



Our Yarra: Healthy, Protected and Loved

29 September 2019

Due: 30 September 2019

Submission draft Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment

Introduction

Golf courses are a critical part of the connected green spaces that form the much-admired open space parklands of greater Melbourne. Many of the golf courses likely to be subject to development are along urban waterways and in particular along the Yarra. Development will severely impact on the connectivity of habitat in Melbourne and impair the city's ability to respond to a heating climate, and reduced flashier flooding, through the existence of sizeable contiguous habitat, migration of species upstream and downstream, and the ability of the landscape to absorb water.

These spaces are critical to the health of Melbourne and the health of the waterways, and any development must reach and exceed the highest standards of sustainability.

p. 3 section 'Step 3'

This section needs to include the following wording in red

'a net community benefit and a net environmental gain and the highest level of sustainability'. The Yarra River Protection (Willip-gin Birrarung murrn) Act has established the importance of the net environmental gain principle if there is not to be an ongoing decline in the ecological health of the city.

p. 4

Planning assessment needs to explicitly included a study of the current state of biodiversity and natural environment including the importance of providing habitat for native species that are 'common' and culturally valued, not just the rare and threatened species. In particularly the connectivity role of the particular golf course in the more extensive connected network of green habitat spaces across the city.

p. 5

Public open space contributions need to also contribute to the creation of habitat for native species, in particular for species commonly found in the area.

p. 6

The list of relevant state or local strategies needs to include

- The relevant Healthy Waterways Strategy (Melbourne Water)
- The Yarra Strategic Plan, if adjacent to the Yarra River.
- Integrated Water Management Framework for Victoria (released September 2019)

p. 8

The value of creating connected walking and biking paths needs to be included in net community benefits (also noting the need to provide for undisturbed areas immediately adjacent to waterways for the benefit of wildlife).

Water

Golf courses function as key water management features due to their ability to absorb rain, as well as to store rainfall in wetlands and water features. Water and the ability of the landscape of golf courses to absorb and manage water must be a key consideration in any development of a golf course and therefore these guidelines.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Kelly

Yarra Riverkeeper,

On behalf of the board and membership of the Yarra Riverkeeper Association and the broader community that supports our vision and objectives.

Appendix: Yarra Riverkeeper Association

Formed in 2004, the Yarra Riverkeeper Association speaks for the Yarra, Melbourne's own beautiful, resilient, iconic river. The Association is a credible and authoritative voice for the river. It is an independent community of citizen-advocates that works solely in the interest of the river. The spokesperson of the Association is the Yarra Riverkeeper.