



Manningham City Council

WONGA PARK RESERVE MANAGEMENT PLAN May 2008



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1 BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION



Our vision is for a strong community in which people are active, involved and healthy, and feel that they are cared for and belong. Our parks and reserves are the 'green lungs' for the City and areas for our enjoyment. When we visit our parks and reserves we feel healthier. We need to plan for them so they can be enjoyed today and be there tomorrow for our children.

This Management Plan is the result of Council's Open Space Strategy 2004 that recommends that Management or Development Plans be prepared for all of Council's Reserves.

The Wonga Park Reserve provides a range of sporting, recreational and leisure opportunities to the residents of Wonga Park and neighbouring areas.

The Reserve is used by groups and casual users for organised recreation such as netball, tennis and cricket as well as more informal recreational activities such as walking, jogging, BMX riding and picnicking. The Reserve also contains significant indigenous vegetation.

Additionally, the recently developed Wonga Park Community Centre offers programs, childcare and vital community services to residents.

I would like to thank the community for their contribution to the consultation process as it has greatly assisted us to identify the issues and opportunities which have shaped the development of the recommendations.

GEOFF GOUGH
Mayor



1.2 LOCATION & PLANNING AREA

1.2.1 Study Area

The Wonga Park Reserve comprises 7.7 hectares of open space featuring:

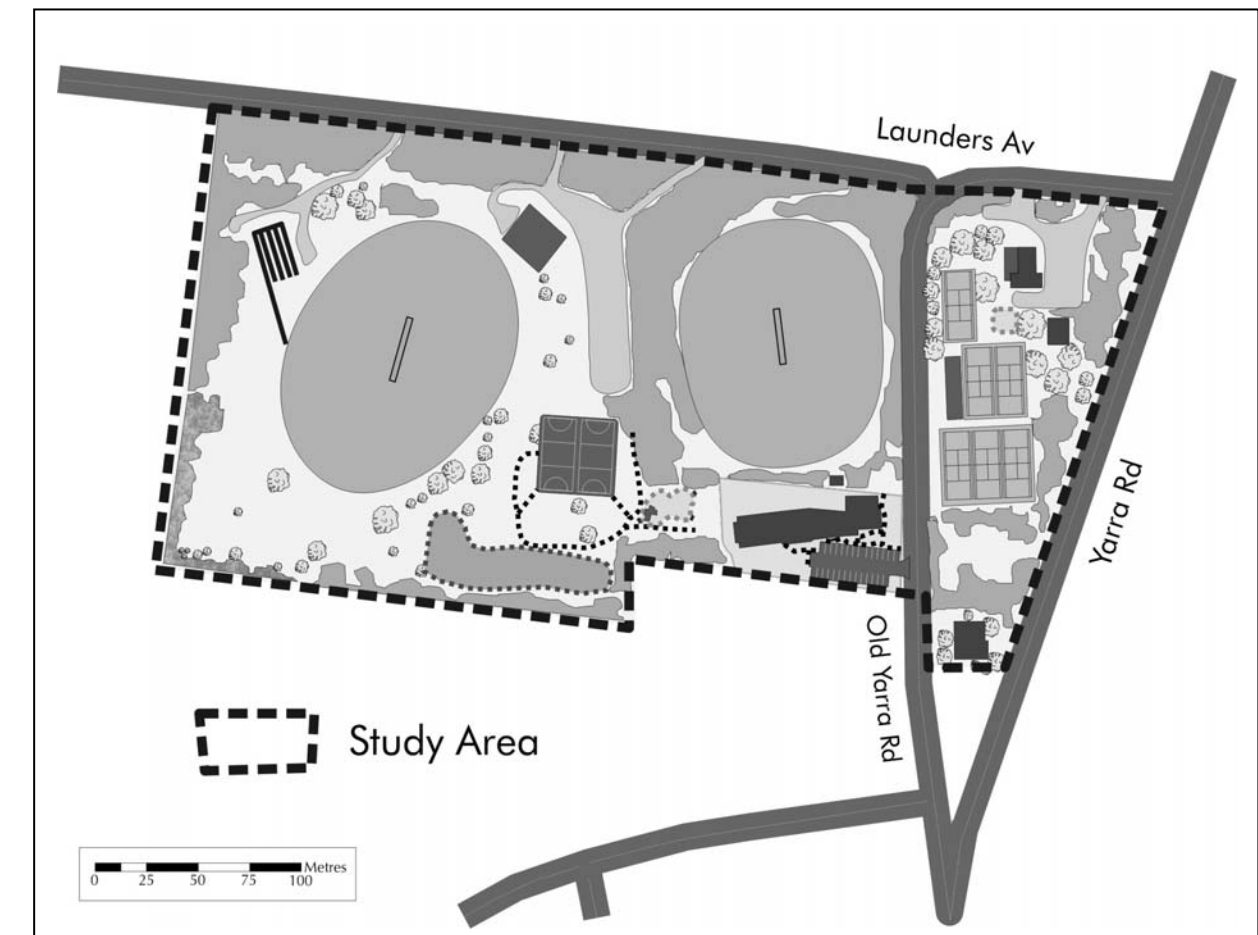
- bushland areas;
- sporting facilities;
- community centre;
- public hall;
- car parking & public toilets;
- playgrounds, and;
- a BMX Track.

As the largest area of Council managed open space in the Wonga Park Area, the Reserve is a significant community resource for the district. It provides a wide range of sporting, recreation and community facilities that are not available elsewhere within the suburb.

The Reserve is centrally located within Wonga Park. The Reserve is bordered by Launders Avenue and the local shopping centre to the north, Yarra Road to the east and privately owned, low density housing to the south and west.

The Wonga Park Country Fire Authority (CFA) Station is immediately adjacent to the Reserve at the intersection of Old Yarra Road and Yarra Road. Despite appearing to be part of the Reserve the Station is on freehold land owned by the CFA and is therefore outside of the study area and not included in this management plan.

Figure 1: Study Area

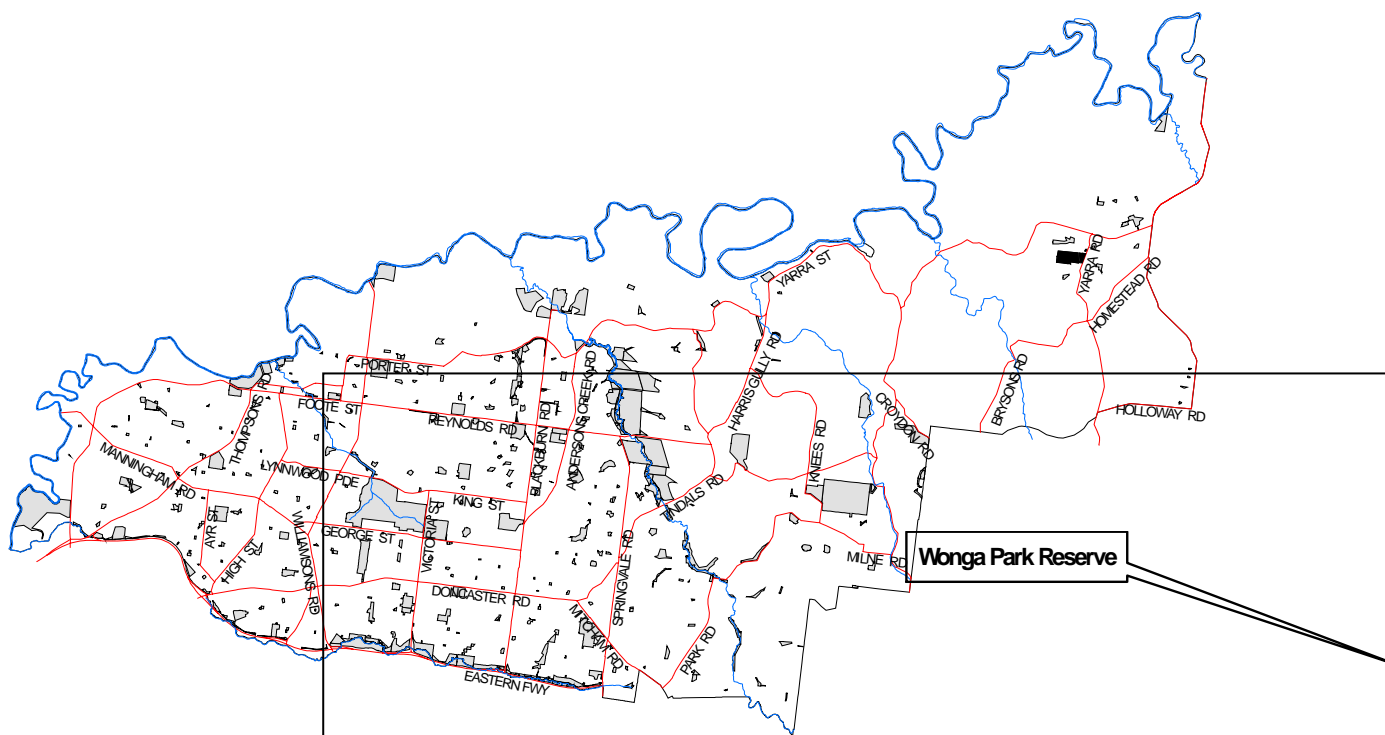


1.2.1.1 Municipal Context

Covering 113 square kilometres, Manningham City Council is located 12kms east of the Melbourne CBD. The City has one of the largest networks of parks and open space in Metropolitan Melbourne.

Covering 19.8km² the Manningham open space network represents 17% of the area of the municipality and comprises over 300 parks and reserves.

Figure 2: *Municipal Context*

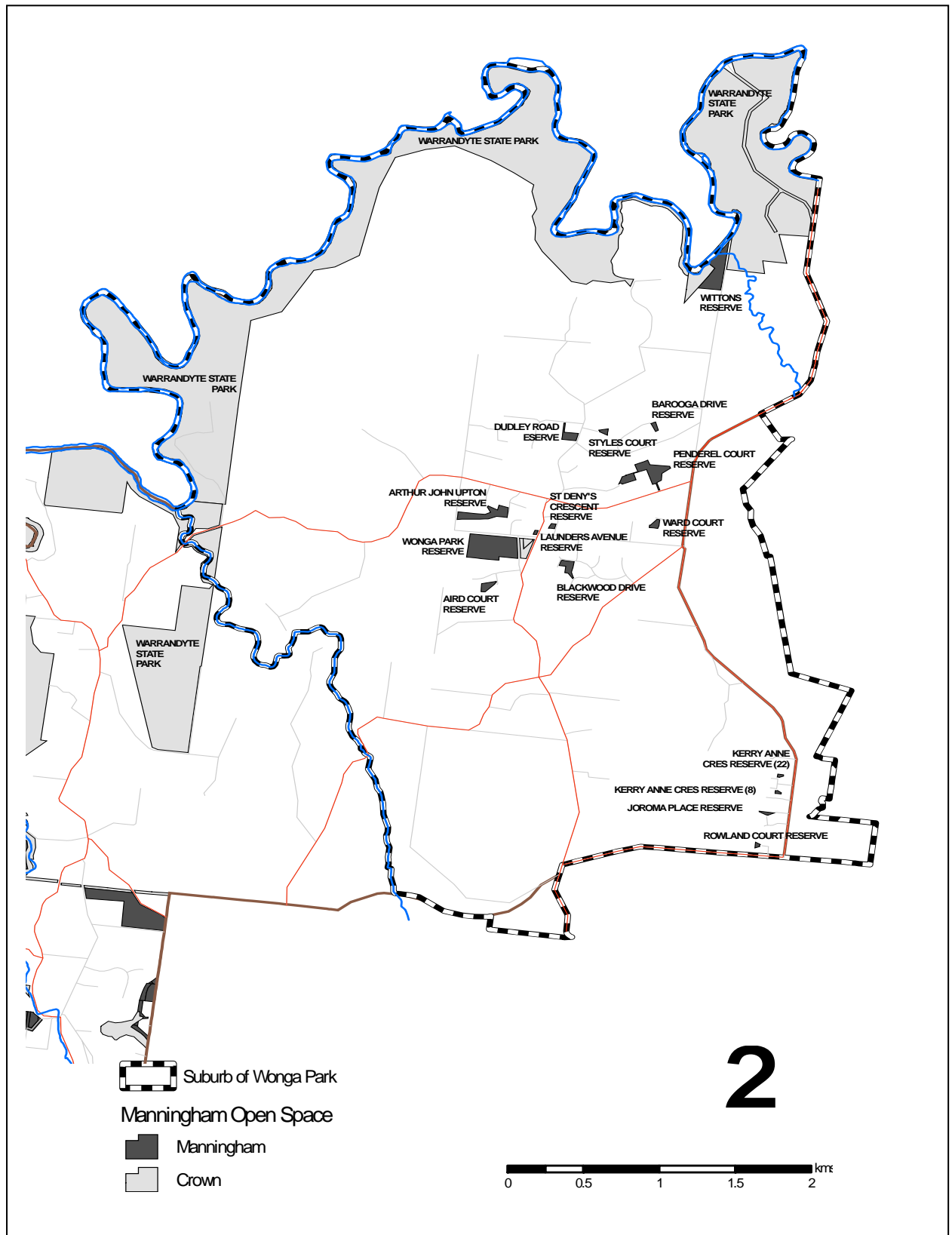


Manningham Open Space

 Council Reserves

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Figure 3: District Context



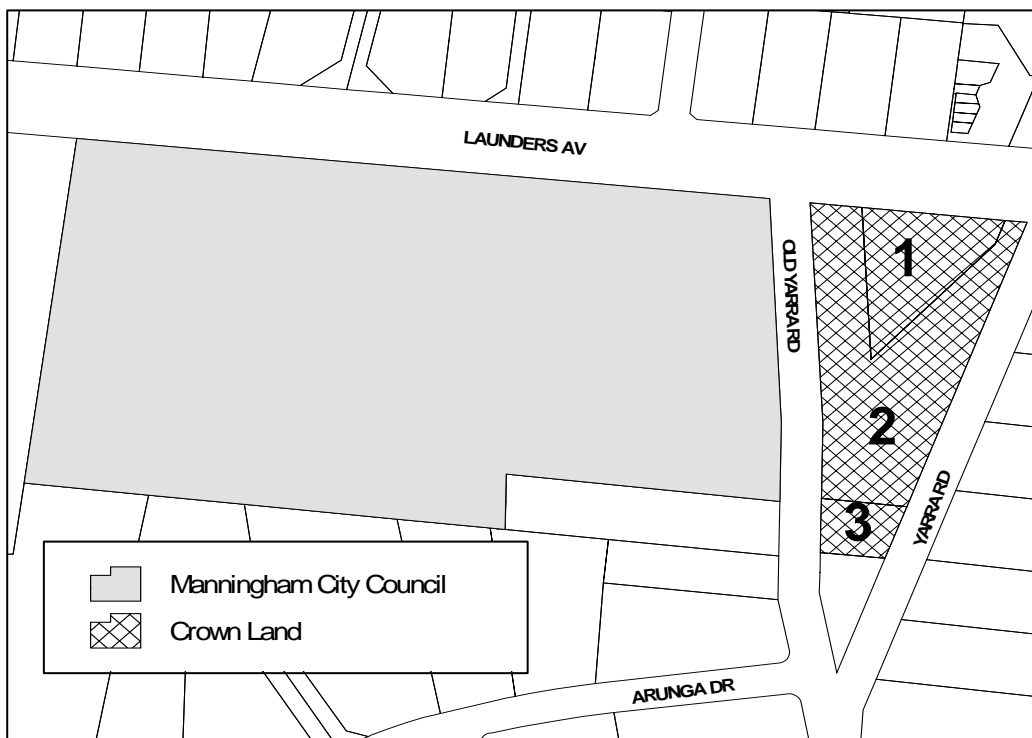
1.3 LAND TENURE

Wonga Park Reserve is 7.7 hectares in size, comprising four parcels of land under two land tenure types. A 6.4 hectare parcel west of Old Yarra Road is owned by Council. The other three parcels are Crown Land totalling 1.3 hectares.

Council manages the Crown Land area as a 'Committee of Management' under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978. The Crown Land is reserved for a particular type of use. The three parcels of land are currently reserved for:

1. Mechanics Institute
2. Public Recreation
3. Public Purposes (Infant welfare/preschool centre)

Figure 4: Land Tenure



1.4 PLANNING & POLICY CONTEXT

This section provides the planning and policy context for this Management Plan within a State and Municipal framework.

1.4.1 State

There are a number of state laws, policies and plans that relate to the planning, development and management of open space areas. These are identified in the table below.

STATE LEGISLATION	PURPOSE
Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006	To provide for the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria.
Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978	To provide for the Reservation of Crown Lands for certain purposes and for the management of such Reserved Lands and for other purposes.
Planning and Environment Act 1987	To establish framework for planning the use, development and protection of land in Victoria in the present long-term interests of all Victorians.
STRATEGY/POLICY	
State Planning Policy Scheme (including Melbourne 2030)	To provide a clear and consistent framework within which decisions about the use and development of land can be made. <i>Melbourne 2030</i> seeks to manage growth and change across metropolitan Melbourne and the surrounding region across a 30 year period.
Linking People and Spaces	To ensure the equitable distribution of open space across Melbourne.
Victoria's Native Vegetation Management – A Framework for Action	To protect, enhance and revegetate Victoria's native vegetation.
Middle Yarra Concept Plan	To protect and enhance the Middle Yarra River and its associated parklands.
Warrandyte State Park Management Plan 2006	To direct all aspects of management for the Warrandyte State Park.

1.4.2 Municipal

1.4.2.1 Manningham Planning Scheme (MPS)

The *Local Planning Policy Framework* in the Manningham Planning Scheme contains the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) and local planning policies. The Manningham MSS sets policy and strategies for the use and development of land in the municipality.

The MPS contains all the policies, zones, overlays and other provisions that apply to all land in the municipality. The zoning of an area establishes what land use is permitted for that area, whilst the overlays control that land use.

The following planning zones apply to, or around Wonga Park Reserve (refer figure 5).

LDRZ = Low Density Residential Zone

The purpose of this zone is to provide for low density residential development. Lots must be at least 0.4 hectare in size. The LDRZ is the underlying zone in the area.

PPRZ = Public Park and Recreation Zone

The purpose of this zone is to recognise areas for public recreation and open space protect and conserve areas of significance, where appropriate, and provide for commercial use where appropriate.

PUZ6 = Public Use Zone (Local Government)

The purpose of this zone is to recognise public land for public utility, community services and facilities. It also provides for associated uses that are consistent with the intent of the public land reservation or purpose.

RCZ2 = Rural Conservation Zone

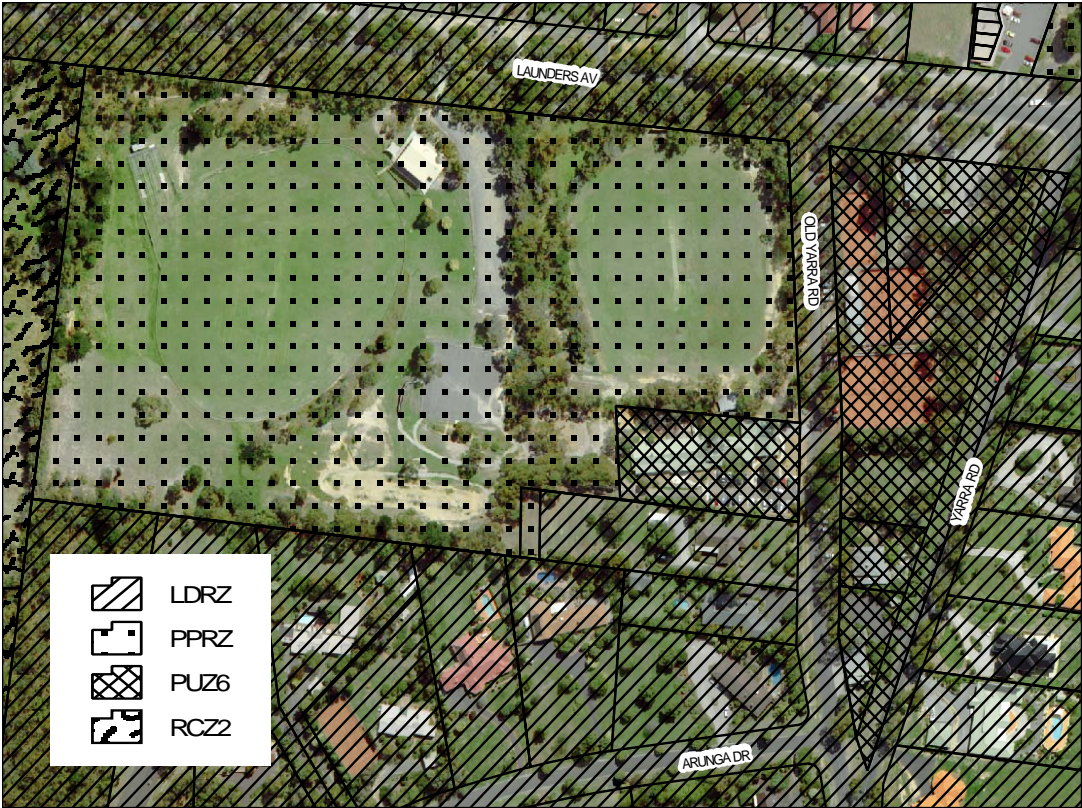
The purpose of this zone encourages development and use of the land consistent with sustainable land management and land capability practices, and which takes into account the conservation values and environmental sensitivity of the locality.

B1Z = Business 1 Zone

The purpose of this zone is to encourage the intensive development of business centres for retailing and other complementary commercial, entertainment and community use.

Further to the zoning, a Vegetation Protection Overlay, Schedule 1 (VPO1) applies to the Reserve (and most of the Wonga Park township area). A Heritage Overlay, Schedule HO99 also applies to the Reserve. The VPO1 aims to conserve the existing pattern of vegetation and landscape quality. The Heritage Overlay applies to heritage place HO99 Wonga Park Hall and Reserve. Pursuant to the provisions of the Heritage Overlay a planning permit is required to, among other things; subdivide land, demolish or remove a building, construct or carry out works, externally alter a building by structural work, rendering, sandblasting or in any other way, construct or display a sign, carry out repairs and routine maintenance which change the appearance of a heritage place or which are not undertaken to the same details, specifications and materials and remove destroy or lop vegetation (as the schedule identifies the heritage place as one where tree controls apply).

Figure 5: Zoning



*Note: Non patterned area, top right denotes B1Z

1.4.2.2 Manningham Council Plan

The *Council Plan 2006 - 2010 – Future Manningham* outlines the following vision for the City of Manningham:

A **strong community** in which people are active, involved and healthy, and feel that they are cared for and belong;

A **liveable Manningham** that offers the best of both worlds – the balance of city and country;

Convenient local services that enhance the community's lifestyle and contribute to the local economy, and;

A **leading Council** that is focused on the current and future needs of the whole community and that gets better and better at what we do.

To achieve this vision, the Council Plan details the following four objectives:

Objective 1 – A strong Community. A healthy, safe, caring, involved and diverse community.

Objective 2 – A liveable Manningham. Well-planned places to live in and nature for people to enjoy and conserve, now and always. Simple, sustainable ways to get from place to place.

Objective 3 – Convenient Local Services. A variety of well-located services, delivered by thriving local businesses and organisations that meet community needs.

Objective 4 – A leading Council. A sustainable and versatile organisation, focused on benefiting the community, now and into the future.

For each objective the plan details a number of strategies and indicators to assess how the implementation of the overall vision is progressing.

1.4.2.3 Manningham Open Space Strategy

The Manningham Open Space Strategy 2004 provides a guide for the strategic planning, development and management of Manningham's Open Space network.

The Strategy is a reference document for Council officers involved in the planning, development and management of Manningham's Open Space network. It recognises that the provision of high quality open space has many benefits for the community, including economic, environmental, urban liveability, social/health and cultural benefits.

The Strategy defines fifteen open space precincts for the municipality. Wonga Park Reserve is within Precinct 15 – the suburb of Wonga Park, which is identified as being "abundantly supplied with Open Space". The Strategy states that open space planning needs to focus on upgrading the quality of existing open spaces within the precinct.

The strategy also applies a category system to all reserves, reflecting their primary purpose. The category system defines eight categories of reserves, which are used to determine:

- The Council Service Unit responsible for the planning of the reserve;
- The distribution of specific facilities across the municipality e.g. sporting facilities;

- Priorities for the allocation of capital and maintenance resources, and;
- How a reserve should be planned, developed and managed in the future.

Wonga Park Reserve is categorised as a 'Community Recreation Reserve'. Community Recreation Reserves are defined as complex sites, serving a range of sporting, community and informal recreation needs. Reserves such as this that contain community facilities are used for many and diverse purposes and will subsequently have diverse issues which require active management.

The strategy also applies a significance rating system based on the level of facilities a particular reserve provides and the size of the catchment for users of those facilities.

Four significance ratings are applied:

- Regional
- Municipal
- District
- Local

Wonga Park Reserve is rated as a 'District' level significance: *"Reserves of district significance would have a higher than local catchment. People would still travel more than 'walking distance' to visit these reserves."*

The Open Space Strategy identifies Wonga Park Reserve as being the largest area of Council owned open space within the precinct. It recommended that the opportunity for a link to Arthur John Upton Reserve (refer figure 3) be investigated. The Economic and Environment Planning Unit did investigate the options to link the reserves and found it not possible.

1.4.2.4 Manningham Recreation Needs Study

A Recreation Needs Study was undertaken by Council in December 2003 to assess the current and future culture and leisure needs of residents within Manningham. Walking was identified as the most popular sporting or recreation activity (28%) followed by swimming (10%), tennis and golf (9%).

The community consultation process undertaken as part of this management plan supported this finding with 'walking' identified as being the most common reason for visiting the Reserve.

1.4.2.5 Manningham Playspace Strategy

In 2003, Council adopted the Manningham Playspace Strategy to provide strategic guidance for the provision of play spaces, design guidelines and priorities for the replacement of existing play spaces. The Strategy recognises the importance of *"whole park planning to ensure easy access to play"*.

The vision for the development of play spaces is to provide high quality play spaces with a range of equipment and play opportunities to provide for children of all ages and abilities as well as their carers. Council aims to eliminate low quality play spaces through a coordinated maintenance and refurbishment program.

1.4.2.6 Manningham Local Law

In relation to Open Space, Council's Local Law prescribes some restrictions on use. Manningham's General Law Part 3 aims to ensure that Council reserves are used in a safe and orderly manner and states that:

Restrictions on Use

3.1 Except with a permit, or except as otherwise authorised in writing, a person must not, on a reserve, ride or drive a horse or a motor vehicle, or other vehicle or any bicycle except that this sub-clause does not apply to:

- (i) the riding of a bicycle in a manner that does not interfere with the enjoyment of the reserve by any other person;
- (ii) a designated roadway or bicycle path; or
- (iii) the riding of a horse where that has been permitted by Council.

1.4.2.7 Other Strategies, Plans & Studies

The following table summarises other Manningham Strategies, Plans and Studies relevant to the planning and management of Council parks and reserves.

STRATEGY/POLICY	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
Manningham Council Plan 2006-2010 – Future Manningham	Key document that guides Councils strategic direction.
Horse Riding Strategy (2002)	Contains recommendations for the continued development of the Horse Riding network through open space and along roadsides.
Roadside Environmental Management Strategy (2002)	Provides strategic direction for future management of roadsides and specific best practice maintenance guidelines.
Multicultural Policy and Action Plan (2002)	To establish effective and efficient strategies for facilitating understanding and harmony within the Community and the provision of services to culturally and linguistically diverse residents of the municipality. Furthermore to enhance the participation of residents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in the decision making process that impact on their lives.
Tennis Strategy (2003)	Provides a guide for the future development and management of tennis courts.
Disability Access and Equity Policy (2004)	Contains actions to improve accessibility and equity in access.
Domestic Animals Strategy (2004)	Relating to the management of domestic animals in Manningham. Contains details on dog controls for Council reserves. Also contains recommendations for responsible dog and cat

STRATEGY/POLICY	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
Green Wedge Strategy (2004)	ownership relating to open space. Provides strategic framework for the development of the Green Wedge area.
Youth Policy and Action Plan (2004)	The purpose of Youth Policy is to provide strategic directions for the development, co-ordination and provision/facilitation of services to young people and their families within the municipality; assist in the development of community connectedness and social capital and contribute towards the development of a sense of belonging among the young people in Manningham.
Drainage Strategy (2004 – 2014)	Recommends drainage improvement works, including some for open space.
Municipal Fire Prevention Plan (2005)	Contains measures to minimise the occurrence of unplanned fire and mitigate its effect on the community.
Social Planning Policy (2005)	To provide guiding principles in relation to social planning, policy development and delivery of services.
Municipal Public Health Plan (2005 – 2008)	To promote a physical, social, economic and cultural environment that not only enables people to avoid ill health, but also promotes health and well-being among the whole community.
Bicycle Strategy (2006)	Provides direction for the ongoing development of on and off road bicycle facilities and programs.
Bushland Management Action Plan Draft (2006)	Establishes policy, principles and directions for the management of bushland on Council owned Open Space.
Ageing Well in Manningham Strategy (2006 – 2010)	Provides a foundation for the creation of an age-friendly city in which older people can lead active and full lives and can play their part in ensuring Manningham remains a vibrant and cohesive community.
Manningham Local Activity Centres Plan July 2007	The scope of this Plan is to examine the future planning needs of the “Local Centres” within Manningham. Within Wonga Park it focuses on the Launders Avenue Village Centre opposite the Wonga Park Reserve.

1.5 DEMOGRAPHICS

The Australian Bureau of Statistics Census provides an insight into the makeup of the Wonga Park community. This demographic information is useful in planning the development and management of open space in the area.

The information contained in this Plan is obtained from Census data 2006. It identifies Wonga Park estimated resident population as at 30 June 2006 of 3147 people comprising 2.7% of Manningham's population (refer to table 1).

The population density is significantly lower than the Manningham average; confirming the low density residential and rural conservation nature of the area (refer to table 1).

Table 1. Demographics in Wonga Park compared to Manningham (2006 ABS data)

Population	Wonga park	Manningham
Total Population	3,147 (2.7%)	115,702
Area (<i>hectares</i>)	2,120	11,350
Population Density (<i>persons per ha.</i>):	1.6	9.7

The following information is taken from the City of Manningham Community Profile developed by the organisation .id 'Informed Decisions'; located at www.manningham.vic.gov.au >links>Community Profile.

Table 2 Break down of ages across the population in Wonga Park and Manningham (2006 ABS enumerated data)

Age Structure	Wonga Park	%	City of Manningham %
Age (years):			
0-4 years	167	5.3%	5.2%
5-11 years	391	12.4%	8.3%
12-17 years	417	13.2%	8.3%
18-24 years	298	9.5%	9.4%
(0-24 years)	(1273)	(26.29%)	(%)
25-34 years	212	6.7%	10.6%
35-49 years	862	27.4	22%%
50-59 years	476	15.1%	13.8%
60-69 years	6.7	6.7%	11.7%
70-84 years	102	3.2	9%
85 + years	12	4%	1.8%
Total population	3,147 (2.7% total Manningham population)	100%	100% Manningham population 115,702

When comparing age structure of Wonga Park in 2006 with City of Manningham it indicates that there was a larger proportion of people in the younger age groups (0-17) but a smaller proportion of people in the older age groups (60+).

Overall, 30.9% of the population was aged between 0-17, and 10.3% were aged 60 years and over, compared to 21.8% and 22.5% respectively for the City of Manningham.

The major differences between the age structure of Wonga Park and the City of Manningham were:

- A larger percentage of 35-49 years old (27.4% compared to 22%)
- A larger percentage of 12-17 years old (13.2% compared to 8.3%)
- A smaller percentage of 70-84 year olds (3.2% compared to 9%), and;
- A smaller percentage of 60-69 years olds (6.7% compared to 11.7%)

Other important information to draw from the community profile

Household income

Household income is one of the most important indicators of socio-economic status. With other data sources, such as Educational Qualifications and Occupation, it helps to evaluate the economic opportunities and socio-economic status of an area.

Analysis of household income levels in Wonga Park in 2006 compared to City of Manningham shows that there was a larger proportion of high income households (those earning \$1,700 per week or more) but a smaller proportion of low income households (those earning less than \$500 per week).

Overall, 45.4% of the households earned a high income, and 6.8% were low income households, compared with 31.6% and 14.3% respectively for City of Manningham.

Family types

Analysis of the family types in Wonga Park in 2006 compared to City of Manningham shows that there was a larger proportion of couple families with child(ren) but a smaller proportion of one-parent families.

Overall, 68.6% of total families were couple families with child(ren), and 5.8% were one-parent families, compared with 52.5% and 11.6% respectively for City of Manningham.

Household types

Comparing Household types between Wonga Park and City of Manningham in 2006 reveals a larger proportion of Family households, but a smaller proportion of lone person households. Family households accounted for 87.2% of total households in Wonga Park while lone person households comprised 8.4%, (79.5% and 16.5% respectively for City of Manningham).

Between 2001 and 2006 in Wonga Park, there was an increase in the number of Family households (64), an increase in lone person households (4) and a decrease in group households (-4).

Voluntary work

Analysis of the voluntary work performed by the population in Wonga Park compared to City of Manningham shows that there was a larger proportion of persons who volunteered for an organisation or group.

Overall, 21.4% of the population reported performing voluntary work, compared with 17.0% for City of Manningham.

Car ownership

The ability of the population to source services and employment is strongly influenced by access to transport. The number of motor vehicles per household quantifies access to private transport. There are three major reasons for a different share of motor vehicles per household:

- the age structure of the population and household type, which influences the size of the household and the number of adults present;
- access to public transport; and
- household income, which can influence the amount of money available to purchase motor vehicles.

Private vehicles are the main form of transport for residents of Wonga Park. Public transport within this district is poor (particularly between Warrandyte and Wonga Park), creating mobility problems for single car families, elderly and young people.

Good mobility (whether by public transport or private vehicle), can translate to greater degree of choice in where a person may recreate/ shop.

The profile of the district is especially pertinent as Wonga Park is a “self contained/isolated” community. There is a cluster of community facilities/shops which presents itself a hub for activity for residents in this district.

The major differences between the car ownership of the households in Wonga Park and City of Manningham were:

- A larger percentage of households with 3 or more vehicles (38.0% compared to 21.6%), and;
- A smaller percentage of households with 1 vehicle (11.2% compared to 26.6%).

1.6 CONSULTATION & VISITOR SURVEYING

As part of the development of this Management Plan a comprehensive consultation process was undertaken. The process involved:

- Public meeting held July 2005 (21 people attended);
- Distribution of surveys (142 surveys returned);
- Meetings and/or telephone discussions with relevant community groups and sporting clubs;
- Written submissions (three submissions received);

- Meetings across Council with relevant Officers, and;
- Liaison with the Department of Sustainability and Environment.

This consultation process was widely advertised through:

- Advertisements in local papers;
- Public notices;
- Direct mail out, email and;
- Press releases.

The following is a summary of the main issues raised during the consultation process:

- Facilities to encourage walking such as walking track and seating;
- More centrally located toilets;
- Inappropriate car driving behaviour;
- Picnic and barbeque facilities;
- Improved sporting facilities such as additional tennis courts, improvement to netball courts and main sporting pavilion, and;
- Various environmental issues including weed control.

The information gained from this consultation process was used to develop a draft Management Plan and guide the recommendations. This draft was then put out for further consultation involving a ten week exhibition period from the 3 December 2007 to 15 February 2008:

- The Draft Plan was available in hard copy form or electronically on Councils' website;
- All people who made initial submissions were notified;
- Advertisement was placed in local paper

19 submissions were received for the draft Management Plan. Comments from a number of Units across Council were also received and further detailed work was undertaken with these officers to develop the final Management Plan.

2 ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 ORGANISED SPORT

There are three established sporting clubs located at Wonga Park Reserve. These clubs include the Wonga Park Tennis Club, Wonga Park Cricket Club and the Wonga Park Netball Club. All three clubs offer a range of sporting opportunities for the area providing well-recognised physical, social and mental health benefits for the participants. Wonga Park Reserve is one of the only locations in Wonga Park where such sporting activities can formally occur.

Additional benefits the clubs provide include opportunities for social contact and fostering of community development. The role of the sporting clubs is particularly important given the location of Wonga Park on the fringe of Manningham in a 'semi-rural' area, further from other established community facilities, activities, clubs and shopping centres.

2.1.1 Wonga Park Cricket Club



The Wonga Park Cricket Club is an active and growing club with over 300 registered members representing the full range of age and skill groups. The Club have one of the biggest registered player memberships in both the City of Manningham and the Ringwood District Cricket Association. The Cricket Club has a current lease for the main pavilion and access to the two sports ovals, and primarily uses these facilities during the summer season.

The Wonga Park Cricket Club has a unique lease arrangement with Council. In

September 1992 the Club transferred the title of land and surroundings of oval two to the Shire of Lilydale. This land coupled with the existing land owned by the Shire resulted in the Shire becoming proprietor of the title including both ovals, pavilions and surrounding land. In return a lease was developed with the provision and intent to give the club use of both ovals and pavilion until 2022. An arrangement was made regarding the maintenance of the ovals. The Club maintain the ovals for a maintenance levy that is adjusted annually in accordance with GST and CPI movements. This levy is currently \$12,065. This is a unique arrangement as Council's City Parks Unit maintains all other ovals in the municipality.

In 1995, with the Council amalgamations, the Wonga Park Reserve title was handed over to the City of Manningham. In June 2001 the lease was renewed and replaced with two leases. One lease was created for use of the pavilion for a term of nine years (2010) and another for usage and maintenance of both ovals for a term of 22 years (2023). The lease document refers to the importance of the history of the title of land. It states 'special consideration should always be given in the future to the unique circumstances and history of the Wonga Park Cricket Club, in particular in any future lease negotiation and Council grant.'

The Cricket Club has recently started to share use with the Wonga Park Netball Club of the main pavilion adjacent to the lower oval, as clubrooms. The main pavilion is comprised of male

and female change rooms, a small storage area, bar/kitchen/servery space and a meeting/gathering room for social events and spectators.

In 2004, some minor capital works improvements were made as a result of the Wonga Park Playgroup requiring use of the pavilion whilst the new Wonga Park Community Centre was being constructed. These improvements only included works required to accommodate the relocation of the playgroup.

The Cricket club also uses a second smaller pavilion next to the upper oval. This pavilion, which is comprised of a kitchenette and small gathering/spectator area, was completely rebuilt in 2005 to replace an existing dilapidated building.

The Cricket Club uses both the upper and lower ovals at the Reserve for competition and training. Four practice nets are adjacent to the lower oval and two next to the upper oval.

2.1.1.1 Main Pavilion

The club has expressed dissatisfaction with the adequacy of the current main pavilion. The issues arise primarily from the small size of the building and include:

- Lack of change rooms for visiting teams;
- Too small for club functions and gathering;
- Inadequate shelter for spectators in wet weather;
- Lack of storage space, and;
- Limited space to display banners and trophies.

The club has also expressed a desire for additional outside seating and a barbecue space for socialising. Additional seating and a BBQ has been discussed in section 2.5 '*Infrastructure*'.

Whilst attempts have been made over the years to address some of these issues through minor refurbishments and extensions it is acknowledged that the current facility has its limitations. An upgrade of the clubrooms could resolve the issues above and better accommodate the Wonga Park Netball Club. This upgrade would need to reflect similar facilities of an intermediate standard as defined in the 'Pricing Policy' for sporting clubs'. This is further discussed under section 2.1.3 '*Wonga Park Netball Club*'.

Initial discussions have taken place with the Cricket and Netball clubs and will continue in the investigation of the extension of the main pavilion.

Over time, the club has made various modifications to the area surrounding the main pavilion including to the steps leading from the main pavilion, to the lower oval and some terracing works. While the intent of these modifications has been to improve the pavilion for the user groups it has created other issues in respect to risk management. As a result of the modifications the steps are uneven and the terracing was developed to a height which does not comply with Australian Standards. It is a Council requirement, that any Club must request approval from Council for any modifications or improvements to Council's assets.

2.1.1.2 Use and Access of the Ovals

As discussed above Wonga Park Cricket Club lease agreement reflects a historical decision made prior to Council amalgamations and states the ovals be maintained by the Cricket Club. In 2001 when the lease was renewed discussions were held with City Parks regarding the maintenance arrangement. It was decided at the time the resources required were greater for Council to under take the work than for the Club.

Apart from the formal use by the Wonga Park Cricket Club the ovals and their surrounds are also used for a range of recreational purposes including walking, jogging, general informal play, as a meeting place and for primary school sporting activities.

Horses are commonly ridden within the Reserve area causing damage to the turf, leaving manure and creating an unsafe playing surface on the ovals. This mainly occurs on the upper oval, which has no boundary fencing. Although horses are prohibited on the sports ovals, boundary fencing should be installed to prevent the horses accessing the top sports oval. This has been further discussed in section 2.2.4 '*Horse Riding*'.

It should be noted that there are no formal car park bays at the upper sports oval. Cars currently park at the upper sports oval near the pavilion and encroach on the vegetation which causes compaction of the soil around the base of the large Eucalypts. This impacts on the long term health of the trees. Due to the physical constraints of this car parking area, works should be carried out to create two or three 'semi-formal' car-parking bays for umpire/official use only and/or loading/unloading.

Timber bollards or a similar natural material should be used to create and define the car park area in an unobtrusive, low key manner and for the area to be signed accordingly.

2.1.1.3 Shipping Container

The Cricket Club currently has a shipping container for storage purposes onsite near the cricket nets at the lower oval. Reserve users have expressed concern about the container as it provides a harbour for rabbits, is a visual detraction from the Reserve and requires an electrical cable to supply electricity. There is an opportunity for the storage requirements to be addressed as part of the proposed extension of the main pavilion, as discussed in section 2.1.1 '*Main Pavilion (Wonga Park Cricket Club)*', which would allow the shipping container to be removed.

2.1.1.4 Upper Oval Track & Spectator Viewing

There is an informal track from the main car park to the upper oval which clearly demonstrates the number of people walking up from the main car park to the top oval. The path is currently not much more than a slippery 'goat' track. While there are no environmental concerns for people to walk through this area it is considered necessary to construct steps along the existing access route to form a suitable and safe track from the main car park (lower oval) up to the upper oval. Feedback from the Cricket Club also indicated that spectators tend to watch games at the top oval adjacent to where the track meets the upper oval.

Recommendations:

- 1. Investigate the extension of the main pavilion in consultation with the Netball and Cricket Club to accommodate their needs to maximise participation and for the**

pavilion to remain as an intermediate standard facility, as outlined in the Pricing Policy’.

2. Address risk issues at the sports pavilion including installation of a protective barrier on terracing, and to repair sunken steps leading to the oval and handrails as appropriate.
3. Install boundary fencing around the upper oval to prevent access by horses or unauthorised vehicles.
4. Resolve environmental issues from uncontrolled car parking next to the pavilion on the top oval by installing physical barriers to prevent car parking encroaching onto vegetation and for the area to be signed accordingly.
5. The Cricket Club to remove the shipping container from the Reserve.
6. To open discussions with the Wonga Park Cricket Club regarding the future maintenance of the ovals.
7. Construct a stepped pedestrian walk way between the main car park and the top oval.
8. Construct a small retaining wall to provide a small, level space (approximately 2-3 meters wide and 5 – 10 meters long) for spectators to stand immediately north of where the steps meet the top oval and extending around towards the northern sight screen as far as practical.

2.1.2 Wonga Park Tennis Club



Wonga Park Tennis Club is a thriving community club with approximately 330 financial members. Comprising of six tennis courts and a pavilion, the club offers a range of services and programming including:

- After school coaching;
- Saturday morning junior competition;
- Monday morning adult classes;
- Weekday ladies competition;
- Night tennis, and;
- Social activities.

These programs combined with casual/informal use (an estimated 70% of court usage is from non-members) fully utilise the Club facilities. Waiting lists exist for current programs and the number of teams in competitions is at capacity to the point that it has been necessary for some junior teams to book courts at other clubs outside of the municipality.

2.1.2.1 Inadequate Number of Courts

The Tennis Club has 330 members and a further 207 participants who are non members. They have six courts (5 en-tout-cas and one plexipav) and compared to similar sized clubs in Manningham they have significantly more members per courts. This is particularly evident in the junior team participation rates, as Wonga Park boasts the highest number of teams (17) in the municipality. Eight of these junior Saturday teams are based at other clubs because there are not enough courts available. 43 adult teams play midweek, night and Saturday and Sunday competition tennis. Private lessons spill over into the coaches private tennis court due to lack of court availability. Hence, it is clear that the existing number of tennis courts is inadequate.

While neighbouring tennis courts have been used to accommodate the demand it is worth noting that this is not an ideal situation particularly as this requires additional commitment by parents to transport their children to facilities outside of the district or municipality. Further development of programs for seniors, children and people with a disability cannot be realised due to the lack of court space.

Preliminary planning was undertaken to investigate the opportunities for the Wonga Park Tennis Club to share tennis court facilities at the South Warrandyte Tennis Courts. The South Warrandyte Tennis Club disbanded several years ago however the tennis courts are currently being used by the Warrandyte Tennis Club and are at capacity.

The development of additional tennis courts is supported by the Club and Tennis Victoria. It should be noted that while one additional tennis court would assist with the demand it is highly desirable for the development of two additional tennis courts which would more appropriately meet current and future demand and enable increased participation and extended programming.

As part of the initial planning for the development of additional tennis courts several options were examined.

In assessing the most appropriate location, the following factors were considered –

- Space Available;
- Extent of vegetation removal required, and;
- Orientation (North-south is optimum to minimise impact of sun on players).

Sites both north and south of the existing tennis courts were assessed. The northern site was considered to be inappropriate due to the lack of space and close proximity to the Wonga Park Community Hall.

The site to the south of the existing courts had sufficient space to develop two tennis courts. In determining the most appropriate orientation, the level of vegetation removal required was assessed. It was resolved that both orientation options would require a similar level of vegetation removal.

It is therefore considered that the most appropriate location for new courts would be the open space area between the existing courts and the former Burch Memorial Pre-school in a north – south orientation.

However, it is acknowledged that this site has some constraints. Several trees and understorey vegetation is scattered predominantly on the northern, eastern and southern boundaries of the proposed site. Of these trees there are two significant Eucalypts with high amenity value due to their maturity and position in the landscape. One of these trees is bifurcated which may present structural issues in the future. It should be noted that the trees and vegetation are a combination of indigenous, native and weed species and vary from fair to good condition. A significant number of these trees and vegetation would need to be removed to allow for the construction of two additional tennis courts.

Furthermore, the low and sloping nature of the site would require the construction of retaining walls and fill to provide an appropriately sized and level base on which to construct the tennis courts.

Prior to these works being undertaken Council needs to provide DSE with a plan showing the Reserve boundaries and the actual/proposed land use and for this to include any extension onto the Mechanics Institute reserve. The reserve tenure implications from the proposed extension of the tennis courts will then be resolved by DSE.

A planning permit is required under the Manningham Planning Scheme for the development of the tennis courts and for the removal of vegetation under the Heritage Overlay and the Vegetation Protection Overlay of the Manningham Planning Scheme. The removal of native vegetation must be consistent with the principle of 'Net Gain' as set out in Victoria's Native Vegetation Framework which must firstly avoid the removal of native vegetation. If this is not possible then the removal should be minimised and there should be an offset for the loss of native vegetation.

It is worth noting that the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 will generally require the development of a Cultural Heritage Management Plan for most development proposals in the Green Wedge. This Act came into effect after 28th May 2007 and prescribes the circumstances where a Cultural Heritage Management Plan is required for development of areas of Cultural Heritage Significance. According to advice from Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, the selected site is not an area of Cultural Heritage Significance hence a Cultural Heritage Management Plan is not required.

Despite the constraints of the site as outlined above it is considered the only viable site. It is appropriate that the two new additional tennis courts are constructed with a synthetic surface. This synthetic surface has lower maintenance requirements and significant water savings compared to that of the existing en-tout-cas court surface.

In regard to funding the project, the Tennis Club has committed a financial contribution of up to \$50,000 towards the project. In addition Council was successful in receiving \$50,000 in funding from the State Government under the 2006/2007 Community Facilities Funding Program administered through Sport and Recreation Victoria. Council has received an initial extension from the State Government for this funding in order to first complete the management plan and extensive planning required for the two additional tennis courts to 2008/09 financial year. Council will consider the balance of the project through the annual Capital Works Budget. While it is important to consider funding options for this project it is important to note that the approval for the project is subject to the relevant planning processes as described above.

2.1.2.2 Disposal of en-tout-cas

The maintenance requirements of the existing tennis courts result in amounts of en-tout-cas being regularly swept off the court surface requiring disposal. It was observed during site inspections that surplus en-tout-cas material is being dumped outside of the tennis courts into the Reserve next to vegetation. This practice impacts the health of the vegetation and the visual appearance of the Reserve and is not acceptable. To address this issue an appropriate storage bin should be used to store the material and arrangements are made for the appropriate disposal of the en-tout-cas. Council's City Parks Unit has agreed to empty the bin as required.

As a result of the environmental issues associated with the inappropriate disposal of the en-tout-cas and the increasing concern with the use of water during the current drought, the upgrade and replacement of existing en-tout-cas tennis courts need to be with a synthetic surface to ensure minimal use of the community's potable water supply.

Recommendations:

- 9. Develop two synthetic tennis courts to the south of the existing tennis courts (north – south orientation) subject to the relevant statutory processes.**
- 10. Introduce a “storage” bin for the Wonga Park Tennis Club to dispose of en-tout-cas appropriately.**
- 11. The upgrade and replacement of existing en-tout-cas tennis courts should consider the replacement with surface that requires minimal use of the community’s potable water supply such as a synthetic surface.**

2.1.3 Wonga Park Netball Club

Netball is a popular sporting choice for females in Manningham and as such has been given considerable resources with the development of the regional facility located next to and incorporating the Manningham Templestowe Leisure Centre. Other courts located within the municipality are classified as local and only accommodate training with no other facilities offered other than public toilets. Given Wonga Parks isolated location, proximity to Templestowe and high participant rate consideration should be given to their needs.

The Wonga Park Netball Club was established in 1979. Originally established as the Yarra Road Netball Club, the club practiced and played on one court at the Yarra Road Primary School. With the help and hard work of many dedicated players and parents over the years, the club has grown to 120 players in 2007, comprising 13 teams. The netball club only trains at Wonga Park Reserve with competition held at different venues.

The club has managed to achieve its growth and success without the benefit of any clubrooms or change rooms. The club also has no meeting or storage space.

2.1.3.1 Court Surface

A number of safety and maintenance issues arise in relation to the existing netball court surface. These include:

- Mud and gravel washing onto the courts from the surrounding embankments;
- Water pooling on the sides of the netball courts after rain, and;
- Cracks and an uneven surface posing a trip and fall hazard.

To address some of these concerns, the court was recently resurfaced.

Furthermore, to minimise mud and gravel washing onto the courts from the surrounding embankments it is necessary to develop a low retaining wall. It will be necessary to install appropriate drainage on the eastern side of the netball courts and a drainage swale on the southern boundary of the netball courts (closest to the BMX track) to address the issue of water pooling on the sides of the netball court.

2.1.3.2 Lighting

Recently Council installed court lighting so that both netball courts can be safely used at nights and teams have adequate practice time. Lighting was also installed in the main car park to allow members to safely access the pavilion toilets and return to their cars and depart once the court lights had been turned off. The lighting to the netball courts and the main car park now satisfactorily service the netball club and the community.

2.1.3.3 Clubrooms

It is recognised that the club has requested clubrooms for:

- Storage of balls, bibs, training equipment etc.;
- Display of trophies;
- Indoor space for meetings and theory/indoor training sessions;
- Space for sponsorship advertising;
- Social events, and;
- Undercover change rooms and shelter in adverse weather.

Other options have been considered at the Reserve including the use of the former Burch Memorial Pre-School and the former Maternal & Child Health Care Nurse room at the Community Hall. However, neither of these facilities has been constructed for a sporting purpose resulting in significant limitations and each is a significant distance from the courts. Hence, neither option is considered appropriate or viable.

The building of new 'stand alone' club facilities is also not considered a feasible option due to limited space in the Reserve and the cost of construction.

Discussions with the Cricket Club and the need for increased clubroom space have resulted in the opportunity to resolve the needs of both clubs by sharing the one facility. This would have significant benefits including:

- Cost savings arising from only requiring capital works/refurbishment to one existing building;
- Enhancing the economic sustainability of both clubs by creating increased benefits for sponsors and being able to share facility management and maintenance costs, and;
- Increased opportunities for social events and community development and interaction.

The Netball Club and the Cricket Club have agreed in principal that this would be a mutually beneficial outcome for themselves and the Wonga Park community. In 2006 the clubs successfully commenced sharing the pavilion. To address the needs of both the Wonga Park Cricket Club and the Wonga Park Netball Club it is recommended to investigate the extension of the main pavilion as discussed in section 2.1.1 '*Main Pavilion (Wonga Park Cricket Club)*'.

Furthermore to facilitate the redevelopment of the main sports pavilion it will be necessary to establish appropriate management arrangements for the shared use by the Netball Club and the Cricket Club.

Recommendations:

- 12. Construct a retaining wall on the eastern side of the netball courts, including appropriate drainage, to prevent dirt and debris from washing onto the netball courts.**
- 13. Develop a drainage swale on the southern end (closest to the BMX track) away from the netball courts and top dress as required.**
- 14. Council to finalise the lease agreement with the Wonga Park Cricket Club and the Wonga Park Netball Club for the shared use of the sports pavilion.**

2.1.3.4 Other Sporting Opportunities

Across the municipality there is a shortage of 'greenfield' (undeveloped) space which can be developed into new sports ovals. Furthermore, with the growth in participation of various codes of sports and the physical condition of Council's sports ovals with the current drought there is real pressure for Council to find alternative solutions to support Manningham sporting clubs.

The current drought has had significant implications for water authorities, State Government, Local Councils, Sporting Associations and local sporting clubs including but not limited to:

- water restrictions on how much water the community can use;
- restriction on the use of Council's sports ovals;
- alternative options to maintain sports ovals (i.e. warm season grasses, water tanks, bore water etc.);
- shorter playing season in particular Australian Rules Football, and;
- clubs are seeking alternative forms of training sessions such as the use of leisure/aquatic centres, schools or footpaths in local streets.

The implications of the drought will require significant major works, including non drought related planned works, for sports ovals around the municipality. The implications of any major works (i.e. drainage, seeding etc) will result in a disruption, if not displacement, for a period of time, of local sporting clubs from their home ground.

Ideally, in order to minimise this disruption, an 'overflow' sports oval should be reserved for the purpose of:

- Council to allocate clubs to train during major works on their home ground;
- an alternative venue to provide a recovery period for their home venue (limit damage through over use), and / or;
- access for pre-season training.

The Wonga Park Cricket Club currently uses the two sports ovals during the summer season. The two sports ovals are unused during the winter season. This provides an opportunity for Council to reserve a sports oval for the purpose of allocating to disrupted or displaced sports clubs. It is important to note that the use of the sports ovals during winter or pre season training at Wonga Park Reserve should not impact on the use by Wonga Park Cricket Club. Also in consideration of the current arrangements for the Cricket Club to maintain the sports ovals during the summer season, Council would be responsible for maintenance during the winter season.

To ensure the ovals can accommodate winter training by other sports clubs additional infrastructure will be required in the form of drainage, floodlighting and irrigation (subject to the current drought conditions). A decision would need to be made regarding where these resources are directed either to one or both ovals.

Recommendations:

- 15. Investigate the opportunity to use one or both of the ovals at Wonga Park as 'overflow' venues and associated works for this to occur.**

2.2 RECREATION, LEISURE AND PLAY

2.2.1 BMX Track

The BMX track at the Reserve was constructed in 2004 as a result of community action and a successful working bee and barbecue day.

A previous track on the same site had, overtime, become rundown and unused. Following extensive community consultation, local youth, residents and Council Officers combined to redesign and reconstruct the track to its current form. The aim was to:

- improve the safety and functionality of the old track;
- provide a variety of challenges for all ages and skill levels; and,
- improve amenity with planting, seating and a rubbish bin.

Three circuits are provided:

- beginners jumps between 0.3 - 0.7m;
- intermediate, between 0.5 – 1.0m; and,
- advanced, between 1.0 – 1.5m.

The track is used regularly by casual small groups and individuals as well as for larger 'informal' events. The track is one of few places in Wonga Park where young people can come together and participate at their leisure and socialise.

Vehicle access within proximity of the track must be retained for emergency and management vehicles.

Advanced riders seeking more of a challenge regularly try and raise the height of the jumps beyond the Council 'approved' maximum safe height of 1.5m. There is a need to monitor these jumps and ensure that more junior or intermediate level jumps are still provided for. Consultation for this management plan revealed that there may be a need for better intermediate jumps/layout to enable riders to practice and progress to the more advanced jumps. It was also identified that the signage should be updated and replaced to provide the most relevant and appropriate information to riders.

Council's insurer, Civic Mutual Plus, considers informal BMX dirt jump tracks such as Wonga Park to be generally low risk. However, it is important for Council to:

- continue to manage an inspection and maintenance schedule showing written evidence that inspections are carried out,
- identify and record issues or defects; and,
- program and address these.

During the consultation process it was identified that the lack of toilet facilities in the area has resulted in riders and spectators using nearby trees and landscape plantings. With groups of occasionally over 100 people using the track, the toilet issue needs addressing. The public toilets attached to the sporting pavilions recommended for consideration to accommodate the netballers will address this need along with the general public.

Recommendations:

16. Continue to monitor the height and use of existing jumps to maintain safety.
17. Investigate reconstruction of the intermediate level jumps.
18. Maintain ongoing discussion with users regarding the design of the jumps to cater for all levels.
19. Replace existing signage at the BMX dirt jump track with updated information.

2.2.2 Play spaces

Currently two play spaces are provided at the Reserve, the Gooligulch playground between the Community Centre and the Netball Courts, and a small scale play space between the tennis courts and the Community Hall.

Manningham's Playspace Strategy 2003 provides strategic guidance for the provision of playgrounds, design guidelines and priorities for replacement. The strategy assessed all play spaces within the municipality and assigned each a rating for its size or regional importance, extent of play opportunities and condition.

Of the respondents to the visitor survey for this Management Plan 50% had children under 11 years of age and 20% of these were under 4 years.

Of those who answered 'Yes' to the question '*Is there anything you don't like about the Reserve and would like to see changed/added?*' 26% mentioned playground problems including no bins, not well located, poorly designed and/or maintained.

2.2.2.1 'Gooligulch' Play space



In 1998 Council installed a new junior play space behind what is now the Wonga Park Community Centre. This play space was based on the popular Graeme Base children's book, "My Grandmother Lived in Gooligulch". The play space has been popular and many people are very attached to it. However over the years it has aged and a number of issues have arisen in relation to its maintenance and functionality.

These include:

- low height of the swings means they are only suitable for younger children;
- deteriorating plywood "façades" and murals;
- high maintenance cost and limited play opportunities associated with 'Grandmothers House';
- vandalism forcing the removal of several aspects including the fireplace and 'Emu heads';
- 'hidden' location away from public view and lack of toilet and picnic facilities;
- original layout has had to be altered as the 'stations' and shaky bridge suffered from lack of use due to their distance away from the main features. Some of these features have been removed or moved closer; and,

- the playground no longer offers a great range of play opportunities for all ages or abilities.

The Playspace Strategy classified the Gooligulch play space as a 'District' facility with a 'condition 1' rating (= *highest rating out of 4 levels*) and play opportunity rating of '2' (= *second highest rating out of 4 levels*).

Of the 18 community survey respondents who answered 'poor' or 'very poor' to the question of how well the Reserve was managed 22% mentioned the need for improvements to Gooligulch play space.

For this reason the Gooligulch play space should be maintained in accordance with Council's maintenance program. Once the equipment can no longer be appropriately maintained then the play space equipment should be phased out and replaced with new equipment. At this point consideration should be given to both the relocation and to paths linking the play space site to other facilities in the Reserve.

2.2.2.2 Play space adjacent to Community Hall and tennis courts

The remnants of the old play space between the Community Hall and the tennis courts are ageing and require replacement or removal. Elements of this play space have been removed primarily due to safety issues. This play space still provides a function for the local community and hence should be replaced with similar style equipment.

Recommendations:

- 20. Maintain the Gooligulch play space in accordance with Council's maintenance program.**
- 21. Once the Gooligulch equipment can no longer be appropriately and efficiently maintained it should be phased out and consideration be given to relocation of site and paths linking site with other Reserve facilities.**
- 22. Replace the existing play space equipment between the Wonga Park Community Hall and the tennis courts with similar style equipment.**

2.2.3 Walking & Jogging

The Manningham Cultural and Leisure Needs Study 2003 identified "walking" as the most popular recreation or sporting activity in the municipality. Not only was it the most popular activity it was also the activity most frequently participated in.

Walking is the most accessible form of physical activity. It brings people together socially, improves health and helps to create a more sustainable environment. Most importantly, walking is an activity open to nearly everyone, regardless of age, socio-economic status or culture. Walking plays an important role in people participating in their communities. This simple activity brings people out into their neighbourhoods while helping them be healthier and happier. Walking within local neighbourhoods promotes increased face to face contact with neighbours, social interaction and consequently can encourage more people to get involved in local community activities. The potential health, community and environmental benefits of walking are significant. Providing markers along the path assists walkers to measure their performance and acts to motivate and give a sense of achievement.

The popularity of walking as an activity is reflected in the community survey for this Management Plan. “Walking” and/or “Dog Walking” were the most common reasons for visiting the Reserve (18% of respondents). 77% of respondents walked to get to the Reserve. This is a surprising response given paths are non-existent or inadequate. These issues need to be explored through:

- the development of the ‘Pedestrian Policy’ identified in the Council Plan 2006-2010, action 2.6.5; *‘Develop policy for the construction of new footpaths to enhance pedestrian use and safe travel’*;
- the development of the walking strategy as identified in the Municipal Public Health Plan 2005 – 2008 Action Plan; and,
- the action outlined in the Municipal Public Health Plan 2005 – 2008 Action Plan to ‘audit of routes to, from and around shopping areas and recreation facilities to ensure accessibility and safety for walking’.

Whilst walking is clearly a popular activity there are opportunities for the Reserve to more appropriately accommodate the needs of walkers. There is a lack of footpaths both around and within the Reserve. Spaces and activity areas are not well linked by suitable pathways. The existing path network is informal and not planned. Surfaces and steps are often poorly sited for drainage and can be hazardous.

The community survey identified that a track to walk and/or run was ranked as the most important aspect for the Reserve. 86% of respondents supported the construction of a shared circuit/loop pathway around the Reserve for pedestrians and 75% supported a circuit path for cyclists.

It is important that a walking circuit/pathway be constructed around the Reserve to meet the needs of the community as identified in the community survey. Where possible, the pathway should be wide enough to function as a multi-use pathway for walking and jogging. The alignment of the path should also capitalise on the existing paths within the Reserve.

Whilst the circuit track will need to go through an area of fenced off vegetation behind the upper oval, with careful siting and construction works, the extent of vegetation removal should be minimal and the route confined to the most degraded areas.

A crushed rock track will suit the character of the Reserve and will be suitable for activities such as walking and jogging however an appropriate hard surface should be used where practical.

Recommendations:

- 23. Construct a circuit pedestrian path around the Reserve and for distance markers to be placed along the path.**
- 24. Ensure the future ‘pedestrian policy’, ‘walking strategy’ and audit of routes consider the pedestrian access to and around Wonga Park.**

2.2.4 Horse Riding



Councils Local Law prohibits horse riding on Council Reserves (and on footpaths) unless the area is signed or appropriately designated to permit it. This prohibition also applies to areas of Crown Land managed by Council such as that area of the Reserve east of Old Yarra Rd.

Horse riding is however permitted on road reserves and as such may occur along the eastern boundary of the Reserve along Yarra Rd.

Therefore horse riding is not allowed within Wonga Park Reserve. The community consultation and survey revealed a desire by some residents to ride horses within the Reserve. However it is considered that this is not appropriate due to:

- the comparatively small size of the Reserve means there is inadequate space to provide a designated horse riding area or trail;
- the proposed walking route cannot safely function as a shared trail for horse riders, walkers, cyclists or joggers; and,
- horse riding would damage the grass surface of the open space areas within the Reserve, as evident by the current damage to the ovals

Recommendations:

25. Install 'horse riding prohibited on oval' signs at the entrance to both sports ovals.

2.2.5 Other Recreation & Leisure Opportunities

The open spaces and varied layout of the Reserve affords ample opportunities for a further range of activities that do not require any equipment or infrastructure apart from the landscape itself.

It is important to recognise that this variety of open spaces adds to the attraction and amenity of the Reserve. These spaces include the contours and slopes around the main oval, the flat grassed ovals themselves, the bushland areas and the more 'developed' areas for club based activities and structured play.

The wide range of activities able to be enjoyed in these spaces includes:

- kite flying;
- nature appreciation;
- informal picnicking;
- frisbee throwing; and,
- ball throwing/kicking.

2.3 COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES



The services and facilities at Wonga Park Reserve have evolved and changed over the last decade. Some of the community services facilities have been consolidated into one venue resulting in several facilities being either under utilised or vacant. There is now a need to determine the future usage and need for these facilities through the development of a community facility plan.

2.3.1 Wonga Park Community Centre

The Community Centre was completed in December 2004. The major redevelopment and extension of the Wonga Park Community Cottage and the former Wongaroo Child Care Centre was a community development project involving comprehensive consultation.

The original 'cottage' building was constructed in 1950 as a family residence for the orchard that occupied the site. The former Shire of Lilydale bought the residence in 1978 for accommodation of the Wonga Park Community Cottage. The building was then home to a wide variety of leisure and community programs and organisations including:

- arts and crafts;
- exercise groups;
- spinners and weavers;
- youth group;
- Wonga Park Residents Association;
- walking group creche;
- Free Range Egg Association; and,
- Mothers' Group.

The new Wonga Park Community Centre integrates a number of community services into the one facility. These community services include:

- Wonga Park Community Cottage;
- Burch Memorial Preschool;
- Maternal and Child Health Centre, and;
- Wonga Park Playgroup.

2.3.2 Wonga Park Community Cottage

The 'Cottage' continues to deliver a range of arts, leisure and recreational activities for the community. A program of activities is developed each term outlining the range of activities available.

The cottage is similar to other 'Neighbourhood Houses' in the municipality. These not-for-profit organisations offer a diverse range of programs including: accredited courses; art/craft; vocational; English and adult literacy; health and well-being; children's activities; occasional childcare; and, self help and support groups that respond to local community needs.

A Co-ordinator and Assistant Co-ordinator are employed at the cottage to deliver the programming and operation of the Centre on a day-to-day basis. A Committee of Management is responsible for the ongoing management of the Cottage as an incorporated body. The Committee is made up of interested people generally from the local community.

Classes are held during the day, evening and on some weekends. Office Hours are generally 9:15am to 4:00pm Monday to Thursday and 9:15am to 12:15pm Friday (closed during school holidays).

2.3.3 Occasional Child Care

The Cottage also operates the 30-place Occasional Child Care Centre. Occasional care is available each weekday 9am-12noon for participants attending classes at the Cottage and the general community.

The Centre has its own outdoor play space within the Community Centre grounds.

2.3.4 Wonga Park Burch Memorial Pre-School

The Burch Memorial Pre-school formerly occupied the building opposite the new Centre, between the Country Fire Authority and the open space area adjacent to the tennis courts. The pre-school relocated to the Community Centre due to the community development and co-location benefits of redeveloping the preschool's building and playground. The future of the former pre-school building is discussed later under the 2.3.7 'Former Pre School Site' section.

The Preschool is licensed to hold 27 children.

Similar to the Occasional Child Care Centre and the Playgroup, the Pre-school has their own outdoor play space within the Community Centre grounds.

2.3.5 Maternal and Child Health Service

The Community Centre is also home to the Maternal and Child Health Service. The service provides health and developmental checks for children.

The Maternal and Child Health Service is delivered by the Social and Community Services Unit, Manningham City Council. This service is jointly funded by Manningham City Council and Victorian Department of Human Services. It is a free service for all families with children up to six years of age throughout the Wonga Park area.

Formerly the Maternal and Child Health Service operated out of offices attached to the Wonga Park Community Hall.

2.3.6 Wonga Park Playgroup

The Wonga Park Playgroup now operates out of the Wonga Park Community Centre. The Playgroup previously occupied the supper room at the Wonga Park Community Hall and then the former Wongaroo Child Care Centre.

The Playgroup offers sessions throughout the week for parents and their children to play and socialise with each other.

Similar to the Occasional Child Care Centre and the Burch Memorial Preschool, the Wonga Park Playgroup has its own designated playground within the Wonga Park Community Centre grounds.

2.3.7 Former Pre-School Site

The former pre-school building situated between the CFA and the open space area adjacent to the Tennis Courts, is now vacant. The Burch Memorial Preschool that previously occupied the building, is now located within the Wonga Park Community Centre.

The former pre-school site has a strong family connection with the Burch and Kear families who lost loved ones in a tragic accident in 1972. A plaque dedicated to those family members who lost their lives has been relocated from the former preschool to the new preschool at the request of and in consultation with the families.

The opportunity therefore exists for a new community facility or use on the site. This could involve utilising the building in its current state, undertaking a major refurbishment or redevelopment to accommodate a new tenant, or a completely new use for the site.

A constraint to future uses is that the building is situated on Crown Land (refer Land Tenure Map – Figure 4). Council manages the land as a ‘Committee of Management’ under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978. Under this Act, the use of the building and/or development the site is reserved for Public Purposes (Infant welfare/preschool centre).

Feedback from the community consultation survey in regards to the future use of the building and the site are outlined below:

Future Of Former Pre-School Building/Site	%	%	%
	Yes	No	Neutral
Re-develop the site as open space/parkland	36	43	21
Refurbish the building as a community facility of some sort	69	12	19

The 69% of respondents (72 responses) who were in favour of refurbishing the existing building as some sort of community facility suggested the following uses:

Suggested Use	% Frequency
Youth Centre/Facility	26
Tennis Club use/Courts	14
Community Cottage use/ Or Meeting rooms/Adult Education	14
Senior Citizens use	8
CFA	7
Library	4
Netball Club use	4
Gym	3
Dance Studio	3
Scouts/Girl Guides	3
Café/Coffee Shop	3
Function Hall	1
Medical Centre	1
Bowls	1
Computer Training Centre	1
Craft Co-op	1
Small Business Centre	1
Environment Centre	1
Art Gallery	1

Council has been approached by a number of organisations including CFA, various private practitioners and the Park Players Theatre Group to make use of the site.

The CFA have requested the building for training and meetings and the Theatre Group have requested the use to store their sets and backdrops including their costumes and props.

Whilst both organisations would be a satisfactory use of the former Burch Memorial Pre School facility some further detailed planning and consultation would be required. It is also important that any future use of the former Burch Memorial Pre School is based on restricted access to ensure the facility is accessible to a diverse range of community groups and maximises the use of Council's assets.

2.3.8 Wonga Park Community Hall

The public hall consists of a stage, toilets, kitchen and seating/space for approximately 100 people. The hall is available for hire for functions and meetings. Bookings are managed through the Manningham City Council's Cultural and Leisure Services Unit.

Additional office/meeting space attached to the hall on the western side, previously accommodated the Maternal and Child Health Service. As this service has now moved to the new Community Centre the space is currently vacant.

The space could be redeveloped as a storage area or smaller meeting area/hall overflow space. Relatively minor capital works would be required to reintegrate the space as part of the hall and/or provide storage or preparation space for stage management/preparation. This might involve the partial or complete removal of an internal wall and doorway. The design and redevelopment of the Community Hall should wait until the completion of the community facility plan (refer to recommendation 26).

The external 'child-proof' fencing around the outside of the former Maternal and Child Health Service no longer has a use since the Maternal Child Health Service relocated across the road.

In the past the hall has also been used as a Community Fire Refuge. However following a review of Fire Refuges in Victoria in 2004 Council no longer designates or maintains the Wonga Park Hall as a fire refuge.

Recommendations:

- 26. Develop a community facility plan and for this to include consultation with all stakeholders including the Wonga Park community of 1972; today's community; groups working with young people (YMCA, church groups; relevant Council Units); and all groups who have requested usage, including Park Players Theatre Group, CFA and private practitioners.**
- 27. Allocate funds from the Infrastructure Asset Refurbishment/Replacement Strategy (IARRS) to bring the former Burch Memorial Preschool building to a satisfactory standard when the use is determined.**
- 28. Remove the 'child proof' fencing around the outside of the former Maternal and Child Health Service.**
- 29. Refer survey results to YMCA to address the identified need to provide for young people in Wonga Park.**

2.4 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

2.4.1 Site Description - Vegetation

The *Manningham Biosites - Sites of (Biological) Significance Review (2004)* defines areas of Wonga Park Reserve as comprising part of the 'Freyne St' – a biosite of State significance for its biological values. Biosites are "Core Conservation Areas" for Manningham and represent those areas that support the majority of the municipality's biodiversity.

The Review identifies that the remnant vegetation in the Reserve belongs to Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC) 'Grassy Dry Forest'. This EVC is the common vegetation type typical of the mid-slopes and ridge-tops throughout Manningham. It has a conservation status of 'least concern' within the Highland – Southern Fall bioregion due to low levels of depletion and relatively high representation in conservation reserves within the Bioregion. The EVC is a generic list on the Grassy Dry Forest class within the Port Phillip and Westernport region.

In order to effectively monitor the management of vegetation at Wonga Park Reserve it is advisable that a 'flora list' on the specific vegetation in Wonga Park Reserve is developed. The list should be developed by Council's botanist and will include the level of information to effectively monitor the management of the vegetation. Furthermore, a monitoring process should include the gathering of some vegetation data such as 'photo points'.

Figure 6: Ecological Vegetation Classes



2.4.2 Management History

In approximately 1987, fencing was erected around much of the remnant vegetation abutting Launders Ave, Old Yarra Road and Yarra Road; and the bushland areas in the Reserve have been managed by Council's Bushland Management Team since 1997.

In 1997 a control burn was carried out in the far north-west corner of the Reserve (the most westerly section of Zone 1) by the local CFA at Council's request. This site was chosen as it had the best quality vegetation at the time. It is one of two high quality vegetation sites in the Reserve, the other being the area between the upper oval and Old Yarra Road (part of zone 2).

In autumn 2006 another control burn was carried out in bushland abutting and immediately to the east of the 1997 burn site.

Since these burns, all weed species, in particular the grassy weed species, have been controlled. A rabbit proof fence was also erected around these burn sites immediately post burning to prevent rabbits grazing on the regenerating vegetation and to better control dog and people trampling on such sensitive sites.

In addition to weed control works in the burns, spraying of Blackberry and of young vine and woody weed species has occurred throughout the Reserve. Control of woody and vine weed species of all sizes have also been carried out by two members of the cricket club and the local environment group.

Council's bushland management team have recently commenced control of the weeds, Spanish Heath (*Erica lusitanica*) which occurs around much of the perimeter of the lower oval and Sweet Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*) which occurs thickly along the west boundary of the Reserve.

2.4.3 Management Zones, Issues & Recommendations

Conservation vegetation management in the Reserve is best described by breaking it up into zones each of which reflects a different management regime. These zones are described below and the location and extent of each is indicated in figure 7.

Zone 1 – 'Comprehensive' Weed Zone

This zone is approximately 2000m² in size and comprises of indigenous vegetation of highest quality (ie. highest plant diversity) in comparison to other areas of the Reserve. Within this zone comprehensive weed control occurs, that is all weeds are controlled, in particular grassy and herbaceous species along with woody weeds and climbers.

The prime management objective of this zone is to manage all weeds and other threats to maintain or improve quality over time.

The zone is characterised by a continuous indigenous ground storey and tree cover and is the most floristically diverse zone within the Reserve. The ground storey vegetation is of higher quality i.e. relatively low weed level and high indigenous species diversity.

Zone 2 – ‘Select’ Weed Management Zone

This zone comprises those areas of indigenous vegetation, classified as lower quality, where not all weed species are controlled; that is only selected ‘higher threat’ grassy and herbaceous weeds are controlled. All woody and climbing weeds are controlled.

The management objective of this zone is to manage the higher threat weeds as well as other threats and maintain and/or improve quality over time.

This zone is characterised by a continuous indigenous ground storey with varying levels of weed invasion and mostly continuous indigenous tree cover. The ground storey vegetation is mostly of medium to low quality (i.e. medium-high weed level and medium-low indigenous species diversity).

Key management issues within both zone 1 & 2 include:

- pressures on remaining vegetation as a result of climate change (drier) due to global warming;
- decline/death of mature eucalypt canopy as a result of all the issues associated with fragmentation of bushland, e.g. greater exposure to weather and an increase in Noisy Miner presence.

Other management issues within these zones:

- lack of fire events
- increasing populations of perennial grasses including Kikuyu grass (*Pennisetum clandestinum*) invading from edges;
- works associated with maintenance and upgrade of utilities and road works, especially excavation works;
- dumping of waste from private gardens; and,
- maturing pine trees.

A priority for management is to undertake regular control burns within Zones 1 and 2. These will contribute to maintenance and enhancement of floristic diversity. The actual amount of burning that would occur each year depends on: the nature of the season; the availability of resources to conduct the burn; and, the amount of post burn weed management works achievable across all Manningham burn sites in that year, by the bushland team.

All areas of high and medium quality vegetation within the burn sites are managed for all weed species post the burn. All other lower quality parts of the burn site are managed less intensively with the aim of at least retaining existing (pre-fire) biodiversity levels. Weed control after burning is ongoing, funding permitting, but will decrease as weed levels decline.

It is important that any excavation or similar works in or adjacent to bushland areas in the Reserve are discussed with the Bushland Management Officer during the design phase of the works to avoid and/or minimise biodiversity loss.

Zone 3 - ‘Minimal’ Weed Control Zone

This zone comprises of those areas with lowest quality indigenous vegetation that are dominated by weeds, have little indigenous vegetation and still hold habitat value. Only woody and vine weeds are controlled and any other weed species where control is a legislative requirement. The management objective is to prevent further quality decline as far as is practical and to increase fauna habitat.

The zone occurs in two areas of the Reserve - between the upper oval and the main car park and the filled embankment below (west of) the lower oval. The ground storey vegetation in these areas is mostly monocultures of the weedy grasses, Kikuyu and Phalaris species.

Rabbits are quite destructive as they eat and burrow destroying the highest quality vegetation within the Reserve. It is important in order to protect the biodiversity of the Reserve to control rabbits and their burrows through a controlled program that specifically targets the rabbits, protecting the flora and fauna and users of the Reserve. The fill embankment below the lower oval provides a significant harbour for rabbits. When burrows are identified here they are collapsed as rapidly as possible.

Indigenous trees and shrubs are planted each year to enhance fauna habitat. Spraying of blackberry and young plants of woody weed species has been undertaken in these zones since 2005. Further tree and shrub planting will occur as space allows. Ground storey species will not be planted due to the heavy weed presence. In addition to the trees and shrubs two indigenous climbing plants Small Leaved Clematis (*Clematis microphylla*) and Austral Clematis (*Clematis aristata*) are being planted. All these plantings maximise structural diversity (ie more structure than just long grass) and so maximise fauna habitat opportunities.

It is important that the Kikuyu grass on the site below the upper oval be controlled as it is invading the adjacent zone 2 remnant ground storey.

Zone 4 - Conservation Mowing Zone

This zone comprises those areas of ground storey/open space that retain a high level of indigenous ground storey (e.g. grasses, wildflowers, groundcovers) and which are regularly mown. The management objective of the zone is to enhance the retention and management of indigenous species within the mown areas by investigating alternate mowing regimes (e.g. timing, height & frequency of mowing) and mowing techniques for these areas.

Figure 7 – Vegetation Management Zones.



2.4.4 All Management Zones

Weeds

Blackberry, vine and juvenile woodies control – search and spray runs for blackberry and juvenile woodies across the whole Reserve annually.

Mature woody weed control – Pittosporum and Spanish Heath are the main species in the category in this Reserve. Both are being gradually ‘rolled’ back.

Rabbit Control

Rabbit control commenced in February 2000. Initially this involved spotlight counting three times per year and annual baiting in March/April. Since about 2002 excavators, where appropriate, have become a vital part of the rabbit control work. The fill embankment below the lower oval has provided excellent rabbit harbour and has been the focus of rabbit control work. This work has included annual rabbit hole searching and marking for collapse. A high proportion of the concrete slabs and metal pieces sticking out of the (fill) embankment have also been removed as these contribute to the excellent rabbit harbour.

During the initial spotlight counting 29 rabbits were seen on average within the Reserve. Now the counts (pre-baiting) are averaging 10 rabbits. The need for baiting has been reduced and it is considered that the ongoing hole searching and closure has greatly contributed to these significantly lower spotlight numbers.

Rabbit control works have also been undertaken in the adjacent roadsides of Launder Ave, Hartley Rd and the nearby Arthur John Upton Reserve. Harbour on these roadsides from resident stored materials such as garden pruning and timber has been mostly removed, but needs continual monitoring to ensure build up of these materials do not occur.

In zone 1 & 2 rabbit proof fencing around recently burnt sites continues to be required and is intended only to be temporary. No fences have been removed as yet, so the attractiveness of this ‘burn’ vegetation has not been tested.

Not all adjacent or nearby properties are addressing adequately the issue of active rabbit holes and harbour.

Dead Vegetation

It is important to acknowledge that dead vegetation provides a vital role as part of the ecosystem. It provides habitat and food for indigenous birds, reptiles, invertebrates, fungi and other ‘lower’ plants. Council also has a responsibility from a risk management perspective to provide a safe environment for the community and users of the Reserve. For this reason the removal of dead vegetation will be based on an assessment of the safety and the habitat value of the dead vegetation.

Recommendations:

- 30. Develop a ‘flora list’ to assist with the effective monitoring and management of vegetation at Wonga Park Reserve. Furthermore a monitoring process should include the gathering of some vegetation data such as ‘photo points’ (for at least Zone 1 and 2).**
- 31. Undertake various environmental improvement and maintenance works in the Reserve as per the Environmental Plan to improve the biodiversity of vegetation**

including weed management, controlled burning, new mowing regime to sustain remnant grassy understorey, rabbit control, indigenous plantings, the retention of dead vegetation.

32. Rabbit control works continue at the Reserve including regular searches for rabbit holes and appropriate hold collapse and regular spot counts of rabbit numbers should also continue.

33. Council support local residents through education on rabbit control measures and how residents can assist with removing and preventing any new rabbit harbours.

2.5 INFRASTRUCTURE

2.5.1 Picnic Area / BBQ Facilities

Through the public consultation process there was a strong level of interest for the development of a picnic area at the Reserve. The development of a picnic area including barbeque facilities and picnic tables will service visitors to the playground, the Reserve and existing community and sporting groups. The picnic facilities will also complement the proposed walking track and will provide a destination for people visiting Wonga Park Reserve.

The proposed picnic area and barbeque facilities have been positioned in between the main pavilion, near the lower oval, and the netball courts to service all visitors to the Reserve. In addition to these facilities a double bin will be provided near the car park and between the barbeque area to allow for visitors to place their rubbish in the bin when leaving the Reserve.

2.5.2 Public Toilet

The Netball Club identified as part of the early consultation that access to public amenities was a particular issue for the young girls who are often training in the evening. The closest public amenities were located on the other side of Old Yarra Road near the tennis courts and community hall. This was not particularly accessible and the netball players do not feel safe walking approximately 300 metres to these toilets.

Preliminary investigations were undertaken to determine the feasibility to open up the toilet facilities at the sports pavilion near the bottom oval. The sports pavilion is in reasonably close proximity to the existing netball courts. The toilet facilities are located to the northern side of the pavilion and access requires the girls to walk around the back of the pavilion between a high rock wall. This area is quite secluded and did not provide a feeling of safety for users particularly at night.

To address this issue a compost toilet facility located between the netball courts and the BMX track was proposed for the Reserve. Since this recommendation lights have been installed in the car park giving the users a safe path from the courts to the pavilion. This coupled with the development of a joint lease agreement between Council and the Cricket Club and Netball Club has met the current needs for toilet facilities of the netball club.

To address the need to provide public toilets for users of the western side of the Reserve and to avoid the perception of anti-social behaviour taking place in a stand alone facility it is proposed officers investigate, as a part of the proposed lower pavilion development, the public toilets be attached to the sporting pavilions.

2.5.3 Vehicle Management

Throughout the public consultation vehicle management particularly at the main car park was consistently raised as an issue. The main car park located next to the main pavilion and lower sports oval is currently a loose gravel surface. It has been reported that vehicles, particularly after dusk, frequently use the main car park near the lower sports oval for inappropriate activity such as 'burn outs' and reckless driving. These vehicles have also been reported leaving the Reserve at high speeds which is inappropriate behaviour for the Reserve, local traffic and the neighbourhood.

One of the challenges associated with this situation is that this type of behaviour is somewhat opportunistic and drivers will seek isolated areas to behave in such a manner. Unfortunately Wonga Park Reserve is very isolated and remote which provides the Reserve as an ideal location for this inappropriate driver behaviour. Furthermore, due to the Reserve's remoteness it is very difficult for the police to patrol and apprehend the offenders.

It has been suggested from stakeholder groups that sealing the main car park would prevent inappropriate driving practices of cars seeking the isolated location of the car park. After reviewing traffic management options, based on experience at other isolated Reserves within the municipality, it has been determined that sealing the car park would be an expensive option and this would not address the inappropriate driving practices.

The traffic management review has indicated a traffic plan would need to be developed to improve safety and circulation and traffic calming measures speed humps, landscaping and bollards. These measures will also ensure greater safety for pedestrians crossing the car park and using the proposed circuit walking path.

2.5.4 Fencing

There are several types of fencing used around Wonga Park Reserve. The fencing around the facilities and areas are specific and functional for the type of use or non-use. This includes:

- high 'cyclone wire' fencing around the tennis courts and the low 'post and rail' fence around the lower sports oval.
- 'pipe and rail' style fence used around the BMX track to provide some distinction of this facility.
- 'post and wire' has been used as boundary fencing and to segregate sensitive environmental areas throughout the Reserve. This post and wire fencing is particular appropriate for the character of Wonga Park Reserve as it is not intrusive and complements the rustic nature of the Reserve and suburb.

The current style of 'post and wire' fencing within the Reserve as described above should remain and be replaced with the same style of fence when required.

2.5.5 Pathways, Trails and Steps

Wonga Park Reserve, in particular the sports ovals, is currently well used by local residents for walking. Walking is not just restricted to the sports ovals as there are many informal worn paths which indicate the current patterns of where people enter and walk within the Reserve. It is of particular notice that there are paths that connect to the north of the Reserve onto Launderers Avenue. These paths are a connection point for walkers to access local streets which also connect to some local dams north of the Reserve.

Walking has also been identified as a well supported activity through the public consultation. The development of a walking path around the Reserve will increase participation at the Reserve and support a healthier community. The location of the walking path must take into consideration the environmental significance of remnant vegetation throughout the Reserve in particular to the north of the top sports oval. Refer to the 'Proposed Conditions' plan for the location of the walking path. The development of a walking path was discussed in section 2.2.3 '*Walking and Jogging*'.

A site inspection and risk assessment identified that the steps leading from the netball courts to the Gooligulch playground are quite hazardous and should be repaired or replaced as required to provide a safe path of travel for the community.

2.5.6 Seating

When providing a walking track around the Reserve it is also important to provide supporting infrastructure such as seating. This encourages all age groups to benefit from the walking path. The current seating would need to be upgraded and placed in appropriate locations throughout the Reserve incorporating seating with backs and arm rails.

2.5.7 Drainage

On the southern side of the lower oval, treated septic discharge from a legal discharge point is flowing down the embankment to the oval. This creates an area of boggy mud all year round at the edge of the oval. As part of this Management Plan the water was tested by Council's Health and Local Laws Unit and meets the regulatory requirements. However the muddy area creates an ongoing problem on the oval and for walkers around the oval. To address this problem it is necessary that Council install underground piping to carry the discharge from where it enters the Reserve and down the embankment into the drainage pit on the edge of the oval. This will satisfactorily eliminate the damp muddy area on and around the oval.

2.5.8 Lauanders Avenue Village Centre

Six premises make up the Wonga Park Village shops located on the north side of Lauanders Avenue. The Lauanders Avenue Village Centre has benefited from patronage provided by the sporting, educational and leisure facilities located at Wonga Park Reserve. Pedestrian connections from Wonga Park Reserve should be encouraged to enhance the supporting function each area provides to the other.

Recommendations:

- 34. Develop picnic and BBQ facility, including bins, south east of car park.**
- 35. To investigate the construction of public toilets being attached to both sporting pavilions.**
- 36. Develop plan for main car park, next to bottom oval, to improve safety and circulation, traffic calming measures considering speed humps, landscaping, bollards, etc.**
- 37. Replace the fencing when required with the existing 'post and wire' style fence to retain the rustic and unique country feel to the Reserve (except for the 'post and rail' style fence marking the BMX track which should be retained to preserve the high visibility of this recreational area).**
- 38. Repair and/or replace, as required, the steps connecting the Gooligulch play space to the netball courts.**
- 39. Upgrade seating throughout the Reserve incorporating seating with backs and arm rails.**
- 40. Install underground piping/drainage to carry the treated septic discharge from where it enters the Reserve (southern boundary) down the embankment into the drainage pit on the edge of the oval.**

3 TABLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

All recommendations discussed in the Management Plan, including the associated capital costs (approximate), are listed in the table below. The total cost listed in this table is the approximate budget required by Council to implement the Wonga Park Management Plan.

Please note that the cost estimates are preliminary only and will be subject to further detailed cost preparation as part of the Council's annual Capital Works Budget process. Recommendations from this Management Plan with a cost implication will only be implemented after appropriate funding has been allocated and approved in Councils Capital Works Budget.

Following Council endorsement of the Management Plan a business case will be developed to refer money to the capital works program. The works will then be further prioritised based on available funding being allocated into the five year capital works program.

The 'stages' indicated in this table reflect the priority of works and not a particular financial year.

Implementation and capital works plan		Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
RECOMMENDATIONS				
RECREATION AND SPORT				
1.	Investigate the extension of the main pavilion in consultation with the Netball and Cricket Club to accommodate their needs to maximise participation and for the pavilion to remain as an intermediate standard facility, as outlined in the 'Pavilion Policy'.	\$8,500		
2.	Address risk issues at the sports pavilion including installation of a protective barrier on terracing, and repair to sunken steps leading to the oval and handrails as appropriate.	\$7,500		
3.	Install boundary fencing around the upper oval to prevent access by horses or unauthorised vehicles.		\$40,000	
4.	Resolve environmental issues from uncontrolled car parking next to the pavilion on the top oval by installing physical barriers to prevent car parking encroaching onto vegetation and for the area to be signed accordingly.	\$850		
5.	The Cricket Club to remove the shipping container from the Reserve.	Club	Club	
6.	To open discussions with the Wonga Park Cricket Club regarding the future maintenance of the oval.	Operational		
7.	Construct a stepped pedestrian walk way between the main car park and the top oval.	\$ 4,300		
8.	Construct a small retaining wall to provide a small, level space (approximately 2-3 meters wide and 5 – 10 meters long) for spectators to stand immediately north of where the steps meet the top oval and extending around towards the northern sight screen as far as practical.	\$1,250		
9.	Develop two synthetic tennis courts to the south of the existing tennis courts (north – south orientation) subject to the relevant statutory processes.	\$263,000 Includes contribution from SRV \$50,000 and Club \$50,000		
10.	Introduce "storage" bin for Wonga Park Tennis Club to dispose of en-tout-cas appropriately.	\$1,500		

Implementation and capital works plan		Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
RECOMMENDATIONS				
11.	The upgrade and replacement of existing en-tout-cas tennis courts should consider the replacement with surface that requires minimal use of the community's potable water supply such as a synthetic surface. Explore funding opportunities with Tennis Victoria.	Operational		
12.	Construct a retaining wall on the eastern side of the netball courts, including appropriate drainage, to prevent dirt and debris from washing onto the netball courts.	\$8,700		
13.	Develop a drainage swale on the southern end (closest to the BMX track) away from the netball courts and top dress as required.	\$5,500		
14.	Council to finalise a lease agreement with the Wonga Park Cricket Club and the Wonga Park Netball Club for the shared use of the sports pavilion.	Operational		
15.	Investigate the opportunity to use one or both of the ovals at Wonga park as 'overflow' venues and associated works for this to occur.	Operational		
16.	Continue to monitor the height and use of existing jumps to maintain safety	Operational		
17.	Investigate reconstruction of the intermediate level jumps	Operational		
18.	Maintain ongoing discussion with users regarding the design of the jumps to cater for all levels.	Operational		
19.	Replace existing signage at the BMX dirt jump track with updated information.	\$1,000		
20.	Maintain the Gooliguch play space in accordance with Council's maintenance program.	Operational		
21.	Once the Gooligulch equipment can no longer be appropriately and efficiently maintained it should be phased out and consideration be given to relocation of site and paths linking site with other Reserve facilities.			\$45,000
22.	Replace the existing play equipment between the Wonga Park Community Hall and the tennis courts.		\$15,000	
23.	Construct a circuit pedestrian path around the Reserve and for distance markers to be placed along the path.	\$18,500		
24.	Ensure the pedestrian policy, walking strategy and audit of routes address the pedestrian access to and around Wonga Park	Operational		
25.	Install "horse riding prohibited on oval" signs at the entrance to both sports ovals.	\$700		
COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES				
26.	Develop a community facility plan and for this to include consultation with all stakeholders including the Wonga Park community of 1972; today's community; groups working with young people (YMCA, church groups; relevant Council Units); and, all groups who have requested usage, including Park Players theatre group, CFA and private practitioners.	\$7,000		
27.	Allocate some funds from Infrastructure Asset Refurbishment Replacement Strategy (IARRS) to bring the former Burch Memorial Preschool building to a satisfactory standard when the use is determined.	TBC		
28.	Remove the 'child proof' fencing around the outside of the former Maternal and Child Health Service.	\$300		
29.	Refer survey results to YMCA to address the identified need to provide for young people in Wonga Park.	Operational		
ENVIRONMENTAL				
30.	Develop a 'flora list' to assist with the effective monitoring and	Operational		

Implementation and capital works plan		Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
RECOMMENDATIONS				
	management of vegetation at Wonga Park Reserve. Furthermore a monitoring process should include the gathering of some vegetation data such as 'photo points' (for at least Zone 1 and 2).			
31.	Undertake various environmental improvement and maintenance works in the Reserve as per the Environmental Plan to improve the biodiversity of vegetation including weed management, controlled burning, new mowing regime to sustain remnant grassy understorey, rabbit control, indigenous plantings, the retention of dead vegetation.	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000
32.	Rabbit control works continue at the Reserve including regular searches for rabbit holes and appropriate hold collapse and regular spot counts of rabbit numbers should also continue.	Operational		
33.	Council support local residents through education on rabbit control measures and how residents can assist with removing and preventing any new rabbit harbours.	Operational		
BUILDINGS AND SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE				
34.	Develop a picnic and BBQ area, including bins, south east of car park.		\$30,000	
35.	To investigate the construction of public toilets being attached to both sporting pavilions	Operational		
36.	Develop traffic plan for main car park, next to bottom oval, to improve safety and circulation, traffic calming measures considering speed humps, landscaping, bollards etc	\$5,000		
37.	Replace the fencing when required with the existing 'post and wire' style fence to retain the rustic and unique country feel to the Reserve (except for the 'post and rail' style fence marking the BMX track which should be retained to preserve the high visibility of this recreational area).	Operational		
38.	Upgrade the steps connecting the Gooligulch play space to the netball courts.	\$4,000		
39.	Upgrade seating throughout the Reserve incorporating seating with backs and arm rails.	\$6,500		
40.	Install underground piping/drainage to carry the treated septic discharge from where it enters the Reserve (southern boundary) down the embankment into the drainage pit on the edge of the oval.	\$2,200		
41.	Monitor the implementation of the Management Plan.	Operational		
42.	A major review of the Management Plan is carried out by Council 5 years after the implementation of the Capital Works recommended in this Management Plan.	Operational		
	TOTAL	\$91,300*	\$93,000	\$53,000
	*Please note the project cost for the development of the courts at Wonga Park Tennis Club has been removed.			

4 APPENDICES

4.1 APPENDIX 1: PROPOSED CONDITIONS

Wonga Park Reserve - Summary of Proposed Conditions



4.2 APPENDIX 2: EVC DESCRIPTION – GRASSY DRY FOREST

EVC No: 22

EVC Name: Grassy Dry Forest

MCC Distribution: A dominant element of the drier sections of the low hills dominating the eastern portion of the study area from Donvale and Templestowe to Wonga Park. Most abundant EVC in the study area.

Position in landscape: Usually on the mid slopes and ridge tops of low hills and occasionally in minor gullies at higher elevations, particularly on northern and westerly aspects.

Ecological notes: Grassy Dry Forest occupies the upper section of a characteristic topo-sequence typical of the region's vegetation patterning on Silurian geology that is widespread throughout the foothills of north-east Melbourne particularly in the Shire of Nillumbik. On a transect from ridge tops to the creek or river valleys the sequence is: Grassy Dry Forest; Valley Grassy Forest; (Creek line Herb-rich Woodland); Riparian Forest. Often the transition with Valley Grassy Forest involves mixed ecotones that may even represent discrete Floristic Communities or EVCs. The abundance of the ericoid shrubs plus (amongst a range of other morphological, reproductive and physiological features of the plants present) is indicative of adaptation to dry conditions. Although the vegetation can be saturated for long periods during winter and spring, being situated at the very top of the landscape on very shallow well-drained soils, it is also capable of surviving prolonged period of extreme drought over the summer and autumn months. Its occupation of the drier aspects suggests that this EVC was historically frequently burnt and therefore likely to be well adapted to fire. The presence of relatively short-lived shrubs, particularly those well adapted to fire (eg Fabaceae and Mimosaceae), imply that frequent fire plays some role in the ecology of Grassy Dry Forest.

Structural and floristic description:

A medium to short forest (10 - 30 m) to woodland of dry environments such as ridge tops and hill slopes of north and west aspects dominated by a canopy of medium to short mixed eucalypts over a large range of tall to prostrate shrubs (< 5 m) virtually all of which are indigenous. The ground layer consists of a range of medium to small (<1 m) tussock and non-tussock forming grasses plus some mat-rushes and some sedges interspersed with a range of medium to small herbaceous dicots. Primarily due to its occupation of the least arable, drier portions of the landscape, Grassy Dry Forest supports a limited range of exotics, although in the more degraded sites, these can represent a visually conspicuous element of the vegetation.

The most frequent and usually dominant eucalypts are Red Box, Red Stringy-bark, Bundy Box with Yellow Box, Narrow-leaf Peppermint and Candlebark often present, but in a lower abundance and then usually at the lower elevations near the ecotone with Valley Grassy Forest or other related EVCs. Cherry Ballart, a range of the larger wattles including Black Wattle, Blackwood, and Lightwood plus Sweet Bursaria comprise the taller shrublayer or can even codominant with the eucalypts where canopy height growth is limited. Radiata Pine and Sweet Pittosporum are the only consistently present larger woody weeds of this EVC.

The typical medium shrubs include broad-leaf, narrow-leaf and some ericoid species such as Drooping and Common Cassinia, Grey Parrot-pea, Spreading Wattle, Common Correa, Burgan and Narrow-leaf Bitter-pea all of which are indigenous. Perhaps with the exception of Common Hovea, the prostrate shrubs are largely heaths such as Honey-pots, Cranberry Heath, Thin-leaf Wattle and Common Beard-heath. Once again no exotics feature in this element of the vegetation.

On the ground the most common indigenous graminoids include: Wattle Mat-rush, Weeping Grass, Silvertop Wallaby-grass, Kangaroo-grass, Black-anther Flax-lily and Grey Tussock Grass. At some sites the richness of graminoids, especially the tussock-forming grasses can be extremely high (upto ~25% of total species richness). Whilst often in great abundance, it is interesting to note that only two exotic grasses occur frequently in this vegetation: Sweet Vernal-grass and Large Quaking-grass, the former a perennial and the later an annual most abundant in dry regions such as the Goldfields of Central Victoria.

A great richness of herbaceous dicots are usually found in abundance within the graminoid intertices. Species such as Common Raspwort, Small Poranthera, Kidney-weed, Tall Sundew, Variable Plantain, Blue Pincushion, Button Everlasting are examples. Although this vegetation is often renowned for it's orchid richness, the most frequently occurring geophytic or herbaceous

monocots are the lilies: Chocolate Lily, Milkmaids, Common Early Nancy and Grass Trigger-plant. Anecdotal evidence suggests orchids were formerly much more abundant and only dropped out of remnants in recent decades as a result of poaching and habitat fragmentation accompanying urban sprawl. Cat's Ear and Common Century are the most commonly encountered exotic herbs, an element of the vegetation that is rarely abundant or ecologically important.

Whilst four climbers/scramblers are frequently present in this EVC (and often appear very abundant when flowering in spring) namely: Purple Coral-pea, Small-leaved Clematis, Common Appleberry and Love Creeper, in contrast, ferns are usually absent or at best restricted to isolated patches that are relatively sheltered and moist.

Comparison with general description:

In comparison with the description in Oates and Taranto (2001), Manningham's Grassy Dry Forest differs in the following ways:

- Never or very rarely are Green Scentbark (*Eucalyptus fulgens*) or Messmate Stringybark present.
- Low frequency of Yam Daisy and Bulbine Lily
- High frequency of a range of ericoid shrubs such as Honey-pots and Common beard-heath
- Possibly a higher medium to tall shrub cover

In general the Grassy Dry Forest of Manningham appears fairly typical of that described for the greater Port Phillip region in Oates and Taranto (2002), presumably because the Manningham and Nillumbik Green Wedges represent the stronghold for this vegetation within the greater Port Phillip Region.

EVC FREQ	LIFE FORM	ORIGIN	NAME	COMMON NAME	FAMILY NAME	MCC FREQ
Trees and Large Shrubs						
81	LS		Exocarpos cupressiformis	Cherry Ballart	Santalaceae	330
75	T		Eucalyptus polyanthemos	Red Box	Myrtaceae	254
71	T		Eucalyptus macrorhyncha	Red Stringybark	Myrtaceae	342
71	LS		Acacia mearnsii	Black Wattle	Mimosaceae	286
55	T		Eucalyptus goniocalyx s.l.	Bundy	Myrtaceae	280
47	LS	#	Pittosporum undulatum	Sweet Pittosporum	Pittosporaceae	240
41	LS		Acacia melanoxylon	Blackwood	Mimosaceae	240
40	T		Eucalyptus melliodora	Yellow Box	Myrtaceae	265
30	LS		Acacia implexa	Lightwood	Mimosaceae	100
27	LS		Bursaria spinosa ssp. spinosa	Sweet Bursaria	Pittosporaceae	222
22	T		Eucalyptus radiata s.l.	Narrow-leaf Peppermint	Myrtaceae	169
22	T	*	Pinus radiata	Radiata Pine	Pinaceae	169
22	T		Eucalyptus rubida	Candlebark	Myrtaceae	100
Shrubs and Prostrate Shrubs						
58	S		Cassinia arcuata	Drooping Cassinia	Asteraceae	205
55	S		Dillwynia cinerascens s.l.	Grey Parrot-pea	Fabaceae	240
53	PS		Hovea heterophylla	Common Hovea	Fabaceae	170
51	S		Cassinia aculeata	Common Cassinia	Asteraceae	269
51	S		Acacia genistifolia	Spreading Wattle	Mimosaceae	171
48	PS		Acrotriche serrulata	Honey-pots	Epacridaceae	221
45	S		Correa reflexa	Common Correa	Rutaceae	139
44	S		Kunzea ericoides	Burgan	Myrtaceae	220
41	PS		Astroloma humifusum	Cranberry Heath	Epacridaceae	107
40	S		Daviesia leptophylla	Narrow-leaf Bitter-pea	Fabaceae	155
38	S		Pimelea humilis	Common Rice-flower	Thymelaeaceae	211
38	S		Cassinia longifolia	Shiny Cassinia	Asteraceae	100
37	S		Epacris impressa	Common Heath	Epacridaceae	158
33	PS		Acacia aculeatissima	Thin-leaf Wattle	Mimosaceae	121
30	S		Leucopogon virgatus	Common Beard-heath	Epacridaceae	165
27	PS		Bossiaea prostrata	Creeping Bossiaea	Fabaceae	138
25	S		Tetralochea ciliata	Pink-bells	Tremandraceae	72
25	S		Acacia paradoxa	Hedge Wattle	Mimosaceae	125
21	S		Platylobium obtusangulum	Common Flat-pea	Fabaceae	171
21	S		Acacia pycnantha	Golden Wattle	Mimosaceae	73
Large to small tussock and non-tussock forming graminoids						
79	MG		Lomandra filiformis	Wattle Mat-rush	Xanthorrhoeaceae	417
71	SG	*	Briza maxima	Large Quaking-grass	Poaceae	328

59	MG		<i>Microlaena stipoides</i> var. <i>stipoides</i>	Weeping Grass	Poaceae	468
59	MTG		<i>Joycea pallida</i>	Silvertop Wallaby-grass	Poaceae	221
56	MTG		<i>Poa sieberiana</i>	Grey Tussock-grass	Poaceae	155
52	MTG		<i>Themeda triandra</i>	Kangaroo Grass	Poaceae	340
45	MTG		<i>Dianella revoluta</i> s.s.	Black-anther Flax-lily	Phormiaceae	130
42	MTG	*	<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	Sweet Vernal-grass	Poaceae	309
29	MG		<i>Gahnia radula</i>	Thatch Saw-sedge	Cyperaceae	200
27	MTG		<i>Dianella revoluta</i> s.l.	Black-anther Flax-lily	Phormiaceae	192
22	MTG		<i>Danthonia</i> s.l. spp.	Wallaby Grass	Poaceae	82
22	MTG		<i>Austrodanthonia racemosa</i> var. <i>racemosa</i>	Stiped Wallaby-grass	Poaceae	95
21	MTG		<i>Lepidosperma laterale</i>	Variable Sword-sedge	Cyperaceae	163
21	MTG		<i>Dichelachne sciurea</i> spp. agg.	Short-hair Plume-grass	Poaceae	70

Large to small herbaceous dicots and geophytes

78	H		<i>Gonocarpus tetragynus</i>	Common Raspwort	Haloragaceae	419
56	H	*	<i>Hypochoeris radicata</i>	Cat's Ear	Asteraceae	478
45	SH		<i>Poranthera microphylla</i>	Small Poranthera	Euphorbiaceae	291
44	G		<i>Arthropodium strictum</i> s.l.	Chocolate Lily	Anthericaceae	220
40	SH		<i>Dichondra repens</i>	Kidney-weed	Convolvulaceae	175
40	H		<i>Drosera peltata</i> ssp. <i>auriculata</i>	Tall Sundew	Droseraceae	216
40	SH		<i>Hypericum gramineum</i>	Small St John's Wort	Clusiaceae	243
37	G		<i>Burchardia umbellata</i>	Milkmaids	Colchicaceae	189
37	H		<i>Plantago varia</i>	Variable Plantain	Plantaginaceae	112
36	H		<i>Viola hederacea</i> sensu Willis (1972)	Ivy-leaf Violet	Violaceae	150
34	SH	*	<i>Centaurium erythraea</i>	Common Centaury	Gentianaceae	170
34	H		<i>Brunonia australis</i>	Blue Pincushion	Brunoniaceae	141
33	H		<i>Oxalis exilis</i>	Shady Wood-sorrel	Oxalidaceae	116
32	H		<i>Helichrysum scorpioides</i>	Button Everlasting	Asteraceae	111
29	H		<i>Euchiton collinus</i> s.s.	Creeping Cudweed	Asteraceae	85
26	H		<i>Opercularia varia</i>	Variable Stinkweed	Rubiaceae	166
26	H		<i>Stylidium graminifolium</i> s.l.	Grass Trigger-plant	Stylidiaceae	73
25	G		<i>Wurmbea dioica</i>	Common Early Nancy	Colchicaceae	68
23	SH		<i>Drosera whittakeri</i> ssp. <i>aberrans</i>	Scented Sundew	Droseraceae	128
21	H		<i>Senecio quadridentatus</i>	Cotton Fireweed	Asteraceae	112

Ferns and fern allies

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Climbers and Scramblers

60	CL		<i>Hardenbergia violacea</i>	Purple Coral-pea	Fabaceae	227
38	CL		<i>Clematis microphylla</i>	Small-leaved Clematis	Ranunculaceae	134
33	CL		<i>Billardiera scandens</i>	Common Apple-berry	Pittosporaceae	142
30	CL		<i>Comesperma volubile</i>	Love Creeper	Polygalaceae	105

Other incl. Bryophytes

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EVC = Ecological Vegetation Class; ORIGIN = (*) exotic or introduced and (#) naturalised taxa; LIFEFORM = Type of plant (T – Tree, LS – Large, S – Shrub, LG – Large Grass, MG – Medium Grass, MTG – Medium Tussock Grass, H – Herb, SH – Small Herb, G – Geophyte, GF – Ground Fern, CL – Climber or scrambler); NAME = Taxon name in Latin (Scientific Name); FAMILYNAME = Taxon family classification; COMMONNAME = Taxon name in English; MCCFREQ = Number of FIS records in Manningham (Ex – Extinct in MCC); E/e = Endangered nationally or in Victoria; V/v = Vulnerable nationally or in Victoria; R/r = Rare nationally or in Victoria; K/k = status unknown nationally or in Victoria; D/d = depleted nationally or in Victoria.