



9 November 2025

Submission Guide: Objection to Proposed Arthurs Seat Eagle Expansion

Have your say

Save our Seat, representing a broad cross-section of community members, strongly opposes the proposed gross expansion of Arthurs Seat Eagle (gondola facility). The Eagle's planning permit application is currently being assessed by the Planning Minister. We encourage community members and groups to make a submission opposing the Eagle's plans as soon as possible.

Guide to making a submission

A submission is a written statement explaining your views about the application and how you may be affected if a permit is granted. You don't need technical knowledge to make a submission.

This is a guide only. We encourage you to write submissions in your own words and to personalise your submission. Submissions will be more powerful if they contain your unique perspective and/or expertise and outline your personal response to the plans. Submissions can take the form of a simple email or can be more extensive. You can include pictures, references etc.

You can find more detailed information about our objections at

<https://www.saveourseat.org/objections>

You can find the Eagle's planning application and many supporting documents (renders, reports etc) at

<https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/planning-approvals/ministerial-permits-register/ministerial-permit/s/32fc606f-4419-48fc-83b4-38433d85ad14> This page also contains a contact email address for the Department of Transport and Planning: development.approvals@transport.vic.gov.au

Reminder: What is proposed?

Developers are proposing a \$25 million tourism expansion on State Park land at Arthurs Seat (Wonga), including:

- A roller coaster-like luge down the escarpment.
- A 34-metre-high viewing tower at the summit (equivalent to 11-13 storeys).

- Demolition and re-build of the base station building, built only 10 years ago.

Fast-tracked planning process

Please note Mornington Peninsula Shire is **not** the decision-maker on this project. The decision maker is the Victorian Planning Minister, The Hon. Sonia Kilkeny. The Planning Minister will need to apply the Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme when making her decision.

A fast-tracked approval process applies, and **the public are likely to have only a 2-week period in which to make submissions once the required “public notice period” commences** (potentially we may be given 28 days, but this is not confirmed). Although we have been given conflicting information about when the public notice period will start, **the public notice period is imminent**. The Minister can make a decision after the public notice period finishes and will consider public submissions as part of the planning process. Submissions need to be received by the end of the public notice period to ensure the Minister considers them.

It is important to know there are no third-party appeal rights as part of this fast-tracked approval system. Community members would only be able to have the Minister’s decision reviewed in the Supreme Court if she made an error of law, which is very unlikely. **Therefore, this submission period is make or break for the future of Arthurs Seat. There will be no going back.**

Public notice information

We understand from the Department of Transport and Planning that the public notice will include the following information:

Any person who may be affected by the granting of the permit may object or make other submissions to the responsible authority by email to development.assessment@transport.vic.gov.au or by post to Minister for Planning, C/- Department of Transport and Planning, GPO Box 2392, Melbourne VIC 3001.

An objection must:

- *Be made to the Responsible Authority in writing.*
- *Include the reasons for objection, and*
- *State how the objector would be affected.*

Some community members have already made submissions to the Minister using the development.approvals@transport.vic.gov.au email address.

Addressing your submission

Please address your submission to:

*The Hon. Sonya Kilkeny MP
Minister for Planning
Department of Transport and Planning
GPO Box 2392*

Melbourne VIC 3001

Email: development.assessment@transport.vic.gov.au

Dear Minister

Subject: Objection to Planning Application PA2403185 – Arthurs Seat Eagle Expansion

Introducing your submission

You can write something like:

I/we write to formally object to the proposed expansion of the Arthurs Seat Eagle precinct, as outlined in Planning Application PA2403185. I write as a local resident seeking to safeguard the unique character, environmental integrity, and safety of Arthurs Seat [please amend/adapt as appropriate].

You might be writing from the perspective of:

- A local resident that lives proximate to the proposed development site.
- Someone who visits and enjoys Arthurs Seat and its unique and beautiful features.
- A Victorian concerned with protecting the environment including public land such as Arthurs Seat State Park for future generations.

Reasons for objection

Please feel free to use and amend our dot points below as appropriate. You may wish to concentrate on a broad range of concerns, or narrow your submission to areas of particular concern or interest. If you have the time and/or expertise, it is helpful to refer to specific parts of the Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme. See page 6 and <https://www.saveourseat.org/objections> for more information.

1. Environmental Impact

- The development threatens native habitats and wildlife corridors within a State Park of environmental significance, including by fragmenting habitat.
- The proposed luge track and observation tower will result in vegetation removal and visual intrusion into a protected landscape.
- Construction and operation of the luge will directly affect local biodiversity and threaten the presence of sensitive wildlife species. Noise, light and human activity associated with the luge would also disrupt fauna behaviour patterns, further degrading the ecological values of Arthurs Seat.
- The Environmental Significance Overlay and Significant Landscape Overlay are not adequately respected in the proposal.

2. Bushfire Risk

- Arthurs Seat has been categorised as an extreme fire risk zone and there is a risk to life from people being trapped in a fast-moving bushfire.
- The proposal increases visitor numbers particularly at the height of summer, including vulnerable groups, without a realistic emergency evacuation plan.
- The 1997 bushfire reached the summit in 7 minutes, while gondola evacuation is estimated to take 6–23 minutes.
- Emergency services are unlikely to be able to respond in less than 15 minutes and can only respond if safe to do so and if they are able to get through traffic. Water supply will be an issue.
- Both the current and proposed buildings are not fire refuges and are not designed to protect human life. The current buildings are rated Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) 12.5 and the proposed new buildings are BAL 19. Despite the deficiency of the buildings, “shelter-in-place” strategies are proposed to be used.
- It is likely that people will get in their cars and seek to leave the area as a bushfire approaches, which is incredibly dangerous and in contrast to all CFA advice.
- There is no Bushfire Place of Last Resort (also known as Neighbourhood Safer Place) at Arthurs Seat as there is nowhere safe enough in the event of bushfire.

3. Erosion and Land Stability

- Landslide risk is a prominent issue on the Mornington Peninsula since the McCrae Landslide in January 2025 and the report of the subsequent Board of Inquiry. As stated in the Inquiry report, one of the chief lessons from the work of the Board of Inquiry is that “landslide risk cannot be ignored”.
- The luge track is planned through an area with active landslide risk, as identified in the developer’s own geotechnical report.
- There is already an Erosion Management Overlay in place, which exists specifically to mitigate landslip and instability hazards.
- Excavation and construction works required for the luge track would disturb fragile soils and slopes, significantly increasing the likelihood of landslides. In a location already prone to erosion, this presents an unacceptable level of risk to public safety and the integrity of the landscape.
- The proposal does not eliminate risk but accepts it, contrary to the Erosion Management Overlay objectives.

4. Visual and Cultural Intrusion

- The 34-metre observation tower and other structures would disrupt the treed skyline and scenic views of Arthurs Seat.
- The development fails to respect natural ridgelines, public lookouts, and the cultural heritage of the Bunurong / Boon Wurrung people.
- The luge is visually intrusive and may require a widened fire break (defendable space), creating a larger than existing scar down the front face of Arthurs Seat.
- The natural beauty and relative tranquility of Arthurs Seat are central to its value as a visitor destination. The visual intrusion of luge and tower infrastructure, coupled with noise generated by rides and large crowds, would fundamentally alter the experience of the site for both residents and visitors. Human noise from the luge has not been properly considered.

5. Traffic, Parking and Safety

- Traffic congestion and inadequate parking are already significant issues during peak visitation periods. The addition of high-volume attractions such as the luge and observation tower would exacerbate these pressures.
- The cumulative effect of increased visitation at both the base and summit stations has not been adequately planned for. “Overflow” parking in Seawinds Gardens and near the Dromana Cemetery is already inappropriate and will only increase.
- Increased traffic on narrow, winding roads poses risks to residents, wildlife, and tourists unfamiliar with the terrain. The luge is a dangerous distraction for road users.
- There has recently been a distressing increase in wildlife deaths in the area, particularly kangaroos being hit by cars. Wildlife fatalities are expected to rise due to increased vehicle movement.

6. No Net Community Benefit

- The community was not adequately consulted prior to the submission of the planning application, and the developer has largely concealed visual representations of their proposal.
- The Local Community Reference Group (LCRG) set up by the Arthurs Seat Eagle has not been an adequate community consultation process.
- The project is “capture tourism” and will not be of benefit to other businesses in the region.

- Save Our Seat previously lost at VCAT in 2014 on “net community benefit” grounds when opposing the scale of the original gondola. The Tribunal gave weight to the continuation of the heritage of the Arthurs Seat chairlift with a new facility.
- This proposal goes well beyond the gondola and introduces commercial, high-impact recreational development into public parkland. It offers limited public accessibility, is based on private ticketing, introduces environmental and life safety risks, and undermines the passive recreation character of the area.
- Unlike basic access to views and trails, these new facilities shift the area toward a pay-to-play model. The public loses peace, biodiversity, and safety while the operator gains revenue. This is not a balanced outcome and does not meet the planning scheme’s requirement that development must result in a net community benefit.

Relevant provisions of the Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme

- **Clause 36.02-2** – to use land for ‘leisure and recreation’ use the Public Park and Recreation Zone.
- **Clause 36.02-2** for building and works in the Public Park and Recreation Zone.
- **Clause 36.04-2** to construct or carry out works within a Transport Zone.
- **Clause 42.01-2** to construct or carry out works and remove vegetation in the Environmental Significance Overlay.
- **Clause 42.03-2** to construct or carry out works and remove vegetation in the Significant Landscape Overlay.
- **Clause 43.01-1** to demolish and construct a building or construct or carry out works in the Heritage Overlay.
- **Clause 44.01-2** for roadworks in the Erosion Management Overlay.
- **Clause 44.01-2** to construct a building or construct or carry out works and remove, destroy or lop any vegetation in the Erosion Management Overlay.
- **Clause 44.06-2** to construct a building or construct or carry out works associated with the following (relevant) uses (leisure and recreation) in the Bushfire Management Overlay.
- **Clause 52.17-1** to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation, including dead native vegetation.
- **Clause 52.29-1** to create or alter access to a road in Transport Zone 2 (intensification of use).

More information

Follow the Save Our Seat Facebook page for updates.

Our website is saveourseat.org.au

You can email us as at saveourseat2024@gmail.com if you have any questions.