

Draft Ecological Burn and Post Burn Bushland Management Policy-Summary of Submissions

| Response Number | Agree with ecological burning | Agree with proposed policy | Summary of comments | Officer Response |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | Yes | Yes | 1. Policy intent should specify frequency and timing of burns. | Too specific for policy - this will be detailed in the Native Vegetation Works Program, which is the technical supporting document for carrying out works under this policy. |
| | | | 2a. Purpose / Objective - more specific on measurable frequency and timing. | As above. |
| | | | 2b. Purpose / Objective - three additional objectives suggested: i. To minimise extremely flammable weed species (Coast Tea tree). ii. To maximise security from unauthorised burning. iii. Plants to be sourced from Bayside Community Nursery. | Noted. No changes made, these objectives are specific and covered by the existing 3 objectives. |
| | | | 3. Scope - recognise the interest of the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) and legal protection of flora and fauna through the Flora and Fauna Guarantee (FFG) Act, Crown Land Reserves Act, Wildlife Act. | Noted. The conservation and management objectives of the FFG Act have been included in the 'Scope'. |
| | | | 4. Roles and Responsibilities - evaluation and review should not be the responsibility of the same officer who develops and implements the policy. External auditing suggested. | No changes made - this is not consistent with the policy template requirements. External auditing is to be undertaken, see Section 5. |
| | | | 5. Monitoring, evaluation and review - suggested process inadequate as prone to be circular and self fulfilling. | External auditing by independent botanical consultant is to be undertaken via the Native Vegetation Works Program. Explanation added to policy. |
| | | | Other suggestions: a. Fencing for three years after significant burns. b. Signage and education to explain necessity of fencing following burns. | Noted. Suggestion a) is included under details of Objective 2 Agree with suggestion b) and this is covered under the scope of the policy in terms of providing community education. Signage will be provided onsite. |
| 2 | Yes | Yes | 1. Research and experience have revealed the necessity of fire as a means of allowing seed to sprout, root-stock to revive, remove weeds and thus contributes to biodiversity. | Noted. Covered in the policy. |
| | | | 2. The proposed policy is in line with the guidelines and practice of the DSE, and thus consistent with State Government policy and practice. | Noted. Acknowledged and included in the policy scope. |
| | | | 3. Protective fencing is important and valuable and in the past has been unobtrusive. | Noted. |

Draft Ecological Burn and Post Burn Bushland Management Policy-Summary of Submissions

| | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|---|---|
| | | | 4. Experience within the George Street Reserve, particularly since 1984, confirms the value of fire, as heathland plants either unknown in the area or not seen for decades have emerged, such as the recent identification of <i>Cassinia aculeata</i> (Dogwood). | Noted. |
| 3 | Yes | Yes | 1. From my perspective the burning of the invasive Coast Tea tree and the nurturing of the heathland that replaces it after fire has a triple bottom line benefit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The fire prone Coastal Tea tree is removed. b. The heathland that replaces it does not have the volatility of Coast Tea tree in a fire. c. The grassland plants that emerge from the ashes are diverse and attractive. Like a lot of native plants their beauty is a subtle blend of colour and form. They are not flashy. They are bush plants. The native birds appreciate them and they are rare. If they are not respected and conserved they will disappear. | Noted. |
| | | | 2. While the memory of Black Saturday 2009 is still fresh in our memories, I urge Council to take this opportunity to deal with the threat of wildfire in bushland reserves and at the same time enhance the intrinsic natural beauty of these pockets of remnant vegetation. | Noted. No further action. Bushfire threat is covered under Municipal Fire Prevention Plan. |
| | | | 3. In my view more Coast Tea tree should be removed in controlled burns and more heathland established. | Noted. Will be considered in the development of ecological burn plan. |
| 4 | Yes | Yes | 1. It is essential that this fire management is continued, employing the most up to date information that is available. This needs to be employed with 'controlled burns' and also those accidental or malicious wildfire events that occasionally hit our reserves. | Noted. |
| | | | 2. While periodic burning appears essential, the follow up period of regeneration is equally important. New growth of fragile plants and orchids doesn't need to be trampled by feet and dug up by excitable dogs. So for a number of years it is essential that these areas be fenced to allow the regrowth to develop to its best. It may be that some areas need to be permanently fenced. | Noted. Acknowledged in the details of Objective 2: "Council will: Fence all burn sites for a minimum of 3 years". |
| | | | 3. Unfortunately after all our burns, we invariably encounter a 'flush' of weeds, which need removal and only well qualified and trained personnel should be allowed into the regeneration areas to avoid damage to the fragile native vegetation. | Noted. |

Draft Ecological Burn and Post Burn Bushland Management Policy-Summary of Submissions

| | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|--|--|
| | | | 4. It would seem that this Management policy is essential and needs to be followed to best possible and up to date standards. We are fortunate to have excellent bushland staff and friends groups to ensure this policy is properly implemented. | Noted. |
| 5 | Yes | Yes | 1. Each reserve needs to have a Management Plan which details a restricted number and width of paths and what or if fencing is necessary. A copy of each Management Plan should be available for viewing on the Council website. | Noted. Individual bushland management plans already exist for each heathland reserve but it is acknowledged that these should be reviewed and updated as most are now several years old. |
| 6 | Yes | Yes | 1. Already we see these natural vegetation areas are better and the richer in diversity since the protective ecological burns. We recognise that fire is an important tool in the management of the reserves. | Noted. |
| | | | 2. We hope that this management will be an ongoing process because we are aware of the great scope and the possibilities inherent in our natural reserves. We wish to see a firm transparent policy on this issue. | Noted. |
| 7 | Yes | Yes | 1. The policies relating to post fire management are well stated. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying clear paths through the reserves is necessary. • The changes to the pathways need to favour the revegetation site and not the general public. • Fencing of the burn site will be in place for a minimum of 3 years and not be automatically removed before an independent assessment. • Pathways to be re-established or created 3 years post burn and to be fenced if necessary on independent assessment. | Noted. |
| | | | 2. The success of retaining the fencing depends on who the independent assessor is. If it is DSE it should be a good result. If it is VCAT the result would probably not be the best outcome for the Bushland. | Noted. Independent botanical consultants will be used in conjunction with advice from DSE. |
| 8 | yes | Yes | 1. The council policy for management of ecological burns and post burn sites is a thoughtful excellent document that should be adopted. | Noted. |
| | | | 2. Marvels that seed dormant in the soil is triggered to regrowth by smoke and fire. | Noted. |
| | | | 3. Ash beds after fires must remain undisturbed - fencing must be used to protect ash beds and emerging plants. | Noted. Consistent with current proposals. |

Draft Ecological Burn and Post Burn Bushland Management Policy-Summary of Submissions

| | | | | |
|----------|-----|-----|--|--|
| | | | 4 Resident of Beaumaris for 54 years - has witnessed amazing post fire regrowth. | Noted. |
| 9 | Yes | Yes | 1. The proposed policy places a clear priority on maximizing the full biodiversity potential of the seven listed reserves by appropriate and validated use of controlled burn and post burn management. | Noted. |
| | | | 2. As a scientist I would also like to acknowledge that the proposed policy recognises the importance of expert evaluation and monitoring of post burn vegetation regeneration, particularly in regard to evaluation of any changes to public access within these reserves – with the understanding that, as opposed to other parks and gardens in the district, preservation of native biodiversity must take precedence. | Noted. |
| | | | 3. The council should be commended on this draft policy regarding stewardship of our limited reserves of biodiversity in this ecological district. | Noted. |
| 1 | NA | NA | <p>Comment provided specifically on the Gramatan Avenue Heathland Sanctuary ecological burn, not on the Draft Ecological Burn and Post Burn Bushland Management Policy.</p> <p>The concerns raised were over possible drainage and flooding ramifications on his property due to vegetation removal as part of pre burn management practices and a suggestion put forward to change burning configuration at Gramatan Heathland Sanctuary.</p> | Comments were submitted as a result of the April 2011 burn at Gramatan Avenue Heathland Sanctuary and do not seek changes to the draft policy. |
| 2 | No | No | 1. This policy contradicts other council policies including; Council's adoption of energy and carbon reduction policies, Local Law prohibiting burning of biomasses and combustible substances. | A permit is obtained from Local Laws to enable burning. The principal environmental objective is to enhance the biodiversity of the bushland reserves. |
| | | | <p>2. Health and Environmental damage:</p> <p>a. Dangers of smoke inhalation especially for elderly, frail, young and sick.</p> <p>b. Location of aged care facilities often close to reserves.</p> <p>c. Wind born microscopic ash particles carry pathogenic bacteria that create a persistent hazard to the public over many weeks.</p> <p>d. Biomass burning exposes outdoor staff to infection during burning and when working in ash beds.</p> | Noted. The Department of Health have advised that Council's ecological burns process meets their requirements in relation to environmental health. |

Draft Ecological Burn and Post Burn Bushland Management Policy-Summary of Submissions

| | | | | |
|----------|----|----|---|---|
| | | | 3. The term 'Ecological Burn Policy' is contradictory and burning biomass is counter ecological. | The term 'ecological burn' is consistent with terms used by the DSE. Their guidelines state that 'all fire, and indeed the absence of fire, has an ecological dimension'. (DSE Guidelines and Procedures for ecological burning on public land in Victoria, 2004). |
| | | | 4. There are no endangered or threatened species in Bayside. | Species have been found within Bayside that do not occur elsewhere in Melbourne. |
| | | | 5. The proposed policy makes unnecessary provision for the well being of heath scrub yet puts in danger the community health. | The notification procedure carried out prior to an ecological burn is consistent with current advice and recommendations from the Department of Health. |
| 3 | No | No | 1. Danger to health and lifespan of mature Eucalypt trees as observed by failed controlled burn at Phillip Island - Oswin Roberts Nature Reserve in early 2010. | Not relevant to Bayside, describing a different vegetation community. Controlled burning in Bayside targets Coast Tea tree and Coast Wattle. |
| 4 | No | No | 1. Believes that public access to well shaded park areas for walking in and maintaining good health is a higher priority than burning. | Bayside has numerous other parks and reserves and areas of open space where well shaded areas of canopy trees are provided. Bushland reserves are maintained primarily for the conservation of indigenous vegetation, which is low growing heath species interspersed with small trees rather than large areas of large canopy species. |
| | | | 2. Important habitat for birds and wildlife and should not be disturbed by fire. | Many bird and other wildlife species benefit from ecological burning as this increases plant species diversity and therefore the opportunity for a wider diversity of seed, fruit and flowers as food sources. Smaller shrub species are also vital in providing habitat for smaller species of native birds that are often chased out of open treed environments by bigger more aggressive bird species. |
| | | | 3. Believes regeneration will happen with or without fences | Various independent botanical experts have credited the current management of bushland reserves (i.e.: burning, fencing and limiting access) for the high level of species regeneration and diversity. |

Draft Ecological Burn and Post Burn Bushland Management Policy-Summary of Submissions

| | | | | |
|---|----|----|--|--|
| 5 | No | No | <p>1. Access:</p> <p>1. It is misleading to call these 7 parks “Remnant Heathlands”. They are recreations or constructs of what is believed to be indigenous flora.</p> <p>2. Do not agree with any activity which reduces public access to Bayside's Open Space areas.</p> <p>3. One thing that would be good to add to the paper is a spread sheet of the timings of previous burns and the recommended schedules so far.</p> <p>4. Fencing for three years is too long - There is no scientific evidence to support that these parks need to be fenced for this length of time.</p> <p>5. Other Municipalities don’t lock out people from their parks like this. Refer to Bradshaw Park in the City of Kingston.</p> <p>6. If fencing is to be put around the perimeter of a park then paths must be designed and installed. Existing pathways must be maintained.</p> <p>7. Some so called “temporary fences” have been left in situ for decades (George Street). The fencing reviews have been adhoc and show little regard for proper process or consultation. The fencing policy within the draft report is not only about allowing regeneration but more a thinly veiled attempt to permanently lock Bayside residents out of these parks. It is based on a misconception that people are vandals.</p> <p>8. Last year Council passed a motion to make these heathland parks more accessible. They did not recommend more internal fences to be erected. This continued disrespect and disregard of the rights of the majority must stop.</p> | <p>Bayside only has seven small areas of bushland. The Bayside Bushland Strategy (2002) states that these areas will be managed to maintain the genetic diversity through protecting genetic integrity of individual populations within each bushland, and enhancing diversity of those individual populations where elements have disappeared. The proposed policy provides a revised position on fencing which will be implemented on approval of the policy. Other parks in other municipalities are often much larger than Bayside's bushlands and as such are not as vulnerable to disturbance.</p> |
|---|----|----|--|--|

Draft Ecological Burn and Post Burn Bushland Management Policy-Summary of Submissions

2. Environmental and Health Concerns:

9. Bayside has made a commitment to reduce carbon emissions. These proposed fires are in opposition with this commitment.

10. It seems incongruous with Bayside's principles of tree conservation that in preparation for these burns healthy mature canopy trees are felled. This occurred in a devastating way in Cheltenham Park last year.

11. All of these parks are within metres of residential properties and some of them are adjacent to schools and aged care facilities. It is irrefutable that smoke emissions can be harmful to health and may even be fatal to vulnerable residents. There is no higher priority for Council than human health.

12. This policy cannot be properly assessed without consideration of the outcomes of the Bushfire Royal Commission, advice from EPA, Asthma Foundation and the Department of Health. In my opinion these fires would create unnecessary risks to health and the environment.

13. While an initial burn in these types of reclaimed parks may identify dormant plants, it cannot be assured that these were the same flora as pre-European settlement because many of these parks have had other uses previously.

The primary objective of ecological burns is to enhance biodiversity. The Coast tea tree felled at Cheltenham Park is considered a pest species in the remnant vegetation in this reserve. Officer discussions with representatives from these agencies have indicated that Council's current practices are compliant with their recommendations.

Draft Ecological Burn and Post Burn Bushland Management Policy-Summary of Submissions

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| | | <p>2. Environmental and Health Concerns continued:</p> <p>14. The term “ecological” burn is misleading because they are not for safety or fuel reduction. These are proposed for germinating and propagating indigenous flora. There are safer, less destructive ways to achieve this that have been used in this municipality and in common use elsewhere. See http://anpsa.org.au/seed.html for the ways this can be done. Using the artificial propagation techniques suggested on the reference page would have advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Parks would not need to be fenced extensively. ii) The parks would remain beautiful with flourishing local flora and not have prolonged periods of looking like an ash bed. iii) There would be no risk to health. iv) There would be no added carbon emissions. <p>15. These parks are individually small and do not form a continuous corridor. It is misleading to claim that they have any significant impact on biodiversity. This was put to Council by a Park Management expert last year.</p> <p>16. The greater Bayside community has not been properly consulted in the management of these parks and council has not been presented with a balanced view of the pros and cons of the proposed management plan. The consultants engaged have been given biased briefs that ask questions that lead to a certain predictable outcome. The question is not “what is the best way to manage the plants” but what is the best way to manage these reserves providing a balance between maintenance of the plants, the greater environment, and community access and wellbeing.</p> | <p>The term 'ecological burn' is consistent with terms used by the DSE, and their guidelines state that 'all fire, and indeed the absence of fire, has an ecological dimension'. (DSE Guidelines and Procedures for ecological burning on public land in Victoria 2004). The Bayside Bushland Strategy (2002) is a Council endorsed document that outlines the reasons why bushlands are managed the way they are. They are recognised as having a different function from other areas of open space within Bayside i.e.: the conservation of indigenous vegetation is the primary objective.</p> <p>Research supports the use of ecological burning as an appropriate management tool to control invasive plant species (such as Coast Tea Tree) and to enhance biodiversity through promoting increased regeneration of native flora species.</p> |
| | | <p>3. Financial Considerations:</p> <p>17. These parks constitute nearly 20 hectares of land. Council needs to consider their value and cost.</p> <p>18. There is nothing in this document that refers to the financial cost of implementing the policy. Council cannot perform a cost analysis or risk benefit assessment on this project without such information</p> <p>19. It is known that fences in George Street have cost easily more than \$20K, so temporary fencing should not be an issue taken lightly.</p> <p>20. It would be inappropriate to leave out such financial</p> | <p>The Bayside Bushland Strategy, which was endorsed by Council in 2002, specifically states that indigenous vegetation will be considered as a sustainable ecosystem, with the clear understanding that this will require expenditure on practices such as weed control, additional planting and artificial propagation at nurseries.</p> |

Draft Ecological Burn and Post Burn Bushland Management Policy-Summary of Submissions

| | | | | |
|----------|----|----|--|---|
| | | | information in the briefing information for the policy document as the cost to the community needs to be taken into account. | |
| 6 | No | No | 1. It is apparent from research material that there are some real health related issues which could result from the proposed burn in the Gramatan Avenue Heathland Sanctuary. Obviously the community seems concerned that the burn will result in adverse health outcomes for residents close to the reserve. We are located only a few hundred metres from the reserve in Haydens Road, others are a great deal closer. I would expect that a burn in such a restricted area, close to houses doesn't seem sensible. | Resident notification process for the controlled burn at Gramatan Avenue Heathland Sanctuary is consistent with current advice from the Department of Health. |
| | | | 2. I would expect that you as one of the Councillors (and a resident of this area) would be more concerned about the health and well being of your neighbours. I believe that other methods should used to achieve whatever the environmental outcome is. There are so many cases of activities carried out by the authorities without the proper research or analysis as to the effects on humans. | Ecological burning is recognised by both independent botanical consultants and agencies such as the DSE as the most effective way to manage heathland vegetation, especially regeneration of species. |
| | | | 3. In more personal and simplistic terms. I don't want a fire anywhere near my family or property, controlled or otherwise. Find some other method. | Noted. |

Attachment 2: List of information sourced from other agencies

- EPA Victoria – Bushfires and air quality. EPA Victoria website
- Department of Health – Bushfire smoke and your health. Public health bushfire information factsheet – December 2010
- The Asthma Foundation Victoria – Bushfires and Asthma. Information Sheet May 2009
- Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) - Smoke from planned burns. DSE Planning Burn Information Sheet. Series 2010
- DSE – How we do our burns. DSE Planned Burn Information Sheet. Series 2010
- DSE – When are we burning? DSE Planned Burn Information Sheet. Series 2010.
- DSE – Using fire to manage our parks and forests. Information sheet
- DSE – Fire and Victoria's parks and forests. Information sheet
- DSE – The effects of fire on Victorian bushland environments. Information sheet
- DSE – Fire and biodiversity in Victoria's parks and forests. Information sheet

Council Policy

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Council policy title: | Ecological Burn and Post Burn Bushland Management Policy (DRAFT) |
| Council policy ref no: | C/POL/CST/011 |
| Council policy owner: | Director City Strategy |
| Adopted by: | Bayside City Council |
| Date adopted: | XXXX 2011 |
| Scheduled review: | 2014 |

1. Policy intent

Burning bushland to create a mosaic of heathland ages is a management aim in Council's Bushland Strategy 2002. This policy establishes guiding principles for ecological burning, including notification of surrounding residents prior to a burn, post-burn management and post-burn access within Council's bushland reserves and foreshore areas.

In particular, this policy:

- Reinforces Council's guardianship role in managing remnant vegetation within reserves to preserve these locally significant natural assets for future generations.
- Assists Council to manage heathland vegetation to balance the protection of remnant native vegetation with community access and use of reserves.
- Ensures there is a consistent, transparent, simple and equitable process for the management of heathland vegetation.
- Ensures that community concerns regarding any potential health issues related to the use of ecological burning are addressed.

The Policy assists in implementing the Council Plan 2009-2013 – Revised 2010, in particular Strategy 4.1.1. *'We will conserve Bayside's natural environment'*.

2. Purpose/objective

Objective 1: Provide a basis for the use of controlled ecological burns for bushland management within Bayside.

Objective 2: Clarify post-fire management, including access to sites that have been burned either by a controlled ecological burn or wildfire.

Objective 3: Establish guidelines for the notification of residents and other community members.

3. Scope

The policy is applicable to all Council owned or managed bushland reserves. There are seven remnants of indigenous bushland or heathland that remain within the City of Bayside. These remnant areas range in size from less than 0.3 of a hectare to approximately six hectares:

- Balcombe Park, Balcombe Road (approx. 3.4 ha) – Beaumaris
- Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary (approx. 2 ha) – Sandringham
- Cheltenham Park, Park Road (approx. 3.4 ha) – Cheltenham
- Donald MacDonald Reserve, Haydens Road (approx. 6 ha) – Beaumaris
- George Street Reserve (approx. 2.1 ha) – Sandringham
- Gramatan Avenue Heathland Sanctuary (approx. 0.3 ha) – Beaumaris
- Long Hollow Heathland, Reserve Road (approx. 2.2 ha) – Beaumaris

While the policy will largely be applicable to these seven bushland reserves, it also applies to areas of coastal vegetation in the event of wildfire in higher quality foreshore bushland areas. The policy applies to the Friends groups who work in the identified bushland areas and other users and visitors to those areas. The policy will affect public access in areas where an ecological burn has taken place or a wildfire has occurred.

This policy does not apply to Council's other parks and reserves, sports grounds or formal gardens.

In relation to wildfire, Council will continue to liaise and comply with the Melbourne Fire Brigade's (MFB) annual review and recommendations regarding fire work plans for all bushland reserves and associated firebreaks in accordance with Council's Municipal Fire Prevention Plan (2009).

Council will manage regeneration of indigenous vegetation after wildfire as if it were an ecological burn site, to the extent possible within available resources (i.e. dependant on the extent of the area burnt).

Implementation of this policy will also ensure that Council is consistent with a key piece of Victorian legislation, the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act* (1988), administered by the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE). This has the following fauna conservation and management objectives:

- a) To guarantee that all taxa of Victoria's flora and fauna can survive, flourish and retain their potential for evolutionary development in the wild.
- b) To conserve Victoria's communities of flora and fauna.
- c) To manage potentially threatening processes.
- d) To ensure that any use of flora or fauna by humans is sustainable.
- e) To ensure that the genetic diversity of flora and fauna is maintained.
- f) To provide programs:
 - i. Of community education in the conservation of flora and fauna.

- ii. To encourage co-operative management of flora and fauna through, amongst other things, entering into land management co-operative agreements under the *Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987*.
- iii. To assist and give incentives to people, including landholders, to conserve indigenous flora and fauna.
- g) To encourage conservation of native flora and fauna through co-operative community endeavours.

3. Roles & responsibilities

| Role | Responsibility |
|--------------------|---|
| Policy development | Manager Environmental Sustainability and Open Space |
| Implementation | Manager Environmental Sustainability and Open Space Manager Amenity Protection |
| Evaluation | Manager Environmental Sustainability and Open Space |
| Reporting | Manager Environmental Sustainability and Open Space |
| Review | Manager Environmental Sustainability and Open Space |

4. Monitoring, evaluation & review

Compliance with the policy is monitored through Council risk management audits, internal audit checklists and Council's Open Space contract specifications.

Effectiveness of the policy is monitored and evaluated through Council's Native Vegetation Works Program (NVWP) – Stage 2. The NVWP (Stage 2) is a ten-year program that includes annual visual auditing, three-yearly photo point monitoring and a five-yearly habitat hectare assessment to determine vegetation quality and ecological condition. The implementation of the NVWP is conducted through Council's Open Space contract. An independent botanical consultant will be engaged every five years to conduct the habitat hectare assessment.

Policy statement

Objective 1: Provide a basis for the use of controlled ecological burns for bushland management within Bayside.

In bushland reserves, conservation of indigenous vegetation is the primary management objective. Bushland reserves are managed to achieve maximum diversity of indigenous floral species and minimum weed species. Controlled ecological burns are used within identified bushland reserves as a management tool to maintain, regenerate and increase heathland species diversity and to provide habitat for fauna.

Each bushland is assessed regularly through the implementation of the NVWP. This is a technical document prepared by external botanical consultants and identifies Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVC) for each reserve and prioritises burning regimes (including timing and frequency) based on the specific requirements of the particular vegetation found at the site.

Council will:

- Ensure all controlled burns are based on clear ecological management objectives. These will be identified through the NVWP.

- Ensure that an Ecological Burn Plan (EBP) is developed for every controlled burn within a bushland reserve that includes the following:
 - Pre-burn:
 - The extent, conservation and reservation of the vegetation type to be burned.
 - The extent, conservation and reservation status of rare or threatened species occurring in the area to be burned.
 - The extent of different successional stages of the vegetation to be burned.
 - Specific values within the burn area.
 - Land tenure and status.
 - Burn objectives.
 - Post-burn:
 - Extent of the burn.
 - An indication of burn intensity.
 - Achievement of the objectives.
 - Monitoring and reporting framework
 - Outcome based performance indicators for evaluating the success of ecological burns. For example, indicators could include the status or abundance of desirable heathland species post burn or comparisons of changes in species richness and composition before and after burning.

Achievement of the ecological management objectives may take many years to determine. Ongoing monitoring and reporting will be required to evaluate the success of the burn based on the original burn objectives set out in the EBP. The outcomes of monitoring will be made available to the community.

Objective 2: Clarification of post-fire management, including access to sites that have been burned either by a controlled ecological burn or wildfire.

The development of the bushland Ecological Burn Plan will clarify and outline post-fire assessment requirements and monitoring programs for all burns. Post-fire access will be retained through bushland areas, although access paths essentially serving those enjoying the bushland may be altered depending on the nature of the burn and subsequent regeneration. Main access paths for each bushland reserve have been identified (see Attachment 1) and these will be maintained during controlled burns and in the event of a wildfire.

Council will:

- Develop clear path identification (and implicit “no-go” areas beyond those paths) within each bushland reserve. This will include clarification and enforcement of dog on/off-leash regulations.

- Specify any changes in pre-fire and post-fire access paths in the development of the EBP. Some sites may be too small to re-open or locate pathways through and this will be noted in the EBP. Post-fire, access paths will be retained but may be altered according to the significance and location of regenerating species. These will be determined during subsequent vegetation assessments. If vegetation is to be removed to enable a secondary path to be made, a permit from the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) to remove flora may be required under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*.
- Fence all burn sites (both ecological and wildfire) for a minimum of three years with an assessment of vegetation at the following intervals:
 - Six months
 - Three years
- Provide signage on the site explaining the purpose of the fence.
- At the end of the three year period, assessment of the burn site and access paths (existing and proposed) will be carried out independently by a qualified botanical consultant, including reassessment of the original burn objectives set out in the EBP, review of the visual audits and photo-monitoring results of the NVWP and habitat hectare assessment.
- The Director City Strategy will consider the advice of the independent qualified botanical consultant and determine whether or not to remove the fence.
- Re-establish secondary pathways should the independent botanical assessment indicate that this is appropriate.

Objective 3: Establish guidelines for the notification of residents living near burn sites.

Council will notify residents living within 250 metres of burn sites, the general community, community groups and fire brigades of the intention to carry out controlled Ecological Burns through a series of communications in the six months prior to the burn.

Any public facilities within close proximity requiring special notification (ie: hospitals, schools, aged care facilities, child care centres, sports centres etc.) will also be notified.

This notification will take into account advice available from organisations such as the Department of Health, EPA Victoria, The Asthma Foundation and the DSE.

The notification process will enable residents to act in a manner most appropriate to minimise potential impacts on their health during a burn.

(NOTE: A Resident Notification Procedure is being prepared and is awaiting advice from the Department of Health, Environmental Protection Agency Victoria, The Asthma Foundation and the Department of Sustainability and Environment)

Related documents

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Policies | N/A |
| Strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bayside Bushland Strategy 2002• Bayside City Council Municipal Fire Prevention Plan 2009 |
| Procedures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ecological Burn Resident Notification Procedure (draft) |
| Guidelines | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guidelines and procedures for ecological burning on public land in Victoria – DSE 2004• Code of Practice For Fire Management on Public Land Revision No. 1 – DSE 2006 |

5. Definitions & Abbreviations

| Term | Meaning |
|-------------|--|
| NVWP | Native Vegetation Works Program – Stage 2 |
| EBP | Ecological Burn Plan |
| DSE | Department of Sustainability and Environment |
| MFB | Melbourne Fire Brigade |
| EPA | Environment Protection Authority |

6. Attachments

Maps of all bushland reserves showing main access paths to be retained.

Please note: This policy is current as at the date of approval. Refer to Council's website (www.bayside.vic.gov.au) or staff intranet to ensure this is the latest version.

Balcombe Park



Main access paths marked in yellow.

Note: The perimeter edges are fire breaks accessible for walking (including the southern edge along Reserve Road).

Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary



Main access paths marked in yellow. A secondary access path is marked in blue and is open to the public every Thursday for working bees and each year for spring openings.

Note: The north, south and east perimeter edges are firebreaks. Access gates are marked with yellow stars.

Cheltenham Park Flora and Fauna Reserve



Main access paths are marked in yellow.

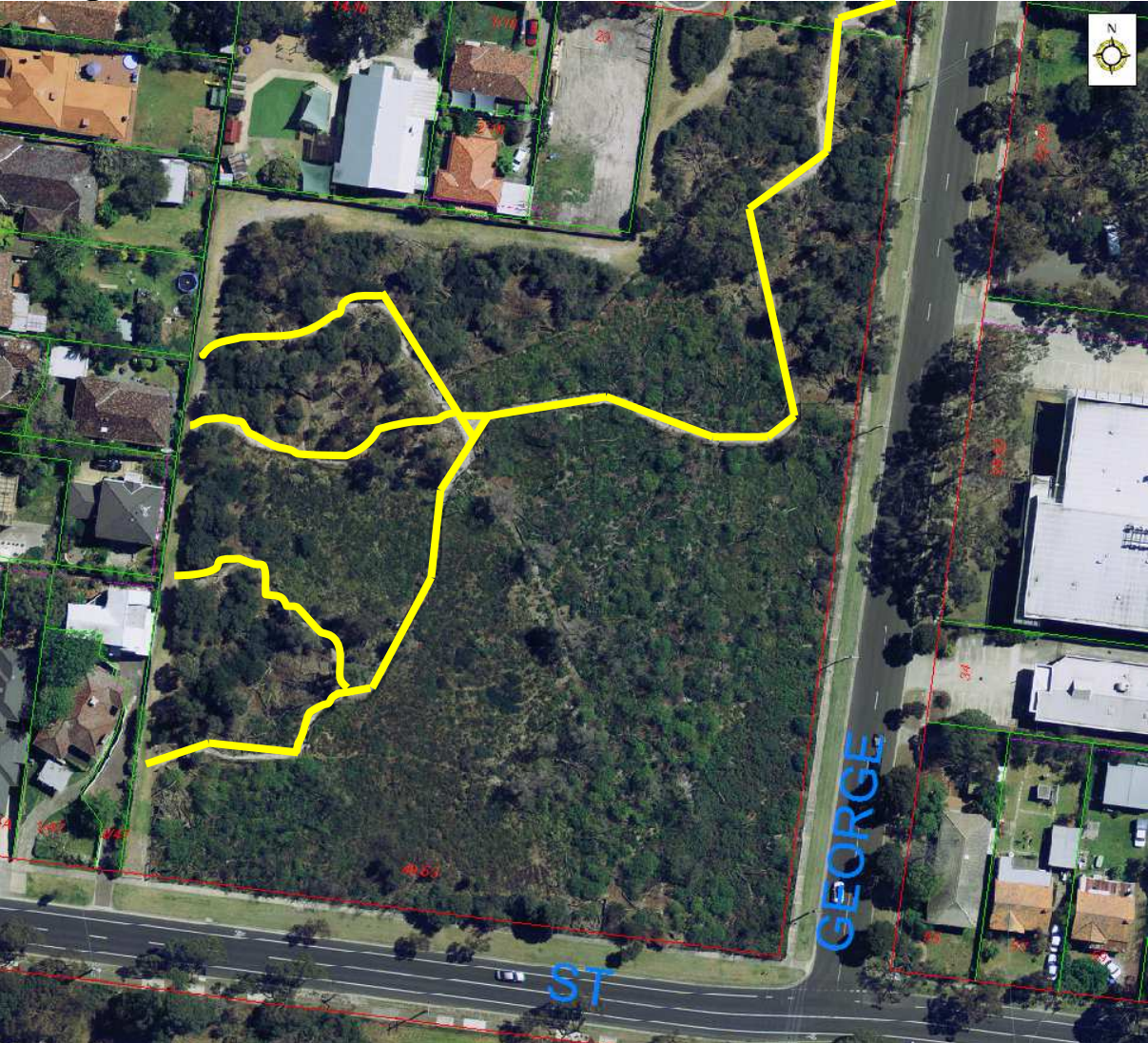
Donald MacDonald Reserve



Main access paths marked in yellow.

Note: There is a firebreak around the oval.

George Street Reserve



Main access paths marked in yellow.

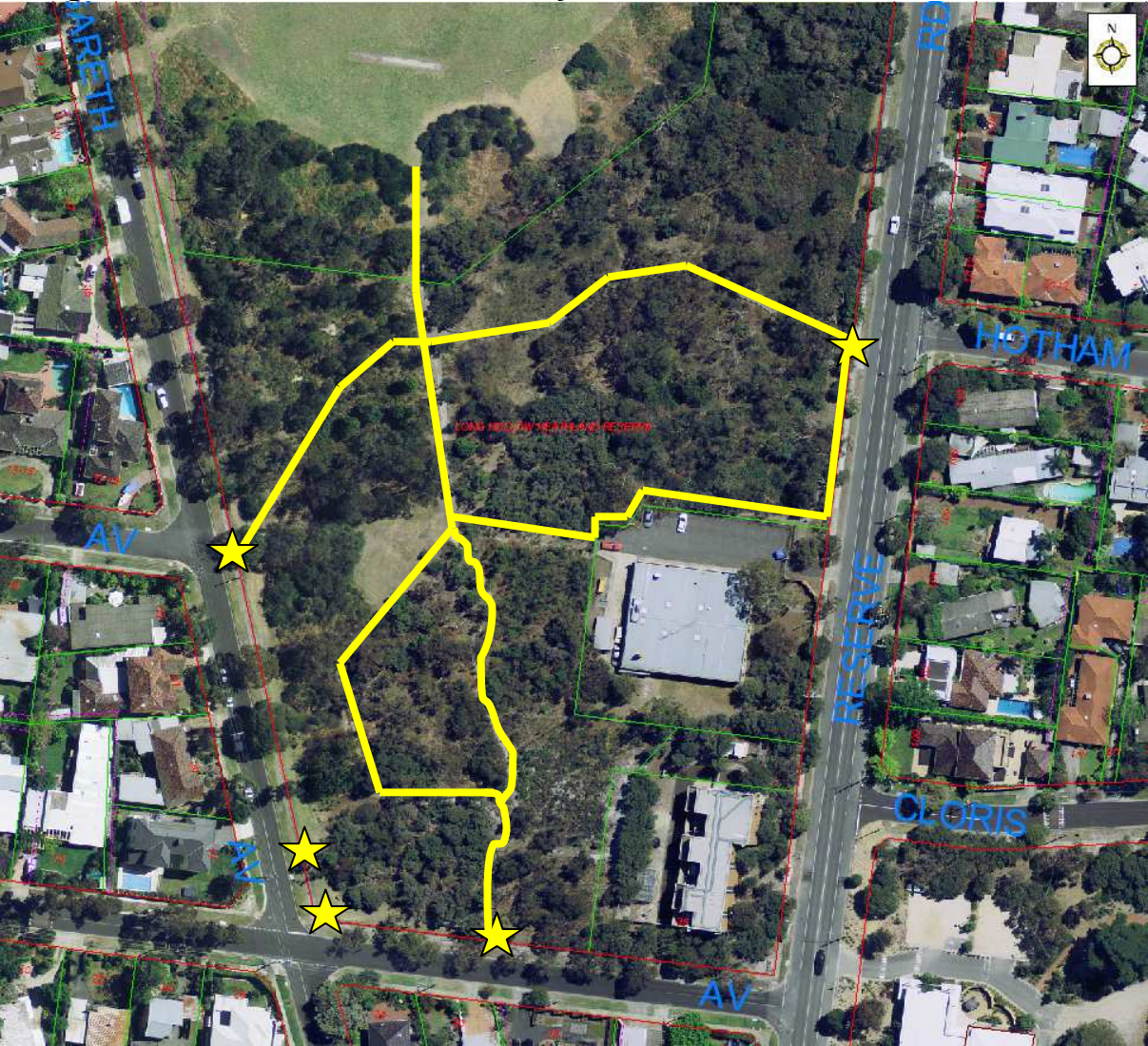
Note: The western perimeter edge is a firebreak.

Gramatan Avenue Heathland Sanctuary



Main access paths marked in yellow.

Long Hollow Heathland Sanctuary



Main access paths marked in yellow.

Note: The eastern (Reserve Road), southern and western perimeter edges are firebreaks accessible for walking. Access gates are marked with yellow stars.