

Agenda

Scheduled Council Meeting

Monday 6 December 2021 at 6:30 pm

You are advised that a Meeting of Council has been called by the Chief Executive Officer on Monday 6 December 2021 at 6:30 pm for the transaction of the following business.

In accordance with section 394 of the *Local Government Act 2020* this meeting will be held remotely online and will be [livestreamed via Council's website](#).

C Lloyd
Chief Executive Officer

Administrators

Lydia Wilson	Chair of Council
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Peita Duncan	Administrator
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Chris Eddy	Administrator
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On 19 June 2020 the Acting Minister for Local Government appointed the Panel of Administrators for the City of Whittlesea and appointed Ms Lydia Wilson as Chair of the Panel. The Panel of Administrators comprises of Ms Lydia Wilson, Ms Peita Duncan and Mr Chris Eddy who will undertake the duties of the Council of the City of Whittlesea until the October 2024 Local Government Election.

Senior Officers

Craig Lloyd	Chief Executive Officer
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Frank Joyce	Executive Manager Governance & Strategy
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Kate McCaughey	Director Community Wellbeing
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Mark Montague	Acting Director Corporate Services
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Janine Morgan	Executive Manager Public Affairs
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Justin O'Meara	Director Planning & Development
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Debbie Wood	Director Infrastructure & Environment
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Order of Business

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Note:

At the Chair of Council's discretion, the meeting may be closed to the public in accordance with Section 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The provision which is likely to be relied upon to enable closure is set out in each item. These reports are not available for public distribution.

Question Time:

During the meeting, the Chief Executive Officer will answer questions from residents and ratepayers. Questions are required to be submitted in writing prior to the advertised commencement time of a Scheduled Council Meeting. It is preferred to receive any questions by 3.30pm unless this unreasonably prevents or hinders you from participating. A Question Time form can be downloaded from Council's website and copies of the form are available at the meeting. Refer: <https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/about-us/council/council-meetings/>

Council will hold public question time for up to 30 minutes at each Scheduled Council Meeting to allow members of the public to present the questions they have submitted to Council. When Council Meetings are held remotely by electronic means in accordance with Section 394 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, members of the public will be unable to present their questions, however the Chief Executive Officer will read out and answer questions from residents and ratepayers.

Council is committed to ensuring that all residents and ratepayers of the municipality may contribute to Council's democratic process and therefore, if you have special requirements, please telephone the Governance Team prior to any Council Meeting on (03) 9217 2294.

1 Opening

1.1 Meeting Opening and Introductions

The Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson will open the meeting and introduce the Administrators and Chief Executive Officer:

Administrator, Ms Peita Duncan;
Administrator, Mr Chris Eddy; and
Chief Executive Officer, Mr Craig Lloyd.

The Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd will introduce members of the Executive Leadership Team:

Executive Manager Governance and Strategy, Mr Frank Joyce;
Director Community Wellbeing, Ms Kate McCaughey;
Acting Director Corporate Services, Mr Mark Montague;
Executive Manager Public Affairs, Ms Janine Morgan;
Director Planning and Development, Mr Justin O'Meara; and
Director Infrastructure and Environment, Ms Debbie Wood.

Following the Introductions, the Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd will then read the following prayer:

Almighty God, we ask for your blessing upon this council to make informed and good decisions to benefit the people of the City of Whittlesea.

Our father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever.

Amen

1.2 Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Statement

The Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson will read the following statement:

"On behalf of the City of Whittlesea I recognise the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledge the Wurundjeri Willum Clan as the Traditional Owners of this place.

I would also like to personally acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging."

1.3 Attendance

2 Declarations of Conflict of Interest

3 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting/s

Recommendation

THAT the following Minutes of the preceding meeting as circulated, be confirmed:

Scheduled Meeting of Council held 8 November 2021

4 Public Questions, Petitions and Joint Letters

4.1 Public Question Time

4.2 Petitions

Nil Petitions

4.3 Joint Letters

4.3.1 Joint Letter - Request for removal of Street Trees corner Strathoon Crescent & Vista Way – South Morang

Responsible Officer Director Infrastructure & Environment

A joint letter has been received from four residents requesting the removal of street trees on the corner of Strathoon Crescent and Vista Way, South Morang:

“We wish to support the need to remove the trees in Strathoon Court on the corner of Vista Way and Strathoon.

These trees are causing us huge problems and a visit from an arborist, however well intentioned, is simply no solution. The trees are dangerous and they must go. The trees from 43 Vista Way and over at 45 are causing enormous grief to residents.

There are trees which also affect others and these are notes on this petition.

Trees cast shadows on roof making solar panels pointless.

Trees constantly drop leaves on roof and gutters. It is costing us enormous fees for guttering and removal.

Falling branches are dangerous. It is a matter of time when a serious accident will occur.

We never asked for these trees and believed if they were creating danger they would be removed.

The trees are lifting footpaths and potential damage to under ground pipes.

We urge you to finally remove these trees.

We the under signed are rate payers and we want action taken, we are tired of being ignored.”

Recommendation

THAT Council receive the joint letter from four residents requesting the removal of street trees on the corner of Strathoon Crescent and Vista Way, South Morang, and that a report be presented to the Council Meeting on 31 January 2022 in relation to the matter.

5 Officers' Reports

5.1 Connected Communities

5.1.1 17-19 Johnsons Road, Mernda - Sale of Council Land

Responsible Officer Acting Director Corporate Services

Officer Consultant

Attachments

1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Confidential Option Details [5.1.1.1 - 3 pages]
2. Location Plan [5.1.1.2 - 1 page]
3. Aerial Photo [5.1.1.3 - 1 page]
4. Council Report 2 August 2021 [5.1.1.4 - 27 pages]

This attachment has been designated as confidential by the Acting Director Corporate Services, under delegation from the Chief Executive Officer, in accordance with Rule 53 of the Governance Rules 2021 and sections 66(5) and 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* on the grounds that it contains Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released. In particular the attachment contains sensitive financial information which would diminish Council's position in these negotiations.

Proposal

The property located at 17-19 Johnsons Road, Mernda, was purchased by Council from the State Government with the strategic intent of selling the property at a future point in time for a return to be reinvested back into community infrastructure.

It is proposed that Council develop and subdivide the site into 35 lots, with 32 of these to be sold on the open market and the remaining 3 lots to be reserved for sale and/or lease, via an expression of interest, to a registered housing organisation to undertake an Affordable Housing development in accordance with Council's Social Affordable Housing (SAH) Policy.

Recommendation

That following the completion of the community engagement process in accordance with Section 114(2)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Act) and in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy, and subject to Council first fulfilling the requirements of section 114(2)(a) and (c) of the Act (in relation to, respectively, the giving of public notice and the obtaining of a valuation) Council:

1. Sell the Council-owned property known as 17-19 Johnsons Road, Mernda (subject property) in order to achieve the following outcomes –
 - a. to develop, construct, subdivide and sell the subject property in accordance with the approved 35 lot plan of subdivision;

- b. to confine the sale of the subject property to the sale on the open market (by public sale, public auction or via an expression of interest process) of 32 of the 35 lots that will be developed (lots to be sold);
- 2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer;
 - a. in relation to the lots to be sold, on behalf of Council, to appoint selling agents and to offer the lots to be sold by either public sale, public auction or via an expressions of interest process upon and subject to whatever terms and conditions the Chief Executive Officer considers are appropriate, including in relation to the persons to whom the lots are to be sold and the prices to be paid and the settlement periods for the lots to be sold;
 - b. to reserve the remaining 3 of the 35 lots for sale and/or lease to a suitable housing provider as determined by Council and otherwise in accordance with Council's Social Affordable Housing Policy (affordable housing allocation) and furthermore, in relation to the affordable housing allocation, to provide a report to Council by mid-2022, advising the most appropriate method to facilitate affordable housing on these lots, either by sale (at full market value or at a discounted market value) or by a long-term lease to a suitable housing provider in accordance with Council's Social Affordable Housing Policy; and
 - c. in relation to the lots to be sold (other than the affordable housing allocation) and the matter generally, to carry out all and any other legal and administrative procedures necessary to enable Council to give effect to this resolution, including to sign all and any documents on behalf of Council.

Brief Overview

The property located at 17-19 Johnsons Road, Mernda, was purchased by Council from the State Government with the strategic intent of selling the property at a future point in time for a return to be reinvested back into community infrastructure.

It is proposed that Council develop and subdivide the site into 35 lots, with 32 of these to be sold on the open market and the remaining 3 lots to be reserved for sale and/or lease, via an expression of interest, to a registered housing organisation to undertake an Affordable Housing development in accordance with Council's Social Affordable Housing (SAH) Policy. Key Information,

Option one is to on-sell the property undeveloped on the open market to a purchaser / developer who will be required to develop the site in accordance with the approved plan of subdivision.

Option two is for Council to develop the site in accordance with the approved plan of subdivision and sell-off each individual lot on the open market. This is the recommended option as it presents the best return on investment for Council.

Community Consultation and Engagement

A community engagement process in accordance with Section 115 of *the Local Government Act 2020* and in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy has been undertaken and included placing all the information on the proposals on Council's website (Hive) via an engagement page, together with contact details for a Council officer who could answer additional queries. A letterbox drop was also undertaken to surrounding properties.

Following the community consultation and engagement process, nine (9) submissions were received.

In relation to the question "How much do you support the sale of land at 17-19 Johnsons Road Mernda?"

5 "strongly support"

1 "neither support nor oppose"; and

3 "strongly oppose".

In relation to the question as to the number of lots proposed for social housing,

5 agreed with "3 lots";

1 stated more than "3 lots"; and

3 wanted less than "3 lots".

Some of the comments received were:

- "I live in the next street and I don't mind if this land sells however I would like to see the supporting infrastructure in the playgrounds also upgrade a Wombat reserve and at the Footy Oval."
- "I am looking for land to build an accessible home near public transport. This is the perfect location."
- "The traffic impact will be horrendous. Johnsons/Schotters/Hazel Glen Drive cannot cope with any more traffic."
- "Community housing is important to support disadvantaged people in the area."

Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

High performing organisation

We engage effectively with the community, deliver efficient and effective services and initiatives, make decision in the best interest of our community and deliver value to our community

This project will result in additional funding available to Council, outside the usual revenue sources, to assist in funding priority programs and projects that will benefit the community.

Considerations

Environmental

This proposal makes available additional housing resources within the Mernda area and contributes to housing affordability.

Social, Cultural and Health

Officers have taken the opportunity to assess the development and its ability to support the outcomes of Council's SAH policy. An allocation of three lots is proposed to be reserved for affordable housing. An expression of interest process is proposed to be undertaken to offer the three lots for sale and/or lease to a suitable housing provider as determined by Council.

Economic

Option 2 will require Council to engage with and employ businesses to construct the infrastructure needed for this residential development. This proposal will result in 35 new families residing within the Mernda area, which will provide additional economic activity to local businesses.

Financial Implications

Option 2 (where Council develops and sells the lots) provides the more advantageous financial return to Council. This option will allow more funds to be reinvested back into community infrastructure.

Link to Strategic Risk

Strategic Risk *Financial Sustainability - Inability to meet current and future expenditure*

Strategic property purchases and development are an alternative source of cashflow that Council has identified to meet the financial constraints associated with rate capping. Council's return on investment from this project is intended to be reinvested back into community infrastructure.

Implementation Strategy

Communication

All details on the Option 2 will be communicated on Council's website (Hive) via an information page. The information page will include contact details for a Council Officer who can respond to community enquiries on this project.

Critical Dates

No critical dates exist in relation to this proposal or project, other than ensuring a financial gain be returned to Council for proposed reinvestment back into community infrastructure, and to support the objectives of Council's SAH Policy.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Rule 47 of the Governance Rules 2021, officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

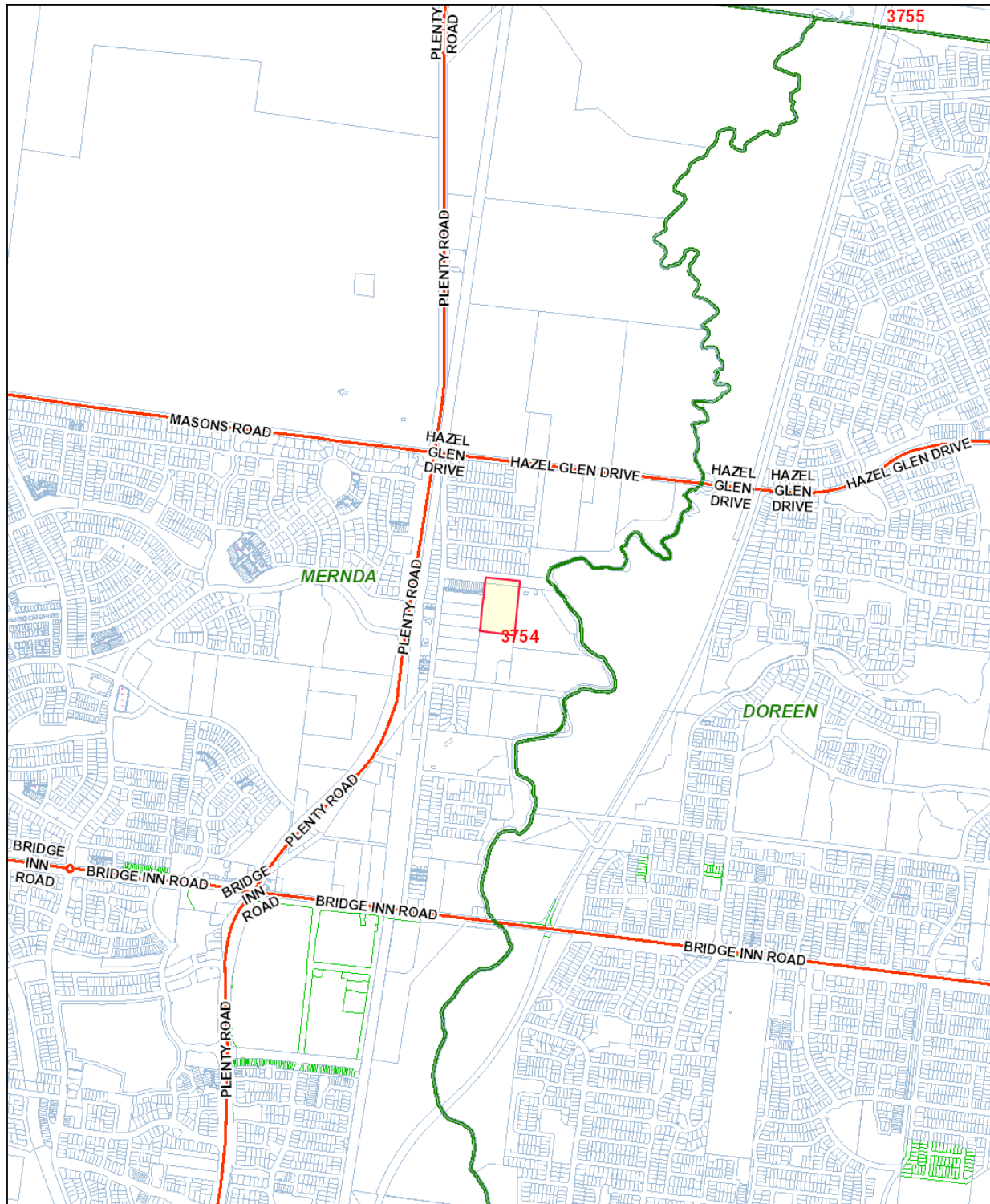
Conclusion

The community consultation process did not result in substantial opposition to Council's proposals to sell the subject property (subdivided lots) and/or allocating three lots to social affordable housing.

Following the consideration of various sales options, the preferred option is for Council to develop, construct and subdivide the site in accordance with the approved 35 lot plan of subdivision (Option 2 from Attachment 1). Further, it is proposed that Council sell 32 of the 35 lots on the open market and reserve three lots for "Affordable Housing" in accordance with Council's SAH Policy.



17 - 19 Johnsons Road, Mernda



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Map Scale: 1 : 18968
Date: 23/08/2021
Produced By: gjm



Aerial Photo of 17-19 Johnsons Road, Mernda



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Map Scale: 1 : 2371
Date: 23/08/2021
Produced By: gjm

Scheduled Council Meeting Minutes**Monday 2 August 2021****6.2 LIVEABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS****ITEM 6.2.1 FOR DECISION - PLANNING APPLICATION 718577 - SUBDIVIDE LAND (35 LOTS) IN THE GENERAL RESIDENTIAL ZONE AND REMOVAL OF NATIVE VEGETATION IN A VEGETATION PROTECTION OVERLAY AND (INCLUDING DEAD VEGETATION) UNDER CLAUSE 52.17 AT 17 - 19 JOHNSONS ROAD, MERNDA**

Attachments: 1 **Locality Map**
 2 **Subdivision Layout Plan**

Responsible Officer: **Director Planning & Development**

Author: **Principal Planner**

APPLICANT: **Whittlesea City Council c/o Urbis Pty Ltd**

COUNCIL POLICY: **River Redgum Protection Policy**

ZONING: **General Residential Zone Schedule 1 (GRZ1)**

OVERLAY: **Development Plan Overlay Schedule 34 (DPO34)**
 Vegetation Protection Overlay Schedule 1 (VPO1)

REFERRAL: **AusNet**
 Melbourne Water
 Yarra Valley Water
 APT & O & M Services
 CFA

OBJECTIONS: **Four**

RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

That Council resolve to approve Planning Application No. 718577 and issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit for subdivision of the land into 35 lots and removal of native vegetation at 17-19 Johnsons Road, Mernda, as the proposal represents an appropriate development consistent with Planning Scheme requirements.

BRIEF OVERVIEW

Council purchased the subject site (former Mernda Primary School) in 2014 from the State Government, with the intention of developing the site to help fund future community infrastructure.

It is a requirement that Council assess and determine the application (despite also being the owner) and transparency has been provided through Council engaging an independent consultant on behalf of Council and the application process was as thorough as any application would typically be.

The initial application proposed 38 lots, however officers raised a number of questions in relation vegetation assessment, drainage, bushfire planning and subdivision/road layout.

This resulted in a modified plan that increased reserve areas to retain additional trees and avoid Tree Protection Zones being located within lots. An additional reserve was required at the southern end to match an approved reserve and tree retention on land to the west, which

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are shown in the current plan (Revision G) which now creates 35 lots and is the plan that was publicly advertised.

Advertising of the application has attracted four objections which identified concerns relating to traffic, urbanisation and health impacts. A response to these concerns is provided within the discussion section of this report.

The proposed subdivision is considered satisfactory and consistent with the concept plan in the schedule to the Development Plan Overlay and subject to conditions, is an appropriate outcome for the site.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The proposed subdivision is consistent with the residential zoning of the land and Development Plan Overlay that applies to this area. It meets the requirements set out in the detailed concept plan, is respectful of the intended layout pattern and density, whilst has retained important native vegetation where possible.

IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The subdivision will increase residential land supply and housing opportunities within Mernda consistent with the strategic outcomes sought for the site and whilst appropriate, will result in a change for the area as the site is presently undeveloped.

The objections relates to the urbanisation of the site and consequences of that change. However, urbanisation is anticipated by the planning controls and the retention of as many trees as practical, creation of reserves in the site and conditions for management of construction seek to minimise adverse impacts.

WHAT MEASURES WILL BE PUT IN PLACE TO MANAGE IMPACTS

There have been alterations made to the proposed subdivision during the application process to improve its response to planning provisions and conditions imposed will ensure that any negative impacts will be minimised and maintained resulting in an appropriate residential development for the area.

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The site is located on the southern side of Johnsons Road some 140m to the east of Schotters Road. The site was previously used for the Mernda Primary School, with the school relocating to a larger site in 2011 to accommodate the forecasted population growth.

The land is owned by Council. Council formally resolved to purchase the property at its meeting held on 28 October 2014. The purchase was conditional on the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development removing all improvements and any soil contamination from the property, including buildings and underground tanks.

The land was valued and purchased by Council on the basis of the land being rezoned and developed for residential purposes to assist in funding community infrastructure at the new Regional Mernda Recreation Reserve. The land was zoned as 'Public Use' at the time, and was intended to be rezoned (by Whittlesea Planning Scheme Amendment C175) for future residential sub-division purposes in accordance with the proposed Mernda Township Strategy Plan. Amendment C175 was gazetted and came into operation on 4 May 2017 rezoning this site and the area to the south and west, most of which is on the eastern side of Plenty Road to General Residential Zone and introduced Development Plan Overlay Schedule 34.

The profits from this enterprise were intended to be placed into a fund for the future development of the Regional Mernda Recreational Reserve.

SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The land is rectangular in shape with a frontage of 120.3m to Johnsons Road and measures approximately 2.02 hectares and is largely flat. The site does not contain any buildings and features significant numbers of mature trees, particularly along the boundaries, and in the southern quarter of the site, with others located in the centre of the site. The site, including the frontage to Johnsons Road, is currently fenced with no formal functional vehicle crossover.

It is rectangular in shape with a frontage of 120.3m to Johnsons Road and measures approximately 2.02 hectares and is largely flat. The site does not contain any buildings and features significant numbers of mature trees, particularly along the boundaries, and in the southern quarter of the site, with others located in the centre of the site. The site, including the frontage to Johnsons Road, is currently fenced with no formal functional vehicle crossover.

When the site was functioning as a school there were formalised vehicle access and drop-off areas in the north-west corner, as well as vehicle access points in the north-eastern corner.

Interfaces to surrounding properties include the following:

- To the east is 31-35 Johnsons Road, which contains a dwelling as well as significant vegetation. There are a number of mature trees on the site including some close to the common boundary.
- To the north on the opposite side of Johnsons Road are dwellings typically single storey and setback from the road frontage about 10m with garages or car ports generally at the side or rear.
- To the south 22-30 Hayes Road contains a single dwelling, as well as two large ancillary sheds. The sheds are close to its northern boundary.

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- On the western side the site abuts the rear of five separate properties, including No. 104-106, 108-110, 112- 114, 116-118 and 120 Schotters Road.
 - At 120 Schotters Road there is a row of 17 (townhouse style) dwellings (most attached) fronting Johnsons Road, with a small setback from that frontage. At the western end is a small medical centre (for up to two practitioners) fronting Schotters Road. Each dwelling is two-storey in height with private open space located at the centre of each lot and a garage on the southern end. There is a common property accessway adjacent to the common boundary with the subject site.
 - The other abutting properties also have rear abuttal to the subject site and include scattered mature trees and dwellings sited towards the Schotters Road frontage. There is a permit for 24 dwellings at 116-118 Schotters Road, with a more recent permit (May 2021) issued for a medical centre (for up to three practitioners). Similarly, there is a permit for 25 dwellings at 112-114 Schotters Road. No works have been commenced under these permits yet.
 - A permit was approved by Council (at its meeting October 2020) for the two lots comprising 104 and 108-110 Schotters Road. This approved a 29 lot subdivision and 12 dwellings (on the lots less than 300sqm), and also featured a road running into the southern end of the western boundary of the subject site (intended to run into the subject site) and a reserve on the northern side of that road also adjacent to the common boundary with the subject site. Similarly, works have not yet commenced on that subdivision.

The site is located close to the following infrastructure and community facilities (approximate distances shown):

- Public Transport:
 - Mernda Train Station (approximately 800m to the south-east)
 - Bus Route 382 - Whittlesea to Northland Shopping Centre (350m to the north-west)
 - Bus Route 385 - Mernda Station/Whittlesea to Greensborough (350m to the northwest)
- Public Open Space:
 - Wombat Corner (100m to the north-east)
 - Mernda Streamside Reserve (300m to the east)
 - Schotters Road Park (350m to the north-west)
 - Mernda Adventure Park (450m to the south-west)
 - Mernda Recreation Reserve (700m to the south of the site)
 - Plenty Gorge Parklands (1.25km to the south of the site)
- Schools:
 - Mernda Primary School (1.2km to the south-west)
 - Mernda Central College (2.1km to the south-west)
 - St Paul the Apostle Catholic Primary School (1km to the south-east)
- Medical:
 - APS Medical Clinic (700m to the south)
 - Mernda Village Medical (1.30km to the south-east)

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- Retail/Service:
 - Mernda Activity Centre (1km to the south-east)

RESTRICTIONS AND EASEMENTS

The certificate of title contains no covenants or agreements.

PROPOSAL

The application is proposing a residential subdivision creating a total of 35 residential lots of varying sizes. The key components of the application are:

- 35 residential lots of varying sizes and orientations, including 21 lots with an area of 299sqm or smaller and 14 lots of between 300sqm and 500sqm
- Provision of three tree reserves totalling 0.2ha in area. These include:
 - A reserve on the western side 10m wide extending to about mid-site where it increases to the mid connecting east-west part of the road. This retains the trees in this part of the site.
 - A linear reserve alongside the eastern boundary so as to retain the trees along and close to that boundary.
 - A reserve at the southern end of the western boundary on the north side of the road that will connect to the western boundary so to provide for the preservation of a Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) relating to a tree required to be retained on the adjoining property, and to match and complement a reserve to be provided around that tree on the adjoining property.
- Internal access roads with connections provided into adjoining properties - located at the southern end of the western boundary and the eastern end of the southern boundary (to provide for through roads at those points).

The initial application sought approval for the subdivision into 38 residential lots with less/smaller reserves (on the west side) and less tree retention (as compared to the current plan).

Initial concerns were worked through with the planning consultants and amended plans were submitted for consideration, with the latest plan submitted now showing lots excluding impacts from TPZs by the enlargement of the reserve on the western side and the incorporation of the reserve at the southern part of the western side which protects the TPZ on the tree on adjoining land and matches the reserve on that land.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

The application was publicly advertised, and four objections have been received from residents on the northern side of Johnsons Road opposite the site. In summary, the main grounds of objection raised are as follows:

1. Diminishment of quietness of the location, Johnsons Road being a no-through road and the reason for purchasing in the location.
2. Loss of the present natural views and wildlife and its benefits for wellbeing and mental health.
3. The increase in traffic in accessing the development opposite existing dwellings on the northern side of Johnsons Road with increased noise, disturbance, headlights into existing dwellings together with loss of privacy and loss of safety (especially to children in the area).

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4. The prospect of the site being a 'building site' for many years with significant disturbance from trucks, machinery, trades and similar, both on-site and by utilising Johnsons Road for access. This includes being detrimental to sleep when engaged in shift work.

GENERAL RESIDENTIAL ZONE (GRZ1)

Under Clause 32.08 a planning permit is required to subdivide land. An application to subdivide land (into 16 to 59 lots) must meet all of the objectives and should meet the standards of all the requirements of Clause 56 except Clauses 56.03-1 to 56.03-3 (Standards C2 to C4), 56.03-5 (Standard C6), 56.06-1 (Standard C14) and 56.06-3 (Standard C16).

Schedule 1 to the Zone specifies no additional requirements.

OVERLAYS**Clause 42.02 Vegetation Protection Overlay Schedule 1 (VPO1)**

This Overlay (Clause 42.02) provides that a permit is required to lop, remove or destroy native vegetation.

The vegetation on the site includes a range of exotic, native and indigenous trees. Amongst the indigenous trees are a number of River Red Gums, which have been identified within VP01 as being of value.

Considering the recommendations for retention and removal provided by the arborist's report included to inform this proposal, the trees being removed and retained as part of this proposal are considered to have been appropriately selected. Two tree reserves and an area set aside for the Plenty River Environs are proposed which will serve to protect a large proportion of the trees identified to be of high to moderate retention value.

The tree reserves are located to ensure each reserve has significant pre-existing vegetation and are of sufficient size, and are appropriately located, to establish and preserve the natural character of the area. They preserve a range of valued species, including River Red Gums and Yellow Box, and so preserve a valuable level of biodiversity.

The River Red Gums to be removed are limited to a total of seven (numbered in the Arborist Report as 44, 45, 47, 52, 53, 187, and 189) Each of these are assessed as 'low retention value' with one rated (No. 53) 'no retention value' and each of these trees has a DBH of less than 50cm.

Clause 43.04 Development Plan Overlay Schedule 34 (DPO34)

The Development Plan Overlay contains a general provision that a permit for subdivision, use or development should be in accordance with an approved Development Plan unless the applicable schedule specifically states that a permit may be granted before a development plan has been prepared.

In this instance, Schedule 34 provides that a permit may be granted prior to the approval of a Development Plan where the Responsible Authority is satisfied that the proposed subdivision, use or development will not prejudice the orderly use and development of land, as outlined by the Concept Plan and development plan requirements included in this Schedule.

The site, being the former Mernda Primary School site, forms part of the Mernda Township Development Plan which is given effect through Schedule 34 to the Development Plan Overlay.

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Under this Schedule, a planning permit may be granted prior to the approval of a Development Plan where the Responsible Authority is satisfied that the proposed subdivision, use or development will not prejudice the orderly use and development of land, as outlined by the Concept Plan and development plan requirements included in this schedule.

It is considered that the proposed subdivision will not prejudice the orderly use and development of the land noting that it is consistent with the detailed Concept Plan and as such a Development Plan is not required to be prepared in advance of a permit being issued. In that respect a Development Plan would not provide any greater guidance to a permit for subdivision, and it is also noted that:

- The proposed subdivision is generally consistent with Mernda Township Concept Plan.
- The site is within walking distance of public open space and the train station and is in proximity to the Mernda Town Centre.
- The initial plan of subdivision was altered to show the western access road continuing south to boundary of the adjacent property (to allow ultimate road connection to the south).

The detailed Concept Plan is included at Clause 6.0 of the Schedule. As part of the concept Plan, the subject land has been identified for a mix of medium and standard density residential development. Medium density development is shown along the northern part of the site (adjacent to Johnsons Road), while the remaining land to the south is shown to be developed at standard residential density, with lots ranging from 260sqm to 454sqm.

The subdivision layout shows lots between 192sqm to 274sqm (with frontages of 6m to 8.7m) fronting Johnsons Road which is generally consistent with the Concept Plan where the provision of medium density housing is encouraged. The lot sizes proposed for the remainder of the site are varied in size and range between 244sqm to 454sqm.

CLAUSE 56 (Subdivision)

The following table provides details on whether the proposal complies with the applicable requirements of Clause 56 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme. Under these provisions a subdivision:

- Must meet all of the objectives
- Should meet all of the standards

If Council is satisfied that an application for an alternative design solution meets the objective, the alternative design solution may be considered.

	✓ - Compliance x - Non compliance	Objectives	Standards	Comments
C1	Strategic Implementation	✓	✓	The layout and design of the subdivision is generally in accordance with wider planning policies of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme, including the Mernda Township Development Plan's Concept Plan.
C5	Built environment	✓	✓	The subdivision implements the objectives of the State and Local Planning Policy in addition to zoning and overlay requirements. The precinct creates a compact neighbourhood that has a highly permeable movement network.

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	✓ - Compliance x - Non compliance	Objectives	Standards	Comments
				All allotments within the subdivision will have access to the Mernda Township Activity Centre, public open space and public transport.
C7	Lot diversity and distribution	✓	✓	The subdivision has a variety of lot sizes and will be able to accommodate varied dwelling typologies. All lots will be capable of accommodating a dwelling, with approval by a planning or building permit.
C8	Lot area and building envelopes	✓	✓	Future dwellings on these lots will be able to achieve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate solar access. • An appropriate area of secluded private open • Safe vehicle access and adequate onsite parking • Access to a full range of utilities
C9	Solar orientation of lots	✓	✓	The majority of allotments have been designed to satisfy the solar orientation standard. The lots are adequate in area to provide appropriate solar access for future dwellings.
C10	Street orientation	✓	✓	A number of features are proposed to enable the creation of a safe community and to promote interaction between residents including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All lots have primary frontage to a road. • Lots less than 300sqm are proposed in the northern portion of the site in close proximity to the open space. • The public open space will abut a road frontage
C11	Common area	✓	✓	No common property is created, and roads created would be transferred to Council as public roads.
C12	Integrated urban landscape	✓	✓	The primary public areas within the subdivision that require landscape design will be the streetscapes, in addition to the small open space areas. A landscape plan is to be developed in coordination with Council's landscaping department. The landscape plan will consider species appropriate for the Mernda area.

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	✓ - Compliance x - Non compliance	Objectives	Standards	Comments
C13	Public open space provision	✓	✓	The Concept Plan indicates an area of open space being developed between the northern boundary of the proposed subdivision and Johnsons Road. The proposed subdivision maintains this open space and also includes additional areas of open space along the eastern and western portions of the site, providing immediate access to open space for a large portion for dwellings within the proposed subdivision.
C15	Walking and cycling network	✓	✓	The Concept Plan nominates a shared path along the western side of the site, and this area will not be developed, with the open space in the area facilitating the development of a shared path at a future date. All pedestrian and shared paths will be constructed to accommodate persons of limited mobility
C17	Neighbourhood street network	✓	✓	The road dimensions in the subdivision are sufficient to comfortably accommodate the key components of the neighbourhood street network including appropriately sized carriageways, sufficient on street parking, landscaping, drainage, public transport and pedestrian/cycle paths where required. All carriageways will be constructed to accommodate emergency vehicles and service vehicles as appropriate.
C18	Walking and cycling network detail	✓	✓	The open space area on the western side of will facilitate footpaths which can feed into a network and connect pedestrians and cyclists to the surrounds, including Mernda Station and the Mernda Township Activity Centre.
C19	Public transport network detail	✓	✓	The subdivision does not include any arterial road, nor is it located adjacent to one. It is within the proximity of the Mernda station and buses which traverse Schotters Road.
C20	Neighbourhood street network detail	✓	✓	The road design will provide an accessible and safe neighbourhood street system. The road reservation widths are generally wide enough to accommodate appropriately sized carriageways, traffic calming devices, parking, landscaping, drainage, public transport, and pedestrian/cycleway requirements for the different category roads as specified in Table C1. Uninterrupted street lengths are kept below 200 metres and the street block widths are within the ranges specified.

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	✓ - Compliance x - Non compliance	Objectives	Standards	Comments
				The street geometry fosters the development of a safe environment for pedestrians.
C21	Lot access	✓	✓	The road reservation widths are generally wide enough to accommodate the pavement and verge widths for the different category roads as specified in Table C1.
C22	Drinking water supply	✓	✓	All lots will be connected to the local water supply to the satisfaction of the relevant water authority.
C23	Reused and recycled water	✓	✓	Recycled water supply systems will be developed to the satisfaction of the relevant water authority.
C24	Waste water management	✓	✓	Waste water systems will be designed, constructed and managed in accordance with the requirements of the relevant water authorities. Reticulated waste water systems will be provided to the boundary of all lots where required by the relevant water authority.
C25	Stormwater management	✓	✓	The subdivision design will be designed and managed in accordance with the requirements and satisfaction of the relevant drainage authority.
C26	Site management	✓	✓	A Construction Management Plan could be required by condition of approval to ensure that environmental impacts are minimised during the construction phase.
C27	Shared trenching	✓	✓	Reticulated services will be constructed within shared trenches where appropriate.
C28	Electricity, telecommunications and gas	✓	✓	Electricity services can be made available to a staged development subject to the developer entering into the standard conditions of supply. The demand on the electricity supply will be minimised by: Allotments with good solar orientation Dwellings that achieve a five star energy efficiency rating. Telecommunication infrastructure will be extended and augmented as necessary to meet the future development requirements. Broadband services will be provided as a part of the telecommunications package and will be made available to a staged development subject to the developer entering into a supply agreement.

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	✓ - Compliance x - Non compliance	Objectives	Standards	Comments
C29	Fire hydrants	✓	✓	Fire hydrants will be installed to satisfy this standard.
C30	Public lighting	✓	✓	Public lighting will be provided within the street network, to contribute towards a safe movement network

DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN OVERLAY

The land is not covered by a Development Contributions Overlay. However, Developer Contributions are required in accordance with the rates set out in the Mernda Local Structure Plan Part 1 (Developer Contributions). Contributions may be in the form of a cash contribution and/or works in lieu of payments.

A condition is included in the recommendation to require the contribution accordingly.

COMMENTS ON GROUNDS OF OBJECTION**1. Diminished quietness of the location.**

While it is understood that the proposal represents a marked change from the previous use of the site as a primary school and its present vacant status, the land and surrounding land is General Residential Zone which is an urban residential zone that includes the purpose of providing for a diversity of housing types and housing growth particularly in locations offering good access to services and transport.

Further, the DPO34 Schedule includes a detailed concept plan that shows the site to be designated for medium density housing at the northern part (i.e. to the Johnsons Road frontage) and standard density further south within the site.

These controls anticipate a development consistent with the proposed subdivision.

It is also noted that the development at the Johnsons Road frontage is largely consistent with the existing townhouse development on the adjoining property at 120 Schotters Road where the dwellings similarly front Johnsons Road.

2. Loss of the present natural views.

Similar to the above comments, the development of the site is anticipated by the planning controls. However, there has been a particular effort made to preserve as far as practical trees that are assessed as suitable for being retained. Reserves shown in the initial application plan have been increased in area/width and an additional reserve created at the south end for that reason.

While the development is still a significant change, this will minimise the impact.

3. Additional traffic and access.

The additional traffic (and access to the site) is a necessary correlation to the development of proposed lots for dwellings.

The frontage to Johnsons Road has two access points and at the southern end of the proposed subdivision the access roads run to the western boundary (south side) and to the southern boundary (east side). Both will connect to connecting roads once development occurs on the adjoining properties, as depicted on the Concept Plan in Schedule 34 to the DPO.

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The road to the west side of the land has been approved as part of a subdivision approved by Council in October 2020 for the adjoining land at 104-110 Schotters (Permit 719072), which includes a connecting road through to Schotters Road. Ultimately, traffic to and from this estate will be well distributed.

4. The site being a 'building site' for many years.

The recommendation for approval includes a requirement for a site management plan which will manage potential offsite impacts during the course of the construction of the subdivision.

Notably, a further planning permit will be required for dwellings on lots of less than 300sqm in area (these lots are at or near the Johnsons Road frontage) and typically include some conditions to prevent or minimise offsite impacts. In any event, the construction of dwellings are required to comply with a code of conduct also seeking to minimise and manage potential offsite impacts.

DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Rule 47 of the *Governance Rules 2021*, officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

CONCLUSION

The application has been assessed against the Whittlesea Planning Scheme, including applicable policies, Zoning, Overlays and other provisions.

The proposed subdivision has been amended over the course of the application process and the proposal now demonstrates a satisfactory level of compliance, subject to appropriate conditions. The sizes and variation of lots and retention of existing vegetation is acceptable and is consistent with the detailed concept plan which is in accordance with the outcomes sought by the Mernda Township Plan.

Accordingly, approval of the application is recommended subject to the conditions as set out the recommendation below.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council resolve to approve Planning Application No. 718577 and issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit for the subdivision of the land and removal of native vegetation in accordance with the endorsed plans and subject to the following conditions:

Amended Subdivision Concept Plan

- 1. Prior to certification, an amended Subdivision Layout Plan to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. When approved, the plan will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The plan must be drawn to scale with dimensions and an electronic copy must be provided. The plan must be generally in accordance with the Subdivision Layout Plan, Revision G dated 05/03/2021 as prepared by Urbis, but amended to show:**

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- a. All vegetation within the site identified in accordance with the Arborist Report prepared by TreeMap Arboriculture dated May 2018 and nominated for retention or removal.
- b. full concrete laneway (8m wide) with swept paths for garbage collection.
- c. carriageway in accordance with the Council Urban design guidelines or as otherwise agreed with the Responsible Authority.
- d. the laneway connection to Johnsons Road and the footpath without impacting the trees.

Payments required

- 2. Prior to the endorsement of plans, the permit holder must pay to Council a contribution for infrastructure pursuant to the rates set out in the Mernda Local Structure Plan Part 1. The contribution will be subject to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) applicable at the time of payment.
- 3. Before a Statement of Compliance is issued under the Subdivision Act 1988, a public open space contribution as specified in the schedule to clause 52.01 of the Planning Scheme must be made to the Responsible Authority.

Functional Layout Plan

- 4. Before the submission and approval of construction plans (engineering plans) and the certification of the relevant plan of subdivision for each stage, a functional layout plan for the subdivision, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority.

When approved, the functional layout plan will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. An electronic copy of the functional layout plan must be drawn at a scale of 1:500 to acceptable drafting standards.

The functional layout plan must be generally in accordance with the Subdivision Layout Plan endorsed under Condition 1, but amended to show:

- a. a fully dimensioned subdivision layout, including approximate lot areas, lot numbers, open space areas, widths of street reservations, stage boundaries and the relationship between the site/stage and the surrounding land;
- b. topography and existing features, including contours for the subject land and any affected adjacent land;
- c. identification by survey of all trees (or group of trees) existing on the site, including dead trees and those that overhang the site from adjoining land. All trees proposed for removal shall be designated with a cross;
- d. details of tree protection zones (TPZs), for all trees to be retained on site and overhanging from adjoining sites in accordance with the City of Whittlesea TPZ standard;
- e. typical cross-sections for each street type, dimensioning individual elements, services offsets and any other spatial requirements;
- f. a table of offsets for all utility services and street trees;
- g. location and alignment of kerbs, indented parking spaces, footpaths on the subject land and between the subject land and the nearest other subdivision, shared paths on the subject land and between the subject land and the nearest other existing subdivision, bus stop locations marked with a cross;
- h. the location of any traffic management devices required to service the subdivision (signals, roundabouts, splitter islands, etc);
- i. provision of notional on-street parking for all lots at a rate of one space per

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lot;

- j. swept path diagrams demonstrating that the road network (including laneways) have been designed for a 12.5m design service vehicle in accordance with Austroads Design Vehicle and Turning Path templates;
- k. any spatial requirements for drainage as identified in the submitted Drainage Strategy and the proposed overland flow paths;
- l. preliminary location of reserves for electrical kiosks; and
- m. works external to the subdivision, including both interim and ultimate intersection design requirements and layouts.

Amended Bushfire Management Plan

- 5. Before the development starts, an amended and updated Bushfire Management Plan to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. When approved, the Bushfire Management Plan will be endorsed and will then form part of this permit. The Bushfire Management Plan must be generally in accordance with the Bushfire Management Plan prepared by Bushfire Planning Report entitled "Bushfire Planning Assessment 17-19 Johnsons Road Mernda dated 22 May 2020 Version 1.0, but modified to show:
 - a. Assessment based on the final subdivision concept plan.
 - b. Dwellings on each lot constructed to a BAL-12.5 standard.
 - c. Defendable space established and maintained in accordance with the recommendation of that Report.

CONDITIONS TO BE SATISFIED PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF WORKS**Telecommunications services agreement**

- 6. The owner of the land must enter into an agreement with:
 - a. A telecommunications network or service provider for the provision of telecommunication services to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with the provider's requirements and relevant legislation at the time; and
 - b. A suitably qualified person for the provision of fibre ready telecommunication facilities to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with any industry specifications or any standards set by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the land is in an area where the National Broadband Network will not be provided by optical fibre.

Engineering Plans

- 7. Pursuant to sections 15 and 17(1) (b) of the Subdivision Act 1988, the applicant must submit engineering plans including specifications for works required under this permit to the Responsible Authority for approval. The engineering plans submitted for approval must be to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority and must incorporate details of all public works within and outside the subdivision as required by this permit. If the subdivision is to be staged, engineering plans for each stage must be generally in accordance with the approved functional layout plans for each stage.

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7.1 Civil Works Plans

Works must be provided, in accordance with civil works plans and specifications as approved by the Responsible Authority, prior to the issue of Statement of Compliance. Before any works associated with the subdivision commence, detailed civil works plans for the relevant stage of works to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. The civil works plans will not be considered until the functional layout plan(s) for the relevant stage has been approved by the responsible authority and landscape works plans submitted, the plan of subdivision has been lodged for certification with the Responsible Authority and the locations of other authorities' services have been provided to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. When approved, the civil works plans will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The civil works plans must be drawn to scale with dimensions and three copies must be provided. The civil works plans must include:

- a. All necessary computations and supporting documentation, including a Certificate of Compliance (design) for any structure, traffic data, road safety audit and geotechnical investigation report.
- b. All details of works consistent with the approved functional layout plan, submitted landscape plan and lodged plan of subdivision.
- c. Design for full construction of streets and underground drainage, including measures to control / capture pollutants and silt.
- d. Provision for all services and conduits (underground), including alignments and offsets, on a separate services layout plan.
- e. Provision of public lighting and underground electricity supply within all streets.
- f. Traffic control measures.
- g. Provision of street name plates to the Council standard design including a schedule of individual signs and associated street numbers.
- h. Provision of footpaths in all streets and reserves and between the subject land and the nearest other existing subdivision in accordance with the approved functional layout plan.
- i. Any shared paths in accordance with the Development Plan Overlay Schedule 34 within streets and reserves.
- j. Provision of underground easement drains of sufficient capacity to serve all lots being created to a legal point of discharge and the provision of an inlet on each such lot.
- k. The location and provision of vehicle exclusion mechanisms abutting reserves.
- l. Details of the proposed treatment and provision for lot boundary fencing adjoining all reserves other than road reserves.
- m. Appropriate mechanisms for protecting environmental and heritage assets during the construction phase of the subdivision.
- n. Provision for the utilisation of any surplus top soil from this stage.
- o. Permanent survey marks.

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- p. Unless an alternative empty conduit network is being installed that is suitable for fibre optic infrastructure and the applicant has evidence of an access agreement between the carrier putting in the conduit and the National Broadband Network Company, the provision of conduits, including pits and ancillary works for optical fibre telecommunications services or any equivalent alternative approved by the Responsible Authority and the conduit shall be designed in accordance with Clause 22.13 Telecommunications Conduit Policy of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme and Planning Guidelines for Conduits for Optic Fibre Services, 2001.
- q. Survey details of the canopy trunk location and size of trees to be retained and associated tree protection zones.
- r. Details in relation to all filling on the site which must be compacted to specifications approved by the Responsible Authority.
- s. The relocation underground of all existing aerial services, including electricity and telecommunications assets, within streets abutting the subdivision.
- t. The location of any earthworks (cut or fill) or service provision in a location outside the designated tree protection zone which does not adversely impact on the health and integrity of any trees to be retained.
- u. A separate signage and line marking plan identifying the road layout, proposed signs, line marking, RRPMS and a sign schedule.

7.2 Landscape Works

Plans Prior to the approval of civil works plans for each stage, a draft landscape works plan for that stage must be submitted to the Responsible Authority for comparison against the civil works plans. Once approved to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority, the landscape works plan will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The landscape works plan must be drawn to scale with dimensions and three copies of the final plan must be provided. The landscape works plan must show:

- a. The removal of all existing disused structures, foundations, pipelines or stockpiles and the eradication of weeds.
- b. All proposed street-tree planting using semi - advanced trees; with maximum container size of 45 litres or equivalent (larger sizes will incur additional establishment and extended maintenance obligations).
- c. Earth shaping including the supply and spread of sufficient topsoil and sub soil if required on the proposed areas of open space to provide a stable, free draining surface and hydro-seeding of proposed grass areas (including within the drainage reserve if applicable).
- d. Mechanisms for the exclusion of vehicles.
- e. All proposed open space and streetscape embellishments such as installation of pathways, park lighting, garden beds, seating, shelters, picnic facilities, boardwalks, tree planting, signage, drinking fountains, irrigation systems, playgrounds, artwork, retaining walls, protective fencing (temporary and permanent), wetlands and ornamental water bodies (including within the drainage reserve if applicable).
- f. Hazard reduction pruning of trees to be retained, to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

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- g. Where sufficient detail is shown on the endorsed landscape masterplan, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority, stage landscape plans may not be required.
- 8. Unless the Council agrees under section 21(1) (b)(ii) of the Subdivision Act 1988 , all works shown on the endorsed construction plans must be constructed or carried out in accordance with the plans before the issue of a Statement of Compliance for the relevant stage under the Subdivision Act 1988 all to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Statement of compliance with deferment of engineering works

- 9. Prior to the issue of a Statement of Compliance for any stage or by such later date as is approved by the responsible authority in writing, the applicant may seek, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority, the issue of the Statement of Compliance but with deferment of completion of specified civil construction works shown on the endorsed construction plans and all or part of landscape construction works shown on the endorsed plans, provided the following requirements have been met:

9.1 Civil Works

- a. All relevant referral authorities have consented to the issue of a Statement of Compliance.
- b. Civil construction works have been completed except for the wearing course asphalt works, the landscaping component of the works and any other minor works as agreed with the responsible authority.
- c. An amount equivalent to 150% the agreed estimated cost of outstanding civil construction works will be required by the responsible authority as security deposit.
- d. A works program is provided setting out the proposed timing of all outstanding construction works.
- e. A site safety plan that ensures continuous public safety measures are maintained until completion of the deferred works.

Upon completion of the deferred civil construction works the applicant must notify the responsible authority to enable its inspection. If the works have been completed to its satisfaction, the Responsible Authority must refund fully the security deposit.

9.2 Landscape Works

- a. An amount equivalent to 150% of the agreed estimated cost of outstanding streetscape / landscape construction plus an agreed amount for the maintenance works will be required by the Responsible Authority as security deposit.
- b. A works program is provided setting out the proposed timing of all outstanding landscape construction works. Works must commence within 3 months of issue of Statement of Compliance for the given stage of the subdivision and must be completed prior to occupancy of any new dwelling within the given stage.

Upon completion of the deferred landscaping construction works, the applicant must notify the Responsible Authority to enable its inspection. Subject to satisfactory completion of the deferred landscaping, a Certificate of Practical Completion for landscaping will be issued, triggering the commencement of the maintenance period. If the works have been completed to its satisfaction, the Responsible Authority must refund fully the security deposit.

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Tree Protection Zones

10. Prior to the certification of a plan of subdivision under the Subdivision Act 1988, a Tree Protection Zone plan for the subdivision or stage of subdivision to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. When approved, the Tree Protection Zone plan will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The Tree Protection Zone plan must be drawn to scale with dimensions and three copies must be provided. The Tree Protection Zone plan must show:

- a. A Tree Protection Zone on a lot covering each tree marked for retention on the approved tree protection envelope plan; and
- b. A Tree Protection Zone within open space and road reserves for each tree or cluster of trees marked for retention on the approved tree management plan.

The Tree Protection Zone is a shape defined by a circle, whose centre point is the centre point of the tree trunk at ground level, and whose radius is equal to half the height of the tree (or half the crown width (whichever is the greater)) plus the tree canopy plus one metre.

Tree Protection Zone Fencing

11. Prior to commencement of subdivision works (including any demolition, excavations, tree removal, delivery of construction materials and/or temporary buildings) on a lot, open space and/or road reservation, each Tree Protection Zone on that lot, open space and/or road reservation must:

- a. Be fenced with temporary fencing in accordance with the attached specifications, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority; and
- b. Include a notice on the fence to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority advising on the purpose of the Tree Protection Zone, the need to retain and maintain the temporary fencing and that fines will be imposed for removal or damage of the fencing and trees.

The Tree Protection Zone temporary fencing must be maintained until works are completed; including the construction of a dwelling if the land is a lot, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority or until such earlier date as is approved by the Responsible Authority in writing.

A copy of the tree protection zone(s) are to be included in any contract for the construction of the estate or for any other works which may impact upon the trees.

CONDITIONS TO BE SATISFIED PRIOR TO ISSUE OF A STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE**Connection to Telecommunication Services**

12. Before the issue of a Statement of Compliance for any stage of the subdivision under the Subdivision Act 1988, the owner of the land must provide written confirmation from:

- a. A telecommunications network or service provider that all lots are connected to or are ready for connection to telecommunications services in accordance with the provider's requirements and relevant legislation at the time; and
- b. A suitably qualified person that fibre ready telecommunication facilities have been provided in accordance with any industry specifications or any standards set by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the land is in an area where the National Broadband Network will not be provided by optical fibre.

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13. Prior to the issue of a Statement of Compliance, the permit holder must enter into an agreement pursuant to Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 or any alternative restriction deemed satisfactory by the Responsible Authority for all lots between 300m² and 500m² which requires the preparation of building envelope plans. These building envelope plans must:
- Be in accordance with Standard C8 and any other relevant Standard under Clause 56 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.
 - Incorporate plans and a written statement to address each of the relevant objectives and performance measures of Clause 54 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
 - Require the construction of all dwellings and associated development be contained within the nominated building envelope for each of the lots hereby approved except with the prior written consent of the Responsible Authority.
 - Include design guidelines to ensure a consistent building form and design outcomes for groups of contiguous allotments affected by a building envelope pursuant to this Condition.

The costs for preparation and execution of the Agreement shall be borne by the permit holder.

Servicing strategy

14. A servicing strategy must be provided detailing whether existing infrastructure will be used or new infrastructure will be provided to service the proposed development. The strategy must also identify location of any trunk services and space requirements, and the proposed staging of infrastructure delivery as relevant.

Access to lots

15. Access to each lot created must be provided by a vehicle cross over constructed to the responsible authority standards from a fully constructed carriageway to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Services to lots

16. Before a Statement of Compliance is issued for each stage, domestic standard services for reticulated water, and provision for reticulated recycled water, drainage, sewerage and underground electricity reticulation must be available to each lot.

Site Management Plan

17. Before any works, including works required by other authorities, commence:
- Four copies of a site management plan for the relevant stage must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. When approved, the Site Management Plan will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The Site Management Plan must:
 - Include separate parts describing relevant matters of occupational health and safety, traffic management, environmental controls and cultural protection measures.
 - Be submitted to the Responsible Authority a minimum of seven days before a required pre-commencement meeting (attended by authorised representatives of the construction contractor and project superintendent as appointed by the developer) on the site of the works.

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- (iii) Include the proposed route for construction vehicle access to the site including a program for the upgrade and maintenance works required along this route while any works are in progress.
 - (iv) Include means by which foreign material will be restricted from being deposited on public roads by vehicles associated with building and works on the land to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
 - (v) Include measures to reduce the impact of noise, dust and other emissions created during the construction process.
- b. All environmental and cultural protection measures identified shall be described on a drawing(s) drawn to scale and prepared in accordance with Melbourne Water standards for such drawings.

The developer must keep the responsible authority informed in writing of any changes to the Site Management Plan. If in the opinion of the Responsible Authority the changes represent a significant departure from the approved Site Management Plan then an amended Site Management Plan must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. The approved measures must be carried out continually and completed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Stormwater Drainage

- 18. Any stormwater drain, temporary drainage out falls and ancillary works, required as a condition of a Melbourne Water Drainage Scheme, or that are designated to become the responsibility of the Council for maintenance, must be designed and constructed to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
- 19. Before the approval of construction plans for roadworks and drainage, the designs for such works and the details of maintenance requirements (asset management and maintenance schedule) must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority.
- 20. Access to each lot created must be provided by a vehicle cross over constructed to the responsible authority standards from a fully constructed carriageway to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
- 21. Before a Statement of Compliance is issued for each stage, domestic standard services for reticulated water, and provision for reticulated recycled water, drainage, sewerage and underground electricity reticulation must be available to each lot.
- 22. Each reserve shown on the endorsed plan(s) must be provided with services and facilities to a domestic service standard to the satisfaction of and at no cost to the responsible authority including power and water for neighbourhood parks.

Tree Removal Conditions

- 23. No native vegetation, other than that shown on the endorsed plan, shall be destroyed, felled, lopped, ring barked or uprooted, without the consent of the Responsible Authority.
- 24. In order to offset the removal of native vegetation (patch, scattered trees or re-vegetation) approved as part of this permit, the applicant must provide a native vegetation offset that is in accordance with the Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (DELWP 2017) and the native vegetation gain scoring manual Version 2 (DELWP 2017). The offset, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the Responsible Authority, must:
 - n. Contribute a gain of 0.001 General Habitat Units (GHUs);

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- o. Be located within the boundary of the Whittlesea municipality or the Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority area; and
- p. Have a strategic biodiversity score of at least 0.112 of the native vegetation approved for removal.

Before any native vegetation is removed, evidence that an offset has been secured must be provided to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

The removal of any other planted Eucalyptus or Corymbia spp. must be undertaken outside of the critically endangered Swift Parrot migratory period; winter.

25. A targeted survey for the nationally threatened Golden Sun Moth during the breeding period (Oct-Jan) to determine whether they are present within the study area must be carried out as recommended in the Biodiversity Assessment submitted with the application. To ensure the applicant meets their obligations under the EPBC Act, a targeted survey and self-assessment under the Act must be undertaken.
26. The permit holder is to ensure that tree removal is carried out in a safe manner.
27. The permit holder is to locate all services either above or below ground prior to the commencement of any works.
28. Stumps and any surface roots are to be ground down below ground level. Ground and chipped material to a depth of 50mm is to be removed from site at the direction of the project manager. The permit holder must supply and replace suitable topsoil and seed the area making certain that the reinstated ground surface is level, even and safe.
29. All stumps not removed immediately after removal of the tree are to be paint marked with a suitable bright yellow reflective marking paint.
30. All stumps must be removed within 14 days of removal of the tree.
31. All timber greater than 300mm in diameter that cannot be reused as habitat, furniture or another use determined as appropriate by the responsible authority shall be hammer milled and shredded for reuse as mulch within the subject site.
32. All timber less than 300mm in diameter and branch/leaf material shall be shredded for reuse as mulch within the subject site.
33. At the completion of the works, the applicant is to arrange for an appropriate Council officer to inspect the site to ensure compliance with the planning permit.

Top Soil

34. No top soil is to be removed from land covered by the subdivision without the written consent of the Responsible Authority.

Time Limit

35. This permit will expire if:
 - a. The plan of subdivision for the first stage is not certified within 2 years of the date of this permit; or
 - b. The plan of subdivision for any subsequent stage of the subdivision is not certified within 2 years of the date of the certification of the previous stage of the subdivision.
 - c. The registration of any stage of the subdivision is not completed within 5 years of the date of certification of the plans of subdivision.

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The Responsible Authority may extend the time if a request is made in writing before the permit expires or within six months afterwards.

REFERRAL AUTHORITY CONDITIONS**Ausnet Electricity Services Conditions (Condition 35)**

36. The Plan of Subdivision submitted for certification must be referred to AUSNET ELECTRICITY SERVICES PTY LTD in accordance with Section 8 of the Subdivision Act 1988. The applicant must –

- Enter in an agreement with AUSNET ELECTRICITY SERVICES PTY LTD for supply of electricity to each lot on the endorsed plan.
- Enter into an agreement with AUSNET ELECTRICITY SERVICES PTY LTD for the rearrangement of the existing electricity supply system.
- Enter into an agreement with AUSNET ELECTRICITY SERVICES PTY LTD for rearrangement of the points of supply to any existing installations affected by any private electric power line which would cross a boundary created by the subdivision, or by such means as may be agreed by AUSNET ELECTRICITY SERVICES PTY LTD.
- Provide easements satisfactory to AUSNET ELECTRICITY SERVICES PTY LTD for the purpose of “Power Line” in the favour of “AUSNET ELECTRICITY SERVICES PTY LTD” pursuant to Section 88 of the Electricity Industry Act 2000, where easements have not been otherwise provided, for all existing AUSNET ELECTRICITY SERVICES PTY LTD electric power lines and for any new power lines required to service the lots on the endorsed plan and/or abutting land.
- Obtain for the use of AUSNET ELECTRICITY SERVICES PTY LTD any other easement required to service the lots.
- Adjust the position of any existing AUSNET ELECTRICITY SERVICES PTY LTD easement to accord with the position of the electricity line(s) as determined by survey.
- Set aside on the plan of subdivision Reserves for the use of AUSNET ELECTRICITY SERVICES PTY LTD for electric substations.
- Provide survey plans for any electric substations required by AUSNET ELECTRICITY SERVICES PTY LTD and for associated power lines and cables and executes leases for a period of 30 years, at a nominal rental with a right to extend the lease for a further 30 years. AUSNET ELECTRICITY SERVICES PTY LTD requires that such leases are to be noted on the title by way of a caveat or a notification under Section 88 (2) of the Transfer of Land Act prior to the registration of the plan of subdivision.
- Provide to AUSNET ELECTRICITY SERVICES PTY LTD a copy of the plan of subdivision submitted for certification that shows any amendments that have been required.
- Agree to provide alternative electricity supply to lot owners and/or each lot until such time as permanent supply is available to the development by AUSNET ELECTRICITY SERVICES PTY LTD. Individual generators must be provided at each supply point. The generator for temporary supply must be installed in such a manner as to comply with the Electricity Safety Act 1998.
- Ensure that all necessary auditing is completed to the satisfaction of AUSNET ELECTRICITY SERVICES PTY LTD to allow the new network assets to be safely connected to the distribution network.

Melbourne Water Conditions (Conditions 36 to 48)

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37. Prior to the issue of a Statement of Compliance, the Owner shall enter into and comply with an agreement with Melbourne Water Corporation for the acceptance of surface and storm water from the subject land directly or indirectly into Melbourne Water's drainage systems and waterways, the provision of drainage works and other matters in accordance with the statutory powers of Melbourne Water Corporation.
38. No polluted and / or sediment laden runoff is to be discharged directly or indirectly into Melbourne Water's drains or watercourses.
39. Prior to Certification, the Plan of Subdivision must be referred to Melbourne Water, in accordance with Section 8 of the Subdivision Act 1988.
40. Prior to the issue of a Statement of Compliance for the subdivision, engineering plans of the subdivision (in electronic format) must be submitted to Melbourne Water for our records. These plans must show road and drainage details and any overland flow paths for the 100 year ARI storm event.
41. Alignment of roads and reserves with any adjoining estates must ensure continuity and provide uninterrupted conveyance of overland flows.
42. Prior to Certification of any Plan of Subdivision associated with the application, a stormwater management strategy including associated modelling must be submitted and accepted by Melbourne Water and Whittlesea Council. The strategy must demonstrate the following:
 - The proposed alignment for any 1 in 5 year drainage infrastructure and any associated overland flow paths directions for the 1 in 100 year ARI flood event;
 - The details of the proposed outfalls for the development, including interactions and/or license agreement with downstream land owners.
 - Proposed lot fill levels relative to the 1% AEP flood level, including the provision of required freeboard.
43. Prior to the issue of a Statement of Compliance for the subdivision, a Site Management Plan detailing pollution and sediment control measures must be submitted to Melbourne Water.
44. The subdivision is to make provision for overland flows from the upstream catchment utilising roads and/or reserves.
45. Any road or access way intended to act as a stormwater overland flow path must be designed and constructed to comply with the floodway safety criteria outlined within Melbourne Water's Land Development Manual.
46. Easements or reserves shall be created over existing and proposed Melbourne Water assets on the Plan of Subdivision to the satisfaction of Melbourne Water.
47. The developer is to negotiate with any downstream landowners to obtain a free draining outfall through their property. Approval is to be forwarded to Melbourne Water for our records prior to construction commencing.
48. Any temporary outfall is to be arranged to the satisfaction of Melbourne Water, Council and the affected downstream property owner(s).
49. Prior to the issue of a Statement of Compliance for the subdivision, a separate application direct to Melbourne Water must be made for any new or modified storm water connection to Melbourne Water's drains or watercourses.

Yarra Valley Water Conditions (Conditions 49 to 50)

Water

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50. The owner of the subject land must enter into an agreement with Yarra Valley Water for the provision of water services.

Sewerage

51. The owner of the land must enter into an agreement with Yarra Valley Water for the provision of sewerage services.

APT O&M Services Conditions (Conditions 51 to 52)

52. Easements in favor of "Australian Gas Networks (VIC) Pty Ltd" must be created on the plan to the satisfaction of APT.

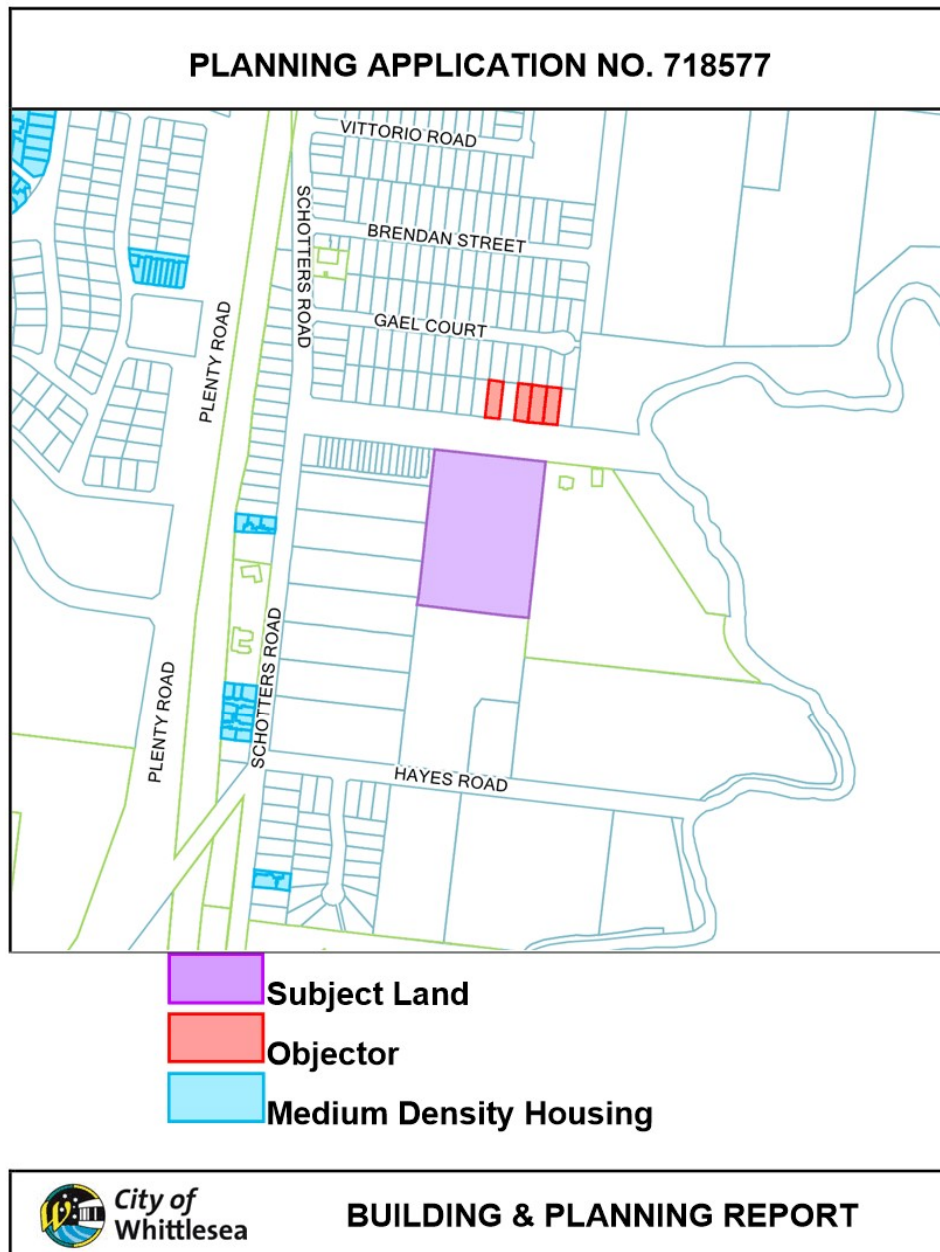
53. The plan of subdivision submitted for certification must be referred to APT O&M Services Pty Ltd, in accordance with Section 8 of the Subdivision Act 1988.

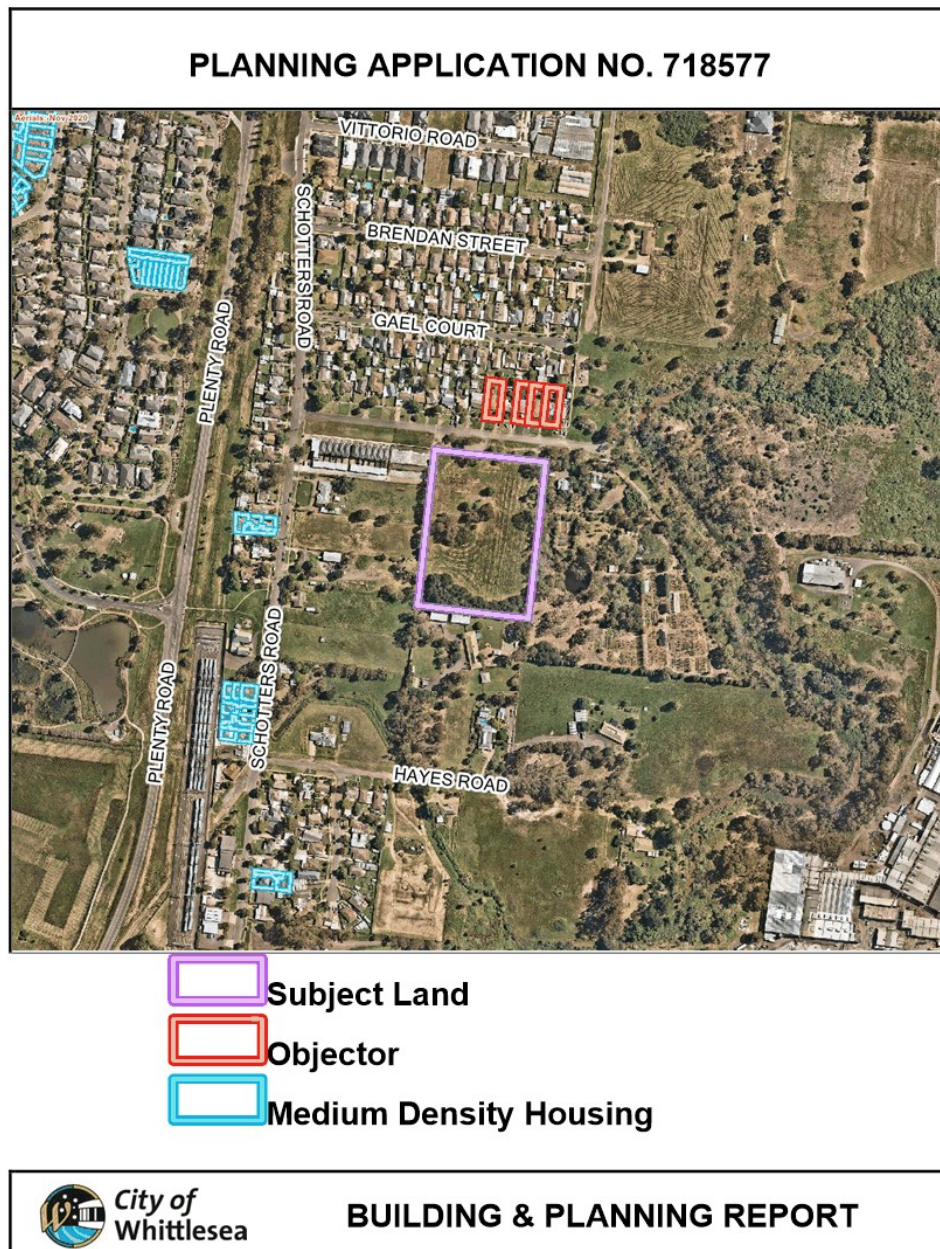
COUNCIL RESOLUTION

MOVED: Administrator Eddy
SECONDED: Administrator Duncan

THAT Council resolve to adopt the Recommendation.

CARRIED







17-19 Johnsons Road, Mernda
Subdivision Layout Plan



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PROJECT NO: ND2113
DATE: 05/03/2021
DRAWING NO: UD-01
REV: G

5.1.2 Provision of leisure, aquatics and sports court facilities in Mernda

Responsible Officer Director Community Wellbeing

Officer Senior Leisure Planner

Attachments

1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - MACPS Pool Options Analysis Paper [5.1.2.1 - 28 pages]
2. Project Background and Proposal Detail [5.1.2.2 - 17 pages]

This attachment has been designated as confidential by the Director Community Wellbeing, under delegation from the Chief Executive Officer, in accordance with Rule 53 of the Governance Rules 2021 and sections 66(5) and 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* on the grounds that it contains Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released. The attachment contains information regarding budget estimates and sensitive financial and operational information that may impact on future tender processes.

Proposal

This report outlines a proposal for a major new leisure, aquatic and sports court facility to be located at the Mernda Sports Hub precinct, on Plenty Road, Mernda (the Project). The proposed Project represents one of the municipality's most significant single investments in social and health infrastructure to date, and has been developed to:

- Enhance the quality of life for all residents as a place to exercise, get healthy, connect and have fun;
- Improve health and wellbeing outcomes – particularly where the municipality performs lower than metropolitan counterparts (refer **Attachment Two**);
- Create a welcoming sense of place and community pride as the cornerstone use of the Mernda Sports Hub precinct; and
- Function at a local, municipal and regional level.

The Project comprises a number of key components including:

- **Sports courts:**
 - Six indoor sports courts (including show court)
 - Eight outdoor floodlit netball courts
- **Aquatic and leisure:**
 - 50-metre multipurpose pool (with boom wall)
 - Warm water program pool, teaching pool, leisure pool, spa, steam and sauna
 - Gymnasium, group fitness, program rooms, occasional care
 - Health consulting and wellness suites

- **Shared:**

- Environmental design features such as all electric building, efficient heating, cooling and water treatment systems, maximising thermal efficiency, rainwater harvesting and re-use and use of sustainable and circular economy materials through construction.
- Other features will include a café, family change village and changing places stations.

The Project design and construction cost is estimated as a high-level figure at around \$113.4 million.

Attachment One provides independent advice and has informed the proposed Project facility scope through investigations of capital cost, income, expenditure, performance, accessibility, demand and benchmarking. **Attachment Two** provides background information and a more detailed Project description.

Advocacy and partnerships will be actively pursued to attract external funding from potential Project partners, and opportunities for the community to continue be involved will continue throughout the Project, including establishment of a Community and Stakeholder Reference Group in 2022 (post the detailed Business Case phase).

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Endorse the project scope for a leisure, aquatic and sport courts facility at the Mernda Sports Hub (Plenty Road, Mernda) as described in Table Four of this report which, subject to a detailed Business Case and further design analysis, will likely include:**
 - a. A 50-metre multipurpose pool with boom wall;
 - b. Warm water program pool, teaching pool, leisure pool, spa, steam and sauna;
 - c. Gymnasium, group fitness, program rooms;
 - d. Health consulting and wellness suites; and
 - e. Six indoor sports courts (including show court) and eight outdoor floodlit netball courts.
2. **Note a detailed Business Case for a leisure, aquatic and sport courts facility at the Mernda Sports Hub (Plenty Road, Mernda) will be developed based on the project scope outlined in Table Four of this report and will be presented to Council for consideration mid-2022.**
3. **Note the high-level estimated design and construction cost for a leisure, aquatic and sport courts facility at the Mernda Sports Hub (Plenty Road, Mernda) is \$113.4 million (refer Attachment One and summarised in Table Eight of this report), and is also subject to a detailed Business Case and further design analysis.**

4. Note a leisure, aquatic and sport courts facility at the Mernda Sports Hub (Plenty Road, Mernda) is proposed to be delivered via a single stage construction method which will be investigated through the detailed Business Case process.
5. Note the report titled 'Mernda Aquatic Centre Planning Study - Pool Option Analysis' (Attachment One, confidential).
6. Note the report titled 'Project background and proposal detail: Aquatic, leisure and sports court facilities at Mernda Sports Hub' (Attachment Two).
7. Note the guiding principles for major leisure and aquatic facilities outlined in Table One of this report.
8. Note the sports courts component of the leisure, aquatic and sport courts facility at the Mernda Sports Hub (Plenty Road, Mernda) is an advocacy priority for Council in the 2022 federal government election.
9. Note external funding opportunities will actively pursued for the leisure, aquatic and sports court facility at the Mernda Sports Hub (Plenty Road, Mernda), including enhanced advocacy approaches to maximise financial contributions to the project from other sources.
10. Explore integrated leisure and community facility approaches within future growth corridor infrastructure planning, including linkages with future town centres, activity precincts and neighbouring municipalities.
11. Note that a Community and Stakeholder Reference Group will be established in 2022 to inform future planning for the leisure, aquatic and sports courts facility at the Mernda Sports Hub (Plenty Road, Mernda) during the design development stage.
12. Thank the community and project stakeholders for their contribution to date in regards to planning for the leisure, aquatic and sports court facility at the Mernda Sports Hub (Plenty Road, Mernda).

Brief Overview

This report outlines a proposal for a major new aquatic, leisure and sports courts centre to be located at the Mernda Sports Hub, Plenty Road, Mernda. The proposal:

- Provides opportunities for participation in recreation, leisure and sporting activities;
- Fosters positive physical and mental wellbeing benefits to realise Whittlesea 2040 social and health outcomes for the community over many decades;
- Aims to create a vibrant, welcoming and innovative health and wellbeing hub for the whole municipality.

This report and associated attachments provide further detail regarding the proposed scope (**Attachment Two**) for aquatic, leisure and sports court facilities at the Mernda Sports Hub.

The recently released *Victoria's Infrastructure Strategy 2021-2051* also identifies aquatic and leisure centres play a key role in improving the quality of life within communities. To

this end Recommendation 73 of Infrastructure Victoria's report identifies that a new aquatic centre is required within the City of Whittlesea within the next five years.

Key Information

Background

In December 2020, Council resolved to:

- Undertake a feasibility and comparative analysis for project options for the aquatic and leisure facilities proposed for Mernda, including consideration of a 25-metre lap swimming pool and a 50-metre lap swimming pool; and also
- Consolidate opportunities for the project to enhance Council's existing strategic planning in the area, specifically the future Mernda Town Centre.

This resolution built on extensive research and strategic planning (see **Figure One** below); multiple options analysis; and four community consultation initiatives undertaken to inform this Project (2013, 2017, 2018 and 2020).

Throughout 2021 Council has continued feasibility analysis including Project scope and location opportunities. Strategic links to the Mernda Town Centre were explored, including a potential co-location within this precinct. These investigations identified that whilst co-location within the Town Centre had considerable benefits (such as proximity to the Mernda train station and greater accessibility for people without a car); this option was unfeasible at the current time due to a number of factors including cost, impact on functionality, availability of suitable land and timing of other projects within Council's long term capital works program.



Figure 1: Council endorsed strategic plans

Broader project outcomes: health and wellbeing

Attachment Two provides an overview on the role of aquatic and leisure centres within communities and the important value they provide in realising health and social wellbeing outcomes. For this reason, a number of recent municipal aquatic and leisure facilities have been identified as wellness or wellbeing centres. Research identifies that aquatic and leisure centres play an important role in:

- Reducing the risk of chronic disease and prevalence of mental illness (results in both personal and systemic benefits);
- Reducing the incidence of drowning;
- Developing social capital and connection (particularly for people involved in group activities);
- Improving productivity and reduction in absenteeism;
- Creating local employment opportunities (throughout construction and operation), as well as on-going social procurement and targeted employment opportunities.

Aquatic and leisure centres' role in fostering health and social outcomes identifies the importance of maximising these benefits when planning for the delivery of new facilities. To assist with decision making and to guide assessment of potential options, four guiding principles were established to inform the Major Leisure and Aquatic Facility Strategy 2014 ('MLAFS'). Some of these principles have been refined to assist with analysis of the Project and are summarised in **Table One** below.

Guiding principle	Description
Maximising social and health benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centres should become a meeting place for the community and create a sense of belonging. • Centres should provide facilities and programs that reflect the community profile.
Accessible, equitable and safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of residents in new suburbs should have reasonable proximity to aquatic and leisure facilities. • Services that encourage use by all sectors of the community – including universal and targeted programs. • Targeted programs maximise use by community members that have traditionally been the least likely to use an aquatic and leisure facility and resulting in improved physical and mental health for some of our most disadvantaged residents. • Physical and cultural safety in facility and service design is paramount.
Affordable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of facilities needs to be affordable for Council given the many competing demands for infrastructure. • Pricing strategies should make use of the centre affordable for all members of the community and particularly those on low incomes.
Viable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities need to have a sufficient range of commercial activities to ensure financial performance is close to break-even.

Table 1: Guiding principles for Project options assessment

Broader project outcomes: place-making and building strong communities

“Placemaking builds stronger, livelier, more liveable communities - but that’s just part of the story. Numerous medical leaders have also shown that Placemaking can play a huge role in promoting better health for all ...”

(Project for Public Places, [Great Communities Grow at the Intersection of Health and Design \(pps.org\)](https://www.pps.org/), 2015).

In addition, it is acknowledged within the industry that aquatic and leisure facilities play a role in encouraging a sense of community pride, an uplift in public amenity and increased security in surrounding locale (by providing secure areas for recreation and socialisation). Hence, the Major Leisure and Aquatic Facility Strategy’s (2014) vision identifies:

“...That aquatic and leisure facilities are easily accessible by residents, are a meeting place and make a significant contribution to the physical and mental wellbeing of the City of Whittlesea community.”

Place-making and how these proposed aquatic, leisure and sports courts facilities are configured within the broader Mernda Sports Hub will therefore be vital in realising a sense of place in which people come to connect, recreate and dwell – not only to meet transactional needs (e.g. learn to swim, get fit etc), but to enjoy a sense of wellbeing and community connection. For example, landscaping and site context for the facility will be vital in order to achieve lasting opportunities for the facility to host larger crowds (such as picnics on hot evenings, summer concert series or inter-school competitions). In addition, active encouragement and prioritisation of active and sustainable transport options to the site will also be important. A review of the draft Mernda Sports Hub master plan is required and will facilitate opportunities to consolidate and synergise place-making for the broader precinct.

Victoria’s Infrastructure Strategy 2021-2051

The importance of health and wellbeing outcomes and placemaking is supported by Victoria’s Infrastructure Strategy 2021-2051; which recognises that aquatic and leisure centres play a key role in improving the quality of life within communities. Recommendation 73 of this report identifies that a new aquatic centre is required within the City of Whittlesea within the next five years. It also identifies the need for funding for libraries and aquatic centres in growth areas, and states:

“Each of the seven growth area municipalities should receive up to \$200,000 for aquatic centre planning and \$100,000 for library planning. The Victorian Government should fund up to one-third of the cost of new facilities, capped at \$20 million for aquatic centres and \$10 million for libraries, with councils to provide funding for the remaining capital costs and operational expenses. Flexible funding could support staged approaches to delivery, where preferred by councils. This investment supports growth area councils to address provision, service and access gaps for this essential infrastructure”. (pp204, [Victoria’s infrastructure strategy 2021-2051](#)).

The strategy was developed by Infrastructure Victoria which is an independent advisory body to the Victorian Government.

Project proposal: Key components

In line with Council's December 2020 resolution, Council engaged independent consultants, Sport and Leisure Solutions and Warren Green Consulting to compare three lap swimming pool options:

1. 8-lane 25-metre lap swimming pool; depth profile of 1.1 metres to 1.5 metres.
2. 8-lane 50-metre FINA lap swimming pool; depth profile of 1.35 metres to 2.0 metres.
3. 8-lane 50-metre multipurpose lap swimming pool; depth profile of 1.1 metres to 1.8 metres.

Note: FINA means 'Federation Internationale De Natation Amateur', with the English translation being the 'International Swimming Federation'.

This independent advice is provided as a confidential attachment as the *Mernda Aquatic Centre Planning Study Pool Options Analysis (Attachment One)*; **Table Two** provides a comparative analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the three lap swimming options listed above; further detail is provided in **Attachment One**.

Pool Depth	Advantages	Disadvantages
Option 1 - 8 lane 25-metre pool - Depth profile of 1.1 m to 1.5 m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower cost option to construct Better financial performance Shallower water facilitates whole of community access, including families, children, water walkers and users who have lower levels of swimming skill and confidence (the hot day "bobbbers." Safer access for children, water walkers and users who have lower levels of swimming skill and confidence and those with a disability Appropriate for water-based fitness classes such as aqua aerobics Better transition for the learn to swim program Depth and temperature appropriate for lower-level swim lessons Services lap swimming requirements – to a lesser extent than the 50m pool options Service swim club requirements for lower-tier swim club Suitable for small primary school carnivals and short course club activities Service the needs of the "hot day bobbbers." Diving blocks are permissible for supervised (lessons, squad and competition) use at the deep end. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not suitable for water polo Shallow water throughout presents some risk of injury from diving Not suitable for regional or national events Not suitable for water polo No diving will be permitted from diving blocks at the shallow end in competition. Therefore no 50m relays. All diving will need to occur at the deep end. No recreation/play diving There will be some issues with supervising Lack of deep water might reduce use by teenagers It does not comply with RLSS guidelines for safe pool operation unless diving blocks are removed when not in use.

Pool Depth	Advantages	Disadvantages
Option 2 - 8 lane FINA compliant 50-metre pool - Depth profile of 1.35 m – 2.0 m with pool boom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pool complies with FINA requirements for major swimming events and is suitable for school carnivals and events. However, additional amenities, spectator facilities, and competition facilities will be required for regional, state, national, and international events. • Enable use of diving blocks unsupervised (training and competition) at both ends of the pool • Provides recreational (unsupervised) use of diving block at the deep end. • Provides deep water for use by teenagers • Better services requirements for squad participants swim club members and dedicated lap swimmers • Suitable for water polo training and games • Suitable for swim club activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More expensive to construct • High cost to operate • Not accessible for people with low levels of swimming skill and confidence – more comfortable in shallow water • Limits whole of community use including lower use by water walkers and users who have lower levels of swimming skill and confidence and those with a disability • More costly to build and heat than the 25 m pool • Greater water and chemical usage than the 25 m pool option • Higher safety risk for operator and Council, which may necessitate the deployment of additional staff to supervise patrons • Provides a poor transition for the learn to swim pool • Not suitable for lower levels swim lessons • Not suitable for water-based programs such as aqua aerobics • Potentially significant increase in facility infrastructure requirements, including additional amenities, spectator facilities, and competition facilities. If the intention is to use for competition.
Option 3 - 8 lane multipurpose 50 m Pool - 1.1 m to 1.8 m with pool boom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shallower water facilitates whole of community access, including families, children, water walkers and users who have lower levels of swimming skill and confidence (the hot day “bobbies.”) • Safer access for children, water walkers and users who have lower levels of swimming skill and confidence and those with a disability • Suitable for school carnivals and club events. • Services lap swimming requirements • Suitable for swim club activities • Service the needs of the “hot day bobbies.” • Diving blocks are permissible for supervised (lessons, squad and competition) use at the deep end. • Better transition for the learn to swim program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More expensive to construct • High cost to operate • It will not be possible to conduct major events at the Centre (i.e. non-compliant for state, national and internal events but compliant for school carnivals and swim club meets). • Not suitable for water polo • No diving is permitted from diving blocks at the shallow end in competition. Therefore no 50m relays. All diving will need to occur at the deep end. • No recreation/play diving • There will be some issues with supervising people diving into shallow water

Pool Depth	Advantages	Disadvantages
	Appropriate for water-based fitness classes such as aqua aerobics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depth and temperature appropriate for lower-level swim lessons 	

Table 2. Comparative table for three lap swimming pool options for the Project.

The independent advice detailed in **Attachment One** has informed the proposed Project facility scope through investigations of capital cost, income, expenditure, performance, accessibility, demand and benchmarking – for both the aquatics and sports courts components. Each component plays a different role in supporting crucial community health outcomes, as summarised in **Table Three** and **Table Four** below.

Component	Key inputs / activities	Profile
Aquatics and leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A variety of pools will be available to support opportunities for lap swimming, warm water exercise, play for all ages, learn to swim and relaxation (spa, sauna, steam). Once built, it would be the only 50-metre pool within the municipality. A state-of-the-art gym and program rooms will support residents and visitors with a range of skills and ability levels to improve their physical health and fitness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed scope of facilities will primarily respond to the diverse existing and future community needs of Mernda and Doreen. The proposed 50-metre multipurpose pool will provide programmable space suitable to capture the broad health outcomes sought on a municipal level.
Sports courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprises one show court multi-lined for netball and basketball to attract major events and showcase matches. An additional five indoor multipurpose sports courts and eight outdoor floodlit netball courts. The new facility will become the home of netball for the municipality. Once built, the sports courts will be the largest facility of its kind within the City of Whittlesea and neighbouring municipalities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a regional netball facility, the Project will provide significant participation opportunities for our netballers (96% of participants are female) from grassroots to elite pathway programs, much closer to home. The courts will also support the growth of basketball and sports such as badminton and volleyball across the City of Whittlesea and surrounding municipalities.

Table 3: Key activities and profile of proposed project components

The guiding principles detailed in **Table One** (affordable, viable, accessible, equitable and safe, maximising social and health benefits) are imperative in the decision-making process when considering facility scope for the Project. In particular, the inclusion of a 50-metre multipurpose pool:

- Provides for improved accessibility outcomes and opportunities for additional and flexible programming achieved through the depth profile, water temperature and additional space within the 50-metre multipurpose pool.
- Combines the aspects of both the 25-metre pool and the 50-metre FINA compliant pool. To this end it therefore facilitates whole of community use through its

shallower depth profile, whilst at the same time providing all the benefits of the FINA pool except for conducting state and national swimming events and facilitating water polo training and competition.

Component	Facility	Indicative Scope	Use / activities
Aquatics	Multipurpose Pool	8-lane 50-metre with boom wall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lap swimming (casual, training and carnivals) Gentle warm water exercise and aqua classes Learn to swim programs Aqua walking and jogging Water play for toddlers and young children Deeper water play for older children, youth and adults Leisure, relaxation and rehabilitation
	Warm Water Program Pool	300 m2 + ramp	
	Teaching Pool	125 m2 + ramp	
	Leisure Pool	350 m2 incl. ramp	
	Spa, steam and sauna	n/a	
Health and Fitness	Gymnasium	600 m2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weight and cardio training Variety of group fitness programs Holistic health focus (via allied health partnerships)
	Group fitness room	220 m2	
	Program room #2	150 m2	
	Program room #3	80 m2	
	Occasional care / program room #4	190 m2	
	Health consulting / wellness suites	150 m2	
Sports Courts	Multipurpose sports courts	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant growth in local netball and basketball clubs and associations Increase opportunity for other sports such as volleyball and badminton Capacity to attract special events
	Netball and basketball show court	1	
	Permanent seating	500	
	Capacity for temporary seating	Up to 1500	
	Outdoor floodlit netball courts	8	

Table 4: Proposed Project scope to proceed to detailed Business Case development

Project proposal: Next steps and connecting key tasks to outcomes

Figure Two provides an overview of the methodology and considerations to date to inform the proposed facility scope. Once the key Project elements have been confirmed (i.e. the project scope detailed in this report), an important next step will be to finalise the detailed Business Case, design and associated costs.

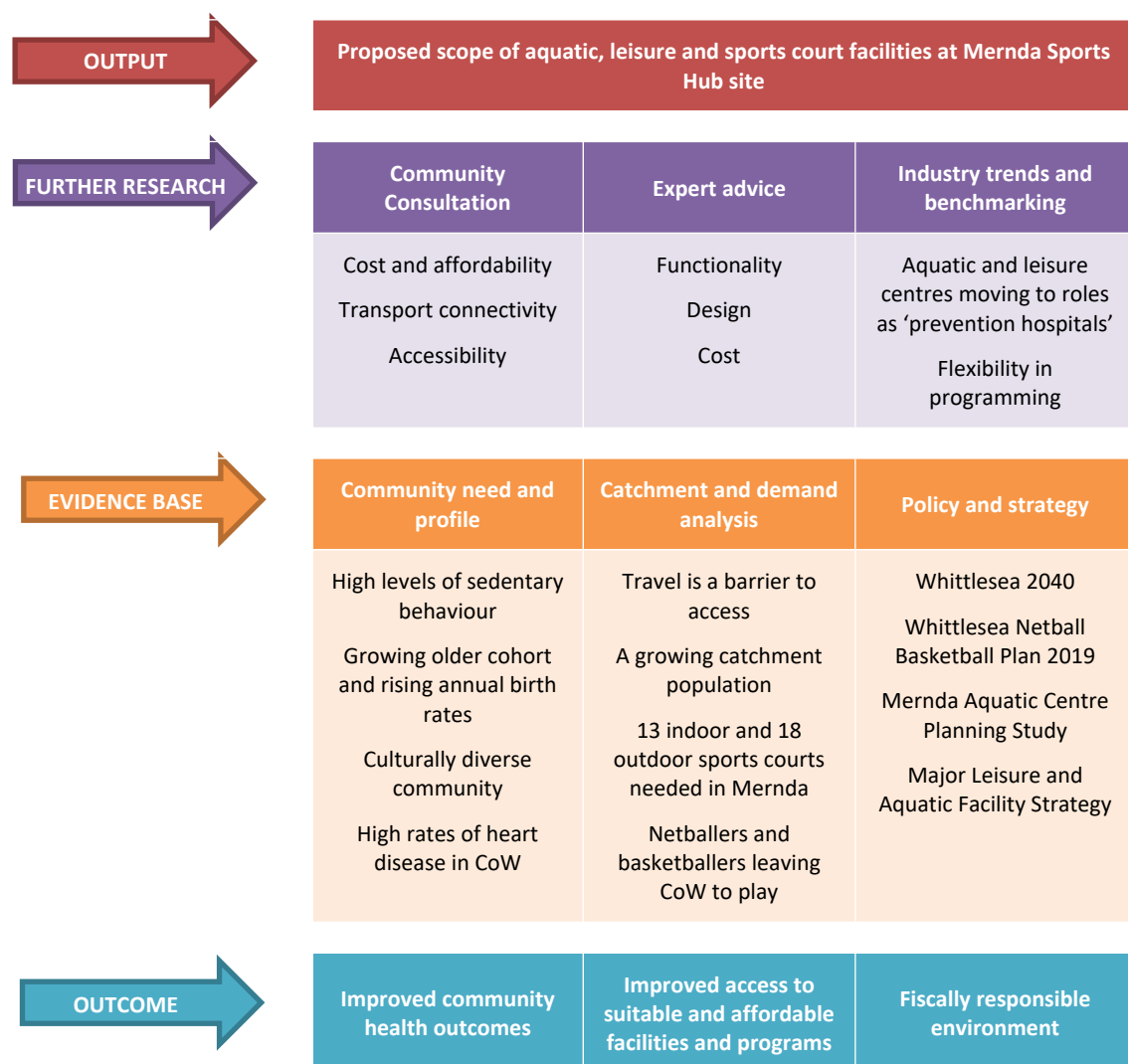


Figure 2. Methodology and considerations to inform proposed scope of facilities in Mernda.

Community Consultation and Engagement

Four consultation processes undertaken since 2013 have shown significant community support for the facility with key priorities identified as cost and affordability, safety, transport connectivity and accessibility. A summary of consultation outcomes is provided in **Attachment Two**.

A Communications and Engagement Plan will be developed to prioritise further opportunity for community input into components such as facility design and name; further detail is provided in **Attachment Two**.

A key element of the Communications and Engagement Plan will be the establishment of a Community and Stakeholder Reference Group to provide a consultation forum on key stages of the Project. Members of the Community and Stakeholder Reference Group should represent the diverse culture, skills and experiences within the communities of Mernda and Doreen as well as lived experiences of the wider municipality (such as people living with

disabilities, older people, young people, culturally and linguistically diverse communities etc) and project partners.

Additionally, planning for and strengthening Council's advocacy approach to attract external funding for the Project is imperative. This includes opportunities throughout the upcoming state and federal election cycles, as well as future strategic partnerships with potential funding partners.

Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

Connected communities

We work to foster an inclusive, healthy, safe and welcoming community where all ways of life are celebrated and supported

The provision of aquatic and leisure facilities within the municipality strongly aligns with the Whittlesea 2040 strategic priority of 'Connected Community' as the provision of sport and recreation infrastructure supports the key directions of encouraging a socially cohesive, participating and healthy and safe community. This Project is identified in two key initiatives in the Community Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan):

1. Commence construction of a leisure and wellbeing facility in Mernda; and
2. Build additional outdoor netball courts in a number of neighbourhoods including Epping, Doreen, Mill Park, Whittlesea, South Morang and Mernda.

The Community Plan Action Plan 2021-22 includes an action to advocate for a regional indoor netball basketball centre. Community Plan consultation identified that to help recovery from COVID-19, the community asked Council to focus on:

- Health promotion, emphasising mental health and wellbeing; natural environments and green open space; connected walking and cycling paths and trails, safety in public places and opportunities for social connection and exercise.
- Community connections, including supporting vulnerable people and providing facilities and spaces for groups of people to meet

The proposed facility also aligns with the Council endorsed policy and strategy outlined in **Figure One** and includes:

- *A Voice for All*, Community Engagement Policy 2021
- Mernda Strategy Plan 2011 (amended 2016)
- Major Leisure and Aquatic Facilities Strategy 2014
- Whittlesea Netball and Basketball Plan 2019
- Active Whittlesea Policy 2019
- Mernda Regional Recreation Reserve Master Plan 2011 (draft)
- Zero Net Emissions Plan 2022
- Whittlesea Water for All 2020 – 2030

- Greening Whittlesea City Forest Strategy 2020-2040.

As earlier outlined, Victoria's Infrastructure Strategy 2021-2051 recognises the importance of aquatic and leisure centres in improving the physical and mental health and wellbeing; each swimming pool visit generates \$26 in health benefits. Recommendation 73 of the Strategy identifies that a new aquatic centre is required within the City of Whittlesea within the next five years, and that municipalities should receive State Government funding for up to one third of project capital cost (capped at \$20 million) to support addressing the essential infrastructure gap in growth areas.

Additionally, there are significant opportunities to explore a shared approach and partnership with neighbouring municipalities (i.e City of Hume and Mitchell Shire) when considering the planning and delivery of future growth corridor infrastructure planning, including the integration of leisure facilities within a town centre precinct.

Table Five below provides an overview of Council resolutions and endorsements to date regarding the Project.

Date	Summary
2011	Mernda Strategy Plan endorsed; identifies site as regional recreation node suitable for development of various sports, aquatic centre and stadium.
2014	Major Leisure and Aquatic Facility Strategy endorsed; development of an aquatic centre is a key recommendation.
February 2019	Council endorsed two facility options for further development through a detailed business case; both facility options varied in the scale of the aquatic and dry components with neither including the provision of a 50-metre pool.
March 2019	An item of Urgent Business was endorsed which sought the preparation of a report back to Council of indicative costs for inclusion of a 50-metre competition pool.
July 2019	Council resolved to receive a petition with 1621 signatures calling for Council to review the need for a 50-metre competition sized pool rather than the lesser aquatic options being considered.
August 2019	Council resolved to note the report on 50-metre pool costings and advise the head petitioner accordingly.
December 2019	Council endorsed the Whittlesea Netball Basketball Plan which recommends the construction of six indoor sports courts and eight outdoor netball courts at the Mernda Sports Hub site as short-term high priority projects, with an additional four outdoor courts as a long-term priority project.
December 2019	Council resolved to undertake further community consultation regarding aquatic and leisure facilities at Mernda and in particular whether to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extend the pool to 50-metres; - Incorporate large scale water play (such as water slides and outdoor activities); and - Include netball and basketball courts in stage one of the project.
December 2020	Council resolved to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake a feasibility and comparative analysis for two facility options; a 25-metre pool option and a 50-metre FINA compliant competition pool. - Consolidate opportunities for the project to enhance strategic planning in the area (i.e. linkages with Mernda Town Centre).

Table 5. Summary of Council decisions to date for the Project.

Considerations

Environmental

The implementation of environmentally sustainable and universal design principles are key priorities as the Project progresses through development of the detailed Business Case and design phases. This is important not only to reduce future operating costs of the facility, but to realise Council's endorsed sustainability policy including:

- Implementation of the Zero Net Emissions Plan 2022.
- Target to reduce Council potable water consumption by a further 20 per cent (on a kilolitre per capita basis) by 2030; Whittlesea Water for All 2020 - 2030.
- Greening Whittlesea canopy cover targets (20% canopy cover).

An integrated approach to sustainability in the business case, design, delivery and facility operation will be embedded to ensure carbon footprint, water use and operating costs are minimised; further detailed in **Table Six**.

Sustainability initiative / priority	Example / opportunity
Setting a measurable key performance target.	Net Positive Energy Building, Passive House, 6-Star Green Star Building or Green Star Communities when looking at the Mernda Sports Hub precinct.
Maximising opportunities for renewable and alternate energy systems on a precinct level.	Geo-thermal, solar panels, wind technology, battery storage, EV charging infrastructure.
Use of existing and emerging technologies in efficient energy infrastructure.	All electric building, heating and cooling systems, water treatment operations, plant/mechanical, insulation, passive design, glazing of windows and doors, maximising thermal efficiency etc.
Reduction in construction waste and increase recycling and repurposing.	Rock removed to enable construction is crushed and utilised in sub-base for internal road network and facility, using Circular economy materials for construction. Use of sustainable / recycled materials in all aspects of construction, including roads, footpaths etc.
Reducing potable water consumption and ensuring water sensitive urban design outcomes.	Rainwater harvesting and re-use, rainwater tanks, passive irrigation of landscaping, treatment and reuse of storm water, water efficient fittings and fixtures.
Reducing Urban Heat Island Effect.	Increased tree canopy, ensuring solar reflective materials, alternatives to asphalt, solar PV canopies over parking areas.

Table 6. Summary of sustainability initiatives and opportunities for project to be further explored.

Sustainable design key criteria will be further refined through the detailed Business Case development. This will be informed by consultation with the Cities of Darebin, Kingston and Brimbank; who are municipalities with recent experience in planning and delivering for aquatic and leisure facilities with exemplary sustainability outcomes.

The environmental footprint of a 50-metre pool is higher than that of a 25-metre pool as evidenced by the estimated comparative annual utilities costs for each option (\$350,000 p.a. for a 25-metre pool versus \$640,000 p.a. for a 50-metre pool). When comparing the 25-metre pool option to the 50-metre pool options, **Attachment One** noted the 50-metre pools have a larger water volume that requires increased gas, electricity, water and pool chemicals and, by extension, will increase the centre's environmental impact. Similarly, the larger pool halls will require additional energy for heating and circulation of air and result in an increased environmental footprint.

Social, Cultural and Health

The proposed facilities, services and programs will provide a safe and inclusive space to encourage use and employment for communities who may experience barriers to participate, such as women and girls, older adults, people with a disability and culturally and linguistically diverse residents.

Accessibility is a key criterion through design development, including consideration of ramps into all pools, reduced paths of travel for users with lower mobility, accessible and family change village including changing places stations, and investigating pricing options to ensure accessibility for all through affordability.

Economic

Local impact

An Impact Statement derived from Council's economic projections program EconomyID identifies that an investment of \$113.4 million into the building construction industry would create an additional 430 jobs located in the City of Whittlesea. **Table Seven** provides a breakdown of direct, industrial and consumption jobs forecast.

Type	Description	No. of jobs created
Direct	Local building construction sector	135
Indirect	Intermediate industries	241
Indirect	Consumption impacts	54
TOTAL		430

Table 7: Breakdown of local job creation as a result of project investment.

Employment impacts are not limited to the local economy; industrial and consumption effects would flow outside the region to the broader economy and are anticipated to create an additional 354 jobs within Australia.

The business case will also explore opportunities for Council to harness greater social procurement outcomes through local employment programs as part of future management tender processes (i.e. including local employment targets aimed at increasing employment opportunities for local residents such as young people, Aboriginal people, people with a disability and culturally and linguistically diverse residents etc).

Broader economic impacts

A KPMG report also noted the economic impact of such facilities in their 2020 report, *The Value of Community Sport and Active Recreation Infrastructure*, commissioned by Sport and Recreation Victoria which identified the value of sport and active recreation infrastructure across the State annually; summarised in **Figure Three** below.



Figure 3: The Value of Community Sport and Active Recreation Infrastructure, KPMG 2020

Financial Implications

A summary of the financial implications of the proposed Project facility scope is identified in **Table Eight** below. Further detail is provided in **Attachment One**.

Item	Amount	Note
Capital Cost	\$113,406,000	Provided by Quantity Surveyor based on concept sketches.
Income (pa)	\$5,060,000	Assumptions on casual fees, memberships and lane hire.
Expenditure (pa)	\$5,045,000	Assumptions on utilities, cleaning, wages and plant services / maintenance.
Net performance (per annum)	+ \$15,000	Operational / post construction

Table 8: Summary of estimated financial forecasts for proposed project scope.

Financial implications will be further explored through the business case and design development. Further investigation is required to understand the full scope and cost of civil and supporting infrastructure such as services connection, roads, car parking, water management and any latent ground conditions (i.e. rock). Similarly, assumptions have been made regarding operating financials based on benchmarking with like facilities in the State relating to items such as wages, fees, management structure, cleaning and utilities.

As outlined above, Council's advocacy approach will guide opportunities to procure external funding to the Project. It is proposed that Council continue to pursue advocacy and partnership opportunities to attract external funding for the Project.

Link to Strategic Risk

Strategic Risks:

Financial Sustainability - Inability to meet current and future expenditure

Service Delivery - Inability to plan for and provide critical community services and infrastructure impacting on community wellbeing

The provision and scope of aquatic, leisure and sports facilities can significantly impact on the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the community. Under provision of suitable facilities will decrease the number of programs and services available to the community. As a barrier to participation, a decrease in opportunities to partake in such programs and services creates challenges in promoting equitable access.

The capital delivery and ongoing operational costs of aquatic, leisure and sporting facilities is expensive and requires extensive planning to ensure affordability for Council. Indeed, this proposal represents one of the largest single investments in health and social infrastructure by Council to date. A detailed Business Case is required to further understand the cost implications of the proposed Project. The construction sector is facing rapidly escalating costs at present which may continue to impact on this Project; and hence careful planning will be central to managing this risk.

Implementation Strategy

Communication

A Communications and Engagement Plan will be developed to identify key stakeholders and the most effective communication and engagement methods for each stakeholder including key messages for project phases; further detailed in **Attachment Two**.

Critical Dates

The sports courts component of the Project is a Council advocacy priority for the upcoming 2022 federal and state government elections. The Federal election must be held no later than May 2022 and the State election is scheduled for November 2022.

The proposed Project commencement is 2024/25 with a likely completion date of 2027/28; these dates are in line with Council's current long-term financial plan. **Figure Four** below summarises the key Project phases and their anticipated commencement timelines; subject to change and refinement as the Project progresses.

Project completion is estimated for six years' time, with ongoing community involvement in the Project will be prioritised, as will advocacy efforts and the strengthening of partnerships to attract external funding from potential Project partners.

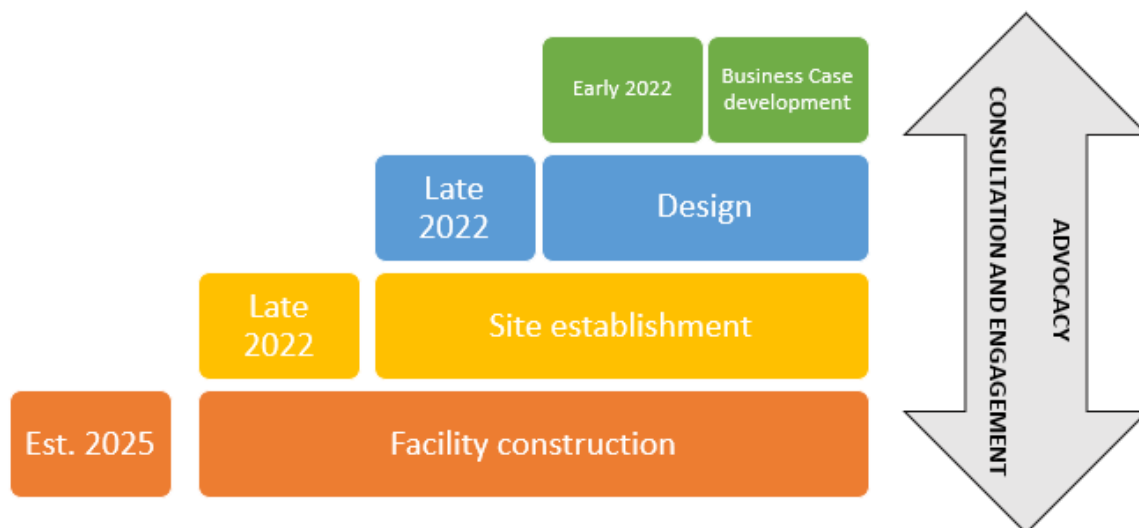


Figure 4. Upcoming project phases and anticipated commencement dates.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Rule 47 of the Governance Rules 2021, officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

Conclusion

Finalising the scope and provision of future aquatic, leisure and sports courts facilities is a decision of considerable importance to Council and the local community. Such facilities have an inter-generational impact and represent a major investment in infrastructure and services.

The final detailed Business Case will be informed by:

- Further analysis and evidence of local community health and wellbeing needs and trends.
- Best practice research and expertise relating to public health prevention planning; includes the role of aquatic and leisure centres transitioning from fitness centres to a holistic community focus on prevention of chronic illness.
- Optimising leisure, aquatic and sporting design and operational models and approaches (with site context).
- Capital and recurrent facility cost.
- Financial and environmental feasibility and sustainability; and

- Community feedback.

Importantly, Council's focus on building strong and collaborative partnerships with the community and future funding partners is imperative to the success of the Project.



Project background and proposal detail: Aquatic, leisure and sports court facilities at Mernda Sports Hub



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Purpose

The provision of aquatics, leisure and sports court facilities at the Mernda Sports Hub (Plenty Road, Mernda) will provide a myriad of opportunities for participation in active recreation, leisure activities and structured sport; resulting in positive physical, mental and social health outcomes for decades to come.

The purpose of this paper is to:

- Provide overview of the role of aquatic and leisure centres within communities and the important value they provide in developing health and social wellbeing outcomes.
- Summarise planning undertaken to date on the project including strategic context and community profile.
- Document the proposed facility scope and opportunities to be further refined and explored through the development of a detailed business case.

Project background

Strategic context

Figure One below an overview of relevant strategic planning and feasibility undertaken to date.

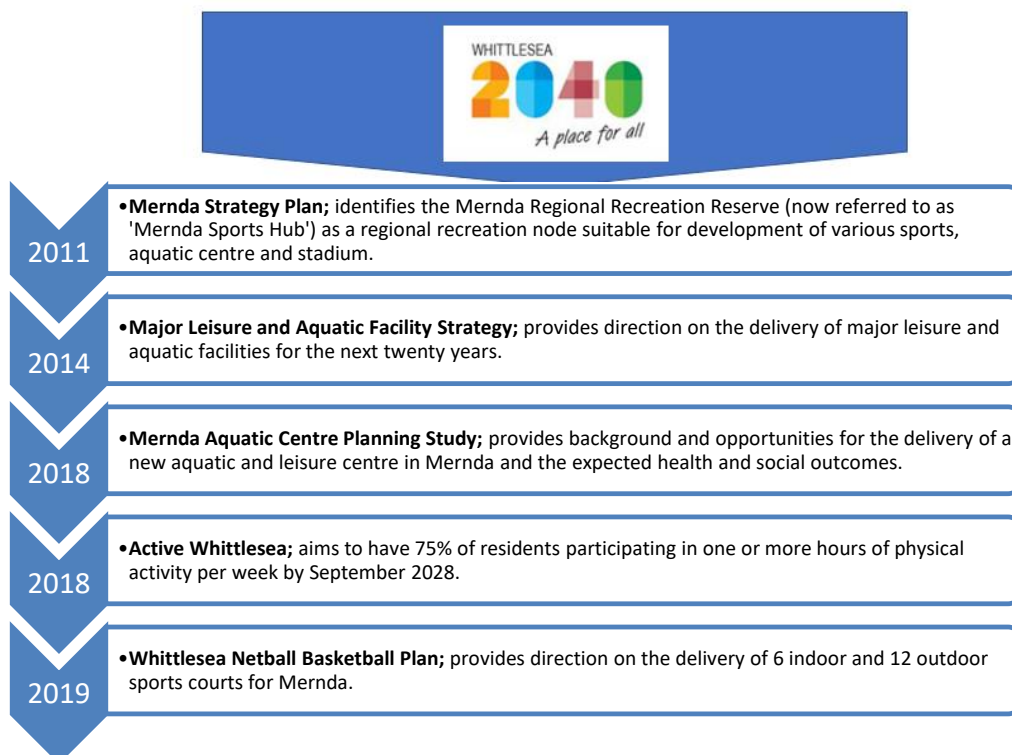


Figure 1. Council endorsed strategy and policy



Guiding principles

The Major Leisure and Aquatic Facility Strategy 2014 ('MLAFS') states a vision:

That aquatic and leisure facilities are easily accessible by residents, are a meeting place and make a significant contribution to the physical and mental wellbeing of the City of Whittlesea community.

To underpin this vision and the strategic intent of the MLAFS, the following four guiding principles were established:

Accessible and equitable

- The majority of residents in new suburbs should be as close to an aquatic and leisure as possible.
- Services and programs that encourage use by all sectors of the community.

Affordable

- Development of facilities needs to be affordable for Council given the many competing demands for infrastructure.
- Pricing strategies should make use of the centre affordable for all members of the community and particularly those on low incomes.

Viable

- Facilities need to have a sufficient range of commercial activities to ensure financial performance is close to break-even.

Maximising social and health benefits

- Centres should become a meeting place for the community and create a sense of belonging.
- Centres should provide facilities and programs that reflect the community profile.

Demand assessment and catchment

Consultation phases to date on this project have indicated that travel and/or proximity to local, suitable facilities remains a constant barrier to participation. User behaviour analysis to inform the MLAFS indicated that:

- Most respondents typically would not travel longer than 20 minutes to attend an aquatic and leisure centre regularly.
- The primary catchment (80%) for aquatic and leisure centres is people who live or work within a five to six-kilometre catchment of the centre.

Catchment mapping identifies that residents of Mernda and Doreen have travel distances of between 12 kilometres and 21 kilometres to attend the nearest indoor aquatic and leisure centres; as mapped in **Appendix One**.



[The Indoor Aquatic and Recreation Facility Development Guidelines](#) developed by Aquatics and Recreation Victoria recommend that a 50-metre pool (with a boom wall) should be *considered* where the catchment population is between 70,000 to 100,000 and *included* where the catchment population is above 100,000. Data sourced from [ProfileID](#) indicates that the current five-kilometre catchment for the proposed facility is 67,940 which is anticipated to grow by 15,102 residents to a catchment of 83,042 residents by 2041.

Additionally, the Whittlesea Netball Basketball Plan 2019 ('WNBP') found that approximately 51% of registered netballers and 46% of registered basketballers are currently leaving the City of Whittlesea to play their respective sports.

Audits undertaken to inform the WNBP identified that there is a significant shortage of suitable indoor and outdoor sports courts in the municipality which is negatively impacting on netball and basketball participation rates. In order to address this, the WNBP provides recommendations on facility provision ratios as 1:6000 for indoor sports courts and 1:7000 for floodlit outdoor netball courts.

Specific to Mernda and Doreen regions, the WNBP recommends provision of 13 indoor courts and up to 18 floodlit outdoor netball courts to meet the recommended facility provision ratios required in providing suitable participation opportunity; six indoor courts and 12 outdoor floodlit netball courts have been identified for the Mernda Sports Hub precinct.

It is acknowledged that each project component (aquatic, leisure and sports court components) plays a different yet vital role in the provision of facilities at a local, municipal and regional catchment level; further detailed later in this report.

Community profile

In addition to the above, the MLAFS also outlines how imperative it is to consider the 'whole of life' community; considerations made not only to the current community profile, but a need to look at emerging trends and changing demographics over the facility lifespan (approx 50 years), and identify facility and program opportunities that enables aquatic and leisure centres to adapt to the changing ages, socioeconomic status and cultural heritage of residents.

In order to provide an insight to the demographics and health profile of the Mernda and Doreen communities, data was been obtained from the City of Whittlesea [Community Attitudes and Liveability Survey 2018](#), [Household Survey Municipal Report 2019](#), [Mernda profile 2018](#) and [Doreen profile 2018](#).

Highlighted trends indicate that the Mernda and Doreen regions are experiencing:

High levels of sedentary behaviour

- **Commute:** 45.2% (Mernda) and 43.9% (Doreen) of respondents spending 60+ minutes commute on an average day (33.8% municipal average).
- **Inactivity:** 56.5% (Mernda) and 49.2% (Doreen) of respondents spend less than 2.5 hours doing moderate to vigorous exercise per week.

A growing older cohort

- **50+ population:** Is expected to rise by 5578 residents in Mernda and 4690 in Doreen by 2038.



Youth disengagement

- 12.7% of 15 to 24 year olds in Mernda are not attending an education institution or employed (9.8% municipal average).

Emerging communities

- **Newly arrived:** 26.4% (Mernda) and 42.2% (Doreen) of residents who were born overseas have arrived in the past decade (27.1% municipal average).
- **Aboriginals:** There are a notably larger proportion of residents who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (1.2%) in Mernda and Doreen (1.1%) compared to municipal average (0.8%).

A booming younger population

- **Birth rates:** Annual rates expected to be 542 (Mernda, 10.4 per week) and 507 (Doreen, 9.7 per week) by 2038.
- **Babies and preschoolers:** Make up 12.5% of Mernda population compared to 8.2% municipal average.
- **U11's:** Mernda (23.8%) and Doreen (24.9%) highest within the municipality for proportion of U11's within total population.

An additional and significant statistic for Doreen is that 17.1% of respondents indicated that they had accessed/used mental health services within the past 12 months (8.8% municipal average).

The communities of Mernda and Doreen are also culturally diverse; [ProfileID](#) data indicates that 28.3% of residents in Mernda were born overseas, with 6.2% of these residents born in India. United Kingdom, Sri Lanka and the Philippines are amongst other notable countries of origin. Additionally, 15.2% of the Doreen community were also born overseas, with the United Kingdom, India, New Zealand and Italy prevalent countries of origin.

Consultation themes

Overarching themes have been consistent throughout the four consultation periods undertaken to inform this project (2013, 2017, 2018 and 2020) including strong support for Council's investment into designing, planning and building of the facilities. Respondents have constantly reinforced the need for the facility to be accessible to everyone; a place for the community to spend time together that is affordable and inclusive. High expectations are placed in a range of facilities and programs to suit various needs with cost and affordability remaining a primary area of concern.

Appendix Two provides a summary of consultation outcomes; **Figure Three** below provides an overview of frequent answers provided by respondents.

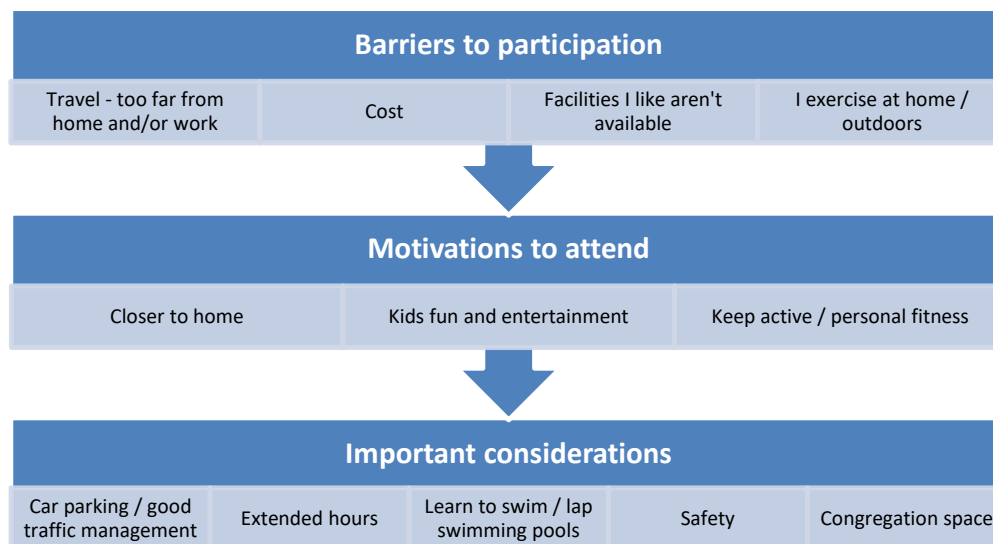


Figure 3. Summary of consultation outcome themes to date

Social, cultural and health outcomes

In November 2020, Sport and Leisure Solutions presented to Council to provide advice on the role of aquatic and leisure centres within communities and the important value they provide in developing health and social wellbeing outcomes. Research identifies that aquatic and leisure centres play an important role in:

- Reducing the risk of chronic disease and prevalence of mental illness (results in both personal and systemic benefits).
- Reducing the incidence of drowning.
- Developing social capital and connection (particularly for people involved in group activities).
- Improving productivity and reduction in absenteeism.
- Creating local employment opportunities (throughout construction and operation) and ongoing social procurement and targeted employment opportunities.

In addition, it is acknowledged within industry that aquatic and leisure centres play a role in encouraging a sense of community pride, an uplift in public amenity and increased security in surrounding locale (by providing secure areas for recreation and socialisation).

This is supported by The Value of Community Sport and Active Recreation Infrastructure 2020, a [KPMG report](#) that was commissioned by Sport and Recreation Victoria which identifies the value of sport and active recreation infrastructure across the State annually; summarised in **Figure Four** below.



Figure 4. Summary of key findings from KPMG report

Similarly, in July 2021, Royal Life Saving Australia released a report on the [Social, Health and Economic Value of the Australian National Aquatic Industry](#) which describes aquatic facilities as unique in their ability to transcend many of the barriers present in other sports or social settings; generally safer and more accessible than other forms of physical activity, aquatic centres allow people of all abilities to participate in recreation and leisure. Important findings regarding Social Return on Investment per \$1 spent on aquatic facilities are shown in **Figure Five**.

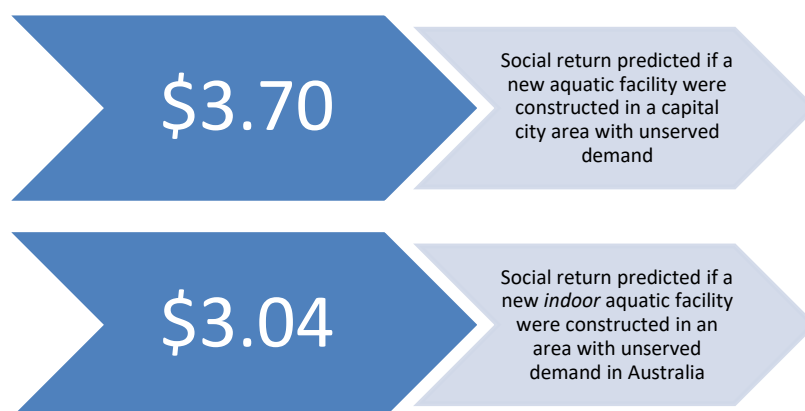


Figure 5. Social return per \$1 spent on aquatic infrastructure (Royal Life Saving Australia)



[Victoria's Infrastructure Strategy 2021-2051](#) also identifies the important role that aquatic and leisure centres play in improving physical and mental health and wellbeing; identifying that each visit to a swimming pool generates \$26 in health benefits.

Maximising outcomes

When considering the important role that aquatic and leisure centres play in developing positive health and social outcomes within the community, it's important that any opportunities to maximise these benefits are considered when planning for the delivery of new facilities. In particular:

- Maximising participation by traditional users; provides commercial viability and broader health and wellbeing outcomes.
- Maximising use by community members that have traditionally been the least likely to use an aquatic and leisure centre; results in improved physical and mental health for some of our most disadvantaged:
 - People with chronic health issues.
 - People from low socio backgrounds.
 - People from disadvantaged backgrounds.
 - People with a disability.
 - Those experiencing homelessness.
 - The unemployed and the underemployed.
 - Newly arrived migrants.
 - Aboriginals.

A commitment to the alignment of aquatic and leisure centre strategies with local health and wellbeing plans by local government could be perceived to be relatively weak in past times; stipulating that this is a challenge that is not unique to the City of Whittlesea. However, this can be achieved through a whole of organisation buy in and alignment of priorities as summarised in **Figure Six**.

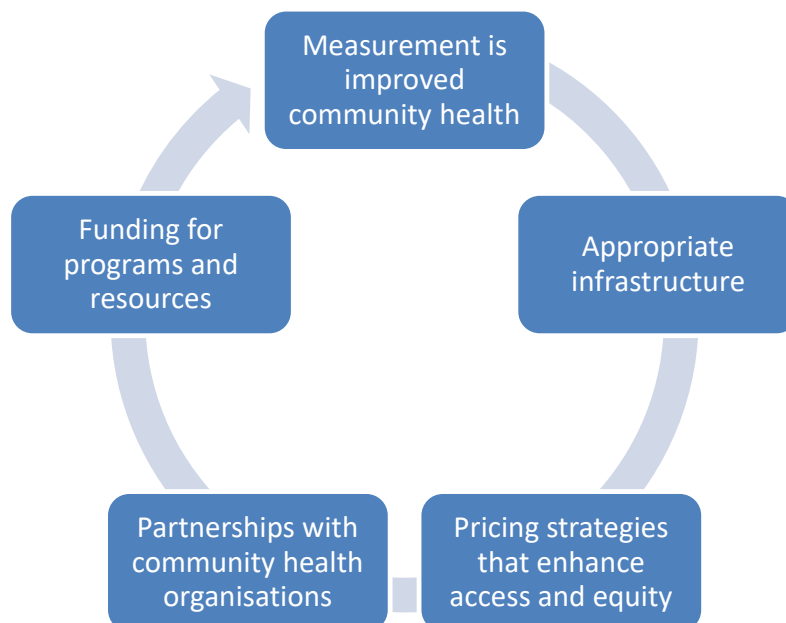


Figure 6. Alignment of priorities to local health outcomes.



Proposal

The desired outcomes have significantly influenced the proposed scope of facilities to respond to the diverse needs of the existing and future communities of Mernda, Doreen and surrounding precincts; an overview of the methodology and considerations to date to inform the proposed scope of facilities as detailed in this paper is summarised in **Figure Seven** below.

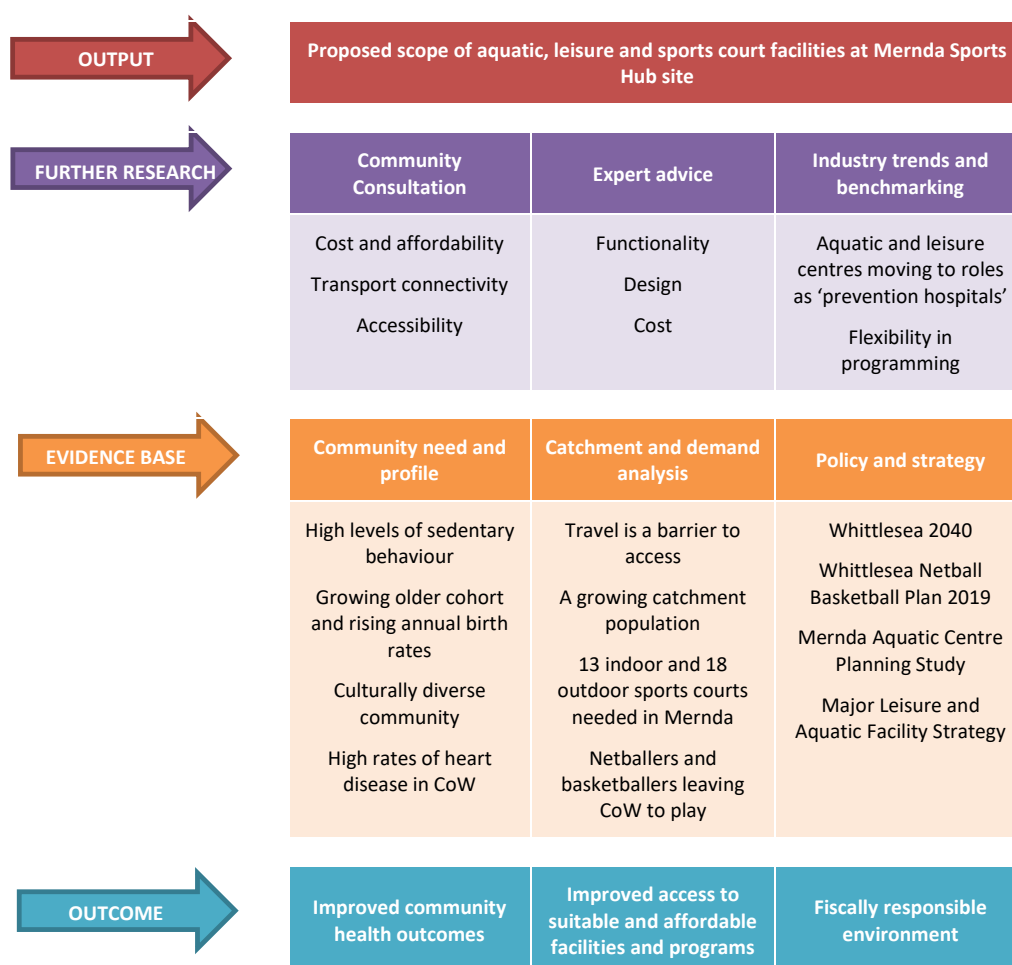


Figure 7. Considerations and methodology to date to inform proposed project scope for Mernda facilities.



Proposal: Facility scope and cost

The proposed facility scope is made in careful consideration of accumulated knowledge, planning and consultation outcomes to date (as detailed earlier in this report); in particular the independent advice provided by Sport and Leisure Solutions and detailed in the *Mernda Aquatic Centre Planning Study Pool Options Analysis 2021*.

Further detailed in **Table Two** below, the proposed core facility components strike a balance between demonstrated community demand, predicted changing community needs and ongoing financial performance and viability of the facilities; the following key features are proposed:

- A 50-metre multipurpose pool (with boom wall) to deliver accessibility outcomes and maximum programming flexibility.
- Supporting aquatic spaces to encourage learn to swim, rehabilitation, gentle exercise and leisure play opportunities for all ages, abilities and levels of aquatic confidence.
- Health and fitness facilities to support individual or group training.
- Six indoor sports courts and eight outdoor netball courts to provide regional level netball and basketball facilities which assists in bridging the infrastructure gap within the municipality and boosts the growth of local clubs and associations.

Component	Facility	Indicative scope	Use / activities
Aquatics	Multipurpose Pool	8-lane 50-metre with boom wall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lap swimming (casual, training and carnivals) • Gentle warm water exercise and aqua classes • Learn to swim programs • Aqua walking and jogging • Water play for toddlers and young children • Deeper water play for older children, youth and adults • Leisure, relaxation and rehabilitation
	Warm Water Program Pool	300 m2 + ramp	
	Teaching Pool	125 m2 + ramp	
	Leisure Pool	350 m2 incl. ramp	
	Spa, steam and sauna	n/a	
Health and Fitness	Gymnasium	600 m2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weight and cardio training • Variety of group fitness programs • Holistic health focus (via allied health partnerships)
	Group fitness room	220 m2	
	Program room #2	150 m2	
	Program room #3	80 m2	
	Occasional care / program room #4	190 m2	
	Health consulting / wellness suites	150 m2	
Sports Courts	Multipurpose sports courts	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant growth in local netball and basketball clubs and associations • Increase opportunity for other sports such as volleyball and badminton • Capacity to attract special events
	Netball and basketball show court	1	
	Permanent seating	500	
	Capacity for temporary seating	Up to 1500	
	Outdoor floodlit netball courts	8	

Table 2. Proposed scope of facilities for further refinement through business case development.



A summary of the anticipated capital cost and operational forecast for the proposed scope of facilities is provided in **Table Three** below.

Item	Amount	Note
Capital Cost	\$113,406,000	Provided by Quantity Surveyor based on concept sketches.
Income (p.a.)	\$5,060,000	Assumptions on casual fees, memberships and lane hire.
Expenditure (p.a.)	\$5,045,000	Assumptions on utilities, cleaning, wages and plant services / maintenance.
Net performance (p.a.)	+ \$15,000	Operational / post construction

Table 3. Summary of estimated financial forecasts for proposed project scope.

Importantly, the proposed scope represents:

- Improved accessibility outcomes and opportunities for additional and flexible programming achieved through the depth profile, water temperature and additional space within the 50-metre multipurpose pool.
- Aspects of both the 25-metre pool and the 50-metre FINA compliant pool; facilitating whole of community use through its shallower depth profile, whilst at the same time providing all the benefits of the FINA pool except for conducting state and national swimming events and water polo training/competition.
- Consideration of 'whole of life' community outcomes which reflect the current community profile and consider emerging trends and changing demographics over the facility lifespan.
- Consultation outcomes that identify priority for a facility that is accessible, affordable, inclusive and close to home for the community.
- Alignment with strategic guiding principles of the Major Leisure and Aquatic Facility Strategy 2014 ('MLAFS'); accessible and equitable, viable, affordable, maximising social and health benefit.

Next steps and opportunities

A detailed business case is required to further refine the proposed project scope, estimated capital cost and operating forecast; inclusive of further understanding the full scope and cost of civil and supporting infrastructure such as services connection, roads, car parking, water management and any latent ground conditions (i.e. rock) as design progresses. Similarly, assumptions have been made to date regarding operating financials based on benchmarking with like facilities in the State relating to items such as wages, fees, management structure, cleaning and utilities.

Figure Eight below summarises the key project phases and their anticipated commencement timelines; subject to change and refinement as the project progresses.

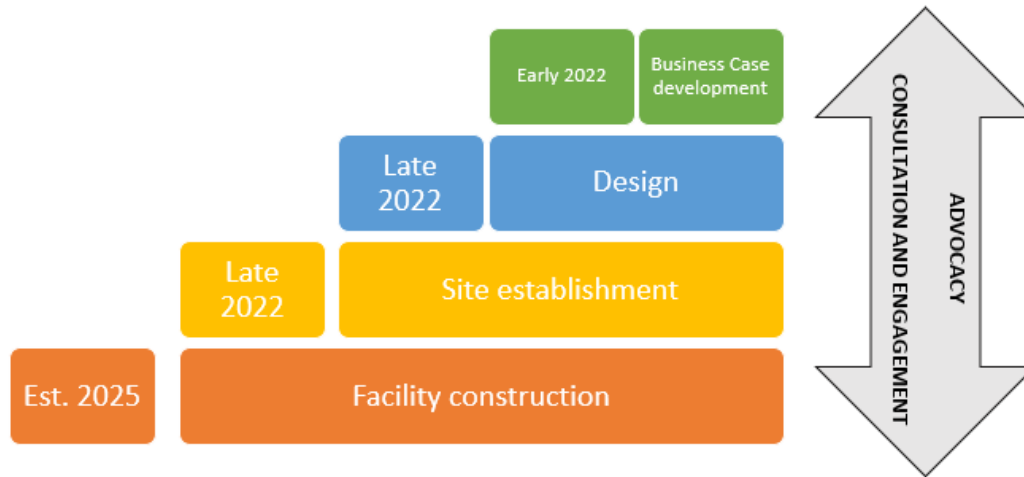


Figure 8. Upcoming project phases and anticipated commencement dates

Consultation

Due to the significant community interest and sheer size, complexity and cost of the project, a Communications and Engagement Plan will be developed to:

- Identify stakeholders and their expectations; ensuring that they are informed and engaged at relevant project stages, taking them on the project journey.
- Minimise the perceived risks associated with the project and mitigate project fatigue.
- Identify creative and effective communication and engagement methods in implementing the above.

A key element of the Communications and Engagement Plan will be the establishment of a Community and Stakeholder Reference Group; proposed to provide a consultation forum on key stages of the project. A Terms of Reference will be established, and it is proposed that members of the Community and Stakeholder Reference Group should represent the diverse culture, skills and experiences within the communities of Mernda and Doreen as well as lived experiences of the wider municipality (such as people living with disabilities, older people, young people, culturally and linguistically diverse communities etc) and project partners.

An Advocacy Plan will also be developed to ensure a planned advocacy approach to potential funding partners.

Environment and sustainability

The implementation of environmentally sustainable and universal design principles are key priorities as the project progresses; important not only to reduce future operating costs of the facility, but to reflect Council's endorsed sustainability policy including:

1. Implementation of the Zero Net Emissions Plan 2022.
2. Target to reduce Council potable water consumption by a further 20 per cent (on a kilolitre per capita basis) by 2030; Whittlesea Water for All 2020 - 2030.
3. Greening Whittlesea canopy cover targets (20% canopy cover).



An integrated approach to sustainability in design and delivery of the facility is to be embedded, ensuring best efforts are made to minimise carbon footprint and water use through construction and ongoing operations of the facility; **Table Four** identifies sustainability opportunities for further exploration.

Sustainability initiative / priority	Example / opportunity
Setting a measurable key performance target.	Net Positive Energy Building, Passive House, 6-Star Green Star Building or Green Star Communities when looking at the Mernda Sports Hub precinct.
Maximising opportunities for renewable and alternate energy systems on a precinct level.	Geo-thermal, solar panels, wind technology, battery storage, EV charging infrastructure.
Use of existing and emerging technologies in efficient energy infrastructure.	All electric building, heating and cooling systems, water treatment operations, plant/mechanical, insulation, passive design, glazing of windows and doors, maximising thermal efficiency etc.
Reduction in construction waste and increase recycling and repurposing.	Rock removed to enable construction is crushed and utilised in sub-base for internal road network and facility, using Circular economy materials for construction. Use of sustainable / recycled materials in all aspects of construction, including roads, footpaths etc.
Reducing potable water consumption and ensuring water sensitive urban design outcomes.	Rainwater harvesting and re-use, rainwater tanks, passive irrigation of landscaping, treatment and reuse of storm water, water efficient fittings and fixtures.
Reducing Urban Heat Island Effect.	Increased tree canopy, ensuring solar reflective materials, alternatives to asphalt, solar PV canopies over parking areas.

Table 4. Summary of sustainability initiatives and opportunities for project to be further explored.

Further refinement of the sustainable design key criteria is to be further explored through detailed business case development. This will be informed by consultation with the City of Darebin and Brimbank City Council; two municipalities with recent experience in planning and delivering for aquatic and leisure facilities with exemplary sustainability outcomes.

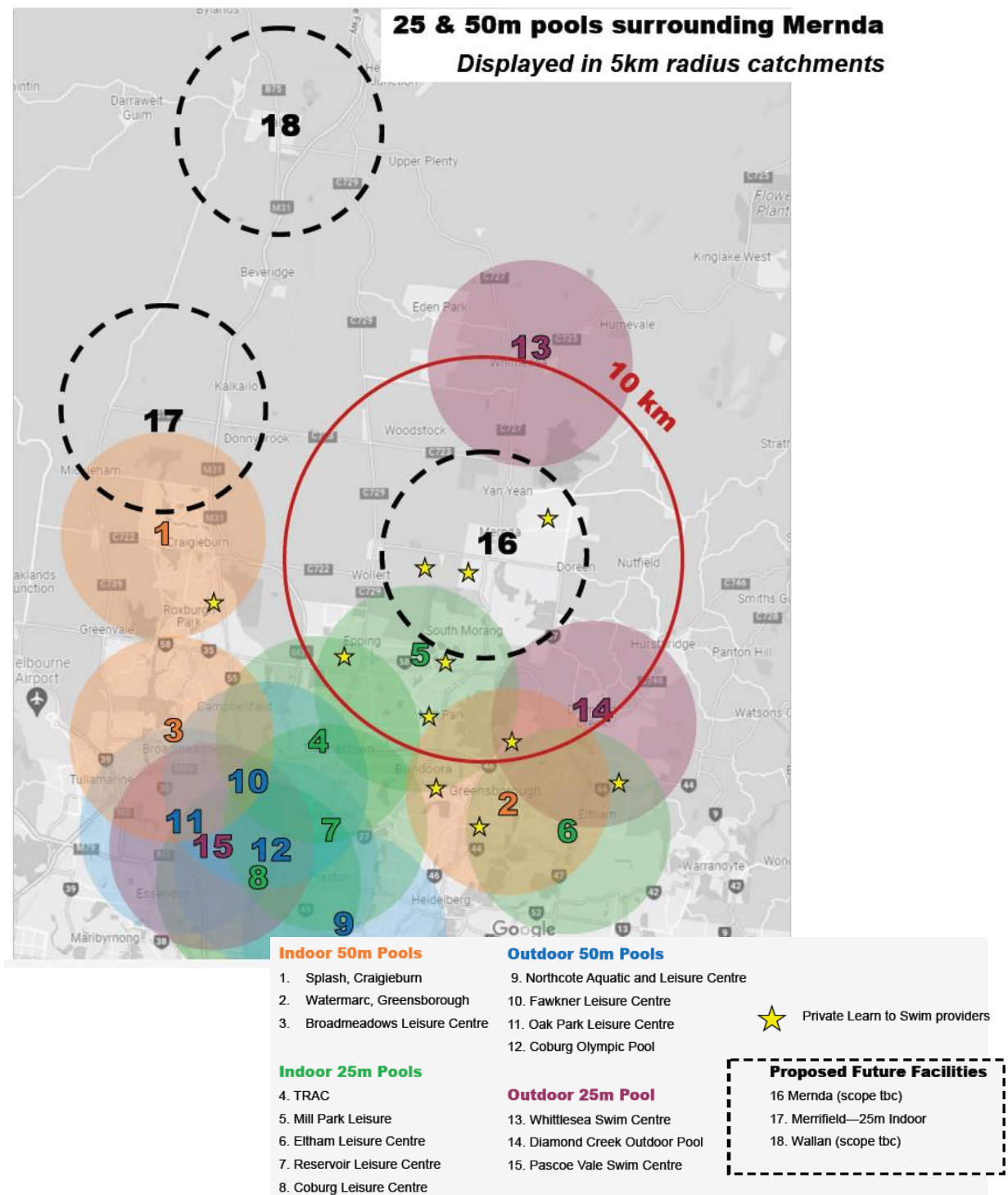
Accessibility

Accessibility is a key criterion through design development, including consideration of ramps into all pools, reduced paths of travel for users with lower mobility, accessible and family change village including changing places stations, and investigating pricing options to ensure accessibility for all through affordability.

Social procurement

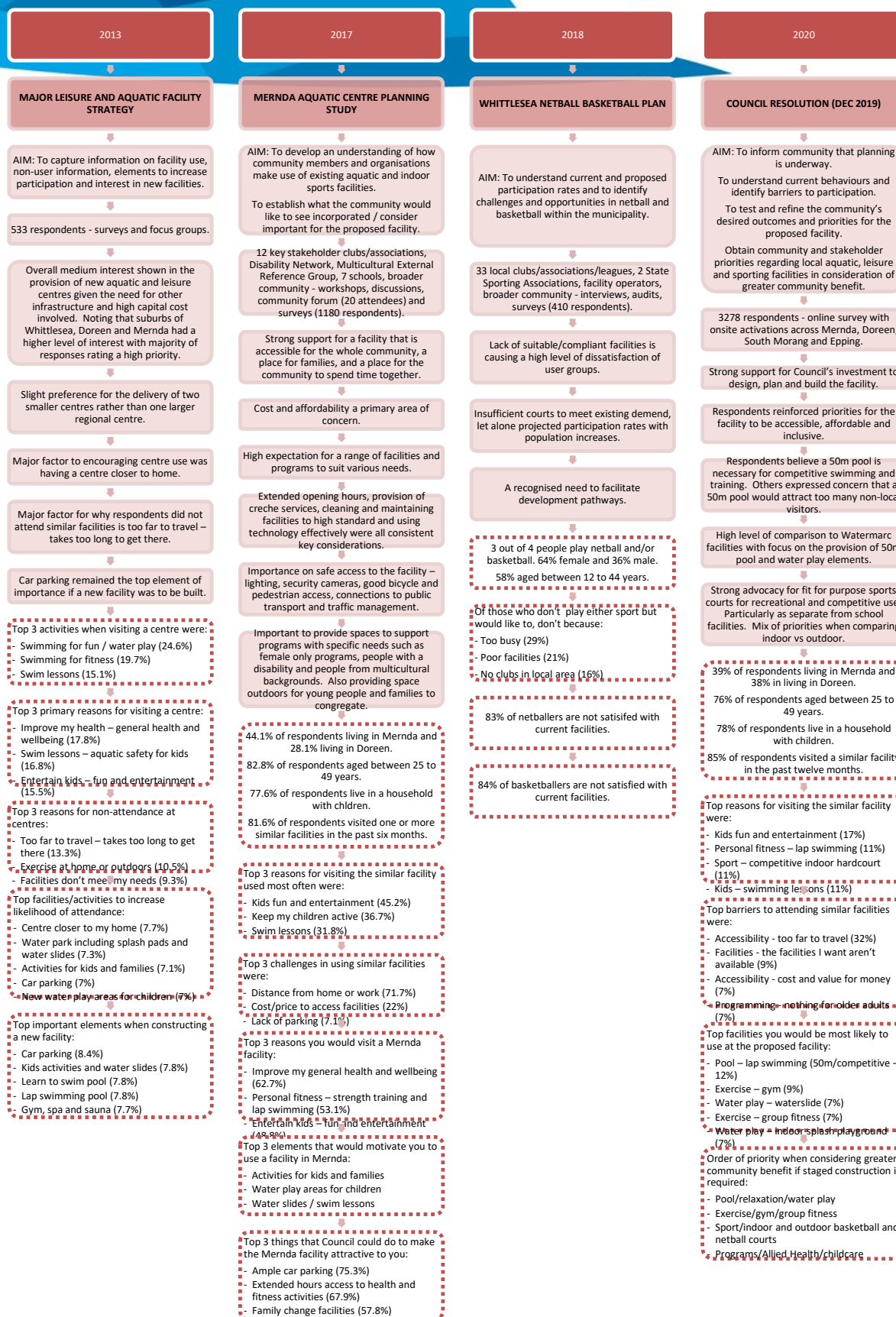
The business case will also explore opportunities for Council to harness greater social procurement outcomes through local employment programs as part of future management tender processes (i.e. including local employment targets aimed at increasing employment opportunities for local residents such as young people, Aboriginal people, people with a disability and culturally and linguistically diverse residents etc).

Appendix One: Facility aerial mapping





Appendix Two: Consultation Summary



5.1.3 Leisure Centres COVID-19 contract variation and proposed extension

Responsible Officer Director Community Wellbeing

Officer Team Leader Major Leisure Facilities

Attachments

1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Contract No's 2020-059 and 2020-141 variation details
[5.1.3.1 - 3 pages]

This attachment has been designated as confidential by the Director Community Wellbeing, under delegation from the Chief Executive Officer, in accordance with Rule 53 of the Governance Rules 2021 and sections 66(5) and 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* on the grounds that it contains private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—

- (i) relates to trade secrets; or
- (ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

In particular, the attachment contains information regarding commercially confidential tender pricing and negotiated variations to contract rates.

Proposal

It is proposed that two existing contracts for the operation of Council's aquatic and leisure facilities be extended to suit operational requirements. A contract extension is provided for within the current contract provisions. These contracts include:

- Contract number 2021-141 for the Management and Operation of Thomastown Recreation and Aquatic Centre; and
- Contract number 2020-059 for the Management and Operation of Mill Park Leisure and Whittlesea Swim Centre.

It is also proposed that the current contracts be varied to address the impacts of COVID-19 closures and restrictions.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Approve a variation of \$ 326,431 (excluding GST) making a revised contract sum of -\$457,416 (excluding GST) for Contract No 2020-141 for Management and Operation of Thomastown Aquatic and Recreation Centre as a result of interruptions to business operations due to COVID-19 closures and restrictions during the extended COVID-19 lockdown period in 2021.
2. Approve a variation of \$ 41,446 (excluding GST) making a revised contract sum of -\$1,055,495 (excluding GST) for Contract No. 2020-059 for Management and Operation of Mill Park Leisure and Whittlesea Swim Centre as a result of

interruptions to business operations due to COVID-19 closures and restrictions during the extended COVID-19 lockdown period in 2021.

3. **Approve an extension of the Contract No. 2020-141 for the Management and Operation of Thomastown Aquatic and Recreation Centre to have an end date of 30 June 2024, subject to receiving a revised budget (guaranteed and non-guaranteed) from Belgravia Leisure, via a report for endorsement by Council in early 2022.**
4. **Approve an extension of the Contract No. 2020-059 for the Management and Operation of Mill Park Leisure and Whittlesea Swim Centre to have an end date of 30 June 2024, subject to receiving a revised (guaranteed and non-guaranteed) from Belgravia Leisure, via a report for endorsement by Council in early 2022. The extension of Contract No. 2020-059 will also include a trial for the Whittlesea Swim Centre season which includes free entry for this facility and an evaluation process at the end of each season, subject to contractual agreement with Belgravia Leisure.**

Brief Overview

Both leisure centre contracts have been awarded to Belgravia Leisure and commenced on 1 November 2020 (Contract No. 2020-059, Mill Park Leisure and Whittlesea Swim Centre) and 1 July 2021 (Contract No. 2020-141, Thomastown Aquatic and Recreation Centre).

The contracts have been performed to a high level to date whilst the centres have been operational. A financial variation to these contracts is required due to interruption to business operations during COVID-19 closures and restrictions in 2021. A contract extension to 30 June 2024 is proposed for Mill Park and Thomastown leisure centres, as well as the Whittlesea Swim Centre. Contract extension options for both contracts are available within existing provisions to 30 June 2024. A notification of extension is required to be given by 1 January 2022.

Key Information

Belgravia Leisure (Belgravia) manage Council's aquatic and leisure facilities under the following contracts:

- Contract number 2020-141 Management and Operation of Thomastown Recreation and Aquatic Centre (TRAC) - commenced 1 July 2021.
- Contract number 2020-059 Management and Operation of Mill Park Leisure and Whittlesea Swim Centre - commenced 1 November 2020.

Both contracts have both a guaranteed and a non-guaranteed financial performance threshold. While the non-guaranteed budget is the likely net performance and the working contract sum, the guaranteed sum is the ultimate contract sum and liability for both parties.

Table One below outlines the financial responsibilities of both parties in relation to the guaranteed and non-guaranteed sums.

	Contractor	Council
Positive to non-guaranteed Sum	50%	50%
Sum between non-guaranteed and guaranteed		100%
Negative to guaranteed sum	100%	

Table One: Financial responsibilities summary

Although the Contractor is responsible for any negative variances to the guaranteed sum in normal operating circumstances, the following clause found in both contracts outlines Council's obligations regarding disruption to normal operating circumstances:

Council will give favourable consideration to variations based on financial impacts of a change to the opening date or any impacts upon operations during the opening. Additionally, Council will accept fair and reasonable variations as a consequence of COVID-19 restrictions and impacts on operations.

Variation Claims

Due to COVID-19 lockdowns both Mill Park Leisure and TRAC have been closed for 79% of the first four months of the year.

Table Two below shows the total number of closure days at both centres due to Lockdown 5 (15 July to 27 July 2021) and Lockdown 6 (5 August 2021 to 29 October 2021).

	Open	Closed	Total
July	19	12	31
August	5	25	30
September	0	30	30
October	2	29	31
Total days	26	96	122

Table two: Number of closure days due to lockdowns in 2021

With the facilities closed and income restricted, Belgravia have been unable to meet the budgeted targets that will enable them to achieve either the guaranteed or non-guaranteed contract sums at year end.

Officers have worked closely with Belgravia to significantly reduce expenditure during closures, however a base level has been required to maintain the building in an operational state, pay utilities and support a minimal staff presence to perform pool plant maintenance and water testing as well as ensure security and safety checks are performed.

Prior to Lockdowns 5 and 6, and despite a delayed start to the opening of Mill Park Leisure, Belgravia were performing well above the contract targets, achieving 2910 members against a target of 1718 and 2022 learn to swim enrolments against a target of 889.

As such, Belgravia's strong performance at Mill Park Leisure has ensured that high levels of income earned outside of lockdowns significantly offsets losses.

Belgravia have outlined that they are willing to apply income earned due to their enhanced performance to expenditure incurred due to lockdowns rather than claim any type of profit share, however, cannot carry the net losses.

Performance at TRAC has not been as strong as Mill Park Leisure due to a general decline of the business patronage prior to handover to Belgravia on 1 July 2021; as well as a lack of ability to build the business during closures. Belgravia will continue to focus on membership and enrolment growth at TRAC and their success at Mill Park Leisure provides some assurance of achieving this.

A detailed summary of the rational and breakdown of the requested variations is provided in the confidential attachment to this report (**Attachment One**).

Contract Extension

The initial term of both contracts is currently scheduled to end on 30 June 2022.

Options exist to extend both contracts up to 30 June 2024. Extension of the contracts to 30 June 2024 is proposed due to the significant business disruption caused by COVID-19 limitations, and the operator's subsequent lack of opportunity to develop and grow the business as planned.

The original intent of the short-term nature of both contracts was twofold:

- To align the end dates of each contract to facilitate combining all facilities under one contract in the longer term.
- To allow Mill Park Leisure to re-open and the business to establish to a level that would provide data to inform a longer-term tender.

The tender process for these current contracts identified Belgravia as the current industry leader in leisure facility management. With strong financial backing, Belgravia also represented the lowest financial risk to Council in the recovery from COVID-19.

Over the term of the current contracts, despite the delayed opening of Mill Park Leisure and COVID-19 limitations, Belgravia Leisure have proven their ability to operate the Centres to a high level and even exceed targets.

A two-year extension to the contracts is anticipated to allow Belgravia to grow and develop the businesses post COVID and provide quality data to inform the tender for a longer-term and combined contract to commence from 1 July 2025.

Officers will work with Belgravia to prepare a guaranteed and non-guaranteed budget for both contracts for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024 and will report back to Council for endorsement early in the new year.

Whittlesea Swim Centre Entry Fees

In response to the impacts of COVID-19 on our community, Council could consider fully subsidising entry fees at Whittlesea Swim Centre for the remainder of the 2021/22 season. A number of Councils across Victoria, including neighbouring Shires of Mitchell and Murrindindi, have made entry free at their outdoor pools in recent years. Free usage of Whittlesea Swim Centre would encourage broader community usage and assist local children in the practice of lifesaving swimming skills. Large scale leisure centre closures over the past two years have seen a general decrease in children's aquatic competence leading to an increase in the risk of drowning incidents.

In addition, the Whittlesea Swim Centre is only available to the community on a seasonal basis compared to Council's other aquatic facilities which are open year-round. During the

off-season when the Whittlesea Swim Centre is closed, local community members need to travel further to access aquatic services.

Council currently subsidises the operation of Whittlesea Swim Centre by approximately \$180,000 - \$200,000 per annum. The average seasonal income from entry fees taken over the past 5 years is \$52,955. A further contract variation to Belgravia Leisure for income loss will be monitored and negotiated. Officers are aware of examples from other Councils where the waiving of entry fees contributed to a rise in income from secondary spend and had less effect on the bottom line. It is anticipated that the Whittlesea Swim Centre component of contract number 2020-059 is relatively small; and therefore variation of the contract to allow free entry is not assessed to constitute a probity issue from a contractual perspective.

Community Consultation and Engagement

Community consultation and engagement was not required in relation to the subject matter of this report as it relates to commercial arrangements and contractual obligations that are confidential.

Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

Connected communities

We work to foster an inclusive, healthy, safe and welcoming community where all ways of life are celebrated and supported.

Leisure centres provide important opportunities for the community to be connected, active and supported to improve their health and wellbeing.

Considerations

Environmental

No implications.

Social, Cultural and Health

Belgravia Leisure are working to an endorsed Active Whittlesea Plan that outlines strategies and actions to address key social, cultural and health benefits as a key component of the contracts.

Economic

Belgravia Leisure employ over 100 local people which directly contributes to the local economy. The social value of aquatic and leisure facilities also contributes significant economic benefit to the community.

Financial Implications

Contract variations

Additional funding to support the variation of these contracts is sought as detailed in the confidential attachment (**Attachment One**).

Contract extensions

Officers will work with Belgravia to prepare a guaranteed and non-guaranteed budget for both contracts for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024, and will report back to Council for endorsement in the new year (no later than the third quarter of the 2021/22 financial year). Strong performance of the contractor to date shall be factored during guaranteed and non-guaranteed budget preparation discussions.

Preparation of an acceptable guaranteed and non-guaranteed budget for both contracts shall involve these arrangements being within Council's endorsed long term financial plan. Free entry to the Whittlesea Swim Centre is not accounted for in the current endorsed long term financial plan.

Whittlesea Swim Centre entry fees

Council currently subsidises the operation of Whittlesea Swim Centre by approximately \$180,000 - \$200,000 per annum. The average seasonal income from entry fees taken over the past 5 years is \$52,955. A further contract variation to Belgravia Leisure for income loss will be monitored and negotiated and assessed as part of an annual evaluation.

Link to Strategic Risk

Strategic Risk

Service Delivery - Inability to plan for and provide critical community services and infrastructure impacting on community wellbeing

Contractor Management - Failure to manage contractors to deliver agreed outcomes

Leisure centres provide essential opportunities for the community to participate in activities for the benefit of their physical and mental wellbeing. By supporting Belgravia through this difficult operating environment, we are maintaining a strong partnership and ensuring that the centres are accessible, relevant and operating to a high standard.

Implementation Strategy

Communication

Formal contract variation and extension documentation will be completed and executed in due course.

Officers will work with Belgravia to communicate the extension to customers and residents once finalised.

Critical Dates

The contracts commenced on 1 November 2020 (Contract No. 2020-059) and 1 July 2021 (Contract No. 2020-141) and the current approved end date for both is 30 June 2022.

Options exist to extend the contracts up to 30 June 2024. Under the current contracts, Council is required to provide a notification of extension to the contractor by 1 January 2022.

The 2021/2022 season for the Whittlesea Swim Centre is 1 November 2021 to 31 March 2022.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Rule 47 of the Governance Rules 2021, officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

Conclusion

Variations and extension of the following contracts is sought in accordance with the contract's terms and conditions and Councils' applicable policy and procedures for:

- Contract No. 2020-141 Management and Operation of Thomastown Recreation and Aquatic Centre (TRAC)
- Contract No. 2020-059 Management and Operation of Mill Park Leisure and Whittlesea Swim Centre (including introduction of free entry for the Whittlesea Swim Centre).

A report will be presented to Council for endorsement early in 2022 which outlines a guaranteed and non-guaranteed budget for both contracts for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024.

5.1.4 Complaints Policy

Responsible Officer Acting Director Corporate Services

Officer Senior Customer Service Advisor

Attachments

1. Complaints Policy [5.1.4.1 - 7 pages]

Proposal

Following review and engagement with our community, Council's updated Complaints Policy is presented to Council for adoption.

Recommendation

That Council adopt the Complaints Policy (Attachment 1) to align to requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and recommendations from the Victorian Ombudsman.

Brief Overview

Council's Complaints Policy reflects our commitment to being accessible and responsive to determining the outcome of complaints quickly and creating a culture that encourages feedback.

The adoption of Council's Complaints Policy is also a requirement of the *Local Government Act 2020* and is required to be adopted by 31 December 2021.

Key Information

Council provides an extensive range of services to our community. We value our customers and are committed to providing a high standard of service and ensuring consistency in service delivery.

If our service falls short, or we make a mistake, we encourage our customers to contact us directly so we can resolve the issue promptly. We regard complaints as an opportunity to improve our practices and procedures.

Council's Complaints Policy aims to put in place an open and transparent customer complaint handling system to ensure complaints are handled fairly and objectively. The Policy has been updated to reflect the latest recommendations from the Victorian Ombudsman's "Councils and complaints – A good practice guide" 2nd edition.

Community Consultation and Engagement

Community consultation was undertaken for a five-week period commencing 20 October 2021 via the following channels:

Channel	Approach/use
Media	Media release issued to local papers
Website	News item Hive – policy and submission form included
Social media	Social media post explaining opportunity to contribute.
Direct mail	To regular complainants as appropriate
Print advertising	Included in local media advertising

In total there were two submissions received in consultation that related specifically to the Complaints Policy.

The two submissions received were focused on the importance of a process for following through and resolving complaints, whilst another highlighted social media as a more accessible way to lodge a complaint. Both were noted.

Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

High performing organisation

We engage effectively with the community, deliver efficient and effective services and initiatives, make decision in the best interest of our community and deliver value to our community.

Community consultation and engagement carried out provided an opportunity for the community to provide feedback on Council's draft Complaints Policy.

Considerations

Environmental

No implications

Social, Cultural and Health

An effective complaints policy helps develop a safe and inclusive community and promotes respect for diverse values, abilities, beliefs, cultural practices and ways of living.

Economic

The aim of this Policy is to ensure complaints are dealt with in a timely and consistent manner. The community will have access to the Complaints Policy via the City of Whittlesea website where they can learn what to expect should they need to lodge a complaint.

Community education should help the objective to deal with complaints efficiently and effectively.

Financial Implications

No implications

Link to Strategic Risk

Community and Stakeholder Engagement - Ineffective stakeholder engagement resulting in compromised community outcomes and/or non-achievement of Council's strategic direction

A robust complaint handling framework enables effective and consistent management of complaints and provides data to inform service refinements and improvements.

Council's Complaints Policy is our commitment to being accessible and responsive to determining the outcome of complaints quickly and creating a culture that encourages feedback.

Implementation Strategy**Communication**

Once endorsed, the Complaints Policy will be uploaded to the City of Whittlesea website. It will replace the current Complaints Policy.

Critical Dates

- Community consultation was undertaken between 20 October and 24 November 2021.
- Under the *Local Government Act 2020* the Complaints Policy must be adopted by Council before 31 December 2021.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Rule 47 of the Governance Rules 2021, officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

Conclusion

Council's Complaints Policy takes into consideration Council's legislative obligations and aims to put in place an open and transparent customer complaint handling system to ensure complaints are handled fairly and objectively.



Complaints Policy

Policy statement

The City of Whittlesea values and encourages community feedback. Where there are complaints about our services, actions, decisions, and policies we are committed to:

- enabling members of the public to make complaints about the Council;
- responding to complaints by taking action to resolve complaints as quickly as possible; and
- learning from complaints to improve our services.

We treat every complaint we receive on its individual merits, through clear and consistent processes. Our Complaints Policy (Policy) applies to all complaints from members of the public about Council staff, Council contractors and decisions made at Council meetings. This Policy does not apply to complaints about individual Administrators/Councillors.

Purpose

The Complaints Policy aims to:

- put in place an open and transparent customer complaint handling system;
- establish our timeframes for addressing complaints (where statutory timelines apply; they will override the timelines in this Policy);
- ensure Council Officers handle complaints fairly and objectively;
- set out how Council Officers record and analyse complaint data to identify where we can improve our services; and
- put in place open and transparent procedures for managing unreasonable complainant conduct to ensure unreasonable complainants are dealt with fairly and objectively.

Principles

The Complaints Policy is informed by the following City of Whittlesea Community Building Principles:

Equity, access and inclusion

We support the development of a safe and inclusive community, and promote respect for diverse values, abilities, beliefs, cultural practices and ways of living. Council ensures that the distribution of our services and resources is a transparent and socially inclusive process that delivers equitable outcomes.

W2040 Key Direction

Date of Adoption

Directorate Responsible

High-performing organisation

V2.0 December 6, 2021

Corporate Services



Community and civic participation

We are committed to delivering accessible information, facilities, programs and services that encourage all people to build social connections and participate in community life. We work to ensure citizens are informed and consulted by governments about the decisions that affect their lives and are able to fully participate in decision making processes.

Community outcomes

We are focused on achieving positive and equitable community outcomes by ensuring a consistent approach to recording, managing, and reporting on complaints received from the community regarding service standards and delivery. Complaint data is important community feedback and is an integral part of the continuous improvement process.

Context/Rationale

Development of a Complaints Policy is a requirement under the *Local Government Act 2020* which states that a Council must develop and maintain a complaints policy.

A robust complaints policy enables effective and consistent management of complaints and provides data to inform service refinements and improvements.

Scope

This Policy is applicable to all members of Council staff, volunteers, and contractors.

Key linkages

All City of Whittlesea policies comply with the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities*.

This Policy has links to several Council documents and legislation.

- Council's Complaint Handling Guidelines
- Council's Managing Unreasonable Complainant Conduct Guidelines
- Council's Community Plan
- Council's Code of Conduct for Staff and Others
- Council and complaints - A good practice guide (Victorian Ombudsman's Office)
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*

W2040 Key Direction

Date of Adoption

Directorate Responsible

High-performing organisation

V2.0 December 6, 2021

Corporate Services



Procedural guidelines

Definition

A complaint includes a communication (verbal or written) to the Council which expresses dissatisfaction about:

- The quality of an action, decision or service provided by Council staff or a Council contractor.
- A delay by Council staff or a Council contractor in taking an action, making a decision or delivering a service.
- A policy or decision made by the Council, Council staff or a Council contractor.

In this Policy:

- 'Council staff' is any person employed by the Council to carry out the functions of the Council, and the Council's CEO, this includes volunteers.
- 'Council contractor' is any third-party engaged by the Council to carry out functions on the Council's behalf.
- 'Council' means the body of elected Councillors/Panel of Administrators.

A complaint is not:

- A request for service, which is contact with Council to seek either assistance, access to a new service or advise us about a matter for which Council has responsibility.
- Feedback, which is information provided to council on the quality of service provided by its officers or contractors.

How to make a complaint

Any member of the public can make a complaint. Complaints can be made by:

- Telephone: 03 9217 2170
- Online: www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au
- Email: Info@whittlesea.vic.gov.au
- Post: City of Whittlesea, Locked Bag 1 Bundoora, MDC, 3083
- In person: Council Offices, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang

All complainants are asked to raise their concerns directly with the Council staff member or contractor involved in the first instance to allow Council the opportunity to resolve the complaint. If the complaint is not resolved, the complaint can be escalated to a senior officer. After all avenues of review at Council level have been met and if the complainant is not satisfied with Council's response, they will be advised of the external avenues for appeal.



It is helpful for a complainant to provide the following to Council:

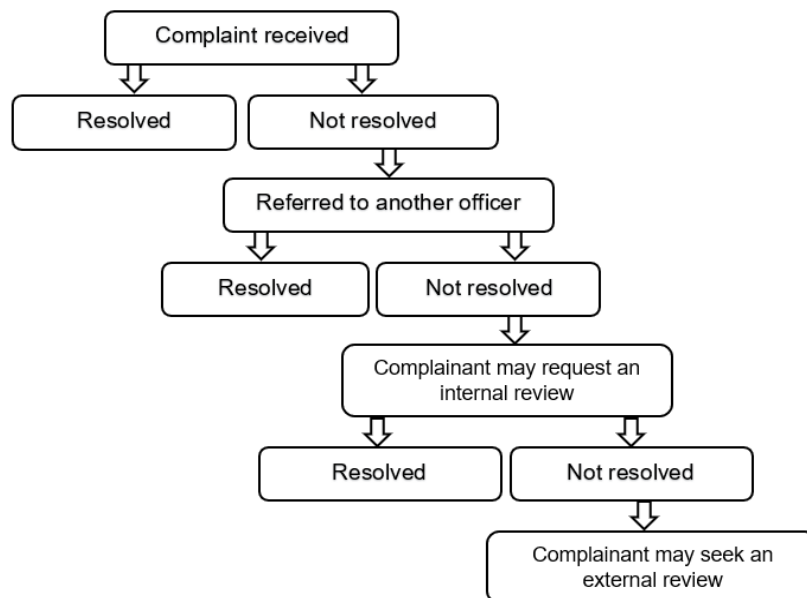
- Name and contact details. Complaints can be made anonymously, but this may limit how Council responds.
- Identify the action, decision, service or policy in question, and precisely what is causing the dissatisfaction.
- Relevant details, such as dates, times, location or reference numbers, and documents that support the complaint.
- The outcome being sought from making a complaint.
- Whether the complainant has any communication needs.

We are committed to ensuring our complaints process is accessible to everyone. Tell us if you have specific communication needs or barriers, and we can assist you by:

- using an assistance service, such as an interpreter or TTY (for free);
- talking with you if you have trouble reading or writing; or
- communicating with another person acting on your behalf if you cannot make the complaint yourself.

Our complaints process

Diagram 1. Flowchart of the complaints process





When you complain to us, we will record the complaint immediately and acknowledge your complaint within one business day. We will initially assess your complaint to decide how we will handle it. This may happen while we are talking with you.

After our initial assessment, we may:

- take direct action to resolve your complaint;
- refer your complaint to the relevant team or manager for investigation;
- refer your complaint to the relevant external agency for investigation; or
- decline to deal with your complaint if you have a right to a statutory review of your complaint (such as a right of appeal to VCAT).

Where possible, we will attempt to resolve your complaint at the time you first contact us. If we decide not to act on your complaint, we will explain why, and, where possible, inform you about other options.

If we cannot resolve your complaint quickly, we will refer it to the relevant team or manager to investigate. We will tell you who you can contact about the investigation.

We aim to complete investigations within 20 business days and will tell you if the investigation will take longer. We will update you regularly (but no longer than 20 business days) about progress until the investigation is completed. We will inform you of the outcome of your complaint and explain our reasons.

As part of our investigation we will:

- Assess the information against relevant legislation, policies and procedures.
- Refer to Council documents and records.
- Meet affected parties to consider possible solutions.
- Advise you in writing of the outcome and our reasons.

We require our staff to be respectful and responsive in all their communications with members of the public. We expect the same of you when you communicate with our staff.

We may change the way we communicate with you if your behaviour due to either its nature or frequency raises health, safety, resource or equity issues for Council staff involved in the complaints process.

How to request an internal review

If you are dissatisfied with our decision and how we responded to your complaint, you can request an internal review.

The internal review will be conducted by a senior Council officer with the required subject matter knowledge but who has not had any prior involvement with your complaint.



We will inform you of the outcome of the internal review and explain our reasons within 20 business days.

How to request an external review

There are external bodies that can deal with different types of complaints about us. After all avenues of review at Council level have been met and if you are not satisfied with Council's response, we will advise you of the relevant external avenue for appeal.

You can request an external review from the following organisations.

Complaint	Organisation to contact for external review
Actions or decisions of a Council, Council staff and contractors. This includes failure to consider human rights or failure to act compatibly with a human right under the <i>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)</i>	Victorian Ombudsman www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au
Breaches of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> . Concerns about a councillor, council staff, a person providing advice to Council, or Council elections.	Local Government Inspectorate www.lgi.vic.gov.au
Breach of privacy. Complaint about a freedom of information application	Office of the Victorian Information Commission www.ovic.vic.gov.au
Corruption or public interest disclosure ('whistle-blower') complaints	Independent Broad-based Anticorruption Commission www.ibac.vic.gov.au
Management of child safety	Commission for Children and Young people www.contact@ccyp.vic.gov.au
Discrimination	Victorian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission www.humanrights.vic.gov.au
Council elections	Victorian Electoral Commission www.vec.vic.gov.au

How we learn from complaints

Complaints from people who use or who are affected by our services provide us with valuable feedback about how we are performing.

We regularly analyse our complaint data to identify trends and potential issues that deserve further attention. We use this information to come up with solutions about how we can improve our services.



Your privacy

We keep your personal information secure. We use your information to respond to your complaint and may also analyse the information you have provided for the purpose of improving services that relate to your complaint.

When gathering information to respond to a complaint, we will only use it to deal with the complaint or to address systemic issues arising from the complaint.

The following information will be recorded for each complaint:

- The complainant's details.
- How the complaint was received.
- A description of the complaint.
- The complainant's desired outcome (if known).
- The Council Officer responsible for handling the complaint.
- Any action taken, including contact with the complainant, response times and the outcome.
- Any recommendations for improvement, and who is responsible for implementing them.

Where we publish complaint data, personal information is removed.

5.1.5 Proposal to lease 1F Ashline Street Wollert for affordable housing

Responsible Officer Director Planning & Development

Officer Social Policy and Planning Officer

Attachments Nil

Proposal

Conduct further community engagement on the *Local Homes for Local People* proposal to lease 1F Ashline Street, Wollert, for affordable housing, to enable the community and stakeholders to be involved in discussions about this proposal and provide feedback.

Recommendation

That Council:

- 1. Conduct further community engagement on the proposal to lease 1F Ashline Street, Wollert, for affordable housing, in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy 2021.**
- 2. Invite community members that responded to the first phase of consultation, to take part in community engagement activities in 2022.**
- 3. Present the outcomes of the community engagement process at a subsequent Council meeting in 2022 to inform the consideration of leasing 1F Ashline Street, Wollert, for the purpose of delivering Affordable Housing.**

Brief Overview

As part of considering the lease of 1F Ashline Street, Wollert for affordable housing, consultation with the community, local service providers and other key stakeholders, was conducted between September and October 2021. A large volume of feedback was raised throughout the consultation process. The main themes from the consultation feedback to date are summarised in this report. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown requirements, Council was unable to undertake additional community engagement activities in response to these matters. Community members and stakeholders provided feedback that the consultation should be extended to allow for further information and additional opportunities to provide input.

It is recommended that to appropriately respond to community feedback and ensure the consultation findings are representative of the community and key stakeholders, further community engagement be undertaken in 2022.

Community members will be invited to participate in discussions about this proposal and provide feedback.

Following further community engagement, the consultation outcomes will be presented at a future Council meeting to inform the consideration of leasing 1F Ashline Street, Wollert, for the purpose of delivering affordable housing.

Key Information

There is an opportunity for Council to make a meaningful contribution to increasing affordable housing in Wollert through a long-term lease arrangement with a community housing organisation.

At its meeting on 6 September 2021, Council resolved to:

1. Consider the lease of 1F Ashline Street, Wollert, in accordance with Section 115 of the Local Government Act 2020, to a community housing organisation for the purpose of delivering affordable housing.
2. Commence a process of community engagement on the proposal to lease 1F Ashline Street, Wollert, in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy 2021.
3. Present the outcomes of the community engagement process at the December 2021 Council meeting to inform the consideration of leasing 1F Ashline Street, Wollert, to deliver affordable housing.

These recommendations were adopted in response to current evidence and extensive community feedback that there is a significant shortfall in affordable housing across the municipality.

There are currently around 3,800 households (4.8%) with an unmet need for affordable housing in the City of Whittlesea. This gap will continue to increase with the growing population. Only 0.3% of rental properties were affordable for very low-income households in 2020. In the Epping North/Wollert Area, there were no (0.0%) rental properties available for very low-income households over this period. The rate of affordable housing provision in Wollert is far lower than average (0.7% of households, compared with 2.6% for Greater Melbourne).¹

Site Overview - 1F Ashline Street, Wollert

- Vacant 5,000 m² serviced parcel
- Zoned General Residential 1
- There is no significant vegetation on the site
- Surrounded by residential development and located opposite the new Wollert East P-12 school

¹ Housing.id, Housing monitor for City of Whittlesea, <https://housing.id.com.au/whittlesea> accessed November 2021

Key considerations

- The proximity to Wollert East Primary School offers an ideal opportunity for the location of affordable housing. The tenant cohort selected for this housing is likely to include households who would most benefit from living near the school, for example, families with school-aged children. The school is categorised as an ‘inclusive school’, meaning it has extra provisions to cater for students with disabilities and additional needs.
- The planning provisions for the site allows for buildings of up to three storeys (approx. 11m). In keeping with the residential built form of the area, the development would primarily be one or two-storey dwellings on the two residential streets, with the possibility of using some of the land for three-storey housing on Highpark Drive facing the school.
- As the site was vested to Council as part of a development contribution, it is recommended the land be leased, not sold.
- The site was initially set aside for a community facility. The community facility has since been relocated and is under construction on the adjoining Wollert East school site. The land has become available for alternate community use, such as affordable housing.
- The site is a single title, and no further subdivision would be required as part of a leasehold development.

Community Consultation and Engagement

Consultation with the community, local service providers and other key stakeholders was conducted between September and October 2021 on the proposal to lease 1F Ashline Street, Wollert, for affordable housing. This included direct correspondence to surrounding residents and property owners, an online community information session, and the opportunity for community and stakeholders to participate in a consultation survey. Information about the proposal and the community engagement activities were promoted via Council’s communication channels and on Council’s community engagement website.

A large volume of feedback was raised during the consultation. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown requirements, Council was unable to undertake additional community engagement activities in response to this feedback and concerns, particularly as face-to-face consultation was not allowed under COVID-19 restrictions. Community members and stakeholders provided feedback that the consultation should be extended to allow for further information and additional opportunities to provide input.

To appropriately respond to community feedback and ensure the consultation findings are representative of the Wollert community and key stakeholders, it is recommended that further community engagement be undertaken in 2022 to enable the community to participate in discussions about this proposal and provide feedback.

Opportunities for the community and key stakeholders to participate in this engagement process will be promoted in early 2022 via Council's communication channels.

Following further community engagement, the detailed outcomes of the community consultation will be presented to a subsequent Council meeting to inform the consideration of leasing this property for affordable housing.

Community feedback to date

The main themes from the consultation feedback to date are summarised below. Additional community engagement would further explore and respond to these matters to inform the recommendations presented to Council.

The significant need for affordable housing in this area

Respondents reported that there is a significant need for high-quality affordable housing in this area and more broadly in the municipality due to high rental costs, rising house prices and the long waiting list for social housing. This included support for the provision of affordable housing in addressing a human right to have safe, appropriate and accessible housing. The impact of the pandemic on housing security and was raised as a significant issue and re-enforcing the need for affordable housing options.

Respondents highlighted the need for affordable housing for families, particularly those with a single income, women and children from the area who are escaping family violence, older women and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Local housing service providers who responded to the survey emphasised the significant need for more affordable housing in Wollert and provided commentary that good quality affordable housing results in families having an improved life, contributing to their community, improved outcomes for the children and society as a whole. These respondents highlighted that more affordable housing is critical for addressing homelessness in this community.

In contrast, some respondents questioned the need for affordable housing in this area and suggested that it should be located in other suburbs.

Suitability of this site for affordable housing

There was contrasting commentary about the suitability of this property for affordable housing in terms of its proximity to schools, transport and services. Many respondents questioned the suitability while a small number of respondents support the use of this site due to its location. Local service providers stated that the proximity to a school, services and transport would reduce barriers for residents of the housing and that the site is well located to address local affordable housing needs.

Size and design of the housing

The impact of developing the site for housing particularly the size and design of any future building. Respondents expressed concerns about three-storey dwellings and the impact of higher density housing in the area, given the surrounding neighbourhood is predominantly one and two-storeys. The option to provide a mix of private and affordable housing on this

site was raised. The need to maintain the existing neighbourhood character and aesthetic was important to many respondents.

Respondents expressed that affordable housing should be high-quality, well integrated into the neighbourhood and lower density, to prevent stigmatisation of future residents.

Car parking and traffic

The need for adequate car parking for the housing has been raised. There is concern that the housing would increase the traffic in the area, particularly given the impact of additional traffic when the Wollert East Primary School is open.

Impact on the value of surrounding properties

Respondents reported significant concerns that the housing would devalue the surrounding properties in the area due to the perception that housing would not fit the current aesthetic, the impact of public perception of affordable housing developments including the people who would live there and the tenancy management.

Crime and anti-social behaviour

Respondents reported concerns that the people who would live in the housing may increase crime, anti-social behaviour and threaten the safety of residents.

Changing the proposed use of the site from a community facility to housing

The rationale for changing the proposed use of this site from a community centre was questioned and respondents expressed opposition to the change in use from the initial plan for this property.

Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

Connected communities

We work to foster an inclusive, healthy, safe and welcoming community where all ways of life are celebrated and supported

Whittlesea 2040: *A place for all* reflects the long-term vision for the City of Whittlesea and highlights both the community's aspirations for a range of housing types and the Council's commitment to delivering housing for diverse needs. The Community Plan 2021-2025 includes a key initiative to '*Deliver more affordable and accessible homes in the municipality*', under Goal 2: *Liveable neighbourhoods*. This proposal is an opportunity for Council to deliver on this key initiative by facilitating new affordable housing on suitable Council-land.

This proposal responds to the Council's commitment under the City of Whittlesea *Social and Affordable Housing Policy 2012*, which states that Council '*actively encourages and facilitates the provision of affordable, accessible and appropriate housing for very low, low and moderate income households across the municipality.*' Key action areas for Council identified in the Policy are to increase the supply of social and affordable housing.

The Policy includes six key areas for Council action:

- Plan for social and affordable housing
- Increase the supply of social housing
- Increase affordable private rental housing for low income households
- Increase the access to affordable house purchase for moderate income households
- Develop housing that matches the needs of the diverse population
- Address the needs of people faced with a housing crisis

The Policy recognises that *‘every person has a right to affordable, adequate and appropriate housing to enable their participation and sense of belonging in community life.’*

The Whittlesea Planning Scheme, which implements the existing Policy, states: *“Council aims to achieve the inclusion of 5% social housing and 10% affordable housing in the structure planning of any established or greenfield housing development.”*

Council’s efforts in facilitating social and affordable housing are underpinned by a human rights framework and local government’s obligations under the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*, reflecting that the provision of adequate housing is an essential human need and right.

The key documents that intersect with Council’s SAH Policy are:

Whittlesea 2040 Vision: <i>A place for all</i> Community Plan 2021 - 2025 Council Plan Update 2017 – 2021 Community Building Policy and Strategy Housing Diversity Strategy 2013-33 Whittlesea Planning Scheme and (WPS) Municipal Strategic Statement (MMS)	Health & Wellbeing Partnership Plan 2017-21 Municipal Pandemic Readiness and Recovery Plan Disability Action Plan 2017 – 2021 Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2017-20 Positive Ageing Strategy 2016 -2025
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Considerations

Environmental

There are no environmental considerations for the proposal to conduct further community engagement.

The site at 1F Ashline Street, Wollert, is currently vacant and zoned for residential purposes. If the Council decides to lease the land for affordable housing, plans for the proposed housing would be prepared in partnership with a community housing organisation. The plans will be required to comply with relevant planning scheme requirements which will ensure the design is suitable within the built environment and addresses potential amenity impacts on surrounding residents. The plans will also be required to meet relevant Environmental Sustainable Design requirements.

Social, Cultural and Health

Affordable, safe and appropriate housing is critical to health, wellbeing and social and economic security. Within Australia, and overseas there is research that demonstrates the positive benefits of long-term, safe, and secure affordable housing. The benefit is to the tenant, to the community, and to the economy measured through reduced demand on health services and greater participation in education and the workforce.²

Affordable housing is an essential part of the housing system in Australia. It provides housing for vulnerable people, as well as key workers with low and moderate incomes, whose jobs are essential to the functioning and liveability of the municipality, including childcare, health care and aged care workers, hospitality and retail staff, service industry staff and delivery personnel.

Many people from the City of Whittlesea, including the Epping North-Wollert area, cannot find housing in the private market, and the current provision of affordable housing does not meet demand.

Evidence shows that housing affordability is a significant issue for residents, with many households on lower incomes unable to afford rental properties and high proportions of households experiencing housing stress. For example, in the City of Whittlesea:

- One third of households renting are experiencing housing stress (33.8%). For people with low and very low incomes, this rate is much higher (69% and 90%, respectively).
- 22.8% of households are classified as having very low incomes.
- Only 0.3% of rental properties were affordable for very low-income households in the 12 months to Dec 2020.
- Overall, 16% of households experience housing stress which impacts people's health and wellbeing and diminishes the local economy.¹

The lease of property at 1F Ashline Street, Wollert, to a community housing organisation would deliver additional affordable housing dwellings in Wollert, which currently has no affordable rentals for households with very low incomes and significantly lower than average access to affordable housing (0.7% of households, compared with 2.6% for Greater Melbourne). Additional affordable housing will deliver a significant community benefit and address a critical undersupply by providing local homes for local people.

If the Council decides to lease the land, Council would work closely with the community housing organisation to ensure the development and ongoing management of the housing is a success for existing and new residents, and there is a planned approach to community development that seeks to build positive community connections between the people living in the housing and the surrounding neighbourhood.

² C. Nygaard, *Social and Affordable Housing as Social Infrastructure* (2019), Swinburne University of Technology, <https://www.communityhousing.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Social-and-affordable-housing-as-social-infrastructure-FINAL.pdf?x12261>

Economic

Research from Australia shows there are *'economic and social costs in unmet housing need, with these accruing at individual household and community levels. Social and affordable housing generally improves social and economic outcomes for its beneficiaries, including in the domains of social inclusion, education and skills, employment, health and mental health, safety and security, and empowerment. Securely housing people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness produces whole-of-government cost savings, especially in the areas of health and justice.'*³

The economic impacts of a particular housing development on this site would depend on a range of factors, such as the type of housing provided and the housing service model.

Financial Implications

Existing resources will be used to conduct further community engagement activities.

Link to Strategic Risk

Strategic Risk *Not linked to the risks within the Strategic Risk Register*

Under the adopted City of Whittlesea *Social and Affordable Housing Policy 2012*, the Council recognises that access to affordable and appropriate housing is a human right and a basic need. The provision of social and affordable housing and related support services are therefore considered critical community infrastructure and services. Council has legislated responsibilities for housing-related matters under the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Planning and Environment Act (1987)*, such as land-use planning, social and physical infrastructure planning and development, building controls, community consultation and engagement, and advocacy.

This proposal responds to recent community consultation findings that show there is a significant need for affordable housing and housing services in the municipality.

The process of community engagement is summarised under the consultation section of this report. Through the consultation to date, a large volume of feedback was raised. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown requirements, officers were unable to provide an appropriate level of engagement on this proposal. It is recommended that further community engagement be conducted in 2022, aligned with Council's commitments under the *Community Engagement Policy 2021*.

³ Davison, J., Brackertz, N. and Alves, T. (2021) Return on investment for social housing in the ACT, report prepared for ACT Shelter, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Melbourne.
<https://www.ahuri.edu.au/sites/default/files/documents/2021-09/AHURI-Prof-Services-Return-on-investment-for-social-housing-in-the-ACT.pdf>

Implementation Strategy

Communication

Opportunities for the community and key stakeholders to participate in this engagement process will be promoted in early 2022 via Council's communication channels, including on the project website. Direct correspondence will be sent to surrounding residents and property owners, and the project mailing list.

Critical Dates

- Conduct further community engagement activities in 2022.
- Present the outcomes of the community engagement process to a future meeting in 2022, to inform the consideration of leasing 1F Ashline Street, Wollert, to deliver affordable housing.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act, 2020* and Rule 47 of the Governance Rules 2021, officers providing advice to the Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

Conclusion

A large volume of feedback was raised during the consultation for this proposal. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown requirements, Council was unable to undertake additional community engagement activities in response to this feedback. Community members and stakeholders provided feedback that the consultation should be extended to allow for further information and additional opportunities to provide input. In order to appropriately respond to community feedback and ensure the consultation findings are representative of the Wollert community, it is recommended that further community engagement be undertaken in 2022.

Opportunities for the community and key stakeholders to participate in this engagement process will be promoted in early 2022. This will include opportunities for community members who were part of the first phase of consultation to participate in further discussions and provide feedback.

Following further community engagement, the detailed consultation outcomes will be presented at a future Council meeting to inform the consideration of leasing 1F Ashline Street, Wollert, for the purpose of delivering affordable housing.

5.1.6 Maternal and Child Health Sector Advocacy

Responsible Officer Director Community Wellbeing

Officer Manager Children & Families

Attachments

1. Interface Councils Draft MCH Advocacy Paper FINAL 24 November 2021 [5.1.6.1 - 8 pages]

Proposal

The Interface Councils Group has undertaken research to document pressures experienced by the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) services. The process has also identified opportunities and practical initiatives to improve outcomes for MCH services, particularly in municipalities experiencing considerable population growth.

It is proposed that Council endorses a suite of advocacy 'asks' to address issues relating to the funding and provision of MCH services as a 'Tier 2 - Ongoing Advocacy Priority' within Council's operational advocacy framework.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Endorse the draft Interface Councils Maternal and Child Health Issues Paper, November 2021 (Attachment One)
2. Endorse the advocacy 'asks' outlined in the draft Interface Councils Maternal and Child Health Issues Paper, November 2021 (Attachment One, and Table Two of this report) as part of Council's advocacy program.
3. Note the Municipal Association of Victoria's Maternal and Child Health service advocacy priorities (Table three of this report).
4. Note Department of Health and the Municipal Association of Victoria have committed to review of the Key Age and Stage Framework, with the review timeframes yet to be released.

Brief Overview

The Interface Councils group have commissioned a draft *Interface Councils Maternal and Child Health Issues Paper, November 2021* (Issues Paper, **Attachment One**) outlining current Maternal and Child Health (MCH) sector challenges. The Issues Paper includes a suite of practical initiatives that would assist with planning and delivery of the service. These issues are summarised in **Table One** below and also form the basis of suggested collective advocacy initiatives (summarised in **Table Two**) to be pursued by The Agenda Group on behalf of, and with, the Interface Councils group.

The Agenda Group are a consultancy engaged by the Interface Councils to support and progress agreed advocacy issues with federal and state government.

Key Information

Background

Maternal and Child Health (MCH) services in the City of Whittlesea

The MCH service is jointly funded by local governments and the Department of Health (DH) through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU outlines the partnership arrangements for Victorian MCH service planning, funding, and provision.

The Maternal and Child Health service in the City of Whittlesea provides a vital service to over 21,000 parents and children per year. As a growth area and a municipality with strong diversity, the scale and scope of this service is broad. The following service statistics demonstrate the breadth and volume of this service and relate to the service delivered between June 2020 and July 2021:

- 3,111 new babies were born in the municipality
- 21,140 children aged 0-6 years were enrolled in the MCH service
- 1195 people became parents for the first time
- 324 Aboriginal children (50 babies were enrolled in the service)
- 24,007 Key Age and Stage visits were delivered
- Over 70 staff at 51.34 EFT deliver and support the MCH service.

Emerging Issues

In response to a multitude of recent pressures and challenges experienced in the MCH service, the Interface Councils group has commissioned the development of an Issues Paper that outlines the sector challenges. This Issues Paper represents the experiences of the Interface Councils being the Cities of Whittlesea, Melton, Hume, Cardinia, Mornington Peninsula, Nillumbik, Wyndham, Casey, Mitchell and Yarra Ranges. This Paper is intended to be used to inform advocacy activities undertaken by The Agenda Group on behalf of, and with the Interface Councils group.

The Issues Paper outlines the stressors reported across all Interface Councils, and are grouped into 6 primary themes which are summarised in **Table One** below.

Key issue	Description
<i>Shortages in the MCH workforce</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortages in the availability of qualified Maternal and Child Health nurses given competing EBA conditions across Councils and with the hospital sector, and the redeployment of nurses to support COVID responses. • Demographic challenges of the existing workforce, including peaks at each end of the age spectrum leading to both an ageing and retiring workforce and a workforce with high levels of maternity leave uptake.

Key issue	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fatigue from the ongoing adjustments to the mode of delivery in response to COVID restrictions and increased sick leave in response to COVID-like symptoms or attending exposure sites.
Key Age and Stage Framework (KAS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current allocation of 6.75 hours per child has not increased within the past 10 years and is not reflective of the current complexities of families and scope creep in the KAS appointments. Additional demands have been placed on KAS Framework such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) assessments, psychosocial assessment at 4 weeks, Nutrition and development program, breastfeeding clinics, which are not matched by additional funding. The expansion of issues and problems MCH staff are required to assess and respond to per consultation now includes incidence of family violence, mental health problems and financial burdens, equating to additional information gathering and reporting within a KAS consultation. The Department of Health has committed to undertaking a review of the KAS framework alongside the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV). The review timeframe has not been released.
Gaps in funding across the entirety of the MCH model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Enhanced MCH program, which works with vulnerable families, is only funded to provide service until a child is 3 years of age, leaving a gap in support for children over 3 years of age Reliance on the MCH program to bridge the gaps where there are long waitlists for targeted supports such as mental health, family support, family violence, OT, speech therapy. These needs are more pronounced in growth areas where these services are not well established. A lack of funding built into the management, administrative and clinical support of the program adding pressure to the high-quality leadership of the service. A lack of funding for IT infrastructure such as for laptops and devices. Lack of capital funding to upgrade and expand MCH facilities.
Child Development Information System (CDIS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Child Development Information System (CDIS) database is the state-wide service client record system. There are challenges within the existing CDIS system to generate critical reports, assess family/ client need and disengagement and to provide useable data to inform service review and improvement. Some of these include: a high level of manual functions; and absence of customer focused add-ons such as online appointment booking functions.

Key issue	Description
Population growth across the growth area councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases in births compounds the already strained service and has resulted in increased waiting lists for MCH services as well as support services.
COVID impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A significant increase in the numbers of families experiencing significant vulnerabilities and requiring more support from the service than previous years. A backlog of appointments due to the prioritisation of younger babies during COVID, meaning children over 2 years of age were not seen nor developmental issues identified early.

Table One: Key issues summary**Interface Councils Advocacy**

The Issues Paper identified a number of advocacy focus areas (or 'asks') reflecting the key issues described above. It is proposed that a detailed advocacy plan calling for service model improvements be developed by The Agenda Group to raise with the Victorian Government. Advocacy asks are summarised **Table Two** below. The items of paramount importance (i.e. those which are seen to most effectively address the current stressors), in the City of Whittlesea are the:

- Review of the workforce challenges and development of a workforce strategy
- Review of the KAS framework
- Development of a new IT infrastructure system, and
- Release of the funding boost to cover the backlog of cases resultant from COVID.

CoW identified Priority	Advocacy focus areas ('asks')	Description
✓	MCH workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An urgent review of the MCH workforce to develop a workforce strategy
✓	New IT infrastructure system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further funding for a new IT infrastructure system, to replace the outdated CDIS database
✓	KAS framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of the KAS framework in light of the expanding list of programs and issues that are now included in a consultation
✓	Infrastructure funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific funding for the delivery of MCH infrastructure, aligned to the delivery of kindergarten The inclusion of MCH consulting rooms in all Kindergarten on School Site projects
✓	Addressing the longer-term impact of COVID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An immediate funding boost to cover the backlog of cases resultant from COVID*. (*Note: Council were notified in September 2021 of additional funding for

CoW identified Priority	Advocacy focus areas ('asks')	Description
		<p><i>this purpose, as of November 2021 advice on the quantum or timing of the release of these funds has not been received)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recruitment drive (or fast track MCH training programs) of trained nurses to address immediate workforce pressures. • A funded scholarship program • Consideration of funding professionals with different qualifications to work in the service to address workforce shortages.
	<i>Targeted programs for children and families with additional needs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional funding for targeted programs for children and families identified through general KAS consultations in need of extra support from other health and wellbeing services (mental health, family support, family violence, speech therapy, NDIS)
	<i>A revised funding model</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future funding allocations consider population growth projections, as opposed to historical demand for MCH services

Table 2: Advocacy 'asks' summary**MAV Advocacy**

An improved MCH operating model is also an advocacy priority for the MAV, with their focus over the past 12 months being around issues with a State-wide (and mostly pandemic related) lens and are summarised in **Table Three** below.

MAV Advocacy priorities over past 12 months	MAV advocacy priorities for 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID response issues • Service demand and workforce pressures • MOU renegotiation • CDIS implementation and education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the MCH framework • Development of MCH specific clinical guidelines • Continuity of care in relation to communication and discharge summaries • MCH leadership support resources.

Table 3: MAV Advocacy priority issues for MCH services**Relationship to Council advocacy**

Council's July 2021 considered an advocacy framework summarised in **Figure One** on the next page.



Figure 1: City of Whittlesea operational advocacy tiers

The Issues Paper challenges and advocacy 'asks' align to Council's advocacy framework as a 'tier 2 priority' within this framework. These priorities represent the challenges unique to growth area Councils and a tailored advocacy approach to the needs in these municipalities, which is required in addition to the MAV State-wide advocacy approach.

It is recommended that Council endorse the inclusion of this advocacy position to be integrated into existing advocacy activities and discussions with local MPs and relevant Ministers. In addition, it is proposed that Council works with the Interface Councils group who will lead the advocacy coordination on this item across all Interface Councils.

Community Consultation and Engagement

The development of this report has been informed by the following consultation and engagement activities:

- **External:**
 - The Interface Councils' CEO and Human Services Directors Working Groups
 - Inclusion on the ongoing agenda for the Community services advocacy working group
- **Internal:**
 - Engagement with Council's Maternal and Child Health team
 - Engagement with Council's Senior Advocacy Advisor.

Following endorsement, Council will take a two-pronged approach to this item:

- Work through the Interface Councils Group to lead the collective interface advocacy activities in this space,
- Develop an advocacy plan to undertake localised activities and leverage localised discussions on this item.

Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

Connected communities

We work to foster an inclusive, healthy, safe and welcoming community where all ways of life are celebrated and supported.

Identifying and advocating for sector improvements in the MCH program supports the development of a healthy community to have access to a locally responsive, accessible and high-quality service.

Considerations

Environmental

There are no significant environmental considerations related to this report.

Social, Cultural and Health

Undertaking advocacy to address the sector challenges and make improvements to the MCH program model will support positive social and health outcomes for recipients of this service.

Economic

Long term economic impacts are derived from a positive start in life. Improvements to the MCH program that allow adequate resourcing to support positive health outcomes, well-position children for the best start in life.

Financial Implications

Advocacy activities occur within existing operational staff budgets, and as part of the Interface Councils Group, of which Council is a member. SOCOM is the secretariat of this group, and Council contributes \$37,000 per annum for membership to this group. Contributions from each member Council resources SOCOM to undertake various activities on behalf of this group, such as election and advocacy campaigns, convening working groups and social media and communications work. SOCOM and The Agenda Group have recently merged, and this work is now occurring under the banner of 'The Agenda Group'.

The Memorandum of Understanding between the Victorian Government and MAV on behalf of Local Government outlines the funding model for the Maternal and Child Health service. The model is primarily delivered through the Universal and Enhanced program streams. The Universal program is jointly funded by the Victorian Government and local

government and is intended to be funded equally by each party. The enhanced model is funded by the Victorian government and funding has increased over the past several years to make this service fully funded.

Whilst the funding model is intended to be as outlined above, in practice, the increase in costs of delivering the service such as staff salaries is growing at a faster rate than the funding is increasing, leading to Council bearing the additional costs.

Link to Strategic Risk

Community and Stakeholder Engagement - Ineffective stakeholder engagement resulting in compromised community outcomes and/or non-achievement of Council's strategic direction.

Ineffective engagement with stakeholders such as funding bodies (Victorian Government Department of Health) to inform of current service sector challenges and advocate for improvement and change could result in compromised community outcomes as the Maternal Child Health program struggles to overcome the challenges and pressure points outlined in this report.

Implementation Strategy

Communication

Endorsement of this advocacy position will inform upcoming discussions with local MPs and relevant Ministers and to incorporate this matter into pre-budget discussions in December 2021 and January 2022.

Critical Dates

Further detail on the timeframes and description of advocacy activities are expected from The Agenda Group in the near future (and will be communicated with Council as soon as available).

In addition, the dates below outline the existing advocacy timeframes for Council's current advocacy priorities, this matter will be included into these discussions:

- **November 2021- Jan/February 2022** - Meetings with MP and relevant Ministers
- **December 2021/January 2022** - Pre-budget submissions
- **December 2021-April 2022** - Inform and engage community.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Rule 47 of the Governance Rules 2021, officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

Conclusion

The MCH Service is a free universal primary health service for all Victorian families with children from birth to school age. The service is provided through a partnership model with the aim to promote and optimise health, wellbeing, safety, development and learning outcomes for children and their families. The current sector challenges and pressures require immediate attention from the Victorian government to ensure the program continues to respond to the ever-evolving needs of community, particularly in a time where this service provides critical care in the rebuilding of community post pandemic. Council will continue operational measures to address the current challenges and is working with the Interface Councils Group to address more systemic issues.



Creating liveable communities in Melbourne's outer suburbs

INTERFACE COUNCILS

Maternal and Child Health Issues Paper

November 2021



Interface Councils comprises Cardinia Shire Council, City of Casey, Hume City Council, Melton City Council, Mitchell Shire Council, Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, Nillumbik Shire Council, City of Whittlesea, Wyndham City Council and Yarra Ranges Shire Council.

Introduction

The Maternal and Child Health (MCH) service is a universal program which has been successfully provided to the community by the local government sector in Victoria for over 100 years. The health and wellbeing assessments of infants, children and families provides opportunities for parents and early intervention for health, social, wellbeing and environmental risks, which ensures problems in children can be addressed swiftly before they become challenging later in their lives.

Parents of newborn children visit MCH nurses at 10 key stages of the child's development, known as Key Age and Stage (KAS) consultations, focussing on optimising child and family health, wellbeing, safety, learning and development. Furthermore additional (funded) appointments are available for families requiring extra support.

The Enhanced Maternal and Child Health (EMCH) program which forms part of Victoria's MCH Service and is offered to families identified as vulnerable clients, as an extension of the universal MCH program. The EMCH program offers flexible actions and interventions to families who would benefit from targeted support.

The MCH system across the Interface Council group was already under pressure before the onset of the COVID emergency. Issues relating to the shortages of local services and referral pathways for families, shortages in the MCH workforce, increasing demands on the Key Age and Stages (KAS Assessments) and an inadequate and unsuitable database (CDIS) further exacerbates these pressures. Furthermore, complexities due to burgeoning population across the growth area councils, social disadvantage, increased needs and complexity of clients and outdated physical infrastructure and facilities continue to impact of service delivery, exasperated by issues such as higher family violence rates, mortgage stress, higher child protection notifications and mental health challenges.

The COVID emergency and repeated lockdowns of over the last eighteen months have brought further stresses to the system: a shortage of MCH-trained nurses to work across councils and burnout for existing MCH staff, a backlog of clients in need of face-to-face assessments after a period of conducting only telehealth appointments and a cohort of older children who have emerging developmental needs after missing out on assessments due to the prioritisation of newborn babies. These issues are compounded by limited local services and referral pathways.

The following sections give further detail on the issues currently facing interface councils and the MCH system.

Pressure and Shortages on the MCH Workforce

The expansion of the MCH system has resulted in an increase in demand for MCH nurses and related professionals. However, there are not enough trained MCH nursing professionals to fill these positions. Councils face competing challenges in employing an existing ageing workforce that is nearing retirement and a younger workforce that is more likely to work part time and across multiple locations. Overall, there are a limited number of new MCH graduates every year across the State and not all enter the council MCH workforce system, with some working part time in hospital settings as Midwives. Hume City and Mitchell Shire Council note that there is not enough workforce available to backfill leave and subsequently service delivery and ability to meet service targets is impacted.

A compounding problem is the lack of parity in pay rates between Councils. With new and emerging Interface Councils having less funds to contribute to the service and less capacity to meet the pay rates of non-interface metro councils, this can make it harder for new and emerging Interface Councils to compete in recruitment. Compounding this problem are increasing births notifications and transfers from other LGAs to IFC LGAs, which has meant hiring, where possible, casual staff to meet growing service demand, but leaving IFC councils with less budget to cover annual and sick leave of permanent employees. Furthermore, requiring significant rostering alterations, regularly impacting on continuity of service delivery and timely access to KAS appointments.

More recently the MCH workforce is suffering from the demands placed on the whole nursing sector due to the COVID response. The current need for nurses, either for immunisation or COVID testing, is taking nursing staff from all clinical areas. In Whittlesea, Cardinia and Mitchell Shire, the last advertisement for an enhanced MCH nurse did not attract any external applicants.

The remaining MCH staff are emotionally drained and fatigued by the constant move in and out of lockdown responses. Councils are seeing an increase in sick leave taken by MCH nurses due to the pressures that the pandemic has placed on their workloads and professional roles in addition to the expectation that sick leave should be taken if experiencing any COVID-like symptoms, and due to the need to care for their children and families. Some agencies have referred families to MCH services because they are one of the few face-to-face services open when the State is under lockdown. Some of the IFC members have reported that families are using MCH as a counselling/debriefing service in the absence of mental health or family support services that could assist but have long waiting lists or have closed.

Coordination of the service has also become extremely demanding. On a daily basis MCH Leadership and administration staff are having to reprioritise clients and service demands and reallocate staff to provide service to the youngest and most vulnerable infants. The impact of this is that MCH leadership and admin staff are burnt out, clients are experiencing reduced access to service and increased anxiety due to lack of contact with the service.

Overall, the onset of the pandemic together with existing workforce shortages and limited casual workforce availability has resulted in appointments being rescheduled or pushed forward, compounding workloads and leading to longer waiting times for struggling families to secure appointments.

ASK:

An urgent review of the MCH workforce is needed, with a view to developing a comprehensive workforce plan for the sector. The review should examine:

- ***The impact of differing pay rates and conditions across councils (including examining the possibility of a body such as the MAV leading EBA negotiations on behalf of the Local Government sector to minimise discrepancies between awards in different LGAs and to ensure parity across the sector).***
- ***Demographic challenges within the existing workforce, including the expected numbers of workers exiting the sector due to retirement and the number of MCH trained graduates expected to enter the system, and whether this matches expected demand for MCH services, particularly in growth councils***

- ***The impact of the COVID emergency on the workforce over the last two years, and its implications going into 2022***
- ***The expectations of the community to have access to all 10 KAS consults and for these to be conducted face to face***
- ***The inability of nurses to transfer leave entitlements from hospital sector to LGA's impacts the desire of nurses to move permanently to MCH***
- ***The impact of increased requests by child protection and Orange Door program on MCH workloads***
- ***Incentivising MCH students to remain in the local government MCH service where training was conducted.***

The key Age and Stages (KAS) consultations need more hours of funding to meet expanding list of requirements

The current allocation of 6.75 hours per 10 KAS consultations has not been reviewed and is no longer sufficient given the increased complexities experienced by families and the scope creep that has been occurring in relation to the KAS consultations. The expansion of issues and problems MCH staff are required to assess and respond to per consultation now includes incidence of family violence, mental health problems and financial burdens, equating to additional information gathering and reporting within a KAS consultation. Further programs added into the KAS framework now include:

- Sleep and settling program
- Autism Spectrum Disorder – SACS assessment
- Psychosocial assessment at 4 weeks
- Nutrition and development program (INFANT Program)
- Breastfeeding clinics
- Sessions for First Time Parent Groups
- Family Violence MARAM assessments.

Despite the expansion of the framework a review of content or time allocation within the KAS Framework has not been undertaken for 10 years.

Once again, the pandemic has and will continue to add further pressure to KAS consultations over the next few years. In 2020, there was a reduction in the number of children who attended for KAS visits at age of 18m, 2 years and 3.5 years, as a directive of the first lockdown to prioritise younger babies – this has led to identification of children with emerging developmental needs who missed visits during this time and have not had an assessment prior to commencing kindergarten or school. This creates pressure for both the early learning system and schools and kindergartens as there is an increased number of children presenting with undiagnosed additional needs or developmental delays.

Earlier discharges from hospital (often 24-48hrs) post birth due to COVID has also put an additional strain on MCH services as they often have to deliver an additional consultation to cover the gap between the funded initial home visit and two-week KAS consultation.

ASK:

A review of the KAS framework in light of the expanding list of programs and issues that are now included in a consultation.

There are a number of shortfalls across the MCH system

There is a need to increase funding across the following aspects of MCH delivery:

- Increase ***Enhanced Maternal and Child Health (EMCH) funding*** to work with families with young children up to school age – with the expansion over three years now fully implemented in 2020/2021. Following recognition of the increase in complexities in families, consideration should be given to finding the EMCH program to work with families with children up to 6yrs of age to mirror the Universal MCH service EMCH program currently funded to work with children up to 3 years.
- ***Targeted funding*** should be made available to councils with limited access to support services, including mental health, family support, family violence, occupational therapy and speech therapy. Both Universal Maternal and Child Health (UMCH) and EMCH services across IFC councils provide additional client support as there are fewer services to refer to and long wait lists to access services. Interface councils currently receive additional funds for EMCH program (GCTC funding) however the Universal MCH service does not receive additional funds but spend time supporting many of these clients. EMCH services are also spending large amounts of time supporting clients trying to navigate the NDIS and Orange Door system as there is now a much longer and complex intake system. It is recommended that close consideration be taken to working with LGA social planners in determining population growth, instead of relying on retrospective numbers for funding to ensure IFC have the capacity to meet the significant emerging growth.
- More funding is also required to support ***the management, administrative and clinical support of the program***. Recruiting at the management end of the program is extremely difficult due to the challenges and complexities that this role is responsible for. There is a lack of funding built into the program to resource management, administration and clinical support. Due to workforce shortages, coordinators often take on administration, KAS consultations and delivery of other linked programs due to the inability to get appropriately trained casual staff when permanent staff are on leave or where recruitment has been unsuccessful
- ***Capital Funding*** is needed to upgrade and expand MCH facilities. Currently there are limited funding sources to access capital funding for new and existing MCH facilities. Older facilities based in non-growth LGAs now need capital funding to build new or expand facilities. Nillumbik, for example, has ageing facilities that were built as single nurse facilities. These facilities no longer align with current best practice and pose OHS concerns in relation to staff working in isolation with lack of professional support or personal physical safety. This is a significant issue given the complexities of families and an increase in family violence cases. Mitchell Shire Council has indicated a significant shortfall of MCH infrastructure due to emerging population growth.

The current Building Blocks Infrastructure program does not specifically allow for MCH funded delivery in development of new and emerging builds. There are no current grant schemes for infrastructure that relate to the provision of Maternal and Child Health services. For most other local government services that are co-funded by State and Local Government, there is a state capital grants stream to support infrastructure (for example Sport and Recreation, Living Libraries Program, Buildings Blocks). While Maternal and Child Health Infrastructure can be funded through the Growing Suburbs Fund this stream is already oversubscribed and is currently subject to an annual commitment through the State Budget process.

The State Government has committed to delivering 'Kindergarten on School Sites' as part of the '3-year-old kinder Best Start, Best Life' policy platform that will see every new primary school have a kindergarten delivered on the school site or next door. However, these projects do not include consulting suites for the delivery of Maternal and Child Health services. Co-locating rooms that can be used for Maternal and Child Health alongside kindergarten rooms supports an integrated holistic early years' service model and provides improved outcomes and experiences for families.

ASK:

Further funding for:

- ***Targeted programs for children and families identified through general KAS consultations in need of extra support from other health and wellbeing services (mental health, family support, family violence, speech therapy, NDIS)***
- ***Specific funding to allow for 'fit for purpose' MCH Infrastructure delivery in combination with Kindergarten sequencing, allowing for holistic wrap around support to children and families.***
- ***All 'Kinder on School Sites' to include the provision of infrastructure to support the delivery of Maternal and Child Health Services.***

The Child Development Information System (CDIS) database is not fit for purpose

The current Child Development Information System (CDIS) database was designed as a client record system and is not meeting the needs of the program in terms of generating critical reports and understanding and addressing individual and local needs. It is not a well-designed client information management system. IFC councils have reported that:

- it is very clunky to schedule and/or manage appointments etc.
- Its business reporting capacity is poor – it is hard to truly track business performance e.g., to run a report on percentage of parents who cancelled their appointments vs parents who did not turn up to the centre – this makes resource management challenging.
- it does not have an online appointment booking capacity.
- It is not intuitive to use in a time-pressured environment.
- Data is not auto-saved therefore the potential for loss of client information and notes is high requiring MCH Nurses to re-enter data which equates to time wastages

ASK:

Further funding for:

- ***A new IT infrastructure system, to replace the current inefficient CDIS database***

Growth Councils cannot keep up with increasing demand for services

IFC members Hume, Melton, Mitchell, Whittlesea, Wyndham, Casey and Cardinia are the fastest growing municipalities in Victoria. This means:

- increased demand, requiring additional facilities to deliver MCH services. It is challenging to keeping ahead of the population growth.
- Increased birth notifications and new enrolments into growth areas – Hume had 7% increase in birth notifications in 2020/21 compared with 2019/20. Mitchell Shire experienced an 18% increase in the number of births, and a large proportion of these births are to first time mothers (40%).

This increase in births, coupled with the impacts of COVID-19 has seen increased waiting lists for mental health, alcohol and drug services, allied health services including speech pathology, and residential parenting programs.

The deficit of locally based services within growth councils impacts on MCH as they are 'holding' clients until they can access services and completing with other jurisdictions for services.

ASK:

Future funding allocations consider population growth projections, as opposed to historical demand for MCH services. Additional weighting to be applied to growth areas due to the complex nature of the client.

The ongoing, longer-term impact of COVID

The impact of COVID on the community and families has seen a substantial increase in the numbers of families experiencing significant vulnerabilities and requiring more support from the service than previous years. The pandemic may result in increased developmental delay due to isolation, home schooling and lack of socialisation. This burden will translate to MCH and early years services in next 1-2 years and is already being experienced.

ASK:

An immediate funding boost to cover the backlog of cases put on hold over the last two years due to the COVID emergency,

A recruitment drive (or fast track MCH training programs) of trained nurses to work in the sector to meet the increased demand for services expected over 2022 and 2023.

A funded scholarship program to attract nurses to complete the qualifications required to practice as a MCH nurse

Consideration of 'funded' roles for professional with different qualifications within the MCH framework, to address the workforce shortage — i.e., Family Social Workers providing referral

pathways, Parenting Support Workers, Lactation Consultants, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander & CALD specialised support workers.

5.2 Livable Neighbourhoods

5.2.1 Tender evaluation - 2021-12: Supply of Roadside Hazard Protection Works

Responsible Officer Director Infrastructure & Environment

Officer Project Manager

Attachments

1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - 2021-12 Tender Evaluation Summary [5.2.1.1 - 10 pages]

This attachment has been designated as confidential by the Director Infrastructure & Environment, under delegation from the Chief Executive Officer, in accordance with Rule 53 of the Governance Rules 2021 and sections 66(5) and 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 on the grounds that it contains private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—

- (i) relates to trade secrets; or
- (ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

In particular, the attachment contains tender amounts submitted by tenderers and tender evaluation scoring prepared by Council officers. It also contains details of credit and reference checks about the tenderers provided to Council in confidence. The release of this information could reasonably be expected to prejudice the commercial position of the persons who supplied the information or to confer a commercial advantage on a third party.

Proposal

It is recommended that contract number 2021-12 for Supply of Roadside Hazard Protection Works:

- is awarded to Barrier Designs;
- for the tendered schedule of rates with total expenditure limited to \$2,500,000 (excluding GST); and
- for a term from 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2024 with extension options to 31/12/2026.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Accept the tender submitted by Barrier Designs for the schedule of rates detailed in the confidential attachment for the following contract:**

Number: 2021-12

Title: Supply of Roadside Hazard Protection Works

Term: 1/1/2022 to 31/12/2024

Options: Term extensions up to 31/12/2026 (only to be exercised if separately approved by Council)

Value: Total expenditure is limited to a maximum of \$2,500,000 (excluding GST), unless otherwise approved by Council

subject to the following conditions:

- a. **Tenderer to provide proof of currency of insurance cover as required in the tender documents.**
 - b. **Price variations to be in accordance with the provisions as set out in the tender documents.**
- 2. Approve the funding arrangements detailed in the confidential attachment.**

Brief Overview

The tender evaluation panel advises that:

- 5 tenders were received; and
- the recommended tender was the highest ranked and is considered best value.

Key Information

Background

The purpose of this contract is to engage a contractor to undertake the installation, maintenance and asset recording of roadside hazard barriers along roadsides in high-risk settings within the City of Whittlesea.

Tenders for the contract closed on 21 September 2021. The tendered prices and a summary of the evaluation are detailed in the confidential attachment.

Evaluation

No member of the Tender Evaluation Panel declared any conflict of interest in relation to this tender evaluation.

A Tender Probity & Evaluation Plan was designed specifically for this tender process, and it was authorised prior to this tender being advertised. All tenders received were evaluated in accordance with that plan. The evaluation involved scoring of conforming and competitive tenders according to these pre-determined criteria and weightings:

Criteria	Weighting
Price	60%
Capability	20%
Capacity	15%
Impact	5%

The weightings reflect the relative importance of each element to this particular contract. They were determined as being most appropriate after considering numerous factors including (but not restricted to) the time, quality, risk and contract management requirements which were likely to have the most impact on the achievement of best value.

Only tenders that were conforming and competitive were fully scored. Tender submissions that were evaluated as non-conforming or not sufficiently competitive were set aside from further evaluation. In cases where this occurred the reasons for that outcome are detailed in the confidential attachment.

The evaluation outcome was as follows:

Tenderer	Conforming	Competitive	Score	Rank
Tenderer A Barrier Designs	Yes	Yes	94.8	1
Tenderer B	Yes	Yes	76.2	2
Tenderer C	No	Yes	NA	-
Tenderer D	Yes	No	NA	-
Tenderer E	Yes	No	NA	-

Refer to the confidential attachment for further details of the evaluation of all tenders.

Community Consultation and Engagement

This contract has been developed by Council's Capital Delivery Department in conjunction with representatives from Operations & Maintenance Department, Urban Design & Transport Department and the Asset & Facilities Management teams to support barrier programs across the organisation. The consolidated program and a bulk supply contract will provide savings over the period of the contract as well as improved data collection for Council's asset management system (Assetic), which will guide future renewal and maintenance programs.

Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

Liveable neighbourhoods

Our City is well-planned and beautiful, and our neighbourhoods and town centres are convenient and vibrant places to live, work and play.

Ensure that the road networks protective barriers are correctly maintained, and a co-ordinated and consistent asset management system is employed by the City of Whittlesea.

It will also improve the ability of Council to supply and install roadside barriers as part of projects approved in the New Works Program.

Considerations

Environmental

See details in confidential attachment.

Social, Cultural and Health

The contract management will include KPI's regarding traffic management, site safety, Occupational Health and Safety and response times to ensure a safe roadside environment is maintained for road users.

Economic

Barrier Designs will undertake all maintenance and installation works for roadside barriers within the City of Whittlesea. This will ensure that Council can maintain its network of roadside barriers by providing a safe environment for all road users in high-risk settings and aid in the prevention of serious road incidents.

An assessment of all barrier sites will be undertaken as part of the initial period to identify the condition, age and compliance of the current barriers to establish a rolling maintenance and replacement program.

The contract services must comply with regulatory requirements as defined in the Road Management Act. As such the contract has a defined set of KPI's which will be measured via surveillance audits as well as contract meetings to discuss the performance and ongoing services to ensure delivery with the requirements.

Financial Implications

Works undertaken under this contract will be funded from various Council's New Works (Capital) Programs and the Operational (maintenance) programs.

Link to Strategic Risk

Strategic Risk *Service Delivery - Inability to plan for and provide critical community services and infrastructure impacting on community wellbeing*

Awarding this contract will enhance Council's ability to respond quickly to maintenance and installation of roadside barriers to protect roadside hazards. This will ensure that community expectations regarding road safety can be met and Council can maintain best practice for asset management and data recording.

Implementation Strategy**Communication**

There is no requirement to communicate the decision of this report to the community. However individual items of work may require information to be provided to the community.

Critical Dates

The current supply contract for roadside hazard protection works expires at the end of the 2021 calendar year.

The new contract is planned to commence on 1 January 2022.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Rule 47 of the Governance Rules 2021, officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

Conclusion

The tender from Barrier Designs was determined to be best value and it is considered that this company can perform the contract to the required standards.

5.2.2 11 Ruth Street, Lalor

Responsible Officer Director Planning & Development

Officer Planning Officer

Attachments

1. 720054- 11 Ruth LALOR- Locality Maps [5.2.2.1 - 2 pages]
2. 720054- 11 Ruth LALOR- Architectural Plans [5.2.2.2 - 12 pages]

Applicant Planning & Design P/L

Council Policy 16.01-1L Housing Supply in Established Areas

Zoning General Residential Zone (Schedule 5)

Overlay Development Contributions Plan Overlay (Schedule 3)

Special Building Overlay

Referral Melbourne Water

Objections Nine objections

Proposal

The application seeks approval for the construction of three dwellings. The existing dwelling and associated structures will be demolished

Details of the proposed development are outlined in the following table:

	Height/ Scale	Number of Bedrooms	Setbacks	Private Open Space	Car Parking	Maximum Height
Dwelling No. 1	Two- storey	Two bedrooms	North (front) - 7.675m Side (east) - 5.41m West (side) - 3.5m	40m ²	One car space (shared garage)	7.035m
Dwelling No. 2	Two- storey	Two bedrooms	East (side) - Built to boundary South (rear) - 5.15m	40m ²	One car space (shared garage)	7.035m
Dwelling No. 3	Two- store	Two bedrooms	South (rear) - 5.55m West (side) - 0.02m	40m ²	One car space (Single garage)	7.035m

Recommendation

THAT Council resolve to Refuse Planning Application No. 720054 and issue a Refusal to Grant a Planning Permit for the construction of Three Dwellings on the following grounds:

- 1. The proposal does not appropriately respond to the neighbourhood character objectives sought by Schedule 5 to Clause 32.08 – General Residential Zone;**
- 2. The proposal fails to appropriately respond to the Policy Framework of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme as follows:**
 - a) The development does not comply with the policy at Clause 16.01-1L – Housing supply in Established Areas;**
 - b) The scale, separation, built form and landscaping opportunities is inconsistent with the key design principles outlined for Suburban Residential change area of the Housing Diversity Strategy.**
- 3. The proposal does not comply with the following Objectives and Standards of Clause 55 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme:**
 - a) B1 Neighbourhood Character;**
 - b) B2 Residential Policy;**
 - c) B13 Landscaping;**
 - d) B15 Parking Location;**
 - e) B23 Internal Views;**
 - f) B25 Accessibility;**
 - g) B26 Dwelling Entry;**
 - h) B31 Design Detail**

Brief Overview

The proposal seeks approval for the construction of three double storey dwellings at 11 Ruth Street, Lalor. The three dwellings will all contain two bedrooms and a covered parking space.

Notification of the application was undertaken and nine objections have been received. Grounds of objection relate to noise, traffic and parking concerns, privacy and amenity impacts, drainage issues and neighbourhood character.

The proposal does not adequately respond to the context of the site and the relevant local housing policy.

Site and Surrounding Area

The site is a residential property located on the south side of Ruth Street in Lalor, 200 metres from Dalton Road. The site contains as 15.54 metres to Ruth Street, an average depth of 34.37 metres and a total site area of 536.75 metres.

The site currently contains a single dwelling, with a pitched tiled roof, and a single carport. Access to the dwelling is obtained from a crossover from the north and a driveway which extends down the western side boundary. Minimal landscaping is located within the front

setback behind a low fence. A shed is positioned in the south eastern corner to the rear of the dwelling.

The surrounding area is characterised by single storey dwellings, consistently finished in brick veneer, with pitched tiled roofs. Secondary additions and detached outbuildings to the side and rear of dwellings are common. Front fences, if present, are consistently low in overall height, however, vary in transparency and construction materials. Landscaping is present within both front setbacks and rear secluded open space.

The site is located immediately north of Lalor Secondary School and approximately 150 metres west of Lalor Primary School. Directly north is Ruth Street and single storey detached dwellings. Single storey detached dwellings are again located to the immediate east and west fronting Ruth Street. A five unit development at number 27 is the only multi dwelling development located on Ruth Street.

Other examples of medium density within proximity to the site include 27 Ruth Street (Developed with five Dwellings), 14 Blackburn Street (Developed with two dwellings), 15 Blackburn Street (Developed with three dwellings), 19-21 Blackburn Street (Developed with three dwellings) to the west of Ruth Street and 32 Maxwell Street (Developed with three dwellings).

The site is located within proximity to the following sites, services and infrastructure:

- Bus Route No. 556 – Northland SC via Keon Park (200 metres east along Dalton Road);
- Lalor Secondary College (Immediately abutting to the south);
- Lalor Primary School (Approximately 150m west);
- Lalor Plaza Shopping Centre (Approximately 670m south east);
- Lalor Shopping Precinct (Approximately 1km west); and
- Lalor Train Station (Approximately 1.1km north west).

Restrictions and Easements

The site is formally described as Lot 50 on Plan of Subdivision 096542

The Certificate of Title for the property shows that the site is not affected by any encumbrances or restrictions.

A 1.8m wide drainage easement runs along the southern rear boundary of the site.

Public Notification

Advertising of the application has resulted in 9 objections being received. The grounds of objection can be summarised as follows:

- Over congestion of local streets and loss of on street car parking;
- Increased noise associated with the development;
- Flood and drainage issues;
- Amenity impacts if all dwellings are occupied by renters;
- Proposal would result in a loss of privacy;
- Unreasonable overshadowing to adjoining residences including to solar panels;
- Dwelling redesigned to accommodate residents with disabilities to be demolished;

- Double storey-built form is inconsistent with existing neighbourhood character;
- Noise and waste impacts during construction;
- Development will lead to overpopulation of the area.

A response to the grounds of objection will be provided later in this report.

Engagement

Concerns with the proposal were raised directly with the applicant. Discussions were not specifically held with objectors due to the concerns and recommendations of the Building and Planning Department.

Housing Diversity Strategy

The Housing Diversity Strategy (HDS) was introduced into the Whittlesea Planning Scheme by Planning Scheme Amendment C181, gazetted on 22 October 2015. The HDS provides a strategic framework for future residential development in the established areas of the municipality for the next 20 years. It aims to guide the future location and diversity of housing stock and identifies areas of housing growth and change, including areas where future housing growth will not be supported. In general, it aims to encourage higher residential densities and a diversity of housing types and sizes into areas within convenient walking distance to public transport and activity centres.

The HDS is a reference document in the Planning Scheme.

The site is within a Suburban Residential change area, which recognises areas typically a fifteen minute plus walk to public transport and activity centres. The preferred housing types are noted as detached dwellings, dual occupancies and duplexes. The Suburban Residential change area has a number of Key Design Principles, including:

- Low building heights to reflect the existing suburban scale and character;
- Front setback to allow for significant landscaping and large canopy trees to create a sense of openness to the street;
- Increased side and rear setbacks to provide for building separation and landscaping;
- Standard site coverage to facilitate landscaping opportunities;
- An increased area of private open space to allow for significant landscaping;
- Large canopy tree in the front setback; and
- Extra-large canopy tree in the rear setback. A response to Council's Housing Diversity Strategy is provided in the table below.

Assessment Against Clause 55 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme

The following table provides details on whether the proposal complies with the requirements of Clause 55 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme. Under these provisions a development:

- Must meet all of the objectives
- Should meet all of the standards

If Council is satisfied that an application for an alternative design solution meets the objective, the alternative design solution may be considered.

	✓ - Compliance × - Non compliance	Objectives	Standards	Comments
B1	Neighbourhood Character	x	x	<p>The existing neighbourhood character contains predominately single storey detached dwellings. The surrounding dwellings consistently include; double or triple fronted facades, pitched roofs, brick facades, concrete roof tiles and landscaping within front setbacks.</p> <p>Within the immediate streetscape of Ruth Street, low scale development that provides a sense of openness forms the dominant character of the area. Many of the single dwellings have generous secluded open spaces to the rear.</p> <p>In addition to consideration of the above context, Schedule 5 to the General Residential Zone contains the following neighbourhood character objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To support a preferred neighbourhood character where landscaping is the prominent feature of development. - To maintain a sense of openness and separation between built form by providing generous setbacks and ensuring sensitive transitions in height from existing dwellings. - To encourage contemporary building designs with variation and breaks in building form to soften the visual bulk of development through elements such as eaves, hipped or gabled roof forms and setbacks at upper floors. - To improve landscape character by providing generous landscaping including canopy trees in front and rear setbacks to soften the visual impact of development. - To encourage functional secluded private open space at the rear of the dwelling through its orientation and design. <p>While the development incorporates hipped tiled roof forms with eaves and brick facades at ground floor, the proposal does not adequately respond to the existing character.</p> <p>The double storey built form is a departure from the predominately single storey character of the area. There has been no separation provided between the first floor of dwellings 2 and 3. These dwellings are visually dominant when</p>

	✓ - Compliance x - Non compliance	Objectives	Standards	Comments
				<p>viewed from the secluded private open space of neighbouring properties. This presents significant visual bulk to the rear of the site and fails to provide a sense of space and separation.</p> <p>Furthermore, there has been no separation of built form across the three dwellings at ground floor level. This continuous built form exacerbates the bulky appearance of the development and fails to present as a sensitive transition when considering the existing and preferred neighbourhood character.</p> <p>The lack of separation at ground floor results in limited landscaping opportunities. Visual bulk from the built form massing is the predominant feature of the site which is not consistent with the neighbourhood character objective which seeks landscaping to be the predominate feature. This will be discussed further in Standard B13 – Landscaping.</p> <p>The development does not appropriately respond to the existing and preferred neighbourhood character. Significant alterations would be required as to achieve an outcome that meets the objective of Standard B1.</p>
B2	Residential Policy	x	x	<p>The site is located within a General Residential Zone (Schedule 5) and is within a Suburban Residential Change Area as identified in the Housing Diversity Strategy 2013-2033 (HDS).</p> <p>The HDS sets out key design principles for residential development within Suburban Residential Change Areas.</p> <p>The proposal is inconsistent with the preferred housing typology identified by the HDS, which encourages detached dwellings and dual occupancy/duplex development within the Suburban Residential Change Area. The HDS seeks to encourage developments within the Suburban Residential Change Area to have low built form to respect the character, have greater built form separation and large/ extra- large canopy trees. The proposal does not respect these principles nor the preferred housing typology.</p> <p>Double storey developments are present within proximity to the site however are the minority housing typology, with single storey dwellings</p>

	✓ - Compliance ✗ - Non compliance	Objectives	Standards	Comments
				<p>which include generous setbacks and secluded private opens space the predominate feature.</p> <p>Clause 16.01-1L (Housing Supply in Established Areas) applies to the development of two or more dwellings in the established areas of the municipality. This Clause contains strategies for achieving development that contributes positively to the neighbourhood character of the area whilst achieving a high level of amenity. Strategies for achieving this include to encourage development that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achieves generous setbacks where a sense of space and separation between dwellings is part of the preferred neighbourhood character; - Provides an articulated building form to avoid visual bulk; - Provides landscaping along driveways that is not impacted by vehicle manoeuvres; - Integrates overlooking screening (where required) with the building design to reduce visual bulk and to maximise access to daylight, natural ventilation and outlook for habitable rooms; <p>Whilst the development meets technical compliance with setback objectives, the extent of built form across the site is of concern. As mentioned, the development fails to appropriately provide a sense of visual break between the dwellings at both ground and first floor. The development also provides boundary to boundary built form to the dwellings at the rear and is dominating when viewed from the streetscape. The building form and absence of appropriate separation leads to a distinct lack of articulation between the dwellings further worsening the developments bulky appearance.</p> <p>Minimal landscaping along the accessways has been provided however the turning circles from the garages demonstrate that vehicles would conflict with these areas. In particular the car spaces to dwellings 1 and 2 are shown to crossover landscaped areas along the western boundary and it is unlikely any meaningful landscaping would establish in these areas as a result. This same area has been identified as the location of rubbish bins which would further</p>

	✓ - Compliance ✗ - Non compliance	Objectives	Standards	Comments
				<p>inhibit a cars ability to appropriately enter and exit the site in a forward motion.</p> <p>In addition to the housing character and amenity strategies identified above, Clause 16.01-1L (Housing Supply in Established Areas) also encourages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourages a greater diversity of housing types and dwelling size including both smaller and larger dwellings; and - Encourage accessible and adaptable housing that includes dwellings containing a kitchen, bedroom, shower, toilet and wash basin at ground level that is usable by everyone regardless of their age and abilities. <p>The proposed housing mix relies on three dwellings of almost identical internal amenity. The size of these dwellings vary little in size with Dwelling one only 7sqm's larger than the dwellings to the rear. Of the three dwellings, all are provided with two bedrooms which are provided on the first floor. The dwellings have not been designed to ensure access to people regardless of their age and abilities.</p> <p>The proposal does not adequately respond to the objectives of Standard B2 and in particular the Housing Diversity Strategy and Clause 16.01-1L of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.</p>
B3	Dwelling Diversity	N/A	N/A	Only applicable to developments of ten (10) or more dwellings
B4	Infrastructure	✓	✓	The proposal satisfies this standard and objective.
B5	Integration with the street	✓	✓	The proposal appropriately integrates with the street.
B6	Street setback	✓	✓	The proposed setback of 7.675 metres satisfies the requirements of this standard.
B7	Building height	✓	✓	The building height of 7.035 meters is within the maximum allowable height.
B8	Site coverage	✓	✓	The development has a site coverage of 37.94% which is less than the standard which allows for a site coverage of no more than 60%.
B9	Permeability	✓	✓	Permeable area of 45.15% which meets the standard requiring a minimum 20% permeability.

	✓ - Compliance x - Non compliance	Objectives	Standards	Comments
B10	Energy efficiency	x	x	<p>This objective seeks to ensure the orientation and layout of development reduce fossil fuel energy use and make appropriate use of daylight and solar energy.</p> <p>Dwelling Nos. 2 and 3 have not been provided with any north facing windows to habitable rooms. This leads to poor internal amenity for future residents and reduced energy efficiency for the dwellings.</p> <p>The shadow diagram provided also shows the development will impact the sunlight access to existing solar panels to the property adjoining to the east of the site.</p> <p>This outcome is considered inappropriate and fails to comply with the requirements of Standard B10.</p>
B11	Open space	N/A	N/A	Only applicable if public or communal open space is to be provided on site or adjacent to the development.
B12	Safety	✓	✓	The proposal satisfies this standard and objective

	✓ - Compliance x - Non compliance	Objectives	Standards	Comments
B13	Landscaping	x	x	<p>Schedule 5 to the General Residential Zone contains additional landscaping requirements. The development must provide at least one canopy tree in both the front and rear setbacks. Each canopy tree must achieve a minimum six metres mature height and be accommodated in a permeable area of at least 5 metres by 5 metres, that does not contain driveways or car parking.</p> <p>The development proposes canopy trees in both the front and rear setback. However, the canopy tree to the rear is not accommodated by a pervious area of 5 metres by 5 metres.</p> <p>As mentioned, Schedule 5 to the General Residential Zone contains the following neighbourhood character objectives relating to landscaping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To support a preferred neighbourhood character where landscaping is the prominent feature of development. - To improve landscape character by providing generous landscaping including canopy trees in front and rear setbacks to soften the visual impact of development. <p>The provision of substantial landscaping is a characteristic of this zone and is intended to reduce the visual bulk associated with infill developments. The bulky appearance of the development can be attributed to a lack of appropriate landscaping between built form as to soften the transition between existing dwellings.</p> <p>The landscaping as part of this development is considered poor and does not appropriately respond to the objectives and requirements of Standard B13.</p>
B14	Access	✓	✓	The proposal provides only one single crossover therefore meeting this requirement.

	✓ - Compliance x - Non compliance	Objectives	Standards	Comments
B15	Parking location	x	x	<p>This objective seeks to provide convenient parking for resident and visitor vehicles; and to protect residents from vehicular noise within developments. Car parking facilities are required to be reasonably close and convenient to dwellings; and be secure.</p> <p>The proposed shared garage for Dwelling Nos. 1 and 2 is not considered satisfactory as it does not provide residents with secure parking locations. The shared garage is likely to lead to ownership concerns as these locations will be considered common property when subdivided.</p> <p>Furthermore, the location of the shared garage to Dwelling 1 is inconvenient for residences as there is no immediate access provided to the dwelling from the garage. The shared garage limits opportunity to provide access to private property from within the car spaces.</p> <p>The parking locations are considered to provide a poor outcome for future residents and does not meet the objectives at Standard B16.</p>
B17	Side and rear setbacks	✓	✓	The proposal provides adequate setbacks on all side.
B18	Walls on boundaries	✓	✓	Walls on boundary are provided at an appropriate length.
B19	Daylight to existing windows	✓	✓	The proposal complies with this standard and objective.
B20	North-facing windows	✓	✓	The proposal complies with this standard and objective.
B21	Overshadowing open space	✓	✓	The proposal complies with this standard and objective.
B22	Overlooking	✓	✓	The proposal complies with this standard and objective.
B23	Internal views	x	x	<p>The purpose of this standard is to limit views into the secluded private open space and habitable room windows of dwellings and residential building within a development</p> <p>The first-floor windows to bed 2 of Dwelling 2 and bedrooms to Dwelling 3 are not obscured appropriately as to avoid internal view concerns within the development, this could be resolved through conditions on any permit issued, however this also may be to the detriment of future occupants of the dwellings by creating poor internal amenity.</p>
B24	Noise impacts	✓	✓	The proposal complies with this standard and objective.

	✓ - Compliance x - Non compliance	Objectives	Standards	Comments
B25	Accessibility	x	x	<p>This objective seeks to encourage the consideration of the needs of people with limited mobility in the design of developments.</p> <p>The Dwellings all provide bedrooms at first floor and is not considered accessible to people with mobility concerns. The Dwellings are also not designed as to be easily convertible as an open plan ground floor layout has been proposed.</p>
B26	Dwelling entry	x	x	<p>This objective seeks to provide each dwelling with its own sense of identity. In this regard, entries to dwellings are required to be visible and easily identifiable from streets and other public areas.</p> <p>The entry to Dwelling 2 is located away from public realm and is not easily identifiable, with only the entrance and no other part of the building visible from the internal accessway. The development also has a continuous built form to the rear with minimal windows facing the internal accessway which further impacts the ability to provide a sense of dwelling identity.</p> <p>The built form of the development impacts the ability to provide each dwelling with an appropriate level of identity and as such does not meet the objectives of Standard B26.</p>
B27	Daylight to new windows	✓	✓	The proposal complies with this standard and objective.
B28	Private open space	✓	✓	Private open space of 40sqm has been provided to all three dwellings and meets the objective of this standard.
B29	Solar access to open space	✓	✓	While the private open space is not located to the north of the dwellings, due to the orientation of the lot, it can be considered appropriate to have them located as proposed.
B30	Storage	✓	✓	The proposal complies with this standard and objective.

	✓ - Compliance x - Non compliance	Objectives	Standards	Comments
B31	Design detail	x	x	<p>As discussed earlier in this report, the continuous built form along the ground floor of the dwellings and the lack of meaningful separation along the first floors of the dwellings presents as visually bulky and is a non-responsive development to the existing and preferred character of Ruth Street.</p> <p>The proposal is considered ambitious in its bulky design with limited separation. In particular the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dwellings 2 and 3 to the rear to not provide acceptable first floor separation and built form articulation. - The continuous ground floor built form and lack of landscaping is a poor outcome in the context of the surrounding neighbourhood. <p>The design has not responded to the existing low scale neighbourhood character nor has it satisfactorily responded to the preferred neighbourhood objectives stipulated in Schedule 5 of the General Residential Zone.</p>
B32	Front fences	✓	✓	The proposal complies with this standard and objective.
B33	Common property	✓	✓	The proposal complies with this standard and objective.
B34	Site services	✓	✓	The proposal complies with this standard and objective.

Car Parking

Clause 52.06 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme prescribes the rate and design standards for car parking spaces required on site. Pursuant to this clause the following car spaces are required.

Dwelling No.	No. of bedrooms	Car spaces required	Car spaces provided	Complies
1	2	1	1	✓
2	2	1	1	✓
3	2	1	1	✓

Garages should be at least 6.0m long and 3.5m wide for a single space and 5.5m wide for a double space (measured inside the garage or carport). An open space should be at least 4.9m long and 2.6m wide. The proposal complies with these requirements, although noted that the shared garage is problematic and consistent with an overdevelopment of the site.

Development Contributions Plan

The site is affected by the Development Contributions Plan Overlay. Pursuant to Clause 45.06 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme, the Development Contributions Plan Overlay enables the levying of contributions for the provision of works, services and facilities prior to development commencing. Schedule 3 to the overlay requires development contributions for drainage infrastructure for medium density residential development at a rate of \$2.19 per square metre of the total site area. This rate is subject to the Consumer Price Index at the time of payment. This requirement must be included as a condition on any planning permit that is issued.

Comments on Grounds of Objection

1. Over congestion of local streets and loss of on street car parking

The development does not propose any additional crossovers which could impact on the availability of on street car parking. Furthermore, the development has been provided with the required amount of onsite car parking spaces as discussed above.

The increase in traffic is still within the scope of what is reasonable for a residential area. However, the issue of traffic is closely related to the infrastructure and ability of the street itself to accommodate substantial rather than incremental increases in density. This is recognised by the Whittlesea Housing Diversity Strategy which does not support substantial change in this area.

2. Increased noise associated with the development;

The noise generated by this proposal is acceptable for a residential zoned area.

3. Flood and drainage issues;

Internal drainage mechanisms are typically dealt through conditions on any permit issued which would require the submission of a professionally prepared drainage design including the use of an on-site detention system for the internal drainage and method of disposal of stormwater from all roofed and sealed areas. These internal drainage works must be completed to Council's satisfaction prior to occupying any building on site. Furthermore, the application was referred to the relevant floodplain authority in which had no objection to the proposal.

4. Amenity impacts if all dwellings are occupied by renters;

This is not a relevant planning consideration.

5. Proposal would result in a loss of privacy;

The proposal includes measures to address overlooking in accordance with Standard B22 – Overlooking of Clause 55 - ResCode of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.

6. Unreasonable overshadowing to adjoining residences;

As discussed elsewhere in the report, the proposal will have a minor impact on the access to solar energy and this is not supported, in particular the site to the east.

7. Dwelling redesigned to accommodate residents with disabilities to be demolished;

This concern is not clear, however noted that the design of the dwellings limits the ability to accommodate people with limited mobility.

8. Double storey-built form is inconsistent with existing neighbourhood character;

As discussed earlier in this report, visual bulk from the built form massing is the predominant feature of the proposal which is not consistent with character of Ruth Street. The proposal does not adequately respond to the established or preferred neighbourhood character.

9. Noise and waste impacts during construction;

Construction impacts are a short-term matter than can be managed through permit conditions, under Local Laws and the Building Regulations.

10. Development will lead to overpopulation of the area

Clause 16.01-1S- Housing Supply of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme seeks to identify opportunities for increased residential densities to consolidate urban development. Whilst this particular development is not supported, it is considered suitable for a more modest medium density development.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

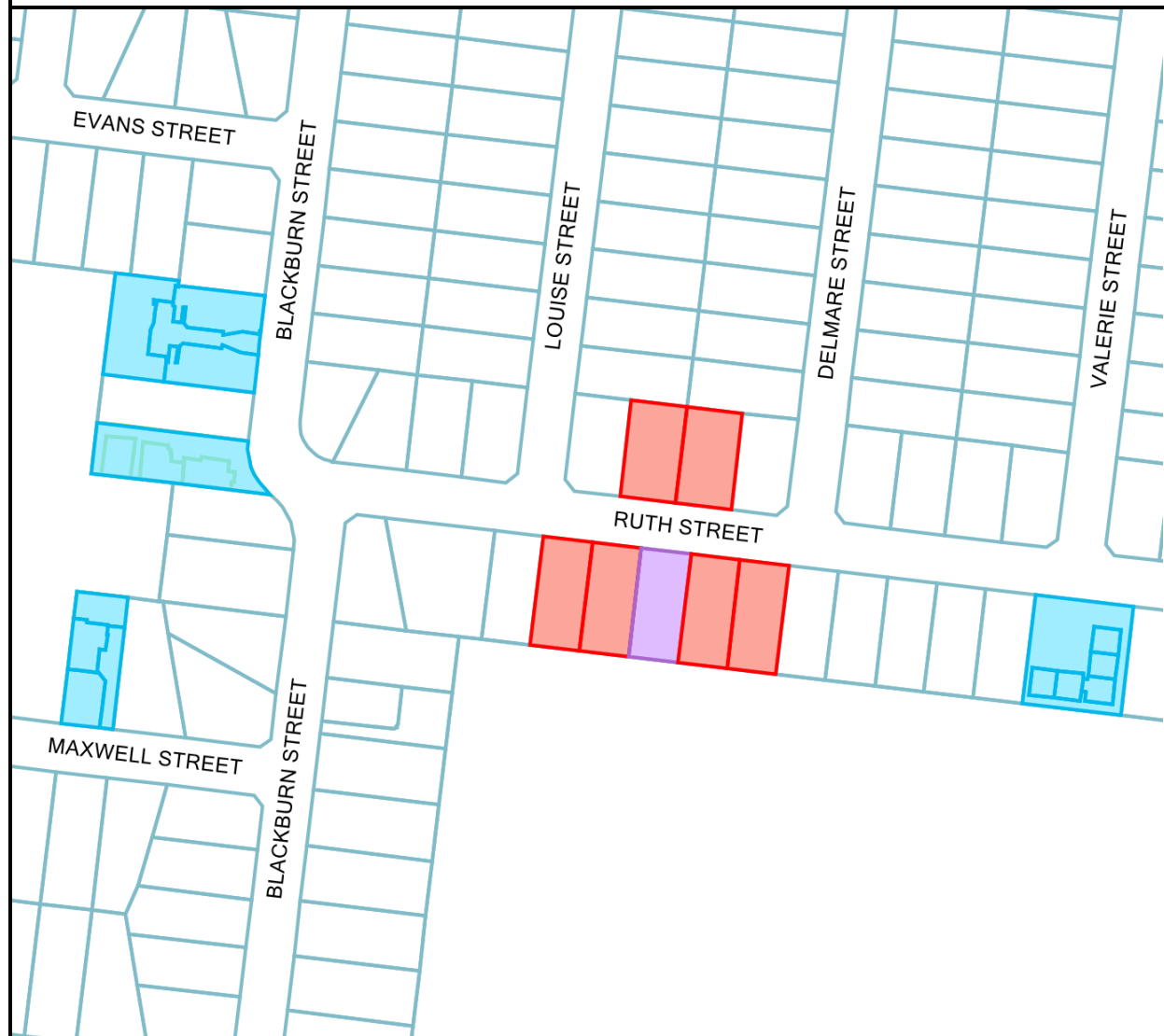
Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Rule 47 of the Governance Rules 2021, officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

Conclusion

The proposal does not appropriately respond to the relevant Planning Policy Framework, including Clause 16.01-1L- Housing Supply of Established Areas and Clause 55 (ResCode). The proposed development does not demonstrate an acceptable level of compliance with the relevant requirements of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme predominately due to its visual bulk, inability to achieve landscape as its predominate feature and lack of built form separation. As such, refusal of the application is recommended.

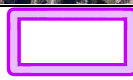


PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 720054



- Subject Land
- Objector
- Medium Density Housing

PLANNING APPLICATION NO. 720054



-  Subject Land
-  Objector
-  Medium Density Housing



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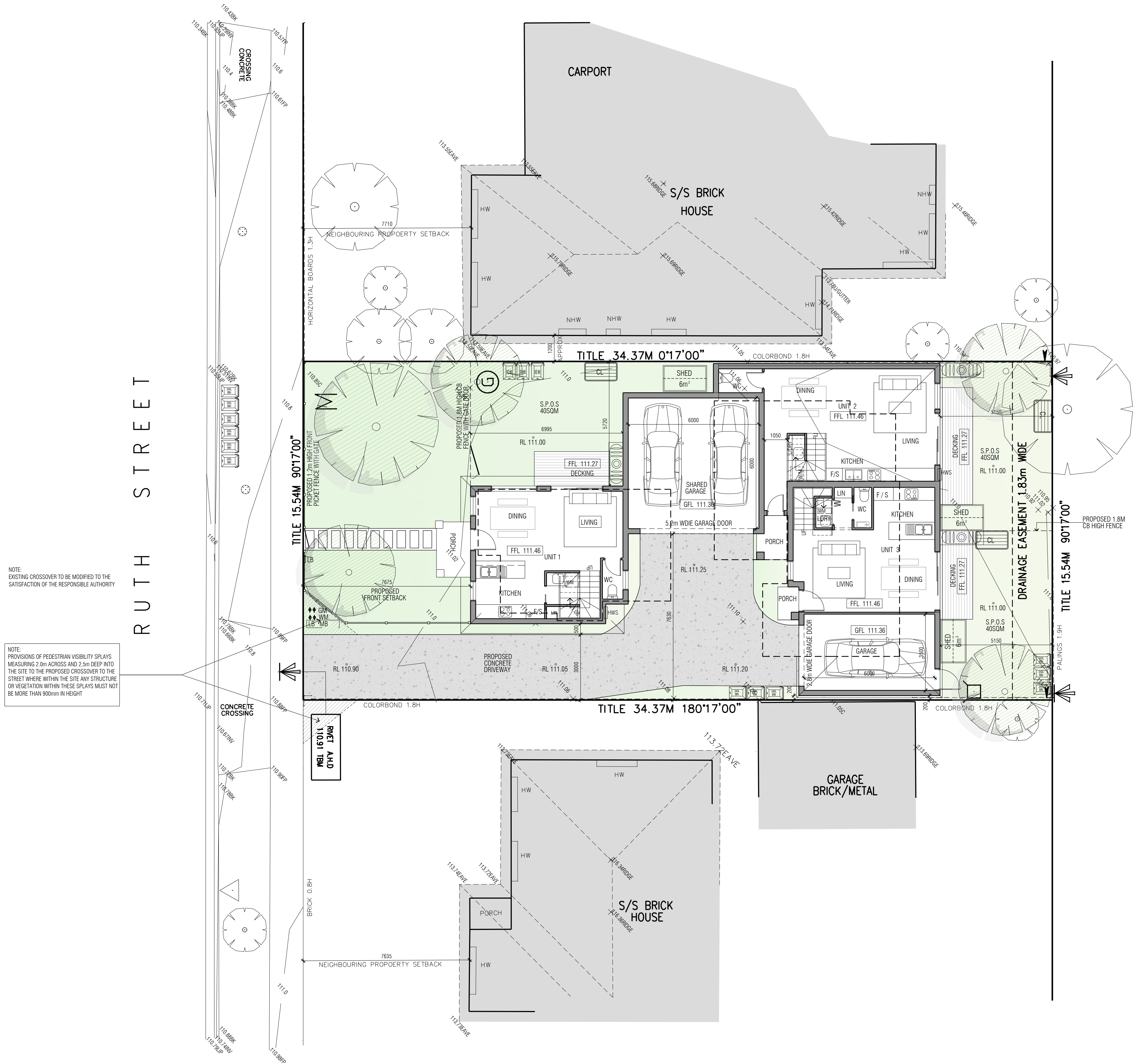
PLANNING & DESIGN

DATE	SCALE	DRWN	CHK	PROJECT No
2021	1:100@A1	SZ	---	6828

EXISTING HOUSE SITE PLAN

UNIT DEVELOPMENT
11 RUTH STREET, LALOR

TP01
REV-



BEARINGS ARE ON TITLE DATUM LEVELS
SHOWN ARE TO AHD VIDE CONNECTION
TO KEELBUNDORA PM 846

AREA SCHEDULE:

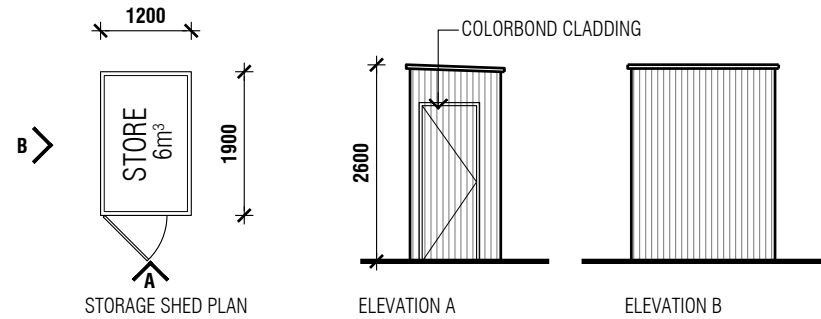
DWELLING 1	
GROUND FLOOR AREA:	44.31 m ²
FIRST FLOOR AREA:	46.48 m ²
GARAGE:	20.53 m ²
PORCH:	4.16 m ²
BALCONY:	2.86 m ²
TOTAL AREA:	12.74 SQ 118.34 m ²
POS:	92.08 m ²
SPOS:	40 m ²

DWELLING 2	
GROUND FLOOR AREA:	48.37 m ²
FIRST FLOOR AREA:	41.40 m ²
GARAGE:	20.53 m ²
PORCH:	2.66 m ²
TOTAL AREA:	12.16 SQ 112.93 m ²
POS:	- m ²
SPOS:	40 m ²

DWELLING 3	
GROUND FLOOR AREA:	41.36 m ²
FIRST FLOOR AREA:	45.22 m ²
GARAGE:	24.81 m ²
PORCH:	1.70 m ²
TOTAL AREA:	12.17 SQ 113.09 m ²
POS:	1.74 m ²
SPOS:	40 m ²

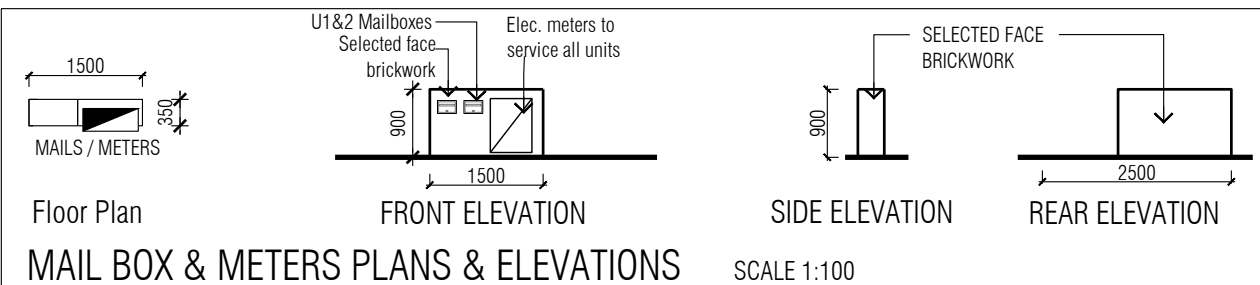
SITE	
SITE AREA:	534.10 m ²
SITE COVERAGE:	37.94% 202.65 m ²
SITE PERMEABILITY:	45.15% 241.15 m ²
GARDEN AREA REQ:	41.15% 219.80 m ²
VEGETATED AREA:	36.84% 196.80 m ²

- Gas and water meters
- General power outlet
- Hot water system
- Proposed canopy tree



STORAGE SHED DETAILS
SCALE 1:100

240L BIN SIZE



MAIL BOX & METERS PLANS & ELEVATIONS
SCALE 1:100



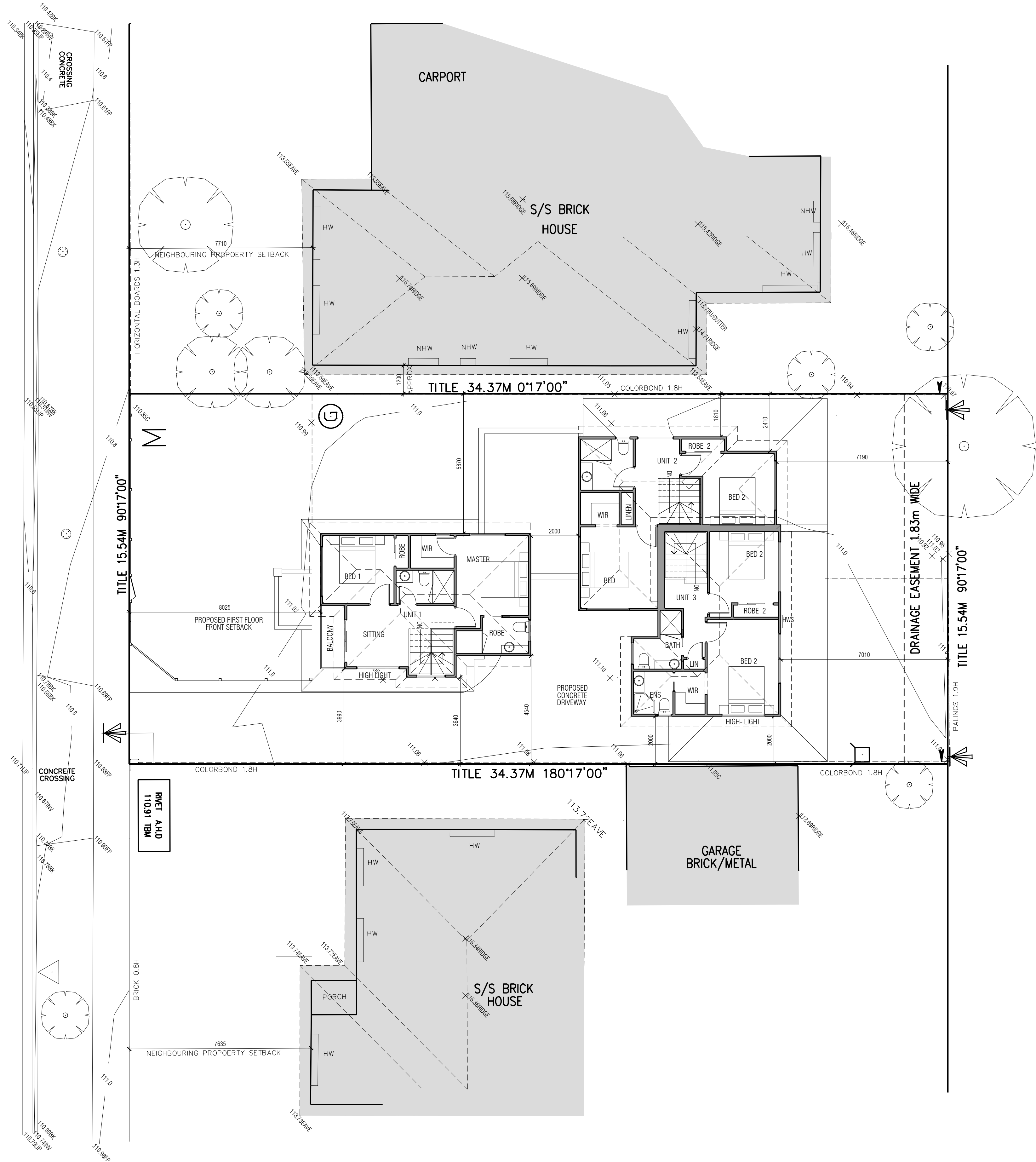
PLANNING & DESIGN P/L
31 Enfield Ave, Preston 3072 T:9018 1529
E: Chirih@planninganddesign.com.au

Revisions
Rev: 15.04.2021 ISSUE FOR TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION

P L A N N I N G &
DESIGN

DATE	SCALE	DRAWN	CHK	PROJECT No.
FEB 2021	1:100(A1)	SZ		6803
PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN				
UNIT DEVELOPMENT				
11 RUTH STREET, LALOR				
TP01				
REV:				

RUTH STREET



BEARINGS ARE ON TITLE DATUM LEVELS
SHOWN ARE TO AHD VIDE CONNECTION
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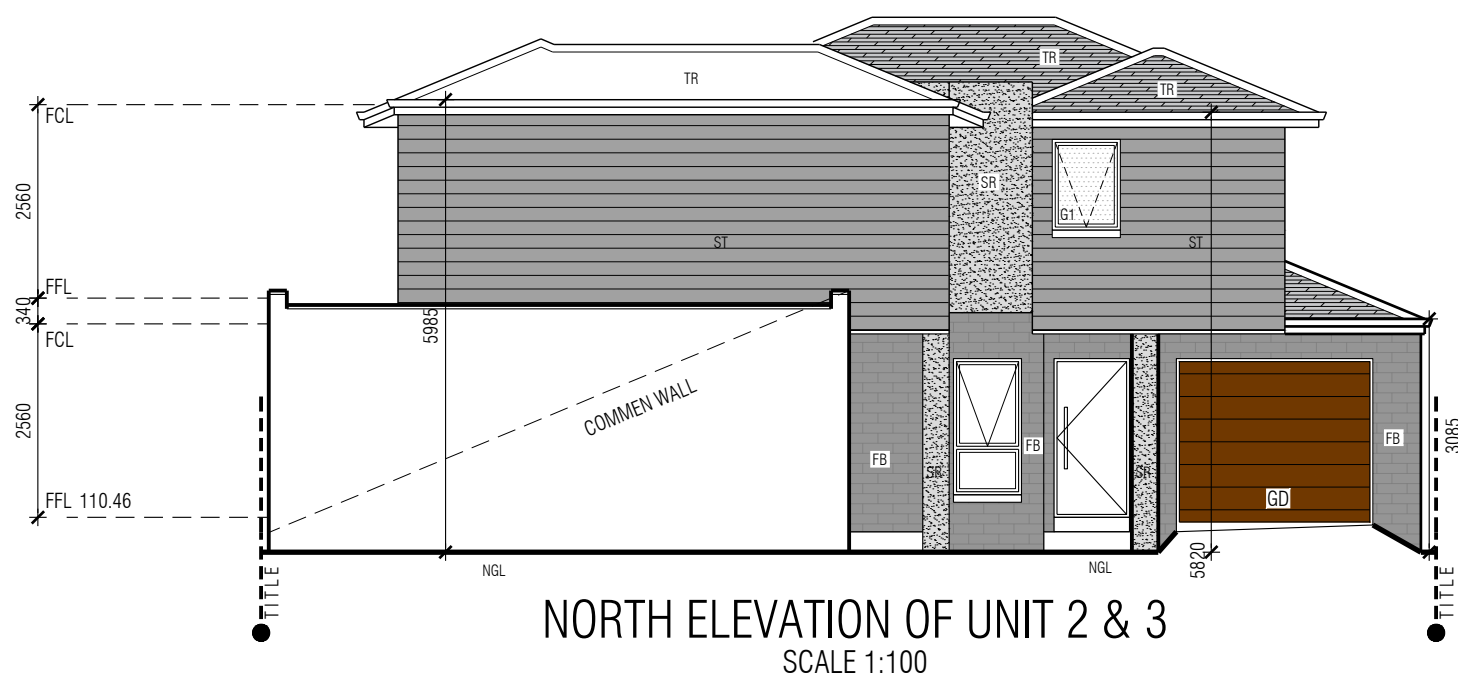
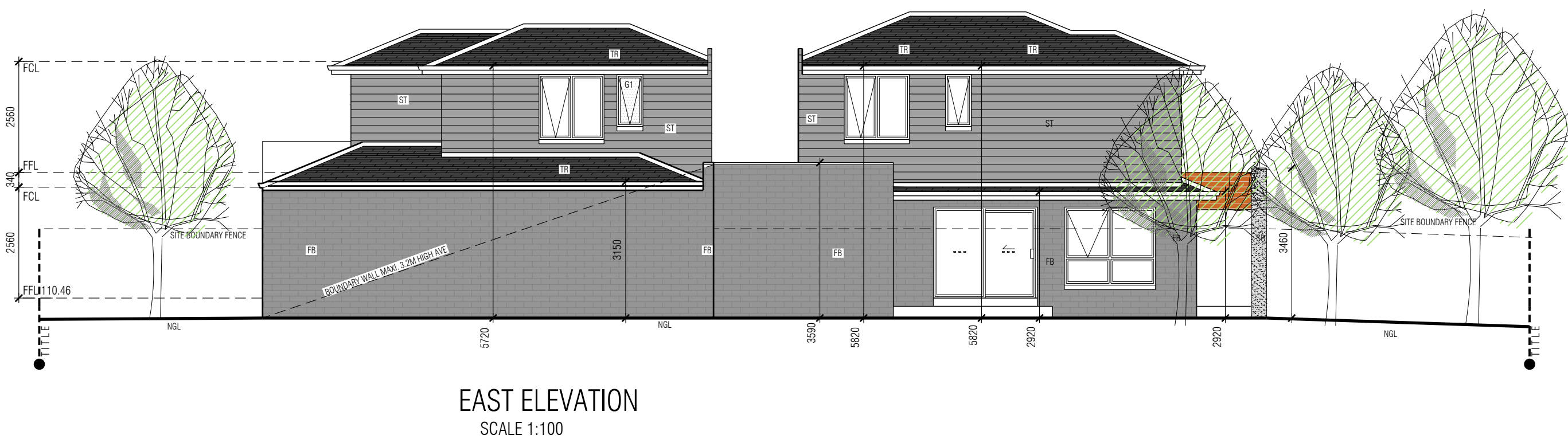
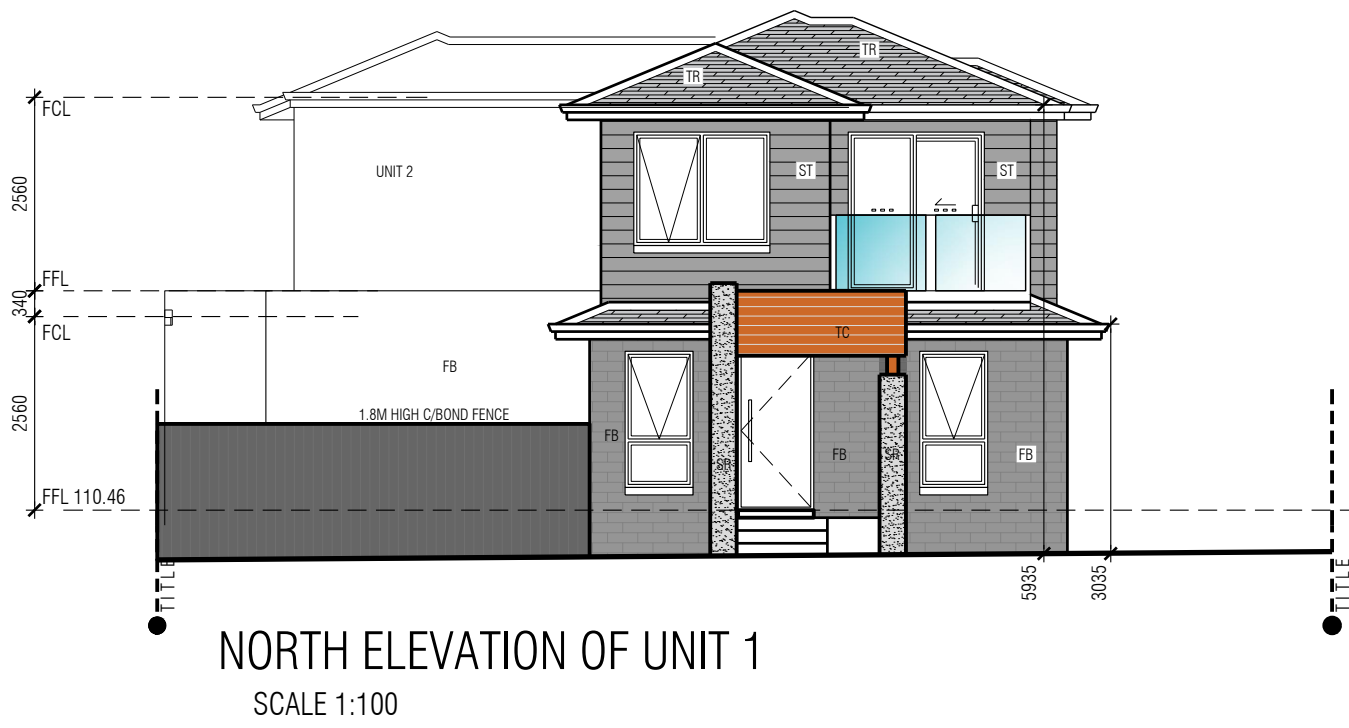
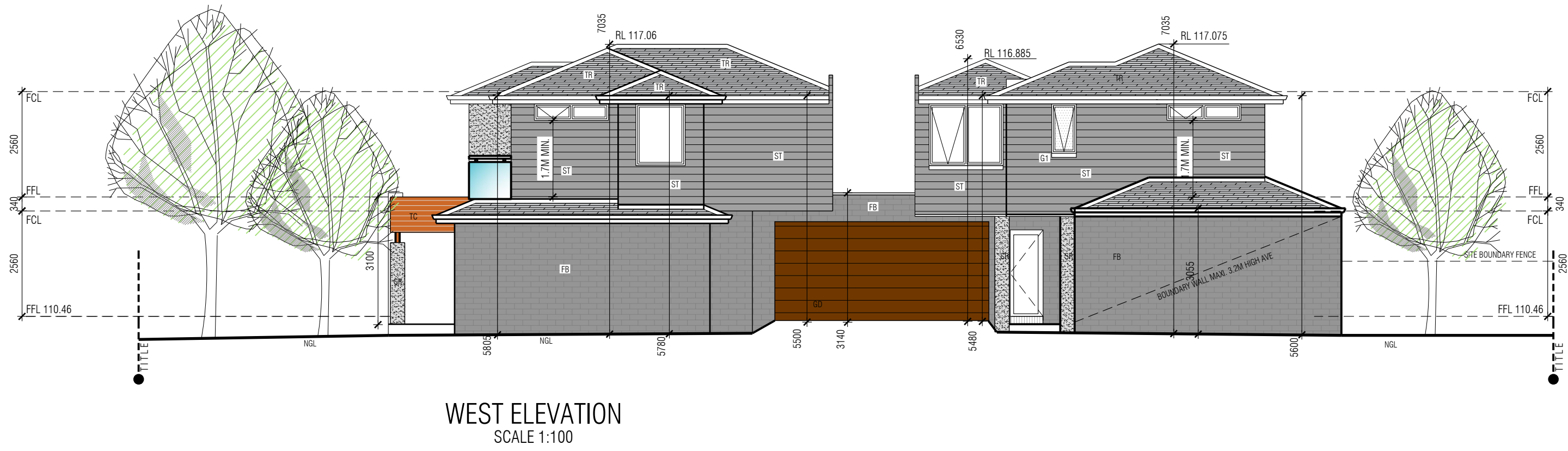
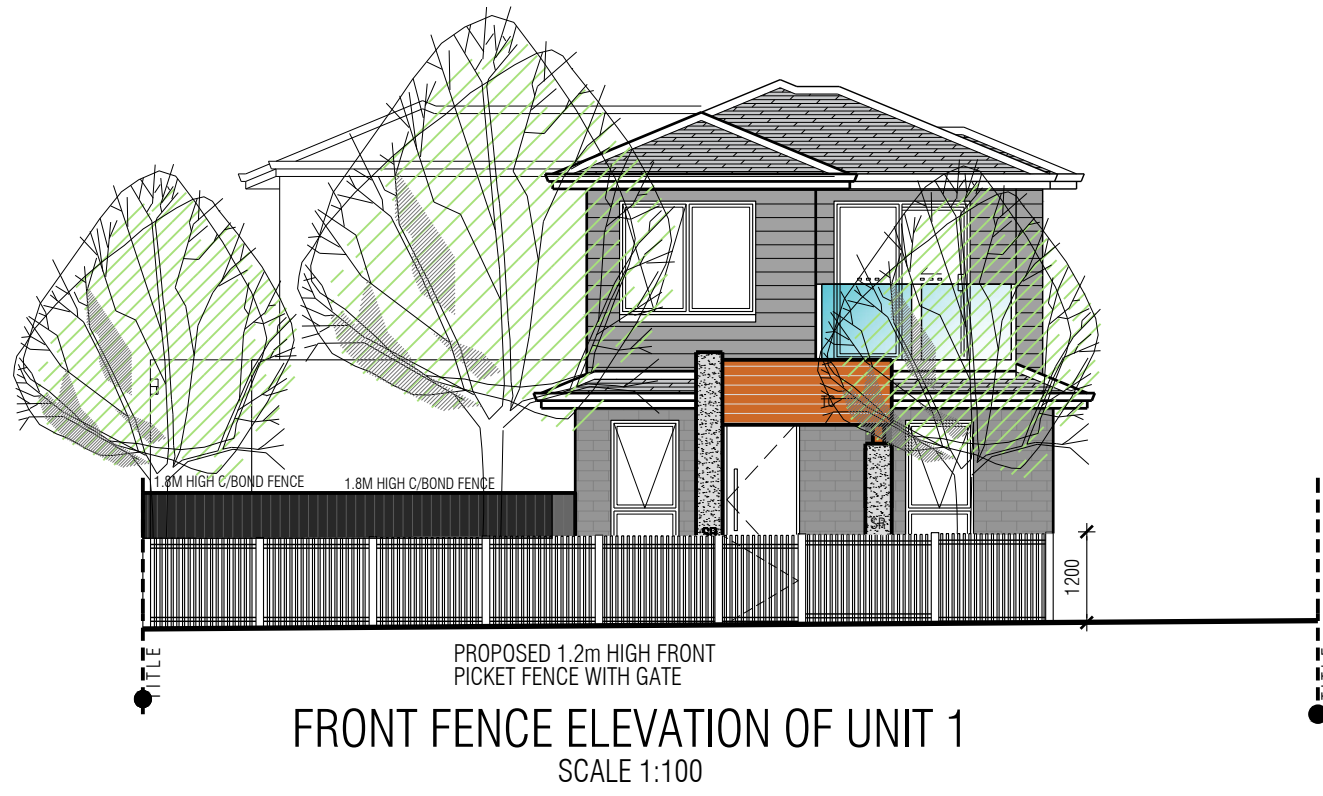
PLANNING & DESIGN P/L
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E: Chinh@planninganddesign.com.au

Revisions			
Rev.	15.04.2021	ISSUE FOR TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION	

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PLANNING &
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DATE	SCALE	DRAWN	CHK	PROJECT No.
FEB 2021	1:100 (A1)	SZ	---	8828
PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN				
UNIT DEVELOPMENT 11 RUTH STREET, LALOR				TP02 REV.



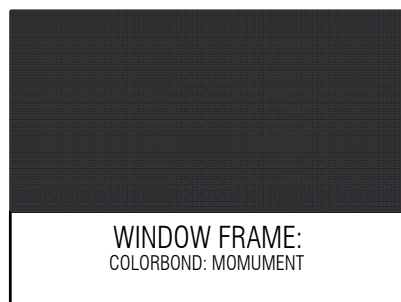
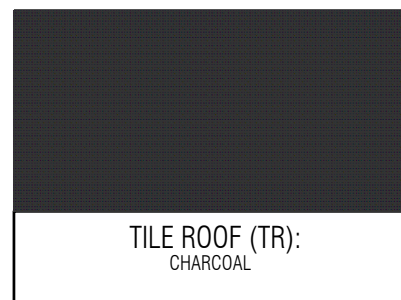
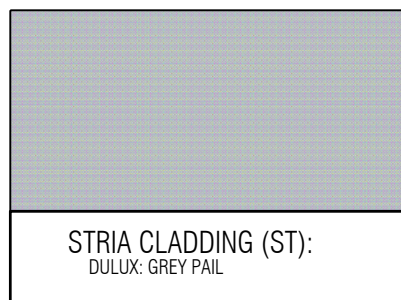
MATERIAL SCHEDULE:

SR	SELECTED RENDERED FINISHED
ST	SELECTED STRIA CLADDING
FB	FACEBRICK WALL
GD	SELECTED GARAGE DOOR
G1	OBS GLASS
G2	OBSCURE GLAZING WITH A MAXIMUM TRANSPARENCY OF 25% TO A MINIMUM HEIGHT OF 1.7m ABOVE FINISHED FLOOR LEVEL
TR	TILES ROOF AT 22.5 DEGREE PITCH

ALUMINUM WINDOWS THROUGH-OUT

COLORBOND GUTTERS, FASCIA'S AND DOWNPIPES

MATERIAL/COLOUR SCHEDULE:



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Revisions
Rev - 15.04.2021 ISSUE FOR TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION

PLANNING & DESIGN

DATE	SCALE	DRAWN	CHK	PROJECT No.
FEB 2021	1:100(DAT)	SZ	---	6626

ELEVATIONS

UNIT DEVELOPMENT TP04
11 RUTH STREET, LALOR REV-

RUTH STREET

NOTE:
EXISTING CROSSOVER TO BE MODIFIED TO THE
SATISFACTION OF THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY

NOTE:
PROVISIONS OF PEDESTRIAN VISIBILITY PLAYS
MEASURING 2.0m ACROSS AND 2.5m DEEP INTO
THE SITE TO THE PROPOSED CROSSOVER TO THE
STREET WHERE WITHIN THE SITE ANY STRUCTURE
OR VEGETATION WITHIN THESE PLAYS MUST NOT
BE MORE THAN 900mm IN HEIGHT

BEARINGS ARE ON TITLE DATUM LEVELS
SHOWN ARE TO AHD VIDE CONNECTION
TO KEELBUNDORA PM 846

AREA SCHEDULE:

DWELLING 1

GROUND FLOOR AREA:	48.88 m ²
FIRST FLOOR AREA:	52.46 m ²
GARAGE:	19.85 m ²
PORCH:	4.16 m ²
BALCONY:	2.86 m ²
TOTAL AREA:	13.80 SQ 128.21 m ²
POS:	92.08 m ²
SPOS:	40 m ²

DWELLING 2

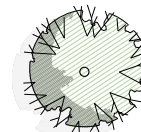
GROUND FLOOR AREA:	52.17 m ²
FIRST FLOOR AREA:	45.20 m ²
GARAGE:	18.90 m ²
PORCH:	2.50 m ²
TOTAL AREA:	12.78 SQ 122.60 m ²
POS:	- m ²
SPOS:	40 m ²

DWELLING 3

GROUND FLOOR AREA:	41.36 m ²
FIRST FLOOR AREA:	45.22 m ²
GARAGE:	24.81 m ²
PORCH:	1.70 m ²
TOTAL AREA:	12.17 SQ 113.09 m ²
POS:	1.74 m ²
SPOS:	40 m ²

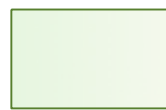
SITE

SITE AREA:	534.10 m ²
SITE COVERAGE:	40.84% 218.10 m ²
SITE PERMEABILITY:	43.47% 232.19 m ²
GARDEN AREA REQ:	40.62% 216.96 m ²



PROPOSED CANOPY TREE

CLASSROOM
PORTABLE



GARDEN AREA



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Revisions				
Rev	15.04.2021	ISSUE FOR TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION		

P L A N N I N G &
DESIGN

DATE	SCALE	DRAWN	CHK	PROJECT No.
FEB 2021	1:100(A1)	SZ	---	8828
GARDEN AREA PLAN				
UNIT DEVELOPMENT 11 RUTH STREET, LALOR				TP03 REV-

SPECIFICATIONS

SUBGRADE PREPARATION
SITE TO BE PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH BEST HORTICULTURAL PRACTICE AND UNDER APPROPRIATE CONDITIONS. DISTURBANCE TO NATIVE SOIL STRUCTURE IS TO BE MINIMISED. THE USE OF MACHINERY THAT MAY DAMAGE SOIL STRUCTURE OR PROFILE IS NOT ACCEPTABLE. ALL LAWN AND PLANTED AREAS SUB-GRADE TO IS TO BE CULTIVATED TO A MINIMUM DEPTH OF 150MM. DRAINAGE FALLS TO BE SHAPED PRIOR TO TOP SOILING. TEST SUB GRADE TO BE TO DETERMINE PH, SALINITY AND GYPSUM REQUIREMENT PRIOR TO PREPARATION AND CONDITIONING. ANY GYPSUM REQUIRED IS TO BE DISTRIBUTED ACCORDING TO MANUFACTURERS RECOMMENDED RATE AND CULTIVATED INTO THE SUB-GRADE AT A MINIMUM DEPTH OF 150MM. TOPPING AREAS TO BE GRADED / DRAINED TO AVOID WATER DISCHARGE INTO ADJOINING PROPERTIES.

WEED CONTROL
ENVIRONMENTAL WEEDS TO BE REMOVED AND DISPOSED OFF OF SITE PRIOR TO SUB GRADE PREPARATION, TOPSOILING AND PLANTING WORKS.

SOIL PREPARATION
SPREAD TOPSOIL IN MAXIMUM 150MM LAYERS, LIGHTLY COMPACTED BY USE OF A 150 - 200KG ROLLER, OR BY CAREFULLY WALKING UNTIL IT IS SETTLED AT FINISHED KERB LEVELS OR TO WITHIN 75MM BELOW EDGING LEVELS TO ACCOMMODATE MULCH. IMPORTED TOPSOIL FOR GARDEN BEDS IS TO BE MEDIUM TEXTURE GENERAL PURPOSE GARDEN SOIL AND LIGHTLY COMPACTED TO MINIMUM 300MM DEPTH TO GARDEN BEDS. SOIL IS TO COMPLY WITH AS 2223-1978, AND AS FOLLOWS:
• FREE FROM PERENNIAL WEEDS AND THEIR ROOTS, BULBS AND RHIZOMES
• FREE FROM BUILDING RUBBLE AND ANY OTHER MATTER DELETERIOUS TO PLANT GROWTH
• PH TO BE 6.0-7.0
• TEXTURE TO BE LIGHT TO MEDIUM FRIABLE LOAM
• FREE FROM SILT MATERIAL
IMPORTED TOPSOIL FOR LAWN REJUVENATION / ESTABLISHMENT SHALL HAVE THE ABOVE CHARACTERISTICS, BUT SHALL BE A FREE DRAINING SANDY LOAM. LIGHTLY COMPACT TO MINIMUM DEPTH OF 100MM.

MULCH
MULCH FOR GARDEN BEDS IS TO BE AN AGED ORGANIC MATERIAL WITH 60 - 80 PERCENT WOOD CHIPS PARTICLES IN A SIZE RANGE OF 25 - 50 MM MAXIMUM BY VOLUME. SPREAD MULCH AT A CONSOLIDATED DEPTH OF 75MM.

PLANTING PROCEDURE
FILL PLANTING HOLE WITH WATER AND ALLOW TO DRAIN COMPLETELY IF SOIL IS DRY. TREE ROOTS ARE TO BE TEASED OUTWARDS IF MATTED OR CIRCLING OCCURS PRIOR TO BACKFILLING. PLACE TREE IN CENTRE OF HOLE ON FIRM SOIL TO PREVENT SINKING, ENSURING TOP OF THE ROOTBALL IS FLUSH WITH THE SURROUNDING SOIL SURFACE AND THE TRUNK IS VERTICAL. BACKFILL MATERIAL IS TO BE IN A LOOSE, FRIABLE STATE, WITH NO BRICKS, ROCKS OR FOREIGN MATERIAL - IF SUFFICIENT MATERIAL IS NOT AVAILABLE FROM THE ORIGINAL HOLE TO BACKFILL, A SIMILAR SOIL TYPE MUST BE SOURCED AND USED. PREVENT LARGE AIR POCKETS IN SOIL FROM OCCURRING BY FIRMLY BACKFILLING SOIL IN LAYERS THEN THOROUGHLY WATERED IN. TREES TO BE STAKED WITH TWO 2250MM X 70MM HARDWOOD STAKES DRIVEN FIRMLY INTO THE GROUND. DO NOT BE PLACE STAKE THROUGH THE ROOTBALL AREA. TREES ARE TO BE SECURED TO EACH STAKE WITH A STRONG, SOFT AND FLEXIBLE MATERIAL, TIGHT ENOUGH TO SUPPORT THE TREE IN WINDY CONDITIONS BUT FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO STIMULATE DEVELOPMENT OF A GOOD SUPPORTIVE ROOT SYSTEM. TREE TIE MATERIAL MUST NOT DAMAGE TREE BARK OR RESTRICT TRUNK GROWTH FOR A MINIMUM PERIOD OF THREE YEARS. SLOW RELEASE FERTILISER (3/6 MONTH FORMULATION) SUCH AS 'OSMOCOTE' IS TO BE APPLIED TO THE TOP OF THE ROOTBALL AREA AWAY FROM THE TRUNK / STEM TO MANUFACTURERS SPECIFICATIONS AND WATERED IN IMMEDIATELY. ALL TREES TO BE MULCHED TO A DIAMETER OF 1200MM WIDE AND TO A DEPTH OF 100MM BUT MUST NOT BE IN CONTACT WITH THE TREE TRUNK. MULCH IS TO BE AN AGED ORGANIC MATERIAL WITH 60 - 80 PERCENT OF ITS VOLUME BEING WOOD CHIP PARTICLES IN A SIZE RANGE OF 25 - 50MM MAXIMUM. MULCH IS TO BE SPREAD AT A CONSOLIDATED DEPTH OF 75MM. THE PLANTING HOLE SURFACE IS TO BE SHAPED TO MINIMISE WATER LOGGING/EXCESSIVE WATER RETENTION BUT RETAIN THE MULCH MATERIAL NEATLY. THE SITE MUST BE LEFT IN A CLEAN AND SAFE CONDITION.

PLANT ESTABLISHMENT PERIOD
THE LANDSCAPE IS TO BE MAINTAINED BY APPLYING BEST HORTICULTURAL PRACTICE TO PROMOTE HEALTHY PLANT PERFORMANCE FOR A 13 WEEK ESTABLISHMENT PERIOD FOLLOWING THE APPROVAL OF PRACTICAL COMPLETION BY THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY INCLUDING (BUT NOT LIMITED TO) THE FOLLOWING TASKS - PRUNING AS NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN PLANTS IN A HEALTHY AND STRUCTURALLY SOUND MANNER, PEST AND DISEASES - VEGETATION TO BE PEST AND DISEASE FREE, MULCHING, STAKING AND TYING. MAINTAINED 75MM MULCH DEPTH AROUND TREE BASES THROUGHOUT MAINTENANCE PERIOD. WATER AS OFTEN AS NECESSARY TO ENSURE HEALTHY AND VIGOROUS GROWTH IN ACCORDANCE WITH CURRENT LOCAL WATERING REGULATIONS. MAINTAIN WEED FREE STATE OVER THE ENTIRE MULCH AREA BY SPRAYING OR MECHANICAL WEEDING. FERTILISING - 3/6 X MONTHLY SLOW RELEASE FERTILISER IN ACCORDANCE WITH MANUFACTURERS RECOMMENDED APPLICATION RATES. REPLACEMENT OF DECEASED, STOLEN OR VANDALISED PLANTS BEYOND REPAIR OR REGROWTH WITH THE SAME SPECIES AS SPECIFIED IN THE PLANT SCHEDULE WITHIN THE ASSIGNED MAINTENANCE PERIOD

IRRIGATION
IF APPLICABLE, INSTALL IN-GROUND AUTOMATIC DRIP IRRIGATION SYSTEM TO ALL GARDEN AREAS AND PLANTER BOXES IN ACCORDANCE WITH CURRENT LOCAL WATERING REGULATIONS

TIMBER EDGING
TIMBER EDGING TO BE 75MM X 25MM TREATED PINE SECURED TO 300MM LONG TREATED PINE STAKES AT NOM. MIN 1000MM SPACINGS WITH GALVANISED SCREWS AND INSTALLED TO ALL JUNCTIONS BETWEEN GARDEN BEDS, LAWN AND TOPPING / PEBBLE AREAS

DRAINAGE
LANDSCAPE AND / OR BUILDING CONTRACTOR(S) ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR CIVIL AND HYDRAULIC COMPUTATIONS FOR LANDSCAPE BUILDING WORKS INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO SURFACE AND SUB SURFACE DRAINAGE FOR ALL LANDSCAPE AREAS PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF WORKS

GENERAL
WHILE CARE HAS BEEN TAKEN TO SELECT TREE SPECIES WITH NON-INVASIVE ROOT SYSTEMS IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT ROOT CONTROL BARRIERS BE INSTALLED FOR ANY TREES LOCATED WITHIN TWO METRES OF ANY BUILDING LINES. CLIMBING PLANTS (IF APPLICABLE) ARE TO BE TRAINED TO SUPPORTIVE MESH, WIRE OR LATTICE FIXED OVER ENTIRE FENCE SECTION FROM BASE TO TOP. DO NOT SCALE FROM PLAN - CONTRACTOR TO VERIFY ALL DIMENSIONS ON SITE PRIOR TO COMMENCING CONSTRUCTION

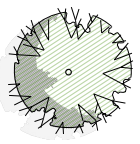
PLANTS - QUALITY OF TREES AND SHRUBS
PROVIDE PLANTS AT SPECIFIED PLANT HEIGHTS AND POT SIZES, AT MINIMUM, PROVIDE LARGER STOCK IF PLANT MATERIAL IS UNAVAILABLE IN THESE SIZES. TREES AND SHRUBS SHALL BE HEALTHY NURSERY STOCK FREE FROM PESTS, INSECTS, DISEASES AND WEEDS. SUBSTITUTE PLANS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE UNLESS DEEMED ACCEPTABLE BY THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY IN WRITING. SEMI-MATURE TREES TO BE SUPPLIED TO MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA: HAVE A MINIMUM PLANTED HEIGHT TO SIZES AS INDICATED IN THE PLANT SCHEDULE, HAVE A MINIMUM TRUNK CALIPER OF 50MM AT GROUND LEVEL, BE UNDAUNAGED AND FREE OF DISEASES AND INSECT PESTS, NOT BE ROOT BOUND OR HAVE CIRCLING OR GIRDLING ROOTS BUT HAVE ROOTS GROWN TO THE EDGE OF THE CONTAINER, SHOULD BE A SINGLE STRAIGHT TRUNK, STRONG BRANCHING PATTERN, AND FULL CANOPY, SHOW HEALTHY, VIGOROUS GROWTH

PROTECTION OF EXISTING TREES
ALL EXISTING VEGETATION SHOWN ON THE ENDORSED PLAN ON BOTH SUBJECT SITE AND NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES IS TO BE RETAINED MUST BE SUITABLY MARKED AND PROTECTED (IF REQUIRED) PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT ON SITE INCLUDING DEMOLITION. VEGETATION MUST NOT BE REMOVED, DESTROYED OR LOPPED WITHOUT THE WRITTEN CONSENT OF THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY. BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF WORKS INCLUDING DEMOLITION, TREE PROTECTION BARRIERS MUST BE ERECTED AROUND TREES ON BOTH SUBJECT SITE AND ADJOINING PROPERTIES TO FORM A DEFINED TREE PROTECTION ZONE DURING DEMOLITION AND CONSTRUCTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH TREE PROTECTION MEASURES AS PER AS 4970-2009. ANY REQUIRED PRUNING MUST BE CARRIED OUT BY A TRAINED AND COMPETENT ARBORIST WITH A THOROUGH KNOWLEDGE OF TREE PHYSIOLOGY AND PRUNING METHODS. PRUNING TO BE CARRIED OUT AS PER AS 4373-2007. ALL TREE PROTECTION PRACTICES MUST MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF A CONSULTING ARBORIST AND / OR TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY.

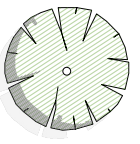
NOTE:
EXISTING CROSSOVER TO BE MODIFIED TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY

NOTE:
PROVISIONS OF PEDESTRIAN VISIBILITY PLAYS MEASURING 2.0m ACROSS AND 2.5m DEEP INTO THE SITE TO THE PROPOSED CROSSOVER TO THE STREET WHERE WITHIN THE SITE ANY STRUCTURE OR VEGETATION WITHIN THESE PLAYS MUST NOT BE MORE THAN 900mm IN HEIGHT

LEGEND



PROPOSED DECIDUOUS TREES



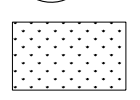
PROPOSED TREES



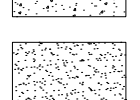
PROPOSED EVERGREEN SHRUBS



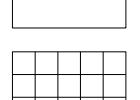
PROPOSED CLIMBERS



EXISTING TREES TO BE RETAINED AND PROTECTED



EXISTING TREES TO BE REMOVED



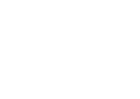
PROPOSED LAWN AREAS



PROPOSED CONCRETE DRIVEWAY



PROPOSED TOPPING AREAS



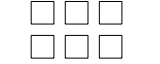
PROPOSED GARDEN BEDS



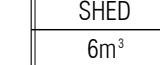
PROPOSED PAVED AREAS



PROPOSED WASHING LINE



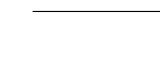
PROPOSED PAVER STEP-STONES



PROPOSED 6m² STORAGE SHED

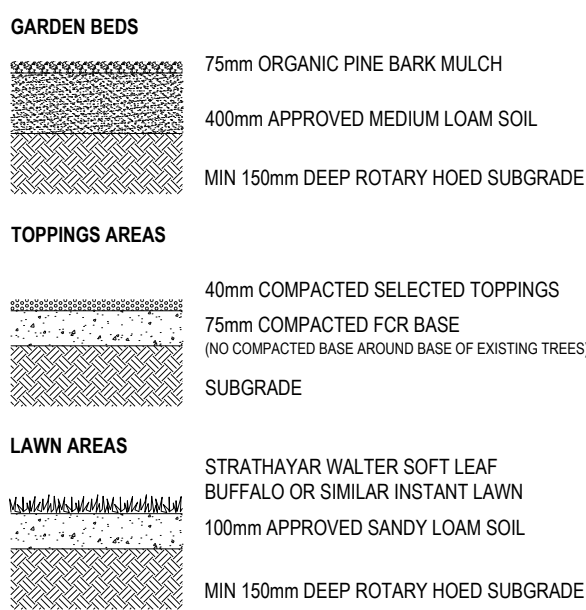


PROPOSED BIN STORAGE AREA



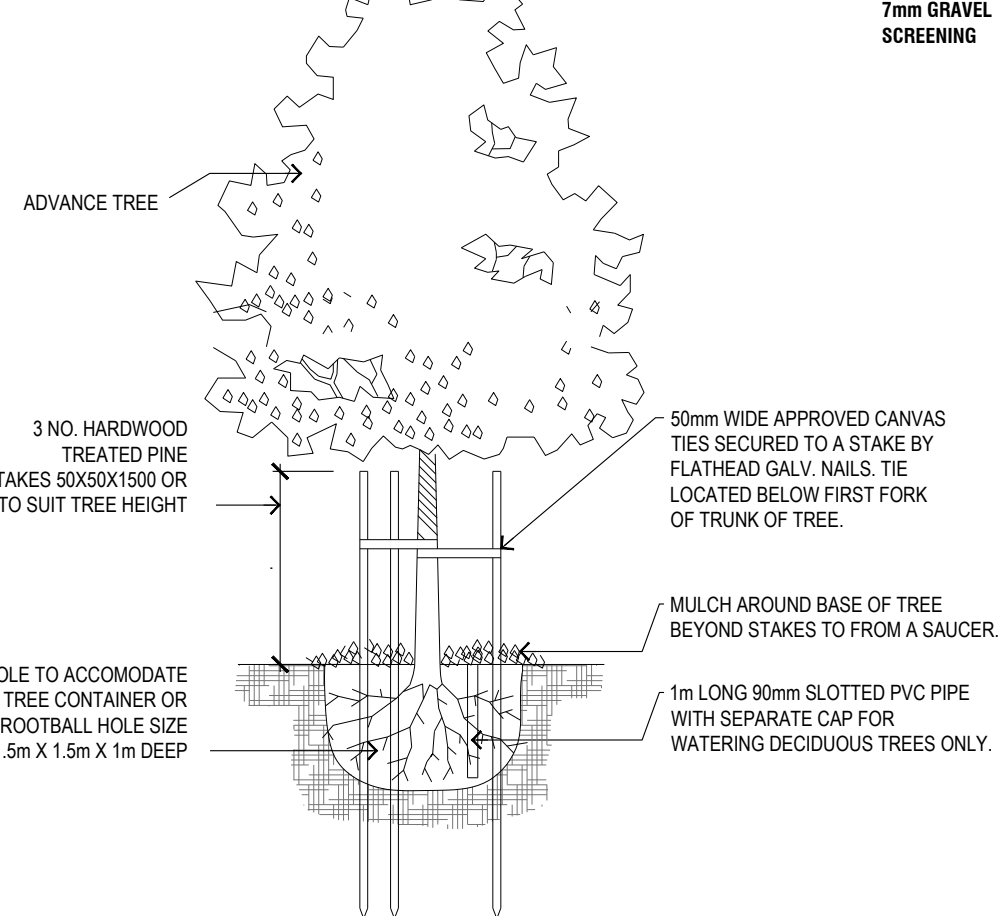
FENCE WITH HEIGHTS AND MATERIALS AS NOMINATED

SURFACE FINISH DETAIL



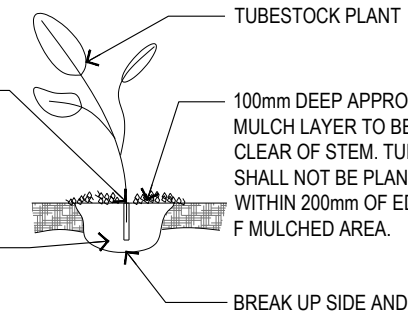
ADVANCE TREE PLANTING

DETAIL NOT DRAWN TO SCALE

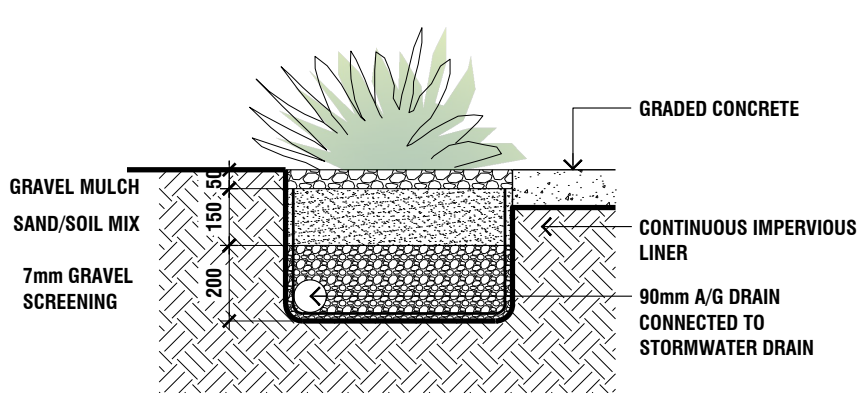


SHRUB PLANTING

DETAIL NOT DRAWN TO SCALE



PLEASE NOTE: BUFFER STRIP TO BE FULLY LINED WITH AN IMPERVIOUS LINER AND HAVE ITS OVERFLOW/AGGIE DRAIN CONNECTED TO THE STORMWATER SYSTEM.

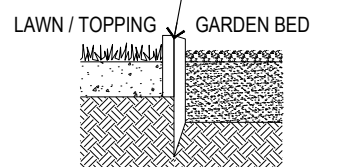


BUFFER STRIP DETAIL

SCALE 1:20

TYPICAL TIMBER EDGE DETAIL

TO ALL GARDEN BEDS AND LAWN / TOPPING'S EDGE



PLANT SCHEDULE

CODE	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	QTY	SUPPLY SIZE	MATURE H x W
TREES					
AL	ACACIA IMPLEXA	LIGHTWOOD	1	40ltr / MIN 2.0m HIGH	10m X 6m
CFS	CORYMBIA FICIFOLIA 'SUMMER BEAUTY'	FLOWERING GUM	3	40ltr / MIN 2.0m HIGH	6m X 3m
LI	LAGERSTROEMIA INDICA	CREPE MYRTLE	2	45ltr / MIN 2.0m HIGH	4.5m X 5m
SHRUBS					
JS	JUNIPERS CHINESE 'SPARTAN'	SPARTAN JUNIPER	8	20cm POT	3m X 1m
SAB	SYZIGIUM AUSTRALE 'BUSH CHRISTMAS'	BUSH CHRISTMAS LILLY PILLY	17	20cm POT	1.5m X 1m
MP	MURRAYA PANICULATA	ORANGE JESSAMINE	10	20cm POT	1m X 1m
TUSSOKS/ GRASSES/ EVERGREEN PERENNIALS					
DCB	DIANELLA CAERULA 'BREEZE'	BREEZE FLAX LILLY	15	14cm POT	0.7m X 0.65m
DCC	DIANELLA CAERULA 'CASSA BLUE'	CASSA BLUE FLAX LILLY	26	14cm POT	0.4m X 0.4m

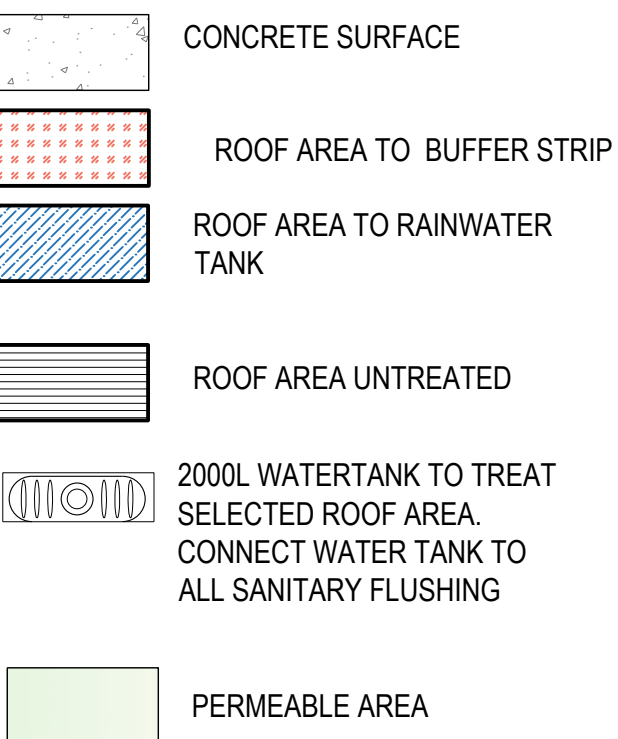


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Revisions
Rev- 15.04.2021 ISSUE FOR TOWN PLANNING SUBMISSION

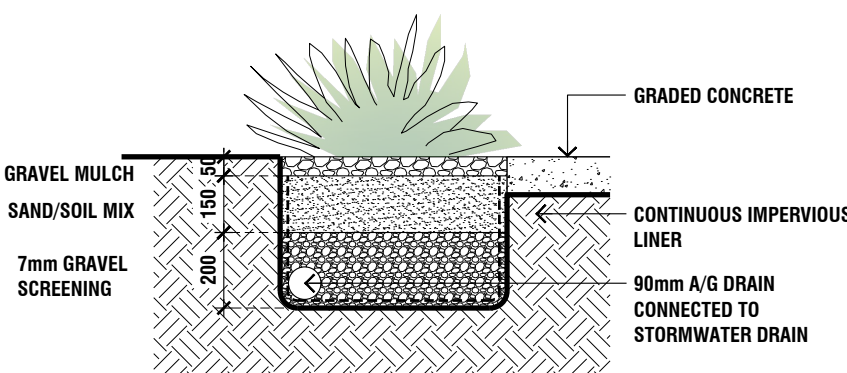
DATE	SCALE	DRWN	CHK	PROJECT No.
FEB 2021	1:1000(A1)	SZ	---	6628
PROPOSED LANDSCAPE PLAN				
UNIT DEVELOPMENT				
11 RUTH STREET, LALOR				
TP01				
REV-				

THE FINAL DESIGN OF THE STORMWATER SYSTEM WILL MEET COUNCIL DRAINAGE ENGINEERS' REQUIREMENTS. THE DESIGNED SYSTEM COMPLIES WITH MELBOURNE WATER STORM REQUIREMENTS THAT MEETS VICTORIAN BEST PRACTICE STORMWATER GUIDELINES




SITE AREA:		534.10 m ²
SITE COVERAGE:	37.94%	202.65 m ²
SITE PERMEABILITY:	45.15%	241.15 m ²
GARDEN AREA REQ:	41.15%	219.80 m ²
VEGETATED AREA:	36.84%	196.80 m ²

PLEASE NOTE: BUFFER STRIP TO BE FULLY LINED WITH AN IMPERVIOUS LINER AND HAVE ITS OVERFLOW/AGGIE DRAIN CONNECTED TO THE THE STORMWATER SYSTEM.



BUFFER STRIP DETAIL


SCALE 1:20

		STORM Rating Report							
TransactionID:		1180632							
Municipality:		WHITTLESEA							
Rainfall Station:		WHITTLESEA							
Address:		11 RUTH STREET							
		LALOR							
		VIC		3075					
Assessor:		Sarah							
Development Type:		Residential - Multiunit							
Allotment Site (m2):		534.10							
STORM Rating %:		100							
Description		Impervious Area (m2)	Treatment Type	Treatment Area/Volume (m2 or L)	Occupants / Number Of Bedrooms	Treatment %	Tank Water Supply Reliability (%)		
Unit 1 Roof Treated		88.44	Rainwater Tank	2,000.00	2	116.20	96.40		
RainWater Tank									
Unit 2 Roof Treated rain water tank		60.40	Rainwater Tank	2,000.00	2	143.00	90.70		
Unit 2 Roof Untreated		7.02	None	0.00	0	0.00	0.00		
Unit 3 Roof Treated Rain water rank		69.50	Rainwater Tank	2,000.00	2	134.00	93.50		
Unit 3 Roof Untreated		6.27	None	0.00	0	0.00	0.00		
Driveway Treated		38.58	Buffer Strip	5.00	0	66.00	0.00		
Driveway Untreated		36.30	None	0.00	0	0.00	0.00		
Date Generated:		29-Jun-2021				Program Version:		1.0.0	



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Revisions

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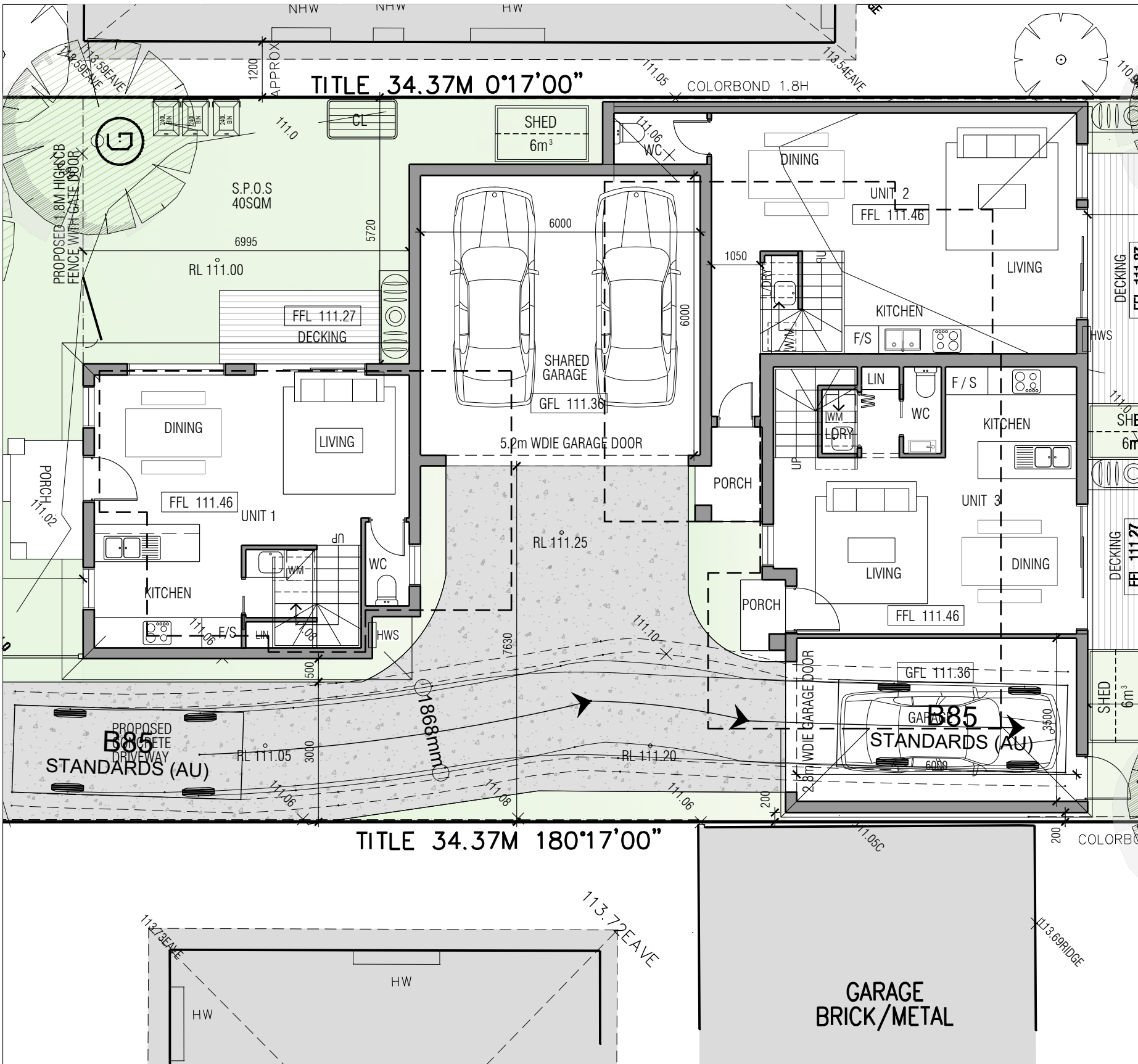
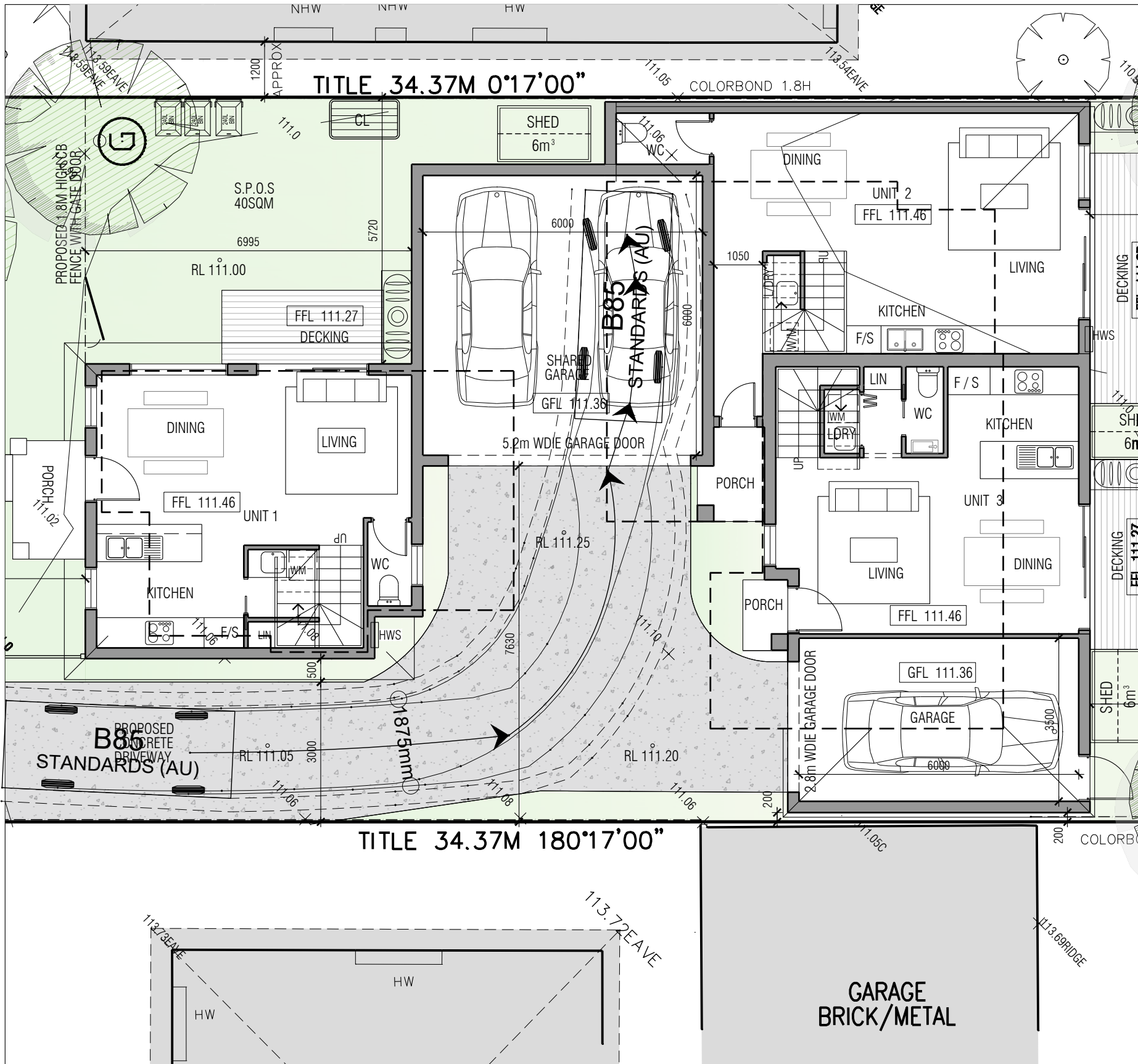
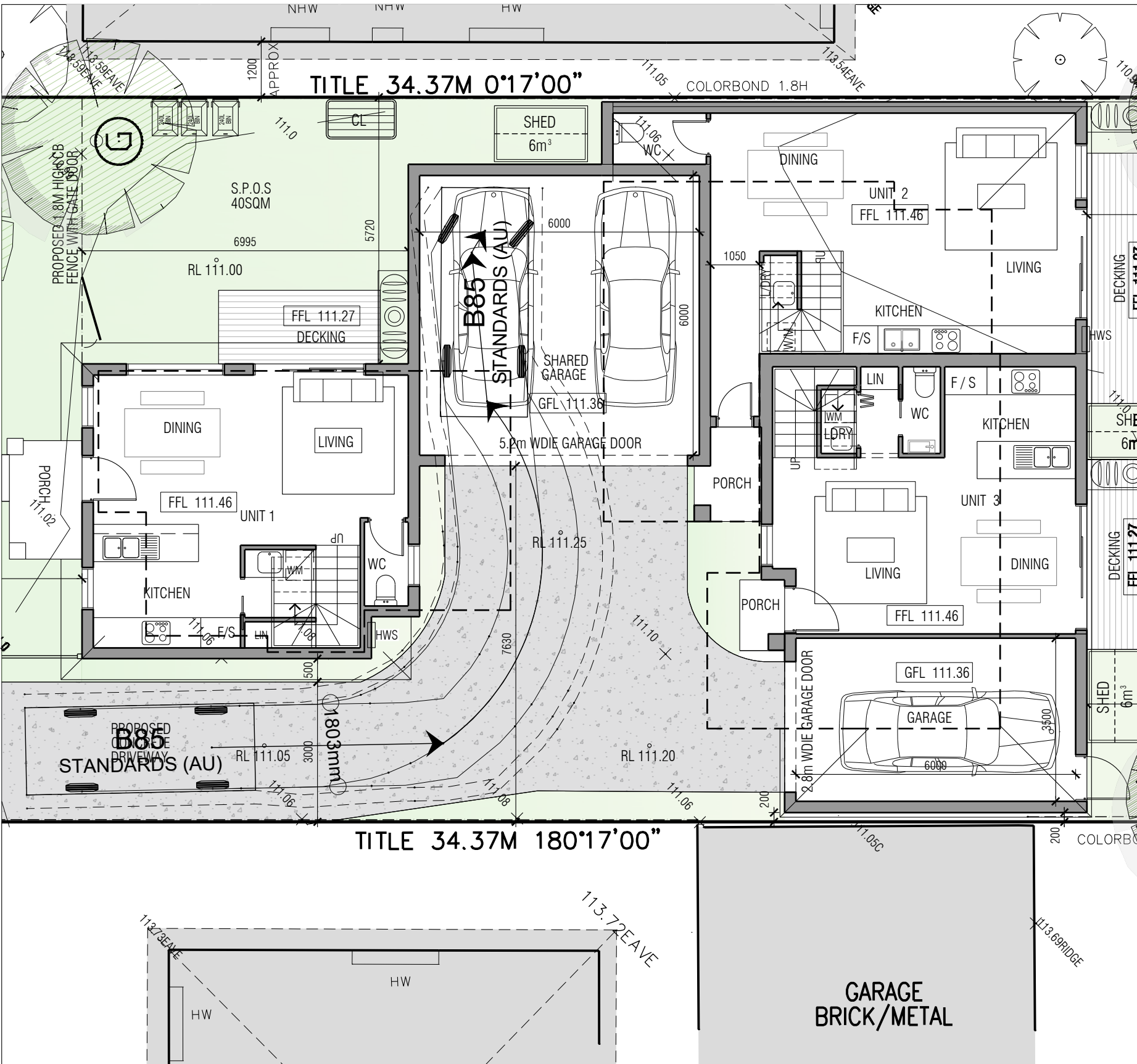
PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN

PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN
TRAC

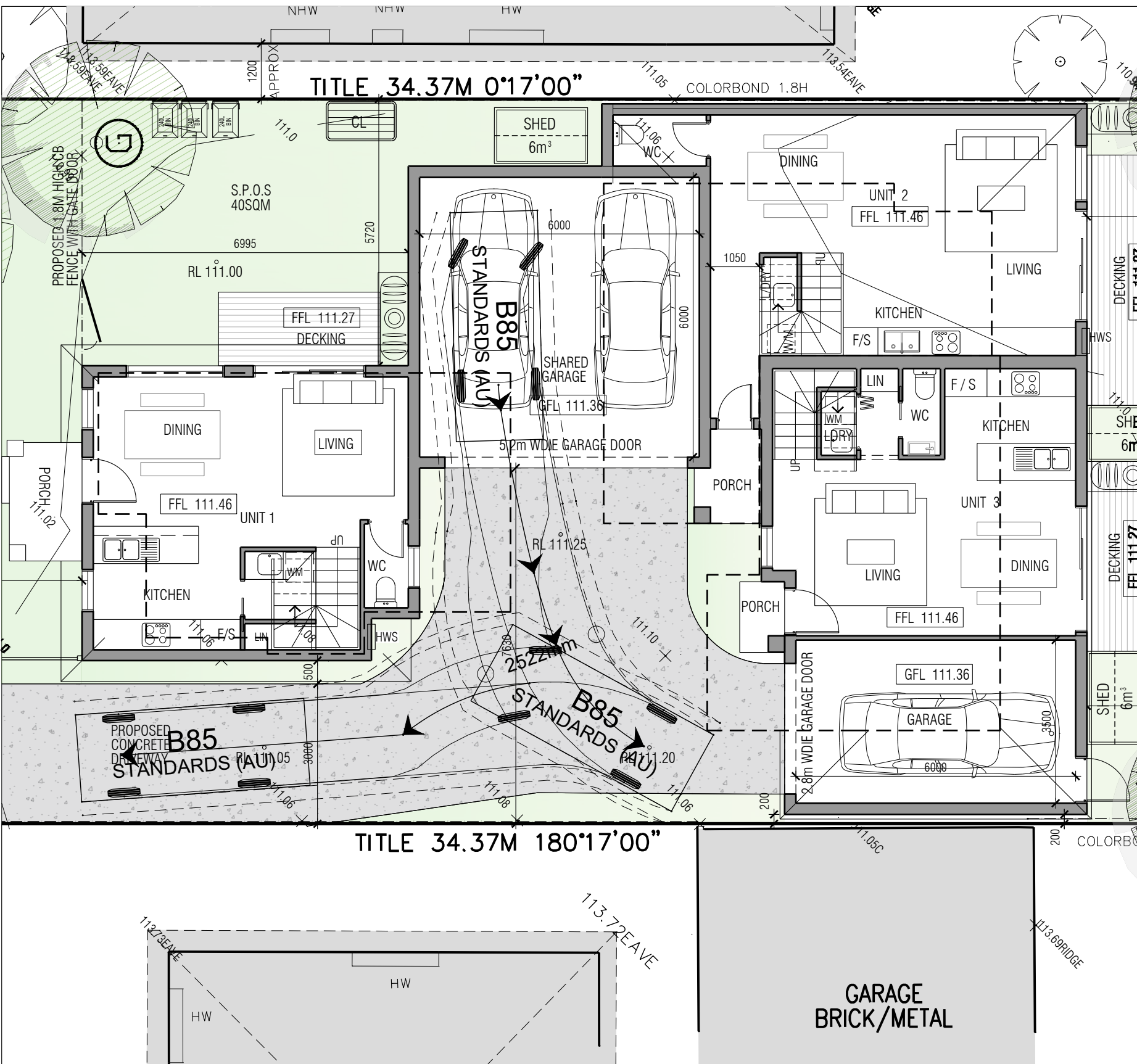
UNIT DEVELOPMENT IP02

11 RUTH STREET, LALOR REV-



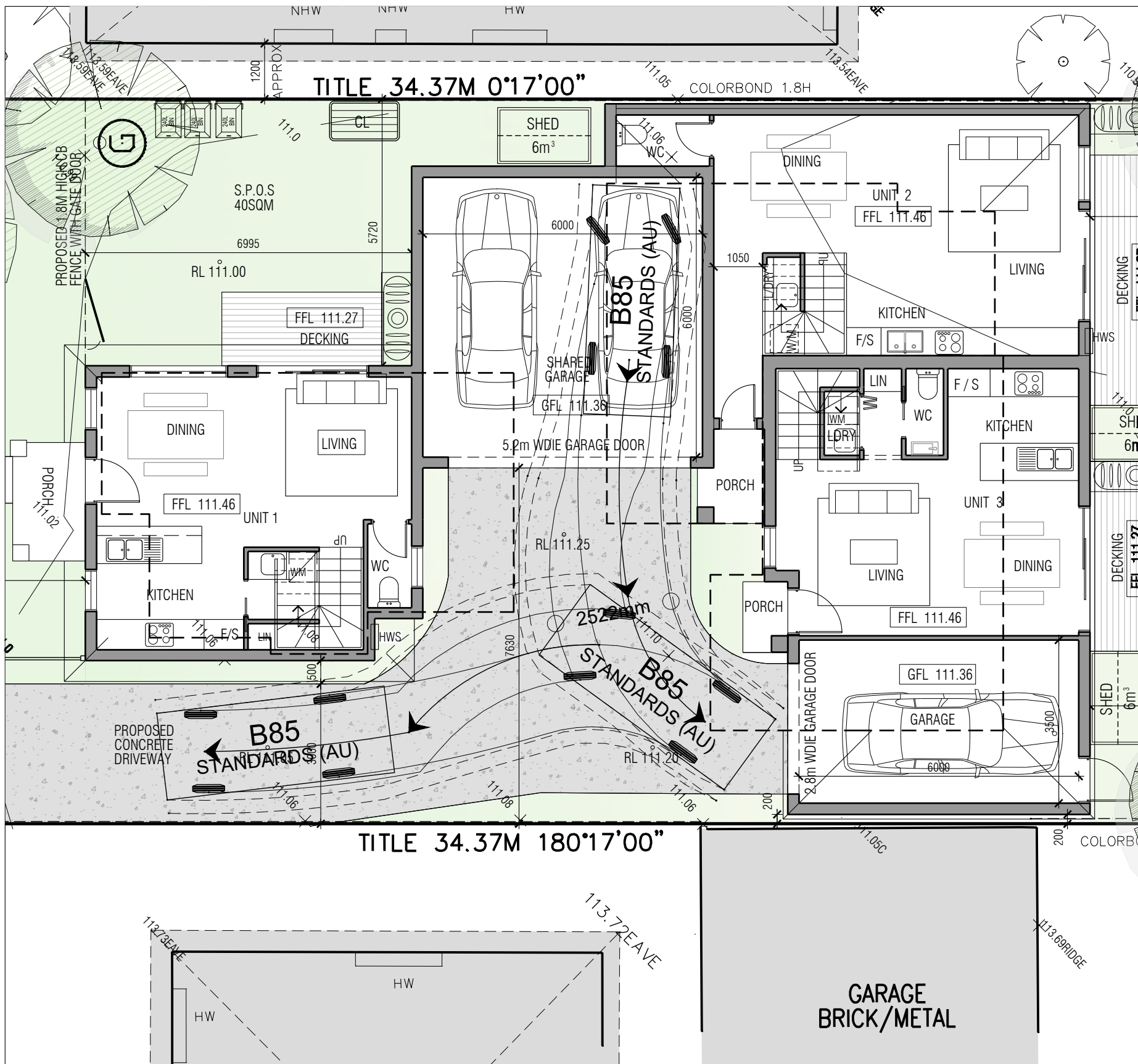


U1 CAR ENTRY
SCALE 1 : 100



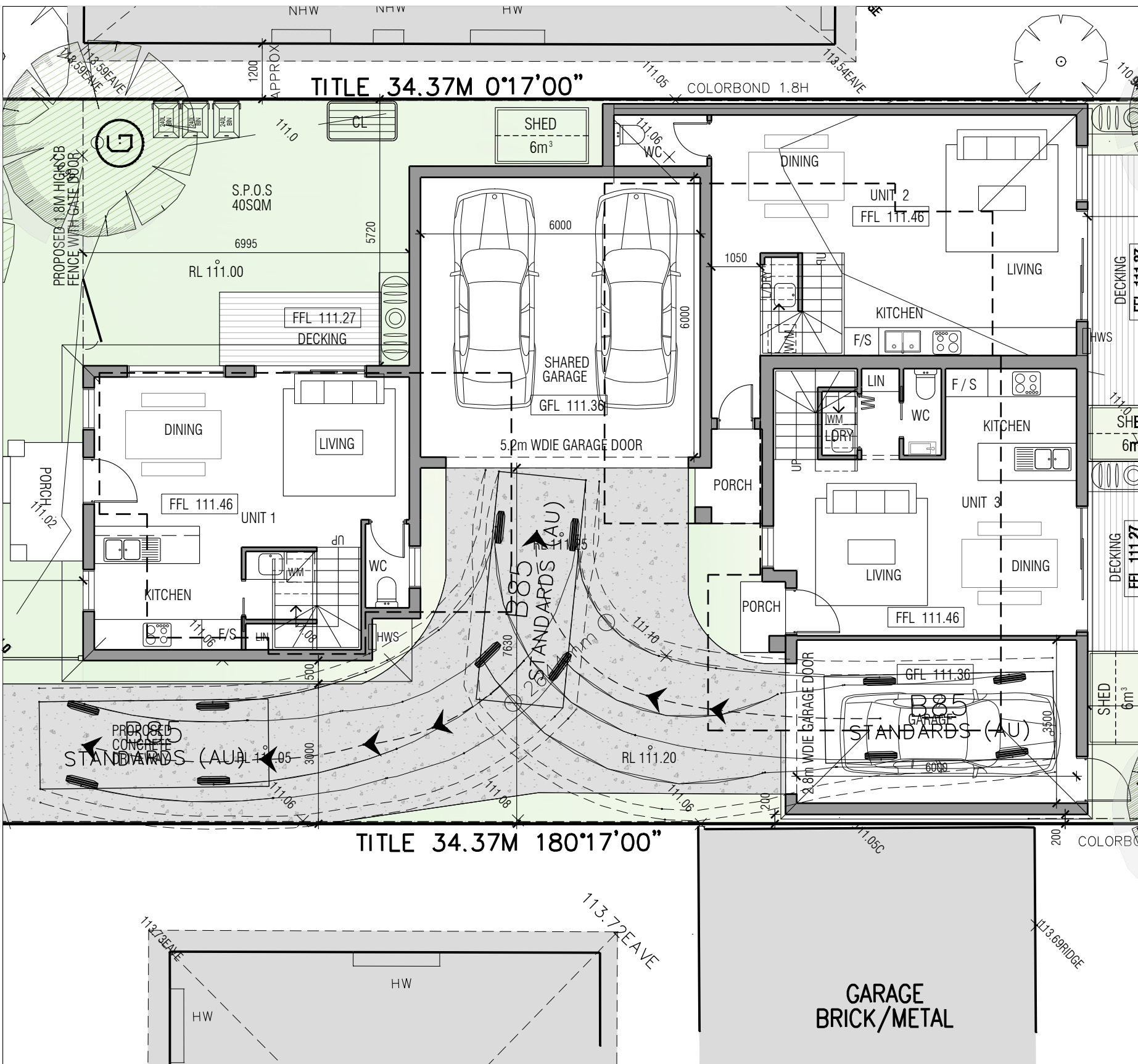
U1 CAR EXIT
SCALE 1 : 100

U2 CAR ENTRY
SCALE 1 : 100

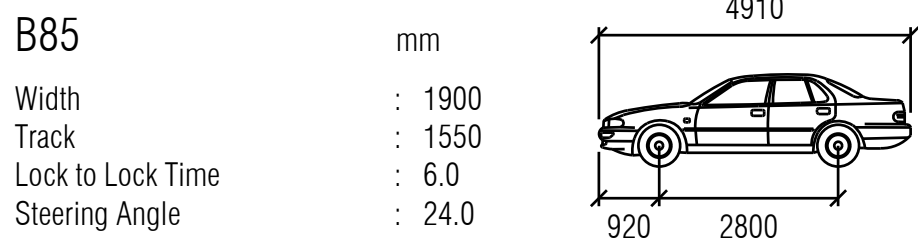


U2 CAR EXIT
SCALE 1 : 100

U3 CAR ENTRY
SCALE 1:100



U3 CAR EXIT
SCALE 1 : 100



- 300mm CLEARANCE
- VEHICLE OVERHANG
- WHEEL PATH



Revisions
Rev-A ISSUE FOR TP SUBMISSION

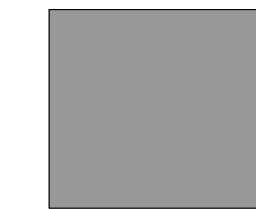
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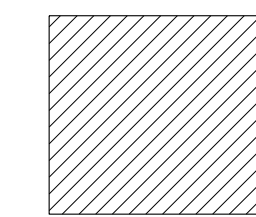
DATE	SCALE	DRAWN BY	PROJECT NO.
	1:100 @ A1		
SWEPT PATH DIAGRAMS			
UNIT DEVELOPMENT 11 RUTH STREET LALOR			
SP REV.			



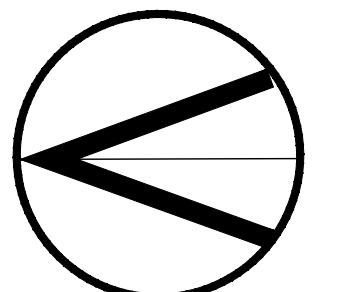
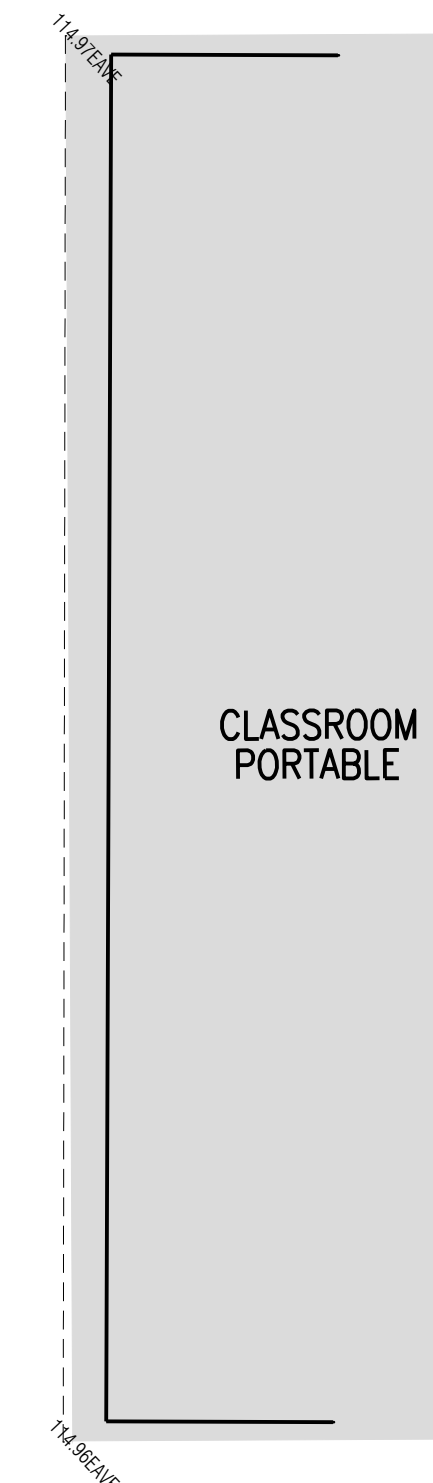
LEGEND



PROPOSED SHADOWS



EXISTING SHADOWS



NORTH

SHADOW DIAGRAM 9AM

22nd OF SEPTEMBER

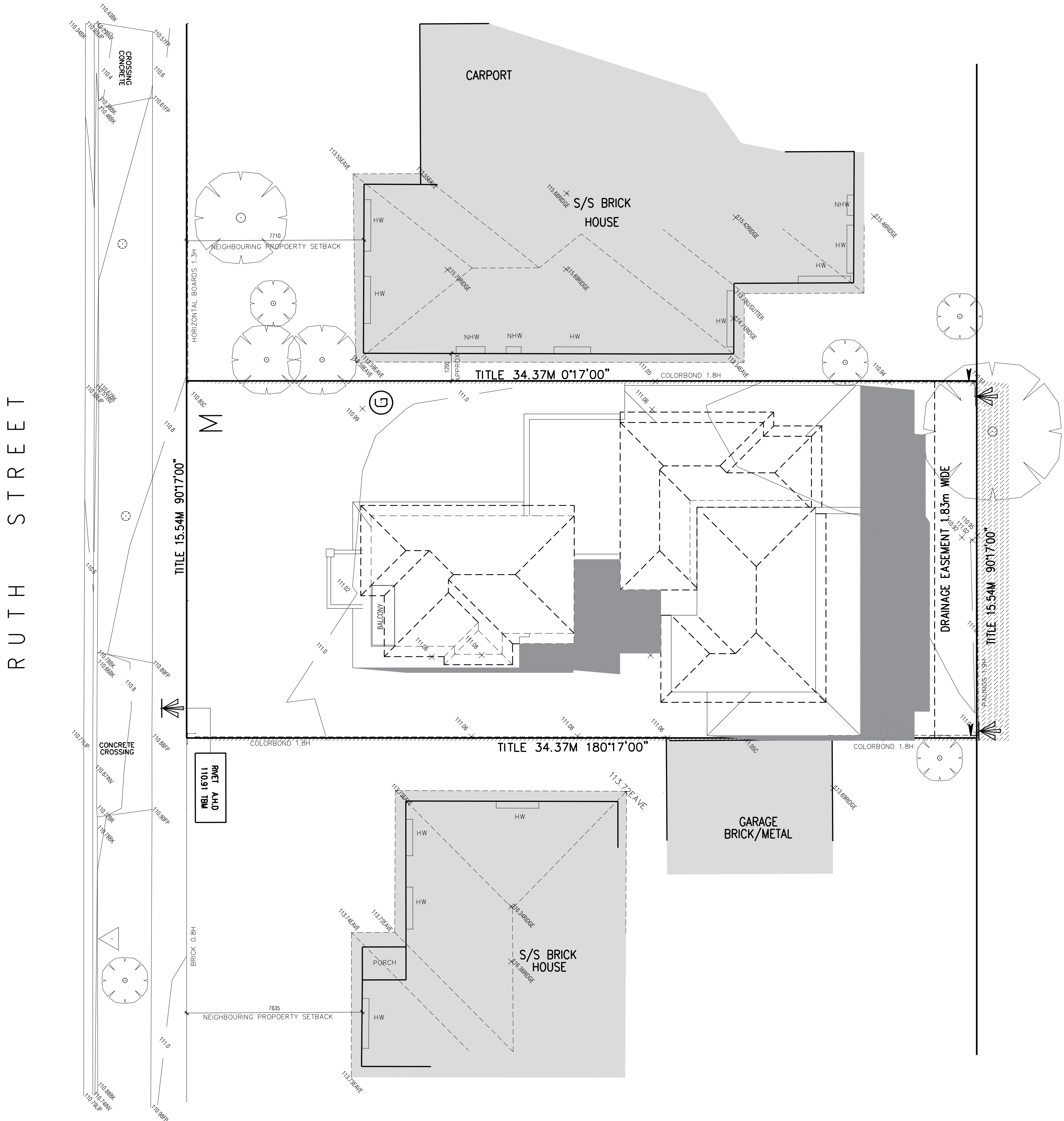
Revisions Rev A ISSUE FOR TP SUBMISSION	PLANNING & DESIGN P/L 31 Enfield Ave Preston 3072 T: 93018 1529 E: admin@planninganddesign.com.au	P L A N N I N G & DESIGN	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">DATE</th> <th style="width: 25%;">SCALE</th> <th style="width: 25%;">DRAWN BY</th> <th style="width: 25%;">PROJECT No.</th> </tr> <tr> <td>MON YEAR</td> <td>1:100 @ A1</td> <td>...</td> <td>...</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">9am SHADOW DIAGRAMS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">UNIT DEVELOPMENT</p> <p style="text-align: center;">11 RUTH STREET LALOR</p>	DATE	SCALE	DRAWN BY	PROJECT No.	MON YEAR	1:100 @ A1
DATE	SCALE	DRAWN BY	PROJECT No.								
MON YEAR	1:100 @ A1								

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SD01

REV

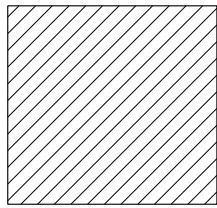


BEARINGS ARE ON TITLE DATUM LEVELS
SHOWN ARE TO AHD VIDE CONNECTION
TO KEELBUNDORA PM 846

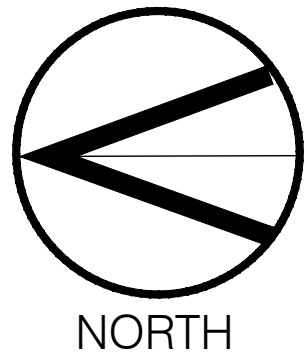
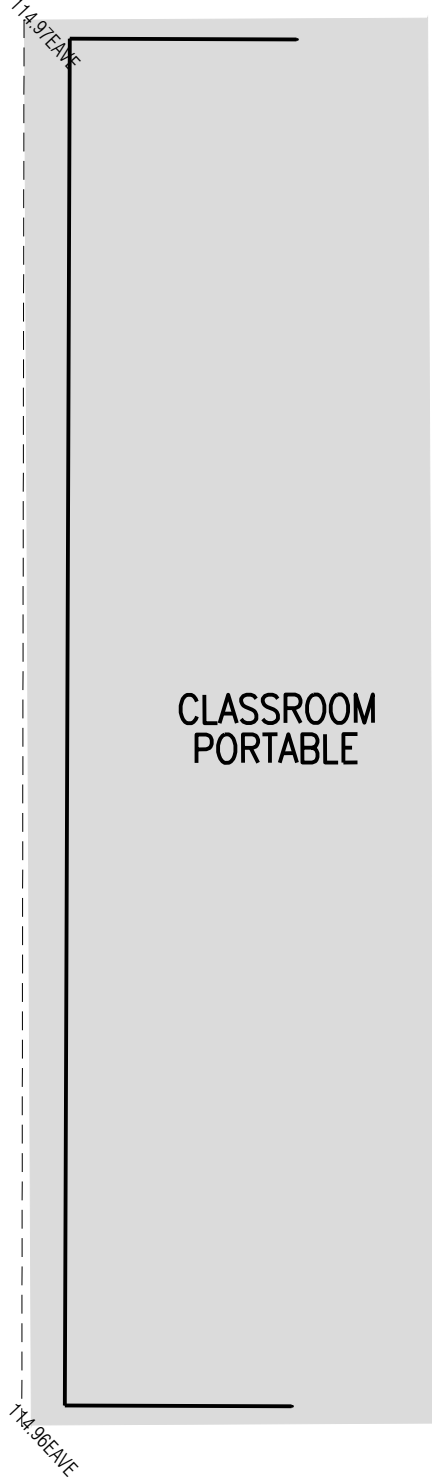
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PROPOSED SHADOWS



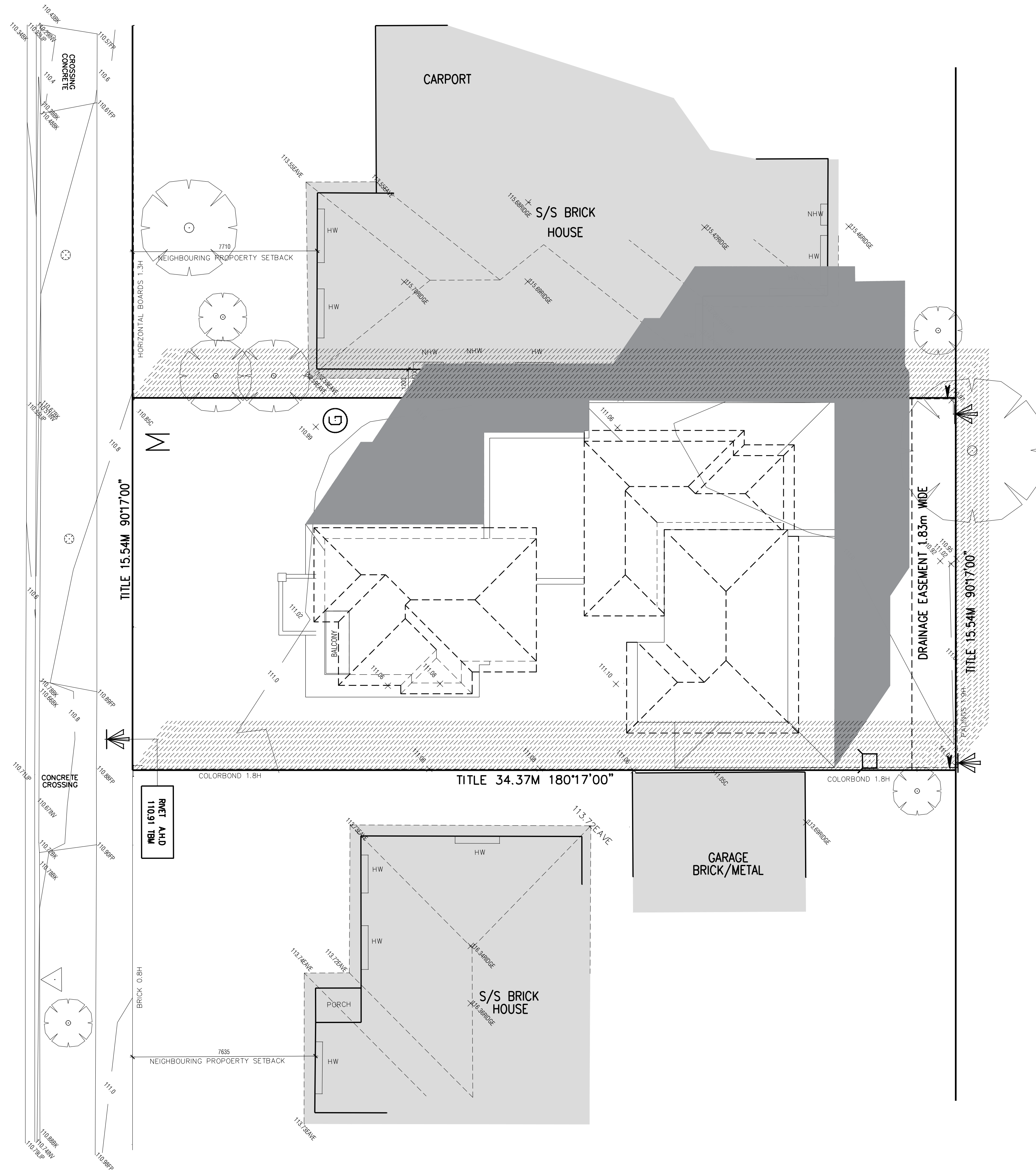
EXISTING SHADOWS



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Revisions Rev-A: ISSUE FOR TP SUBMISSION	PLANNING & DESIGN PT. 31 Enfield Av Preston 3072 T.9018 1529 E: admin@planninganddesign.com.au	P L A N N I N G & DESIGN	DATE	SCALE	DRAWN BY	PROJECT NO.	
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Rev-A: ISSUE FOR TP SUBMISSION	DATE	SCALE	DRAWN BY	PROJECT No.
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	3 PM SHADOW DIAGRAMS			
	UNIT DEVELOPMENT			SD03
	11 RUTH STREET, LAJOR			REV_

5.2.3 Planning Scheme Amendment C256 Interim Heritage Overlay on 90 and 100 Bindts Road, Wollert – Exhibition outcomes and next steps

Responsible Officer Director Planning & Development

Officer Strategic Planner

Attachments

1. C245wsea Exhibited Map [5.2.3.1 - 1 page]
2. C245wsea Post Exhibition Map [5.2.3.2 - 1 page]

Proposal

This report recommends that Council write to the Minister for Planning to request a 12 month extension of Amendment C256 Interim Heritage Overlay for 90 Bindts Road, Wollert, which expires on 29 January 2022. It also informs Council of the outcome of the statutory exhibition of Amendment C245 Heritage Overlay for 90 and 100 Bindts Road and the next steps in the process.

Amendment C256 interim heritage controls are in place while the permanent heritage controls proposed by Amendment C245 are progressed. Amendment C245 seeks to apply the Heritage Overlay (HO204) to land at 90 Bindts Road, Wollert, which is identified as having heritage value, and to correct an identification error for an existing Heritage Overlay that applies at 100 Bindts Road, Wollert (HO161). Two submissions were received, both of which challenged the extent of the curtilage of the Heritage Overlay. One submission has been resolved; however, Council officers are continuing to negotiate with the remaining submitter to try to resolve the submission to Amendment C245.

In the meantime, it is important to ensure that the heritage significance of the site is protected. Officers are recommending that Council request an extension to Amendment C256 interim heritage controls before they expire in January 2022.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Write to the Minister for Planning to request an extension to Amendment C256wsea Interim Heritage Overlay for 90 Bindts Road, Wollert which expires on 29 January 2022;**
2. **Authorise Council officers to continue to negotiate with the submitter to resolve the remaining submission to Amendment C245;**
3. **Advise the submitters of 1. and 2. above.**

Brief Overview

Amendment C245 seeks to apply the Heritage Overlay (HO) on a permanent basis to a place of local heritage significance (Ewert's Farm) at 90 Bindts Road, Wollert, and to correct an identification error of a heritage place to which the HO already applies at 100 Bindts Road (Bindts Farm).

Council resolved on 5 May 2020 to seek Authorisation of Amendment C245, which was granted by the Minister for Planning on 18 December 2020.

On 16 July 2020, the Minister for Planning also approved interim heritage controls to 90 Bindts Road, Wollert, which was at risk of demolition, via Amendment C243. The interim controls were applied for a period of 12 months to provide protection while the permanent controls are being progressed via Amendment C245. These interim controls have since been extended for an additional 12 months via Amendment C256, which now expire in January 2022.

Amendment C245 was exhibited between 21 January 2021 and 5 March 2021. Two submissions were received; one from the Department of Transport (DoT) and one from Urbis on behalf of the landowner of 90 and 100 Bindts Road, Wollert. Both submissions challenged the extent of the curtilage of the proposed HO. The DoT submission has been resolved, however, Council officers are continuing to negotiate on the remaining landowner submission.

To ensure the heritage significance of the site is protected, it is recommended that:

- A request be made to the Minister for Planning to extend Amendment C256 Interim HO for 90 Bindts Road, Wollert which expires on 29 January 2022; and
- Council officers are authorised to continue negotiating with the submitter to resolve the submission to Amendment C245, as appropriate.

Key Information

Background

- Amendment C245 proposes to apply the HO to the Ewert Farm Complex at 90 Bindts Road, Wollert, which has been identified as having local heritage significance. It also seeks to correct an identification error of a heritage place to which the HO (HO161) already applies at 100 Bindts Road (Bindts Farm).
- These sites are the subject of a current planning permit application for a multi lot subdivision (116 lots including 1 super lot) at 40-100 Bindts Road, Wollert, in the Quarry Hills Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) area. The application (Application no. 718008) is under consideration by Council.
- Council officers sought interim heritage controls for 90 Bindts Road via Amendment C243 after two requests were received to demolish the dwelling and outbuildings on the site.

- Amendment C243 Interim HO was approved by the Minister for Planning for 12 months on 16 July 2020. C256 extended these interim controls for a further 12 months, until 29 January 2022. The interim controls provide protection to the site while the permanent HO controls are being progressed by Amendment C245.
- Amendment C245 for the permanent HO controls obtained Authorisation from the Minister for Planning on 18 December 2020. The Amendment was subsequently placed on statutory exhibition for approximately six weeks from 21 January 2021 to 5 March 2021. Two submissions were received which are discussed further in this report.

Site Context

The properties at 90 and 100 Bindts Road are adjacent lots located on the eastern side of Bindts Road, Wollert, within the Quarry Hills Precinct Structure Plan (PSP).

Planning Context

Under the Planning and Environment Act 1987, Council as the Planning Authority must give effect to the objectives of planning in Victoria, including: “to conserve and enhance those buildings, areas or other places which are of...historical or otherwise special cultural value” (section 4(b)).

Council must also undertake local heritage studies to identify places of interest and appropriately apply the HO to places identified as having local (or higher) significance. The application of the HO is the only statutory mechanism for conserving locally significant heritage places.

Whittlesea Planning Scheme:

- Clause 15 (Built Environment and Heritage) identifies the Local Planning Policy objective to recognise the role of heritage in “delivering liveable and sustainable cities, towns and neighbourhoods.”
- Clause 15.03-15 (Heritage conservation) compels Local Governments to “Identify, assess and document places of natural and cultural heritage as a basis for their inclusion in the planning scheme.”
- Clause 22.04-2 (Heritage Conservation Policy) identifies the Local Planning Policy objective is “To identify, protect and maintain the integrity and character of Whittlesea’s heritage places.”
- The Quarry Hills PSP identifies ‘potential European heritage sites’ at 90 and 100 Bindts Road and includes heritage requirements and guidelines to minimise impacts of new development on heritage places including dry stone walls.

Amendment

Amendment C256 Interim HO for 90 Bindts Road, Wollert expires on 29 January 2022. It provides interim protection to the site while the permanent HO controls proposed by Amendment C245 are progressed.

Amendment C245 seeks to apply a permanent HO under Clause 43.01 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme to part of 90 Bindts Road, Wollert known as Ewert's Farm, as shown in **Attachment 1**. It also seeks to amend the Schedule to Clause 43.01 for existing HO161 at 100 Bindts Road, and include an updated Statement of Significance to correct an error in identification. HO161 at 100 Bindts Road, which was previously thought to be Ewert's Farm is in error and is now to be re-titled as Bindts Farm.

Application of the HO to 90 Bindts Road will provide permanent heritage protection over the site and, together with the correction to HO161 at 100 Bindts Road, will ensure that any proposals for these sites do not adversely or irreversibly alter a place's heritage value. Standard planning permit requirements are set out in Clause 43.01 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme for all places to which the HO applies. This generally requires a permit to subdivide, demolish, construct a building or construct or carry out works within the HO.

The extent of the area affected by the HO is shown on the Planning Scheme map for each place. This is commonly referred to as the 'curtilage'. A Statement of Significance is provided for each of the sites, which acts as a reference for each heritage place which identifies the site's contributing features. It is used to inform the Amendment process as well as to guide the assessment of future applications against the heritage criteria identified for the site.

Community Consultation and Engagement

Amendment C245 was placed on exhibition for approximately six weeks from 21 January – 5 March 2021.

Letters were sent to the affected property owners and occupiers, the Minister for Planning, and all prescribed Ministers. The letters contained the Amendment notice, and information on where they could download the specific heritage citation reports. A notice was also placed in the Government Gazette, the Age Newspaper and on the City of Whittlesea website, and Amendment documentation was made available for viewing at the Council Office.

Two submissions were received in response to the exhibition process, both were in relation to the proposed HO204 on 90 Bindts Road:

- **Submission 1** from the Department of Transport (DoT), opposed the HO being applied to the section of 90 Bindts Road which is affected by a Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO).
- **Submission 2** on behalf of the landowner of 90 and 100 Bindts Road Wollert, opposed the extent of the proposed HO on 90 Bindts Road.

As is common practice in Amendment processes, Council officers contacted all submitters with a view to discussing the detail of submissions and to ascertain whether there was any potential to resolve the issues raised.

The submissions are discussed in more detail later in the report.

Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

Liveable neighbourhoods

Our City is well-planned and beautiful, and our neighbourhoods and town centres are convenient and vibrant places to live, work and play.

Amendments C256 and C245 meet the objectives set out in Whittlesea 2040 and the Council Plan. Specifically, the Amendment will achieve the above goal and key direction through the recognition, appreciation and protection of places identified as local heritage significance in the municipality.

Considerations

Response to Amendment C245 Submissions

Submission 1 from DoT opposed the HO being applied to the section of 90 Bindts Road which is affected by a Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) that has been set aside for the Outer Metropolitan Ring / E6 transport corridor which runs along the front of the site, parallel to Bindts Road. A narrow portion of the proposed HO extends into the PAO area to protect the dry stone wall (DSW) that runs along the southern boundary of the site.

Council sought specialist heritage advice regarding this submission. The heritage advice confirmed that the removal of the section of the HO affected by the PAO would be acceptable on the basis that this section of DSW is of less significance than those which are proximate to the farmhouse. The DSW is still afforded some protection by Clause 52.33 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme, which deals with the conservation of DSW in their own right. In the event that DoT seeks a planning permit to remove the DSW, this would trigger a requirement to consider relocating sections of DSW rather than simply demolishing them to make way for the road.

On this basis, officers recommend that the HO curtilage be amended to remove the section of the HO that is affected by the PAO. DoT have agreed to withdraw their submission based on the post exhibition Heritage Overlay curtilage outlined in **Attachment 2**.

Submission 2 was made on behalf of the landowner of 90 and 100 Bindts Road, Wollert. While acknowledging the heritage significance of the site, they opposed the extent of the proposed HO on 90 Bindts Road. The matters raised in the submission can be summarised as follows:

- The proposed HO204 should be limited to the general area of the farmhouse and outbuildings.
- The HO does not take into consideration the anticipated development envisaged by the Quarry Hills PSP.
- The extent of the proposed HO creates additional complexity in developing the site. The HO affects land reserved by a PAO for the future transport corridor.

- The retention of the DSW along the southern boundary would interfere with planned vehicle access which would impact adjoining lots.
- The inclusion of the Statements of Significance as Incorporated Documents is contrary to Planning Practice Note 13, Incorporated and Background Documents.

Further specialist heritage advice was also sought to inform consideration of the matters raised in this submission. This advice has recommended that no reduction in the HO204 extent should be applied in response to this submission, notwithstanding the proposed removal of the section of the HO affected by the PAO, and agreed in response to Submission 1. The heritage specialist's justification for retaining the curtilage is outlined as follows:

- The proposed HO curtilage is based on the significance of the heritage features outlined in the Statement of Significance. It is important to provide a suitable curtilage around the heritage buildings and features to ensure an appropriate setting for them, and to consider the potential impacts of new development so as to ensure their heritage significance is not compromised by future development that may surround it. This will ensure the ultimate development of the site integrates with, and respects, the identified heritage features.
- The proposed HO curtilage has taken into consideration the anticipated development envisaged by the Quarry Hills PSP. The PSP identifies 90 Bindts Road as a potential heritage place and includes a requirement for the subdivision to consider the heritage elements and ensure heritage becomes a prominent feature of the urban structure. It should be noted that the original curtilage sought for the site through the interim HO (Amendment C243) originally covered the entire area to the west of Darebin Creek, whereas the curtilage proposed for permanent protection through Amendment C245 is significantly reduced, as shown in **Attachment 1** to take into consideration the anticipated development envisaged for the site. The curtilage proposed under C245 strikes an appropriate balance. Note: In approving C243 interim HO, the Minister for Planning used the amended curtilage proposed under C245 permanent controls.
- The presence of the HO will not prohibit development; but rather adds a statutory trigger to ensure the significance of heritage features on the site are taken into consideration as part of the planning assessment process. Notwithstanding, additional complexity is not a valid reason against the application or extent of the HO, as Council has an obligation to protect heritage in the municipality.
- The PAO matter has been resolved. Removal of the section of the HO affected by the PAO is acceptable on the basis that this section of DSW is of less significance than the DSW located closest to the farmhouse. Further, DSW are still afforded some protection under Clause 52.33 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.
- The HO over the remaining section of the DSW on the southern boundary of the site is appropriate and does not preclude incursions into the DSW for vehicular access envisaged by the PSP. In such circumstances, it would trigger a requirement to consider relocating sections of DSW rather than simply demolishing them.

- The requirement to include the Statements of Significance as incorporated documents in the Planning Scheme was introduced on 31 July 2018 via Amendment VC148 and is set out in Planning Practice Note 1, the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes and Clause 43.01-5 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme. This is now considered best practice.

On this basis, Council officers do not support any further reduction to HO204 other than that proposed in **Attachment 2**. Council officers have had ongoing discussions with Submitter 2, and while many of the points raised above are acknowledged, their primary concern is the extent to which the proposed HO204 will impact the current planning application, notwithstanding the interim HO is already in place. They have indicated that they are open to withdrawing their submission, should the heritage matters be generally resolved. However, with the application for 40 -100 Bindts Road, Wollert (Application no. 718008), under active consideration by Council and noting that revised plans were recently submitted to Council on 2 September 2021, it is appropriate to provide some additional time to allow these negotiations to advance. Council officers will continue to negotiate with this submitter to resolve their submission.

In the event this submission is unresolved, and in line with statutory process, Council would be required to request that the Minister for Planning appoint an Independent Planning Panel to consider and make recommendations on the unresolved submission.

It is noted that the submitter also requested that the extent of the HO be limited to the general area of the farmhouse and outbuildings, as proposed in their current planning application. Regardless of whether a permit is issued for the current application, it would be premature for Council to reduce the HO curtilage proposed by Amendment C245 to reflect the outcomes of the planning permit. It is not unusual for planning permits to lapse or change throughout their life. Therefore, it would not be appropriate to modify the proposed HO204 until the permit has been acted upon and the subdivision and subsequent development are complete.

On the basis of the above, Council officers recommend that the HO curtilage be amended only to remove the section of the HO that is affected by the PAO.

Expiry of Amendment C256 Interim HO

As noted above, the C256 interim heritage controls are currently in place while the permanent HO controls proposed by C245 are being progressed. However, the interim HO controls will expire on 29 January 2022.

Negotiations with the remaining submitter are ongoing, and officers are hopeful the submission can be resolved. Given additional time is required to resolve the submission, it is recommended that Council request an extension to Amendment C256 interim heritage controls.

Officers have discussed the matter of extending the interim controls with DELWP who have indicated in principle support, given officers have been actively engaging with the submitter

in the hope of resolving the submission to avoid a Planning Panel. Officers have also discussed the matter with Submitter 2.

Financial Implications

No implications

Link to Strategic Risk

Not linked to the risks within the Strategic Risk Register

Implementation Strategy**Communication**

The submitters will be notified of Council's resolution.

Critical Dates

In accordance with Ministerial Direction No. 15: The Planning Scheme Amendment Process, Council must make a decision within 60 business days of the closing date of submissions, being 1 June 2021. Council officers sought an exemption from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) to allow Council to continue to negotiate with the remaining submitter to avoid a potential Planning Panel. The request for an exemption was granted on 29 April 2021.

The Amendment C256 interim heritage controls will expire on 29 January 2022. An extension will ensure that the interim controls applied to the site do not expire, and the heritage place remains protected while the permanent controls under Amendment C245 are progressed.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Rule 47 of the Governance Rules 2021, officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

Conclusion

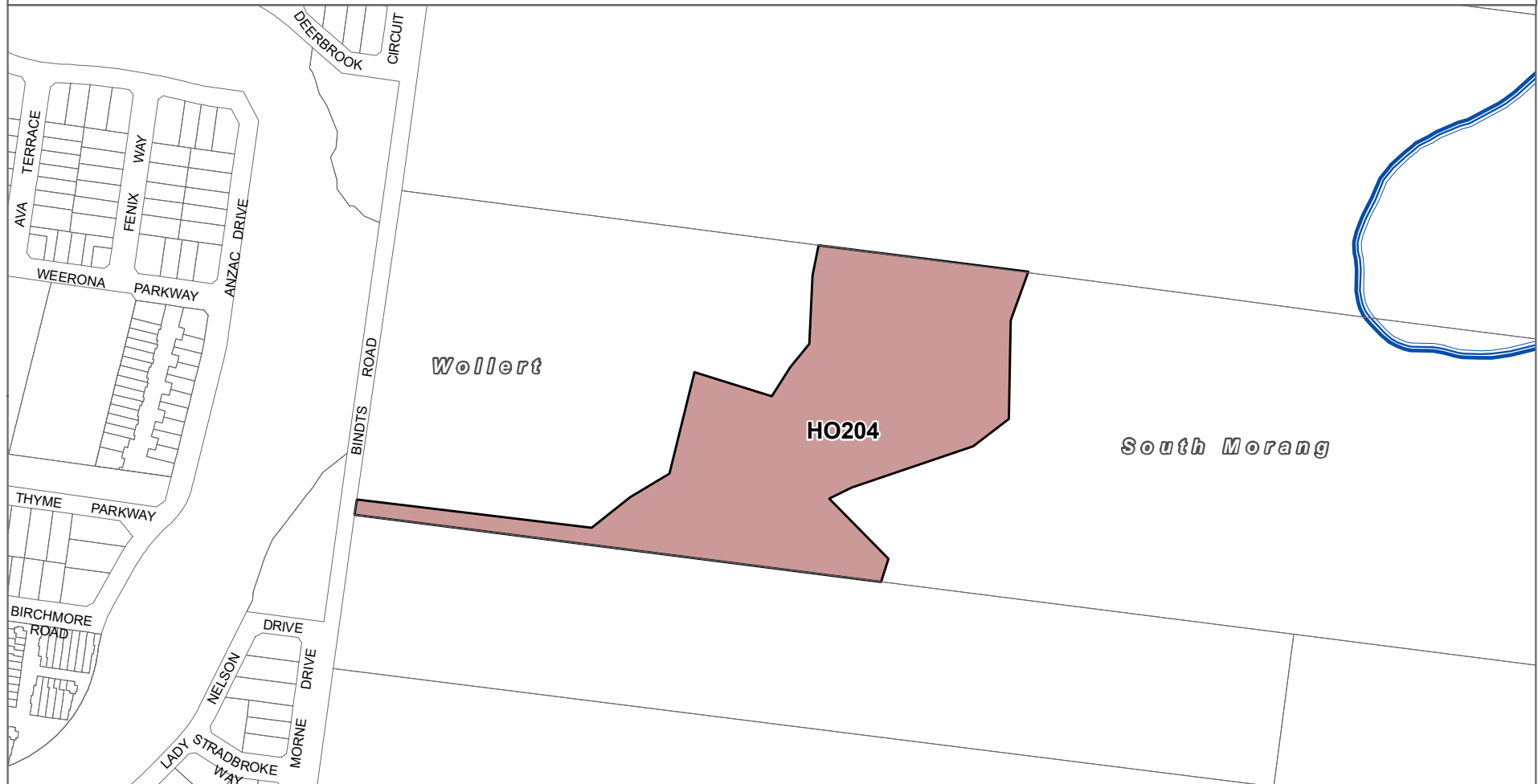
Amendment C256wsea Interim Heritage Overlay for 90 Bindts Road, Wollert expires on 29 January 2022. It provides interim protection to the site while permanent heritage controls are being progressed.

Amendment C245wsea seeks to apply the Heritage Overlay on a permanent basis to Ewert's Farm at 90 Bindts Road, Wollert, and to correct an identification error of a heritage place to which the Heritage Overlay already applies at 100 Bindts Road (Bindts Farm).

Two submissions were received to Amendment C245, both of which related to the extent of the curtilage of the Heritage Overlay. One submission has been resolved to remove the section of the Heritage Overlay that is affected by the Public Acquisition Overlay, as recommended in **Attachment 2** of this report. However, no further reduction is recommended to HO204 in relation to the other submission. Council officers are continuing to negotiate with the remaining submitter to resolve the submission.

It is recommended that Council request an extension of Amendment C256wsea interim heritage controls for 90 Bindts Road, Wollert, which expire on 29 January 2022. It is also recommended that Council officers are authorised to continue negotiating with the submitter to resolve the submission to Amendment C245wsea.

WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION AMENDMENT C245wsea

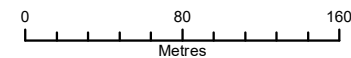


- LEGEND**
- HO - Heritage Overlay
 - Local Government Area
 - Urban Growth Boundary

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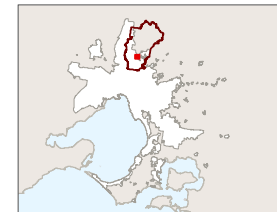
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Amendment Version: 2

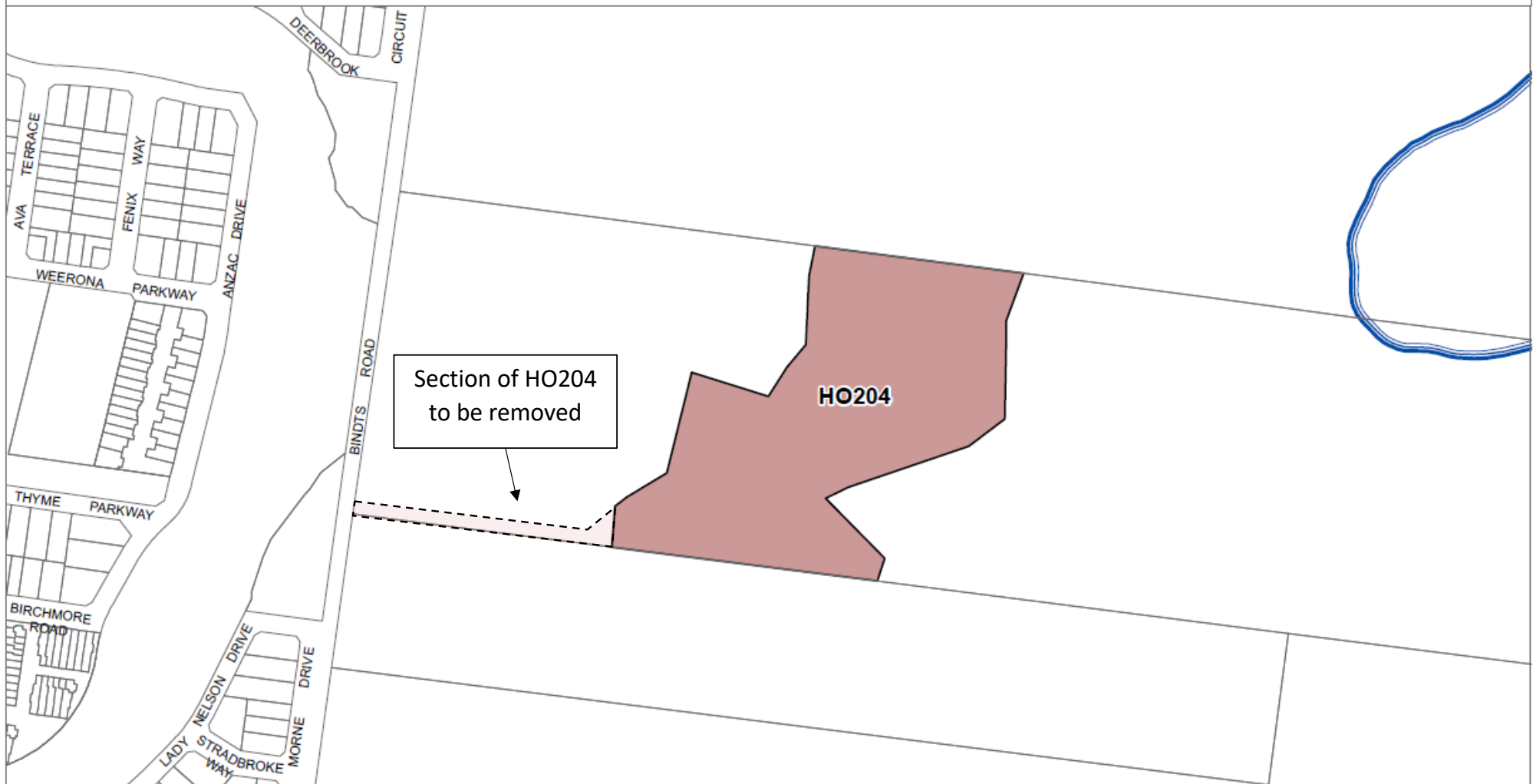


Environment,
Land, Water
and Planning

Part of Planning Scheme Map 17HO



WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION AMENDMENT C245wsea



LEGEND

- HO - Heritage Overlay
- Local Government Area
- Urban Growth Boundary
- Section of HO204 to be deleted

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Planning Group
Print Date: 11/10/2021
Amendment Version: 4

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Metres



Environment,
Land, Water
and Planning

Part of Planning Scheme Map 17HO



5.2.4 Granite Hills Major Community Park

Responsible Officer Director Infrastructure & Environment

Officer Senior Landscape Architect

Attachments

1. Granite Hills Concept [5.2.4.1 - 5 pages]
2. Granite Hills Options Analysis [5.2.4.2 - 3 pages]
3. Granite Hills- Participation and Engagement Findings Report [5.2.4.3 - 28 pages]

Proposal

Continue development of Granite Hills Major Community Park in accordance with the Project Business Case and feedback from the community consultation and engagement process.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Support the recommendations of the Granite Hills Major Community Consultation Findings Report**
2. **Support the recommendation of the business case for the Granite Hills Major Community Park**

Brief Overview

- Community consultation for the Granite Hills Major Community Park concept design was undertaken between August to September 2021. The feedback collated from the consultation will inform the final design of the major community park.
- A business case has been prepared for the Granite Hills Major Community Park for endorsement.

Key Information

Granite Hills Major Community Park is located within the Quarry Hills Regional Parkland in South Morang (bordering Mernda). Quarry Hills Regional Parkland is one of the defining landscape features of the municipality and contributes significantly to the character of the City's growth suburbs. The expansive hills are a striking visual feature within the landscape and are a common point of reference for the two emerging communities of South Morang and Mernda.

Quarry Hills Regional Parkland is rich in Aboriginal cultural heritage and accommodates a diverse range of ecological communities, remnant vegetation, wildlife habitats and geological attributes.

Over the last 14 years, the residential community to the north, south and east have grown around Quarry Hills Regional Parkland, which has better defined the park boundary. Quarry Hills Regional Parkland will eventually equate to 2.25% of the municipality's land area, with a total area of 1100 hectares. Currently 430 hectares of the Quarry Hills Regional Parkland is public open space.

In 2019, a landscape master plan for the Parkland was developed to guide future land planning of the site. The vision set out in the master plan includes:

- Improving public access and use of the parkland
- Provision of iconic regional-level park and playground facilities
- Increasing public use and perception of the parkland
- Protection and enhancement of existing park biodiversity and cultural heritage values.

Stage 1 of the master plan involves the development of the Granite Hills Major Community Park and a connecting trails network. The connecting trails network will be delivered as a separate project, with funding already secured from the State Government.

The Granite Hills Major Community Park will provide a new park and play space and act as the gateway to the broader Quarry Hills Regional Parkland. The concept design presented to the community included the following:

- Play equipment for varying ages and abilities
- Nature play
- Water play (non-reticulated system)
- 50 metre flying fox
- Giant slides
- Lawn maze
- Open air barbecue and pavilion for social gathering
- Barbecue and picnic facilities
- Walking tracks
- Boardwalk and wetlands
- Landscaping
- Nature Amphitheatre
- Public Toilets and Changing Places facility
- Bus drop-off and car parking for 100 vehicles
- Interpretive signage
- Connecting trails network

To view the concept plan, refer to Attachment 1.

Business Case

The problem

The community do not recognise Quarry Hills Regional Parklands as a publicly accessible open space. The future uses are constrained due to poor vehicular and pedestrian access, limited play and recreation opportunities and a lack of utility services for amenities.

Opportunity

The Granite Hills Major Community Park will provide passive recreation opportunities for the community and provide a gateway to the broader Quarry Hills Regional parklands.

Summary of Options

	Key Attractor	Access Road & Services	Estimate
Option 1A Construct Granite Hills major Community Park with playground, car park, public toilets, etc.	Giant Slides	Standard access road and utility services <u>for Granite Hills major Community Park only</u>	Park - \$6,816,218
Option 1B Construct Granite Hills Major Community Park with playground, public toilets, etc.	Giant Slides	Enhanced access road and utility services <u>for future use and access into the parklands</u>	Park - \$6,816,218 Enhanced Road & Services - \$2,625,985
Option 2A Construct Granite Hills major Community Park with playground, car park, public toilets, etc.	Sculpture garden (max 3 sculptures)	Standard access road and utility services <u>for Granite Hills major Community Park only</u>	Park - \$7,939,703
Option 2B Construct Granite Hills Major Community Park with playground, car park, public toilets, etc.	Sculpture garden (max 3 sculptures)	Enhanced access road and utility services <u>for future use and access into the parklands</u>	Park - \$7,939,703 Enhanced Road & Services - \$2,000,003

To view cost analysis - Refer to attachment 2

Option 2B is the recommended option and includes:

- The preferred scope for the Granite Hills Major Community Park, playground, enhanced car park and public toilet;
- The giant slide as a feature attractor; and
- Enhanced access road and utility services to support future uses of the parklands and improved access (to be funded separately).

Key attractor

For the estimated cost of \$600,000, the sculpture garden would only be able to deliver 3 sculptures. The remainder of the sculpture garden would be required to be delivered over

time, meaning it would not be an immediate drawcard. The giant slide which has an estimated costs of \$300,000 would have immediate impact. Unlike the giant slide, the sculpture garden is also not required to be constructed at the Major Community Park, having the ability to be planned as future works in another section of Quarry Hills Regional Parklands. For these reasons, it is recommended to proceed with the giant slide as the key attractor.

Access road, car park and utility services

The proposed car park at the Granite Hills Major Community Park is recommended to be enhanced from a spray seal surface to an asphalt surface. This will reduce wear from turning vehicles, support greater vehicle numbers and provide a more resilient and long-lasting surface. The enhanced access road will allow for the widening and upgrading of the access road for heavy vehicle user (i.e., buses, emergency vehicles, maintenance trucks, etc). Designing and constructing major utility services beneath or adjacent to the enhanced road will also accommodate and promote future Quarry Hills Regional Parkland uses, including the proposed Aboriginal Gathering Place.

Recommendation

Developing Granite Hills as a Major Community Park within the Quarry Hills Regional Parklands will provide regional level facilities that encourage informal and unstructured recreation activities and use of open space in a high-quality landscape setting. The Park will be the gateway to Quarry Hills Regional Parkland and build upon the distinctive geology, topography, historical and biodiversity value of the area, encouraging both children and adults to be more active, social, and to spend time outdoors. The giant slide will act as the main visitor attractor to draw visitors to the site and the access road and utility services infrastructure will enable the park to continue to expand for future uses, including the proposed Aboriginal Gathering Place.

Community Consultation and Engagement

The purpose of the community engagement was to ensure the design of the park is responsive and reflective of the ancient and modern cultural identity of the site; and confirm the type of play style and facilities the community would prefer in the final design. The community engagement process helped Council identify and build a picture of the unique cultural identity of the site including the themes, stories, cultural practice, and individual characteristics associated with it. It also helped Council learn about the community's existing relationship with the space and understand the type of play activities that are appropriate in the park. A range of methods were undertaken to engage with and gain feedback from the community. Due to the COVID 19 restrictions from July 2021, in-person or onsite pop-up sessions were not able to be held. The consultation process therefore focused on the following methods for receiving feedback:

- Online survey
- Q&A tool
- Feedback via phone
- Feedback via email

A broad age range participated in the consultation process including children, young people, and adults. There was a total of 8,644 visits to the online engagement page and a total of 254 formal responses.

The consultation was broadly promoted through letter box drops, site signage, social media updates, publications in local newspapers and information distributed to community groups and local schools. Participants were invited to provide feedback through Council's online engagement page - Hive, direct email and via phone.

The below table summarises the participation rates:

Participation	
Number of visitors to the HIVE page	8,644
Number of online surveys completed	186
Number of questions asked through the Q&A tool	56
Number of people who engaged through social media	10,334
Number of people who provided feedback through direct phone call	4
Number of people who provided feedback through direct email	8

Summary of Findings:

- People currently visit the site to walk, run and hike. They enjoy accessing Quarry Hills because of the habitat, natural environment, and scenic lookouts.
- It is important for users to continue to have walking paths, but to have facilities such as toilets and play equipment which broaden the use and allow a longer stay in the Parklands.
- 69% of participants are happy with the design with their favourite elements including:
 - Toilets
 - Flying fox
 - Hill to hill trail
 - Nature play area
 - Water play
 - Slide mountain
- There is strong support for the play equipment shown in the concept design.
- 97% of participants believe that the implementation of Granite Hills Park will attract people to visit the area.
- Once Constructed, 95% of participants will use the proposed connecting trails.

- Many community members are concerned for the protection of the flora and fauna of the site.
- Many local community members are concerned about the impact of traffic on the local road network.
- Majority of participants believe the design should focus on Indigenous values and use of natural materials.

For further information- refer attachment 3.

Evaluation of Key Themes:

Play equipment

The community was incredibly supportive of the proposed play equipment and emphasised the need to encourage nature play and to utilise natural and recycled materials. The play elements requested by the community currently not shown in the design will be considered as part of the final design.

There was strong sentiment from the community to not use metal in the construction of the slides. Different material options can be investigated; however, metal is the most common material used in giant slides due to its durability and structural capacity for longer slide lengths.

Supporting facilities

Many participants emphasised the need for additional shelters, bins, fenced play areas, etc. This can be further considered in the detailed design phase of the project.

Education of Cultural Heritage Values

The community highlighted the need to design with cultural heritage values in numerous ways (e.g., through language, art, interpretive signage, etc). Council can continue to work with Cultural heritage advisors and signage consultants for the integration of Cultural heritage values into the final design of Granite Hills.

Cultural heritage values will also need to be further considered in the Quarry Hills connecting trails projects and Future Direction Plans.

Connecting trails

There was strong support for the connecting trails with users stating that they would use all trail networks. Participants would like rest stops and viewing points, along with the provision of bins to be further considered.

Traffic management

Many local and neighbouring residents voiced their concerns on the impact of traffic on the surrounding residential catchment including increased traffic to Hunters Road, Cravens Road, Waterview Drive, etc. They also raised concerns on the existing and proposed carparks in the landscape master plan (Topaz Grove, Atrium Reserve and Gravelier Way).

While further traffic management measures in these carparks can be considered in the detailed design of the Granite Hills Major Community Park, an additional traffic impact assessment will be required to identify broader implications in the surrounding road network and measures to manage these impacts.

Enhancement and protection to flora and fauna

Respondents also highlighted their concern for the flora and fauna, requesting further information for Council's plans to protect habitat. While short-term actions can be undertaken as part of the implementation of Granite Hills Park, further consideration of protection of flora and fauna will need to be assessed as part of the Quarry Hills Future Direction Plan.

Management of anti-social behaviour

Many users were concerned about the management and regulation to dog on leash requirements and the illegal access of trail bikes. Participant were also concerned about anti-social behaviour which currently occurs in the Gravlier Way car park and the risk of it occurring in the future car park facilities. Measures such as lighting, signage and boom gates will be used to discourage anti-social behaviour in these areas, however further measures may be required throughout the Quarry Hills Parklands. This will be further considered as part of the Parkland's operational plan in the Quarry Hills Future Direction Plan.

Active recreation facilities

Many participants requested more active recreation elements to be included in Granite Hills Major Community Park. In the master planning for new park, the inclusion of active recreation facilities was considered, however due to the unique character of the Quarry Hills Regional Parkland and its natural features, it was considered that active recreation facilities will be better placed in nearby active recreation reserves where they can be supported by other associated infrastructure. The focus of the Quarry Hills Regional Parkland is centered on facilities that encourage engagement with nature and passive recreation activities, such as hiking, walking, jogging, etc.

Green Links

Participants highlighted the need to connect Quarry Hills with surrounding areas and open spaces. As this is outside of the scope of Granite Hills Park and the implementation of the proposed connecting trails, this will be required to be reviewed as part of the Quarry Hills Future Direction Plan.

Recommendations

Community Consultation

A series of recommendations have been developed from the consultation findings. These will be considered in the detailed design phase of the project and in the Quarry Hills Future Directions Plan. See below table for a summary.

Item	Recommendation	Priority
Play equipment	Develop final playground design for Granite Hills with priority of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slides/ giant slides • Flying fox • Water play • Climbing elements (climbing frames, ropes courses/ climbing walls) • Swings • Trampolines • Monkey bars Ensure that the play equipment caters to all ages, is accessible and has an emphasis on nature play with the use of natural and recycled materials.	Short term - 3-6 months
	Investigate the incorporation of skate-able/ rideable elements.	Short term - 3-6 months
	Investigate other materials for the giant slides as part of the detailed design.	Short term - 3-6 months
Supporting facilities	Incorporate more shelters and bins into the final design of Granite Hills Major Community Park.	Short term - 3-6 months
Education of cultural Heritage Values	To share the knowledge of the Aboriginal cultural and history at Granite Hills Major Community Park, incorporate the following items into the final design: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using Aboriginal names in the local Aboriginal (Woi Wurrung) language • Interpretive signage with information about local Aboriginal history and culture specific to the area • Interactive play equipment that represents aboriginal culture or history • Integration of Indigenous artwork through the site • Educational trail with information about native flora and fauna 	Short term- 3-6 months
	Once the Quarry Hills Cultural Values assessment is complete, implement interpretive signage along the connecting trail network to educate the community on the Cultural heritage of the site.	Short term - 6-9 months
	As part of the Quarry Hills Future Direction Plan and with response to the Quarry Hills Cultural values assessment, undertake the process to change the name of Quarry Hills and Granite Hills to Aboriginal names in the local Woi Wurrung language.	Medium term- 1- 2 years
Connecting Trails	Proceed with the design of the connecting trail network to the proposed alignment. Trail design to	Short term - 6-9 months

Item	Recommendation	Priority
	further consider scenic viewing points, seating, and bins	
	Consider that all entry points to the trail network are accessible and have sufficient parking facilities.	Short term - 6-9 months
Traffic Management	Undertake a Traffic Assessment which benchmarks the parking provision against other large-scale urban conservation reserves, and which reviews the impact of increased traffic on the surrounding road network. This should be undertaken alongside the detailed design for Granite Hills Major Community Park and the Quarry Hills Future Direction Plan. Consider measures to address any impacts.	Short term - 3-6 months
Enhancement & protection flora and fauna	Consider further actions that can be undertaken as part of the implantation pf Granite Hills Major Community Park to improve and protect the flora and fauna of the site (e.g., improvements to habitat for wetlands, access to water for kangaroos currently accessing Granite Hills dams, protection of conservation areas around Granite Hills, etc).	Short term- 3 to 6 months
	As part of the Quarry Hills Future Directions Plan, review management practices to improve and protect the flora and fauna of the site (e.g., protection of Kangaroos, enhancement of native vegetation, etc).	Medium term- 6 to 12 months
Parkland Management	In conjunction with the planning and development of the Aboriginal Gathering Place project, consider appropriate operational methods and opening times for the Granite Hills Major Community Park. This is to include a range of management methods to discouraging anti-social behaviour.	Short term- 6-9 months
	Consider the following items for review in the Quarry Hills Future Directions Plan (currently in development) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of dogs to be on lead within the Parklands • Trail bikes 	Short term- 6-12 months
Green Links	Review opportunities for green links to connecting Parklands e.g., Plenty Gorge, Merri Creek, etc as part of the Quarry Hills Future Directions Plan.	Medium term 12 months

Business Case

Recommendation to proceed with Option 1B as follows:

- Design and construction of a regional scale playground with giant slide attractor to meet functional brief requirements.
- Spaces for small and large-scale events including irrigated lawn, large shelters, barbeques, and picnic facilities.
- Public toilets with Changing Places facilities.
- Wetland or sustainable water treatment.

- Enhanced access road and service utility infrastructure including wider access roads and deeper road pavements to promote future Quarry Hills Regional Parkland uses, including the proposed Aboriginal Gathering Place.

Project cost: \$9,422,203

Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

Liveable neighbourhoods

Our City is well-planned and beautiful, and our neighbourhoods and town centres are convenient and vibrant places to live, work and play.

Well planned accessible open space is proven to have preventative health benefits including opportunities for the community to socially undertake physical activities. The W2040 Liveable Neighbourhoods Goal includes an indicator to increase Use of Open Spaces. Providing new types of facilities and increased accessibility to those facilities is particularly important to consider during this period of COVID-19 recovery.

Considerations

Financial Implications

The following budget has been allocated in the 4 Year New Works Program for the development of the Granite Hills Major Community Park.

Year	Proposed Budget* (Excl. GST):			Fund Source
	Internal:	External:	Total	
2020-21	\$500,000.00	-	\$500,000.00	Council
2021-22	\$1,000,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	\$2,000,000.00	GSF
2022-23	\$1,000,000.00	\$1,500,000.00	\$2,500,000.00	GSF
2023-24	\$1,000,000.00	-	\$1,000,000.00	Council
2024-25	\$1,800,000.00	-	\$1,800,000.00	Council
Total	\$5,300,000.00	\$2,500,000.00	\$7,800,000.00	

The scope of this project has not been significantly changed by the outcome of the consultation phase and can continue to be delivered within the forecast budget. Items from the consultation that are outside of the scope of the Granite Hills Major Community Park project will be further considered in the Quarry Hills Future Directions Plan.

A separate budget (of up to \$2.6M) is required for the design and construction of the enhanced access road and service utility for future use of the Parklands, including the Aboriginal Gathering Place. These works need to occur at the same time as the road works and utility service infrastructure for Granite Hills Major Community Park, to ensure that the site caters for future use.

Link to Strategic Risk

Strategic Risk Service Delivery - Inability to plan for and provide critical community services and infrastructure impacting on community wellbeing

The City of Whittlesea's Open Space Strategy identifies the Quarry Hills land area as a regional park, suitable to be developed with facilities such as the Granite Hills Major Community Park. The community has provided support for this.

Implementation Strategy

Critical Dates

The Granite Hills Major Community Park was successful in receiving \$2.5M grant funding from the State Government's Growing Suburbs Fund. There are critical dates associated with the Growing Suburbs Grant, however COVID-19 restrictions have impacted these milestones. The table below shows the proposed revised grant milestones.

GSF Milestone	Revised GSF Milestones
Planning Permit	28 February 2022
Construction contractor award	26 August 2022
Commence construction	29 October 2022
Construction complete	28 September 2023

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Rule 47 of the Governance Rules 2021, officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

Conclusion

Developing the Granite Hills as a Major Community Park within the Quarry Hills Regional Parklands will provide regional level facilities that encourage informal and unstructured recreation activities and use of open space in a high-quality landscape setting. The Park will build upon the distinctive geology, topography, historical and biodiversity value of the area, encouraging both children and adults to be more active, social, and to spend time outdoors. The giant slide will act as the main visitor attractor to draw visitors to the site and the access road and utility services infrastructure will enable the park to continue to expand for future uses.

By supporting the recommendations of the Consultation Findings Report, the community's feedback will be included in the detail design phase of the Granite Hills Major Community

Park, reflecting the positive community sentiment of the concept plan's ability to meet the current and future needs of the community.

Concept Design

Landscape Concept Plan

- 1 New entry road alignment to connect to Cravens Road - intermittent parallel car parking to length
- 2 Bus drop off and car parking
- 3 Gravel car park
- 4 Bandstand / picnic shelter with table and BBQs
- 5 Natural amphitheatre to stage to be irrigated lawn to extent shown
- 6 The Shed and Outhouse: main shelter, BBQ, picnic and toilet facilities
- 7 Reshaped water body with safety bench, planted edge and floating wetlands
- 8 Boardwalk through macrophyte zone
- 9 Play area with select equipment and soft fall surface, surrounded with planting and stepping stones linking to adjacent lawn and play areas
- 10 Water play area with carved granite blocks, pump, channels and sluices
- 11 Basket swing
- 12 Slide Hill: three slides in embankment with paths, climbing ropes and nets, detailed rockwork and planting
- 13 Play areas in a sequence of zones around the water body with select equipment, reworked site timbers, climbing elements and soft fall surfaces, surrounded with planting and stepping stones linking to adjacent lawn and play areas
- 14 Irrigated lawn area
- 15 BBQ/picnic area with small shelter
- 16 Flying fox with dual cable way
- 17 Lawn maze with low grass covered earthworks connecting to existing Oak with timber log elements under
- 18 Cookhouse as a discrete play and interpretation area with fence, orchard and small play elements



Concept Design

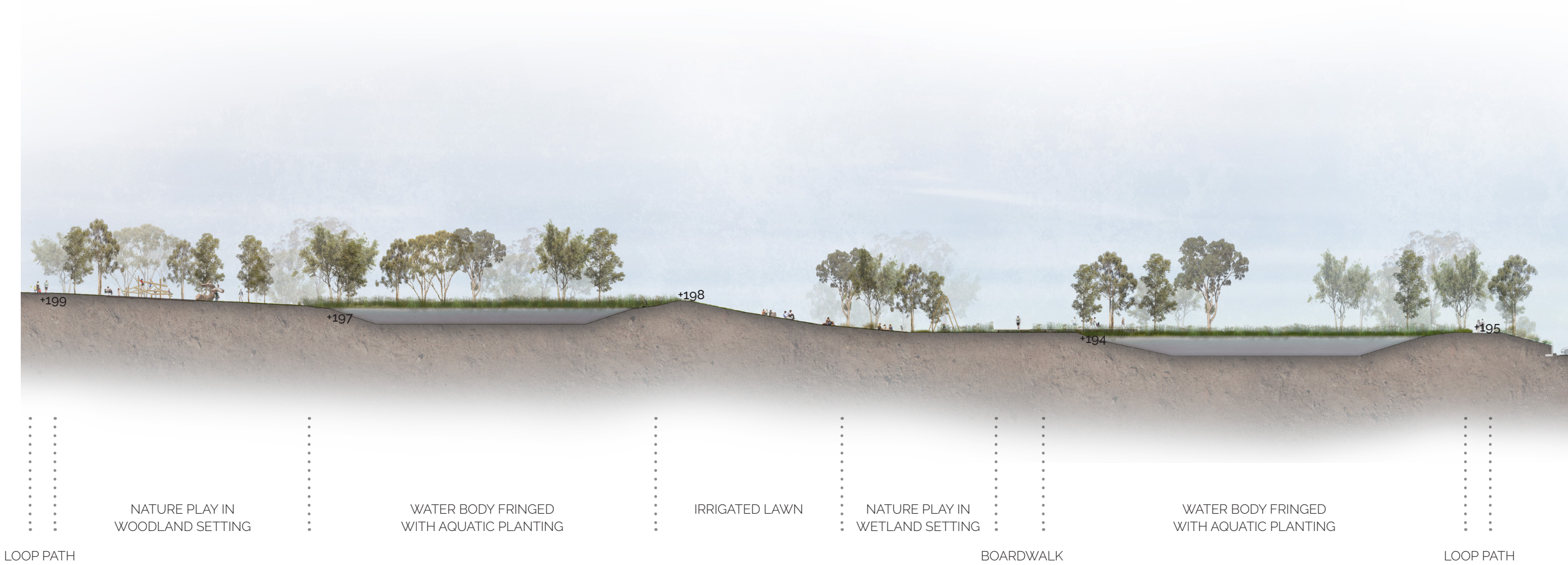
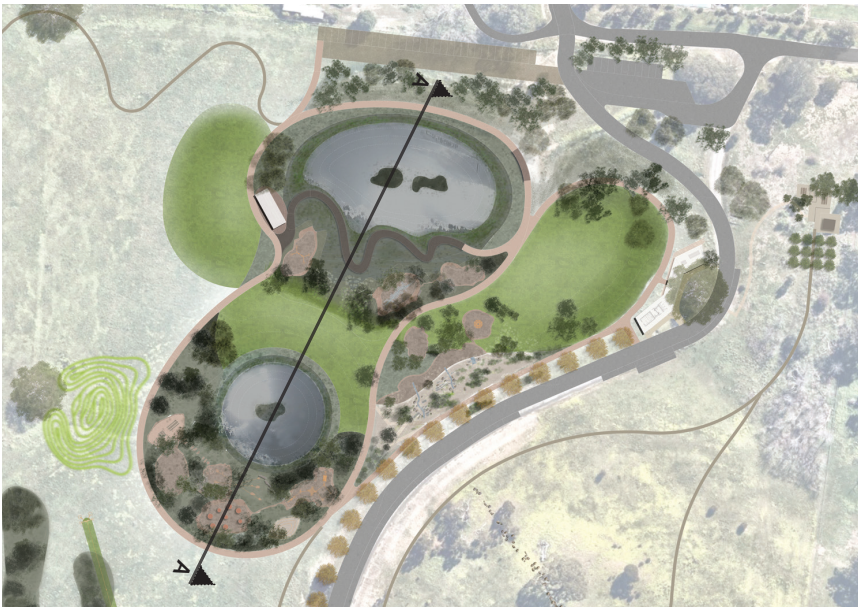
Landscape Concept Plan

- 1 Main Access road
- 2 All abilities loop path
- 3 Rock scramble to stone platform
- 4 Hill to Hill gravel trail path
- 5 Mown lawn path
- 6 Roundabout
- 7 Timber seating logs at top of hill carved from site timbers
- 8 Extend revegetation area to edge of mown path
- 9 Path connection to Habitat House



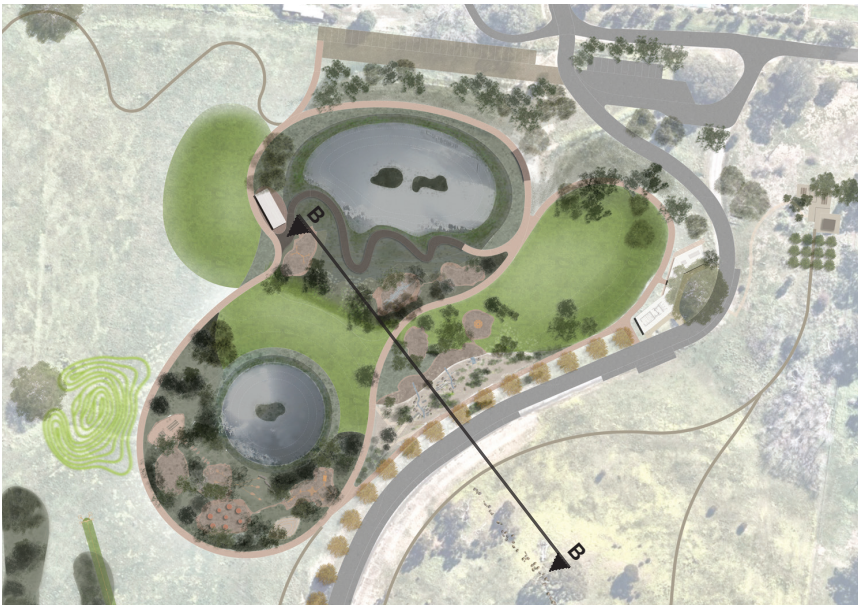
Concept Design

Section A



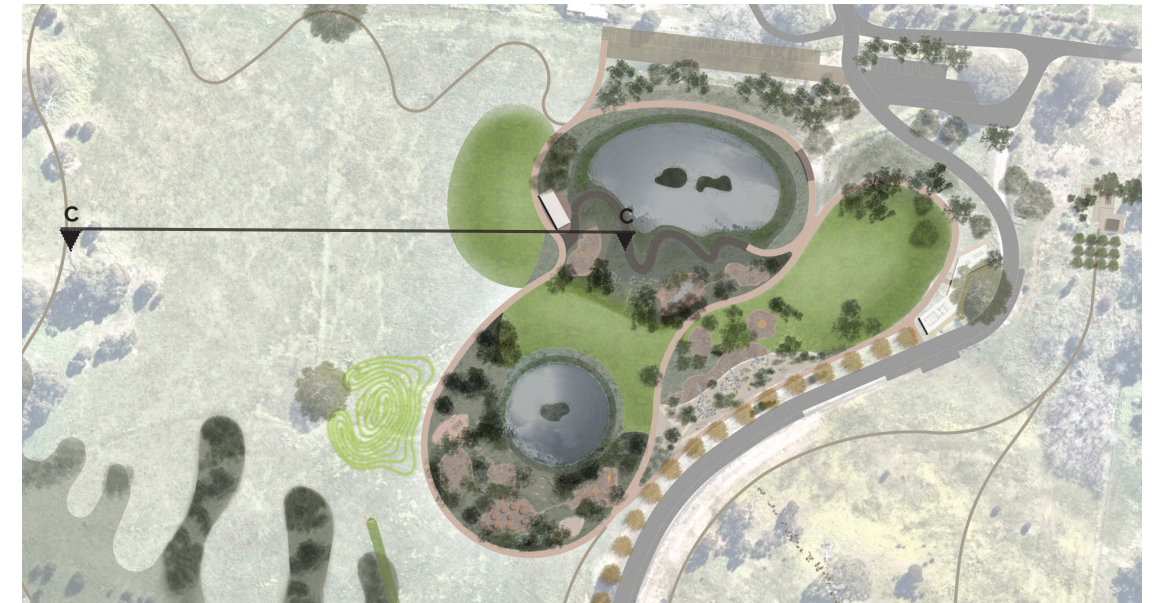
Concept Design

Section B



Concept Design

Section C



LOOP PATH

GRASS MAZE LEADING TO EXISTING ROAD

THE BIG HILL

A diagram showing a trail layout. On the left, a vertical line of 12 dots represents a trail. To the right of this line, the text "LOG SEATING" is written. Below the trail line, the text "HILL TO HILL TRAIL" is written.



Granite Hills Major Community Park- Cost Analysis

Option	Scope	Total up-front cost	Ongoing annual cost
Option 1A Construct Major Community Park with Playground, Giant Slide and standard access road and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New regional scale playground BBQs, drinking fountains, shelters, picnic tables Public toilet including Changing Places facility Walking trails Water body and boardwalk Cultural heritage and biodiversity values interpretation signage self-guided walking discovery trails Giant slide play attractor Stairs/ ramps Entry car parking with designated bus parking and disabled parking Grass overflow area for major events 350m entry road with spray seal pavement finish Utility services to play space only 	Park and Playground: \$4,760,546* Giant slide play attractor: \$150,000^ Access Roadway: \$356,100* Utility Services: \$660,500 Design/Prov/Cont: \$889,072 TOTAL: \$6,816,218	Park and Playground: \$75,000 pa \$1,125,000 over 15 years Giant slide play attractor: \$4,000 pa \$60,000 over 15 years Access Roadway: \$75,000 over 15 years including re-seal every 10 years Utility Services: \$1,200 pa \$18,000 over 15 years TOTAL: \$1,278,000 over 15 years
Option 1B Construct Major Community Park with Playground, Giant Slide and enhanced access road and services for Aboriginal Gathering Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New regional scale playground BBQs, drinking fountains, shelters, picnic tables Public toilet including Changing Places facility Walking trails Water body and boardwalk Cultural heritage and biodiversity values interpretation signage self-guided walking discovery trails Giant slide play attractor Stairs/ ramps Entry car parking with designated bus parking and disabled parking Grass overflow area for major events 	Park and Playground: \$4,760,546* Giant slide play attractor: \$150,000^ Enhanced Access Roadway: \$1,492,174* Utility Services: \$1,790,500* Design/Prov/Cont: \$1,228,983 TOTAL: \$9,442,203	Park and Playground: \$75,000 pa \$1,125,000 over 15 years Giant slide play attractor: \$4,000 pa \$60,000 over 15 years Access Roadway: \$3,150 pa \$47,250 over 15 years Utility Services: \$2,525 pa \$37,875 over 15 years TOTAL: \$1,270,125 over 15 years



Option	Scope	Total up-front cost	Ongoing annual cost
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 500m entry road with full depth pavement to YVW junction Utility services to YVW junction 		
Option 2A Construct Major Community Park with Playground, Sculpture garden and standard access road and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New regional scale playground BBQs, drinking fountains, shelters, picnic tables Public toilet including Changing Places facility Walking trails Water body and boardwalk Cultural heritage and biodiversity values interpretation signage self-guided walking discovery trails Sculpture Garden attractor Stairs/ ramps Entry car parking with designated bus parking and disabled parking Grass overflow area for major events 350m entry road with spray seal pavement finish Utility services to play space only 	Park and Playground: \$4,760,546* Sculpture Garden attractor: \$600,000^ Access Roadway: \$356,100* Utility Services: \$660,500 Design/Prov/Cont: \$956,572 TOTAL: \$7,333,718	Park and Playground: \$75,000 pa \$1,125,000 over 15 years Sculpture Garden attractor: \$10,000 pa \$150,000 over 15 years Access Roadway: \$89,200 over 15 years including re-seal every 10 years Utility Services: \$1,200 pa \$18,000 over 15 years TOTAL: \$1,368,000 over 15 years
Option 2B Construct Major Community Park with Playground, Sculpture garden and enhanced access road and services for Aboriginal Gathering Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New regional scale playground BBQs, drinking fountains, shelters, picnic tables Public toilet including Changing Places facility Walking trails Water body and boardwalk Cultural heritage and biodiversity values interpretation signage self-guided walking discovery trails Sculpture Garden attractor Stairs/ ramps Entry car parking with designated bus parking and disabled parking 	Park and Playground: \$4,760,546* Sculpture Garden attractor: \$600,000^ Access Roadway: \$1,492,174* Utility Services: \$1,790,500 Design/Prov/Cont: \$1,296,483 TOTAL: \$9,939,703	Park and Playground: \$75,000 pa \$1,125,000 over 15 years Sculpture Garden attractor: \$10,000 pa \$150,000 over 15 years Access Roadway: \$3,150 pa \$47,250 over 15 years Utility Services: \$2,525 pa \$37,875 over 15 years TOTAL: \$1,360,125 over 15 years

W2040 Key Direction

Date of Adoption

Directorate Responsible

5.2 More informed Council decisions based

March 2020

Director Infrastructure & Environment



Option	Scope	Total up-front cost	Ongoing annual cost
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grass overflow area for major events 500m entry road with full depth pavement to YVW junction Utility services to YVW junction 		

* Granite Hills Park Rush Wright Associates – Costing JUNE 2020

^ Granite Hills Park Market Assessment – Urban Enterprise MAY 2020

Nature links Bushland maintenance rates 2021

Figures include design, provisional and construction contingency

W2040 Key Direction

Date of Adoption

Directorate Responsible

5.2 More informed Council decisions based

March 2020

Director Infrastructure & Environment



Granite Hills Major Community Park

Participation and Engagement Findings Report

Prepared by Alex Desmond
Version 2- Sept 2021



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Executive Summary

Granite Hills Major Community Park will be one of the City of Whittlesea's four regional- level parks in the established areas.

A concept design for the major community park at Granite Hills was developed early 2021 and includes the following:

- Play equipment for varying ages and abilities
- Nature play
- Water play (non-reticulated system)
- 50 meter flying fox
- Giant slides
- Lawn maze
- Open-air barbecue and pavilion for social gathering
- Barbecue and picnic facilities
- Walking tracks
- Boardwalk and wetlands
- Landscaping
- Natural Amphitheatre
- Public toilets and Changing Places facility
- Bus drop off and car parking for 100 vehicles
- Interpretive signage

The purpose of this engagement was to ensure that the design and proposed infrastructure for the major community park is responsive to the needs of the community.

A range of methods were undertaken to engage with and gain feedback from the community. Due to the COVID 19 lockdown measures in place from July 2021 for a period of 3+ months, no in-person or onsite pop-up seasons were able to be held. The consultation methods therefore focused on online methods for receiving feedback:

- Online survey
- Q&A tool
- Feedback via phone
- Feedback via email

Through the consultation, a wide range of people were consulted including children, young people and adults. There was a total of 8,644 visits to the online engagement page and a total of 254 formal responses.



1. Background

1.1 Project Overview

Granite Hills Park is located within the Quarry Hills Regional Parkland in South Morang (bordering Mernda). Quarry Hills Regional Parkland is one of the defining landscape features of the municipality and contributes significantly to the character of the City's growth suburbs. The hills are a striking visual feature within the landscape and are a common point of reference for the two emerging communities of South Morang and Mernda.

Quarry Hills Regional Parkland is rich in Aboriginal cultural heritage and accommodates a diverse range of ecological communities, remnant vegetation, wildlife habitats and geological attributes.

Over the last 14 years, the residential community to the north, south and east have grown around Quarry Hills Regional Parkland. As development has occurred, the boundary has been defined. Quarry Hills Regional Parkland will eventually equate to 2.25% of the municipality's land area, covering the area of 1100 hectares. Currently 430 hectares of the Quarry Hills Regional Parkland is public open space.

In 2019, a landscape master plan for the Parkland was developed to guide future land planning of the site.

The vision set out in the master plan is representative of the shared values for the space as follows:

- Improving public access and use of the Parkland
- Provision of iconic regional-level park and playground facilities
- Increasing public use and perception of the Parkland
- Protection and enhancement of existing park biodiversity and cultural heritage values.

Stage 1 of the master plan is for the development of Granite Hills Park and a connecting trail network. The Granite Hills Park will provide a new major community park and playspace and act as the gateway into the broader Quarry Hills Regional Parkland.

Community consultation has been undertaken in order to present the draft design to the community and ask for feedback on the features, inclusions and cultural identity which will inform the final design.

As part of the consultation, feedback on the Quarry hills connecting trails was also requested.



1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this engagement was to ensure the design of the park is as responsive and reflective as possible of both the ancient and modern cultural identity of the site, and the type of play style and facilities the community would like to see included in the design.

Aim:

- For the community to help us identify and build a picture of the unique cultural identity of the site - the themes, stories, cultural practice and individual characters associated with it.
- to learn about the community's existing relationship with the space
- to understand the type of play which is expected in the park

The community feedback on the draft park design will be used to inform the final design.

1.3 Scope of Engagement

LIST STAKEHOLDERS	LIST COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT ACTIONS/ACTIVITIES
Inform: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct mail out to 2200 households within walking distance of the Parklands. • Reserve signage at key entrance points around Quarry Hills • Social media updates • Council's <i>Hive</i> page • Publications in the local paper
Consult: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current and future Parkland users • Council Staff with subject matter expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online survey • Online Q&A tool • Feedback via Facebook page • Direct email • Direct phone

2. Methodology

Direct mail out

A flyer was directly distributed to 2200 households within walking distance of the Granite Hills Park.

The flyer included information on the concept design and direction on how to view the plans, along with information on how to provide feedback.



Image 1: Flyer which was distributed to 2200 households in August 2021

Advisory Boards

Advisory boards were placed at entrances to Quarry Hills Parklands to advise existing users of the Parkland of the consultation.



The advisory boards included information on the concept design, direction on how to view the plans, along with information on how to provide feedback.

City of Whittlesea

Help Shape Granite Hills Park

HAVE YOUR SAY!

We've developed a concept design for the future park and play space at Granite Hills and we'd love to hear your ideas and feedback.

Have your say

In person: Pop-up session TBC

Email: parks@whittlesea.vic.gov.au

Phone: 9217 2006

Online: engage.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/granite_hills

Map Labels: MERNDA, Granite Hills Park, SOUTH MORANG, EPPING

Artists impression

Image 2: Advisory Board installed at entrances to the Parklands in August 2021

Social media Promotion

A significant amount of communications occurred through promotion on social media. A total of 61,237 people saw the content of the engagement over a series of 4 Facebook posts

Date	Post Impressions	Post Reach	Post Engagement
13 July 2021	16,191	15,431	1,929
22 July 2021	4,340	4,068	92
20 August 2021	49,298	32,248	7,600
11 September 2021	10,020	9,490	713
Total	79,849	61,237	10,334

Local papers and media outlets

6 articles were published in a series of local papers advising the community of the consultation. The articles occurred in the following publications:

- Northern Star Weekly
- Whittlesea Review
- Kalori News
- The Local Paper



Image 3: Granite Hills on the Front Page of the Whittlesea Review



Online Engagement Page

HIVE was the platform used for the online engagement page. This allowed participants to explore the Granite Hills concept design, the plans for the connecting trail networks, the Quarry Hills Landscape Master Plan, information on local cultural heritage and direction on how to provide feedback through the Q&A tool or Online Survey.

Link to HIVE page:

<https://engage.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/granite-hills>

Online Survey

A total of 186 participants undertook the online survey. This survey was open to all visitors to the HIVE page. A separate survey which was safe for primary school aged children to complete was developed for Mernda Central College and distributed to all parents and students in the school community.

Participants were asked the following questions:

- Have you visited Quarry Hills Regional parklands before?
- If you have visited the Parklands before, what did you do when you were there?
- What do you think are the most important features in a park?
- What play equipment or features do you want to see in the future playspace at Granite Hills Park?
- How happy are you with the concept design for Granite Hills Park?
- What is your favourite feature of the concept design?
- Do you have any ideas for how we can improve the concept design?
- Do you think this park would encourage people to visit the area?
- Would you use walking and cycling trails through Quarry Hills Regional Parkland?
- Where would you walk/ cycle to?
- How can City of Whittlesea best share knowledge of Aboriginal culture and history across the Granite Hills site?
- Do you have any other comments?

Q&A tool

On the online engagement page- HIVE, participants were given the opportunity to ask a question to the Project Landscape Architect.

A total of 56 participants utilised the Q&A function to ask questions and provide feedback on the design.

Phone and Email

A total of 12 community members provided direct feedback by phone or email with their ideas and feedback.



Onsite pop-up sessions

Four Pop-up sessions were planned for the following pop-up sessions were held onsite on the following days:

- Saturday 17 July, 9am-1pm- South Morang Farmers Market
- Sunday 25 July, 9am-1pm- Waterview Recreation Reserve
- Saturday 31 July, 10am-2pm- Bunning Warehouse Mernda
- Sunday 1 August, 10am-1pm- National Tree Planting Day, Granite Hills Park

All pop-up sessions were required to be cancelled due to the COVID 19 lockdown measures. The pop-up sessions at Mernda Bunnings and the South Morang Farmers Market were rescheduled but required to be cancelled again with the extension of the lockdown.

3. Findings

Summary:

Participation	
Number of visitors to the HIVE page	8,644
Number of online surveys completed	186
Number of questions asked through the Q&A tool	56
Number of people who engaged through social media	10,334
Number of people who provided feedback through direct phone call	4
Number of people who provided feedback through direct email	8

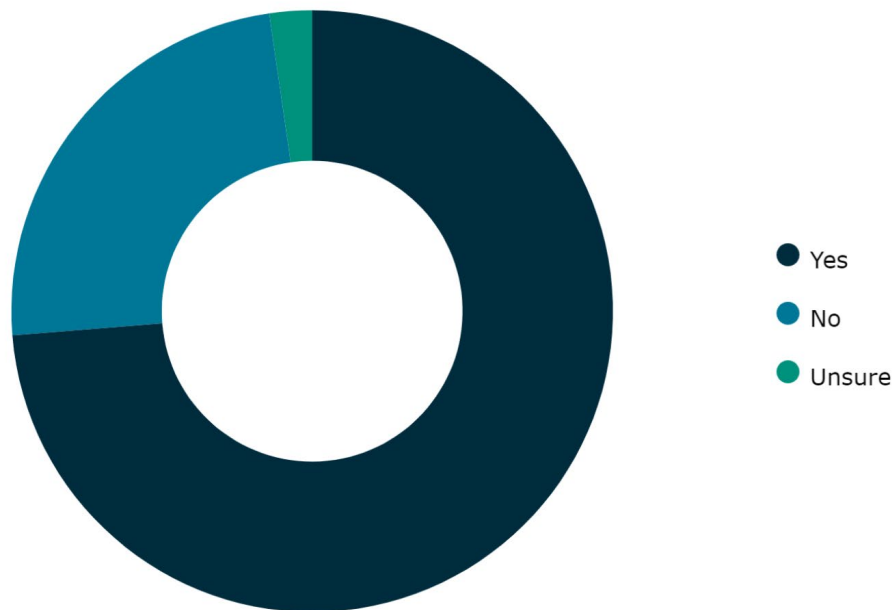
Survey Results:

This section provides results from the online surveys completed by 186 community members.



Question 1: Have you been to Quarry Hills Regional parklands before?

73.71% of participants have been to the parklands before while 24% have never been and 2.29% were unsure.



Question 2: What do you do when you're visiting Quarry Hills Regional Parklands?

Of the 73% of participants who have been to Quarry hills Parklands, the following were popular activities to the visitors:

"Take in the scenery, the feeling that I'm far away from the rest of the world with the beautiful views and rolling hills."

"I enjoy the natural landscape, abundant wildlife and amazing indigenous vegetation this urban park contains"

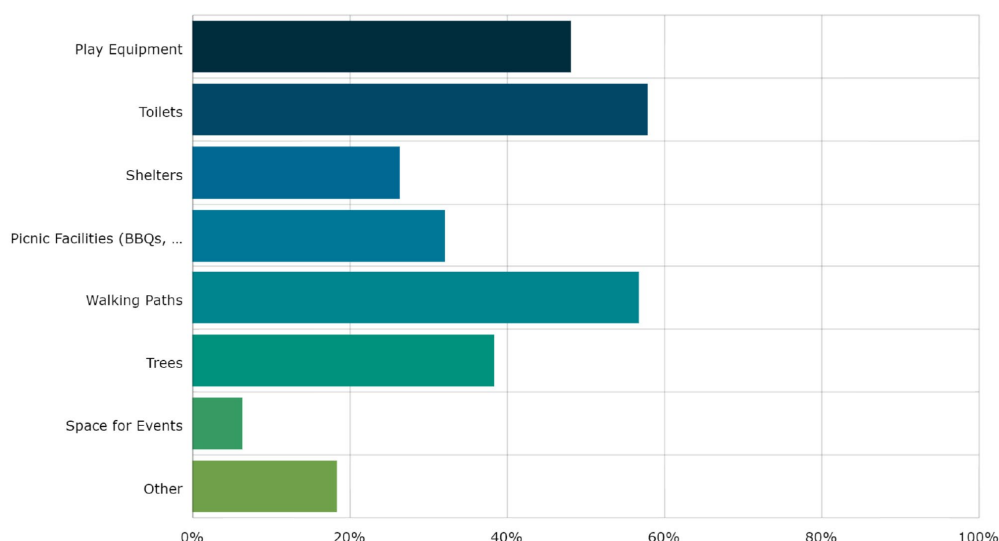
- Walk/ hike/ exercise/ run (86)
- Enjoy the natural environment/ habitat (24)
- Riding (15)
- Enjoy the view/ lookouts (13)
- Participated in community planting days/ Council run education activity (7)
- Explore (6)
- Walk the dog (5)
- Play (4)
- Enjoy the peace and quiet/ relax (4)
- Picnic (3)



- Rescuing wildlife (2)
- Live next door (2)
- Wander free spaces (1)
- Photography (1)
- Visiting Dardi Munwurro (1)

Question 3: What do you think are the most important features in a park? (select up to 3)

Majority of participants selected toilets (57%), followed by walking paths (56.5%), play equipment (48%), trees (38%) and picnic facilities (32%)



Other responses:

- Space for natural habitat and native vegetation (9)
- Rubbish Bins (3)
- Sporting facilities (3)
- Skate parks (2)
- Bike ramps so people stop digging their own (2)
- Horse trails
- Fenced areas for children of all abilities
- Shade
- Access from South Morang to Mernda through the Hills
- Security cameras
- Water stations
- Dogs on lead
- Solar lighting
- Adult exercise equipment
- Bike trails
- Natural features
- Parking



- Opportunities for educational on history
- A dog off leash area
- Water play

Question 4: What play equipment do you want to see in the future playspace at Granite Hills Park? (Short Answer)

There was strong support from participants for the play equipment to include slides/ giant slides, flying fox, water play, climbing frames/ walls and swings. Participants requested the equipment to have an emphasis on catering to kids of different ages, include teens, to be designed with the use of natural and recycled materials, to be accessible to people with disabilities and have a focus on nature play elements. Participants strongly requested that the slides not be constructed from metal but have not requested another material. Within this response some participants requested further items, emphasising the importance active recreation facilities including walking paths and bike tracks, facilities for cycle sports, fitness equipment, Futsal court and basketball courts.

" "destination" play equipment that we can be proud of and gives creates a landmark. Interpretation signs about Indigenous, flora fauna and historical features along the trails"

"Trampolines, a fort with lots of wood (Ballam Park and Frankston foreshore park are great examples and popular, some playgrounds just aren't worth visiting), a SAND area! A lot of parents would prefer sand play to water play."

"I think playgrounds try to get to clever these days and kids end up crying at the top of some ridiculous idea. Keep it fun, but not over the top. Accessibility for all ages is important."

"[Equipment] similar to Norris Bank and Mill Park"

Play equipment:

- Slides/ giant slide (25)
- Flying fox (23)
- Water play (21)
- Climbing frames/ wall (19)
- Equipment targeting kids of different ages including teens (19)
- Nature play/ natural materials (17)
- Swings (13)
- Accessible equipment for all abilities (8)
- Trampoline (5)
- Indigenous play elements to pay respect to traditional owners (5)
- Equipment from recycled materials (5)



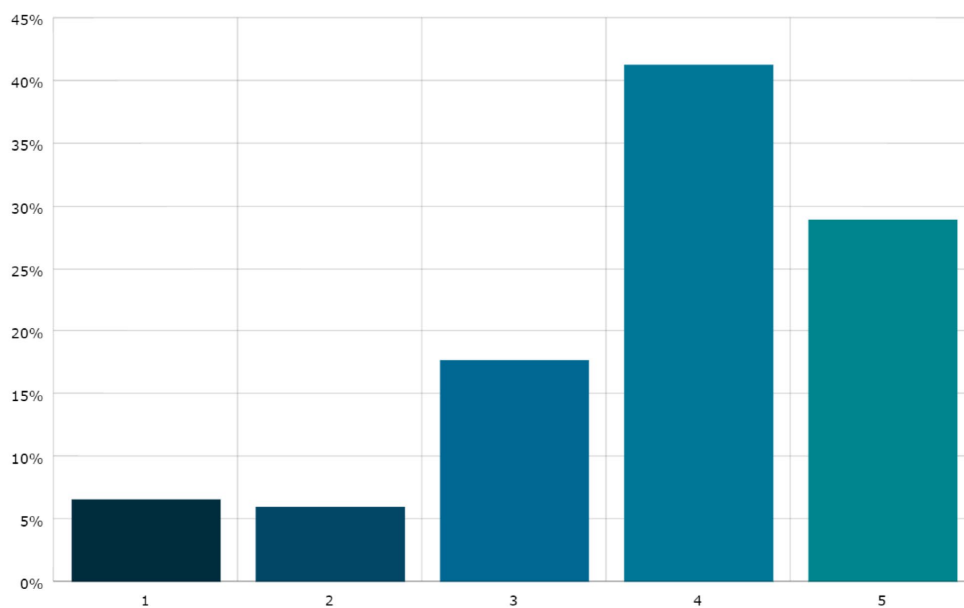
- Adventure playground (4)
- No metal slides (4)
- Multi-generational play (3)
- Monkey bars (3)
- Maze (2)
- Explorative walk (2)
- Sand (2)
- Obstacle course (1)
- Chess board
- Jumping pillows
- Musical play
- Toboggan slide
- Traffic park

Other items:

- Walking paths/ Bike track (17)
- Scooter track/ pump track/ skate park (13)
- Adult outdoor fitness equipment (11)
- Supporting facilities (shelter, toilets, trees) (11)
- Futsal (4)
- Basketball court (7)
- Recreation equipment (6)
- The area should stay the same/ not be developed (3)
- Bins (2)
- Pop-up food stalls (2)
- Interpretive signage (2)
- Lookout area
- Bridges
- Dog park
- Seating
- Parking
- Fences

**Question 5: How happy are you with the concept design for Granite Hills?**

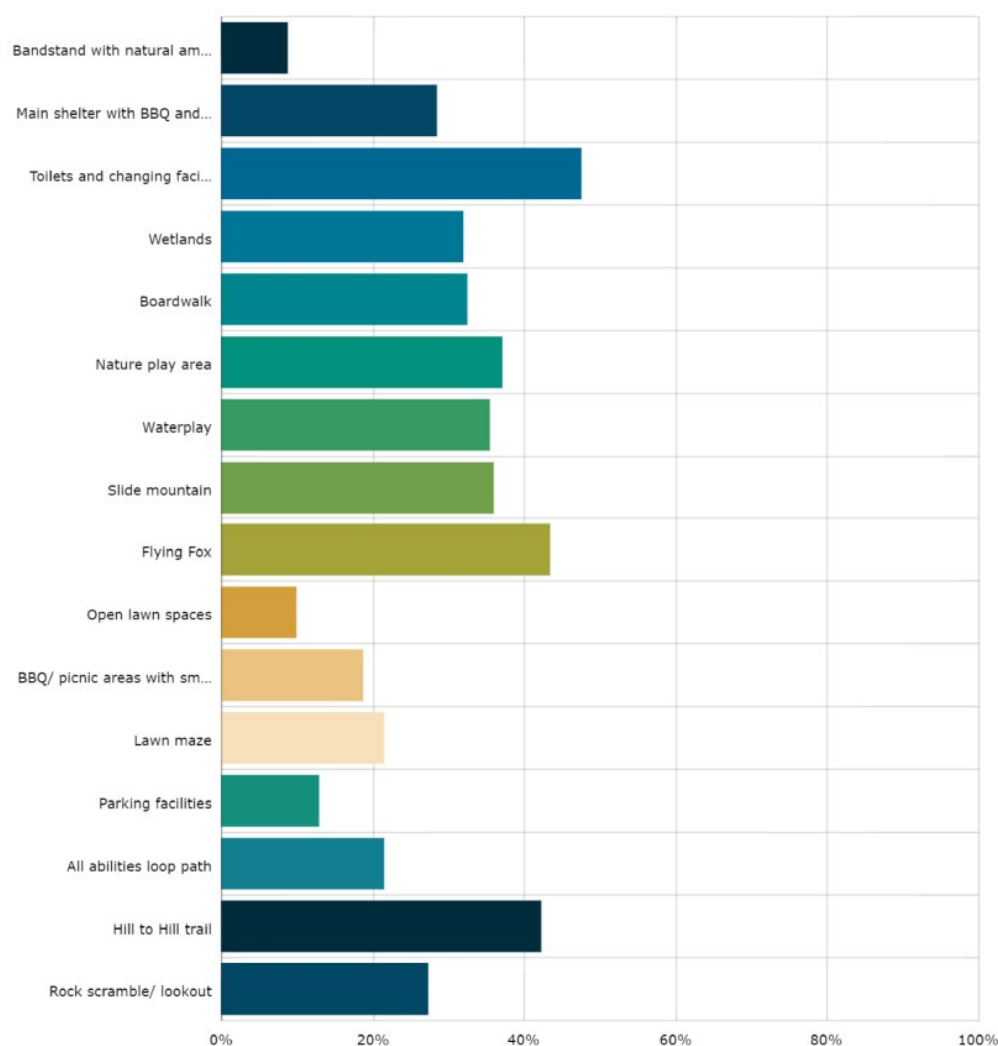
28% of participants were extremely happy with the concept and 41% were happy with the concept. 17% of participants were unsure, 5% were unhappy and 6% were very unhappy with the concept.





Question 6: What is your favourite feature of the concept design? Select up to 5.

Participants favourite features were toilets with changing places (47%) followed by the flying fox (43%), Hill to Hill trail (42%), nature play area (36%), water play (35%) and Slide mountain (35%). The least popular items were the bandstand with natural amphitheatre (8%), open lawns spaces (9%) and parking facilities (12%).



Question 7: Do you have any ideas for improving the design?

This question exhibited a mixed response from the community with many participants in support of the design and keen to see more facilities and other concerned for the impact on the habitat of fauna and flora in the Parklands.

Another key item was around traffic management and the provision of enough parking along with concerns on the surrounding road network in accessing the parkland.

Below is a summary of key themes from the short answer responses:



"Continue revegetating the open woodland. Investigate the cultural significance of the rocky outcrops at the top of the hill and indigenous history."

"Make it as large as possible!!!! We need a giant play area that can accommodate the people that would attend"

"Please be mindful of the incredible biodiversity in the area. Tussock skink are found in this area, this species is in great decline across its range"

"Honestly, well done. This has been thought out and designed to give the community a great park space and play area."

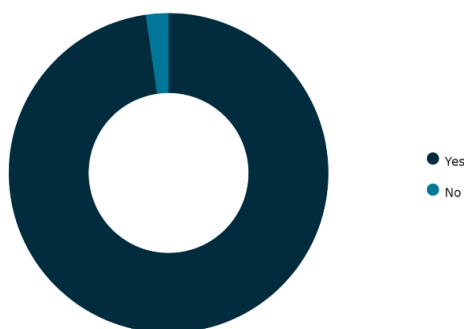
"leave south Morang as the nature reserve it is. we locals appreciate it better that way & would prefer the land to be untouched."

- Support the design as is shown (18)
- Trails for bikes/ pump tracks/ MTB course (13)
- Needs more supporting infrastructure. E.g. shelters (10)
- Trail networks (10)
- Design should focus on nature play and education on environment (9)
- Should focus on revegetation and provision of habitat (9)
- Parkin/ Traffic/ transport (9)
- Do not use metal material for slides (6)
- More active recreation facilities (6)
- Need more bins (5)
- Dog off leash park (4)
- Café (3)
- Lookouts (2)
- Toilets near playground (2)
- Water play (2)
- Trampoline
- Interactive elements
- Sand play
- Musical water fountain
- Fence around the playground
- All abilities
- Lighting for tracks



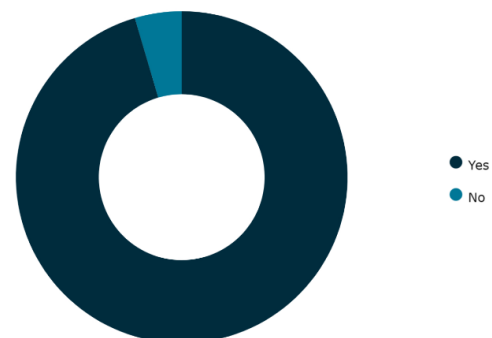
Question 8: Do you think this would encourage people to visit the area?

97.7% answered yes while only 2.3% answered no



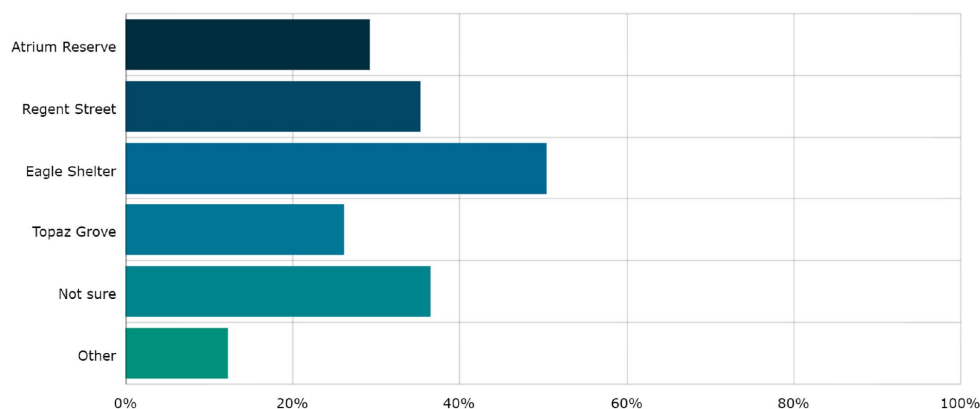
Question 9: Would you use the walking and cycling trails through Quarry Hills Regional Parklands?

95% answered yes while 5% answered no.



Question 9: Where would you walk/ cycle to?

Majority of participants would cycle/ walk to Eagle Shelter (50%) followed by Regent Street (35%), Atrium Reserve (29%) and Topaz Grove (26%). 36% of participants were unsure.



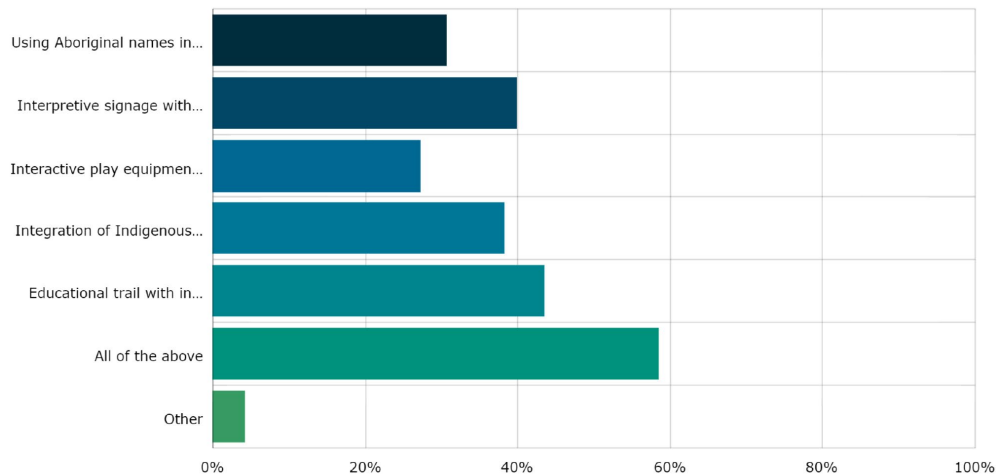
Other:

- Not sure but will use
- Within the park
- Plenty Gorge
- All of the above (4)
- The Lakes Blvd/ Gordon Road
- Foothill/ Eagles lookout (3)
- Would use the paths on my commute home (3)
- Plenty River



Question 10: How can the City of Whittlesea best share knowledge of Aboriginal cultural and history across the Granite Hills site?

Majority of participants thought that all actions should be undertaken (58%). 43% selected Educational trails, and 39% selected interpretive signage about indigenous history.



Other responses:

- Connection to the future Aboriginal Gathering Place
- Educational sessions with elders (2)
- Drawings on section of the CoW Reconciliation Plan
- Consult with the Indigenous Community first
- Would like to see information on the native habitat as well

Question 11: Do you have any further comments?

Many participants took this opportunity to highlight their excitement for the project, stating that they "Can't wait". Other participants reiterated that the park needed to use natural materials or have an emphasis on nature play. Some concerned participants emphasised the need for further consideration for parking and traffic management or for the protection of flora and fauna. A theme which emerged through this question was the need for the parkland to provide connections to surrounding sites (E.g. Mernda Rise, to provide a green link to Plenty Gorge Parklands or to be a green link for residents walking between Mernda and South Morang for work).



"As a local it's so exciting and we cannot get enough of these type parks to encourage kids & families to be outside. We live in a beautiful part of Victoria & we should encourage everyone to enjoy it"

"This could be an amazing nature link between south Morang and Mernda. I would use this weekly on my commute from work if possible and like to ride and walk the trails with the family on weekends. Making this a more natural theme would set it apart from AA"

"Concerned about impact on conservation area with lots of people walking beyond the playground or off the new walking trails. Dogs, litter!"

"I am really excited by this plan! My wife and I recently moved into city of Whittlesea and can't wait to visit this park with our children regularly"

"The park should be a dedicated conservation reserve not a theme park"

Responses:

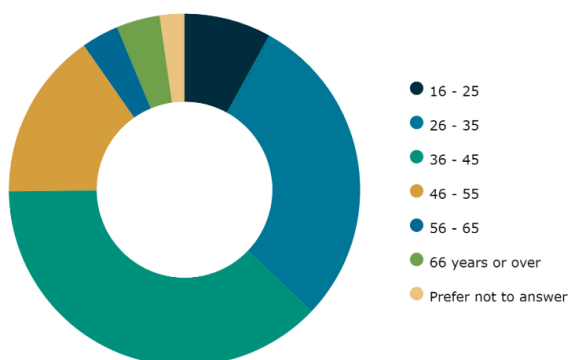
- Can't wait for it to be built/ so excited for the park (16)
- The park should have a natural theme (10)
- Further consider parking and traffic management (9)
- More supporting facilities e.g. Shelter and bins (6)
- Concerned for the protection of wildlife and habitat (6)
- Connection to surrounding sites e.g. Party tree, Plenty River, Mernda Rise, Cravens Road (4)
- Further consider safety of users (3)
- Don't change the Parkland (3)
- Need a skate park/ MTB track (3)
- Incorporate Aboriginal names and cultural heritage elements (3)
- More active recreation facilities (2)
- Make this a nature link between suburbs (2)
- Consider all abilities access (2)
- Equipment should be for all ages (2)
- Should support local businesses
- Dog off leash park
- More exciting equipment
- Trails
- Planting should be representative of different cultures
- Link to Aboriginal Gathering place
- Water Play



Demographic Data:

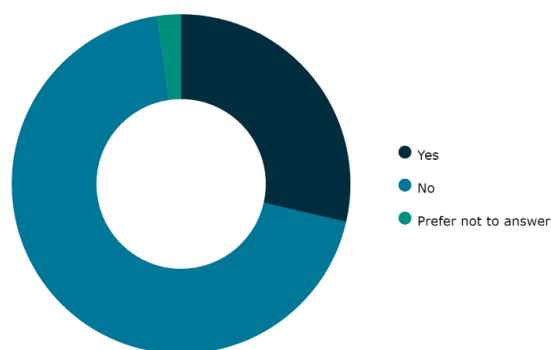
Question 12: What is your age?

Majority of participants were between the ages of 36-45 (37%) followed by 56-65 years old (29%) and then 46-55 year (15%). There were low participation rates from people over the age of 66 year (4%).



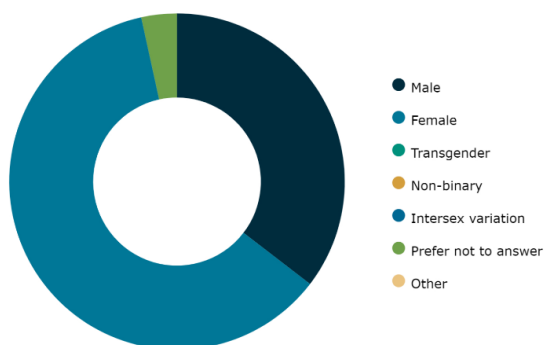
Question 13: How do you describe your gender?

Majority of participants identify as female (61%) followed by male (35%).



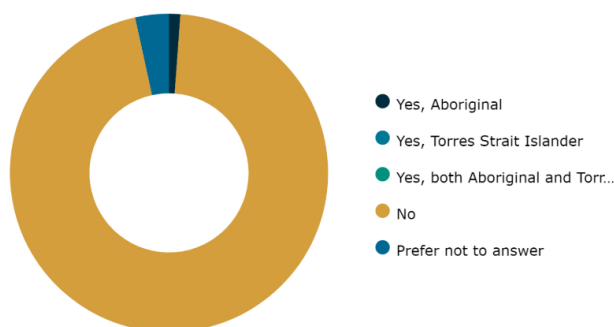
Question 14: Do you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

Of the participants, a low percentage identified as Aboriginal (1.14%) or Torres Strait Islander (0%).



Question 15: Do you speak a language other than English at home?

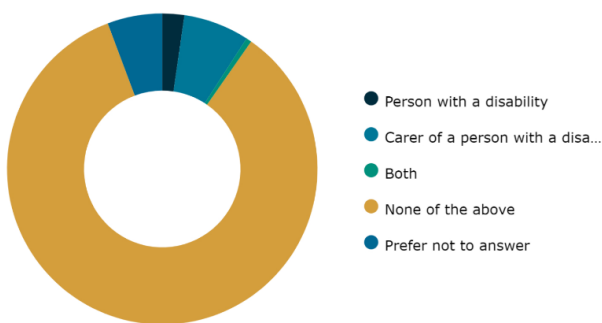
Majority of participants speak English at home (69%).





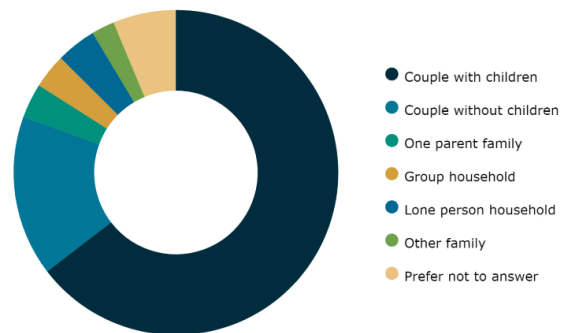
Question 18: Which applies to you?

Majority of users (84%) didn't identify as a person with a disability and 6% identified as carers while 2% identified as having a disability.



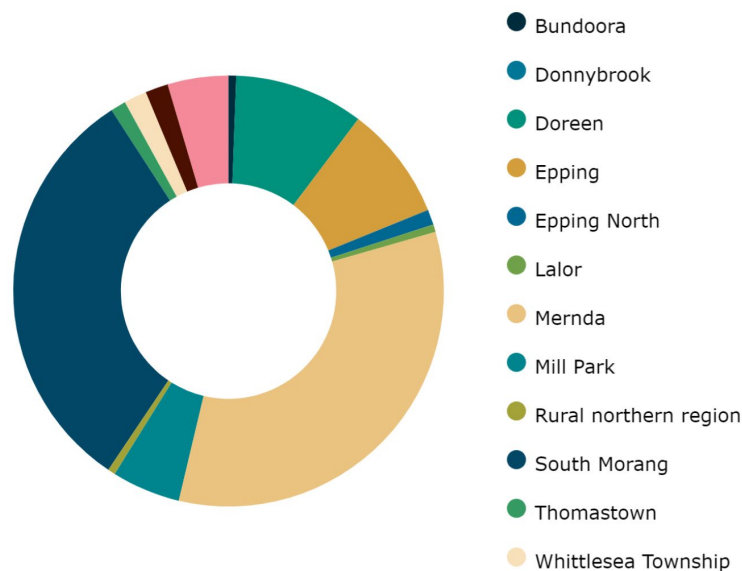
Question 19: Which of the following describes your household structure?

64% of participants are part of a couple with children while 16% are part of a couple without children.



Question 20: Which suburb do you live in?

Majority of participants live in Mernda (33%) and South Morang (31%).





Q&A Responses

Feedback and questions were received through the Q&A tool on the HIVE Engagement page and responded to by the Project Landscape Architect. 56 responses were received which highlighted the following key themes:

- **The protection of wildlife and habitat (6)**
Participants raised questions of how Council will be protecting flora and fauna and regulate dogs to be on lead and the illegal access of trail bike riders. Respondents also highlighted that they love using the Parklands for the serenity and engagement with the environment and their wish for it to remain untouched.
- **Traffic management (6)**
Many local and neighbouring residents voiced their concerns on the impact of traffic to the surrounding residential catchment including increased traffic to Hunters Road, Cravens Road, Waterview Drive, etc. They also voiced their concerns on the existing and proposed carparks in the landscape master plan (Topaz Grove, Atrium Reserve and Gravelier Way). These concerns include management of anti-social activities, the impact of car access to neighbouring residents and whether the carparks will be locked at night. Another concern is the risk of overflow parking onto residential streets (E.g. onto Cravens Road, Topaz Grove and the Atrium).
- **Metal Slides (3)**
Participants stated that while they were supportive of the giant slides, they are against them being constructed from metal which will make them unusable in summer due to the heat.
- **Dog off leash area (2)**
There were several requests for a fenced dog off leash park within the parklands.
- **All abilities access (2)**
Participants highlighted the importance of facilities for people with disabilities and their carers, to ensure that they are able to use the park. This included accessible play equipment and toilets/ change facilities
- **Active recreation facilities (2)**
Many participants asked why active recreation facilities were not included in the proposal and if it would be included in the future. Facilities that participants wanted to see were soccer goals, outdoor fitness equipment, skate park and bike jumps.
- **Connection to surroundings open spaces**
Participants highlighted the need to connect to Plenty Gorge Parklands. As the two main conservation reserves in the area, a link between would encourage riders/ hikers to travel between the two parklands.

4. Limitations

The following limitations were experienced through the consultation process:

- **COVID-19 Lockdown**
Due to the COVID-19 measures Council was unable to undertake in any person pop-up sessions. This limited the amount of feedback received from the community and the ability to have open face to face conversations about the proposal. Once



lockdown measures have eased, Council will look for opportunities to undertake pop-up sessions to update the community on the project and answer questions.

- **Lack of interest from the community in participation:**
While direct mail advising of the consultation was directly distributed to 2200 households and over 8,000 people visited the online engagement page, only 254 formal responses were received. This may be due to consultation fatigue or the individual's personal circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 lockdown (e.g. fatigued from online activities, detachment from the media, etc.).

5. Summary Results and Evaluation

Key facts:

- People currently visit the site to walk, run and hike. They enjoy accessing Quarry Hills because of the habitat, natural environment and scenic lookouts
- It is important for users to continue to have walking paths, but to have facilities such as toilets and play equipment which broaden the use and allow a longer stay in the Parklands
- 69% of participants are happy with the design with their favourite elements including:
 - Toilets
 - Flying fox
 - Hill to hill trail
 - Nature play area
 - Water play
 - Slide mountain
- There is strong support for the play equipment shown in the concept design
- 97% of participants believe that the implementation of Granite Hills park will attract people to visit the area
- Once Constructed, 95% of participants will use the proposed connecting trails
- Many community members are concerned for the protection of the flora and fauna of the site
- Many local community members are concerned of the impact of traffic to the local road network
- Majority of participants believe the design should focus on Indigenous values and use of natural materials

Key themes:

- **Play equipment**
The community was very supportive of the proposed play equipment and emphasised the need to encourage nature play and to utilise materials from natural and recycled materials. The play elements requested by community currently not shown in the design will be considered as part of the final design.
There was strong push from the community to not use metal in the construction of the slides. Different material options are able to be investigated, but metal is the most common material used in giant slides due to its durability and ability to be engineered for long lengths.



- **Supporting facilities**
Many participants emphasised the need for additional shelters, bins, fencing to play areas, etc. This is able to be further considered in the detailed design phase of the project.
- **Education of Cultural Heritage Values**
The community emphasised the need to design with Cultural heritage values in various ways (e.g. through language, art, interpretive signage, etc). Council is able to continue to work with Cultural heritage advisors and signage consultants for the integration of Cultural heritage values into the final design of Granite Hills. Cultural heritage values will also need to be further considered in the Quarry Hills connecting trails projects and Future Direction Plans.
- **Connecting Trails**
There was strong support for the connecting trails with users stating that they would use all trail networks. Participants would like rest stops and viewing points, along with the provision of bins to be further considered.
- **Traffic Management**
Many local and neighbouring residents voiced their concerns on the impact of traffic to the surrounding residential catchment including increased traffic to Hunters Road, Cravens Road, Waterview Drive, etc. They also voiced their concerns on the existing and proposed car parks in the landscape master plan (Topaz Grove, Atrium Reserve and Gravier Way). While further traffic management is able to be reviewed in the detailed design of Granite Hills, an additional Traffic Assessment will be required to be undertaken alongside the detailed design and development of the Quarry Hills Future Directions Plan.
- **Enhancement and Protection to flora and fauna**
Respondents also highlighted their concern for the flora and fauna, requesting further information for Council's plans to protect habitat. While short term actions are able to be undertaken as part of the implementation of Granite Hills Park, further consideration of protection to flora and fauna will need to be assessed as part of the Quarry Hills Future Direction Plan
- **Management of anti-social behaviour**
Many users were concerned about the management and regulation to dog on leash requirements and the illegal access of trail bikes. Participant were also concerned for the anti-social behaviour which currently occurs in the Gravier Way car park and the risk of it occurring in the future car park facilities. While short- term management of anti-social behaviour will be considered for Granite Hills Park, further consideration of Parkland management will need to be assessed as part of the Quarry Hills Future Direction Plan
- **Active Recreation facilities**
Many participants requested more active recreation elements to be included in Granite Hills Park. In the planning for Granite Hills, council had considered the inclusion of active recreation facilities. Because of the unique character of Quarry Hills and the natural features, it was assessed that active recreation facilities will be better placed in active recreation reserves where they are supported by other infrastructure and Quarry Hills is to instead focus on facilities which encourage engagement with nature and passive recreation including walking, hiking, jogging, etc.



- **Green Links**

Participants highlighted the need to connect Quarry Hills with surrounding areas and open spaces. As this is outside of the scope of Granite Hills park and the implementation of the proposed connecting trails, this will be required to be reviewed as part of the Quarry Hills Future Direction Plan.

6. Key recommendations

From the feedback received and an evaluation of the key themes, the following recommendations are made for the consideration and/ or inclusion in the final design:

Item	Recommendation	Priority
Play equipment	Develop final playground design for Granite Hills with priority of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slides/ giant slides • Flying fox • Water play • Climbing elements (climbing frames, ropes courses/ climbing walls) • Swings • Trampolines • Monkey bars Ensure that the play equipment caters to all ages, is accessible and has an emphasis on nature play with the use of natural and recycled materials	Short term - 3-6 months
	Investigate the incorporation of skate-able/ rideable elements	Short term - 3-6 months
	Investigate other materials for the giant slides as part of the	Short term - 3-6 months
Supporting facilities	Incorporate more shelters and bins into the final design of Granite Hills park.	Short term - 3-6 months
Education of cultural Heritage Values	To share the knowledge of the Aboriginal cultural and history at Granite Hills Park, incorporate the following items into the final design: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using Aboriginal names in the local Aboriginal (Woi Wurrung) language • Interpretive signage with information about local Aboriginal history and culture specific to the area • Interactive play equipment that represents aboriginal culture or history 	Short term- 3-6 months



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of Indigenous artwork through the site Educational trail with information about native flora and fauna 	
	Once the Quarry Hills Cultural Values assessment is complete, implement interpretive signage along the connecting trail network to educate the community on the Cultural heritage of the site	Short term - 6-9 months
	As part of the Quarry Hills Future Direction Plan and with response to the Quarry Hills Cultural values assessment, undertake the process to change the name of Quarry Hills and Granite Hills to Aboriginal names in the local Woi Wurrung language.	Medium term- 1- 2 years
Connecting Trails	Proceed with the design of the connecting trail network to the proposed alignment. Trail design to further consider scenic viewing points, seating and bins	Short term - 6-9 months
	Consider that all entry points to the trail network are accessible and have sufficient parking facilities	Short term - 6-9 months
Traffic Management	Undertake a Traffic Assessment which benchmarks the parking provision against other large-scale urban conservation reserves, and which reviews the impact of increased traffic on the surrounding road network. This should be undertaken alongside the detailed design for Granite Hills park and the Quarry Hills Future Direction Plan	Short term - 3-6 months
Enhancement & protection flora and fauna	Consider further actions that can be undertaken as part of the implantation pf Granite Hills Park to improve and protect the flora and fauna of the site (e.g. improvements to habitat for wetlands, access to water for kangaroos currently accessing Granite Hills dams, protection of conservation areas around Granite Hills, etc)	Short term- 3 to 6 months
	As part of the Quarry Hills Future Directions Plan, review management practices to improve and protect the flora and fauna of the site (e.g. protection of Kangaroos, enhancement of native vegetation, etc)	Medium term- 6 to 12 months



Parkland Management	Further consider with the Planning of the Aboriginal Gathering Place, the closing hours of Granite Hills and the management methods for excluding vehicles from the site	Short term- 6-9 months
	Consider the following items for review in the Quarry hills Future Directions Plan (currently in development) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of dogs to be on lead within the Parklands • Trail bikes 	Short term- 6-12 months
Active Recreation Infrastructure	Work with Council's Leisure Planning Team for the provision of the following recreation facilities into active recreation reserves in the future: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor fitness Equipment • Basketball court • Futsal court • Skate Park 	Medium to long term- 12months to 3 years
Green Links	Review opportunities for Green links to connecting Parklands e.g. Plenty Gorge, Merri Creek, etc as part of the Quarry Hills Future Directions Plan	Medium term 12 months

5.3 Strong Local Economy

Nil

5.4 Sustainable Environment

Nil

5.5 High Performing Organisation

Nil

6 Notices of Motion

Nil

7 Urgent Business

Nil

8 Reports from Council Representatives and CEO Update

9 Confidential Business

Under section 66(2) of the Local Government Act 2020 a meeting considering confidential information may be closed to the public. Pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the Local Government Act 2020

Recommendation

THAT the Chair of Council recommends that the meeting be closed to the public for the purpose of considering details relating to the following confidential matters in accordance with Section 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020* as detailed.

9.1 Confidential Connected Communities

9.1.1 Kindergarten Reform Options Paper

Responsible Officer Director Community Wellbeing

Officer Community Infrastructure Project Coordinator

This report has been designated as confidential by the Director Community Wellbeing, under delegation from the Chief Executive Officer, in accordance with Rule 53 of the Governance Rules 2021 and sections 66(5) and 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* on the grounds that it contains Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released. In particular the report contains information regarding proposed partnership negotiations and capital projects that require further consultation and investigation before they can be announced.

9.2 Confidential Liveable Neighbourhoods

9.2.1 Compulsory Land Acquisition

Responsible Officer Acting Director Corporate Services

Officer Consultant

This report has been designated as confidential by the Acting Director Corporate Services, under delegation from the Chief Executive Officer, in accordance with Rule 53 of the Governance Rules 2021 and sections 66(5) and 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* on the grounds that it contains Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released. In particular the report contains information that prematurely discloses Council's intentions and diminishes the strength of Council's position in these negotiations.

9.3 Confidential Strong Local Economy

Nil Reports

9.4 Confidential Sustainable Environment

Nil Reports

9.5 Confidential High Performing Organisation

Nil Reports

9.6 Confidential Notice of Motion

Nil