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VC37**NATIMUK AND MT ARAPILES AREA TOURISM POLICY**

This policy applies to the provision of tourist services, including accommodation for visitors to Mt Arapiles-Tooan State Park and the surrounding area.

Policy Basis

Mt Arapiles-Tooan State Park is an international rock-climbing destination attracting more than 70,000 visitors every year. The park has created and will continue to create demand for tourist services in the area. Camping facilities are provided at the base of the mountain and most other accommodation is provided in either Natimuk or Horsham. The lack of development around the mountain assists to maintain the wilderness experience for visitors, and ensures that visitors make use of services and facilities in Natimuk, to the benefit of the local economy.

This policy identifies a preference for tourist services to continue to be provided in Natimuk, however should tourist developments be sought outside the township area, they should be of high aesthetic quality and meet stringent environmental criteria.

Objective

To maintain and enhance the environmental and recreational qualities and attributes of Mt Arapiles-Tooan State Park

To encourage the provision of services including accommodation for visitors to Mt Arapiles-Tooan State Park within Natimuk township to enhance the local economy

To ensure that any tourist related development that takes place outside the Natimuk township complies with stringent aesthetic and environmental criteria

Implementation

It is policy that:

- All buildings constructed within the identified Schedule 2 to the Landscape Significance Overlay - Mt Arapiles - Tooan State Park accord with the requirements of the Overlay, to minimise impact upon vistas to and from the park. The foreground area between the mountain and Mitre Lake is of particular importance given its visibility from the main rock face.
- Applicants for new tourist developments or related services will be encouraged to locate the proposed facilities in the Natimuk township where reticulated water and sewer services are available.
- Rock climbing, bushwalking and related businesses and industries will be encouraged to establish and further develop in Natimuk.
- The limited ability of soils outside the Natimuk township to dispose efficiently of effluent and waste water be recognised as a serious impediment to development.
- Should a proposal be put forward for some form of tourist services, facilities or accommodation, the responsible authority will firstly encourage the proposal to be located in Natimuk, if following discussions with Council the use and development is not proposed in the Natimuk township the following provisions will apply:
 - any wastewater or effluent should be disposed of in such a manner to minimise any environmental effects, the preferred form of effluent disposal will be composting toilets or similar systems. No effluent or drainage may be directed to any watercourse;

- buildings should not exceed one storey and should be of low profile to ensure they do not interrupt vistas from Mt Arapiles, or detract from existing views;
 - all buildings should be constructed of materials which are of similar colour to the surrounding landscape; reflective corrugated iron or zincalume will not be considered acceptable;
 - all buildings should be screened from roads and other vantage points including Mt Arapiles by stands of indigenous vegetation;
 - the removal of any existing indigenous vegetation is to be avoided;
 - the impact of the proposed development upon any adjacent farming activities should be minimised by maintaining a substantial distance between activity areas and the property boundary;
 - advertising signs should be kept to a minimum; and
 - a detailed concept plan should be submitted as part of the planning permit showing all plans and elevations of the proposed building, works, landscaping and associated access ways and other facilities in accordance with the requirements listed above.
- Council may seek the comments of the Department of Sustainability and Environment in regard to any application for a large scale accommodation complex or similar in the vicinity of Mt Arapiles-Toan State Park.
 - Only a small number of small scale tourist developments may be supported in the vicinity of Mt Arapiles. Any large scale facility must be located in Natimuk or Horsham. Should the number of tourist developments located in the vicinity of Mt Arapiles impact on the integrity of the area, no further will be permitted.