


COUNCIL POLICY

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| Victoria Park | Adopted By Council: | 24/07/22 |  |
| | Date/s Revised: | | |
| | Next Review Date: | 07/23 | |
| | Document No: | CP054 | |
| | Directorate: | Executive | |
| | Responsible Officer | Chief Executive Officer | |

CONTEXT

Victoria Park is located on land in the township of Queenscliff. Victoria Park was reserved for Public Gardens and Recreation purposes on 20 January 1868. Camping in Victoria Park commenced in 1937.

In December 1997 Council resolved to restrict camping in Victoria Park to the period between 1 December and 30 April each year. For the rest of the year Victoria Park functions as a public park.

A storm event on 29 October 2021 caused significant damage to vegetation within Victoria Park requiring the removal and lopping of many trees, including remnant indigenous Moonah's of considerable age. In response, Council committed to revegetating and restoring Victoria Park. This policy supports this commitment by setting out a framework for managing Victoria Park for future use.

PURPOSE

This policy sets out the principles Council will use to manage Victoria Park to protect the environmental values and enhance the amenity of Victoria Park for all users. These principles seek to both:

- (a) deliver on Council's commitment to improving the management of Council-operated tourist parks for the benefit of the whole community, specifically, by bettering dual use areas for community and visitors alike; and
- (b) uphold Council's core value of sustainability, the protection of the environment including wildlife and its commitment to delivering environmental regeneration actions under the Climate Emergency Response Plan.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions will apply:

- **Vegetation Reserves:** areas within Victoria Park permanently reserved for vegetation
- **Restricted Camping:** areas within Victoria Park that will be opened for low impact camping for limited periods within the annual period Victoria Park is open for camping
- **General Camping:** all other areas within Victoria Park that are not vegetation reserves or restricted camping areas

These areas are identified in the Victoria Park Plan 2022 (CP054 Appendix 1).

POLICY

It is policy that the following principles underpin the ongoing management and future use of the park:

Park Management

- a. Victoria Park will remain dual use, a public park and place for campers with distinct areas for vegetation and camping
- b. Camping will be permitted in the General Camping areas from 1 December 1 to 30 April, and the Queenscliff Music Festival weekend.
- c. Low impact camping, being camping with a tent, caravan or recreational vehicle with a maximum open length of 6.5 metres, will be allowed in Restricted Camping areas:
 - i. During the Queenscliffe Music Festival
 - ii. For five weeks from 26 December until 31 January
- d. Camping in Restricted Camping areas may be subject to further restrictions if a qualified arborist assesses that camping is having a detrimental impact on vegetation growth, canopy enhancement and/or habitat regeneration
- e. No camping will be permitted in Vegetation Reserves
- f. There will be no public access to Vegetation Reserves
- g. Vegetation and camping will be clearly separated by fencing and with clear signage which both identifies the Vegetation Reserves and educates the public on the history and significance of the plantings within the Vegetation Reserves.
- h. The roadways surrounding the Vegetation Reserves will be transformed into non-invasive pathways which will be inaccessible to public vehicles.
- i. Council will look to establish means to ensure equality of access to the camping sites within the park.
- j. Council's management of the park will comply with relevant state legislation, policies and guidelines, including but not limited to improving equity of access to Crown Land, Caravan and Camping parks 2011, and Crown Land Caravan Park Policy update 2019

Environmental Management

- a. Council will prepare a Revegetation Plan within 3 months from the date of this policy.
- b. Council will complete all necessary revegetation works within 5 years from the date of this policy.
- c. Revegetation will include an appropriate mix of indigenous and exotic plants, recognising and extending Victoria Park's unique and ecologically diverse history. These will include Moonahs and significant tree and shrub species and give consideration to their capacity to withstand strong and more frequent weather events.
- d. There will be a strong focus on increasing tree canopy and density, creating a cooling atmosphere, maintaining biodiversity and increasing habitats at the site over the long-term.
- e. Initiatives will be undertaken to attract and return birdlife to the site.
- f. Action will be taken to enhance the restorative appeal and amenity of the site.
- g. The relevant elements of the Climate Emergency Response Plan and the Wadawurrung Healthy Country Plan will be applied in the long-term environmental management of the park.
- h. Council will look to partner with the community when planning and undertaking revegetation, selecting plants, vegetation management and environmental preservation at the park.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

This policy will be reviewed on a continuous basis, initially one year from the date of adoption and then as a minimum every two years thereafter.

Each review will entail:

- (a) the incorporation of any relevant new key plans and policies which impact the park, such as the Coastal and Marine Management Plan and the Vegetation Management Policy once developed; and
- (b) a consideration as to the appropriateness of continued camping at each of the sites in light of the then impact on the environmental values of the park.

OTHER REFERENCES

Borough of Queenscliffe Climate Emergency Response Plan

Wadawurrung Healthy Country Plan

END