

11th December 2007

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Dear Amy,

**Points to Consider following Guided Walk along Proposed “Meandering” Alignment of Bayside Bicycle Road between Cromer and Charman Roads**

As representatives of Beaumaris Conservation Society Inc, we appreciated the on-site information and insights obtained by our above walk with you and other Council officers that have been developing proposals for the siting of the above bicycle road extension, and now wish to raise certain points as a result of that inspection.

**Questioning any Incursion:** It is unquestionably most regrettable that any diminution of the bushland is being contemplated at all. It raises the question of whether Bayside City Council should decline to diminish it in any substantial way, by declining to be involved in any substantial construction sited in the bushland area, in the event that neither VicRoads, nor the Victorian Government, which is the proponent for the bicycle road, were prepared to undertake the feasible modification and extension of the present Safety Section between Charman Road and Deauville Street to provide room on the wide road reservation for the bicycle road extension.

**Main Consideration in any Incursion into the Bushland Reserve:** The walk along a likely 4 metre-wide cleared wind tunnel, and weed and litter access zone, dividing the already narrow linear bushland strip in many places into two parallel bushland strips each about half as wide demonstrated clearly the essential need to rank the preservation of the wholeness and unity of the bushland continuum well ahead of concerns about the removal of individual trees. The long term integrity and viability of the bushland is best served by totally avoiding any further fragmentation of it.

**Individual Trees are Transitory:** It is not an argument to fell trees without a sound reason, but individual trees, even when they are numerous and are fine specimens, have limited life, and must be replaced with successors. For young specimens, the time to achieve equivalent substance is not long, and for old or senile specimens the risk of a natural death is never far away. By contrast, the dedication and placement of a 2.5 metre-wide concrete bicycle road centred in a 4 metre wide permanently vegetation-free corridor would be a far more permanent and non-negotiable aspect of the reserve. It is useful to zoom in on the 1951 Lands Department [aerial photograph](#) showing the well-established Beach Road as a 2-lane paved road bordered by a wide grass verge, and to note the quite sparse and depleted foreshore vegetation between Cromer Road and Wells Road, compared with the present more widespread growth.

**“Net Gain” in Trees from Siting the Bicycle Road with Minimum Incursion:** The reserve’s greatest significance is its location on the cliff edge and fault line. If the bicycle road were sited on the edge of the reserve furthest from the sea and cliff, it would be in the least important part of this coastal reserve. Siting it there would, compared to the “meandering” proposal, not increase the length of the edge of the reserve at all. Some 90 indigenous trees would be felled, but the [Victorian Government’s Net Gain principles](#) for indigenous bushland, which are incorporated in the Bayside Planning Scheme, should legally mandate the planting and nurture of many more replacement trees, for which room exists on the reserve’s many bare areas, including some unduly wide areas of the cliff-edge walking path.

**Removal of Sand for Levelling:** Siting the bicycle road on the inland edge of the reserve would entail some cutting into the sandy bank created by the construction of Beach Road, but that amounts to moving the present bank further seawards rather than creating an extra bank. The extent of cutting and banking might be reduced by some boardwalk structures. Consideration could be given to using that sand, which might also contain good seeds, to fill depressions among mounds near Wells Road if investigation shows that different landform was created artificially by fill from elsewhere, and it might also be of use in repairing parts of the very deeply eroded walking path near the cliff edge.

**Split Path & Dismounting:** There are places where a 4 metre-wide swathe would unnecessarily condemn certain special trees, so there should be a split path, or [dismounting zones](#) where cyclists contribute to tree protection by accepting some inconvenience by being required to dismount to allow a narrower width in order to save those trees.

Yours sincerely,

Adrian Cerbasi  
President

Geoffrey Goode  
Treasurer