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MEDIA RELEASE

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HALT THE CHAIN SAWS REMOVAL OF TREES FROM THE BEAUMARIS HIGH SCHOOL SITE

The Member for Sandringham Murray Thompson calls upon the Andrews' Labor Government to immediately cease its scorched earth approach to the removal of natural vegetation from the Beaumaris High School site at the corner of Reserve Road and Balcombe Road Beaumaris and to properly consult with the Beaumaris Community.

The destruction of 229 trees including 200 year old River Red Gums without proper community consultation must not be tolerated.

Following the meeting held in the school grounds at 5.00 pm on Tuesday the 18th October 2016 the Beaumaris community seeks answers to the following questions:-

1. Which trees are being removed?
2. Is the arborist's report available for independent review?
3. Have abutting property owners been consulted?
4. Where is the final landscaping plan available for inspection?
5. Will representatives from the department and the Government meet with members of the local Community on Thursday 20 October 2016 at the school (Balcombe Rd. entrance) at 5.30 pm and again at 7pm to explain the landscaping plan?
6. What scope is there for wider local community input into site development and access? What community access is planned?
7. Will the Government, the School Building Authority and the school working group commit to no chain saw tree removal until more detailed community consultation has taken place with the wider Beaumaris community, Council and local MP's?

The Chair of the New School Planning Group has stated that "We are committed to replacing any removed vegetation with a minimum of 2 to 1".

Such a program will not replace the 200 year old River Red Gums and other mature vegetation which provides an important corridor habitat for native birds and wild life. Such trees are not available at Bunnings.

Beaumaris is defined by its trees. No trees should be removed without specific justification for works to proceed or on the basis of independent analysis of the arborist's report.

Reinvestment in the Beaumaris High School site, which is supported by everyone, must carefully balance the interests of the school, the MCC and the local community.

Yesterday I invited the Minister for Education or his delegates to attend a meeting on the Beaumaris school site on Thursday 20 October 2016 at 5.30 pm (and again at 7.00 pm) with members and representatives of the local community to outline and discuss relevant arborist reports, landscape plans, requirement for tree removal and replanting options for the site and related issues prior to the chainsaws starting.

All interested stakeholders are welcome to attend.

Unless satisfactory answers are received to the above questions I invite the Beaumaris community to attend a community protest at the school from 6.45 am on Monday the 24 October 2016 to **HALT THE CHAIN SAWS.**

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