

The Secretary
Legislative Council Select Committee on Public Land Development
Parliament of Victoria
Spring Street
Melbourne Vic 3002

I am seeking to share with you our current situation, which involves the subdividing of Public space for low & high density housing by our Council.

I am a resident in Apollo Parkways, Greensborough. Our neighbourhood is green and leafy with over 1000 homes on generous blocks. We are in a very hilly part of Melbourne, many homes are 2 storey on terraced blocks With steep driveways and roads. Most homes are 30 yrs old or less with mature gardens.

In recent years our area has seen new subdivisions of family homes at Kilarney Ridge, Tree Tops, Bullaroo Ct, Apollo Ct, & Mariposa. Currently high density housing is going up at Diamond Hills.

The entrance way to our neighbourhood includes a welcoming green area which surrounds our Library, Sports Centre and Shire Offices. We have approx 350 car parks, garden beds, and numerous trees, which provide us with a great amenity. Council figures estimate 1,000,000 visitors to the Sports Centre and Library each year. Numerous people walk through the area as it is so pleasant and relatively flat. A footbridge across the Bypass provides Banyule residents access to the land/facilities. Alongside the land is Greensborough campus of NMIT, Apollo Parkways Primary School (roll 750) and our small Shopping Centre. The current Apollo site is significantly elevated providing wide views to the City and is marked in the Melways as a look out point. It is in effect our heart, and our best functional open space. It is zoned local govt – public use.

Our Shire Council, Nillumbik have proposed a relocation to a new building in Eltham as it is a Major Activity Centre, has rail access and a superior location according to Melbourne 2030. Council propose to sell/subdivide 6 Hectares of this land and raise approx \$16 million for their new building 7 km away.

No alternative funding models were put to the public for consultation. There has since been strong opposition to sale of the land from local residents, across the Shire, and people from Banyule and beyond who frequent the facilities. Petition signed by 1060, 197 submissions were received (96 opposed sale of the land, 55 did not state a view, 46 favoured land sale) 129 of the submissions did not state a preferred option

to the Civic Centre location – I believe this is because each option was linked to the sale of Apollo's prized open spaces.

When responses were sought, Council provided the criteria of **accessibility, activity centre**, cost, environmental sustainability. The discussion about **accessibility** urged people to consider public transport access and proximity to resident population centres. With 96% of Nillumbik residents being motorists I believe there should have been more consideration given to access roads and parking availability which is dire at the Council favoured site in Eltham – commuter parking already choking the locale. Apollo is serviced by bus and a short trip to Greensborough station which is on the same rail line as the Nillumbik stations of Hurstbridge, Wattle Glen, Eltham and Diamond Ck. 3 different stops are at the site or a short walk from the Civic offices.

Activity Centre Council asked people to consider planning principles that desire such facilities in a major town centre. Our neighbourhood is frequented by numerous people beyond just the residents and visitors can park easily at the Council offices and complete a multi – purpose trip. The current site adjoins the point where the Western Ring Road/Greensborough Bypass meets Diamond Creek Road and Civic Drive so a very convenient location for numerous motorists. Nillumbiks other major activity centre is Diamond Ck which is linked directly to Apollo site by a short journey on a main access road.

The discussion clearly and I believe unfairly biased the reader to a relocation requiring twice the funds to be raised and the future for our open spaces is grim. Although many responses and submitters could see through to some common sense, the Council has chosen 25/9/07 to move forward and seek more detail by developing a master plan for the new building site and future development/subdivision of our Apollo site.

Council have stated the Apollo Parkways area has an abundance of open space, more than is required, I dispute much of it is not functional. Some of what has been offered is steep Yarra Valley Water strips between properties, some are unusable riverbanks, and paths deemed unsafe, as they are not visible to road/properties & snake prone. I think the Council is wrong to be directing residents to the school after hours and weekends. The school have a dry and unsafe oval which they are trying to rectify in the coming months but the drought presents a long term problem. The school has signs up regarding no smoking, no biking, no dogs and authorised people only. Litter bins are not provided after hours, it is not

the school's responsibility to provide park/playground for the general public.

The land in question is not remote, isolated, vacant or unutilised as stated in council discussion paper/reports. It is the pleasant gateway to our neighbourhood and at the heart of our daily lives.

Dianne Brooker
48 Corowa Crescent
Greensborough 3088