

Details of submissions received [Personal Information Redacted]

| No. | Submission   | Summary  | Officer comment   | Speak to submission? |
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| 1.  | Are these blocks going to be subdivided?<br>If so how big would they be and how much?  | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Tinarra Court, Kilsyth, 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth, 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark, 182-184 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p>  | Council does not intend to undertake subdivide the lots into smaller residential parcels prior to proposed sale (aside from annexing 2600m <sup>2</sup> of the Tinarra Crt site to allow for the retention of a public walkway). Upon sale, each land parcel would be subject to ordinary planning controls applicable to its zoning.   | No                   |
| 2.  | Selling any reserve land should NOT EVEN BE CONSIDERED.  | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Tinarra Court, Kilsyth, 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth, 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark, 182-184 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p>  |   | No                   |
| 3.  | I find it disturbing that these parcels of land will probably be sold to developers for high density living projects. From looking at the photos, they seem to be perfectly suited green spaces for locals to use for recreation and for habitat for animals. The trees also seem to be significant, and private owners would most likely remove them, reducing the environmental value of the area. | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Tinarra Court, Kilsyth, 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth, 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark, 182-184 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blocks hold recreational &amp; environmental value</li> </ul> | <p>Council has no intention of subdividing the land into smaller parcels prior to sale.</p> <p>Each of the land parcels are zoned consistently with the underlying residential zone of the area in which they are located, and so are subject to the same planning restrictions and/or development opportunities as neighbouring properties. Any proposal to remove trees/vegetation would be subject to ordinary planning controls and restrictions for properties within that residential zone.</p> | No                   |
| 4.  | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Tinarra Court, Kilsyth, 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth, 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark, 182-184 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth</i></p> <p>I think it's the best option to sell the above 4 parcel of land to be able to buy 150 Cambridge Road site.</p>   | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Tinarra Court, Kilsyth, 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth, 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark, 182-184 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p>  |   | No                   |
| 5.  | I support the sale of small allotments assuming they are superfluous & unused, but note that for any land taken as a public open contribution the proceeds must be directed to the provision of public resort & recreation...other parks & public space  | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Tinarra Court, Kilsyth, 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth, 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark, 182-184 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p>  | All lots subject to this proposal are Reserves on title with evidence suggesting that all were acquired through developer open space contribution requirements at the time of subdivision. Any proceeds realised from the sale of these lots would be used to replenish cash reserves used  | No                   |

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|    |  |  | as a contribution toward the purchase of additional open space at 150 Cambridge Road. Excess funds realised through the sale of public open spaces would be directed to the Open Space Fund for Walling ward or to further improvement/rehabilitation of the 150 Cambridge Rd site (as parkland or recreational space). Council's intended use of proceeds from the sale of 'public open spaces' meets Council's obligations under section 20(2) of the Subdivision Act 1988.  |     |
| 6. | <p>This park is used by local community<br/>Important open park space.<br/>The 2 neighbours either side have maintained this park for 30 years, mowing, gardening, keeping it tidy, using their own mowers ect.<br/>SYR have not maintained the park.<br/>Do not sell a donated park space.<br/>Divert subdivision contributions to fund the Cambridge Rd Parkland purchase.</p> | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Wannan Court</i><br/>Received via web-form</p> | <p>Council's Parks and Bushland Officers confirm that routine maintenance of 9A Wannan Crt, including mowing, has been undertaken by community for quite some time. Accordingly, Council's maintenance regime for that park is very occasional and not tied to a regular schedule, unlike other open space lots of similar size.</p> <p>The Reserve at Wannan Crt was created by subdivision LP95873 and transferred to Council at that time, likely as a developer open space contribution requirement which would have been imposed at the time of subdivision in May 1975, and normal for such subdivisions.<br/>the reserve's well-maintained appearance and the existence of a bench for seating suggests a level of community use.</p> <p>As of early 2022, Walling Ward's Open Space Fund reserve contained \$2.97 Million – far short of the \$6.44M required to purchase the Cambridge Rd site. The Walling ward Open Space Fund reserve expected to grow by approx. \$1M per annum (according to current patterns) which along with proceeds received for the potential sale of land, could assist with the replenishment of cash reserves required for purchase in the first instance – in line with Council's resolution of 3 March.</p> | Yes |

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| 7.  | <p>Do Not sell this land.</p> <p>It will go to developers and be littered with shit units straight away. Keep the land vacant and green. The council owes this to us.<br/>You should be ashamed for even considering selling this land</p>   | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Tinarra Court, Kilsyth, 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth, 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark, 182-184 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p>  | <p>Any future application to develop any of the properties would be subject to the planning controls and restrictions applicable under the residential zoning of the land.</p>   | No  |
| 8.  | <p>I am in favour of selling any or all of these parcels of land.</p>  | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Tinarra Court, Kilsyth, 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth, 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark, 182-184 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p>  |  | No  |
| 9.  | <p>Hi,</p> <p>I'm very disappointed to discover this block of land is potentially up for sale. My house backs on to this reserve and my son uses it regularly.<br/>We also purchased our block of land due to the fact that the reserve was never meant to be sold/built on.</p> <p>This also won't help the congestion already in the streets due to developments with 3-6 units on the blocks. It's getting more and more difficult to get in my own driveway due to people parking directly opposite it constantly which has also resulted in me hitting one car...</p> <p>I hope you take this into consideration</p>  | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Wannan Court</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land never meant to be built on</li> <li>• Development would worsen already problematic traffic congestion and parking issues</li> </ul>  | <p>The Council lots have a reserve designation on title, but are not covenanted to never be built on. If Council resolves to sell the land, it would commence procedures under section 24A of the Subdivision Act to apply to have the reserve statuses removed. This would carry with it its own consultative process.</p> <p>If sold, any development on the land would be subject to planning restrictions under the Low Density Residential Zone, the same as any other property within Ellis Crt.</p>   | No  |
| 10. | <p>I'm appalled that council wants to sell these green spaces!</p> <p>Where are families meant to grow and play? Where are kids meant to play back yard cricket? Kick the football? Ride their bikes? Build and play make believe? Definitely not in the streets as they're blocked with cars &amp; are unsafe<br/>Definitely not in their own yards as they no longer have them, as they've been subdivided</p> <p>Definitely not in these green spaces because council were more interested in profits! Council are already receiving double/triple the amount of money from rates as they're are multiple dwellings on blocks, where has this money gone? Into the ugly new council offices?</p> <p>Pull the money from that to buy this land! Not these spaces!<br/>We back onto Wannan court and use it often! We hosted our sons birthday party there as our yards are too small for these kind of events!</p> <p>The land was donated by Mrs Dorothy Olsen to be a green space, if this was no longer going to be used as a green space shouldn't it rightfully go back to the Olsen family? Not to council?</p> <p>Similar to the old Boronia high school - Chandler family &amp; Maroondah council saga??</p> | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Wannan Court</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of safe, usable play space</li> <li>• Council should find alternate funding</li> <li>• Questions right of Council to profit from sale</li> <li>• Reserve is maintained by community</li> </ul> | <p>The residents of Wannan Crt are adequately serviced by open spaces and recreation reserves in near proximity, including Palm Grove Reserve (open space and playground - 70m as the crown flies, or 365m by road), Geoffrey Drive Reserve (open space and small playground 490m), and Pinks Reserve (major sporting and recreation precinct – 660m by road).</p> <p>The loss of Wannan Crt Reserve would not cause an undersupply of open space to this pocket when applying principles of the Recreation Open Space Strategy. The funding model which involves the potential sale of this land was endorsed by Council at its meeting of 8 March.</p> <p>This open space was created by subdivision and acquired by Council in 1975, likely as part of a developer open space contribution requirement. Lots created through such process are</p> | Yes |

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|     | The land it self has been maintained by residents of Wannan crt - not the council itself so where does council think they have the right to pull this space from under a community they clearly know nothing about! ?  |  | transferred to Council and are therefore Council owned. Council has the discretion and right to review its land holdings and distribution of open spaces to meet strategic needs.<br><br>Council accepts that this reserve has been routinely maintained by local community, though contends that while this should be given consideration decision making, it is not the only determining factor as to whether or not the land could be sold.   |    |
| 11. | My partner and I recently purchased our first home in Wannan Court, with the appeal of the beautiful Dorothy Olsen Reserve in mind for our children to one day grow up enjoying. It is extremely disheartening to hear the proposal to sell this beloved park- listen to the local community and leave the reserve alone.  | <i>Submitting on: 9A Wannan Court</i><br>Received via web-form   |  | No |
| 12. | Stop selling our green spaces. There is less impact selling 150 Cambridge Rd than the four smaller parcels of land. Your just robbing Peter to pay Paul. Our rates are already exorbitant - you do not need to sell these blocks to purchase 150 Cambridge Rd.<br><br>We need the reserves - do not turn us into an urban space. Apart from the residents that enjoy the reserves the trees provide nesting hollows for wildlife. Council has not made an effort to remove dangerous trees in this area, yet now you are more than happy to cut down the healthy trees that remain. There are still dead trees leaning on one another along Cambridge Rd that could fall at any minute.<br><br>The extra traffic cannot be accommodated, it is already extremely dangerous trying to cross Cambridge Rd near Pembroke Rd due to traffic flow. It's just a matter of time before someone gets hit by a car or a falling tree on Cambridge Road - how about you focus on the safety of the existing residents. | <i>Submitting on: 9A Tinarra Court, Kilsyth, 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth, 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark, 182-184 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth</i><br>Received via web-form<br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rates money should be used to purchase Cambridge Rd</li> <li>• Council should prioritise tree safety and traffic issues along Cambridge Rd</li> </ul> | As of early 2022, Councils Open Space Fund reserve for Walling ward (from which it can purchase and/or improve open spaces) had a balance of \$2.79 million, which is some way short of the purchase price for the former school site at 150 Cambridge Rd.<br><br>Council's purchase of the land will save the former school site from future residential development of significant scale, thus lessening traffic impact on Cambridge Road / Pembroke Road.<br><br>Council's ownership of the land will over time allow for significant improvement and planting opportunities. | No |
| 13. | We Oppose the sale of the reserve. It is a well loved and locally maintained reserve for the locals around to area to play, enjoy the nature including several bird species that have made it home and catch up with others from the neighbourhood. In this day and age we cannot lose such a loved and well used reserve.   | <i>Submitting on: 9A Wannan Court</i><br>Received via web-form   | Council acknowledges that general maintenance of this reserve has been undertaken by local residents for numerous years, which has resulted in Council's Parks and Bushland team removing it from their regular maintenance schedule. Council maintenance is undertaken on an ad-hoc, as needed basis.   | No |

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| 14. | <p>The Dorothy Olsen Reserve is used by many locals including myself. I do not understand why a park that is a short walk for me is being sold to extend what is already an enormous park a long walk from where I am. Why can't the council purchase and subdivide a small portion of the old school site for development to pay for the buyback of the rest of that site? Why are the people in the vicinity of Liverpool road and Wannan Court losing their park to pay for a park that is a long walk for us to access?</p>   | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Wannan Court</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p>  | <p>The funding model, which involves the potential sale of 4 parcels of land in Walling ward, was endorsed by Council at its meeting of 8 March.</p> <p>Council has committed to purchasing the site on the proviso that it would remain as public open space in its entirety.</p>   | No  |
| 15. | <p>I am in favour of the proposal to sell all these blocks</p>  | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Tinarra Court, Kilsyth, 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth, 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark, 182-184 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p>  |  | Yes |
| 16. | <p>I live within walking distance to Ellis Court and I often park there at school pick up time. I had not realised that there was an empty block there that was publicly usable until I heard of it in the consultation about the Cambridge Rd plans. I had previously walked past, looking for a walk-through to the court behind or to the school, and didn't enter the block to investigate further because the block appeared to me that it could be privately owned already.</p> <p>I am in support of selling this land to assist in funding the purchase of Cambridge Rd. If I am looking for parkland for recreation there is a small park available very close by on Taylor Rd, along with other bushy areas near the school and in the Blue Ridge neighbourhood. I will get more use of the land at Cambridge and therefore if you propose selling the Ellis Court block to fund it then I support the proposal. Thank you.</p> | <p><i>Submitting on: 16 Ellis Crt, Mooroolbark</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support on the basis the land currently looks to be privately owned</li> <li>• Would get more use from Cambridge Rd site</li> </ul>   | <p>Luke Polkinghorn Memorial Reserve, which is more suitably located for broader community use and is currently subject to a playspace upgrade, is located only 90m from the entrance to Ellis Crt.</p>  | No  |
| 17. | <p>Submission on the Sale of: 9A Wannan Court Kilsyth - Dorothy Olsen Reserve</p> <p>Council has identified 9A Wannan Court as having limited Community benefit, which is not the case.</p> <p>It is used by many of the Shire residents in and around Wannan Court. We have residents from the Age Care/Retirement facility on Liverpool Road come and sit to appreciate the Flora and Fauna in the Reserve. One of the gentlemen purchased a park bench so he could sit and enjoy the space when he wanders over.</p> <p>Many dog lovers come to exercise their dogs as it is enclosed on three sides and has no distractions for the dogs.</p> <p>Many of the neighbouring children come to the Reserve to play among the trees and enjoy the grass area to kick a footy. Please see attached video of children playing in park. (I asked if it was OK to video them).</p>   | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Wannan Court</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serves as a place for dog exercise, play, relaxation, parties</li> <li>• Developed by Council and community into an established green space with an array of fauna</li> <li>• Used by residents from Aged Care home on Liverpool Rd</li> <li>• Has been maintained by community for 30 years</li> <li>• Sale would disadvantage those who can't access other reserves</li> <li>• Little involvement from Council to maintain the site represents 'best</li> </ul> | <p>Wannan Crt reserve is the closest open space to the Gracedale Grange residential aged care facility, at approximately 230m from its Pleasant St entrance. Two other open spaces, Palm Grove Reserve and Geoffrey Drive Reserve, both lie approximately 330m from the facility. All three open spaces are on the opposite side of busy Liverpool Rd which acts as a physical barrier thus making access more difficult.</p> <p>Officers acknowledge that general maintenance of this reserve has been undertaken by local residents for numerous years, which has resulted in Council's Parks and Bushland team removing it from their regular maintenance schedule.</p> | No  |

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|                   | <p>Families sit and enjoy this space while their children play. There is no need for any equipment as this space enables children to explore their imaginations. I have also attached a photo of a community Christmas Party (one of many) that was held in the Reserve. (Notice the cricket stumps for a game of cricket).</p> <p>Given the ongoing medium and high density residential development in the area, this Reserve is an important green space to the community. This Reserve has been maintained by the community for over 30 years which has had no impost on the Shire of Yarra Ranges.</p> <p>All the trees that have been planted were supplied by Council as tubers and planted and maintained by the community.</p> <p>This now well established small green space has encouraged a wonderful array of fauna including, Owls, Tawny frogmouth, Cockatoos, Eastern Spinebills, Wattlebirds, Parrots, Rosellas, Kookaburras and possums (Ringtail and Brushtail). If this Reserve was to be sold the community would lose a valuable green space. Yarra Ranges Council Policy States:-<br/> <i>"You are the custodians and Stewards of Community Assets, to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the community, achieving best value and sustainable outcomes."</i></p> <p>I would like to make it very clear that Dorothy Olsen Reserve has achieved the best value to the community as it has not cost the Shire anything. The Reserve was acquired by Council when Dorothy Olsen Sub- divided Wannan Court.</p> <p>The Council has had little involvement in maintaining this Reserve in over 30 years again achieving best value for the community.</p> <p>By selling the Reserve you are disadvantaging Shire residents that may not be able to access other green spaces.</p> <p>I would like to implore you to reconsider the sale of 9A Wannan Court Kilsyth.</p> | <p>value outcome', in line with Council policy</p> <p>Supporting documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Image of a Christmas party on the land ( <i>attached to this document as <u>Submission 17</u></i>)</li> <li>• Video of 2 children kicking a footy on the land</li> </ul> | <p>Council maintenance is undertaken on an ad-hoc, as needed basis.</p> <p>Council's proposal (if all 4 lots were sold and 150 Cambridge Road purchased) would realise a net increase of 1.943 hectares to the Walling community's open space network.</p> <p>Further Officer response as per response to submitter 10.</p> |           |
| <p><b>18.</b></p> | <p>I believe the sale of this parcel of land is an excellent trade off in order to help pay for 150 Cambridge Road.</p>   | <p><i>Submitting on: 182-184 Cambridge Rd, Kilsyth</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p>   |   | <p>No</p> |
| <p><b>19.</b></p> | <p>This land is delightful and a much loved local sanctuary. It is cared for by the owners of surrounding blocks. It will affect the locals detrimentally if this green zone were to be sold</p>  | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Wannan Court</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p>   |   | <p>No</p> |

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| <p><b>20.</b></p> | <p>Sustainable Tiny Communities would like to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Request the land be zoned residential,</li> <li>• Make an offer to purchase the land, subject to town planning approval,</li> <li>• Establish a Sustainable Micro Community – complying with town planning / building permit requirements,</li> <li>• Create a socially affordable and inclusive community for residents who would otherwise be excluded from ownership or social housing.</li> </ul> <p>Regards<br/> <br/>         Founder and Director @ Sustainable Tiny Communities</p> <p><i>A written submission was sent as an attachment via the webform and is attached to this document as <u>Submission 20</u></i></p> | <p><i>Submitting on: 182-184 Cambridge Rd, Kilsyth</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p> <p>Complete submission attached</p>   | <p>The current engagement process being undertaken is to assist Council's decision making around whether the land should or should not be sold, and does not extend to preferred purchasers or future land uses following sale.</p> <p>If Council resolves to sell, sale would be by an open competitive process, such as by public auction or EOI process.</p> <p>Upon sale, any proposal by the purchaser to use the land for a specific purpose would be subject to the planning controls/restrictions applicable to the land.</p>   | <p>Yes</p> |
| <p><b>21.</b></p> | <p>Objection to the Notice of Intention to sell 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark.</p> <p><i>A written submission was sent as an attachment via the webform and is attached to this document as <u>Submission 21</u></i></p>   | <p><i>Submitting on: 16 Ellis Crt, Mooroolbark</i></p> <p>Received via web-form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing prevalence of multi-unit developments with little/no green space provision</li> <li>• Questions Council use of Open Space Contributions from developers</li> <li>• Smaller parks are often preferred by locals for picnics/kicking footy etc.</li> <li>• Loss of open spaces and approval of new estates are damaging to the character of the Yarra Ranges and are inconsistent with the Council's commitment to Living Melbourne.</li> <li>• Repeated attempts to sell the land create emotional distress and is a breach of trust to residents</li> </ul> | <p>Developers are required to provide to Council a Developer Open Space Contribution amounting 5% of the land area, which Council may opt to accept in land (as was common in the past), or as a cash equivalent, which it has opted to do in more recent times. Rather than accept many smaller land parcels which service only a relatively small section of the community, Council's preference is often to accumulate funds so that it may strategically acquire land for larger, centralised open spaces which create greater opportunity for diverse uses and activities and are located appropriately to service a broader section of the community.</p> <p>Legislation dictates that funds raised through this scheme must be used for the acquisition of open spaces, or for the improvement of public open spaces, such as the nearby Luke Polkinghorn Reserve playspace redevelopment on Taylor Rd. The Open Space Fund reserve for Walling ward currently contains approx.\$2.79M, which is far short of the \$6.44M purchase price for the former school site at 150 Cambridge Rd.</p> <p>Council last undertook an engagement process in respect of this land in 2015, where it lodged an application under 24A</p> | <p>No</p>  |

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|     |   |  | <p>of the Subdivision Act to remove the reserve status from the land. A separate statutory process would have then followed to investigate whether the land should or should not be sold. Unlike current proceedings however, the proceedings of 2015 were not tied to a broader recreation open space objective, and so was not considered to hold a strong enough strategic basis to support the potential sale at that time. The application to remove the reserve status was withdrawn accordingly.</p> <p>Further officer response as per response to submitter 35.</p>   |    |
| 22. | <p>I agree with Council's intention to sell 1 or more of the 4 council owned small blocks of land, hopefully only 182-184 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth, as well as the block at 'Part (2600m2) of 9A Tinarra Court, Kilsyth will be needed to be sold. Below I explain why I particularly mention those 2.</p> <p>The small block at 182-184 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth is fairly insignificant as it is only used as a 'short cut' through' to Morrisson Crescent which is fully accessible only a few metres further along plus this site is underutilized as it contains no play equipment, no drive through, no public toilets, taps, buildings nor any public amenities upon it at all and should 150 Cambridge road become a Reserve or similar, considering it is only a very short walk from 182-184 Cambridge Road, will provide and offer countless more lifelong outdoor public social benefits and positives than any negatives that may result from the sale of 182-184, which is around 14 times smaller in size than 150 Cambridge.</p> <p>Also, the sale of 'Part (2600m2) of 9A Tinarra Court, Kilsyth will still leave residents with close and easy access on foot to use and enjoy the adjoining open space block that runs into Belinda Close from 9A Tinarra Court as only part of the 9A Tinarra block is intended for sale</p> <p>The sale alone, of the 2 addresses mentioned above, according to calculated and relevant advice received will comfortably raise enough funds, more than is needed it appears, to comfortably meet the purchase price of 150 Cambridge rd, taking into consideration the financial status of the Walling Wards open space purse combined with accumulating compulsory developer financial contributions.</p> <p>I also agree with Council's proposed intention to sell, only if need be though, of 1 or more of the other 2 small blocks of council owned land mentioned as neither of these other 2, addressed at: 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth and 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark, have any play equipment on them, nor public amenities nor public toilets nor any building what so ever on them either and all of which are surrounded on 3 sides by existing residential properties, near all fenced.</p> <p>I am just not sure as to whether it could be justified that the need be there to have to sell all 4 as in my opinion, I don't think that we should take and use too much more</p> | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Tinarra Court, Kilsyth, 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth, 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark, 182-184 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agrees in principle to selling of land to help fund the purchase of 150 Cambridge Rd, though contends only 2 need to be sold to raise adequate funds (182-184 Cambridge Rd, and Part 9A Tinarra Crt).</li> <li>• Does not agree with Council raising more funds than is needed for the purchase.</li> </ul> | <p>Once having expended the current balance of the Walling ward Open Space Fund reserve, Council would still require an additional \$3.65m to secure the purchase of the Cambridge Rd site, which it will fund initially using cash reserves.</p> <p>The 4 properties being investigated (if all were to be sold) would realise around \$4.5m. As funds realised from the sale of public open space must be used to purchase or improve open spaces (in accordance with section 20 of the Subdivision Act), any amount raised over and above that needed to purchase 150 Cambridge Rd (purchase price and associated costs), would be either directed to the Open Space fund, or used for additional improvements to the land.</p> <p>Council will consider and make a decision on each of the four land parcels individually on their own merits.</p> | No |

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|                   | <p>than is needed to effect the purchase of 150 Cambridge road and immediate associated costs.</p> <p>Regards<br/> </p>   |   |  |           |
| <p><b>23.</b></p> | <p>I agree with Council's intention to sell 1 or more of the 4 council owned small blocks of land, hopefully only 182-184 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth, as well as the block at 'Part (2600m2) of 9A Tinarra Court, Kilsyth will be needed to be sold. Below I explain why I particularly mention those 2.</p> <p>The small block at 182-184 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth is fairly insignificant as it is only used as a 'short cut' through' to Morrisson Crescent which is fully accessible only a few metres further along plus this site is underutilized as it contains no play equipment, no drive through, no public toilets, taps, buildings nor any public amenities upon it at all and should 150 Cambridge road become a Reserve or similar, considering it is only a very short walk from 182-184 Cambridge Road, will provide and offer countless more lifelong outdoor public social benefits and positives than any negatives that may result from the sale of 182-184, which is around 14 times smaller in size than 150 Cambridge. Also, the sale of 'Part (2600m2) of 9A Tinarra Court, Kilsyth will still leave residents with close and easy access on foot to use and enjoy the adjoining open space block that runs into Belinda Close-from 9A Tinarra Court as only part of the 9A Tinarra block is intended for sale</p> <p>The sale alone, of the 2 addresses mentioned above, according to calculated and relevant advice received will comfortably raise enough funds, more than is needed it appears, to comfortably meet the purchase price of 150 Cambridge rd, taking into consideration the financial status of the Walling Wards open space purse combined with accumulating compulsory developer financial contributions.</p> <p>I also agree with Council's proposed intention to sell, only if need be though, of 1 or more of the other 2 small blocks of council owned land mentioned as neither of these other 2, addressed at: 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth and 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark, have any play equipment on them, nor public amenities nor public toilets nor any building what so ever on them either and all of which are surrounded on 3 sides by existing residential properties, near all fenced.</p> <p>I am just not sure as to whether it could be justified that the need be there to have to sell all 4 as in my opinion, I don't think that we should take and use too much more than is needed to effect the purchase of 150 Cambridge road and immediate associated costs.</p> <p>Regards<br/> </p> | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Tinarra Court, Kilsyth, 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth, 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark, 182-184 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agrees in principle to selling of land to help fund the purchase of 150 Cambridge Rd, though contends only 2 need to be sold to raise adequate funds (182-184 Cambridge Rd, and Part 9A Tinarra Ct).</li> <li>• Does not agree with Council raising more funds than is needed for the purchase.</li> </ul> | <p>Officer response as per response to submitter 24.</p> | <p>No</p> |

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| <p>24.</p> | <p>I have no objection to Yarra Ranges Council's intention to sell 'Up to' or 'Some' of the four small blocks of mentioned land in Kilsyth and Mooroolbark, in order to raise a comfortable &amp; necessary amount of funding to HELP FUND THE PURCHASE of the former school site at 150 Cambridge rd.</p> <p>It seems obvious that all four are not needed to be sold in order to HELP FUND THE PURCHASE of the former school site at 150 Cambridge rd, Kilsyth?</p> <p>I say that because below the heading 'Notice of Intention to Sell Council Land' (displayed at the following site address)<br/> <a href="https://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Council/Latest-news/Notice-of-intention-to-sell-Council-land">https://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Council/Latest-news/Notice-of-intention-to-sell-Council-land</a><br/> It mentions: selling four smaller blocks of land to help fund the purchase of the former school site.</p> <p>And the same is mentioned at the address:<br/> <a href="https://shaping.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/notice-intention-sell-council-land">https://shaping.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/notice-intention-sell-council-land</a></p> <p>It just seems not clear whether or not council actually do intend selling all four. Having said that, I believe that proceeds from the sale of 'all four' could raise around \$10 million (based on the current median cost per square metre of vacant land within the Kilsyth Mooroolbark area with a residential zoning).</p> <p>Also recent reports mention the use of the current balance of the Walling Ward's open space contribution kitty (from the 5% compulsory developer open space contributions), being at around \$3million currently and raising approximately a further \$1million annually.</p> <p>Assuming all those figures mentioned above are fairly accurate, I do hope council are not intending selling all four because, in my opinion it would seem not right at all to sell all four if proceeds from the sale of 2 were easily enough to HELP FUND THE PURCHASE of the former school site at 150 Cambridge rd, Kilsyth and other costs 'associated with the purchase'.</p> <p>I think that when the PURCHASE of 150 Cambridge road Kilsyth is all paid for and complete, that it would just not be right nor fair for certain local small open space blocks be sold if that needed to not be so. Nor should the Walling Ward open space 'kitty' grow from the monies left over from all 4 sales, taking into consideration that sure funding will be needed for works and like as time passes, but that is what the accruing open space purse is for as well as various State and federal funding that has been granted and can be applied for, not dissimilar to that related to the Chirnside Park Parkland government grant.</p> <p>It is of my opinion that no more needs to be taken than is actually required and if one or 2 of the smaller blocks are able to be left untouched, then the less disgruntled and unnecessarily affected people there will be and all considered, righteously so I think.</p> <p>Thank You<br/> </p> | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Tinarra Court, Kilsyth, 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth, 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark, 182-184 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth</i></p> <p>Received via web-form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No objection in-principle to selling land to help fund the purchase of 150 Cambridge Rd</li> <li>• Not clear from Council's communications if it intends to sell all four lots</li> <li>• Believes selling all 4 (approx. \$10m) would far exceed the amount required, therefore would like to see only 2 of the lots sold</li> </ul> | <p>Though intending to expend the balance of the Walling ward Open Space Fund reserve, Council would still require an additional \$3.65m to secure the purchase of the 150 Cambridge Rd site. The sale of the 4 properties being investigated (if all were sold) would realise around \$4.5m. As funds realised from the sale of public open space must be used to purchase or improve open spaces, any amount raised over and above that needed to purchase 150 Cambridge Rd (purchase price and associated costs), would be used for improvements to the land.</p> <p>Council will consider and make a decision on each of the four land parcels individually on their own merits.</p> | <p>No</p> |
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| 25. | <p>Please find my objection to the proposal of sale of the reserve at 16 Ellis Court attached herein.</p> <p><i>A written submission was sent as an attachment via the webform and is attached to this document as <u>Submission 25</u></i></p> | <p><i>Submitting on: 16 Ellis Crt, Mooroolbark</i></p> <p>Received via web-form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council has not engaged in an open, genuine, and unbiased consultation methodology.</li> <li>• Council has given no alternative funding proposal for consideration.</li> <li>• It is ironic that the State Government's offer (re 150 Cambridge) is contingent on its retention as open space, when removing open space (through sale) is what Council is seeking to do through this process.</li> <li>• Densification of the immediate adjacent neighbourhood necessitates that any and all available Open Space in the vicinity be kept and maintained to a user-friendly standard.</li> <li>• The land at 16 Ellis Crt. contains environmentally significant remnant vegetation, and no effort has been made by Council to replenish storm damaged trees.</li> <li>• Consolidation of Open Space into a singly located mega park does not provide the same community or ecological benefit as diverse and distributed Open Space options.</li> <li>• Passive open green space is vitally important to wildlife and the community.</li> <li>• Multiple previous unsuccessful attempts by to sell 16 Ellis Court can only be interpreted as a bullying tactic by Council, in an effort to wear down impacted residents.</li> </ul> | <p>Due to the competing organisational needs resulting from Covid and the June 2021 storm event, Council is not able to utilise borrowings or rate revenue, and therefore it has been necessary to seek other options for the purchase of 150 Cambridge Rd. A funding proposal was put out for public engagement, which involved the possible sale of some land parcels, which was strongly supported at the time.</p> <p>Council's resolution of 3 March approved the commencement of statutory processes to investigate the sale of the four land parcels following a public engagement process to be undertaken in line with the Local Government Act and Council's Public Engagement Policy. No decision has been made regarding whether or not any of the land parcels will be sold. Council will consider the matter at a future Council meeting following it considering all submissions received, and hearing submitters who choosing to speak to their submissions. Only then will a decision be made on the matter.</p> <p>Council's currently endorsed Recreation &amp; Open Space Strategy 2013-2023 indicates adequate open space within precinct E (Kilsyth). However, analysis of open space provision for the Kilsyth precinct as part of updating the Recreation and Open Space Strategy identifies a significant shortfall of linear (15.4ha) and social recreation open space (6.1ha) in 2020. Based upon current trends, this shortfall will increase to 17.9ha and 9.6ha respectively by 2041. Furthermore, the provision of open space for structured sport in Kilsyth will be below the preferred provision by 2037.</p> <p>Research generally shows that Large parks over 1600m2 have proven to</p> | Yes |

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|     |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tying the sale of 16 Ellis Court (plus the 3 other properties) to the purchase of 150 Cambridge Road, Council is disingenuously attempting to use a popularity contest to then claim wide community support for the sale.</li> </ul> | <p>encourage people to walk further distances and diversity of activity within parks attracts greater numbers to use the space. Providing access to large parks can be used by Council as a mechanism to assist in reducing obesity and improving the overall health and wellbeing of the community.</p> <p>Given current development patterns within the Kilsyth area, it is unlikely that large, relatively flat parcels of land such as 150 Cambridge Rd will be available for acquisition in the future, making the provision of additional structured and un-structured recreational facilities impossible.</p> <p>Over the last five years Council has approved approximately 350 dwelling applications, indicating 290 additional houses have been constructed in the Kilsyth, most being one or two dwellings constructed to the rear of an existing house within the NRZ or up to 12 units within the GRZ. All additional dwellings result in reduced access to private open space, intensifying the need for access to high quality public open space.</p> <p>Pocket parks or small parks can play an important role as 'green breaks' in the urban landscape, with their value being that they are often within 5-10mins walk of where people live. Main roads, steep hills and railways are often seen as barriers to accessing open space and may inhibit people from walking to their local park.</p> <p>Further officer response as per response to submitter 35.</p> |    |
| 26. | <p>Opposition of sale and rejection of council plan. I object to the sale of a valuable local community resource when council has not put forward any alternative funding proposals. This also impacts the environment for the native animals and birds living in this space as well as encroaching on neighbours peaceful liveability, a key feature of the Yarra Ranges.</p> | <p><i>Submitting on: 16 Ellis Crt, Mooroolbark</i></p> <p>Received via web-form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No alternate funding method proposed</li> </ul>   | <p>Council's proposed funding model was released for community consultation in February 2022, inviting submissions on the matter, before it was endorsed by Council at its meeting on 8 March 2022.</p> <p>Further officer response as per response to submitter 35.</p>   | No |

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|     |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impacts environment for native animals and neighbours' peaceful liveability</li> </ul>  |   |     |
| 27. | I object to the sale of this land. An important green space with environmental and social importance to the local area. Council has not clearly outlined other reasonable options or proposals for funding that would allow appropriate community dialogue. It feels like council is not acting in the best interests of the long term future of that ward and the shire. | <p><i>Submitting on: 16 Ellis Crt, Mooroolbark</i></p> <p>Received via web-form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No alternate funding method proposed</li> <li>Not acting in best interests of long term future</li> </ul>  | Refer to Officer response for Submitter 35.   | No  |
| 28. | <u><i>A written submission was sent via direct mail/email and is attached to this document as Submission 28</i></u>   | <p><i>Submitting on: 16 Ellis Crt, Mooroolbark</i></p> <p>Received via direct mail/email.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports submission made by [REDACTED]</li> <li>Sale (causing loss of trees) would be hypocritical given Cr Child's quotes in press release "<i>Council's election call for greener suburbs</i>"</li> <li>High importance on quiet contemplative, passive, free creativity play areas given increase development in the area.</li> <li>Proposes it be part of a mini urban forest model, as part of Council's Greener suburbs push.</li> <li>Seeks improvements be made by Council, with better access, indigenous planting and seating.</li> </ul> | Refer to Officer response for Submitter 35.   | Yes |
| 29. | <u><i>A written submission was sent via direct mail/email and is attached to this document as Submission 29</i></u>   | <p><i>Submitting on: 16 Ellis Crt, Mooroolbark</i></p> <p>Received via direct mail/email.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local (most affected) residents need to be heard more strongly than those who have advocated for the Cambridge Rd purchase.</li> <li>Owners purchased with knowledge the Reserve existed</li> </ul>   | Council's current submission process is seeking comment and opinion from those potentially most affected by the proposal to sell land. Local letterbox drops, site signage and targeted social media posts have been undertaken in a deliberate effort to allow near-by residents to have their voices and opinions heard. Though Council has nominated four properties for sale in prior resolutions, and has advertised its intention, in line with provisions of the | No  |

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|     |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No indication that the covenant affecting properties (restricting to single dwelling) would be applied to this lot.</li> <li>Green spaces must be retained, given increased and new development in the area.</li> <li>Queries Council reviving sale process only 7 years after previous attempt – community objection.</li> <li>Adding dwellings would increase traffic congestion</li> <li>Reinstating basic amenities would enhance its overall use and appeal.</li> </ul> | <p>Local Government Act, no Council decision on whether or not the land will be sold has been made.</p> <p>Council currently has no intention to apply the covenant affecting surrounding properties to this land. The Low Density Zoning applying to the neighbourhood would have the effect of restricting the type and density of future development to be in keeping with surrounding properties. Further officer response as per response to submitter 35.</p>  |     |
| 30. | <i>A written submission was sent via direct mail/email and is attached to this document as <u>Submission 30</u></i> | <p><i>Submitting on: 182-184 Cambridge Rd, Kilsyth</i></p> <p>Received via direct mail/email.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports purchase of 150 Cambridge Rd, but not the sale of 182-184 Cambridge Rd.</li> <li>Contains a path connecting Morrison Cres to Cambridge Rd, which they use to access public mailbox, and previously before its sale, the milkbar.</li> </ul>   | <p>The parcel of land is likely only servicing those residents living in Morrisons Crescent. If the land is sold, all Morrisons Crescent residents will still be within 450m of either Elizabeth Bridge Reserve, which has just benefited from a substantial upgrade, or to the proposed parkland at 150 Cambridge Road being purchased by Council.</p> <p>The land currently serves as a walkthrough from Morrisons Crescent to Cambridge Road which shortens the walking distance to the Cambridge Road pedestrian crossing point (to reach public phone and mailbox) by a mere 50m.</p> | Yes |
| 31. | <i>A written submission was sent via direct mail/email and is attached to this document as <u>Submission 31</u></i> | <p><i>Submitting on: 182-184 Cambridge Rd, Kilsyth</i></p> <p>Received via direct mail/email.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disappointed with decision to exchange habitat/ secure environmental spaces for barren former school grounds requiring significant work.</li> <li>Concerned by increasing vegetation removal and inadequate replacement caused by development – with concerns extending to this lot.</li> </ul>  | <p>Had Council not agreed to the purchase of 150 Cambridge Rd, the land would likely have been sold for residential development</p> <p>The sale of this property may result in the loss of trees if the lot was to be developed however this would be offset by significant planting that could occur at 150 Cambridge Road. The land is isolated and therefore does not contain significant habitat value.</p> <p>If sold, future development of the site would be subject to the same planning controls/restrictions applicable to its residential zoning.</p>                           | No  |

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|     |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Privacy and overshadowing concerns if developed.</li> <li>• Increased traffic congestion on Cambridge Rd.</li> </ul>   | This area is well provided for with good access to open space in other nearby locations.  |    |
| 32. | <p>A written submission was sent via direct mail/email and is attached to this document as <u>Submission 32</u></p> | <p>Submitting on: 9A Tinarra Crt, Kilsyth</p> <p>Received via direct mail/email.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports purchase of 150 Cambridge Rd, but not the re-classification / sale of 9A Tinarra Crt.</li> <li>• The land is 'used' by people who access it, walk through it, exercise on it, and play with their children and animals, but notes it's also an important passive space, referencing the YRC Health and Wellbeing Plan 2.</li> <li>• Existence of this Reserve is one of the deciding factors in moving to the neighbourhood.</li> <li>• The reserve has contributed to improved mental health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• Seeks alternate funding model for purchase of 150 Cambridge Rd.</li> </ul> | <p>A 2600m2 section of Tinarra Court side of the reserve is being considered for sale. The walkway through to Belinda Close is proposed to remain open and in Council ownership and would provide direct access to 1139m2 of open space (fronting Belinda Close) which is not being proposed for sale as part of this process.</p> <p>Pocket parks or small parks can play an important role as 'green breaks' in the urban landscape. The value of pocket park is that they are often within 5-10mins walk of where people live, though main roads, steep hills and railways are often seen as barriers to accessing open space and may inhibit people from walking to their local park.</p> <p>Research generally shows that larger parks encourage diversity of activity and attract greater numbers to use the space. Providing access to large parks can be used by Council as a mechanism to assist in reducing obesity and improving the overall health and wellbeing of the community.</p> <p>Council's purchase of the 3.6 hectares former school land at 150 Cambridge Road represents is a rare opportunity to acquire a large parcel of land that will contribute to addressing future open space needs and may not be available should this land be sold and developed for residential purposes.</p> <p>Council's proposed funding model was released for community consultation in February 2022, inviting submissions on the matter, before it was endorsed by Council at its meeting on 8 March 2022.</p> | No |

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| 33. | <i>A written submission was sent via direct mail/email and is attached to this document as <u>Submission 33</u></i> | <p><i>Submitting on: 16 Ellis Crt, Mooroolbark</i></p> <p>Received via direct mail/email.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports submission of submitter 35</li> <li>• Reiterates their objection provided in February 2022 consultation regarding Council's proposal to purchase 150 Cambridge Rd.</li> </ul>  | Refer to Officer response for Submitter 35.  | No  |
| 34. | <i>A written submission was sent via direct mail/email and is attached to this document as <u>Submission 34</u></i> | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Tinarra Court, Kilsyth, 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth, 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark, 182-184 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth</i></p> <p>Received via direct mail/email.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parks are community assets and not Council's to sell – should be left alone</li> <li>• Selling would set dangerous precedent</li> <li>• Seeks more responsible management of Council funds</li> </ul> | <p>Council has the ability to sell public open spaces on the provision that proceeds for the sale be used to purchase additional open space or improve existing open spaces. This allows Council to redistribute its public open space network, sell surplus or open spaces of lesser strategic value, and strategically purchase spaces where community benefit will be greatest.</p> <p>On 8 March, Council resolved to expend the balance of the OpenSpace Fund reserve for Walling ward. However, due to the competing organisational needs resulting from Covid and the June 2021 storm event, Council is not able to utilise borrowings or rate revenue, and therefore it has been necessary to seek other options, hence the current investigation into property sales.</p> | No  |
| 35. | <i>A written submission was sent via direct mail/email and is attached to this document as <u>Submission 35</u></i> | <p><i>Submitting on: 16 Ellis Crt, Mooroolbark</i></p> <p>Received via direct mail/email.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Error in Council's statutory process - no resolution to give notice of intention has been issued by Council and proposed funding model proposing replenishment of</li> </ul>  | Council's resolution of 8 March 2022 included a decision to "Approve the commencement of the statutory processes required for the investigation of the future sale of the four parcels of land aforementioned in accordance with Section 24A of the Subdivision Act 1988 and Section 114 of the Local Government Act 2020."  | Yes |

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|  |  | <p>cash reserves not legal under provisions of the Subdivision Act.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sale is inconsistent with Council's Planning Scheme</li> <li>• Importance of retaining trees given recent storm damage and nearby development causing loss of vegetation</li> <li>• Biodiversity aspects have not been considered</li> <li>• Sale would be inconsistent with Council's commitment to 'Living Melbourne'</li> <li>• Repeat investigations into sale seen are a vexatious attempt to wear down local residents</li> <li>• Current process breaches of past undertakings to stop sale procedures. Not being undertaken in good faith</li> <li>• Council has engaged in stealth by removing and not replacing playground equipment and park furniture on the land and thereby changing the character of the land</li> <li>• Council is not proposing to use sale proceeds for a legal purpose and has failed to prepare and adopt a revised budget</li> <li>• Council cannot fulfil its obligations to consider submissions without bias and the appearance of bias</li> <li>• Council has failed to maintain its Policy on the Sale of Land.</li> <li>• The sale of the land would adversely impact the amenity of the area including exacerbating the current peak traffic chaos</li> </ul> | <p>Council's issuing of its Notice of Intention is in line with this direction. Officers are of the firm opinion that Council's legislative obligations are being met in this regard.</p> <p>Each of the four lots are reserves on title and considered public open spaces. Section 20 of the Subdivision Act 1988 requires that Council use the proceeds of sale of public open spaces to buy land for use for public recreation or public resort, as parklands or for similar purposes; or improve land already set aside, zoned or reserved (by the Council, the Crown, a planning scheme or otherwise) for use for public recreation or public resort, as parklands or for similar purposes. Council may also seek approval from the Minister to improve land (whether set aside on a plan or not) for the purposes of recreation and/or parkland. It is Council intention to use proceeds accordingly.</p> <p>Officers are of the belief that Council's endorsed funding model, which includes the replenishment of cash reserves through the proceeds of from the sale of public open spaces is legally sound, given the clear relationship to the purchase of open space and the timeline for 'pay back' which is clearly laid within the resolution. Officers, however, will seek legal advice to ensure all legal obligations are in order prior to a report being presented to Council for a decision on the matter.</p> <p>Similarly to its investigation of 2015, Council's current investigations into the possible sale of this site has included a Preliminary Site Investigation report undertaken by Prensa Pty Ltd, which has concluded that there is low potential for historical and/or current contamination to be present at the site based on their desktop and site observations, and investigations into the site history, meaning that contamination is unlikely to pose a risk of significant environmental liability based on the intended residential use. Further</p> |  |
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|  |  |  | <p>invasive ground testing was not a recommendation of the report.</p> <p>The land is zoned as Low Density Zone, which it has in common with other properties in Ellis Ct. The purpose of the LDRZ is to ensure land within that zone remains committed to low density, single dwelling residential use as the primary function, therefore protection the larger backyards of ½ acre blocks at this location. This similarly applies to 16 Ellis Ct. 16 Ellis Ct, however, is not encumbered with the same covenant affecting building form as other properties in the street.</p> <p>Living Melbourne is aspirational and focused on building capacity in the public and private sectors for improved urban greening outcomes. It does not instruct on the sale of public open space. Though the principle of Living Melbourne should be a consideration when open spaces are being considered for sale, equally, it is important to understand why the land is being sold and what the funds generated from the sale will be used for. If the land is being sold strategically to fund the acquisition or enhancement of other open space in the local area, and this will have a net gain for community health, biodiversity, and environment, it is argued that Council is in fact acting in accordance with the goals of Living Melbourne.</p> <p>Officers acknowledge that there are several large, established trees and shrubs on this site, some of which would likely be lost if sold and developed for housing. Any development occurring at the site would be subject to planning provisions which would seek to protect existing trees where possible, or implement offset requirements. Plantings and improvements works at 150 Cambridge Road will also offset vegetation lost through the sale of land parcels.</p> <p>Council last undertook an engagement process in respect of this land in 2015, where it lodged an application under 24A of the Subdivision Act to remove the</p> |  |
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|  |  |  | <p>reserve status from the land. A separate statutory process would have then followed to investigate whether the land should or should not be sold. Unlike current proceedings however, the proceedings of 2015 were not tied to a broader recreation open space objective, and so was not considered to hold a strong enough strategic basis to support the potential sale at that time. The application to remove the reserve status was withdrawn accordingly. It is importantly, the current processes are based on current circumstances, and any historical proposals in relation to the land should not necessarily exclude Council from undertaking fresh assessments of its landholdings.</p> <p>Council's Playspace Plan 2019-2029 provides a framework for assessing service need and provision over time, considering numerous factors including geographic spread and siting, demographic data and other Council strategies relating to health, wellbeing, access, and equity. The plan also identified gaps in play space provision and strategies to meet current and future needs. Though the plan did not identify 16 Ellis Court as a site required to address a known gap in play space provision, it did recommend the renewal of the Luke Polkinghorn Reserve play space, (less than 100 metres from the entrance to Ellis Crt) which is currently being undertaken.</p> <p>Council's resolution of 3 March approved the commencement of statutory processes to investigate the sale of the four land parcels following a public engagement process to be undertaken in line with the Act and Public Engagement Policy. No decision has been made regarding whether or not any of the land parcels will be sold. Council will consider the matter at a future Council meeting following it considering all submissions received, and hearing submitters who choosing to speak to their submissions. Only then will a decision be made on the matter.</p> |  |
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|     |   |   | A traffic investigation has commenced into traffic movements along Taylor Road at peak school pick-up/drop-off hours which may result in changes to traffic flow or parking availability in that area. Though not specifically part of the trial, if Ellis Crt is seen to be negatively by traffic and parking during this investigation, Council's Traffic Engineers can look at congestion mitigation measures in that court.   |     |
| 36. | <p><i>A written submission was sent via direct mail/email and is attached to this document as <u>Submission 36</u></i></p> <p>From Feb 2022 submission-<br/> <i>"Whilst I agree with the Council's proposal to purchase 150 Cambridge Road to facilitate 'green', 'open' space for the community, I DO NOT agree with the funding proposal. To that end in particular, I believe the loss of a small green space in Wannan Court Kilsyth should not be sacrificed so that an already large space [Elizabeth Bridge Reserve] can be 'extended'. The residents on the Wannan Court side of Mount Dandenong Road already have limited parkland. Local elderly residents from the aged care/retirement villages use the park space in Wannan Court in addition to nearby residents with young children. Wannan Court in recent years has become developed with townhouses which has meant that parking in the Court is already extremely limited. Should another dwelling be added this parking issue would only be exacerbated".</i></p> | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Wannan Court</i></p> <p>Received via direct mail/email.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reiterates points made in previous submission around the proposal to purchase of 150 Cambridge Rd.</li> <li>• While supporting the purchase to facilitate green space, does not support funding by sale of land.</li> <li>• Limited parkland availability on the Wannan Crt side of Mt Dandenong Rd.</li> <li>• Is used by children and elderly nearby residents</li> <li>• Increasing unit development means parking already an issue and would be worsened.</li> </ul>   | <p>If sold, any future development application would be subject to the planning restrictions relevant to its residential zoning. This would include the provision of onsite parking and parking and traffic impacts on the street.</p> <p>Any current parking congestion issues should be raised with Council's Traffic team who may be able to further investigate the issue and possible solutions.</p>   | No  |
| 37. | <p><i>A written submission was sent via direct mail/email and is attached to this document as <u>Submission 37</u></i></p>  | <p><i>Submitting on: 9A Wannan Court</i></p> <p>Received via direct mail/email.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land well used as a park – visited by aged care residents, used by children as a open play space and for dog exercise.</li> <li>• The land contains diverse variety of resident and visiting wildlife.</li> <li>• There is an increasing importance open space plays in the physical and mental wellbeing of residents.</li> <li>• Locals are invested in the park. It has been mowed/maintained by residents of the street.</li> <li>• Sale would be at odds with Council's website statement that Council 'are the custodians and stewards of community assets to</li> </ul> | <p>Officers acknowledge the Wannan Court Reserve is likely to have a level of usage given its regular maintenance by local residents and generally tidy appearance, however its location within the Court makes it likely that only surrounding residences in Wannan Court or potentially those backing onto the reserve would enjoy access to this land. It is entirely possible that the land may be visited on occasion by residents of the nearby aged care facility, however, to access the land those residents are required to cross busy Liverpool Road, which acts as a physical barrier. Another similarly sized alternate open space located on the Western side of Liverpool Rd may more easily accessed by those residents though is located</p> | Yes |

|     |   |  |   |    |
|-----|---|--|---|----|
|     |   | <p>ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the community, achieving best value and sustainable outcomes.</p>  | <p>approximately 390 metres away by road at the southern end of Mountfield Drive.</p> <p>Council has the ability to sell public open spaces on the provision that proceeds for the sale be used to purchase additional open spaces, or improves existing open spaces. This allows Council to redistribute its public open space network, sell surplus or open spaces of lesser strategic value, and strategically purchase spaces where community benefit will be greatest.</p> <p>On 8 March, Council resolved to expend the balance of the OpenSpace Fund reserve for Walling ward. However, due to the competing organisational needs resulting from Covid and the June 2021 storm event, Council is not able to utilise borrowings or rate revenue, and therefore it has been necessary to seek other options, hence the current investigation into property sales.</p> |    |
| 38. | <p>A written submission was sent via direct mail/email and is attached to this document as <u>Submission 38</u></p> | <p>Submitting on: 16 Ellis Crt, Mooroolbark</p> <p>Received via direct mail/email.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As an adjacent owner, has mowed the land for over 16 years</li> <li>• Well-used by families within the court, then playground removed</li> <li>• Surrounding properties are 1/2 acre and have covenants preventing subdivision. Reserve is a vital part of original subdivision.</li> <li>• The land contains hard rock just below the surface.</li> </ul> | <p>Though Ellis Court is on Council's routine maintenance schedule for mowing/ slashing, it is quite possible and not unusual that adjacent owners may contribute to maintenance of the land.</p> <p>Further officer response as per response to submitter 35.</p>  | No |





# Sustainable Tiny Communities

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7<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Yarra Rangers Council

Public Submission Po Box 105

LILYDALE 3140

## **RE: Purchase and Use of Reserve 1 LP91601 Ca PTCA 41B PMooroolbark**

Attention: The Chief Executive Officer

I am writing to you on behalf of Sustainable Tiny Communities.

## 1. Introduction

Our mission is to create and manage a vibrant, connected, inclusive and sustainable tiny house community that is fiscally responsible, caters for a range of income levels and provides long term stability for residents.

In 2019 we commenced gathering like-minded community members who have supported the development of our core values, operating principles, development and governance documentation, legal framework and town planning strategy. We are proposing to create a community of tiny houses, with the primary model being owner-occupier, creating long term housing security for community members.

## 2. Property

Our team has visited the reserve to conduct a preliminary assessment of the topography and vegetation.

**Topography:** The reserve is flat, with minor undulations across the property, as well as some land locked low points in the center of the grassed area.

**Vegetation:** There is a number of well-established tall trees on the property; stringybark gums, peppermint gums, a black wattle tree and mix of several native and non-native smaller trees.

**Area:** Approx 2600m<sup>2</sup> of the reserve being considered for sale

**Lot description:** Reserve 1 LP91601 Ca PTCA 41B PMooroolbark

**Zone:** NRZ1

**Planning Overlays:** SLO Schedule 23



# Sustainable Tiny Communities

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## 3. Intended Land Use

Our intended use of the land would be to create a **Sustainable Micro Community** with a strong sustainability focus around renewable energy, small footprint dwellings requiring less energy to run, locally grown food and the protection of existing native vegetation as well as creation of indigenous gardens.

### 3.1. Proposed Micro Houses

To ensure we create a visually appealing street scape, we propose to establish the **Sustainable Micro Community** with pre-fabricated tiny houses build by [www.formflow.net.au](http://www.formflow.net.au)



Pre-fabricated houses are inherently more sustainable to build off site. As on-site construction has a significantly larger volume of waste materials and CO2 footprint.

These structures meet the Council building standards, and each dwelling would be constructed off site and installed ready to connect to the services.

Each dwelling would have solar and battery storage as well as a 5,000lt water tank, making the **Sustainable Micro Community** a carbon neutral development.

Smaller dwellings / tiny houses require smaller inputs to heat and cool, and as such require less energy to run. Reducing the demand on the local grid and creating an opportunity to export unused power to the grid.

### 3.2. Proposed Residents

The residents in the proposed **Sustainable Micro Community** are predominantly owner occupiers. It is our intention to open the applications up for residents to the Community from a mix of age, ability, gender, and ethnic background. We would be hoping to assist people who are currently struggling with housing security issues and people who are at risk of homelessness because of the ever-increasing housing market cost. Many of our community members are not eligible for social housing, but not enough income to secure private rental accommodation.



# Sustainable Tiny Communities

## 3.3. Proposed Layout

Below is our concept design of the proposed **Sustainable Micro Community**. Refer to the next page for explanations.





# Sustainable Tiny Communities

1. At the South side of the property at Tinarra Court, a carpark would be installed to accommodate 11 cars, including 2 disabled parking spaces and a shared EV charging station. The driveway has been designed to be single direction flow. This carpark would reduce the demand on street parking. Not all residents are proposing to maintain car ownership once they are living in the **Micro Tiny Community**.
2. At the heart of the **Sustainable Micro Community** would be a shared garden space on common land, which will be maintained by residents, with shared paths, vegetable gardens, outdoor seating area.
3. Proposed dwellings consist of a single bedroom, bathroom, laundry facilities and kitchen/living space. These are stylishly designed and will be packed with sustainable features such as double glazed windows, and high R value insulated walls/floor/ceiling.



4. At the northern end of the property existing trees would be assessed as part of an Arborist Report for the town planning submission and full site landscape management plan. It is our intention that we would retain as many trees as possible.



# Sustainable Tiny Communities

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## 4. Affordable Housing Solutions

Sustainable Tiny Community has been working on creating affordable housing solutions that address the key issues facing members of the community. In 2021 we made our recommendation to the Victorian State Government's Social Housing 10 year Strategy. However, we don't have time to wait 10 years for the solution to be provided, people need housing now.

As you can see from the current articles in our appendices this is a hot topic and needs solutions urgently:

- Appendix 1 - AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSING IN AUSTRALIA
- Appendix 2 - RENTAL STRESS
- Appendix 3 - HOMELESSNESS OF THE OVER 55'S
- Appendix 4 - SOCIAL HOUSING
- Appendix 5 - BENEFITS OF LIVING IN AN INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY

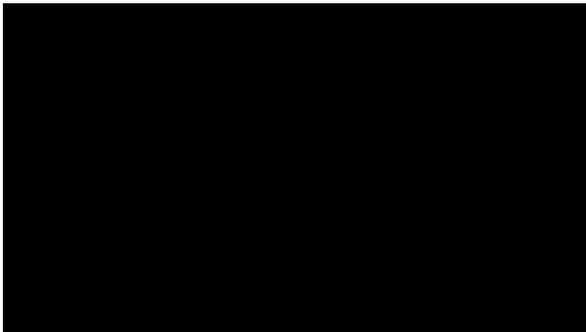
## 5. Summary

Sustainable Tiny Communities would like to:

- Request the land be zoned residential,
- Make an offer to purchase the land, subject to town planning approval,
- Establish a **Sustainable Micro Community** – complying with town planning / building permit requirements,
- Create a socially affordable and inclusive community for residents who would otherwise be excluded from ownership or social housing.

If unsuccessful, we would like to work with Council to create affordable and sustainable housing solutions across the Yarra Valley.

Kind Regards,





# Sustainable Tiny Communities

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## Appendix 1

### AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSING IN AUSTRALIA

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#### [Australia's Housing Crisis is a Natural Disaster](#)

Australia is in the midst of an affordable housing and rental crisis. A perfect storm of high demand, limited supply, and low interest rates ..

**Source:** thefifthestate.com.au

**Author / Date:** Charlie Beckley 11 April 2022

#### [Housing Affordability Plummets in Victoria](#)

The gap between house prices and wages is growing bigger, and women are doing it tougher than men.

**Source:** realestate.com.au

**Author / Date:** Rebecca DiNuzzo 1 Sept 2021

#### [Urgent Action Needed on Housing Crisis](#)

The Nationals Member for Gippsland South, Danny O'Brien says urgent action is needed to tackle the growing housing crisis across Gippsland.

**Source:** The Nationals Victoria

**Author / Date:** Danny O'Brien 20 April 2022

#### [Melbourne Housing Affordability Plummets, Women hardest Hit](#)

The price of a typical house in Melbourne has multiplied by 22 in the past 40 years, almost four times faster than wages, with advocates ...

**Source:** theage

**Author / Date:** Fitzsimmons/Towell 7 Nov 2021

#### [Are Tiny Homes the Solution to Victoria 's Housing Crisis](#)

One proposed solution to housing affordability is tiny homes. It seems an easy answer, in theory; reduce costs by reducing the size of ...

**Source:** philanthropy.org.au

**Author / Date:** Eric Dolan



# Sustainable Tiny Communities

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## Appendix 2

### RENTAL STRESS

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#### [Support Needed to Help Millions of Australian Renters with Rising Cost of Living](#)

Support needed to help millions of Australian renters with rising cost of living, experts say.

**Source:** ABC News

**Author / Date:** Tom Lowrey 7 April 2022

#### [Renting in Australia: It's all Going Up, Workers Face Rental Stress](#)

Surging **rents** and flat wages are forcing childcare, aged care and supermarket **workers** deeper into **rental stress** in four marginal seats that ...

**Source:** Sydney Morning Herald

**Author / Date:** James Massola and Rachael Dexter 6 March 2022

#### [Rental 'tragedy' Pricing out Essential Workers Who are Keeping Cities Running](#)

Rental 'tragedy' pricing out the essential workers who are keeping cities ... Rents have reached record highs in our biggest **cities** and many ...

**Source:** Sydney Morning Herald

**Author / Date:** Kate Burke 20 Jan 2022



# Sustainable Tiny Communities

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## Appendix 3

### HOMELESSNESS OF THE OVER 55'S

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#### [No Place to Call Home - Older People at Risk of Homelessness in Victoria](#)

No Place to Call Home: Older People at Risk of Homelessness in Victoria. **Homelessness is a rapidly growing problem in Victoria.** Between the 2006 and 2016 Census the number of people experiencing homelessness in Victoria increased from a rate of 35.3 per 10,000 population to 41.9 per 10,000 population.

**Source:** oldertenants.org.au

**Author / Date:** Faulkner & Maglou J 2020

#### [Women Over 55: the Fastest Growing Cohort of Homelessness](#)

A new report by the Retirement Living Council shines a light **on the fastest-growing cohort of homeless** Australians and presents policy ...

**Source:** propertycouncil.com.au

**Author / Date:** PROPERTY AUSTRALIA March 14, 2022

#### [Older Women Turn to Caravans and Share Housing as they Face Homelessness](#)

A chronic shortage of affordable **housing** frustrates attempts by single, **older women** to **move** on from lockdown in regional Victoria.

**Source:** ABC News

**Author / Date:** Alexander Darling Feb 2021

#### [Accom Needs Intensify for "new" Homeless Demographic](#)

A **new** report attempts to shine a light on the fastest-growing cohort of **homeless** Australians: women over the age of 55

**Source:** accomnews.com.au

**Author / Date:** Mandy Clark 19 Mar 2022



# Sustainable Tiny Communities

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## Appendix 4

### SOCIAL HOUSING

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#### [I Had to Sleep in the Car: Crisis puts Social Housing Back on the Agenda](#)

A Victorian government spokesperson said work on its \$185 million **Public Housing Renewal Program** – which aims to increase the number of social ...

**Source:** The Age

**Author / Date:** Jewel Topsfield / 9 Nov 2020

#### [Every Victorian Deserves the Safety and Security of a Home](#)

Currently in Victoria, massive house prices are locking a generation out of home ownership and ...

**Source:** homesforall.com.au/facts

#### [Decades of Neglect: Vic has Built less than 10% of it's Public Housing Pledge as Waiting Lists Swell](#)

Decades of neglect: Victoria has built less than 10% of its public housing pledge as waiting list swells. **The Victorian government has built only 57 of the 1,000 new public housing units it pledged by 2022**, amid a push to bind the state to a housing target.

**Source:** theguardian.com/australia news

**Author / Date:** Luke Henriques-Gomes / 26 October 2020

#### [Housing Shortage Forces Thousand's of at Risk Women to Return to Violent Partners or End up Homeless](#)

A lack of affordable **housing** is being blamed for 7,700 **women** a year **returning to violent partners** and over 9,000 becoming at ...

**Source:** ABC news

**Author / Date:** Kelly Hughes / July 2021



# Sustainable Tiny Communities

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## Appendix 5

### BENEFITS OF LIVING IN AN INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY

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#### [The Effects of Co-housing Model of People's Health and Wellbeing](#)

Our review indicates that the **cohousing model** can be positively associated with **health** outcomes through psychosocial determinants of **health**, ...

**Source:** Public Health Review 41 Article no 22

**Authors / Date:** Juli Carrere, Alexia Reyes, Laura Oliveras, Anna Fernández, Andrés Peralta, Ana M. Novoa, Katherine Pérez & Carme Borrell / 6 October 2020

#### [Intentional Communities Increase Social Bond](#)

Cohousing and other **intentional communities** exist explicitly to foster stronger **social bonds**. In that sense, they demonstrate alternatives for ...

**Source:** The Gainesville Sun

**Author / Date:** Whitney Sanford / 20 April 2018

#### [Communal Living and Co-housing; Types and Benefits of Intentional Communities](#)

**Clustered Housing.** Grouped closely around the common house are smaller individual homes. Depending on the location, these can be condominiums, townhouses, single-family houses, duplexes, or even tiny houses. Each one is a complete home with bedrooms, bathrooms, and a kitchen. However, because the common house provides many of the facilities that residents need, individual families can have smaller homes.

**Source:** moneycrashers.com

**Author / Date:** Amy Livingston / 31 Jan 2022

#### [Four Reasons to Consider Co-housing and Housing Co-operatives for Alternative Living](#)

1. **Collective ownership can give you more**
2. **It can be good for the environment**
3. **It's good for well-being**
4. **Communities aspire to be inclusive**

**Source:** theconversation.com

**Author / Date:** Kirsten Stevens-Wood / 20 August 2018



Ms Tammi Rose  
Chief Executive Officer  
Shire of Yarra Ranges  
PO Box 105  
Lilydale 3140

May 6<sup>th</sup> 2022

**Objection to the Sale of Land at 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark.**

I am writing in response to your Notice of Intention to Sell Council land at 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark.

I vehemently object to the sale of this land.

This land is valuable green space in an area where residents are in desperate need of green space due in part to the council's seemingly never-ending approval of split/ multi dwellings that offer homeowners no personal yard space. It is my understanding that these high density housing developments are required to pay a specific levy to contribute to the establishment of green space due to the fact that they provide very little within people's properties. I would challenge the council to ask where are those funds going? We cannot continue the trend of building more and more properties providing no open green space on site, whilst simultaneously removing any public space that they should have access to, and which the council is required to provide.

I cannot fathom how council could suggest that the purchase and development of green space in Kilsyth should lead to the removal of green space more than 2 kms away. This is not space able to be easily utilised by the young families in this area. Council should be providing an abundance and variety of green space for use by citizens. Not everyone wants to go to a playground; some people like to picnic/ play footy in a quiet space surrounded by trees which is exactly the kind of location that 16 Ellis Court provides. It is an ideal community space for such activities and is often used for such purposes.

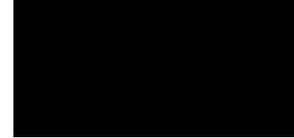
With recent major development in the Shire, such as Kinley and Cloverlea Estate's in recent years, this council is running the risk of creating an environment that no longer reflects that values that make the Yarra Ranges so appealing. People have always loved the character of this beautiful area, lots of space, lots of trees, lots of wildlife; the sale and removal of yet another piece of open space whilst simultaneously building another high-density housing estate is damaging to the character of the area. This proposal is entirely inconsistent with the council's commitment to Living Melbourne.

We have recently moved into this area and honestly are quite shocked to learn that the council has attempted and failed to sell this land on two previous occasions. This to me is a

blatant measure to wear down the local community and take advantage of the local resident's emotional distress caused by dealing with this issue. This is highly distressing for the local community. As a government agency that is charged with representing the interests of the local community, this is a total breach of the trust of the local residents.

Regards,

A solid black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.



Public Submission  
The Chief Executive Officer  
PO Box 105  
Lilydale, 3140

9<sup>th</sup> May, 2022

Re: Objection to the notice of intention to sell Council land at 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark (the Proposal)

In regard to the above topic, I am writing to register my strong opposition and objection to the proposed sale of land at 16 Ellis Court. I would also welcome the opportunity to be heard in this regard.

The land is vitally important and valuable to local residents and should be retained by council for ongoing availability as an open space reserve. Having recently moved to the local area, the proposed sale would have a direct impact on my young family. My specific objections are outlined forthwith:

1. Council has not engaged in an open, genuine, and unbiased consultation methodology. In Council's proposal to purchase 150 Cambridge Rd., and subsequent communications and social media posts on the subject, it has positioned the purchase as being contingent on the sale of four proposed reserve sites, of which 16 Ellis Court is one. As such, it has negatively positioned the future of the identified properties, including 16 Ellis Court, in the minds of the public.

This is exacerbated and reinforced by the pejorative language used in the descriptions of the properties. Throughout the [shaping.yarranges.vic.gov.au](http://shaping.yarranges.vic.gov.au) landing page dedicated to the combined purchase / sale proposals, the reserve at 16 Ellis Court is referred to as; a "small block of land" despite it's 2343m2 size, as an "empty parcel of land" despite it being an active, designated reserve space, and of being "deemed to hold limited community benefit" where it is clear Council has made no effort to beautify or improve the state of the space.

Since the brief community consultation period for the purchase of the 150 Cambridge Rd. site, communication from council has indicated a vast majority of support for the funding method proposed. Given Council has inextricably linked the sale of the 4 land parcels to the purchase of 150 Cambridge Rd., and given no alternative funding proposal for consideration, this is hardly surprising.

Furthermore, the imagery and language used throughout the [shaping.yarraranges.vic.gov.au](https://shaping.yarraranges.vic.gov.au) landing page on the proposal seem to suggest the sale of the 4 land parcels is fait accompli.



- In Council's own description of the State Government's offer conditions for the purchase of 150 Cambridge Rd. it is stated that " *This offer from the State Government is provided on the basis that the land must be for Restricted Community Use (e.g. open space) only.*" It is ironic that the State Government's offer is contingent on the one thing that council is now proposing to do (ie removing reserve status to sell land for private purposes) with the current sale of land proposals.

One can only wonder how long council will wait before taking steps to profit off the opportunity afforded it by the State Government by selling small portions of the Cambridge Rd. site it deems "are of limited community benefit". When the original subdivision development for Ellis Court was undertaken, the requirement for developments of this size was, and remains that 5% of the land value must be provided as public open space – in either actual land or via cash equivalent. Having the land parcel at 16 Ellis Court set aside for this purpose and passed to Council's custodianship for

the use of residents in the immediate vicinity, moving to sell such an asset reeks of opportunistic profiteering at its worst.

3. Densification of the immediate adjacent neighbourhood necessitates that any and all available Open Space in the vicinity be kept and maintained to a user-friendly standard. Council has made no new Open Space available to the residents in the Taylor Rd./Blackburn Rd./Carronvale Rd./Pembroke Rd. precinct despite the proliferation of dual and multiple occupancy developments. It is frankly disingenuous of council to claim that the purchase and development of 150 Cambridge Rd. would be of service to these residents given their proximity.

Under the heading of "How would the community benefit?" of Council's webpage for the proposal to purchase 150 Cambridge Rd., the Social Impacts section states:

"Residents have come to depend on their local parks and open spaces more than ever during the recent Covid lockdown periods. These spaces play an important role in our mental health, providing opportunities for people to connect socially and outdoors with nature.

Large parks encourage people to walk further and meet their physical activity targets while helping reduce obesity. They also encourage many different activities within the space and help support the health and wellbeing of our community."

While I cannot agree more with the first paragraph quoted above, is council seriously proposing that residents in the vicinity of 16 Ellis Crt. should drive to this "large park" to then go for a walk? Or are they suggesting residents engage in the 5km round trip walk just to get to/from the park from their houses – before presumably going for a walk around the park? Despite the seemingly unlimited energy of my small children, this would certainly be beyond them!

4. The land at 16 Ellis Crt. contains environmentally significant remnant vegetation. The proposed change in land use from public reserve to private residential purposes, would necessitate the removal of many of the mature trees to accommodate the dwelling and associated outbuildings envelope, as well as any landscaping works.

The existing vegetation are home to a diverse range of native bird and wildlife. Kookaburra's, king parrots, crimson and eastern rosella's, rainbow lorikeets, wattlebirds, magpies, and more can all be found and heard in 16 Ellis Court.

Despite the ever-present birdlife, it is also evident that council has made absolutely no effort to replenish fallen and storm damaged trees. A quick walk through the space I counted no less than a dozen major tree stumps or stump hole where mature remnant trees once stood. This has significantly impacted the original tree canopy and I am frankly stunned that over the years council has done nothing to address this situation. The cynic would assume this is not an accident.

5. Consolidation of Open Space into a singly located mega park does not provide the same community or ecological benefit as diverse and distributed Open Space options. Isolated, dedicated reserves such as 16 Ellis Court enable and sustain wildlife corridors when considered in addition to neighbouring managed residential lots. Such corridors are essential in maintaining thriving wildlife populations.

Consolidation of Open Space also does not consider potential mobility or social limitations of affected residents. Small scale Open Space reserves can provide a sanctuary for those who do not wish to partake in a mass outdoor gathering spaces, or who simply cannot travel to such areas.

6. Passive open green space is vitally important to wildlife and the community. While I am encouraged to see the improvement works being undertaken at the nearby Luke Polkinghorne Memorial Reserve, it saddens me to hear passive Open Spaces referred to as of “limited benefit to the community” or other such narrow interpretations.

As residents of the Yarra Ranges, we should be incredibly proud of our passive open spaces. They are a place for our children to understand and appreciate their natural environments. They provide opportunities for unstructured and creative play, without the stimuli of added playground furniture. As a child growing up in Mt. Evelyn, I fondly recall looking for small grubs and lizards, picking up small rocks to look for what might be underneath, building a tepee out of fallen branches and other such activities. With the increasing density of nearby residential housing blocks and the subsequent loss of ‘backyard’, passive open spaces can fill this gap. Having recently moved to the neighbourhood, we were pleased to have an open green space reserve such as 16 Ellis Court so close for our young children to enjoy.

7. Lastly, as a new resident to the area, I was shocked to learn that there have been multiple previous unsuccessful attempts by Council to sell 16 Ellis Court – with the most recent barely 7 years ago! To the outsider, this latest attempt can only be interpreted as a bullying tactic by Council, in an effort to wear down impacted residents. I can only imagine the distress this is causing the long-term residents (again) as surely the reasons for previous attempts not proceeding are still valid. It also seems Council are going back on, and breaching assurances given to the residents that Council will not undertake such proceedings in the future.

This latest attempt to sell 16 Ellis Court by packaging it together with other reserve spaces is no more than an attempt to ‘sneak one through’ on residents. By tying the sale of 16 Ellis Court (plus the 3 other properties) to the purchase of 150 Cambridge Road, Council is disingenuously attempting to use a popularity contest to then claim wide community support for the sale.

The overwhelming support for the purchase of the Cambridge Road site should reinforce to council the deep community desire to retain and gain more Open Space however, this cannot and should not be at the loss of other existing sites. As outlined in my first objection point, Council has offered no alternative funding proposals.

For the reasons listed above, I strongly encourage Council to reconsider it's proposal to sell 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark and consider alternate funding strategies for the purchase of the Cambridge Road site. I also reserve the right to register further opposition on the subject and put forward further submissions as additional details come to light.

Furthermore, I would welcome the opportunity to discuss with the relevant members of the Council team potential improvement opportunities on 16 Ellis Court to further improve on the amenity the site provides the local resident community.

Best Regards,





8<sup>th</sup> May, 3138

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Ms Tammi Rose  
Chief Executive Officer  
Shire of Yarra Ranges  
PO Box 105  
Lilydale 3140

**Objection to Council's Proposed Sale of Reserve at 16 Ellis Court Mooroolbark**

(Submission in response to notification of sale proposal to residents 31 March 2022, by Phil Murton Acting Director Environment and Infrastructure)

**Council's recent purchase of 150 Cambridge Road Kilsyth has attracted solid support from the community, however we are vehemently opposed to the proposal that this be part funded by sale of the Reserve at 16 Ellis Court Mooroolbark. [REDACTED] has widely circulated a comprehensive paper embracing the valid concerns of Ellis Court residents and we lend our voice of unequivocal support to the 12 stated objections he has raised.**

Our particular concern relates to the consideration for sale (revisited from two former failed attempts) of the Reserve at 16 Ellis Court Mooroolbark which according to correspondence from the Director of Environment and Infrastructure has "...limited community benefit" The last proposed sale was successfully opposed by residents and withdrawn some 6 years ago. The current proposal appears to be based on an alleged rationalisation of Council's property assets with no justification of the alleged "limited community benefit" or meaningful consultation with residents. We believe that in the current environment of diminishing open space that our local government should be working creatively with residents to utilise small reserves in new and exciting ways for the benefit of all. This superb site boasts 30 established trees and large shrubs. Any attempt to wilfully promote their loss (i.e. sale for housing) would be nothing short of environmental vandalism and instant fodder for a vigorous media campaign. The stance would be perceived as hypocritical when set alongside the detailed fulsome observations of Mayor Jim Child on 3<sup>rd</sup> May in lauding Yarra Ranges proposal for a Greening The Suburbs program.

**Quoting from his press release "Council's election call for greener suburbs" Mayor Child observes:**

*“We know that as the climate changes and our urban areas evolve, severe weather events such as storms and heat waves will become more common, our tree canopy will continue to decline ... In the June 2021 storms, we estimate that 25,000 trees fell in Yarra ranges alone, permanently changing the landscape. Before this, from 2014-18, our built-up areas lost 186 hectares of tree canopy cover- roughly the surface area of 104 MCG’s ... We’re asking all federal parties and candidates to commit to Greening Our Suburbs. This project will have a direct benefit for community members, in improving public spaces; to our environment, by providing better habitat and protecting the biodiversity of the region and; visitors, who come out to enjoy our beautiful and renowned environment.*

*This project is one of council’s key advocacy projects for the federal election”*

The profile of our area is changing significantly due to greatly increased population density. Available land is almost exhausted and dual occupancy accelerating. During the necessary restrictions on movement during COVID **we have focussed inward on our local facilities (within a short walk) in a fashion never before experienced.** We have had many conversations with residents in the vicinity that we have met casually whilst tramping our streets. The foot traffic in our Court increased significantly and again many expressed surprise that such a little gem existed at the end. An almost universal expression is the value we place on open space and the reluctance for older people to visit playgrounds where clusters of people gathered, unfortunately the only place where seating seems to be available locally.

Hence the concept of **contemplative spaces** as a tool in fostering mental health has arisen, quiet spaces defined thus “In today’s urban realm, we can understand a contemplative space more specifically as one joining esthetic and environmental values with mental health benefits for its visitors...” (*Agnieszka A.Olszewska et al SAGE Journal, 2016*). This places our reserve, in a quiet location away from traffic noise, and surrounded by treed properties, as a prime location for such use. This Reserve, although sadly never adequately resourced by the Shire over the years, brought much pleasure to the children and adults of Ellis Court and surrounds as a passive area, space for free creative play and a place of peace and tranquillity. We recall fondly picnics with our children on the site and would like other families to continue experiencing this along with our own grand children

Its continued use into the future **does not require intensive redevelopment** but rather embracing the philosophy of a mini **urban forest**. That is, enhancing tree and vegetation populations in urban settings for the purpose of improving the urban environment. As so ably expressed by Mayor Jim Child in his press release the devastation by storm damage of our tree stock throughout our urban settings and our national parks will require action on many fronts in the immediate and foreseeable future. Hence the vital importance of Council’s “Greener Suburbs” push. This small reserve setting, already well set for enhancement, could well be developed by Yarra Ranges as a model that may be replicated and modified in other small settings throughout our municipality.

Other groups are pushing the same message. We noted a recent report in The Age of the launch of a new book and initiative by Clive Blazey founder of Australia’s largest gardening

club and a non-profit dedicated to sustainable gardening and biodiversity. He is touring the country to convince Australians to plant more trees.

He said: "If we all plant 160 trees over 10 years – about 12 to 16 a year – we can solve the problem of climate change ...Clive and his wife Penny are also encouraging the public to protest...and do more to prevent trees from being destroyed before the world is intolerably hot and barren. Most deforestation was happening in backyards, said Penny. If you have got neighbours doing that try to persuade them not to chop down trees. The residents of Ellis Court are doing just that – trying to persuade the Shire from launching an unnecessary act of environmental vandalism!

Adding to our net loss of vegetation and associated increase in temperature is **the formation of heat islands.** [REDACTED] has documented this in his submission and in our walks through the area we see that this is accelerated locally by dual occupancy and smaller allotments in subdivisions removing existing vegetation and precluding replacement of trees on allotments. Large impermeable concrete or asphalt pads seem to be fostered and allowed under existing guidelines.

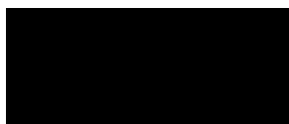
We also note that property owners in Ellis Court are well aware of the protections afforded to them in strict covenants on their titles setting out fencing, setback, single dwelling construction, type of activity etc. **None of these apply if the Reserve is offered for sale,** potentially devaluing properties, and amenity. in one of the Shire's highest rating areas. These concerns were well canvassed 6 years ago, heeded and contributed to the resultant withdrawal of the proposal.

**What is required to promote and enhance 16 Ellis Court:**

- A commitment by Council to foster a new model for small reserves and not view them all as repositories for look-alike playgrounds
- Provide a better access to this land so that people can reach the apex easily and maintenance is facilitated
- Implement an aesthetic planting scheme of indigenous trees and vegetation to supplement the existing canopy
- Provide appropriate seating areas in both shaded and sunny areas to facilitate passive use.

We request that Council explores other avenues of funding for purchase of 150 Cambridge Road Kilsyth and assure the residents of Ellis Court that our Reserve will be enhanced and not form part of a cheap solution to an inadequately articulated funding issue. As ratepayers we deserve respectful, meaningful consultation and the fostering of a partnership in the continued use of precious, treed, open space.

We reserve the right to further pursue opposition to the sale of 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark both in writing and in Council/community consultations.



Phil Murton  
Acting Director Environment &  
Infrastructure

[REDACTED]  
Mooroolbark 3138  
[REDACTED]

9<sup>th</sup> April 2022

Dear Phil and Council Members,

We write to you to present our objection to the sale of the land at 16 Ellis Court Mooroolbark. As residents of Ellis Court we are extremely disappointed with the proposal of this sale and the degree of pressure being applied to sell this precious piece of land. We feel our voices have not been adequately heard or responded to thus far and are in disbelief that planning has proceeded, despite both past and more recent efforts to voice our desire to conserve this land reserve and concerns regarding sale and development.

There are various reasons we object to this sale which we are outlined below:

- As residents of the court, we believe we would be the most impacted by the sale and feel our voices need to be heard, acknowledged and considered 'more strongly' in the context of those most affected by the sale of land.

Recent community consultation was sought regarding the sale of this land to help fund the purchase of land on Cambridge Road. The apparent result was overwhelming support to sell this land in order to purchase the Cambridge Road site. We are concerned this was not carefully-considered consultation, with skewed results in favour of those least impacted by the sale of this land. Surely sale of land in Mooroolbark should be based on the feedback of local residents, not those who live in Kilsyth! The Cambridge Road site, for which funding is needed, is not even within walking distance for residents in Ellis court and surrounding streets. We would therefore sacrifice access to green space withing walking distance. Does this align with council's goals?

- All properties in Ellis court were purchased with the knowledge that a reserve existed at the end of the court. This was part of the court's attraction and is commonly used by residents (e.g. exercising dogs, picnics, as a quiet contemplation space). In effect this increased the original purchase price residents paid to be in close proximity.
- All properties in the court are covered by a covenant which ensures consistency of setback, dwelling type and housing density. This is of paramount importance in this estate and must be retained for every

property in the court. There has been no indication a covenant would apply to 16 Ellis Court. Not having a covenant would significantly devalue existing properties in the court.

- The rapidly decreasing vegetation in Mooroolbark is of great concern. This is particularly evident with the development of new housing estates where vast numbers of trees have been removed (e.g. Kinley Estate) The parcel of land in Ellis Court maintains a leafy green environment for this area. Green spaces such as this must be retained. Once sold they will never be reclaimed.
- This block of land was previously considered for sale in 2015. At that time the residents of Ellis Court and surrounding streets worked tirelessly, unanimously objecting to the sale and presenting their case at a Council meeting. As a result, Council abandoned its plan to sell the land. It is incredibly disappointing that after all the time and effort exerted only 7 years ago, we are back at the same point yet again.
- Ellis Court is already incredibly busy during peak times. Both at school drop off and pick up times the traffic is chaotic and quite often dangerous. The consideration of adding further dwellings to the street is not feasible.
- Any noticeable decline in use of this land of late is associated with the lack of amenities which have been repeatedly removed by council. In the past, the land in question contained amenities which complemented the space, making it more usable. Playground equipment and seating has been installed and then removed on two occasions, thus reducing the degree to which it might be used by varying community groups. Reinstating basic amenities would enhance its overall use and appeal.

Under no circumstances should 16 Ellis Court be sold for development. We are concerned the voice of the local residents has not been heard equitably and insist any further conversations must involve us, the resident of Ellis Court who are most impacted by this proposal. We would appreciate being updated with any further developments as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

Report on 150 Cambridge Rd.

We have previously approved the sale of this land to the Council, and that has not changed. We have no internet at the moment, hence this letter. The street has NEVER Been a crescent. We are the longest living people in this what should have been named a "court". It did have a "walk through" to Durham Rd a long time back, but who arranged it to be sold to nearby houses ??

Bottom line is that the two blocks mentioned in your correspondence 182 and 184 have a path on them which connects to the Council arranged spare block in Morrison Cres. The path is maintained by the Council. It leads up to Cambridge Rd. and to the letter posting box that I use regularly. It also used to lead to a milk bar type arrangement till it was sold off. I used to get milk from there from time to time.

Thus we do NOT support the Council in this regard.



*I will speak if needed*

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 7 May 2022 19:23:12 +1000  
**To:** mail  
**Subject:** Submission- Purchase of land 150 cambridge Rd, kilsyth

Dear council,

We moved into Kilsyth many years ago & slowly have watched the 'green wedge' suburb slowly decrease into subdivisions of blocks/ land parcels, demolition of houses into units & the significant increase of traffic on Cambridge road & adjoining streets.

We have been fortunate to have the reserve of 182-184 Cambridge road adjacent to us where we have seen nesting owls & other birds & wildlife live happily. We are extremely disappointed that the council has chosen to sell off current habitat/ secure environmental spaces, to purchase a baron piece of school ground. In turn needing to heavily invest in the new land purchase, to make this a new 'environment & vegetation' space. Given the beautiful Elizabeth Bridge Reserve & easy access through adjoining streets, we thought continued upgrading would occur to this space. We would like to further understand the plan for this site once purchased & would be far more supportive to see the long term plan for this investment.

Over time we have watched trees & other vegetation being removed & not replaced to the same level. Our surrounding neighbors an example where subdivisions have occurred & vegetation removed for another home. Increasing traffic on the shared driveway & also removing vegetation/ habitats that have not been replaced.

We understand that yes land is very limited, however find it odd that existing wildlife will be impacted & existing vegetation removed to make a purchase of a baron piece of land requiring significant work at 150 Cambridge Rd, to replace lost habitat at land locations such as 182- 184 Cambridge rd.

We are also wanting to understand the intention & building restrictions bring placed on the particular 182-184 Cambridge Rd kilsyth, as we are concerned once again our privacy will be reduced & significant overshadowing will occur if/ when a builder takes ownership of this land parcel. We also would like to understand the impact on vegetation as we have slowly watched our surrounding land parcels diminish with vegetation & no follow through on required permits.

Our other concern is access to Cambridge rd & impact on the shared driveways with increased traffic flow with ongoing subdivisions.

I can be contacted on this email & look forward to being provided further updates as things progress.

Kind regards,  
[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 3 May 2022 17:37:10 +1000  
**To:** mail  
**Cc:** Cr Len Cox;Cr Jim Child;Cr Johanna Skelton;david.hodgett@parliament.vic.gov.au;tony.smith.mp@aph.gov.au  
**Subject:** Public Submission: Objection to the reclassification of land / proposed sale of land at 9 Tinarra Court, Kilsyth Vic 3137 (Proposed sale of land to fund proposed purchase of Land - 150 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth Vic 3137)  
**Attachments:** Yarra Ranges - Objection to reclassification of land 9 Tinarra Court Kilsyth.pdf, Open-Space-Resource-Guide\_.pdf, Health-and-Wellbeing-Plan-FINAL\_.pdf

**Public Submission: Objection to the reclassification of land / proposed sale of land at 9 Tinarra Court, Kilsyth Vic 3137 (Proposed sale of land to fund proposed purchase of Land - 150 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth Vic 3137)**

Please refer attached.

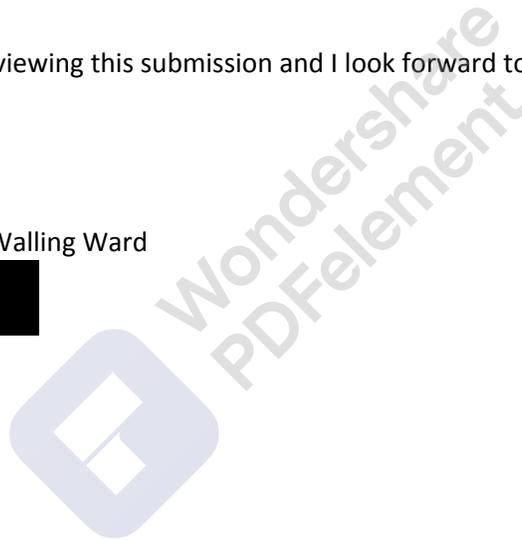
Thank you in advance for reviewing this submission and I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

With thanks,

[REDACTED]

Resident of Yarra Ranges – Walling Ward

[REDACTED]



|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Subject:         | <p><b>Objection to the reclassification of land / proposed sale of land at<br/>9 Tinarra Court, Kilsyth Vic 3137</b></p>  <p><b>Proposed sale of land to fund proposed purchase of<br/>Land - 150 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth Vic 3137</b></p>  |
| Submission to:   | <p>Public Submission<br/>Tammi Rose<br/>Chief Executive Officer<br/>Yarra Ranges Council<br/>PO Box 105, Anderson Street<br/>LILYDALE VIC 3140<br/><a href="mailto:mail@yarraranges.vic.gov.au">mail@yarraranges.vic.gov.au</a></p>   |
| CC:              | <p>Councillor Len Cox, Walling Ward<br/><a href="mailto:CrLenCox@yarraranges.vic.gov.au">CrLenCox@yarraranges.vic.gov.au</a></p> <p>The Mayor of Yarra Ranges, Cr Jim Child<br/><a href="mailto:CrJimChild@yarraranges.vic.gov.au">CrJimChild@yarraranges.vic.gov.au</a></p> <p>The Deputy Mayor of Yarra Ranges, Cr Johanna Skelton<br/><a href="mailto:CrJohannaSkelton@yarraranges.vic.gov.au">CrJohannaSkelton@yarraranges.vic.gov.au</a></p> <p>The Hon David Hodgett, Member for Croydon<br/><a href="mailto:david.hodgett@parliament.vic.gov.au">david.hodgett@parliament.vic.gov.au</a></p> <p>The Hon Tony Smith MP for Casey<br/><a href="mailto:tony.smith.mp@aph.gov.au">tony.smith.mp@aph.gov.au</a></p> |
| Submission from: | <p>██████████<br/>Resident of Yarra Ranges – Walling Ward<br/>██████████</p>  |
| Submission date: | 3 <sup>rd</sup> May 2022  |

3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022

Public Submission  
Tammi Rose  
Chief Executive Officer  
Yarra Ranges Council  
PO Box 105, Anderson Street  
LILYDALE VIC 3140  
[mail@yarraranges.vic.gov.au](mailto:mail@yarraranges.vic.gov.au)

**Subject:**

**Objection to the reclassification of land / proposed sale of land at 9 Tinarra Court, Kilsyth Vic 3137**  
**Proposed sale of land to fund proposed purchase of Land - 150 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth Vic 3137**

Dear Tammi,

**Council's Proposal**

As per council's letter dated 31/03/2022 and the related information on Council's website, in relation to Tinarra Reserve:

- Council advised 2600m<sup>2</sup> of Tinarra Reserve is being considered for sale.
- If Council decides that it will sell the land, the property boundaries would need to be realigned as part of the subdivision process which would remove the Reserve status from the land.
- The land has reserve status. If Council decides that it will sell the land, it would undertake a separate process under s24A of Subdivision Act to:
  - Remove the 'Reserve' status from the land
  - Realign the property boundary so that the walkway (proposed to share a boundary fence with 7 Tinarra Court) would remain Council owned

As I read the information available, Council is proposing to sell off an existing open green space with mature trees which benefits the community, in order to fund the purchase of a 3.6 hectare site in Cambridge Road Kilsyth, proposed to be kept as open space, to benefit the community.

- **I am not objecting to the purchase of land at 150 Cambridge Road Kilsyth.**
- **I am objecting to the reclassification of Tinarra Reserve and sale of that reclassified land to fund the purchase of 150 Cambridge Road Kilsyth.**

As well as benefiting ratepayers who reside around and near it, along with all green spaces in the region, Tinarra Reserve is available to all of the community to access and use.

... /2

**Use of Land**

There are many interpretations of 'use of land'. There is the obvious interpretation – people access the land, walk through it, exercise on it, play with their children and animals, etc.,

There is also the more subtle use of land ~ where the green space is appreciated for what ***isn't*** there.

You don't need to ***physically*** access a green space to appreciate it. Looking out onto green space gives peace and solitude to many.

Green space gives us a place to breathe. Space to be. Space to enjoy. Space to create.

This subliminal use is harder to measure and so very important to defend.

In July 2013, the State Government of Victoria, in the "*Creating Liveable Open Space - Case Studies*" document state:

*"Having access to a variety of quality open spaces is vital for any community.*

*Throughout our lives we are likely to use many different types of open space, from playgrounds and active sporting facilities, to places where we can have a barbeque, ***enjoy the natural environment*** or sit down to read a book.*

*Research confirms that convenient access to quality open space has a positive influence on our sense of wellbeing, as well as our physical health."*

*Reference: [Creating Liveable Open Space - Case Studies – State Government of Victoria – July 2013 – Introduction.](#)*

In February 2022, mailcommunity.com.au, reported Cr Cox, current Walling Ward Councillor as saying:

*"When you look at the public open space in Kilsyth, it's way down on what it should be and I'm talking about ***passive public open space***, not the sporting stuff."*

*Reference: <https://muntevelyn.mailcommunity.com.au/news/2022-02-09/150-cambridge-rd-closer-to-being-saved-after-council-decision/>*

On reflection, Tinarra Reserve clearly falls into the above two definitions.

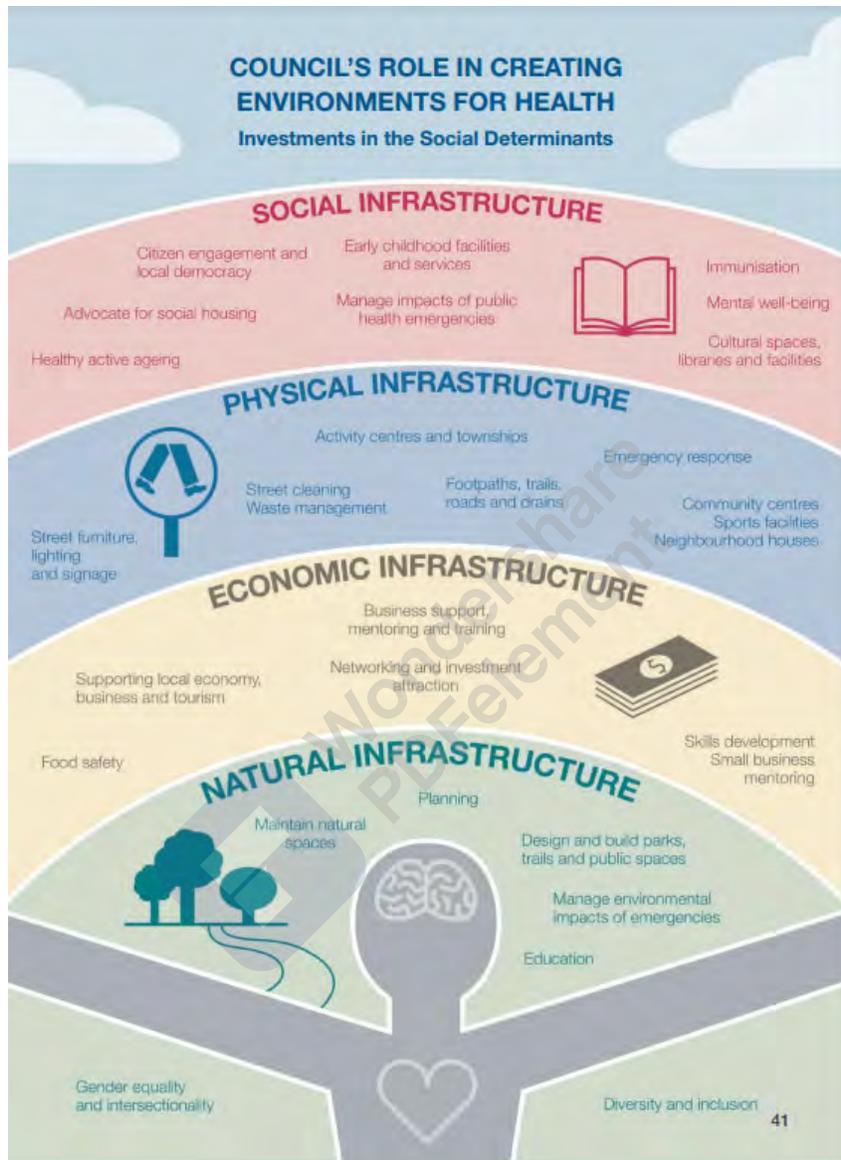
*... enjoy the natural environment ... passive public open space ...*



... /3

~ 3 ~

The chart below, from “Yarra Ranges Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025”, clearly shows Council’s stated intention to “**Maintain Natural Spaces**”.



Reference: Yarra Ranges Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025 -Page 41

... /4

**My Story**

In 2020 I made the decision to move from Maroondah where I had lived for 19 years. Looking within Yarra Ranges, I was immediately taken with the prospect of living next to green space. For a year, I considered properties around Tinarra Reserve, Geoffrey Reserve, Pinks Reserve and D Olsen Reserve. In Feb 2021 I purchased my current property which borders Tinarra Reserve and moved in March 2021.

Since moving to Yarra Ranges, having the Tinarra Reserve green space bordering my property has significantly improved my mental health and well-being ~ one of my deciding factors for moving. Having the green space at the top of Tinarra Court is of benefit to residents in the surrounding streets of Belinda Close, Lucas Avenue, Lade Avenue, Paramount Avenue, Eva Court, Garden Street and Orchard Street – all within Walling Ward.

In speaking with other residents, they too are keen for the Tinarra Reserve to remain unchanged. Unsure of how many residents will put pen to paper, I am writing to you to share my story

Since moving here in March 2021, it has been a delight living within Yarra Ranges. and I hope to stay here with my home bordering Tinarra Reserve, for many years to come. Your letters of 08/02/22 and 31/03/22 re the proposed sale were really disappointing to receive and read.

**Request**

I ask council reconsider funding options for the purchase of 150 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth, and please leave Tinarra Reserve as is, unchanged. Keep it as a Reserve, with its current dimensions and mature trees, for residents to enjoy for many years to come.

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours faithfully,

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted signature]

Resident – Yarra Ranges – Walling Ward

[Redacted signature]

**Tinarra Reserve:  
9 Tinarra Court, Kilsyth Vic 3137**

From daybreak to sunset, featuring both grass areas and mature trees, Tinarra Reserve is a green space for our community to enjoy year-round.



... /6

~ 6 ~

**Tinarra Reserve:**  
**9 Tinarra Court, Kilsyth Vic 3137**

From daybreak to sunset, featuring both grass areas and mature trees, Tinarra Reserve is a green space for our community to enjoy year-round.



... /7

~ 7 ~

**Tinarra Reserve:  
9 Tinarra Court, Kilsyth Vic 3137**

From daybreak to sunset, featuring both grass areas and mature trees, Tinarra Reserve is a green space for our community to enjoy year-round.



~ end of submission ~

---

Subject: Objection to the reclassification of land / proposed sale of land at 9 Tinarra Court, Kilsyth Vic 3137  
Proposed sale of land to fund proposed purchase of Land - 150 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth Vic 3137  
Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022





# CREATING LIVEABLE OPEN SPACE: CASE STUDIES

This document has been prepared by the Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure to assist local government, industry, property owners and other government agencies in understanding the opportunities to improve open space across Victoria.

Published by Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure  
1 Spring Street, Melbourne 3000. July 2013

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Photo: Brimbank Council

## CONTENTS

|            |  |           |
|------------|--|-----------|
| <b>1</b>   | <b>INTRODUCTION</b>  | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>2</b>   | <b>OPEN SPACE</b>  | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>3</b>   | <b>OPEN SPACE CASE STUDIES</b>   | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>3.1</b> | <b>NEW OPEN SPACE FOR PLACES</b>                                       | <b>7</b>  |
|            | ACQUIRING NEW LAND FOR OPEN SPACE 'ON-MARKET'                          | 8         |
|            | CREATING NEW OPEN SPACE FROM EXISTING ASSETS                           | 10        |
|            | IMPROVING OR CREATING NEW OPEN SPACE THROUGH DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS | 11        |
|            | BUYING LAND FROM AN AGENCY OR GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT FOR NEW OPEN SPACE | 12        |
| <b>3.2</b> | <b>TURNING LAND USE CHALLENGES INTO OPEN SPACE ASSETS</b>              | <b>13</b> |
|            | CREATING OPEN SPACE FROM ROAD SPACE                                    | 14        |
|            | CREATING OPEN SPACE FROM A ROUNDABOUT                                  | 16        |
|            | CREATING OPEN SPACE FROM A DRAINAGE RESERVE                            | 17        |
|            | CREATING OPEN SPACE FROM A QUARRY                                      | 18        |
| <b>3.3</b> | <b>DELIVERING OPEN SPACE IN PARTNERSHIP</b>                            | <b>19</b> |
|            | DELIVERING ACTIVE AND PASSIVE OPEN SPACE IN PARTNERSHIP                | 20        |
|            | WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES TO IMPROVE EXISTING OPEN SPACE                | 22        |
|            | BUILDING COMMUNITIES THROUGH OPEN SPACE DEVELOPMENT                    | 23        |
|            | COUNCIL AND AGENCIES WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP TO DELIVER OPEN SPACE      | 24        |





Photo: DTPLI

# 1 INTRODUCTION

Having access to a variety of quality open spaces is vital for any community.

Throughout our lives we are likely to use many different types of open space, from playgrounds and active sporting facilities, to places where we can have a barbeque, enjoy the natural environment or sit down to read a book.

Research confirms that convenient access to quality open space has a positive influence on our sense of wellbeing, as well as our physical health.

As urban populations continue to grow and change, open space is in even greater demand. The challenge for planners is to ensure we get the maximum benefit from our existing open space assets and seek opportunities to deliver new open space where there is an identified need.

To do this we need to identify new ways to deliver open space that are driven by innovation and challenge conventional or traditional approaches.

This *Creating Liveable Open Space: Case Studies* showcases a number of innovative approaches for upgrading and delivering new open space assets. It includes case studies where open space has been reclaimed from existing roadways, quarries and drainage reserves as well as examples of new ways of working in partnership across government and with local communities.

One of the lessons from the case studies is the need to develop a robust plan, an Open Space Strategy, to guide open space development – one that includes a clear vision and a staged implementation process.

Experience shows that no open space issue is solved overnight. Detailed planning and consultation is essential to ensure the needs of current and future open space users are taken into account.

Strong leadership is also vital to take a project from concept through to completion, and to maintain the original vision when issues or objections arise.

A common theme running through the case studies in this best practice guide is the importance of building partnerships across government, the private sector and the community to ensure open space assets deliver the maximum possible benefits to the people they serve.

## OPEN SPACE CHECKLIST FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### Open Space Strategy

- Do you have an Open Space Strategy? If so, is it less than ten years old?
- Do you need to review your Open Space Strategy?
- Do you have a current GIS layer of existing open space assets, including key attributes?
- Is your Open Space Strategy on your website and publicly available?

### Implementation

- Do you have a dedicated officer/manager responsible for implementation of the Open Space Strategy?
- Do you have an annual implementation plan? Is it aligned with the Council capital works budget?
- Is your Open Space Strategy a reference document to your planning scheme?
- Are there any other policies or strategies that need to be included in the Local Planning Policy Framework to support implementation of your OSS?
- Is there land that needs to be rezoned to reflect its open space designation?
- How do you collect open space development contributions? Does this need to be reviewed?
- Do you have a transparent process for documenting the funds and land that are accepted as open space contributions?
- Do you have a transparent process for documenting how open space contributions are spent?

### Outcomes

- Do you monitor changes in the quality, quantity and access of open space?
- Do you provide Council with an annual report on open space improvements and additions?
- Do you communicate open space improvements and additions to the community and other stakeholders?
- Do you have information publicly available on your website about the open space in your municipality and the facilities it includes?



Photo: DTPLI

## 2 OPEN SPACE



### Open Space Strategy

Central to high quality open space outcomes is a high quality strategy. Open Space Strategies are a critical component of understanding what open space assets you have now, likely demands from existing and potential population, demographic change and cultural preferences, where you need new or improved open space, and how you can work towards achieving your open space goals.

Open space planning is complicated by the fact that there are numerous types of open space, locations and community needs/desires, all with competing opportunities and constraints. Open space planning ensures all of these factors are considered and planned for in a detailed way. Without a strategy, open space assets can be left to deteriorate, which increases the risk of these spaces not meeting the community's recreation and leisure needs.

### Implementation

Once you have an Open Space Strategy, it is critical to start implementing the key elements. Two important first steps are to include the strategy as part of the local planning scheme and to consider the best mechanism for leveraging open space development contributions. By making sure your strategy is effectively embedded into your planning scheme, you will have a policy framework for decision making as part of the development process.

Delivering actions in the strategy and reporting regularly on achievements will show progress and build broad understanding of the initiatives required to improve open space in your area.

### Outcomes

Detailed planning and implementation of an Open Space Strategy should result in improved and better used open space in your area. Monitoring and feedback are critical to maintain support and improve delivery. Achieving these outcomes will not be easy or quick but the short and long term benefits will prove it was a worthwhile investment.



Photo: Whitehorse Council



Photo: DTPLI

# 3 OPEN SPACE CASE STUDIES

The following case studies illustrate different ways that state government, local councils, landowners and other stakeholders have delivered a variety of innovative open space outcomes.

The case studies are from across Victoria and are only a small selection of the many successful examples of innovative approaches to open space planning and management that can be found.





Photo: Moonee Valley Council



# 3.1

## NEW OPEN SPACES FOR PLACES

Opportunities for new open space are important for those communities that have little or no open space relative to demand. There are a number of different ways new open space can be created, depending on locational needs, land capabilities and how existing assets are performing. In recent years land managers have been challenging the status quo of how new open space is created by developing innovative processes for acquiring land.

### **Acquiring new land for open space 'on-market'**

Councils are able to participate in the property market and buy land for new open space through a competitive process, whether that be private sale or auction. This method requires rigour in understanding the opportunity of the preferred site but also speed to participate effectively in the 4-6 week cycle that a property is generally listed for sale.

### **Creating new urban open space from existing assets**

To create new urban spaces in existing suburbs, councils are increasingly reviewing their existing land assets and identifying opportunities to turn underperforming assets – or assets that could be converted into a better use – into urban parks. This approach can give rise to conflicts between different users of space and challenges the conventional understanding of the highest and best use of a land asset.

### **Creating new open space through development contributions**

New subdivision may add more pressure on existing open space. Development contributions provided through the *Subdivision Act 1988*, Clause 52.01 of the Victoria Planning Provisions or through a Development Contributions Plan, enable land, cash or a combination of both to be levied towards new or improved open space.

### **Buying land from an agency or government department for new open space**

A potential source of new open space is former government or agency land that is surplus to requirements. These sites can come with challenges including poor access, contamination and/or heritage controls. However, through good planning, these sites can be turned into valuable open space assets.

The following pages provide one case study for each of these processes.



Photo: Ian Moodie

## ACQUIRING NEW LAND FOR OPEN SPACE 'ON-MARKET'

### CASE STUDY:

#### Whitehorse Council Land Acquisition Process

**Municipality:** Whitehorse

**Location:** Land across municipality

While open space contributions offer the opportunity to improve or acquire new open space in a municipality, the challenges of purchasing new open space are sometimes more difficult in established areas. Faced with high land costs, long timeframes for land acquisition, approvals, lengthy consultation processes and financial probity obligations, many councils choose not to pursue privately-owned land sales. Yet small parcels of land can often provide important pocket parks, opportunities to add to existing parks and open space linkages that meet local needs.

The *Whitehorse Open Space Strategy* (2007) (WOSS) has a number of key objectives that focus on the improvement of existing open space. One of these key objectives identifies 13 priority locations for Whitehorse Council to purchase land for open space. These priority locations were selected after careful analysis of expected population growth and demand for open space in specific locations across the municipality and the gaps in the open space network.

#### New acquisition process

To put itself in a position to successfully acquire land, Whitehorse Council has established a new acquisition process to facilitate the purchase of land on the private market. Buying 'on-market' means Council can achieve a competitive price for the land without needing to pay compensation, which can be as much as an additional 30% of the purchase price if the Council was to compulsorily acquire land. Recognising the property market usually works in a four to six week auction cycle, Council has developed a clear, robust process for moving quickly

when a property in a priority area is identified for sale. This process triggers a system to (a) identify, (b) assess and (c) acquire land for open space.

#### Step 1 – Identify

Council established an internal 'alert' system when properties in priority locations become available through private sale or auction. Using online real estate websites, potential properties are identified and considered as they come on to the market. This ensures that opportunities are not missed.

#### Step 2 – Assess

After a property is identified, a quick assessment is completed which includes two parts – the first being a brief report to the Planning and Property Managers and the General Manager outlining the property's suitability for open space and alignment with the WOSS.

Once permission is received to pursue the property, a report is prepared for Council seeking approval to purchase the property. This report is based on a standard proforma and includes a detailed assessment of property characteristics, costs, method of purchase and due diligence. The benefit of a standard proforma is that the information required and the considerations that need to be made appear in a consistent format. The report always recommends an 'upper limit' towards the purchase of the site based on an in-house and independent valuation. This is a confidential report to Council.

#### Step 3 – Acquire

If Council agrees to purchase the property, the final part of the process is to acquire the property – either through negotiation (if it is a private sale) or through an auction process. Council can appoint an officer internally to act on its behalf for the purchase or contract a Buyer's Advocate.

#### Whitehorse Council Open Space Acquisition Process

Identify

Assess

Acquire

Photo: DTPLI



**Outcome**

Whitehorse Council is well placed to respond promptly and successfully within the property market to acquire land for open space. Senior staff and councillors are familiar with the new land acquisition initiative and are committed to responding quickly to reports. As of 2012, two properties have been acquired through this accelerated process. Funding for the purchase of the open space has been made through the Open Space Reserve – cash contributions that

have been collected through the subdivision process under either the *Subdivision Act 1988* or through a Schedule to Clause 52.01.

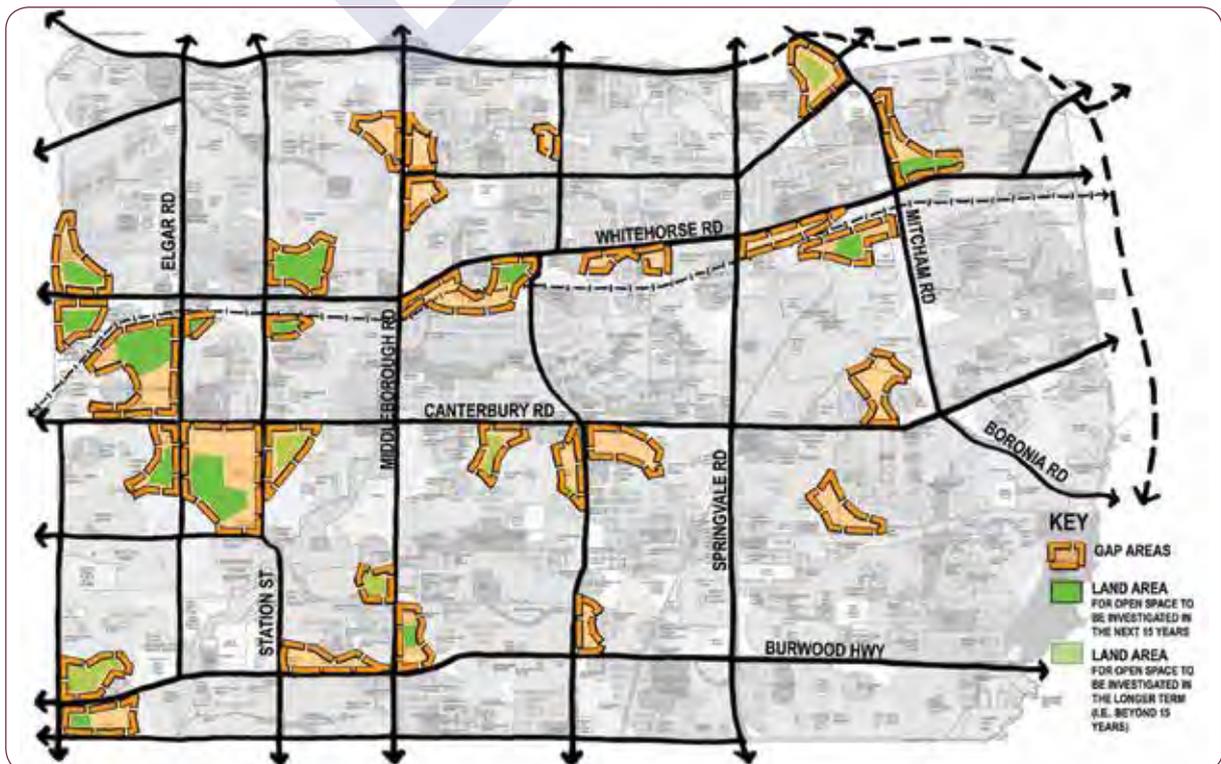
**Lessons to date**

Setting up a new land acquisition process can take time but the ability to move quickly once a property is listed for private sale/auction means council is more likely to be successful in acquiring open space 'on-market.'

**FAST FACT: Whitehorse Open Space Strategy (2007)**

The act of purchasing land for open space is one of several key recommendations of the Whitehorse Open Space Strategy. The strategy is a robust, comprehensive document that explores the current and future needs of the city and provides clear direction on the actions required for improving open space and purchasing land for open space 'on-market'.

**Whitehorse priority locations for future open space acquisition.**



Source: Whitehorse Open Space Strategy, 2007



## OPEN SPACE SNAPSHOT



Photo: DTPLI

# CREATING NEW OPEN SPACE FROM EXISTING ASSETS

## CASE STUDY:

### Collingwood from car park to urban park

**Municipality:** Yarra

**Location:** Peel St, Collingwood (Melway 44 B6)

In the 2009–13 Yarra Council Plan an ambitious goal was set to create five new parks for the municipality by 2013. Supported by the *Yarra Open Space Strategy* (2006), which had identified a significant lack of open space in Collingwood due to changes to local land uses and increases in local population, Council began work in 2009 to turn an existing car park into a new urban park.

Located on the corner of Peel and Oxford Streets, the chosen site was freehold land owned by Council covering an area of 1145m<sup>2</sup>. It was used as a public car park for up to 28 vehicles, predominately servicing local traders and employees and included a small Council-owned building. Working with the community, Council decided the site offered an opportunity to create a new urban park.

The starting point for exploring the type of park that could be achieved was the preparation of the concept plan in 2010. The concept plan considered:

- the site characteristics and constraints
- improving pedestrian movement within and around the site
- providing seating for rest and relaxation and open space for passive recreation
- incorporating Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) treatments to capture and treat stormwater runoff before it enters the drainage system
- lighting to improve safety and amenity without impacting on adjoining residents
- garden beds with drought-tolerant planting to add colour and visual interest.

Consultation on the new park was completed in two phases. Initial consultation took place with residents, traders and employees around the site. Using the concept plan, Council

sought wide-ranging views about the potential of the new park. The second consultation phase was focused on the detailed design of the park prior to construction.

In July 2011, the new Peel Street Park was officially opened for residents, workers and visitors to Collingwood to enjoy. The car park was transformed into a green oasis through an open lawn and tree planting, the creation of a rain garden to capture and treat rainwater, and the addition of pathways, custom-designed seating and landscape features which contribute to an adaptable open space with a unique sense of place.

### **FAST FACT: Planning And Delivery**

New parks, even if they appear to be simple, take time to deliver. Always expect the unexpected. Discovering a large empty fuel tank buried on the Peel Street site was not anticipated at the start of the project. A general rule of thumb is: one year to plan; one year to construct.

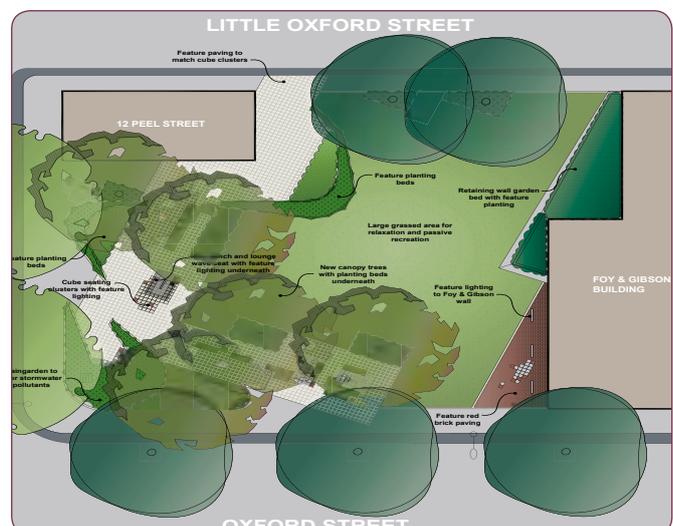


Image: Peel St Concept Plan, Yarra Council (2010)

Photo: Hume Council

OPEN  
SPACE  
SNAPSHOT

## IMPROVING OR CREATING NEW OPEN SPACE THROUGH DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS

### CASE STUDY:

#### Implementing the Hume Open Space Strategy through development contributions

**Municipality:** Hume

**Location:** Land across municipality

A key source of open space funding for councils is the collection of development contributions. In Victoria, there are a number of mechanisms that enable open space contributions to be collected as land, cash or a combination of both, as part of the development process. Existing mechanisms include the *Subdivision Act 1988*, Clause 52.01 of Victoria Planning Provisions and Development Contributions Plans.

These funds and land can be used to make improvements to existing open space or acquire new open space.

Hume City is a vibrant, multicultural community experiencing rapid population growth. It is located on Melbourne's urban-rural fringe, approximately 20km north-west of the CBD. The municipality contains diverse land uses including rural areas, established residential areas and growth areas to accommodate future residential communities.

Hume Council collects open space contributions for both its established areas and its growth areas as part of the subdivision process. This source of land and cash provides important resources for implementing the Hume Open Space Strategy. Completed in 2010, the strategy identifies a number of projects for improving the municipality's open space network.

In finalising the open space strategy, Hume Council recognised the need to provide clear accountability of how contributions were collected and expended. Council developed a specific end-to-end process which provides a rigorous methodology and transparency for open space contributions. The 11-step process begins when an application for subdivision is received and finishes with advice to the Projects and Contract Management Department to start physical works on a project.

Critical to the success of the 11-step process was its development within Council – a partnership that included the statutory planning, open space planning, finance

and capital works departments. Together, these four areas of Council worked together to refine the process, ensuring they understood their respective roles and responsibilities and that appropriate documentation and transparency was incorporated into the process to record contribution amounts and how they are used and/or spent. The roles of these departments within Council are:

*Statutory Planning Department* – manage the subdivision application, correspond with the applicant and assess the application for a subdivision contribution.

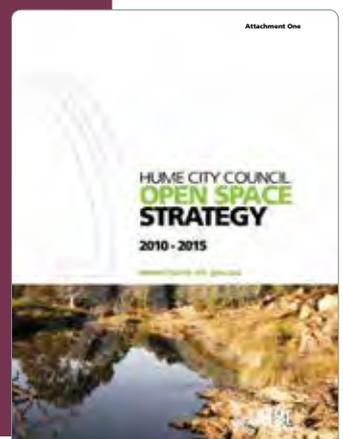
*Open Space Planning Department* – identify projects that need to be implemented in the Hume Open Space Strategy and try to support projects where there is a link between the location of the application and where the funds are spent.

*Finance Department* – receive advice on expected contributions, ensure contributions are kept within a specific trust reserve, and make contributions available to fund improvement projects.

*Projects and Contract Management Department* – undertake and project manage the physical improvement works in open space.

### FAST FACT: Annual Reporting

The four departments collaborate on a report annually to the Council Executive advising on the outcomes of the Open Space Strategy that includes improvements and acquisition/disposal of open space. This report provides a valuable record of the annual open space achievements against the contributions collected. It also details overall progress on the implementation of the Hume Open Space Strategy.





## OPEN SPACE SNAPSHOT



Photo: Moonee Valley Council

# BUYING LAND FROM AN AGENCY OR GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT FOR NEW OPEN SPACE

## CASE STUDY:

### Former Defence land now major conservation park

**Municipality:** Moonee Valley

**Location:** Afton St, Aberfeldie (Melway:28 A5)

Following years of negotiation, lobbying and an active community campaign, Moonee Valley Council purchased 17 hectares of public open space in West Essendon from the Commonwealth Government in 2003. Formerly Department of Defence land, the site was used for storing, testing and disposing of munitions from the larger Defence site on the opposite side of the Maribyrnong River. The land was identified as surplus to Defence needs and initially identified for residential development. However, after a three-year campaign, the land was sold to Council for \$900,000.

The Afton Street Conservation Park is located approximately 6km from Melbourne's CBD, and is bounded by the Maribyrnong River to the west, a vegetated escarpment to the north and a small creek to the east. Land adjoining the park is predominately residential. It has had a variable history including sand quarrying, sheep grazing, bee keeping and Defence-related activities. Stone artefacts found on the site are evidence of prior occupation by the Wurundjeri Aboriginal People, a clan of the Woiwurrong.

Soon after the transfer of the land, Council started a long-term planning process, including the development of a master plan to guide future actions. Developed over two years, the master plan recognises the site could potentially support up to 64 indigenous plant species with regional or local significance and a range of indigenous fauna including the Striped Legless Lizard and the Ring Tailed Possum. The master plan proposed a series of actions to attract and 'hold' indigenous wildlife through habitat protection and extensive revegetation.

Some of the first tasks included extensive revegetation, installing walking paths around the site and a new car park. Major efforts have been made to progressively remove Box Thorn and replace it with native vegetation in a staged process to ensure small birds have a continuous habitat.

The development of a wetlands at the park in 2010 was a significant achievement. It was designed to help protect and improve the water quality of the Maribyrnong River. The wetlands harvest stormwater from the Hoffman Main Drain and support biodiversity by providing a better environment for plants and animals. It will eventually provide a sustainable water supply to three neighbouring parks – Aberfeldie Park, Clifton Street Park and Maribyrnong Park – with recycled water piped directly to these parks and used to irrigate sports fields.

### **FAST FACT: Expecting The Unexpected**

Even after completing the master planning process, the detailed design component of open space development can be challenging. For the establishment of the new wetlands, the discovery of a large sewer pipe on the site meant the wetlands could only be half the size of that originally envisaged.

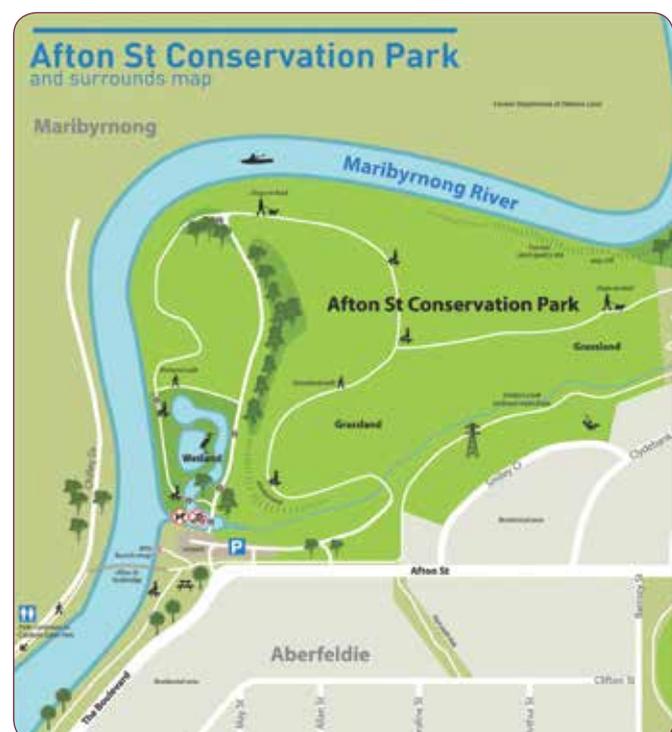


Image: Moonee Valley Council



## 3.2

# TURNING LAND USE CHALLENGES INTO OPEN SPACE ASSETS

Opportunities for new open space often exist in a local area without people even realising it. For some councils, long-term land use challenges may even provide opportunities for new open space in ways that were not previously anticipated. For example, places that are unattractive or underutilised can be redesigned as new innovative open spaces. However, developing an inventive response for new open space is a long process. Innovation can challenge traditional ideas, and this can result in the need for comprehensive and time-consuming consultation. The investment in this process will deliver better outcomes.

### **Creating open space from road space**

Challenging the status quo of the role of the road network near to open space is allowing planners to identify opportunities to create new open space and increase park sizes to improve the quantity and quality of open space.

### **Creating open space from a roundabout**

Taking an existing small pocket park and dramatically increasing its size is not usually possible without spending millions of dollars. However, additions to existing open space are occurring more frequently with innovative design solutions that peel back the tarmac of adjoining roads.

### **Creating open space from a drain**

One of the places to explore resolution of gaps in the open space network is existing government or authority land that might be underutilised. For many councils, existing drainage reserves are well placed to provide new opportunities for open space to provide for some leisure and recreation uses. However a clear vision and plan for delivering an enhanced open space asset is essential, especially if the Council doesn't own the land.

### **Creating open space from a quarry**

While some large, former quarries may pose a range of problems for councils, many offer opportunities to create new open space for the local community.

The following pages provide one case study for each of these projects.



Photo: DTPLI

## CREATING OPEN SPACE FROM ROAD SPACE

### CASE STUDY:

#### New open space for Albert Park Secondary College and the community

**Municipality:** Port Phillip

**Location:** Foote St, Albert Park (Melway 57 D4)

In inner urban areas, the ability to deliver new open space is fraught with high land costs, fragmented land ownership and administrative difficulties. Increasingly, councils are working with partners to achieve innovative solutions where open space is shared between users and meets multiple needs in the community.

While planning for a new secondary college in Albert Park to cater for 900 students, it quickly became apparent the existing school site could not accommodate sufficient open space for the students. With high land prices and high ambitions for the new Albert Park College, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) in partnership with the City of Port Phillip decided to convert a local Council road into new open space to create a new shared park for the local community and students.

#### Foote Street Reserve

In late 2009 the DEECD formally wrote to the City of Port Phillip requesting Council close Foote Street, between Danks Street and the north-east side of Graham Street including the Graham Street intersection, to create a new park. DEECD envisaged the area would provide (a) a new local park with pedestrian and bike linkages between Gasworks Park, the new college and the foreshore and (b) would assist in developing more positive relationships between the school and the local community through the establishment of shared community space. As the concept of road closures to create new local parks was supported by the City of Port Phillip Open Space Strategy, the Council resolved to progress the idea.

*Step 1: Traffic assessment* – Council completed a traffic assessment to understand how the existing road network

was used. The study found the street was predominately used by residents and ranked traffic speed and use as 'light volume.'

*Step 2: Statutory process* – Council commenced the statutory process for the permanent closure of Foote Street in accordance with Section 207 and clause 9 of the *Local Government Act 1989*. Nearly 500 letters were sent to owners/occupiers in the local area and an advertisement was placed in the local paper to advise the community about the proposal and seek their views. A total of 14 submissions were received, six in support, six raising some concerns and two raising issues unrelated to the project.

*Step 3: Council decision* – In June 2010, Council resolved to close Foote Street Park between Danks Street and the north-east side of Graham Street to vehicular traffic.

Consultation played a key role in the development of the project, with Council acting as the public face of the new park by undertaking the formal consultation, attending public meetings and responding to concerns. DEECD was responsible for the construction of the park and committed to working collaboratively with Council to ensure the new park was aligned with Council policies and planning frameworks.

DEECD paid for the initial construction of the park, including landscaping, while Council supplied park benches and rubbish bins. Council will be the owner of the park and is responsible for ongoing maintenance.

**Park In Action** - One year on, the school, its students and the community have been enjoying the new park. For students the new space has provided safer passage around the school, passive recreation opportunities and even the occasional classroom activity there. "It provides a refreshing natural environment" Steve Cook, Principal of Albert Park Secondary College says "a green wedge next to the school for all to use."

Photo: DTPLI



## Outcome

Opened in January 2011, the new Foote Street Park is an innovative example of high quality urban space that caters for a variety of users. The site provides clear linkages to surrounding infrastructure and acts as a seamless interface between the school and the public realm. Approximately 2080m<sup>2</sup>, it includes green space, shade, public seating, recreational facilities and designated pedestrian and cycle routes.

Council is committed to ongoing monitoring of the traffic in and around the park to ensure measures are introduced or modified to respond to changing traffic demands.

## Lessons to date

Considering user desire lines – such as the way in which students use and move through a space – was important to the design of the park. Landscaping and pathways were designed to take account of the way students tend to walk in groups.

### **FAST FACT: Planning Scheme Amendment**

In mid-2011 the Minister for Planning approved Planning Scheme Amendment C62 to the Port Phillip Planning Scheme which included a schedule to Clause 52.01 Public Open Space Contribution and Subdivision for a mandatory 5% public open space contribution. This will ensure all residential, commercial and industrial subdivisions of three or more lots contribute either 5% of the site value, 5% of the land (or a combination of both) as an open space contribution. These funds will provide Council with resources to implement other initiatives of the City of Port Phillip Open Space Strategy.

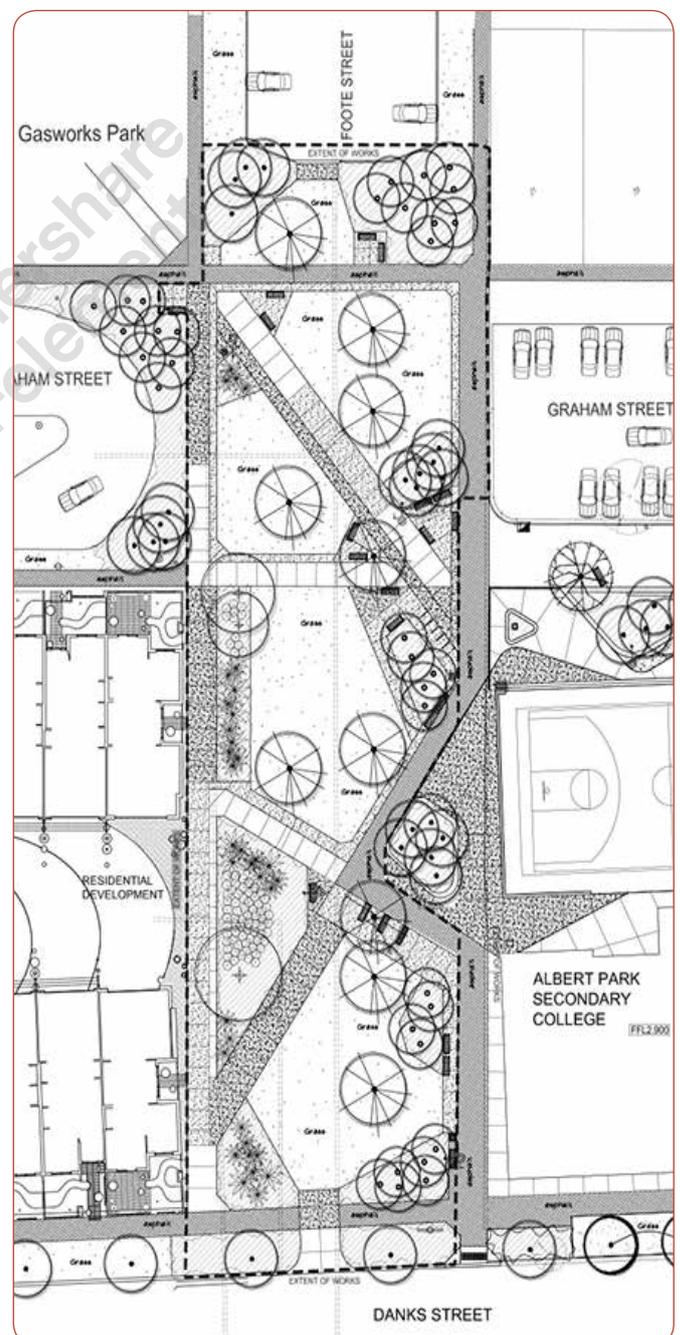


Image: Foote St Concept Plan, Port Phillip Council (2010)



## OPEN SPACE SNAPSHOT

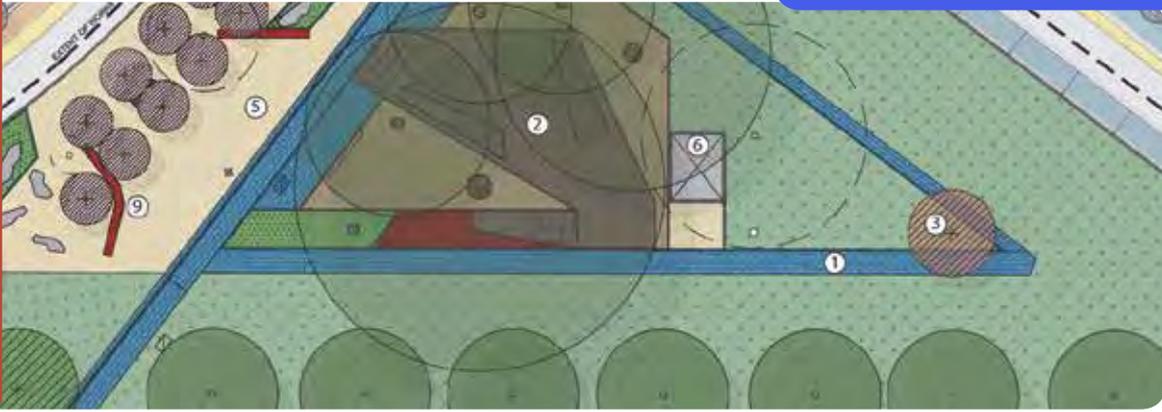


Image: Melbourne City Council

# CREATING OPEN SPACE FROM A ROUNDABOUT

## CASE STUDY:

### Expanding the Errol Street Reserve in North Melbourne

**Municipality:** Melbourne

**Location:** Errol St, North Melbourne (Melway 43 E4)

The suburb of North Melbourne is a medium-high density suburb characterised by a few scattered pocket parks and bordered by Royal Park. The *North and West Melbourne Local Plan 2010* (February 1999) identified the need for increasing open spaces in these suburbs given the projected population increase. The plan identified opportunities to increase and improve local public open space using existing road space. In May 2002, the *Open Space Opportunities in North and West Melbourne* document investigated nine potential sites to expand existing small open spaces into adjoining road space in conjunction with traffic management and calming measures. Many of the nine potential sites identified were relatively small-scale such as the opportunity to expand Errol Street Reserve pocket park/roundabout into the abutting wide roads.

Errol Street Reserve is a triangle-shaped open space in North Melbourne. The 529m<sup>2</sup> space houses a substation building and is raised from ground level with a pedestrian pathway on three sides. There are a number of mature trees on the site. To the north is North Melbourne Primary School on Courtney Street, while to the south and west are residential properties.

The Errol Street Reserve stood out as an excellent opportunity to expand an existing underutilised open space asset by increasing its size and functionality to better meet the needs of the local community. Council embarked on an ambitious plan to make the existing park 10 times bigger by recovering road space, incorporating existing median plantations/roundabouts and re-routing a bus route.

**Step 1** – In 2008 Council completed an extensive community consultation and design process to progress the development of Errol Street Reserve. The consultation phase included feedback from the local community on proposed designs and three community reference group workshops to prepare the final design.

**Step 2** – Traffic engineering assessments were undertaken in 2009 to evaluate the potential traffic impact that might result from an expanded park. The final report concluded there would not be any significant amenity or vehicle traffic impacts in the area as a result of the plan. In fact the plan would enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety. Council also worked with Department of Transport and Sita Buslines to re-route the bus in this area.

**Step 3** – A planning permit for removal of a building (bus stop) and other works in a heritage and special building overlay was applied for in March 2010. Council issued a Notice of Decision in favour of the application in May 2010. This decision was appealed to VCAT who upheld the Council's decision to issue a planning permit in February 2011 with some additional conditions relating to heritage. Amendments to design required under the new planning permit conditions were approved in early January 2012.

**Step 4** – In April 2011 Council began the formal road discontinuation process for portions of road in Errol, Harcourt and Courtney Streets that abut the Errol Street Reserve, under the *Local Government Act 1989*. Council resolved to discontinue the roads on 30 August 2011 following a submission process.

**Step 5** – Detailed traffic and flood management design analysis were conducted in late 2011.

The new Errol Street Reserve will provide many benefits to the local community including improved amenity, the opportunity for informal recreation and improved pedestrian, cyclist and motorist safety. The additional tree variety and shading will assist in cooling the local environment and improve biodiversity in Melbourne. Stormwater flow control and treatment has been incorporated into the design.

In June 2012, all the approvals were in place and construction began on-site. With a project budget of \$1.8 million (approximately) the physical works are complete and it is expected that landscaping and planting will occur in Autumn 2013.

Photo: Monash Council

OPEN  
SPACE  
SNAPSHOT

## CREATING OPEN SPACE FROM A DRAINAGE RESERVE

### CASE STUDY:

#### An ecological approach to planning at Scotchman's Creek

**Municipality:** Monash

**Location:** Warrigal Road, Chadstone to Crosby Drive,  
Glen Waverley (Melway 69F4 – 70K4)

Scotchman's Creek Reserve is a 9km linear park from Holmesglen TAFE, Glen Waverley to Warrigal Road, Chadstone. One of its main roles is to provide a waterway corridor for environmental values and community use, as well as adequate floodplain area for the management of urban stormwater. Until the late 1990s it was a degraded area, with poor water quality, high levels of weed infestation, significant urban rubbish and undesirable activities. Monash Council recognised significant work was required to redevelop the area as open space for public use and to provide habitat for native flora and fauna.

Although the drain outlets and creek corridor was predominately the responsibility of Melbourne Water, Monash Council wanted to take an active role in the management and conservation of land surrounding Scotchman's Creek. Driving the Council's priorities was the need to develop a scientific approach that placed ecological and conservation values at the centre of its works on site.

The first step was to undertake an investigative study of the indigenous habitat of the corridor. In 2000, Monash Council appointed Ecology Australia to prepare an Indigenous Reserve and Conservation Management Plan to review a number of sites including Scotchman's Creek. The plan provided a comprehensive understanding of the current flora and fauna in the study area. It recognised the deterioration of the environment at Scotchman's Creek and the need to respond with targeted action to rehabilitate the corridor, focussing predominately on revegetation and conservation of remnant indigenous habitat.

Working with Melbourne Water, Council completed a number of different works throughout the reserve including improved shared paths and a new wetland/billabong.

Facilities were installed at various locations throughout the park to provide opportunities for active sport and passive recreation. Thousands of native trees, shrubs and understorey were planted by Council and friends groups while new wayfinding signage helps people move around the park.

More than 10 years on, the stormwater system has been maintained and the quality of open space has significantly improved. There is a large increase in the number of people using the park for walking, running and riding their bikes. The flora is now well established and native trees are providing habitat for native fauna. Birds that have not been observed for some time are being sighted in the area.

### FAST FACT: Open Space Planning

The development of open space is a long-term commitment, especially when trying to repair degraded physical environments. It is important to develop a long-term strategy and deliver action in progressive stages.

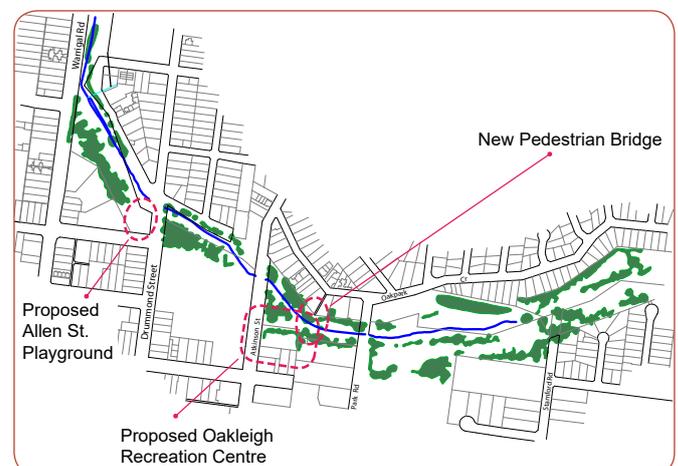


Image: Scotchman's Creek Location Plan, Monash Council



**OPEN  
SPACE  
SNAPSHOT**



Photo: DTPLI

## CREATING OPEN SPACE FROM A QUARRY

### CASE STUDY:

#### Turning Newport Quarry into Newport Park Lakes

**Municipality:** Hobsons Bay

**Location:** Lakes Drive, Newport (Melway 55 G3)

In Newport, west of Melbourne, a site that was once a bluestone quarry is now a 33ha bushland haven. Quarrying first began on the site in the late 1800s and continued through to the 1960s, when some of the site was used for landfill until 1993. Following an active and successful community campaign, the Williamstown Council (now Hobsons Bay) resolved to turn the site into a park for the local community.

Due to its size, the site was split into four different segments for planning purposes. The first segment had little conservation value and was identified as a location for active play. Over time this area was developed to include a playground, picnic area, toilet block and BBQ facilities. It also has an arboretum of North American pine, European trees and ornamental Australian trees.

The second and third segments are the 'lakes component' – where two quarry holes were transformed into large lakes. A number of walking paths were constructed around the lakes, providing an aesthetically pleasing walking track, including a number of lookouts and resting places. Works were also undertaken to increase safety – particularly by reducing the depth of the lakes from 9m to 3m and introducing a connecting stone wall that acts as a path between the two lakes. The final segment in the north-west of the site is predominately vacant and is currently very heavily used by dog walkers as it is one of the rare places in the area where dogs can be exercised off leash.

A primary focus of Council activity since the quarry was first rezoned as a park has been revegetation of the site. Initial planting was extensive and included any type of native species that could be sourced. However, in recent years, the focus of replanting has been on local indigenous varieties.

Today, Newport Lakes provides a sanctuary for flora and fauna and a peaceful retreat for visitors. It supports over 200 species of plants and 160 species of birds, and meets a diversity of open space needs.

### Lessons to date

One of the key challenges for this site was the development of the lakes themselves. While they provide an aesthetically pleasing environment, they are not naturally occurring and sit at the top of the catchment where there is little opportunity to redirect stormwater. As a result, Council has invested in a water bore that is intended to operate two to eight hours per day. The bore is used as little as possible as it is costly to run and pumps saline water into what is intended to be a fresh water system.

### **FAST FACT: Planning For Habitat**

In highly urbanised areas, foxes, feral cats and domestic cats can be a threat to native animals. It is important to plan vegetation that provides places for ducks and other native wildlife to hide.



Image: DTPLI



# 3.3

## DELIVERING OPEN SPACE IN PARTNERSHIP

As there are many different owners and users of open space, partnerships often provide the best open space outcomes. Genuine cooperation between State and Commonwealth government departments and agencies, local councils, community groups and other stakeholders ensures that open space provides high quality outcomes that meet the needs of communities.

### **Delivering active and passive open space**

One of the key challenges of delivering new open space is balancing the competing needs of conservation values and recreational needs. Traditionally it has been difficult to reach agreement on how these two competing objectives can be met. However, through partnership and a commitment to high quality open space outcomes, it can be achieved.

### **Council and agencies working in partnership to deliver open space**

When a Council doesn't own a lot of open space or there is a need for new open space, one option to explore is locations where existing government or authority land might be underutilised. For many councils, existing drainage reserves are well placed to provide new opportunities for open space. However a clear vision and plan for delivering an enhanced open space asset is essential, especially if the Council doesn't own the land.

### **Building communities through open space development**

Where a community is yet to be established (such as a growth area) or the demographic mix is changing (such as an established area), the development of open space offers an opportunity to bring communities together. New open space development or an upgrade of existing open space can act as a focal point for communities to come together to discuss how the space should be developed.

### **Working with communities to develop open space**

It is important to ensure the development of open space meets the needs of the local community and one of the best ways to do this is to involve the community from the beginning in planning for future needs. There are numerous engagement tools for facilitating community involvement in the planning and development of open space. The key challenge is picking the right one for your community and project.

The following pages provide one case study for each of these processes.



Photo: Parks Victoria

## DELIVERING ACTIVE AND PASSIVE OPEN SPACE IN PARTNERSHIP

### CASE STUDY:

#### Creating a new regional park in Melton

**Municipality:** Melton

**Location:** Bridge Rd, Melton South (Melway 343 B8)

In 2004, government policy set out a plan to create six new regional parks – one of which was in Melton. A parcel of 130 hectares of land owned by Melton Council was identified as the location for the new regional park. Situated alongside the Toolern Creek, the land was seen as an ideal location for a large open space asset to cater for the area's significant urban growth. Melton Council knew such a park was needed to provide a full mix of recreation, relaxation and conservation activities, including sports grounds.

#### Toolern Creek Regional Park

Located approximately 45km west of Melbourne, Toolern Creek Regional Park provides habitat for marginalised native fauna as well as a range of recreational and sporting facilities. In 2006, the State Government committed \$3.27 million to the planning and establishment of visitor facilities at the park.

Melton Council as the owner of the land and Parks Victoria as the future owner, came together early to start planning for the park. Recognising the high rates of population growth across the municipality, Melton Council was adamant the new park should include active recreational facilities as well as passive recreational opportunities. Traditionally, regional parks are managed primarily to protect and enhance conservation values, while providing opportunities for passive visitor recreation. Co-locating sporting facilities at the park was not initially a priority for Parks Victoria, however after detailed discussions it was agreed the park would house 18ha for active recreation, including facilities.

A key aspect of delivering the active recreation components was to ensure the right location was selected. This involved a number of criteria:

- *Geography/topography* – an assessment was undertaken to determine which parcels of land would be suitable for sports fields. A key criteria was that the land was flat.
- *Visibility* – it was important the sports fields had high visibility from the main road for people who would be using the facilities.
- *Conservation values* – an assessment was undertaken to ensure that only areas with low conservation values, generally areas that had been heavily cleared and farmed, were considered for the location of the sports grounds.
- *Buffer* – the location of the sports fields was seen as an opportunity to create a natural buffer with the adjoining residential development and the sensitive conservation areas.
- *Accessibility* – it was important to locate the sports fields close to facilities such as community hubs and proposed new schools.
- *Irrigation* – sports fields generally require a high level of irrigation. Therefore, the design of the new sports fields takes into account opportunities for captured stormwater or recycled water for irrigation.
- *Compatibility* – it was important that the active sporting areas be located where they wouldn't impact on the opportunity for passive recreation.

*"The purpose of the Toolern Creek Regional Park is to provide diverse recreational opportunities and improved connectivity for the communities in Melbourne's western growth corridor while further enhancing the protection of areas of ecological, Indigenous and European cultural, and landscape significance. While equitable access for recreation purposes is a key driver of the need for new parks, protection of the varied conservation values of the Toolern Creek corridor is also a primary objective for this new regional park."*

Toolern Creek Regional Park Melton Landscape draft Master Plan 2009

Photo: Parks Victoria



A total of 23ha has now been identified as active open space at Toolern Creek Regional Park. Melton Council, supported by Sport and Recreation Victoria, is undertaking a needs and demand analysis to determine the best mix of organised sporting facilities. This process will include a review of the anticipated demographic profile of the community and existing participation levels. It is envisaged the sporting fields will be completed in late 2013. Parks Victoria has completed construction of some elements identified within the Toolern Regional Master Plan. These elements include the shared path and associated social spaces/lookout areas.

### Lessons

Although the whole park will be given to the State for Crown land, the management and maintenance of the sporting fields will remain the responsibility of Melton Council. This was a critical decision given Parks Victoria is not generally responsible for managing these types of facilities. However, it was seen as important that the park in its entirety be planned and owned by the State, to ensure a continuity of overall management.

It is envisaged that the inclusion of the sporting grounds within the regional park has the potential to attract a broader range of visitors to the park. This project also has the added benefit of maximising infrastructure such as parking, public toilets, play equipment and barbeques that will be for both Regional Park and District Park (sportsground) visitors.

#### **FAST FACT: Multipurpose Infrastructure**

Instead of building a sewer pipe across Toolern Creek as part of the 6.1km Melton sewer upgrade, Western Water designed and built a \$2 million bridge that is both a sewer and a pedestrian link to the new Toolern Creek Region Park. Parks Victoria and Western Water worked together to construct the bridge linking the pedestrian trail to the park following consultation with the Melton Council and local community.

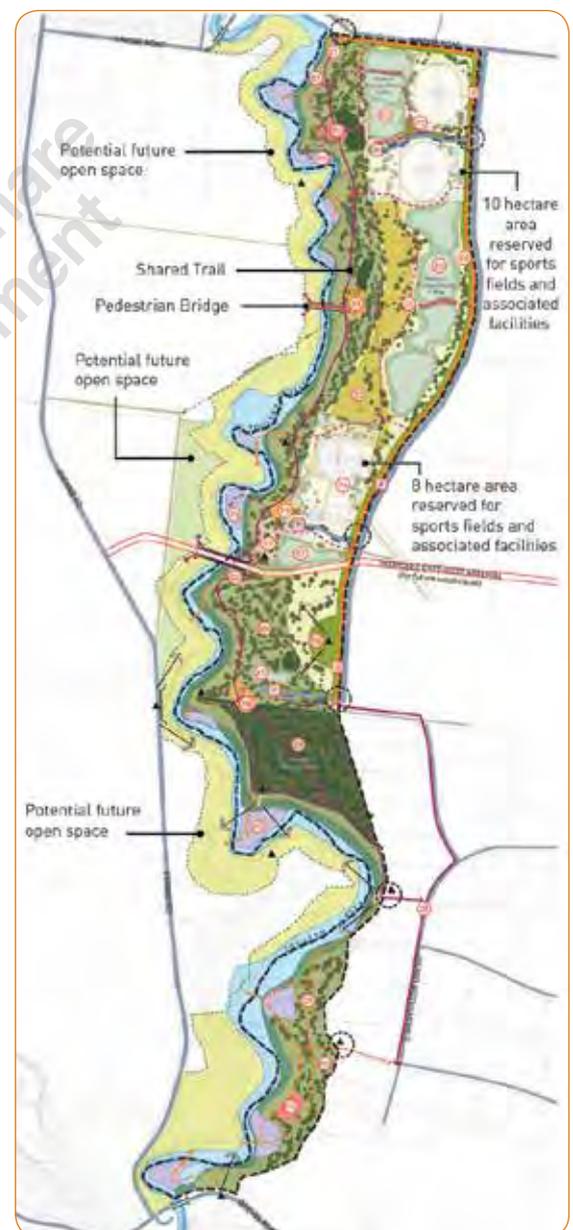


Image: Toolern Creek Regional Park Masterplan, Parks Victoria (2009)



OPEN  
SPACE  
SNAPSHOT



Photo: Ballarat Council

## WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES TO IMPROVE EXISTING OPEN SPACE

### CASE STUDY:

#### Improving the Alfredton Recreation Reserve Ballarat with the local community

**Municipality:** Ballarat

**Location:** Cuthberts Rd, Alfredton

- new signage, BBQ facilities and rotunda
- refurbishment of the existing netball courts
- A new “Village Green” – a multi-purpose playing field and associated change rooms, landscaping and car parking.

Alfredton is a suburb west of Ballarat that is in close proximity to the Ballarat West Growth Area, an area experiencing significant residential growth. The suburb is also home to the Alfredton Recreation Reserve, a 12.7ha park that provides a mix of recreational uses including football, cricket, tennis, lawn bowls and netball and provides important access to open space, especially to adjoining schools.

Recognising the importance of the park for current and future users, Ballarat Council started work on a master plan for the park in 2007. This process focused on access to the park, water sustainability, major issues with existing vegetation obscuring good passive surveillance, future expansion and development opportunities, and involved working with the community on broader planning and detailed design for the park.

*Consultation on the master plan* – the consultation process included engagement with eight sporting/user groups, two primary schools, a mail-out to residents and a public forum. Following consultation the master plan was adopted by Council in 2008.

Council immediately embarked on an ambitious program of improvement including:

- development of a connected walking trail throughout the reserve
- installation of a sustainable water supply and irrigation system

*Consultation on the detailed design* – even though the master plan provided guidance on the future development of the park, detailed design was required for each precinct earmarked for improvement. The redevelopment of an existing play space in 2010 was seen as an important opportunity to engage directly with park users and to ensure the final design met the needs of local children.

Inviting play space users to participate in the design process enabled a greater understanding of the types of facilities that children would like to see in the space. Adjoining the park is the Alfredton Primary School and a large group of students were invited to talk to Council officers about the future of the play space. Children of various ages and gender were invited to participate in the workshop. They were asked to describe how they would like to see the park develop and what play equipment should be provided.

This direct involvement from local children has ensured the finished play space is a well used asset by children of all ages. It complements the surrounding play areas at the school and neighborhood parks as well as encourages greater use of Alfredton Reserve’s other facilities.

‘A guide to planning your community and stakeholder engagement strategy’ has been prepared to assist in planning for projects, programs and policy initiatives using an engagement approach. It is available electronically at [www.dtpli.vic.gov.au](http://www.dtpli.vic.gov.au).

### FAST FACT: Community Engagement

There is often a concern that when you actively engage with the community you may not be able to deliver the outcomes envisaged. However, a good facilitator, a genuine partnership, informed discussion and robust feedback to the community can ensure tangible outcomes are delivered that meet everyone’s expectations.



Photo:Stockland



**OPEN  
SPACE  
SNAPSHOT**

## BUILDING COMMUNITIES THROUGH OPEN SPACE DEVELOPMENT

### CASE STUDY:

#### Planning new open space at Selandra Rise with the future community

**Municipality:** Casey

**Location:** Corner Lipizzan Way and Heather Grove  
Clyde North (Melway 134 K5)

Community involvement in the development of open space can be limited to picking the colours of the swing or deciding where to place the slide. The development of open space at Selandra Rise in south-east Melbourne was seen as an opportunity for early engagement as well as an important community building initiative.

Selandra Rise is a master planned community in south-east Melbourne. Approximately 120ha, it will provide 1200 new homes and associated facilities including a shopping centre, medical facilities, primary and secondary schools. This is a demonstration project involving a partnership between the Growth Areas Authority, Stockland, Casey Council and the Planning Institute of Australia, with three key objectives of creating a healthy and engaged community, local jobs and housing diversity. Open space plays a major role in defining the new estate, with every home within 300m of parkland. But rather than guessing what kind of parkland new residents might want, the developer Stockland and Casey Council decided to actively engage with the community so they could decide on the kind of open space they wanted.

Community engagement took place once the broad master plan was prepared but prior to the detailed design phase. This was seen as an important shift in thinking as traditionally community consultation occurs more as a series of information session once most of the open space decisions have been made, including the types of space and facilities provided.

Although there were no residents living at Selandra Rise at the time community engagement started, the opportunity to participate in the development of a new park was a major drawcard, attracting a number of families who were yet to move to the estate. The consultation session focussed on

exploring the big issues for open space in the area – how the space would be used, and what open space means to residents. Each resident brought a unique perspective to the table during the consultation, which provided a wealth of ideas, examples and considerations from which to draw from during detailed design. However, through discussions about what other parks people liked and an understanding of future community needs, there was a robust exchange of ideas that informed the final design.

Complementing the design of the parks, Council in partnership with the developer, worked with leisure industry practitioners to conduct programs in the estate's parks to encourage residents to participate in physical and social activities. The commencement of these initiatives in the early establishment of this new community is critical to establishing positive and healthy behaviour amongst the community.

A BBQ following the consultation session was also valuable. For the first time, new neighbours were able to meet and chat informally. Participants talked broadly about the new community that was forming on the estate and even started to plan housewarming parties. Community leaders also emerged through the consultation process, which was a positive sign for the future health and vibrancy of the community.

**The Growth Areas Authority** is an independent statutory body with a broad, facilitative role to help create greater certainty, faster decisions and better coordination for all parties involved in planning and development of Melbourne's growth areas. Established in 2006, the Growth Areas Authority aims to develop communities in growth areas that are socially, environmentally and economically sustainable and work with industry and local Councils to ensure economic, employment and housing priorities are achieved in Melbourne's six growth areas.



OPEN  
SPACE  
SNAPSHOT



Photo: Brimbank Council

## COUNCILS AND AGENCIES WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP TO DELIVER OPEN SPACE

### CASE STUDY:

#### Brimbank Council and Melbourne Water working together to improve The Lakes District Park

**Municipality:** Brimbank

**Location:** Chichester Drive, Taylors Lakes (Melway 13 J2)

Since the adoption in 2008 of the *Creating Better Parks Policy and Plan* by Brimbank City Council, a major transformation of their open space network has been occurring. Part of this transformation is the establishment of five new district parks as major destination places for the community. One of these parks is the Lakes Reserve District Park.

The Lakes Reserve District Park is a 16.6ha wetland and lake system surrounded by open space and forms part of a larger open space corridor along Taylors Creek. Located in the suburb of Taylors Lakes, approximately 25km north-west of Melbourne, it is predominately owned by Melbourne Water and is part of the stormwater drainage network.

Before being upgraded, the area that is now Lakes Reserve District Park provided a well-used path network for local residents. However, these paths were not easily accessible or safe. There was also no focal point to the area, and no safe car parking or other facilities.

It was important for developing the park to determine roles and responsibilities from the outset. Whilst Melbourne Water is the owner of the land and is responsible for the lakes system as part of the broader drainage network, the City of Brimbank is responsible for areas where it has completed capital works, including maintenance.

After Council nominated the park as a potential district park and reached an agreement with Melbourne Water, it appointed planning and design consultants to prepare a Landscape Master Plan for the Park. The purpose of the master plan was to create a new vision for the park that could be implemented over time. The master planning process took into account the existing landscape character, access, pathways and recreational facilities. It also included a community information day and questionnaire to help inform the future vision.

*"The Lakes Reserve will be a well developed contemporary parkland which provides a range of recreational opportunities in an attractive natural landscape setting. The Reserve will become a focal point for the community of Taylors Ward, while continuing to provide for local fauna."*

Lakes Reserve Master Plan, 2008

Once finalised, Council used the Lakes Reserve Master Plan to drive implementation. The first stage of the works included creating a formal park entrance as well as building BBQ facilities, picnic tables and a children's playground. The works also included new paths, shared trails and wooden jetties on the lake for people to fish. The second stage of the works is now complete and includes a new toilet block. Stage 3 and 4 are planned to occur in future years and include a circuit path around the lake, an extension of the boardwalk built in Stage 1 and a formal grassed area with associated landscaping.

For the past two years, The Lakes Reserve District Park has been the location of Brimbank City Council's annual FUNtasia Children's Festival, which attracted around 10,000 people.

A strong partnership between Melbourne Water and Brimbank Council has been fundamental to the success of this project. The Lakes is a great example of where the two uses of flood protection and recreation can coexist with a clear understanding of responsibility and without compromising public safety or asset protection.

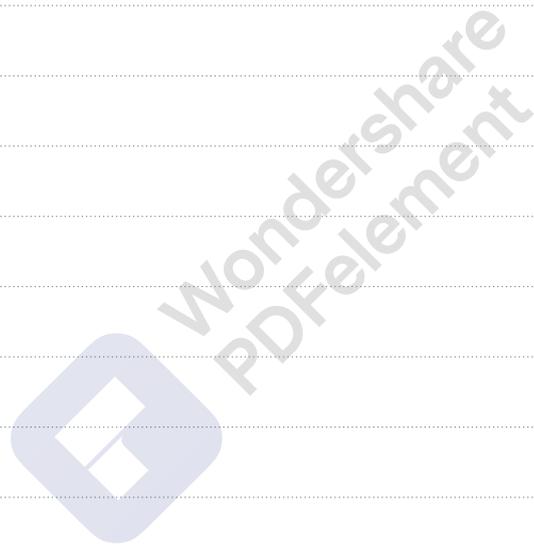
**Melbourne Water** has a number of important roles, including as the caretaker of river health in the Port Phillip and Westernport region. This includes managing rivers and creeks, floodplains - the land surrounding rivers and creeks that can sometimes experience flooding and the regional drainage system - drains, gutters and channels that carry rainwater from roofs, roads and buildings to rivers and creeks.



# NOTES

A series of horizontal dotted lines for taking notes.







# THANK YOU

We would like to thank officers from the Ballarat, Brimbank, Casey, Hobsons Bay, Hume, Melbourne, Melton, Monash, Moonee Valley, Port Phillip, Whitehorse and Yarra Councils, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Growth Areas Authority, Melbourne Water, Western Water, Parks Victoria, Sport and Recreation Victoria and Stockland who assisted in the development of the case studies.







# Yarra Ranges Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025





**Acknowledgement of Country**

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners, The Wurundjeri People as the Custodians of this land. We also pay respect to all Aboriginal community Elders, past and present, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the history of this region. Council also acknowledges Indigenous ways of being, knowing and doing that led to sustainable and health-giving societies thriving across Australia, for thousands of years.



## From the Mayor Cr Fiona McAllister



Our community has great strength, and this has never been clearer than over the past year through the pandemic and then the storm emergency. The context for this Health and Wellbeing Plan is unlike any other, with the pandemic affecting everyone in our community, albeit differently.

This Plan gives Council guidance in the coming four years for how we can support communities to return to health and wellbeing both physically and mentally. One of the biggest assets for achieving this is our community: our leaders, our volunteers, the services and our business people; and the neighbours who look out for and show kindness to each other.

Ours is a place of historic significance, home to Wurundjeri people and Coranderrk. It is a unique place with natural environments that others want to visit and in 2021, some of these beautiful places have been devastated by natural disaster. Our priorities to tackle the health impacts of climate change and public health emergencies underscore our commitment to doing our part to build back better.

This Plan aligns with the Council Plan and expands on how Council will support mental wellbeing which is a major initiative of the new Council Plan. Social connection, eating nutritious food and being physically active are all powerful ways for us to have good mental and physical health. Council's role to advocate for local needs will also continue.

I invite your participation in the journey and acknowledge your contributions to wellbeing. I know that by working together we can create a healthier Yarra Ranges.

## From Chief Executive Officer Tammi Rose



Council has many ways it supports health and wellbeing and while this Plan outlines how we will work to improve the top health issues, I want to acknowledge the broader Council effort. Whether it be collecting and recycling waste, delivering meals to older residents or responding on all fronts to emergencies, we are here to serve our communities.

Council is fortunate to have strong partnerships; the success of this Plan very much depends on the skills and efforts of our partners and community members who act every day in their communities. I am pleased that Council has been able to provide additional grants to support relief and recovery projects and this will continue over coming years through soon to be established Community Recovery Committees.

We will continue a collective impact approach for some of our health priorities, bringing skills and resources from across the Council and our external partners, to the priorities of, improving mental wellbeing and increasing healthy eating.

Our commitment to gender equality also continues, both within the Council and with communities. The Plan and the work coming out of it, applies a gender lens in line with the Gender Equality Act. I look forward to leading the organisation in its many efforts to support health and wellbeing over coming years.

## Acknowledgment of partners involved in developing this plan

Council acknowledges the many people and partners who gave their time, expertise and insights to help develop this Plan. The members of the Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group brought their knowledge and commitment to help set directions for the ongoing wellbeing of the Yarra Ranges community. In a year when Covid 19 and a devastating storm changed all our plans, this was particularly appreciated.

## Abbreviations

Abbreviations used in this plan are listed in Appendix 1.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cr Sophie Todorov Chair 2020-21</li> <li>• Cr Richard Higgins Chair 2017-20</li> <li>• Christine Farnan (Dept Health)</li> <li>• Jacky Close/Kylie Osborne (OEPCP)</li> <li>• Tracey Higgins (Inspiro)</li> <li>• Naveen Yadav (EMPHN)</li> <li>• Lisa Currie (Urban Area community representative)</li> <li>• Andrew Fullagar (Hills community representative)</li> <li>• Siu Yin Chan (Valley community representative)</li> <li>• Debbie Stanley/Di Collins (EACH)</li> <li>• Jo Stanford, Josette O'Donnell (Eastern Health Community Health)</li> <li>• Kristine Olaris (Women's Health East)</li> <li>• Daisy Brundell (Inspiro)</li> </ul> | <p><b>Advisory Committees of Council</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability Advisory Group</li> <li>• Indigenous Advisory Group</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Engagements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A list of local networks and services engaged in the development of the Plan is included in a separate report on engagement findings.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Community Survey</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 280 respondents contributed their views.</li> <li>• 109 comments were left on the Shaping Yarra Ranges webpage made by 21 individuals during the final consultation phase.</li> </ul>               |
|  | <p><b>Council Reference Group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officers from across the Council brought their expertise to the development of this Plan and connected health and wellbeing with their area.</li> <li>• Yarra Ranges Youth Ambassadors</li> </ul> |

# Contents

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|  |    |
|--|----|
| <b>Sections</b>                          |    |
| The Plan at a Glance                     | 10 |
| Executive Summary                        | 12 |
| Yarra Ranges Council                     | 16 |
| About Yarra Ranges: demographics         | 22 |
| Health and Wellbeing                     | 26 |
| Achievements of Previous Plans           | 30 |
| Developing the Health and Wellbeing Plan | 36 |

---

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>Our Priorities</b>                           |     |
| Health and Wellbeing Priorities 2021            | 54  |
| Respond to public health impacts of emergencies | 57  |
| Tackle climate change and its impacts on health | 71  |
| Increase healthy eating                         | 85  |
| Increase active living                          | 101 |
| Improve mental wellbeing and social connection  | 115 |
| Prevent violence against women and children     | 133 |
| Reduce harmful alcohol and drug use             | 147 |

---

|                   |            |
|-------------------|------------|
| <b>References</b> | <b>166</b> |
|-------------------|------------|

---

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>Action Plan</b> |  |
|--------------------|--|

---

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>Appendices</b>   | <b>174</b> |
| Appendix 1: Abbreviations                                 |            |
| Appendix 2: Gender and intersectionality - health factors |            |





# The Plan at a glance

The Yarra Ranges Council Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 provides a strategic road map for Council to support optimal health and wellbeing of communities across the municipality. The plan reflects and leverages where Council has responsibility, capability, influence, roles and resources to support health and wellbeing.

## Improving health and wellbeing

Optimal health and wellbeing are fundamental to a thriving community and prosperous municipality. Residents are generally healthy but not in every way.

Compared to all of Victoria, Yarra Ranges adults have poorer health and wellbeing related to:

- Family violence incidents
- Food insecurity and drinking sugary drinks
- Anxiety, depression and other mental health-related problems
- Excess alcohol consumption
- Diagnosis of multiple chronic diseases

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>How the Plan was developed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through community consultation.</li> <li>• Build on achievements of previous Health and Wellbeing Plans</li> <li>• Articulate with other Council plans and the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-23</li> </ul> | <p><b>Approaches of the Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy and sustainable environments</li> <li>• Whole of Council</li> <li>• Partnership and collective impact</li> <li>• Prevention - protective and risk factors</li> <li>• Asset based community development</li> <li>• Placed-based</li> <li>• Life-course</li> <li>• Evaluation and monitoring</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Principles of the Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence informed</li> <li>• Gender equity and intersectionality</li> <li>• Social determinants of health</li> <li>• Human rights and health equity</li> </ul>   | <p><b>How the Plan will be implemented</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directly by Council and via partnerships with other agencies and communities</li> <li>• Action Plans for each priority</li> </ul>   |

## Health and Wellbeing Priorities and Goals

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <p><b>Priority 1</b></p> | <p><b>Respond to public health emergencies</b><br/>Communities recover from Covid 19 and other emergencies.</p>   |
| <p><b>Priority 2</b></p> | <p><b>Tackle climate change and its impact on health</b><br/>People and businesses are resilient, prepared, and able to mitigate the potential health impacts of climate change.</p>                    |
| <p><b>Priority 3</b></p> | <p><b>Increase healthy eating</b><br/>People have the capacity to consume healthy food, built on a sustainable system providing access to healthy, affordable food for all.</p>                         |
| <p><b>Priority 4</b></p> | <p><b>Increase active living</b><br/>People have capacity to walk and be physically active in an inclusive culture.</p>   |
| <p><b>Priority 5</b></p> | <p><b>Improve mental wellbeing and social connections</b><br/>People have good mental wellbeing through strong community connections, family supports and ease of access to mental health services.</p> |
| <p><b>Priority 6</b></p> | <p><b>Prevent violence against women and children</b><br/>Women and children live free from abuse and violence in a culture of gender equity and respect.</p>   |
| <p><b>Priority 7</b></p> | <p><b>Reduce harmful alcohol and drug use</b><br/>People are safe from the harmful effects of alcohol and other drugs.</p>  |

# Executive Summary

**The Yarra Ranges Council Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 (the Plan) articulates what we want to achieve over the coming four years.**

The Plan is a strategic road map for how Council can support optimal health and wellbeing of communities and meets the requirement of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008.

**The Plan:**

- describes priority areas for action to improve health and wellbeing, principally through Council’s work and work in partnerships with other agencies and communities
- reflects where Council has responsibility, capability, influence, roles and resources to support health and wellbeing.

The Health and Wellbeing Plan is part of how Council delivers its strategic objective of a Connected and Healthy Community. Council has additional service delivery roles that support good health, such as immunisation, maternal and child health, wastewater management and food safety, to name a few. These are vital to community health and generally, are not the focus on this Plan.

## Health and Wellbeing Priorities

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| <b>1</b> | Respond to public health impacts of emergencies |
| <b>2</b> | Tackle climate change and its impact on health  |
| <b>3</b> | Increase healthy eating                         |
| <b>4</b> | Increase active living                          |
| <b>5</b> | Improve mental wellbeing and social connection  |
| <b>6</b> | Prevent violence against women and children     |
| <b>7</b> | Reduce harmful alcohol and drug use             |



These health priorities reflect the most significant preventable causes of poor health and wellbeing in Yarra Ranges. They were informed by residents’ priorities for improving health and wellbeing. Local health and community organisations also share priorities with Council. Five of the priorities continue work from the 2017-2021 Health and Wellbeing Plan. Actions for each priority describe the outcomes we hope to achieve, who in Council is involved, our partners, measures of success and related Council plans or strategies.

A comprehensive approach is required to plan for and deliver improved health and wellbeing outcomes for all residents of Yarra Ranges. A set of principles and approaches guide this Plan and the way Council works with the community and our partners to improve health and wellbeing. Applying these principles and approaches will ensure that the benefits of population-level health planning extend to all members of the community.

| Principles                                  |
|---|
| Evidence informed                           |
| Gender Equity lens                          |
| Intersectionality and discrimination        |
| Social determinants of health               |
| Human rights and health equity              |
| Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing |

| Approaches                               |
|--|
| Healthy and sustainable environments     |
| Whole of Council                         |
| Partnership and collective impact        |
| Prevention - protective and risk factors |
| Asset based community development        |
| Place-based                              |
| Life-course                              |
| Evaluation and monitoring                |

Council embeds gender equity and intersectionality into its strategies. Research, consultation and data analysis through a gender and intersectionality lens gives a more nuanced understanding of our communities to inform Council action.

The 2017-2021 Health and Wellbeing Plan took a new approach to changing entrenched health issues through three major initiatives on: walking, water and Indigenous health. This collective impact approach provided a framework to tackle health issues from multiple perspectives, harnessing different skills and resources.

Taking a deliberate learning approach, this was a new way of working for Council. The approach will evolve in the 2021-2025 plan with a new collaboration proposed for mental wellbeing and another to focus on nutrition and the food system. These priorities will also support recovery from the recent public health emergency of Covid 19 and the storms of 2021.

Good health and wellbeing are fundamental to a thriving community and a prosperous municipality. Yarra Ranges Council views health and wellbeing as vital for our residents and communities. Improving the health and wellbeing of our community is everyone’s business. Different institutions and levels of government play different roles in people’s health and wellbeing. Yarra Ranges Council plays a central role in shaping a healthy and liveable region which promotes and supports health and wellbeing.



# Yarra Ranges Council

## Council vision 2036

**Whether you live here or visit, you will see how much we care for Country, how inclusive and connected our communities are, and how sustainable balanced growth makes this the best place in the world.**

The Council Plan 2021-2025 sets the road map for each four-year term of the Council. It describes what Council stands for, its priority activities, strategic directions and outcomes for the Council term. This Health and Wellbeing Plan directly delivers on the Council Plan objective of Connected and Healthy Communities.

The Council Plan development was informed by a community engagement process. Priorities developed by three area-based community panels show a focus on our environment and community wellbeing. Themes identified by the Community Panels for the Council Plan align with many of the priorities of this Plan.



## Council services and regulatory roles to support health and wellbeing

Council improves, supports and protects health and wellbeing through services, programs and regulatory roles to protect health and the environment. Council also leads and works with others to advocate for funding for services and facilities. Council has many roles to improve the health and wellbeing of residents, including:

- delivering infrastructure, services, planning and facilities that support people to be healthier
- planning functions such as strategic land planning
- regulatory functions such as, statutory planning, building and health. Council also assesses the social and economic impacts of new electronic gaming machines and reviews alcohol license applications
- partnerships - leveraging skills, resources, expertise and working together for collective impact
- building capacity of communities through grants, community development, training and skills building, and leadership development
- advocating for systemic change to improve the underlying causes of poor health.

“

Gender equity is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world

- UN Sustainable Development Goal 5<sup>(1)</sup>



## Gender Equality and Intersectionality

The Gender Equality Act 2020 requires Council to undertake a Gender Impact Assessment when developing a Plan such as this and embed gender equity and intersectionality impacts into its strategies. All areas of Council must show how they are contributing to a vision for gender equality.

### Our Vision for Gender Equality in Yarra Ranges

The following Vision was developed by Council’s leadership team to direct the organisation’s work to reduce gendered violence in Yarra Ranges. It recognises the absolute requirement to change the underlying conditions that lead to this form of violence, such as gender stereotypes, expectations and roles.

Yarra Ranges is gender equitable, inclusive and diverse. Women, men and gender diverse people have equitable access to resources, power and opportunities. We are brave and fierce in our pursuit of gender equality and human rights, and we all have a role to play. We demand this for ourselves and our community.

The Plan reflects the commitments made in this vision and describes a range of Council work to help achieve it. Further details on gender equality and intersectionality are in Appendix 3.

## Disability

Council also has an important and legislated role to support people with disability and their carers to participate equally in their community. Council's vision for this is that:

*Yarra Ranges is an accessible, inclusive and equitable community that enables people with a disability to fulfil their potential equitably and as valued citizens.*

Almost 7,000 people identify as having a disability that requires them have assistance with daily living (2016 ABS Census). The need for assistance relates to severe or profound disability. The prevalence of people who need support in the community, and information on unpaid care to a person with a disability, informs Council's planning and support.

Council's Disability Advisory Group provided input to development of the Plan and will help guide implementation, bringing lived experience to decisions.

## Young People

During the consultation process to develop the Plan, five Youth Ambassadors for Yarra Ranges Council were consulted. The Youth Ambassadors gave an important perspective and they were well informed of the issues. Their insights will help inform advocacy and action over the life of the Plan.

## Men

Data on men's health in this Plan show in some areas men have worse health outcomes. This is true for suicide, life satisfaction and harms associated with alcohol consumption. Short-term harms from alcohol misuse, such as injury, are experienced more often by men than women. <sup>(48)</sup>

More data is needed on the challenges for men's help seeking behaviour for both mental and physical health issues. Coupled with poor service access in some areas of Yarra Ranges, this can lead to negative health outcomes. Early intervention approaches such as supporting new Dads in their parenting role can support good health as well as reduce the risk of family violence.

Council supports prevention activities in men's health, through its grant programs, support for men's sheds and support for new fathers. During the life of the Plan data will be monitored to better understand service access by men and other groups who may experience greater barriers, including people from diverse cultural background, people with disability, people who are homeless, those in more remote areas, and LGBTIQ+ community members.

## Socio-economic factors

Longer-term harms including cancers, cardiovascular diseases and digestive diseases are more likely to be experienced by people with low socio-economic backgrounds.

# About Yarra Ranges



**159,955** estimated resident population in Yarra Ranges (2020)<sup>(2)</sup>



YR 16.3%

GM 33.8%

Residents born overseas compared with Greater Melbourne (2016)

Almost **7,000** identified as having a severe or profound disability and **15,157** provided assistance to a person with a disability in 2016

**1,359** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples reside in the Yarra Ranges (2016) - the largest population in the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR)

**20%**

Overall population socioeconomically advantaged - Top 20% in Vic

However, high disadvantaged areas in **Yarra Junction** and **Warburton**

## 2016 Census Snapshot

| Total people (usual residence)                   | Yarra Ranges | Greater Melbourne |      |
|--|--------------|-------------------|------|
| Population group                                 | Number       | %                 | %    |
| Females  | 75,717       | 50.6              | 51.0 |
| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population | 1,359        | 0.9               | 0.5  |
| Australian citizens                              | 133,014      | 89.0              | 79.6 |
| Eligible voters (citizens 18 years and older)    | 100,965      | 67.5              | 60.8 |
| Population over 15 years                         | 121,081      | 81.0              | 81.7 |
| Employed Population                              | 74,423       | 95.4              | 93.2 |

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2016.

## Emerging population trends



**3,000+**

new households expected over next 20 years due to increased population growth from new Lilydale development<sup>(3)</sup>

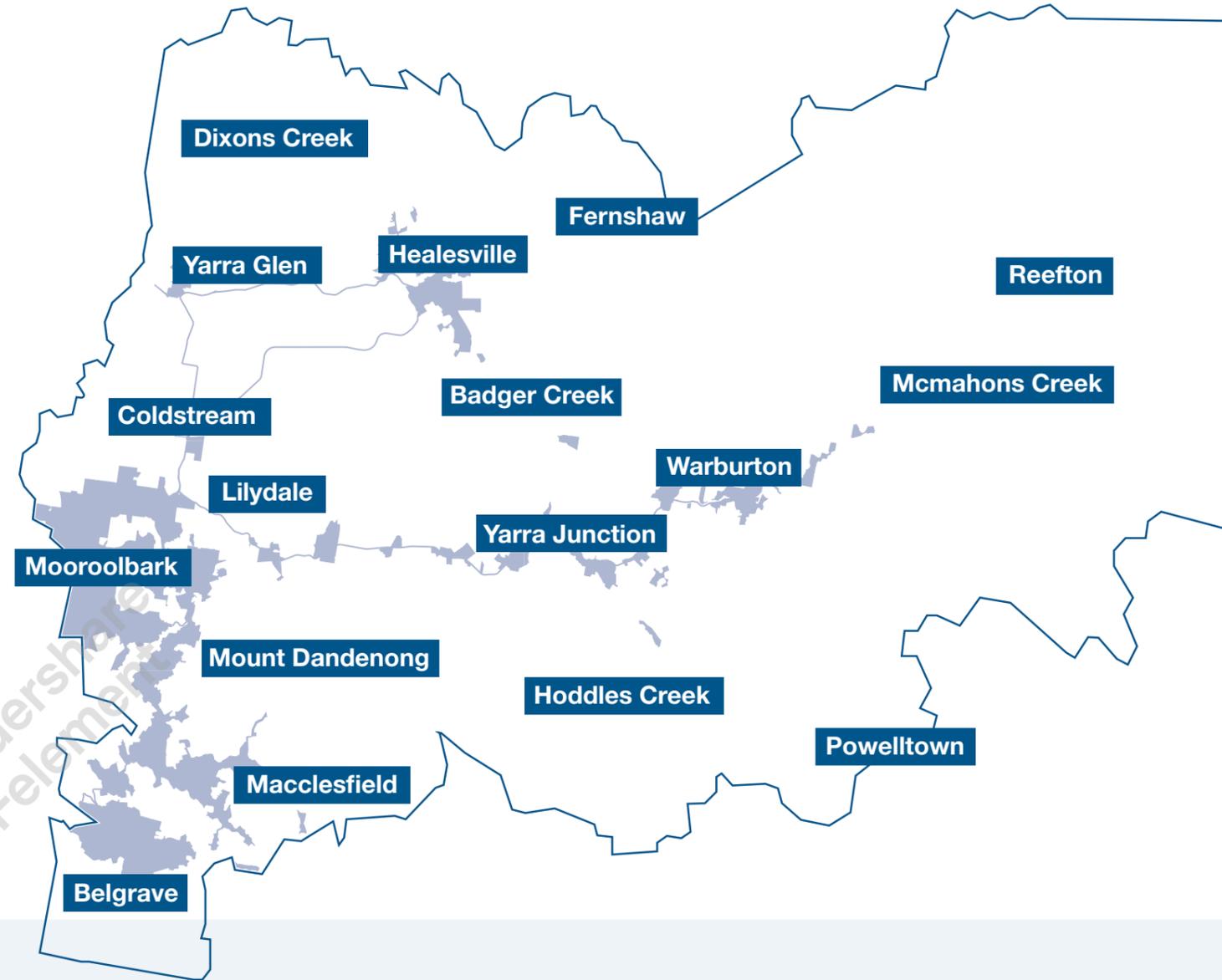


Infill development has increased population density in urban areas



Affordable housing and lifestyle change among top reasons people moving to Yarra Ranges

Increase in cultural diversity – most new overseas arrivals coming from Asia-Pacific region



## Our places

Yarra Ranges is made up of diverse places and communities with distinct geographies and identities. There are 55 townships across the almost 2,500 square kms of the municipality. Council uses four planning areas that reflect our distinct places: The Hills, Urban, Valley and Upper Yarra areas. The map below shows 17 of the larger townships, shading of the more populous urban areas and extensive forested areas that make up Yarra Ranges.

The urban areas of Yarra Ranges are on the fringe of Melbourne. The urban area which is 3% of the land mass of the municipality, is where around 70% of the population live. The central and eastern parts of Yarra Ranges are more rural. Rural land is used for agriculture, horticulture, tourism and viticulture. Significant forests and State parks edge the municipality. The natural beauty and proximity to Melbourne attracts an increasing number of visitors.



## Caring for Country

Council is proud of the partnerships developed over many years with Indigenous Elders, community members, services and organisations. A shared commitment to improving health and closing the Indigenous health gap includes improving the health of Country, as climate change and natural disasters have greater impact.

The Yarra Ranges Indigenous Advisory Committee guides Council's understanding of the intrinsic connection between healthy Country and human health. Ancient understanding held by Indigenous peoples, confirms the inter-dependence of the health of our environments and the health and wellbeing of people. Indigenous knowledge such as the Firestick approach to caring for and managing Country, is gaining momentum as a more sustainable way to protect from catastrophic fires. Council is committed to building knowledge and cultural awareness through this and other strategies and learning from Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing.

# Health and Wellbeing

Good health and wellbeing are fundamental to a thriving community and prosperous municipality. Yarra Ranges residents are generally healthy but not in every way.

Headline indicators, compared to all of Victoria, show Yarra Ranges adults have poorer health and wellbeing related to:

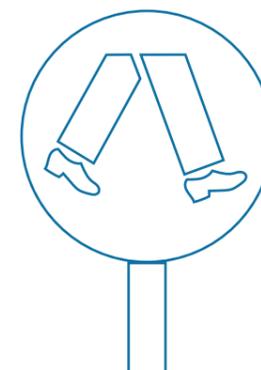
- family violence incidents
- food insecurity and drinking sugary drinks
- anxiety, depression and other mental health-related problems
- excess alcohol consumption
- diagnosis of multiple chronic diseases.

The self-reported data in the headline indicators below are from the 2017 Victorian Population Health Survey. <sup>(4)</sup> Results for 2020 will be available after the development of this Plan. Council will monitor the findings carefully.

These headline indicators for each priority of the Plan, are used in conjunction with other kinds and sources of data to give a more complex assessment of the health status of Yarra Ranges residents.

To assess the full impact of health risk factors, the total burden of disease is measured in terms of disability-adjusted life years. That is, healthy years of life lost either through dying prematurely, or through living with illness due to disease and injury. Burden of disease information for Yarra Ranges is not available.

| 2015 Australia wide burden of disease  |
|--|
| <b>38%</b> could be prevented by reducing exposure to modifiable risk factors  |
| Tobacco use had the highest burden of the measured risk factors at <b>9.3%</b> |
| <b>7.3%</b> due to dietary risks   |
| <b>2.7%</b> was due to illicit drug use  |
| <b>2.5%</b> due to physical inactivity   |
| <b>4.5%</b> due to alcohol use   |
| <b>0.7%</b> due to intimate partner violence                                   |
| <b>2.2%</b> was due to child abuse and neglect                                 |
| <b>0.3%</b> due to unsafe sex <sup>(5)</sup>                                   |



# Headline Health Indicators

## Violence against women and gender inequality



Increase in number of family violence incidents.



Increase in rate of family violence incidents.

### Risk factors



Two or more chronic diseases (high blood pressure, diabetes etc).

## Healthy eating



Experienced food insecurity.



Met dietary guidelines for fruits and vegetables.



Consume take-away meals, or snacks more than once a week.



Consume sugar-sweetened drinks daily.

## Mental health



High/very high levels of psychological distress.



Sought help for a mental health-related problem in the last 12-months.



Ever diagnosed with anxiety or depression.

## Physical activity



Sedentary, or insufficient physical activity.



Met physical activity guidelines.

## Risky alcohol consumption



Increase risk of alcohol related harm from a single occasion of drinking.



Increase lifetime risk of alcohol-related harm.



Drank more than 2 standard drinks per day.



Drank more than 4 drinks in one go (weekly basis).

## Achievements of previous Plans

The Yarra Ranges Council Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 is the fourth plan developed by Council to comply with the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008. The new Plan builds on the approaches, partnerships and achievements of previous plans.

A key component of the 2017-2021 Health and Wellbeing Plan <sup>(6)</sup> was an innovative cross Council approach to generate collective impact in three Major Initiatives Projects (MIPs) designed to improve health and wellbeing by:

- encouraging walking
- promoting drinking water instead of sugary drinks
- working to close the Indigenous health gap.

To undertake each MIP, partnerships were drawn from across Council. Achievements of each MIP are described below. Feedback via partnership surveys on this new cross-Council approach has been positive and shown increased awareness of the Health and Wellbeing Plan and the three priority projects. The collaborative approach taken has involved a sharp learning curve for members of the three MIP project groups, including skill building in collective impact work, outcomes thinking and progress measurement.

### Walking - the way to go MIP

Constructing and maintaining infrastructure that supports walking as a free and widely accessible activity was the focus of this MIP.

Outcomes include:

- elevating walking and pedestrian travel in the new Integrated Transport Strategy
- cross Council officer training on the value of walking and walking infrastructure for community wellbeing
- external funding for iconic projects - Rivers and Ridges
- implementing new and existing footpath construction programs, retrofitting pram crossovers and improving accessibility of paths of travel in activity centres
- design changes to the Warby Trail to enable Adaptive Mountain Bike users to access the trail independently.



## Water - the drink of choice MIP

A range of outcomes were achieved to increase access to water and reduced access to sugary drinks, including:

- installation of ten new water refill stations by Council, branded with the Water the Drink of Choice graphic. Yarra Valley Water is working with Councils to increase access to water in public spaces and agreed to install an additional six water stations during 2020 (installation delayed). These will be co-branded. Council capital funding will continue Council's installation of new water stations
- reduced availability of sugary drinks and less nutritious food options in several Yarra Ranges schools and sports clubs, through the Healthy Active Living project. This is a partnership of local services and Council and supported by health promotion workers in local community health services
- changes to grants guidelines were made to promote increased access to healthy drink options
- sugary drinks now make up less than 20% of the drinks available, or on display in five out of the six Council sport and recreation facilities. The work to achieve this has been part of Council's Water in Sport project, funded by a VicHealth grant
- water is provided at all Council cultural facilities, and the range of sugary drinks is substantially reduced
- health promotion has occurred across Council's sport and recreation centres, to increase community awareness of the negative health impacts of sugary drinks.

## Indigenous health MIP

The Indigenous Health MIP increased the cultural literacy of Council staff in the MIP and across Council more broadly, as a result of a cultural audit undertaken to capture Council's current level on the cultural competency continuum.

The recommendations from the audit have provided the foundation and inspiration for the development of the next iteration of Council's Reconciliation Strategy. This will take Council on a cultural journey, creating the platform to significantly increase the understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. It will embed cultural principles and values into the broader practices and procedures across Council, making our services and facilities more accessible and culturally safe for Indigenous community members.

## Other achievements

Additional achievements of the 2017-21 Health and Wellbeing Plan include:

- Healthy Active Living - a collaboration of Council, local community health services and partners to:
  - work with schools, sports clubs and other recreational venues to increase access to healthy food and drink choices in canteens
  - research community support for healthier choices, this has shown strong community support for these options
  - consult with the community to increase understanding of what a healthy and sustainable food system is (in progress)
- the Water in Sport project funded by VicHealth. This supported people to choose water and reduce their consumption of sugary drinks
- Upper Yarra Partnership, a place-based initiative to support families and children, increase access to services and strengthen community connections
- Council grants for projects with a range of health outcomes:
  - healthy eating and increasing access to healthy foods
  - supporting social connection and breaking down isolation
  - increasing gender equity
  - addressing homelessness
- Covid 19 relief and recovery grants to support mental wellbeing, social connection and relief needs - funded by Council's Recovery Fund
- gender equity work to prevent violence against women, including 16 Days of Activism campaigns, training for Council leaders and community capacity building
- advocacy to improve health and wellbeing in the areas of: social housing and homelessness and improving mental health services for young people. Achievements include a local Headspace and Integrated Youth Health Hub
- promotion of safe alcohol consumption through partnerships with community organisations and sports clubs (affected by Covid 19)
- increased participation of people with disability and their carers in the community through walking and engaging in recreation and cultural activities. Promoting the contribution and voice of people with disability and carers through an International Day for People with Disability event
- community infrastructure, recreation facilities and open space improvements, including an award for increasing access to the Warby Trail for wheelchair users, developed through engagement with community.



# Developing the 2021–2025 Plan

Council's Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group provided guidance to develop the 2021-2025 Health and Wellbeing Plan. Our community engagement reached across our community, including to children and young people and people with diverse life experiences and backgrounds. The contributions of partner organisations and community groups were instrumental. Community surveys and engagement offered a more nuanced picture of health and peoples' experience.

Analysis of health data for Yarra Ranges underpins this Plan. This data is available on Council's website. It is a resource for local services, agencies, students and community.

## Connecting with Victorian State Priorities

The Plan aligns with the principles, priorities and focus areas of the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-23.<sup>(6)</sup> The State vision for Victorians is:

'A Victoria free of the avoidable burden of disease and injury so that all Victorians can enjoy the highest attainable standards of health, wellbeing and participation at every age'.

The State Plan lists roles and contributions made in different organisations to improve Victorian population health and wellbeing.

|   |   |
|---|---|
|    | <p><b>State level</b></p> <p>Victorian government departments; peak bodies, professional organisations and specialist agencies.</p>   |
|    | <p><b>Local level</b></p> <p>Local government; regional and metropolitan partnerships; social and aged care services; early childhood services and schools; women's health services; workplaces.</p>            |
|  | <p><b>Service level</b></p> <p>Hospitals; community health and primary care organisations; Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations; human services provider agencies, community organisations.</p> |

The Victorian Plan notes...

'Taking an evidence-informed and coordinated approach can maximise opportunities across communities and within settings and services to support Victorians to live healthy lives. The wider determinants of health are integral to the long-term vision for public health and wellbeing interventions. Place-based and co-design approaches are also important mechanisms for driving improvements in wellbeing in Victoria and should be considered when designing and delivering public health and in public health and wellbeing.'<sup>(7)</sup>

## Principles and Approaches of the Plan

A comprehensive approach is required to plan for and deliver improved health and wellbeing outcomes for all residents of Yarra Ranges. A set of principles and approaches guide this Plan and the way Council works with the community and partners to improve health and wellbeing. The principles and approaches are described in Appendix 4 that accompanies the Plan. While each approach and principle are described separately, it is the combination that is foundational to development and implementation of this Plan.

Council has many roles and influences in addressing the social determinants of health as part of improving health and wellbeing in Yarra Ranges. This is depicted in the diagram below. Principal among them is housing, particularly advocacy for social housing and homelessness. The actions of Council in addressing the social determinants of health are included in the Action Plan of each priority of the Plan.

The social determinants of health and two other important determinants are outlined below. These determinants impact on many of the foundations, or fundamentals of health and wellbeing.

| Principles                                  |
|---|
| Evidence informed                           |
| Gender Equity lens                          |
| Intersectionality and discrimination        |
| Social determinants of health               |
| Human rights and health equity              |
| Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing |

| Approaches                                |
|---|
| Healthy and sustainable environments      |
| Whole of Council                          |
| Partnership and collective impact         |
| Prevention - protective and risk factors  |
| Asset based community development (ABCD*) |
| Place-based                               |
| Life-course                               |
| Evaluation and monitoring                 |

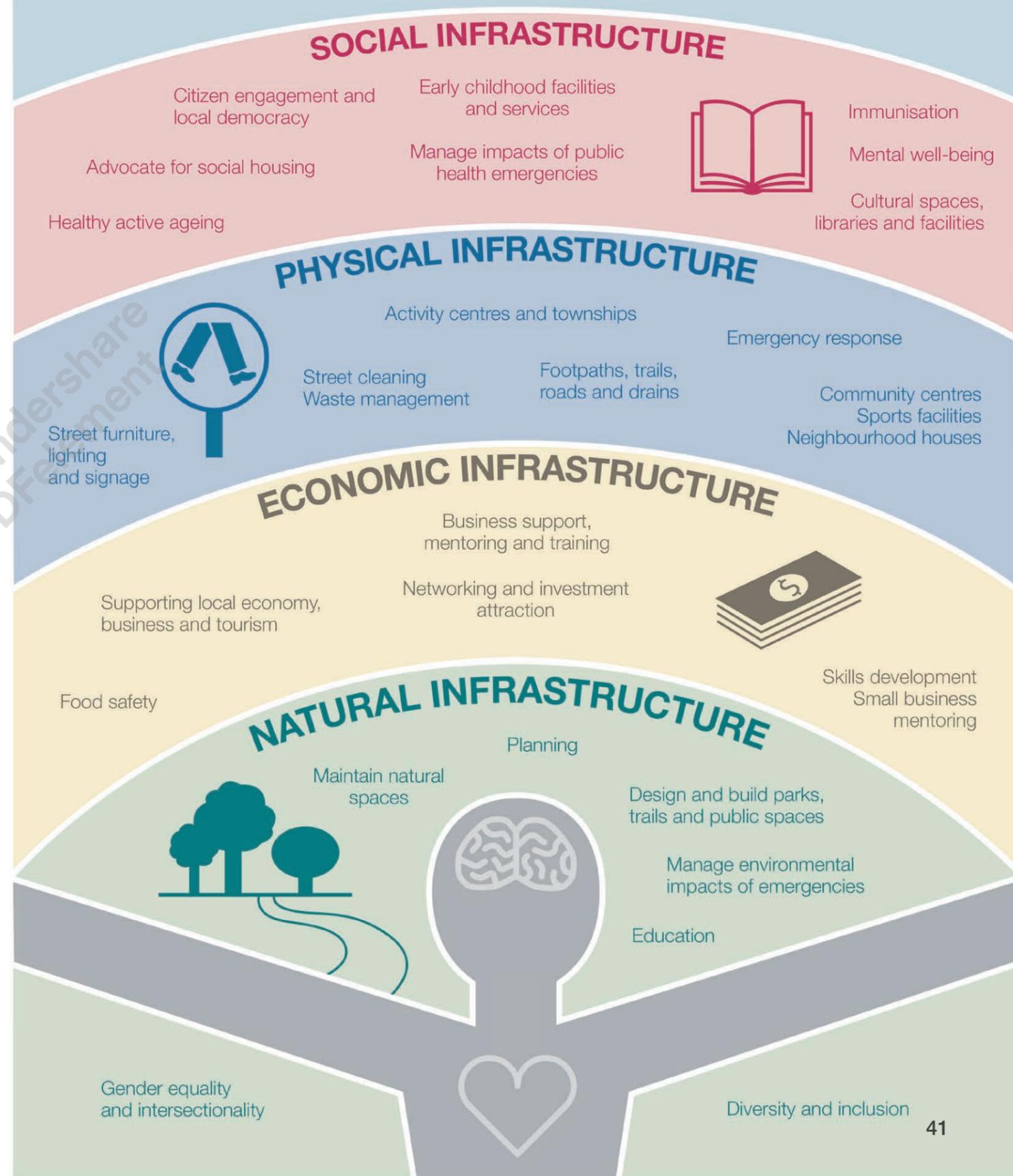
\* ABCD is a globally adopted approach that recognises and builds on the strengths, gifts, talents and resources of individuals and communities to create strong, inclusive and sustainable communities.

Jeder Institute 2020 <sup>(66)</sup>



# COUNCIL'S ROLE IN CREATING ENVIRONMENTS FOR HEALTH

## Investments in the Social Determinants



### The Social Determinants of Health

The social determinants of health are the conditions we are born into: the economic, social and environmental influences and opportunities. They are particularly relevant in Yarra Ranges given our diverse communities and places.

‘...the single strongest predictor of our health and wellbeing is our position on the social gradient. Whether measured by income, education, place of residence or occupation, those people at the top of the gradient have the most power and resources, and on average live longer and healthier lives. Those people at the bottom have the least power and usually run at least twice the risk of serious illness and premature death as those near the top.’<sup>(8)</sup>

Housing, education, employment, services, social and community networks and the quality of natural and physical environments are all social determinants of health.

## Housing

Council acknowledged the centrality of secure and affordable housing to health and wellbeing in a set of Guiding Principles for Housing and Homelessness in 2020. Council is a long-time member of the Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance which advocates for improved housing affordability in the eastern metropolitan region.

Yarra Ranges is a partner with 12 other local Councils in a Charter Group formed to:

‘...advocate for more social housing and wrap around services for people experiencing homelessness and working in partnership with all levels of government to innovate to address housing needs.’

Council recognises the impacts of the gap in housing affordability, particularly for people in the lowest income bracket of our community, due to a shortfall in social housing. This gap can have devastating impacts on people’s lives, including for children who experience homelessness or insecure housing. The pressures of housing stress are significant and include having limited household funds for other vital needs: food, school costs, travel and utilities. In mid-2021 only 5.6% of dwellings in Yarra Ranges were affordable for 2 adults and a child on Centrelink payments.

**2,638** people from Yarra Ranges presented for homelessness support in 2017-18. Of these, **590** were homeless and **1,852** were at risk of homelessness. This contrasts with the last Census estimate of **360** people experiencing homelessness.

Data from homelessness services in Yarra Ranges, Anchor, Salvation Army, and Uniting

The impacts of homelessness and insecure housing affect women, men and gender diverse people differently. Women’s risk of homelessness is worsened by family violence, income inequality, lack of financial independence and lack of affordable housing. Women on low incomes, older women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women without permanent residency, and women with disabilities are at particular risk. <sup>(9)</sup> LGBTIQ communities can experience homelessness and insecure housing due to breakdown of family relationships and discrimination. <sup>(10)</sup>

Engagement with community members on the Plan highlighted the need for more social housing to meet local needs.

### Child Safety

The safety of children and young people are highlighted because of the impact of early childhood experiences on many of the foundations for health and wellbeing. Council takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and commits to:

- safety, wellbeing and positive social outcomes of children and young people
- prevention of abuse and neglect to avoid devastating and life-long impacts on health.

Council has a range of measures in place to become a strong, child safe organisation. This Plan includes actions to protect the safety of children and young people in the priorities of mental wellbeing, preventing violence against women and children and alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.



Wondershare PDFelement

## The Covid 19 pandemic and storm emergency

This Plan was developed during the global public health emergency of Covid 19. Research on the health impacts of Covid 19 inform this Plan. The Plan includes how Council will work to support community recovery. Recovery work takes an asset (strengths) based community development approach wherever possible to tap into the skills, wisdom and resources of communities.

Some people in our community will continue to experience greater impacts of the pandemic or are at higher risk of longstanding negative impacts. The wellbeing of young people, people with disability and their carers, Indigenous community members, people from diverse cultural backgrounds, those experiencing homelessness and single parent families, may have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Council is committed to supporting community members who are more affected during recovery. The long-term impacts expected from the pandemic will be monitored over time to inform actions to support social recovery.

Many health priorities and existing areas of concern in Yarra Ranges have worsened due to the pandemic and the 2021 storm:

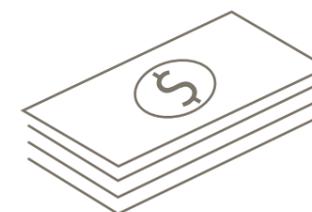
- mental health, mental wellbeing and social isolation
- rates of family violence
- employment and economic wellbeing
- homelessness and housing issues
- social inclusion, employment and educational outcomes for young people.

Research shows that women were disproportionately affected by the pandemic in a range of ways including:

- employment impacts with female dominated industries in Yarra Ranges disproportionately affected e.g. tourism, hospitality
- caring roles - women were primarily responsible for remote learning and caring for children, elderly, people with disabilities
- mental health – isolation, insecure work and home schooling affected mental wellbeing.

Family violence incidence is also a concern with increased risk and incidents for women during and following the emergency including limited options to seek support and more opportunities for coercive control. This included Elder Abuse. <sup>(11)(12)</sup> In the initial aftermath of the storm Council received requests for help from women experiencing family violence and this will need to be a focus of recovery efforts.

Economic wellbeing is a powerful determinant of health. Council's Economic Development and Investment team monitored businesses throughout the pandemic and storm event and provided support and information to assist businesses to access grants and other supports. A new Economic Development and Investment Strategy will set a roadmap for the future, including how Council can support employment and thriving local businesses.



# Our vision for health and wellbeing

The vision of the 2021-2025 Health and Wellbeing Plan reflects where Council has responsibility, capability, roles and resources to improve health and wellbeing.

**Yarra Ranges has connected and healthy communities that are resilient, fair and inclusive. Our places are liveable and sustainable.**

The Plan is mostly about Council’s work to improve health and wellbeing. This is both direct work and work in partnership with other agencies and communities. Seven health and wellbeing priorities are identified. These priorities reflect the most significant preventable causes of poor health and wellbeing in Yarra Ranges, and have been strongly confirmed by our community engagement. Each priority has a goal articulating the future we hope to see.

The Council Health and Wellbeing Plan must align local health priorities with the 2019-2023 Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan. <sup>(5)</sup> The state Plan has 10 priorities and within this, four focus areas.

| State Priorities  |
|---|
| Reducing injury   |
| Preventing all forms of violence                                  |
| Decreasing the risk of drug resistant infections in the community |
| Improving mental wellbeing  |
| Improving sexual and reproductive health                          |
| Reducing harmful alcohol and drug use                             |

| State Focus Areas                                |
|--|
| Tackling climate change and its impact on health |
| Increasing healthy eating                        |
| Increasing active living                         |
| Reducing tobacco-related harm                    |

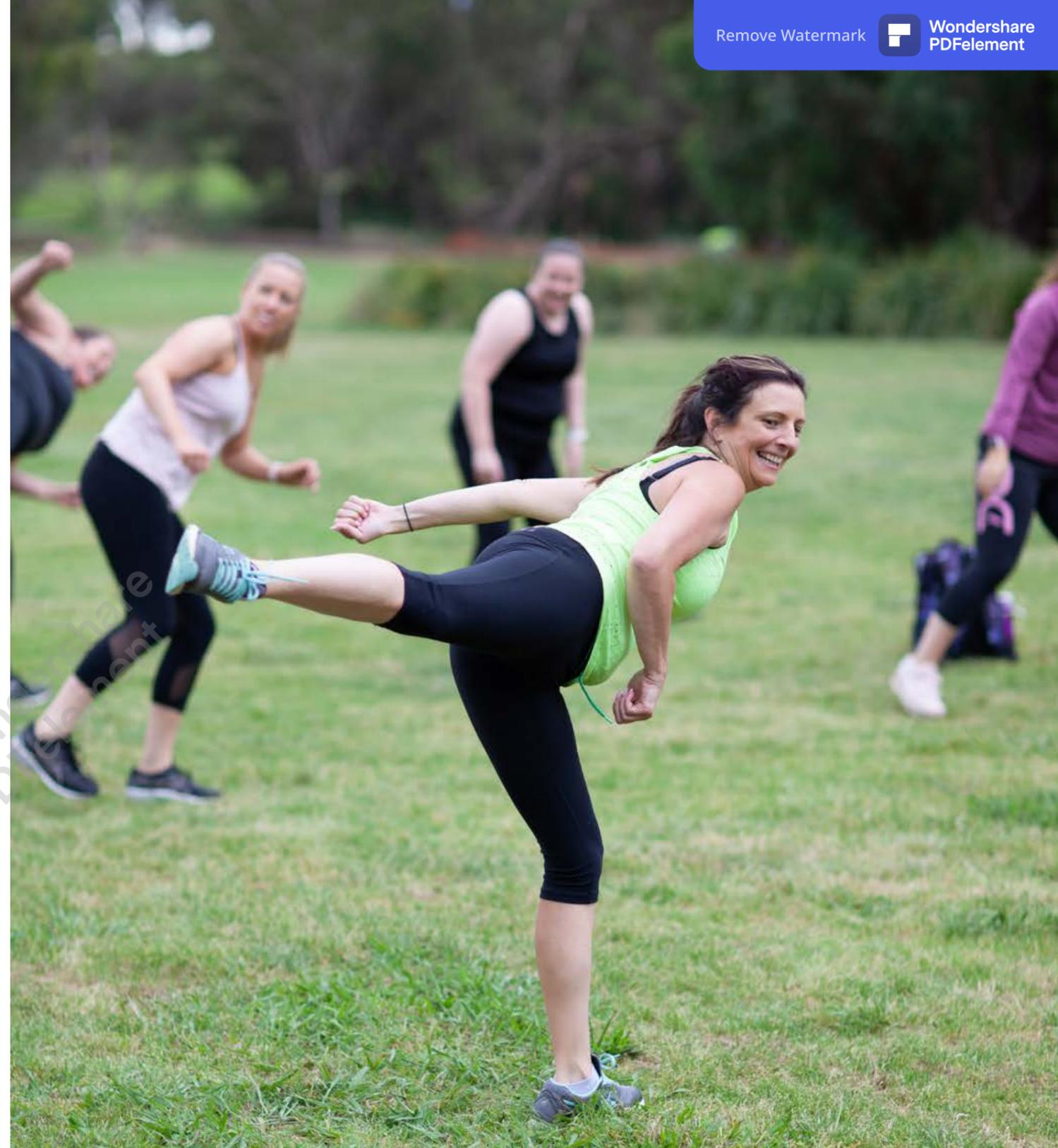
State priorities and those for Yarra Ranges closely align. Local health data and consideration of Council’s role, responsibility and influence indicate there are six shared priorities. Council adds the health impacts of emergencies like Covid 19, storms and other emergencies, to this list. The State plan was developed pre-Covid.

### Local partnership to progress shared goals

Local community health organisations share priorities for improving health and wellbeing with Council. Collaborative planning by Council, Eastern Health Community Health, Inspiro and EACH has resulted in agreement to work on the following priorities over the next four years:

- **Healthy Eating:** Increase consumption of healthy food and drink to enable better physical and mental health.
- **Physical Activity:** Increase physical activity and enable people to lead active lives.

These two priorities will include a gender equity lens and build on previous collaborations in Yarra Ranges to reduce violence against women and children. Work to help prevent women and their children from experiencing violence and discrimination will support our communities to practice healthy and respectful relationships, and live free from gender inequalities.



### Approach to gender equity

Council commits to implementing the legislated requirement to apply a gender impact assessment to all new and revised policies, programs and services. The Plan applies this lens to ensure actions are gender equitable and inclusive and contribute to achieving Council's vision.

## Advocacy priorities

In addition to the priorities of the Plan, there are other issues where Council will primarily take an advocacy role. These advocacy priorities point to important systemic issues, the social determinants. Many are a longstanding focus for Council:

|   |  |
|---|--|
|    | <b>increase access to health services including mental health, with a focus on the mental health of young people</b> |
|  | <b>increase social housing and reduce homelessness</b>   |
|  | <b>secure funding for an integrated Aboriginal community-controlled health service</b>                               |
|  | <b>improve public transport, increase service access in outer areas of Yarra Ranges.</b>                             |

## What you told us...

This Plan has been developed with engagement and consultation with community, our partners and across Council. Through a survey and other engagements, community members and local organisations confirmed the priorities and provided important insights into what assists in building healthy local people and communities. In a simple rating exercise, community members prioritised, mental health, preventing violence against women and the health impacts of emergencies as their highest concerns.

The health and wellbeing priorities of the Plan were previously validated in community engagements for the Liveable Climate Plan and the development of the 2021-2025 Council Plan, which told us people value social connections and inclusion, our natural environments and give high priority to recovery from the Covid 19 pandemic.

The 280+ people who completed a survey on the priorities of the Plan provided important insights on the 7 priorities. The response rate was a credible sample, noting that only 20% of respondents were male and over 40% were aged 50 and over. However, views among men and women on the priorities mostly aligned. People who care for someone with a disability or older adult were well represented.

Young people were under-represented in the survey. Engagements with Council's Youth Ambassadors helped fill this gap in the survey. An overview of what community shared with us through the survey is available on Council's website. Throughout the life of this Plan Council will continue to talk with and engage with community members on the priorities.



# Health and Wellbeing Priorities 2021

| Priority 1                                      |   |
|---|---|
| Respond to public health impacts of emergencies |   |
| <b>Goal</b>                                     | Communities in Yarra Ranges recover from Covid 19 and other emergencies and restore social connections, mental and physical health and wellbeing, thriving local places and economies, and access to services and resources needed. |

| Priority 2                                      |  |
|---|--|
| Tackle climate change and its impacts on health |  |
| <b>Goal</b>                                     | People and businesses in Yarra Ranges are resilient, prepared, and able to adapt and protect against the potential health impacts of climate change. |

| Priority 3              |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Increase healthy eating |  |
| <b>Goal</b>             | People in Yarra Ranges have the capacity to consume healthy food, built on a sustainable food system that provides access to healthy, affordable food for all. |

| Priority 4             |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Increase active living |  |
| <b>Goal</b>            | People in Yarra Ranges have capacity to walk and be physically active through accessible footpaths, trails, parks, play spaces and an inclusive culture that supports participation in all forms of physical activity. |

| Priority 5                                     |  |
|--|--|
| Improve mental wellbeing and social connection |  |
| <b>Goal</b>                                    | People in Yarra Ranges have good mental wellbeing through strong community connections, family supports and ease of access to mental health services |

| Priority 6                                  |  |
|---|--|
| Prevent violence against women and children |  |
| <b>Goal</b>                                 | Women and children in Yarra Ranges live free from abuse and violence through a culture of gender equity and respect. |

| Priority 7                          |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Reduce harmful alcohol and drug use |  |
| <b>Goal</b>                         | People in Yarra Ranges are safe from the harmful effects of alcohol and other drugs - particularly from alcohol and tobacco, through preventing uptake and support for safe alcohol use. |



## Priority 1

# Respond to public health impacts of emergencies

### Our goal for preparing and responding to the health impacts of emergencies:

Communities in Yarra Ranges recover from Covid 19 and other emergencies and restore:

---

strong and sustainable social connections

---

mental and physical health and wellbeing

---

thriving local places and economies

---

access to the services and resources needed.

---

This section outlines: why this is a health and wellbeing priority, the data for Yarra Ranges, what a gender and intersectionality lens reveal, our approach to improve health and wellbeing, and our priority actions. A detailed action plan is included at Appendix 1.

## Why responding to the health impacts of emergencies is a priority

Public health emergencies in Yarra Ranges can include: pandemics; bushfires; storms, flooding; infectious disease outbreaks and toxic chemical spills.

This plan will provide guidance to:

- support recovery from the Covid 19 pandemic and the 2021 storm event
- prepare for public health emergencies
- respond to and provide relief in public health emergencies
- support community led recovery in new emergencies such as bushfire and flood.

Council has a legislated role to respond to emergencies and assist community led recovery. It has other roles directed by the State in relief operations depending on the kind of emergency.

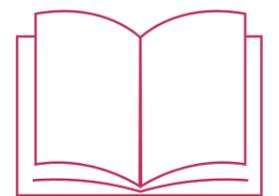
Council's work is informed by past emergencies and best practice principles. Social and economic recovery from the impacts of Covid 19 which affected everyone, and the devastating and concurrent emergency of the 2021 June storm, will be a focus for the coming years. This priority is closely connected with the impacts of climate change on health (Priority 2).

The Centre for Social Issues and Professor Ian Hickey 2020 paper comment on what is most needed for mental wellbeing with ongoing lockdowns:

...public health messages are required that engage people to be community-minded and active in their local settings to support and care for each other in really testing times... supporting each other, and those who are distressed, within our families, workplaces, communities...

They also note that drivers of substantive health risks (resulting from lockdowns) to monitor are:

- Job losses, social disconnection and, for young people, the lack of availability of support for ongoing education and training.
- Industries like hospitality, tourism and the arts that were already devastated in past lockdowns.



### Public health emergencies in Yarra Ranges

Covid 19 impacted both Yarra Ranges residents and businesses. During 2020-21, Council undertook community surveys to track and understand the impacts of Covid 19 and assess the needs of residents to inform Council action and advocacy. Information from the surveys inform this Plan. Council will continue to monitor the impact of the pandemic and storm through surveys over the next few years.

On top of the effects of Covid 19, the June 2021 storm event caused widespread destruction of homes and our natural environment. It required concurrent responses to a lockdown and storm, to support communities across Yarra Ranges.

Council has a role in emergency relief and response in partnership with government and local agencies. It has a central role in recovery.

The impacts of the storm will require immediate, medium, and long-term action and the recovery plan in place for Covid 19 will be adapted to include storm impacts.



**Council programs and activities to support communities in 2020**

supported businesses and communities including a Be Kind campaign and Buy Local for the 2020 festive season

offered grant funding to not-for-profit community groups, artists and organisations to respond to relief and recovery needs

established the model for regional (area-based) Community Recovery Committees to facilitate community led recovery

offered mental Health First Aid courses for community leaders and volunteers

funded the emergency relief network to increase coordination, strengthen governance, assist with increased demand during and after lockdowns and re-engage volunteers

advocated to other levels of government: air quality monitors for Healesville and Warburton, employment impacts of Covid 19 and on homelessness through regional advocacy

made over 18,500 outreach calls to older residents, volunteers, U3As and seniors' groups during the pandemic to check on their welfare and distributed 24,000 newsletters

ensured Council's Meals on Wheels program was maintained by redeploying Council staff. Provided alternate activities for older adults during lockdown

adapted events to online e.g. Reconciliation Week and International Day for People with Disability forums, significantly increasing participation. Creative Communities activities and workshops were also offered online.



### Gender equity and intersectionality impacts

During times of emergency, such as Covid-19, people are more likely to take up traditional gender roles and gender inequalities may increase. There can be disproportionate impacts of the emergency on different genders. This was seen during Covid 19 with women in Victoria spending the most time helping children (72% of women) and women aged 18-24 experiencing significant job loss during the first lockdown (26% compared to 11% of men).<sup>(12)</sup> More than a quarter (26%) of women aged 18-24 lost their job during the first lockdown, compared to 11% of young men. Data is not sufficient to report on gender diverse community members' experience.

Access to services and supports for people with disability and carers were affected by Covid 19. Local engagement has shown some carers of people with disability have experienced greater isolation and increased caring load during Covid 19. Older carers with limited access to the internet and those living in our rural areas were particularly affected. Disability services pivoted quickly to offer Covid Safe supports.

Anecdotal information indicated that during the Covid 19 pandemic, women with disability and carers were particularly affected by the social isolation caused by lockdowns and other restrictions. This was the case more generally for people with disability and those who care for them.

In 2021 the new National Commission for Children highlighted the need to have greater focus on the needs of young children's development due to interruptions to schooling during Covid.



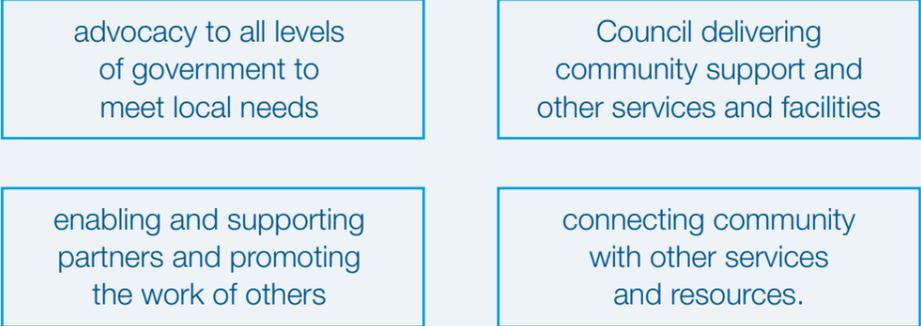
Wondershare PDFelement

## Our approach

Covid 19 is an emergency like no other and affected everyone. Best practice principles for community led recovery apply to the Covid 19 pandemic:

- understand community context where each community has its own history, values and dynamics
- respond to the complex and dynamic nature of emergencies and the affected community
- apply community-centred, responsive, flexible approaches, engaging with community and supporting their futures
- take a planned, coordinated and adaptive approach between community and agencies.
- continuous assessment of impacts and needs
- ensure effective communication between affected communities and other partners
- recognise, support and build on individual, community and organisational capacity and resilience
- apply gender equitable and inclusive responses that recognise that women, men and gender diverse people will have experienced the pandemic in different ways
- understand diversity, Indigenous people, young people, people from culturally diverse backgrounds and people with disabilities are also likely to have different experiences that need to be well understood.

### Community recovery can include:



Through its role in planning and preparedness for public health emergencies and co-ordinating recovery, Council is well placed to connect and work with affected communities. It is paramount that Council considers the needs of those people who are most affected in our community and applies a gender lens to understand the nuances of how emergencies affect people of different gender identities in different ways. Community involvement in recovery will strengthen resilience. Communities are best placed to identify priority areas for recovery and lead or support programs and activities to address these priorities.

Building strong and sustainable social connections is instrumental in responding to public health emergencies such as the Covid 19 pandemic and the 2021 storm event. The Priority to improve mental wellbeing and social connection lists what we aim to achieve and our top actions to improve mental wellbeing, which will also be critical to recovery.



### Community survey

**85%** of people nominated **‘responding to the health impacts of emergencies’** as the **top priority**

Results obtained by a survey completed mid-2021



**The Council has a crucial role in emergencies as they know so much about the local area in terms of access and safe routes and resources to assist with response. They have strong partnerships with business, health providers, clubs, community to bring together the correct groups to enact and coordinate responses.**

### Priority actions areas

**To attain our goal in responding to the public health emergencies, we aim to achieve:**

- strong and sustainable social connections
- thriving local places and economies
- accessible services and resources needed by communities.
- protected local amenity through resilient infrastructure
- easy to find and use services and resources needed by communities in emergencies.

Based on the principles and approaches of the plan described in Appendix 3, the Action Plan to progress these achievements lists the:

- priority action areas for Council in partnership with others
- sections of Council that are responsible, and our external partners
- measures of success and related Council plans.

### Mutually reinforcing work across Goals

Actions and projects to achieve the goal of each Priority often intersect. Work in one area being mutually reinforcing of the goals in other areas. Actions for public health emergencies may reflect work and co-benefits in other Priorities of the Plan, particularly:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Priority 2</b> | tackle climate change and its impacts on health |
| <b>Priority 5</b> | improve mental wellbeing and social connections |
| <b>Priority 6</b> | prevent violence against women and children     |





## Priority 2

# Tackle climate change and its impacts on health

### Our goal for tackling climate change and its impacts on health:

People and businesses in Yarra Ranges are resilient, prepared, and able to adapt and protect against the potential health impacts of climate change.

This section outlines why this is a health and wellbeing priority, the data for Yarra Ranges, what a gender and intersectionality lens reveal, our approach to improve health and wellbeing, and our priority actions. A detailed action plan is included at Appendix 1.

### Why climate change is a health priority

‘Climate change as the defining issue for public health in the 21st century. It is an urgent challenge, with implications at the global, national and community levels.’

‘Our lives depend on a healthy planet’

- World Health Organization 2016 <sup>(13)</sup>

Local government is identified in the Climate Change Act 2017 as a decision maker which must consider climate change when preparing this Plan. Tackling climate change and its impact on health is one of four priorities identified as a focus in the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023. <sup>(5)</sup> The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework includes the outcome that Victorians belong to resilient and liveable communities, indicated by increased adaptation to the impacts of climate change. <sup>(14)</sup>

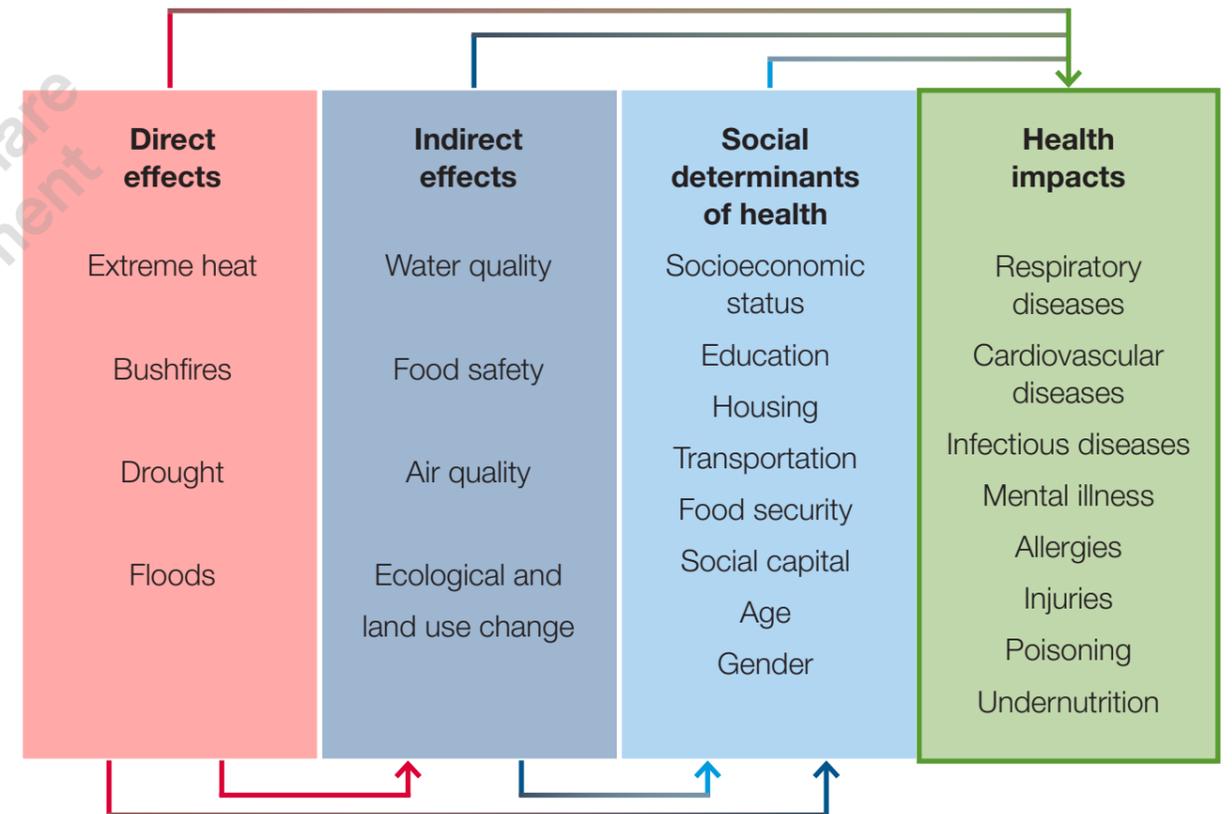
### Climate change, health, and the determinants of health

‘Health of humankind is intricately connected to the health of the overall environment and with other living beings.’

- United Nations Climate Change 2017 <sup>(15)</sup>

Climate change is expected to directly cause increased intensity and frequency of extreme weather events, such as prolonged heatwaves, floods and bushfires. Indirectly, climate change will cause worsening air quality; risks to food safety and drinking water quality; and ecological and land use change, as represented below from the Lancet Commission of Climate and Health. <sup>(16)</sup>

The direct health impacts of climate change are predicted to include deaths, injuries and ill-health due to increases in respiratory diseases, cardiovascular diseases, infectious diseases, mental health issues, allergies, injuries, poisoning, dehydration and malnutrition.



Source: Adapted from Lancet Commission of Climate and Health <sup>(16)</sup>

In addition, climate change is expected to indirectly impact the major determinants of health, including socio-economic status, education, housing, transport, food security, social capital and social connections. People will also suffer different levels of impact depending on many of these factors e.g. income, housing security and through individual factors such as age, gender, disability and Indigenous status.

## Climate change in Victoria and Yarra Ranges

Victoria's climate has become hotter and drier over the past few decades. Over the next thirty years, climate change is forecast to lead to increased average temperatures, high-heat days, high fire danger days and sea levels. In addition, climate is expected to lead to reduced snowfall, but more intense rainfall.

These changes then lead to increased intensity and numbers of extreme weather events such as heatwaves, bushfires, storms, drought and floods. Indirectly these events may impact water quality, food safety, air quality, land use, the ecological system and biodiversity.

The 2021 storm event caused widespread power outages and damage to property from trees down. It affected access to water, safe food storage and sewerage systems in many areas. Road access was blocked and the ability to stay warm and get adequate nutrition was diminished. Education and employment were severely affected and our reliance on technology showed a lack of resilience and preparedness, particularly in communications systems.

A particularly severe heatwave in the summer of 2003 resulted in more than 70,000 excess deaths across Western Europe. Health systems were unprepared and quickly overwhelmed. <sup>(16)</sup> In 2009 Victorian experienced a heatwave which led to the Black Saturday fires and directly affected communities in Yarra Ranges. As a direct result of the heatwave in the lead-up to the fires, 374 Victorians died through causes such as heat stroke and heart attacks.

## Gender equity and intersectionality impacts

Climate-related disasters can lead to existing gender inequalities worsening, greater adherence to gender roles and stereotypes and increased risk of family violence. It is internationally recognised that gender must be central to efforts to adapt and build resilience, to counter the impact of climate change.

Women are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change. Globally, women and children are significantly more likely than men to die during climate-related disasters, and they comprise up to 80 percent of those displaced by natural disasters. In our engagement, young people consistently raised concerns about climate change as a priority. They also express concern at the future they face because of climate change.

Five Council Youth Ambassadors rated climate change as their second highest priority after mental wellbeing, noting the two are linked. They reported that their peers feel a sense of hopelessness and the need to share information about what individuals can do to help. They encouraged Council to show this is an issue it cares about, to help people feel less anxious. The young people also proposed more education on sustainability actions such as eating more plant-based foods, less fast fashion. One Ambassador noted:

**“the world is full of good people that can make the changes needed.”**

### Our approach

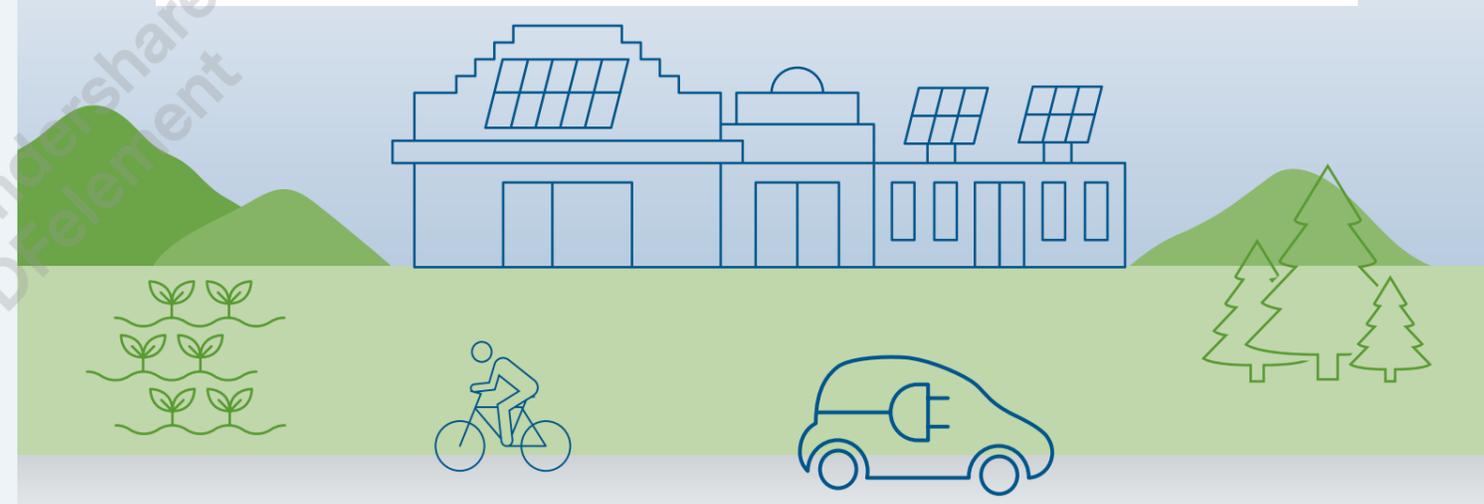
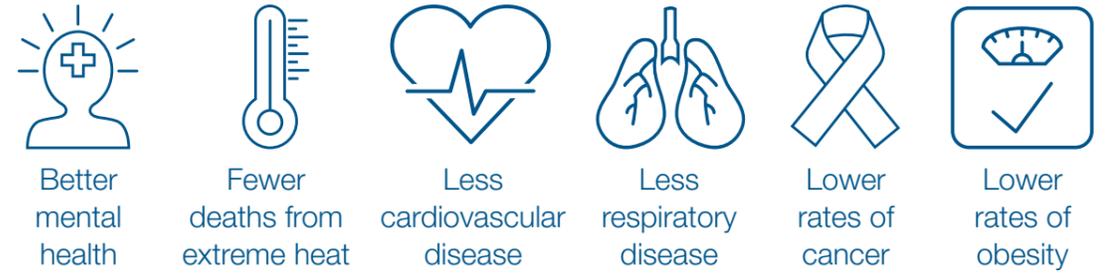
To tackle climate change and its impacts on health, the Victorian Government wants to achieve:

- resilient and safe communities that are adapting to the public health impacts of climate change
- decreased health impacts associated with climate change for example, fewer deaths from extreme heat events, fewer mosquito-borne diseases, fewer food poisoning outbreaks, fewer algal blooms in drinking water catchments
- increased action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and realise health co-benefits. <sup>(5)</sup>

Reducing climate change has considerable health co-benefits (see diagram). <sup>(17)</sup> Actions by Council to mitigate and adapt to climate change will reduce negative impacts on our environment and promote physical health and wellbeing.

### Health and climate: co-benefits

#### Health benefits



#### Example interventions

|                               |                             |  |                          |                                     |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Produce more renewable energy | Improve insulation in homes | Encourage use of lower emission vehicles | Promote active transport | Reduce solid fuels used for cooking | Less food from animal sources | Encourage locally produced fruit and veg |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|

#### Example co-benefits

|                              |                      |                           |                             |                              |                    |                    |
|------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Fewer fossil fuels           | Improved air quality | Reduced humidity and damp | Reduced heat in urban areas | Reduced livestock production | Less deforestation | Less meat consumed |
| Lower CO <sub>2</sub> levels | Thermal comfort      | Less noise                |                             |                              |                    |                    |

Source: Adapted from Health and climate: co-benefits diagram <sup>(17)</sup>

During recent incidents relating to climate change in Victoria, the main loss of life has occurred through extreme weather events leading to bushfires, storms and floods; and high heat days causing heat stress amongst residents. <sup>(18)</sup> Interventions by Councils that could reduce illness and deaths from heatwaves include to:

- increase community awareness of projected impacts, frequency and intensity of: bushfires, storms, floods and heatwaves on health and preventing impacts
- implement urban greening and cooling strategies
- encourage leadership in local development through low carbon and climate-adapted neighbourhoods
- support programs that improve energy efficiency and thermal comfort, maintain safe indoor temperatures and reduce bill stress including for older people and those more affected
- ensure emergency management plans and strategies consider projected changes in climate and climate-related health risks
- plan for and invest in cooler and cleaner air spaces to provide community respite
- link Council service users into appropriate services e.g. hardship schemes for utility retailers
- monitor water quality and foodborne disease outbreaks during heatwaves (Environmental Health teams).

Council has already acted to incorporate climate change into health planning. The impact of climate change on the community is on the agenda through:

- declaring a Climate Emergency
- developing a Liveable Climate Action Plan
- identifying climate change as a key health and wellbeing priority

Partnerships identify how Council and the community can work together to support a healthy, sustainable food system, which is linked to both health and climate change, and with clear health co-benefits.

While this Plan is focused on adapting to and preventing the health impacts of climate change, action to mitigate climate change is essential to reducing the direct and indirect health impacts. Council's work on climate change mitigation is captured in its 2020 Liveable Climate Action Plan.

A focus on supporting community adaptation is also needed because a certain amount of climate change is now inevitable due to for example population growth and increased emissions. Action needs to include:

- continued emphasis on understanding and assessing the risks of climate change to public health
- promoting community adaptation and preparedness for the public health risks associated with climate change
- assessing the health co-benefits of measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

### Community Survey

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Young people rated <b>'tackling the climate change impacts on health'</b> higher than other age groups | Young people account for 9% of survey     |
| <b>75%</b> rated this priority as <b>important</b> or <b>extremely important</b>                       |   |
| <b>Women</b> placed more importance on this priority   | <b>80%</b> of women and <b>73%</b> of men |



**I believe it is the most important issue of our time and the Council has an opportunity to be a leader in this space.**



**Shade trees in paved community spaces will help stop heat radiating off the paving.**

*The use of pesticides on health was also raised during the engagement.*

Council's use of pesticides is very limited, and it has reduced the use of herbicides through the implementation of other treatment options such as mechanical works and mulching. Council continues to look at alternative treatments across the open space network.

### Priority actions areas

**To attain our goal in tackling climate change and its impacts on health, we aim to achieve:**

- healthy and resilient country in face of climate change
- creation of places of respite for those who most need them during extreme weather
- increased community awareness of the health impacts of climate change and increased capacity to prevent them.

Based on the principles and approaches of the plan described in Appendix 3, the Action Plan to progress these achievements lists the:

- priority action areas for Council in partnership with others
- sections of Council that are responsible, and our partners
- measures of success and related Council plans.

### Mutually reinforcing work across Goals

Actions on climate change and health may reflect work and co-benefits in other Priorities, particularly:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Priority 1</b> | respond to health impacts of emergencies        |
| <b>Priority 5</b> | improve mental wellbeing and social connections |
| <b>Priority 6</b> | prevent violence against women and children     |



While this Plan is focused on adapting to and preventing the health impacts of climate change, action to mitigate climate change is essential to reducing the direct and indirect health impacts. Council's work on climate change mitigation is captured in its 2020 Liveable Climate Action Plan.

A focus on supporting community adaptation is also needed because a certain amount of climate change is now inevitable due to for example population growth and increased emissions. Action needs to include:

- continued emphasis on understanding and assessing the risks of climate change to public health
- promoting community adaptation and preparedness for the public health risks associated with climate change
- assessing the health co-benefits of measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.





## Priority 3

# Increase healthy eating

### Our goal to increase healthy eating:

People have the capacity to consume healthy food, which is built on a sustainable food system that provides access to healthy, affordable food for all.

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This section outlines: why this is a health and wellbeing priority, the data for Yarra Ranges, what a gender and intersectionality lens tell us, our approach to improve health and wellbeing, and our priority actions. A detailed action plan is included in Appendix 1.

## Why healthy eating is a priority

Increasing healthy eating is one of ten priorities identified in the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023.<sup>(5)</sup> This has been a priority of previous Council plans because of the significant relationship between nutrition and health. The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework includes the outcome that Victorians act to protect and promote health indicated by an increase in healthy eating and active living.<sup>(14)</sup>

Healthy eating is central to good health and wellbeing. Diet is arguably the single most important behavioural risk factor that can be improved to have a significant impact on health.<sup>(19)</sup>

What we eat and the food environment changed substantially over the past three decades. This shift has contributed to chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers. Two-thirds (68%) of Victorian adults are overweight or obese<sup>(20)</sup> - applied to Yarra Ranges this is an estimated 90,000 adults.



### Food consumption and production

**disproportionally affect human health and environmental sustainability; food is the single strongest lever in optimising health for humans and the environment.**

- EAT-Lancet Commission<sup>(21)</sup>

## Achieving health and wellbeing - nurturing and celebrating all bodies

Unhealthy weight is a complex and global population health reality. Not including enough high nutrition foods contributes substantially to weight gain. Around the world, obesity has risen among children and adults in recent decades. This rise is leading to significant consequences for the health of the affected individuals, along with an increasing burden on health services, social support and economic productivity. Being underweight contributes to a weakened immune system, fragile bones and fatigue.

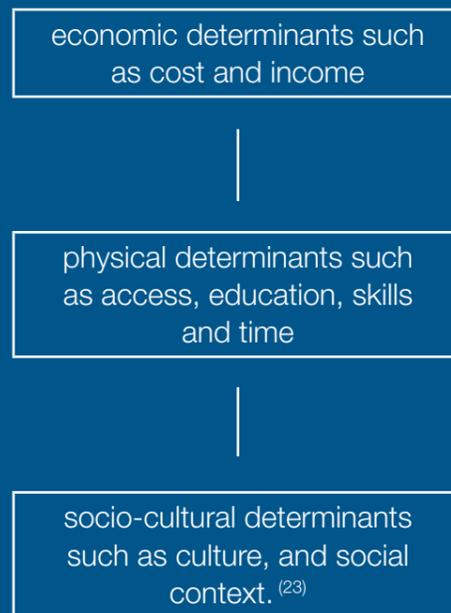
For many decades health policy and clinical practice have been based on weight-centred principles. This coupled with our objectifying body culture brings much confusion and distress about weight and shape issues across communities, particularly for women and girls. Focusing on weight and weight loss can lead to:

- weight stigma
- poor body image
- exercise avoidance
- unhealthy dieting and eating behaviours
- a range of mental health issues including eating disorders
- substance abuse
- weight cycling and/or weight gain.<sup>(22)</sup>

People with positive body image appreciate their bodies primarily for what they can do, their functionality and their health. They are more likely to engage in regular pleasurable activity and have a flexible approach to exercise, food and eating. Having positive body image means an individual is more likely to listen to their body in relation to what and how much to eat, eat foods that are healthy, and help their bodies to perform well.

## Social determinants of healthy eating

Social determinants are highly influential in an individual's choice of food, especially:



## Healthy eating and food security in Yarra Ranges

Many Yarra Ranges adults, as for all of Victoria, do not consume enough of the foods and drinks required to keep them healthy e.g. fruit and vegetables, wholegrain foods and water. Many consume too many discretionary and processed foods and drinks, often high in saturated fat, sugar, salt or alcohol. More than half (58%) of Australians' food spending is on discretionary food and drinks, such as fast food and sugary soft drinks. Some populations are more at risk of unhealthy eating patterns, particularly those living in disadvantaged areas, and Indigenous residents. <sup>(24)</sup>

In 2017, these data were for Yarra Ranges adults: <sup>(4)</sup>

- 10% had been affected by food insecurity in the past 12 months. In 2014, 16% of adults in Yarra Ranges worried about food insecurity with hunger, the highest in the EMR; 11% of parents relied on low-cost food to avert food insecurity
- 15% consumed sugar sweetened drinks daily, compared to 10% across Victoria.
- Often consumed takeaway and other processed foods in place of fresh fruit and vegetables - 16% of adult residents having takeaway meals or snacks more than once each week
- only 4% of adults ate enough fruit and vegetables, with 6% meeting the vegetable consumption guidelines. Most residents ate less than half the recommended level of vegetables per day.

While Yarra Ranges generally has access to high quality food, the cost of healthy food and public transport access remain issues for a proportion of the community. <sup>(25)</sup> New data will be available later in 2021 and will be reviewed with an eye to impacts of Covid 19.

### Healthy eating during Covid 19 pandemic

The Covid 19 pandemic exacerbated unhealthy eating and food insecurity. Yarra Ranges Council surveyed residents during lockdown. Healthy eating was one of the main concerns. Nearly 20% of parents and carers of children and teenagers had contacted food relief services during lockdown. <sup>(26)</sup>

Local challenges to healthy eating during the pandemic were reflected across Victoria and Australia. One in five Australians experienced problems maintaining a healthy lifestyle due to Covid 19. <sup>(11)</sup> They consumed more unhealthy snacks, more takeaway and delivered foods and more alcohol.

For Victorian adults during Covid 19 lockdown: <sup>(12)</sup>

- sugary drink consumption more than tripled, with nearly one-third of respondents living in the metro/rural interface having sugary drinks every day
- food insecurity nearly doubled - 7% of respondents ran out of food and could not afford to buy more. Indigenous residents had higher food insecurity
- metro/rural interface areas had the lowest vegetable consumption - only 4% of respondents were eating enough (8% across Victoria); 29% were likely to rely on low-cost unhealthy food due to financial issues; 7% went without meals; 9% used food relief agencies; 17% worried about having enough money to buy food; and 11% skipped meals to feed their households
- young people aged 18-24 and adults aged 25-34 years had much higher food insecurity than older adults.



## Our approach

To achieve the benefits of healthier eating, the Victorian Government wants to:

| Increase  |
|---|
| access to healthier food and drinks   |
| capacity to breastfeed, and prepare and consume healthier foods and drinks                    |
| capacity to not consume discretionary food and drinks   |
| socio-cultural norms reinforcing healthier eating, drinking and breastfeeding                 |
| purchase of healthier food and drinks and decrease purchase of discretionary food and drinks. |

| Decrease  |
|---|
| access to discretionary foods and drinks  |
| sodium, saturated fat and added sugar, and increase fruit, vegetables, wholegrains and dairy/alternatives in processed and ready-to-eat foods |
| the quantity of discretionary food and drinks served eating out and at home   |
| exposure to marketing of discretionary foods and drinks and increase exposure to marketing of healthier food and drinks. <sup>(5)</sup>       |

## The Food System

A sustainable food system delivers food security and nutrition for all without compromising the economic, social and environmental pillars to generate food security and nutrition for future generations. This means that it:

- is profitable throughout (economic sustainability)
- has broad-based benefits for society (social sustainability)
- has a positive or neutral impact on the natural environment (environmental sustainability).

Increasing healthy eating in Yarra Ranges is dependent on a sustainable food system. Council, all levels of government, communities, businesses and the individual all have a role in establishing and maintaining a system to support healthy eating, as shown in the diagram on the following page.<sup>(27)</sup>

Local Councils are uniquely positioned to address health issues by increasing access to healthy, sustainable and affordable food for all community groups including populations at risk of food insecurity.

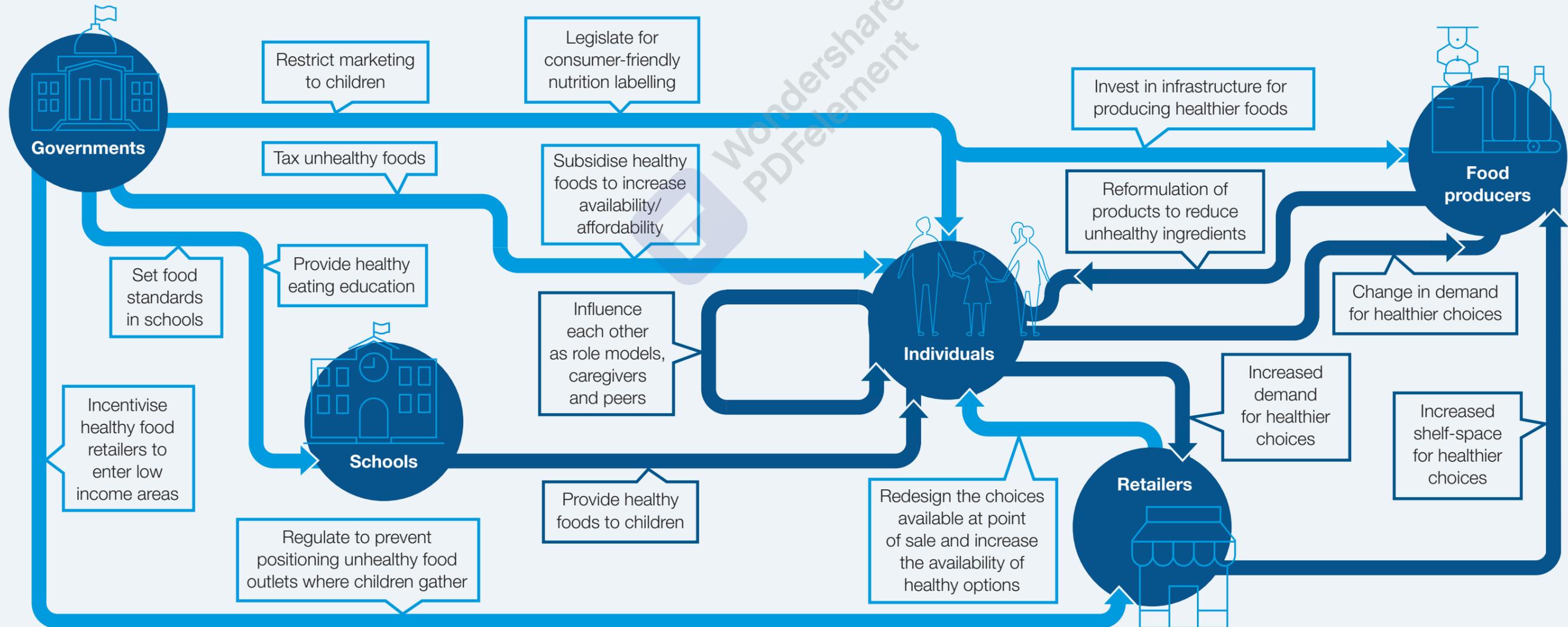
## Inclusive approaches

Council supports taking a weight inclusive approach. Building on positive strategies already in place, partner led programs will focus on prevention and early intervention of eating disorders and weight stigma and the promotion of positive body image across all sectors of our community. Weight inclusive aims, backed by research, include: creating environments where people with bodies of all shapes and sizes thrive, and where access to and motivations for health enhancing behaviours are nurtured through self-acceptance, care and compassion rather than shame, fear and guilt.

## How can governments support healthy food preferences?

The food system is an interconnected network of producers, industry, and institutions. But at its heart is the individual. Policy can affect all parts of the network, influencing a cultural shift towards healthier food preferences.

- Government policies
- Food system and individual changes



### Community Survey

**75%** of people rated **'increasing healthy eating'** as **extremely** or **very important**

Healthy eating had lowest level of prioritisation

---

People **aged 65–74** rated this priority as most important



**I see a lot of potential in partnering ... to provide educational opportunities for community members to learn how to cook healthier meals.**



**Reduce food miles by supporting local growers and helping local growers to re-diversify back to what the Yarra Valley once had, not that long ago.**



**No more chips at Council venues.**

### Priority actions areas

- To attain our goal of increasing healthier eating, we aim to achieve:**
- a healthy, sustainable food system with healthy food available to all in Yarra Ranges
  - community led action on healthy eating supported by Council grants
  - collaborative approaches to nutrition that increase access to healthy and affordable food
  - community gardens that thrive as places that build skills in growing and preparing food
  - community members able to access healthy and affordable food from a range of sources
  - girls and boys with the skills to prepare and enjoy healthy food, free from stereotypes and rigid gender roles
  - a community that nurtures and celebrates all bodies and reduces stigma
  - Council contracted services and catering policy that advance healthy eating through clear standards and expectations.

Based on the principles and approaches of the plan the Actions to progress these achievements lists the:

- priority action areas for Council in partnership with others
- sections of Council that are responsible, and our partners
- measures of success and related Council plans.

| Mutually reinforcing work across Goals   |   |
|--|---|
| Actions to increase healthy eating may reflect work and co-benefits in other Priorities of the Plan, particularly: |   |
| <b>Priority 4</b>  | increase active living                          |
| <b>Priority 5</b>  | improve mental wellbeing and social connections |



Council is a partner in the Healthy Active Living Group, which is currently focusing on developing a plan to improve the resilience and sustainability of the food system in Yarra Ranges, with a focus on access to healthy and sustainable food.

### Partnerships

Recent work of the Healthy Active Living Group has focused on engaging with the community and stakeholders. This engagement aims to:

- understand community and stakeholder priorities, including gendered differences
- widen the range of stakeholders involved in the project
- increase awareness of the work being done on food systems and map existing work
- identify key strategic and research priorities for 2022-2025.

By the end of 2021, a report on the engagement findings will inform an action plan for 2022-2025.

Council is a member of the SUSTAIN food system network which supports collaboration with other local governments; and collates research on food systems and plans in other regions and examines best practice for food systems planning.





## Priority 4

# Increase active living

### Our goal to increase active living:

People in Yarra Ranges have the capacity to walk and be physically active through accessible footpaths, trails, parks and play spaces, and an inclusive culture that supports participation by as many people as possible in all forms of physical activity.

This section outlines: why this is a health and wellbeing priority, the data for Yarra Ranges, what a gender and intersectionality lens tell us, our approach to improve health and wellbeing, and our priority actions. A detailed action plan is at Appendix 1.

## Why active living is a priority

Increasing active living is one of four priorities identified as a focus in the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023 and was a priority in the previous Council Plan. The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework includes the outcome that Victorians act to protect and promote health, indicated by an increase in healthy eating and active living.<sup>(14)</sup>

Leading an active life improves people's health and wellbeing. Moving more and sitting less, reduces the risk of ill-health and death. Regular physical activity can help prevent and treat diseases such as heart disease, stroke, some cancers, diabetes, osteoporosis, dementia, musculoskeletal conditions and depression.

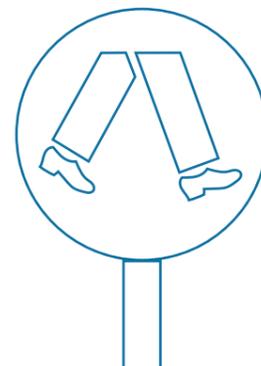
Being physically active in combination with having a healthy diet helps to reduce the prevalence of other health risk factors, such as high blood pressure and high blood cholesterol, and can help maintain a healthy weight. Incorporating physical activity into daily living is also associated with improved mental health, ageing well and increased levels of happiness.

## How does active living help our communities?

Active communities experience other benefits. Higher levels of physical activity are associated with better academic performance throughout early childhood and school, and with increased workplace productivity.

Neighbourhoods which are designed to encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport promote positive social connections and feelings of safety and belonging; support local business activity; and reduce environmental impacts from car emissions and traffic congestion. Car emissions contribute to climate change; increasing the number of trips made and using sustainable transport modes is therefore important to mitigating climate change.

Sport and active recreation play an important role in the social and cultural life of Yarra Ranges. They can help to challenge and shift socio-cultural norms, and to reduce inequalities and discrimination within communities. Sport and active recreation also deliver substantial economic benefits. Sport and recreation environments can be important places to challenge attitudes and behaviours that excuse or support disrespect, gender inequality and violence against women.<sup>(28)</sup>



### Social determinants of active living

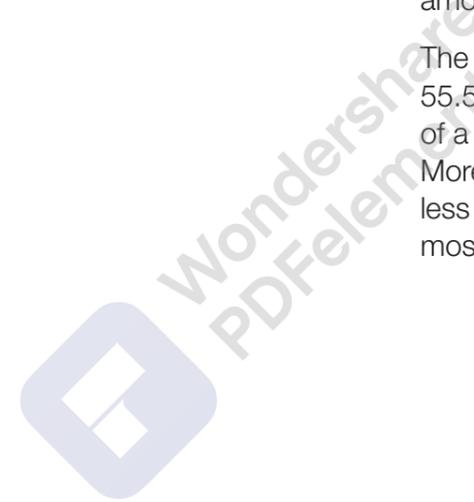
The quality of the built environment is a major determinant of physical activity. The built environment can either enable, or be a barrier to, active living. Neighbourhoods where residents can walk to local services such as schools, sport and recreation facilities, public transport and destinations near people's homes, can encourage higher levels of physical activity.

Characteristics of the built environment supporting health and wellbeing, particularly active living, include, distances to playgrounds, daily living destinations, public open spaces and parks, and street connectivity.

### Active living in Yarra Ranges

In 2017 in Yarra Ranges, 58% of adults did enough physical activity to support good health.<sup>(4)</sup> This is greater than the 51% for all of Victoria. Location, Indigenous status, socio-economic advantage, disability and gender all affect levels of activity. Physical activity is significantly lower amongst people living in Australia's most disadvantaged areas.

The level of residents with insufficient physical activity dropped from 55.5% in 2014 to 38% in 2017. This met the state government's target of a 10% increase in the level of adults with sufficient physical activity. More people have active occupations in Yarra Ranges, with residents less likely to sit for 7 or more hours per day at work. Walking is the most popular physical activity of adults in Australia.



### Active living during the Covid 19 pandemic

A Council survey in September 2020 highlighted impacts of the pandemic. <sup>(26)</sup> Reduced physical activity and lack of access to usual physical exercise opportunities negatively affected wellbeing. The loss of sport and other exercise such as gyms, also exacerbated social isolation.

A VicHealth survey in May 2020 found that 37% of respondents were doing less physical activity during lockdown. <sup>(12)</sup> Physical activity varied substantially by area. Only 29% of residents in interface areas were exercising five or more days per week.

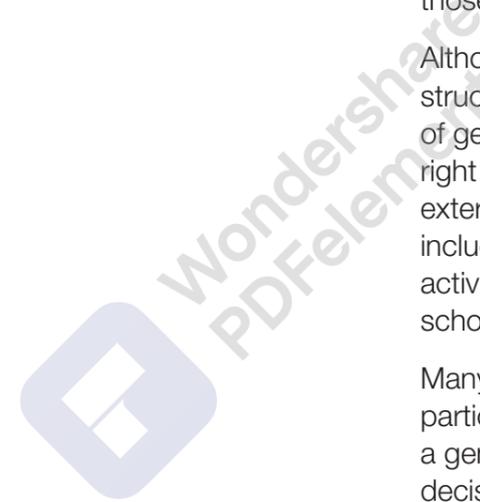
Building access to quality public places, walking paths and trails and lighting for use in future lockdowns and restrictions during public health emergencies such as the Covid 19 pandemic, is an effective way to support residents to maintain active living and support the co-benefit of mental wellbeing.

### Gender equity and intersectionality impacts

In 2017, men and women had similar levels of physical activity. <sup>(4)</sup> There is no information on physical activity levels for people in Yarra Ranges of other socio-demographic groups. For adults in Victoria in 2018 getting enough physical activity was higher for employed adults and those on higher incomes. <sup>(29)</sup> Further details are provided in Appendix 3.

Although many women and girls participate in recreational and structured sports activities, a lot remains to be done in the sphere of gender equality. <sup>(30)</sup> Many women are today still unable to find the right environment in which to develop their full potential. Many factors, external to sport, can affect women's levels of participation. These include gender stereotypes about where and how women can be active, the situation at home and the role of physical education at school.

Many factors are at play within the sport sector which can hamper the participation of women, for instance a lack of coaches able to create a gender friendly and safe sport environment and low interest from decision making boards, often dominated by men, for sustainable gender equality policies that lead to real changes.



### Spotlight on women in sport & physical activity in Yarra Ranges

A survey of residents provided the following local insights into participation.

| Unstructured activities  |         |       |
|--|---------|-------|
| women and girls engage more in unstructured activity than structured sports compared to males: |         |       |
|  | females | males |
| walking is the most popular activity   | 96%     | 55%   |
| bushwalking and trail running  | 73%     | 47%   |
| swimming   | 49%     | 25%   |
| fitness/gym  | 48%     | 26%   |

| Top 5 activities in our open spaces: |
|--------------------------------------|
| walking or running                   |
| sitting and relaxing                 |
| meeting up with friends              |
| walking the dog                      |
| having a picnic.                     |

| Motivators  |
|---|
| positive social aspects of physical activity  |
| caregiving responsibilities as the main reasons for visiting parks and open spaces is to spend time with family |
| paths are accessible for prams, good seating areas, public toilets.   |

| Barriers  |
|---|
| footpaths and cycling/walking trails are missing/unsafe           |
| not enough lighting   |
| work commitments  |
| lack of shelter/shade and not enough rest areas and seating rank. |

| Enablers   |
|--|
| well designed and inclusive built environment to facilitate participation in physical activity |
| well located disability parking spaces   |
| low-cost activities.   |

| Perceptions of safety & other barriers   |
|--|
| perceptions of safety, fear of judgment, exercising alone, time constraints and poor accessibility to open space due to lack of public transport |
| barriers are amplified for women who experience intersecting forms of discrimination, or who are victims of trauma and domestic violence.        |



## Our Approach

To achieve the health impacts of active living, the Victorian Government wants to:

- improve neighbourhood and precinct planning to better support active living
- increase accessible and adaptable spaces for active living, ensuring compliance with appropriate state and national regulations and standards
- increase socio-cultural norms reinforcing active living
- increase capacity to be more physically active and less sedentary
- improve integration and accessibility of public transport
- increase active transport
- increase participation in sport and active recreation activities
- decrease sedentariness in workplaces, schools and early learning centres and during leisure time. <sup>(5)</sup>



### Community Survey

**82%** of people rated ‘increasing active living’ as **extremely** or **very important**

It was more important for people **living in urban areas** and people **75 years and over**



**Support and increase participation in sports and recreation for older adults.**



**While physical activity is important, it’s also important to include diversity and not focus on just one activity which caters mostly for a specific gender and age group.**



**Lighting of facilities is very important for women to feel safe when they exercise early morning or late at night.**

### Priority actions areas

**To attain our goal in increasing active living, we aim to achieve:**

- universal access of footpaths and trails
- accessible and inclusive parks, recreation facilities and Playspaces
- active residents - participating in walking and physical activity
- culture change that supports participation of women, men and gender diverse community members in sport and recreation
- inclusive cultures that support participation by all, in all forms of physical activity.

Based on the principles and approaches of the Plan, the Actions to progress these achievements lists the:

- priority action areas for Council in partnership with others
- sections of Council that are responsible, and our partners
- measures of success and related Council plans.

### Mutually reinforcing work across Goals

Actions to increase physical activity may reflect work and co-benefits in other Priorities of the Plan, particularly:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Priority 3</b> | increase healthy eating                         |
| <b>Priority 5</b> | improve mental wellbeing and social connections |
| <b>Priority 7</b> | reduce harmful alcohol and drug use             |





## Priority 5

# Improve mental wellbeing and social connection

### **Our goal for improving mental wellbeing and social connection:**

People have good mental wellbeing through strong community connections, family supports and ease of access to mental health services.

---

This section outlines: why this is a health and wellbeing priority, the data for Yarra Ranges, what a gender and intersectionality lens tell us, our approach to improve health and wellbeing, and our priority actions. A detailed action plan is at Appendix 1.

## Why mental wellbeing and social connection is a priority

‘As a herd species, human beings have an inherent need to live in small groups, herds, and belong to tribes for nurturing, sustenance and protection.

Because we are social beings the only identity that makes sense is the identity that’s related to where we belong and where we fit into the networks we belong to...’

Hugh MacKay Social Researcher - The Art of Belonging 2015

Improving mental wellbeing was a priority in the last Council Health and Wellbeing Plan. It’s also one of ten priority areas in the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023. The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework includes the outcomes: Victorians have good mental health, and Victorians are socially engaged and live in inclusive communities. <sup>(14)</sup>

The 2021 Council Plan identifies improving mental health as a major initiative. The following action will guide our work to improve mental wellbeing:

**‘Improve mental health outcomes for the community, strengthen social connections, and advocate for equitable and accessible mental health services across the municipality’.**

Mental health conditions are one of the top five causes of burden of disease and death in Australia. <sup>(5)</sup> Having good mental health supports people to fully live their lives, cope with life stresses, work productively, and contribute to their communities. <sup>(31)</sup> Mental health and physical health are inextricably linked. Compared to the general population, people with mental illnesses are more likely to develop physical illnesses such as cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease and cancer; and to have a reduced life expectancy. <sup>(32)</sup>

Mental health conditions may also intersect with chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer. Harms from alcohol and substance use, and problem gambling may also intersect with mental health.

### Social connection

The benefits of social connections for good mental health are numerous:

- strong, healthy relationships can help to strengthen the immune system, help recover from disease, and may even lengthen life
- social ties are a potential resource that can be harnessed to promote population health
- proven links of social connection include lower rates of anxiety and depression, higher self-esteem, greater empathy, and more trusting and cooperative relationships. <sup>(33)</sup>

### Social determinants of mental wellbeing

The World Health Organisation recognises that <sup>(34)</sup>

“.. a person’s mental health and many common mental disorders are shaped by various social, economic, and physical environments operating at different stages of life. Risk factors for many common mental disorders are heavily associated with social inequalities, whereby the greater the inequality the higher the inequality in risk.

It is of major importance that action is taken to improve the conditions of everyday life, beginning before birth and progressing into early childhood, older childhood and adolescence, during family building and working ages, and through to older age. Action throughout these life stages would provide opportunities for both improving population mental health, and for reducing risk of those mental disorders that are associated with social inequalities”.

As social connection is one of the key determinants of mental wellbeing, Council policies and programs designed to promote a sense of belonging, increase awareness and acceptance of diversity, prevent violence, increase access to affordable housing and build community resilience, can all support mental wellbeing.

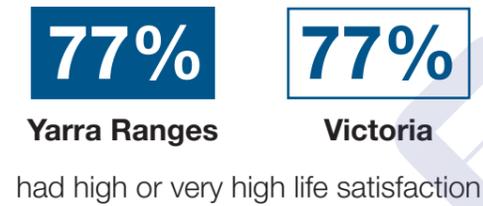
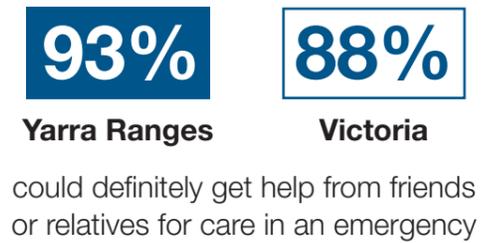
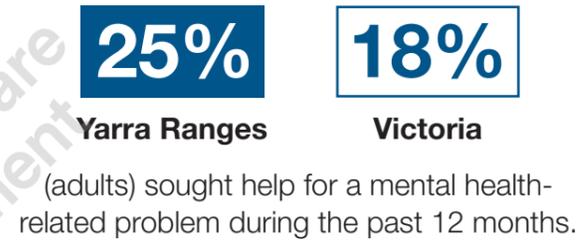
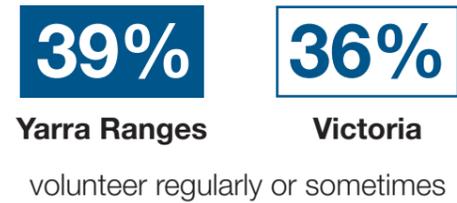
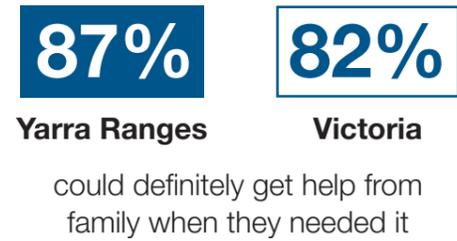


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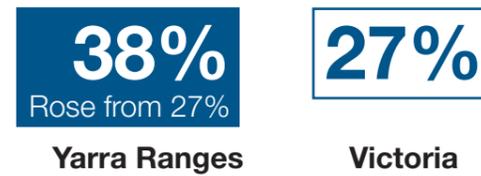
### Mental wellbeing and social connection in Yarra Ranges

The 2017 Victorian Population Health Survey shows adults in Yarra Ranges had strong social connections: <sup>(4)</sup>

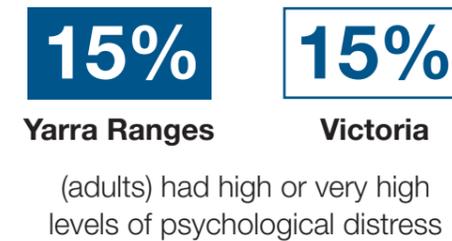
However, residents of Yarra Ranges experience significant rates of mental health related issues:



**Yarra Ranges ranked second highest in Melbourne (2017)**  
**Women (29%)** had higher prevalence than **men (24%)** <sup>(4)</sup>



**Yarra Ranges ranked highest within Melbourne**



In 2018-19, children in Yarra Ranges (0-14 years) had higher rate of hospital admission rate for mental and behavioural disorders, than the Victorian average <sup>(35)</sup>

**Mental and behavioural disorders** were the **third-highest** reason for admission to hospital for young people (15-24 years) in Yarra Ranges.

Females of all ages had a **33%** higher admission rate than men. <sup>(35)</sup>

**1 in 5** Victorian adults will experience a mental health condition each year and **45%** will experience a mental health condition within their lifetime. <sup>(36)</sup>

## Mental wellbeing during the Covid 19 pandemic

During the pandemic there was a rise in mental health patients in Yarra Ranges. Between 2019 and 2020, the number of active mental health patients in Yarra Ranges increased by 90%, to nearly 10,000 people. EMPHN, 2020 - COVID-19 Community Update

Social isolation and mental health were the main impacts for residents of the pandemic and resultant lockdowns.<sup>(26)</sup> The key issues were: social isolation (nearly 70% of survey respondents); and survey respondents' personal mental health (nearly 50%), and that of their families (44%) and their children (35%). Relationship strain was also an issue for nearly 20% of respondents. One quarter of respondents had contacted mental health services for assistance.

Mental health was identified as a key concern for parents and carers across the community. About two thirds of parents and carers (64%) reported medium to high levels of concerns around social isolation, mental health of a child (63%), family member (60%), or self (53%). Similar concerns were reported for respondents aged 18-24 years around social isolation (66%) and mental health (69%).

During the Covid 19 pandemic, women experienced greater negative mental wellbeing impacts than men.

Women at particular risk of mental health issues as a result of Covid19 included:

- women experiencing family violence, pregnant women and new mothers, women with disability, older women, and women from migrant and refugee backgrounds.<sup>(37)</sup>

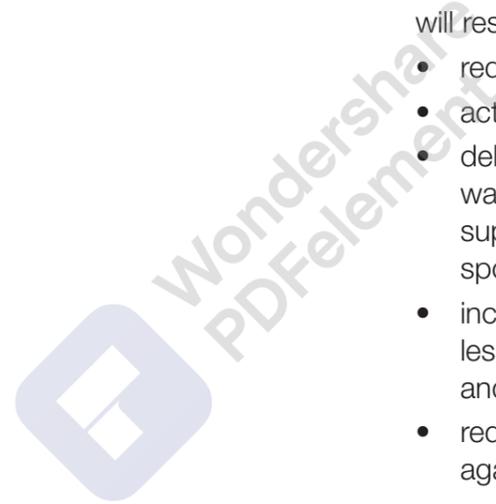
Women were overrepresented in industries impacted by the pandemic such as retail, hospitality and the arts. They were also more likely to be on the frontline - aged care, nurses, childcare workers. This has led to higher levels of anxiety and stress for women.<sup>(37)</sup>

## Mental wellbeing co-benefits across all Plan priorities

Achievements in each of the other six priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Plan will help to improve mental wellbeing in Yarra Ranges. These co-benefits will occur at both personal and community level.

Co-benefits for mental wellbeing and in many cases social connection, will result from activities to:

- reduce stress and anxiety as a result of public health emergencies
- act on climate change mitigation and adaptation
- deliver group activities as part of active living such as sport and walking groups, healthy eating, such as community gardens, and support groups for specific issues such as women's participation in sport and people with disability participation in cultural activities
- increase healthy lifestyles resulting in healthier eating, more activity, less smoking and alcohol - each resulting in improved quality of life and mental wellbeing
- reduce gender inequality and the social context for men's violence against women, creating freedom from violence and discrimination.



## Gender equity and intersectionality impacts

In 2017, men in Yarra Ranges were more likely to report low or medium life satisfaction than women, where the prevalence for men was higher than for all of Victoria. <sup>(4)</sup> A similar proportion of women and men in Yarra Ranges reported high or very high levels of psychological distress, which were like the Victorian average for each.

Women were 75% more likely to report moderate distress than men. The prevalence of distress in Yarra Ranges women was higher than the state average. Women in Yarra Ranges were more likely to be diagnosed with anxiety or depression by a doctor than the state average.

Mental wellbeing for children and young people is of increased importance and focus, as it can affect wellbeing across a lifetime. Early support or treatment can prevent future mental illness. Five Council Youth Ambassadors rated mental wellbeing as their highest priority. Their concerns included addressing the social aspects and socio-economic factors affecting mental wellbeing. They also noted the benefits of preventive approaches such as social prescriptions, self-care, walking and taking time to look after yourself.

Carers of people with a disability also reported increased depression and anxiety due to isolation and lack/loss of supports as a result of Covid 19.

There is no information on mental wellbeing and social connections for people in Yarra Ranges of other socio-demographic groups.

For adults in Victoria in 2018 the prevalence of social connection, mental wellbeing and mental health issues varied between population groups. <sup>(29)</sup> Further details are provided in Appendix 2.

In Yarra Ranges, parents and carers reported challenges balancing working from home with home-schooling. Of parents and carers 58% expressed medium to high concerns about being present and available for their children, and 51% expressed similar concerns in providing a remote learning environment. <sup>(26)</sup>

Consistent with this, in Victoria 72% of females were spending the most of their time helping their child with school at home, compared with 26% for males. Given almost 80% of single parent households in Australia are headed by women, <sup>(38)</sup> they are disproportionately affected by the increasing burden of unpaid labour in the home and supporting remote learning for children.

In Australia, women experienced higher levels of depression, anxiety and stress than men in response to Covid 19. 39% of females report moderate to severe levels of psychological distress compared with 31% of males, while 35% of females report moderate to severe levels of depression, compared with 19% of males. <sup>(39)</sup> For young people aged 18-24, 37% of women reported suicidal thoughts, compared to 17% of men.

LGBTIQ+ Victorians are a diverse community and they continue to face stigma and discrimination.

They are more likely than the broader community to experience poor mental health, suicidal thoughts, homelessness, substance abuse and intimate partner and family violence.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated challenges being faced by some LGBTIQ+ Victorians.

Many people experiencing homelessness also experience declining mental health or serious mental illness.

### Our approach

To improve mental wellbeing the Victorian Government wants to achieve: <sup>(6)</sup>

- a reduction in the prevalence of mental illness, and increased resilience among Victorian individuals, families and communities
- reductions in the gap in social and emotional wellbeing for at-risk groups, including Aboriginal Victorians, with an emphasis on loneliness and increasing social connectedness
- reductions in the occurrence of suicide deaths, suicidal ideation and suicidal attempt, and the gap between the suicide rates for vulnerable groups and the general population. <sup>(5)</sup>

At an individual level, the UK National Health Service recommends five steps people can take to improve mental health and wellbeing: <sup>(40)</sup>

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Connect with other people</b>                         |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Give to others</b>                                    |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Be physically active</b>                              |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Pay attention to the present moment (mindfulness)</b> |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Learn new skills</b>                                  |

Critical to enabling and supporting individuals to take these steps is addressing the social determinants of health and providing access and opportunities to culturally and age-appropriate facilities, services and groups to undertake each step.



In this Plan, Council will have a strong focus on supporting social connection and reducing loneliness. This is a protective factor for good mental health. Council strengthens social connection in many ways:

- provision and funding of social support programs
- provision of programs and activities that build social connection
- funding and grants to organisations for projects for community connection
- funding and support for sport and clubs
- designing and constructing great places and facilities in communities where people can connect
- advocacy for improved mental health services and increased supply of social housing.

Council also has a role in responding to factors forecast to contribute to worsening mental health as a result of the pandemic and the 2021 storm event, and will:

- support community connection in as many ways as possible, e.g. through community clubs and sport, volunteering and funding for community led festivals and events
- support economic development to mitigate business disruption and job losses
- facilitate opportunities for work, education and training including for young people
- advocate for increased access to essential services and infrastructure, particularly mental health services and affordable housing, noting that:
  - gender analysis reveals women and children escaping family violence and older single women to be at higher risk of homelessness.



**Community survey**

Improving mental wellbeing and social connection was rated the **top priority** | 87% rated extremely or very important

---

Respondents saw a clear advocacy and support role for Council in terms of social connection and mental wellbeing:

- 89%** advocating for affordable and appropriate housing
- 88%** advocating local businesses to create employment
- 87%** advocating for more mental health services



**Affordable and long-term housing is very important for mental health...**



**...if people are eating well and feel welcomed to join local groups or meet at local events, this is one of the best ways to promote mental health but also support those who have a mental illness to connect...**

**Priority actions areas**

**To attain our goal in increasing mental wellbeing and social connection, we aim to achieve**

- increased social connection through participation in group activities, volunteering, community life and civic engagement
- reduced loneliness and isolation
- improved access to mental health services through our advocacy and increased community mental health literacy
- support for people whose mental wellbeing has been most affected by Covid 19, the 2021 storm and other emergencies
- well supported families and children through the critical years of early childhood development
- increased mental wellbeing, recognising the centrality of this in a Covid 19 and post storm emergency recovery environment.

Based on the principles and approaches of the Plan, the Actions to progress these achievements lists the:

- priority action areas for Council in partnership with others
- sections of Council that are responsible and our partners
- measures of success and related Council plans.

**Mutually reinforcing work across Goals**

Actions to increase physical activity may reflect work and co-benefits in other Priorities of the Plan, particularly:

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>Priority 2</b> | tackling climate change                        |
| <b>Priority 3</b> | increase healthy eating                        |
| <b>Priority 4</b> | increase active living                         |
| <b>Priority 6</b> | preventing violence against women and children |
| <b>Priority 7</b> | reduce harmful alcohol and drug use            |





## Priority 6

# Prevent violence against women and children

### Our goal to reduce and prevent violence against women:

Women and children in Yarra Ranges live free from abuse and violence through a culture of gender equity and respect.

---

This section outlines: why this is a health and wellbeing priority, the data for Yarra Ranges, what a gender and intersectionality lens tell us, our approach to improve health and wellbeing, and our priority actions. Appendix 1 is a detailed action plan.

## Why preventing violence against women and children is a priority

All people have the right to live safely and free from all forms of violence. Violence impacts people of all genders but is disproportionately experienced by women and by male perpetrators.

Gender equity to prevent violence against women was a priority in the last Council Health and Wellbeing Plan. Preventing all forms of violence is one of ten priority areas in the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023. The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework includes the outcome Victorians live free from abuse and violence. <sup>(14)</sup>

**‘The term violence against women means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.’**

- United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women <sup>(41)</sup>

The 2015 Royal Commission into Family Violence led to the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act being amended to require councils to specify what they will do to prevent family violence and how they respond to victims of family violence, when preparing their Health and Wellbeing Plans.

All people have the right to live safely and free from all forms of violence. Violence impacts people of all genders but is disproportionately experienced by women by male perpetrators. Violence is a significant but modifiable risk factor for ill-health amongst women, particularly those of child-bearing age. <sup>(5)</sup> Family violence causes physical injury, psychological trauma and emotional suffering, which can affect victims and their families for the rest of their lives. In its most extreme form, it causes senseless and preventable deaths. <sup>(42)</sup> The personal impacts include pain, suffering and early death, with substantial physical and mental health impacts; loss of income and reduced financial security; loss of housing; loss of or limited access to employment; disconnection from family and friends; and property damage.

Family violence can also affect child development. If family violence is combined with other problems, such as drug and alcohol abuse, or mental health issues, children are placed at even greater risk of developing emotional, behavioural, health, social and educational problems. <sup>(5)</sup>



### Tackling causes - a prevention approach

Evidence shows that key predictors of violence against women relate to how individuals, communities and society as a whole view the roles of men and women. Some of the strongest predictors for holding attitudes that support violence at the individual level, are low levels of support for gender equality and following traditional gender stereotypes.

International evidence suggests benefits for fathers' relationships and life satisfaction, and for child development from greater father engagement in the early years. Boosting parental leave and making it more gender-equal would be good for fathers, mothers, children, and the economy (Grattan Institute 2021).

When women are not equal to men and when our attitudes and behaviours assert male dominance over women, it enables some men to abuse and it prevents women from seeking help. Recognising this, the National Plan to reduce violence against women and their children 2010-2022, has a long-term plan to address the gender inequalities that set up the conditions for violence. <sup>(43)</sup>



### How reducing family violence help our communities

Good mental, physical, and sexual and reproductive health, is supported by:

- gender equality and respect
- safety and freedom from discrimination, violence and stigma.

Beyond health benefits, creating a society free from family violence will lead to: <sup>(5)</sup>

- improved socioeconomic outcomes for women and young children
- increased gender equity
- participation in social and economic life for all genders
- increased feelings of safety; reduced drug and alcohol misuse
- reduced demand for family violence services and a range of other services.

### Social determinants of family violence

The social and economic determinants of intimate partner violence are at multiple levels:

|  |
|--|
| <b>at the family level</b>   |
| across power differentials between partners  |
| across status inconsistencies between partners   |
| <b>at the community level</b>  |
| peer and community influence and norms of acceptability of intimate partner violence and male intimate violence perpetration |
| community levels of violence   |
| <b>at the societal or ecological level</b>   |
| community or societal violence and attitudes towards violence  |
| social, gender and economic inequity.  |



### Family violence during the Covid 19 pandemic

In Victoria in 2017, 4.2% of men and 6.6% of women and 5.4% of adults experienced family violence in the two years preceding the Victorian Population Health Survey. <sup>(44)</sup>

In Yarra Ranges, the number of reported family violence incidents increased by 4.7% in 2020 compared to 2019. <sup>(45)</sup> Females accounted for 76% of those affected by family violence. Family violence against people aged 55 years and older in Yarra Ranges increased by 22% between 2019 and 2020.

In 2020, Yarra Ranges had a rate of reported incidents of 1,094 per 100,000 residents. Reported family violence appears more prevalent in the outer east than in the inner east. Yarra Ranges, Knox and Maroondah all have rates of more than 1,000 per 100,000 residents, compared to rates ranging from 565 to 807 per 100,000 in the inner eastern areas.

Many people seeking assistance for family violence during Covid 19 were doing so for the first time and the majority of those seeking support were women. During Stage 3 and 4 restrictions in Melbourne, the level of first-time victims engaging with the Eastern Domestic Violence Service (EDVOS) doubled to 60%. Cases showed increased frequency and severity of ongoing violence, particularly physical and sexual abuse, and coercive control.

Referrals from generalist services rose by 20% between March and June 2020; these services include community health, early childhood and counselling services. Many of these services had never contacted EDVOS previously and were highly concerned for the safety of women and children. <sup>(46)</sup>

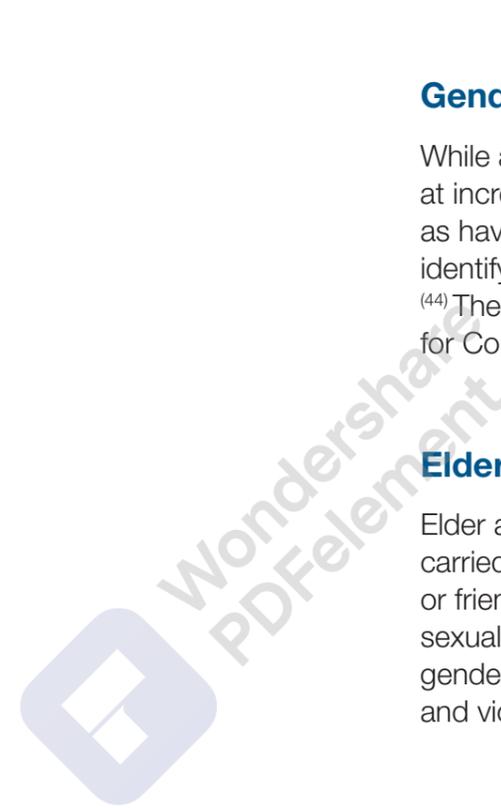
### Gender equity and intersectionality impacts

While anyone can experience family violence, some groups tend to be at increased risk. These include women who are Indigenous; identify as having a disability; live in rural, regional or remote areas; are older; identify as LGBTIQ+; or are affected by socio-economic disadvantage.

<sup>(44)</sup> The experiences of migrant and refugee women are emerging areas for Council that needs to be better understood.

#### Elder Abuse

Elder abuse is any act which causes harm to an older person and is carried out by someone they know and trust, such as a family member or friend. The abuse may be physical, social, financial, psychological or sexual and can include mistreatment and neglect. Older women and gender diverse people can be at increased risk of this kind of abuse and violence.



## Our approach

To prevent family violence, the Victorian Government wants:

- women, men, girls and boys to be treated equally with respect and dignity
- all parts of the community engaged in practical and creative ways to learn about respectful, safe and equitable relationships
- women and children resourced, supported and empowered to make decisions regarding their safety and wellbeing
- all Victorians feel safe and empowered to take a stand against family violence. <sup>(5)</sup>

At its core, family violence and violence against women is rooted in the inequality between women and men. <sup>(6)</sup> This priority continues work from the previous Health and Wellbeing Plan and maintains Council's focus on a prevention approach and to promoting gender equality in our workplace and community.

Council is working towards an inclusive and diverse Yarra Ranges, where women, men and gender diverse people have equitable access to resources, power and opportunities.

Examples of Council's work include:

- upgrading sports and recreational facilities to provide equal access to all genders
- supporting women into leadership at all levels of society
- partnerships to develop resources for early years services that break down rigid gender stereotypes
- lighting to improve safety in popular walking areas
- services actively supporting women who may be experiencing violence in their relationships, such as Maternal and Child Health and Youth Development
- referrals to specialist services
- advocacy for changes to the causes of violence against women
- support for male carers and projects that challenge stereotypical gender roles
- organisational change to ensure Council is equitable for all employees and in how it provides services for residents.



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**Community Survey**

**100%** of people aged **18-25** rated this priority **extremely** or **very important** | 86% rated this priority second highest overall

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**89%** women and **80%** men rated this **extremely** or **very important**

---

**Second highest** priority for people living in the **Valley and Hills** areas



**Keep calling out disrespectful behaviour and sexism.**



**Advocate for men to have flexible work environments so there is more time for men to be involved in family responsibilities. Supports for new Dads in the maternal child health services - engaging men in parental roles early in the child's life.**

There were some comments in the survey about respect for men and boys and feeling this priority was discriminatory towards them. An example is...



**Please try to remember that gender equality means that men are also a gender... not all young men are potentially bad.**

Council's position is that gender equality encompasses all genders and gender diverse community members. Boys and men also experience limitations as a result of rigid gender roles. Support for boys and men and working with them to promote a fair go for everyone, is important. They are also powerful champions for change.

**Priority actions areas**

**To attain our goal in preventing violence and abuse against women and children, we aim to achieve:**

- increased gender equality through the work of Council, community and partner organisations
- rigid gender stereotypes are dismantled, and our community is not limited by these stereotypes and roles
- greater recognition and attainment of leadership roles by women
- respectful relationships between men, women and children
- a reduction in family violence in all its forms
- support for women with intersecting factors that increase their risk of harm
- the inclusion of women from diverse backgrounds and life experiences.

Based on the principles and approaches of the Plan, Actions to progress these achievements lists the:

- priority action areas for Council in partnership with others
- sections of Council that are responsible and our partners
- measures of success and related Council plans.

**Mutually reinforcing work across Goals**

Actions to prevent violence and abuse against women and children may reflect work and co-benefits in other Priorities of the Plan, particularly:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Priority 1</b> | respond to health impacts of emergencies        |
| <b>Priority 2</b> | tackle climate change and its impacts on health |
| <b>Priority 5</b> | improve mental wellbeing and social connections |
| <b>Priority 7</b> | reduce harmful alcohol and drug use             |



## Priority 7

# Reduce harmful alcohol and drug use

### Our goal to reduce harmful alcohol and drug use:

People in Yarra Ranges are safe from the harmful effects of alcohol and other drugs - particularly from alcohol and tobacco, through preventing uptake and support for safe alcohol use.

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This section outlines: why this is a health and wellbeing priority, the data for Yarra Ranges, what a gender and intersectionality lens tell us, our approach to improve health and wellbeing, and our priority actions. Appendix 1 includes detailed actions.

## Why reducing harms from alcohol is a priority

‘Alcohol is the most widely used drug in Australia. People drink alcohol for a range of reasons and in different social and cultural contexts, but alcohol can cause harm to the person who drinks and sometimes to others around them.’

- National Health and Medical Research Council, 2020 <sup>(47)</sup>

Harmful alcohol use was a priority in the last Council Health and Wellbeing Plan. It’s also one of ten priority areas in the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023. The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework includes the outcome Victorians act to protect and promote health, indicated by reduced smoking and reduced harmful alcohol and drug use. <sup>(14)</sup>

Every year in Victoria, alcohol causes over 1,200 deaths and nearly 40,000 hospitalisations. <sup>(48)</sup> Alcohol is a known risk factor for 13 different forms of cancer. <sup>(49)</sup> In addition, heavy alcohol use can also cause short and long-term health problems such as cirrhosis of the liver, alcohol dependence, strokes, suicide, injury and car accidents. Harmful community impacts of alcohol include drink driving, contributing to family violence and violence in the public realm.

Residents and visitors to Yarra Ranges enjoy the fine wines and spirits produced in the area. These economic, culinary and tourism benefits can be at odds with health concerns and other negative impacts of alcohol such as traffic accidents and links to family violence. <sup>(50)</sup>

## How much alcohol?

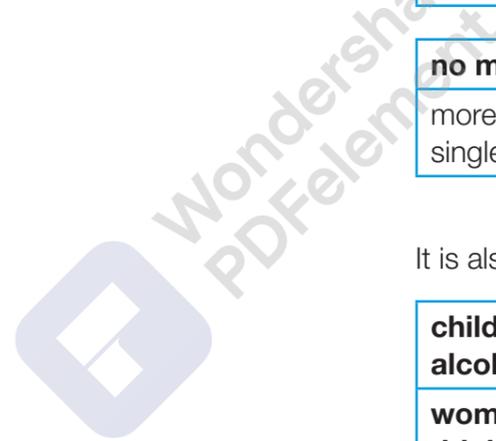
For adults who do drink alcohol, the National Health and Medical Research Council recommends: <sup>(47)</sup>

|   |
|---|
| <b>no more than 10 drinks per week</b>  |
| more drinks place a person at increased lifetime risk of alcohol-related harm |

|  |
|--|
| <b>no more than four drinks on any one occasion</b>  |
| more drinks place a person at increased risk of injury from a single occasion of drinking. |

It is also recommended that:

|  |
|--|
| <b>children and people under 18 years of age should not drink alcohol</b>          |
| <b>women who are pregnant or planning a pregnancy should not drink alcohol</b>     |
| <b>not drinking alcohol is safest for the baby of women who are breastfeeding.</b> |



## Social determinants of harmful alcohol

The World Health Organisation recognises that: <sup>(51)</sup>

‘Breaking the vicious circle of the social determinants and consequences of the harmful use of alcohol requires a combination of effective measures addressing social inequalities, alcohol availability and the context and patterns of alcohol use, as well as the availability of effective treatment for alcohol use disorders.’

Alcohol culture influences how often and how much alcohol people drink. Culture includes the way people drink, including the formal rules, social norms, attitudes and beliefs around what is and what is not socially acceptable.

‘It is the shared practices of a social group, rather than individuals, that have the greatest scope to bring about cultural change.’

VicHealth Alcohol Strategy 2019-2023 <sup>(48)</sup>

## Alcohol consumption in Yarra Ranges and during the Covid 19 pandemic

Most adults in Yarra Ranges drink alcohol responsibly, however a significant proportion of the population still drink in a way that puts them at risk of injury from a single occasion of drinking, or at risk of chronic disease over the longer term.

The proportion of adults in Yarra Ranges who consume harmful amounts of alcohol is higher than for Victoria. In 2017, 67% of adults in Yarra Ranges were at increased lifetime risk of alcohol related harm, greater than the 59% for all of Victoria. <sup>(4)</sup> Half (50%) of adults were at increased risk of injury from a single occasion of drinking, also larger than for all of Victoria (43%).

During 2020, surveys tracked the impacts of Covid 19 and lockdowns on alcohol consumption. Nationally, 11% of women and 18% of men increased their consumption of alcohol during the pandemic. <sup>(11)</sup> Commonwealth Bank of Australia card spend data showed decreased spending in pubs and clubs, relative to the same period in 2019. <sup>(52)</sup> This was offset by increased spending in bottle shops up until mid-November 2020.



### Gender equity and intersectionality impacts

Short-term harms from alcohol misuse, such as injury, are experienced more often by men than women. Longer-term harms including cancers, cardiovascular diseases and digestive diseases are more likely to be experienced by people with low socio-economic backgrounds. <sup>(48)</sup>

In 2017, men in Yarra Ranges were 27% more likely to be at increased lifetime risk of alcohol related harm than women, similar to the Victorian average. <sup>(4)</sup> Similarly, men in Yarra Ranges were 39% more likely to be at increased risk of injury from a single occasion of drinking than women - where the prevalence for women in Yarra Ranges was 26% higher than the state average.

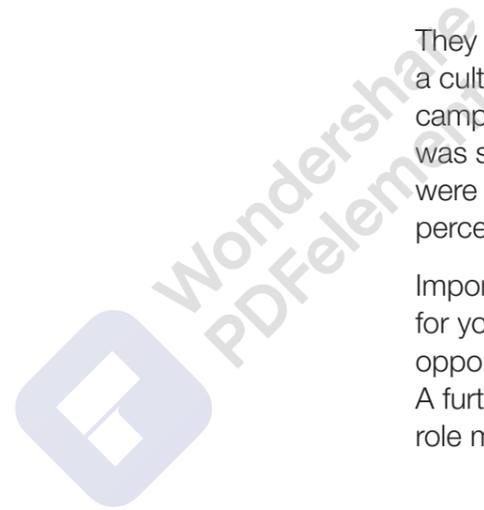
There is no information on harmful alcohol consumption for people in Yarra Ranges of other socio-demographic groups. For adults in Victoria in 2018 the prevalence of lifetime risk of alcohol related harm and risk of injury from a single occasion of drinking varied between population groups. <sup>(29)</sup> Further details are provided in Appendix 3.

Engagement with the Youth Ambassadors rated this as their third highest priority, and they saw mental wellbeing strongly linked to this priority ...

“people are drinking because they are anxious, as a social lubricant...”

They expressed concern about heavy drinking, access to alcohol, and a culture of shame towards those not drinking. They highlighted a past campaign, Drink-Wise, as helpful for young people. Smoking tobacco was seen as a social prop and very easy to get. Drugs and alcohol were noted as a “massive problem” and a rite of passage that was perceived as helping with social acceptance and loneliness.

Importantly they noted a lack of alternate social and cultural activities for young people and supported Council programs and grant opportunities for young people to design and deliver their own events. A further insight was offered, that peer support is more impactful than role modelling by adults for changing these behaviours.



## Why reducing tobacco use is a priority

Tobacco smoking remains the leading contributor to the death and disease burden in Australia, despite a substantial reduction in the smoking rate over the past two to three decades. Smoking causes 22% of the cancer burden of disease, and 41% of the respiratory burden of disease.<sup>(5)</sup>

Smoking increases the risk of many illnesses including lung cancer, cardiovascular disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Evidence suggests that smoking kills almost two in three regular users. The health burden of tobacco use affects not only smokers but also their families, particularly children who are more likely to suffer from bronchiolitis and other respiratory conditions. Smoking also causes significant economic impacts through costs of health care and loss of life.<sup>(5)</sup>

### Smoking in Yarra Ranges

In Yarra Ranges in 2017, 11% of adults smoked daily, similar to the 12% for all of Victoria. Including occasional smokers, 17% of both Yarra Ranges and Victorian adults smoke tobacco.<sup>(4)</sup>

## Gender equity and intersectionality impacts

Smoking is a significant contributor to health inequalities. Daily smoking rates were similar for men and women in Yarra Ranges in 2017.<sup>(4)</sup> There is no information on tobacco use for people in Yarra Ranges of other socio-demographic groups.

A number of population groups in Australia have higher smoking rates than the general population.<sup>(53)</sup> This includes people who are socio-economically disadvantaged, unemployed, are sole parents, have a mental health issue, have a substance use problem, are in prison, are experiencing homelessness and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. For adults in Victoria in 2018 the prevalence of daily smoking varied between population groups. Further details are provided in Appendix 3.

The negative health effects of tobacco are experienced at greater levels by Indigenous peoples. The extent of this impact was revealed in new research early in 2021. In Australia, smoking caused around half of all deaths among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders adults aged 45 years and older, exceeding 10,000 deaths in the past decade.<sup>(54)</sup>



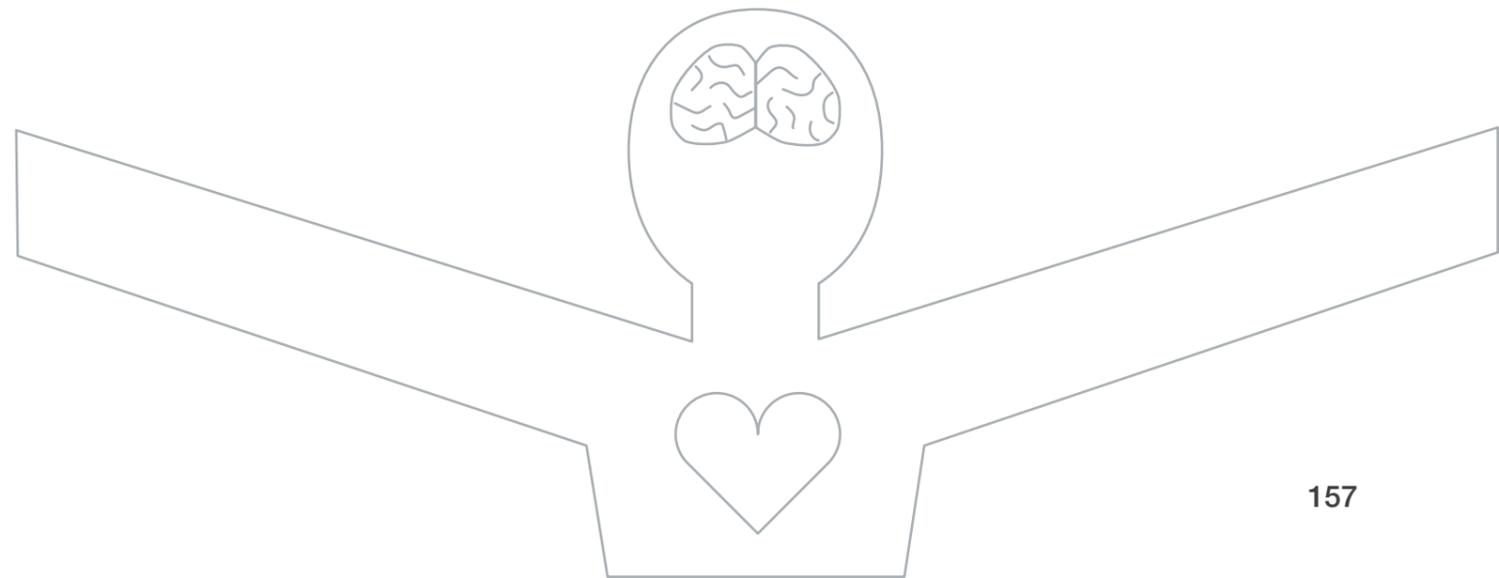
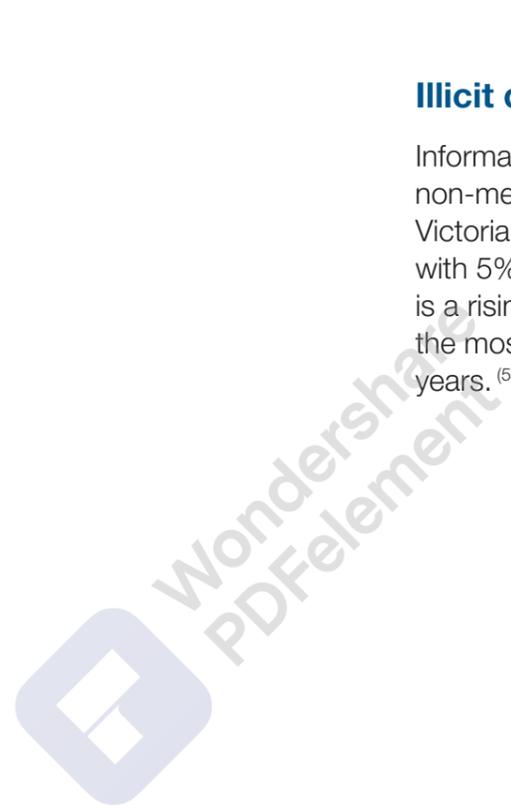
### Why reducing drug use is a priority

Illicit drug use includes use of illegal drugs (such as methamphetamines), the use of pharmaceutical drugs for non-medical purposes (such as tranquillisers) and the misuse of other substances (such as paint, glue or petrol as inhalants). In 2015, 2.7% of the disease burden in Australia was due to illicit drug use, with about a third of the burden due to opioid use. <sup>(55)</sup> By comparison, tobacco use caused 9.3% of the burden of disease and alcohol use caused 4.5%. Typically, illicit drug use is initiated in late teenage years and peaks in young adulthood, although a small minority continue the practice into middle age. <sup>(56)</sup>

The social impact of drug use is high - crime associated costs were about 20 times the health system costs. The long-term impact is evident in chronic liver diseases and cancer.

### Illicit drug use in Yarra Ranges

Information on drug use (illicit drugs and use of prescription drugs for non-medical purposes) is not available for Yarra Ranges. In 2019 in Victoria 17% of people had used an illicit drug in the past 12 months, with 5% using cocaine, 4% using ecstasy. <sup>(56)</sup> Prescription drug abuse is a rising problem in Australia and pharmaceutical drugs have been the most frequent contributors to overdose deaths in Victoria in recent years. <sup>(57)</sup>



## Our approach to reduce harmful alcohol and drug use

### Alcohol and drug use

To reduce the health impacts of harmful alcohol and drug use, the Victorian Government wants to achieve: <sup>(5)</sup>

- change in risky drinking cultures and environments that support low risk drinking
- increased capability in all service systems including mental health, housing, child protection and family violence to assist people with alcohol and other drug-related issues
- better outcomes for those who access treatment, reducing harm and improving social outcomes
- improved capability of primary care providers to assist people to manage alcohol and other drug-related issues before treatment is required or complexity develops.

The 2019-2023 VicHealth Alcohol Strategy has a 10-year goal that 200,000 more Victorians drink less alcohol. <sup>(48)</sup> The priorities include:

- changing risky drinking cultures
- enabling environments to support low-risk drinking.

A culture that would support reducing harms from alcohol looks like:

*‘People socially supporting one another to engage in low-risk drinking practices rather than high-risk drinking, resulting in reduced harm for the individual, their family, bystanders and the broader community.’*

(VicHealth) <sup>(48)</sup>

While a life course approach is taken to address all the priorities of the Plan, it is of critical importance in reducing alcohol harm. Of importance is the role of friends and family alcohol use and the impact it has on young people’s sociocultural norms, aspirations and wellbeing.

Recognising the importance of family and friends in reducing alcohol harms in the current and future lives of children and young people, Council supports early life through maternal and child health, early years programs and inclusive playgroups. In addition, Council’s Youth Development team takes a strengths-based approach to supporting young people and will continue to be a vital way to nurture the leaders of the future.

There are many contributors in this area of health promotion to reduce harmful alcohol use: <sup>(48)</sup>

- prevention, early intervention, treatment and harm minimisation are primarily the responsibility of the Department of Health
- alcohol and other drug education in schools is the responsibility of the Department of Education and Training
- local Councils have a minor role in licensing and can object to new licences if they assess it will result in local harms
- Councils can:
  - work with partners and communities to promote safer alcohol consumption
  - contribute to the reduction of alcohol related harm through advocacy
  - exercise its role in planning decisions
  - promote safer drinking cultures
  - build local partnerships with sporting clubs, business groups, industry networks and Victoria Police
  - better understand the needs of marginalised communities in relation to alcohol.

The Alcohol and Drug Foundation report that:

‘Prevention is an important part of a comprehensive harm reduction approach to reduce alcohol and other drug harms, particularly amongst young people. This is because young people are going through significant social, physiological and developmental changes. In this phase of their life, prevention strategies have the potential to positively influence behaviour that will last through their adult years.’<sup>(58)</sup>

An important goal of prevention is to change the balance between risk and protective factors so that protective factors outweigh risk factors.

Protective factors interact with alcohol and drug use in complex ways.<sup>(58)</sup> They may moderate the influence of risk factors to reduce the likelihood of alcohol and drug use in young people, delay the uptake of alcohol and drug use in young people, and reduce harm should young people engage in their use.

Examples of protective factors are:

- parental supervision and communication
- participation in supervised leisure activities
- social and emotional competence
- sense of belonging/connectedness to community, school and family
- participation in positive activities with adult engagement.

Risk factors can influence drug abuse in several ways.<sup>(59)</sup> The more risks a child is exposed to, the more likely the child will abuse drugs. Some risk factors may be more powerful than others at certain stages in development, such as peer pressure during the teenage years; just as some protective factors, such as a strong parent-child bond, can have a greater impact on reducing risks during the early years.



Image: Cathy Ronalds

## Tobacco use

To reduce the health impacts of smoking tobacco, the Victorian Government wants to achieve:<sup>(5)</sup>

- decreased access and affordability of tobacco products
- decreased number of environments in which to smoke
- decreased exposure to second- and third-hand smoke
- decreased social acceptability of smoking
- increased capacity to stop smoking and use of nicotine
- increased uptake of stop-smoking supports.

Local councils have the power to enforce the Tobacco Act 1987, the legislation governing where Victorians can smoke, as well as the sales and promotion of tobacco products and certain non-tobacco products. Council monitors sale of tobacco to people under 18, working with businesses to prevent young people taking up smoking.

Evidence-based actions that a local government can take to reduce tobacco-related harm and become a healthier place include:<sup>(5)</sup>

- educating businesses and the community on obligations in the Tobacco Act 1987
- monitoring compliance and taking enforcement action where necessary
- responding to complaints in relation to the Tobacco Act 1987
- participating in the Cigarette Sales to Minors Program and conduct test purchases with young people to ensure compliance with the Tobacco Act 1987
- extending smoke-free areas and contribute to de-normalisation of smoking.

Currently, the Federal Government is funding the Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) program.<sup>(60)</sup> The overall goal of the program is to improve Indigenous health “through local population specific efforts”. Much of these efforts rely upon place-based approaches and building relationships to support capacity-building and behaviour changes.

Reducing the impact of tobacco in Indigenous communities is through preventing uptake of smoking and smoking cessation programs.

Council recognises that:

- Aboriginal community-controlled health services (ACCHO) are best placed to deliver culturally safe programs and support for a range of health issues
- bespoke tobacco cessation and health promotion campaigns for Indigenous people will be more likely to succeed than mainstream programs
- ACCHOs offer services that can provide holistic support to people wanting to Quit and across health needs e.g. smoking in pregnancy, smoking and diabetes.

Council is committed to working with Oonah Health and Community Services Aboriginal Corporation (Oonah) to achieve a purpose-built Aboriginal community controlled Aboriginal Health Service (Belonging Place). The partnership with Oonah is the most effective way for Council to support improved Aboriginal health and wellbeing through shared advocacy, design expertise and a commitment to self-determination.

### Community Survey

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>74%</b> of people rated <b>'reducing harmful alcohol and drug use'</b> as <b>extremely</b> or <b>very important</b>               | Awareness of health benefits of reducing alcohol consumption was high overall       |
| People are trying a range of ways to reduce drinking including <b>low or no alcohol options, events without alcohol and Feb Fast</b> | Around a third of respondents did not drink alcohol and very few used illicit drugs |

“  
**...consider the number of outlets that sell alcohol. I live in \_\_\_\_\_ and there are 4 bottle shops within walking distance and multiple wine and spirit outlets.**

“  
**the limited information there is around re: what help looks like and information to parents about what supports they may get. I think the hardest thing is the guilt and shame that goes with asking for help ...**

Comments about freedom of choice and dignity were also made, as were questions about Council's role in this area. Some comments also indicate a need to increase knowledge and tackle stereotypes about who drinks and why, for example risk from alcohol increases with higher income, unlike for other health priorities where higher income predicts better health.

**Priority actions areas**

**To attain our goal in reducing harmful alcohol and drug use, we aim to achieve:**

- community attitudes that support safer alcohol culture
- partnerships that strengthen responsible consumption of alcohol
- effective use of Council's regulatory roles to protect community amenity
- Council modelling responsible serving of alcohol
- reduced disease and death from tobacco use
- resilient young people and children who are protected from alcohol and drug harms.

Based on the principles and approaches of the Plan, actions to progress these achievements lists:

- the priority action areas
- the sections of Council that are responsible
- our partners
- measures of success
- related Council plans.

**Mutually reinforcing work across Goals**

Actions to reduce harmful impacts of alcohol and other drugs may reflect work and co-benefits in other Priorities of the Plan, particularly:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Priority 5</b> | improve mental wellbeing and social connections |
| <b>Priority 6</b> | prevent violence against women and children     |



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## Action Plan

See external document: Health and Wellbeing Plan Action Plan



# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Abbreviations

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>ABCD</b>    | Asset Based Community Development   |
| <b>CALD</b>    | Culturally and linguistically diverse                                     |
| <b>CRC</b>     | Community Recovery Committees   |
| <b>DFFH</b>    | Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (formerly DHHS)              |
| <b>DH</b>      | Department of Health (formerly DHHS)                                      |
| <b>DHHS</b>    | Department of Health and Human Services                                   |
| <b>EDVOS</b>   | Eastern Domestic Violence Service   |
| <b>EHCH</b>    | Eastern Health Community Health   |
| <b>EMPHN</b>   | Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network                                  |
| <b>EMR</b>     | Eastern Metropolitan Region   |
| <b>ERL</b>     | Eastern Regional Libraries  |
| <b>LDAT</b>    | Local Drug Action Team  |
| <b>LGBTIQ+</b> | Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or questioning, plus |
| <b>MOU</b>     | Memorandum of understanding   |
| <b>NH</b>      | Neighbourhood Houses  |
| <b>OEPCP</b>   | Outer East Primary Care Partnership                                       |
| <b>RMIT</b>    | Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology                                   |
| <b>WHE</b>     | Women's Health East   |
| <b>WHO</b>     | World Health Organisation   |

## Appendix 2: Gender and intersectionality - health factors

Prevalence of factors associated with each priority varied between adults of different genders and other population groups in Victoria in 2018. (25) The prevalence of each risk or protective factors was assessed for the following sociodemographic groups and is reported below where there are significant differences:

- men and women
- country of birth - born in Australia and overseas
- language spoken at home - English and other
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status and all other adults
- Experienced discrimination and did not experience discrimination
- Employed, unemployed and not in the labour force
- Total annual income - less than \$40,000, \$40,000 to less than \$100,000 and \$100,000 or more.

### Priority 3 – Increase healthy eating

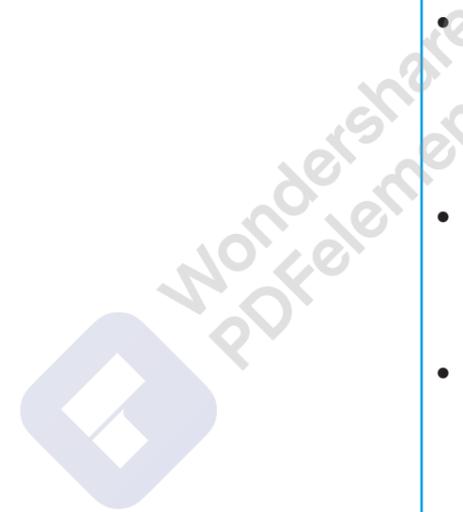
- Fruit and vegetable consumption: Prevalence of meeting the fruit and vegetable consumption guidelines was similar across socio-demographic groups.
- Take away food: More men than women had meals or snacks from take-away places more than once a week.
- Savory or salty snacks: Adults born in Australia and those who spoke English at home were more likely to consume savory or salty snacks three or more times per week, than comparable groups.
- Food insecurity: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders had higher prevalence of food insecurity than all other adults, as did unemployed adults, adults with low incomes and those who had experienced discrimination in the last year.

### Priority 4 – Increase active living

- Sufficient physical activity: Adults who spoke English at home, those who were employed and adults with annual income more than \$100,000 were more likely to meet the physical activity guidelines, than comparable groups.

### Priority 5 – Improve mental wellbeing and social connection

- Did not speak to anyone on previous day: Adults who spoke a language other than English at home, those not in the labour force and those on an annual income less than \$40,000 were more likely to not speak to anybody on the previous day, than comparable groups.
- Social and emotional support: Adults who spoke a language other than English at home, those who had experienced discrimination in the last year, the unemployed and those on an annual income less than \$40,000 were more likely to rarely or never get the social and emotional support they need, than comparable groups.
- Feel valued by society: adults who had experienced discrimination in the last year, who were unemployed or not in the labour force, or earned less than \$40,000 annually were more likely to never or not often feel valued by society, than comparable groups.
- Life satisfaction: Adults born in Australia, those who had experienced discrimination in the last year, those who were unemployed or not in the labour force, and those with annual income less than \$40,000 were more likely to report low or medium life satisfaction, than comparable groups.
- Psychological distress: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, adults who had experienced discrimination, unemployed adults and those not in the labour force, and those with annual income less than \$40,000 were more likely to report high or very high psychological distress, than comparable groups.



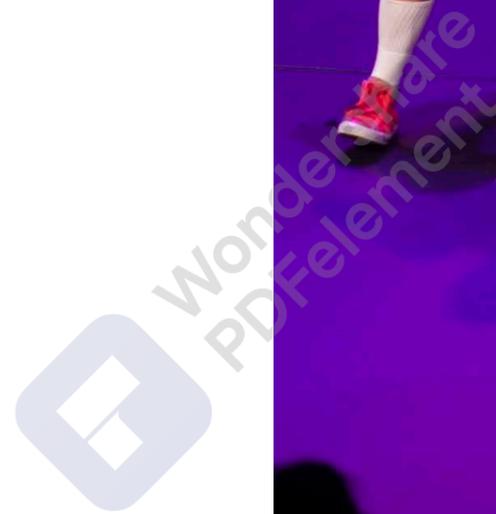
### Priority 7 – Reduce harmful alcohol and drug use

#### Alcohol

- Lifetime risk: Adults born in Australia, those that spoke English at home, and those with annual income of at least \$100,000 were more likely to drink alcohol weekly at a level that increased their risk of alcohol-related harm, than for comparable groups.
- Single occasion risk: Adults born in Australia, those that spoke English at home, employed adults, and those with annual income of at least \$100,000 were more likely to drink alcohol weekly at a level that increased their risk of injury from a single occasion of drinking alcohol, than for comparable groups.

#### Tobacco

- Daily smokers: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, adults who have experienced discrimination in the last year, and those with annual income of less than \$40,000 and people who were homeless, were more likely to smoke daily, than comparable groups.



**Craig Sutherland**

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 3 May 2022 1:51 PM  
**To:** mail  
**Subject:** Re Sale of 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark

Chief Executive Officer  
Shire of Yarra Ranges  
Dear Sir / Madam

We write in support of our previous objection to the sale of 16 Ellis Court Mooroolbark made in February 2022, pursuant to the purchase of 150 Cambridge Road Kilsyth.  
We reiterate our objections outlined and further support the further submission by [REDACTED] forwarded recently.

Thanking you for your consideration

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, 30 April 2022 1:36 PM  
**To:** mail  
**Subject:** Notice of intention to sell Council land

Under no circumstances should any of these parcels of land be sold. They are given to the community when land is developed and belong to the community not the council to sell off as they please. A dangerous precedent would be set and rate payers further enraged after the wasted money spent on new council buildings, trying to take over Swinburne site etc. This is going too far and typical of council money grabs and greed. Stop wastage in council and manage your funds better-like we all do and leave community assets for their intended purposes.

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone



**9 May 2022**

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Ms Tammi Rose  
Chief Executive Officer  
Shire of Yarra Ranges  
P O Box 105  
Lilydale 3140

### **Objection to the Sale of Land at 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark**

I refer to your Notice of Intention to Sell Council land at 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark (Proposal).

I write to object to the sale of this land and wish to be heard in relation to this objection.

Council should retain the land and, in conjunction with residents, improve it with park furniture, better access and supplementary vegetation to assist in offsetting the massive loss of tree canopy in the area to create a passive park to address the health and wellbeing aspirations Council has espoused.

The objections are as follows:

1. Council has not resolved to give notice of intention to sell the subject land and notice issued by Council staff is not in accordance with Council's resolution.
2. Sale for development of 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark is inconsistent with the provisions of Council's Planning Scheme.
3. Council should not sell the public open space at 16 Ellis Court given:
  - a. the rapid increase in the density of adjacent residential development occasioned by the huge growth of dual occupancy subdivisions;
  - b. the massive loss of established trees and associated tree canopy following major windstorms; and
  - c. the huge loss of established trees allowed to occur in the Kinley subdivision in Hull Road, Mooroolbark;and the resultant need for passive areas planted to create an optimum tree canopy, providing green space to promote Council's aspirations for health and wellbeing.
4. Council has failed to consider the biodiversity aspects of its Proposal.
5. The sale of 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark is inconsistent with Council's commitment to *Living Melbourne*.

6. Council has on two previous occasions sought unsuccessfully to sell the land at 16 Ellis Court and the present Proposal is nothing more than a vexatious attempt to wear down local residents.
7. Council has previously given undertakings and other assurances that it would:
  - not likely undertake planning processes which are necessary to enable it to sell the land;
  - undertake consultation on the future of the land; and
  - stop the sale of 16 Ellis Court.
 and the Council's present action is a breach of those undertakings and is not being conducted in good faith.
8. Council has engaged in stealth by removing and not replacing playground equipment and park furniture on the land and thereby changing the character of the land.
9. Council is not proposing to use the proceeds of any sale for a legal purpose and has failed to prepare and adopted a revised budget.
10. Council cannot fulfil its obligations to consider submissions on the proposed sale of 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark without bias and the appearance of bias.
11. Council has failed to comply with its own policies and to maintain its Policy on the Sale of Land.
12. The sale of the land would adversely impact the amenity of the area including exacerbating the current peak traffic chaos.

Each of these objections is detailed below.

**Objection 1: Council has not resolved to give notice of intention to sell the subject land**

As Council is aware section 114 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) provides, in part:

- (2) *Before selling or exchanging the land, the Council must—*
  - (a) *at least 4 weeks prior to selling or exchanging the land, publish notice of intention to do so—*

However, the Council resolution of 8 March 2022 approves "*investigating and progressing the potential sale...*". Council has not resolved to publish notice of intention pursuant to section 114 of the Act. Council staff have proceeded in this matter without adequate authority.

In response to one of my written questions to the Chief Executive Officer, Council's Director Environment and Infrastructure, Mark Varmalis said that the "*Council is investigating the possible sale of 16 Ellis Court.*" (Underlining added). Giving Notice of Intention to Sell is well outside the scope of "investigating".

When Council last sought to sell the land at 16 Ellis Court in 2015 it resolved that:

*Council undertake procedures to appropriately re-zone, then give public notice pursuant s223 of the Local Government Act 1989 of its intention to sell the properties at.....* (Underlining added)

With the current Proposal there is no such resolution to support the giving of public notice.

Where the process under the legislation is defective then the resulting sale will not be valid.

Decisions made without proper authority can therefore put Council at financial and legal risk.

If Council proceeds it risks any contract for the potential sale of the land being found void.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See *Bycon Pty Ltd & Byham v Moira Shire Council*

## **Objection 2: Sale for development of 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark is inconsistent with the provisions of Council's Planning Scheme**

The land in Ellis Court, Mooroolbark and surrounding area is subject to a Significant Landscape Overlay (Overlay) and its sale for development is inconsistent with the provisions of Council's Planning Scheme.

The objectives of the Significant Landscape Overlay in Schedule 22 to Clause 42.03 of the Planning Scheme include -

*To maintain vegetation as a dominant element of the landscape and encourage retention and regeneration of native vegetation*

Council, as the owner of land subject to this Overlay, has an obligation to retain (the land) and regenerate the native vegetation.

Council has an opportunity to play a lead role in promoting the objectives of its Overlay.

Alternatively, the objectives of Council Planning Scheme are merely meaningless words.

## **Objection 3: Need to Maintain all Available Open Space**

- a. the rapid increase in the density of adjacent residential development occasioned by the huge growth in dual occupancy subdivisions and the need to maintain and improve passive recreational space as well as active open space**

In the last few years, the development of dual occupancy subdivisions in the area abutting 16 Ellis Court has surged.

In the area immediately to the north of Ellis Court many dual occupancy developments have been approved by Council. This number will continue to grow as the previous minimum sized subdivision allotments have ensured that most allotments can, under current standards, accommodate a second dwelling. Further, with the growth of 'knockdown rebuild' developments the density grows up three to four times in the number of dwellings and the corresponding increase in population and heat radiating paving. With the extent of this development the population in this area will at least double in the next few years.

In the area of Taylor Road, Carronvale Road, Hull Road and Blackburn Road (originally the J P Lillis's, Carronvale Estate) 86 dual occupancies have already been developed. Many other such developments have occurred to the west.



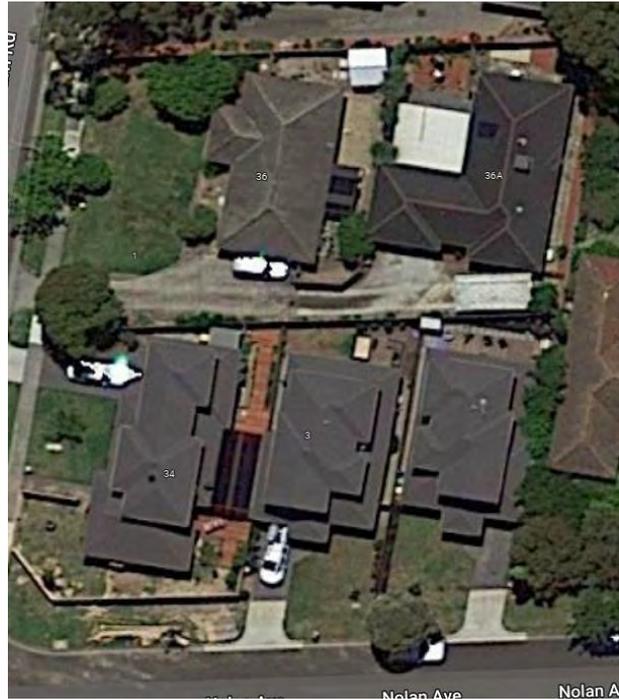
**Examples of the concrete driveways and parking aprons which have proliferated in the area**

A reference to available aerial photography will demonstrate the loss of tree canopy occasioned by dual occupancy developments.

Council has made no provision for additional public open space in this area – but is now proposing to eliminate a potential area which should be improved to provide tree rich passive open space and help meet Council’s aspirations for health and wellbeing in an area of increasing population density.

It is noted that much of the Open Space ‘cash in lieu of reserves’ which Council accumulated has come from the dual occupancy development and Council has an obligation to the new residents to provide accessible open space.

The land at 150 Cambridge Road is 2.5 kms from the land at 16 Ellis Court. It is not practically accessible to residents by foot. Hopefully Council does not expect residents to use motor vehicles to access it.



Effectively Council has used the funds generated from areas which will receive no benefit from the Cambridge Road land purchase. The price these new owners have paid for their dwellings has embedded in it the cash in lieu fees levied by Council.

In many cases established trees have been removed to allow for the dual occupancy developments significantly reducing the extent of the tree canopy and allowing little space for replacement vegetation to offset the impact. It is insufficient to allow meaningful shade trees to be grown.

These developments have also aggravated the impact on the environment by replacing natural surfaces with areas of concrete and asphalt driveways and parking aprons. These areas produce radiating heat and hence a need to improve the tree canopy.

Even Council’s redevelopment of the Luke Polkinghorne Memorial Playground in Taylor Road contains expansive paved areas.



**Current redevelopment of the Luke Polkinghorne Memorial Playground**

- b. the massive loss of established trees and associated tree canopy following major windstorms and the need to take all possible action to offset such loss.**

Council’s website records that the storm event in June 2020 saw an estimated 25,000 trees fall throughout the Yarra Ranges. Among the trees lost were a large number in the adjacent Mooroolbark East Primary School grounds and at the Luke Polkinghorne Memorial Playground. Natural regeneration of these areas is unlikely to occur and recovery of the previous canopy needs a serious planting effort.

The land at 16 Ellis Court provides an ideal opportunity for Council to achieve some level of planting and canopy development.

**Just a tiny portion of the massive loss of tree canopy**



- c. huge loss of established trees allowed to occur in the Kinley subdivision in Hull Road, Mooroolbark, and the need to take all possible actions to offset such loss locally.**

Local residents watched in horror as hundreds of 60 to 80-year-old trees over the 143 hectare site at the Kinley subdivision were bulldozed.

The deplorable and wanton loss of trees on the Kinley Estate north of Hull Road further aggravated the loss of the canopy and will also take decades to replace.

There is a resultant need for passive areas planted to create an optimum tree canopy, providing green space to promote Council’s aspirations for health and wellbeing.



**143-hectare Kinley site in Hull Road, Mooroolbark denuded of hundreds of 60 to 80 year old trees**

Council in its submission to the *Inquiry into Environmental Infrastructure for Growing Populations*<sup>2</sup> on 28 September 2020 and prepared by Phil Murton, Manager - Recreation, Projects & Parks says, in part, that:

- *Yarra Ranges is highly cognisant of the importance of environmental infrastructure and the benefits it provides to both our community and the environment.*
- *The impact of COVID 19 has further reinforced the importance of environmental infrastructure and the need to plan for future provision as popularity increases and populations grow.*
- *Providing the community with access to a variety of environmental infrastructure to undertake active and passive recreation can assist in increasing community levels of health and wellbeing. This is particularly important in Yarra Ranges community as statistics show more people in Yarra Ranges are overweight, less are meeting the physical activity guidelines and more are suffering from psychological distress when compared to the Victorian average. (Underlining added)*

If ever there was a case for maintaining land that can be used to improve community health and wellbeing with a passive park with some park furniture, better access and appropriate plantings it is, in Council's own terms, here at 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark.

Similarly, Council's *Yarra Ranges Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025* says, in part:

*Optimal health and wellbeing are fundamental to a thriving community and prosperous municipality. Residents are generally healthy but not in every way -*

*Compared to all of Victoria, Yarra Ranges adults have poorer health and wellbeing related to:*

- *Anxiety, depression and other mental health-related problems*
- *Diagnosis of multiple chronic diseases*

The *Yarra Ranges Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025* also says:

*During recent incidents relating to climate change in Victoria, the main loss of life has occurred through extreme weather events leading to bushfires, storms and floods; and high heat days causing heat stress amongst residents.*

*Interventions by Councils that could reduce illness and deaths from heatwaves include to:*

- *implement urban greening and cooling strategies*
- *plan for and invest in cooler and cleaner air spaces to provide community respite.*

The land at 16 Ellis Court provides an ideal opportunity for Council to live up to its health and wellbeing aspirations and create a passive park to address the health and wellbeing aspirations Council has espoused.

Also consider that in its *Yarra Ranges Council Environment Strategy 2015–2025* Council quotes C Maller from 'Healthy Parks, Healthy People, A Review of Relevant Literature' who says:

*"In terms of health, parks and other natural environments have been viewed almost exclusively as venues for leisure and sport. Yet recent research shows that 'green*

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<sup>2</sup> The Inquiry was set out to inquiry into the current and future arrangements to secure environmental infrastructure, particularly parks and open space, for a growing population in Melbourne and across regional centres.

*nature' such as parks can reduce crime, foster psychological wellbeing, reduce stress, boost immunity, enhance productivity and promote healing. In fact, the positive effects on human health, particularly in urban environments, cannot be over-stated.*

Council agrees with the resident's position on improving amenity by planting more trees. In its 3 May 2022 press release on the forthcoming election Council has called for greener suburbs and said:

*Yarra Ranges Mayor, Jim Child, said the proposal is to plant more than 130,000 trees – a mix of street planting and planting in bushlands and reserves – throughout all parts of the municipality.*

*"We know that as the climate changes and our urban areas evolve, severe weather events such as storms and heatwaves will become more common, and our tree canopy will continue to decline," Cr Child said.*

*"Trees provide sun protection for pedestrians and help to reduce heat in urban areas, while supporting the beautiful natural environment we're known for.*

*"This project will have a direct benefit for community members, in improving public spaces; to our environment, by providing better habitat and protecting the biodiversity of the region and visitors, who come out to enjoy our beautiful and renowned environment."*

Please make your proposal to plant more trees meaningful and plant out 16 Ellis Court.

#### **Objection 4: Council has failed to consider the biodiversity aspects of its Proposal**

Council has failed to consider the biodiversity aspects of the land at 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark.

Council purports to a leader on environmental Issues. In its *Yarra Ranges Council Environment Strategy 2015–2025* Council says:

*It is through the Environment Strategy 2015–2025 that Council will not only demonstrate leadership on environmental issues but will also work closely with other agencies and the community to foster environmental stewardship across the municipality.*

Consider these three aspects of the local biodiversity:

1. The Victorian Biodiversity Atlas records that in the immediate area of 16 Ellis Ct there was a recording of the Vulnerably listed Powerful Owl (*Ninox strenua*) in 2020. The Powerful Owls are listed on the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act – Threatened List. Powerful owls may not be nesting in the reserve, but they may well use the trees to roost in and to search for food.
2. As Council has discovered the very rare Buxton Gum / Silver Gum (*Eucalyptus crenulate*) tree is growing in Mooroolbark. There are fewer than 670 plants remaining in only two wild populations north-east of Melbourne. The Buxton Gum is listed as Endangered under the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 and threatened under the Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988.
3. The late Bob Edwards who lived adjacent to 16 Ellis Court had recorded the following birds on the land:
  - White Cockatoos
  - Black Cockatoos
  - Eastern Rosellas
  - Corellas
  - Kookaburras
  - King Parrots
  - Tawny Frogmouth
  - Owls
  - Doves
  - Bronze Winged Pigeons
  - Currawongs
  - Crows
  - Noisy Minors
  - Wattle Birds
  - Peewees
  - Magpies
  - Galahs
  - Crested Pigeons
  - Butcher Birds

Council has not undertaken the necessary studies of the land to determine its biodiversity values. Yet one of the goals of Council's *Environment Strategy 2015–2025* expressed as:

*Our native plants and animals are protected and their habitat is enhanced. This goal aims to preserve unique and indigenous ecosystems, remnant vegetation, and threatened species and communities. By protecting our natural environment and promoting a range of self-sustaining ecosystems, we enhance the quality and long-term sustainability of Yarra Ranges biodiversity.*

The existing 30 trees and large native shrubs at 16 Ellis Court are 60+ years old and should be retained. If the vegetation of this site was to be supplemented with further plantings will it only takes 10-15 years for those trees to get to a good size.



**Objection 5: The sale of 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark is inconsistent with Council commitment to *Living Melbourne*.**

The Yarra Ranges Shire Council has signed up to and fully endorsed '*Living Melbourne*' and supports *Living Melbourne*'s vision, goals and actions. The vision for *Living Melbourne* is to increase tree canopy targets, not decreased canopy cover.

*Living Melbourne: our metropolitan urban forest*<sup>3</sup> – is described as a bold new strategy for a greener, more liveable Melbourne.

Council has endorsed this Strategy which includes the following commitment:

*Living Melbourne: our metropolitan urban forest is bringing together councils, state government agencies, non-government and community organisations, residents, and other partners, to work towards a shared vision for the urban forest: our thriving communities are resilient, connected through nature. This strategy focuses on improving the quality and quantity of trees and vegetation in the urban forest – whether on public or private land. (Underlining added)*

Again, Council has an opportunity to demonstrate in very practical terms the reality of its commitment to *Living Melbourne*.

Alternatively, its commitment will be meaningless.

<sup>3</sup> An Urban Forest made up of native and exotic trees, shrubs, grasslands and other vegetation, growing on public and private land across metropolitan Melbourne, and the soil and water that supports them. This includes vegetation in parks, reserves and private gardens; along railways, waterways, main roads, and local streets; and on other green infrastructure such as green walls and roofs

**Objection 6: Council has on two previous occasions sought unsuccessfully to sell the land at 16 Ellis Court and the present Proposal is nothing more than a vexatious attempt to wear down local residents**

Council has on two previous occasions proposed to sell the land at 16 Ellis Court. On both occasions Council was met with strong objections from the residents and on the first occasion withdrew its proposal to sell and on the second withdrew its Planning Application which sought to remove the reservation status on the land (as a preliminary step to selling).

In the 1980's the predecessor Council, the Shire of Lillydale, first proposed the sale of the land at 16 Ellis Court Mooroolbark. That proposal was based on an alleged rationalisation of Council property assets.

At the time there was treated pine play equipment, park furniture and considerable foliage on the land (see later Council's actions in removing assets and changing the character of the land). The residents demonstrated that the land was in regular use. A senior Council officer told residents who objected at the time "don't worry I'll take care of that". The Shire of Lillydale subsequently withdrew the land from the list of properties it had proposed to sell.

In 2015 Council, without any prior consultation, made application to remove the reservation status on the land pursuant to the Subdivision Act 1988.

Council initially refused to provide a copy of the Planning Application (Application) and did so only after the breach of section 51 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 was drawn to its attention.

Residents strongly opposed this Application, prepared detailed submissions and attended a hearing at Council to consider the Application. As such Applications function Council was both the Applicant and also the Responsible Authority – both roles were represented at the hearing by Council Officers. No Councillors were present.

Residents were told at the planning hearing that Council had a large unfunded capital works program and were selling the land at 16 Ellis Court to help fund that program.

Residents were united in their opposition to this proposal and made a detailed presentation to a planning hearing.

The residents were subjected to a most unedifying display as the Council Officer representing the Applicant proceeded to dictate to the young female Planning Officer how the process should be conducted. Frankly, he bullied her and endeavoured to gag the planning officer representing the Responsible Authority. This argument in front of the residents was most undignified (I later apologised to my neighbours for the reflection this display cast on local government).

The Planning Officer made it clear after the meeting that 'we' will not be supporting the Application and she expected it to be withdrawn. We note that in 2015 Council also abandoned its Planning Applications for the other properties it had proposed to sell at that time.

After two previous attempts to sell the land Council's Proposal for a third attempt can only be described as vexatious. It is both exasperating and distressing for residents.

**Objection 7: Council has previously given undertakings and other assurances that it would:**

- a. not undertake planning processes which are necessary to enable the sale of sale of the land;**
- b. undertake consultation on the future of the land; and**
- c. stop the sale of the land**

**and Council's present action is a breach of those undertakings and is not being conducted in good faith.**

At the planning hearing on 20 August 2015 the Council Planning Officer (for the Responsible Authority) canvassed with objectors alternative uses for the land and undertook to refer the residents aspirations to Council's strategic recreation planning staff.

On 9 October 2015 Planning Officer, Susan Hartley, advised that the Council had withdrawn its Application and also said:

*The applicant will be seeking further community consultation on this matter in the future.*

Residents are still awaiting that consultation.

A letter was also received from Council's Craig Sutherland, as Acting Executive Officer Property & Facilities Management, dated 13 November 2015 in which he said:

*Having reflected upon the nature of community objections received, a decision has been made to withdraw the planning application.*

The nature of the community's objections has not changed so why would Council –

- a. not respect the local community's views; and
- b. fail to undertake engagement before launching another attempt at sale.

More significantly after Council withdrew its Planning Application all the residents signed a joint letter on 19 October 2015 seeking to establish Council's future intentions for the land.

In response to our question -

*Does the Applicant intend to submit another Application for a planning permit pursuant to section 47 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 for a permit to remove the reservation on title status on the subject land pursuant to section 24A of the Subdivision Act 1988?*

Council's then Manager, Built and Active Spaces, Robyn Mansfield responded on 9 November 2015 that:

***It is unlikely that Council would re-commence procedures pursuant to section 47 of Planning and Environment Act for this property. (Bolding added)***

Council could not have been any clearer.

So, what has changed to cause Council to go back on this undertaking without first engaging with residents?

We encourage Council to honour its previously undertakings.

Residents are also aware that Council obtained legal advice before withdrawing its Planning Application. I have successfully sought access to documents related to the withdrawal of the Application pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 1982 and material will be released to me after the 60-day VCAT appeal period. I therefore request that Council not consider submissions on this matter until that material is released to me.

The Residents' objection also raised concerns about traffic safety in the Court associated with school drop-off and, more significantly, pick-up times. The situation in Ellis Court at school

pick-up time from the adjacent Primary School is chaotic and unsafe with parking of often large vehicles both sides of the court, over driveways and on nature strips. It is sensible to use the Court for school pickup, but the process just needs to be organised. A solution may save a life.

In this regard Ms Mansfield advised that:

*Your traffic concerns have been relayed to the appropriate Council department for their response, which shall be provided in due course.*

Nearly seven (7) years later residents are still awaiting that response too.

The residents had been fortunate to enjoy the support of Councillor Len Cox who, in regard to the sale of 16 Ellis Court, said in an email to me on November 6, 2015, in part:

*..... However, if anything comes out of it I am very happy to do whatever I can to stop it.*

*All the best Len.*

Cr Cox had earlier agreed to meet a deputation of residents. The proposal for the deputation was abandoned after Council withdrew its Planning Application.

**Objection 8: Council has engaged in stealth by removing and not replacing playground equipment and park furniture on the land and thereby changing the character of the land.**

Various Councillors had undertaken to improve the land at 16 Ellis Court as a playground.

Until late 2013 there was play equipment on the subject land (the soft fall material is still on the land). Council has removed that equipment – again without any consultation - and not replaced it. Council actions in removing the equipment suddenly and mysteriously gave the appearance of an attempt to ‘smooth the way’ for sale of the land.

Residents purchased properties in Ellis Court prior to the removal of the playground equipment on the understanding that this facility would be available to their families. One purchaser inspected the land on 25 May 2013 and the play equipment was gone when they moved into the adjacent property they had purchased on 12 October 2013.

Council then separately removed the park benches again without consultation. These were in place at least until 6 November 2014.

Council should research the undertakings given by Councillors and honour those undertakings.

Council’s staff in their report on the purchase of 150 Cambridge Road describe 16 Ellis Court as of ‘*limited community benefit*’.

This is an absurd claim – first Council removes the limited play equipment and park furniture then it fails to honour an undertaking to consult on the future of the land, fails to make any improvements to the land and then declares that the land is of limited benefit.

If you denude the land of improvements it will by definition be of limited benefit. Improve the land and as demonstrated earlier, it can be of huge benefit.

**Objection 9: Council is not proposing to use the proceeds of any sale for a legal purpose and failed to prepare and adopt a revised budget.**

Council is proposing to remove the reservation on title pursuant to section 24A of the Subdivision Act 1988. Subsection 8 of that section says:

(8) *If a body sells land under this section that was public open space, it must apply the proceeds—*

- (a) first, in paying the expenses of or incidental to the sale;
- (b) secondly, for any of the following recreational or cultural purposes—
  - (i) halls and public buildings.
  - (ii) sport, recreation, leisure and arts;
  - (iii) parks, gardens and reserves.
  - (iv) libraries and museums;
  - (v) historic buildings and places;
  - (vi) public entertainment.

The report to Council on the purchase of land at 150 Cambridge Road on 8 March 2022 says, in part, that:

*It is recommended that Council utilise the current balance of Public Open Space Funding available to Walling Ward of \$2.97 million with the remaining amount initially being drawn from existing cash reserves, (which is funding allocated for other future projects that are yet to commence).*

*It is proposed that the cash reserves are then replaced through the sale of Council owned open space land in Walling, which is considered to be of limited community benefit and surplus to requirements*

Council has therefore borrowed internally to fund the purchase of the land at 150 Cambridge Road. The purpose of the proposed sales is therefore not to buy land for the purposes defined in the Subdivision Act but rather to repay a debt.

In response to one of my written questions to the Chief Executive Officer, Council Director Environment and Infrastructure, Mark Varmalis said that the funds from a potential sale would be used to “replenish cash reserves”.

The repayment of a debt is not a legal purpose for the use of proceeds pursuant to section 24A of the Subdivision Act 1988.

Council is therefore not proposing to use the funds in a manner which complies with the Subdivision Act but rather to pay off an internal debt which it says it has generated by ‘borrowing’ from its cash reserves.

There is one further very significant issue Council needs to consider in respect to both its Proposal to sell land at 16 Ellis Court and its decision to buy land at 150 Cambridge Road.

Council cannot use Open Space funds to make up for past deficiencies in open space.

Council says in its Report to its meeting of 8 March 2022:

*Analysis of open space provision for the Kilsyth precinct as part of recent work for updating the Recreation and Open Space Strategy identified a significant shortfall of linear (15.4ha) and social recreation open space (6.1ha) in 2020 (underlining added)*

Council’s *Recreation and Open Space Plan Strategic Framework 2013-2023* incorporates in Appendix 3 its Policy on Public Open Space Contributions which correctly says, in part:

*Public open space contributions cannot be used to pay for historical open space deficiencies for people living in the municipality. (underlining added)*

And further:

*Similarly, the same controls apply to the proceeds from the sale of surplus land if Council sells land that has been specifically reserved as public open space.*

In Council’s own words the proceeds of the sale of 16 Ellis Court cannot be used to rectify past deficiencies in open space and therefore – nor for that matter can funds in the Open Space Contribution fund be likewise used.

Further, Council has also failed to comply with section 95 of the Act and prepare a revised budget.

This section requires that Council must prepare and adopt a revised budget before it –

*(c) can make a change to the budget that the Council considers should be the subject of community engagement.*

In its purchase of land at 160 Cambridge Road Council clearly considered that the Proposal required community engagement and accordingly undertook that engagement.

However, Council has failed to prepare and adopt the required revised budget notwithstanding that it varied its budget by at least \$6,440,000 and probably a good deal more.

I trust that Council will refer this aspect to its Audit and Risk Management Committee.

**Objection 10: Council cannot fulfil its obligations to consider submissions on the proposed sale of 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark without bias and the appearance of bias.**

Council has committed itself to repaying its internal borrowings made to enable it to purchase land at 150 Cambridge Road. Council has therefore made a commitment which:

- prevents it from being genuinely open minded when considering submissions on the sale of 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark; and
- causes it to have prejudged any representations which are at variance with its need to raise funds.

Council has prejudged the matter of the sale of 16 Ellis Court and cannot without bias consider the submissions as it is required to.

Further, Council cannot appear unbiased when the need to repay the debt is upon it and has failed to identify any other options for its commitment to ‘repay’ debt. Council is now literally between a rock and a hard place.

In this regard a right-thinking person would form the view that Council is no longer able to discharge its statutory duty to consider submissions with fairness.

*The Local Government Best Practice Guideline for the Sale, Exchange and Transfer of Land* (Guidelines) refers to Councils being genuine in matters of property sales. The Guidelines say that *the public notice given in compliance with the Local Government Act must be genuine (and be seen to be genuine)*. How can the section 114 process be genuine when it has already been pre-empted?

In the words of the Guidelines how can “*Councillors have a genuinely open mind when considering [section 114(2)(b)] submissions*” if they have already resolved to sell the reserve to fund an incurred debt.

**Objection 11: Council has failed to comply with its own policies and to maintain its Policy on the Sale of Land**

Council has policies on both Community Engagement (described on its website as a draft Policy) and Public Transparency. It has not adhered to these Policies.

Further, Council has also allowed its policy on the Sale of Land to lapse and deprived residents of a structure and a set of fair principles against which Council can assess its current Proposal and residents can consider such an assessment.

Council’s Policy on Community Engagement embraces the International Association for Public Participation’s *Spectrum of Public Participation* (Spectrum) and contains the following table:

|                                  | <b>INFORM</b>  | <b>CONSULT</b>   | <b>INVOLVE</b>  | <b>COLLABORATE</b>  | <b>EMPOWER</b>   |
|----------------------------------|--|--|---|---|--|
| <b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL</b> | To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions. | To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.  | To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.  | To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.                     | To place final decision making in the hands of the public. |
| <b>PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC</b>     | We will keep you informed.   | We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. | We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. | We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible. | We will implement what you decide.                         |

Council’s commitment to this Spectrum is very clear when it says:

*We will apply our DELIBERATIVE ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES across ALL LEVELS of the PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM (sic)*

The Policy on Community Engagement commits Council to informing the community with the goal:

*To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.*

Council had failed this goal in every way possible.

Council has provided minimal information on the proposed sale of 16 Ellis Court. It has only provided a single Notice of Intention on its website and a single letter which deals as much with the purchase of 150 Cambridge Road as it does with the Proposal to sell 16 Ellis Court.

Contrast this to the detail provided in 2015 when Council last proposed to sell the land and commissioned an independent assessment of the land from Environmental Consultants, Prensa Pty Ltd (Prensa Report) *prior to divestment* (by Council) that covered details including:

- environmental considerations
- site investigation/contamination
- history of the site
- geology

Council also developed and made available in 2015 an assessment of its proposal against the criteria set out in its Sale of Land Policy (see below)

The 33-page Prensa Report informed Council’s understanding of aspects of the land, its past improvements uses and factors that may affect its future use. Residents were able then to point out where Council’s understanding (based on the Prensa Report) was erroneous and based on misconceptions. This included matters such as:

- use of the land over time
- removal of treated pine playground equipment
- existence of a private quarry on the abutting allotment (later used as a rubbish tip)
- the reference to the certificate of title which incorrectly said the land was in the name of the Shire of Healesville
- subdivision which was contemplated by Council notwithstanding that the land was already smaller than allowed under the Planning Scheme.
- fencing of the land which was incorrectly described

In the current Proposal residents have been deprived of such basic information as the Prensa Report provided.

Council's Community Engagement Policy claims to be founded on Council's meaningful engagement. You say:

*We empower stakeholders with relevant, objective and plain English information and resources to allow informed participation*

Engagement cannot be meaningful if Council fails to provide the necessary information to allow residents to fully understand the Proposal and its implications. In this regard Council needs to provide residents with:

- an upgraded and competent version of the Prensa Report with corrections to the errors and misconceptions identified by residents when Council last attempted to sell this land
- an evaluation of the other options /alternatives Council has to achieve its objective of raising funds to reimburse its cash reserves
- an informed justification as to why the land is considered by Council to be of '*limited community benefit*'
- details of the permitted use of the land under the Yarra Ranges Planning Scheme and a plain English interpretation of the implications of the Planning Scheme
- an assessment of the alternative uses for the land
- a genuine cost/benefit analysis of Council's Proposal.

Similarly, the Community Engagement Policy commits Council to informed decision making. If the community only has a small part of the story then decision making simply cannot be informed.

The Deliberative Principles in Council's Community Engagement Policy includes **Transparency + Trust**. The Policy says:

*We will act in an honest, transparent and respectful way to build strong relationships, partnerships and trust with our community and other stakeholders. People know what is happening and how their input is being used. They will also have access to the right, objective and relevant information to inform their participation.*

Residents have not enjoyed transparency. If only partial information is available to it then the community is not experiencing transparency.

Equally how can the community trust Council if the first it hears of Council's Proposal to sell 16 Ellis Court is when it is linked to the purchase of another distant piece of land.

As to 'strong relationships, partnerships' as demonstrated above nothing in Council's actions suggests that in any way it has endeavoured to form strong relationship, partnerships.

The Principle, "Inform", in the table above says Council's goal is:

*To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions. (Underlining added)*

Residents have not received "balanced and objective information" but rather scant details of the Council Proposal.

Further under the Principle "Empower" in the table Council says its goal is:

*To place final decision making in the hands of the public.*

The residents of Ellis Court and surrounding areas welcome this Principle and look forward to Council placing the final decision in their hands.

Council Policy on Public Transparency is required by section 57 of the Local Government Act to '*give effect to the public transparency principles*'.

The public transparency principles are set out in section 58 of the same Act requires that:

- *Council decision making processes must be transparent*
- *Council information must be publicly available*
- *Council information must be understandable and accessible to members of the municipal community*
- *public awareness of the availability of Council information must be facilitated*

As demonstrated above Council has failed these requirements in every regard. It has not:

1. been transparent
2. made the relevant information publicly available
3. provided information in an accessible form to the community
4. made the public aware of the availability of relevant information.

In the last fortnight of the consultative process for this Proposal as a result of written questions to the Chief Executive Officer I have become aware that Council has "*commissioned an environmental safety and risk consultant to undertake a Preliminary Site Investigation*" on risk issues.

Again, this is another document not made available to inform residents.

Further, when Council last proposed selling the land at 16 Ellis Court it had in place a *Sale of Land Policy* which provided a structure for considering land sales and included some protections for the community. The Policy has vanished along with the protections for the community in the process. It appears to have just been allowed to expire in June 2017 and has not been reviewed as proposed in the Policy itself.

The Council *Sale of Land Policy* contained a set of Principles for identifying and proceeding with the sale of Council owned property. It also committed Council to adhere to the Local Government *Best Practice Guidelines for the Sale and Exchange of Land*.

The Principles covered the following components:

- Economic
- Environment
- Social
- Physical Works
- Recreation
- Town Planning

Without such Principles Council has not had to provide residents with any substantive material necessary to allow a reasonable assessment of Council's Proposal to sell the land.

Residents were also not made aware of a document titled *Strategic Property Assessment Framework* which uses different set of Key Assessment Principles. This document only became known (to one resident) as a result of written questions asked of the Chief Executive Officer in the last fortnight of consultation and after the Notice of Intention was published.

This document is not on Council's website.

That's another example of failed transparency.

Council has not provided residents with an assessment of 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark against this different set of Key Assessment Principles, if such an assessment exists.

The *Strategic Property Assessment Framework* also says in part that:

*A Sale of Land and Building Policy will also be developed to support the implementation of this Framework.*

This is the same Policy that has been allowed to lapse.

At the very least Council should reinstate its Sale of Land Policy before it proceeds with further consideration of its Proposal. It should then adhere to its Policy.

## **Objection 12: Sale of 16 Ellis Court would adversely impact the amenity of the area**

The sale of 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark would allow for different and inconsistent standards of development of the land. All allotments in Ellis Court except No 16 are subject to restrictive covenants. These covenants require that:

1. Only one single dwelling can be constructed
2. The single dwelling must be constructed with external walls of brick, stone, glass or timber (and timber is restricted to only infill material and cannot exceed 25% of the total external area)
3. Paling fencing constructed on side boundaries is prohibited.

The land at 16 Ellis Court is not subject to these restrictive covenants. The original owner, Elizabeth Ellis, did not anticipate that the allotment designated *Recreation Reserve No 1* would ever be anything else.

Nowhere in its Proposal has Council acknowledged that these covenants exist, and no proposals are made to ensure that these covenants are applied to the subject land.

The land is zoned Low Density Residential, and the uses permitted without a permit include a Bed and Breakfast for up to 10 persons and up to 5 car parking spaces or a medical centre

With a permit the land could be used for two dwellings of two stories each, domestic animal boarding and even a market.

Council's Proposal to sell 16 Ellis Court has not taken into account the potential uses of the land.

Further, the entire street is used by the parents of students at the adjacent primary school as a drop off and pick up area. The traffic situation is diabolic and must be addressed by Council. The following images show that up to 30 vehicles each afternoon block the street. Cars are parking on both sides of the street, across driveways and on nature strips.

Many of the uses permitted under the Planning Scheme (with and without a permit) would further exacerbate the present peak traffic problem which Council has failed to act on despite undertakings that it would do so (see earlier).



History tells us that once the land at 16 Ellis Court is sold it is gone forever along with the opportunity to serve future generations.

I strongly encourage Council to rethink its Proposal to sell 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark and look for an alternative means of funding its Cambridge Road commitment elsewhere.

Finally, I reserve my right to further pursue opposition to the sale of 16 Ellis Court, Mooroolbark and to raise further objections as further details of Council's Proposal become available.

Yours faithfully

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

## Craig Sutherland

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 6 April 2022 2:26 PM  
**To:** mail  
**Subject:** Notice of Intention to Sell Land - 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth

***Attention: Craig Sutherland***

I write in response to your correspondence of 31 March 2022.

I wish to reiterate my opposition to the sale of 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth for the purpose of funding the purchase of 150 Cambridge Road, Kilsyth.

As a resident of Wannan Court, I am opposed to the proposed sale of 9A Wannan Court, Kilsyth for the reasons outlined in my submissions made in response to the original notice.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

---

Email sent using Optus Webmail

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 5 May 2022 20:00:43 +1000  
**To:** mail  
**Subject:** Ref: Public Submission - sale of reserve 9A Wannan Court Kilsyth, VIC 3137

- > Council has proposed (selling several small parcels of vacant land in Kilsyth and Mooroolbark, which have limited community benefit)
- >
- > With regard to the above land, this is not the case. The Council failed to inform the general community that the land in question is a Council Reserve (Park)
- >
- > This reserve is much needed and well used as a public park. It has been extensively planted out and now has a significant canopy of trees with open space for general use.
- >
- > The park is visited by residents from the Liverpool Road Aged Care Facility. One of the residents purchased and supplied a park bench for general use. Many dog owners come to train and exercise their dogs, as the park is fenced on 3 sides. The reserve is used extensively by local children. Families sit and enjoy the tranquil space and bird life. The diversity of the wild life as a result of the now well established trees includes wattle birds, magpies, kookaburras, rosellas, tawny frogmouth, parrots, ringtail possums and more.
- >
- > With the continued increase in higher density residential development in the area, this parkland is of ever increasing importance to the physical and mental wellbeing of the residents. This reserve has been mowed and maintained by residents in the street for the benefit of the Community.
- >
- > Yarra Ranges Council website states that you "are the custodians and stewards of community assets to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the Community, achieving best value and sustainable outcomes." With the D.E.Olsen reserve being well used and maintained at little cost to the council for the last 34 years, it has most certainly provided good value and meets the needs of the Community. The park provides a place of recreation, relaxation, tranquility and contemplation for the wider community.
- >
- > The Sale of 9A Wannan Court Kilsyth would greatly disadvantage the older residents, the young and those not within easy reach of the Cambridge Rd reserve.
- > I implore the Council to keep the Wannan court reserve for the benefit of the local Community.
- >
- > Kind regards
- > [REDACTED]
- >

[REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 22 April 2022 4:08 PM

**To:** mail <[mail@yarraranges.vic.gov.au](mailto:mail@yarraranges.vic.gov.au)>

**Subject:** 16 Ellis Court

Public Submission,  
The Chief Executive Officer,  
PO Box 105,  
Lilydale. Vic. 3140

My husband and I built next to the reserve (16 Ellis Court) and moved there in 1980. Bob planted several bushes around the perimeter of the park, and he and our children mowed it for about 16 years, as the Council seemed to be unaware of its existence!! It was well used by our family and the families in the court, but some years ago the play equipment was dismantled, and then the Council tried to sell the property (2015). This led to a well-attended protest meeting, and the idea was shelved, only to reappear this year.

Various residents of our court have already recently submitted detailed and well-reasoned arguments as to why the reserve should not be sold.

All of our properties are 1/2 acre in size, and there is a covenant preventing us from sub-dividing. It is not fair of the Council to try to have the reserve status removed, as it was a vital part of the original subdivision.

It should be noted that there is a layer of hard rock just below the surface, and we had to remove 100 tip-truck loads of rock to excavate for a parking area and pool!

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

( I do not wish to talk to my submission at a meeting)