

2025 - 2030



MOORABOOL SHIRE COUNCIL

Moorabool Shire **Open Space Strategy**



ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land which includes the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung people. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging.

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

Developed by the Urban Design & Landscape Architecture Team at Moorabool Shire Council in conjunction with @leisure Planners, Council staff, DEECA Staff, Moorabool Community Groups, and Local Park & Environmental groups.

2025

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Introduction

1.1 Glossary

TERM	DESCRIPTION
MSC	Acronym for Moorabool Shire Council.
Public Open space	Defined as public land open to the sky. Reserved for public park and recreation, or public conservation and resource within the Moorabool Planning Scheme, or land set aside for recreation or environmental purposes.
Primary Function	The open space function is defined as the primary purpose and role of the open space within the wider network, based on key benefits sought by the community from the type of space.
Open space catchment	The Open space catchment refers to the categorisation of open space based upon the defined level of service i.e. local, district and regional level parks.
Landscape Setting	Landscape setting can be defined as the environmental setting an open space is situated within i.e. treed parkland, bushlands, former agricultural area etc.
Settlement Type	The settlement type is defined by the immediate context in which the public open space is provided defined by development & population levels i.e. suburban, township etc.
Programme	A programme is a planned activity, event, or function designed to enhance an open space.
Kickabout space	A kickabout space is an informal outdoor area designed for recreational activities, such as casual sports or play, without formal structures or equipment.
Encumbered open space	Encumbered open space refers to outdoor areas that are restricted or limited in their use due to legal, physical, or environmental constraints, such as easements, conservation regulations, or infrastructure.
Un-encumbered open space	Un-encumbered open space refers to outdoor areas that are free from legal, physical, or environmental restrictions, allowing for unrestricted use and development.
OSEP	Acronym for Open Space Enhancement Project.
STEP	Acronym for Small Township Enhancement Project.

PART 1

Introduction

An Introduction which includes a glossary, document structure, purpose, strategic framework and the definition of public open space.



Introduction

1.2 Structure of this document

The Open Space Strategy is divided into the following sections;

PART 1 - INTRODUCTION

This chapter includes a glossary, document structure, purpose, strategic framework and the definition of public open space.

PART 2 - VISION

This chapter demonstrates how this document fits within the strategic framework of Council and the principles that guide the strategy's direction. All principles are consistent with the State Planning Policy (Clause 11. Settlement, Moorabool Planning Scheme 2021).

PART 3 - OPEN SPACE CLASSIFICATION

This chapter identifies each type of open space classification. These are primary function, catchment, landscape setting & settlement types.

PART 4 - APPLYING THIS STRATEGY

This chapter provides locality analysis and examples on how to apply the classification system in-line with the overarching strategic values & principles.

PART 5 - ACTION PLAN

This chapter provides a 10 year action plan or the duration of the Open Space Strategy.

1.3 What is public open space?

Public open space, in this strategy is:

- ~ Public land open to the sky
- ~ Land reserved for Public Park and Recreation, or Public Conservation and Resource in the Moorabool Planning Scheme, or
- ~ Land set aside for recreation, or environmental purposes.

This study is about public open spaces managed or owned by the Council. It considers Crown land and land that may or is used for recreation or environmental purposes or set aside for utility purposes.

1.3 Purpose

This Strategy aims to provide a clear direction about the planning for open space across the Shire, including in all greenfield development areas, and meeting the community's needs today and into 2035. The brief for this Open Space Strategy required the following items to be addressed:

1. A classification system/hierarchy for public open space defining non-encumbered vs encumbered open space.
2. Levels of service for each hierarchy level.
3. Future Actions for the strategic period.

1.4 Legislative requirements

This strategy has been developed with consideration to current legislation, standards and best practice design to provide guidance on Council's minimum expectations when it comes to open space design. This strategy is to be read in line with all relevant legislation, standards and best practice design and it is the consultants obligation to submit documents that comply with this strategy and all other requirements.

1.5 Role of Council & process

Moorabool Shire Council is responsible for managing the process in preparing this Open Space Strategy which has included:

- ~ Review of over 50 documents, open space-related policies and plans, locality and issues related plans.
- ~ Classification of open spaces submitted and discussed with the Project Steering committee.
- ~ Process for assessment of open space.
- ~ Provision standards by open space function type and catchment.
- ~ Review of demand from other consultations especially Bacchus Marsh and Ballan Open space Planning Framework 2019 and consultation with children.
- ~ Interviews with key stakeholders.
- ~ Community engagement via Council's 'Have Your Say' for comments.
- ~ Assessed participation in activities in open space using existing and 2041 populations.
- ~ Issues based internal workshops (8)*2 with staff: open space in new residential areas, Encumbered land, Development contributions, Biodiversity and waterways, Off road trails,

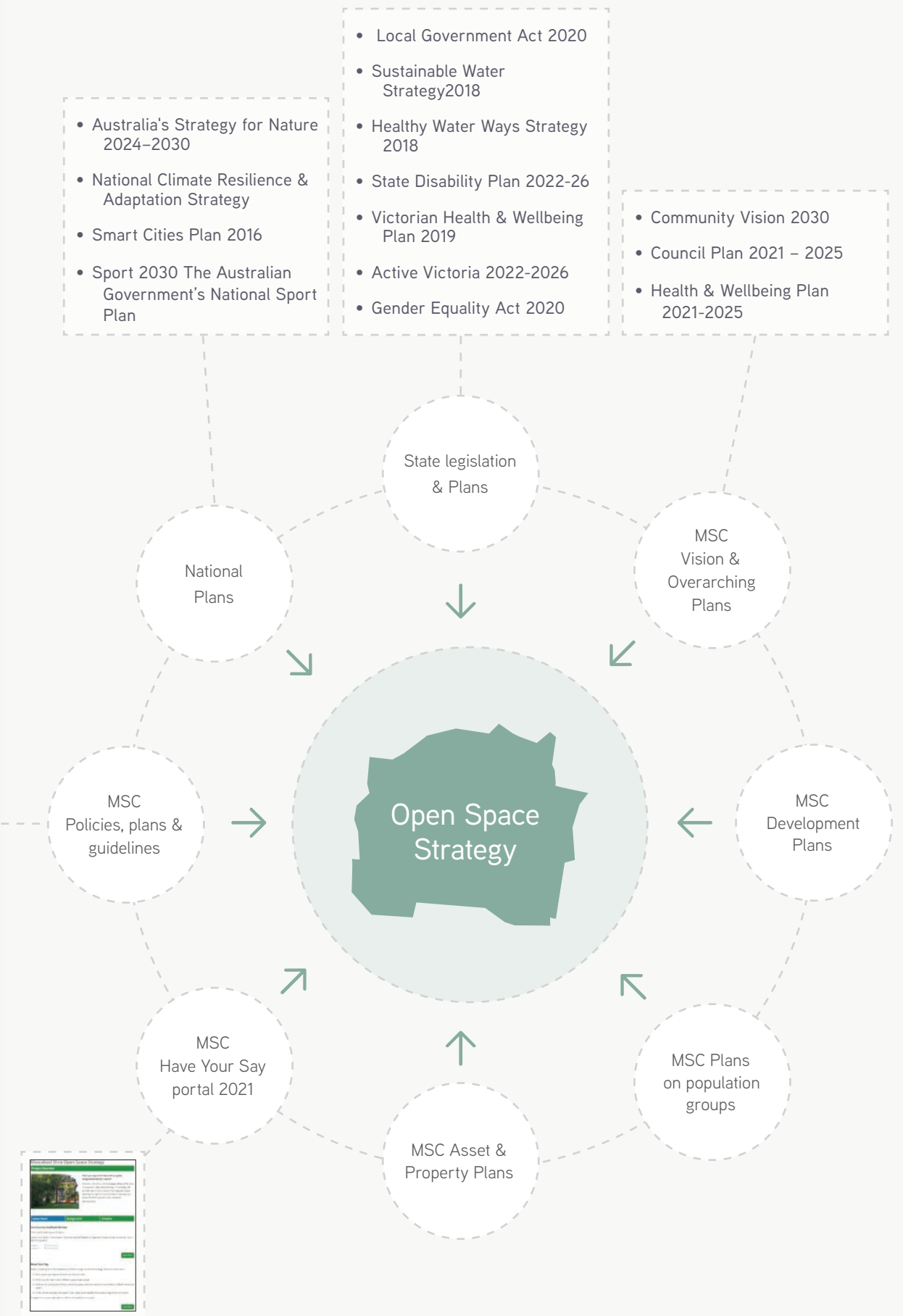
Dogs in open space, Play, Access and Inclusion.

- ~ Research, analysis and key points summarized.
- ~ High level directions were identified for each issue and a draft strategy was submitted in July 2021. Additional volumes were revised and submitted in December 2022.
- ~ Council has internally reviewed and condensed the four x Open Space Strategy Volumes prepared by @leisure, into one single volume.

How does this strategy fit within the greater National, State & Council context?

1.7 Strategic Framework

The documents and groups listed here have been key in developing the Open Space Strategy and should serve as ongoing references for its implementation through adoption and actions.



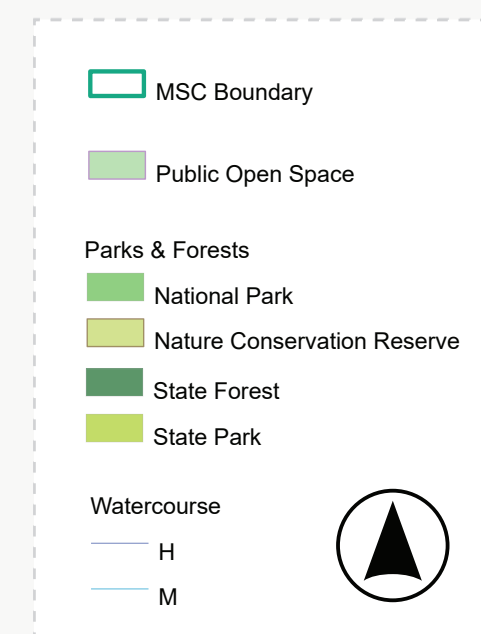
Mapping of existing Open space within Moorabool Shire Council

1.8 Existing Open space Mapping

The mapping to the right shows the extent of the municipality and distribution of forest & park, national park, nature conservation reserve, and Moorabool Shire Public Open Space across the Shire.

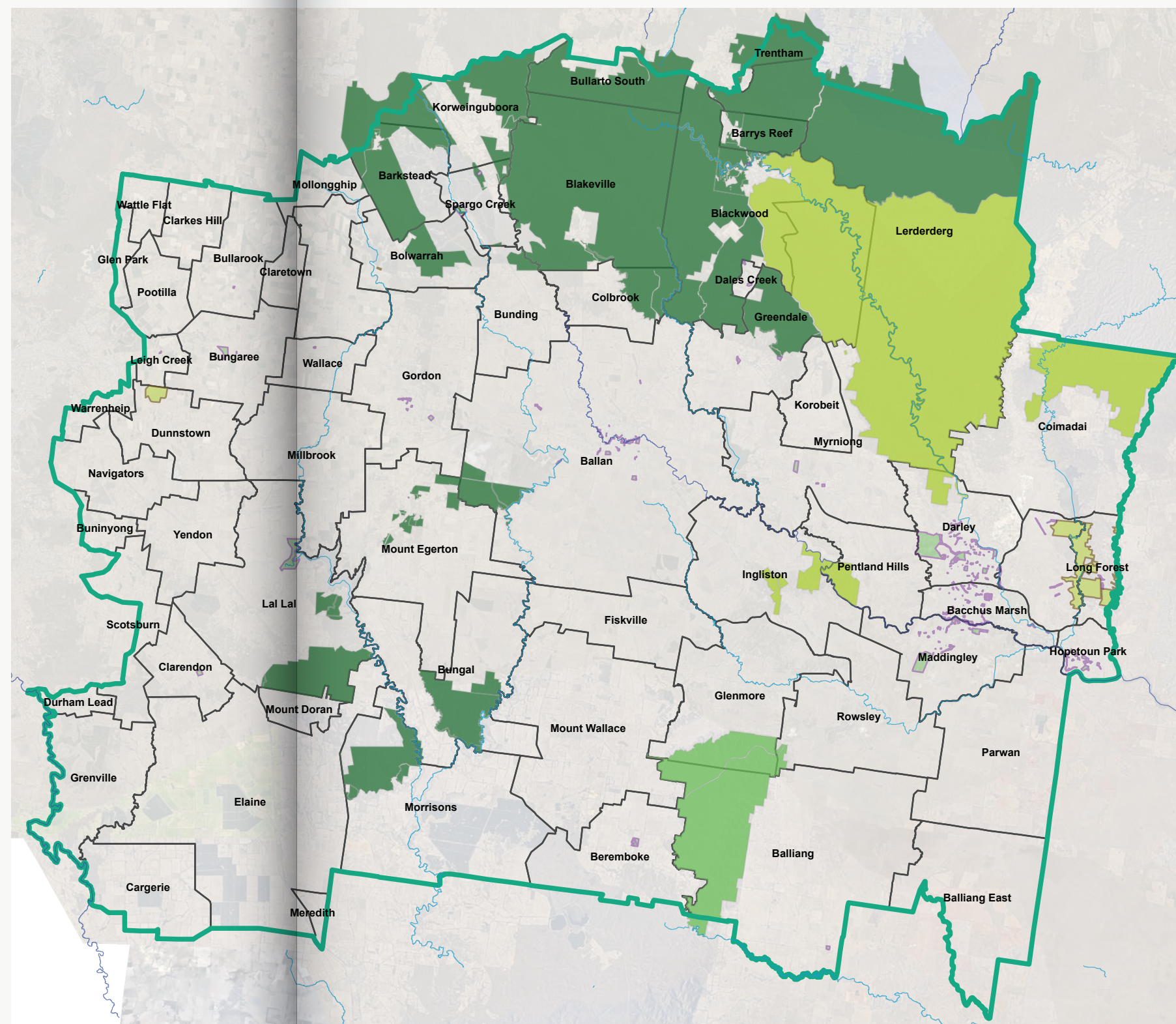
Locality Analysis

The distribution of open space across Moorabool was assessed by locality, using Isochrone maps to show walkable distances from Council parks classified as passive parks or equivalent to social/family recreation sites (see Part 4).



0 10 20km

1 : 300,000



PART 2

Vision

The Open space Vision and a breakdown of each principle that guides the overall vision of the strategy.

Open space Vision

The overall open space vision encompasses a core set of values that serve to inspire and guide the long term direction of the entire open space network within the Shire.

Principles

A set of principles guide the implementation of the Open Space Strategy within Moorabool Shire and its broader context, defining the key elements and values that form the foundation of any open space project.



Open space Vision for Moorabool

2.1 Council Vision

A network of open space in Moorabool Shire that is:

Fit for purpose in accordance with its identified primary function and desired landscape setting,

Diverse in nature and opportunities,

Equitably distributed within easy walking distance from all residences,

Accessible and inclusive to people of all ages, abilities, backgrounds and gender identities,

Able to enrich social, environmental and recreational experiences and provide opportunities to increase physical activity for existing and future residents of Moorabool,

Sustainably sited, designed and managed in partnership with community, stakeholders and traditional owners,

Protecting and enhancing biodiversity, cultural heritage and amenity in the Shire's built landscape, parks and waterways, and

Complementary to and providing access to the opportunities that the extensive state park system in Moorabool could provide.



Open Space Principles

2.2 Open space principle definitions

TERM	DESCRIPTION
Accessibility & Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide opportunities for all people to access all types of public open space, and interact with others when using open spaces, even though not all activities or equipment may be readily accessible to all people.• All projects must comply with DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) where possible, to cater to all users, particularly those with disability or specific mobility requirements.• All projects require an internally developed Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) mandated by Victoria's Gender Equality Act 2020. Gender Impact Assessment is necessary to ensure that the design, accessibility, and safety of the space considers the diverse needs of all people while addressing potential disparities.
Health & Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maximize the opportunities for existing residents to access green open space and outdoor recreational opportunities.• Locate public open space of appropriate function and form (landscape setting types) complementary to the context of the place where people live and work to create a sense of well-being, stress release and provide opportunities for recreation and physical activity.• Provide opportunities for all people, especially children, to grow and learn through risk and challenge in open space and enhance opportunities and resilience. The planning and design of spaces will seek to minimize danger to users, locate public open spaces to promote passive surveillance, promote a sense of security and adhere to Safer by Design Principles.• Ensure shade and UV protection by incorporating trees for natural shade and installing shade structures such as shade sails or shelters.
Diversity & Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a diversity of outdoor recreation experiences through open space function and landscape setting types that:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respond to the needs and wants of the community through consultation,• Complements opportunities available to residents at home and in their local area,• Delivers a range of recreation, social, physical and environmental experiences to suit people of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds, and• Provides as a priority a social/family recreation area, a network of off-road trails and a sporting open space that is proximate to all residential areas.



Open Space Principles

TERM	DESCRIPTION
High standard of urban design and amenity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide high quality designs that conform to Australian Standards and general best practice.• Each design is to be reviewed by specific internal Council departments for feedback and approval.• Each design must conform to Council policies, plans and procedures.• Each design should be informed by relevant preliminary investigations, which are not limited to the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">~ Cultural Heritage Management Plan~ Arborist Report~ Environmental Management Plan~ Gender Impact Assessment
Prevention of pollution to land, water and air. Includes integrated water management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide areas for the retention and filtering of stormwater, utilities and other non-recreation purposes, without compromising space for sporting and recreational requirements.• Create buffers between incompatible land uses and maximize the value of that space for open space objectives.• Address the decrease in the tree canopy and the increasing proportion of impervious and heat-absorbing surfaces.• Where applicable, promote the use of water storage tanks that collect stormwater from building infrastructure within reserves e.g. pavilions, toilet blocks & shelters. To assist in providing water to localized garden beds.
Protection of environmentally sensitive areas & natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contribute to the management and protection of creek corridors for habitat, environmental integrity, water quality improvement and management of weeds.• Minimize the impact of buildings, lights, structures, car parks and social activities on environmentally and culturally significant attributes in open space and waterway corridors.• Where suitable, utilise indigenous planting and habitat specific vegetation to enhance biodiversity. Native classified planting being a secondary option.• To provide educational opportunities around environmental protection and waste disposal in applicable open space bordering Environmental sensitive areas (e.g. forests, waterways, habitat).



Open Space Principles

TERM	DESCRIPTION
Land use & multi-modal transport integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Locate public open space in prominent and accessible locations close to where people live, so that they provide multiple benefits: physical, social and environmental.• Ensure all the social/family recreation and sporting open spaces are accessible by off-road trails that connect to the wider footpath network.• Develop a network of off-road trails in every township that includes park perimeter trails, local neighbourhood trails, circuits and open space corridor trails to allow people to exercise and access community facilities, parks and commercial areas without having to drive a vehicle.
Planning the prevention of environmental issues created by siting incompatible land uses close together.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek to provide buffers along waterways and around environmentally sensitive open spaces, while ensuring residential, commercial and other land uses minimize impacts and enable residents to benefit from these encumbered open spaces.• Adequately sized reserves and buffers must also be provided around sports facilities to protect residences from ball spill, traffic congestion, noise and light spill.
Facilitate the provision of public open space that supports sustainable development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on sustainable development that leverages existing and intended settlement patterns.• Ensure transport, telecommunications, water, sewerage and power are provided within public open space where appropriate.• Encourage residential development close to and overlooking existing recreation opportunities.• Expand existing open space assets to ensure they are fit for purpose.• Provide additional open space, and/or upgrade existing open space, to serve area specific population increases and changing requirements.• Address gaps in off-road trail circuits, sporting, and social/family recreation spaces.
Sustainable development & Economic viability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Configure and design public spaces to enhance sustainability and cost-effective development, programming, use and management.• Encourage the use of public open spaces for local, Moorabool-wide, and regional communities, while also benefiting and attracting tourists from a broader catchment.• Take countermeasures to reduce heat island effect across reserves, parking lots and streetscapes by increasing tree canopy.



The four forms of classification

The Open Space Strategy provides a classification system which includes **primary function, catchment, landscape setting** and when applicable, **settlement**. Each component of these classification types will be explored with examples provided.

Encumbered vs Un-encumbered

The function types will be listed as **encumbered** or **un-encumbered**, with each function falling within either of these categories. Each function type will be explored, demonstrating the reasons for these categorisations.

PART 3

Open space classification system

This chapter introduces the open space classification process and provides a breakdown of each type.



Open space

Classification system

3.1 Open space classification purpose

This classification system aims to provide the framework for analysing existing open space, potential community needs in future, and determining the future open space requirements of the specific study area. Open spaces provide varying benefits and experiences based on their function, landscape setting, and catchment area, all of which determines the catchment level of local, district, or regional populations.

These catchment levels in summary are:

CATCHMENT LEVEL	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
Local	Open space predominantly serving the immediate surrounding neighbourhood. These service daily and weekly needs and short stays and are generally accessed by walking or cycling from surrounding areas.	McLean Reserve, Ballan
District	Open space predominantly serving a whole suburb or group of suburbs. For sports parks these facilities will provide for competitions rather than social activities, and for people who drive from some distance.	Darley Park, Darley
Regional	Open space predominantly serving the whole Shire or a larger area. These may have significance to a large population including visitors, and typically would include some unique attraction. These provide for visitors and longer length of stay, likely to include a higher degree of accessibility and support facility provision.	Maddingley Park, Maddingley

To determine the catchment level, the following classification system is utilised:

- ~ Primary Function
- ~ Catchment Level
- ~ Landscape Setting & Settlement Type

These classification types ensure open spaces are protected, diversified, equitably distributed, and managed effectively according to their purpose. This approach helps maintain consistent service levels for provision, upgrade, and maintenance, while addressing the unique benefits of each space.

Primary function

In Moorabool, reclassifying existing open space, such as converting a play space into a community horticulture site or adding trees to an open grassy area, can reduce redundancy, promote diversity, and meet a broader range of community needs. These strategic changes enhance sustainability, create varied experiences, and ensure that open spaces provide valuable opportunities for all members of the wider community.

3.2 Application to established open space

By using open space classification to differentiate between sites that have similar functions or landscape settings, established areas can be improved by reducing duplication and enhancing diversity.

Re-programming an open space to a different function, such as turning a play area into a community garden or adding trees and paved surfaces to an open grassy area, creates variety and better meets the diverse needs of the community. This approach promotes sustainability by reducing competition between similar spaces and providing more opportunities for different activities.

3.3 Primary function

The open space function type reflects the purpose and role of the open space within the wider network based on key benefits sought by the community from the type of space. This classification is the most important as it will determine if needs will be met. An Open space can have one or more function, but there will generally be a primary purpose that encompasses the entire space.

The function of each site (including non-recreational uses) needs to be overt. The function is the first decision in planning a new area because the function determines the desirable size, location, distribution, quality and nature of infrastructure and management.

By defining the primary purpose or function of public open space, it is possible to:

- Determine which benefits can be met in the long term
- Design the space to be fit-for-purpose
- Measure the demand for these spaces
- Monitor changes in time and across the Shire
- Define the attributes it should provide, where it should be and how many spaces are needed
- Assess appropriateness of development proposals and enable residents to understand opportunities and limitations of each public space.

Un-encumbered land

3.4 Un-encumbered open space functions

Un-encumbered land refers to land that is free from any restrictions or obligations, such as easements, zoning limitations, or legal claims, that could restrict its development or use for public purposes. This type of land is available for potential use as public open space without having to respond to conflicting rights or encumbrances, making it a more viable option for development of parks, recreational areas, or other public amenities.



Primary Function Types

3.4.1 Social & family recreation (SFR)

Areas that provide opportunities for social and physical and play activities for people from a wide range of age groups and abilities, typically catering for community & family gathering, play, picnics, casual ball games, social sporting activities, trail activities and educational elements.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

- ~ Hine Court Reserve, Darley
- ~ Mclean Reserve, Ballan
- ~ Bacchus Marsh Recreation & Racecourse Reserve (BMRRR), Bacchus Marsh



3.4.2 Singular Playgrounds (Existing)

Small, single-use areas that are primarily play equipment oriented toward younger age children.

Note: These single purpose spaces should be phased out in future in favour of larger, multipurpose social / family recreation areas (SFR) accommodating play for people of all ages and abilities.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

- ~ Rogers Reserve (As of 2024)
- ~ White Avenue Reserve (As of 2024)
- ~ Hine Court Reserve (As of 2024)



3.4.3 Sports Fields & Organized active recreation

Sports fields and organized active recreation refers to designated areas that allow for structured physical activities, such as team sports, competitive events, or recreational games. These spaces usually include specialised surfaces and facilities, like fields, courts, pavilions & grand stands. They play a key role in promoting community participation, physical activity and healthy lifestyles.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

- ~ Masons Lane Reserve
- ~ Ballan Recreation Reserve
- ~ Myrniong Recreation Reserve



3.4.4 Relaxation & passive recreation

The relaxation and contemplation function of open space is characterized by areas that feature minimal recreational elements, such as seating, pathways, viewing platforms, or interpretive signage, within predominantly green or natural landscapes. These spaces are designed with a focus on high environmental quality which provides users with relaxation, reflection, and a sense of escape.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

~ Rupert Van Moon Reserve



3.4.5 Memorial, remembrance & contemplation parks

Parks, gardens, or avenues of honor dedicated to commemorating individuals or events, including the preservation or interpretation of significant trees, gardens, or buildings that reflect European settlement or Indigenous cultural heritage. This may include landmarks such as shrines, cemeteries, memorials, sacred sites or peace parks. Often contemplative spaces for quiet reflection are incorporated into these reserves.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

~ Ballan General Cemetery

~ Myrniong War Memorial

~ Lal Lal Memorial Reserve



3.4.6 Visual amenity & Look outs

Areas principally providing visual relief from urban surroundings, enhancing the amenity of streetscapes or for civic pride, restorative values or respite. Areas dedicated to viewing scenery, or to protect view sheds, ridge lines or skylines. These only need to be provided if the quality are not provided in other open spaces close to residences.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

~ Bald Hill



3.4.7 Gateway reserves & wayside stops

Area set aside on a main road to take a break or rest. These spaces cater to a larger catchment that includes tourists and visitors to the region. The level of activity and visitation is sporadic in nature being impacted by seasonal holidays, working hours etc.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

- ~ Federation Park, Darley (As of 2024)
- ~ Freeway or highway resting stops
- ~ Entry points into Townships



Encumbered Land

3.5 Encumbered Open space functions

Encumbered land refers to land that is subject to restrictions or legal obligations, such as easements, zoning restrictions, or existing claims, that may limit its use or development for public purposes. These encumbrances can affect the land's suitability for certain types of open space development, as they may impose limitations on how the land can be accessed, developed, or modified. Encumbered land often requires additional considerations or negotiations before it can be utilised for parks, recreational areas, or other public amenities.

Note: Encumbered land functions may be refused by Council as part of an open space contribution. Land may be refused or maintenance periods can be requested to be extended if land is not fit for purpose or demonstrates perceived risk to Council.



Encumbered Land Functions

3.5.1 Embankments, escarpments & sloped areas

From an open space function perspective, embankments and escarpments are considered encumbered space because they create physical barriers that restrict movement and accessibility. Embankments, being raised earth structures, hinder the flow of people and limit the usability of surrounding areas for recreational activities. Similarly, escarpments, which have steep slopes and dramatic elevation changes, make it difficult to navigate and connect different spaces. Both landforms reduce the functional potential of open spaces by isolating areas, creating safety concerns, and limiting practical use. Any slope at or greater than 1:4 is generally considered significantly steep and is extremely limited in terms of accessibility, usability and maintenance.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

- ~ Stonehill Estate
- ~ Queens brook Estate



3.5.2 Accessways, off-road trail corridors & linear parks

Accessways, off road corridors & linear parks are commonly situated along existing corridors such as riparian zones (banks of rivers & streams), disused rail lines, or utility easements. These can integrate specific design elements such as promenades, shared user paths, trails, planted buffers, and green corridors to facilitate pedestrian movement, cycling, and forms of non-motorized recreation. If planned appropriately, these parks can enhance connectivity between communities through a continuous spatial network while providing opportunities to incorporate native vegetation, enhanced biodiversity, sustainable stormwater management systems, and ecological restoration. These do not include on-road bicycle lanes or footpaths.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

- ~ Aqualink walking trail, Darley
- ~ Peppertree Park, Bacchus Marsh



3.5.3 Flood prone, wetlands, basins & water management areas

Flood-prone areas, wetlands, basins, and water management zones are often considered encumbered space in an open space function context because they present challenges for development, accessibility, and recreational use. Flood-prone areas are subject to water inundation, limiting their potential for construction or public use due to safety concerns and environmental regulations. Wetlands, while ecologically valuable, typically have soft, waterlogged ground that makes them difficult to access and less suitable for active recreation. Similarly, water management areas, designed for flood control or water treatment, may be restricted by infrastructure and regulatory constraints reducing their functionality as accessible, multi-purpose open spaces. This category also includes open water bodies or lakes, where water is the dominant landscape, and the use is predominantly for water-based recreation with many other uses being restricted.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

- ~ The Avenue Estate wetland, Maddingley
- ~ BMRRR Wetland Basin, Bacchus Marsh



3.5.4 Utility Areas

Utility areas are classed as encumbered open space that is primarily designated for public use but are limited by the presence of infrastructure such as power lines, water pipelines, or sewage systems. These areas may still be used for passive activities like walking, but their primary function is to support utilities rather than serve as recreational spaces. The infrastructure limits their design and accessibility, making them less suitable for large events or intensive recreation, though they still can provide some ecological or aesthetic value within their urban context. Appropriate visual and physical buffers should be incorporated between utility and recreational assets to enhance the open space experience within or adjacent to these areas.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

~ Silverdale Drive Reserve



3.5.5 Open space in and around industrial estates, and employment areas

Open space adjacent to industrial estates and employment areas serves buffer zone, providing a transition between industrial activity and surrounding environments. These spaces can mitigate environmental impacts like noise, air pollution, and visual disturbances, while offering recreational opportunities for workers and nearby communities. The integration of green space promotes physical activity, provides social and relaxation opportunities, and mitigates pollution and visual disruption, which in turn improves both the employees and local residents well-being. As a general guideline, a minimum 50m vegetated buffer is required between residential and industrial areas to ensure adequate spatial separation and mitigate potential conflicts between these land uses.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

~ Parwan Industrial Precinct (future development plans)



Open space Classification - Landscape Setting

3.6 Landscape Setting

A classification based on landscape setting defines the nature of vegetation and form of open space. (For example, can the site be mowed grass, heavily treed, paved, managed sports turf, or an ornamental or cultivated garden).

This classification helps us to:

- Understand the diversity of experiences available across a locality and the Shire
- Assess the extent of tree canopy and residents likely access to nature
- Determine the priority for how to develop new open spaces so they complement other planned or available open spaces, and
- Determine maintenance requirements and costs.

The landscapes setting types recommended are:

- Bushlands, Forests or Conservation Areas
- Ornamental, Formal or cultivated Garden
- Open Grass Area or Kickabout space
- Lawn, Managed Turf, or Specialised soft sports surfaces
- Treed Parkland
- River corridor, Waterway or Water body
- Culturally significant or historical landscapes
- Plaza, Civic spaces or squares
- Former Farmland and Agricultural areas

Landscape Setting Types will be further explored throughout this chapter.

Demonstrating the landscape setting type of each open space can assist potential users to make a choice between sites, for different reasons, in different seasons and explore new places. For example, on a hot day residents may choose a forested, shaded place to play, rather than a paved area or open grassed area.

Landscape Setting Types

3.6.1 Bushlands, Forests or Conservation Areas

Conservation areas, including bushlands and forests, are natural spaces that offer a secluded landscape separate from the built environment, while providing limited access to outdoor activities. These activities typically include trail walking, bush walking, and recreation, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in their natural surroundings. Additionally, these areas support and protect biodiversity by offering various habitats for plant and animal species as part of a diverse range of ecosystems.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

- ~ Coimadai Bushland Reserve
- ~ Long Forest conservation reserve
- ~ Kel Shields Flora Reserve



3.6.2 Ornamental, formal or cultivated garden

An ornamental, formal or cultivated garden in an open space is a meticulously designed landscape setting featuring symmetry, geometric patterns, and curated plantings, which may also be paired with fountains, arbors, statues, and paved walkways. This landscape setting is usually themed and does not necessarily conform to the greater context of the reserve. Activities include strolling, reflection, private events, photography and horticultural based community events or tours.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

- ~ Rose Garden at Maddingley Reserve
- ~ Native Gardens at Darley Park



3.6.3 Open Grass Area or kickabout space

Open lawn areas or kick-about spaces are large, flexible grassed areas (often without irrigation) that can include land subject to flooding/inundation or meadow-like environments. While typically cleared, these spaces may have boundary tree planting for definition or shelter, but remain largely open for casual activities like picnics, games, or relaxation.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

- ~ Clarinda Park Bacchus Marsh
- ~ Carberry Drive Reserve



3.6.4 Lawn, Managed Turf, or Specialised soft sports surfaces

Lawn, managed turf, and specialised soft sports surfaces are landscape settings designed to support recreational activities, offering smooth, durable surfaces suitable for a variety of sports and outdoor events. Managed turf refers to well-maintained grass areas that provide a soft, aesthetically pleasing space for picnics, casual sports, or community gatherings. Specialised soft sports surfaces, such as artificial turf or resilient rubberized materials, are engineered for specific activities like soccer, rugby, or athletics, offering consistent performance and durability.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

- ~ Masons Lane Reserve
- ~ BMRRR, Bacchus Marsh
- ~ Dunnstown Recreation Reserve, Dunnstown



3.6.5 Treed Parkland

Treed parkland consists of open grassed areas with scattered specimen trees, offering a balance of shade and open space. This landscape setting creates flexible environment for activities like picnicking, walking, and casual play, while the trees add visual interest, shade and structure to enhance the park's informal appearance.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

- ~ Maddingley Park, Maddingley



3.6.6 River corridor, Waterway or Water body

Rivers, waterways, and water bodies are dynamic landscape settings that serve as natural features, offering both ecological and recreational value. These water features create opportunities for activities such as boating, fishing, kayaking, and waterfront walking, while also contributing to biodiversity and environmental health. The presence of water enhances the aesthetic appeal of a space, providing tranquil views and a habitat for various plant and animal species. In urban and rural settings, these areas are often integrated into parks or conservation spaces, offering a natural retreat for visitors and serving as vital resources for local ecosystems.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

- ~ Federation Park, Darley
- ~ Peppertree Park, Bacchus Marsh



3.6.7 Culturally significant or historical landscapes

Cultural heritage and historical landscapes are settings that embody the historical, cultural, and social significance of a place, often preserving landmarks, architecture, and features that tell the story of a community or region. These landscapes may include monuments, historic buildings, battlefields, or traditional cultural sites, which provide both educational and aesthetic value. They offer opportunities for learning, reflection, and connection to the past, while also serving as focal points for tourism and local pride. These spaces play a crucial role in preserving history, fostering a sense of identity, and promoting cultural heritage within the broader landscape.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

- ~ Lal Lal Falls Reserve



3.6.8 Plazas, Civic Spaces or squares

Plazas, civic spaces, squares, and paved areas are landscape settings primarily defined as open, sealed or paved surfaces designed for social interaction, events, and gatherings. This setting is often dominated by hardscape materials such as stone, brick, or concrete, however, they may also incorporate elements like trees, planters, water features, or sculptures that reduce the harshness of the urban landscape. Additional landscape elements can act as meeting points or landmarks, which spatially can offer opportunities for respite, relaxation and calm. These settings serve as focal points in cities or towns, becoming activated through hosting markets, performances, and community events in the center of the urban environment.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

~ Court House Place, Bacchus Marsh



3.6.9 Former Farmland and Agricultural areas

Former farmland and agricultural landscape settings offer expansive, open landscapes which typically include fields, crops, scattered trees and hedgerows. This setting provides a rural environment that connects users to the former land-use such as animal husbandry and agriculture. Opportunities generally include passive recreation such as walking or cycling, as well as educational opportunities about farming, horticulture and land stewardship. If significant open space is retained, wide open spaces combined with scenic vistas can provide carefully designed sight-lines, framed views or perspectives that highlight specific elements of the greater landscape. Often, existing agricultural practices in adjacent areas offer a backdrop of working landscapes that highlight the region's farming heritage.

Moorabool Shire specific examples:

~ Avenue Estate, Maddingley



Open space Classification - Settlement

3.7 Settlement Type

This classification i.e., Large Town, Small Town or by different densities, large lot residential, and non residential areas, is to reflect the immediate context in which the public open space is provided. The context should consider dwelling density, availability of incidental open space, trees and degree of hard stand and the nature of the likely market. In the selected environment, the scale of urban development determines whether all facilities should be centralized or multiple spaces equitably distributed are provided, based on walkability and planning scheme zone. These factors determine who the space will serve, (i.e., employees or residents) and the priority type of spaces required. In dense areas where private spaces are small, and highly paved, small pockets of forest, ornamental garden or treed parkland would be preferred over paved or grass.

3.8 Settlement Hierarchy

The settlement hierarchy system categorises settlements based on their size, function, and the services they provide. This assists in planning, design & implementation of open space within the allocated locality.

The Moorabool Shire Small Towns and Settlements Strategy, and the Moorabool Shire Gateways Strategy, categorizes settlements into three scales of habitation, identifying commonalities across different settlement sizes.

At the top of the hierarchy are **Large Towns**, which offers access to extensive services and is generally densely populated. **Small Towns** serve as regional hubs with fewer services and lower population densities. **Villages** are smaller settlements, often focused on local agriculture or basic community needs, with limited amenities but a strong local identity. **Hamlets** are the smallest type of settlement, typically rural with only a few houses and minimal or no public services

Clearly defining the settlement type can be utilised to determine what level of open space is required, and what features or programmes are implemented. These assessments can also provide the basis to investigate the needs of residents including access to services. Hierarchy also informs urban planning, zoning, and overall development, ensuring equitable access to amenities and resources based on settlement size and function.

3.9 Settlement Density

In the context of the settlement hierarchy, different densities refer to the spatial arrangement and distribution of built form and open space within a settlement e.g. how tightly concentrated or spread out residential areas are. In high-density urban areas, where built form is more concentrated and land is at a premium, a desired outcome could be the introduction of small, multi-functional public open spaces, such as small local level reserves, plazas, civic spaces, green walls or rooftops, that maximize accessibility and provide a break from the built environment.

In low-density suburban neighbourhoods, where there is more space between buildings, the design of open spaces can be more expansive, such as local, district, and possibly regional level reserves, with the addition of linear corridors. Large lot residential areas, typically associated with low density, often have private gardens or yards, which reduces the requirement for larger public spaces but may still have access to shared community amenities such as smaller reserves or nature reserves.

In non-residential zones, like commercial or industrial districts, then integration of green corridors, green walls & roofs, or social spaces into otherwise hardscaped environments can offer aesthetic value, improve air quality, and provide relief to workers and visitors.

3.10 Greenfield developments

Greenfield developments, which involve the transformation of undeveloped land into residential property, commercial and industrial allotments and public open space, present a unique opportunity to holistically shape an outcome that caters to the existing & expected community needs.

Clause 56.05-2 of the Moorabool Planning Scheme provides assessment standards for open space in new residential development subdivision applications. These standards inform travel distances related to the future open space hierarchy as:

- local parks within safe walking distance of 400 metres of at least 95 percent of all dwellings
- additional small local parks or public squares in activity centres and higher density residential areas
- active open space of a least 8 hectares in an area within 1 kilometre of 95 percent of all dwellings
- linear parks and trails along waterways, vegetation corridors and road reserves within 1 kilometre of 95 percent of all dwellings

All stakeholders should ensure that each development in incorporates ample active open space in both high-density and low-density areas, which responds to the context and landscape setting of each proposed area. Council requires over 5% land contribution of unencumbered open space within infill development.

Greenfield Developments

3.10.1 Open Space Provision Rates

The Victorian Planning Authority's Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines: New Communities in Victoria, October 2021 includes the following guidance on open space provision:

The open space network should seek to meet the following targets:

- Within residential areas (including activity centres)
 - ~ 10% of net developable area for local parks and sports field reserves
 - ~ 3-5% of net developable area set aside for local parks
 - ~ 5-7% of net developable area set aside for sports field reserves
- Within dedicated employment and / or economic activity areas, 2% of the net developable area for local parks

Moorabool Shire Council recognises that there is a historical undersupply of active open space in the Shire of Moorabool and therefore prefers 7 per cent of the land in future greenfield areas to be allocated for sports field reserves and 3 per cent as passive open space.

3.10.2 Active Open Space Provision Principles

The following principles are provided to guide future decision-making by Council for the provision of sports reserves in greenfield areas:

- The land for new sports reserves should be of an appropriate size, with sufficient space for playing fields of senior dimensions and other open space for informal recreational use and provides appropriate buffers between the defined playing fields and adjoining properties.
 - ~ 4 hectares is required for a single oval or two soccer field reserves (this size is suitable for development located in Ballan and small townships). Reserves should be square or rectangular with sides no greater than 2:1.
 - ~ 6 hectares is required for rectangular field sports (this size is suitable for small sports ground reserves in PSP areas). Reserves should be square or rectangular with sides no greater than 2:1.
 - ~ 10-12 hectares is required for reserves (this size is suitable for large sports ground reserves in PSP areas). Reserves should be square or rectangular with sides no greater than 3:1.
- The land should be unencumbered.
- The land should be appropriate for the intended uses in terms of quality and orientation.
- The land should be flat.

- The land should be located with access to, or make provision for, a recycled or other sustainable water supply.
- The land should be linked to existing or planned pedestrian and cycle path networks.
- The land should be located adjacent to complementary facilities or spaces.

3.10.3 Encumbered Open Space Provision Principles

Encumbered open space should be functional, fit-for-purpose and cost effective to maintain.

Encumbered land can include:

- steep land that is not suitable for development.
- land required for flood protection, drainage and water treatment.
- land encumbered with biodiversity that must be retained (conservation open space).
- Land encumbered with cultural heritage.
- utility and service land including pipelines, pylons and overhead wires.

The following principles are provided to guide future decision-making by Council for the provision of encumbered land in greenfield areas:

- In the new developments, during the assessment stage to determine what open space is needed where, undertake a stepped process to determine if an encumbered site can have a secondary recreational function:
 - ~ Determine if colocation of an encumbered space with a priority open space function is possible, and whether the encumbered site can have a secondary recreational function.
 - ~ Determine what land is required for conservation or cultural heritage which can also serve a secondary open space function. For example, visual amenity, relaxation, or an off-road trail.
 - ~ Specify what type of open space function may use land with each type of encumbrance – and on what conditions.
- Use encumbered land proactively to maximise its value e.g. by adding size to an unencumbered park for borrowed landscape, or to extend the variety of landscape settings or activities available.
- Agree on what uses of encumbered land are acceptable for each type of open space, and different types of encumbrances.
- Where Council is requested to take on the management of encumbered land, first consider whether it is willing to do this and second ensure the developer:
 - ~ Undertakes a risk assessment of the land being used for public purposes and

- ~ Contributes to the additional ongoing costs of maintenance, over and above urban parkland.
- Where a roadway separates a residential development from an escarpment or encumbered land, ensure a developer provides a shared trail along the length of the land on the outer edge of the road.
- If encumbered land is to be taken as an open space contribution, ensure an adequate budget is available to cover the additional costs of developing escarpments and encumbered land. This cost may be considerably more than flat reserves due to erosion control, topsoil to enable plant growth, planting and revegetation and maintenance on steep slopes, and armouring / path design that will be sustainable on a slope.

The following principles are provided to guide future decision-making by Council for the provision of elevated or steep slope open space in greenfield areas:

- Minimise the disturbance of recontouring steep slopes and the need for significant cut and fill and fully consider the difficulty and cost in managing such a site when apportioning expenses or considering whether Council should, in fact, own the land. If steep sites are to be transferred to Council, the developer must develop / remediate and maintain the steep slope until vegetation establishes and the slopes are stable. This may require extended developer maintenance periods e.g. 10 years.
- Create the best possible visual relationship between the public open space and the streetscape by minimising the height difference between the two. Enhance views into the site, create prominent entries, path access, clearly sign the open space as public, where open spaces are elevated above the street level. Create ease of access into the site at grades suitable for a person using a mobility aid, and ensure access is not restricted to roadways.
- Consider the slope and design of the entry through meandering or switchback access for roads and paths separated with suitable planting.
- Minimise the visual effect of the bulk and scale of any support buildings or structures in public open space by planting. Avoid using bright and highly reflective external materials and finishes in infrastructure in elevated slopes that are prominent from roads and reserves.
- Open spaces with slopes should not have retaining walls or batters above 1m high, which create additional risk, visual separation, access concerns and are expensive and difficult to maintain. Soften the retaining walls or batters with landscaping.
- Escarpments must be cleared of environmental weeds and rehabilitated in accordance with a plan approved by the Council prior to the Council accepting the dedication of the land.
- Ensure appropriate drainage has been designed on slopes, and erosion control such as jute / Coir matting or logs are incorporated into works to prevent land slip and erosion.
- Require the development of slope management plans for open space in steep areas.



Open space Classification - Catchment Level

3.11 Open space catchment types

The open space catchment level defines the sphere of influence of an open space, how far people are willing to travel to use it and how long they are likely to stay. Therefore, catchment determines the level of embellishment and support facilities required to support its function. The following points outline the criteria for determining the Open space Catchment Type.

3.12 Walkable distance

Analysing walking distances and accessibility can assist in defining the open space catchment type. Spaces within a 5-10 minute walk are generally considered local level, while those 10-20 minutes away serve a larger district level. Open spaces that serve a greater catchment and are accessible multi-modal transport such as walking, car or public transport, are considered district or regional level spaces. Walking distance analysis is a key factor in determining how accessible open spaces are to the community.

3.13 Population Density

The population density in the area surrounding an open space influences its catchment type. A higher population density typically calls for a higher density of local level spaces to accommodate the demand. In contrast, sparsely populated areas commonly rely more on district or regional-level spaces, as fewer people are spread across a larger area, and these larger spaces can cater to broader needs. Population analysis is not required to conclude that regional level parks do not belong in high population density areas, this analysis provides a benchmark in determining catchment type.

3.14 Local Context

The local context, including the availability of other nearby open spaces, impacts the catchment type. If there are many other parks or recreational areas in the vicinity, a smaller, more specialised open space might serve the local neighbourhood. However, if open space is limited or distant, the catchment area may extend to a regional level to provide adequate access to green space. This process can be applied to existing open space as well as green field developments.

3.15 Reserve Area

Calculating the size of the reserve assists in determining the catchment type. Larger reserves with an area ranging from 3 - 10 or more hectares, that also provides an array of programmes, are categorised as regional or district-level open spaces. These spaces offer a range of activities that attract visitors from a broader area and can potentially be expanded upon due to available open space. Smaller reserves ranging from 0.2 - 3 hectares, are usually considered local level spaces, serving the immediate vicinity through the provision of basic amenities and less extensive facilities.

3.16 Open space catchment level hierarchy

The open space catchment level hierarchy is as follows:



Note: the driver of planning new open space is not the catchment of the space, it is the determined primary function or purpose.

Open space Catchment Levels

3.17 Local Level Park

A local-level park is a small-scale open space designed to serve the immediate community, typically within a 5-10 minute walking distance from residential areas. This level generally provides recreational opportunities such as playgrounds, smaller scale sports fields or courts, kick-about spaces and path networks intended to meet the day-to-day needs of nearby residents. They are often more accessible and less crowded compared to larger parks, offering a safe and conveniently located space for small events, socializing, and outdoor activities.

OPEN SPACE ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION
Walkable Distance	Serves less than a 400m walkable catchment and maximum 5 - 10 minutes walking distance.
Population catchment	Serves local area (single suburb or township). Average population per dwelling, per block, can provide an estimate calculation.
Local Context	Multiple local level reserves co-exist within the same suburb. This allows for use without over congestion.
Area Size	Area typically from 0.2 ha - 3 ha (2,000 - 30,000 m2).
Programmes, Assets & Amenities (Essential)	Green space (includes open lawn and kick-about space for unplanned recreation), landscaping (Includes trees for shade and understory planting), playground (basic level of play), social spaces (picnic settings), walking paths , resting nodes (seating) and general waste bins.
Programmes, Assets & Amenities (Optional)	Lighting (additional lighting located on assets or free standing), active recreation & sporting facilities (sports fields, courts, outdoor fitness equipment & sporting assets), shade sails and assets , community gardens , art installations and sculptures , social spaces (Power supply, shelter, BBQ facilities), drinking tap , dog parks (unfenced on-leash or fenced off-leash areas), and irrigation & water storage systems (water tanks, lawn or garden irrigation).



3.19 District Level Park

A district-level park serves a broader area, commonly within a 1-kilometer walkable catchment, and is designed to cater to multiple suburbs or townships. These parks are larger in size and offer a broader range of facilities and amenities, such as sports fields & courts, fitness areas, larger multi-age play spaces, and defined social spaces. Depending on community needs, specialised features may optionally be included such as performance or community event spaces, toilet facilities, pump tracks or skate parks, accommodating a variety of recreational activities required for a multiplicity of unique suburbs, townships or user groups. District parks serve as a key destination for residents seeking a greater variety of activities than those offered by smaller level parks.

OPEN SPACE ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION
Walkable Distance	Serves a 1km walkable catchment and 10 - 20 minutes walking distance.
Population catchment	Serves more than one suburb or township. Population numbers vary between suburbs and townships.
Local Context	A district-level reserve serves a larger catchment area, such as multiple suburbs or townships, offering a wider range of recreational facilities to meet the diverse needs of the community.
Area Size	Area typically from 3-10 ha (30,000 - 100,000 m2) or 1.5km in length.
Programmes, Assets & Amenities (Essential)	Green space (includes open lawn and kick-about space for unplanned recreation), landscaping (Includes trees for shade and understory planting), playground (multi-age play and natural play), social spaces (event spaces, shelter, picnic settings), extensive walking paths , resting nodes (seating), active recreation & sporting facilities (sports fields, courts, multi-courts, outdoor fitness equipment & sporting assets), shade sails and assets , drinking tap , lighting (additional lighting located on assets or free standing), irrigation & water storage systems (water tanks, lawn, field or garden irrigation), allocated parking and general waste bins.
Programmes, Assets & Amenities (Optional)	Toilet block (including DDA accessible cubicles), Community gardens , art installations and sculptures , water features or water bodies , dog parks (unfenced on-leash or fenced off-leash areas), social spaces and related assets (BBQ facilities, power supply), and specialised recreational programmes (fitness equipment, skate park, pump track, bouldering).



3.20 Regional Level Park

A regional level park serves a wider geographic area, typically covering several districts or localities, and is designed to attract visitors from a greater catchment. These parks are larger in size and offer a broader range of facilities and amenities, such as several organised sports fields & courts, fitness & resting nodes, large multi-age play spaces, and several social gathering spaces. Regional open spaces often feature specialised facilities such as toilet blocks, change rooms, lighting, parking and expansive path networks. They offer specialised programmes and activities that cater to a diverse range of users from multiple communities, providing an essential destination for both locals and visitors seeking expansive outdoor experiences and community connection.

OPEN SPACE ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION
Walkable Distance	There is no set distance, as regional level parks are considered key destinations that people are willing to travel longer distances to reach by vehicle or other transportation.
Population catchment	Serves one or more regions with the intent to attract visitors from across the Shire and beyond. The entire population of Moorabool Shire will provide a benchmark for determining level of service.
Local Context	Regional level parks are usually located in a densely populated area, however, this is not a defining rule for future open space. This level will generally cover a wider range of social, recreational and amenity value, including multi-aged and specialised recreation to cater to the entire Shire and beyond. Tourism and regional visitation is a main driver on what level of service is provided.
Area Size	Area typically greater than 10 ha (100,000 m2) or 5km in length.
Programmes, Assets & Amenities (Essential)	Green space (includes open lawn and kick-about space), landscaping (Includes trees for shade and understory planting), playground (multi-age play and natural play), social spaces (event spaces, shelter, picnic settings, powered BBQ facilities), extensive walking circuits , resting nodes , active recreation & sporting facilities (sports fields, courts, multi-courts, & sporting assets), shade assets , drinking tap , lighting , irrigation & water storage systems (water tanks, lawn, field or garden irrigation), allocated parking , toilet block (including DDA accessible cubicles), dog parks , potential to include specialised recreational programmes (fitness equipment, skate park, pump track, bouldering) and general waste bins.
Programmes, Assets & Amenities (Optional)	Community gardens , art installations and sculptures and water and aquatic features .



3.21 Programme / Feature hierarchy comparison

The following tables will compare several aspects of each Open space Catchment Hierarchy Level.

- ✓ = Compulsory programme/feature
- = Optional programme/feature (considered for higher density areas)
- ✗ = Not required

OPEN SPACE PROGRAMME / FEATURE	LOCAL	DISTRICT	REGIONAL
Large open grassed area for unstructured recreational use (includes kickabout space)	●	✓	✓
Soft landscaping (includes trees for shade, understory planting, spade edge & mulched garden beds)	✓	✓	✓
Hard landscaping (includes pavement, seating & retaining walls, timber structures, edging, etc.)	●	✓	✓
Playground - Minor	✓	✗	✗
Playground - Medium	✗	✓	✗
Playground - Large	✗	✓	✓
Playground - Major (includes towered multi-play & custom units)	✗	●	✓
Path - Shared	●	✓	✓
Path - Pedestrian	✓	✓	✓
Public Toilet	✗	●	✓
Rubbish Bin	●	✓	✓
Social space - Shelter	●	✓	✓
Social space - Accessible BBQ	✗	●	✓
Resting Nodes - Seating	✓	✓	✓
Shade Sails & assets (UV protection)	●	●	✓
Structured outdoor sport & recreation facility	✗	✓	✓

OPEN SPACE PROGRAMME / FEATURE	LOCAL	DISTRICT	REGIONAL
Exercise & fitness facilities (e.g.. small scale fitness equipment, half court, tennis table etc)	●	✓	✓
Unstructured sport & recreation facility (e.g.. multi-use courts, cricket nets etc)	●	✓	✓
Drinking fountains	✗	✓	✓
Car Parking	✗	✓	✓
Irrigation	●	●	✓
Lighting	●	●	✓
Dog Parks (Fenced off-leash & unfenced on-leash areas)	●	●	●
Specialised programmes - skate parks	✗	●	●
Specialised programmes - advanced fitness equipment & courses including parkour equipment	✗	●	●
Specialised programmes - BMX parks & pump tracks	✗	●	●
Water play including splash parks	✗	●	●
Specialised programmes - Rock climbing & bouldering	✗	●	●
WSUD feature and infrastructure, including sustainable water supply	●	●	●
Open space for festival & event activation - major	✗	●	✓
Open space for festival & event activation - minor	●	✓	✗
Ornamental & cultivated gardens	●	●	✓
Community gardens	●	●	●

PART 4

Applying this strategy

A practical guide on how to utilise this strategy for existing open space.

Locality & distribution analysis

The distribution of open space across Moorabool was assessed by locality, using previous studies to demonstrate walkable distances from Council parks classified as passive parks or equivalent to social/family recreation sites.

Assessment of existing open space

An example will be provided and investigated based on this strategy.

Analysis will include area size, existing programmes, current use, landscape setting & settlement type..



Areas of under & over supply:

4.1 Locality & distribution analysis

4.1.1 Bacchus Marsh & Darley

The northeast, northwest, and west areas of Darley lack dedicated social and family recreation spaces. While the overall quantity of land designated for open space may seem sufficient, much of it is either undeveloped, encumbered, or not publicly accessible. As such, the town's open space network is underutilized.

To improve access to recreation, it would be beneficial to selectively redevelop one large open space in each sector of Darley for social and family use. Additionally, a comprehensive planting program could enhance the many smaller, underused reserves. Several trail circuits are also needed to better connect these spaces to the River and Aqualink, creating a more cohesive and accessible network for the community. Encumbered sites such as Telford Park in Darley, could address gaps in forest or bushland settings not available in other parks.

4.1.2 Bacchus Marsh & Maddingley

The gaps in Bacchus Marsh are mainly large, unencumbered sites that could serve as spaces for social and family recreation (SFR) and trail circuits. While the town has two sizable potential recreation spaces, there are several areas without open space within a walkable 400-500m distance.

To improve accessibility, additional SFR sites are needed, including the redevelopment of key areas like Maddingley Park and Rotary Park to cater to all ages and abilities. By enhancing larger sites, including natural areas, their value could be increased, extending their reach and providing spaces for areas lacking priority public space. Most existing spaces in Maddingley are small play parks, which are challenging to retrofit due to their size, proximity to houses, or encumbrances like slope or drainage. Some of these parks have already undergone upgrades since the first draft of the plan.

Encumbered land

Bacchus Marsh contains several encumbered spaces, some of which offer valuable sporting opportunities. To maximize their potential, enhancing these areas through trail development, additional planting, and general improvements will be crucial for increasing their usability and value. Rather than solely focusing on new unencumbered open space, future developments should consider larger sites adjacent to these encumbered areas, as they will provide greater value and benefit a wider range of people.

Trails and greening

As housing density increases in and around Bacchus Marsh, trail extensions and the greening of open spaces will become essential. Connecting more residences to existing reserves through trails, while enhancing landscape quality and planting in these spaces, will help create a more sustainable and enjoyable environment, especially given the area's challenging climate.

4.1.3 Ballan

Ballan is currently structured around a central green space provided by the Werribee River corridor, which serves as the town's main open space spine. This corridor runs east, connecting various public spaces, community facilities, and the main off-road trail. However, the river itself is not fully accessible, and the surrounding area, while perceived as public, is not officially designated as such. Furthermore, the town lacks a central, easily accessible town park, and with only 3 hectares of land reserved for public open space, this is a significant gap in the urban fabric.

The southern part of Ballan is served by the Ballan Recreation Reserve and a small civic space along the main street, but these are not connected to the river corridor. Meanwhile, the northern area, which has seen an increase in housing density, is undeserved by public open spaces, compounded by a relatively impermeable street layout. The town's recent residential developments, primarily small infill subdivisions, have exacerbated the lack of walkable public spaces. For future growth, it is essential that Ballan incorporates centrally located open spaces to support sports, recreation, off-road trails, and relaxation—helping to create a more connected and accessible community.

4.1.4 Blackwood

While Blackwood benefits from nearby Crown land and the Lerderderg State Park, there is a lack of accessible open space for recreation close to the residential area and main street. The town's existing sporting reserve is not within safe walking distance from the town center, further limiting public access.

Additionally, Blackwood lacks a central town park for social and family recreation, which would be a valuable asset for both residents and visitors. A circuit trail connecting the town's existing recreation facilities, particularly the Recreation Reserve and sporting facilities, would significantly enhance accessibility and create a safer, more connected community.

4.1.5 Bungaree

The residential area is well-served by the main recreation reserve, located about 1 kilometer from most homes. Other nearby open spaces include The Mount Warrenheip Nature Conservation Reserve and the primary school.

With expected population growth, focusing further residential development around the Recreation Reserve and school will be key. Additionally, providing an off-road trail circuit and connecting trails to nearby regional Crown open spaces would enhance accessibility. The development of open space facilities in this area should align with those in Wallace to create a cohesive network of recreational spaces.

4.1.6 Dunnstown

The Dunnstown Recreation Reserve, located less than 1 km from most homes, serves as a central hub for social and family recreation, as well as sports. Other open spaces, such as Mount Warrenheip Flora Reserve, are situated 2 km from the township.

The focus of open space development should be on creating a trail to Mount Warrenheip and expanding bio-links to enhance connectivity and biodiversity within the area.

4.1.7 Elaine

Elaine's existing open spaces include a Recreation Reserve on the town's outskirts, which features active cricket and tennis clubs as well as a play space, a large cemetery near the Monastery, and a Crown water frontage reserve along Tea Tree Creek.

There may be opportunities for walking or cycling along closed roads to the east. Priorities for development should include upgrading the shared path, enhancing reserve facilities, adding tree planting, and creating a circuit trail. Encouraging additional housing development near the Recreation Reserve would also help support its role as a central community hub.

4.1.8 Greendale

Greendale borders the Wombat State Forest and offers several open spaces, including a cemetery on Napoleon Street, the Dales Creek water frontage, Blue Gully water frontages, a small bush block, and the Egans Reserve Recreation Reserve, which adjoins Dales Creek.

The Recreation Reserve is located within approximately 400m of all residential lots. The focus should be on developing trails to these open spaces, along with ongoing improvements and maintenance of the Recreation Reserve to support the town's young population and ensure a well-distributed network of open spaces.

4.1.9 Gordon

Gordon benefits from a good distribution of public open space, including several parcels of Crown land. However, the central social and family recreation park is small and not fully accessible to all residents. The area along the town's southern boundary lacks a social or family recreation or sports reserve within 500m.

A key strategy for Gordon should be to plan all existing sites as an integrated network of open spaces, offering diverse opportunities while ensuring that infrastructure is concentrated at key nodes, avoiding duplication. Focus should be placed on selectively redesigning and planting existing spaces, along with developing circuit trails to enhance connectivity.

4.1.10 Hopetoun Park

Hopetoun Park currently lacks a defined community heart, with no space for sports, social hard courts, or dedicated social and family recreation. The street layout limits the creation of open spaces with good visibility and pedestrian accessibility. Two undeveloped recreation reserves leave much of the residential area without proper open space services.

Most of the existing reserves serve conservation purposes, such as wetland areas or treed parkland, and do not cater to active recreation needs. There are no sealed paths or off-road trails within the suburb, though introducing paved landscape settings could enhance the existing conservation spaces and open grassed areas, improving overall connectivity.

With potential residential development in the northern part of the suburb, smaller lots will require a central social and family recreation space to serve the entire community. Additionally, preserving the grey box forest and creating a bio-link to connect conservation areas and trees on private land would enhance ecological connectivity and provide greater value to the suburb.

4.1.11 Lal Lal

Lal Lal has limited access to centrally located open spaces for social and family recreation or sport, with the school being the only significant facility available.

To improve accessibility, the focus should be on enhancing and making better use of existing facilities around the village, including the school's resources for community activities. Additionally, prioritizing the design and embellishment of the Regional Falls Recreation Reserve would help create a more inviting and functional space for residents.

4.1.12 Mt Egerton

The Mt Egerton township is surrounded by large tracts of public open space, though much of it is either unembellished or located on former mine sites. Key open spaces in the area include the Recreation Reserve, the Mechanics Institute Reserve, Tech Sol Mine, and several reserves along local roads such as Reserve Road, Church Street, Carney Street, and others, as well as the Mount Egerton Cemetery.

All land zoned for public parks and recreation is forested, while the Recreation Reserve is zoned as Township Zone, which may need to be reassessed for its appropriateness. Both the primary school and the Recreation Reserve are somewhat removed from the main road, indicating the need for a centralized social and family recreation space. This could potentially be developed in conjunction with the Mechanics Institute to create a more accessible community hub.

4.1.13 Myrniong

Myrniong is a small town, with most residential areas are within 1 km of either the Recreation Reserve, the school, or open space along the waterway corridor.

To ensure future development is sustainable, it will be important to concentrate any new residential growth near the existing Recreation Reserve and other community facilities. Available funds for open space should be directed towards enhancing existing reserves and creating an off-road trail circuit that connects key community spaces and travels along the riparian corridor. This will improve accessibility and promote connectivity across the town.

4.1.14 Wallace

Wallace has a main recreation reserve located within approximately 400 meters of most residential blocks. To support the town's growth, future residential development should be concentrated near the recreation reserve. Additionally, open space contributions from subdivisions should be used to enhance the reserve and fund the construction of a shared trail circuit, improving connectivity and recreational opportunities for residents.

Locality analysis summary

4.2 Locality analysis summary

The main urban localities (mostly consisting of large towns) and 10 small towns were assessed. The main urban localities were: Bacchus Marsh including Darley & Maddingley, Ballan, and Hopetoun Park. The assessment of the largest small towns was also included in the analysis were: Blackwood, Bungaree, Dunnstown, Elaine, Gordon, Greendale, Lal Lal, Mount Egerton, Myrniong and Wallace.

Mappings were provided as part of the original open space strategy volumes. These provided a very high-level guide to areas served within 400m walking distance to reserves, which was used as a starting point for the analysis.

The locality analysis did not identify any obvious areas of oversupply, considering distance and range of open spaces required. However, some sites are of low value and others potentially underutilised because of the lack of embellishment. Some sites are underutilised due to the area having a small local population (small towns).

Many open spaces in the urban areas of Moorabool are encumbered. Some of these may provide additional benefits or address identified gaps. For example, Darley has a limited number of treed sites. A large site such as Telford Park may fill a gap in forest/ bushland- a landscape setting type not available in other parks locally.

Linear open space corridors along waterways, aqueducts, transmission easements, and adjacent to encumbered sites remain undeveloped and disconnected from towns and other open spaces. Additionally, off-road shared trails along freeways and railways are underutilised. It is recommended to develop more shared trail and walking path links to improve connectivity and accessibility within, to, and between open spaces. Areas that have potential for bio-links also appear to be underutilized.

The master planning process

4.3 Master plans

Many parks require redevelopment due to changing needs, aging infrastructure, or inadequate design and embellishment since their initial creation. To address these issues, the master planning process is essential, as it offers a structured opportunity for user groups, the community, and staff to contribute their ideas on the reserve's development. While there may be a misconception that a master plan implies a commitment to short-term funding and specific details, it is important to understand that these plans are long-term frameworks. Development often occurs incrementally in stages as funds become available.

Master plans should reflect long-term community needs, with strong support from landowners, managers, committees, user groups, and the wider community. They provide an invaluable opportunity to fulfill the overarching vision for the area, ensuring parks offer spaces for social, environmental, and physical activities that promote family recreation and sport. The open space function, catchment area, and provision standards outlined in this plan should serve as key elements when crafting the brief for a master plan, ensuring that all future development aligns with the broader goals of accessibility, inclusivity, and sustainability.

4.3.1 Master plan criteria

A master plan should meet the following criteria:

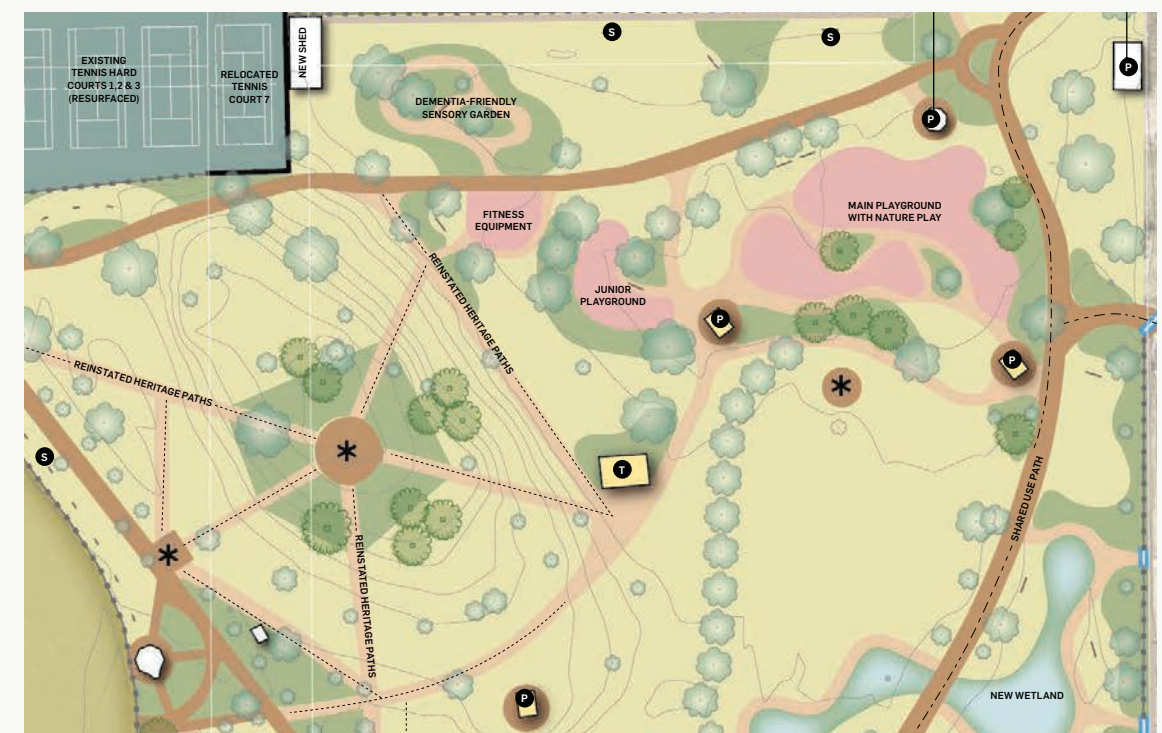
- ~ Not just be focused on a single space but should assess those neighbouring and in the wider locality.
- ~ Be clear about the relationship of the reserve to those of the same open space function type elsewhere.
- ~ Be specific to the primary and secondary function of the site and the preferred landscape setting type. Clarify the reserve's role with other open spaces of the same kind and any open spaces in the neighbourhood.
- ~ Respond to long term community needs and environmental and sustainability targets.
- ~ Commit the owner and manager of the land, any committee responsible for management or advice, user groups and the broader community to the vision
- ~ Identify key facility components and the objectives for change.
- ~ Respond to the need for the key activities, the key market segments, social, physical and environmental components, and the requirements of people of all ages and abilities.
- ~ Be clear about what a master plan is in all relevant messaging. They are blueprints to guide long term development when funds become available.

- ~ Ensure that play opportunities are integrated into the whole park's design and not present as separate elements.
- ~ Provide a basis for incremental improvement works by Council and the community within annual budgets: access, tree planting and path works.
- ~ Engage all relevant stakeholders throughout the design & review process.

4.3.2 Master plan priorities

Sites where master plans are required as a priority include but are not limited to:

- ~ Werribee River corridor and associated reserves, Ballan
- ~ Lal Lal Falls Reserve, Lal Lal
- ~ Kel Fields Flora Reserve, Maddingley, and
- ~ New greenfield sites across the Shire including Merrimu, Parwan Station and Ballan.



Maddingley Park Masterplan

Open space acquisition & disposals

4.4 Acquisitions & disposals

4.4.1 Strategic Acquisition of Public Open Space

Acquisition of public open space may be required for strategic purposes such as:

- ~ To protect an open space that would fill a gap in supply, or add diversity to open space functions present or landscape settings in public open space
- ~ To address the lack of a continuous corridor along a significant river corridor or trail route or connect fragmented spaces - for the purpose of a bio-link
- ~ To meet an identified demand for outdoor recreation or sport
- ~ To protect a site that has high conservation or local significance
- ~ To increase the size of an existing space to enable it to meet the fit-for-purpose criteria for that open space function type, and
- ~ To replace a site that is of low value and will be divested or lost in development.
- ~ To provide for demand as a result of subdivision.

The Subdivision Act 1988 specifies that the amount of contribution for public open space must be determined on a case-by-case basis. Under Section 20 of the Act, any land acquired as a public open space contribution can only be sold if the Council provides for the replacement of the public open space.

4.4.3 Disposal of Public Open Space

1. Before a site is considered for disposal, or land swap, it should be first assessed, to establish:
 - ~ Its potential to provide another open space function, or landscape setting type
 - ~ The opportunities to expand or develop the site to enable it to be fit-for purpose
 - ~ The benefits of and likely revenue from disposal – e.g., if it has low potential to develop and if the value of the land could be better utilised to add to or develop another open space in the vicinity, and
 - ~ The cost of disposal and any remedial works required, including community engagement, advertising and the planning process, including any likely appeal.
2. Open space should not be disposed of to raise funds for small capital projects.

4.4.4 Acquisition Process for Open Space

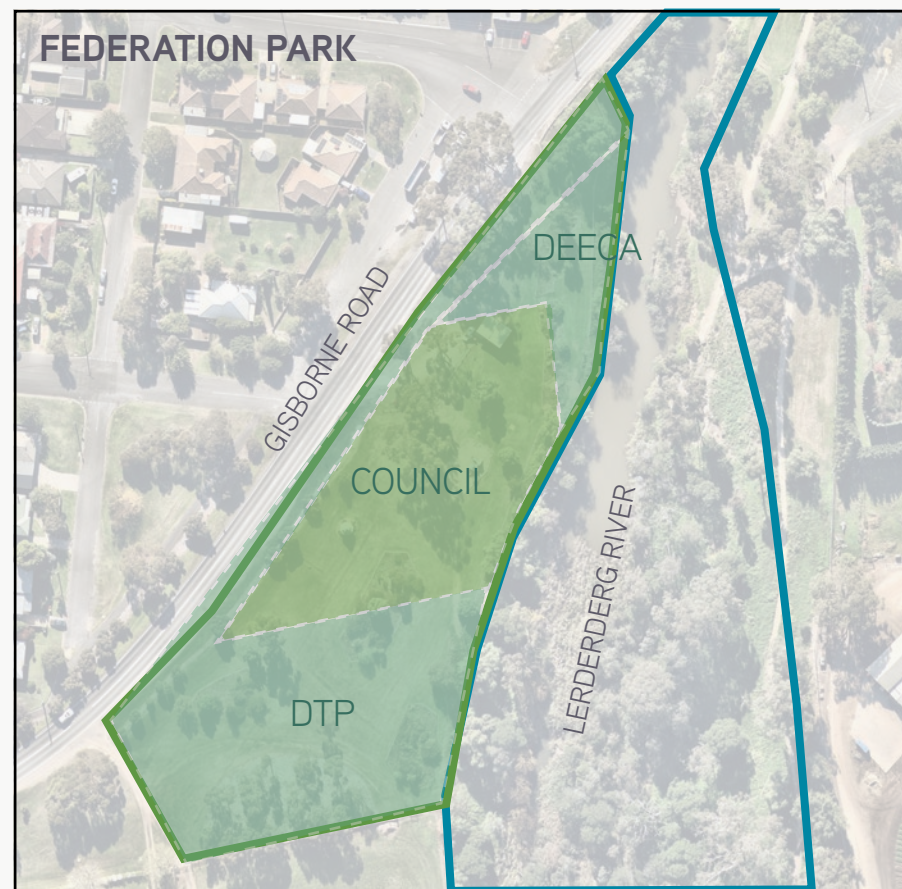
The acquisition process for open space should include the following considerations

- ~ The primary open space function of land required for acquisition must be identified prior to being able to assess (using the core service levels for each function type) what land is suitable and fit-for-purpose and the size of land to acquire
- ~ The land must be fit for the intended purpose (primary function type)
- ~ If required for an open space with a recreation purpose, the site should not be encumbered - in line with the core service levels described for each function of open space, and
- ~ The site should be assessed for contamination/hazards, possible encumbrances, and potential costs of rectification prior to purchase.

Analysis of existing Open space

4.5 Case study: Federation Park (Existing open space)

For the purposes of demonstrating how this strategy can be applied to existing open space, Federation Park Reserve located on Gisborne Road, Darley is the example project.



4.5.1 Project Analysis

Based on a brief analysis, the following can be determined:

- ~ **Area Size Total Reserve** - 15,270m² (Between Local and District Level)
- ~ Area size Council Reserve - 5,580m²
- ~ Area Size DEECA Reserve - 1,430m²
- ~ Area Size DTP Reserve - 8,260m²
- ~ **Population catchment of Darley** - 9,190 residents (2021 Census All persons QuickStats)

- ~ **Population catchment analysis** - Visitors from Bacchus Marsh Region including locally in Darley, Moorabool wide visitors stopping or passing through, truck drivers, transport staff and couriers stopping over, regional visitors going to and from Gisborne (Macedon Ranges Shire).
- ~ **Existing primary function** - gateway reserve/wayside stop
- ~ **Existing features** - Rotunda (references to heritage including Darley Camp), Toilet Block, drinking fountain, seating, dog bag dispensers, bins & car park
- ~ **Landscape Settings** - Treed parkland
- ~ **Settlement Type** - Large Town
- ~ **Walkable catchment** - walkable distance to significant portion of suburban Darley and rural properties.
- ~ **Overlays** - Area encompassed by CSO (Cultural Sensitivity overlay).



4.5.2 Adherence to Open space strategy principles

A significant part of the process is to evaluate whether the current Open space meets the required benchmark based on the principles of the Open Space Strategy, and to identify any necessary upgrades that will reasonably achieve this standard.

- ✓ = Fully adheres
- ✗ = Does not adhere
- = Partially adheres

PRINCIPLE	LEVEL OF ADHERENCE
Accessibility & Inclusion	✗
Health & Safety	✗
Diversity & Choice	✗
Sustainable development & Economic viability	✗
High standard of urban design and amenity.	✗
Prevention of pollution to land, water and air. Includes integrated water management	✗
Protection of environmentally sensitive areas & natural resources	●
Land use & multi-modal transport integration	✗
Planning the prevention of environmental issues created by siting incompatible land uses close together.	●
Facilitate the provision of public open space that supports sustainable development.	✗

4.5.3 Adherence to Open Space Strategy Vision

Additionally, the current Open space should be evaluated whether it meets the required benchmark based on the vision of the Open Space Strategy, and to identify any necessary upgrades that will reasonably achieve this standard.

- ✓ = Fully adheres
- ✗ = Does not adhere
- = Partially adheres

VISION STATEMENT	LEVEL OF ADHERENCE
Fit for purpose	✗
Diverse	✗
Equitably distributed	✗
Accessible & inclusive	✗
Able to enrich social, environmental and recreation experiences	●
Sustainably sited, designed and managed partnership	●
Protecting and enhancing biodiversity, cultural heritage & amenity	●
Complementary to and providing access to the opportunities extensive	●

4.5.4 Conclusion

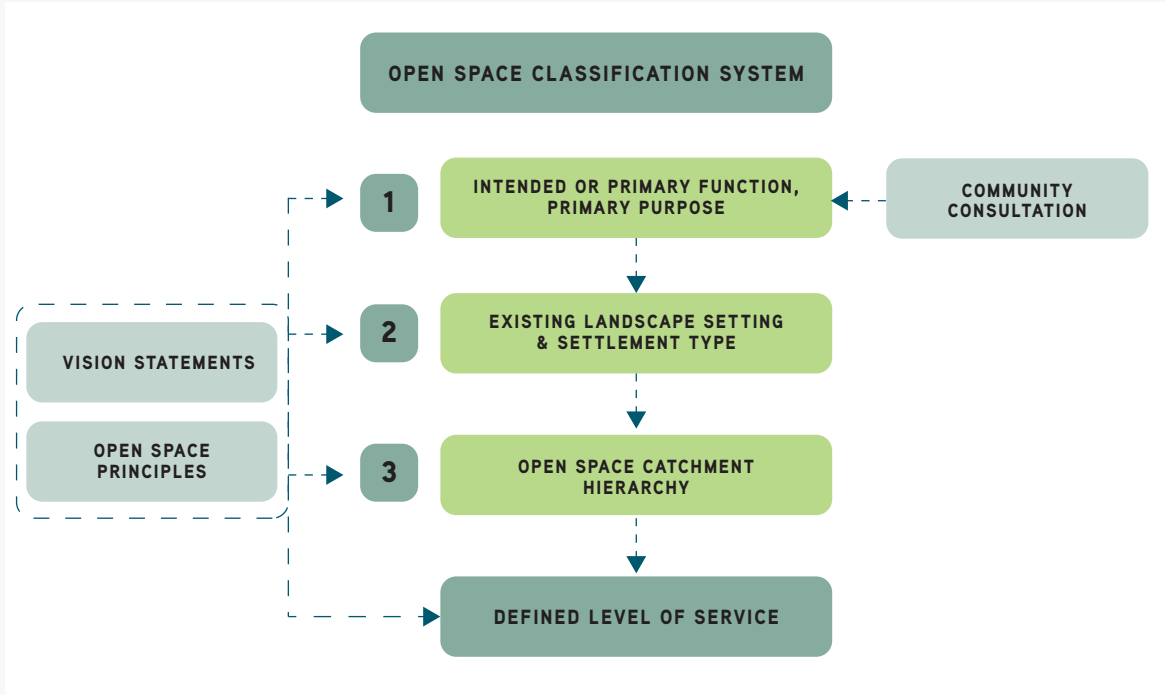
This section will provide a summary of the findings, outlining a path forward for Open space Classification and establishing a foundation for future upgrades.

- ~ Federation Park's total area size qualifies it as a reserve at the local to district level. However, considering walking distance, regional visitation, and population catchment, it could be classified solely as a district-level reserve.
- ~ While the reserve has the potential to be a high-end district-level park based on its existing function and features (toilet block, parking, playground etc.), currently these are either lacking or in need of upgrade. Based on the table in 3.21 Programme / Feature hierarchy comparison, this reserve should be upgraded to better align with the appropriate level of service, based on the assigned catchment level.
- ~ Several landscape settings, located adjacent to the site, present opportunities to enhance the reserve's character, biodiversity, and connection to the surrounding context.
- ~ The historical and cultural significance of this reserve further elevates its importance within the broader local context.
- ~ Currently, the site's development does not fully reflect the Open space Strategic principles and vision. Therefore, an upgrade is needed to address these gaps and integrate the key principles into the Open space Enhancement Project (OSEP).
- ~ According to Gender Impact Assessment reporting and analysis, the reserve does not provide adequate safety and accessibility to all residents.
- ~ Based on several rounds of community consultation, collated feedback has determined the intended primary function is required to transition into Social & Family Recreation (SFR) rather than a wayside stop or gateway reserve.

'Federation Park, Darley is by definition a District Level reserve that currently does not meet the appropriate level of service. The reserve requires an upgrade through the OSEP program to meet these standards and to better adhere to the Open space Vision & Guiding Principles.'

4.6 Process diagram

The following diagram will summarize the process flow in how Open space is classified and how adjacent tasks directly impact the outcome.



Analysis of Greenfield open space

4.6 Case study: Development site in Darley (Greenfield)

For the purposes of demonstrating how this strategy can be applied to greenfield open space, a development in Darley is the example project.



4.6.1 New development Checklist

Initially, the process to determine what open space is required in a new development must undergo an initial checklist as provided within the appendices.

The checklist can be summarised into the following four categories:

- ~ Context for the development
- ~ Open space function type
- ~ Open space landscape setting needed to ensure a diversity of experiences
- ~ The best site for an open space

4.6.2 Recommended Steps

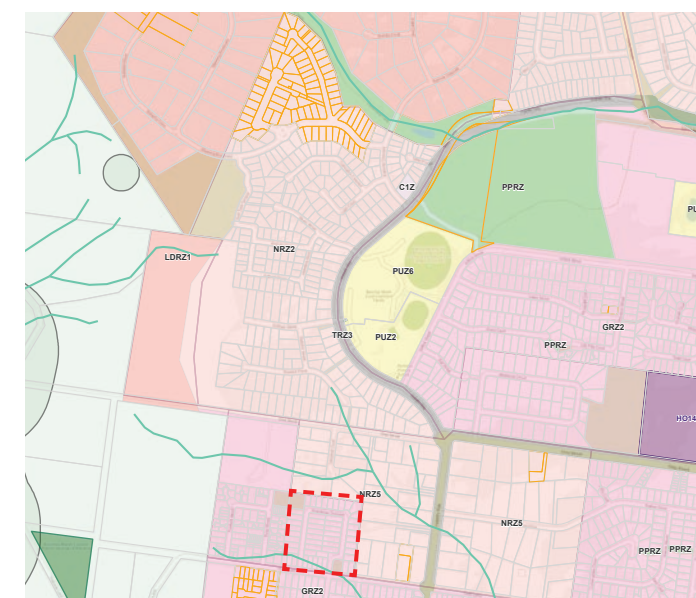
Step 1

What is the context for the development: What private and open space will be available to people who come to live here?

Findings

The site (see area marked in red in the image below) is in an urban township (Darley) extending over 2 kilometers across. So multiple open spaces are appropriate to the settlement type. The development is in the southwestern sector and on the fringe of the developed township. See Darley locality in locality and distribution analysis section.

The property is in a Neighbourhood Residential Zone. Low Density Residential (potentially Low-Density Residential where there is currently Farming Zone) also abuts. Some adjacent medium-density dwellings have a poor relationship to the existing open space. The proposed blocks are small in comparison with existing. There is also small undeveloped open space adjacent.



Step 2

What open space function type is needed and would add opportunities?

Findings

The site should become part of a local social / family recreation park to serve the southwest of Darley.

There is no social/family recreation space, sport, or off-road trail within the desirable distances of houses, (500m, 1km and 400m) nor in this sector of Darley based on GIS mappings.

The priority open space for a residential community that may be Neighbourhood Resident Zone or ultimately medium density, will be a social/family recreation area as none is available in the west of the suburb, or within the desired 400- 500m.

The closest sports park is about 1.8 kilometers away (desirable 1km), about the same for social/family recreation and no off-road trail circuit in the vicinity.

There is potential to develop a trail through the land to the north-west through the grey box forest (1.8 km from the site). When an extension of Ross Street is constructed, to the north, in the future subdivision, this will be closer).

Step 3

What open space landscape setting is needed and would add a diversity of experiences?

Findings

There are few areas of treed, parkland or forest designed for a social recreation function in Darley. Most sites are open grassed areas. The conservation sites further to the north are open forest, but these are not likely to allow significant social activities. Is not conducive to being primarily a water-based setting type or paved area.

With a local catchment and its potential size, it is not suitable as a cultivated garden, or managed sports turf.

This new space's preferred landscape setting type is treed parkland or bushland/forest.

A full range of physical, social, and environmental activities for people from various age groups and abilities are required to serve a social recreation function and can be supported in a heavily treed area.

Step 4

What is the best site for an open space?

Findings

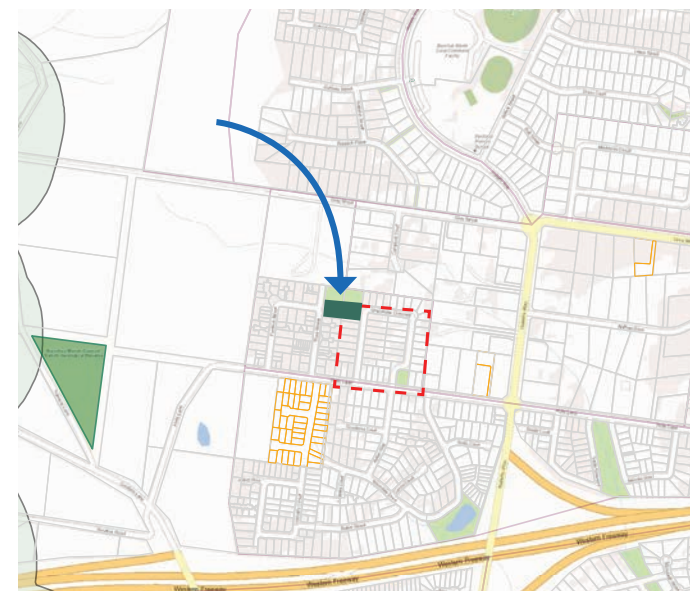
The site has been selected.

The area to the north-west, and north of Grey Street, may well be developed for residential but may also include a further corridor of open space to protect trees.

There is a parcel on the south-east of the site, a geological reserve which is a Crown reserve and has limited development potential for recreation. However, further re vegetation would provide restorative values, additional visual amenity, and opportunities for walking.

To the south-east is a reserve abutting the freeway off Silverdale Drive. A small creek feeds it. Here there are limited opportunities to develop as a social space (although it has a play space on it?). It is encumbered on the periphery of the residential area and abuts the freeway and private yards.

The Silverdale Drive site is not well landscaped. Its best potential is to serve a relaxation function, nature play, drawing on its potentially wet nature and its size of some two hectares.



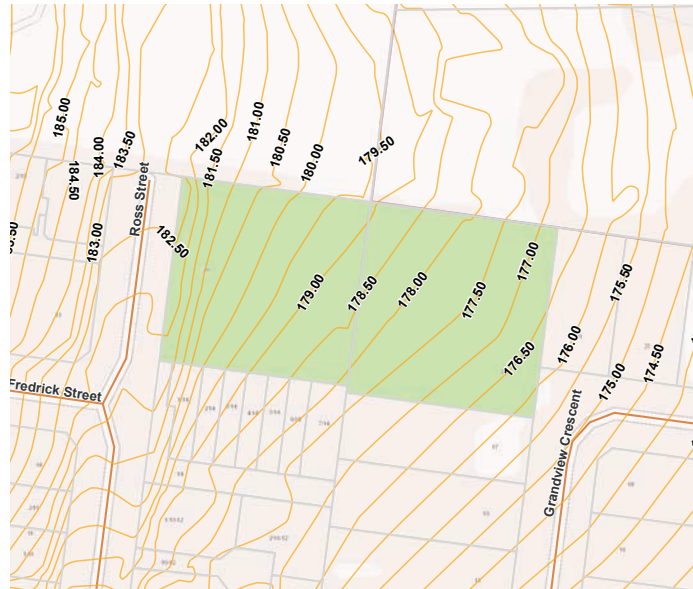
Step 5

How should it be designed and developed to meet the requirement of the function and setting type.

Findings

This site is relatively flat and unencumbered. However, it is small, and multiple parcels (Ross Street open space and additional space in a future subdivision to the north) will meet the minimum size for a social family recreation area.

As shown in the plan, the site has a very narrow entry and poorly addresses the street.



This site and the adjacent park in Ross Street are relatively flat and featureless with limited encumbrances, except potentially backing onto the rear of residences on at least three sides.

This site should incorporate Ross Street reserve and a potential reserve to the north as one, and where possible in total provide a park of a minimum of approximately 8000-1ha square meters.

This new parcel of land has immediate rear private yards abutting, so it is least appropriate for the social activities, and more appropriate for the environmental features and trail activities.

The Ross Street Reserve is more appropriate for social activities, being open to the street. With a further development to the north, this street presence could expand.

This site should have screen planting along the fence lines, specimen trees, multiple layers of vegetation to provide sensory interest for play, visual amenity, and shade. See the development standards link. The park should have a path system that extends around the perimeter, (approx., 260 meters), picnic tables, and possibly a shelter.

On the western side of the park allow for more social facilities to be provided on the Ross Street verge, at a future date. The path along the medium density housing should (rather than as shown) not be too close to the fence.

It should include a narrow buffer of screen planting on the private fence line.

The Council could potentially allow residents in the medium density housing to have vegetable allotments in the park if appropriate. These lots have minimal open space.

4.6.3 Conclusion

The development site in Darley's southwestern sector, within a Neighbourhood Residential Zone, has limited open space and smaller allotments. The site should be transformed into a local level social and family recreation park to address the lack of accessible recreational spaces in the area, with the potential for a trail network. A treed parkland or bushland landscape is needed to support a range of social, physical, and environmental activities. The site selection considers surrounding developments and greater context. Further open space corridors and re vegetation can enhance environmental value and walking opportunities. The design should include a path system, social facilities, trees for shade, understory planting, and potential future social and community spaces such as community vegetable gardens.

PART 5

Action Plan

An action plan to be implemented for the duration of the open space strategy.



Action Plan

4.1 Action Plan Table

Actions are a crucial part of the open space strategy as they provide a clear road map for developing and managing spaces that meet community needs, protect natural environments, and enhance quality of life while providing an appropriate level of service.

NO.	ACTION	IMPLEMENTED TIME FRAME				
		YEAR 1 (2025)	YEAR 2 (2026)	YEAR 3 (2027)	YEAR 4 (2028)	YEAR 5 (2029-30)
SPECIFIC & MEASURABLE ACTIONS						
1.0	Develop an Open Space Enhancement Project (OSEP) program every three years that identifies and sets out the design projects for that period. This action will be determined by the results of Action #1.1.					
	Responsible Parties: Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, Parks & Gardens					
1.1	Collate all existing audits of all existing open space to define Primary Functions, Catchment Hierarchy Types, Settlement Types, Landscape Setting Types and Landscape features/assets/programmes. The audits inventory should include information about age groups and the activities provided for, e.g.. swinging, rotating climbing; accessible features; whether the site is fenced; nature of softfall, and support facilities e.g.. shade and tables, BBQs, etc. To include any additional audited information that may not be present in previous audits. Revise at end of strategy duration to ensure information is up to date prior to development of next OSS strategy.					
	Responsible Parties: Asset Management, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, Parks & Gardens					

NO.	ACTION	IMPLEMENTED TIME FRAME				
		YEAR 1 (2025)	YEAR 2 (2026)	YEAR 3 (2027)	YEAR 4 (2028)	YEAR 5 (2029-30)
1.2	Update the database each year as new projects are handed over to Council.					
	Responsible Parties: Asset Management, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, IT business systems		✓	✓	✓	✓
1.3	Implement separate GIS mapping layers of each Hierarchy Level, for all existing open space, including any other relevant layers that could be useful to whole of Council. Revise & update the GIS mapping layers each year as new projects handed over to Council.					
	Responsible Parties: Asset Management, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, IT business systems		✓	✓	✓	✓
1.4	Develop detailed mappings of existing open space and investigate gaps within the network. Investigate potential bio-links, recreation links and other opportunities. Revise every 5 years.					
	Responsible Parties: Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, Strategic Planning Department, Community Place & Prosperity, Special Projects, Community Planning & Development, Environments		✓	✓		

NO.	ACTION	IMPLEMENTED TIME FRAME				
		YEAR 1 (2025)	YEAR 2 (2026)	YEAR 3 (2027)	YEAR 4 (2028)	YEAR 5 (2029-30)
1.5	Develop a Small Township Enhancement Project (STEP) Program every three years that identifies and sets out the design projects for that period.	✓				
	Responsible Parties: Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, Capital Works, Parks & Gardens				✓	
1.6	To develop, in partnership with relevant departments, a 'developer toolkit' that demonstrates Councils benchmark regarding the design, approval & development of Open Space in Greenfield developments. Revise Toolkit in fourth year of strategy duration and update accordingly.	✓	✓			
	Responsible Parties: Engineering Services, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, Strategic Planning, Statutory Planning, Parks & Gardens				✓	
1.7	Audit all existing Open Space with a primary function of 'Single Playground', and plan the future design & construction of these reserves to become SFR (Social & Family Recreation) as a minimum standard.	✓	✓			
	Responsible Parties: Asset Management, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, Parks & Gardens					

NO.	ACTION	IMPLEMENTED TIME FRAME				
		YEAR 1 (2025)	YEAR 2 (2026)	YEAR 3 (2027)	YEAR 4 (2028)	YEAR 5 (2029-30)
1.8	Audit existing bio-links & conservation areas. Develop mappings to determine gaps and potential re-vegetation projects.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
	Responsible Parties: Asset Management, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, Parks & Gardens					
1.9	Identify open space that should be prioritised as social & family recreation (SFR) space in each settlement type, for redevelopment, master plan each and prioritise programmes in-line with the Open Space Strategy Principles.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
	Responsible Parties: Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, Parks & Gardens					
1.10	Prepare a plant species list of trees, shrubs, grasses and ground covers that can be used to add play & sensory value, attract birds and are safe for children and pets.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
	Responsible Parties: Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, Parks & Gardens, Environments					
1.11	Develop a 'Parks for Play' guideline. Update the Open Space Strategy to refer to this document.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Responsible Parties: Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, Parks & Gardens, Community Planning & Development					

NO.	ACTION	IMPLEMENTED TIME FRAME				
		YEAR 1 (2025)	YEAR 2 (2026)	YEAR 3 (2027)	YEAR 4 (2028)	YEAR 5 (2029-30)
1.12	Develop and adopt a 'Playspace Strategy'. Update the Open Space Strategy to refer to this document. The 'Parks for Play' Guideline should be referenced within this document.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Responsible Parties: Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, Parks & Gardens, Community Planning & Development, Asset Management					
1.13	Develop a Park & Street Furniture Asset guideline/palette. This document will compliment the Open Space Strategy by specifying landscape assets for each type.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Responsible Parties: Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, Parks & Gardens, Asset Management, Major Projects					
1.14	Develop a 'Dogs in Open Space' Guideline that follows the FOLA Dog Park Management Plan and the Masons Lane Reserve Notes developed by LMH consulting. Utilise the FOLA Dog Park Management Plan prior to the adoption of the guidelines. .		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Responsible Parties: Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, Parks & Gardens, Community Planning & Development					

NO.	ACTION	IMPLEMENTED TIME FRAME				
		YEAR 1 (2025)	YEAR 2 (2026)	YEAR 3 (2027)	YEAR 4 (2028)	YEAR 5 (2029-30)
1.15	Develop an interactive map of all parks and open spaces that Council manages with a key of facilities available.			✓		
	Responsible Parties: Asset Management, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture, IT business systems					
1.16	Update Open Space Maintenance Management Plan to reflect revised hierarchy and terminology.		✓			
	Responsible Parties: Parks & Gardens, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture					
COUNCIL WIDE ACTIONS - GENERAL						
2.0	Adopt the classifications used in this Strategy to guide the provision, design, and management of public open space.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.1	Ensure the Open Space Principles underpin the planning, provision, design, construction and management of public open space.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.2	Refine the current processes and classifications in other plans so that the language reflects classifications required for planning as well as management and consistency is ensured between the hierarchy of open space and the asset hierarchy.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.3	Utilise the same classifications from this document in future strategies, documents & guidelines.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

NO.	ACTION	IMPLEMENTED TIME FRAME				
		YEAR 1 (2025)	YEAR 2 (2026)	YEAR 3 (2027)	YEAR 4 (2028)	YEAR 5 (2029-30)
2.4	Adopt the priority function types of open space in new residential areas (Greenfield) as: social/ & family recreation, off-road trails, and sport.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.5	Where possible, utilise nature strips in established areas and greenfield developments to provide opportunities for people to walk, cycle and wheel around their neighbourhood, connect to off-road trail corridors and experience nature.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.6	All STEP (Small Town Enhancement Plan) projects, or works within Townships, should seek to provide path alignments and connectivity that either mirror or build upon the objectives outlined within adjacent strategies.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
COUNCIL WIDE ACTIONS - ENCUMBRANCE						
3.0	Before encumbered land is taken in residential developments, Council must ensure that site of a suitable size, configuration, capability and character is taken to meet the priority open space functions, otherwise Council may refuse acceptance of the allocated public open space.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.1	Ensure that the need for and possibility of taking land is considered as a priority before accepting a cash open space contribution, including the opportunity to add to an existing public open space.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

NO.	ACTION	IMPLEMENTED TIME FRAME				
		YEAR 1 (2025)	YEAR 2 (2026)	YEAR 3 (2027)	YEAR 4 (2028)	YEAR 5 (2029-30)
3.2	Ensure the process provided within the Open Space Strategy of selecting a suitable site for open space is followed and that incorporates an assessment of the feasibility of expanding any existing open space to meet the provision standards or the required space.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.3	For infill projects, as well as higher-density and mixed-use areas, spaces for social and family recreation (SFR), sports, and off-road trails (maintained to the same distance standards as in lower-density areas) should be supplemented with areas for community gardening and relaxation/visual enjoyment. These spaces should be situated close to residences in mixed-use, higher-density residential areas, and potentially within commercial or business zones to serve residents, employees, and visitors.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.4	Reduce the land take from developers that is encumbered, unless it has ability to meet a specified open space function and is compensated for taking it (has a long maintenance period etc.).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.5	Ensure all parks can be fit-for-purpose, not compromised by encumbrances.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.6	Use encumbered land proactively to maximise its value – e.g., adding size to a park for borrowed landscape etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

NO.	ACTION	IMPLEMENTED TIME FRAME				
		YEAR 1 (2025)	YEAR 2 (2026)	YEAR 3 (2027)	YEAR 4 (2028)	YEAR 5 (2029-30)
3.7	Where Council is requested to take on the management of encumbered land, Council should ensure the developer undertakes a risk assessment of it being used for public purposes and contributes to the additional ongoing costs of maintenance, over and above urban parkland.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

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