Reimagining the landscape

The inspiring new vision for the Underbank environment

Prepared by the Underbank Project Team, December 2015.
With a significant history as a successful stud farm, Underbank respects its past. And now, as it enters a new chapter as an evolutionary masterplanned community, we can reimagine its future.

Rolling hills, sweeping views, wide-open spaces and natural waterways make Underbank an undiscovered gem.

Reinvigorating the landscape is a cornerstone of the new development, from the entire ecosystem down to the smallest plant.

Residents will benefit from a variety of green parks, open space, relaxing streams, boardwalks and walking trails – meticulously planned over a number of years by a team of industry-leading experts.
Defined by its unique topography—rolling hills, beautiful sweeping views and open space—Underbank is a mature landscape and a site of great natural value.

Two waterways—The Werribee River and Korkuperrimul Creek—flow through Underbank, as well as two smaller waterways.

Inaccessible for many years to the public, the outstanding landscape of Underbank is now being brought back to life.

Underbank sits within a bioregion known as the Central Victorian Uplands. As such, it is home to a number of large old trees including grand Red River Gums, bottlebrushes, acacias and other wattles. The flowers of the iconic native Fragrant Saltbush (Rhagodia parabolica) are found scattered across the site in large patches, and the land is home to a wide range of kangaroos, wallabies, owls and native birds.

Landscape
// An undiscovered gem
Unlike many other developments, Underbank boasts a range of existing natural assets that can be reinvigorated and incorporated into the new masterplan environment, enhancing the natural setting for residents.

A Flora, Fauna and Net Gain Assessment was undertaken to assess the environmental values of the Underbank development site. The report found that areas within Underbank have a number of areas supporting an ‘intact’ indigenous understorey that could benefit greatly from the planned conservation and renewal.

Areas of large, significant indigenous trees
Native grassy woodlands
A healthy range of smaller trees of varying age and size
The iconic Fragrant Saltbush
A wide range of common native bird species.

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The Underbank Project Team have a steadfast commitment to not only preserve environmental conditions of value, but also improve the natural environment – through reinvigorating and renewing waterways, indigenous plantings and overall landscape.

How is Underbank different to other new estates in the area?
What’s really special about Underbank is the landscape, and in particular the undulation of the topography. There are rolling hills in every direction.

And those hills and valleys are home to existing vegetation?
That’s right. And we’re protecting and retaining as many trees as possible. We’re being very environmentally sensitive which is not only sustainable, it’s the right thing to do.

As well as retaining vegetation, will there be new plantings?
Yes, but we don’t want to be too forceful – we want to make it a natural experience. That’s why we’ve already completed some early planting around the estate to continue the natural vegetation and establish new plant life now. There will be new species, but they will be predominantly native.

Have you also been influenced by the heritage of Underbank?
Absolutely, our overall approach has been to engage with the heritage of the site. Underbank has such a significant history within the horse racing history, as the site of a previous stud farm and a place with an association with Phar Lap. More recently Underbank is known as a popular holiday destination where children could enjoy horse riding.

How have you incorporated that history?
We’re building on the heritage of its past as a centre of horseracing by keeping and extending the classic fences, and maintaining some of the stud farm’s buildings and other structures.

What new elements will the masterplan include?
In terms of urban design, we’re exploring ideas including feature stone walls, shelters, artworks, sculptures and of course vantage points to admire the scenery as residents walk around. There are really nice aspects, especially within the parks and the creek reserves, so we want to maintain those long sweeping views.

What do you imagine the finished community will look like?
I believe when it’s complete, everything will be a seamless blend between the new homes, the new landscape development and the natural environment.

“While creating contemporary streetscapes and built forms, our design has also been informed by the existing aesthetics of the township. We’ve been inspired by the character of Grant Street, the beautiful Avenue of Honour and the overall community atmosphere.”

—Andrew Tamme, Masterplan Designer, Taylors
Respect—Reinvigorate—Renew

Respecting Underbank’s history by protecting and conserving existing flora across the site wherever possible.

Improving waterways and general environment allowing species to recover through propagation and other processes.

Breathe new life into the landscape by carefully introducing other native species to expand and improve the overall natural environment.
The Underbank masterplan takes its planning and design cues from our most loved cities and towns world-wide, to create a vibrant human environment in balance with the outstanding natural assets that are a feature of the land.

Continuous green corridors will run alongside reinvigorated waterways, along with shared bike and walking trails. Several pocket parks and waterside reserves will be dotted throughout Underbank, enriching the health and wellbeing of everyone who will live here.

Underbank is a carefully planned estate, supported by generous corridors of open space, waterways and walking trails.

The masterplan vision for Underbank is based upon traditional neighbourhood design principles. It will be a vibrant human environment; a place designed for people to live, work and play.

Each neighbourhood within Underbank will have a logical sequence and relationship with the prominent green corridors. This greenway system translates to a clear network of off-road thoroughfares which link Underbank internally as well as to the centre of Bacchus Marsh, the train station and the Werribee Gorge State Park to the west.

The plan enhances these natural features offered by the site, in particular the creek corridors, gullies and Werribee River flats. Natural assets have been incorporated into permanent greenways, stands of important trees preserved, and prominent topographic features are also incorporated into the public open space system.
A holistic management plan will ensure the waterways of Underbank are preserved and reinvigorated, for the benefit of both residents and the natural environment.

As a focal point of the development, the waterways will be surrounded by expansive green corridors providing open space, activity zones and boardwalks.

A variety of initiatives and features will be incorporated into the waterways plan.

Water as a “focal” point
Water will be prominently featured, with trails and parklands integrated into the immediate area for residents to explore and enjoy.

Raised walking areas
Boardwalks and bridges across creeks to minimise impact on existing indigenous vegetation.

Improved water quality
New landscaping and planting will assist erosion control and improve water quality.

Incorporating creek elements
Bringing creek elements into the landscape design of the community, ensuring harmonious surroundings throughout.

Left: Indicative examples of the above landscape design concepts and features.
The masterplan of Underbank promotes health and wellbeing. Walking trails, activity nodes and open space will feature prominently, along with reinvigorated waterways and surrounds.
Flora

// A natural beauty
Revegetation is an integral part of the development plan.

Plans have been developed, guided by the overarching principle of using hardy indigenous species that will establish well in the challenging environment. Complemented by other native and exotic species, it ensures a sensitive approach towards conserving and enhancing the Underbank landscape.

Some key character elements under consideration within the revegetation plan include the following:

- Rehabilitation of the Korkyppermul Creek corridor through the planting of indigenous trees, shrubs and groundcovers – to upgrade the habitat values and water quality of the creek.
- Evoking a home-grown, country town feel through alignment of the landscape treatment with the urban design concept.
- Creating a ‘sense of place’ within key public nodes and a visual link with the surrounding Baccus Marsh area by using similar tree species from the township.
- WISUD principles such as use of appropriate vegetation, permeable paving and rain water harvesting to promote the ecologically sensitive elements of the development.

The revegetation of key areas will feature a careful selection of proposed indigenous and introduced species.

**Revegetation Species: Tall / Large Shrubs & Trees**
- Grey Box
- Eucalyptus microcarpa
  - 20 x 5 metres
- Yellow Gum
  - Eucalyptus leucoxylon
  - 25 x 6 metres
- River Red Gum
  - Eucalyptus camaldulensis
  - 20 x 15 metres
- Ironbark
  - Eucalyptus sideroxylon ssp. tricarpa
  - 25 x 5 metres

**Revegetation Species: Small Shrubs & Ground Covers**
- Lightwood
  - Acacia implexa
  - 8 x 4 metres
- Black Wattle
  - Acacia mearnsii
  - 10 x 6 metres
- Golden Wattle
  - Acacia pycnantha
  - 5 x 5 metres
- Creeping Saltbush
  - Atriplex semibaccata
  - 2 x 2 metres
- Fragrant Saltbush
  - Rhagodia parabolica
  - 1 x 2 metres
- Nodding Saltbush
  - Einaida nutans ssp. nutans
  - 1 x 1 metres
- Ruby Saltbush
  - Enchylaena tomentosa
  - 1 x 1 metres
- Tree Violet
  - Melicytus dentata
  - 2 x 2 metres
- Boobialla
  - Myoporium insulare
  - 5 x 5 metres

**Grasses**
- Spear Grass
  - Austrostipa spp.
  - 3 spread
- Wattle Mat Rush
  - Lomandra filiformis
  - 3 spread

**Planting Palette: Shrubs**
- Silky Oak
  - Grevillea robusta
  - 20 x 8 metres
- Drooping Sheoak
  - Allocasuarina verticillata
  - 10 x 5 metres
- Silver Banksia
  - Banksia marginata
  - 6 x 8 metres
- Tree Violet
  - Hymenanthera dentata
  - 2 x 2 metres
- Woody TeaTREE
  - Leptospermum ligatum
  - 4 x 4 metres

**Planting Palette: Small Shrubs & Ground Covers**
- Common Everlasting
  - Chrysocephalum apiculatum
  - 1 metre spread
- Small leaved Clematis
  - Clematis micropylia
  - 3 metre spread
- Rock Correa
  - Correa glabra
  - 1 metre spread
- Spreading Flax Lily
  - Dianella revoluta
  - 1 metre spread
- Spiny-headed Mat Rush
  - Lomandra longifolia
  - 1 metre spread
A natural advantage
For sales enquiries, please email info@underbank.com.au