



7.1 Petition Against BMX Pump Track In Garden City Reserve

A Petition containing 723 signatures, was received from local residents: 254 signatures were received via change.org and 469 were received via hardcopy.

The hard copy Petition states the following:

We the residents of Port Melbourne request that the council find a new location for the BMX Pump track / skate park other than Garden City Reserve. I present to the Council a petition which contains 723 signatures. There are 469 on paper and a further 254 signatures on Change.Org Online petition.

We object to the installation of an asphalt BMX pump track /skate park on Garden City Reserve for the following reasons:

- *Reduction of the park's green space and reduced land permeability in a flood prone zone*
- *Likely degradation of the area adjacent to the proposed BMX pump track due to cyclists riding across grass.*
- *The close proximity of residents living adjacent to a high action BMX track who will have their quality of life negatively impacted by the additional noise, traffic and graffiti that comes with skateboarding culture. Car parking is already an issue for the Reserve.*
- *The safety risk to toddlers using the children's playground in close proximity to competitive BMX riders*
- *The safety risk to seniors. A walk in the park should not result in injury as is the case for (a resident), who was knocked down on the footpath/ new bike corridor on the Beacon Cove side of the park. There have already been verbal exchanges between scooter and bike riders/ and frightened pedestrians, with one scooter rider telling people "to f.....keep clear of my path". The volume of bicycle and scooter traffic is already becoming untenable in our area, and adding a BMX track will only make it worse.*
- *There are no toilet amenities in the proposed location. BMX riders would need to dismount before crossing to the other side of the park to access the only toilet that services a large area. Please note Julier Reserve has several toilets.*
- *The proposed facility is superfluous to community needs. There are two existing pump tracks within 1 – 3kms of Garden City:*
 1. *Graham St under bridge Skate Park and BMX pump track Turville Reserve*
 2. *BMX Pump track Westgate Park*
- *If this build proceeds, Garden City Reserve will be surrounded by bike riders on either side. Without a direct link between the two, riders will inevitably cut across the off-leash park, resulting in potential danger to pedestrians of all ages and to dogs.*



The Online Petition includes the following text:

A BMX pump track has been proposed for Garden City Reserve, which is a beautiful open "passive" green space used daily for family picnics, dog walkers, solitude seekers and young children playing in the dragon play ground area.

As per City of Port Phillip information, "an asphalt track is being proposed to maximise safety and provide a variety of riding opportunities for bike and scooter riders and skateboarders of all abilities."

This seems dangerous to promote such a track next to a children's playground. The track is likely to see users riding at high speed, chasing each other in the area, and again this is not conducive near to children playing and family picnics. The track could become a hang out area similar to the skate board park under Graham St.

During COVID-19 lockdowns, a local Port Melbourne community built a BMX track at RF Julier Reserve. The track was removed for public safety, and Council received a petition for it to be maintained. In response, Council is proposing to build a BMX pump track within the local area.

If you don't want Garden City Reserve to become home to this track, please sign this petition.

OFFICER COMMENT

During COVID lockdown, a local community in Port Melbourne built a makeshift BMX track within their local park at Julier Reserve, Port Melbourne. While this track had to be removed for public safety, a petition was received for it to be reinstated on 18 November 2020.

In response to the petition, Council committed to investigating construction of a BMX track within the municipality through the 2021/22 Council Budget, noting community benefits and social connectiveness a BMX track would provide.

Extensive analysis of potential sites and track types was undertaken by officers. The analysis considered different options for location and track types including BMX jumps, BMX racetrack and pump tracks. The highest scoring sites were shortlisted, with Garden City Reserve being the highest ranked and preferred location. The other highest ranked were Fred Jackson, Cyril Letts and Julier Reserves.

A Have Your Say (HYS) page was published on 23 March 2022 and onsite pop-up sessions were held to provide project information and details on the track type and location being considered, and to give community members an opportunity to ask questions about the project.

This consultation has identified that many members of the community around Garden City are opposed to having the BMX track at this site, which reflects this petition.

The consultation also identified a covenant is affecting part of the Garden City Reserve and precludes the building of the BMX track in the current proposed position.

The terms of the Restrictive Covenant are very specific and restrict the development and use of the land within the Affected Title. The covenant requires that this area only be used as "lawns and gardens and maintaining the same for use as public reserve".



The restrictions placed on the reserve by the Covenant mean that the BMX track cannot be located at this site.

It is therefore recommended that this site is not progressed, and an alternate site is considered for the BMX track.

If considering another location, officers note that when undertaking the analysis for site options for a BMX track, the beach side of Fred Jackson Reserve was the next highest ranked site due to its proximity to bike paths and ease of access.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the Petition.
2. Thanks the petitioners for their Petition.
3. Notes Council's previous decision which acknowledged the community benefits and social connectiveness a BMX track would provide.
4. Notes that the 2021/22 Budget allocated an amount to investigate and construct a BMX track.
5. Notes that Council undertook engagement around a proposal to locate a BMX track at Garden City Reserve.
6. Notes that the Covenant at Garden City Reserve restricts the ability to locate the BMX Pump Track at this site, and therefore the project will not progress at this site.
7. Notes that the beach side of Fred Jackson Reserve was the next highest ranked site for a BMX track.
8. Requests the CEO to commence engagement on locating the BMX track at the beach side of Fred Jackson Reserve and bring a report back to Council.
9. Encourages the petitioners to register their interest in any future consultation on this topic on the Have Your Say page of the website.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil