

Notice of Motion, Cr Leppert: Council projects on land on the Victorian Heritage Register

Motion

That the Future Melbourne Committee:

1. Notes the extensive tracts of public parkland added to the Victorian Heritage Register in the last seven years for which the City of Melbourne is the Committee of Management.
2. Notes that the City of Melbourne’s requirement to seek permits and exemptions in accordance with the *Heritage Act 2017* has increased considerably as a result of these additions, given the extent of projects for works required and proposed to be carried out in accordance with Council plans and policy.
3. Expresses the view that the City of Melbourne can improve how it goes about applying for Heritage permits and Heritage permit exemptions, and that a review of internal processes and protocols in relation to planning for works on land on the Victorian Heritage Register is timely.
4. Requests that management conduct a review of the internal processes and protocols across all work areas that manage the planning and delivery of building and works to places on the Victorian Heritage Register and report the outcomes of this review to councillors by September 2021, including by reporting to this Committee or the Council any proposed changes to Council policy that require formal resolution. In conducting the review, management is requested to consider the matters raised in the notice.

Background

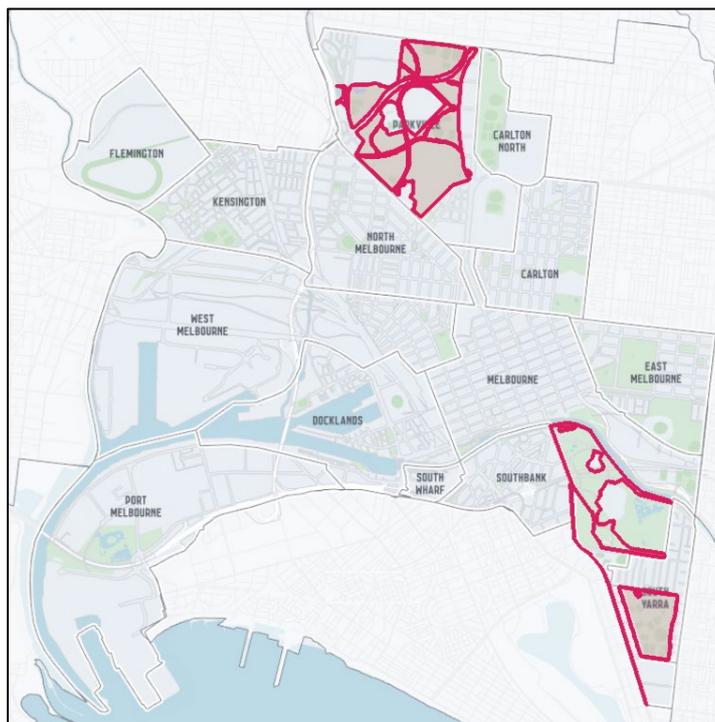
The four large tracts of public parkland (and boulevard) added to the Victorian Heritage Register within the last seven years, for which the City of Melbourne carries some or total Committee of Management control, are:

Domain Parklands	Added July 2013	#H2304
Royal Park	Added October 2014	#H2337
Fawkner Park	Added September 2016	#H2361
St Kilda Rd	Added September 2016	#H2359

Together these lands constitute a significant proportion of the municipality, which include a large number of Council owned and managed structures, trees, infrastructure and objects.

As part of the City of Melbourne’s project and service delivery programs multiple teams are involved in the preparation of Heritage permit applications and requests for permit exemptions. Responsibility for the implementation of Conservation Management Plans is also dispersed throughout the organisation.

It has become evident that at times this decentralised approach has led to difficulties in understanding and adequately planning for meeting relevant Heritage legislative requirements in a timely, consistent, informed and prepared manner.



This motion therefore commissions a review, seeking to improve the way all work areas can be equipped with the information and processes necessary to accurately predict and plan for Heritage legislative requirements, and be aware of good management practices for land and properties with high levels of Heritage protection.

A review of policies and processes should consider:

1. How work areas can be better equipped to know how to factor in *Heritage Act 2017* permission into project planning, and know when and how to identify where permit requirements, or permit exemption opportunities, exist.
2. The current decentralised approach to making Heritage permit and exemption applications, and whether one work area or officer should have oversight of applications made, or at least be in a position to provide advice and expertise to the relevant work area making the application.
3. The often highly political nature of heritage permit applications, and the need to be able to clearly and publicly demonstrate how any application aligns with Council policy, plans or resolutions and not only rely on the materials advertised with the Heritage permit, as well as the need to ensure that councillors as public representatives are aware of and briefed on Heritage permit applications prior to their lodgement and the public advertising process.
4. The lack of a consistent formal approach to the collection, secure storage and access to Conservation Management Plans (CMPs), noting that the current informal approach is that the relevant work area keeps the CMP for the building or land in their portfolio, and that this had led to the existence of some CMPs falling out of knowledge of other parts of the organisation. Some CMPs have also not been lodged with Heritage Victoria. CMPs have been commissioned over the years at great cost and are important in their guidance to Council in how works on heritage properties should be undertaken, and these documents should be internally and publicly accessible and guide decisions.
5. The ideal timeline and forward plan for the commissioning and completion of Conservation Management Plans for land and buildings on the Victorian Heritage Register managed by the City of Melbourne, where CMPs do not yet exist.
6. Heritage Victoria's advice.

Mover: Cr Rohan Leppert

Seconder: Cr Nicholas Reece