

My name is Clare Worsnop & I am a resident of Mt Evelyn. I have lived here for 22 years. I that time I have been involved in many areas of community life. I was president of Safety House for 3.5 years, I was a founding member of the Dandenong Ranges Residents Action Group, a group set up to fight anomalies on the planning scheme, I was a founding member & co editor of the Mt Evelyn Community Rag for 10 years. Out of this came the Mt Evelyn History Group of which I am still a member. I have been a Voluntary Guide at Healesville Sanctuary since 1991 & a member of MEEPPA for 18 years, including 5 years as president and am currently Vice President. I over saw the revision of the book "*The Original Garden*" plants of the Northern Dandenongs & wrote the History of Native Fauna chapter for Tracks to Trails and am currently writing a more extensive book on the History of Native Fauna in the Dandenongs. I run my own small business in Mt Evelyn & was involved with the Nursery industry for 28 years.

I may not have a degree in law or town planning etc, but I do have a qualification no one else in this room has. On Australia Day I was given the award of Environmentalist of the year for 2008. This award was given to me in recognition of 22 years of working with my community & in the Environment, an award which I am humbled by & extremely proud of. I believe this makes me well qualified to speak on behalf of the Mt Evelyn Community on environmental matters & social issues associated with this development.

Like many Mount Evelyn residents, I came to Mt Evelyn because it has a village atmosphere. There were and still are No Large Department Stores or Major Retailers. Mt Evelyn has true Olde World charm where the shop-keepers have the time for a chat or to tell a visitor about the local places of interest

Our Village atmosphere is our charm and our best kept secret. Those who stay, stay because of this charm. Those who want a city slick life style return to the suburbia from which they came. Our Village is our life, it should be our choice, whether we have to accept the changes a development of this size & style.

Mt Evelyn has never been a shopping destination and does not seek to be. Our strength has always been our connection with the Environment & our natural history. Since 1870 when Daniel Bunce came to the Dandenongs to study the native fauna, there has been a steady string of naturalists who have followed him. 1902 saw the arrival of the Woodlanders, who continued to study the wildlife until 1910. In fact the nest & the Eggs of the extremely endangered Helmeted Honeyeaters, which are our State Emblem, were collected along the Olinda Creek in Mt Evelyn. In the 1950's saw another great naturalist Jack Hyett, living & studying our native fauna here. He continued to return to Mt Evelyn until old age prevented him from doing so late last century. We have been privileged to have other great naturalists like Steve Craig, Rob Taylor & Ed McNabb studying our great Powerful Owls, which are another of the endangered species, which live in our bush land.

Mt Evelyn is the only place in the world, which has a sanctuary dedicated to the research & protection of Powerful Owls in the World & one of only three Owl Sanctuaries in the world. Mt Evelyn has a responsibility to care for & protect the many rare & endangered animals which frequent & live in our bush land. Powerful Owls, Sooty Owls, Barking Owls, Platypus, Gliders, Antechinus and a recently discovered colony of the rare & endangered Broad-toothed Rats, are all a testament to the way we preserve and care for our bush land, and balance it with sustainable & appropriate development.

I note there is no consideration for Clematis Creek, which runs under Station Street, and it appears that no geological surveys have been done.

So you see we in Mt Evelyn have a long history of involvement with our bush land environment, which has been a very important part of our lives here. We have never been a shopping destination & indeed do not seek to be.

We do not believe that this development is sensitive to our core values in Mt Evelyn.

As you have seen from the maps the site is enclosed on both sides by linear parks. The Warburton Rail Trail to the East & the Aqueduct walk to the West. These are both very important wildlife corridors. The only vegetation, which connects the town centre to these trails are the large trees, which are situated within the development site, albeit that they are exotics. This makes them extremely important corridors for the native wildlife, which live, feed & roost in them, especially the smaller birds & animals. They also serve as an important flight path for many of our birds, including the Powerful owls, and bats, which traverse the town centre on their daily/nightly search for food. Removing them would be detrimental to these creatures. I know that if this development were to proceed that landscape plantings along Snowball Avenue could replace this vegetation, but as the existing trees are all over 50 years old it will be many, many years before they could replace the benefits of the old established trees, by which time, the creatures which depend on them would be long gone.

Another consequence of removal of large trees would be an increase in carbon emissions, which are at present absorbed by these trees. This will, in turn contribute to the climate change, and we are all aware of our responsibility to reduce our carbon emissions and our environmental footprint.

I would like to turn now to the problems of the trucks entering Station Street & Snowball Avenue. You have seen the photos showing the difficulties that they will have entering, traversing and leaving the area. I suggest that this represents an even greater danger to our community if there were ever to be a medical emergency where an ambulance were to be needed, or fire requiring our CFA trucks to attend or any other emergency where the State Emergency Vehicle were to be needed to attend. With all the congestion already created these vehicles would have great difficulty getting access and this could put residents' life & safety at great risk.

With the many Older residents living in the area in close proximity to the development site, The Scout & Guides at the end of station street and the Youth Park which are all used by young children, it will only be a matter of time before this becomes a reality.

Do we want the responsibility for the consequences if any lives are put at risk?

We in Mt Evelyn believe this is an unacceptable Risk.

Another risk which has not been addressed is the location of the bus stops which are at present located in Wray Crescent, just before the intersection of Station Street, and Birmingham Road service Road next to Snowball Avenue.

The safety of the bus travelers and the pedestrians using these sites will be put at serious risk when trucks are trying to turn into and out of the development area. How will these difficulties be addressed?

Some discussion has been given to the size of the delivery trucks to be used in Mt Evelyn. Although in theory 14 metre trucks will be specified to be used, the reality is that the delivery drivers will come in which ever sized trucks they are told to take on their rounds. If a 17 metre truck is loaded then that is the one they will arrive in Mt Evelyn. Who is going to police this problem?

Some discussion has been given to our history & that of the architecture of our buildings in Mt Evelyn. Although they may, in themselves not have a great deal of architectural value, we do still have a few buildings that link us to our past. The Mt Evelyn Library was the original Station masters house, The St John's Ambulance building was the first fire Station, The Top of the Town was one of our early stores & the old building in Wray Cres, now Mosquito Blue & Beautiful Bellies, which is to be demolished if this development were to proceed, was old Hughie Wray's original General Store and has historical value as a link to our past.

We believe that these should all be preserved.

When the Bendigo Bank Building was built, much emphasis was put on the architectural style of the building & federation style was seen as being appropriate & important as the style which most represented Mt Evelyn. The proposal is not sympathetic to our efforts to link our modern phase of Mt Evelyn to our past historical values. We do not see this modernistic urban style of building as suitable for our quaint village like setting

The great wall of the "Eastern Freeway" which Woolworths has presented for the residents of Snowball Avenue is not at all acceptable to our residents & Village, and the Steel & Glass building on the corner of Station & Snowball will look totally out of place & unsympathetic to our Village. Some discussion has been given to the possibility of medium density housing in Snowball Avenue. Just because the planning laws allow for medium density housing in Snowball Avenue it doesn't necessarily follow that that will ever happen either in the near future or in the longer time and therefore does not need to be given a great deal of consideration at this time.

I would like to address the issues of heights in the Development. The DDO2 clearly states a height limit of 8 metres. Why is it that Woolworths think that heights of 11 metres and 14 metres are acceptable? When I went to school 11 into 8 didn't go. Equally 14 into 8 didn't go either. When did this change?

The Development will compromise our views of Mt Dandenong. Views we sought to protect and are recognised as important in the DDO2

Equally residents in Snowball Avenue views of the large Eucalypts along Outlook Park & The Warburton trail will be obliterated. This outcome is totally unacceptable to Mt Evelyn's Residents.

At our four public meetings more than 1600 of Mt Evelyn's residents have taken the time to come and learn & listen to the proposal that has been put to them. They have asked the questions, which has helped them to make an informed decision as to whether they wanted this development or whether they considered that it is suitable for their town. Whether it will enhance their township and their quality of life.

On each of these occasions Mt Evelyn Residents have spoken in one voice. "We Do NOT want or Need this development in our town.

This Proposal has none of the values we treasure and we ask for it to be abandoned.