



Elster Creek and Elsternwick Park water management

New and expanded infrastructure to reduce flooding in Port Phillip and surrounds

The Elster Creek Catchment has a history of widespread flooding that will become further impacted by climate change over time.

What is the ask?

Council requests the Victorian and Australian Governments commit to a partnership with the cities of Port Phillip, Bayside, Glen Eira and Kingston and Melbourne Water to help fund and deliver water management infrastructure in the Elster Creek Catchment.

What is the issue that this initiative will address?

The Elster Creek Catchment is in inner south-east Melbourne and spans across four municipal boundaries: Port Phillip, Glen Eira, Bayside and Kingston. Flooding from the Elster Creek Catchment has major financial, environmental, safety and liveability impacts for residents of Elwood in particular.

Pollutants, nutrients and sediment from the catchment negatively impact the health of waterways and Port Phillip Bay.

What is Council proposing?

Since 2017, Melbourne Water and the four councils of the Elster Creek Catchment have been working together to support a whole-of-catchment approach to flood management and Integrated Water Management improvements in the catchment.

Elsternwick Park Masterplan:

Located in City of Bayside, Elsternwick Park sits just across the road from the boundary of City of Port Phillip. This project 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 area of Elsternwick Park to a nature reserve.

Elster Creek and Elsternwick Park Integrated Water management

A Masterplan for the site was developed by City of Bayside, in partnership with City of Port Phillip, and Melbourne Water for the Bayside and Port Phillip communities.

The project is to co-fund detailed design and delivery of the Masterplan, which can be delivered in stages.

Key elements of the Masterplan include:

- **Environment** – the reserve will provide seven habitat zones for targeted species and provide protection from pests and human activity in key areas. An expanded stormwater harvesting scheme could deliver up to 240 megalitres of harvested stormwater per year for use in nearby parks and sports fields.
- **Community amenity** – the reserve includes improved access and linkages for pedestrian and bike riders and community and visitor facilities.
- **Water quality** – a proposed wetland of approximately 5.5 hectares will contribute towards water quality improvements by preventing nutrients and pollutants from flowing into Port Phillip Bay. The wetlands and stormwater harvesting scheme have the potential to reduce 1,620 kg of Total Nitrogen (TN) per year from entering the Bay.

Elwood Drain Diversion Expansion Project:

One of the major deliverables in the Elster Creek Flood Management Plan is to seek opportunities to identify new or expanded infrastructure works to reduce flooding. Elwood is one of the most flood-prone areas of Victoria. Climate change and increasing urban development will exacerbate the impact.

Melbourne Water has completed an analysis of various major infrastructure options to ultimately reduce flooding in Elwood.

The most promising option is to expand the existing drain that runs from Elwood Canal, under Elsternwick Park and Elwood Park, to Port Phillip Bay at Head Street. Melbourne Water is now undertaking detailed investigations into this potential project. This includes further flood modelling, geological and soil testing, investigations into existing services and infrastructure, and assessment of environmental impacts. Once investigations are complete, Melbourne Water will engage with the community on a proposal.

How does this initiative align with the Council Plan and Victorian/Australian Government priorities?

Council:

[Council Plan 2021-31](#): Sustainable Port Phillip – A City that has a sustainable future, where our environmentally aware and active community benefits from living in a

bayside city that is greener, cooler, cleaner and climate resilient.

We will partner with Melbourne Water and the Cities of Bayside, Glen Eira and Kingston to take a holistic approach to reducing flood risk in the Elster Creek Catchment, collaboratively implementing the Elster Creek Catchment Flood Management Plan 2019-24, subject to relevant feasibility studies and available budget from all partners.

Victorian Government:

The projects deliver on many of the Victorian Government strategies and targets including Water for Victoria, Biodiversity 2037, Port Phillip Bay Environmental Management Plan and Dandenong Catchment Integrated Water Management Strategic Directions Statement. These projects also contribute towards achieving Victorian Government agencies' strategies and targets, including Melbourne Water's Healthy Waterways Strategy.

Australian Government:

The projects deliver on many Australian Government strategies and targets and support the delivery of Australia's National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy.

How does the initiative assist the community to recover from COVID-19?

Flood mitigation would reduce flood risk for the communities in the catchment, improving liveability and safety.

The detailed design and delivery of both projects will create jobs for design consultants and contractors.

Cost and current status?

Cost

The total cost of delivering the Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve Masterplan Is in the region of \$20 million.

Elwood Drain Diversion Expansion Project is subject to a detailed cost analysis, due to be completed by Melbourne Water in 2022. As this is a significant and complex project, it is likely to require a considerable investment.

Status

Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve

- Masterplan and concept designs have been developed for the whole nature reserve. Stage One, the Chain of Ponds has commenced construction.

Elwood Drain Diversion Expansion Project

- A business case has been developed and is subject to approvals. Stakeholder consultation has begun.

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More information:

- <https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/council-services/sustainability-and-climate-change/climate-emergency-and-sustainability-action/elster-creek-catchment-flood-management-plan>
- <https://www.melbournewater.com.au/building-and-works/projects/elwood-diversion-drain-augmentation-project>
- <https://www.bayside.vic.gov.au/elsterwick-park-nature-reserve>