

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Suburban Development



Getting Things Done.
Making Things Fair.

Tuesday, 31 July, 2018

BELFAST RESERVE MANAGEMENT PLAN RELEASED

The Andrews Labor Government has released a management plan for the Belfast Coastal Reserve that will better regulate dog-walking and commercial horse training along the coastline.

Key features of the 15-year management plan include:

- a 'Conservation Zone' prohibiting horse riding and dog-walking
- a 'Conservation and Recreation Zone' allowing on-leash dog walking and recreational horse riding
- restriction of commercial horse training to a small area at Levy's Beach and Hoon Hill
- priority management strategies to protect and monitor populations of beach-nesting birds
- foreshore access throughout the entire reserve for walking dogs on-leash and recreational horse riding.

The Labor Government will provide Birdlife Australia with \$100,000 over two years to fund education and monitoring programs aimed at protecting shorebirds.

Racing Victoria will provide a further \$100,000 to protect cultural heritage at Levy's Beach and Hoon Hill, and ensure infrastructure is in place to minimise impacts on other users of the beach and on the environment.

The plan will be reviewed within two years and will include an assessment of compliance with the new zones.

More than 800 people took part in the community consultation process, which included meetings with local residents, councils, environment groups and the racing industry.

In the coming weeks, the conditions of a new Warrnambool Racing Club licence to train in restricted areas of the Belfast Coastal Reserve will be finalised.

Open House sessions will be held at Port Fairy on 21 August and Warrnambool on 22 August.

To view the final plan and a summary report of public submissions, visit: engage.vic.gov.au/belfast

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"The Belfast Coast is home to rare species of birds - that's why it's important to restrict commercial horses training and dogs off leashes to certain areas."

"The plan is the product of extensive consultation and balances the range of views on how to best protect the Belfast Coast for the community and the future."

Quote attributable to Minister for Racing Martin Pakula

"The plan ensures the future of racing and training in the south-west while protecting the environment and cultural heritage."

Media Contact: Pat Hutchens 0436 344 218 | pat.hutchens@minstaff.vic.gov.au