

BILLABONG PARK

DRAFT MASTER PLAN REPORT

26 SEPTEMBER 2024

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T.C.L

WHITEHORSE CITY COUNCIL

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DRAFT MASTER PLAN REPORT

Report prepared by:
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Client:
Whitehorse City Council

Date:
26 September 2024

Rev	Date	Purpose
04	26.09.24	Draft Master Plan
03	19.08.24	Draft Master Plan
02	05.07.24	Draft Master Plan
01	17.06.24	Draft Master Plan for review

WHITEHORSE CITY COUNCIL

T.C.L

Introduction

TCL were engaged in 2024 to undertake a Master Planning process for Billabong Park. The project methodology outlined a rigorous community and stakeholder consultation process to understand the community's ambitions for the park. The project also included an in-depth site analysis and issues and opportunities phases that unpacked the site and communicated possibilities for the park. The Draft Master Plan articulates the key projects and implementation plan to achieve the vision for the park through incremental improvements over the next 15 years.



Photo: Billabong Park Drone View

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

The Billabong Park Draft Master Plan sets out a strategy to incrementally improve the amenities and infrastructure in Billabong Park into a diverse, sustainable, and ecologically inclusive park by 2040. The Master Plan outlines Council's vision, goals, and strategic objectives to guide the development of Billabong Park over the next 15 years through a series of key projects. The Master Plan is the result of extensive community and stakeholder engagement, in-depth analysis, issues and opportunities assessment, and a draft Master Plan process.

Vision Statement

The Masterplan recommends improvements to Billabong Park over the next 15 years to create a diverse, accessible, and safe destination that supports both sports and social recreation, enhances integrated water management, and elevates the landscape experience for all park visitors.

Principles

1. Develop a Master Plan for the implementation of 15-year projects.

2. Enhance and preserve the natural environment.

3. Offer diverse recreational opportunities for physical and mental well-being.

4. Implement sustainable water practice, including habitat creation and efficient drainage.

5. Connect communities through varied activities and interactions.

Key Projects

The Draft Master Plan outlines a series of key projects intended to achieve the Council's strategic objectives. These projects focus on enhancing access and movement, improving open space and landscape character, and upgrading recreational facilities and amenities within the park.

Conclusion

The Billabong Park Master Plan will serve as a guide for the next 15 years. Through collective efforts, the goal is to develop a vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive open space that meets the needs of both current and future generations. All community members and stakeholders are encouraged to contribute to realising the vision for Billabong Park 2040.

Below: Render view showing potential improvements to Billabong Park over the next 15 year.



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1. DRAFT Master Plan

The Master Plan for Billabong Park aims to enhance access and movement, improve open space and landscape character and upgrade recreation facilities and amenities, while acknowledging the importance of the existing baseball fields and facilities.



Legend

- Existing Trees
- Proposed Trees
- Proposed Garden Bed
- Proposed Swale (WSUD)
- Proposed Rain Garden/Wetland
- Lawn
- Existing Path
- Existing Bench Seat
- Proposed Bench Seat
- Proposed Path (2.5m Width)
- Proposed Path (1.8m Width)
- Playground
- Proposed Park Lights
- Proposed Sport Lights
- Existing Lights
- Proposed Outdoor Exercise Equipment
- Way-finding
- Signage
- Potential Future Sports Field
- Existing Baseball Fence
- Existing Disabled Parking
- New Practice Net by Others

6.4 Key Projects

Access and Movement

01 02 03 04 A connected path network
Establish a connected path network through Billabong Park with existing and new paths.

05 06 Signage and wayfinding
Provide signage and wayfinding at the main entries of the park to improve safety, navigation and visitor experience.

Open Space and Landscape Character

07 Establish new garden beds and a diversity of planting
Underplant existing trees to diversify the landscape experience and create varied landscape qualities.

08 Provide additional tree planting
Plant additional trees to increase tree canopy cover throughout the park.

09 10 Investigate Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) opportunities
Explore opportunities to create rain garden/wetland, and build a swale link along the path to provide diverse habitats and enhance the landscape experience for park users.

Recreation Facilities and Amenities

11 12 Internal pavilion renewal
Explore opportunities for internal pavilion renewal including fit out, accessibility, and making pavilion female-friendly.

13 Improve park amenities
Provide additional seating areas throughout the park.

14 15 Lighting
Provide suitable lighting along the path network to enhance safety and accessibility; upgrade the lighting at the baseball diamond for better visibility during evening games.

16 Provide outdoor exercise equipment
Provide a variety of fitness equipment suitable for all age groups.

17 Playground facilities
Retain the existing playground at the Allawah Court entry.

18 Provide rock edge terrace seating
Develop rock edge terrace seating that aligns with topographic change. Seating area to accommodate a minimum of 200 people.

19 Off-leash dog area
Billabong Park to remain as designated off leash dog area. Provide signage and infrastructure to support the dog off leash activities

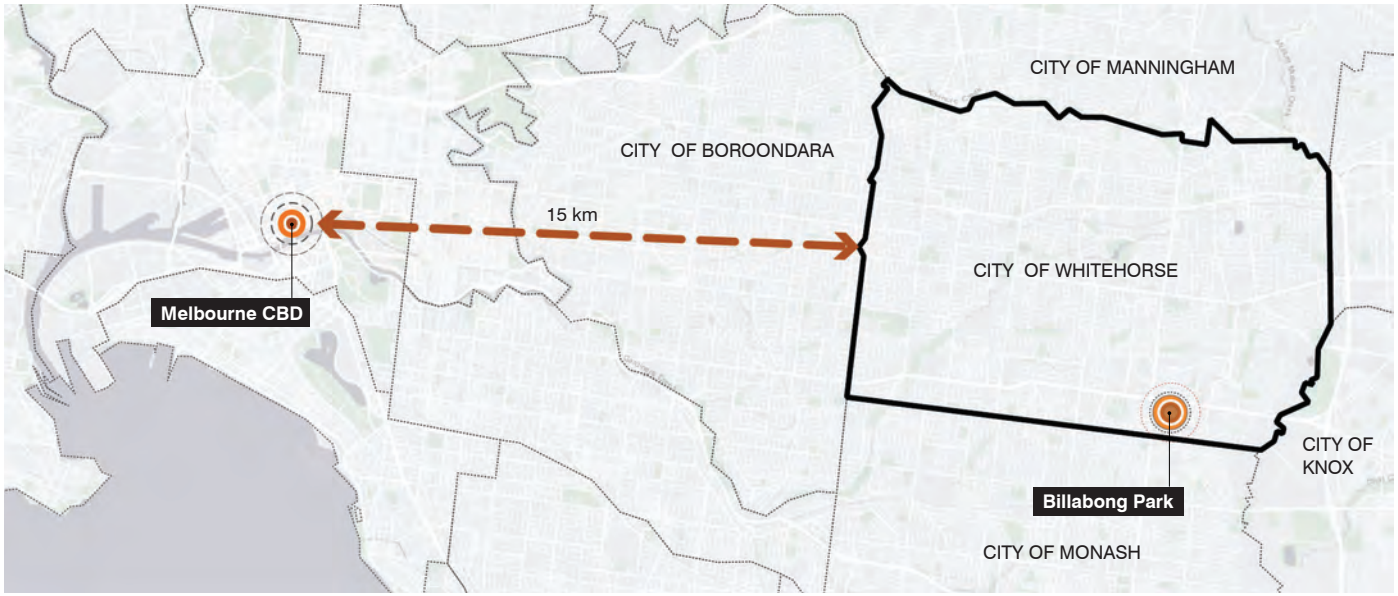
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2. SITE CONTEXT

The City of Whitehorse is situated 15 kilometers east of Melbourne, spanning across an area of 64 square kilometers. It is bordered by the City of Manningham to the north, the Cities of Maroondah and Knox to the east, the City of Monash to the south, and the City of Boroondara to the west.

Billabong Park is situated in the south east corner of the Municipality.

NOT IN SCALE



The City of Whitehorse is divided into 11 wards. Billabong Park is situated in the Terrara ward.

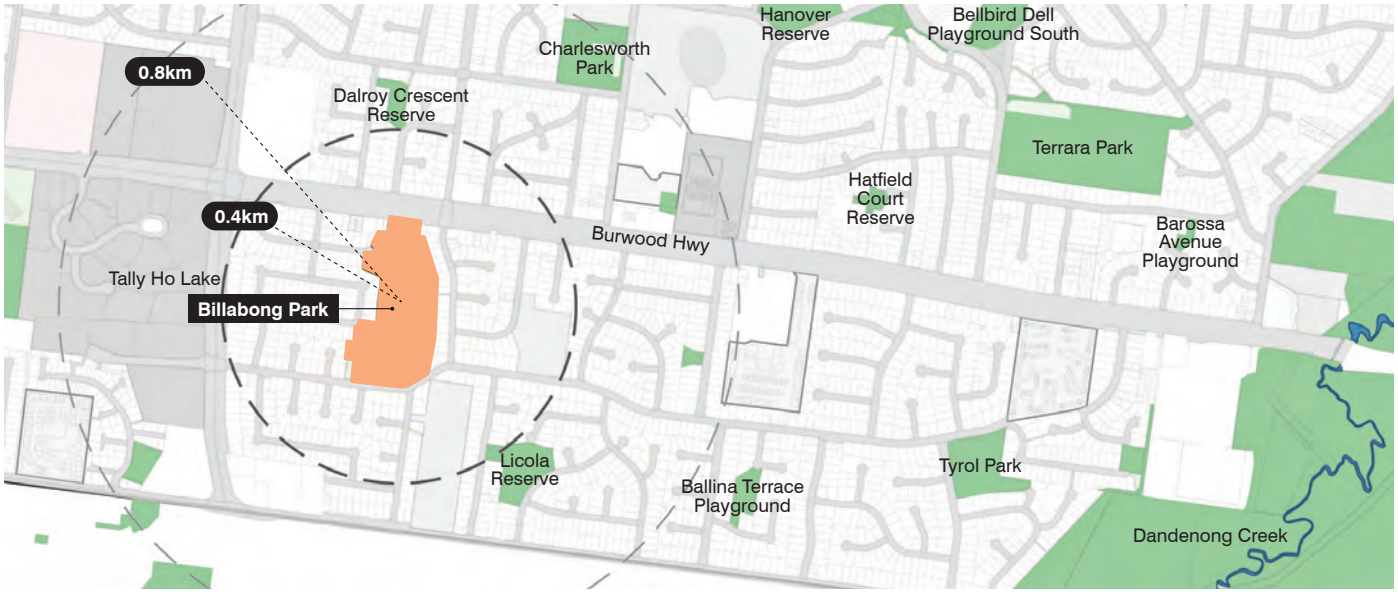


NOT IN SCALE

Billabong Park is a municipal open space with two baseball fields, making it a major destination for baseball players in Whitehorse City. There are three open spaces within a 800-meter walking catchment radius, collectively catering to the needs of the local community.

Legend

- Site
- Green Space
- Walking Radius



Existing Site Aerial and Photos

Billabong Park, covering approximately 6 hectares, is situated Burwood Highway to the north and Weeden Drive to the south, with residential areas to the west and east. The site spans approximately 400 meters in length and 180 meters in width. While primarily serving as a retarding basin for Melbourne Water, the Park also offers structured recreation facilities, including two baseball diamonds serviced by the existing pavilion.











3. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

3.1 Council Strategic Documents

19 strategic documents listed below were reviewed to align the ambitions of the Concept Plan with the strategic objectives of Council. For the key documents, a high level summary has been provided.

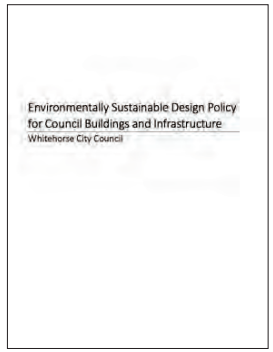
- Council Plan 2021-2025
- Whitehorse 2040 Community Vision
- Whitehorse Open Space Strategy 2024 (Currently in development)
- Whitehorse Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) Policy for Council Buildings and Infrastructure
- Urban Forest Strategy 2021-2031
- Urban Forest Strategy Action Plan 2021-2031
- Interim Urban Forest Policy and Tree Management Plan Asset Plan
- Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025
- Whitehorse Asset Plan 2022-2032
- Whitehorse Climate Response Strategy 2023-2030
- Integrated Water Management Strategy
- City of Whitehorse Recreation Strategy 2015-2024
- Whitehorse Play Strategy 2011 / Whitehorse Play and Social Recreation Action Plan (Currently in development)
- Whitehorse Cycling Strategy 2016
- Building Asset Management Plan 2018
- Pavilion Development Policy
- Melbourne East Regional Sport And Recreation Strategy
- Open Space Asset Management Plan 2019





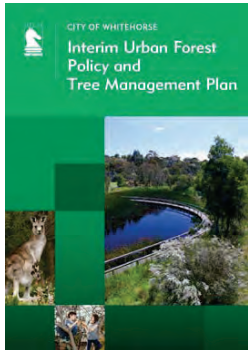




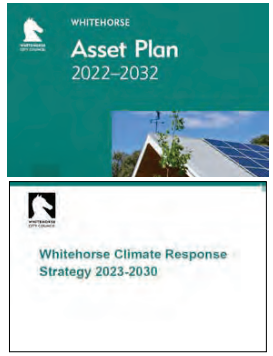


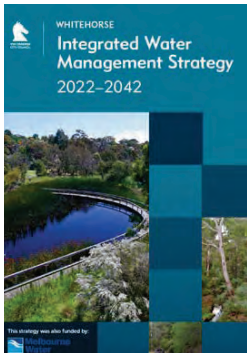




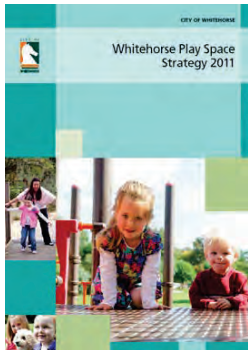


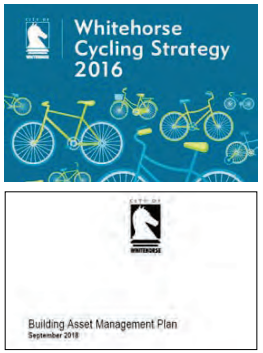














3.2 Strategic Priorities

The Billabong Park Master Plan was developed to align with the strategic priorities. This section summarises the key strategic and planning factors that were evaluated and incorporated during the creation of the Master Plan.

- **Whitehorse City Council, seeks to create** a sustainable, vibrant, and inclusive community with a strong focus on environmental stewardship and social cohesion.
  (Whitehorse 2040 Community Vision)
- The Landscape Concept Plan will encourage sustainable building practices to reduce environmental impact and promote energy efficiency.
  Whitehorse Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) Policy for Council Buildings and Infrastructure
- Plan to enhance and expand open spaces to meet community needs, improve biodiversity, and promote recreational opportunities.
  Whitehorse Open Space Strategy 2024 (Currently in development)
- **Provide a diverse linked network of open space with people of all ages recreating, socialising and enjoying the outdoor space, and bushland reserves brimming with indigenous flora and fauna.**
  Whitehorse Open Space Strategy 2024 (Currently in development)
- The Landscape Concept Plan seeks to increase urban tree canopy cover, improve biodiversity, and enhance the ecological health of urban areas.
  (Urban Forest Strategy 2021-2031)
- Prioritises initiatives to improve physical and mental health, enhance community well-being, and promote active lifestyles.
  (Whitehorse Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025)
- The Landscape Concept Plan will align with the actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change, focusing on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing resilience.
  (Whitehorse Climate Response Strategy 2023-2030)
- The Landscape Concept Plan will aim to manage water resources sustainably, improve water quality, and promote efficient water use throughout the precinct and align with the Integrated Water Management Strategy.
- **Minor upgrade to include a picnic facility and additional unstructured recreation facilities.**
  Whitehorse Open Space Strategy 2024 (Currently in development)
- **Provide a variety of creative, high quality,socially inclusive recreation spaces that offer people of all ages opportunities to be active and recreate together.**
  (Whitehorse Play Strategy 2011 | Whitehorse Play and Social Recreation Action Plan) (Currently in development)

4. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Community engagement for Billabong Park took place from January to February 2024, involving several activities to gather feedback.

Letters were sent to residents encouraging participation in the Whitehorse Your Say Survey. The survey, held from January 22 to February 18, received responses from 217 participants. Forest Hill Baseball Club and Blackburn Orioles Baseball Club were also engaged to gather further feedback.

The Draft Master Plan will proceed to Community Consultation Round 2 to gather community feedback. Following the second round of community consultation the Master Plan will proceed to Council endorsement with required amendments.

Summary of the engagement activities

1. Letters to Residents:

- Council sent letters informing residents about the project and encouraging participation in the Whitehorse Your Say Survey online.
- A total of 1194 letters sent to residents within a 500m catchment area.

2. Whitehorse Your Say Survey:

- Conducted from January 22, 2024-February 18, 2024.
- A total of 709 people were aware through Your say platform of which 217 completed the survey.

3. Community Pop-up Session:

- Held on February 3, 2024, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm.
- Approximately 50 attendees
- **4. Engagement with Clubs:**
- Conducted on February 22, 2024.
- 4 participants, 2 from each club.

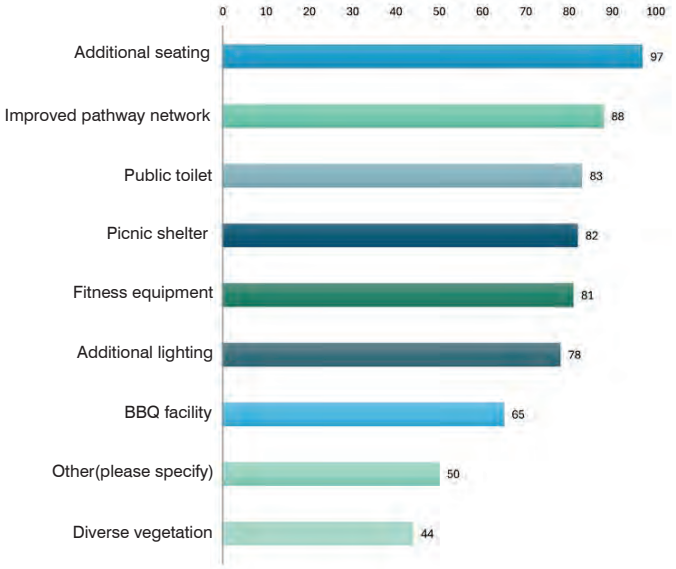


54% of the survey respondents are from Vermont South, 26% of respondents live outside of City of Whitehorse.

Top three park facilities include walking path, play space and openness.

50% of survey respondents drive to Billabong Park while 45% walk.

What improvements would encourage you to visit Billabong Park more often? Please choose your top five.



5. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

An issues and opportunities diagram was undertaken following the site analysis phase. This provided a framework for the development of the Draft Master Plan.

The issues and opportunities are developed into four main groups these include: planning Controls, Access and Movement, Open space and Landscape Character and Recreation facilities and amenities.

Planning Controls

01 LSIO Land Subject to Inundation and Overlay

Issues

The park is a Melbourne Water Retarding Basin that regularly floods.

Opportunities

Review landscape character and planting approach with Melbourne Water meeting the requirements of the retarding base standards. This will enable the presence of water and diversity of plants to enhance the ecological value of the park.

02 SBO – Special Building Overlay

Issues

Due to the LSIO and flooding of the park a special building overlay determines any future development location.

Opportunities

All future buildings to be in accordance with the SBO

Open Space and Landscape Character

03 Landscape character

Issues

The landscape is characterised by a single experience of turf and tree canopy.

Opportunities

Diversify the landscape experience creating distinctive landscape qualities and differentiating the landscape, increase tree canopy coverage and provide diverse landscape character. Opportunities to incorporate Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles.

Access and Movement

04 Path connection and circulation

Issues

The site has poor connectivity with no formal circulation paths. Access to the baseball diamonds from car park and Pavilion is limited. The steep grades present challenges in achieving DDA-compliant access

Opportunities

Enhance the path network and improve existing paths to enhance park-wide accessibility.

Provide connectivity from the car park and pavilion to the baseball diamonds and other park facilities, utilising the site's natural terrain

Provide a clear circulation path for all users that circumnavigates the park and helps to define the parks key entrances.

Review car park arrangement to accommodate increased visitors and improve traffic flow.

N

NOT IN SCALE



Recreation facilities and amenities

05 Play and social recreation infrastructure

Issues

The play space only caters for younger children and there are limited recreational opportunities for diverse age groups.

Opportunities

Enhance existing playground facilities with a diversity of play opportunities for all age groups and diversify the play experience from fixed infrastructure to nature play.

06 Off-leash dogs and infrastructure

Issues

The presence of unsupervised off-leash dogs and insufficient infrastructure for dog management poses safety risks for park users and potential risks to passing motorist.

Opportunities

Define the off-leash dog area with improve signage, and infrastructure.

07 Baseball infrastructure

Issues

The existing sporting infrastructure presents several challenges:

Firstly, drainage issues disrupt baseball games during wet weather, particularly evident during winter periods.

Secondly, insufficient sports lighting significantly limits the potential for nighttime play.

In addition, the current parking provisions and pavilion facilities demonstrate inadequacies in accommodating projected future growth.

Concerns regarding the configuration and condition of the baseball diamonds and fencing.

Opportunities

Upgrade sports drainage with subsoil AG drains to improve functionality and mitigate waterlogging issues.

Review existing amenities and infrastructure, potential to increase deck area and relocate the storage to new practice nets to optimise space usage and enhance functionality.

Improve sports lighting.

08 Limited alternative sports equipment for the diversity of park users and age

Issues

No other sporting infrastructure access to public.

Opportunities

Provide a diversity of fitness equipment for all age groups.

09 Supporting amenities

Issues

Lack of public toilets for casual users, lack of seating, rubbish bins , and access to drinking fountains.

Opportunities

Provide supporting amenities such as public toilets, drinking water to support increase usage and longer stays.

Review Council's Public Toilet Service Policy and determine if viable.

N

NOT IN SCALE



6. MASTER PLAN DIRECTION

6.1 Vision

The vision for Billabong Park is to create a vibrant, ecologically diverse space that promotes both active and passive recreation, enhancing the health and well-being of visitors and the local community.



Billabong Park Perspective
The view captures the central of the Billabong Park, featuring a path network winding through the landscape with a park bench alongside. In the foreground, a swale landscape encourages interaction and provides diverse landscape qualities. In the background, the baseball field and dog area are actively used, contributing to a vibrant park space.

The 3D artist impression is for illustrative purposes only. It is intended to provide a visual representation and may not precisely depict the final design.

6.2 Principles

The Master Plan for Billabong Park is guided by five core principles. These principles help establish a long-term strategic vision and serve specific purposes in shaping the park's development.



01

Develop a Master Plan for the implementation of 15-year projects.



02

Enhance and preserve the natural environment.



03

Offer diverse recreational opportunities for physical and mental well-being.



04

Implement sustainable water practices, including wetland restoration and efficient drainage.



05

Connect communities through varied activities and interactions.

6.3 Billabong Park Draft Master Plan

The Master Plan for Billabong Park aims to enhance access and movement, improve open space and landscape character and upgrade recreation facilities and amenities, while acknowledging the importance of the existing baseball fields and facilities.



Legend

- Existing Trees
- Proposed Trees
- Proposed Garden Bed
- Proposed Swale (WSUD)
- Proposed Rain Garden/Wetland
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- Proposed Bench Seat
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- Proposed Outdoor Exercise Equipment
- Way-finding
- Signage
- Potential Future Sports Field
- Existing Baseball Fence
- Existing Disabled Parking
- New Practice Net by Others

6.4 Key Projects

Access and Movement

01 02 03 04 A connected path network
Establish a connected path network through Billabong Park with existing and new paths.

05 06 Signage and wayfinding
Provide signage and wayfinding at the main entries of the park to improve safety, navigation and visitor experience.

Open Space and Landscape Character

07 Establish new garden beds and a diversity of planting
Underplant existing trees to diversify the landscape experience and create varied landscape qualities.

08 Provide additional tree planting
Plant additional trees to increase tree canopy cover throughout the park.

09 10 Investigate Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) opportunities
Explore opportunities to create rain garden/wetland, and build a swale link along the path to provide diverse habitats and enhance the landscape experience for park users.

Recreation Facilities and Amenities

11 12 Internal pavilion renewal
Explore opportunities for internal pavilion renewal including fit out, accessibility, and making pavilion female-friendly.

13 Improve park amenities
Provide additional seating areas throughout the park.

14 15 Lighting
Provide suitable lighting along the path network to enhance safety and accessibility; upgrade the lighting at the baseball diamond for better visibility during evening games.

16 Provide outdoor exercise equipment
Provide a variety of fitness equipment suitable for all age groups.

17 Playground facilities
Retain the existing playground at the Allawah Court entry.

18 Provide rock edge terrace seating
Develop rock edge terrace seating that aligns with topographic change. Seating area to accommodate a minimum of 200 people.

19 Off-leash dog area
Billabong Park to remain as designated off leash dog area. Provide signage and infrastructure to support the dog off leash activities

6.5 Master Plan Elements

The Master Plan can be described by the following elements. It aims to enhance and protect existing infrastructure and guide the development of the park for the next 15 years.

Existing Trees

Retain existing trees throughout the park to align with the proposed Master Plan.

Proposed Trees

Plant additional native trees to increase tree canopy cover throughout the park. Ensure proposed trees achieve maximum growth and are climate change compatible.

Proposed Garden Bed

Establish new garden beds under existing and proposed trees to create diverse landscape qualities.

Proposed Rain Garden/Wetland

Investigate opportunities to create rain garden/wetland to enhance the ecological value and the landscape experience for park users.

Proposed Swale (WSUD)

Introduce a swale link that connects the wetlands/raingardens along the eastern bank of the retarding basin.

Lawn

Retain the lawn in the center of the retarding basin and consider using native grass species to support local ecology and habitat.

Existing Path

Retain the existing path at the top of the embankment and maintain it in a good condition.

Proposed Path (2.5m Wide)

Provide a 2.5m wide path in selected areas of the park to enhance accessibility and improve the park experience.

Proposed Path (1.8m Wide)

Provide a 1.8m wide path in selected areas of the park to enhance accessibility and improve the park experience.

Existing Bench Seat

Retain the existing bench seats. Relocation may be considered to align with the proposed Master Plan.

Proposed Bench Seat

Provide additional seats throughout the park.

Existing Baseball Fence

Retain the existing Baseball fence.

Playground

Retain the existing playground next to Allawah Court.

Existing Lights

Retain the existing four sports lights at the main baseball field. Investigate LED light upgrade.

Proposed Park Lights

Propose pathway and entry lighting to improve public safety and accessibility during nighttime. Explore sensor and solar lighting options.

Proposed Sport Lights

Provide extra sports lighting for the main baseball field.

Proposed Outdoor Exercise Equipment

Proposed exercise equipment for park users of all ages

Way-finding

Provide way-finding at main entries of the park to provide navigation and information to enhance visitor experience, safety and accessibility.

Signage

Provide signage to contribute to safety, education, and overall experience.

Existing Disabled Parking

Retain the existing disabled parking space next to the pavilion.

Potential Future Sports Field

Review ongoing usage of second diamond and investigate potential future sports for this area.

New Practice Net by Others

A new practice net is currently under development by City of Whitehorse.

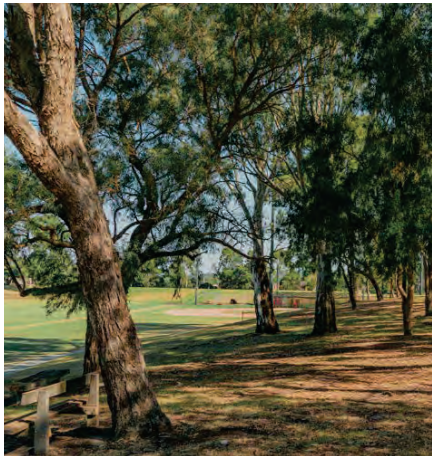
6.6 Tree Canopy Coverage

The Billabong Park Master Plan seeks to align with the City of Whitehorse's Environmentally Sustainable Design Policy by targeting 30% canopy cover, primarily through the preservation of existing trees and the planting of new ones.

Currently, the existing tree canopy coverage at Billabong Park is 14%, and the proposed additional coverage is 8% as outlined in the Master Plan, bringing the total canopy cover to 23%.

This calculation does not account for expected canopy growth; it assumes a conservative estimate of a 5m canopy diameter per proposed tree.

Site photo: Existing trees



Precedent: Additional trees with understory planting.





Legend

- Existing trees to be retained
- Proposed trees

6.7 Path Network

The existing network of pedestrian paths at Billabong Park has limited connections.

The Master Plan proposes a 1.8m to 2.5m wide continuous loop path (1km) throughout the park, connecting the main site entrances to enhance accessibility and improve the park experience.

A DDA accessible path and a staircase are provided from the car park/pavilion to the northern diamond, ensuring safe and direct access for baseball players and park users.

The majority of the path network will be located above the 1-in-10 year flood line where feasible.

Site photo: Existing Path



Precedent: A hard-wearing path with a park bench alongside.



Legend

- Existing path
- Proposed path network
- Alternative DDA accessible path



6.8 Lighting

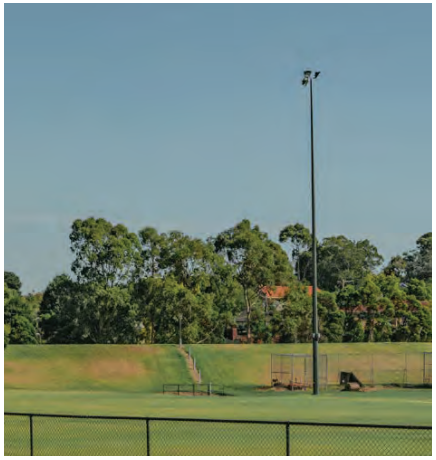
The Billabong Park Master Plan proposes a series of lights along the path network, integrated with existing street lighting, to enhance public safety and accessibility during night time.

Upgrade the sports lighting to 300 lux at the southern baseball diamond to support night-time training with provisions to future-proof the lighting for 500 lux to accommodate night time competition.

Provide additional pedestrian lights along the walking paths. Consider light fittings with motion activation and time restriction.

The lighting placement is indicative only, the final arrangement will be subject to detailed design

Site photo: Sport Lighting



Precedent: Lights along the path



Legend

- Existing street lighting
- Proposed path lighting
- Existing sport lighting
- Proposed sport lighting



6.9 Precedents

Images demonstrate potential improvements for Billabong Park.

Please note that all precedent images provided are intended solely for reference. They are meant to serve as visual examples or inspiration and should not be interpreted as final designs or exact representations of the proposed outcomes



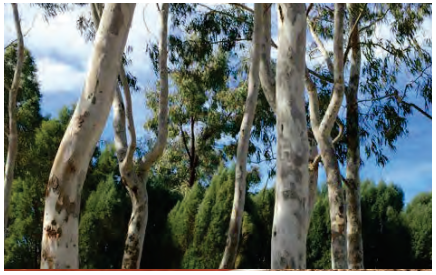
Open space



A continuous path network



Rock edge terrace seating



Native trees



Diverse understory planting



Off-leash dog area



Outdoor exercise fitness



Park bench seat



Upgraded park lighting



Signage



Swale/WSUD



Rain garden/wetland

7. 15 YEARS CAPITAL WORK PROGRAM

The key projects outlined in the Master Plan have been prioritised below according to perceived need and Council's capacity to implement through current or future resourcing and funding opportunities. It is important to note that the inclusion of these projects does not directly commit Whitehorse City Council, user groups or any other organisation to a responsibility for funding and implementing these projects. Some projects are contingent on Melbourne Water's permission.

Opinion of probable costs (OPC) have been allocated to each recommendation, and where appropriate. The costs include assumed design fees, statutory fees, or other costs associated with developing the Master Plan recommendations to implementation stage. Costs are based on current rates and will be subject to escalation.

Priorities assume the following time frames:

High Priority Actions: now - 5 years - FY25/26-FY29/30
Medium Priority Actions: 6 - 10 years - (FY30/31- FY34/35)
Low Priority Actions: 11 - 15 years - (FY35/36- FY39/40)

Version 5
26/09/2024

Key Projects	Project	Recommendation	Priority	OPC
1.0 Access and Movement				
A connected path network	1	Upgrade the existing gravel path adjacent to the baseball diamond to a width of 2.5 meters, extending it to connect with Burwood Highway. Upgrade the existing embankment path and the access path from Tulimber Circuit to 2.5 meters wide, linking them to the path through the car park. Create a new access path from Allawah Court, connecting it to the circulation path loop. Ensure that the majority of the path network is above the 1-in-10 year flood line where feasible. For sections of the path below the 1-in-10 year flood line, consider using solid materials such as concrete, asphalt or permeable bound gravel. (To be delivered in conjunction with item 2)	High	$189,881.00
	2	Provide a 2.5m wide DDA accessible path from the car park/ pavilion to the northern diamond to connecting it to the circulation path loop. Material options include concrete, asphalt and permeable bound gravel (subject to Melbourne Water approval) to provide a hard wearing surface to provide a hard-wearing, trafficable surface and ensure proper accessibility. (To be delivered in conjunction with item 1)	High	$71,500.00
	3	Provide a continuous path of 1.8 m wide on the east side, north and middle section of the park. Provide a 1.8 m wide path connecting the eastern path to the linkage path leading to Fortescue Grove on the eastern section. Ensure that most of the path network is above the 1-in-10 year flood line where feasible. For sections of the path below the 1-in-10 year flood line, consider using solid materials concrete, asphalt or permeable bound gravel.	High	$97,052.00
	4	Provide a staircase from the Pavilion to the northern diamond- subject to Melbourne Water approval	High	$286,000.00
	5	Provide integrated signage and way-finding at the park entrances to improve navigation and visitor experience.	Medium	$11,000.00
	6	Consider interpretative/ educational signage aligned with habitat creation near wetlands.	Low	$4,400.00

2.0 Open Space and Landscape Character	Project	Recommendation	Priority	OPC
Establish new garden beds and a diversity of planting	7	Under plant existing trees at Weeden Dr, Burwood highway, Eastern Buffer, Western Buffer and along Playground to establish habitat. Ensure the planting design to meet Melbourne Water's requirements and council's maintenance.	Low	$82,500.00
Provide additional tree planting	8	Plant additional trees where existing trees are not present. Ensure the proposed trees are above 1 in 100 year flood line to Melbourne Water's requirements. Increase tree canopy cover throughout the park.	Medium	$16,500.00
Investigate Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) opportunities	9	In consultation with Melbourne water, explore opportunities to create rain garden/wetland at the north and south sections of the retarding basin. These features will contribute to flood management and enhance the landscape experience for park users. Once approved undertake detailed design development meeting all Melbourne Water's requirements for approval.	Low	$80,600.00
	10	Subject to investigation and Melbourne Water approval, develop wetlands and swale links in the north and south section.	Low	$497,120.00
3.0 Recreational Facilities and Amenities	**Project**	**Recommendation**	**Priority**	**OPC**
Internal pavilion renewal	11	Review the pavilion functional layout, consider opportunities for internal pavilion renewal to make pavilion female-friendly.	High	$260,000.00
	12	Review and explore the possibility of converting the existing accessible toilet within the pavilion to a public toilet with external access, based on future community demand.	Medium	$195,000.00
Improve park amenities	13	Provide additional seating areas throughout the park.	Medium	$9,900.00
Lighting	14	Provide suitable lighting along the path network.	Low	$81,900.00
	15	Upgrade sports lighting to 300 lux at the southern baseball diamond. Future proof the lightings (500 lux) to support night time competition.	High	$474,370.00
Provide outdoor fitness equipment	16	Remove the existing swing set near Pavilion and provide a outdoor fitness equipment suitable for all ages at that location.	Low	$50,000.00
Playground facilities	17	Retain the existing playspace near Allawah Circuit. Once the play equipment reaches the end of its lifespan, explore opportunities to expand park area where feasible to accommodate play and social recreation area.	Long-term	TBC
Provide rock edge seating	18	Develop rock edge terrace seating to align with topographic change.	Low	$240,000.00
Off-leash dog area	19	Billabong Park to remain as designated off leash dog area. Provide signage and infrastructure to support the dog off leash activities.	Low	$5,000.00

Sub Total	$2,921,323.00

Appendix

A. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION SUMMARY



Billabong Park Master Plan

Feedback closed on 18 February

Thank you to everyone who shared their thoughts on Billabong Park. We are currently considering your feedback. To stay updated on the progress of this project please subscribe on the 'Follow Project' box on this page.

Background Information

We invited the community to help us prepare a Master Plan for Billabong Park.

Located in Vermont South, Billabong Park is 5.9 hectares of open space which features two baseball diamonds, a pavilion, two play spaces and a non-fenced dog off-lead area.

We asked for ideas for the future of Billabong Park.

Community Feedback will help inform the development of the Master Plan, which will provide a clear direction for the future development of the park.

Project Timeline

- **Community Engagement Round #1**
  22 January 2024 - 18 february 2024
- **Community pop-up session**
  Learn more and share your ideas for Billabong Park at our pop-up session. Chat to us over a free coffee. there will also be free treats for the kids.

  Date and Time: Saturday, 3 February 2024, 10:00am-12:00pm.

  Location: Billabong Park
- **Draft Billabong Master Plan**
  Mid 2024
- **Community Engagement Round #2**
  This is an upcoming stage for Billabong Park Master Plan

  Details TBC

FAQs

- What is a Master Plan and why is it needed?
- Who can share their ideas for Billabong Park Master Plan?
- What will you do with the community's ideas?
- When will the draft Master Plan be ready?
- Will there be an opportunity to give feedback on the draft Master Plan?

Summary of the Engagement Activities

Billabong Park community engagement round one has been launched, involving several activities to gather feedback. Letters were sent to residents encouraging participation in the Your Say survey. The survey, held from January 22 to February 18, received responses from 217 participants.

Forest Hill Baseball Club and Blackburn Orioles Baseball Club were also engaged with local clubs to gather further feedback.

Summary of the engagement activities

1. Letters to Residents:

- Sent letters informing residents about the project and encouraging participation in the Your Say survey.
- Total of 1194 letters sent to residents within a 500m catchment area.

2. Your Say Survey:

- Conducted from January 22, 2024- February 18, 2024.
- A total of 709 people were aware through Your say platform of which 217 completed the survey.

3. Community Pop-up Session:

- Held on February 3, 2024, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm.
- Approximately 50 attendees, encouraged to complete paper or online surveys.

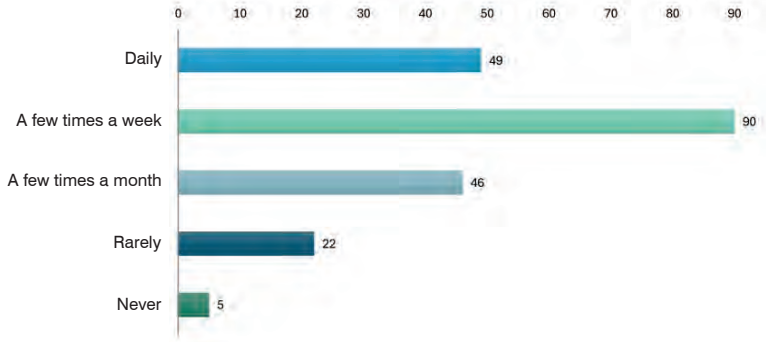
4. Engagement with Clubs:

- Conducted on February 22, 2024.
- 4 participants, 2 from each club.

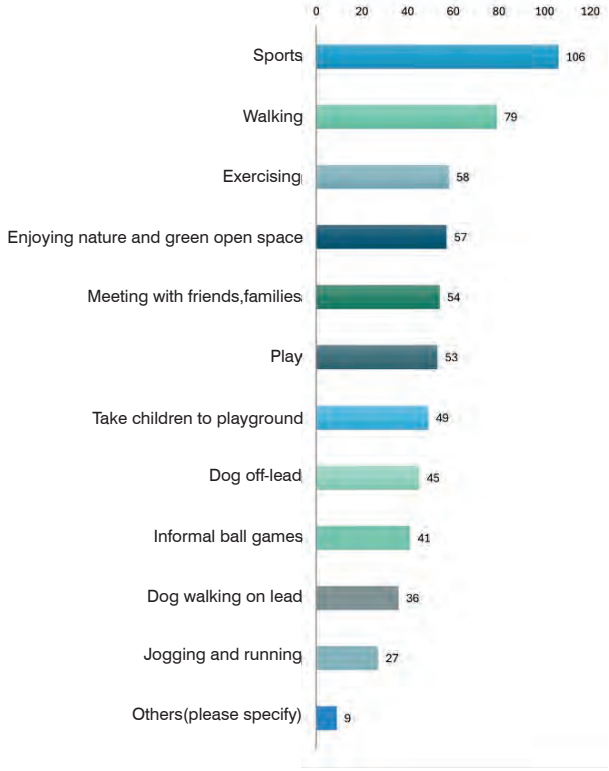
5. Key Findings

- Demographic
- Traveling method
- Park visitation and park use
- Park safety and improvements
- Other community comments

How often do you visit Billabong Park?



How do you use Billabong Park?Please select your top five below.

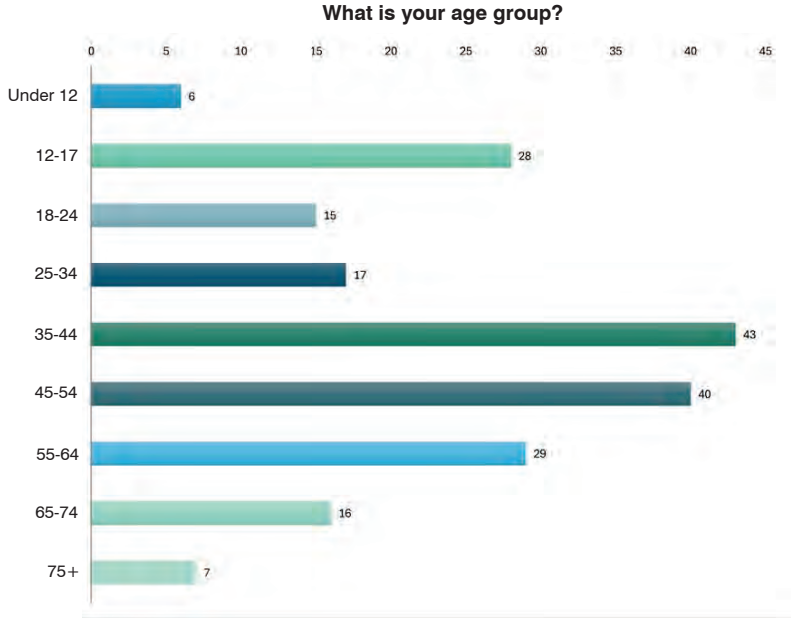


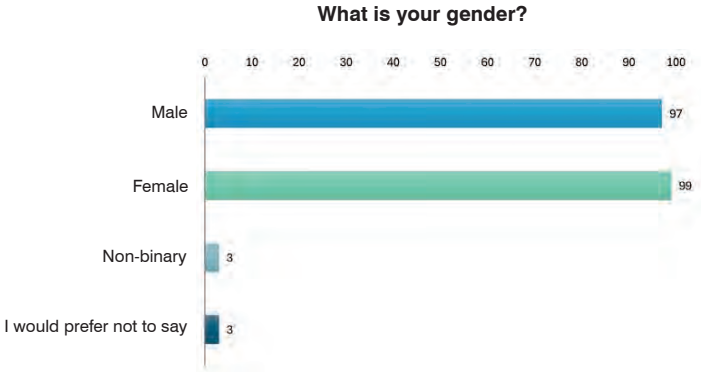
Billabong Park visitation and park use key findings

- More than 65% of the survey respondents visit Billabong Park daily or a few times a week.
- About 10% of respondents visit the park rarely or never visit the Billabong park.
- Most of respondents visit the park during weekend daytime and weekday evenings.
- Very few people choose to go to the park on weekday and weekend mornings.
- Approximately half of the respondents typically stay at the park for an hour or two, while 30% of the respondents would like to stay at the park for more than two hours.
- It is worth noting that 20% of people typically stay in the park for less than 30 minutes.
- The park has been used in a diverse range of ways, encompassing physical activity, leisure, and social interactions.
- The top five park use activities identified are: sports (106 respondents), walking (79 respondents), exercising (58 respondents), enjoying nature and green open space (57 respondents), and meeting with friends or family (54 respondents)
- The top four park facilities/features that people like to use the most are baseball diamonds (97 respondents), open grassy area (97respondents), pavilion (68 respondents), and play space (66 respondents),.
- Walking paths, trees and vegetation, and the quality and amenity of the landscape are less chosen and preferred by respondents compared to other park features.
- Out of 217 survey respondents, five reported not using the park. Reasons cited included: the features or facilities in the park are not attractive to them or their family, preference for other parks or reserve, and have never heard of the park or haven't seen it before.

54% of the survey respondents are from Vermont South, 26% of respondents live outside of City of Whitehorse.

Top three park facilities include walking path, play space and openness.





Demographic key findings

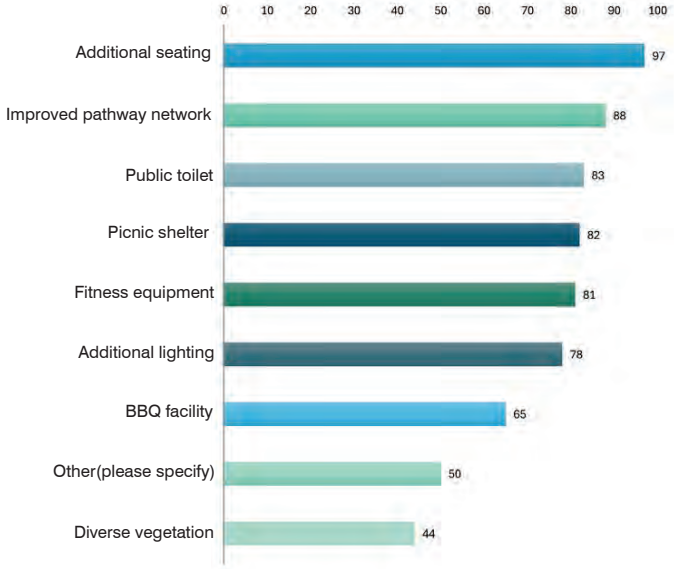
- All age groups were quite well represented in the survey responses.
- 67% of the survey respondents fall within the age group of 35 to 75. Respondents aged 12 to 34 comprise 30% of the total.
- The ratio of female to male park users is very close. Specifically, 49% of the respondents are female, while 48% are male. Additionally, 1.5% of respondents identify as non-binary, and 1.5% would prefer not to say.
- More than 50% of survey respondents reside locally in Vermont South. The remaining respondents are distributed among 43 other suburbs. Within this distribution, 19% are from other suburbs within City of Whitehorse, while 27% are from suburbs outside City of Whitehorse.
- Out of the 197 survey respondents, 9 individuals reported having a disability or impairment, 2 identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and 20 stated they are from a non-English speaking background.
- The park users represent a diverse range of backgrounds, with 69% (139 respondents) being born in Australia and 31% (63 respondents) originally from overseas.
- 82% of the respondents report that English as their main language spoken at home.
- Approximately 20% of respondents' main spoken language are not English at home. Among these individuals, around 9% speak Mandarin.

Traveling method key findings

- Half of the survey respondents drive to Billabong Park, while 45% walk.
- 44% of respondents drive less than 5km to the park. 17% of respondents need to drive more than 15km to get to the park from other suburbs.
- For the respondents who walk to the park, 68% of people walk to the park with a max 5 minutes walking distance. 10% of people walk to the park more than 10 minutes / 1.2km.
- 2.5% of the respondents travel to the park using public transport within a 15-kilometer traveling distance.
- 2.5% of the respondents jog/run to the park.
- Only one person selects cycling as their mode of transportation to the park, with the cycling distance ranging between 1.2 and 5 kilometers.

50% of survey respondents drive to Billabong Park while 45% walk

What improvements would encourage you to visit Billabong Park more often? Please choose your top five.





Park safety and improvements key findings

- 78% of the respondents feel safe in the park; however, 20% of the respondents feel somewhat safe, and 1.5% do not feel safe.
- Suggestion to improve the sense of safety in the park:

- Requests for additional lighting, CCTV cameras, and police patrols to enhance safety and security within the park. (20 respondents)
- Safety concerns due to insufficient lighting on paths, especially at night when baseball field lights are off. (4 respondents)
- Suggestions for subtle path lighting, more shades, and seats to improve comfort during the daytime. (2 respondents)
- Presence of unleashed dogs and dog droppings throughout the park, indicating a need for designated dog areas to prevent disturbance to other park users. (6 respondents)
- Desire for the park to be divided into different functional areas with more greenery and amenities, such as walking tracks, footpaths, playgrounds for older kids, basketball courts, and outdoor fitness utilities. (3 respondents)
- Safety concerns regarding baseballs flying out of the park during games. (1 respondent)
- Concerns about the park's accessibility and safety during rainy weather, suggesting the need for better drainage systems, concrete footpaths, and tracks. (5 respondents)

- The improvements that would encourage people to visit the park more often:
- Additional seating/ shaded seating areas (97 respondents)
- Improving pathway network (88 respondents)
- Public toilet (83 respondents)
- Picnic shelter (82 respondents)
- Fitness equipment (81 respondents)
- Additional lighting (78 respondents)
- BBQ facility (65 respondents)
- Diverse vegetation (44 respondents)
- Others below (50 respondents):
- Drinking fountains and water taps
- Expansion and enhancement of the playground facilities
- Additional sports facilities such as basketball courts and tennis courts
- Fenced off leash dog park
- Improved field drainage
- More parking space
- Improve safety netting for baseball fields.

Other comments

- **Amenities and Facilities:** Requests for diversifying the park's offerings to cater to a broader range of interests, including fitness equipment, skate areas, more passive recreational spaces upgraded playgrounds, basketball courts, and other sporting facilities are common. Additionally, suggestions for seating, drinking water facilities, outdoor toilets, and shade are made to enhance comfort,usability and community engagement. (36 respondents)
- **Infrastructure and Maintenance:** Suggestions for better drainage systems, maintenance of grass, seating, and waste management facilities like more bins and doggie bags are made to improve the overall infrastructure and cleanliness of the park. (18 respondents)
- **Accessibility and Inclusivity:** Calls for better accessibility for people of all abilities, including the provision of ramps, seating, and other amenities, are noted to ensure inclusivity within the park (15 respondents)
- **Dog Facilities:** A few of respondents suggested a fenced-off dog leash area(9 respondents)
- **Pathways and Accessibility**: Improved pathways and access to different areas of the park, especially to baseball diamonds, are suggested for safety reasons, particularly during wet weather. (9 respondents)
- **Safety and Security:** Concerns about safety when baseball games are ongoing, and suggestions for lighting upgrades and preventative netting for sports facilities are mentioned to address safety issues. (7 respondents)

Q: Do you have any other comments?

"If Billabong Park could have improved pathway and access to the Baseball Diamonds that would be fantastic. Walking down the hill from the car park can be dangerous even on a dry day."

"There needs to be a fenced off lead dog area. Being so close to such big roads there is no infrastructure to prevent tragic mistakes."

"I enjoy the park as it is for its green open space and the bird life it attracts. No need for further trees. Concerned about the park area being used for illegal drug related activities if public toilets are added. Already have concerns about this. Dumping of rubbish in the car park is also an issue."

"Make the park some section for activities, some section for dogs, some section for quiet runners and joggers, and some section with more greenery."

"Lights around the park for sport and recreational walkers."

"Billabong Park is an oasis in this part of Vermont Sth. It aids my health and well-being. Many persons,communities use this park. There is s Kinder adjacent, and a primary, so all age groups utilise this space. It makes the suburb desirable to others. It has birdlife like parrots in the trees. The more built up the suburb becomes, the more valuable this space is for residents and visitors. It is great to see people from the baseball clus using it. The building there is great and blends in well with its surrounding."

"I regularly visit Billabong Park as part of the Forest Hill Eagles Baseball Club in Winter and Blackburn Baseball Club in Summer. I really enjoy that the park is in easy walking distance from my house and the majority of it is flat. It would be great if there was an upgraded playground near the Clubrooms and better line of sight from the clubrooms to the baseball diamond. The proposed new batting cages will be brilliant. If it was possible a public toilet would also be great for people using the park to exercise."

Q: Do you have any suggestion to improve the sense of safety in the park? (e.g. Passive surveillance, additional lighting etc.)

"It is crucial to have a clean and safe walk way to travel through the park from Weeden Drive to Burwood highway. Currently there is no clear foot path especially for wet weather."

"Dogs running everywhere without leash, dog droppings everywhere, please make a certain area for the dogs, so will not disturb other park users. The park need to be set with different functional areas, with more greenery."

"More lighting at night time."

"I feel safe in the daytime. More shades and seats here and there."

"Larger playground for older kids, add basketball court, outdoor fitness utilities under cover, restrict baseball area."

"Have fences on the side of Burwood Highway."

Key Stakeholder Engagement

- A meeting was held with two members of the Blackburn Baseball Club and Forest Hill Eagles Baseball Club on the 22nd of February 2024.
- The discussion focused on the key stakeholders aspirations for the site and long term requirements for the growing clubs. The clubs also have some immediate concerns that require attention.
- Key Feedback and upgrades required:
- Upgrade Path Network due to wash out and compliance issues.
- The current path network is inadequate
- Currently no path connection from the Carpark to the baseball diamond
- The clubs experience drainage issues in the winter season.
- Pebbles drop to the centre of the baseball field due to the surface runoff
- Currently no emergency vehicle access, to be considered in the future
- Required additional seating with some to be included under the shade
- Incorporate potential amphitheatre/ tiered seating in front of the pavilion
- Current project includes relocation of the practice nets
- Walk track/ loop
- Potential for wayfinding and signage
- Site-wide flood and pooling issues
- The small baseball field is unusable during the flood season (June/July)
- require drainage for the baseball fields
- Additional lighting to meet best baseball standards another 2 or 3 lights for baseball fields
- No lighting park-wide and should be considered along path and in the car park
- Review and assess if the Car Park can be reconfigured to provide more car parking space
- Amenities & Facilities
- change rooms for all genders are required to support club growth
- more rubbish/recycling bins
- a public toilet should be considered
- Pavilion renovation – kitchen area inadequate, more rooms and space required to support the clubs growth
- Planters in front of the pavilion – currently no plants and it’s not maintained by the Council
- Community
- Require social space and recreation for diverse age groups
- BBQ facilities
- Shelter
- Rubbish bins and Dog poop bags

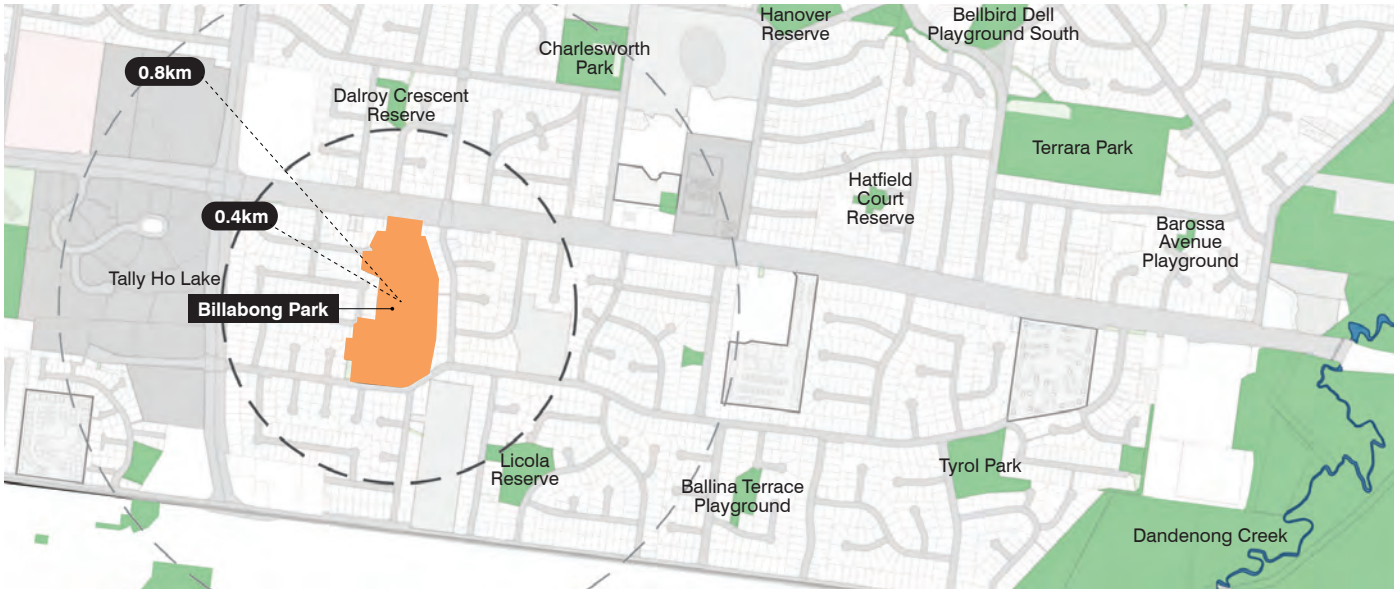
B. SITE ANALYSIS

Green Space

Billabong Park is a municipal open space with two baseball fields, making it a major destination for baseball players in Whitehorse City. There are three RESERVE within a 0.8-kilometer walking catchment radius, collectively catering to the needs of the local community.

Legend

- Site
- Green Space
- Walking Distance

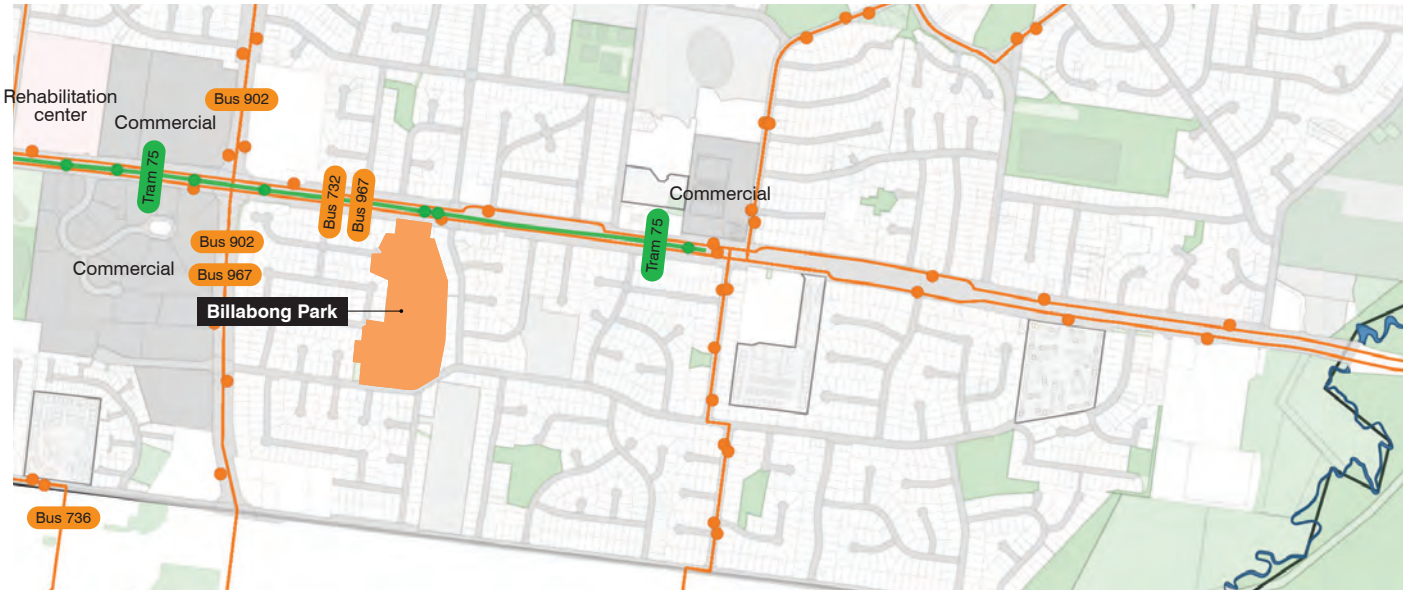


Public Transport

Billabong Park is connected to both bus and tram networks, with stops located to the north of the park.

Legend

- Site
- Tram Stop
- Bus Stop



Zoning

To the north of Billabong Park along the Burwood Highway lies the Residential Growth Zone. The park is surrounded by Residential Zones to the west, east, and south. Additionally, Billabong Park is in close proximity to the Commercial Zone, situated to the west and northeast.

Legend

- Site
- Commercial Zone
- Residential Zone
- Industrial Zone
- Public Conservation and Resource Zone
- Public Park and Recreation Zone
- Public Use Zone - Service and Utility
- Public Use Zone - Education
- Public Use Zone - Local Government
- Residential Growth Zone
- Transport Zone
- Health

SBO and LSIO Overlays

Legend

- Site
- SBO Special Building Overlays
- LSIO Land Subject to Inundation Overlays

N

SCALE: 1 in 16000





Existing Site Aerial

Billabong Park, covering approximately 6 hectares, is situated Burwood Highway to the north and Weeden Drive to the south, with residential areas to the west and east. The site spans approximately 400 meters in length and 180 meters in width. While primarily serving as a retarding basin for Melbourne Water, the Park also offers structured recreation facilities, including two baseball diamonds serviced by the existing pavilion.

N

NOT IN SCALE



Legend

Site

NOT IN SCALE

Existing Site Photos

01 - The view from the south of Billabong Park, featuring the baseball diamond, fence, practice net, pavilion, and embankment adjacent to Weeden Drive.

02 - The view to the Pavilion, which currently serves two baseball clubs.

03 - The view from the north of Billabong Park, featuring the second baseball diamond and the practice field adjacent to Burwood Highway.

04 - The view to the Practice net. The new Practice net is set to be relocated and installed next to the pavilion.

05 - The existing playground is located to the north of the Billabong Park, connected to the Allawah Court.

06 - The existing drain links to the retarding basin spillway located to the north of the Billabong Park.

07 - A pathway situated at the top the embankment connects to the car park and Weeden Drive.



01 Baseball Diamond 1



Key Plan



02 Pavilion



03 Baseball Diamond 2



04 Practice net



05 Playground



06 Drain



07 Retarding Basin Embankment

Views

The site offers a variety of viewing experiences:



An expensive view to the retarding basin, providing insight into the general arrangement of the park.



A view outside of the fence looks into the small Baseball field with the baseball field lighting in the foreground.



The majority of trees are clustered around the edge of the retarding basin.



The view captures the vastness of the baseball field and showcases the relationship between the baseball diamond fence and the park.

N

NOT IN SCALE

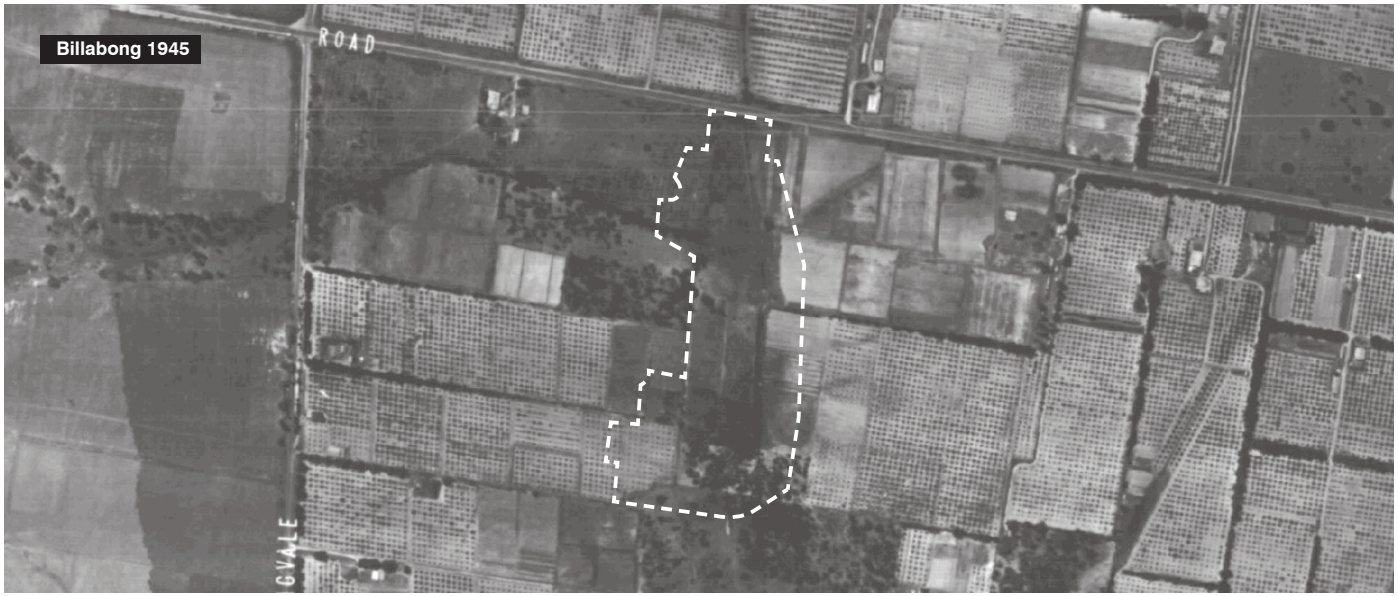


NOT IN SCALE

Billabong Park 1945 vs. Today

The 1945 aerial imagery depicts Billabong Park as a former farmland, with a creek originating from the west and a billabong present in the area. Dark pixels on the map indicate the presence of trees.

The 2024 aerial imagery shows that Billabong Park is now surrounded by residential development. The layout of Burwood Highway and Springvale Road remains consistent with that of 1945. However, the drainage line no longer exists, stopping west of Springvale Road.





Topography

The topography of Billabong Park is characterized by low-lying areas of land. There is a general elevation difference of 7 meters, ranging from the highest point at 90 meters in the west to the lowest point at 83 meters in the south, located at the toe of the embankment. The embankment features a 1 in 3 fall gradient.

N

NOT IN SCALE



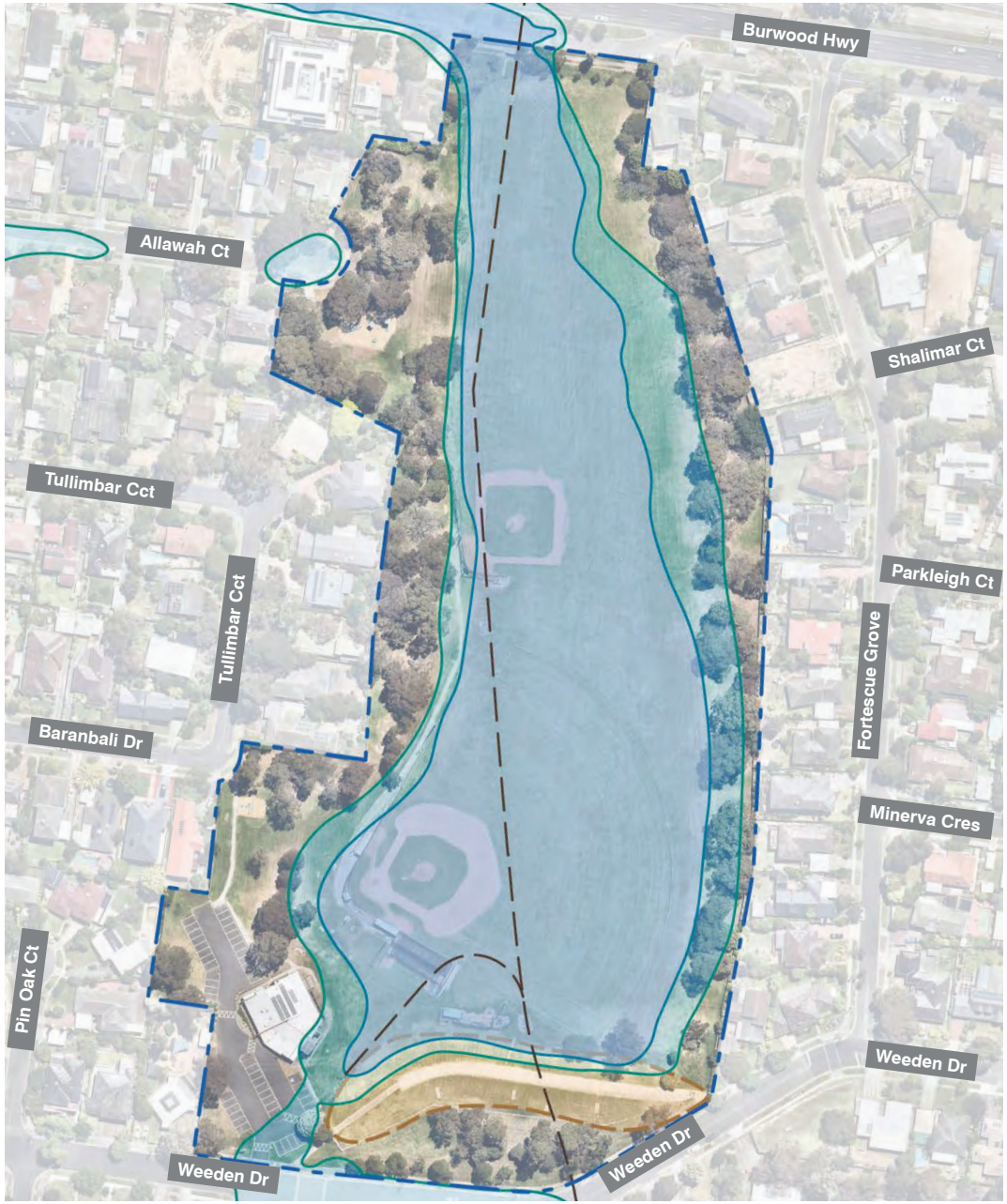
Legend

Site

NOT IN SCALE

Flood/Drainage

Billabong Park serves as a retarding basin managed by Melbourne Water, intended to temporarily store stormwater during periods of heavy rainfall. The diagram illustrates that Billabong Park is engineered to accommodate flooding up to a 1 in 100 year flood event.



Legend

- Site
- Flood Extent 10PCT (1 in 10 year flood)
- Flood Extent 1PCT (1 in 100 year flood)
- Embankment
- Spillway

N

NOT IN SCALE

Existing Trees

The trees within Billabong Park are primarily planted around the site edges, particularly high points. Trees consist mainly of native with a mix of species, and vary in age. While the majority of trees are low risk, a few trees are assessed to be at moderate risk with maintenance work required.



Legend

- Site
- Existing Trees

Environmental Vegetation Classes (EVC)

Billabong Park is host to two Environmental Vegetation Classes (EVC):

EVC 127 Valley Heathy Forest: Defined as an area of a low, open forest to 15 m tall with a sedgy/ grassy understorey with a component of small ericoid shrubs and grass-trees. Soil and moisture factors are critical in delimiting the vegetation.

EVC 126 Swampy Riparian Complex: Swampy Riparian Complex includes a range of EVCs and is representative of vegetation typical of swampy or waterlogged, low gradient drainage-lines. The EVC may include components of Creekline Herb-rich Woodland, Gully Woodland, Shrubby Gully Forest, Fern Swamp, Swampy Riparian Woodland, Swampy Woodland and Swamp Scrub. Swampy Riparian Complex is typically a woodland to 15 m tall or forest to 20 m tall.

The EVC can serve as a guide for future planting design proposal, ensuring alignment with the objectives of the Whitehorse City Council.

N

NOT IN SCALE



Legend

Site

PRE - 1750

EVC 127: Valley Heathy Forest

EVC 126: Swampy Riparian Complex

Spatial Zoning

Billabong Park is comprised with various functional zones:

- The first Baseball diamond, enclosed by a fence, with a practice net and storage facilities located to the south, along with sports lighting.
- The second baseball diamond is enclosed by a fence only along the western side, adjacent to the pathway.
- Two playgrounds: one located to the south with a single wing, and another with more comprehensive facilities situated to the north of the park, adjacent to Allawah Court.
- The Pavilion, positioned to the south next to the car park, primarily utilised by two baseball clubs.
- Vegetation surrounding the retarding basin, predominantly consisting of trees and grass.
- An embankment situated at the south of the site, with pathways connecting to the car park and Weeden Drive.

Legend

Site

N

NOT IN SCALE



N

NOT IN SCALE

Access/Circulation

There are five key access points to Billabong Park: two from Burwood Highway to the north, one from Allawah Court and Baranabli Drive to the west, one from Parkleigh Court to the east, and two access points from Weeden Drive to the south. Predominant traffic access is from the car park adjacent to Weeden Drive.

Currently, the site lacks formal circulation pathways. There is one pedestrian path along the baseball field to the west and another pathway along the car park and pavilion. Informal circulation patterns are observed on-site to meet the needs of park users



Legend

- Site
- Pedestrian Entry
- Pedestrian Path (formalized)
- Informal Path (observed)
- Emergency Entry

NOT IN SCALE

Edge Conditions

The diagram demonstrates the presence of both closed and open edges on the sides of Billabong Park. The edge condition analysis reviewed the potential sightline issues and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)principles. The site is characterised as open at the north and south, while relatively closed at the west and east, resulting in a small opening to the park. An active edge is observed in front of the pavilion during baseball activities.



Legend

- Site
- Open
- Close
- Permeable (Visibility)
- Active

NOT IN SCALE

Materiality

The diagram illustrates the existing material palette of Billabong Park. The majority of the site is covered by grass due to the retarding basin function. Pedestrian pathways consist of gravel and concrete, while the car park is surfaced with asphalt. The two playgrounds are surfaced with mulch, and the baseball diamonds are a mix of sand, clay, and silt.



Legend

- Site
- Concrete
- Gravel
- Mulch
- A mix of sand, clay, and silt
- Asphalt
- Furniture

Landscape Quality Summary

Billabong Park serves as a retarding basin, providing recreational space for the community during dry periods. Baseball is the primary focus of the park. Existing mature and semi-mature trees surround the park. The park lacks a defined circulation network, limiting the diversity of experiences. The main landscape experience is characterized by open grass and trees. Additionally, the two playgrounds offer limited programs and cater to young children.










T.C.L
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