strategically placed litter bins. As indicated in Sections 3.1.1 and 3.4.1 above, the sportsfield north of the lake is one area within the reserve that is under utilised and warrants some further development in order to make it more attractive, particularly to families, and to encourage more use. It is intended that such development will include a barbeque and picnic area as indicated in the concept development plan included in Part 5.



Other than that, additional furniture will be considered as demand determines.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide new and replacement reserve furniture when and where a need is identified and to improve public use and enjoyment of the park.
- To ensure all new and replacement furniture is of an approved standard design.

POLICIES

- Reserve furniture to an approved standard design will be provided within Victoria Park when and where a need is identified.

3.4.7 VEHICLE PARKING

Adequate car parking on or in close proximity to a reserve makes it more accessible for those having to travel some distance, however car parks within a reserve can reduce the amenity value.

Victoria Park is surrounded on all sides by public streets that provide a substantial amount of on-street parking. Within the reserve itself there is currently only one formal off-street car park adjacent the playground off Orlando Street, however members of the croquet club are permitted to access the northern sportsfield from Regan Street in order to park their vehicles behind the clubrooms on playing days.

This generally provides adequate parking to cater for the majority of sporting events held at Victoria Park, however, as indicated in the concept development plan included in Part 5, with the proposed development of the northern sportsfield it is considered appropriate to provide further off-street parking within the reserve to avoid users of the barbeque and picnic facilities having to carry equipment and provisions some distance and to provide a safe transition of children and bicycles from vehicles to the children's bike park.

OBJECTIVES

- To minimise onsite vehicle parking so as to not to diminish the amount of reserve land available for recreation purposes.

POLICIES

- The provision of further onsite car parking in conjunction with the proposed redevelopment of the northern sportsfield is approved.

3.5. ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

Stratford District Council has been appointed by the Crown to control and administer Victoria Park pursuant to the Reserves Act 1977. The Act empowers Council to carry out certain actions, impose rules relative to the use of the reserve and develop objectives and policies in regard to its future development.

This management plan is the principal document that governs the management of the park while its provisions in regard to maintenance and future developments will be implemented through Council's Parks, Reserves and Cemeteries Asset Management Plan and the Long Term Plan. The Reserves Act also empowers Council to grant leases, licenses and permits to other organisations, subject to certain conditions, in order to complement its management of the reserve.

3.5.1 MAINTENANCE

Council does not currently employ any parks and reserve maintenance staff. Routine maintenance of Victoria Park, be it grass mowing, gardening, path or structure maintenance, is carried out by an external contractor under an Open Space Maintenance contract.

This contract requires the contractor to carry out regular inspections of the reserve to ensure it meets acceptable and defined standards and provides a safe recreational environment. These inspections are carried out daily in respect of the playground, twice weekly in respect of the sports fields and adjacent facilities and weekly in regard to the passive recreation areas. Inspections must also be carried out within 24 hours of any particularly severe weather incident.

OBJECTIVES

- To maintain Victoria Park to a standard that meets the recreational needs and aspirations of the community.
- To implement the policies of this Reserve Management Plan in a structured and integrated manner through the Parks Reserves and Cemeteries Asset Management Plan and the Long Term Plan.

POLICIES

- Victoria Park will be maintained to the levels of service demanded by the community and embodied in the Open Space Maintenance contract.

3.5.2 LEASES, LICENCES, AND PERMITS

Section 54 of the Reserves Act 1977 empowers Council to grant leases or licences for uses of or activities on recreation reserves, provided such uses or activities are associated with recreation, the purpose of the reserve. Permits are granted for specific one-off or seasonal uses of the reserve or sportsfields within the reserve.

LEASES

Leases are generally granted to clubs or organisations requiring exclusive, long-term use of an area of a reserve to erect a building consistent with the reserve's purpose such as a sports clubhouse. Council is empowered to grant such leases for periods of up to 33 years with further renewals under certain circumstances and subject to numerous conditions, including the right of Council to terminate if the land and/or building is not being adequately used or if Council considers the land would be better used by

another organisation or for a better recreational purpose. Appropriate rentals are determined by Council on a case by case basis.

Currently Victoria Park is subject to two leases, these both being to the Stratford Cricket Club, one for the footprint of the cricket clubrooms and the other for the adjoining Council-owned concrete block storage shed. The former is leased for a term of 21 years, expiring on 31 December 2029 while the latter is leased for a term of 16 years and 4 months, expiring contemporaneously with the former.

If and when the cricket club completes the proposed development of its indoor training facility, a lease will also be granted for the footprint of this building, again expiring contemporaneously with the two other leases.

The only other privately owned building on the reserve is the croquet clubroom for which there is currently no formal lease in place. As indicated in Section 3.1.1 above, the Stratford Croquet Club has a very limited membership but enjoys exclusive use of the area of the reserve occupied by its greens and clubrooms. Accordingly, its future will be constantly under review.

Notwithstanding, it is still appropriate that the club be issued a lease for the area it occupies in order to clearly spell out the rights and responsibilities of both parties, lessor and lessee, in order to avoid confusion or debate. As indicated above, the Reserves Act requires as a condition of any reserve lease the right of the administering authority to terminate the agreement if the land and/or building is not being adequately used or if Council considers the land would be better used by another organisation or for a better recreational purpose.

LICENCES

Licences are generally granted for shorter-term or temporary reserve uses such as a commercial operation “.....necessary to enable the public to obtain the benefit and enjoyment of the reserve or for the convenience of people using the reserve.” Licences can also be granted for uses such as grazing as a maintenance tool if it is not required for recreational purposes.

Currently there are no extant licences relative to Victoria Park and there is no intention to employ stock grazing as a maintenance tool.

PERMITS

Permits are granted seasonally to the Stratford Eltham Rugby and Sports Club for the use of the sportsfields (winter), the Stratford Cricket Club for the use of the sportsfields (summer), and the Stratford Croquet Club for the use of the croquet greens (summer).

Season permits may also be issued to any other sport that is considered appropriate. On-off permits may also be issued to organisations or individuals for privately organised activities that are considered appropriate to the primary purpose of the reserve.

Fees and charges for these permits are determined by Council on an annual basis.

Section 53 of the Reserves Act 1977 provides that an administering authority may “*prescribe, as to not more than 40 days in any year as it thinks fit, that the public shall not be entitled to have admission to the reserve or to any part or parts thereof set apart for a particular purpose or purposes unless on payment of a charge or charges as hereinafter mentioned.*” It further goes on to provide that the administering authority may “*grant the exclusive use of the reserve or any part thereof on any 1 or more of the days provided for but*

not for more than 6 days consecutively at any time, to any person, body, voluntary organisation or society for the purpose of particular games, sports or other activities or for public recreation or enjoyment, with authority for that person, body, organisation or society to demand a fee or charge for admission on that day or those days to the reserve or part thereof so granted...". During the rugby season the Stratford Eltham Rugby and Sports Club has for many years charged spectators for attending premier club matches at the ground in accordance with this provision.

OBJECTIVES

- To allow the occupation of areas within Victoria Park for approved uses, buildings and other structures that are compatible with the reserve's primary purpose through the granting of leases, licences or permits as appropriate.
- To control the use through such leases, licences or permits by way of conditions that ensure the most effective use of Victoria Park for the enjoyment of the whole community.

POLICIES

- A lease, licence or permit will only be granted for a use and term that is compatible with the Reserves Act 1977, the District Plan and Council bylaws and policies.
- The grantee of any lease, licence or permit will be required to pay a rental, charge or fee as prescribed in Council's Fees and Charges or as otherwise approved by Council.
- Licences will not be granted for stock grazing purposes.
- A lease may be granted to the Stratford Croquet Club for the area it exclusively occupies for a term of 10 years with a right of renewal for a further 10 years, subject to the conditions outlined in Schedule 1 of the Reserves Act 1977.
- On completion of the proposed indoor training facility by the Stratford Cricket Club, a lease will be granted to the club for the footprint of the building, such lease to expire contemporaneously with the club's other two leases and to be subject to the conditions outlined in Schedule 1 of the Reserves Act 1977.

3.5.3 RESERVE BOUNDARIES, ENCROACHMENTS AND EASEMENTS

On occasions, unauthorised encroachments into reserves by adjoining private owners can occur that, in relation to such things as fencing, gardens and landscaping, retaining walls and other minor structures, and driveways, give the impression of private ownership. If this is not prevented or formalised by way of a licence to occupy it can lead to disputes that can be exacerbated when properties are sold without the purchaser realising part of the land they are buying is public reserve.

The external extremities of Victoria Park are road boundaries apart from the western end of the northern boundary which is shared with a number of private commercial or residential properties. None of the roads or adjacent footpaths encroaches within the reserve however there are some encroachments by the reserve into the legal roads, although these are not considered significant given that both are vested in Council. However there are two encroachments either into or by private properties that are quite significant and warrant rectification or formalising in some manner so as to avoid future disputes.

The residential property at 127 Regan Street encroaches into the reserve by approximately 3.5 metres for the entire length of its rear boundary, encompassing a total of 78 square metres of reserve land. Constructed within this area are a number of garden/implement sheds and it is appropriate this be rectified by either revoking the reserve status and disposing of the land to the adjoining owner or granting the owner

a lease or licence to occupy in terms of Section 73 of the Reserves Act 1977. This will be initiated following adoption of this management plan.

Conversely, the croquet greens encroach by a similar amount into the adjoining property at 123 Regan Street. If it is intended this land remain occupied by the Croquet Club, this also needs to be formalised in some manner and, again, will be initiated following adoption of this management plan.

In regard to easements, the reserve is currently not subject to any and the only public utility service through Victoria Park is a stormwater drain that runs from Orlando Street to Cordelia Street via the lake which is part of this system, being essentially a storm water detention pond.

There is also a water pipe running from Regan Street to a number of connection points behind the playground. Until a few years ago these water connection points were used by the local volunteer fire brigade for the purpose of training volunteers in the use of fire hoses. This has now discontinued.

OBJECTIVES

- To preserve the amenity value of Victoria Park by preventing unnecessary and/or inappropriate encroachments beyond the legal boundaries.

POLICIES

- No future encroachments into Victoria Park beyond the legal title boundaries will be permitted.
- The existing encroachment by the property at 127 Regan Street will be rectified either by way of a revocation of the reserve status and disposal to the encroaching owner or by way of a lease or licence pursuant to Section 73 of the Reserves Act 1977.
- The encroachment by the reserve into the property at 123 Regan Street will either be relinquished or formalised either by way of acquisition of the land for reserve purpose or lease or licence to occupy.

3.5.4 REVIEW AND MONITORING

Section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977 requires all reserve management plans to be kept under continuous review in order to be able to adapt to changing circumstances or in accordance with increased knowledge. While some particular aspects of this plan may be reviewed individually from time to time as the need arises, it is proposed to carry out a further full and definitive review within 10 years of its approval by Council.

OBJECTIVES

- To keep this plan under continuous review in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977 in order to conserve and enhance the recreational values of Victoria Park.

POLICIES

- This plan will be reviewed in its entirety within 10 years of its approval by Council
- Individual parts of the plan may be reviewed in response to the identification of management issues for which there is no current policy herein or elsewhere or as a result of national changes through amended legislation.
- All reviews of this management plan will be publically notified as required by the Reserves Act 1977.

Part 4. ACTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following table records those actions that have been identified in this Reserve Management Plan relative to the future management and development of Victoria Park. It records the proposed action, the policy it relates to, the organisation responsible for carrying out the action and the priority/anticipated timeframe.

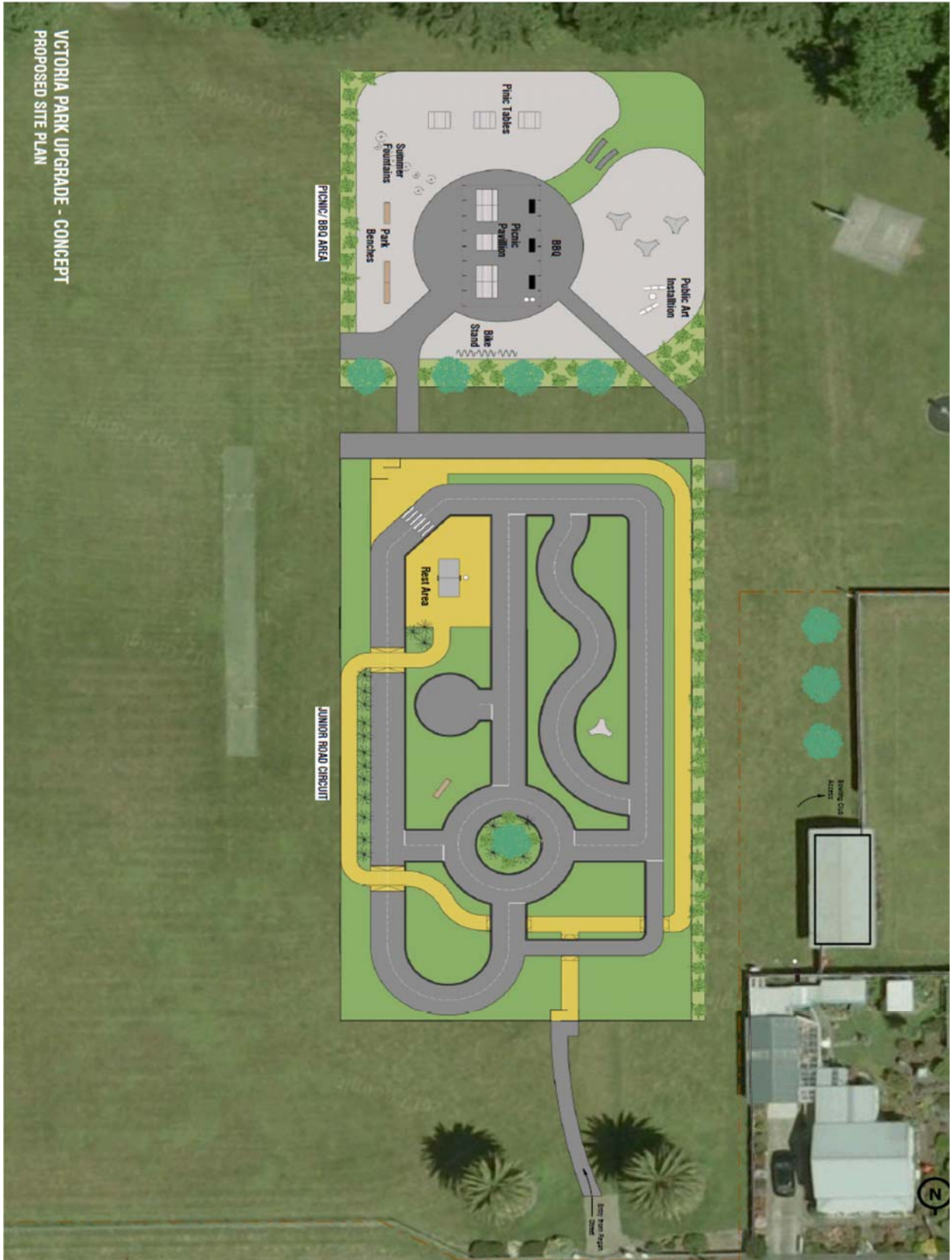
It should be noted that these proposed actions are concepts only at this stage. They do not commit Council or any other organisation in any way but simply “flag” them as developments approved in principle in terms of the Reserves Act 1977, enabling public input and discussion through both this planning process and subsequent Annual and Long Term Plan processes.

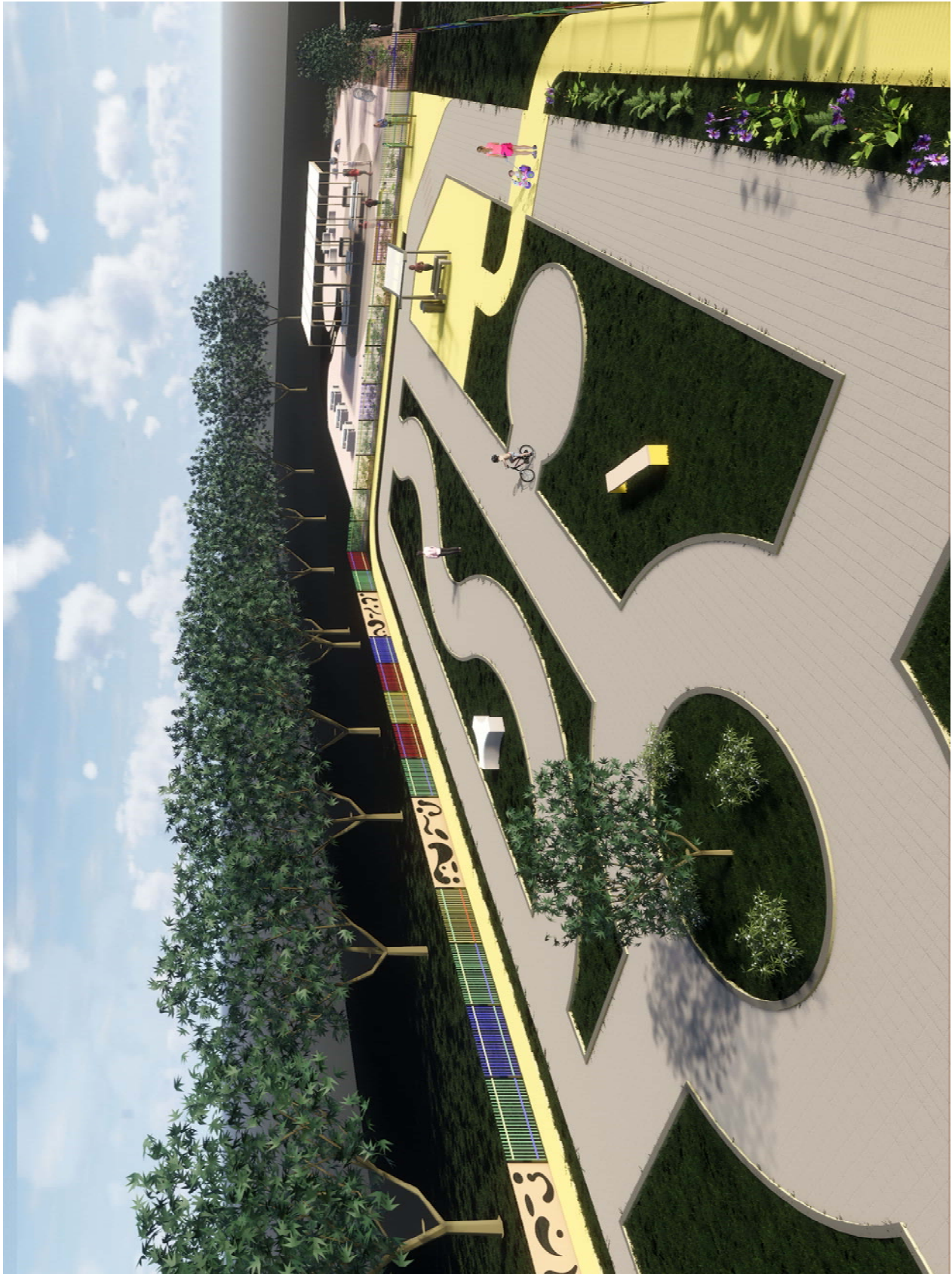
No.	Proposed Action	Policy No.	Who	Priority
1	Improve amenity value of central lake through selective removal of vegetation	3.2.1	SDC	1
2	Develop northern sportsfield in accordance with concept development plan	3.4.1	SDC	2
3	Develop fitness trail adjacent path around lake	3.4.1	SDC	3
4	Construct cricket indoor training facility	3.4.2	SCC	2
5	Review of all lighting requirements within the reserve	3.4.4	SDC	1
6	Formalise reserve encroachments relative to croquet greens	3.5.3	SDC	1

Priorities:	1 = 1 – 3 years	Who abbreviations:	SDC = Stratford District Council
	2 = 4 – 6 years		SCC = Stratford Cricket Club
	3 = 7 – 10 years		

Part 5. CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND PERSPECTIVE DRAWINGS











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