

Community Bulletin

Christmas Hills Land Use Study

September 2017

Background information

Melbourne Water owns land in Christmas Hills which was previously earmarked for the Watsons Creek Storage Reservoir (WCSR).

Following the 2012 review of potential future augmentations of Melbourne's water supply system, the land once earmarked for a storage reservoir has been eliminated as a viable future water supply option for the city.

This is primarily due to the relatively small volume of water (3-21 gigalitres per year) that the WCSR would supply as compared to Sugarloaf (100 gigalitres), climate change, a growing population and environmental impact concerns as well as the estimated costs of up to a billion dollars making it financially unviable.

Today, approx. 1000 hectares in Christmas Hills remains in Melbourne Water's ownership.

Melbourne Water has previously sold 276 hectares in Christmas Hills in the early to mid-2000s and transferred a further 295 hectares into the Kinglake National Park from Buttermans Track and 408 hectares into the Warrandyte-Kinglake Nature Conservation Reserve.

Further to this, a Public Acquisition Overlay is currently in place over 313 hectares of privately owned land.

What is planned?

Melbourne Water is now planning to:

- Transfer 280 hectares of land to the Crown to ensure the preservation of significant environmental values in the area. This land will be included as part of the Warrandyte-Kinglake Nature Conservation Reserve.
- Rezone and sell the balance of the land on the open market.
- Remove the existing Public Acquisition Overlay over 313 hectares of privately owned land, removing uncertainty for landowners.

Melbourne Water will be undertaking a staged approach to the sale and transfer of land to ensure that all landholders, tenants and other interested parties have adequate information and time to partake in the process.

Planning and preparation

Melbourne Water has engaged Spiire Australia to prepare a Land Use Study for the land previously identified for the reservoir (the Study Area).

The Study Area is shown in Figure 1.

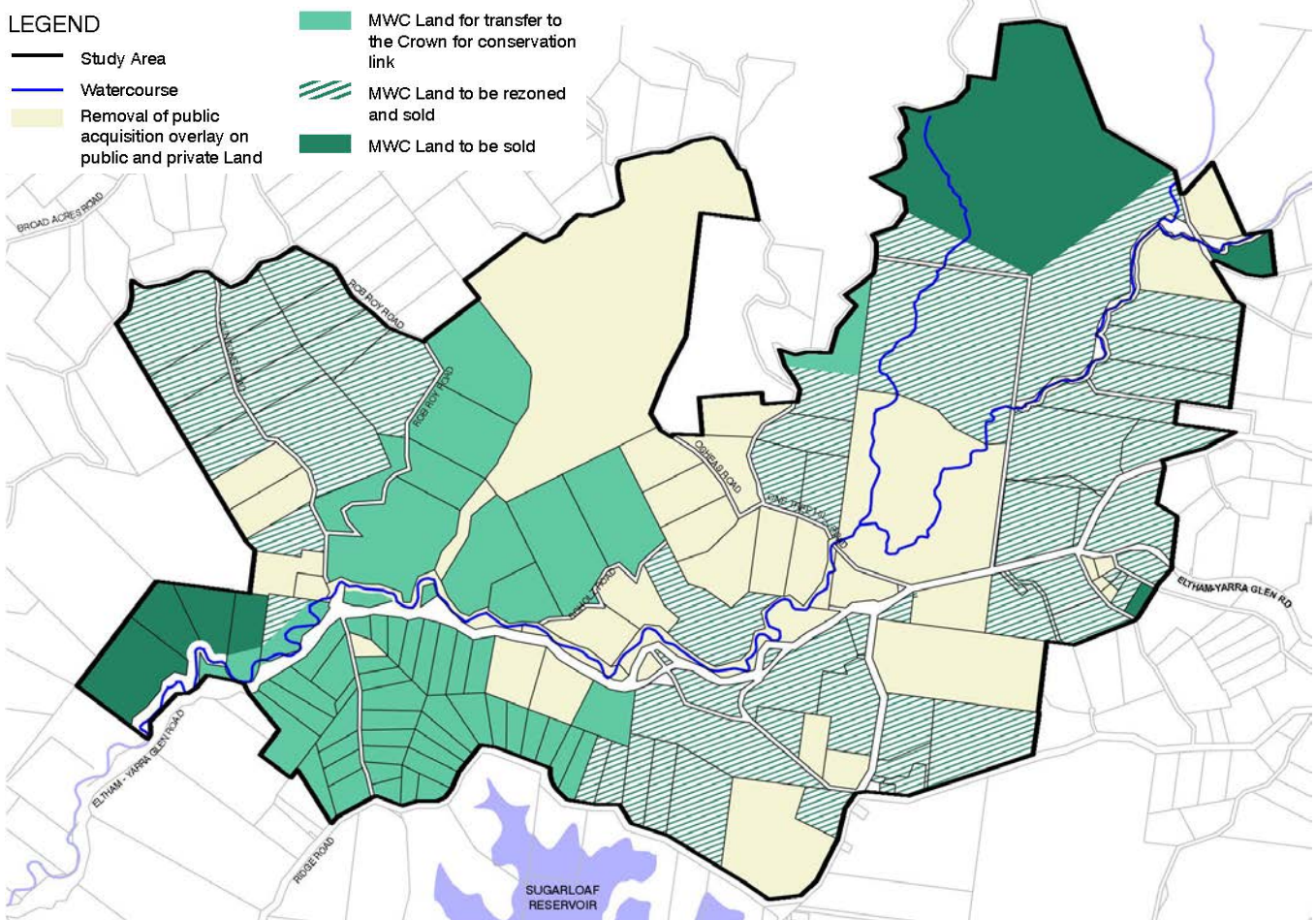


Figure 1 Study Area Proposed Planning and Ownership Changes

The Land Use Study will take a comprehensive look at the area and address the following:

- Identify areas which require protection due to existing and important environmental values.
- Identify any other areas of consideration including bushfire risk, cultural heritage, service availability, potential land contamination and landscape character.
- Develop lot layouts that respond to on site constraints and provide certainty to what can be developed on each parcel to be sold.
- Ensure that the land disposal will not unreasonably remove options for future community facility locations.

To achieve these requirements for the Study Area, the Land Use Study will be undertaken in four key phases:

Phase 1: Background Issues Report

- This will include the identification of areas of opportunity and constraint when considering the future development of the Study Area. This includes: servicing, heritage, bushfire, planning, visual/landscape, ecology and land contamination investigations (see Figure 2 Study Area Aerial).

Phase 2: Options Analysis

- This will include the preparation of options for the land in the Study Area in consultation with the community, Council and the State Government.

Phase 3: Master Planning

- Based on the outcomes of the Options Analysis, Spiire in consultation with the Community, Council and the State Government will create a Master Plan to guide future land use.

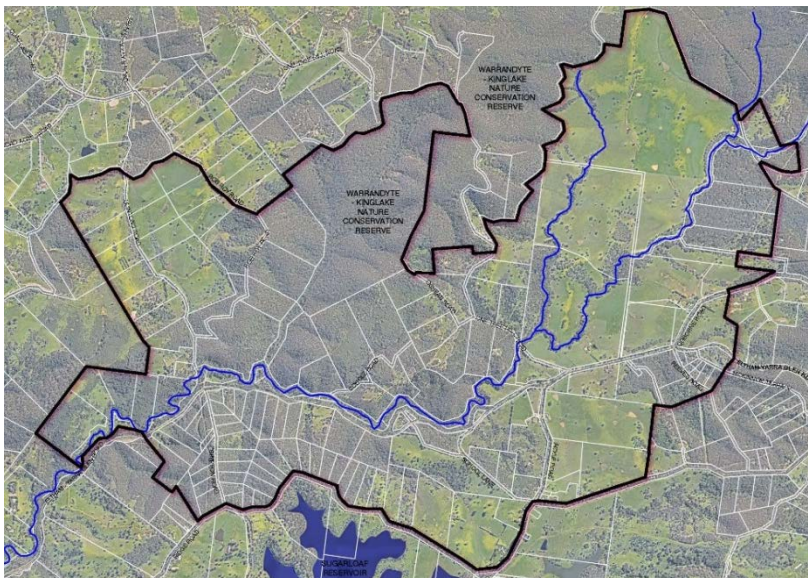
Phase 4: Planning Scheme Amendment

- Following the above phases, a Planning Scheme Amendment will be required to amend the Nillumbik Planning Scheme. This will likely comprise:
 - Removal of the Public Acquisition Overlay currently existing on both public and private land for the purpose of the Watsons Creek Reservoir.
 - Rezoning approximately 280 hectares of land to the Crown for the WKNCR
 - Rezoning of the land currently within the Public Use Zone prior to sale.
 - Changes to policy in the Nillumbik Planning Scheme to facilitate the Master Plan outcomes.

The Planning Scheme amendment is expected to be managed by the State Government. This process will also include community consultation with opportunity for community and Council to make submissions.

The Project has progressed through Phase 1 and is now entering Phase 2. Initial consultation activities will commence shortly. It is anticipated that the Master Plan will be completed during the first part of 2018 with a Planning Scheme Amendment to follow. The sale of surplus land and implementation of the Master Plan will occur progressively over the next five years.

Figure 2 Study Area Aerial



Community consultation

How can you get involved?

Melbourne Water will be holding individual meetings with directly affected tenants and lessees and will provide information to the wider community on the land sales process and indicative timelines.

Discussions will be undertaken with existing tenants (residential and commercial) in the Study Area in August.

A Community Information Session is proposed to discuss initial project findings in October 2017. The aims of this consultation session are to:

- Explain the project.
- Present findings from the Background Issues Report and accompanying technical assessments of the Study Area.
- Gather information about community values, ideas and aspirations.

A Master Planning Community Workshop is also proposed towards the end of 2017 to seek community input into the Master Plan including potential land use changes and subdivision opportunities.

Project reports will be available for the Public to view on Melbourne Water's website.

Melbourne Water will make every effort to ensure information is timely and relevant to provide the local community with adequate opportunity to discuss the project with us.

Community Information Session

Date: **Wednesday 18 October 2017**

Drop in at any time between 4pm and 8pm. Presentations at 4:30pm and 6:30pm.

Location: Christmas Hills Mechanics Institute Hall, 787 Ridge Road, Christmas Hills.

Contact Details

Any project inquiries should be directed to Melbourne Water or Spiire.

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