

MITCHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

"New Chapter"

Celebrating Thirty Years

*"Proud of our history and
committed to our future"*



Circa 1876

www.mitchamhistoricalsociety.org.au

Contact: Julie Hogan Ph: (08) 8338 3238

PO Box 903, MITCHAM SHOPPING CENTRE SA 5062

26th April 2012

The Steering Group

CEO Adelaide City Council Mr Peter Smith/General Manager Mr Tom McCready

CEO City of Burnside Mr Paul Deb

CEO City of Mitcham Mr Matt Pears

CEO City of Unley Mr Peter Tsokas

CEO City of West Torrens Mr Terry Buss

Dear CEO's,

Re: Proposed Dam in Brownhill Creek

We have serious concerns over the proposal to build a flood control dam in the Brownhill Creek Recreation Park, which contains **cultural, historic and environmental sites**. The building of a 12 metre high spillway dam will be a blot on the natural landscape, to one of the last original creek lines in the Adelaide Hills.

The proposed dam will not prevent homes from flooding in short duration rain events and has limited effect in long duration rain events up to a 1 in 50 ARI (2005 flood). Alternatives have been identified that provide effective flood mitigation in all rain events, up to and including a 1 in 100 ARI.

More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the catchment for the stormwater is below the proposed dam site and in the Keswick Creek catchment. The rural run off above the dam site could well be as low as 10% of the inflow for the overall catchment.

There have been no environmental impact assessments undertaken of the park area concerned. There are serious environmental implications to the threatened varieties of flora, fauna and fish species that exist in the park.

Brownhill Creek Recreation Park was set aside in 1841, predating the oldest National Parks in the world and has been designated as a *heritage site*. It contains a traditional Kaurna camping site, colonial heritage sites, as well as important plant rehabilitation sites. Mitcham Village was originally established because of its proximity to Brownhill Creek Valley and the historical sites in the valley are vital links with the history of the entire Mitcham area. The park provides a unique rural landscape less than 10km from the city centre and is a major tourist attraction to the area.

It is proposed to put a natural, Heritage Park at risk due to the inability of the relevant authorities to have respect for our natural resources. This situation has come about with past poor planning of our urban development throughout several Council areas in the Brownhill/Keswick Creek Flood plain.

Channel upgrades, strict guidelines to planning and future development, creek maintenance and community awareness is imperative. Modern, viable alternatives to the proposed dam should be considered by the Brownhill/ Keswick Creek Stormwater Project Authorities.

We are instructed to blindly accept the out-dated dam proposal when even the Project Director, Michael Salkeld admitted (Eastern Courier 21.12.2011) “*the height of the side walls was unknown*”. The proposed dam has been referred to as a small earth dam, blending into the environment, which is untrue.

Due to ANCOLD guidelines the proposed dam will be a large, highly engineered, concrete structure, requiring freeboard of three metres above spillway height, making the overall height 15 metres or five storeys high. **This dam should not be constructed as a result of public fear and ignorance.**

The Draft Stormwater Management Plan does have certain strategies proposed such as “natural” detention basins, bypass and diversion culverts, channel upgrades and bridge works which are essential projects and for which we support. We believe that any new residential development to be undertaken in flood affected areas must adhere to strict planning guidelines, that must be implemented now. Over development in flood affected urban areas has severely restricted stormwater absorption. Rainwater tanks, underground detention systems, the raising of housing foundation levels and road kerbs, permeable road areas, driveways and paved areas, would all assist in combating any flood potential. Several of the Councils in the flood prone areas need to carry out regular CCTV investigations of their current stormwater systems for material build-up.

We, as custodians of our current environment, have a duty to make intelligent decisions for the benefit of future generations to come. **The history that we have all around us, exists only from the protection and preservation by others before us.**

We request that you look seriously into this matter, as the dam proposal in Brownhill Creek will have an enormous impact to not only our local, but also to our wider community.

Yours faithfully

JULIE HOGAN
CHAIRPERSON,
MITCHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

Copy to:

Mr Barry J Grear AO
Presiding Member
Stormwater Management
Authority
Level 1
GPO Box 2834
ADELAIDE SA 5001
CC. members of the
Stormwater Management
Board

Lord Mayor Stephen Yarwood
And
CEO Mr Peter Smith
Adelaide City Council
GPO Box 2252
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Mayor Lachlan Clyne
And
CEO Mr Peter Tsokas
City of Unley
PO Box 1
UNLEY SA 5061

Mayor David Parkin
And
CEO Mr Paul Deb
City of Burnside
PO Box 9
GLENSIDE SA 5065

Mayor John Trainer
And
CEO Mr Terry Buss
City of West Torrens
165 Sir Donald Bradman Drive
HILTON SA 5033

Mayor Michael Picton
And
CEO Mr Matt Pears
City of Mitcham
PO Box 21
Mitcham Shopping Centre
TORRENS PARK SA 5062