



9 Main Lawn and Playground

The notional centre of the Zoo is the main lawn and playground which is a popular family picnic spot and the location for Zoo events, such as concerts and performance. The area could be greatly enhanced by a feature or focus. A performance stage on the north side of what is now Oak Lawn and the closure of the road in that vicinity is a worthwhile and commercially viable proposition. One suggestion has been that an elevated ride be established, with viewing of the proposed Gorilla enclosure, new Elephant extension, Wetlands, new African Painted Dog and Rhinoceros enclosures. This would be an excellent feature, although the impact on animal welfare and the commercial viability would require closer analysis.

Adjoining the lawn are “Oasis”, which is a small cafe outlet, and a toilet block that requires major upgrading.¹⁷ Over the life of the Plan these two areas require review and replacement.

- 9.1 Some of the existing Zoo playground should be removed to create a greater lawn area for family picnics and more sitting areas.
- 9.2 Additional shelters, seats and picnic tables should be immediately acquired.
- 9.3 The café facility and barbecue facilities should be upgraded.
- 9.4 A dedicated performance stage and associated facilities should be constructed at the site of the Oak Lawn and re-locate the existing service road behind the facility. The new stage should incorporate multi-purpose facilities for winter and summer performances.
- 9.5 The ablution facilities should be upgraded by at least five additional booths and incorporate facilities for the disabled and for people with small children.



Figure 26



10 Zoo Entrance

The Front Entrance comprises an Information Centre, a Zoo Shop and Zoo offices. Drainage work, paving and upgrading of the Information Centre to meet special needs occurred in 2001. One criticism of the entrance has been that it does not have a strong impact. The planned acquisition of Western Lowland Gorillas would address this deficiency, given that it would be a feature partially in view on entering the Zoo.

The Information Centre will require substantial upgrade, and there needs to be additional visitor service facilities, such as adequate storage areas, more lockers and first aid areas, during the life of this Plan.

10.1 The Zoo should develop a landscape plan for the entrance statement with additional seating and a feature that complements the existing Australian theme sculpture.

Other medium to long-term improvements will be required over a 20-year period. These include more appropriate queuing arrangements for peak periods, increased information and integrated signage, and better access to the Zoo Shop.

- 10.2 The Zoo should introduce portable equipment for queuing control at the Zoo entrance.
- 10.3 Plans for the upgrade of the existing ticketing booths should be set in place within a 10-year period.
- 10.4 Increased facilities and services for those entering the Zoo should be introduced such as an information screen that details activities at the Zoo and associated animal information for queuing visitors.
- 10.5 New security systems for the Zoo Shop should be developed and a new Labouchere Road entrance to the shop.
- 10.6 The existing Information Centre and its connected buildings should be re-developed to enable an integrated Visitor Services facility with upgraded First Aid Room, ablution facilities, security office that includes an upgraded parenting room and rest area. This may require re-location of some staff in the long term to a new administration building.



Figure 27



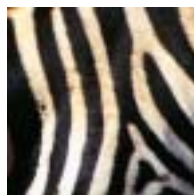
11 Café Precinct

The Zoo Café and associated function areas are run down and in need of repairs and/or reconstruction. Safaris and Geckos and the attached Function Room are not currently meeting visitor demand and visitor expectation of standards appropriate to a quality tourist facility.

- 11.1 The Café area requires upgrading to enable planned queuing and to accommodate the peak capacity crowds.
- 11.2 The existing Function Room should be integrated into the upgrade of the Cafes and a purpose-built Function Centre with an increased capacity be constructed in the area adjoining the Café Precinct in the area now called the World of Birds. The old office and ablutions in that area should be either demolished or upgraded into the proposed new Function Centre. The Function Centre should take full advantage of the established trees in the area and accommodate an aviary as part of the development and potentially an enclosure of active and robust animals (such as Lemurs or Meerkat).
- 11.3 A playground should be constructed within sight of the Safaris Café.
- 11.4 The Carousel should be upgraded within a 3-5 year period to maintain its heritage value and visitor appeal.



Figure 28



12 Education and Conference Rooms

Presently the purpose-built education facilities (built in 1988) are being used for the dual purpose of conference/meeting room hire and teaching classrooms. This makes the facility only marginally viable as a commercial activity.

- 12.1 It is recommended that the conference rooms be upgraded as a professional centre with up-to-date facilities. The existing classroom facilities should be re-located to the Homestead and newly-constructed facilities sited in that area in the medium term.



13 Environmental Management and Sustainability

The Zoo's vision for sustainable development and environmental management is a priority. This area of the Zoo's operations consequently requires resources and dedicated infrastructure. Two major recent reports highlighted water management issues and presently the Zoo is using its existing resources to address this matter. As a conservation agency, the Zoo's aim in all environmental management is to be environmentally sustainable and to enhance visitor knowledge and understanding by show-casing this area of Zoo operations.

A water treatment facility enabling water re-use is a high priority as are strategies to address the problem water bodies throughout the Zoo.

Presently the works and environmental areas are located randomly throughout the Zoo. There remains a lack of detailed information about the location of water, drainage and electricity services. This should be urgently addressed.

13.1 A dedicated environmental management and grounds area should be identified on the Mill Point Road boundary. This should include grounds' activities such as mulching and water treatment as well as workshop, storage and general support facilities.

13.2 A waste-water treatment facility should be located at the north-east corner of the Zoo and allow for down flow on the natural slope of the hill for reticulation.

13.3 An off-site general storage facility should be planned for the medium term to enable space for the expansion of environmental initiatives, such as composting, chipping and mulching. The shed in this area presently used for storage should be available for Zoo machinery associated with environmental management and grounds.

13.4 Underground storage for water catchment and fuel storage should be planned.

13.5 All new roof areas constructed in the Zoo should have facility for water catchment.

13.6 A full survey of the infrastructure within the Zoo grounds should be completed with a maintenance plan put in place as required.



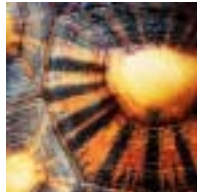
14 Horticulture

The garden of the Zoo is one of its most important physical advantages. It is a significant botanical garden in its own right and enhances the Zoo significantly. The Zoo gardens contain heritage plantings and significant trees that should be preserved and conserved. The roles of horticulture staff in growing and coordinating significant animal fodder production, involvement in mulching and worm farming, as well as the significant job in tending and managing the Zoo gardens make them vital. To maintain a sustainable and workable future for these operations, some activity will require some contracting and off-site activities will be required. This will not affect the numbers of staff or profile of the horticulture staff.

14.1 The conservation of significant trees and plantings within the Zoo grounds should be assured through the implementation of the Botanical Plans developed through the Horticulture Branch.

14.2 The nursery facilities should be located off site to enable the construction of off-exhibit enclosures. This could be at the Zoo's property in Byford¹⁸, which could be established with an increased horticulture role.

14.3 Negotiation and development of partnerships with bodies such as the WA Ministry of Justice and local government should continue to establish systems for fodder production off the Zoo site. Within the life of this Plan, most fodder production should occur off the grounds.



15 Behind the Scenes Facilities

Aside from the environmental management areas and horticulture areas described above, the behind the scenes of the Zoo can be divided into four areas: staff areas including animal food preparation; Zoo houses; workshops and parking.

Zoo Houses

The Zoo presently has four houses on its perimeter. These all require ongoing maintenance and attract high taxes on the rent received. The Zoo benefits from on-site accommodation for security purposes, to accommodate visiting Keepers¹⁹ and guests. However the present arrangements are not efficient, given the high maintenance, associated costs and locations of the properties. The Zoo is also unable to sell the houses as distinct properties because of the land status being an “A” Class Reserve.

- 15.1 The Zoo ‘Corner house’ should be demolished to enable construction of on-site water treatment and an environmental management precinct.
- 15.2 A well-maintained house designated for the CEO should be retained. This should remain as the present designated house and that it be a part of the Zoo asset and maintenance program.

15.3 The house on Mill Point Road should be demolished and make way for purpose-built short term accommodation for up to 15 people that can be used for visiting staff and Keeper exchange. It should be constructed to enable multi-use for potential commercial opportunities such as resident conference accommodation for guests, teacher and tertiary or school groups for Zoo experiences. One larger adjoining residence should be available for a resident Zoo security staff member.

15.4 The Zoo house on Angelo Street should be integrated or demolished to enable the precinct to be made available for office accommodation or as part of a larger redeveloped area, including animal food preparation.

Staff Areas

The staff areas in the Zoo are of a mixed quality. The Operations Building, largely occupied by the Life Sciences and Research Directorate is a facility with quality staff amenities. However, work areas for some sections are below standard and require attention. These include the Veterinary Hospital, staff areas in elephants, primates, education and some areas of the Australian Fauna section. These conditions require attention during the life of this Plan. The administration building at the Zoo entrance will require replacement within the 20 year time frame, as will

the Veterinary Hospital. In a planning and development sense, staff will benefit from co-location wherever possible. Perth Zoo Voluntary Guides, the Docents, occupy another building on Labouchere Road. Although it is aged, it has been deemed to be sufficient for use by the Docents for the period of the Plan. The Docent Association does not plan to make the organisation larger than its existing 300 members. The maintenance of the facility should continue on a regular basis.

The animal food preparation areas throughout the Zoo are inadequate and require attention. Relocation to the outskirts of the Zoo is required for ease of transport and deliveries. Food preparation areas would be best located close to the delivery Gate 9 with easy turn around and delivery areas. Existing workshop areas could be developed into animal food preparation areas (also see 15.4).

15.5 Plans should be developed for additions to the existing Operations Building precinct to enable the co-location of administration staff, education and other Business Operations staff.

15.6 The Veterinary Hospital building should be replaced or upgraded as a purpose-built facility that also accommodates dedicated research and NSBP staff from the Life Sciences and Research team. This building should incorporate facilities reflecting the planned cooperation between the tertiary sector in the

research and veterinary areas. The planned cooperative approach between Murdoch University and Perth Zoo in veterinary medicine should be reflected in the development. The planning and development of the facility should be functional to accommodate possible public tours of the facility and have a purpose-built area suitable for hand rearing and public viewing.

- 15.7 The Mammal Feed Shed should be replaced with a new feeding facility in the location of the old workshops on the outskirts of the Zoo. Adequate facility for the storage of meat and other animal foods should be planned into the facility. Given that the Australian Fauna exhibits will all be on the northern side of the Zoo, planning around an efficient food preparation facility as a part of the Australian Walkabout should also occur.
- 15.8 The Bird Feed Shed is one of the few remaining heritage buildings in the Zoo grounds and should be retained with modifications. The adjoining bird enclosures are now inadequate and should be demolished and the collections re-allocated to the walk-through enclosures, proposed new enclosures or transferred to another zoo. The old Bird Feed Shed building should be modified to demonstrate animal food preparation and include signage and interpretation with public viewing of the preparation areas.

Workshops

The existing workshop areas are adequate for the Zoo's needs and, as recommended above, one workshop should be converted to an animal food preparation and storage area. The existing delivery gates and turn around areas for delivery trucks should be improved by modifications to the main delivery gate. Storage off-site will also be required in the long-term. The workshops and grounds management areas should be incorporated in one area along the Mill Point

Road boundary of the Zoo along with the planned environmental precinct.

- 15.9 The delivery and turn around areas for trucks should be modified as a part of the upgrade of gates and entrances recommended in 4.6.

Parking

Parking facilities for Zoo visitors are presently adequate but may not remain so in the life of this Plan. Present public transport to the Zoo is not adequate and this poses a significant restriction on the Zoo's development and future. Alternatives to car transport should be secured to enable increased tourist visitation and to increase access for Perth visitors in outlying suburbs.

- 15.10 Alternative transport systems that will service the Zoo and provide a permanent and accessible link between Perth City and the Zoo should be explored.
- 15.11 Work with the City of South Perth and transport authorities on alternatives to car transport should continue.

Presently some staff park within the Zoo grounds determined through a policy on parking and relevant staff instructions. Within the life of this Plan, and with the developments envisaged during its life, staff parking may be further limited. Under local government regulation, the Zoo is required to maintain a certain number of car spaces and these should be retained.

- 15.12 Staff parking facilities should be determined on the basis of minimum local government requirements.



Figure 29