

Updating the heritage-listed Ivanhoe Park Croquet Clubrooms to meet current standards

We are seeking:

1. A State Government investment of \$565,000 to upgrade lighting at the Ivanhoe Park Croquet Club and improve accessibility and functionality of the heritage listed clubrooms.



The Ivanhoe Park Croquet Clubrooms have been home to local croquet for 90 years. The heritage-listed building is outdated and no longer fit for purpose, failing to comply with competition court standards or accessibility requirements.

Urgent upgrades are needed if the club is to continue attracting new members and competing against other clubs.

Background

The Ivanhoe Park Croquet Club has a single storey clubhouse building with two croquet greens. The oldest part of the clubhouse is a weatherboard room with a gabled corrugated iron roof that serves as a kitchen. This adjoins a larger pressed metal gabled building with a timber-framed verandah used as the meeting and locker room.

A skillion has been added for toilet and storage facilities. The building is located in Ivanhoe Park adjacent to tennis courts. The croquet courts have no lighting which restricts play.

Upgrades needed

The Ivanhoe Park Croquet Club was established in 1913. The clubhouse, while quaint, is small and poorly appointed. The courts are not standard size and lack lighting.

Urgent upgrades are needed to achieve the intent of the Ivanhoe Sports Precinct Plan and the Ivanhoe Park Croquet Club's vision of "a vibrant club that attracts and caters for all age groups keen to play croquet at both social and competitive levels all year round".

Banyule Council and the Ivanhoe Park Croquet Club are seeking to partner with the State Government to fund a development plan and undertake the necessary works to bring the facility up to current standards.



What is croquet?

Croquet is described as a mix of chess and snooker played on grass. It is one of the few games where men and women can play on equal footing and is suitable for people aged of all ages.

The game is known for attracting retired people who enjoy the exercise, mental stimulation, and social interaction. There is growing interest among younger people.

The most common type of croquet is Golf Croquet that anyone can play at a social level and once they become more skilled, enter in competition.

The popular Association Croquet (the original form of the game) is more complex and competitive.



Lawn size

The current courts are not square, slightly undersized and lack the requisite 900 mm space around the perimeter that is needed to take boundary shots. These shortcomings mean that the present courts cannot be used for national and international tournaments. Standard sized croquet courts would allow the club to host interstate competitions.

Demographics and club membership

The Ivanhoe Park Croquet Club has around 60 members, of which 70 percent are female – among the highest proportion of female membership of sporting clubs in the Ivanhoe sport district.

Most members are over 65 years of age. However, the age bracket that club is targeting for future growth is 25 to 45 while continuing to cater for all ages. Initiatives such as open days are attracting new members.

The club is keen to maintain inter-club competition and recognises that having champion level players attached to the club is key to increasing vibrancy as it increases the depth of playing skill and encourages less skilled players to improve.

The development plan would include:

- A larger clubhouse that meets accessibility requirements and can cater for up to 80 people (the present clubhouse accommodates around 30 people);
- Installing lights to allow evening play year round.

Existing club house

The existing club house is a timber framed structure sitting on red gum footings. The building is primitive by modern standards and is heritage listed. It has a main room that can accommodate about 30 people, a small kitchen, single male and female toilets and a small storage area.

The clubhouse needs to be upgraded and enlarged to accommodate more people.

Lighting

People enjoy playing croquet during the evenings, but this is not possible most of year because of a lack of light.

Installing lights would allow play during the evenings all year round and make the club more accessible to working age players.