



Elster Creek Catchment Joint advocacy priorities

A statement of joint priorities from the council
partners within the Elster Creek Catchment
Collaboration to the State Government of Victoria

September 2022



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Introduction

A statement of joint priorities from the council partners within the Elster Creek Catchment Collaboration – City of Port Phillip, City of Bayside, City of Kingston, Glen Eira City Council – to the State Government of Victoria.

As a partner in the Collaboration, Melbourne Water has provided technical support in the development of this joint statement.

Our Flood Story

The Elster Creek Catchment is located in the inner South-East area of Melbourne. The catchment spans four municipal boundaries: Port Phillip, Glen Eira, Bayside and Kingston.

The Catchment has a known history of widespread flooding and given its highly developed nature, flooding is expected to continue to be part of the character of the Catchment into the future. It is also expected that climate change will add to the challenges of flood management with more severe and more frequent storm events adding a greater risk of flooding throughout the catchment.

The existing drainage infrastructure does not have the capacity to take the amount of runoff needed to eliminate flooding. The opportunity to add new infrastructure is limited due to the extent of existing development within the catchment. As future development within the catchment is expected to increase urban runoff, exposure to flooding events will remain an ongoing challenge and represents a complex problem.





Priority 1: Major flood mitigation infrastructure within the catchment

What is the ask?

The councils within the Elster Creek Collaboration request funding from the Victorian Government to deliver flood mitigation infrastructure across the Elster Creek Catchment.

While Melbourne Water is progressing with the business case for flood mitigation investment through the duplication of the existing Elwood Diversion Drain, the local council partners call on additional funding support from State Government to implement further infrastructure options to ensure residents and businesses across the entire catchment are better protected from flooding.

What is the benefit of this initiative to the community?

Flooding from the Elster Creek Catchment has major financial, environmental, safety and liveability impacts for residents and businesses across the catchment, and is a significant cost to government and the insurance industry each year.

In terms of financial impact, the Average Annual Damages (AAD) for property and infrastructure effected by flooding within the Elster Creek Catchment is estimated to be \$550,000. Elster Creek is part of a broader catchment area that has an estimated AAD of \$4.5 million.

Additional infrastructure, in combination with community preparedness and planning approaches, will improve flooding issues and reduce the tangible and intangible costs of flooding for the catchment community.

How does this initiative align with State Government priorities?

Investment in flood management infrastructure aligns with 'Focus Area 3: Flood effects mitigation' in the Flood Management Strategy Port Phillip and Westernport 2021–2031 for a high flood risk location.

Major flood mitigation infrastructure investment in this catchment also delivers on the commitment within Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021-2051 to invest in infrastructure that prepares the community to thrive in a changing climate (goals 9 and 10).

Developing major infrastructure can also create multiple benefits for the community such as enabling economic opportunities and building green space that demonstrates the principles of the State Government's 'Value creation and capture framework'.

What is the cost and how much has been secured?

Catchment partners are **seeking State Government investment in new infrastructure in the order of tens of millions of dollars**, with co-contributions to be determined depending on the specific project.

The Elster Creek Collaboration Working Group are currently updating a list of major infrastructure options within the catchment; a 2019 report identified six options each costing between \$21M and \$120M.



Priority 2: Elsternwick Park water management

What is the ask?

The councils within the Elster Creek Catchment Collaboration jointly request the Victorian Government to commit funding to deliver on the entire masterplan for Yalukit Willam (formerly Elsternwick Park) Nature Reserve developed by the City of Bayside.

Recognising the funding commitment from the Federal Government to the project combined with funding from Bayside City Council will only realise a part of the overall masterplan.

What is benefit of this initiative to the community?

Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create a new urban forest and wetland in the inner suburbs by converting the former golf course to a nature reserve.

Located in the City of Bayside, the project will provide significant benefit to residents and businesses across the catchment, and greater Melbourne, as an iconic urban parkland, a biodiversity haven, and a visitor destination. Through the wetland system, the reserve will also be a key contributor to reducing pollutants and nutrients entering Port Phillip Bay.

How does this initiative align with State Government priorities?

The full realisation of Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve delivers on Victorian Government strategies and targets in Biodiversity 2037 (increasing urban biodiversity), Port Phillip Bay Environmental Management Plan (reducing nutrient loads to the Bay) and Dandenong Catchment Integrated Water Management Strategic Directions Statement (re-use of stormwater for urban greening and cooling). This project also contribute towards achieving Victorian Government agencies' strategies and targets, including community connection, water quality, and biodiversity objectives in the Healthy Waterways Strategy.

What is the cost and how much has been secured?

The total cost of delivering the Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve Masterplan is \$24 million.

Catchment partners are **seeking State Government support of \$6 million** for the continued transformation of the reserve and expansion of the wetlands to realise the full masterplan for this site.

Funding has already been committed from:

- Bayside City Council - \$9 million
- Federal Government - \$6 million, with a further \$10 million pledged in the May 2022 Federal Election



Priority 3: Ensuring flood mitigation is incorporated into State Government owned property

What is the ask?

Flood mitigation elements should be incorporated into all new development or re-development of property owned by the State Government.

In particular, flood mitigation should be prioritised in the development of strategic sites and urban renewal areas, and public school sites should include flood mitigation (such as retarding basins) within the renewal of school open space.

Property owned by the State Government is not currently subject to the same planning controls as other land tenures, therefore local council and Melbourne Water do not have the same opportunity to provide advice or apply conditions on development to maximise potential flood mitigation benefits.

What is benefit of this initiative to the community?

Revised planning processes and stronger partnership in development of strategic sites, urban renewal areas, and state school sites would ensure all opportunities to incorporate flood mitigation within the catchment are embraced, and demonstrate commitment of the State Government to supporting the work of local government in managing flooding in the Elster Creek catchment.

How does this initiative align with State Government priorities?

The State Government have committed within the DCP Corporate Plan (2021-2025) to “coordinate a range of planning reforms to deliver a more efficient planning system that provides greater certainty to the community and other users”; including flood mitigation infrastructure in State Government owned properties within flood risk areas is a practical and achievable way to realise that commitment.

This initiative also aligns with ‘Focus Area 4: Land use planning’ in the Flood Management Strategy Port Phillip and Westernport 2021–2031 that “land use planning will respond proactively to flood risk”.

What is the cost and how much has been secured?

There is no umbrella cost to this initiative, but catchment partners are calling on the State Government to **allocate 5% of overall budgets** for the development of strategic sites and urban renewal areas, and works on state school sites, to be specifically allocated to flood mitigation works.



