

Minutes

Title:	Meeting 7 – 2021 Koo Wee Rup Longwarry Flood Protection District Advisory Committee		
Meeting date:	Thursday, 25 February 2021		
Meeting time:	12.45 for 1.00pm – 3.00pm		
Location:	Zoom meeting		
Chairperson:	Bruce Turner		
Attendees:	Bruce Turner, Con Raffa, Susan Anderson, Robert Mure, Kevin Alexander (CSC), Teena Mathew (BBSC), Sarah Eggleton (MW), Tom Le Cerf (MW), Adam Ryan (MW), Georgina Downey (MW), Stuart Cochrane (MW)		
Apologies:	John Hobson, Ian Anderson, Ray Brown, Jo Fontana, Frank Rovers		
Note taker:	Georgina Downey		
Agenda item	1. Welcome & apologies and items for General Business	Presenter	Bruce Turner
	Welcome & apologies and check for items of General Business Quick whip round to check in with everyone re their situation. Overall, people were remaining positive and coping despite some challenges. Adam Ryan introduced himself. Adam is replacing Cate as Waterways and Land Officer. Tom explained that his role has changed a little with him taking up Drainage Management role.		
Agenda item	2. Actions from previous meetings	Presenter	SE
Discussion	Action 4.1: Teena to provide a briefing on the drainage approvals at Longwarry Saleyards. Teena reported that Baw Baw Shire Council had issued a conditional permit that includes drainage and a wetland. The applicant is appealing some of the conditions of the permit to VCAT. The hearing is scheduled in August. CLOSED (but Committee is still interested in updates as they come to hand) Action 5.1: MW, Kevin A and Teena to collaborate on preparing a presentation and discussion on how planning process should work to address this issue with new developments, involving relevant experts, for the next meeting. OPEN Kevin said he had spoken to Cardinia’s Planning Manager who is responsible for managing development and he agreed to come to a meeting. Teena said someone from Baw Baw’s statutory planning team is also happy to attend and answer questions. Tom queried the area to be covered. It was agreed the focus should be on Officer (Pakenham East PSP) as this was within Cardinia Shire (not extending to Clyde as this was in Casey). However, this lead to Con querying whether the City of Casey should be included on the Committee because development in Casey is encroaching on and potentially affecting drainage in the Flood Protection District. Sue asked if it was possible to get a Strategic Planner from Cardinia to attend to discuss the overall strategy for the area. Kevin said the Manager that had agreed to attend was also responsible for strategic planning. New Action 7.1 Casey Council to be formally invited by MW to join the Committee.		

New Action 7.2 Bruce and Georgina to collaborate on collating questions/ issues raised at previous meetings on the topic of planning/ development pressures for circulation to Committee members for input. The resulting paper can then be provided to the planning officers to help them prepare to attend the next meeting.

Action 5.2 MW to take up **illegal camping** and recent fire on riverbanks with PV and/or DELWP as the land managers to implement some measure i.e. bollards to prevent access. Are causing some damage to the riverbank. Have been in contact with DELWP.

Sue reported there is still nothing preventing access and camping – a vehicle got stuck halfway up the bank recently. Tom indicated that there were proposed changes in management of Crown Land that would allow camping on Crown Land river frontages, but that did not necessarily mean that it was still not possible to prevent people from accessing due to safety issues – e.g fire, flooding and being washed away. Also damaging trees and vegetation. Sue believed the proposed changes were currently out for public consultation. **ONGOING**

Sue went on to say she was extremely grateful for the works that have been done by contractors WES. She said their communication and standard of work was exemplary. The machinery they use is great – especially the spider excavator. The willows and elms are all gone. The only downside is that the landowner on the opposite bank has not been keen to have works on their side - blackberry is not being removed in the belief that it is holding the bank together.

New action: 7.3 MW to circulate a link to the proposed new Guidelines for Camping on Crown Land.

Action 4.2 follow up: (re MW guidelines for new culverts) Formal update on the MW Crossing Guidelines to incorporate KWR requirements is to be applied for any new culverts but will be some time for the Policy to be finalised.

CLOSED

Sarah reported that MW is still working internally to develop the best way forward to get the policy changed to become upfront advice to landowners/ developers. The broad principle is that bridges are preferred for large drains over culverts that have a tendency to block and add to flooding issues. **OPEN**

Action 6.1: Tom to report on source of water flows at McCormack's Road. Tom said he has set up regular meetings with Drainage Development team to look at the hotspots to make sure that the expectations of the community are clearly understood **CLOSED**

Agenda item **3. Pricing submission feedback** GD/SE/TLC

Discussion Georgina and others reported that there will be no increase in rates until 2022 due to COVID and ERC response. MW flagged the desire to have a workshop with the Committee to work through the priorities for discretionary spending in the environmental and flooding packages, including defining the principles for identifying the priorities, e.g. cannot increase the capacity of the Cardinia Creek but can look at other smaller drains. Workshop to be scheduled for November/ December.

Agenda item **4. Works Update** SC/AR

Discussion **Capital works**

Southbank Rd works: Adam reported that willows and woody trees have been removed in large scale along the Bunyip. Remaining 20% to be removed in March 2021. Where willows have been removed, we will undertake a drone survey to get a better idea of the space we are looking at and what plants we will need. This is extra to the planned project; ie will be able to plant more than originally planned.

North of inlets: weed control works are well underway and will be planted this year. Access issues have been resolved

Modella Rd: going really well

There are also two new projects in the initial planning stages – Investment driven from HWS – great to get funding to do these works outside of the Precept rate funding.

Sue asked where plants had been sourced from for the planting involved in these projects. She suggested using the CEC Community Nursery which produces seedlings of local provenance.

She suggested looking at the choice of species (EVCs) at the top of the bank where it is drier and not suited to swamp scrub She also suggested looking at plants that are less flammable such as Blackwood and Silver wattles in response to climate change impacts.

Adam said MW is looking at climate change and changes to the plants we use.

Maintenance works update

Immediate Priorities for next three months

Stuart reported:

Desilts that have occurred

Desilts that have been scoped include: Lower Gun Scrub, Greys Drain, Cardinia Creek.

Underway – large scale Typha on Longwarry drain, Tooradin Drain,

Gorse on Yallock, Johnson’s Drain – grooming Cardinia Rd culverts

Egan’s Drain in Bayles weed control on Griffiths Drain and Thompsons Drain in Longwarry – Wiltshire to Sand Rd within the next week or so.

Milligan’s Drain will be happening in the next few weeks.

Teena enquired about works at Thomson Street. Stuart said these would be complete in the next couple of weeks.

Con (on behalf of Marshall Baillieu) enquired about Cardinia Catch Drain work – 300m up to floodgate have not been completed – will this be done?

Upstream choked with Phragmites. Stuart said this has been prioritised.

Downstream drain is in better condition and benefit is not as significant as upstream section. Melbourne Water will confirm timing with landowner.

Con said had requested works on ?? drain but no response.

New Action 7.4: Stuart will organise a time to meet Con on-site to inspect.

Tom reported on McGregor’s Drain works – he said MW were talking with VicRoads re reshaping batters to improve access for future years.

Agenda item 5. Focus Area updates

TLC

Discussion

Focus Area 1 Enhancing and managing the function of drains

Tom reported MW have Flood Information team carrying out a study of the District to update the flood model with most recent LIDAR – ‘cutting edge’ modelling. Can get a member of the team to present more about this. Moving from a 1D view to a 2D approach – how drains impacting others etc. Moving to a single model (or small number of models) rather than multiple (~150) individual models. Will take into account climate change etc.

Drainage Maintenance Optimisation Process – will be running a pilot in the District – how do we best prioritise works spending – criticality and risk assessment of the network – can go back and review our current program to look at optimising the maintenance – e.g. can we groom and manage weeds to reduce the need to desilt which is a more expensive.

Bruce asked how does the ground truthing happen? Tom said the local community and committee will be able to provide more of the local knowledge and identify problem areas as well as the team looking after KWR.

Sarah said MW was reviewing the previous functional analysis of the drainage system as a starting point.

Con commented on the condition of drains in Dalmore – in his view all are terribly overgrown – how long will it take for the analysis and ground truthing as the drains will only get worse. Stuart commented it will be important to check in with Con as part of the ground-truthing exercise. This will happen once MW has a better idea of asset criticality in the first quarter of this year. The delay in applying new pricing will not affect MW's ability to do some works as there is existing budget.

Rob asked about 3D modelling and noted that aerial surveys are possible to a very accurate scale.

Focus area 2 Managing impacts of development on flow volumes, amenity etc

Tom said the biggest change this year is that we are not regularly meeting with Development teams – two studies underway. James Hodgson from Developer Services (who spoke to the Committee on its last field trip in August 2019) is looking at the development site at Ballarto Rd/ Cardinia Rd and the impacts of development on drains from Ballarto Road to the Bay. This could lead to redesigning the levees that run along creeks.

Con commented that 60 years ago, drains used to be clean and were much wider (30 feet). Now clogged and much narrower (4 feet). Nothing has been done on those drains. Tooradin Inlet, Deep Creek Catch – floodgates working well but now if other drains are not clean, then the water does not flow. Water just overtops and floods the paddocks. Need to get out and look at specific spots to understand priorities – MW need to be visible and responsive to issues raised.

Con went on to list examples of complaints/ reports made to MW via the call centre and/or online by him and others that had not received a response. Georgina asked for specific details so that these could be followed up.

New Action 7.5 Issues with CSC complaints not getting through – Georgina will follow up with CSC and see what we can find out. Con to provide as much information to enable this.

Focus Area 3 Disaster management – climate change, climate extremes, contamination, fires across swamp, water pollution event.

Tom said MW is working with Councils and SES in terms of how we manage flooding – Cardinia Flood Management Plan is being jointly completed by MW and Council, and SES have their plan. Sarah referred to the Westernport Coastal Hazard Assessment which looks at inundation - information on this is available at www.secca.org.au (SE Councils Climate Change Alliance).

New Action 7.6 Sarah will provide an update at next meeting on where this at and what we need to do to manage sea level rise.

Focus area 4 Communication roles and responsibilities – user friendly advice – who's responsible

Sarah showed a Fact Sheet on MW's website – about responsibilities between landholders and other authorities. Roles around maintenance, litter, pollution events etc can also be included. She asked if this type of information was useful in meeting the aspirations under this Focus Area.

Sue said she thought it was useful to have this information as awareness in the communities not always high.

Tom wondered about clarifying the roles between MW as waterway manager and other land managers. He was not aware of any precedent of MW undertaking works on private land – MW do banks but landholders do top of banks as it is private land or road reserve.

Sue wondered if the Shire's Flood Management Plan (FMP) might be used for management of drains. Tom agreed it might, but it may not be a priority with smaller drains, rather than say Bunyip River, as the FMP has limited funding. Sue noted that MW will be taking on the role of PPWCMA from Jan 2022, meaning MW will become responsible for the overall catchment management strategy and as land manager. Sarah clarified that DELWP will still be more responsible for land management. Sue suggested making it clear (on a map) which drains MW is responsible for.

Lastly, Con asked about the floodgates on the Cardinia Catchment Drain when works were done on the South Gippsland Highway. Tom indicated VicRoads had paid for this.

Agenda item 6. Community feedback

ALL

Discussion

Georgina reported feedback received from **John Hobson** – some wins with the floodgates and the crossings but still need to do further work on the floodgates and the vegetation in the Cardinia Creek. Stuart indicated that he has reinforced a work order to remove trees on Cardinia Creek – back onto contractors for works to be completed.

Sue – Boom gates at Cora Lynn Ford – have been damaged a few times as they are too far down and they are not seen. Residents want someone to come out at night and turn on manually.

Stuart said extensive damage was done when gates were closed, requiring expensive parts from overseas. Advised Asset team that the gates are not fit for purpose and are looking at what style of gate can be installed and at what location. This is on the program for 18 months. Adding to this discussion, Kevin - reported works by Cardinia Council at Cardinia Viaduct in Beaconsfield where a monitor dipstick in the creek turns on lights automatically. Tough Tech is the company that installed the system.

New Action 7.7 Stuart to follow up with asset team and advise of Council's experience with an alternative to gates.

Stuart added that the Tooradin floodgates are also being looked at as they are the old timber gates.

Agenda item 7. General business

TLC

Agenda item 8. Meeting conclusion

Meeting closed: 2.50pm

Next meeting: Thursday 27 May 2021 1.00pm-3.00pm

Kevin Alexander offered the Cardinia Shire offices as a venue for the next meeting – this opened up the possibility of a site visit related to the 'development pressures' topic in the adjacent developing residential areas, for those who are interested.

The Committee also has a standing offer, via Susan, of the Bunyip Hall as a future meeting venue.
