

ATTACHMENT B: ARBORICULTURAL ADVICE

Letter of support from McLeod Trees



18th July 2021

Donald Cant Watts Corke
Att: Spencer Dunbabin
Upper Level 3
GPO Building
350 Bourke St
Melbourne 3000

Dear Spencer

Re: Caulfield Racecourse Tree Management Strategy – Letter of Support

As requested, I have undertaken a review of the relevant documentation in regard to the Melbourne Racing Club, Caulfield Racecourse masterplan and Tree Strategy provided by Urbis Pty Ltd, and provide herewith my thoughts, professional opinion and endorsement of the same.

The following documents have been provided and read in the undertaking of this review.

- *Caulfield Racecourse Tree Strategy – Urbis Pty Ltd. Dated July 2021*
- *Caulfield Racecourse Northern Precinct Tree Strategy – Hassel Architects. Dated 2/3/21*
- *MRC Caulfield Northern Precinct Site Plans – Hassell Architects. Ref No. 014264.*

McLeod Trees and in particular, myself as an arborist, have had an ongoing professional relationship with the Melbourne Racing Club and Caulfield Racecourse, having managed the tree population on and off for over 20 years.

It is considered that the existing tree population contributes significantly to the environmental, aesthetic and historical value of the property and surrounding landscape, however a vast number of the trees are becoming senescent and nearing the end of their safe useful life expectancy.

The idea of succession planting is not new, and many replacement and new tree plantings have occurred over the years, as well as transplanting and relocation of significant specimens where conflict with infrastructure necessitated removal.

This current masterplan and tree strategy provided by Urbis meets a number of key objectives in regard to the management of any public tree population, in which the site managers and stakeholders have a duty of care to protect both the environment, property and persons. Such duty of care must consider hazard assessment and risk management, as well as long term sustainability and environmental contribution of the tree assets.

The proposed plans call for the removal of 45 tree specimens, with replacement planting of 68 new trees, thereby securing a positive net gain of 23 trees. This is considered a win-win situation, in that a number of those trees designated for removal are considered senescent specimens of poor health and structure, of low retention value and a limited safe useful life expectancy.

The proposed replanting calls for a large number of new trees, ranging from small canopy trees planted within hard structures, through to large canopy trees which will provide shade, shelter and aesthetic contribution for future generations to enjoy.

The species selection and planting locations are based on such contributing factors as; size and scale, foliage and flower colour and timing and ongoing maintenance requirements, as well as consideration of the timing of events on the Caulfield calendar. The final selection is in keeping with, and an extension of, the existing tree population.

The use of trees of varying mature size and structure, provides alternative impact to the site, thereby ensuring the 'right tree in the right location', with a view to long term tree retention, growth potential and sustainability. The number and type of tree plantings, and the canopy coverage associated with the same will well offset that of the proposed and necessary designated tree removal associated with the future masterplan.

Furthermore, it is proposed that 5 mature Phoenix palms be transplanted and relocated within the site where they will continue to offer significant contribution to the property. A number of these palms have previously been relocated within the site approximately 10-15 years ago, utilizing techniques which have been extremely successful, and the trees have thrived following such transplanting. It can be expected that provided correct techniques are utilized, the relocation of the palms to the proposed Day Stalls area as part of the future strategy will have the same success.

It is for the above reasons I am highly satisfied with the proposed design and can support the proposed tree management strategy as undertaken by Urbis, with a view to improving the ongoing tree population within the Caulfield Racecourse open space areas for future generations to enjoy and benefit from.

Should you wish to discuss these findings or recommendations further, please feel free to contact me via email to jack@mcleodtrees.com.au, or phone on 0411 131 412

Yours Sincerely

Jack Sinclair
Dip App Sci (Hort/Arb)
Adv Cert (Hort)

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