



October 2016

Dear Colac Otway Shire 2016 Candidate

Via email provided

Questions for Colac Otway Shire Council election candidates, October 2016

The Wye River Separation Creek Progress Association Inc. is seeking views from candidates for the upcoming Colac Otway Shire Elections with the intention that our members can be better informed with who their elected members will be for the next three years. As an elected Committee ourselves, the WRSCPA have summarised our key current areas of concern in 8 questions below. It would be greatly appreciated if you could provide a response to these so that this information could be presented to our members for information.

Tree management on Council owned land in Wye River and Separation Creek

Our community was devastated by bushfire on Christmas Day 2015 and since then thousands of trees have been removed from private land as a risk management strategy. Council owned public land such as Harrington Park is more valuable than ever as it still has some tree cover. The Progress Association is keen to see a staged approach to tree management and as many trees retained as possible

1. What is your approach to future tree management on Council owned land in Wye River?
2. What strategies will you employ to ensure as many trees are retained as possible?

Bushfire recovery

Our townships are struggling to recover from the impacts of the bushfires. Many property owners are considering their rebuilding plans and assessing the implications of the high BAL ratings (BAL-40 and BAL-FZ) that have been assigned to their properties. While we appreciate the One Stop Shop process that has been adopted for planning applications in the bushfire affected areas, we are concerned about the lack of flexibility in the BAL ratings and the impact of the substantial change to vegetation and fuel loads post-bushfire and tree removal both on BAL rating and neighbourhood character

3. What is your approach to BAL ratings? Do you think the current high ratings are appropriate given the substantial changes in vegetation in the townships?
4. Should there be flexibility for property owners in the bush-fire affected areas to propose alternate responses or a change in BAL rating?
5. How will you ensure neighbourhood character is maintained in the light of the many changes post bushfire?

Waste collection in our townships

Following extensive community consultation in 2013, the waste collection service in Wye and Sep was rationalised and a contract agreed. This arrangement has worked well but we understand changes are again being discussed.

6. Will you commit to maintaining pre-bushfire waste collection schedules and routes in Wye River and Separation Creek?
7. Will you consider introducing a hard waste collection service for properties within Colac Otway Shire, and in particular assistance to help clean up properties in fire prone areas?

Rate Capping

The Wye River and Separation Creek townships are generally high value properties that in turn attract high rates dollars being collected for COS services. Bushfire and landslide issues over 2016, a consistent theme from our members is the value of rates paid for the service received given the proximity of our townships to the major towns in Colac Otway of Colac and Apollo Bay.

8. Will you continue to support the State Government mandate of capping rates to no more than 2.5% annually?

Thank you for your time to read this letter and we look forward to hearing back from you on your thoughts on the issues raised.

Yours Sincerely

Juliet le Feuvre

President WRSCPA