

Submission to Victorian Extinction Inquiry July 2020

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I have been a resident of the Green Wedge in Wonga Park for 30 years. My family regularly visit the Mt Lofty Reserve in the Warrandyte State Park, a short walk from our property.

I cite 3 examples of what is happening in my backyard, as the core of the State, National and Global problem of habitat destruction.

During our time in Wonga Park we have seen the vegetation decimation within Mt Lofty in proportion to the increase in feral deer in the area.

The delicate and fragile native vegetation of Mt Lofty reserve has been destroyed, local birds and smaller native animals have lost their habitat and left the area.

Manningham Council provide a subsidy for a deer hunter to control the deer population on adjacent private property, a mere bandaid.

A larger well resourced, scientifically based eradication program is required for the entire State Park area.

Band aid solutions are a short sighted, quick fix, waste of public money and do not resolve the problem.

Feral deer are a state wide problem, that requires a state sterilisation and mass culling response.

Creeping industrial planning permits within the fringe of the Green Wedge of Manningham Council allow for intensive development inappropriate to the purpose of the Green Wedge.

In our immediate area a small wholesale plant nursery has morphed into a landscape rock and boulder supplier with associated heavy earth equipment and truck movements.

A single operator excavator yard has developed into a 28 container, 14 truck parking and storage yard with associated truck movements, land degradation and waterway contamination.

What is the reason for the Green Wedge if not to protect the waterways and environment for the future of society.

Councils must be obliged to preserve the Green Wedge, reinforced by law.

The widening of Jumping Creek Road for "safety" reasons is a completely unnecessary destruction of roadside vegetation to allow for greater traffic flow at speed. Perplexingly, J.Creek Road is to be flattened (hills removed) and straightened (curves removed) to make it safer. The new Jumping Creek Road design includes the installation of speed humps(hills) and roundabouts(curves) also to make the road safer.

The safety issue could easily be resolved by lowering and policing the speed limit on the existing road which will also minimise much of the road kill that happens along J.Creek Road.

Much of the roadside reserve being sacrificed contains native wildflowers and large old trees which provide habitat for countless birds and native animals.

The emphasis within Government is on development, not on preservation or protection.

The loop holes allowing developers to "get around" the environment protection laws must be amended. Planners must put preservation and protection of the Environment before development.

Implementing the recommendations of the 2011 Parliamentary Inquiry into the Environmental Effects Statement Process in Victoria would be a good beginning. Requiring an Independent body to be responsible for the EES preparation while removing the EES process from the Development proponent would lead to more factual, environment focused reports. Tightening the EES approval process at Minister level would also protect more Environment.

As a society we cannot afford to continue allowing destruction..from small scale local habitat to larger state, National development. Environment protection must be top priority.

As I see it..we are the feral animal destroying our own habitat.