

Submission to the Shire of Nillumbik on its 2018-19 draft Budget and Yarrambat Park

See the attached Diamond Valley News report of the acquisition of Yarrambat Park in 1975 for \$1 Million – the price today of many individual homes in the Shire of Nillumbik.

Moreover, Council acquired Yarrambat Park in 1975 on very good terms being paid by a deposit of \$400,000 and by six annual interest free payments of \$100,000.

The Federal Government provided funding support through the Grants Commission.

Council's vision then was the whole northern region would benefit from –

1. Bushland adjacent to Plenty Gorge;
2. Public recreational and sporting facilities adjacent to Yan Yean Road, including an 18 hole golf course; and
3. A buffer zone adjacent to nearby land to be planted out with trees, commencing in 1976. (Has any of this planting yet happened?)

Today, the golf course and other recreational facilities are well developed and well used. Residential development north of the park and an aging population has increased the need for such facilities dramatically.

Against this background, it seems unfathomable to understand why Council's draft budget fails to provide for funding support to maintain these facilities and protect this valuable community investment. Is this the first such omission in 43 years?

Is Council bankrupt?

Has Council wasted ratepayers' money that it can no longer protect and develop its community investments?

Has Council before it any reports that Yarrambat Park is not a valuable community asset?

Will any Councillors maintain the Council vision of 1975 and argue the case for more funding support for Yarrambat Park?

We would appreciate the opportunity to speak to our submission at the relevant Council meeting.

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\$1m. LAND BUY FOR PARK

Diamond Valley Council will pay \$1million for the Yarrambat property known as 'Young's land'.

The 166 ha. (413-acre) site which abuts the Plenty River Gorge, will become a regional park.

The decision on the price was made last week at a meeting between council representatives and the vendors, Mr and Mrs F. L. Young.

\$400,000 down

The contract will be signed at the Diamond Valley Council meeting on June 9.

There will be a down payment of \$400,000, the balance to be made by annual payments of \$160,000 over the next six years.

The vendors last week said that they would charge no interest on the six yearly repayments.

Cr Goldsworthy said: "With interest rates now in the 9.0 per cent range this concession is a great money saver."

Through this gesture from Mr and Mrs Young, plus our hope

of continued Government assistance, it seems possible that this unique site can be bought at little cost to the municipality.

Grants

The initial \$600,000 payment is already covered by two united Federal Government grants made through the Grants Commission and by Area Improvement Program funds.

Cr Goldsworthy told the DV News last week he believed that this type of grant would continue.

The site of the proposed park is at the northern edge of Diamond Valley Shire between Yan Yean Rd and the Plenty River gorge. The northern end will reach to the boundary of the Whittlesea Shire.

Plans for the park have been divided into three sections. The area around the Plenty Gorge is rugged bush country featuring old, gnarled redgums. This area will continue as bush.

Buffer

Alongside will be a buffer zone of present grazing land which gradually will be re-afforested. Replanting will start next year.

Nearer to the Yan Yean Rd there will be gradual development which in time will include an 18-hole golf course and provision for many sporting facilities and recreational areas.

Diamond Valley councillors last week were glad to know that their prolonged and persistent support for the establishment

of the Yarrambat Park had proved successful.

Cr Goldsworthy said: "The platypuses and birds don't know it, but we have ensured security for them in this area, perhaps for all time."

"When I went to Yarrambat Gorge last week the knockabouts were laughing — I felt like laughing back."

"I am proud to be Shire President at the time of this purchase."

Tribute

Cr Goldsworthy paid a tribute to Cr Brian Waters who had supported the provision for the Yarrambat Park five years ago.

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THE Diamond Valley Shire President, Cr A. Goldsworthy (left), admires the beauty of the Plenty River Gorge with Mr and Mrs F. L. Young. Mr Young farmed the area for more than 30 years.

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This week's issue contains a special shopping supplement on Greensborough. The comprehensive guide begins on page 21.

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