

Jim Mason Answers to Landcare Questions 08 Oct 2017

- With so little remnant native vegetation remaining on the Bellarine, further incremental clearing for roads and new developments in our region has alarmed many residents. Are you committed to increasing sustainability of developments and safe-guarding remaining remnant vegetation in the Bellarine?

I am fully committed. Further, we need development designs to contain generous parkland areas, and designated bio-link pathways which can ultimately be connected to other recreation pathways.

- The rural charm of the Bellarine is being impacted by the growing peri-urban and suburban developments such that some are predicting it may resemble Werribee in the decades to come. Are you committed to preserving the clean and green agricultural component of the Bellarine and enhancing its productive capacity so that farming remains affordable?

I am fully committed. That's why I am in Landcare. For people to fully enjoy the rural aspects we need a network of linked bike and recreation tracks. Some of these can be along undeveloped yet designated roads. New roads need to have a proper bike lane and where possible old alignments should be widened, but also preserving and protecting existing Natural roadside vegetation. Perhaps some landholders will sell a strip of land next to the road reserve for this purpose.

- Many in the Bellarine remain opposed the major Tip being located and expanded in Drysdale due to its sensitive environmental and agricultural location. Are you committed to finding a more suitable alternative location for an expanded Tip?

I am fully committed. I am also committed to seeing this site revegetated with indigenous grasses, shrubs and trees, to serve as an exemplary park, and done in such a way as to preserve the views neighbours already enjoy.

- Controlling weeds and feral animals within our environmental and agricultural areas remains a key resource problem for land managers. Are you committed to supporting Bellarine landholders to address this problem on public and private land?

I am fully committed. This is a diabolical problem and I will fight for more funding from COGG and for a fully coordinated effort.

- Within the Bellarine we have much depleted native vegetation, threatened ecosystems and species and fragile wetlands. Are you committed to engaging additional support for the restoration, revegetation and enhanced protection of these areas?

I am fully committed. My track record on this is enough. On Lynne's and my property, we have planted well in excess of 60,000 indigenous plants and are putting 16 Ha. into a Trust for Nature covenant.