



Mr Chris White,  
Vice-Principal (Property and Campus Services)  
Via Ms Amanda Mulligan  
amandajm@unimelb.edu.au

Dear Mr White,

Below are our comments on the Parkville Master Plan, 2008.

The Melbourne University Sports Association (MUSA) is the representative body for the 39 active sporting clubs at the University, as well promoting the interests of other Users of the sporting facilities at the University.

The following submission is on behalf of these clubs, and users. These clubs provide an enormous physical, recreational and social benefit to students past, present and future. They serve as a major facet of a student's identity and University experience. The University must commit to supporting these clubs and the users of sporting facilities at the University in future developments.

For the University to retain if not expand its vibrant sport and physical recreation activities it must improve and increase (rather than decrease the space) the facilities and support it provides. Despite the disadvantage we face, being an inner urban university, we must not lose sight of this goal. It should be noted that other major Australian Universities, such as Monash University, have significantly expanded their recreational facilities. On top of this expansion, Monash, who this year won the Australian University Games, are planning further significant upgrades of their facilities for physical recreation.

The all encompassing word to provide the overview is 'capacity'. Any successful sport and active recreation environment will only be created and survive where there is suitable capacity in:

- The playing arena or field itself – be that indoor or outdoor;
- The off arena facilities including those for changing, medical treatment, fitness and training requirements, scorers and officials as required, spectators where appropriate, social activities and to create a club atmosphere;
- The equipment used in the activity;

- The off field storage, not only for the playing equipment but also the equipment for the preparation and maintenance of the playing arena;
- The volunteers and officials for the activity;
- The governance structure; and
- The financial resources available.

A reduction or ‘squeeze’ on any of the above makes it increasingly difficult for the university not only to engage its community in activity, but also to retain teams and individuals in the highest levels of competition. Additionally, the wide range of lower profile, but equally as important, recreational activities (including mountaineering and the various martial arts) also become disadvantaged.

### **University Statutes and Regulations 17.1.R7**

The University Recreation Reserve (‘the Reserve’) was granted to the University by a Crown Grant for use as a recreation ground. The reserve and its facilities are maintained by the University for the enjoyment of students and other members of the University community.

- The Crown Grant governs the conditions of the permitted use of land between Tin Alley and the Colleges; noting specifically that this Grant would prevent any academic building on the Recreation Reserve.

### **The Master Plan – Section 8: The North Precinct**

- The planning preference to relocate a new indoor sports hall and health centre under the running track and hockey pitch fails to recognize the depth and the associated enormous costs which would be required.
- The Master Plan also refers to the hockey pitch being replaced with synthetic turf. The current pitch is synthetic turf.
- The same paragraph also refers to the removal of storage facilities away from the college boundaries. These storage facilities are used for grounds maintenance equipment. As this equipment is also used to maintain Melbourne City Council owned grounds in Princes, and perhaps, Royal parks, (in return for guaranteed access and reduced ground rental) it needs to remain within easy access of these areas. Additionally, these storage sheds are less than ten years old, are more than ‘fit for their current purpose’, and will be fit for a significant period of time. They are largely out of sight behind the Baldwin Spencer mound, and the Colleges are not objecting to their presence.

- The plan acknowledges the heavy dependence the University has on leasing sports facilities in Royal and Princes Parks. It must be pointed out that many of the users of these facilities, especially in Princes Park, still use the changing rooms in the current pavilion on the campus for both training and on match days. If the university was ever denied continuing access to the facilities in both major parks, the competitive sports clubs would be decimated. The university must use all its endeavors to prevent this happening, and even move towards engaging in a 99 year lease or similar with the Victorian Government or Melbourne City Council to ensure use of these areas to protect our sporting future.
- The proposed conversion of Morrison Close to a major pedestrian thoroughfare may not be acceptable to the College owners; this requires consultation.

### **The Master Plan – Section 8: The South Precinct**

- The Master Plan for the South Precinct refers to both ‘student facilities including food services and service-related retail’ and ‘further student accommodation’. Grattan Street is described as a ‘university street’. There is now a plethora of university departments, schools and faculties south of Grattan Street. Consideration should be given to also developing at least some indoor sport and fitness facilities in this precinct to meet the growing university population frequenting it. Example of these facilities could include, but not be limited to, gymnasium, exercise bike room, shower facilities. This might also alleviate some of the overcrowding in the facilities in the North Precinct alluded to elsewhere in the Plan. In fact for the last 20 years, the University of Zurich has a principle (approved by its University Council) that all new buildings must contain some facility for physical recreation.

### **The Master Plan – Section 9: Design Principles and Actions**

#### 9.4 Urban Design Values:

- Section 4a and 4b have clear implications for sporting clubs. The illustration on p55 of the Master Plan suggests there will be no vehicle access north of Tin Alley. This implies no parking/access to the proposed new pavilion, or to the tennis courts. This makes it extremely difficult for football, cricket, hockey and tennis clubs especially, who all require regular transportation of bulky/heavy equipment to facilities. Examples of items requiring transportation include: medical equipment and massage tables, training gear, and food/drinks to sell at the pavilion kiosk.

Some parking and access must be provided for clubs to these facilities. A permit system will enable sufficient limitations on this, yet still enable key club personnel to utilise this access for the required purpose.

- Section 4e refers to access for emergency service vehicles in pedestrian shared pathways. It is essential that an ambulance can access the oval/athletics track/tennis

courts (north precinct). Any alternative would be negligent, and may have legal implications for the University. The illustration on p55 suggests there may not be access for emergency service vehicles to sporting facilities. We seek clarification on this.

#### 9.5 Outdoor Rooms and Pedestrian Corridors:

- Section 5b promotes new open spaces as an integral part of the redevelopment of precincts within the University. World-class Universities have world-class sporting facilities; and the development of these should not be unreasonably limited because a small amount of green area might be lost.
- Section 5h suggests the University will consult with the sporting clubs and Colleges to establish a master plan for the north precinct.

#### 9.8 Sustainability and Environmental Design:

- Section 8h promotes a desire to maximise recycling opportunities on campus. Despite efforts, there continues to be no recycling service to the north precinct. The provision and servicing of recycling bins at the new pavilion, and at the tennis courts (as a minimum) should occur in line with this principle.

MUSA welcomes engagement and discussion of the Master Plan in relation to Sport and Physical Recreation facilities. In addition, MUSA and the relevant sporting clubs would greatly appreciate the opportunity for involvement and consultation in relation to the functionality of future sporting facilities.

Yours sincerely,

Marcus King  
President, MUSA