

Deputation to Adelaide City Council

Tuesday 23rd September, 2014

BHKC Stormwater Management Plan: Part B Report

My name is Ron Bellchambers and I live at 170 Brownhill Creek Road, Brown Hill Creek. I am a spokesperson for the No Dam in Brownhill Creek Community Action Group.

Good evening elected members and staff.
Good evening to the gallery.

The Part B Report, being presented to council tonight, is a ***robust*** report.

After weighing up extensive and independent technical advice, ***all*** 5 CEO'S from the Project Steering Group have a clear preference for No Dam Option D. It is obviously the best solution for the following reasons:

- No Dam Option D has the lowest capital cost, \$8.6 million less than a dam in Ellison's Gully, has the lowest annual maintenance cost, and brings Part B works within budget.
- It provides the required 100 year ARI level of flood protection and out of 400 properties at risk of flooding in Mitcham and Unley, ***none*** will be left with serious flooding.
- It provides the best protection for 100 year ARI short duration events, namely urban flash flooding. This is especially important for Unley and West Torrens.
- It is clearly the best environmental solution out of the 8 options, aiming to enhance Brownhill Creek under the guidance of the NRM Board.

- It saves officially documented heritage, and community amenity, in Brownhill Creek Recreation Park and Ellison's Gully.
- It satisfies the project councils' **endorsed** position to give preference to a feasible no dam solution, which resulted from widespread community opposition to a dam in Brownhill Creek.
- It does not require culverts in suburban streets and
- It provides a way forward to allow the final completion of the BHKC Stormwater Management Plan.

The spokesperson for the Project Steering Group, West Torrens' CEO Terry Buss has made it clear that:

- There is to be **no** 'land grab' of creek owners' properties under Option D and that creek owners will **not** lose any land.
- Easements will **not** be forced on creek owners and it will be up to creek owners to decide on easements or access agreements. Agreements will **not** be attached to a title.
- Natural sections of urban Brownhill Creek will **not** be concreted.
- Urban parks will **not** be decimated. Along Brownhill Creek, tree replacement with native trees and suitable native aquatic plants, will improve bio-diversity and habitat for native animals and birds.
- Widening of the creek at critical sections, called creek capacity upgrade works, will be no more than one metre, in almost all cases.

- The difference in average velocity of flow between Option D and the dam options is minor, ranging from 0.3-0.4 m/s. That's only 30-40% of walking pace.
- The claim that the cost of Option D will blow out as a result of additional compensation claims and legal action has been exaggerated. Compensation for easements has already been factored into the capital cost, and if creek owners reject easements then the cost will likely reduce. Under Section 131 of the NRM Act of 2004, creek owners have a legal responsibility to maintain the creek in 'good condition'.
- Creek Rehabilitation works will happen ***dam or no dam*** across all 8 options. 179 trees will be removed from the creek and replanted on the banks, private bridges replaced and rubbish and obstructions removed.
- Creek capacity upgrade works will be undertaken on 22 properties for options B1, B2 and D, ***dam or no dam***.
- **No Dam Option D only involves the removal and replanting of an additional 50 trees, none of which are significant, along with limited creek capacity upgrade works on an additional 44 properties.**
- It is hoped that many of these 44 creek owners will in fact support Option D when they realise the potential benefits. These benefits include direct flood protection, an improved creek environment, better flood insurance outcomes and the potential for improved property values, all paid for by the project.
- The irony is that creek owners in Denning Street Hawthorn, seemingly the epi-centre of unrest, will be subject to creek rehabilitation works and creek

capacity upgrade works ***even with a dam***. Please see the *Summary of Flood Mitigations Options* table in the report.

In Summary

An overall creek upgrade has to happen anyway and a dam is not the flood mitigation panacea that some are claiming.

The report clearly shows that a dam is ***not*** required in Brownhill Creek Recreation Park or Ellison's Gully and that No Dam Option D is in fact the ***best*** solution.

For us this is not ***just*** about stopping a dam, but improving the environmental outcome for Brownhill Creek as a whole and to this end we have formed Brownhill Creek Association Inc.

It's time to move forward and finally complete the Brown Hill Keswick Creek Stormwater Management Plan.

We respectfully ask Adelaide City Council to receive the Part B Report, in line with the recommendation from the CEO Steering Group, and support a 2015 Public Consultation on the preferred, No Dam Option D.

We thank elected members and staff for your work on this complex issue.

Thank you.