

Friends of Damper Creek combined submission to Monash City Council on its Draft Housing Strategy – Residential Framework Plan

Ref: FoDCR May 2014 Newsletter

You may have noted in the last issue of the *Monash Bulletin*** that the City of Monash was preparing a revised housing strategy to bring it into line with other municipalities. Briefly, the Strategy involves planning for anticipated urban growth to a greater Melbourne population of 6.5 million by 2050 (current population is 4 million). Suburban areas such as Monash are targeted to absorb much of this growth using a concept known as “Urban Consolidation”.

The Monash strategy as it stands in draft form does not incorporate protection for environmentally sensitive areas or a general consideration for environmental factors as urban density increases.

The “Friends of Damper Creek Reserve”(FODC) and the “Friends of Scotchman's Creek and Valley Reserve” (FOSCVR) presented the environmental case together with a letter on behalf of their respective memberships at a meeting with the council on May 8th. Present were the three Mt Waverley Ward Councillors and Sue Wilkinson Director of Planning and her staff, Libby Anthony on behalf of FODCR and Ted Mason on behalf of FO SC&VR & Friends.

The “Urban Consolidation” model allows for a high density development within a 400m radius of railway stations. In the case of Mount Waverley and Jordanville railway stations this radius impinges on portions of Damper Creek, Valley Reserve and Scotchman's Creek catchments and other environmentally sensitive areas currently protected (in part) by the VPO.

Loss of habitat and tree cover are significant concerns but so too are water management issues, exacerbated through rapid runoff caused by loss of suburban gardens and a high proportion of hard surfaces in new developments. The current capacity of our creek systems to handle this runoff is limited as recent flood events in Gardiner's Creek have shown.

Further to our east the “Dandenong Valley Escarpment” has been granted a high level of environmental protection. The two “Friends” groups have asked that an equivalent level of protection be applied to the watersheds of Damper and Scotchman's creeks.

The Friends of Damper Creek Reserve extend their thanks to Libby Anthony and Ted Mason (of FO SC&VR) for presenting the environmental case to the Monash City Council.

Ref: FoDC May meeting - update

Cr Brian Little, one of our three Mt Waverley Ward Councillors, attended FoDCR May meeting to talk about the council's DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY and, in particular the Residential Framework Plan and its effects on Damper Creek and Scotchman's Creek catchments.

Cr Little, is a member of the MCC Environmental Advisory Committee and is keenly interested in environmental issues, recycling and composting.

References:

**Monash Bulletin

<http://www.monash.vic.gov.au/news/bulletin.htm>

Monash City Council Draft Housing Strategy

http://www.monash.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay/planning-review/documents/Monash_Housing_Strategy_2014_Consultation_draft.pdf