



NOVEMBER VICTORIAN STATE ELECTION

ISSUES FOR EAST MELBOURNE RESIDENTS

Dear Candidates

The East Melbourne Group Inc (EMG) is an association of residents committed to enhancing our community. We work to protect the environment and amenity of East Melbourne and its heritage.

EMG works closely with the City of Melbourne on local issues and is an advocate for its members on issues that concern the state and federal governments.

Attached to this letter is a table of state issues of concern to residents. The first column summarises the issues. The second column sets out the actions sought from the government to be elected. The third column is left blank and we invite you to set out the actions you or the party that you represent would be prepared to take, if elected.

We would appreciate your response by 18 November 2014.

In the week before the election we will be sending an update to all of our members. It will include a link to the completed table which will be published on our website at www.emg.org.au.

We hope the information supplied will help inform our community on local issues of concern.

Murray Hohnen

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President
East Melbourne Group Inc

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QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CANDIDATES

ON

STATE ISSUES OF CONCERN TO ITS MEMBERS

FROM

THE EAST MELBOURNE GROUP INC

ISSUE	POLICY ACTION REQUESTED	POLICY ACTION PROMISED BY THE PARTY
Yarra Park		
<p>Yarra Park adjoins the MCG and MOPT sporting precincts. It is the remnant of a much larger area set aside as green space. It has been accorded heritage status under the Victorian Heritage Act.</p> <p>Until 2010 the Park was jointly administered by the State Government and the City of Melbourne. They had the shared goal of progressively reducing the use of the Park for car parking.</p> <p>The last Labor Government transferred management of the Park to the private MCG Trust and dropped the policy commitment to eliminating car parking and restoring this Heritage Park to the people of Victoria.</p>	<p>A number of actions are needed to restore Yarra Park to a condition befitting its heritage status-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to adopt as policy, and implement the progressive elimination of car parking from Yarra Park; • to adopt measures to encourage patrons to travel to events by public transport as they did during the Commonwealth Games; • to build, away from the Park, such dedicated parking as is appropriate to a world class sporting and entertainment precinct. 	<p>Parklands and gardens surrounding Melbourne's CBD are a key attraction of our city and part of our heritage. They must be safeguarded and managed in a way for future generations to enjoy.</p> <p>Labor will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue to work with stakeholders to enhance and preserve the heritage values of Yarra Park and minimise the impact of major events.
Planning		
<p>East Melbourne is a mix of planning zones.</p> <p><u>Residential Zoning</u></p> <p>The predominant zone is Residential 1. Prior to the 2004 election the Labor Party promised that Councils could add additional planning certainty by converting suitable Residential 1 Zones to new Residential 3 Zones that would mandate a building height restriction.</p>	<p>Support for the establishment of a single residential zone for the bulk of East Melbourne with the highest protection available and a human scale, mandatory height limit.</p>	<p>Under the Liberals, Victorians have lost confidence in the planning process. Every skyscraper's approval from the Minister's office, every decision made behind closed doors, every zone amendment that threatens our iconic natural and built assets, and every VCAT determination that ignores the voice of the community puts the fairness of the process in jeopardy. Locals feel like they have no say.</p>

The City of Melbourne recommended a number of areas of East Melbourne to the Labor Planning Minister for ratification as Residential 3. The recommendations were not ratified, breaching the election promise made by the then Premier.

Under the current Liberal/National Party Government, residential zones have again been under review and in the case of East Melbourne, the City of Melbourne has proposed converting the existing Residential 1 Zone into a mix of General Residential and Neighbourhood Residential Zones contrary to the wishes of the community that wants to retain a single NRZ zone for the whole of the suburb.

At the root of the community's thinking is the wish to promote East Melbourne as a heritage precinct and to act, while it is still possible, to retain this important representative of the Victorian, Federation and art deco, human scale architecture styles for which Melbourne is famous.

The suburb merits the protection of these heritage values in the same way as inner city heritage precincts in many of the world's great cities overseas.

The proximity to the sports and entertainment precinct and the fact that many hundreds of thousands of spectators and Melbourne visitors walk through the suburb each month

Labor will give the community back its voice, so we can preserve our reputation as the world's most liveable city. Wind tunnels, congestion and forests of towers can't be Melbourne's new hallmarks. Labor will protect our heritage and take a responsible, consultative and long-term approach to planning. Because it's our responsibility to pass on Victoria's liveability to our children.

Labor will

- review the Heritage Act to protect our built heritage.
- conduct an independent review to understand what went wrong with the Liberals' residential zone changes. The review panel will consider protocols for best practice consultation and the appropriate role of the Minister, councils and the community in the planning process.
- amend legislation so that, where appropriate, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) must take into account the weight of community opposition to planning proposals.

demonstrates its importance to the whole State.

Business Zoning

There are business zones along a number of the major streets and boulevards bounding East Melbourne.

Consistent with the human scale residential areas that adjoin, the EMG wishes to see in-fill development within these business zones limited to 6 storeys or less.

Jolimont

The historic Jolimont precinct within East Melbourne is zoned for mixed use although the last 10 years has seen the amount of business in the area progressively reduce with a corresponding increase in residential use.

EMG wishes to see Jolimont re-zoned as a Neighbourhood Residential Zone.

Heritage Protection

It is EMG's view that the strength of heritage protection in planning matters is being gradually eroded. It is in urgent need of a refocussed effort and resourcing.

VCAT Fees

The introduction of high fees for planning objections lodged with VCAT has created a substantial obstacle to community groups wishing to represent their members in planning matters.

To support the limitation of new developments within East Melbourne's business zones to six or less storeys.

To support the re-zoning of Jolimont as NRZ

To support the reinvigoration of the State's heritage protection agencies and in particular Heritage Victoria.

To exempt community groups from VCAT fees for planning objections involving neighbourhood character and heritage issues.

<p>In the case of EMG, the number and extent of VCAT applications has been restrained, but the issues raised of importance to the local community in its quest to retain neighbourhood character and protect heritage values.</p> <p><u>VCAT Appointments</u></p> <p>EMG perceives a pro development bias in tribunal decision making.</p>		
<p>Amenity</p>		
<p><u>Aircraft noise</u></p> <p>Since the deregulation of small aircraft above Melbourne the number and intrusiveness of flights over the inner city suburbs has grown with an attendant increase in the risks of both intentional and accidental damage to property and people in an area of high population density. A huge increase in noise from low flying aircraft has been another consequence of this deregulation.</p>	<p>To support the EMG's campaign to re-regulate low level flights above inner Melbourne suburbs to provide no fly zones for all but emergency service aircraft and reduce the risk of air incidents and accidents above these built up areas and improve local amenity by reducing noise.</p>	<p>Labor understands the needs of a growing modern economy must be balanced with the needs of the community.</p> <p>Green spaces improve liveability, enrich communities and enhance the environment. In principal, Labor supports community gardening programs as a way to promote sustainable and healthy living.</p>
<p><u>East Melbourne Community Garden</u></p> <p>Government should make available to community groups, for worthwhile community purposes including community gardens and meeting places, state owned land that is under-utilised or in excess of current needs.</p>	<p>To adopt a policy to facilitate community gardens and provide venues for use of community groups upon long term leases or licences.</p>	
<p>Local Government</p>		

Reintroduce Ward Councillors

In the view of the EMG, abolition of Local Government Wards, where an elected member of Council had particular responsibility for each Ward has been a backward step.

To support the reintroduction of Ward Councillors or equivalent for City of Melbourne elections.

Labor will continue to work with, and support councils, to better represent local rate payers.