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To whom it may concern,

Please disregard my previous email and in its stead accept the following

updated email:

A SUBMISSION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
TO  
REZONE THE LAND AREA NORTH OF THE CALDER  
FREEWAY IN KEILOR

WHAT WILL THE FUTURE USE OF THE  
LAND AREA NORTH OF THE CALDER  
FREEWAY IN KEILOR BE? -

A PREMIER VISIONARY GROUND BREAKING WORLD CLASS VILLAGE COMMUNITY  
(NOT ANOTHER McMANSIONVILLE THANKS!)  
OR  
AN OVERSEAS AGGLOMERATE -OWNED CABBAGE-PATCH MUD HEAP AND UNSAFE  
EYESORE?

#### INTRODUCTION

The Brimbank City Council, in consultation with the Victorian Government after many years of research and debate, including several consultancy reports, is about to make a crucial LANDMARK decision regarding what the future use of the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor will be. The "whole" of this comparatively large area of open space land, only parts of which borders the Maribryngong River, currently falls within a Green Wedge zone.

Herein follows my submission to all the relevant decision-makers and stakeholders which unequivocally argues that the above-mentioned land should now, before it is too late and results in a potentially extremely costly government mistake, be rezoned to Residential.

Given the current emerging trends(crisis?) regarding housing affordability, and the rapidly diminishing supply of suitable residential development land that is available close to the CBD to build more sustainable compact cities along with government policy emphasizing the need to create more economically viable, socially and aesthetically-pleasing urban landscapes/communities ,via such policies as containing the urban sprawl, developing medium and high-density housing living zones, and planning new residential zones on suitable

residential development land that is close to established suburbs that are already blessed with good infrastructure/amenity/services/facilities whose capacity could quite easily be enhanced/better utilized (as opposed to investing in new capacity in outer metropolitan suburbs which is much less cost effective) etc Isn't it about time that the government finally succumbed to the long-held common sense view that the now almost redundant former market-gardening/agricultural land North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor be re-zoned to Residential to help to alleviate the above-mentioned rapidly emerging problems and hence rectify the present farcical situation that exists in this area - namely, a hotch-potch of ugly, barren, unhealthy, dangerous, diverse, barely viable and hardly sustainable fragmented holdings of varying sizes/uses creating a blight on the visual landscape. e.g. For over 20 years many families, some ex-market gardeners of this area for over 100 years standing, have witnessed the gradual decay of their property's assets. ( I also recently read with some bemusement that Brimbank Council will soon be selling off some of its own barren, unattractive and undeveloped land to free up funds for improving parklands etc ( See 'Brimbank Leader' Sept 11 2007 page 5 "Residents to get open Space Say"))

Why not thedevelop the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor into a truly visionary ground-breaking world-class premier "Keilor Valley" village-style township and not yet another McMansionville or master planned community which are already all too common in the West of Melbourne? Imagine waking up every morning with the surrounding hill views for your backdrop, alongside a beautifully maintained environmentally-sustainable publicly-accessible Maribryngong River frontage recreational zone and all this only 15 minutes from the CBD?

I'm certain that if this land were to be re-zoned to residential for a future designated Keilor Village Mark 2 to be hopefully designed by an internationally renowned aesthetically astute and highly experienced visionary boutique architectural firm ( Not another boring mass produced

overnight community thanks - I mean what's the hurry? To create a work of genius takes time and inspiration and will never emanate from the pen of a Stockland/Vicurban etc architect ) almost all bar none of the few remaining small land holders/ market-gardeners/ residents of the area would be prepared to sell-up immediately.

And hopefully, such a new township would be egalitarian and allow for a mix of tiny/small/medium and high-density housing ( note the trend of downsizing in our more densely populated ageing cities) so that not only the wealthy will be able to take the opportunity to buy into what, if handled professionally, could easily become one of the most desirable and appealing( the envy of the Toorak crowd - Why not?) village-style urban landscapes to live in. The KEY is to select the best architectural design and then and only then will the West of Melbourne get its just desserts.

A COMPLETE REFUTATION OF ALL OF THE ARGUMENTS AS REPRESENTED BY THE STAKEHOLDERS/OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES WHO OPPOSE THE REZONING OF THE LAND AREA NORTH OF THE CALDER FREEWAY IN KEILOR TO RESIDENTIAL

#### 1. My Objections to Melbourne Airport's Argument

One of the major opponents to the above proposal to rezone to residential the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor is Melbourne Airport. It claims that the said land is located too close to its noisy flight zone - but I must stress it is therefore not directly under its flight zone (except on occasions e.g I've just personally witnessed at 11.30am on 20th September 2007 a Jumbo Jet fly directly over the Keilor Primary School which has population of over 600 plus students - Which begs the question, How often does this happen?) - and if it is subdivided to residential would become a threat to its curfew free night time status (i.e. no flights would be permitted from 11pm to 6am if a curfew were imposed on the airport effecting mainly freight not passenger airlines. Such a curfew would only be imposed if nearby residents effected by the flight zone complained loud enough and long enough to compell Government to impose one) and hence it should remain a Green Wedge zone in perpetuity.

I will argue argue that Melbourne Airport's objections are now totally irrelevant given that the airport's owners "conveniently" ignore the glaring fact that there already exists subdivided developed residential land less than 50 meters away on the southern side of the Calder Freeway in Keilor called Keilor Village. To our dear airport friends, isn't this land also just as close to your noisy flight zone?

And why does this well and truly established residential community in Keilor Village NOT pose a threat to your curfew free night time status? Do you believe that the thousands of residents living and working on this side of the Calder Freeway in Keilor do not have the right (or the future right for that matter!- Isn't that illegal? ) to complain about your aircraft's noise and pose a future threat to your curfew free night time status?

And besides, what's preventing the denizens of Keilor/surrounds from lobbying the Federal Government to impose a 17% cap on Air Traffic Movements over Keilor/surrounds. It is my understanding that such a 17% target has already been imposed on Sydney Airport with regard to the West of Sydney.

What follows are five more irrefutable reasons why I believe Melbourne Airport's argument that the Green Wedge Zone imposed on the "whole" of the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor, not just a corridor along the Maribryngong River, way back in 1971 by "Tricky Dicky Liberal Premier Hamer" should not be rezoned to Residential is fallacious:

Firstly, we need to keep in mind two things:

a/ the above-mentioned emerging trends (crisis?) regarding the housing affordability issue and the rapidly diminishing supply of suitable residential development land situated close to the CBD which, if available and suitable, would help to halt the urban sprawl by creating a more compact sustainable and viable city and

b/ the need to develop housing on land, if available and suitable, closer to already established inner suburbs which already have

existing good  
infrastructure/amenity/services/facilities whose capacity can be  
quite  
easily enhanced/ better  
utilized rather than creating newer outer metropolitan suburbs that  
will  
require new  
capacity regarding amenity/infrastructure etc etc. ( Many are  
currently  
claiming that public transport on the urban fringe of Melbourne is  
deplorable)

These two statements serve to highlight a recent precedent-setting  
decision made by Canberra (see The Australian Financial Review  
newspaper  
article 30 November 2006 'Rezoning outcome is plain to some' page 48)  
to  
re-zone to residential - due to the limited amount of suitable  
available  
residential development land located close to the Canberra CBD - the  
last  
remaining parcel of undeveloped land which just happened to be rural  
zoned  
land (0.5%) close to the CBD. And this land also just happened to be  
DIRECTLY under the Canberra Airport's flight path, unlike the land  
area both  
North and South (i.e. Keilor Village) of the Calder Freeway in Keilor,  
which  
is located adjacent to or close to the Airport's noisy flight path  
zone and  
is therefore  
not directly under it. So it now appears that out of a dire shortage  
of  
suitable residential development land close to the CBD Canberra will  
now  
build a new urban living zone directly under the Canberra Airport's  
flight  
zone!

Secondly, I note that Melbourne Airport's public relations unit is  
currently spruiking the benefits of its new upcoming major upgrade -  
"It  
will be like a mini-city and will attract thousands more to the  
airport to  
shop." Dare I say a large proportion of these shoppers will no doubt  
be  
non-travellers, that is, ordinary shoppers not wanting to catch a  
plane but  
simply visiting the airport for some retail therapy. Wouldn't it be  
advantageous to the Airport's owners and retailers to have a  
blossoming new  
"real" mini-city on its doorstep in Keilor a la Keilor Village Mark 2  
to  
attract even more shoppers to its upcoming so-called "mini-city"? I'm  
certain the retailers at the airport would be unlikely to object to  
such a  
new nearby suburb emerging!

So given this blatant push to dramatically increase the number of non-flying visitors to Melbourne Airport why is it then that literally tens of thousands of airport employees/travellers/shoppers at Melbourne Airport can congregate all day long adjacent to and perhaps even directly under the airport's noisy flight path? How can all these tens of thousands of people be made to tolerate all that aircraft noise and their health and safety not be compromised whilst those in the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor must remain an under-developed ugly third world redundant rural backwater zone simply because Melbourne Airport's owners oppose the rezoning of the land North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor to residential - deploying the now blatantly anachronistic view that this land is located too close to the airport's flight path and in turn may effect its curfew free night time status and encroach somehow on its land? (See SGS Consultant's report to Brimbank Council)

This is manifestly incorrect! Just how can the rezoning of the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor from rural to residential encroach on Melbourne Airport's land? This is not only nonsensical illogical reasoning, because Melbourne Airport simply does not own the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor, but it may in fact also be an inadvertent Freudian slip of the tongue that has revealed the Airport owners' duplicitous hidden agenda to purchase this land for a song whilst it is relatively cheap under the current zoning regime and then have it rezoned to residential later on (to expand on its "mini-city" megalomaniacal expansion plans no doubt!) so that it will make the airport's owners a huge windfall profit. Never underestimate the greed factor!

Thirdly, the hypocritical and contradictory nature of Melbourne Airport's argument on this matter is again blatantly obvious for all to see given the fact that on the South side of the Calder Freeway in Keilor we have the Keilor Village - a long-established township - where it is apparently deemed safe enough to live, work and play, although it is very close to the airports flight zone, yet less than 50 meters away on the

opposite North side of the Calder Freeway in Keilor, the Airport objects to any further residential development and subdivision taking place even though this area is as close to the flight path as the South side is. This is absurd logic, n'est pas?

My fourth objection to Melbourne Airport's views on this matter is that given that Canberrians are now prepared to live DIRECTLY under a noisy aircraft flight path zone, ( like so many residents in cities all over the world that are experiencing exponential population growth are now also prepared to do so) why should Melbournians be compelled to commute to work maybe up two hours or more to and from the CBD and home each day from some distant outlying suburb - a suburb which will probably have both poor infrastructure/amenity/services/facilities in both the short and long term (and will probably cost the lives of many children and adults over the years because they have been made to wait 45 minutes for an ambulance to take them to the closest hospital when a major hospital from Keilor is only 15 minutes away! I wouldn't want that on my conscience!) - simply because of Melbourne Airport's illogical and inflexible view that it does not want residents to live too NEAR, therefore not directly under, their aircraft's flight zone?

My fifth and final objection in terms of Melbourne Airport's false reasoning on this issue is to reiterate yet another recent precedent-setting decision that was made by the Department of Sustainability and Environment to remove more than 4000 properties in Brimbank (some in Keilor) from the Melbourne Airport Environs Overlay. ( Amendment VC30 )The land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor has NOW been removed from the Melbourne Airports Environs Overlay. Perhaps the most potent reason why it is time to rezone the land North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor to residential. This new overlay reflects more accurately noise forecast data.

In other words, with a rapidly growing population resulting in ridiculously long commutes to the CBD little wonder Canberrians (and many other cities worldwide) and now more than 4000 homes in Brimbank (

including the homes in the said land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor) are prepared to tolerate noisy aircraft flying close too or even directly over their home's rooftop. And it appears only newly built properties or already established properties wanting to undertake renovations who live under/near Melbourne Airport's flight zone in Keilor/Brimbank will be made to incur the seemingly negligible cost of having to insulate and protect their homes from the aircraft noise. The older residents can put up with the airplane noise even though many of us were here way before the airport. But we are obviously expendable.

I live on the South side of the Calder Freeway in Keilor, adjacent to, and therefore not directly under, the noisy Melbourne Airport flight path, precisely the same distance away from the flight path as the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor is away from it, and I am more than happy to put up with such a rather small inconvenience and mostly only during weekdays. It sure beats having to commute up to two hours or more to the CBD and back home each day!

In short, Melbourne Airport's argument opposing the re-zoning of the now almost redundant rural and agricultural land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor to residential subdivision land is myopic, self-serving, retrograde, unfair, irrelevant and illogical. It also cavalierly, perhaps dangerously, totally disregards the current governmental policy thrust that we must all act smarter right now as a society and develop land into residential, when available and suitable, which is situated as close as possible to existing established inner suburbs/CBD that are already blessed with good infrastructure/amenity/services/facilities with existing capacity that could be quite easily augmented/enhanced etc rather than continue to create faraway suburbs on less suitable undeveloped land which is likely to have poor infrastructure/services/amenity with little capacity available to it in both the short and long term resulting in a much longer commute to the CBD than

more suitable alternatives.

2. The inappropriateness, impracticality and unfeasibility of retaining the current zoning regime for the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor

As for the now obviously inappropriate and antiquated "Tricky Dicky Liberal Premier Hamer" 1971 decision which zoned the "whole" of the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor to Green Wedge - not just the well-worth preserving environmentally important Maribryong River corridor - to help "safeguard agricultural uses and preserve rural and scenic landscape uses" (See Victorian Government Department of Planning Website) give me a break!

Let's get real! What agricultural uses are we currently preserving if no one but a tiny percentage of the current land-owners ( 99% who are former market gardeners) have continued or wish to continue market-gardening and based on current irrefutable trends it is highly doubtful that those still working these relatively small-sized agricultural plots will remain viable for much longer. Given the experience of the ex-market gardening families in this area , coupled with the perennial drought conditions/climate change, poor water quality and the paucity of available affordable water etc and the current world-wide mega-trend in first world economies ( see below) I agree with the expert consensus on this issue that this style of farming is now inevitably doomed.

And I don't for one minute subscribe to the view that boutique farming could replace the old family market gardening unit in this area because many over the years have tried and failed and most of us who've left the land decades ago have rarely if ever had anyone of these so-called boutique operators knocking on our door wanting to purchase or lease our land let alone at a fair and reasonable price.

In otherwords, just because some of the land North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor has now been "temporarily" leased out to recent newcomers

for market gardening/other rural purposes it is highly improbable that these one or two newly arrived market gardening operators will be around for much longer (See Below).

What is much more probable is that few if any of the current landowners will be willing to lease or sell more of their land to these interlopers who, as a direct consequence of not being able to expand and grow their business to achieve the economies of scale necessary to compete with the 'big industrial farming boys', will no doubt soon go 'belly-up'.

Are we then so naive to believe that given the extreme difficulties confronting the farmers in this land area just outlined above and the current climate of volatile and often escalating vegetable prices and therefore the corresponding tendency for mortgage-stressed or struggling families to skimp on value-added - usually much more costlier products - that a so-called small boutique producer in Keilor specializing in plastic (sic expensive) packaged lettuce leaves can survive and thrive whilst unable to acquire the extra land that is essential if they are to survive and keep up with the big industrial conglomerates?

And what "scenic landscape uses" are we preserving if one takes into account the current hotch-potch/unsafe eyesore described in my introductory remarks as well as taking a good hard look at the surrounding hills in this land area which are slowly being mutilated and defaced by the quarry works and the fast growing industrial zone near Keilor Park Drive -another example of the latter is the current amendment ( C101) before Brimbank Council to rezone a Public Park and Recreational zone to Business 3 Zone on Stadium Drive, Keilor Park.

SMALL PLOT MARKET GARDENING/OTHER RURAL PRACTISES NO LONGER VIABLE OR APPROPRIATE FOR THE LAND AREA NORTH OF THE CALDER FREEWAY IN KEILOR

So why do the politicians and various stakeholders constantly downplay, even seemingly totally ignore the fact, that the majority of the original market-gardeners of the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor - who currently own 99% of this land - who have either retired long ago or passed on - and the majority of their heirs, have chosen

for over 20 years at least now NOT to pursue what is perhaps one of the toughest least profitable and least viable of occupations?

Literally hundreds of Keilor market gardening families have often been defeated by this most demanding of occupations. Just read the long "inexhaustive" list of former market gardening families on the Keilor Historical Society sign in front of Brimbank Council's offices in Keilor to once more unambiguously confirm that in Keilor, or where ever else their are small agricultural plots for that matter, this is now a "profession" only for the naive/foolhardy or for those on the verge of retirement simply filling in time because they have known nothing else in their lives!

So much then for the ridiculous argument put forward by the Department of Primary Industry that it does not want subdivision to occur on the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor because in the past horticulturalists in Keilor have managed to adjust to market/other pressures (See SGS consultancy's report to Brimbank Council ). Have these folk forgotten that once upon a time suburbs like Oakleigh were a mixture of farms, market gardening and some housing. Nothing is preordained for ever my friends!

And it should at all times be remembered that historically there has rarely ever been anything other than market gardening on this land area ( Dear Primary Industry, horticulture/orchardists experimented and failed over 100 years ago) since 1847 so it is quite futile to try to find alternative rural/horticultural/agricultural uses for this land. And secondly I'd like to see the Primary Industry person who wrote the above-mentioned rubbish have a go at market-gardening on a small 10 to 50 acre plot etc in this mega industrial farming consortium agglomerate-dominated era and adjust to market pressures during the worst drought since records began whilst therefore being on the brink of financial collapse year in year out! What would he/she produce to compete with the mega industrial farm operators I wonder? Multicoloured perfume scented cauliflours or yellow-ribboned gift-wrapped tomatoes!

And why isn't the Department of Primary Industry listening to

such eminent authorities as Dr Watson (former chief research economist of the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics) who states that "There is too much irrigation in Australia because of previous political pressures" (See The Business Age newspaper article "Federal irrigation takeover doubt valid" on 10 September 2007).

So why would government then wish to encourage the few remaining inefficient and non-viable irrigators (market gardeners/horticulturalists who are mostly temporary leasees or ageing upcoming retirees) in the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor to persist with this activity during the most severe drought since records began (see Prime Minister's Website) to continue on irrigating? (sic.continuing to waste the precious rare commodity of water). I am absolutely certain that our "market economy" would easily cope if these small operators ceased to exist overnight.

Many families, consisting of several large extended families at the time they worked this market gardening land and possessing a wealth of knowledge, experience, abundant energy and manpower, have given up the market gardening caper more than 20 years ago! I must also add that more than 99% of the original market gardeners of this land area have either retired/passed on and only a tiny minority continue on either struggling to make their enterprise viable/using water inefficiently i.e.if they have been allocated more than 5% or are basically filling in time until they soon retire.

Most of us, (the old established market-gardening families of this area and who still own 99% of this land area) will never sell our land to some interloper for market gardening/agricultural/horticultural/any other purposes because it was our blood, sweat and tears- some of us for over 100 years- which established this farming zone not some edict by a government department!

And if it hadn't been for the almost monumental efforts of several extremely hard working industrious farming families over many decades - I can remember many summers when parents would leave their young ones in their grandmothers's care from dawn till midnight whilst they worked the

land  
usually 7 days a week/140 plus hours per week and with only one or two  
holidays over a 50 year period - trying to keep at bay "market pressures" -  
it is highly improbable that this land would have ever become and remained  
agricultural land for so long.

Moreover, again if not for the herculean efforts and magnificent sacrifices of the original market-gardening families in this area over the  
last century and a half, it is highly likely that this land would have been  
subdivided into a residential suburb many decades ago like other nearby land  
along the edges of the Maribryngong River has been and is now being subdivided (e.g. Edgewater in Maribryngong).

So it is misleading and bordering on the immoral for the Department of Primary Industry and other vested interests to distort the  
issue to such an extent that it would have everyone believe that this land  
area  
North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor became horticultural/agricultural land  
because it was always predestined to be utilized for this type of land use  
due to its fine top red and black soils etc ( now being depleted )  
and  
therefore should remain in perpetuity rural non urban horticultural land for  
these reasons alone. As I've amply demonstrated above nothing could be  
further from the truth!

Moreover, it is more important to keep in mind that the indisputable trend  
over the last 20 years ( much longer overseas) has been towards massive  
acreage, large scale, highly-mechanized, less labour-intensive, often soil  
exhausting and land degrading agricultural practices. Such practices are  
obviously entirely inappropriate for the land area North of the Calder  
Freeway in Keilor when one compares this relatively small-sized fragmented  
partially subdivided zone to the  
huge acreage conglomerate-owned agricultural industrial zones that have  
sprung up in the outer suburbs of Melbourne/elsewhere/worldwide all  
but  
making the  
small market-gardener with a relatively few number of acres an almost extinct species.

And those small plot market gardeners that manage to hang on cutting corners for a little while longer are not only continuing to exhaust the soil thereby perhaps irreparably destroying it (which won't please any environmentalist) but are also using dangerous pesticide/herbicide sprays - which is not really appropriate for an area so close to an established community and which may therefore perhaps pose a future health risk to locals all of which would be exacerbated if land consolidation occurs i.e. if a large expanding industrial farming company decides to buy all or most of this land and grow crops that require intensive soil exhausting and high use pesticide/herbicide spraying /other hazardous practises etc

It is our firm and fervent belief that several of the ex-market gardeners/family members who worked on the old farms have contracted cancers as a direct result of these dangerous sprays/practises. These persons had up until their illnesses lived clean pure extremely healthy and constantly active lifestyles but have inexplicably died young just to keep up with the mega industrial farming consortiums now almost monopolizing and dominating the agricultural and horticultural industries. And I repeat none of the land owners of the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor will ever lease or sell any more of our land to some interloping agricultural arriviste whilst it remains so ridiculously undervalued - a direct consequence of the obviously anachronistic current zoning regime - thus hampering the growth potential/viability of the current growers/producers who won't survive in an increasingly cut-throat competitive environment and also having a long term adverse impact environmentally etc

The land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor is both too fragmented and too small a land area for the type of large scale industrial style agriculture just described above. But unless the government acts soon to rezone this land it may yet fall into the hands of perhaps a faceless insensitive overseas-owned industrial farming agglomerate to be developed into a

low-employment health threatening cabbage-patch mud-heap and ugly eyesore!

Perhaps then in the not too distant future, given our fast growing population trend/housing and land shortages and the rapidly diminishing supply of suitable residential development land close to the CBD, a government scrambling to find affordable and/or suitable urban subdivision development land may be compelled to buy back this land at a ridiculously exorbitant price. Not to mention the huge ongoing employment (as opposed to a couple of monster-sized tractors and two employees tending the cabbage-patch!) and tourism opportunities that would be missed creating a visionary ground breaking community-oriented township with an environmentally-sustainable recreational zone along the Maribrynong River corridor.

It is our considered view, based on our deeply ingrained pragmatic habit of mind borne out of many years of experience on the land, along with the current obvious trends mentioned above, that unless the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor is developed into say the above-mentioned visionary "Keilor Valley" village-style type of living zone that it is highly probable that its environmental, landscape, horticultural, heritage, scenic, natural (natural environment/habitat and biodiversity i.e. flora, fauna and wildlife) values etc will deteriorate rapidly and irreparably because the areas upkeep would require such a massive risk and outlay of government funds initially and annually that I believe only the private sector, not some perennially cash-strapped public sector statutory body, could ever hope to fund and maintain it to the level of excellence that would be required.

TIME FOR A REALITY CHECK!

Therefore governments at all levels should acknowledge that the only long term affordable option is to legislate that only a narrow corridor along the Maribrynong River - not the whole of this land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor - should remain a green wedge open space which can accommodate an

exceptional state of the art environmentally sustainable and publicly accessible recreational zone.

Common sense should therefore prevail in this instance. We simply no longer need to preserve for agricultural or rural and scenic landscape uses etc the "whole" of the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor that falls outside the just mentioned proposal to retain as Green Wedge only the corridor along the Maribryngong River's banks. Otherwise, we run the real risk that the whole of this land area could become an environmental disaster area due to lack of long-term funding etc

Given that the said land area is undoubtedly potentially premium residential development land (Just ask any Real Estate Agent worth his/her salt) it would also be in the developers interests to retain any heritage, environmental and potential tourism values along the Maribryngong River corridor etc Besides, the government could stipulate that this would be a prerequisite that the developer must adhere too.

Or do we want a second massive Brimbank Park in Keilor ? Surely we cannot continue to expect taxpayers to continue funding such large extravagant barely utilized parklands especially when we read ( Refer again to the local newspaper article mentioned in my introduction) that the Council, due to lack of funds, is considering selling some of its barren, unattractive and undeveloped land so that it can better respond to residents' wishes and needs to upgrade 5 major flagship parklands (not including the massive Brimbank Park) etc Will Brimbank Council then one day need to sell Brimbank Park to fund the creation of a new massive park in the land area North of the Calder freeway in Keilor?

How then can such scarce valuable land, as the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor, which is so obviously suitable and prime for residential development continue to remain in the hands of a hotch-potch of reluctant hobby farmers /ex-market gardeners/ ageing retirees who lack the energy, willpower and the financial resources - namely, they do not possess the requisite millions of thousands of dollars that would be required - to properly sustain and continually maintain the areas horticultural and scenic

landscape uses/values etc each year. This is mere wishful (nostalgic) and therefore unrealistic thinking by Government. Not too mention poor planning and bad management. Farming in this area will soon be history my friends!

Hence, why then does there exist such a dogmatic and inflexible approach by some of the stakeholders who seem to be arguing that this former market gardening land is intrinsically (not just historically) rural/horticultural/agricultural land should therefore remain so in perpetuity. You've got to be joking? No one in their right mind could possibly believe that this status quo will remain in tact for much longer given the said lands close proximity to the CBD/established infrastructure etc and the current macro big picture issues i.e. emerging population pressures, shortage of land issues, emerging housing affordability crisis, climate change/salinity/severe drought, and the adverse environmental impact that results from inaction on underfunded open spaces/redundant rural zones etc crying out for urgent government action.

Its a no-brainer my friends! Horticultural and agricultural/rural uses in the land area North of the Calder freeway in Keilor are now being continually hamstrung/obstructed by insuperable factors way beyond the control of the small players and as such these practises are doomed! How many more drought assistance packages can we afford? How much longer will we keep our heads in the sand?

And besides, the above reality directly contradicts government policy which states that Green Wedges are meant to be "active, living areas that include agriculture (i.e. productive agriculture) and other non-urban uses. ( See the Department of Sustainability and Environment website). As I've argued cogently, the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor can hardly be described as an "active living zone" i.e a vibrant and thriving prosperous area but is instead destined to become a visually ugly and decaying underdeveloped unsafe health threatening dead zone if the current zoning regime is maintained. It is no longer credible to argue that this land area will be able to sustain such agricultural uses, let alone productive agricultural uses, in both the short and long term.

And how long will we continue to believe the political rhetoric that there is an emerging trend (crisis!) regarding the diminishing supply of suitable residential development land that is located close to the CBD and that there is much wisdom in developing suitable residential zones near too already established inner suburbs blessed with good infrastructure/amenity/services/facilities where capacity can more easily be augmented/utilized rather than creating new capacity etc if such pre-eminently suitable residential land North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor is being continually overlooked because newer suburbs much further out from the CBD (Melton, Craigieburn, Deer Park etc) are deemed more appealing and suitable to prospective residents. Again you've got to be kidding!

Surely, if ever an ideal opportunity presented itself for government to put its rhetoric into action then the rezoning to residential the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor represents such an opportunity. For goodness sake, this land is directly adjacent too and only 1 minute from access to the Calder Freeway/City Link, only 15 minutes to the CBD and 2 Major CBD Hospitals, 10 minutes to Melbourne Airport, 5 minutes to Bus Services and Watergardens Railway Station/Shopping Centre, surrounded by numerous established schools, sporting clubs, libraries, community clubs etc crying out for more students/members etc, and thousands of nearby jobs in the adjacent fast growing industrial and airport zones etc!

I am certain that if clear decisive political leadership prevails then Brimbank Council's desire to "ensure development opportunities within the municipality are realised" will view PART of the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor as a unique and rare urban development opportunity.

The land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor if marketed correctly presents a mouth-watering prospect for a world-class boutique architectural firm/developer(s) to create something truly groundbreaking and visionary for this side of Melbourne. And given the massive profits that will be made it should be mandatory that the selected developer(s) who

will create the premier "Keilor Valley" Village Mark 2 par excellence must help to fund/contribute to the establishment of the infrastructure/services/amenity in the area so as to mitigate the concerns of the likes of Melbourne Water, Melbourne Parks and Vicroads whose objections can all be easily allayed if the above proposed urban development is carefully thought through in every minute detail.

#### CONCLUSION

So to all the relevant Government decision-makers and stakeholders my question is: Will the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor soon be developed into a visionary world class ground breaking premier village-style community-oriented living/recreational zone to help alleviate the current emerging trend of diminishing supply of available and suitable residential development land that is situated close to the CBD and which also happens to be near an already established inner suburb blessed with good infrastructure/services/amenity/services that can be easily further augmented/utilized when compared to the task of establishing all this infrastructure from new etc OR will this land, by perhaps badly-informed, unenlightened poor decision-making soon end up an overseas-owned health-threatening cabbage patch mud-heap and ugly eyesore that will embarrass all Victorians for the next 100 years?

Thus will government finally listen to the wisdom and common sense views of the man on the land - like probably 95% or more of our ex-market gardening neighbours who in turn comprise almost all of the current landowners in this land area, my family decades ago discontinued market-gardening in this land area for the reasons outlined above. Nowadays, as we all know, small farm businesses/small acreage farming operations of this nature are only for the foolhardy!

I predict that in a few years the current remaining tiny percentage of farm businesses (both leasees and owners) will eventually be defeated by the industrial conglomerates. Just look at the exorbitant price of vegetables these days! How can these relatively small operators ever hope to compete. Their dreaming! Market consolidation ( sic. monopolies/duopolies etc) and

product commodification will soon absorb the few remaining small acreage agricultural lots everywhere. But as I've mentioned above, probably as many as 99% of the landowners of this area will always refuse to sell their land to any interloper wanting to buy it whilst it is so undervalued under the current antiquated and unfair zoning regime.

Most of the landowners of the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor, born with an egalitarian ethos, would I believe prefer to see our land utilized for both medium/high-density housing and residential living (and not become one of those undemocratic peopleless/lifeless/spiritless gated or dreary master-planned communities) in lots of all shapes and sizes/styles so as to cater to the widest possible range of (little)people who have different needs given their varying incomes, lifestyle preferences, age, ethnicity, people with disabilities etc Anyone for a zero carbon town? Just ask the Persian Gulf's Hyder Consulting group how its done.

Please tell me then who in their right mind would prefer to live in a newly established outlying North/Western suburb with a 2 hour plus commute to and from the CBD to work each day if given the option of living in the above proposed "Keilor Valley" village-styled community-oriented township on the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor which is a hop step and a jump to the city?

At the same time when will government rectify the current ludicrous situation that now exists which on the one hand has recently rezoned former rural land to residential in such faraway suburbs as Craigieburn (over 2 hours plus commute to and from the CBD on most weekdays) to be included within the new Melbourne 2030 Urban Growth Boundary whilst under the the Planning and Environment Act 1987 the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor and only 15 minutes to the CBD still remains outside the new Melbourne 2030 Urban Growth Boundary! This is patently absurd! Just take a look at any map and it will show you just how close Keilor is to the CBD etc

Surely it's now time for everyone to acknowledge that the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor is ripe for residential subdivision for all the reasons given in this submission and that it is a spurious argument at best to maintain that it is still a realistic and viable option to continue to persist in trying to "safeguard this area's agricultural uses and rural and scenic landscape uses" (Taken from the Victorian Government's Planning Department Website blurb on Green Wedge Zones). I repeat, the current landowners in this area, 99% of whom are ex-market gardeners, will never sell or improve their land unless it is rezoned to residential. This land will therefore continue to remain a deteriorating eyesore and potential future health and safety risk.

And how can we continue to ignore the recent residential housing subdivision developments that have sprung up in the West right beside the Maribryngong River's edge and on surrounding clifftops - namely, Edgewater in Maribryngong and Valley Lakes in Keilor East. Such residential developments undermine the argument that the "whole" of the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor should remain zoned rural in perpetuity whilst other land barely a few kilometres away which is also adjacent to the Maribryngong River's edge or similarly surrounded by hills is permitted to be re-zoned to residential.

So how much longer will voters tolerate governments that condemn them to commuting to work sometimes over two hours or more to and from the CBD each day from perhaps some flat, barren, windblown, and viewless outlying poorly-serviced suburb when a golden opportunity exists in their midst to create a model visionary state of the art world class ground breaking environmentally-sustainable and community-friendly "Keilor Valley" township on the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor - which is located adjacent to a major freeway and an established suburb with great infrastructure/ amenity/services/facilities whose capacity could all be quite easily enhanced/better utilized to accomodate the newly created suburb's population? At bottom, a fair go for the West of Melbourne is also at stake.

Therefore, will the upcoming decision on the future use of the land area North of the Calder Freeway in Keilor be dictated by reason and fairness by taking into account the future needs of our cities burgeoning population, the legitimate interests and concerns of the current land-owners (99% ex-market gardeners) and all of the objective facts outlined above which would lead one to conclude that this land is more suitable than most for residential development subdivision especially if we can in this instance ignore the often ill-conceived and ill-informed views of certain vested interests OR will indecision/poor decision-making, lack of vision/weak leadership and/or inertia continue to obstruct what is perhaps in the best interests of the West of Melbourne and all Victorian taxpayers?

With the many many millions of dollars more of Victorian taxpayer's money that it costs to create a new suburb in some farflung outer Metropolitan Melbourne urban zone and which is more than likely to have poor infrastructure/amenity/facilities/services in both the short and long term due to lack of government funding surely it is much wiser and humane and also more cost-effective and efficient to build a new suburb in a now almost redundant rural/agricultural zone situated only 15 minutes commute to the CBD and adjacent to an established inner suburb!

If the right decision is not made this time around I'm afraid that in the not too distant future be viewed as a foolish decision and a hugely missed opportunity by government. And in this part of Metropolitan Melbourne we shall be again condemned to live in the homogenous project home estates all featuring imitation period style housing or the so-called Mc Mansions with triple garages in the "exciting" new flat suburbs adjacent to Deerpark, Sunshne, St Albans, Melton etc

I am by no means a snob but I would love to see something less mediocre and more cutting-edge, innovative, ground breaking and therefore truly visionary in the West of Melbourne, which is now apparently being attempted in cities like Canberra and in many

other places worldwide.

Is there anyone else out there who believes that this is a watershed/tipping point moment for the West of Melbourne to raise the bar and reinvent itself by creating the type of village community that I have sketched out above that will be the envy of the Toorak crowd so that in the future we no longer have to put up with disparaging comments about McMansionville! Need I say anymore!

Victorian Planning Minister the Right Honourable Mr Justin Madden, I believe the above suggestion for a "Keilor Valley" Village Mark 2 accords with your departments stated aim to, when appropriate, allow parts of Green Wedges to be included within the Melbourne 2030 Urban Growth Boundary and also with your own firm principles with regard to creating aesthetically-pleasing humane vibrant prosperous boutique-style urban communities/landscapes, so will you please seriously consider putting your considerable power and authority behind the above residential rezoning proposal so that when you eventually leave politics you will be remembered as an outstanding visionary and principled, not some mediocre and immediately forgettable, politician.

Name temporarily withheld.

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