

Metropolitan Melbourne

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No: 60

February 11, 2009

Chairperson,
Victorian Environmental Assessment Council
Level 6, 8 Nicholson Street
East Melbourne 3002

Dear Sir or Madam,

As a local resident I wish to express my concern regarding the use being made of the Yarra Park.

As a green area of the city and its wonderful trees it is a haven for birds and city dwellers who walk through. For attendees at the local sportsgrounds it is a pleasure to walk through.

However, this area is being destroyed by being used as a car park. In many areas of the world people cannot even walk on grassed areas yet we use our grassed areas as a car park when there are countless car park facilities within a short walking distance.

The Yarra Park is difficult to access and use of it as a car park becomes a traffic nightmare not just for locals attempting to leave or access their homes, but for the traffic police attempting to manage the traffic. The cost savings in police manpower by ceasing to use this area as a car park would, I am sure, be significant.

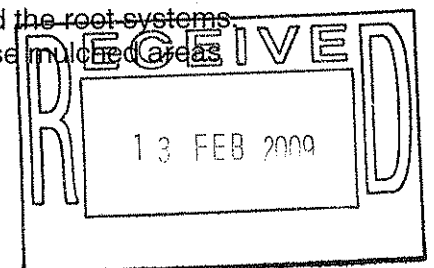
This park has an impressive network of avenues lined with 490 heritage elms. It is historical, it is a draw card for our city for tourists who must be horrified at the use of it as a public car park.

I note that in the past during the Commonwealth Games, Yarra Park was closed to car parking and free public transport was included in the ticket. The arrangement was successful and generally accepted by the public attending the Games.

Having lived in the area only a short time I am amazed at the waste caused by the constant repairing of the Park required after car parking for one season ends, before car parking for another starts. Recently the area was used for tennis parking. The Rod Laver tennis centre is not adjacent to the parking and one would have thought that public transport which is adjacent to the Rod Laver Arena, would have been the transport of choice.

As a City of Melbourne ratepayer I consider this a waste of my rates. Not only is it a waste but its servants fail to implement its policies. The City of Melbourne has a policy that does not permit cars to park within 3 metres of the baseline of trees. Yet this is consistently ignored by parking attendants and cars persistently park up against trees and over root systems causing further soil compaction. I wonder if there are any figures provided by the City of Melbourne justifying the income which is surely eaten up by the cost of repair of the damage caused?

The City of Melbourne has spent a lot of money mulching around the root systems. Users have observed parking attendants directing cars over these mulched areas causing further soil compaction.



Of a morning I walk through this park and dodging bike riders is one thing, but some motorists drive at unsafe speeds also and can cause far more damage. As there is a children's playground adjacent to this "car park" it is not a safe place for children to play.

Once the "car park" is full there is no monitoring of the parking. Such failure to observe normal occupational health and safety concerns is damning on the authorities concerned.

I submit that car parking in this park should be banned and vehicles use paid parking places. The city abounds with car parking centres only a short distance from the venues. Generally these centres offer cheaper parking at the weekend, the only advantage of the Yarra Park is its proximity. Given the problem of obesity and lack of exercise in the community, I would have thought that exercise would be encouraged.

Yours faithfully,

Lydia Kinda
A concerned resident.