

EASTERN STANDARD 18/5/1983

Blackburn land saved for park

LOCAL conservationists are delighted with Nunawading Council's decision to buy the natural bushland area known as Blackburn Creek land.

At last week's meeting, council agreed to pay the Board of Works more than \$272,000 for the land situated between Pakenham and Main Sts.

The land will now be retained for community use as a passive recreation area. At one stage during protracted negotiations over the past few years between council and the Board of Works it had been proposed to sub-divide the land for residential development.

The Board originally offered the land to council for more than \$500,000 on the basis of its residential potential. If council did not want to buy the land at this price the board had intended to rezone it for subdivision.

However, representations were made on behalf of the Blackburn Creek Conservation Group by the Labor MLA for Box Hill, Mrs Margaret Ray.

Mrs Ray approached State Planning Minister Evan Walker in an effort to resolve the issue.

Following discussions between the Minister and the Board of Works it was agreed to drop the valuation of the land to one reflecting costs to the Board.

It was offered to Nunawading Council at just over \$272,000 — almost half the original price.

The chairman of Blackburn Creek Conservation Group, Mr Graham Burgess, welcomed the resolution to the problem and council's unanimous decision to acquire the land as public open space.

The conservation group is inviting members of the public to take part in a walk through the new park area and Wandinong Sanctuary on Sunday, May 29.

The walk starts at the scout hall in Pakenham St. at 11 a.m. and there will be a barbecue lunch afterwards, about 12.30 p.m.

NUNAWADING

GAZETTE

WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 1983

New parks on the way

by Simon Kinch

Two big investments to create new public parklands in Blackburn and Vermont were approved by Nunawading Council on Monday night.

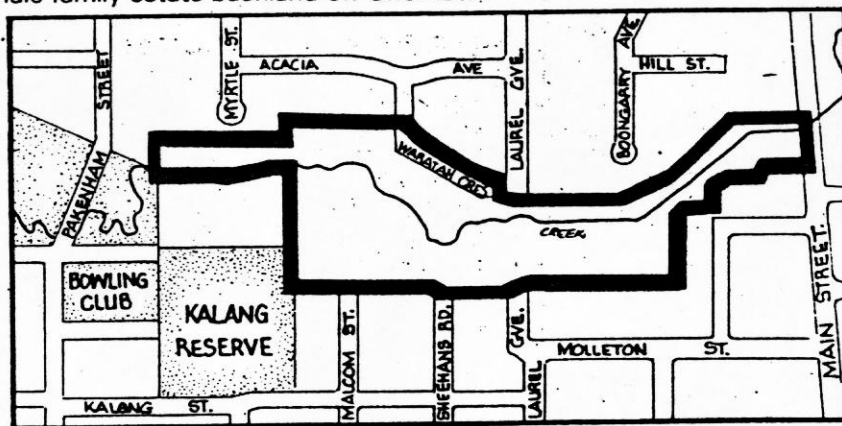
More than \$272,000 will be spent buying the 24 hectare of Blackburn Creek bushland between Main and Pakenham Streets from the Board of Works, and in Vermont, the council will try to buy half of the four-hectare Hale family estate bushland off Orion St.

The purchase of the Blackburn Creek land which borders Gardiner's Creek through Blackburn's famous Bellbird area will complete a successful campaign mounted by the conservation group which "adopted" the area two years ago.

The Blackburn Creek Conservation group was formed in 1981 to resist Board of Works moves toward selling much of the bushland for home sites.

The conservation group has since made an intensive environmental study of the land and its flora and fauna and has gained wide public support for the call to buy it for parkland.

The council will accept the board's latest offer to sell for \$272,000 repayable over seven years, interest free for three years, and at an interest of one per cent above the Board's pub-



● This map shows the boundaries of one of the proposed new parks covered by the council's big buying decisions.

lic borrowing rate for the other four years.

A similar, but shorter, campaign by a group of residents in Vermont has led to the council decision to bid for half of the Hale estate bushland fronting Orion St, Grey St and Glenburnie Rd, Vermont.

The residents formed the Hale Property Pres-

ervation Group late last year when its owners moved to subdivide the land into home sites.

Outcome of the council's plan to buy this land will rest with negotiations to be undertaken by the city administrator, Mr E. J. Jane, with the owners.

A move by Cr Valda Arrowsmith on Mon-

day night for the council to seek 70 per cent of the Hale estate instead of half was rejected.

Cr Arrowsmith said residents who had known and used the open bushland over many years wanted a family park established as a permanent asset to the municipality.

No estimate of cost has yet been given.