

EDINBURGH GARDENS

**LANDSCAPE STUDY**

Prepared for **the**

**CITY OF FITZROY**

LANDFORM **AUSTRALIA PTY LTD**

Landscape Planning **and** Conservation Consultants

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**Plate I** **From** an **infra**-red aerial photograph of the Edinburgh Gardens and its surrounding area taken c. 1977. This was prior to removal **of the** railway and the redevelopment of the Oval.

## INTRODUCTION

As the only substantial **area of parkland in** Fitzroy, **the** Edinburgh Gardens deserve particular **care**. This has **not** always been the case in the past, and **in** fact the **Gardens** have a long history **of** abuse and alienation of land **to other** purposes of **which** the worst episode was sub-division for the State Railways **in the late** 1880s. Now **that** the railway has at last been **removed**, the City is **presented with** a golden opportunity to reverse **this** decline **and restore the Gardens to their proper** role as a **well** integrated **and** attractive inner city **park serving** the passive and active recreation needs of **the** local **community**. That is the central theme of this report. In due course the industrial land **which** intrudes on the Gardens **will** also be converted back into parkland.

Fitzroy is very much aware of its history, although the background of the Edinburgh **Gardens** has **to date** been somewhat **obscure**. The brief **for** this **landscape** study was strongly oriented to conservation, which meant **that** sufficient research **had to be** done to clarify the sequence of development of **the Gardens** with a view **to determining the significant** features **and** guiding future work. Without doubt, the best feature of the Gardens today is the canopy of **mature** exotic trees that dates **in** large part from the **late** nineteenth century. These trees are mostly planted **in** avenues along the path system of slightly earlier date which links to the surrounding streets and perpetuates **the through**-passage needs **of** the **pedestrians** of that **era**. **Paths and** trees provide **the** basic design and structure of **the park** which, although pragmatic in origin **and** essentially uninspired, are characteristic of many of the simpler town **parks** of **its period** and well worth preserving.

The sports ground **in the** south-west corner **of** the park (formerly the Cricket Ground and now redeveloped as the Community Oval) dates **from the** 1860s **and in** fact predates by several years the effort **to develop** the remainder **of** the park **as** a decorative public **garden**. The passive and active recreational uses of the park have always existed side by side. Fitzroy has carried out an extensive program **of** improvements to the Community Oval and its facilities in recent years and the area has been agreed to be substantially outside the scope of the present study.

It was accepted **at the outset that** large amounts of development funding **are** unlikely to be available, **so that** the **consultant's** recommendations **for** improvements **to the** Gardens were required to be correspondingly modest. **The basic** structure of **the park** has been respected and the established **patterns** of recreational use have been accepted. The **recommendations** can be viewed as the **minimal** improvements in design **and** management needed to make the park work **properly** in its present combination of roles, while upgrading **its** horticultural presentation to an acceptable level **and** conserving its best

features for the future.

The report is **designed to be easy to use**. All the more important recommendations are summarized in Section 1 **and** references are provided to the appropriate **sub-sections** of the text. The more **detailed** recommendations are **summarized at the end of each sub-section**. A **Master Plan** is reproduced at a reduced scale at the end **of** the report. As a matter of convenience, the research **notes** on the history of the Gardens have been set apart as an appendix.

Grateful thanks must be **expressed** to the councillors and staff **of the** City of Fitzroy for their encouragement and help, **and in** particular to Cr. Margaret Righton, Mike Simpson, Director of Technical Services, **and Ian Laurens**, Superintendent of **the Parks and Gardens** Department. Members **of** the Fitzroy **Open Space** Advisory Committee **provided** valuable comments during preparation **of the report** and their contribution is **acknowledged** with thanks. A debt is owed **to** Frank Keenan O.B.E. **and** to John Neylan of the T.R.A.I. **whose** suggestions on horticultural and turf matters, respectively, **were** of much value.

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## 1.0 SUMMARY **OF** PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATIONS

i) A program to reduce the clutter **and** restore the usable **open** space and scenic quality of the

north-central section of the Gardens, reversing the harmful effects of railways occupation.

**This would** involve:

Properly absorbing the old railway line back **into** the Gardens after relocating the

bicycle path onto the existing path to the east. (See Section 2.1)

Demolition of the unused plant nursery facilities. (See Sections **2.1** and 3.1)

Eventual demolition of the house **and** relocation of the parks depot out of the Gardens. (See Sections 2.1 **and** 3.1)

Expension and improvement of the Primary School play area. (See Sections 2.1 **and** 3.7)

Removal **of** the Ladies' Bowling Club facilities. Amalgamation of **the** two clubs to be considered. (See Sections 2.1 **and** 3.3)

Removal of the derelict **fenced** enclosures formerly used for floral displays. (See Section 4.3)

Some additional planting and the possible development of the central section with a small lake. (See Section 2.1 and 4.6)

11) A program to redevelop as parkland the National Can and Canterbury Timber sites, which

were formerly a part of the Gardens, when this land becomes available. (See Section 2.2)

iii) A program to develop the Bunge, Canterbury Timber and Martin sites **as a future**

community sports and recreation **centre** if this land can be obtained. (**See** Section 2.3)

iv) A basic tree maintenance program. (See Section **4.1**)

v) Improved standards of turf maintenance and irrigation. (See Section 4.2)

vi) Improvements to the St Georges Road / Brunswick **Street** frontage, especially **as** regards

the appearance of the Bowling Club. (See Sections 3.2, 4.3 and **4.6**)

vii) A tree planting scheme to improve the Alfred Crescent frontage. (See Sections 4.1 and 4.6)

## **2.0 PARKS AND RECREATION POTENTIAL OF RAILWAY LAND**



Construction of the railway branch line **in** 1888 was a calamity **for** the Edinburgh Gardens far greater **than** the mere loss of **8 acres** **of land**, **for** not only did it sever the park **into** two less attractive and **less useful** halves (**kept** separate by tracks, fencing and hedges) **but it** destroyed most **of the** open **space and** recreational potential **of the quietest and** most secluded central portion of the grounds. The Gardens **were** invaded by **noisy**, grimy locomotives and rolling stock. The area excised from the southern end of the grounds became the site for railway station structures, **dusty** sidings **and** industry, the descendants **of** which still **occupy** the site today. These developments undoubtedly contributed to the **decay** of the surrounding residential area and would have led to a devaluation in general public appreciation of the park which seems to have **slipped**, **at least** in parts, **to** the status of public land suitable as a site for Council depots **and** other unattractively designed facilities.

Construction **of the** railway would have limited and distorted the improvement **and** planting program initiated by the Council and the Lands Department in 1883. **After** 1888 **much** attention seems to have been given to screen planting the railway fences and modifying the path system. **It** is a matter **for** conjecture **what** might **have** been done to improve **the** central portion **of** the grounds had the railway not been built. Improvements in other old Melbourne parks suggest that a decorative lake (Treasury Gardens, Carlton Gardens, Queen Victoria Gardens) **or** woodland ares (Fitzroy Gardens) might have been developed.

The enormous potential ~~for~~ upgrading the Gardens once the railway was removed seems not to have been considered or evaluated in the Fitzroy Landscape Study of 1979. **It is** appropriate to **do** so here.

The railway land is considered below **in** three parts. (See **Sketch Plan 1 .** ) *Parts A and B were originally part of the Gardens and were owned jointly by Fitzroy and the Government under crown grants issued in 1882 and 1883. They were transferred to the Railways in 1888. (This form of title is unusual. Most of the old Melbourne parks were not the subject of crown grants and have remained crown land, whereas the balance of the Edinburgh Gardens persists today in joint ownership under the original crown grants.)* The Railway Line Working Party Report of 1986 recommends **the** eventual redevelopment of this land as open space, with transfer of ownership from the State Transport Authority to the Ministry of Conservation, Forests **and** Lands, apparently **in** the mistaken belief that it was crown land at the time of **its** transfer **to** the Railways as was probably the case with Royal Park. **It seems appropriate that Fitzroy should** insist **on** recovering *its former joint ownership of this land.*

Part C was never part of the Gardens, being private property and public **road** at the time of **its** resumption **for** the Railways. The Working Party Report recommends that the northern section **be** transferred to the Ministry of Housing **for** redevelopment as public **housing**, **and** that the southern section be sold off to industry. Fitzroy Council is opposed to this

proposal **and** wishes to see the land redeveloped **for** parkland, community **and** recreational uses as an extension to the Gardens. The potential of **this** land for **these** uses **is** considered below.

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Plate 2 The former railway **track**, now paved **as** a little-used pathway for cyclists and pedestrians, terminates at the National Can and Canterbury Timber sites.

These industrial sites occupy land that was originally part of **the** Gardens.

**Plate 3** Looking north along the former railway track. The unsightly fences and structures of the Ladies' Bowling Club compromise the amenity of this important **central** area. Sections of privet hedge remain from railway **days**.

## 2.1 FORMER RAILWAY TRACK IN GARDENS (PART A)

The Working Party Report recommends **that this land** be developed as open space, but **it has**, in effect, already been incorporated back **into** the Gardens by informal agreement **with the State Transport Authority**. The **Railways** initially fenced off only a **portion of the two** chain wide reserve given to them **in 1888 and the** remaining land continued as parkland. **In 1937** the fenced area was **further** reduced in width, by agreement between **Fitzroy and the Railways**, and the **excess** land was incorporated in the park. After the railway track was taken up **in 1981 (?)** the subsequent redevelopment by the City was tentative - just a general clean-up, establishment of grass, and asphalt **over the** ballast **for a new** pedestrian/bicycle **path**. No trees **have** been planted. Ragged sections **of** the old privet hedge remain.

North of Alfred Crescent a path has been built along the old railway easement as far as Apperley Street. It is intended that this connection will eventually be improved as a landscaped pedestrian and cycle link between the Edinburgh Gardens **and** the strip of parkland connecting Royal Park **and** the Merri Creek.

Within the Gardens the new path follows the sweeping reverse curve of the railway line which was excavated somewhat **below natural** surface levels **and** with a wide drainage swale down both sides. The **path** crosses Alfred Crescent at the railway crossing, which remains as a traffic hump. Two **additional** paths enter the **park** close to this point, producing a situation where one path is certainly superfluous and could be removed. The steam era **is** memorialized in the fine locomotive which has been set up **for** children's play nearby.

The opportunity should be **taken** to improve this section **of** the **park** by restoring **its** open space character to the pre-railway **situation**. Basic works to achieve this would involve relocating the bicycle route across **to the** existing path to the east (as shown **on** Sketch Plan 2) so **that** the bicycle path **can** be removed and the area filled to restore natural contours.

The possibilities for upgrading this area would be greatly enhanced **if** the parks depot (including the nursery **and** residence) **and** the Ladies' Bowling Club were relocated **as**

recommended in Sections 3.1 **and** 3.3. Further improvements could include an enlarged school play area taking **in** the existing depot **site**. (The extra play area would be desirable in itself but it would also reduce the level of wear and **tear** on the turf which is at present quite acute.) To the south, the central **section of the** Gardens between **the** <sup>two</sup> main east west **paths** and the **two** main north-south **paths could be redeveloped as a** landscape focus **for** the whole **park**. As **noted in** Section 4.6, a lake would be an appropriate feature **for** this area. Replanting here should include advanced trees for the various gaps in the **elm avenues** along the main paths.

Recommendations:

- i) **Relocation of the bicycle route** (see Sketch **Plan 2**); removal of the railway **path**; filling **and** grading **to** natural **contours**; **turfing** and installation of sprinklers.
- ii) Removal **of the depot, plant nursery and** residence. (See **Section 3.1**) iii) Redevelopment **of this area as parkland with an enlarged play area for the primary school.**
- iv) Removal **of the Ladies' Bowling Club.** (See Section 3.3)
- v) Redevelopment **of this area with a decorative lake or other landscape** feature **as the central focus for the Gardens.** (See Section 4.6) vi) Replanting **advanced elms** to fill **the** gaps along **the** main **paths**.

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EXISTING

PATH ON RAILWAY

TRACK

ALTERNATIVE.

ROUTES ON EXISTING

PATHS

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SKETCH PLAN 2.

BICYCLE PATH.

Lessee

West side

Canterbury Timber

## 2.2 INDUSTRIAL LAND IN GARDENS (PART 8)

The Railway **Land** Working Party Report recommends **that** this area **of** about 4.2 acres (1.8 hectares) which was part **of** the **Gardens prior to 1888, be redeveloped as open space.** It is presently held under **lease from** the State Transport Authority as follows:

Use

**Timber** reprocessing  
and storage

**Lease** (per RLWPR)

30 year **term Expires** in 2002

Central section

**Canterbury Timber**

**Believed to expire**  
in 2002

Timber storage

East side

National Can

50 year term **Expires** 2021

Can manufacture and used  
can collection

The Working Party Report **recommends** that all industrial leases on railway **land** be allowed to run their full **course**. Disappointingly, *Fitzroy will have to wait 15 and 34 years, respectively, before these sites become available for redevelopment parkland*, unless **the** funds can be **found** to buy out **the** lessees. In the **meantime**, neither of these industries **is** appropriate **in** contiguity with public parkland. National Can presents a reasonably neat **exterior** to the park, but it generates noise audible for a considerable distance as well **as unpleasant** paint fumes **from** time **to** time. Canterbury Timber is untidy **to** outward appearance as well as noisy when timber **is** processed. Both factories draw heavy transports to **the area**.

The **beneficiary** of this situation is the **State** Transport Authority which **earns** a rental income by leasing former parkland. It seems extraordinary that land resumed **for** a railway from crown granted public **parkland** should be **tied up** for such a length of **time in industrial use** after **the** railway has ceased to function. *Legal matters are beyond the scope of this study and it is suggested that the City of Fitzroy seek appropriate legal advice.*

*There may,*

*for example, be a case for the City to claim a joint share in the rental income over the life of these leases.*

It is sufficient **for the** purposes of this report **to note** that **the land** will become available for **incorporation in the park at some later date**, **with** the Canterbury Timbers site **probably** becoming available first. External examination of the structures indicates **that it** would not **be appropriate to** retain any of them **for** recreational purposes. It is recommended **that the** land be cleared for redevelopment as **open space**. The most desirable open space development should be assessed **at a future date a few years** in advance of hand-over **of the National can site**. **One** possible use could be as an additional sports ground for local schools.

Recommendations, **phase one development, for the Canterbury Timber site:**

- i) Demolition, **clearing, filling and** grading; establishment **of turf cover and installation of** an automatic sprinkler system.
- ii) Replanting **of avenue trees along the main north south** walk beside **the** Community Oval (where the avenue was removed in 1937) . **Thinning and clean up of the elms beside the** tennis courts. **Planting trees**

**in peripheral areas.**

iii) **Construction of a connection between Freeman Street and Alfred Crescent (either a pedestrian/cycle path or a local-traffic-only street, depending on local needs).**

Recommendations, **phase two development, for the National can**  
site:

- i) Demolition, **clearing**, filling **and** grading **to** establish levels;  
establishment of turf **cover and** installation of an automatic sprinkler system.
- ii) **Planting** trees **along the** walks **and in peripheral** areas.
- iii) Redevelopment **of the combined areas for active or passive**  
recreation  
**as necessary.**

**Plate 4** The former railway yard looking north past the pedestrian over **pass** to the Canterbury Timber and National Can sites. **The** area north of the overpass was resumed **from** the **Gardens** for Railway's use **in** 1888.

**Plate 5** **The former** SEC briquette shed, now used as a timber **store**. If acquired, this building and the adjacent property would have potential for **redevelopment** as a sports and recreation centre set in **a** parkland extension of the Gardens.

## 2.3 INDUSTRIAL LAND BETWEEN GARDENS AND QUEENS ROAD (PART C)

This site covers about 3.5 acres (1.4 hectares) of the former station and siding and was never part of the Gardens. The Railway Land Working Party Report recommends transfer of the northern section to the Ministry of Housing for development of public housing, and continuation of the present industrial use and zoning at the southern end with eventual sale to private owners. Development for housing would involve removal of the railway footbridge. The land is presently held under lease from the State Transport Authority as follows:

Lessee	Lease (Per RLWPR)	Use
West side (old briquette shed)	Canterbury Timber	
	30 year term	
	Expires 2002	Timber storage
Central	Bunge Australia	
	12 year term	
	Expires 1993	Wharehousing
S-E corner	Martin & Co	
	Expires 1991	Hardware retailing

Much of **the** land around the buildings is derelict and dusty former railway siding which appears not to be subject to leasehold occupation. Some **of** this area **is** used for vehicular access and parking.

**The** principal improvements **on** the site are the former SEC briquette shed and the Bunge store. These buildings would have some potential for conversion for use as sports and recreation halls **if** the **land** were to be developed **as** a community sports **and recreation** centre. Internal **clear** spans and **clear heights** are the principal limiting factors.

The briquette **shed** has a clear span **of** **17.1** metres reducing to **16.2** at the southern **end**. Its **clear** height appears to be about 7.5 metres **which** is significantly less **than** the 9.1 metres **needed** for tennis, badminton, etc. at the level of international competition. Nevertheless, the building's dimensions would be sufficient for a sports hall containing two basketball courts to a recreational standard suitable **for** schools use, two tennis **courts** (after **minor** structural alterations) and areas for badminton, table tennis, gymnasium practice, etc. plus changing room and club **room** facilities. The building **has** a heavy timber frame construction that appears on brief examination to **be in fair** condition, but sections **of the corrugated iron wall** and roof cladding are **in poor** shape. Minimal improvements **for use** as a very basic **sports hall** would have to include concrete **flooring** with appropriate surfacing, repairs to wall **and** roof cladding, cladding of **open** wall areas, painting, lighting **and** internal **fitting** out. The building would probably be impossible to heat. Externally, **the** building is unattractive **and** its considerable bulk dominates **the** adjacent residential streets. Not much can be **done** to ameliorate this, **although** a decent paint **job and a** thicker belt of trees along Napier Street would help. The roadway in Napier Street could be made narrower **to allow** for additional **landscaping**.

**The** Bunge store is a good quality, **modern**, steel framed structure that **appears to have** an internal clear span of about 12 metres. This limits its potential to use as a recreation hall for badminton, **table** tennis, squash, bowls, archery, cricket nets, gymnasium practice, **etc. plus** changing room and club **room** facilities. **Minimal** improvements would have to include appropriate floor surfacing, lighting **and fitting** out.

The **remaining land** around the buildings would be suitable **for** development as recreational open space that could include a variety **of** facilities such **as** cricket nets, **tennis courts**, basketball courts, a children's playground, **a** barbecue area **and** adequate off street parking. A landscaped **path** system could **link** the Queens **Parade frontage** through to the southern end of the **Gardens**.



If this project were to proceed, it would **be** appropriate to reconsider the possibility of improved pedestrian access **across Queens parade on the** Napier Street alignment **and**, further south, a fly-over across Alexandra Parade. **These have** been considered **in** the past **in** the context **of** improvements to Napier Street as a **pedestrian priority** zone.

Recommendations:

- i) **Further examination of the possibility of acquiring this site.** ii)  
**Further study of the capabilities of the site and buildings** for redevelopment as a community sports and **recreation** centre **set in a** parkland.
- ii) **Examination of the possibilities for improved pedestrian access across Queens Parade and Alexandra Parade on the** Napier Street alignment.



### 3.1 PARKS DEPOT , PLANT NURSERY & SUPERINTENDENT'S HOUSE

This service area is a most **inappropriate use of prime** parkland and **has** an adverse impact **on** the Gardens **far** greater than **its** area of about one acre **would** suggest. It occupies a prominent location **in the** well frequented **north-central** section **of the Gardens** **that** could otherwise **be** valuable open space. The complex **appears to have** grown **over many years** as a convenient adjunct to the original gardener's cottage that was built in **the** 1870s directly **behind** the present **house**. The railway easement **formed** its boundary **on** the eastern side **until** recent years. The boundary fences of **chain** wire mesh are an eyesore **and** have not been properly screen planted, allowing views to the stored machinery **and untidy** structures within. Most of the glasshouses and shadehouses are in need **of** extensive repair **and** the plants they contain are mostly pot-bound **and** degenerating. Because the depot serves the parks and street tree needs of all Fitzroy it draws a flow of council **and** employee vehicles **in** and out of the park. These **pass** beside the children's playground and pose a potential danger to the **public**. Lastly in **this** list of obvious problems, the depot confines the North Fitzroy Primary School play area with the result that the turf there **is** severely overstressed.

The area has served a number of functions:

- A parks depot with staff car parking, facilities **for** vehicle and equipment storage, maintenance workshop, administration **office**, staff change room and lunch room.
- Accommodation for the Parks Superintendent in an **area** where his presence **would** enhance security,
- A plant nursery with areas **for** growing on street trees to planting out size, plant propagating facilities for raising bedding plants to planting out size, and glasshouse and shadehouse facilities **for** the cultivation and display of potted plants.

The Superintendent has explained that plant raising activities have been more or less abandoned since the early 1970s when Council directed that the extensive displays of bedded flowers along Rushall Crescent, Alexandra Parade and in the Edinburgh Gardens should be curtailed in favour of **increased** efforts **on** street improvements over a wider area. At about the same time Council ceased to hold the traditional June mayoral **ball** which was the principal **use for** the extensive reserve of palms **and** other potted plants. Public open house displays **of the** glasshouses **and** shadehouses were subsequently abandoned. **Some** limited recent **use** has been made of the nursery beds for growing **on** smaller purchased planes and other trees to a modest size. We suggest **that** this **is** an uneconomic activity. Experience in Fitzroy shows that when planting out street and park trees **the** larger trees are **the** best since **far less** prone to vandalism. Fitzroy's parks department does not have the specialist horticultural knowledge and equipment **needed** to **produce** quality advanced trees at a cost comparable with that of commercial growers. The same argument applies

to bedding plants should **Council** decide to re-introduce a limited amount of floral bedding in future.

*It is apparent that Fitzroy does not need a plant nursery at all, now or in the foreseeable future, merely a small holding area for the temporary storage of purchased plants.* Landscaping trees and plants should be bought from commercial growers or the MCC. Tubbed plants for functions should be rented from commercial suppliers or the MCC. (It is acknowledged that parks staff may oppose dismantling of the nursery in the hope that its function be restored at some later date.) Alternative uses that have been mooted in the past for the nursery, such as a school garden or a community garden, would be unsympathetic to the surrounding parkland and impractical to maintain.

*The parks depot on the other hand is a necessary facility. It should desirably be located outside the Gardens but in an area of reasonable proximity.* A site of about half an acre should be ample. Possible locations might be the Fitzroy Sand and Gravel site, a

**Plate 6** Untidy **fences** and structures of the depot **intrude** on **this northern part of** the Gardens, **spoiling** the **view** and limiting the extent of the school play area. **The steam** locomotive, always popular with children, **can** be seen to the east. **Plate 7** The depot **and** nursery seen from the south. Removal of these facilities, and relocation of the path, would give the opportunity for attractive restoration **of** this area as parkland.



small portion of the Canterbury Timbers site at the intersection of Freeman and Napier Streets **or** the Martin & Co site **on** Queens **Parade**, but there are probably many other locations **in the** area **that** would **be** suitable.

The Superintendent's house appears to date **from** the **early** 1960s. Its suburban architectural style **and** materials (cream brick) **are** inappropriate for a structure **in** a nineteenth century **park**. The primary security function of the **house** is to deter theft and vandalism in the depot. **Also, there** are some advantages in having the Superintendent **on** site for the general night time surveillance **and** security of **the** Gardens. **(This at some risk to the Superintendent and his family!)** On balance it appears probable that the **Gardens can** get along without this facility as do several other comparable inner Melbourne parks. It is *suggested that if the funds can be found to relocate the depot then the house should also be demolished*

**Recommendations:**

- i) Immediate **demolition of the** nursery facilities **and** realignment of the fences. **Incorporation of the excess area** back into the Gardens.
- ii) **Demolition of the** house **and** relocation of the parks depot to a suitable site **outside the** Gardens **as soon** as practicable. **Restoration of the area as parkland. (See Section 2.1)**

Plate 8 Untidy fences, gaudy paint **colours**, cheap storage structures and a general lack of screen planting all work to compromise the potentially attractive leasehold of the Fitzroy Bowling Club.

**Plate 9 Junk**, untidy storage facilities and poor quality landscaping in **the Club's** grounds **mar this** section of the frontage to St Georges Road, the principal street frontage **of** the Gardens.



### 3.2 BOWLING CLUB

The first bowling green on this site was set **up** by the Fitzroy Cricket Club in 1877.

**Today**, the **Fitzroy** Bowling Club **has a** substantial, all-male membership **and** excellent recreational facilities that include two greens **for a** total of 16 links, plus a **good** quality, brick clubhouse **with a** manager's residence above. The site of 18 2r 10p (0.65 hectare) is leased **from** the City of Fitzroy under a 21 year lease that expires on 21st of September 1989. (**The rent** is nominal but the club is rated. Recent improvements **to** the club were financed by **loan** moneys provided by **the** City **and on** which interest is paid.) The **site** is **almost** fully developed although there appears to be sufficient space **in** the north east **corner** to extend the green **for an extra** two links. These space restrictions **have** resulted **in the** modern clubhouse being built without a set back from the street, unfortunate **for** a park structure but about which nothing can now be done.

The greens are maintained in good condition and the floral edgings are well **done**. However, the peripheral areas **are in poor** shape **and** untidy giving **an** unfavourable impression **from** the outside. Lawn areas and the plantings of mixed shrubs and small trees are generally **run** down and unthrifty. A recently planted photinia hedge has failed in places. These are problems **that** would be easily solved by a little extra attention to watering and maintenance, plus appropriate replacement planting.

The greenery **and** bustle of the club **make** an important contribution **to the** interest and streetscape of Brunswick Street, **but the** view **in** is greatly marred by the collection of equipment and rubbish gathered together **in** the untidy and unscreened service **area** hard by the street. This area needs **a** thorough tidying up and reorganization, with attention being **paid** to adequate buffer planting. An **area** of concrete slab here should be removed so that planting can be put in to screen the metal store shed.

The sheet metal sheds, seats, shelters, tank **and** sheet metal fence call attention to themselves in gaudy shades of yellow, green, red and blue. The presentation of the grounds would be much improved **if** these items of external hardware were painted **consistently** in a less obtrusive colour, perhaps the buff **used on** the fascias of **the** new clubhouse, leaving the cheerful flower beds and canvas awnings to provide the colour interest **on** the site.

The new, one **metre**, chain mesh fence on Brunswick Street is neat and acceptable, particularly **if** it is eventually to be incorporated in a photinia hedge. **The** 1.2 metre fence within the **park** is older and run down, **and** should also **be** repaired and screen planted. An unsightly **upper strand of** barbed wire remains in places and should be removed.

With the 21 year lease coming up **for** renewal in two years the City is in a strong

position to require a higher standard of external maintenance more appropriate to this visually prominent location. At the same time, in the interests of performance, it is suggested that the **term** of the lease be renewed for three years rollovers, which is the maximum period of lease that does not require the approval of the **the Governor in Council** under the Fitzroy (Edinburgh Gardens) Lands Act, 1967.

Recommendations:

- i) That **Fitzroy require improved standards of maintenance and planting in those areas of the Bowling Club that are visible from the street or the adjacent parkland.**

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-18-

### 3.3 LADIES' BOWLING CLUB

Permission **was** obtained to build **this facility in the Gardens in 1948**. **The** founding members were a group of ladies **who** were mostly social workers employed **in** Fitzroy. Presumably the facility was needed because the established **club** had **an** all-male membership. Today, the majority of the members **are** said **to come from further afield**. **An area of 1r 18p (0.15 hectare)** is leased from the City of **Fitzroy** under a **21 year** lease that expires on 15th of October **1990**. (The rent is nominal but the club **is** rated.) The site extends into the railway land and this small additional **area is** under **lease** from **the** State Transport Authority. The principal improvements **on** the site are the **clubhouse**, a **storage shed**, two shelters, a green **of six** links and the boundary fence.

The club dates from the period **that** extended from the 1920s to the 1960s when public interest **in** simple open space values and passive recreation **in the** inner suburban **parks declined** in favour **of** more intensive sporting and institutional uses. Unfortunately, many of **the** facilities **built** in that period were poorly designed and insensitively sited.

Like the parks depot, the Ladies' Bowling Club presents an unattractive visual intrusion into the central open space of the park that was, perhaps, acceptable **when** it abutted the railway line but should **now** be reassessed. The enclosing **chain mesh** fence is a three **metre**, **Pentridge** horror topped with a triple row of barbed **wire**. (**It** is probably required **for**

insurance in this secluded part of the park.) Peripheral areas between the green **and** the fence are poorly **maintained** and weed infested. The **limited** amount of fence line planting, mostly golden privet alternating with purple leaved plums, is a discordant element in the surrounding parkland. The green appears to be well maintained under **an** arrangement with the green-keeper of the adjacent club. (**At** the time of writing the ladies are using **that** club's facilities while repair **work is** carried out on **their own green.**) No attempt has been made to paint or screen plant the sheet metal storage shed. The clubhouse itself is **a** simple, timber frame building **that** has been faced with asbestos cement sheeting textured to resemble brickwork.

The club gives the impression that **its** facilities are not intensively used and that it lacks the membership and **resources** necessary to maintain the grounds to a standard that might reasonably be expected in a public park. This is a common situation among bowling clubs in the inner suburbs where the memberships tend to be elderly **and** in decline. Amalgamations **are** the obvious and practical answer although not always popular with the more conservative members. Facilitating this, **the** old all-male **and** all-female clubs **are** likely **to** come under pressure to open up their membership rules under equal **opportunity** legislation. **In** this case, with the lease **coming** up for renegotiation **in** less than three **years**, the opportunity presents itself to tactfully encourage amalgamation **with the** larger club (**or** another club outside **the** Gardens if the membership should so elect). A lot of the activity in the Ladies' Club takes place during week **days** so that their times should fit in without raising too many difficulties.

Recommendation:

1)

**That Fitzroy initiate negotiations for removal of the Ladies Bowling Club facilities from the Gardens (perhaps by encouraging amalgamation with the larger club) so that the area can be cleared and redeveloped as parkland. (See Section 2.1)**

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Plate 10 Simple landscaping on land peripheral to the Tennis Club helps to ameliorate the impact of the fence and blend the Club into the park landscape. Planting should be strengthened on the southern and northern sides. **Plate 11** The adjacent bocce court. (Other grassed areas in the Gardens are also used for bocce.) The seating here is appropriately located, although perhaps a little too close to the court. In due course the Monier benches will be replaced.

### 3.4 TENNIS CLUB

The Fitzroy Tennis Club occupies **a site of 3r 37p (0.41 hectare)**, a part of the old cricket club reserve. A formal **lease** agreement is not at present in force between the Club **and the City, but** rates are paid. **Site** improvements are principally the **six en-tout-cas courts**, the clubhouse and **the** enclosing fence. The **club is** unobtrusively sited **in the area behind** the grandstand **and the mound**; avenue **elms and** peripheral landscaping partly screen **it from** view.

The chain mesh fences **are in fair** to poor condition **and** additional external plantings of **shrubs and climbers** would **be** desirable to mask their **appearance on both the northern and southern** sides. The **timber outer** fence **on the** eastern side **is** somewhat untidy. A section of **corrugated** iron fencing **on the south side** is quite unsightly and should be replaced. **The** land outside the fence **on** the south side is not **well** maintained **and** has an accumulation of garbage, weeds and long grass. Within the fence, **the** small area of **landscaping that** is maintained by the club is in need **of** basic horticultural maintenance with particular attention to **elm** suckers.

The club is a **good** example of an intensively used **sporting** facility that **has been** intelligently sited **and** grouped **with other** sporting facilities **to** preserve **the** open space values of **the surrounding** parkland.

It is suggested that any future lease specify required standards for grounds maintenance, and that performance be encouraged by **limiting the** term to three year rollovers, which **is the maximum** period of **lease** that **does** not require the approval of the Governor **in** Council,

Recommendations:

- i) **Additional screen planting** outside **the northern and southern fences. 11) Improved** maintenance **of** peripheral **areas.**
- iii) ~~That~~ Fitzroy **require improved standards of grounds** maintenance **by**  
**the Club with particular attention to** fences.

### 3.5 COMMUNITY OVAL AND RELATED FACILITIES

The first oval on **this** site was constructed by the Prince of Wales Cricket Club after permissive occupancy over **six** acres was granted **by the Lands** Department in 1863. The Collingwood Commercial Cricket Club had been granted permissive **occupancy of** nine acres directly to the **north** **in the** previous year. When **the two** clubs amalgamated **as the** Fitzroy Cricket Club **in** 1872, activities centred **on** this ground and **within** a few years **it became** the only oval. **The** Fitzroy Football **Club** started **here** in 1883. Intermittent development **of the grounds** and facilities took place over the next **few decades**. The last major development before recent **years** took place in the late 1930s **when** the grounds were extended over the main north-south path on the Napier Street **alignment**. The path was relocated to the east.

The Community Oval **and** its related facilities were redeveloped **and** refurbished **in the** early 1980s to their present state by the City of Fitzroy (designer: Tract Consultants). The boundary walls and fences were demolished; **earth** banks were regraded and planted with trees; the late nineteenth century grandstand was restored; the site of **the** Football Club grandstand which had burnt down a few **years** earlier was landscaped; the timber entry **pavilion** was moved to the main through path; and the grounds and oval were extensively returfed and replanted.

Since it **has already** been the subject of a major improvement program and **now** provides a high standard sports ground facility, *the area has been agreed to be substantially outside the scope of the present master planning exercise*. However, there are **two significant problems** that should be addressed. The Superintendent has pointed out **that** the oval becomes severely water-logged during wet periods with the result that the ground **has** to be taken **out of use** for significant periods. It is **apparent** that the old agricultural-tile drainage **field** beneath the oval **and the spoon drain around** the periphery are **no** longer functioning. Council should be aware that a substantial investment will be needed to lay a new drainage field so that the ground can operate properly in winter.

The fences, hardware **and** signs **of the** Canterbury Timber yard are **an** intrusion **on** the



eastern side. **They** should be screened by thickening up the planting on **the** mound beside the path with a **belt** of low growing, evergreen trees.

**Recommendations:**

- 1) Replacement **of the drainage system for the** oval.
- ii) Additional **tree planting on the eastern side to screen the** timber yard.

-22-

### 3.6 SCHOOLS' SPORTS GROUND, BASKETBALL COURT AND CENTENARY PAVILION

**The Schools' Sports Ground** was constructed in the **late 1940s after** removal **of the path to Grant Street as well as the 'mound'** (an artificial hill used **as a** play area **by local** children) and several **trees**. The circular pond **had** been taken out some years **earlier**. The Centenary **Pavilion, which contains** changing room facilities, was erected in the City's centenary **year** of 1977. **About** eight local schools (some **of them** from **outside** Fitzroy) give **the ground** intensive use **on** weekdays and weekends, **and of these, the** nearby St Josephs and North Fitzroy Primary are **probably** the heaviest users. **The** staff at these **two** schools seem satisfied **with the** quality **of the** facility. **Staff** have suggested that padding on the existing **goal posts** would be a **desirable** improvement, **and that soccer nets would be** welcome.

At the time of writing (March) the **turf** appears **to be in** fair condition **and summer** irrigation appears to have been adequate. **However**, maintenance standards **have** been allowed to slip as an economy measure in recent years (no regular fertilizing, herbicide spraying **or** top-dressing) **and** this will certainly result in **declining** turf quality. **The** recommendations **of the Turf Research and Advisory Institute** should be followed. (See Section 4.2 and Appendix B.) Attention should be given **to** top-dressing **and** reseeding **the numerous low spots**. The Superintendent advises that an agricultural drainage field has not been installed under the ground but that **it** is well crowned **and** drainage **has** not been a problem in most **years**.

The Centenary **Pavilion** is a utilitarian structure built of similar bricks to **the** adjacent **east** **well** of **the** Continental Can factory. **Neither could** be considered **appropriate in the** **park** landscape. Both invite the attentions of graffiti daubers. Limited plantings of screening shrubs and **wall climbers** (Boston ivy, creeping fig) would ameliorate the problem on the factory wall. All that **can** be done **for the** pavilion is to **paint** the walls below the verandah roof **and** repaint **them as often as is** needed. **The toilets at the rear have no** doors **and have** been vandalized. **It** would be desirable **to install** security doors **and adopt the** practice **of locking the toilets at** sundown.

The adjoining basketball **court** is also heavily ~~used~~ by school groups. The derelict **iron** fence beneath the pittosporum **hedge at** the northern end could be dangerous to players and should be ~~removed~~.

Some **weekend** users of the pavilion are in the **habit** of driving their cars across **the ground from Alfred Crescent in contravention of the** Edinburgh Garden's Regulations. They should be discouraged from doing so by policing the grounds properly (fines, withholding use of the **ground** from the offending **club**) **and** by installing vehicle **barriers** along **the** street frontage. Vehicle barriers ~~should fit with the landscaping~~ improvements proposed for the Crescent. It is suggested **that** a raised kerb would probably **be the** most unobtrusive **and** satisfactory solution, with cast iron bollards at the entrances.

Recommendations:

- 1) A turf** maintenance program **as recommended in Appendix B.**
- ii) Soccer nets and padding to goal posts.**
- iii) Screening** shrubs **and** wall climbers **to mask the walls of the factory.**
- iv) Painting** of the walls of the pavilion; **repainting** as necessary.
- v) Security doors on the pavilion toilets; these to be locked at night.**
- vi) Removal of the iron railing by the basketball court.**
- vii) Bollards and a raised kerb to block vehicle access from Alfred Crescent.**

### 3.7 PRIMARY SCHOOL'S PLAY AREA AND CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND

The **play** and sports area is used by the school **for** general lunch-hour play and supervised **sports** activities. It shows the **signs** of **gross** over-use **in** large areas of worn out **or** wire-weed infested turf. Installation of **the** Rainspray irrigation **system here in** 1986 **has** not reversed this deterioration. Extensive **turf** renovation **work** is needed (see Section 4.2 **and** Appendix **B**) **and for** satisfactory results **this will** probably have **to be an annual procedure**. **The** importance of the **area** justifies particular **attention** to fertilizing and weed eradication **as noted**. Ideally, **the** available area **should** be enlarged **to reduce** the pressure on the **turf**. **This** would be possible **if** the parks depot can be relocated as noted **in** Section 3.1. Some extension would be possible **to** the east if the old railway track area is redeveloped **as** recommended in Section 2.1.

School staff members have requested safety padding **on the** goal **posts**; also seating under the trees along the Crescent **and** some sort of safety barrier to the street frontage to stop children chasing balls directly **onto** the road. A low hedge **or shrub** barrier backed by **wire** fencing to discourage through passage would be suitable.

Grassed **areas** at **the** crossing should also be renovated and planted **with** shrubs and trees. **The** existing ash trees opposite **the** school are of poor quality **and the** street frontage here

should be interplanted with **new** trees **for** their eventual replacement. Trees planted should continue the planting scheme suggested for the rest of Alfred Crescent. (See Sections 4.1 and 4.6.)

The children's playground is largely taken over by school children during the lunch break **and** at other **times**, with the result **that** younger children visiting the park under supervision have only limited periods of access. An additional playground would be **desirable** in the park at a location **well** removed **from** the school area. (**One** suitable location would be near the Rowe Street entry.) School **staff** have **pointed** out that some **of** the older items of play equipment here **are** of designs **now** considered dangerous (see-saws, the carousel). These should be replaced. **Non-functioning** equipment should also be replaced. The items **of** equipment that are located directly below the large gum and elm trees where branches could fall should be moved to an open area.

Recommendations:

- i) Turf renovation **and** maintenance **as recommended in Section 4.2 and Appendix B.**
- 11) Safety **padding to goal posts.**
- iii) Redevelopment **of the street frontage with** seating, additional **trees and**  
a **safety** barrier **with** planting.
  - iv) **Replacement of non-functioning and dangerous play equipment in the playground . Relocation of play equipment presently under trees.**
- v) **An additional playground for pre-school children in a different area of**  
the gardens.

### 3.8 CHILDRENS' WELFARE CENTRE CHILD

In 1972 this brick structure was built **to** replace the original timber building that was located directly **behind** the present Superintendent's **house**. The old building **appears to** have **been the** original gardener's cottage of 1870s vintage. We are **told** that: 'The original **timber** health centre, sited **in** the middle of **the** Bardens, occasionally attracted undesirable characters, **thus** the new building was resited **on** the more public Alfred Crescent perimeter of **the** park'. (*A Centenary of Change*. City of Fitzroy 1878-1978. )

The building **appears to** satisfy **its** function. **Its location hard on** the **street is less than** ideal **from** the point **of view of** providing **an** attractive finish to **the perimeter of the** park, but the forward plantings **of trees and shrubs** do modify the otherwise stark outline of the structure. Some additional **shrub** planting would **be** desirable at **the** rear to screen **the** back wall. The starkness of the street wall could be ameliorated by planting climbers.

#### **Recommendations:**

- i) Additional screening **shrubs planted** at the **rear and** climbers **to the front wall**.

### 3.9 PUBLIC TOILET BLOCK, PEDESTRIAN SHELTER

#### Public Toilet Block:

The brick toilet block **near the** intersection of Alfred Crescent and St Georges Road was built **in 1972 and** is typical of **the** starkly **utilitarian** park structures **of** the post-war period that do so **much to** mer Melbourne's **parks**. It is clear **that** the selection of design **and** location were dominated by considerations of vandal-**resistance**, security **and** ease **of** access with very little **thought** being given to siting the building attractively **in** the landscape. The surroundings have been kept bare **of planting to** facilitate **surveillance at** night. It is questionable whether this **should** have been **a** consideration **since** it would **be** better practice to keep the building locked at night. However, nothing **can** be **done** to ameliorate **the** appearance **of this** building from **the** street since it abuts the paths on two sides. **On** the **park** side, some screening shrubs and wall climbers would be an improvement.

#### Pedestrian Shelter:

The brick pedestrian shelter near the Superintendent's house was erected in 1972 **and** replaced a charming, slate-roofed gazebo **of** Victorian vintage on the same site. Its design **and** materials **and** the lack of peripheral planting make it **an** unwelcome intrusion at this point. One wonders why it was ever thought necessary because today it seems to get very little use. Few parks departments see any value in covered seating of this sort today. It is suggested **that** the building be removed.

#### Recommendations:

- i) Locking **of** the toilet block **at** night.
- ii) Screening **shrubs and** wall **climbers planted on** the park side **of** the toilet block.
- iii) Removal **of the** pedestrian shelter.



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**Plate 14** The bandstand rotunda is an attractive addition to **the** landscape near the St Georges Road frontage. As a war memorial and the only traditionally styled park pavilion remaining in the Gardens this **structure** deserves particular care. **Plate 15** The toilet block off **Alfred Crescent** is an unfortunate **visual intrusion**. Its design and location reflect a set of utilitarian **concerns** and not the need **to** fit the facility unobtrusively in the landscape as is appropriate in parkland.

### 3.10 MEMORIAL **BANDSTAND**

**The band-stand rotunda** was erected **in** 1925 **as** a memorial **to** those **who served in the Great War**. **It** is a handsome structure **in** the tradition **of classical** park architecture **and** contributes **an** item of visual interest to the park landscape, notably when viewed across **the** lawn **from from** St



Georges Road. The original surrounding fence and flower beds have been **removed**,

The **band-stand is significant both** as a **war** memorial **and as park architecture**, meriting **appropriate** conservation measures. Unfortunately, it is always likely to suffer from the attentions of vandals, overnight sojourners **and graffiti** scrawlers. Strong internal and peripheral lighting, even strong spot-lighting, would be desirable **to** deter this. The platform should be **cleaned** out regularly **and the** walls painted as frequently as needed **to** obliterate the daubs. Care should **be taken to ensure that** the **ground** floor store room, presently used by the Bocce Club, is kept permanently locked.

Recommendations:

- i) **Improved levels of lighting and appropriate maintenance measures.**

-29-

#### 4.0 ASSESSMENT **OF** LANDSCAPE **CONDITIONS**

##### 4.1 **TREES**

There **are** about **380 mature trees in the Edinburgh Gardens**. The large shade trees **are its** principal charm **and the** records suggest **that** most of **them** *were* **planted in the ten years** following 1883 when **Fitzroy and the** Lands Department implemented their jointly financed program of **improvements**. Today these trees are probably about a century old. Given *proper care*, the *majority should last another century*.

Most of **the** trees were planted in formal avenues down either side of the established paths, which was the **usual** practice in the smaller, early Melbourne **parks**. The intention was to develop **the** wide walks as attractive, shady retreats in summer. This **combination of** straight paths and **parallel avenues of** trees **is very much in the centuries-old** European tradition of **formal gardening and town square** design. (**The effect is** very different ~~from~~ the curving paths and **informal** groups of trees which **are the** design **themes** made popular by the English landscape school **and** which **set** the pattern **in** many **of the larger** parks created **in** the nineteenth century, such as the Royal Melbourne Botanic **Gardens**.)

A distance of about 30 feet (in some cases **33** feet or **half a** surveyor's chain) seems to have been adopted **as the spacing for** avenue trees in the Gardens. **This is far too close for** the long term development of the species planted and **it was** probably **the** original **intention** to cut out alternate trees after, perhaps, the **first** twenty five years. Thinning out trees **in parks** takes vision as well as courage and sometimes the task never gets done. It is noteworthy that **the best elms** in the Gardens **are** the ones at 60 feet spacings. However, most have been allowed **to** remain unthinned at thirty feet spacings **and** these

are noticeably smaller **in** the butt, with crowded, disease prone crowns. It is **not likely that thinning out now could** *much improve the quality of these trees.*

There is quite a noticeable variation **in** the size and quality of trees in several of the avenues. It is thought that **non-uniformity** of the soil conditions is probably the principal **cause**. The soil in the Gardens varies **from the** shallow topsoil over heavy clay that is typical of the **area**, to depths of highly variable *fill* which is known to **contain much ancient** household refuse including considerable quantities of shells.

Some of the tree planting in the areas between **the** main paths also **has** a formal character. The rather unusual device of planting elms in circular rings was used and **there appears to** have been six of **these** tree rings at **one** stage. **One surrounded** the circular **pond** near Rowe Street and was mostly cut down when **the playing** field **was** built. **Another seems to have** been substantially removed to create the **open** space around the war memorial **bandstand built in 1925**. **The three that** survive more or less intact **today** have a **curious**, nordic quality.

Elms **and** oaks of various species predominate among the older trees and **their** presence establishes the essentially **European** quality **of the** park. This **overwhelming** dominance of **two** genera **is most** unusual for a **Melbourne park** of **the** period. There are **almost no pines or** cypresses, **no** araucarias, **no** old planes **and** no Moreton **Bay figs**, all **park trees that** were very **popular here** in the late nineteenth **century**. Palms **are** completely absent; the Gardens **appear to have** escaped **the fashion** for planting these **and** other sub-tropical exotics that **prevailed in** the early 1900s. There are very few native **trees** apart from the kurrajongs **around Alfred Crescent**. Nothing **remains of the** indigenous vegetation **of the area** except **for two** splendid red **gums** (*Eucalyptus cemaldulensis*) by the **children's** playground at the northern end. // **is** quite *likely that these two trees predate European settlement and every effort should be made to preserve them for their beauty and historic interest.* Listing on the Register of Historic Trees would be appropriate. **They** are a potentially valuable seed source from which to raise trees for native plantings in the area, such **as** the Merri Creek. **(The** author



Plate 16 Its fine old elms **are** the principal scenic attraction of the Gardens. The large trees shown here are widely spaced at about 60 foot centres **and** may have been thinned out at an early date to permit their growth to a mature form.

**Plate 17** These poorer quality elms at about 30 **foot** centres **have** not **had** the **space** to develop fully. The untidy pole and bracket lamp shown is the lighting detail used throughout the Gardens. **It** should be replaced by a simple **standard**.

is aware of only one other comparable red gum in Fitzroy.)

The species of the dominant trees **in the** Gardens are believed to be:

English elm ( *Ulmus procera* ). Easily the most numerous tree **and a great asset** in the Gardens. There are many fine specimens **with** the characteristic tall, rounded crown, ascending branches and stout butt. As a parks tree it has the disadvantage of suckering wildly throughout the lawns. In old age it drops large branches without warning. It **is** highly susceptible to Dutch elm disease, as are the other two **elms** listed below, and for this **reason it would be prudent to refrain from using these trees so** exclusively in *future*.

Wych or Scots elm ( *Ulmus glabra* ) . A smaller **and** more spreading elm from Europe which is probably not as suited to our climate. Non-suckering. Comes into leaf late. Is easy to transplant as a large tree.

Hybrid elm ( *Ulmus X hollandica* ) . There are several hybrids between the wych elm and the smooth leaved elm **but** the one planted here could be 'Purpurascens' . **It has** buff-purple coloured new foliage in spring and can be seen **as** an old street tree in other parts of **Fitzroy**.

English oak (*Quercus robur*). Present as an **avenue** of 23 trees along the southern Rowe Street walk. Two trees are missing. Not a highly successful species here but **well** established. Much of the **apparent** distress of these trees is being caused by possums eating the foliage **for** which they show a distinct preference. Measures should be taken to .keep the possum population within acceptable **limits**

Holm oak (*Quercus ilex*) according to I. Earl **but** possibly the southern live oak (*Quercus virginiana*). Both species are evergreen. There are ten of these trees in three incomplete rows on the western side, presumably remnants of a more extensive **earlier** avenue planting. Five *of* these oaks are superb, *advanced specimens that are well worth particular care for the future*.

Kurrajong (*Brachychiton populneum*). Native to eastern Australia but not to the Melbourne area. Planted as a row around Alfred Crescent with the best specimens at the St Georges Road end. There are numerous gaps and the row peters out at the southern **end**.

Southern mahogany gum (*Eucalyptus botryoides*). Native to Victoria and NSW but not to the Melbourne area. Of the seven old trees remaining, five are located along the railway reservation land and may be **remnants** of Railways Department planting.

A thorough report **on** the trees in the **Gardens** was prepared by I. H. Earl & Sons Pty Ltd in 1978. The **state of** health **of each** tree was described **and a** detailed prescription **given for** arboricultural maintenance. As **well**, some 120 trees **including the** complete avenue of English oaks **and most of** two avenues of elms were considered to be **in** such a poor state

as to be fit only for **immediate** removal.

These recommendations **on** tree removal, which were estimated to **cost** about \$30,000 **at** the **time**, met considerable opposition **from** Fitzroy **council** and staff with the result **that** they were not **put** into effect. (Only seven **dead or dying** trees have **been** cut down since 19781) Today, with the benefit of hindsight, they can be seen **to** be overly severe and to **some** extent a counsel of perfection. Most of **the** trees marked **for** removal **are** still in fair **condition**; **some are** flourishing. Why should this be so? The automatic sprinkler **system that** was **installed** throughout the Gardens at about the time the report was written **has** certainly helped by giving the trees the benefit of regular **summer** watering (**except for** the 1981-82 drought) and most have **responded** well with vigorous growth. Without **doubt**, the trees discovered **to** be diseased are **still diseased**, **but they are** probably less stressed **and** they continue to make a superb contribution to the tree canopy of the park.

A basic problem **with** these recommendations **is that** they **appear to have** been **based on** the premise that each tree should be an ideal, free standing specimen of its type. This **is** fine for

arboreta **and** botanic gardens, but **in** more typical city parks we **are** much more concerned with the overall aesthetic effect **of** groups of trees, **as well as** with public safety. Thus trees of quite poor quality can be accepted where **they continue** to make a contribution. **This is particularly** so for old avenue plantings where the removal of individual trees that are impossible to replace in kind will invariably **spoil** the regularity of a highly artificial landscape.

There **can** be no doubt that **the** trees, which are a valuable asset, need **an** extensive and ongoing amount **of** pruning and maintenance work **to help** them flourish **in their second century**. **The** Earl report recommended **immediate** work **on** ~~about~~ **180 trees which** would have **cost** about \$60,000 at **the** time. Not surprisingly, council balked **at this**. **To date, for** lack of funds and direction only a small amount of **the** most necessary work **has been** carried **out**, mostly by **outside contractors**.

The recommendations **for** the more expensive and specialist tree work, such as pest control and cable bracing, while desirable, are likely to remain beyond **the** means of Fitzroy. But the City's recent acquisition of a travel tower should make a basic program **of** tree maintenance possible using council labour. This work should only be done under the detailed supervision of a horticulturalist who has the appropriate training - the trees are too **important** to be botched.

**A basic** tree maintenance program should aim to improve public safety while enhancing presentation **and** tree health. To maximize value **for** money **the** work should **be done in** the following sequence:

- clean-up of **dead** timber and unsafe branches in the trees along pathways and overhanging other areas where people congregate, such as the playground,
- similar work on the remaining **trees** throughout **the** park,
- more drastic shaping and crown reduction needed on some degenerating trees to recover vigour,
- cavity clean-out and filling.

The work should be done in **winter** when other garden pressures are reduced.

It should be **noted** that the recommendations made in Section 4.2 for upgrading the lawns **in** the vicinity of trees would also benefit the trees.

The need **for** replacement planting of trees in the Gardens is quite limited. Where gaps occur in the avenues (such as **the** two missing trees **in the oak avenue**) **these should be** filled in **with** advanced specimens of the same species bought **in** from commercial **nurseries**. Similarly, there is not **much need** for infill tree planting in the **Gardens**, other than the old railway reserve (see Section 2.0) **and the** frontage to **Alfred Crescent** where a **double avenue** of trees would **be a significant** improvement as noted **in** Section 4.6.



Trees selected **for these areas should** be of species known **to** thrive in local conditions, **and** the predominantly deciduous, European quality of the **existing** tree **mix** should be respected. This does not **mean** slavishly sticking **with** the established species (ie. predominantly with elms) or doing without natives.

For **Alfred** Crescent, **an** avenue planting of deciduous shade trees down both **sides of** the street would **be** desirable. Within **the park**, an additional **row** of evergreen trees such **as** sweet pittosporum (**already** present at **certain points**) in line with **the** kurrajongs would give **the** needed sense of enclosure **and** finish. (See **Section 4.6**)

Recommendations:

- i) Established **trees** should **be preserved** wherever practicable.
- ii) A **basic and ongoing** program of tree surgery and maintenance **should be**  
carried out **as** noted.
- ii) New **tree** plantings **should reinforce the established** tree **structure** and reflect **the European and urban** quality of **the** Gardens.

#### 4.2 LAWNS AND IRRIGATION

**Fixed** sprinkler irrigation and modern turf management techniques have made **a** high **standard of turf an** expected and achievable feature of city parks. Consistently **green** lawns with good cover **are** attractive **and** inviting. They recover quickly **from**

periods **of** intensive **wear**.

Inspection of the **turf in** the Gardens shows that it is **very** variable between **sub-areas**, grading **from** the high quality **maintained on the** Community **Oval** to virtually **non-existent** over extensive areas beneath **the** larger trees. **There are evident** problems **with soil** compaction, wear, heavy shade, weeds, **poor** drainage **and** uneven irrigation **that** require attention. The Superintendent advises **that in** recent **years** the maintenance regime **for** lawns has been limited largely to mowing **and** watering; there **are no** established programs **for** fertilizing, herbicide spraying, top dressing **or** reseeding. In these circumstances a continued deterioration **in** the quality of **turf is** inevitable. Low standards of maintenance will produce a **financial** economy **in the** short term **but** they **are** incompatible with a program **to** upgrade **the** quality and overall presentation of the Gardens.

It is clear that basic **turf** repair **and** maintenance procedures **are needed** in **the** Gardens **on** a continuing basis. The specialist advice of **the** Turf Research and Advisory Institute has been obtained (see Appendix **B**) and this is commended to **Council** as an appropriate guide **for future** work.

*Particular attention should be given to the large areas of unattractive and virtually unusable bare ground under trees.* Getting a decent grass cover established **in** these situations is acknowledged **to** be difficult because **of** summer shade, soil compaction **and** competition **from the fine** feeder roots **of elms** which exhaust the soil. The general approach recommended by **the** TRAI **has** been tried by **the** MCC Parks Department and gives acceptable results. **This** involves fertilizing and seeding with a shade tolerant **ryegrass** and creeping red fescue **mix** after breaking up **the** surface crust **with** a reciprocating harrow. (Sprinkler heads must be clearly marked.) This work is done **in** late **winter** well before trees come into **leaf**. Temporary fencing is left in place for about **six** weeks. Subsequent mowing is set high (50mm **or** more) **and the area** is fertilized at least once a year. **In the** worst areas it is usually the practice to repeat **this** reseeding procedure every second **year**. The technique also benefits the trees through better soil aeration, improved penetration of water **and the** introduction of nutrients.

*The other area of very unsatisfactory turf cover is the heavily used primary school play area, the importance of which justifies a special effort.* Initial cultivation and reseeding work on **bare** patches as recommended by **the** TRAI is probably best **done in** the Easter **school** vacation (**under the new four** term system) with the affected areas **being** fenced off **during the** second term. It is important **that the** play **area** receive adequate irrigation to assist its recovery over summer, with the full herbicide and fertilizer application **as** noted. Subsequent cultivation **and** reseeding of bare **patches** should **be done** as necessary. Kikyu is present in parts **of this** area and it should be encouraged to spread.

The aim of irrigation in parks is to keep turf growing **vigorously** (ie. green) during

**the summer months** by supplementing natural **rainfall** with the amount of water **needed** to balance transpiration and **evaporation**. **In** Melbourne **this** means **an** application **of** irrigation water equivalent **to** about 150mm of rainfall a month **during the** peak demand period **of** January and February in a typical summer.

**The** 'Toro' automatic **sprinkler** system **through** **most of the Gardens was** installed with Commonwealth funding about **ten** years ago. **(The** Community Oval has its own **separate** 'Toro' system **that** was installed more recently, **and the** primary **school** play **area has** a separate 'Spraymaster' system installed in 1985.) There are 33 stations with 8 to 13 **spray heads** each

and the stations are programmed **to operate from the control box near the Superintendent's house**. The pipes, **spray heads** and hydraulic **control lines** are plastic and **prone to damage**. (Better recent systems **for parks use** are electronically controlled.) **Water** is connected by **three inch mains** to both **sides** of the pipe network and **the feeder lines to individual heads** are said **to be one inch** pipe. **The Gardens are rated for water at the lower night rate** to take advantage **of the automatic system**.

It was a cheap system **in its day and** it has inbuilt design **and** technical weaknesses. **The problem now is to make it function with maximum efficiency**.

There appears to **be** two main difficulties. The first is **an** apparent failure to quickly repair **components** of the system that have been damaged or vandalized. **This** is a management **problem** requiring vigilance on the **part** of staff **and** prompt rectification. Council should **ensure** that the necessary plumbing skills are available, either by a staff appointment **or** by contract.

The second is **an** overall technical **or** design weakness **of** the system. There **appears** to be **too** many spray heads connected to certain stations (**up to 13 instead of** the more satisfactory 8), some heads have been **spaced too far apart** and pressure seems **to be** inadequate at certain points **in** the system. As a **result**, the system is usually limited **to** operating two stations at any **one** time, which fails to deliver **the** necessary quantity of **water** to all areas of the **park under** summer conditions. It is **suggested** that **an** irrigation consultant **be** retained **to advise on** Improvements to the system and to operator techniques. For **example**, at relatively small cost it may be possible to:

- duplicate the supply lines to the worst affected, outlying stations,

- add another** mains connection to the supply network at a point where pressure is low, rearrange the switching pattern so that stations operating at the same time are at widely separated parts of the network (ie, not drawing down in close proximity off **a common feeder line es** appears to be the case at present) .

**Recommendations:**

- i) **Basic turf repair and maintenance procedures carried out on a regular basis** as recommended **by the Turf Research and Advisory Institute. (See Appendix B . )**
- ii) **Specific procedures as noted to establish and maintain turf**

**cover**

under trees.

iii) **Specific procedures as noted to improve turf cover on the Primary**

**School play area.**

iv) **Acquisition of the necessary stand-by plumbing skills (staff appointee or contractor) for speedy rectification of faults in the irrigation system.**

v) **Appointment of an irrigation consultant to advise on operation, fine**

**tuning and improvements to the irrigation system.**

#### 4.3 FLOWER AND SHRUB BEDS

The general practice of city parks administrators over the last few decades has been to progressively remove the old shrubberies and flower beds with a view to economies in maintenance labour, simplified mowing by gang mowers and better surveillance at night. At its worst, this produces a debased park landscape of lawns and trees dotted with unscreened structures and inadequately buffered from the surrounding streets. This is substantially the case with the Edinburgh Gardens, where very little shrub bedding and no flower bedding of significance remain today.

Nonetheless, the best modern parks use shrubs and limited amounts of floral planting to great effect. Shrub beds are important in the park landscape for screening and channelling views, directing foot traffic and creating sub-spaces. Flower beds are used in well considered ways to add interest and colour at the most important and highly visible locations: at entrances, around architectural features and other foci, and occasionally on the boundary to the street. (The nineteenth century gardening practices of herbaceous borders and isolated flower beds scattered about the lawns have substantially disappeared from public parks.)

Older residents remember the displays of massed cannes that were an eye-catching summer feature of the St Georges Road frontage of the Edinburgh Gardens. These appear to have been grassed over in the 1960s. Floral bedding remained a feature of the Gardens until the late 1970s when Council directed that it should be discontinued. Until then, the east-west walk directly north of the Canterbury Timber and National Can sites (formerly the railway station) was lined with flower beds, there was a flower bed around the Victoria memorial, another where the fountain had been, and various other smaller beds were spotted about.

Where they remain, these old flower beds now stand forlornly derelict. Increasing shadow and root competition from adjacent trees would make it hard to re-establish traditional bedded annuals in some of them. Their spray heads remain but have not been

connected **to** the newer plastic pipe network which irrigates **the** park. **In the past**, most of these **beds** were fenced. **Earlier** fencing would have been iron hurdles. (A **scrap** remains by the basketball court.) More **recent** fencing was 1.2 metre high chain mesh, much of it now **in** poor **condition** where it has been retained along the east-west walk **and around the** Victoria memorial site. (The general practice has been **to** remove these protective fences from the beds **in** most of Melbourne's older parks. They were considered to be **in the way and no** longer necessary.)

On balance, there is **little** to be gained by reintroducing floral features at any **of these** locations. The fences, kerbs and **pipings** should be removed so that the sites **can** be cleaned up, levelled and grassed over. The Victoria memorial site would make **an** excellent location **for an** architectural feature, such as a **fountain or** a piece of **sculpture**, if something suitable **can** be found **in future**. **In** the meantime it should be tidied up and **developed** with **a** simple landscape treatment: a few **seats off** the path, **some** small, **shade tolerant** trees **and an** underplanting of evergreen **shrubs** such as camellias. The pedestal could be temporarily retained.

Very little shrub bedding survives **in the Gardens today** although it **appears to** have once been fairly extensive. There is a mixed **shrub** and agapanthus **border** beside **the tennis club** which **partly** masks **the fence** *but* needs **additional planting**. **Further along this** walk, a **row of** oleanders, sweet **pittosporum** and **coprosma**, now virtually tree **sized**, makes a **good** screen to the National Can buildings.

The recently built, dwarf-conifer bed north **of the** Rowe Street entrance **has to** be considered **a** failure in a **number of ways** *but* primarily **because it has no** apparent purpose **other than** decoration. The planting concept is out of key with the surroundings **and** the scale is wrong for **a public park**. (**This sort** of planting of dwarf **conifers** is a **very English idea** best **suited to the** small scale of domestic gardens in cooler climates than **our own!**) The stone retaining wall **adds**





Plata 18 These **shrub** beds by St Georges Road have little visual **impact** and are ineffective as screen **planting**. They should be replaced **with** a bolder, **more** extensive boundary treatment as was maintained here until **the** 1960s. Plate 19 **The** dwarf conifer **bed near the** Rowe **Street** intersection is **an** unsuitable decorative **development** that should be removed so that the area **can** be converted to lawn.

nothing **and** is an impediment to mowing. It would be preferable to remove **the bed and level** the area **as** lawn.

North of **the Bowling Club** some **beds** have recently **been developed with** mixed **shrubs**, perennials and dwarf weeping cherries in an **attempt** to smarten up the St Georges Road frontage. The **intent is** praiseworthy **but** the effect is a little half-hearted **for this very** visible area which needs **the sort of a** bold landscape treatment it appears **to have had in the past**. The area also needs planting to screen **the** interior spaces of the **park from** the street. (See Section 4.6) **This is** probably the only area of **the** Gardens where a substantial floral **border** is worth reviving, **perhaps as** the street-side edge of **a** series of shrub **beds**.

Bedded annuals, replanted two **or** three times a **year**, are usually not the most cost-effective way of introducing floral colour to a park today. Modern floribunda roses **can** be recommended as a cheaper **and** successful, low maintenance alternative. **They** are best massed **in** large, single colour groups. Good varieties can flower for eight months **of** the year if properly maintained and the plants last for several years. Winter **colour** **can** be **added** by underplanting with early **bulbs**. Some **of the** hardy perennials, particularly cannas, geraniums **and** day-lilies, are **also** very effective in mass plantings.

Recommendations:

i)

ii)

Clean-up, levelling **and** grassing **over** of all **derelict flower beds after** removal **of** fences, **kerbs** **and** piping.

**Short term redevelopment of** the Victoria memorial site **with basic planting and seats. Possible** long term development **for a** fountain **or sculpture**.

iii) **Removal of the** dwarf conifer bed near Rowe Street.

iv) Revival **of a decorative** floral **border** **to the** St Georges **Road frontage,** **backed by beds of screening shrubs.**

v)

**Any** floral plantings **to** be primarily **of** low maintenance **and** permanent **plantings of floribunda roses or** hardy perennials.

#### 4.4 PATHS

The main path system which **is** the framework **of the** Edinburgh Gardens is entirely **utilitarian** in **origin and** reflects the through passage needs of pedestrians in the 1870s **and** 1880s. Gates through the fence **around** the reserve were built opposite the intersecting streets. It is **probable that** when **the paths were formed up** in the 1880s they simply followed the established foot tracks, albeit on straightened alignments. The main north-south path followed along **the fence line of the** Cricket Club **enclosure and connected** Napier **Street** through to Best Street in a straight line. (**The** section beside the Cricket Ground was moved **east in the** 1930s **when the ground was extended.**) **The** northernmost east-west path also followed an original **fence line of** the Cricket **Club** enclosure and connected **through** to Rowe Street, **passing** over the creek via a small bridge or culvert. The southernmost **east-west** path connected Watkins to Grant Street, also via a small bridge. After the underground drain replaced the creek and the railway had been built, the second **north-south** path which connects **Falconer** Street **through** to Jamieson Street was built more or **less** along the line of the filled-in creek.

The first set of regulations published **for** the administration of **the** Gardens (1883) contained **the** prohibition: 'All persons visiting **or** walking **through** the Gardens shall keep on the footpaths'. There was also a prohibition against lying on the grass. These transgressions were punishable by a **fine** of up to five **pounds**. Similar regulations applied in many **of the** other public gardens in Melbourne in the nineteenth century, but by the early 1900s they had mostly been repealed. **Their** lasting result has **been a** legacy of wide walks designed **to** accommodate benches and the crowds **of** people who thronged the parks on Sundays and summer evenings. **Thus** the main through paths, which were the first to be formed **up** in the Edinburgh Gardens, **have** retained an average breadth of **about** 14 feet which today may seem excessive. The lesser diagonal paths are generally narrower at **about** 10 feet.

The **path** system in the Gardens has retained its late nineteenth century layout **with** very few changes. In the 1930s the path around the south-east **frontage** to Alfred Crescent was taken up. Recently, the paths behind the children's **health** centre have been **simplified to** adjust **for** removal of **the** fountain in the 1960s, and one of the two **paths**

intersecting **the** Victoria memorial site **has** been taken up. An additional path, the new bicycle track, has been created **over** the old railway track. Probably **the** most significant change has **been** the removal **of the** main path to the Grant street entry **in the** 1940s to create the space **for the** Schools' Sports Ground. The foot track worn around the southern edge **of** this oval **shows that the** public still uses this connection **and** that a paved path here would be appropriate.

Formed path surfaces **in** the Gardens were probably gravel **in** the first instance, then coal tar asphalted and **much** later resealed **with** bituminous asphalt. Today, the **bituminous** path surfaces **appear** to be in sound condition **with** only minor exceptions.

Path edging details **vary** throughout the Gardens. A **few** sections of the older rock kerbing remain in **some** areas and **concrete** kerbing has also been introduced. Flush **edging** is **more** attractive **and** unobtrusive in parks. Kerbs obstruct the gang mowers **and** necessitate considerable **hand** labour to maintain a neat grass edge. Fitzroy has adopted the worthwhile practice of replacing them but **the** process **has not** been **completed**. The flush, basalt pitcher **side drains that have** been substituted are an excellent **innovation**, allowing mowers to **trim to** the paths and resembling **the old** spoon drains that remain in other **areas** of the park. This edging detail should be substituted wherever practicable.

Recommendations:

1)

A new paved **path** connecting **to Grant Street around the southern end of the schools** oval.

11) Replacement of path kerbs **with the** newer, flush, side **drain** detail  
**wherever** possible.

**Plate 20** Left: one of the **aluminium** reproduction lamp **standards** set **up** for trial in the **Gardens**. Right: one of the electrified, nineteenth century, gas-lamp standards by the band-stand which are clumsily connected to power above **ground**. **Plate 21** Simple, unobtrusive, modern lamp standards of a type suitable for use in the Edinburgh Gardens. These ones are seen along the main walk of the **Parliament Gardens**.



## 4.5 LIGHTS, SEATS

### Lights:

The consultant has been unable to **determine** the **date** at which lighting was first installed **in** the Gardens. **The** late nineteenth century records examined have no **mention of lighting** and it seems likely that **gas** lights were never installed. The present lights are mostly mercury vapour lamps cantilevered on SEC posts high **over** the **paths** where **their illumination** value is limited by the tree **canopy**. The **untidy** collection of posts and supply lines is not only unsightly, it **has become a problem** now that the SEC is **tightening** up on **clearances** between **trees and power lines**. Many of the avenue trees **face** the imminent threat of mutilation. Obviously, overhead **wiring** should **be** replaced with underground cabling as a top priority. A **limited** amount has already been installed.

**Four** reproduction lamp **standards** (maker: Melbourne Aluminium and Iron Lacework Pty Ltd, cost: \$461) supplied by underground cabling have recently been installed as a trial at points off the western frontage. **These** are modelled on the Collins Street lamps used by the MCC but they are smaller, more domestic **in scale and made out of aluminium** rather **than cast iron**. **While** they are an undoubted improvement **on the** other fixtures, eliminating the untidy **posts** and shedding light **from** a more appropriate height beneath the tree canopy, they introduce **a** fussy, false-historical detail **to the park which** is undesirable **and** unnecessary. It is questionable whether they will **prove** to be sufficiently robust in **the** long term. **There** are several alternative designs available **that** are **simple** and unobtrusive in design and more appropriate to present needs. One should be selected and used consistently throughout the Gardens to replace both of the existing **types of lighting**

The three electrified, nineteenth century gas lamp standards that illuminate the bandstand area **appear**, from photographic evidence, **to** have been installed **in** the 1920s. They are probably worth keeping but should **be** supplied by underground **cables** and fitted out **with** more appropriate lanterns.

Paint colours used **on** lamp standards should be uniform and consistent with seating and the other items of park hardware. Black seems to be used in many cases at present, but it is suggested **that** a dark carriage green would be a more attractive substitute in the park **setting**.



### Seats:

At present, two styles of seating are installed. The **old**, concrete-frame, Monier benches are either broken or approaching the end of their useful lives. **They** are by no means a visual asset in the Gardens and the sooner they **can** be replaced the better.

Recently installed seats have mostly been cast **iron** frame, Victorian reproduction benches that **are** permanently attached to concrete slabs to simplify mowing and frustrate **theft**. This type of seat appears **never to** have been very common in our nineteenth century parks **and**, like the lamp standards **discussed above**, its use here introduces **an** historical **detail into** the **Gardens** that could be considered spurious. (**On** the other **hand**, no pictorial evidence has been found which shows the sort of seating that was used here at an early date. Photographs from the 1920s show simple timber benches.) Since **so** many of **these** reproduction benches have already **been** installed, there would have to be a compelling **reason** for changing to a different **design**. **On** the plus side, **they** are readily obtainable, appear to **be** serviceable, **are** reasonably vandal-**proof** and do **provide** **a** late Victorian detail. On balance, it seems reasonable to stick with this design, using it consistently throughout the Gardens where additional or replacement seating is required.

Obviously, seating should be located with a view to minimizing clutter and where there is **an**

**Plate 22** Obsolescent Monier benches **are** still **common in** the Gardens. **They** will eventually **be** superseded with the cast iron and timber reproduction benches **shown below**.

**Plate 23** Cast iron , reproduction Victorian style benches have recently been installed along Alfred Crescent. These appear to get very little use. It is suggested that, **in future**, seats be sited in accordance with the guidelines **given** in the text.

apparent need. Some **seats** presently installed **appear to be very** little used **and** could be considered **for** relocation. Several **additional** benches **would be** useful **around the children's** playground, **along** the Alfred Crescent frontage **by** the **primary school** (as requested **by** staff) and along the principal east-west and north-south **paths**.

Greater care should **be** taken **in** future over the **siting** of benches and a **few** guiding principles are worth bearing in **mind**. As a rule, **people feel** most comfortable when **park** seats back against a **wall, a tree trunk** or a shrub bed. Seats should face an attractive view or **an interesting** activity. They should be **spread** around **to take** advantage of **sunshine**, particularly winter **sunshine, as** well as summer shade **and they** should generally be **located well** away from noisy **peripheral** streets.

Recommendations:

- i) Replacement of **overhead wiring with underground cabling** as a top priority.
- ii) Replacement **of the** bracket **and reproduction** lamp **types** with a **modern lamp standard and** lantern **of uniform design**.
- iii) Retention **of the** **Victorian reproduction bench design**. Relocation of **benches from areas of little use**. Installation of additional benches **around the** childrens' playground, **by the primary school and along the principal paths**. Siting of **additional bench seats** as **per the** guide-lines above.
- iv) Uniform **paint colour** to benches, lamps **and other** hardware.  
(Carriage green **would be appropriate**.)

-43~

Plate 24 **For** lack **of** suitable planting, Alfred **Crescent** fails to **fulfil** its **scenic** potential **as** an attractive residential crescent facing parkland. A formal, **avenue** scheme **is** recommended. The ineffective garden beds here

should be removed. Plate 25 **Boundary** planting on the St. Georges Road frontage needs reinforcing **with** belts of screening shrubs **to** shelter **the** inner space of the park **from** the noise and clutter **of the** street. **Some** floral **colour to the** street would be desirable.

#### 4.6 SCENIC AND SPATIAL RELATIONSHIPS

The **flat** topography **of** the Gardens **combined with the** dominant pattern of planting, **which consists** largely of clear-bole trees at **regular** intervals along the paths, **means** that the **Gardens are** perceived **as a series** of grassy **open** spaces **separated by belts of** trees. Lack **of** ground **hugging** vegetation gives visitors relatively unobstructed views **across several** of these sub-spaces from any point, with the result that **in the passive** recreation areas there is little sense of seclusion **and** separation from **the** various school **and sporting** activities **that may be** taking place in other **areas**. It is unlikely that the Gardens were **intended** to **have this very** open character; **it has** probably **resulted from** a **long** history of modifications **to the** planting to simplify maintenance. **There is a** strong **case for** some discreet replantings **of trees** and shrubs to reinforce the **separateness** of the various sub-spaces. **These should** not be scattered about the lawns at random but grouped to complement the avenues.

The problem **is** particularly acute around the street frontages of the Gardens. The **Gardens** were originally fenced along **the street** lines and there were probably extensive shrubberies on the inside. These have long gone and **today** there are no effective visual barriers to **the** streets, **so** that noisy **traffic, parked** cars **and** building **fronts** of variable quality **dominate** the view from most **positions**. The St Georges Road frontage, in particular, needs redevelopment with **beds of** screen planting **as** noted in Section 4.3. A similar treatment **should** be continued **around Alfred** Crescent to the frontage overlooked by the North Fitzroy Primary School, where teaching **staff have** requested a barrier or **low** hedge to prevent children chasing balls directly onto the road.

It must be **said** that **the** present landscape treatment **of** Alfred Crescent fails completely to **exploit** the scenic potential of a sweeping residential crescent bordering parkland. **On the east and south-east side the boundary** planting of kurrajongs **has** been allowed **to die**

**out** without replacement **so** that **the** park peters out as a wide expanse **of lawn**. This fine, wide street would be greatly **improved** by 'greening' with a **row of** shade trees down both sides. **The** trees would frame views **in** and out **of** the Gardens and clearly define the boundary when seen from the streets and properties facing to it. (See Section **4.1**) Planting on the Gardens **side** should be reinforced with **an inner row of lower** growing evergreens **in the general** line of **the** kurrajongs. The **traffic** islands **at the** intersection with **Grant** Street should be similarly planted.

The park lacks **any** sort of central **focus**, a consequence **of its long** occupation by **the** Railways. The obvious natural **focus** **should be the** rectangular **central** space between **the two** main east-west paths **and the two** main north-south **paths**, but this area is at present partly **occupied** by **the** Ladies' Bowling Club **and the** bicycle track. **In the event that these** facilities **can be** relocated as proposed in Sections 2.1 and 3.3, the **opportunity** should be **taken** to completely redevelop this area. **It** would be hard to do better than build a water feature. A small lake, **with a wooded** margin and, perhaps, **an** island to encourage water **birds to** the area, would **add a** dimension **of interest** to **the** park that **it** totally lacks **at** present. (**The Gardens**, as noted elsewhere, **had** a substantial **pond and a fountain in earlier** years.) Peripheral plantings of predominantly native shrubs **and** trees would **encourage** other native birds **to return**.

Recommendations:

- i) A **limited** amount of tree and **shrub** planting located to reinforce the visual **separation between the sub-spaces of the Gardens**.
- ii) **Screen plantings on the St Georges Road** frontage. (See Section **4.3**)
- iii) **Barrier planting to Alfred Crescent opposite the school.**
- iv) **An avenue planting of deciduous trees on both sides of Alfred Crescent.** On **the Gardens** frontage, a parallel **row of evergreen trees**. (See Section 4.1) Similar planting on **the traffic** islands **by Grant Street.**
- v) **A decorative lake in the centre of the gardens if the Ladies Bowling Club and bicycle track can be relocated.** (See Section 2.1)

## 5.0 COMMENTARY ON PARKS DEPARTMENT MANPOWER

A management **audit** of the effectiveness **of the** Parks and Gardens Department is well beyond the scope of this study. However, **a few points** concerning **staffing have come to light** during **the course** of the work **and the consultant has** been asked **to record them**.

The Superintendent advises that he **has** a total **staff** of 22 men **to carry** out the maintenance and capital works programs **on the** city's street **trees, street** closures and parks. **Of these**, only two men **are** certificated **gardeners and one** an apprentice, which **means that there is** an overwhelming predominance **of** labourers. Advice **has** been sought **from** professional parks managers (including the Manager, M.C.C. Parks and Gardens Division) concerning a desirable balance between skilled and unskilled staff for a good standard of open space maintenance. **Their** advice has been that an effective city parks department today should comprise:

- approximately 40% certificated gardeners, including some with specialist training
- in tree maintenance, turf maintenance, **etc.**,
- approximately 20% gardener apprentices and specialist tradesmen such as vehicle mechanics, plumbers, **etc.**,
- approximately 40% labourers, caretakers, drivers, etc.

Clearly, Fitzroy falls well short of **this ideal** and probably not much can be **done** about **it** in the short term given M.E.U. constraints and the permanency of council employment. However, **when** the next vacancies occur on **staff** they should be filled **with** certificated gardeners to raise the percentage of qualified staff. As well, a qualified plumber should be recruited as soon as possible **so** that the skills are on hand to properly **maintain** the water supply and irrigation systems.

The Superintendent also advises that of his staff of 22 there would be an average of only 12 men **turn up** for work on a typical Monday to **Friday** in **summer**, leaving him grossly understaffed **in** what should **be** the season of peak activity. The aggregate of demands **for** annual holidays, plus **sick** leave, rostered **days off, workers'** compensation absences **and** leave without pay is concentrated on this **period**. This is a staff management problem that has obviously got seriously out of hand, and it remains the responsibility of management to work out a satisfactory solution.

As a palliative measure, it would make **sense** **to** take on additional temporary **staff in** summer (labourers, students, horticultural students) as is **done in** the European **and** American city parks departments. In the longer term, economies may be possible **if** advantage is taken of **staff** transfers and retirements to **reduce** the number **of** full time employees **in** the department.



Reid **St**  
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bowling

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**Community Oval**

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soccer field  
for **industrial**  
ites  
Freeman **St**  
proposed Community  
& Recreation **Centre**

# MASTER PLAN EDINBURGH GARDENS

Napier **St**  
Jamieson **St**  
Queens Pde  
groun  
Falconer St  
**Schools'** Sports Ground  
trees existing  
proposed  
**Grant St**  
**shrubs**  
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Alfred  
metres 50  
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LANDFORM AUSTRALIA **PTY LTD**  
March 1007

## CITY OF FITZROY

Rowe **St**



Summarized from **correspondence**, maps and **other** documents in **Crown Lands** Management **Branch** file Rs. 360 for the **Edinburgh Gardens**, Ministry of Conservation, **Forests and Lands**. **Explanatory** comments are in italics.

1859

First Fitzroy Council **request** to Crown Lands Dept. **for a** reserve **for** public recreation. Seven acre **triangular site** between Heidelberg Road, Reilly Street (now *Alexandra Parade*) and Smith Street is temporarily reserved **for** public recreation (6 acres 1 rood) and public baths and wash-houses (3 roods) .

10.1.1862 and 19.2.1862

Fitzroy Council requests an alternative site of 50 acres for public recreation in **North Fitzroy**. Suggests an oval site 20 chains in diameter and 29.25 chains long **with** its flat side aligned along the Yan Yean Tramway (*later renamed St Georges Road*). See Map 1. The site straddles a creek running north-south (*today an underground main drain*). There are two **ponds and** a few scattered trees. (*It is possible that the two large red gums at the northern end of the Gardens today are remnants of this original tree cover.*) The site also includes the rifle butts used by the Collingwood Volunteers (*apparently its first recreational use*).

*The reasons for choosing this site and plan shape are not explained.*

22.2.1862

**The** site is reduced in area to 388 3r 26.5p by Clement Hodgkinson, Deputy Commissioner of **Land and Works** (*the leading figure in the planning of Melbourne's early park system*) who directs that **the** southern half circle **of** the reserve be moved back **to** clear the future extension of Brunswick Street.

*This fixed the location of the future Edinburgh Gardens at the intersection of St **Georges Road** and Brunswick Street. Also fixed the half **circle** shape of the northern end of the Gardens, soon to become the inside edge of Alfred Crescent. The southern half circle was soon obliterated when the boundary there was squared up on the grid of the new Freeman, **Langton** and Brunswick Streets.*

28.3.1862

Temporary reservation of new site and revocation of 1859 reservation is **Gazetted**.

25.9.1862

Collingwood Commercial Cricket Club is given permissive occupancy of 9 acres of the reserve at the intersection of Brunswick street and St Georges Road; also given permission to fence.

9.7.1863

Prince of Wales Cricket Club is given permissive occupancy of 6 acres of **the** reserve directly south of the C.C.C.C. **See Map 2.**

1872

The two cricket clubs **amalgamate to become the Fitzroy Cricket Club and** receive permissive occupancy for the combined site of about 15 acres.

*The Club's subsequent activities centred on the* southern cricket **ground** which survives **today as the Fitzroy Community Oval.**

26.7.1876

Departmental memo refers **to the** reserve **as the 'Duke of Edinburgh Gardens'.** *(Queen Victoria's younger son had visited Melbourne in 1867 and the reserve appears to have been unofficially given his name, later simplified to the Edinburgh*

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**Gardens)** Memo states that the Fitzroy Cricket Club has to date expended about £450 on fencing, planting, sowing, building, etc. **on the area** occupied by it. 'The remainder of the grounds is merely enclosed by a post and two rail fence at a cost of £90, and the land so enclosed is utilized by the Fitzroy Council for grazing purposes.'

3.10.1877

Fitzroy Cricket Club requests permission to charge admission for up to four days a year. The letter details improvements made by the Club. 'Since the reserve was made into a Cricket Ground (some 12 years ago) about £2,000 have been spent on it.' The letter is accompanied by a sketch map [see Map 3] and records the division of the grounds as follows:

1st Division. Ladies' Reserve and Pavilion. 'This reserve is fenced & planted with Trees, Flowers & a Fountain erected in the centre of one of the Flower Beds.'

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The Playing Ground. This is encircled by a foot-path and running track. The Bowling Green, started 'Some two months ago... *(The present bowling club occupies the same site and is the descendant of this original facility.)*

The Remainder of the reserve, including the northern ground which is referred to as the 'Practice Pitch'.

The letter also records a 'Residence for Caretaker'. *(Map 4, dated 1883, shows that this house was built on the same site as the present head-gardener's house.)*

22.10.1877

Regulations Gazetted for management of the area occupied by the Cricket Club (148 3r 23p) and appointing a Committee of Management composed of members of the Club.

2.9.1878

Regulation Gazetted appointing Fitzroy Council the Committee of Management for the balance of 28 acres. (Total area now 428 3r 23p.)

9.4.1881

Fitzroy Council writes opposing the proposed excision of 2 acres of the Gardens east of the Prince of Wales Cricket Ground for a State School site. A subsequent letter notes that .. the scheme of drainage for the greater part of Fitzroy North runs through the said land..." *Subsequently, the Department of Public Instruction acquired the present school site on the north side of Alfred Crescent.*

1.8.1881 and 9.8.1881

Railway Department writes requesting excision of a strip of land for a railway reserve. Request lapses.

*This original line was intended to run east-west; the line built a few years later ran north-south.*

24.10.1881

Southern portion of the Gardens (33a 3r 23p) permanently reserved, Gazetted 28.10.1881. Northern portion (7a 3r 37p) not permanently reserved until 19.6.1883, Gazetted 22.6.1883. (Total area now 418 3r 20p)

*By this stage Alfred Crescent had been continued around the south-east boundary*

*between Grant and Groom Streets with a resulting loss of area from the Gardens.*

12.4.1882

Crown grant for southern portion (338 3r 23p) issued to the Board of Land and Works jointly with the Mayor, Councillors and citizens of Fitzroy as '... a site for a public park **and** gardens for the recreation **and** amusement of our subjects and people...' (Vol. 1368, Fol. 273446) Crown grant for the northern portion (now amended to 88 Or 17p for a total area of 428 Or Op) issued 19.6.1883. (Vol. 1480, Fol. 295990)

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*These crown grants reserved to the Crown all rights in minerals as well as rights for public roads, **canals** and railways.*

22.6.1883

Fitzroy Council agrees with the Board of Land and Works (ie. the Crown Lands Dept.) to each contribute £250 per annum for five years from 1.7.1883 for the improvement and maintenance of the Gardens, the expenditure to be controlled by a Committee of Management appointed jointly. (A separate Committee of Management continues to administer the cricket ground and bowling green area.)

*Serious development and planting of the Gardens appears to have started from this date. Large sections were raised by filling with garbage and street manure, giving rise to shrill public complaints. Extensive areas were trenched for the disposal of night-soil, a measure believed to improve the land prior to planting but also saving the Council the cost of cartage further afield. The creek was filled in and an underground culvert installed somewhat to the west. The creek's old route **is** marked today by the north-south path and avenue of trees on the eastern side of the Gardens.*

*It is probable that the fine plantations and avenues of elms and oaks that survive today were planted in the 1880s. The best of these appear to be *Ulmus procera* (the English elm), *Ulmus x hollandica 'Purpurascens'* (the purple leaved hybrid elm), *Quercus robur* (the English oak), and *Qvirginiana* (the southern live oak). Most of the other trees appear to be of more recent planting.*

*A Lands Department map dated May 1883 [Map 4.] records developments to that time and shows the unfenced northern oval, the main southern oval, bowling green, pavilion and gardener's dwelling, all fenced, **as well as** the fence and gates around the boundary of the Gardens. The main path system which persists today was already established along routes which clearly reflect the practical,*



*through-traffic needs of pedestrians rather than a garden designer's aesthetic predelictions. The two east-west paths, one from Rowe Street, the other from Grant Street, crossed the natural barrier of the creek via two small bridges. These two crossing points persist today as intersection points in the path system. The main north-south path ran beside the cricket ground in the line connecting Best Street and Langton (now Napier) Street. Later paving and avenue plantings confirmed the permanency of these main paths. Diagonal paths and decorative garden beds were added to fill in the interspaces.*

10.8.1887

A deputation of citizens waits on the Minister for Lands asking for the immediate stoppage of the Council depositing garbage, rubbish and dead animals in a portion of the Gardens.

Dr. Crook: 'The danger to public health cannot be estimated.'

Councillor Britten: 'Only 7 horses have been buried in the Gardens during the past 6 years and none of them less than 4 feet below the surface.' 'The Central Board of Health have served notices on the Council to fill in the drain.'

The Minister directs that the work must cease.

7.9.1887

Petition of citizens asks for removal of certain fences erected by the Committee of Management which impede free access across the northern ground. Also asks '... that paths should be made from one gate to another for the accommodation of pedestrians' and notes that '... paths already worn by the feet of pedestrians...'

*Maps show that within the next few years this part of the Gardens north and east of the bowling green was developed with paths and trees.*

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17.8.1887

Surveyor General reports **on** inspecting Gardens. Recommends removal of **obstructing fences**. But **favours** continuation of use of the gardens for rubbish disposal: 'From what **can** already be seen **as the** effect of the operation of **the** trenching and **manuring** the results achieved by the managing committee in the improvement of the grounds considering the small amount at their disposal is something remarkable.'

22.6.1888

The Gardens **are** subdivided to transfer a portion of the land **to the** Railways Commissioners. (Vol. 2044, Fol. 4087030) *Subsequently, the rail line and station were built.*

18.10.1888

Education Department writes advising of closure of North Fitzroy School because of the **smell** and health risk caused by the depositing of rubbish in the Gardens by Fitzroy Council.

14.3.1889

Fitzroy Council and Board of Land and Works agree to continue joint management arrangement for another 5 years from 1.7.1888 contributing annually £250 each.

In 1892 the recession forces the government to reduce this to £200 per annum.

Annual reports prepared by the Committee of Management for several years from 1892 are on file and give details of expenditures. These are signed by A. A. Bannerman as Acting Curator. In 1892-93, £3/15/- was spent for 5000 hawthorn 'quicks'; more were bought in subsequent years. *It is apparent that extensive hedges of hawthorn were a feature of the Gardens. These were certainly used to screen the railway land and were probably planted in other locations, perhaps even along the peripheral fence. None survive today.*

In 1894-95 the Committee began the practice of 'selling grass' for revenue, *i.e., harvesting hay, a common practice in other Melbourne parks at the time. This practice appears to have been continued for many years, indicating that the turf must have been quite rough by modern standards.*

In 1894-95 the street water from Rowe Street was carried into the Gardens and **used** for watering the eastern side for which reticulated water was not available. *It is probable that the large circular pond built adjacent to Alfred Crescent was **used** to store this storm water.*

M.M.B.W. Maps 29 (1894) and 50 (1900) record most of the ground features of the Gardens at the turn of the century, including the **new** railway station, rail line and level crossing, and a fountain at the northern end. *(This may **have been** the fountain **once** located in the Ladies' Enclosure of the Cricket Ground.)* See Maps 5 and 6.

A map of the northern suburbs, circa 1905, shows additional diagonal paths, avenue plantings, several circular garden beds, the circular pond in line with Rowe Street, and the gardener's cottage with a substantial yard to the rear *(probably a service yard where the present service yard and nursery facilities now stand)*. See Map 7.

*By the early 1900s the Gardens had taken very much their present form. Developments since then have mostly involved expansion of the cricket ground facilities, which became important as the home ground of the Fitzroy Football Club, and erection of other sporting and public facilities. These latter included the band stand, a statue to Queen Victoria (now missing), the toilet block, the children's health centre, the children's playground, the tennis club, the Ladies' Bowling Club, and the hockey field and changing rooms on the eastern side. (The northern end of this ground covers the former site of the circular pond). It is probable that the external fences, other than those around the cricket ground,*

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*were removed in the 1920s, the period when most public parks were 'opened up' in Melbourne. In recent years many flower beds and shrubberies have been eliminated to simplify maintenance. Fixed sprinkler systems have been installed over large areas to the great benefit of the lawns and the canopy of mature trees.*

2.10.1917

The Lands Department withdraws from direct participation in the management of the Gardens and Fitzroy Council is appointed a Committee of Management. Gazetted 10.10.1917.

3.12.1926

Fitzroy Council's proposal to extend the cricket ground to the east, involving removal of the fine avenue of elms along the north-south path beside the railway land, is bitterly opposed in the press and by local citizens. The Minister for Lands forbids their removal. The issue resurfaces from time to time.

9.3.1938

Fitzroy Council informs the Lands Department that the trees have been removed as '... an eyesore and a danger... Also the trees ... adjacent to the Tennis Courts were throwing shadows on the playing arenas and the roots were also a continuous source of trouble.' Refers to the '... floral decorative strip along the pathway north of the playing arenas from the Brunswick Street entrance eastwards ... which could not be continued to the end of the Courts as desired because of these trees.' Recent improvements described include incorporation of disused Railway land on each side of the line after removal of the hedges and picket fences. Also removal of the footpath on the eastern and southern side abutting Alfred Crescent and its conversion to grass.

27.8.1945

The vicar of St Lukes Church and several other citizens write opposing the Council's plan to build a large playing field in the south east section of the Gardens. It is suggested that this might be used for Sunday football and lead to ... the commercialization of Sport and its attendant evil of Gambling'. Council later reduces proposed sports ground to a size more appropriate

for children's play.

20.8.1948

Lands Department approves of the establishment of a ladies' bowling green in the Gardens.

12.12.1967

The *Fitzroy (Edinburgh Gardens) Lands Act, 1967*, approved:

closes a small portion of Freeman Street and incorporates it in the Gardens,

- appoints corporation of Fitzroy as the committee of management,

permits corporation to lease the sites occupied for bowling (two), tennis, cricket and football for up to 21 years (subject to the approval of the Governor in Council if the term exceeds three years).

6.10.1977

Memo from Lands Department's landscape architect details condition of the Gardens, in particular the Cricket and Football **area** where most buildings are in a derelict state.

'The Football Club stand, recently destroyed by fire, has been largely demolished...'

11.3.1980

The City of Fitzroy writes seeking the Minister's approval **for** its proposal ... to redevelop the Football/Cricket Ground as a community use facility designed to achieve the optimum use of this public open space asset by the maximum number **of** Fitzroy residents, schools and sporting organizations. Cost of the works to be approximately \$500,000 over four years.

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Map 1.

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Portion of a Lands Department sketch map of February 1862 showing the original outline of the Fitzroy recreation reserve as modified by Clement Hodgkinson. (Scale **reduced**.)

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ASSISTANT SURVEYOR

Photolithographed at the Department of Lands and Survey, Melbourne. by I.Noone:

**17th October 1867**

Map 2.

(Scale: 1 inch equals 8 chains.) October 1867, showing the recreation reserve with its two cricket grounds. Portion of Lands Department lithographed map F99 of Fitzroy and Brunswick,

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Map 3.

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Sketch map of portion of the reserve included in the Cricket Club's letter to the Minister for Lands, 4 October 1877. (Not to scale.)

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Lands Department lithographed map of the Edinburgh Gardens dated May 1883 with annotations of 1887. (Scale reduced.)

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Map 5.

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Portion of MMBW Plan 29 (1896) showing the southern end of the Gardens. Note that damage to the original copy has erased the details in the north-west corner of the Cricket Ground. (Scale: 1 inch equals 160 feet.)

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Portion of MMBW Plan 50 (1900) showing the northern end of the  
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Map 7.

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Portion of an unidentified map of the Northern Suburbs, circa 1905, showing details of the Edinburgh Gardens. (Scale: 1 inch equals 10 chains.)

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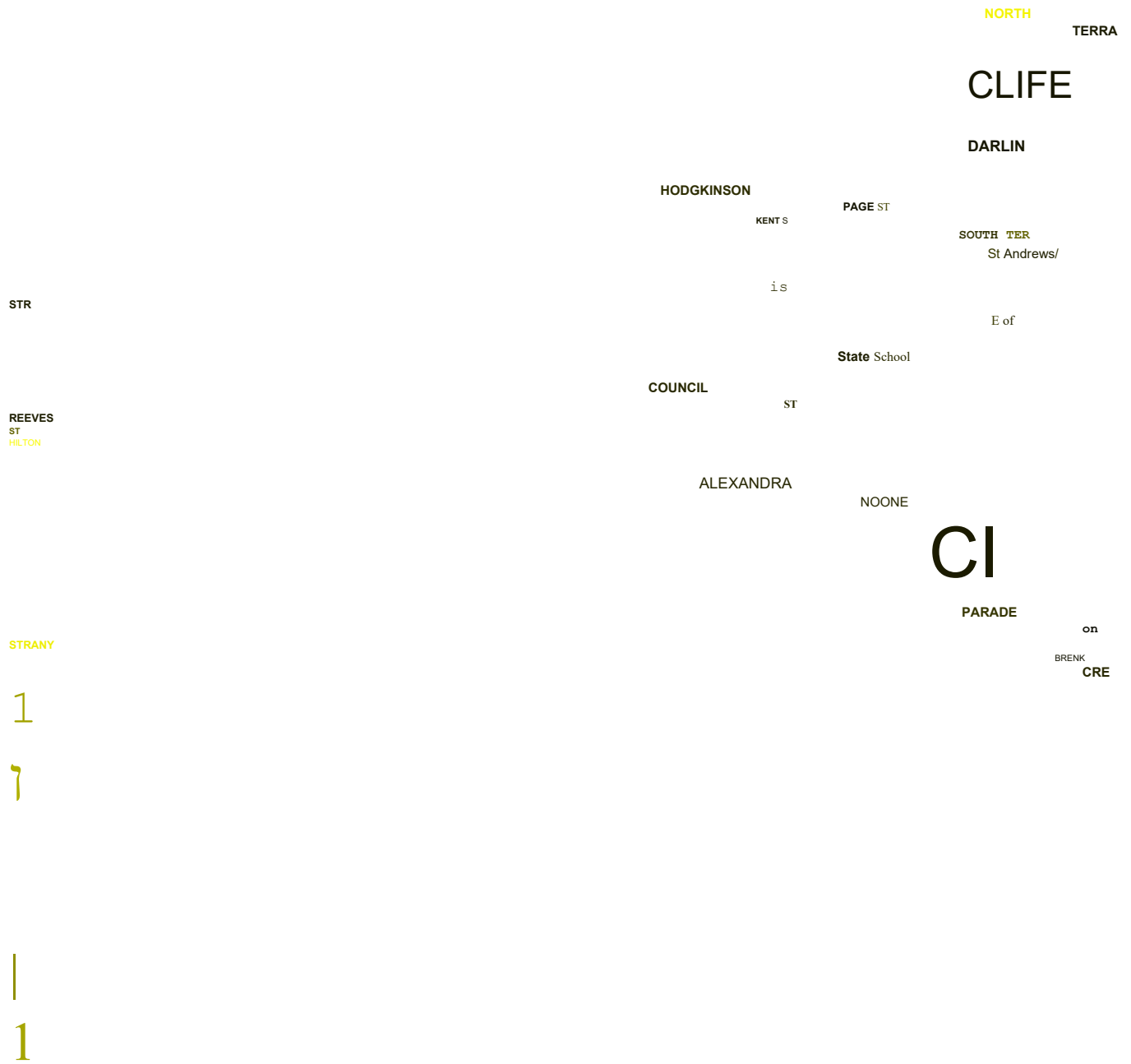
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Mr R Swanson  
Landform Australia 39  
Brunswick Street FITZROY  
VIC 3065

Dear Sir

February 12 1987

Reference No.

JN:JT: 1191

INSPECTION OF EDINBURGH GARDENS ON THE 9th FEBRUARY 1987

On my recent inspection of the Edinburgh Gardens, Fitzroy, the following observations and recommendations are made with regard to the turf quality throughout the gardens.

1. SMALL SPORTSFIELD OPPOSITE THE FITZROY PRIMARY SCHOOL

This small sports field has a patchy turf cover consisting of kikuyu, wineweed, flatweeds, ryegrass as well as large bare areas. The soil is a hard, compacted clay. This ground obviously receives very heavy wear from the students at the primary school and consequently requires a good fertiliser program, regular watering, annual weed control and overseeding as required.

As the kikuyu is spreading throughout the ground I would suggest that this be encouraged. Kikuyu runners or plugs can be taken from the areas. The kikuyu will wear very well and has good recovery. However, it will go into winter dormancy, at which time any wear incurred will not recover until the following spring. It is therefore important that good growth is promoted in the summer and early autumn so that there is minimum damage during winter.

The following program is suggested for the area;

1.

Cultivate bare areas and plant sprigs of kikuyu. needs to be done from September through to April.

This

2. In the autumn use a broadleaf herbicide containing MCPA plus Dicamba to eliminate the flatweeds and wire weed.

3.

Fertilise in the early autumn with an NPK fertiliser such as Pivot 900 at 300kg/ha. In the spring fertilise at 250kg/ha with an NPK fertiliser. Fertilise with ammonium nitrate at 90kg/ha on two occasions during the summer.

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## 2. OVAL

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The oval has a reasonable turf cover consisting of kikuyu, clover and ryegrass.

The oval has a series of surface undulations that would hold water during the winter months. The oval requires heavy harrowing, topdressing and over sowing with ryegrass.

The harrowing will open up the surface and permit the topdressing soil to bind with the existing soil. Some of the undulations are deep and may require several topdressings to reach the required level without smothering the existing grass.

This oval receives heavy use and requires an adequate fertiliser program. The following program is recommended;

autumn:  
winter:

spring:

summer

Pivot 900 or similar at 350kg/ha Ammonium Nitrate at 90kg/ha

Pivot 900 at 250kg/ha

2 applications of ammonium nitrate at 70kg/ha application.

The oval is infested with flatweeds and requires similar treatment to the previous sports field. The ground can be oversown in autumn, after the flatweeds have been sprayed, with Victorian perennial Ryegrass at 100kg/ha.

## 3. GENERAL GRASSED AREAS UNDER TREES

The area

The trees in the park provide a dense shade cover. Under the trees has a very poor grass cover and the soil is compacted. It will be difficult to maintain a substantial turf cover under these conditions, regardless of the grass type. The area under the trees requires rotary hoeing, a seed bed prepared, a fertiliser added and then sown with a 50:50 mix of ryegrass and creeping red fescue at 4kg/100m<sup>2</sup>.

To avoid putting excessive stress on the grass growing under the trees it will have to be mown at no less than 50mm. Low

mowing will eliminate the creeping red fescue which is shade tolerant but will not tolerate low mowing. Also,by allowing the grass to grow higher it will be better able to withstand any wear it receives. Fertilising twice a year with Pivot 900 at 200-300kg/ha will help maintain the turf.

4. GENERAL GRASSED AREAS - OPEN POSITION

The grassed areas that in an open position with few trees have a good cover of ryegrass, kikuyu and clover. Regular mowing, fertiising and watering will be sufficient to maintain these areas. Fertilise these areas at 200-300 kg/ha of Pivot 900 twice a year.

#### 5. PLAYGROUND

The playground presently does **not** have a **grass** cover but **consists of river** washed sand over a **compacted base**. If a grass cover is to be considered then **the area** requires deep rotary hoeing **and then** planted **with kikuyu**. A watering system would **be** required **to at least** get the **kikuyu** established. **As we** discussed, it will **not be possible to maintain a grass cover** under the **swings**, etc. because of the **excessive wear**.

**If you have any queries please contact the Institute.**

Yours faithfully

JNafa

J. NEYLAN  
TURF RESEARCH OFFICER

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