

7.0 ACCESS + CIRCULATION

7.01 GENERAL ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

The criss-cross network of pedestrian footpath/vehicle access ways has developed since the early site history and the layout simply reinforces most of the site access pedestrian 'desire lines'.

The broad tree-lined pedestrian avenue continues the line of Wellington Parade South, east-west across the top of the site. The long diagonal path runs from Gate 3 in the north-west corner, down to Punt Road, at Gate 5 and Gate 6, existed on the site, prior to the development of the MCG. Many local residents and city-workers regularly walk and cycle through the park.

The majority of park use is related to MCG events. Even for weekday use, most visitors to the park, are for MCG tourist-related visits, or visits to the National Sports Museum.

Yarra Park also plays an important role as a parkland for East Melbourne and Richmond residents. There are good pedestrian links to the local street network from the north and the east. The picnic facilities and the playground on the north boundary are regularly used by local residents – the level of patronage, places it in the 'small local neighbourhood play space' category. There is potential for upgrade, and a greater level of promotion, and usage.

7.02 VISITOR ACCESS

The MCG and the National Sports Museum are major tourist attractions in Melbourne, and visitation is likely to increase.

Patrons, visitors, event staff and employees of the MCG/MCC currently access the grounds by a multitude of transport modes. Some key access routes are as follows:

- By rail to Richmond Station and then by foot to the MCG.
- By rail to Jolimont Station and then by foot to the MCG.
- Via Tram Routes 48 or 75 along Wellington Parade/Bridge Road then by foot through the top end of Yarra Park.



- Via Tram Route 70 along the rail right-of-way southside and parallel to Brunton Ave, then by foot over the pedestrian bridge to the immediate east of MCG.
- Bus Route 246 along Punt Road (Hoddle Highway).

Most pedestrians arrive from the city side, via the William Barak footbridge (Birrarung Marr) and Wellington Parade South (City and Fitzroy Gardens), and from the tram stops in Wellington Parade South.

The 'tourist bus' bus stop/drop off at Gate 2 off Jolimont Terrace is another important point of arrival.

Car users generally park their cars in Wellington Parade South, and around Fitzroy Gardens, generally in Clarendon Street, Wellington Parade South, and Wellington Parade. People then have a pleasant walk down via Gate 3 to the MCG.

7.03 EVENT PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

The Existing Access and Circulation Plan shows the main points of pedestrian arrival and indicates the general number of 'patrons' which arrive via that entry point, during a major event. Patronage numbers were obtained from an 'internal' survey conducted by the MCC in 2009.

The tidal nature of pedestrian and vehicular flows entering and leaving the MCG on game day places strain on the surrounding road network to accommodate these flows. Also, given the key pedestrian flows points interact with vehicular access points, this potential conflict needs to be managed to provide a safe, well coordinated, and efficient access strategy for access to and from the MCG.

The main point of arrival is clearly from the Flinders Street direction, via William Barak pedestrian bridge (15,000), with a significant number of patrons arriving from each of the southern access points, including the Rod Laver Arena footbridge (8,000), Olympic Park footbridge (8,000), Yarra Park footbridge (5,000) and from the Richmond Punt Road/ Brunton Avenue corner (10,000). The other main point of arrival is from the Gate 3, north-west corner (5,000) and Jolimont Station (5,000).

Lesser numbers arrive from the north-east and east Punt Road side, but overall, the distribution of access points is fairly wide spread.

Eventually, pedestrians all converge on the wide hard-paved concourse of the MCG, and congregate and circulate around the stadium, to enter via the appropriate ticketed gate.

Pedestrians from grass parked cars, also disperse through the cars, and generally converge onto the path network, to approach the concourse. The wide path network generally caters quite well to accommodate, and direct the crowds. Areas and edges which are more trampled indicate where the network is under severe pressure.

7.04 VEHICLE ACCESS

Vehicle access points for event car parking are controlled by removable vehicle barriers. The same access points are used for maintenance and emergency access.

Service vehicle access to the park, which is almost totally to the MCG, is via the service entries on Brunton Avenue. For vendors and vendor 'vans' located on the concourse, vehicle access is via the controlled crossover on Brunton Avenue at the Great Southern Stand.

7.05 EVENT PARKING LAYOUT

The parking of cars within Yarra Park is a reasonably efficient operation. The current contractors are able to manage car spacing in relation to the existing weather conditions, through their experience within the park. In 2009, 319,309 cars parked in Yarra Park over 176 days the car park was open. In 2008, 318,416 cars parked over 155 days.

Over the last decade, the City of Melbourne and the MCC have reduced car parking numbers from around 9,000 to 4,500. The YPMP limits car parking to 4,500. This Master Plan will ensure the enforcement of 'no parking zones' under avenue trees as well as the implementation of a rotational car parking strategy. Where triangular grassed open spaces are used for parking, the avenues are completely mulched for the entire path length. 'No-go' parking zones have already been designated, in earlier parking agreements, and these have been extended to other perimeter areas. The rotation of areas is a key element of this strategy.

Several constructed car park options have been investigated and would be extremely costly and is unlikely to occur in the near future. Given the legislation and demand for continuation of car parking in Yarra Park, it is therefore critical to minimise the impact of this activity.

7.06 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT STUDY

Opportunities exist to improve the entry and egress of vehicles around and within Yarra Park. A comprehensive traffic management plan and a review of parking operations and management has been commenced by ARUP Consultants Pty Ltd. This will assist with the coordinated traffic management of the whole sports precinct, which includes the MCG and Melbourne Park Sports and Entertainment Precinct.



Arup has been commissioned by the MCC to:

- Review the car parking arrangements within Yarra Park.
- Understand the interaction with patrons arriving via other modes.
- Identify any potential issues.
- Identify mitigation measures to improve the operation of the site.

A multi-modal approach to MCG site access will ensure that the current multiple travel alternatives currently available to Yarra Park and the MCG are not only maintained, but coordinated into a cohesive transportation access strategy. The access plan for the park will put people first and provide a transportation system where the pedestrian takes priority, with appropriate and safe provision for auto access and parking. A key element of the plan will be to maximise the entry and exit rates of pedestrians and vehicles, and to minimise the potential conflicts between the two.

The location of the MCG in close proximity to the city and surrounded by a dense network of public transport options make it easy for the majority of trips to the site to be made on foot, and/or transit. However, as a regional destination and to provide alternative transport options to families, auto travel will continue to be an important mode for travel to and from the site. It is therefore critical to create a strategy to accommodate auto traffic safely and conveniently, in a way that coexists with pedestrian access, and within the adjacent transport network.

The following goals and objectives will shape the development of the access plan for Yarra Park:

- Create iconic site entrances that act as gateways to Yarra Park for branding and marketability of the park, but also to provide clear wayfinding for access by employees, officials, players and visitors alike. These may or may not be the existing key points of access.
- Develop a clear wayfinding strategy for vehicular access to the various gates around Yarra Park.
- Provide vehicular and pedestrian gateways that are separated where possible.
- Minimise pedestrian/vehicle conflict.
- Investigate opportunities for technologies to provide up-to-the-minute travel and route information tailored to a user's needs. Signs should be able to adapt and display information related to congestion, route closings or other time sensitive information.
- Maximise entry and exit flows of vehicles and pedestrians at Yarra Park, with due consideration of the impact on the adjacent road network.
- Develop a strategy that is easy to implement and manage.
- It will be important to work closely with a number of stakeholders during the development of this strategy, especially VicRoads and VicPolice.