

Castlemaine Botanical Gardens Conservation Management Plan Fact Sheet

Introduction

Council has developed a draft Conservation Management Plan (CMP) to guide the management of the heritage-listed Castlemaine Botanical Gardens. The plan identifies the heritage values and significance of the gardens in a local and state-wide context. It includes an assessment of significant features, with policies and actions to manage, renew and protect them for decades to come.

What is the scope of the plan?

The plan covers the area gazetted as the Castlemaine Botanical Gardens Reserve, as well as adjacent areas within the road reserves of Walker Street, Downes Road and Froomes Road. The plan includes the caravan park and sunken reserve as part of the adjacent public recreation and camping reserve, as listed on the Victorian Heritage Register (see map on page 28).

The draft builds on previous plans for the much loved gardens that have helped conserve our built heritage. The new plan includes a focus on managing the gardens as a living landscape, which is strongly influenced by seasonal and operational changes.

What are the main recommendations?

Some of the main recommendations include continued management of significant trees, maintaining a diverse collection of large trees in the heart of the gardens, propagation of rare and unusual species, introducing a botanical record keeping system, consolidating the rose collection, re-establishing planting programs and adding contemporary displays to our annual plantings.

Built heritage like the kiosk, entrance gates and curator's residence at the caravan park should be restored while retaining reconstructed elements such as the rotunda, summerhouse and fountain. Park infrastructure like the lower and middle bridges, stone weir, historical pathways and the 4Cs club tables are to be conserved. The vacant fish hatchery could be documented and removed. (See pages 13 – 14 for key policy and works recommendation).

The plan includes a new statement of significance (pages 113 – 116) and will be reviewed by Heritage Victoria. It highlights botanical and interpretive signage as a priority, along with more tours, furniture and water fountains to improve the visitor experience.

How was the plan developed?

The plan was developed by John Patrick Landscape Architects with input from conservation and heritage experts at Bryce Raworth Ptd Ltd. An assessment of community values was shaped by a community survey in 2017.

What are the next steps?

Council is seeking community feedback on the plan by Friday 21 June. The plan will be revised based on community feedback and is expected to be considered by Council for adoption in August/September. View the draft at www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/HaveYourSay, the Civic Centre and Castlemaine Library. Send your feedback titled Draft Botanical Gardens CMP to info@mountalexander.vic.gov.au or Mount Alexander Shire Council, PO Box 185, Castlemaine VIC 3450, by Friday 21 June.

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