

Minutes

Title:	Koo Wee Rup Longwarry Flood Protection District Advisory Committee (#4) – Meeting No 7
Meeting date:	Thursday, 3 July 2025
Meeting time:	1.00 pm to 3.00 pm
Location:	Zoom
Attendees:	Bruce Turner, Ian Nicolson, Ian Anderson, Frank Rovers, Susan Anderson, Kate Yeowart, Con Raffa, Teena Mathew (Baw Baw SC), Nev Bayley, Scott Martin and Wayne O'Hara (Cardinia SC), Kuan Yeoh (Casey), Paul Rees (MW), Tom le Cerf (MW), Andy Clark (MW), Patrick Hook (MW), Apologies: Matthew Coleman, Ben Lamont and Brendan Nunn (Cardinia SC), Paul Bucys (Casey), Olivia Tattam (MW Comms & Engagement), Angela Farnell (Baw Baw SC)
Chairperson:	Bruce Turner
Note takers:	MW and Bruce

1. Welcome, apologies			Presenter
1.00	1.1	Welcome & apologies	Bruce Turner (Chair)
	1.2	New member update (replacement for Garry Oates) We found a suitable candidate, but they have since had health issues and unfortunately can't now participate in the Committee. We will have to do a general recruitment process for the remainder of the period. If Committee members know of others who may be interested, please let us know.	Tom/ Paul

2. Communications & Engagement			Presenter
	2.1	Update on broader engagement program with the community in the district	N/A
	2.2	Price Submission update Community forum (12 May 2025) 40 people attended, with 36 voting on future service and pricing options. A 10% increase in the precept rate (currently around \$1.1 million) emerged as the preferred option. People chose this because: - Reduces flood risk - Improves service quality - Keeps it affordable for most	Paul

Options	Survey	Community Forum
Option (BAU)	47%	36%
Option (10% increase)	25%	42%
Option (25% increase)	9%	3%
Option (50% increase)	19%	19%

Paul pointed out that the actual increase in budget/ spending will in effect be far more than 10%, due to the recent agreement by

MW to fully fund the maintenance of the carrier drains (ie \$225,000/ year) from the broader Waterways & Drainage rate. Also most staff time is not funded by the precept rate.

- 2.3 District Tour with MW senior executives – conclusions/ next steps MW
We have been continuing discussions with the senior executives about Koo Wee Rup and are still finalising the conclusions/ next steps.

3. MW Works approach and update	Presenter
3.1 Flood Mapping/ Modelling and Asset Renewal (Service & Asset Lifecycle program) update Data review process of the flood modelling; building the model. This involves going out over the next few months to collect information, eg on culverts, bridges. A 'Let's Talk' page will be set up for community feedback on past flood hot spots etc. Once that's set up, we can consider how best to facilitate Committee members' input. Con, Frank and Ian A all expressed a preference for getting together in person to provide this feedback, while others were happy to provide it online on an interactive map. ACTION 7.1: Tom to organise a small group in-person session at the Koo Wee Rup Office for those who are interested to provide feedback. Likely timing is mid- to late-August 2025. NB the flood modelling is funded via the waterways and drainage charge. Bunyip River Levee Works – Has been identified as high risk to the KWR Township and therefore a high priority for funding to renew it. This is not being run by the local team and, again, funding will be from the Waterways & Drainage charge, not the precept rate. Secondary project – inspection of levees – a large number are heavily overgrown. The initial scope is to groom the top of the levees, to allow the crests to be inspected. The overall condition assessment includes all levees. Our team has been reviewing culverts through the levees. Tom invited Ian A's input, given his unique position as the lowest irrigator on the system. He will do this at the in-person session (see above). Frank commented that the levees are very vulnerable to a small breach quickly becoming a larger problem.	Tom
3.2 Current Works (maintenance, capital) Presentation by Patrick – see separate pdf for the slides. He showed the desilts completed last year.	Andy and Patrick

Desilt material can be used as clean fill, subject to testing. A question was asked as to whether testing is done for Phytophthora. It is not part of the standard sampling that is done for desilted materials. Desilt classification testing tests for heavy metals, PFAS, pesticides, petrochemicals and asbestos (but not limited to these).

Regarding completed works, Patrick emphasised that MW is avoiding one-off works and are prioritising ones that are part of a regular program of mowing and spraying.

Ian A asked about the wattle and willow removal on the North West Catch Drain. Pat reported that this had been completed in 2 days. The Committee felt it was good work; MW is very happy with that contractor.

- 3.3 Precept works for the coming year 2025-26 Andy and Patrick
See Presentation. Pat said he had been looking at higher risk drains and also getting community feedback to work out the priorities.

Cook Road Drain, Longwarry – the system is not performing as it should in large events. Teena and Patrick agreed to discuss in more detail outside the meeting.

Con observed that on the recent district tour, Deep Creek Catch Drain was 'in a mess' and should be on the planned list of works.

Frank – had understood there would be vegetation thinning on the Main Drain to Iona. This cannot currently be working at capacity. Andy confirmed there is a plan to thin vegetation; the details are being worked out with the delivery team to ensure a balanced, cost-efficient result. Paul noted that a previous analysis had shown the drain still has the capacity required. Frank was dubious that it could handle an event like the 2011 flood.

Lyalls Inlet – level sensors for flood and tide. There was discussion with Con about the pros and cons of increasing the flow capacity in the tidal zone as this can lead to more tidal inundation.

There was considerable positive feedback to Pat on his excellent preparation and presentation.

Andy – environmental works

'Capital' Healthy Waterway Strategy projects (Waterways & Drainage funded)

Cardinia Creek - Revegetation and Weed Control – habitat creation for waterway health improvement focusing on Southern Brown Bandicoot supporting vegetation. A four-year project.

Downstream Chasemore road– Works area upstream of Cardinia Road is currently under review for a cultural heritage permit.

Bunyip River – upstream of KWR / Healesville Road to Ballarto Road: grasses and sedges are going to be replacing the blackberry and broom which currently cover the Northern batter of the levee bank of the McDonalds Catch Drain. Vegetation has been chosen to allow monitoring of the levee system and create Southern Brown Bandicoot habitat.

Yallock Creek – Bayles – South of KWR Longwarry Road, down toward the Number 5 Yallock Drain Road: significant cover of blackberry, reestablishing vegetation on some billabongs.

Yallock Creek – Sth Gippsland Hwy: a few thousand plants focusing on sedges and grasses to compete with Blackberry and Gorse.

Sue asked about what is proposed for addressing erosion on the Bunyip River. MW received a report from Water Tech. Remedies include: a couple of rock structures, pinning some large woody debris to direct flow away from the banks and assist in increasing sedimentation. Currently in discussion with the Melbourne Water team that looks after erosion control and owns the budgets for these large capital expenditures.

- 3.4 Progress update on Level of Service approach to prioritising works prior to completion of mapping/ modelling Tom and Paul
- Tom reported that they are continuing to progress this approach, seeking to understand how the condition of the drains are assessed – ie what are we inspecting, what does it look like, what are we recording?

Ongoing Monitoring – aerial surveys are done every couple of months (under MW's geospatial subscriptions; again from wider funding) and research is ongoing into what happens at specific spots after mowing, spraying – after works what is the response on a month-to-month basis?

4. Actions from previous meetings		Presenter
4.1	Refer to minutes of last meeting and spreadsheet circulated prior to meeting; discussion by exception Cora Lyn – Paul reported that the lights and signage are in, but no progress has been achieved in discussions with Council regarding ongoing responsibility. Nev said he would check with Ben.	MW/ all
5. Stakeholder feedback/ general business		Presenter
5.1	New feedback / AOB Ian raised an issue on 13 Mile Drain – Patrick undertook to have a look	MW

Significant road improvements, e.g. Murray Road, Bennet Road to Dessent Road. Frank said he believed Council was responsible for putting spoil on the levee banks which would impede MW's ability to mow. Scott responded that he and colleagues were not with the unsealed roads team so not sure how the spoil got there.

Deer in the swamp. A widespread issue. Sue interested in knowing where they are in the swamp – please let her know of any other sightings. Con reported that large numbers (well over 100) of deer are causing significant damage on his land at Lyall Inlet. Paul reported MW has some large control programs in water catchments. Aerial shooting has been approved recently. Andy mentioned that Melbourne Water is undertaking an aerial thermal drone survey on the Yallock Drainage Reserve in Bayles with the aim of completing deer control works. Also completing aerial thermal drone survey of the Inlets Site (Cardinia, Deep, Toomuc and Gumscrub) Railway Road to the South Gippsland Highway, again with the aim of completing control works.

Con emphasised a point he made earlier on the importance of doing as much maintenance work as possible while the ground is still relatively dry.

6. Next meeting		Presenter
6.1	10 am to 12 noon, Thursday 13 November This was the preferred time of those present. Mode to be advised – online or in-person.	Bruce Turner