

Metropolitan Melbourne

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No: 106

13 February 2009

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

Dear Sirs

VEAC Investigation into Crown Land

I understand that the Minister for Environment and Climate Change has requested that the Victorian Environment Assessment Council carry out an investigation of Crown Land and Public Authority Land in 29 municipalities, including Melbourne Metropolitan.

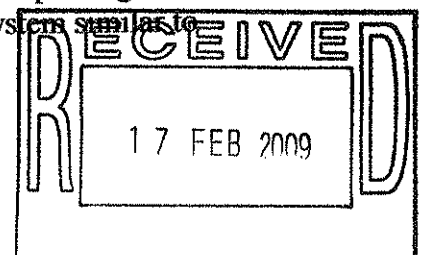
I would like to bring to the attention of the Council the long term neglect and active destruction of Yarra Park.

This park, originally designated as an area for public recreation and enjoyment, and maintained accordingly, has instead become a public car park. The drought, now in its twelfth year, has exacerbated the damage done to the ground and trees by cars, and must from now on be taken into account when making plans for the park's future. The park is in such a fragile state that it cannot take any more car parking without the risk of irreversible damage.

The grass has died as an inevitable result of the drought and water restrictions, but worse than that much of it has disappeared. There is no hope of regeneration if and when the rain comes because the cars have meant that only bare earth remains. The earth is compacted with dust on top which blows away on windy days. Not only is the top soil lost, it is unpleasant to walk in. The Fitzroy Gardens and the Botanic Gardens have managed to keep their grass, even if it is brown, so it is not impossible. It is the cars that are doing the damage.

Many of the trees are struggling and cars which are supposed to park at least three metres away from them are parked hard up against their trunks, compacting the soil around them and damaging the roots.

There always seems to be money to build a new stadium (the rectangular stadium) or improve an old one (tennis center), but no money is ever spent on car parking. It is time to rethink this. Cars must be banned from Yarra Park and a system similar to that used during the Commonwealth Games put in place instead.



I do feel strongly about the wanton destruction of this parkland and hope that you will do what you can to save it for future generations in the manner in which it was intended, that is for the enjoyment and recreation of the public, and not the convenience and commercial gain of a few.

Yours sincerely,

Sylvia Black