

# **MASTER PLAN**

**Chittick Park, Seymour**

**Mitchell Shire Council**

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## 1.0 Introduction

Chittick Park is located in the township of Seymour and is approximately 18 hectares in size. It is described as a largely traditional sporting precinct, providing a wide range of sport and recreation facilities and opportunities.

In December 2009 Council commissioned the development of a Master Plan for the Park to provide guidance to Council regarding the enhancement and improvement of the Park for the local community and user groups. The Master Plan has been developed giving consideration to the capacity and capabilities of the site, previous planning work completed by Council and community needs which have been identified through a program of community consultation. These aspects are discussed in detail in the following sections, and form the basis for the Master Plan recommendations outlined in Section 6 below.

## 2.0 Background

The Park offers a wide range of sport and recreation facilities and opportunities. The facilities consist of:

- Seymour Sports and Aquatic Centre including 2 multipurpose courts, a 25 metre swimming pool and water play pool, a small gym and a café
- 2 formal playing fields – the Bennet Oval and the Chittick Oval, each have a turf cricket pitch
- 2 cricket practice compounds (synthetic surfaces) – one associated with each playing field
- 2 cricket pavilions one attached to each playing field
- Floodlight towers – Both Chittick Oval and Bennett Oval partially lit
- A scout hall
- A band hall
- Seymour Youth and Fitness Centre
- Several storage facilities – Little Athletics, Dog Club, Cricket Club, Community Service Groups
- 10 outdoor netball courts located on main public carpark
- 16 tennis courts (11 plexipave and 4 synthetic) with pavilion attached
- Skateboard facility
- Former hockey pitch / soccer pitch (currently unused)
- All Abilities Accessible Playground
- Sealed and unsealed car parking.

One of Mitchell Shire Council's depot facilities is also located in Chittick Park at the rear of the Seymour Sports and Aquatic Centre.

The groups who currently make use of the facilities through formal arrangements are:

- Seymour Town Tennis Club
- St Mary's Tennis Club
- Seymour Junior Netball Club
- Seymour Senior Netball Club
- Seymour Basketball Club (in the Sports and Aquatic Centre)

- Seymour Cricket Club
- Royals Cricket Club
- St Mary's Football Club
- Seymour Soccer Club
- Seymour Scouts
- Mitchell Shire Concert Band
- Seymour Youth and Fitness Club
- Seymour District Kennel Club
- Local schools.

The Park is Mitchell Shire Council land and its use is managed through a number of separate arrangements. Some of these arrangements are clear and well documented, for example:

The Seymour Sports and Aquatic Centre has responsibility for bookings for the playing fields

A Section 86 committee consisting of members from both the St Mary's and Seymour Town Tennis Club is responsible for the management of the tennis pavilion and tennis courts.

By contrast use and lease / licence arrangements are not clearly documented for the Scouts, Mitchell Concert Band Hall, the Seymour Youth and Fitness Facility.

### 3.0 Capacities and Capabilities

The purpose of this analysis is to understand the capacities and capabilities of Chittick Park, through consideration of the sites strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, as identified by the planning consultant in association with Council officers.

Strengths		Comments
	The size of the Park and the range facilities and opportunities these provide for the community for participation in formal sport and recreation activities.	It is generally acknowledged that the Park is not currently used to its best capacity. This largely appears to be driven by the poor condition of many of the facilities and the amenity of the Park as a whole.
	The location of the Seymour Sports and Aquatic Centre in the Park.	This facility attracts many visitations to the Park which may not otherwise occur, providing a ready market of people who many be interested in participating in other activities in the Park.
	The location of the Park within an intensive residential area.	This is an important piece of open space for the Seymour community, and expanding its capacities and capabilities will be of great assistance in improving the health and wellbeing of the Seymour community.

Weaknesses	Comments
There is poor visual amenity at the entry to the Park. The park looks 'unloved' with no entry signage, no perimeter fencing, unkempt grass, gravel areas and limited plantings.	Improving the visual amenity will encourage increased use and care of the Park.
Car parking is poorly designed eg: the centre of the Park is designated for car parking, informal car parking occurs on grass and gravel areas causing damage to the Park and creating conflict between pedestrians and cars, nose to tail parking occurs around the ovals.	The poor location and design of the car parking also impacts significantly upon the visual amenity of the entry area and the Park as a whole.
The skate ramp is located directly beside the playground and has very little space around it.	While the location of the skate ramp at the entry to the park provides valuable passive surveillance and ready access, the co-location with the playground creates a conflict of use between young people and families, particularly given the lack of space around the skate ramp. The relocation of the skate ramp is desirable.
The generally poor condition of the facilities in the Park.	For example many of the tennis courts are in poor condition, the playing fields are poorly maintained, the amenities supporting the playing fields eg seating are in poor condition or non existent.
Turf wickets which limit use of the playing fields.	The installation of synthetic cricket pitches would substantially increase the capacity of the playing fields eg: could cater for junior cricket.
The cricket practice compound located beside the Bennett Oval runs east west.	Practice wickets should run North South to ensure minimal impacts of the sun upon cricketers.
Poor amenities to support formal sport and recreation activity – shade, toilets, seating, water bubblers, picnic tables, BBQ.	It is now well established that good quality amenities to support formal sport and recreation activities are essential for encouraging participation.
Poor access to the Sports and Aquatic Centre back of house / plant areas.	The current set up requires vehicle access onto the hockey pitch to access the plant areas. As the pitch is currently not in use this is not an immediate problem, however it is not an acceptable arrangement if use of the pitch recommences.
Lack of use of the facilities, particularly the playing fields eg: one field is used 6 hours per week for competition during the summer months.	Active involvement from Council officers is needed to support the existing clubs to increase membership numbers and to identify opportunities for other clubs and activities to use the facilities at Chittick Park.

<b>Weaknesses continued</b>		<b>Comments</b>
	There are a large number of tennis courts (16) to meet the moderate needs of two tennis clubs who have a combined total of 80 members. Further, the courts create a physical barrier between the north and the south of the Park.	Amalgamation of the two tennis clubs is a sensible option to pursue, however both clubs have indicated an unwillingness to consider this. It is not sustainable to continue operating 16 tennis courts for 80 people and this needs to be addressed.
	Use of the Park as an access road to the Council Depot by Council vehicles. This arrangement is in place due to concerns from residents in the surrounding streets about large vehicles / trucks access the Depot through residential street.	This impacts negatively upon the condition of the road into the Park, however currently there is no alternative arrangement available.
	Poor lighting on the ovals ie: only partial lighting on both ovals.	This impacts upon the flexibility and usability of the oval ie: training at night time is limited.
<b>Opportunities</b>	Substantially expand use of the Park through improving the condition of the facilities, improved maintenance standards and expanding the opportunities for participation in the Park.	It is acknowledged that improving the condition of the facilities and the maintenance standards for the Park has resource implications for Council. Further, expanding the participation opportunities also has resource implications as it may require different facilities to be provided, but most importantly it will require support from Council officers to encourage different activities and increased participation.
	The enhancement and development of informal recreation options in the Park.	The Park is largely focused on formal sport and recreation activity. There is an opportunity to expand the informal recreation options in the Park, particularly at the northern end of the Park eg: walking trails, a children's cycle trail, informal kick around areas. As identified above there is also opportunity to substantially increase amenities such as picnic tables, BBQ facilities, water bubblers etc. Passive surveillance is an issue at the northern end of the Park.
	Relocation of the skate ramp and development of a young people's precinct.	As identified above, the skate ramps current location is less than desirable given the limited space surrounding it and the proximity to the playground. A new location which allowed for the expansion of informal recreation options for young people such as hit up walls, basketball rings etc should be considered. Passive surveillance will be an important consideration in any relocation of the skate ramp.

Opportunities continued	Comments
Relocation of the service club facilities from the back of the Shire Depot.	The relocation and removal of these facilities is currently occurring. This will increase the open space available at the north of the Park, potentially for informal recreation pursuits.
Improve the linkages to the residential streets at the northern end of the Park..	Currently access to the north western end of the Park is limited. If possible this needs to be addressed to allow is easy to the Park, particularly for residents living to the west of the Park.
Consolidation of storage facilities.	The removal of the service clubs facilities to the Worrhough Road site will go a long way to address this. Two other separate storage facilities remain in the park and these may be difficult to consolidate. What must be agreed to is that no other separate storage facilities / buildings will be erected.
The operators of the Seymour Youth Fitness Centre wish to expand the facility they use.	Council is unlikely to agree for this to occur as there is insufficient evidence to support this expansion ie: current operating hours are limited.
Improve the connection and interaction between the Seymour Sports and Aquatic Centre and other facilities and groups who make use of the Park.	The Seymour Sports and Aquatic Centre is operated by Mitchell Shire Council staff and while their focus and function is upon the Centre itself, an opportunity exists to expand their role. For example facilitating relationships between the different user groups, encouraging co-operation, joint programming and marketing and encouraging users of the Centre to consider other activities on offer in the Park. This may also expand the Centre's markets by exposing the Centre to people participating in other activities in the Park.,
Buy residential land to put road / foot entry at the north of the Park	This has resource implications for Council.
The relocation of the Council Depot to another site away from the Park	This is a long term vision Council has for the Depot and Park. One option to be considered could be the rezoning of the site for residential purposes generating funds for the upgrade and redevelopment of the Park. However any funds may be required for any upgrade of other depot facilities.

Threats		Comments
	Exposure to bushfires and possible damage and loss of community assets.	While located comfortably in the township and residential areas of Seymour, the Park has the potential to be impacted by bushfire.
	Flood prone area, a flood overlay is in place for the Northern part of the Park.	This indicates it may not be viable to develop extensive formal infrastructure in this part of the Reserve.
	Entrenched community behavior in relation to the Park.	It may take time to encourage a different way of using the Park, for example parking in different locations, encouraging people to respect and look after the Park, encouraging groups to work more effectively together.
	The size of the Park and generally its poor condition.	Extensive resources will be required to enhance and develop the Park and this will be a challenge given Council's many competing priorities. The flood prone nature of the land limits any opportunities to rezone and sell part of the land to assist in paying for improvement works.
	Maintenance responsibilities, OHS and risk management.	Volunteer committees of management are responsible for managing and maintaining parts of the Park. Issues regarding maintenance standards, risk management and OHS and are a concern for Council in relation to committees of management.

## **4.0 Review of Previous Planning**

In planning for the future management and development of recreation facilities, it is important to ensure that what is recommended considers and reflects past research and planning undertaken by Council. This section provides an overview of the key recommendations and outcomes from past reports and studies relating to Chittick Park and broader Council Policy documents.

### **4.1 Mitchell Shire Council Plan 2009 – 2013**

The Council Plan outlines the important issues and initiatives Council will focus on in its four year term. Council's vision for this period is 'together with our community, create a sustainable future.' The Plan outlines eight key result areas where Council will focus its activities and resources. The key result area most relevant to the development of the Master Plan for Chittick Park are 'sport and recreation', and 'community services, education and youth', however they provide minimal specific direction.

Overall, the Council Plan provides a broad outline of the issues and service areas which will be of priority to Council during its four year term and in that context provides the broad strategic framework for the Chittick Park Master Plan. A number of strategic objectives outlined in the Council Plan are relevant to this Master Plan and should be referred to as a testing point when considering the future mix of facilities and opportunities to be offered at Chittick Park. These are:

Enhance the quality of residents' lives by facilitating and encouraging healthy lifestyles; a community in which it is safe to live and an environment that is diverse and sustainable.

Plan developments and public spaces that take into account community needs and desires while being practical and responsive to longer term needs.

Council has an extensive network of aging infrastructure, and the development of responsible preservation programs will be balanced against the community's desire for new facilities.

Provide opportunities for residents to maintain physical wellbeing and strengthen social ties.

### **4.2 Mitchell Shire Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2009 - 2013**

It is a legislative requirement that Councils develop a Municipal Public Health Plan and the Mitchell Shire Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan is intended to both fulfill this requirement, and more broadly focus on a partnership approach to integrated health planning to achieve healthy living outcomes for residents and visitors of Mitchell Shire. It is identified as one of three core policy documents for Council.

The Plan identifies five goals which are:

1. Create a sense of community safety
2. Create an environment of connection and resilience through community building
3. Advocate for and promote early intervention
4. Support and enhance engagement, participation and partnerships
5. Maintain, enhance, develop and protect healthy environments.

Each of these goals has relevance to the development of the Master Plan for Chittick Park and as with the Council Plan discussed above, these goals provides a broad outline of the health and wellbeing priorities Council has for its community and should be referred to as a testing point when considering the future mix of facilities and opportunities to be offered at Chittick Park.

The Plan identifies objectives, strategies and actions for each goal. Those of relevance to the Chittick Park Master Plan are outlined below:

*Relevant Objectives*

- Provide places for people to meet.
- Recognise and address the needs of vulnerable groups in the community.

*Relevant Strategies and Actions*

- Continue to support Seymour Youth and Fitness Centre.
- Continue to encourage participation and development of active sports and other recreational opportunities.
- Encourage incidental physical activity.
- Continue to develop footpaths, walking trails and tracks within the Shire.
- Increase areas of walk and cycle ability in the Shire.
- Increase community awareness of local opportunities for physical activity.
- Continue to protect and enhance our native vegetation in open spaces.
- Plan for additional informal sports facilities in parks and open spaces ie: a half court.
- Increase passive recreation opportunities for young people.
- Develop sport and recreation opportunities that address changing community demand.
- Develop, maintain and manage the Shire's signage to encourage and increase leisure and recreational activities.
- Support the development of the junior football clubs, soccer clubs and associated fields, ovals and amenities\Finish AAA playground in Seymour.

### **4.3 Mitchell Shire Environment Strategy, July 2008**

The Mitchell Shire Environment Strategy was initially adopted in May 2000 and has since been reviewed twice in April 2005 and July 2008. It is designed to foster a culture and implement management practices which support ecologically sustainable land uses by creating guidelines to direct Council in achieving sustainability for the long term prosperity and health of the Mitchell community.

Environmental challenges identified in the Shire of Mitchell include:

- Much of the Shire is highly susceptible to various land degradation problems.
- Clearing, grazing and loss of native perennial pasture has led to increased soil erosion.
- Bushland has largely been reduced to small privately owned patches, public reserves, road reserves and waterways.
- Vegetation clearance has increased recharge to ground water, raising the water table through salt laden soils resulting in salinity discharge areas.
- Deterioration in water quality of rivers and streams.
- Noise and atmospheric pollution are effecting the environment and standards of living.
- Recreational activities, if not carefully managed have the potential to contribute to erosion, spread of weeds, noise and air pollution and loss of native flora and fauna.

- As one of the fast growing regional municipalities, Mitchell Shire faces environmental pressures from the development of green field sites and increased population.

While the Strategy largely does not identify actions specific to Chittick Park, it highlights the importance of the natural environment and Councils commitment to ensuring continued sustainability of native flora and fauna. Chittick Park has significant parts which provide a natural bush setting. These parts of the Park are subject to a flood overlay and therefore have limited capacity to be developed for formal sport and recreation pursuits. Further they provide a valuable buffer between an industrial area and the Park and residential areas. The conservation area however is largely unenhanced with minimal maintenance levels.

#### **4.4 2005 Mitchell Shire Council Recreation and Open Space Strategy**

The Recreation and Open Space Strategy seeks to provide strategic directions and identifies priorities for the provision of recreation and leisure services for the short, medium and long term in Mitchell Shire. The program of research identified six key issues for the provision of leisure and recreation opportunities and infrastructure in Mitchell. These are:

1. Rapid population growth and change which will have a major impact on the demand for sport, recreation and leisure activities;
2. A need for Council to support and encourage activities that enhance the health and wellbeing of its community;
3. Increasing the diversity of sport, leisure and recreation opportunities available to the community and not maintaining a reliance on existing and traditional infrastructure and opportunities;
4. The need to provide a range of opportunities for people of all ages and abilities;
5. An increasing awareness of the natural environment and the need to protect and enhance it while continuing to provide opportunities for people to enjoy its benefits;
6. Supporting and encouraging the community's greatest asset, its people.

The broad actions identified to address these issues are:

Managing change;  
 Encouraging walking and cycling;  
 Catering for a diverse range of opportunities;  
 Design for equity;  
 Protect natural features;  
 Asset and information management.

There are a number of actions identified in the Strategy which are relevant to the Master Plan for Chittick Park. Those of greatest significance are:

#### **Relevant Township Specific Actions - Seymour**

- There may be benefits of reviewing the Chittick Park Master Plan to enhance viability and usability. *This occurred in September 2006.* Suggestions included:
  - Consolidating buildings
  - Reconfiguring roadways, parking and bollards
  - There may be value in developing the skate park further and the existing hockey field to cater for soccer or as an additional junior ground and training area

- Addressing irrigation, drainage and floodlighting.
- Commence the planning of a significant accessible playground in Seymour. Consider Chittick Park and Kings Park/Seymour Outdoor Pool areas as the primary options. *An accessible playground has been constructed at Chittick Park.*
- Review options to provide additional open space for kick about areas, tree planting and paths to enhance environmental amenity and walkability. *Chittick Park has several areas which are underutilized / undeveloped particularly at the northern end of the Park which could be considered for this purpose.*
- Review the long term management model for Chittick Park in conjunction with a programmed implementation of a new master plan. *Reviewing the management model is outside the scope of this master plan, however some consideration has been given to this in the recommendations.*

#### **Broader Actions**

- Focus on good design of new infrastructure and on rectifying infrastructure in one prominent social family recreation space in each township first.
- Place priority on improvement or replacement of structures in spaces identified as township parks, serving social / family recreation function.
- Develop a network of further trails along linear open spaces and creek corridors and through new residential developments; as a priority one in each township and new larger residential development. *Chittick Park has significant capacity in this area given its size and proximity to residents.*
- Promote walking and cycling circuits and trails with clear, consistent signage and trail information.
- Incorporate perimeter paths where practical into new Reserve Master Plans or Future Development Plans. *Chittick Park has significant capacity in this area given its size.*
- Provide opportunities for adolescents (especially female) to be active as well as just 'hang out' in safe, observable open spaces in each township.
- Improve the design of open space to appeal to older adults.
- Upgrade park infrastructure and facilities to encourage participation by people with a disability.
- Ensure one park in each township is made accessible to all users as a priority.
- Protect remnant vegetation along roadsides, ridgelines, water courses and open space.
- Ensure management practices and development within surrounding reserves do not adversely impact on waterways.
- Ensure future infrastructure in open space minimizes the use of non-renewable resources and encourages users to reduce, re-use and recycle.

#### **4.5 Chittick Park Master Plan, June 2002**

The 2002 Chittick Park Master Plan was developed in response to a recommendation in the Mitchell Shire Council 2002 Recreation and Open Space Strategy. The Master Plan identified a lengthy list of issues, aspirations, and needs for the Park including their priority and likely cost to implement. The issues, aspirations and needs appear to largely be a wish list of the groups who made use of the Park at that time. The following list provides a summary of the key issues, aspirations and needs:

Improvements to and expansion of the Boxing Club (Seymour Youth and Fitness Club) building including options for co-tenants such as the Seymour Little Athletics Club.

Development of a synthetic athletics track. *The Seymour Little Athletics Club has since relocated to Kings Park in Seymour.*

Address disability access to the toilets and installation of security lighting to the exterior of the Mitchell Concert Band hall.

Increased lighting for tennis courts.

Upgrade to Chittick Park Oval.

Training lights for ground on which the Royals Cricket Club play (Bennett Oval).

Construction of a third playing field in the northern part of the Park – *currently informal parkland.*

Address security lighting for buildings in the Park.

Retention of the hockey field for training and junior sport.

Address aesthetics of the Park with more shade trees, landscaping the main entrance and Park generally, improved street lighting, removal of dangerous vegetation / trees, installation of BBQ areas, seating and tables, directional signage.

Increase informal recreation options through developing a path/circuit around the Park, establishment of a BMX track, expansion of the skate facilities, improving the existing walking / cycling track.

#### **4.6 Chittick Park Reserve Master Plan, September 2006**

This Master Plan was developed in 2006 and like the 2002 Master Plan, largely reflects the issues raised by groups making use of the Park rather than broader consideration of Council's priorities and wider community needs. It identified 12 issues, aspirations and needs in relation to the Park and developed a series of recommendations related to these. The issues, aspirations and needs identified were:

*A lack of adequate athletic facilities in Mitchell Shire. The Little Athletics Club has since relocated to Kings Park where more appropriate facilities are located.*

The main entrance to the Park requires realignment.

The band building requires improved security and access for wheelchairs to the toilets.

Explore alternate access to the Council Depot by Council vehicles.

The management of the Park.

The upgrading of Chittick Park Oval.

The limited potential for community groups to raise funds.

Security lighting for the Stadium, Band Hall and Skate Park.

The development of the soccer pitch.

The removal of portable buildings and development of the Seymour Youth and Fitness facility.

Reserve signage and promotion strategy.

Development of an access for all abilities playground in Seymour. (An access for all abilities playground has since been constructed in Chittick Park.)

Largely the issues, aspirations and needs for Chittick Park have remained unaddressed. This has most likely occurred because of the broad demands on Council resources and as noted above, the Master Plan did not consider broader Council priorities and the needs of the wider community.

## 4.7 Conclusion

The review of previous planning completed by Council has identified a number of issues, directions and strategies which have implications for the development of the Chittick Park Master Plan. In particular Council's broad strategic plans including the Council Plan 2009-2013 and the Health and Wellbeing Plan will set the strategic framework for the Chittick Park Master Plan. These plans highlight Council's strong emphasis on:

Encouraging healthy lifestyles and wellbeing in the community

Creating a sense of belonging and connectedness for the community

Planning spaces based upon community needs and balancing this against practical issues such as resources, durability and changing community needs.

This is reinforced in Council's Recreation and Open Space Strategy which also provides more specific direction regarding Seymour and in particular Chittick Park, but also more broadly about the directions Council should pursue in relation to open space and recreation. For example:

A strong emphasis on walking and cycling options for the community, recognizing this is one of the simplest ways to encourage a more healthy and active lifestyle for community members

The importance of providing good recreation options for young people .

Finally the two Master Plans developed for Chittick Park in 2002 and 2006 provide an important insight into the needs and aspirations of the groups who make use of the Park. This Master Plan will seek to consider those in the context of Council's strategic directions and priorities and wider community needs.

The issues, strategies and actions identified in this section will be considered in the development of the recommendations for the Master Plan.

## 5.0 Community Consultation

A program of community consultation and engagement was conducted as part of developing this Master Plan. The consultation consisted of three workshops. The first was held with Council officers who have some responsibility for Chittick Park and / or have particular knowledge of the Park and/or community surrounding the Park. The second was held with representatives from the groups who use Chittick Park and the third workshop was focused upon members of the general community in Seymour, particularly those living close to the Park. The notes documenting the outcomes from the workshops were circulated to those who attended, to confirm that they accurately reflected the discussions from the workshops, and to provide an opportunity to raise any additional ideas, opportunities or issues.

While the consultation program identified a wide range of issues and opportunities, there was some clear consistency about the issues raised. The information below outlines the key findings from the consultation with the detailed notes from each consultation session available in Appendices 1, 2 and 3.

### 5.1 Key Findings

The key findings from the consultation program were:

- Recognition that development of the Park has previously occurred in a very piecemeal way and that this needs to be discontinued with a clear sense of purpose and role defined for the Park.
- The aesthetics of the Park are poor and this gives the impression that the Park is under resourced, unloved and not well managed. This should be addressed as a priority to help create a Park which the local community and visitors feel good about visiting and looking after.

- There are significant safety issues which need to be addressed including:
  - The poor delineation of car parking which means people park cars in inappropriate locations and create conflict between cars and pedestrians
  - The use of the Park as the only vehicle access point to the Council Depot located behind the Sports and Aquatic Centre
  - The poor lighting both within the Park and the streets surrounding it
  - The narrow car entry into the Park off Pollard Street and the poor sightlines at this entry point
  - Antisocial behavior associated with the skate ramp and playground facilities.
- There is opportunity to significantly increase the informal recreation options available in the Park, particularly through the creation of trails and pathways both through and around the perimeter of the Park, and the development of picnic and barbecue areas with shade, water bubblers, seating, grassed areas etc.
- That the conservation area at the north of the Park is valuable but currently difficult to access, with many parts of the community unaware that the Park extends beyond the tennis complex. The conservation area should be enhanced and improved, with consideration given to how it might be made more accessible with better links and connections to the rest of the Park and surrounding residential areas. This applies to the whole of the northern area of the Park.
- The current co-location of the skate ramp and playground is problematic. There are concerns about antisocial behavior, particularly connected with the shed/shelter facility incorporated as part of the playground, and the poor condition of the skate ramp. Relocation of the skate ramp needs to be considered as a priority. The general view was that every attempt should be made to relocate within Chittick Park.
- Some of the amenities and facilities in the Park do not adequately support or respond to the activity occurring in the Park. For example there are no public toilet facilities in the Park, except for those located in the Sports and Aquatic Centre and there are no appropriate change facilities to support winter sports such as football.
- A strong sense that user groups and the community are keen to work proactively together and with Council to make the best use of resources to enhance the Park and the sport and recreation opportunities it offers.

## **6.0 Master Plan Recommendations**

This section outlines the:

- Key issues and opportunities for Chittick Park,
- Role of the Park and guiding principles for decision making in relation to the Park, and
- Recommendations for the Chittick Park Master Plan.

These have been developed giving consideration to the capacity and capabilities of the site, previous planning work completed by Council and community needs identified through the program of community consultation.

### **6.1 Key Issues and Opportunities**

While a range of issues and opportunities have emerged through development of the Master Plan, it has been particularly interesting to see such strong consistency in the issues and opportunities raised through the planning process. Where possible the Master Plan seeks to address these issues and opportunities. However, it is important to recognize that it may not be possible to address all of the issues and opportunities raised, as the ability to make changes to the Park is impacted by a wide range of factors including balancing the differing needs and interest groups, the resources available and the demand for facilities.

The key issues and opportunities which have emerged are:

1. To define the purpose and role of Chittick Park ensuring this reflects Councils priorities in relation to improving the health and wellbeing and sense of connectedness and belonging of the Seymour community, and enhancing and preserving the natural environment.
2. To make better use of the Park and the resources and opportunities it offers.
3. To define and delineate sport and recreation activity areas from car parking/vehicle access areas, and pedestrian access areas.
4. To address the current conflict associated with the co-location of the playground and skate ramp facility.
5. To significantly enhance the aesthetics of the Park through for example tree planting, perimeter fencing and improved maintenance levels.
6. Increasing the informal recreation options available in the Park through the development of pathways and trails both through and around the perimeter of the Park, the development of picnic and barbecue spaces and enhancement of the northern end of the Park.
7. Ensuring the conservation corridor and native vegetation are protected and enhanced.
8. Improving amenities and facilities which support sport and recreation activity in the Park eg: change facilities, lighting, car parking etc.
9. Ensuring the development of the Park as a place where both the local community and visitors want to spend time and look after the Park.
10. Establishing better links and connections between the northern and southern end of the Park giving consideration to road access, walking and cycling access and barriers which isolate the northern end of the Park from the remainder of the Park and the surrounding residential areas.

## 6.2 Role and Guiding Principles

The *Role and Guiding Principles* for Chittick Park have been developed to provide Council with a clear policy framework for making decisions in relation to the Park. While the recommendations outlined in this Master Plan will provide specific guidance about the steps to be taken to improve the Park, it is recognised that the Park is a dynamic environment, and that new issues will continue to emerge and need to be responded to by Council.

In this context, the *Role and Guiding Principles* will assist Council in determining the priorities for the Park. Each decision made in relation to the Park should be tested and compared against the *Role and Guiding Principles* to ensure the decisions are consistent with the policy framework.

It is recommended that the following role be adopted for the Park:

*To provide formal and informal sport, recreation, and leisure opportunities for both the local community of Seymour and visitors to the township. The Parks' primary focus will be upon providing facilities and opportunities which encourage physical activity, social interaction and informal leisure pursuits by the local community. It will be a place the local community takes great pride in and sees as being central to their sense of belonging. Visitors to Seymour will be encouraged to visit the Park and feel welcome in its friendly surrounds.*

It is recommended that the following guiding principles be adopted for the Park.

**Sports Provision and Development:** Providing opportunities for a variety of outdoor and indoor sports primarily focused on supporting local and district needs.

**Informal Recreation and Leisure:** Providing attractive, informal open space with links to the surrounding residential areas and township capable of meeting local needs and the needs of visitors for a range of active and passive uses for all ages.

**Primarily a Park:** Car parking and road access will be of secondary importance to the recreation, sporting, leisure and environmental value of the Park.

**Environmental Enhancement:** Protecting and enhancing the environmental quality of the Park.

**Co-location and Multi-Use:** Encouraging and facilitating opportunities for the joint use and sharing of facilities including the integration and co-location of facilities.

**Accessibility:** Chittick Park will be managed and promoted to ensure safe, equitable, quality access for all the community.

**Ecological Sustainability:** Opportunities to improve the ecological sustainability of the Park will be actively pursued. All built resources will be ecologically sustainable and incorporate energy saving, waste minimization and water saving and re-use elements.

**Quality:** Decisions with regard to the Park will seek to ensure that high quality facilities, open spaces and *user experiences* are achieved.

### 6.3 Recommendations

The following section outlines the Master Plan recommendations for Chittick Park. The recommendations have been categorized as follows:

1. Supporting formal sport and recreation activity;
2. Informal leisure and recreation;
3. Pedestrian and Vehicle Access
4. Environment
5. Amenity
6. Better Use of Space
7. Management

A priority rating has been identified for each recommendation. This is designed to enable Council to assess priorities annually and resources as required. Timeframes have not been allocated to each priority, rather the rating is designed to ensure Council has a clear understanding of the order of works or actions to be completed.

Priority 1

Priority 2

Priority 3

Priority 4

Ongoing: Those recommendations which will continue to be implemented on an ongoing basis.

Urgent: This needs to be addressed immediately.

It should be noted that while section 6.1 above has broadly outlined the key issues and opportunities identified through the development of the Master Plan, where appropriate additional commentary about issues and opportunities has been provided at the commencement of each group of recommendations.

### 6.3.1 Supporting Formal Sport and Recreation Activity

The number of people participating in tennis at a national, state and local level is stagnant and in many communities like Seymour, participation has declined over the last decade. This coupled with the limited population growth projected for Seymour over the next twenty years suggests that both currently and in the future there will be limited demand for 16 dedicated tennis courts in Chittick Park. By contrast the Seymour Junior Netball Association is experiencing strong growth in its participation rates, with limited facilities to meet the increasing demand. It is these factors, combined with the need to address the lack of connection between the northern and southern parts of Chittick Park which has lead to the recommendations below in relation to the existing tennis facilities.

It should be noted that the planning consultant is very aware of the tensions around multi-use facilities and concerns about their ability to effectively meet the needs of all users. Multi-use facilities must be developed so that they appropriately meet the needs of all users. This may require discussion with peak sporting bodies or associations, to overcome any conflicting requirements for particular sporting codes or activities.

Finally the operator of the Seymour Youth and Fitness Centre has been actively seeking permission from Council to expand the facility over a number of years. This planning process has not been able to identify if there is sufficient evidence to support the expansion of the facility and consequently the recommendation below proposes that Council investigate this more thoroughly before making any decisions. This is not to underestimate the value of the facility and the services it offers, rather it simply acknowledges that this planning process was not designed to specifically consider this issue.

No.	Recommendation	Priority
1a	<p>Upgrade and replace five of the tennis courts located on the southern side of the tennis pavilion. The tennis courts are to be replaced with multipurpose courts suitable for tennis and netball.</p> <p>Ensure two of the five multipurpose courts are open and accessible to the wider community at all times.</p> <p>Remove the remaining four courts on the south eastern side of the pavilion to encourage better connections between the northern and southern areas of the Park.</p> <p>Before proceeding with these recommendations, Council may wish to re-examine the demand for tennis, netball and multi-use facilities as part of a broader leisure infrastructure planning project proposed to be completed in the 2010/2011.</p>	2
1b.	<p>Identify available options and develop infrastructure to support winter sporting codes in Chittick Park. In particular:</p> <p>Address the need for additional changeroom and amenity facilities to support junior AFL on Chittick Oval.</p> <p>Examine the demand for and feasibility of providing junior soccer facilities on Bennett Oval. This should be considered as part of the proposed broader leisure infrastructure planning project identified in 1a above.</p>	1 2
1c	Relocate the cricket nets on the northern side of Bennett oval so that they run North South.	3

No.	Recommendation	Priority
1d	<p>Investigate whether there is sufficient evidence to support the expansion of the Seymour Youth and Fitness Centre. As part of this investigation Council should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing levels of use, the programs, services and opportunities offered at the facility, including operating hours</li> <li>The ongoing viability of the service, given the current management structure</li> <li>How the proposed expansion will increase service levels and opportunities available to the broader community.</li> </ul>	4

### 6.3.2 Informal Leisure and Recreation

With plenty of space to accommodate a mix of formal and informal leisure pursuits Chittick Park is ideally placed to expand the informal leisure and recreation opportunities available to the community. Further, expanding these opportunities will be an important part of helping Council to achieve its goal of improving the health and wellbeing of the Seymour community and addressing concerns about the lack of recreation outlets available for young people in Seymour. The recommendations below cover a range of areas including walking and cycling, picnic and barbecue facilities and facilities for young people.

Of particular concern to participants in the consultation process was the location of the existing skate ramp beside the playground. In addition participants were concerned that the ramp was of a metal structure encouraging undesirable behavior and that the shelter facility attached to the playground attracted strong elements of antisocial behavior.

It should be noted that specific recommendations relating to walking and cycling paths are identified in detail in section 6.3.3 below.

No.	Recommendation	Priority
2a	Develop a network of pathways throughout and around the Park suitable for walking and recreational cycling (see recommendation 3a below for full details).	2
2b	Develop a youth focused recreation precinct at the northern end of the old hockey pitch incorporating: The relocated skate ramp facility (see recommendation 2c below) A half court facility and hit up wall Seating and shelter. The shelter could be formal such as shade sails or picnic shelters. Alternatively the same effect may be achievable through plantings.	1
2c	Relocate the skate ramp from its current position on Pollard Street near the playground to the newly proposed youth recreation precinct outlined in 2b above. Replace the existing skate ramp with a new concrete skate ramp structure.	1
2d	Change the structure of the existing shed/shelter facility in the playground to address antisocial behavior which currently occurs in the facility. Possible approaches might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removing the shed/shelter entirely</li> <li>• Replacing the shelter/shed with a structure that has a roof only</li> <li>• Redesigning the existing shed/shelter to remove the walls.</li> </ul>	Urgent

No.	Recommendation	Priority
2e	<p>Develop a series of large picnic areas in the Park. The following areas are suggested but others may be identified:</p> <p>In the newly proposed green space (see recommendation 3f below) between Bennett Oval and the Sports and Aquatic Centre</p> <p>Where the skate ramp is currently located beside Pollard Street</p> <p>On the north eastern side of Bennett Oval.</p> <p>These picnic areas should include picnic tables and seating, barbecue facilities, shelter and water and be in reasonable proximity to public toilet facilities (see recommendation 5b below)</p>	2
2f	<p>Provide seating options throughout the Park including:</p> <p>Beside / around the proposed youth precinct (see recommendation 2b above)</p> <p>Around Bennett and Chittick Ovals</p> <p>Along proposed walking / cycling pathways (see recommendation 3a below)</p> <p>In the north western corner of the Park (see recommendation 2g below).</p>	3
2g	<p>Encourage use of the north western corner of the Park by:</p> <p>Improving pedestrian access to this part of the Park (see recommendations 3a and 3b below)</p> <p>Implementing a higher standard of maintenance</p> <p>Promote the space as an informal kick about area</p> <p>Consider developing a children's bicycle path</p> <p>Installing signage which actively directs people to the space.</p>	3

### 6.3.3 Pedestrian and Vehicle Access

Currently vehicles and pedestrians are in conflict in many areas throughout Chittick Park. Further, there is great opportunity to enhance and improve pedestrian access to the Park. These factors combined with the guiding principal of 'Primarily a Park: Car parking and road access will be of secondary importance to the recreation, sporting, leisure and environmental value of the Park', provide the context for the recommendations outlined below.

No.	Recommendation	Priority
3a	<p>Develop a network of pathways throughout and around the Park suitable for walking and recreational cycling including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A perimeter path around the Park</li> <li>Pathways which allow people to complete small or large loops in and around the Park</li> <li>Pathways which encourage access between the northern and southern areas of the Park</li> <li>A boardwalk from Howe Street through the conservation area</li> <li>Pathway connections into the surrounding streets – walking and cycling</li> <li>Clear pedestrian pathways from car parking to sport and recreation facilities.</li> </ul> <p>In identifying and developing pathways, consideration must be given to the existing pedestrian traffic patterns which have resulted in the creation of some informal pathways in the Park.</p>	1
3b	<p>Examine options for providing pedestrian access to the Park from the west ie: between the Depot and the north western corner of the Park.</p>	4
3c	<p>Provide pedestrian access to the Park on the eastern side of the main driveway (off Pollard Street) the full length of the road leading to the Sports and Aquatic Centre.</p> <p>Provide pedestrian access on the Western side of the main driveway as far as the end of the parking proposed behind the Band Hall. This pathway is to then connect into pedestrian pathways leading to Chittick Oval and the playground.</p>	2
3d	<p>Address safety concerns regarding two way traffic access to the Pollard Street driveway by widening and straightening the driveway.</p>	1
3e	<p>Remove the existing road access inside the Park, which turns to the west towards Chittick Oval and follows the line of Chittick Oval heading towards the Council Depot facility located behind the Sports and Aquatic Centre.</p> <p>Provide vehicle access to the Sports and Aquatic Centre and Council Depot by formalizing a road from the main entranceway (Pollard Street) in a straight line towards the entrance of the Leisure Centre.</p> <p>Vehicle access to the Sports and Aquatic Centre for maintenance purposes (ie: the east side of the centre) is to be controlled by bollards. Vehicle access to the Depot will occur to the west of the Sports and Aquatic Centre.</p>	1

No.	Recommendation	Priority
3f	Remove the existing car park area on the eastern side of the new access road outlined in 3e above, and return the area to open space.	2
3g	<p>Retain the car parking to the north west of Chittick Oval and enhance this through the use of bollards. Consider whether there is resurfacing the car park with asphalt.</p> <p>Investigate further alternatives for parking associated with the tennis courts and the band hall with a view to developing small nodes of parking. Parking options which should be considered are:</p> <p><b>Tennis courts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain the existing parking between the tennis courts</li> <li>• Developing a new car park on the site of the Council Depot (only a small portion of the site would be required)</li> </ul> <p><b>Band Hall</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A small node of parking on the western side of the main driveway behind the Band Hall. Access to this parking would occur from the main driveway.</li> <li>• 90 degree parking along the west side of the main driveway.</li> </ul>	4  2
3h	Retain the ability to allow vehicle access around Chittick Oval, however only for large scale events or activities. Vehicle access is to be controlled by bollards.	Ongoing
3i	Remove vehicle access from around Bennett Oval by installing fencing or bollards.	2

**6.3.4. Environment**

Council officers identified that the vegetation in the conservation area in the northern part of Chittick Park is young but in good condition and as it matures will be an important habitat which must be protected and enhanced. The following recommendations seek to support this.

No.	Recommendation	Priority
4a	As outlined in 3a above install a boardwalk from Howe Street through the conservation area. This will both protect the habitat and allow safe pedestrian access.	3
4b	Consider establishing a Landcare / Friends of Chittick Park group to support the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment in the Park.	2
4c	Identify options for further enhancing the conservation area to provide a greater buffer from the industrial area immediately abutting the conservation corridor.	3

### 6.3.5 Amenity

The poor aesthetics and amenity of the Park was raised extensively throughout the program of consultation for the Master Plan. As noted previously concerns about the lack of public toilet facilities and poor lighting throughout the Park were key concerns for residents, user groups and Council officers alike. These along with the aesthetics of the Park are addressed in the recommendations below.

No.	Recommendation	Priority
5a	<p>Develop a program of works to improve the aesthetics of the Park including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planting an avenue of trees along the newly realigned main driveway</li> <li>Planting trees along the perimeter of the Park</li> <li>Installing new and attractive fencing around the perimeter of the Park, particularly along Pollard Street and Alfred Streets</li> <li>Plantings associated with the proposed picnic areas identified in recommendation 2d above.</li> </ul>	1
5b	<p>Provide public toilet facilities within Chittick Park. This may require the provision of public toilet facilities in more than one location within the Park. When examining options for the location of toilet facilities Council should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actively seek opportunities to co-locate public toilets with other existing or proposed facilities within the Park</li> <li>Ensure that they are located within a reasonable distance of the playground</li> <li>Ensure that they are located within a reasonable distance of the proposed youth activity area</li> <li>Ensure that they are located within a reasonable distance of the proposed picnic and barbecue facilities</li> <li>Ensure they are designed giving careful consideration to safety eg: good lighting.</li> </ul>	1
5c	<p>Provide improved lighting within the Park including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Around all car parking areas and the pathways leading from car parking areas to facilities eg: the Sports and Aquatic Centre</li> <li>Along the proposed new pathways within and around the perimeter of the Park. In particular on the pedestrian pathway proposed along the main driveway from Pollard Street.</li> </ul>	1

No.	Recommendation	Priority
5d	<p>Develop a strategy to improve the signage in and around the Park. This should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A uniform approach to the signage which includes a hierarchy</li> <li>Signage which more actively directs people to the Park, both by vehicle and on a bike or walking</li> <li>Large signs at key entry points which directs people to different parts of the Park, may include a map and may identify the groups who make use of the Park</li> <li>Directional signage throughout the Park, particularly along pathways and from car parks</li> <li>Distance signage along pathways, this may be incorporated with directional signage</li> <li>Interpretive signage for the conservation corridor.</li> </ul>	3
5e	<p>Consider the relocation of the water tank located beside the pavilion used by the Seymour Cricket Club, to increase vehicle access and improve the aesthetics of the area.</p>	4

### 6.3.6. Better Use of Space

Mitchell Shire Council currently has a Depot located within Chittick Park at the rear of the Seymour Sports and Aquatic Centre. Vehicles access the Depot through Chittick Park from Pollard Street. Council officers have indicated that vehicle movements associated with the Depot are in the order of 200 per day and this is likely to increase over time as the number of staff based at the Depot increases. The activity associated with the operation of a Depot would seem to be at odds with Chittick Parks' role as a primary piece of open space in Seymour. While it is recognized that the relocation of the Depot from Chittick Park to another site is likely to be a costly exercise for Council, this action is something which Council needs to seriously consider over the medium to long term in order address safety concerns associated with vehicle movement through the Park and maximize the capacity of the Park to meet the needs of the Seymour community.

No.	Recommendation	Priority
6a	<p>Examine the feasibility of removing and relocating the Council Depot from Chittick Park to another site in Seymour. As part of this process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examine options for a land swap with vacant land on Wimble Street to facilitate better pedestrian access from Wimble Street</li> <li>Consider rezoning and selling the Depot land for residential purposes. The proceeds from this sale could be invested into redeveloping Chittick Park.</li> </ul>	4
6b	Remove the sheds located within the boundary of Chittick Park at the rear of the Council Depot. Determine an appropriate alternative location for these facilities outside Chittick Park.	1

### 6.3.7. Management

What was very evident from the community consultation undertaken as part of developing this Master Plan, was the strong interest individuals and groups have in the future management and development of Chittick Park and in particular their interest in working together with Council to achieve a better outcome for the Park and the community. It is acknowledged that the Seymour community faces many social and economic challenges and the revitalization of Chittick Park presents an opportunity to bring the community together, foster a spirit of collaboration between Council and the community, and establish the Park as a place in which the community has great pride and a sense of belonging. Council will need to have an ongoing lead role in encouraging these outcomes.

No.	Recommendation	Priority
7a	That Council be directly responsible for the management and maintenance of Chittick Park and that this responsibility not be divested to a committee of management.	Ongoing
7b	<p>That Council actively pursue means to improve the communication and collaboration between Council, groups and individuals who make use of Chittick Park. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holding a forum or workshop with all user groups once a quarter to discuss opportunities and issues</li> <li>• Establishing a youth working group / advisory group in relation to developing the proposed youth recreation precinct in the Park. Consideration should be given to how young people can continue to be engaged in the operation and management of the youth precinct in the long term</li> <li>• Facilitating the establishment of a friends of Chittick Park group to provide advice, support and community involvement in the redevelopment of the Park</li> <li>• Facilitating the conduct of regular community barbecues or get togethers.</li> </ul>	1

Insert visual representation of Chittick Park Master Plan

# APPENDICES

# **Appendices 1: Notes Workshop with Council Officers**

## **1.0 Introduction**

A workshop with Council officers who have some responsibility for Chittick Park and / or have particular knowledge of the community surrounding the Park was held on Monday 15 February 2010. A total of 7 officers participated in the workshop from a range of services including community development, environment, recreation, parks and reserves and planning.

The workshop sought to discuss the existing condition and circumstances of the Park and identify the issues and opportunities for the future management and development of the Park.

## **1.1 Existing Conditions and Circumstances**

The existing conditions and circumstances identified included:

1. That a number of pathways exist in the northern part of the Park, some which are formal and others which have developed informally.
2. The vegetation in the conservation area at the north of the Park is generally in good condition. The vegetation is young but generally in good condition and is not weed infested.
3. The Primary School to the West of the Park will eventually be closed and is likely to be rezoned for residential purposes. It is also likely that vacant and further to the West of the Park will become residential over time, increasing the number of people who will live in the areas immediately surrounding the Park and emphasizing the need for improved access to the Park.
4. There is no demand for the old hockey ground (which is in very poor condition and unusable for sporting purposes) to be redeveloped as a formal sports ground. The population in Seymour is stagnant and it is aging.
5. The Depot generates 100 vehicle movements per day through the Park. It is likely this will increase over time with a larger number of staff to be based from this Depot.
6. Future plans for expansion of the Leisure Centre are focused upon a warm water pool and a gym/fitness facility.

## **1.2 Opportunities and Issues**

A range of issues and opportunities were raised by those attending the workshop. These are outlined below:

1. The future protection and enhancement of the conservation corridor and native vegetation is important and must be addressed through the Master Plan
2. Additional access pathways need to be developed from the northern end of the Park. Opportunities including the construction of a boardwalk from Delatite Road through the conservation area, ensuring the habitat is preserved and giving the community access to this part of the Park.
3. The skate park is destroying the playground.

4. The creek line needs to be enhanced and preserved, including the large trees.
5. The opportunity to develop an avenue of trees along Pollard Street and the roadway leading into the Park.
6. To incorporate the Youth and Fitness Centre as part of any expansion to the Aquatic Centre. Consider the development of a hub for young people as part of and in the vicinity of the Aquatic Centre potentially incorporating BMX, skate ramp and half court facilities.
7. Reduce the size of the car park in the centre of the Park and provide car parking along the perimeter or in small nodes close to the activity areas.
8. The lighting is inadequate through the Park, particularly around the car parking. There is no lighting along the roadway.
9. Consider the removal of 8 of the 15 tennis courts ie: those courts closest to Pollard Street. This will provide an opportunity to open up the physical and visual connections from the north to the south of the Park.
10. Need to establish a clearly defined purpose for Chittick Park. It's role is not as another version of Kings Park which is has an events focus. Chittick Park has a role as a more traditional community sporting and open space precinct.
11. Disability access for the aging population must be considered as part of the Master Plan.
12. Parking around the ovals must be discontinued and bollards / fencing used to implement this position.
13. It must be recognized that here is a strong concentration of community services that support young people in this part of Seymour. The development and operation of Chittick Park needs to recognize this and ensure opportunities for young people are incorporated.
14. A greater emphasis needs to be placed on management of the Park with regards to antisocial behavior ie: police surveillance.

## **Appendices 2: Notes Workshop with User Groups**

### **1.0 Introduction**

A workshop for the sport and recreation groups who make use of Chittick Park was held on Monday 15 February 2010. Attendance at the meeting was reasonably good with 12 people attending representing the following various groups who make use of the Park:

Seymour Kennel Club  
Seymour Junior Netball Association  
St Mary's Junior Football Club  
Seymour Senior Basketball Association  
Seymour Cricket Club  
Seymour Lions Club  
Seymour Town Tennis Club.

Also in attendance was Councillor Coppel and one Council officer.

The workshop sought to explore:

1. The positive aspects about the Park
2. Issues and opportunities in relation to the Park
3. Possible solutions and strategies for addressing the issues and opportunities.

### **1.1 Positive Aspects of Chittick Park**

In the first instance discussion centered around identifying and reflecting upon those aspects of the Park which are positive and important to the user groups. The list below outlines the aspects identified:

The size of the Park, it is large and has extensive capacity,  
It has more than one street frontage which provides good access and there are opportunities to improve this further,  
It is an established resource that the community already has access to,  
There is plenty of space in the Park which has the potential to be used more effectively,  
It is very central to the resident population,  
The condition of the ovals of good,  
The Park is multi-use in nature,  
Access to the Park is free,  
It has some great trees  
It provides a good casual use venue for families to kick the footy, fly a kite etc  
The conservation area at the northern end of the Park.

## 1.2 Issues and Opportunities at Chittick Park

A range of issues and opportunities were raised throughout the workshop, some of which were particular to individual groups and others which were issues for all or most groups. Outlined immediately below are those issues which might be considered general in nature ie: not specific to any one group. Information about the issues or opportunities specific to individual groups are identified later in this section.

1. The site has not been developed in an integrated way. It is very piecemeal and this needs to be addressed.
2. The poor aesthetics of the site and the lack of landscaping. The Park is an eyesore and is not welcoming.
3. The lack of definition between car parking areas and people / activity areas creates significant safety concerns. This is exacerbated by the current arrangement which sees vehicles accessing the Council Depot through the Park.
4. The car park is not marked ie: there are no line markings to identify and delineate car parking spaces. Consequently people park wherever they like not just in the car park, but throughout the park. In addition there is a lack of signage providing direction for people about where to park and where not to park.
5. The lack of lighting throughout the Park including in the car parks, along the road access and otherwise in the Park.
6. There is an opportunity to tap into and encourage volunteer involvement in improving the Park.
7. The northern area of the Park is poorly maintained and not sign posted, so many people would be unaware of its existence.
8. The old hockey oval is an resource which should be developed for use.
9. The entranceway to the Park is unclear. People drive past the driveway because it is not visible, there is no signage, it is a narrow entrance and gives little indication that this is where you enter the Park.
10. The street signage needs to be addressed with user groups describing it an ambiguous.
11. Pursue discussions with the new Prep-12 school about the sport and recreation activities they offer and the types of facilities which they may need access to. This may present an opportunity for the joint development of facilities in the Park.
12. The lack of public toilet facilities in the Reserve. The options currently are toilets inside the Leisure Centre or across the road at the IGA supermarket.
13. The opportunity to develop a walking / cycling track around the perimeter of the Park. These tracks should have connections to outside the Park in Wimble Street and Anzac street.
14. Consider the development of a bike track around the outside of one of the ovals.
15. The skate facilities need to be relocated.
16. There are a lack of rubbish bins in the Park.

The following table outlines the issues and opportunities which relate to particular groups.

<b>GROUP</b>	<b>ISSUE</b>
<b>Seymour Junior Netball Association</b>	The Netball association is seeking access to more outdoor all purpose courts. It is not longer appropriate to use courts which when not in use are a car park facility. The Association has experienced a 27% increase in junior members of the past few years and are unable to cater for the demand.
	Require 4 -5 courts, happy for them to be multi-use in nature. Prepared to discuss options for joint use with Tennis.
	Prefer to have a combination of courts which are fenced off and those which are open and accessible for training purposes.
<b>Seymour Lions Club</b>	The Lions Club require a shed for storage and this does not need to be located at Chittick Park as it currently is. Council officers are currently negotiating an alternate site.
<b>St Mary's Junior Football Club</b>	The club needs access to core changeroom and toilet facilities. The club does not have access to change room facilities or shelter at the Park. A total of 85 players play on Chittick Oval and the Club does not access the Cricket Clubrooms. This is because the Clubrooms are not set up for winter sport ie: two sets of changerooms, showers, separate access etc. The Cricket Club indicated a willingness to discuss options for alterations/additions to its clubrooms to address this issue.
	There are no public toilet facilities available in the Reserve with the exception of accessing the Leisure Centre. The Club is loath to make use of the Leisure Centre because of the muddy state of players clothes and boots.
	The goal posts on Bennett oval are unsafe.
	Poor lighting around the ovals for training purposes.
<b>Seymour Basketball Club</b>	The stadium requires air conditioning. The club has indicated at this point the number of courts it has access to is adequate.
<b>Seymour Cricket Club</b>	The Club is keen to extend its existing facilities to provide greater storage. In addition it is focused upon beautifying the cricketing facilities.
	The water tank towards the rear of the pavilion is an eyesore and the Club would like to address this.
	The Club is looking for opportunities to work with other groups to enhance the Park as a whole.
	The car park near the cricket pavilion needs to be updated and the fence posts replaced.

<b>GROUP</b>	<b>ISSUE</b>
<b>Seymour Town Tennis Club</b>	The main issue of concern to the club is the lack of vegetation to shield the courts from the wind.
<b>Seymour Kennel Club</b>	The provision of public toilets in the Park is an urgent issue. The lack of toilets is an issue each time the club holds a show.
	The creation of a dog off lead area in the Park.
	Refurbishment of the existing road around Chittick Oval. The Club indicated it requires access during peak times and would propose to control this at other times with bollards.

Because of the extent of discussions about the issues and opportunities for the Park, it was not possible to discuss strategies for tackling these issues and opportunities.

## **Appendices 3: Notes Workshop with General Community**

### **1.0 Introduction**

A workshop for the general community about Chittick Park was held on Thursday 18 February 2010. Attendance at the meeting was reasonably good with 12 community members and local residents attending. A number of the people attending are members of groups who are key users of the Park. Also in attendance were two Council officers.

The workshop sought to explore:

1. The positive aspects about the Park
2. Issues and opportunities in relation to the Reserve
3. Possible solutions and strategies for addressing the issues and opportunities.

### **1.1 Positive Aspects of Chittick Park**

In the first instance discussion centered around identifying and reflecting upon those aspects of the Park which are positive and important to the community. The list below outlines the aspects identified:

- The Seymour Youth and Fitness Club which is well located in the Park, provides good access for the community and has a good level of membership.
- The open feel of the Park ie: that it is located in town but still provides a lovely sense of open space.
- The number of recreation and sporting activities which take place in the Park. Particularly in previous years there has been a great sense of interaction between the sports.
- The new playground, however there are issues about its location which will be discussed later in this section.
- The sporting clubs willingness to share 'their facilities'. This is largely driven by the individuals involved and the opportunity to raise funds / share funding.
- The Dog Shows held at the Park are very positive attracting large numbers of people to the Park and the township.
- The opportunities for walking which the Park currently provides.

### **1.2 Issues and Opportunities at Chittick Park**

A range of issues and opportunities were raised by those attending the workshop. These are grouped and outlined in the table below:

<b>Grouping</b>	<b>Issues or Opportunities</b>
Facilities	The lack of space available at the Seymour Youth and Fitness Centre to cater for the needs of young people and uncertainty about whether Council support the expansion of the Centre.
	<p>The old hockey field was described as being in poor condition and a waste of a resource. Options for using the space more effectively included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The relocation of the skate park to this site</li> <li>• The construction of a half court basketball facility</li> <li>• Planting up the area to create a better aesthetic for the space</li> <li>• Establishing formal pathways through the space to connect the north and the south of the park.</li> </ul>
Informal and Passive Recreation	The lack of infrastructure to support passive recreation ie: shade, picnic tables etc. There is an opportunity to increase the passive recreation spaces available in the Park to incorporate picnic and BBQ facilities, shade and grassed areas. The creation of such spaces will be of benefit to both the local community and passing traffic eg: people towing caravans seeking a place to stop and rest. A further opportunity associated with this is the provision of an "Easy Dump" ie: a sewer outlet for caravans.
	<p>The Park has great capacity for the development of tracks and loops around the perimeter of the Park for walking, jogging and cycling ie: 'The Seymour Tan'. Important aspects might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That it be visible, well lit and safe</li> <li>• Provide options for 2, 5 and 10km loops</li> <li>• That the surface be compacted sand not concrete</li> <li>• That it be focused upon family groups and general health and fitness not elite use eg: elite cyclists.</li> </ul>
	<p>There was discussion about why the northern part of the Park is underutilized. Some of the barriers identified were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The long grass, so concerns about snakes</li> <li>• No clearly defined tracks</li> <li>• A perception that the creek needs cleaning out. In fact Council officers have indicated that the creek is in good condition with minimal weeds.</li> </ul>
	<p>Options for improving access to the northern part of the Park included:</p> <p>A development of pathways from the residential areas to the north and the east</p> <p>Establishing road access from Wimble Street by the continuation of Howe Street.</p>

Grouping	Issues or Opportunities
Aesthetics and Amenities	<p>The poor aesthetics around the perimeter of the Park, at the entry to the Park and within the Park. It is uninviting, particularly around the skate ramp area.</p>
Safety	<p>The trees in the park are not looked after</p> <p>The dangerous conflict between cars and pedestrians ie:  The way the driveway is structured  The lack of delineation between areas for cars and areas for pedestrians  The requirement for depot vehicles to access the Council Depot via Chittick Park</p> <p>The driveway entrance is dangerous when cars are attempting to enter and exit at the same time. The angle of the driveway means it is difficult to see onto Pollard Street and the entrance is narrow.</p> <p>The removal of the skate park from its current location will not address safety issues associated with cars and skaters around the IGA supermarket and Pollard Street.</p>
Skate Park and Playground	<p>There were many issues and opportunities raised in relation to the skate park and the playground and these are outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The conflict between the skate park and the playground. The two facilities are located immediately beside each other and the type of activity and use occurring in the skate park is disturbing and confronting for users of the playground.</li> <li>• The skaters themselves are not an issue, it is the people who hang around the site who are not skaters which display antisocial behavior eg: drinking, swearing etc.</li> <li>• The picnic shelter constructed as part of the playground is a significant problem. It was identified that even if the skate park was removed, it is the picnic shelter which seems to attract anti social behavior and it is this facility which needs to be addressed.</li> <li>• The condition of the skate park is poor, uninviting and it attracts anti social behavior ie: it is a steel frame providing hiding spaces underneath it. The skate ramp needs to be replaced by a concrete ramp structure.</li> <li>• A lot of young people use the skate ramp appropriately and this behavior needs to be encouraged. Consider allocating resources to conduct programs at the ramp ie: that it be supervised and managed with specific opening hours. Previously there has been a committee of young people for the skate ramp which Seemed to encourage positive and appropriate use of the skate ramp. May be appropriate to consider re-establishing this structure in the future.</li> </ul>

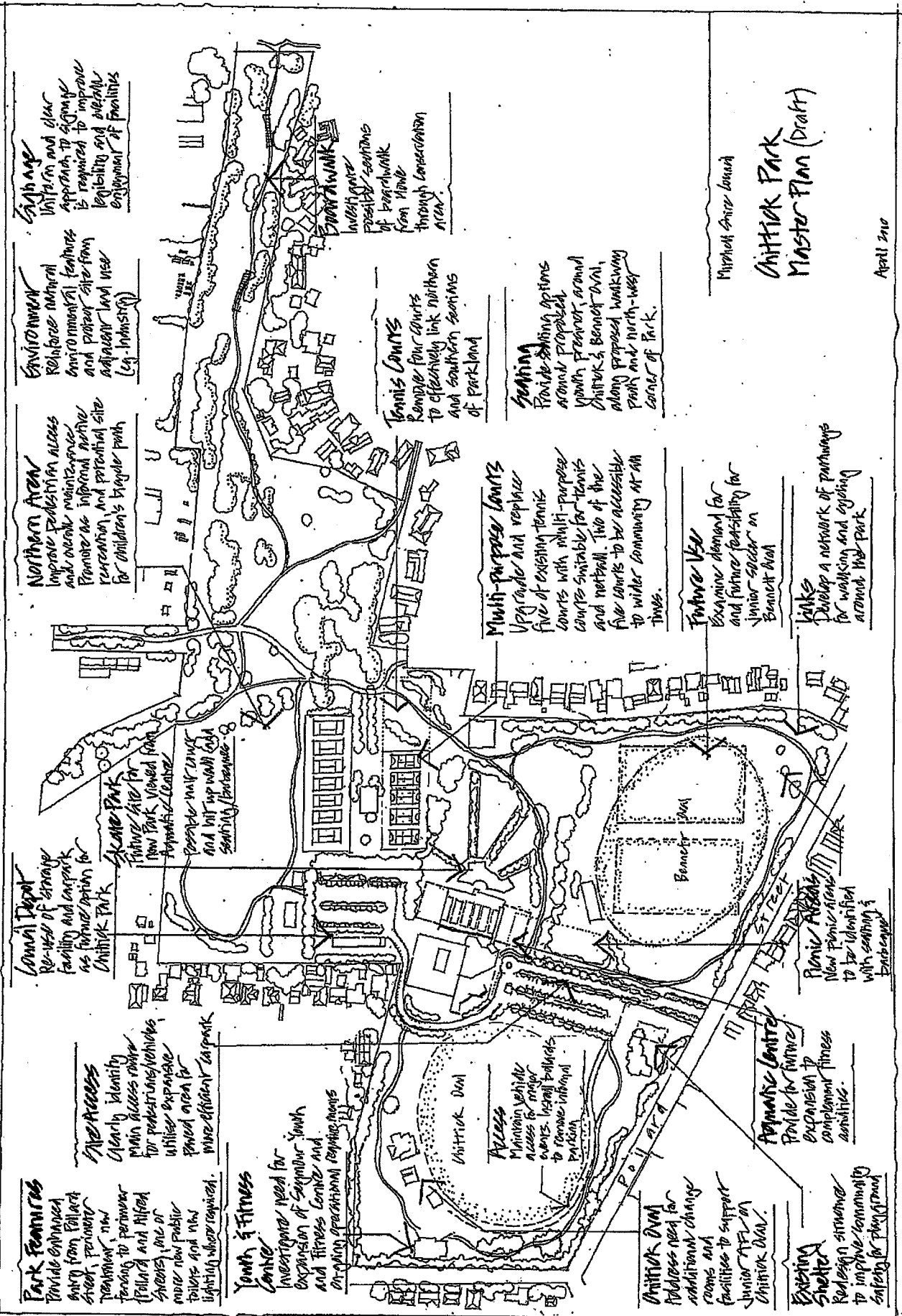
Grouping	Issues or Opportunities
Skate Park and Playground continued	<p>There was general agreement about the need to relocate the skate park given the lack of space at that site and the conflict with the playground. Possible options for relocation were discussed at length including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The old hockey ground in Chittick Park beside the Leisure Centre which would provide passive surveillance, make use of an otherwise underutilized space, and be in close proximity to car parking.</li> <li>• Relocating to the old netball court in Kings Park or relocating to the steam train near Kings Park. The drawback of these options is that it is further for young people to travel and does not necessarily address the need for passive surveillance.</li> </ul>
	<p>Wherever the skate park is relocated to, it will be important to provide shelter, seating / picnic areas.</p>
Other	<p>The lack of communication between Council and user groups in relation to access to facilities and buildings in Chittick Park. User groups have some concerns about Council being able to access buildings, largely because they do not believe Council communicates appropriately about when they access the building and for what purpose.</p> <p>The groups and organizations who make use of the Park need to work together with a common goal of enhancing and improving the Park.</p>

Because of the extent of discussions about the issues and opportunities for the Park, it was not possible to discuss strategies for tackling these issues and opportunities. However, the group did agree upon the priority areas which must be considered and addressed as part of the Master Plan. These are:

1. The skate park,
2. The shed associated with the playground,
3. The creation of walking and cycling opportunities within the Park,
4. The aesthetics and landscaping of the Park,
5. The creation of picnic areas including picnic tables, BBQ's, shade / shelter, toilets, water bubblers etc,
6. Addressing the conflict between cars and pedestrians – defining sporting/recreation activity spaces from car use,
7. Lighting throughout the Park.

Underpinning each of these priorities is the focus upon what needs to change in the Park to make it a place people want to be and are happy to use.





**Park Features**  
 Provide enhanced entry from Folkart Street, perimeter treatment, new fencing to perimeter (Folkart and Alfred Streets), one of more new public toilets and new lighting where required.

**Age Access**  
 Clearly identify main access route for pedestrians/cyclists, utilize expensive paved area for more efficient carpark.

**Council Depot**  
 Re-use of storage facility and carpark as formal option for Chittick Park.

**Skate Park**  
 Future site for new park viewed from opposite of Centre. People may come and hit up with dog sitting/leashwork.

**Northern Area**  
 Improve pedestrian access and create maintenance. Promote as informal sports recreation, and potential site for children's bicycle path.

**Environment**  
 Reinforce natural environmental features and patrol site from adjacent land use (eg. industry).

**Signage**  
 Uniform and clear approach to signage is required to improve legibility and overall enjoyment of facilities.

**Youth & Fitness Centre**  
 Investigate need for expansion of Senior Youth and Fitness Centre and on-going operational requirements.

**Access**  
 Minimum vehicle access to major carpark, include pathways to connect with main pedestrian.

**Multi-purpose Courts**  
 Upgrade and replace five of existing tennis courts with multi-purpose courts suitable for tennis and netball. Two of the five courts to be accessible to wider community at all times.

**Tennis Courts**  
 Reserve four courts to effectively link northern and southern sections of parkland.

**Seating**  
 Provide seating options around proposed youth pavilion around Chittick & Bennett Oval, along proposed walkingway park and north-west corner of park.

**Future Use**  
 Examine demand for and future feasibility for junior soccer on Bennett Oval.

**Links**  
 Develop a network of pathways for walking and cycling around the park.

**Chittick Oval**  
 Address need for additional change rooms and facilities to support junior AFL on Chittick Oval.

**Existing Shelter**  
 Redesign structure to improve community safety for play ground.

Murdoch State Council

**Chittick Park (Draft) Master Plan**

April 2010

