Baw Baw Skate and BMX Strategy – 2012 to 2030

Final Report – April 2013

Prepared for Baw Baw Shire

Prepared by SGL Consulting Group Australia Pty Ltd in association with Playce Pty Ltd

■ **ADELAIDE**
2a Mellor Street, West Beach,
South Australia 5024
Phone: +61 (0) 8 8235 0925
Fax: +61 (0) 8 8353 1067
Email: sa@sglgroup.net

■ **BRISBANE**
PO Box 713, Mount Gravatt,
Queensland 4122
Phone: +61 (0) 416 235 235
Email: queensland@sglgroup.net

■ **MELBOURNE**
Level 2/181 Fitzroy Street
St Kilda 3182
Phone: +61 (0) 3 8623 2840
Fax: +61 (0) 3 9681-3158
Email: victoria@sglgroup.net

■ **OCEAN GROVE**
PO Box 173, Ocean Grove,
Victoria 3226
Phone: +61 (0) 417 536 198
Fax: +61 (0) 3 5255 4717
Email: mking@sglgroup.net

■ **PERTH**
19 Clayton Street, East Fremantle, WA
Australia 6158
Phone: +61 (0) 407 901 636
Email: gmcneill@sglgroup.net

■ **SYDNEY**
Phone: +61 (0) 417 536 198
Email: mking@sglgroup.net

www.sglgroup.net

Offices also in
■ **AUCKLAND** ■ **CHRISTCHURCH** ■ **WELLINGTON**

Table of contents

Directory of tables

Disclaimer

The scope of this report does not include an assessment of the skate park's compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), associated legislation, regulations and standards. Council should engage a suitably qualified assessor to review each of their skate parks to ensure compliance with relevant components of the DDA. Playce has compiled this Skate Park Report as experts in the fields of skate park design, construction and facility management, where we consider general DDA requirements.

This document should be considered in addition to all available standards and guidelines.

Executive summary

Introduction

Baw Baw Shire Council recognises the importance of providing a range of recreation opportunities for the community. These opportunities must be appropriately managed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of members in the community. The purpose of the Skate and BMX Strategy is to establish direction in the planning, development and management of skateboarding and BMX riding.

Purpose of the study

The Skate and BMX Strategy has been developed to guide Council decision making to ensure skate and BMX facilities meet the current and future needs of the community.

Background review

There are currently four skate parks in the Baw Baw municipality:

- Warragul Skate Park, Burke St Park, Warragul. This park was designed and built by SK8con and opened in 2002. The site is situated in a park setting with access to toilets, BBQ shelter and car parking as well as being contained within a sporting hub and close to schools, the Warragul Leisure Centre and the CBD. The skate park contains a triple bowl, street course and ½ vert wall.
- Drouin Skate Park, Civic Park, Young St, Drouin. This park was designed and built by SK8con and also opened in 2002. The site is situated in a park with access to toilets and car parking as well as being close to the outdoor pool, Recreation Reserve and CBD. The placement of the skate park within this formal park has changed its nature. Features of the park include a mini ramp with escalator, quarter pipe, fun box, stairs and ledge and grind poles.
- Neerim South Skate Park, Main Neerim Road, Neerim South. This park was designed and built by Concrete Skate parks and opened in 2006. The site is situated within a town park with adventure playground, BBQ shelter, toilets and car parking and is close to schools, the Recreation Reserve and CBD. The park contains a deep bowl and small street course with ¼ pipe, grind block and fun box.
- Trafalgar Skate Park, Depot Lane, Trafalgar. This park was designed and built by Concrete Skate parks and opened in 2003. The site is situated within the CBD behind shops and Civic buildings with access to toilets and car parking. This site has presented a range of challenges due to its restricted natural surveillance and proximity to businesses. The park contains a bowl section with rollover dome, ledges and rails.

All current skate parks are utilised by skateboarders, freestyle BMX riders and scooter riders. There has been no significant upgrade works on any of the skate parks since they were constructed.

There are currently three BMX tracks in the municipality:

- Warragul BMX Track, Western Park Drive, Warragul. This site has recently undergone a $150,000 track upgrade
- Rawson BMX Track, Dunstan Oval Reserve, Tyers- Walhalla Rd, Rawson
- Trafalgar BMX Track, Between Contingent St and Edward Cres, Trafalgar

Over the past few years Baw Baw Shire Council has received a number of requests for improvements to existing facilities and the development of new facilities.

Participation review

Based on an assessment of existing facilities across Metropolitan Melbourne, there are significant numbers of users participating in skateboarding and BMX. Benchmarking undertaken at these facilities indicates that overall patronage is significant at all the skate parks and there is clear evidence that demand is strong. The new regional facility at Frankston in particular, is attracting approximately 100,000 visits a year.

Recommended strategic direction

One of Council's key roles is to provide recreation and sporting opportunities that service the needs of the community and contribute to resident's participation in active and healthy lifestyles. Skate and BMX parks are now recognised as major venues for recreational opportunities for young people. Council has already made a strong commitment to developing skate and BMX parks for residents through the provision of a number of quality facilities throughout the Shire. These facilities currently cater for advanced and intermediate requirements across the Shire.

The consultation process undertaken as part of this strategy identified the following priorities:

- Upgrade and extend the existing facilities and provide a diverse range of experiences and opportunities including the development of facility types not currently available within the Shire.
- Provide increased maintenance at existing facilities.
- Provide increased opportunities to access facilities in townships not currently serviced by a facility.
- Increased access to sites for beginner level participants.

The development of this strategy has further identified the opportunity to combine skate park facilities with playgrounds and other facilities to form youth precincts. These precincts provide opportunities for a cross range of age groups to recreate in the same area. Council should seek to develop these areas in collaboration with young people, providing equipment that combines activities such as basketball rings, skate/BMX elements and social areas. An example of this in Baw Baw is the Warragul skate park which is linked to public open space, trails, a playground, sporting reserves and the Warragul Leisure Centre.

Given the geographical distance between townships in Baw Baw it is often difficult for young people to access facilities without relying on a parent/adult to transport them to the facility. There is an opportunity to develop some smaller scale "incidental" skate facilities in smaller communities. The future development of these satellite sites

seeks to provide greater opportunities for skate participants at a localised level and at a more beginner intermediate level.

Based on the hierarchy of facilities identified in section 5.2 of this report it is recommended that the skate facilities strategy be based on the following facility hierarchy and the facilities be developed /redeveloped according to the facility classification.

Skate parks

Regional

- Warragul Skate Park

District

- Drouin Skate Park
- Neerim South Skate Park
- Trafalgar Skate Park.

Local

To provide increased access to smaller communities, it is recommended that a local/incidental skate facility be developed in Yarragon, and Erica or Rawson. These facilities can be developed on disused outdoor court spaces such as netball or tennis courts. In line with the definition of local facilities this might include elements such as small scale street park (ledges, blocks, angle banks) or transition elements (ramps). The combination of facility components would be determined through consultation with young people in the local area.

The site selection criteria detailed in **Section 5 of the report** should be used as part of the community engagement process to determine the most appropriate sites for the development of local facilities.

BMX facilities

Regional

- Warragul BMX

It should be noted that the track is a classified as regional track, but does not comply with UCI guidelines (length) due to site constraints

District

- Nil

Local

- Rawson BMX
- Trafalgar BMX

Recommended strategies costs

The table below details the cost associated with the recommended strategies for each of the existing and proposed skate and BMX facilities in the Shire. The strategies have been prioritised under the following headings:

- **Immediate** – works that require immediate attention due to possible safety or functional issues. They should be prioritised with Councils works team to ensure they are actioned as soon as possible. They are generally not a significant cost and so should not be impacted by funding delays. (0-3 months as a guide).
- **High** – works that require focus with regard to both planning and implementation. Funding may need to be set aside for them which may slow the process, but upon receipt of funds, the works should be implemented. (6-12 months as a guide).
- **Medium** – works that generally are focused on improving or extending the existing facilities to ensure that they meet growing demand. They should be the priority of major funding and once this is secured should be implemented accordingly. (1-4 years as a guide).
- **Low** – works that are more long term in consideration and only once the other more pressing actions are taken. This includes additional smaller facilities and extensions to parks (4 years+ as a guide)

Table 1 - Recommended strategy costs for each facility across immediate, high, medium and low priorities.

Facility name	Immediate	High	Medium	Low	Total
Drouin skate park	$12,500	$40,000	$80,000	$150,000	$282,500
Warragul BMX track	$5,000	$15,000	$20,000	$40,000	$80,000
Warragul skate park	$12,500	$15,000	$380,000	$0	$407,500
Trafalgar skate park	$43,500	$40,000	$80,000	$150,000	$313,500
Trafalgar informal BMX	$8,500	$8,000	$15,000	$15,000	$46,500
Rawson BMX park	$5,000	$0	$15,000	$15,000	$35,000
Neerim South skate park	$12,500	$55,000	$30,000	$100,000	$197,500

Facility name	Immediate	High	Medium	Low	Total
Proposed new facilities	$0	$5,000	$93,000	$88,000	$186,000

1 Introduction

Baw Baw Shire Council recognises the importance of providing a range of recreation opportunities for the community. These opportunities must be appropriately managed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of members in the community. The purpose of the Skate and BMX Strategy is to establish direction in the planning, development and management of skateboarding and BMX riding.

1.1 Purpose of the study

The preparation of a Skate and BMX Strategy will guide Council decision making to ensure skate and BMX facilities meet the current and future needs of the community.

The aim of the Strategy is to review and evaluate existing facilities including:

- Identification of the likely skill range required by participants for the various elements at each facility
- Identification of the population catchment area of participants using the facilities
- Provision of data on current usage of facilities
- Identification of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of existing facilities
- Provision of technical advice on the maintenance and risk management of the facilities.

1.2 Background review

There are currently four skate parks in the Baw Baw municipality:

- Warragul Skate Park, Burke St Park, Warragul. This park was designed and built by SK8con and opened in 2002. The site is situated in a park setting with access to toilets, BBQ shelter and car parking as well as being contained within a sporting hub and close to schools, the Warragul Leisure Centre and the CBD. The skate park contains a triple bowl, street course and ½ vert wall.
- Drouin Skate Park, Civic Park, Young St, Drouin. This park was designed and built by SK8con and also opened in 2002. The site is situated in a park with access to toilets and car parking as well as being close to the outdoor pool, Recreation Reserve and CBD. The placement of the skate park within this formal park has changed its nature. Features of the park include a mini ramp with escalator, quarter pipe, fun box, stairs and ledge and grind poles.
- Neerim South Skate Park, Main Neerim Road, Neerim South. This park was designed and built by Concrete Skate parks and opened in 2006. The site is situated within a town park with adventure playground, BBQ shelter, toilets and car parking and is close to schools, the Recreation Reserve and CBD. The park contains a deep bowl and small street course with ¼ pipe, grind block and fun box.

- Trafalgar Skate Park, Depot Lane, Trafalgar. This park was designed and built by Concrete Skate parks and opened in 2003. The site is situated within the CBD behind shops and Civic buildings with access to toilets and car parking. This site has presented a range of challenges due to its restricted natural surveillance and proximity to businesses. The park contains a bowl section with rollover dome, ledges and rails.

All current skate parks are utilised by skateboarders, freestyle BMX riders and scooter riders. There has been no significant upgrade works on any of the skate parks since they were constructed.

For the past 7 years, Baw Baw Shire has been a partner in the South Eastern League Series and the Warragul skate park has hosted an event in the series. In 2010, this traditional skateboarding competition expanded to include freestyle BMX. The other skate parks have hosted smaller scale community events in the past.

There are currently 3 BMX tracks in the municipality:

- Warragul BMX Track, Western Park Drive, Warragul. This site has recently undergone a $150,000 track upgrade
- Rawson BMX Track, Dunstan Oval Reserve, Tyers- Walhalla Rd, Rawson
- Trafalgar BMX Track, Between Contingent St and Edward Cres, Trafalgar

The Warragul BMX track is the only facility to have an active club who conduct competitions. The Rawson and Trafalgar BMX tracks were not professionally designed and are for recreation purposes only.

Over the past few years Baw Baw Shire Council has received a number of requests for improvements to existing facilities and the development of new facilities.

1.3 Participation review

Given that skate and BMX activities are usually undertaken as an unstructured activity it is difficult to accurately determine the current participation levels in the Baw Baw area.

The Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey (ERASS) is a national survey undertaken by the Australian Sports Commission which collects information on the frequency, duration, nature and type of physical activities participated in for exercise, recreation or sport by persons aged 15 years and over. It was conducted quarterly in 2010, with an annual total of 21,603 respondents across Australia.

Skateboarding is categorised within the roller sports section of the survey. Based on the revised data collated in 2010 approximately 250,000 Victorians or 0.05% participate in roller sport activities on a regular basis. Using this benchmarked figure and the current population of Baw Baw's 5 to 24 year olds (10,408) it could be assumed that there are between 500 and 700 people participating in skating activities in Baw Baw on a regular basis

BMX is categorised within the cycling section which given the popularity in cycling makes it difficult to determine the BMX component.

Based on an assessment of existing facilities across Metropolitan Melbourne, there are significant numbers of users participating in skateboarding and BMX. Benchmarking undertaken at these facilities indicates that overall patronage is significant at all the skate parks and there is clear evidence that demand is strong. The new regional facility at Frankston in particular, is attracting approximately 100,000 visits a year.

2 Baw Baw demographics

Baw Baw Shire is located 90 kilometres east of Melbourne, linked by the Princes Freeway and a daily rail service. Baw Baw Shire has a population of over 43,000 (2011 Census) which is expected to grow to around 60,000 by 2026. Whilst there is over 100 towns and localities in the Shire, the majority of the Shire's population live in the two largest towns of Warragul, with a population of over 14,000 and Drouin with a population of over 9,600. The twelve major population centres across the Shire include:

- Warragul
- Drouin
- Longwarry
- Darnum
- Yarragon
- Trafalgar
- Noojee
- Neerim south
- Rawson
- Erica; and
- Thorpdale
- Willow Grove

Baw Baw combines a mix of high quality rural areas interspersed with attractive residential villages and larger towns. Areas of natural significance exist in the Baw Baw Alpine National Park, the Latrobe and Thomson River Catchment Areas and the scenic Mt Worth State Park at the entrance to the Strzelecki Ranges.

2.1 Demographic profile

A review of relevant ABS statistics for 2011 produced for the Baw Baw Shire Council by ID Consulting has been completed and is summarised in the table on the following page:

Table 2 - Demographic Age Profile Baw Baw Shire

Age Years	Males	Female	Total	% (percentage)
0 4	1,560	1,356	2,916	7
5 14	2,863	2,799	5,662	14
15 19	1,585	1,501	3,086	7
20 34	3,297	3,451	6,748	16

Age Years	Males	Female	Total	% (percentage)
35 54	5,533	6,075	11,608	28
55 74	4,836	4,997	9,833	21
75 Plus	1,335	1,775	3,110	7.7
Total	19,818	20,764	40,582	100

- Overall, 44% of the population was aged between 0 and 34, 49% are aged between 35 and74 years and 7.7% were aged 75 years and over,
- Leisure statistics indicate that people aged between 0 to 24 years are more likely to participate in leisure and sporting activities such as skating and BMX riding. People in this age group currently represent approximately 34.5% of the Baw Baw population.
- The age composition of Baw Baw indicates the population is maturing, with a slight decrease in the percentage of pre-school and school aged children.

2.2 Future growth projections – Baw Baw Shire

The table below details the estimated population projections for the Shire of Baw Baw between 2011 and 2031:

Table 3 - Population Projections 2011 - 2031 Baw Baw Shire

Age category (years)	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
0 4	2,627	2,885	3,160	3,400	3,595
5 14	5,997	6,578	7,384	7,895	8,415
15 24	5,783	6,210	6,187	6,773	7,525
25 34	4,595	5,325	6,151	6,532	6,520
35 49	8,872	9,308	10,068	11,044	12,347
50 59	6,289	6,692	6,866	7,123	7,433
60+	9,879	12,174	14,624	16,811	18,772
Total	44,042	49,174	54,439	59,578	64,608

A review of the estimated population projections indicates that over the next 19 years the population is estimated to increase to approximately 64,000 people, an increase of approximately 20,500 people (46.7%).

2.3 Other leisure related statistics

Two major constraints, which limit people's participation in leisure activities, are the availability of private transport to access facilities and the cost of participating in activities. A review of the vehicle ownership and income levels of Baw Baw residents indicates:

2.3.1 Income levels

The table on the following page details the personal weekly household income levels of Baw Baw residents:

Table 4 - Weekly personal income levels

Income Level ($)	Percentage in Baw Baw 2006 (%)
$0-$499	32.3
$500-$699	12.8
$700-$1,499	30.7
$1500+	12.0
Not Stated	12.2
Total	**100**

Note: Income derived from businesses or from rental properties may be recorded by the ABS as "Negative Income"

The review of the income levels of Baw Baw residents indicates:

- Approximately 32.3% of Baw Baw residents have low-income levels between $0 and $499 per week.
- The second highest proportion of residents 30.7% has weekly income levels of between $700 and $1,499 per week.
- The review indicates that Baw Baw residents have some discretionary income for activities related to leisure and sporting pursuits.
- Fees and charges for participation in skate or BMX events or programs however, need to be maintained to ensure all residents are able to access these activities.
- It should be noted that access to skate and BMX facilities in Baw Baw on a casual basis is free of charge; however the cost of equipment and associated safety equipment will be impacted by income levels.

2.3.2 Vehicle ownership

Vehicles garaged at home by residents based on the 2006 ABS statistics are detailed in the following table:

Table 5 - Vehicle ownership (ABS 2006)

Vehicles Per Household	Percentage in Baw Baw 2006 (%)	Percentage in Melbourne 2006 (%)
No vehicle	6.3	12.3
One vehicle at household	32.7	37.1
Two vehicles at household	43.7	34.5
More than three vehicles	17.2	12.8
Not stated	NA	3.3

The review of the Vehicle ownership of Baw Baw residents indicates that the majority of residents 93.6% had access one or more vehicles which means that residents have the ability to independently access leisure facilities.

- The most frequent users of the skate and BMX facilities are young people. Therefore, it is necessary to take into account their level of mobility and the impact this has on their capacity to access facilities outside of their local neighbourhood. Often, young people are dependent on the availability of a parent/adult to drive them to facilities; parents are reliant on the access to a vehicle and available time outside of other commitments such as work.

Access to public transport is also critical in enabling young people to make use of skate and BMX facilities. With the Shire public transport along the Princess Freeway spine is good, however the connections between the north and the south of the municipality are poor.

3 World's best practice

3.1 Two separate trends

Historically, skateboarding and to an extent other forms of in-line skating, bike riding etc. has evolved from the appropriation of urban space and the exploration and occupation of these spaces. This has led to the creation of two separate trends that cater for very different needs and users.

3.2 The Recreational Model – purpose built facilities

Like more traditional organized sports, action sports have developed toward facility provision and regulation. This development has led to purpose built facilities: including Vert' ramps, park style elements (e.g. fun-box, pyramid, flat banks, ledge etc.) and bowls to provide for ongoing demand whilst ensuring a safe and inviting space for users to enjoy their chosen sport.

With this regulation, there has been a growing emphasis on competition. Competitions have therefore grown around the world with events like X-Games, Maloof Money Cup, Dew Tour and the like being established to meet significant spectator interest as well as providing greater opportunities for organised competition for professional and amateur athletes.

To cater for this demand and interest there has been a significant push for governments to provide appropriate sports facilities. Hence purpose built action sports facilities have continued to be implemented across both Australia and the rest of the world. This is very much a recreation planning model where sports facilities are considered and implemented to cater for demand.

Action sports however, have also retained their emphasis on the more social aspects of the 'sport' and they provide an important less structured option for young adolescents; both male and female.

It is therefore important that any new skate facility considers the social spaces; terrain, elevation, containment, refuge (shelter, seating, etc.) and identity (the culture of skateboarding together with its art, symbols, brands, music, etc.)

3.3 The Social Model – youth inclusive public space

The other major new trend is the provision of youth inclusive public space. Areas for social interaction and gathering in central, accessible locations within our cities are becoming more prevalent and called for as the design of the public domain becomes more inclusive to all. Youth precincts and intergenerational spaces are now being considered in broader urban design and city planning to cater for the needs of younger generations. Given that a significant proportion of action sports participants are young, catering for them has become a key consideration when designing public space.

4 Summary

Therefore in terms of best practice, there is a need to look at both providing for competitions, events and athlete requirements as well as ensuring the social and unstructured opportunities to participate are also considered.

For the purposes of this report, the focus on world's best practice will be on the recreational model given the existing facility provision in the shire.

4.1 Specific facility trends

There are a number of current trends occurring in the provision of public skate facilities space around the world. These have been observed through direct changes in scope of projects undertaken by major skate park designers/landscape architects around the world.

4.1.1 Skate plazas

There is an international trend to develop 'skateable landscapes' or 'urban plaza' styled facilities given the high participation rate in street or plaza style skating (more than any other). Young people want to be in high profile locations near transport nodes, shopping precincts or other public facilities where they can skate 'real' urban infrastructure.

Councils and designers are now meeting this need by delivering 'plaza' style facilities that are integrated into their environment. Cairns and Rosebud are two examples of this current trend. Over the last four years there have been approximately 20 skate plazas designed and/or constructed throughout Australia (Source: Skateboard.com.au).

Figure 1: Example of skate plaza – Clifton Hill

4.1.2 Regional skate parks

There is a significant push by the Australian skate and BMX community and Councils for the development of larger Regional scale facilities. A larger centralised facility consolidates management and maintenance into a single space. They can also cater for large scale events whilst having ample space to ensure there are components for all skill levels to enable progression from simpler beginner items to major advanced elements. Examples include Eaglehawk and Frankston. Over the last four years

there have been approximately 25 Regional skate parks designed and/or constructed throughout Australia (Source: Skateboard.com.au).

Figure 2: Example of regional skate park - Frankston

4.1.3 Youth precincts

Councils are seeing the importance of catering for a broader range of young people when providing public recreation spaces within their municipalities. This has led to the development of integrated 'youth precincts' in a number of municipalities. These facilities provide a range of different recreation, sport and arts related activity and event opportunities to cater for a much broader spread of young people and their individual recreation needs. Examples include the Redlands Youth Plaza and Caroline Springs School Break Out Space/CYAN. Over the last four years there have been approximately 10 major youth precincts designed and/or constructed throughout Australia.

Figure 3: Example of youth activities area - Geelong

4.1.4 Single focus facilities

Attempting to cater for all styles of riding; skateboarding, in-line skating and BMX with a limited budget will result in conflicting requirements and a compromised outcome. The recent escalation in construction costs and cost of raw materials internationally has meant that many 'local' scaled skate facilities, with limited budgets, have to prioritise which style of action sport is most important rather than incorporating the whole range of skate elements and types.

There has also been a push by Councils and designers to minimise conflict and clashing of different user types. i.e.: BMX using a skate park differently to skateboarders and hence the potential for conflict or safety issues.

To overcome the above issues there are now more single focus facilities (BMX park only or street skate plaza) or a clear delineation of separate activity areas within larger facilities. For example a specific space for street skating and another for BMX use. Examples of a single use facility include the Clifton Hill skate plaza (refer figure 1 above) and the Hill ‘n’ Dale BMX jumps track for Boroondara. As an example, in Victoria, over the last four years 5 concrete BMX jumps tracks have been designed and/or constructed specifically for BMX use; a first for contemporary skate park provision.

Figure 4: View of Hill 'n' Dale BMX jumps track

4.2 Good design principles

4.2.1 Introduction

As well as consideration of skateability and skate trends, it is important to understand and address public perceptions about skate facilities. The recommendations for the planning and design of skate facilities, included within this document, are aimed at challenging these perceptions with worlds best practice approaches to design.

Fundamentally, designs should accommodate the wider community by safely configuring shared public space and paying as much attention to quality and design resolution as would be expected of any other public facility. Landscaping should not be considered as just a cosmetic softening of a concrete skate park but be part of a strategy aimed at ‘good design’ outcomes.

As well as ensuring maximum surveillance and inclusivity, locating skate facilities adjacent to urban centres gives the impetus to apply good design principles.

4.2.2 Site specific

The design of a skate facility should respond directly to existing site characteristics. As well as meeting all requirements for drainage, earthworks and access, a site specific approach to designing a skate park ensures that each facility is unique and that skaters have options to diversify their skills and explore new territory.

To a great extent the orientation of the facility about the site can control noise and direct movement and activity. The design of a skate facility can make use of low retaining walls and seating ledges at the higher landings to create a 'back' to the facility, so that the skate park opens out in a particular direction. The direction will maximize views into the park. Equally important for the users of the facility are views out from the skate park.

The existing topography will determine the fall and arrangement of the skate facility. It is important to sit the skate park into the landscape so it is relatively unobtrusive and so that views are maintained where necessary and where possible. There are design opportunities in using the topography as a sculptural form for viewing, containment and/or separation. This may be a sculptural retaining wall at changes in level, an elevated refuge/viewing area, split level skate areas etc.

The design of a skate facility should consider adjacencies, local character and existing land use similar to the approach to any public landscape or urban design. These are design opportunities as well as important considerations.

4.2.3 Refuge and social spaces

Social and viewing spaces are fundamental to action sports. Unlike other regulated sports these spaces do not need to be rigid adjacent 'spectator' seating. The design of the skate facility can incorporate refuge areas central to the facility or at the periphery. These areas should make use of distinct non-skateable materials. Changes in level, leaning rails and ledges can define and protect refuge areas. It is important that non-skaters, beginner skaters, parents and the wider community can be in close proximity to the activity and yet feel safely separated.

It is also important to have a range of social spaces dispersed across the facility so that one particular group doesn't dominate. Similarly the spaces can be a range of sizes and configurations including well maintained lawn areas, raised decks for 'hanging out', ledges and edges etc. A range of social spaces will cater for larger groups as well as more intimate groups or individuals.

The significant viewing areas should be located to the north/west of the facility to maximize shade and to face spectators away from the afternoon sun.

Most skate parks, small or large, have an opportunity to hold events. It is important to allow for spectator numbers during peak times, this may simply be a grassed area with informal terraced seating steps next to the skate park.

Robust and appropriately designed drinking fountains, rubbish bins, seating and shelters are essential amenity for a skate facility.

4.2.4 Multi-use skate spaces

CYAN (Central Youth Activity Nodes), school 'break out spaces', YAA (Youth Activity Areas) can be designed to accommodate a range of 'youth' related activities. These may be art and performance related or may be unstructured sports e.g. half-court basket-ball, bouldering (climbing) walls, kick-about nets etc. The spaces must be able to be used for other purposes, programs and events.

Multi-use spaces incorporating social spaces, together with events and skate related programs, encourage female participation in sport and skating. Similarly, young males who are not generally interested in regulated, competitive sports are encouraged to participate.

Fundamentally the YAA should also be skateable when possible. It is essential that all surfaces, ledges, steps, barrier rails and the like are examined by professional and experienced skate park designers for skateability and safety. The surface details, landscape furniture and planting must be robust and able to withstand long term wear.

The materials and details incorporated into multi-use spaces can relate to relevant existing urban design. Similarly there are opportunities to overlay youth related graphics, images and text on surfaces such as steps and walls.

Services and infrastructure for small and large events need to be designed into the multi-use facility e.g. 3-phase power, cable trenches, footings to receive poles and frames for rigging and exhibition, temporary fencing etc. There are opportunities for built-in audio and projected media.

Access to adjacent grassed or hard-stand areas needs to cater for temporary services, generators, ablution blocks, retail, food and beverage marquees etc.

4.2.5 Proximity to residential areas

With competing pressures placed on centrally located public space and the necessity to ensure skate and youth related spaces/facilities are highly accessible, it is likely that distances from residential and retail areas will be less than 100m.

The materials, style, orientation and elevation of the skate facility will determine the impact of noise on adjacent areas.

Strategic placement of low walls, screens and low planting can ameliorate noise. The location and design of social spaces will affect the distribution of noise.

Resistance by neighbouring residences is in part due to the perceived likelihood of vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Landscape treatment to residential boundaries must be considered simultaneously with the design of the skate facility. This may require clearing view lines, construction of transparent screen walls and reconfiguring the spaces surrounding the skate facility.

4.2.6 Circulation and access

A skate facility should have multiple points of entry and where there are open edges; up stand seating walls, sculptural screens/barriers/bollards or planting can limit entry.

Controlled entries are important to protect both skaters and pedestrians and to contain activity spilling onto adjacent footpaths and roads. Distinct materials with colours and/or scored surfaces, indirect entry, sculptural barriers and feature signage should be used to control entry points. These are all design opportunities and can be used to ‘brand’ and promote the facility as well as proving important safety information to users of the facility.

Feature safety signage located at entry points should be integrated with the design and material selection of the skate park.

Separate and aligned non-skate pedestrian access and viewing allows broader community involvement. These paths can connect with a wider path network.

At a neighbourhood level there should be consideration of 'skate routes' to and from skate facilities, transport hubs, schools and popular recreational areas, boulevards, city squares, retail precincts. Where possible, separate active from passive or provide sufficiently wide paths and indicate that the paths are shared. This is similar to shared bike path signage and treatment. Changes in surface material and edge treatments of paths can aid skateability and user safety. There is an opportunity to provide skate interventions with small scale social spaces at critical points along these routes.

4.2.7 Construction of facilities

Construction of skate parks and BMX tracks use specialist skills and knowledge. New skate parks, upgrades, extensions and repairs should only be undertaken by contractors with a proven track record in skate park construction. Quality control measures should be used when preparing and assessing tenders and contracts. Critically, if quality control measures are not met during construction the contractor should be held accountable in order to meet the approved tender/contract requirements.

4.2.8 Inspections and maintenance of facilities

Ongoing inspections and maintenance assists towards increasing longevity, safety and success of a skate park facility. A well maintained park increases the sense of pride held by riders and the community for their facility and is less likely to encourage acts of vandalism and graffiti. The popularity and outdoor public location of skate parks make them subject to signs of high impact usage and weathering.

No matter the size of the facility, an inspection and maintenance plan must be budgeted for and developed prior to opening. The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) suggest that as a general principle, skate park operators should allow 10% of original capital cost of facility for annual maintenance of concrete facilities. This amount is higher for timber or steel facilities. Costs should be calculated, budged for and reviewed regularly (and revised if needed) to meet real costs annually.

5 Facility typology

5.1 An explanation through analogy

To best illustrate the four defined facility types developed for this study, the analogy of similar public sporting infrastructure with a youth focus has been used. Basketball facility provision is generally in a number of different scales and locations, which has parallels with skate parks. This is explained as follows

A basketball hoop on a wall at someone's house or against a wall in public plaza could equate to an **Incidental skate park**: Used by just a few people at a time without being a specific facility. It still provides entertainment and interest for users for a short space of time or in a very localised environment.

A half-court basketball area located in a public park or space would equate to a **Local skate park**: A facility that is aimed at allowing new users to comfortably experience the activity whilst also being significant enough that even an experienced user would be able to use and enjoy it.

A full size basketball court located in a public park or space would equate to a **District skate park**: Users can undertake a full game (or in the example of skateboarding; skate throughout the skate park) to the extent of their ability, while at other times the facility may be used for separate half-court games/shooting hoops (or in the example of skateboarding; session just a few elements of the skate park).

A full size basketball court in a sports or recreation centre, with provision for lighting if applicable, viewing seating, toilets, possible canteen etc. would equate to a **Regional skate park**: A premier facility with all of the amenities and facilities expected of such a space that will benefit users of all types and skill levels and be of a standard appropriate for competition and demonstration events.

5.2 Skill levels for different facilities

Skate and BMX facilities are used by a range of users, those both at a beginner level and those through to a more advanced skill level.

Given that within these sports there are so many variations in technical proficiency it is difficult to label or assign a skate park as being more for beginner or advanced use. Essentially a very low level skate park (heights and dimensions of a park obstacles being under 300-400mm can be used by a very experienced technical skater to do very complex tricks. Alternatively, a very deep bowl, given the curved nature of the transition can be a very easy way for beginners to learn and practice how to turn and get proficient at bowl skate and BMX riding.

The real determinant of a skate parks skill level is the size, configuration and congestion of a park. By that any park that enables different user's space to frequent different areas at the same time allows much more successful use by everyone of all levels. Therefore regional facilities are often the best parks for beginner use as there is adequate space to enable use by everyone. Please refer to the individual park assessments for more information on how Baw Baw's current parks cater for different levels of use.

6 Definition of types

6.1 Regional

Regional level skate parks are defined within this study as a purpose built sporting facility providing ample space and components to enable a variety of different skilled skate and BMX users to frequent the space on a daily basis. A Regional facility will also be the main focus of skateboarding and BMX in a municipality that other smaller facilities will compliment. It therefore needs to be easily accessible by public transport and cars including available parking for parents and older users.

Whilst not area dependent, they need to be large enough to accommodate a significant amount of rideable terrain for a range of BMX and skate users from beginner to advanced level. Within this may be specific zones for different user types to minimise conflict (e.g.: plaza area, transition zone). The facility should contain adequate event space and infrastructure including permanent/temporary seating options, power and lighting subject to Councils requirements.

There also needs to be provision for appropriate entry and safety signage, refuge areas, including seating and shade, bins, drinking fountains and bike racks. The facility should also consider its context and have the necessary landscaping to integrate /complement its surroundings. Toilets nearby or at the site is also critical. This current range of cost for this type of facility is in the order of $500,000 to $1,500,000.

Regional facility examples include:

- Frankston Skate park, 2070m² (Frankston City Council)
- Riverslide Skate park, 1630m² (City of Melbourne)
- Eaglehawk Skate park, 1200m² (City of Greater Bendigo)

Figure 5: Image of Riverside skate park

6.2 District

Traditionally with strategic skate park provision, a District facility has been considered a smaller version of a Regional park. This inevitably creates problems with scale and size restrictions. By trying to cater for both skate and BMX requirements and also for all levels of ability there can be size limitations that create conflict between user types and compromises safety and function.

Therefore a District skate park; for the purposes of this strategy, is defined as being a public sporting space that focuses primarily on one particular type of skate or BMX function.

For example these could be a bowl/transition facility catering for bowl skaters and BMX riders, a park style course for BMX and skate riders, an urban plaza configuration that caters for street skaters and in-line users or a BMX jumps track designed specifically for BMX only.

Given the focus on one or two user types only, a district skate park will not cater for all users and requires other district facilities within the municipality or a centralized Regional park to cater for other user groups.

A distribution of District facilities focusing on specific user types will provide a far better spread of unique and valued sporting spaces than the same distribution of facilities trying to cater for all users.

Given that a District facility is predominately catering for one major group, it can potentially cater for beginners through to advanced users. This also means that it is important to provide both parking and preferably be accessible by local transport.

The facility should contain adequate event space and infrastructure including permanent/temporary seating options, power and lighting(preferable but should be considered on a site by site basis) to cater for events, competitions and demonstrations such as the 'Belco Bowl Jam' - a very popular bowl event which is held annually.

There also needs to be provision for appropriate entry and safety signage, refuge areas, including seating and shade, bins, drinking fountains and bike racks. The facility should also consider its context and have the necessary landscaping to integrate/complement its surroundings. Toilets nearby or at the site is also preferable. . This current range of cost for this type of facility is in the order of $100,000 to $500,000.

District facilities examples include:

- Fitzroy Bowl – Edinburgh Gardens, approx. 380m² - Bowl focus
- Quarries Skate park, 562m² - Plaza focus
- Deer Park Skate park, 459m² (Brimbank City Council) – Bowl focus
- Hill N Dale BMX park, 510m² (City of Boroondara) – BMX focus

Figure 6: Deer Park (bowl) an example of a District facility

6.3 Local

Traditionally smaller facilities are considered 'beginner' facilities due to their overall scale. Smaller however does not necessarily mean beginner. For example, a 300mm high ledge can be used successfully by highly skilled skaters of all ages. A small ramp for BMX beginner use can be upwards of 1.2m high.

Beginners should be in areas where there is easy access, clear seating and viewing areas for parents and have elements that enable progression. Whilst local parks will provide partially for this, Regional parks are considered the best facilities to cater for beginners.

A local facility for the purposes of this strategy is a small scale space that caters for users of a local catchment only. These facilities will provide informal localised recreational experience for users that live/work near to the skate park.

They should contain a mix of elements at a level which can be used by all skill levels without necessarily having the more challenging elements found at District or Regional parks.

There also needs to be provision for appropriate entry and safety signage, refuge and seating however these items may be consolidated with other existing surrounding park infrastructure. The facility should also consider its context and have the necessary landscaping to integrate/complement its surroundings. Toilets nearby are also preferable.

Given the local catchment, public transport and parking are not as important for a local facility. Pedestrian and bicycle connections are more critical to enable users easy access to the skate park.

Local facilities could also be temporary particularly in more regional or remote communities. Portable equipment can be relocated on a rotation at a range of different locations to ensure different small communities can all experience appropriate skate function. This current range of cost for this type of facility is in the order of $50,000 to $100,000.

Figure 7: Example of local skate park at Little River

6.4 Incidental

The final skate park type has never really been defined before. However given the importance of providing recreational opportunities for young people in centralised public space it has been added for consideration.

Any pathway that is used by skateboarders/cyclists as a thoroughfare has the possibility to have sections of it widened to accommodate skateable items or undulating terrain to create an 'incidental' skate park.

Many urban spaces contain infrastructure or sculptural components that can be designed to accommodate skate function.

Whilst the focus may be on other activities or recreational needs, an incidental skate element can add value and increase overall function or recreational opportunity to an existing space (such as a basketball court or existing urban square),

Given the incidental skate element is not facility based, there is no set size constraint so whilst managing activity is still important to avoid conflict with other users, there are opportunities to create these incidental elements in areas previously considered either inappropriate or too small for a skate facility.

Incidental skate spaces are already occurring across municipalities (potentially illegal) with local skaters appropriating existing urban infrastructure due to their unique skate function. Examples include seats, walls and stairs. With appropriate design and management, incidental skate spots can be developed that are significantly safer and more functional to users whilst not impacting significantly on the broader community.

Incidental skate spaces are not aimed at any specific level of user per se, rather elements located at appropriate scales depending on their broader context for informal appropriation.

Incidental skate elements are focused more on where young people want to be so that we are adding recreational opportunity in existing interest areas. Access, public transport and ancillary requirements will already be available in most instances given the potential centralised location of these elements.

Incidental skate element examples include:

- Melbourne Museum (unintended use)
- The numbers at Docklands (unintended use)
- St Kilda promenade (legal skate spot)

Figure 8: Example of incidental skate spot in Melbourne

6.5 General skate facility distribution

Based on the typology discussed above, within each municipality subject to the overall demand, there should be at least one major regional facility. This will provide for major events and service the entire community from beginners through to advanced users and will also attract interest from outside the municipality.

The next distribution is the district facilities. These parks should be located throughout the municipality to provide a spread of parks each with a specific different focus.

The final distribution is local and incidental skate parks. These should be scattered throughout the municipality to provide localised recreation in both residential and urban youth interest nodes based on need.

Whilst this distribution model is the ideal configuration based on need, each council is different in terms of its overall scale, transport connections, population distribution and level of services and infrastructure and so generally the distribution ties in with these different considerations.

For example, some Councils have a single significant regional park with no need for district facilities. Others have well distributed district parks, given the lack of space for a regional facility or need to provide a facility in each township. The key is ensuring that there is a range of facilities to properly cater for the various users requirements that meet required demand.

7 Site selection criteria

7.1 Introduction

This section summarizes the key site selection criteria that will be considered when assessing suitable locations for skate facilities across Baw Baw Shire Council. These criteria have been developed using information from the Sport and Recreation Victoria's Skate Park guide (2001) and Playce's own professional experience (successfully designed over 200 skate park projects worldwide). If Council were to consider in the future the development of a new skate or BMX facility the following site selection criteria should be used.

7.2 Definitions

7.2.1 Physical site conditions and technical considerations

This first broad criterion is based on the physicality of the various sites and whether they can accommodate a skate park of the required scale and type required by council. It also considers technical implications such as drainage and soil conditions.

Questions asked at each site include;

- Is the proposed site capable to cater for the various different applicable skate park types defined previously? (i.e.: large enough to cater for events if we are looking for a regional scale park)
- Is the proposed site free of existing land use implications, covenants, easements, service access requirements and/or underground/overhead power lines, water and gas?
- What are the implications of geotechnical (soil) conditions, ground water, and drainage?
- What are the physical terrain implications of the site?
- Is there existing services to the site?

7.2.2 Access/transport

This second criterion looks at how easily accessible the site is for users, parents and those viewing the skate park or events.

Questions asked of each site on this criterion include;

- Is there access to public transport at the proposed site?
- Are there pedestrian/footpath connections from transport nodes to the proposed site?
- Is there a safe drop off area or adequate car parking if applicable?

7.2.3 Natural surveillance, security and safety

Given we are looking at creating a public sporting facility with the main users being younger generations it is critical to ensure that the facility is open and safe and easily accessed in the case of an emergency.

Questions asked for this criterion include;

- Is the site visually prominent with good public surveillance for safety and for the promotion of the facility and skate activity?
- Is the site a short distance from police response calls and does it provide ease of police access on schedules routes?
- Can the site provide adequate emergency vehicle access (fire and ambulance)?
- Can vehicular access be restricted at the proposed site to prevent skating at night by car light if applicable?
- Can the proposed site provide safe entry to and from the site and safe setbacks from busy roads and intersections

7.2.4 Proximity to amenities (water, toilets, shade, food and drink)

An active public sporting facility such as a skate park should have appropriate ancillary amenities. This includes shade for viewing and resting, water bubblers and nearby toilets given users can spend many hours using a skate park in a single session.

Questions therefore asked for this criterion are;

- Are associated amenities such as public telephone, toilets, water, shelter/s and shade existing and available or cost effective to install at the site?
- Is the site close to shops selling food and drink and is there potential for seasonal, peak time and/or event day food and drink outlets?

7.2.5 Impact on existing facilities, adjoining uses and users

To assess the suitability of a site, one of the main considerations is how much impact a new skate park will have on the existing users and use of the space. This can be a contentious community issue and so the following questions have been asked for this criterion;

- Can the site facilitate minimal loss of green space?
- Can the site facilitate minimal impact on ecological systems e.g. wetlands, foreshore and bushland
- Can the site facilitate minimal loss of mature or significant trees
- Can the site facilitate minimal impact on pedestrian or road network and access including existing desire lines?
- Will the location of a skate facility on the site not substantially displace existing recreational or other site users?

- Are there no existing heritage items or indigenous people's claims for land title or sites cultural significance at the site?
- Is there a history of 'anti-social' activity or behaviour at the site?

7.2.6 Distance from housing and incompatible land use

Another major consideration for any new public sporting facility is the potential impact of noise and light if applicable to nearby housing. It is important that the new skate facility is placed to minimise impact to surrounding residential areas. We have undertaken acoustic assessments of a number of existing skate parks to ascertain an appropriate distance from residential areas and as a guide 50m is considered an acceptable distance for a purpose built skate park.

Please note that this is subject to a more detailed acoustic assessment as each location has different factors such as surrounding noise, landform, prevailing winds etc. Please also note that this does not apply to the provision of incidental skate spaces which due to their scale and level of potential use are not considered major creators of noise or loss of amenity.

Questions therefore include;

- Is the site location an adequate distance (50m) from residential dwellings and incompatible land uses to avoid potential noise and light intrusions?
- Has the site the capacity to place a skate park in a location to maximise noise attenuation (e.g.: sunk into the ground)

7.2.7 Maintenance

Maintenance is important to ensure the park can be cleaned easily and regularly.

Questions therefore asked for this criterion are;

- How readily accessible is the site to regular cleaning for existing council cleaning and maintenance teams.

7.2.8 Context and amenity

The criteria is most applicable to the socialisation that occurs at skate parks and the importance of providing facilities that are where young people want to be and provide important amenity (sun protection, wind etc.)

The following questions will be asked for each of the sites regarding context and amenity.

- Is the site location where young people want to be or adjacent to where they currently congregate?
- Is the site in close proximity to existing shopping centres, sports or recreation facilities or interested schools?
- Is the site within or adjacent to a major community hub or central area?

7.2.9 Facility Type Summary

The following table ranks how critical, preferable or unnecessary the various requirements are for each facility type. For example whilst event space is critical for a regional facility, it is not necessary for a local facility.

In the table:

- As a guide only facility types are distinguished as:
  - Regional facilities are between 1,000 square metres minimum to 2,500 square metres and more.
  - District facilities are between 300 and 1,000 square metres.
  - Local facilities are between 200 and 400 square metres.
  - Incidental facilities have no size limit but are generally small.
- Cells marked as:
  - Critical are highlighted in green and indicate the key requirement is critical for the facility to function appropriately.
  - Preferable are highlighted in yellow and indicate the key requirement is preferable for the facility to function appropriately.
  - Unnecessary are highlighted in red and indicate the key requirement is unnecessary for the facility to function appropriately.

Table 6 - Ranking of how critical, preferable or unnecessary various requirements are for each facility type.

Key Requirements	Regional Facility	District Facility	Local Facility	Incidental Facility
Appropriate size to cater for specific functional requirements of each type	Critical	Critical	Critical	Critical
Space for temporary seating and associated infrastructure for events	Critical	Preferable	Unnecessary	Unnecessary
Public transport access available	Preferable	Preferable	Preferable	Unnecessary
Emergency vehicle access available	Preferable	Preferable	Preferable	Unnecessary

Key Requirements	Regional Facility	District Facility	Local Facility	Incidental Facility
Adequate car parking /drop off available	Critical	Preferable	Preferable	Unnecessary
Shelter/shade	Critical	Critical	Preferable	Unnecessary
Designated seating and viewing areas	Critical	Critical	Critical	Preferable
Toilets (or in close proximity)	Critical	Preferable	Preferable	Unnecessary
Rubbish bin/s	Critical	Critical	Critical	Unnecessary
Drinking fountain/s	Critical	Critical	Critical	Unnecessary
Appropriate entry and safety signage	Critical	Critical	Critical	Critical
Good natural surveillance	Preferable	Preferable	Preferable	Preferable
At least 50m from housing/residential areas	Preferable	Preferable	Preferable	Preferable
Close proximity of food/drink outlets	Preferable	Preferable	Preferable	Unnecessary
Other recreation/youth infrastructure can be accommodated	Preferable	Preferable	Preferable	Preferable
Proximity to youth interest areas (shopping areas, other recreation spaces, schools)	Preferable	Preferable	Preferable	Preferable
Proximity to major community hub or centralized location?	Preferable	Unnecessary	Unnecessary	Preferable

8 Existing skate facilities review

8.1 Introduction

The following information is a summary of the site inspections undertaken as part of this strategy on the 10th January 2012. All of Baw Baw Shire Councils skate and BMX facilities were reviewed onsite, according to the following key areas;

- General condition (Overall physical appearance, condition, evidence of use, etc.)
- Surface condition (Riding surface condition, number of cracks, extent of repairs, finish consistency, acceptable tolerances)
- Obstacle/park layout and functional condition (Appropriate scale and layout of park, distance between obstacles, flow, etc.)
- Amenity (safety signage, appropriate seating, access, shade, landscape, rubbish bins, etc.)
- Maintenance (extent of graffiti, rubbish, wearing, surrounding landscape)

As well as considering possible additions or opportunities for the site.

Figure 9: Map showing existing skate and BMX facilities in Baw Baw Shire Council visited on 10 January 2012

All the sites could potentially be increased in size to accommodate additional components however these opportunities are not discussed as they are subject to the user consultation and confirmation of definitive need.

9 Australian standards and other documents

There are currently no formal industry standards or Australian Standards relating to skate park design, construction, maintenance and management. In lieu of this, a number of guidelines developed by various organisations to assist with designing and constructing skate parks are used wherever possible. These guidelines are useful for general knowledge about skate parks, but they are not regulatory or absolute. Playce also uses our substantial professional experience, judgement and expertise in skate park design to determine when appropriate standards and guidelines should be used to minimise risks within skate parks.

Specific to the sport of skating some elements do not conform to Australian standards for access and fall heights. Playce refers to Australian standards where a risk is identified at the interface between skate elements and pedestrian/viewing areas. This may be within or at the periphery of the skate park.

Standards and Guidelines that have been referred to in compiling this report include:

- Sport and Recreation Victoria “The Skate Facility Guide”
- Sport and Recreation Victoria “Sport and Recreation - Access for All”
- Building Code of Australia 2008
- AS 4685.1 - 2004: Playground Equipment - General Safety Requirements and Test Methods
- AS 4486.1 – 1997: Playgrounds and Playground Equipment - Development, Installation, Inspection, Maintenance and Operation
- Urban Design Guidelines for Creating Youth Friendly Spaces and Places (Department for Community Development)
- Design Standards for Urban Infrastructure Part 15: Playgrounds and Playground Equipment
- The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents - Play Safety Information Sheet Number 27 – Skateboarding Safety and Play Safety : Skateboarding : Skate park Maintenance Costs
- British Standard BS EN 14974:2006 – Facilities for users of roller sports equipment – Safety requirements and test methods.
- Civic Mutual Plus – Best Practice Manual Skate Park and BMX Facilities 2010
- UCI BMX Rule Book and Management of BMX Tracks – A Local Government Guide.

An audit is an important step in reducing risk however risk management for the skate facilities mentioned in this report are beyond the scope of this audit. AS 4360 – 2004 ‘Risk Management’ and HB246 – 2004: ‘Guidelines for Managing Risk in Sport and Recreation’ provide standards and guidelines which should be reviewed in addition to this audit by a suitably qualified risk manager for Council.

10 Disclaimer

Playce Pty Ltd., its employees, director and associated entities shall not be liable for any loss, damage, claim, costs and expenses that may arise from any damage or inquiry of any kind whatsoever in relation to this document or the maintenance and use of skate parks generally. While all due care and consideration has been undertaken in the preparation of this report, Playce Pty Ltd do advise that all recommendations, actions and information provided in this document is based upon our experience as professional Landscape Architects specialising in skate park design.

Playce Pty Ltd and its employees are not qualified to provide legal, medical, and financial or risk management advice. Suitably qualified experts in these fields should be consulted to provide further information.

10.1 Explanations and definitions used in the report

10.1.1 Skate park rating system

Skate parks are a relatively new phenomenon and the design and construction process is still evolving. Therefore it is difficult to apply an established set of rules or procedures when assessing the lifespan and rating of a skate park. Playce has hence looked at a range of skate parks across Australia and determined that for the purposes of this report, skate parks that are designed and constructed to meet the required tolerances and specifications of today will have a functional life of approximately 20 years (100%) before major repairs, renovation or renewal are needed. Obviously older parks may not have been designed or built to current best practice so this timeline is used as a reference tool only and all skate parks are assessed on their current existing condition.

The skate park has been rated to describe its current **condition** and **function** in accordance with the rating system indicated below:

- **Excellent:** 100% of life, 20 years remaining, skate park is well designed with high quality finishes.
- **Good:** 75% of life, 15 years remaining, and skate park is a few years old with some wear and tear, design and finishes of good quality.
- **Fair:** 50% of life, 10 years remaining, and skate park with imperfections in design or finish quality, wear and tear but still has some functional value.
- **Poor:** 25% of life, 5 years remaining, and skate park with maintenance or structural issues, imperfections in design or finish quality, wear and tear or other issues.
- **Failed/Hazard:** 0% of life, 0 years remaining, and skate park is unsafe due to structural failure, poor design or extreme surface degradation.

The rating system is based on our professional assessment of the skate parks current physical condition including: (but not limited to) the date of construction, function, structural soundness, amount of damage/wear, etc.

10.2 Site 1: Drouin skate park

10.2.1 General condition

Overall the Drouin Skate park was in relatively good condition on the day of the site visit. The park sits comfortably into the side of an embankment which enables clear access and views to the facility from the road and adjacent car park.

The park was clean and relatively free from rubbish. Whilst there was no one at the facility at the time of the inspection, the park appeared to have been actively used as evidenced by recent tyre and wheel marks.

Figure 10: Overview of the existing park

10.2.2 Surface condition

Whilst on site, the riding surfaces (platforms, obstacles, transitions and banks) were inspected and generally the finishes were overall in a reasonable condition.

There was however a number of instances of the concrete spalling with pock marks of a significant nature found as shown in the images below (one over 20cm in size). It appears aggregate has come away and a hole has formed that then holds water, further increasing the degradation and size of the area.

There were cracks at a number of the joints and ongoing wear and tear and in some locations are opening them up and becoming a potential riding hazard.

The spalling includes the surface finish in a number of areas where the surface finish has degraded from weathering and use and is exposing the aggregate. This is becoming rough and may impact on function over time. It appears there is also damage from melted bins that has affected the riding surface, particularly in the bowled end.

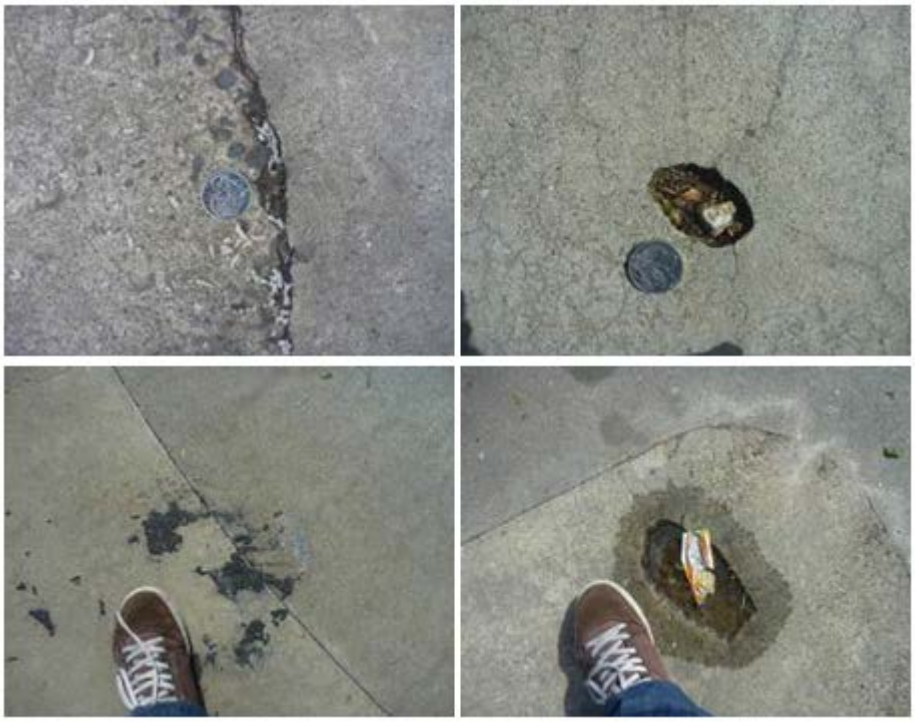

Figure 11: Views of various holes, spalling, burned plastic damage and cracks

10.2.3 Obstacle/park layout and functional condition

The park was designed and constructed by a specialist skate park contractor and so the layout and flow appears to function appropriately. The run ups and landings are wide enough to not compromise function. There is a large flat hubba (large flat edge) that could be reshaped to increase function as well as the raising of a low rail may be required (subject to users requirements). The park layout will be reviewed in detail with the local users to determine in more detail if park features are altered accordingly to maximise function to meet their specific requirements.

One issue with the park that will require further review is the transitions at the Eastern end of the park as the banks between the platforms are steep and could be rationalised with steps to improve access.

From a skill level perspective, the park, due to its linear layout enables use for both beginner through to advanced use. Beginners can use the large open flat areas and the base of the open bowl to practice, whilst advanced users can enjoy the entire park. When congested, there will be some impact on use by beginners accordingly.

Figure 12: Steep transition between landings and low short rail

10.2.4 Amenity

Whilst the park is in an open park location, there was little amenity surrounding the facility. There was no seating for viewing or for those using the facility. There were also no formal access paths from the facility to surrounding paths and so 'dog tracks' have developed through the lawn areas. Whilst there is a shelter approximately 30m to the south of the facility, this provides no assistance to those using the facility which is exposed to sun and the weather. Nor are there any adjacent trees to provide shade.

Whilst there is a sign, the information on it has worn off and provides no conditions of use or safety information. A bin is located at the north western corner of the facility however given the evidence of burning plastic on the facility indicates that these are burnt and replaced on occasion.

Figure 13: Images of the rubbish bin and sign

10.2.5 Maintenance

With regard to maintenance, at the time of the site inspection the park appeared clean and relatively clear of rubbish and litter. There was evidence of some repairs having taken place and patching on the surface. There was no obvious sign of graffiti other than on some areas of the surface where it appears it had been removed from the park. Surrounding lawn areas are in relatively good condition and there only appeared to be a drain along the edge of the park that has been damaged and overgrown with weeds which requires repair and cleaning. There are also a number

of areas where water is collecting. This is due to the grading of the park being not correct at the time of installation.

Figure 14: Images showing water ponding and damaged drain

10.2.6 Summary

Whilst there are some signs of wear and tear and some damage to the surfaces of the facility, overall the Drouin park is in good to fair condition or around 50% of its life with approximately 10 years remaining in line with the assessment process outlined earlier. There are no major issues with the facility in either function or condition however repairs to the surface finish of the park should be a priority to remove the large pock marks found around the park.

The other main consideration is improving amenity. Clear and appropriate signage should be an initial high priority in the short term to ensure the conditions of use of the park is available to those using the facility. Seating, access paths, more durable bins, youth public art and shade should also be a key consideration moving forward. Another consideration is installing CCTV cameras and improving surveillance of the site to discourage poor behaviour.

With regard to maintenance a tailored plan should be developed to ensure regular inspections for the facility including key areas for review and methods of cleaning to assist the parks and gardens maintenance team in affectively managing this asset. For example ongoing water blasting to remove graffiti may over time significantly compromise the surfaces and increase degradation thus impacting on the function of the facility. There are a number of alternate options for the removal of graffiti that could be considered including chemical wash or a repaint of the facility.

There is an opportunity to extend the existing facility to create a district standard facility by adding more street/plaza obstacles.

10.3 Site 2: Warragul BMX track

10.3.1 General condition

Overall the Warragul BMX track is in good condition. Having only been installed in mid-2011 the track is new and has no major issues. Whilst on site the main areas that were reviewed in detail were access, erosion and drainage. These are discussed in more detail below. Note that as part of this review, the MAV Targeted Risk Appraisal Report - Skate Parks and BMX Facilities Report for the site August 2011

was reviewed in line with the recommendations contained within it and these are also outlined below.

Figure 15: Overview image of track

10.3.2 Surface condition

Overall the surface condition of the track was in a good condition without major issues. The only area of concern was in a number of locations across the track where run off from rain has impacted on the track surface and it is degrading providing a potential riding hazard. There were also areas where water was pooling in the drainage swales in between the track.

The last 20-30 metres of the return track also was damp and was holding water and was being impacted by frequent use. Finally the access to the start ramp was degrading due to its steepness. It made access difficult and was eroding in a number of areas.

Figure 16: Water and run off damage to track

10.3.3 Obstacle/park layout and functional condition

The park appears to flow well and whilst not a full size Olympic UCI track layout, it provides appropriate localised competition requirements.

10.3.4 Amenity

The track has a clear sign that outlines the use and safety requirements of the facility. There are also seats on the side of the facility. Large trees provide some shade.

Overall event viewing is limited and this could be improved to ensure those watching can have a better view into the track.

Figure 17: Images of treed viewing area and signage

10.3.5 Maintenance

The park appeared to be relatively well maintained. The grass on the verges were stabilising the embankments but were in need of maintenance as growth was getting high and potentially a fire hazard/visibility issue. The drainage swales required some realignment to improve surface drainage and catchment management. The track also needs ongoing maintenance to ensure the riding surface is maintained to minimise the erosion occurring in a number of areas along the track. Access to the start track is an important consideration that requires an appropriate solution to ensure its long term durability.

10.3.6 Summary

Overall the Warragul BMX track is in good condition and whilst it won't have the life span of the concrete facilities given it is constructed out of less durable materials, it should still have over 10 years+ life span assuming it is maintained regularly. The focus of this site for Council is establishing some key maintenance protocols around the riding surface to mitigate the impact of erosion moving forward. This will require working with Councils maintenance team and the bike club to ensure a clear accountability and regular checking and maintenance process.

The start ramp is also an ongoing issue. This was raised in the MAV report and it needs further consideration. A rubberised/paved designated path or access ramp should be explored further to ensure appropriate access to the starting ramp can be achieved.

Another key point raised in the MAV report was an appropriate emergency access plan. This should be included as a part of the maintenance and management plan for the facility.

Finally whilst there are some seats and a sign, there should be further consideration of a designated viewing area for those watching the activity. This could include seating and shade.

10.4 Site 3: Warragul skate park

10.4.1 General condition

The Warragul skate park has been a highly successful and well-loved facility since its construction in mid-2002 by Sk8Con. The park is in relatively good condition given ten years of consistent and constant use and whilst it is not in the most visible location at the Burke Street Park, it is in a hub of recreation activity and surrounded by a range of other active and passive recreation services.

There are signs of wear and tear both within the facility itself and also around the verges, seats and access paths. These will be discussed in more detail below.

10.4.2 Surface condition

The Warragul skate park appears to overall be in relatively good condition given its ongoing use. The concrete was laid by a professional skate park contractor and so even after 10 years, it has remained consistent and with relatively minimal cracking or spalling.

There are however a number of areas of concern particularly within the bowl and at the base of transition from the bowl area into the street park. Key issues include similar spalling and pock marks in the concrete as found in Drouin. These are collecting water and will require repair. There are also a number of areas where cracks have opened up and are a potential riding hazard. These are found within the bowl and in a number of locations in the street course. Drainage is another ongoing concern. There appears to be a number of locations were water is pooling at the base of some of the obstacles. This requires attention as the water is not only slippery and a hazard but it will continue to damage the concrete in this area. The base of transitions is critically important for rider safety and so must be looked at in more detail.

Whilst on site, there were discussions with a number of local scooter riders who also noted that the anti-graffiti patching paint that has been applied in a number of areas around the bowl is actually slippery and is a hazard. This will require further discussion during the user meetings to look at possible removal of the paint as a priority.

Figure 18: Views of some cracking and anti-graffiti paint and pock marks on the park

10.4.3 Obstacle/park layout and functional condition

The park was designed and constructed by a specialist skate park contractor and so the layout and flow appears to function relatively well. Whilst not all of the obstacles are in line with current best practice, they were relevant at the time of construction. It appears though that some of the original obstacles have been altered over time to improve function (removal of rail in street section). A more detailed discussion will be undertaken with the local users to confirm specific issues with the layout and flow.

From a skill level perspective, the park, due to its layout enables use for both beginner through to advanced use. Beginners can use the large open flat areas and the base of the open bowl to practice, whilst advanced users can enjoy the entire park. When congested, there will be some impact on use by beginners accordingly and there are some areas of conflict that have been raised for rectification.

10.4.4 Amenity

The major issue with the Warragul skate park is that it does not have any information/safety signage. Given its use and age, this is a critically important consideration that should be actioned in the short term. With regard to the other amenity at the site, whilst seating has been provided, it is in relatively poor condition. It appears that bins are regularly removed and damaged at the site. There is no designated shade although there are trees adjacent to the park that provide some respite. Toilets are located close by and there is drinking fountain located at the edge of the park near the carpark and entry.

Pedestrian access to the bowl area is not formalised and so makes it difficult for people entering the top section of the park and viewing into the bowl. Emergency access should also require greater review to ensure appropriate access is enabled if an accident occurs. This includes liaising with the local emergency services to make them aware of the unique access requirements of this bowl to assist in responding to an emergency if it occurs.

Figure 19: Views existing seating and wear around bases

10.4.5 Maintenance

The park appears to be relatively well maintained. As outlined above litter appears to be an ongoing concern with the burning and vandalism of bins an ongoing issue. The embankments and batters at the edges of the park are also degraded and exposing the concrete footings in a couple of key areas. Anti-graffiti paint has also been raised

as an issue by local users as creating a slip hazard. As outlined previously a specific tailored maintenance plan for the facility should be considered to look at specific solutions and ongoing inspection regime for the park moving forward, particularly given its now coming on to 10 years old.

Figure 20: Views of water pooling and build-up of leaf litter

10.4.6 Summary

Whilst there are some signs of wear and tear and some damage to the surfaces of the facility, overall the Warragul park is in good to fair condition or around 50% of its life with approximately 10 years remaining in line with the assessment process outlined earlier. The focus of the works to this park include installation to signage, some repairs to improve drainage and concrete patching to remove pock marks and significant cracks. Improving access, seating and amenity should also be looked at in more detail moving forward.

The consultation process also identified the opportunity to develop a new street plaza extension to improve the current function and meet current and future demands of young people. This would include the installation of new flat rail and minor street components.

10.5 Site 4: Trafalgar skate park

10.5.1 General condition

Like both Drouin and Warragul, the Trafalgar skate park is in reasonable condition. Once again given it was built by a professional skate park contractor, the riding surfaces, coping offsets and layout of the park are all okay. It is also a similar vintage to the other facilities and so is holding up despite regular use over the last 6+ years. The positive for the Trafalgar skate park is its location. Whilst there have been ongoing issues with the hardware store and shared wall that it is built against, the broader locale for the facility is good given it's in the heart of the commercial district and very accessible to those that use it.

Figure 21: Overview image of the existing park entrance

10.5.2 Surface condition

The Trafalgar skate park has many of the same surface condition issues faced at the other parks. Whilst there is no significant cracking or major failure of the concrete, the surface has a lot of pock marks and spalling that is a potential hazard to riders.

Figure 22: Views of various holes and cracks

10.5.3 Obstacle/park layout and functional condition

Like both Warragul and Drouin the Trafalgar skate park was designed and built by a professional skate park Contractor and so overall the dimensions, layout and coping offsets for the park are in line with best practice at the time of construction. There are a couple of areas where the obstacle layout could be improved to meet current best practice including increasing the platforms around the flat bar on the edge of the park to improve function as well as potentially removing/replacing the fun box as the run up for this obstacle is cramped and may limit effective use. These will be confirmed during the consultation with local users.

From a skill level perspective, the park provides for both beginner through to advanced use. Beginners can use the large open flat areas, whilst advanced users can enjoy the entire park. When congested, there will be some impact on use by beginners accordingly and there are some areas of conflict that have been raised for rectification such as the small fun box.

10.5.4 Amenity

The main ongoing issue raised by Council officers and also observed on site is the adjacent building the skate park is built against. Council has recently addressed the issue of users gaining unauthorised access to the roof of this building. There is

signage for the park that is in reasonable condition although the text and information needs reviewing to ensure it is in line with current insurance requirements. The batters on the edge of the park are wearing and will need repair or rectification. There are also no seating or shade opportunities at the space. A drinking fountain is accessible at the eastern edge of the park.

Figure 23: Image of existing sign and drinking fountain

10.5.5 Maintenance

The wall is an obvious ongoing risk that needs consideration moving forward. The batters also need repair and rectification however overall the park was reasonably clean on the day of the inspection. Implementation of a tailored maintenance plan also needs to be undertaken per previous parks.

Figure 24: Images of existing adjacent wall/fence

10.5.6 Summary

Consideration for the Trafalgar skate park should focus on solutions for the existing wall as well as a potential reconfiguring of a couple of the obstacles. Overall the Trafalgar skate park is in good to fair condition or around 50% of its life with approximately 10 years remaining in line with the assessment process outlined earlier and is very similar condition to both Drouin and Warragul. As per the other concrete parks for Baw Baw, repairs to all of the damage to the concrete should be a priority as part of a formalised maintenance and management program. The park itself is not particularly visually appealing and could be improved with more seating and shade or possibly be extended to the east. It also requires a new sign that includes appropriate safety and conditions of use information and more formalised access to the top of the platforms.

There is also a need to repair or where possible review the options for improving drainage issues with partial regrading where possible.

There is an opportunity to consider the extension of the park include new street plaza and jump box flyouts to further support BMX and event activities.

10.6 Site 5: Trafalgar informal BMX

10.6.1 General condition and park layout

This facility is in poor condition and really has no functional layout. The jumps are degraded and poorly sited and the track is really overgrown without any clear demarcation for appropriate use. The jumps are also of no specific dimension or alignment to any existing standard or best practice and so pose an ongoing risk to anyone using them.

Figure 25: Images of the existing dirt mounds

10.6.2 Amenity and maintenance

There is no signage, seating or shade at this location, which will need to be considered in any redevelopment of the site.

10.6.3 Summary

The technical review indicates that this area is not designed to any standard. It is therefore recommended that the track is rebuilt to current best practice (appropriate layout, jumps and defined track) and include appropriate amenity and signage.

10.7 Site 6: Rawson BMX park

10.7.1 General condition and park layout

This facility is in relatively good condition however is very low level and not really a BMX jumps track. It is more of a lower level multipurpose bike track and so should really be tailored to maximise this type of use or be reshaped to be more applicable to BMX riders. The layout offers appropriate flow and the spacing of obstacles is also acceptable however they need ongoing repair and reshaping to maximise safety and functionality. In a number of areas the gravel has degraded and this could be a potential hazard moving forward.

Figure 26: Overview image of the track

10.7.2 Amenity and maintenance

There is a bin and sign with appropriate information and the park sits well in a high profile accessible location. As outlined above the track requires ongoing maintenance to ensure it does not impact on function however overall it is in relatively good condition and given the jumps/obstacles are rather small, can only really be used for more low level use at this stage.

Figure 27: Images of sign and bin

10.7.3 Summary

The park should be reviewed to ensure the layout and surfaces maximises function. It is important to liaise with the local community to determine current use and expected interest as this will drive the long term redevelopment of the space (i.e. reshaped to be more applicable to BMX or adjusted to continue to be more of a low level bike track).

10.8 Site 7: Neerim South skate park

10.8.1 General condition

The final skate park inspected on site was the Neerim South skate park, which like the other Baw Baw skate parks, was designed and built by a professional skate park Contractor. It is in a high profile accessible location and sits next to some significant and popular playgrounds. It is also newer than the other facilities and overall is in relatively good condition.

Figure 28: View of the ramp at the street section

10.8.2 Surface condition

The surface of the park overall is in really good condition. The concrete surface has minimum spalling or degradation and so provides a good quality riding surface for the local users. The bowl has some cracking and this will require ongoing monitoring to ensure its function is not compromised over time

10.8.3 Obstacle/park layout and functional condition

The main issue with the facility is the significant damage to the concrete coping modules surrounding the bowl. A decision was made during the design and construction process to install concrete tiles rather than CHS section and unfortunately they have been broken and removed in a number of locations. Whilst the Neerim South Bowl is known for this relatively unique coping and it's great for Baw Baw to have a mix of different coping types at its parks for the locals to enjoy, the coping must be repaired as a priority moving ahead. There are a couple of options regarding this and they include reinstalling new concrete coping that is more durable than that initially installed or removing all of the coping and replacing with a CHS substitute. Both options are costly and will require further discussion in Council and the local users to determine the best method to proceed with. Overall the rest of the facility flows and is laid out okay. The street section appears relatively cramped with small distances with obstacles and the central rail on the funbox appears high however these can be confirmed when discussions are held with the local users.

From a skill level perspective, the park, due to its layout enables use for both beginner through to advanced use. Beginners can use the large open flat areas and the base of the bowl to practice, whilst advanced users can enjoy the entire park. When congested, there will be some impact on use by beginners accordingly and this should be managed with signage.

Figure 29: Views of the damaged/removed coping and existing drainage grate.

10.8.4 Amenity

The Neerim South skate park, given its location as a recreation and play hub has shelters, a toilet and access to water nearby. There is a clear delineation between the concrete riding surface and paved access and refuge areas that assists in defining the active areas, mitigating possible conflict between those skating and those watching. Appropriate conditions of use signage needs to be installed as per previous comments and must be a priority (to be confirmed on site). Additional seating could also be considered around the facility.

10.8.5 Maintenance

Other than the major issue with the damaged/removed coping along the bowl, maintenance appears to be reasonably successful. With the trees adjacent to the lower street section, leaf litter is gathering in a number of locations and this should be removed regularly to reduce rider impact. Whilst on site, a local user also raised an issue with the tree branches being low and a branch was removed recently as it posed a hazard. This needs ongoing monitoring. The vertical concrete walls also need sealing as there are some holes and exposed reinforcement that may also pose a hazard to riders. This was also raised by the local user.

Figure 30: Images of leaf litter and dirt on the edges of the facility.

10.8.6 Summary

The key issue with the Neerim South Skate park is resolving the coping issue around the bowl. Following a discussion with the local users to determine their requirements we will provide an appropriate solution in discussion with Council's maintenance staff to ensure the long term usability of the bowl is maximised. Overall the skate park is in good to fair condition or around 50% of its life with approximately 10 years remaining in line with the assessment process outlined earlier and is very similar condition to Drouin, Warragul and Trafalgar.

There are some maintenance issues and the layout of the park can be potentially altered. Signage is a critical component and additional seating could be considered to improve amenity

11 Community consultation

11.1 Introduction

As part of the development of the strategy the following community consultation has been completed to identify key issues and needs and guide the future development and programming priorities.

- Internal Council Officer Workshop
- Key stakeholder interviews
- Focus Group with Young People
- Schools Focus Group
- Discussion with Neighbouring Municipalities
- Discussions with Skate Victoria and Skate Australia
- Discussion BMX Victoria

11.2 Summary of key issues

The following provides a summary of the key issues identified during the consultation.

11.2.1 Internal focus group

An internal focus group was held with Council Officers that had some involvement with the skate and BMX facilities. The following provides a summary of the key issues identified.

- Council has had a number of requests for the provision and development of additional skate facilities, including in the Neerim, Erica, Yarragon, Darnum, Jindivick, Noojee, Willow Grove and Thorpdale areas.
- There are ongoing maintenance issues with Councils existing skate facilities. An ongoing maintenance program is required to keep the facilities clean and safe. There is ongoing criticism about the concrete coping on the Neerim South facility due to the constant cracking.
- There is also an ongoing problem with litter, damage to park infrastructure i.e. bins being burnt and graffiti. The rectification of these issues requires ongoing resources. The location of the existing facilities contributes to this problem. The Drouin facility is particularly bad.
- Given the geographical spread of the Baw Baw municipality Council is unable to provide a permanent skate park in all townships, therefore there is a need to identify alternate skate options i.e. mobile fun box.
- Participation in skating and BMX by young people is consistent with the State Governments priority for increased participation in physical activity, particularly for people coming from a disadvantaged background.

- There is a concern about the risk management issues surrounding the BMX facilities. There is a public liability exposure due to the casual and unsupervised use of these facilities.
- Parents have expressed a concern about the ability for young people to access skate facilities to improve their skills due to the intimidation by older children/young people.
- Some of the existing facilities are seen as being poorly positioned in terms of supervision and exposure.

11.2.2 Warragul skate BMX workshop

A workshop was held near the Warragul Skate Park on 26 March 2012. Thirteen people attended including four parents.

11.2.2.1 Discussion about the good/bad of skate parks in Baw Baw

Warragul skate park

Overall function

- All of the street section is cramped
- Big Box Is cracked.
- Love the big bowl. It's in good nick. Leave it.
- Need to open up street section as there is conflict with BMX and skate coming out of bowl.
- Short term installation of some lighting and a circular flat rail somewhere
- Areas flood but overall okay. Bowl sometimes has water in it
- Signage not around?
- Drainage needs improvement
- Anti-graffiti coating can be slippy but the users are okay with it
- Overall pretty clean.

Positive aspects of the facility

- Tranny good
- Rails on box good
- Accessible by train

Negative aspects

- No lights
- No Plaza/street
- Too small for number of users
- Limited in the way you can skate

- Younger kids don't understand how the bowl flows
- No shade
- Scooters get in the way

Neerim South skate park

- Bowl coping needs replacing.
- Bowl is okay. Very deep- too deep for bikes
- Rail and Box too high. Extend rail down bank and make the whole thing lower.
- Would like some street stuff and ledges

Drouin skate park

- Holes everywhere, patch up
- Extend run ups at street end.
- More bins, seats, bubbler,
- Path needed from car park
- Move low rail

Trafalgar skate park

- Extend park to create formal box jump. All tranny no street. Perhaps more street
- Remove small fun box. Gets in the way. Reconfigure
- More seats and bins

Barriers to participation

- Weather
- Too many users of 1 group e.g. BMX, skate or scoot
- Scooters get in the way.
- Bikes and skaters work well.

What type of facilities should be provided in the future?

- Circular flat bar rail
- Hip of some description
- 4 set of stairs
- Really want a skate plaza or specific street section
- Fix up playground as well
- Need more bins
- Lighting would be great. With timing to shut off at 10pm

- Clean the toilets ,Security lighting would be good at toilets
- Afternoon shade or shelter
- Little beginner area that is still connected to the rest of the park
- Possible vert ramp?
- In terms of BMX perhaps a larger box jump and a tranny hip

What programs/ events would you like to see run at facilities?

- South eastern league currently successful
- Only at Warragul
- Once a year event
- Access to other events difficult
- Religious group comes down and gives free BBQ
- Music and art events would be good at the skate park
- Make it in line with skate event. Very popular
- Level of coaching not great. Sometimes users are better than coaches
- NO to other sports at this space
- More competitions would be great
- No school programs
- Very few girls if any use facilities
- When there is an emergency, users ring the ambulance.

Other comments/ideas

- Skate/BMX facilities bring visitors and business to the town
- Skate tourism

11.2.3 Trafalgar High School skate/BMX workshop

A workshop was held with Trafalgar High School interested students on the 27 March 2012. 19 young people in group- range of year levels, predominantly Year 9.

11.2.3.1 Baw Baw skate facilities

Warragul skate park

Positive Aspects of the Facility

- Big, spacious
- Has spine
- Close to the Warragul Leisure Centre
- Clean

Negative aspects

- Too far from shops
- Busy
- Too many people using
- Dominated by bikes – they get to go because they are bigger
- Vert wall quarter too close
- No lighting

Warragul BMX track

Positive aspects of the facility redeveloped

- Good for racing

Negative aspects

- Too difficult to jump

Drouin skate park

Positive aspects

- Close to shops
- Space to pick up speed
- Good for scooters
- Like box
- Bit of everything
- Like the graffiti

Negative aspects

- Not enough street
- Landing spot too small
- Busy

Neerim South skate park

Positive aspects

- Bowl

Negative aspects

- Too small

Rawson BMX track

Negative Aspects

- Too small

Trafalgar BMX track

Negative aspects

- Need bigger jumps
- Needs ramps
- Too small
- No kick over the jumps
- Grass on the jumps reduces speed – needs to be maintained
- Needs to be more spread out

Trafalgar skate park

Positive aspects

- Mural- looks good
- Close to shops and toilets
- Smallish, so not that attractive to outsiders
- Got ramps
- Well laid out
- People travel to the park- good concrete park

Negative aspects

- No shade
- Not enough space- crowding
- Not enough bins
- No seats/ table- seats would be good along the road or near the trees
- Tap a little far away- would be good to move closer to the park or have another one
- Not cleaned regularly enough/broken glass
- Rail not accessible
- Some divots in concrete
- No security cameras
- Some bullies/ behaviour problems at the site – have to be aggressive to get a go,
- Vandalism

Barriers to participation

- Weather

- Too many users of 1 group e.g. BMX, skate or scoot
- Some kids are intimidated by other kids

Current gaps in facility provision- facilities and locations

- Yarragon
- Willow Grove (although acknowledged that this would not be high use)
- An indoor facility such as The Shed in Cranbourne

What type of facilities should be provided in the future? (Trafalgar Skate Park)

- Solar lights
- More street- rails, boxes, stairs, spines and ramps
- Less vert
- Phone that dials to police (like you see at train stations)
- Wall for art- tags or chalk board
- Extension downhill (change grass to concrete), add spine
- Butt bins for cigarette rubbish

What programs/ events would you like to see run at facilities?

- Existing annual skate event ran by community and YMCA good
- Would like to see more competitions
- Have demonstrations with well-known skaters/ BMX riders

Other comments/ideas:

- Supervision/session times for different users would be good
- Lighting
- Rank the parks on best mode to ride e.g. skate/ blade/ scooter etc.
- The Summit (private property/ business) has or used to have a good downhill BMX track.
- Police to patrol more regularly
- Boyles (Hardware store next to Trafalgar skate park) loan their brooms etc. to clean the park.
- Bike riders are getting priority at Trafalgar skate park
- A facility should be provided in Yarragon
- Interested in a bowl into another bowl – like at Ferntree Gully
- Trafalgar is experiencing population growth

11.2.4 Yarragon Primary School skate/ BMX workshop

A workshop was held at Yarragon Primary School on 29 March 2012. 27 children from grades 5/6 attended.

11.2.4.1 Baw Baw skate facilities

Warragul skate park

Good:

- Bowl- big
- Used by skate/ scooter riders

Neerim South skate park

Good:

- Location
- Close to playground

Trafalgar skate park

Good:

- Jumps
- Big jumps

Barriers to participation

- Too many people
- Older people (intimidating)
- Transport- only 2 children are allowed to catch the train on their own. Most others are allowed to ride their bikes (approx. 18) or rely on being driven.

Current gaps in facility provision- facilities and locations

- Yarragon- somewhere that you could walk/ ride to e.g. near old tennis courts (Market St), old school site (Rollo St), new school site (Dowton Park), or near the playground at the back of the hall- Howard Park (back of Hanns Lane and Campbell St). Not too close to houses.
- Darnum- locate near playground on main strip

What type of facilities should be provided in the future (Yarragon)

- Majority voted for a skate park, some wanted both a skate park and BMX track
- Bowl
- Jumps
- Ramps
- Enough space

- Vert wall
- Murals, graffiti wall
- Learner area with smaller jumps
- Pink area for girls!

What programs/ events would you like to see run at facilities?

- Special days with competitions, come and try, opportunities to learn from others, music

11.2.5 Rawson Primary School skate/ BMX workshop

A workshop was held at Rawson Primary School on 27 March 2012. 18 children from Grades 4, 5, and 6 attended (approximately half lived in Rawson and half in Erica). There is a total of 56 children at the school. (Most of the children hadn't used the skate parks in Baw Baw).

11.2.5.1 Baw Baw skate facilities

Warragul skate park

Positive attributes

- Used by scooter riders and bikes
- Lots of things to ride on
- Quiet

Rawson BMX track

Negative attributes

- Better than nothing

Bad:

- Gets washed away in the rain and puddles form
- Old/ boring- only one way of using it (circle shape) and only same type of jumps
- Holes
- Rocks in jumps
- Can't get enough speed up
- The two bigger jumps are too close together
- Needs improvement

It could be improved by:

- Utilising a different material that doesn't wash away e.g. concrete
- Fence- to separate from road

Barriers to participation

- Reliant on parent driving them somewhere
- Not many places to ride within townships

Current gaps in facility provision- facilities and locations

- Erica- lacks things to do. Has general store, rotunda with toilets provides a good place for gatherings, rail trail. Could be good place to locate skate facilities as existing infrastructure to support
- Rawson- needs skate park. Has police station, shop, rail trail, indoor pool. Would prefer a skate park to a BMX track. Preferred location is between shop and Pinnacle Drive.
- Parkers Corner- middle of two towns but no facilities

What type of facilities should be provided in the future (Rawson/ Erica)?

- Rail
- Small jumps
- Box
- Bowl
- Quarter pipe

What programs/ events would you like to see run at facilities?

- Anything that helps develop skills

Other comments/ideas

- Rail trail has management issues- snakes, trees across road
- Understand that project may have to be staged
- Local community would help raise funds
- Most high school students go to Newborough (Latrobe City Council)

11.3 Skateboarding Australia

- Skateboarding Australia (SBA) promotes the growth and development of skateboarding in Australia and their role is to develop skateboarding at all levels and to increase opportunities for skateboarders.
- SBA, along with valued support from the Australian skateboard industry, is increasing overall awareness and participation opportunities for skateboarders in Australia through the delivery of regular, high quality and professionally managed events.
- Skateboarding Australia's emphasis is on the "Activation" of skate facilities and on ensuring provision is sustainable and ongoing.
- There is a need for greater diversity within what is being provided. Many facility developments do not service entry level participants.

- SBA has a commitment to grow “Hubs” The Hubs include creating a connection between the Local Government Authority, local community organisations and young people for the ongoing management and use of facilities.
- SBA would welcome the opportunity to establish a working relationship with Baw Baw Shire Council and have them partner in the future with a Skateboarding Australia Hub. There is a small amount of funding available from Skateboarding Australia to support this.

11.4 Victorian Skateboarding Association

- The Victorian Skateboarding Association Inc. (VSA) is recognised by the Victorian State Government as the Peak Body for Skateboarding in Victoria however is not affiliated with Skateboarding Australia.
- VSA’s aim is to foster, encourage and promote the sport of skateboarding throughout Victoria. The VSA achieves this by partnering with education providers, government, businesses and other organisations to provide opportunities for people to participate in skateboarding.
- The VSA develops resources, networks and policies that assist partners to provide skate-related programs and facilities. The VSA provides its members with industry knowledge and information about upcoming events and programs.
- Skateboarding Victoria’s current focus is on how skate/BMX facilities are managed and programmed in order to make them a more inclusive community facility. It should be noted that some of the staff of Skate Victoria have a direct connection with the YMCA.
- In the past many skate/BMX facilities have been developed with a mentality of “build it and leave it.” This approach in some instances has led to undesirable behaviour and facilities that have not been adequately maintained. Some councils are still building facilities and negating their duty to look after patrons.
- Patron management is deficient in many facilities across the state. This is the area that Skate Boarding Victoria would like to see improved.
- Patron management and programs enhance the experience for all users and assist in making spaces more inclusive.
- There is a need to provide ways to introduce participants to the sport in a safe manner and provide a pathway as their skill level increases. There is a need to look at ways to attract the non “hard core” skater/BMX rider to these facilities.
- One option could be to create clubs around skate facilities to encourage ownership and custodianship of the facilities in the same way as other sporting clubs do.
- Through their current management of a number of facilities including rural facilities, the YMCA estimate rural skate/BMX facilities have 70,000-100,000 visits per year.

- During the 2011 South Eastern League Series of which Warragul was a part there were 2,855 people who attended as a competitor, spectator or volunteer. The series saw 397 skateboarders and 198 BMX riders compete throughout the 13 SEL events. At the Warragul event, there were 21 competitors in Skate and 13 in BMX.
- Skate Victoria and the YMCA are interested in having further discussions with Baw Baw Shire to assist Council in improving the experience for users of the Skate/BMX facilities.

11.5 BMX

- BMX is an emerging sport. There are approximately 10,000 riders in Australia. Queensland is the strongest state followed by WA. In 2008 it was accepted into the Olympics as one of cycling's new disciplines. Australia is a strong BMX nation with its best females rated 1st, 4th and 5th in the world and best males rated 2nd, 4th and 15th. It will be sending a team of 3 males and 3 females to the 2012 London Olympic Games.
- Cycling Victoria manages the sport on behalf of the association. In Victoria there are 17 clubs and around 900 registered members. The sport estimates it has around 2000 participants with approximately half residing in the South East corridor. Currently BMX is managed by Cycling Victoria through grants from VicHealth and Sport and Recreation Victoria which are funding an administrative position for 3 years. The sport does not have a home base.
- There is only one internationally recognised track in Victoria and that is in Shepparton. National events are held in Victoria every two years. To date they have been held in Frankston, Shepparton or Geelong. They are staged over 5 days and can attract up to 1000 competitors. It is estimated that "2.9" supporters accompany each competitor.
- The growth in the sport peaked two years ago but has been limited by club structures and governance. It is participating with the Active After School Community program and is currently preparing a major strategic plan.

11.6 Latrobe City Council

- In 2006 Latrobe City Council prepared a Skate and BMX Plan for the future provision of skate facilities within Latrobe City Council.
- Council undertakes monthly inspections of facilities and undertakes ongoing maintenance. Signage is provided at all facilities. No events, programming or supervision is provided by Council.
- Currently there are local level skate parks provided at the following locations.
    - Moe
    - Morwell
    - Traralgon
    - Churchill

- Boolarra
- Toongabbie

- Yallourn North and Glengarry have small rural facilities.
- The existing Morwell facility is currently located on church land. In 2012/2013 this facility will be relocated to Commercial Road, Morwell which will position it within the city centre and make it accessible by train. The estimated cost of the new facility is $350,000.
- Currently BMX tracks are provided at the following locations.
  - Newborough
  - Yallourn North
  - Tyers
  - Traralgon
  - Glengarry
  - Morwell
  - Churchill

11.7 Cardinia Shire Council

- Cardinia's Skate Strategy was undertaken in 2002 and is now out of date. Council undertakes minimal maintenance and there is no programming or supervision provided by Council.
- Skate/BMX facilities are provided at the following locations:
  - Garfield
  - Pakenham
  - Cockatoo
  - Gembrook
  - Kooweerup
  - Lang Lang
- Currently BMX tracks are provided at the following locations:
  - Bunyip
  - Emerald
  - Nar Nar Goon
  - Upper Beaconsfield
  - Cockatoo
- All of the facilities are classified as local with the exception of Pakenham which is a regional facility

- A new facility is planned for Beaconsfield in 2014 and in Emerald when a suitable site can be found.
- A skate facility is planned for Officer however this is 8-10 years away.

11.8 South Gippsland Shire

- All of the South Gippsland Shire skate facilities were built approximately 20 years ago and have had no maintenance done on them since construction. Council do not provide events, programming or supervision.
- All facilities are classified as local facilities and are located as follows:
    - Nyora
    - Loch
    - Leongatha
    - Mirboo North
    - Foster
    - Toora
    - Venus Bay
- Concept plans are being developed to extend Leongatha Skate Bowl in 2012/2013.

12 Strategic direction

Based on a review of the existing facilities and the community consultation process the following provides a summary of key issues and recommended strategic direction for the provision of skate and BMX facilities in the Shire of Baw Baw over the next 5 to 10 year period.

The key directions have been summarised under the headings of:

- Facility Provision and Maintenance
- Sports Development and Promotion
- Community Impact

12.1 Facility provision and maintenance

One of Council's key roles is to provide recreation and sporting opportunities that service the needs of the community and contribute to resident's participation in active and healthy lifestyles. Skate and BMX parks are now recognised as major venues for recreational opportunities for young people. Council has already made a strong commitment to developing skate and BMX parks for residents through the provision of a number of quality facilities throughout the Shire. These facilities currently cater for advanced and intermediate requirements across the Shire.

The consultation process undertaken as part of this strategy identified the following priorities:

- Upgrade and extend the existing facilities and provide a diverse range of experiences and opportunities including the development of facility types not currently available within the Shire.
- Provide increased maintenance at existing facilities.
- Provide increased opportunities to access facilities in townships not currently serviced by a facility.
- Increased access to sites for beginner level participants.

The development of this strategy has further identified the opportunity to combine skate park facilities with playgrounds and other facilities to form youth precincts. These precincts provide opportunities for a cross range of age groups to recreate in the same area. Council should seek to develop these areas in collaboration with young people, providing equipment that combines activities such as basketball rings, skate/BMX elements and social areas. An example of this in Baw Baw is the Warragul skate park which is linked to public open space, trails, a playground, sporting reserves and the Warragul Leisure Centre.

Given the geographical distance between townships in Baw Baw it is often difficult for young people to access facilities without relying on a parent/adult to transport them to the facility. There is an opportunity to develop some smaller scale "incidental" skate facilities in smaller communities. The future development of these satellite sites seeks to provide greater opportunities for skate participants at a localised level and at a more beginner intermediate level.

Based on the hierarchy of facilities identified in section 5.2 of this report it is recommended that the skate facilities strategy be based on the following facility hierarchy and the facilities be developed /redeveloped according to the facility classification.

12.1.1 Skate Parks

Regional

- Warragul Skate Park

District

- Drouin Skate Park
- Neerim South Skate Park
- Trafalgar Skate Park.

Local

To provide increased access to smaller communities, it is recommended that a local/incidental skate facility be developed in Yarragon, and Erica or Rawson. These facilities can be developed on disused outdoor court spaces such as netball or tennis courts. In line with the definition of local facilities this might include elements such as small scale street park(ledges, blocks, angle banks) or transition elements (ramps). The combination of facility components would be determined through consultation with young people in the local area.

The site selection criteria detailed in **Section 5** should be used as part of the community engagement process to determine the most appropriate sites for the development of local facilities.

12.1.2 BMX Facilities

Regional

- Warragul BMX

It should be noted that the track is a classified as regional track, but does not comply with UCI guidelines (length) due to site constraints

District

- Nil

Local

- Rawson BMX
- Trafalgar BMX

12.2 Maintenance

Skate facilities receive high impact use on a regular basis. As a result they are prone to damage, vandalism, graffiti and litter. In addition the majority of facilities are not covered and as a result are susceptible to the weather elements. This requires

diligent maintenance regimes to ensure surfaces are clean and free of obstructions to mitigate against potential risk to users.

Councils Asset Maintenance area is currently responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the skate and BMX facilities and expressed concern about the staffing resources required to maintain the facilities to the required levels. A detailed and ongoing Maintenance program is required to ensure these facilities meet the necessary safety requirements.

The sight of graffiti and vandalism at public facilities has significant issues in relation to the appearance of the facility and pride and ownership by users and the wider community. In addition, graffiti and vandalism appears to increase when not treated or removed for a period of time. While there is no clear solution to this ongoing problem, experience would show that increased and ongoing consultation is needed between Council and participants to address the problem. It is important that users feel a strong sense of pride and ownership for the site and its appearance to help to combat the problems associated with graffiti and vandalism. One option could be to create clubs around skate facilities to encourage ownership and custodianship of the facilities in the same way as other sporting clubs do.

12.3 Recommended strategies

The table on the following page details the recommended strategies for each of the existing and proposed skate and BMX facilities in the Shire. The strategies identify the cost and priorities under the following headings:

- **Immediate** – works that require immediate attention due to possible safety or functional issues. They should be prioritised with Councils works team to ensure they are actioned as soon as possible. They are generally not a significant cost and so should not be impacted by funding delays. (0-3 months as a guide)
- **High** – works that require focus with regard to both planning and implementation. Funding may need to be set aside for them which may slow the process, but upon receipt of funds, the works should be implemented. (6-12 months as a guide)
- **Medium** – works that generally are focused on improving or extending the existing facilities to ensure that they meet growing demand. They should be the priority of major funding and once this is secured should be implemented accordingly. (1-4 years as a guide)
- **Low** – works that are more long term in consideration and only once the other more pressing actions are taken. This includes additional smaller facilities and extensions to parks (4 years+ as a guide)

Appendix A details the recommended works for each site.

Table 7 - Baw Baw Skate Park Strategy Implementation Plan – Drouin Skate Park

Strategy outcome	Existing facilities	Cost for immediate action	Cost for high priority	Cost for medium priority	Cost for low priority
1.1	Prepare and adopt standard maintenance plan for the park	$5,000			
1.2	Ensure regular maintenance is undertaken to ensure safe riding surface according to maintenance plan	Ongoing			
1.3	Repair cracks and spalling throughout park		$30,000		
1.4	Repair drain and look at options for improving drainage issues with partial regrading where possible		$10,000		
1.5	Reconfigure end of the street section to improve functionality			$50,000	
1.6	Install appropriate safety/conditions of use signage	$7,500			
1.7	Install improved amenity (shade, seating, paths, CCTV and youth art)			$30,000	
1.8	Extend the park with more significant street/plaza section				$150,000
Sub-total costs		**$12,500**	**$40,000**	**$80,000**	**$150,000**

Total for all Drouin Skate Park works	**$282,500**

Table 8 - Baw Baw Skate Park Strategy Implementation Plan – Warragul BMX Track

Strategy outcome	Existing facilities	Cost for immediate action	Cost for high priority	Cost for medium priority	Cost for low priority
2.1	Adopt standard maintenance plan for the park	$5,000			
2.2	Ensure regular maintenance is undertaken to ensure safe riding surface according to maintenance plan	Ongoing			
2.3	Repair existing degraded areas due to run off		$10,000		
2.4	Regrade and shape existing swales to improve surface drainage collection and removal		$5,000		
2.5	Install appropriate access steps/ramp at back of starting ramp to improve access/egress and reduce maintenance concerns			$20,000	
2.6	Regrade and repair track and maintain grass verges where possible on an ongoing basis in line with maintenance plan	Ongoing			
2.7	Consider additional seats and amenity to improve viewing and event spectator opportunities				$40,000
Sub-total costs		**$5,000**	**$15,000**	**$20,000**	**$40,000**

Total for all Warragul BMX Track works	**$80,000**

Table 9 - Baw Baw Skate Park Strategy Implementation Plan – Warragul Skate Park

Strategy outcome	Existing facilities	Cost for immediate action	Cost for high priority	Cost for medium priority	Cost for low priority
3.1	Adopt standard maintenance plan for the park	$5,000			
3.2	Ensure regular maintenance is undertaken to ensure safe riding surface according to maintenance plan	Ongoing			
3.3	Repair cracks and spalling throughout park		$10,000		
3.4	Repair drainage issues with partial regrading where possible		$5,000		
3.5	Reconfigure street section interface with bowl area to improve functionality			$100,000	
3.6	Develop new street plaza extension to improve function and meet current and future growing demand			$200,000	
3.7	Install new flat rail/minor street components			$40,000	
3.8	Install appropriate safety/conditions of use signage	$7,500			
3.9	Install improved amenity (evergreen shade trees, seating, access paths, bins, batter retention system)			$40,000	
Sub-total costs		**$12,500**	**$15,000**	**$380,000**	**$0**
Total for all Warragul Skate Park works		**$407,500**			

Table 10 - Baw Baw Skate Park Strategy Implementation Plan – Trafalgar Skate Park

Strategy outcome	Existing facilities	Cost for immediate action	Cost for high priority	Cost for medium priority	Cost for low priority
4.1	Adopt standard maintenance plan for the park	$5,000			
4.2	Ensure regular maintenance is undertaken to ensure safe riding surface according to maintenance plan	Ongoing			
4.3	Repair cracks and spalling throughout park		$30,000		
4.4	Repair drainage issues with partial regrading where possible		$10,000		
4.5	Reconfigure/remove funbox at northern edge of park				$30,000
4.6	Refine appropriate safety/conditions of use signage	$3,500			
4.7	Install improved amenity (shade, seating, access paths, batter retention system, bins)			$50,000	
4.8	Reconfigure/install new wall along western edge of the park	$35,000			
4.9	Look at extending park to consider new street plaza extension and jump box flyouts to further support event activities.				$150,000
Sub-total costs		**$43,500**	**$40,000**	**$50,000**	**$180,000**
Total for all Trafalgar Skate Park works		**$313,500**			

Table 11 - Baw Baw Skate Park Strategy Implementation Plan – Trafalgar Informal BMX

Strategy outcome	Existing facilities	Cost for immediate action	Cost for high priority	Cost for medium priority	Cost for low priority
5.1	Adopt standard maintenance plan for the park	$5,000			
5.2	Ensure regular maintenance is undertaken to ensure safe riding surface according to maintenance plan	Ongoing			
5.3	Install appropriate safety/conditions of use signage	$3,500			
5.4	Undertake design for facility with consultation from young people to ensure safety and better use of site		$8,000		
5.5	Following design, make appropriate changes to track, possibly with use of in-kind assistance.			$15,000	
5.6	Install improved amenity (shade, seating, access paths as applicable)				$15,000
Sub-total costs		**$8,500**	**$8,000**	**$15,000**	**$15,000**

Total for all Trafalgar Information BMX works	**$46,500**

Table 12 - Baw Baw Skate Park Strategy Implementation Plan – Rawson BMX Park

Strategy outcome	Existing facilities	Cost for immediate action	Cost for high priority	Cost for medium priority	Cost for low priority
6.1	Adopt standard maintenance plan for the park	$5,000			
6.2	Ensure regular maintenance is undertaken to ensure safe riding surface according to maintenance plan	Ongoing			
6.3	Consider reconfiguration of jumps to accommodate more advanced users. Detail of this to be determined during detailed design phase and consultation with young people.			$15,000	
6.4	Install improved amenity (shade, seating, access paths as applicable)				$15,000
Sub-total costs		**$5,000**	**$0**	**$15,000**	**$15,000**

Total for all Rawson BMX Park works	**$35,000**

Table 13 - Baw Baw Skate Park Strategy Implementation Plan – Neerim South Skate Park

Strategy outcome	Cost for immediate action	Cost for high priority	Cost for medium priority	Cost for low priority
7.1 Adopt standard maintenance plan for the park	$5,000			
7.3 Ensure regular maintenance is undertaken to ensure safe riding surface according to maintenance plan	Ongoing			
7.4 Repair cracks and spalling throughout park		$15,000		
7.5 Replace damaged concrete coping with new more appropriate skate park concrete coping to whole of bowl		$40,000		
7.6 Reconfigure parts of street section to improve functionality				$100,000
7.7 Install appropriate safety/conditions of use signage	$7,500			
7.8 Install improved seating, youth art			$30,000	
Sub-total costs	**$12,500**	**$55,000**	**$30,000**	**$100,000**

Total for all Neerim South Skate Park works	**$197,500**

Table 14 - Baw Baw Skate Park Strategy Implementation Plan – Proposed Additional Skate Park Facilities and Planning

Strategy outcome	Cost for immediate action	Cost for high priority	Cost for medium priority	Cost for low priority
Confirm location and suitability for localised skate facility for Erica.		$5,000		
Undertake design for localised skate facility for Erica.			$8,000	
Construct new skate facility for Erica.			$80,000	
confirm location and suitability for localised skate facility for Yarragon			$5,000	
undertake design for localised skate facility for Yarragon				$8,000
Construct new skate facility for Yarragon				$80,000
Sub-total costs	**$0**	**$5,000**	**$93,000**	**$88,000**

Total for all Proposed Additional Skate Park Facilities and Planning works	**$186,000**

Table 15 - Baw Baw Skate Park Strategy Implementation Plan – All Sites Totals

Strategy outcome	Cost for immediate action	Cost for high priority	Cost for medium priority	Cost for low priority
Drouin Skate Park	$12,500	$40,000	$80,000	$150,000
Warragul BMX Track	$5,000	$15,000	$20,000	$40,000
Warragul Skate Park	$12,500	$15,000	$380,000	$0
Trafalgar Skate Park	$43,000	$40,000	$50,000	$180,000
Trafalgar Informal BMX	$8,500	$8,000	$15,000	$15,000
Rawson BMX Park	$5,000	$0	$15,000	$15,000
Neerim South Skate Park	$12,500	$55,000	$30,000	$100,000
Proposed Additional Skate Park Facilities and Planning	$0	$5,000	$93,000	$88,000
Sub-total costs	**$99,500**	**$178,000**	**$713,000**	**$558,000**

12.4 Sports Development and Promotion

Participation in skate and BMX activities provides a range of benefits through participation in an active and healthy lifestyle with peers. Changing trends in the way people participate in leisure activities – increased demand for low cost, unstructured activities - has resulted in an increased popularity in sports like skate and BMX, which do not in the main, require specific time commitments. Council can continue to support, encourage and facilitate participation in skate and BMX activities as a means of increasing the health and well-being of young people.

Given the unstructured, non-club based nature of skate and BMX activities promotion of these activities can be difficult. Some of the key opportunities recommended to further support and promote the sport include:

- Building on the success of the South Eastern League Series and provide additional competitions and demonstrations.
- Provision of "skill development" coaching activities either after school or during school holidays for a range of ages and abilities. Could focus on a particular skill e.g.: learn how to drop in to the bowl. Could include peer to peer mentoring.
- Development of promotional literature advising people of facility locations and levels.
- Development of local Skate/ BMX groups to work in consultation with Council in the implementation of this strategy; the upkeep, upgrade and redevelopment of the facilities and the ongoing promotion of the sport and facilities.

Although the sport has grown in popularity it is still dominated by males. There are opportunities for Council to encourage greater participation by females by offering development programs directly aimed at females. Some of these programs could include:

- Female only coaching sessions during quiet off peak times
- Access to lower level sites to gain skill and confidence

A number of metropolitan Councils have identified the important role skate and BMX facilities play as a recreational outlet for young people. As a result they have contracted the management of the facilities to a third party i.e. YMCA with the necessary skills in working with young people and programming the facilities to meet the identified needs of this target group. This process involves a staff person being on site which has the advantage of ensuring a fun and safe environment for all age groups and abilities. Given the popularity of the Warragul Skate Park and its location across from the Warragul Leisure Centre (currently managed by the YMCA) there may be an opportunity to extend their contract to include a sports development role at the skate park.

12.5 Community Impact

The development of skate facilities in built up areas has proven to be difficult for many Councils. While the community generally supports the development of skate and BMX facilities, many residents object to having facilities developed in their area

due to the potential “anti-social behaviour” that may result. Council therefore needs to manage the process and provide a balanced approach to the development or redevelopment of facilities to ensure the needs of young people are being adequately met.

Ongoing community development measures are required to manage the impact on the surrounding community and allow participants to continue to enjoy the sport/activity.

Some of the strategies Council may wish to consider include:

- **Increased Marketing/Promotion:** There is a need to promote skating and BMX as a mainstream activity with a positive image with the community to ensure the activities are seen as a legitimate and beneficial form of recreation or sport for young people. Skate and BMX activities could further be promoted through schools, coaching clinics and the events held at the facilities.
- **Education:** There is a need for:
    - Ongoing education of participants to ensure their activities do not impact other people i.e.: skating in the streets.
    - Increasing the presence of youth workers at facility sites and schools and educating young people on the responsible use of public spaces and access and egress from the Parks could be implemented.
    - Increase education about the safe and lawful way to access and use a skate and BMX facility is required through park and school based programs, coaching clinics, promotional material and signage.

Appendix A: Recommended development plans

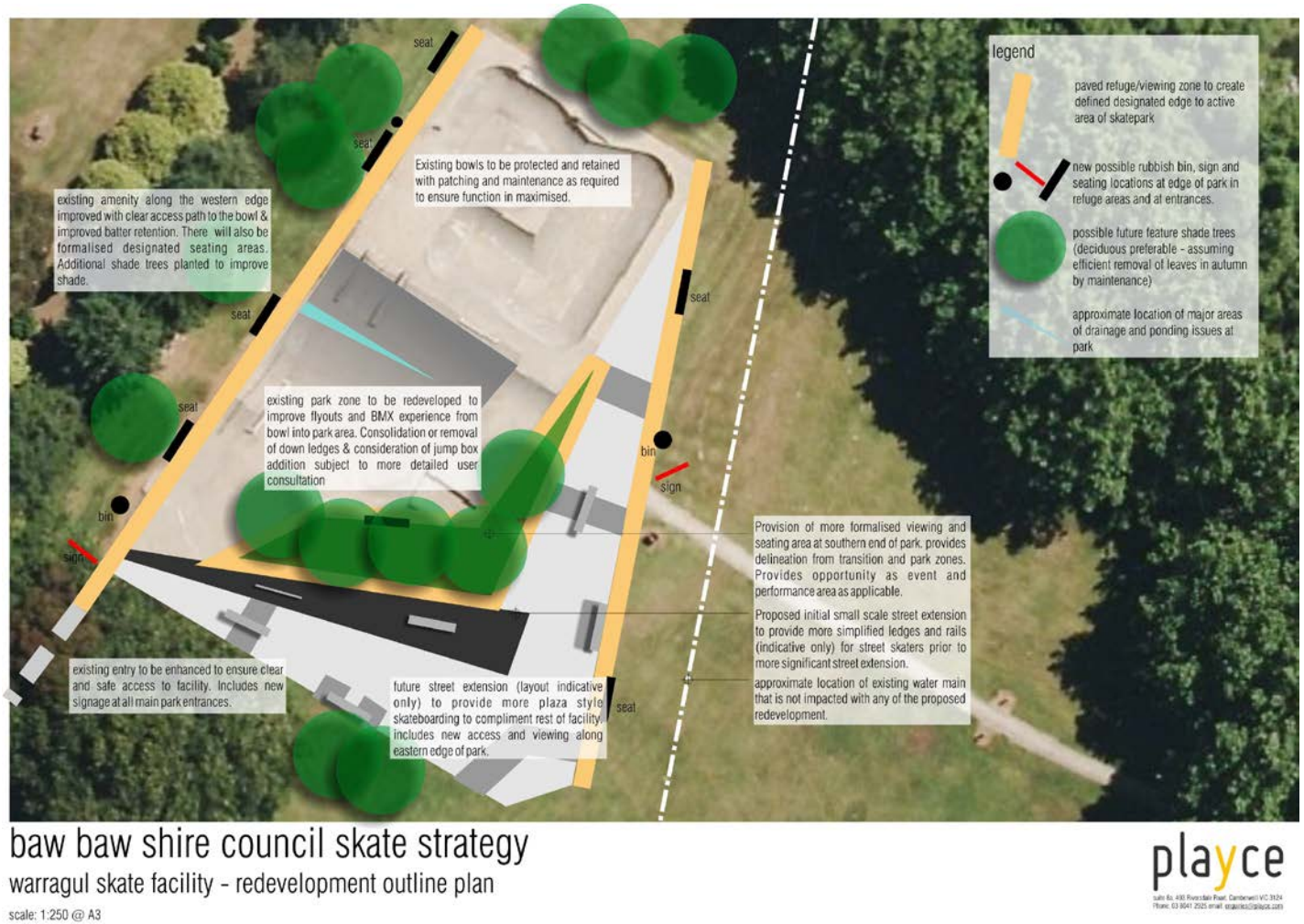

Figure 31 Warragul Skate Park

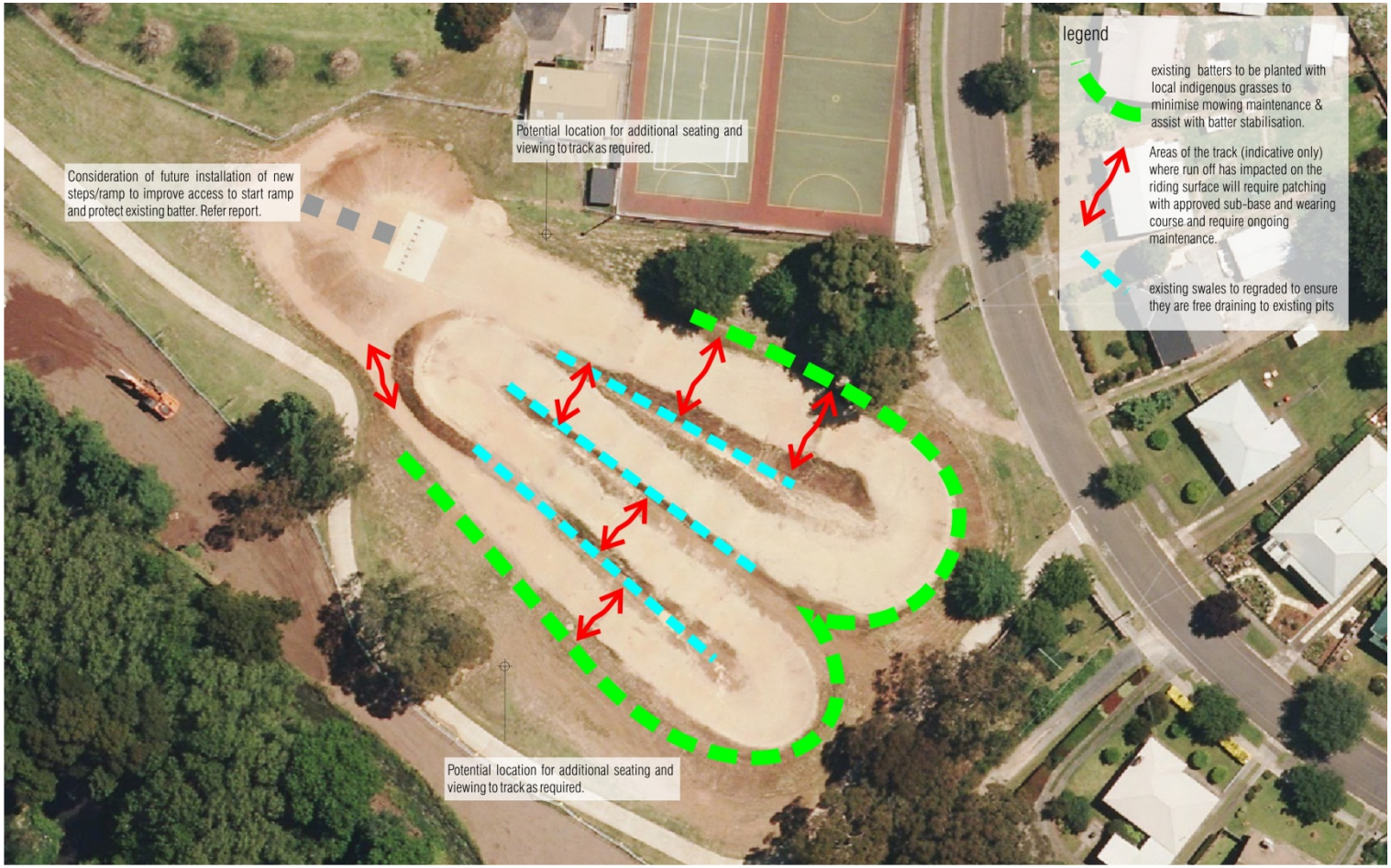

Figure 32 Warragul BMX Facility

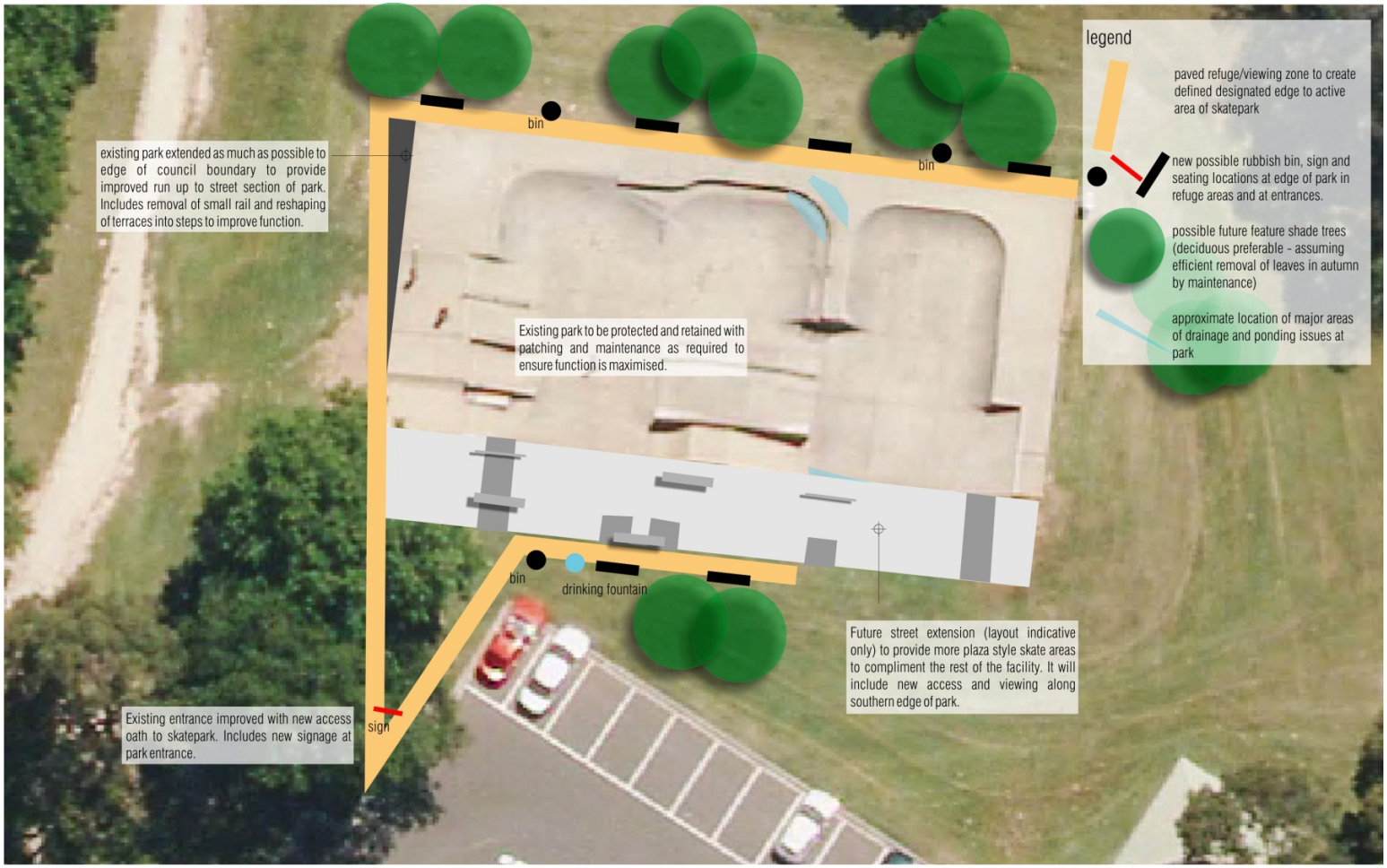

Figure 33 Drouin Skate Facility

Figure 34 Neerim South Skate Facility

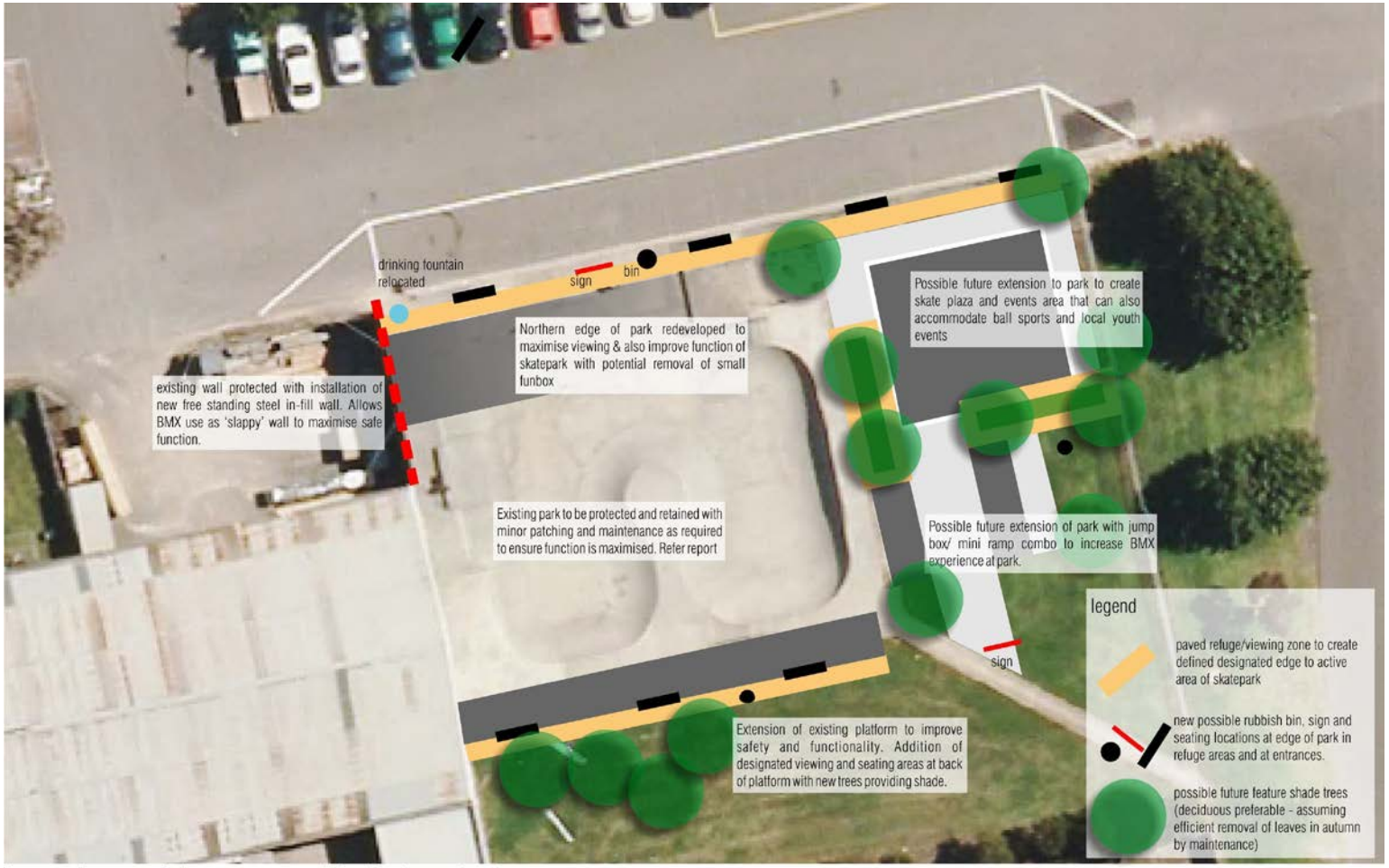

Figure 35 Trafalgar Skate Facility