

# Media Release

**The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC**

Minister for Employment

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy

Minister for Small Business

Minister for Resources



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## FITZROY GARDENS TO NIDDRIE: OLD QUARRIES PROVIDE NEW LIFE

A new guide reveals the little-known history of some of Victoria's best-known public spaces, with Fitzroy Gardens and Highpoint Shopping Centre among locations that were once quarries providing materials to build the state.

The Victorian Government's *New Lives of Old Quarries* booklet details Victoria's proud history of transforming former work sites for recreation, fishing, shopping and housing once the extraction stops and land rehabilitation is finished.

All Nations Park in Northcote produced clay for bricks from the 1870s and Valley Lake in Niddrie was a source for basalt between the 1940s and 1970s. Highpoint was a quarry for almost a century from the 1870s and provided basalt for roads.

The Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne produced sand for concrete and bricklaying before its transformation while Albert Park Lake and Princes Park were also once quarries, though little is known of the operations that took place there.

Perhaps the most stunning example is Fitzroy Gardens, situated on the edge of the CBD and a bluestone quarry for a decade from about 1839. Large holes left from the digging were reportedly filled with rubbish, creating an eyesore for the burgeoning city. In 1848 Governor Charles La Trobe responded to public demand and the site, then known as Fitzroy Square, was reserved for parkland.

At Quarries Park in Clifton Hill, small quarry operations were made available for leasing to the public from 1846 and it was declared that most of Melbourne's "better warehouses and dwellings" were constructed from bluestone and basalt quarried at the site.

The park was used for landfill in the 1960s and '70s but is now home to sporting fields used year-round for cricket, soccer and football and it also connects to the Main Yarra and Merri Creek trails.

Coburg Lake Reserve, Quarry Reserve in Ferntree Gully and Plenty Gorge Parklands in South Morang also feature in the new guide.

Earth Resources Regulation is responsible for approving new quarries to provide the materials for Victoria's new schools, hospitals, homes, road and rail – a work authority for a new quarry can only be granted once planning permission is in place.

Planning for the end of a quarry's economic life begins before the first stone is extracted with a rehabilitation plan part of the work authority approval and bonds held by the State to cover liability.

*New Lives of Old Quarries* is available at [earthresources.vic.gov.au](http://earthresources.vic.gov.au).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Resources Jaala Pulford

*"Quarries are vital to build a state that provides for every person, regardless of where they live – and we know it's just as important to plan for what happens when the extraction ends."*

*"Old quarries have been transformed into some of our most-loved community assets and we'll continue to make sure that's the case."*

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