



PRINCES GARDENS

MASTER PLAN

Prepared by **Hansen Partnership**
for the **City of Stonnington**

July 2018



— City of —
STONNINGTON **hansen**



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE INTENTION

In 2016 Council asked the community what they liked about Princes Gardens and what could be improved. This feedback was used to develop a Draft Master plan that proposes a number of improvements to support the diverse range of activities that take place in the park.

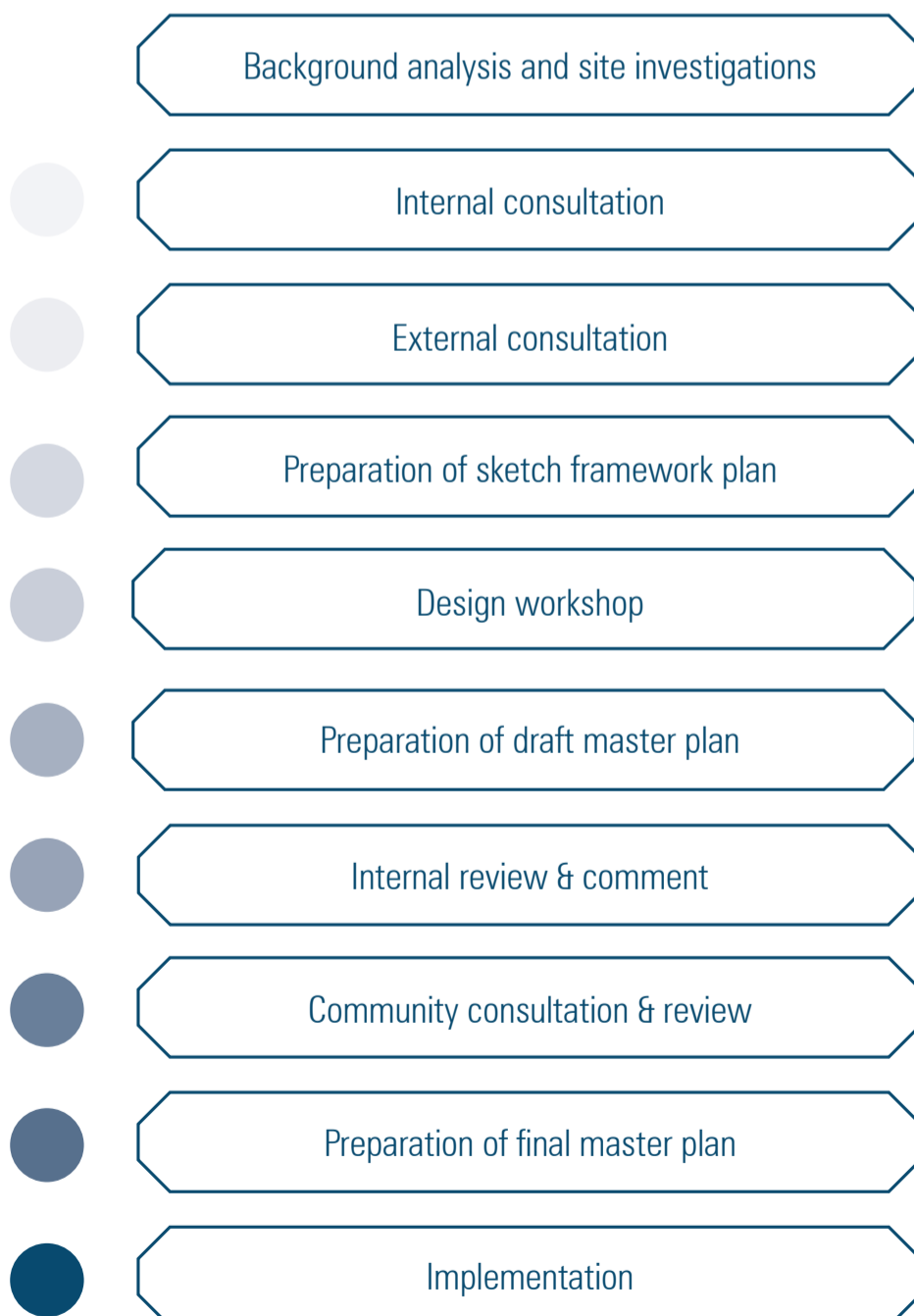
The Princes Gardens Master Plan aims to:

- Determine the role and function of Princes Gardens within its current context; as well as envisioning its role and function in the future context of its precinct;
- Develop Princes Gardens as a place where people will feel comfortable relaxing, exercising and socialising with others;
- Make Princes Gardens a safe, accessible and attractive place; and,
- Ensure that the facilities within Princes Gardens are of high quality and meet the needs of the current and future local community.

When completed, the Master Plan will be an implementation strategy to guide Council in making staged improvements and upgrades to meet the needs and priorities of user groups now and into the future.

1.2 THE PROJECT PROCESS

This master plan is built upon the foundations of the preceding process outcomes and multiple rounds of stakeholder and community consultation illustrated in the diagram below:



2 BACKGROUND

2.1 MORE ABOUT PRINCES GARDENS

Princes Gardens is a community hub and historical park where there is a concentration of open space, community and municipal facilities and services including:

- Chapel Off Chapel
- Prahran Aquatic Centre
- Skate park and 2 half pipes (one big one small)
- Basketball court
- 3No. Tennis courts
- Formal playground
- Informal grassed areas
- Princes Close Childcare Centre
- Maternal & Child Health Centre/ Youth Services
- Prahran Clinic
- Inner South Community Health Service
- Community Health Centre

There are also private commercial properties clustered in the north west corner of the site.

There is also one tree listed on the National Trust Significant Tree Register, a *Combretum caffrum* just south of the basketball court.

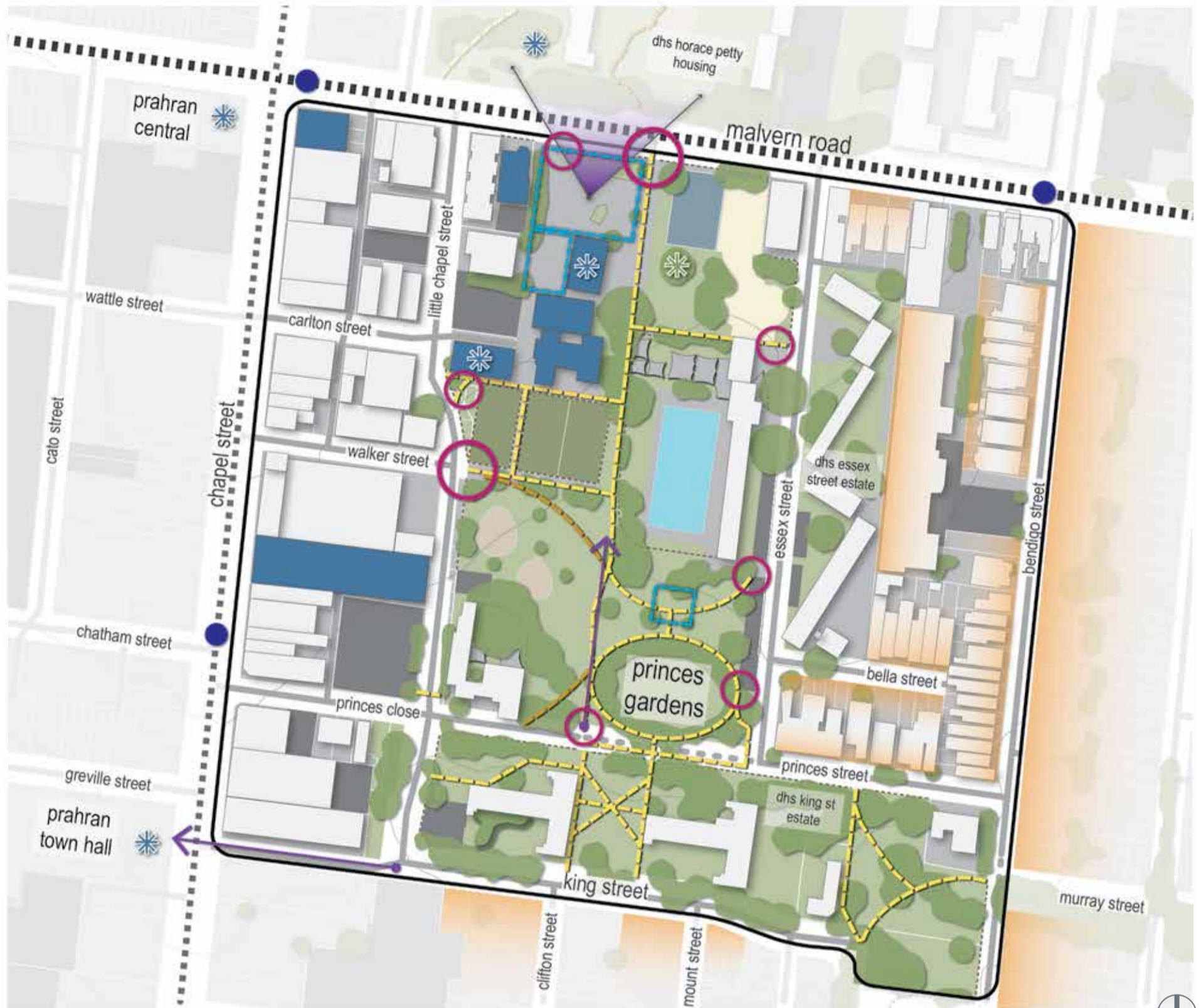
2.2 CONTEXT

Princes Gardens is both a destination and a thoroughfare. Its close proximity to Chapel Street -the bustling commercial and retail spine of Prahran- makes it a perfect candidate for linkage improvements and open space upgrades. There are many local strategies developed around Chapel Street and Princes Gardens falls within this precinct.

The Princes Gardens Master plan objectives are consistent with and feed directly from the concentrated visions, objectives and outcomes of Chapel reVision, ReDiscover Chapel Street and the Princes Gardens Master plan 2011. The following strategies have been reviewed for both their municipality-wide recommendations for the public realm and open space, and site-specific recommendations for the Princes Gardens precinct.



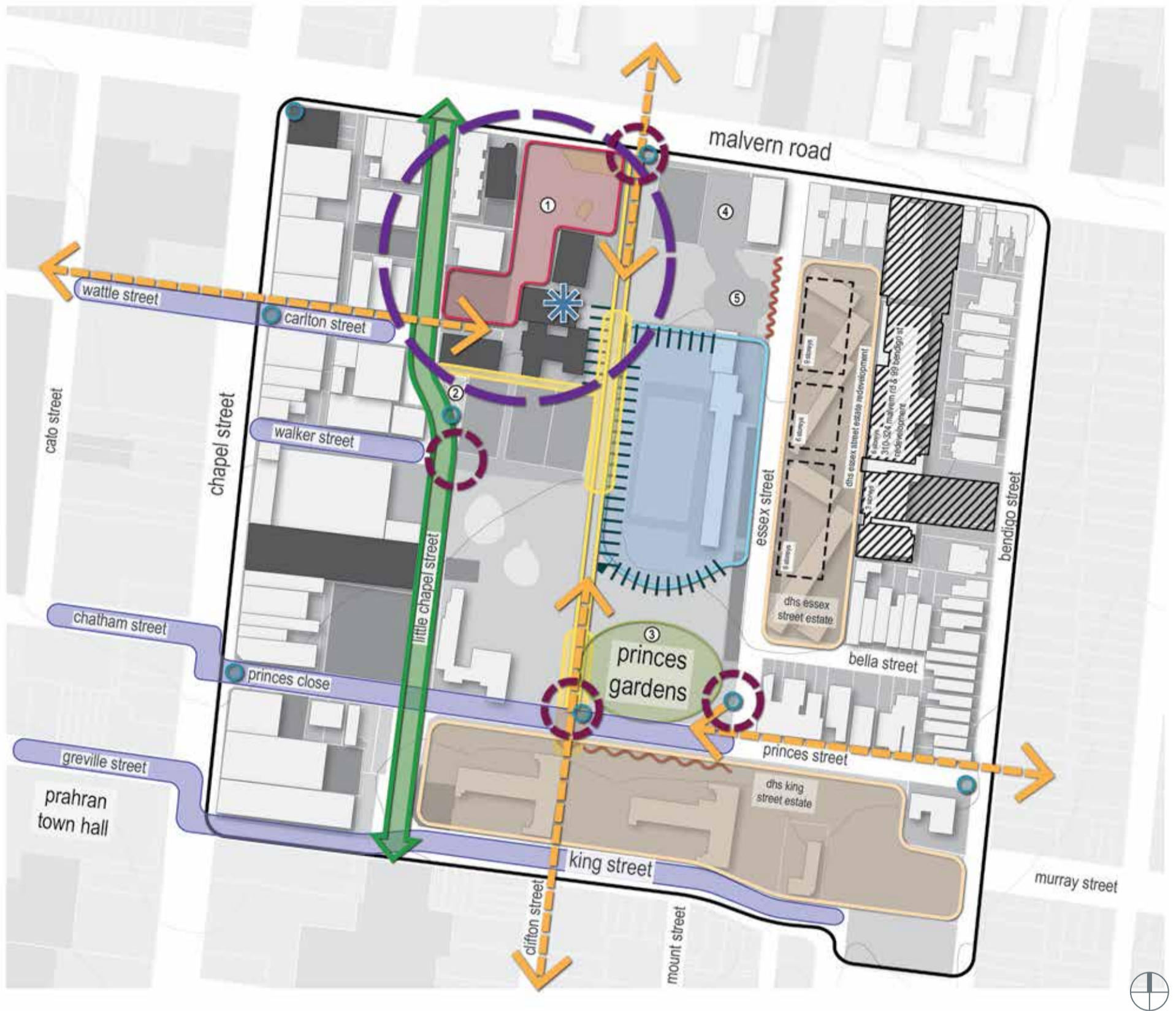
2.3 EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN



legend

study area		green space	
residential interface		scattered vegetation	
key vistas		skate park	
key views		play area	
sealed pedestrian path		basketball court	
pedestrian desire line		tennis courts	
entrance to princes gardens		prahran pool	
landmark site		car park	
significant tree <i>Combretum cafrum</i> (national trust heritage register)		tram route	
plaza		tram stop	
heritage buildings		main road	
built form		no vehicle access	
shade sail		fence	
		contours	

2.4 ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES PLAN



legend

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| study area | | consider interfaces and connections with any future redevelopment of the department of housing estates | |
| opportunity to enhance entrance | | opportunity to create zones to cater for a variety of uses and events | |
| opportunity to improve way-finding signage at key entrances and nearby intersections | | implement 'shared streets' as pedestrian priority zones with light traffic, lots of greenery and commercial activity | |
| potential for the re-use and integration of heritage buildings to maintain the distinctive character of the area | | acquire assets and consolidate community services | |
| consider the removal and reshaping of vegetation and fencing to improve passive surveillance | | opportunity to achieve more active use of existing spaces | |
| opportunity to develop streets as linear forms of open space | | proposed future redevelopment envelopes | |
| opportunity to redevelop the Prahran Aquatic Centre to encourage broader use and provide a recreation hub | | approved development footprint | |
| opportunity to improve the use and function of the recessed oval | | | |
| opportunity to improve pedestrian amenity and safety within the gardens | | | |
| opportunity to upgrade the existing main north-south access path | | | |
| consider the arrangement of pedestrian links from princes gardens to the wider precinct | | | |
| opportunity to improve or remove fencing conditions | | | |

3 INITIAL CONSULTATION

3.1 ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The preliminary round of community consultation for the Princes Gardens Master Plan took place over one month through April - May 2016 and presented a great opportunity to promote the project, understand the community’s experience of the park and start collecting their ideas for improving it.

To start the engagement and information gathering process, members of the community were encouraged to have their say by attending community drop-in sessions for direct conversations with the project team; or by completing a survey available in hard copy format or online via Council’s website.

Three drop-in information sessions were set up on the following days:

- Two Saturday mornings (16 & 23 April 2016) @ Princes Gardens,
- One Wednesday evening (27 April 2016) @ Prahran Town Hall

3.2 WHAT WAS DISCOVERED

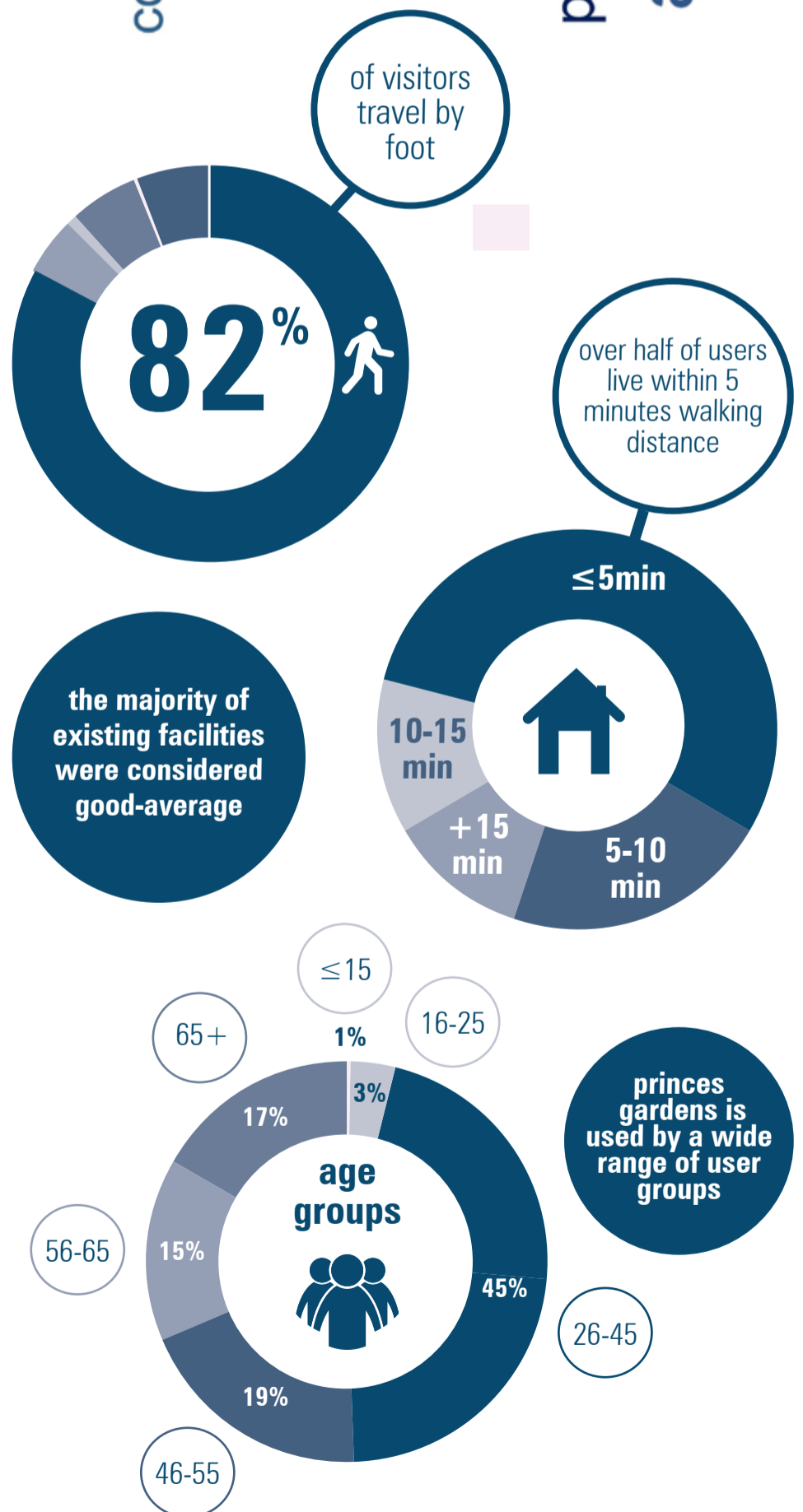
The questions asked during the initial round of consultation identified the demographics of user groups, existing usage trends, access, proximity to the park, satisfaction with existing facilities and expectations for future improvements. The following is a summary of the feedback received and fast facts identifying general usage and access of the park.

Participants were also prompted to identify the current issues with the park, and future opportunities for improvement. This information led to the development of a Framework Plan for Princes Gardens which visually identified broad short and long-term design objectives for resolving these issues.

Issues	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ surveillance ▪ inappropriate use of public space, i.e.: drugs, vandalism & graffiti ▪ waste disposal ▪ cleaning up after dogs ▪ lack of gathering spaces ▪ lighting ▪ way-finding signage ▪ noise ▪ cleanliness ▪ toilet facilities ▪ limited use of tennis courts ▪ maintenance ▪ lack of shelter ▪ pedestrian accessibility ▪ lack of parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ increase passive surveillance by opening sight lines ▪ realign pathways to reflect desire lines ▪ provide more usable open space ▪ improve lighting along thoroughfares ▪ way-finding & identity signage ▪ garden beds ▪ multi-functional spaces - basketball, skate, netball, tennis, etc. ▪ shade to playground ▪ update space around basketball and skate area ▪ more seating ▪ DDA compliant paths and seating ▪ regular maintenance ▪ upgrade toilet facilities ▪ enhance the sunken oval ▪ revamp the Aquatic Centre

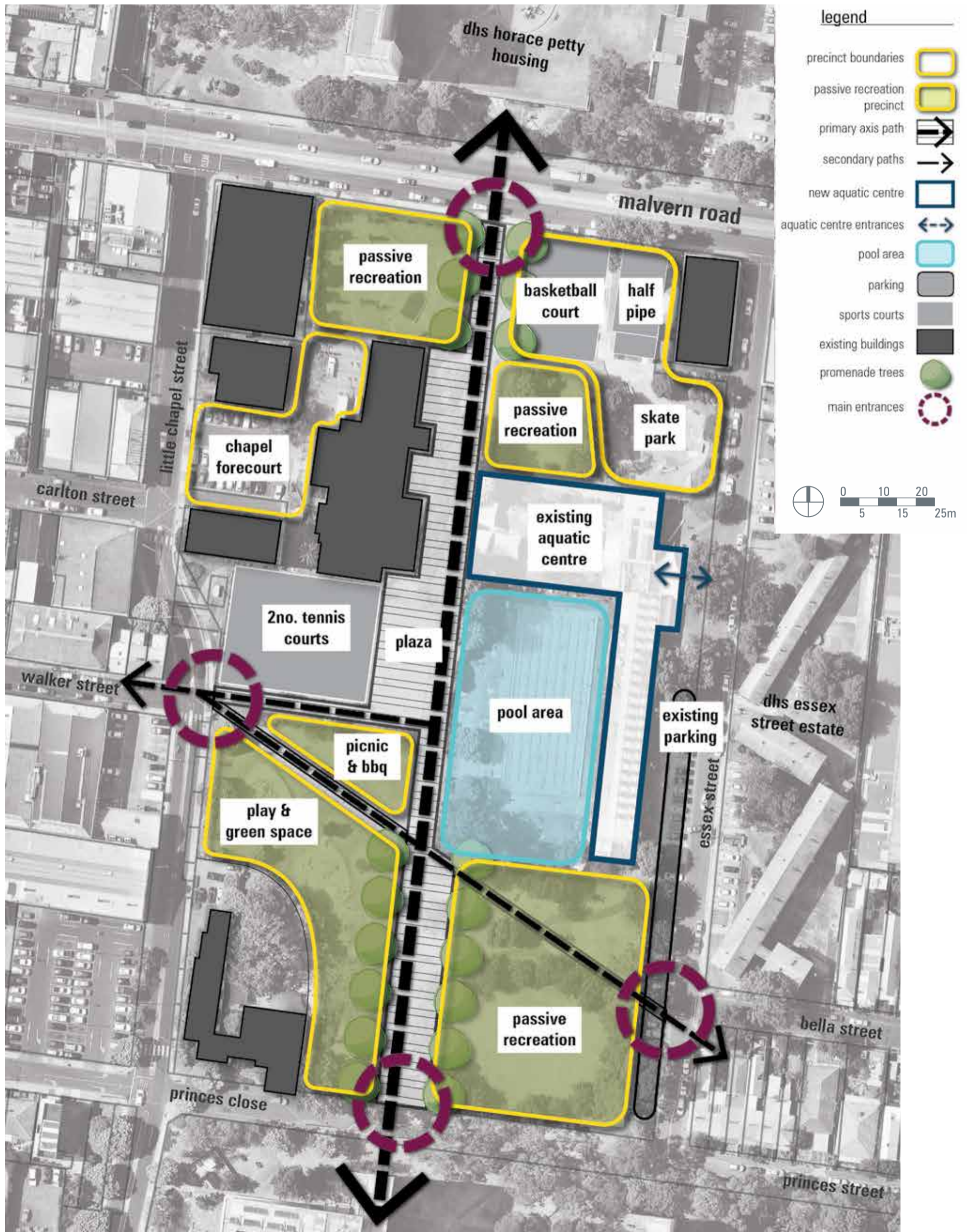
3.3 FAST FACTS

Participants were encouraged to identify aspects of the park that they valued most. The word cloud below visually illustrates these characteristics, with the larger words being the most common identified.



4 FRAMEWORK PLAN

4.1 SHORT-TERM FRAMEWORK PLAN





















5 DRAFT MASTER PLAN

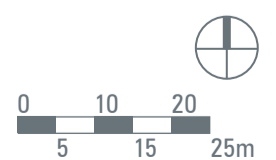
5.1 SHORT & LONG-TERM DRAFT MASTER PLAN



short & long term objectives

legend

-  new paving
-  existing paving
-  new vehicular paving
-  pool area
-  existing parking
-  basketball courts
-  multi-use courts
-  existing skate park
-  existing buildings
-  existing building to be demolished
-  existing pool shade structure
-  fence around pool area
-  existing play area
-  furniture
-  new promenade trees
-  new park trees
-  existing trees
-  grassed area



5.2 CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

To continue the engagement and information gathering process, members of the community were encouraged to review and provide comment on the Draft Master plan by attending community drop-in sessions for direct conversations with representatives of the project team and Council, and/or by completing an online survey which was available on the Connect Stonnington Princes Gardens Master plan website and on iPads at the drop-in sessions.

Two drop-in information sessions were set up on site within Princes Gardens on the following days:

- Saturday 17th March 2018 @ Princes Gardens, 10-11:30am
- Wednesday 21st March 2018 @ Princes Gardens, 6-7:30pm

The project team and Council also held an internal stakeholder consultation session and park walk the afternoon of Friday 6th April 2018 to gain feedback from Council officers and facility groups on the Draft Master plan.

The variation in times and days allowed the project team to engage with a wide range of user groups, demographics and people from diverse backgrounds. The drop-in events were staffed by representatives from Hansen Partnership and Stonnington Council.

5.3 CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

At the conclusion of the consultation period, the Connect Stonnington Princes Gardens Master plan page received over 850 views with 60 people completing the online survey. Over 100 comments and replies were left on Facebook, most of which were diverted back to the survey or the Mayor addressed directly. There were on average ± 50 attendees over the two drop-in consultation sessions.

The following presents a summary of responses received during the consultation process; and recommendations for inclusion in the final master plan.

80% of people surveyed said they would use Princes Gardens more if the Draft Master plan was implemented.

"It has many practical responses and doesn't change the character and layout of the park greatly."

- Prahran resident

"We just need one space that's beautiful and fun for families to spend time in."

- Prahran resident

"I like the emphasis on more sport facilities to get people out and active, promoting a sense of community."

- Glen Iris resident

"I am very supportive of the idea and I think it's very healthy to integrate the users of recreational facilities with the general populous, bringing our community closer together."

- Prahran resident

"I think it will enhance the neighbourhood."

- South Yarra resident

"Build it and they will come, happy people make a happy place."

- Glen Iris resident

 **The majority of people surveyed were in support of the Draft Master plan.**

Aspects of the Draft Master plan people liked most:



MORE LIGHTING



BBQ & PICNIC AREA



SAFER PATHWAYS



MORE GREEN SPACE & TREES

Participants identified the following activities as the most popular ways to spend time while in Princes Gardens. The Final Master plan should continue to provide for these uses and facilitate design interventions to ensure these uses are maintained and enhanced.



walking



visiting the pool



playing or watching basketball



enjoying the grass areas



walking the dog



hanging around & skating in the skate park



visiting the play ground

Upgrading the central north-south pedestrian avenue & providing a formal east-west pathway from Little Chapel Street into the gardens were the top two most supported design features proposed by the Draft Master plan.

These design interventions **seek to remediate many of the top issues identified within the park** including safety, legibility, sight lines, lighting and greenery.

Consolidation of the feedback received identified the following recommendations to be incorporated into the Final Princes Gardens Master plan:

1. Upgrade the public toilet and relocate to an area with more passive surveillance
2. More drinking fountains
3. Retain some paved areas in the Malvern Road forecourt to accommodate informal ball sports
4. Provide a shelter to the BBQ and picnic area to allow for use year-round
5. Provide area for a potential cafe to the rear courtyard of Chapel Off Chapel along the new central path to activate the centre of Princes Gardens
6. Swap the proposed diagonal path through Malvern Road forecourt to run from the gate towards Carlton Street as there is more foot traffic moving in this direction
7. Install flood lights on timers to the existing basketball court
8. Irrigate the grass areas
9. More seats around the play area
10. Keep pedestrian crossing on Malvern Road, subject to further investigation and VicRoads and Yarra Trams approval.

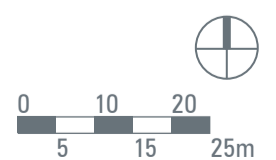
6 FINAL MASTER PLAN



short & long term objectives

legend

- new paving
- existing paving
- new vehicular paving
- pool area
- existing parking
- basketball courts
- multi-use courts
- existing skate park
- existing buildings
- existing building to be demolished
- existing pool shade structure
- fence around pool area
- existing play area
- furniture
- new promenade trees
- new park trees
- existing trees
- irrigated grass areas



6.1 MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVE

Short-term objectives

- ① Establish a central pedestrian avenue as a key north-south axis, connecting Malvern Road in the north with Princes Close in the south. This pedestrian avenue will comprise a generously-dimensioned walkway, with opportunities for feature paving, more seats, drinking fountains, bins, lighting and way finding signage. The pedestrian avenue will provide clear and open sight lines, improving amenity and safety for all users. Avenue planting of large, deciduous canopy trees along either side of the avenue will assist in making it a strong visual element of the Gardens.
- ② Remove the easternmost tennis court and create more green space.
- ③ Reconfigure the forecourt area to the east of Chapel off Chapel such that this space is a plaza integrated into the central pedestrian avenue, with improved access and sight lines. The intention is to establish a more prominent address for Chapel off Chapel as a key attraction within Princes Gardens. The plaza will act as a key meeting space within the Gardens in a central location which is readily accessible from all surrounding streets.
- ④ Establish a formal entry to Princes Gardens on Princes Close, at the southern end of the proposed central pedestrian avenue. The northern entry on Malvern Road is already accessed via historic entry gates, and an opportunity exists at the southern end to anchor the path.
- ⑤ Remove the majority of the existing under-utilised pavement between Chapel off Chapel and Malvern Road and replace it with grass and trees, as a means of providing more 'green space' in the northern part of the Gardens and improving the frontage to Malvern Road.
- ⑥ Demolish 22 Little Chapel Street and relocate Council services elsewhere. Reconfigure car park further north to allow for an entryway/forecourt and event space to the entrance of Chapel Off Chapel.
- ⑦ Demolish the majority of the existing car park to create a new civic space to include expanded green space and a central footpath connecting Chapel Off Chapel to Little Chapel Street. The space can be utilised for events associated with Chapel Off Chapel, as well as other complementary activities associated with arts and culture.
- ⑧ Retain two existing tennis courts and reconfigure to become multi-use courts.
- ⑨ Formalise and enhance the east-west connection from Little Chapel Street into the Gardens by replacing the existing goat track through the grass with a paved pathway and lighting.
- ⑩ Establish a new picnic/BBQ area within a highly-visible, central location close to main pedestrian thoroughfares and the existing playground. The picnic/BBQ area should comprise all facilities required for such a use, including a shelter structure, seating, tables and BBQ.
- ⑪ Retain the existing basketball court. Install floodlights to the basketball court; lights to be installed on timers to balance night use with local residents.
- ⑫ Retain the existing Prahran Aquatic Centre.
- ⑬ Retain the existing passive recreation spaces in the southern part of the Gardens, including the sunken lawn.
- ⑭ Retain the existing playground.
- ⑮ Retain existing National Trust listed tree *Combretum caffrum*.
- ⑯ Upgrade the existing Exeloo public toilet.
- ⑰ Add a new single occupancy automated public toilet to service the northern section of Princes Gardens.

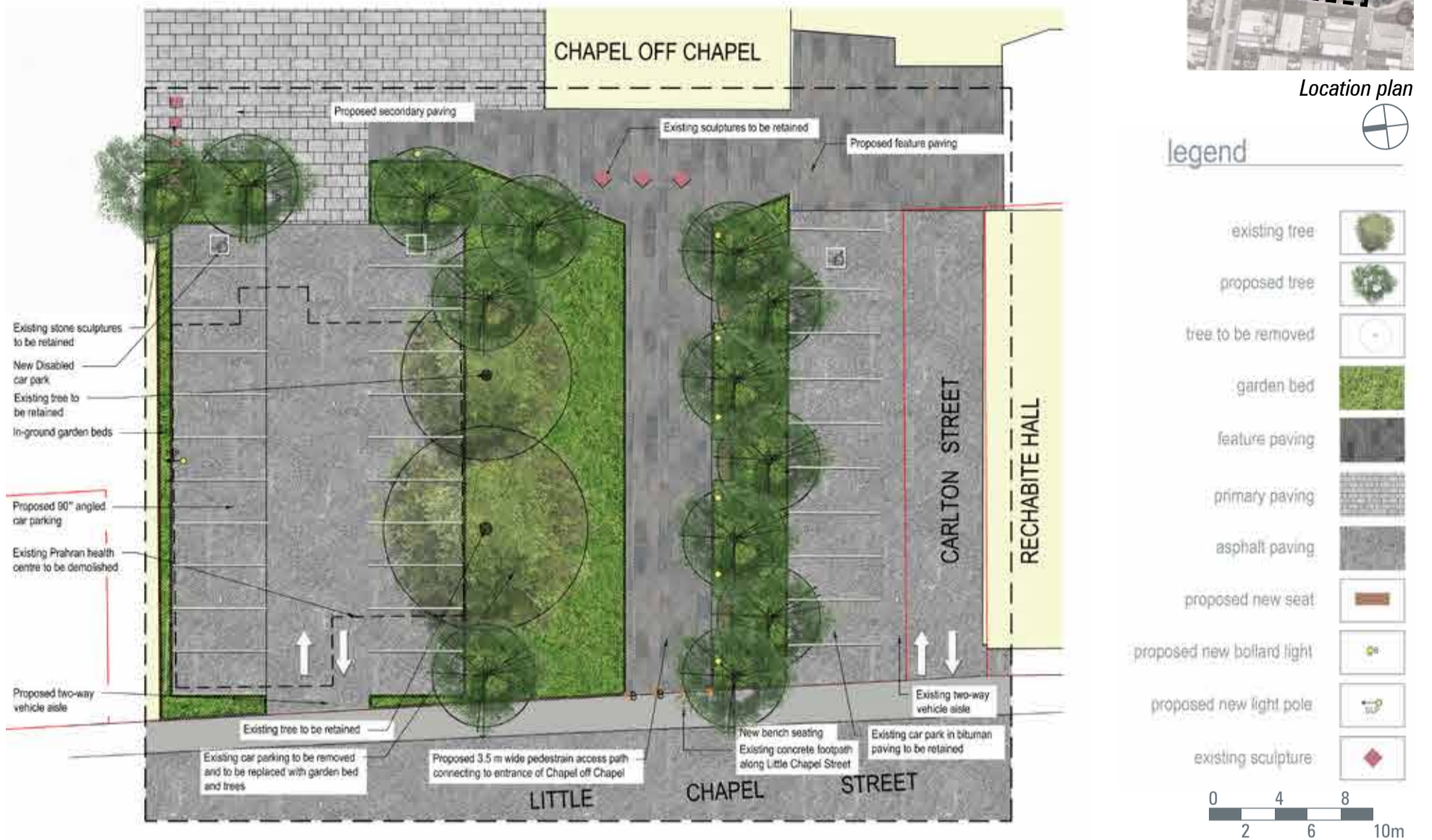
Long-term objectives

- ⑱ Retain the existing 50-metre outdoor pool, with an expanded and improved pool deck, complete with custom-designed shade structures and expansive areas of usable recreation space. Replace the existing utilitarian fence at the perimeter of the Aquatic Centre with a new a fence which is more architecturally-sensitive and complements the public domain of Princes Gardens.
- ⑲ Provide a signalised pedestrian crossing on Malvern Road, on the alignment of the central pedestrian avenue, in anticipation of the redevelopment of the Horace Petty Housing Estate. This is subject to further investigation and VicRoads and Yarra Trams approval.

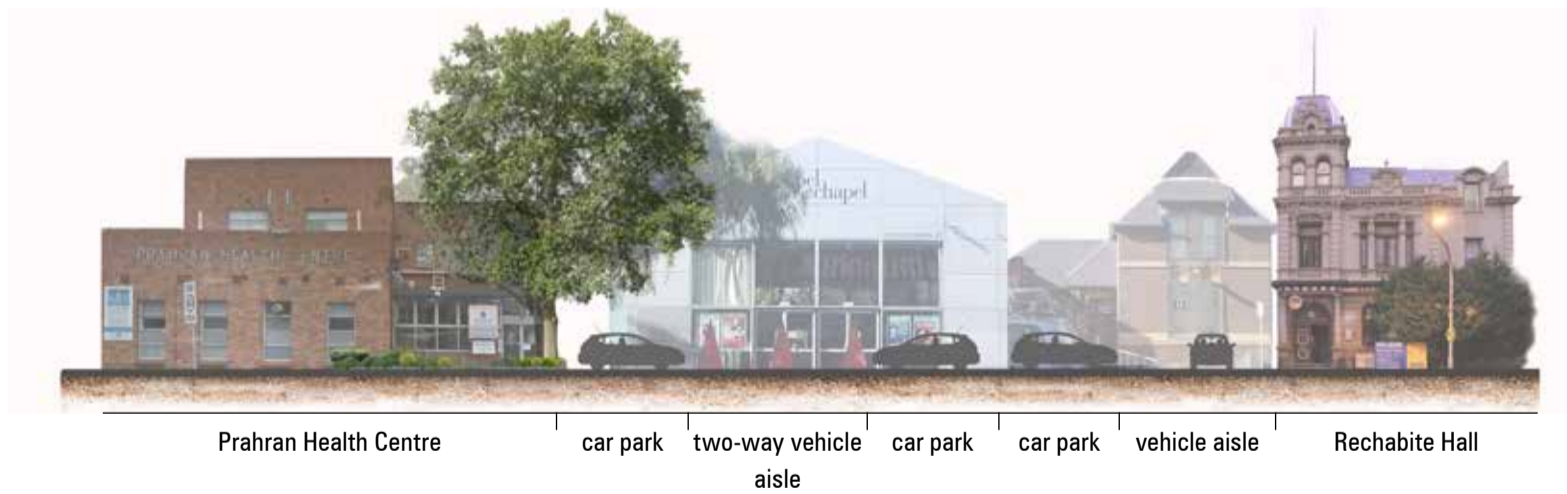
7 MASTER PLAN - DETAIL PLANS

7.1 CHAPEL OFF CHAPEL FORECOURT

7.1.1 Concept Plan



7.1.2 Elevation - Existing Conditions

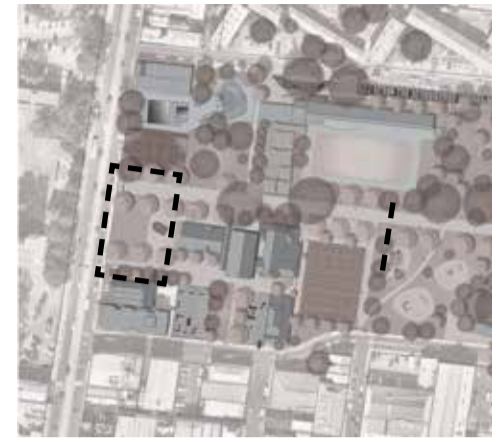


7.1.3 Elevation - Proposed Design



7.2 MALVERN ROAD FORECOURT

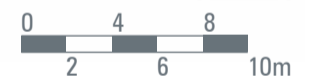
7.2.1 Concept Plan



Location plan

legend

existing tree	
proposed tree	
tree to be removed	
garden bed	
grass	
feature paving	
primary paving	
secondary paving	
granitic gravel	
existing raised planter bed	
proposed new seat	
existing monument	
proposed new light pole	
existing sculpture	
proposed toilet block	



7.3 CENTRAL PATH AND TENNIS COURTS

7.3.1 Elevation - Existing Conditions



tennis courts g. path g. bed pool area

7.3.2 Elevation - Proposed Design



multi-use sport courts grassed area with seating and new trees shared path with lighting pool area

8 STAGED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The staged implementation plan outlines priority project areas and design initiatives of the master plan to be delivered in the short to medium term. Priority should be given to those projects that alleviate safety risks.

