



GLEN EIRA
CITY COUNCIL

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Caulfield Racecourse Reserve

Glen Eira City Council is calling on the Caulfield Racecourse Reserve Trust to protect and enhance community access to open space within the heart of the Caulfield Racecourse Reserve.

CAULFIELD RACECOURSE RESERVE — IMPROVE COMMUNITY ACCESS

The Caulfield Racecourse Reserve Trust has been established under the *Caulfield Racecourse Reserve Act 2017* to manage Caulfield Racecourse Reserve for racing, recreation and public park purposes.

However, for most of its history the reserve has been predominantly used and developed as a racecourse. Other parts of the reserve are accessible for public use from 9.45am to sunset on days other than race days. The public area is in the centre of the reserve and provides a picnic area, walking tracks and some open spaces for recreational activities.

It is Council's longstanding position that a better balance needs to be achieved at the Caulfield Racecourse Reserve between racing, recreation, and use as a public park. Similar sentiments around disproportionately favouring racing over other uses were voiced by the Victorian Auditor General in 2014.

Council is expectant that the Trust's new *Land Management Plan* will provide a clear management framework for non-racing events, without compromising the community's recreation and open space needs in the reserve.

Council is a major stakeholder in planning for the future of the Caulfield Racecourse Reserve. The Victorian Planning Authority is leading the preparation of a *Structure Plan* for the Caulfield Station Precinct which incorporates the Caulfield Racecourse Reserve.

The Victorian Planning Authority has been directed by the Minister for Planning to lead the preparation of a *Structure Plan* for the Caulfield Station Precinct. Structure plans define the preferred direction of future growth within an activity centre and articulate how it will be managed.

The *Structure Plan* process seeks to create a shared community and stakeholder vision for the future of the precinct through a land use, economic development, built form, parking and transport framework.

The *Caulfield Station Precinct Structure Plan* is being developed in close collaboration with Glen Eira City Council, Stonnington City Council, the Caulfield Racecourse Reserve Trust and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and Transport for Victoria.

FACTS

Glen Eira City Council has the least amount of open space per person of any council area.

Glen Eira covers a total land area of 38.7 square kilometres. Glen Eira has approximately 70 existing open space reserves covering approximately 173 hectares of land area which equates to 4.5 per cent of the municipality.

Currently there is approximately 11 square metres of open space per person in Glen Eira. The Metropolitan median is 66 square metres of open space per person.

Our population will grow from 155,352 in 2019 to 180,626 by 2036 placing further demand on existing open space.

The Caulfield Racecourse Reserve is a 54-hectare parcel of Crown Land — the largest in Glen Eira. The parcel of land is permanently reserved for three purposes — a racecourse, public recreation ground and public park. The reserve is significantly underutilised in many respects.

There is six hectares of open space (non-race track area) at the Caulfield Racecourse Reserve that can be better utilised for active and passive recreation.

Community consultation for the *Caulfield Station Precinct Structure Plan* revealed that 32 per cent of respondents did not know they could access the Racecourse Reserve. Of these, 71 per cent stated that they would consider using it now that they know it is open to the public during certain hours.

Almost 24,000 Glen Eira residents are members of sporting clubs and Council is currently unable to accommodate the growth of existing clubs and any new clubs or sports starting up in Glen Eira due to limited open space availability.

Glen Eira residents are more likely to participate in organised sport than the average Victorian. In addition, close to 75 per cent of residents participate in unstructured physical activity.

THE ASK

1. Protect existing open space within the heart of the reserve

Council calls on the Caulfield Racecourse Reserve Trust to increase the function, appeal and accessibility of the open space in the heart of the reserve through the development of its *Land Management Plan* for the Caulfield Racecourse Reserve.

The Caulfield Racecourse Reserve presents as the key opportunity to respond to the current and future demand for additional facilities for Glen Eira sporting clubs and to further diversify the range of sporting and recreation options available for the community.

A benefit of locating organised sport within the Caulfield Racecourse Reserve is that sporting fixtures can be programmed to accommodate race meets and large scale events.

The current lease arrangement and car parking licence in the centre of the reserve is seen as a major inhibitor to achieving significantly improved community access and use of the reserve.

Council is seeking an effective partnership with the Caulfield Racecourse Reserve Trust to establish a set of agreed principles around access and use of the reserve, to guide decision-making for the future of the car park and community-focused open space.

2. Integrated transport to encourage greater community use of the reserve

The Caulfield Station Precinct currently operates as a major interchange for train, tram and bus and is earmarked for significant State investment into transport infrastructure including the Melbourne Metro Tunnel Project, Caulfield to Dandenong Level Crossing Removal project, and Caulfield to Rowville tram link study.

The new *Caulfield Station Precinct Structure Plan* will seek to redefine pedestrian-friendly spaces, cycle and vehicle movement.

Council is calling on the Trust to positively contribute to a modern transport hub and encourage greater community access to the reserve through the removal of visual barriers to the reserve and having active, outward facing edges that seamlessly link with the wider precinct.

3. Effective management and staging of proposed re-developments in the area

Any proposal for significant redevelopment of the lease areas of the reserve should only be considered after the completion of the *Structure Plan* for the Caulfield Station Precinct. This includes the triangular Guineas Car Park area which is bounded by Smith Street, Normanby Road and Station Streets.

The Guineas Car Park provides much needed valuable parking for commuters, students, employees and visitors to the area. Any proposed plans for the re-development of the Guineas Car Park treated in isolation, and prior to a *Caulfield Station Precinct Structure Plan*, would likely result in unintended detrimental consequences on the functioning and cohesion of the wider precinct.

4. Sustainable funding stream for the Land Management Plan

Additional land for community use will become available once Melbourne Racing Club relocates horse training activities from the site in 2023. The development of a new *Land Management Plan* provides a unique opportunity to ensure the reserve operates as a vibrant, accessible, inclusive State-significant open space that includes opportunities for recreation and events.

The Trust is expected to remain financially sustainable while implementing the plan, including investing in new infrastructure development and its subsequent maintenance.

Council is calling on the State Government for a long-term funding stream for Caulfield Racecourse Reserve to ensure that future community and sporting assets can be developed and maintained to a high standard.

COMMUNITY BENEFIT

Public access to more open space will provide the community with greater accessibility to recreational pursuits including walking, exercising, dog walking, cycling and visiting playgrounds.

Open space and active and passive recreation contribute to positive community health and wellbeing outcomes, particularly connected walking trails and cycling paths.

Additional sportsgrounds are required to cater for the existing unmet demand for additional sportsground use from existing clubs that are growing and new start-up sporting clubs.

MORE INFORMATION

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