

# Agenda

## Scheduled Council Meeting

Tuesday 20 February 2024 at 6:30 pm

You are advised that a Meeting of Council has been called by the Chief Executive Officer on Tuesday 20 February 2024 at 6:30 pm for the transaction of the following business.

This meeting will be held in the Council Chamber at Civic Centre, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang and will be [livestreamed via Council's website](#).

**C Lloyd**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

# Administrators

Lydia Wilson                      Chair of Council

Peita Duncan                    Administrator

Christian Zahra AM            Administrator

On 19 June 2020 the Acting Minister for Local Government appointed the Panel of Administrators for the City of Whittlesea and appointed Lydia Wilson as Chair of the Panel. The Panel of Administrators comprises of Lydia Wilson, Peita Duncan and Christian Zahra 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

Emma Appleton                Director Planning & Development

Agata Chmielewski            Director Community Wellbeing

Sarah Renner                    Director Customer & Corporate Services

Debbie Wood                    Director Infrastructure & Environment

Janine Morgan                 Executive Manager Public Affairs

Jacinta Stevens                Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

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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:**

Council will hold public question time for up to 30 minutes at each Scheduled Council Meeting to allow for public questions, petitions or joint letters from our community to be read out by the Chief Executive Officers delegate and responses will be provide by the Chief Executive Officer.

Questions are required to be submitted in writing no later than 12 noon on the day prior to a Scheduled Council Meeting.

Priority will be given to questions or statements that relate to agenda items. Any questions submitted after 12 noon the day prior will be held over to the following Council Meeting.

The Public Question form can be downloaded from Council's website. Refer:

<https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/about-us/council/council-meetings/>

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 2170.

## **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, Peita Duncan;  
Administrator, Christian Zahra; and  
Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd.

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

Emma Appleton, Director Planning and Development;  
Agata Chmielewski, Director Community Wellbeing;  
Sarah Renner, Director Corporate and Customer Services;  
Debbie Wood, Director Infrastructure and Environment;  
Janine Morgan, Executive Manager Public Affairs; and  
Jacinta Stevens, Executive Manager Office of Council and CEO

### **1.2 Apologies**

### **1.3 Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Statement**

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

*“On behalf of Council, I recognise the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledge the Wurundjeri Willum Clan and Taungurung People as the Traditional Owners of lands within the City of Whittlesea.*

*I would also like to acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging.”*

### **1.4 Diversity and Good Governance Statement**

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

*“At the City of Whittlesea we are proud of our diversity and the many cultures, faiths and beliefs that make up our community. We strive to be an inclusive welcoming City that fosters active participation, wellbeing and connection to each other and this land. We commit as a Council to making informed decisions to benefit the people of the City of Whittlesea now and into the future, to support our community’s vision of A Place For All.”*

### **1.5 Acknowledgements**

**2 Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

**3 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting/s**

**Recommendation**

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

**Scheduled Meeting of Council held on 19 December 2023**

## **4 Public Questions, Petitions and Joint Letters**

### **4.1 Public Question Time**

### **4.2 Petitions**

#### **4.2.1 Australia Day Petition**

An electronic petition has been received from a large number of signatories requesting the following: 'We the undersigned, petition that Council should leave Australia Day alone. Australia Day means different things to many, it is still a day to be proud and acknowledge those who have served, fought, and died under our flag, defending our freedoms. For some Australia Day may be painful.'

'We believe that the debate about Australia Day is not the role of local Councils – who should be focused on local issues. We ask that Council leave Australia alone and hold community events that celebrate Australia Day, Acknowledge Indigenous Culture and mark Australia Day with Citizenship Ceremonies.'

#### **Officers' Recommendation**

**THAT Council note the petition from a large number of signatories requesting Council leave Australia Day alone and hold community events that celebrate Australia Day, Acknowledge Indigenous Culture and mark Australia Day with Citizenship Ceremonies.**

**4.3 Joint Letters**

No Joint Letters

## 5 Officers' Reports

### 5.1 Quarterly Corporate Performance Report - Q2 ended 31 December 2023

**Director/Executive Manager:** Director Customer & Corporate Services

**Report Author:** Unit Manager Financial Strategy & Performance

**In Attendance:** Chief Financial Officer

#### Executive Summary

This report provides the Quarterly Corporate Performance (Q2) outcomes and comprehensive summary for the period ended 31 December 2023 provided at **Attachment 1** relating to:

- Council's financial performance
- Community Plan Action Plan 2023-24
- Good Governance Actions
- 2023-24 Capital Works Program

#### Officers' Recommendation

**THAT Council:**

1. **Notes the Quarterly Corporate Performance Report for the period ended 31 December 2023 at Attachment 1.**
2. **Notes the financial performance for the period ended 31 December 2023 contained within Attachment 1.**

## Background / Key Information

### Introduction

The Quarterly Performance Report for the period 31 December 2023 has been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*. This report is designed to identify major variances against the December year to date budget.

The attached report (Attachment 1) includes a comprehensive summary of:

- Community Plan Action Plan 2023-24 to 31 December 2023;
- Good Governance actions to 31 December 2023;
- 2023-24 Capital Works Program to 31 December 2023; and
- Council's financial performance to 31 December 2023.

The report includes the following comparisons for the six months ended 31 December 2023:

- actual and budgeted operating revenues and expenses;
- actual and budgeted capital revenues and expenses;
- actual movements in the balance sheet; and
- actual movements in the cash flow statement.

### Community Plan Performance

The Community Plan 2021-25 includes 61 key initiatives. 56 related key actions are included in the Community Plan Action Plan for delivery in the 2023-24 financial year.

Of the 56 key actions included in the Community Plan Action Plan 2023-24:

- 8 actions are reported "Completed";
- 46 actions are reported "On Track";
- One action is reported "Monitor"; and
- One action is reported "Off Track".

These are the key actions currently reported "On Track", "Monitor", "Off Track" or "Completed":



Below are the key actions reported as “Monitor” and “Off Track”:

Key actions		Progress Status	OPEX Budget Status
<b>Goal 1: Connected community</b>			
Adopt the Whittlesea Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-2027		Off Track	N/A
<u>Comment:</u> We have been working with our local community and stakeholders to ensure they have the opportunity for meaningful input in the development of the Reconciliation Action Plan. A draft is currently in development and due for completion by June 2024.			
<b>Goal 2: Liveable neighbourhoods</b>			
<b>Goal 3: Strong local economy</b>			
<b>Goal 4: Sustainable environment</b>			
<b>Goal 5: High-performing organisation</b>			
Identify key initiatives that have a "direct and significant impact on community" for gender impact assessment under the Gender Equality Act 2020		Monitor	N/A
<u>Comment:</u> Gender Impact Assessments have been implemented for Strong Local Economy Strategy, Sustainable Environment Strategy, Connected Communities Strategy to help Council adequately plan to address gender needs and impacts of this work. We are embedding processes and systems to ensure that all significant pieces of work have a gender lens applied to them in the future.			

Of the 10 ongoing key actions included in the Community Plan Action Plan for delivery in the 2022-23 financial year, two actions have now been completed.

Please refer to:

- Attachment 2 for the detailed status report covering all 56 key actions, and
- Attachment 3 for the Quarter 2 2023-24 Performance Snapshot.

### Good Governance

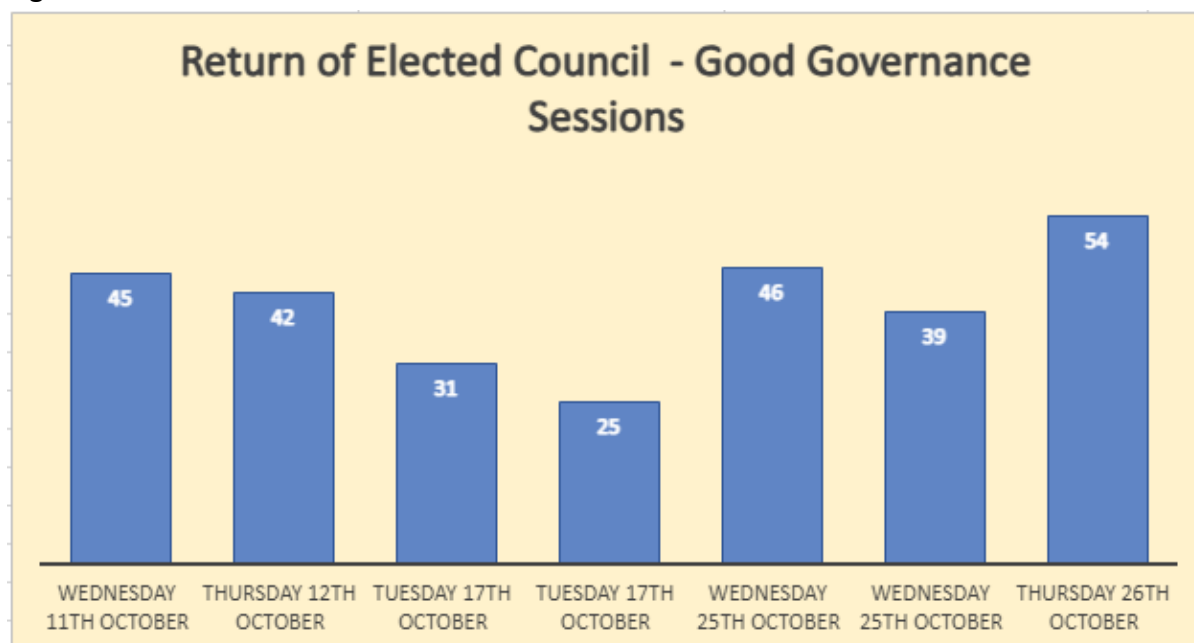
Council is committed to good governance and transparent decision making. During Q2 several actions were undertaken to ensure continuous improvements were made, and in preparation for the return of an elected Council.

Council’s preparation for the return to an elected Council is progressing well with all four workstreams: Empowering our People, IT and the Customer, Communicating our needs, and Ensuring Good Governance delivering against the program vision.



During October, 328 staff across 8 sessions attended the Return of Elected Council – Good Governance workshops (figure 1 below).

Figure 1



To promote positive and constructive interactions between Councillors and staff, whilst ensuring compliance with the separation between the governance functions of Councillors and the administrative and operational functions of the organisation, in October 2023, the CEO approved a Councillor/Staff Interaction Protocol.

The CEO approved a refined and clearly articulated Staff Gift Policy. To ensure consistency, the Staff Policy and Councillor Gift Policy significantly align.

The CEO and Executive Manager, Office of Council & CEO delivered a workshop in November to the Organisational Leadership team titled '*Returning to Normal*' covering information on the Program, what we've done so far, what's to come, election period, good governance, good governance gone wrong.

In December 2023, three '*Effective Council report writing*' workshops were held with another five workshops scheduled in early 2024. Approximately 189 Council staff have enrolled to participate in one of the eight workshops.

In preparation for the return of Councillors, and to enhance good governance practices, the following policies were thoroughly reviewed, released for community consultation, where required, and adopted by Council.

- Governance Rules incorporating a refined Election Period Policy
- Councillor Code of Conduct incorporating Councillor/Developer interactions and process for community complaints about a Councillor
- Councillor Communications Policy
- Community Engagement Policy
- Councillor Gift Policy
- Public Transparency Policy
- Public Interest Disclosure Procedures
- Councillor Expense Policy

Other key achievements this quarter relating to continuous and improved good governance included:

- Scheduled Council meetings continued to be held monthly to facilitate Council open and transparent decision-making. In October two additional unscheduled Council meetings were held. One being a Joint Council meeting between Whittlesea, Hume, and Mitchell Council's, the first of its kind across Victorian Local Councils. The second unscheduled meeting was to adopt the 2022-23 Annual Report.
- The Audit and Risk Committee, consisting of two Administrators and four independent members met on 15 November 2023 to consider several matters including Council's financial and performance reporting, assurance plan progress, risk management, internal audit outcomes, systems of internal control, annual procurement report, and legislative compliance.
- In relation to Freedom of Information, during this quarter there were:

New FOI Applications Received	12
Completed/Closed FOI Requests	12
Current FOI's In Progress	9

Recent FOI applications included:

- 6 requests for claims, inspection and maintenance records in relation to incident or injury
- 2 requests for details of complaints made against the applicant's properties
- 2 requests for financial records
- 1 request for all documents relating to a property
- 1 request for unresolved Snap, Send, Solve enquiries
- One privacy complaint was received during the quarter, however, upon investigation it was determined that no breach had occurred.

### Capital Program

Council adopted the 2023-24 Capital Works Program on 27 June 2023 with a budget of \$75.37 million. Capital Works Annual Budget also includes 2022-23 carry forwards of \$21.66 million, providing a total budget of \$97.03 million.

The financial expenditure performance of the Capital Works Program to 31 December 2023 is detailed below:

	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Variance \$'000	Adopted Budget \$'000	Annual Budget \$'000	Quarter 2 Forecast \$'000
Property	6,571	6,320	(251)	16,179	20,101	18,872
Plant and equipment	2,708	2,345	(363)	5,773	6,241	6,452
Infrastructure	16,757	15,984	(774)	53,413	70,684	59,774
	<b>26,036</b>	<b>24,649</b>	<b>(1,387)</b>	<b>75,365</b>	<b>97,026</b>	<b>85,098</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>						
New assets	11,747	11,586	(161)	38,040	41,743	35,027
Asset renewal	9,502	8,575	(927)	25,497	34,899	30,027
Asset expansion	59	55	(4)	-	1,776	1,561
Asset upgrade	4,728	4,433	(295)	11,828	18,608	18,484
<b>Total Capital works</b>	<b>26,036</b>	<b>24,649</b>	<b>(1,387)</b>	<b>75,365</b>	<b>97,026</b>	<b>85,098</b>

As at 31 December 2023, capital expenditure of \$26.04 million was \$1.39 million ahead of budget.

### Infrastructure Grants

A summary of recent infrastructure grants outcomes is included in the Grants Status Report (Attachment 3). A total of \$15.88 million in applications have been successful to date this financial year. Applications to the value of \$16.91 million are awaiting outcomes/announcements.

### Program Impacts and Carry forwards

The delivery of many projects within the 2022-23 capital works program were impacted throughout the year. Due to delays to planning, tendering and construction activities throughout the year, \$21.66 million has been carried forward to the 2023-24 financial year to enable completion of these works.

## Financial Performance

The Financial Performance Report for the period ended 31 December 2023 includes the following financial statements included in the Corporate Performance Report (Attachment 1):

- Comprehensive Income Statement;
- Balance Sheet;
- Statement of Cash Flows;
- Statement of Capital Works; and
- Summary of Reserves.

	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Variance \$'000	Adopted Budget \$'000	Quarter 2 Forecast \$'000
<b>Operating</b>					
Income	324,066	298,622	25,444	423,863	456,252
Expenditure	138,195	132,867	(5,328)	295,736	307,972
<b>Surplus / (deficit)</b>	<b>185,871</b>	<b>165,755</b>	<b>20,115</b>	<b>128,127</b>	<b>148,280</b>
Less					
Capital non-recurrent grants	(703)	(922)	219	(6,860)	(12,663)
*Developer contributions	(84,718)	(66,413)	(18,305)	(137,856)	(155,556)
<b>Adjusted underlying surplus / (deficit)</b>	<b>100,450</b>	<b>98,421</b>	<b>2,030</b>	<b>(16,589)</b>	<b>(19,939)</b>

\*Includes gifted assets which do not convert into cash

\*Includes developer contributions which are restricted by legislation and must be used for future infrastructure investment

For the six months ended 31 December 2023, Council recorded an operating surplus of \$185.87 million, which is \$20.12 million favourable to the year to date budget.

This surplus as reported, includes all revenue recognised in the financial period, including gifted subdivisional assets (non-monetary), developer contributions and grants towards capital works projects. It is important to note that the operating surplus is not a cash surplus; therefore, it does not convert to immediately available cash for Council. Significant amounts of the surplus are restricted by legislation and must be used for future infrastructure investment.

The operating result is a key figure to assess Council's financial performance. Although Council is a not-for-profit organisation, it should still generate a surplus to ensure future financial sustainability.

## 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, to deliver efficient and effective services and initiatives, and to make decisions in the best interest of our community and deliver value to our community.

## Considerations of *Local Government Act (2020)* Principles

### Financial Management

All matters raised in this report, which have financial implications, have been reflected in the Corporate Performance Report for the six months ended 31 December 2023 (Attachment 1).

The Chief Executive Officer notes, as required under section 97(3) of the Local Government Act 2020, is of the opinion a revised budget is not required.

### Community Consultation and Engagement

The Community were extensively engaged and consulted in developing the 2023-24 budget.

## Other Principles for Consideration as per the *Local Government Act (2020)*

### Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

(g) The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

### Public Transparency Principles

(a) Council decision making processes must be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of the *Local Government Act* or any other Act.

## Council Policy Considerations

### Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

No implications.

### Social, Cultural and Health

No implications.

### Economic

No implications.

### Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications

No implications.

## Implementation Strategy

### Communication

Reported information has been sourced and discussed with line management and project managers across the organisation. Consultation has also been undertaken with the Executive Leadership Team.

### Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* 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.

### Attachments

1. Corporate Performance Report [5.1.1 - 23 pages]
2. 2021-2025 Performance Report Q 2 2023-2024 [5.1.2 - 11 pages]
3. Capital Grant Status Update - December 2023 [5.1.3 - 2 pages]
4. Reserve December 2023 [5.1.4 - 3 pages]





# Quarterly Corporate Performance Report

for the period ended 31 December 2023

*A place for all*



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## Introduction and Key Highlights

### Community Plan Action Plan

- 8 of the 56 key actions included in the Community Plan Action Plan for delivery in the 2023-24 financial year have been completed. 46 of the key actions are on track while 1 is monitor and 1 is off track.

### Good Governance

- In preparation for the return of an elected Council, during October, 328 staff across 8 sessions attended the Return of Elected Council – Good Governance workshops.
- In October 2023, the CEO approved a Councillor/Staff Interaction Protocol and Staff Gift Policy.
- 12 Freedom of Information (FOI) requests were received during this period and 12 FOI requests were completed.
- One privacy complaint was received during the quarter, however, upon investigation it was determined that no breach had occurred.

### Capital Performance

- Council adopted the 2023-24 Capital Works Program on 27 June 2023 with a budget of \$75.37 million. Capital Works Annual Budget also includes 2022-23 carry forwards of \$21.66 million, providing a total budget amount of \$97.03 million.
- Year to date Capital Works actual expenditure is \$26.04 million against year to date Annual Budget of \$24.65 million, which is \$1.39 million ahead of budget.

The below table includes a summary of the Capital Works program.

	Capital Works Budget \$'000
Adopted Budget 2023-24	75,365
Additional Carry forwards from 2022-23	21,662
<b>Annual Budget</b>	<b>97,026</b>
Anticipated Carry Forwards 2023-24	11,928
Approved Budget Adjustments Q2	-
<b>End of year forecast at Quarter 2</b>	<b>85,098</b>



## Financial Performance

For the six months ended 31 December 2023, Council recorded an operating surplus of \$185.87 million, which is \$20.12 million favourable to the year to date budget.

	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Variance \$'000	Adopted Budget \$'000	Quarter 2 Forecast \$'000
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Income	324,066	298,622	25,444	423,863	456,252
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<b>Adjusted underlying surplus / (deficit)</b>	<b>100,450</b>	<b>98,421</b>	<b>2,030</b>	<b>(16,589)</b>	<b>(19,939)</b>

\*Includes gifted assets which do not convert into cash

\*Includes developer contributions which are restricted by legislation and must be used for future infrastructure investment

- The forecast for the year ending 30 June 2024 is expected to have an operating surplus of \$148.28 million, which is \$20.15 million favourable to the Adopted Budget.
- This surplus as reported includes all revenue recognised in the financial period, including gifted assets (non-monetary), developer contributions and grants towards capital works projects. It is important to note that the operating surplus is not a cash surplus; therefore, it does not convert to immediately available cash for Council. Significant amounts of the surplus are restricted by legislation and must be used for future infrastructure investment.

## Community Plan Action Plan

The Community Plan 2021-2025 includes 61 key initiatives. 56 related key actions are included in the Community Plan Action Plan for delivery in the 2023-24 financial year.

Of the 56 key actions included in the Community Plan Action Plan 2023-24:

- 8 actions are reported "Completed"
- 46 actions are reported "On Track";
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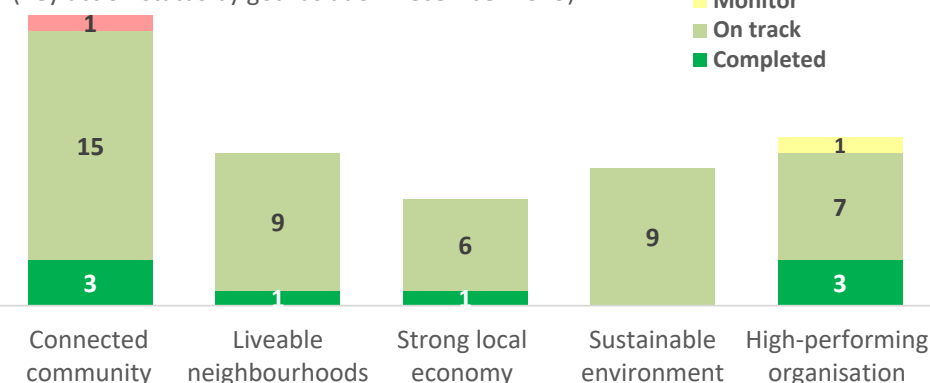
These are the key actions currently reported "On Track", "Monitor", "Off Track" or "Completed":

*A place for all*



## Community Plan Action Plan 2023-24

(Key action status by goal as at 31 December 2023)



Below are the key actions reported as “Monitor” and “Off Track”:

Key actions	Progress Status	OPEX Budget Status
<b>Goal 1: Connected community</b>		
Adopt the Whittlesea Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-2027	Off Track	N/A
<u>Comment:</u> We have been working with our local community and stakeholders to ensure they have the opportunity for meaningful input in the development of the Reconciliation Action Plan. A draft is currently in development and due for completion by June 2024.		
<b>Goal 2: Liveable neighbourhoods</b>		
<b>Goal 3: Strong local economy</b>		
<b>Goal 4: Sustainable environment</b>		
<b>Goal 5: High-performing organisation</b>		
Identify key initiatives that have a "direct and significant impact on community" for gender impact assessment under the Gender Equality Act 2020	Monitor	N/A
<u>Comment:</u> Gender Impact Assessments have been implemented for Strong Local Economy Strategy, Sustainable Environment Strategy, Connected Communities Strategy to help Council adequately plan to address gender needs and impacts of this work. We are		



Key actions		Progress Status	OPEX Budget Status
embedding processes and systems to ensure that all significant pieces of work have a gender lens applied to them in the future.			

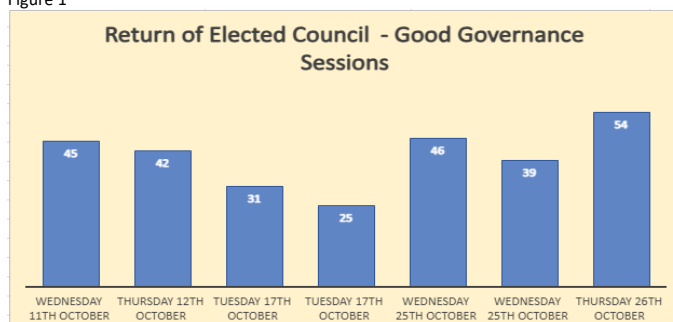
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Council is committed to good governance and transparent decision making. During Q2 several actions were undertaken to ensure continuous improvements were made, and in preparation for the return of an elected Council.

Council's preparation for the return to an elected Council is progressing well with all four workstreams: Empowering our People, IT and the Customer, Communicating our needs, and Ensuring Good Governance delivering against the Program vision.

During October, 328 staff across 8 sessions attended the Return of Elected Council – Good Governance workshops (figure 1 below).

Figure 1



To promote positive and constructive interactions between Councillors and staff, whilst ensuring compliance with the separation between the governance functions of Councillors and the administrative and operational functions of the organisation, in October 2023, the CEO approved a Councillor/Staff Interaction Protocol.

The CEO approved a refined and clearly articulated Staff Gift Policy. To ensure consistency, the Staff Policy and Councillor Gift Policy significantly align.



The CEO and Executive Manager, Office of Council & CEO delivered a workshop in November to the Organisational Leadership team titled *'Returning to Normal'* covering information on the Program, what we've done so far, what's to come, election period, good governance, good governance gone wrong.

In December 2023, three *'Effective Council report writing'* workshops were held with another five workshops scheduled in early 2024. Approximately 189 Council staff have enrolled to participate in one of the eight workshops.

In preparation for the return of Councillors, and to enhance good governance practices, the following policies were thoroughly reviewed, released for community consultation, where required, and adopted by Council.

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- Councillor Communications Policy
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- Councillor Gift Policy
- Public Transparency Policy
- Public Interest Disclosure Procedures
- Councillor Expense Policy

Other key achievements this quarter relating to continuous and improved good governance included:

- Scheduled Council meetings continued to be held monthly to facilitate Council open and transparent decision-making. In October two additional unscheduled Council meetings were held. One being a Joint Council meeting between Whittlesea, Hume, and Mitchell Council's, the first of its kind across Victorian Local Councils. The second unscheduled meeting was to adopt the 2022-23 Annual Report.
- The Audit and Risk Committee, consisting of two Administrators and four independent members met on 15 November 2023 to consider several matters including Council's financial and performance reporting, assurance plan progress, risk management, internal audit outcomes, systems of internal control, annual procurement report, and legislative compliance.
- In relation to Freedom of Information, during this quarter there were:



New FOI Applications Received	12
Completed/Closed FOI Requests	12
Current FOI's In Progress	9

Recent FOI applications included:

- 6 requests for claims, inspection and maintenance records in relation to incident or injury
- 2 requests for details of complaints made against the applicant's properties
- 2 requests for financial records
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## Capital Performance

### Financial Update

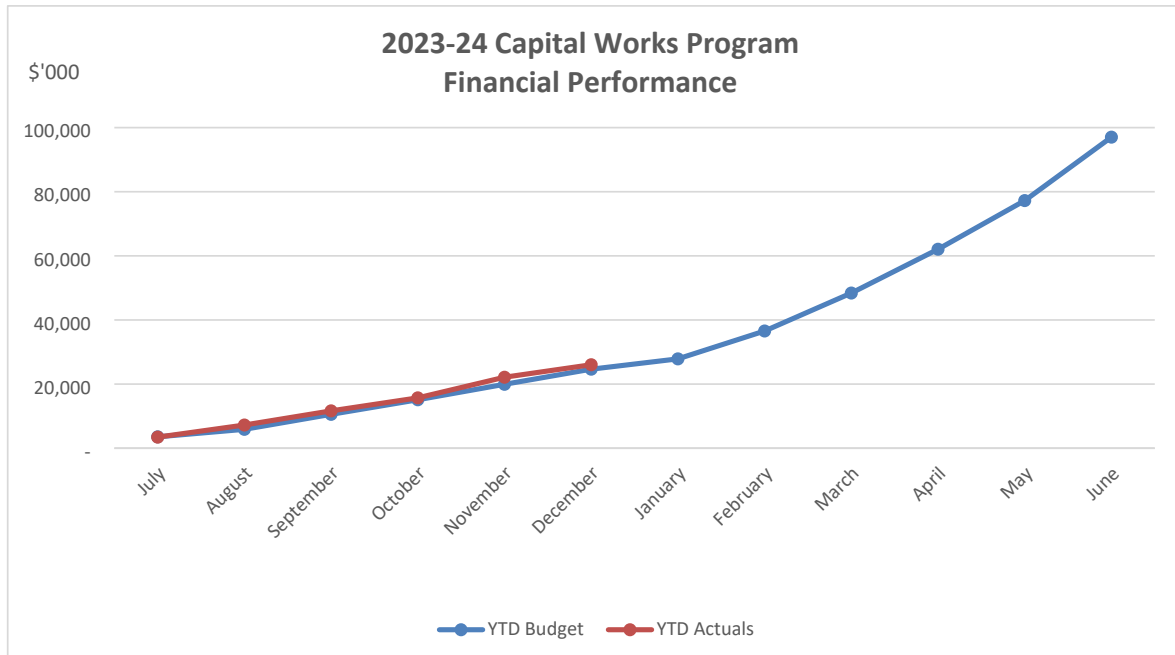
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The financial expenditure performance of the Capital Works Program to 31 December 2023 is detailed below:

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Plant and equipment	2,708	2,345	(363)	5,773	6,241	6,452
Infrastructure	16,757	15,984	(774)	53,413	70,684	59,774
	<b>26,036</b>	<b>24,649</b>	<b>(1,387)</b>	<b>75,365</b>	<b>97,026</b>	<b>85,098</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>						
New assets	11,747	11,586	(161)	38,040	41,743	35,027
Asset renewal	9,502	8,575	(927)	25,497	34,899	30,027
Asset expansion	59	55	(4)	-	1,776	1,561
Asset upgrade	4,728	4,433	(295)	11,828	18,608	18,484
<b>Total Capital works</b>	<b>26,036</b>	<b>24,649</b>	<b>(1,387)</b>	<b>75,365</b>	<b>97,026</b>	<b>85,098</b>



As at 31 December 2023, capital expenditure of \$26.04 million was \$1.39 million ahead of budget.



## Program Impacts and Carry forwards

The delivery of many projects within the 2022-23 capital works program were impacted throughout the year. Due to delays to planning, tendering and construction activities throughout the year, \$21.66 million has been carried forward to the 2023-24 financial year to enable completion of these works.

## Infrastructure Grants Update

A summary of recent infrastructure grants outcomes is included in the Grants Status Report (Attachment 3). A total of \$15.88 million in applications have been successful to date this financial year. Applications to the value of \$16.91 million are awaiting outcomes/ announcements.

## Financial Performance

### Operating Performance

The Financial Performance Report for the period ended 31 December 2023 includes the following financial statements included in the Corporate Performance Report (Attachment 1):



- Comprehensive Income Statement;
- Balance Sheet;
- Statement of Cash Flows;
- Statement of Capital Works; and
- Summary of Reserves.

	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Variance \$'000	Adopted Budget \$'000	Quarter 2 Forecast \$'000
<b>Operating</b>					
Income	324,066	298,622	25,444	423,863	456,252
Expenditure	138,195	132,867	(5,328)	295,736	307,972
<b>Surplus / (deficit)</b>	<b>185,871</b>	<b>165,755</b>	<b>20,115</b>	<b>128,127</b>	<b>148,280</b>
Less					
Capital non-recurrent grants	(703)	(922)	219	(6,860)	(12,663)
*Developer contributions	(84,718)	(66,413)	(18,305)	(137,856)	(155,556)
<b>Adjusted underlying surplus / (deficit)</b>	<b>100,450</b>	<b>98,421</b>	<b>2,030</b>	<b>(16,589)</b>	<b>(19,939)</b>

\*Includes gifted assets which do not convert into cash

\*Includes developer contributions which are restricted by legislation and must be used for future infrastructure investment

For the six months ended 31 December 2023, Council recorded an operating surplus of \$185.87 million, which is \$20.12 million favourable to the year to date budget.

This surplus as reported includes all revenue recognised in the financial period, including gifted subdivisional assets (non-monetary), developer contributions and grants towards capital works projects. It is important to note that the operating surplus is not a cash surplus; therefore, it does not convert to immediately available cash for Council. Significant amounts of the surplus are restricted by legislation and must be used for future infrastructure investment. The operating result is a key figure to assess Council's financial performance. Although Council is a not-for-profit organisation, it should still generate a surplus to ensure future financial sustainability.

After eliminating non-recurrent capital grants and other items, the adjusted underlying surplus is \$100.45 million, which is \$2.03 million favourable to budget. An adjusted underlying surplus is the net surplus for the year adjusted for non-recurrent capital grants and contributions. It is an accepted measure of financial sustainability as it is not impacted by non-recurring or once-off items of revenue and expenses that can often mask the operating results.

## Financial position

The financial position as at 31 December 2023 shows a cash and investment balance of \$301.66 million compared with \$301.17 million as at 30 June 2023.





The cash and investment balance was sufficient to meet the restricted cash of \$189.54 million at the end of December 2023.

	YTD Actual \$'000	Audited 2023 \$'000
Financial assets	301,659	301,173
Restricted funds	189,542	168,936
Unrestricted cash and cash equivalents	<b>112,118</b>	<b>132,237</b>
Intended allocations	116,862	120,185
<b>Net Available cash</b>	<b>(4,744)</b>	<b>12,052</b>

Restricted cash is the amount of cash holdings Council requires to meet external restrictions such as trust funds and statutory reserves. Cash for intended allocations includes cash held to fund future capital works and project works.



## Financial Statements

### Comprehensive Income Statement

for the period ended 31 December 2023

	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Variance \$'000	Adopted Budget \$'000	Quarter 2 Forecast \$'000
<b>Income</b>					
Rates and charges	204,473	204,673	(200)	206,509	206,809
Statutory fees and fines	9,817	8,488	1,330	17,561	18,857
User fees	4,883	4,555	328	10,550	10,552
Grants - operating	9,123	7,738	1,385	30,765	30,718
Grants - capital	703	922	(219)	8,129	13,933
Contributions - monetary	35,024	14,785	20,239	29,571	50,967
Contributions - non-monetary assets	49,694	51,628	(1,934)	108,285	104,589
Net gain on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	625	397	228	744	744
Share of Net Profits of Associate	-	-	-	200	200
Other income	9,725	5,437	4,288	11,549	18,883
<b>Total income</b>	<b>324,066</b>	<b>298,622</b>	<b>25,444</b>	<b>423,863</b>	<b>456,252</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employee benefits	59,710	57,070	(2,640)	113,109	115,395
Materials and services	42,363	41,397	(966)	112,045	119,163
Depreciation	25,383	24,238	(1,144)	48,478	50,478
Amortisation - intangible assets	-	-	-	130	130
Amortisation - right of use assets	-	-	-	498	498
Bad and doubtful debts	1,391	1,000	(391)	2,500	2,500
Borrowing costs	69	64	(5)	127	127
Finance costs - leases	-	-	-	42	42
Other expenses	9,280	9,098	(181)	18,807	19,637
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>138,195</b>	<b>132,867</b>	<b>(5,328)</b>	<b>295,736</b>	<b>307,972</b>
<b>Total comprehensive result</b>	<b>185,871</b>	<b>165,755</b>	<b>20,115</b>	<b>128,127</b>	<b>148,280</b>
<b>Less</b>					
Capital grants - non recurrent	(703)	(922)	219	(6,860)	(12,663)
*Developer contributions	(84,718)	(66,413)	(18,305)	(137,856)	(155,556)
<b>Adjusted underlying surplus / (deficit)</b>	<b>100,450</b>	<b>98,421</b>	<b>2,030</b>	<b>(16,589)</b>	<b>(19,939)</b>



Total year to date income is \$25.44 million favourable to budget, which is primarily due to favourable variances in the following:

- \$20.24 million favourable to budget in monetary contributions as a result of greater than anticipated contributions received as a result of increased activation of s173 agreements and unbudgeted contributions received from a developer for works in kind relating to the West Wollert Community Centre project that the developer could no longer deliver
- \$4.29 million favourable to budget in other income attributed to higher interest received on investments following interest rate increases and unbudgeted income received for removal of mercury vapor streetlights
- \$1.39 million favourable to budget in operating grants primarily due to \$0.6 million funding received relating to Maternal and Child Health in line with its service delivery and a \$0.11 million grant received relating to the Early Years strategic project
- \$1.33 million favourable to budget in statutory fees and fines attributable to an increase in the number of fines issued as a result of updated and new parking agreements with commercial properties and supervision fees being higher than budgeted as a result of growth in construction activities.

These variances are offset by (\$1.93 million) unfavourable to budget in non-monetary contributions relating to a backlog of gifted infrastructure assets not recognised.

Total year to date expenditure is (\$5.33 million) unfavourable to budget, which is primarily due to the unfavourable variance in the following:

- (\$2.64 million) unfavourable to budget in employee expenses due to additional costs associated with increased workcover levy and with the increase in employee payments in line with adopted EBA
- (\$1.14 million) unfavourable to budget in depreciation as a result of an increase in the valuation of Council assets and significant gifted assets being received after the budget was adopted, therefore not factored into the budget for depreciation
- (\$0.97) million unfavourable to budget in materials and services, primarily due to lodgement of fees with Fines Victoria as a result of non-payment of fines in line with the process outlined in the Infringements Act and the implementation of the Customer and Digital Experience program (CX/DX), which is fully funded through the Technology Improvement reserve.

The forecast for the year ending 30 June 2024 is expected to have an operating surplus of \$148.28 million, which is \$20.15 million favourable to the adopted budget. Key variances contributing to this favourable variance to the budget include:

- \$21.4 million favourable to budget in monetary contributions as a result of greater than anticipated contributions received as a result of increased activation of s173 agreements and unbudgeted contributions received from a developer for works in kind relating to the West Wollert Community Centre project that the developer could no longer deliver
- \$7.33 million favourable to budget in other income primarily due to higher interest anticipated to be received on investments as a result of increase in interest rates



- \$5.8 million favourable to budget in capital grants due to unbudgeted grants expected to be received, particularly for the Quarry Hills priority links, Granite Hills Regional Park implementation and the Whittlesea Public Gardens projects
- \$1.3 million favourable to budget in statutory fees and fines due to an increase in the number of fines issued as a result of updated and new parking agreements with commercial properties and supervision fees being higher than budgeted as a result of growth in construction activities.

These favourable variances are partially offset by the following unfavourable variances:

- (\$0.83 million) unfavourable to budget in other expenses mainly due to additional grant payments made associated with Jobs Victoria which is offset by the funds received, increased insurance small claims leading to higher excess costs and an increase in rent at Westfield as per renewed rental lease agreement and additional rent relating to the newly opened Mernda Town Centre Library
- (\$2 million) unfavourable to budget in depreciation due to an increase in the valuation of Council assets as a result of a revaluation and significant gifted assets being received after the budget was adopted
- (\$2.29 million) unfavourable to budget in employee expenses due to additional costs associated with increased workcover levy and with the increase in employee payments in line with adopted EBA
- (3.7 million) unfavourable to budget in non-monetary contributions due to a slight downturn in new subdivisions reaching practical completion throughout the municipality
- (\$7.12 million) unfavourable to budget in materials and services primarily due to remediation works on contaminated land owned by Council, lodgement of fees with Fines Victoria as a result of non-payment of fines in line with the process outlined in the Infringements Act and the implementation of the CX/DX, which is fully funded through the Technology Improvement reserve.



## Financial Position

for the period ended 31 December 2023

	YTD Actual \$'000	2022-23 Actual \$'000
<b>Financial assets</b>		
<b>Cash and cash equivalents</b>		
Cash on hand	4	4
Cash at bank	1,054	1,074
Term deposit	25,602	50,095
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>26,660</b>	<b>51,173</b>
<b>Other financial assets</b>		
Term deposits	275,000	250,000
<b>Total other financial assets</b>	<b>275,000</b>	<b>250,000</b>
<b>Total financial assets</b>	<b>301,660</b>	<b>301,173</b>
<b>Restricted cash and investments</b>		
Trust funds and deposits	20,533	34,320
Asset development reserves	169,009	134,616
<b>Total restricted cash and investments</b>	<b>189,542</b>	<b>168,936</b>
<b>Total unrestricted cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>112,118</b>	<b>132,237</b>
<b>Intended allocations</b>		
Cash held to fund Carried forward capital works	11,928	21,662
Unexpended grants and subsidies	26,866	20,455
Asset replacement reserves	78,068	78,068
<b>Total unrestricted cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>116,862</b>	<b>120,185</b>



## Balance Sheet

as at 31 December 2023

	YTD Actual \$'000	2022-23 Actual \$'000	Net Movement \$'000
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	26,659	51,173	(24,514)
Trade and other receivables	182,300	40,669	141,631
Other financial assets	275,000	250,000	25,000
Inventories	162	106	56
Other assets	5,882	6,237	(355)
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>490,003</b>	<b>348,185</b>	<b>141,818</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Investment in associate	2,893	2,893	0
Other financial assets	22	22	0
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	4,390,593	4,366,282	24,311
Intangible assets	279	279	(0)
Right of use assets	2,412	2,412	(0)
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>4,396,199</b>	<b>4,371,888</b>	<b>24,312</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>4,886,202</b>	<b>4,720,073</b>	<b>166,130</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables	43,081	23,830	19,251
Trust funds and deposits	20,510	32,440	(11,930)
Provisions	20,512	21,672	(1,160)
Lease liabilities	588	588	0
Interest-bearing liabilities	1,235	2,449	(1,214)
Unearned Income	26,889	25,542	1,347
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>112,815</b>	<b>106,521</b>	<b>6,294</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Provisions	1,651	1,651	0
Lease liabilities	1,880	1,880	0
Interest-bearing liabilities	9,191	9,191	0
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>12,723</b>	<b>12,722</b>	<b>(0)</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>125,538</b>	<b>119,243</b>	<b>6,294</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>4,760,665</b>	<b>4,600,830</b>	<b>159,835</b>
<b>Equity</b>			
Accumulated surplus	3,058,503	2,923,827	134,676
Reserves	1,702,161	1,677,003	25,158
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>4,760,665</b>	<b>4,600,830</b>	<b>159,835</b>



## Cash balance

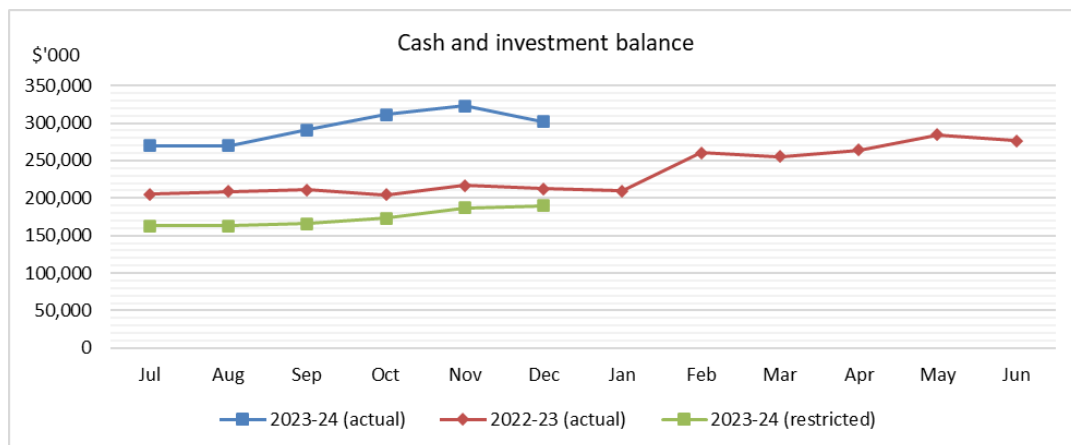
The chart below shows Council's cash balance year to date for 2023-24 against the cash balance from the 2022-23 and restricted cash. The chart portrays:

- Actual 2023-24 cash balance
- Actual 2022-23 cash balance
- Restricted cash

Restricted cash includes:

- Trust funds and deposits
- Non-discretionary reserves including developer contributions and subdivision levy (parkland contributions)

The cash and investments balance is currently (\$6.71 million) unfavourable to the budgeted year end position. Every opportunity is taken to invest surplus cash to maximise investment returns.



Note: Cash and investments include term deposits with a maturity date exceeding 90 days which are classified as other financial assets in the Balance Sheet.

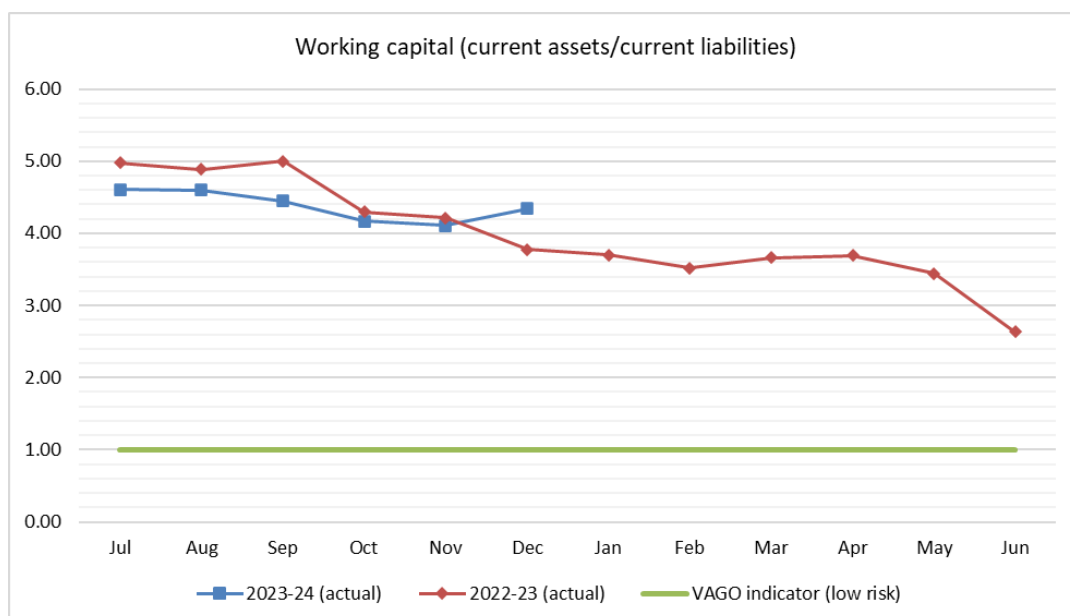


## Working capital

The chart portrays:

- Actual 2023-24 working capital
- Actual 2022-23 working capital

Council's working capital is forecast to remain well above the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) liquidity indicator as shown below.



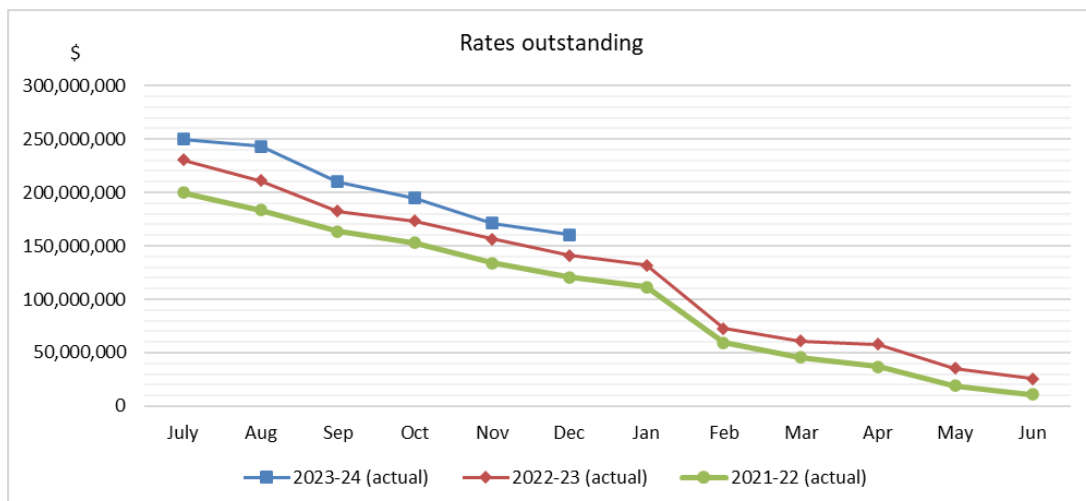
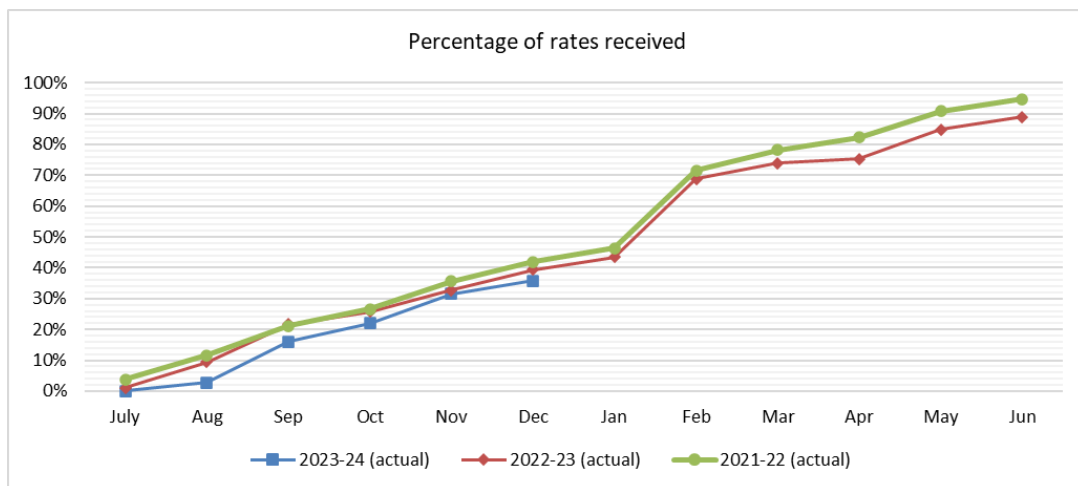




## Rates debtors

As at 1 July 2023, \$222.11 million was raised in rates and charges to Council's property base. At 31 December 2023, 36% of the rates raised have been collected compared to the same period of the 2022–23 financial year of 39%.

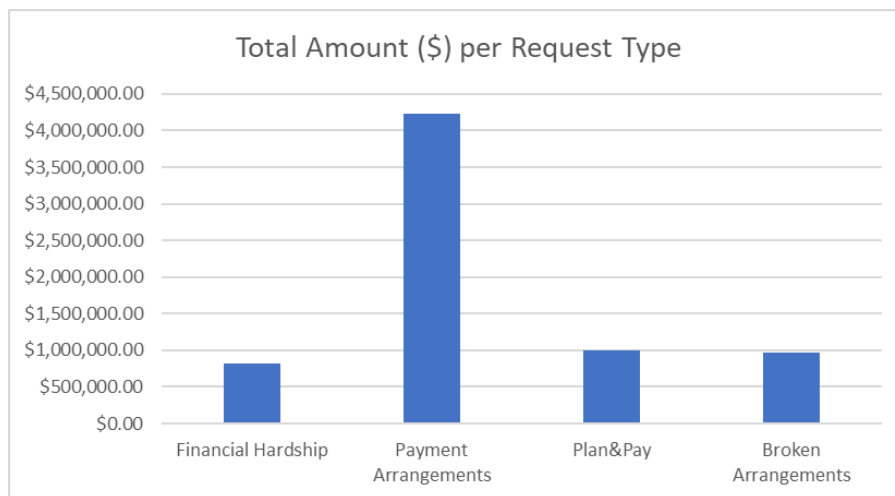
The following graphs show that current collection trends are slightly behind the 2022–23 collection trend.





## Financial Arrangements

To help reduce debt to Council, the following initiatives are being implemented.



Request Type	Total Amount (\$) per Request Type
Financial Hardship	\$814,173.05
Payment Arrangement	\$4,229,418.64
Plan&Pay	\$1,000,781.61
Broken Arrangements	\$968,406.91



## Cash Flows

for the period ended 31 December 2023

	2023-24 Inflows / (Outflows) YTD Actual \$'000	2022-23 Inflows / (Outflows) Actual \$'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>		
Rates	66,426	184,640
Statutory fees and fines	8,674	15,223
User fees	1,183	4,853
Grants - operating	9,123	38,590
Grants - capital	703	12,630
Contributions - Monetary	35,024	23,187
Trust funds and deposits taken	18,527	6,598
Other receipts	3,110	4,289
Interest received	6,970	7,742
Net GST refund	(132)	(184)
Payments to employees	(60,870)	(103,112)
Payments to suppliers	(51,430)	(86,783)
Short-term, low value and variable lease payments	(361)	(662)
Trust funds and deposits repaid	(1,835)	(8,478)
Other payments	(7,933)	(15,772)
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities</b>	<b>27,179</b>	<b>82,761</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Payments for infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	(26,035)	(55,290)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	625	685
Payments for investments	(25,000)	(30,000)
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities</b>	<b>(50,411)</b>	<b>(84,605)</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>		
Finance costs	(69)	(192)
Repayment of borrowings	(1,213)	(2,364)
Interest paid - lease liability	-	(91)
Repayment of lease liabilities	0	(898)
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities</b>	<b>(1,282)</b>	<b>(3,545)</b>
<b>Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>(24,514)</b>	<b>(5,389)</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	51,173	56,562
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period</b>	<b>26,659</b>	<b>51,173</b>



## Capital Works

for the period ended 31 December 2023

	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Variance \$'000	Adopted Budget	Annual Budget \$'000	Quarter 2 Forecast \$'000
<b>Property</b>						
Land	3,224	3,090	(134)	3,100	3,300	3,524
Building	1,073	1,356	282	3,854	5,986	4,206
Building improvements	2,273	1,874	(399)	9,225	10,815	11,143
<b>Total Property</b>	<b>6,571</b>	<b>6,320</b>	<b>(251)</b>	<b>16,179</b>	<b>20,101</b>	<b>18,872</b>
<b>Plant and equipment</b>						
Plant, machinery & equipment	1,630	638	(992)	3,672	3,672	4,172
Fixtures, fittings & furniture	511	1,078	567	985	1,283	985
Computers & telecommunications	568	630	62	1,116	1,286	1,295
<b>Total plant and equipment</b>	<b>2,708</b>	<b>2,345</b>	<b>(363)</b>	<b>5,773</b>	<b>6,241</b>	<b>6,452</b>
<b>Infrastructure</b>						
Roads	4,340	4,711	371	15,455	18,869	17,377
Bridges	275	389	114	350	1,224	1,224
Footpaths & cycleways	653	1,200	547	4,490	6,671	5,323
Drainage	353	404	51	950	1,081	1,081
Recreation, leisure & community facilities	3,487	1,919	(1,568)	7,989	10,040	7,870
Parks, open space & streetscapes	6,153	6,151	(3)	20,054	27,720	21,262
Carparks	45	55	10	665	665	1,335
Waste management	-	-	-	561	561	561
Other infrastructure	1,451	1,155	(295)	2,899	3,853	3,741
<b>Total infrastructure</b>	<b>16,757</b>	<b>15,984</b>	<b>(774)</b>	<b>53,413</b>	<b>70,684</b>	<b>59,774</b>
<b>Total capital works</b>	<b>26,036</b>	<b>24,649</b>	<b>(1,387)</b>	<b>75,365</b>	<b>97,026</b>	<b>85,098</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>						
New assets	11,747	11,586	(161)	38,040	41,743	35,027
Asset renewal	9,502	8,575	(927)	25,497	34,899	30,027
Asset expansion	59	55	(4)	-	1,776	1,561
Asset upgrade	4,728	4,433	(295)	11,828	18,608	18,484
<b>Total capital works</b>	<b>26,036</b>	<b>24,649</b>	<b>(1,387)</b>	<b>75,365</b>	<b>97,026</b>	<b>85,098</b>



## Reserves

as at 31 December 2023

	2022-23 Actual \$'000	Net transfers \$'000	2023-24 YTD Actual \$'000
<b>Discretionary reserves</b>			
LASF defined benefit plan liability	3,739	-	3,739
Native vegetation offset site maintenance ( <i>App. 5</i> )	1,572	-	1,572
Strategic investment reserve ( <i>App. 1</i> )	28,914	-	28,914
Strategic properties reserve ( <i>App. 6</i> )	4,819	-	4,819
Synthetic turf replacement reserve	1,880	-	1,880
Technology improvement fund reserve ( <i>App. 3</i> )	5,264	-	5,264
Transport Infrastructure reserve	28	-	28
Waste reserve ( <i>App. 2</i> )	4,270	-	4,270
Aboriginal Gathering Place	6,000	-	6,000
Strategic Operational Projects	3,196	-	3,196
Regional Aquatic and Sports Reserve	14,283	-	14,283
Resilience and Emergency Management	449	-	449
Plant replacement reserve	-	-	-
Community Grants reserve	-	-	-
	<b>74,415</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>74,415</b>
<b>Non-discretionary reserves</b>			
Community Infrastructure Levy	10,908	846	11,754
Developers contributions	99,588	20,143	119,731
Donnybrook Woodstock ICP	7,611	3,110	10,720
Epping Plaza DC	1,026	26	1,052
Net gain compensation	1,587	41	1,628
Non standard street lighting contribution	3,901	-	3,901
Parklands contributions (open space)	10,153	906	11,059
Planning permits drainage ( <i>App. 4</i> )	10,641	84	10,725
Plenty Road duplication	80	2	82
Purchase of Lutheran Church and Cemetery	380	-	380
Street tree contributions reserve	686	-	686
Traffic lights construction	943	-	943
	<b>147,504</b>	<b>25,158</b>	<b>172,662</b>
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>221,920</b>	<b>25,158</b>	<b>247,078</b>
<b>Reconciliation to balance sheet</b>			
Asset revaluation reserve	1,455,083	-	1,455,083
	<b>1,455,083</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,455,083</b>
	<b>1,677,003</b>	<b>25,158</b>	<b>1,702,161</b>

### Community Plan Action Plan 2023-2024 - Final (Incl. budgets GL codes)

Key initiative Project ID/Action name	Progress status	OPEX Budget status	Lead Department	Lead Directorate
<b>Goal 1 Connected community</b>				
<b>#01 Improve safety and perceptions of community safety in public spaces including for people with disabilities and their carers, women, girls and gender diverse people</b>				
OP-10603 Consult and develop the community local law to make our municipality safer	Completed	N/A	Emergency Management and Regulatory Programs	Planning and Development
Comment: Council adopted the Community Local Law 2024 on 21 November 2023. An extensive communication and education campaign is underway to prepare for the Local Law taking effect on 1 July 2024.				
<b>#02 Prevent and respond to family and gender-based violence by working with local service providers and the community</b>				
OP-10389 Engage with culturally and linguistically diverse community groups to improve access to Prevention of Violence Against Women programs, services, and resources	On Track	On budget	Community and Place	Community Wellbeing
Comment: Council has engaged with playgroup facilitators and community groups to inform the development of gender equity resources for early years settings such as playgroups, kindergartens and child care.				
<b>#03 Increase responsible pet ownership and reduce the adverse impact of domestic animals on wildlife</b>				
OP-10770 Implement new cat management initiatives, including the cat confinement local law	Completed	N/A	Compliance and Environmental Health	Planning and Development
Comment: The new cat management initiatives including the cat confinement local law was successfully introduced on 1st August, following an extensive communication and education campaign with the community. There has been no increase to cats coming to the Wat Djerring facility and Council continue to work with cat owners and residents to ensure the new regulations have impact.				
<b>#04 Support our community to be safer, better prepared and more resilient to emergency events and disasters through increased access to information and education</b>				
OP-10834 Increase community emergency resilience and preparedness, including for people most at risk or at risk communities, to address emergency incidents such as fire, storm, flood, and pandemic	On Track	N/A	Emergency Management and Regulatory Programs	Planning and Development
Comment: Council facilitated a Bushfire Scenario for the township of Whittlesea on 10 October 2023. 120 residents attended the community event with emergency services to increase preparedness to respond to emergency events.				
OP-10683 Deliver the Emergency Services Exhibition in partnership with service organisations to increase community awareness, build relationships and educate around emergencies	Completed	On budget	Emergency Management and Regulatory Programs	Planning and Development
Comment: The 27th Annual Blessing of the Fleet was held on 7 October 2023 with community invited to attend the event for the first time. We delivered the Emergency Services Exhibition as part of the event to increase community awareness around emergency management which was well received.				

### Community Plan Action Plan 2023-2024 - Final (Incl. budgets GL codes)

Key initiative Project ID/Action name	Progress status	OPEX Budget status	Lead Department	Lead Directorate
<b>#06 Deliver a Connected Communities Strategy that will enhance social inclusion, civic participation, health, wellbeing and safety and reflect and celebrate the diversity of religions, cultures, heritages, abilities, ages, gender and sexual orientation which make City of Whittlesea a place for all</b>				
OP-10446 Finalise the Connected Community Strategy to guide how we create a socially cohesive, healthy, safe, and engaged community	On Track	N/A	Community and Place	Community Wellbeing
Comment: The Connected Community Strategy was adopted by Council on 19 December 2023.				
<b>#07 Strengthen community connections through a vibrant arts and events scene celebrating our diverse culture and heritage, activated open spaces and facilities and local markets</b>				
OP-10833 Increase partnerships with community groups and event providers so more people attend our vibrant events	On Track	N/A	Active and Creative Communities	Community Wellbeing
Comment: Council has opened the new Community Grants which are available all year round to support local events. Medium and Large grants are now available for application on a quarterly basis, rather than an annual or six monthly basis. Now that the Community Local Law 2024 has been endorsed, an event permit process will be developed and integrate a street party permit, expanding the opportunities for event organisers to stage events within the municipality.				
<b>#08 Establish a Gathering Place to increase connections to culture, heritage, land and healing for Aboriginal people</b>				
CW-10471 Complete design and commence construction of an Aboriginal Gathering Place to foster connections to culture, heritage, land, and healing	On Track	N/A	Capital Delivery	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment: Council has progressed the delivery of the Aboriginal Gathering Place. We awarded the contract for the design and construction of the facility. We anticipate the delivery of the Aboriginal Gathering Place to commence early to mid 2024.				
<b>#10 Deliver an inclusive leadership program to support community members to develop their leadership skills and potential</b>				
OP-10308 Continue to deliver the Community Leadership Program to support residents' leadership skills across community and civic projects	On Track	Under budget	Community and Place	Community Wellbeing
Comment: This year 99 residents developed practical skills and knowledge over four courses. All suburbs in the City of Whittlesea were represented and 44% of the participants has a first language other than English. 2% of the participants were non-binary, 68% were female and 30% male.				
<b>#11 Advocate for more mental health services and prevention programs for our community including young people</b>				
OP-10815 Provide advice and support Neami National and other partners to establish the Mental Health Local Service for Adults and Older Adults	On Track	N/A	Community and Place	Community Wellbeing
Comment: The Whittlesea Mental Health Local Service for Adults and Older Adults in South Morang provides treatment, care and support both on site and in an outreach capacity. Council will continue to facilitate connections with current service providers in the municipality to ensure that NEAMI National is well embedded in the municipality.				
<b>#12 Work with our community and partner organisations to support older residents to access quality local services</b>				
OP-10836 Increase support to senior citizen groups via an expanded grants program	On Track	N/A	Ageing Well	Community Wellbeing
Comment: Senior citizen groups were supported to enter applications last financial year. These were all received, and the funding went out before Christmas. A new program is being developed for the new year for an additional \$70k.				

### Community Plan Action Plan 2023-2024 - Final (Incl. budgets GL codes)

Key initiative Project ID/Action name		Progress status	OPEX Budget status	Lead Department	Lead Directorate
#13 Commence construction of a leisure and wellbeing facility in Mernda					
CW-11096	Commence design and site preparations of the regional aquatics and sports centre in Mernda	On Track	N/A	Infrastructure and Environment	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment:		Council has commenced drafting a concept design for the facility. This will be completed and presented to community early in 2024.			
#14 Build additional outdoor netball courts in a number of neighbourhoods including Epping, Doreen, Mill Park, Whittlesea, South Morang, Mernda					
OP-10830	Provide advice and support Neami National and other partners to establish the Mental Health Local Service for Adults and Older Adults	On Track	N/A	Strategic Projects/ Active and Creative Communities/TBC	Community Wellbeing
Comment:		A review of netball facility needs is currently underway. Preliminary consultation with State sporting associations has been completed, and the outcomes of these discussions will help to inform Council's delivery standards for netball facilities in the future.			
#15 Improve access to physical activity and social connection by providing accessible, multiuse sports infrastructure which meets the diverse needs of our community					
CW-10235	Design the tennis facility at Huskisson Reserve	On Track	N/A	Capital Delivery	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment:		Council has progressed the detailed design phase and is expected to be completed in early 2024.			
OP-10733	Develop a Fair Access Policy Implementation Plan to increase participation, equality and inclusion in local sports and recreation, specifically among women and girls	On Track	N/A	Active and Creative Communities	Community Wellbeing
Comment:		The Fair Access Policy is currently in development.			
#16 Enhance our network of vibrant and welcoming community centres at the heart of our neighbourhoods - including building new centres at Mernda, Wollert, and Donnybrook					
OP-10832	Create vibrant and welcoming community spaces with activities and programs responding to local community needs	On Track	N/A	Active and Creative Communities	Community Wellbeing
Comment:		Council's community facilities are continuously being reviewed to ensure they provide activities and spaces to support local need. An external review of our current practice has been undertaken and is being used to improve our community facility planning and design process.			
CW-10343	Commence constructing the Community Activity Centre in Patterson Drive, Donnybrook	On Track	N/A	Capital Delivery	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment:		Council completed the detail design of the Patterson Drive Community Centre and have tendered for construction. A contract for works is planned in early 2024.			



### Community Plan Action Plan 2023-2024 - Final (Incl. budgets GL codes)

Key initiative Project ID/Action name	Progress status	OPEX Budget status	Lead Department	Lead Directorate
<b>#18 Transition the Youth Advisory Committee to a Whittlesea Youth Council</b>				
OP-10587 Establish a City of Whittlesea Youth Council	On Track	On budget	Community and Place	Community Wellbeing
Comment: Throughout the Expression of Interest period, over 60 applications from incredibly skilled and capable young people from across the municipality were received. After a comprehensive selection process including conducting interviews with shortlisted applicants, 13 applicants were provided a formal offer to join the inaugural Youth Council. An induction program will be delivered for Youth Council members in Jan 2024. The first Youth Council meeting will be held on Monday 5 February 2024.				
<b>#19 Deliver a new Whittlesea Reconciliation Action Plan</b>				
OP-10747 Adopt the Whittlesea Reconciliation Action Plan 2023 -2027	Off Track	N/A	Aboriginal Communities	Community Wellbeing
Comment: We have been working with our local community and stakeholders to ensure they have the opportunity for meaningful input in the development of the Reconciliation Action Plan. A draft is currently in development and due for completion by June 2024.				
<b>Goal 2 Liveable neighbourhoods</b>				
<b>#20 Increase the quality, access, safety and amount of public open space in the municipality, including additional dog parks and a local park improvement program</b>				
OP-10620 Finalise the Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy to drive Council's program of work to deliver desirable transport, planning, urban design, open space, and housing outcomes	Completed	On budget	Strategic Futures	Planning and Development
Comment: The Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy is now complete, incorporating feedback provided during the community consultation period. The Strategy was approved by Council on 19 December 2023.				
CW-11055 Commence design to improve access to the Whittlesea Township Park to better connect our community	On Track	N/A	Capital Delivery	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment: The detail design is in progress and is expected to be completed by April and tender for works to commence after.				
CW-10961 Continue to upgrade Whittlesea Public Gardens	On Track	N/A	Capital Delivery	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment: We have commenced construction of the new skate and urban park and is expected to be completed by late May 2024. We are currently designing the car park for future construction.				

### Community Plan Action Plan 2023-2024 - Final (Incl. budgets GL codes)

Key initiative Project ID/Action name		Progress status	OPEX Budget status	Lead Department	Lead Directorate
<b>#21 Develop and implement a plan to improve public toilets making them accessible, useable and safe</b>					
CW-10904	Continue to upgrade public toilets in line with the Public Toilet Amenity Plan	On Track	N/A	Capital Delivery	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment: The Public Toilet Amenities Plan review is underway. Priority sites for upgrade are currently to be determined for delivery in future years.					
<b>#22 Implement the Quarry Hills Regional Park master plan to increase accessibility, useability and activation</b>					
CW-10021	Continue the construction of Granite Hills Major Community Park	On Track	N/A	Capital Delivery	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment: The upgrade of the waterbodies at Granite Hills Major Community Park is well underway and is expected to be complete by February 2024. Tenders are being called for the construction of the main park and playground.					
<b>#23 Increase safety and accessibility of transport with a focus on major corridor improvements, public transport usage and safe connected cycling and walking networks</b>					
CW-10784	Deliver the local road resurfacing works	On Track	N/A	Capital Delivery	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment: We successfully resurfaced over 6 lineal km of road pavement which used over 1,800 tonnes of recycled material. Streets resurfaced include: Red Oaks Way (South Morang), McCrae Drive (Doreen), Malaleuca Drive (Thomastown), Gardenia Road (Thomastown), Davisson Street (Epping), Black Flat Road (Whittlesea), Carome Way (Doreen), Falcon Street (Thomastown), Catalina Drive (Thomastown), Scenic Terrace (South Morang), Laurence Street (Doreen), among others.					
CW-10789	Deliver the local road reconstruction works	On Track	N/A	Capital Delivery	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment: We successfully reconstructed over 1 lineal km of road pavement and over 2km of kerb. Road were reconstructed used over 1,500 tonnes of recycled material. Streets reconstructed include: Vincent Drive (South Morang), Plenty Road Service Road (Bundoora), Almond Court (Thomastown) and Teak Court (Thomastown).					
<b>#25 Improve disability access to public transport including installation of bus shelters across the municipality</b>					
CW-10799	Improve disability access to public transport	On Track	N/A	Capital Delivery	
Comment: We will construct the bus stop at Whittlesea-Yea Road west of Coombs Road in early 2024.					

### Community Plan Action Plan 2023-2024 - Final (Incl. budgets GL codes)

Key initiative Project ID/Action name	Progress status	OPEX Budget status	Lead Department	Lead Directorate
#27 Design and upgrade local streetscapes and shopping precincts to make it easier to move about, celebrate local culture, heritage and character, and connect people to the natural environment				
CW-10458 Commence streetscape improvements at Gorge Road shopping precinct in South Morang	On Track	N/A	Capital Delivery	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment: We are finalising the detail design and we will advertise the construction tender in January 2024.				
#28 Deliver more affordable and accessible homes in the municipality				
OP-10669 Advocate for increased affordable and accessible housing in the municipality to address the significant shortfall for local residents	On Track	N/A	Strategic Futures	Planning and Development
Comment: Council officers have initiated the Expression of Interest process to select a Community Housing Organisation to deliver and manage and affordable housing project on the Ashline street site.				
<b>Goal 3 Strong local economy</b>				
#31 Strengthen the visitor and agri-tourism economies by implementing a new Destination Tourism Plan				
OP-10805 Adopt the Agri-Food Action Plan to attract investment in the sector and support existing businesses	Completed	N/A	Economic Development	Planning and Development
Comment: The City of Whittlesea has adopted the Agri-Food Plan 2023-2026 and will be implementing the actions under the Strong Local Economy Strategy over the next three years.				
#33 Work with partners to increase opportunities for local work, training, apprenticeships and programs with a focus on young people and groups who experience significant barriers to employment				
OP-10610 Facilitate partnerships between industry, education and job seekers through targeted initiatives supporting under-employed people including people with a disability	On Track	N/A	Economic Development	Planning and Development
Comment: In partnerships with the Hume Whittlesea Local Learning and Employment Network Council delivered a Careers on Wheels event on 16 November 2023 involving Career teachers and industry site visits to local businesses. We continue to work with local businesses to look to employing local residents in cadetship positions, including Structured Workplace Learning.				

### Community Plan Action Plan 2023-2024 - Final (Incl. budgets GL codes)

Key initiative Project ID/Action name		Progress status	OPEX Budget status	Lead Department	Lead Directorate
#34 Implement the Investment Attraction Plan to attract investment, strengthen the local economy and increase the number and diversity of local jobs					
OP-10580	Develop a business grants and incentives program for business attraction and support	On Track	N/A	Economic Development	Planning and Development
Comment:	The Business grants and incentives program has been developed and will be launched in early 2024.				
OP-10678	Deliver industry development programs for priority sectors	On Track	N/A	Economic Development	Planning and Development
Comment:	The Epping Metropolitan Activity Centre forum was held in October to promote the opportunities for development and sector growth within the area. Key landowners and investors shared their vision and projects, and agreed to continue to collaborate to achieve common outcomes. The Epping Health Precinct forum was held in November, which highlighted the growth of the health sector, particularly in Epping and the northern region. Key presenters showcased research projects and opportunities for industry and education to collaborate.				
#35 Work with the Victorian Government and key stakeholders to progress planning for key employment precincts such as Epping central, the Beveridge Intermodal Freight Terminal, the Melbourne Food Innovation and Export Hub and the Vearings Road employment precinct					
OP-10673	Finalise the refreshed Epping Central Structure Plan	On Track	N/A	Strategic Futures	Planning and Development
Comment:	We commenced the review of the planning controls to implement the updated Structure Plan. As an outcome of the Housing Statement recently released by the Victorian Government, the Council will be working with the Victorian Planning Authority and Department of Transport and Planning to undertake further work and finalise the planning controls.				
#36 Implement the Victorian Government-funded 3-year-old kindergarten service together with the early childhood sector and deliver infrastructure projects at key sites across the city					
OP-10686	Continue implementing the kindergarten reform in conjunction with the Department of Education	On Track	N/A	Children and Families	Community Wellbeing
Comment:	Council has been working with the Department of Education to understand the impact of the recent Victorian government reform to increase free four-year-old kindergarten hours.				
#37 Work with the Yarra Plenty Regional Library corporation to continue improving our library services around accessibility, innovation and community learning					
CW-11042	Open the Mernda Town Centre Community Library and commence works on the Library Hub at Kirrip Community Centre	On Track	N/A	Capital Delivery	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment:	We are nearly completion of the construction fitout works at Mernda Town Centre Community Library with the opening anticipated early 2024.				

### Community Plan Action Plan 2023-2024 - Final (Incl. budgets GL codes)

Key initiative Project ID/Action name		Progress status	OPEX Budget status	Lead Department	Lead Directorate
Goal 4 Sustainable environment					
#41 Deliver key actions from our Rethinking Waste Plan, including introducing residential glass recycling, extending food and garden waste services, protecting the environment from litter and increasing sustainable procurement					
OP-10316	Continue to implement the Rethinking Waste Plan to support our community to become a leader in sustainable living	On Track	N/A	Sustainable Environment	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment:	We have implemented the Rethinking Waste Plan priorities for 2023-2024. We are supporting to establish a 2nd repair café with in municipality, and establish a program to work with a low waste community. We have been working to update the contamination management plan and are planning to introduce a bin inspection program this year. We have worked closely with Visy to install 4 CDS reverse vending machines with the community				
OP-10778	Educate our community around illegally dumped rubbish to enhance compliance, and keep the city clean via an intensive dumped rubbish program	On Track	N/A	Sustainable Environment	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment:	We are developing the Education program, and we expect to start the implementation in 2024. We are continuing compliance of illegal dumped rubbish and shopping trolley within the municipality.				
#42 Improve the quality and activation of our water networks, source more water from alternative water supplies and use less water through water efficiency upgrades					
CW-10707	Continue to renew and upgrade Peter Hopper Lake in Mill Park	On Track	N/A	Sustainable Environment	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment:	We are reviewing the tender submission for the lake desilting and dewatering. We expect to commence the work early 2024.				
#43 Finalise and implement the new Green Wedge Management Plan and 10 year action plan in consultation with the community					
OP-10670	Continue to implement the Green Wedge Management Plan	On Track	N/A	Strategic Futures	Planning and Development
Comment:	The Green Wedge Management Plan is being implemented. Actions underway include: liaising with Department of Transport and Planning on the Waterways on the North project which has recently commence; early investigation works for potenial planning shceme amendments related to environmental issues.				
#44 Deliver on our Greening Whittlesea Strategy including increasing tree canopy along main road residential streets and in conservation reserves, park and major facilities					
OP-10528	Improve conservation reserves fire management planning and operations	On Track	On budget	Sustainable Environment	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment:	We finalised the annual audit of reserve firebreaks and the 2023/24 prescribed burn program, prioritising areas for reducing fire-risk, as well as improving ecological significance. Council is partnering with traditional owners in facilitating cultural burning through a partnership with the Narrap Rangers.				

### Community Plan Action Plan 2023-2024 - Final (Incl. budgets GL codes)

Key initiative Project ID/Action name		Progress status	OPEX Budget status	Lead Department	Lead Directorate
<b>#45 Finalise and implement the Climate Change Plan, with a focus of reducing potable water use, reducing carbon emissions and transitioning to more sustainable resources</b>					
OP-10702	Undertake a study to understand the current and future carrying capacity of wildlife, i.e. how many healthy wildlife numbers our Whittlesea environment can sustain now and into the future	On Track	On budget	Sustainable Environment	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment: The study has commenced and final document will be completed by mid 2024.					
<b>#46 Use less energy by investing in energy efficiency programs including energy efficient street lighting</b>					
CW-10137	Continue to improve the energy efficiency of Council buildings and facilities including solar and lighting upgrades	On Track	N/A	Capital Delivery	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment: We have installed solar PV systems on four community facilities. Further, six Kindergartens de-gassed in the latest round of the De-gassing Program for Council Facilities, taking the total to 11 Kindergartens de-gassed					
<b>#47 Introduce new local recycling drop off points including a resource recovery shop</b>					
OP-10837	Investigate options for introducing a local resource recovery shop	On Track	N/A	Sustainable Environment	Infrastructure and Environment
Comment: We are investigating options for the local resource recovery shop. A report will be presented in early 2024.					
<b>#49 Undertake analysis of extreme heat on the health and wellbeing of our community to inform future planning to protect residents and precincts most vulnerable to heatwaves</b>					
OP-10835	Develop a Readiness and Activation Guideline to mitigate the effects on our community in extreme heat events, particularly to support vulnerable community members	On Track	N/A	Emergency Management and Regulatory Programs	Planning and Development
Comment: We have commenced planning on initiatives to mitigate the effects of extreme heat events on the community and support the most vulnerable members. Guideliness will be produced in quarter four, following a review of the Council Heat Action Plan.					
<b>Goal 5 High performing organisation</b>					
<b>#50 Improve customer service through investing in technology, systems and Council staff and make it easier for our community to interact with Council</b>					
OP-10573	Make it easier to interact with Council by building a customer portal, adding more services online and upgrading the city's website	On Track	N/A	Information Services	Customer and Corporate Services
Comment: Council has completed a significant piece of design work on the Enterprise Architecture. The initiative underpins all investment decisions in systems, processes and technical capability for Council into the future. Work is currently progressing on the customer portal.					

### Community Plan Action Plan 2023-2024 - Final (Incl. budgets GL codes)

Key initiative Project ID/Action name	Progress status	OPEX Budget status	Lead Department	Lead Directorate
OP-10816 Launch a new service centre in Whittlesea township	Completed	N/A	Customer Experience & Advocacy	Customer and Corporate Services
Comment: The Whittlesea Service Hub officially opened its door to the community on 31 August 2023. Located in a central position in Church Street, Whittlesea, the Hub offers a range of Council services to the community closer to their home or places of business.				
#51 Continue to implement our Advocacy Plan for infrastructure and services to support the diverse needs of our community				
OP-10771 Continue to advocate for Council's priority projects for better community outcomes	On Track	N/A	Customer Experience & Advocacy	Customer and Corporate Services
Comment: We continue to advocate for Council's priority projects at State and Federal Government levels, and in partnership with key business and community stakeholders, for better community outcomes.				
#52 Continue to be an employer of choice through developing and implementing a new Workforce Plan to attract and retain high quality and skilled staff to support our community				
OP-10564 Continue to implement the Workforce Plan to attract and retain skilled staff to deliver for our community, including an inclusive employment program	On Track	On budget	People and Culture	Customer and Corporate Services
Comment: Actions contained within the Gender Equality Action Plan have been included in the Great Workplace for All Plan and are being undertaken as per the timelines identified.				
OP-10547 Continue to implement the Gender Equality Action Plan to ensure a safe and equal workplace and progress towards becoming an Employer of Choice	On Track	N/A	People and Culture	Customer and Corporate Services
Comment: Actions contained within the Gender Equality Action Plan have been included in the Great Workplace for All Plan and are being undertaken as per the timelines identified.				
#53 Establish a place-based approach to Council planning, service and infrastructure delivery that is responsive to the distinct needs and aspirations of local communities				
OP-10417 Continue implementing our place-based service delivery model to be responsive to the needs of our local communities	On Track	N/A	Community and Place	Community Wellbeing
Comment: Council is progressing to a place-based approach to ensure that service and infrastructure delivery responds to local community aspirations and needs.				
#54 Continue to implement the Local Government Act 2020 and publicly report on an action plan to embed good governance at the Council				
OP-10630 Finalise the High-Performing Organisation Strategy to guide effective and efficient use of resources, and good governance at Council	Completed	N/A	People and Culture	Customer and Corporate Services
Comment: The Project Working Group consulted with all the Managers and relevant Subject Matter Experts to gather the necessary priorities, goals and data. It has been an enormously successful collaborative project due to the multiple touchpoints/loop-backs throughout the process. The Strategy has been endorsed by the Executive Leadership Team.				

### Community Plan Action Plan 2023-2024 - Final (Incl. budgets GL codes)

Key initiative Project ID/Action name	Progress status	OPEX Budget status	Lead Department	Lead Directorate
<b>#55 Develop a long term community infrastructure plan responding to community service and infrastructure needs for sport, leisure, recreation, arts, heritage and culture, youth, older adults, families and children and libraries</b>				
OP-10525 Finalise the Long-Term Community Infrastructure Plan	Completed	N/A	Strategic Projects	Community Wellbeing
Comment: The plan as adopted by Council on 19 December 2023.				
<b>#57 Maintain strong communications with our community to promote access to services including multilingual , accessible for all and mobile friendly communications and website</b>				
<b>#58 Implement, communicate and promote our Financial Hardship Policy 2021 to support our financially vulnerable residents</b>				
OP-10838 Provide information and support to residents experiencing severe mortgage stress in line with Council's Financial Hardship Policy	On Track	N/A	Finance and Strategic Property	Customer and Corporate Services
Comment: To reach more residents who are experiencing severe mortgage stress, we will further strengthen visibility and access to Council's financial hardship program. This will be achieved over the next quarter by rolling out self-serve technology, updating financial wellbeing publications and communicating this focus to local support agencies and digital platforms.				
<b>#59 Introduce regular reporting on Council's performance including the Community Action Plan and customer service performance</b>				
OP-10434 Implement Council's Research and Analytics Plan to enable informed decisions for the benefit of our community	On Track	On budget	Strategy and Insights	Executive Services
Comment: Council has developed a revised R&A Plan that commenced in April 2023. All initiatives have been delivered or are currently on track to be delivered before June 30 2024				
<b>#60 Seek further opportunities to collaborate with surrounding municipalities and other partners including shared services and collaborative procurement</b>				
<b>#61 Undertake service planning to drive innovation, improvement, equity, efficiency and service excellence with a focus on customer experience</b>				
OP-10662 Identify key initiatives that have a "direct and significant impact on community" for gender impact assessment under the Gender Equality Act 2020	Monitor	N/A	Community and Place	Community Wellbeing
Comment: Gender Impact Assessments have been implemented for Strong Local Economy Strategy, Sustainable Environment Strategy, Connected Communities Strategy to help Council adequately plan to address gender needs and impacts of this work. We are embedding processes and systems to ensure that all significant pieces of work have a gender lens applied to them in the future.				



## Capital Grant Status Update - December 2023

Submitted

Financial Year	Grant Number	Title	Organisation Name	Project ID	Project Name	Funding Type	Grant Funding Request	Council Contribution	Other Contribution	Total Project Cost
23/24	GCW-10240	22-23 Urban Rivers and Catchments Program - Round 1 Election Commitment, Peter Hopper Lake Restoration	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	CW-10707	Peter Hopper Lake renewal and upgrade	Federal	2,000,000	2,716,000	0	4,716,000
23/24	GCW-10241	2023 Investing in Our Communities Program Election Commitment, Doreen Splash Park and Playground	Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development	CW-11066	Doreen Splash Park and Playground	Federal	1,500,000	800,000	700,000	3,000,000
23/24	GCW-10247	2023 Building Blocks Early Learning Facility Upgrade, Bubup Wilam HVAC Upgrade	Department of Education and Training	CW-11079	Bubup Wilam - HVAC Upgrade Works	State	350,000	302,000	0	652,000
23/24	GCW-10248	2023 Building Blocks Minor Infrastructure, Childrens Bathroom Facilities Upgrade, South Morang Preschool	Department of Education and Training	CW-11051	Kindergarten nappy change facilities and privacy stall doors for regulatory compliance	State	44,238	0	0	44,238
23/24	GCW-10249	2023 Building Blocks Minor Infrastructure, Childrens Bathroom Facilities Upgrade, Roycroft Kindergarten	Department of Education and Training	CW-11051	Kindergarten nappy change facilities and privacy stall doors for regulatory compliance	State	39,523	0	0	39,523
23/24	GCW-10250	2023 Building Blocks Minor Infrastructure, Childrens Bathroom Facilities Upgrade, Centenary Drive Kindergarten	Department of Education and Training	CW-11051	Kindergarten nappy change facilities and privacy stall doors for regulatory compliance	State	42,389	0	0	42,389
23/24	GCW-10251	2023 Building Blocks Minor Infrastructure, Childrens Bathroom Facilities Upgrade, Edward Street Preschool	Department of Education and Training	CW-11051	Kindergarten nappy change facilities and privacy stall doors for regulatory compliance	State	37,018	0	0	37,018
23/24	GCW-10252	2023 TAC Grant Program. Hayston Boulevard Traffic Management project	Local Government Victoria	CW-10809	23-24 Collector Road traffic management - Various locations	State	50,000	0	0	50,000
23/24	GCW-10255	2023-24 Growing Suburbs Fund, West Wollert Community Centre	Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	CW-10648	Construct community centre - West Wollert	State	1,500,000	7,888,110	6,750,000	16,138,110
23/24	GCW-10256	2023-24 Growing Suburbs Fund, Whittlesea Public Gardens Stage 3	Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	CW-10962	Whittlesea Public Gardens STAGE 3 Implementation (Wetlands)	State	400,000	1,099,896	0	1,499,896
23/24	GCW-10257	2023-24 Growing Suburbs Fund, Atrium Reserve at Quarry Hills Regional Parklands	Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	CW-10832	Quarry Hills - Atrium Reserve Entrance Node	State	200,000	780,000	0	980,000
23/24	GCW-10258	2023-24 Growing Suburbs Fund, Regent Street Reserve at Quarry Hills Regional Parklands	Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	CW-10835	Quarry Hills - Regent Street Entrance Node	State	200,000	780,000	0	980,000
23/24	GCW-10259	2023-24 Growth Areas Infrastructure Contribution, Mernda Aquatic Precinct Transport Infrastructure	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning	CW-10097	Signalise intersection - Plenty Rd and Everton Drive, Mernda	State	10,000,000	13,705,000	0	23,705,000
23/24	GCW-10260	2023-24 Local Sports Infrastructure Fund, Olivine Recreation Reserve Skate Park	Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions	CW-10353	Construct sports reserve & pavilion - Olivine, Donnybrook (PSP SR02)	State	300,000	0	500,000	800,000
23/24	GCW-10261	2023-24 Local Sports Infrastructure Fund, Hillsvie Recreation Reserve Sports Lighting Upgrade	Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	CW-11138	Hillsvie Recreation Reserve - Sports Ground Lighting	State	125,000	145,000	0	270,000
23/24	GCW-10262	2023-24 Local Sports Infrastructure Fund, Partridge Recreation Reserve Sports Lighting Upgrade	Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions	CW-11058	Partridge Recreation Reserve - Sportsfield Upgrade Soccer	State	125,000	145,000	0	270,000
							<b>16,913,168</b>			

Capital Grant Status Update - December 2023

Successful

Financial Year	Grant Number	Title	Organisation Name	Project ID	Project Name	Funding Type	Grant Funding Request	Council Contribution	Other Contribution	Total Project Cost
23/24	GCW-10137	Roads to Recovery, 2019-2024	Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development	CW-10789	23-24 Local Road Reconstruction / Rehabilitation	Federal	1,217,224	0	0	1,217,224
23/24	GCW-10234	2022 Building Blocks Partnership Grant - Patterson Drive Community Centre	Department of Education and Training	CW-10343	Construct Community Activity Centre - Patterson Drive, Donnybrook	State	4,500,000	4,990,500	2,709,500	12,200,000
23/24	GCW-10235	2022 Building Blocks Partnership Grant - West Wollert Community Centre	Department of Education and Training	CW-10648	Construct community centre - West Wollert	State	6,750,000	0	8,885,178	15,635,178
23/24	GCW-10239	2023 Changing Places Funding, Patterson Drive Community Centre Changing Places Facility	Department of Families, Fairness and Housing	CW-10343	Construct Community Activity Centre - Patterson Drive, Donnybrook	State	180,000	89,980	0	269,980
23/24	GCW-10242	Local Roads & Community Infrastructure, Phase 4, Traffic Management Around Schools	Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development	CW-10900	23-24 Traffic Management Around Schools	Federal	160,000	410,000	0	570,000
23/24	GCW-10243	Local Roads & Community Infrastructure, Phase 4, Footpath Reconstruction and Renewal Program	Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development	CW-10771	Footpath Reconstruction / Renewal	Federal	900,000	0	0	900,000
23/24	GCW-10244	Local Roads & Community Infrastructure, Phase 4, Missing Links Program – Whittlesea-Yea Rd	Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development	CW-11033	Missing Path Links Program - Large Links	Federal	255,000	0	0	255,000
23/24	GCW-10245	Local Roads & Community Infrastructure, Phase 4, Barry Road, Thomastown - Road Safety Project	Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development	CW-10657	Barry Road, Thomastown Road Safety Project	Federal	102,408	597,592	0	700,000
23/24	GCW-10246	Local Roads & Community Infrastructure, Phase 4, Local Road Resurfacing Works Program	Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development	CW-10784	23-24 Local Road Resurfacing works	Federal	817,592	0	0	817,592
23/24	GCW-10253	Better Parks and Playgrounds Election Commitment, Henderson Creek Wetland Park and Playground Upgrade	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action	CW-11073	Hendersons Creek Wetland Park and Playground Upgrade	State	500,000	0	0	500,000
23/24	GCW-10254	Better Parks and Playgrounds Election Commitment, Doreen Splash Park and Playground	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action	CW-11066	Doreen Splash Park and Playground	State	500,000	799,977	1,500,000	2,799,977
							15,882,224			

## City of Whittlesea Financial Performance Report

**APPENDIX 1 - STRATEGIC INVESTMENT RESERVE**

YEAR	OPENING BALANCE	TRANSFERS		CLOSING BALANCE	COMMENT
		CONTRIBUTION (IN)	ALLOCATION (OUT)		
2017-18	641,354	20,492,048 *	10,773,193	10,360,209	Transfer out funded early repayment of loan parcel
2018-19	10,360,209	8,899,410	3,000,000	16,259,619	Transfer from surplus (17/18) \$8,899,410 Funding for New Works \$2,827,475
2019-20	16,259,619	9,381,151	4,368,287	21,272,483	Transfer from surplus (18/19) \$9,381,151 Funding for Signalisation intersection Ferres Boulevard & Findon Road (PID 2039 \$1,000,000), Reconstruct courts - Dr Harry Jenkins Reserve (PID 0259 \$200,000), Construct Findon Road extension - Williamsons Road to Danaher Drive (PID 1218 \$920,913), Construct Community Activity Centre Edgars Creek (PID 1419 \$641,354), Plant Reserve \$1,606,020
2020-21	21,272,483	11,141,843	-	32,414,326	Transfer from surplus (19/20) \$11,141,843 Transfer from closure of discretionary reserves: Plant Replacement Reserve \$1,703,005, Tip Replacement Reserve \$4,806,229, Aged & Disability Minor Capital Reserve \$322,305
2021-22	32,414,326	-	-	32,414,326	Nil movement
2022-23	32,414,326	2,500,000	6,000,000	28,914,326	Transfer to establish Aboriginal Gathering Place Reserve and transfer from surplus
2023-24	28,914,326	-	-	28,914,326	

\* Reserve created with transfers from accumulated surplus \$9,292,048.28 and Tip Replacement Reserve \$6,600,000 and Plant Replacement Reserve \$4,600,000

**APPENDIX 2 - WASTE RESERVE**

YEAR	OPENING BALANCE	TRANSFERS		CLOSING BALANCE	COMMENT
		CONTRIBUTION (IN)	ALLOCATION (OUT)		
2020-21	-	4,864,335 *	-	4,864,335	Transfer from Environmental Reserve
2021-22	4,864,335	-	-	4,864,335	Nil movement
2022-23	4,864,335	-	594,699	4,269,636	Transfer from waste reserve for Cooper street
2023-24	4,269,636	-	-	4,269,636	

\* Transfer from Environmental reserve to form this reserve

## City of Whittlesea Financial Performance Report

**APPENDIX 3 - TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENT FUND RESERVE**

YEAR	OPENING BALANCE	TRANSFERS		CLOSING BALANCE	COMMENT
		CONTRIBUTION (IN)	ALLOCATION (OUT)		
2017-18	4,392,719	1,546,126 *	278,003	5,660,842	
2018-19	5,660,842	1,381,232	1,530,292	5,511,782	Transfer from accumulated surplus \$1,381,232 New Works funding for \$1,530,291
2019-20	5,511,782	950,527	1,598,660	4,863,649	Transfer from accumulated surplus (18/19) \$950,527 and balance of garden waste Funding for IT computer hardware (PID 225 \$232,247), Salesforce implementation (\$1,001,711), Smart Cities program (\$132,000), Enterprise Project Management Office implementation (\$120,702), Internet of Things implementation (\$100,000), Finance System (\$12,000)
2020-21	4,863,649	1,036,201	222,182	5,677,669	Transfer from accumulated surplus \$1,036,201 Enterprise Project Management Office implementation (\$92,968), PC Replacement (\$69,154) and Network Infrastructure (\$69,154)
2021-22	5,677,669	-	-	5,677,669	Nil movement
2022-23	5,677,669	1,000,000	1,413,239	5,264,430	Funding of IT hardware purchases and transfer of accumulated surplus
2023-24	5,264,430	-	-	5,264,430	

\* Transfers from accumulated surplus (2016-17) \$1,500,000 and consolidation of Telemetry Conduit Reserve \$5,540 and Computer Equipment Reserve \$40,586.14.

**APPENDIX 4 - PLANNING PERMIT DRAINAGE RESERVE**

YEAR	OPENING BALANCE	TRANSFERS		CLOSING BALANCE	COMMENT
		CONTRIBUTION	ALLOCATION		
2017-18	2,127,641	282,285	1,048,959	1,360,968	Funding for Queenscliff Rd drainage (PID 1884) \$1,012,235, Drainage Improvement works (PID 1064) \$36,724
2018-19	1,360,968	287,486	60,000	1,588,454	Funding for Drainage Improvement works (PID 1064) \$60,000
2019-20	1,588,454	202,222	60,000	1,730,676	Funding for Drainage Improvement works (PID 1064) \$60,000
2020-21	1,730,676	8,543,462	250,000	10,024,138	Funding for Drainage Improvement works \$250,000
2021-22	10,024,138	580,658	-	10,604,796	Planning Permit Levy contributions \$286,052
2022-23	10,604,796	35,832	-	10,640,628	Funding for Drainage Improvement works
2023-24	10,640,628	84,049	-	10,724,677	Funding for Drainage Improvement works

## City of Whittlesea Financial Performance Report

**APPENDIX 5 - NATIVE VEGETATION OFFSET SITE MAINTENANCE**

YEAR	OPENING BALANCE	TRANSFERS		CLOSING BALANCE	COMMENT
		CONTRIBUTION	ALLOCATION		
2017-18	921,367	141,408	290,534	772,242	Funding for Various Native Vegetations \$290,534
2018-19	772,242	985,437	222,704	1,534,975	Funding for Various Native Vegetations \$290,534
2019-20	1,534,975	148,337	442,750	1,240,562	Funding for Various Native Vegetations \$173,199
2020-21	1,240,562	-	-	1,240,562	Nil movement
2021-22	1,240,562	315,655	207,941	1,348,276	Funding for Various Native Vegetations
2022-23	1,348,276	489,633	266,340	1,571,569	Funding for Various Native Vegetations
2023-24	1,571,569	-	-	1,571,569	

**APPENDIX 6 - STRATEGIC PROPERTIES RESERVE**

YEAR	OPENING BALANCE	TRANSFERS		CLOSING BALANCE	COMMENT
		CONTRIBUTION (IN)	ALLOCATION (OUT)		
2017-18	574,234	160,000	-	734,234	Sale of 182 & 214W Greenhills Rd, Bundoora
2018-19	734,234	3,544,149	-	4,278,384	Sale of 30 Brand Drive (net proceeds)
2019-20	4,278,384	513,820	-	4,792,204	Nil movement
2020-21	4,792,204	86,255	-	4,878,458	Bridge Inn Road and Epping Road (net proceeds)
2021-22	4,878,458	-	58,964	4,819,494	Purchase of 135 Williamson Road and 30 Danaher
2022-23	4,819,494	-	-	4,819,494	
2023-24	4,819,494	-	-	4,819,494	

## 5.2 Planning Scheme Amendment C269 – 149 McKimmies Road Bundoora Rezoning Exhibition Outcome

**Director/Executive Manager:** Director Planning & Development

**Report Author:** Strategic Planner

**In Attendance:** Strategic Planner

### Executive Summary

This report details the outcomes of the public exhibition of Planning Scheme Amendment C269 which applies to land at 149 McKimmies Road, Bundoora, and includes the consideration of submissions and recommended next steps.

Amendment C269 applies to 36.4Ha of land at 149 McKimmies Road, Bundoora (shown on Attachment 1). From 1964 to 1992 the site was used as a basalt quarry. From 2000 the site has been progressively filled using 'clean fill' material. With these operations ceasing, the current landowner is proposing to use the site for residential purposes. This responds to the strategic direction provided by Thomastown Industrial Area Plan (2018) which found the site unlikely to support industrial use long term and identifies residential as a possible alternate use and State policy to facilitate the remediation of contaminated land, particularly on sites in developed areas of Melbourne with the potential for residential development.

To facilitate this use, the Amendment seeks to:

- rezone part of the subject site from Industrial 1 Zone to the General Residential Zone (new schedule GRZ6),
- apply the Development Plan Overlay (DPO) with a new scheduled (DPO40) to the rezoned land; and
- amend the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) to accord with Melbourne Water's updated flood mapping.

The proposed zoning map is included at Attachment 2.

Council resolved at its September 2022 meeting to seek authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare and exhibit Amendment C269 to the Whittlesea Planning Scheme. Authorisation was granted by the Minister for Planning in July 2023.

The Amendment was publicly exhibited between 14 September and 15 October 2023. Council notified owners and occupiers of 92 neighbouring properties, affected agencies and prescribed Ministers. Council Officers also held a community information session on October 2nd, inviting interested members of the community to discuss the Amendment directly with Council officers. 13 members of the public attended with Council Officers sharing information on the proposal and current conditions and activities on the site.

Council received nine submissions during the exhibition period. Three submissions were received from residents, four from agencies and one from the operators of the immediately adjoining Dyson bus depot to the north. A late submission was also received by the proponent in support of the Amendment. Issues raised by the submissions include the extent of waterway reserve along Darebin Creek, ensuring compliance with implementation of Statement of Environmental Audit as part of the next stages of development, traffic and site access issues to McKimmies Road, acoustic and air quality issues, and interface treatments of the proposed residential neighbourhood to the neighbouring bus depot.

This report will discuss the outcomes of the public exhibition process. A summary of each of the submissions and officer's recommendations in relation to the Amendment are contained in Attachment 3 to this report and an amended DPO schedule showing how the changes would appear if they were recommended by the Panel is included at Attachment 4. As a number of submissions cannot be resolved, the report recommends that Council submit a request to the Minister for Planning to appoint an independent Planning Panel to consider all submissions. Further, the report recommends that officers be authorised to continue discussions to seek resolution of unresolved submissions in the lead up to the Planning Panel.

The outcomes of the Planning Panel and its recommendations will be reported to Council following the release of the Panel report.

## **Officers' Recommendation**

### **THAT Council:**

- 1. Request the Minister for Planning appoint an independent Planning Panel to consider all submissions made in relation to proposed Planning Scheme Amendment C269 to the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.**
- 2. Refer all submissions to the independent Planning Panel, when appointed by the Minister for Planning.**
- 3. Note for the purposes of advocacy at the Planning Panel, Council's submissions recommended to the Planning Panel that the form of Development Plan Overlay Schedule 40 should be generally in the form listed at Attachment 4.**
- 4. Authorise officers to continue discussions to seek resolution of unresolved submissions prior to the Panel Hearing, consistent with the officer recommendations detailed within this report and Attachment 3.**
- 5. Note officer will advise the proponent, submitters and Planning Panels Victoria of point 1. above.**



## Background / Key Information

### Background and Site Details

The site subject of the Amendment is a 36.4Ha former basalt quarry at 149 McKimmies Road, Bundoora. The site is bounded by Darebin Creek to the west and south, land owned by Yarra Valley Water and the Metropolitan Ring Road to the south, the future E6 road reserve to the east and McKimmies Road and Dyson Bus Depot to the north.

The quarry on the site was operational from 1964 to 1992. Since 2000, the former quarry has been operated as a landfill accepting clean fill material (mixed clay, silt, sand, gravel and boulders). The site has not accepted any putrescible waste. The material was initially sourced from the near-by Mill Park subdivision and later expanded to material from other sources. Between 2004 and 2013 approximately 13,500m<sup>3</sup> of Coode Island silt from Footscray and Docklands was transported to the site. Specific EPA approval was obtained to receive these acid sulphate soils.

With the quarry ceasing operation and the former quarry hole largely filled, the owners sought an alternative use for the site. Council's Thomastown Industrial Area Plan (endorsed 2018) investigated the future use of the site. It was found the site was not expected to support industrial development in the long term given the isolated nature of the site (separated from other industrial precincts in the Thomastown Industrial area), surrounding residential context, connectivity issues and the availability of better located employment sites elsewhere in the municipality. The Thomastown Industrial Area Plan identified opportunities for alternate uses such as residential and mixed use subject to detailed assessment of access arrangements, impacts of existing bus depot, environmental implications and any associated geotechnical and contamination issues. The owners have proposed redevelopment of the site for residential use supported by a range background reports and technical assessments. Council resolved at its meeting on 19 September 2022 to commence the Planning Scheme Amendment process to rezone the site.

Due to its former use as a quarry and subsequent filling, the site has undergone an Environmental Audit process overseen by an independent Environmental Auditor appointed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and in accordance with the EPA's pre-development advice. A Statement of Environmental Audit was issued on 6 January 2023. The Statement concluded that the site is suitable for the proposed uses, including residential, subject to conditions which will need to be implemented as part of the remediation and development of the site. The conditions require mitigation measures to respond to the low concentrations of soil, groundwater and ground gas contaminants. These include groundwater to not be extracted for beneficial use without testing and the installation of a ground gas mitigation system over parts of the former quarry holes.

A geotechnical response to the ground conditions has also been developed and is currently being implemented across the site. This includes overloading the former quarry holes with fill to surcharge the compaction before a layer of engineered fill is used to cap the compacted fill.

### **Planning Context**

The planning controls which currently apply to the site are:

- Zones:
  - o Industrial 1 Zone IN1Z (majority of site)
  - o Urban Flood Zone UFZ (along Darebin Creek)
  - o General Residential Zone Schedule 5 GRZ5 (small area adjoining residential properties)
- Overlays:
  - o Development Contributions Plan Overlay Schedule 3 (DCPO3)
  - o Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO2) (E6 corridor)
  - o Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO)

### **Planning Scheme Amendment Proposal**

The Amendment seeks to implement planning controls to enable the redevelopment of the subject site for residential use. Specifically, the Amendment proposes to:

- Apply the General Residential Zone Schedule 6 to part of the site (refer to Attachment 2)
- Implement the new GRZ Schedule 6 to the Whittlesea Planning Scheme
- Apply the Development Plan Overlay (DPO) Schedule 40 to the rezoned part of the site
- Implement the new DPO Schedule 40 to the Whittlesea Planning Scheme Amendment
- Amend the extent of the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO)
- Amend the Framework Plans (showing the implementation of Strategic Directions) at Clause 2 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme to reflect the above changes.

The Amendment will also deliver a number of key outcomes, including:

- A new supply and an appropriate mix of housing consistent with Councils Housing Diversity Strategy
- Provision of 15% affordable housing including 5% social housing and 10% affordable housing in accordance with Councils Social and Affordable Housing Policy and Strategy, 2016 and the Whittlesea Planning Scheme
- Provision of 30% tree canopy coverage in the public realm and additional tree planting opportunities on private lots consistent with Councils Greening Whittlesea City Forest Strategy 2020-2040

- Local infrastructure required to support the new housing such as local parks and shared paths, connections to recreation areas, local road and service connections.
- Site remediation

The application of a DPO will require the preparation of a Development Plan to guide the future development of the site. The Development Plan will be prepared by the proponent following the approval of the Amendment and prior to the grant of a planning permit for any substantive development. A number of site specific issues will need to be addressed in the Development Plan including access arrangements, road and traffic conditions on surrounding road network including McKimmies Road, interface treatments to Dyson's bus depot, Darebin Creek and the E6 reservation, implementation of Statement of Environmental Audit and geo-technical strategy. The Development Plan will also resolve the final developable area and dwellings yield which will be informed by further technical assessments prepared in support of the Development Plan.

Subsequent planning permits must be generally in accordance with the approved Development Plan.

Changes to the extent of the LSIO will implement updated flood mapping for the Darebin Creek prepared by Melbourne Water.

A strategic assessment of the proposal is included in the Explanatory Report which accompanied the exhibition of the Amendment.

### **Planning Scheme Amendment Process**

The Planning Scheme Amendment process includes a number of prescribed steps and stages as per the *Planning and Environment Act, 1987*. These are detailed in Attachment 5. Amendment c269 is currently at the stage of considering submissions received during exhibition.

### **Response to submissions**

The Planning Scheme Amendment was publicly exhibited from 14 September to 15 October 2023. Nine submissions were received.

Attachment 3 summarises all the submissions received and provides officer recommendations in response. Attachment 4 also includes proposed draft wording changes to the exhibited DPO Schedule responding to the submissions received. These largely relate to requirements for further assessments at key interfaces, the implementation of a variable width waterway reserve and transport considerations. A number of other minor changes have also been made to the DPO Schedule to improve the accuracy and clarity of drafting and to align with more recent changes in Council policy.

Key strategic issues raised in the submissions and officer recommendations are summarised below. More detailed discussion is contained in Attachment 3.

#### The Darebin Creek waterway corridor

The Department of Environment, Energy and Climate Action (DEECA) submitted that the waterway reserve along Darebin Creek should be extended to a minimum 50 metres from the top of bank rather than the proposed minimum 30 metres due to the importance of the Darebin Creek corridor as a habitat for the Growling Grass Frog (GGF) and to protect existing native vegetation. They also recommended this reserve should include the areas covered by the current LSIO and extended to include any existing native vegetation outside of this area.

#### *Officer recommendation*

The submission is supported in principle. However, it is recommended that an equivalent outcome can be achieved by adopting a site responsive, variable width waterway reserve with an average width greater than 50m, rather than the 50m minimum and this be reflected in an amendment to the Framework Plan in the DPO Schedule (refer to Attachment 4). The reserve is to be at a minimum 30m from the top of the bank to the Darebin Creek consistent with the submission of Melbourne Water. It will extend beyond 50m at points to protect significant areas which would not be achieved under the blanket 50m reserve. The reserve is to include land with the proposed LSIO control and incorporate existing native vegetation, where possible. This will ensure the protection of important Growling Grass Frog (GGF) habitat links and existing native vegetation in accordance with relevant policy.

#### Environmental Audit implementation - conditions

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) submitted regarding the implementation of the conditions and requirements in the Statement of Environmental Audit. The EPA requested that each condition from the Statement of Audit be included in the DPO Schedule, though it is not specified in which section/s of the DPO Schedule they be included. The EPA's objective is to ensure that the conditions are implemented as part of the next stages of development.

#### *Officer Recommendation*

The submission is partly supported with each condition and requirement of the Statement of Environmental Audit to be detailed in the Development Plan rather than the DPO Schedule. To achieve this, it is recommended the DPO Schedule include a new entry at Clause 4 – 'Requirements for Development Plan' to require the Development Plan include all 'conditions of the Statement of Environmental Audit and identify how each will be implemented or complied with' (refer to Attachment 4). This better accords with guidelines on drafting the DPO schedule and ensures that the information is contained in the adopted Development Plan document.

### Environmental Audit implementation - Section 173 agreement

The EPA submission also recommended additional drafting in the DPO schedule to secure the implementation of the Environmental Audit via a Section 173 agreement.

#### *Officer Recommendation*

The submission is supported in principle. It is recommended that the DPO Schedule be updated to allow for a condition of permit requiring a Section 173 Agreement for the implementation of any Statement conditions or requirements that feature on-going obligations or restrictions (refer to Attachment 4).

### Native Vegetation

DEECA submitted that references to the native vegetation report (Nature Advisory, November 2021) be removed from the proposed DPO Schedule and/or updated to adequately address all requirements of the *Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017). This report included a native vegetation retention and removal plan. DEECA submitted that the report did not fully respond to biodiversity and landscape values as detailed in the Planning Scheme and the Guidelines mentioned above.

#### *Officer Recommendation*

The submission is supported. It is recommended to remove references to the Nature Advisory Native Vegetation Report (2021) from the DPO Schedule at Clause 3 Conditions and requirements for permit and Clause 4 Requirements for development plan (refer to Attachment 4). The removal of any native vegetation will be determined through a permit in accordance with clause 52.17 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme and the *Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation*. A significant amount of native vegetation located in the identified waterway reserve or other open space areas will be naturally protected.

### River Red Gums

DEECA also provided commentary supporting the retention of mature River Red Gums consistent with state planning policy and Councils local planning policy.

#### *Officer Recommendation*

The submission is supported. It is recommended that Clause 4 – Requirements for Development Plan be updated to require the retention of existing native vegetation including mature River Red Gums in the waterway reserve, conservation reserve and tree reserves (refer to Attachment 4).

### Acoustic Assessment

The development of sensitive uses on the site may potentially be impacted by noise from the adjoining bus depot and proximity to existing and future major roads (i.e. metropolitan ring road and E6 road). The EPA has submitted that their pre-development advice, that a high-level noise assessment to be performed to support the Amendment application was not satisfactorily undertaken by the proponent and referenced incorrect standards. The EPA noted that a noise assessment has been made a requirement for the Development Plan process and provided updated drafting for the DPO schedule to ensure it complies with its guidelines and standards.

### *Officer Recommendation*

The submission is supported. It is recommended that the requirements for Acoustic Assessment in the DPO Schedule be updated in line with the EPA's proposed drafting to ensure the acoustic assessment is prepared in accordance with the best practice EPA guidelines and standards (refer to the Attachment 4).

### Bus Depot interface

Dyson Group's (Dysons) bus depot, which directly adjoin the development site, submitted an objection to the proposed Amendment. The submission:

- queried whether a transition or buffer zone such as Industrial 3 Zone was considered as part of the Planning Scheme Amendment.
- recommends that to deal with the potential incompatible land uses of residential use in proximity to bus depot, that the Framework plan in the DPO Schedule be amended to show a 200m buffer as measured from the bus depot boundary into the subject site.
- argues that the provisions in the DPO Schedule are inadequate to facilitate an appropriate interface treatment and protect their operations and recommends changes in respect to buffer distance, the transport strategy requirements, requirements for a noise assessment and an assessment of the risks, and implementation of mitigation measures from light-spill.

### *Officer Recommendation*

The submission is partly supported. A transitional industrial zone is not considered appropriate on the site and a 200m buffer is not considered justified in this instance. Clause 53.10 in the Whittlesea Planning Scheme requires an acoustic assessment for bus depots locating within 200m of sensitive uses. It does not prohibit them within this distance and neither does it prohibit residential uses within this distance.

However, a suitable buffer and treatment may be required which ensures bus operations are not adversely affected by the introduction of residential uses and the amenity of the proposed residential neighbourhood is secured. It is recommended that the Framework Plan in the DPO Schedule be amended to clearly articulate and note the 'interface with the bus depot' and that the suitability of developing land within 200m for sensitive uses needs to be assessed as part of the acoustic assessment requirements specified by the EPA and, if necessary, a suitable buffer and treatment measures introduced to mitigate any impacts. It is also recommended that a light spill assessment be undertaken. It is recommended that the requirements for the Concept Plan prepared as part of the Development Plan are updated to require it to reflect any buffers or treatments recommended by these assessments. (refer to Attachment 4)

#### Site Access

The Dyson bus depot currently operates from the adjoining site and buses access and egress the site through a shared access way (Laurie Collins Drive). The Dysons submission requests that the DPO schedule be amended to require the Transport Strategy to include express consideration for not only retained access for the depot, but also that there be no worsening in the quality of access for the bus depot, and any road upgrades that may be necessary be undertaken 'in consultation with the depot....'. This is to ensure that Dysons are able to continue to operate their bus services efficiently from the depot.

#### *Officer Recommendation*

The submission is supported in principle. While the proposed wording drafted by the submitter is not supported in its entirety, it is recommended that the DPO Schedule be amended to better address the issue of the development site access. It is recommended that the Transport Strategy be required to assess and make recommendations of a number of additional matters in respect to access and traffic conditions. It is also recommended that the DPO schedule be amended to require the preparation of concept plans for the reconstruction of Laurie Collins Drive and that there be consultation with affected land owners in respect to proposed changes to access arrangements (refer to Attachment 4). This will ensure that the site access arrangements to both the development site and the bus depot is acceptable and considers the operations of the bus depot appropriately.

#### Traffic Impacts on road network

Two submissions objected to the development partly on the impacts of traffic on the surrounding road network.



*Officer Recommendation*

To respond to this issue, it is recommended that the DPO schedule be amended to include additional requirements as part of the Transport Strategy to demonstrate that the additional increase of traffic movements from the proposed residential neighbourhood can be managed and supported on the surrounding road network, including infrastructure works that may be required to facilitate this outcome.

**Rationale for Recommendation**

As noted above the exhibition of the amendment resulted in nine submissions being received. Two submissions supported the Amendment including a late submission by the proponent.

The other submissions received each raised multiple issues. Council officers have reviewed the submissions and made recommendations as to whether the change requested is supported or not (refer to Attachment 3). In some circumstances an alternative change is proposed to respond to the issue raised. Attachment 4 includes a track changed version of the proposed DPO Schedule that shows how the changes would appear if they were recommended by the planning panel. A number of minor edits to the DPO schedule have also been proposed to improve clarity of drafting and reflect more recent agreements (ie. social and affordable housing).

A number of submissions remain unresolved (refer to Attachment 3). In accordance with the Planning and Environment Act 1987 all submissions must now be referred to a Planning Panel for consideration or the Amendment abandoned. As the submissions received remain unresolved, the strategic basis for the Amendment remains sound and therefore, it is recommended that Council request the Minister for Planning to appoint a Panel to consider all of the submissions.

Council officers will present Council's position on the submissions to the Panel. In order to minimise the amount of issues to be considered at the Panel, it is recommended that officers be authorised to continue discussions to seek resolution of unresolved submissions in the lead up to the Panel, consistent with the officer recommendations outlined in this report and its Attachments.

**Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies**

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

**Whittlesea 2040**

This Amendment supports Goal 2: Liveable neighbourhoods through:

- Well-designed neighbourhoods
- Attractive streetscapes and public spaces



- Quality and varied housing options
- Housing that is diverse and affordable

### **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.

The proposed Planning Scheme Amendment will implement planning controls on the new residential land to guide and deliver a well planned residential development, with a mix of dwelling sizes and vital increase in canopy tree cover, making it a quality place to live with high levels of amenity.

### **Considerations of *Local Government Act (2020)* Principles**

#### **Financial Management**

The cost is included in the current budget.

The cost of conducting the Panel Hearing will be borne by the proponent. In accordance with the Planning and Environment Act 1987, the proponent is also required to pay Council a fee to assist with the resources required to consider submissions. Council will be responsible for covering the cost of any representation or evidence it requires at the planning panel which will be from its operational budget.

A s173 agreement has been negotiated with the proponent which ensures the delivery of essential transport infrastructure and a contribution to community and recreation infrastructure.

#### **Community Consultation and Engagement**

The Planning Scheme Amendment was publicly exhibited from 14 September to 15 October 2023. Owners and occupiers from 92 neighbouring properties were notified along with the prescribed Ministers and agencies. The amendment was advertised in the 12 September 2023 edition of the Star Weekly. Council Officers also hosted a drop-in session open to the public at community centre near the subject site. The session allowed residents interested in the proposal to discuss and ask questions about the Amendment with Council Officers and the proponent prior to the close of the exhibition period.

## Other Principles for Consideration as per the *Local Government Act (2020)*

### Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

(a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

### Public Transparency Principles

N/A

## Council Policy Considerations

### Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

The Amendment proposal including the draft DPO Schedule consider Environmental Sustainability matters to ensure that the future development of the land is sustainable in accordance with current planning policy.

### Social, Cultural and Health

The Amendment proposal considers social, cultural and health implications including delivery of affordable housing, protection of cultural heritage and implementation of the Environmental Audit conducted for the site. This is discussed in more detail in the Explanatory Report for the Amendment.

### Economic

The development will have a positive economic impact through the development of the site for housing.

### Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications

The recommendation of this report is to progress the Amendment to a Panel which Council may require legal representation to assist with its submissions.

In respect to Strategic Risks, the Amendment documents provide for the implementation of the Environmental Audit consistent with the advice of the EPA. The Amendment also facilitates the provision of infrastructure required to support the proposed development.

## Implementation Strategy

### Communication

All submitters to the Amendment will be notified of the Council Meeting date and the outcome of the Council meeting as per resolution no. 5.

### Critical Dates

- Council Resolution to seek Authorisation to prepare and exhibit Planning Scheme Amendment: 19 September 2022
- Authorisation granted by Minister for Planning: 24 July 2023
- Exhibition of Planning Scheme Amendment: 14 September 2023 – 15 October 2023
- Scheduled Planning Panel dates:

- Directions Hearing: week of 18 March 2024
- Panel Hearing: week of 8 April 2024

### **Next Steps**

This report recommends that Council resolve to request the Minister for Planning appoint an independent Planning Panel to consider the unresolved submissions. The role of the Planning Panel is to provide an independent forum for submitters to be heard in an informal, non-judicial manner.

The Panel dates have been provisionally set as:

- Directions Hearing: week of 18 March 2024.
- Panel Hearing: week of 8 April 2024.

The recommendations of the Panel will be reported to Council following the release of the Panel report and Council will be required to consider the recommendations of the Panel and resolve whether to adopt or abandon the Amendment.

### **Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* 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.

### **Attachments**

1. Attachment 1 - Site Context Plans [5.2.1 - 2 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Amendment C269wsea - Zoning Map [5.2.2 - 1 page]
3. Attachment 3 Submission Summary Table and Officer Recommendations [5.2.3 - 20 pages]
4. Attachment 4 DPO Schedule 40 Track Changes [5.2.4 - 12 pages]
5. Attachment 5 - Planning Scheme Amendment Process [5.2.5 - 2 pages]



Attachment 1: Site Context Plans

Figure 1: Context Plan

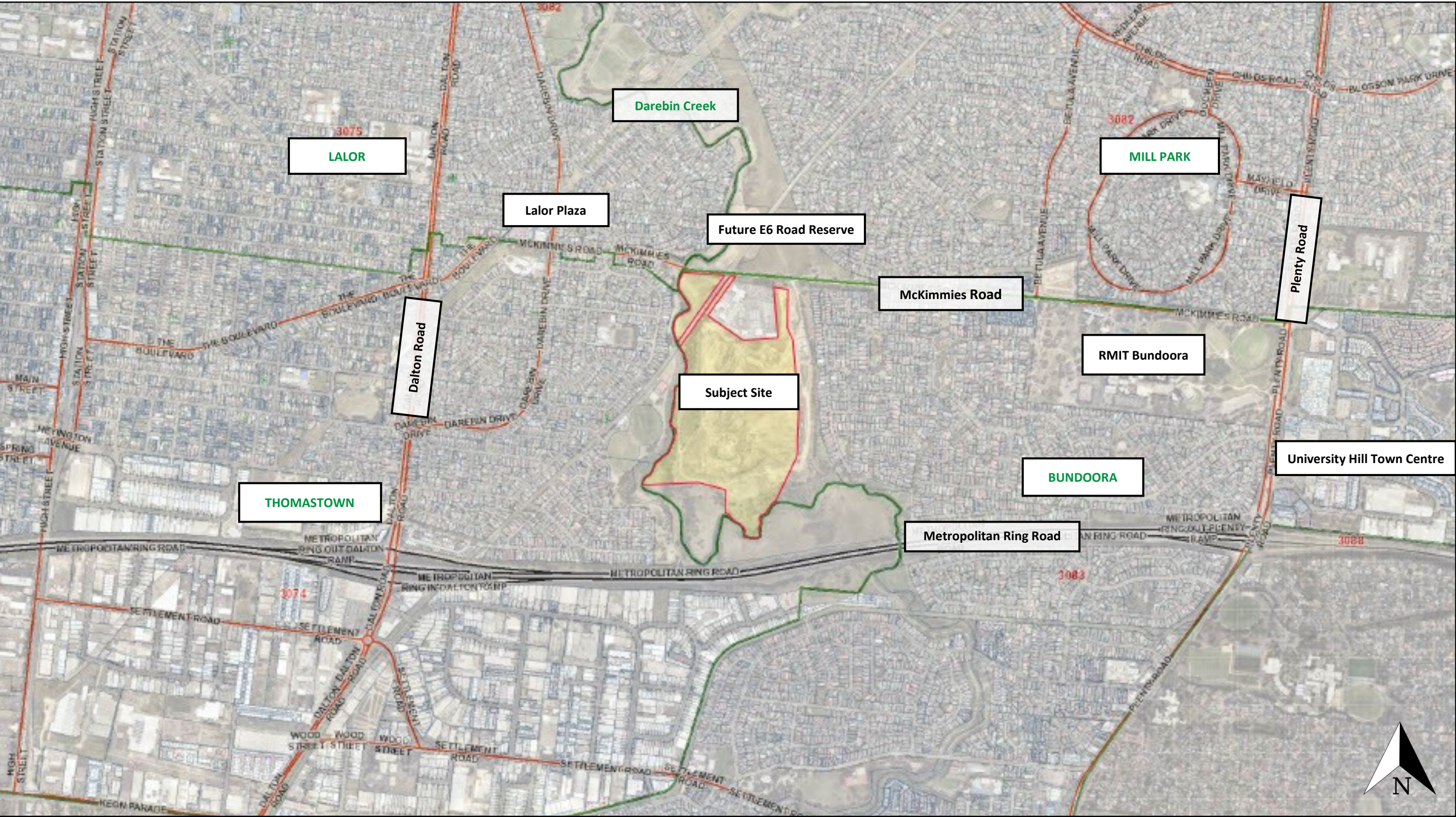
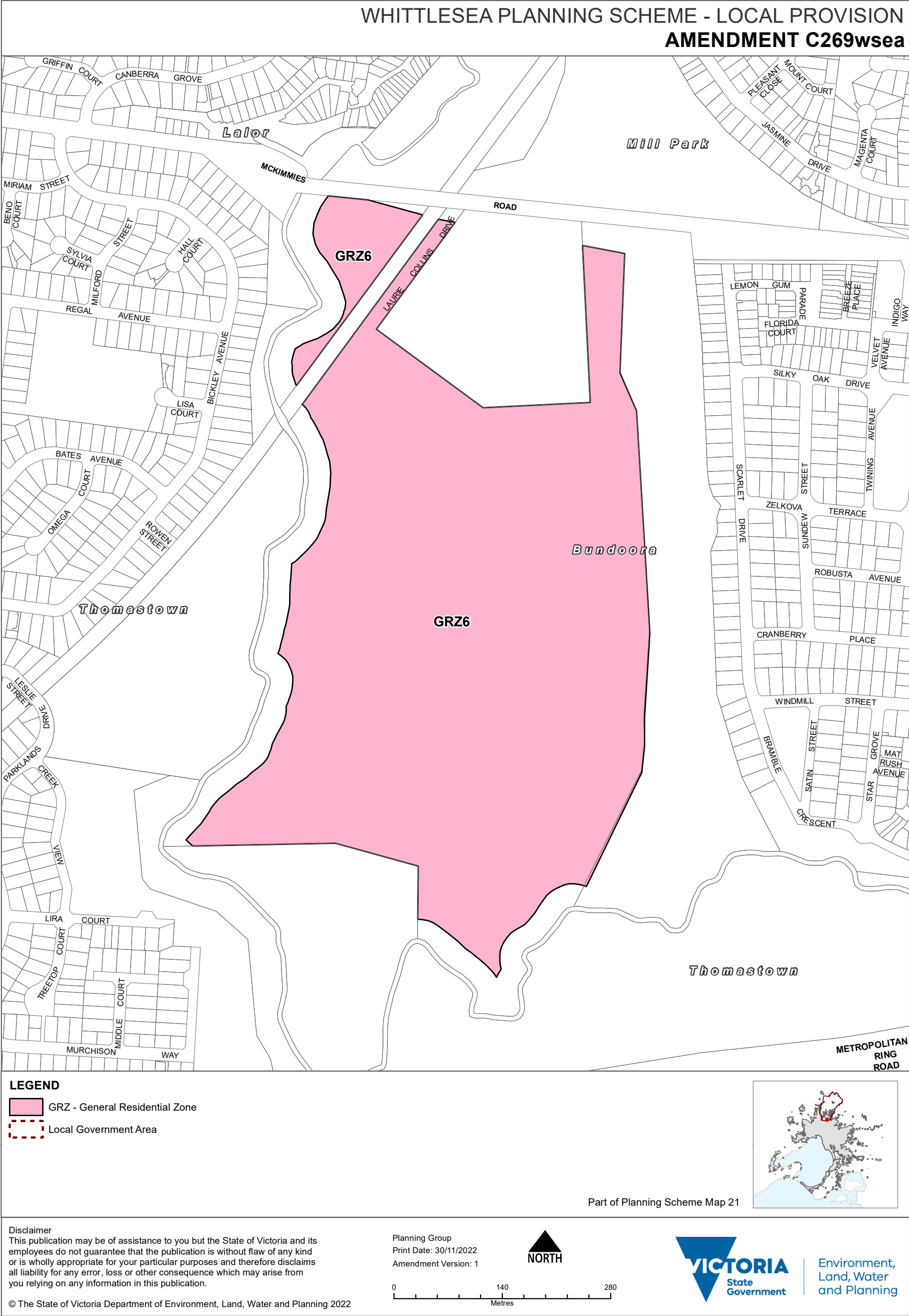




Figure 2. Aerial Photo







**Attachment 3: Submissions received following Exhibition of Amendment 14 September 2023 to 15 October 2023**

	<b>C269wsea Submission Summary Table</b>	
<b>Resident A</b>	<b>Officer Recommendation</b>	<b>Status Summary*</b>
The resident requests compensation due to anticipated noise, dust and pest issues during development of the site, and for increased traffic both during and after development. Without compensation they do not support the amendment.	<b>Request to abandon the Amendment is not supported.</b> <b>Changes recommended in response to submission.</b> Compensation is not a planning matter and, as such, cannot be considered as part of this Planning Scheme Amendment process. The issue of increased road traffic post development has partially been considered in the submitted Traffic Impact Assessment. However, the analysis is limited in scope and only addresses the site specifically and not the broader road or transport network. As such, it is recommended the DPO Schedule be updated to require the Transport Strategy to be prepared as part of the Development Plan to assess the impact of the development along McKimmies Road and intersections (including travel times), determine how the increase in vehicles due to the residential development can be supported by the broader network, and any capital upgrades necessary to maintain the functioning of the network and appropriately accommodate the increase in traffic. The Development Plan will require the Transport Strategy to recommend delivery responsibility, and timing and lot triggers for any proposed upgrades.	Not resolved
<b>Resident B</b>	<b>Officer Recommendation</b>	<b>Status Summary*</b>
The resident states their concerns regarding the shared fence between their property and the amendment subject site. This has been damaged during the current round of works occurring at the site.	<b>Requested change not supported.</b> Boundary fences is not a matter which is relevant to this Planning Scheme Amendment process. Council Officers have provided information to the residents about the appropriate agency responsible for fencing disputes.	Not resolved
There are also concerns about the ability for McKimmies Road to handle the increase in traffic during development and once developed.	<b>Changes recommended in response to submission.</b> As noted above, it is recommended the DPO Schedule be updated to require the Transport Strategy to be prepared as part of the Development Plan to assess the impact of the development along McKimmies Road and intersections (including travel times), determine how the increase in vehicles due to the residential development can be supported by the broader network, and any capital upgrades necessary to maintain the functioning of the network and appropriately accommodate this increase in traffic. The Development Plan will require the Transport Strategy to recommend delivery responsibility, and timing and lot triggers for any proposed upgrades.	Not resolved

Resident C	Officer Recommendation	Status Summary*
This submission is in support of the amendment.	<b>Noted.-</b>	Resolved.
Melbourne Water	Officer Recommendation	Status Summary*
Melbourne Water advise that generally they are supportive of the Amendment and provide the following for Council to consider:	<b>Noted.</b>	
The flood level in the northwest corner is 97.67 metres to Australian Height Datum. This is based upon a flood which has a 1% annual exceedance probability. Council is to determine whether the property is affected by flooding from the local drainage system.	<p><b>Changes recommended in response to submission.</b></p> <p><u>Discussion</u></p> <p>Melbourne Water provided a submission advising they are generally supportive of the overall amendment. The submission confirmed that the proponent had used the correct flood levels to amend the extent of the LSIO. In confirming the flood levels, they advise these levels are based upon a flood which has a 1% Annual Exceedance Probability. It does not factor in flooding from the local drainage system, and they advise Council is to determine this.</p> <p>This is noted and the assessment of impacts from local drainage will be considered in more detail at the Development Plan stage as part of preparing a Stormwater Management and Drainage Strategy for the site. An additional requirement is recommended to be added to the DPO schedule to provide for this assessment and response at the Development Plan assessment stage.</p> <p>Melbourne Water also included in their pre-development advice that any development proposal will need to provide appropriate freeboard, all ground levels are to be at a minimum 600mm above the LSIO flood level (for habitable buildings) and 300mm above the LSIO flood levels (for garages). Council engineers have endorsed this position. This requirement is to work in conjunction with other design considerations and building code requirements. This design and building requirement is to be included in the DPO Schedule to ensure it is considered at the Development Plan assessment stage.</p> <p><u>Officer Recommendation</u></p> <p>The submission is supported. It is recommended the DPO Schedule be updated to reference the requirement for buildings to include sufficient freeboard above the modelled flood levels and</p>	Resolved.



	requirements for the Stormwater Management and Drainage Strategy to consider the impacts of local drainage on flooding (refer to <i>Attachment 4</i> ).	
This section of Darebin Creek is an identified priority area for amenity under Melbourne Water's Healthy Waterway Strategy. This development must not disrupt the current sense of place.	<b>Noted. Change recommended in response to submission.</b> The DPO Schedule features a number of objective requirements for the development plan that ensures protection of the Darebin Creek and provides for the enhancement of the Creek corridor.	Resolved.
	It is recommended that the wording of objective 'to enhance the Darebin Creek environs, protect significant environmental features and deliver increased tree canopy coverage across the site' be amended to include reference to 'protect' the Darebin Creek environs (refer to Attachment 4).	Resolved.
	The Development Plan is to include:	
	A Concept Plan that includes "A response to the interface with the Darebin Creek. The interface response to Darebin Creek corridor is to provide for high amenity and accessibility and consider public safety and bushfire risk. In accordance with Whittlesea's <i>Neighbourhood Design Manual</i> streets are to front waterways."	Resolved.
	An Open Space and Landscape Plan that includes the " Identification of encumbered open space along the Darebin Creek generally in accordance with the Framework Plan at Figure 1 that provides for a variable width waterway corridor which is at a minimum 30m from the top of the bank of the Darebin Creek (95metres to AHD contour line), a minimum average of width of 50m from top of the bank of the Darebin Creek and includes any other land encumbered by flooding, for conservation purposes or tree retention including mature red gums.	Resolved.
	A Built Form Analysis Plan that identifies:	
	"A design response to buildings interfacing with the Darebin Creek corridor, open space, and any significant biodiversity retained on the site" and, "Key interface treatments for McKimmies Road, Darebin Creek to the west and south, the E6 corridor and residential areas to the east and 121 McKimmies Road to the north, including noise and light spill treatments."	Resolved.
Requirements to be considered for inclusion to DPO Schedule:		

Submission of a Stormwater management and drainage strategy (SWMS) to the satisfaction of Melbourne Water and the Responsible Authority (RA). The drainage strategy must include any proposed connections to the creek.	<b>Support requested change.</b> The DPO schedule will be updated to state that any connections to the creek must be detailed in the Stormwater Management and Drainage Strategy plan. The DPO Schedule already requires the report to be to the satisfaction of both Melbourne Water and the Responsible Authority. Further it is recommended that the Concept Plan to be prepared in response to the DPO Schedule include Integrated Water Management features and assets (refer to <i>Attachment 4</i> ).	Resolved.
The SWMS must outline storm water quality treatment systems and Water Sensitive Urban Design to minimise the extent of impervious surfaces.	<b>Support requested change.</b> The DPO Schedule is to be updated to require that the amount of impervious surfaces are to be minimised.	Resolved.
Setback to waterway: Melbourne Water require a setback/easement of 30m from top of bank of the Darebin Creek. The submission also notes that the top of bank currently sits at the 95 metres to AHD contour line.	<b>Support requested change.</b> The DPO Schedule already requires that a minimum of 30m from the top of bank be encumbered open space. In response to other submissions this will be extended beyond 30m in select locations. Further, it is recommended that the DPO schedule be updated to include reference to the top of the bank being at the 95 metres to AHD contour line.	Resolved.
Development must be set outside of the 30m setback or the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) whichever is greater.	<b>Support requested change.</b> The waterway reserve excludes development within the 30m setback from top of bank of Darebin Creek. The proposed waterway reserve includes land within the extent of the proposed LSIO control. Within the 30m (but outside 20m) there may be provision for minor infrastructure such as shared paths consistent with Melbourne Water guidelines and further assessment of environmental impacts.	Resolved.
The location is identified as a place where Growling Grass Frog values are present. Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action must be consulted prior to undertaking any works.	<b>Noted.</b> The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) were notified of this amendment during the public exhibition and invited to submit on the matter, details of the submission are below. The DPO Schedule requires a Flora and Fauna Assessment be submitted with the Development Plan. This will assess the Growling Grass Frog population and values on the site. The DEECA will be referred the Flora and Fauna Assessment and the Development Plan for comment and review as part of the assessment of the Development Plan.	Resolved.
Built form is not to dominate at the waterway interface, planting is to be the dominant visual form and built forms unobtrusive.	<b>Changes recommended in response to submission.</b> The DPO Schedule requires a Built Form Analysis Plan to detail the design response for any buildings interfacing with the Darebin Creek and details of interface treatments to Darebin Creek. This will require appropriate built form and planting treatments to protect the Darebin Creek corridor. Implementation of Councils guidelines contained in its Neighbourhood Design Manual in	Resolved.

	respect to the interface of development with waterways will assist in achieving this objective. Melbourne Water's Waterway Corridor guidelines also promote 'active edges' with waterway reserves. As such it is recommended that the DPO schedule be updated (both text and framework plan) to include reference to streets fronting the waterway interface as the preferred interface treatment in accordance with these documents (refer to <i>Attachment 4</i> ).	
Prior to commencement of any development on the property, a site management plan detailing pollution and sediment controls measures is required to be submitted to Melbourne Water.	<b>Noted.</b> This matter will be managed through a future planning permit. The DPO schedule states that: "A planning permit granted may include a requirement for the following items to be endorsed prior to the commencement of the building and works, or the land use as appropriate: Site Environmental Management Plan/s (including any Construction Environmental Management Plan or similar plan required by an environmental audit statement)."	Resolved.
<b>Department of Environment, Energy and Climate Action (DEECA)</b>	<b>Officer Recommendation</b>	<b>Status Summary*</b>
DEECA asks Council to consider the following key recommendations:		
A minimum 50-metre waterway and habitat corridor along the Darebin Creek as encumbered open space. The space should include the area covered by the current LSIO and extend to retain existing native vegetation outside these areas.	<p><b>Changes recommended in response to submission.</b></p> <p><u>Discussion</u></p> <p>DEECA submitted that the waterway reserve along Darebin Creek should be extended to a minimum 50 metres from the top of bank rather than the proposed minimum 30 metres. They also advised that this reserve should include the areas covered by the current LSIO and extend to include any existing native vegetation outside of this area.</p> <p>This request is driven by the importance of the Darebin Creek corridor as a habitat for the Growling Grass Frog (GGF) and to protect existing native vegetation. The GGF is listed as vulnerable under the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (EPBC Act), listed as threatened under the <i>Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988</i> (FFG Act) and is classified as endangered in Victoria. The submission notes that while the section of Darebin Creek within the subject site is no longer home to a metapopulation of GGF (a group of spatially separated though interacting populations), it still provides an important strategic link between metapopulations to the north and south along Darebin Creek.</p> <p>Council officers support the objective to protect habitat, habitat links and native vegetation along the Darebin Creek corridor through an encumbered waterway reserve, protected from any other</p>	Not resolved

	<p>use. The exhibited Development Plan Overlay Schedule 40 includes the objective <i>“To enhance the Darebin Creek Environs, protect significant environmental features and deliver increased tree canopy coverage across the site”</i>. The DPO Schedule also requires an Open Space and Landscape Plan that includes <i>“Identification of encumbered open space along the Darebin Creek that provides for a minimum 30m waterway corridor from the top of bank and any other land encumbered by flooding or for conservation purposes.”</i></p> <p>In response to the DEECA submission, the proponent has undertaken further investigation and design work of the waterway reserve. This has resulted in a proposal to have an area of encumbered and unencumbered open space along the Darebin Creek corridor with a variable width that provides a minimum distance of 30m, a maximum distance of 78m and an average buffer distance of at least 50m. This is a site-specific response that factors in topography, existing vegetation, location of GGF metapopulations, and the need for land remediation and de-contamination. The proposed variable width buffer would see areas of flatter topography provide a 50m+ buffer distance, where practical, as this flatter area is more likely to be used by GGF. It is proposed areas of steep topography feature a narrower buffer, though still a minimum of 30m, as this area is unlikely to be inhabited or utilised by GGF.</p> <p>Council officers consider that this variable width waterway reserve will support DEECA’s objective of protecting the Darebin Creek corridor as a habitat and habitat link for GGF through responding to the specifics of the site, rather than the application of a blanket 50m buffer distance. DEECA have informally advised that they are generally comfortable with the approach of a variable width buffer, rather than a 50m minimum buffer, though need further time to properly review and assess the proposal.</p> <p>To implement the site responsive variable width waterway reserve, it is recommended to amend the Framework Plan in the DPO Schedule (refer to Attachment 4) to show the indicative variable width waterway reserve. It is also proposed that Clause 4 – Requirements for Development Plan of the DPO Schedule be updated to require an Open Space and Landscape Plan that includes <i>“Identification of encumbered open space along the Darebin Creek generally in accordance with the Framework Plan at Figure 1 that provides for a variable width waterway corridor which is at a minimum 30m from the top of the bank of the Darebin Creek (95metres to AHD contour line), a minimum average of width of 50m from top of the bank of the Darebin Creek and includes any</i></p>	
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	<p><i>other land encumbered by flooding, for conservation purposes or tree retention including mature red gums.”</i></p> <p>Council officers will continue discussions with DEECA and the proponent to respond to the issues raised in their submission. It is expected that DEECA will provide an updated submission prior to the panel hearing.</p> <p><u><i>Officer recommendation</i></u></p> <p>The submission is supported in principle. It is recommended that Council support a site responsive, variable width waterway reserve, rather than the 50m minimum and this be reflected in an amendment to the drafting and Framework Plan in the DPO Schedule (refer to <i>Attachment 4</i>). The reserve is to be on average greater than 50m in width and at a minimum 30m from the top of the bank to the Darebin Creek. This will ensure the protection of GGF habitat links and existing native vegetation. Further, it is recommended that the waterway reserve be reflected in the Concept Plan listed in the Development Plan Requirements of the DPO Schedule.</p>	
<p>References to the Native Vegetation Assessment be removed from the DPO Schedule and/or an updated native vegetation assessment is provided that adequately addresses all requirements of the Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.</p>	<p><b>Support requested change.</b></p> <p>DEECA submitted that references to the native vegetation report (Nature Advisory, November 2021) be removed from the proposed DPO Schedule and/or updated to adequately address all requirements of the <i>Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation</i> (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017). This report included a native vegetation retention and removal plan. DEECA felt the report did not fully respond to biodiversity and landscape values as detailed in the Planning Scheme and the Guidelines mentioned above.</p> <p>Council officers originally included the reference in the DPO Schedule to the Native Vegetation assessment to secure a positive retention outcome for native vegetation. This is still a major objective for the Amendment and future Development Plan process. However, Council Officers have considered the outcomes of VCAT case VAG Project Management Pty Ltd v Whittlesea CC [2022] VCAT 1138, where the member found the Development Plan was not the appropriate stage to address tree removal and that this was to be determined at the planning permit stage. The approach can also be applied to planning scheme amendments. It is not the appropriate planning stage to determine the removal of native vegetation. This is to be determined at the planning permit stage following the endorsement of a Development Plan. As such it is recommended that DEECA’s request to remove the references to the Nature Advisory report be supported. However,</p>	Resolved

	<p>as per the requirements of the DPO schedule it is expected that the Development Plan layout will maximise tree retention through the location of open space, conservation reserves and tree reserves.</p> <p><i>Officer Recommendation</i> The submission is supported. It is recommended to remove references to the Nature Advisory Native Vegetation Report (2021) from the DPO Schedule at Clause 3 Conditions and requirements for permit and Clause 4 Requirements for development plan (refer to Attachment 4). The removal of any native trees will be determined through a planning permit process and be in-line with the Guidelines and approved Development Plan.</p>	
A recommendation that the existing Strategic Habitat Link which applies to the western side of the creek (Strategic Framework Plan 02.04-3) be extended to the eastern side, in the subject site. This can be within the 50m setback from the creek.	<b>Support requested change.</b> Council officers support this request and will have the Framework plans amended. It is recommended that it aligns with the waterway reserve.	Resolved.
Wording is provided to amend the DPO Schedule to enable these two recommended changes.	<b>Changes recommended in response to submission.</b> Please see responses above.	Partially resolved
The 50m buffer will strengthen the habitat corridor for Growling Grass Frogs. The buffer distance is based on best practice information.	<b>Noted.</b>	For noting
The native vegetation report must be updated to comply with the current protection approach for River Red Gums.	<p><b>Changes recommended in response to submission.</b></p> <p><i>Discussion</i> In further considering the DEECA commentary on retention of River Red Gums, Council officers would like to see a greater effort undertaken to retain River Red Gums as part of the future Development Plan process. Information provided by the applicant suggests that environmental audit requirements to remove contaminated soil and develop batters for new fill required for the site remediation will result in the need to remove a number of River Red Gum trees on the site including two large hollow bearing trees. Council officers consider these trees significant and should be considered for retention consistent with Councils River Red Gum policy as Clause 12.01-</p>	Not resolved

	<p>1L. Further investigation and discussion should occur to understand the Environmental Audit and site development requirements which will impact the ability to retain these trees and whether there are any alternate design responses which could be implemented to retain these trees. In any case the area containing Tree 6 should not be identified in the Framework Plan as being developable and this land should be incorporated into the waterway reserve consistent with the advice of DEECA.</p> <p><i>Officer Recommendations</i> The submission is supported. Further, it is recommended that Clause 4 – Requirements for Development Plan be updated to require the retention of existing native vegetation within the variable width waterway reserve and the waterway reserve be amended to include the area containing Tree 6 which immediately adjoins the waterway reserve (refer to <i>Attachment 4</i>).</p>	
The current proposal has not reasonably demonstrated how biodiversity and other values of native vegetation have been considered and options for their protection explored.	<p><b>Noted.</b> This is to be determined at the future planning permit stage. The Amendment stage is not the appropriate stage to implement this.</p> <p>Refer also to the recommended changes above to ensure native vegetation removal is considered at the planning permit stage. At the planning permit stage, the planning scheme requires that applicants demonstrate that all options for retention of native vegetation have been explored.</p>	Not resolved
The open space along Darebin Creek should be expanded to include all land within the current LSIO.	<p><b>Requested change not supported.</b> The LSIO is to be reduced in its extent informed by the current Melbourne Water flood mapping. Council officers consider that the waterway reserve along the Darebin Creek should respond to the updated flood controls consistent with the advice of Melbourne Water.</p>	Not resolved
<b>Environmental Protection Agency</b>	<b>Officer Recommendation</b>	<b>Status Summary*</b>
Council should consider including each condition from the Environmental Audit Statement in the DPO40 Schedule.	<p><b>Changes recommended in response to submission.</b> The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) submitted regarding the implementation of the conditions and requirements in the Statement of Environmental Audit. The EPA requested that each condition from the Statement of Audit be included in the DPO Schedule, though has not specified in which section/s of the DPO Schedule they be included. The EPA made reference to Planning Practice Note 30 regarding contaminated land, that “provision needs to be made for applicable recommendations of the Statement of Environmental Audit to be given effect or used to inform the drafting of the planning controls”.</p> <p>Council officers are supportive of the EPA’s intent in principle, to ensure the conditions and requirements in the Statement of Environmental Audit are met. Council Officers propose a more</p>	Not resolved

	<p>straightforward implementation which sees the drafted DPO Schedule include a requirement of any permit issued, that “conditions and requirements detailed in the Statement of Environmental Audit must be complied with to the satisfaction of an EPA appointed Environmental Auditor and Responsible Authority respectively”, rather than listing each condition and requirement.</p> <p>In response to the EPA’s reference to Planning Practice Note 30, the exhibited DPO Schedule has been drafted with the enforcement of the Statement of Environmental Audit conditions and requirements in mind. It is recommended that the planning permit stage for subdivision is the most appropriate stage to implement the Statement conditions and requirements as guided by the Development Plan. Planning permits for subdivision feature a number of compliance checkpoints and holding points such as plan certification, Statement of Compliance, and Certificate of Practical Completion. Checkpoints and hold points provide Council the ability to withhold certificates or statements until any condition or requirement is complied with.</p> <p>However, Council officers do consider it appropriate to include each condition and requirement from the Statement of Environmental Audit in the Development Plan itself, rather than the DPO Schedule. It is proposed to amend Clause 4 – Requirements for Development Plan of the DPO Schedule to require the Development Plan to feature each condition and requirement from the Statement of Environmental Audit and the proposed response or implementation plan, (refer to <i>Attachment 4</i>). Permits will then be informed by the proposed timing of delivery/compliance proposed in the Development Plan.</p> <p><i>Officer Recommendation</i></p> <p>The submission is partly supported with each condition and requirement of the Statement of Environmental Audit to be detailed in the Development Plan rather than the DPO Schedule. It is recommended the DPO Schedule include a new entry at Clause 4 – Requirements for Development Plan to require the Development Plan include all conditions of the Statement of Environmental Audit and identify how each will be implemented or complied with (refer to <i>Attachment 4</i>).</p>	
It is recommended a Section 173 Agreement be entered into for the Statement conditions where they are on-going requirements.	<p><b>Changes recommended in response to submission.</b></p> <p>The EPA submission also recommends matters which are ongoing in nature (such as those requiring maintenance or monitoring), be secured via a Section 173 agreement. This aligns with the previous Council resolution to not adopt the Amendment until a s173 Agreement for the implementation of the Statement conditions had been entered into. However, it is noted that the</p>	Not resolved



	<p>resolution was made prior to the Statement of Environmental Audit being issued. With the Statement now issued and the conditions known, Council officers recommend that the best mechanism to implement the Statement conditions and requirements is through the Planning Permit for subdivision, as discussed above. However, should there be any requirements with an ongoing obligation (beyond the initial subdivision), there may need to be an additional mechanism (such as s173 or deed agreement) to secure implementation.</p> <p>Specifically, the ground gas mitigation system may require ongoing monitoring and maintenance if not decommissioned prior to the completion of development. To highlight this, it is recommended the DPO Schedule be updated, consistent with the EPA advice, to include a potential condition for future planning permits for a Section 173 Agreement to secure implementation of Statement conditions or requirements which feature ongoing obligations (i.e. monitoring) or restrictions (i.e. construction of basements).</p> <p>Council officers will continue to have discussions with the EPA and the proponent to respond to the issues raised in their submission.</p> <p><i>Officer Recommendation</i></p> <p>The submission is supported in principle. It is recommended that the DPO Schedule be updated to include drafting which enables a condition to be applied to a future permit which requires a Section 173 Agreement for the implementation of any Statement conditions or requirements that feature on-going obligations or restrictions (refer to <i>Attachment 4</i>).</p>	
It is advised the Statement Conditions are linked to planning controls whose triggers are Building & Works and Use. They recommend they also be tied to subdivision to avoid a situation where they may be missed if a building or use permit is not required.	<b>Support requested change.</b> The conditions in the Statement of Environmental Audit will be implemented through the planning permit. Subdivision will trigger a permit. The DPO requires planning permits to include a condition for development to comply with the conditions and requirements of the Statement.	Resolved.
It is advised they consider these changes necessary prior to the Amendment progressing.	<b>Noted.</b>	For noting

<p>EPA previously recommended a noise (acoustic) assessment be prepared, but are not aware as to whether it has been completed. Acknowledge that there is a requirement at the Development Plan stage.</p>	<p><b>Support requested change.</b></p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p> <p>The EPA has submitted that they were not aware whether pre-development advice that requested a high-level noise (acoustic) assessment to be performed to support the Amendment application was undertaken by the proponent and noted the acoustic assessment was identified as a requirement for the Development Plan process. A preliminary acoustic assessment was undertaken by the proponent but was not referred to the EPA at that stage of the process. This assessment has since been updated and is currently being reviewed by the EPA.</p> <p>The need for the assessment is primarily driven by the proposal to locate sensitive uses such as dwellings in proximity to the adjoining bus depot and the nearby roads. It is noted that bus depots are listed as a land use under Clause 53.10 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme (Uses and activities with potential adverse impacts). Clause 53.10 requires an acoustic assessment for bus depots locating within 200m of sensitive uses. It does not prohibit them within this distance and neither does it prohibit residential uses within this distance. Were the bus depot seeking to establish on the site and the residential development be already in place, the threshold distance referred to above at Clause 53.10 would only trigger a referral to the EPA and is not an exclusion buffer. The referral would help to determine if the use could be accommodated, and the conditions required to be met to accommodate the use.</p> <p>The EPA provided recommended wording to replace the current noise assessment drafting in Clause 4 of the DPO Schedule Requirements for a Development Plan. They also requested that the updated wording be inserted at Clause 3 Conditions and requirements for permits to ensure that no permit is issued before a development plan is endorsed that prejudices the outcome of the acoustic assessment.</p> <p>The DPO Schedule recognises the neighbouring bus depot as a key interface which will require a considered and integrated response from future development of the subject site.</p> <p>The DPO Schedule is recommended to be updated with the EPA's proposed wording. This will ensure best practice acoustic assessment will occur and any resulting recommendations or requirements will inform the preparation of the Development Plan in response to bus depot noise and the existing and future road network. This may include (but not be limited to) buffers,</p>	<p>For noting</p>
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	<p>separation distances, street network design, orientation of buildings, building materials used, building heights, and physical barriers.</p> <p><i>Officer Recommendation</i> The submission is supported. It is recommended that the Acoustic Assessment remain a Development Plan requirement and the DPO Schedule be updated with the EPA proposed standards for the acoustic assessment to ensure it is preformed considering the best practice EPA guidelines and standards (refer to <i>Attachment 4</i>). Further, it is recommended that the Framework Plan is updated to show a 200m 'interface' area and a reference that development within this interface areas is subject to the outcomes of the Acoustic Assessment (refer to <i>Attachment 4</i>).</p>	
It is noted that if the residential development were already in place and the bus depot tried to establish, the depot would not meet the 200m threshold distance under Clause 53.10.	<b>Noted.</b> Please see response above.	Not resolved
The submission provides wording to be included at Clause 4. This details how the Acoustic Assessment should be performed.	<b>Support requested change.</b> Please see response above.	Resolved.
Any resulting measures required to address noise are to be implemented at the subdivision stage.	<b>Support requested change.</b> Recommend updating DPO Schedule to ensure that measures to address noise are implemented at the subdivision stage (refer to <i>Attachment 4</i> ).	Resolved
The submission does not support allowing for subdivision prior to a Development Plan.	<b>Support requested change.</b> It is agreed that there should only be subdivision on the site after the preparation of the Development Plan and detailed assessments including an acoustic assessment, so as not to prejudice the outcomes of the Development Plan or supporting assessments. It is recommended that the Conditions of Statement of Environmental Audit and requirements of acoustic and air quality assessments also be considered as part of any applications for permits prior to the approval of the Development Plan.	Resolved.
The submission considers the above changes necessary prior to the Amendment progressing.	<b>Noted.</b>	For noting

It is recommended that the Air Quality Assessment be a subdivision requirement.	<b>Support requested change.</b> Recommend updating DPO Schedule to ensure that measures to address air quality are implemented at the subdivision stage. Further it is recommended that references in the objectives and requirements of the DPO Schedule to interfaces also refer to existing and future major roads (refer to Attachment 4).	Resolved.
<b>Dyson Bus Group</b>	<b>Officer Recommendation</b>	<b>Status Summary*</b>
Objection to the amendment as exhibited.	<b>Noted.</b>	For noting
Strategic Frameworks plans to be amended to leave 121 McKimmies as industrial land.	<b>Support requested change.</b> This was a drafting error. It is recommended that Strategic Frameworks plans be corrected.	Resolved.
The submission asks if use of a buffer zone was considered between the bus depot and proposed residential use.	<p><b>Requested change not supported.</b></p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p> <p>As noted in the report, the Thomastown Industrial Area Plan assessed the subject site and found it was unlikely to support industrial use into the future due to the isolation of the site, poor transport connectivity, the surrounding land uses, and the availability of better located industrial and employment land within the municipality. The plan identified the opportunity for an alternate use to be considered, with residential or mixed use identified subject to further investigation and resolution of land contamination, geo-technical and site access issues. A transition zone or a mandatory buffer distance has not been proposed or would be considered a feasible or suitable outcome for the site. Instead, it is recommended that a 'bus depot interface area' be identified to appropriately manage the interface of the bus-depot.</p> <p>This acknowledges that the interface is a key consideration that requires technical assessment and a considered response. Any transition, buffer or interface treatments will be the responsibility of the proposed development to implement as the 'agent of change'. This can be resolved during the Development Plan assessment stage upon the completion of further background technical reports, such as an Acoustic and Light Spill Assessment. The Development Plan must comply with any recommendations or conditions to enable residential development that these reports require, as this will determine the interface treatment. With respect to the acoustic assessment, the EPA's submission includes amended drafting for the DPO schedule to ensure that the assessment meets best practice standards. It is recommended this wording is adopted.</p>	Not resolved

	<p><i>Officer Recommendation</i></p> <p>The submission is supported in principle. It is recommended that the suggestion for buffer zoning not be supported. It is recommended that the Framework Plan in the DPO Schedule be amended to clearly articulate and note the 'interface with the bus depot' (distance of 200m) and that the development of land in proximity to the interface is subject to further acoustic and light spill assessment, and response as part of the Development Plan assessment stage (refer to <i>Attachment 4</i>).</p>	
<p>The submission recommends a buffer area should be shown between the bus depot and residential development, citing 200m.</p>	<p><b>Changes recommended in response to submission.</b></p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p> <p>This request appears to be in response to potential noise issues and to implement the 200m threshold referenced at Clause 53.10. As noted previously, Clause 53.10 provisions do not apply in this situation and would only trigger referral to the EPA, not an exclusion buffer. The implementation of a buffer area is not informed by any assessment or report, and it is unclear how this buffer distance would be determined and function. An acoustic assessment is required at the Development Plan assessment stage to inform the subdivision layout and, as per the EPA requirements, specify any measures to address the noise impacts.</p> <p>As per the EPA advice, this would be required to determine appropriate measures relating to:</p> <p><i>'land use separation, appropriate setback distances, use of barriers, and orientation and positioning for lots so that private open space is shielded from noise from the Metropolitan Ring Road and the bus depot; and</i></p> <p><i>the identification of areas where any attenuation measures are required.</i></p> <p>To clearly identify the interface issue between the bus depot and future residential uses, it is recommended the Framework Plan in the DPO be amended to highlight the boundary between the properties and note a 200m 'interface with the bus depot' and that the land in proximity to the interface is subject to further acoustic assessment as part of the Development Plan assessment stage.</p> <p><i>Officer Recommendation</i></p> <p>The submission is supported in principle. It is recommended that the request for a specified buffer not be supported. It is recommended that the Framework Plan in the DPO Schedule be amended</p>	<p>Not resolved</p>

	to clearly articulate and note the 'interface with the bus depot' (distance of 200m) and that the development of land in proximity to the interface is subject to further acoustic and light spill assessment and response as part of the Development Plan stage (refer to <i>Attachment 4</i> ).	
The submission states that the provisions for the DP to address the interface with the Depot are inadequate.	<b>Noted.</b> An area of 200m from the depot boundary will be shown as requiring further acoustic assessment and response as per the recommendation above.	Not resolved
The submission requests the DP to include a buffer distance.	<b>Requested change not supported.</b> See above. Whilst the request for a buffer is not supported, it is recommended that the Framework Plan in the DPO Schedule be amended to clearly articulate and note the 'interface with the bus depot' (distance of 200m) and that the development of land in proximity to the interface is subject to further acoustic and light spill assessment and response as part of the Development Plan stage (refer to <i>Attachment 4</i> ).	Not resolved
Any physical mitigations to be in place prior to occupation.	<b>Noted.</b> The Acoustic Assessment will determine the treatments required and these will be implemented prior to occupation	Not resolved
The Transport strategy to include express consideration of retained access and no worsening of access. Any road upgrades are to be made in consultation with the Depot.	<b>Changes recommended in response to submission.</b> <i>Discussion</i> Council officers recognise the strategic importance of the Dysons bus depot and the role it plays in delivering important public transport services for the municipality. Council officers also recognise that changes to road access to support the proposed development will have an impact on Dysons current access arrangements, as would development of the site in accordance with the existing zone. The DPO Schedule requires a Transport Strategy to be prepared to inform the future Development Plan.  It is recommended that the requirements for the Transport Strategy be updated to require it to assess the function of McKimmies Road, the function of the site access and the impacts on existing movements and public transport operations from the Dysons bus depot. The assessment should also make recommendations to address these issues. Further, it is recommended that the Strategy provide concepts for the reconstruction of Laurie Collins Drive including the access points of the bus depot, which minimises impacts on existing conditions.	Not resolved

	<p>These requirements should minimise the impacts on the Dysons bus depot operations and support the continued effective and efficient public transport services operated from the bus depot. The updated requirements will also ensure that the traffic impacts of the development, and the anticipated residential yield, are acceptable and can be supported by the proposed street network and existing broader road network.</p> <p>Further, it is recommended that given the impact, that Dysons be consulted in respect to proposed changes to access arrangements included in the Transport Strategy.</p> <p><i>Officer Recommendation</i></p> <p>The submission is supported in principle. It is recommended the specific changes proposed by the submitter not be supported. However it is recommended that the DPO Schedule be amended at Clause 4 Requirements for development plan to include additional requirements for the Transport Strategy to assess and make recommendations (including concept plans) for the reconstruction of Laurie Collins Drive and that there be consultation with affected land owners in respect to proposed changes to access arrangements (refer to <i>Attachment 4</i>).</p>	
<p>The High-level noise assessment performed is not enough, it should be more targeted and use actual observed data. The recommendations of this assessment should then be made mandatory.</p>	<p><b>Changes recommended in response to submission.</b></p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p> <p>The acoustic assessment required at the Development Plan assessment stage will assess the existing conditions at the site, including noise generated from the bus depot. It will then determine any response to the existing conditions required. Any resulting recommendations must inform the preparation of the Development Plan. As discussed above, the EPA's submission includes amended drafting for the requirement of an acoustic assessment in the DPO schedule to ensure that the assessment meets best practice standards. The preliminary noise assessment which has been prepared, will need to be updated to meet the EPA's best practice standards and standards.</p> <p><i>Officer Recommendation</i></p> <p>The submission is supported in principle. It is recommended that the DPO Schedule be updated with the EPA's proposed standards to ensure the Acoustic Assessment is undertaken to meet best practice standards and require the recommendations of the assessment to inform the future development of the site (refer to <i>Attachment 4</i>).</p>	Not resolved

An assessment of risk and mitigation measures from light-spill.	<p><b>Changes recommended in response to submission.</b></p> <p><i>Discussion</i> Council officers support the inclusion in the DPO Schedule of a requirement for light spill to be considered as part of the Development Plan process. It is noted that the bus depot has a current obligation to ensure their lighting does not have an adverse effect on adjoining land.</p> <p><i>Officer Recommendation</i> The submission is supported. It is recommended the DPO Schedule be amended at Clause 4 - Requirements for Development Plan to include a requirement for a Light Spill Assessments and “Key interface treatments for McKimmies Road, Darebin Creek to the west and south, residential areas to the east and 121 McKimmies Road to the north, including noise and light spill treatments” (refer to <i>Attachment 4</i>).</p>	Not resolved.
<b>Department of Transport and Planning (Transport)</b>	<b>Officer Recommendation</b>	<b>Status Summary*</b>
The Department of Transport and Planning (Transport) advises there is no objection to the Amendment	This is noted	For noting
<b>Bundoora Developments, Brencorp Bundoora and New Urban Projects (Intrapac, the proponent)</b>	<b>Officer Recommendation</b>	<b>Status Summary*</b>
The proponent advises their support for the Amendment and provide the below justification:	This is noted	For noting
The Amendment is in-line with state and local planning policies to provide additional housing within established residential areas.	This is noted	For noting
The significant infill site is supported by the State Government’s Housing Statement released in	This is noted	For noting



September 2023, which encourages the provision of a range of housing typologies, including affordable housing, to be delivered in established neighbourhoods with access to infrastructure, amenities and services.		
<p>The Amendment will have a net community benefit through the delivery of a number of environmental, social and economic benefits that include but are not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Facilitating the repurposing of a disused quarry site that would otherwise sit vacant and unusable with no contribution to the local economy or housing supply;</li> <li>2 Allowing an increase in residential housing stock that will add diversity of housing in proximity to existing transport and services;</li> <li>3 Facilitating social and affordable housing to be integrated into the residential development;</li> <li>4 Enhancement and protection of the Darebin Creek linear reserve;</li> <li>5 Providing essential connections between the existing residential community and Darebin Creek;</li> <li>6 Facilitating improved landscape character outcomes through the provision of street trees; and</li> </ol>	This is noted	For noting

7 Providing an immediate boost to the local economy through construction and development.		
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\* Note: where Council resolves a submission with the submitter, it may or may not be supported by other parties to the Amendment.

## WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME

**SCHEDULE 40 TO CLAUSE 43.04 DEVELOPMENT PLAN OVERLAY**Shown on the planning scheme map as **DPO40****MCKIMMIES ROAD RENEWAL SITE****1.0****Objectives**

To ~~facilitate the remediation of the land and~~ guide the orderly use and development of the land for residential purposes ~~at an appropriate density,~~ including a diversity of housing, ~~at a range of densities throughout the site.~~

**Commented [LW1]:** New drafting by Council upon considering EPA submission.

~~To deliver a high amenity residential neighbourhood, including sustainable development and with well-designed housing with good internal amenity, and adaptable, innovative sustainable design and integrated water features.~~

**Commented [LW2]:** New objective drafted by Council to support section 4 requirements. Also responds to Melb Water and EPA submissions.

To provide for ~~well-designed,~~ safe and efficient traffic, pedestrian and cycling networks ~~that are that connected, and legible, well shaded, high amenity, integrate integrated~~ with the adjoining areas and encourage sustainable transport ~~use.~~

**Commented [LW3]:** New drafting by Council upon consideration of Dysons and community submission.

To ~~protect and~~ enhance the Darebin Creek environs, protect significant environmental features and deliver increased tree canopy coverage across the site.

**Commented [LW4]:** In response to submission by Melb Water and DEECA

To ensure the timely delivery of infrastructure, including roads, ~~drainage and integrated water assets,~~ open space and links to adjoining sites and open space.

**Commented [SP5]:** In response to EPA and Melb Water submissions.

To provide appropriate ~~land use and built form~~ interface treatments ~~to enable compatible use with~~ the bus depot at 121 McKimmies Road (the Depot), the Darebin Creek, ~~existing and future major roads~~ and existing residential development in proximity to the site.

**Commented [SP6]:** In response to EPA and Dyson's submissions.

**2.0****Requirement before a permit is granted**

A permit may be granted to use or subdivide land, construct a building or construct or carry out works before a development plan has been prepared to the satisfaction of the responsible authority for the following:

- Temporary land uses and buildings and works.
- Any buildings and works ~~or subdivision~~ associated with the remediation of the site in accordance with or for the purpose of carrying out a Preliminary Risk Screen Assessment or obtaining a Certificate or Statement of Environmental Audit under the *Environment Protection Act 2017*.
- Completion of the filling of the disused quarry and related works.
- Display of advertising signs.
- ~~Subdivide land.~~
- Removal, variation or creation of easements, restrictions or reserves.
- Removal, ~~destruction of,~~ ~~lopping~~ ~~or protection~~ of vegetation.
- Site offices or display ~~suites/home centres.~~
- Rehabilitation ~~and protection~~ of the Darebin Creek environs.
- Works associated with a minor utility installation or any other service infrastructure works.

**Commented [LW8]:** In response to submission by EPA.

**Commented [LW9]:** In response to the submission by the EPA.

**Commented [SP10]:** New drafting by Council upon considering DEECA's submission

**Commented [LW11]:** To align with Planning Scheme land use term.

**Commented [SP12]:** New drafting by Council upon considering DEECA's submission

A planning permit issued prior to the approval of a Development Plan must not prejudice or conflict with:

- The long-term future use and development of the site.
- The preparation or approval of a Development Plan.

## WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME

- Conditions of any Statement of Environmental Audit.
- Requirements for Acoustic and Air Quality assessments to be prepared for the site.

This is to be detailed in a report submitted with the application

**Commented [LW13]:** In response to submission by EPA.

### 3.0 Conditions and requirements for permits

#### Requirements

The following requirements apply to permits, as appropriate:

A planning permit granted may include a requirement for the following items to be endorsed prior to the commencement of the building and works, or the land use as appropriate:

- Waste Management Plan.
- Drainage/Stormwater Management and Drainage Plan.
- Site Environmental Management Plan/s (including any Construction Environmental Management Plan or similar plan required by an environmental audit statement).

A planning permit for the removal of native vegetation must be accompanied by an **Offset Statement** which demonstrates the offsets required to compensate for the proposed removal of native vegetation from the study area, as identified in Native Vegetation Assessment 149 McKimmies Road, Bundoora Report No. 20196.2 (1.1) (Nature Advisory, November 2021) have been achieved and secured via a third-party offset prior to removal of native vegetation.

**Commented [LW14]:** In response to submission of the DEECA.

#### Acoustic Assessment

The development must implement any recommendations set out in the Acoustic Assessment prepared pursuant to the requirement at Clause 4.0 (Requirements for Development Plan) of this Schedule to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

#### Air Quality Assessment

The development must implement any recommendations set out in the Air Quality Assessment prepared pursuant to the requirement at Clause 4.0 (Requirements for Development Plan) of this Schedule to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

**Commented [LW15]:** In response to submission by the EPA.

#### Compliance with environmental audit

Conditions and requirements detailed by the *Statement of Environmental Audit* issued 6<sup>th</sup> January 2023 must be complied with to the satisfaction of EPA appointed Environmental Auditor and Responsible Authority respectively.

#### -Geotechnical

Before the submission and approval of construction plans (engineering plans) and the certification of the relevant plan of subdivision for each stage, a geotechnical statement prepared by a suitably qualified geotechnical engineer must be prepared to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. The statement is to include:

- An overview of the geotechnical remediation works completed.
- A record of the measured settlement.
- Reconciliation of the measured settlement to behaviour modelled in the Geotechnical Design Report.
- Address any instances where the measured settlement is outside expected parameters and provide detailed mitigation / design solutions.

## WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME

- A plan of the Stage showing zones of different predicted future settlement behaviour and noting.

Where the geotechnical statement identifies a difference between the measured settlement and the behaviour modelled, it should be accompanied by a written peer review statement from a suitably qualified and independent geotechnical engineer which is to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

**Conditions**

The following conditions apply to permits, as appropriate:

**Section 173 Agreement**

A planning permit may include a condition that requires the owner to enter into an agreement or agreements under section 173 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* which must be registered on title and make provision for the following:-

- An arrangement with one or more Participating Registered Agencies for the provision of affordable housing ~~within the meaning of that agency's remit~~ to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.
- Provide ~~an agreed~~ 15 percentage of the total number of dwellings as affordable housing including 5 percent as social housing.
- Or make other arrangements for the provision of affordable housing to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.
- The owner, or other person in anticipation of becoming the owner, must meet all of the expenses of the preparation and registration of the agreement, including reasonable costs borne by the responsible authority.

**Commented [LW16]:** Updated as per agreement.

**Commented [LW17]:** Updated as per agreement.

Where conditions of the Statement of Environmental Audit require significant ongoing maintenance and/or monitoring, a planning permit for subdivision may include a condition that requires the owner to enter into an agreement with the Responsible Authority under section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The section 173 agreement must be executed on the title of the relevant land prior to certification of the plan of subdivision. The applicant must meet all costs associated with drafting and execution of the Agreement, including those incurred by the responsible authority.

**Commented [LW18]:** In response to the submission of the EPA.

Unless there is an agreement which deals with the matter, a planning permit may include conditions as appropriate which require any measures required by a Statement of Environmental Audit to be implemented before, during and after the development of the site.

A planning permit for subdivision may include a condition ~~for requiring~~ the proponent ~~permit holder to provide~~ evidence that any Council Infrastructure has been designed to accommodate the maximum anticipated ground movement established in the geotechnical remediation design and ~~as that may have been any adjustments modified~~ based on actual settlement monitoring during and after the geotechnical remediation works.

**Commented [LW19]:** Amended drafting by Council to improve clarity.

A planning permit for subdivision may include a condition that requires the owner to enter into an agreement or agreements under section 173 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* which:

- indemnifies Council against third party claims related to negligence in respect to the geo-technical works undertaken on the site.
- if required by the Responsible Authority, provides for a bond and/or extended maintenance or repair of defects period for Council Infrastructure on filled land related to geotechnical failure from settlement, for a specified period of time.
- notifies purchasers of land and successive purchaser of the nature of ground conditions including filling.

## WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME

## 4.0 Requirements for development plan

A development plan must [respond to and](#) include the following requirements and must be generally in accordance with the Framework Plan at Figure 1.

A **Site Analysis Plan** that includes:

- Site shape, size, orientation [of the site](#) and existing easements.
- Topographical features.
- Existing environmental features including waterways and vegetation.
- The general location and built form of existing buildings on the site and surrounding properties.
- The environmental features and use of surrounding land including alignment of future E6 road corridor.
- Key interfaces to McKimmies Road, Darebin Creek to the west and south, residential areas to the east and 121 McKimmies Rd to the north.
- Key views to and from the site.
- Street frontage details including crossovers, streetscape treatments, and intersections.
- The location of existing public transport services and public open spaces within walking distance.
- The existing and proposed local road network.
- [Existing local services, facilities and infrastructure in the immediate vicinity of the site.](#)

**Commented [LW20]:** New drafting by Council.

A **Concept Plan** that [outlines the proposed spatial layout of the neighbourhood to deliver upon the objectives of this Schedule and](#) includes:

**Commented [LW21]:** Section re-ordered to improve clarity of drafting.

- [The waterway corridor reserve along the Darebin Creek.](#)
- ~~The size and location of encumbered and unencumbered open space, including the identification of any conservation and heritage areas.~~
- [Retention of native vegetation in open space, conservation reserves or tree reserves including mature River Red Gums.](#)
- [Any buffers or treatments required to mitigate acoustic, air quality or light spill impacts on the amenity of future dwellings.](#)
- [The identification of amenity interface areas and responses, including those associated with the land uses in the vicinity of the site such as the existing bus depot and existing and future major roads.](#)
- [A response to the interface with the Darebin Creek. The interface response to Darebin Creek corridor is to provide for high amenity and accessibility and consider public safety and bushfire risk. The type of road interface \(i.e. street frontage, paper road\) is to respond to the adjoining housing typology.](#)
- Details of the proposed land uses consistent with zoning of the site.
- A breakdown of land uses / precincts including standard density only precincts [and potential locations for social housing.](#)
- ~~The size and location of encumbered and unencumbered open space, including the identification of any conservation and heritage areas.~~
- Key infrastructure elements including access, transport connections, pedestrian/cycle and vehicle links.
- [Details of proposed pedestrian and cycle connections through the site from east to west and connecting to the Thomastown East Recreation Reserve over the Darebin Creek.](#)

**Commented [LW22]:** In response to the submission of DEECA

**Commented [LW23]:** In response to the submission of the DEECA.

**Commented [LW24]:** In response to EPA and Dyson submissions.

**Commented [LW25]:** In response to submissions by Dysons Group and the EPA.

**Commented [LW26]:** To implement social and affordable housing agreement.

**Commented [LW27]:** Amended drafting for clarity.

## WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME

- 
- ~~The identification of any critical interface points, including those associated with the adjoining land uses and the Darebin Creek.~~
- ~~Details of key interfaces including to existing bus depot and Darebin Creek. The interface response to Darebin Creek corridor is to provide for high amenity and accessibility and consider public safety and bushfire risk.~~
- ~~Details of proposed pedestrian and cycle connections through the site from east to west and beyond to the Thomastown East Recreation Reserve.~~
- Retention of vehicular access to the Yarra Valley Water site (149A McKimmies Road) and 121 McKimmies Road.
- ~~Provides opportunity for integration of development with adjoining sites should they be redeveloped in the future.~~
- ~~The location of any Integrated Water Management infrastructure.~~
- ~~Responds to the recommendations and outcomes of other plans prepared in accordance with this schedule and the objectives and guidelines in Whittlesea's Neighbourhood Design Manual and Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria.~~

**Commented [LW28]:** In response to submissions by Dysons Group and the EPA.

**Commented [LW29]:** New drafting by Council for clarity of outcome.

**Commented [LW30]:** New drafting by Council upon considering Melbourne Water submission.

**Commented [LW31]:** New drafting by Council to link Concept Plan to the supporting documents and Councils updated Neighbourhood Design Manual dated September 2023.

A Precinct **Infrastructure Plan** that includes:

- The location of existing infrastructure and services, including their capacity.
- An assessment of any future infrastructure and services upgrades required to support the proposed future development of the site.
- An assessment of community and recreation infrastructure required to support the anticipated residential population.
- A staging plan for the delivery of site infrastructure and mechanisms for how staging is intended to occur and milestones for completion and delivery of infrastructure and land projects.
- The location and scope of infrastructure and land projects.
- The timing and conditions for transfer of open space and conservation land.

A **Stormwater and Flood Management and Drainage Plan Strategy** that includes:

- Assessment of the pre and post development drainage conditions of the site.
- ~~Assessment of impacts from flooding including impact on flood levels from the local drainage system.~~
- Water sensitive urban design principles ~~or infrastructure~~, which provides for the protection of natural systems, integration of stormwater treatment into the landscape and protection of water quality.
- ~~Stormwater quality and water sensitive urban design principles which limits the amount of impervious surfaces.~~
- ~~Consideration of natural systems, integration of stormwater treatment into the landscape and protection of water quality.~~
- A design response, including any drainage reserve and / or infrastructure required to the satisfaction of Melbourne Water.
- ~~Details of proposed connections to the Darebin Creek~~
- ~~Consideration of natural systems, integration of stormwater treatment into the landscape and protection of water quality.~~
- Consideration and response to the habitat requirements for the Growling Grass Frog and any other threatened species which may inhabit or frequent the site.

**Commented [LW32]:** In response to Melbourne Water submission

**Commented [LW33]:** In response to submission of Melbourne Water.

**Commented [LW34]:** In response to the submission of Melbourne Water.

**Commented [LW35]:** In response to the submission of Melbourne Water.

## WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME

- Specifies Requirements for future development including minimum floor heights with sufficient freeboard (minimum 600mm for habitable buildings and 300mm for non-habitable buildings) above modelled flood levels.

**Commented [LW36]:** In response to information provided by Melbourne Water.

An **Open Space and Landscape Plan** that includes:

- Details of the existing open space network in the adjacent and broader area and what opportunities there are for connection to those areas from the site.
- Identification of the location, features and embellishment of proposed public parks, and other publicly accessible open space areas and the pedestrian / cycle path network within the site.
- ~~Location of all medium to very large trees and existing River Red Gums on the land (including dead trees). Identification of those trees to be retained and Tree Protection Zones (TPZs) in accordance with Council requirements for those trees nominated for retention. The plan must accord with Councils River Red Gum policy and should provide for the retention of a minimum 80 per cent of River Red Gums classified as Medium, Large, or Very Large.~~
- Identification of no less than 72,820 square metres 20% of the gross site area as open space. The identified open space will comprise a combination of encumbered and unencumbered areas, including no less than 10,000 square metres of new unencumbered open space.
- Identification of variable width encumbered open space along the Darebin Creek generally in accordance with the Framework Plan at Figure 1 that provides for a variable width minimum 30m waterway corridor which is at a minimum 30m from the top of the bank of the Darebin Creek (95metres to AHD contour line), a minimum average of width of 50m from top of the bank of the Darebin Creek and includes any other land encumbered by flooding, or for conservation purposes or tree retention including mature red gums, as per the Framework Plan at Figure 1.
- A scaled 'waterway corridor reserve' plan clearly showing the encumbered open space along Darebin Creek, environmental and cultural heritage features, the top of bank, setbacks and any proposed embellishment including the location of shared paths and pedestrian/cycle crossings of the Darebin Creek.
- ~~Location of all medium to very large trees and existing River Red Gums on the land (including dead trees). Identification of those trees to be retained and Tree Protection Zones (TPZs) in accordance with Council requirements for those trees nominated for retention. The plan must accord with Councils River Red Gum policy and should provide for the retention of a minimum 80 per cent of River Red Gums classified as Medium, Large, or Very Large.~~
- A tree canopy coverage plan which demonstrates a minimum 30% coverage in the public realm and public open space (not including Darebin Creek waterway corridor or areas for conservation).
- Retention of native vegetation including scattered trees and patches of Riparian Woodland in the southern part of the site, adjacent to Darebin Creek; and retention of native vegetation including patches of Plains Grassy Woodland and scattered trees in areas prone to inundation, any scattered trees or native vegetation patches within 50 metres of Darebin Creek, and any native vegetation of high biodiversity or other value, including local biodiversity value. Retained vegetation should be incorporated into open space, conservation reserves or tree reserves shown on the Concept Plan. ~~Retention of native vegetation including scattered trees, dead trees and patches of Riparian Woodland in the southern part of the site, adjacent to Darebin Creek and retention of remnant vegetation in areas prone to inundation and within the variable width encumbered open space along Darebin Creek. Retention of all vegetation, including dead trees, identified for retention in Figure Two of Native Vegetation Assessment 149 McKimmies Road, Bundoora Report No. 20196.2 (1.1) (Nature Advisory, November 2021) and incorporation of that retained vegetation into open space or conservation reserves.~~

**Commented [LW37]:** Amended drafting for consistency of land area measurement.

**Commented [LW38]:** In response to submission by the DEECA and Melbourne Water.

**Commented [LW39]:** To implement submissions of DEECA and Melbourne Water

**Commented [LW40]:** Moved for improve clarity of drafting.

**Commented [LW41]:** In response to the submission by the DEECA.



## WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME

- A preferred planting list for public and publicly accessible spaces, with consideration given to the suitability of planting within the Darebin Creek environs and the environmental and soil conditions of the site.
- Details and initiatives to be incorporated into open space areas to enhance and celebrate the sense of 'place' of the Darebin Creek and its environs.
- Details of any cultural heritage features to be incorporated into open space areas.

**Commented [LW42]:** In response to Melb Water submission

**Commented [LW43]:** To respond to potential outcomes of CHMP process.

An **Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment** which:

- Responds to the provisions of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

A **Transport Strategy** which includes:

- A Traffic Impact Assessment Report detailing access and passage to the surrounding road network, as well as within the development area.
- The Traffic Impact Assessment Report must include an assessment of the impacts of the proposed development on:
  - the function of McKimmies Road including the existing intersections along McKimmies Road between Plenty Road and Dalton Road.
  - existing travel times on the surrounding road network.
  - the function of the site access, and,
  - the impacts on existing movements and public transport operations (quantified) from the adjoining bus depot and demonstration that the proposed development will not detrimentally impact public transport servicing.

The assessment must make recommendations on measures to address the impacts, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority, including in respect to:

- The intersection treatment of the site access (Laurie Collins Drive) and McKimmies Road.
- Upgrades/treatments to other intersections on the McKimmies Road.
- The feasibility of a second access / egress point to the site.
- The views and requirements of emergency services.
- Ensuring the continued effective and efficient public transport services operated from the adjoining bus depot.
- The intersection with Laurie Collins Drive of the treatment of access points to the adjoining bus depot.
- Any restrictions of lot or dwelling numbers or release of stages.
- Other measures to support use of sustainable and active modes of transport as part of the development.
- A ~~road-street~~ network with a high degree of internal and external connectivity and permeability, and public transport opportunities as appropriate.
- Location of proposed intersections and road upgrades.
- Indicative road cross sections.
- A proposed concept design and cross section for the reconstruction of Laurie Collins Drive which considers the access requirements of the adjoining bus depot and minimises impacts on existing conditions and ensures the continued effective and efficient ensure that public transport network operations are not detrimentally impacted.
- Consideration of the views of the affected landowners in respect to proposed changes to access arrangements included in the Transport Strategy.
- A pedestrian and cycling movement plan, with a high degree of permeability and connectivity to the broader pedestrian and cycling network.

**Commented [LW44]:** In response to submissions by community members and Dysons Group.

**Commented [LW45]:** In response to submission of Dyson Group.

**Commented [LW46]:** In response to the submission by the Dysons Group.

## WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME

- [Location and details of proposed pedestrian and cycle crossing/s of Darebin Creek.](#)
- [Recommendations of measures to be incorporated into the development to support the transition to electric vehicles.](#)

**Commented [LW47]:** To implement agreement.

**Commented [LW48]:** New drafting by Council in recognition of Electric Vehicle Transition Plan.

An **Environmentally Sustainable Design Statement Strategy** which:

- Sets out the energy efficiency and water conservation principles and requirements to guide the preparation of a Sustainability Management Plan which is to be applied to the design and construction of the development and buildings [and outlines the precinct scale sustainability initiatives to be incorporated into the development.](#)

**Commented [LW49]:** Amended drafting by Council to highlight precinct wide sustainability measures.

A **Flora and fauna assessment** which:

- Provides for the management and protection of threatened species and ecological communities including any land required to be retained for conservation purposes.
- Has regard to existing ecological reports/plans for the site and permitted Clearing of Native Vegetation Regulations or other legislative requirements relating to the removal of native vegetation and threatened species conservation.

An **Arborist Report** providing a survey prepared by a suitably qualified person, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority, of all existing trees on the site.

A **Native Vegetation Removal Plan and Offset Assessment** of any native vegetation to be removed, having regard to Victoria's Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation, including the location of any necessary vegetation offsets and the requirements under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* and *Environment Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

A **Kangaroo Management Plan** which includes

- Strategies to avoid land locking kangaroos, including staging of subdivision.
- Strategies to minimise animal and human welfare risks.
- Management and monitoring actions to sustainably manage a population of kangaroos within a suitable location.
- Actions to address the containment of kangaroos and to ensure adequate animal welfare.

A **Built Form Analysis Plan** that identifies:

- The range of preferred [housing typologies](#), building heights and indicative lot densities across the site.
- A design response to [any](#) buildings interfacing with the Darebin Creek corridor, open space, and any significant biodiversity retained on site, [where street frontage cannot be achieved.](#)
- Key interface treatments for McKimmies Road, Darebin Creek to the west and south, [the E6 corridor and](#) residential areas to the east and 121 McKimmies Road to the north, [including noise and light spill treatments.](#)
- Design response and guidelines which delivers tree canopy coverage in the public realm and on private residential lots and provides for their longevity.
- Built form guidelines in respect to lot densities, street layout, siting and orientation, to deliver high quality [built form outcome buildings.](#)

**Commented [LW50]:** In response to Melb Water submission and noting guidelines contained in Melb Water's Waterway Corridor document and Councils Urban Design Manual.

**Commented [SP51]:** In response to EPA submission

**Commented [LW52]:** In response to the submission of the EPA and Dyson Group.

A **Housing Diversity Report** which includes:

- The range of housing types, densities and sizes [which responds to demographic needs.](#)

## WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME

- The expected housing population and dwelling yield including a breakdown of dwelling types, which can be supported by the transport network and service provision.
- The delivery of 15 percent an agreed amount of the overall housing stock as affordable housing, including 5 percent as social housing.
- Principles to ensure that the affordable housing dwelling are well designed, tenure blind, provide for a range of housing types and are integrated with the remainder of the development.
- Guidelines to deliver accessible and adaptable housing at a rate of 5% of the total number of dwellings across the site.

**Commented [LW53]:** In response to submissions by community members.

A **Geotechnical Design Report** outlining the proposed design response to geotechnical issues affecting the development plan area including imported Coode Island silt and which supports the proposed built form typologies and infrastructure provision.

**Commented [LW54]:** Additional drafting by Council.

Statement of Environmental Audit implementation summary table which includes a response as to how each condition of the Statement of Environmental Audit will be complied with and implemented as part of the development of the site and future planning permit applications.

**Commented [LW55]:** In response to the submissions of the EPA.

A Noise Assessment which includes a high level noise assessment for the proposal to identify the existing risks to new noise sensitive areas established on the subject land. The assessment should make recommendations in respect to the specific controls to achieve suitable noise attenuation and outcomes for noise sensitive areas based on the existing conditions surrounding the site; or that further, site specific assessment is needed to assess each proposal having regard to the ambient sound environment.

An Acoustic Assessment report, prepared by a suitably qualified acoustic engineer or other suitably qualified person to the satisfaction of the responsible authority, which:

- Applies the following noise objectives:
  - 35 dB LAeq,8h when measured within a sleeping area between 10 pm and 6 am
  - 40 dB LAeq,16h when measured within a living area between 6am and 10 pm.
- Noise levels should be assessed:
  - Considering the cumulative noise from all sources impacting on the proposal including industry and road traffic, as well as potential other noise sources; and
  - In unfurnished rooms with a finished floor and the windows closed and be based on average external noise levels measured as part of a noise level assessment.
- For areas other than sleeping and living areas, the median value of the range of recommended design sound levels of Australian Standard AS/NZ 2017:2016 (Acoustics – Recommended design sound level and reverberation times for building interiors).
- Includes recommendations for any noise attenuation measures required to meet the applicable noise level objectives, which is consistent with Clause 13.05-1 and can be implemented through subdivision with measures such as:
  - Land use separation, appropriate setback distances, use of barriers, and orientation and positioning for lots so that private open space is shielded from noise from the Metropolitan Ring Road and the bus depot; and
  - Clearly identifies areas where any attenuation measures are required.
- Includes additional considerations, where relevant, to address:
  - Potential noise character (tonality, impulsiveness or intermittency);
  - Noise with high energy in the low frequency range; and

## WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME

- Transient or variable noise.

**Commented [LW56]:** In response to the submission of the EPA.

An **Air Quality Assessment** which assesses the potential impacts to air quality on sensitive uses due to the surrounding environment from existing and future traffic conditions and nearby industry in the context of the *Environment Protection Act 2017* and associated regulations. The assessment should refer to and consider Guidelines for assessing and minimising air pollution in Victoria as appropriate.

**Commented [SP57]:** In response to EPA submission.

A Light Spill Assessment which assesses the impact of lighting on the development site and makes recommendations on any measures or design responses required to mitigate the impacts.

**Commented [LW58]:** In response to Dyson submission.

A Waste Management Plan which demonstrates that the proposed Development Plan layout can effectively provide for the safe movement of waste collection trucks and the ability to service all properties under the four bin kerbside system.

**Commented [LW59]:** New requirement drafted by Council in line with recent changes to waste collection services.

**Figure 1: Framework Plan**

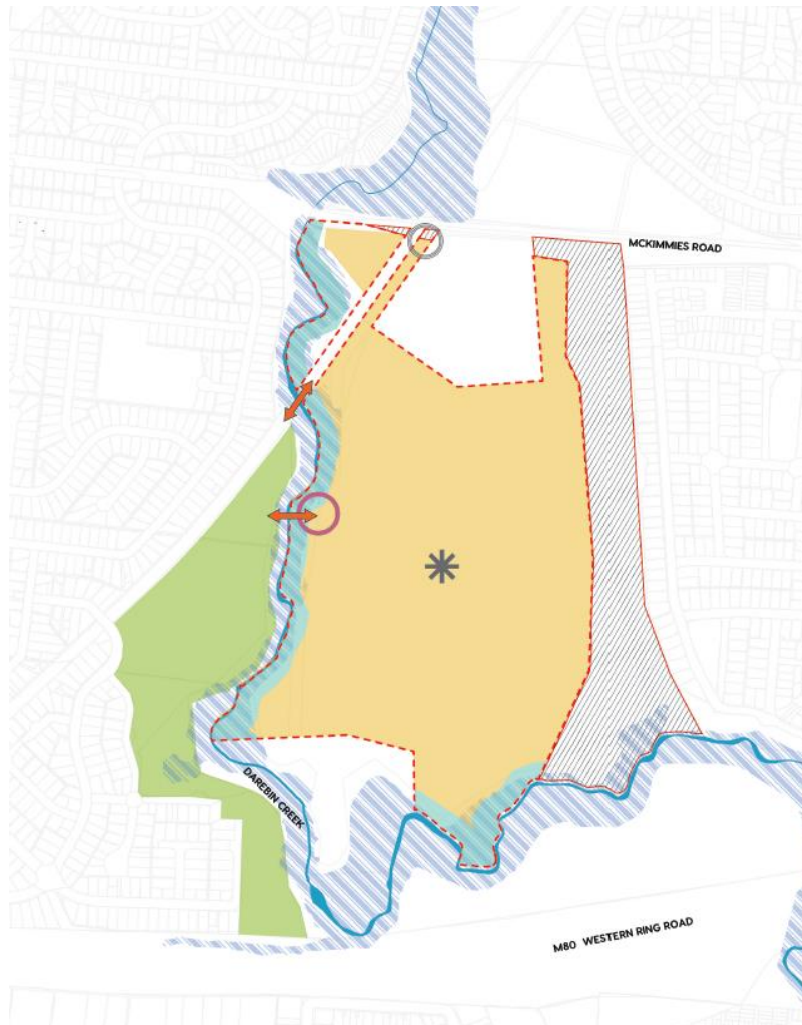
**Commented [LW60]:** New plan being prepared by Urban Design team.

Framework Plan to be updated to show-

- the variable width waterway corridor which is at a minimum 30m from the top of the bank of the Darebin Creek (95metres to AHD contour line), a minimum average of width of 50m from top of the bank of the Darebin Creek and includes any other land encumbered by flooding, for conservation purposes or tree retention including mature red gums (to also include the location of Tree 5).
- identify 200m amenity interface to Dyson bus depot. \*subject to detailed noise assessment.

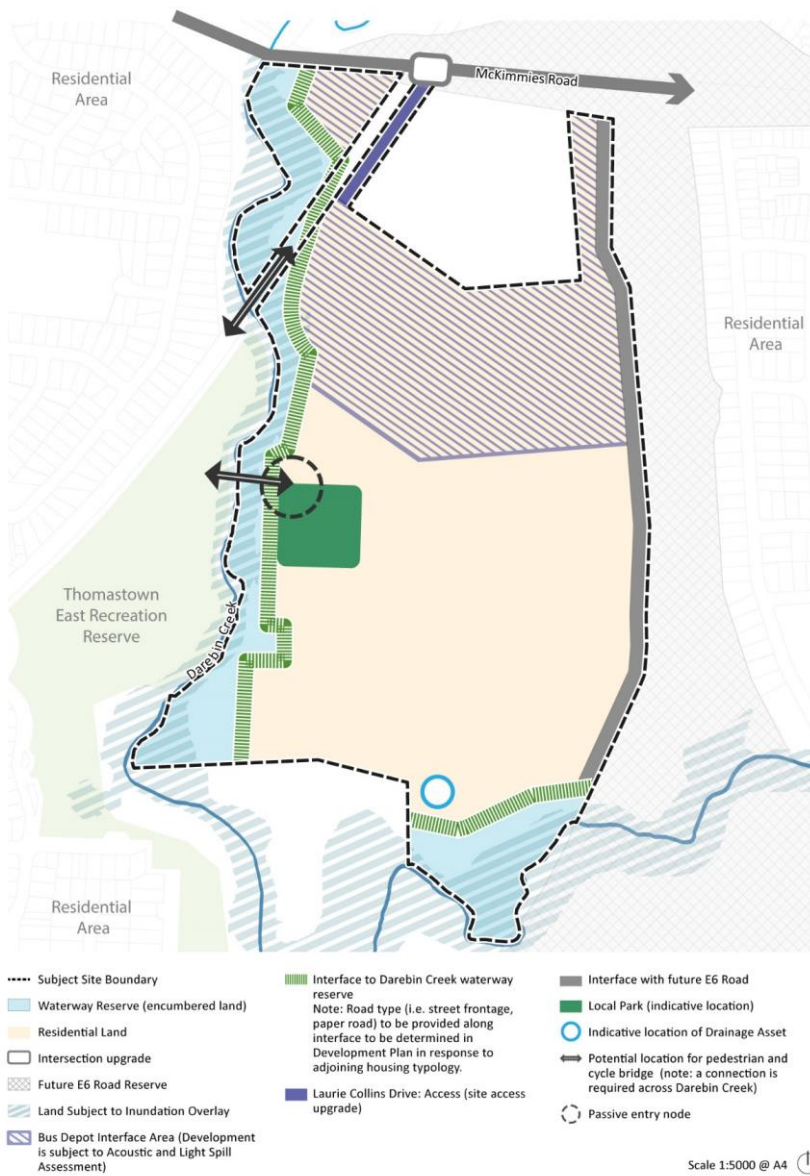
Recommend also showing indicative unencumbered open space (minimum 1ha in size) and indicative location of IWM infrastructure. Include note: that 'Developable Area is subject to outcome for more detailed assessments.'

WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME



- \* Subject Site
- - - Subject Site Boundary
- Public Acquisition Overlay - Future E6 Road
- Darebin Creek
- Top of Bank 30m Buffer Zone
- Land Subject To Inundation Overlay
- Developable Area - Residential Dwellings
- Site Entry Location
- Possible Connection Locations
- Passive Entry Node
- Active Recreation Reserve

## WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME



**Attachment 5: Planning Scheme Amendment Process**

The Planning Scheme Amendment process includes a number of prescribed steps and stages as per the *Planning and Environment Act, 1987*. These are detailed below.

1. Request to Council to commence Planning Scheme Amendment process

Proponents may make requests to Council, to become the Planning Authority and commence a Planning Scheme Amendment process.

*For Amendment C269, planning consultants on behalf of the proponents Intracpac Properties submitted their updated request with supporting documentation in November 2021, which was subsequently considered by Council in September 2022.*

2. Request an Amendment

A formal request for authorisation to prepare an Amendment is made to the Minister for Planning. The request is to include the draft Amendment documents and strategic justification.

*For Amendment C269, Council submitted the request to the Minister following Councils resolution on 19 September 2022.*

3. Authorisation

The Minister for Planning assesses the proposal and submitted documents for consistency with state policy and interests and to ensure it makes appropriate use of the Victorian Planning Provision.

*Council was granted Authorisation to prepare Amendment C269 on 24 July 2023.*

4. Prepare for Exhibition

Exhibition is required to begin within 40 business days of Authorisation being granted. The exhibition documents and collateral are to be prepared including letters and notices. The Minister for Planning is to be provided with the exhibition documents 10 business days before the commencement of exhibition.

5. Exhibition

Exhibition is to include notification to potentially affected neighbouring landowners and occupiers, potentially affected agencies and prescribed Ministers. The exhibition period is to be at a minimum, one calendar month. Notification is to be placed in a newspaper circulating in the area, the state government Planning website and the Government Gazette.

*Exhibition for Amendment C269 was from 14 September to 15 October 2023.*

6. Submissions, panels and advisory committees (current stage)

Following, the close of the exhibition, the Planning Authority is required review submissions received and resolve whether make the changes requested by the submission, refer the submission to a Panel appointed or abandon the Amendment. In accordance with Ministerial Direction No.15 (MD15), the request to the Minister for Planning, for a Panel to



be appointed must be made within 40 business days of the closing date of submissions. A panel is appointed by the Minister for Planning to hear submissions about amendments to planning schemes, and to make recommendations or provide advice about if the amendment should proceed.

*For Amendment C269, eight submissions were received during exhibition which are not fully resolved. It is recommended that Council request the appointment of a Panel to consider these submissions. Noting that it has now been more than 40 business days since the close of submissions, Council has received an exemption to the strict compliance with MD15.*

#### 7. Adoption

Following the Panel Hearing, the Panel members will issue a report with their recommendations in response to the submissions. Council in its role as the Planning Authority must then consider the recommendation of the Panel and resolve to either adopt the Amendment (potentially with changes) or abandon the Amendment.

#### 8. Approval

A Council resolution to adopt the Amendment is sent to the Minister for Planning with a request that they Approve the Amendment. Once Approval is granted the Planning Scheme will be updated once a notice of approval is published in the Government Gazette.



### 5.3 Planning Scheme Amendment C278 - Update to the former Wollert Church Heritage Overlay

**Director/Executive Manager:** Director Planning & Development

**Report Author:** Coordinator Planning Policy & Implementation

**In Attendance:** Strategic Planner

#### Executive Summary

This report recommends that Council writes to the Minister for Planning to request the preparation and approval of a Planning Scheme Amendment (C287wsea) to modify the *Whittlesea Planning Scheme* to correctly reflect the new location of the former Wollert Methodist Church on the Carome Homestead site. It is proposed to prepare the amendment under Section 20(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

The former Wollert Methodist Church was moved from its original location near the intersection of Epping and Lehrmanns Roads in Wollert by Major Road Projects Victoria as a result of the Epping Road duplication. Following discussions between Major Road Projects Victoria and Council, Major Road Projects Victoria agreed to refurbish the Church and relocate it to the site of the Carome Homestead site in 2022, in consultation with the site's Committee of Management.

The proposed amendment will remove the Heritage Overlay (HO165) from the original location of the former church and update the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay, the Statement of Significance for the Carome Homestead, and associated mapping of the *Whittlesea Planning Scheme* to reflect the new location of the former church within the curtilage of the Homestead (HO17). The Carome Homestead has been adapted for re-use and provides a restaurant/cafe on site. It is intended that the former Church will also be used for a similar use (ie. hospitality).

Council officers sought advice from officers at the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) to prepare the amendment under Section 20(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, which enables the Minister of Planning to intervene and exempt an amendment from the requirements of sections 17, 18, and 19 (relating to notification and exhibition) of the Act.

The circumstances in which this power may be used are that if the Minister considers that:

- compliance with any of those requirements is not warranted; or
- it is in the interests of Victoria or any part of Victoria to make such an exemption appropriate.

This was considered appropriate given the amendment is essentially an administrative update to the scheme to reflect the relocation of the former church. DTP agreed that the proposed amendment met the tests set out in Planning Practice Note, Ministerial Powers of Intervention in Planning and Heritage Matters (November 2004) to proceed under this provision.

#### **Officers' Recommendation**

**THAT Council submits the proposed Amendment C278 Wollert Church Relocation to the Minister for Planning, to formally prepare and approve Amendment C278wsea, under Section 20 (4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, to the *Whittlesea Planning Scheme*, as presented in Attachments 1 – 6.**

## Background / Key Information

Increasing demand for transport infrastructure upgrades to meet the needs of a growing population has placed significant pressure on the management of heritage sites in growth areas. Recent urban development has resulted in impacts on previously untouched heritage sites including Aboriginal cultural heritage and post-contact heritage. As such, a careful approach is required to ensure that the significance of these places is respected and retained where practicable.

Epping Road is one of six upgrades planned by the State Government to improve main roads in the northern metropolitan region. The projects are being delivered by Major Road Projects Victoria (MRPV) as part of the State Government's Northern Upgrade Project.

The former Wollert Methodist Church was located within the direct impact area of the Epping Road duplication project at the northeast corner of the intersection of Epping and Lehmanns Roads, Wollert. The road design required the removal of the church for the project to progress as part of the State Government's Victoria's Big Build program. The former church is protected by a Heritage Overlay (HO165) in the *Whittlesea Planning Scheme* (scheme).

The Wollert Church is considered to be:

- historically and culturally significant because it has served as a place of worship for over 120 years
- historically and aesthetically significant as it is a good and largely intact example of a Carpenter Gothic style building in the Whittlesea area
- aesthetically significant as a dominant feature of the local landscape.

Given its significance and high degree of structural integrity, relocation of the former church was considered as a viable option rather than demolition.

Carome Homestead was identified as a potential relocation site due to its relatively close proximity to its original location and the site being protected by a Heritage Overlay (HO17).

The relocation of the former church was proposed to the Homestead's Committee of Management for the site, Working Heritage Inc. (WHI) by City of Whittlesea officers. The Carome Homestead's management plan contained an objective to expand hospitality offerings complementary to the onsite café. WHI have agreed to take on the former church as an asset in perpetuity for adaptive reuse of the building for hospitality uses.

The cost of the restoration and relocation and satisfaction of permit requirements was met by MRPV as part of the Epping Road upgrade project with Council guiding and negotiating as the project progressed.

In light of community interest in the project, MRPV contacted the Whittlesea Historical Society to inform a well-developed social media and community information campaign regarding the relocation. Residents affected by the relocation also worked directly with MRPV to achieve a suitable outcome. The project was supported both by the local community and State Government.

The church was successfully relocated and restored during 2022–2023, and officially opened in May 2023. The opening ceremony was attended by members of the Victorian Government in support of project outcomes.

#### Proposed amendment

The proposed amendment will update the Heritage Overlay schedule and associated mapping in the scheme to reflect the relocation of the former church.

**Attachment 1** provides the instruction sheet for C278wsea which proposes to:

- Delete the existing Heritage Overlay (HO165) at the original location of the former church on Epping Road
- Update the existing Heritage Overlay (HO17) at the Carome Homestead to reflect the relocation of the former church and
- Update the Incorporated Documents schedule for the Carome Homestead to include details regarding the former church.

**Attachments 2 and 3** show the map deleting the Heritage Overlay (HO165) from the former church location and the inclusion of the former church details into the Heritage Overlay Schedule 1 at Clause 43.01 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.

**Attachment 4** provides a map of the curtilage of Heritage Overlay (HO17) at the Carome Homestead site. The existing Heritage Overlay (HO17) at the Carome Homestead covers the land on which the church is now located. Attachment 4 also includes an aerial photograph of the site and the Church building now on the site.

**Attachment 5** provides an updated Statement of Significance to reflect the relocation of the former church, which will be incorporated into the planning scheme.

**Attachment 6** shows the condition of the former church at its original location at the junction of Epping and Lehrmanns Roads, Wollert and the restored condition at its new location, being Carome Homestead.

By continuing to have a Heritage Overlay applied to the relocated former church at the new location will ensure that any alterations to the former church will need to consider the Statement of Significance and be sensitive to the heritage context.

## 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.

The proposed amendment will update relevant ordinances in the scheme to reflect a well-planned heritage outcome resulting from the need to upgrade transport infrastructure to better service the municipality.

Relocation and restoration of the former Wollert Methodist Church maintains and celebrates the history and enhances the sense of place of the City of Whittlesea. Relocation of the church to this site provides for adaptive reuse and ongoing community access to a significant heritage building.

## Considerations of *Local Government Act (2020)* Principles

### **Financial Management**

The costs associated with the proposed amendment will be met by Major Road Projects Victoria and therefore there are no financial implications for Council.

### **Community Consultation and Engagement**

By using a 20(4) Amendment, the Minister will authorise exemption from notice and exhibition requirements for the proposed amendment. This exemption is considered appropriate in given it meets the tests set out in Planning Practice Note, Ministerial Powers of Intervention in Planning and Heritage Matters including that the 'views of affected parties are known' given the relocation of the former church was undertaken with the support of the directly affected landowners, being MRPV and WHI.

Additionally, non-statutory consultation was undertaken as part of Amendment C234 which facilitated the Epping Road Upgrade Project as well as Permit PLN-36854 for the relocation and restoration of the former Wollert Methodist Church. The project received significant public attention and was supported both by the local community and State Government.

## Other Principles for Consideration as per the *Local Government Act (2020)*

### Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

- (a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.
- (b) Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

### Public Transparency Principles

N/A

## Council Policy Considerations

### Environmental Sustainability Considerations

No implications.

### Social, Cultural and Health

The former church was successfully relocated and restored in the 2022-2023 period, with the asset retaining 78% of its original fabric. The relocation and restoration of the Wollert Methodist Church assists with the sense of place and vibrancy of the City of Whittlesea.

### Economic

The church was structurally sound and it was clear that the structure could be adapted for use. As mentioned above, the former church is likely to be adapted to provide an increase to the hospitality offerings at the Carome homestead.

### Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications

No Implications

## Implementation Strategy

### Communication

Assuming the Minister for Planning approves the amendment, the affected landowners will be informed when the Amendment is gazetted.

### Critical Dates

There are no critical dates.

### Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* 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.

### Attachments

1. Attachment 1 Amendment C 278 wsea Instruction Sheet [5.3.1 - 1 page]
2. Attachment 2 Amendment C 278 wsea Plan - Deletion of H O 165 from Map 12 of the Whittlesea Planning [5.3.2 - 1 page]
3. Attachment 3 Extract from Whittlesea Planning Scheme ( Schedule 1 from Clause 43.01 Heritage Overlay [5.3.3 - 1 page]
4. Attachment 4 Carome Homestead and Wollert Church location [5.3.4 - 1 page]
5. Attachment 5 Updated Statement of Significance for Carome Homestead including the Wollert church [5.3.5 - 6 pages]
6. Attachment 6 Images of the former Wollert Church showing t [5.3.6 - 1 page]

*Planning and Environment Act 1987*

## **Whittlesea Planning Scheme**

### **Amendment C278wsea**

#### **Instruction sheet**

The planning authority for this amendment is the Minister for Planning

The Whittlesea Planning Scheme is amended as follows:

#### **Planning Scheme Maps**

The Planning Scheme Maps are amended by a total of one (1) attached map sheet.

#### **Overlay Maps**

Amend Planning Scheme Map No 12. HO in the manner shown on the one (1) attached map marked “Whittlesea Planning Scheme, Amendment C278wsea”.

#### **Planning Scheme Ordinance**

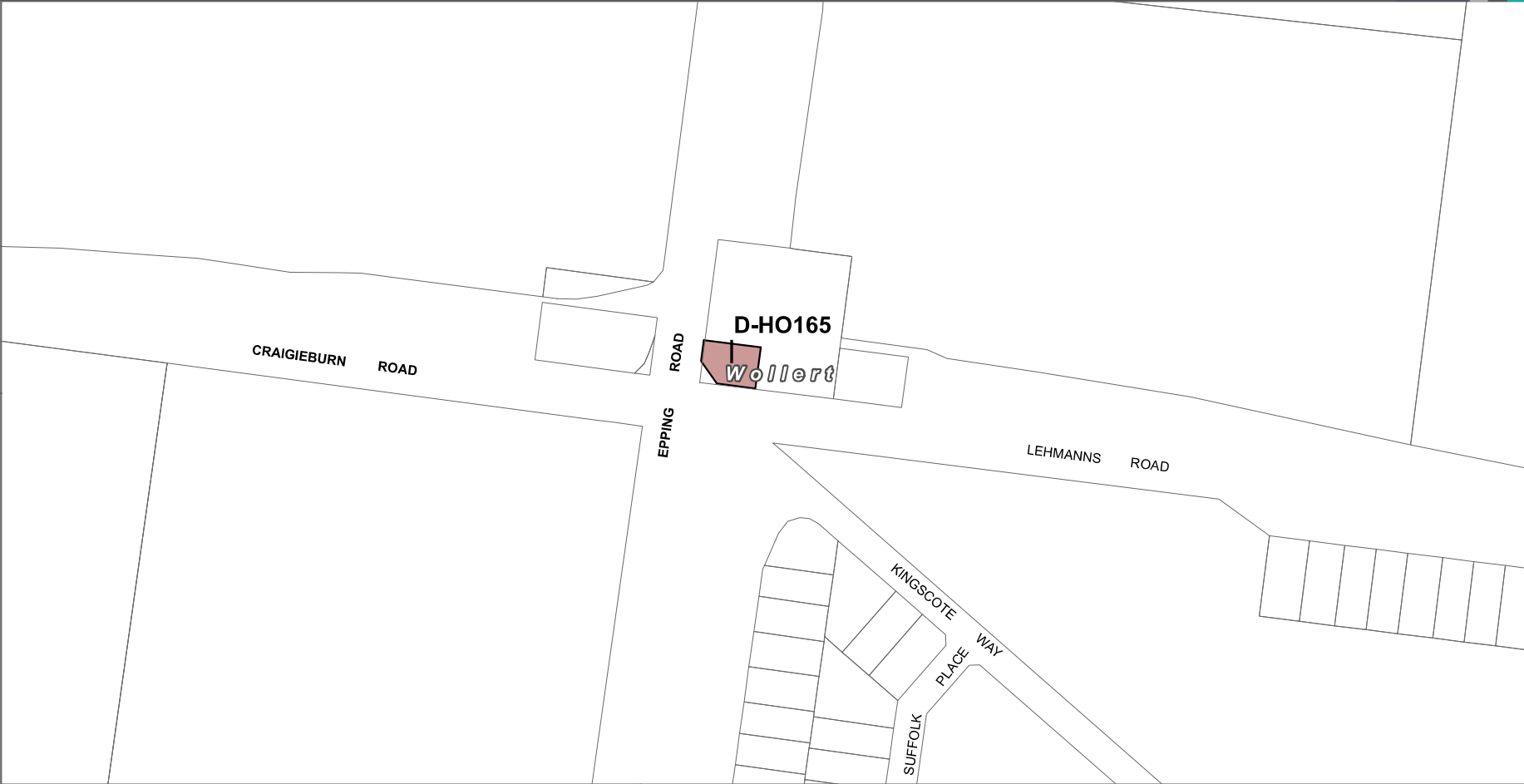
The Planning Scheme Ordinance is amended as follows:

1. In **Overlays** – Clause 43.01, replace Schedule 1 with a new Schedule 1 in the form of the attached document.
2. In **Operational Provisions** – Clause 72.04, replace the Schedule with a new Schedule in the form of the attached document.

**End of document**



WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION  
AMENDMENT C278wsea



**LEGEND**

D-HO - Area to be deleted from a Heritage Overlay

Local Government Area

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Planning Group  
Print Date: 23/11/2023  
Amendment Version: 1

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Metres

**VICTORIA**  
State Government

Department of Transport and Planning

Part of Planning Scheme Map 12HO

PS map ref	Heritage place	External paint controls apply?	Internal alteration controls apply?	Tree controls apply?	Solar energy system controls apply?	Outbuilding s or fences which are not exempt under clause 43.01-4	Included on the Victorian Heritage Register under the Heritage Act 2017?	Prohibited uses may be permitted?	Aboriginal heritage place?
	65A Cravens Road, Mernda – House, cow bales and wells.								
HO15	'Hazelmere' – Horner's House 32-36 Hayes Road, Mernda – House and outbuildings.	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
HO16	Mayfield School and Residence 1325 Plenty Road, Mernda – Bluestone residence, timber <u>school house</u> , mature trees.	No	No	Yes Mature trees	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
HO17	Carome Homestead and Mill <u>Wollert Methodist Church</u> 10 <del>Hathfelde</del> Boulevard, Mernda – Residence, quarry, mill, waterhole, stable, <del>dairy shed</del> , <u>weatherboard church</u> .	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No

## Attachment 4 Carome Homestead and Wollert Church Mapping Location

Figure 1: Carome Homestead Heritage Overlay (aerial photo prior to relocation of church)



Notes: Extent of Heritage Overlay indicated by shaded area.  
Location of church shown in dark red square

Figure 2: Aerial Photo showing relocated Wollert Church on the site



Note: Location of church shown in dark red square

**CAROME HOMESTEAD  
REVISED STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE  
MEMORANDUM OF HERITAGE ADVICE**

**Ray Tonkin**

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## CAROME HOMESTEAD REVISED STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND THE BRIEF

This task was briefed by WSP on behalf of Major Road Projects Victoria (MRPV). The task is to review and as necessary propose a revision to the Statement of Significance for Carome Homestead (HO17) on the understanding that the former Wollert Methodist Church was to be relocated to the Carome site at Hathfelde Boulevard, Mernda.

## 2. DESCRIPTION OF PLACE

The site supports the remnants of the former Carome Flour Mill and other elements associated with the early history of the site as a flour mill and dairying property including the bluestone house, unsawn timber frame shed, remnant orchard, quarry, graves and the track to the Mill.

Little of the Mill remains. It was set just downstream from the deep rocky waterhole which formed a natural dam.

Two buildings may be contemporary or a little later than the Mill. These are the timber milking shed now converted to a stable, and the kitchen with accompanying room of the main house. The milking shed is constructed from saplings and unsawn tree trunk posts. Its construction technique, use of materials and scale all suggest a c1850 date.

The kitchen and adjoining southern room are clearly earlier than the rest of the Carome homestead. The stonework is clearly earlier, roof pitch is steeper, and chimneys differ from the rest of the house. The building had a flagged kitchen floor before recent renovations occurred. The fireplace is particularly large as would be expected for an 1840s building and there appears to be provision for a baker's area. Unusual brackets project internally at ceiling level. The purpose of these is not clear however they may relate to a sleeping loft. Provision of rough cramped sleeping conditions accessed from a manhole was standard at remote locations, as this would have been in the 1840s. Similar accommodation can be seen at Mills Cottage Port Fairy (date open to debate possibly 1839) where sailors were sometimes accommodated.

The remainder of the Carome house is a large but very standard late nineteenth century house, notable only for the use of bluestone at such a late date. The later portions are of local significance as one of the larger farmhouses in the district and for the use of bluestone. (Gould, 1990)

## 3. HISTORY OF CAROME

In 1840 Arthur Sergeantson purchased Section 19, Parish of Morang, a total of 842 acres. He named the property 'Sergeantson Hall' but the portion between the Plenty Road and Plenty River soon became known as Carome, the name of a flour mill he established in 1841. In 1843 Sergeantson leased the mill to a miller named Anderson, who operated it until 1850. Anderson was followed by Robert Charles, whose name appears on an early 1850s map of the proposed Yan Yean Pipeline. The map shows several buildings on the location of today's Carome homestead, indicating that elements of the present dwelling date back to at least 1850, and possibly earlier. Charles prospered for a time but was bankrupted when a mortgagee foreclosed.

In 1857 Sergeantson's remaining 411 acres and Carome Mill were purchased by Abraham Willis and William Hardesty, who refurbished and upgraded the mill at the enormous cost of 1,200 Pounds. In 1868 the Mill was destroyed by fire. An official enquiry found that the mill had been wilfully destroyed. Reduced water flow had rendered the mill uneconomic and for several years it had remained unused. In 1867 Willis received 600 pounds compensation from the Government following the diversion of water from the Plenty River into the Yan Yean Reservoir. A local Parliamentary Representative, Mr. Balfour, in seeking compensation for him argued that "Abraham Willis has no source of livelihood and a large family to support... his case is particularly bad, and the loss he must



## CAROME HOMESTEAD REVISED STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

be now sustaining, there having been an abundant harvest in the district and plenty of employment for his mill in consequence, must necessarily be something considerable”.

Willis continued farming at Carome until 1899 when he leased the farm to his son Robert and retired to Carlton. In 1871 Hardesty had sold his interest in Carome and purchased land on the west side of Plenty River, south of the schoolhouse.

Willis died in 1903 and in 1909 the family sold Carome to Edward Boylan of Cororooke. Various owners and occupiers followed, the most notable being the Danaher family, which has held Carome since the 1950s. (Gould, 1990)

In 2009 the by then empty homestead complex was passed to Working Heritage (then known as Mint Inc) to manage. It was renovated and converted to a café/restaurant, a use that continues to this day.

## 4. CURRENT STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE FOR CAROME

From Meredith Gould's Whittlesea Heritage Study, 2009

*Carome is one of the oldest known flour mill sites in Victoria.*

*The two roomed early house with loft and the timber milking shed are probably from the 1840s and as such are amongst the oldest buildings in Whittlesea and in Victoria. The association of the flour mill with the Melbourne market in the 1840s make the mill site with the early house and milking shed and waterhole historically significant on a Statewide level. (Gould, 1990)*

and from the Robert Sands CMP (2006)

*What is significant?*

*The remnants of the former Carome mill and other elements associated with the early history of the site as a flour mill and dairying property including the bluestone house, unsawn timber frame shed, remnant orchard, quarry, graves and the track to the mill.*

*How is it significant?*

*Carome is of historical significance and of technical and research value to the State of Victoria.*

*Why is it significant?*

*Carome is of historical significance to Victoria as the site of one of the earliest water powered flour mills in the State. Remnants of the c1841 mill remain and other structures associated with the mill including a bluestone house, primitive timber shed and the natural setting of the mill, next to the Plenty River, are also intact. Carome is of technical and research value in that it is demonstrative of the early use of water powered flour mills in Victoria and its site has considerable archaeological potential to reveal the early European history of this site, particularly its flour milling activities.*

## 5. CURRENT STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE FORMER WOLLERT METHODIST CHURCH

***What is significant?***

*The 1878 Wollert Methodist Church, and the surrounding site to the title boundaries. The 1965 hall is not significant.*

***How is it significant?***

*Wollert Methodist Church is historically, socially and architecturally significant to the City of Whittlesea.*

## CAROME HOMESTEAD REVISED STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

**Why is it significant?**

*Wollert Methodist Church is historically and socially significant because it has served as a place of worship for over 120 years. (Criteria A, G & H)*

*The church is historically and aesthetically significant as a good, and largely intact, example of a Carpenter Gothic style building in the Whittlesea area. The building expresses key characteristics of the style, including timber cladding and an angular aesthetic with a restrained, Gothic-derived decorative scheme. The church is aesthetically significant as a dominant feature of the local landscape. (Criteria A, D & E)*

## 6. ASSESSMENT WITH FORMER METHODIST CHURCH LOCATED ON SITE

**Criterion A:**

*Importance to the course, or pattern, of Whittlesea's cultural history.*

Carome is of historical significance to Victoria as the site of one of the earliest water powered flour mills in the State. Remnants of the c1841 mill remain and other structures associated with the mill including a bluestone house, primitive timber shed (better known as the Carome homestead) and the natural setting of the mill, next to the Plenty River, are also intact.

The former Wollert Methodist Church now relocated to this site is historically significant having served as a place of worship at Wollert for over 120 years.

**Criterion B:**

*Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Whittlesea's cultural history.*

Carome is of technical and research value in that it is demonstrative of the early use of water powered flour mills in Victoria

**Criterion C:**

*Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Whittlesea's cultural history.*

The site has considerable archaeological potential to reveal the early European history of this site, particularly its flour milling activities

**Criterion D:**

*Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects.*

NA

**Criterion E:**

*Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.*

The Carome homestead is a solid if typical late Victorian residence. It appears to have been developed from an earlier simpler structure and has undergone further renovations throughout its life.

The former Wollert Methodist Church is aesthetically significant as a good, and largely intact, example of a Carpenter Gothic style building in the Whittlesea area. The building expresses key characteristics of the style, including timber cladding and an angular aesthetic with a restrained, Gothic-derived decorative scheme.

**Criterion F:**

*Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.*

Carome is of value in that it is demonstrative of the early use of water powered flour mills in Victoria.



## CAROME HOMESTEAD REVISED STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

**Criterion G:**

*Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions.*

The former Wollert Methodist Church is socially significant because it has served as a place of worship in Wollert for over 120 years.

**Criterion H:**

*Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Whittlesea's history*

NA

## 7. REVISED STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

*What is significant?*

The remnants of the former Carome Flour Mill and other elements associated with the early history of the site as a flour mill and dairying property including the bluestone house, unsawn timber frame shed, remnant orchard, quarry, graves and the track to the mill, along with the relocated former Wollert Methodist Church.

*How is it significant?*

Carome is of historical significance and of technical and research value to the State of Victoria.

*Why is it significant?*

Carome is of historical significance to Victoria as the site of one of the earliest water powered flour mills in the State. Remnants of the c1841 mill remain and other structures associated with the mill including a bluestone house, primitive timber shed (known as Carome Homestead) and the natural setting of the mill, next to the Plenty River, are also intact. (Criterion A)

The former Wollert Methodist Church now relocated to this site is historically and socially significant having served as a place of worship at Wollert for over 120 years. (Criterion A & G)

Carome is of technical and research value in that it is demonstrative of the early use of water powered flour mills in Victoria and its site has considerable archaeological potential to reveal the early European history of this site, particularly its flour milling activities. (Criterion B & C)

The former Wollert Methodist Church is aesthetically significant as a good, and largely intact, example of a Carpenter Gothic style building in the Whittlesea area. The building expresses key characteristics of the style, including timber cladding and an angular aesthetic with a restrained, Gothic-derived decorative scheme. (Criterion E)

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- .1 Once removed from its site at Wollert the City of Whittlesea should initiate an amendment to the Whittlesea Planning Scheme to delete HO165 from the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay.
- .2 Once the church building is relocated on the Carome site the council should adopt the revised Statement of Significance for the site.
- .3 Once church building is relocated on the site council should complete a review of the mapped extent of HO17 (Carome Homestead) to ensure that it covers all significant elements of the Mill, homestead complex and former Wollert Church. (NOTE: the current mapped extent is an ill-defined polygon on the site).

## Attachment 6 Images of the former Wollert Church showing the original and restored condition

**Figure 1 Original condition of the former Wollert Church in its original location at the corner of Epping and Lehmans Road, Wollert**



**Figure 2: Restored condition of the former Wollert Church in its new location at Carome Homestead, Mernda**



## 5.4 Tender Evaluation Report - 2023-114 Construction of Granite Hills Major Community Park

**Director/Executive Manager:** Director Infrastructure & Environment

**Report Author:** Senior Parks Project Manager

**In Attendance:** Unit Manager Parks Development

This attachment has been designated as confidential in accordance with 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 tender amounts submitted by a contractor which give direct insight into the contractor's detailed pricing information that is commercially confidential. 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.

### Executive Summary

This report summaries the evaluation of the tender submissions received for the Tender 2023-114, Construction of Granite Hills Major Community Park.

The tender evaluation panel advises that:

- Four tenders were received.
- The recommended tender was the highest ranked.
- Collaborative tendering was not undertaken in relation to this procurement because it is not listed in the Northern Councils Alliance consolidated contract register.
- This contract relates to a unique need for the City of Whittlesea.
- This contract relates to a Federal or State Government grant funded project.

## Officers' Recommendation

### THAT Council:

1. Resolve to award the following contract to Warrandale Industries Pty Ltd:  
Number: 2024-114  
Title: Construction of Granite Hills Major Community Park  
Cost: A lump sum of \$5,449,678.39 (excluding GST)  
subject to the following conditions:
  - a) Contractor providing contract security and proof of currency for insurance cover as required in the tender documents.
  - b) Price variations to be in accordance with the provisions as set out in the conditions of contract.
2. Approve the funding arrangements as detailed in the confidential attachment.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign and execute the contract on behalf of Council, and to authorise any price variations in accordance with 1 b) above.

## Background / Key Information

In 2019, a landscape master plan for the Quarry Hills Regional Parklands was developed to guide future land planning of the site. Stage 1 of the Masterplan is for the development of Granite Hills Major Community Park, which will provide the gateway into the broader Quarry Hills Regional Parkland and the future Aboriginal Gathering Place.

The purpose of this contract is for the construction of a playground, landscape, and associated public park amenities including public toilets with Changing Places facilities, picnic facilities and visitor shelters. Two early works packages for Granite Hills Major Community Park have already been awarded for the creation of waterbodies and the design and construction of a timber boardwalk.

The proposed contract is made up of two parts - Part One: Overall landscape works and design and construct of custom play unit, and Part Two: Construction of public amenities facility and minor shelters.

Public tenders for the contract closed on 31 October 2023. The tendered prices and a summary of the evaluation are detailed in the confidential attachment.

No member of the Tender Evaluation Panel declared a conflict of interest to this tender evaluation.

A Tender Probity and Evaluation Plan was designed specifically for this tender process and was authorised prior to the 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:

	<b>Part One</b>	<b>Part Two</b>
<b>Price</b>	50%	60%
<b>Capability</b>	25%	20%
<b>Capacity</b>	20%	15%
<b>Sustainability</b>	5%	5%

The weightings reflect the relative importance of each element to this particular contract. They were determined as being most appropriate after considering many factors including (but not limited to) 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	PART ONE	
			Score	Rank
Tenderer A Warrandale Industries Pty Ltd	Yes	Yes	78.5	1
Tenderer B	Yes	Yes	Did not submit for this part	
Tenderer C	Yes	Yes	69.3	2
Tenderer D	Yes	Yes	66.1	3

Tenderer	Conforming	Competitive	PART TWO	
			Score	Rank
Tenderer A Warrandale Industries Pty Ltd	Yes	Yes	81.1	1
Tenderer B	Yes	Yes	79.6	2
Tenderer C	Yes	Yes	74.7	3
Tenderer D	Yes	Yes	73.6	4

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

### Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

#### Connected Communities

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

Construction of these new park facilities will enable our residents and visitors to enjoy and use this open space for recreation and community gatherings and activities.

#### 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.



Our residents and visitors have told us what they want from the Granite Hills Major Community Park, and their views are included in the designs for the various elements. Our communities will enjoy increased liveability for those who live close to and visit the new major community park.

### **Sustainable Environment**

We prioritise our environment and take action to reduce waste, preserve local biodiversity, protect waterways, and green space and address climate change.

This project will foster positive environmental outcomes, including biodiversity protection and habitat improvement, and education and interpretation of natural values.

### **High Performing Organisation**

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

For many years, our communities have contributed to preserving and guiding the future development of Quarry Hills Regional Parklands. Council officers have carefully planned and executed the additional required actions and work – regulatory, community engagement, design, and procurement – to realise the project, demonstrating best value for Council.

## **Considerations of *Local Government Act (2020)* Principles**

### **Financial Management**

Sufficient funding for this contract is available in the capital budget for Granite Hills Major Community Park which includes a \$2,500,000 State Government Grant from the Growing Suburbs Fund.

### **Community Consultation and Engagement**

In accordance with the Local Government Act 2020, consideration was given as to whether there were any opportunities to collaborate with other councils and public bodies or to use any existing collaborate procurement arrangement. In this instance, collaborative tendering was not undertaken in relation to this procurement because it is not listed in the Northern Council's Alliance consolidated contract register, and this contract relate to a State Government grant funded project.

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.



## Other Principles for Consideration as per the *Local Government Act (2020)*

### Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

- (b) Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.
- (c) The economic, social, and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.
- (d) The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.
- (e) Innovation and continuous improvement are to be pursued.
- (h) Regional, state, and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making.

### Public Transparency Principles

- (a) Council decision making processes must be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of the *Local Government Act* or any other Act.
- (b) Council information must be publicly available unless— (i) the information is confidential by virtue of the *Local Government Act* or any other Act; or (ii) public availability of the information would be contrary to the public interest.
- (c) Council information must be understandable and accessible to members of the municipal community.
- (d) Public awareness of the availability of Council information must be facilitated.

## Council Policy Considerations

### Environmental Sustainability Considerations

This project will foster positive environmental outcomes, including biodiversity protection and habitat improvement, and education and interpretation of natural values.

The rich habitat within Quarry Hills Regional Parkland, includes a large number of kangaroos, native birds, reptiles, frogs, and invertebrates. The implementation of the major community park will allow the public to access this eight-hectare section of the site in a controlled and safe way, whilst minimising impact to the wildlife habitat. The majority of high impact activities such as car parking, visitor amenities and the playspace are located near the park entrance.

The water bodies are being upgraded into high-quality wetlands, providing further habitat for flora and fauna. Low impact walking paths and trail network will allow users to access other areas of the park whilst protecting conservation and rehabilitation areas. Interpretive signage will be located along trails to educate the community on the ecological values of the park.

### **Social, Cultural and Health**

The new Granite Hills Major Community Park will provide residents, visitors, and local workers:

- outdoor spaces for people to relax, socialise, and exercise.
- opportunities and encouragement for play and participation in community activities, promoting health and wellbeing.
- protection and promotion of cultural heritage and diversity.
- a refuge during extended periods of heat, providing respite and promoting the principles of passive cooling.
- green spaces with large canopy trees, native grasses, and garden beds to bring nature and recreation experiences.

### **Economic**

The development of the parkland including the contract expenditure will contribute to a short-term economic impact, while the future maintenance and visitation to the park will provide long term economic benefits to the region.

### **Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications**

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

Construction of the park will provide a place for community activities and passive recreation to contribute to the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors.

***Life Cycle Asset Management*** - *Failure to effectively plan for the construction, on-going maintenance and renewal of Council's assets.*

Internal stakeholder engagement included sharing plans and seeking input from various departments to that the built environment can be managed and maintained effectively. All new assets will be added to Council's Asset Management System to inform future maintenance and renewal programs.

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

Officers have effectively engaged traditional owners and the broader Whittlesea community to arrive at the final designs for the park. This project will deliver beautiful, practical, and much needed open space services and initiatives in the best interest of our residents and visitors and deliver value to our community.

**Contractor Management** - Failure to manage contractors to deliver agreed outcomes.

Suitably qualified, experienced, and supported Council staff will oversee the construction activities. The project will be delivered in partnership by contractors with a proven record for delivering projects of a similar scale and character.

### Implementation Strategy

#### Communication

The decision to award this contract will be communicated via the standard processes for Council Meeting outcomes. Additionally, and in consideration of the project's importance to the community there will be communication prior to and during the construction works via Council's communication channels.

#### Critical Dates

The project construction is expected to begin in April 2024 and is programmed for completion in early 2025.

### Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* 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 Officers reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

### Attachments

1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED 2023 114 Tender Evaluation Report Confidential Attachment [5.4.1 - 6 pages]

## 5.5 Variation and Extension of Contract 2017-137 - Supply of Bulk Fuel

**Director/Executive Manager:** Director Infrastructure & Environment

**Report Author:** Acting Manager Maintenance & Operations

**In Attendance:** Unit Manager Fleet Services

### Executive Summary

This report seeks to extend Contract 2017-137 with BP Australia for the provision of bulk fuel, which is required to fill the fuel tanks at Epping Depot to allow on-site refuelling of depot-based trucks and plant.

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) undertook a procurement process in July 2017 for the provision of bulk fuel, fuel cards and vehicle lubricants on behalf of Victorian Councils. BP Australia was awarded the contract for the provision of bulk fuel which the City of Whittlesea has utilised since the contract was awarded.

MAV has extended the contract with BP Australia by 12 months to 31 January 2025, which has resulted in Council requiring a variation and extension of the contract given its financial value.

A variation and extension of this contract is required to enable Council's fleet of passenger and light commercial vehicles, plant and mobile equipment to continue the delivery of key services to the community. This variation request includes a 12 month extension of the contract and additional budget of \$563,000 (excluding GST) to ensure appropriate funding is available for the extension of the contract period.

### Officers' Recommendation

**THAT Council approve the variation and extension of Contract 2017-137 for the provision of bulk fuel until 31 January 2025, including a variation of \$563,000 excluding GST, bringing the total cumulative value of the contract to \$4,163,000 excluding GST.**

### Background / Key Information

The Epping Depot has fuel tanks and bowsers on-site to enable Council's depot-based trucks and plant to be refuelled.

The MAV undertook a procurement process in July 2017 for the provision of bulk fuel, fuel cards and vehicle lubricants on behalf of Victorian Councils.

At its meeting on 6 June 2018, Council resolved to accept the MAV contract (Contract 2017-137) which awarded the provision of bulk fuel to BP Australia for a period of three years ending 31 January 2021.

There have been three contract extensions and variations awarded for this contract, both by Council and under CEO delegation.

It was anticipated that MAV would go to market for a new tender in 2023, however they have extended the agreement with BP Australia by a further 12 months ending 31 January 2025.

Accordingly, this variation and extension is being sought to align with the MAV timeframes for a new tender.

The variation being requested is for a 12-month extension of the contract and additional budget of \$563,000 (excluding GST) to ensure appropriate funding is available for the extension of the contract period.

### 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, to deliver efficient and effective services and initiatives, and to make decisions in the best interest of our community and deliver value to our community.

The MAV undertook a competitive process for this tender and ensured that the tender delivered good value. Extending this agreement will ensure Council can still access competitive rates whilst a new tender is undertaken.

### Considerations of *Local Government Act (2020)* Principles

#### Financial Management

The cost is included in the current budget.

## Other Principles for Consideration as per the *Local Government Act (2020)*

### Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

- (a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

### Public Transparency Principles

- (a) Council decision making processes must be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of the *Local Government Act* or any other Act.

## Council Policy Considerations

### Environmental Sustainability Considerations

Extending this contract by 12 months will ensure Council can still access competitive fuel prices whilst it continues to transition its fleet to hybrid and electric vehicles.

### Social, Cultural and Health

No implications.

### Economic

No implications.

### Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications

No implications.

## Implementation Strategy

### Critical Dates

If the extension of Contract 2017-137 is endorsed, it will end on 31 January 2025, following which it is expected that the MAV will have awarded a new tender for Council's consideration.

## Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* 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.

## Attachments

No attachments.

## 5.6 Informal Meetings of Administrators

**Director/Executive Manager:** Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

**Report Author:** Coordinator Governance Administration

### Executive Summary

Chapter 5 of the Council Governance Rules requires a summary of the matters discussed at a meeting of Councillors (Administrators) that:

- is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of Council or briefing Councillors (Administrators);
- is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and
- is not a Council meeting or Delegated Committee meeting.

The summary of matters discussed at the meeting must be:

- tabled at the next convenient Council meeting; and
- recorded in the minutes of that Council meeting.

The record of Informal Meetings of Councillors (Administrators) at Attachment 1 is reported to Council in accordance with this requirement.

### Officers' Recommendation

**THAT Council note the record of Informal Meetings of Administrators at Attachment 1.**

### Attachments

1. Informal Meetings of Council Report [5.6.1 - 2 pages]





### RECORDS OF DISCUSSION

ASSEMBLY DETAILS	ADMINISTRATOR ATTENDEES	OFFICER ATTENDEES	OTHERS PRESENT	MATTERS CONSIDERED	CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES
30 January 2024	Chair of Council Wilson Administrator Duncan Administrator Zahra	Craig Lloyd Emma Appleton Agata Chmielewski Sarah Renner Debbie Wood Bobbie-Lea Bright Debbie Blandford Adis Cindrak Aaron Gerrard Sarah Oldman Assad Qureshi Amanda Reed Rahul Shah David Stone		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forward Plan Review</li> <li>Variation and Extension of Contract 2017-137 – Supply of Bulk Fuel</li> <li>2024-25 Budget including Community Plan Action Plan and Capital Works</li> <li>Quarterly Corporate Performance Report – Q2 ended 31/12/2023</li> <li>General Business:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarry Hills Future Direction Plan</li> <li>Youth Council Meet and Greet</li> <li>Citizenship Ceremonies</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Nil
6 February 2024	Chair of Council Wilson Administrator Duncan Administrator Zahra	Craig Lloyd Emma Appleton Agata Chmielewski Sarah Renner Debbie Wood Janine Morgan Bobbie-Lea Bright Mark Donnellan Justin Fox Adrian Napoleone Julie Paget Stephen Parker		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forward Plan Review</li> <li>Tender Evaluation Report – 2023-114 Construction of Granite Hills Major Community Park</li> <li>Planning Scheme Amendment C278 – Update to the former Wollert Church Heritage Overlay</li> <li>Proposed Planning Scheme Amendment: Stage 1A Beveridge Intermodal Precinct</li> <li>Planning Scheme Amendment C269 – 149 McKimmies Road Bundoora Rezoning Exhibition Outcome</li> </ul>	Nil



### RECORDS OF DISCUSSION

ASSEMBLY DETAILS	ADMINISTRATOR ATTENDEES	OFFICER ATTENDEES	OTHERS PRESENT	MATTERS CONSIDERED	CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES
		George Saisanas Anthony Traill Liam Wilkinson		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General Business:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovation Youth Hub</li> <li>LGV Local Government Reforms Paper</li> <li>RASC Update</li> <li>Pro-Palestine Petition &amp; Rally</li> <li>Grass and Garden Bed Maintenance</li> <li>Woodruff Street, South Morang</li> <li>Reporting on Informal Meetings of Council report</li> <li>Ward Boundaries</li> <li>YPRL Funding</li> <li>2009 Bushfires - 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary</li> <li>YARN</li> <li>Mernda Library Opening</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

## 5.7 Administrator Update Report

**Director/Executive Manager:** Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

**Report Author:** Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

### Executive Summary

Administrators set an ambitious program at the outset of their four-year term with the development of a comprehensive *Administrator Action Plan 2020-2024* (Action Plan) to confirm actions and commitments to ensure continued good governance and the achievement of strategic priorities. The Action Plan outlined priorities in line with the Community Vision, Whittlesea 2040: *A Place for All*.

The purpose of this report is to present the biannual Administrator Update for the period July 2023 to December 2023 which incorporates achievements during this reporting period and significant work already completed in preparation for the return of an elected Council.

### Officers' Recommendation

**THAT Council:**

1. **Note the biannual Administrator Update report at Attachment 1 for the period July to December 2023.**
2. **Note a copy of the Administrator Update report was provided to the Hon. Melissa Horne, Minister for Local Government Victoria, Executive Director Local Government Victoria, and all local Members of Parliament in January 2024.**
3. **Note a final detailed report and proposed roadmap for the newly elected Council will be provided to the Minister for Local Government no later than August 2024.**

## Background / Key Information

### Background

The Panel of Administrators were appointed under the provisions of the *Local Government (Whittlesea City Council) Act 2020* by the Minister for Local Government. The Chair of the Panel of Administrators takes on the role functions and duties of the Mayor and the Administrators take on the roles, duties and functions of a Councillor. Together the Panel of Administrators form the Council of the City of Whittlesea.

### Key Information

The attached detailed report outlines a particularly busy yet fulfilling second half of 2023 leading the Council and supporting the local community. With the significant number of achievements over the past three and a half years, the Administrators will continue being just as committed during 2024 to ensure a legacy of good governance and strong strategic position is maintained for the incoming elected representatives.

The following key highlights are a small representation of the Administrator collective achievements during this reporting period. Detailed information of all achievements is outlined in the attached report.

- Finalisation of the integrated planning framework with the adoption of three key strategies to complete the suite of documents created for each of the Whittlesea 2040 goals.
- Endorsement of a new 10-year Community Local Law following an extensive community engagement process.
- Welcomed 1,400 new citizens into our community over 10 Citizenship Ceremonies, virtually eliminating a very significant previous backlog.
- Co-signed a historic regional partnership with Hume City Council and Mitchell Shire Council for the development of the new city of Cloverton.
- Opened the Mernda Social Centre to assist older residents to improve their physical and mental health.
- Adopted the 2023-24 budget in late June 2023 maintaining a sound financial position and long-term sustainability.

### Good Governance

Administrators continue to support a culture of good governance at the Council with decision-making underpinned by rigorous due diligence.

### Return of Elected Council Program

The Return of Elected Council Program's (Program) vision is *'To be fully prepared and committed to a harmonious working relationship with the incoming Council for the benefit of our community'*.

### **Responsible Financial Management**

Council is committed to strong and responsible financial management which strikes a balance between maximising support for our community in the present, while maintaining a sound financial position to ensure sustainability in the long-term.

### **Customer Service**

Council continues to place a significant focus on improving our customer service through investing in technology, systems and staff to make it an easy and pleasant experience for our community to interact with Council.

### **Community Engagement**

Council is committed to ensuring our community has authentic opportunities to engage with us on local priorities to help shape the future of the City of Whittlesea.

### **Advocacy**

Council recognises the importance of partnering with the State and Federal Governments to deliver essential services, critical infrastructure and a sustainable environment for our rapidly growing community. Our municipality is one of the fastest growing in the State, with projections showing a population growth of almost 50 per cent by 2041.

### **Integrated Planning**

#### **W2040 Goals**

The City of Whittlesea vision of *A Place for All* has five goals which Council is striving to achieve to help us realise this shared community vision. They are: Connected Community, Liveable Neighbourhoods, Strong Local Economy Sustainable Environment and High-Performing Organisation.

Specific highlights are noted in the attached report and continue to be reported to Council quarterly.

### **Future Priorities**

Administrators are committed to leaving a legacy of good governance, contemporary and best practice strategies and policies and a Council in a strong financial position to set the City of Whittlesea up for future success.

Administrators set out an ambitious program of work during their term. Through the program, the following priorities remain and are on track to be delivered over the remainder of their term:

**1. Events – conduct of civic and community events and Council’s role.**

A draft outdoor events framework has been developed. Further development to encompass all Council events, including Dates of Significance and smaller local events at community centres to be incorporated within the Framework.

**2. Integrated Framework – complete development and endorsement of all planned Integrated Planning Framework Strategies.**

Except for the Aboriginal Action Plan, due for endorsement in early 2024, all strategies have been adopted by Council.

**3. Customer Service/Customer First (CX/DX program)**

The Customer Service First program aimed at improving the customer experience for our community is on track for completion in June 2024.

**4. Achievement of funding for flagship projects, Aboriginal Gathering Place and Regional Aquatic and Sports Centre (RASC) and commencement of works.**

Works on the Aboriginal Gathering Place are due to commence in February 2024.

An early works package is being developed for RASC. It continues to be an advocacy priority for Council.

**5. Preparation for the return of Council.**

As detailed in the Administrator Update report, a significant amount of work has been completed, and is in progress to ensure a smooth transition back to an elected Council.

**Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies**

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

**Connected Communities**

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

**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.

**Strong Local Economy**

Our City is a smart choice for innovation, business growth and industry as well as supporting local businesses to be successful, enabling opportunities for local work and education.

**Sustainable Environment**

We prioritise our environment and take action to reduce waste, preserve local biodiversity, protect waterways and green space and address climate change.

**High Performing Organisation**

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

This report confirms Council's engagement with community and key decisions, priorities and actions taken in the best interest of the community.

**Considerations of *Local Government Act (2020)* Principles****Financial Management**

There are no financial implications with publicly providing a copy of the Administrator Update report.

**Community Consultation and Engagement**

Not required.

**Other Principles for Consideration as per the *Local Government Act (2020)*****Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles**

- (a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.
- (b) Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.
- (c) The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.
- (e) Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.
- (g) The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.
- (i) The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

**Public Transparency Principles**

- (a) Council decision making processes must be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of the *Local Government Act* or any other Act.

**Council Policy Considerations****Environmental Sustainability Considerations**

Achievements mentioned in the Administrator Update report support and encourage a sustainable environment.



**Social, Cultural and Health**

The work undertaken confirms Council's intent to ensure the social, cultural and health of our community are supported through liveable neighbourhoods and connected community initiatives.

**Economic**

Initiatives carried out to date and others planned for, enhance a strong local economy.

**Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications**

There are no legal implications with publicly releasing this report.

**Implementation Strategy****Communication**

A copy of the Administrator Update report was provided to the Hon. Melissa Horne, Minister for Local Government Victoria, Executive Director Local Government Victoria, and all local Members of Parliament in January 2024.

The final Administrator Update will be provided to the Minister for Local Government in August 2024 and reported to Council for transparency.

**Critical Dates**

There are no critical dates associated with this report.

**Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* 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.

**Attachments**

1. Attachment 1 - Administrator Update December 23 Final [5.7.1 - 20 pages]



# Administrator Update

December 2023



## Introduction

The Panel of Administrators were appointed under the provisions of the *Local Government (Whittlesea City Council) Act 2020* by the Minister for Local Government. The Chair of the Panel of Administrators takes on the role functions and duties of the Mayor and the Administrators take on the roles, duties and functions of a Councillor. Together the Panel of Administrators form the Council of the City of Whittlesea.

This report provides an update from the Panel of Administrators on the progress that has been achieved between July to December 2023 across the City of Whittlesea and highlights the priority actions that will be the central focus for the remainder of their term.

## Highlights

Administrators set an ambitious program at the outset of their four-year term with the development of a comprehensive **Administrator Action Plan 2020-2024** to confirm actions and commitments to ensure continued good governance and the achievement of strategic priorities. The Action Plan outlined priorities in line with the Community Vision, Whittlesea 2040: *A Place for All*.

In March 2021 Council adopted the **Community Plan 2021-2025** which incorporates Council's Health & Wellbeing Plan and Disability Action Plan. The Community Plan was informed by extensive community consultation and includes 60 initiatives aligned to community priorities.

Council has embedded the reporting of these plans into Council's quarterly performance reports with key achievements highlighted in the Annual Report each year.

The period between July - December 2023 was particularly busy as Council:

- adopted the 2023-24 Budget (late June)
- finalised its integrated planning framework (IPF) with the adoption of the Liveable Neighbourhood Strategy, Connected Community Strategy and Long-Term Community Infrastructure Plan - the three strategies join the Sustainable Environment, Strong Local Economy and High Performing Organisation strategies to complete a suite of documents created for each of the Whittlesea 2040 goals which were designed to guide the City towards achieving the Whittlesea 2040 Vision of A Place for All. In addition,



IPF process saw a review of 22 policies during this quarter and the development of an overarching framework with subsidiary plans and actions – the whole process and full suite completed in our term.

- turned the sod on the Aboriginal Gathering Place (refer to page 11)
- transitioned our Youth Advisory Committee to a Youth Council to empower our young people to contribute to the governance of the city
- opened the Mernda Social Centre to assist older residents to improve their physical and mental health
- opened a new service hub in the rural Whittlesea township
- adopted a Future Directions Plan for the Quarry Hills regional Parkland
- appointed architects for the design of the sports court component of the regional aquatic and sport centre in Mernda
- co-signed a historic regional partnership with Hume City Council and Mitchell Shire for the development of the new city of Cloverton
- took on the management of the historic Ziebell's Farmhouse Museum and Heritage Garden
- endorsed a new 10 Year Community Local Law following an extensive period of community engagement
- unveiled a new FIFA accredited soccer pitch at Harvest Home Recreation Reserve in Epping
- following on from an extensive community consultation program Council endorsed new regulations for cat confinement and mandatory desexing of newly registered cats to come into effect from 1 August 2023; a thorough community education program including educational information, workshops, videos and practical advice on preparing your pet and your property supported the community to successfully transition to the new regulations which help protect and enhance the welfare and safety of cats and create a more harmonious environment between pets, people and other animals
- Officers continue to review and streamline our Citizenship ceremony processes to eliminate the previously high number of conferees on the waiting list. During this period, 10 Citizenship Ceremonies were held welcoming 1,400 new citizens into our community.

Council has worked cohesively to support the Executive Leadership Team and staff to deliver an ongoing comprehensive program of service and governance improvements and there has been a particular focus on solidifying the policy environment in preparation for the return of Council.



Administrators unfailing commitment to good governance and an active representational role continues to be a hallmark of their tenure, alongside improvements to customer service, financial management, community engagement, advocacy and a strategic approach to the creation and execution of key strategies, plans and projects such as the Aboriginal Gathering Place, Whittlesea Park, Whittlesea Public Gardens, Quarry Hills and the Regional Aquatic and Sports Centre.

## Good governance

Administrators continue to support a culture of good governance at the Council with decision-making underpinned by rigorous due diligence.

Administrators continue to enshrine transparent decision-making. Since the previous update in June 2023, a total of 49 open Council meeting agenda items were considered and only 5 confidential items considered in camera.

The CEO Employment Matters Advisory Committee undertook the 2022-23 CEO performance appraisal (with 6 monthly reviews) and mutually agreed and adopted the 2023-24 CEO Key Performance Indicators.

The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) met three times during this period to review Council's financial position and performance over 2023-24. The ARC continues with 4 independent members and 2 Administrators and ongoing review of its Charter to ensure an industry best practice approach is taken.

All required biannual personal interest returns were lodged on time, and a summary made available on Council's website.

A governance structure with terms of reference for the Return of Elected Council and workstreams was established. Further information on the Return of Elected Council Program is provided below.

To support a smooth return to elected officials in 2024 and foster the next generation of community leaders Council launched a comprehensive community leadership program in 2022 in partnership with La Trobe Business School, Public Value Studio and VLGA. In 2023, 99 people successfully completed the program.

## Return of Elected Council Program

The Return of Elected Council Program's (Program) vision is *'To be fully prepared and committed to a harmonious working relationship with the incoming Council for the benefit of our community'*.





The following three key Program objectives:

1. **Establish a good governance foundation** – ensuring all processes, policies and guidelines are updated and communicated
2. **Empowering our teams** – increased capability through the development and delivery of training programs
3. **Supporting a high performing organisation** – ensuring the development and delivery of an extensive induction program to support elected councillors contribute to a high performing organisation

have already achieved some incredible results over the past 6 months through the establishment of 4 Program workstreams:

- Stream 1: Empowering our People
- Stream 2: IT and the Customer
- Stream 3: Communicating our needs
- Stream 4: Ensuring Good Governance

#### **Empowering our People**

Council, in partnership with the VLGA and Hunt & Hunt Lawyers, facilitated two Return to Elected Council sessions with the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) covering topics such as keys for good governance, roles and responsibilities, conduct and obligations, conflict of interest, confidential information.

In addition, during the month of October 2023, 328 Council staff attended Return to Elected Council – Good Governance workshops across eight sessions.

In November 2023, the CEO and Executive Manager, Office of Council & CEO delivered a workshop to the Organisation Leadership Team titled '*Returning to Normal*' covering information on the Program, what we have done so far, what's to come, election period, good governance, good governance gone wrong.

In December 2023, three '*Effective Council report writing*' workshops were held with another five workshops scheduled in early 2024. Approximately 189 Council staff have enrolled to participate in one of the eight workshops.

#### **IT and the Customer**

This stream is focussing on Council's systems, processes and equipment to ensure they are in place to support high performance of Councillors and staff.

To date and as part of the CX/DX program, this workstream has mapped out an enhanced Councillor portal, including a seamless CRM process, Councillor enquiries



and request for information.

### **Communicating our needs**

This workstream kicked off in November 2023 and has three main focus areas: Internal Staff; Community; and Candidates, Councillors and, Administrators.

Regular working group meetings are scheduled throughout 2024 leading up to the general election.

### **Good Governance**

This workstream has achieved significant outcomes over the past 6 months. In preparation for the return of Councillors, and to enhance good governance practices, the following policies were thoroughly reviewed, released for community consultation, where required, and adopted by Council. Of note, Administrators have been operating under the revised policies since being adopted.

- Governance Rules incorporating a refined Election Period Policy
- Councillor Code of Conduct incorporating Councillor/Developer interactions and process for community complaints about a Councillor
- Councillor Communications Policy
- Community Engagement Policy
- Councillor Gift Policy
- Public Transparency Policy
- Public Interest Disclosure Procedures
- Councillor Expense Policy

To promote positive and constructive interactions between Councillors and staff, whilst ensuring compliance with the separation between the governance functions of Councillors and the administrative and operational functions of the organisation, in October 2023, the CEO approved a Councillor/Staff Interaction Protocol.

The CEO also approved a refined and clearly articulated Staff Gift Policy. To ensure consistency, the Staff Policy and Councillor Gift Policy significantly align.

A substantial amount of work has been done to date on establishing a roadmap for the newly elected Councillor Induction Program. As requested, this information will be provided to you no later than two months before the end of the Administrator term.

## **Responsible financial management**

Council is committed to strong and responsible financial management which strikes





a balance between maximising support for our community in the present, while maintaining a sound financial position to ensure sustainability in the long-term.

Council has identified a strong program of efficiency savings in the operating budget to enable continued delivery of 147 essential services within the rate cap and maintenance of low borrowings to ensure, when Administrators end their term in October 2024, Councillors will come into an organisation with a strong financial base and long-term financial sustainability.

Council has taken a strategic approach to the management of the capital expenditure program and strongly pursued alternative funding as appropriate; evidenced by our successful advocacy program for critical infrastructure such as the Regional Aquatic and Sports Centre in Mernda. Council has established an Enterprise Project Management Office to ensure best practice project management and strong internal governance with oversight by an Enterprise Board. The strong management of the capital program has resulted in low carry forwards despite the challenges of delivery in recent years.

In recognition of the economic pressures and challenges being faced by our community during the pandemic Council adopted a Financial Hardship Policy in July 2021 to provide support to residents and businesses who are unable to meet payment obligations. Council has instilled a culture of respect in relation to the management of financial vulnerability seeking to ensure that members of our community will face no judgement and will be treated with understanding and dignity regardless of their circumstances. Residents now have an ability to enter into a negotiated payment plan, which is a more customer-friendly approach rather than the previous onerous approach of debt collection. This approach demonstrates Council's willingness to work with residents to find a mutually agreeable solution and can contribute to a more positive relationship with our community. It also helps alleviate financial stress residents may be facing and emphasises Council's flexibility and understanding of individual needs.

To lessen the burden on families recovering from the pandemic and experiencing increasing cost of living pressures, Council has continued to subsidise waste charges, specifically the State Government Landfill Levy and as a result the City of Whittlesea has one of the lowest waste charges across Victorian Councils.

On 28 June, Council adopted its 2023-34 Budget. The \$371.1 million Budget includes an operating budget of \$295.74 million and a focused capital works program of \$75.37 million. At the same meeting Council also endorsed its Community Plan Action Plan for 2023-24 which outlines 56 priority projects that align with the Whittlesea 2040 goals of Connected Community, Liveable Neighbourhoods, Sustainability Environment, Strong Local Economy and High Performing Organisation. Both documents were endorsed following extensive community consultation. Increasing community grant funding including for local seniors' groups, a greater focus on



maintaining open space and trees and more money for footpaths and drainage maintenance are just some of the highlights of the City of Whittlesea's 2023-24 Budget.

## Customer Service

Council continues to place a significant focus on improving our customer service through investing in technology, systems and staff to make it an easy and pleasant experience for our community to interact with Council.

To understand how Council can continue to improve the customer experience, each customer is invited to participate in a post service delivery feedback survey which provides feedback on Council's performance in delivery the specific service. Between July and end of December 2023, Council had 5,343 individual customers complete the feedback survey. During this period, Council received a customer satisfaction score of 73%.

In addition to measuring customer satisfaction, Council also seeks feedback on communication, ease, first contact resolution rates and the knowledge and skills of our staff to drive performance uplift and highlight focus areas to continue to improve the customer experience when interacting with Council.

In August 2023, Council opened the new Whittlesea Service Hub, located in the Northern end of the municipality. This was a high priority of the Administrators from the outset of their term. The Whittlesea Service Hub allows customers the ease of interacting with Council face-to-face, closer to their home or business in the North, rather than driving to South Morang. Service provisions at the Hub include customer service, business concierge, emergency management support and a virtual building and planning booth.

The key focus to improve the customer experience over the coming six months include launching a new website, with simple navigation features and more self-serve opportunities, including a customer portal. The new website and customer portal is anticipated to go live in June 2024. Our customer first approach seeks to deliver resolution at the first point of contact which requires investment to modernise Council's ageing technological infrastructure.



## Community Engagement

Council is committed to ensuring our community has authentic opportunities to engage with us on local priorities to help shape the future of the City of Whittlesea.

Robust methodology underpins a comprehensive municipal-wide engagement program that seeks to ensure all the voices of our community are heard and considered in Council's decision-making.

Council continues to develop and improve the digital Engage Whittlesea platform to provide accessible opportunities for the community to have their say online. This includes improvements such as the addition of translation options for the most commonly spoken languages in our municipality and plug-ins which provide those living with disabilities the option to tailor pages to meet their own personal needs such as screen readers, dyslexia view and voice navigation. Since January 2023 we have received 4597 online contributions for community consultation.

Council has continued to increase regular in-person opportunities for community to talk to us about matters that are important to them. We have introduced monthly *Coffee with Council* drop-in sessions at local cafes where community members and businesses can talk to Administrators and senior leadership, Community Forums ahead of community-based Council Meetings, engagement opportunities at Citizenship Ceremonies and a regular program of pop-ups at local shopping strips, markets, events and shopping centres. Since January 2023 we have held 108



community-based pop ups with over 4340 people providing feedback face-to-face.

We continue to build our networks and access to marginalised voices through initiatives such as the Whittlesea Disability Network Hub, an online space where people with disability, their carers and disability service providers, can provide feedback to Council on what people with disability need to live independently and safely in the community.

## Advocacy

Council recognises the importance of partnering with the State and Federal Governments to deliver essential services, critical infrastructure and a sustainable environment for our rapidly growing community. Our municipality is one of the fastest growing in the State, with projections showing a population growth of almost 50 per cent by 2041.

We continue to strongly advocate on behalf of our community and build strategic relationships, meeting regularly with local members, key industry partners, peak bodies (including the Municipal Association of Victoria, the Victorian Local Governance Association and the Australian Local Government Women's Association) and play a key role on many regional networks including the National Growth Areas Alliance, the Interface Group of Councils and the Northern Councils Alliance. We have recently refreshed Council's comprehensive Advocacy Prospectus, seeking co-investment on 18 key initiatives for the 2023-2025 period, to meet the needs of our growing population. Key initiatives include the E6 Freeway, Wollert Rail, the Melbourne Food Innovation and Export Hub, Regional Aquatic and Sports Centre and the Aboriginal Gathering Place.

The Advocacy and Stakeholder Engagement team continue to work on targeted campaigns and outreach to key State and Federal Ministers and local MPs on Council's advocacy priorities. This includes 2024-25 State and Federal Pre-Budget Submissions, and national submissions on housing and telecommunications.

## Integrated Planning

### W2040 Goals

The City of Whittlesea vision of *A Place for All* has five goals which Council is striving to achieve to help us realise this shared community vision. They are: Connected Community, Liveable Neighbourhoods, Strong Local Economy Sustainable Environment and High-Performing Organisation.

Specific highlights are noted below and continue to be reported to Council quarterly.



## Connected Community

In December 2023, Council endorsed the **Connected Community Strategy 2023-2033** which outlines Council's commitment to fostering an inclusive, healthy, safe and welcoming place where all residents are celebrated and supported.

Informed by the analysis of trends and engagement with the community, the strategy identifies 24 priorities to build on the progress already made in these areas.

Advancing gender equality, improving physical and mental wellbeing, providing services for people at all life stages, and creating culturally safe and accessible spaces are just some of the areas Council will focus on over the next decade.

Council has also adopted the **Long-Term Community Infrastructure Plan** which contains Council's blueprint for investing in buildings and spaces that promote access to services supporting health, wellbeing and life-long learning such as the Aboriginal Gathering Place and regional sports facilities.

We were delighted to turn the sod in November 2023 on an **Aboriginal Gathering Place at Quarry Hills Regional Parkland** to increase connection to culture and facilitate healing for Aboriginal people, as well as enhancing health and wellbeing. This project has been the vision for many Elders in the community for over 20 years and in partnership with local Aboriginal communities, the City of Whittlesea Aboriginal Gathering Place Advisory Group (AGPAG) and the Whittlesea Reconciliation Group (WRG).

Council has appointed architects for the design of the **sport courts component of the regional sports and aquatic precinct in Mernda** and awarded the contract for the construction of the access road into the precinct. The new facility will provide improved health and wellbeing benefits to our community, through access to services and facilities for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. The staging approach endorsed in the business case for the precinct prioritises delivery of the indoor and outdoor sports courts. This is in direct response to current community demand which already far exceeds capacity - in the City of Whittlesea, we have a shortage of 43 indoor courts and 32 outdoor courts, with approximately half of registered netball and basketball players having to leave the municipality to play their sport.

Staging the project spreads the costs over a number of years, however the sheer scale of this investment means Council cannot do this alone. To deliver this project Council requires the support of the Federal and State Governments and we are strongly advocating to both levels of government to contribute significant funding to deliver this much-needed facility.

Council has completed a new \$2.25 million **synthetic pitch at the Harvest Home Road Recreation Reserve in Epping**. The FIFA-accredited pitch replaces one installed back in





2008 that no longer met the needs of tenant Whittlesea Ranges Football Club or the wider community. The redevelopment has delivered a new synthetic playing surface with improved drainage, fencing and the latest in LED sports lighting technology.

Council is embedding the 3-year-old kindergarten reform with services offering between 7.5 and 15 hours kindergarten in 2024 and progressing the implementation of pre-prep.

Council also endorsed a position to stay in the delivery of Commonwealth funded aged care services in recognition of the critical role this service provides in supporting the wellbeing of our ageing population.

Council has endorsed a comprehensive new ten-year **Community Local Law** aimed at addressing a wide range of important community issues including fire safety, animal welfare, property regulations, vehicle management, and public behaviour. The new Community Local Law 2024-2034 will replace Council's existing Local Law and aims to strike a balance between safety, personal freedom, and community responsibility to help people live harmoniously in their local community. This year we embarked on a process to update our law to make sure it met the changing needs of our community and was much more accessible to our community and easy to navigate and understand. We received valuable feedback and insights from more than 2,000 residents which played a pivotal role in shaping these essential local laws. The community highlighted the need for updates in the new Community Local Law to improve regulations on responsible pet ownership, and update requirements for property and fire prevention. Council presented its draft Community Local Law for community feedback earlier this year with 80% of respondents agreeing that they believed the new law met the needs and values of the community.

More than \$95,000 has been allocated to support community groups deliver programs, activities and events in the first round of funding through the **new City of Whittlesea Community Grants Program**. The new grants program, which came into effect from August this year, offers grants across six categories, with applications assessed monthly and quarterly, providing access to funding year-round. The following community groups have been awarded grants:

- Valley Presbyterian Church for Doreen Community Carols
- Thomastown Neighbourhood House for the Promise town Picnic & Markets
- Rotary Club of Whittlesea for the Whittlesea Garden Expo 2024
- New Horizons Assembly of God Church for the Whittlesea Christmas Festival
- Olivine Community Group for the International Expo 2024
- Lalor Neighbourhood House for art, permaculture and creative programs.



In addition, Council has developed four-year funding agreements with the following organisations to help deliver on Council's Whittlesea 2040 vision of creating a place for all and provide these organisations with greater certainty and stability:

- Whittlesea Agricultural Society for the Whittlesea Show
- Mission Smiles for the Northern Diwali Festival
- Mernda and District Residents Association for the Whittlesea Cruise Night.

The City of Whittlesea also provided \$100,000 in emergency grants to 12 local food share organisations to support an increasing demand for food because of rising cost-of-living expenses.

The **Mernda Social Support Centre** was opened in November 2023 to assist older residents improve their physical and mental health. The \$2.69 million facility was built in response to a surge in demand for support for older residents in the growing suburbs of Mernda and Doreen. The facility features three activity rooms, kitchen, consulting room, staff office, outdoor barbecue areas and accessible amenities.

The management of the historic **Ziebell's Farmhouse Museum and Heritage Garden**, in the revered Westgarthtown Pioneer Precinct in Thomastown, has now transitioned to the City of Whittlesea to ensure the preservation of local history for the benefit of the community and future generations and in recognition of the onerous demands placed on community volunteers. Nestled within the heart of the Westgarthtown Pioneer Precinct, the heritage listed Ziebell's Farmhouse Museum and Heritage Garden is a site of historical significance. It is Victoria's oldest German immigrant building, built between 1851 and 1856. Owned by the City of Whittlesea, it has been thoughtfully managed for almost three decades by the dedicated Friends of Westgarthtown. The work of the Friends of Westgarthtown has raised the profile of the cultural building which has included gaining museum accreditation from the Australian Museums and Galleries Association. To support the transition of management, Council will continue to maintain a collaborative partnership with the Friends of Westgarthtown. A museum advisory body will be established to foster ongoing discussion and cooperation, allowing the unique insights and expertise of the Friends of Westgarthtown to continue to enrich the stewardship of Ziebell's.

Council recently reviewed its popular **library service** (which is managed through the **Yarra Plenty Regional Library Corporation** with partner councils the Shire of Nillumbik and City of Banyule) to inform the delivery of a future-focused service that can continue to meet the needs of the growing community.

The review confirmed that libraries were still highly valued, not just for books but also as places of community connection. We have reviewed our current service delivery model with our rapidly growing community in mind. During 2022-2023 there were more than 259,000 visits to a library within the City of Whittlesea, with this number expected to grow to 489,350 in 2023-2024. We need to look at innovative ways we can





deliver timely library services to our developing and newer communities. We will be delivering library services from a shop front in the Mernda Town Centre and we are planning for a library hub at the Kirrip Community Centre in Wollert like the already popular model at Galada Community Centre in Epping North. In addition, we have our successful mobile library service

## Liveable Neighbourhoods

Council's *Liveable Neighbourhood Strategy* was adopted in December 2023. The strategy sets out Council's approach to creating and maintaining well-planned and attractive neighbourhoods with convenient and vibrant spaces and town centres for people to enjoy.

The priorities of the strategy include a focus on developing town centres, integrating transport, housing improving walking and cycling networks, and increasing social and affordable housing options.

Hume City Council, the City of Whittlesea and Mitchell Shire council co-signed a **historic Regional Partnership as a commitment to collaboration for the planning and delivery of Cloverton**, a new proposed city that will service the growing northern corridor. The catchment will be the primary employment and service centre for an estimated 380,000 residents, or the size of a new Canberra, and potentially generating approximately 50,000 jobs at full build. The scale of the Cloverton area and its strategic location in Melbourne's rapidly developing northern growth corridor calls for a joint effort to deliver the services and community infrastructure required. The three councils will work together to seek further support and a genuine partnership with the State Government to ensure the precinct is delivered in an innovative, integrated and sustainable way.

An exciting new space that the City's youth can call their own has been unveiled at **Norris Bank Reserve in Bundoora**.

The transformation of the Reserve's western end into a youth-focused area continues the staged redevelopment of the park.

The \$900,000 upgrade delivers a new basketball court, seating, upgraded paths and gardens and a grass area for recreation or relaxation.

A second and final stage of the project, due to start in early 2024, will feature a shelter for the youth space with free wi-fi, speakers, lighting and performance area.



Lydia Wilson, Colin Brooks and Angela Rolevska at Norris Bank opening

Council has turned the sod on the second stage of a multimillion-dollar redevelopment of the **Whittlesea Public Gardens in Lalor**. Stage two of the upgrade to the park will feature a 100-metre-long street-style skate park designed to test the skills of beginner, intermediate and advanced skaters. The project will also see construction of two half-court basketball courts and the installation of a rock-climbing wall, as well as a kick-about space with soccer goals. There will be a range of amenities installed for the comfort and convenience of visitors, including two large shelters with barbecues, seating, drinking fountains, paths, lighting and landscaping. The works build on the redevelopment's first stage, completed earlier this year, which delivered a new playground featuring play towers, swings, slides, flying fox, riding circuit and more.

A **master plan for Nick Ascenzo Reserve** was endorsed at the Council Meeting in November 2023, providing direction for future improvements to this major open space in Thomastown. The short, medium, and long-term recommendations outlined in the plan will enhance the natural features of the park, improve safety and ensure an inclusive and distinctive reserve that provides a range of recreation, informal sport, and social opportunities for all to enjoy. The plan has been developed with feedback received during community consultation. The master plan includes upgrades to ensure the Reserve is welcoming and accessible. These include improvements to the entrances, better parking facilities, a running loop, nature play, fitness stations, and a multi-purpose court. These changes will provide a versatile recreational space that



caters to our diverse community, including a playground with nature-based play elements, and a scooter, skate, and BMX loop, all of which provide a range of options for children of all ages to get active and get involved in creative play. The plan also includes planting additional trees for increased shade, and low-maintenance garden beds, enhancing the park's ecological diversity and sustainability.

## Strong Local Economy

In February 2022, Council adopted the *Strong Local Economy Strategy* which will guide our approach to building and supporting a strong and innovative local economy. It defines Council's priority areas for action in the following key directions: increased local employment, education opportunities for all and successful innovative local businesses.

Our *Investment Prospectus: Partner to Prosper* articulates how we are helping to build a robust and economically valuable investment environment where our local businesses, partnering organisations and residents can thrive.

Through funding from the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) we have delivered the Job Advocate Service. This service has been instrumental in supporting over 8000 individuals in their search for work and training opportunities.

In collaboration with the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) we actively participated in the Visitor Economy Community Engagement Pilot Program. Through this program a robust and scalable framework was developed to support councils to work with communities to conserve and enhance the visitor economy.

As part of our commitment to the 'Whittlesea 2040' vision: A Place for All, we have developed Plans, including the Agri-Food, Circular Economy, Destination, and Economic Participation Plan for the years 2023-2026. These plans are designed to support a robust local economy while aligning with our key directions in the Strong Local Economy Strategy 2022-2026.

Implemented several Actions in the Strong Local Economy Strategy 2022-2026 that supports increased local employment, education opportunities and successful businesses in our community. Highlights include:

- Driving awareness and investment to the municipality through an investment attraction promotional campaign, Developer Forum and Epping Health precinct information session, the development of the *Business Relocation and Growth* Program and sponsoring the State Government Victorian Manufacturing Showcase.
- Delivered the Children and Family Jobs and Career Fair in August to promote



careers and jobs in the maternal child and health sector with a focus on early years. This Careers Fair attracted over 100 attendees that had the opportunity to engage with 75 Employers, educational, training and employment providers, hear from guest speakers and view the 90 employment vacancies displayed.

- Supporting our priority sectors, such as manufacturing and food and beverage, through the delivery of targeted events. Examples include the Empowering Victorian Manufacturing Business Leaders Seminar and Quick Bites event. In partnership with Digital Jobs Victoria and the Department of Jobs, Skills and Regions, these events featured talks on subsidised training to upskill staff in digital jobs within the manufacturing sector; opportunities of environmental upgrade agreements for business and the contemporary challenges, synergies and opportunities within the food and beverage industry.

Actively supported our local businesses through the delivery of shop front grants. This program supported 32 applications that successfully assisted business owners to upgrade the appearance and appeal of shopfronts in retail activity centres to attract and retain customers, make the centre look and feel inviting and therefore increase the level of community safety and drive better economic outcomes for businesses. Due to the success of this program, Council is currently implementing a second round of grant funding.

Following the success of the inaugural Whittlesea Business Awards held in May 2023, planning has commenced for the 2024 event. The Awards celebrate our business community through a series of categories, including Start Up (biannual category); Customer Service; Innovation & Enterprise; Environment and Sustainability; Community Contribution; Workplace Diversity; and Business of the Year. For 2024, a new category will be introduced acknowledging our home-based businesses.

The Business Advisory Panel continues to meet throughout the year, bringing together business leaders from the City of Whittlesea, Administrators and Council Officers to discuss a range of business topics, enabling businesses to collaborate and provide invaluable ongoing advice to Council to enhance a strong local economy.

## Sustainable Environment

Council continues to implement its *Sustainable Environment Strategy and Action Plan* which helps to ensure we are creating a liveable and sustainable environment for our residents for generations to come. The strategy covers seven key focus areas related to environmental sustainability: biodiversity, city forest (greening), climate change, water, waste and recycling, Green Wedge and community empowerment.

Council has continued to help our community connect to nature including through range of nature play programs, tree planting days and the Nature Stewards program.



We have continued our work with the Wurundjeri Narrap Team to support the management of a number of councils conservation reserves.

We have continued to implement our urban greening program, including in streets, parks and reserves and waterways, to ensure the benefits of this program are experienced by the whole community.

We partnered with the Northern Councils Alliance to complete and launch the community-wide electric vehicle transition plan and prepared a transition plan for our own fleet.

We have developed improved processes for our Integrated Water Management assets, including from planning, design, delivery, maintenance and renewal. We have presented our work at industry forums and events.

We have continued to development and implement waste avoidance and waste ministration education programs including a focus on reducing textile wastes.

Council also celebrated its first 12 months of the new glass kerbside service. Over 2,132 tonnes of glass was collected and sorted. Importantly through our contract we have ensured that a substantial portion of the glass collected was turned back into glass and jars in a manufacturing plant in Melbourne.

Council partnered with local young people to design and deliver we our first Youth Environment Summit. This day supported young environmental champions from across the city, learn about what they and their schools can do to address climate change and support the environment.

## High Performing Organisation

The *High Performing Organisation Strategy* has now been adopted. The Strategy outlines Council's commitments, the outcomes we strive for and the actions we will deliver for our community.

Council has undertaken a significant organisational structural review to ensure it is aligned to the needs of the community now and into the future and has developed a *Workforce Plan 2021–2025* to strategically manage the City of Whittlesea's workforce over the coming years.

The *Gender Equality Action Plan 2021–2025*, outlines key gender equality insights relating to our workforce, and the positive actions we commit to in pursuit of improved gender equality outcomes for our staff.

Underpinned by a commitment to good governance, Council continues to make improvements to ensure our organisation is transparent, open and responsive, as detailed under the Return to Elected Council Program section.





The safety and wellbeing of staff remain a priority and the establishment of the *Great Workplace for All* program articulates 80 actions that will help the City of Whittlesea to attract and retain high quality staff to continue to deliver the critical infrastructure and services the community needs in the short and long term.

## Future priorities

Administrators are committed to leaving a legacy of good governance, contemporary and best practice strategies and policies and a Council in a strong financial position to set the City of Whittlesea up for future success. Administrators set out an ambitious program of work during their term. Through the program, the following priorities remain and are on track to be delivered over the remainder of their term:

1. **Events – conduct of civic and community events and Council’s role.**  
A draft outdoor events framework has been developed. Further development to encompass all Council events, including Dates of Significance and smaller local events at community centres to be incorporated within the Framework.
2. **Integrated Framework – complete development and endorsement of all planned Integrated Planning Framework Strategies.**  
Except for the Aboriginal Action Plan, due for endorsement in early 2024, all strategies have been adopted by Council.
3. **Customer Service/Customer First (CX/DX program)**  
The Customer Service First program aimed at improving the customer experience for our community is on track for completion in June 2024.
4. **Achievement of funding for flagship projects, Aboriginal Gathering Place and Regional Aquatic and Sports Centre (RASC) and commencement of works.**  
**Works on the Aboriginal Gathering Place are due to commence in February 2024.**  
An early works package is being developed for RASC. It continues to be an advocacy priority for Council.
5. **Preparation for the return of Council.**  
As detailed earlier in this report, a significant amount of work has been completed, and is in progress to ensure a smooth transition back to an elected Council.

The Administrators and CEO have agreed on the Transition Roadmap.

Administrators and ELT meet regularly to review progress on these priority actions



and Transition Roadmap.

The delivery of the Return to Elected Officials Program aims to make the changeover back to elected officials when sworn in, in October/November 2024, as seamless and effective as possible.

## Attachments

Nil



**6 Notices of Motion**

No Notices of Motion

**7 Urgent Business**

No Urgent Business

**8 Reports from Council Representatives and CEO Update**

**9 Confidential Business**

**9.0.0 Close Meeting to the Public**

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.**

**10 Closure**