



"David Ellis"

16/02/2009 08:14 AM

To <veac@dse.vic.gov.au>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject D.Ellis. Investigation: Submission.

**Metropolitan Melbourne**

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No:  
116

*Re:*

**Notice of Investigation** The Minister for Environment and Climate Change has requested the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) to carry out an investigation of Crown land and public authority land in 29 municipalities in metropolitan Melbourne\*.

*Attached please find my submission.*

David Ellis  
Councillor, Manningham



Submission Open Space.doc

Submission to  
Victorian Environmental Assessment Council, re  
**Investigation of Crown land etc., Metropolitan Melbourne.**

Observations in my capacity as a private individual and resident of one of Melbourne's Green Wedge municipalities (Manningham):

- **As Melbourne's population expands** – or is forced to expand – what open space remains is increasingly precious. This applies to large and contiguous tracts of public reserve as well as to modest neighbourhood 'pocket parks'.
- **The value of open space** cannot be measured solely in terms of market value of comparable private land. It's value includes the psychological health of those who access the space. While difficult to quantify, open areas of grass and trees make an assessable contribution to the sanity and social health of communities when compared with those cities and suburbs that do not have that benefit, or have it only in small measure.
- **It follows that** open space does not have to have a designated purpose (e.g. as a sporting field or conservation area) for it to have value. It's first value lies in being, simply, *open*.
- **Privately owned open space** must be considered to be more liable to being developed than public open space: the more reason for retaining and maximising openness of POS as the principle duty or trust of open space management.
- **Whatever future development of Melbourne occurs**, it should be in concentrated in designated urban areas such as the Development Activity Centres. It is not a defensible option to continue to 'fill the gaps' especially with the 'gaps' now so diminished.
- **This applies to building for public use** on currently open public land. A building is still a building and represents a loss of the benefits of open space as outlined.
- **Horseriding** is a popular and healthy pursuit for many people in outer urban areas yet places to ride are few and restricted, typically unsafe paved roads or very limited space in ménages, paddocks or a few pony clubs. Substantial tracts of open space could be made available to horseriding trails in the way that bike-paths have allowed to cyclists. With proper management, this need not impact unduly on conservation or other uses and would lead to extended use and appreciation of, and care for, our open spaces.

Thank you for your attention to these few points.

David Ellis  
Councillor, Manningham Council