



IMAGINE  
THE YARRA

# DRAFT YARRA STRATEGIC PLAN PUBLIC CONSULTATION

## SUBMISSION COVER SHEET

<b>Submission Number:</b>	YSP26
<b>Name (Individual/Organisation):</b>	Individual
<b>Attachments:</b>	Attachment 1 – Written submission

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Yarra Strategic Plan](#)  
**Subject:** Individual submission to Yarra Strategic Plan  
**Date:** Sunday, 29 March 2020 7:06:49 PM

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For the first 25 years of my life, I lived in Lower Templestowe on a 50 acre dairy farm which extended from the main road to the Yarra river. That farm is now Birrarung Park. One of my clearest memories of that time is of swimming in the river at the bottom of our property and delighting in the clarity of the water. Such a feeling would not be possible now and I believe that one of the key objectives of the YSP should be a focus on restoring the Yarra river and its tributaries to a former condition of health.

For the past 47 years, I have lived [REDACTED] which is opposite the Eltham Lower Park and borders the Diamond Creek which flows into the Yarra 500 metres further on at the Lenister Farm area of the park. In our early years here, I concentrated on restoring the creek bank by gradually - and successfully - eliminating watsonia, boneseed, tradescantia and various other weeds. Propagation of locally indigenous species followed, particularly Prostanthera lasianthos, Melicytus dentatus and Eucalypts. Since 2001, [REDACTED] to continue the revegetation of the 70 metres of creek bank on our property. What was once a bank comprising two huge pine trees, Lomandra and scattered Eucalypts, Kunzea, Bursaria and Melicytus, is now, some 1000 plants later, a thickly vegetated area, home to wombats, possums, echidnas, snakes, lizards and a variety of birds including tawny frogmouths, parrots, lorikeets, kookaburras, magpies, pigeons, currawongs, thornbills - and noisy miners - which are not so welcome!

About 30 years ago, I became a member of Friends of the Diamond Creek, Eltham Lower Park [REDACTED] [REDACTED] We have been involved in revegetating a 300 metre stretch of land along the creek and also involved in planting various copses within the park. Over this time, many thousands of plants indigenous to the Diamond Creek have been planted and the area maintained with occasional grants from Melbourne Water.

I am also a member of Friends of Eltham Lower Park (FELP) a group which was formed in 2017 with one of its purposes being to advocate for the park, particularly the area known as Lenister Farm. The catalyst for the formation of this group was the proposed extension by the Diamond Valley Railway (DVR) into the Lenister Farm area beside the Diamond Creek and the Yarra and through the wetlands. In contrast to other areas of the park which are used by sporting clubs and the Diamond Valley Railway, this area is used by dog walkers and walkers in general who enjoy the walk along the Diamond Creek and beside the Yarra. An extension of the DVR into this area would involve visual and aural pollution with the erection of cyclone fences, noise and litter. Our organisation is particularly concerned that this Lenister Farm area be preserved and enhanced as a place of passive recreation, something which is becoming all too rare today.

One area in the Lenister Farm area which could be developed is the landing at the confluence of the Diamond Creek and the Yarra, a popular place for dog walkers to meet and allow their dogs to swim in the river. I believe this area is worthy of further development such as steps and a ramp to ensure safer access - particularly for the elderly and the disabled - and planting to enhance the beauty of what is naturally a very attractive section of the river.

Since 2018, I have been the [REDACTED] of a group which consists of the 13 householders who live along the banks of the Diamond Creek in Antoinette Boulevard. This group was set up with the assistance of Nillumbik Shire Council and Melbourne Water to establish some control over the rabbit population along the creek which tended to migrate to and from the Eltham Lower Park. It was decided that it was essential to destroy rabbit habitat such as blackberries and to set up a weed eradication program to enable later planting to be undertaken along the 600 metre stretch of the creek. This has been funded by Melbourne Water over the past two years and last year, all householders were involved in planting along the creek bank with the intent of restoring the creek bank to its natural state and hopefully providing a wildlife corridor. Further planting and weed eradication will be undertaken again this year.

My plea in recounting my interactions with the Yarra and the Diamond Creek over the years is that where there

is a conflict between providing greater public access to the river or ensuring the health of the river and its wildlife, that priority be given to the health of the river.

