



## Are We Serious About Integrated Water Management?

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Growth in Melbourne is expected to approximately double by the year 2050 and our water system will need to build in further resilience to meet this demand. Urban development in the growth corridors are also at an all-time high and much of Melbourne's future water management system is being planned for our future generations.

Whilst Integrated Water Management forums are being carried out within Victoria, the philosophy is not new and requires not only engagement but a commitment from the relevant authorities, developers and the community with their willingness to manage new innovations and policies.

Australia's fastest selling development, Woodlea, in Melbourne's west had support to undertake an Integrated Water Management Plan from the developer and the relevant authorities, including a grant from the now defunct Office of Living Victoria.

The plan involved optimization of conventional end of line wetlands, recycled water, rainwater harvesting, local precinct storm water capture and reuse. 60% reduction in potable water and keeping the new suburb green was earmarked to be achieved. After 3 years of intense engagement the developer was ready to implement the integrated water plan as part of the overall development, however there was one problem, everyone wasn't ready for it.

The water retailer didn't want rainwater tanks as it reduced the viability of recycled water. Council didn't want to manage stormwater harvesting schemes as they hadn't managed this before and the water authority was still trying to deal with the technical uncertainty and complex modelling involved compared to a base case situation. This was 2014.

Now in 2017 the water retailer has ceased mandating recycled water and both Council and the retailer are in the progress of preparing their own independent Integrated Water Management framework. The question has now been asked again by these two organisations, can Woodlea prepare an integrated Water Management Plan?

This abstract is not about crying over a missed opportunity or tarnishing anyone's brand, it is about reflecting, sharing and learning from this complex experience as Victoria once again try's to implement much needed direction for integrated water management.