

MORDIALLOC BEAUMARIS CONSERVATION LEAGUE INC.

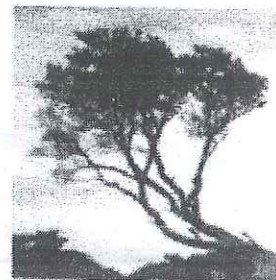
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Victorian Environment Assessment Council,
Level 6, 8 Nicholson Street,
PO Box 500, East Melbourne 3002

31-10-2016

Dear VEAC Councillors, Re: Public Land Draft Proposals Paper

Complements to VEAC for producing a most informative report- The Statewide Assessment of Public Land Discussion Paper. These reports are invaluable for environment groups with limited resources. The Draft Proposals Paper proved most helpful in providing summaries of nineteen draft recommendations for public comment.

While finding each of the recommendations to be well considered of special interest to this community group, with years of involvement with local waterways and foreshore, was Draft Recommendation R2 - Legislative Reform of Crown land (Reserves Act) and Land Act, in order to remove "anachronistic or confusing provisions which are clearly outdated as well as a multiplicity of different leasing, licensing permits and trusts." Reform of these Acts will be much appreciated.

We note that, (p.19) 2.6 under "Priorities for further assessment or review, includes coastal reserves which were to be classified into coastal recreation and coastal protection zones in a previous report." In the Marine, Coastal and Estuarine Investigation 2000, zoning was to be incorporated in the Victorian Coastal Strategy but this hasn't eventuated.

This is concerning for two reasons. One reason is that the impact of climate change storms on coastal areas around Port Phillip Bay is already causing inundation of low-lying areas and erosion of cliffs, beaches and foreshore infrastructure. The second reason is whether a future Victorian Coastal Strategy will have the authority to enforce compliance with councils and/or developers who continue to ignore environmental regulations and proceed with inappropriate developments on low-lying coastal Crown Land subject to storm surges, gales and flooding.

Currently Life Saving Clubs around Port Phillip Bay appear to be engaged in a contest to see who can build the biggest edifice on Crown land. Under "Desired Outcome 3.1 Coastal buildings, infrastructure and management "New buildings and infrastructure must exhibit excellence in siting and design that integrates with coastal landscape and settings while also avoiding environmental outcomes." (Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014. p.65)

These outcomes have been ignored by the new Mordialloc Lifesaving Club building which towers over the tree line and occupies a large area of the limited open space on the foreshore dune in which Aboriginal artefacts were found prior to construction. There is a proposal for a new Lifesaving Club building on Brighton's limited foreshore open space. The new building will have a restaurant which will profit from occupying Crown land.

There is support for this Draft Recommendation because of community interest in protecting Beaumaris Red Bluff Cliffs and sea ledges from loss due to the possible expansion of the Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron when its current lease expires in 2018. This site appears to fall into the category review R12:-

“number and types of coastal reserves outside the protected area system, reserves with high environmental, social and economic value be identified and values at risk from the impacts of climate change be identified, as specified in the Victoria Coastal Strategy 2014.”

Beaumaris Cliffs and sea ledges is outside a protected area but has high environmental and scientific value because of the number of 6000 year old fossils still being washed up on sea ledges at this site between Table Rock Beaumaris and Charman Road, Mentone.

Currently 6000 year old fossil specimens in Melbourne Museum's collection are increasing as each significant fossil find is given to the Museum for safe keeping and research purposes. An expansion of the Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron, mainly for boat storage, would cover fossil sites and sea level rise due to climate change. This would also prevent further recovery of fossils which can only be undertaken at low tide.

It is imperative that protective action is taken to secure this site so that further scientific discoveries and research can continue into the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mary Rimington OAM
Secretary MBCL