

# Macedon Regional Park



Strategic Management Statement 2009

This Strategic Management Statement was prepared by Parks Victoria in collaboration with the Macedon Regional Park Advisory Committee to guide management of the Macedon Regional Park until reviewed. Macedon Regional Park Advisory Committee represents various community organisations, community groups and members of the community.

Parks Victoria recognises and acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the park. The park (2165 ha) was permanently reserved in 2006 under the *Crown Lands (Reserves) Act 1978* (Vic.) and will be managed in accordance with the park regulations.

The park is reserved for public purposes, in particular:

- to provide opportunities for informal recreation associated with the enjoyment of natural or semi-natural surroundings
- to protect and conserve biodiversity, natural and cultural features and water supply catchments
- for minor resource use that is not inconsistent with the above.

The statement implements the 1987 Government accepted recommendations of the former Land Conservation Council (LCC). It builds on the 1991 Management Plan and the 2002 Strategic Framework for the park.

The LCC also recommended that softwood timber production continue to be permitted from existing plantations. None of the plantations are subsequently reserved as regional park. The plantations are Reserved Forest (shaded brown on the attached map) and are leased to Hancock Victorian Plantations by the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE). There are a number of adjacent reservoirs (shaded blue on the map) that are reserved for water production and managed by Western Water.

The statement also addresses Mount Macedon War Memorial Cross Reserve (1 ha) at Mount Macedon summit. The Reserve is gazetted as a war memorial reserve under the Crown Lands (Reserves) Act. It is managed seamlessly by the Reserve Trustees and Committee of Management in accordance with the reserve regulations.

## KEY VALUES

### Visitor Experiences and Recreation Opportunities

The park is easily accessible from Melbourne and the major regional centres north-west of Melbourne.

A popular destination for day visitors, it attracts approximately 230 000 visitors per year. Visits to the park are often associated with visits to other attractions in the area, such as Macedon's ornamental gardens, local wineries and Hanging Rock.

Within the park, the main attractions are the Memorial Cross, Mount Macedon summit, Camels Hump and the Sanatorium Lake Eco-Tourism Walking Trail.

Pleasure driving, sightseeing, picnicking and walking are the most popular activities undertaken in the park. The park is of statewide importance for the provision of visitor services. There is a range of facilities to help visitors enjoy the park's special places and magnificent views (as detailed in the Visitor Guide parknotes). The 'Top of the Range' tearooms near the summit of Mount Macedon enhance visitor enjoyment of the park.

The Macedon Ranges walking track offers 30 km of walks that link to all of the picnic areas and key features of the park (as detailed in the Walking Tracks parknotes). Sections of the track offer easy self guided walks within the vicinity of Sanatorium Lake with many natural features to enjoy and experience. More adventurous walkers can opt for difficult sections of the trail to less visited areas such as Mount Towrong.

There is an extensive network of shared tracks for cycling, (as detailed in the Cycling Trails parknote). Cycling has increased in popularity in recent years. It is permitted on vehicle roads and tracks, including management vehicle only tracks, but not on walking tracks.

Many of the shared tracks throughout the park are also available for horse riding (as detailed in the Visitor Guide parknote).

Rock climbing and abseiling are popular activities at Camels Hump.

### Landscape Values

The Macedon Ranges with its forested slopes forms the dominant landscape feature of the park. The park is clearly visible against the skyline from Melbourne and much of central Victoria. In turn, there are many vantage points in the park which offer spectacular views across Melbourne and the western basalt plains.

Within the park, Mount Macedon at 1001 metres and Camels Hump at 1011 metres are the highest western peaks along the Great Dividing Range.

The Memorial Cross near Mount Macedon summit, Sanatorium Lake, the ornamental plantings, and mountain forests throughout the park are important aspects of the cultural landscape of the park.

Mount Macedon township, renowned for its magnificent properties and gardens, and the extensive softwood plantations nestled into the Ranges contrast with the park's forested landscapes.

### Environmental Values

On a statewide basis, the park is rated as high for the protection of natural values. The park supports a diverse mix of ecological vegetation classes which varies along the range with changes in aspect and elevation. Herb-rich Foothill Forest and Grassy Dry Forest occur on the drier lower slopes. Damp Forest occurs at higher elevations, with pockets of Wet Forest on the sheltered southerly slopes. Montane Grassy Woodlands supporting Snow Gums occur at the highest elevations on Mount Macedon and Camels Hump.

The park supports 10 flora species of regional significance. The park's stands of Mountain Ash and Alpine Ash are at the western limit of their natural distribution.

The variety of habitats in the park support more than 150 species of native birds, 20 species of native mammals and seven species of

reptiles. Of these, five species are considered threatened in Victoria under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (Vic.) including the Regent Honeyeater and Spot-tailed Quoll, which are endangered in Victoria and the Brush-tailed Phascogale, Barking Owl and Powerful Owl which are rare.

Other important species include Peregrine Falcon, Greater Glider, Bobuck, Common Wombat, Koala, Dusky Antechinus, Red-browed Tree-creeper, Olive Whistler, Rose Robin and Wedge-tailed Eagle.

### Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

The Macedon Ranges and the region to the south of the park is part of the *Country* of the Wurundjeri people. Aboriginal occupation of the park has occurred over many millennia and is demonstrated by the presence of a number of flaked stone artefact scatters in the park and stone axe-grinding areas in the surrounding region.

### Historic Heritage

In 1836, Major Thomas Mitchell became the first European to ascend the summit, which he named Mount Macedon after Philip of Macedon in ancient Greece.

The Mount Macedon War Memorial Cross, built in 1935, is the second most important war memorial in Victoria after the Shrine of Remembrance. Severely damaged in the 1983 Ash Wednesday fires, the cross was replaced in 1995 and refurbished in 2007, with assistance from the community and Mount Macedon War Memorial Cross Reserve Trustees and Committee of Management.

Historic places of interest include:

- Mount Macedon summit survey cairn, constructed in the 1860s and one of three known examples of geodetic triangulation cairns in Victoria
- Sanatorium Lake, constructed around 1903. The lake is a picturesque focal point of the park.

During the 1870s denuded areas on the summit were planted with

Deodar Cedar, Spruce, Redwood and Douglas Firs after harvesting of native forests. Some of these mature softwood specimens have become an integral element of the visual character of some areas of the park.

## MANAGEMENT DIRECTIONS

- The Traditional Owners' knowledge and interests in the area and aspirations for *Country* will be reflected in the park's management, in accordance with legislation and policies.

### Healthy Parks Healthy People

#### Park Visitors

- Visitor services throughout the park will be maintained to satisfy high and growing visitor demand.
- A range of quality recreational experiences for large numbers of visitors will be maintained at sustainable levels through appropriate management and park zoning (table 1).
- Visitors' enjoyment and understanding of the park will be enhanced by maintaining the range of high standard visitor facilities in the 'Summit Precinct' and smaller scale facilities at other key sites (as shown in the Parknotes and attached map).
- An appropriate network of roads and shared access tracks will be maintained for visitor use and park management consistent with the protection of park values, as indicated in the Parknotes.
- The range of walking experiences will be maintained and promoted including short and long distance walks and easy to difficult tracks.
- Cycling will be encouraged in the multipurpose recreation area, and long distance experiences will be maintained through links with cycling routes in adjoining areas, and with potential links to Wombat State Forest and Hanging Rock via the Great Dividing Trail.
- Horse riding opportunities on roads and tracks other than

walking tracks will be maintained.

- Where necessary for visitor safety or protection of park values, roads will be closed seasonally, in consultation with the Victorian Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs.
- Recreational activities will be directed away from and down slope from the boundary of Conservation and Water Catchment Zone and any environmentally sensitive areas to minimise visitor impacts.
- Management of recreational activities within the Conservation and Recreation Zone, and in particular the multipurpose area, will be subject to annual review of impacts on catchment values, in consultation with Western Water.
- Visitors will be encouraged to adopt codes of behaviour appropriate to their activity and minimal-impact techniques.
- Visitors' awareness of safety issues and potential hazards will be increased through the use of parknotes, Parks Victoria's website and information signs.
- Directional signage will be maintained at appropriate locations on major roads leading to the park and within the park.
- Park information, recreational opportunities and links with other major tourist sites such as Hanging Rock will be promoted.

#### Community Awareness and Involvement

- Parks Victoria will continue to work with the Macedon Regional Park Advisory Committee and Mount Macedon War Memorial Cross Trustees and Committee of Management regarding the management of the park.
- Strong collaborative partnerships will be developed with the Traditional Owners and the relevant Registered Aboriginal Party to help to reflect the Traditional Owner's knowledge and aspirations in the park's management.
- The wider community will be encouraged to become more aware of the park and appreciative of its values.

- Community involvement will be encouraged, supported and guided for the benefit of the park and communities.
- Ongoing opportunities will be given for communities, groups and individuals to share their interests and concerns relating to the park with the park's management.

## Healthy Parks Healthy People

### Natural Environment

- The landscape values of the park will be protected and the visual impacts on values will be managed and minimised.
- Rare and threatened species, communities and habitats will be given special protection through an integrated approach to the protection and management of biodiversity.
- An integrated response to pest plant and animals and other extensive or emerging threats at a landscape scale will be a high priority.
- Species listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act will be managed according to approved action statements.
- Flora, fauna and communities will be recorded on relevant scientific databases and key pests mapped and monitored.
- Protection of the designated water supply catchments and water quality will be a priority.
- The park will be protected from damage by wildfire through the implementation of the annual DSE Midlands Fire Operation Plan.

### Cultural Heritage

- Aboriginal places and objects will be protected from harm or damaging activities in co-operation with the Traditional Owners and relevant Registered Aboriginal Party, and in accordance with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (Vic.) and the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cwth.).
- Aboriginal knowledge will be promoted and interpreted in accordance with the views of the Traditional Owners.

- The War Memorial Cross Reserve will be protected and managed in consultation with the Mount Macedon War Memorial Cross Trustees and Committee of Management and Heritage Victoria.
- Other historic places of significance will be protected and, where appropriate, interpreted.
- The cultural landscape character of the park will be maintained through careful planning, design, siting and construction activities.
- The impact of any works and infrastructure on the park's natural and cultural values will be minimised.

### Agency Partnerships

- Parks Victoria will liaise with DSE, Macedon Regional Park Advisory Committee, Macedon Ranges Shire Council, Mountain Bike Australia (MTBA), park users and the Traditional Owners to link with cycling experiences beyond the park.
- Parks Victoria will continue to work with Macedon Ranges Shire Council and Western Water in accordance with the relevant Memorandums of Understanding.
- Parks Victoria will continue to liaise with adjacent land managers including Macedon Ranges Shire Council, Western Water, DSE, Hancock Victorian Plantations and VicRoads and the Country Fire Authority to improve natural corridors, pest and fire protection, and recreational linkages with the park.
- Public authorities will continue to be required to minimise impacts of public utilities on park values.

## M A N A G E M E N T Z O N I N G

A park management zoning scheme has been developed to:

- provide a geographic framework in which to manage the park
- indicate the uses and activities appropriate throughout the park (table 1)

- assist in minimising conflicts between uses and activities or between these and the protection of park values
- assist in assessing the suitability of future activities and development proposals.

Three management zones apply to the park (table 1 and the attached map) as follows:

### • Visitor Use

This zone applies to the 'Summit Precinct' which includes the War Memorial Cross Reserve and Harbison Picnic Ground. These areas are managed primarily for use by large numbers of visitors.

Visitor facilities are developed to a high standard and include a tearoom, major interpretive and information displays, toilet and picnic facilities, sealed walking paths, car and bus parking areas and lookouts at the summit and the Cross.

The facilities are designed and maintained to a standard that minimises impacts on the surrounding catchment values.

This zone also includes telecommunication towers on the summit.

### • Conservation and Recreation

This zone protects less sensitive environments outside the water catchment areas and provides for sustainable dispersed recreation activities and small-scale basic visitor facilities, where appropriate.

Recreation activities are subject to special conditions (table 1) to better protect the natural and cultural values.

The boundary of this zone south of Bawden Road aligns with the boundary of the water supply catchment as defined under Schedule 5 to the Environmental Significance Overlay of the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme.

The zone applies to the multi purpose recreational area in the section of the park between Bawden Road and the park boundary. The concentration recreation activities such as cycling and orienteering in the multipurpose area will help to alleviate pressure from these activities on more sensitive areas of the park.

## Conservation and Water Catchment

This zone protects the proclaimed domestic water supply catchment areas consistent with the Macedon Ranges planning scheme.

A limited range of recreational activities are permitted subject to special conditions to protect the water supply values (table 1).

Basic visitor facilities are provided to cater for lower numbers of visitors and are designed to a standard that will protect water quality.

## INFORMATION

For further information on this statement or management of the park, please contact Parks Victoria Information Centre on 13 1963 or visit Parks Victoria's website, [www.parkweb.vic.gov.au](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au).

Table 1 Summary of recreation activities permitted in management zones

ACTIVITY	VISITOR USE ZONE	RECREATION AND CONSERVATION ZONE	CONSERVATION AND WATER CATCHMENT ZONE
	11 ha (0.5% of park)	396 ha (17.5 % of park)	1818 ha (82 % of park)
Barbecues (solid fuel)	YC (1)	YC (1)	YC (1)
Barbecues (gas or liquid fuel)	No	No	No
Bird watching	Yes	Yes	Yes
Camping	No	No	No
Campfires	No	No	No
Cycling	YC (2)	YC (2)	YC (2)
Dogs – on leads at all times	Yes	Yes	Yes
Education/ Guided activities	Yes	Yes	Yes
Events	YC (3)	YC (3)	YC (3)
Firewood collection	No	No	No
Filming / Photography	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fishing	No	No	No
Fossicking / Prospecting	No	No	No
Horse riding	No	YC (4)	YC (4)
Hunting /	No	No	No
Nature study	Yes	Yes	Yes
Orienteering/ Rogaining	No	YC (3)	No
Picnicking	Yes	Yes	Yes)
Pleasure driving / Sightseeing	YC (5)	YC (5)	YC (5)
Rock climbing and abseiling	No	Yes	YC (6)
Trail bikes	YC (5)	YC (5)	YC (5)
Walking	Yes	Yes	YC (7)

Y	Yes	No	Not appropriate	YC	Conditional, refer to conditions below:
(1)	solid fuel barbecues only in fireplaces provided				
(2)	permitted on public roads, management vehicle tracks and multipurpose trails in the multipurpose area south-west of Bawden Road but not on walking tracks				
(3)	subject to permit with conditions to protect park values				
(4)	permitted on specific public roads and management vehicle tracks				
(5)	permitted on roads open to the public only				
(6)	only at Camels Hump				
(7)	permitted on walking tracks only				

# MACEDON REGIONAL PARK

- Macedon Regional Park
- Mt Macedon War Memorial Cross Reserve
- Macedon Regional Park (Proposed additions)

## COMPATIBLE ADJACENT LAND USE

- Reserved Forest
- Water Reserve (Western Water Managed)
- Hancock Victorian Plantations - Vested
- Hancock Victorian Plantations - Leased
- Parcel boundaries
- Highway/Freeway
- Sealed Road
- Unsealed Road
- Vehicle track (4WD)

## ZONING

- ZONE 1: Key Visitor Use (13ha)
- ZONE 2: Conservation and Recreation (389 ha)
- ZONE 3: Conservation and Water Catchment (1964 ha)
- Visitor Node - major
- Visitor Node - minor

