



Pipemakers Park and Environs

Master Plan

October 2015



Maribyrnong
CITY COUNCIL

Site Context



Study Area



Site History*

Pipemakers Park is an eight hectare reserve located on Van Ness Avenue on the Maribyrnong River in Maribyrnong. Burton Crescent Reserve is located further north along the River, while Frogs Hollow Wetlands are located to the south. Thompson Reserve is a four hectares reserve located to the west on Gordon Street. The study area is located in the Maribyrnong River Valley and includes flood plain and a steep escarpment along the Van Ness Avenue boundary.

Prior to European settlement, the Marin Balluk were the people of the area occupying land extending to Kororoit Creek to the west and Sunbury to the north. They were part of the Wurundjeri Tribe and members of the Kulin Nation. Archaeological evidence further upstream has proved the presence of Aboriginal people in the Maribyrnong River Valley for more than 40,000 years, however no archeological evidence has been found of Aboriginal activity in the study area itself. The river was a valuable food source, and the escarpment offered good viewing points of the valley, however the study area was probably not a major camping place as, due to the tidal nature of the river, it lacked a fresh water supply.

The study area was explored and settled early in Victoria's European history, with survey and land licences occurring in the 1840s. Pastoral activity quickly gave way to industrial uses with Raleigh's boiling-down works established in 1848. The Melbourne Meat Preserving Company occupied the site in 1867 followed by Australian Frozen Meat Export Company in 1880. The Hume Pipe Factory occupied the site in 1912 and production halted in 1974.

In 1978 the study area was purchased by the Melbourne Board of Works. A Bicentennial grant of \$2million in 1987 supported the development of the site and in 1988 Pipemakers Park was opened.

* Pipemakers Park Conservation Analysis, Olwen Ford and Gary Viens of Melbourne's Living Museum of the West Inc

Heritage Significance*

The study area is of national historical, social and architectural significance as some of the oldest and most substantial early industrial structures are associated with technological innovations in Manufacturing.

The site shows a range of heritage features relating to five separate innovative industries stretching over 140 years. The boiling down works was one of the first of its type in Australia and the largest in Victoria. The Melbourne Meat Preserving Company pioneered meat preserving by the vacuum process. The Australian Frozen Meat Export Company is credited with the first successful frozen meat export in the world. Hume Pipes were an innovator in the field of concrete pipe manufacture, being the first Australian company to export a manufacturing technology as opposed to a raw material or product.

This site encapsulates the history of industrial development in Melbourne and represents some of its major development phases. Architecturally, the buildings represent early fire proof construction techniques and industrial buildings of any kind from the mid nineteenth century are exceptionally rare in Melbourne. The river location demonstrates the importance of maritime communication to early industry as well as the need for a water source and drain.

Several significant historical figures are associated with the site including pastoralist Joseph Raleigh, Samuel Sextus Ritchie (proprietor of the MMPC) and Walter Hume (HPC).

* Victorian Heritage Database Report, Melbourne Meat Preserving Company and Hume Pipe Company

Methodology

In July 2014 Council took over Committee of Management responsibilities from Parks Victoria for Pipemakers Park and Frog's Hollow Wetland. To plan for the future of these parks, Council commenced a Master Plan process.

The study area for the Master Plan includes Pipemakers Park, Frogs Hollow Wetlands, Thompson Reserve, and Burton Crescent Reserve.

A preliminary engagement phase was conducted from February to April 2015 to collect input from community members and stakeholders. This information informed a Draft Master Plan which was consulted on further during June and July 2015.

Following amendments to the Draft Master Plan based on feedback received, Council adopted the Final Master Plan in October 2015.

Objective

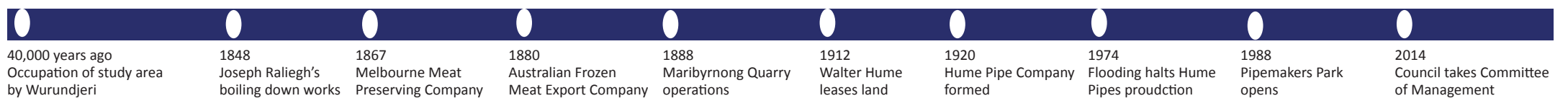
The objective of the Master Plan is to increase visitation and improve park facilities by enhancing the following six key features of the parks:

- bushland setting and environmental values
- heritage values
- access, points of entry and signage
- pathway connections and circulation
- leisure opportunities
- unique site character

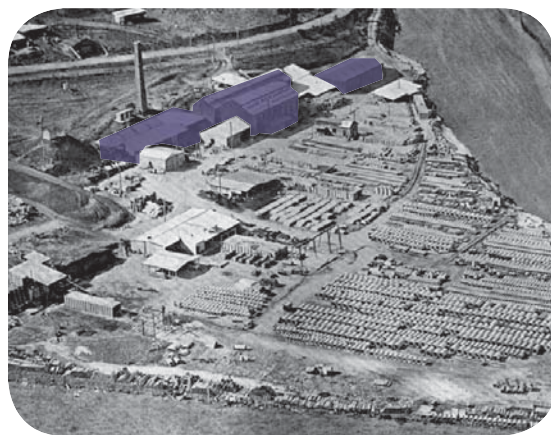
Vision

The parks are safe and accessible open spaces, which celebrate their rich cultural heritage and which offer a variety of leisure experiences within a sustainable river parkland setting.

Timeline



(Vegetation Map of Melbourne Western Region) Land of the Woiworing and Wurundjeri tribes from 40,000 years ago



(Photo of Hume Pipes, existing buildings shown highlighted) Hume Pipe Company



Master Plan 1988 Metropolitan Board of Works



Maribyrnong River, Maribyrnong City Council

Key Principles

Developed from feedback received during consultation with stakeholders, the following key principles have been adopted to guide all recommendations in the Master Plan

Enhance bushland setting and environmental values



Existing Conditions

Since becoming parkland in 1980s the parks have developed a dense bushland setting. A Flora and Fauna Assessment of the site was conducted in April 2015. It found that while vegetation within the study area did not meet the condition thresholds that define any significant ecological communities potential habitat exists for significant species, being River Swamp Wallaby-grass, Curly Sedge and the Growling Grass Frog.

The existing wetlands, while providing some habitat, are not functioning for stormwater treatment, and are generally clogged with weeds, reducing their aesthetic appeal.

Recommendations

The Master Plan recommends the following to improve environmental values:

Restoration of understorey through weed removal and planting indigenous species

Planting of new canopy trees in key locations to provide shade, shelter and increased habitat

Protection of mature trees, with removal of poor quality trees where needed to open site lines and create usable lawns

Improve treatment function of wetlands by weed removal, re-grading of channels, and directing additional stormwater flow



Improve access, points of entry and gateways



Existing Conditions

Pipemakers Park and Thompson Reserve are somewhat hidden from Van Ness and Gordon Street, and often only experienced by people passing by on the Maribyrnong River Trail. There is the need for clearer points of arrival to create gateways into the parks, from all directions. This includes the potential signalised access for pedestrians crossing Van Ness Ave and Gordon Street. Vehicular circulation in the park is unclear and brings cars into sections of the park which should be reserved for park-users.

Recommendations

The Master Plan recommends the following to improve access points of entry:

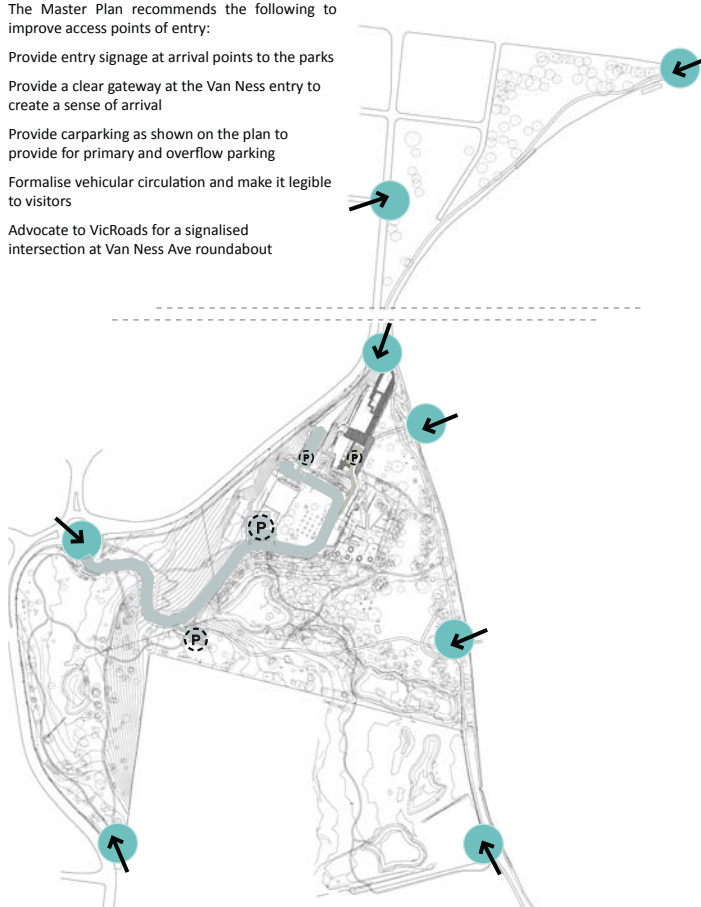
Provide entry signage at arrival points to the parks

Provide a clear gateway at the Van Ness entry to create a sense of arrival

Provide carparking as shown on the plan to provide for primary and overflow parking

Formalise vehicular circulation and make it legible to visitors

Advocate for VicRoads for a signalised intersection at Van Ness Ave roundabout



Create strong pathway connections and circulation



Existing Conditions

Recent works by Council have improved pedestrian and bike circulation through and around the parks, however there are still some gaps in the path network.

There is further opportunity for walking tracks around the features of the park, such as the wetlands and key view points. Thompson Reserve is also used as an important connection and recreations space, and is in need of formed paths.

Recommendations

The Master Plan recommends the following to improve pathways and circulation:

Provide new path connections to the river trail

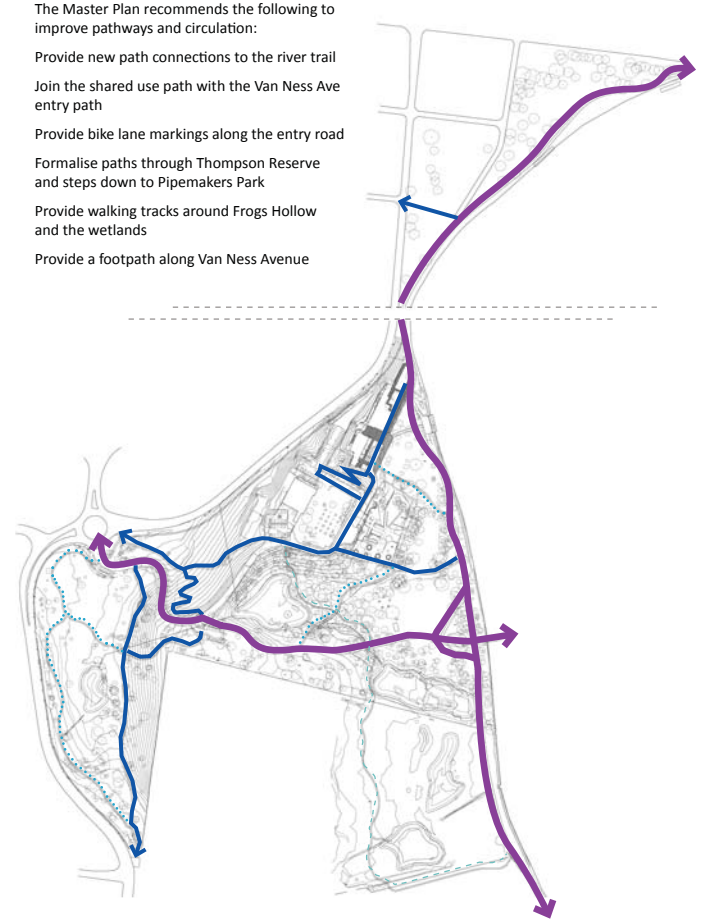
Join the shared use path with the Van Ness Ave entry path

Provide bike lane markings along the entry road

Formalise paths through Thompson Reserve and steps down to Pipemakers Park

Provide walking tracks around Frogs Hollow and the wetlands

Provide a footpath along Van Ness Avenue



Build on the heritage values of the park



Existing Conditions

The existing heritage buildings are of significance and lend great character to Pipemakers Park, however the majority do little to activate the park, or contribute to the visitor experience.

The interpretive signage and history trails established in the 1980s are in need of renewal.

Other heritage landscape elements such as the workers' picnic area, have also suffered from a lack of maintenance in recent years.

Recommendations

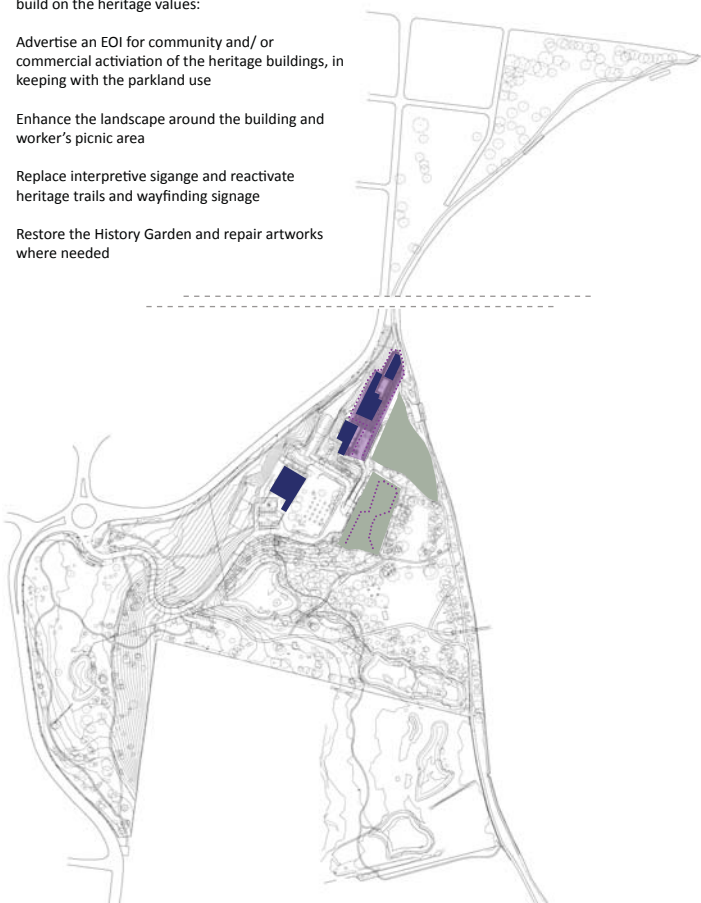
The Master Plan recommends the following to build on the heritage values:

Advertise an EOI for community and/or commercial activation of the heritage buildings, in keeping with the parkland use

Enhance the landscape around the building and worker's picnic area

Replace interpretive signage and reactivate heritage trails and wayfinding signage

Restore the History Garden and repair artworks where needed



Facilitate leisure opportunities



Existing Conditions

The Maribyrnong River Trail is a highly popular recreation facility connecting through the parks. It caters to the fastest growing forms of leisure, being walking and cycling. Other popular leisure uses of the park include dog walking and picnicking. Outdoor exercise equipment is provided at Burton Cres Reserve. There is the opportunity to provide for and encourage a greater range of informal and passive leisure pursuits, in keeping with the park character.

Recommendations

The Master Plan recommends the following to facilitate leisure opportunities:

Provide a public toilet that services the river trail and parkland

Connect the shared use path to the Van Ness entry to facilitate cycling

Provide walking tracks around the wetlands

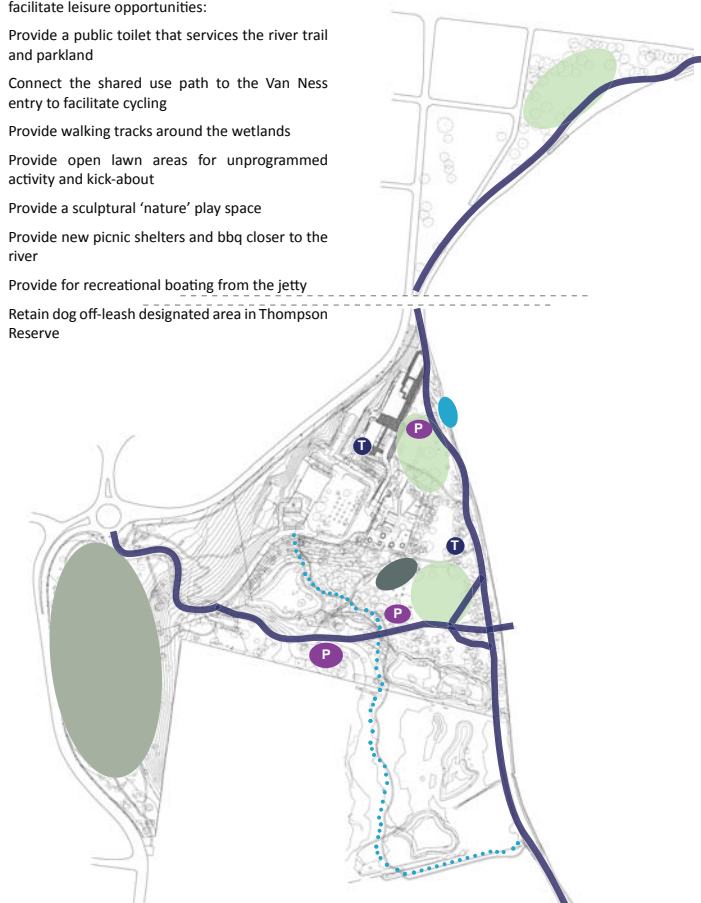
Provide open lawn areas for unprogrammed activity and kick-about

Provide a sculptural 'nature' play space

Provide new picnic shelters and bbq closer to the river

Provide for recreational boating from the jetty

Retain dog off-leash designated area in Thompson Reserve



Capitalise on the park's unique character



Existing Conditions

The fascinating history and evolution of these parklands give the place a distinctive quality, which should be retained and enhanced by retaining the unique features and making sensitive new additions.

The History Garden and worker's picnic area contains multiple artworks which contribute to the character of the place and require some restoration.

Recommendations

The Master Plan recommends the following to capitalise on the park's unique character:

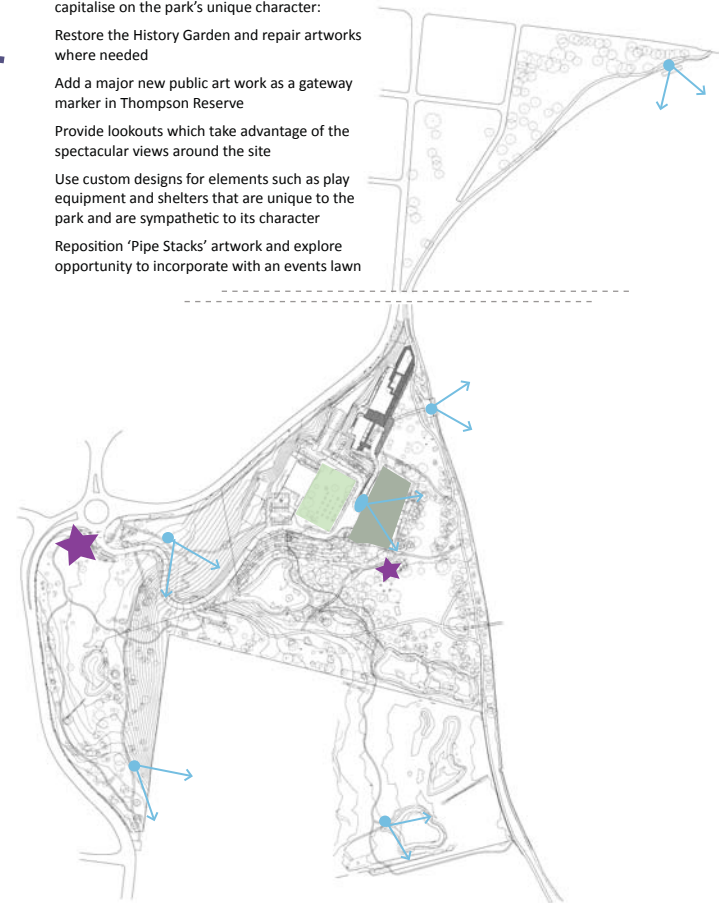
Restore the History Garden and repair artworks where needed

Add a major new public art work as a gateway marker in Thompson Reserve

Provide lookouts which take advantage of the spectacular views around the site

Use custom designs for elements such as play equipment and shelters that are unique to the park and are sympathetic to its character

Reposition 'Pipe Stacks' artwork and explore opportunity to incorporate with an events lawn



Legend

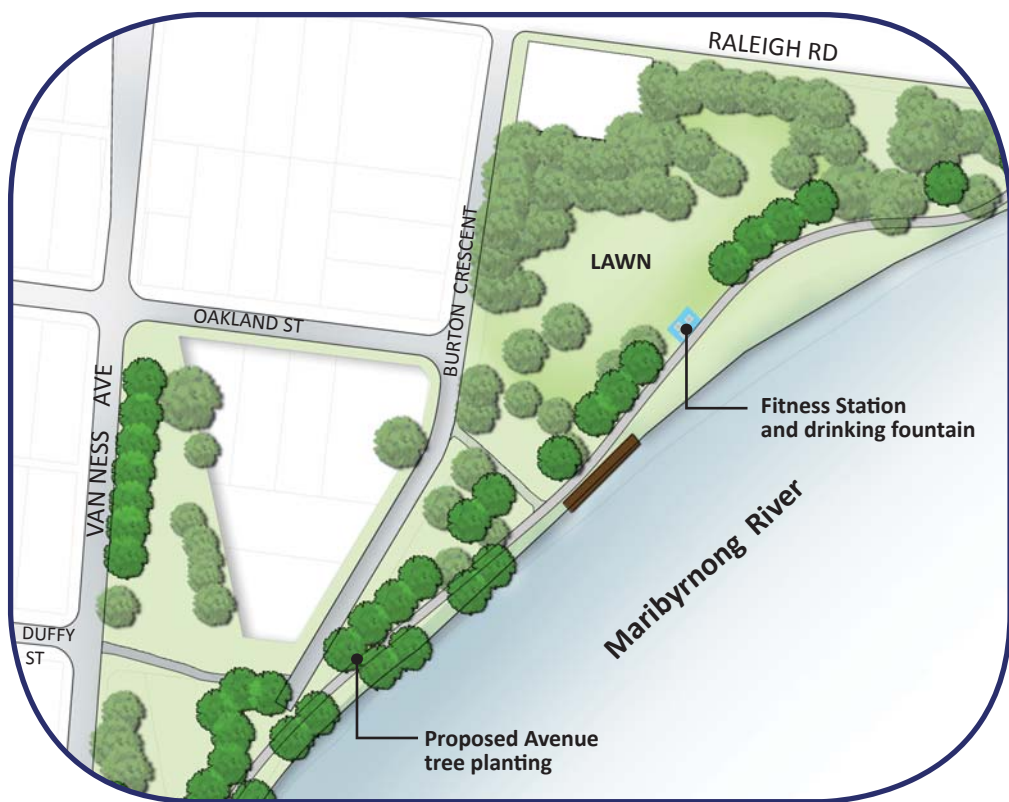
- a** Heritage buildings, activate with community/commercial use
- b** Courtyards & gathering space
- c** Service parking to lower heritage buildings
- d** River jetty, retain and improve use
- e** Workers picnic area and Womens Pioneer Shelter
- f** Maribyrnong River Trail
- g** Main access ramp, retain and improve
- h** Overflow carpark area
- i** Event lawn integrated with Pipestacks artwork
- j** Outlook over History of the Land Garden
- k** Restore History of the Land Garden
- l** Public toilet, to serve park and river trail (TBC)
- m** Playspace, creative and sculptural nature play
- n** Open lawn for unprogrammed recreation
- o** New picnic area with barbecue and shelter
- p** Wetland walk trail, with lookout / birdhide
- q** Southern picnic grounds
- r** Wetlands, improve flow and treatment function
- s** Primary carpark
- t** Picnic area carpark

- u** Shared path connection to river trail
- v** Primary pedestrian paths
- x** Lookout off main entry path
- y** Provide bike lane marking on entry road
- z** Pedestrian path along Van Ness Ave
- 1** Pipedreams Artwork
- 2** Thompson Reserve, path network
- 3** Path/steps connection to Thompson Reserve
- 4** Seating / lookout area along escarpment path
- 5** Improved entry to Thompson Reserve off Gordon Street
- 6** Signalised crossing for pedestrian access

Legend

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Main Entry Road | History of The Land Garden | Existing Trees & Vegetation Canopy | Title Boundary |
| 3.0m wide Concrete Shared Path | Ephemeral Wetland Water Bodies | Understorey Vegetation | Viewing Platforms |
| 1.5m wide Gravel Pedestrian Path | Open grassed area | New Tree & Vegetation Planting | "Pipedreams" Artwork |
| Carpark Area | Event Lawn | New Exotic Tree | |

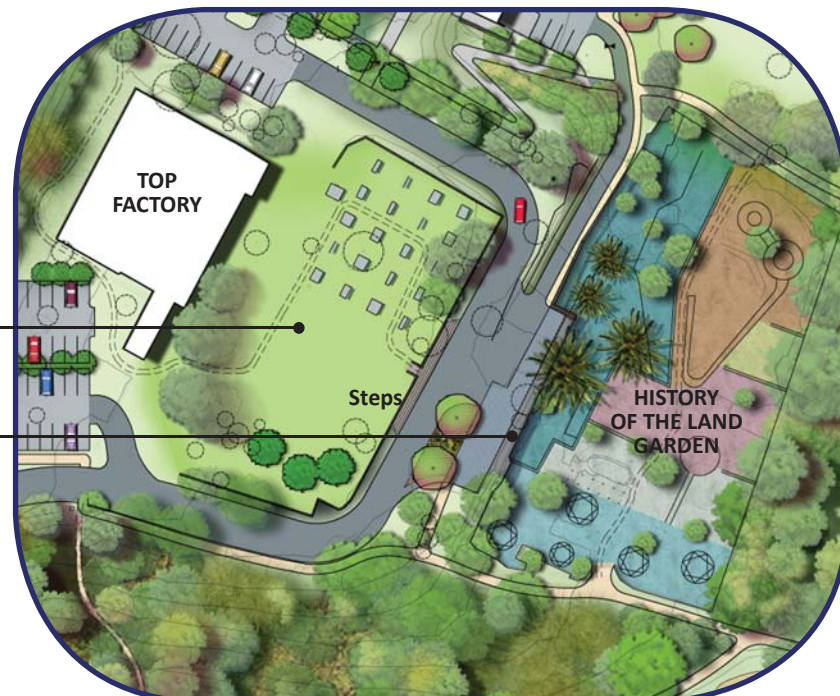




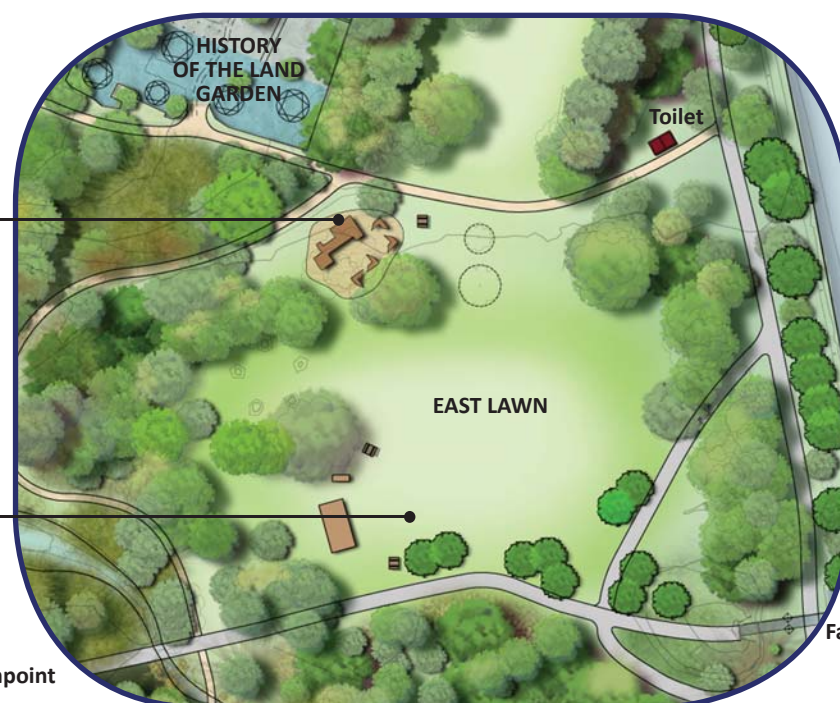
A Burton Crescent Reserve



B Lower Heritage Area



C Upper Heritage Area



D River Lawn and Picnic Area

Heritage Elements		
Item		Priority
1	Advertise an EOI for use of Heritage Buildings 1, 2, 3, and Top Factory for suitable community / commercial use which will complement and further activate Pipemakers Park.	High
2	Establish formal paved forecourts to Heritage Building entries	Medium
3	Replace interpretive signage and reactivate heritage trails	High
4	Restore History Garden – repair of artworks and renewal of planting	Medium

Environmental Systems		
Item		Priority
5	Improve function of wetlands by connecting two wetlands in Pipemakers Park and rectifying eroded channels in Thompson Reserve	High
6	Improve function of wetlands by connecting Van Ness stormwater to wetlands, and connecting Pipemakers Park to Frog Hollow wetlands	Medium
7	New tree planting in key locations to retain views, enhance park experience and improve habitat and biodiversity	High
8	Manage weeds through removal, suppression and new understory planting	Medium
9	New understory planting, particularly on embankment areas	Medium
10	New tree planting to Burton Crescent Reserve including riverside planting	Medium

Carparking and Vehicular Circulation		
Item		Priority
11	Advocate for signalised intersection at Van Ness Ave and Gordon St.	High
12	Formalise road from south of Top Factory to front of heritage buildings	Medium
13	Establish main carpark area on south side of Top Factory	Medium
14	Establish service / event parking in front of Heritage Building 3	Medium
15	Retain south carpark and remove existing overflow parking from south area open up as visitation increases	Low
16	Establish overflow carpark to the north of Top Factory	Low
17	Establish small car park at the Pipemakers Park entrance to service Thompson's Reserve dog off-leash parking	Low
18	Controlled access to Jack's Magazine	Low

Entries, Signage and Wayfinding		
Item		Priority
19	Improve wayfinding and directional signage	High
20	Improve south entrance to Thompson Reserve from Gordon Street crossing, including fence alignment	Medium
21	Provide entry signage at south and north entry points along River Trail	Medium
22	Provide gateway / entry sign at Van Ness entry	Medium

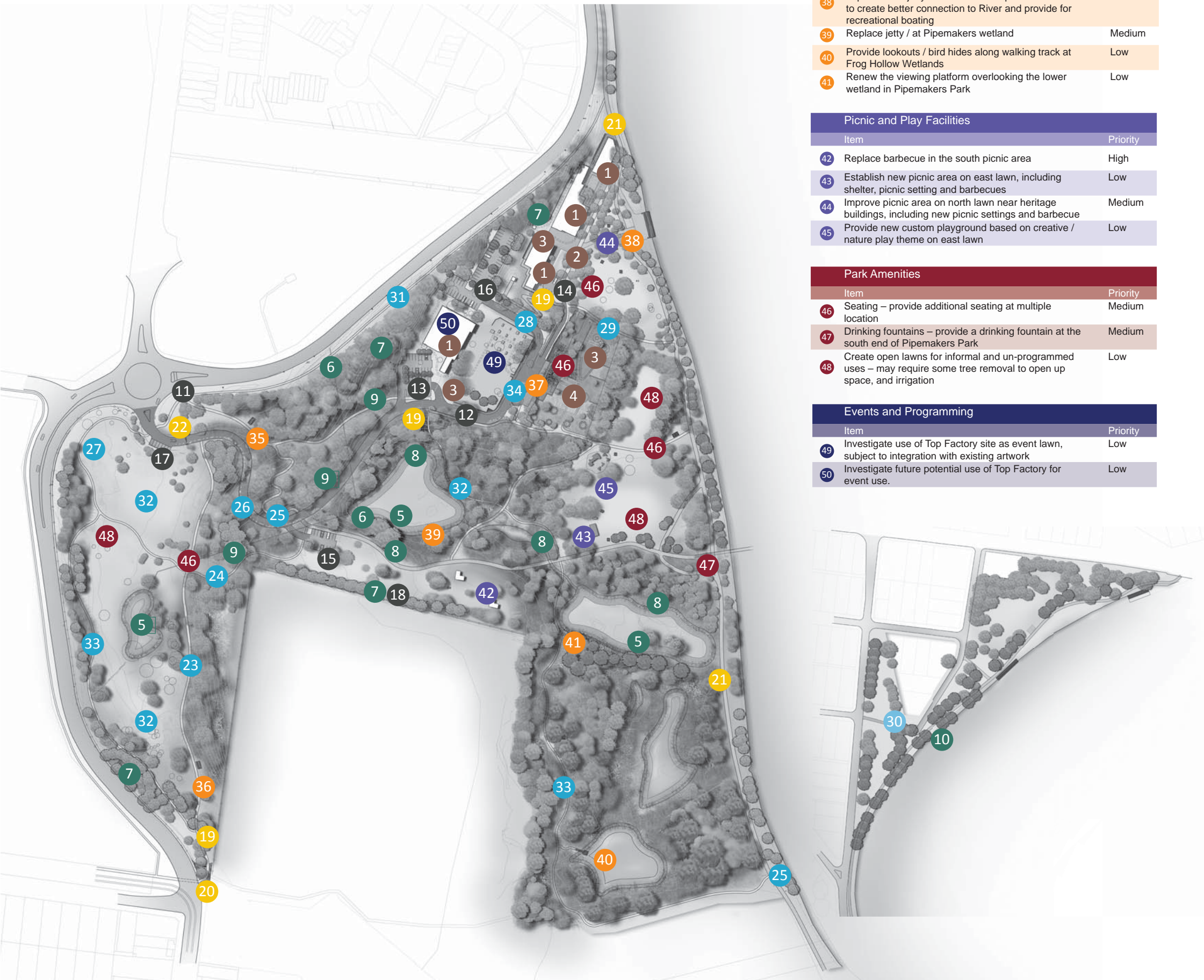
Pedestrian and Cycle Circulation		
Item		Priority
23	Provide path along east edge of Thompson Reserve	High
24	Provide steps connection down escarpment from Thompson Reserve to Pipemakers south carpark	High
25	Connect path from Van Ness entry to east-west shared path	High
26	Provide bike lanes along entry road from Van Ness Ave entry	High
27	Provide new gravel path to integrate with "Pipedreams" artwork	High
28	Improve ramp connection to the south of Heritage Building 3	Medium
29	Provide path along north edge of History Garden to River Trail	Medium
30	Provide path at south end of Burton Cres Reserve to connect to Duffy Street	Medium
31	Provide footpath along Van Ness Avenue	Low
32	Provide walking track around Pipemakers wetlands	Low
33	Provide walking track around Frogs Hollow wetlands	Low
34	Provide terrace/steps east of event lawn	Low

Lookouts and Viewing Spaces		
Item		Priority
35	Provide lookout near Van Ness entry	High
36	Provide seating area / lookout on east side of Thompson Reserve	High
37	Provide lookout / viewing terrace on east side of History Garden	Medium
38	Improve river jetty at north end of Pipemakers Park to create better connection to River and provide for recreational boating	Medium
39	Replace jetty / at Pipemakers wetland	Medium
40	Provide lookouts / bird hides along walking track at Frog Hollow Wetlands	Low
41	Renew the viewing platform overlooking the lower wetland in Pipemakers Park	Low

Picnic and Play Facilities		
Item		Priority
42	Replace barbecue in the south picnic area	High
43	Establish new picnic area on east lawn, including shelter, picnic setting and barbecues	Low
44	Improve picnic area on north lawn near heritage buildings, including new picnic settings and barbecues	Medium
45	Provide new custom playground based on creative / nature play theme on east lawn	Low

Park Amenities		
Item		Priority
46	Seating – provide additional seating at multiple location	Medium
47	Drinking fountains – provide a drinking fountain at the south end of Pipemakers Park	Medium
48	Create open lawns for informal and un-programmed uses – may require some tree removal to open up space, and irrigation	Low

Events and Programming		
Item		Priority
49	Investigate use of Top Factory site as event lawn, subject to integration with existing artwork	Low
50	Investigate future potential use of Top Factory for event use.	Low





Activated Buildings



Activated Buildings



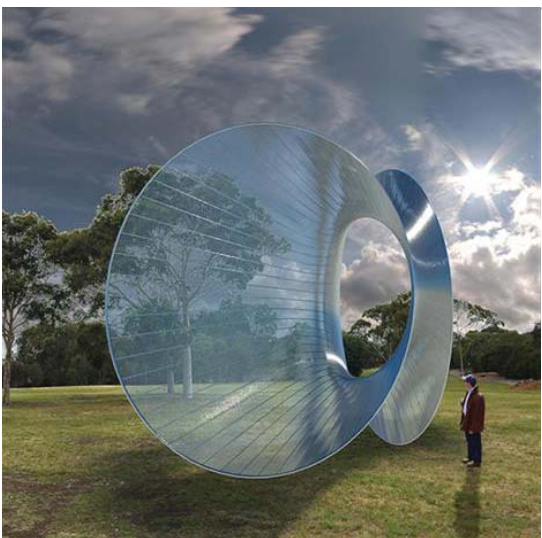
Frogs Hollow Wetland



Viewing Platforms



Bushland Discovery Trails



"Pipedreams" Public Art



Events Lawn

