

## 4. SITE ASSESSMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS/OPPORTUNITY ANALYSIS

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### 4.1 Constraints and Opportunities Assessments

A thorough assessment of the Farmers Creek corridor and its surrounds – especially adjoining or nearby open space and pathways networks, or natural vegetation areas – provided an essential foundation for the masterplan’s preparation.

The recreation and environmental assets and constraints/opportunities presented for a public open space or vegetated corridor and the development of a shared path and recreation facilities, were comprehensively assessed over a series of on-site investigations for each of the following twelve planning units (refer to Figure 2 for location of planning units):

- Farmers Creek (Planning Units FC1 to FC10);
- Vale of Clywdd Creek (Planning Unit VoCC3 only – Planning Unit VoCC2 was not assessed in detail due to being non-contiguous with the other public lands in the project area); and
- State Mine Creek (Planning Unit SMC2).

A constraints and opportunities plan was prepared, accompanied by a summary constraints and opportunities table, for each planning unit – as provided in Appendix 3. These provide a more detailed description, and graphic presentation, of the constraints and opportunities of each planning unit.

A range of attributes were assessed during the on-site investigations for each planning unit, including:

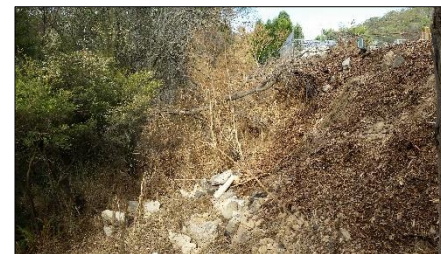
- the width of the public land corridor along the creek, and the on-ground location of the physical creek channel relative to the “cadastral creek corridor” (a key determinant of Council’s ability to access and undertake on-ground works along particular sections of the creek);
- other public lands, such as Council open space or Crown lands, as well as road reserves;
- other tenures – notably Rail Corp lands;
- existing access infrastructure – shared paths, bitumen pathways, footpaths (including footpaths and road verges in surrounding streets – as possible alternative or interim routes), laneways and on-road cycleways – these were assessed as either shared path standard or “not to standard”;
- open space, parklands and existing recreation facilities, including toilets and drinking water;
- potential leisure, recreation or education facility sites;
- possible access points to the creek corridor – both point access and areas of “open” or “unconfined” access;
- potential conflict points, especially between walkers or cyclists and vehicles (or trains), and potential road crossings;
- “trample track” and informal paths – indicating current use patterns;
- possible creek crossing points;



- “pinch points – such as narrow bridges, limited public land, intruding fences, power poles, and other obstructions or impediments to a shared path;
- physical barriers to a shared path, and locations not suitable for shared path construction due to significant physical constraints (scarps and steep banks, narrow benches, undercut or eroding sections, etc.);
- locations likely to require additional construction or design measures, and expense, to accommodate a shared path – such as sloped banks/benches, dips, stormwater outlets, etc.;
- an evaluation of landscape amenity or the scenic qualities of a creek segment or alignment – rated high, medium or low as influenced by factors such as vegetation condition, views, enclosure, proximity of fencelines and buildings, adjacent land uses, shade/exposure, etc.;
- views along and from the creek, including intrusive elements in a viewshed, and vantage points;
- assets and features of interest or possible attractions – ranging from short attractive sections of creek bed to major built heritage features;
- areas of natural or semi-natural vegetation;



- weed infestations and densities – including the occurrence of high risk, problem or noxious weeds;
- past, and on-going, weed control and replanting/revegetation measures by Council (or others);
- sections of eroded or unstable creek bank;
- contaminated lands or subsidence issues (where obvious or apparent on the surface only);
- encroachments into the public creek corridor and locations requiring tenure and property boundary clarifications; and
- potential safety, privacy and security concerns – for path users and adjoining resident or land users.



The flood liability assessments (less than, or more than, 300mm depth in a 10 year ARI flood event) included in the constraints and opportunities plans were taken from Council's 2015 *Lithgow Flood Study Review*. These were not identified or assessed on-site.

The constraints/opportunities analysis also included results from the rapid waterway condition assessments where relevant.

Summary descriptions of each planning unit and key outcomes of these constraints/opportunities assessments, for each of the above twelve planning units, are presented the following Sections:

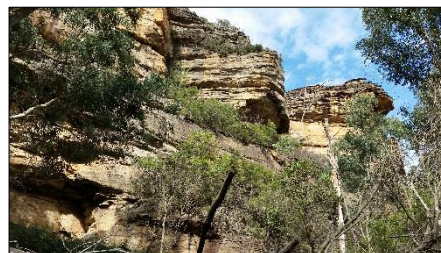
- Section 4.2 Farmers Creek;
- Section 4.3 Vale of Clwydd Creek, including Lake Pillans Wetlands and Blast Furnace Park; and
- Section 4.4 State Mine Creek.



## 4.2 Farmers Creek Constraints and Opportunities - Summary

### 4.2.1 Planning Unit FC1 – Historic (Lower) Farmers Creek Dam to End of Bells Road

Planning Unit FC1 extends from the lower dam (the historic now dis-used No. 2 Dam) downstream to the northern end of Bells Road (just north of the Oakey Park Water Treatment Plant).



For much of this unit the physical channel of Farmers Creek runs through private lands and is located outside the “cadastral creek corridor” (which terminates at the north-east corner of Newnes State Forest). Council land abuts the creek in sections at the southern end, and the dam lies in Council land in the north. These factors present challenges for aligning a creekside pathway and siting other facilities.

However this unit also has considerable user appeal. The land is undeveloped and the creek winds through a narrow valley flanked by scenic rocky escarpments and stone pagodas/pillars/outcrops in a setting of natural or regenerating bushland. The creek is mainly a narrow series of attractive rocky or gravelly pools and riffles. This unit contrasts markedly with all other lands along Farmers Creek and its tributaries (within the project area) offering an undeveloped, natural and largely enclosed setting – while still being readily accessible from the urban area. The area also has several smaller features of heritage interest, in addition to the dis-used No. 2 Dam (and an informal access track to the upper dam).

Weeds occur as small, low density patches scattered along the access track and around usage sites. The rapid waterway condition assessment (site 1) identified this section of Farmers Creek as being in “Excellent” condition.

### 4.2.2 Planning Unit FC2 – End of Bells Road to Ida Falls Creek

Planning Unit FC2 extends from Bells Road just north of the Oakey Park Water Treatment Plant downstream to the Ida Falls Creek bridge.



For approximately half of this unit the physical channel of Farmers Creek runs through private lands and is located outside the “cadastral creek corridor” (which is generally narrow, between 3 to 7 metres wide). The Bells Road reserve flanks the cadastral creek corridor at the eastern end of this unit, however here the actual creek flows on the western (and, in part, on the northern) side of the cadastral creek corridor within private lands.

A small portion of Crown land abuts the south side of the creek corridor (where it is contained within the cadastral corridor) in the middle of this unit. As the creek flows downstream from this point it diverges from the cadastral corridor to flow to the north again within private lands. No public land abuts the creek in this section. These factors, as well as the proximity of Bells Road to the creek channel in the middle section of this unit, present challenges for aligning a creekside pathway or the siting other facilities or for conducting environmental works.

Much of this unit is undeveloped with the exception of the Oakey Water Treatment Plant (located on two sites on the south and eastern side of Bells

Road) and a rural residential property on the north side of Bells Road, all in the unit's eastern half.

Remaining lands to the north are open paddocks or cleared land backed, in close proximity, by vegetated rocky ridges. Remaining lands to the south are partially cleared with introduced grasses dominating and remnant vegetation in places. Sections of the creek channel in this unit are incised with a narrow pebbly bed, and attractive reaches in the better vegetated areas, but the extent of private property limits public access. The scattered remains of the Oakey Park Colliery are a feature of this unit, but are inaccessible within private land.

This unit was assessed as a low and medium weed density area (assessing the public lands along the creek corridor only). The rapid waterway condition assessment (site 2) identified this section of Farmers Creek as being in "Good" condition.

#### 4.2.2 Planning Unit FC3 – Ida Falls Creek to Victoria Avenue

Planning Unit FC3 extends from Ida Falls Creek downstream to Victoria Avenue.



For much of this unit the physical channel of Farmers Creek is contained within the "cadastral creek corridor" although in some sections this corridor is extremely narrow (only 5 to 7 metres wide). At places in the eastern end of this unit the creek channel runs through private lands, just to the north of the cadastral corridor. There is also only very limited public land flanking the cadastral creek corridor, principally Oakey Park Reserve. Several existing

items of infrastructure, mainly footbridges and road bridges with footpaths, cross the creek in this unit – but none are to shared path standard. All these factors present challenges for aligning any creekside pathway and siting other user facilities, and afford only a limited riverine corridor (on public land) for environmental works.

For most of this unit the land north and south of the cadastral creek corridor is developed, predominantly as housing with Zig Zag School located within the residential area on the northern side (east of Mill Street). Encroachments into the public lands along creek corridor, from adjacent residential blocks, are common along this upper section of Farmers Creek. Garden waste dumping is also common.

Vegetated rocky ridges, in close proximity, back the residential area to the north. Bells Road and the rail line back the residential areas to the south, with views to more distant vegetated rocky ridges.

This unit is heavily weed infested, including a large stand of the introduced Honey Locust Trees (*Gleditzia* species) creekside along the northern margin of the Oakey Park Reserve. This entire unit was assessed as either a high or medium density weed area. The rapid waterway condition assessment identified Farmers Creek, at the south end of Hay Street (site 3) as only being in "Poor" condition.

#### 4.2.4 Planning Unit FC4 – Victoria Avenue to State Mine Rail Line (Drurie Street)

Planning Unit FC4 extends from Victoria Avenue downstream to the State Mine rail line (embankment and bridge, on the eastern side of Drurie Street).





For much of this unit the physical channel of Farmers Creek runs through private lands and is located outside the “cadastral creek corridor” (which is generally narrow, mostly 8 to 13 metres wide). There is also only very little public land flanking the cadastral creek corridor, principally Brook Street Park, and few access points to the public creek corridor (especially in the western half of this unit). All these factors present challenges for aligning any creekside pathway and siting other user facilities, and afford only a limited riverine corridor (on public land) for environmental works.

For most of this unit the land to the south of the cadastral creek corridor is developed, predominantly as housing but with industrial blocks at the western end, and encroachments into the corridor from adjacent properties are a regular feature. Garden waste dumping is common. Lands to the north are open paddocks or cleared land backed, in close proximity, by vegetated rocky ridges.

The State Mine rail line is a very significant barrier to access along the creek corridor and the continuity of any creekside path. A large block of land owned by Rail Corp (and used for storage by adjacent industrial premises) is located on the southern creekbank immediately west of the State Mine rail line. Use of this parcel would require Rail Corp approval.

This unit has a varied weed profile, with most of the public lands along the creek corridor being medium weed density areas as well as smaller areas assessed as high and low weed density. The rapid waterway condition assessment identified Farmers Creek, along the north-west margin of the Brook Street Park (site 4), as being in “Fair” condition.

#### 4.2.5 Planning Unit FC5 – State Mine Rail Line (Drurie Street) to Burton Street

Planning Unit FC5 extends from the State Mine rail line (embankment and bridge) at Drurie Street downstream to Burton Street.

Farmers Creek is predominantly located within the “cadastral creek corridor” within this Planning Unit, with the exception of a small meander just to the west of Saywell Street (which runs through private property to the north). Vale of Clywdd Creek (from the Lake Pillans Wetlands to the south) joins



Farmers Creek opposite the Saywell Street Park (with piped outlets in the creek’s southern bank).

Public land flanks the cadastral creek corridor at Farmers Creek Reserve between Drurie and Saywell Streets (southside), at Saywell Street Park (south side) and at two small parks on each side of Atkinson Street (on the northside of the creek corridor). The State Mine rail line at the eastern end forms a very significant barrier to access along the creek corridor between Planning Units FC4 and FC5, and to the continuity of any creekside path.

It is west of the State Mine rail line that the creek curves southwards to head away from the vegetated rocky ridges along its northern side and flows into/through the Lithgow urban area.

Saywell Street Park offers a large area open space adjacent to the creek corridor, with an attractive planted belt of trees along the park’s northern boundary (southern creekbank). However this large park is poorly supplied with facilities and appears little used. Across Inch Street to the south a smaller park, with a low-key playground, links to the open space of the Lake Pillans Wetlands and Blast Furnace Park beyond (Planning Unit VoCC3).

Apart from the two small Atkinson Street open space areas, the land to the north of the creek is largely developed as housing with the exception of an open grassed paddock located at the unit’s eastern end opposite Saywell Street (this apparently unmanaged creek flat is an area of Crown land). On the creek’s southern side housing flanks the western half of this unit, as well as a small area between Saywell and Drurie Streets in the east.

West/downstream from Saywell Street Park the creek corridor is generally narrow and heavily weed infested with the creek channel often very close to the residential property boundaries along the southern side, leaving very little

room for locating recreation facilities or undertaking environmental works. Where the northern creekbank widens slightly towards the western end of this unit several encroachments (lawns and fences) extend into the public creek corridor and garden waste dumping is common.

The upstream/western section of this unit was assessed as, mostly, a medium density weed zone (mainly the northern side of the creek past Saywell Street Park, with the opposite southern bank having been subject to previous vegetation management and native tree plantings). Downstream of the park the narrower section of creek corridor is heavily weed infested and assessed as either a high or medium density infestation zone.

The rapid waterway condition assessment identified Farmers Creek, at the north-western end of Saywell Street Park (site 5) as only being in “Poor” condition.

#### 4.2.6 Planning Unit FC6 – Burton Street to Tank Street

Planning Unit FC6 extends from Burton Street downstream to the road bridge at Tank Street.



Largely, Farmers Creek is located within the “cadastral creek corridor” within this Planning Unit with the exception of two sections, near Guy St Park and adjacent to Macauley Street near Tank Street which are both public land (zoned environmental management). Other public lands – including Crown land (also zoned environmental management), other Council lands and road reserve – flank a large proportion of the cadastral creek corridor giving a reasonable width in which to accommodate recreational facilities or undertaken environmental/amenity works.

There are many possible access options to the creek corridor from the northern side of Farmers Creek. However access to the southern side is limited, due to almost continuous industrial development from Burton Street to Union Street. The land to the north of the creek, beyond the adjacent strips of Crown land and road reserve, is largely developed as housing. The creek meanders in close proximity to the vegetated ridges to the north towards the downstream end of the planning unit. To the south the creek is flanked by large factories on industrial sites from Burton Street almost to Tank Street (with housing between Union and Tank Streets).

The majority of this unit was assessed as a low weed density zone with much of the creek corridor subject to past vegetation management and weed control measures and scattered replanting efforts. Some smaller areas of medium weed density occur, such as at the junction with State Mine Creek.

The rapid waterway condition assessment identified Farmers Creek, at Guy Street (and downstream of the junction with State Mine Creek), as only being in “Poor” condition.

#### 4.2.7 Planning Unit FC7 – Tank Street, to Sandford Avenue, and on to Albert Street

Planning Unit FC7 extends from Tank Street downstream, past Marjorie Jackson Oval and Sandford Avenue then via Glanmire Oval, to Albert Street.



Largely, Farmers Creek is not located within the “cadastral creek corridor” within this Planning Unit. Not far downstream from the Tanks Street bridge, the creek alignment leaves the cadastral boundaries of the creek corridor and winds to the north. The cadastral creek corridor winds around the dog park

and continues west into the Marjorie Jackson Sporting Complex where it terminates. The cadastral corridor recommences downstream of the Sandford Ave road bridge, deviating into Glanmire Oval but substantially returning to the same alignment as the creek around the remainder of Glanmire Oval downstream to Albert Street.

From Tank Street, Farmers Creek winds west past the Montague Street dog park – initially as a semi-natural creek and then as a previously engineered or modified (but not hardened) channel – to just west of Heffernan Place Park. This section of creek corridor was assessed as a moderate weed zone. The rapid waterway condition assessment (site 7, in the previously engineered/modified wide channel) identified this section of Farmers Creek as only being in “Poor” condition.

Downstream/westward from Heffernan Place Park, Farmers Creek has been formalised as a wide concrete canal with relatively low sided walls (topped by open metal fencing) with adjacent grassed sloping banks in most places. This canal essentially parallels Sandford Avenue downstream. After approximately 250m this wide canal narrows to continue west, then south, around Marjorie Jackson Oval before passing under the Sandford Avenue road bridge. Scattered introduced Pine Trees, and a large grove of Poplar Trees adjacent to Sandford Avenue, occur here.

The narrow/smaller concrete canal continues west then south around the northern and western boundary of Glanmire Oval, with a variety of larger exotic and native trees between the oval and canal. The northern bank is mostly lawn with scattered trees, and regular encroachments (such as garden furniture).

This narrow smaller canal continues until approximately 100 metres short of Albert Street. At this point recent works have enlarged the canal to a considerably more substantial structure with a very wide concrete base and high concrete block side walls (topped by safety railings). The amenity of the creek transforms from relatively pleasant to highly engineered, presenting as all hard surfaces with little to no plantings.

The south side of Farmers Creek in this unit is flanked for approximately two thirds of the boundary by sports fields (Marjorie Jackson Complex and Glanmire Oval). An area of open space flanks the creek for a small length

near Heffernan Place and another smaller area containing a pump station at the Tanks Street end. The remainder of adjacent development is housing.

On the north side open space flanks the creek at the dog park (upstream end), between the creek and Sandford Avenue, at the upstream end of Coalbrook Street and a small pocket behind housing in Coalbrook Street. The remainder of land is developed as housing, though backed in close proximity by vegetated ridges giving high value long-range views from much of the creek corridor.

The rapid waterway condition assessment (site 8, on the narrow canal at the north-west corner of Glanmire Oval) identified this section of Farmers Creek as being in “Fair” condition.

#### 4.2.8 Planning Unit FC8 – Albert Street, to/past Showground and along Geordie Street, to Tourist Information Centre

Planning Unit FC8 extends from Albert Street downstream past the Tony Luchetti Sportsground and Showground, over the new Geordie Street footbridge and along the south side of Geordie Street, to the Tourist Information Centre in Geordie Street west of the rail line.



In the east Farmers Creek is contained within a recently constructed canal (with a wide concrete base and high concrete block side walls topped by safety railings), from Albert Street to the new Geordie Street footbridge. This crossing has been designed for shared use. This highly engineered section of creek has low amenity, exacerbated by the few plantings and only scattered “urban” weeds. West from the Geordie Street footbridge the creek



is contained within an older style smaller/narrow canal, flanked by unmanaged grasses and weeds on the southern (Showground) side and mown grasses with some plantings (in varied condition) also lining the canal margin on the northern side (plus a concrete pathway).

Between Albert Street and the western boundary of the Showground, Farmers Creek runs within the “cadastral creek corridor” or the road reserve of Geordie Street to the north. The cadastral creek corridor terminates at the western boundary of the Showground (and does not resume until west of the Great Western Highway).

From the Geordie Street causeway, Farmers Creek leaves the road reserve and flows to the north-northwest. However Planning Unit FC8 continues along Geordie Street to the Lithgow Tourist Information Centre (west of the rail line) in order to accommodate shared path links to this facility and to the existing urban path network.

Large areas of open space, sporting fields and the Showground, flank the south bank of the creek, although the Showground site is fenced restricting open access to the creek corridor from the south. A small strip of Crown land borders the Albert Street end, with a section of private land between this and the sports fields. Investigation is required to ascertain the width of public land available at this point. An industrial complex borders the unit’s downstream end.

Between Albert Street and the Geordie Street footbridge the northern bank is flanked by developed residential land, while Geordie Street parallels the creek from the footbridge to the causeway. The Sewage Treatment Plant ponds have a small frontage on Geordie Street just east of the causeway and housing occurs between the causeway and the rail line to the west. Immediately west of the rail line is parking for the Tourist Information Centre and the centre building (either side of Geordie Street).

A level crossing is located at the intersection of the rail line and Geordie Street, but does not pose a significant barrier to access as does the State Mine rail line to the east.

A vegetated ridge is in close proximity to the north, adjacent to Geordie Street and behind the housing at the upstream end.

The rapid waterway condition assessment (site 9, on the small canal at the north-west corner of the Showground) identified this section of Farmers Creek as being in “Fair” condition. Being a developed and closely managed section of creekline, a weed density assessment was not undertaken for this unit.

#### **4.2.9 Planning Unit FC9 – Geordie Street causeway, via sewage ponds and Council depot to Chivers Close, and on to Coorwull Road**

Planning Unit FC9 extends from the Geordie Street causeway downstream to the intersection of Coorwull Rd with Fullagar Avenue – running along the unsealed service road accessing the Council storage/depot area, then an undeveloped reserve to the Chivers Close footbridge, and then to Fullagar Avenue.



Between the Geordie Street causeway and the Council storage depot Farmers Creek flows in a north-westerly direction along the boundary between Council land (Sewage Treatment Plant) and private lands. The creek does not form the boundary line between these tenures, but meanders in and out of the Council and private lands. The ponds of the Sewage Treatment Plant lie to the east of the creek and blocks zoned as light industrial to the west (including noise generating dog kennels, and several items of historic rail infrastructure).

From the Council storage depot Farmers Creek re-enters Council land (a largely unmanaged block) and continues to the north-west, to just north of Evans Close. The creek corridor is accessible from three residential roads off Fullagar Avenue – Chivers Close, Evans Close and (indirectly) Willow



Place. The footbridge at the north-east end of Chivers Close is not to a shared path standard. Housing closely abuts the creek's western margin in this section, with a creek bench (mostly mown grass and to varying widths) behind these private properties. Open paddocks lie to the east and north of the creek and Council land, and the Council Waste Depot is located to the north-east of the sewage ponds (but visible from the creek and Council land). A vegetated ridge lies beyond the paddocks in the north within reasonable proximity.

From just north of Evans Close, Farmers Creek flows through private property for the remainder of this planning unit (and all of Planning Unit 10), to below the Great Western Highway.

Within this unit Farmers Creek lies in a relatively natural channel although the banks, and wide bed, are highly weed infested in places. Most of this creek corridor was assessed as a moderate weed density zone, with areas of higher weed density in the vicinity of the sewage outfall (west of the Council storage depot) as well as between Chivers and Evans Close.

The rapid waterway condition assessment (site 10, north-east of Evans Close) identified this section of Farmers Creek as only being in "Poor" condition.

#### **4.2.10 Planning Unit FC10 – Fullagar Avenue (east) and Coerwull Road rail bridge (south), to Great Western Highway (north-west)**

Planning Unit FC10 extends from the intersection of Coerwull Road with Fullagar Avenue to the Great Western Highway to the west and addresses the option for a loop or return along Coerwull Road back to the Tourist Information Centre in Planning Unit FC8.

Farmers Creek meanders to the north-west from the end of the Council Reserve noted in Planning Unit FC9 and re-joins Planning Unit FC10 as it meanders to the south under Coerwull Road at the James Kirkwood Bridge. The road reserve of Coerwull Road is almost twice the average width of this road at this point. Farmers Creek then flows south east to pass through private lands (paddocks) passing under the rail line then continuing in a south



easterly direction to pass under the Great Western Highway. Farmers Creek continues flowing to the south through privately owned lands.

Here it flows along a relatively natural channel through farming land with vegetated ridges lying beyond the paddocks to the north within reasonable proximity of the creek.

West of Fullagar Avenue, Coerwull Road is flanked by lands zoned for environmental management and developed as farming land (paddocks). South of Fullagar Avenue, Coerwull Road is flanked by a caravan park to the west and light industrial (storage unit and motel) to the east (north of the rail line). There is no open space or Council owned land except for the road reserves in this Planning Unit. A Rail Corp owned easement runs between the Great Western Highway and Coerwull Road. It includes the Main Western Rail line passing over an arched brick viaduct, and a service road passing over a stone arched viaduct, crossing Farmers Creek. Both these "Bowenfels Rail Viaducts" are heritage listed.

## **4.3 Vale of Clwydd Creek Constraints and Opportunities - Summary**

### **4.3.1 Planning Unit VoCC2 – Opposite Berry Street (south) to Chifley Road (north)**

Planning Unit VoCC2 is an area of public land running along and beside Vale of Clwydd Creek north-south each side of Mort Street, and including Vale



Park in the south. It is “land-locked” and not connected with the other public lands in the project area, and only tenuously linked to the town’s existing pathway network. It was not subject to a detailed constraints and opportunities assessment.

The creek corridor was assessed as a low weed density zone over much of this planning unit – due mainly to previous weed control measures and mass plantings at Vale Park and north of Mort Street. Adjacent non-treated areas, or recolonised sites, were assessed as medium weed density. An area of high weed density was identified along an untreated section of the creekline in the north.

The rapid waterway condition assessment (site 14 at the southern end of Vale Park) identified this section of the Vale of Clywdd Creek as being in a “Highly Degraded” condition.

#### **4.3.2 Planning Unit VoCC3 – Inch St (north) to Main Western Railway (south) and Inch Street (south-west) (includes Lake Pillans Wetlands and Blast Furnace Park)**

Planning Unit VoCC3 extends from the Main Western Rail Line south of Lake Pillans Wetlands to Inch Street (Saywell Street Park South) to the north.

Vale of Clywdd Creek, a tributary of Farmers Creek, flows from a culvert under the rail line, into the Lake Pillans Wetlands. The creek’s outflow from the wetlands is piped under Saywell Street Park (south), Inch Street and Saywell Street Park (north), to where it joins Farmers Creek (refer to Planning Unit FC5 for details).

Essentially this planning unit consists of public open space – Lake Pillans Wetlands and Blast Furnace Park to the east (plus a portion of Crown land between the Blast Furnace Park access road, from Inch St, and the rail corridor to the south). The Main Western Rail Line borders this area of open space in the south and a private branch rail line (State Mine rail line) leaves the main line in the south-east corner and forms the eastern border to Lake Pillans Wetlands, travelling north, eventually passing over Farmers Creek (refer to Planning Unit FC5 for details). To the north-east and north housing development borders the open space. A vacant block of land borders Blast Furnace Park to the west, on which horses are agisted, and presents as an unmanaged and unattractive block.

The Lake Pillans Wetlands provides a “natural” setting with high amenity internal views. The wetlands and surrounding planted areas offer substantial areas of native species, where weeds are actively managed, and contribute to the area’s biodiversity values. To the east Blast Furnace Park, though open with little planting, contains dramatic remnants of the historic furnace buildings. The rail embankment to the south also dominates this area although views to the vegetated ridges to the north are possible.

Both Lake Pillans Wetlands and, to a lesser degree, Blast Furnace Park are already provided with vehicle access, limited facilities and an existing path network (including a pathway link between both sites via a moderate gradient grassy slope). The area offers few constraints to further recreational and educational or interpretive development.

Being a developed and closely managed site, neither a weed density assessment nor a rapid waterway condition assessment were undertaken for this unit.



## 4.4 State Mine Creek Constraints and Opportunities - Summary

### 4.4.1 Planning Unit SMC2 – confluence with Farmers Creek (south) to north-west of end of Pillans Road (north)

Planning Unit SMC2 extends from the northern limit of public lands on State Mine Creek, north-west of the northern end of Pillans Road (approximately opposite Mount Street in the west) south/downstream to its junction with Farmers Creek at the Guy Street open space just south-west of Banksia Street (refer to Planning Unit FC6 for details).



State Mine Creek is not delineated by a cadastral creek corridor (as is the situation for Farmers Creek) but flows through a mix of Council parks (Sutcliffe Street open space) and other Council managed lands, Crown land

and road reserve all of varying width. Midway along this unit it flows across private lands for approximately 150 metres.

All the public land through which State Mine Creek flows is relatively narrow with a number of issues in regard to aligning a shared path, providing recreational facilities or undertaking environmental works. The public land is flanked on each side by developed housing and roads, and set in a narrow valley flanked each side in close proximity by vegetated ridges beyond the housing.

Much of the creek corridor (both public and private lands) supports little native vegetation and is heavily weed infested. All public lands north of Laidley Street were assessed as a high density weed zone – except for an area off the north end of Pillans Road where Council had recently commenced weed control works, assessed, as a moderate weed density area. South from Laidley Street to Farmers Creek weeds are confined to the narrow creekbanks and bed (due to mown grass areas adjoining both sides of the creek), with this area assessed as a moderate density weed zone.

The rapid waterway condition assessment sites were located in Planning Unit SMC2 – site 12 near the northern limit of the public lands, and site 13 just upstream of the junction with Farmers Creek. Site 12 identified the upper section of State Mine Creek as being in a “Poor” condition only, while site 13 identified the lower section of State Mine Creek as being in a “Fair” condition.