
Request to be heard?: Yes

Full Name: Ted Kieca

Organisation:

Affected property:

Attachment 1: 2020_Yarra_Bulleen_Plan_Submission_TK.pdf

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: Please see attached document.

2020 Draft Yarra River – Bulleen Precinct Land Use Framework Plan

Submission.

I would like to present the following submission for review by the advisory committee related to Birrarung Park. The goal of this submission is to improve the safety, increase functionality of the facilities and make Birrarung Park more attractive for all residents.

Birrarung Park Safety Concerns – Cross Yarra Bridge Location.

Background.

Birrarung Park consists of two oval loops of paved roads and a carpark facility. The access to the park is only from one side as the park is surrounded by the meandering Yarra River.

Almost all of the time, the park is used by pedestrians, people walking their dogs and families with children. Occasionally, we also have runners and families with small children on bicycles. The speed of the traffic is low. Due to its unique setup, the environment for these activities is ideal, very relaxed and safe. The park has almost no bicycle traffic.

Concern.

The current recreational development plan delivered to the residents via mail raises a safety concern which should be addressed.

The proposed bicycle and pedestrian bridge location across the Yarra River will have a large impact on the usage pattern of Birrarung Park.

Two main pedestrian loops will now experience high volumes of through, high speed bicycle traffic. Strict walking and running discipline will need to be introduced in order to avoid frequent accidents. This will include line markings, speed restrictions and warning signs. Dogs and small children will need to be under tight control as the groups of bicycle riders will commute through the main Birrarung Park walking paths.

The proposed location of cross Yarra River bridge will therefore have a negative impact on the safety of the Birrarung Park and will reduce enjoyment of it for the community, which will be in stark contrast and directly the opposite of what the proposals are meant to do.

Proposed Solution.

Whilst the bridge across the Yarra River can bring a lot of benefits and can open new opportunities for the users of the park, it needs to be constructed in a location which is convenient and does not impact the existing environment.

To avoid this issue, it is proposed that the following be done:

1. Construct a cross Yarra River bicycle and pedestrian bridge at the gate of the Birrarung Park at the intersection of Templestowe Road and Sheahans Road in Bulleen which will prevent high speed through traffic from entering Birrarung Park walking paths.
2. Provide a carpark at the intersection of Templestowe Road and Sheahans Road in Bulleen, near the bridge. The unpaved parking ground already exists in this area and is used frequently by people.

Benefits.

1. The proposed solution will not destroy the unique character and function of Birrarung Park.
2. The proposed solution will create easy access for all of the community to the other side of the Yarra River.
3. The proposed solution will allow visitors to park next to the bridge and join the Main Yarra Trail for long walk, run or bicycle ride.
4. The proposed solution will not create a detrimental environmental impact on Birrarung Park during erection of the bridge, as the construction site will be located off the main road, not in the middle of the park.
5. The proposed solution should have some cost advantages due to construction site location and easy access as well as available electrical power.

Birrarung Park Improvement – Original Lake Restoration.

Background

The park used to have a lake with an island in the middle of the small loop. Due to severe drought at the end of the last decade, the water level in the lake was decreasing. The MFB pumped the water back to the lake from the Yarra on a few occasions but the lake eventually disappeared. The bed of the dry lake was taken over by the vegetation and its water holding capacity greatly diminished.

The lake came back again in 2009 during a period of exceptional rainfall when Yarra flooded the whole park. The lake lasted for another 2 years and disappeared again. The vegetation grew even bigger and it is now even hard to recognise the original shape of the lake. The capacity of the lake to retain water has further diminished.

Proposed Improvement.

Restore the original lake in the park by doing the following:

1. Improve water retention capacity of the lake and prevent it from dry out.
 - 1.1. Excavate the lake bed and remove existing vegetation.
 - 1.2. Deepen the lake.
 - 1.3. Leave the island on the lake.
2. Increase lake water catchment area and prevent it from dry out.
 - 2.1. Install irrigation system around the lake to collect and discharge more water to the lake.
 - 2.2. Install irrigation system in frequently flooded areas of the park and discharge the water to the lake.

Benefits.

1. Restore the original lake in Birrarung Park.
2. Provide water feature in the park.
3. Provide additional water storage for bushfire seasons.

Ted Kieca