

Dear Property Owner,

Invitation to have your say on future drainage services in your area

As a customer of the Koo Wee Rup-Longwarry Flood Protection District, you pay a special charge on your water bill called the **Melbourne Water precept rate**. This funds the higher level of drainage services Melbourne Water provides for this area.

Melbourne Water has begun to develop our price submission. This is where we propose the services we'll deliver, and the prices we will charge over a five-year period from 1 July 2026 (2026-2031).

As part of the submission development and to ensure prices are fair and reflective of customer preferences, the process of setting these prices starts with capturing community feedback. Any changes we make to the services you receive will only be made following consultation with the community.

Submit your preferences via our five-minute survey.

Your insights and opinions are invaluable to us as we develop our submission and the services we provide to the region. Share your preferences on drainage services and prices for 2026 to 2031 via our short five-minute survey. These options have been developed following community feedback and engagement. Further information on the options you can vote for are attached to this letter.

You can complete this survey by using the QR code, or typing this link into your internet browser:

tinyurl.com/mh8zhsxa

For more information or assistance please contact our Price Submission Engagement Team by calling 131 722 or emailing us at:

PS26engagement@melbournewater.com.au

We look forward to hearing your thoughts.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Rees

Manager Peninsula and Westernport



The survey will
close on Sunday 15
December 2024

Future drainage service options for Koo Wee Rup – Longwarry Flood Protection District for 2026-2031

At Melbourne Water, our prices, including the precept rate, are reviewed and set for a period of up to five years by the Essential Services Commission – Victoria's independent regulator. This is done through the Price Submission process, where we put forward our proposed service levels and prices informed by engagement with customers and the community.

In our survey, we are asking you to choose which of the following service options you would be willing to pay for during the period 2026-2031. Option 1 will provide the District with the current level of flood resilience as highlighted in the table on the opposite page. Options 2, 3, and 4 allow for additional proactive maintenance which can help to increase the Districts' resilience to flooding. Each option will also provide you with a dedicated Melbourne Water officer for the region.

	OPTION 1 (current service level)	OPTION 2	OPTION 3	OPTION 4
Indicative price change (%) at 1 July 2026	1.6%	11.8%	27.0%	52.4%
Indicative price per property	\$254 per annum	\$280 per annum	\$318 per annum	\$381 per annum
Precept rate – total invested per year	\$1.2 million	\$1.3 million	\$1.5 million	\$1.8 million
Additional proactive maintenance Helps increase the Districts' resilience to flooding by keeping the channels clear	No	Yes - \$90K of additional activities, which could include: - More comprehensive and frequent inspections of drains AND - An extra 3km of desilting / maintenance to keep channels clear OR - An extra 45km of instream vegetation grooming to keep the channels clear	Yes - \$250K of additional activities, which could include: - More comprehensive and frequent inspections of drains AND - An extra 8km of desilting / maintenance to keep channels clear OR - An extra 125km of instream vegetation grooming to keep the channels clear	Yes - \$450K of additional activities, which could include: - More comprehensive and frequent inspections of drains AND - An extra 14km of desilting / maintenance to keep channels clear OR - An extra 225km of instream vegetation grooming to keep the channels clear
District boundary review Ensure the District boundary is logical and consistent	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Drainage asset responsibilities review To identify inconsistencies in which assets are privately managed and which assets are publicly managed in the District	No	No	No	Yes

Koo Wee Rup – Longwarry Flood Protection District

About the District

The 330km² Koo Wee Rup–Longwarry Flood Protection District is a former swamp, drained in the late 1800s for farming.

Property owners across the District pay a **precept rate** through their South East Water bill to fund the higher level of drainage service we provide to the area to reduce flood risk.

This is instead of the Waterways and Drainage Charge billed to property owners across the rest of Greater Melbourne.

Melbourne Water services in the District

Within the District we are responsible for managing about 500 kilometres of waterways and drains, 145km of levee banks, over 300 flood gates and 60 bridges. We work closely with other authorities, including local councils, to do this. Approximately 70% of the work we do is proactive to provide flood resilience to the District.

Each year we invest approximately \$1.2 million in maintenance services to meet the following service levels. This is based on an annual budget in consultation with the District Advisory Committee – a group comprising local business owners and residents.

Services provided to the Koo Wee Rup – Longwarry Flood Protection District in 2023-24

Melbourne Water Maintenance Service	Service level	% of precept rate revenue	Works completed in 2023-24
Weed control	Annual spraying to control and reduce vegetation in and around drains	~26%	563 kilometers (km) of weed control and vegetation management undertaken to ensure channels are clear.
Drain de-silting	Removal of silt and aquatic vegetation, monitored on an ongoing basis and prioritised as needed based on an assessment of risks	~25%	34 km of drains had sediment removed to ensure channels are clear
Grass cutting & spraying	Twice-yearly cutting (on average) in mowable drains and Melbourne Water easements for fire management and floodwater conveyance	~12%	1,984 kms of drains cut via 476 work orders.
Levee banks inspections and repairs	Annual inspections for routine maintenance, with missing or damaged banks repaired through the annual works program	~9%	Annual inspections complete and 1 levee bank repaired.
Debris removal	Removal of rubbish and minor debris in line with scheduled works program	~9%	32 work orders for debris and rubbish removal completed.
Floodgate inspections & repairs	Annual inspections for routine maintenance, with missing or damaged floodgates repaired through the annual works program	~7%	309 floodgates inspected, 2 repaired and 1 replaced.
Maintenance tracks	Maintaining all weather access to Melbourne Water drains	~6%	100s of kms of tracks mowed and 2.7 kms track repairs completed.
Erosion control	Repair of erosion within drains	~6%	3 erosion control works completed.

Further information**Why am I receiving this letter?**

Your property is within the Koo Wee Rup-Longwarry Flood Protection District Special Precept Area. Once a swamp, the 330 square kilometre district was drained in the late 1800s for farming. Due to its significant flood risk, property owners pay a precept rate to fund the higher level of drainage maintenance Melbourne Water provides to the area.

Why is Melbourne Water asking ratepayers about services and prices?

All water prices in Victoria are regulated by Victoria's independent regulator, the Essential Services Commission (ESC). To ensure prices are fair and reflective of customer preferences, the process of setting them starts with capturing community feedback. We then develop a price submission to the ESC for their approval. Once approved, the ESC issues a declaration of the final rates, which will apply for the District from 2026-2031.

What will happen with the community feedback from the survey?

The feedback we receive through the survey will help determine the final service option and precept rate that you will pay for 2026-2031. We will consider running additional community engagement activities following the survey to further clarify the community's position and provide other opportunities to have your say on our proposal.

Do I have to complete the survey for my views to be heard?

This survey is the main way we are capturing community feedback on the precept rate for the period 2026-2031. If you are having trouble completing the survey, please contact our Price Submission engagement team by calling 131 722 or emailing us at

PS26engagement@melbournewater.com.au We are engaging on all our services and investments through the price submission. You can find out more and get involved via our Let's Talk page: **letstalk.melbournewater.com.au/price-submission**

Is the precept rate changing?

Any changes to the precept rate will be informed by direct feedback from the survey and any subsequent community engagement. Changes to the rate will apply from 1 July 2026.

How do I keep up to date with news about this engagement and Melbourne Water's work in the District?

You can follow the Koo Wee Rup-Longwarry online Community Hub to receive updates, and Melbourne Water news across the District. Scan the QR code or go to the link below **letstalk.melbournewater.com.au/kwr**



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