Shepherds Hill Recreation Park
Vegetation Management Units

Introduction
The currently accepted format for Vegetation Management Plans for parks under DEH management is critically dependent on dividing the park into a number of Vegetation Management Units. This document outlines a proposal for vegetation management units for Shepherds Hill as a basis for discussion amongst the Friends of Shepherds Hill and with DEH rangers. Agreement on the vegetation management units is a prerequisite to the preparation of the Vegetation Management Plan for Shepherds Hill as a considerable amount of work could be wasted in developing a plan against a set of vegetation management units which are subsequently deemed unsuitable.

It should be noted that the vegetation descriptions provided below are based on a very superficial preliminary survey of the park. They are not intended to be complete and may contain errors. Please don’t hesitate to point them out if you find them.

The Proposal
The proposal outlined here divides the park into eight vegetation units as shown in the attached map. Some alternatives were considered before settling on the current proposal. These included treating each of the creek lines and each copse of Grey Box as separate vegetation units, but the added complexity did not seem justified. Each of the proposed units is briefly described below.

Vegetation Management Unit 1
This unit is the north western section of the park to the west of the vehicular entrance track from the Ayliffes Road car park and bounded to the south by a line projecting east from the southern boundary of the Marion Pony Club lease to the entrance track. This boundary also corresponds roughly to the southern extent of Grey Box in that area.

The vegetation is Grey Box grassy woodland with River Red Gum grassy woodland in the Walkers and Wattiparringa creeklines. This unit contains some (perhaps all) of the rare old growth Grey Box in the park. The native understorey consists of sticky Hop Bush, Golden Wattle and native grasses. The north western corner and all of Walkers Creek in this section is heavily infested with Olives, Ash and some Boxthorn. There are several Acacia cyclops bushes on the steep bank adjacent to the entrance track. Some work has been done (by DCS?) in and near the Wattiparringa Creek line.

The proposed priority for work in this unit by the Friends is LOW. However, given that this unit contains the main park entrance and car park, it could be considered a high priority for DCS or DEH contractor work, particularly adjacent to the Ayliffes Road boundary and in the Wattiparringa Creek line.

Vegetation Management Unit 2
This unit is the area east of the entrance track and bounded by Ayliffes Road to the north and Pasadena, Saddle Hill and the Eden Field Archers lease to the east. The vegetation is primarily Grey Box grassy woodland with River Red Gum grassy woodland in the Wattiparringa Creek line. There is a scattered understorey of sticky Hop Bush, Golden Wattle and native grasses. There are non-native planted trees adjacent to the Ayliffes Road boundary and a copse of Sugar Gums in the “pan-handle” just west of the Eden Field Archers lease. The main weed species are olives and grasses. A considerable amount of olive control work has been done in this unit by DCS and DEH contractors and a small amount by the Friends so that most of the mature olives have been killed or removed and those remaining are mainly regrowth or seedlings.

The proposed priority for work in this unit by the Friends is LOW. This unit should be a priority area for DCS and DEH contractor follow-up to eliminate the remaining olives.

Vegetation Management Unit 3
This unit is the area bounded by the Eden Field Archer lease to the west, Saddle Hill Reserve to the north, Wattiparinga Reserve to the east and the Viaduct Track to the south. It is dominated by a very steep south-facing slope, which makes access difficult, and part of the Wattiparringa Creek line. The vegetation is primarily Grey Box grassy woodland with River Red Gum grassy woodland in the creek line, but also includes some Drooping Sheoak. The understorey contains Kangaroo Thorn, Golden Wattle, native grasses and iron grasses. The main woody weeds are olive, pine, boxthorn and broom. Herbaceous weeds include scabious, plantain, bridal creeper and grasses.

This unit has been a primary area for woody weed control by the Friends in the lower part of the hillside east of the junction of the Viaduct and Ridge Tracks and by Friends contractors on the steep slopes.

It is proposed that this unit continue to have a high priority for Friends Contractor woody weed control and follow-up on the steep slopes. Woody weed control in the creekline between the track junction and the Eden
Field Archers lease can be done as a secondary priority for Friends contractor effort when funds are available or by the Friends themselves as an alternative worksite in winter.

**Vegetation Management Unit 4**

This unit comprises the area to the west of the Ridge Track from its western junction with the Viaduct Track to the corner of the park boundary near the junction of the Ridge and Walkers Creek Tracks.

This is the least homogeneous of the proposed vegetation management units and could be further divided, but there would be little benefit in doing so. The vegetation is open grassland to the north, consisting of native and weed grasses and iron grasses. The main weeds are olives which are scattered in the north and east and more dense near the western boundary, and Scabious. The south eastern section, north of Walkers Creek Track, was also open grassland prior to revegetation by the Friends with local provenance Grey Box, Drooping Sheoak and Sticky Hopbush over several years commencing in about 2004. This area also contains weed grasses, Scabious and Dog Rose. There is a small amount of Monadenia on the northern side of the Walkers Creek Track.

There is a small amount of older revegetation near the Ridge Track about halfway up the hill. The provenance of these trees is unknown, but some species, such as Lemon Scented Gum, are clearly not local natives.

There is a band of Grey Box grassy woodland extending some 150 metres to the east of Walkers Creek. This is heavily infested with weed grasses and olives. The creekline contains River Red Gums, but is heavily infested with Phalaris and Ash trees. West of the creekline, the hillside is sparsely populated with Blue Gums and Red Gums and has been planted with some non-locally indigenous trees. The location of the southern boundary, west of the creek, is uncertain.

It is proposed that the Friends give high priority to the control of woody weeds in their revegetated area, the removal of Monadenia while it is still in manageable amounts, and additional revegetation by planting local provenance understorey species such as Golden Wattle, Kangaroo Thorn and Sticky Hopbush amongst the Grey Box and Drooping Sheoak.

**Vegetation Management Unit 5**

This unit is the north-facing hillside bounded by the Ridge and Viaduct Tracks. It is mainly a grassland comprising native and weed grasses, with some half dozen or so copses of Grey Box scattered about it. There are also small numbers of Drooping Sheoak and Native Apricot. Understorey species include Golden Wattle, Kangaroo Thorn, Sticky Hopbush, New Holland Daisy and Iron Grasses. The dominant weeds are Olive and Topped Lavender, but there are also Almond Trees near the western junction of the Ridge and Viaduct Tracks, Boneseed seedlings, Plantain and Scabious.

The Friends have done a small amount of revegetation in this unit using trees grown from seed collected in the park. About 25 Grey Box were planted near the Viaduct Track just to the west of the Eden Field Archers lease boundary in about 2003. Grey Box and Drooping Sheoak were planted amongst the olives below the rocky outcrops near the Ridge Track in the western section of the unit in about 2005 and 2006. Grey Box, Drooping Sheoak, Sticky Hopbush, Native Apricot and Kangaroo Thorn were planted amongst the olives on the hillside below the Ridge Track to the west of its junction with the Boundary Track in about 2008 and 2009.

It is proposed that the Friends place a high priority on the control of olives and Topped Lavender amongst the copses of Grey Box in this unit and, as the revegetation trees mature, to the control of olives and Topped Lavender in the immediate vicinity of the revegetation. In addition, it is proposed that the Friends place a medium priority on the control of Topped Lavender by contractors in this unit.

**Vegetation Management Unit 6**

This unit is the triangle bounded by the Ridge Track, Viaduct Track and Wattiparinga. It is a Grey Box grassy woodland with River Red Gums in the creekline. This is perhaps the most biodiverse region of the park and includes an understorey of Golden Wattle, Kangaroo Thorn, Sticky Hopbush and Twiggy Daisy Bush. The ground layer includes native grasses, Native Cranberry, New Holland Daisy, Iron Grasses, White Goodenia, Cut Leaf Goodenia and Glycine tabacina, the last three of which have conservation ratings. There are also Pale Rush, Finger Rush and Flat Sedge in the creekline.

The major weeds are olive, boneseed, Topped Lavender, Scabious, Ash, Broom, Bridal creeper, Three-Cornered Garlic, Plantain, weed grasses and a very small amount of Monadenia.

This unit has been the main focus for the Friends since their formation in 1999. With the exception of those in the upper part of the creekline parallel with the Wattiparinga boundary, all woody weeds have been treated.
It is proposed that this unit be a high priority for the Friends for follow-up at least annually for woody weeds and Bridal Creeper. It is also proposed that it be a high priority for Friends Contractors for woody weed control, and follow-up, in the creekline parallel to the Wattiparinga boundary.

**Vegetation Management Unit 7**

This unit is the area bounded to the north by the Walkers Creek and Ridge Tracks, to the east and west by the park boundary and to the south by the northern edge of the Grey Box treeline. It is predominantly open grassland with a mix of native grasses, particularly Kangaroo Grass, but does include a couple of isolated Grey Box near the Ridge Track and some Drooping Sheoak near the western boundary. It is heavily infested with Phalaris and other weed grasses and there are olives and some Monadenia near the western boundary.

It is proposed that this unit have a high priority for the Friends for the control of Monadenia while it is still in manageable amounts and for Friends Contractors for the control of Phalaris. When the Phalaris has been eliminated, this unit could be considered for revegetation with local native species or retained as a grassland.

**Vegetation Management Unit 8**

This unit is the area bounded by the park boundary to the south, east and west and by the Grey Box treeline to the north. It is a Grey Box grassy woodland with a scattered understorey of Golden Wattle, Kangaroo Thorn, Native Apricot, New Holland Daisy, Lomandra and native grasses. There are River Red Gums in the creekline.

The main weeds are olives, boneseed, Ash, Phalaris and other grasses. The area bounded by the Sewer Easement Track and the Boundary Track is largely free of woody weeds due to work by the Friends and DEH contractors and was also the subject of a fuel-reduction controlled burn in November 2009. The remainder of the unit is heavily infested with weeds, particularly olives.

It is proposed that the Friends place a medium priority on the control of woody weeds in the more biodiverse areas of this unit including woody weed follow-up in the control burn area. This could be another alternative work site for the second working bees in the winter months. Note that DEH is responsible for the control of weed infestations induced by the controlled burn and it is not proposed that the Friends take on that responsibility.