



Knox City Council

KNOX CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Meeting of the
Strategic Planning Committee of Council
To be held at the Civic Centre,
511 Burwood Highway, Wantirna South
on Tuesday 9 September 2008 at 7.30pm

Under Section 89 of the Local Government Act 1989, Council may resolve that the Meeting be closed to members of the public if the Meeting is discussing any of the following issues Personnel Matters, Personal Hardship of any resident or ratepayer, Industrial Matters, Contractual Matters, Proposed Developments, Legal Advice, Matters affecting security of Council property, any other matter which the Council or Special Committee considers would prejudice the Council or any person

APOLOGIES

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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Graeme Emonson
Chief Executive Officer

ALL WARDS**ITEM****1. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION REGISTER**

SUMMARY: *Manager – Governance (Rodney McKail)*

This report seeks a Council resolution to declare information confidential in accordance with the requirements of section 77(2)(b) of the Local Government Act 1989.

1. INTRODUCTION

Among the governance reforms in the Local Government (Democratic Reform) Act 2003 was an amendment to the confidential information provisions to section 77 of the Local Government Act 1989.

Section 77(2)(c) of the Act enables the Chief Executive Officer to designate in writing that information is confidential, specifying the relevant ground/s applying under section 89(2) of the Act. Such information is designated confidential for a period of 50 days only and requires a Council resolution in order to remain confidential in perpetuity.

2. DISCUSSION

The definition of 'confidential information' in section 77 of the Local Government Act is as follows:

- "(2) For the purposes of this section, information is "confidential information" if-
- (a) the information was provided to the Council or a special committee in relation to a matter considered by the Council or special committee at a meeting closed to members of the public and the Council or special committee has not passed a resolution that the information is not confidential; or
 - (b) the information has been designated as confidential information by a resolution of the Council or a special committee which specifies the relevant ground or grounds applying under section 89(2) and the Council or special committee has not passed a resolution that the information is not confidential; or
 - (c) subject to sub-section (3), the information has been designated in writing as confidential information by the Chief Executive Officer specifying the relevant ground or grounds applying under section 89(2) and the Council has not passed a resolution that the information is not confidential.
- (3) Confidential information referred to in sub-section (2)(c) ceases to be confidential at the expiry of the period of 50 days after the designation is made unless sub-section (2)(a) or (2)(b) applies to the information."

1. Confidential Information Register (cont'd)

Under section 77(3), if the Chief Executive Officer has designated in writing that the information is confidential information, the information will cease to be confidential at the expiration of 50 days after the designation was made.

A Council resolution is now required to ensure the confidential status and legislative protection of documents designated as confidential by the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with Section 77 of the Act. It is important to note, that confidential information can, by subsequent resolution of Council, become non confidential.

3. CONSULTATION

No consultation has occurred in relation to the preparation of this report, however, a Council resolution to declare information confidential in accordance with the requirements of section 77(2)(b) of the Local Government Act 1989 is consistent with Council's Confidential Information Policy and Procedure.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

There are no environmental/amenity issues associated with the preparation of this report.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no social implications associated with this report.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN

This process supports the Key Result Area of Sound Stewardship by ensuring good governance through the application of appropriate processes and protocols to facilitate effective and democratic government.

8. CONCLUSION

In adopting the attached confidential schedule, Council ensures that documents that have previously been declared confidential by the Chief Executive Officer remain confidential in perpetuity.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

Due to the confidential nature of the information to be included in the register, a detailed listing of the documents for adoption by Council has been circulated separately as Confidential Appendix A.

1. Confidential Information Register (cont'd)**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council in accordance with section 77(2)(b) of the Local Government Act 1989

- 1. declare the information referred to in Confidential Appendix A as confidential information on the grounds as specified in the attachment.**
- 2. declare Confidential Appendix A as confidential information in accordance with the grounds specified in section 89(2)(h) of the Local Government Act 1989, as a matter which the Council considers would prejudice the Council or any person.**

Report Prepared By: Manager – Governance (Rodney McKail)

Report Authorised By: Director – Corporate Development (Mark Dupe)

ALL WARDS**ITEM****2. NATIVE VEGETATION GENETIC INTEGRITY POLICY**

SUMMARY: *Conservation Officer (Nadine Gaskell)*

This report seeks to introduce a Native Vegetation Genetic Integrity Policy to be implemented for all Council plantings in close proximity to a Site of Biological significance within the Knox municipality.

1. INTRODUCTION

At the September 2007 Council meeting, Council requested a report be prepared regarding the use of indigenous and non indigenous species in Council plantings, in areas adjacent to significant remnant vegetation, to ensure that the local genetic pool is not impacted upon by cross fertilisation with genetically modified varieties.

Knox's native vegetation has become fragmented due to decades of land clearing for agriculture, housing development and infrastructure, as the city evolved from a rural shire to an urban and suburban city. Consequently only small pockets of plant populations remain. These remnants range from a few plants to many hundreds, and their ecological and genetic health is highly variable and depends on many factors.

The planting of similar species that are not of local provenance in the landscape design both on private and public land, genetic assault by pollen dispersal and hybridisation has become an increasing concern.

Following a literature review and consultation with officers, and the Environment Advisory Committee the attached Native Vegetation Genetic Integrity has been produced for Council's consideration.

2. DISCUSSION**Sites of Biological Significance**

Biodiversity is the variety of all life-forms, the different plants, animals and micro-organisms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems of which they form a part. In order to gain a broad understanding of the biodiversity (in particular the native vegetation) in Knox, the Sites of Biological Significance (SoBs) of Knox Study was completed in 2004. This study also assessed the significance and threats to biodiversity and opportunities for improvement.

The study has been reviewed over the last few months and has found that native vegetation or areas with indigenous tree cover occupy less than 4% of Knox, which has declined over 4 years from 5% to 4%.

2. Native Vegetation Genetic Integrity Policy (cont'd)

The study also revealed that indigenous plants are not well conserved:

- Slightly more than half of the indigenous plant species presently found in Knox are threatened with extinction from the municipality within one or two decades.
- 42% of all plant species that are threatened in Knox are not found in reserves managed for conservation.
- Eighty-two of the 118 sites identified in the study contain plant species that are threatened in Knox or more widely.
- The loss of any one of these sites is likely to render either a species extinct from the municipality or more widely.

Council's Vision 2025 aspires to ensure the natural environment is protected and enhanced by:

- Achieving no further extinctions of flora and fauna or Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVC's)
- Planting 100,000 trees annually

The largest threats to the remnant native vegetation identified in the 2008 Sites of Biological Significance in Knox are:

- Environmental weeds
- Small populations
- Lack of fire
- Clearing

As remnant vegetation becomes increasingly fragmented, it results in habitat quality decline. Threats to the genetic integrity through inappropriate planting can add to the assault on quality habitat through cross pollination or hybridisation of plant species which are not of local provenance.

Ensuring planting of local provenance vegetation near significant sites may assist in maintaining local genetic integrity and maintain characteristics that have adapted to the local area through an evolutionary process. However, the issue is complex and predictions of the level of pollen dispersal in any particular landscape difficult. (Burne et al 2007).

Application of Council Policy

Council has very little ability to control the planting of species in private gardens and therefore the policy would provide an opportunity to lead by example on this issue.

2. Native Vegetation Genetic Integrity Policy (cont'd)

3. CONSULTATION

Input was sought from relevant Council officers and from the Environment Advisory Committee (EAC). The EAC initially raised the issue and considered this issue on several occasions. The EAC considers the adoption of precautionary principles important.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

Native vegetation is valued by Council and the desired outcome of this policy is to protect and conserve this vegetation for future generations.

The intention of the policy is for Council to provide leadership in minimising an adverse impact on genetic diversity in indigenous vegetation through its own actions.

Knox currently supports many rare and endangered flora and fauna species. Additional habitat loss and failure to close habitat gaps will threaten survival of endangered species and will lead to possible extinction. Landscape plantings which follow this policy will form a buffer to the remaining Sites of Biological Significance.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

There are no anticipated financial implications in the adoption of this policy.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Recent studies have established direct links between the health of individuals/communities and their contact with nature.

The planting of indigenous species within streetscapes and parks will showcase to the community species appropriate to gardens that will sustain themselves in the Australian climate.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN

Protecting and enhancing the biodiversity values of Knox is a key objective of the Knox 2001 -2010 Sustainable City Plan.

Knox Vision 2025 aspires to no further extinctions of flora and fauna or ecological vegetation classes.

The Community & Council Plan 2006-10 seeks to provide a sustainable natural environment.

2. Native Vegetation Genetic Integrity Policy (cont'd)**8. CONCLUSION**

As remnant vegetation becomes increasingly fragmented, it results in habitat quality decline.

Threats to genetic integrity through inappropriate planting can add to the assault on the quality of habitat through cross pollination or hybridisation of plant species which are not of local provenance.

Ensuring planting of local provenance vegetation near Sites of Biological Significance may assist in maintaining local genetic integrity and maintain characteristics that have adapted to the local area through an evolutionary process

Council has little ability to control the planting of species in private gardens and new developments and therefore the policy would predominantly provide an opportunity to lead by example on this issue.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

There are no confidential issues within this report.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council;

- 1. note the report; and**
- 2. approve the draft Native Vegetation Genetic Integrity Policy as outlined in Appendix A to this report.**

***Report Prepared By: Conservation Officer – Sustainability
(Nadine Gaskell)***

***Report Authorised By: Director – City Development
(Angelo Kourambas)***

APPENDIX A



KNOX POLICY - DRAFT

NATIVE VEGETATION GENETIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Policy Number:		Directorate:	City Development
Authority:	CEO	Responsible Officer:	Manager Sustainability
Policy Type:	Administrative or Council	Version Number:	1
Approval Date:		Sunset/Review Date:	

1. PURPOSE

For Council to demonstrate leadership in preserving genetic integrity of remnant native vegetation when planting garden beds and in streets that abut a Site of Biological Significance or in Parklands and Open Space that provides connectivity to a Site of Biological Significance.

2. BACKGROUND

In 2004 a Sites of Biological Significance study was undertaken which identified 118 significant sites containing remnant vegetation within the City of Knox. This includes several significant bushland areas which are managed as conservation zones.

The Study also revealed that indigenous plants are not well conserved:

- Slightly more than half of the indigenous plant species presently found in Knox are threatened with extinction from the municipality within one or two decades.
- Eighty-two of the 118 sites identified in the study contain plant species that are threatened in Knox or more widely.
- The loss of any one of these sites is likely to render either a species extinct from the municipality or more widely.

Knox's native vegetation has become fragmented due to decades of land clearing for agriculture, housing development and infrastructure. Consequently only small pockets of remnant plant populations remain. These remnants range from a few plants to many hundreds, and their ecological and genetic health is highly variable is dependant on many factors.

Council's Vision 2025 aspires to ensure the natural environment is protected and enhanced by:

- Achieving no further extinctions of flora and fauna or Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs)
- Seeking to protect and enhance sites of biological significance through linking these to other sites of significance through best practice bushland Management
- Planting a minimum of 100,000 trees in public spaces per year

The largest threats to the remnant native vegetation identified in the 2008 Sites of Biological Significance in Knox are:

- Environmental weeds
- Small populations
- Lack of fire
- Clearing

As remnant vegetation becomes increasingly fragmented, it results in habitat quality decline. Threats to the genetic integrity through inappropriate planting can add to the assault on quality habitat through cross pollination or hybridisation of plant species which are not of local provenance. Ensuring planting of local provenance vegetation near significant sites may assist in maintaining local genetic integrity and maintain characteristics that have adapted to the local area through an evolutionary process. However, the issue is complex and predictions of the level of pollen dispersal in any particular landscape difficult. (Burne et al 2007).

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to Council plantings on roads that immediately abut a Site of Biological Significance or parklands and open space that provides connectivity to a site of Biological Significance (e.g. linear waterway vegetation). This policy will not apply to street trees. Street trees are addressed in the Street Tree Policy.

4. REFERENCES

- Sites of Biological Significance in Knox 2002
- Maintenance of high pollen dispersal in Eucalypt Wandoo, a dominant tree of fragmented agricultural region in Western Australia (2007)

5. DEFINITIONS

Biodiversity – the variety of all life-forms, the different plants, animals and micro-organisms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems of which they form a part.

EVC (Ecological Vegetation Class) – one or a number of communities which can be described through a combination of floristic, life form, reproductive strategy profiles and biogeographic attributes

Council – Knox City Council.

Remnant Native Vegetation – Remnant native vegetation is any species of vegetation that existed in the Knox municipality before European settlement including trees, saplings, shrubs, scrub, understory, groundcover or plants in a wetland.

Genetic Integrity

Maintaining the completeness of the genetic material of a species that has evolved and adapted to the local environment.

Hybridisation

The production of an offspring of genetically dissimilar parents. Mostly used to describe the production of offspring of two different species or of two distinct varieties within a species

Local Provenance

Indigenous plants propagated from collections from locations as close geographically and in terms of habitat as practicable to the location where the propagated plants are to be planted.

Cultivars are not considered local provenance.

6. COUNCIL POLICY

Native vegetation is valued by Council and the desired outcome of this policy is to protect and conserve this vegetation.

In order for Council to provide leadership in minimising an adverse impact on genetic diversity in indigenous vegetation, the following 'Precautionary Principles' will be implemented by Council.

- Ensure planting in a street abutting a Site of Biological Significance or in Parklands where there is a possible connection to Sites of Biological Significance along a corridor (i.e. waterway or roadside), any species that are indigenous to Knox should be local provenance.
- Require confirmation of species provenance by the plant supplier.
- Where local provenance species are not available use suitable natives or exotic species that will not hybridise with the local species.

CHANDLER WARD**ITEM****3. REVITALISATION PLAN FOR THE BASIN TRIANGLE**

SUMMARY: *Coordinator – Open Space & Landscape Design
(Robyn Mansfield)*

This report outlines the proposed Revitalisation Concept Plan for The Basin Triangle in The Basin. The Revitalisation Plan provides a clear direction for the upgrade of this park, and is presented for Council endorsement.

1. INTRODUCTION

Council considered a report on the triple bottom line benefits associated with developing open space within Knox on 13 February 2007. Council committed funds to the upgrade of this reserve in the 2008 – 2009 budget process as part of a rolling program of design and works to develop open space within Knox. This report seeks to adopt a Revitalisation Plan developed through broad community consultation.

The Basin Triangle is located on the corners of Forest Road, Church Street and Mountain Highway in The Basin. The park is bordered by roads on all sides with shops lining Mountain Highway and Forest Road opposite the reserve and by residential development along Church Street. The Basin Triangle is classified in the Knox Open Space Plan as a local park, defined as being within approximately 500 metres of most dwellings.

Local parks were identified in the Knox Open Space Plan consultation process as being deficient in basic facilities, shade and shelter. Consultation indicated that these types of parks are the highest priorities for action.

2. DISCUSSION

In January 2008 “Twyford Consulting” was commissioned to assist Council’s community engagement advocates prepare a community engagement plan for The Basin Triangle revitalisation planning process. As a result of this plan, in February 2008 the place making firm “Village Well” were commissioned to conduct extensive consultation and prepare a Revitalisation Plan for The Basin Triangle. Information was gathered from letters sent to over 1300 local residents and a Council Officer workshop representing the diverse groups of interest associated with The Basin Triangle. Extensive consultation was undertaken after this by “Village Well” and the resulting plans broadly included the following:

- Upgraded and relocated playground;
- Shaded areas near the playground and throughout the reserve;
- Planting design using indigenous plants that also provide wildlife habitat;
- Open space for passive recreation;
- Additional parking spaces;
- Public toilet;

3. Revitalisation Plan for The Basin Triangle (cont'd)

- Walking paths and meandering paths;
- Seating;
- Artwork;
- Relocation of Wisteria pergolas within park;
- Signage and community notice board;
- Bicycle parking;
- Enhancement of existing character.

3. CONSULTATION

A detailed analysis of the consultation process is included in the report as Appendix A.

The consultation process can be summarised as follows:

Letters were sent out to over 1300 local residents in December 2007 asking for input into how people used the reserve. 25 emails and 6 phone calls were received in response to the letter offering suggestions, indicating the way people want to use the reserve and the preferred character of the park. Online surveys were posted on the Knox City Council website in March and 19 responses were received.

One-on-one interviews were held with 18 traders and 7 community groups in March and April.

A training workshop was held for the Knox Youth Council to enable them to conduct comprehensive on-site surveys. On-site surveys were conducted over three days in March by Council staff and the Youth Council with 47 people responding. Village Well conducted another 25 surveys on site in March and April. The Village Well team also conducted a number of site visits to observe usage, connections, movement patterns and physical aspects of the site.

Three workshops were held with Council staff, two of which were run by Village Well. These workshops included staff from Sustainability, Facilities, Parks Services, Placemakers, Youth Services, Community Transport (representing the Senior Citizens), Community Wellbeing, Community Safety, Strategic Planning, Statutory Planning, Marketing and Communications, Culture and Arts, Traffic and Transport and Governance.

The information obtained from the above techniques was used to develop a detailed design brief. Once this had been agreed the consultation continued with a specific focus on design development.

A Community Group Visioning Workshop including The Basin Triangle's user groups was conducted and gave attendees the opportunity to draw on site plans and discuss innovative solutions to how the site could be developed.

3. Revitalisation Plan for The Basin Triangle (cont'd)

Two concept plans were designed using all the information collected throughout the consultation process. These plans were then shown to the traders before a workshop was held with Council staff to determine that the needs of the community, user groups and traders had been addressed. Elements from each plan were selected that were seen to be the best options for the site and were further developed into one plan.

The plan was exhibited on site in August and letters sent to the original list of residents, community groups and traders. The plan was posted on the Knox City Council website. Comments were extremely positive and supported the proposals. Requests for details such as seating styles, path materials and similar will be addressed at detailed documentation stage later this year and the comments received will be used during this stage. No further changes were made to the Revitalisation Plan.

A copy of the detailed report is shown in Appendix A, which has been distributed under separate cover. This report includes responses to the consultation, mapping, analysis of responses, details of the training program given to the Youth Council and information that explains the consultation and design process.

A copy of the The Basin Triangle Revitalisation Concept Plan is shown in Appendix B (circulated separately)

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

The Basin Triangle is one of the gateways into Knox and provides an opportunity to showcase Knox in a positive manner.

The implementation of this project will have a long-term positive effect on the local amenity and environment. Additional planting will increase biodiversity and attract bird life. Tree planting will add to the green leafy character of Knox by providing additional canopy cover, as well as reducing heat islands in the area and removing pollutants from the air.

The inclusion of water sensitive urban design (WSUD) elements will improve stormwater quality and quantity from the site.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

A staged implementation approach will be required for The Basin Triangle. The renewal of the reserve can be implemented over time towards a consistent concept through renewal works. It is estimated that the plan may require up to \$1,000,000 to implement. This would not include building works to the existing progress hall which requires further planning before a cost estimate can be provided. Annual maintenance costs would be similar to existing maintenance costs.

3. Revitalisation Plan for The Basin Triangle (cont'd)

Further design development is required for some aspects of the design such as the progress hall modifications and cost estimates will be developed as part of that process.

The Long Term Financial Plan identifies \$100,000 in the 2008 – 2009 financial year for the development of this reserve as part of the Unstructured Recreation Capital Works Program. This is in response to the February 2007 Council report identifying a significant shortfall in investment in this area and the social, economic and environmental benefits gained through investing in this area.

Additional funds have been allocated in the 2008 – 2009 financial year for the development of the new toilet and the removal of the existing house. Future new or renewal works will be included in the Capital Works Program for prioritisation by Council.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This park has a high level of ownership by the community and provides a valuable opportunity for the community to interact and engage in passive recreation. The reserve also provides valuable connections through the community, which provides the opportunity for people to walk or cycle through the City and to the adjacent shopping centre.

A number of user groups use the reserve and easier, safer access to these centres will increase as a result of the development of the Plan. A higher level of usage in the park as well as opening up of sight lines will also increase feelings of safety and greater social connection.

Recent studies as identified in the February 2007 Council report also draw clear links between the physical and mental health of individuals and communities to their ability to interact with nature.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN

This Plan contributes to the following Key Result Areas;

- Balanced Quality Urban Development: “To further develop the natural and built environment to enhance liveability”
- Sustainable Natural Environment: “To make progress toward being a national leader in environmental sustainability”

The following Council documents were used to inform the development of the plan:

- Draft Sustainable Environment Strategy 2008-18
- Sites of Biological Significance
- Standard Furniture
- Public Toilet Masterplan
- Traffic studies completed in the area

3. Revitalisation Plan for The Basin Triangle (cont'd)

8. CONCLUSION

The investment in developing and maintaining quality open space and natural settings within Knox is an investment in the health and well being of the community of Knox, the environment and future generations.

Passive open space and walking tracks are utilised by in excess of 88,000 Knox residents each year. The development of pleasant and safe areas will increase the usage; assist in individual's health, whilst adding to biodiversity and environmental outcomes.

It is anticipated that this reserve can be developed as a staged approach depending on funding and further consultation with agencies such as VicRoads.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

There are no confidentiality issues associated with this report.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

1. **note this report;**
2. **note the Concept Plan Development and Consultation Summary for The Basin Triangle, The Basin as shown as Appendix A to this report;**
3. **approve the Revitalisation Plan for The Basin Triangle, The Basin as shown as Appendix B to this report; and**
4. **refer funding requirements for the implementation of the Revitalisation Plan to future budget processes for consideration and ranking.**

**Report Prepared By: Coordinator – Open Space & Landscape Design
(Robyn Mansfield)**

**Report Authorised By Director – City Development
(Angelo Kourambas)**

DOBSON WARD**ITEM****4. MASTERPLAN REPORT FOR PEREGRINE HEIGHTS OPEN SPACE RESERVE (CSR QUARRY)**

SUMMARY: *Coordinator – Open Space & Landscape Design
(Robyn Mansfield)*

This report outlines the proposed Master Plan for Peregrine Heights open space reserve (former CSR Quarry) in Ferntree Gully. The Master Plan provides a clear direction for the upgrade of this park, and is presented for Council endorsement.

1. INTRODUCTION

Council considered a report on the triple bottom line benefits associated with developing open space within Knox on 13 February 2007. Council committed funds to the design of five reserves in the 2007 – 2008 budget process as part of a rolling program of design and works to develop open space within Knox. This report seeks to adopt a landscape plan developed through broad community consultation.

Peregrine Heights open space reserve (former CSR Quarry) is located along the North side of Quarry Road to the east of Stringybark Drive in Ferntree Gully. The park is bordered by the Dandenong Ranges National Park to the East, and by residential development on the North boundary.

This reserve has been identified in the Knox Open Space Plan as a high priority requiring a Master Plan. A Master Plan locates and identifies all values, activities and functions intended to occur in the park.

2. DISCUSSION

In March 2008, landscape and environment firm “EDAW AECOM” were commissioned to prepare a Master Plan for Peregrine Heights open space reserve (CSR Quarry). Information was gathered from surveys sent to 380 local residents. Three public meetings were held to determine the direction of the design, discuss three concepts and present the final draft Plan. The resulting plan broadly includes the following:

- Raising the level of the lake;
- Formal and informal paths including links to existing path networks;
- Planted terraces;
- Informal play areas;
- Planting design using indigenous plants that also provide wildlife habitat;
- Boardwalks on edge of lake;
- Restoration of remnant bushland
- Shade structures;
- Seating;
- Addressing grading issues to make lawn areas safer.

4. Master Plan for Peregrine Heights Open Space Reserve (CSR Quarry) (cont'd)

3. CONSULTATION

Surveys were sent to 380 residents inviting comment on the reserve's use and attributes. There were 114 responses to the survey. Three public meetings were held with an attendance of between 20 and 40 at each meeting. The initial meeting was held to determine the direction of the design.

The responses to the survey and the first public meeting were used to create a program and three concept draft plans for the reserve. Invitations were mailed to each of the original 380 residents mentioned above inviting them to attend a community meeting at the Wattle Senior Citizens Club meeting room in Ferntree Gully to review and discuss the draft Plan. Over twenty residents attended and were asked to comment on their preferred option. The Plans were also made available on the website.

A strong preference for one option was supported and a master plan developed using the feedback from residents. Twenty written responses were received describing a preference for a natural environment with an emphasis on habitat, remnant vegetation and minimal development. The preferred option included raising the level of the lake, reducing the steepness of the site and a heavy emphasis on a range of access options through the park.

The final Plan was presented to the community in August and displayed on Council's website. Over 27 people attended this meeting and 10 written responses were received, as well as numerous phone calls. The responses showed a strong support for the concept plan and a desire to begin works as quickly as possible.

The park is intended to attract people within walking distance due to its nature, scale and location.

A copy of the final Master Plan is shown as Appendix A. A copy of the final Master Plan report is shown in Appendix B.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

The implementation of this project will have a long-term positive effect on the local amenity and environment. Additional planting will increase biodiversity and attract bird life and other wildlife. Tree planting will add to the green leafy character of Knox by providing additional canopy cover, as well as reducing heat islands in the area and removing pollutants from the air.

The inclusion of water sensitive urban design (WSUD) elements will improve stormwater quality from the site into the lake.

The reserve will form a valuable buffer to the Dandenong Ranges National Park.

4. **Master Plan for Peregrine Heights Open Space Reserve (CSR Quarry)
(cont'd)**

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

A staged implementation approach will be required for the Peregrine Heights Open Space Reserve (CSR Quarry). The development of the reserve can be implemented over time towards a consistent concept through works. The community have expressed their interest in participating in planting and clean-up days which will increase ownership and lower vandalism. It is estimated that up to \$6,000,000 will be required to develop the park. This includes costs for specialised consultants, engineering documentation, tender documents and contract administration.

Given the safety and risk implications of the site, it is recommended that the initial stages address the greatest areas of risk and this will determine a logical staging process.

The recommendations of the plan and the associated funding requirements will be referred to Council's 2009/10 Capital Works Program for ranking. This business case will be ranked against other business cases as part of Council's budget development process.

The Long Term Financial plan identifies \$1,000,000 in the 2009 – 2010 financial year for the development of unstructured recreation reserves. This is in response to the February 2007 Council report identifying a significant shortfall in investment in this area and the social, economic and environmental benefits gained through investing in this area.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This park has a high level of ownership by the community and provides a valuable opportunity for the community to interact with each other and engage in passive recreation and a strong interaction with nature.

Recent studies as identified in the February 2007 Council report draw clear links between the physical and mental health of individuals and communities to their ability to interact with nature.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN

This Plan contributes to the following Key Result Areas;

- **Balanced Quality Urban Development:** "To further develop the natural and built environment to enhance liveability"
- **Sustainable Natural Environment:** "To make progress toward being a national leader in environmental sustainability"

4. **Master Plan for Peregrine Heights Open Space Reserve (CSR Quarry)
(cont'd)**

8. CONCLUSION

The investment in developing and maintaining quality open space and natural settings within Knox is an investment in the health and well being of the community of Knox, the environment and future generations.

Passive open space and walking tracks are utilised by in excess of 88,000 Knox residents each year. The development of pleasant and safe areas will increase the usage; assist in individual's health whilst adding to biodiversity and environmental issues.

It is anticipated that this reserve can be developed over a period of ten to fifteen years depending on funding.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

There are no confidentiality issues associated with this report.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council;

1. **approve the Master Plan for Peregrine Heights Open Space Reserve (CSR Quarry), Ferntree Gully as shown in Appendix A to this report;**
2. **Note the Master Plan Report for Peregrine Heights Open Space Reserve (CSR Quarry), Ferntree Gully as shown in Appendix B to this report; and**
3. **refer \$180,000 funding to the mid year budget to address identified risks for immediate and urgent works.**

Report Prepared By: Coordinator – Open Space and Landscape Design (Robyn Mansfield)

Report Authorised By Director – City Development (Angelo Kourambas)

APPENDIX A/1 - Master Plan for Peregrine Heights Open Space Reserve (CSR Quarry)

**APPENDIX B/1– Master Plan Report for Peregrine Heights Open Space Reserve
(CSR Quarry)**

**APPENDIX B/2– Master Plan Report for Peregrine Heights Open Space Reserve
(CSR Quarry)**

**APPENDIX B/3– Master Plan Report for Peregrine Heights Open Space Reserve
(CSR Quarry)**

**APPENDIX B/4– Master Plan Report for Peregrine Heights Open Space Reserve
(CSR Quarry)**

ALL WARDS**ITEM****5. LEWIS PARK SKATE AND BMX FACILITY REFERENCE GROUP - REPRESENTATION**

SUMMARY: *Coordinator Leisure Services (Mark Stockton)*

Following Council's adoption of the Terms of Reference for the Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group, expressions of interest for non Councillor (community representatives) to the Group have been received. This report recommends the appointment of community and Council advisory committee members to the Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group and seeks Council's endorsement to amend the Group's Terms of Reference to reflect the request for increased Victoria Police representation.

1. INTRODUCTION

At the 13 May 2008 Ordinary Meeting of Council, Terms of Reference to establish the Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group were endorsed. In addition, Cr. Adam Gill, Cr. Mick Van de Vreede and Cr. Tony Kamitsis were endorsed as Councillor appointments to the Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group.

The purpose of the Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group (the Group) is to review and report on the performance of the Lewis Park Skate and BMX facility. The Reference Group will consider and provide input into information gathered as part of a review process, which will be considered by Council's Recreation and Leisure Liaison Group prior to its presentation to Council.

The specific objectives for operation of the Group include:

- To monitor the utilisation of the Lewis Park site;
- To provide an ongoing assessment of the facility's physical condition;
- To determine operational and facility management issues (including risk management) associated with the Lewis Park site;
- To conduct benchmarking for similar facilities;
- To conduct a cost benefit analysis of the site (retention verses decommissioning); and
- To consider the implications of the improvements proposed within the Knox Central Urban Design Framework.

5. Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group - Representation (cont'd)

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Expression of Interest Applications

In June 2008, Council requested expressions of interest to the Group from non Councillor members (community members) through advertisements within the Knox Leader newspaper recruitment, leaflets distributed to users of the Lewis Park Skate and BMX facility, direct mail out to industry groups and a letter issued to the Inspector at Knox Police requesting police representation.

An information package for prospective members to the Group, including an expression of interest form was made available through Council's website.

Expression of interest applications closed on Friday 4 July 2008. In response to Council's request for expressions of interests, five (5) applications were received.

The current Terms of Reference (refer to Appendix A) for the Group nominates that membership of the Group comprise of up to 13 members, (categorised as Councillor membership, community membership and advisory committee membership) including:

Membership category	Description
Councillor membership x (3)	
As per Councillor committee appointments.	Current Councillor representatives comprising Cr. Gill, Cr. Kamitsis and Cr. Van de Vreede
Community membership x (7).	
Facility user and Knox residents x (4).	Users of the Lewis Park Skate and BMX facility and those who reside in the City of Knox.
Industry Representatives x (2).	Persons who work in the Skate, BMX and/or Leisure Industry.
Victorian Police representation x (1).	Members of the Victorian Police.

5. Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group - Representation (cont'd)

Advisory membership x (3) committee	
Recreation and Leisure Liaison Group representatives x (2).	Nominated representatives of Council's Recreation and Leisure Liaison Group comprising Matt Nimbs and Nicholas Van Egmond.
Youth Council representation x (1).	Due to existing commitment the Youth Council is unable to provide a dedicated member to the Group. As an alternative, it recommends that the Youth Council representation be provided upon a rotational basis, which is permitted through the Terms of Reference.

The five (5) expressions of interest applications received represent the following community membership categories:

Community Membership	Expression of interest applications
Facility users and Knox residents x (4)	2
Industry representatives x (2)	1
Police representation x (1)	2

Community membership applications are included within Confidential Appendix B.

A summary of community membership applications is tabulated as follows:

Applicant 1.	Is a keen and passionate participant and supporter of BMX and skateboarding for over twenty (20) years and a regular user of the Lewis Park facility.
Applicant 2.	Has been using the Lewis Park Skate and BMX facility for over twenty (20) years and has a strong relationship and rapport with the skating fraternity.
Applicant 3.	Has a long historical association with the facility and also has a strong working knowledge of skateboarding and BMX communities.
Applicants 4 & 5.	Nominations from Victoria Police

5. Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group - Representation (cont'd)

The expression of interest applications indicate that there is a desire for increased representation from Victoria Police to gain additional membership to the Group. Consequently, as set out in the amended Terms of Reference (refer to Appendix C), officers recommend that the Victoria Police membership within the Terms of Reference be amended to provide two (2) representatives.

2.2 Assessment Criteria

Prospective candidates for community and advisory committee membership were assessed by the Group's Councillor representatives based upon the interest, knowledge and expertise relating to the operation and management of Skate and BMX facilities demonstrated by applicants.

3. CONSULTATION

Consistent with Council's Community Engagement Framework, appropriate community engagement has been undertaken, as presented within Section 2 of this report.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

One of the objectives of the Group will be to consider the impact of the Knox Central Urban Design Framework on the Lewis Park Skate and BMX facility

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Support for the Group will be provided within Council's existing operational budget.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Group will provide advice to Council's Recreation and Leisure Liaison Group (RLLG) concerning the performance of the Lewis Park Skate and BMX facility. The RLLG will report to Council regarding the future of the Lewis Park Skate and BMX facility.

Social benefits to be considered by the Group, which are highlighted within Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy include:

Strong Family and Community

- Social networks
- Family support
- Sense of belonging
- Friends
- Community groups

5. Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group - Representation (cont'd)

Healthy Living

- Physical and mental health
- Quality natural and built environment

Education and Lifelong Learning

- Personal growth
- Access to formal and informal learning
- Training and skills

Culture and Leisure opportunities

- Diversity
- Active and passive
- Structured and unstructured

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN

Establishment of the proposed Lewis Park Skate and BMX facility Reference Group is consistent with the broader strategic objectives identified in Council's 'Community and Council Plan 2006 – 2010. In particular:

- Healthy connected communities
- Strong communities
- Active Community Life

8. CONCLUSION

The development of the Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group is a significant step for Council to undertake to ensure an effective community engagement approach with the review of the Lewis Park Skate and BMX facility.

As per the Terms of Reference for the Group, Councillor members on the Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group have assessed the applications and recommend to Council the endorsement of community and advisory committee members as nominated within this report.

In addition, this report recommends that Council amend the Terms of Reference for the Lewis Park Skate and BMX Reference Group to acknowledge a desire for increased representation from Victoria Police.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

A summary of the expression of interest applications is contained within Confidential Appendix B and circulated separately to Councillors.

5. Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group - Representation (cont'd)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

1. Approve the following non Councillor representatives to the Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group for a term which concludes on 31 March 2010:

- Applicant (1)**
- Applicant (2) and**
- Applicant (3)**

as referred to within 'Confidential Appendix B'.

2. Approve Matt Nimbs and Nick Van Egmond as representatives from Council's Recreation and Leisure Liaison Group upon the Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group for a term concluding 31 March 2010.

3. Approve a rotating representation of one member from the Youth Council upon the Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group for a term concluding 31 March 2010.

4. Approve the member composition within the Terms of Reference for the Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group to include two (2) Victoria Police representatives for a term concluding 31 March 2010.

5. Endorse the amended Terms of Reference for the Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group as presented within Appendix C of this report.

Report Prepared By: Co-ordinator Leisure Services (Mark Stockton)

**Report Authorised By: Director – Community Development
(Kerry Stubbings)**

APPENDIX A – Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group – Current Terms of Reference



TERMS OF REFERENCE

LEWIS PARK SKATE AND BMX FACILITY REFERENCE GROUP

Directorate	Community Services
Responsible Officer	Mark Stockton
Committee Type	Specific Purpose

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group (the Group) is to review and report on the performance of the Lewis Park Skate and BMX facility. The Reference Group will consider and provide input into information gathered as part of a review process.

2. OBJECTIVES

The Group is required to report upon a two (2) year review process to Council's Recreation and Leisure Liaison Group (RLLG), which will provide advice to Council regarding the future of the Lewis Park Skate and BMX facility.

The objectives of the Review are to:

- Monitor the utilisation of the Lewis Park site;
- Provide an ongoing assessment of the facility's physical condition;
- Determine operational and facility management issues (including risk management) associated with the Lewis Park site;
- Conduct benchmarking for similar facilities;
- Conduct a cost: benefit analysis of the site (retention verses decommissioning); and
- Consider the implications of the improvements proposed within the Knox Central Urban Design Framework.

APPENDIX A – Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group – Current Terms of Reference

3. MEMBERSHIP, PERIOD OF MEMBERSHIP AND METHOD OF APPOINTMENT

Membership of the Group will consist of members approved and appointed by Council.

The Group will comprise up to but no greater than thirteen (13) members, including:

- Councillor representation (maximum of 3)
- Facility users and Knox residents (x4)
- Industry representatives (x2)
- Recreation and Leisure Liaison Group representatives (x2)
- Police representation (x1)
- Youth Council representation (x1)

It is expected that each member will attend a minimum of 70% of meetings annually. If a member attends less than 70% of meetings annually, Council has the ability to appoint a replacement member if deemed necessary.

In the event of a member resigning from the Group, a written letter of resignation should be made to the Chairperson.

4. DELEGATED AUTHORITY AND DECISION MAKING

The Group acts in an advisory capacity only and does not represent Council or make decisions on behalf of Council.

5. MEETING PROCEDURES

The Group will meet four (4) times per calendar year and additional meetings will be scheduled if required.

6. CHAIRPERSON

The position of Chairperson shall be reviewed annually immediately following Councillor appointments to committees.

Where there is one Councillor representative on the Group that Councillor stands as Chair. Where there is more than one Councillor, the Chairperson is to be agreed upon between Councillors. When this cannot be achieved, the Mayor of the day shall determine the Chairperson.

APPENDIX A – Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group – Current Terms of Reference

The Group may determine, with consent of Councillor representative/s, to appoint another member other than the Councillor representative/s as Chairperson.

If the Chairperson is not present at a meeting, any other Councillor representative shall be appointed Chairperson. In the absence of any other Councillor representative/s, the Group members shall appoint a Chairperson for the purpose of conducting the meeting.

The Group must advise the Governance Team of the name of the Chairperson within one week of appointment. These details will then be updated on the intranet and internet.

7. AGENDAS AND MINUTES

Agendas and Minutes must be prepared for each meeting of the Group. The Agenda must be provided to members of the Group not less than 48 hours before the time fixed for the meeting.

The Chairperson must arrange for minutes of each meeting of the Group to be kept.

The minutes of the Group's meeting must:

- (a) Contain details of the proceedings and resolutions made.
- (b) Be clearly expressed.
- (c) Be self-explanatory.
- (d) In relation to resolutions recorded in the minutes, incorporate relevant reports or a summary of the relevant reports considered in the decision making process.

Minutes must be approved by the Chairperson before being published or distributed and then formally endorsed at the subsequent meeting.

Agendas and Minutes are to be made available on Council's Intranet.

8. VOTING

All representatives appointed to the Group have equal voting rights and the Chairperson will have a second vote in the event of a tie.

APPENDIX A – Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group – Current Terms of Reference

9. CONDUCT AND INTEREST PROVISIONS

In performing the role as a member of the Group, a person must:

- act honestly;
- exercise reasonable care and diligence;
- not make improper use of their position; and
- not make improper use of information acquired because of their position.

Where a member has an interest or conflict of interest in relation to a matter in which the Group is concerned, or is likely to be considered or discussed, the member must disclose the interest to the Group before the matter is considered or discussed at the meeting. Disclosure must include the nature of the relevant interest and be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

10. REPORTING

The Group is required to prepare and adopt a formal report on an annual basis (prior to end of November each year). The report will then be presented to the Recreation and Leisure Liaison Group detailing the outcomes of the Group and any recommendations to Council. A final report regarding review of the Lewis Park Skate and BMX facility will be made by the group on or before the 30 November 2009.

11. ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT

Administration support is provided to the Group by the Community Services Directorate.

12. SUNSET CLAUSE

The Group will sunset on 28 February 2010.

13. MEALS AND SUSTENANCE AT MEETINGS

The provision of refreshments during the course of a meeting will be in accordance with Council's Meals and Sustenance Policy.

APPENDIX B (Confidential)

Community Membership Application

(circulated separately)

APPENDIX C – Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group – Amended Terms of Reference



TERMS OF REFERENCE

LEWIS PARK SKATE AND BMX FACILITY REFERENCE GROUP

Directorate	Community Services
Responsible Officer	Mark Stockton
Committee Type	Specific Purpose

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group (the Group) is to review and report on the performance of the Lewis Park Skate and BMX facility. The Reference Group will consider and provide input into information gathered as part of a review process.

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- Consider the implications of the improvements proposed within the Knox Central Urban Design Framework.

ALL WARDS**APPENDIX C 1 – Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group – Amended Terms of Reference****3. MEMBERSHIP, PERIOD OF MEMBERSHIP AND METHOD OF APPOINTMENT**

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- Industry representatives (x2)
- Recreation and Leisure Liaison Group representatives (x2)
- Police representation (x2)
- Youth Council representation (x1)

Deleted: 1

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APPENDIX C – Lewis Park Skate and BMX Facility Reference Group – Amended Terms of Reference

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