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SCHEDULE 6 TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OVERLAY

Shown on the planning scheme map as ESO6

COOPER STREET GRASSLAND

1.0 Statement of environmental significance

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The 75 hectare site is a contiguous remnant grassland generally dominated by Themeda triandra (Kangaroo grass), with other native tussock grasses dominating the more disturbed areas to the south. In some sections an overstorey of Eucalyptus camaldulensis (Red Gum) and Acacia implexa (Lightwood) remains and the site provides a range of habitat niches. It also forms part of an important habitat link extending along Merri Creek to the Craigieburn Grassland.

The grassland is of state significance due to its large size, its floristic values, the number of rare ecosystem types, and the presence of two vulnerable faunal species listed under the Endangered Species Protection Act 1992. It is also of regional significance for its diversity and environmental value in providing a regional habitat link.

The ability to maintain the biodiversity and durability of the grassland is dependent on retaining existing vegetation and encouraging revegetation based on indigenous species.

2.0 Environmental objective to be achieved

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To protect and enhance the size, floristic and faunal habitat values and diversity of this rare site of regional and state significance.

3.0 Permit requirement

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A permit is required to remove native vegetation.

An application to remove native vegetation must indicate:

- The total extent of vegetation on the property and the extent of native vegetation proposed to be cleared.
- The purpose of the proposed clearing and any proposals for revegetation, including proposed species, and ground stabilisation.
- A report by a suitable qualified person which describes the vegetation and habitat significance of the site, to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

4.0 Decision guidelines

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Before deciding on an application, the responsible authority must consider:

- The effect of the proposed removal of native vegetation on the habitat value and long term viability of remnant grasses in the vicinity.
- The significance of the native vegetation area.
- The reason for removing the vegetation and the practicality of alternative options which do not require removal of the native vegetation.

References

Sites of Faunal and Habitat Significance in North East Melbourne (1997).

Remnant Native Grasslands and Grassy Woodlands of the Melbourne area; An action plan for conservation based on biological values (1990).

Merri Creek Concept Plan: Flora and Fauna Study (1993).