



Point Lonsdale Civic Association Inc.

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Representing Point Lonsdale Residents since 1910

04/06/22

To: Colleen White – Regional Director Barwon South West DELWP
CC. Hon. Lisa Neville MP Member for Bellarine;

VICTORIA PARK QUEENSCLIFF

Thank you Ms White for copying me into your reply to Mr. David Connoley at QCA in which you advised that: the site is crown land permanently reserved as a public park, with the Borough of Queenscliffe directly managing its uses as the Committee of Management, that there is not a requirement for a Marine & Coastal Act consent as safety fencing at the direction of Worksafe meets the definition of prior maintenance consent.

You also indicated that you have spoken to Council's CEO who has advised that Council Officers are currently undertaking due diligence to present options to the Council regarding the site and that it's your understanding that any options analysis/plans will be shared with the community through a transparent process in which you encouraged QCA's involvement. Some of this information was unknown to local people who cherish this particular public park and have been disappointed with what's happened recently. This information apparently now supercedes the 5 point management plan which was produced, presented to the community, and agreed by Queenscliffe Councillors at the March Ordinary Meeting.

In reply, the Point Lonsdale Community Association also expresses its concern about the future of Victoria Park as a public reserve and the unprecedented placing of steel barricades around the perimeter of 1.6 hectare parkland, which as you know was Queenscliffe's original Botanic Garden first established in 1868. The ugly steel fencing recently erected by Queenscliff Council (please see photographs below) on the approach to the historic township extends beyond the footpath and closes off access to the entire parkland and to the toilet facilities in King Street, Queenscliff, but strangely allows contractor work to continue on the music festival office building located within this valued Public Park.

The Association is also concerned with a 3rd wave of moonah tree destruction in the park which has prolific birdlife that use these very long lived trees year round. The park, which is widely used by locals, is also the central feature of Queenscliffe's Botanic Gardens Precinct which includes many beautifully restored heritage properties along the Mercer Street and King Street frontages. All this comes hard on the heels of the CEO's recent \$50,000 "Tourist Parks Management and Operations Review" which now appears to be abeyance, a proposed huge Telstra mobile communications tower, Council's earlier incorrect posting on its website that Victoria Park was open year round to caravanning despite being a seasonal only park and a succession of arborists reports that result mainly in continued tree destruction rather than park conservation and restoration.

On a positive note a local Queenscliff community group concerned about the welfare of the park have recently lodged a detailed application for a Queens Jubilee Tree Planting Grant with Council sponsorship and Council have pledged \$40,000 in their upcoming budget for a replanting program in the central core of the parkland following the devastation of last year's storm. This historic park is clearly at the crossroads and without proper stewardship will be lost to the community forever. The Association therefore advocates a replanting and restoration program for the central and upper western and northern sections of Victoria Park as a priority followed by new plantings along largely barren eastern boundary. The aim should be the rehabilitation of the park's treed canopy and a new beginning as the town's Botanic Park.

With the pending Bellarine DAL/SPP and other initiatives such as Queenscliffe's long awaited and half completed Coastal and Marine Management Plan (CMMP) we believe it's important that DELWP as custodians of crown land, involves itself in the stewardship of our parks and provides management guidance in respect of these important coastal reserves.





Yours Sincerely – David Kenwood

PLCA President - on behalf on Members.

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