



Victorian Climbing Club  
G.P.O. Box 1725  
Melbourne Victoria 3000

1<sup>st</sup> July 2020

Gabrielle Williams  
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs  
C/O Aboriginal Victoria  
GPO Box 2392  
Melbourne Victoria 3001  
By email: [aboriginal.heritage@dpc.vic.gov.au](mailto:aboriginal.heritage@dpc.vic.gov.au)  
cc: [jason.borg@parks.vic.org.au](mailto:jason.borg@parks.vic.org.au)  
cc: [michael@bglc.com.au](mailto:michael@bglc.com.au)  
cc: [stuart.harradine@bglc.com.au](mailto:stuart.harradine@bglc.com.au)

Dear Ms Williams,

Thank you for your correspondence dated 10<sup>th</sup> June, informing us of the interim protection declaration that you have made for Dyurrite 1 Aboriginal Place at Taylors Rock /Declaration Crag at Mount Arapiles/ Dyurrite.

I am writing to you as President of the Victorian Climbing Club and as a resident of Natimuk (located close to Mount Arapiles- Toosan State Park). I believe that the majority of climbers and locals are very happy that cultural heritage has been 'rediscovered' at the Dyurrite 1 site and are keen to have it appropriately protected and celebrated. They understand that the Wotjobaluk Traditional Owners have deep connections to Dyurrite that date back tens of thousands of years. They also understand the critical need for cultural heritage to be protected from possible harm and acknowledge that they may have unwittingly contributed to such harm over the years.

Where there has been some anxiety among climbers and locals, it has not related to the need to protect cultural heritage. Rather, it has related to what particular management options, out of many available, might be chosen. This concern has emerged as a result of Parks Victoria's recent management decision to prohibit climbers from over 550 square kilometres of the nearby Gariwerd / Grampians National Park, ostensibly to protect the geographically small sites where cultural heritage has been identified.

The VCC has always respectfully maintained that there are alternative ways of providing robust protection – both of cultural heritage and of environmentally sensitive sites - without recourse to huge exclusion zones. These alternative ways include fine-grained cliff-sector by cliff-sector assessments and subsequent development of cliff-sector- appropriate management strategies. Such approaches have been used very successfully elsewhere in Australia (including elsewhere at Dyurrite/Mount Arapiles) and overseas to provide

strong cultural heritage protection that has not required prohibitions of recreational users from vast expanses of territory.

Hence, we are heartened that this first interim protection order – for Dyurrite 1 – excludes public access from the relatively geographically small area where the Cultural Heritage has been identified without the need to keep people away from larger tracts of land in this part of the Park. We note that a ‘low-key’, low-level log perimeter has already been constructed and this seems appropriate.

We look forward to some interpretative signage that helps visitors learn about and be able to celebrate the significance of the cultural heritage at this site. As you may be aware, this approach is already established in this Park, as evidenced by a small site near a section of cliff-line called the Plaque Area. The site has been respected by Park users for decades and the small interpretative sign there has been appreciated by myriads of visitors.

We hope that this approach continues to be followed by Parks Victoria and Traditional Owners when considering the protection of other local cultural heritage sites within the Park and we congratulate all parties on recent steps in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Lindorff', written in a cursive style.

Kevin Lindorff  
President,  
Victorian Climbing Club