



Project manager Mike David with the central truss of the Deakin University footbridge made from weathering steel that's designed to rust. Picture: LAWRENCE PINDER

MT WAVERLEY

Park project gets the nod

THE state's peak tribunal has overruled a Monash Council decision to reject plans for a new three-storey, 107-bed nursing home on parkland in Mt Waverley.

The council last July knocked back BlueCross's proposal to effectively double its presence on the site by building the large nursing home in well-vegetated parkland along Scotchman's Creek.

But BlueCross took the case to Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, which this month gave the green light to the project at 444-454 Waverley Rd and 1 Betty Court.

The site, although home to a reserve next to the creek, is private land owned by BlueCross the western side of which already houses a three-storey, 134-room nursing home.

The council and neighbours objected to the plans, saying the project was an overdevelopment.

The council's lawyer, Maria Marshall, said the size of the building, particularly its height of 15m, was "extremely" out of character with the neighbourhood and would have a negative impact on eight houses in Anthony Drive and one in Betty Court it abutted.

Ms Marshall also said the "box-like" form of the nursing home would affect the amenity of neighbours.

But the tribunal said the setbacks from the property boundaries and setbacks of the second and third storeys made it acceptable.

BURWOOD

Bridge weathers the storm

Like it or loath it, you won't miss it - the big, bold and rusty footbridge at Deakin Uni is taking shape

Paddy Naughtin

CONSTRUCTION of the controversial Deakin University footbridge is finally under way, following a 13-year long saga which ended only when the Planning Minister came in over the top of Whitehorse Council.

The Gardiners Creek Community Group and West of Elgar Residents Association fought against the 245m Burwood Link bridge connecting

the Burwood university's two main study areas until Richard Wynne controversially stepped in to approve the bridge in December 2015.

It was one of the longest-running planning debates in Whitehorse's history, with Deakin first proposing the bridge in 2004.

Deakin University Burwood Link project manager Mike David said the bridge would be Australia's largest weathering steel structure.

"Weathering steel rusts on purpose and will turn a nice rustic brown colour pretty quickly," Mr David said.

"The colour will be sympathetic with the bush palette."

Nineteen trees along Gardiners Creek will need to be either removed or trimmed to make way for the bridge - a lot less than the 85 trees that would have been affected by Deakin's previous bridge proposal, he said.

Mr David said a large crane had been moved on to the site and had begun lifting the bridge pieces into place.

"We're getting to the exciting part of the works now," he said. "There is a giant crane on site now, it's probably 140ft tall and weighs about 600 tonnes,"

Gardiners Creek Community Group member Terry Randle said that he was still disappointed Mr Wynne took the issue out of

the hands of the council.

"We still believe the fly-over design is far too big, however it is a lot better than the absolute monster of the previous design," Mr Randle said. "There's not a lot of natural green space left around here, so we have to protect what's there."

Have your say on the bridge at monash@leadernewspapers.com.au

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