1. Reference is made to the Parks Victoria letter dated 11 September 2019. From the outset the limited time that was provided to prepare this response should be acknowledged by the Committee.

2. In the mid part of the Parks Victoria letter, specifically with regard to 177 Templestowe Road (previously referred to in the YJFL submission as 168 Templestowe Road), it is noted that:

   - the subject site is crown land and subject to a lease agreement
   - the strategic direction for the Yarra Valley Parklands in this section is for a continuous passive open space, applicable to the current land either side of, and in the future, including the subject site
   - there is no consideration by Parks Victoria of a change of land use to active open space at the subject site

   Parks Victoria has engaged in the process of the Yarra River – Bulleen Precinct Land Use Framework Advisory Committee as the forum to specifically review land use in this reach. This land use framework process is appropriate to consider the balance, distribution or changes of the land use in this precinct. The draft Land Use Framework has the subject site as proposed ‘open space/recreation/conservation’ which accords with the strategic planning for the Yarra Parklands.

3. Further the letter states ‘Until the Yarra River – Bulleen Precinct Land Use Framework process is resolved, the long term vision for the subject site remains to serve to protect riparian and environmental values, cultural heritage, flood plain capacity and to facilitate passive recreation experiences along the river’.

4. We find this response from Parks Victoria completely at odds with the draft Yarra River Bulleen Precinct Land Use Framework Plan (YRBPLUFP).

5. The draft YRBPLUFP states that the vision for the study area (in part) which is:

   ‘The river corridor provides a healthy natural environment, enabling swimming, relaxation and other recreational activities’ (draft Yarra River Bulleen Precinct Land Use Framework Plan, pg 41).

6. This vision is complemented by the four principles that align with the vision – the fourth principle is most relevant and relates to Delivering Public Value which includes:

   Ensure future development and change leaves a lasting positive legacy
   Introduce a compatible mix of uses to improve the quality and amenity of parklands and open space
   Improve the environmental, social and cultural values of the study area for future generations (draft Yarra River Bulleen Precinct Land Use Framework Plan, pg 42).

7. The references to introduction of a compatible mix of land uses and improving the environmental, social and cultural values of the study area for future generations is particularly relevant to the YJFL submission which quotes extracts from the Plan of General Development Melbourne 1929.

8. The Plan of General Development Melbourne 1929 that was prepared by the Commission and subsequently implemented by the MMBW established the legacy of the parklands and specifically highlighted the need for increased provision of active recreation sites for the health and well being of the whole community.

9. Active recreation use of land that is not encumbered by significant environmental or cultural values is a use that was anticipated and planned for since 1929 and in successive documents including the draft YRBPLUFP.

10. It is highly important to note that the draft YRBPLUFP states at pg 51 that the draft Framework seeks to:

   4.5 In the medium-term, redevelop Crown land under lease at 165 Templestowe Road and at 199-209 amd 211-219 Templestowe Road as active open space, revegetating a habitat corridor along the Yarra River
frontage (draft Yarra River Bulleen Precinct Land Use Framework Plan, pg 51).

11. The draft YRBPLUFP then goes onto to highlight key sites and identifies 165 Templestowe Road with a proposed future use as open space/recreation/conservation (draft Yarra River Bulleen Precinct Land Use Framework Plan, pg 53).

12. The actual Yarra River – Bulleen Precinct Land Use Framework Plan also specifically notes the subject land as ‘Expansion of parklands/potential active recreation’ - (draft Yarra River Bulleen Precinct Land Use Framework Plan, Map SA).

13. In this context the proposal to relocate the YJFL is entirely consistent with the draft Framework.

14. It is also entirely appropriate for this committee to make recommendations that can be used during the course of the advisory committee that will consider the draft YRBPLUFP.

15. In this context we reiterate our previous submissions that have called for the need to achieve a net community benefit and the positive extent that this can be achieved via adoption of the submission that have been made by the YJFL.

16. Finally we reiterate our conclusion and request below.

What is requested

17. The Committee will note that little has been said in this submission about the position of the YJFL in terms of support or otherwise for the North East Link. In some ways the relative importance of the north east link is beyond the interests of the YJFL but what is important to note is that at no stage have the YJFL sought to oppose the project.

18. It follows therefore that the YJFL do not oppose the north east link project, but that position is conditional upon resolution of a home for the YJFL as a requirement or condition of the project not something to be looked at in the future.

19. The reasons for the Seed Farm site having been identified as the preferred site are set out in this submission but it is important to highlight in closing some very important points about the Seed Farm site and its potential use for active sporting purposes:

Firstly, the land is already in public ownership and as such does not need to be acquired;

Secondly, the land forms part of a broader river corridor that has been identified for recreation and other purposes;

Thirdly, current occupation of the land for a Seed Farm should be viewed no differently to other land that is occupied by existing businesses except with the potential that there may be other land that could accommodate the Seed Farm.

20. In terms of reference to a net increase in area of land for public/recreation purposes, as discussed by Mr Barlow, whilst we support the objective as an indicator of net community benefit, we note the point above that the Seed Farm is already in public ownership. The proposal to use the land for active sporting facilities, as opposed to a business, is in our view a return of the land to one of its intended purposes for the betterment of the community however we must reiterate that the YJFL is not seeking to solely serve its own purposes.

21. Moving to the Seed Farm will enable 4 existing ground leases to be reduced to 2 and enable other activities to be consolidated.

22. With the betterment of the entire community in mind, what is sought from the Committee are firm recommendations to:

   a) include the Seed Farm site within the boundaries of the project;
b) support the request from the YJFL to nominate the Seed Farm site as the future home of the YJFL;

c) bring forward construction of the facilities such that any temporary relocation can either be avoided or reduced in duration; and

d) support the general position that achievement of a net community benefit in the form that has been requested must be recognized with the EPRs.

Chris De Silva
Director