

14 January 2009

Victorian Environmental Assessment Council
Level 6 / 8 Nicholson St
East Melbourne
Vic 3002

Metropolitan Melbourne Investigation – Use of Crown Land

Dear Councillors

I wish to make a submission to your current investigation into the use of Crown Land across Victoria.

As a general statement, it is my firm belief that Crown Land has been reserved for public purposes and, except in exceptional circumstances, should remain in available for public uses – not for private development.

In particular, I wish to speak of the Crown Land along the Edgars Creek in Coburg.

Currently extensive development is occurring on the former Pentridge and Kodak sites which will result in a dramatic increase in the local population. Such development is doubtless needed in metropolitan Melbourne as the physical infrastructure is stretched by the need to provide services to outer suburbs.

One essential need in a densely settled population is open space for recreation and indeed to maintain a natural environment around the dwellings.

As you know, the Edgar Creek reservation, originally made for a freeway, sits between the two new developments mentioned above. As a former natural water course, I understand that it forms a flood plain thus making it useless for building development.

The rates of Moreland (former Coburg) people have maintained this land for many years. Now that, thankfully, it is no longer required for more road works, it is being "offered" back to us, if a further payment of millions of dollars is given to a State Government department!

How many times can individuals be asked to pay for a piece of land that is already owned by them?

The land is already used for recreation- walkers, many with their animals, bike riders and even at one stage golfers. It would continue to be an essential green space for people moving into the Pentridge and Kodak developments.

In 2009, in a community so concerned with green-house issues and the future of our planet, one would hope that all levels of government would support the provision of parklands and recreation.

I submit that this land in Coburg should be transferred, at no cost, to the Moreland Council to be maintained as open public space.

My previous representations to Members of Parliament on this matter have only evoked general remarks such as "these are the rules". I trust that your investigation into the use of Crown Land may ensure that these "rules", which of course have been made by parliamentarians, may be changed for the benefit of all.

Thank you for reading my submission.

Sincerely

Ken McLeod