

22 March 2025

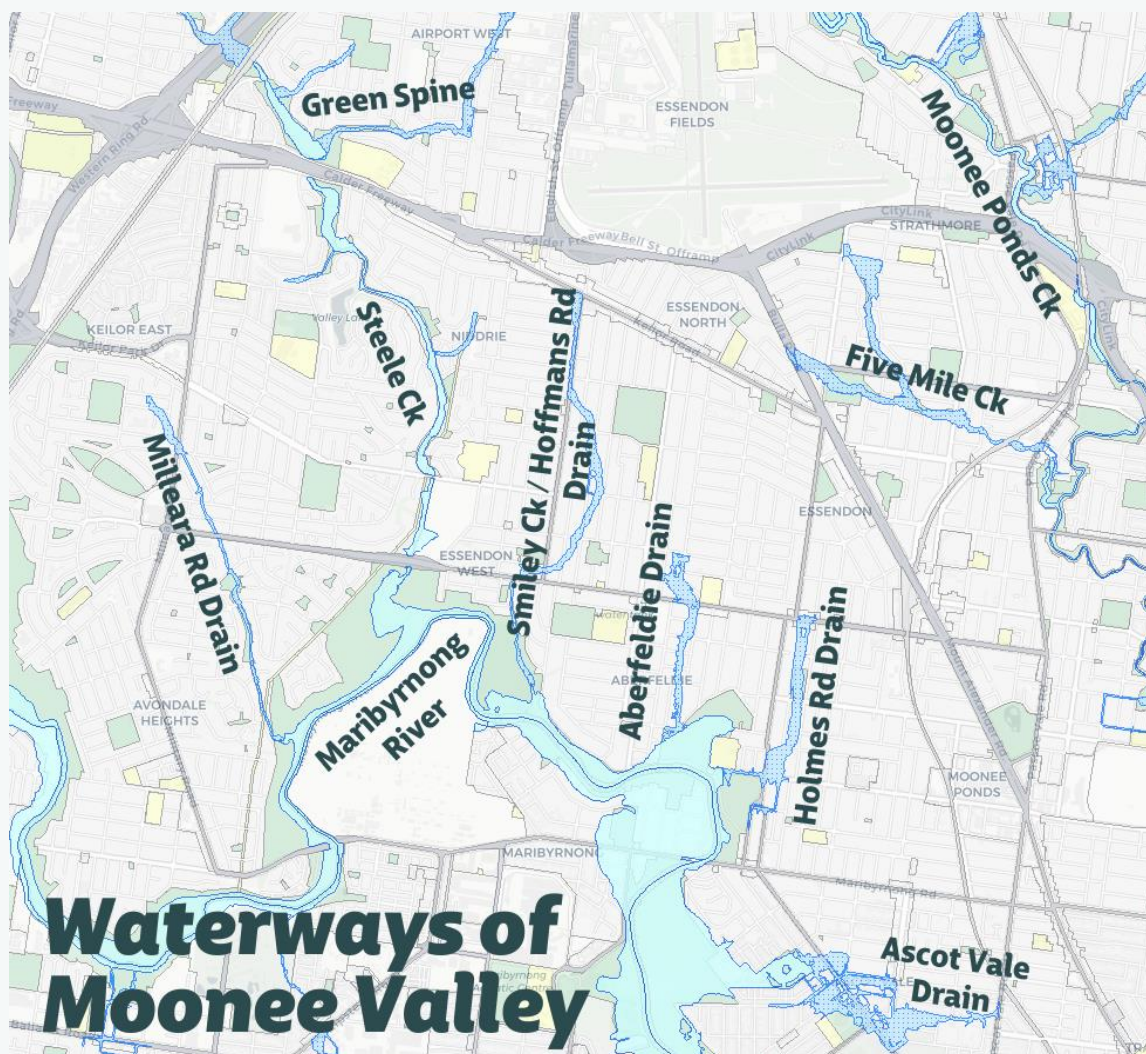
Support for strengthening Planning Protections for Melbourne's Waterways

We recognise that waterways hold deep cultural significance for Traditional Owners, serving as places for connection and reflection and as such we endorse the recognition of waterways as interconnected, living entities.

Planning protections that acknowledge waterways as systems with intrinsic value, supporting ecological and cultural life and respect mutual, reparative relationships between humans and nature will help to ensure that development does not disrupt these systems that are essential to our environment, culture and wellbeing.

We strongly support the introduction of meaningful planning controls to protect our waterways.

Key waterways for us are the **Maribyrnong River, Moonee Ponds Creek** and **Steele Creek**, as well as local waterways **Smiley Creek** and **Five Mile Creek**.



Our rivers and creeks are **natural corridors** and support **biodiversity**, providing **crucial habitat** for native wildlife and species movement, improving water quality, and helping to reduce urban heat.

Based on Paul Boon's "[Widths of riparian corridors required to fulfil various ecological functions: a literature review](#)" (2024) we recommend that the riparian buffer zone be either **set or maintained at a minimum of 50m and where possible extended to 100m**. To that end we also strongly support the introduction of permits for the **removal of native vegetation** knowing that riparian zones also play a critical role in reducing stormwater impacts, and facilitating ecological connectivity.

We also support permits for building alterations, developments above 6 metres, changes to ground level of 600mm or more near a waterway, constructing a fence and developments that are less than 50m from the bank of a waterway. These built environment interventions can lead to erosion, pollution, habitat loss, reduced amenity, and restriction of wildlife movement and need to have careful consideration of their impacts. Larger developments (floor areas greater than 50m²) should be thoroughly assessed for environmental impacts.

Having a suite of strong planning controls over the next 10 years has the potential to act as a powerful climate calming salve. This is critical if we want to address the impacts of climate change and create a cool, safe climate for generations to come.

Moonee Valley Sustainability fully supports the introduction of these planning protections and urges the Department of Transport and Planning to rigorously enforce them. Furthermore we encourage the Department to embrace the concept of waterways as living entities so that our approach to waterways is one of stewardship rather than resource management ensuring these systems thrive into the future.

We are happy to have had the opportunity to provide feedback on the development of the proposed waterways planning protections. We look forward to welcoming a framework of stronger, enforceable measures that protect our waterways.

Yours Sustainably,

Logan Shield, Angela Clarke, Teresa Day, Valerie Thiessen, Ganga Selvarajan, Veronica Snook, Supriya Perera

Moonee Valley Sustainability

For a climate safe and pollution free Moonee Valley for all

About Us

Moonee Valley Sustainability (MVS) is a grassroots, volunteer run, community group and registered charity.

Our members and volunteers regularly engage in waterway clean-ups and advocacy, nature-strip planting, tree planting and campaigns for local climate solutions.

Our **Vision** is a *climate safe and pollution free Moonee Valley for all.*

Our **Mission** is to *inspire our community to care for Country and act on climate.*

