

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Maribyrnong River Flood Review](#)
Subject: Maribyrnong River Submission
Date: Monday, 23 January 2023 12:19:08 PM
Attachments: [Submission Maryibyrnong Flooding.docx](#)

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To: Maribyrnong Flood Review

From: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED]

I would like to make a submission on the historical flooding of the Maribyrnong River, I was not so much affected this time but in past floods of the Maribyrnong River.

I have personally lived through them living along the river through the 40's to the 70's floods and have knowledge of them and also through my Grandfather who we lived with in the Footscray Park, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] He went through the great flood of 1916 and told me and through his daily journals and then the floods of the 50's as I did which had minimal destruction compared to the 2022 flood.

The floods of 1800 and early 1900's was not as devastating as the 2022 flood, as back then the river valley retained its natural flood plains undisturbed by urban expansion and human greed which all changed with town planners ignoring historical flood data to please ruthless developers.

After the fifty floods my Grandfather was asked by the Race Course Executive for his opinion on a muted flood wall for the Flemington Race Course. My Grandfathers advice on the consequence it would have up river during a flood must have been headed as it did not go ahead at that time.

His recommendation to the Race Course was based on the Aboriginal Elders of the land who had given him advice when he was building the Footscray park. My Grandfather had tones of spoil to dispose of and it was going to be used to fill the low flats along the river of the park which are now playing fields.

The Elders told him of the historical floods of the river before white civilization and that any manmade alteration to the Maribyrnong River flood plains would have dire consequences, so these park land flats were left natural to allow for river flooding.

This 2022 flood was only partially caused by the Race Course Flood wall which caused devastating property damage unlike any other flood we have had. As said before Government Bureaucrats are to blame for this destruction and their poor town planning.

If you compare the topography maps of the 1800's and early 1900's you will find that there was a lot more low-lying river flat plains available for mitigation of flood waters to disburse with little effect, now most of these low-lying flood plains have gone looking at a present-day topography map.

Just to name some losses of low lying flood plains which have now been built up to prevent these areas from flooding, all the way from the Maribyrnong Road to the Port of Melbourne.

The Old Ammunition flood plains (old Victorian Ammunition Factory Gordon Street Footscray),
Myers Flat (the old Myers store factory near Farnsworth Avenue and the river),

The Flemington Race Course (along Smithfield Road Flemington)

Melbourne Abattoirs flats (along Smithfield Road Kensington),

Building and development (along the River between Smithfield Road and Footscray Road),

Development and narrowing of the Maribyrnong River (Port of Melbourne).

All these built-up low flood plain areas (1/2 to 2/3 of existing flood plains) have all contributed greatly in the past in reducing flood mitigation and it was accepted that these areas would flood every so often, but left untouched until no one cared.

The other big contributing factor is the reduced volume of the Maribyrnong Rivers capacity to hold flood water, mainly due to regular maintenance, dredging of the river which use to take place on average every ten years in the mid 1900's for the entire length of the salt water section. The spoils used to be deposited on the flood plains and then removed when they had dried out (not sure when this last happened). This could not be achieved this way now as there is little flood plains left to carry this procedure out anymore.

If the river has not been dredged since the 60's then the river could be holding up to three million tons of silt and rubbish including cars, shopping trolleys, bicycles and other large dumped items all restricting the flow of the river. If this was removed it would equate to around 1,500 megaliter's of extra water capacity of the river which is about the same amount of water that flooded the homes in the Maribyrnong area. So why is this the first time this area has flooded?

Unfortunately removing the Race Course wall would only partially help, but essential. The other is regular river maintenance which is also essential but now costly to carry out and no more use of the little flood plains we have left as we cannot regain all of the lost ones as they have already been built on.

It is a shame that we did not take more notice and advice from the Aboriginal Elders of the land who new the river so well and made their home along it in the olden days.

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