

WEEK 1



(SCOTT MCNAUGHTON / SUPPLIED)

NATURAL WONDERS

Outdoor living and stunning landscapes appeal at this dramatic estate

Valley Lake estate, in Keilor East, is located in a visually stunning pocket of the thriving north-west, where land formations not normally associated with the residential areas of Melbourne create an atmosphere at once dramatic and protective. It is built on sloping land that was once Niddrie Quarry. Basalt for road paving was mined there from the 1940s until 1975. The Urban Land Corporation, now Places Victoria, bought the site in 2000 and work on the estate began a decade ago. The first land release was in 2006. The 48-hectare estate is secluded, with just a couple of roads into it, and is defined by stunning escarpments formed four million years ago that gives it a distinctive character and an atmosphere found nowhere else in Melbourne. Because it is so well-defined, and with limited entry roads, it is like a naturally gated community. More than 180 houses have been built and, when finished, there will be 580 houses on the estate. They will be primarily single-family houses, with some medium-density housing. A lot of the blocks in the estate are on sloping



(JOHN GOLLINGS)

PENLEIGH & ESSENDON GRAMMAR JUNIOR SCHOOL

land and this has resulted in stunning, architect-designed houses complemented by creative landscaping. In 2011, Valley Lake won the Urban Development Institute of Australia's Victorian urban renewal award in recognition of the barriers overcome to bring new life to the site. Places Victoria is selling Stage 7B in the Lake View Release. The blocks range in size up to 754 square metres and have excellent views of Niddrie Lake, the cliff and across the estate, with some lots directly opposite

the lake. Water is a feature of the estate, with Niddrie Lake, wetlands and Steele Creek, a tributary of the Maribyrnong River, running through it. The water, naturally, attracts birdlife and this has been celebrated with *The Ornithologist*, a dramatic piece of public art in Niddrie Lake at the northern end. With about 30 hectares of open space, the estate is a place that encourages enjoyment of the outdoors and a healthy way of life. Walking trails have been incorporated into the estate itself, and the Steele Creek shared trail for walkers and cyclists, which forms a shortcut between the Western Ring Road Trail in the north and the Maribyrnong River Trail in the south, runs through the estate. Niddrie Lake is flanked by boardwalks and has barbecues on its shore. The Cliff Top Walk gives fantastic views in all directions. Peregrine Park, with its basketball court and playground, is a great place to have a family picnic or kick a footy, and P.A. Kirchner Reserve is natural parkland. The area is well-g geared for families, although they are not the only buyers. Single people and downsizers have also been attracted to the charms of Valley Lake.



Access to Melbourne and Essendon airports is fast and fuss-free and the estate has attracted pilots and other airline employees. Excellent primary and secondary schools are nearby – including Penleigh and Essendon Grammar, with its dramatic new buildings signalling yet another stage of evolution in the school's history. Essendon Keilor College is to the south of Valley Lake and Keilor Heights Primary is just a couple of streets away. Also nearby are St Bernard's College, St John Bosco's Primary, Rosehill Secondary College and Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar. Valley Lake is 15 minutes from the city in off-peak times and has excellent access to Calder and Tullamarine freeways and the Western Ring Road. Bus services operate on the perimeter of the estate and bus services in the area are being revised. ●

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NEXT WEEK \ JUNE 24
We look at building on a sloping block



ADVENTURES AT STEELE CREEK

Valley Lake is within easy reach of family activities, sports, shopping and restaurants. Brimbank Park, in Keilor East, is a great day out for the family. Its fun playground is inspirational for children with a giant Bunjil the Creator nest for the kids to climb, a maze with many separate elements, a build-your-own cubby house and lots of more traditional play equipment for children of all ages. Barbecues and picnic areas are well-equipped. Football, cricket and tennis clubs have good memberships and hard-fought competitions. Golf course, tennis courts and swimming pools are a short drive away.

Keilor East Leisure Centre has swimming lessons in a heated pool for infants through to adults, health and fitness programs, a full gym with more than 60 pieces of equipment, a cardio room and group exercise facilities. Classes include body pump, body combat, aquatics and zumba. Birthday parties can be held at the centre. Keilor Park Recreation Reserve has a wave slide, scrambling wall and climber among its play equipment and there is also a basketball court, barbecues and huge open spaces. Rosehill Skate Park is a concrete park with banks, quarters, fun box, ledges and a flat bar.

Overnewton Castle, built in 1849 in Scottish baronial style and set in two hectares of gardens, has events, children's activities, afternoon teas and tours of the castle.

SHOPPING
Keilor East Farmers' Market is held at

Centreway Park in Wyong Street on the fourth Saturday of each month. The Milleara Shopping Centre is close by, but Westfield Airport West and Highpoint are the go-to destination for fashion, films, department stores and services.

RESTAURANTS
Keilor Road is loved by locals for the way it layers up restaurants with cuisines from all around the world. Biagio's has a stylish, modern aesthetic with a well-considered menu. Favourites with a modern twist are served for breakfast, lunch and dinner and the restaurant also caters for functions. Tin Roof Café has about 90 meals on the menu – including homestyle specials such as goat, rabbit, polenta chips, pizza, risotto and wood-fired oysters kilpatrick, followed by dark chocolate pudding and other scrumptious desserts. Enjoy Turkish food at House of Fides; seafood and steak at Squid Inc.; gluten-free and MSG-free Chinese at Jasmine House; a contemporary spin on jalapeños and barbecue sauce or chicken quesadilla at Mylk & Honey, and many more flavours and textures along this restaurant strip. ●



HIGHPOINT BROWSING