

Homestead Park, Glenard Estate: Conservation Management Plan

Prepared by Homestead Park Association Inc.



Source: Homestead Park photos by Charles Craig and Diane Kraal

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1. Introduction

Why a Conservation Management Plan?

'A Conservation Management Plan (CMP) is the principal guiding document for the conservation and management of a heritage place. It is a tool that allows owners, managers and approval authorities to make sound decisions about heritage places.

A CMP identifies the heritage values – or significance – of a place, the conservation policies to be applied to protect that significance in the face of change, and a strategy through which the policies will be put into action.

A CMP also adopts the important principle embodied in Article 3.1 of the Burra Charter, (The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance) which reads:

Conservation is based on a respect for the existing fabric, use, associations and meanings. It requires a cautious approach of changing as much as necessary but as little as possible.

This principle has been found to be entirely appropriate to this project, not just because Homestead Park is of undoubted cultural heritage significance, but because the project has revealed not so much a need to rejuvenate, redesign refurbish or remodel the parks, but more a need to restore, conserve and enhance their inherent qualities. This plan is more about what not to do than a proposal for significant change.'¹

Approach to the task.

The Homestead Park Association Inc. (HPA) committee initiated the CMP process for the Homestead Park in the Glenard Estate.

All residents adjoining Homestead Park were canvassed in the form of a letter asking for input into a CMP. The letter included a number of ideas already discussed. A number of responses were received, which included additional ideas and comments on the ideas originally tabled by the HPA committee.

The HPA committee acknowledges the 'The Mount Eagle Estate Common Parks Conservation Management Plan' that covers the Mount Eagle Estate in Banyule, another Peter Keam development that was designed by landscape architect, Walter Burley Griffin in the 1916. Mount Eagle Estate includes a number of the internal private parklands.

This document forms the formal CMP for Homestead Park, Glenard Estate.

¹ "The Mount Eagle Estate, Common Parks: Conservation Management Plan" (2011) Michael Smith and Associates and Ian Wight Planning and Heritage Strategies, p.3.

2. History

Homestead Park is part of the Glenard Estate. Originally farmland, the land used for the Glenard Estate was purchased by Peter Keam, who commissioned Walter Burley Griffin in 1916 to design a new housing estate. Griffin incorporated a number of innovative features within this estate – the curvilinear road plans that follow the contours of the estate, but without hard intersections, the absence of visual barriers between allotments, and the creation of the private parklands for the purpose of recreation (incorporating gardens and parks) and sense of community.

Over a number of years, the original 120 allotments were sold, and the building of homes gradually started. Each of the original allotments includes a covenant granting access rights to the common parklands. Some of the original allotments were later subdivided, and these later subdivided allotments did not include the access covenant.

Two parklands were created within the Glenard Estate – Homestead Park and Banksia Park. This CMP is specific to Homestead Park.

Some of the land was transferred to the crown, notably the actual roadways and the parkland known as the Yarra Flats.

Interestingly, the private parks were never transferred from the original title, and they are still in the name of Peter Keam. The trustee of his estate (his grandson) is the formal owner of the property.

The Glenard Estate and its internal parks are heritage listed on the Victorian Heritage Register, and thus fall under the guidelines of Heritage Victoria.²

Section 4 of this CMP lists relevant literature regarding a more detailed history of the Estate, and the formal Glenard Estate Heritage Guidelines.

² See 'Glenard Estate' on the Heritage Victoria website: <http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/14277>

3. Park Attributes

Homestead Park has three distinct areas, plus two access paths.

The areas are:

1. The northern end, characterised by fairly flat land, with a circular vehicle track surrounding an open grassed area.
2. The southern end, which has little vehicle usage, is slightly sloping up to the south-west end, and is well grassed with a range of trees
3. The linking lane, which connects the northern and southern end. It is used for vehicle access to properties mostly on The Boulevard, and there is limited space for plantings.

There is a concrete access lane between Glenard Drive and the intersection of the northern end with the linking lane.

There is a foot path directly opposite the concrete access lane which leads down to The Boulevard.

Necessary Attributes	Comments
Safe place to play	Safe at the southern end, with limited car access. Area includes a pine 'fort' that is fun for smaller children. Plenty of room to play. The northern end has a large flat grass area good for sports, including an old concrete cricket pitch, but has the danger of being surrounded by the access road with no barriers to stop running children.
Interaction opportunities	Good. Clearings are suitable for gatherings, including the annual Christmas party at the northern end. Many neighbours know each other due to interactions in the park.
'Natural' Landscape character	Achieved. Good spread of trees and shrubs, while leaving open spaces to play.
Integration with gardens	Some. There has been good integration at the southern end with some properties, plus quite a few properties have no or little fencing to achieve the desired original plan. Most properties at the northern end have higher fences, due to the presence of cars within the park (associated dust and noise)
View lines	No external views
Possible Problems	
Solid fences and buildings on boundary	There are many garages built on the park boundary, especially from properties on The Boulevard (due to flood plain building

	restrictions at the street level), and on Glenard Drive at the northern end (even though these Glenard Drive properties have good street access with cross-overs and driveways and right of carriage way (on title) from Glenard Drive, only. These properties also tend to have full height solid fences. Most properties at the southern end have good street access, but some still have rear garages.
Car parking	Yes at the northern end. Some cars park on the central 'oval', and this has impacted the grass and ability to play on the area. Most properties have enough space between the access track and the property boundary to park. Car parking on this northern end should not continue. There is no observed parking on the southern park after the last house on the lane.
Traffic	The lane is occasionally congested (typically at morning and evening peak times), and traffic moves at sometimes excessive speed around the northern access track, and down the central access lane. A limit of 10kph or less should be observed at all times.
Unsightly storage	Mostly no. There is some at the far northern end of the park.
Alienation of land	Some. There is an extension of a garden at the southern end, and some track diversions at the northern end. Recent attempts to extend driveways have been stopped with help from Heritage Victoria.
Understanding of operation and consensus on function	Probably reasonable. This CMP is an attempt to educate all owners of the roles and responsibilities required and expected.
Appropriate management structure	Yes. The Homestead Park Association Inc. is open to all title holders for participation. It is run by residents only, collects subscriptions, has a general meeting, and seeks support of the owners.

4. Conservation Principles and Policies

The Conservation Principles and Policies are designed to address these issues in the context of a good understanding of the significance of Homestead Park and including the intentions of the Griffins.

In 1929, Walter Burley Griffin explained that the internal reserves were intended ... to serve the function of 'bringing the country into the city' and provide places for children to meet and play with friends from neighbouring houses overseen by the surrounding houses. They were also intended to provide for community interaction as the Griffins ... 'advocated garden city planning and had the idea of a neighbourhood as a physical and social planning unit'.

The significance of the internal reserves of the Glenard Estate (which includes Homestead Park) are documented in a number of publications, some of which include quotes from early interviews of Walter Burley Griffin or Marion Mahoney Griffin, and drawn upon in this CMP.

In the planning stages of the Glenard and Mount Eagle Estates, important emphasis was placed upon the purpose of the parks (including Homestead Park) with the following intentions, specifically for the Griffins, the reserves 'were to substitute for nature, fast disappearing in the suburban environment' and consequently a place where original native trees could be preserved. In Melbourne in 1913, Griffin spoke of the internal reserves as "... favourite playgrounds. Here all the children from the different houses can play together, where their mothers can see them, and where they are safe from the motor traffic in the streets."

The publications listed below can be found at Heritage Victoria, Banyule City Council and libraries:

Butler, Graeme (1985), 'Heidelberg Conservation Study, Part 1, Heidelberg Historic Buildings and Areas Assessment', the City of Heidelberg, Victoria.

Loder, Bayley & McBriar (1987) 'Heidelberg Conservation Study: Part 2 : Historic Riverland Landscape Assessment,' Heidelberg City Council.

Bick, David and Kellaway, Carlotta (1992), 'Shire of Eltham Heritage Study'.

Dobbie, Meredith and Jackson, Fran (1995), 'Landscape Heritage Study: Mt Eagle and Glenard Subdivisions, Eaglemont'.

Allom Lovell and Associates (1998), 'Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital Heritage Assessment', City of Banyule.

Toomey, Carol, (1999), 'Beautiful Banyule: A Register of our City's Natural Assets', Warringal Conservation Society Inc., Rosanna.

Allom Lovell & Associates (1999), 'Banyule Heritage Places Study', Banyule City Council. 5 Volumes: - Vol 1 An Urban History; Vol 2 (in 2 parts) Building Citations; Vol 3

Landscape Citations; Vol 4 Heritage Areas; Vol 5 Summary of Recommendations; and the Heritage Overlay Schedule.

'Heritage Guidelines for the Glenard Estate' (2005), prepared by Andrew Ward Architectural Historian with Ian Wight Planning and Heritage Strategies, for Banyule City Council.

Glenard Estate, Victorian Heritage Database Report and Glenard Estate, Statement of Cultural Heritage Significance, Victorian Heritage Register, <http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/14277>

5. Resident Rights

Any resident of a property with a title deed that includes the access covenant, has the right to use the park for its original purpose, which is general recreation and to provide a safe place for children to play.

5.1 Legal Decisions relevant to the Glenard Estate:

- Riley v Pentilla V.R. 547, Supreme Court (1974).
- Sewell v Banyule CC [2010] VCAT 769 (29 April 2010)
- Bordonaro v Heritage Victoria, VCAT 848 (7 August 2020).

6. Responsibilities of Residents

Ownership and residence, of properties abutting Homestead Park, comes with responsibilities (for those titles that allow access and use of Homestead Park as per the covenant). The responsibilities are specifically around the care and maintenance of the park. This includes pruning of vegetation especially in regards to safe access, maintaining (but not expanding) vehicle track, mowing of grass from the boundary of a property to the centreline of the park. No materials or rubbish must be stored in the parklands for long periods, and regular parking of vehicles in the park is discouraged.

It is the intention of the HPA Committee that residents have open access to a copy of this CMP, and use it as a guiding document for the ongoing management of the park.

This CMP notes that Homestead Park should provide:

- A safe place for children to play
- Opportunities for community involvement and interaction with/by residents
- A 'natural' landscape character
- Visual integration with gardens
- Protection of view lines

This CMP notes that for shared enjoyment of the parks, there must not be:

- Car parking and vehicular traffic/movement – for the safety of children and other

residents

- Visual barriers between park and gardens
- Storage of unsightly materials or rubbish for long periods
- Fences established within the park
- Alienation or privatisation or commandeering of parkland in any way

This CMP notes that there should be:

- A good understanding amongst users of the significance of the park and adherence to the intended purpose of the park
- An organisational structure that supports the above
- An acknowledgement by residents that there is no vehicle parking in Homestead Park, both the southern end and the northern end.

Schedule 1 contains the ongoing 'Action Plan'. It can be changed by the HPA Committee in consultation with Homestead Park residents. It is recommended that the Action Plan is reviewed regularly by the HPA committee and revised where necessary.

SCHEDULE 1.

Action Plan

The primary purpose of Homestead Park, Glenard Estate, is general recreation for residents and to provide a safe place for their children to play.

The Action Plan notes the primary purpose of Homestead Park, Glenard Estate. This Action Plan includes items that seek to maintain, preserve, re-establish, restore and/or repair all elements that form part of the original intention of the use of Homestead Park. The recommended actions to conserve and enhance the conservation values of the park.

Maintenance of Park Appearance

- Retain the current general structure of the park, including the treed areas and the open parkland
- Retain and improve the northern end oval to a 'village green', by restricting vehicle access. This may involve physical barriers to prevent car access (bollards, rocks, plantings).
- Residents to ensure that any workers doing work within a private property are not dumping material (soil, clippings, green waste, building rubble, or similar) into the park, but rather are removing it responsibly.
- Regular pruning by anyone of park vegetation to ensure safe access
- Regularly clear the concrete access lane of weeds
- Regularly clear the spoon drain along the connecting lane to prevent flooding of downhill neighbours
- Adjoining landholders may maintain the park to their rear, from their boundary to the centreline of the park
- Adjoining title holders may assist if the area is not being maintained
- If an area is becoming overgrown, any titleholder may maintain the area to a reasonable standard

Access

- Maintain the pedestrian access paths between Homestead Park and The Boulevard
- No new rear access/garages will be permitted
- Existing rear access / garages will be removed or deleted, when such opportunities arise
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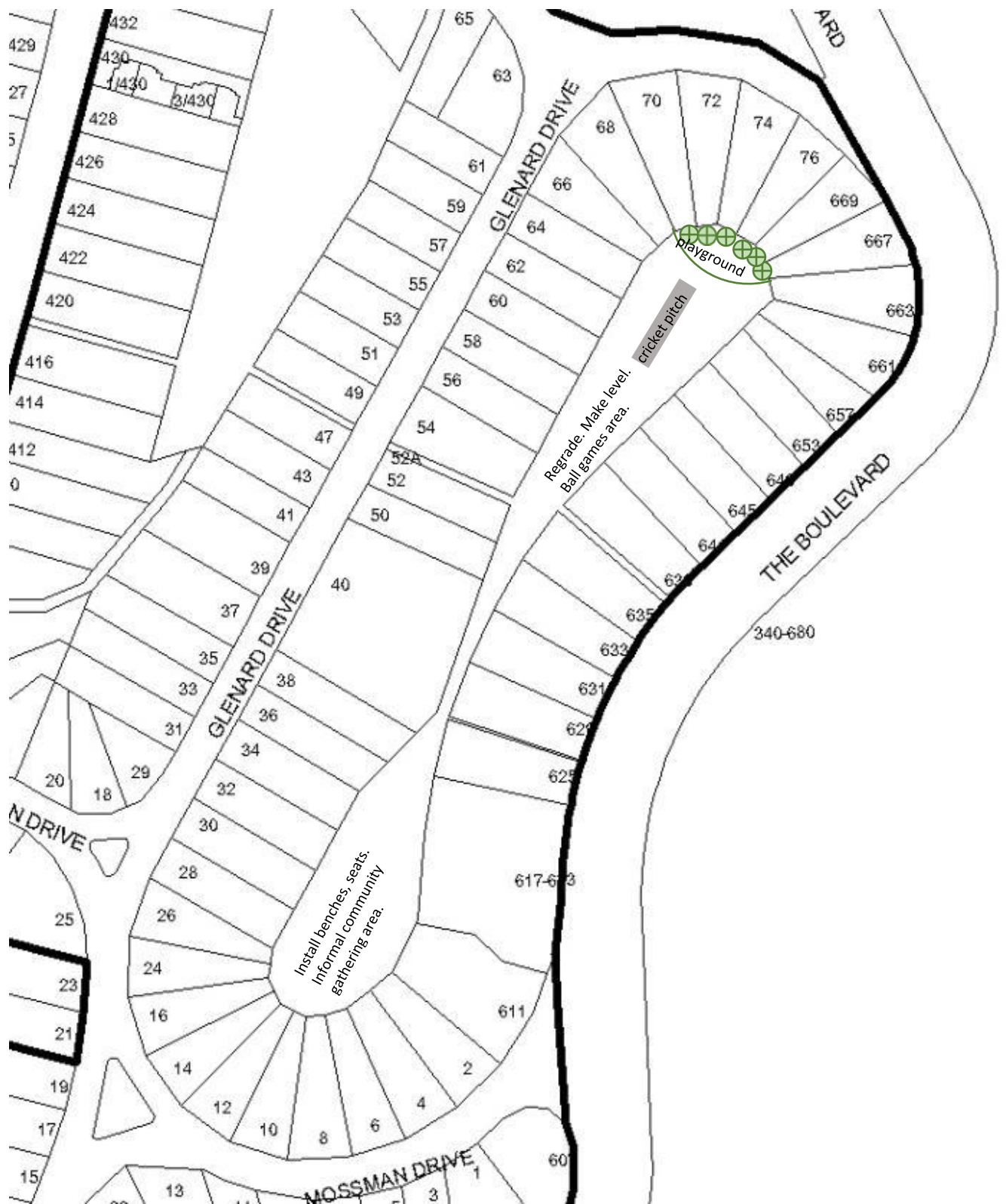
Parkland Maintenance

- Replace the broken cricket pitch with a new one in the same location.
- Work towards the agreed overall structural plan, contained in the map at the end of

this document, which includes establishing a playground for children. For instance, maintaining the cricket pitch, install benches or seats for informal community gathering area. Restoring the track to its original layout (in Homestead Park, a straight track along the rear of properties along The Boulevard, from 625 The Boulevard to 661 The Boulevard). Review reasonable suggestions as they arise, provided they are in keeping with the original intent and purpose of Homestead Park

Other

- Commence the compilation of an information folder for new residents. A history of the Griffin vision, a history of the estate and the reserves, and the values that residents aspire to.
- Request from council a convex mirror on Glenard Drive directly opposite the concrete lane to prevent congestion of the lane
- Install some possum boxes in taller trees



History of CMP revisions

Revised 2/12/16

Revised 2/2/17

Revised 16/3/17

Revised 25/31/17

Revised 05/06/17

Revised 12/8/17

Revised 21/9/20

Contact us

Email: hpa52a@gmail.com

Giovanni Mandarano, Mob. 0468 428 099.

President, Homestead Park Association

Homestead Park Committee: Giovanni, Pat, Lee, Helen, Charles, Meileen, Diane and Margaret.