

# Royal Park Protection Group



## Royal Park Protection Group Inc

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"Black Shouldered Kite"

Hello everyone,

Hope you are managing to stay safe and well in these difficult times.

Here is an update on happenings in and around the park.

Part of this newsletter was generated by Friends of Royal Park and we are grateful that we can reproduce their work to avoid duplicated effort.

### **AGM for Financial Year 2019/2020**

We still need to hold our AGM at some point so we are looking to see if we can get enough numbers to hold a Zoom meeting. A daytime slot in October, either during the week or on a Saturday is being considered.

The meeting will be kept short (no speaker) and will just do the basic agenda of finance and election of Committee.

See email options....please respond if you can attend and which day suits. We need at least 10 members to join us to have a quorum!

### **Card Sales**

We have been fortunate to be able to continue to sell our cards through the Parkville Post Office. Sales have been brisk as people have used the cards to keep in touch and cheer one another. Thanks to Margaret and Anne for all their efforts.

## **Revegetation of the Brens Drive remnant**

We have been awarded a Commonwealth grant to revegetate the Brens Drive remnant area and to develop an “App” to introduce people to interesting areas of Royal Park. The plants have been ordered for delivery this August but planting plans have all been disrupted. We hope to be able to reschedule soon. The App development has also been delayed by current restrictions. It is planned that the format will be like that used for Parkville walks

## **Trial plantings in Gatehouse Street**

The trial plantings in Gatehouse Street are now springing to life. This report from Katherine Horsfall at Melbourne City Council:

“Unfortunately people have been walking through or letting their dogs run through and the possums have discovered the geraniums are tasty. The plants that have appeared are *Vittadinia muelleri*, *Linum marginale*, *Geranium retrosum* and a bit of *Leucochrysum albicans* subsp. *tricolour* with some other forbs and grasses too.



*Vittadinia muelleri*,



*Linum marginale*



*Geranium retrosum*



*Leucochrysum*

Challenges include people and dogs walking on the plots and what Kathryn thinks are foxes (or cats) digging in the sand. However these things you can expect in a publicly accessible experimental site. Also there was more of a weed seed bank under the mulch than expected, so now we must manage the weed growth in a way that allows the native meadow species to prevail. But again, these are all the kinds of normal challenges one would expect. In terms of initial results, so far we've found from weeding that the soil only plots are creating the most weed biomass and requiring the most labour to manage. But early days yet and plenty more weeding and monitoring to do before we have conclusive results.

The roof tiles on the plots have been put there to monitor gastropod populations - slugs and snails. I'm keen to know if the colloquial belief that sand deters slug and snail herbivory of small plants is true...so now we wait to see if they move into their attractive new quarters."

We have offered assistance with weeding.

### **Paul Prentice**



Our committee member Paul Prentice featured in The Age August 8<sup>th</sup> in his role as litter coordinator for Merri Creek.

Paul has been a long term Committee member and dedicated weeder/planter and rubbish collector for the Royal Park as well!

Well done Paul!

### **People not doing the right thing in the park**

There are a lot more people in the park which is good but it seems that many are not respectful of the various spaces within the park.

The Council has been approached to provide some extra signage and protection.

If you are lucky enough to be able to visit the park and you see anything untoward the telephone hotline 9658 9658 (day time and after hours) needs to be alerted

Some of the issues observed:

A bike jump has been built, dogs are off leash, bikes are being ridden through remnant areas, garden beds and the circle, people are picking the flowers, people are removing branches and logs.



New tracks are being created by bikes and branches ripped off for shelters

Another issue is the impact of Dogs off Leash on birds and small vertebrae in the Park in general areas not set aside for this.

### **Plantings in the park Working for Victoria Program**

Royal Park has benefitted from the \$500-million Working for Victoria program set up to assist local governments employ Victorian jobseekers, including people who have lost their jobs as a result of Covid-19 in roles that support our community.

With the assistance of the City of Melbourne, Serco and overseen by CityWide's Jim Morton, 150,000 tube stock of grasses, ground covers and some trees have been planted in swathes along The Avenue and Park Street by many helpers as part of the program. What a great sight now ... and will be in the years to come – returning Royal Park to its grassy woodland landscape character.



Park Street



The Avenue

### **Results of Microbat Bioblitz**

The letter received from the Council about the Microbat Bioblitz results has been circulated by email. For those receiving a paper copy of the newsletter, a copy of the report has been included'

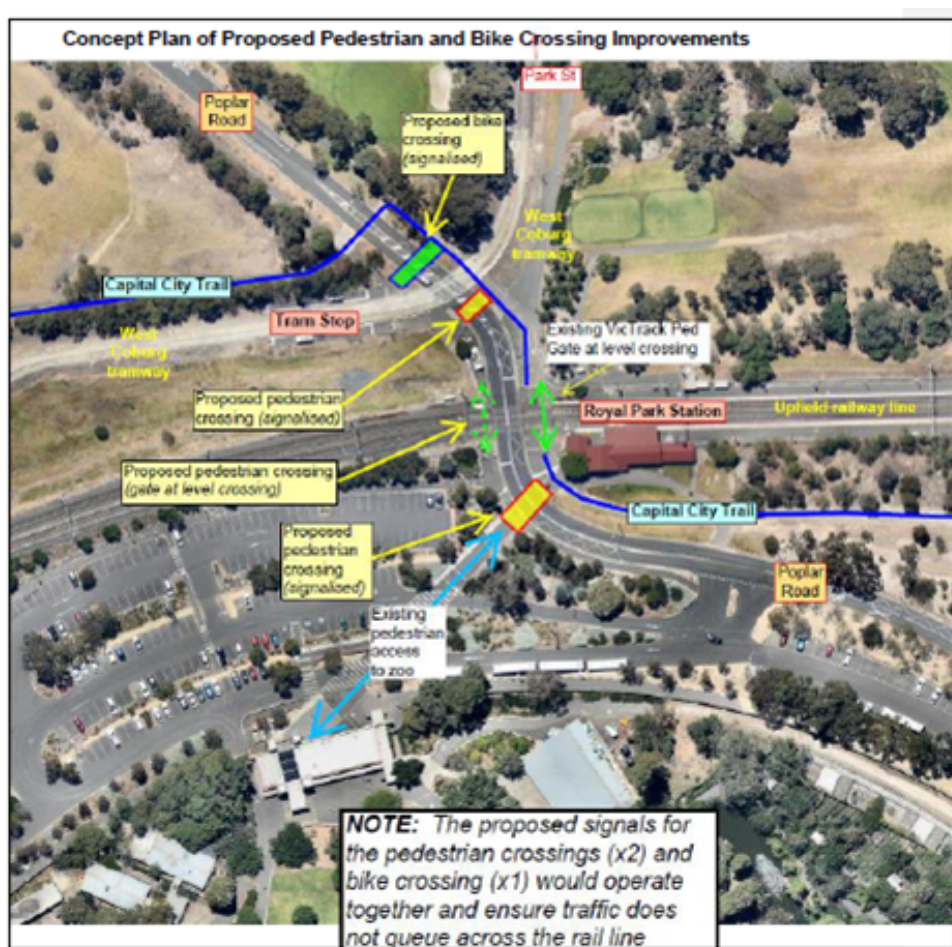


We were looking forward to a presentation by Dr Lindy Lumsden on microbats in March but that is long gone and so we hope to get together in 2021 to hear about these amazing creatures from this most interesting speaker.



## Royal Park Station Intersection

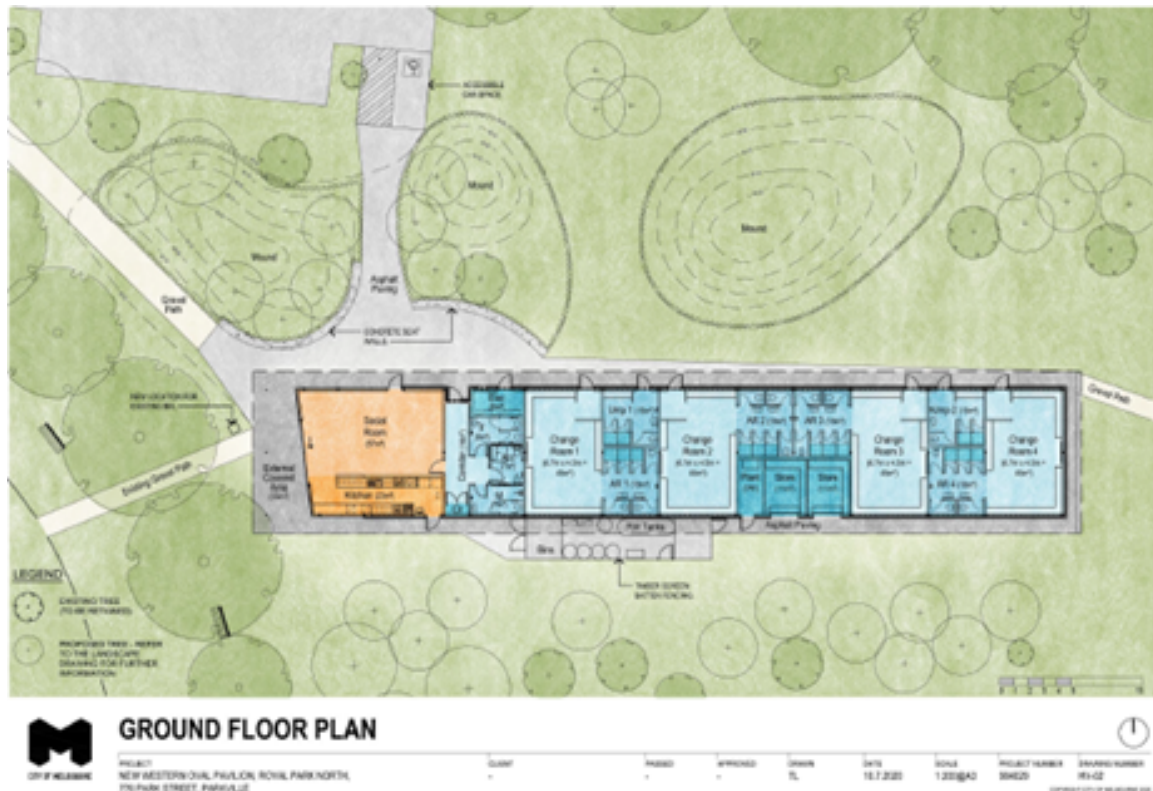
Good news has been received from the Melbourne City Council's Acting Director, Infrastructure & Assets, Craig Stevens, that the concept plans for upgrading and improving safety for pedestrians, cyclists, Zoo visitors, workers, trams and vehicles at the Royal Park Station intersection will be brought forward as a full budget bid for the Council's 2021-22 capital works program. This follows a renewed approach by the FoRP, RPPG and PPL to Cr. Frances Gilley, Chair of the Council's Transport portfolio.



## Western Oval Pavilion

Late notice was received about the finalised concept plan for the new pavilion at the Western Oval on Park St going to Council's Future Melbourne Committee on Aug 4. The new building will be built further into the park, be larger in size and will accommodate female sporting use as well as expanded social facilities.

Comments during the initial round of consultation – that the building should be close to Park St - were not adopted and it was concerning to see artificial mounds introduced around the building – which are not a feature of Royal Park’s topography. The plans will now go to Heritage Victoria for approval.



Anyway, that's all for now.

Hope we can catch up again soon.

Keep well.