

THE PARKLANDS CODE

The public parks, gardens, bushland and open spaces of Melbourne are central to the cultural, recreational and sporting traditions of our city.

They belong to the community.

These parklands are vital assets and adequate resources must be devoted to maintaining them. They provide the essential balance against the environmental impact of continuing urban growth.

There must be legal safeguards against commercial interests and state and local government projects that threaten them. Any proposals that would alter existing forms of recreational use or diminish or degrade parklands must be subject to full and open community consultation and objective assessment.

Positive environmental and social outcomes must be demonstrated before any changes are made. There must be an undertaking that any open spaces lost are replaced with areas comparable in size and quality.

Melbourne has inherited a world class system of open spaces of which it has long been proud.

Our public parks, gardens, bushland and open spaces must be preserved.

The Parklands Code was adopted and published by the more than forty organisations in October 1995 as a simple, sensible set of criteria which allows the reasonable use of parks without destroying their unique values. It was agreed that all political parties should be asked to endorse the Code and incorporate its principles into their political platforms. It was also agreed that the Code needs to be accompanied by documentation that outlines the legal, financial and management elements which needs to be applied in its implementation. The Parkland Principles overleaf, which forms part of the "Planning Charter for Victoria", aims to fulfil these requirements.

PARKLAND PRINCIPLES

- 1 Parklands are for the common good and must be occupied by minority groups only for relevant recreational or educational purposes, with the minimum restrictions of general access, with the minimum visual intrusion, and in a potentially reversible manner.
- 2 Any proposal to use parkland in any other fashion must be contingent upon an equal or greater area of land being added to the park in a position where it can be successfully integrated into the design.
- 3 The only buildings which should be permitted in parkland are interpretation centres directly relevant to the park in question, toilet facilities required by users, and minimal changing facilities at sports areas. Any other building should be considered a reduction of the parkland, and the site of the building, considered as the area of the structure itself plus a surrounding belt of twenty metres or five times the maximum building height, whichever is greater, should be compensated for as provided in point 2.
- 4 Administrative, social and other facilities are not proper uses for parkland, and any building containing such uses, plus the curtilage, must be compensated as in points 2 and 3.
- 5 Parkland must not be fenced except as required to bound sports areas and ovals, and then only by a single rail not exceeding 1.2 metres in height. Any higher or more substantial fencing should be regarded as excising land from the park, and the area within the fence plus an area extending at least 5 metres beyond it should be deemed to be excised and should be compensated accordingly.
- 6 Any road, rail, tram or other transport route through a park should be securely fenced and visually and acoustically buffered as necessary, and the area contained within any fences or buffers, plus an area extending 20 metres beyond, should be compensated as in point 2.
- 7 Any sporting or other body seeking ongoing or regular use of parkland should be required to demonstrate that it has such administrative, social and other facilities as may be necessary available to it in the immediate vicinity.
- 8 Any form of carparking requiring hard surfacing, parking meters, the felling of trees, or earthworks, must be regarded as an excision from the park, and must be compensated as in point 2.
- 9 Overflow carparking onto grassed areas may be permitted provided it does not involve works (other than the creation of gates or openings in fences, and bridging of ditches), provided that it (or any part of it within a given area) is not used on more than ten occasions per year.
- 10 Any existing building on parkland which was not constructed according to these principles must be regarded as temporary, and must not be alienated, improved, extended or enlarged, unless and until the site is compensated as provided above.