

# Minutes

**Date** 9/03/11

**Time** 5:30pm **Location** South East Regional Office,  
Worsley Road, Bangholme

<b>Chairperson</b>	Joy Humphreys	<b>Meeting Subject</b>	Quiet Lakes subcommittee mtg
<b>Attendees</b>	Committee members: Nanne Stubbs, Rolf Daniel, Jeff Welsh, John Thomson & Anthony Moffatt (PLQLOR) Melbourne Water (MW): David Norman, Tim Seipolt, Louise Alexander, Alan Clements, Ross Bleazby Other: Jason Sonneman – Design Flow		
<b>Apologies</b>	MW: Trish Grant		
<b>Note Taker</b>	Alan Clements		

**1. Agenda item** Introduction **Presenter** Tim Seipolt

**Discussion** Outlined agenda for tonight. MW is asking for feedback from committee on presentation tonight including how community may respond to proposed options, how MW presents the proposal to other residents, and how MW consults with the community.

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**2. Agenda item** Presentation of proposed water quality management options **Presenter** Jason Sonneman

**Presentation** Design Flow (DF) gave a presentation summarising the proposed Water Quality Management Plan. DF suggested the committee take the presentation home for two weeks and then submit comment on the proposed actions.

Summary of proposed actions presented.

Vegetation Restoration – Aim to achieve a minimum cover of 50% of submerged Macrophytes (water plants) within the lakes to naturally stabilise the lake ecosystem. DF suggested a trial planting in a small section of each of the lakes including the removal of sediment from two trial areas in Legana and Illawong.

Mixing using SolarBee – The SolarBee mixes the water to reduce stratification within the lake. There is currently a trial SolarBee in place within Lake Illawong. Dependent on the success of the trial it is proposed to utilise additional SolarBees in the other lakes as well. Water column monitoring is proposed in all of the lakes to determine the full extent of stratification within the lakes.

Lake Salinity – Utilising water sources such as ground water or stormwater diversion to try and maintain a lower salinity of 6000 uS/cm in the lakes to help promote a healthy environment for the macrophytes. The bore water is not considered suitable and has an insufficient yield to make it possible to flush out the lakes.

Lake sediments - There is potentially a large store of nutrients in the accumulated silt within the lakes, however, it would be difficult and very

expensive to remove.

Carp removal – Removing carp from the system will reduce the pressure on the macrophytes and reduce the turbidity of the lake system. An electro-fishing trial followed by extensive netting of the lakes is proposed. It is proposed that permanent fish traps are installed in the connections between each of the lakes and that annual stocking of predatory fish such as Black bream and Estuary perch be undertaken.

Other possible options briefly touched on were – Floating Macrophyte Beds, Hypolimnetic Withdrawal and Ultrasonication.

A proposed implementation plan with timeline was presented.

MW outlined the estimated costs involved with vegetation trials, SolarBee installation and monitoring, Carp removal trial, fish program and fish traps.

**Discussion**

***Questions – Vegetation regeneration***

***Q - What effect will the quality of the stormwater runoff have on the aquatic plants and can they tolerate stormwater runoff?***

A - Healthy aquatic plant communities can cope with occasional nutrient inputs via stormwater. Although there is no formal treatment of stormwater runoff, it is expected that once the aquatic vegetation is re-established, it will be reasonably robust and resilient to stormwater runoff.

***Q - How much consideration is given to the use of the lakes by the residents?***

A – No consideration has been given at this stage. However, what is being proposed is what is needed to stabilise the lakes ecosystem to achieve improved water quality.

MW advised that it would take residents views into consideration in the locations of the planting.

***Q – Would installation of the plants impede future removal of the sediments?***

A – The widespread re-establishment of aquatic vegetation would not impede the future removal of sediments from the lake system. Removal of sediments from the lake system would most likely involve drying out of the lake/s concerned, and any plant biomass present would be removed with the sediments. ***Q - In the presentation you mentioned that you may have to lower the water level.***

A - To get sufficient light for the plants we may need to lower the water level within the lake system during the plant establishment phase.

**Other Questions**

***Q – Why was the SolarBee installed in Lake Illawong where it is?***

A - The manufacture suggested the location and lake where the SolarBee should be installed.

***Q – How do fish traps work? Is now a good time to remove the little Carp?***

A – The proposed in-situ fish traps would be located in pits between the lakes to trap fish who are attracted to these areas due to water flow. The plan is to electro fish the lake system and to use block nets to prevent fish from evading the electro-fishing boat. However, we have to

**1. Agenda item** Introduction

**Presenter** Tim Seipolt

provide a justification to DSE in order to use Fisheries electrofishing boat which is equipped to operate in brackish waters.

**Q – Why has Ultrasonication been discarded as an option?**

A - Trials have been held around Australia; however, there is insufficient data available on how it might affect humans and other aquatic organisms present within the lake system. The use of ultrasonication is a brutal approach that kills most organisms in the water. Further scientific testing is required to verify whether this is a sustainable method for managing algal biomass in small lake systems.

**Q – Has Melbourne Water spoken to Kingston City Council about possible options?**

A – MW advised it was planning to discuss potential Stormwater Urban Design options such as Ecopits.

**General comments**

- Suggestion to consider stormwater harvesting such as diverting water from roofs to holding basins and stormwater from the retirement village to put into the lakes to assist flushing of lakes.
- Suggestion that when re-stocking with fish to use more throughout the lakes and use bigger fish.
- Previous Carp nets were insufficient due to net size openings.

**Action items**

**Person responsible**

**Deadline**

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| 1. Provide comments on the presentation and proposal to Melbourne Water. | PLAC members | 23 March 11 |
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**7. Agenda item** Presentation of draft community engagement actions **Presenter** Louise Alexander

**Discussion**

MW presented a draft community engagement plan for the WQMP, including proposed community information sessions in May. At the 8 June meeting MW proposes to advise the committee how community feedback will be incorporated into the WQMP. The committee suggested including MW's other key stakeholders in the plan so they would know when council and MPs are being briefed.

MW advised that although consultation with the broader community would take place in May, some of the planned trials may proceed earlier.

MW advised it will continue to work on the electro-fishing trial, fish traps, sourcing of fish stock, investigate silt removal and planting, and increase the capacity of the bore licence up from 20ML per year.

**8. Agenda item** General Discussion

**Presenter** Joy Humphreys

**Discussion**

**Q – What about the bore water?**

A – There is a daily limit on the bore. The amount of water needed would not be sufficient to flush the lakes. It would also not be cost effective. It is suggested that MW increase the bore allocation to 40-60ML only.

**Q – Will MW have an ongoing relationship with Design Flow to follow the management plan through?**

A - When the plan is drafted MW and the community will have a chance to review it. The WQ management plan will provide a proposed sequence of actions to improve water quality within the lake system. It is expected that anyone would be able to implement it.

**Q – Will MW hold onto the data collected for this plan?**

A – Yes.

***Q – Will MW ever change the direction of the plan?***

A – MW values fresh opinions and ideas with the science evolving in the years to come. It's always important to re-evaluate. However, there will be commitment to the next WQMP from MW.

***Q – Why is this plan focusing more on vegetation regeneration than increasing water flow?***

A – These recommendations are not ground breaking, and are on the same page as other water quality experts. Design Flow has used contemporary knowledge, including research from the last 10 years. High flushing rates would be required for a plan that focused more on flow and that does not meet residents' requirements. The residents voted not to pay for higher cost options that would flush the lakes; these are the lower cost options.

***Q - A committee member suggested that water harvesting may be the better option and that perhaps Federal grants might be available.***

The main problem with this option is how we treat the water. An area equivalent to approximately 40% of the total lake area would be needed to adequately treat stormwater inflows. There isn't the space available. The potential volume of stormwater able to be directly diverted from houses roofs is small in relation to the overall volume of the lake system. The treatment and re-use of stormwater is more common in new estates where retrofitting is not required. This is not a viable option and is considered too expensive.

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Meeting adjourned at 7:26pm.