

# WONTHELLA SKATEPARK

**DRAFT** SKATEPARK ASSESSMENT REPORT  
MARCH 2012

**CONVIC**

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## OBJECTIVE

**THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT IS TO ASSESS THE CURRENT CONDITION AND FUNCTIONALITY OF THE SKATEPARK AND HIGHLIGHT AREAS OF CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL. THIS ASSESSMENT PRODUCES AN OVERALL SCORE THAT ESTIMATES THE SKATEPARKS REMAINING USEFUL LIFE BASED ON KEY CRITERIA.**

Assessing the skatepark is essential to:

- Define potential liabilities and hazards.
- Understand its capacity, condition and how long it is viable.
- Develop a regular maintenance schedule and long term plan for the skatepark to maximise its value as a community asset.

The report gives valuable information to stakeholders and will provide guidance and advice on how to reduce risks and capitalise on opportunities where applicable.

## WONTHELLA SKATEPARK OVERVIEW



Wonthella Skatepark is located on the corner of Eighth And Pass St, Wonthella, WA. The skatepark borders a large sporting complex with pools and various ovals south of the skatepark.

The local community of users consists of skateboarders, BMX and scooter riders and the 740 ms<sup>2</sup> skatepark can accommodate about 4 active users at a time (and 20 observers at peak usage). Australind Skatepark has basic amenities.

The skatepark has a well spaced flowing layout of mostly banks and quarter pipes and features a funbox with ledge and transition hips from a bank to quarter pipe into a bowl style corner section. There are a number of square grind rails

arranged at the top of the platform and a level change forming a long grind ledge. There are shade shelters and seating dispersed in 2 refuge areas around the park perimeter.

The following report details our observations and recommendations.

## SKATEPARK RATING

This is a summary table detailing how the park scored against a number of key criteria of an ideal skatepark would have. The score is comprised of 2 key categories: Condition and Function which are explained in detail under 'Explanation of Terms'.

WONTHELLA SKATEPARK REPORT					
CATEGORY	DETAIL	SCORE		RATING	COMMENT
<u>CONDITION</u> <i>THE PHYSICAL CONDITION OF THE PARK</i>	SURFACE SUBTOTAL	43	/100	FAIR	
	TOLERANCE/QUALITY SUBTOTAL	29	/100	FAIR	
	STRUCTURE SUBTOTAL	31	/100	FAIR	
SUBTOTAL		103	/300		
<b>CONDITION TOTAL (A)</b>		<b>34%</b>		<b>FAIR</b>	
<u>FUNCTION</u> <i>HOW THE PARK CATERS TO USERS</i>	AMENITIES SUBTOTAL	45	/100	FAIR	
	OVERALL SKATE DESIGN SUBTOTAL	72	/100	GOOD	
SUBTOTAL		117	/200		
<b>FUNCTION TOTAL (B)</b>		<b>58%</b>		<b>GOOD</b>	
RUNNING TOTAL (A+B)		219	/500		
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>47%</b>		<b>FAIR</b>	

## SUMMARY

Overall the skatepark is rated as Fair (47%) which means it is in the last half of its useful life. Parks in this stage of their life cycle require regular inspections and maintenance works to ensure they remain safe to users over the next 5-10 years.

The need for repairs, renovation or renewal to the skatepark will be required in the not too distant future. Planning and budgeting for this stage should be undertaken over the next 5 years. Please refer to the Life Cycle Comparison Table.

## ACTION ITEMS

These items are necessary and urgent repairs to minimise risk to council, and are referred to as 'Stop Gap Measures' or Option A in the 'Possible Works' Table below

NUMBERED	UNSAFE ITEMS	LOCATION	ACTION REQUIRED	REFERENCE IMAGE	PRIORITY	TIMING
1	CONCRETE EROSION AT PLATFORM BEHIND COPING. WHEEL TRAP	BEHIND QUARTER PIPE COPING EDGE	CLEAN DEBRIS, PATCH HOLES 6-25 MM	(H)	CRITICAL	IMMEDIATE
2	STRUCTURAL FAILURE TO CONCRETE AT PLATFORM BEHIND COPING. TRIPPING & STRUCTURAL HAZARD.	BEHIND QUARTER PIPE COPING EDGE	CUT OUT DAMAGED SECTION AND REPLACE WITH APPROVED GROUT	(F)	CRITICAL	IMMEDIATE
3	LARGE CRACKS AT TOP OF BANKED HIP. TRIPPING AND WHEEL TRAP	PLATFORM EDGE OF BANKED HIP NORTH OF PARK	CLEAN DEBRIS, PATCH HOLES 6-25 MM	(A)&(B)	CRITICAL	IMMEDIATE
4	FINGER TRAP AND SHARP EDGES	ENDS OF GRIND RAILS	FILL HOLES WITH APPROVED GROUT, GRIND SMOOTH	(E)	CRITICAL	IMMEDIATE
5	JAGGED HOLES AND CRACKS TO COPING. HIGH RISK TO USERS	COPING OF QUARTER PIPE NEAR FUNBOX	REMOVE SHARP EDGES FILL HOLES OR REPLACE COPING	(D)	CRITICAL	IMMEDIATE
6	NO SAFETY SIGNAGE	ENTRY PATHS TO SKATEPARK	REPLACE SIGNAGE	(I)	CRITICAL	IMMEDIATE

## POSSIBLE WORKS

OPTION	DESCRIPTION	RISK TO COUNCIL	APPROX. COST OF WORKS	LIFE OF WORKS[YEARS]
NO REPAIRS	LEAVE SKATEPARK AS IS	<b>VERY HIGH</b>	0	0
OPTION A	STOP GAP MEASURES	HIGH, CONSTANT REPAIRS REQUIRED	15,000	EVERY 1 YEAR
OPTION B	COPING REPLACEMENT	HIGH - MEDIUM	150,000	EVERY 5 YEARS
OPTION C	NEW PARK	LOW-MEDIUM	370,000	EVERY 20 YEARS

## LIFE CYCLE

This table shows the projected life cycle of the Possible Works and the approximate costs over the next 10 years.

10 YEAR LIFE CYCLE PROJECTION >		CURRENT SKATEPARK LIFE	WONTHELLA SKATEPARK	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022		
REPAIR OPTIONS	REMAINING LIFE [YEARS]	9	OPTION A	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000		
			OPTION B	\$150,000					\$150,000							
			OPTION C	\$370,000												
			NO REPAIRS	0												
			OPTION A	\$135,000												
			OPTION B	\$300,000												
			OPTION C	\$370,000												
			RESULTING PARK QUALITY	POOR(25-0)	POOR(25-0)	POOR(25-0)	POOR(25-0)	POOR-FAIR(50-25)	GOOD-EXCELLENT (75-100)							
			COST BREAKDOWN	NA	\$15,000 EVERY YEAR	\$150,000 ONCE OFF, THEN REPAIRS AFTER 5 YEARS	\$370,000 ONCE OFF									
			COUNCIL RISK	VERY HIGH	HIGH-MEDIUM	HIGH-MEDIUM	LOW									
REMAINING LIFE	0	0	0	10												

KEY:	END OF LIFE	<>
	LIFE REMAINING	<>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The table aims to highlight the cost and life of each repair option over a 10 year period. Note the total cost of Option A & B and the outcome after 10 years being an old park at the end of its life. At that stage a new facility is inevitably required.

Convic recommend the following actions to ensure the money invested in the community has the maximum value over its life span:

-Immediate Stop Gap measures on current skatepark (All points in the Action List) in the first year.

-Do not keep investing money in this park after this and concentrate funding on developing a new facility.

-Build new facility (The approximate cost for the design and construction of a new similar sized facility is \$370,000)

The design of the current skatepark is fair but its condition is deteriorating quickly and in its current condition poses a significant risk to Council. This does not adequately serve the thriving non structured sports community in Geraldton.

The community needs for a skatepark should be determined and appropriate funding be secured to design and construct a new skatepark by an experienced specialist. The process may include

- Feasibility Study
- Site Selection
- Community consultation
- Design & Construction

Addressing the 'Immediate' items on the Action Items table should minimise the potential risk of injury at the current site.

Considering the time span of the skatepark development process, it is important to retain a functional skatepark in the community. We recommend keeping the existing skatepark and maintaining it for the community. The existing skatepark should be demolished once a replacement is completed, as it has reached the end of its useful life.



**CONDITION DETAILS**

The overall **condition** of the skatepark is rated at 34%, which means the facility is near the end of its total life based on physical condition. The following stand out as the lowest scoring items for each category:

**SURFACE (43/100)**

The BANK (A) has large cracks in the surface from an obstacle that was removed

There are cracks and erosion on the skateable surface (B) between transition pieces.

**TOLERANCE (29/100)**

The tolerance of the coping on the FUNBOX LEDGE (C) QUARTER PIPE (D) is incorrect due to damage, has holes and rust and the surrounding concrete is heavily eroded. As a result, it cannot be used safely by users.

The GRIND LEDGE (E) has holes and sharp edges exposed on the ends. This is a significant risk to the intended users.



## STRUCTURE (31/100)

The platform edge of the coping (F) has deteriorated and shows structural concrete failure, causing a significant tripping hazard for skateboard & scooter wheels. This also increases the potential of debris covering on the skatepark surface.

Significant erosion around the grass edge of the skatepark at the BANK (G) shows wear and exposes a coarse edge.

The structural integrity of the QUARTER PIPE (H) coping shows wear in the circular steel edge and in the supporting concrete. This will deteriorate further and needs to be addressed before it exposes any more sharp edges.



**FUNCTION DETAILS**

The overall function of the skatepark is rated at 58%. The following recommendations would improve the score in this category:

**AMENITIES (45/100)**

Amenities at the site are rated as fair (45%) but can be improved by adding facilities as shown below:

AMENITY	STATUS
SHADE FOR 8 USERS	ADEQUATE
SEATING FOR 8 USERS	INADEQUATE
BINS FOR 8 USERS	ADEQUATE
WATER FOUNTAIN FOR 8 USERS	INADEQUATE
ACCESS POINTS TO SITE	ADEQUATE
READABLE SIGNAGE	INADEQUATE

Safety signage is critical to inform users of recommended safety equipment to be worn, emergency contact information and to reduce risk to council.



## DESIGN (72/100)

The overall design of the park is rated as good (72%) and the park is well laid out with some variation in obstacles and favours mostly intermediate riders and skateboarders.

The design score could be improved by:

- Designing a space to meet beginner and more advanced user needs.
- Providing greater variation in obstacles (There are 3 square rails in the park of similar dimension and styles)



EXAMPLE PHOTO APPENDIX



bank



quarterpipe



corner



banked hip



ledge / manual pad



rail & pole jam



bowl



mini ramp with shelter



vert ramp





street wedge blend



shallow to deep blend



funbox with hubba



hubba & handrail



shelter with seating, water fountain & path

## EXPLANATION OF TERMS

### SKATEPARK RATING SYSTEM

Skateparks are a relatively new phenomenon and the design and construction process is still evolving.

We estimate skateparks that are designed and constructed to meet the required tolerances and specifications of today will have a functional life of approximately 20 years (100%) before major repairs, renovation or renewal are needed. It may be difficult to assess older skateparks in this way as they may never have been at 100% to start with. This should be used as a frame of reference, but all skateparks will be assessed on their current condition.

The skatepark has been rated to describe its current **CONDITION** and **FUNCTION** in accordance with the rating system indicated below:

**EXCELLENT** 100% of life  
approx. 20 years remaining

Skatepark is well designed with high quality finishes.

**GOOD** 75% of life  
approx. 15 years remaining

Skatepark is a few years old with some wear and tear, design and finishes of good quality.

**FAIR** 50% of life  
approx. 10 years remaining

Skatepark with imperfections in design or finish quality, wear and tear but still has some functional value.

**POOR** 25% of life  
approx. 5 years remaining

Skatepark with maintenance or structural issues, imperfections in design or finish quality, wear and tear or other issues.

**FAILED/HAZARD** 0% of life  
approx. 0 years remaining

Skatepark is unsafe due to structural failure, poor design or extreme surface degradation.

## KEY CRITERIA

The rating system is based on our professional assessment of the skateparks current physical condition including: (but not limited to) the date of construction, function, structural soundness, amount of damage/wear, etc. This is detailed further below.

The rating of a skatepark is made up of two parts; **CONDITION** and **FUNCTION**.

### CONDITION

This assesses surfaces, tolerances and structural integrity.

- Surface assesses the finish quality of constructed elements.
- Tolerance assesses at any deviations from the intended design. This includes measuring various tolerances to determine curve quality, coping offsets, steel welding, etc.
- Structural Integrity assesses damage, wear and tear, significant cracks, differential movement etc.

The three categories are given a score out of 10 for each obstacle.

The type of obstacles and their impact on the overall space is also taken into consideration. For example, if the surface condition of a specific ramp is rated very poorly, but that ramp only accounts for 10% of the functional space in the park, then its rating is adjusted to only have 10% impact on the overall condition.

This part does not consider the design of the skatepark, only the physical condition of the park.

### FUNCTION

This assesses how the skatepark addresses the needs of users and observers.

When considering the functional performance, the score is derived from:

- How well the skatepark caters for participants in terms of skate layout and design.
- How well the park provides for beginner, intermediate and advanced users.
- How well the skatepark caters for participants and observers with amenities such as: shade, access routes, bins, water fountains, lighting, drainage, etc.

## TERMS - GENERAL

A brief explanation of some terms used in the report:

An **Active User** is someone who is actually riding the skatepark on a skateboard/scooter/bike or similar.

An **Inactive User** is someone who is part of the session, but is waiting for their turn when the active user finishes.

An **Observer** is someone who is watching the activity on the skatepark.

A clear distinction needs to be made between an active user, inactive user and observer. For every active user we estimate there are four inactive users and one observer. Although the skatepark may only cater for three active users at one time, for the purposes of estimating its use we conservatively assume there is up to fifteen participants at the skatepark.

All users require suitable amenities like shade, water, bins and other services; however the skatepark obstacle layout is not critical to the experience for observers.

### Hazards

Any item posing an immediate risk to the safety of users that must be actioned.

## TERMS - PHOTO APPENDIX

Please refer to the Photo Appendix for photographic examples of some common obstacles found at a skatepark. In short they are:

- **BANK**  
A flat sloped surface.
- **QUARTER PIPE**  
A curved surface, typically with round steel coping to the top edge.
- **HIP**  
Indicates an external change of direction (like the corner of a pyramid).
- **CORNER**  
Indicates an internal change of direction.
- **BOWL**  
A combination of quarter pipes, banks, hips and corners that create an enclosed area for continuous skating. Typically sunken below the surrounding ground with steel or concrete coping to the top edge.
- **MINI RAMP**  
Two opposing quarter pipes separated by a flat section.
- **VERT RAMP**  
Two opposing quarter pipes with a vertical section to the top, separated by a flat section.
- **BLEND ZONE**  
A complex surface change between two known curves or banks that can not be clearly defined.
- **LEDGE / MANUAL PAD**  
A raised ledge/platform which is wide enough to roll on top of (greater than 300mm wide).
- **HUBBA**  
A sloping ledge down stairs or a bank.
- **RAIL /THIN LEDGE**  
A handrail down stairs or a bank, a horizontal rail or a raised ledge/platform that is too thin to ride the top of.
- **FUN BOX**  
Typically a central combination of smaller banks and quarter pipes, ledges and rails.

## AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS & OTHER DOCUMENTS

At present there are no Australian Standards or formal industry standards that exist for skatepark facility design, construction, maintenance and management. There are several guidelines developed by various organisations to assist with designing and constructing skateparks. These guidelines are useful for general knowledge about skateparks, but they are not regulatory or absolute. The Skate Facility Guide [2001] by Sport and Recreation Victoria states; "...this Skate Facility Guide is intended as a general reference source..." [page2].

Convic uses our substantial professional experience, judgement and expertise in skatepark design and construction to determine when appropriate standards and guidelines should be used to minimise risks within skateparks.

Specific to the sport of skating some elements do not conform to Australian standards for access and fall heights. Convic refers to Australian standards where a risk is identified at the interface between skate elements and pedestrian/viewing areas. This may be within or at the periphery of the skatepark.

For example, a 1000mm high drop could be designed as a feature of a skatepark that skaters would perform tricks over. Convic believes this is acceptable; given the context. However, if the platform of a quarter pipe is 1000mm high and has an uninterrupted fall to the ground the handrail and balustrade requirements of the Building Code of Australia will be followed.

Standards and Guidelines that have been referred to in compiling this report include:

- Sport and Recreation Victoria "The Skate Facility Guide"
- Sport and Recreation Victoria "Sport and Recreation - Access for All"
- Building Code of Australia 2008
- AS 4685.1 - 2004: Playground Equipment - General Safety Requirements and Test Methods
- AS 4486.1 – 1997: Playgrounds and Playground Equipment - Development, Installation, Inspection, Maintenance and Operation
- Urban Design Guidelines for Creating Youth Friendly Spaces and Places (Department for Community Development)
- Design Standards for Urban Infrastructure Part 15: Playgrounds and Playground Equipment
- The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents - Play Safety Information Sheet Number 27 – Skateboarding Safety & Play Safety : Skateboarding : Skatepark Maintenance Costs
- British Standard BS EN 14974:2006 – Facilities for users of roller sports equipment – Safety requirements and test methods

An assessment is an important step in reducing risk however risk management for the skate facilities mentioned in this report are beyond the scope of this assessment. AS 4360 – 2004 'Risk Management' and HB246 – 2004: 'Guidelines for Managing Risk in Sport and Recreation' provide standards and guidelines which should be reviewed in addition to this assessment by a suitably qualified risk manager for Council.

The scope of this report does not include an assessment of the skatepark's compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), associated legislation, regulations and standards. Council should engage a suitably qualified assessor to review each of their skateparks to ensure compliance with relevant components of the DDA. Convic has compiled this Skatepark Report as experts in the fields of skatepark design, construction and facility management, where we consider general DDA requirements.

This document should be considered in addition to all available standards & guidelines.



## DISCLAIMER

Convic Pty Ltd., its employees, directors and associated entities shall not be liable for any loss, damage, claim, costs and expenses that may arise from any damage or inquiry of any kind whatsoever in relation to this document or the maintenance and use of skateparks generally.

While all due care and consideration has been undertaken in the preparation of this report, Convic Pty Ltd do advise that all recommendations, actions and information provided in this document is based upon our experience as professional Landscape Architects specialising in skatepark design and construction.

Convic Pty Ltd and its employees are not qualified to provide legal, medical, financial or risk management advice. Suitably qualified experts in these fields should be consulted to provide further information.

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