

Privacy acknowledgement: *

I have read and acknowledge how Council will use and disclose my personal information.

Name: *

Margaret O'Brien

Email address: *

margaretruthob@bigpond.com

Date of meeting: *

Tuesday 5 October 2021

Agenda item title: *

Agenda item 6.5 Carlton Gardens' Draft Master Plan

Please write your submission in the space provided below and submit by no later than 10am on the day of the scheduled meeting.

Thank you councillors.

Submissions will not be accepted after 10am.

I will not be making a written submission.

Rather, I will make a brief commentary to councillors.

I therefore asked to be contacted with details on how to access the meeting via zoom.

Margaret O'Brien

Please indicate whether you would like to address the Future Melbourne Committee live via phone or Zoom in support of your submission: *

Yes

Privacy acknowledgement: *

I have read and acknowledge how Council will use and disclose my personal information.

Name: *

Fiona Bell

Email address: *

fiona.bbbell@gmail.com

Date of meeting: *

Tuesday 5 October 2021

Agenda item title: *

Draft Carlton Gardens Master Plan for community engagement

Please write your submission in the space provided below and submit by no later than 10am on the day of the scheduled meeting.

Please see attached submission

Submissions will not be accepted after 10am.

Alternatively you may attach your written submission by uploading your file here:



[future_melbournwh_masterplanr_2021.docx](#) 5.36 MB · DOCX

Please indicate whether you would like to address the Future Melbourne Committee live via phone or Zoom in support of your submission: *

Yes

World Heritage Master Operational Plan for Carlton Gardens

Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens

Report to the Future Melbourne Committee

Draft Carlton Gardens Master Plan for community engagement

This Master Plan you are reviewing this evening is vital to the extremely important World Heritage Management Plan.

It describes and references many important issues. I would like to bring your attention to a few additional factors that need to be considered before this Draft Master Plan is released.

The important elements of the Carlton Gardens which contribute to its Outstanding Universal Values include its formal design, tree-lined pathways, fountains and lakes. Preserving these for future generations is vital.

Land use and activity

The ongoing use of the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens needs to be closely examined to protect the integrity of both the building and the gardens. Exhibitions in the building showcase the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens. Care must be taken that neither is harmed in any way.

The Draft Master Plan cites the background and vision for the Carlton Gardens. Some activities that have occurred in the past have caused harm to the Carlton Gardens, but this appears to have been denied, overlooked and dismissed. It is especially important in this most recent Master Plan review, where many circumstances that affect the Gardens have changed. These include climate change, with increased heat and more extreme weather conditions as well as the Covid pandemic.

We note that the World Heritage and the EPBC act requirements contain the stipulation: *"...a person must not take an action that has or will have a significant impact on the World Heritage values of a World Heritage property; or is likely to have a significant impact on the World Heritage values of a World Heritage property..."*

They state that an action is likely to have a significant impact on the values of a property if there is a real chance or possibility that it will cause one or more of the values to be lost, degraded, damaged, notably altered, modified, obscured or diminished.

City of Melbourne is in control of management and operational activities, so needs to consider the total welfare of the site as well as the revenue from the hosting of various exhibitions and shows. We are pleased that the Draft Master Plan does include additional elements for added monitoring and protection of the Carlton Gardens, as well as recognition of First Peoples cultural association with them.

The revised tree planting guidance and horticulture program is necessary due to climate change. In addition there is recognition that the opening of the Dome Promenade Walk by Museums Victoria will need to be sensitively supported.

Major Past Issues

The major concern that PPL-Vic Inc., and other community organisations have recorded and complained of over decades is the damage caused using the Carlton Gardens for the **Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (MIFGS)**. Displays within the Royal Exhibition Building and on the surrounding hard surfaces have not caused us concern. We have noted, however, that this event causes considerable damage to the grass and vegetation even though the show itself lasts for less than a week. This is of course a prestigious event to have in this World Heritage building and beautiful Carlton Gardens, but at a significant cost.

International visitors normally come to this event (**MIFGS**) but while they see a beautiful and well-maintained historic Exhibition Building, *they are not able to admire the southern Carlton Gardens*. These are largely obscured by MIFGS infrastructure. Also, the public is restricted from seeing and visiting the southern Gardens for months as preparation for the show and restoration of the Carlton Gardens afterwards occurs. This is unacceptable.

This event has become a trade fair with this section of the public park being fenced off and heavy machinery, which compresses the tree roots including those of historic elms, installs numerous tents and temporary buildings and exhibits which are erected on the grass and under the dripline of trees, as well as on hard surfaces. Over 120,000 people walk around to admire the flowers and displays built during this event. This is also a dangerous practice to place people and things under trees as there is a possibility of limb shed and resultant injuries.

The damage to the grass and trees is occurring due to soil compression, changes in moisture and damage to roots. After the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show in 2017, and probably all previous shows, the City of Melbourne managers used a grader to rip up what turf remains thus further damaging tree roots before laying new turf and doing other repairs. Surface tree roots were damaged.

We claim that because of the damage from this show, we believe numerous established trees have been lost from the Southern Carlton Gardens in recent years compared to a much smaller loss in the Northern Gardens with their beautiful largely intact massive trees in avenues.

It appears that that the **Australian Standard for trees, AS 4970-209**, including the Tree Protection Zones, have not always been respected.

Earlier this year, three old elms, all 120 years old, in the southern Carlton Gardens, were lost due to rotting of their trunks. These trees were assessed, and I met with David Callow and the Tree Team to see the evidence from assessments before they were cut down. Unfortunately, they could not be saved, which was a huge loss. They have been replaced with small sapling elms. An interesting fact is that for years during the MIFGS public toilets were placed under the canopies of these trees. Heavy vehicles install the toilets and take them away and people walk on the ground under the trees. Is that the correct way to treat venerable old trees in a World Heritage garden? Did that earlier treatment cause them stress and shorten their lives?

Photograph below of the 3 venerable elms in early 2021.





The elms cut down.

I am reliably informed that in France the public are never permitted to trample over the World Heritage gardens of Versailles or other Royal Palaces.

We suggest the prestigious Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (MIFGS), and possibly other major events, continue to be held in the iconic Royal Exhibition Building and that the surrounding **hard surfaces only** be used for displays. The additional stalls, temporary buildings and displays that cannot be accommodated could be placed at a more suitable site. The one ticket could access both sites. This would ensure visitors are able to fully enjoy the World Heritage Royal Exhibition Building and the beautiful, unencumbered and uncluttered Carlton Gardens which are the other part of the World Heritage nomination.

We submit to you that the MIFGS had previously done damage to the Carlton Gardens and I have these photos, taken after the show as evidence.

This information about damage dating back years has been largely ignored and not explored by an independent body.

We are aware that the City of Melbourne gains considerable income from the MIFGS, but we consider it needs to change the nature of this and other similar shows in order to preserve the Carlton Gardens. This proposed Draft Master Plan appears to offer greater protection but close monitoring is needed.

In 2020 and 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic put a stop to the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show. The suggestion of holding the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show both in the Royal Exhibition Building and its hard surface surroundings but also at an additional site in Melbourne rather than damage the Carlton Gardens could be a way to further showcase the beautiful and important World Heritage Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens and the heritage environs.

I am including an aerial view of the Carlton Gardens on Google earth in 2020 to compare the vegetation with 2009 to see the changes and losses to the southern end. I am enclosing an arborist report from 2009 detailing damage and potential damage from the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show and photographs showing damage from Carlton Gardens after the 2015 Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show.

Please take this all into consideration concerning the Draft Master Plan.

Yours sincerely

Fiona Bell, Deputy President Protectors of Public Lands Victoria Inc.



Rob Galbraith's final
report June 2009 on



Carlton Gardens 2009



Carlton Gardens 2020 shows less dense vegetation in the southern gardens due to loss of trees.

Below a series of photos taken after the 2015 International Melbourne Garden and Flower Show showing damage.





































Privacy acknowledgement: *

I have read and acknowledge how Council will use and disclose my personal information.

Name: *

Yolande Leonardi

Email address: *

volande@bigpond.net.au

Date of meeting: *

Tuesday 5 October 2021

Agenda item title: *

Draft Carlton Gardens Master Plan for community engagement

Alternatively you may attach your written submission by uploading your file here:



[cg_master_plan_submission_5.docx](#) 194.31 KB · DOCX

Please indicate whether you would like to address the Future Melbourne Committee live via phone or Zoom in support of your submission: *

No

Draft Carlton Gardens Master Plan for community engagement 5/10/2021

FMC Meeting no. 21 - Agenda item 6.5

Submission from Yolande Leonardi

Dear Lord Mayor & Councillors,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit thoughts on the Draft CG Masterplan. I look forward to working with Community Groups to make submissions over the next 12 months. This is a good Masterplan, but still some things stand out and I shall attempt to briefly touch on some of these.

Background:

Fitzroy Gardens is the “jewell” of Melbourne’s gardens in both management, maintenance and interpretation. Captain Cook’s Cottage & The Conservatory offer interpretations of visitor importance. May I suggest that Guilfoyle’s Cottage in the Northern CG be used in a similar way recounting history and offering similar visitor attraction?

I believe Fitzroy Gardens is this “jewell”, because there is one sole Custodian, unlike its internationally important “sister” – the Carlton Gardens.

Disparate management documents, multiple custodianships and the designation of the Gardens into “3 distinct land parcels”. (3.1 The Current Gardens) tells us that the WH Gardens site is treated as such. I believe these three parcels should be managed by CoM to give wholeness and continuity in planning, management and interpretation objectives. That is not to say there should be no referral or consultation with MV, CoFitzroy, or others. That MV is preparing a concurrent document regarding the Exhibition Reserve illustrates this disconnect. The MOU is meant to bridge communication gaps, but it is up to the participants to make it better and stronger and deliver better outcomes.

The Carlton Gardens Master Plan 2005 (Agenda Item 5.1 , 1/03/2005) had all the hallmarks of a good Plan going forward at its time, with the best intentions and aspirations. Unfortunately, there were many disappointments along the way, and CoM should understand that the management of MIFGS (Uses) has been a major sticking point.

Heritage & Conservation p. 12

I agree very much with the Recommendations: Heritage & Conservation, especially those regarding Tree Planting. The “green” of Carlton Gardens makes them unique, and in brilliant contrast to the highly floral Fitzroy Gardens. It would be lovely to see the grassed areas well maintained, but unfortunately there is a disruption to this every Autumn.



Uses & Activities 5.5 p 26

Agree, Carlton Gardens are, and should be used for informal recreation by those near and far.

The Southern Gardens were designed to “showcase” the REB and were never used in 1880 or 1888 as exhibition space.

The Term MIFGS

Agree, the specific reference MIFGS should be removed from the Draft Masterplan.

5.6 - I disagree with the statement that “In conjunction with the Royal Exhibition Building, Carlton Gardens has a long history of hosting large scale exhibitions and events“.

MIFGS has been the only event.

MIFGS

1/It is a privately owned, ticketed event & is for private profit. The gardens are reserved exclusively for MIFGS in March every year during our most beautiful weather.

2/ CoM suggested in 2008 that there should be an easing, & 40% of structures be moved to the hard surfaces of the Exhibition Reserve. MIFGS offered to do this but has never delivered, and CoM has failed in pursuing this, to the further detriment of the Gardens.

See Steven Potts letter 2008 further below.

On 03April 2008, the City of Melbourne, represented by Professor Rob Adams, stated before the Parliamentary Select Committee on Public Land Development, regarding MIFGS and the Carlton Gardens:

*‘Prof. ADAMS — Council had for a number of years been trying to negotiate with MIFGS a slow withdrawal from the soft areas of the gardens ... We are obviously talking about the southern area of the gardens. This plan is where MIFGS would be today, shown in red. This plan would show some of the areas which are of low amenity where we have been negotiating to try to get those upgraded so that the footprint of MIFGS could start to **retreat out of the southern gardens** and actually go further and further north on to the hard standing, on the common-sense assumption, I think, that there are a lot of activities that take place at MIFGS which could quite easily be accommodated on the hard standing areas between the Exhibition Buildings and the Museum.*

... The strategy ... was that we would negotiate with MIFGS to try to move the alignment north off the soft landscape

...’¹¹(www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/documents/council/Select_Committees/PublicLand/Transcripts/Melbourne.pdf)



21st November 2008

Mr. Peter Stewart
Manager
Events Melbourne
Town Hall
120 Swanston Street
MELBOURNE VIC 300

Dear Peter

As always we wish to continue to work with both the City of Melbourne and the State Government to continue to deliver this world class event for Melbourne.

Over the years we have been at the fore front in developing procedures to protect the park and will continue to do so.

As previously reported to the administration, for the 2008 event (April 2nd to 6th) we did not start recruiting or promoting the 2008 event until November 2007 because of license issues with the City. This situation caused us this year to present what was possible the most disappointing show of the last 13 years which had a negative impact on our revenue and status.

In moving forward on the 2009 event we determined that we had to go "to market" as per previous years in July of this year to build the show back up. While over the last 5 months we continued to work with the City (knowing we were in the market with a plan similar to the 2008 show) on the license extension we honestly did not expect to be informed that we would had to move 40% of the commercial activity and that this would apply from the 2009 show.

We are more than happy to work with the City for the removal in years 2010 and 2011 but will certainly not be able to deliver on the 40% in 2009.

For the 2009 event we will continue to ensure we:


- Work to remove infrastructure from the Gardens to hard services.
- Implement and manage both tree and ground protection procedures.

While understanding there would be an increase in the rental we were surprised that it would go from:

- \$74639 (inc. gst) to \$100,000 (inc. gst), representing a 34% increase.
- Sinking fund going from \$25,000 to \$30,000, representing a 20% increase.

But in the spirit of co-operation we will accept the above increase. As always we look forward to working with City to deliver a great event.

Yours sincerely,


Steven Potts
Director
Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show

Event Management – IMG
Level 3, 480 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, Victoria, 3004 Australia
Telephone 61 3 9864 1111 Facsimile 61 3 9864 1112
Email info@melbflowershow.com.au Internet www.melbflowershow.com.au

3/ Horticultural

MIFGS is no longer “horticultural”. It has morphed into other side shows of food, alcohol & a night-time event of “fun & music.” Is this appropriate in a WH garden? Or better placed elsewhere in a purpose - built venue?

Extract from MIFGS public advertisement for 2019

“.....

Melbourne’s favourite food trucks, including Beatbox Burgers, Taco Truck, Purley Delish and Agape Organics, will be providing tasty delights, plus woodfired pizza will be available from the Potting Sheds, all to be enjoyed with a drink from the pop-up bar.



4/Cost Benefit Analysis

There has never been public justification of the cost to CoM (cost benefit analysis), nor recording of the number of visitors that are shut out while MIFGS occupies the Gardens, given CoM says 3million visit the gardens and MIFGS attracts about 125,000.

There will be other opportunities to submit on MIFGS so I will not make further comment here. As the only major event in the Carlton Gardens it seems obvious to community, and should be unsurprising to CoM that these statements must be made.

The Dome Promenade Walk is mentioned & is pleasing to the FREBCG (Friends Community Group) which has been involved since 2011. Thank you to CoM for recognising this.

Covid, Pandemics and Future considerations.

During Melbourne’s 250+ day lockdown, residents have enjoyed their limited freedom in all of Melbourne’s open spaces, including Carlton Gardens. We have been advised that future pandemics and restrictions may become a way of life – the “new normal”.

Should CoM give thought to the unknowns of public health and well-being and consider long-term, the need for these considerations? Also, the post-Covid economic recovery of the City and how this might affect the Gardens?

Having said this, I support the Draft CG Master Plan and agree with the proviso that some changes by the General Manager Strategy Planning & Climate Change may need to be made prior to publication.

Thanking the Teams involved in this document,
Yolande Leonardi
Spring Street Resident,

Melbourne 3000

5th October 2021