



Holroyd City Council

CENTRAL GARDENS

P l a n o f M a n a g e m e n t



Adopted by Council on 18 June 2002

Holroyd City Council

CENTRAL GARDENS

Plan Of Management

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Background	1
1.2	Location	2
1.3	Scope and Objectives	2
1.4	Compliance with the Act	4
2.	CONTEXT	5
2.1	Regional Significance	5
2.2	Cultural and Historical Significance	5
2.3	Previous Studies	6
2.4	Physical Site Factors	7
2.4.1	Introduction	7
2.4.2	Climate	7
2.4.3	Flora	8
2.4.4	Fauna	9
2.4.5	Landform and Drainage	10
2.4.6	Buildings and Structures	10
2.4.7	Condition of Buildings	11
2.4.8	Services	12
2.5	Visual Considerations	12
2.6	Recreational Opportunities	13
2.6.1	Introduction	13
2.6.2	User Demand	13
2.7	Planning Considerations	16
2.7.1	Adjoining Land Use	16
2.7.2	Zoning and Planning Controls	16
2.7.3	Access and Circulation	17
2.8	Management Responsibility	18
2.9	Maintenance	18
2.10	Current Leasing Agreements	19
2.11	Funding	19

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

3.	MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES	20
3.1	Core Objectives for the Park	20
3.2	Core Objectives for the Bushland	20
3.3	Site-specific Objectives	21
3.4	Management Strategies	21
3.4.1	Recreational Demand	21
3.4.2	Improvements	22
3.4.3	Access and Circulation	23
3.4.4	Health and Safety Issues	23
3.4.5	Landscaping	24
3.4.6	Bushland conservation	26
3.4.7	Maintenance	26
3.4.8	Planning Issues	27
4.	IMPLEMENTATION	28
4.1	Introduction	28
4.2	Management Structure	28
4.3	Funding	28
4.4	Priorities	29
4.4.1	Introduction	29
4.4.2	Timing of Actions	30
4.5	Staffing	35
4.6	Commercial Development Opportunities	35
4.7	Easements, Leases and Licences	35
4.8	Performance Assessment	35

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Under the NSW Local Government Act, 1993 (as amended by the Local Government Amendment (Community Land Management) Act 1998), Councils are required to prepare Plans of Management for all land classified as 'Community Land', to ensure it is effectively planned and managed. 'Community Land', as defined by the Act, may be categorised as:

- Sportsgrounds,
- Parks,
- Natural Areas,
- General Community Use Areas (including drainage reserves).

Under these definitions, the predominant area of Central Gardens is categorised as a Park, whilst a small portion of it is categorised as a Natural Area (management Zone B, **Figure 3**).

For the purposes of this Plan of Management, a Park is defined as an area of Community Land for use mainly for passive or active recreational functions.

A Natural Area is defined as an area of Community Land with significant natural attributes that would be sufficient to further categorise the land as bushland, wetland, escarpment, watercourse or foreshore under section 36(5) of the Act. The area of Central Gardens categorised as a Natural Area consists of remnant Cumberland Plain Woodland, which is currently subject to a draft Recovery Plan and as such must be categorised as a Natural Area under the NSW Local Government Act, 1993 (as amended by the Local Government Amendment (Community Land

Management) Act 1998. Zone B (**Figure 3**) is further categorised as Bushland in accordance with Clause 15 of the Local Government (General) Regulation, 1999.

Categorisation within the terms of the Act assists the formulation of objectives for the long-term management of this open space resource.

The Act sets objectives for the management of the different land categories. Core objectives for the management of land categorised as a Park are:

- To encourage, promote and facilitate recreational, cultural, social and educational pastimes and activities, and
- To provide for passive recreational activities or pastimes and for the casual playing of games, and
- To improve the land in such a way as to promote and facilitate its use to achieve the other core objectives for its management.

Section 36B of the Act sets the requirements for land that is directly affected by a recovery plan. The Act states that, the Plan of Management, must identify objectives, performance targets and other matters that:

- Take account of the Council's obligations under the recovery plan in relation to the land, and
- Are otherwise consistent with the objects of the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995, and
- Incorporate the core objectives prescribed under section 36 in respect of community land categorised as a natural area.

The core objectives mentioned above relate to the further sub-categorisation of the land.

The core objectives for the management of land sub-categorised as Bushland are:

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

- To ensure the ecological viability of the land by protecting the ecological biodiversity and habitat values of the land, the flora and fauna (including invertebrates, fungi and micro-organisms) of the land and other ecological values of the land, and
- To protect the aesthetic, heritage, recreational, educational and scientific values of the land, and
- To promote the management of the land in a manner that protects and enhances the values and quality of the land and facilitates public enjoyment of the land, and to implement measures directed to minimising or mitigating any disturbance caused by human intrusion, and
- To restore degraded bushland, and
- To protect existing landforms such as natural drainage lines, watercourses and foreshores, and
- To retain bushland in parcels of a size and configuration that will enable the existing plant and animal communities to survive in the long term, and
- To protect bushland as a natural stabiliser of soil surface.

Management of Central Gardens is expected to continue to focus primarily on the park as an informal recreational facility, with some conservation and education functions.

1.2 Location

This Plan of Management covers land shown in Figure 1. Covering an area of approximately 11.4ha, Central Gardens is located on the corner of Merrylands Road and the Cumberland Highway in Merrylands West Relevant property details for the park are listed under Council's asset register database (TAMS).

1.3 Scope and Objectives

The main aim of this Plan of Management is to guide future management and development of Central Gardens taking account of community expectations and the resources available to Holroyd City Council (HCC).

Site specific objectives of this Plan of Management are generally based on the programs and broad objectives that are expressed in HCC's 'Management Plan' and 'State of the Environment Report'.

Other documents reviewed include the Upper Parramatta River Catchment Trust Policy Manual (UPRCT), recommendations relating to the upgrading and management of the Doug McLaren lakes prepared for CLASP (Consultant Landscape Architects and Site Planners), the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Draft Cumberland Plain Vegetation Recovery Plan, and the HCC Policies, Codes And Delegated Authority Manual. Direction was also obtained via discussion with Council staff and relevant user groups.

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

The site specific objectives for Central Gardens are to:

- Ensure Central Gardens is a safe environment available and accessible for use by the community.
- Achieve a consistent and responsible approach to the management and maintenance of the park's resources.
- Provide adequate, equitable and appropriate services for the community and to ensure they are managed efficiently.
- Protect, conserve, restore and enhance the environmental values of the park, to ensure it is sustainable for future generations while being visually attractive and pollution free.
- Manage and conserve Zone B (Figure 3), the land categorised as a Natural Area, in accordance with the Cumberland Plain Vegetation recovery Plan and the requirements of the Threatened Species Conservation Act, 1995.

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

1.4 Compliance with the Act

The following table sets out the minimum requirements of the Local Government Amendment (Community Land Management) Act, 1998 for Plans of Management and the sections of the plan in which these requirements have been addressed.

Table 1.1 Compliance with the Act

<i>Minimum requirements under the Act that a Plan of Management must meet</i>	<i>Section of the Plan of Management that satisfies the Act</i>
Category of the land.	Section 1.1
Categorisation of Zone B (Figure 3) as a Natural Area.	Section 1.1
Core objectives for the management of the land categorised as Park or Natural Area.	Sections 1.1, 3.1 and 3.2
Performance targets of the plan in respect of the land.	Section 4.4
Ensure that the performance targets adopted for the management of the area categorised as Bushland are consistent with the Threatened Species Conservation Act, 1995.	Section 4.4
Means of achieving the objectives and performance targets.	Section 4.4
Manner in which the Council proposes to assess its performance with respect to the plan's objectives and performance targets.	Section 4.8
Take account of the Council's obligations under the recovery plan for the area categorised as Bushland.	Sections 3.4.5 and 4.4
Ensure that the objectives adopted for the management of the area categorised as Bushland are consistent with the Threatened Species Conservation Act, 1995.	Section 1.3 and 3.3
Description of the land and any building or other improvements on the land, as at the date of adoption of the plan of management.	Section 2.4

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

Description of the use of the land, and any such buildings or improvements as at that date.	Section 2.6
The purpose for which the land, and any such buildings or improvements, will be permitted to be used.	Section 2.6.2
The purpose for which any further development of the land will be permitted, whether under lease or licence, or otherwise.	Section 3.4
The scale and intensity of any such permitted use or development.	Section 2.6.2 and 3.4

2. CONTEXT

2.1 Regional Significance

Central Gardens forms an important component of the recreational facilities managed by Holroyd City Council and is one of its regional community land areas. Central Gardens is regionally important as the size of the park and facilities available attract patrons from a wide area, well beyond the boundaries of Holroyd City. A survey in 1989 found that 56.7% of park users were not residents of the Holroyd local government area.

Central Gardens is regionally important in terms of the environment as the park contains remnants of Cumberland Plain Woodland association. One of these remnants has been fenced off and is being carefully managed by Council. These remnants have been recognised in a number of flora and fauna reports and most recently in the National Parks and Wildlife's Urban Bushland Biodiversity Study and the draft Recovery Plan for Cumberland Plains Vegetation.

The gardens also represent one of the few opportunities within the Holroyd area for residents to recreate in a bushland setting. Other bushland areas in Holroyd such as the Prospect Creek corridor and Greystanes Woodland have only limited facilities for public access.



The open grassed areas in the park allow for both passive and informal active forms of recreation

Recreation demand for the park is discussed in more detail in Section 2.3 of this Plan of Management.

2.2 Cultural and Historical Significance

Prior to Council ownership of the land, the area was used for clay extraction pits and kilns for brick making. These clay extraction pits were later redeveloped in 1974 to form the Doug McLaren lakes.

The area which makes up Central Gardens was acquired by Council in the early 1970s. When CLASP consultants began design of the park, only the tennis courts and large central grassed area had been developed. Central Gardens was officially opened on April 12, 1976 by The Hon Tom Uren, the then leader of the Opposition.

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

The Doug McLaren Lakes and the Franklin Edward Memorial Tennis Courts were named after prominent Holroyd identities. Doug McLaren was a lawyer in the Merrylands area and was known for his community work. The Franklin Edward Memorial Tennis Courts, were named after Alderman Edward (1953-1974). who was the Deputy Mayor of Holroyd in 1961 and 1962. He was also a delegate to Prospect County Council from its formation and was involved in many local organisations.

Central Gardens has strong cultural significance, as it is an important meeting point for many community groups and individuals.



The amphitheatre in Zone F of the park provides the opportunity for theatre productions and other forms of entertainment

2.3 Previous Studies

Listed below are the main studies relating to the park:

Central Gardens Development Report

[CLASP, 1974]

This report written prior to the development of Central Gardens provides strategic goals for the park as an interpretive educational resource and recreational facility. The report outlines the various recreational opportunities of the area and weighs them against the ecological values found in the park.

Central Gardens Woodland [M.Olgers, 1993]

The aim of this report is to 'identify strategies for the effective long term management of the woodland which will be consistent with State Environmental Planning Policy No.19 Bushland in Urban Areas'.

Urban Bushland Biodiversity Study (UBBS)

[NPWS, 1997]

This study represents one of the most comprehensive and up to date studies of flora and fauna resources within western Sydney. Central Gardens is one of a number of primary remnant sites surveyed within the Holroyd City Council area. Detailed flora and fauna lists are included within this study.

GreenWeb Study [ROC, 1997]

This study, funded by the Nature Conservation Council, examined vegetation remnants across the Sydney Basin, proposed potential links between these remnants and made a number of broad recommendations in regards to the management of these corridors. The Green Web Study lists Central Gardens as an important remnant that should form part of an overall corridor system.

Cumberland Plain Vegetation Mapping and Recovery Plan (NPWS, 2000)

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

This study has been undertaken to produce a comprehensive information base describing the characteristics, distribution and condition of endangered Cumberland Plain ecological communities. The mapping undertaken will assist the development of the Cumberland Plain recovery plan and will also aid in the management of the remaining native vegetation.

2.4 Physical Site Factors

2.4.1 Introduction

For the purposes of this POM, Central Gardens has been divided into seven broad management zones based generally on landuse boundaries and other physical determinants as indicated on Figure 3.

These include:

Zone A

The northern end of the park along Merrylands Road. This zone incorporates the Yarrabee picnic areas, carpark, playground and informal recreation areas.



BBQ facilities in Zone A are well utilised on weekends

Zone B

The area of the park categorised as a Natural Area and sub-categorised as Bushland under the Local Government Act. The western boundary of the park directly below Zone A. This zone incorporates the bushland regeneration area and is bounded on the eastern and southern sides by the Doug McClaren Lakes.

Zone C

This zone incorporates the Doug McClaren lakes and associated waterways, located near the centre and western portions of the park.

Zone D

This zone located along the eastern side of the park incorporates the wildlife sanctuary.

Zone E

Located along the eastern boundary of the park adjoining Thames Street this zone incorporates the works depot, plant storage area, green-house, shade-house, garage and ranger's sheds.

Zone F

The central and part of the southern portion of the park. This zone incorporates the kiosk, amphitheatre, toilets and the Pinaroo picnic area.

Zone G

The remainder of the southern portion of the park incorporates the tennis courts and car parking area.

2.4.2 Climate

The climate of Central Gardens is typical of the western suburbs of Sydney. The period of highest rainfall generally occurs within the first half of the year and the area can expect an average of 970mm of rain a year. Temperatures in the Holroyd area vary between 4-34 degrees Celsius.

2.4.3 Flora

The vegetation at Central Gardens primarily consists of a mixture of remnant indigenous vegetation and planted trees within a parkland setting.

The most significant area of remnant vegetation is known as Central Gardens Woodland (Zone B), located in the north-west corner of the park adjacent to the Cumberland Highway frontage. This area is described in more detail below.

Central Gardens Woodland (Zone B – Figure 3)

This remnant is an example of the Cumberland Plain Woodland Association. This association has recently been listed on Schedule 1 of the Threatened Species Conservation Act, which has significant management implications. In the past the remnant has been subject to a high level of disturbance and at least some of the trees are likely to have regenerated after previous clearing. However the current structure and species composition of the community make it a valuable representative example of Cumberland Plain Woodland.

The most common canopy species is *Eucalyptus moluccana* (Grey Box), with other Eucalypts occurring occasionally, including *Eucalyptus crebra* (Narrow-leafed Ironbark) and *Eucalyptus tereticornis* (Forest Red Gum). In the lower portion of the community *Melaleuca styphelioides* (Prickly-leafed Paperbark) also forms a major component.

The understorey has been subject to varying levels of disturbance. This has resulted from activities including mowing and uncontrolled pedestrian traffic. The majority of the community has now been fenced off from public access, and mowing has ceased, enabling the understorey including many native grasses to regenerate.

In areas which have undergone the least amount of disturbance, a definite shrub layer occurs which is dominated by *Bursaria spinosa* (Blackthorn), but also contains *Dillwynia juniperina* (Prickly Parrot-pea) and several other indigenous species.

The woodland was the subject of a previous study by Council's Bushland officer in 1993. This study should be referred to for a more detailed description of the remnant. More recently, the UBBS [NPWS 1997] identified the conservation significance of the remnant.

The UBBS also lists a number of general recommendations for ongoing management of the remnant, including the use of the remnant as an educational resource.

While this remnant vegetation community is small and isolated from other areas of indigenous vegetation, appropriate management will enable it to continue to recover from previous disturbance and remain a viable representative example of the Cumberland Plain Woodland Association.

Other Vegetation

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

The remainder of vegetation onsite consists of a mix of remnant and non-remnant natives, in addition to exotic species, generally reflecting the original 1974 Masterplan by CLASP. These species include *Casuarina glauca* (Swamp Oak), *Ulmus parvifolia* (Chinese Elm) and *Liquidambar styraciflua* (Sweet Gum).

Significant tree loss occurred in the park as a result of a severe storm in February 2002.

Tree and shrub planting is carried out within the gardens on an ongoing basis, depending on the availability of funds and staff resources. Many of the remnant trees offer excellent potential as seed sources, although collection from these trees is limited at present.

2.4.4 Fauna

The Central Gardens Woodland is isolated from other significant areas of vegetation. This has implications on the value of the remnant as a fauna habitat. The primary habitat within Central Gardens is the tree canopy, which is used by a range of bird species commonly associated with urban environments. While the lakes are used by a range of waterfowl species, this habitat is highly modified and the birdlife is largely reliant on food supplied by people visiting Central Gardens. There is a high proportion of exotic bird species frequenting the lakes. European Carp are present in the lake system. This particular species of fish contributes to poor water quality through its voracious feeding habits.

It is not known if any native species of fish or other amphibious species such as frogs inhabit the lakes. The current quality of the water and absence of aquatic vegetation would make this unlikely. A comprehensive fauna study for the park should be carried out.

Council has a licence under the Exhibited Animals Protection Act administered by the NSW Agriculture Department to display animals in Central Gardens. The exhibit waterfowl and other migratory birds the park.

As a result dogs are not permitted in the park.

2.4.5 Landform and Drainage

The landform of Central Gardens consists of two main topographic units. The northern half of the park slopes gently from Merrylands Road towards the system of lakes in the centre of the park, whilst the section of park south of the lakes is largely flat, with a small localised rise in elevation adjacent to Paton St.

A major attribute of the gardens is the exposed rock face, formed during quarrying operations, when the site was used for brick manufacture. Part of this cliff is used for a large waterfall (part of the original CLASP design) which acts as both a visual feature and a water aeration device.

The majority of the lake system running through the centre of the park was formed by modifying and then flooding the disused clay extraction pits. Additional excavation and earthworks were carried out to create further water storage and linkages between them.

The three main lakes are operated on a reticulation system. Water is pumped from the main lake in the centre of the park, to an outlet near the Cumberland Highway. It then gravity feeds in an easterly direction via a series of cascades through the two upper water bodies and into the main lake.

The lakes also feature two water jets which assist with water aeration whilst also providing a strong visual and auditory element.

In some sections of the park, the ground surface has been modified to direct surface runoff away from the lakes, in an attempt to improve water quality. Water from other areas within the park is directed into existing street stormwater drains to reduce the amount of sediment and nutrients deposited into the lakes.

Water quality is a major issue within the lake system. The quality of the water in the lakes is consistently poor. Contributory factors include silt laden runoff entering from adjacent areas, lack of water depth, presence of carp and waterbirds and lack of reliable water supply to top up the lakes during dry periods.

The shallow depth of lakes means that foraging carp and ducks stir up the clay sediments, increasing turbidity. In addition, shallow water bodies are more susceptible to drought conditions.

2.4.6 Buildings and Structures

Below is a summary of the buildings and structures within Central Gardens. The locations of buildings on the site are indicated on Figure 4. The structures in Zone E are for staff use only.

Zone A

- picnic tables
- timber shelter
- play unit
- amenities block
- flagpole
- commemorative plaque and time capsule
- commemorative tree grove
- carpark

Zone B

- chain-mesh fencing surrounding bushland regeneration area

Zone C

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

- viewing platform/boardwalk adjacent to the Doug McClaren Lakes



The park is well serviced with amenity buildings, BBQ's and picnic tables.

Zone D

- animal enclosures
- bird aviaries
- picnic tables
- viewing platform
- information shelters

Zone E

- works depot and residence
- greenhouse
- garage
- shade house

Zone F

- amphitheatre seating and stage
- amenities block
- kiosk/ranger headquarters
- picnic tables
- play unit and shade structure
- commemorative plaque

Zone G

- tennis courts
- tennis shelter
- carpark



Two playground facilities are provided in the park

2.4.7 Condition of Buildings

The Local Government Amendment (Community Land Management) Act, 1998 requires that a plan of management describe the condition of buildings at the time of the plan. Table 2.1 below describes the condition of the buildings, as at March 2002.

A comprehensive listing of all buildings and structures together with individual condition ratings is maintained and located on Councils TAMS (Total Asset Management System) database.

Inspection of buildings and structures in the park revealed that all were generally in excellent condition and high standards of maintenance were being implemented.

Table 2.1 Condition of Buildings

<i>Buildings</i>	<i>Condition</i>
Zone A timber picnic shelter	Good condition, well-maintained.
Zone A amenities block	Good condition, well-maintained.
Zone D Animal enclosures	Good condition, well-maintained.
Zone D Bird aviaries	Good condition, well-maintained.

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

Zone E Works depot and residence	Good condition, well-maintained.
Zone E Garage	Good condition, well-maintained.
Zone E Shade house	Good condition, well-maintained.
Zone F Amphitheatre stage	Good condition, well-maintained.
Zone F amenities block	Good condition, well-maintained.
Zone F Kiosk/ranger head quarters	Good condition, well-maintained.
Zone F play unit and shade structure	Good condition, well-maintained.
Zone G Tennis shelter and amenities	Good condition, well-maintained.

2.4.8 Services

The approximate location of existing services is illustrated by Figure 4. Water, electricity and sewage are available to the kiosk and amenities buildings in the park. Other services include underground telephone cabling, pipework for lake reticulation system and stormwater drainage lines.

2.5 Visual Considerations

One intention of the original masterplan for Central Gardens was to screen park activities from the surrounding area. This has largely been achieved, however screening is inadequate in certain areas. This is being addressed by supplementary planting. Views from Merrylands Road, which passes along the northern boundary of the park, are partially blocked by the park's perimeter fence and vegetation screening (Figure 5).

The western side of the park is partly screened from the Cumberland Highway by vegetation contained within the woodland regeneration area.

Views north from Paton Street are also screened by vegetation, although this boundary is not as dense as the western or northern boundaries of the park. Views into the park from this area are further reduced by the lower elevation of the park to the Street and the perimeter fence.

The eastern boundary of the park is separated from the adjoining residential area by a 1.8m high wooden fence. The fenceline is screened intermittently with vegetation. Views afforded to adjacent residents can be considered attractive and unobtrusive.



Views of the residential development to the east of the park are partially screened by the 'Colourbond' fence and row of Melaleucas

2.6 Recreational Opportunities

2.6.1 Introduction

The recreational facilities of Central Gardens are designed to provide for a diverse range of activities. Whilst the park focuses on passive recreation, it also provides active recreational facilities in the form of tennis courts.

Other recreational facilities include:

- bird aviaries and animal display area;
- amphitheatre;
- ornamental lake and waterfall;
- barbecues;
- two designated picnic areas available for bookings;
- other non-regulated picnic areas;
- kiosk;
- open lawn areas;
- children's playground facilities; and
- timber deck and boardwalk.

2.6.2 User Demand

Groups using the park facilities include local residents, schools, charity and private groups. The park is very popular for wedding parties as it is used as a backdrop for wedding photos. The park is also frequently used for events such as end of year office Christmas parties.

Activities within the park include walking, jogging, picnicking, barbecuing, structured and unstructured children's play, general relaxing, reading, photography, bird/nature watching, limited bike riding, tennis playing and animal viewing.

The park is used as a focus for Council celebrations such as NAIDOC and the annual Teddy Bear Picnic.

Central Gardens records higher attendance levels in summer than those of any other Park in the area. This high level of usage makes providing a consistently high maintenance standard difficult. Associated problems include soil compaction and erosion of unpaved areas and slopes adjoining the Doug McLaren Lakes.

A comprehensive survey of park users was undertaken by Ku-ring-gai College of Advanced Education in 1989. This survey identified that user numbers peaked dramatically during school holidays and on weekends, particularly if the weather was fine. Annual picnic days also boosted user numbers significantly. Peak times for visitation occurred between 12 noon and 2pm

The survey indicated that the most popular form of recreation in the park was picnicking and barbecuing (62%), with relaxing also a favoured activity (55%). Looking at the animals was listed as the third most popular

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

activity.

Due to a lack of current survey data it is not known whether present day user statistics vary from these 1989 figures. There is a need to undertake further surveys to address this shortfall.

The park experiences high levels of use due to large visitor numbers, particularly in the warmer months and during weekends and public holidays. To some extent, this results in overuse of the park's facilities.

In accordance with the Local Government Amendment (Community Land Management) Act, 1998, Table 2.2 summarises the purpose for each of the land components of Central Gardens and the intensity of their use.

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

Table 2.2 Purpose for various components of Cental Gardens

<i>Land component</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Intensity of use</i>
Tennis courts	Sports activities	Regular use by local groups through bookings and fees paid to the local committee.
Barbecues and picnic tables	Passive recreation	Regular booked and informal use by park users, with more frequent use during the warmer months.
Bird aviaries and animal displays	Passive recreation, interpretation and education	Daily use by park visitors.
Kiosk/ranger headquarters	Supporting facilities	Daily use by park visitors.
Children's playgrounds	Passive recreation	Daily use by park visitors.
Amphitheatre	Concerts and cultural events	Occasional use for special events.
Bushland regeneration area	Conservation, education and interpretation	Viewed by park visitors.
Timber deck and boardwalk	Access to lakes edge and viewing points	Daily use by park visitors.
Ornamental lake and waterfall	Aesthetic attraction and water treatment	Viewed by park visitors.
Open lawn areas	Passive recreation	Daily use by park visitors.
Pathways	Access	Daily use by park visitors.
Amenities	Supporting facilities	Daily use by park visitors.
Car parks	Supporting facilities	Daily use by park visitors.
Works depot and residence	Supporting facilities	Daily use by staff, Council.
Greenhouse	Supporting facilities	Daily use by staff, Council.
Shade house	Supporting facilities	Daily use by staff, Council.
Garage	Supporting facilities	Daily use by staff, Council.

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT



High use levels in the park have resulted in some degradation such as soil compaction and erosion

2.7 Planning Considerations

2.7.1 Adjoining Land Use

Residential development is the primary adjoining land use to the east of the park along Thames Street, the northern edge of Merrylands Road, the western edge of the Cumberland Highway and the southern edge of Paton Street. There have been few complaints from residents regarding noise levels.

The Cumberland Highway runs along the western side of the park. This six-lane highway carries high traffic flow particularly during peak hours. This traffic produces a high level of noise which is intrusive to the park (Figure 6).

Merrylands Road adjoins the northern boundary of the park. This four-lane road is an important east to west link running through the centre of Holroyd City. The north west corner of the park is formed by the intersection of the Cumberland Highway and Merrylands Road. This corner of the park is screened with vegetation and mounding.

2.7.2 Zoning and Planning Controls

The area in which Central Gardens is located is zoned 6(a) Open Space. Holroyd City Council's objectives for this zone are to:

- Identify land which is currently used or is intended to be used for the purposes of open space or public recreation.
- Allocate sufficient open space to serve the present and future recreational needs of residents and visitors.
- Enable development associated with, ancillary to or supportive of public recreational use.

Within these areas the following works can be undertaken without development consent:

- landscaping;
- gardening; and
- bushfire hazard reduction.

The following activities are permitted with development consent:

- construction of advertising structures;
- buildings for the purposes of landscaping;
- caravan parks;
- child care centres and children's playgrounds;
- drill grounds;
- forestry;
- public baths;
- racecourses;
- showgrounds, sportsgrounds and tourist facilities;
- utility installations; and
- uses or buildings associated with those purposes which are under the care, control and management of the Council.

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

Purposes other than those listed above are prohibited in areas zoned 6(a) Open Space except that Council may construct roads, stormwater drainage, recreation areas, public amenities, parking areas and cycleways in this zoning without obtaining its own consent.

2.7.3 Access and Circulation

The normal hours of opening of Central Gardens are from 7.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. on weekdays and 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. during weekends. During daylight savings opening times are 7.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. on weekdays and 8.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. on weekends. Unauthorised pedestrian access into the park after hours is prevented by boundary fencing.

The popularity of Central Gardens as a recreational venue has contributed to a shortage of available car spaces. An on-site survey conducted in 1989 indicated that approximately 83% of all visitors to the park arrive by car.

Public vehicle access is restricted to two perimeter car park areas. Entry into these carparks is via Merrylands Road and Paton Street. Merrylands Road car park caters for 48 cars including 2 spaces for disabled persons. Paton St car park caters for 42 cars which also includes 1 space for disabled persons.

There is also parking available perpendicular to the kerb in Paton St. This parking restricts pedestrian access along Paton Street. This area requires redesign so that the pedestrian / vehicular conflicts are resolved.

The primary entry point for maintenance and other authorised vehicles is via the gates adjacent to the works depot and residence, which are accessible from Serpentine Street. Maintenance vehicles may also access the park via boom gates located within the two car parks. Within the park, maintenance vehicles generally travel on the designated bitumen pathways. In certain sections of the park, the use of maintenance vehicles off the pathways has contributed to worn grassed areas. This issue needs to be addressed.

The 1989 user survey indicated that approximately 15% of visitors arrive by foot. Pedestrian access into the park is provided through the entrance gates off Merrylands Road and Paton Street. There is currently no separation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic at these entry points. Once inside the park, pedestrians circulate throughout the park on the pathways provided.

Restricted access areas include the fenced woodland area, the animal enclosures and the works depot and residence area. Access to the lakes (for the purposes of activities such as fishing or swimming) is not permitted. Access to Pinaroo and Yarrabee picnic areas is only restricted to groups when bookings are received.

Pathways are generally suitable for use by disabled persons. The boardwalk and deck structure constructed in 1993 is designed specifically to allow disabled persons to access the edge of the main lake. Toilets within the park have disabled facilities.

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT



Pedestrian access throughout the park is via a series of pathways

Residents living in homes bordering the park are able to access the park during opening hours via individual gates in their boundary fences. These gates must be kept locked at all times when not in use.

2.8 Management Responsibility

The responsibility for managing Central Gardens rests with Holroyd City Council. In addition, the Central Gardens Tennis Courts Local Committee is responsible for the administration of the various groups using the tennis courts. The Lessee is responsible for managing the leased area of the kiosk building. (refer to section 2.10).

Careful management of the various user groups at Central Gardens is essential to avoid conflicts. For example, past conflicts between large groups wishing to use the picnic areas led Council to provide two picnic areas which could be booked exclusively, upon payment of the appropriate fee. Whilst this has largely alleviated past problems conflicts still sometimes occur in the other picnic areas.

Management responsibilities are further discussed in Section 4.

2.9 Maintenance

Maintenance of Central Gardens is generally the responsibility of Holroyd City Council staff. The maintenance responsibilities of the Central Gardens Parks and Gardens crew include:

- lawn mowing, minor tree pruning and weeding of garden beds;
- garbage collection and removal;
- upkeep of the children's play unit areas;
- watering of plants where required;
- general maintenance of buildings and other structures;
- cleaning of drainage grates and pits;
- overseeing the care and maintenance of the animals and their enclosures.; and
- cleaning and servicing of the amenity blocks.

The maintenance responsibilities of the Central Gardens Tennis Courts Local Committee include:

- cleaning and sweeping of area within tennis court enclosure. and
- cleaning of shelter areas adjacent to courts.

Contract maintenance staff are used on an as needs basis to carry out activities such as the servicing of the waterfall pumps. Contract tree surgeons are employed to undertake preventative and remedial maintenance of the parks tree stock. Specialist consultants such as veterinarians are employed as required.

2.10 Current Leasing Agreements

The kiosk located in Zone F is covered by a lease. This lease was established in 1999 and grants the Lessee exclusive rights for sale of refreshments within Central Gardens, with the exception of Special Activity Days, at which times others may be permitted to sell refreshments. The lessee is responsible for maintaining the kiosk in a tidy/hygienic condition. HCC acts as a 'landlord' in this situation. The lease was signed on December 22, 2000 for a three-year period, commencing October 12, 1999. Upon expiration, the lessee may continue to hold the lease on a month to month basis. After the three-year period, the lease may be terminated by either party, with 28 days of notice.

Details regarding standard fees and charges for use of the park are determined annually by the Council. These guidelines are set out in Council's annual budget in line with Council's "Management Plan".

2.11 Funding

The majority of funding for general maintenance and improvement works at Central Gardens comes from rate revenue. In addition, the fees collected by the Tennis Court Local Committee assists with minor works to the tennis court facilities, and occasionally grants are obtained for capital improvements.

Fees collected from the lease of the Central Gardens kiosk contribute to the upkeep of the park. Fees are also collected from persons booking the Yarrabee or Pinaroo picnic areas as well as for use of the gardens for wedding photographs.

Section 94 contributions provide a source of potential funds for improvement within Community Land. Funding is discussed further in Section 4.

3. MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

3.1 Core Objectives for the Park

Management of Central Gardens must be in line with the core objectives for the area categorised as Park, stated under Section 36G of the Local Government Amendment (Community Land Management) Act 1998, namely:

- To encourage, promote and facilitate recreational, cultural, social and educational pastimes and activities, and
- To provide for passive recreational activities or pastimes and for the casual playing of games, and
- To improve the land in such a way as to promote and facilitate its use to achieve the other core objectives for its management.

Funding will be a major factor determining the timing for implementation of actions identified in the POM.



The Doug McLaren Lakes are a major feature of the park

3.2 Core Objectives for the Bushland

Zone B (Figure 3) must be managed in line with the core objectives for Bushland, stated under Section 36J of the Act, namely:

- To ensure the ecological viability of the land by protecting the ecological biodiversity and habitat values of the land, the flora and fauna (including invertebrates, fungi and micro-organisms) of the land and other ecological values of the land, and
- To protect the aesthetic, heritage, recreational, educational and scientific values of the land, and
- To promote the management of the land in a manner that protects and enhances the values and quality of the land and facilitates public enjoyment of the land, and to implement measures directed to minimising or mitigating any disturbance caused by human intrusion, and
- To restore degraded bushland, and
- To protect existing landforms such as natural drainage lines, watercourses and foreshores, and
- To retain bushland in parcels of a size and configuration that will enable the existing plant and animal communities to survive in the long term, and
- To protect bushland as a natural stabiliser of soil surface.

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

In addition to the above core objectives, it is a requirement that the management of the bushland area is consistent with the Cumberland Plain Vegetation recovery plan and the objects of the Threatened Species Conservation Act, 1995.

3.3 Site-specific Objectives

The site-specific objectives for this Plan of Management, as described in Section 1.3 are to:

- Ensure Central Gardens is a safe environment available and accessible for use by the community.
- Achieve a consistent and responsible approach to the management and maintenance of the park's resources.
- Provide adequate, equitable and appropriate services for the community and to ensure they are managed efficiently.
- Protect, conserve, restore and enhance the environmental values of the park, to ensure it is sustainable for future generations while being visually attractive and pollution free.
- Manage and conserve Zone B (Figure 3), the land categorised as a Natural Area, in accordance with the Cumberland Plain Vegetation recovery Plan and the objectives of the Threatened Species Conservation Act, 1995.

Council's management objectives for Central Gardens will remain in line with those adopted for all areas zoned 6(a) Open Space as stated in section 2.7.2.

3.4 Management Strategies

Management strategies are presented below in seven areas:

- Recreational demand
- Improvements
- Access and circulation
- Health and safety issues
- Landscaping
- Maintenance
- Planning issues
- Bushland conservation

3.4.1 Recreational Demand

Strategies are required to resolve the problems associated with overuse of the facilities at Central Gardens. Possible actions include:

- Encouraging people to use other parks within the city through appropriate development and promotion of facilities at these parks.
- Provision of additional facilities within the park to cater for demand.

Any strategies developed should be based on comprehensive and up to date research data in the form of a new user survey and strategic planning information for other open space areas in Holroyd.

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

Development of Alternate Venues

The development of other parks within Holroyd City is seen as the most effective way to assist with taking the pressure off Central Gardens. Three other parks with regional status are Holroyd Gardens, Gipps Road Open Space and the Prospect Creek corridor. Holroyd Gardens is being developed systematically as funds become available and user numbers are gradually increasing. However Holroyd Gardens does not offer the bushland / water recreational experience that makes Central Gardens so popular.

Gipps Road Open Space is largely undeveloped and future development will focus on sporting facilities (refer Gipps Road Open Space Plan of Management – HCC, 1996). The Jack Ferguson Recreation Area within Gipps Road Open Space offers picnic facilities in a bushland setting and includes a lake feature. However this facility is not as well known or as well utilised as similar facilities at Central Gardens. Consideration should be given to raising the profile of such areas to encourage increased patronage.

Picnic and barbecue facilities could also be developed along Prospect Creek although the bushland along this area is fragile (expected to improve as a result of Council's bush regeneration program) and in relatively poor condition. The area's isolation raises issues such as access and vandalism.

Provision of Additional Facilities

Provision of additional facilities at Central Gardens would assist in alleviating some of the pressure on existing facilities. However additional facilities may encourage higher user numbers, and would also add to the cost associated with maintenance of these facilities.

Care must be taken to provide a level of facilities commensurate with maintaining the essential qualities of the gardens as an attractive passive recreation area.

3.4.2 Improvements

Improvements to the existing facilities at Central Gardens are undertaken as funding and the availability of staff resources permit.

Improvements are generally undertaken with the aim of upgrading existing facilities that are reaching the end of their functional life, such as more efficient or more 'environmentally friendly' technology, for example the recent change from wood-fired to electric barbecues. Facilities also need to be upgraded from time to time to comply with new standards.



Holroyd City Council's policy on upgrading the quality of the animal enclosures has seen marked improvements in the Emu and Wallaby enclosures

Examples of improvements at Central Gardens include:

- current upgrading of boundary fencing on the Merrylands Road and Paton Street frontages with steel pallisade panels; and
- improvement of animal habitat values within the park's wildlife sanctuary.

Holroyd City Council has an existing policy of upgrading the animal habitats to create a

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

more natural environment for each of the animals at the park in accordance with Zoological Parks Board directives. This policy has resulted in marked improvements to the Kangaroo, Emu and Wallaby enclosures. Government legislation strictly controls the type of environment that must be provided to captive animals. Further improvements are to be undertaken as funding permits.

3.4.3 Access and Circulation

Conflicts with pedestrians are generally kept under control as only authorised vehicles are allowed to enter the park. However the nature of the park means that sometimes a number of council and/or contractors vehicles may be present in the park at one time. This leads to potential conflicts between park users and pedestrians.

A policy should be developed regarding the use of authorised Council or contractor vehicles within the park. Such a policy should identify an acceptable speed limit, determine who has priority when using the dual-use pathways and set clear guidelines as to who and when should enter the park. This policy could be a generic policy for all Council parks and dual use pedestrian/vehicular pathways.

The policy should stipulate that all vehicles undertaking reversing manoeuvres within the park be fitted with an approved reversing alarm. Alternatively a condition could be made that all vehicles entering the park are not to undertake reversing manoeuvres.

The regular use of park maintenance and garbage trucks off the sealed pathways has led to wearing of the grass and exposing of the soil in certain areas of the park. This practice should be avoided as the worn areas visually detract from the park and the exposed soil contributes to turbidity levels in the lake system after heavy rain.



High use levels have led to erosion of unsealed paths.

3.4.4 Health and Safety Issues

Water Quality

As discussed, water quality is a major issue at Central Gardens.

Possible options to improve water quality include the draining and deepening of the lakes, provision of a lining, planting of nutrient absorbing wetlands, control of localised erosion, and the provision of a cost-effective supplementary water supply (currently localised run-off only) to assist the maintenance of appropriate water levels. Other possible measures include the complete removal of carp from the lake ecosystem and stocking of the lakes with native aquatic animals.

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT



Erosion along the banks of the Doug McLaren lakes increases the silt load of the lakes while decreasing the visual amenity of the park

Deepening of the lakes would assist to minimise turbidity and an increased volume of water would assist to maintain water quality by providing a more stable ecosystem, less susceptible to water level and temperature fluctuations.

Council has a program currently to remove the carp from the lake, which would assist to reduce turbidity and allow native plant species to establish. Turbidity would also be improved by controlling sediment laden overland flow before it enters the lake system, particularly that coming from areas north of the cliff line.

In regards to augmenting the current water supply to the lake system, Council has undertaken preliminary discussions with Australian Water Technologies (AWT) in relation to undertaking a sewer mining project within Central Gardens, involving the reuse of treated effluent to top up lake water levels.

It is likely that this proposal, in conjunction with the other options listed above, would significantly improve water quality in the lake system.

Council should carry out a comprehensive review of all possible options before all or any are adopted for implementation. It is recommended that this review be carried out in conjunction with the preparation of a revised Master Plan for the park.

3.4.5 Landscaping

Planting Strategy

Planting of additional vegetation within Central Gardens is required to perform a range of functions including:

- improve visual amenity by blocking undesirable views;
- provide shade to protect park users;
- stabilise soil erosion; and
- regenerate native stands of vegetation (such as those lost in the severe storm in February 2002).

Erosion on the banks of the Doug McClaren Lakes is caused by uncontrolled overland flow from upper areas of the park. Therefore, there is a need to resolve drainage issues. The provision of nutrient absorbing wetland vegetation around the edges of the lakes will help to stabilise eroding banks, while providing a more natural appearance to the edge of the lakes.



The banks of the Doug McLaren Lakes could be planted out with vegetation to prevent erosion and provide a more natural edge

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

Additional screen planting is recommended along the northern boundary of the park to reduce views of Merrylands Road. Screen planting could also be used along the park's western boundary to complement those trees already screening views of the Cumberland Highway.

A planting strategy should be developed as part of the comprehensive landscape master plan review. This should detail the exact locations and species to be used together with the necessary planting specifications.

Recommended Species

Suggested plant species are listed below. These include predominantly native species, supplemented by exotic species that are known to perform well on the Cumberland Plain and are able to provide shade for park visitors and children using the playground. Those species in the following plant lists that are known to be locally indigenous to the Holroyd area have been marked with an asterisk.

Perimeter Planting

Shrubs

- *Acacia elata* (Cedar Wattle)
- *Acacia glaucescens* (Coast Wattle)
- *Callistemon salignus* (Pink-tip Bottlebrush)
- *Callistemon viminalis* (Weeping Bottlebrush)

Trees

- *Eucalyptus moluccana* (Grey Box) *
- *Eucalyptus tereticornis* (Forest Red Gum) *
- *Eucalyptus crebra* (Ironbark) *
- *Eucalyptus elata* (Willow Peppermint) *
- *Eucalyptus maculata* (Spotted Gum) *
- *Eucalyptus sideroxylon* (Pink Flower Ironbark) *
- *Casuarina glauca* (Swamp Oak) *
- *Casuarina torulosa* (Forest Oak) *

Shade Planting

Trees

- *Fraxinus oxycarpa Raywoodii* (Claret Ash)
- *Pistacia chinensis* (Pistacia)
- *Sapium sebiferum* (Tallow Tree)
- *Eucalyptus maculata* (Spotted Gum) *
- *Eucalyptus nicholii* (Small leaved Peppermint)
- *Lophostemon confertus* (Brush Box)

Erosion Control

- *Acacia floribunda* (White Sallow Wattle)
- *Lomandra longifolia* (Spiky Headed Mat Rush)
- *Pennisetum alopecuroides* (Swamp Foxtail)
- *Casuarina glauca* (Swamp Oak)
- *Melaleuca styphelioides* (Prickly Leafed Paperbark)

Nutrient Absorption

- *Bolboschoenus fluviatilis* (Marsh Club Rush)
- *Cyperus exaltus* (Tall Flat Sedge)
- *Schoenoplectus mucronatus*
- *Schoenoplectus validus* (River Club Rush)
- *Lepironia articulata*
- *Eleocharis sphacelata* (Spike Rush)

In order to minimise the area of turf that needs to be maintained it is recommended that surface mulch be used as much as possible in areas where clumps of trees and shrub planting are carried out and that where possible areas of exotic grasses are replaced with native species.

3.4.6 Bushland conservation

Management of Remnant Bushland

A long-term regeneration and management strategy for the remnant vegetation in Central Gardens, focusing on Zone B (Figure 3.) has been started by Council. This program involves the use of the fenced off area for educational and scientific purposes while its value as a native vegetation area is increased. It is also proposed to use this area as a seed source to produce tube stock seedlings that will then be used for landscaping purposes throughout the rest of the park.

Recommendations for the management of the remnant bushland at Central Gardens in the Cumberland Plain Vegetation recovery Plan and other documents such as the UBBS [1997] and Olgers [1993] should be taken in to account when proposing management actions for the bushland. These recommendations should also be addressed in the proposed revised Master Plan for the park.

3.4.7 Maintenance

Introduction

The high patronage of Central Gardens and the fragile nature of many areas of the park means that an appropriate maintenance regime is particularly important.

The original design philosophy for the park was one of environmental sustainability (refer Central Gardens Development Report, CLASP 1974). This concept was largely in response to the strong natural values of the park. Low maintenance systems are an important aspect of this philosophy. However the current high user numbers is in conflict with a low-maintenance approach.

The proposed revised park master plan should review the original design philosophy and compare it against the current situation in regard to establishing an appropriate level of maintenance.

Scheduling of Activities

Central Gardens caters for a wide range of recreational groups. Coordination of park maintenance activities is important to ensure down-time does not adversely affect these groups. For example, unscheduled maintenance activities carried out on the waterfalls can inconvenience wedding parties who have pre-booked this facility. Work on the various facilities should be scheduled so that weddings and other bookings are not taken during these maintenance periods.

Level of Maintenance

Increasing the level of maintenance within the gardens would assist the park to support higher numbers of users (refer also 3.3.1). However, increasing the intensity of maintenance measures such as more frequent watering of lawn areas and use of fertilisers to encourage vigorous plant growth is not recommended, as together with the extra costs associated with employing additional staff, water costs, etc the measures are in direct conflict with the original park design philosophy.

3.4.8 Planning Issues

Introduction

The Central Gardens POM has been influenced by various planning issues, which relate not only to the park itself, but also the surrounding areas. The character of surrounding urban areas will continue to change over time. It is therefore important to ensure that these changes do not adversely affect the function and amenity of Central Gardens.

While most of the planning issues identified in the following sections of this POM are under the direct control of Holroyd City Council, some involve other authorities and organisations, such as the RTA and various scenic authorities.

Council will need to communicate with these authorities when any of their proposed works impact on Central Gardens.



The Norrie Maley kiosk is the only leased portion of the park

Adjoining Land Use

In accordance with existing legislative requirements, owners of land adjoining the park will need to be consulted before any major works are undertaken. Through Council liaison with adjoining land users management issues such as dumping of rubbish, weed growth and noise intrusion can be addressed.

Major Road Developments

The RTA has upgraded the Cumberland Highway, along the eastern side of the park, to six lanes. The impact on the park includes increased traffic noise and a reduction in visual quality. Council has requested the RTA that a non-reflective noise barrier of appropriate height, and to Council requirements, be constructed along the Central Gardens frontage of the Cumberland Highway including necessary returns at Merrylands Road and Paton Street to reduce noise levels to 55dB(A) within Central Gardens. The proposed wall would be designed to minimise impact on the adjacent vegetation within the Cumberland Plain Woodland Area.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Introduction

Implementation of the Central Gardens POM will be an ongoing process that will proceed in response to community expectations, user requirements, availability of funding and other circumstances as they arise.

4.2 Management Structure

As the management and development of Central Gardens involves several user groups, it is essential to have a clear definition of management responsibilities together with the involvement of a range of people with the necessary management skills and experience. These groups and their respective responsibilities are summarised below.

Holroyd City Council

- ultimate responsibility for development and management of Central Gardens;
- budget allocation for development, and maintenance of the park;
- liaison with tennis court committee, leasee and major user groups;
- allocation of resources (financial, human and physical) for effective development of the park;
- liaison with authorities that have responsibilities relevant to development and management of Central Gardens (eg. Sydney Water, Zoological Parks Board);
- maintenance of landscape works and recreation facilities in the park;
- annual inspection by Councillors, Directors and relevant staff; and
- administration of bookings for user groups including picnickers, weddings etc.

Central Gardens Tennis Courts Local Committee

- coordinating uses of the tennis courts by user groups, including bookings, and fee collection;
- accumulate funds to assist with maintenance and general improvements at the courts;
- monitoring and reporting on maintenance requirements; and
- advising Council as to the expectations and needs of the community in relation to the tennis courts.

Leasee

- management and coordination of activities within the leased area only; and
- liaison with Council regarding management and maintenance issues.

It is proposed that these groups will work together in implementing the development and ongoing maintenance of Central Gardens.

4.3 Funding

The timing for implementation of POM will be directly dependent on the availability of funding. Such funding is required to cover capital expenditure as well as recurrent costs for repairs and maintenance. In allocating funds to the park, Holroyd City Council needs to consider such expenditure within the context of its overall annual budget limits and priorities.

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

Section 94 contributions provide a major source of potential funds for capital improvements within the park. These funds are generated by the contributions from organisations and individuals involved in new development. The contributions are intended to increase the capacity of public facilities to cater for the expected population increase resulting from the development. As this source of funding is directly linked to the timing of development it depends on the rate of development within the Holroyd LGA which fluctuates significantly.

Funding for the recurrent cost of most repairs and maintenance is provided through Council's annual budget. Council's annual budget allocation for parks is aimed at achieving a satisfactory level of maintenance in all parks.

The fees charged by the Central Gardens Tennis Courts Local Committee for use of facilities are guided by the fees set by Council in the annual budget. Local committees are encouraged to set fees that will provide income for improvements in addition to meeting service charges such as water and electricity and minor maintenance costs. Local committee annual budgets should include provision of funds for such improvements.

4.4 Priorities

4.4.1 Introduction

In order to provide a framework within which to implement the POM an indicative schedule of priorities has been prepared.

The following list of criteria has been used as a guideline when determining the priority rating for each action.

H - High Priority (Short-term)

- safety issues in which there is a high probability of serious injury occurring;
- work needed to ensure the essential function of the park is not compromised; and
- work needed to eliminate or reduce severe environmental problems eg, erosion, water pollution etc, in line with the requirements of the Environmental Protection Act and Soil Conservation Act.

M - Moderate Priority (Medium-term)

- ongoing preventative and remedial maintenance of existing park assets;
- work needed to ameliorate adverse environmental conditions eg, shade planting, noise intrusion, poor circulation and access; and
- works aimed at enhancing habitat value

L - Low Priority (Long-term)

- works aimed at reducing overall maintenance costs; and
- works aimed at improving the aesthetic quality of the park.

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

The above criteria may require modification over time in response to special circumstances as well as changing community attitudes and expectations.

4.4.2 Timing of Actions

Timing of actions have been identified for the short (1 year to 2 years), medium (2 years to 3 years) or long-term (3 years to 5 years).

ST: short-term

MT: medium-term

LT: long-term

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

ISSUE / ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	PERFORMANCE TARGET	TIMING
PROVISION OF FACILITIES				
Review the 1974 CLASP master plan and design report and prepare updated master plan.	H	HCC	Revised and updated masterplan to guide future improvements to the park	ST 2002/03
As part of master plan review, undertake user survey and compare against earlier studies in order to establish current user trends	H	HCC	Survey compiled, compared against past data and relevant conclusions drawn	ST 2002/03
Investigate alternate recreational opportunities to relieve pressure on Central Gardens	M	HCC	Alternate opportunities identified	Ongoing
Develop additional facilities in accordance with the revised park master plan and Council's open space strategy	L	HCC	Appropriate level of facilities	Ongoing
GENERAL IMPROVEMENTS				
Stabilise lake banks using appropriate erosion control techniques	H	HCC	Reduced areas of erosion. Increased vegetation	ST Ongoing
Upgrade animal enclosures	M	HCC	Enclosures upgraded	Ongoing
Provide additional screen planting in mulched beds along park boundaries	L	HCC	Adequate screening	LT 2003/04
Provide additional screen planting above waterfall	L		Increased density of planting achieved	LT 2003/04
Upgrade boundary fencing	H	HCC	Fencing upgraded	2002/03
ACCESS AND CIRCULATION				
Develop a policy for vehicle movement within the park	H	HCC	Policy adopted and distributed to all relevant staff and contractors	ST 2002/03

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

ISSUE / ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	PERFORMANCE TARGET	TIMING
Minimise regular tracking of Council service vehicles across grassed areas	H	HCC	Re-establishment of grass on previously tracked areas	ST 2002/03
Upgrade Paton Street carparking	M	HCC	Improved parking facility	MT 2003/04
Require all vehicles undertaking reversing manoeuvres to use reversing alarms	M	HCC	Alarms installed. Increased safety levels.	ST 2002/03
Investigate feasibility of extending board-walk in a westerly direction as part of master plan review	L	HCC	Study complete with appropriate recommendations	MT 2002/03
Upgrade interpretive and directional signage within the park	M	HCC	Increased knowledge of park features	MT 2003/04
WATER QUALITY & DRAINAGE				
Prepare a comprehensive water quality improvement plan in conjunction with the proposed park master plan review.	H	HCC	Completed study & recommendations as to most appropriate course of action	ST 2002/03
Investigate water sewer mining scheme as part of the water quality improvement plan.	H	HCC	Investigation complete. Recommendations made.	MT 2002/03
Install drainage device to catch runoff from Merrylands Road carpark	H	HCC	Surface runoff prevented from scouring upper picnic area	ST 2002/03
Complete carp removal program	M	HCC	Carp removed from system	MT 2002/03
Undertake planting of aquatic plants in accordance with revised park master plan and water quality improvement plan	M	HCC	Increased numbers of aquatic plants	Ongoing
Manage the number of water fowls in park	L	HCC	Water fowl numbers reduced	LT 2003/04
BIODIVERSITY				

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

ISSUE / ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	PERFORMANCE TARGET	TIMING
Implement recommendations of the Western Sydney Urban Bushland Biodiversity Survey and the GreenWeb Study as they relate to Central Gardens	H	HCC	Ongoing implementation of recommendations	Ongoing
Liaise with NPWS in the implementation of its Cumberland Plain Vegetation Recovery Plan.	H	HCC	Ongoing implementation of recommendations	Ongoing
Undertake ongoing bushland regeneration activities within remnant bushland	M	HCC	Gradual improvement in health of remnant woodland	MT 2002/03
Develop vegetation corridor linkages to Central Gardens	M	HCC	Corridors established	MT 2002/03
Install interpretive facilities in bushland area	M	HCC	Signage installed. Increased level of knowledge amongst park users	MT 2002/03
Undertake fauna survey	L	HCC	Increased knowledge of fauna	LT 2004/05
Implement education program for park users	L	HCC	High level of appreciation of bushland amongst park users	LT 2003/04
HEALTH AND SAFETY				
Install shade structure over northern play unit	M	HCC	Appropriate level of shade over playground	LT 2003/04
Plant additional shade trees around playgrounds and pedestrian pathways	L	HCC	Increased shade levels	LT 2003/04
Upgrade shade in amphitheatre	H	HCC	Increased shade levels	2002/03
MAINTENANCE				
Assess maintenance regimes in conjunction with master plan review	M	HCC	Level of maintenance commensurate with desired aesthetic standard.	ST 2001/02

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

ISSUE / ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	PERFORMANCE TARGET	TIMING
Carry out ongoing preventative & remedial maintenance	M	HCC	Park adequately maintained	Ongoing
Implement procedures which will assist to reduce maintenance costs.	L	HCC	Maintenance costs reduced	Ongoing

HCC - Holroyd City Council

4.5 Staffing

The current level of staffing at Central Gardens is adequate to maintain an acceptable level of maintenance and recreational opportunity. If new facilities are implemented then additional staff may be required.

Development of new facilities could also be carried out by contractors engaged by Council, where identified as being appropriate.

4.6 Commercial Development Opportunities

Holroyd City Council has no current plans for development of further commercial facilities within Central Gardens. Such development would be constrained by the high level of development already present at the park. Holroyd Council is not currently considering any applications by private or community organisations to develop additional commercial facilities in the park.

4.7 Easements, Leases and Licences

Council may approve licences or leases over Community Land in accordance with Section 45(3) of the Local Government Act (1993). This Plan of Management authorises Council to issue permits or grant interests or estates, including leases, licences and easements in accordance with the Local Government Act, (1993). Licences and leases are used to formalise the use of community land by groups such as sporting or recreation clubs and organisations or individuals providing facilities or services for public use.

This Plan of Management expressly authorises the lease, licence or grant of any other estate over the management and operation of the kiosk at Central Gardens. This is in keeping with the current lease for the kiosk, which bestows exclusive rights for sale of refreshments within Central Gardens, with the exception of Special Activity Days, at which times others may be permitted to sell refreshments. The leasee is responsible for maintaining the kiosk in a tidy/hygienic condition. HCC acts as a 'landlord' in this situation.

This Plan of Management expressly authorises the lease, licence or grant of any other estate over the management and operation of the Central Gardens tennis courts for sporting purposes in accordance with section 46(1)(b) of the Local Government Act, 1993 (as amended by the Local Government Amendment (Community Land Management) Act, 1998). The grant of a lease or licence for the management and operation of the tennis courts is consistent with the core objectives for the management of the land, as stated in section 36G of the Act.

4.8 Performance Assessment

Council will monitor its performance with respect to the plan's objectives and performance indicators. This would be done through the undertaking of an annual audit of the action plan. The audit will identify actions that are or are not completed.

As noted in Section 4.4. priority works will be considered by Council each year for budgeting and setting of implementation targets as well as for consideration of other works as needed or determined.

CENTRAL GARDENS PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

In addition to this annual assessment, reviews of the Plan of Management will be carried out when necessary to update the plan to reflect any changing circumstances and community needs.