



Merlynston Creek Parklands

Masterplan

JULY 2026



Acknowledgement of Country

Hume City Council recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage within the municipality and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung as the Traditional Custodians of this land.

Council embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander living cultures as a vital part of Australia’s identity and recognises, celebrates and pays respect to Elders past and present.

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For:

HUME CITY COUNCIL

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Figure 1: Merlynston Creek Parklands Masterplan Process.

Overview

Project introduction

Merlynston Creek is located on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people.

From its headwaters it flows southwards for approximately 11 kilometres before entering Merri Creek. Starting in Campbellfield, Merlynston Creek flows through Coolaroo, Dallas and Broadmeadows for about 7 kilometres. It then passes out of the City of Hume under the Western Ring Road, continuing through the City of Merri-bek to join Merri Creek.

Within Hume, Merlynston Creek forms part of an important green spine that is the main source of public open space for many residents. The creek travels through many existing parks, including Laura Douglas Reserve, Hepburn Street Reserve (also known as Dallas Tennis Hall), Seabrook Reserve, Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery, and Jack Roper Reserve.

However, the Merlynston Creek Parklands lack continuous connected trails and much of the habitat has been removed over time. Water quality in the creek is poor.

Project scope

The Masterplan aims to set the long-term strategic direction for the Merlynston Creek Parklands, embedding cultural, ecological, waterway, heritage, community recreation, and access and connection values.

The Masterplan provides direction for short, medium and long term future capital works bids to support playspace renewal and upgrades, footpath renewal and expansion, ecological and landscape works, sports renewal, traffic and stormwater improvements.

Some initiatives cannot be funded by Council alone, and the Masterplan provides advocacy and strategic direction that will be drawn on to apply for grants, partnerships and any adjacent developer negotiations.

Policy context

The Masterplan aligns with:

- Council Plan 2025 - 2029
- Open Space Strategy 2025
- Community Infrastructure Plan
- Active Living Plan 2026

Study Area

Study Area

The project study area is located 25 kilometres north of the Melbourne CBD and extends from Maffra Street in the north to the Western Ring Road in the south. It covers approximately 82 hectares and passes through the suburbs of Coolaroo, Dallas and Broadmeadows.

The map on this page gives a high-level snapshot of the area under investigation.

Why this project?

The vision, key policy directions, and infrastructure levels of service informing both the Merlynston Creek Parklands Masterplan and more detailed reserve planning are set out in Hume City Council's Open Space Strategy 2025.

The municipal-wide vision for open space is:

"Hume's high-quality open space network supports the health and wellbeing of our diverse community and celebrates the waterways, natural values and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural values of our landscape."

Merlynston Creek stretches over three of the 13 precincts set out in the Open Space Strategy. Most of the study area falls within Precinct 8: Broadmeadows. A small area of Merlynston Creek is in the southeast corner of Precinct 9: Roxburgh Park, and the source is located in Precinct 10: Somerton.

The Open Space Strategy identifies the need for greater investment in Broadmeadows to improve the diversity and number of open space reserves, and the quality of experiences and assets. Broadmeadows has the least open space per person in the City of Hume, and about one-fifth of urban homes are not within a 400m walk of open space.

In an otherwise very urbanised area, Merlynston Creek Parklands is a habitat corridor rich in nature — improvements within the Parklands will help to address these challenges and ensure open space outcomes are maximised to support the housing expansion forecast for Broadmeadows over the next 20 years. The project will contribute to all three key policy directions — Protect; Optimise; Grow — in the Open Space Strategy

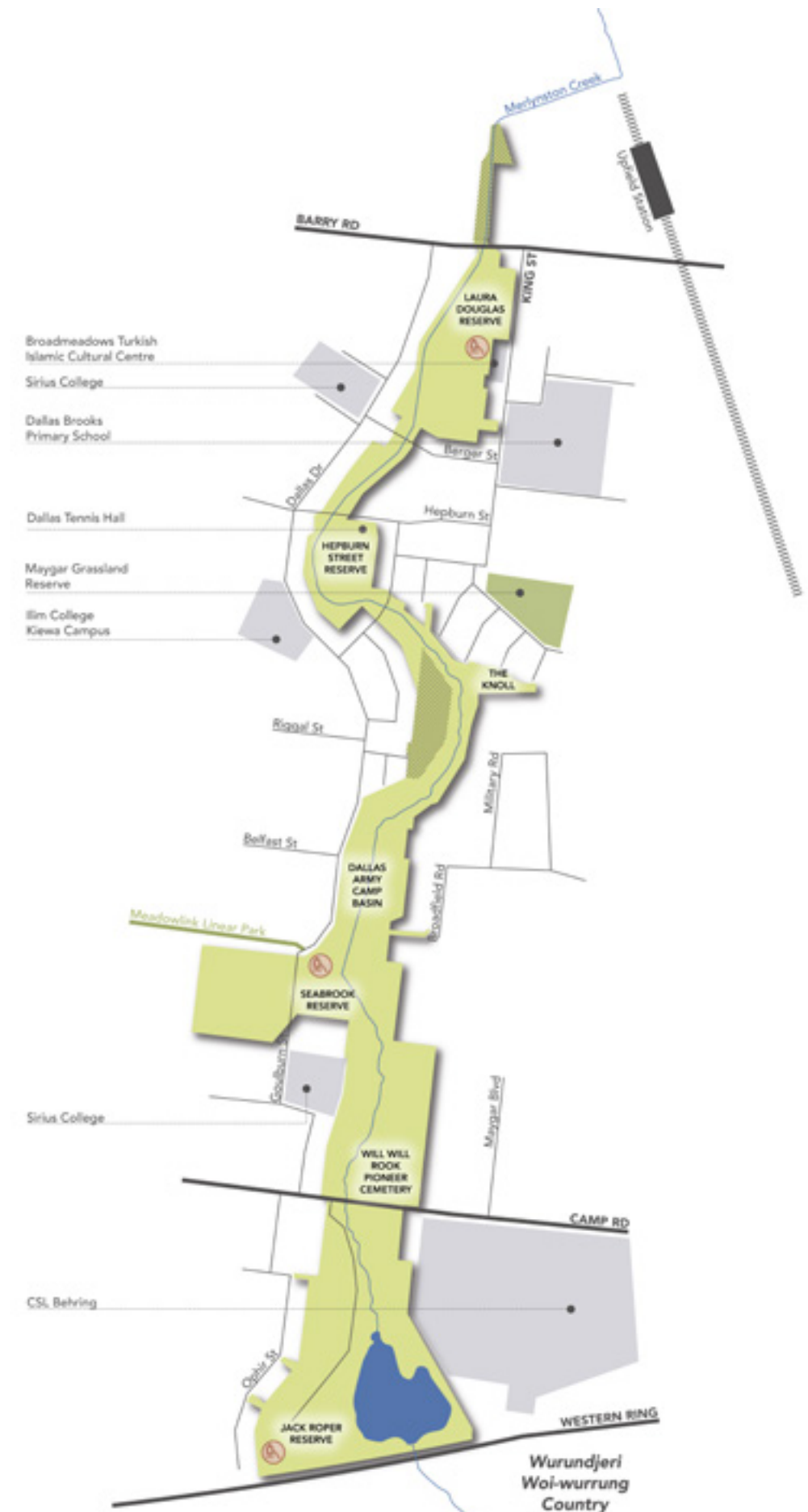


Figure 2: Merlynston Creek Parklands Masterplan Study Area.

2.0

Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country

Merlynston Creek is located on the lands of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people

"Merlynston Creek and the cultural landscape it is embedded in is an important part of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country. Waterways and waterscapes hold immense cultural, spiritual, and social significance to Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People. The protection, preservation and revitalisation of waterways and waterscapes is a crucial part of caring for Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country."

The health of Merlynston Creek is intertwined with that of all beings within this cultural landscape, all which have an important role. For Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People, Merlynston Creek flows as a living connection to Ancestors and Country, and the ways they lived in and cared for this landscape, much which can be learnt from. Revitalising Country to reflect the landscape of Merlynston Creek prior to colonisation as much as possible is important to Elders. Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural knowledge and history of Ancestors should be celebrated and shared with the wider community, where appropriate. Such education is important for non-Wurundjeri people living on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country, allowing for truth-telling and fostering greater respect for Country.

Caring for Country is an immense task that is everyone's responsibility. Within this shared responsibility, it is important that Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People have a real and meaningful voice in decision making around their Country. This includes Merlynston Creek and connected Cultural Landscapes, which remains of immense value to Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People today."¹²

*"Elders place significant value on the scarce patches of remnant vegetation along Merlynston Creek, including areas at Jack Roper Reserve, Will-Will Rook Cemetery, and around The Knoll. Elders have highlighted the importance of preserving and protecting remnant vegetation in caring for Country. These areas also offer a connection to the pre-colonial landscape, an inheritance from Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Ancestors that cared for Country at this time. Elders have emphasised the need for preventative measures to be put in place to reduce detrimental impacts on remnant vegetation; as well as proactive measures, such as seed collection, to increase native populations."*¹²

The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (WWCHAC) are the Registered Aboriginal Party appointed to represent Traditional Owner matters.

The WWCHAC has undertaken a Cultural Values Assessment to consider the wider cultural landscape significance. This considers cultural beliefs, customs, spiritual attachments, the archaeological and historical records, ongoing association and more.

The outcomes and recommendations of the Cultural Values Study have informed the outcomes of this Merlynston Creek Parklands Masterplan. Additionally, Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMP) will be undertaken prior to any construction work.

"Waterways are the lifeline of all Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People's flora and fauna species."

- Perry Wandin, Wurundjeri Elder

"It's Mother Earth, so the waterways are her veins. If you are looking after Country, you are looking after your mother. If you are blocking the waterways, you are blocking her veins. It's a spiritual connection."

- Aunty Di Kerr, Wurundjeri Elder

"The Cultural Landscape of Merlynston Creek plays an important role in providing habitat to a wealth of native fauna species of significance to Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People."

- Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation





3.0

One Parkland: Many Places

Merlynston Creek Parklands is a place of diversity. It can be understood and experienced in many different ways.

Critically, it is a cultural place, Country with deep significance to the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People.

It is also a place of ecology, of waterways, of heritage, of community recreation, and of connection. These qualities and characters are expressed in different ways along the length of the parklands.

The images on these two pages show just some of the many different places and conditions within Merlynston Creek Parklands. Both individually and together, they provide a snapshot of the character of the parklands.

A Cultural Place

Merlynston Creek is on the traditional lands of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and their cultural values and heritage are seen in the land, water, sky, plants, animals and more.

*"The Wurundjeri People have an unbroken relationship with Country, caring for this land, its waterways, its plants, and animals. A core purpose of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Corporation is the protection, preservation and revitalisation of Wurundjeri culture and cultural practices."*¹²

An Ecological Place

Merlynston Creek Parklands is home to many plants and animals, including:

- Kangaroos - these in the rail reserve north of Barry Road
- Stands of native trees - these in Laura Douglas Reserve
- Golden Sun Moth - suitable habitat west of The Knoll
- Endangered Crane's Bill - sighted west of The Knoll

A Waterway Place

Merlynston Creek itself takes many forms as it travels through the Parklands, including:

- Concreted and fenced - beside the Coolaroo Hotel
- Concrete and disconnected from surrounding parkland - near Hepburn Reserve
- Free-flowing, with waterway planting along the banks - through Will Rook Cemetery
- Opening into large detention basins for flood management - like the basin at Jack Roper Reserve

A Heritage Place

Merlynston Creek Parklands contains glimpses of post-settlement heritage, including:

- Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery with central avenue tree planting and remaining gravesites
- Broadstore Railway Crossing - remembered with a viewing area with informational signage
- Maygar Army Camp - remembered in the name of Camp Road, south of Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery - image shows the barracks to the east of the site during World War 1

A Community Recreation Place

One of the striking features of Merlynston Creek Parklands is the three Regional / District parks, including:

- Laura Douglas Reserve - A 'district' reserve currently offering soccer facilities and small playground
- Seabrook Reserve - A 'district' reserve with recently upgraded picnic and play facilities, State Rugby League facilities, Seabrook Community Centre and more
- Jack Roper Reserve - A 'regional' reserve much loved as one of Hume's feature play and picnic areas, along with walking loops and sporting areas

A Connected Place

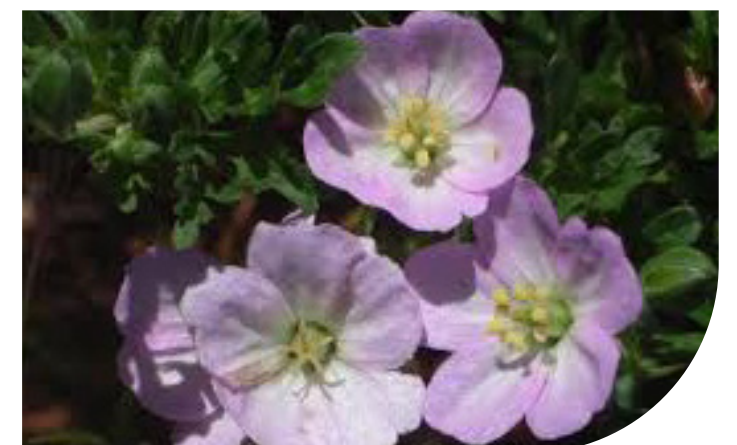
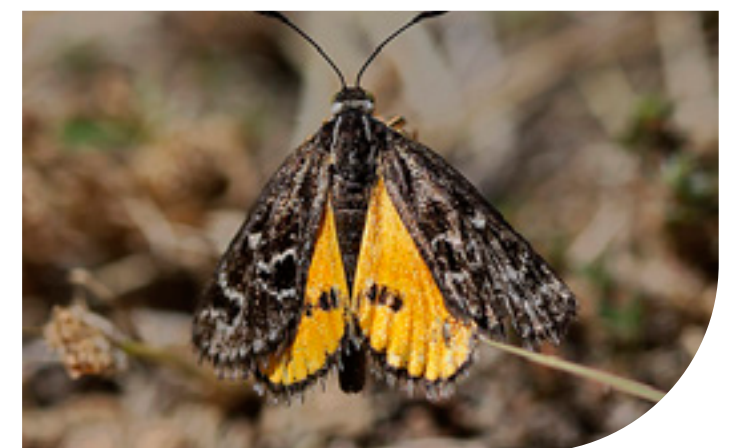
Although Merlynston Creek Parklands extends in one long corridor, there are a number of challenges to overcome to maximise access and connectivity, including:

- Walls and barriers that block views and restrict access - Hepburn Reserve
- Steep creek banks that make it challenging to cross from one side to the other, and pinch points that block long views into the park from streets - this pinch point is south of Hepburn Reserve
- A large central gap in the parkland including the fenced Dallas Army Camp Basin and private land north of this that prevent continuous walking and cycling
- However, generous shaded paths exist and they allow visitors to access the park

A CULTURAL PLACE



AN ECOLOGICAL PLACE



A
WATERWAY
PLACE



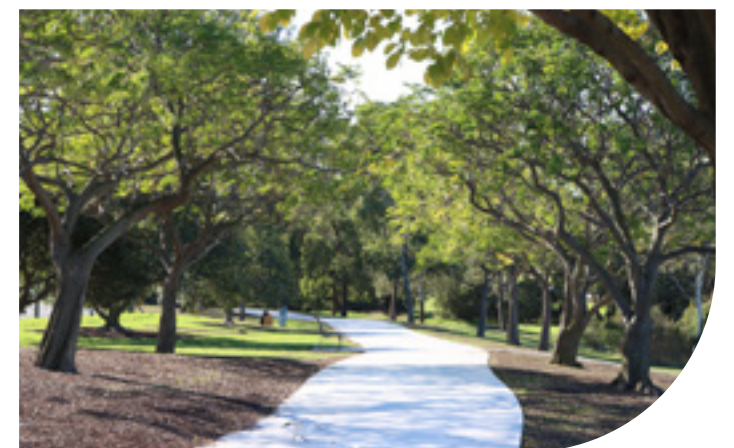
A
HERITAGE
PLACE



A
COMMUNITY
RECREATION
PLACE



A
CONNECTED
PLACE



4.0

Current Conditions



The Merlynston Creek Parklands are bordered by a mix of residential, industrial and commercial zones.

North of Barry Road the creek passes mainly through industrial land. From Barry Road to the northern extent of the Dallas Retarding Basin, the parklands are surrounded by established residential development. The Basin itself is largely surrounded by industrial land. Further south, industrial land uses continue along the eastern edge of the creek and parklands, whilst residential development occurs to the west.

Several schools are located close to the study area, as well as a number of local commercial precincts. The majority of the study area is zoned as Public Park and Recreation (PPRZ), Public Use – Service and Utility (PUZ1) or Public Use – Cemetery/Crematorium (PUZ5).

Growth and housing

Hume’s population is expected to grow by more than 130,000 people in the next 20 years. ³

Large parts of the established suburbs of Dallas and Coolaroo are affected by the Melbourne Airport Environments Overlay (MAEO), a State planning control designed to limit the impacts of aircraft noise on land use and development in areas close to Melbourne Airport. The MAEO currently limits the potential for new housing in the study area. Potential updates to the MAEO may unlock more sites for housing development and associated park and open space improvements.

Ownership and management

Melbourne Water and Hume City Council work together to manage different parts of Merlynston Creek Parklands. Melbourne Water directly manages the following areas:

- Dallas Retarding Basin;
- Jack Roper Reserve lake area;
- The creek itself and land extending 30m on either side of it.

Supporting a growing community

There are several schools and retail shopping precincts close to the parklands. These are shown on Figure 4: Community, Access & Amenity.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR MASTERPLAN



Consider future opportunities to bring all land within the Merlynston Creek Parkland corridor into public ownership for parkland purposes.



Maximise interface with Merlynston Creek Parklands for any new development along the parkland corridor.



Consider impact of proposed future amendment to the Melbourne Airport Environs Overlay (MAEO).



Maximise co-benefits for any work proposed in land managed by or with Melbourne Water.

Legend

- Merlynston Creek Park Boundary
- Strategic Cycling Corridor
- Watercourse
- Buildings
- Elevation Contours - 10m Intervals
- Land Ownership**
 - Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)
 - Private Property
 - Melbourne Water
- Plan Overlays**
 - MAEO - Melbourne Airport Environs Overlay
 - SBO - Special Building Overlay, Flood Mgmt.
 - ESO - Environmental Significance Overlay
 - HO - Heritage Overlay
 - LSIO - Land Subject to Inundation Overlay
- Planning Zones**
 - Commercial Zone
 - Commonwealth Land
 - General Residential Zone
 - Housing Choice and Transport Zone
 - Industrial Zone
 - Mixed Use Zone
 - Public Park and Recreation Zone
 - Public Use Zone
 - Special Use Zone
 - Transport Zone

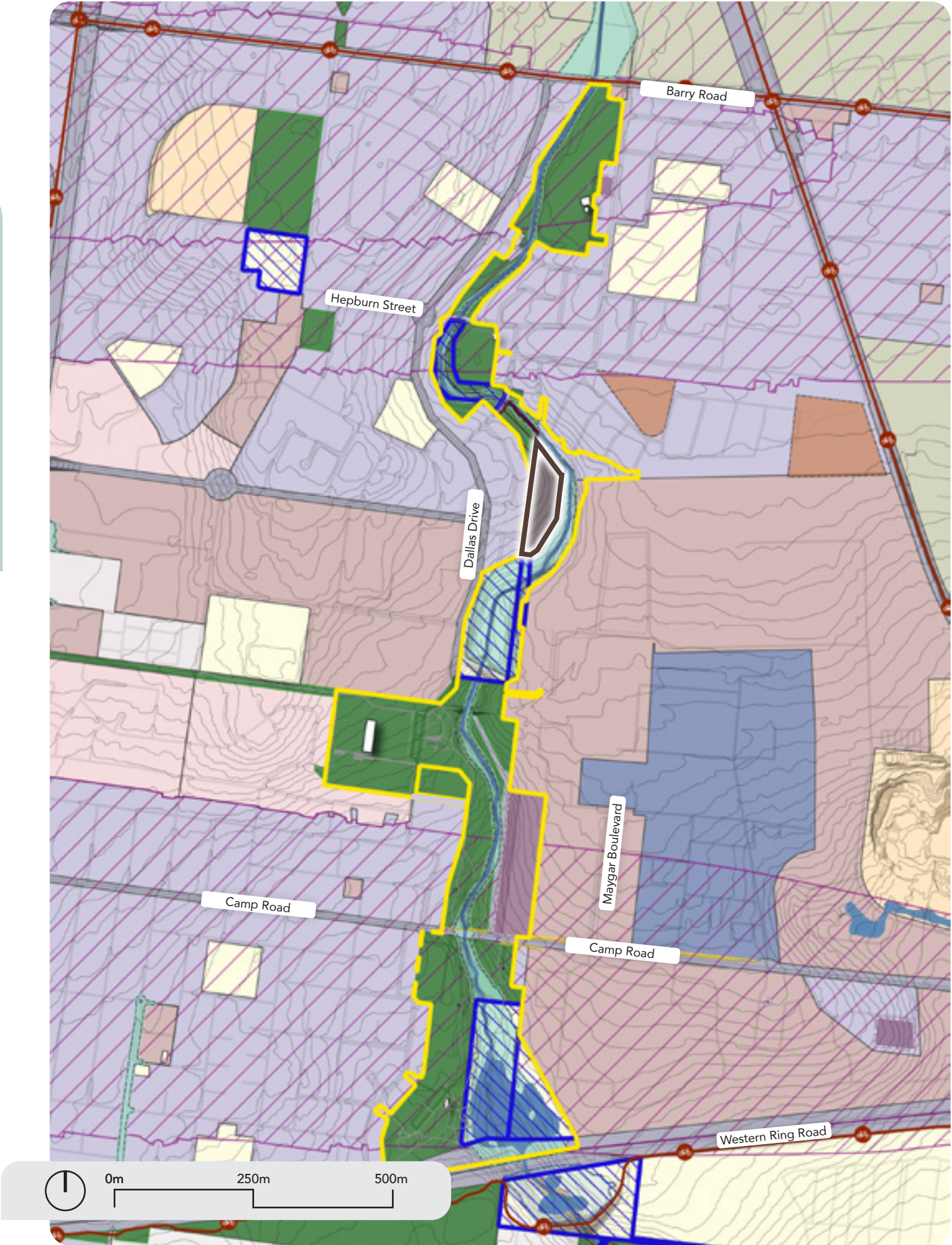


Figure 3: Existing Land Uses Map

COMMUNITY, ACCESS & AMENITY

Cultural diversity

The City of Hume’s residents hail from over 170 different countries and speak more than 155 languages. Within the study area, close to half of residents living within a 15-minute walk of Laura Douglas Reserve were born overseas, with nearly 40% speaking Turkish and Arabic at home.⁴ The Broadmeadows Turkish Islamic and Cultural Centre and the Greek Community of Broadmeadows & Districts centres, which are both adjacent to the parklands, reflect and serve this diverse community. Community data shows that the local residents are younger than the national average (32yo/38yo) and nearly double the national average for being born overseas (48/27%).

Community facilities

The community adjacent to the Merlynston Creek Parklands is served by a range of schools, places of worship, and community centres. Within the parklands, community groups use the Dallas Tennis Hall for activities ranging from community choirs to community kitchens. The retail shops at the top of Laura Douglas Reserve are well used, and there is an opportunity to take greater advantage of the proximity to the parklands. Connection between the parklands and the Central Grove shops could also be enhanced. Apart from Seabrook and Jack Roper Reserves, there is a general lack of outdoor furniture – seats, drink fountains, bins, picnic settings – to support visitors using the parklands.

Recreation

Merlynston Creek Parklands contains three major recreational nodes including: Laura Douglas Reserve at the top, and Seabrook Reserve in the middle both with a District classification and with primary function of sport, and Jack Roper at the bottom with a Regional classification and a primary function of social recreation

Movement and Access

Arrival and legibility

Large parts of the parklands are hidden from public view behind tracts of housing or industrial development. In many locations park entry points are not obvious or intuitive.

Connectivity

There is a lack of north-south connectivity through the parklands. Pedestrian paths and Shared Use Paths are mainly located from Seabrook Reserve south, with few formal paths in northern parts of the parklands. There are few opportunities to cross Merlynston Creek or to connect from west to east. Improvements must consider the diversity of needs for different people who walk and cycle, and make provision for commuter, novice, and recreational cyclists.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR MASTERPLAN



Improve walking and cycling access to, through, and within the Merlynston Creek Parklands.



Reflect and celebrate the cultural diversity and community activities of the community.



Improve vehicle access around the parklands without compromising parkland values.

Vehicle conflict

The parklands interface several busy roads including Barry Road and Camp Road. These are challenging and dangerous for people who walk and cycle to cross, further impacting arrival and connectivity. During peak school drop-off and pick-up times, traffic on Dallas Drive is heavily congested. School-time traffic through Seabrook Reserve also congested, with cars using the carpark as a through-street for pick-up and drop-off.

Public transport

It is difficult for visitors who rely on public transport to visit the parklands. Whilst there are bus stops near Laura Douglas and Jack Roper Reserves, there is no bus stop directly serving Seabrook Reserve. Walkability to the nearest bus stops must be maximised within the parklands. For visitors arriving by train, there is a lack of wayfinding or obvious walking path from Upfield Station.

Future road crossing

This project will introduce a new section of Council road from Maygar Boulevard to Dallas Drive. The proposed road is seen as an important renewal project for the eastern part on Broadmeadows. In the context of the Merlynston Creek Parklands, the proposed road needs to be designed to support walking, cycling, habitat, canopy, waterway, amenity and maintenance outcomes.

Legend

- Merlynston Creek Park Boundary
- Watercourse
- Elevation Contours - 10m Intervals
- Potential Road Crossing
- Strategic Cycling Corridor
- Bus Stop
- Train Station
- PTV Bus Route
- Train Line
- Dog Off Leash Area
- Open Space
- Sports Field

- ### Community Facilities
- Community Centre
 - Education
 - Religious
 - Retail Shopfront

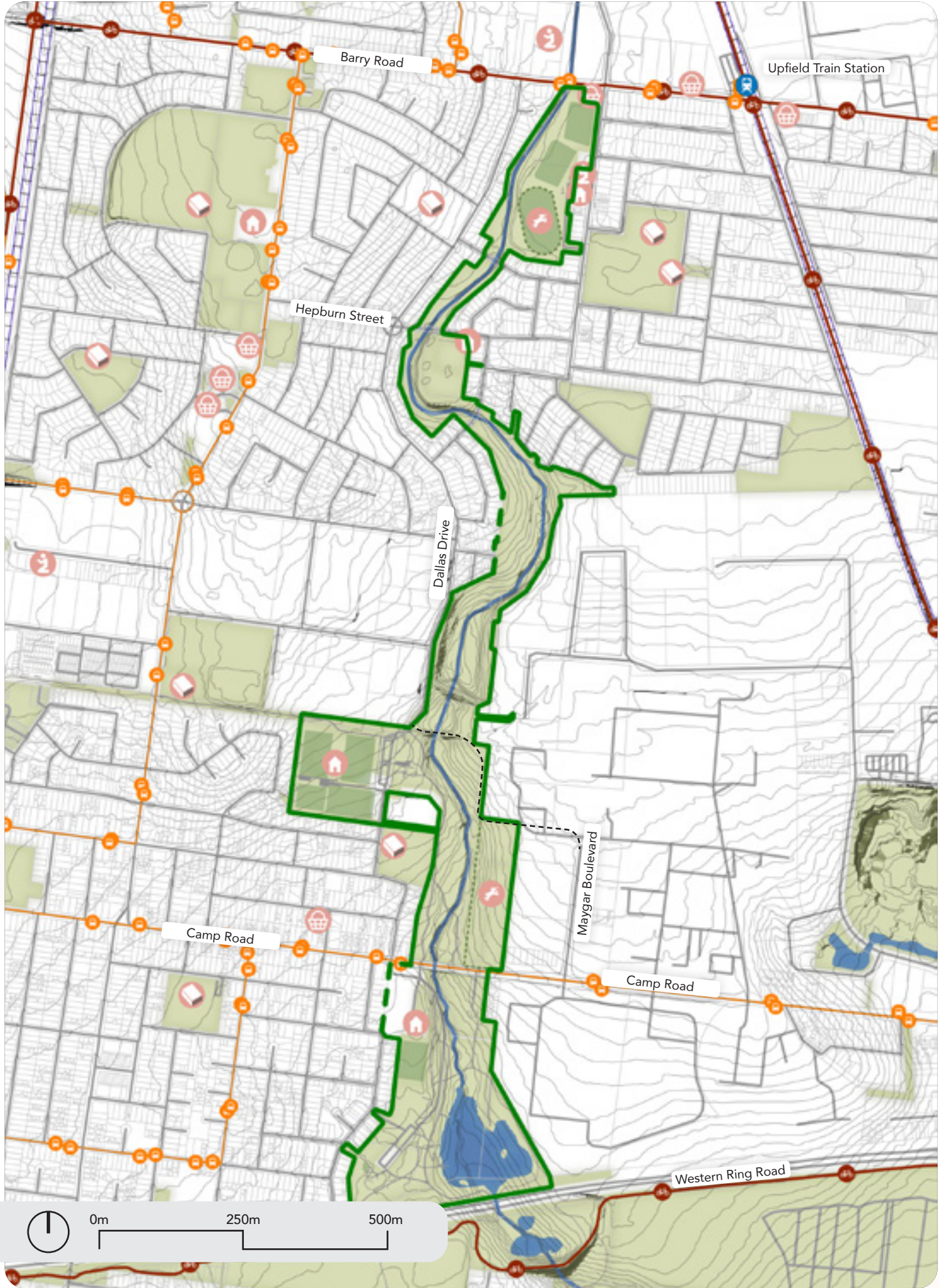


Figure 4: Community Access & Amenity Map.

HEAT VULNERABILITY

Heat Vulnerability Index

Coolaroo, Dallas, and Broadmeadows experience some of the highest rates of heat vulnerability in Greater Melbourne, meaning there are more people vulnerable to heat and more areas with less vegetation and more buildings.⁶ Merlynston Creek Parklands sits within and connects all three suburbs.

There is a strong relationship between tree canopy cover and reducing heat in urban areas. The tree canopy cover across Hume City is just over 5%, far less than the State Government target of 30%.

There is growing evidence that an effective method of delivering human thermal comfort is via introducing shade and moist soil environments (i.e. irrigated vegetation). This suggests the urban heat island effect could be mitigated through the establishment of healthy tree canopy supported by water sensitive urban design (WSUD) approaches.

The combination of WSUD ensures tree canopies are large, healthy and actively release water vapour via transpiration. The CRC for Water Sensitive Cities (CRCWSC) has demonstrated that urban heat impacts are mitigated by means of passive watering practices and green infrastructure solutions (such as irrigated trees) and these practices can lower the Urban Thermal Climate Index by up to 10 °C.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR MASTERPLAN

-  Maximise healthy tree canopy to help reduce urban heat island effects and increase community resilience.
-  Maximise soil moisture to support healthy tree growth by implementing water sensitive urban design (WSUD) approaches, including naturalisation to remove concrete, and capturing rainwater and stormwater for irrigation.

Legend

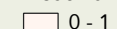
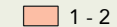
-  Merlynston Creek Park Boundary
-  Watercourse
-  Elevation Contours - 10m Intervals
- Heat Vulnerability Index**
-  0 - 1 Least Vulnerable
-  1 - 2
-  2 - 3
-  3 - 4
-  4 - 5 Most Vulnerable



Figure 5: Heat Vulnerability across suburbs surrounding Merlynston Creek Parklands.

WATERWAY CONTEXT

Condition

Merlynston Creek is highly modified, with long sections of the creek piped underground or straightened and lined with a concrete channel. The creek catchment for the extent upstream of Jack Roper Reserve is approximately 847 hectares with most of the ground surface covered with hard surfaces (e.g. concrete and asphalt) that prevent water being able to soak into the ground.

During dry weather there are very low flows in the creek. Two retarding basins manage storm flows and provide flood protection for downstream communities.

The basin at Dallas, located on the site of the former World War 1 Army Camp, is ephemeral, whilst the one at Jack Roper Reserve contains permanent standing water. Several other permanent pools exist along the waterway.

Water Quality

Pollution generated from upstream industries has long impacted water quality in Merlynston Creek and Jack Roper Reserve. Untreated runoff, spills, dumping and factory fires have all contributed to poor water quality in the waterway, and potentially further downstream in Merri Creek.

Pollutants remain accumulated in sediment beds in Jack Roper Reserve, limiting the extent to which the public can use the lake for recreational activities.

EPA monitoring shows that upstream pollution loads have decreased in recent years. The ongoing implementation of appropriate industrial pollution management solutions is critical to improving water quality and enabling naturalisation of some channelised portions of Merlynston Creek.⁶

The community continues to express concern about pollution in the northern parts of the creek and the presence of litter in the waterway and the parklands more generally.

Wurundjeri Elders are also concerned about the water quality of the Merlynston Creek, connecting the concrete channels akin to suffocating Country and any removal of concrete along this creek will give macro-invertebrates and other species to be reintroduced, leading to a stronger, healthier waterway and overall system.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR MASTERPLAN



Plan for waterway improvements that deliver multiple community and environmental benefits.



Increase or improve the visibility of Merlynston Creek, both the water flowing in the creek, and the creek as a connected, vegetated landscape corridor.

Flooding

The existing flood risk is largely contained upstream of Barry Road by the existing stormwater assets.

Within the Masterplan study area, the key reach for flood risk is around the bluestone toilet block at Camp Road. The Municipal Flood Emergency Plan (MFEP) for Merlynston Creek indicates that stormwater from the residential neighbourhoods to the west generate flash flood events that drain to the parklands via Stanhope Street.

Flash flood waters arrive at the culverts at Camp Road and then back up towards the toilet block. There are opportunities to enhance flood resilience at this location. This could be through infrastructure upgrades or creating a 'stilling basin' immediately upstream of the culverts.

The MFEP also indicates that, at Jack Roper Reserve, the flash flood extent looks to be exceeding the stormwater infrastructure and sheeting across the car park. If this is considered problematic, there are different opportunities for improvement.

Legend

- Merlynston Creek Park Boundary
- Watercourse
- Elevation Contours - 10m Intervals
- Sewer Pipe
- Stormwater Pipe
- Watercourse Condition**
 - Natural Stream
 - Channelised - Overgrown
 - Channelised
 - Piped
 - Open Water Body
 - Culverts & Hydraulic Structures
 - Gross Pollutant Trap
 - SBO - Special Building Overlay, Flood Mgmt.

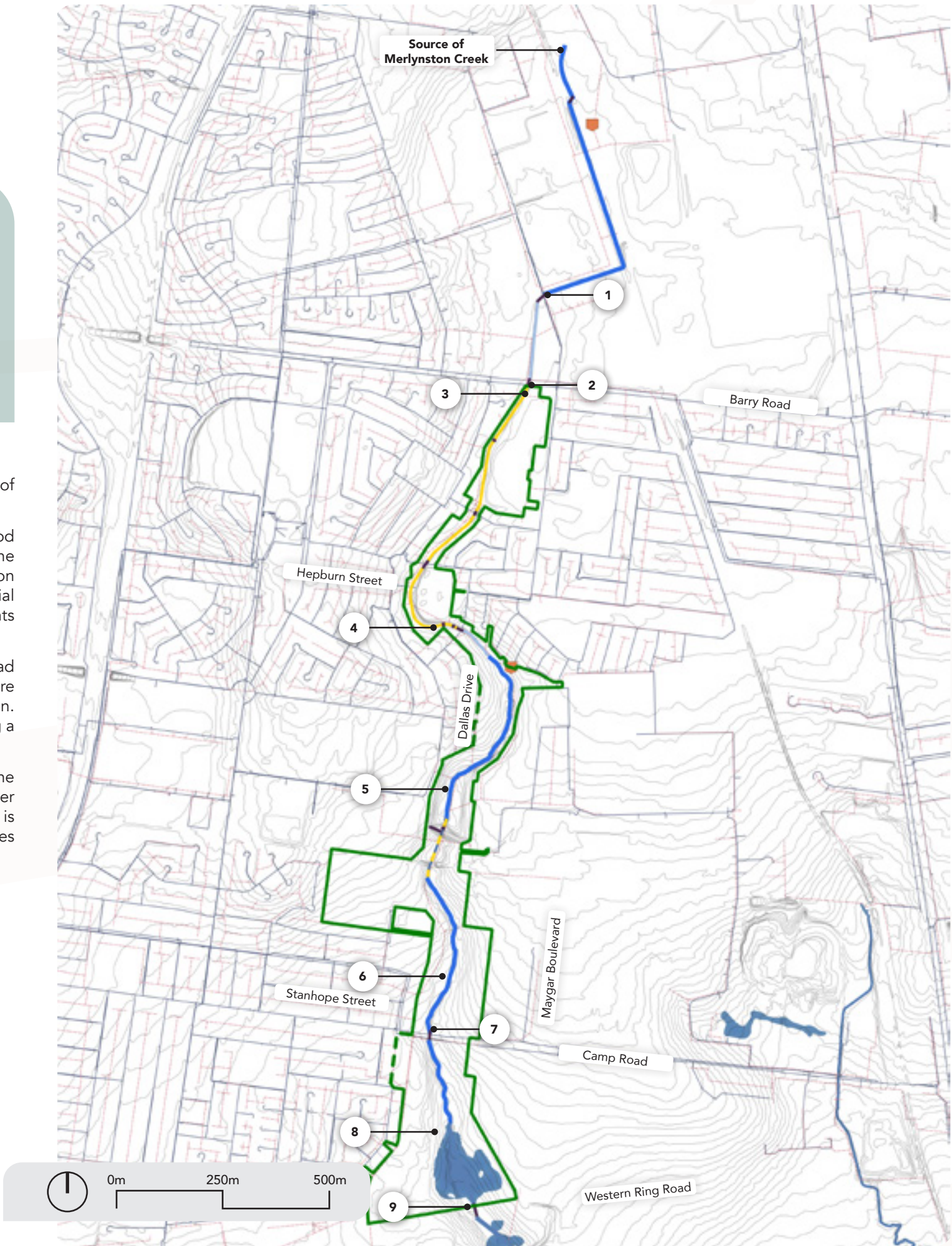


Figure 6: Waterway Context Map.

Visibility

There are two main ways creeks are visible and recognised as waterways:

- The water flowing through the creek can be seen; and
- The riparian corridor - the water, creek banks, low plants and trees that grow along the banks - is present and can be seen.

Large parts of Merlynston Creek are not visible to the community. There are several reasons for this:

- It is not possible to access some parts of the creek as they are fenced or not publicly owned;
- The lack of paths and facilities means people do not travel to or through the parklands, and as a result do not see the creek regularly;
- Where the creek is channelised, the lack of vegetation and trees creates a perception of a piece of drainage infrastructure that people should stay away from, rather than a living waterway;
- The lack of footbridges crossing the creek means people do not have opportunities to look straight down onto flowing water, or directly up and down the creek.

Terrain

Whilst the terrain through the parklands varies, there are some similar types of land forms:

- Steep banks - where Merlynston Creek is channelised, the banks tend to be relatively steep.
- Flat plateaus - above the banks the land generally flattens out. Where these flat area are located in 'corners' of the parkland e.g. north and south of Berger Street, there is an opportunity for the creek corridor to be widened to incorporate water quality treatment features such as bioretention, rocky riffles, and more planting.
- High points - several locations along the corridor offer elevated views of the parklands and creek. The land on the west side of the creek opposite The Knoll, offers sweeping views across an important stretch of waterway and critical habitat. Similarly, the top of the Melbourne Water spillway offers expansive views north into the retarding basin, and south across Seabrook Reserve and the parklands.

Upper Area

The Upper study area runs along and through several industrial lots and at the back of residential lots. The creek channel base material throughout this area is concrete, with pockets of vegetation growing through the cracks in the concrete.

Merlynston Creek through this area is highly modified, with long, linear runs, sharp changes of direction, and minimal bends and meanders.



Central Area

The Central study area has the greatest variation in surrounding context condition, with the creek corridor running alongside parklands, residential and industrial land uses. The creek passes through a grassed basin operated and owned by Melbourne Water, where floodwaters up to 8m deep are held back to allow downstream floodwater to move away.

The creek base channel material varies, with concrete towards the north and towards the south of the central area, the creek widens out, with a sediment base.



Lower Area

The Lower study area generally travels through parklands adjacent to residential development and industrial lots.

Merlynston Creek flows into an expansive lake at Jack Roper Reserve, before continuing under the M80 Ring Road and further towards Fawkner.

The creek base channel material is primarily a sediment base, with rough objects such as boulders to slow the speed of water.



THE CONCRETE CHANNEL

Potential

The concrete channel base and walls are the most obvious physical and visual component of much of Merlynston Creek in its current form. The present day creek and associated concrete has been designed as a stormwater drain. What to do with the concrete - if anything - is a fundamental consideration affecting the ongoing contribution of the creek to the parklands.

Retention vs removal

A spectrum of options is available, including perforating, building over, cutting into, or removing some or all of the concrete.

The adjacent section diagrams illustrate a range of possible interventions to the creek channel. A preliminary rating has been made against 6 criteria that relate to perceived social, economic, and environmental performance, where 1 = low performance and 5= high performance.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR MASTERPLAN



Exploring the full range of possible naturalisation options, from 'light touch' to full removal of concrete and reprofiling the ground to create a more naturalistic floodplain, means that solutions can be tailored to suit the conditions, budget and desired outcomes along the length of Merlynston Creek.

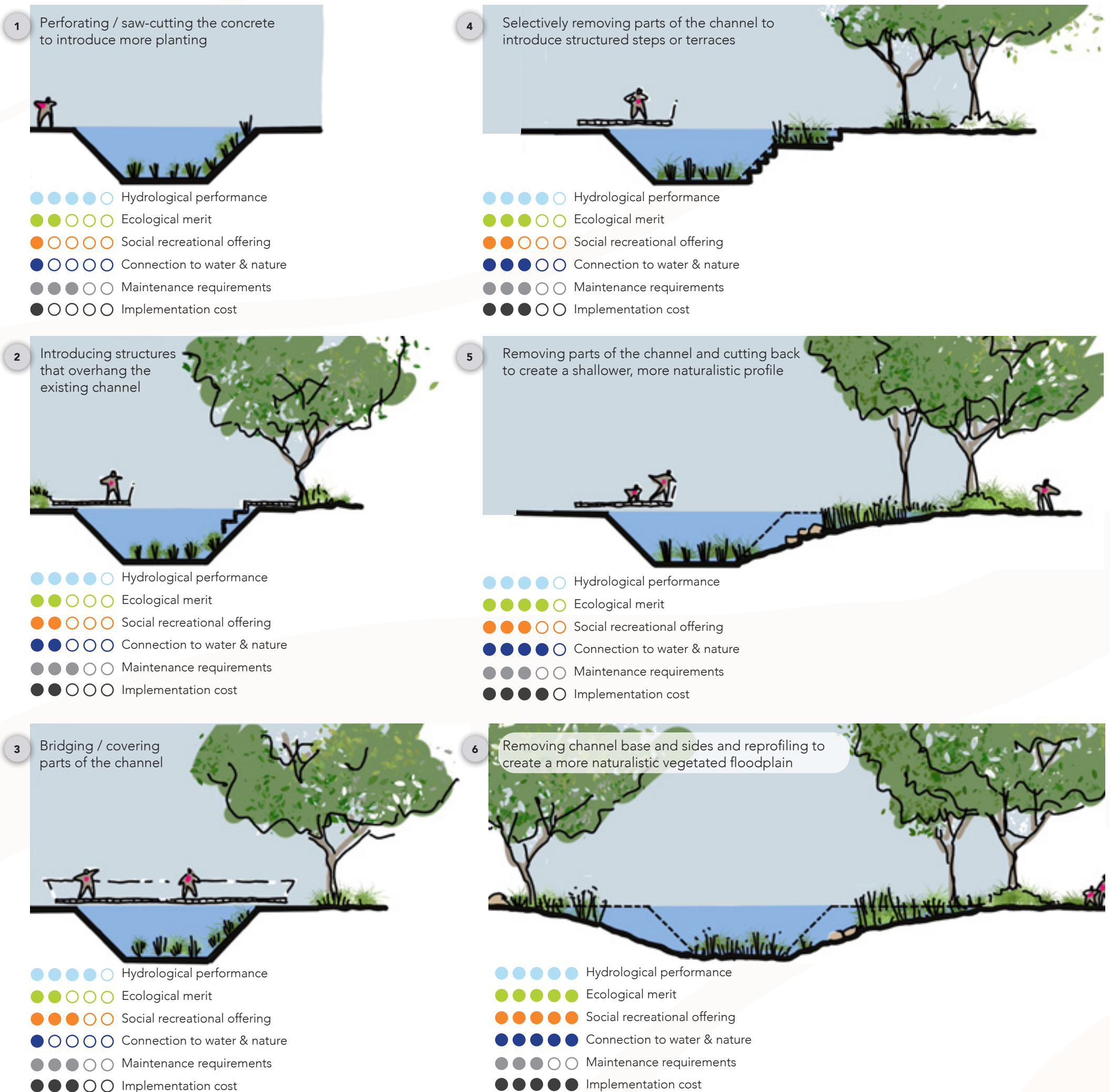


Figure 7: Section diagrams illustrating possible interventions to the concrete channel.

ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT - FAUNA

Species

Animal species observed within the study area include 41 bird, 3 amphibian, and 2 mammal species. Fifty threatened fauna species have been recorded or have modelled habitat within 5 kilometres of the Merlynston Creek Parklands.

According to the most recent on site survey ⁹, the following threatened fauna species have been observed:

- **Hardhead (duck)**
Aythya australis
- **Tussock skink**
Pseudemoia pagenstecheri

The following threatened fauna species have a high or moderate likelihood of presence:

- **Golden Sun Moth (GSM)**
Synemon plana
- **Grey-headed flying fox**
Pteropus poliocephalus
- **Eastern great egret**
Ardea alba modesta
- **Little eagle**
Hieraaetus morphnoides
- **Blue-billed duck**
Oxyura australis
- **Australasian shoveler (duck)**
Spatula rhynchotis
- **Murray River Turtle**
Emydura macquarii

Fauna habitats

Merlynston Creek currently provides limited habitat for threatened species: there are steep banks and extensive concrete, and a resulting lack of shallow edges, emergent vegetation and basking spots. The frequently mown lawns provide little shelter and limited habitat complexity.

Less frequently mown areas may provide habitat for smaller mammals and reptiles, as well as the Golden Sun Moth. Existing identified habitat with the potential to support the threatened Golden Sun Moth is shown on Figure 8.

A range of animals have been observed in the grassland areas in the central study area. This includes the Eastern Grey Kangaroo *Macropus giganteus*.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR MASTERPLAN



Manage waterway renewal and access for visitors in ways that supports conservation of Golden Sun Moth habitat.



Naturalising Merlynston Creek creates an opportunity for additional, connected habitat for multiple species.

Legend

- Merlynston Creek Park Boundary
- Watercourse
- Elevation Contours - 10m Intervals
- Golden Sun Moth Suitable Habitat
- Existing Native Tree
- Golden Sun Moth Suitable Habitat

Pre-1750 Ecological Vegetation Class

- Plains Grassy Woodland (EVC 55_61)
- Creekline Grassy Woodland (EVC 68)
- Plains Grassland (EVC 132_61)
- Grassy Woodland (EVC 175)

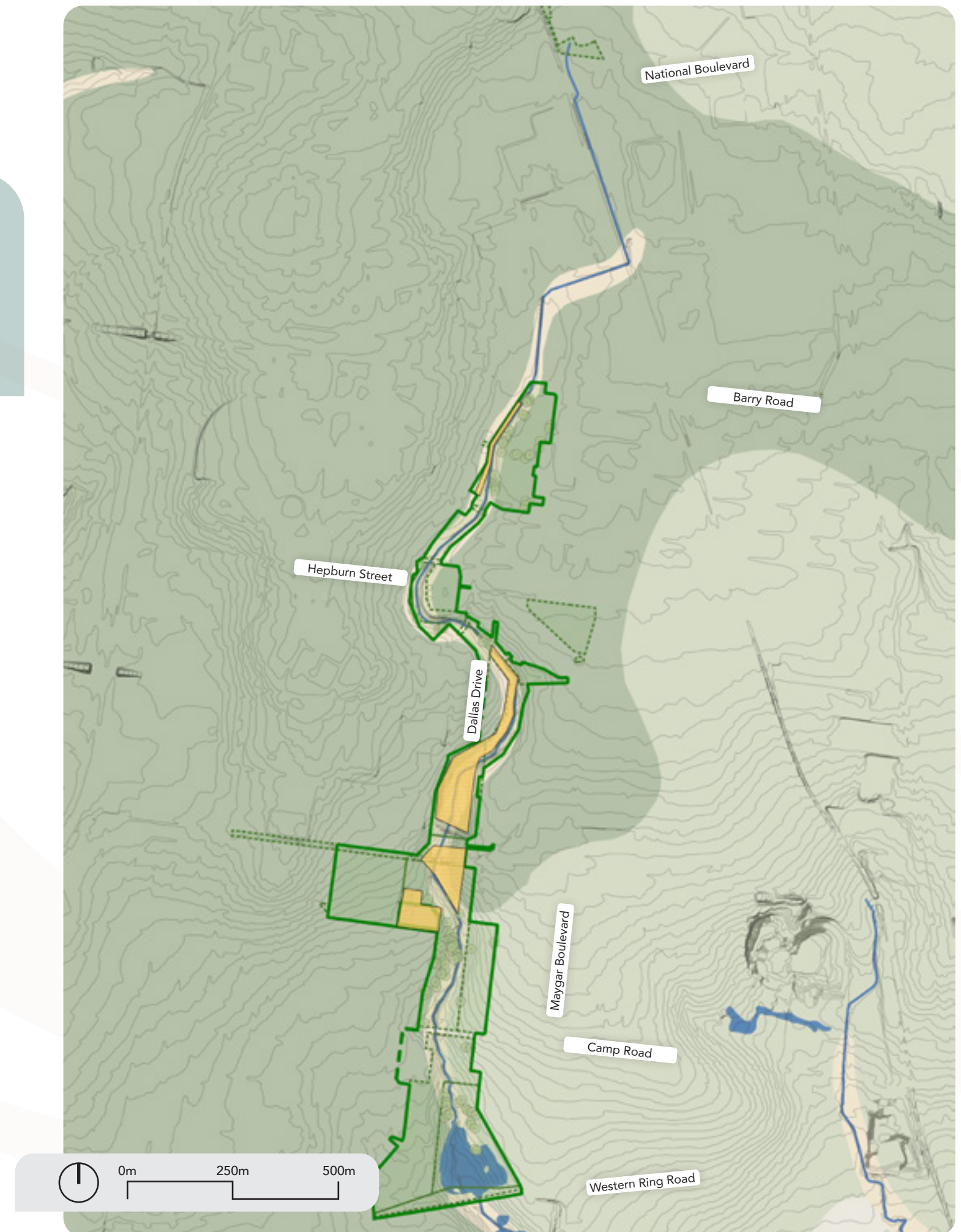


Figure 8: Map of Habitat with Potential to Support Golden Sun Moth, and Confirmed Fauna Sightings within Study Area.

ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT - FLORA

Plant communities

Most indigenous vegetation within the study area has been removed as a result of channelisation and urbanisation.

“Merlynston Creek and the connected Cultural Landscape provides habitat to a number of threatened species. These species hold great value to Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People and play a significant role in this landscape.”¹²

Prior to colonial settlement and clearing, the land through which Merlynston Creek flows may have supported several vegetation communities (EVCs). Remnants of these are still found on site today, although they are not well represented. Two additional vegetation communities are also present.

All the EVCs present in the study area are widely scattered and are endangered. They occur in discrete patches surrounded by weedy vegetation or lawn. The location and extent of these are shown on Figure 9.

No EPBC Act-listed communities are present, and two FFG Act-listed communities are present although highly modified.⁹

Plant species

Eight threatened plant species have been observed within the study area.

Large-flower crane’s bill

This plant is both endemic, critically endangered, and not previously recorded within the study area. The Masterplan includes actions to support conservation of this rare species.

The location and extent of threatened plant species present throughout the study area are shown on Figure 9.

No Environmental Significance, Significant Landscape, or Vegetation Protection overlays apply to the study area. The land is also not subject to a native vegetation precinct plan and is not within a Melbourne Strategic Assessment Area.

Threatened flora

Other threatened native flora which has been previously recorded throughout the Merlynston Creek Parklands include species such as Matted flax-lily (*Dianella amoena*), Austral Crane’s bill (*Geranium solanderi* var. *solanderi* s.s), Pale Swamp Everlasting (*Coronidium gunnianum*), the Fragrant Saltbush (*Rhagodia parabolica*), and the Giant Honey-myrtle (*Melaleuca armillaris* subsp. *armillaris*).¹²

CONSIDERATIONS FOR MASTERPLAN

-  Manage waterway renewal and access for visitors in ways that supports conservation of Large-flower crane’s bill.
-  Build on existing recorded EVC patches and pre-1750 to create a richer and more resilient connected creek and parklands corridor.
-  Expand tree canopy cover to contribute to urban cooling and improve year-round usability of the parklands for visitors.

Legend

-  Merlynston Creek Park Boundary
-  Watercourse
-  Elevation Contours - 10m Intervals

Recorded Ecological Vegetation Class

-  Plains Grassy Woodland
-  Stream Bank Shrubland
-  Tall Marsh
-  Creekline Grassy Woodland
-  Plains Grassland

Pre-1750 Ecological Vegetation Class

-  Plains Grassy Woodland (EVC 55_61)
-  Creekline Grassy Woodland (EVC 68)
-  Plains Grassland (EVC 132_61)
-  Grassy Woodland (EVC 175)

Existing trees - Native to Victoria

-  Eucalypt spp.
-  Grey Box
-  Large-fruit yellow gum
-  Mugga
-  Red box
-  River red-gum
-  Yellow box

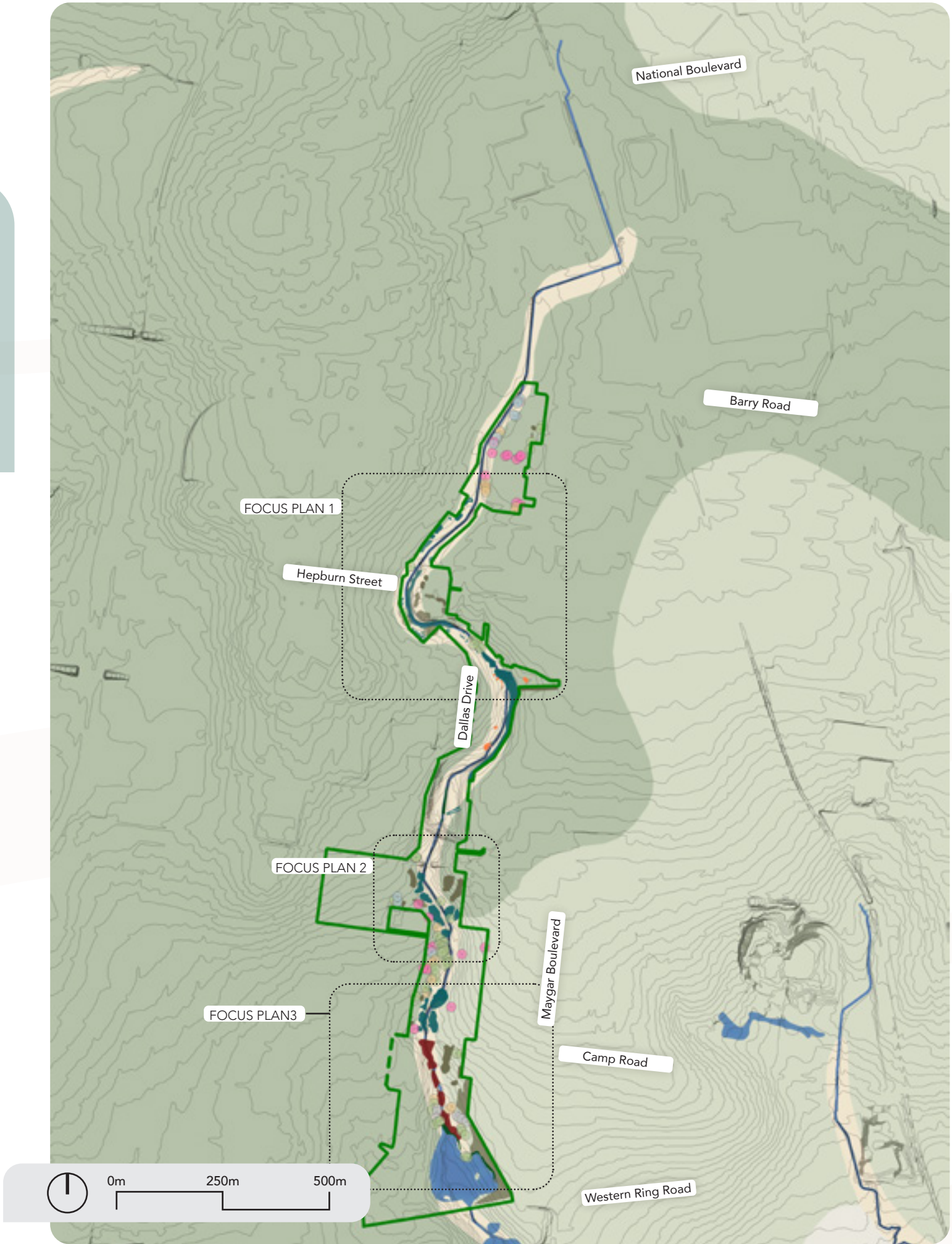


Figure 9: Map of Vegetation Communities and Threatened Species Occurring within Study Area.

FOCUS PLANS



- Focus Plan 1**
- Plains Grassy Woodland (EVC 55_61)
 - Creekline Grassy Woodland (EVC 68)
 - Plains Grassland (EVC 132_61)



- Focus Plan 2**
- Plains Grassy Woodland (EVC 55_61)
 - Creekline Grassy Woodland (EVC 68)



- Focus Plan 3**
- Plains Grassy Woodland (EVC 55_61)
 - Stream Bank Shrubland (EVC 851_61)
 - Tall Marsh (EVC 821)
 - Creekline Grassy Woodland (EVC 68)

FFG Listed Communities



The Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 Threatened List contains Victoria's native flora, fauna and ecological communities recognised as being at risk of extinction.

Two communities listed on the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act (FFG) are present within the study area (*Ecology Australia 2025*), however they are highly modified:

- 1. Western (Basalt) Plains Grassland Community**
The Plains Grassland vegetation community was identified within the site study area, however it is highly fragmented, with very small remnants scattered throughout the site.
- 2. Western Basalt Plains (River Red Gum) Grassy Woodland Community**
The Plains Grassy Woodland vegetation community was identified within the site study area, and tended to be in poor condition. This is due to high modification or clearing of the land, weed invasion or installation of inappropriate planting. This vegetation community generally features River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) trees with a ground cover dominated by native grass species.

Golden Sun Moth Habitat



Less frequently mown areas provide habitat for fauna including reptiles and insects including the Golden Sun Moth.

Golden Sun Moths (GSM) are unable to disperse themselves further than a few hundred metres and rely on grasslands with low biomass. This means that they cannot move and migrate into new areas, so adequate habitat creation is important in protecting the Golden Sun Moth.

Ideal habitat for the Golden Sun Moth consists of open native grassland with little canopy or shade as these can impact the temperature and moisture content of the soil, effecting moth larvae.

Species that should be used to create ideal habitat are grasses such as Spear Grass (*Austrostipa spp.*) and Wallaby Grass (*Rytodisperma spp.*).



Golden Sun Moth
Synemon plana

Community Engagement

Two rounds of Community engagement were conducted from 24 July to 19 August 2025 and 27 February to 2 April 2026. These consultation sessions were used to understand preferences for future parkland outcomes along Merlynston Creek.



290

A total of **290** responses were received representing valuable snapshots of ideas from the community and stakeholders across the key engagement topics.



17,750+

Across both Facebook and Instagram, via both organic and paid promotion the posts reached **17,751** people.



33

On Participate Hume's interactive online map, there were a total of **33** community pins with feedback.



5 sessions

Throughout the consultation period, **5** in person consultation sessions were set up at various points along the creek.



12 posters

12 posters in English, and translated into Turkish and Arabic, placed along the parklands

Preliminary Engagement consultation involved:

- **Online engagement** hosted on Participate Hume: two interactive maps and a survey.
- **On-site meetings**: five pop-up engagements at various locations and times along the creek. These were held at Laura Douglas Reserve, Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery, and Jack Roper Reserve.
- **Walk on Country** with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and commencement of a detailed Cultural Values Study to inform the Masterplan
- **Information session** hosted by Merri Creek Management Committee.
- **Meetings** with key stakeholders: Hume Sustainability Taskforce, Melbourne Water, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Department of Transport and Planning, Broadmeadows Turkish Islamic and Cultural Centre, Friends of Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery, Greek Orthodox Community of Broadmeadows, Dallas City Football Club, Coolaroo Hotel.
- **Individual letters** were sent to 16 landowners located adjacent to the parklands and most directly impacted.
- **Social media promotion** in English and translated into Turkish and Arabic.
- **12 signs** placed along the parklands and posters in English, Turkish and Arabic placed in community centres and playgrounds.
- **In person surveys** were undertaken with King Street traders, and with park visitors at Laura Douglas Reserve, Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery and Jack Roper Reserve
- **Community travel analysis** (Neighbourlytics) to help understand existing park users and patterns

Key Engagement Topics

Community engagement was structured to address:

- Merlynston Creek Parklands holistically
- Laura Douglas Reserve in detail

Feedback was sought on key topics, including:

- Naturalising the Creek
- Private Land Uses
- Hepburn Reserve and Dallas Tennis Hall
- Dallas Retarding Basin (Melbourne Water)
- Seabrook Reserve Community Centre
- Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery
- Upfield Station Connection
- Camp Road Crossing
- Future Road Crossing at Dallas
- Laura Douglas Reserve upgrade

"The local cemetery should be enhanced with grassland wildflowers and biodiversity (similar to projects underway in Melbourne General Cemetery) these areas could bring value and respect to the heritage values of the landscape and the name 'Broad Meadows' which was given for these beautiful grasslands.

- Local resident

"Improve the natural values and visual appeal of the area which would encourage residents to treat the creek better, potentially reducing pollution and dumping.

- Local resident

"I often walk alongside the creek and I as well as many others would benefit from a formal walking/cycling path.

- Local resident

"(A path network) Would be a fantastic addition to the creek's rehabilitation, whilst assisting more people and Hume residents to use the path along the river as a green corridor, a great alternative to roads. Especially for Bike riders, joggers, people pushing prams or walking dogs!

- Local resident

Summary of findings

CREATING A CULTURAL PLACE...

- Support for stronger **integration of Aboriginal culture and naming** into the parklands, and ongoing consultation with Traditional Owners.
- Support for **information and signage**, including way-finding, heritage interpretation, and opportunities for volunteering and community activities.

CREATING A ECOLOGICAL PLACE...

- Strong support for future opportunities for **private land to be made public** to create a continuous parkland corridor and improved access.
- External stakeholders highlighted the need for **stronger ecological protections**, integration with broader habitat corridors, and careful siting of new infrastructure to avoid impacts on remnant vegetation and threatened species.

CREATING A WATERWAY PLACE...

- Most respondents were supportive of **naturalising the creek**, with 81% 'strongly supportive' or 'supportive'.
- External stakeholders highlighted the need for **stronger ecological protections**, integration with broader habitat corridors, and careful siting of new infrastructure to avoid impacts on remnant vegetation and threatened species.

CREATING A COMMUNITY RECREATION PLACE...

- Community members expressed a strong desire for **improved safety, lighting, and amenities** (toilets, seating, picnic and BBQ areas, shade).
- High priority given to **upgraded play spaces, and more sitting and picnic areas**, particularly at Laura Douglas Reserve.
- Concerns raised about potential **impacts of the proposed future road crossing** near Seabrook Reserve
- Concerns raised about **rubbish dumping, vandalism, and antisocial behaviour**, with requests for CCTV and better maintenance.

CREATING A HERITAGE PLACE...

- Support for **moving the off-leash dog park** away from Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery.
- Desire to **redesign and re-purpose the bluestone toilet building** at Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery for heritage and community use.

CREATING A CONNECTED PLACE...

- A large majority (87%) supported a **continuous walking and cycling trail** along the creek, with shorter loops for local use.
- Calls for **improved crossing at Camp Road**, with suggestions for traffic lights, pedestrian overpasses or bridges.

In-person community stakeholder sessions



Promotional posters in different languages.



Community engagement session at Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery.



Community engagement session #1 at Laura Douglas Reserve.



Community engagement session #2 at Laura Douglas Reserve.



Reference images used to support community conversations. Some children drew hearts to show their support for playspace improvements.



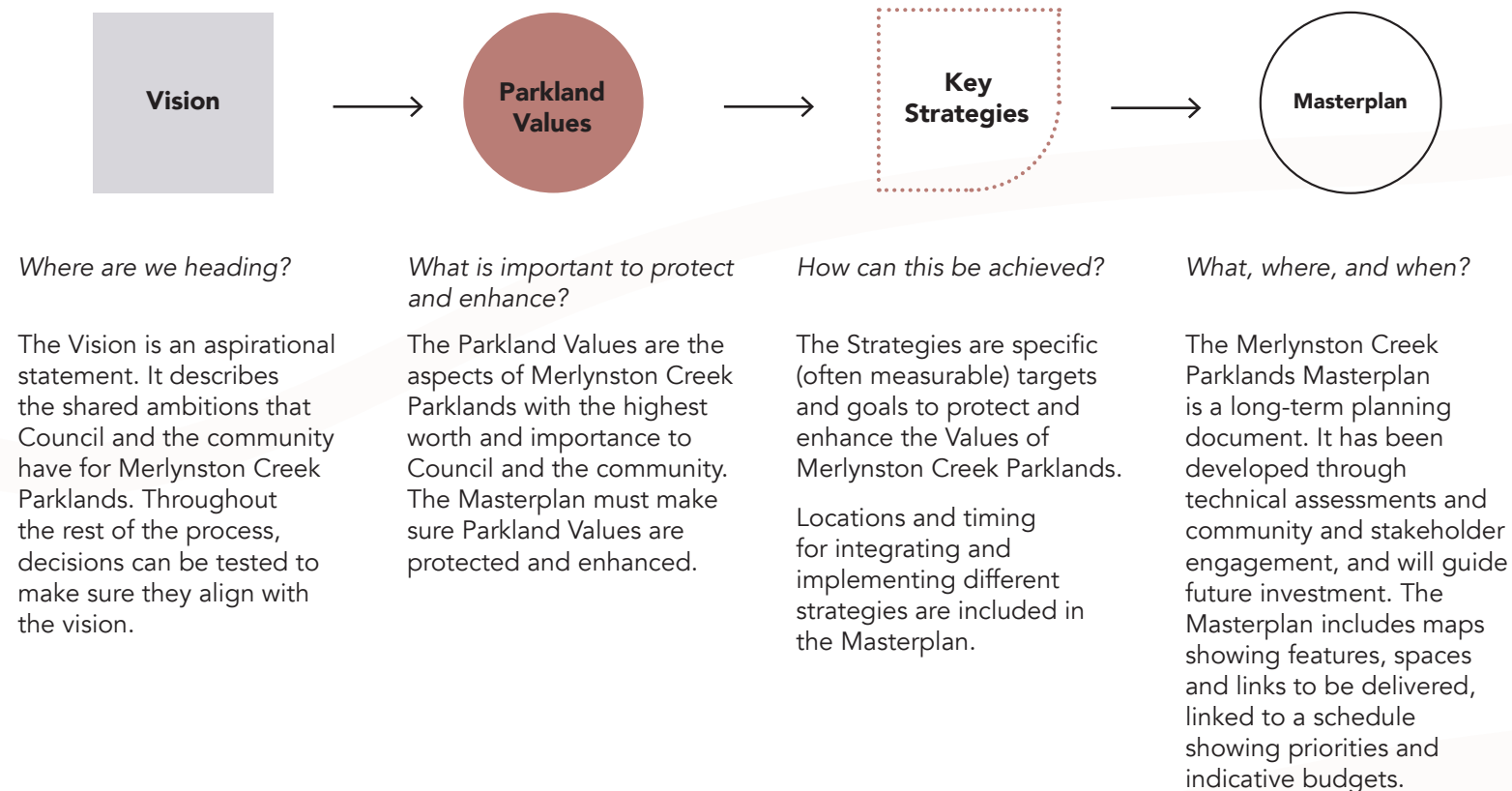
Informal community activities occurring within the parklands and shared during community engagement sessions.

6.0

Vision, Values and Strategies

Process

A logical process has been used to make sure the Masterplan is aligned with Council and community aspirations:



Design Principles for all Merlynston Creek Parkland Planning

What informs design decisions?

A series of Design Principles guides how the Parkland Values are translated into Key Strategies and the Masterplan, forming a bridge between the aspects of the parklands with the highest worth, and how they will be protected and enhanced.

1. Opportunities to deliver the self-determined priorities of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung will be maximised, employing strategies from Cultural Values Assessment prepared by the WWCHAC (Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation)
2. The local community priorities will be supported in the parkland through community hubs and activities.
3. Opportunities to enhance habitat connections will be maximised. Ecological values will be protected and enhanced.
4. Improving summer shade options for park visitors will be maximised. Creating warm wind-sheltered nooks for visitors will be sought.
5. Sport, events and recreation is focused in the Regional / District Park nodes, with the connecting areas focused on walking, cycling, and nature.
6. Decisions will support the long term commitment to create public access along the length of the parklands from its source.
7. No additional carparking within the open space, instead improved signage and paths will be supported for people to park nearby, or come by public transport, walking or cycling.
8. Increases in park visitation will be supported with design and maintenance that helps reduce litter and rubbish dumping
9. Minimise and redirect stormwater flows from adjacent properties to reduce impact on Merlynston Creek.

Vision Statement

"Merlynston Creek Parklands will be a valued, continuous nature corridor through Broadmeadows, Dallas and Coolaroo, strengthening habitat connectivity and providing welcoming public places that reflect the diverse needs, interests and cultures of local communities and Traditional Owners."

CULTURAL VALUES

Strategy 1.1

Integrate the values and recommendations of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders based on Cultural Values Assessment prepared by the WWCHAC.

ECOLOGICAL VALUES

Strategy 2.1

Connect and enhance habitat corridors (both riparian and grassland) and diversify habitat types across the Merlynston Creek Parklands.

P

Strategy 2.2

Extend native tree canopy throughout Merlynston Creek Parklands — including 20% canopy cover across recreational areas; striving for 50% cover overall; and establishing Merlynston Creek as a continuous linear tree reserve — to help mitigate urban heat island effects, enhance habitat, and support shaded recreational uses.

P O

Strategy 2.3

Protect, restore and enhance native vegetation and plant communities within Merlynston Creek Parklands.

P

WATERWAY VALUES

Strategy 3.1

Naturalise channelised parts of Merlynston Creek and allow it to occupy more space within the parklands.

P O G

Strategy 3.2

Improve the health of Merlynston Creek by slowing flows, stabilising banks, reducing impervious surfaces and managing water quality.

P G

Strategy 3.3

Use more rainwater and stormwater to irrigate trees, vegetation and sportsfields.

P

HERITAGE VALUES

Strategy 4.1

Embed multicultural community identities within Merlynston Creek Parklands.

O

Strategy 4.2

Reflect local heritage and elevate the presence of heritage elements within Merlynston Creek Parklands.

P

COMMUNITY RECREATION VALUES

Strategy 5.1

Build on the three major parks - Jack Roper, Seabrook and Laura Douglas - as drawcards bringing visitors to Merlynston Creek Parklands, then acting as springboards for wider connection and discovery.

O G

Strategy 5.2

Merlynston Creek Parklands will form a valued, continuous nature corridor through Broadmeadows, Dallas and Coolaroo, strengthening habitat connectivity and interspersed with welcoming public places that reflect the diverse needs, interests and cultural identities of local communities and Traditional Owners

P O

Strategy 5.3

Diversify recreational activities for people of different ages, abilities, gender and interests.

O

CONNECTION & ACCESS VALUES

Strategy 6.1

Create a continuous walking and cycling path along the length of Merlynston Creek Parklands

P O

Strategy 6.2

Create walking loops, viewing, shade and seating opportunities for visitors to enjoy in different areas of the Parklands.

P O

Strategy 6.3

Improve explicit and intuitive wayfinding for visitors.

O

Alignment with Open Space Strategy

Implementation of the Strategies enables the Masterplan to comply with all three key policy directions in Council's Open Space Strategy:

P

Protect

- Protect and enhance conservation, heritage & Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural values.
- Protect open space from encroaching development, works, interfaces and the impacts of climate change.

O

Optimise

- Open spaces designed and maintained to provide a mix of visitor experiences in each neighbourhood.

G

Grow

- New open spaces provided in areas of highest visitor and/or ecological needs, especially along waterways.

The relevant policy direction – Protect; Optimise; Grow – is noted below each strategy.

7.0

Masterplan

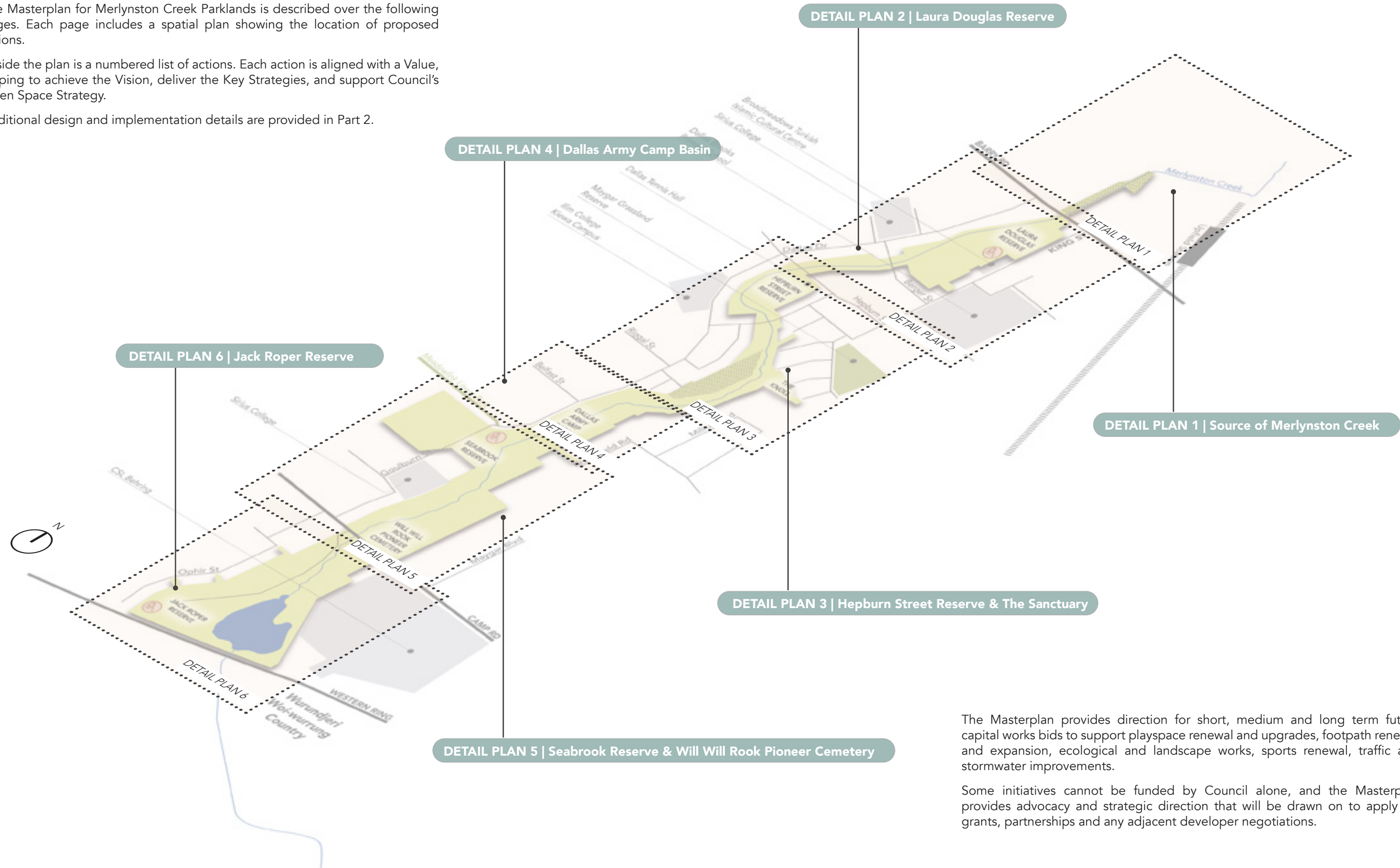


HOW TO READ THE MASTERPLAN

The Masterplan for Merlynston Creek Parklands is described over the following pages. Each page includes a spatial plan showing the location of proposed actions.

Beside the plan is a numbered list of actions. Each action is aligned with a Value, helping to achieve the Vision, deliver the Key Strategies, and support Council's Open Space Strategy.

Additional design and implementation details are provided in Part 2.



The Masterplan provides direction for short, medium and long term future capital works bids to support playspace renewal and upgrades, footpath renewal and expansion, ecological and landscape works, sports renewal, traffic and stormwater improvements.

Some initiatives cannot be funded by Council alone, and the Masterplan provides advocacy and strategic direction that will be drawn on to apply for grants, partnerships and any adjacent developer negotiations.

WURUNDJERI WOI-WURRUNG CULTURAL VALUES ASSESSMENT

Vision

“Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People have a deep and abiding connection to their Country. Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country is inscribed with cultural heritage places that are a record of Country and the activities of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Ancestors.

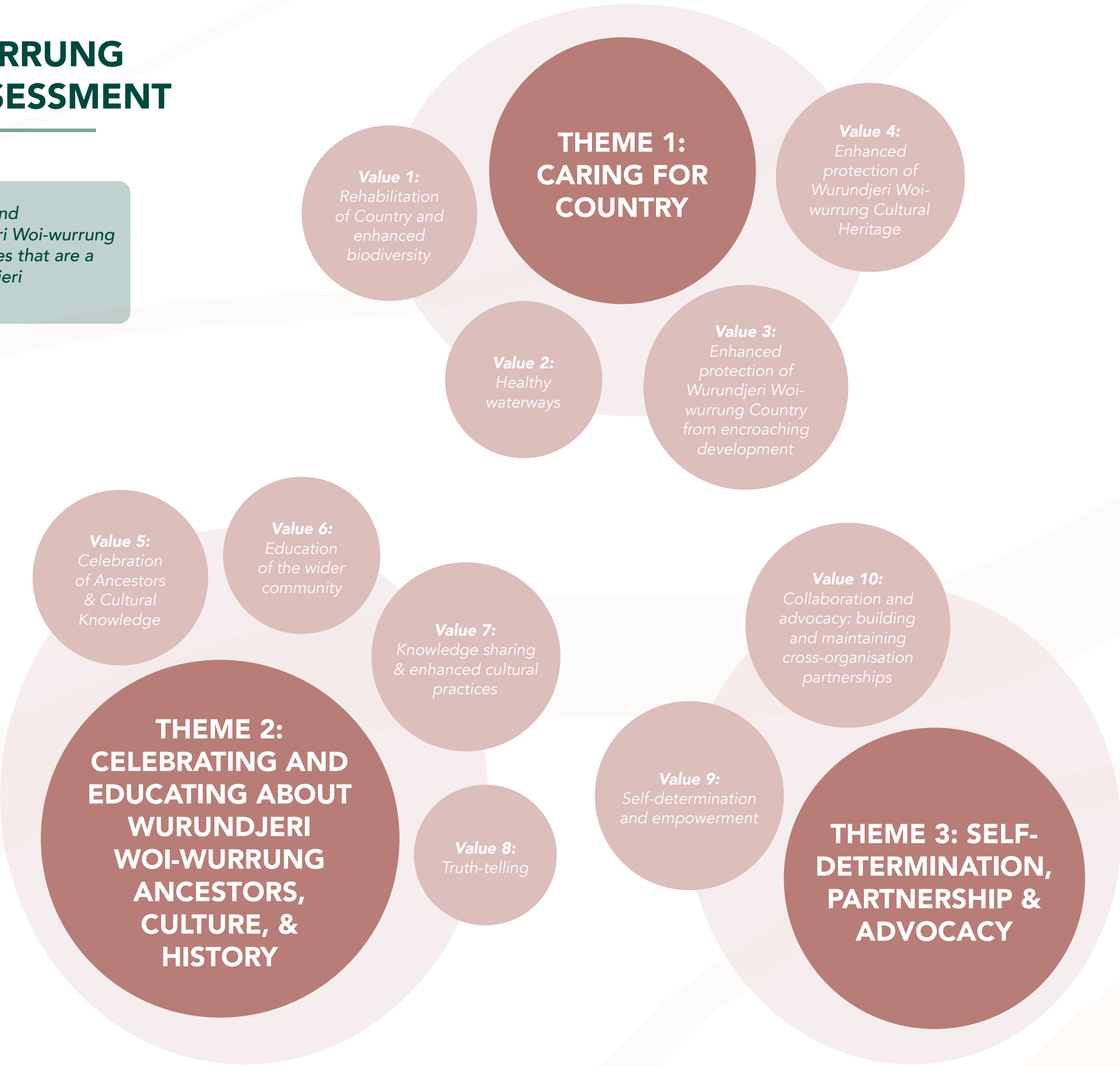
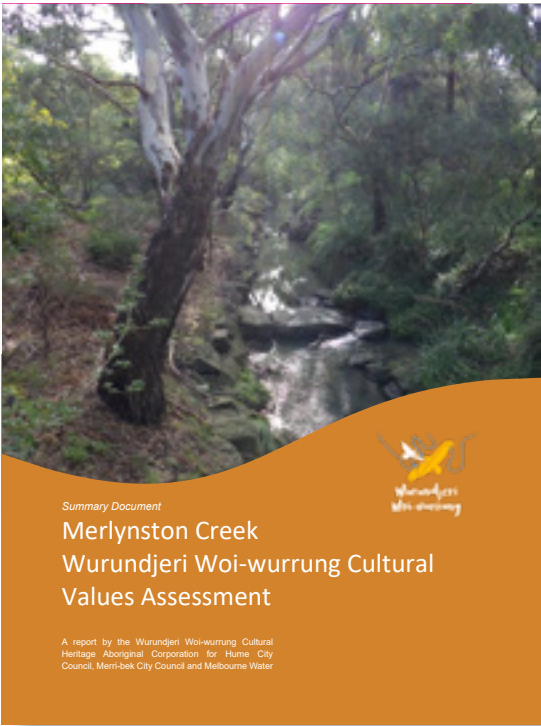
Overview

The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Values Assessment was commissioned by Council to understand the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural values of Merlynston Creek and the surrounding parklands as well to assist in the development of this Masterplan.

Within this Cultural Values Assessment document, there are eight recommendations and thirty-five specific actions along with three overarching themes.

Themes

The three themes outlined within the assessment document align with the Cultural Values Assessment within the Wurundjeri’s Whole of Country Plan Principles. These provide a holistic approach to the care and connection to country.



CULTURAL VALUES ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The eight key recommendations of the Cultural Values Assessment have been included have been included to implement cultural values and embed Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung perspectives throughout Merlynston Creek.

RECOMMENDATION 1

Revitalise Country to reflect the landscape prior to colonisation as much as possible and where appropriate

Actions:
Ecological rehabilitation is a priority including protecting remnant vegetation, habitat restoration, revegetation, removal of invasive species, waste and pollutants. Protect and repopulate fauna species native to Merlynston Creek, including aquatic fauna and protection of spiritual animals, and provide signage to share information about native fauna.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Enhanced protection of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country from encroaching development

Actions:
Consider the broader interconnected landscape to improve waterway health, including minimising stormwater flows from surrounding development feeding into Merlynston Creek. Work with Wurundjeri Corporation to ensure future development applies low impact design including the proposed rail extension and the proposed new bridge crossing apply low impact design.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Protect and enhance Merlynston Creek and connected waterscapes

Actions:
Renaturalising Merlynston Creek is a priority for Elders along with rehabilitation of the creekline and associated wetlands. This can support environmental flows, cultural flows and natural cycles of flooding, infiltration and evaporation.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Enhanced protection of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural heritage

Actions:
Protect cultural values holistically, this may include artefacts, cultural features, flora, fauna, water bodies, landforms, stories, associations, practices, beliefs, traditions and Cultural Landscapes. Consider stony rises and other features mapped in the Wurundjeri Strategic Aboriginal Heritage Assessment (SAHA) as an area of cultural sensitivity and design to avoid harm to these features.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People and Culture is visible on Country

Actions:
Acknowledge Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People as the Traditional Owners along the parkland, facilitate renaming using Woi-wurrung language, and use Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung art and design where possible in future building, works and infrastructure design along Merlynston Creek. Co-develop interpretive signage which can include Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural knowledge and history, and information on Ancestors and resource use, as deemed appropriate by Elders.

RECOMMENDATION 6

Support Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People in continuing to connect with their Cultural Landscape

Actions:
Continue engagement with the Elders on cultural values work and ensure Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people have ongoing access to Country along Merlynston Creek and its resources to engage in cultural practices, as guided by the Wurundjeri Corporation

RECOMMENDATION 7

Support Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People in Truth-telling and healing processes

Actions:
Implement interpretive signage to support truth telling.

RECOMMENDATION 8

Genuine and meaningful engagement with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People

Actions:
Engage with Wurundjeri Corporation to ensure Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People have a real voice in informed decision-making regarding their Country. Consider the Wurundjeri Corporation's Whole of Country Plan. Provide project updates to the Wurundjeri Corporation and increase compliance in relation to caring for Country, where possible.

Refer to Appendix 2 - Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Values Assessment Actions page for more information

THE SOURCE OF MERLYNSTON CREEK

Vision

"The source of Merlynston Creek is a hidden oasis, where wallabies graze amongst wattles and eucalypts. Improvements along the creek will support a healthy waterway and habitat. Enhanced access will enable better connections between the railway, the source of the creek, and Merlynston Creek Parklands."

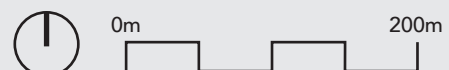
Wurundjeri advise that Merlynston Creek was once fed by headwaters originating much further north where Roxburgh Park is today. Development in the region has seen modifications to Merlynston Creek. This has resulted in changes to its source, which today begins in Coolaroo (indicated on the plan adjacent).¹²



Landscape at the Merlynston Creek headwaters: the source of the creek.



The Merlynston Creek corridor next to the Coolaroo Hotel.



ACTION ITEMS

Plan No.	Action			Key Strategy	Responsibility	Priority
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WURUNDJERI WOI-WURRUNG CULTURAL VALUES

1-C1	C1	Implement recommendations from the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Cultural Values Assessment to support Caring for Country, self- determination and the celebration and education of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung culture.	1.1	HCC / WWCHAC	O
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ECOLOGICAL VALUES

1-E1	E1	Protect and enhance conservation values along the Merlynston Creek within the rail reserve northwards to at least the National Boulevard Nature Reserve. Future plans for the extension of the rail line from Upfield to Roxburgh Park are supported only if it is an elevated rail that is designed with minimal impact on the creek and its Ecological and Woi-wurrung Cultural Values. This includes level crossing removal at Barry Road to improve community connectivity and safety.	2.3	HCC	O
1-E2	E2	Advocate for ecological and waterway outcomes to Merlynston Creek on private land from Barry Road to Maffra Street, including retention of standing dead tree snags to provide ongoing habitat.	2.1	HCC / MW	S
1-E3	E3	Develop a long-term strategy and business case to support access and habitat improvements to Merlynston Creek between Maffra Street and the railway line.	2.1; 2.3	HCC	L

WATERWAY VALUES

1-W1	W1	Recognise and celebrate the source of Merlynston Creek.	3.1; 3.2	HCC, WWCHAC	L
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WATERWAY VALUES

1-H1	H1	Reflect the former Ford factory history in the emerging open space along Merlynston Creek, the former rail line, and in the proposed new Upfield Station Reserve.	4.2	HCC, WWCHAC	L
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Plan No.	Action			Key Strategy	Responsibility	Priority
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COMMUNITY RECREATION VALUES

1-R1	R1	Viewing Areas: Provide nature viewing opportunities along the creek.	5.1, 5.2	HCC	S
1-R2	R2	Planning Permits: Maximise parkland interface improvements in any development applications on adjacent land. Seek Environmental Significance or Significant Landscape Overlay planning controls for better protection.	5.1	HCC	S-L

ACCESS AND CONNECTION VALUES

1-A1	A1	Investigate opportunities to create a loop ‘shared (use)’ path connecting the northern end of Merlynston Creek Parklands to Upfield Station.	6.1; 6.3	HCC	L
1-A2	A2	Develop a long-term strategy to support habitat and access improvements to Merlynston Creek between Maffra Street and the railway line.	6.1; 6.3	HCC, DTP	L
1-A3	A3	Create a cycling path on both sides of Barry Road to improve active transport safety between the Upfield Rail Station and Laura Douglas Reserve within the Merlynston Creek Parklands.	6.2	HCC, DTP	L

Detail Plan 2

LAURA DOUGLAS RESERVE

Vision

"A place of belonging, that celebrates community, welcomes joy and play, offers cool shade and creekside exploration, and is easy to visit, time and time again."

Although it starts north of Barry Road, this is the first part of Merlynston Creek that flows through a residential neighbourhood. Improvements to Laura Douglas Reserve would provide many opportunities for the park to become part of life on a daily or weekly basis, as well as for special events and occasions. Classified as a 'District' park, Laura Douglas Reserve has the potential to bring visitors from further away to enjoy Merlynston Creek Parklands.

Enhancements to Merlynston Creek, including more planting and potential naturalisation, could provide more habitat, more shade, and a focus for walking and cycling. Extending the creekside planting and meandering forms into the park reinforces the sense that all the reserve is part of, and connected to the creek.

Places for recreation, play, sport, events, and gatherings - both large and small, formal and informal - are nestled within the parkland landscape. A network of looped paths and trails allow people to move through at the pace that suits them, from quickly and directly, to slowly and curiously.



ACTION ITEMS

Plan No.	Action				Key Strategy	Responsibility	Priority
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ECOLOGICAL VALUES

2-E1	E1	Install riparian vegetation and trees along both banks of Merlynston Creek. Retain 3m wide turfed zone behind property fencelines for maintenance access and clear viewlines. Install rock habitat and sun access for wildlife.	2.3	HCC	S
2-E2	E2	Undertake native tree planting for habitat and shade, and to draw more creekside character into the park.	2.2	HCC	S
2-E3	E3	Implement educational initiatives to discourage bird feeding.	2.3	HCC	S

HERITAGE VALUES

2-H1	H1	Reuse of bluestone boulders in reserve upgrade.	4.2	HCC	S
2-H2	H2	Provide flexible, shaded and welcoming ‘Cultural Carpet’ that reflects local cultural diversity and enables multi-purpose use for events; markets, large family and community gatherings and celebrations, and overflow parking.	4.1; 5.3	HCC	M
2-H3	H3	Investigate design opportunities to enhance interface between parklands and Turkish Islamic Cultural Centre.	4.1	HCC	M

ACCESS AND CONNECTION VALUES

2-A1	A1	Signage: Improve information and wayfinding signage at key park entrances to increase awareness of Merlynston Creek and its visitor features.	6.1	HCC	S
2-A2	A2	Shared Use Path: Implement an inclusive, Shared Use Path along the length of Merlynston Creek Parklands, on at least one side of the creek, for people who walk and cycle. Investigate lighting on higher use paths for early morning and early evening use. Lighting design is to minimise wildlife impacts.	6.2	HCC	M
2-A3	A3	Secondary Trail: Implement secondary trails along the length of Merlynston Creek Parklands, on the side opposite the shared use trail.	6.1	HCC	M
2-A4	A4	Access: Remove chainlink fence at top of bank.	6.3	HCC	S
2-A5	A5	Walking Loops: Implement loops around the open lawn area for people who walk and cycle, with easy connection to the Shared Use Path, the play space, sports fields and other parkland features. Provide shade trees and seating.	6.1	HCC	M
2-A6	A6	New Footbridge: Install new footbridge for a walking and cycling connection to Dallas Drive, for people who walk and cycle. As part of the design, investigate a viewing area so visitors can see up and down the creek, as well as across the parklands to key wayfinding landmarks such as buildings and the play space.	6.1, 6.2	HCC	S
2-A7	A7	Creekside Place: Provide creekside meeting space under shade trees with views into waterway and parkland, and connection to the Shared Use Path and other trails, paths and loops.	5.3, 6.2	HCC	S
2-A8	A8	Discovery Loops: Implement ‘discovery loops’ - informal paths to enable slower walking and discovery. Provide shade and seating.	6.1, 6.2	HCC	M
2-A8	A9	Carparking: Move carparking away from the rear of the pavilion to support walking loops and shared space. Loading access will be retained. Visitors will park in new multiple use carparking area that will also be closer to the shops, play and events area. There will be no change to carpark numbers.	5.1	HCC	L

Plan No.	Action				Key Strategy	Responsibility	Priority
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WURUNDJERI WOI-WURRUNG CULTURAL VALUES

2-C1	C1	Implement recommendations from the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Cultural Values Assessment to support Caring for Country, self- determination and the celebration and education of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung culture.	1.1	HCC / WWCHAC	O
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WATERWAY VALUES

2-W1	W1	Investigate and where feasible implement ‘light touch’ naturalisation opportunities to improve riparian zone whilst protecting existing trees. Refer Typical Section 1 (see page 40).	3.2	HCC / MW	M
2-W2	W2	Underground the water storage tank as part of playing field and clubhouse redevelopment.	3.3	HCC	L
2-W3	W3	Investigate, and where feasible, seek partnership funding to implement naturalisation of Merlynston Creek including widening waterway footprint and integrating with sediment pond and bioretention to deliver water quality improvements. Refer Typical Section 2 (see page 41).	3.1; 3.2	HCC / MW	M
2-W4	W4	Investigate, and where feasible implement ways for rainwater and stormwater to be stored and used to water parkland trees and plants.	3.1	HCC	M

COMMUNITY RECREATION VALUES

2-R1	R1	King Street Shops: Enhance the interface between the parklands and the King Street shops - e.g. shade, paving, outdoor seating - so customers can enjoy the parkland setting.	5.2	HCC	M
2-R2	R2	Events: Provide large welcoming shelter and combine with ‘cultural carpet’ plaza that can be used for events, markets and gatherings. Seek funding to construct including supporting power, water, public toilet, event vehicle access and signage.	5.1	HCC	M
2-R3	R3	Carparking: Investigate, and where feasible implement multiple use opportunities for carpark e.g. painting and hoop at one end to allow use as a basketball half court; or patterns and colours that reflect local groups.	5.2	HCC	M
2-R4	R4	Daily Enjoyment: Provide a range of furniture including picnic settings, seating, rubbish and ash disposal bins.	5.3	HCC	S
2-R5	R5	Play: Establish a district level play space that can be viewed and enjoyed from the streets and shops and future event area.	5.2; 5.3	HCC	S
2-R6	R6	Sport: Investigate, and if feasible, incorporate a smaller third field (96mx50m) to the south and realign two full sized fields (78x105m). The realignment will retain the central tree avenue including walking loops and viewlines to new footbridge.	5.2; 5.3	HCC	M / L
2-R7	R7	Play: Retain small simple playspace for young children to meet high demand when older siblings are playing soccer. This space will be included in the design considerations for the nearby larger district playspace.	5.2	HCC	S
2-R8	R8	Pavilion: Replace clubhouse when fields are realigned including forecourt. Ensure new clubhouse location does not result in loss of walking loops, trees and other parkland values.	5.2; 5.3	HCC	L
2-R9	R9	Park Connections: Investigate future long-term opportunities to bring land into public ownership to improve parkland connections, viewlines and visibility from King Street and Berger Street.	5.1; 5.3	HCC	L
2-R10	R10	Planning Permits: Maximise parkland interface improvements in any development applications on adjacent land. Seek Environmental Significance or Significant Landscape Overlay planning controls for better protection.	5.2; 5.3	HCC	O

LAURA DOUGLAS RESERVE SCENARIOS

SCENARIO
1

SPORTS DAY



All three pitches can be used for games or training without affecting the Shared Use path or movement through the park for people who walk or cycle. A redeveloped clubhouse is located on the centreline of the field for optimal viewing. At the northern end of the clubhouse, a shaded plaza is a welcoming arrival point for members, visitors, or those coming for events. A small play space caters for families with younger children who need to be close to the sporting activities during training, so cannot move away to use the larger play facilities.



SCENARIO
2

MARKET DAY



Flexible spaces allow for small scale markets, larger monthly or seasonal markets, and different events, and access from King Street to bump in temporary stages, food trucks, coffee carts, and market stalls. Ticketed events with temporary fencing could be accommodated whilst still allowing multiple ways for visitors to move through the park and use the play space and other facilities.





Sports ground - Laura Douglas Reserve



HEPBURN STREET RESERVE and THE SANCTUARY

Vision

“Away from the bustle of Laura Douglas is a place of calm and connection. Hepburn Street Reserve invites visitors to slow down, meander, and explore with the senses. The Sanctuary provides refuge for important plant and animal species, with views over rolling terrain and connection to earth and sky.

Hepburn Street Reserve and Sanctuary is a Neighbourhood scale reserve and home to the Dallas Tennis Hall offering opportunities for nature, walking, kick-about and picnic connections.

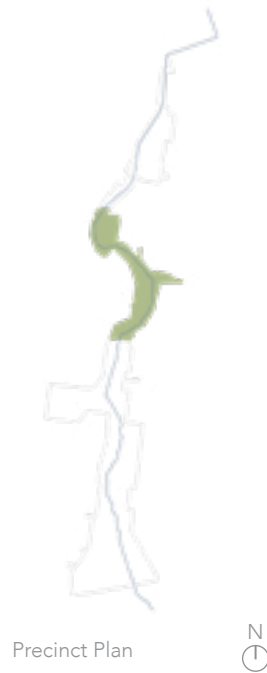
This area has gaps in continuous trail connection that are a priority to address.



Paths that allow you to move like the river: quick and direct, or slow and meandering.



Large sunny spaces open to the sky; smaller shady spaces to explore and connect.



Precinct Plan



0m 100m

ACTION ITEMS

Plan No.	Action				Key Strategy	Responsibility	Priority
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WURUNDJERI WOI-WURRUNG CULTURAL VALUES

3-C1	C1	Implement recommendations from the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Cultural Values Assessment to support Caring for Country, self- determination and the celebration and education of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung culture.	1.1	HCC / WWCHAC	O
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ECOLOGICAL VALUES

3-E1	E1	Install riparian vegetation and trees along both banks of Merlynston Creek. Install rock habitat and sun access for wildlife. Retain 3m wide turfed zone behind property fencelines for maintenance access and clear viewlines.	2.3; 6.2	HCC	S
3-E2	E2	Undertake native tree planting for habitat and shade. Curving sweeps of trees and planting meander across the flatter land, increasing the sense of being part of a riparian plain connected to the creek.	2.2	HCC	M
3-E3	E3	Implement edge treatment and planting, and maintenance regimes that direct cyclists and walkers away from sensitive ecological areas.	2.3	HCC	S
3-E4	E4	Any installation and timing of lighting to assist park visitors is to be designed to minimise wildlife impacts.	2.3	HCC	S

HERITAGE VALUES

3-H1	H1	Retain existing bluestone retaining wall and integrate into park entry.	4.2	HCC	O
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ACCESS AND CONNECTION VALUES

3-A1	A1	Hepburn Bluestone Path: Improve walking and cycling entry from Hepburn Street by adapting the bluestone walk for all abilities access.	6.1	HCC	M
3-A2	A2	Signage: Improve information and wayfinding signage at key park entrances to increase awareness of Merlynston Creek and its visitor features.	6.3	HCC	S
3-A3	A3	Shared Use Path: Implement an inclusive, Shared Use Path along the length of Merlynston Creek Parklands, on at least one side of the creek, for people who walk and cycle. Investigate lighting on higher use paths for early morning and early evening use. Lighting design is to minimise wildlife impacts.	6.1; 6.2	HCC	S
3-A4	A4	Secondary Trails: Implement secondary trails along the length of Merlynston Creek Parklands, on the side opposite the shared use trail. All trails located to direct walkers and cyclists away from ecological and culturally sensitive areas.	6.1; 6.2	HCC	M
3-A5	A5	Walking Trail: Where feasible, implement a secondary path that enables a walking loop around the open lawn area with easy connection to the shared use path, the Terang Street entry, and the hall. Provide shade trees and seating.	6.1; 5.3	HCC	M
3-A6	A6	Terang Street Walkway: Improve path connection into parklands from Terang Street to make it feel safer to walk through.	6.1	HCC	M
3-A7	A7	Benalla + Hepburn entrance: Investigate, and where feasible, seek additional parkland area near the Benalla Street and Hepburn Street entrance to improve path connections, viewlines and visibility.	6.1; 6.2; 6.3	HCC	L
3-A8	A8	Footbridge: Investigate, and if feasible, construct a creek crossing to improve east-west connectivity.	6.2; 6.3	HCC	L
3-A9	A9	Maygar Grasslands: Improve wayfinding and information signage to support links to nearby Maygar Grasslands.	6.1	HCC	M

Plan No.	Action				Key Strategy	Responsibility	Priority
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WATERWAY VALUES

3-W1	W1	Investigate, and where feasible, implement ‘light touch’ naturalisation of Merlynston Creek including introduction of riparian vegetation, and saw-cutting concrete to allow low density sedge planting.	3.2	HCC / MW	M
3-W2	W2	Investigate, and where feasible, seek partnership funding to implement naturalisation of Merlynston Creek including concrete removal, meandering low flow channel, benched floodplain, and riparian vegetation.	3.1; 3.2	HCC / MW	L
3-W3	W3	Increase planting to screen fencing on top of the culvert wing walls. Extend the planting area outside the fence to ease ongoing maintenance.	3.3	HCC / MW	L
3-W4	W4	Investigate, and if feasible, implement sediment basin and bioretention basin to improve water quality in Merlynston Creek.	3.1	HCC / MW	M

COMMUNITY RECREATION VALUES

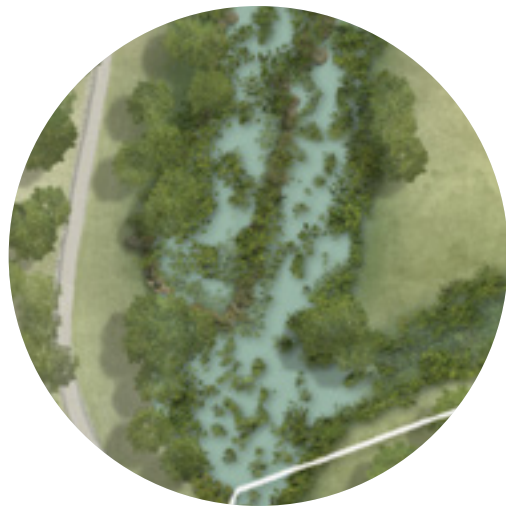
3-R1	R1	Carpark: Investigate, and where feasible implement ‘light touch’ upgrades to enable multiple use opportunities for carpark e.g. painting and hoop at one end to allow use as a basketball half court; or patterns and colours that reflect local groups using the community building.	5.2; 5.3	HCC	M
3-R2	R2	Building Upgrade: Investigate, and where feasible implement building upgrades that better connect the hall with the parkland e.g. windows, verandah, or forecourt.	5.2; 5.3	HCC	L
3-R3	R3	Community Gardens: Investigate, and if self-managed by an active community group, implement a small community garden subject to site having limited impact on public use of reserve and self-organisation by the community.	5.2	HCC	M
3-R4	R4	Picnics: Install seating, sun loungers and picnic settings to support smaller gatherings and quiet relaxation.	5.2; 5.3	HCC	S
3-R5	R5	Signage: Enhance signage to viewing and picnic area at The Knoll by Stamford Court.	6.3	HCC	O
3-R6	R6	Discovery Loops: Implement ‘discovery loops’ - informal paths to enable slower movement, discovery and walking. Create sensory garden with informal paths weaving between drifts of planting. Extend creekside tree and groundcover planting to connect and increase the sense of being part of the creek corridor. Integrate existing olive grove into planting clusters. Integrate pockets of planting chosen for their textural and sensory qualities.	5.2	HCC	L
3-R7	R7	Maintenance Partnerships: Continue to maintain DFFH land at 12-16 Benalla Street that is zoned PPRZ for parkland purposes.	5.3; 6.1	HCC	L
3-R8	R8	Rezone: Rezone existing Council parkland at 6-20 Military Road, 16 Stamford Street and 20 Cornell Close from General Residential to PPRZ. Improve parkland interface in any adjacent development.	5.3	HCC / DFFH	O
3-R9	R9	Viewing Area: Investigate viewing area looking over creek and Golden Sun Moth / Large-flower crane’s bill habitat.	5.2	HCC	S
3-R10	R10	Critical Parkland Gap: Seek to acquire grassy plains parcel at 13 Merlynston Close, Broadmeadows, to fill the most critical parkland and trail gap in the Merlynston Creek Parklands. Rezone from General Residential to PPRZ. Improve parkland interface in any adjacent development.	5.2; 5.3	HCC	L
3-R11	R11	Planning Permits: Seek Environmental Significance or Significant Landscape Overlay planning controls for better protection.	5.1; 5.3	HCC	S

DALLAS ARMY CAMP BASIN

Vision

"A flourishing Merlynston Creek becomes an artery of life, connecting the waterway through the parklands to the vibrant community activity at Seabrook Reserve."

Constructed in the 1960s to mitigate flooding in surrounding suburbs, the Dallas Army Camp Basin is managed by Melbourne Water and underwent a major upgrade in 2015. Due to ongoing flood risk, further works are required to open up and allow integration of safe walking and cycling access, such as egress paths and warning signage



Detail plan showing the central Army Camp Basin area with sediment pond, ephemeral wetlands and native tree planting.



Precinct Plan



ACTION ITEMS

Plan No.	Action	Key Strategy	Responsibility	Priority
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WURUNDJERI WOI-WURRUNG CULTURAL VALUES

4-C1	C1	Implement recommendations from the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Cultural Values Assessment to support Caring for Country, self- determination and the celebration and education of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung culture.	1.1	HCC / WWCHAC	O
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ECOLOGICAL VALUES

4-E1	E1	Establish passively watered street tree planting along Dallas Drive to shade path.	2.2	HCC	M
4-E2	E2	Undertake native tree planting for habitat and shade.	2.1	HCC	O
4-E3	E3	Plant scattered River Red Gum and Swamp Gum trees and reduce mowing to form a modified floodplain woodland (EVC56) in areas below the Q10 flood extent.	2.2	MW	M
4-E4	E4	Revegetate steep slopes to increase habitat and screen the adjoining factories.	2.1; 2.2	MW	M

WATERWAY VALUES

4-W1	W1	Continue monitoring and investigation of catchment-wide water quality management. Implement sediment pond and bioretention basin.	3.2	MW	S
4-W2	W2	Within Melbourne Water-owned land, implement ephemeral wetlands fed by stormwater outlets along western side of Merlynston Creek.	3.2	MW	M
4-W3	W3	Investigate, and where feasible, daylight piped section of Merlynston Creek to elevate its presence within the parklands and facilitate improved riparian connectivity.	3.2	HCC / MW	M

HERITAGE VALUES

4-H1	H1	Reflect former Army Camp history as part of enabling access into the Dallas Retarding Basin.	4.2	HCC / MW	L
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COMMUNITY RECREATION VALUES

4-R1	R1	Viewing Area: Work with Melbourne Water to investigate opportunities for enhancements along top of spillway to provide viewing platform with seating, signage, and integrated balustrade.	5.3	HCC, MW	M
4-R2	R2	Planning Permits: Maximise parkland interface improvements in any development applications on adjacent land.	5.1	HCC	

Plan No.	Action	Key Strategy	Responsibility	Priority
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ACCESS AND CONNECTION VALUES

4-A1	A1	Shared Use Path: Implement an inclusive Shared Path along the length of the Dallas Army Camp Basin. This will be set back from Dallas Drive to provide a shady relaxed walking experience.	6.1; 6.2	HCC, MW	S
4-A2	A2	Dhemre Place: Provide connection into parklands from southern end of Dhemre Place.	6.1	HCC	M
4-A3	A3	Entrance Gateway: Create formal parkland entry points along Dallas Drive, with views over the Basin. Provide seating.	6.1	HCC/ MW	M
4-A4	A4	Signage: Improve information and wayfinding signage at key park entrances to increase awareness of Merlynston Creek and its visitor features. Include emergency warning markers in flood hazard areas.	6.3	HCC/ MW	S
4-A5	A5	Access: Remove chainlink fencing along Dallas Drive (once other access restrictions, signage and warning markers are installed).	6.2	HCC/ MW	S
4-A6	A6	Restricted Area: Some areas of the basin will remain unavailable for public access due to flooding safety risks. This is indicatively marked on the map by the white line. No stepping stones along stretch of creek to limit access to eastern bank	6.2	HCC/ MW	O
4-A7	A7	Safety: Provide additional egress to allow evacuation during a flood event.	6.1; 6.2	HCC / MW	S
4-A8	A8	Proposed Potential Road: Connect Shared Use Path running along proposed future road into the parkland trail network.	6.1	HCC	M

SEABROOK RESERVE and WILL WILL ROOK PIONEER CEMETERY

Vision

Life is celebrated in Merlynston Creek Parklands. There is laughter and adventure at Seabrook Reserve; further along, dogs also run and play, and children make their way to and from school. Past lives are commemorated with planting that makes the cemetery more visible.

Seabrook Reserve features State Rugby League facilities and community centre.

Along the creek, Seabrook Reserve is home to recently upgraded high quality play and picnic facilities along the banks of the creek. This important feature is not well known and used by the local and district community.

Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery is on Crown land and provides an important historical point of interest for the creek.

Difficulties crossing or entering the reserve from Camp Road are a priority to address.



Detail plan showing altered mowing regime to allow the old pattern of Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery to be revealed, and path connection along the east side of the creek.



Precinct Plan



ACTION ITEMS

Plan No.	Action			Key Strategy	Responsibility	Priority
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WURUNDJERI WOI-WURRUNG CULTURAL VALUES

5-C1	C1	Implement recommendations from the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Cultural Values Assessment to support Caring for Country, self- determination and the celebration and education of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung culture.	1.1	HCC / WWCHAC	O
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ECOLOGICAL VALUES

5-E1	E1	Infill gaps in riparian vegetation along banks of the Merlynston Creek while ensuring sun access and rocky habitat for fauna. Ensure protection of associated grassland communities.	2.3	HCC	M
5-E2	E2	Undertake native tree planting for habitat and shade.	2.1	HCC	S
5-E3	E3	As wetlands, ponds and creek improvements are created, implement educational initiatives to discourage bird feeding.	2.2	HCC	M
5-E4	E4	Trial mowing regime to only mow along the historic grid layout and monitor any species improvements. Implement supplementary planting with the support of the Friends of Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery.	2.3	HCC	M
5-E5	E5	Investigate, and if feasible, relocate dog off-leash area to an alternate area to support ecological improvements in Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery.	2.3	HCC	M

WATERWAY VALUES

5-W1	W1	Implement sediment basin and wetland using stormwater diverted from industrial catchment to the east.	3.2	HCC / MW	M
5-W2	W2	Reduce stormwater being pumped directly into Merlynston Creek to protect the riparian corridor and reduce potential bank instability.	3.2	HCC / MW	M

HERITAGE VALUES

5-H1	H1	Investigate, and if feasible, undertake adaptive reuse of bluestone toilet block to convert to an outdoor shelter area with information panels celebrating local history.	4.2	HCC	M
5-H2	H2	Better recognise the historic significance and graves of Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery with planting and mowing regimes to showcase its layout, along with improved trails, seating and sweeps of low planting to create a sense of enclosures. Seek funding to undertake ground penetrating radar sensing to confirm location of unknown graves.	4.2	HCC	S

Plan No.	Action			Key Strategy	Responsibility	Priority
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COMMUNITY RECREATION VALUES

5-R1	R1	Creekside Walking: Design and management of the creekside reserve area, Seabrook Reserve and Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery to encourage safe, relaxing and enjoyable walking routes to schools, sporting reserves and playgrounds visitor features.	5.1	HCC	O
5-R2	R2	Playground Visibility: Maximise design and viewlines around the new housing development to help improve sense of connection and community at Seabrook playground.	5.1	HCC	S
5-R3	R3	Outdoor Gathering: Investigate, and where feasible integrate improvements for small outdoor events e.g. bump-in area and strategic hardstand sites into any future redesign of playground and picnic area at Seabrook Reserve.	5.2	HCC	L
5-R4	R4	Seabrook Community Centre: Maintain State Rugby League reserves and facilities while investigating design improvements to improve seating and sense of place for community use near the Seabrook Community Centre.	5.2	HCC	S
5-R5	R5	Planning Permits: Maximise parkland interface improvements in any development applications on adjacent land. Seek Environmental Significance or Significant Landscape Overlay planning controls for better protection.	5.2; 5.3	HCC	O

ACCESS AND CONNECTION VALUES

5-A1	A1	Seabrook Reserve Carpark: Investigate and where feasible, implement redesign Seabrook Reserve carpark, access, and building arrival to prioritise people who walk and cycle, a slow speed environment, and wayfinding. Include land currently used for informal path in assessment.	6.1	HCC	M
5-A2	A2	Stanhope Connection: Investigate future long term opportunities to create connection into parklands along Stanhope Street to improve the connection to the Central Grove Shopping Centre. If proceeding investigate forecourt as potential entry incorporating the adaptive reuse of the bluestone toilet block.	6.2; 6.3	HCC	L
5-A3	A3	Walking Loops: Subject to heritage, cultural and ecological sensitivities, investigate new walking and cycling path along eastern side of Merlynston Creek that will connect to Shared Use Path. Implement where feasible.	6.1; 6.3	HCC / DEECA	M
5-A4	A4	Broadfield Road: Create new walking and cycling entrance into the parklands with signage and trail connections from the east at Broadfield Road	6.1	HCC	M
5-A5	A5	Proposed Potential New Road: Potential proposed future road to be set back further from Merlynston Creek if needed to protect Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural values, ecological values, heritage values, walking and cycling access and community recreation values including minimising visual and noise impacts.	6.1; 6.2	HCC	S
5-A6	A6	Walking Loops: Explore feasibility for path connection under new potential proposed future road	6.1; 6.2	HCC	S

JACK ROPER RESERVE

Vision

" Jack Roper Reserve will continue as a popular recreational drawcard, attracting and connecting visitors to the rest of the parklands and to a flourishing Merlynston Creek.

Jack Roper Reserve provides a 'regional' level of play and picnic facilities and is a well known and well used park for people of many surrounding suburbs. It also provides some sporting facilities. Recent trail upgrades create new connections with further work needed to enhance safe road crossings and vehicle entrance legibility. The recent completion of the stormwater harvesting scheme is improving the water quality of the Melbourne Water basin, and providing a reliable source of water to keep the park green at all times.



Detail plan showing wetlands to the lake, to improve water quality, and associated path connections..



Precinct Plan



ACTION ITEMS

Plan No.	Action	Key Strategy	Responsibility	Priority
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WURUNDJERI WOI-WURRUNG CULTURAL VALUES

6-C1	C1	Implement recommendations from the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Cultural Values Assessment to support Caring for Country, self- determination and the celebration and education of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung culture.	1.1	HCC / WWCHAC	O
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ECOLOGICAL VALUES

6-E1	E1	Undertake planting of riparian vegetation and trees along both banks of Merlynston Creek and infill any gaps. Install rock habitat and sun access for wildlife	2.1	HCC	M
6-E2	E2	Undertake native tree planting for habitat and shade.	2.2	HCC	M
6-E3	E3	Implement educational initiatives to discourage bird feeding.	2.3	HCC	S

WATERWAY VALUES

6-W1	W1	Align additional water quality treatment measures such as sediment ponds with community recreation opportunities to maximise co-benefits. Ensure flood detention capacity of Jack Roper Reserve is maintained, to protect downstream suburbs and communities. Seek additional monitoring and investigation of catchment-wide water quality management.	3.2	HCC / MW	L
6-W2	W2	Investigate, and if feasible implement recirculating wetlands to improve creek water quality and habitat.	3.2	HCC / MW	L
6-W3	W3	Investigate and seek community input on potential removal of, or redesign of island as part of lake water quality improvement. If feasible, implement as a long-term initiative.	3.2	HCC / MW	L

HERITAGE VALUES

6-H1	H1	Investigate and where feasible reflect contributions of the Greek community as part of long term use and development of Jack Roper Reserve and neighbouring PPRZ-zoned land.	4.2	HCC	L
6-H2	H2	Reflect the story and history of Merlynston Creek basins.	4.2	HCC	S/M

Plan No.	Action	Key Strategy	Responsibility	Priority
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COMMUNITY RECREATION VALUES

6-R1	R1	Shared Entrance: Improve shared entrance into Jack Roper and 227 Camp Road for clearer walking, cycling and vehicular movement. Ensure 227 Camp Road retains its PPRZ zone and parkland interface improvements are maximised.	5.1	HCC	L
6-R2	R2	Interface with 227 Camp Road: Implement design solutions that help improve the interface of adjacent community building to sports field including walking loops, clearer vehicle movements, fencing to help protect the building from potential ball damage.	5.2	HCC	M
6-R3	R3	Viewing Point: Investigate, and if feasible, establish shelter or seating at existing viewing point.	5.1	HCC	L
6-R4	R4	Regional Playspace: Retain and invest in Jack Roper Playground to maintain its status as one of Hume’s feature regional play experiences and outdoor gathering experiences.	5.2	HCC	O
6-R5	R5	Sound Barrier: Advocate with the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) for a potential sound barrier along the Western Ring Road.	5.1	HCC / DTP	L
6-R6	R6	Planning Permit: Maximise parkland interface improvements in any development applications on adjacent land. Seek Environmental Significance or Significant Landscape Overlay planning controls for better protection.	5.1	HCC	O

ACCESS AND CONNECTION VALUES

6-A1	A1	Camp Road Crossing: Improve trail connections to help pedestrian and cycle connections between Jack Roper Reserve and Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery. Partner with DTP to install pedestrian crossing lights, to help people cross Camp Road.	6.1; 6.3	HCC	M
6-A2	A2	Signage: Install directional and wayfinding signage at key park entrances. Show clearly how the Shared Use Path connects into the rest of the park.	6.3	HCC	M
6-A3	A3	Footbridge: Consider relocation of bridge crossing point further north to facilitate water quality improvements. If it is not feasible to reuse the existing bridge, consider replacing with one that is wide enough to include Shared Use Path.	6.1; 3.2	HCC	L
6-A4	A4	Tree Trail: Provide informal trail through established trees.	6.1	HCC	M
6-A5	A5	Wetlands Loop: If wetlands are created, provide path on top of main bund to facilitate walking loop and maintenance.	6.1	HCC	L
6-A6	A6	Underpass: Improve path amenity and habitat link for wildlife under the Western Ring Road. Improve wayfinding and invite visitors to enjoy extended Merlynston Creek parklands in the City of Merri-bek.	6.1; 6.3	HCC	M



Part 2 - Design and Implementation

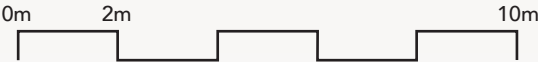
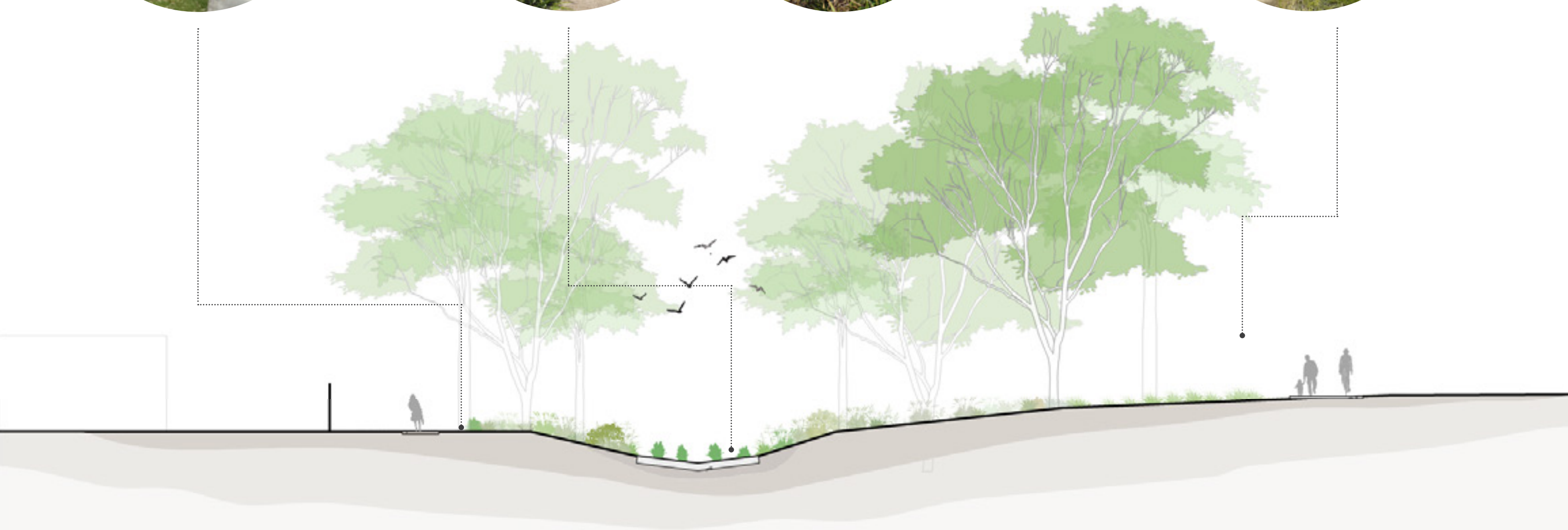


CREEKLINE LAURA DOUGLAS RESERVE

This section illustrates options for improvements along the creek where the concrete drain is very close to residential neighbours on one side, and large existing trees on the other. To protect these trees, so they can continue to provide shade and habitat, the existing creek bank is retained and planted. Space for maintenance vehicles is provided behind property fences, with mown grass on both sides of the informal trail. There may be opportunities to introduce pockets of planting amongst the concrete in the drain.



Section Location Plan N



CREEKLINE LAURA DOUGLAS RESERVE

In the south west corner of Laura Douglas Reserve, a large parcel of available land presents the opportunity to widen out the creek (subject to flow requirements). This would include a series of polls and riffles, with informal rock crossing points.



Section Location Plan N

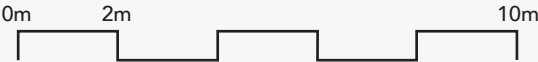
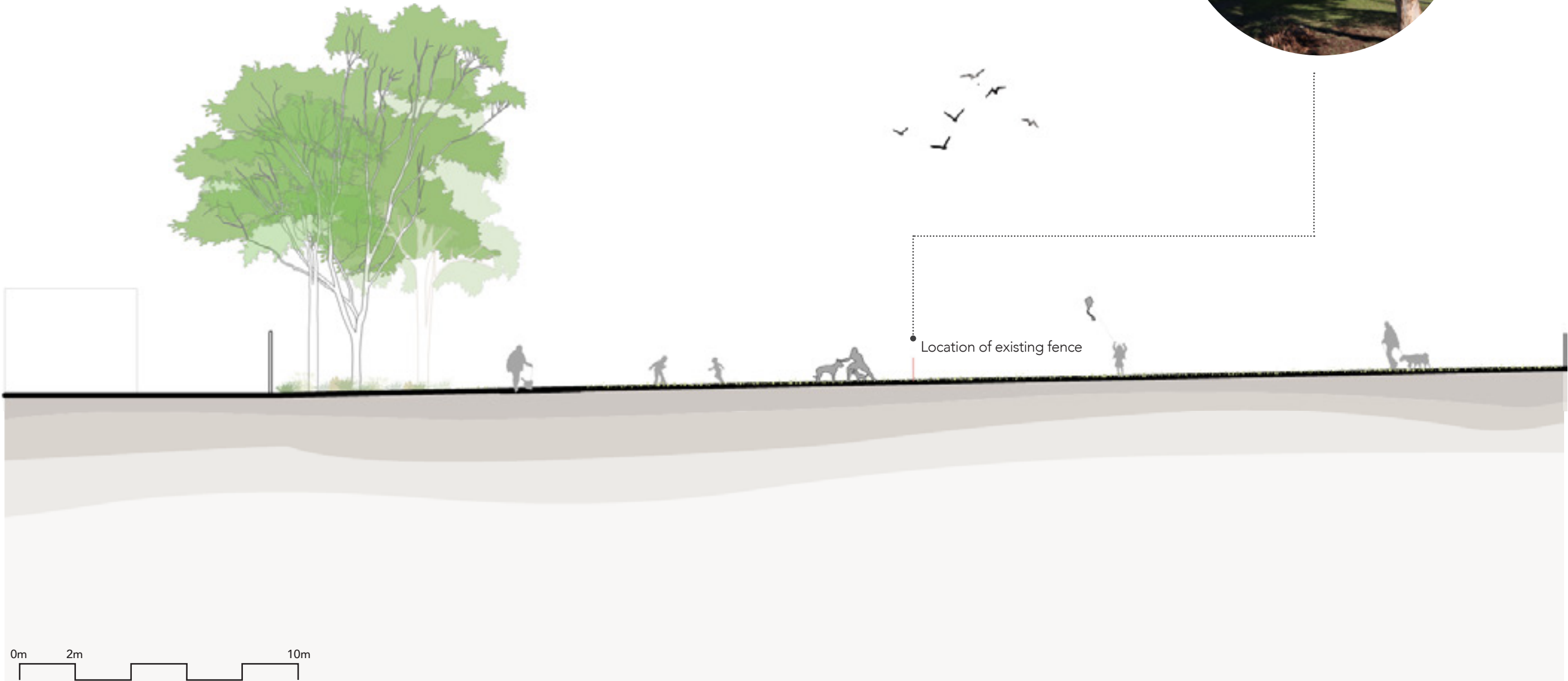


LAURA DOUGLAS RESERVE FIELD

The southern portion of Laura Douglas Reserve is currently underutilised and lacking clear connection to Merlynston Creek. A new loop path around the open lawn area will provide people who walk and cycle with an easy connection to the Shared Use Path, the play space, sports fields and other parkland features.

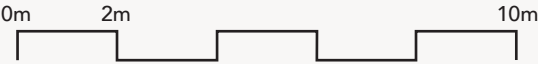
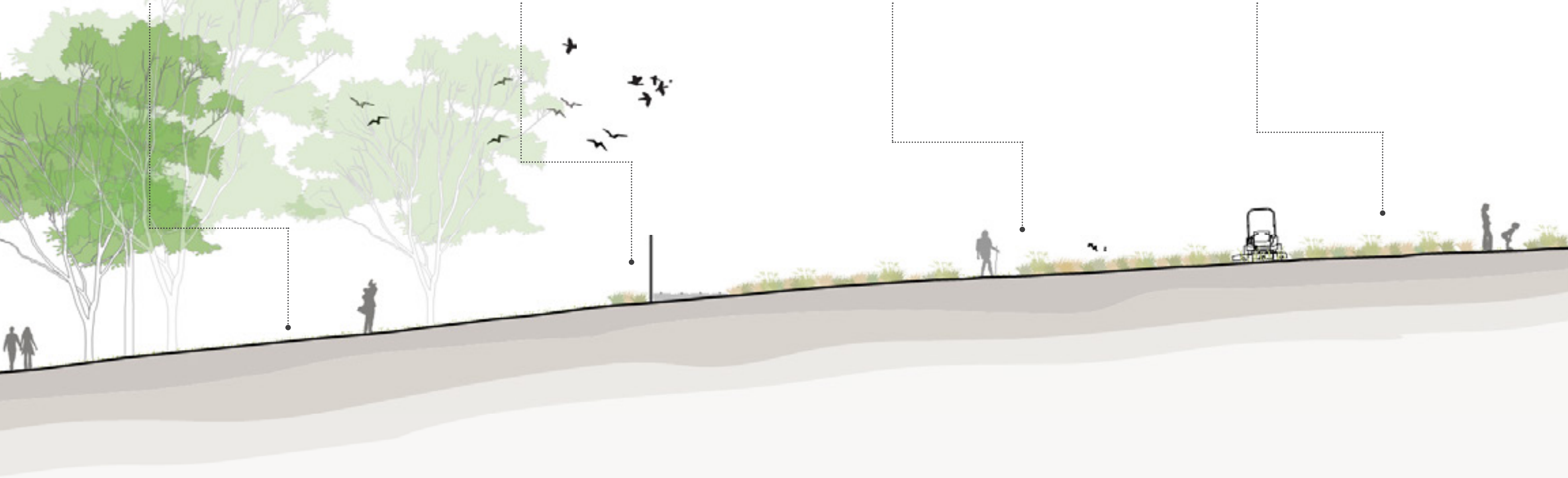


Section Location Plan N



Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery

The Will Will Rook Pioneer Cemetery is a historic and important landmark within the Merlynston Creek parklands. Its unique grid like ground plan presents an opportunity to employ a selective mowing regime to only mow along the historic grid layout. Native supplementary planting such as grasses and flowering shrubs will highlight gravesites, markers and other features. This will allow for Will Will Rook to become more visible as an historic place of rest.



Palettes

Building on existing assets

The following pages provide high-level direction to guide detailed design and implementation of the Masterplan in the future.

Both the Materials Palette and Planting Palette build on existing strengths. Neither palette provides an exhaustive list, but instead should be used as a starting point.

Both should be read in conjunction with other relevant documentation such as the Hume City Council Recommended Species List.



EXISTING MATERIALS & FINISHES

Vision

Existing materials, finishes, textures, surfaces and colours provide a starting point to build upon, and a way of incorporating the best the parkland currently offers.

Pavements and Surfaces

- 1. Artwork on court surface at Seabrook Reserve: opportunity to continue the involvement of local artists in creating locally responsive artworks on pavements and other surfaces throughout the parklands.
- 2. Carpark surfaces are hot and not used at all times: opportunity to consider temporary treatments (e.g. painting) to allow for other recreational uses such as half courts.
- 3. Concrete pavements: opportunity to upgrade with new or temporary (painted) surfaces to tie in with parklands.
- 4. Breaking up the pavement surface into smaller squares reduces the overall scale, bringing it down to a more personal scale: opportunity to continue to use pavement treatments to provide spaces that feel comfortable for large and small group, and individuals.

Furniture

- 5 & 6. Existing furniture is robust and durable.
- 7. New picnic settings and BBQs at Seabrook Reserve are also durable: opportunity to build on this new evolution of furniture, with clean lines, simple shapes and forms, and a greater range of accessible options, allowing people of different ages and abilities to enjoy the facilities.
- 8. Existing fences and balustrades range from chainlink to custom design at key locations like the old rail spur near Seabrook reserve.

Structures

- 9. Basalt retaining wall at Hepburn Street is beautifully constructed and its generosity suits the scale of the parklands: opportunity to use basalt as a key landscape element through the parklands.
- 10. Existing (unused) toilet block at Will Will Rook is solidly built: opportunity to consider adaptive reuse of existing building and materials.
- 11. The new shelter structure at Seabrook provides shade and is a strong landmark.
- 12. Existing footbridges vary in style and not all allow for Shared Use: opportunity to upgrade over time (from repainting to replacement) in line with other improvements.

Signage & Wayfinding

- 13-15. Existing signage varies in style: opportunity to rationalise over time, with consistent graphics and languages.
- 16. New information signage near Seabrook is more contemporary in design.

Play & Discovery

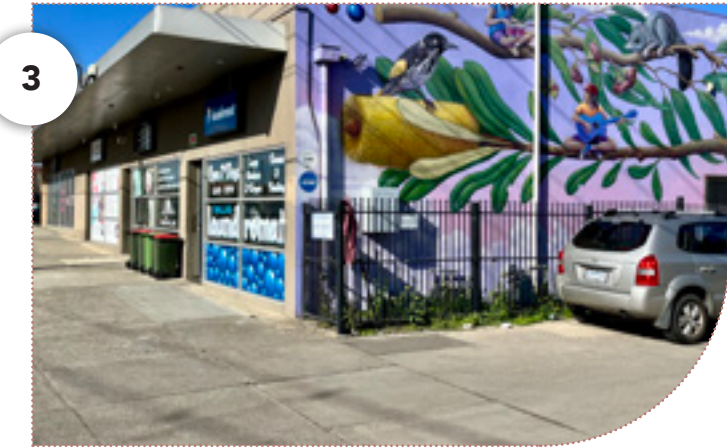
- 17. Play equipment at Laura Douglas is small and dated, although well used by families attending soccer training.
- 19 & 20. District level play spaces at Seabrook and Jack Roper are extremely popular, and offer different activities, providing play opportunities for children of different ages and abilities: opportunity for new play at Laura Douglas to complement.
- 21. Existing fields are well used.

Waterway

- 21 and 22. Existing concrete is generally in good condition: opportunity to salvage and reuse or keep in place and plant in the joins (subject to flow requirements).
- 23. Basalt boulders in the creek near Will Will Rook (and elsewhere): opportunity to use a consistent, local material throughout, where required as part of naturalisation.
- 24. Investigate rock-filled gabions at Army Camp basin: opportunity to consider the use of gabions elsewhere.

The following pages show how this approach could be varied to suit the different needs of two parts of Merlynston Creek Parklands: Laura Douglas Reserve, and Hepburn Street Reserve.

PAVEMENTS



FURNITURE



STRUCTURES



SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING



PLAY & DISCOVERY



WATERWAY



PROPOSED MATERIALS & FINISHES

Vision

“Across the full extent of Merlynston Creek Parklands, materials and finishes, colours and patterns draw from the rich cultural diversity of the community, and the natural qualities of the creek. This approach allows different parts of the park to have their own identity whilst still feeling connected to the rest of the corridor.

The diversity of play and recreation experiences is supported by inclusive furniture and play spaces, allowing people of different ages and abilities to visit and enjoy the parklands.

Pavements and Surfaces

1 & 2. Tones and patterns reflect traditions of rug-making and textiles in cultural background of many locals and visitors. Colours and patterns to reflect cultural diversity - temporary or painted options could be reapplied for different festivals, events or cultural celebrations.

3. Painted carpark surfaces allow for other recreational uses.

4. Stone reflects local geology and is a hard wearing surface.

Furniture

5. Robust furniture is resilient and provides creekside durability. Custom-designed furniture can be considered for District level parks, to support their role as important recreation destinations.

6. Loungers for relaxing - can be installed in smaller groupings under shade trees and along the creek.

7. Furniture should enable large family gatherings to occur in comfort, and support the needs of people of different ages and abilities.

8. Multifunctional furniture allows for different uses, including sitting, lounging, and dining, and for visitors to use the park in small or larger groups.

Structures

9. A bridge across the creek can become a landmark.

10 & 11. Robust and colourful structures to reflect a sense of play, joy, and celebration.

12. Integrated multifunctional furniture / structures allow for a variety of uses from dining and sitting, to play, performances and events

Signage & Wayfinding

13. Parks totem signage in accordance with the Hume Signage Style Guide.

14. Nature reserve interpretive signage in accordance with the Hume Signage Style Guide.

15 & 16. Custom interpretive signage with a mixture of languages, words and diagrams, or used to celebrate important plants and animals.

Play & Discovery

17 & 18. Challenging adventure structures in materials that reflect the creek and its importance.

19. Diverse skills and activities support the needs of children of different ages and abilities.

20. Different colours, textures, scents and sounds support the physical, social and mental wellbeing of children of different ages, needs and abilities.

Waterway

21 and 22. Opportunities for boulder crossing points for exploration, where the creek widens.

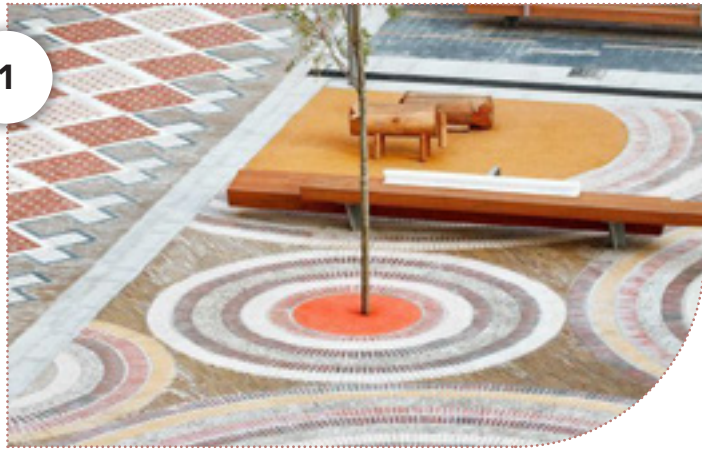
23. Reuse of concrete removed and salvaged from the drain.

24. Using materials and plants to make places for play and sitting that are away from the creek but feel like part of the waterway.

The following pages show how this approach could be varied to suit the different needs of two parts of Merlynston Creek Parklands: Laura Douglas Reserve, and Hepburn Street Reserve.

PAVEMENTS

1



2



3



4



FURNITURE

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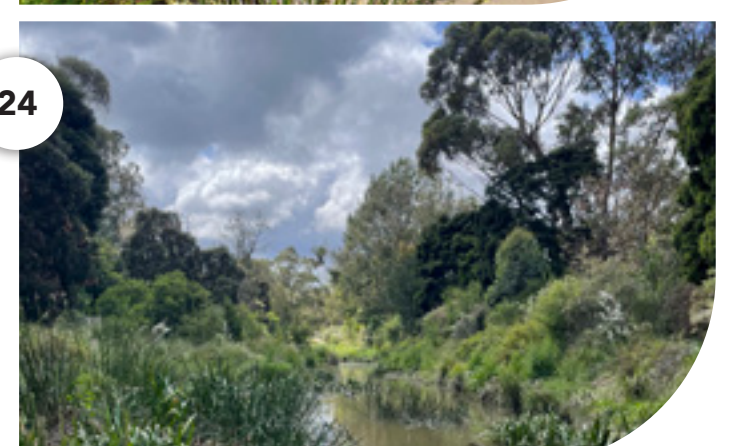
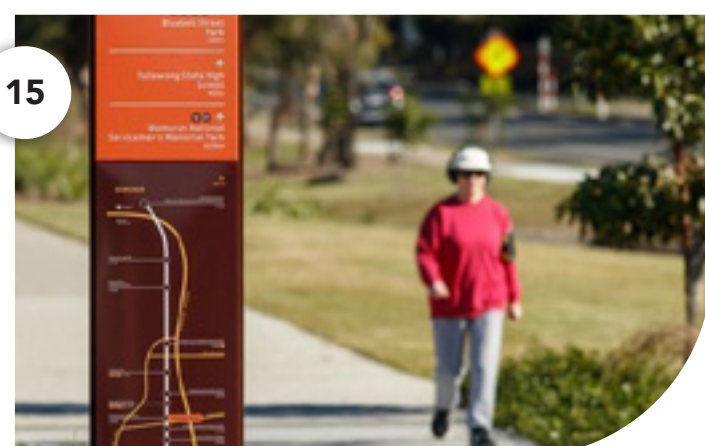
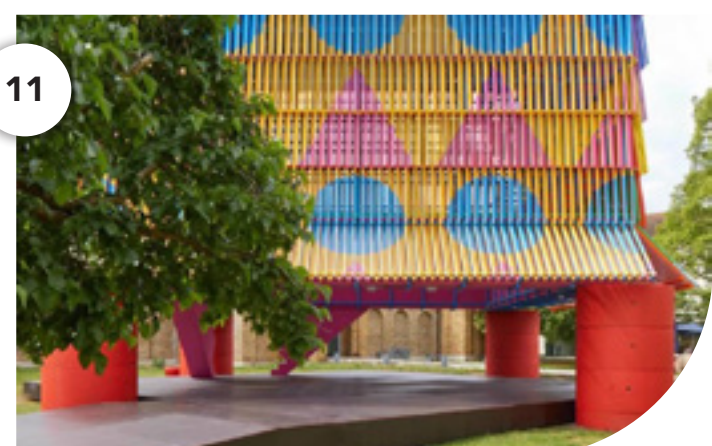


STRUCTURES

SIGNAGE

PLAY & DISCOVERY

WATERWAY



PROPOSED: LAURA DOUGLAS RESERVE

Vision

Materials and finishes, colours and patterns draw from the rich cultural diversity of the community, and the natural qualities of the creek. Different types of furniture and fixtures cater to visitors of different ages and abilities, as well as large and small gatherings - appropriate for this District park.

Pavements and Surfaces

- 1. Tones and patterns reflect traditions of rug-making and textiles in cultural background of many locals and visitors.
- 2. Colours and patterns to reflect cultural diversity - temporary or painted options could be reapplied for different festivals, events or cultural celebrations.
- 3. Stone reflects local geology and is a hard wearing surface.
- 4. Informal paths allow exploration and rainwater to soak into the soil and irrigate plants along the creek.

Furniture

- 5. Robust custom furniture is resilient and provides creekside durability. Custom-designed furniture can be considered for District level parks to support their role as important recreation destinations, while accommodating the needs of people of different ages and abilities.
- 6. Loungers for relaxing - can be installed in smaller groupings under shade trees and along the creek.
- 7. Integrated multifunctional furniture / structures allow for a variety of uses from dining and sitting, to play, performances and events.
- 8. Opportunities for flexible sitting, dining, gathering, that can be shared .

Structures

- 9. A bridge across the creek can become a landmark.
- 10 & 11. Robust and colourful structures to reflect a sense of play, joy, and celebration.
- 12. One key part of the structure can be the hero, telling the story of the community.

Signage & Wayfinding

- 13. Parks totem signage in accordance with the Hume Signage Style Guide.
- 14. Interpretive signage in accordance with the Hume Signage Style Guide, to inform the community of its surroundings, along with any rules and regulations that may apply.
- 15 & 16. Custom interpretive signage with a mixture of languages, words and diagrams, or used to celebrate important plants and animals.

Play & Discovery

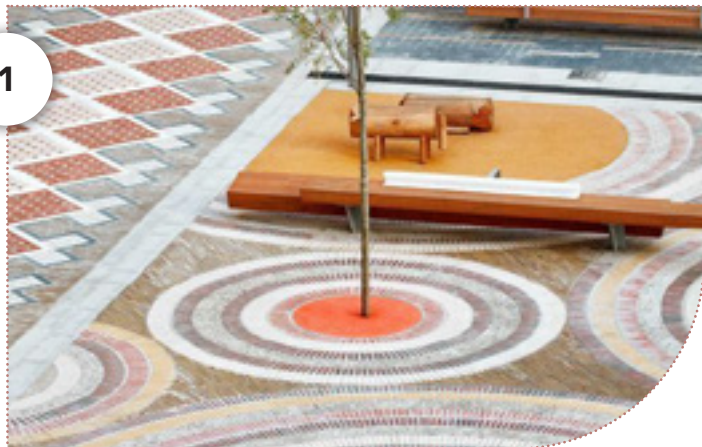
- 17 & 18. Challenging adventure structures in materials that reflect the creek and its importance.
- 19. Diverse skills and activities support the needs of children of different ages and abilities.
- 20. Play is integrated with existing trees and new planting, and there are places for parents and carers close by.

Waterway

- 21 and 22. Opportunities for boulder crossing points for exploration, where the creek widens.
- 23. Reuse of concrete removed and salvaged from the drain.
- 24. Using materials and plants to make places for play and sitting that are away from the creek but feel like part of the waterway.

PAVEMENTS

1



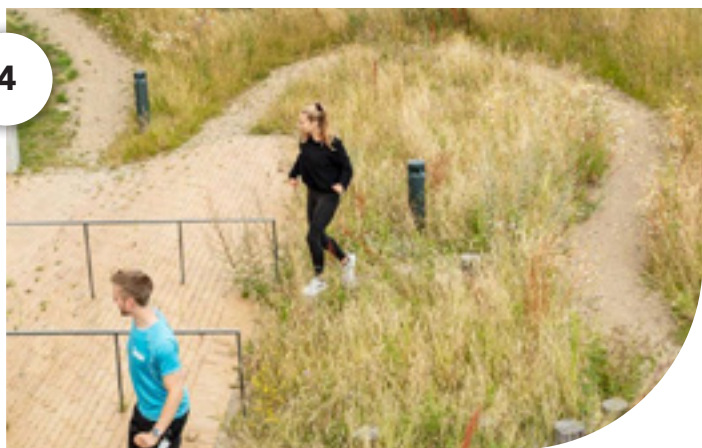
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4



FURNITURE

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STRUCTURES

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12



SIGNAGE

13



14



15



16



PLAY & DISCOVERY

17



18



19



20



WATERWAY

21



22



23



24



PROPOSED: HEPBURN STREET RESERVE

Vision

“Nature is the focus, with simple pavements and furniture enabling people to enjoy the creek, the sensory planting, open lawn and sky, and community gathering.

Pavements and Surfaces

- 1. Colours and patterns to reflect cultural diversity - temporary or painted options could be reapplied for different festivals, events or cultural celebrations.
- 2. Sawcutting into edges of existing pavements to allow planting and encourage rainwater to soak into the soil and irrigate plants.
- 3. Painted surface to carpark to allow for other uses.

Furniture

- 4 & 5. Different types of ‘off-the-shelf’ furniture, including loungers for relaxing, allow for people of different ages and abilities to enjoy the park in comfort, by themselves or with others.
- 6. Groups of individual seats close to the Tennis Hall so visitors using the hall can enjoy the park.

Structures

- 7. Informal canopy outside the Tennis Hall to provide an outdoor sitting space.
- 8. Robust structures to reflect a sense of play, joy, and celebration, while providing a space for relaxation and gathering.

Signage & Wayfinding

- 10. Parks totem signage in accordance with the Hume Signage Style Guide.
- 11. Interpretive signage in accordance with the Hume Signage Style Guide, to inform the community of its surroundings, along with any rules and regulations that may apply.
- 12. Custom interpretive signage with a mixture of languages, words and diagrams, or used to celebrate important plants and animals.

Play & Discovery

- 13 & 14. Different colours, textures, scents and sounds.
- 15. Raised planters could be used for community gardens. Sensory plants such as culinary herbs could be grown and link the community and sensory gardens.

Waterway

- 16 & 17. Opportunities for boulder crossing points for exploration, where the creek widens.
- 18. Using materials and plants to make places for play and sitting that are away from the creek but feel like part of the waterway.

PAVEMENTS

1



2



3



FURNITURE

4



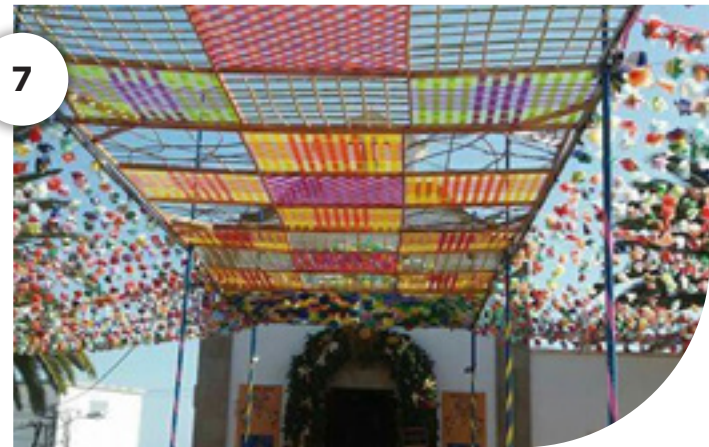
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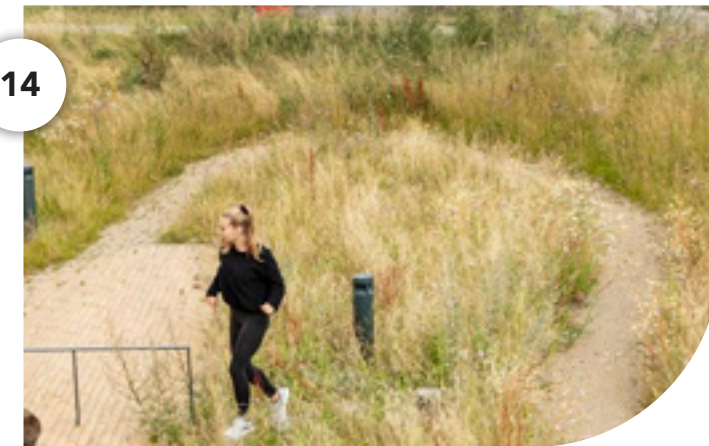
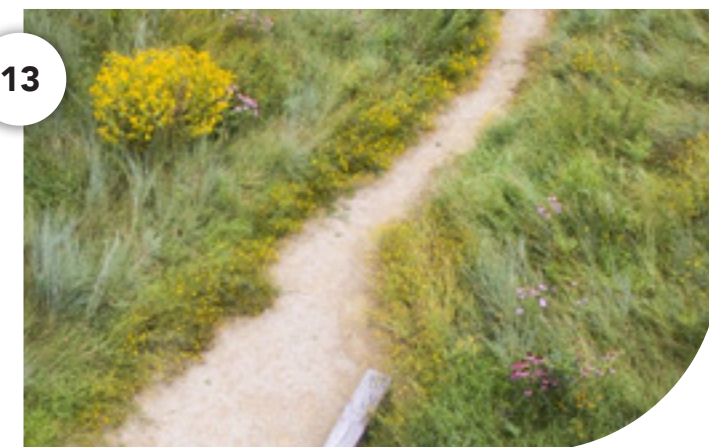
STRUCTURES



SIGNAGE



PLAY & DISCOVERY



WATERWAY



BIORETENTION & WETLANDS

Role in Merlynston Creek Parklands

These plants may be used within naturalised areas of Merlynston Creek, or within water quality treatment elements such as bioretention basins, ephemeral or permanent wetlands, or lake edges.

Note: this is not an exhaustive list of possible species, but a high-level guideline to indicate the types of plant forms and habits.

Indicative Species

- 1. *Baumea articulata* Jointed Twig-rush
- 2. *Bolboschoenus cadlwellii* Salt Club-sedge
- 3. *Persicaria decipens* Slender Knotweed
- 4. *Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani* River Club Rush
- 5. *Eleocharis spaelata* Tall Spike-rush
- 6. *Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani* River Club Rush.
- 7. *Triglochin procera* Water Ribbons.
- 8. *Carex appressa* Tall Sedge
- 9. *Ficinia nodosa* Knobby Club Rush
- 10. *Juncus kraussii* Sea Rush
- 11. *Ranunculus inundatus* River Buttercup

AQUATIC



DEEP MARSH



EPHEMERAL WETLANDS



SOCIAL SPACES

Role in Merlynston Creek Parklands

These tree and understorey plants may be used within the social and recreation areas of the park, to provide different qualities of shade, texture, foliage, and flowers in addition to creek side vegetation.

There is a focus on native species and the planting palette includes species that encourages birds and insect pollinators.

Note: this is not an exhaustive list of possible species, but a high-level guideline to indicate the types of plant forms and habits.

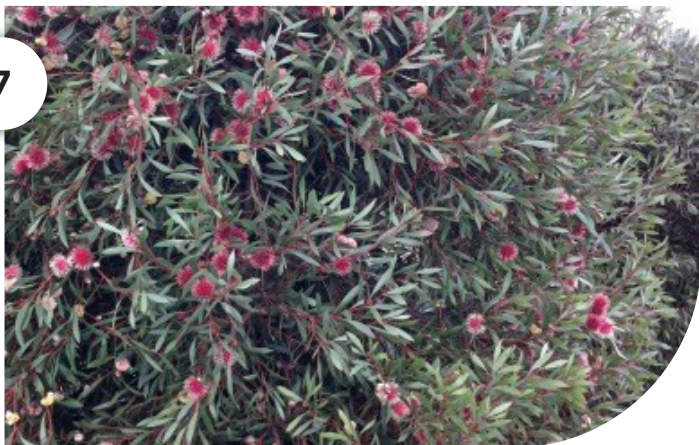
Indicative Species

1. *Acacia pendula* Weeping Myall
2. *Agonis flexuosa* Willow Myrtle
3. *Angophora hispida* Dwarf Apple Myrtle
4. *Callistemon viminalis* Weeping Bottlebrush
5. *Corymbia citriodora* 'Dwarf Pink' Dwarf Lemon-scented Gum
6. *Corymbia maculata* Spotted Gum
7. *Hakea laurina* Pincushion Hakea
8. *Lomandra longifolia* Mat Rush
9. *Enchylaena tomentosa* Ruby Salt Bush
10. *Westringia* 'Low Horizon' Coastal Rosemary

NATIVE TREES



NATIVE TREES



GROUND LAYER



EVC REVEGETATION

Creekline Grassy Woodland EVC 68

Description

Prior to settlement, waterways in this landscape are presumed to have been intermittent linear wetlands or linked chain of ponds. The surrounding woodland was made up mainly of grasses and sedges, with occasional scattered shrubs. Tree canopy cover, dominated by Eucalypts, made up 15% of the landscape.

Role in Merlynston Creek Parklands

Fragments of this EVC are common throughout the study area, although some areas are higher quality. Species from this EVC should be planted to bolster species diversity in exiting patches and to provide a continuous connected waterway.

Note: this is not an exhaustive list of possible species, but a high-level guideline to indicate the major components of the plant community.

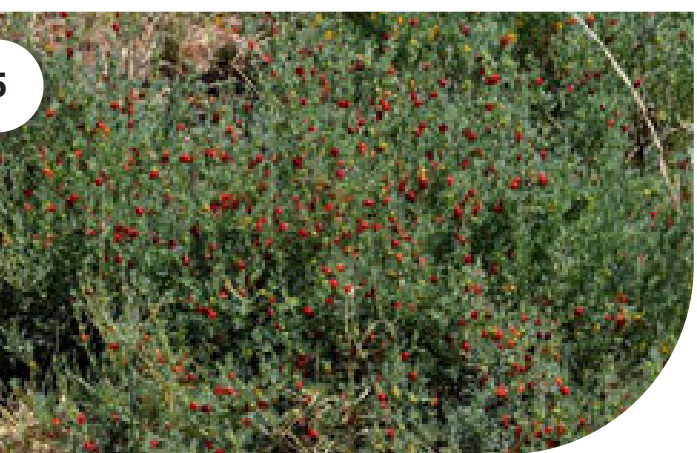
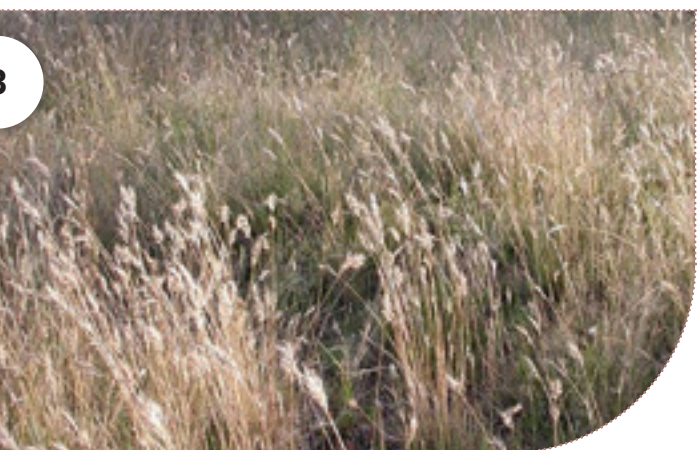
Indicative Species

- 1. *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* River Red-gum
- 2. *Acacia melanoxylon* Blackwood
- 3. *Austrodanthonia caespitosa* Common Wallaby Grass
- 4. *Austrostipa bigeniculata* Kneed Spear-grass
- 5. *Enchylaena tomentosa* var. *tomentosa* Ruby Saltbush
- 6. *Microlaena stipoides* var. *stipoides* Weeping Grass.
- 7. *Dianella revoluta* Flax Lily
- 8. *Poa labillardieri* Common Tussock-grass

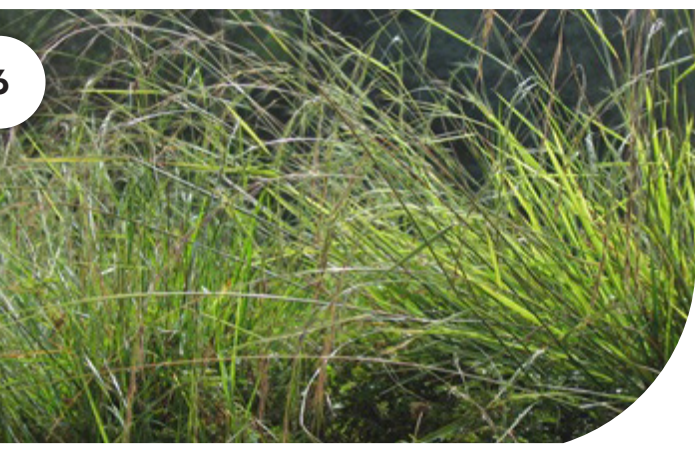
TREES & SHRUBS



UNDERSTOREY



EPHEMERAL WETLANDS



EVC REVEGETATION

Plains Grassy Woodland EVC 55_61

Description

This plant community is an open eucalypt woodland with tress growing to 15m tall, sparse shrubs, and a species-rich grassy and herbaceous ground layer.

Role in Merlynston Creek Parklands

Fragments of this EVC are scattered throughout the study area, although most patches appear to contain supplementary plantings of native species. Species from this EVC should be planted to bolster species diversity in exiting patches and to extend grassy woodland out beyond the riparian zone of the creek.

This EVC currently occurs in locations identified as potential Golden Sun Moth habitat. Additional plantings may boost habitat for this species.

Note: this is not an exhaustive list of possible species, but a high-level guideline to indicate the major components of the plant community.

Indicative Species

- 1. *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* River Red-gum
- 2. *Acacia pycnantha* Golden Wattle
- 3. *Pimelia humilis* Common Rice-flower
- 4. *Austrodanthonia setacea* Bristly Wallaby Grass
- 5. *Austrostipa bigeniculata* Knead Spear-grass
- 6. *Dichondra repens* Kidney-weed
- 7. *Gonocarpis tetragynus* Common Raspwort
- 8. *Dianella revoluta* Flax Lily
- 9. *Microlaena stipoides* var. *stipoides* Weeping Grass
- 10. *Themeda triandra* Kangaroo Grass

TREES

1



2



UNDERSTOREY

3



4



5



6



UNDERSTOREY

7



8



9



10



9.0

Implementation

Implementation Schedule

All implementation actions and opportunities are set out in Section 7 Detailed Plans.

This is a strategic list of parkland improvement opportunities that will be implemented, wherever feasible. Experience has shown that works along waterways are subject to multiple challenges including topographical, geological, ecological, cultural and land contamination, waterway health. Initial planning for all activities will enable costs and timelines to be better resolved prior to seeking final approval for their implementation.

Council will fund works on their land via their new capital works budget bids, in addition to ongoing budgets for maintenance of landscapes, playspace renewals, footpath, strategic planning and advocacy. Larger projects will be dependent on external funding from grants, partnerships, developer negotiations, open space contributions, and stormwater offset contributions.

The scheduling prioritisation of actions is provided in the Detailed Plans and is based on the following timelines:

- » Short Term (S) 1—5 years
- » Medium Term (M) 6—10 years
- » Long Term (L) 11—20 years
- » Ongoing (O)

Lead Initiatives

The lead initiatives to implement across the whole Parklands are:

- **Upgrade of Laura Douglas Reserve** including new district playspace, event area, walking loops and footbridge and integrated with creek naturalisation opportunities. This will also be supported by the sportsfield and pavilion upgrades. Given the scale of community and environment benefit of these initiatives, grants will be sought for this to be delivered as a showcase upgrade. Council will undertake playspace, signage, furniture and pavement works within its annual Capital Works budget program.
- **Upgrade of Dallas Army Camp Basin** at Dallas Retarding Basin will be funded by Melbourne Water.
- **Habitat enhancements** will be incorporated into Council parkland planting and maintenance programs and subject to annual budget processes.
- Implementation of **Shared Use Trail** along the length of the parklands. This will be progressively undertaken in stages with an initial focus on Berger to Benalla St and subject to Council's annual budget processes and grant opportunities. The installation of pedestrian lights at Camp Road will be subject to Council's annual budget processes.
- **Acquisition of land** to create a continuous parkland and fill critical gaps will be negotiated and subject to Council’s annual capital works prioritising processes and draw primarily upon its open space contributions and grant/partner opportunities. The priority gap to fill is in the central parklands.

Funding and delivery of the potential proposed new Maygar Boulevard bridge crossing, and future pavilion and building upgrades sit outside of the Merlynston Creek Parklands program.

All other actions listed in the Masterplan set out Council priorities to guide future capital works budgets as they arise. The actions also give clear direction to guide unplanned requests, for example, if an adjacent landowner wants to develop in will need to draw on the guidance of this Masterplan in its considerations.

Parkland Strategies	HCC Cost (if all projects feasible) Grants, Partnerships, Negotiations	Actions
WURUNDJERI WOI-WURRUNG CULTURAL VALUES		
Reflect Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and culture in the parklands through design, signage, artwork, naming and Care for Country as guided by the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Merlynston Creek Cultural Values Assessment (CVA) May 2025	Approx. \$500,000 over 15-20 years.	1-C1, 2-C1, 3-C1, 4-C1, 5-C1, 6-C1 Other CVA initiatives embedded in actions below
ECOLOGICAL VALUES		
Incrementally expand ecological habitat enhancement works along Merlynston Creek.	Between \$1m and \$1.6m over 15-20 years.	1: E1, E2, E3 2: E1, E2, E3 3: E1, E2, E3, E4 4: E1, E2, E3, E4 5: E1, E2, E3, E4, E4 6: E1, E2, E3
WATERWAY VALUES		
Deliver additional waterway enhancements including creek naturalisation, stormwater harvesting, planning controls, and interpretive signage.	Between \$5m and \$6.5m over 15-20 years. Seek additional \$12-22m grant and partnerships for naturalisation works.	1: W1 2: W1, W2, W3, W4 3: W1 ,W2, W3, W4 4: W1, W2, W3 5: W1. W2 6: W1, W2, W3
HERITAGE VALUES		
Strengthen heritage and multicultural features in landscape and signage to reflect the local history and community.	Between \$0.5m and \$0.8m over 15-20 years. Seek additional \$300-500,000 grant for LiDAR assessment.	2: H1, H2, H3 3: H1 4: H1 5: H1, H2 6: H1,H2
ACCESS AND CONNECTION VALUES		
Deliver a continuous all-abilities walking and cycling trail along the creek including footbridges, safer road crossings, connections to public transport, gateways and wayfinding signage. Provide smaller walking loops with shade and seating.	Between \$5m and \$7.5m over 15-20 years. Plus \$3m-\$6m for priority land purchase. Seek additional \$2m-\$3.8m grant and partnerships for additional connections.	2: A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8 3: A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8, A9 4: A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8 5: A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6 6: A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6
COMMUNITY RECREATION VALUES		
Link the three major parks with a continuous nature corridor with welcoming viewing, walking, seating and meeting areas. Deliver district level upgrade to Laura Douglas Reserve including event space, playspace and new junior sportsfield.	Between \$7.5m and \$10.5m over 15-20 years. Seek additional \$7-\$12m grant and partnerships for Laura Douglas event space and sportsfield reconfiguration.	2: R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7, R8, R9, R10 3: R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7, R8, R9, R10 4: R1, R2 5: R1, R2, R3, R4, R5 6: R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6





Part 3 - Appendix



Appendix 1 - Laura Douglas Reserve Comparison



Laura Douglas Reserve - Current Condition



Laura Douglas Reserve - Proposed Condition

11.0

Appendix 2 - Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Values Assessment Actions

The Merlynston Creek Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Values Assessment (CVA) May 2026 set out the values and recommendation of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders. These have been embedded into the Merlynston Creek Parklands Masterplan. Below is a list of all the CVA actions and readers are guided to the CVA Overview Document which sets these actions within the broader cultural context of the creek.

RECOMMENDATION 1:	
Revitalise Country to reflect the landscape prior to colonisation as much as possible and where appropriate	
Action No.	Action Description
1.1	Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung input and decision-making regarding the land and water of Merlynston Creek must be sought and prioritised. The Wurundjeri Corporation's Narrap Unit (Water Program and Narrap Rangers) should be offered first preference in codesigning and leading water, natural resource management activities and remediation works; and given the opportunity for ongoing involvement in decision making around the future management of Merlynston Creek.
1.2	Ecological rehabilitation: A priority for Elders is the rehabilitation of the ecological values along Merlynston Creek and surrounding landscapes to a level of a typically healthy waterway.
1.3	Removal of invasive species along Merlynston Creek, using the least harmful methods available.
1.4	Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung input and decision-making regarding the land and water of Merlynston Creek must be sought and prioritised. The Wurundjeri Corporation's Narrap Unit (Water Program and Narrap Rangers) should be offered first preference in codesigning and leading water, natural resource management activities and remediation works; and given the opportunity for ongoing involvement in decision making around the future management of Merlynston Creek.
1.5	Protect areas of remnant vegetation along Merlynston Creek. This includes appropriate protection of remnant vegetation, including areas at Will Will Rook Cemetery. Seed collection could be used to increase native populations.
1.6	Planting of appropriate native species along creekline, which belong to the area. Wurundjeri Corporation's Narrap Unit should be provided the opportunity to collaborate in the identification of appropriate plants.
1.7	Protect fauna species native to habitats along Merlynston Creek. This should include protection of endangered fauna and repopulation of native fauna species, including aquatic fauna. This should also include the protection of spiritual animals associated with Merlynston Creek. Protection of habitats and wildlife corridors should be supplemented with modern habitat creation and installation.
1.8	Work with Wurundjeri Corporation to develop interpretive signage with information regarding native fauna species of relevance. This could include injured wildlife hotline numbers for members of the public to contact.
1.9	Further investigations that assist in understanding how the landscape has changed to allow Elders to provide a more comprehensive account of cultural values for Merlynston Creek relating to the rehabilitation of Country and enhanced biodiversity. This could include the inspection of core samples from identified locations along Merlynston Creek. Engagement with the Narrap Unit at Wurundjeri Corporation is essential to this action.

RECOMMENDATION 2:	
Enhanced protection of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country from encroaching development	
Action No.	Action Description
2.1	Project partners should prioritise low impact infrastructure and consider impacts of all development associated with Merlynston Creek on the health of the waterway and preservation of native flora; fauna and their habitats. This includes works associated with the Merlynston Creek Parklands. The natural and aesthetic attributes of Merlynston Creek and the surrounding landscape should be maintained where possible. This involves: a) Ensuring the proposed potential road in Dallas is designed with minimal impact on the health of Merlynston Creek, including the waterway, native flora, fauna and habitats. b) Ensuring the potential future train line extension from Upfield to Roxburgh Park is designed with minimal impact on the health of Merlynston Creek and the connected Cultural Landscape. This includes protecting existing and creating habitat corridors to support connectivity for wildlife, including the protection of old gum trees in this area as much as possible. Engagement with Wurundjeri Corporation is essential to this action. This should include involvement in decision making regarding such future developments from the early planning stage and throughout the development project.
2.2	Project partners should work with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People to improve the health of waterways by considering the broader interconnected landscape. This includes working with Wurundjeri Corporation to ensure future developments prioritise healthy waterways.
2.3	Hume City Council, Merri-bek City Council and Melbourne Water must work to minimise the current stormwater flows that Merlynston Creek receive as surface run-off. This is vital in moving towards a system that allows water to support the land, sky and beings (both above and below ground), as the water makes its way more naturally down Merlynston Creek.
2.4	Plans for increased population growth, including around Broadmeadows, must aim to reduce stormwater that flows from roofs, footpaths and roads which ultimately feed into Merlynston Creek. Engagement with the Water Program at Wurundjeri Corporation is essential to this action.

RECOMMENDATION 3:	
Protect and enhance Merlynston Creek and connected waterscapes	
Action No.	Action Description
3.1	Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung input and decision-making regarding the land and water of Merlynston Creek must be sought and prioritised. The Wurundjeri Corporation Narrap Unit (Water Program and Narrap Rangers) should be offered first preference in codesigning and leading water, natural resource management activities and remediation works; and given the opportunity for ongoing involvement in decision making around the future management of this waterway.
3.2	Re-naturalisation of Merlynston Creek is a priority for Elders. This includes the removal of concrete channelling in all instances where environmentally safe to do so. This also includes the improvement of water quality; the removal of weeds and invasive species; preservation of any native plants; and the re-introduction of native plants that will help make Country and Water healthy.
3.3	Rehabilitation of Merlynston creekline and, where possible, associated waterways and wetlands to support the retardation and treatment of surface water flows. This involves improving the ecological health, environmental flows, Cultural flows, and the persistence of natural cycles of flooding, infiltration, and evaporation for Merlynston Creek and associated waterways and wetlands.
3.4	Project partners must ensure water testing is conducted to establish base levels of water quality, and efforts must be made to improve these levels on an ongoing basis. Wurundjeri Corporation's Water Program should be given first right of refusal to conduct this water testing, or to direct specifications of testing by a third party.

RECOMMENDATION 4:	
Enhanced protection of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural heritage	
Action No.	Action Description
4.1	Project partners must engage with the Wurundjeri Corporation Cultural Heritage Unit regarding the protection of tangible cultural heritage in accordance with the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (Victoria) and its regulations. Project partners are encouraged to consider voluntary Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMPs) and permits where mandatory CHMPs and permits may not be triggered in accordance with the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (Victoria) Sections 45 and 46.
4.2	Protect Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural values holistically. Cultural values are to be considered in relation to their tangible (physical) and intangible (non-physical) attributes. For example, this may include artefacts, cultural features, flora, fauna, waterways and waterbodies, landforms, stories, associations, practices, beliefs, traditions, and Cultural Landscapes.
4.3	Areas of important cultural heritage landscapes identified from the Wurundjeri Strategic Aboriginal Heritage Assessment (SAHA) and depicted through the First Peoples – State Relations’ mapping platform for strategic planning, are to be treated as areas of cultural heritage sensitivity.
4.4	Project partners should encourage developers operating within their jurisdictions to design their activities to avoid harm to important cultural heritage landscapes identified from the Wurundjeri Strategic Aboriginal Heritage Assessment (SAHA) depicted through the First Peoples – State Relations’ mapping platform for strategic planning. Where areas of important cultural heritage landscapes identified from SAHA are present and CHMPs or CHPs are not mandatory, voluntary CHMPs (for high-impact activities) or CHPs (for low-impact activities) should be sought. Project partners should lead by example in development activities they are managing.
4.5	Further investigations would allow Elders to provide a more comprehensive account of cultural values for Merlynston Creek relating to the enhanced protection of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage. This involves: a) Archaeological surveys along the creek corridor b) A survey of the Merlynston Creek CVA project area for ground truthing with Cultural Heritage Officers to inspect potential stony rises. Engagement with the Cultural Heritage Unit at Wurundjeri Corporation is essential to this action.

RECOMMENDATION 5:	
Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People and Culture is visible on Country	
Action No.	Action Description
5.1	Co-develop interpretive signage with Wurundjeri Corporation at significant places along the creek sharing Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural knowledge and history related to Merlynston Creek. Interpretive signage could include Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural knowledge and history, and information on Ancestors and resource use, as advised and deemed appropriate by Elders. Places identified by Elders include: a) The original confluence of Merlynston Creek with Merri Creek b) Waterhole in Northern Memorial Park
5.2	Acknowledgement of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People as the Traditional Owners of Country must be clear along the parkland.
5.3	The project team is encouraged to engage with Wurundjeri Corporation’s Education Unit to facilitate the re-naming of Merlynston Creek using Woi-wurrung language
5.4	Use Woi-wurrung language where possible with consultation with the Wurundjeri Corporation’s Education Unit. Woi-wurrung language should be used on signage (with English translation where necessary) and for naming natural features, surrounding areas, flora and fauna, and significant sites along Merlynston Creek.
5.5	Use Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung art and design where possible. It is recommended that Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung artwork and cultural design elements are reflected in any future buildings, works and infrastructure design along Merlynston Creek. This includes Hume City Council’s development of Merlynston Creek Parkland. Wurundjeri Corporation should direct these usages. Where possible incorporate Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung artwork and cultural design elements into the design phase of the project, co-developed with Wurundjeri Corporation and engaging with Elders and Wurundjeri Corporation approved artists.

RECOMMENDATION 5 (cont.):	
Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People and Culture is visible on Country	
5.5	Promote and Respect Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People’s right to practise Culture on Country. The project team is encouraged to engage with Wurundjeri Corporation and to facilitate opportunities for cultural practice, particularly throughout the Merlynston Creek Parklands project, and beyond. This includes Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremonies. It is very important to Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People that visitors are welcomed onto their Country in this way. It is a cultural tradition that has been practised on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country for tens of thousands of years and beyond.

RECOMMENDATION 6:	
Support Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People in continuing to connect with their Cultural Landscape	
Action No.	Action Description
6.1	Continue engagement with Wurundjeri Corporation Research Unit to undertake further cultural values work on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country. Elders have recommended that Hume City Council, Merri-bek City Council, and Melbourne Water strive to engage in cultural values works for any projects that they are leading on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country at the project inception stage.
6.2	Ensure Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People have ongoing access to Country along Merlynston Creek and its resources to engage in cultural practices, as guided by the Wurundjeri Corporation.

RECOMMENDATION 7:	
Support Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People in Truth-telling and healing processes	
Action No.	Action Description
7.1	Co-develop interpretive signage with Wurundjeri Corporation at appropriate places along Merlynston Creek to enable Truth-telling. This includes signage at an appropriate and respectful location at Fawkner Memorial Park to provide a Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung perspective on Batman’s so called ‘Treaty’.

RECOMMENDATION 8:	
Genuine and meaningful engagement with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People	
Action No.	Action Description
8.1	Engagement with Wurundjeri Corporation to facilitate and support equal partnerships and ensure Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People have a real voice in informed decision-making regarding their Country. Hume City Council, Merri-bek City Council and Melbourne Water should lead by example by creating strong and meaningful partnerships and working relationships with Wurundjeri Corporation.
8.2	Project partners should consider Wurundjeri Corporation’s Whole of Country Plan in future planning and decision making on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country.
8.3	Provide project updates to Wurundjeri Corporation. Project partners must provide updates regarding this project; and the outcomes and evaluation of recommendations provided in this report to Wurundjeri Corporation Elders and community members. Updates should be delivered through engagement with the Policy and Partnerships Unit at Wurundjeri Corporation.
8.4	Hume City Council, Merri-bek City Council and Melbourne Water should increase compliance of stakeholders operating within their jurisdiction in policies and guidelines related to caring for Country, where possible.

12.0

References

Footnotes

- 1. Notes in italics are direct quotes from the *Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Statement for Draft Hume Open Space Strategy* 23 August 2023, as included in the Hume City Council Open Space Strategy 2025.
- 2. Website of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation. wurundjeri.com.au
- 3. Hume City Council Housing Diversity Strategy June 2020 (updated August 2023).
- 4. Hume City Council 2021 Census Social Profile Laura Douglas Reserve – 15 min walk.
- 5. Alluvium, Merlynston Creek Integrated Water Management Opportunities Plan. August 2021.
- 6. Hume City Council website, Climate and Environment, Tree Canopy Cover.
- 7. Ecological assessment of the Merlynston Creek area between Barry Road and the Western Ring Road. 2025. Ecology Australia.
- 8. Merlynston Creek Integrated Water Management Opportunities Plan. 2022. TBLD/Alluvium Consulting.
- 9. CHMP 18445: Brief Summary of Activity Area, Proposed Activity and Desktop Assessment. Christine Williamson Heritage Consultants.
- 10. Army Camp Retarding Basing Activation Concept Report. 2023. Alluvium Consulting
- 11. Army Camp Retarding Basin Geotechnical and Contaminated Land Assessment. 2023. Tonkin and Taylor.
- 12. Merlynston Creek Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Values Assessment Overview document, 2026

Referenced Hume City Council Policies

- Hume City Council Plan 2025-2029
- Hume City Council Open Space Strategy 2025. [Link](#).
- Hume City Council Community Infrastructure Plan
- Hume City Council Heat Health Plan 2020.
- Hume City Council Hume Bicycle Network Plan 2015. [Link](#).
- Hume City Council Species List 2025. [Link](#).
- Municipal Flood Emergency Plan for Merlynston Creek.
- Hume City Council Active Living Plan 2026
- Merlynston Creek - Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Values Assessment Overview document 2026



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