

Olinda Golf Course Precinct Plan

April 2017

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Contents

	Executive Summary	iv
1.	Introduction	01
1.1	Background	01
1.2	Project Objectives	01
2	Site Context	02
2.1	Regional Overview	02
2.2	Natural Values	04
2.3	Historical Context	06
3	Strategic Context	09
3.1	Policies and Strategies	09
4	Statutory Planning Context	11
4.1	Zoning	11
4.2	Fire Management	11
5	Existing Conditions	12
5.1	Study Area	12
5.2	Primary Activity Area	13
5.3	Observations	14
5.4	Existing Geology, Landform and Topography	17
5.5	Existing Use and Recreation	17
5.6	Cycling and Walking	17
6	Community Consultation	19
6.1	Consultation phase 1	19
6.2	Consultation phase 2	21
6.3	Consultation phase 3	21
7.	Vision	22
8.	Olinda Golf Course Precinct Plan	24
8.1	Precinct Plan Overview	26
8.2	Operational Recommendations	27
8.3	Town Walk	28
8.4	Linkages	29
8.5	National Rhododendron Gardens and RJ Hamer Arboretum	29
8.6	Olinda Green	30
8.7	Olinda Hall	31
8.8	Nature-based Playspace	32
8.9	Lower Terraces	33
8.10	Sport and Recreation	35
9.	Management and Operations	37
10.	Staging and implementation	39
	References	41

Appendices

A	The Olinda Mechanics Hall	44
B	Strategic Context	46
C	Precinct Zoning Overlay	48
D	Phase 1 Consultation Survey Results	49
E	Phase 2 Consultation Survey Results	50
F	Phase 3 Consultation Survey Results	52





Executive Summary

Vision

To retain the qualities that contribute to the unique character and setting of Olinda. To integrate open space connections and facilities within the precinct to support the needs of the broader Olinda and Hilltop communities.

Background

The Olinda Golf Course has a long and interesting history that has directly contributed to the wider Olinda Township. Located 50km east of Melbourne, the Olinda Golf Course dates back to the 1950s where it was originally constructed as a small nine-hole course catering for recreational golfers.

Recently considered unsustainable as an 18-hole golf course, Parks Victoria has prepared this Precinct Plan to guide the future function, development and management of the former Olinda Golf Course site.

The picturesque site is directly adjacent to the National Rhododendron Gardens and the RJ Hamer Arboretum. The 34-hectare golf course also forms part of the wider Olinda Township and the Dandenong Ranges National Park. The site currently provides local residents and visitors with unstructured active and low intensity recreation opportunities.

Objectives

The Precinct Plan, developed in consultation with the community and stakeholders, guides the future of the former Olinda Golf Course site over the next 5- 10 years.

Key objectives include:

- Conserve, protect and interpret the natural, cultural and historical values of the site;
- Improve connectivity and circulation;
- Improve the visitors experience through the design and implementation of engaging recreation opportunities that provide meaningful connections to the surrounding environment;
- Focus on recreational and tourism opportunities to benefit the local community and the public;
- Define key access and orientation points, services and facilities of the site;
- Explore options for dog walking;
- Explore potential commercial opportunities;
- Examine the active and low intensity recreational opportunities;

- Provide a feasible and sustainable proposal that balances the pressures of visitation with the need to protect flora and fauna;
- Provide a precinct plan that is financially and environmentally responsible and sustainable;
- Employ Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD), Crime Prevention through environmental design (CPTED) and safety in design principles and consider the impacts of climate change;
- Provide a feasible and sustainable proposal that provides a high quality visitor experience, while balancing the pressures of visitation with the need to protect flora and fauna; and
- Provide a precinct plan that is financially and environmentally responsible and sustainable.

Community and Stakeholder Consultation

Three phases of community and stakeholder consultation activities were undertaken in the preparation of the Precinct Plan. Engagement activities included drop-in sessions, online surveys, meetings and written correspondence.

The engagement activities were well attended with approximately 120 people attending the drop-in events during the first round of consultation and a total of 147 online surveys were received. Phase 2 of the consultation saw approximately 95 people attend drop-in events with 413 online surveys received.

Community and stakeholder participation was pivotal in developing a vision, identifying issues and opportunities, proposing recommended actions, and outlining the priorities in the Precinct Plan.

Precinct Plan Overview

The following recommendations have been established during the development of the Olinda Precinct Plan:

- Improve pedestrian connections through the creation of a Town Walk and Improving connections and wayfinding between existing trails and paths.
- New entrance off Olinda-Monbulk Road and formalisation of the existing car park to service the Olinda Green.
- Upgrade the existing Rhododendron Gardens car park and vehicular connection from the Olinda Green Precinct through to Georgian Road.
- Establish a flat open grass area suitable for use as a public market, event space, junior sport and training. This will include construction of a new regional scale, nature-based playspace to cater for a range of ages and abilities.
- Investigate relocating the Olinda Hall next to the proposed Olinda Green and playspace which may also include a commercial offer such as a cafe. Retain the existing shelter and establish a destination within the park. This could include an amphitheatre or a lookout.
- Create a designated dog off lead zone within the golf course site. In addition, modify the lower sections of the former golf course to maintain landscape values and viewsheds and improve pedestrian access and facilities whilst protecting sensitive environments.
- Upgrade the Olinda Recreation Reserve to include an additional multi-use court; upgraded cricket nets; relocated the vehicle entry and exit points to improve circulation; and the construction of disabled car parks.
- Realign part of Chalet Road to improve connections between the Olinda pool, the Olinda Community House and the former golf course.

The Olinda Precinct Plan also recommends the following operational items for action:

- Fire Management: Retain areas of mown grass to continually provide a fire break Investigate the implementation of a fire refuge or place of last resort.
- Universal Access: Employ universal design wherever possible, especially in high use areas.
- Consolidate Existing Buildings: Consolidate or adaptively reuse existing buildings.
- Park facilities: Update existing park facilities including seats, shelters, public art and barbecue facilities.
- Traffic Management Plan: Prepare a Traffic Management Study in collaboration with VicRoads.
- Complete an Environmental Risk Assessment for the precinct to guide the next stage of planning and implementation.

Implementation

The actions identified in this plan form the basis for the programming of works. This plan outlines a hierarchy for implementation and the potential implementation costs. The action items prioritised for implementation in the short term include trail linkages, a new entrance to the National Rhododendron Gardens, the establishment of the Olinda Green, the construction of a regional scale, nature-based playspace and building consolidation. The cost for these works is estimated to be in the order of \$6-\$9 million.

Fully implemented, this precinct plan will provide a range of new and improved facilities, experiences and recreational opportunities to benefit both locals and visitors whilst retaining the environmental values of the precinct.



Introduction

1.1 Background

The Olinda Golf Course has a long and interesting history that has directly contributed to the wider Olinda Township. Located 50km east of Melbourne, the Olinda Golf Course dates back to the 1950s where it was originally constructed as a small nine-hole course catering for local recreational golfers. The picturesque location sites the golf course directly adjacent to the National Rhododendron Gardens and the RJ Hamer Arboretum. The golf course also forms part of the wider Dandenong Ranges National Park.

The Olinda Golf Club was established in 1989 and over time was extended from the nine-hole recreational course to the competition 18-hole layout visible today. In 2009, a report was commissioned by Parks Victoria to explore the commercial viability of the land as a golf course. The report concluded that the site was unsustainable as an 18-hole golf course due to the water storage capacity and the inadequate infrastructure required to service the site. In 2012, the site ceased operation as a golf course and was subsequently opened to the public as an informal parkland.

Parks Victoria manages the former Olinda Golf Course, a 34-hectare area of open space reserved under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 for public recreation. The majority of the former Olinda Golf Course is zoned Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) with a large section of the site also designated as a fire break that protects the township from the threat of wildfire in the summer months. The site currently provides the local residents and visitors with unstructured active and passive recreation opportunities.

1.2 Project objectives

The purpose of this project is to develop a precinct plan that guides the future function, development and management of the former Olinda Golf Course site over the next 5- 10 years. The plan has been developed in consultation with the community and stakeholders.

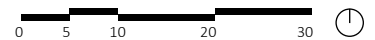
Key projects objectives include:

- Conserve, protect and interpret the natural, cultural and historical values of the site;
- Improve connectivity and circulation;
- Improve the visitors experience through the design and implementation of engaging recreation opportunities that provide meaningful connections to the surrounding environment;
- Focus on recreational and tourism opportunities to benefit the local community and the public;
- Define key access and orientation points, services and facilities of the site;
- Explore options for dog walking;
- Explore potential commercial opportunities for the site;
- Examine the active and passive recreational opportunities highlighted during previous community consultation;
- Provide a feasible and sustainable proposal that provides a high quality visitor experience, while balancing the pressures of visitation with the need to protect flora and fauna;
- Provide a precinct plan that is financially and environmentally responsible and sustainable; and
- Employ Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD), Crime Prevention through environmental design (CPTED) and safety in design principles and consider the impacts of climate change.

Site Context



Map 1: Distance to Melbourne centre.



2.1 Regional Overview

The Dandenong Ranges

The Dandenong Ranges is located approximately 50 kilometres east of Melbourne. It is nestled between the townships of Mount Dandenong and the villages of Kallista and Sassafras in the Dandenong Ranges. The Dandenong Ranges is a set of low mountain ranges on the eastern fringe of metropolitan Melbourne. Mount Dandenong, an extinct volcano, marks its highest point at 633 metres.

Within the Dandenong Ranges is the Dandenong Ranges National Park (DRNP). The Dandenong Ranges National Park covers an area of approximately 3,500 hectares and is renowned for its spectacular Mountain Ash (forest trees) and lush fern gullies. The unique natural beauty of the Dandenong Ranges National Park attracts a number of tourists both locally and internationally due to the park's diverse visitor offers. During a visit to the Dandenong Ranges National Park, visitors can discover a wide range of walking trails, visit historic sites, explore the beautiful parks and gardens, dine at the various tea houses and cafes, or stay in one of the many guest houses located on Mt Dandenong.

The Dandenong Ranges National Park also makes a valuable contribution to Victoria's parks system, which aims to protect viable, representative samples of the State's natural environments occurring on public land. It also

provides opportunities for visitors to enjoy and appreciate natural and cultural values and makes an important contribution to tourism and the economy of the region. The park is an important component of the landscape backdrop of metropolitan Melbourne as well as being the major landscape feature of the Dandenong Ranges. The community's attachment to landscapes in 'the Dandenongs' adds a layer of cultural value to the region's environmental significance.

The proximity of the Dandenong Ranges to the CBD along with the many parks, forests, gardens and tourist attractions make the area accessible, diverse and unique.

In the year ending December 2015, The Dandenong Ranges had received over 4 million day visitors and over 1 million overnight visitors. Key attractions within the area include the 1000 Steps walking trail, Olinda Falls, the National Rhododendron Gardens, William Ricketts Sanctuary, Sassafras, Puffing Billy Railway, Sky High Mount Dandenong and Scenic Lookout, and the Dandenong Ranges National Park.



Map 2: Project activity area - The Olinda Township.

Yarra Ranges Council

The township of Olinda is located within the municipality of the Yarra Ranges. The Yarra Ranges Council covers approximately 2,500 square kilometres and stretches from the densely populated outer eastern suburbs up into the surrounding foothills, agricultural valleys and forested areas of the Great Dividing Range. It is also the largest area of any Victorian metropolitan council with more than 55 suburbs, townships and small communities in the Yarra Ranges.

Some of Victoria's most environmentally important areas are located within the Yarra Ranges. The area is renowned for its remnant vegetation, natural beauty and diverse environments which attract both residents and tourists.

In 2013-14, tourism contributed an estimated \$1.1 billion to the Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges economy (13.4% of gross regional product) and employed approximately 10,500 people (11.7% of regional employment). In the same time, tourism in these two regions generated \$489 million in direct and \$1.6 billion in indirect tourism output, and \$2.1 billion in total tourism output highlighting the importance of tourism within the Yarra Ranges municipality.

Olinda Township

Within the hilltops of the Dandenong Ranges is Olinda, a popular tourist town known for its bed and breakfast accommodation, cafes, restaurants, antique and craft shops and its scenic beauty. The Dandenong Ranges National Park covers a significant portion of Olinda which offers residents and visitors opportunity to experience the natural offerings of the town such as the pronounced seasonality, local flora and fauna, the Olinda Falls and other various walking trails.

The two main attractions within Olinda include the National Rhododendron Gardens and the RJ Hamer Arboretum. The Rhododendron Gardens consists of 43 hectares of scenic botanic parkland and offers spectacular views of the surrounding Dandenong Ranges National Park. The RJ Hamer Arboretum houses over 150 species of native and exotic trees in plantations designed to represent forests, creating a patchwork effect over the hills. A designated lookout point and picnic area on Chalet Road offers optimal and fantastic views over the arboretum.

Situated between the gardens and the arboretum is the Olinda Golf Course, 34 hectares in size, currently offering an attractive setting for both active and passive forms of recreation.

Natural Values



Winter, Olinda Golf Course Precinct
Source: Parks Victoria

The Dandenong Ranges National Park protects a large part of the scenery and forests of the Dandenong Ranges, and forms an important link in the system of parks and reserves that stretches from Western Port to the Yarra Valley and the Yarra Ranges. The Mountain Ash forests of the park are the closest to Melbourne and the tall trees of the forests continue to be a major attraction for visitors.

2.2 Natural values

The former Olinda Golf Course sits within the Dandenong Ranges National Park, a 35,000 hectare National Park within Greater Melbourne.

Dandenong Ranges National Park makes a valuable contribution to Victoria's parks system, which aims to protect viable, representative samples of the State's natural environments occurring on public land. It also provides opportunities for visitors to enjoy and appreciate natural and cultural values and makes an important contribution to tourism and the economy of the region.

The Dandenong Ranges has diverse vegetation with 16 ecological vegetation classes (EVCs) recognised. The Olinda Golf course is home to 3 different EVCs; Wet Forest, Damp Forest and Shrubby Foothill Forest. Olinda and the national park is famous for its Mountain Ash forest, home to a wide range of wildlife.



The age of the existing forest varies, but some areas are estimated to be about 250 years old, with younger stands of trees dating from the time when sections were burnt. In recent times, much effort has been spent in preventing fires entering the Mountain Ash forest, because of the risk to life, property and environmental values. In the very long-term, with the exclusion of fire there will be little natural regrowth, and the oldest trees will gradually die and may be replaced by a different type of forest. Whilst many areas of native vegetation have been cleared as a result of development in the Dandenong Ranges, they are considered extremely significant in terms of their natural values. For example, the Dandenong Ranges National Park is home to:

- 34 species of threatened flora and fauna;
- threatened cool temperate rainforests;
- the closest Mountain Ash stand to Melbourne; and
- catchment area for the Yarra River and Dandenong Creek.

Much traditional knowledge about the use of flora of the park by Traditional Owners remains to be uncovered. Contemporary Wurundjeri people have an interest in the flora and may seek materials for purposes of teaching traditional practices to Wurundjeri children. Dandenong Ranges National Park is reserved and managed under the National Parks Act. The Act requires the protection of the natural condition of the park and its natural and other features, and, subject to this, provision for the use of the park by the public for enjoyment, recreation and education. These values are to be considered and protected as appropriate.



The Mechanics Hall, Olinda c.1914
Source: Olinda Historcial Society

2.3 Historical Context

Pre settlement- 1900

Olinda was officially settled in the 1870s however people had camped in the hills felling Mountain Ash trees from around 1850. The Dandenong Ranges was used as a main source of timber for Melbourne and hunting for game, with the townships of Mt. Dandenong, Sassafras and Olinda originally settled for this purpose. In the mid-1890s the town was formally laid out with housing and township blocks were made available for sale. Between 1893 and 1906 shops began to open and a post office, a school and churches were built. Large parcels of land between Olinda and Monbulk were cleared to allow for orchards and berry and vegetable farms. In the late 1890s, the tall forests of Olinda began to attract tourists. Guest houses were built and the township entered a prosperous period of tourism.

1900-2000

During the early 1900s, Olinda had established itself as a popular holiday destination known for tall forests, lush fern gullies, fresh air, walking trails, beautiful gardens and scenic picnic spots. This trend continued until the 1950s where the Dandenong Ranges became a fashionable spot for Melburnians to build weekenders and, later, larger more permanent residences. During this time the timber harvesting industry continued, in some areas until as late as the 1960s. Numerous tracks that were constructed by forestry operations and sites originally cleared for timber tramways and sawmills are now used by visitors for recreational activities such as picnicking, walking and experiencing the scenery and wildlife. The golf course was originally built in 1952 to act as a fire break for the Olinda Village Township. It was an 18-hole public course on over 34 hectares of Crown Land administered by Parks Victoria and leased to a private operator. The greens were constructed on a clay base, reflecting the era in which the Course was established and although the course was minimally irrigated, recycled water was available via a treatment plant on site.



Golfers on the Olinda Golf Course, 1952
Source: Olinda Historical Society

2000- today

The Olinda Golf Course was renowned for its steep fairways, scenic views, impressive Mountain Ash and beautiful rhododendrons. It was once noted by a golf professional that everyone should play Olinda Golf Course at least once in their lifetime. During its operation, the golf course and associated clubhouse offered services to golf course members and the general public. The site ceased operation as a golf course in November 2012. The Olinda Golf Course site currently provides residents with scenic open space that offers various forms of active and passive recreation.

Olinda and the Dandenong Ranges National Park remains a popular tourism destination with visitors enjoying a variety of recreational opportunities and experiencing the local flora and fauna. The Rhododendron Gardens attracts as many as 60,000 visitors annually and is seen as a key tourism attraction in the region. The population of the Hilltop Towns (comprising the localities of Kalorama, Mount Dandenong, Olinda and most of Sassafras) is 5,300 people with over 1,500 locals residing in Olinda.

Olinda Mechanics Hall

Olinda Hall (previously known as the Olinda Mechanics Institute Hall) is located on the corner of Olinda-Monbulk and Georgian Roads and was officially opened on the 20th December 1913. The Mechanics Institute in Olinda began as an assembly room and library used by the working class for evening lectures to keep up with the technical and scientific information. Gradually its function changed to a hall for social gathering and public meetings with a library and reading room containing literature and instructional material.

Now managed by the Yarra Ranges Council, Olinda Hall is a valuable community asset which continues to represent the history of the Olinda community by providing a public place of social interaction. This plan commits to showcasing the history of the Olinda Hall by ensuring it is sited within the landscape both respectfully and productively, ensuring it continues to be an iconic feature of the township for many generations to come.



Strategic Context

3.1 Policies and Strategies

There are existing policies and strategies that affect the future of The Dandenong Ranges, Olinda, the Golf Course Precinct and surrounding destinations. The following is a summary of relevant documents reviewed in the process of preparing the Olinda Golf Course Precinct Plan:

- Recreation and Open Space Plan, Yarra Ranges Shire Council, 2013-2023;
- Environment Strategy, Yarra Ranges Council, 2015-2025;
- Vision 2020 Community Plan, Yarra Ranges Council, 1999 and 2008 review;
- Economic Development Strategy, Yarra Ranges Council, 2012-2022;
- Dandenong Ranges National Park Management Plan, Parks Victoria, 2006; and
- Dandenong Ranges Gardens Strategic Management Plan, Parks Victoria, 2014.

The Council's Recreation and Open Space Strategy provides a framework to guide policy and service provisions to create healthy and active communities.

Yarra Ranges Council's Environment Strategy outlines 6 key goals for environmental program planning and decision making for the next ten years.

The Vision 2020 Community Plan provides the Shire of Yarra Ranges with a framework to guide future decision making, to ensure a healthy and sustainable future for the community.

Yarra Ranges Council regards economic development as a key driver of community wellbeing. The Economic Development Strategy presents Council's policy in regards to sustainable economic development.

Dandenong Ranges National Park Management Plan is a strategic guide for future management of the Dandenong Ranges National Park. The plan establishes how Parks Victoria will protect the area's natural and cultural values and provide the services and facilities to help visitors to enjoy, appreciate and understand the park.

The Dandenong Ranges Gardens Strategic Management Plan establishes a strategic framework and management direction for the gardens to enhance their horticultural, cultural and visitor values.

Refer to Appendix B for a summary of key strategic documents relating to the precinct and their relevance to the Olinda Golf Course Precinct Plan.

The precinct plan needs to be consistent with all adopted strategies of Parks Victoria and Yarra Ranges Council. It will also provide the framework for future master plans, works programs, operational recommendations and management strategies.



Statutory Planning Context

4.1 Zoning

The Yarra Ranges Planning Scheme provides a clear and consistent framework within which decisions about the use and development of land can be made; expresses state, regional, local and community expectations for land use; and guides for the implementation of State, regional and local policies affecting land use and development.

Under the Planning Scheme, areas of land in the precinct are zoned as follows:

- Green Wedge A Zone
- Green Wedge B Zone
- Public Park and Recreation Zone
- Public Conservation and Resource Zone
- Public Use Zone
- Commercial zone
- Mixed Use Zone

The majority of the study area is zoned Public Park and Recreation or Green Wedge.

The Public Park and Recreation Zone recognises areas for public recreation and open space, and protects and conserves areas of significance, while providing for commercial uses where appropriate.

Green Wedge zones recognise, protect and conserve green wedge land for its agricultural, environmental, historic, heritage, landscape, recreational and tourism opportunities. They encourage use and development that is consistent with sustainable land management practices whilst protecting and enhancing the cultural heritage, biodiversity and character of the area.

Significant parts of the study area are zoned for Public Conservation and Resource. This zone aims to protect and conserve the natural environment and natural processes for their historic, scientific, landscape, habitat or cultural values, and provide facilities which assist in public education and interpretation of the natural environment with minimal degradation of the natural environment or natural processes.

Within the study area, the National Rhododendron Gardens are also covered by the following overlays:

- Environmental significance
- Heritage
- Significant landscape

The Environmental Significance Overlay identifies areas where the development of land may be affected by environmental constraints and ensures that development is compatible with identified environmental values.

The Heritage Overlay conserves and enhances heritage places, and elements contributing to the significance of heritage places, which are of natural or cultural significance. It also ensures that development does not adversely affect the significance of heritage places.

The significant landscape overlay identifies significant landscapes and conserves and enhances the character of such landscapes.

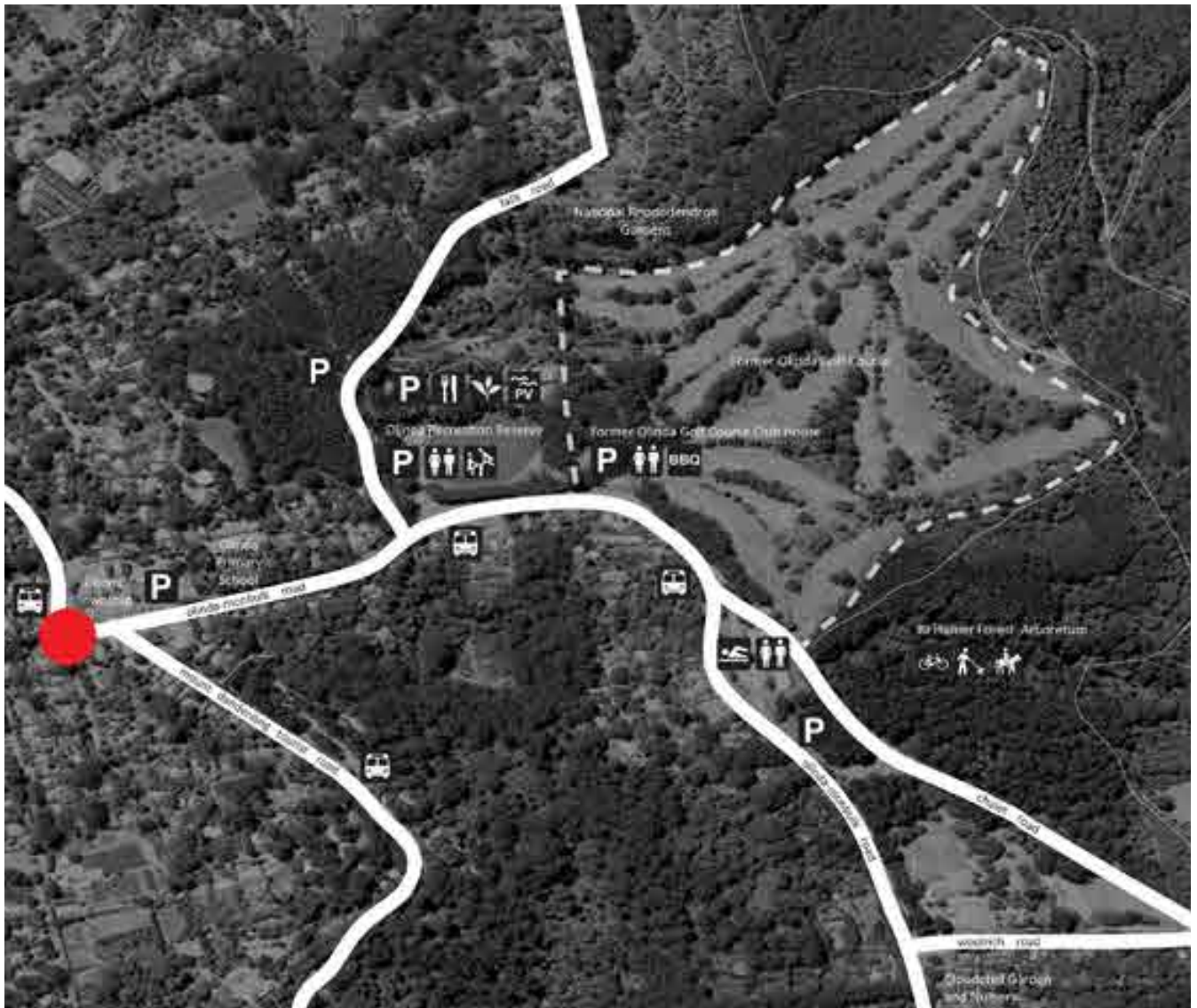
4.2 Fire management

The Dandenong Ranges has extensive stands of forest and woodland and is vulnerable to fire, particularly on the northern and western faces of the mountain. Due to the fact that urbanised areas surround the park, there is an increased risk of fires and greater potential threat to life and property. On average, wildfires occur in the park less than once every five years.

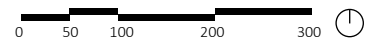
Visitor evacuation plans have been developed for emergency situations and these need to be regularly reviewed and updated where necessary. Emergency response plans are coordinated with local government plans.

Parks Victoria takes a leading role in fire protection and management in Dandenong Ranges National Park by implementing the fuel reduction program and other fire prevention works such as slashing. Many of the sites in the study area play an important role in fire protection, particularly RJ. Hamer Arboretum and the Olinda Golf Course, by acting as fuel breaks to the Olinda community. Refer to Appendix C for the extent of the fire buffer to the Olinda Golf Course. Existing and proposed maintenance tracks, grassed areas and other fire breaks are important aspects to be considered throughout the Olinda Golf Course Precinct.

Existing Conditions



Map 3: Study Area.



5.1 Study Area

The Olinda Golf Course Precinct contains a number of important facilities ranging from local community facilities to unstructured recreational open space to high-use tourist attractions.

The wider study area includes a series of cafes, restaurants, speciality stores and retail shops which are located at the junction of Mount Dandenong Tourist Road and Olinda Monbulk Road. The Olinda Township is a popular tourist destination which hosts both local, interstate and international visitors who are looking to experience the Dandenong Ranges region while taking in the vast gardens, artists galleries and retreats which are embedded in some of Victoria's most unique forested environments.

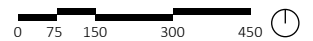
The Olinda Township also has a series of community services including a small primary school, a police and fire station and a municipal community house / hall for public events.

Legend

	car park		cafe / restaurant
	bus stop		nursery
	toilets		horse riding
	playground		bbq / picnic
	swimming pool		dog on lead area
	bike paths		parcs victoria office



Map 4: Primary activity area.



5.2 Primary Activity Area

The primary activity area defined by this project is the land occupied by the Olinda Recreation Reserve, through to the Olinda Golf Course and the existing Olinda Pool and Community House. The study area is located only 200m south of the Olinda Township accessible via Olinda-Monbulk Road and the roadside pedestrian walkway.

The Olinda Recreation Reserve is accessible via two entry points off Olinda-Monbulk Road. The reserve houses the main sporting precinct featuring a football oval, a netball court, a children’s playground and a sporting pavilion. The reserve is supported by a moderate size car park. Located in the south / west corner of the precinct is Olinda Hall. Olinda Hall is a civic space open to the community for events, parties and functions. There is a kindergarten and toy library currently operating from the hall which is serviced by a small car park of three spaces. Due to the limited space available, there are currently no opportunities for this

service to expand.

The Golf Course site is serviced by a small car park, accessed from Olinda-Monbulk Road. There is a picnic shelter and barbeque close to the car park. The old golf course club house still remains, but is closed to the public.

Further south along the Olinda-Monbulk Road is the Olinda Pool and Community House. This site is surrounded by two feeder roads- Olinda Monbulk Road and Chalet Road. In terms of community facilities, the Olinda Pool is a small 25m facility recently upgraded thereby securing its long term future. There is also a kiosk and change facilities which function during operating hours. The Community House operated by the Yarra Ranges Council is home to a number of community based services. The Community House and pool are serviced by a large car park and link to the wider regional pedestrian and cycling networks.

5.3 Observations





Rhododendron Garden entrance



National Rhododendron Gardens



Playground



Existing community facility



View of entrance to golf course



Olinda public pool



RJ Hamer Arboretum viewing point



Arboretum car park and picnic area



5.4 Existing Geology, landform & topography

The Dandenong Ranges are the remains of an ancient volcano. Weathering and the action of streams have eroded the old volcano over time to the extent that it is largely unrecognisable today. The whole block is detached from other mountain ranges and it is of an earlier volcanic derivation than most other volcanic areas in Victoria. About 300 million years ago, over a period of time, a large volcano erupted near the present township of Olinda, creating four distinct lava flows. The Ranges that resulted from these geological episodes rise steeply from the plain stretching to the west.

The Dandenong Ranges have a significantly higher rainfall than the surrounding areas. This has had a marked influence on the development of landforms and has allowed the development of Mountain Ash forest in the deep soils of the moist, sheltered south facing slopes.

The topography of the land within the Dandenong Ranges and the study area is a distinguishing feature. At 569m above sea level, Olinda is highest village in the Dandenong Ranges. A ridge line running approximately the line of Olinda-Monbulk Road provides the study site with a relatively flat area on which a number of structures, infrastructure and other development can occur. Beyond the ridge line, the site begins to slope away revealing steep landforms as can be seen at the former golf course site.

5.5 Existing use and recreation

Within the study area there are a number of existing uses and recreation opportunities. These include the following:

- Olinda township shopping and commercial precinct
- Olinda Recreation Reserve. The Reserve is used by football, netball and cricket teams. The pavilion is also used by community groups and for public meetings.
- Olinda Hall
- National Rhododendron Gardens, which includes walking paths and picnic areas as well as having facilities for student groups, volunteers and staff. A cafe and function centre are also located in the gardens and a retail shop operates at the entrance to the gardens.

- Olinda Public Pool, which operates during summer.
- Olinda Community House
- RJ Hamer Arboretum, which includes walking tracks, picnic areas and viewing points.
- Dandenong Ranges National Park, which includes walking and mountain biking paths.

5.6 Cycling and walking

Walking is a very popular activity for visitors and residents. The DRNP has an excellent network of both short and longer distance walking tracks. Roads and tracks currently provide access for management vehicles throughout the park however they are also available for walking. Walking tracks are to be maintained in good condition to make them accessible to all users without detriment to the environment.

In recent years trail connections have been constructed along roadways to link destinations and towns within the Dandenong Ranges. Additional work is being undertaken by Council and VicRoads to expand these connections.

DRNP provides extensive opportunities for cycling and mountain bike riding. These are permitted on approximately 70 km of tracks in the park, including all roads open to visitors' vehicles and most roads open to management motor vehicles only, and a few walking tracks. Cycling is not permitted on most walking tracks to protect sensitive environmental areas where there is risk of erosion and vegetation loss through off-track riding.

Providing improved signage and information associated with walking and cycling tracks will enhance visitors' ability to enjoy the park and use it to improve their health and wellbeing.



Community Consultation

Consultation overview

Consultation sessions were held with the local community and stakeholders between April and December 2016 to explore any issues within the golf course precinct and to inform the direction of the precinct plan.

The groups engaged in consultation were:

- Primary stakeholders
- Clubs and tenants
- Parks Victoria Staff
- Community/ local residents
- Friends and Community Groups
- Local and State Government Agencies

The participation of community groups and individuals in the park's management is pivotal in effective long-term planning, use and care of the precinct's values. Community groups, particularly local groups and user groups, assist in the early detection of threats, bring enthusiasm, and provide knowledge and skills that assist management and greatly benefit the park.

Dandenong Ranges National Park is notable for the close involvement of community groups in park management. There are more than 20 'Friends' and community groups who take an active interest in the park. Many of the groups have had a long-term commitment to programs in weed control and wildlife monitoring.

Parks Victoria encourages and supports these groups with financial grants, training, equipment and technical advice. Parks Victoria is keen to establish ongoing working partnerships with such groups, particularly the relevant Indigenous communities, and to involve them in achieving shared goals for the park.

6.1 Consultation phase 1

Activities during the first phase of consultation included two drop-in events, a survey and email correspondence. The objectives of the initial consultation process were to raise awareness about the commencement of the project, provide opportunities for initial input and help identify issues, ideas and opportunities for further planning consideration.

Approximately 120 people attended the drop-in events on the 19th and 20th of April 2016. Parks Victoria together with the Yarra Ranges Council hosted two information booths providing the community the opportunity to meet with members of the project team and the steering committee to discuss the development of the Olinda Golf Course Precinct Plan. The sessions were well attended and provided the project team with a number of recommendations.

A total of 147 responses were received at the consultation events or via the online survey. Results from the online survey are included in Appendix D.

The following key themes and ideas emerged from the initial consultation:

- Dog off lead areas with associated facilities and amenities
- Active recreational opportunities such as walking paths, mountain bike trails, sports ovals, netball and basketball courts, bmx/skate park, golf and open space areas for unstructured ball sports
- Improved pedestrian connectivity including additional and improved paths and wayfinding
- Nature-based playground
- All abilities access to and throughout the golf course precinct
- Leaving the site as untouched open space and retaining the connection with the surrounding Rhododendron Gardens and the Arboretum
- Community facilities such as picnic facilities, barbecues and toilets
- Market and event space
- Commercial enterprise such as a café, social enterprise, cultural centre, art studio, tourist office or community hub

Other uses such as a community garden, fire refuge, mini zoo, sculpture park, or artists compound were also raised.



6.2 Consultation phase 2

The objectives of phase 2 of consultation process were to provide opportunities for community feedback on issues and opportunities identified, provide input to the vision for the precinct and on potential land uses and locations. Activities during this phase of consultation included a drop-in event at the Olinda Hall, a survey and email correspondence.

Approximately 95 people attended the drop-in event in July 2016. Parks Victoria together with the Yarra Ranges Council hosted the day providing the community the opportunity to discuss the development of the precinct plan.

A total of 413 responses were received at the consultation events or via the online survey. Results from the survey are included in Appendix E.

A number of key themes similar to those raised during phase 1 of consultation emerged during the consultation including:

- Dog off lead areas
- Active recreational opportunities
- Improved pedestrian connectivity
- Nature-based playground
- All Abilities Access

A number of ideas were presented during this phase of consultation for the community and stakeholders to provide feedback on. The following is a list of the ideas that were supported by the community providing the consultant team with actions to investigate for the precinct plan:

- A market and event space
- A playground suitable for all ages and abilities amongst the trees near Olinda-Monbulk Road
- Improved walking tracks within the precinct and along roads
- A new entrance to the National Rhododendron Gardens from Olinda-Monbulk Road
- Consolidation of existing buildings within the precinct
- The proposed realignment of Chalet Road
- A suitable commercial operation (such as a cafe)

A number of ideas required further investigation before including recommendations in the precinct plan:

- A viewing platform or similar within the golf course
- Mountain bike trails
- Multi-use ovals and courts on the golf course
- A dog off-lead area in the lower portion of the site

For further detail regarding results from Phase 2 of consultation and their impact on the precinct plan refer to Appendix E.

6.3 Consultation phase 3

Activities conducted for the third phase of consultation included a drop-in information session, one on one meetings with key stakeholders and community groups, and email correspondence. The objectives of this final round of consultation were to further analyse issues raised in the initial engagement programs while also confirming key visitor opportunities for the former golf course precinct.

A total of 274 responses were received at the consultation event and via the project email. Key themes derived from this stage of consultation included:

- Walking / Nature appreciation
- Active sport
- Picnicking
- Nature-based play
- Site for events
- Exercise
- Environmental protection
- Improved traffic management
- Consideration for the siting of facilities
- Commercial operation at old clubhouse
- Multi-use playing facilities
- Improved signage and interpretation
- Lookout
- Improved links to the township

Of the ideas presented during this phase of consultation, most were supported, including:

- The Olinda Green Precinct which caters for public events, junior sport and training requirements
- Nature-based playground
- A multi-use oval and courts to the precinct
- A small scale commercial operation (such as a cafe/kiosk)
- The realignment of Chalet Road to improve safety and assist with connecting the Olinda Pool to the wider Golf Course Precinct

There was both support for and opposition to a dog off lead area, and a viewing platform, within the golf course site. This conflict resulted in further analysis and consideration before providing actions within the Precinct Plan.

Mountain bike trails and nature-based activities/tourism were not supported during this phase of consultation.

For further details regarding results from Phase 3 of consultation and their impact on the precinct plan refer to Appendix F.

Project Vision:

Retain the qualities that contribute to the unique character of Olinda. Integrate open space connections and facilities within the precinct to support the needs of the Olinda and Hilltop community.





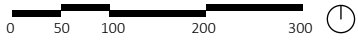
Olinda Golf Course Precinct Plan

The Olinda Precinct

Over the past year, Parks Victoria and Yarra Ranges Council have been working with the local and broader communities to develop the The Olinda Golf Course Precinct Plan. The Plan guides the future function, development and management of the former Olinda Golf Course site and its connections to the Olinda township.



Legend	
	Existing trees
	Existing road
	Existing path
	Proposed road
	Proposed trail linkages
	Proposed Town Walk
	Significant entry points/nodes
	Proposed/existing car park
	Proposed playground
	Proposed Court Zone
	Proposed Olinda Green
	Area of Rhododendron Garden extension
	Proposed location for key signage
	Potential picnic/seating area

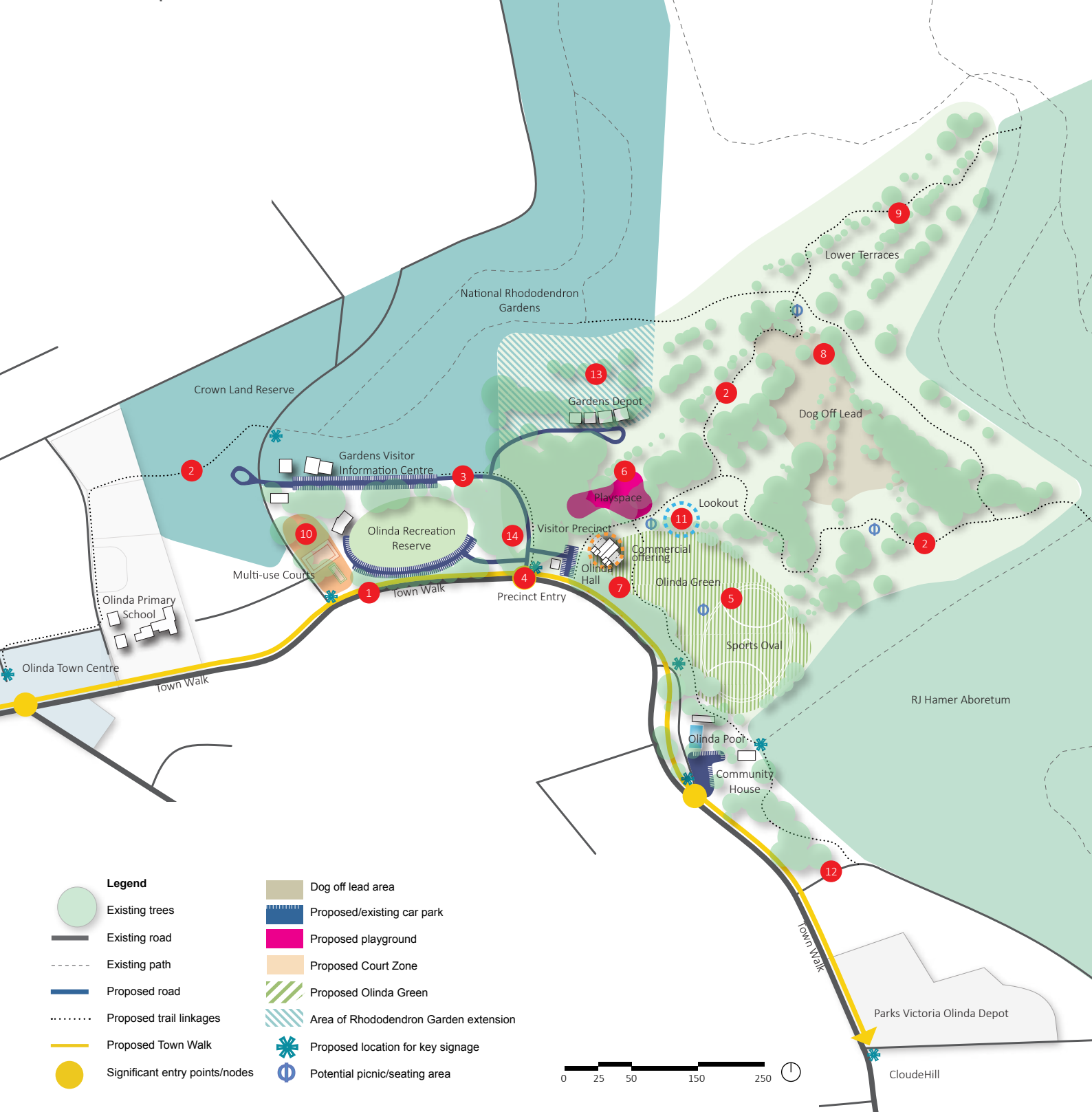


Olinda Golf Course Precinct- Key Recommendations

8.1 Precinct Plan Overview

The following landscape recommendations were established during the development of the Olinda Connect Precinct Plan:

- 1 Town Walk: Improve pedestrian connections and way-finding along Olinda-Monbulk Road. Refer to page 28.
- 2 Trail linkages: Improve connections and wayfinding between existing trails and paths including improved links within the former Olinda Golf Course. Refer to page 29.
- 3 National Rhododendron Gardens: Upgrade the existing Rhododendron Gardens car park and vehicular connection from the Olinda Green Precinct through to Georgian Road. Refer to page 29.
- 4 New Precinct Entry: New entrance off Olinda-Monbulk Road and formalisation of the existing car park to service the Olinda Green.
- 5 Olinda Green: Investigate the establishment of a flat open grass area with walking paths suitable for use as a market, event space, junior sport and training. Ensure community facilities including the community house, the community hall and the Olinda pool continue to meet the needs of the wider Olinda Precinct. Refer to page 30.
- 6 Nature Based Playspace: Construct a new nature based playspace that caters for a range of ages and abilities as well as providing seats, shelters, barbecues, public art and picnic facilities. Refer to page 32.
- 7 Olinda Hall: Investigate relocating the Olinda Hall next to the proposed Olinda Green and playspace. This will include:
 - Test the commercial viability of the pro-shop with the private sector;
 - Retain the use of the hall as a community venue;
 - Investigate the viability of co-locating a commercially operated cafe; restaurant or related use which may include a kitchen garden;
 - Relocate the Olinda Hall to main visitor precinct;
 - Refurbish the hall and improve facilities such as toilets and kitchen which enables them to be used as part of events and other open space users;
 - Upgrade existing parking areas to improve access to the Hall, Olinda Green and playspace; and
 - Retain and refurbish the existing rotunda.Refer to page 31 for additional information.
- 8 Dog Off Lead Area: Create a designated dog off lead zone within the golf course site to include:
 - Improved pedestrian access and signage; and
 - A picnic / seating area.
- 9 Lower terraces: Modify the lower sections of the former golf course to:
 - Maintain landscape values / viewsheds of the lower terrace and protect sensitive environments (flora and fauna);
 - Improve pedestrian access and signage; and
 - Provide a picnic / seating area.Refer to page 33 for additional information.
- 10 Sporting Precinct: Upgrade the Olinda Recreation Reserve including:
 - The construction of an additional multi-use court (netball and tennis) near the existing sports pavilion;
 - The upgrade of the existing cricket nets;
 - Relocating the vehicle entry and exit points to improve circulation;
 - The creation of a new area of open space that references / interprets the history of the Olinda Community Hall; and
 - The construction of disabled car parks near pavilion. Ensure no net loss of car parking as part of any upgrades.Refer to page 35 for additional information.
- 11 Visitor destination: Explore the establishment of a destination within the park. This could include an amphitheatre or a lookout.
- 12 Chalet Road: Realign part of Chalet Road to improve connections between the Olinda pool, the Olinda Community House and the former golf course.
- 13 Parks Victoria Depot and treatment plant: Reconfigure the Parks Victoria depot as part of the upgrade of the access to the gardens, including the existing treatment plant.
- 14 Remove old Golf Course Club House.



8.2 Operational Recommendations

The following operational recommendations were established during the development of the Olinda Connect Precinct Plan:

- Fire Management: Retain areas of mown grassed to continually provide a fire break for Olinda.
- Fire Refuge: Investigate the implementation of a fire refuge or place of last resort.
- Universal Access: Employ universal design wherever possible, especially in high use areas.
- Consolidate Existing Buildings: Consolidate or adaptively reuse existing buildings.
- Park facilities: Update existing park facilities including seats, shelters, picnic, public art and barbecue facilities.
- Dog off-lead zone: Dog Off Lead area extent, management and enforcement requirements to be defined by Parks Victoria and the Yarra Ranges Council.
- Traffic Management Plan: Yarra Ranges Council to prepare a Traffic Management Study in collaboration with VicRoads.
- Complete an Environmental Risk Assessment for the precinct to guide the next stage of planning and implementation.
- Yarra Ranges Council to undertake a feasibility assessment of the Olinda Community House.



8.3 Town Walk

Walking is a popular activity within the precinct. Improved trail connections and access to community facilities as well as making walking and cycling a more appealing alternative to driving. The proposed actions build upon the work Yarra Ranges Council is undertaking to improve connectivity in the Dandenong Ranges.

Aims:

- Improve pedestrian links along Olinda-Monbulk Road
- Link key sites from Cloudehill Garden and Nursery to the Town Centre
- Improve pedestrian links within the site to define key visitor precincts

There is strong community support for improving pedestrian links from the Town Centre to Cloudehill. The creation of a Town Walk would link existing shopping areas, Olinda Primary School, bus stops, sports facilities, Olinda Pool and destinations such as Cloudehill Garden and Nursery.

The proposed walk would include the following:

- Upgrade existing trails along the roadside to an appropriately graded, all weather trail in order to provide universal access
- Improve wayfinding signage to destinations along the trail and beyond
- Create an avenue of consistent tree plantings
- Improve pedestrian safety at key intersections

The walk could assist with alleviating traffic congestion as it would provide an alternative to driving between these facilities.

8.4 Linkages

Within the precinct there are a number of missing linkages that have an impact on community use and access. The creation of new linkages will provide additional community activities as well as providing improved access for people with limited mobility.

Aims:

- Improve inclusive access for people of all abilities
- Provide user facilities such as wayfinding, rest stops, picnic settings and barbecues
- Connect existing trails across the former golf course

There is strong community support for the creation of additional trails. Additional trails should be constructed across the former golf course to enhance connections between the National Rhododendron Gardens, RJ Hamer Arboretum and Olinda-Monbulk Road. The final alignment of trails should consider the following:

- Opportunities to experience views and broader vistas
- The provision of mown grass trails that have the opportunity to change with usage as the site develops and is activated
- Providing a range of experiences such as walking in open areas as well as in shaded areas
- Seasonal changes and experiences such as autumn colour
- Location of strategic seats and other rest areas
- Opportunities for trail information such as directional and interpretative signage
- Trail materials and alignment to cater for a broad ranges of users and enhance accessibility
- Aligning trails to minimise earthworks and site disturbance
- Feasibility, constructability, drainage, erosion and maintenance

8.5 National Rhododendron Gardens

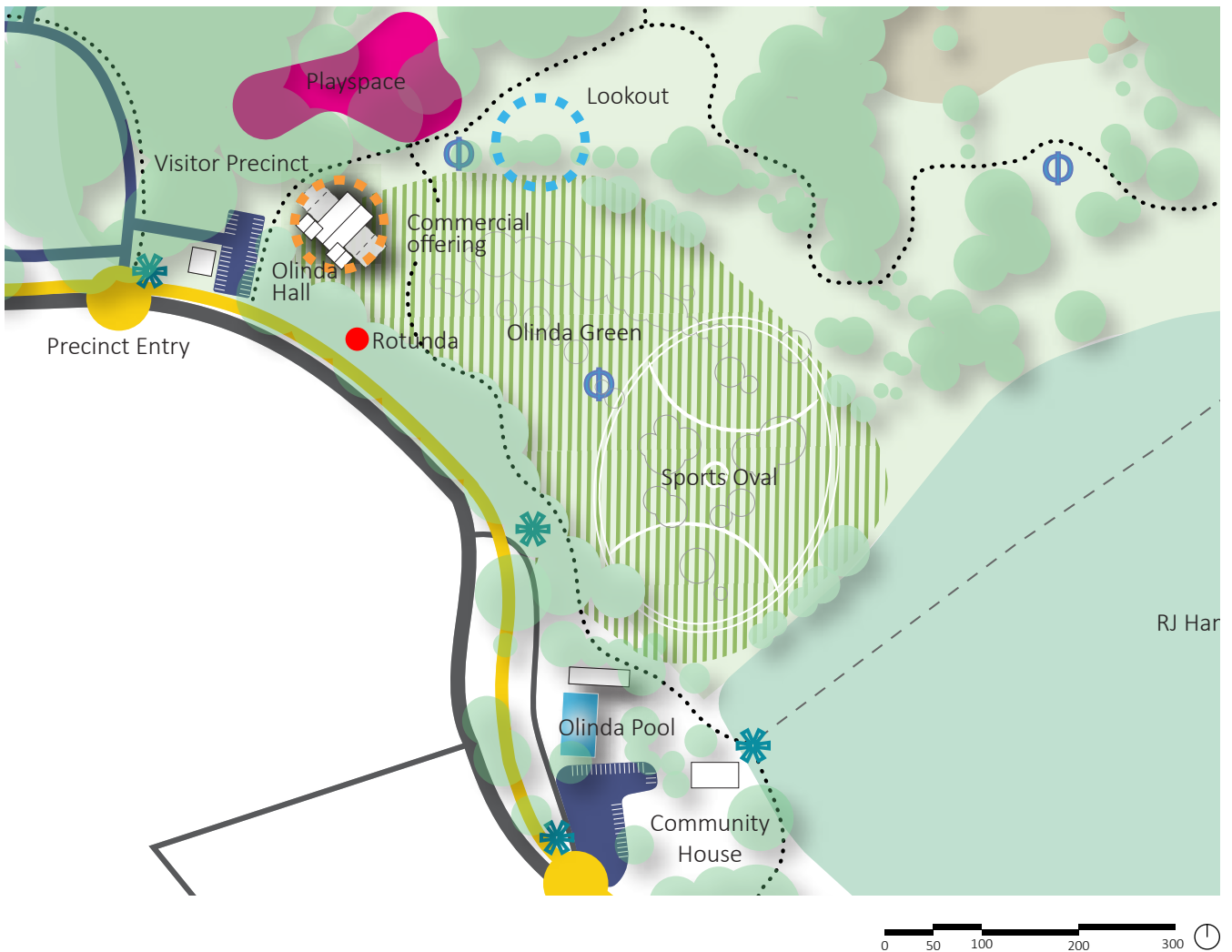
The National Rhododendron Gardens and RJ Hamer Arboretum are significant destinations in the Dandenong Ranges for local residents and visitors to the area. Modifications to existing facilities will improve visitor experiences, traffic circulation as well as reduce the impact on residential streets.

Aim:

- Retain and enhance the contribution the National Rhododendron Gardens and RJ Hamer Arboretum make to Olinda and the surrounding region
- Improve entry and visibility of the National Rhododendron Gardens

The following are proposed to enhance user experiences and existing facilities:

- Upgrade the existing Rhododendron Gardens car park and vehicular connection from the Olinda Green Precinct through to Georgian Road
- Enhance the arrival experience for visitors. This might include floral displays, interpretive and wayfinding signage and improved circulation
- Enhance the visitor experience by providing information on the plant collections and the importance of plants (including materials such as timber) to a healthy environment and sustainable living
- Upgrade volunteer, training and staff facilities including material storage and propagation areas
- Explore options to upgrade the existing treatment plant including reuse of treated waste water for use as irrigation



8.6 Olinda Green

The upper sections of the former golf course have the potential to provide a range of facilities for multiple community needs. This includes unstructured open space as well as more formal facilities such as community buildings, walking paths and playing surfaces.

Aims:

- Identify a space for events such as a community market
- Reconfigure upper fairways for use by other sports and community events
- Explore the potential to incorporate a cafe on the former golf course

There is strong community support for the creation of a 'village green' on the former Olinda Golf Course. The creation of an open grass area allows for the following community uses and facilities:

- A market and event space
- Perimeter walking paths to improve access
- An informal training and junior sport area (with painted playing surfaces as opposed to fenced)
- The potential to provide lighting for sporting and other community uses during evening hours
- Additional planting and landscape works
- Parking facilities to precinct entrance

- Ensure community facilities including the community house, the community hall and the olinda pool continue to meet the needs of the wider Olinda Precinct.
- Retain and refurbish the existing rotunda.

The creation of this space has the following community benefits:

- Proposed upgrades to walking trails and shared paths cater for multiple user groups.
- Locating an event space in this location can assist in making a potential cafe more viable.

It is anticipated that the creation of this space may require the removal of some trees (see plan above). Removal of trees should be offset by new tree planting.

The upper portion of the former golf course is a relatively flat open space which has the potential to provide a training space and overflow oval for the sports groups. The configuration of this space will require earthworks and an analysis of underlying geology to determine the most cost effective way to modify the existing fairways to create a surface suitable for play sports such as AFL football. The proposed sports surface should be located in close proximity to the Olinda Pool or relocated Olinda Hall to provide access to toilets, change rooms, car parking and other facilities.



The Mechanics Hall, Olinda c.1914
Source: Olinda Historcial Society

8.7 Olinda Hall

Relocate the hall to the former golf course near the proposed Olinda Green to provide the following community benefits:

- A new prominent location for this significant community building with the opportunity to connect the hall with views over the valley
- Use of the hall as a destination for community use and events
- New community facilities associated with the Olinda Hall such as a cafe, meeting rooms and toilets
- An appropriate landscape setting around the building which would include enhancing access paths and parking provisions
- The creation of a public space to the area where the hall is currently located

The community supports a potential cafe, restaurant or related use within the golf course. Co-locate this with the relocated hall where the café / kitchen can be used to cater for events or community activities within the hall. This might include the creation of a kitchen garden which could supply freshly sourced produce.

There are number of community buildings currently existing within the precinct of various condition and usage. Each building should be assessed on their condition and levels of community usage, to determine potential upgrades or demolition. This could include the following:

- Historically significant buildings, such as the Olinda Hall, or highly used buildings, such as the sports pavilion, should be retained (and relocated where appropriate) and upgraded where required.
- Aging and underutilised buildings should be removed to open views and reduce built form.
- Existing community activities and programs that currently take place within aging and underutilised buildings should be relocated to other community facilities such as the Olinda Hall and sports pavilion.



Nature-based playspace example
Source: FFLA, 2017.

8.8 Nature-based playspace

There is strong community support for a nature-based play space within the precinct. Such a playground would provide multiple community benefits, promote a healthy and active lifestyle, as well as the opportunity to interact with nature.

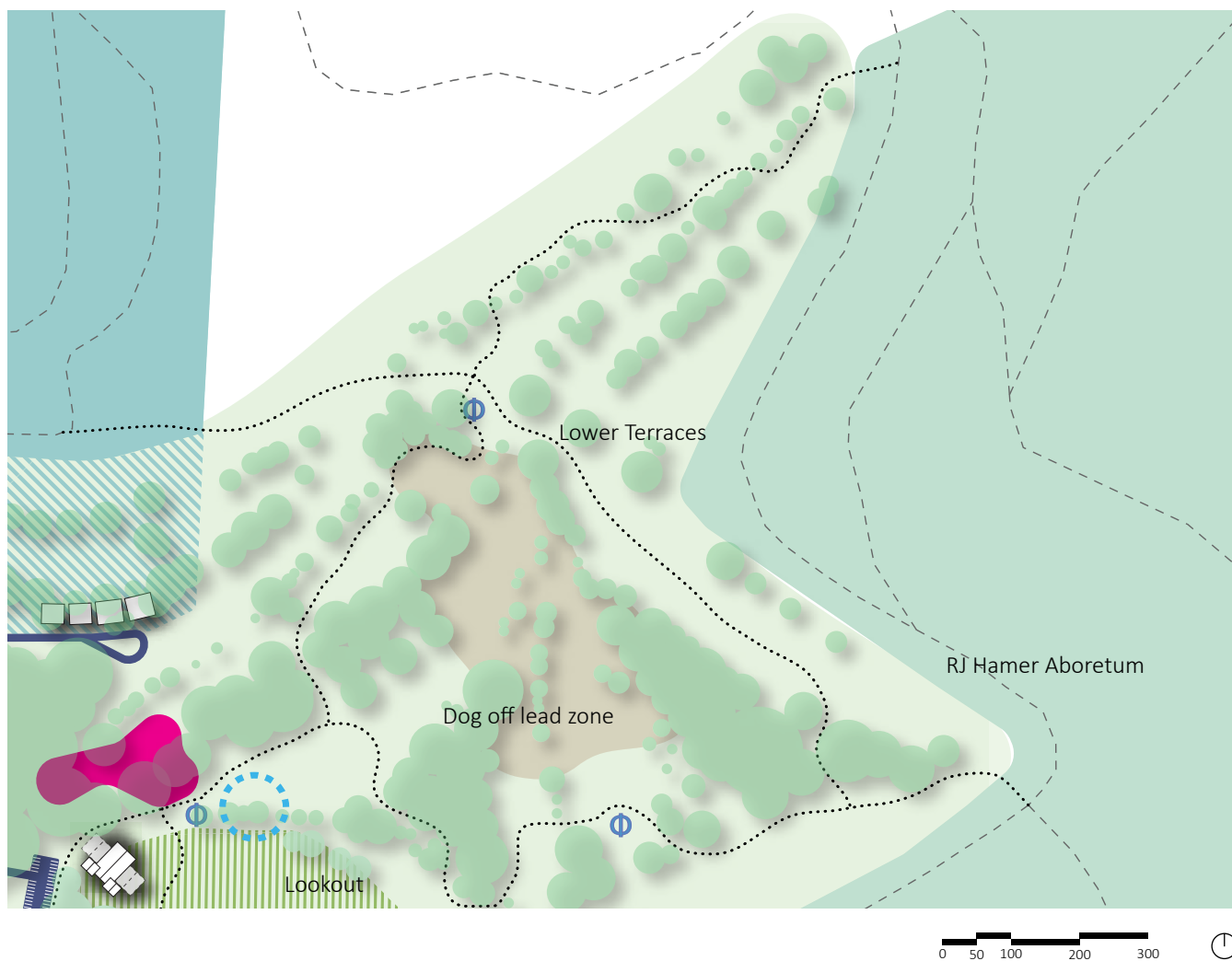
Aims:

- Identify the best location for the playground that provides multiple community benefits, is complementary to adjacent uses and takes advantage of site topography, features and views
- Provide facilities for a range of age groups and abilities
- Incorporate nature-based play elements in the playground design

The proposed location of the playground has been informed by community consultation. In addition to the objectives above, the playground design should incorporate the following:

- A distinctive design of a 'regional' standard (different to play spaces in the surrounding area) to create a unique destination as well as providing a different experience for local children
- The playspace should feel part of the surrounding landscape and be connected to trail networks and open spaces.

- The arrangement of play elements should have consideration of season variations. Locating the playground in and around established trees should consider summer shade as well as winter sun.



8.9 Lower terraces

Walking and dog walking are community activities that take place on the former golf course. The existing facilities were not planned with these uses in mind and there is an opportunity to enhance facilities for the current users as well as clarifying areas for activities such as dog off lead.

Aims:

- Identify potential uses for the lower portion of the former golf course
- Provide designated areas for dog off-leash use
- Improve access to the former golf course for all users

The following recommendations are proposed to the lower terraces to enhance user facilities and access:

- Walking paths, potentially including a circuit path(s). Proposed paths could include informal, ephemeral mown grass paths on existing fairways that have the ability to change in response to user requirements and the development of the site
- Trail signage, including wayfinding (especially at key decision points), behavioural and interpretive signage
- Seats, shelters and other rest areas to enhance the user experience

Dog walking is a popular activity for visitors and locals as it provides a connection with nature and opportunities for visitors and the local community to socialise. There is strong community support to create a dog off-leash area on the former golf course, this specific use however, needs to be clearly articulated and managed.

The proposed dog off lead area will be defined through the use of signage, proposed paths and existing natural features (such as tree lines and topography). The dog off lead area extent, management and enforcement requirements to be defined by Parks Victoria and the Yarra Ranges Council.



8.10 Sport and recreation

Sport and recreation are key activities undertaken by the community within the precinct. The benefits of regular participation in active sport and recreation are well known and provide multiple community benefits.

Aim:

- Cater for current and potential future community recreation needs
- Improve existing visitor experience
- Improve pedestrian and vehicular layout

Walking

There is a high level of community participation in walking within the study area. This includes walkers who appreciate the natural qualities of the area along with dog walkers. Improved linkages within the precinct and to townships will enhance facilities for this user group.

Olinda Recreation Reserve

The recreational facilities at Olinda Recreation Reserve provide a range of sporting facilities including AFL, cricket and netball. The recently upgraded sports pavilion is used by sporting clubs as well as being available for community events and activities. The following upgrades are proposed to enhance current sport and recreation facilities:

- Construct an additional multi-use court (netball / tennis) near the existing sports pavilion
- Upgrade cricket nets
- Improve pedestrian links
- Relocate the vehicle entry and exit points to improve circulation
- If Olinda Hall is relocated, upgrade the spaces between the reserve and Olinda Monbulk Road
- Allocate disabled car parks near the pavilion as part of any upgrades
- As part of the upgrade confirm there is no net loss of car parking

Training space at the Olinda Green

The flat upper portion of the former golf course presents the opportunity to provide an informal training space and overflow oval to cater for current and future recreation demands. This training space should be located in closer proximity to change rooms and parking at the Olinda Pool. The inclusion of lighting and fencing will be subject to future assessment of community demand for facilities.

Olinda Pool

The Olinda Pool is another community recreation resource which operates during the summer months. The following upgrades are proposed near the pool:

- Improved pedestrian connections between the pool and the wider precinct
- An improved connection between the pool and the former golf course

In the event it is not possible to construct an additional multi-use court within Olinda Recreation Reserve, explore the potential to construct additional courts near the pool to alleviate demand for training as well as being available for public use. This may require an upgrade of the toilets, change facilities and meeting space within the pool.

Other proposed recreation opportunities

Throughout the consultation process, other recreation opportunities such as tennis, half court basketball and disc golf have been suggested as potential uses for the former golf course site. Demand for these uses is low and nearby facilities appear to cater for current community requirements. There is the potential to incorporate these, or other, recreational opportunities within the precinct if participation levels increase.



Management and operations

In addition to the items described throughout section 8, there are a range of management and operational issues that have been identified during this project. The following recommendations provide direction on these items.

Universal Design and CPTED

- Employ universal design wherever possible in order to provide access to people of all abilities, especially in high use areas. The steep topography of the site may pose limits to achieving universal access in all cases.
- Incorporate CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles wherever possible to provide a safe environment for all.

Land management

- Review existing management arrangements in response to the recommendations in the Precinct Plan. This may require an assessment of future land management based on function and responsibilities of Parks Victoria and Yarra Ranges Council.

Fire management

- Employ fire prevention and strategies throughout the precinct as recommended in the Dandenong Ranges National Park Management Plan (March 2006).
- Ensure all modifications to the precinct retain, and where possible enhance, the Olinda township fire break.

Wayfinding signage

- Provide consistent suite of directional and information signage within the precinct that clearly identifies destinations, linkages and permissible uses.
- Provide directional and interpretive signage along existing and proposed trails as recommended in this precinct plan.

Vegetation removal and offsets

- All vegetation removal should be offset in accordance with environmental legislation including additional plantings within the precinct in accordance with legislative requirements.

Ongoing management of facilities

- A condition assessment of existing facilities within the precinct should be undertaken by the managing authority. This should include an assessment of the recurring costs to maintain the facility in its current condition, usage levels, access provisions and suitability of the facility for current uses.
- Formal agreements shall be entered into with the users of facilities that is to clearly articulate the responsibilities for maintenance, repairs and capital works.

Community involvement and ongoing consultation

- Continue to communicate to the broader community the progress of the Precinct Plan and any subsequent plans and development through ongoing consultation.
- Nurture relationships with community groups and the broader community.

Traffic management

- Yarra Ranges Council in consultation with VicRoads to investigate the need for a Traffic Management Plan for Olinda which considers the changes proposed in the Olinda Precinct Plan.
- A number of proposed and formalised car parking areas are proposed across the precinct. Ensure that there is no net loss of car parking spaces across the precinct with the proposed works.

Parks Victoria depot and treatment plant

- Explore the reconfiguration of the Parks Victoria depot as part of the upgrade of the access to the gardens.
- Review the existing treatment plant including an assessment of a potential upgrade and relocation.
- Review the size and condition of facilities such as Vireya House to cater for current and future collection and planting needs.
- Upgrade service infrastructure such as service connections, fencing and access paths in consultation with commercial operators where appropriate.



Staging and Implementation

Recommendation	Priority	Approximate Cost
Landscape Recommendations		
Trail linkages: Improve connections and wayfinding between existing trails and paths including improved links within the former Olinda Golf Course.	High	\$750,000 - \$1,000,000
New Olinda Green entry: New entrance off Olinda-Monbulk Road and formalisation of the existing car park to service the Olinda Green.	High	\$500,000 - \$1,000,000
Olinda Green: Establish a flat open grass area with walking paths suitable for use as a market, event space, junior sport and training.	High	\$1,000,000 - \$1,500,000
Nature-based Playspace: Construct a new nature-based playspace that caters for a range of ages and abilities as well as providing seats, shelters, barbecues, public art and picnic facilities.	High	\$2,000,000 - \$2,500,000
New Netball Court: Add an additional Netball Court to the current Olinda Recreation Reserve Sporting Precinct.	High	Scope to be defined
Chalet Road: Realign part of Chalet Road to improve connections between the Olinda pool and the former golf course.	High	Scope to be defined
Traffic Management Plan: Council to prepare a Traffic Management Study in collaboration with VicRoads.	High	\$20,000 - \$30,000
Building Consolidation: Assess the condition of current buildings within the precinct and explore options to consolidate or adaptively reuse existing buildings.	High	Scope to be defined
Town Walk: Improve pedestrian connections and wayfinding from the Olinda Town Centre to Cloudehill.	Medium	\$450,000 - \$500,000
National Rhododendron Gardens: Upgrade the existing Rhododendron Gardens car park and vehicular connection from the Olinda Green Precinct through to Georgian Road.	Medium	\$1,500,000 - \$2,000,000
Olinda Hall: Investigate relocating the Olinda Hall next including; relocating the Olinda Hall to main visitor precinct, removing existing golf course club building, refurbishing the hall and improve facilities such as toilets and kitchen, investigating the viability of co-locating a commercially operated cafe (or related use) and upgrading existing parking areas.	Medium	\$1,000,000 - \$1,500,000
Dog Off Lead Area: Create a designated dog off lead zone within the golf course site to include improved pedestrian access and signage and a picnic/ seating area.	Medium	\$25,000 - \$50,000
Sporting Precinct: Upgrade the Olinda Recreation Reserve including the existing cricket nets, carparking and vehicular circulation and interpret the history of the Olinda Community Hall.	Medium	\$200,000 - \$250,000
Parks Victoria Depot and treatment plant: Reconfigure the Parks Victoria depot as part of the upgrade of the access to the gardens, including the existing treatment plant.	Medium	Scope to be defined
Visitor destination: Establish a destination within the park. This could include an amphitheatre or a lookout.	Low	\$150,000 - \$200,000
Lower terraces: Modify the lower sections of the former golf course to maintain landscape values/ viewsheds of the lower terrace and protect sensitive environments (flora and fauna), improve pedestrian access and signage and provide a picnic/ seating area.	On-going	Operational Item



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13. www.visitdandenongranges.com.au/history
14. The Argus Newspaper, Feb. 1934 via the NLA (www.trove.nla.gov.au)
15. The Argus Newspaper, Feb. 1934 via the NLA (www.trove.nla.gov.au)
16. www.visitdandenongranges.com.au/activity/national-rhododendron-gardens
17. www.profile.id.com.au/yarra-ranges/about/?WebID=150



Appendix A



The Olinda Mechanics Hall

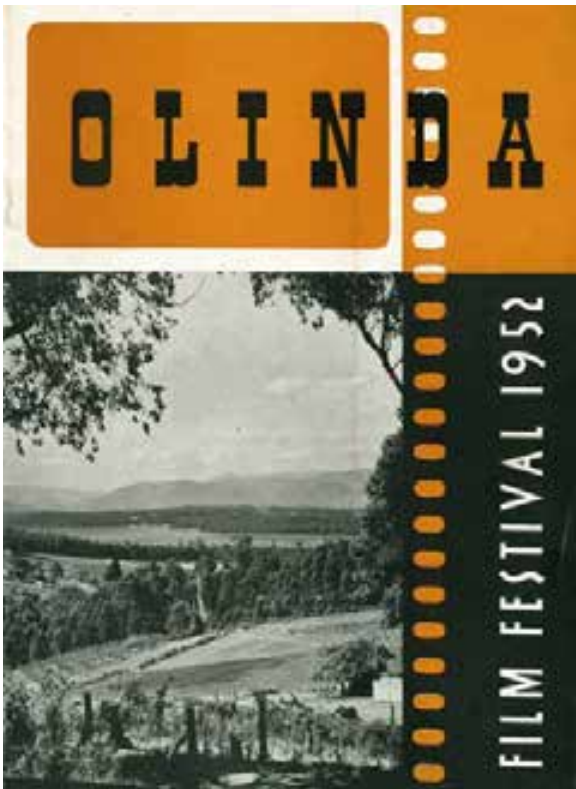
The Mechanics Institute of Victoria was formed in 1839, four years after Melbourne was founded offering access to technical knowledge and literacy for men who worked with machinery and engines. Over time, their functions changed to provide man and their families access to services and facilities which encouraged community stewardship.

The Olinda Community Hall (previously known as the Olinda Mechanics Institute Hall) located on the corner of Olinda-Monbulk and Georgian Roads was officially opened on the 20th December 1913. The Mechanics Institute in Olinda began as an assembly room and library used by the working class for evening lectures to keep up with the technical and scientific information. Gradually its function changed to a hall for social gathering and public meetings with a library / reading room containing literature and instructional material.

Construction of the Olinda Mechanics Institute was jointly supported by the Shire of Lilydale and the local community. Built from the designs of Melbourne architect A.E.H Carleton, the Hall was financed by a Shire Council loan. The

first guarantors faced the prospect of repaying 600 pounds to the Lilydale Shire Council over the ensuing 30 years.

The Hall has a symmetrical facade which is dominated by a double height, rectangular plan central section with smaller projecting wings to either side. The rectangular plan wings extend back only a quarter of the length of the main hall and their gable roofs are, in part, an extension of the main roofline. The roof of the eastern wing is pierced by a brick chimney, which is partially expressed in the external wall below. A timber lined, built-in verandah connects the three elements on the street facade and a sign over the entrance lists the name and construction date of the building. The Hall is timber lined and elevated in part to accommodate the gentle slope of the land. The base of the building has been lined with timber slats. The corrugated iron lining the roofs and verandah has been painted red, and include overhanging eaves and bargeboards to the flanking wings. The gable ends to each section of the Hall are identical, with overhanging bargeboards and timber lining moulded to simulate shingles. Casement windows have been used on the street facade, and are mounted on the outside of



Melbourne International Film Festival, Olinda c.1952
Source: Olinda Historical Society



the wall face. The windows are banked in groups of four and are surrounded by timber strapping and stucco boards. Windows to the side elevations of the main hall are vertical, timber framed, double hung windows.

From its earliest days, the Olinda Hall was the centre of social activities in the Olinda Community. Old letters refer to dances at the time of WW1 and the football club celebrations held at the hall. In the years following, the hall was also used for community based offers, fundraising activities and private functions.

During the 1930s the hall promoted gymnasium classes to improve local's physical fitness. A vaulting horse and Roman rings for men on Tuesdays and rods and dumb-bells for the ladies on Thursday. An end of year exhibition was also held at the end of the year to promote the ongoing value the hall provided the wider community.

In 1952, Olinda was invaded with hundreds of people over the Australia Day weekend for the first Melbourne Film Festival. Supported by several other venues, the Olinda

Mechanics Hall and the Olinda Township was herald as a successful venue and event ensuring the long term sustainability of the iconic Melbourne event. Throughout the decades the Olinda Hall has been a happy haunt of many school functions, concerts and end of year socials, Badminton has been played in the Hall for many years. Basketball and Netball have also been played as the floor is solid with a large area and the ceiling of the hall is high enough to allow for a series of skilled ball sports. The hall also has also played home to the football and netball clubs while also providing relief to the community and its services in managing the risk posed by wildfire.

The Olinda Community Hall, now managed by the Yarra Ranges Council is a valuable community asset which continues to represent the history of the Olinda community by providing a place of social interaction which is available for public use. This plan commits to showcasing the history of the Olinda Mechanics Hall by ensuring it is sited within the landscape both respectfully, tastefully and productivity ensuring it continues to be an iconic feature of the township for many generations to come.

Appendix B

Strategic Context

The following is a summary of a selection of key strategic documents that are of relevant to the preparation of the Precinct Plan.

Recreation & Open Space Plan

Yarra Ranges Council 2013- 2023

The Council's Recreation and Open Space Strategy states that a range of social, environmental and economic benefits are derived from participating in sport and recreation and engaging with open spaces like parks and bushland. The plan combines a number of previous strategies (such as reserve masterplans, the Hike and Bike strategy and recreational facilities provision plans) and provides a framework to guide policy and service provisions to create healthy and active communities. The objectives of the plan include:

- Provide clear strategic directions for developing recreation services and facilities in Yarra Ranges.
- Develop a network of recreation facilities; and spaces that provide a diverse range of social, environmental and economic benefits to the community;
- Recommend precinct-specific actions for improving open space and recreation facilities; and
- Identify partnerships to improve the breadth and sustainability of recreation services and opportunities in Yarra Ranges.

In reference to Olinda, the strategy provides the following recommendations:

- Yarra Ranges Council to implement the Olinda Recreation Reserve Masterplan including formalising car parking, establish a new play space and picnic area and establishing a pedestrian path network around the reserve;
- Improve the quality and diversity of recreation opportunities at local social recreation parks; and
- Explore partnerships with Parks Victoria and other open space managers investigating nature-based tourism and commercial activities in the precinct.

Environment Strategy

Yarra Ranges Council 2015-2025

Council's Environment Strategy provides a framework for environmental program planning and decision making for the next ten years. Key goals outlined in this document include:

- Active protection of iconic places and their natural character;

- Preservation and improvement of water resources;
- Protection of native plants and animals and the protection and enhancement of their animals habitat;
- Enhancement and strengthening of local economies through environmentally sustainable activities;
- Community resilience in the face of a changing climate and more extreme weather events; and
- Yarra Ranges residents as stewards of the environment.

These 6 goals are intrinsic to the vision for the Precinct and providing a guide to future development in Olinda.

Vision 2020 Community Plan

Yarra Ranges Council 1999 (2008 review)

Vision 2020 provides the Yarra Ranges Council with a framework to guide future decision making, to ensure a healthy and sustainable future for the community. Important principles within the strategy that are also intrinsic to the Precinct Plan include:

- Preservation of the Shire's natural forests and biodiversity;
- Provision of a high level of connectedness between individuals and local communities across the shire with a particular focus on interactivity at the neighbourhood level;
- Enhancement of the Shire's tourism industry encouraging, small business clusters, developing a suitable mix of shops that provide for both locals and tourists and ensuring that tourist providers work closely with the local producers, who form part of the tourism attraction of the Shire of Yarra Ranges; and
- Provision of a range of recreation and cultural activities that are available all ages, interests and abilities. Provision of sporting facilities and clubs vital for community connectedness and wellbeing such as football, netball, soccer and swimming.

This document is a shared vision of the Yarra Ranges Community. It is an optimistic statement of what the community hope for and aspire to in the future, for both people and places.

Economic Development Strategy

Yarra Ranges Council 2012-2022

Yarra Ranges Council regards Economic Development as a key driver of community wellbeing. This Strategy presents Council's policy in regards to sustainable economic development but outlining the following key objectives in line with the Precinct Plan:

- Targeted development of land aimed at ensuring business growth and improvements to soft and hard infrastructure;
- Attracting new investment, development and business opportunities to the region;
- Providing support to key community organisations to deliver high quality learning programs that lead to sustainable employment outcomes;
- Developing partnerships through constructive, collaborative working relationships between government, industry associations and neighbourhood houses that support sustainable growth for the region;
- Implementing strategic projects with industry that to reduce impediments and maximise competitive opportunities; and
- Enhancement of the region's civic space through a comprehensive capital works program.

Dandenong Ranges National Park Management Plan

Parks Victoria 2006

This Management Plan is a strategic guide for future management of the Dandenong Ranges National Park. The plan establishes how Parks Victoria will protect the area's natural and cultural values and provide the services and facilities to help visitors to enjoy, appreciate and understand the park.

In reference to the Olinda Precinct Plan, this management plan serves to inform adjacent land managers about the park's management, and encourage them to participate with Parks Victoria in cooperative, community-based land management programs. Many of the plans visions, aims and strategies have been adopted in the process of developing this Precinct Plan.

This Management Plan is under current legislation and therefore must be adhered to when undertaking any works in the Dandenong Ranges National Park.

Dandenong Ranges Gardens Strategic Management Plan

Parks Victoria 2014

The Dandenong Ranges Gardens (the Gardens) are a diverse group of properties with significant botanic, heritage and tourism value located within the Dandenong Ranges. This plan establishes a strategic framework and management direction for the gardens to enhance their horticultural, cultural and visitor values. In reference to the National Rhododendron Gardens the plan recommends:

- Formally re-branding the National Rhododendron Garden as a botanic garden, including a change of name to include the word 'botanic' in the title;
- Enhancing visitor facilities and provide high quality passive recreation opportunities and experiences;
- Investigate options to provide a venue suitable for events throughout the year;
- Enhance the profile of the garden in the local community and the tourism market; and
- Provide opportunities for appropriate commercial ventures that enhance the visitor experience and complement the values of the garden, to provide a sustainable funding base for the ongoing maintenance of the garden.

Regarding the RJ Hamer arboretum, the plan recommends:

- Providing a range of active and passive recreational opportunities including family and group picnicking, walking and sightseeing;
- Explore opportunities to use the arboretum for compatible tourism and recreational activities, including partnering with tourism or recreational user groups in the development of new opportunities; and
- Promote linkage to National Rhododendron Garden and Pirianda Garden.

This plan was approved for implementation in 2014 with a clear purpose to direct all management of the gardens. Any proposed works involving the National Rhododendron Gardens and the RJ Hamer Arboretum are to comply with this plan.

Appendix C









Precinct Zoning Overlay



Source: Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017.



Legend

- | | |
|---|---|
|  green wedge A |  Fire Buffer |
|  green wedge B |  public use zone |
|  public park and recreation |  commercial zone |
|  public, conservation and resource |  mixed use zone |

Appendix D

Phase 1 Consultation Survey Results

The following themes emerged from the initial consultation of 147 respondents:

Dog off lead areas

Areas that enable dogs to roam freely were popular. Amenities that improve the level of service for this activity including a dog friendly café, seating, social facilities, rubbish bins, lookout points and an improved car park were also noted. Many people expressed the desire for an unfenced area away from town and sports groups. Other members of the community expressed concerns that dogs cause conflict with other users and native wildlife.

Active recreational opportunities

A sports oval, BMX/skate park, multi-use sports ovals, family friendly bike paths, walking paths, mountain bike trails netball and basketball courts and open space areas for ball sports were a popular point of discussion. The respondents noted there are limited opportunities for young people to engage in active sporting activities on the hill and the area of flat open space provides a perfect opportunity for structured organised sport. Retaining the golf course was also put forward as an option.

Improved pedestrian connectivity

A number of respondents noted the poor condition, allocation and access to the pedestrian network together with a limited amount of wayfinding signage within the precinct. Respondents suggested an upgrade of the trail network together with a clear wayfinding plan that complements the Olinda Township. Improving links from the township to the activity precinct should be explored.

Nature Based Play opportunities

The addition of a nature based play component within the precinct was highlighted by a number of respondents.

All Abilities Access

A number of respondents referred to the aging population and noted that many of the dog walkers are in the mature age demographic. Any development should be sympathetic to this portion of the population.

Retain the site as untouched open space

A number of respondents expressed a desire to keep the site in harmony with the surrounding Rhododendron Gardens and the Arboretum, as a place to preserve local history for future generations. It was noted that the site needs to be low maintenance and could include cultural and heritage interpretation.

Public Facilities

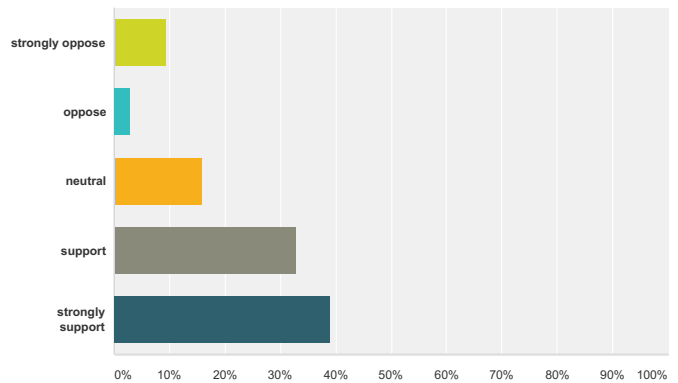
A number of community members noted the desire for public facilities including picnic facilities, toilets, barbecues and open space play areas for passive recreation.

Use of existing commercial buildings / facilities

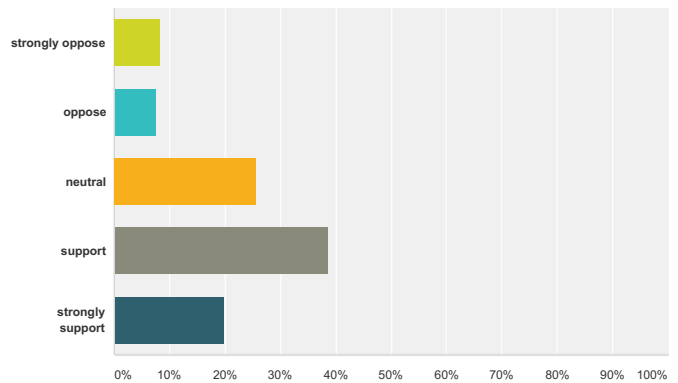
Conflicting views were presented in regards to the use of existing buildings. Many respondents expressed a strong desire for no commercial activity to take place on the site and did not want a large tourist attraction within the Precinct. Other community members discussed the options of a commercial enterprise such as a café, social enterprise, cultural centre, working art studio, tourist office, community Hub.

Community Opportunities

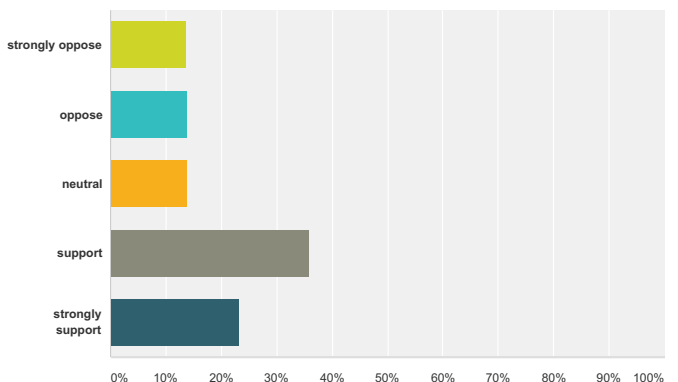
Other suggestions discussed include retaining a fire break, a community garden, fire refuge, events and market space, mini zoo, sculpture park, artists compound.



Would you like to see upgraded paths and additional tree planting along roads to improve links with Olinda?



Parks Victoria is proposing to consolidate buildings within the golf course site in order to open views and reduce built form. Do you support this approach?



Do you support a commercial operation on the site such as a cafe or a nature based tourism venture?

Appendix E

Phase 2 Consultation Survey Results



The following table has been interpreted from the community feedback during phase 2 of consultation:

Items Supported	Actions for the Precinct Plan
There is strong community support for a market and event space at the Olinda Golf Course site.	Define a suitable multi-use area to assist with attracting future activities, events and markets.
The preferred location for a new playground is amongst the trees near Olinda-Monbulk Road as opposed to the top of the escarpment. There is also strong community support for the playground catering for a range of age groups including older children.	Note the preferred location for a new playground including the need for the playground design to cater for a range of age groups including older children.
There is very strong support for improved walking tracks within the precinct.	Recommend the creation of additional walking trails to and within the golf course precinct.
There is very strong support upgraded paths and additional tree planting along roads to improve links.	Identify locations for upgraded paths and tree planting along roadsides.
The community supports the creation of a new entrance to the National Rhododendron Gardens from Olinda-Monbulk Road.	Include the location of a new entrance to the National Rhododendron Gardens from Olinda-Monbulk Road.
There is strong support for consolidation of existing buildings in order to open views and reduce built form.	Note community support for consolidation of buildings.
The proposed realignment of Chalet Road was supported.	Recommend the realignment of Chalet Road.
Approximately 60% of respondents supported or strongly support a commercial operation such as a cafe.	Recommend further investigation of potential operators.
Items requiring further investigation	Actions for the Precinct Plan
There was strong support for and opposition to, the creation of a viewing platform. This may suggest the community prefers a scenic walk as opposed to a key viewing point.	Consider potential views when aligning walking trails.
There was strong support for and opposition to, the creation of mountain bike trails. This may reflect a more detailed analysis of demand and potential locations.	Explore the option of including mountain bike trails within the precinct.
There was strong support for and opposition to, the creation of an oval and multi-use court on the golf course.	Explore alternative options for the oval and a different location for the multi-use court.
Approximately 60% of respondents supported the creation of a dog off lead area in the lower portion of the golf course site. However approximately 15% strong opposed this proposal.	Consult further with dog walkers as well as Project Steering Committee and other stakeholders in regards to impacts and feasibility of dog walking within the precinct.
Items not supported	Actions for the Precinct Plan
Approximately 45% of respondents opposed the inclusion of nature-based commercial activities and tourism such as eco-camping, zorbing or luxury accommodation.	Note that additional community consultation would be required prior to considering these types of nature-based activities and tourism activities in the precinct.
Approximately 45% of respondents opposed or were strongly opposed to the creation of an access road to the lower portion of the golf course site to improve access. It is possible that the community viewed the creation of the road was required as part of other activities such as mountain biking and nature-based activities and tourism.	Explore potential uses for the lower portion of the gold course that don't require construction of the road.

Appendix F

Phase 3 Consultation Survey Results

The following table has been interpreted from the community feedback during phase 3 of consultation:

Items Supported	Actions for the Precinct Plan
There was strong community support for lighting to be included on the Olinda Green Precinct to cater for public events, training and junior sport.	Acknowledgment of the requirements for a multi-use space and the facilities required to accommodate events and junior sport have been considered. Further outcomes of the facilities and infrastructure required will be determined following planning investigations.
There was strong community support for a nature-based playground and supporting infrastructure.	Note the regional scale playground response and explore connecting the playspace facility to the wider visitor precinct.
There was strong support for the creation of a viewing platform. This may suggest the community prefers a scenic walk as opposed to a key viewing point.	Recommend a visitor node that is a destination for visitors wanting to enjoy the spectacular views across the Dandenong Ranges National Park following further considerations of design issues,
There was strong support for the creation of an oval and multi-use court on the golf course.	An oval for events, junior sport and training has been included as part of the development of the Olinda Green Precinct. This will be a valuable space for community based events as well as sporting offers both formal and informal.
A small scale commercial operation was supported by a number of respondents who would like to see the visitor precinct include a cafe / kiosk.	A commercial operation will be included as part of the wider visitor precinct. Further ongoing investigation will be required to determine the financial / economic viability of a commercial operation for this site.
The realignment of Chalet Road was supported during the third phase of public consultation to improve safety and assist with connecting the Olinda Pool and Community House to the wider Golf Course Precinct.	Further work will be required with the Yarra Ranges Council and VicRoads to further explore this as a viable option.
Items requiring further investigation	Actions for the Precinct Plan
There was support for and opposition to a dog off lead area but not if it compromised the environmental values of the site.	Further analysis is required to determine the extent of the dog off lead area. The design of this visitor offer has been identified as part of the development of a dog off lead strategy. The fence line that adjoins to the Dandenong Ranges National Park will also require maintenance and rectification prior to the exploration of a dog friendly park to ensure the ongoing maintenance of flora and fauna species.
Items not supported	Actions for the Precinct Plan
Approximately 45% of respondents opposed or were strongly opposed to the inclusion of nature-based commercial activities and tourism such as eco-camping, zorbing or luxury accommodation.	Note that additional community consultation would be required prior to considering these types of nature-based activities and tourism activities in the precinct.
There was opposition to the creation of mountain bike trails. This may reflect a more detailed analysis of demand and potential locations.	Explore the option of including mountain bike trails within the precinct.

