Site 116b. Taylors Lane Roadside, Rowville

A corridor of remnant vegetation mixed with revegetation and planted Australian native trees.

Summary of significant features:

- Locally significant: viable populations of five tree species threatened with dying out in Knox;
- Locally significant: a habitat link between Hillside Park (Site 68) and Corhanwarrabul Creek (Site 66);
- The remnant vegetation within the site belongs to the regionally-endangered type, Valley Heathy Forest.

Boundaries

The site appears on the aerial photograph and map at p. 449. It extends from the western edge of the Taylors Lane road formation to the boundaries with industrial properties, and from Valleyview Drive in the north to a remnant eucalypt beside the driveway of 131 Taylors Lane in the south. However, the raised gardens beds and adjacent lawn next to that eucalypt are excluded. The precise boundary can be seen in the Knox Biodiversity Atlas that accompanies this report.

Land use & tenure: Council reserve and roadside, used for nature conservation, storage of logs, pedestrian thoroughfare and informal parking.

Site description

This site measures 590 m north-south and an average of 40 m east-west.

There is a band of remnant vegetation typically 15 m wide along the site's eastern edge. It contains a patchy cover of remnant trees and patches of remnant native understorey (mostly a few shrubs and native grasses). These are vestiges of the regionally-endangered Ecological Vegetation Class, Valley Heathy Forest (ecological condition rating D), with six eucalypt species and 28 other indigenous plant species. The remnant vegetation has been extensively supplemented with plantings of indigenous species over the past 15–20 years, much of it now mature and some of it into a second generation.

Abutting the western edge of that band, running the full length of the site, is an earth track lined with logs from trees that have been removed around the municipality. Heavy machinery and trucks move the logs around, sometimes with little regard for knocking over or crushing the adjacent native vegetation and revegetation.

To the west of the log-lined track is a strip of mature Australian native trees (mainly Red Ironbark, wattles and hakeas) and much younger revegetation with indigenous species;

Relationship to other land

The vegetation represents a habitat link between Hillside Park (Site 68, p. 460) and Corhanwarrabul Creek (Site 66, p. 448). The degree to which it is actually used by fauna has not been investigated.

Bioregion: Gippsland Plain

Habitat type

Valley Heathy Forest (EVC 127, regionally **Endangered**)

Canopy trees: Dominated by *Eucalyptus cephalocarpa* and *E. melliodora*.

Sub-canopy trees: Dominated by *Exocarpos cupressiformis* and *Acacia mearnsii*. *Acacia melanoxylon* and *Allocasuarina littoralis* are also present.

Shrubs: Remnant shrubs are restricted to patches of *Acacia paradoxa*. *Bursaria spinosa* is among the shrub species that have been planted and it has produced a second generation.

Vines: *Billardiera mutabilis* is scattered.

Ferns: Absent.

Groundcover: The more natural areas have a dense cover of indigenous grasses, dominated by *Microlaena stipoides* and with substantial numbers of *Austrostipa rudis, Lomandra filiformis, Poa morrisii, Rytidosperma setaceum* and *Lepidosperma gunnii*. There are hundreds of *Arthropodium strictum* and substantial numbers

of *Gonocarpus tetragynus* and *Tricoryne elatior*. *Dichondra repens* and indigenous mosses (particularly *Thuidiopsis furfurosa*) form a stratum beneath the grasses and wildflowers.

Plant species

The author observed the following indigenous plant species growing wild (not just planted) in the site on 3rd October 2024. No other wild plant species have been recorded but additional grass species would be detectable in summer. The column headed 'Risk' indicates the indigenous species' risk of dying out in Knox, with 'E'=Endangered and 'V'=Vulnerable.

Risk	Wild indigenous species
V	*Acacia mearnsii*, Black Wattle
V	*Acacia melanoxylon*, Blackwood
	Acacia paradoxa, Hedge Wattle
V	*Allocasuarina littoralis*, Black Sheoak
	Anthosachne scabra, Common Wheat-grass
	Arthropodium strictum, Chocolate Lily
	Austrostipa rudis subsp. *rudis*, Veined Spear-grass
	Bursaria spinosa, Sweet Bursaria (offspring of planted plants)
	Cassinia aculeata, Common Cassinia
	Cotula australis, Common Cotula
	Crassula decumbens, Spreading Crassula
	Dianella revoluta, Black-anther Flax-lily
E	*Eucalyptus cephalocarpa*, Mealy Stringybark
V	*Eucalyptus goniocalyx*, Bundy
E	*Eucalyptus melliodora*, Yellow Box
E	*Eucalyptus obliqua*, Messmate Stringybark
V	*Eucalyptus ovata*, Swamp Gum
E	*Eucalyptus radiata*, Narrow-leaved Peppermint

Risk	Wild indigenous species
V	*Exocarpos cupressiformis*, Cherry Ballart
	Juncus bufonius, Toad Rush
	Juncus pallidus, Pale Rush
E	*Juncus subsecundus*, Finger Rush
	Lomandra filiformis subsp. *coriacea*, Wattle Mat-rush
	Lomandra filiformis subsp. *filiformis*, Wattle Mat-rush
	Lomandra longifolia, Spiny-headed Mat-rush (offspring of planted plants)
	Microlaena stipoides, Weeping Grass
	Poa morrisii, Soft Tussock-grass
	Rytidosperma racemosum, Clustered Wallaby-grass
	Rytidosperma setaceum, Bristly Wallaby-grass
	Rytidosperma ?*fulvum*, a wallaby-grass
	Senecio quadridentatus, Cotton Fireweed
	Themeda triandra, Kangaroo Grass
	Tricoryne elatior, Yellow Rush-lily
V	*Veronica gracilis*, Slender Speedwell

Fauna of special significance

None recorded.

Fauna habitat features

The density of trees and shrubs within the site provides good habitat for invertebrates and forest birds in an area otherwise substantially depleted of suitable habitat. Urban-adapted parrot species are fairly abundant. The stockpiled logs represent good habitat for some invertebrate species and reptiles.

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).

Ecological Integrity and Viability

As noted above under the heading, 'Relationship to other land', this site might function like a habitat corridor for native birds and flying insects moving between Hillside Park (Site 68) and Corhanwarrabul Creek (Site 66, p. 448). Such movements would be only locally important. This represents **Local** significance under criterion 1.2.6.

Regionally Endangered Ecological Vegetation Class

The site's native vegetation is slightly too fragmented for any of it to meet the definition of a 'remnant patch' adopted by the criteria, i.e. a continuous area of at least 0.25 ha in which the cover of native understorey is at least 10% throughout; However, some of the vegetation comes close to meeting that definition. If it did (as it may one day do), it would be of State significance under criterion 3.2.3. Unfortunately, the difference between

0.25 ha and 0.24 ha is the difference between State significance and no significance at all under the standard criteria.

Locally Threatened Plants

Apart from *Eucalyptus obliqua* and *Veronica gracilis* (one individual each), all the site's other locally-threatened species have viable populations. Each of those species thereby meets criterion 3.1.5 for **Local** significance.

Threats

- Human-induced climate change, which is predicted to cause more severe droughts, heatwaves and storms, as well as substantially lower rainfall (particularly in winter);
- Damage to native vegetation by careless dumping or moving of logs;
- Loss or decline of plant species whose populations are so small that they are vulnerable to inbreeding, poor reproductive success or elimination by chance events such as being struck by a falling tree limb or a rolling log.

Strategic planning

The habitat value of this site has increased so much since the previous (2010) edition of this report that it has become worthy of planning protection under Schedule 2 of the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO2).

Information sources used in this assessment

- A survey undertaken by Rik Brown on 15th July 2002 for the first edition of this report, including compilation of lists of indigenous and introduced plant species, incidental fauna observations and vegetation mapping/descriptions;
- A botanical survey of the site by Dr Lorimer on 3rd October 2024, compiling a list of wild indigenous plant species and checking for changes in features relevant to this report compared with pre-existing information;
- Records of flora and fauna observations stored in Knox City Council's biodiversity database;
- A search (in vain) for records of flora and fauna observations stored in the Atlas of Living Australia;
- Aerial and satellite imagery from between 1946 and 2025;
- The Victorian Government's 'NatureKit' website;
- Maps of geology, topography and strategic planning information produced by agencies of the Victorian Government.