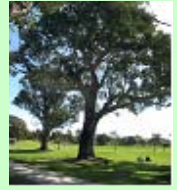


Friends



Of Willow Park Inc.

Patrons:

Professor David
Mitchell

Professor Allan
Curtis

Dr. Juliet Bird

Submission to Wodonga City Council

In response to Council's invitation to the community to input to the decision-making process for the selection of a site and staged developments of

Wodonga Aquatic and Leisure Centre

Postal Address:

c/- P.O. Box 1083,
Wodonga, 3689

Phone:

Julie: (02) 6056 1787
Gerard: (02) 6056 1600
Brydie: (02) 6059 5498
Steve: (02) 6056 6275
Kim: (02) 6024 3023

CONTENTS

SUMMARY	3
THE VALUES OF WILLOW PARK.....	3
SOCIAL IMPACTS	5
• Population changes and the needs this creates	5
• Employment Opportunities.....	5
• Displacement and relocation (impact on services)	5
• Neighbourhood disruption	6
• Noise impacts.....	6
• Aesthetic impacts.....	6
• Accessibility.....	7
• Leisure and recreation impacts.....	7
• Health and safety (including traffic, pedestrian and cycle movements)	8
• Citizens’ responses/reactions	8
• Community impactS.....	9
• Any cultural limitations.....	9
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS	10
• Public open space.....	10
• Flora and fauna	12
• Water (including waterways, wetlands and flooding levels)	13
• Ecosystem Services	14
• Sustainability of site into the future	14
ECONOMIC IMPACTS.....	15
• Total project costs compared to total economic gain to the community	15
• Financial sustainability and management of the project during construction and operation.....	15
• The economic value of the asset to the community in the mid- and long-term.....	15
POSSIBLE OTHER SITES.....	16
White Box Estate area (or elsewhere near the racecourse and showgrounds)	16
A two-stage development incorporating: Stanley Street, Leisure Centre and Middle Creek area.....	17
Regional centre with Albury – Gateway Island.....	18
TYPE OF AQUATIC FACILITIES REQUIRED	18
CONCLUSIONS	19
APPENDIX 1.....	20
APPENDIX 2.....	21

SUMMARY

Willow Park is vital to the function, liveability, and aesthetic character of Wodonga. It provides unique recreational opportunities and environmental and ecosystem services such as water and air filtration, flora and fauna refuge, biodiversity conservation and wildlife corridor. It has a long-established, well-known and cherished social and environmental function and ambience. The park's many values and ambience contribute to the unique character of Wodonga; the foundation of this City's economy. Willow Park is Wodonga's iconic public open space.

Friends of Willow Park (FOWP) is opposed to siting an aquatic facility or any non-ancillary development in Willow Park because of the many detrimental social, environmental and economic impacts. We assert that there is no less a need for Wodonga to protect the many values, function and ambience of Willow Park than there is a need for an aquatic facility.

We propose that building an aquatic centre in the park is not in the public interest and we present this submission in support of our contention.

Wodonga Council has previously shown leadership in protecting key areas of the city from non-ancillary development, for example the hilltops surrounding Wodonga. We urge Council to formally and adequately protect yet another unique and iconic space – Willow Park and its corridors.

Finally, we urge Council to honour its stated commitment to “To preserve and enhance public open space and natural assets” and develop an Open Space Strategy as noted in “Council Plan 2006 to 2010”.

THE VALUES OF WILLOW PARK

Willow Park is a public open space set aside in the 1970s by far sighted planners from the then Albury Wodonga Development Corporation (AWDC, now Albury-Wodonga Corporation (AWC). This parkland is a splendid and rare example of a significant public open space with a long established and well-known function much loved by the community. Throughout the world, studies consistently report on the many economic, social, and environmental values of public open spaces such as Willow Park. The lack of any non-ancillary development in Willow Park is the principal factor in maintaining its many values; values that go well beyond those implied only by the economic balance sheet.

Although the social and environmental values of open spaces are difficult to estimate in monetary terms, it has been shown that urban parkland such as Willow Park can increase the economic value of surrounding property and, therefore the rate tax, more so when the space has aesthetic value. Protection of important greenway corridors such as Willow Park has been found to help mitigate flood, and air, water and noise pollution. Furthermore, Willow Park is fundamental to the character of Wodonga, which forms the economic basis of the city and can potentially increase the economy of Wodonga through business attraction, employment, population increases and tourism.

Submission from Friends of Willow Park to Wodonga City Council
in relation to the Wodonga Aquatic and Leisure Centre

Socially, Willow Park provides important public health services with the provision of space to undertake physical activity, which is well known to reduce morbidity and mortality. Attractive spaces such as Willow Park are proven to be associated with higher incidences of walking activity. Willow Park provides a valuable place and refuge in our urban area for the community to connect to nature, which has many psychological health benefits such as enhancing contemplation, provoking a sense of tranquillity, and to simply relax and escape the stresses of everyday living. Willow Park also provides a space for the expression of personal and cultural diversity and social gatherings and is akin to the ancient “commons”.

Environmentally, public open spaces provide important refuges for indigenous and endemic biodiversity and the conservation of species, more so in large spaces that also have a corridor function such as Willow Park. Important ecosystem services are provided by Willow Park, particularly in the immediate vicinity of the site of the proposed aquatic facility. Ecosystem services such as air filtration, water filtration and storage, carbon sequestration, noise reduction, pollution control and climate regulation are provided to the community by Willow Park in its current state.

Public open spaces such as Willow Park are generally considered desirable and an asset by society and the preservation of this urban parkland is regarded as critical to urban sustainability.

The multitude of social, environmental and economic values of Willow Park to the City of Wodonga is interrelated. For example, there are many economic benefits to the community with reduced medical expenses as a result of healthy lifestyles offered by Willow Park. Economic benefits to the community also arise with the attraction of business to the character of the City – a character that Willow Park is integral to. Likewise, the “green” infrastructure in Willow Park provides environmental services to the community far more cheaply than technological remediation.

In subsequent sections of this submission we will attempt to address the social, environmental, economic values and impacts of the proposed development in Willow Park and the site selection criteria as outlined separately in the Information Kit for brevity and clarity. However, we ask the reader to consider the impacts of non-ancillary development in Willow Park on the interrelated values of the parkland throughout the document.

SOCIAL IMPACTS

Siting an aquatic facility in Willow Park will have many social impacts that are profoundly detrimental to the community of Wodonga. In particular:

- ***Population changes and the needs this creates*** – Wodonga’s population is increasing at a much faster rate than the rest of regional Victoria, requiring expansion of the urban area. As Wodonga’s urban area expands so too does the need for public open spaces that function as places for quiet contemplation, connecting with nature and escaping the stresses of day-to-day living. Furthermore, Willow Park is an ideal space to participate in peaceful informal physical activities such as walking for fitness, health and pleasure. Studies consistently show that informal physical activities are favoured over organised activities and that walking is the fastest growing physical activity in Australia. Council notes that Willow Park will soon be the geographic centre of Wodonga if development continues as planned. Clearly, the value of having a public open space with a long established and well-known cherished function in the community and atmosphere appropriate to these social needs in the geographic centre of the city cannot be overstated.

This is an asset few cities can claim or boast of. Wodonga can lead the way in regional Victoria and continue to enjoy a superb public open space in the geographic centre of Wodonga for citizens to escape the stresses of daily life by acting as a responsible custodian for current and future generations and protecting Willow Park from non-ancillary development.

- ***Employment Opportunities*** – Maintaining a public open space such as Willow Park in its current state provides employment opportunities for the City of Wodonga. Willow Park is an integral part of the character of Wodonga, which is a fundamental factor in attracting business to the City. Furthermore, Willow Park is an asset that can potentially increase tourism to the area creating ancillary employment opportunities. For example, with the newly-constructed Hume Freeway, Wodonga could be promoted as a location to break the journey and Willow Park could be promoted as a site to do that as it provides a perfect, peaceful location for all members of the family to rest, play and recover. Protection and conservation of the park and its environmental corridors offers opportunities in the area of environmental education, similar to the Wonga Wetlands in Albury, and potential joint environmental ventures with the La Trobe and Charles Sturt Universities.

- ***Displacement and relocation (impact on services)*** – Many studies show that maintaining and not over-developing open space saves money in provision of services, particularly where remediation services would be required as a result of development, such as flood mitigation and water pollution. The SGL Group found that Willow Park was the highest capital cost option to connect to services when compared with the existing Stanley Street and leisure Centre sites. Siting an aquatic centre in Willow Park is also likely to impact on the storm water requirements of the area, adding significant unnecessary costs and risking degradation to House Creek.

- ***Neighbourhood disruption*** – The proposed development of an aquatic facility in Willow Park will have significant impacts on the local community. We believe that it is safe to presume that a large majority of residents who live in the Willow Park and Willow Rise area do so because of the special amenity that the park provides. Studies have shown that natural parks and passive parks rather than active parks have a positive impact on the economic value of housing and even more so in more urban populations, and where the park is large. The amenity of the neighbourhood will be significantly altered if an aquatic centre was located here. Mostly, the houses in this area have commanded higher prices because of the amenity. It is reasonable to expect that house prices could fall due to the significant change in amenity. Other critical neighbourhood disruptions include increased noise, vehicular and pedestrian traffic, which are addressed in following relevant points.

- ***Noise impacts*** – The noise impacts of an aquatic facility in Willow Park will be detrimental to the social, environmental and economic values of the parkland and the City of Wodonga. The spatial extent of the proposed development is approximately 15 percent of the total area of the main section of Willow Park; however the impact of noise from the aquatic facility will not respect that physical boundary and will extend to 100 percent in the amphitheatre-like geomorphology of Willow Park. As a consequence, a significant residential area, and not just the immediate neighbours, will be adversely impacted. Likewise, the proposed site in Willow Park would impact upon the oncology hospital in Nordsvan Drive.

Anecdotal evidence shows that there is already occasional disruption due to increased noise, in some instances up to 1.5 km from the park, when musical and skate bowl functions are held. Many residents who live within the broader catchment surrounding the park relate how when the model car club was situated in the park the noise was so loud that it intruded into people's living areas. Many park users also report that the noise associated with that particular facility was such that they often chose not to use the park. Noise levels would undoubtedly increase if the aquatic centre was located in the park.

Not only will there be a significant increase in noise pollution emanating from the aquatic facility, but also from the associated increased vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Road noise is already beginning to disrupt the serenity of the park and this can only become worse given the expected increase traffic to the area. Potential mitigation options to reduce road noise from entering the park is likely to be expensive and further diminish the aesthetics of the park. The noise impacts will disturb the community in both the immediate vicinity of the development and in the access paths to the facility. Noise will also disturb and alienate wildlife in the area, which is integral to the environmental integrity and character of Willow Park.

- ***Aesthetic impacts*** – Willow Park has a long established and well-known ambience that is aesthetically pleasing to the community of Wodonga. The proposed site provides an important vista into the park, which would be lost should the aquatic centre be built. Many studies show that having clear views and attractive vistas into parkland are important in encouraging people to use such amenities. Removal of this important vista leaves only the poor visual link at the bridge over House Creek. As this is also the area that currently allows the greatest 'leakage' of road noise into the park, it is possibly the area for any future noise mitigation action, resulting in no vista into the park.

The proposed development (or other non-ancillary development) would destroy the aesthetics of Willow Park when viewed from any direction (see Appendix 1). Given that the proposed site is bounded by the limits of the flood plain and wetland, any major development will need to be multi-storey. This is strongly out of character with other development in the area. Friends of Willow Park is strongly of the view that even with skilled and innovative architecture that an aquatic centre will dominate the landscape in all directions. This will significantly alter the character of the park and its current appeal. In the future, should expansion of the facility or its associated parking areas be required, the aesthetics of the park would be further threatened. The beauty of Willow Park is not only appreciated by park users and neighbouring residents, but also by patients of the oncology hospital in Nordsvan Drive. It is our understanding that many patients and their families seek solace in Willow Park because of its beauty and tranquillity. This space is likely to become all the more important once the open spaces in Lingford Court and Nordsvan Drive are lost to residential housing. The current aesthetics and ambience of Willow Park are strongly interrelated and one cannot be maintained without the other. As noted previously, the ambience of Willow Park is long established and well-known in the community and contributes to Wodonga's economic, social, and environmental health.

- ***Accessibility*** – An appealing vista into parkland increases access in terms of inviting people in. As previously noted, this vista will be lost. Many studies have shown the important link between parks, public health and wellbeing. They show that in urban environments the best access people have to nature is via parkland. Studies have shown that there are psychological and physiological benefits from physical activity that occurs over varied terrain, the dramatic change in sensory input, and the spiritual values that can accrue from direct contact with the natural world. Willow Park means that it offers all of this and is able to do so largely because of its size and scope. The loss of up to 15% of the park to an aquatic centre and the associated noise and visual impact will alter the function and character of the park and, in turn, its accessibility. It will no longer provide a significant place for peaceful recreation, quiet contemplation and connecting with nature.

The physical accessibility of Willow Park for park users will be limited by the proposed development. Pedestrians will be forced to go around the development and park users could no longer enjoy the open woodland area of the site. The proposed increase in accessibility for vehicular traffic will contribute to the negative social impacts such as neighbourhood disruption and noise.

- ***Leisure and recreation impacts*** – The predominant, long established and well-known function of Willow Park is for peaceful recreation, quiet contemplation, connection with nature and enjoyment of a rare and aesthetically pleasing green space in an urban environment. The more active forms of recreation are parkland in nature and occasional rather than daily. These are therefore in keeping with the predominant use. Studies have found that this form of recreation and leisure is critical to health and wellbeing, equal to and perhaps more beneficial than, other forms of recreation and leisure.

Submission from Friends of Willow Park to Wodonga City Council
in relation to the Wodonga Aquatic and Leisure Centre

The size and scope of Willow Park are important contributing factors to it being well used. For example, because of its size walkers can choose a range of safe routes of varying lengths all within the confines of the park and its corridors. This is an important enabler to encouraging people to walk.

The loss of 15% of the park and the marked change to its character will have a significant negative impact on the leisure and recreation pursuit of the majority of users of the parkland and will undoubtedly alienate them from the parkland.

- ***Health and safety (including traffic, pedestrian and cycle movements)*** – The increased vehicle and pedestrian traffic in the area increases the risk of collision. There are current pressures on motorists entering and exiting Pearce Street, not only at the proposed site but along the road's length. Despite the construction of a roundabout at Nordsvan Drive, there are already daily traffic jams caused by school transport, both buses and private vehicles. Currently the daily average traffic rate on Pearce Street is in excess of 10,000 cars per day. Wodonga Council's traffic projection seeks to reduce the average daily rate of vehicles to around 8,400; a traffic rate that the Council has indicated is more appropriate for the road. Should the aquatic centre be located in Willow Park, the rate of traffic is likely to increase not reduce, continuing to place significant pressure on Pearce Street and feeder roads.

It is understood that there is sufficient space available to make Pearce Street a dual carriageway, should the need arise (14,000+ vehicles per day). While this might alleviate many of the traffic volume issues, it is important to note that Pearce Street has enjoyed a visual buffer between houses and the road. This is an important feature of the area; offering a much more aesthetic road than offered by the dual carriageways of Melrose Drive and Beechworth Road.

There is only one road entry to the proposed site, which is likely to cause significant traffic congestion on the site itself, on Pearce Street and on neighbouring feeder roads. Any solution to the number of entries is likely to place further pressure on neighbouring streets such as Central Place and Kennedy Court, which already experience traffic management issues, and/or mean further loss of parkland. Given that the facility will operate at the same times as other major recreational users such as soccer, cricket and school sports, there will be competing demands on the car parking on a regular basis. This will limit the capacity to reduce the number of car parks, as could be expected if the various user groups' times were more staggered. This will result in either more loss of parkland or continued, and possibly exacerbated, pressure on neighbouring street parking.

- ***Citizens' responses/reactions*** – The negative responses and reactions from the community about the proposed development of an aquatic facility in Willow Park were rapid, strong and impossible to avoid. Members of Friends of Willow Park attended all public meetings called by Council about the proposed development and witnessed these responses and reactions. Many letters and articles were published in *The Border Mail* following the announcement of the proposed site of the aquatic facility and there were a number of local television news reports that also highlighted community concerns.

Submission from Friends of Willow Park to Wodonga City Council
in relation to the Wodonga Aquatic and Leisure Centre

Further irrefutable evidence of the rapid and strong community opposition to the proposed development was proven by a petition with over 1000 signatures. This response was highly significant because these signatures were achieved in less than three weeks by a group with few resources to make the petition widely available. People who signed this petition were from came from a widespread cross section of the community, not only those who live nearby to Willow Park.

Like communities worldwide, the community of Wodonga and surrounding districts is increasingly aware of the many social, environmental and economic values of significant open spaces such as Willow Park. People do not want to lose such valuable urban parkland even when the loss of the land is disguised as being in the public interest. An aquatic centre could be built elsewhere in the city but it is unlikely that an urban park the size, scope and value of Willow Park will ever be set aside again.

Many of the public comments have been concerned not only with the need to retain our parkland but with the reasons for selecting this site. Because of this, it is essential that any social, environmental and economic impact study (initial or detailed) demonstrate:

- that all feasible options have been examined
- that all relevant factors, including environmental factors, have been part of the decision making process
- how the decision on the preferred option was made. (for example the RTA Policy Guidelines).

As noted throughout this document, the proposed development of an aquatic facility or any non-ancillary development in Willow Park will have detrimental social, environmental and economic impacts that will negatively affect current and future generations of Wodonga. This contradicts the principles of sustainable development.

- ***Community impact*** – Many of the community impacts are addressed throughout this document. A further importance is the need to preserve the park for future generations. We are the current custodians of this space, not the exploiters.

- ***Any cultural limitations*** – Willow Park has cultural significance for the people of Wodonga, which is protected by the lack of non-ancillary development at the site. Willow Park has long established cultural function. While the area is used for active competitive sports at times, it is predominantly a site for peaceful recreation, quiet contemplation, connection with nature and enjoying the aesthetics of such a rare and beautiful site in an urban area. This cultural function is as important as any other and is thus important to preserve. Willow Park also has cultural heritage values for Albury Wodonga and Australia's farming community, whether formally recognised or not. A plaque sits next to a willow tree near House Creek on the northern side of Pearce St noting the 1,000,000 tree planted in the National Growth Centre by the AWDC. The tree was planted by Mrs Alma Kruse, the granddaughter of Frederick Heckendorf who was the founder of the original Willow Park property, which was selected in 1878. The cultural value of Willow Park is also noted in Wodonga's Waterway Plans with the recognition that removing the Willows from the interior of the park would alter the character of the park.

Submission from Friends of Willow Park to Wodonga City Council
in relation to the Wodonga Aquatic and Leisure Centre

Indigenous cultural values of Willow Park remain unassessed and we urge Council to undertake such an assessment with the assistance of Mr Richard McTernan, Indigenous Facilitation Officer, North East Catchment Management Authority.

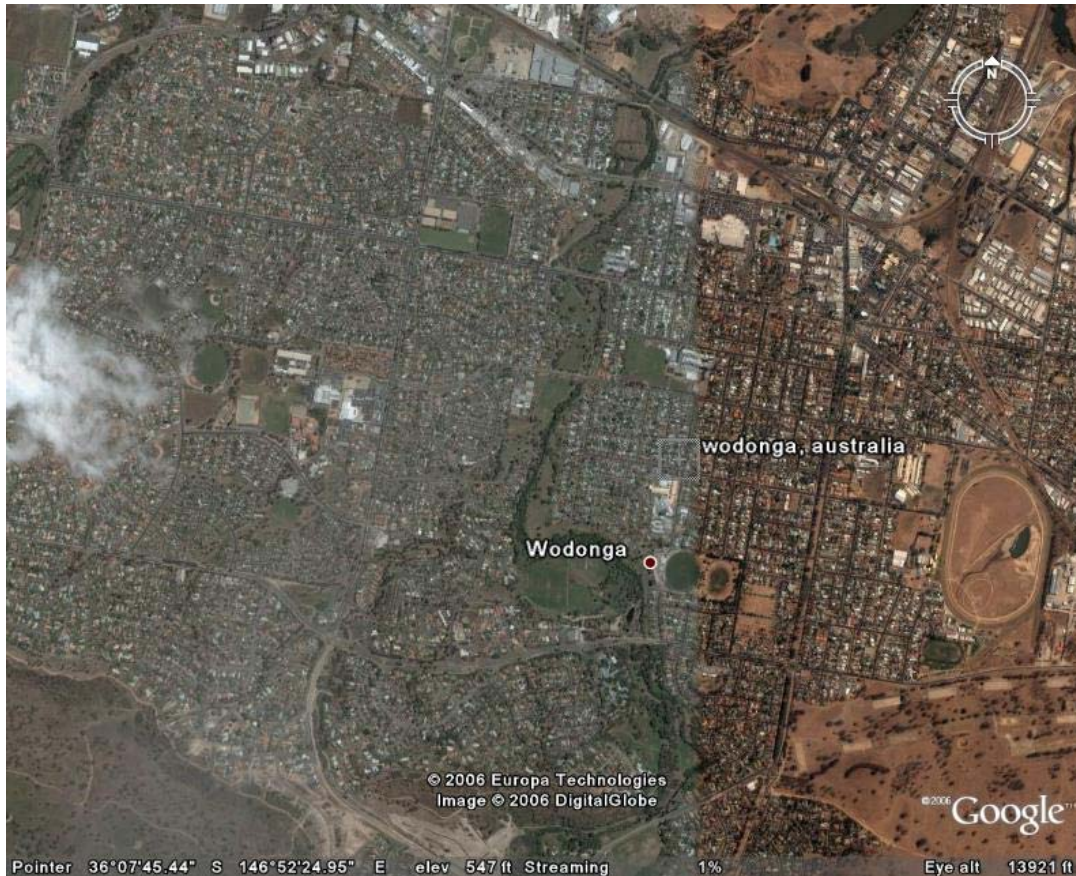
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Environmental impact assessment provides detailed information on environmental, economic and social issues and enables public discussion about a proposed activity before a decision is made on whether it should proceed. (RTA Policy Guidelines)

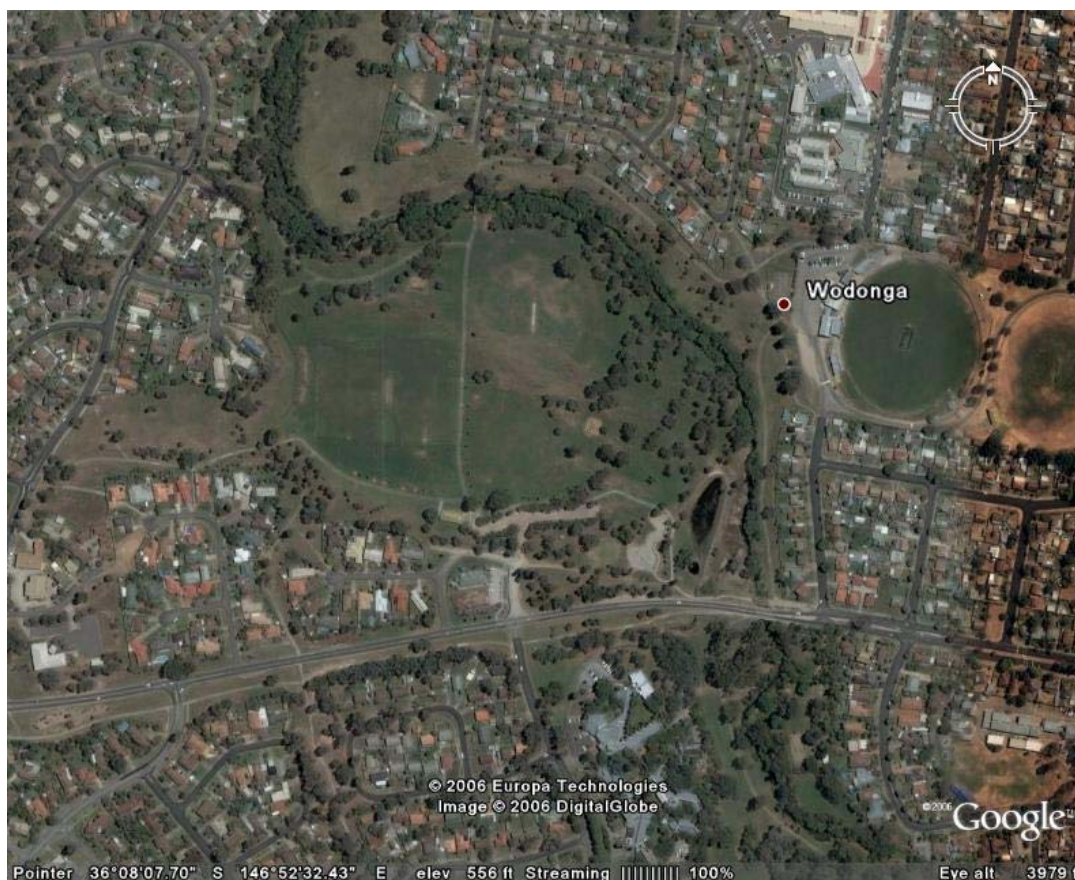
Siting an aquatic facility in Willow Park has many environmental impacts that are predominantly detrimental to the community of Wodonga. In particular:

- **Public open space** –

Diagrams – Satellite imagery of Wodonga and Willow Park (courtesy of Google Earth, accessed 19 November 2006) showing the importance of the space as a public open space in the dense urban area and as a corridor for flora and fauna:



Submission from Friends of Willow Park to Wodonga City Council
in relation to the Wodonga Aquatic and Leisure Centre



Willow Park is a unique and iconic public open space with a long established and well-known ambience and function in the community. Statistical analysis of the proportion of public open space in an urban area is an outdated and ineffective decision-making tool. Recently identified trends in public opinion of public open space suggests that communities are increasingly valuing diversity of function of their open spaces, which suggests a need for government to provide and protect representative examples of each type of space. Satellite imagery (presented in the preceding maps) clearly shows that within the dense urban area of Wodonga there is only one place with the required characteristics to allow residents appropriate space for peaceful recreation, quiet contemplation, connection with nature and enjoyment of a rare and aesthetically pleasing space in an urban environment – Willow Park. Wodonga Council has stated it will develop an Open Space Strategy by June 2007. We urge Council to employ best-practice methods to assess and determine the diversity of public open space and the community's opinions of their public open spaces as part of that Strategy. This could provide a useful decision-making tool for Council and the community alike. Furthermore, we request early and effective community participation in the development of Wodonga's Open Space Strategy.

- **Flora and fauna** – Although there have been no adequate assessments of the flora or fauna of Willow Park, it is clearly a valuable refuge in the dense urban area of Wodonga. Such a refuge is important for contributing to and maintaining habitat diversity and biodiversity, conservation of species, and the opportunity for the community to observe and connect with flora and fauna they might not otherwise be able to observe. This is particularly important for those unable to reach the outskirts of the city.

From the satellite imagery of the area (provided on previous pages) and a site visit, we clearly see that the development of the proposed aquatic facility in Willow Park will remove approximately 100 mature native trees that provide habitat diversity and corridors, which contribute to the maintenance of biodiversity in the region. The functions of this flora are no less valuable because they were not generated naturally. These are important forward tree plantings undertaken by AWC that now support suitable corridors for birds and animals to move from one habitat to the next. Forward tree plantings are particularly valuable when juvenile animals disperse from where they are born.

In the core of Willow Park there are only two areas of open woodland offering important vegetation strata. These are an integral and significant part of the green space. The most significant of these is found on the site proposed for the aquatic centre. Removal of this woodland strata will significantly reducing the immediate habitat diversity and negatively impact on the total biodiversity. Under the Native Vegetation Framework for Victoria, Wodonga will be required to plant 40 trees or shrubs for every one they remove as part of any development. We can expect to wait up to 20 years before any of the these new plantings to offer the important woodland strata of the existing site, resulting in a significant risks to the biodiversity of the region in the interim period.

There are a number of trees of significance in the parks because of size, stature and age, most notably the red gums. Although current early concept plans show these trees are retained, these have been developed in the absence of a traffic management study. It is highly probable that the extended traffic and parking requirements will result in the destruction of two of these trees on the proposed site. Clearly, the size and scope of development would mean that these two trees of significance would pose safety risks. On the other hand, the future of these trees is more favourable if the park is retained for its current predominant function.

The water bodies in the vicinity of the proposed development also have significant floristic diversity, which is critical to maintaining aquatic biodiversity. The risks to flora in the parkland from spills, gaseous emissions of chemicals and increased traffic in the area are significant and mitigation efforts will add to the overall economic cost of the proposed development.

Furthermore, a development of the size and nature being proposed has the potential to disturb native flora along the vegetation corridor. The corridor values provided by this area will be significantly diminished and almost completely destroyed.

Submission from Friends of Willow Park to Wodonga City Council
in relation to the Wodonga Aquatic and Leisure Centre

Numerous studies have shown that Albury-Wodonga's natural setting is vital to the survival and welfare of many threatened species of wildlife, plants and vegetation communities. An important concept of maintaining viable populations of wildlife involves allowing birds and animals to move across the landscape. Corridors are an important part of this.

The recent Wodonga Retained Environment Strategy (WREN) highlights the important and value of linkages and corridors to the environment. Although WREN deals specifically with the Leneva Valley, the strategy highlights the importance of similar strategies in abutting catchments, of which Willow Park is a prominent one.

Worldwide, government is securing and protecting land to create, maintain, protect and preserve corridors. Wodonga has also purchased the "Hunter Land" between Elgin and South Streets to secure the House Creek/Willow Park corridor. The proposal to now destroy part of that same corridor would seem to be a mystifying aberration in Council's planning processes.

Although there have been no adequate assessments of the fauna of Willow Park, it is clearly a refuge in the increasingly dense urban area of Wodonga. Such a refuge is important for contributing to and maintaining biodiversity, conservation of species, and the opportunity for the community to observe and connect with fauna they might not otherwise be able to observe, which is particularly important for those unable to reach the outskirts of the city. Members of FOWP's personal observations of fauna in the vicinity of the proposed development include many bird species such as the kingfishers, herons and other water birds, parrots, honeyeaters, birds of prey, and the site is on the flight path for ibis. Many frog species can be heard at certain times of the day and there is a platypus family living nearby. The water bodies in the immediate vicinity of the development also are home to many species of macroinvertebrates and fish. This biodiversity depends on habitat diversity and the fauna in Willow Park are at risk of losing their habitat with the loss of approximately 100 mature trees and one of only two pockets of open woodland in the parkland. There are further risks to fauna in the parkland from spills and gaseous emissions of chemicals, light and noise pollution, and increased traffic in the area are significant and mitigation efforts will add to the overall economic cost of the proposed development.

A review of *List of Victorian mammals and birds and their conservation status* indicates that several fauna on the vulnerable list are resident in Willow Park. To our knowledge, there has not been a fauna assessment to determine the status of these birds and animals. The building of an aquatic centre could therefore be placing a number of species in danger.

- ***Water (including waterways, wetlands and flooding levels)*** – Although there has been no adequate assessment of the water bodies in Willow Park, House Creek and its floodplain and a stormwater treatment wetland are adjacent to the site of the proposed development of an aquatic facility. These water bodies are flood and storm water storage, improve water quality, retain sediment, and provide refuge for flora and fauna of the region. This contributes significantly to the habitat diversity of the parkland and to supporting biodiversity in the area.

Submission from Friends of Willow Park to Wodonga City Council
in relation to the Wodonga Aquatic and Leisure Centre

As we have recently seen with the “Hunter Land” development proposal, the assessment of flooding levels requires updating and an adequate assessment of future flood levels with the proposed increase in urban development upstream along House Creek.

The water bodies of Willow Park are also important education and research sites and have been used for a number of years by the lecturers and students of the National Environment Centre for studying geomorphology and aquatic assessment and function. The risk of chemical pollution to these water bodies is significant particularly because of the proximity of the proposed development of an aquatic facility. The cost of mitigating these risks will add to the economic cost of the project. Taking such a risk would seem an aberration in Council’s planning processes in light of the plans and economic costs already invested and intended to be invested in improving the condition of these water bodies (e.g. stormwater treatment wetland, willow removal) as identified in Wodonga’s Waterway Plans. There is much potential for further developing these waterways as educational and research sites, which would be lost should the aquatic centre be built.

- ***Ecosystem Services*** – the site of the proposed development of an aquatic facility in Willow Park provides important ecosystem services to the community that would otherwise have to be paid for monetarily with expensive technological solutions. For example, the area provides important ecosystem services such as carbon dioxide sequestration, air filtration, refuge for flora and fauna, habitat diversity supporting biodiversity, allowing water movement into and through the soil for water cleansing and storage limiting the detrimental impacts of storm events on House Creek, and moderating the climate in the region, limiting noise and light pollution, etc. Once lost, these services to the community cannot exist in the area or be sustained for future generations without expensive technological solutions.

- ***Sustainability of site into the future*** – Clearly, the sustainability of the Willow Park site into the future with an aquatic facility or similar non-ancillary development will be quite expensive environmentally, socially and economically. For example: the environmental cost of the loss of habitat diversity and biodiversity (in the short- and potentially long-term); the economic costs of replanting and maintaining those plantings; the economic costs of making the project “parkland neutral”; the social and economic costs of the loss of parkland with a long established and well-known function and ambience; the economic costs of mitigating the risks to flora, fauna and water bodies; the social and environmental costs of loss of function of the area; and more. All these costs will be far greater than for other sites proposed for the development of an aquatic facility in the dense urban area of Wodonga as no similar site with similar values exists there. The economic cost of sustaining the site as it is into the future is already budgeted and the largest economic contribution to sustainability and works has already been completed (i.e. construction of a stormwater treatment wetland, willow removal). It has been shown that errors in decisions such as these have cost the decision-makers and their communities’ dearly as the economic cost of recovering such spaces is far greater than preserving them.

Whatever site is chosen for the proposed aquatic facility, particularly in the case of parkland, an appropriate and rigorous Environmental Impact Statement responsive to the needs of Wodonga’s current and future citizens must be a priority.

ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Siting an aquatic facility in Willow Park has many economic impacts that are predominantly detrimental to the community of Wodonga. In particular:

- ***Total project costs compared to total economic gain to the community*** – Too often public open spaces are viewed as nice, but not economically productive unless developed. However, studies worldwide are increasingly and consistently showing that maintaining and preserving public open space in urban areas complements the economic health of the community. The economic, environmental and social benefits of correctly balancing development with protection of open space have been shown to bring significant and diverse values to the community. Protecting open spaces in an urban environment is an important component of successful community development projects. Willow Park provides a major contribution to the character of Wodonga, which forms the basis of the City’s economy. While the cost of protecting and enhancing a community’s natural assets and public open space may seem high, the true cost of not protecting them may be much higher.

- ***Financial sustainability and management of the project during construction and operation*** – The economic modelling undertaken by SGL is based on an assumption of a significant increase in patronage. This assumption should be further tested as the rationale is not clear. Should it be incorrect, the centre will not be viable.

The proposed \$30 million cost over a 50 year period is of concern. It is not sustainable economic practice for one generation to commit another – and in this case, two generations – to such a large scale debt. The following interest on the proposed loan has been calculated as an example of what such a debt might cost the city.

Cost	intrest	weeks	years	repay/ week	repay/year
\$ 24,000,000.00	7.32%	52.14286	50	-\$34,535.80	\$ (90,039,763.67)
\$ 9,000,000.00	7.32%	52.14286	50	-\$12,950.92	\$ (33,764,911.38)
\$ 33,000,000.00	7.32%	52.14286	50	-\$47,486.72	\$ (123,804,675.05)

- ***The economic value of the asset to the community in the mid- and long-term*** – A change in the character and feature of Willow Park could have an adverse impact on the local economy in terms of what people are prepared to pay for housing in the neighbourhood. Studies have shown a positive economic benefit where houses are located near parks, greenways, rivers and wetlands. Passive parks and natural parks offer greater economic advantage than active parks. ‘Special’ parks such as Willow Park produce even greater effects.

Open space parklands can contribute to the management of stormwater runoff by lowering the cost of remediation, for example:

- undeveloped land and wetlands can absorb more water than residential areas or commercial development;
- the geology of some areas, such as Willow Park, enable large green spaces to absorb significant amounts of water during floods yet is available for recreation as dry land during normal times.

Studies have also shown that an important economic factor is the preservation value attached to preserving significant areas for future generations.

POSSIBLE OTHER SITES

White Box Estate area (or elsewhere near the racecourse and showgrounds)

This site is well located in terms of the current population of Wodonga and the projected growth.

As a greenfield site it offers the opportunity for an aquatic centre to be planned as part of a whole package. In this way, any impact on the neighbourhood can be planned along with the development of the estate. Pathways can be designed both within the estate and to link with other parts of the town to encourage more people to walk or ride bikes. Planning can include public transport needs.

Being on a main road, it offers a highly visible site. It is well situated to the main arterial roads into and out of the town, allowing easy access. These arterial roads have presumably been designed to cater for a high rate of traffic, which could absorb an expected increase in traffic associated with an aquatic centre.

Its proximity to the racecourse, showgrounds and athletics track offers opportunities for an integrated sporting and event precinct. It could also enable shared car parking facilities, with pedestrian walkways linking the various venues. A mixed use of car parking allows for more effective use of car park facilities, would help reduce the cost, and reduce the amount of land required.

This location provides an opportunity for collaborative development with Wodonga South Primary School (to transfer to this estate), the other nearby schools (Huon Middle School and Wodonga Primary School) and Murray Valley Centre. The State Government has a "Pools for Schools" initiative that encourages private-public partnerships to help fund new school infrastructure. Private companies build and maintain a 25 metre indoor pool on school land, recouping investment through private use of the pool out of school hours. Whilst the initial push is for new growth suburbs in Melbourne, the current and projected population growth of Wodonga might provide an opportunity for Wodonga schools, in conjunction with Council and a developer to pursue this option.

The Murray Valley Centre has a heated indoor therapeutic pool with what is reported by the Centre as state-of-the-art lifting devices for use with people who have disabilities or are frail. This facility is potentially a valuable resource for the wider community, particularly people with disabilities or chronic illness, people recovering from an acute illness or trauma, and the elderly. The Administrator of Murray Valley Centre has advised the Friends of Willow Park that the Centre would welcome the opportunity to discuss with Council how the Centre's facility might be able to be part of a joint venture. This might help to reduce the overall cost to Council.

Submission from Friends of Willow Park to Wodonga City Council
in relation to the Wodonga Aquatic and Leisure Centre

Further integration with the various venues in the area might also be possible. For example:

- if the pool is incorporated with the new Wodonga South Primary School, there might be links with the café and school canteen;
- meeting facilities might be incorporated in the redevelopment plans for the racecourse and showgrounds.

Whilst, visually, this is an open space its ex-Defence land status means that this has not been public open space. It does not have a history of public use as parkland and therefore developing an aquatic centre on this site does not threaten any current public open space use.

Endangered species have been identified and protection of these has been incorporated into the overall development. This provides an opportunity to develop an aquatic centre that can be sensitive to its environment.

There might also be an opportunity for water waste (not 'black' water from sewer) from the aquatic centre to be integrated into the proposed stormwater recycling at the racecourse.

A two-stage development incorporating: Stanley Street, Leisure Centre and Middle Creek area

Develop a major aquatic centre in two stages over 15 years through:

- upgrading current facilities for use in the medium term; and
- building a new facility in the Middle Creek area to coincide with the planned residential expansion.

Advantages include:

- less cost in the short to medium term, and time to build up a source of funds for the new facility. Council would not need to borrow over 50 years
- new facility would be located in an area of growing population
- neighbourhood impacts for new location could be considered at design stage for the whole area, allowing better integration of facility with planned development
- continues to use existing assets
- continues to maximise benefits of Stanley Street, for example: In August 2005, SGL Group emphasised the following:

"In our industry expert opinion the current site [Stanley Street] for example has the majority of successful location criteria we look for in selecting high use recreation facility sites. These include:

- *High profile location*
- *Clear views into site*
- *Significant vehicle traffic passing site*
- *Central location to maximise access*
- *Level site to minimise development cost*
- *Surrounding land for potential future facility expansion*

Submission from Friends of Willow Park to Wodonga City Council
in relation to the Wodonga Aquatic and Leisure Centre

- *Fit within existing and future urban development framework (part of CBD redevelopment plans)*
- *Minimal surrounding neighbourhood impacts.*

In our opinion the existing Wodonga Olympic Pool site meets these criteria well and also to a very high standard.”¹

The same report also indicated that the Stanley Street pool

“...is well patronised for an aged cold outdoor pool facility especially when compared to other facilities in similar population areas.”²

- New urbanism promotes local facilities rather than regional ones - plans for higher density residential living in central Wodonga and increase in residential areas in the CBD mean that a swimming pool in the CBD could be a very attractive facility. It would afford people a significant city-based pool within easy walking and bicycle distance (similar to the benefits afforded by the City Baths in Melbourne). It could also be well integrated into the desired ‘café precinct’ in Stanley Street – both through integrating an outdoor lifestyle and through landscaping.
- Good access now via easy walking, cycle paths, bus

The limitations of Stanley Street relating to car parking might be overcome through Council purchasing adjoining land, joint venture with Centro, and so forth.

Regional centre with Albury – Gateway Island

- Joint facility with Albury – larger population area would make an aquatic facility more viable
- Easy access from freeway for attracting passing motorists – perhaps marketed as destination spot, break journey, etc.
- Has cycle paths and these could be upgraded
- Could consider subsidising bus routes to help improve access – perhaps from different spots throughout the district, express to the pool, or park-and-ride options
- Linked to the existing water-based sport facilities

TYPE OF AQUATIC FACILITIES REQUIRED

Given that Friends of Willow Park is comprised of a diverse range of individuals, the group does not have a single view on the type of facilities required. However, some common views held are:

- We would support the need for a 50 metre pool, preferably heated to extend the period of use.

¹ SGL Group, *Wodonga Olympic Pool Redevelopment: Facility Components and Site Options Development Assessment Study – Final Report*, August 2005. pg. 27.

² *Ibid*, pg. 31.

- An update of the 50 metre pool appears to have a higher community priority than does replacing the 25 metre indoor pool.

CONCLUSIONS

We believe that there are strong social, environmental and economic reasons for NOT locating an aquatic centre in Willow Park. Furthermore, the current proposal to site it there is counter to a range of current Council policies and strategic directions, namely:

- Wodonga City Council Budget 2006-2007: Under the strategic objective ‘environment’, the council sets out to “conserve and enhance the natural and built environment and provide opportunities for nature conservation, education and recreation.” – locating a pool in Willow Park will undermine the conservation aspect of this strategy.
- Wodonga Council Plan 2006-2010: As well as the above-mentioned key goal, this plan also includes a goal “Demonstrate environmentally sustainable development in all new residential and commercial developments”. While the proposal to build the pool in Willow Park does not fall within the category ‘new residential area’ it is reasonable to expect that Council would apply similar principles. Clearly, development of an aquatic centre in the park could not demonstrate environmentally sustainable development. The plan also seeks to protect the city’s amphitheatre of hills, develop an Open Space Strategy and support Parklands Albury Wodonga. While not all of these pertain specifically to Willow Park, the underlying values and principles are similar to those that make Willow Park such an iconic asset. It is incongruous for Council to destroy this asset while in the pursuit of other preserving other open space.
- New Urbanism: Important principles of New Urbanism and Smart Growth, its ‘sister’ movement, include: protecting regional open space; sustainability; quality of life; foster distinctive communities with a strong sense of place; preserve natural beauty, parks, farmland and environmentally critical areas; and preserving what’s best about the places we live. While building an aquatic centre can enhance a number of these principles (quality of life; fostering distinctive communities) and others (thriving cities), it clearly would jeopardise many other principles if built in Willow Park.
- Wodonga Retained Environment Network (WREN): Although this recent strategy (Sep. 2006) deals specifically with the Leneva Valley the success of the strategy will partly depend on the conservation and preservation that occurs in adjoining catchments. The Willow Park corridors and House Creek are critical adjoining catchments.
- Wodonga Waterway Plans: These plans pertain to four urban waterways of Wodonga: Felltimber Creek, House Creek, Huon Creek and Jack in the Box Creek. They provide landscape and recreational advice to guide the City of Wodonga in future management of streams and streamside reserves. Among the key principles is one concerned with promoting complementary recreation opportunities along the waterways, and another concerned with ensuring floodplain capacities are maintained. Any decision to build an aquatic centre in Willow Park close to the critical waterway of House Creek would be contrary to the objectives in these plans.

APPENDIX 1 – Representation of the proposed Aquatic Facility in Willow Park as viewed from the northern side of the parkland. Please note that the associated car parks and Stage 2 of the development are not represented nor has the vista of the trees been removed from the background (i.e. the impact will be much greater than this representation depicts):



APPENDIX 2: – Bibliography:

Australian Legal Information Institute, *Albury-Wodonga Development Act 1973*, http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/ada1973286/, viewed 18 September 2006.

Anton, P., *The Economic Value of Open Space: Implications for Land Use Decisions*, Wilder Research, Oct. 2006, accessed from www.embraceopenspace.org/EOSReport?EconomicValueOfOpenSpace.pdf, 16 November 2006

Bedimo-Rung, A. L., Mowen, A. J. & Cohen, D. A. (2005) The significance of parks to physical activity and public health. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*, 28(2S2), 159-168.

Bird, J. (2003) Sustainable cities 2025, Submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment and Heritage, Submission from the Landscape Committee, National Trust of Australia (Victoria) <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/envIRON/cities/subs/sub28.pdf#search=%22value%20of%20urban%20parklands%22>, viewed 23 August 2006

Bryant, M. M. (2006) Urban landscape conservation and the role of ecological greenways at local and metropolitan scales. *Landscape & Urban Planning*, 76, 23-44.

Chiesura, A. (2004) The role of urban parks for the sustainable city. *Landscape & Urban Planning*, 68, 129-138.

City of Ararat, (2005) *Recreation and open space strategy*, available from http://www.ararat.vic.gov.au/page/page.asp?page_Id=271, accessed 23 September 2006.

City of Burlington, VT (2000) *Open space protection plan Chapter 2 Value of urban open space: Why conserve land?* available from http://www.ci.burlington.vt.us/planning/osplan/plan_docs/osplan_2000_chapter2.pdf, accessed 28 August 2006.

City of Greater Bendigo (2005) *Open Space Strategy*, available from http://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/Page/Page.asp?Page_Id=212&h=1, accessed 23 September 2006.

City of Maroondah (2005) *Draft Open Space Strategy, Making the best of open space*, available from (<http://www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/CA256B88001F8356/page/Parks+%26+Reserves-Open+Space+Strategy?OpenDocument&1=45-Parks+%26+Reserves~&2=00-Open+Space+Strategy~&3=~>), accessed 23 September 2006.

City of Melbourne, website <http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/info.cfm?top=25&pg=1321>, accessed 23 September 2006.

Submission from Friends of Willow Park to Wodonga City Council
in relation to the Wodonga Aquatic and Leisure Centre

City of Port Phillip (2005) *Open Space Strategy*, available from <http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/cgi-bin/getObject.cgi?id=o20823>, accessed 23 September 2006.

City of Yarra (2005) *Draft Open Space Strategy*, available from <http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/Services/Parks/Open%20space%20strategy.asp>, accessed 23 September 2006.

City of Wodonga (2006) *Council Plan 2006-2010*, available from <http://www.wodonga.vic.gov.au/council/documents/images/councilplan06-10.PDF>, accessed 24 August 2006.

Cornelis, J. & Hermy, M. (2004) Biodiversity relationships in urban and suburban parks in Flanders. *Landscape & Urban Planning*, 69, 385-401.

Davidson, I., Datson, G., Alker-Jones, J., Bush, T., and Rudd, D., *Wodonga Retained Environment Network: A threatened species and habitat conservation strategy*, Albury Wodonga Corporation, Sep. 2006.

Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH) (1992) *National Strategy for Ecological Sustainable Development*, DEH, available from <http://www.deh.gov.au/esd/national/nsesd/index.html>, accessed 18 September 2006.

Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH) (1999) *Environment Protection and Biodiversity and Conservation Act 1999*, DEH, available from <http://www.deh.gov.au/epbc/index.html>, accessed 18 September 2006.

Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH) (1996) *National Strategy for the Conservation of Australia's Biological Diversity*, DEH; available from <http://www.deh.gov.au/biodiversity/publications/strategy/index.html>, accessed 19 September 2006

Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) (2001) *Growing Victoria Together, A Vision for Victoria to 2010 and Beyond*, DPC, available from <http://www.dpc.vic.gov.au/CA256D8000265E1A/ListMaker!ReadForm&1=30-Growing+Victoria+Together~&2=20-GVT+Goals~&3=~&V=Listing~&K=GVT+Goals~&REFUNID=E8FB5427ABB4EC7DCA2570750024A46A~c0unter>, accessed 21 September 2006.

Department of Primary Industries (DPI, formerly DNRE), (2002) *Victoria's Native Vegetation Management Strategy - A Framework for Action*, DNRE, available from [http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/CA256F310024B628/0/C2E5826C9464A9ECCA2570B400198B44/\\$File/Native+Vegetation+Management+-+A+Framework+for+Action.pdf](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/CA256F310024B628/0/C2E5826C9464A9ECCA2570B400198B44/$File/Native+Vegetation+Management+-+A+Framework+for+Action.pdf), accessed 22 September 2006.

Submission from Friends of Willow Park to Wodonga City Council
in relation to the Wodonga Aquatic and Leisure Centre

Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) (1999) *State Planning Agenda, A Sensible Balance*, DSE, available at

[http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/dse/nrenpl.nsf/646e9b4bba1afb2bca256c420053b5ce/03d099e949042f784a256dea002cc662/\\$FILE/state%2Bplanning%2Bagenda.pdf](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/dse/nrenpl.nsf/646e9b4bba1afb2bca256c420053b5ce/03d099e949042f784a256dea002cc662/$FILE/state%2Bplanning%2Bagenda.pdf),

accessed 22 September 2006.

Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) (2002) *Melbourne 2030: Planning for Sustainable Growth*, DSE, available from <http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/melbourne2030online/>, accessed 23 September 2006.

Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) (2006) *Our Environment, Our Future Sustainability Action Statement 2006*, DSE, available from

<http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/dse/index.htm>, accessed 23 September 2006.

Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE), Planning website a,

<http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/dse/nrenpl.nsf/Home+Page/DSE+Planning~Home+Page?open>, accessed 22 September 2006.

Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE), Planning website b, list of local planning policies in planning schemes,

[http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/CA256F310024B628/0/8C9E4AF7D61D55A5CA2571E90006D26B/\\$File/List+of+Local+Planning+Policies+in+Planning+Schemes+-14+September+2006.pdf](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/CA256F310024B628/0/8C9E4AF7D61D55A5CA2571E90006D26B/$File/List+of+Local+Planning+Policies+in+Planning+Schemes+-14+September+2006.pdf),

accessed 23 September 2006.

Dover, J. W. (2000) Human, Environmental and Wildlife Aspects of Corridors with Specific Reference to UK Planning Practice *Landscape Research*, 25(3), 333–344.

Fausold, C. J. & Lillieholm, R. J. (1999) The economic value of open space: a review and synthesis. *Environmental Management*, 23(3), 307-320.

Giles-Corti, B., Broomhall, M. H., Knuiaman, M., Collins, C., Douglas, K., Ng, K., Lange, A. & Donovan, R. J. (2005) Increasing walking: how important is distance to, attractiveness, and size of public open space? *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*, 28(2S2), 169-176.

Google search: http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&lr=&rls=com.netscape:en-US&defl=en&q=define:Open+space&sa=X&oi=glossary_definition&ct=title;

http://www.actpla.act.gov.au/spatialplan/6_glossary/, accessed 18 September 2006.

Hamilton, L. W. (1997) *The benefits of open space*, The Great Swamp Watershed Association, USA, available from <http://www.greatswamp.org/Education/benefits.htm>, accessed 20 November 2006.

Kaplan, R. Austin, M. E. & Kaplan, S. (2004) Open space communities. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 70(3), 300-312.

Submission from Friends of Willow Park to Wodonga City Council
in relation to the Wodonga Aquatic and Leisure Centre

Lerner, S. & Poole, W. (1999) *The Economic Benefits of Parks and Open Spaces: How Land Conservation Helps Communities Grow Smart and Protect the Bottom Line*. San Francisco, CA: The Trust for Public Lands.

Local Government Victoria (LGV), website
<http://www.dvc.vic.gov.au/web20/dvclgv.nsf/headingpagesdisplay/legislationlocal+government+act>, accessed 23 September 2006

Lynn, D.E., Kingston, N.E., Martin, J.R. & Waldren, S. (2002). Biodiversity in Dublin city urban parklands. In: L. Dunne (Ed.) *Biodiversity in the City: Proceedings of a one-day International Conference held in Dublin 12 September 2002*. (pp. 46 - 56). Environmental Institute, University College Dublin,
<http://www.botanicalevironmental.com/downloads/Urban%20Biodiversity%20Paper.pdf>, viewed 22 August 2006.

Luttik, J. (2003). The values of trees, water and open space as reflected by house prices in the Netherlands. *Landscape & Urban Planning*, 48, 161-167.

Morancho, A. B. (2003) A hedonic valuation of urban green areas. *Landscape & Urban Planning*, 66, 35-41.

Nankervis, M. (1998) Our urban parks: suitable pieces of real estate? *Journal of Australian Studies*, 57, 162-71.

National Park Service (1995) *Economic impacts of protecting rivers, trails, and greenway corridors: A resource book*, Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance, National Parks Service, USA, available from <http://www.nps.gov/pwro/rtca/econindx.htm>, accessed 20 November 2006.

New urbanism – various material from www.newurbanism.org, accessed 16 November 2006

Parks Victoria (2002) *Linking People and Spaces – A Strategy for Melbourne’s Open Space Network*, Parks Victoria, available from
http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/resources/09_0714.pdf#search=%22linking%20people%20and%20spaces%202002%22, accessed 23 September 2006.

Thompson Berrill Landscape Design Pty. Ltd & Tony Wong and Associates Pty. Lt. (2000) *Wodonga Waterway Plans*, Final Report to City of Wodonga and North East Catchment Management Authority, Melbourne.

Thompson, C. W. (2002) Urban open space in the 21st century. *Landscape & Urban Planning*, 60, 59-72.

United Nations (1992a) Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio Declaration on Environment and Development A/CONF.151/26 (Vol. I), United Nations, available from <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/conf151/aconf15126-1annex1.htm>, accessed 30 August 2006

Submission from Friends of Willow Park to Wodonga City Council
in relation to the Wodonga Aquatic and Leisure Centre

United Nations (1992b) United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Agenda 21, available from

<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/english/agenda21toc.htm>, accessed 30 August 2006.

Victorian Law Today Library (VLTTL), <http://www.dms.dpc.vic.gov.au/>, viewed 22 September 2006.

Veal, A. J. (2003) Tracking change: Leisure participation and policy in Australia, 1985-2002. *Annals of Leisure Research*, 6, 3, 245-276.

Wodonga's population is increasing at a much faster rate than the rest of regional Victoria (http://www.dpc.vic.gov.au/domino/Web_Notes/newmedia.nsf/b0222c68d27626e2ca256c8c001a3d2d/fa78bf0e31ec3631ca256d07007d70ff!OpenDocument)