MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

NORTHERN MELBOURNE INSTITUTE OF TAFE

and

VICTORIAN AIDS COUNCIL/GAY MEN’S HEALTH CENTRE

This Memorandum of Understanding is made between the Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE (NMIT) and the Victorian AIDS Council/Gay Men’s Health Centre (VAC/GMHC).

The aim of this document is to record an understanding between NMIT and VAC/GMHC by which NMIT and VAC/GMHC may co-operate in establishing closer links that may involve:

- management of the AIDS Memorial Garden which is part of the public land behind NMIT’s Fairfield Campus for which NMIT has management responsibility

and

- joint sponsorship of projects and activities which, from time to time, encourage awareness and understanding of community issues which impact upon the members of each organization’s community.

The management plan for the Fairfield Parklands, which includes the AIDS Memorial Garden, is attached at Schedule 1.

It is the wish of the parties that the closer links established may contribute to a positive and supportive relationship which ensures that the AIDS Memorial Garden is maintained as a place for respectful and reflective contemplation for the members of the HIV/AIDS affected community and the broader Victorian community.

STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

This document is a statement of understanding and is not intended to create binding or legal obligations on either party.

Signed for and on behalf of
Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE (NMIT) by
Mr Brian MacDonald
Chief Executive Officer
NMIT

Date 21/10/10

Signed for and on behalf of
Victorian AIDS Council/Gay Men’s Health Centre (VAC/GMHC) by
Mr Mike Kennedy
Executive Director
VAC/GMHC

Date 26/10/10
1. **Purpose of the Management Plan**

This Management Plan identifies the area of public land attached to the NMIT Fairfield Campus which includes the AIDS Memorial Garden which NMIT is responsible for maintaining.

Further, the Management Plan describes the manner in which the area will be maintained consistent with the landscaping and plant management philosophy as understood by NMIT in 1998 when it agreed to manage the site.

2. **Physical location of the Fairfield Campus Parkland**

The area of public land which NMIT maintains and manages was noted in the Victorian Land (Further Revocation of Reservations) Bill 1998. Clauses 8-10 provide for the revocation of the portion of the former Fairfield Hospital site not included in the Forensic Psychiatry Institute.

The area is described as Vol. 10453 Folio 871 Parish Jika Jika. The area is surrounded by cyclone fences to the north, south and eastern boundaries with access provided via the main entrance of NMIT and the student car park off Yarra Bend Road.

Within the allotment a small parcel of land has been set aside as the AIDS Memorial Garden.

Refer attachment 1: Photo/map of the area with the fences marked in and the AIDS Memorial Garden identified.

3. **The AIDS Memorial Garden**

The AIDS Memorial Garden was opened on 22 April 1988. The garden was developed as a place of tranquillity and respite for patients in the AIDS Ward at the Fairfield Hospital and their families and friends. (Melbourne Star Observer, 22 April 1988)

Ten years later, after the construction of the Victorian Institute of Forensic Psychiatry on part of the former Fairfield Hospital and the transfer of the remainder of the hospital site to NMIT, it was agreed that NMIT would manage the parkland areas including the AIDS Memorial Garden.

The AIDS Memorial Garden was designed around native shrubs and trees and circumscribed by Victorian-style seats. The garden was intended for the use, although not exclusively, of AIDS patients and their families.

NMIT has, as part of its occupancy of the Fairfield Campus, assumed responsibility for the maintenance of the AIDS Memorial Garden and the surrounding park area. An NMIT Committee of Management is established for that purpose.
4. Parkland concept

The AIDS Memorial Garden is an extension of the native grasslands and woodlands which form the banks of the Yarra River at Fairfield. The garden was designed to be compatible with the natural environment consisting largely of native bushland and developed to enrich the mood of reflection and tranquillity that already exists there.

In keeping with this philosophy, thickets of Wallaby Grass are left to grow naturally amongst more common grasses and undergrowth. Large eucalypts and smaller, self-sown native plants are left to evolve to provide habitat for native birds and small animals.

Pathways, consisting of Lilydale toppings, have been established in the garden. The pathways wind through the area and enable access to the garden benches and minimise the danger of snakes and trip hazards for those wishing to sit in the garden area.

Formal maintenance, other than blackberry control, necessary tree management and debris removal for public safety, will be minimal to allow the bush to evolve naturally.

The area outside the AIDS Memorial Garden is used for training purposes, from time to time, at the direction of the NMIT Horticulture Head of Department. At the conclusion of training activities the area is returned to natural bushland consistent with the parkland concept.

5. Management Committee

The following NMIT senior staff members have responsibility for managing the area:

- Director Client Services (03 9269 1318): Liaison with community stakeholders
- Campus Manager Fairfield (03 9269 8822): Campus access, site monitoring and complaints
- Head of Department Horticulture (03 9269 8830): Advice on plantings, horticultural issues
- Manager Buildings and Properties (03 9269 1559): Routine gardening and maintenance of furniture and signage

The Victorian AIDS Council/Gay Men’s Health Centre (VAC/GMHC) is represented on the Management Committee by the Manager, HIV Services Program (03 9863 0425) in liaison with community stakeholders.

The Management Committee meets twice yearly, in September (summer preparation) and April (winter preparation), at the Fairfield Campus in the Campus Manager’s Office.
6. Maintenance Program

The NMIT Buildings and Properties Department is responsible for clearing the pathways from shrub overhang, potholes and weed infestation. This occurs on a seasonal schedule developed annually and based on current and predicted weather patterns.

A dry winter might require less pruning, spraying and erosion repairs to pathways, while a wet, warm spring might mean fortnightly pruning and spraying until summer arrives.

The Manager Buildings and Properties prepares the annual maintenance schedule and forwards it to the Fairfield Campus Manager.

Monthly inspections to monitor the condition of the area, including any OH&S issues, are undertaken by the Fairfield Campus Manager and/or the Horticulture Head of Department. A condition report, based on the monthly inspections, is filed with the Campus Manager and any rectification issues are followed up in a timely manner.

Furniture and signs are maintained in good condition.

Maintenance Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop annual maintenance schedule and lodge with Fairfield Campus Manager</td>
<td>January each year (or as required )</td>
<td>Manager Buildings and Properties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain AIDS Memorial Garden</td>
<td>As per schedule</td>
<td>Manager Buildings and Properties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct monthly inspections, log reports and rectify any problems</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Fairfield Campus Manager Horticulture HOD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advise security staff of Fairfield Campus Parkland and AIDS Memorial Garden Management Plan</td>
<td>As required with change of security staff</td>
<td>Security Coordinator Fairfield Campus Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convene Management Committee meetings and provide administrative support</td>
<td>Twice yearly</td>
<td>Fairfield Campus Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage complaints and improvement suggestions</td>
<td>As required</td>
<td>Fairfield Campus Manager</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Information for visitors

The AIDS Memorial Garden is located on the banks of the Yarra River directly behind the Thomas Embling Forensic Hospital.

The NMIT Campus at Fairfield is open to students, staff and visitors while classes and institute activities and events are taking place. At other times, access to the campus is limited and entry is via the student car park located on Yarra Bend Road.
On site security and campus patrols operate 24 hours per day.

There is no public access to the AIDS Memorial Garden via the main Yarra Trails from Heidelberg Road.

Vehicle Access and Parking

On weekdays visitors should enter via the main NMIT gate off Yarra Bend Road, advise the gatehouse that they are visiting the AIDS Memorial Garden and they will be directed to follow the main road to the end where designated parking is available close to the pathway to the garden.

On weekends visitors should enter via the student carpark off Yarra Bend Road, take the car park gate through to the main campus road and walk to the end which is close to the pathway to the AIDS Memorial Garden.

On weekends there is no direct access by car to the garden. Visitors with mobility issues wishing to visit the garden on weekends can make prior arrangements by contacting the office of campus manager on 03 9269 8822.

The Fairfield Campus Map can be found on the NMIT website:


Attachment 1: Fairfield Campus Parkland and AIDS Memorial Garden