



Helen Vaughan
DELWP Barwon South West Region
Geelong

16 November 2016

Dear Helen

River Walk Project – Wye River

We are writing to you now to record the Progress Association's position on the River Walk project. We have been represented on the Project Working Group and have had extensive discussions with the Project Manager. The Flora, Fauna and Beachscape Work Group of the Community Resilience Committee shares the views expressed in this letter.

As you know, the project has a long history. The conditions for the establishment of the Riverwalk were set out in the Department's *Land Use Plan for the Wye River Public Recreation Reserve* in 1993, including that "The entire length of the track to be kept unobstructed. For both the convenience of walkers and to satisfy Health Regulations, cars, tents and caravans will not be permitted on the walking track or between the walking track and the river." These conditions are reflected in the Big4 lease but we have we have been waiting for more than 20 years to see their full implementation.

We are pleased to see the current bank stabilisation project get underway and are hopeful that the new bollards and signage, improved compliance by Big4 and awareness raising among the campers will greatly improve the accessibility of the Riverwalk. However in the continued absence of a formed track, which would be much more likely to guarantee success, we see the current project as a trial rather than a definitive solution.

We are keen to understand how DELWP will measure the success of the project and how compliance will be monitored. There needs to be understanding in the community as well as among the campers that camping is not permitted on the Riverwalk and walkers need to be able to feel comfortable about reporting breaches. We ask:

- to whom should they should report? (Big4? OCC? DELWP?)
- how – and by whom – will compliance be monitored?
- what is the threshold for further action, if required?

We are also concerned about continued unacceptable effluent discharge from caravans. Hoses directing wastewater straight onto the river bank are a regular occurrence, impeding access and posing a threat to water quality and both river and public health. This practice must stop.

The Progress Association has worked for 20 years to see the 'Wye River Public Walking Track' envisaged in 1993 become reality. We really hope that the current project will be a success and meet the community's expectations. We would like to meet with DELWP at the end of the summer season to

review the outcomes and assess whether further actions are necessary, with a formed track as the fallback position.

Yours sincerely

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cc Tammy Smith, DELWP Anglesea
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