



BOROONDARA
City of Harmony

City of Boroondara

SOCCER STRATEGY

February 2006

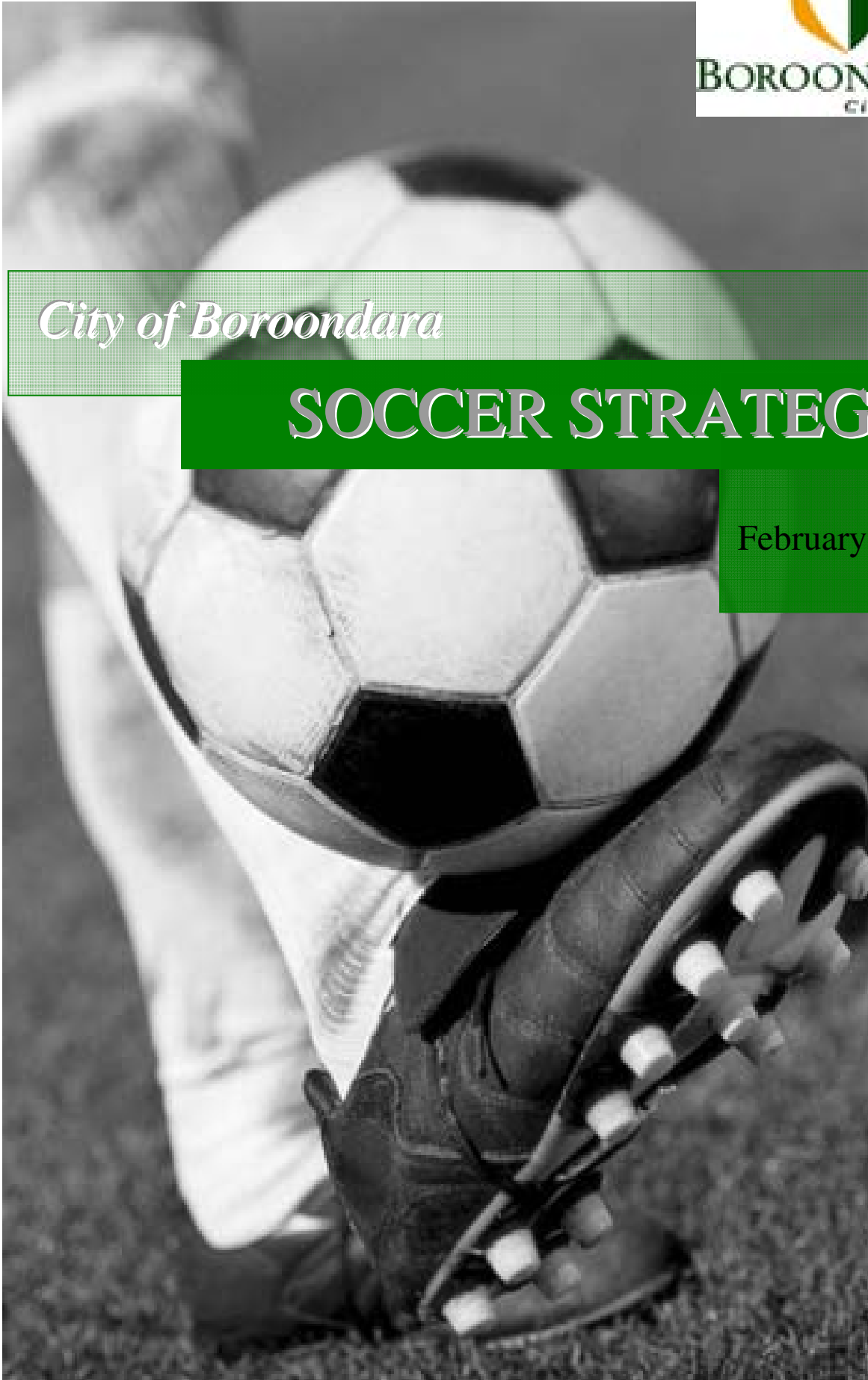


Table of Contents

- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1**
- SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND 4**
- 1.1 The Boroondara Soccer Strategy 5**
- 1.2 Overview of the City of Boroondara 5**
- 1.3 Methodology 6**
- 1.4 Provision for Soccer in Boroondara 7**
 - 1.4.1 Club Development 7*
 - 1.4.2 Facility Management & Provision 9*
- 1.5 Planning & Policy Context 10**
 - 1.5.1 Council’s Role and Policy Position 11*
 - 1.5.2 Open Space Management 11*
 - 1.5.3 Facility Management 12*
- 1.6 Community Context..... 12**
- 1.7 Overview of Soccer 14**
 - 1.7.1 Participation Rates 14*
 - 1.7.2 Programs & Services Provided for Soccer 15*
- 1.8 Provision for Soccer Across the Region 16**
- SECTION 2. SUPPLY ANALYSIS 18**
- 2.1 Summary of Stakeholder Engagement..... 19**
 - 2.1.1 Planning 19*
 - 2.1.2 Provision 20*
 - 2.1.3 Facility Management..... 20*
 - 2.1.4 Partnerships 21*
- 2.2 The Sports Development Pathway 22**
- 2.3 Surface and Facility Options 23**
 - 2.3.1 Artificial Surfaces 23*
 - 2.3.2 District/Regional Level Provision 23*

SECTION 3. NEW FACILITY OPTIONS FOR BOROONDARA 25

3.1 Facility Options for Boroondara..... 26

 3.1.1 *Regional Facility* 26

 3.1.2 *Additional Pitches* 26

 3.1.3 *Facility for Ashburton Soccer Club* 29

SECTION 4. FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR SOCCER IN BOROONDARA. 30

4.1 Recommendations31

 4.1.1 *Club Development Action Plan* 32

 4.1.2 *Soccer Development Action Plan*..... 33

 4.1.3 *Facility Management & Support Action Plan*..... 34

 4.1.4 *Options for Individual Soccer Clubs*..... 36

Executive Summary

The City of Boroondara has conducted a situational analysis into participation and provision for the sport of soccer, to identify opportunities of best meeting the needs of the community where they exist. This strategic review has evolved from growth in soccer participation and the subsequent demands being made by some local soccer clubs for use of facilities to enable the demand to be fully catered for.

Local governments are the major provider of soccer facilities in the region (the City of Boroondara and each of its neighbouring municipalities). The City of Boroondara currently has 14 soccer clubs with a total membership of approximately 1,480 players. Boroondara provides 27 soccer pitches (including 17 senior, 9 junior and 1 undersized), on 18 Council reserves.

Council clarified its role as facilitating and supporting the community to provide leisure opportunities through providing planning, advocacy, coordination, facilitation and funding support (Leisure and Culture Policy, 1996). It considers its priority to be in supporting grass roots sports participation rather than achieving elite levels of competition through the provision of premier standard facilities.

The most commonly reported issues affecting Councils within the region are an undersupply of facilities for soccer, overuse of soccer facilities, limited space for additional facility development, the facility standards expected by Football Federation Victoria and seasonal creep (competitions extending beyond set sports season dates). Soccer clubs' desire for pre-season training also adds to the demand for the use of facilities in summer.

Some soccer clubs use a number of facilities in order to accommodate all of their members. This is common for most sporting clubs in Boroondara. There is a desire among clubs to consolidate their activities to as few facilities as possible. Soccer clubs sharing grounds with summer clubs, usually cricket, presents difficulties for pre-season training. There is a strong demand for separate gender change rooms at some facilities to enable clubs to better cater for female players.

Currently, soccer is considered by Council Officers to be reasonably well catered for relative to other winter sports in Boroondara, and that opportunities exist for soccer to be scheduled more efficiently to better utilise facilities. Soccer has 27 pitches for approximately 1,480 members; AFL has 22 ovals for approximately 3,020 members.

State-wide participation in soccer has increased over recent years, with the most significant increases by juniors and women. While the sport has experienced an increase in juniors and women wanting to play, there are still considerably higher participation rates in AFL and netball (among other sports, but AFL and netball were considered as the major sports competing with soccer for players). Participation in soccer at the senior level has remained relatively stable, and is either yet to experience the impact of the increased number of junior and women players, or players are leaving the sport before they reach the older age competitions.

State Government population projections produced for the City of Boroondara indicate that the city will experience a decrease in the number of young people aged 0-14 years over the 2006-

2011 period. Projections also indicate the number of young people aged 15-24 will level out during the same period. It is unlikely that there will be changes within the population structure that will significantly impact on participation in soccer by young people (through an influx of children, for example). From investigations with the key administrative bodies for soccer at the State and National levels, and analysis of participation trends within the sport in Boroondara, it is anticipated that any further growth in soccer is more likely to result from a redistribution of participants from other sports.

Football Federation Victoria (FFV) is the State Sporting Association for soccer and provides a range of services, including managing and administering junior, women's and senior competitions and junior development programs in Victoria. The Victorian Amateur Soccer Federation and Victorian Churches Soccer League also provide competitions in Victoria, and the Victorian Institute of Sport fulfils the development of elite level players to progress into national and international playing opportunities.

The Strategy has identified a number of additional roles expected of FFV by Council that are not currently being fulfilled; namely the identification of trends in participation and the associated impact on facility provision, and addressing the issues impacting on the sport at a regional level.

Trends in facility provision have been considered, namely the emergence of 'new generation' synthetic grass surfaces as an alternative to the traditional natural turf. Synthetic surfaces require less maintenance, but initial installation is costly, as is replacement of the asset once reaching its life expectancy. In Australia, the peak bodies for soccer identify artificial grass as the future for facility provision, as it has the capacity to tolerate higher intensity levels of use than natural grass, and is an all-year, all-weather surface for the same land area. There are not many examples of such facilities in Australia, let alone Victoria. Three of the five new pitches at the State Soccer Centre in Thornbury will be constructed from artificial grass. The facilities will not be available to clubs to hire for training and competition.

Boroondara has limited opportunities to consider the development of new facilities as it is a fully developed area with no green field sites. Utilising existing passive open space for sport is not considered acceptable, unless that open space can be replaced in the area.

The recommendations relevant to facility management and provision have been applied to the needs communicated by each soccer club in Boroondara, to demonstrate how these demands can be accommodated. In particular, the actions proposed in the Strategy go some way to meeting the demands of the three largest clubs, by enhancing the current level of facility provision to a greater or lesser extent (thus allowing the clubs to accommodate the foreseeable demands of the community).

This strategy was in part instigated by issues facing the largest soccer club in the municipality, Ashburton Soccer Club (ASC). ASC has made ongoing requests to Council for two full sized soccer pitches with support infrastructure at one site to serve as its home base. The club submitted an Expression of Interest for the former Glen Iris Bowling Club site in an effort to find suitable facilities to meet its needs. While this site was not deemed appropriate, the club has since lobbied Council via a petition in late 2004 outlining the need for a Boroondara Soccer Centre for year round use, including an enclosed artificial pitch, and a Premier League standard pitch for its Women's Premier League team.

The Strategy recommends the provision of two senior-sized pitches at Warner Reserve for ASC, subject to consultation, which will also allow the club to reduce the number of venues it requires. The strategy also recommends an audit of ground conditions, floodlighting and change room requirements (for female participation), and the preparation of a plan that prioritises the incremental upgrade on a shared funding basis.

The Strategy does not recommend provision of an enclosed artificial pitch for year round use or a dedicated Premier League facility as stipulated by FFV. Although an enclosed artificial pitch for year round use has been identified as useful for out-of-season training and limited competition, the provision of this facility would be contrary to existing practise of winter and summer sports allocations. The training needs that would be met through this facility could be met through the better utilisation of existing facilities. It is acknowledged that there is some demand among clubs for a high standard Premier League facility that meets FFV standards. However, Council has a role in supporting sport at the grass roots level and encouraging mass participation in physical activity and believes the role of providing facilities for higher level sports competition should be fulfilled by other providers such as FFV and State Government.

The key recommendations (either in anticipated impact, or volume of work) evolving from the analysis of soccer in Boroondara includes:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Ashburton Soccer Club (ASC) with two senior-sized pitches at Warner Reserve, subject to consultation, by removing the moratorium on development of the portion of land at the rear of the Ashburton Pool and Recreation Centre (APARC) and constructing a second senior pitch at the reserve.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a feasibility study into the development of new sports fields in the southern area of the municipality. This study will include an assessment of potential ground locations and configurations, potential users and management model, car parking requirements, cost and funding opportunities as well as impact on the neighbourhood renewal area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In line with the ‘Development and Funding of Sports Grounds Pavilion Policy’ (2003), identify and address change room requirements that will appropriately cater for female participation in soccer.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a Regional Soccer Working Group with local governments in the eastern metropolitan region to ascertain the needs of soccer, and to engage and lobby Football Federation Victoria and Sport and Recreation Victoria regarding seasonal creep, scheduling of matches during non-traditional times and the needs and associated issues with provision at a higher level.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a Boroondara Soccer Forum with all soccer clubs to consider ongoing issues for the provision of soccer in the City.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an audit of club development initiatives available to sporting clubs, identify any ‘gaps’ in provision and through liaison with clubs and Football Federation Victoria prepare a calendar of training to address these gaps.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the current sports e-newsletter to all sporting clubs and distribute on a quarterly basis to increase communication with clubs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an audit of infrastructure, floodlighting and playing surface conditions, (including drainage and irrigation) on all sportsgrounds, and prepare a plan that prioritises the incremental upgrade on a shared funding basis.

Section 1

Introduction & Background

The Soccer Strategy

Profile of Boroondara & Impact of Council's Objectives and Commitments

Overview of Soccer Provision & Participation



1.1 The Boroondara Soccer Strategy

Council has been lobbied for some years by a few clubs regarding the provision of soccer facilities in Boroondara. The key issues that have been raised have included the development of a home base for the largest soccer club in Boroondara, Ashburton Soccer Club (ASC), with year round access to two soccer fields and associated support infrastructure, the provision of a dedicated Premier League standard competition pitch (also for ASC) and the provision of a Boroondara Soccer Centre for shared club use including a Federation International Football Association (FIFA) approved enclosed artificial surface competition pitch.

Rather than responding individually to these issues in isolation, Council resolved in 2004 to conduct a citywide review of soccer to investigate the needs of all Boroondara based soccer clubs as well as the clubs at the heart of the lobbying. This strategy was in part instigated by issues facing the Ashburton Soccer Club (ASC). ASC submitted an expression of interest for the former Glen Iris Bowling Club site in an effort to find suitable facilities to meet their needs. While this site was not deemed appropriate, the club has since lobbied Council through a petition in late 2004 outlining the need for a Boroondara Soccer Centre with an artificial enclosed pitch that meets international standards and a Premier League standard pitch for its Women's Premier League team. The club has also made ongoing requests to Council for two full sized soccer pitches at one site to serve as its home base.

The Soccer Strategy aims to provide a situational assessment of soccer in Boroondara and recommendations to improve opportunities for the sport. The situational assessment is based on a review of background information, site investigation and consultation with soccer clubs and other key stakeholders. The Strategy has been prepared in the context of existing Council policies and strategies relating to sport, recreation, community development and open space, and will serve as a guide and information resource for future relevant planning projects.

The Strategy has been structured to provide an overview of soccer within Boroondara, how it fits within Council's planning and policy context, and details of the participation rates and programs and services provided which is covered in Section 1. Section 2 provides a summary of the stakeholder engagement and a supply analysis. Section 3 provides an outline of potential new facility options and a series of recommendations for Council consideration are found in Section 4. The Strategy, through its recommendations, seeks to respond to a range of issues identified by specific clubs as well as general trends experienced across all of Boroondara.

1.2 Overview of the City of Boroondara

The City of Boroondara is a municipality predominantly characterised by residential development, located east of Melbourne, with a population of approximately 158,000 people. The municipality includes the suburbs of Ashburton, Balwyn, Balwyn North, Camberwell, Canterbury, Hawthorn, Hawthorn East, Kew, Kew East and parts of Glen Iris and Surrey Hills, and contains public and private educational facilities, parks and gardens. Combined, these suburbs cover an area of approximately 60 km².

The City is an established metropolitan municipality, and as a result sporting facilities have been provided for local activity for over 100 years. In all, there are over 155 community based clubs that provide the opportunity to participate in over 24 sporting codes. These sports include a mixture of winter specific, summer specific and year-round played sports that use a variety of

facilities, from outdoor grassed sporting fields and pavilions to artificial courts and pitches, and indoor stadia.

One of these sporting codes, soccer, is the focus of this Strategy. In 2005, Boroondara has 14 soccer clubs using 18 Council owned / managed reserves containing 27 grass junior and senior pitches.

1.3 Methodology

The following process was used to make an informed assessment of the present situation for soccer in Boroondara, and determine appropriate, relevant recommendations to support opportunities for the sport:

- A review of literature related to soccer and Council policy and planning relevant to sport, recreation and open space provision and management;
- A demographic analysis of the Boroondara community, the future population trends, anticipated implications for soccer participation and provision;
- An inspection of all soccer facilities in Boroondara owned / managed by Council, including pavilions and pitches;
- An inventory of sporting facilities owned by the Education Department that could be utilised for soccer;
- Benchmarking conducted with municipalities neighbouring the City of Boroondara (including the Cities of Whitehorse, Manningham, Yarra, Stonnington and Monash), plus the City of Darebin to investigate opportunities presented by the new State Soccer Centre;
- A review of research into participation rates in soccer in Victoria and Australia;
- Benchmarking with international providers of soccer, including the Football Association and Sport England to determine best practice examples of development of the sport;
- Stakeholder consultation which engaged the following parties:
 - Interviews with peak sporting bodies, including the Football Federation Victoria (FFV), Sport & Recreation Victoria (SRV), Victorian Amateur Soccer Federation (VASF) and Victorian Futsal.
 - A survey of soccer clubs that use Council owned / managed facilities which investigated participation trends, facility constraints and club development issues
 - A workshop to which representatives from all soccer clubs in Boroondara were invited
 - A meeting with the Ashburton Soccer Club
 - Interviews with key Managers and Directors from Council.

From the research and consultation, this report has collated the key issues, findings and opportunities to provide a situational assessment of soccer in Boroondara, and ensure that soccer is supported in a way that best balances the demands for and within the sport, with Council's desire to support all sports equitably and within resource constraints. Recommendations for the ongoing support and development of soccer within that context have been provided.

1.4 Provision for Soccer in Boroondara

1.4.1 Club Development

The City of Boroondara strives to provide a range of services to sporting clubs across all sports in an equitable manner. These services are largely aimed at enhancing the capacity of key personnel from local sporting clubs to manage, administer and operate clubs more effectively and efficiently. The philosophy behind this approach is that well run clubs have a greater chance of being financially viable, and therefore the sustainable provision of the sport is more secured.

The City of Boroondara currently provides club development support via a number of departments (refer Table 1). Council's organisational structure separates the role of liaison with seasonal tenants from those of leased facilities between the Parks and Gardens department and Leisure and Cultural Services department respectively.

Council's Community Planning department has implemented the *Community OnBoard* Program aimed at enhancing the support Council provides to the many community organisations in the City, including sporting clubs. The program provides a calendar of training. The program will increase the capacity of these organisations to meet the challenges they face in responding to the needs of the Boroondara community. The Community Development Directorate also administers a grants program to support initiatives by community organisations and clubs, for which soccer clubs are eligible.

The following table provides an overview of the different areas of provision made by Council to soccer clubs. The division by department and function shows the different emphasis of the respective areas.

Table 1. Roles fulfilled by Departments within the City of Boroondara in developing sporting clubs

Leisure & Culture	Parks & Gardens	Community Planning
Planning		
Strategically plan for sports programs, services and facilities for clubs in leased facilities. Facilitate projects where directed by Council (eg. Soccer Strategy).	Identify, research and advocate for improvements to open space outdoor sporting fields to ensure that Council's exposure to risk is minimised and the performance of its facilities is maximised.	
Facilitate Advisory Groups for Bowls, Tennis, Skate & BMX.	Strategic planning for sports programs, services and facilities for clubs in seasonal facilities.	
Identify community needs, and determine strategies to address them in the most appropriate manner within resource constraints.	Identify community needs, and determine strategies to address them in the most appropriate manner within resource constraints.	

Leisure & Culture	Parks & Gardens	Community Planning
Prepare policies and systems to ensure the consistent, effective and efficient management of Council resources in providing for sport and recreation in a coordinated and equitable manner.	Prepare policies and systems specific to open space facilities to ensure the consistent, effective and efficient management of Council resources in providing for sport and recreation in a coordinated and equitable manner.	
Community Development		
		Train community based clubs and organisations in matters relating to community management of an Incorporated Association, eg. Constitutions, incorporation, volunteer recruitment and management, fundraising, sponsorship.
		<i>Community OnBoard</i> Program.

Facility Management		
Manage contracts and support tenants of sporting facilities managed under ongoing lease agreements (including strategic planning for individual clubs if required).	Prepare and disseminate a newsletter to all seasonal clubs that use Council owned/managed facilities. Manage contracts and support tenants of sporting facilities that use open space and are managed under seasonal tenancy agreements (including strategic planning for individual clubs if required).	
	Oversee (re)construction works to sporting facilities on open space.	
	Administer outdoor sporting facilities through allocation of seasonal tenancy agreements to sporting clubs.	
	Maintain all outdoor sporting fields (the maintenance of outdoor sporting pavilions is fulfilled by Facilities Management Department).	

	Inspect all facilities at seasonal changeover. Complete seasonal renovations of grounds, maintenance reports and associated administration.	
Support		
Administer a minor grants program to support individual sporting requests from Boroondara based elite level athletes in competition.		Promote the sporting opportunities provided by community clubs in Boroondara through the Community Directory.
		Administer minor grants program to support community initiated programs and services.

There are other departments within Council that contribute to providing environments for sporting clubs. These have not been nominated as contributors whose major role is in supporting soccer clubs, but include:

- Risk Management – responsible for undertaking biannual risk assessments, coinciding with summer and winter seasons.
- Strategic Planning – responsible for master planning and landscape design of Council’s open spaces. This often includes planning for sporting reserves.

1.4.2 Facility Management & Provision

The provision of facilities is a major role fulfilled by local governments in supporting community based sport at a grass roots level. The following provides a summary of current practices and provision relevant to the strategy:

- All soccer clubs are issued facilities under a seasonal tenancy agreement for one season at a time (as are all seasonal sporting clubs).
- Council undertakes all maintenance of soccer facilities under the seasonal tenancy agreement and charges clubs a pitch and pavilion rental fee. Each facility has a separate rating. Charges are based on the level of usage by clubs and other criteria such as number of grounds, size, drainage, irrigation and lights. Fees can range from \$500 - \$10,500 per season.
- In 2004 Council allocated 16 venues (23 pitches) to Soccer, 16 venues (20 ovals) to AFL and 38 venues (59 grounds) to Cricket.
- In 2005 Council allocated 18 venues (27 pitches) to soccer, 17 venues (22 ovals) to AFL and 37 venues (58 grounds) to Cricket.
- No facilities are provided to soccer, AFL or cricket for exclusive off-season use by those sports.
- Facilities are allocated on an as-requested basis and history of use.
- Some AFL and cricket clubs in Boroondara have been allocated the same facilities for up to 100 years.

- There is a very high level of ownership of facilities by seasonal clubs. In some cases, the land on which a club is based has been donated or sold to Council by past club members, resulting in an extremely strong connection to an area. However this is not the case for any soccer clubs.
- Seasonal dates are formally recognised under a Determination for the Division of Seasons and Occupation of Crown Lands (for Australian Rules Football and Cricket Competition) which has been in place since the 1930s. The seasonal dates are the winter season (1 April to 31 August), and the summer season (1 October to 28 February). Although this determination relates to Crown Land, the application of the seasons is standard practice across all seasonal sports and seasonal sporting facility providers.
- Council allocates seasonal tenancies in accordance with these seasons and conducts its ground maintenance regimes around the changeover between winter and summer sports (to have minimal impact on the clubs). Council recognises soccer as a winter sport.
- Pavilions vary in age and some were clearly designed when sports provision trends were different to current day requirements. Some are now outdated in terms of appropriately providing for male and female sports participation, as most have only one change room.
- The majority of schools in Boroondara do not have soccer facilities (specifically constructed pitches or multi-purpose areas that can be used for soccer). Of the ten full sized pitches that are provided, six of these are within private schools and only three are made available for community sporting club use.
- There are no known outdoor soccer facilities provided by the commercial or private sectors in Boroondara.
- Council's capital contribution for soccer is high compared to other sports in Boroondara. This stems from the high capital costs to provide these facilities coupled with low contributions from soccer. Similarly, soccer is among the sports that receive the highest levels of support from Council's operational budget (maintenance), again with a low contribution from soccer.
- Membership fees charged by soccer clubs in Boroondara are among the highest when compared to fees charged by other sporting clubs in Boroondara. Average annual fees charged to senior players across soccer clubs is \$196, compared to \$183 for cricket, \$200 for football, \$140 for rugby, \$172 for baseball and \$425 for hockey.
- Communication between the soccer leagues, SRV, local governments and soccer administrative bodies is considered critical for the coordinated development of the sport, including facility requirements. Clubs should contribute to this by providing a range of participation options.

1.5 Planning & Policy Context

A range of documents were reviewed for the purposes of informing the Soccer Strategy of commitments made by Council in the areas of sport, recreation and open space to achieve consistency in Council's approach across these areas. Where appropriate, other research and strategic plans were also reviewed to ascertain the issues and directions pursued for soccer broadly. The documents reviewed included:

- Council Plan 2004-2008, City of Boroondara
- Leisure & Culture Policy, City of Boroondara, 1996

- Leisure Facilities Strategy Plan, City of Boroondara, 1997
- Open Space Policy, City of Boroondara, 1996
- Development and Funding of Sports Ground Pavilions Policy, City of Boroondara, 2003
- Capital Assistance for Sporting and Recreational Facilities Policy, City of Boroondara, 1996
- Website search of the Football Federation Victoria, 5 January 2005
- Website search of the Football Federation Australia, 5 January 2005
- Risk Management Manual, Soccer Australia & Victorian Soccer Federation
- Football Federation Victoria Regulations
- Review of relevant correspondence to/from the City of Boroondara
- Local Government & Victorian Soccer Resource Study, 1999

The following key implications have been categorised and noted from the literature review for the Soccer Strategy:

1.5.1 Council's Role and Policy Position

- Council has stipulated its involvement in facilitating and supporting the community is to provide leisure opportunities through providing planning, advocating, coordinating, facilitating and funding support.
Source: Leisure & Culture Policy, City of Boroondara (1996)
- Accessibility to opportunities for people of all abilities is a Council priority.
Source: Leisure & Culture Policy, City of Boroondara (1996)
- Council has a desire to strengthen community networks, as evidenced by the community involvement in the management of some sports fields.
Source: Leisure & Culture Policy, City of Boroondara (1996) & Open Space Policy, City of Boroondara (1996)
- Council considers its primary role is in supporting grass roots sports participation rather than achieving elite levels of competition.
Source: Leisure & Culture Policy, City of Boroondara (1996)
- In supporting community groups to undertake facility improvements, Council has previously provided loans/loan guarantees of up to \$200,000 to community organisations.
Source: Capital Assistance for Sport & Recreation Facilities Policy, City of Boroondara (1996)
- Given the limited green field space in Boroondara, maximum sustainable use, including shared use, multi-use and upgrade of existing facilities is a priority above provision of new facilities.
Source: Leisure & Culture Policy, City of Boroondara (1996), Open Space Policy, City of Boroondara (1996)

1.5.2 Open Space Management

- Council has a desire to manage open space in a sustainable manner, and has a philosophy of improving facilities and maximising use of existing facilities before building new ones. Furthermore, Council has an obligation to maintain existing levels of 'alienated'

(exclusive) open space at current levels, with any additional alienated areas to be compensated for by an equal area of accessible space, provision of public access or multi-use, in accordance with Section 20 of the Subdivision Act 1988.

Source: Leisure & Culture Policy, City of Boroondara (1996) & Open Space Policy, City of Boroondara (1996)

- It is recognised that the community places a high value on open space and therefore Council highlights a need to equitably balance the use of open space for leisure, recreation and sport with environmental enhancement / management.

Source: Leisure & Culture Policy, City of Boroondara (1996) & Open Space Policy, City of Boroondara (1996)

- Council has identified the opportunity to plan, manage and develop open space along municipal boundaries in conjunction with neighbouring Councils, as well as seeking to expand the open space system where opportunities exist. Specifically, it will encourage the provision of increased leisure opportunities in parks in and beside adjoining municipalities in the south west area of Boroondara.

Source: Open Space Policy, City of Boroondara (1996)

1.5.3 Facility Management

- It is likely that expectations for quality sports surfaces will increase. Council is open to private sector involvement in the development of sporting facilities.

Source: Leisure Facilities Strategy Plan, City of Boroondara (1997)

- Council's Open Space Strategy indicates that master plans will be prepared for Macleay / Myrtle Parks, Ashburton Park, Howard Dawson and HA Smith Reserves and Hays Paddock, and implemented on a priority basis as funding permits. There are existing master plans in place for Markham Reserve and Deepdene Park.

Source: Open Space Policy, City of Boroondara (1996)

- Local governments have been encouraged, via the Local Government & Victorian Soccer Resource Study (1999), to develop policies that consider maximising the use of grounds, planning facility improvements that accommodate males and females and addressing cultural issues in soccer. This study was commissioned by a working group of representatives from various local governments and coordinated by the Yarra City Council.

Source: Local Government & Victorian Soccer Resource Study (1999)

1.6 Community Context

A review of the characteristics of the Boroondara population in both its current and projected forms was undertaken to identify implications for participation in soccer now and in the future. Through such an analysis, Council can anticipate the likely impacts on facility use and the types of issues facing soccer clubs.

The Department of Sustainability and Environment estimates that the City of Boroondara will experience a decrease in the number of young people aged 5-14 years over the 2006-2011 period. In 2006 the proportion of persons aged 5-14 years comprises 12.1% of the population, however in

2011 the proportion is estimated to decrease to 11.5% and continue to decrease to 10.8% in year 2016.

Based on this initial analysis, the following trends are emerging.

- Boroondara's total population size is likely to remain relatively stable.
- Over the next 5 years it is estimated that the population segments that are more physically active and more likely to be involved in community sport (5 to 14, 15 to 24 and 25 to 34) are likely to remain stable.
- Overall, the data on the age composition of Boroondara residents compared to participation in soccer by age indicates that participation in soccer may stabilise and, based on estimated population trends, may not change dramatically for at least five years (unless Boroondara soccer facilities are used by high numbers of non-Boroondara residents). Population forecasts have estimated that within five years, the proportion of Boroondara households with children (couple and lone parent families) will decrease.
- In terms of cultural diversity, a report from the Victorian Multicultural Commission has Boroondara ranking in the "high" range in comparison to other municipalities. However it is unlikely that participation rates will increase as a result of a strong cultural influence by any particular population group (cultures that have a high participation rate in soccer).

Source: Victorian Multicultural Commission 2003, Access Services Support Respect – Local Governments Response to Cultural Diversity in Victoria, Table 2.1, Section 2 p.11, Melbourne.

- Building approval rates indicate that building activity has slowed substantially in the municipality. The likely impact of this is the slow down in changes to the physical composition of the City.

Source : i.d. consulting Pty Ltd. Estimated Resident Population, Building Activity Australia and Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (2001) downloaded from Boroondara website 2005 <http://www.id.com.au/profile>

1.7 Overview of Soccer

1.7.1 Participation Rates

The following provides an overview of participation in organised soccer according to surveys and registrations with Football Federation Victoria (FFV). Data from the Australian Sports Commission and FFV has been used to enable an informed interpretation to be made in terms of the likely influence on participation in Boroondara.

Table 2. State-wide soccer player registration numbers with Football Federation Victoria*

Player Category	1998	2001	2004	Player numbers growth 2001 - 2004
Goalkick (non team)	535	2,400	5,250	2,850
Sub Juniors (U/7-U/10)	3,562	5,792	4,785	(1,007)
Juniors (U/11-U/18)	6,970	7,827	15,216	7,389
Seniors (19+)	5,535	7,509	6,779	(730)

* Data provided by Football Federation Victoria

Table 3. State-wide Australian Rules football player registration numbers with Football Victoria**

Player Category	1998	2001	2004	Player numbers growth 2001 - 2004
Auskick (non team)	38,046	39,373	46,294	6,921
Sub Juniors (U/9 – U/12)	28,700	32,375	34,875	2,500
Juniors (U/13 – U/18)	48,625	49,375	50,725	1,350
Seniors (19+)	36,900	35,575	35,075	(500)

** Data provided by Football Victoria (peak body for Australian Rules football in Victoria)

- Participation in outdoor soccer has increased in Victoria, even though its rating in the 'Top 10 Selected Sports and Physical Activities' for the State has decreased (equal 14 highest in 2003, down from 12 highest in 2001, surpassed by yoga and bushwalking), indicating that participation in other activities has increased at a greater level.
 Source: Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport 2004, Participation in Exercise Recreation and Sport Survey 2003 Annual Report, Table 22, p.49, Canberra,
 Source: Australian Sports Commission 2002, Participation in Exercise Recreation and Sport Survey 2001, Table 16, p.22, Canberra.
- Participation in outdoor soccer in Victoria varies from the whole of Australia. Overall, the rate of participation is higher across Australia than Victoria, suggesting that the increase in participation in Victoria is not as great as the national trend. This may result from the popularity of AFL football in Victoria.
 Source: Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport 2004, Participation in Exercise Recreation and Sport Survey 2003 Annual Report, Tables 9 & 22, p.28 & 49, Canberra.
- Although some clubs have claimed that soccer participation has 'gone through the roof', the participation rate in Victoria is still relatively low, and still falls behind sports such as tennis, golf, AFL, basketball, netball and cricket.
 Source: Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport 2004, Participation in Exercise Recreation and Sport Survey 2003 Annual Report, Table 22, p.49, Canberra.
- The junior category (10 to 17 years of age) has become the largest component of the FFV competitions, having grown by 94% from 7,827 in 2001 to 15,216 in 2004.
 Source: Football Federation Victoria, 2005; Player registration numbers with the Football Federation Victoria.

- Participation at the senior level has decreased slightly over recent years (from 7,509 in 2001 down to 6,779 in 2004). This is despite the strong growth at the junior levels of competition and highlights the need for an improvement in the pathway between junior and senior competition. Within the sport, it is hoped and anticipated that the new national administrative body and national competition will encourage players to continue through to senior level.

Source: Football Federation Victoria, 2005; *Player registration numbers with the Football Federation Victoria.*

Of interest is that there are more than twice the number of AFL players in Boroondara than soccer, and AFL utilises fewer facilities (AFL has 22 ovals for approximately 3,020 members; soccer has 27 pitches for approximately 1,470 members). Whilst accounting for the increased number of players per team for AFL, this suggests that the AFL competitions may be being scheduled more effectively to make better use of facilities, or that there is an opportunity for soccer to be scheduled more effectively to better utilise facilities (on the basis that there is an anticipated similar impact to ground surface with both sports).

1.7.2 Programs & Services Provided for Soccer

There are four main organisations that provide opportunities to participate in competitive soccer in Victoria. These include:

Table 4. Opportunities provided by the main soccer providers in Victoria

Provider	Programs	Services
Football Federation Victoria FFV is the recognised peak body for soccer in Victoria and is affiliated with Football Federation Australia – the National representative body for the sport.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Goalkick – fun based physical activity program aimed at encouraging young children to participate in the Rooball program ▪ All Girl's / Women's Goalkick – social competition for females aged 5-60 to learn to play soccer ▪ All Girl's Soccer Tournament ▪ Rooball – junior version of soccer for 7 to 10 year olds ▪ School holiday programs ▪ FFV Academy (elite player development program) ▪ Coaching clinics ▪ Out of school hours Sports Program ▪ School based soccer programs (primary and secondary) ▪ Girls talent search clinics (held in conjunction with the VIS) ▪ Men, women & junior competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access to the Australian Sports Commission's Club Association Management and Volunteer Management Program Manuals ▪ Risk management manual ▪ Facility hierarchy and development standards ▪ Coaching guidelines ▪ Human resource management forms ▪ Competition rules and policies ▪ Referee training, development and coordination ▪ Women's only coaching ▪ Information provision, policy & legislative changes, water restrictions. ▪ Coaching equipment and resources
Victorian Amateur Soccer Federation (VASF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Men's senior competition ▪ Men's senior social competition ▪ Women's competition 	

Provider	Programs	Services
Victorian Churches Soccer League (VCSL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Junior competition ▪ Senior competition ▪ Women's competition 	
Victorian Institute of Sport (VIS)	<p>High performance developmental training plan to assist elite Victorian junior players in their preparation for World Championships at U/17, U/20 and Olympic levels.</p> <p>VIS athletes compete in FFV Premier League.</p>	

Clearly FFV has the major role of providing, managing and developing soccer, and in supporting clubs. Of consideration to Council is the role in club development that is provided by FFV and how it relates to the services provided by Council. Many Boroondara soccer clubs have indicated to Council Officers that they do not believe they have been well supported by FFV.

FFV has worked actively towards providing a range of opportunities, and the activities clearly mirror the increasing participation levels by juniors and women. The participation opportunities offered by the VASF, VCSL and VIS supplement those offered by FFV by accommodating players with a slightly different emphasis to FFV culture, and high performing, elite players with aspirations for national and/or international representation.

1.8 Provision for Soccer across the Region

Benchmarking was conducted with each of the local governments neighbouring the City of Boroondara (the Cities of Whitehorse, Manningham, Monash, Yarra and Stonnington). This allows for the identification of common issues, constraints and opportunities relevant to the sport at the local level. The following provides a summary of the key outcomes:

- All Councils reported that all of the facilities they make available for soccer are being used to capacity. Four Councils (Whitehorse, Manningham, Banyule and Yarra) have plans to provide additional soccer facilities either through new developments, redevelopments or converting to soccer from AFL.
- There is quite a variation in the fees charged to local soccer clubs for the use of facilities across the region. Different municipalities charge a range of fees depending on level of service provided.
- There is a total of 106 soccer pitches provided by the seven local governments, of which 26 are available for year round use. There are no pitches in Boroondara that are available for year round use.
- Local governments are by far the most significant provider of soccer facilities, with only two pitches provided by the private sector (both provided within Manningham) and 13 by the education sector (ten of these provided within Boroondara) within the region.
- Boroondara is the largest provider of soccer facilities, making available 27 pitches within 18 reserves.

- The most commonly reported issues by soccer clubs to local governments within the region are an undersupply of facilities for soccer, overuse of soccer facilities, limited space for additional facility development and the facility standards expected by the FFV.
- Local government officers within the region have acknowledged the need to address these issues and the demand for soccer strategically, but this has not yet occurred specifically (except for the City of Boroondara with the preparation of this Strategy).

Section 2

Supply Analysis



2.1 Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

A number of stakeholders were engaged to identify issues, constraints and opportunities affecting the development and growth of soccer in Boroondara.

Section 1.3 outlines the methodology used in consulting with stakeholders.

Ashburton Soccer Club	Sport and Recreation Victoria
Ashburton Junior Soccer Club	Football Federation Victoria
Ashburton Women's Soccer Club	Victorian Amateur Soccer Federation
Boroondara Lions Football Club	Football Federation Australia
Boroondara Lions Junior Soccer Club	Victorian Futsal
Carringbush Soccer Club	Melbourne Victory
Kew Deaf Soccer Club	Stonnington City Council
Old Camberwell Grammarians Soccer Club	Whitehorse City Council
Olympiakos East Kew Soccer Club	Darebin City Council
Old Trinity Grammarians Soccer Club	Ashburton Pool and Recreation Centre
Old Xaverians Soccer Club	Officers of the City of Boroondara
Riversdale Soccer Club	
Swinburne Soccer Club	

To enable analysis of the key findings from the stakeholder consultation, the categories of **planning, provision, facility management** and **partnership** have been used.

2.1.1 Planning

Stakeholder Comments	Officers comments
There is limited strategic planning by clubs, and a low level of use of club development resources by Boroondara clubs.	The convening of a Soccer Forum with all soccer clubs is a recommendation of the Strategy to provide the opportunity for clubs and Council to better liaise and plan. The improvement of the current sports e-newsletter to all sporting clubs to increase communication and alert clubs to available resources will also assist.
There is a need for the FFV to liaise more closely with local governments for the needs of soccer in the region.	This has been raised by many local government officers in the region and was supported by clubs at the soccer workshop. The convening of a Regional Soccer Working Group to engage FFV on soccer needs is a recommendation of the Strategy.
Seasonal creep by soccer and pre-season training impacts significantly on demand for use of facilities.	This is a key issue and has created significant problems for Council in balancing summer and winter club usage. The convening of a Regional Soccer Working Group to engage FFV on this, and other key issues, is a recommendation of the Strategy.
There is a club need for additional floodlighting at reserves to maximise and more evenly disperse use of facilities.	Noted. An audit of floodlighting on all sportsgrounds and preparation of a plan that prioritises the incremental upgrade on a shared funding basis is a recommendation of the Strategy.
There is demand among Boroondara clubs for the sharing of a year round soccer facility, especially for pre-season training. However, clubs have also expressed a need to retain their identity in using a shared facility as fundraising opportunities for individual clubs at such a facility may be limited.	Noted. Officers believe a dedicated year round soccer facility is not required. The convening of a Soccer Forum, with all soccer clubs, will provide opportunity for clubs and Council to better liaise, identify and plan for more efficient usage of current facilities within Boroondara to cater for pre-season needs.

2.1.2 Provision

Stakeholder Comments	Officers comments
Participation by juniors and females has increased, which has caused facility use challenges for the larger clubs.	Noted. Officers believe there are opportunities for soccer to be scheduled more efficiently in order to better utilise facilities, reducing the challenges for the larger clubs to cater for participation. The convening of a Soccer Forum, with all soccer clubs will provide opportunity for clubs and Council to better liaise, identify and plan for facility challenges resulting from changes in participation.
There is a desire to consolidate club activities at one venue rather than being fragmented across several.	Noted. This is not peculiar to soccer however as many sporting codes within Boroondara desire this.
There is a high level of interest among clubs in club development resources if provided by Council (eg. a newsletter, sports directory, templates and club management information). Clubs are not aware of what resources are currently available to them from Council.	Noted. The convening of a Soccer Forum with all soccer clubs will provide opportunity for clubs and Council to better liaise and plan. The improvement of the current sports e-newsletter to all sporting clubs for distribution on a quarterly basis to increase communication with clubs will also assist.
Volunteer management is an issue for local clubs.	Noted. It is intended that through the Soccer Forum that specific issues are identified and the development of suitable training is undertaken to meet these needs.
People with disabilities are not well catered for by most Boroondara clubs.	Noted. Clubs will be able to link with Council's Access for All Abilities Project Worker through the Soccer Forum to develop strategies to cater for people with disabilities.
Some clubs have high expectations of ground surface to play soccer, and Council's ability to provide and maintain to that standard.	Noted. Club expectations cannot always be met; however, an audit of playing surface conditions on all sportsgrounds and the preparation of a plan that prioritises the incremental upgrade on a shared funding basis is a recommendation of the Strategy.
There is demand for social facilities within pavilions to support clubs' social activities and fundraising efforts.	Noted. An audit of infrastructure on all sportsgrounds and the preparation of a plan that prioritises the incremental upgrade on a shared funding basis is a recommendation of the Strategy.
There is demand for separate gender change rooms to enable clubs to better cater for female players.	Noted. The identification and addressing of change room requirements that will appropriately cater for female participation in soccer will be considered in line with the 'Development and Funding of Sports Grounds Pavilion Policy' (2003).

2.1.3 Facility Management

Stakeholder Comments	Officers comments
Some clubs' operations are fragmented across a number of facilities, and this impacts on coordination and management, and limits fundraising opportunities for these clubs.	Noted. This issue is common for many sporting clubs in Boroondara, including cricket and AFL.

Not all club's pavilions meet their respective needs. Maintenance standard of pavilions should be improved.	Noted. An audit of infrastructure on all sportsgrounds and the preparation of a plan that prioritises the incremental upgrade on a shared funding basis is a recommendation of the Strategy.
Clubs have noted that some games of soccer have been relocated as a result of poor surface standard, especially poor drainage.	Noted. Short term relocation is in the best interests of clubs when playing surfaces are temporarily deemed inappropriate. An audit of playing surface conditions on all sportsgrounds and the preparation of a plan that prioritises the incremental upgrade on a shared funding basis is a recommendation of the Strategy.
Cricket wickets cause surface level problems.	Noted. Current standard practice is to cover concrete pitches with 100mm cover soil. Some pitches have been covered with a synthetic cover (granulated rubber infill) improving surface level. The cost is usually shared between summer and winter tenants. Complete levelling of all surfaces is cost prohibitive.
In all, the number of grounds available for soccer, and the generally poor standard of playing surface, was identified by many clubs as a significant factor inhibiting the growth and development of soccer in Boroondara.	Noted. Officers believe there are a reasonable number of facilities provided in comparison with other winter sports. The Soccer Forum will provide opportunity for clubs and Council to identify and plan for more efficient usage of current facilities within Boroondara. An audit of playing surface conditions on all sportsgrounds and the preparation of a plan that prioritises the incremental upgrade on a shared funding basis is a recommendation of the Strategy.
There is some demand among clubs for higher standard facilities that meet FFV standards.	Noted. The convening of a Regional Soccer Working Group to engage FFV on this, and other key issues, is a recommendation of the Strategy. The facility standards nominated by FFV for different levels of competition are considered to be unreasonable for local governments to provide, and local governments should be included in the planning of these standards, especially as it is a significant provider of facilities.
Dog access on sports grounds presents a maintenance issue with dog activity damaging sports surfaces and excrement causing health risks.	Noted. This is a serious ongoing issue requiring regular inspections by Council Officers and clubs.

2.1.4 Partnerships

Stakeholder Comments	Officers comments
Soccer clubs sharing grounds with summer clubs presents difficulties for pre-season training.	Noted. This is a key issue and one shared by most seasonal tenants. The convening of a Soccer Forum will provide opportunity for clubs and Council to identify and plan for more efficient usage of current facilities within Boroondara to cater for pre-season needs.
Better communication between leagues, SRV, FFV, local governments is required.	Noted. Communications will be improved through a range of forums including the Regional Soccer Working Group, the Soccer Clubs Forum and improvements in communication with Boroondara clubs via the e-newsletter.

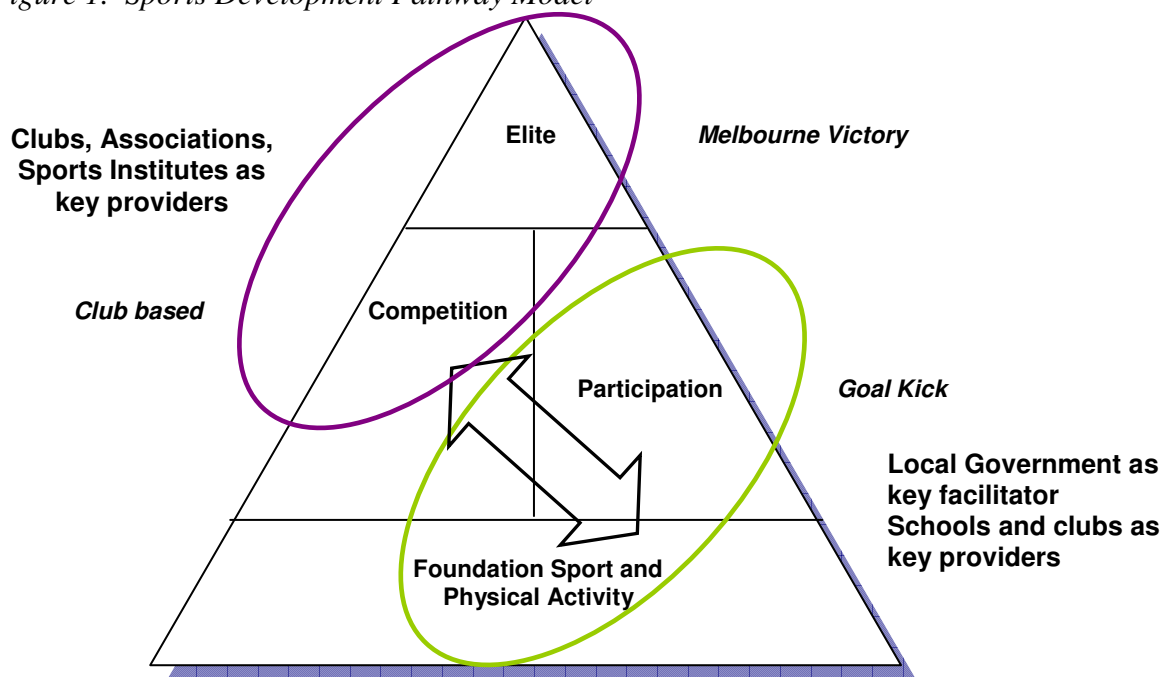
There is interest by surrounding Councils in shared development of higher level soccer facilities.	Noted. The convening of a Regional Soccer Working Group to engage FFV on this, and other key issues, is a recommendation of the Strategy.
Multi use of existing facilities and school facilities could be considered.	Noted. Identification of opportunities to partner with hockey facilities will be explored. However, very few school facilities are available for hire to clubs.

2.2 The Sports Development Pathway

A framework has been devised to illustrate how a range of sporting opportunities are offered to meet the needs of all participants. This provides a pathway from local grassroots foundation activity to participation, and ultimately performance and excellence levels. Central to this pathway are the roles fulfilled by various providers. Boroondara, through its policy and strategy position, clarifies its role as a facilitator, coordinator, planner, funder and service provider of the lower tiers of the pathway. Other stakeholders such as State Sporting Associations and Institutes of Sport are considered to be the providers of the higher tiers of sports development. Sporting clubs have the ability to cross through several tiers of the pathway, depending upon the aspirations of players to play at different levels.

Although Council can have an impact on the elite and competition levels, it is normally indirectly involved. For example, Council provides pitches for competition and a minor grants program to support individual sporting requests from Boroondara based elite level athletes in competition.

Figure 1. Sports Development Pathway Model



The sport of soccer is currently undergoing significant change in Australia. The National competition has recently been restructured, resulting in the creation of the new A League which will commence in August 2005. The A League is aimed at providing a complete player development pathway within Australia for its elite level players. This will provide them with an

opportunity to play in a professional competition without having to travel abroad to compete in Europe, and will see the emergence of a new national team in Victoria, 'Melbourne Victory'.

FFV introduced a Junior Academy to foster high standard junior players. The pathway for soccer under FFV provides from Goalkick (play based soccer skill development program for young children) to junior competitions, into Development Programs that feed into State Squads and State League teams, which in turn feed into national level participation. Opportunities are provided for males and females across this pathway, but seem to miss more socially based competition. The Amateur Soccer Federation of Victoria (VASF) provides the opportunity for senior men, and more recently for women (through a social competition). The Federation does not accommodate juniors.

2.3 Surface and Facility Options

2.3.1 *Artificial Surfaces*

Internationally, the provision of artificial grass surfaces has continued to evolve. This trend in facility development was initiated some decades ago, but resulted in player discomfort and many artificial pitches being converted back to natural grass. More recently, new generation artificial grass has emerged which has been endorsed by the Federation International Football Association (FIFA), the international governing body for soccer. There are a number of such facilities in Asia and Europe, and some lower level World Cup qualifying games have been played on these surfaces.

In Australia, the peak bodies for soccer identify artificial grass as the future for facility provision, as it has a better capacity to tolerate higher intensity levels of use than natural grass, and is an all-year, all-weather surface for the same land area. There are not many examples of such facilities in Australia, let alone Victoria. Three of the five new pitches at the State Soccer Centre in Thornbury will be constructed from artificial grass. The facilities will not be available to clubs to hire for training and competition as they will be predominantly used for FFV development courses, academies, school clinics, the all nations cup, country championship games and wheelchair soccer.

The initial capital cost to provide synthetic surfaces is substantial, as is replacement of the surface. A considered advantage however is the minimal maintenance required (and particularly the substantial reduction in water use to virtually nothing) throughout the life of the surface, estimated at between 10 to 15 years.

2.3.2 *District / Regional Level Provision*

In 1999, the Yarra City Council (in coordination with a working group consisting of representatives from various local governments) and FFV commissioned a study on soccer to consider maximising the use of grounds, planning facility improvements that accommodate males and females and addressing cultural issues in soccer. That research proposed a structure of provision that represented a mixture of both local and district or regional level facilities. In particular, it identified that junior competitions should be locally based (within 10 kilometres) at appropriate, local level facilities (low level infrastructure). In addition, it was proposed that higher levels of competition should be provided at district or regional level facilities (the idea

being that a regional level facility can accommodate the needs of the region – being approximately three municipalities).

The regional facilities would require several pitches, large car park, and pavilion with a number of change rooms and a sizeable social space to accommodate the number of participants that such facilities would attract. They would also require large sites and these are difficult to find, especially in highly developed, established municipalities, such as Boroondara.

Section 3

New Facility Options for Boroondara



3.1 Facility Options for Boroondara

The current facility needs of soccer in the municipality as identified by clubs, has been assessed to provide a range of facility options for Boroondara. These options are outlined through the following facility need areas:

- 3.1.1 Regional Facility
- 3.1.2 Additional Pitches
- 3.1.3 Facility for Ashburton Soccer Club

3.1.1 Regional Facility

Some clubs have expressed a desire for a regional premier league standard facility, which includes fencing of the facility for exclusive soccer use. Council has communicated a very clear position on this concept; that it has a primary role in supporting sport at the grass roots level and encouraging mass participation in physical activity, and the role of providing facilities for higher level sports participation is not the focus and should be fulfilled by other providers such as FFV and State Government. A Regional Soccer Working Group will be convened with local governments in the eastern metropolitan region to engage and lobby FFV and SRV regarding soccer needs, including regional facilities.

3.1.2 Additional Pitches

The following table summarises the facility options explored in an attempt to provide additional soccer pitches. Ideally, an artificial pitch is the preferred method of accommodating the demand for soccer, as this would not only address pre-season requirements, but accommodate much higher levels of use than a natural surface pitch with a lower requirement for maintenance inputs (including chemicals, fertilisers and water). However, the loss of public open space for informal recreational usage by the broader community and the associated financial costs must also be considered. In any case, the need for any facility development (artificial or natural surface) to maintain public access is considered by Council Officers to be non-negotiable.

Council has worked towards a practice of shared use of facilities for out-of-season activities in order to alleviate the pressures on clubs to provide year round facilities. In addition, Council has also worked towards a practice of shared facility development responsibility by seeking a financial contribution from the sport benefiting from any major development. Similarly, in the case of any significant soccer development, soccer as a whole (or the club, if one club is the sole beneficiary) would also be expected to contribute substantially to the capital cost (eg. Boroondara Netball Association contributed almost 30% towards the recent development at Macleay Park).

Further, in considering facility options for extending use for soccer, Council Officers have outlined a desire not to impact on existing users of any facilities, unless clear benefit can be provided to those clubs through any potential relocation / reallocation of use.

A range of facilities were explored to provide for additional soccer use in Boroondara. The facilities were assessed against the following criteria:

- Number of grounds
- Size of grounds

- Irrigation
- Drainage
- Floodlighting
- Pavilion
- Public toilets
- Car parking
- Current sport usage
- Current tenants (winter & summer)

The following table provides a synopsis of facility options explored.

Table 5. Synopsis of facility options explored to provide for additional pitches in Boroondara based on set criteria.

Dorothy Laver Reserve West & East (Saxby)	All three grounds are allocated to lacrosse in winter, including a State League team. Lacrosse has contributed capital to this reserve. A number of cricket clubs share use of the ovals for cricket at the reserve during summer. Overall, there is no additional capacity to accommodate another winter sport.
Eric Raven Reserve	This reserve will be utilised by the Boroondara Lions FC (soccer) and the Camberwell Lacrosse Club for the 2005 winter season. The reserve is not floodlit and is home to the Glen Iris Cricket Club which has contributed capital to the reserve.
HA Smith Reserve	There is currently no irrigation at this site. It does present an option to be developed. However, there are constraints with car parking and the small pavilion located away from the playing field is separated by an access road. The reserve receives high levels of informal use for soccer.
Anderson Park	This site includes an 'exotic' type garden surround and is not considered to be appropriate for a soccer facility development. The M&CHS Centre has recently been upgraded. The surrounding community is actively interested in the development of the reserve but not for additional structured sports use. The reserve is currently used for cricket and football.
Markham Reserve	Parks and Gardens will be adding extra fill to this site which may present more options for flexible use of the area. The master plan for the reserve identifies the area adjacent to the sports field as open space grassed area.
Warner Reserve	There is a moratorium on development at this reserve while a business case is developed to assess the needs of the Ashburton Pool & Recreation Centre. The reserve is used in summer for weekend cricket competition and on weeknights for training by the Ashburton Junior Soccer Club which has contributed capital for floodlighting.
Highfield Park	Increasing soccer use at this site would cause disruption to the long time cricket club tenant. The cricket club has contributed capital to this reserve.
Burwood Reserve	This reserve includes two ovals and is currently used by a large junior football club (Ashburton Junior Football Club). The reserve includes a turf wicket. The football club has contributed capital to this reserve.
Burke Road South Reserve	This oval abuts the Glen Iris Bowling Club. In consideration of the Glen Iris Bowls Club site Council resolved in August 2004 that it would not consider allocating shared use of the site. It is expected that Council would not reconsider allocating shared use of the buildings to the Ashburton Soccer Club. There is an overland drain that runs through the reserve which may present challenges for any potential development.

Gordon Barnard Reserve	There may be an option of converting the cricket wicket to turf. This could lead to a reshuffling of some cricket clubs resulting in Watson Park being freed of summer cricket use and presenting an option for increased soccer use.
Howard Dawson Reserve	A large cricket club is based at Nettleton Park. The club also uses Howard Dawson as a second ground. In the event that additional capacity in summer is available at Howard Dawson, it is anticipated that it will be taken up by this club.
Hislop Park	A barrel drain runs through this site, for which Melbourne Water requires regular access, thus making it a challenge for any major development.
Willsmere Park	The master plan for this reserve recommends improvement to the sportsgrounds.
Watson Park	This reserve, completely surrounded by residences, has a small car park and does not lend itself to any significant development.

Sporting facilities owned / managed by the City of Boroondara currently used for soccer were considered, as well as some facilities that are used for other sports. Of the alternatives reviewed, 3 were determined as potential options for increased soccer provision that would also involve no unnecessary relocation or displacement of existing sporting clubs as is current practice. These include:

HA Smith Reserve

- The reserve is currently undeveloped and has been used most recently for soccer.
- Access to the site is good by vehicle and public transport, although there is minimal car parking available on site.
- The existing pavilion is small and separated from the field by an access road.
- There are residences on one boundary of the reserve only.
- Council has been approached by Scotch College and St. Kevin's College to share in developing the reserve, and Stonnington City Council has expressed interest in any joint development on the Boroondara / Stonnington boundary.
- This reserve could be considered for further development in the future.

Watson Park

- A convoluted process of realigning cricket clubs' use of Gordon Barnard Reserve, Balwyn Park, Greythorn Park and Camberwell Sports Ground could free up the use of Watson Park by turf cricket in summer.
- The cricket clubs involved in such a re-shuffling are already aware of potential relocation, however, the expectation that Council may require additional cricket facilities, as a result of some undersized ovals potentially being closed, would create a reluctance to lose a cricket oval.

Warner Reserve

- This reserve caters mostly for junior soccer with minimal infrastructure. Any potential development of the site has been on hold while a business case is conducted to assess the needs of the Ashburton Pool and Recreation Centre (APARC). It has recently been resolved that should Council invest funds into further development of APARC, facility improvement and expansion could be accommodated on the existing site without requiring the 50m x 50m portion of Warner Reserve currently under a development moratorium.

- With the business case finalised, provision of an additional senior pitch could be considered at the site if the land were made available for soccer development.

Based on the findings of this study, provision of a dedicated year round soccer facility is not recommended for the following reasons:

- Out of season training could be facilitated through shared use of Council owned / managed sportsgrounds; a common practice for all seasonal sports.
- Cost of facility development without significant commitments from other partners (eg. FFV) would be extremely high, if not prohibitive.
- Potential alienation of open space would be undesirable to Council.
- Return to the overall community would be relatively small for such a large investment.
- Ensuring equal and equitable use for all clubs would be difficult from a management perspective.

3.1.3 Facility for Ashburton Soccer Club

Due to the recent completion of the needs assessment of the Ashburton Pool and Recreation Centre (APARC), two senior soccer pitches on an upgraded surface could be provided at Warner Reserve, subject to consultation. The current playing field configuration at the reserve includes one senior pitch and two junior pitches. The cost to upgrade the surface and provide a second senior pitch at the reserve, including drainage, irrigation and floodlighting would be approximately \$250,000 - \$300,000.

Section 4

Future Directions for Soccer in Boroondara



4.1 Recommendations

A whole-of-sport approach has been taken to systematically identify opportunities to enhance the provision of soccer in Boroondara across all aspects of providing, managing and developing the sport. It is acknowledged that a number of stakeholders are involved in providing soccer at the local level. As such, the recommendations have been made for action by the City of Boroondara, to best work with and influence partners to support soccer within the City. The Council department with nominated responsibility has been identified. All recommendations are subject to funding.

The recommendations in this section have been made in the form of actions, with partner stakeholders nominated, the associated timing (over a three year period) where applicable, and estimated resources allocation, where identified. To present this in a logical format which ensures that each aspect of the sport is addressed, the categories of Club Development, Soccer Development and Facility Management and Support have been used.

4.1.1 Club Development Action Plan

Recommended Action	Responsibility	Partner(s)	Timing	Resources Allocation
a) Convene a Soccer Forum with all soccer clubs given the opportunity to participate with a Council representative as a liaison and planning conduit between Council and clubs.	Parks and Gardens to convene and manage the ongoing administration.	Ongoing representation from Leisure & Cultural Services, FFV, VASF, VCSL. Other stakeholders to attend as considered necessary.	First Forum to be held in March 2006, then biannually or as determined.	20 hours per soccer forum. Financial resources: approx. \$15 per head for catering with two members from each club invited. Approx \$2000 per series of forums. All open space sports will be catered for: AFL, Soccer, Cricket & other sports.
b) Conduct an audit of club development initiatives available to all sporting clubs, including soccer, identify any gaps in provision, and through liaison with clubs and FFV, prepare a calendar of training to address these gaps.	Parks and Gardens.	Leisure and Cultural Services, Community Planning & FFV.	Implement club development program for winter 2007.	Operational budget.
c) Improve the current sports e-newsletter to all sporting clubs and distribute on a quarterly basis to increase communication with clubs.	Prepared by Parks and Gardens with input from Leisure and Cultural Services to include information on funding opportunities, risk management, facility use, reminders & events.	Programs, events and resources provided by other Council Departments and other organisations to be promoted via newsletter.	April 2006.	To be published in August, November, February and May to suit seasonal tenancy allocation periods.
d) Council to obtain minutes from Reserve Advisory Committees to monitor the issues addressed (and resolved).	Parks and Gardens to arrange for inclusion on distribution list with relevant Reserve Special Committees.	Reserve Special Committees.	Ongoing.	Operational budget.

4.1.2 Soccer Development Action Plan

Recommended Action	Responsibility	Partner(s)	Timing	Resources Allocation
a) Convene a Regional Soccer Working Group with local governments in the eastern metropolitan region to ascertain the needs of soccer; engage and lobby FFV & SRV regarding seasonal creep, scheduling of matches in non-traditional times, regional facilities and the needs and associated issues with provision at a higher level.	Parks and Gardens.	Leisure and Cultural Services, Cities of Whitehorse, Stonnington, Monash, Knox, Manningham and Maroondah, FFV, VASF, VCSL, SRV.	June 2006.	6 hours per biannual meeting.
b) Council to triennially conduct a Sports Audit, to keep abreast of the community's sport and recreation demands and soccer participation levels in Boroondara.	Leisure and Cultural Services.	Strategic Planning.	Commence from 2007.	Priority Works allocation \$10,000, based on approx. 150 hours work.

4.1.3 Facility Management & Support Action Plan

Recommended Action	Responsibility	Partner(s)	Timing	Resources Allocation
a) Conduct an audit of infrastructure, floodlighting and playing surface conditions on all sportsgrounds including soccer and prepare a plan that prioritises the incremental upgrade on a shared funding basis.	Parks and Gardens.	Leisure and Cultural Services.	Audit completed August 2006 for annual budget application for Sports Floodlight Upgrade Program in 2007/08 budget.	Per site costings for initial review: Irrigation - \$2000, Drainage - \$3000, Lights - \$600, plus \$1000 miscellaneous.
b) In line with the 'Development and Funding of Sports Grounds Pavilion Policy' (2003), identify and address change room requirements that will appropriately cater for female participation in soccer.	Parks and Gardens, Facility Management.	Leisure and Cultural Services, FFV (facility standards).	Ongoing.	Operational budget.
c) Clubs to request use of grounds outside seasonal tenancy (1 April to 31 August) via casual booking procedure.	Parks and Gardens.		January 2006.	Operational budget.
d) Provide Ashburton Soccer Club (ASC) with a second senior pitch at Warner Reserve, subject to consultation, by removing the moratorium on development of the portion of land at the rear of the Ashburton Pool and Recreation Centre (APARC).	Leisure and Cultural Services, Parks and Gardens.		Removal of development moratorium – January 2006. Construction July 2006.	Operational budget. Budget bid for construction of second pitch will be made for 2006/07 budget.
e) Undertake a feasibility study into the development of new sports fields in the southern area of the municipality. This study will include an assessment of potential ground locations and	Leisure and Cultural Services, Parks and	Strategic Planning	July 2006	Budget Bid for feasibility study will be made for 2006/07 budget.

Recommended Action	Responsibility	Partner(s)	Timing	Resources Allocation
configurations, potential users and management model, car parking requirements, cost and funding opportunities as well as impact on the neighbourhood renewal area.	Gardens.			

4.1.4 Options for Individual Soccer Clubs

Further to the recommended actions above, responses have been made to facility requirements of each individual soccer club in Boroondara:

Soccer Club	Pitches Allocated for Season 2005	Indicative Club Facility Requirements*	Officer Comments	Recommended Action
Ashburton		Additional pitch for junior girls teams.	Club is currently using a pitch in the City of Monash for some junior teams and will apply for another pitch in Boroondara for 2006 season. Soccer Forum should assist club.	4.1.1 Action A.
Juniors <i>Team members</i> Boys (300) Girls (110)	Warner Reserve (incl. summer use) Markham Reserve Watson Park	Improved ground conditions, lighting and pavilion facilities.	Audit of infrastructure, floodlighting and playing surface conditions will help clarify specific needs.	4.1.3 Action A.
Seniors Men (50) Women (40)	Ashburton Park	Two senior pitches at the same site in catchment area to serve as a home base.	Upgrade of the surface at Warner Reserve to include two senior pitches, subject to consultation, for the club. ASC has contributed capital to this reserve.	4.1.3 Action D.
		Change rooms to better cater for female players and referees.	Identification of change room requirements to appropriately cater for participants should be achieved in line with Council's 'Development and Funding of Sports Grounds Pavilion Policy' (2003).	4.1.3 Action B.
		Year round access to 2 senior pitches – 1 to be fenced to a State / Premier League standard	Council's policy position is not to alienate open space from the public through fencing or creating exclusive environments. It has clearly outlined that it does not take a role in providing for exclusive, elite level facilities.	4.1.1 Action A.

Soccer Club	Pitches Allocated for Season 2005	Indicative Club Facility Requirements*	Officer Comments	Recommended Action
Riversdale Juniors (280) Seniors Men (80)	Frog Hollow (south) Hartwell Sports Ground (east & west)	Additional floodlighting to maximise use of facilities. Improved change room facilities to cater for female participation. Pre-season training facilities.	Subject to infrastructure audit outcomes, increased floodlighting would assist club. Identification of change room requirements in line with Council's policy may assist club. The convening of a Soccer Forum, with all soccer clubs, will provide opportunity for clubs and Council to identify and plan for more efficient usage of current facilities within Boroondara to cater for pre-season training needs.	4.1.3 Action A. 4.1.3 Action B. 4.1.1 Action A.
Boroondara Lions Juniors (160) Seniors Men (70) Women (20)	Howard Dawson Reserve Eric Raven Reserve	Additional pitch for increased number of teams. Change rooms to cater for away teams. Additional floodlighting to maximise use of facilities. Pre-season training facilities.	Eric Raven Reserve was allocated for 2005 season; previously not used for soccer. Identification of change room requirements in line with Council's policy may assist club. Subject to infrastructure audit outcomes, increased floodlighting would assist club. Soccer Forum will help assist with planning for pre-season training needs.	4.1.3 Action B. 4.1.3 Action A. 4.1.1 Action A.
Canterbury Baptist 1 x team (15)	Highfield Park (south) Hays Paddock (north)	Not clearly known – survey not completed.	Ground requests have been met. Soccer Forum could assist club.	4.1.1 Action A.

Soccer Club	Pitches Allocated for Season 2005	Indicative Club Facility Requirements*	Officer Comments	Recommended Action
Canterbury Presbyterian 1 x team (15)	Highfield Park (south)	Not clearly known – survey not completed.	Ground requests have been met. Soccer Forum could assist club.	4.1.1 Action A.
Carringbush 1 x team (15)	Stradbroke Park (north)	Not clearly known – survey not completed.	Club indicated at soccer clubs workshop it would use facilities available for pre-season training.	4.1.1 Action A.
Kew Deaf 1 x team (15)	Hays Paddock (north)	Improved change room facilities & improved hot water showers.	Club has indicated it is more focused on addressing membership issues. Soccer Forum could assist club.	4.1.3 Action C. 4.1.1 Action A.
Old Camberwell Grammarians Seniors Men (65)	Deepdene Park	Additional floodlighting to maximise use of facilities.	Addressing floodlighting issue would help to fulfil club's immediate facility requirements. Ground requests have been met. Soccer Forum could assist club.	4.1.3 Action B. 4.1.1 Action A.
Old Trinity Grammarians Seniors Men (35)	Willsmere Reserve (east) Willsmere Reserve (west)	Not clearly known.	No indication from survey as to indicative facility requirements. Ground requests have been met. Soccer Forum could assist club.	4.1.1 Action A.
Old Xaverians Seniors Men (72)	Hays Paddock (south) Willsmere Reserve (east & west)	Additional floodlighting to maximise use of facilities.	Addressing floodlighting issue would help to fulfil club's immediate facility requirements. Soccer Forum could assist club.	4.1.3 Action B. 4.1.1 Action A.
Old Scotch Grammarians 1 x team (15)	HA Smith Reserve	Not clearly known – survey not completed.	Ground requests have been met. Soccer Forum could assist club.	4.1.1 Action A.
Olympiakos - East Kew United 1 x team (15)	Willsmere Reserve	Not clearly known.	Ground requests have been met. Soccer Forum could assist club.	4.1.1 Action A.

Soccer Club	Pitches Allocated for Season 2005	Indicative Club Facility Requirements*	Officer Comments	Recommended Action
St. Kevin's Old Boys 1 x team (15)	Highfield Park (south)	Not clearly known – survey not completed.	Ground requests have been met. Soccer Forum could assist club.	4.1.1 Action A.
Swinburne Seniors Men (60) Women (30)	Swinburne Recreation Reserve	Improved grass, drainage and floodlighting.	Soccer Forum, floodlighting and playing surface conditions audit could assist club.	4.1.1 Action A. 4.1.3 Action B.

* Clubs were not specifically asked to nominate the requirements they have for facilities, but were asked to indicate to what extent various components of the facilities they currently use meet their needs, and to identify the issues / barriers to soccer developing further in Boroondara, the single biggest opportunity for soccer in Boroondara, and the single initiative that would assist the club to become more successful.

** Clubs consisting of one team only are considered to have fifteen playing members for the purposes of this document, unless exact membership numbers were provided in the returned questionnaire. Membership numbers represent players in competition teams.