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**Nature Reserves Preservation Group  
of Kalamunda, Inc.**

14 Jan 2022

**TO:** Brett Jackson, Director Asset Services, City of Kalamunda [Brett.Jackson@kalamunda.wa.gov.au](mailto:Brett.Jackson@kalamunda.wa.gov.au)  
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**SUBJECT: NRPG submission on "Kalamunda Flowing, Lower Helena Valley Catchment"**

Dear Brett,

Thank you for the opportunity for NRPG to make a late submission to the Kalamunda Flowing consultation survey. We are pleased to see this important issue being addressed, which is one we have advocated for over many years. The NRPG is making submission also on the draft Waterways and Wetlands Policy 34, which ties in with this submission.

The NRPG has pressed for maximizing of rainwater harvesting by use of Water Sensitive Urban Design, and reducing water requirements of City assets such as sports fields by retaining as much of the natural vegetation as possible.

As such, our general inputs to this submission are:

- Minimise impervious surfaces in the City developments (all kinds), roads, parking, etc.
- Minimise the concentration of rainwater runoff from roads, developments and other impervious surfaces into 'drains' which discharge into our streams and waterways, resulting in high peak discharges which cause erosion in our streams and waterways. This is particularly problematic for revegetation efforts by Friends Groups and others due to washout, steep embankments and the need for heavy machinery access to provide ongoing maintenance to address erosion. This in turn creates a demoralising sense of futility and failed objectives. Specific cases include Toornaart Creek (and Crumpet Creek and Poison Gully which are outside the area of this survey).
- Maximise rainwater harvesting, particularly where it captures the more 'peaky' discharge that presently occurs from the above two causes, to prevent it from being lost to the ocean without recharging local aquifers and seeps/soaks. This water can/should be released more gradually to help prolong the flow of streams into Summer (as used to be the case) to somewhat compensate for reduction in rainfall due to climate change and other causes.
- Where rainwater is harvested or runoff enters streams, if possible there should be artificial wetland to provide a buffer and biofilter to protect water life in the streams and to trap pollutants and litter.
- The map shown of the area of this Survey ends at the boundaries of the City of Kalamunda, but this is not the natural catchment area, so will the City coordinate efforts with neighbouring local governments?
- Streams and wetlands should be treated as ecologically important parts of our environment and restored back to their natural state and function, as well as being afforded protection from weed infestation, pollution and other damage by the use of large buffers on both sides wherever possible. The setback requirements of new developments must be increased significantly to not only provide adequate buffers, but also to accommodate fire access tracks (which unfortunately create weed and erosion issues due to the typical practice of clearing to 'bare mineral earth').

Specific response to the Survey topics:

2. There are many instances of residential properties which drain their runoff onto streets, which exacerbates the issues mentioned above, and it seems also to contravene the City's policies.

3. The NRPNG has raised the issue of high discharges into streams for many years, suggesting the use of Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD), to improve water outcomes. See also item 4 below.

4. In the mid 2000's the City of Kalamunda responded to a request by the Friends Group Coordinator of Toornaart Creek (Steve Gates) to instigate a WSUD project at the upper reach of the creek to slow and detain runoff water to reduce erosion and help increase absorption of water into the creek area. While the intent was good, there have been problems with the basic design and these are still to be resolved in order to reach a successful outcome. The NRPNG appreciates the offer by the City to continue to discuss this further.

5. The NRPNG is aware that all of the sources of contaminants mentioned are commonly an issue. Another is that of concern by residents of breeding areas for mosquitos, and there have been instances of people spraying insecticide into road drainage grilles to attempt to control this. (Part of the driver for this was the concern over the risk of the spread of Ross River Virus, due to what we understand was a 'scare' from unintentional misinformation about Kalamunda being a 'hotspot' for a few cases contracted many years ago).

6. The NRPNG would support more efforts by the City to ensure buffers and artificial wetlands/biofiltration of runoff before it enters streams and other natural areas.

7. NRPNG does not believe our wetlands and waterways are in good condition for the reasons mentioned in the general comments. A further two examples of failures to treat our streams and waterways with the value they deserve and require for health are;

- The hardstand area on the north side of Kalamunda Rd opposite the National Lifestyle Village near the intersection of Abernethy Rd. This ephemeral wetland is part of the series of wetlands which originally joined with Munday Swamp, but has been completely cleared filled, and covered with reclaimed asphalt. NRPNG proposed to the Shire/City in the past for this area to be an 'entrance statement' for Kalamunda, by preserving and enhancing the wetland.
- The stream which flows through Stirk Park and which has been relegated to a covered 'drain'. This could be enhanced to showcase it as a natural stream, with the original functionality. Furthermore, the existing pond, or a second pond could be created to serve as an artificial wetland and a feature of Stirk Park.

We look forward to further engagement on this topic through the draft Policy 34 and further consultations on the other catchment areas.

Regards,

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