



# Newsletter

December 2014

## Monash Planning Scheme

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### Monash Housing Strategy

We reported in the July Newsletter about our submission to the Council in relation to the Draft Monash Housing Strategy which the Council was considering as part of the review of the Monash Planning Scheme. Our concern was that the environmentally sensitive areas along the creek lines were not being given enough protection from degradation as urban density increases.

We are happy to report that the Council has responded by adding a new category, "Creek Environs" to the Strategy. Council officers are "currently finalising the Neighbourhood Character Review to assist in identifying the distinctive neighbourhood character elements of the Creek Environs. These characteristics will inform the development of the appropriate planning provisions and boundaries. It is anticipated that a report will be presented to Council in early 2015 to prepare an amendment to the Monash Planning Scheme that introduces the Monash Housing Strategy and planning provisions that, amongst other matters, recognise and protect the character of the Creek Environs."

### Environmentally Sustainable Design

Another aspect of the Planning Scheme also has implications for our creeks—proposed Amendment C113 which includes a new Environmentally Sustainable Design Policy to apply to new developments.

Our two Friends groups have again made a joint submission about this policy as applied to developments which abut creek reserves. The main points of our submission were under five headings.

1. **Multi-unit design:** that strong consideration be given to "terrace" design housing (as



Vegetation cleared for building redevelopment.

opposed to "tandem" design) and substantial setbacks from rear boundaries. This would ensure that developments neither encroach on the visual amenity nor deplete the ecology or biodiversity of the bushland in which they share their back boundary. Terrace developments allow for significant retention of backyard areas.

2. **"Third Neighbour" concept:** that Council Planners continue to follow the informal agreement that Friends groups will be advised, as the "third neighbour", when planning applications are made for developments of properties which abut the creek reserves. This allows Friends groups to liaise with council officers and make significant community input to protect the unique bushland remnants in the City of Monash.

3. **Single dwellings—Rescode.** Much redevelopment is occurring on land abutting or close to reserves, with large single residences, resulting in total clearance of vegetation including canopy trees. Little open space remains and most of the site is covered with hard, non-porous surfaces. The Friends request that Council considers stricter controls and vigilant monitoring to ensure that greater setbacks are achieved and that hard surface coverings be kept to a minimum by the

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## Monash Planning Scheme.....continued

use of porous materials for driveways and other sealed open space areas.

#### 4. Pollution controls—community education

Council has installed a large underground litter trap at the northern end of Damper Creek Reserve which has resulted in a noticeable decrease in the amount of debris entering the creek. The Friends commend the Council on this action.

From time-to-time unthinking residents, developers or businesses wash debris, litter or pollutants down storm-water drains or street drains thereby polluting the creeks. The Friends ask that the Monash City Council continue to engage in a community education program to prevent pollution of our waterways.

#### 5. Rain gardens, bio-filters and wetlands.

The Friends welcome and commend the construction of rain gardens now in some local

streets and the bio-filter at the Holmesglen Reserve. We encourage the establishment of many more in the City of Monash, especially in areas feeding storm-water into our bushland reserves and creeks. Filtering run-off from roads is important in reducing pollution in waterways from oils, heavy metals and other pollutants arising from vehicular traffic. We also support the continuation of community education programs to residents about what they can do in their own gardens to preserve and filter storm-water.

Following on from more frequent storm events, combined with the increases on hard surface areas throughout Monash, the bushland reserves are now suffering significant scouring of top soils with debris being pushed into, and collected within, the creeks themselves. Rapid runoff is also causing considerable erosion along the creek lines.



*Acacia melanoxylon*  
Blackwood wattle

## "sparc playspace" in Valley Reserve

The Council has released a Concept Vision Plan for the new "playspace" in Valley Reserve. Our group met with the planners in the reserve at the end of October and was given an update briefing. We were pleased to note that the development will be centered around the existing picnic area.

The design of the new playspace and social areas will follow four key criteria:

- **Nature based activity**

Minimal impact on the existing bushland. Additional re-vegetation planting and paths incorporated along existing planting borders. New interpretive signage with storytelling for children about flora and fauna within the reserve. Natural materials for play structures and shelters

- **Adventure play and fitness for all ages**

A series of obstacles for all ages play activities with a mix of traditional elements and

ropes, logs and other structures for balance, climbing and fitness

- **Bush education**

Outdoor area for local schools and groups to hold lessons

- **Social and accessibility**

Spaces for large and small groups and also for individuals to enjoy the reserve. Improve the existing BBQ and picnic areas. Look into upgrade of the existing toilet block for accessible cubicle and baby change facility. Improve path connections between existing toilets, car park and BBQ areas. Clear directional signage to assist people going through the reserve.

The play structures will include a flying fox, a social swing, sculptural play totems, a tree house with lookout and rope climbing course, shaded picnic and seating area and a toddler play area with dry creek bed, swings, slide and balancing play.

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## Waterwatch Results - October–November 2014

Parameter	Site 1A Fiander arm YSC010		Site 1B Crosby arm YSC012		Site 2 Regent Street YSC020		Site 3 Valley Creek YVA100		Site 4 Wetland upper YSC099		Site 5 Wetland lower YSC100	
	19/10/14	23/11/14	19/10/14	23/11/14	19/10/14	23/11/14	19/10/14	23/11/14	19/10/14	23/11/14	19/10/14	23/11/14
Date	19/10/14	23/11/14	19/10/14	23/11/14	19/10/14	23/11/14	19/10/14	23/11/14	19/10/14	23/11/14	19/10/14	23/11/14
Air temperature °C	25.00	19.0	25.0	20.0	22.0	20.0	21.0	20.0	25.0	20.0	23.0	21.0
Water temperature °C	18.0	17.0	17.0	17.0	15.0	18.0	15.0	18.0	19.0	20.0	21.0	21.0
pH	7.3 G	7.3 G	7.1 G	7.0 E	6.4 E	7.0 E	6.8 E	6.8 E	6.8 E	6.9 E	6.8 E	6.5 E
Oxygen concentration mg/l	N/M	3.8 D	N/M	4.8 P	5.2 F	N/M	5.5 F	N/M	N/M	N/M	N/M	N/M
Conductivity E.C.	700 P	940 D	320 F	400 F	400 F	480 F	470 F	290 F	180 G	220 G	190 G	140 G
Turbidity F.T.U	15 G	14 E	39 D	61 D	17 G	17 G	24 P	20 P	20 P	22 P	43 D	0 E
Phosphorus, soluble ppm	N/M	0.065 P	N/M	0.059 P	0.091 P	N/M	0.049 F	N/M	N/M	N/M	N/M	N/M
Ammonium NH <sub>4</sub> ppm	0.00 E	0.05 G	0.00 E	0.04 E	0.40 D	0.06 G	0.00 E	0.00 E	0.00 E	0.00 E	0.00 E	0.00 E
Stream flow L/s	2.1	2.8	2.5	3.5	8.6	4.9	0.0	0.1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Habitat assessment/50	26 F	26 F	27 F	27 F	24 F	24 F	28 F	28 F	21 F	21 F	21 F	21 F

E=Excellent ■ G=Good ■ F=Fair ■ P=Poor ■ D=Degraded ■ N/M= Not measured ■ N/A= Not applicable

## Waterwatch Reports

Macro Invertebrates - November	Site 1A Fiander Arm YSC010	Site 1B Crosby Arm YSC012
<b>Very Sensitive</b>		
<i>Caddisfly larvae</i>	1	1
<b>Sensitive</b>		
<i>Damselfly larvae</i>	20	3
<i>Freshwater mussels</i>	0	2
<b>Tolerant</b>		
<i>Beetle larvae</i>	0	2
<i>True Bugs (Backswimmers, Water Scorpions, Water Boatmen, Lesser Water Striders, Water Striders/Treaders)</i>	1	0
<i>Leeches</i>	1	1
<i>Snails (freshwater)</i>	30	30
<i>Flatworms</i>	30	2
<b>Very Tolerant</b>		
<i>Mosquito larvae</i>	1	0
<i>Midge larvae</i>	2	0
<i>Freshwater segmented worms</i>	16	6
<i>Blood worms</i>	30	30
<b>Abundance Category</b>	3	2
<b>Total Bug Score</b>	32	33
<b>Stream Condition</b>	Poor	Poor

### October

Scotchmans Creek and Glen Waverley Drain flows were normal, Valley Creek was just a trickle, and there was no flow through the wetlands ponds.

Chemical results to note were

- Poor conductivity result at site 2 (Fiander arm)
- Poor phosphate result and Degraded ammonium result at site 2 (Regent Street)
- Poor or Degraded turbidity results at sites 1b, 3, 4, 5 (Crosby arm, Valley Creek, both wetlands sites).

The invertebrate result from Valley Creek was better than the restricted sampling conditions (small shallow pools) led us to expect. The sample contained 8 caddisfly larvae, which are classed as Very Sensitive to water quality and which we do not often find

at any of our sites. There was sufficient variety of invertebrates for the site to be rated Good.

### November

The water was remarkably clear at all sites except 1b (Crosby arm, Glen Waverley Drain).

We heard frogs calling in the wetlands upper pond (site 4) and netted some tadpoles at the upstream sites (1a, 1b). This is encouraging after the prolonged problems with oil and ongoing occurrences of fatty films in Glen Waverley Drain (site 1b).

We noted an absorbent sampling "sock" installed at site 2 (Regent Street).

We noted a small outbreak of Parrots Feather in the wetlands (site 5). This has been separately reported to appropriate authorities.

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**We're on the Web!**  
[scotchmanskreekfriends.org.au](http://scotchmanskreekfriends.org.au)

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### **"Greening Monash"**

**Monash World Environment Day Winner - 2008**  
**Sustainable Cities Award Finalist - 2014**



### **Planting Days coming up in 2015**

We've just had word that the applications for funding our planting program for 2015 have been approved by Melbourne Water so this means we can confidently go ahead with the planning. Our major planting day will again be **National Tree Day, Sunday, 26 July 2015, in Fairway Reserve**. The site is on the west side of the Stephenson's Road bridge. It's quite a large area and we hope to plant another 8000 indigenous plants with the help of the marvellous volunteers who come along. How about making a note in your diary now so you don't forget to join in? The Scouts will be cooking up the sausages and veggie burgers again so that sorts out lunch for you.

We also have two other planting sites picked out, Regent Street Reserve and Crosby Drive Reserve. Two local companies have said they will help us with planting these.

### **Valley Reserve events**

We are always looking for helpers to join in our monthly **Work Party in Valley Reserve**. We'll be starting these again in **February - Saturday, 28 February at 1:20 pm**. There's always work to be done in the reserve - the weeds just won't stop growing! Think of it a bit of gardening to help the Monash community and Valley Reserve is such a great garden to work in.

We have a special event planned for **Valley Reserve on Friday, 20 March**. In co-operation with the Council PALS section we will be holding a **Twilight Tour** evening. It will start around 6:30pm with a barbecue hosted by the Mulgrave Lions Club. This will be followed by the option of two guided tours. The second of these will be after it gets dark and will be a nocturnal animal spotting walk. We will have special night-viewing equipment so as to not disturb the animals too much. We know there are many native animals living in Valley Reserve such as sugar gliders, flying foxes, owls and micro-bats (not the vampire kind), so, who knows what we will see?

We will put out further information about these events and, for the Twilight Tour, the Council PALS section will advertise it in the PALS booklet. Details will also be on the Council website. This event will be free but you will need to book with the Council on 9518 3555.

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## **For the diary - 2015**

**Annual "Get Together" Barbecue**  
**Saturday, 31 January 2015—12:30pm**  
**Valley Reserve – Mel. Ref. 70:G2**

You don't need to be a member - everyone is welcome. The Friends group will be providing salads, meat, bread and drinks - and the electric BBQs are there all ready. Just bring along any special food or drinks you may desire and a chair would also be a good idea. Using your own plates and cutlery would reduce waste going to landfill.

If you are coming, please RSVP to Sally Walker - phone 9807 5576 - by 26 January, so we can work out the catering requirements. This

has been a popular event each year and it is a great way to get to meet other people who share an interest in the beautiful surroundings of Valley Reserve and Scotchmans Creek.

**Clean Up Australia Day**  
**Sunday, 1 March 2015—9:00am**  
**Regent Street Playground—Mel. Ref. 70:G3**

Come and help us give Scotchmans Creek a clean-up. Registration is at the playground in Regent Street just in from Waverley Road. Getting rid of the rubbish that finds its way into the Scotchmans Creek reserves is a great way to make them better for everyone.