

Dear Highbury Resident,

Stage One Works and Launch

The Highbury Aqueduct Reserve was officially opened by the Honorable Tom Kenyon on Saturday, 8 December 2012. Plans to open the reserve were only announced in September which gave the Department for Water, Environment and Natural Resources (DEWNR) just three short months to remove the fences, clean the area up and make it safe for community access.

Because of the time constraint, only a quarter of the reserve (the area between Majestic Grove and Historic Drive known as Stage 1) was earmarked for opening.

Work began in November and the contractors did a fantastic job getting the site ready for the 8th December. However, the cost of removing and pruning hazardous trees proved to be far more expensive than originally thought, and only about half of Stage 1 could be safely opened (up to the bend on Country Lane).

DEWNR hopes to commence work on the remainder of Stage 1 pending additional funding being made available from the Department for Planning, Transport and Infrastructure (DPTI).

In the meantime DEWNR, in partnership with DPTI, will be developing a project plan based on the Master Plan for the redevelopment of the whole reserve. DEWNR will also continue to look after the day-to-day management of the reserve.

Key Findings of Consultation on Preliminary Concepts for the Draft Master Plan

Over 100 people attended the launch of Stage 1. Sixty four people placed their names on the Highbury Contact Register. Around 60 people recorded their responses on the large sheets which were provided with the maps of the Draft Concepts. Twenty five (25) detailed response sheets were either completed at the launch or posted back to URPS.

Highbury Aqueduct Stage One Resident Information Sheet Number 3 February 2013

Most responses indicated strong support for opening up the Aqueduct and its progressive development as a reserve. People expressed a strong desire for differentiating this reserve from the Linear Park by retaining and reinforcing its natural character and limiting recreation to low impact activities compatible with a natural setting. There was very strong support for stormwater management treatments that provide biodiversity and amenity benefits. Some of these initiatives could also reduce erosion and slow the release of water in storm events.



People also wanted to see the development of some discrete hubs for picnic tables, shelter, natural play, water fountains and other community activities. The Draft Master Plan includes 3 of these activity hubs which could include these features.

The issue that generated the most divided opinions was dog control. Slightly more people supported dogs off leash than dogs on leash. One of the main concerns about dogs off leash relates to their impact on native fauna including koalas,



echidnas and birds. Accordingly we are proposing that those areas which provide significant habitat value would be designated as dogs on leash areas. Other parts of the park, except within 50 metres of children's play spaces, would be available for dogs off leash under control of a competent owner. Other modifications to the preliminary concepts include a review of access points to address safety and privacy issues and the provision of limited pull-off areas for parking, especially for people with limited mobility and where street gradients make on-street parking potentially less safe.

A copy of the Consultation Report is available on www.urps.com.au or you can request a hard copy by phoning 8333 7999.

You Are Invited to Comment on the Draft Master Plan

From Thursday, 21 February, the Draft Master Plan will be available on website www.urps.com.au – Latest News and on display at the Turrumurra Recreation Centre, 1000 Lower North East Road. Response sheets will be available at both locations and we look forward to receiving your written response by Wednesday, 20 March.

On Wednesday, 6 March the consultants will be holding an Open House drop-in session from 4:30pm to 6:30pm at Turrumurra. You can come in at any time and talk to one of the planning and design team and DEWNR staff.

Alternatively, you might prefer to attend a presentation and a workshop between 7:00pm and 9:00pm at Turrumurra on Wednesday, 6 March. If you are planning to attend the presentation, we would appreciate your registration by Monday, 4 March. Please call Fil or Donna at URPS on 8333 7999 during business hours or email: mail@urps.com.au