



Alexandra Parade playground before freeway construction

The Metropolitan and Melbourne Board of Works (MMBW), constructing authority for the freeway at the time, acted promptly once approval was given, to the frustration of those who were still disputing the government's decision. In November 1971, the Board bulldozed ten acres of the Yarra Bend Park in advance of the passage of the necessary enabling legislation. An acutely embarrassed government only narrowly averted a threat by its backbench to join the opposition to force a breach of parliamentary privilege inquiry.

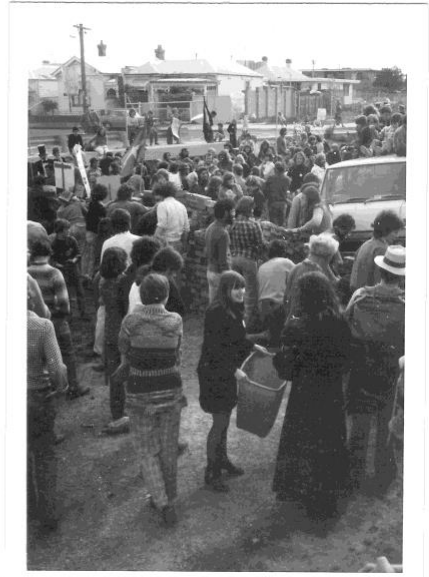
Meanwhile, construction of the first stage was progressing and public opposition was building. <http://mrv.ozroads.net.au/SRNS/M%20Routes/M3%20Eastern/history.htm>

Opposing the freeways became a major community struggle in the 1970s. In 1973 Collingwood Council voted \$1000 to fight against the freeways. In 1976 the Country Roads Board (CRB) decided to upgrade Alexandra Parade. The decision to widen Alexandra Pde caused the anti-freeway protests to boil over and in 1976 protesters built a symbolic brick wall across Alexandra Parade at the beginning of the freeway. Nonetheless the



freeway went ahead and the CRB opened it to traffic in three stages during December 1977; firstly from Hoddle St to Chandler Hwy; then to Burke Rd; then to Bulleen Rd.

The Collingwood Residents Association and others tried to prevent the completion of the Eastern Freeway which had been built through Yarra Bend Park. In 1976 we built a symbolic brick wall across Alexandra Pde and in late 1977 a barricade was built to stop the freeway opening.



The section of Alexandra Pde between Gold Street and Nicholson Street was declared a state highway - Eastern Highway - in October 1977 so that it would be completely a state responsibility. The F2, the Hume Freeway, was scrapped.