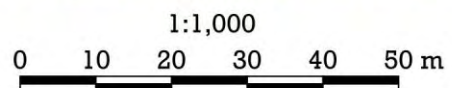
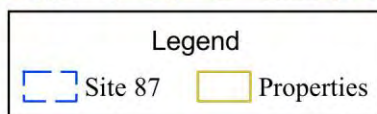


## Site 87. 149-151 Napoleon Rd, Ferntree Gully

Land at the rear of two vacant residential lots in an area undergoing redevelopment.

Summary of significant features:

- Locally significant: viable populations of several plant species threatened with dying out in Knox;
- A regionally-endangered Ecological Vegetation Class (Swampy Woodland) in fair to poor ecological condition;
- Large, old eucalypts with hollows suitable for hollow-dependent native fauna.



### Boundaries

This site is outlined with blue dashes on the aerial photograph. The boundaries other than the northwestern one coincide with cadastral boundaries of 149 and 151 Napoleon Rd. The northwestern edge is drawn parallel to the southeastern boundary and 50 m from it. The site boundary does not fully follow cadastral boundaries in this case because it seems possible to develop the rest of the lots without unreasonably affecting the significant vegetation.

No change has been made to the boundary for this edition.

**Land use & tenure:** Vacant residential properties.

### Site description

This 0.29-hectare site is located near the base of a northern spur of the Lysterfield Hills. The bedrock is the Lower Devonian 'Humevale' siltstone. The slope is very shallow, facing southwest, with a shallow drainage line through it. The elevation is 84–86 m.

The site has a natural density of remnant trees over an area of 1,500 m<sup>2</sup> (mainly on 151 Napoleon Rd) and patchy cover elsewhere. There are some moderately large trees containing natural hollows. Indigenous understorey vegetation has been reduced by a history of grazing and probably mowing. Nevertheless, patches of remnant and regenerating shrubs and groundcover persist.

### Relationship to other land

The site is rather isolated from other areas of remnant vegetation. Indigenous vegetation is depleted within the surrounding residential area. The nearest areas with more than just scattered trees are 800 m north and northeast on Monbulk Ck (Site 66, p. 448) and 900 m southwest on the Kelletts Rd roadside corridor (Site 95, p. 618). This site is now too small to serve as much of an ecological 'stepping-stone' for movements of fauna between larger areas of habitat.

**Bioregion:** Gippsland Plain

### Habitat type

Swampy Woodland (EVC 937, **regionally Endangered**): Total area 0.2 ha, mostly in poor condition (rating D). The following description of vegetation structure is based on a botanical survey in 2002, updated where possible from inspections up to 2024 from Napoleon Rd.

Canopy trees: Dominated by *Eucalyptus ovata*, with some *E. cephalocarpa* and *E. radiata*. There is a good cover of older remnant trees.

Sub-canopy trees: Scattered specimens of *Acacia melanoxylon*, with some *Exocarpos cupressiformis* and *Melaleuca ericifolia*. The introduced *Pittosporum undulatum* is fairly abundant.

Shrubs: Shrub layer vegetation has been greatly depleted by past clearing and grazing. Some *Ozothamnus ferrugineus* and a few other indigenous shrubs have regenerated.

Vines and ferns: Absent.

Groundcover: Patches of indigenous sedges and grasses persist in the least disturbed areas, including *Gahnia radula* and *Microlaena stipoides*.

### Plant species

The following wild, indigenous plant species have been observed in the site. All site inspections were in winter; additional species would no doubt be detectable in other seasons or in a full botanical survey. The column headed 'Risk' indicates the indigenous species' risk of dying out in Knox, with 'C'=Critically endangered, 'E'=Endangered and 'V'=Vulnerable.

Risk	Wild indigenous species	Risk	Wild indigenous species
V	<i>Acacia melanoxylon</i> , Blackwood	V	<i>Exocarpos cupressiformis</i> , Cherry Ballart
V	<i>Coprosma quadrifida</i> , Prickly Currant-bush	C	<i>Gahnia radula</i> , Thatch Saw-sedge
	<i>Dianella longifolia</i> var. <i>longifolia</i> , Pale Flax-lily		<i>Lomandra longifolia</i> , Spiny-headed Mat-rush
V	<i>Eucalyptus goniocalyx</i> , Bundy	E	<i>Melaleuca ericifolia</i> , Swamp Paperbark
V	<i>Eucalyptus ovata</i> , Swamp Gum		<i>Microlaena stipoides</i> , Weeping Grass
E	<i>Eucalyptus radiata</i> , Narrow-leaved Peppermint	V	<i>Ozothamnus ferrugineus</i> , Tree Everlasting

## Fauna of special significance

None recorded.

## Fauna habitat features

The good cover of remnant trees within the site provides a habitat refuge for forest and woodland birds in an area otherwise substantially depleted of suitable habitat. The larger Swamp Gums occurring within the site contain natural hollows suitable as shelter and breeding locations for possums, bats, birds and invertebrates. Nesting activity by Sulphur-crested Cockatoos was observed during the 2002 site inspection. Stick nests were also apparent in some trees, potentially utilised by raptors or ravens.

## Significance ratings

The following is an assessment of the site's biological significance against the Department of Energy, Environment & Climate Action's standard criteria (Amos 2004).

### *Regionally Endangered Ecological Vegetation Class*

Swampy Woodland is regionally endangered. Criterion 3.2.3 of Amos (2004) treats any 'remnant patch' of such vegetation as being of State or Regional significance, depending on the habitat score. For these purposes, a 'remnant patch' is defined as a continuous area of at least 0.25 ha in which the cover of native understorey is at least 10% throughout. In this case, the extent of native vegetation is too small to qualify as a 'remnant patch' and so the standard criteria do not recognise any significance for the presence of the regionally-endangered Swampy Woodland.

### *Locally-threatened plant species*

At least some of the locally-threatened plant species listed above have viable populations (except for the risk that the site may be cleared for residential development), thereby meeting criterion 3.1.5 for **Local** significance.

## Threats

- Potential residential development, possibly resulting in direct vegetation removal, root severance and/or modification of drainage. Greater drainage would reduce the availability of soil moisture for the swamp-loving indigenous plants;
- Human-induced climate change, which is predicted to cause more severe droughts, heatwaves and storms, as well as substantially lower rainfall (particularly in winter);
- Further deterioration of the mediocre health of the reserve's eucalypts, which are quite vulnerable to the abovementioned droughts and storms;
- Displacement of indigenous flora by environmental weeds, particularly Sweet Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*);
- Loss or decline of plant species whose populations are so small that they are vulnerable to inbreeding, poor reproductive success or elimination by incidents such as being struck by a falling tree limb.

## Strategic planning

- The previous (2010) edition of this report led to this site being covered by Schedule 2 of the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO2) because of the presence of the regionally-endangered Swampy Woodland. There has been no material change since 2010, so no amendment to ESO2 is needed.
- The land is zoned Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Schedule 5.

## Information sources used in this assessment

- An ecological survey undertaken by Rik Brown on 3rd June 2002 for the first edition of this report. This included a description of the composition and condition of the vegetation, compilation of lists of indigenous and introduced plant species, incidental fauna observations, and checks for fauna habitat, ecological threats, management issues and populations of scarce or threatened plant species;
- Viewing of the site by Dr Lorimer from Napoleon Rd during the period in which the adjacent Rathgar Rd properties were being cleared, and again on 10/3/08;
- An inspection of the site by Dr Lorimer on 28th July 2014 to check for habitat-related matters that might inform the Knox Housing Strategy review;

- An inspection of the site from a distance by Dr Lorimer on 2nd June 2024, checking for changes in features relevant to this report compared with pre-existing information;
- A search for records of flora and fauna observations stored in the Atlas of Living Australia;
- Aerial and satellite imagery from between 1976 and 2025;
- The Victorian Government's 'NatureKit' website;
- Maps of geology, topography and strategic planning information produced by agencies of the Victorian Government.

## Road and Rail Corridors

Sites 88–97 on the coming pages contain road and rail reserves. Note that some other road reservations are included within other sites, e.g. verges of roads passing through the Dandenong Valley Parklands.