



# Stromlo Forest Park

Master Planning Report

ACT Government



This document outlines the planning framework for Stromlo Forest Park which is an informed guide for consideration and reference. It does not commit this government, or any future government, to provide partial or full funding for any of the identified projects within any specific time-frame. Generally, the progression of any of the identified projects will be subject to future detailed design processes including appropriate stakeholder consultation.





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*A world class recreational sporting facility for our community...*

Following the devastating bushfires of 2003, Stromlo Forest Park rose from the ashes to become a premier adventure recreational destination for Canberra.

The Park is now a world-class sporting facility available to both recreational and professional users. It currently features designated trails for bike riders, runners, walkers and equestrians, for both competitive and recreational use.

The Park attracts high profile events such as the World Mountain Bike and Trial Championships that were held in 2009. They were a pivotal milestone for the popularity of the Park featuring 45,000 competitors and spectators. Since this event, usage and awareness of the Park has grown significantly with 167,000 visitors in 2013. This is an excellent result but also means that existing facilities are under pressure to meet demand.

This is an exciting opportunity to determine the next stage of development for the Park. The future looks bright with demand continuing to grow from the local, national and international community. The site has significant capacity to expand and further improve the quality, range and type of facilities to enhance the visitors' overall experience.

This Master Plan Update is a far reaching vision that builds on the previous plan from 2010 and will facilitate the Park's evolution into a vibrant, specialist centre for recreational and professional sports in Canberra.

Realising the vision will mean building on the uniqueness of the site, expanding the Park's capacity for commercial viability and hospitality activities, and facilitating new sporting activities that will activate the precinct to showcase Canberra to the world. Key elements of this Master Plan update include:





# Executive Summary

## **New playing fields**

The neighbouring Molonglo district is growing with projections to house 60,000 people in the next 30 years. Located in the south east corner of the Park, the Molonglo District Playing Fields will service this community and are expected to attract in excess of 300,000 visitors every year. The Fields will host major events as well as regular sporting fixtures.

## **An arena for athletes & spectators**

Stromlo Enclosed Oval will provide a location suitable for hosting professional local and elite sporting events. It takes advantage of the natural sloping terrain of the Park to provide an extensive grassed amphitheatre suitable for spectator seating.

## **'The Village'**

This is the living heart of the Park and will include a range of exciting developments combined with strong commercial opportunity. A dedicated amphitheatre 'finish bowl' will enable spectators to view riders descending to the finish line. This area has potential to host live performances and extreme sports events. There are commercial opportunities in the Village consistent with the Park such as sporting goods stores, cafes and health/wellbeing services. A vertical transport facility based at the Village (a Gondola) will transport visitors to the summit of Mount Stromlo and will enable access to ANU Mount Stromlo Observatory educational programs, as well as downhill biking and other gravity sports such as zip lines and luge.

## **Tourist accommodation**

There is a need in Canberra for student and tourist accommodation. Tourist accommodation facilities at the Park will provide school and sporting groups with a centrally located 3.5 star facility, and will be located both on the northern and southern precincts of the site.

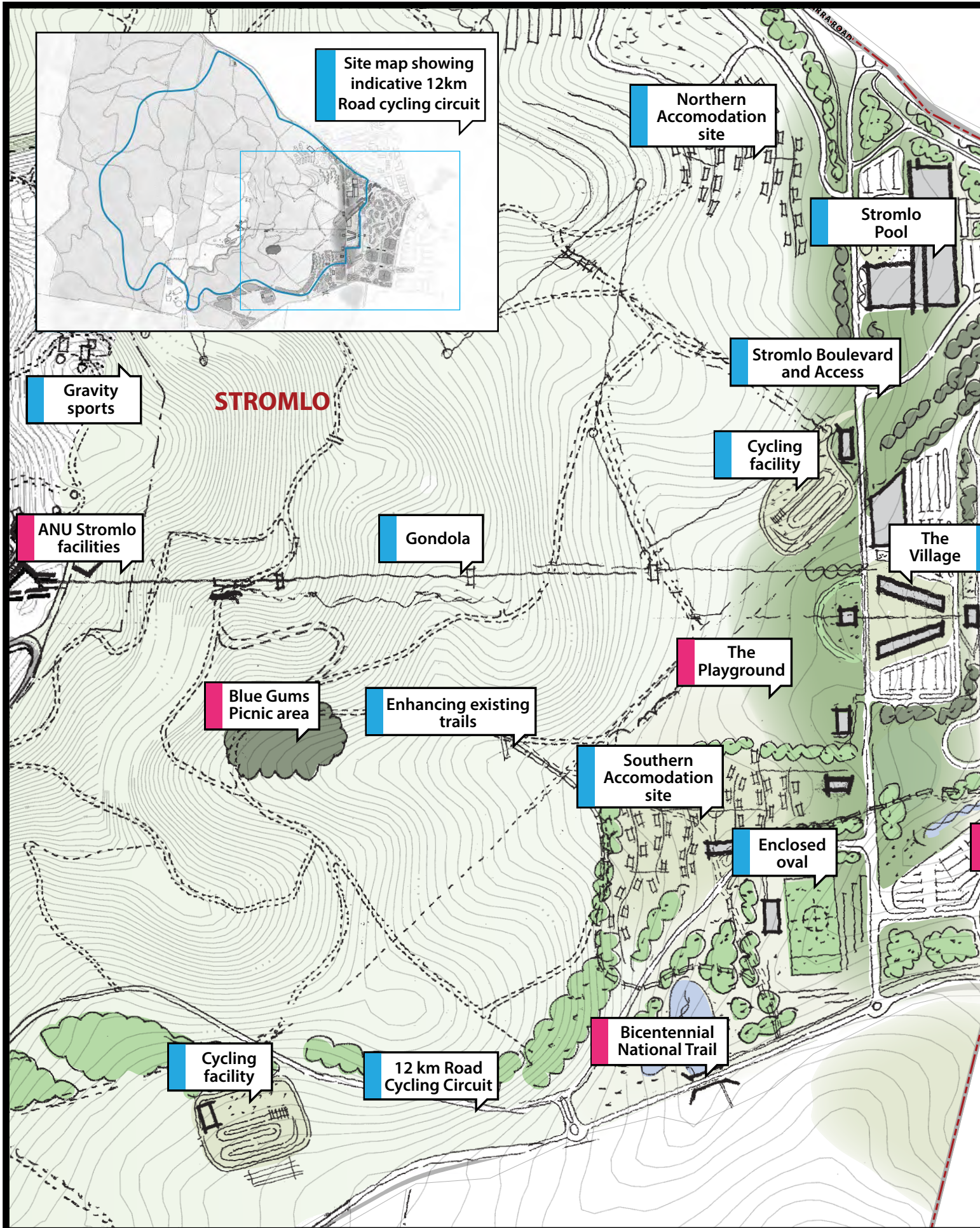
## **Stromlo Pool**

The Park will integrate with the proposed Stromlo Pool, which sits within to the Park. This will be located close to the Park entry to ensure the facilities complement each other.

This update of the Master Plan sets out in detail the interactions of the various Park facilities and offers practical solutions to allow the growth of the Park to be undertaken over time whilst meeting increased demand from visitors.









# MASTER PLAN

Masterplan version provided by ACT Government



Existing

Potential Future development







*One of Canberra's premier recreation destinations in little over seven years...*

The Park has grown to be one of Canberra's premier adventure sporting destinations since its inception just a little over seven years ago. In the past year the Park attracted over 167,000 visitors and is experiencing on average a 15% annual growth in visitor numbers. The Park has been so popular that, at times, the facilities have struggled to cope.

In 2009 the ACT Government undertook a Master Planning process for the Park. The master plan process established a framework and key elements for a clear vision for the Park, as well as aspirations for its future.

Sporting bodies, the wider community, local interest groups and other stakeholders all contributed to creating the long term outlook for the Park. The resultant Master Plan released in 2010 responded to the opportunities and the challenges offered by the site. In 2014 the ACT Government reconfirmed its commitment to the Park by commencing a review and update of the 2010 Master Plan.

The purpose of this Master Plan Update is to provide a strategy to enable the existing facility to organically grow over time into a unique sporting destination unrivaled in Australia.

The scope of the Master Plan Update includes:

- Updating the Master Plan to include new opportunities that have arisen since 2010, including the surrounding residential development of Molonglo, and
- Detailed infrastructure Master Plans including traffic access and circulation, utilities and services.

The implementation of the Park's Master Plan will deliver a diverse sporting precinct like no other in the country. The proposed future development opportunities contained within the Master Plan Update represents the ACT Government's commitment to the strategic objectives of the Park. These include:

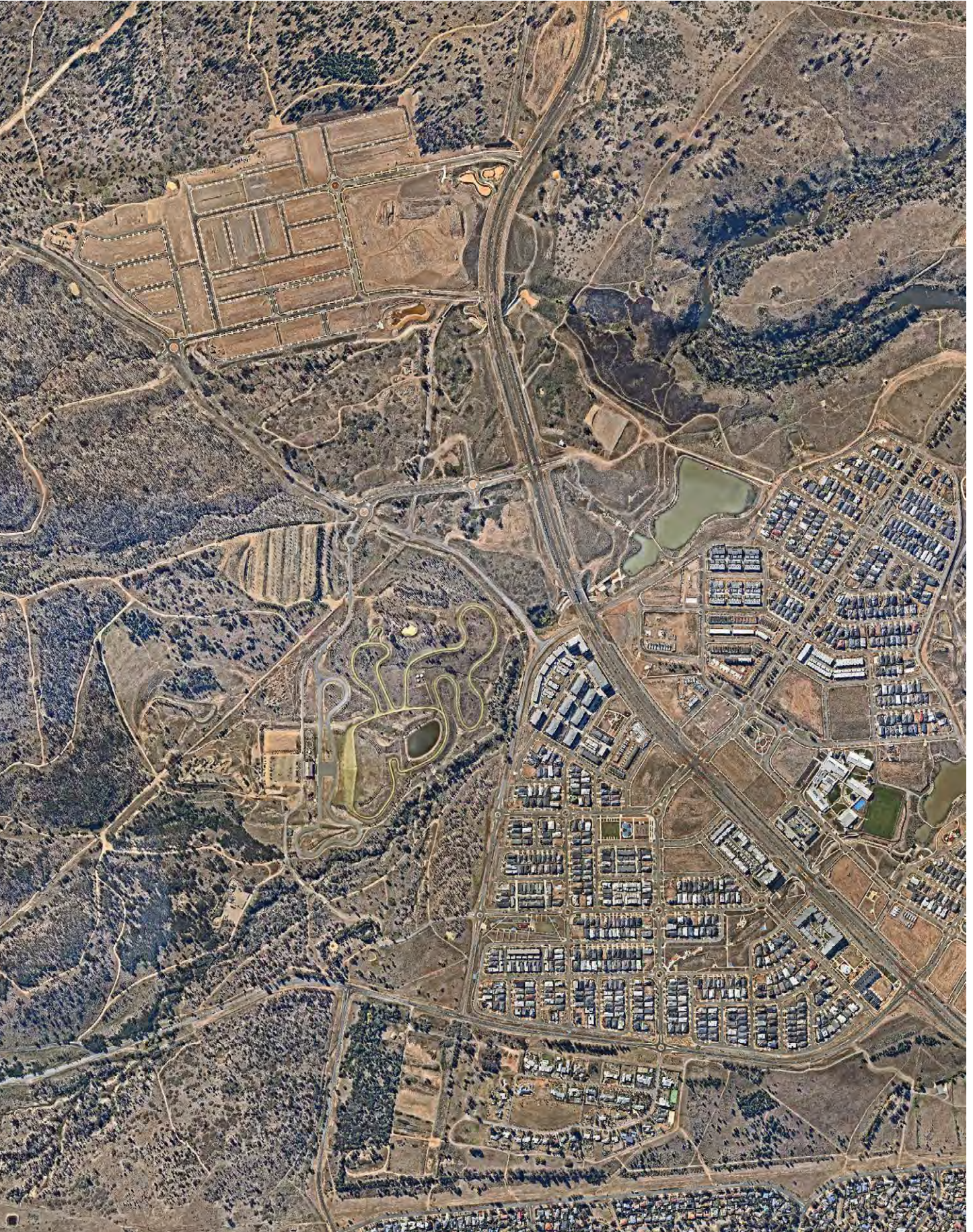
- The Park being Australia's Number 1 most visited and recognised adventure recreation park equivalent to Whistler Canada and Queenstown New Zealand
- Providing community facilities with a positive return to the community and the ACT Government by encouraging participation in active pursuits
- Continuing to attract and promote national and international sporting events being hosted at the Park – this will support the ACT in developing local talent, while also boosting tourism
- Providing opportunities for private sector businesses and organisations to invest in the Park
- Providing tourist accommodation which will relieve pressure on Canberra and district accommodation, especially during peak periods

The implementation of the Master Plan will significantly expand the range of sporting, community and tourist opportunities and reaffirms Stromlo as Canberra's premier adventure destination.











# Stromlo Boulevard and Access





## STROMLO BOULEVARD AND ACCESS

A key feature of the Master Plan update is the establishment of a prominent north and south access link.

The link acts as an organising element within the Park, providing a logical structure that is easily navigated for both users and infrastructure. The link is envisaged to be a mixed use Boulevard shared by cyclists, pedestrians and vehicles.

The Boulevard will link Cotter and Uriarra Roads providing access to the Village, commercial facilities, the Stromlo Enclosed Oval and tourist accommodation.

On the eastern side of the Boulevard next to the new residential suburbs of Wright, North Wright and Denman Prospect are the community facilities such as the Criterium Circuit, District Playing Fields, Aquatic Centre and Cross Country Running Trails. The western side of the Boulevard contains the Mountain Bike Trails, gravity sports, BMX Race Track, Equestrian Trails and Tourist Accommodation.

In addition to the north and south Boulevard, a number of new access links are proposed, including:

- A link between Dave McInnes Drive to the Boulevard
- The Bushfire Memorial Circle and the District Playing Fields Access which provide access to the District Playing Fields.
- An upgrade of the Cotter Road/ Mount Stromlo Road intersection and a Link Road from Mount Stromlo Road to the Boulevard. This link is envisaged to provide 24/7 unimpeded access to the Tourist Accommodation





# The Village





*A place to arrive to and depart from...*

## THE VILLAGE

The location of the Village is proposed to be the unsealed car park located to the west of the existing Event Pavilion which serves the daily needs of recreational users of the Park.

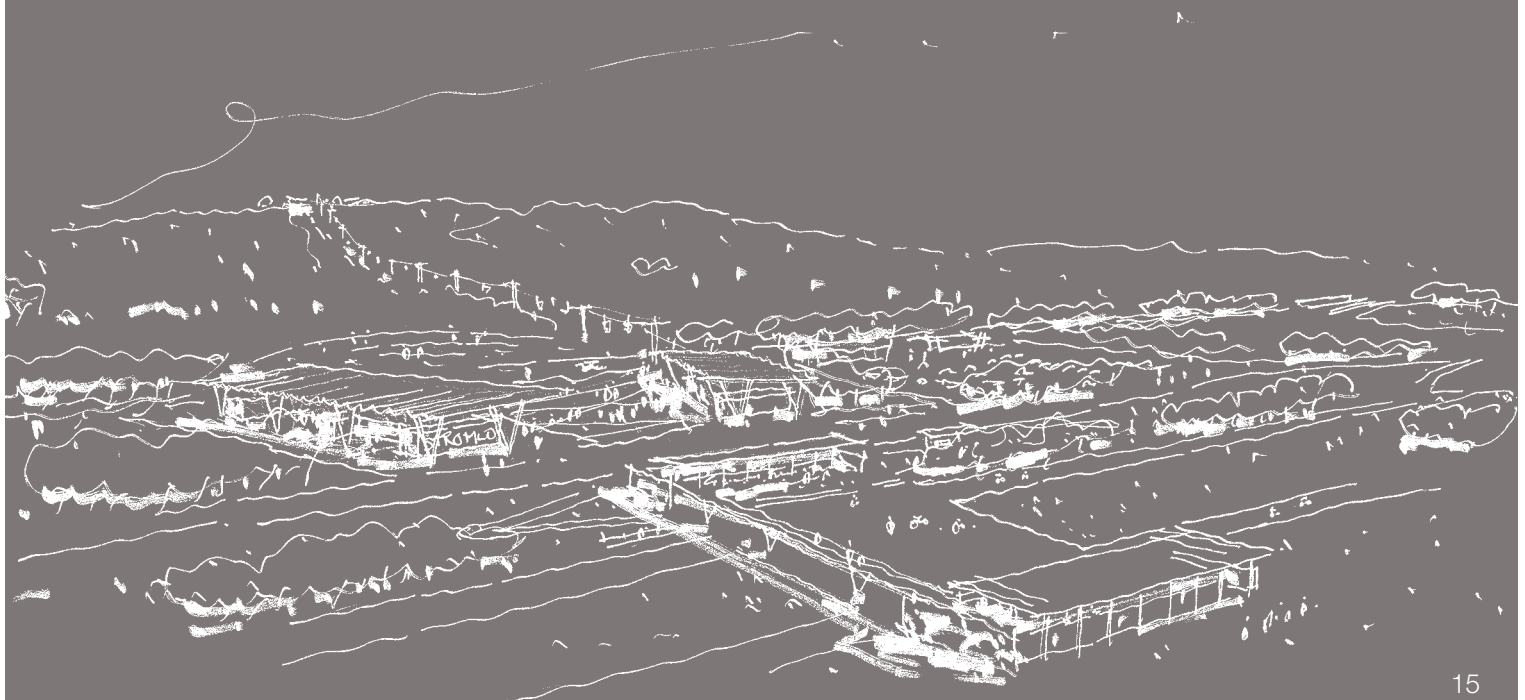
During major events, this area is transformed into a temporary event village, with tents and marquees brought in to accommodate the specific needs of each event. National and international events held at the Park, such as the Mountain Bike World Championships and the Australian Scott 24 hour mountain bike event provide evidence of the transformation of this area.

In times of adverse weather conditions, the temporary event village can be inhospitable to competitors, food and merchandising vendors and spectators.

The Master Plan proposes to address this with the formalisation of the Village. This will improve the space and facilities available for both the daily recreational users of the park and for major events. The Village will reduce the need to rely on temporary facilities and will provide an opportunity to secure multi-purpose buildings for a range of uses.

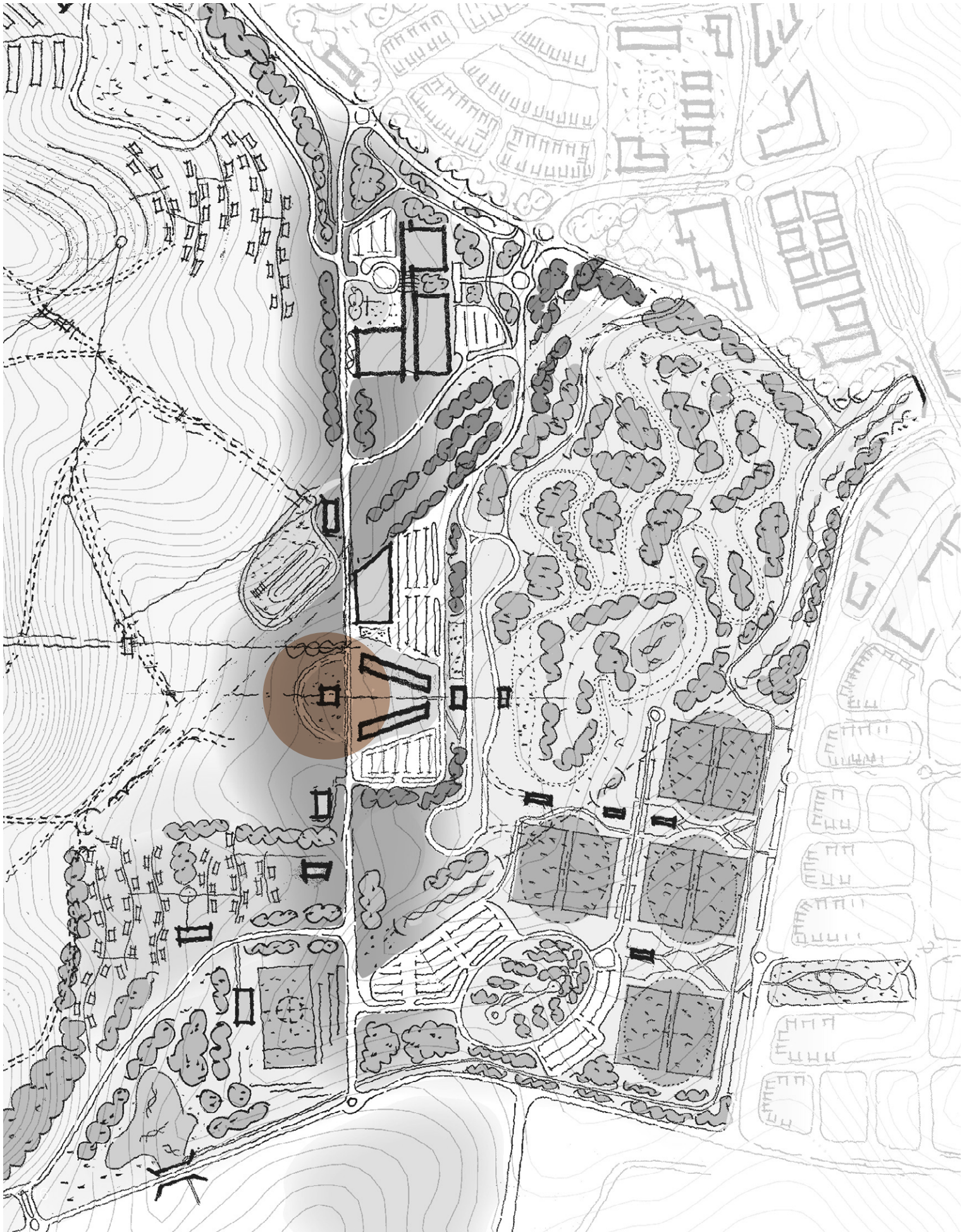
The Village includes the provision of:

- A formal all weather car parking area
- Opportunities for privately leased small scale retail outlets – compatible with the primary purpose of the Park, e.g. cafe, bike hire and repairs, sports store and other shops
- Multi-purpose amphitheatre with a 'Finish Bowl' that provides a spectator friendly finish line for events
- The preferred location for the base of a lifting structure (gondola)





# The Village - Ampitheatre + Finish Bowl





## **MULTI-PURPOSE AMPHITHEATRE**

The Master Plan has incorporated a central green area near the amphitheatre to serve as a congregation space at the base of Mount Stromlo. It is envisaged that this flexible space will enhance the Park's ability to host multi-sport events.

The amphitheatre is located centrally upon the western edge of the Boulevard and provides a flexible open green zone that could act as a space for adventure gravity activities occurring on the slopes of Mount Stromlo such as flying fox, luge etc.

The space is also an ideal location for temporary structures that may be associated with weekend events such as marketing pavilions, or tents associated with athletic support teams.

## **FINISH BOWL**

The amphitheatre has views to the downhill course and can also function as a spectator friendly Finish Bowl. Similar to a ski-jumping finish, spectators in the Finish Bowl will be able to view riders descending Mount Stromlo to the finish line.

This area would also be suitable for other uses, such as concerts, live performances and other extreme games and sports – when not in use for mainstream sporting and recreational events. The Finish Bowl will be flanked by the BMX Race Course and includes the cross country trail head.



# The Village - Commercial Opportunities



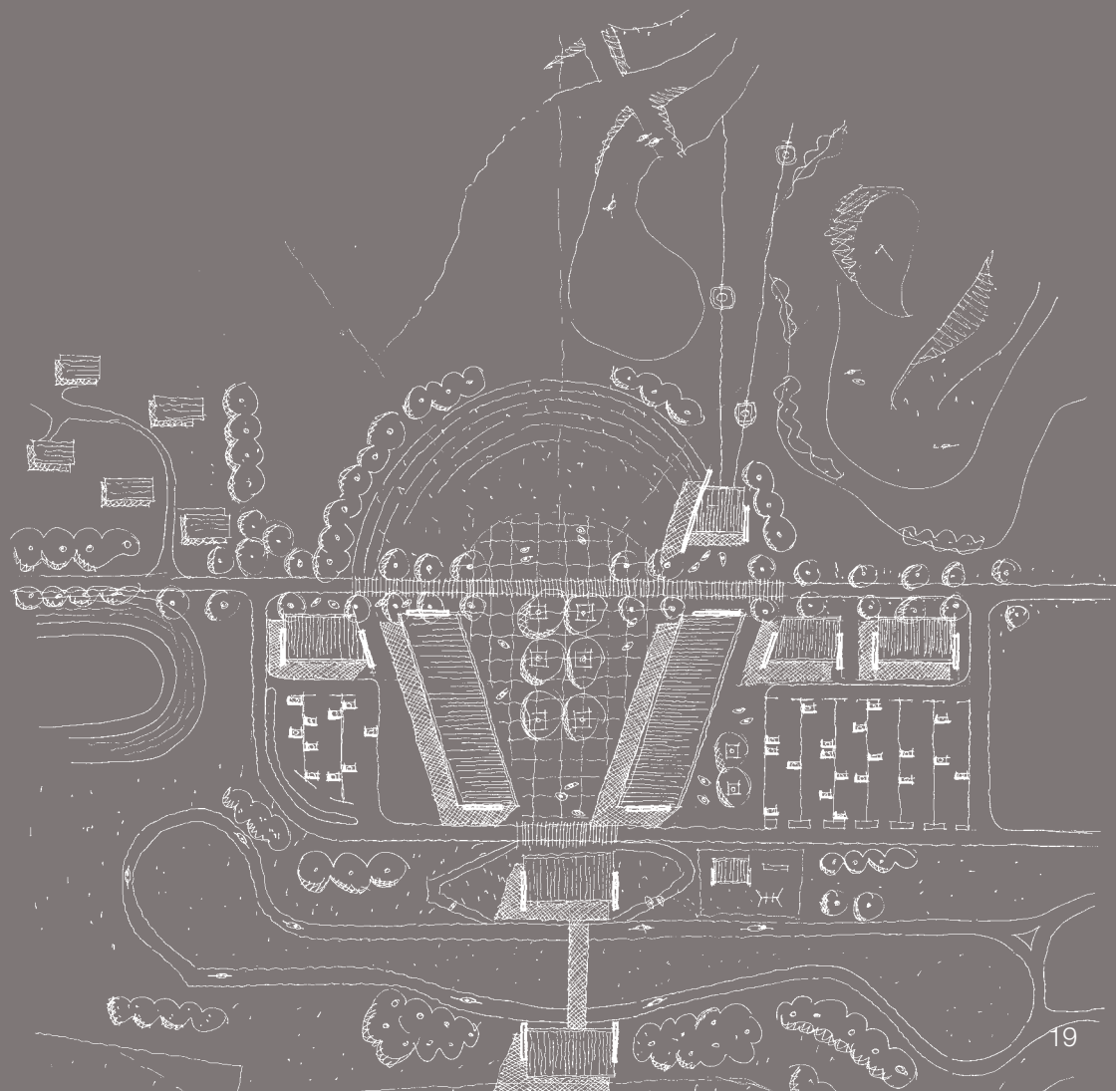


## COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

With increased patronage to the Park, there are commercial opportunities to provide services and products for users. A key component of the Village will be the provision of space for commercial enterprises which are consistent with the overarching strategy of the Park.

Commercial opportunities may include:

- Cafes
- Bike hire, repairs and sales
- Sporting goods stores
- Health and wellbeing services





# The Village - Gondola To Summit





## GONDOLA TO SUMMIT

Extensive analysis was undertaken during the 2010 Master Planning process to test the viability of a chairlift or gondola to the summit of Mount Stromlo.

In order for this to be successful, patrons will need to be drawn from a broader population base than the mountain bike community.

The type and style of vertical transportation will need to consider inclement weather, a range of physical abilities of potential patrons and other visitors with interest in access to the summit.

It is considered that an all-weather gondola with capacity for six to eight persons per cabin will provide the most suitable form of vertical transportation, with a preference for detachable operations at base and summit stations. This will enable patrons to board and disembark in safety from each cabin, and will be attractive to patrons of all age groups and physical abilities. A gondola would also be capable of operating at night to further support the activities planned at the summit.

The concept has been widely discussed with the ANU Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics (RSAA). If the proposal was to proceed, it would actively support the educational facilities that the RSAA is contemplating. Channeling visitors to the summit through a single point of entry via the terminal station will also assist the RSAA with improving its public interface.

The summit terminal would be an integral part of the gondola vertical transport system and would be sited in a location that minimises any potential adverse impact on key operations of the ANU. The summit terminal would provide a covered disembarkation point for the gondola as well as a gift shop, cafe, restaurant and conference facilities.





# Tourist Accommodation





## TOURIST ACCOMMODATION

In December 2009, a supply and demand analysis of ACT accommodation for the Department of Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS) was undertaken. The analysis identified a need for student and caravan/camping accommodation within Canberra.

Growth in this market is supported by government funding, school curricula and sustained marketing efforts. The study found that additional beds would be commercially viable and is unlikely to adversely impact the existing market.

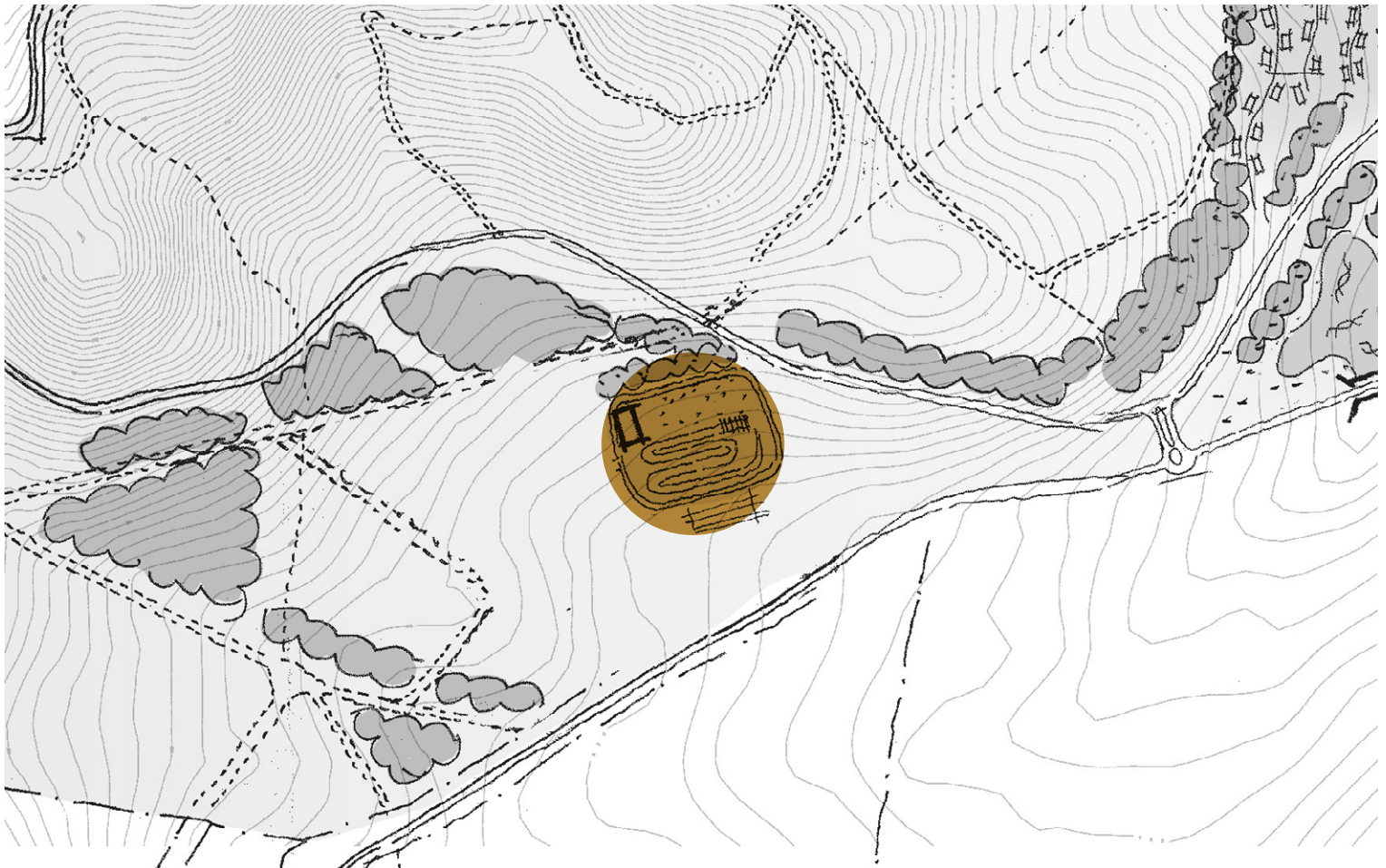
The popularity of the Park as an event venue is likely to continue to grow with an increase in the number of competitors and spectators from interstate. An accommodation facility would benefit throughout the year from a sustainable flow of business especially on weekends from Park events, and from school groups on weekdays.

Two potential sites for the Tourist Accommodation facility have been identified. The proposed locations enjoy vistas through the Molonglo Valley to the City or into undeveloped natural landscapes. Both sites are located within walking distance to major activities in the Park.





# BMX + MTB





## **BMX RACE COURSE**

Since the inception of the Park it has been an overarching vision that it provides venues capable of hosting major international events, and at the same time is attractive to local recreational users. The provision of a BMX track is a possible inclusion.

Ideally the BMX race course will be of world-class standard and be designed as two major courses with some shared areas.

The dual BMX course proposed will cater for participants of all ages and standards, as well as elite riders.

Two locations are proposed for the siting of the BMX track.

These areas provide the elevation required for high speed BMX, but will need careful landscape treatment to protect the area from strong cross winds.

## **JUMPING / DIRT PARK**

A Jumping/Dirt Park will add to the diversification of the off-road cycling experience at the Park. A Jumping/Dirt Park is an informal type of BMX Park specifically catering for recreational users.

There is strong demand for a designated facility in the ACT demonstrated by a number of illegal structures in public places.

Located near the event village and adjacent to the proposed BMX Race facility, the Dirt Park will be designed with input from stakeholders, and will be purpose built to suit a diversity of ages and abilities.



# Criterion track





## **'THE PLAYGROUND'**

In 2010 'The Playground' was constructed which is a short trail loop that encompasses a wide range of mountain bike terrain and features.

The Playground is popular and allows riders and clubs an area to coach and develop skills. These trails include signage and instruction to assist riders in appropriate track skills and etiquette. The concept of the Playground will be retained but it is proposed that it will be relocated to the north west of the Park.

## **CRITERIUM EXTENSION/ LONG BOARD SKATE**

In 2003 the ACT cycling and wheeled sport community established a common vision to create a criterium cycling venue in Canberra. This vision became a reality when the Stephen Hodge criterium cycling circuit was developed at the Park.

This facility frequently hosts events and has been instrumental in the development of a road cycling culture within the ACT community.

The 1,200 metres bitumen track provides Canberra with a short course racing and training circuit. Through discussion with user groups, the Master Plan proposes alterations to the existing track to increase its safety and functionality.

The ACT Government recognises the importance in both the length and design of the criterium cycling circuit. Any modifications to the circuit that may be required as new infrastructure is developed at the Park will be made in consultation with stakeholders to ensure the circuit meets the needs of the community.



# Cross Country Running Track





## CROSS COUNTRY RUNNING TRACK

Stromlo Forest Park has a long history as a training ground for many great Australian and international distance runners.

The Park currently boasts a world-class cross country running track. The De Castella Cross Country Course is a dedicated 2.5 kilometre circuit, 4 metres wide, that provides runners of all levels and ages with an opportunity to train and race on a purpose built grassed, groomed and irrigated circuit. This is unlike anything available elsewhere in Australia.

The Master Plan allows for connection of the cross country course to other multi-use trails within the Molonglo River recreational corridor and beyond.

Landscaping and tree planting for the existing and extended Cross Country Course is required to provide shade and wind protection for the runners, and be designed in a way that does not impede spectator's views.





# Sister Pavilion / Link Bridge





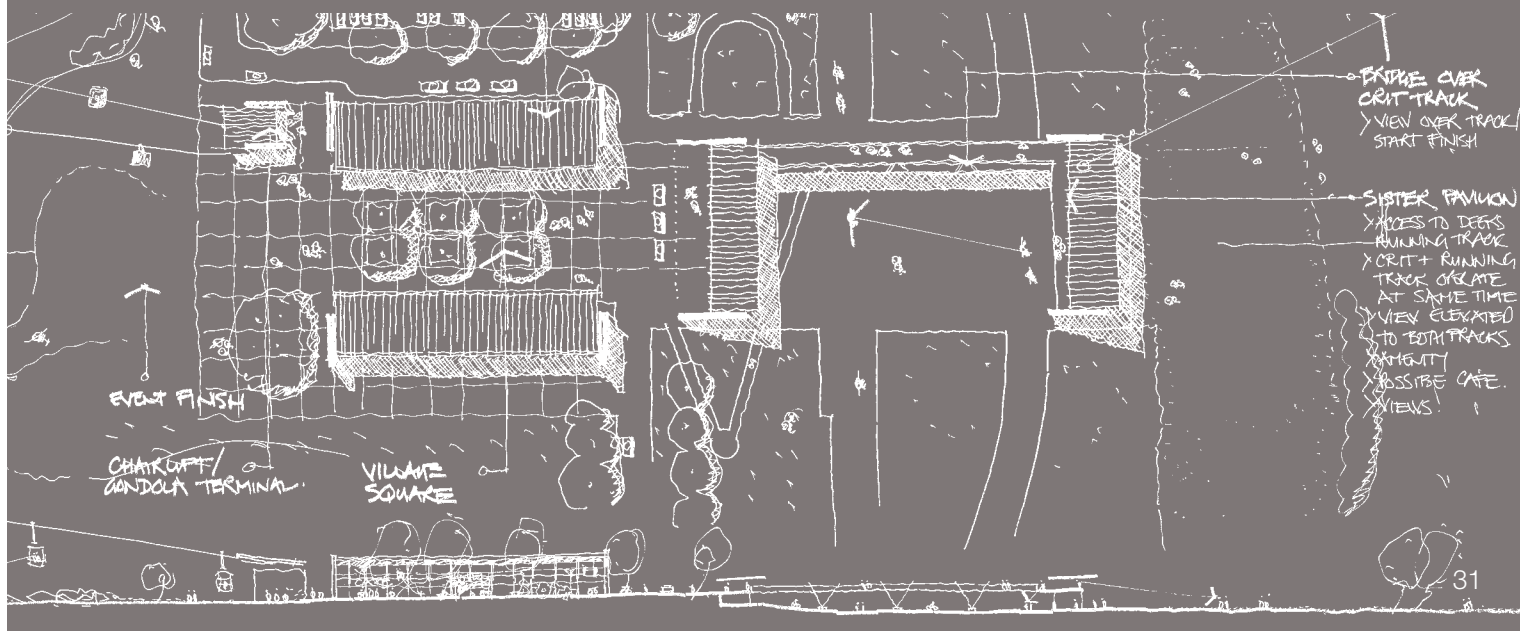
## SISTER PAVILION/ LINK BRIDGE

The Sister Pavilion and Link Bridge over the existing Criterium Track will alleviate the operational pressures from the increased use of both the existing cross country running track and criterium circuit.

Currently the existing Event Pavilion services the start and finish of both the cross country running and cycling circuits which are located adjacent to each other. With the increased use of both facilities, it is becoming increasingly dangerous to access the cross country track via the criterium circuit.

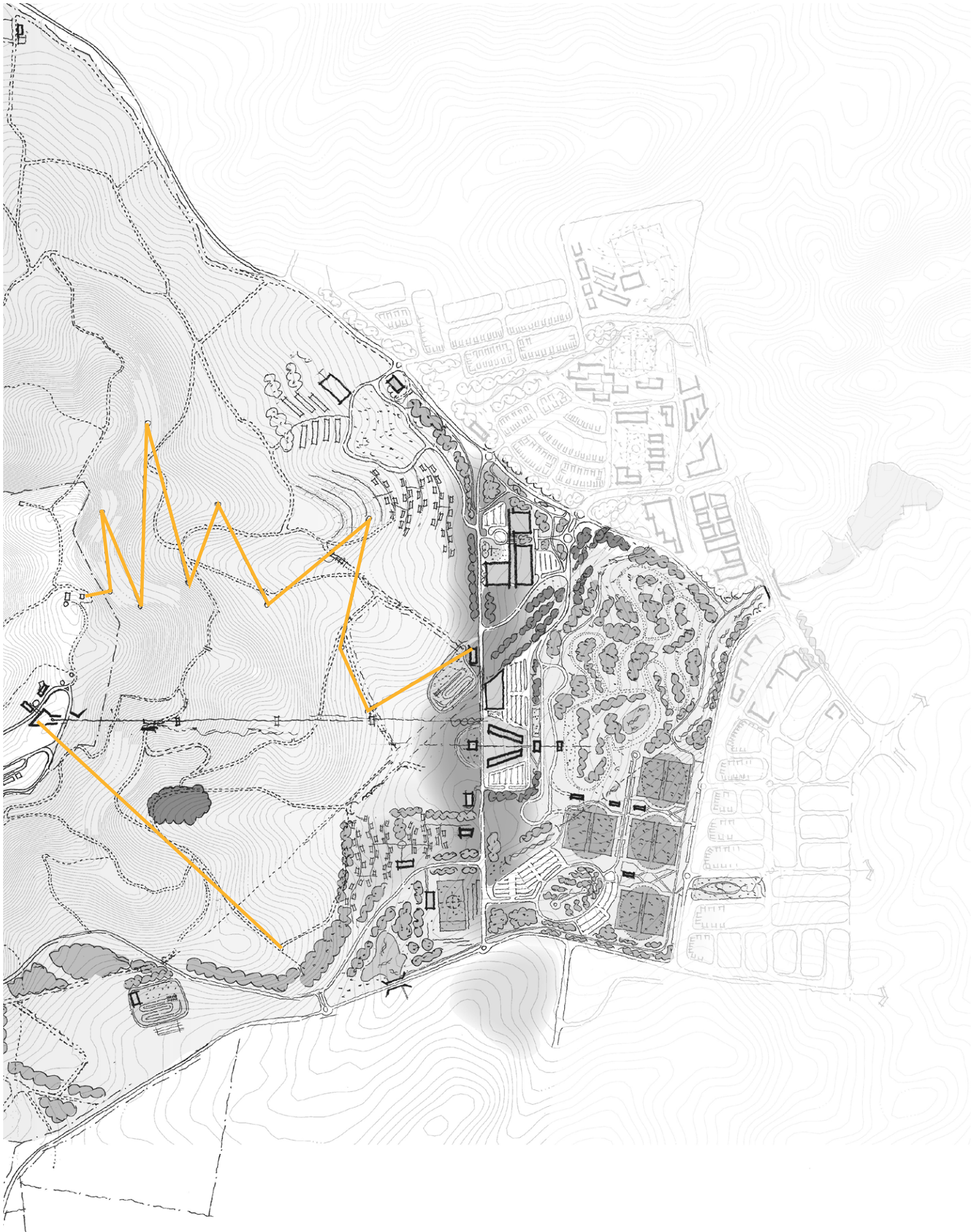
A new Sister Pavilion and Link Bridge over the criterium circuit will perform a number of important functions by providing:

- Safe access to and from the car park for cross country runners
- Washing, toilet and change room facilities for the increasing number of park users
- Additional viewing platforms for events being conducted on the cross country course
- Additional storage areas for community users
- Additional viewing and broadcasting platforms for cycling and mountain bike events from the bridge
- A 'forum finish' to events by catering for spectators on the bridge and both pavilions for events such as the Scott 24 hour race





# Adventure Gravity Sport





## ADVENTURE GRAVITY SPORT

An adventure gravity sport facility will provide a welcome contrast to Canberra's public buildings and cultural institutions on the educational tour circuit. This is an exciting outdoor adventure experience aimed at the youth market. Such a facility would also contribute to the diverse range of recreational facilities available at the Park.

Feedback from visitors to Canberra supports the need for more outdoor adventure activities to balance the time spent indoors at Canberra's national institutions. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Canberra is lacking in venues that promote exercise and healthy activities. The Park has the potential to provide a range of outdoor activities in addition to the cross country running circuit, cycling facilities, and the mountain bike tracks.

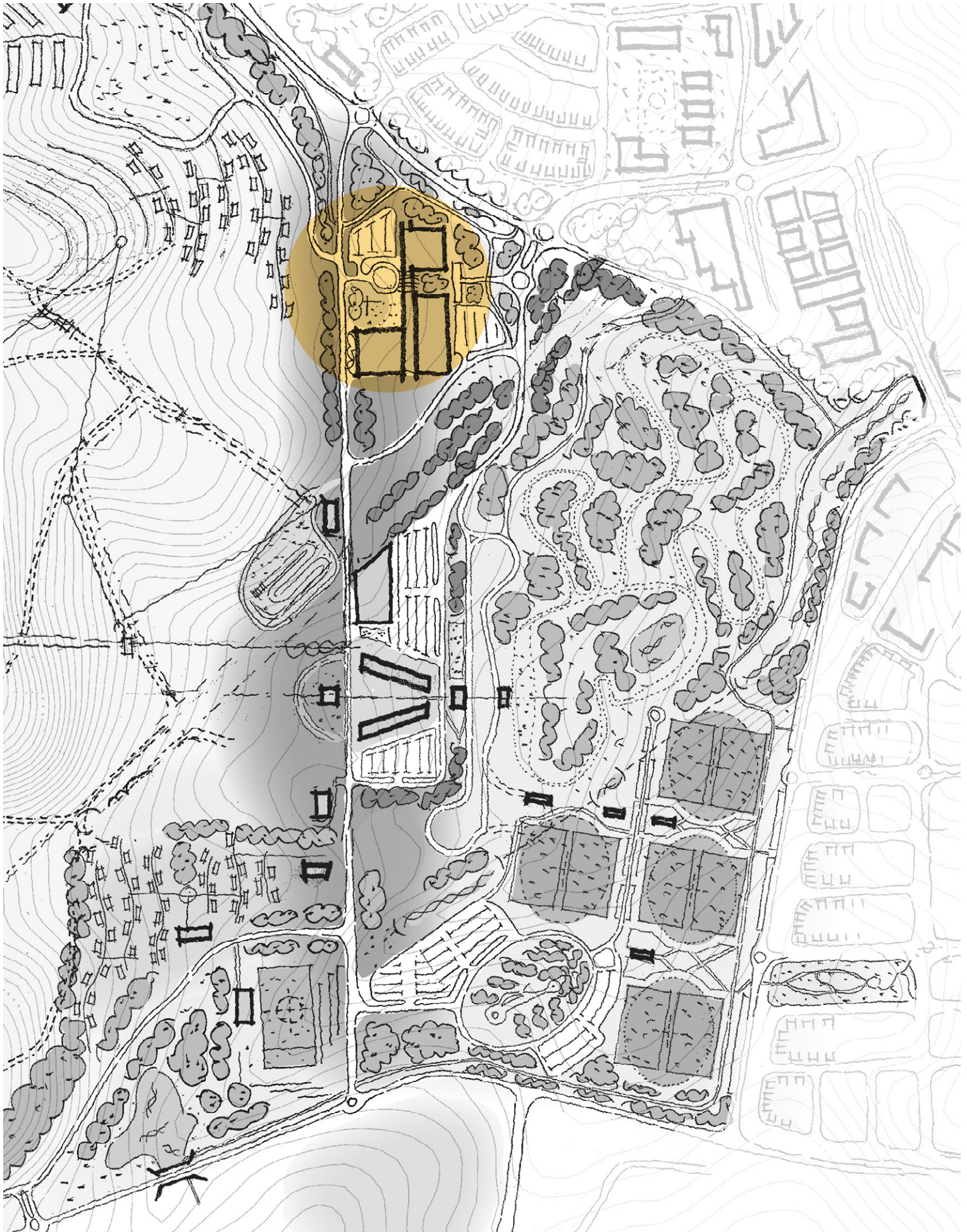
There is a growing market for privately funded adventure sporting facilities in Australia following the success of such facilities in New Zealand and Canada. New Zealand, in particular, has demonstrated success with adventure rides. An example is the Skyline Skyrides facility at Rotorua which attracts over 400,000 visitors per year. Other types of rides, such as a Zip Line (flying fox), para-gliding, luge and go carts may be appropriate for the Park.

Following consultation with the ANU and tourism operators, there is a preference for such facilities to be located on the eastern side of Mount Stromlo where the hill is sheltered from the harsh westerly winds, captures views to the city, and optimises solar orientation.

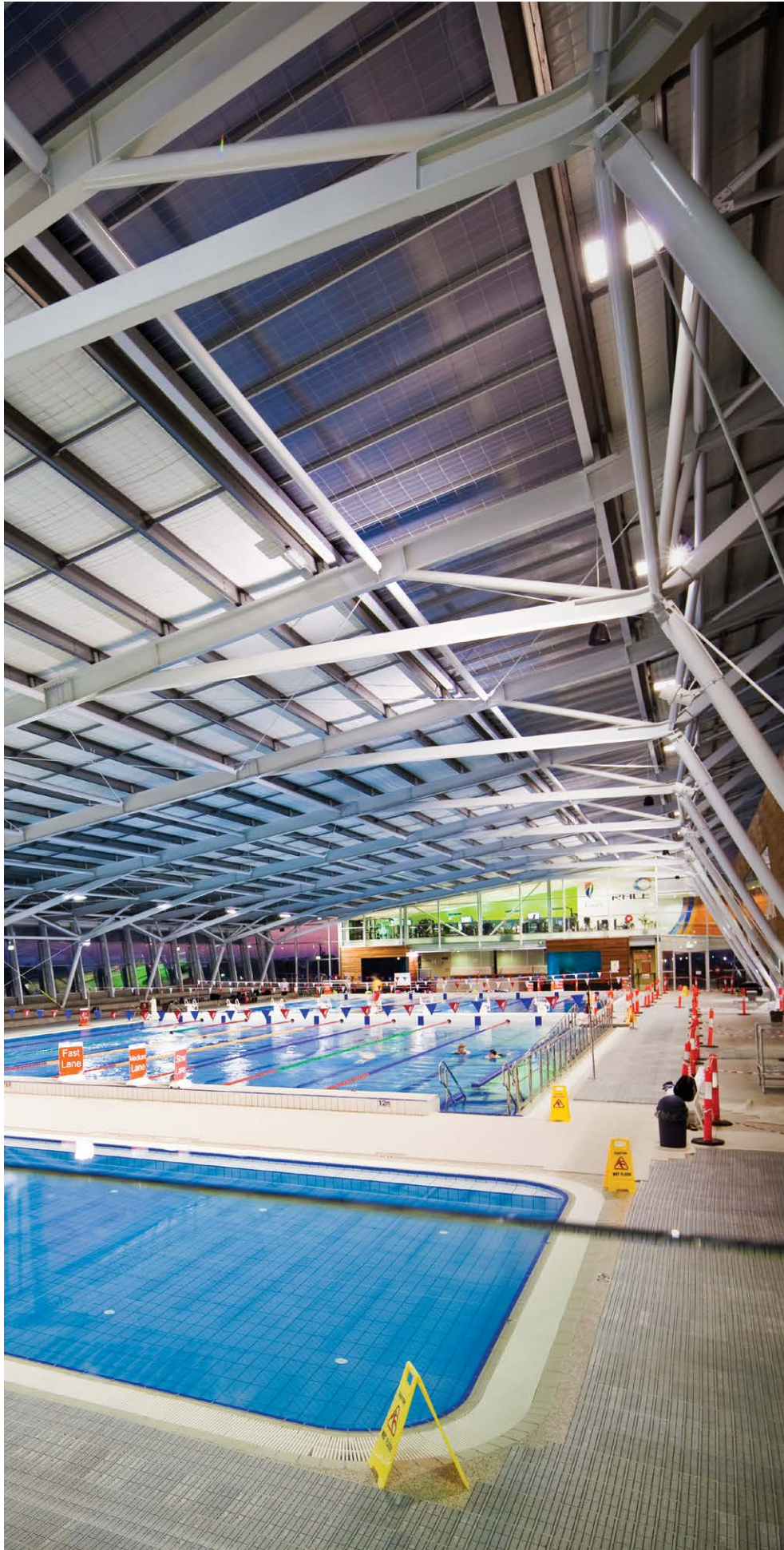




# Stromlo Pool







## STROMLO POOL

Located close to the main entrance of the Park the proposed Stromlo Pool will be a swimming and recreation facility accessible to the population catchment of Molonglo and Weston Creek, as well as visitors to the Park.

The provision of a Pool within the Park would be compatible with the range of sporting and recreational facilities included in the Master Plan, and would reinforce the Park as a centre of recreation and fitness training for Canberra.



# Stromlo Enclosed Oval





## *Sports fields for a growing community...*

### **STROMLO ENCLOSED OVAL**

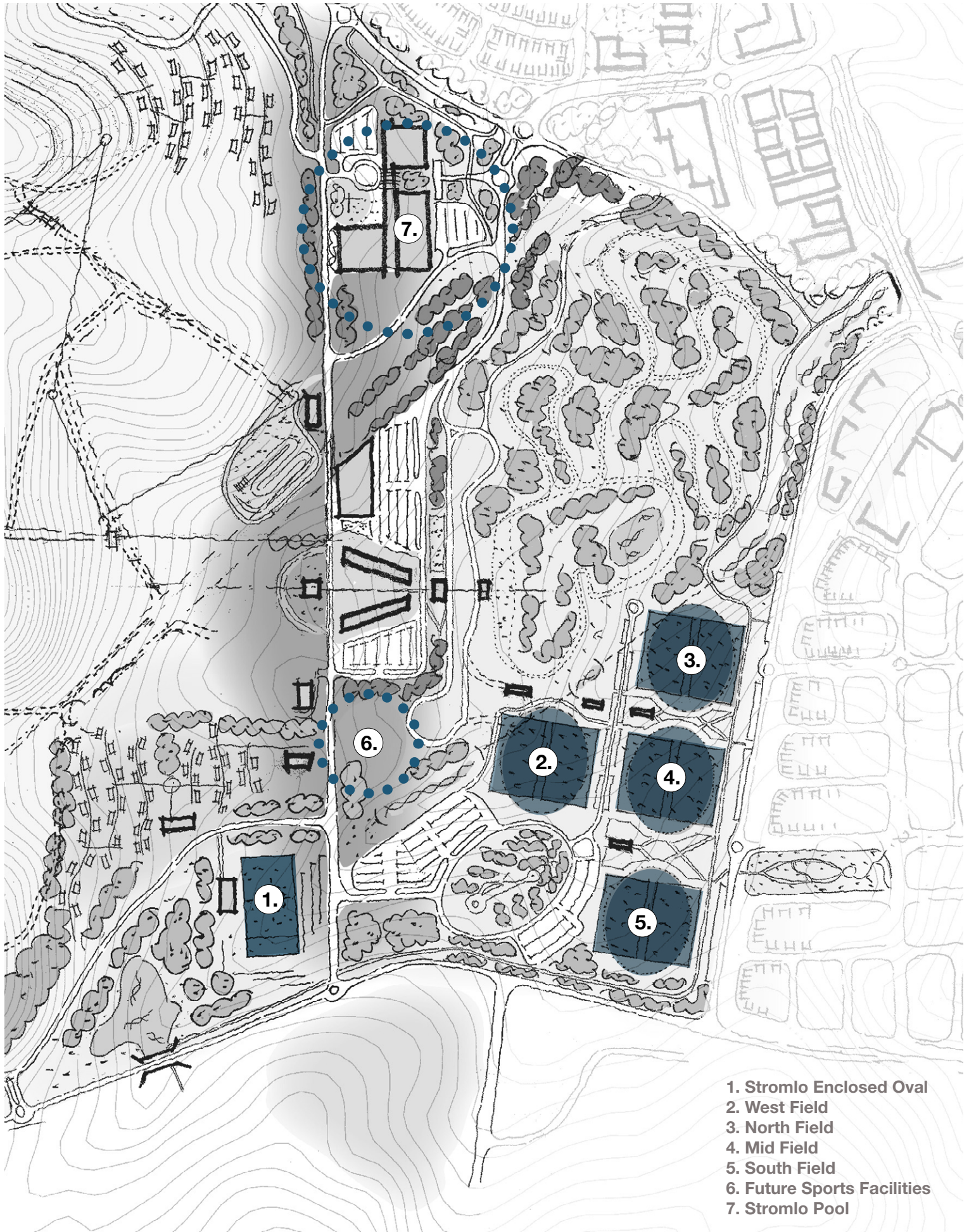
The current Master Plan includes provision of an enclosed oval. This event oriented facility will add to the Park facilities and complement the Stromlo District Playing Fields that are located to its east.

The Enclosed Oval will include a pavilion that houses the following amenities: canteen, referees and first aid rooms, accessible toilets and change facilities suitable for males and females.

It is envisaged that The Enclosed Oval, in conjunction with Molonglo District Playing Fields, will be an ideal location for a range of sporting events and competitions.



# Molonglo District Playing Fields



1. Stromlo Enclosed Oval
2. West Field
3. North Field
4. Mid Field
5. South Field
6. Future Sports Facilities
7. Stromlo Pool



## MOLONGLO DISTRICT PLAYING FIELDS

The current government policy Active 2020 is a long term strategic plan for sport and active recreation in the ACT and Region. It has three key goals:

- To increase participation in competitive, non-competitive and social sport and recreation activities at all levels
- To provide opportunities for achieving excellence in sporting performance
- To ensure access to sustainable and quality infrastructure for the delivery of their activities

Building a District Playing Field Precinct at Stromlo Forest Park supports the delivery of these objectives in the Molonglo and Canberra regions. In addition the District Playing Fields will enable the Park to host major community sporting events.

There is currently a lack of dedicated sporting facilities planned for the Molonglo area, with the closest facilities being the Stirling and Waramanga District Playing Fields. These existing facilities were designed to respond to the immediately adjacent populations.

There is a preference for District Playing Fields to be constructed in new residential areas in preference to neighbourhood ovals. Neighbourhood ovals generally have a shortage of space and lack of amenities which means that many sporting codes cannot conduct their competitions at a neighbourhood oval (e.g. baseball, softball, touch football and oz-tag).

The facilities proposed for the Stromlo District Playing Fields include:

- Four basic sport units
- Car parking spaces with access from Cotter Road
- Amenities blocks including change rooms, canteens and storage spaces

The 2010 Master Plan identified the south east corner of the Park as the ideal location for the Molonglo District Playing Fields. The site is of sloped terrain however it is one of the flattest areas of land within the Park.

The Master Plan provides a layout which accommodates the natural terrain, minimising construction costs and maximising functional space. The four fields flank the eastern edge of the park, adjacent to residential dwellings of Wright. These fields step down the slope towards the north. Grading has been engineered to maximise the connectivity of these fields.

It is also proposed that the District Playing Fields could possibly be used as an overflow area when major events are being held in the Park.

Tree planting is utilised as a buffer to the adjacent roads, residential areas, Bicentennial Trail and the Bushfire Memorial to minimise visual and acoustic conflicts.

## FUTURE SPORT FACILITIES

During the preparation of the Master Plan, a number of sites were identified as being ideal locations for future sporting facilities.

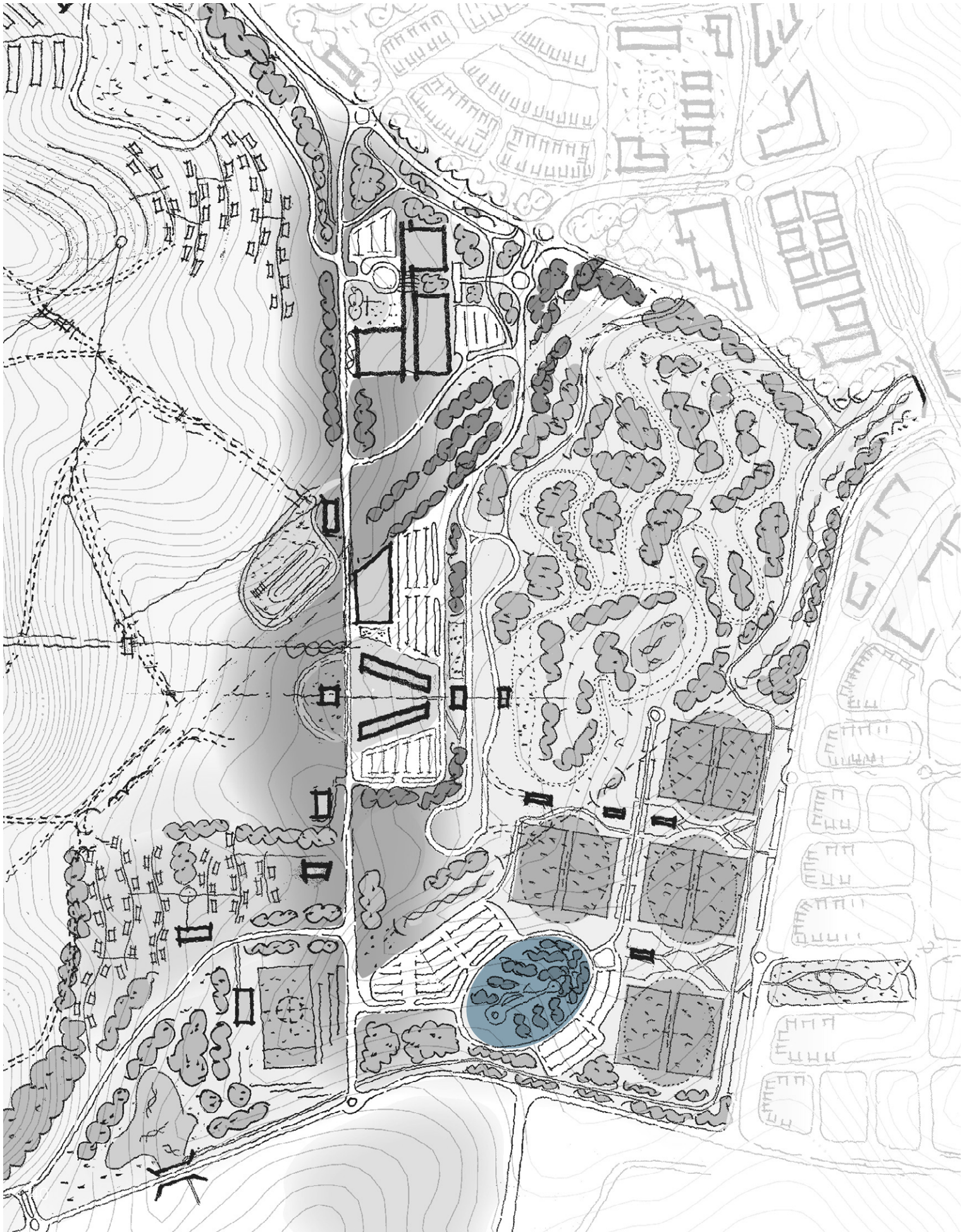
These sites provide the Park with the opportunity to grow and adapt to the needs of the community. They are each centrally connected to car parking, roads and services.

These spaces provide the ACT Government with the opportunity to expand and adapt the Park to meet the needs of the ACT Community.





# Bushfire Memorial





## BUSH FIRE MEMORIAL

Located in the Park near the intersection of Cotter Road and Eucumbene Drive, the ACT Bushfire Memorial was commissioned by the ACT Government to acknowledge the impact of the 2003 bushfires.

The memorial was designed by Canberra artists Tess Horwitz, Tony Steel and Martyn Jolly.

The Master Plan respects and enhances the Bushfire Memorial and its landscaped curtilage. This significant area will be provided with additional plantings and landscaped elements to reinforce its setting within a forested recreational park.

The Master Plan facilitates an increased level of community engagement and access to the Memorial with the provision of a direct vehicular access from the Cotter Road and an adjacent small car parking area.

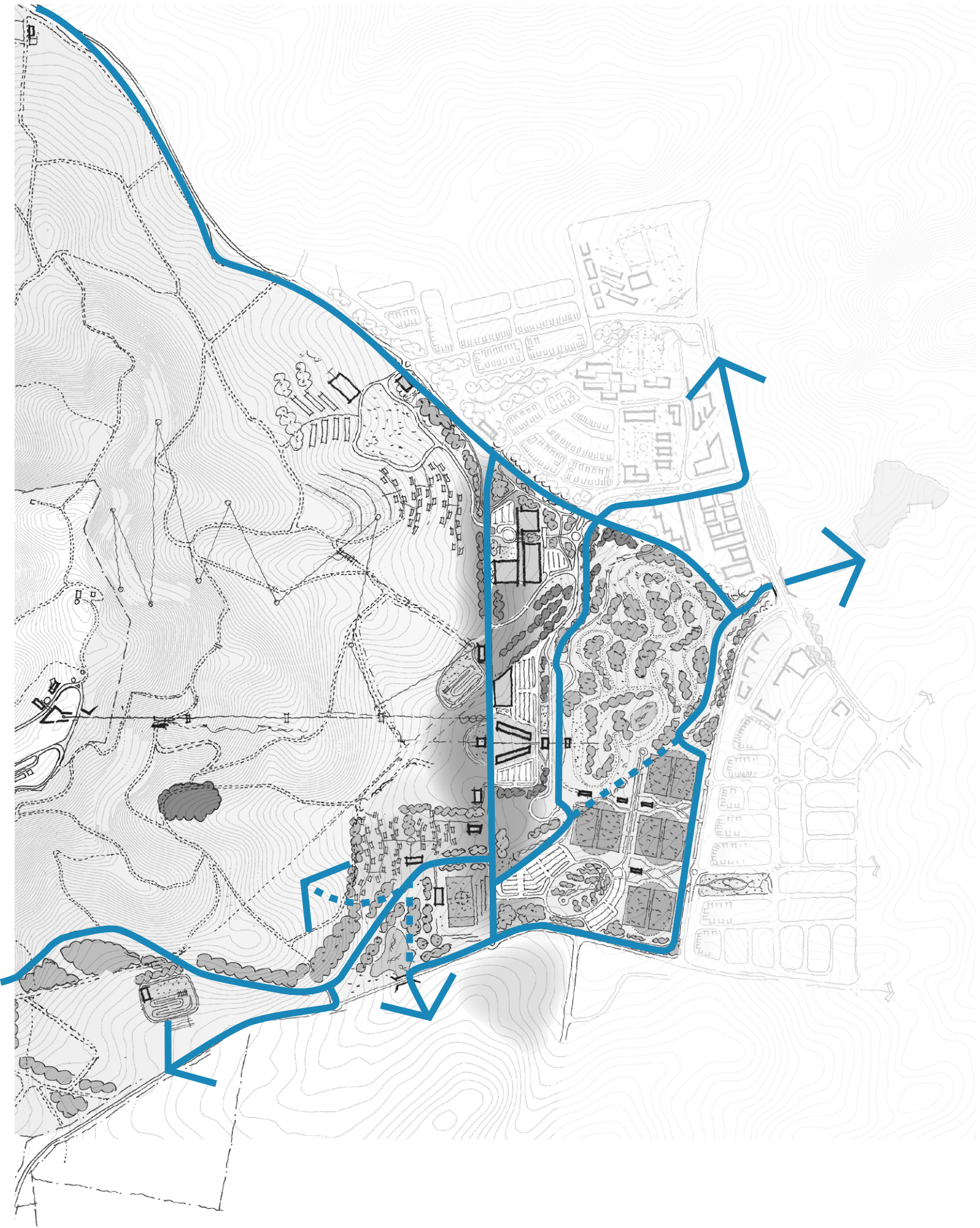
Respectfully the Master Plan offers a buffer street surrounding the existing facility and surrounding landscape. The incorporation of these streets provides an identifiable perimeter for this important installation.

A key consideration in the determination of the provisions of the Master Plan is the contemplative nature of the Bushfire Memorial and the desire of visitors to be able to reflect in a quiet environment. Extensive landscape buffers have been introduced to provide physical and sound barriers to protect the amenity of the Memorial from the surrounding District Playing Fields.





# Linking the Park





## *Exploring the Canberra countryside only ten minutes from Canberra City...*

### **LINKING THE PARK**

Fundamental to the Master Plan is its connectivity to other parts of the City, particularly urban open space and recreational corridors within the emerging urban development.

The General Policy Plan of the National Capital Plan (Amendment 63) includes a requirement for a distinct, accessible and legible link, of a minimum width of 70 metres between Stromlo Forest Park and National Arboretum Canberra through the suburban developments in the Molonglo Valley.

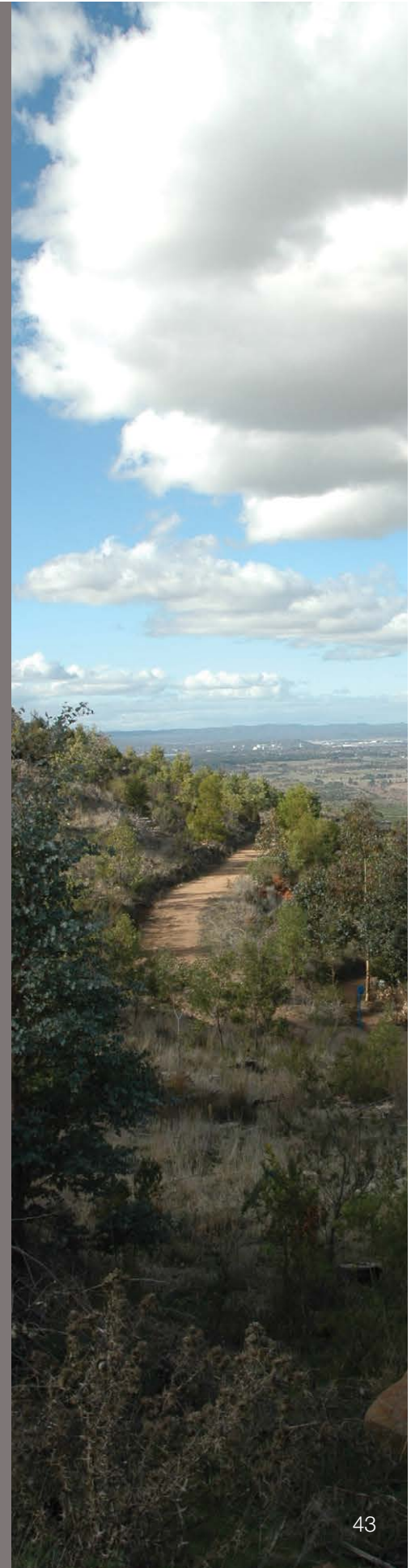
These linkages are to be provided in the form of trails and surfaces suitable for multiple user groups (runners/walkers/cyclists/equestrians). The Master Plan provides connection points for these linkages, however relies on the realisation of the linkages within the new suburban developments.

Linkages to and from the Park currently exist to North and South Canberra, both on and off road. It is intended that these linkages be retained and enhanced where possible. To the west, towards the Cotter River and Brindabella Ranges, links into the Park exist but rely on access through privately leased land.

The main off-road entry into the Park will be from the north east corner, following the bicentennial trail.

Pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians will pass under the Holdens Creek Bridge, rise over the old Uriarra Road pavement and descend into the Park. Pedestrians and cyclists will be segregated from equestrians, entering the Park on dedicated paths.

As new road alignments and infrastructure are realised for the adjacent suburbs it is envisaged that the Park can leverage off redundant infrastructure. This may include part of the existing Uriarra Road that is proposed to be decommissioned, retained and used as part of the road cycling circuit and path network.





# Enhancing Existing Trails





*Nothing compares to  
the simple pleasures  
of a bike ride...*

*- John F. Kennedy*

## ENHANCING EXISTING TRAILS

Stromlo Forest Park has built a strong reputation for the quality of facilities for mountain biking, running, road cycling and equestrian activities.

Over 20 kilometre of trunk and single trails have been constructed and these trails are attractive to a range of recreational users. The construction of the purpose designed mountain bike trails was a major step in segregating the various user groups and avoiding conflict that can occur with multi-use trails.

As the Park attracts more patronage, the existing mountain bike trail network will reach saturation point and the network will need to be expanded to cater for more users.

For runners, the new Master Plan provides the opportunity for consideration to be given to the construction of dedicated running trails that can be tailored to provide a different kind of running experience than what is currently offered.

Celebrity runner Robert de Castella, in association with Glen Jacobs and Stephen Hodge, have mapped out a series of trails of varying complexities and challenges that will include tracks of varying widths (single, dual and four persons), varying gradients, and with different types of surfaces (gravel, wood chips and sealed).

In order to avoid conflict between activities the trails will be designed in such a way that they are attractive and have distinctive character for runners and walkers, mountain bikers and equestrians.

One of the successful features of the Park is the bridge over a forestry trail at the intersection of the downhill mountain bike course. The bridge provides safe access for users crossing the downhill course while allowing free flowing access for spectators and events managers on days when major events are taking place.

A second bridge crossing is proposed to expand the downhill and cross country trail options. It will be of similar scale and dimension as the existing bridge, located to the south along the same trail. It will allow unimpeded and safer access for user movements such as cyclists, vehicles, equestrians and runners. Ideally the bridge would be aligned with any future vertical transportation facility.

The Boulevard includes the opportunity for two underpasses to facilitate safe pedestrian and cycle movements unimpeded by vehicles. The locations of the underpasses have been determined based on the natural topography.

A 'Flow Trail' will add to the off-road cycling experience and are proposed to be incorporated in the future trail development. In mountain bike terms, a trail that 'flows' is one that requires a minimal amount of peddling, breaking and entices excitement with a reduced risk and danger. It appeals to all levels of rider.

Flow Trails are a wider and more undulating trail than a single track and will accommodate a faster and less technically challenging ride when compared to some of the steep, rocky trails currently on the hill. The Flow Trails lend themselves to alignments that skirt around the hill rather than dramatically climb and descend the summit.



# 12 Km Cycling Circuit





*Bringing international competitive road cycling to Canberra...*

## **12 KILOMETRE ROAD CYCLING CIRCUIT**

A feature of the Master Plan is a sealed road cycling circuit around the base of Mount Stromlo.

There is an opportunity to create a road circuit that would provide a tourist, recreational trail and an international standard road cycling destination. A road cycling circuit within the Park offers significant potential to attract national and international events, as well as use by local and regional groups.

A width of 6 metres is required for the safe conduct of road cycling races for international championships.

The minimum length specified by the International Cycling Union for a championship road cycling circuit is 12 kilometre.

The first length of the road cycling circuit is being realised with the construction of a 3 metre wide paved cycle path adjacent to Uriarra Road which has the opportunity to be extended to a 6 metre wide paved path.

The route includes a dedicated circuit on the western slopes of the Mount Stromlo. A crossing (an underpass is proposed, although a bridge is another option) for the intersection of the track and the Boulevard to ensure that unimpeded access is available when an event is taking place.

The alignment of the circuit considers the requirements of other user groups and will be designed to have a minimum number of crossing points with other multi-use trails. The circuit would also provide access for service vehicles, emergency services, and bushfire management vehicles.

The proposal is strongly supported by the ACT Cycling Federation, its associated clubs and other potential users.



# Equestrian Trails





*Trails within the park are reviewed and upgraded periodically to deliver and adapt to the needs of the community...*

## EQUESTRIAN TRAILS

The ACT Government is committed to providing equestrian trails and facilities within the Park and the ACT Urban Area. A number of new trails are proposed to strengthen the existing trail network and to provide better access to the western slopes of the Park.

Equestrian trails approach the Park at a number of locations:

- To the north east of the Park at the Main Off-Road Entry – this forms part of the Bicentennial National Trail and links to the Arboretum
- To the south of the Park at a location west of Eucumbene Drive
- To the north west of the Park from Belconnen

Trails within the park are reviewed and upgraded periodically. Trail adjustments utilise switchbacks to reduce the impact of erosion and maximise the riding distance. The switchbacks are strategically interconnected to produce loops and figure eight tracks, with appropriately located signage displayed for riders with the estimated travel times for the multitude of trail options.

Approximately 12 kilometre of trails with interconnectors to produce short cuts and figure eights could easily create half hour, one hour and two hour trails for riders. A major improvement in access to the western slope trails is proposed via a purpose built horse trail. The new trail will remove the need to cross Mount Stromlo Road and provide excellent access from the proposed camping area to the existing trails on the western slopes.

## BICENTENNIAL NATIONAL TRAIL

The Bicentennial National Trail is the longest marked, non-motorised, self-reliant, multi-use trekking route in the world, stretching 5,330 kilometres from north Queensland to Victoria. It is suitable for horse riders, walkers and mountain bike riders. The trail traverses a variety of track from formed bitumen roads to unformed natural terrain.

Within the ACT the Trail follows the existing equestrian trail systems, navigating around Canberra's outer suburbs before heading to Namadgi National Park and onwards. The route currently traverses the south-east corner of the Park.

With the construction of the suburbs of Wright and Coombs the Trail will be realigned to travel along the Molonglo River Corridor and passing through the park via Holden's Creek Pond pathways and southern access near Eucumbene Drive.

Although the Trail is multi-use, the Park section will be specifically designed to cater for safe use by equestrians. It will also provide an important link to equestrian facilities located adjacent to the Cotter Road, including the ACT Equestrian Park at Yarralumla, and Government horse paddocks at Curtin and Yarralumla.

Given that the Trail traverses a high use recreational area, it is considered important to provide adequate landscaping treatment as a visual and acoustic barrier with other multi-use trails, recreational and sporting facilities.





# ANU Stromlo Facilities



## ANU STROMLO FACILITIES

The ANU Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics (RSAA) is Australia's premier university centre for astronomical research. Its prime objective is to advance the frontiers of astronomy, provide national and international leadership, and to train world class scientists.

The operations are headquartered at the summit of Mount Stromlo. The School runs the Mount Stromlo Observatory which was damaged by the 2003 Canberra bushfires.

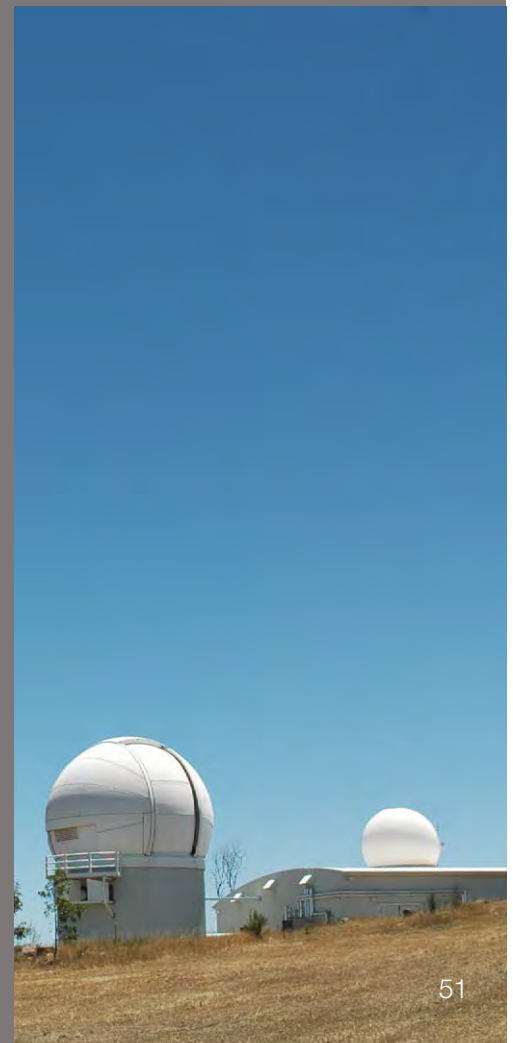
It is home to Australia's largest group of astronomers, the most comprehensive set of undergraduate and graduate astronomical courses, and has trained many of the world's astronomical leaders residing in the United States, Europe, Asia, Africa, as well as Australia. In 2008, the school was placed in the top ten institutions for space science in the world. This highlights the significance of the School at a global level.

Whilst it may appear that the school undertakes a level of research that is difficult for the public to easily comprehend, it is important that the community, and in particular the education market, is made aware of the international significance of the research being undertaken at Stromlo.

The challenge now confronting the school is to introduce an education program that conveys the scientific nature of the research undertaken at Stromlo in a way that is easily understood, is exciting, and is superior to other interactive science centres operating in Australia.

The ANU has evolving proposals for the development of its facilities at Mount Stromlo with numerous opportunities for linked tourism activities with the Park.

Discussions have been held with representatives of the ANU Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics to explore the educational opportunities that can result from the Master Plan being implemented.





# Argus Park



## **ARGUS PARK**

Adjacent to the eastern boundary of Stromlo Forest Park, across Uriarra Road in the suburb of Wright, is Argus Park. This urban park will be a reminder of the running tracks and trails through the former pine forests that emanated from a gravel car park near the corner of Cotter and Uriarra Roads.

Argus Park will be a lasting testament to the recreational enjoyment of many local community members who actively used the pine forests of western Canberra.



# Blue Gums Picnic Area





## *Celebrating a Hidden Gem...*

### **BLUE GUMS PICNIC AREA**

The Blue Gums picnic area was fortunate to have survived the ravages of the 2003 bushfires and has recovered to the point where the effects of the fire are barely evident.

The area is one of the few vegetated sanctuaries in a landscape that is still recovering from the fires, despite a massive planting programme.

The location of the Blue Gums picnic area is in a hidden valley, well protected from the prevailing winds and consequently provides an ideal location for picnics and small gatherings.

The picnic area includes a toilet block, picnic tables and barbecues. These facilities are well used and the picnic area functions as a congregation point for all users of the Park. There is a strong desire to maintain the Blue Gums area in its current form.





# Landscape Character



## LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The core recreation areas on the eastern side of Mount Stromlo consist of a variety of hardy native and exotic species planted out in a structured regime. It is proposed to continue the theme for future plantings by using the general plant palette established in the early development of the Park.

Within the overall landscape regime, there are retained zones of environmental and ecological interest and value. The large ancillary recreation areas to the western side of Mount Stromlo are developed so as to retain or re-establish and protect key drainage gullies and valleys with native and endemic plant communities. In addition, the emerging native regrowth is to be managed so that it can establish a new tree cover, albeit in a modified form. Local areas within the western zone will be developed with theme planting, similar to the east zone.

The ecological study has identified some viable or important plantings and plant communities and these will be retained and incorporated in the new landscape scheme for the Park.



# Sensitive Sites



## **SENSITIVE SITES**

### **LANDFILL SITE**

As a result of the 2003 fires a large quantity of fire damaged material was disposed of at the Park. The Environment Protection Agency has advised that no intrusive activities should take place over the landfill and this is observed in the Master Plan Update.

### **SHEEP DIP**

There is evidence that there might be a historical sheep dip site at the Park on the western slope of Mount Stromlo. This area is isolated from any future developments including trails. A nominal buffer zone of 100 metres is to be maintained around the site identified with an agricultural fence.





## *Learning From The Past, Protecting the Future...*

The Mount Stromlo area has been devastated by bushfires on at least two occasions (1952 and 2003).

These events are marked by the bushfire memorial which will remain as a key feature of the Park.

The nature and location of Park activities will need to be regulated in a manner that minimises the risk of bushfires starting and spreading within the Park environs. Measures may include restriction (permanent and temporary) of specified activities in areas of the Park, through to entire Park closure on extreme fire danger days.

Activities such as strategic bushfire fuel management will be undertaken to moderate the spread of and damage that might be caused by bushfires moving through the Park.

## **BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING**

A Bushfire Management Plan (BMP) was prepared for the Stromlo Forest Park in May 2013. The plan was prepared to assess the risk to the new urban development along the Molonglo Corridor to the north and east of the Stromlo Forest Park.

Stromlo Forest Park is the responsibility of the ACT Government Territory Venue and Events section and as such it is included as an asset in the Elevated Fire Danger Plan in the ACT's Economic Development Directorate.

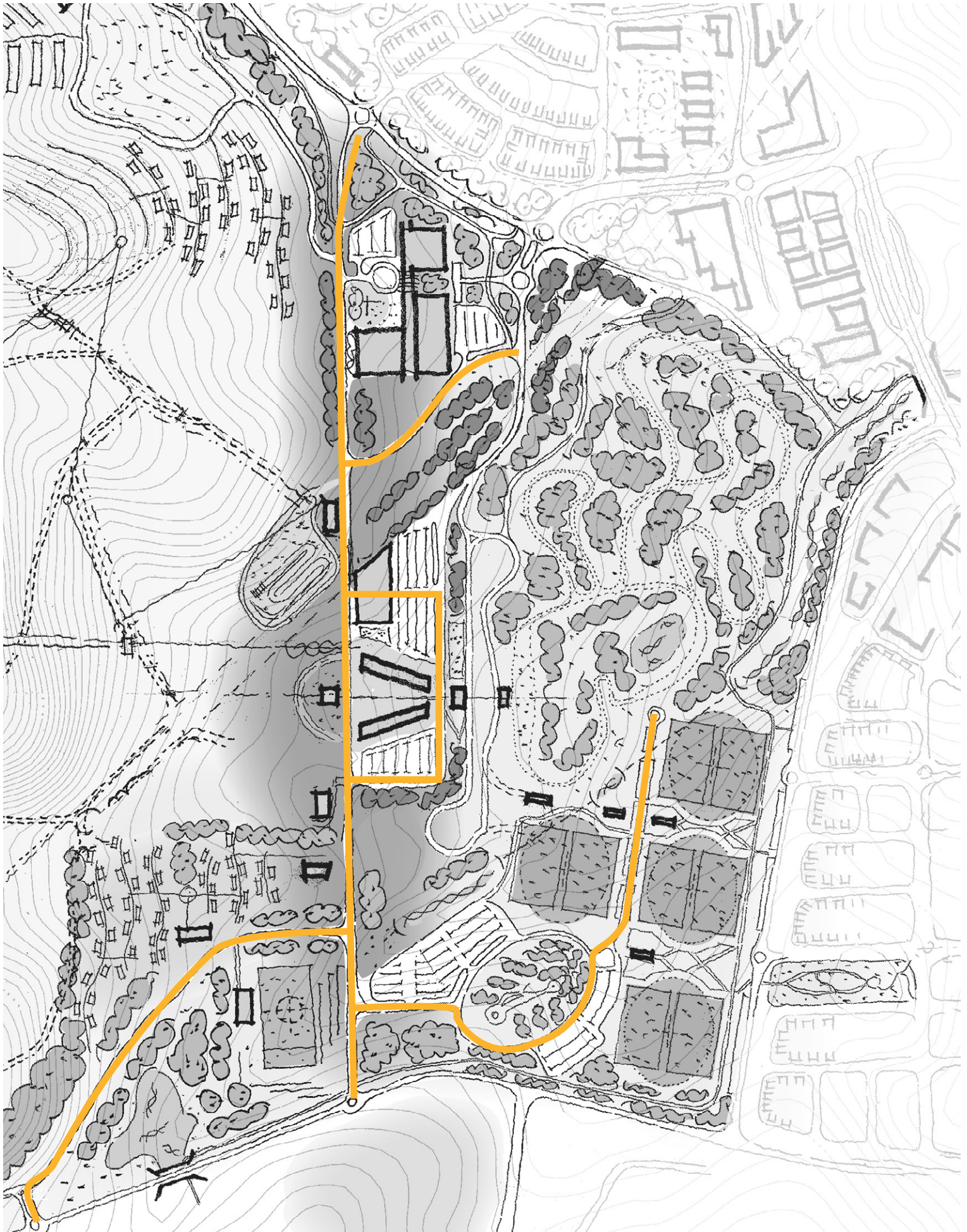
The implementation of the Master Plan over time will result in changing bushfire risk to the Park, its users, its assets and indeed to the residents and homes in adjoining suburbs. It will be important for Park Managers to assess and understand the change in risk scenarios as the Park evolves and develops under the Master Plan.

This Master Plan recognises the need to manage revegetation practices and implement asset development in a manner that will not compromise the fundamental principles and practices embodied in the existing Stromlo Forest Park BMP and remain compliant with relevant Legislative and Regulative requirements.

It will be necessary for the ACT Government to continually review the Bushfire Management Plan as the Park evolves. This is to ensure that assessed bushfire risks and associated mitigation strategies reflect changes in Park characteristics and usage over time and are consistent with, and complementary to, the Bushfire Management Plan for adjoining land.



# Servicing Alignment



*Providing a sustainable  
future for the Park...*

## **SERVICING ALIGNMENT**

The Stromlo Forest Park Master Plan allows for the park to deliver integrated services incrementally. This allows for future growth and change to occur within the park minimising abortive infrastructure works.

A central services spine is intended to extend parallel with the North South Link Road. Localised connections will feed from this main spine to local service facilities associated with the Parks needs.

Locally sourced sustainable technologies minimising consumption and utilising renewable resources are to be encouraged within the Park.

The Infrastructure Master Plan provides detail of the traffic, transport, utilities and services infrastructure for the Park.



# Car Parking





## CAR PARKING

Car parking will be provided to accommodate both the regular Park user groups and the various types of regular and special events staged at the venue.

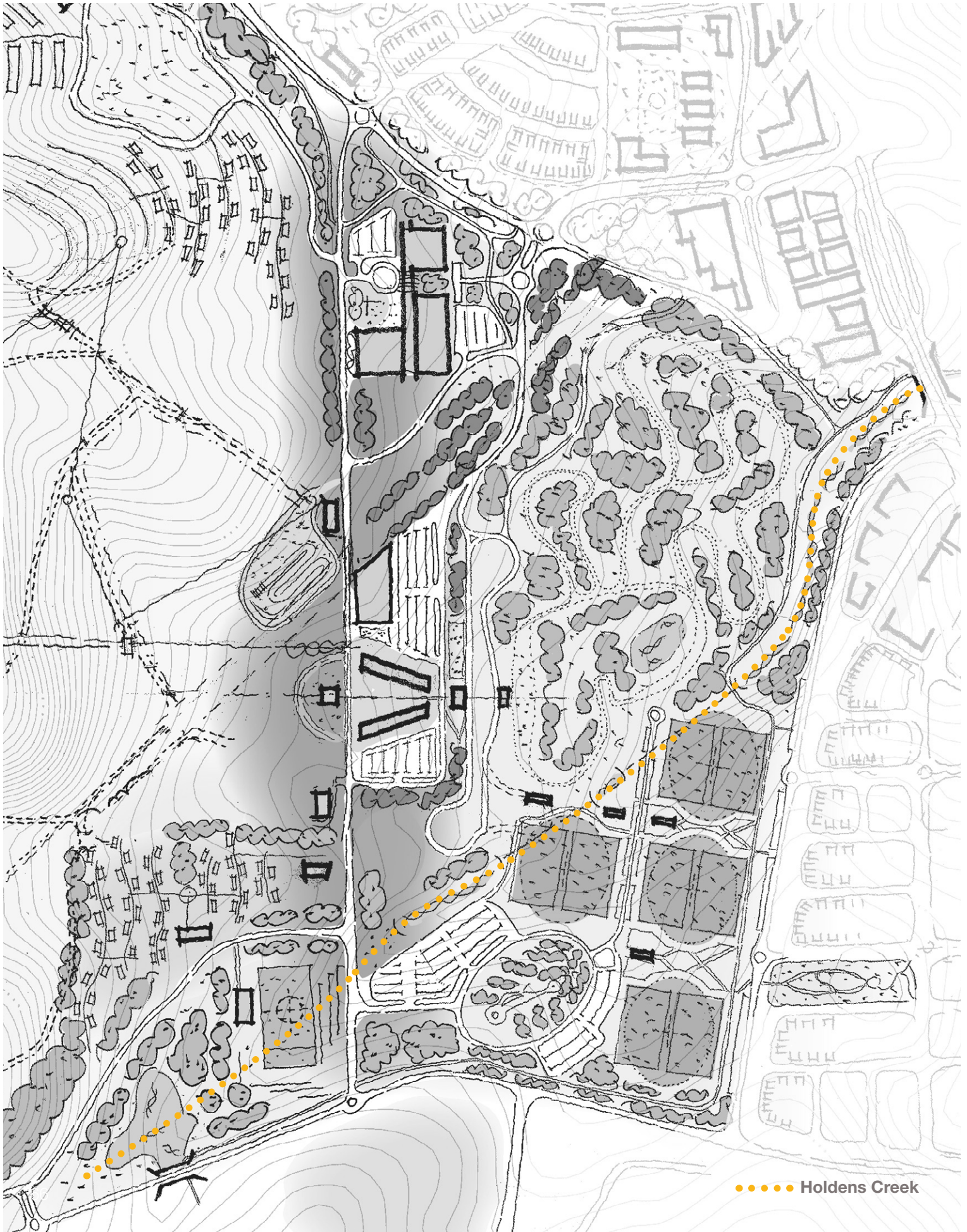
The Park will provide three types of car parking:

- Formal car parking includes permanent infrastructure in the form of paved and lit car parks. These are generally located and dedicated to a specific facility. These are all-weather surface for access at all times of the year. Formal car parking will be provided to the District Playing Fields, Stromlo Enclosed Oval, and the Village whilst Bus Parking will be provided at the Village and along Uriarra Road East.
- Temporary car parking is semi-permanent. It is generally unpaved and unlit. It is used for overflow from the formal car parking areas. These are generally all weather surfaces however may be impacted by extreme events.
- Temporary car parking will be provided at the Village. Informal car parking is to be discouraged. It is those areas which become default car parks not through planning but through human behaviour. Informal car parking is generally unsafe, and damages landscaping and infrastructure. Areas which are likely to be used as informal parking should be discouraged using landscaping.





# Stormwater



●●●● Holdens Creek

## STORMWATER

The Park covers a large area and comprises numerous stormwater catchments and steep watercourses. These watercourses discharge to the west of Mount Stromlo into the Murrumbidgee River and to the east of Mount Stromlo into the Molonglo River via Holdens Creek.

Holdens Creek passes through the Park before discharging into the Holdens Creek Pond downstream of John Gorton Drive and then entering the Molonglo River.

The lower reaches of the eastern draining watercourses upstream of Holdens Creek have been significantly altered and contain stormwater infrastructure elements such as culverts and drop structures.

The steep topography, bushfires and dispersive soils present at the Park have resulted in widespread erosion of watercourses and hill slopes in the upper catchments.

The Park contains the Running Track Pond for stormwater harvesting and site irrigation reuse.

The existing deeply eroded alignment of what is referred to as Holdens Creek presents a potential hazard to visitors to the Park. Its steep and unstable banks require significant structural rehabilitation.

The Master Plan proposes to rectify the situation by re-constructing the drainage channel, optimising its size and rendering it safe as a feature of a proposed high activity zone.

The restored creek will become an important pedestrian and landscape element, traversing the proposed District Playing Fields and the main event areas of the Park.

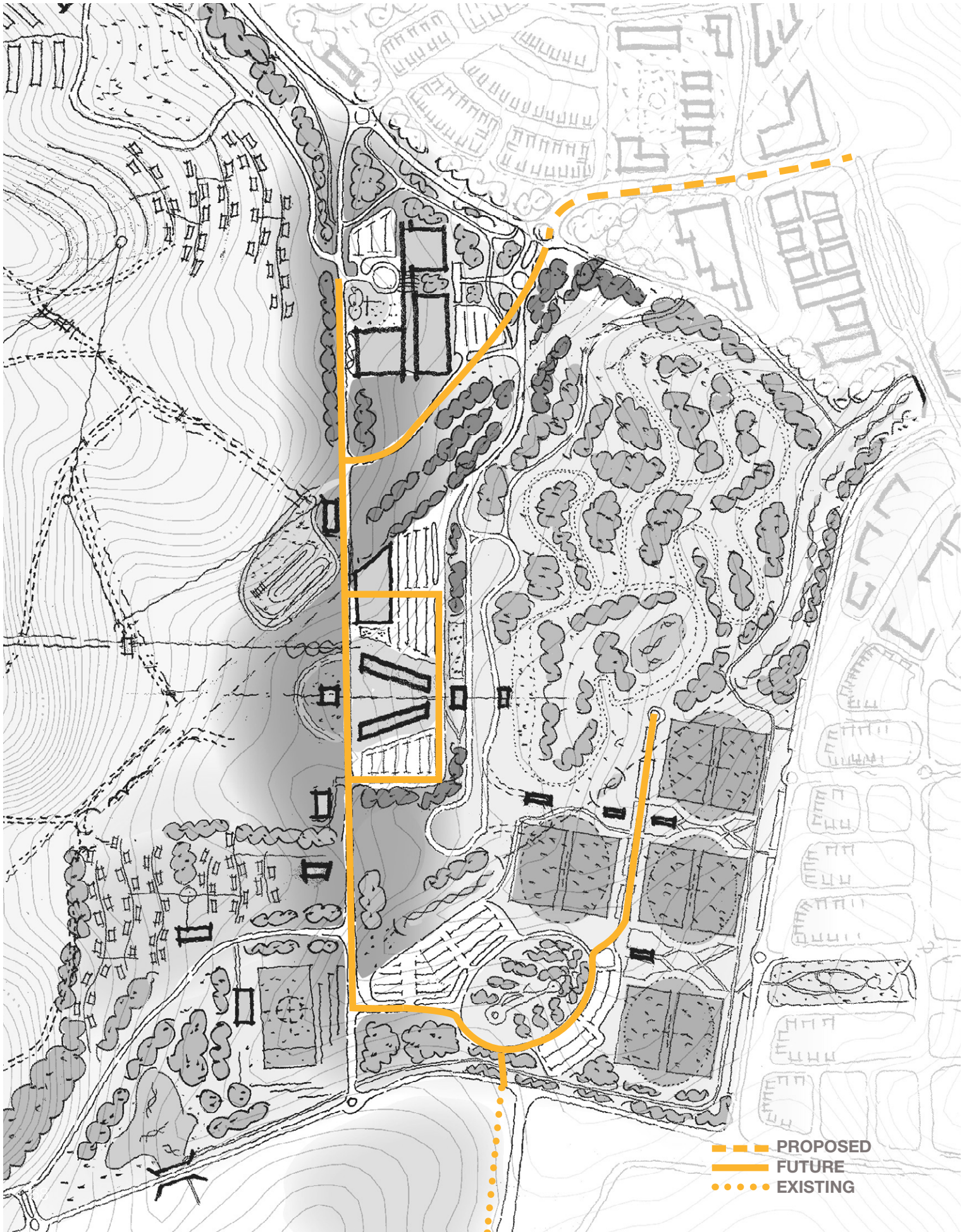
The realigned Holdens Creek will comprise of a mixture of vegetated floodway, stormwater pipes and detention basins navigating around and under the District Playing Fields and Stromlo Enclosed Oval.

Downstream of Holdens Creek to the north east of the Park is the Holdens Creek Pond. This pond will provide amenity to the adjacent suburbs of Coombs and North Wright. Water flows through the Park, into the pond which provides water quality control before being released into the Molonglo River.

The use of Holdens Creek Pond as a source of irrigation to the Park has been investigated. Enabling infrastructure in the form of dedicated pipework is proposed under the Master Plan to provide the opportunity to easily connect into this source of water.



# Water





## WATER

Water is an important natural resource that is under significant pressure from a growing population and uncertain climate conditions. In the ACT, the environmental and economic costs associated with collection, processing and distribution of water are increasing.

For urban development projects there is a drive to reduce the broader social, environmental and economic costs associated with potable water distribution and consumption. There are also growing need to reduce the operational costs associated with water consumption for future developments.

There are a range of different water needs at the Park. These include drinking and domestic water supply, firefighting and irrigation.

Potable water will continue to be supplied from ACTEW Water's system. The water use requirements for the Park can be accommodated within the existing supply system.

The ACT is challenged by potential limits to its ability to increase its water supply. Potential alternate sources of water at the Park include:

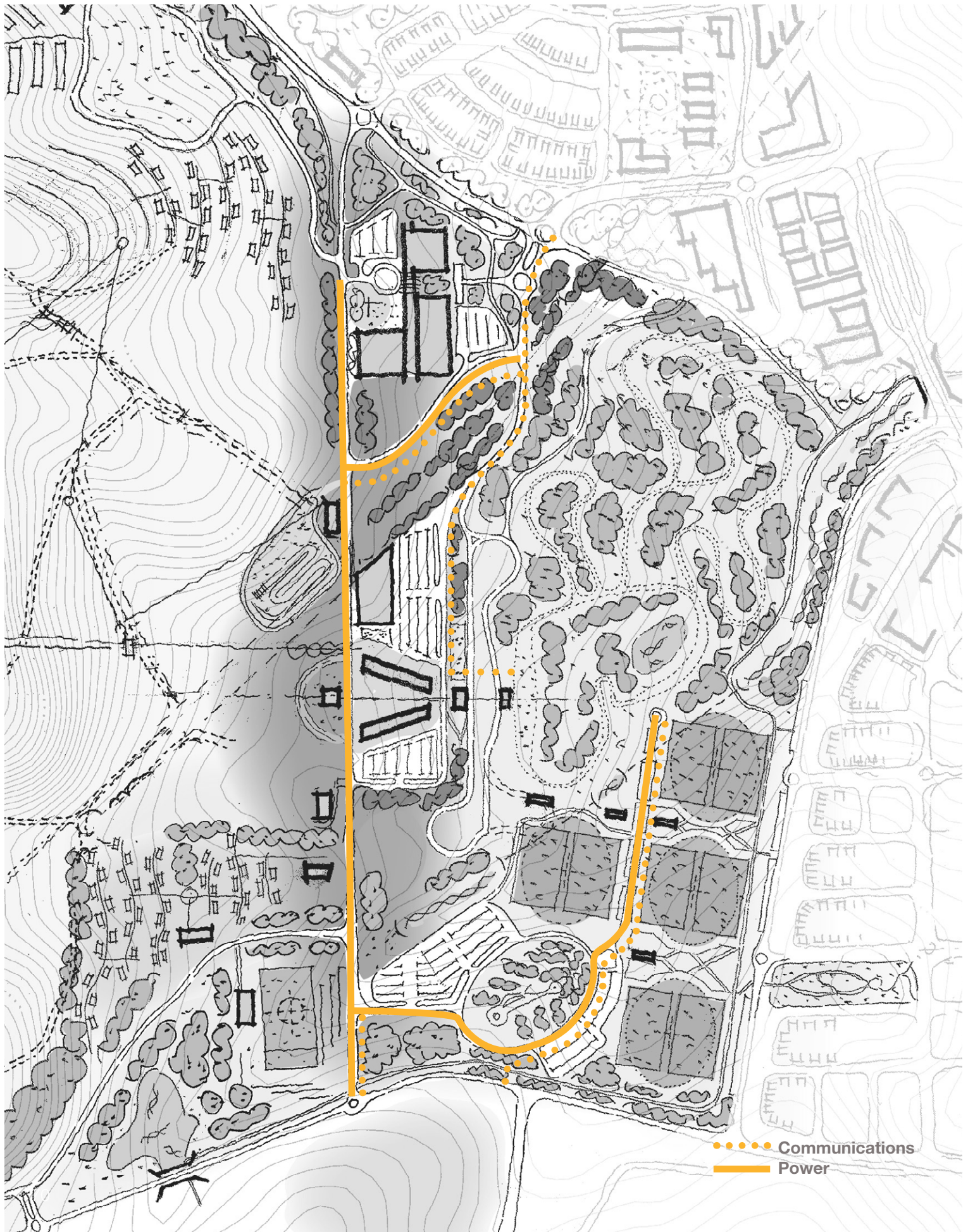
- Dams and stormwater harvesting
- Groundwater bores
- Raw (untreated) water from the Cotter Dam

Providing alternative sources of water to the Park will assist in providing a level of reliability while meeting the sustainability principles for the Park.





# Energy + Communications + Lighting



## ENERGY

To provide energy in a socially responsible, environmentally friendly and cost effective way – as per the ACT Government's objectives outlined in Weathering the Change, gas and electricity usage are considered together.

Energy demand and peak electricity demand have been considered for the Park. The demand profile shows that the existing power supply to the Park will be sufficient to accommodate the facilities proposed in the Master Plan. ActewAGL have indicated that a second supply point from the future Molonglo Zone substation will be available to provide event power reliability and site resiliency. A higher power usage is expected for event days. Events are generally held on weekends or other typically low power usage times allowing the business as usual infrastructure to accommodate event scenarios.

The potential requirements for gas usage at the Park are very modest and are over a large area. This could create a high cost infrastructure investment despite the location of high pressure gas mains very close to the Park.

## COMMUNICATIONS

The future requirements of the Park are not considered large in terms of development requirements. The routes of communication infrastructure should follow the proposed and existing road alignments.

A range of existing infrastructure specifically that installed in the south east corner of the Park will require relocation to facilitate the development of the Park.

## LIGHTING

The Park is at the base of the Mount Stromlo Observatory and adjacent to suburban developments. To minimise light impacting residents and the Observatory, all lighting at the Park will be designed in accordance with dark sky principles.

This includes minimising or eliminating direct upward waste light, selecting the lowest practicable lighting levels, and considering the use of curfews for lighting that generates high-light levels or high levels of luminance.





Master Plan Report  
Final Draft