

## **Melbourne Planning Scheme**

### **Amendment C487Melb**

## **Explanatory Report**

### **Overview**

This amendment is required to embed the Yarra Park Master Plan 2026 (the Master Plan) into the Melbourne Planning Scheme, to guide the long-term evolution of Yarra Park. The Master Plan will ensure the park continues to serve as the home of the Melbourne Cricket Ground and a recreational space for visitors.

The Melbourne Planning Scheme is sought to be amended through incorporating an Incorporated Document into the schedules of Clause 45.12 – Specific Controls Overlay (SCO) and Clause 72.04 – Incorporated Documents of the Melbourne Planning Scheme.

The Yarra Park Master Plan (2010) has served as the guiding framework for Yarra Park under the Melbourne Planning Scheme. However, it has now reached the end of its useful life. Amendment C487Melb aims to replace this outdated plan with a refreshed Master Plan providing an updated planning framework to guide the future evolution of Yarra Park.

### **Details of the amendment**

#### **Who is the planning authority?**

This amendment has been prepared by the Minister for Planning who is the planning authority for this amendment.

The amendment has been made at the request of Melbourne Cricket Club and the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) Trust.

#### **Land affected by the amendment**

The Amendment applies to the area included in the *Yarra Park Master Plan 2026*. The Yarra Park Master Plan Area includes the Yarra Park Reserve, MCG and Richmond Cricket Ground/ Punt Road Oval.

This area is generally bordered by Brunton Avenue to the south, Punt Road to the east, Vale Street South and Vale Street to the north-east, the railway line running parallel to Wellington Parade to the north and Jolimont Street and Jolimont Terrace,

East Melbourne, to the west. The Yarra Park Master Plan Area also includes land in Wellington Parade South and parts of Wellington Park and Jolimont Reserve. It is accessible via the adjacent roads: Punt Road, Vale Street, Wellington Parade, Brunton Avenue, Jolimont Street, and Jolimont Terrace.

The land affected by this amendment is shown on Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 Map of land subject to this amendment, outlined in red



## What the amendment does

This amendment streamlines the approval process for the use and development of Yarra Park by introducing site specific planning controls into the Melbourne Planning Scheme. These controls support various works, including parkland improvements, landscaping, pathway upgrades, park furniture and amenities, public lighting, hostile vehicle mitigation, signage, and utilities upgrades.

The amendment facilitates the approval process through a Specific Controls Overlay (Schedule XX) and Incorporated Document (Yarra Park Master Plan Incorporated Document, XX 2026). The Incorporated Document will allow works which are generally in accordance with the Master Plan.

The purpose of the Incorporated Document is to facilitate the use and development of Yarra Park in line with the Yarra Park Master Plan 2026. The Master Plan outlines opportunities for physical improvements and functional enhancements within the park. It also identifies additional opportunities that, while not immediately physically changing the park, will provide essential guides, strategies, and frameworks for its

future use and maintenance.

### **Overlay Map**

- Amends Planning Scheme Map No 09SBO to apply the Specific Controls Overlay Schedule XX (SCOXX) to the entirety of the Yarra Park

### **Planning Scheme Ordinance**

- Amends the Schedule to Clause 45.12 (Specific Controls Overlay) to introduce the Specific Controls Overlay (SCOXX)
- Amends the Schedule to Clause 72.04 (Incorporated Documents) to introduce the *Yarra Park Master Plan Incorporated Document, XX 2026* and remove *Yarra Park Master Plan Implementation September 2010*
- Amends the Schedule to Clause 72.01 (Responsible Authority for this Planning Scheme) to update the Yarra Park Master Plan area
- Amends the Schedule to Clause 51.01 (Specific Sites and Exclusions) to remove *Yarra Park Master Plan Implementation September 2010*

## **Strategic assessment of the amendment**

### **Why is the amendment required?**

The amendment is required to facilitate implementation of the Yarra Park Master Plan 2026. The Master Plan seeks to support the use of Yarra Park and promote various functional improvements including landscaping, pathway upgrades, park furniture and amenities, public lighting, hostile vehicle mitigation, signage, and utilities upgrades.

The amendment will clarify responsibilities for planning approval and will streamline the planning approval process to implement the Master Plan.

An amendment to the Melbourne planning scheme is the most appropriate means of achieving the desired outcome for Yarra Park. The SCOXX is being applied to the site to support the vision of the Yarra Park Master Plan 2026.

The amendment replaces the existing Yarra Park Master Plan 2010 currently referenced in the Melbourne Planning Scheme.

### **How does the amendment implement the objectives of planning in Victoria?**

The amendment implements the objectives of planning in Victoria as outlined in section 4(1) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (PE Act) as follows:

- a) *Provide for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use, and development of land*

The amendment will result in the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use and development of land by implementing well-planned, functional improvements that support the use of Yarra Park.

- b) Provide for the protection of natural and man-made resources and the maintenance of ecological processes and genetic diversity;*

The Master Plan seeks to identify and protect local environmental features by prioritising tree management. Specifically, the Master Plan aims to maintain healthy, resilient and aesthetically pleasing avenues and specimen trees within the Park and select tree species for planting based on their suitability to the site, predicted climatic conditions, biological diversity, and potential to contribute to the landscape.

- c) Secure a pleasant, efficient and safe working, living and recreational environment for all Victorians and visitors to Victoria;*

The amendment introduces new opportunities for Yarra Park that focus on improving safety and security of park users on both event days and non-event days. The opportunities that have been identified cover a broad range of areas including improving lighting at night-time, adding bicycle and micromobility parking, and making sure the mobility shuttle service (the G-Train) functions in a way that can assist as many people as possible.

The Master Plan seeks to protect the landscape character of Yarra Park, whilst taking a proactive approach to the management of trees and landscape is required in the face of climate change to ensure the park offers a pleasant environment to all visitors.

- d) Conserve and enhance those buildings, areas or other places which are of scientific, aesthetic, architectural or historical interest, or otherwise of special cultural value;*

Yarra Park occupies the Traditional Country of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung. Aboriginal cultural heritage intersects with European heritage in Yarra Park, and the Master Plan aims to appropriately recognise and celebrate this important history. Yarra Park is host to one of the most iconic sporting grounds in Australia, the MCG. The opportunities aim to create a seamless design solution that considers the values of both spaces.

- f) Facilitate development in accordance with the objectives;*

The amendment achieves this objective by introducing a suite of planning scheme provisions to guide functional improvements to support the use of Yarra Park, consistent with state, regional and local planning policy.

- g) Balance the present and future interests of all Victorians.*

The proposed provisions in the Planning Policy Framework and the Specific Controls Overlay schedule have been drafted to ensure development occurs in a logical manner consistent with the objectives set out in paragraphs (a) to (f), to balance the

present and future interests of all Victorians.

## **How does the amendment address any environmental, social and economic effects?**

### Environmental effects

The Incorporated Document has been carefully designed to consider environmental considerations on the site and the site's interfaces and surroundings. Conditions are applied to the use and development permitted by the document to address any potential environmental impacts.

Before commencing works related to the 'gathering space', 'celebration space', and 'concourse upgrades', detailed plans, including a landscape plan, must be prepared. The preparation of a Car Parking Strategy is also required which, amongst other things, will address any disturbances to Yarra Park's surface caused by parking.

Furthermore, a Tree Management and Replacement Strategy is to consider options for 'climate resilient' species to be used as replacements where necessary. These measures ensure that the development is sensitive to the environment of Yarra Park.

### Social effects

The amendment will achieve social benefits as it will promote physical enhancements to the park to enable its continued use, not only as home of the MCG and Punt Road Oval, but also as a place providing peaceful retreat on non-event days.

The Master Plan envisages Yarra Park as a place that honours and celebrates the connections between country, culture, and history, while also serving as a vibrant space for community celebration and gathering.

An Arts and Culture Strategy to be required by the Incorporated Plan proposed under the amendment, will coordinate the storytelling of Yarra Park's history, incorporating both Indigenous and historic values. A dedicated celebration space, identified as an opportunity within the amendment, will honour the site's significance as a place for gathering and celebration.

Upgrades to the northern recreational space will create facilities catering to users of all ages and access requirements, providing an intergenerational facility.

A dedicated gathering space will serve as a central meeting point and refuge from crowds on event days, and as a meeting point for visitor groups on non-event days. Additionally, upgrades to pathways throughout the park will focus on making them universally accessible. A Night-time Strategy will enhance the experience for all users by increasing visibility and improving perceptions of safety during evening hours.

A Crowded Places Safety Strategy will be prepared to protect people within Yarra Park, including those travelling to and from the MCG, on the concourse, and during

event activations.

### Economic effects

The amendment will promote the delivery of functional improvements at Yarra Park which will strengthen the park's ability to support its occasional events. These upgrades will provide the infrastructure needed to manage current event demands more effectively, enhancing the ongoing contribution of Yarra Park to local and regional economic development.

### **Does the amendment address climate change?**

The amendment proactively addresses the impacts of climate change. Climate change is at the forefront of future tree management within Yarra Park. A Tree Management and Replacement Strategy is to consider options for 'climate resilient' species to be used as replacements where necessary.

As part of this amendment, new planting is proposed to provide shade in accessible areas throughout Yarra Park. This initiative aims to mitigate the effects of hotter days resulting from climate change. By strategically planting trees and vegetation, the park will offer cooler, shaded areas that enhance comfort for visitors and promote outdoor activities even during warmer weather.

Additionally, this amendment promotes sustainable travel options, reducing reliance on cars and consequently lowering emissions. By encouraging the use of public transport, cycling, walking, and micromobility solutions, the amendment seeks to create a more environmentally friendly and efficient transportation network.

### **Does the amendment address relevant bushfire risk?**

The land is not located within the Bushfire Management Overlay, nor within a designated Bushfire Prone Area. The amendment will not increase the risk to life, property, infrastructure or the natural environment from bushfire.

### **Does the amendment comply with the requirements of any other Minister's Direction applicable to the amendment?**

Section 12(1a) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 requires that in preparing an amendment, a planning authority must have regard to the Minister's Directions.

#### Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes

The amendment is consistent with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes under section 7(5) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

#### Ministerial Direction No. 11 Strategic Assessment of Amendments

The amendment complies with Ministerial Direction No. 11 (Strategic Assessment of Amendments) under section 12 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The amendment is consistent with this direction which ensures a comprehensive strategic evaluation of a planning scheme amendment and the outcomes it

produces.

### Ministerial Direction No. 22 Climate Consideration

This Ministerial Direction is not applicable to the amendment as it does not meet the threshold described at Paragraph 3(c). The amendment would not result in a significant change to or intensification of the use of the land, nor would it result in a new use and development of land that may be exposed to a natural hazard arising from the impacts of climate change.

### **How does the amendment support or implement the Planning Policy Framework and any adopted State policy?**

The implementation of the Yarra Park Master Plan will advance many of the key policy directions in Plan for Victoria (Department of Transport and Planning, 2025).

Yarra Park is included in Melbourne's Sports and Entertainment Precinct. Policies are directed towards strengthening this precinct as Victoria's premier sport, recreation and entertainment destination.

The proposed amendment supports and implements the objectives, strategies and policies of the Planning Policy Framework. The amendment supports the Planning Policy Framework as follows:

- In alignment with Clause 15.01-1S (Urban Design), the proposed amendment prioritises the creation of safe, healthy, functional, and enjoyable urban environment. The Master Plan respects Yarra Park's unique character, cultural identity, and natural features, integrating these elements into the design to create a harmonious and contextually appropriate environment. The plan also supports public realm amenity and access by improving pathways, lighting, and public transport access, ensuring safe and convenient access for pedestrians and cyclists. Landscaping opportunities are included to enhance the park's attractiveness, safety, and amenity, contributing to a more pleasant and inviting public space.
- Clause 15.01-1R (Urban Design – Metropolitan Melbourne) focuses on creating a distinctive and liveable city with quality design and amenity. The proposed enhancements to Yarra Park will assist in contributing to Melbourne's reputation as a distinctive and liveable city by creating through the creating of a distinctive space, enjoyable for all users. The plan supports Melbourne's network of boulevards through the retention of the existing boulevards in Yarra Park and provides spaces and facilities for cultural activities, fostering the growth of Melbourne's cultural precincts and creative industries.
- Clause 15.01-1L-02 (Signs) requires that signs in the Public Park and Recreation zone in the City of Melbourne be sympathetic to the heritage and landscape character of the area and minimise their impact on the immediate surroundings. The amendment aligns with this clause by providing an

opportunity through the Master Plan to review existing signs throughout Yarra Park and develop a new signage suite for future upgrades. As part of the Incorporated Document, a comprehensive signage suite for information and wayfinding will be developed. This suite will guide the design of signs in Yarra Park, ensuring they are accessible, clearly communicate information, and respect heritage values. Additionally, the Incorporated Document includes provisions for the display of advertising signs at Yarra Park and requires an advertising strategy that addresses various advertising sign objectives, aligning with the objectives of Clause 15.01-1L-02 (Signs).

- The amendment aligns with Clause 15.01-4S (Healthy Neighbourhoods) which seeks to create neighbourhoods that promote healthy and active living and community wellbeing. This includes developing connected, safe, pleasant, and attractive walking and cycling networks that encourage daily physical activity and provide amenities and protection for all weather conditions. The amendment supports improvements to the pathways within Yarra Park to ensure they are universally accessible, allowing people of all ages and abilities to use the park. It also promotes bicycle and micromobility circulation and safety by exploring opportunities for pathway upgrades and, where appropriate, separating cyclists from micromobility users. The amendment proposes temporary, accessible hubs for the micromobility shuttle (the G-train), which will provide shelter, seating, and lighting for users, and be co-located with public transport nodes and drop-off/pick-up points. A Night-time Strategy is also proposed to enhance visibility and improve perceptions of safety in Yarra Park during night hours, encouraging park use and contributing to the creation of a healthy neighbourhood.
- The amendment responds to Clause 15.03-1S (Heritage Conservation), through the incorporation of measures to protect and enhance Yarra Park's natural and man-made heritage, ensuring its historical significance of Yarra Park preserved. Any development within the park will respect and enhance identified heritage values.
- The amendment is responsive to policy around Aboriginal Cultural Heritage (Clause 15.03-2S). The Master Plan has been prepared in consultation with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung. The Incorporated Document includes measures to protect and conserve both pre-contact and post-contact Aboriginal cultural heritage sites within Yarra Park.
- The Master Plan will enhance Yarra Park's appeal as a desirable tourist destination, in alignment with Clause 17.04-1R (Tourism in Metropolitan Melbourne), through the improvement of Yarra Park's facilities and amenities. The Master Plan supports artistic and cultural life through investigating opportunities to integrate artistic expressions by local artists into the MCG concourse, enriching Melbourne's cultural landscape. Upgrades to public facilities and improved access ensure a better experience for visitors, supporting tourism growth. Moreover, the Master Plan incorporates safety

measures, such as improved lighting and pathways, to ensure a secure environment for all users.

### **Is the amendment consistent with the delivery of the relevant housing target set out in the Planning Policy Framework?**

The amendment does not address housing delivery as it is specifically focused on guiding the long-term evolution of Yarra Park. Its aim is to ensure the park continues to serve as the home of the Melbourne Cricket Ground and remains a recreational space for visitors.

### **How does the amendment support or implement the Municipal Strategic Statement?**

This Amendment will support and implement the following clauses of the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS):

- The amendment prioritises the protection and enhancement of Yarra Park's habitat, in alignment with Clause 02.03-2 (Biodiversity and Waterways). It includes measures to preserve existing natural features and encourages the planting of indigenous vegetation. By integrating native plants, the Master Plan supports local biodiversity and works to create a more resilient ecosystem.
- Consistent with Clause 02.03-4 (Built Environment and Heritage), the amendment seeks to protect and enhance Yarra Park's distinctive physical character and heritage, reinforcing the park's importance within Melbourne's open space network. It ensures the preservation of the park's historical and cultural significance. The Master Plan aims to improve public realm permeability, legibility, and flexibility, making the park more accessible and navigable for all visitors.
- In accordance with Clause 02.03-6 (Economic Development), the amendment supports this policy by promoting tourism at sports and entertainment venues, as well as convention and cultural facilities within Yarra Park.
- Aligned with Clause 02.03-8 (Infrastructure – Public Open Space), the amendment maintains and enhances Melbourne's public open space network. It promotes the greening of the city through additional planting and the preservation of parkland.
- In accordance with Clause 02.03-7 (Transport), the Master Plan plans for path upgrades to establish a comprehensive, safe, comfortable, and convenient pedestrian and cycling network. The plan aims to maximise the use of public transport by enhancing internal pathways that provide seamless access to surrounding public transport nodes. Additionally, the upgraded G-Train routes will efficiently transport users between public transport hubs and the MCG concourse, further improving connectivity and convenience for all visitors.

### **Does the amendment make proper use of the Victoria Planning**

## **Provisions?**

The amendment effectively utilises the Victoria Planning Provisions by applying the Specific Controls Overlay to the site. It updates the schedules to Clause 45.12 and 72.04 to incorporate the 'Yarra Park Master Plan Incorporated Document, 2026'. Additionally, it revises Clause 72.01 to update the land included in the Yarra Park Master Plan area, in which the Minister for Planning is the responsible authority.

In the absence of specific planning controls, upgrades to the park may be subject to multiple permit requirements under the Melbourne Planning Scheme. The Specific Controls Overlay and associated Incorporated Document have the effect of exempting these works from the usual requirements of the planning schemes and allowing the use and development of land for the project in accordance with the specific controls of the incorporated document. The Incorporated Document allows for a coordinated and consistent approach to the use and development of land for the project.

Rather than a direct replacement of the Master Plan under Clause 51.01, the proposed amendment uses a Specific Controls Overlay to provide a more transparent mechanism to identify land subject to an Incorporated Document.

## **How does the amendment address the views of any relevant agency?**

The consultation process involved seeking input from relevant agencies through targeted workshops and meetings. These agencies and organisations included Melbourne City Council, the Department of Transport, the Office of the Victorian Government Architect, Heritage Victoria, the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions, the Yarra Park Advisory Committee, and the Melbourne Cricket Ground Trust.

This collaborative approach allowed for the refinement of the opportunities within the Yarra Park Master Plan, ensuring that the identified projects were both appropriate and genuinely deliverable.

## **Does the amendment address relevant requirements of the Transport Integration Act 2010?**

While the proposed amendment is not considered to have a direct impact on the Transport Integration Act 2010 or transport system, it will facilitate a upgrades to Yarra Park which has proximate access to public transport systems and established road networks and in this regard is considered to achieve the transport system objectives specified in Division 2 of Part 2 of the Transport Integration Act 2010.

## **How does the amendment have regard to the principles set out in**

## **the *Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murrong) Act 2017* in relation to Yarra River land and other land, the use or development of which may affect Yarra River land?**

Yarra Park falls in the Birrarung catchment and is covered in the Yarra Strategic Plan Study area. Yarra Park is a culturally important place for Traditional Owners. It is a gathering place and retains tangible culture in the form of remnant scarred trees.

The amendment is consistent with the principles set out in Part 2 of the *Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murrong) Act 2017*, which it is required to have regard to. In particular, the amendment supports the following principles:

- Responding to threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, the amendment focuses on 'climate resilient' species in the tree replacement strategy and the provision of shade trees in accessible areas throughout Yarra Park.
- In support of utilizing public open space for recreational and community purposes, the Yarra Park Master Plan aims to undertake physical improvements within the park to enhance its functionality and support its use for recreational and community purposes.
- Protecting native vegetation and creating new habitat connections. Indigenous understorey planting in is proposed to be addressed in the Tree Management and Replacement Strategy in appropriate locations and in consultation with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Traditional Owners.
- Involving Traditional Owners and other stakeholders in the development of the Yarra Park Master Plan. The Yarra Park Master Plan 2026 has been developed with extensive community and stakeholder engagement, including input from Traditional Owners.
- Aboriginal cultural values, heritage and knowledge of Yarra River land should be acknowledged, reflected, protected and promoted. The Arts and Culture Strategy, part of this amendment, aims to coordinate the storytelling of Yarra Park's history, considering both Indigenous and non-Indigenous values. A celebration space is proposed to honour the site's importance as a place for gathering and celebration. Additionally, opportunities to integrate artistic expressions by local artists will be explored. The proposed signage suite will guide the installation of permanent information signage in the park.

Through these measures, the amendment actively supports the principles in Part 2 of the *Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murrong) Act 2017*, contributing to integrated planning that enhances the health and amenity of Birrarung (the Yarra River) as one living, integrated natural entity.

## **What impact will the new planning provisions have on the resource and administrative costs of the responsible authority?**

The new provisions will not have an impact on the resource or administrative costs of the responsible authority. The Minister for Planning is the Responsible Authority for

administering and enforcing the scheme for land included in the Yarra Park Master Plan Area, which will continue to be the case after this amendment. The specific control allows a clear process for assessment of any plans and reports lodged. The Incorporated Document will also allow for the ongoing use and upgrade works to Yarra Park without unnecessary or inefficient approval requirements.

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## Attachment 1 – Mapping reference table

Land Affected	Mapping Reference	Address	Proposed Zone changes	Proposed Overlay changes	Proposed deletion changes
Yarra Park  The Specific Controls Overlay extent follows the property boundary of the area included in the <i>Yarra Park Master Plan 2026</i>	Melbourne C487melb  SCOMap09 Exhibition	Yarra Park	N/A	Apply SCOXX	N/A

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