

MINUTES



Meeting of Council

Held via Zoom

On

Monday 25 October 2021

The Agenda for the Meeting of Council, Monday 25 October 2021, forms part of these Minutes and is attached in full at the end of the Minutes.

These Minutes are considered draft until adopted and confirmed at the next Meeting of Council

The meeting commenced at 7:03 pm.

PRESENT:

Cr L Cooper (Mayor) Scott Ward

Cr Y Allred Baird Ward

Cr J Dwight Chandler Ward

Cr M Timmers-Leitch Collier Ward

Cr S Grasso Dinsdale Ward

Cr M Baker Dobson Ward

Cr S Laukens Friberg Ward

Cr D Pearce Taylor Ward

Cr N Seymour Tirhatuan Ward

Mr B Dobson Chief Executive Officer

Mr G Thorne Director – Infrastructure

Mr M Kelleher Director - Strategy and Integrity

Ms T Scicluna Director – Connected Communities

Ms I Kelly Acting Director - City Centre

Ms S Stanton Executive Manager - Strategy, People and Culture, Interim Information Technology & Transformation

Mr P McQue Manager, Governance

Mr A Dowling Coordinator, Governance

THE MEETING OPENED WITH A PRAYER, STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND A STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

“Knox City Council acknowledges we are on the traditional land of the Wurundjeri and Bunurong people and pay our respects to elders both past and present.”

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1 Apologies and Requests for Leave of Absence

Nil.

Councillor Allred experienced technical difficulties and left the meeting at 7.06pm.

2 Declarations of Conflict of Interest

Councillor Laukens foreshadowed declaring a general conflict of interest in Item 9.2, Community Development Fund Grant Recommendations 2021-22.

The Mayor noted Cr Allred was experiencing technical difficulties and foreshadowed on her behalf, that she would be declaring a general conflict of interest in Item 9.2, Community Development Fund Grant Recommendations 2021-22.

3 Confirmation of Minutes

The Chairperson, Councillor Cooper invited Councillors to raise any opposition to the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 27 September 2021. There being none, the Chairperson declared the 27 September 2021 Minutes be confirmed.

The Mayor acknowledged Officers had advised of a production error in the Minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 23 August 2021, which resulted in an attachment to Item 14.2 being excluded from the final version of the minutes, and noted copies of the relevant pages had been circulated to Councillors for their information prior to the meeting.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Cooper

SECONDED: Councillor Timmers-Leitch

That the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 23 August 2021 be amended to include Attachment A – as circulated to Councillors on 25 October 2021 and attached to the Minutes of the 25 October Council Meeting.

CARRIED

4 Presentations, Petitions and Memorials

Nil.

5 Reports by Councillors

5.1.1 Councillor Seymour

Councillor Seymour:

- Noted the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic in the municipality and the many cases involving residents under the age of 40.
- Expressed her sincere condolences to families in the municipality who have recently lost loved ones to COVID-19.

5.1.2 Councillor Pearce

Councillor Pearce:

- Noted that teenagers building BMX tracks which cut into grass within Council reserves are exposing Council to legal risks and the matter has been raised with the Director Infrastructure.

The Mayor adjourned the meeting during Item 5.1 at 7:13pm due to technical difficulties involving the live stream.

The Meeting resumed at 7:19pm with all Councillors present.

5.1.3 Councillor Laukens

Councillor Laukens reported attending the following meetings:

- Knox Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee Meeting
- Eastern Regional Group of Councils Federal Election Advocacy Project Meeting
- Melbourne Transport Forum Meeting - We Love Buses Discussion
- Orana Neighbourhood House Annual General Meeting
- VLGA Connect Live Panel Discussion - Debt - Another Resource for Councils to Consider
- Australian Local Governments Accelerating Action Forum on Climate Change
- Eastern Transport Coalition Meeting
- Eastern Regional Group of Councils Meeting

Councillor Laukens also:

- Noted Knox needs short, sharp and direct public transport to increase patronage on local bus routes.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED: Councillor Cooper

SECONDED: Councillor Dwight

That Council resolve to adjourn the Meeting for 5 minutes to address technical difficulties with the live stream.

CARRIED

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 7:21 pm

The Council Meeting resumed at 7:28pm with all Councillors present.

5.1.4 Councillor Baker

Councillor Baker reported attending the following meetings:

- Knox Historical Society Annual General Meeting (congratulated the incoming Committee)
- Knox Disability Advisory Committee Meeting (included discussion on vaccination issues)
- Knox Active Ageing Advisory Committee Meeting

5.1.5 Councillor Grasso

Councillor Grasso reported attending the following meetings:

- Knox Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee Meeting
- Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee Meeting
- VLGA Fast Track Councillor Leadership Program Development Day
- Waste To Energy Forum

Councillor Grasso also:

- Stated she has responded to enquiries from residents relating to issues such as bike track maintenance, the development at 621 Burwood Highway and the cat curfew.
- Outlined the effectiveness of a mental health contact card which identifies mental health support services.

5.1.6 Councillor Timmers-Leitch

Councillor Timmers-Leitch reported attending the following meetings:

- Meeting regarding Advocacy considerations for Afghan Refugees
- Knox Factor Heats
- Workshop: Understanding waste to energy technology and Victorian Regulations
- AICD Day Strategy and Risk Meeting
- AICD Finance Meeting
- AICD Boardroom Effectiveness Meeting
- Knox Historical Society Annual General Meeting
- Domestic Animal Management Plan Discussion

- Building Mentally Healthy Kids Seminar
- Knox Interfaith Network Meeting
- Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee Meeting
- Stockland Presentation of the Amended Planning Permit Application- 203 Mountain Highway, Wantirna
- Orana Neighbourhood House Annual General Meeting
- Knox Hockey Club Annual General Meeting
- Wantirna Friendship Group Meeting
- Metropolitan Local Government Waste Forum
- Burwood Highway Bike Path Opening near Dandenong Creek

Councillor Timmers-Leitch also:

- Announced the full public art restoration at Collier Reserve
- Reminded people that some residents may be feeling overwhelmed and anxious as a result of the easing of restrictions.

5.1.7 Councillor Dwight

Councillor Dwight reported attending the following meetings:

- Goodwin Estate Pre-Kinder Annual General Meeting
- Knox Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing Committee Meeting
- Knox Environment Advisory Committee Meeting
- World of Fungi Webinar
- Metropolitan Local Government Waste Forum

Councillor Dwight also:

- Recognised the passing of Michelle Darragh and the community ceremony marking her passing while acting in solidarity against domestic violence
- Emphasised the importance of looking after mental health in the community

5.1.8 Councillor Allred

Councillor Allred reported attending the following meetings:

- Understanding Waste Technology and Victorian Regulations Webinar
- ICT Governance Committee Meeting
- Knox Early Years Advisory Committee Meeting

Councillor Allred also:

- Noted that Council Officers have discovered that 160 indigenous flowering orchards have flourished in the past few months in a local pocket reserve in the Baird Ward.

5.1.9 Councillor Cooper

Councillor Cooper:

- Encouraged residents to be kind with their community groups and volunteers in the process of emerging from lockdown, such as those who are checking that people are wearing masks and checking in at local events
- Noted many enquiries have been received expressing an objection to the 24 hour cat curfew

6 City Strategy and Integrity Officers' Reports for consideration

6.1 Report of Planning Applications Decided Under Delegation 1 September 2021 to 30 September 2021

SUMMARY: Manager, City Planning & Building, Paul Dickie

Details of planning applications considered under delegation are referred for information. It is recommended that the items be noted.

RECOMMENDATION

That the planning applications decided under delegation reports (between 1 September 2021 to 30 September 2021) be noted.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Allred

SECONDED: Councillor Cooper

That the planning applications decided under delegation reports (between 1 September 2021 to 30 September 2021) be noted.

CARRIED

6.2 Norvel Estate S173 Agreement and Urban Design Guidelines

SUMMARY: Senior Strategic Planner, Patrick Dubuc

After concluding its use as a quarry, in 2006 Council entered into a Section 173 Agreement with the former owner of the Norvel Estate, to facilitate a number of actions ahead of the site being considered for rezoning. These include a land swap, land rehabilitation, fencing, future urban design requirements and the future public open space contribution along Blind Creek.

Since that time, progress has been made and a number of requirements that were prescribed have either been achieved or require updating. A new Section 173 Agreement is needed to reflect these changes.

The Director City Strategy and Integrity currently has delegated authority to end an existing Section 173 Agreement and to enter into a new agreement. However this delegation does not apply to an agreement that was entered into via a resolution of Council.

Consequently, this report seeks a Council resolution to end the current Agreement AG370823M and replace it with a new agreement. This report was originally presented to the September Council Meeting, with Council resolving to defer the matter to the October Council Meeting, which has enabled a more comprehensive briefing on this matter and the future rezoning/planning permit proposal.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolves to:

1. Enter into an agreement under Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (the “New 173 Agreement”) relating to land situated at Norvel Road, Ferntree Gully, generally in accordance with the draft agreement set out in Attachment 3 to the officer report.
2. End the agreement under Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (recorded in dealing AG370823M and set out in Attachment 1 to the officer report) applying to the land situated at Norvel Road, Ferntree Gully (the “Existing 173 Agreement”):
 - a. subject to the owner entering into the New 173 Agreement with Council, in accordance with Resolution 1 above; and
 - b. in accordance with the Terms of the New 173 Agreement, namely effective from the date of recording on title of the New 173 agreement.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer selects) to:
 - a. negotiate and modify, in the delegates discretion, the New 173 Agreement including in respect of the proposed revised Urban Design Guidelines set out in Attachment 3, noting any such amendments should maintain general accordance with the draft referred to in Resolution 1; and
 - b. sign any relevant documents (including the New 173 Agreement), take any actions and provide any necessary consents, to give effect to these resolutions.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Allred

SECONDED: Councillor Dwight

That Council resolves to:

1. Enter into an agreement under Section 173 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the “New 173 Agreement”) relating to land situated at Norvel Road, Ferntree Gully, generally in accordance with the draft agreement set out in Attachment 3 to the officer report.
2. End the agreement under Section 173 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (recorded in dealing AG370823M and set out in Attachment 1 to the officer report) applying to the land situated at Norvel Road, Ferntree Gully (the “Existing 173 Agreement”):
 - a. subject to the owner entering into the New 173 Agreement with Council, in accordance with Resolution 1 above; and
 - b. in accordance with the Terms of the New 173 Agreement, namely effective from the date of recording on title of the New 173 agreement.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer selects) to:
 - a. negotiate and modify, in the delegates discretion, the New 173 Agreement including in respect of the proposed revised Urban Design Guidelines set out in Attachment 3, noting any such amendments should maintain general accordance with the draft referred to in Resolution 1; and
 - b. sign any relevant documents (including the New 173 Agreement), take any actions and provide any necessary consents, to give effect to these resolutions.

CARRIED

6.3 Endorsement of Draft Green Areas and Rural Strategy (GARS) for Community Consultation

SUMMARY: Senior Strategic Planner, Nasrin Dehghani

The draft Green Areas and Rural Strategy (GARS) provides strategic direction for selected precincts within Knox that are of environmental, recreational, agricultural, rural living and landscape significance to the community. It provides a vision for each of its precincts and details actions that would guide future decision making. Building upon the evidence base, technical analysis, stakeholder input and preliminary community feedback from earlier stages, a draft strategy has now been prepared which is proposed to undergo public consultation in November-December 2021 to ensure the views of the community and key stakeholders are sought. It is recommended that Council endorses the draft GARS for the purpose of community consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorses the draft Knox Green Areas and Rural Strategy (draft GARS) as provided in Attachment 1 for the purpose of public consultation for a minimum of 4 weeks in November – December 2021;
2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or such person the Chief Executive Officer selects) to make minor changes to the draft GARS as appropriate prior to public consultation; and
3. Notes that following consultation, the results will be presented together with the final strategy for Council's consideration.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Dwight

SECONDED: Councillor Seymour

That Council:

1. **Endorses the draft Knox Green Areas and Rural Strategy (draft GARS) as provided in Attachment 1 for the purpose of public consultation for a minimum of 4 weeks in November – December 2021;**
2. **Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or such person the Chief Executive Officer selects) to make minor changes to the draft GARS as appropriate prior to public consultation; and**
3. **Notes that following consultation, the results will be presented together with the final strategy for Council's consideration.**

CARRIED

6.4 Draft 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan

SUMMARY: Coordinator Projects and Improvement, Janet Simmonds

Council's 2017-2021 Domestic Animal Management Plan ('the current DAM Plan') is due to expire in December 2021. This report presents the draft 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan ('the draft DAM Plan') for endorsement, prior to proceeding to the final stage of community consultation. The draft DAM Plan has been developed following an extensive community consultation campaign undertaken during July - August 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorses the draft 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan (Attachment 1) for the purposes of community consultation;
2. Notes the community feedback provided in the phase 1 consultation (Attachment 2); and
3. Notes that Phase 2 community consultation on the draft Domestic Animal Management Plan will occur from 28 October to 28 November 2021, and that feedback will be considered prior to finalising the Plan.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Dwight

SECONDED: Councillor Seymour

That Council:

1. **Endorses the draft 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan (Attachment 1) for the purposes of community consultation;**
2. **Notes the community feedback provided in the phase 1 consultation (Attachment 2); and**
3. **Notes that Phase 2 community consultation on the draft Domestic Animal Management Plan will occur from 28 October to 28 November 2021, and that feedback will be considered prior to finalising the Plan.**

CARRIED

A Division was called by Councillor Pearce

For the motion: Councillor Allred, Councillor Baker, Councillor Dwight, Councillor Laukens, Councillor Seymour and Councillor Timmers-Leitch

Against the motion: Councillor Cooper, Councillor Grasso and Councillor Pearce

Abstention: Nil

CARRIED 6:3

7 Public Question Time

Following the completion of business relating to Item 6, City Strategy and Integrity, the business before the Council Meeting was deferred to consider questions submitted by the public.

Question Time commenced at 8:05 pm.

The following questions were raised with Council:

7.1 Public Question 1 – Paul Rouse

What are the council doing about abandoned cars? We have had a car dumped outside our premises for over 1 year and at times people are dumping other rubbish around it. This is not a good look.

Matt Kelleher (Director City Strategy and Integrity)

The Director City Strategy and Integrity responded by stating that:

- Officers have recently been reviewing the Abandoned and Unregistered Vehicle Service and are engaging a new towing contractor which is expected to deliver improvements to the service. This service has experienced a number of impediments, particularly in light of COVID-19 and related restrictions.
- The vehicle mentioned is located in an industrial estate in Knoxfield. Council has been aware of the vehicle and although the vehicle has not been impounded, a Section 45Y letter under the Environment Protection Act was sent to the last registered owner advising them to remove the dumped vehicle. This did not occur and therefore an infringement notice has been issued.
- A further complaint was recently received and an officer has attended the location over the past week. As Council is currently engaging a new contractor to tow abandoned vehicles, we are organising for the vehicle to be towed and impounded later this week.

7.2 Public Question 2 - Bruna Iotti

Since last year, I have had a few interactions with the Knox Council Waste Management team and councilor Marcia regarding how the Circular Economy could be integrated in managing resources within the Knox municipality. You heard correctly, I chose to use the word 'resource' rather than 'waste' because this is how we start replacing our throwaway economy, possessing the waste mentality, towards one where materials are reutilised and nature is regenerated. More importantly, 'the circular economy gives us the tools to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss together, while addressing important social needs' (EMF 2021), which fits in greatly with the current Knox Climate Change Response Plan.

I thank Councillor Marcia for facilitating the discussion with Council staff and I believe that level of cooperation is essential to our democracy, without egocentric and self-service practices, because the Knox Council is accountable to the best and common interests of the Knox community. Not only I believe that council staff and councilors should work harmoniously and share the power vested in them, but that Knox Council should work with other Councils to pioneer something like 'Resource Management' and Climate Change Response. Knox Council can innovate but it needs help from other councilors, businesses and community.

After reading the budget 2021-2022, I was disappointed to notice the fund allocation increase, yet again, towards waste management, from \$20 million to \$23 million. It would be helpful if the waste management budget item showed a breakdown of activities and respective costs. Surely, if all council departments worked together and conceded the climate change mitigation response plan as the ultimate goal, most of those 'waste management funds' could be diverted somewhere else where it would truly make a difference. Otherwise, it is just 'managing the waste of money' for a fallacious notion of community convenience while helping to pollute the environment that we must protect. As a member of the community, I am also helping by volunteering at the Knox Repair café where broken resources are fixed, with a 63% fixing rate to date. But the council has to do a lot more.

Could you provide a breakdown of expenditure for waste management totalling \$23 million?

How can you ensure KTS, who leases the land at Knox Transfer Station, deliver on true circular economy principles, for example by adding contract clauses like 'repairing items dumped there' or transforming resources on site?

How will ensure that the community is educated with circular economy principles, for example by minimising general waste collection from weekly to bi-weekly, using local community gardens to reduce packaging needs etc?

Grant Thorne (Director Infrastructure)

The Director Infrastructure responded by stating that:

Ms Lotti asked for a breakdown of the expenditure for waste management services totalling \$23m. This service is made up of a number of components and at a high level this service includes (\$17m) for the collection and disposal of the waste collection at the kerbside, (\$3m) payment of the State Government for the landfill levy and the remaining (\$3m) is related to commercial waste services / litter management / management of closed landfills and waste education / waste promotion and staffing expenditure.

In regard to the management of the Knox Transfer Station, and leading by example, it is advised that KTS who operate the Knox Transfer Station have a strong record of circular economy credentials. At the site they process used mattresses to extract valuable materials. This operation is the largest in the State and they processed 350,000 mattresses in 2020/2021. The question, specifically asks for Council to include clauses in the contract, like 'repairing items dumped there'. It is not intended to include such a clause at this time. The current contract includes KTS operating the Knox Treasure Chest which identifies items of value coming in through the waste stream and seeks to sell products back to the community, but does not include a repair component.

The final part of the question related to how to ensure the community is educated with circular economy principles. Knox is on the journey of implementing the State Government's Recycling Victoria Strategy and Council's biggest value opportunity for instilling circular economy principles in its waste services is through the implementation of Council's Food and Garden Organics (FOGO) service, which has been endorsed by Council and we are currently planning for this service to be operational in 2023.

Question Time concluded at 8.10pm.

8 Infrastructure Officers' Reports for consideration

Nil

9 Connected Communities Officers' Reports for consideration

9.1 Minor Grants Program 2021-22 Monthly Report

SUMMARY: Community Partnerships Officer, Deb Robert

This report summarises the grant applications recommended for approval in October 2021 for the 2021-22 Minor Grants Program. All applications have been assessed against the criteria set out in the Minor Grants Program Policy.

Applications under the Minor Grants Policy are limited to a maximum of \$3,000 within the current financial year.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Approve three applications for a total of \$7,610.00 as detailed below:

Applicant Name	Project Title	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended
The Food Affectionist	Hot Meals for Locals	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Knox Gardens Cricket Club	Build a Female Program in the Club	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Shishukunj Melbourne Inc	Diwali Care Packages	\$2,610.00	\$2,610.00
TOTAL		\$7,610.00	\$7,610.00

2. Note that inclusive of the above recommended grants, totalling \$7,610.00, a total of \$60,756.74 has been awarded to date under the 2021-22 Minor Grants Program supporting 28 community-based organisations and their programs.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Laukens

SECONDED: Councillor Timmers-Leitch

That Council:

1. Approve three applications for a total of \$7,610.00 as detailed below:

Applicant Name	Project Title	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended
The Food Affectionist	Hot Meals for Locals	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Knox Gardens Cricket Club	Build a Female Program in the Club	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Shishukunj Melbourne Inc	Diwali Care Packages	\$2,610.00	\$2,610.00
TOTAL		\$7,610.00	\$7,610.00

2. Note that inclusive of the above recommended grants, totalling \$7,610.00, a total of \$60,756.74 has been awarded to date under the 2021-22 Minor Grants Program supporting 28 community-based organisations and their programs.

CARRIED

Pursuant to Section 130 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) and Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council, Councillor Laukens declared a general conflict of interest in this item on the grounds that she is a long time member, current committee member and previous president [of Knox community Gardens].

Pursuant to Section 130 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) and Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council, Councillor Allred declared a general conflict of interest in Item 9.2 on the grounds that her child will be attending a kinder that has applied for a grant.

9.2 Community Development Fund Grant Recommendations 2021-22

SUMMARY: Community Partnerships Officer, Deb Robert

This report presents the recommendations of the Community Development Fund (CDF) Evaluation Panel for Council's 2021-22 CDF Grants Program allocation to not-for-profit community groups operating within Knox.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Approve the recommendations of 2021-2022 Community Development Fund (CDF) Evaluation Panel to allocate 49 grants totaling \$371,917.73, as detailed in Attachment 2 of this report; and
2. Note that an on-line grants announcement will be scheduled in November 2021 to highlight the 2021-2022 approved projects and a networking event for grant recipients will be held in February/March 2022 to launch next year's grants program.

*Councillor Laukens left the meeting at 8:16 pm before the discussion and vote on item 9.2
Councillor Allred left the meeting at 8:16 pm before the discussion and vote on item 9.2*

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Seymour

SECONDED: Councillor Dwight

That Council:

1. **Approve the recommendations of 2021-2022 Community Development Fund (CDF) Evaluation Panel to allocate 49 grants totaling \$371,917.73, as detailed in Attachment 2 of this report; and**
2. **Note that an on-line grants announcement will be scheduled in November 2021 to highlight the 2021-2022 approved projects and a networking event for grant recipients will be held in February/March 2022 to launch next year's grants program.**

CARRIED

*Councillor Laukens returned to the meeting at 8:22 pm after the vote on item 9.2
Councillor Allred returned to the meeting at 8:22 pm after the vote on item 9.2*

9.3 Knox COVID-19 Household Survey Results

SUMMARY: Coordinator Health Planning and Liveability, Kylie Osborne

The COVID-19 Pandemic continues to impact the health and wellbeing of our community in ever-evolving ways. As we continue to adapt to our changing circumstances, the prevalent social and health outcomes and community priorities are equally agile. To better understand the persisting health and wellbeing outcomes and concerns for the Knox community, a second iteration of the COVID-19 Household Survey was fielded in July 2021, with the first conducted in June 2020.

Whilst the results of the second survey presented new insights into the evolving concerns of the community, key health and social issues continue to impact with only minor improvement, indicating a continued need for Council to prioritise COVID-19 Pandemic recovery focused health and wellbeing initiatives. Encouragingly, the issues of concern remain in areas where Council continues to remain responsive.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the findings of the second wave COVID-19 Household Survey July 2021, focusing on the new priority areas and existing key health and social issues requiring continued attention.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Dwight

SECONDED: Councillor Seymour

That Council note the findings of the second wave COVID-19 Household Survey July 2021, focusing on the new priority areas and existing key health and social issues requiring continued attention.

CARRIED

9.4 COVID-19 Pandemic Community and Business Support

SUMMARY: Principal Safety, Wellbeing and Pandemic Response, Catherine Dwight; Manager City Futures, Shiranthi Widan; and Manager Community Wellbeing, Petrina Dodds Buckley

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Council has approved four Community and Business Support Packages to date. This report presents an overview of the restrictions impacting the Knox Community since May 2021, the current supports being delivered and facilitated by Council, and a summary of the State and Federal Government grant and relief options available to community and business. This report also recommends a further extension of some initiatives and additional targeted support.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note the continued positive impact that Council's support initiatives and adjusted services have had so far on the Knox community and business.
2. Approve the following initiatives for inclusion in a fifth Community and Business Support Package:
 - a. Waive all not-for profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for a further period 1 October 2021 to 31 December 2021;
 - b. Note that Sporting Group tenancy agreements will be allocated a *pro-rata* charge from January 2022, pending easing of State Government restrictions which allow community sport to return both indoor and outdoor with minimum numbers, spectators and public gathering limits;
 - c. Provide funding to the value of \$20,000 for the implementation of a Digital Upskills Program for businesses; and
 - d. Provide funding to the value of \$20,000 towards the Commercial Advice and Mentoring Program.
3. Divert unexpended community-based grant funds totaling \$79k to a new Grant stream to respond to ongoing food relief supplies and/or pandemic emergency relief requests.
4. Continue to offer the second round of the Placemaking and Liveable Communities grants stream to test its relevance for the business community and take up with the remaining \$66,679 from the Business Support Grants and review the program in February 2022 and redirect remaining funds from the program towards the Knox eCommerce program.
5. Fund the above initiatives with any balance from previously allocated funding and review any additional funding required through the mid-year budget process.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Timmers-Leitch

SECONDED: Councillor Seymour

That Council:

- 1. Note the continued positive impact that Council's support initiatives and adjusted services have had so far on the Knox community and business.**
- 2. Approve the following initiatives for inclusion in a fifth Community and Business Support Package:**
 - a. Waive all not-for profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for a further period 1 October 2021 to 31 December 2021;**
 - b. Note that Sporting Group tenancy agreements will be allocated a *pro-rata* charge from January 2022, pending easing of State Government restrictions which allow community sport to return both indoor and outdoor with minimum numbers, spectators and public gathering limits;**
 - c. Provide funding to the value of \$20,000 for the implementation of a Digital Upskills Program for businesses; and**
 - d. Provide funding to the value of \$20,000 towards the Commercial Advice and Mentoring Program.**
- 3. Divert unexpended community-based grant funds totaling \$79k to a new Grant stream to respond to ongoing food relief supplies and/or pandemic emergency relief requests.**
- 4. Continue to offer the second round of the Placemaking and Liveable Communities grants stream to test its relevance for the business community and take up with the remaining \$66,679 from the Business Support Grants and review the program in February 2022 and redirect remaining funds from the program towards the Knox eCommerce program.**
- 5. Fund the above initiatives with any balance from previously allocated funding and review any additional funding required through the mid-year budget process.**

CARRIED

PROCEDURAL MOTION

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED: Councillor Cooper

SECONDED: Councillor Dwight

That Council adjourn the Meeting for 5 minutes and resume the Meeting at 8:40pm.

CARRIED

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:35pm and resumed at 8:40pm with all Councillors present.

9.5 Knox Hockey Update

SUMMARY: Strategic Planning Coordinator Active and Creative Communities, Paul Reading

Further to the Council report of 26 April 2021, this report discusses the potential development of a new hockey facility within the City of Knox. The report also presents an overview of the outcome of the community and stakeholder consultation processes and provides commentary and advice on the preferred site for a home for hockey in Knox.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorse the development of a new hockey pitch at Wantirna Reserve.
2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such as person as the Chief Executive Officer selects) to formalise the execution of all documents associated with the Knox School site, including the transfer of the accrued surplus to the project, which has been held in trust by the Knox School for the development of a new pitch for the Knox Hockey Club.
3. Advise the Knox Hockey Club, the Knox School and other interested parties of Council's decision.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Timmers-Leitch

SECONDED: Councillor Seymour

That Council:

1. Endorse the development of a new hockey pitch at Wantirna Reserve.
2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such as person as the Chief Executive Officer selects) to formalise the execution of all documents associated with the Knox School site, including the transfer of the accrued surplus to the project, which has been held in trust by the Knox School for the development of a new pitch for the Knox Hockey Club.
3. Advise the Knox Hockey Club, the Knox School and other interested parties of Council's decision.
4. Acknowledge that this decision will result in the relocation of some existing long term tenants from Wantirna Reserve and that Council will continue to work with these tenants in a constructive manner towards a best possible outcome.

CARRIED

9.6 Contract 2790 - Management of Knox Skate and BMX Facilities at Gilbert Park

SUMMARY: Leisure Contracts and Project Officer, Rhonda Snijders

This report considers and recommends the appointment of Victoria YMCA Community Programming Pty Ltd as the successful tenderer for the Management for Programs, Services and Events for Knox Skate and BMX facilities at Gilbert Park Reserve, Knoxfield.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Accepts the tender from Victoria YMCA Community Programming Pty Ltd for contract No. 2790, Management for Programs, Services and Events for Knox Skate and BMX facilities at Gilbert Park Reserve, Knoxfield; for the initial term (1 November 2021 to 31 May 2026) at a cost of \$495,753 (ex GST)
2. Note Contract 2790 includes provision for an extension for a further five year term (1 November 2026 to 31 May 2031) exercisable at Council's discretion.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer selects) to:
 - a. Negotiate and execute all documents necessary to give effect to the Council's decision; and
 - b. Negotiate and execute an extension to Contract No. 2790 to the maximum 10 year term.
4. Advise the tenderer accordingly.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Laukens

SECONDED: Councillor Grasso

That Council:

1. **Accepts the tender from Victoria YMCA Community Programming Pty Ltd for contract No. 2790, Management for Programs, Services and Events for Knox Skate and BMX facilities at Gilbert Park Reserve, Knoxfield; for the initial term (1 November 2021 to 31 May 2026) at a cost of \$495,753 (ex GST)**
2. **Note Contract 2790 includes provision for an extension for a further five year term (1 November 2026 to 31 May 2031) exercisable at Council's discretion.**
3. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer selects) to:**

- a. **Negotiate and execute all documents necessary to give effect to the Council's decision; and**
 - b. **Negotiate and execute an extension to Contract No. 2790 to the maximum 10 year term.**
4. **Advise the tenderer accordingly.**

CARRIED

Councillor Pearce left the meeting at 9.01pm and returned at 9.01pm before the vote on item 9.6.

10 Office of the CEO Reports for consideration

10.1 Loan Borrowings

SUMMARY: Chief Financial Officer, Navec Lorkin

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Council exercise its powers to borrow up to \$50.03 million to enable funding of the 2021-22 capital works program, and to authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign documents with relevant lending institutions to execute the borrowings.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note Council's adopted 2021-22 Revised Budget includes provision for borrowings of \$50.03 million within the 2021-22 financial year.
2. Resolve to borrow up to \$50.03 million in the 2021-22 financial year.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to:-
 - a. Determine the final value of borrowings to be procured to a maximum of \$50.03 million having regard for the latest cash flow forecast;
 - b. Identify and select a finance provider through an appropriate procurement process; and
 - c. Execute all relevant documents necessary to give effect to the above resolutions.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Seymour

SECONDED: Councillor Pearce

That Council:

1. **Note Council's adopted 2021-22 Revised Budget included provision for borrowings of \$50.03 million within the 2021-22 financial year.**
2. **Resolve to borrow up to \$50.03 million in the 2021-22 financial year.**
3. **Note the borrowings are in compliance with Council's Loan Borrowing Policy adopted in January 2021.**
4. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to determine the final value of borrowings to be procured to a maximum of \$50.03 million having regard for the latest cash flow forecast.**
5. **Note that a finance provider for the borrowings will be sought through an appropriate procurement process and a recommendation on the preferred finance provider and associated loan borrowing terms will be presented to Council for decision at a future meeting.**

CARRIED

10.2 ICT Governance Committee Terms of Reference

SUMMARY: IT Program Coordinator, Shona Richards

This report presents the Terms of Reference for the Information Communications Technology Governance Committee (ICTGC) for approval by Council. The original Terms of Reference were approved by Council on 28 August 2017 and were due for review in August 2021. The original Terms of Reference have been reviewed and no changes are proposed, save for updates to the responsible directorate and officer. It is proposed the next review of the Terms of Reference be undertaken by 31 August 2023.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the revised ICT Governance Committee Terms of Reference as set out in Attachment 1.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Pearce

SECONDED: Councillor Allred

That Council adopt the revised ICT Governance Committee Terms of Reference as set out in Attachment 1.

CARRIED

10.3 Adoption of the Community Plan 2021-2031, Council Plan 2021-2025 & Financial Plan 2021-2031

SUMMARY: Corporate Planning Lead, Kathryn Holland

The Knox Community Plan 2021-2031, Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) and Financial Plan 2021-2031 are Council's new key strategic planning documents. They have been developed based on the community's needs and aspirations and will guide the work of Council over the coming years.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Adopt the Community Plan 2021-2031, Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) and the Financial Plan 2021-2031 in accordance with sections 88, 90 and 91 of the Local Government Act 2020.
2. Submit the Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) to the Minister for Local Government and Secretary of the Department of Health.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make minor typographical or editorial changes if required prior to submission (as per Recommendation 2 above) and publication.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Timmers-Leitch

SECONDED: Councillor Dwight

That Council:

1. **Adopt the Community Plan 2021-2031, Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) and the Financial Plan 2021-2031 in accordance with sections 88, 90 and 91 of the Local Government Act 2020.**
2. **Submit the Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) to the Minister for Local Government and Secretary of the Department of Health.**
3. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make minor typographical or editorial changes if required prior to submission (as per Recommendation 2 above) and publication.**

CARRIED

11 City Centre Reports for Consideration

11.1 State and Federal Government Advocacy Requirements

SUMMARY: Imogen Kelly, Manager Communications

All levels of government have a role to play in ensuring our community has access to education opportunities, jobs, housing, services, facilities and transport while protecting Knox for our future generations by adapting to the changing climate and reducing our emissions. Upcoming state and federal elections present a moment in time to secure commitments from governments and opposition to support initiatives which contribute to maintaining our status as one of Melbourne's most liveable regions. Items proposed to be included in requests of government leading into the next state and federal elections have been selected for their project readiness and the likelihood of achieving funding and/or policy commitments ahead of the next elections.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorse the issues to be included in requests of government and opposition representatives ahead of the next federal and state elections.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Seymour

SECONDED: Councillor Grasso

That Council endorse the issues to be included in requests of government and opposition representatives ahead of the next federal and state elections.

CARRIED

12 Items for Information

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Pearce

SECONDED: Councillor Cooper

That the following items:

- Item 12.1- Capital Works Program Report
- Item 12.2- ICT Capital Works Report

be moved en bloc as per the officer's recommendations outlined in the agenda

CARRIED

12.1 Capital Works Program Report

SUMMARY: Coordinator, Capital Works, Gene Chiron

The Capital Works Program Report shows projects on Council's Capital Works Program and indicates the status of each project as of 6 October 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the Capital Works Program Report, as of 6 October 2021.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Pearce

SECONDED: Councillor Cooper

That Council receive and note the Capital Works Program Report, as of 6 October 2021.

CARRIED

12.2 ICT Capital Works Report

SUMMARY: Chief Information Officer, Scott Coleman

The ICT Capital Works Report shows projects on Council's ICT Capital Works Program and indicates the monthly status of each project.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the ICT Capital Works Report, as of 14 October 2021.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Pearce

SECONDED: Councillor Cooper

That Council receive and note the ICT Capital Works Report, as of 14 October 2021.

CARRIED

13 Notices of Motion

Nil.

14 Supplementary Items

Nil.

15 Urgent Business

16 Questions Without Notice

Nil.

17 Confidential Items

PROCEDURAL MOTION

CLOSURE OF MEETING

MOVED: Councillor Cooper

SECONDED: Councillor Baker

That Council resolve to close the meeting in accordance with Section 66(2) of the Local Government Act 2020 in order to consider Item 17.1 Chief Executive Officer Performance Evaluation Committee- Engagement of Independent Advisor because its relates to personal information, including names, that reveals a person's identity that would be unreasonable to disclose in a public report.

CARRIED

THE MEETING WAS CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC AT 9:30 pm

17.1 Chief Executive Officer Performance Evaluation Committee - Engagement of Independent Advisor

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Pearce

SECONDED: Councillor Allred

That Council:

- 1. Resolve to commence a Request for Quotation (RFQ) process from suitably qualified consultants to provide independent professional advice in relation to all matters dealt with in the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy for a five-year period, with a further report to be presented to Council for consideration in December 2021.**
- 2. Pursuant to Section 125 of the Local Government Act 2020, resolve that information in the officers' report and these resolutions be made publicly available**

CARRIED

The Chief Executive Officer, Bruce Dobson left the meeting at 9:31pm prior to the discussion and vote on this item.

Councillor Seymour left the meeting at 9:33pm before the vote on item 17.1

Councillor Seymour returned to the meeting at 9:37pm before the vote on item 17.1

MEETING CLOSED AT 9:57pm

Minutes of Meeting confirmed at the
Meeting of Council
held on Monday, 22 November 2021

.....
Chairperson

The Agenda for this meeting is attached in full at the end of the Minutes

Attachment A to the Minutes

**ORDER 1/2021
of
KNOX CITY COUNCIL**

Section 25(2) of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*



At its meeting on 23 August 2021, Knox City Council resolved to make the following Order under Section 25(2) of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

This Order is effective from 10 April 2022.

1. All cats within the municipal district of Knox City Council must be securely confined to the owner's premises at all times.
2. If a cat is found at large outside the premises of the owner or not securely confined to the owner's premises, the owner is guilty of an offence.

Meaning of words in this Order:

Owner has the same meaning as in the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*

AGENDA



Meeting of Council

To be held via Zoom

On

Monday 25 October 2021 at 7:00 PM

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Bruce Dobson
Chief Executive Officer

1 Apologies and Requests for Leave of Absence

2 Declarations of Conflict of Interest

3 Confirmation of Minutes

Confirmation of Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Monday 27 September 2021

4 Presentations, Petitions and Memorials

5 Reports by Councillors

6 City Strategy and Integrity Officers' Reports for consideration

6.1 Report of Planning Applications Decided Under Delegation 1 September 2021 to 30 September 2021

SUMMARY: Manager, City Planning & Building, Paul Dickie

Details of planning applications considered under delegation are referred for information. It is recommended that the items be noted.

RECOMMENDATION

That the planning applications decided under delegation reports (between 1 September 2021 to 30 September 2021) be noted.

1. REPORT

Details of planning applications decided under delegation from 1 September 2021 to 30 September 2021 are attached. The applications are summarised as follows:

Application Type	No.
Building & Works: Residential	2
Other	3
Subdivision	19
Units	14
Tree Removal / Pruning	15
Single Dwelling	3
Change of Use	3
Signage	2
Boundary Realignment	2
Liquor License	1
Removal of Easement	1
TOTAL	65

2. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Manager, City Planning & Building, Paul Dickie

Report Authorised By: Director, City Strategy and Integrity, Matt Kelleher

Knox City Council

Planning Applications Decided - Council

1 September 2021 and 30 September 2021

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Baird	2021/6390	7 Oaklands Avenue FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Three (3) Lot Subdivision (Approved Development Site)	20/09/2021 Approved
Baird	2021/6290	8 Burke Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Construction of a double storey dwelling to the rear of the existing dwelling and two (2) lot subdivision	2/09/2021 Approved
Baird	2021/6338	7 Browning Road BORONIA VIC 3155	Three (3) lot subdivision (Approved Development Site)	6/09/2021 Approved
Baird	2021/6093	25 Scoresby Road BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Display an electronic and animated pylon sign	6/09/2021 Approved
Baird	2021/9126	141 Burke Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	2 lot subdivision (Approved Development Site)	29/09/2021 Approved
Baird	2021/6214	3 Valerie Street BORONIA VIC 3155	Development of the land for the construction of a double storey dwelling to the rear of the existing dwelling and a two (2) lot subdivision	27/09/2021 Approved
Baird	2021/6047	16 Flower Street FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Development of the land for five (5) double storey dwellings and one (1) single storey dwelling (Total six (6) dwellings)	9/09/2021 Approved
Baird	2021/6345	2 Coogee Street BORONIA VIC 3155	Four (4) lot subdivision (approved development site)	8/09/2021 Approved
Baird	2021/6562	26 Maryborough Road BORONIA VIC 3155	2 lot subdivision (Approved Development Site)	22/09/2021 Approved
Baird	2021/6166	3-5 Dion Street FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	2 lot subdivision - (Boundary Re-alignment)	3/09/2021 Approved
Baird	2021/9120	3 Cockerell Street FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	2 Lot subdivision (approved development site)	15/09/2021 Approved
Baird	2021/6122	19 Holloway Drive BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Use of an existing building for an industry within 30 metres of a residential zone and to use land for a purpose listed in Clause 53.10 (metal coating and finishing) where the threshold distance is not met	15/09/2021 Refused

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Baird	2021/9125	40 Bursaria Avenue FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Two lot subdivision (approved development site)	23/09/2021 Approved
Baird	2021/6471	73 Barry Street BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Removal of easement	23/09/2021 Approved
Chandler	2021/6147	16 Stewart Street BORONIA VIC 3155	Buildings and Works (Vergola)	6/09/2021 Approved
Chandler	2020/6725	8 Harcourt Road BORONIA VIC 3155	Construction of a single dwelling on the land and removal of vegetation	9/09/2021 Approved
Chandler	2021/6507	1/37 Harcourt Road BORONIA VIC 3155	The removal of one (1) Liquidambar styraciflua (Liquidambar)	9/09/2021 Approved
Chandler	2021/9113	86 Daffodil Road BORONIA VIC 3155	The lopping of one (1) Corymbia ficifolia (Flowering Gum)	9/09/2021 Approved
Chandler	2021/6252	25 McDonald Crescent BORONIA VIC 3155	Single storey dwelling to the rear of the existing dwelling, removal of vegetation and two lot subdivision	10/09/2021 Approved
Chandler	2020/6652	5 Hastings Avenue BORONIA VIC 3155	Development of the land for five (5) 3-storey dwellings and six (6) double storey dwellings (Total 11 dwellings) and removal of vegetation	10/09/2021 Notice of Decision
Chandler	2021/6403	11A Lynette Street BORONIA VIC 3155	The removal of two (2) Eucalyptus cephalocarpa (Silver leaved Stringybark)	1/09/2021 Approved
Chandler	2021/6511	1 Brown Street BORONIA VIC 3155	Removal of one (1) Hesperocyparis lusitanica (Mexican Cypress)	20/09/2021 Approved
Chandler	2021/6200	16 Alchester Crescent BORONIA VIC 3155	On-Premises Liquor License in Association with a Restaurant	29/09/2021 Approved
Chandler	2021/6464	67 Olive Grove BORONIA VIC 3155	The removal of one (1) Eucalyptus cephalocarpa (Silver leaved Stringybark) and the pruning of one (1) Acacia pravissima (Ovens Wattle)	15/09/2021 Approved
Chandler	2021/6515	50 Landscape Drive BORONIA VIC 3155	The removal of one (1) Callistemon viminalis (Weeping Bottlebrush) and one (1) Acer palmatum (Japanese Maple)	22/09/2021 Approved
Chandler	2021/6472	25 Judith Avenue BORONIA VIC 3155	The removal of two (2) Grevillea robusta (Silky Oak)	15/09/2021 Approved

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Chandler	2021/6186	1221 Mountain Highway THE BASIN VIC 3154	Use as an Education Centre (Disability Support Education) and reduction in car parking requirement	21/09/2021 Notice of Decision
Chandler	2021/6497	24 Albert Avenue BORONIA VIC 3155	Removal of one (1) Eucalyptus melliodora (Yellow Box)	21/09/2021 Approved
Collier	2021/6347	27 Gresford Road WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Five (5) lot subdivision (approved development site)	9/09/2021 Approved
Collier	2021/6465	59 Peak Crescent & 12 Traydal Close WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Boundary re-alignment	22/09/2021 Approved
Dinsdale	2020/6705	6 Armstrong Road BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Development of the land for three (3) double storey dwellings	1/09/2021 Approved
Dinsdale	2021/6249	460 Boronia Road WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Business Identification Signage	10/09/2021 Approved
Dinsdale	2021/6331	297 Boronia Road BORONIA VIC 3155	Three lot subdivision (Approved Development Site)	9/09/2021 Approved
Dinsdale	2020/6637	16 Willison Street BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Development of the land for two (2) double storey dwellings and one (1) single storey dwelling at the rear	17/09/2021 Approved
Dinsdale	2021/9106	35 Dixon Court BORONIA VIC 3155	Removal of one (1) Eucalyptus leucoxylon (Yellow Gum)	1/09/2021 Approved
Dinsdale	2020/6467	17 Church Street BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Development of a four-storey (including basement) apartment building and a reduction in car parking	27/09/2021 Refused
Dinsdale	2021/9121	45 Kanooka Road WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Construction of a double storey dwelling	14/09/2021 Approved
Dinsdale	2021/6002	32 Myrtle Street BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Development of the land for four (4) double storey dwellings	20/09/2021 Refused
Dobson	2021/6510	30 Warrabel Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	The pruning of one (1) Eucalyptus melliodora (Yellow Box)	30/09/2021 Approved
Dobson	2021/6407	57 Nathan Street FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Two (2) Lot Subdivision (Approved Development Site)	29/09/2021 Approved

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Dobson	2021/6215	1212 Burwood Highway UPPER FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Buildings and works (extension to existing building)	30/09/2021 Approved
Dobson	2021/6451	16 Langley Court LYSTERFIELD VIC 3156	Construction of a dwelling, associated garage and decks, and consent under the Section 173 agreement for works outside the building envelope	23/09/2021 Approved
Dobson	2020/6605	1242 Burwood Highway UPPER FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Development of a two (2) storey mixed use building containing two (2) shops and four (4) dwellings, waiver of car parking requirements pursuant to clause 52.06 of the Knox Planning Scheme	23/09/2021 Notice of Decision
Dobson	2021/6469	9 The Crescent FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	The removal of one (1) Cedrus deodara (Himalayan Cedar) and the pruning of one (1) Corymbia citriodora (Lemon Scented Gum) and one (1) Eucalyptus radiata (Narrow Leaved Peppermint)	29/09/2021 Approved
Dobson	2021/6517	69 Ferndale Road UPPER FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	The removal of one (1) Corymbia maculata (Spotted Gum), one (1) Eucalyptus camaldulensis (River Red Gum) and the habitat pruning of one (1) Eucalyptus viminalis (Manna Gum)	27/09/2021 Approved
Dobson	2020/6750	14 Mount View Road UPPER FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Buildings and works (construction of a dwelling and medical centre) and use of the land for a medical centre	16/09/2021 Notice of Decision
Dobson	2021/9123	1216 Burwood Highway UPPER FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Buildings and Works (addition of a covered area to the rear of the existing restaurant)	22/09/2021 Approved
Dobson	2021/6485	21 Mclver Street FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Two (2) lot subdivision (Approved Development Site)	16/09/2021 Approved
Dobson	2021/9117	4 Barclay Avenue UPPER FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Construction of retaining walls, outbuilding (workshop) and associated concreting	10/09/2021 Approved

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Dobson	2021/6498	16 Selman Avenue FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	The removal of one (1) Cupressus torulosa (Himalyan Cypress)	15/09/2021 Approved
Dobson	2021/9107	15 Winwood Drive FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Removal of one (1) Eucalyptus viminalis (Manna Gum)	17/09/2021 Approved
Dobson	2020/6633	30 Rathgar Road LYSTERFIELD VIC 3156	Development of the land for six (6) dwellings (four double and two single storey) and variation of Covenant U000391K	20/09/2021 Notice of Decision
Friberg	2020/6535	2 Lloyd Street KNOXFIELD VIC 3180	Change of use (Childcare centre), associated Buildings and Works (alterations and extension and additional car parking), Alteration of Access to a Category 1 Road Zone and a Reduction in Car Parking.	10/09/2021 Notice of Decision
Friberg	2021/6349	3 Clyde Street FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Ten lot subdivision (approved development site)	15/09/2021 Approved
Friberg	2021/6251	32 Gaydon Street FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Development of a double storey dwelling to the rear of the existing dwelling	30/09/2021 Approved
Friberg	2021/6108	45 Murrindal Drive ROWVILLE VIC 3178	The construction of four (4) single storey dwellings on the land	27/09/2021 Notice of Decision
Scott	2021/6327	450 Scoresby Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	3 Lot Subdivision (Approved Development Site)	1/09/2021 Approved
Scott	2021/6410	87 Kathryn Road KNOXFIELD VIC 3180	Five (5) lot Subdivision (Approved Development Site)	29/09/2021 Approved
Taylor	2021/6343	82 Major Crescent LYSTERFIELD VIC 3156	Removal of Chamaecyparis sp hedge on part West boundary, North boundary and part East boundary.	30/09/2021 Approved
Taylor	2021/9124	7,7A&B Blaxland Drive ROWVILLE VIC 3178	Two (2) Lot Subdivision (Approved Development Site)	17/09/2021 Approved
Taylor	2021/6466	1430 Wellington Road LYSTERFIELD VIC 3156	Subdivision (boundary realignment)	16/09/2021 Approved
Taylor	2021/9119	34 Bergins Road ROWVILLE VIC 3178	2 lot subdivision (Approved Development Site)	15/09/2021 Approved
Tirhatuan	2021/9104	3 Egret Walk ROWVILLE VIC 3178	Two lot Subdivision	8/09/2021 Approved

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Tirhatuan	2021/6371	31 Lakeview Avenue ROWVILLE VIC 3178	3 Lot Subdivision (Approved Development Site)	21/09/2021 Approved
Tirhatuan	2021/6222	33 Lakeview Avenue ROWVILLE VIC 3178	Development of the land for two (2) double storey and one (1) single storey dwelling	14/09/2021 Approved

6.2 Norvel Estate S173 Agreement and Urban Design Guidelines

SUMMARY: Senior Strategic Planner, Patrick Dubuc

After concluding its use as a quarry, in 2006 Council entered into a Section 173 Agreement with the former owner of the Norvel Estate, to facilitate a number of actions ahead of the site being considered for rezoning. These include a land swap, land rehabilitation, fencing, future urban design requirements and the future public open space contribution along Blind Creek.

Since that time, progress has been made and a number of requirements that were prescribed have either been achieved or require updating. A new Section 173 Agreement is needed to reflect these changes.

The Director City Strategy and Integrity currently has delegated authority to end an existing Section 173 Agreement and to enter into a new agreement. However this delegation does not apply to an agreement that was entered into via a resolution of Council.

Consequently, this report seeks a Council resolution to end the current Agreement AG370823M and replace it with a new agreement. This report was originally presented to the September Council Meeting, with Council resolving to defer the matter to the October Council Meeting, which has enabled a more comprehensive briefing on this matter and the future rezoning/planning permit proposal.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolves to:

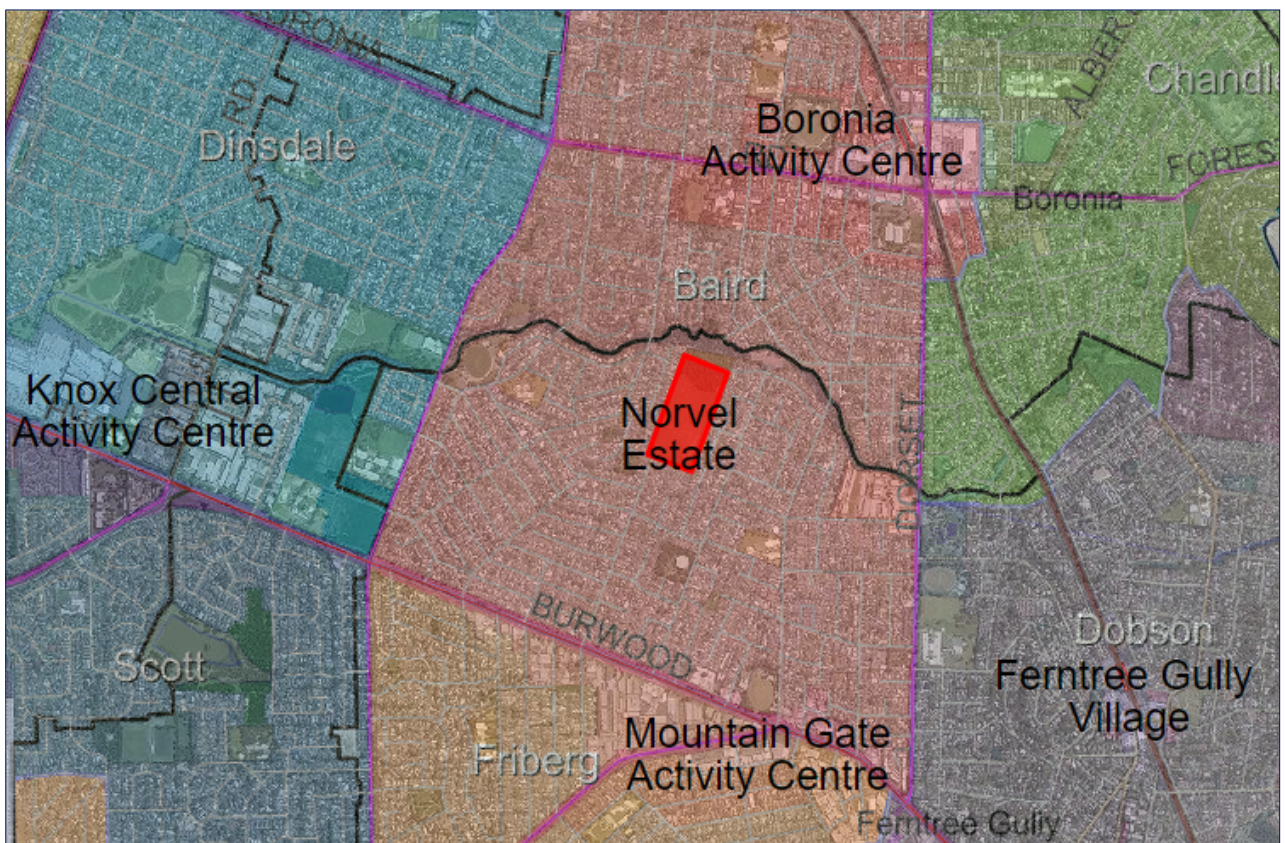
1. Enter into an agreement under Section 173 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the “New 173 Agreement”) relating to land situated at Norvel Road, Ferntree Gully, generally in accordance with the draft agreement set out in Attachment 3 to the officer report.
2. End the agreement under Section 173 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (recorded in dealing AG370823M and set out in Attachment 1 to the officer report) applying to the land situated at Norvel Road, Ferntree Gully (the “Existing 173 Agreement”):
 - a. subject to the owner entering into the New 173 Agreement with Council, in accordance with Resolution 1 above; and
 - b. in accordance with the Terms of the New 173 Agreement, namely effective from the date of recording on title of the New 173 agreement.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer selects) to:
 - a. negotiate and modify, in the delegates discretion, the New 173 Agreement including in respect of the proposed revised Urban Design Guidelines set out in Attachment 3, noting any such amendments should maintain general accordance with the draft referred to in Resolution 1; and
 - b. sign any relevant documents (including the New 173 Agreement), take any actions and provide any necessary consents, to give effect to these resolutions.

1. INTRODUCTION

The subject site at 29Q Norvel Road, Ferntree Gully (Norvel Estate) is located between Norvel Road and the Blind Creek valley in Ferntree Gully. Formerly a quarry, the Norvel Estate is identified as a 'Strategic Investigation Site – residential' in the Knox Planning Scheme and the 2015 Knox Housing Strategy. The site is located in the Baird Ward south of the Boronia Activity Centre and Blind Creek, and north of Burwood Highway.

The site is currently zoned Special Use Zone Schedule 2 (SUZ2) for the purpose of extraction. The extractive activity has since ceased and the site was fully remediated in 2015. The site is surrounded by established residential areas (*Knox Neighbourhood*).

The northern part of the site includes remnant bushland identified as a Site of Biological Significance with the rest being vacant land. The site is currently the subject of a combined proposal for rezoning and subdivision under Amendment C184knox and planning permit application P/2020/6049. The proposal is currently being assessed by officers.



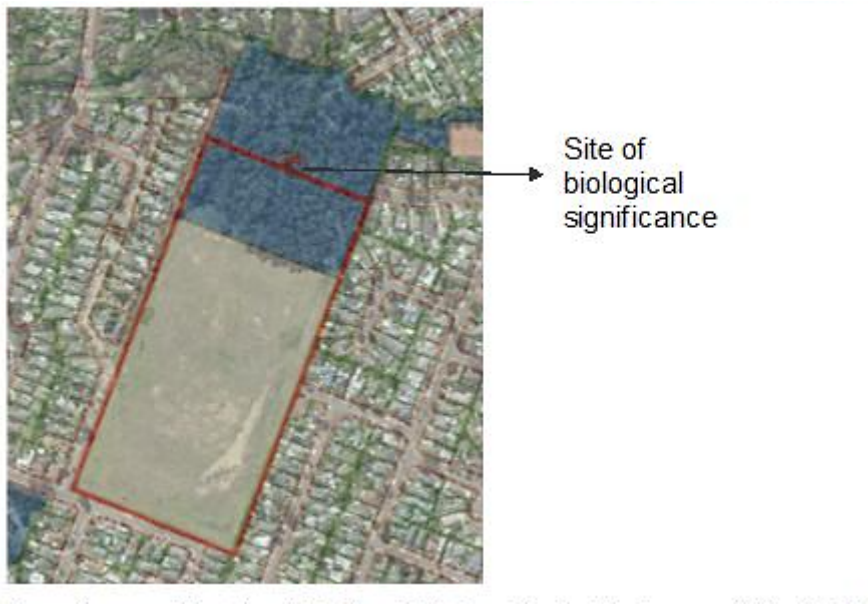


Figure 1 – general location of the Norvel Estate and the bushland reserve (site of biological significance)

2. DISCUSSION

At the 11 July 2006 Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), Council negotiated and resolved to enter into a S173 Agreement with the then owner of the subject site (**Attachment 2**). A Section 173 Agreement is established under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and is an agreement with Council that applies to the title and endures with the land, irrespective of ownership.

The S173 Agreement AG370823M was registered on the land in 2009 in line with the SPC resolution. The agreement refers to different matters which either require updating because they are outdated or are no longer necessary as they have been completed.

The following matters have been **completed and are no longer required**.

- i. *Rehabilitation of the land.*
This clause is no longer required as remedial fill works was completed in 2015 with both geotechnical certification and EPA (Environment Protection Authority) approvals provided.
- ii. *Management Plan and the provision of fencing between the quarry and Council land.*
The management plan has been completed as the quarry operation and the remedial works have finished. The plan referred to amenity management during the quarry operation and the rehabilitation of the land and is no longer required.

The provision of a chain link fence is no longer relevant nor desirable in the context of the bushland reserve being gifted/transferred to Council as a contiguous parcel. The construction and location of a chain link fence in the middle of the bushland reserve no longer serves a practical function and does not contribute to biodiversity values and future residential amenity. This position is supported by Council's Biodiversity team.

The following matters are **outdated and require updating** through a new section 173 agreement.

- iii. *Council's commitment to exhibit, subject to Ministerial authorisation, a planning scheme amendment to rezone the land to Residential 1 Zone and apply a Development Plan Overlay*

The application of these planning controls are no longer relevant as the Residential 1 Zone is not in use and the Development Plan Overlay is not required in the context of the current application under consideration by officers. The existing agreement unnecessarily commits Council to exhibit an amendment and specifies planning controls ahead of a development proposal. This is not ideal as it limits officer's ability to recommend relevant and appropriate controls and pre-empts Council's decision.

The new agreement does not bind Council to such specific commitments whilst acknowledging that Council will facilitate the consideration of an amendment. A combined proposal for rezoning and subdivision is now being contemplated under Amendment C184knox and planning permit application P/2020/6049. This is being assessed by officers and will be brought to Council for a decision to commence the planning scheme amendment process together with appropriate planning controls at a subsequent Council meeting.

iv. *Reference to Urban Design Guidelines (UDG) prepared by Jones and Whitehead Pty Ltd (2004) to guide the assessment of any future proposals for the site*

The 2004 UDGs are outdated, with limited analysis and content. These UDGs do not meet the contemporary standard developed by the Department of Land Environment Water and Planning (DELWP) as part of the Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria, 2017.

Revised UDGs have been prepared (**Annexure 2 of Attachment 3**) to replace and supersede those referred to in Agreement AG370823M. The revised UDGs retain the intent of the original UDGs and include additional objectives and guidelines to help direct the future development of the site. Table 2, page 18 (**Attachment 3**) of the revised UDG includes a comparative review of the 2004 guidelines documenting what has been changed and retained. This includes:

- ensuring best practice in design and development and a mix of building types,
- providing a sensitive and suitable interfaces to adjoining residential neighborhoods and the bushland reserve,
- maintaining accessible pedestrian and cycle links,
- protecting and restoring significant vegetation,
- providing accessible public open spaces,
- designing safe, accessible and landscaped public realms,
- protecting the amenity of surrounding areas from the impacts of construction.

v. *A land swap between the owner and Council.*

Part of the land swap was completed in 2017 where a 6,593sqm triangular lot (shown in orange in Figure 2 below) along Norvel Road was provided to the landowner in exchange for part of the bushland (shown in green in Figure 2 below). The bushland to be transferred to Council totals 7,922sqm.

vi. *The transfer of approximately 0.5ha (4,980sqm) of land in lieu of Public Open Space Contribution*

This agreement also commits the landowner to 4,980sqm of land to be transferred to Council (shown in blue in Figure 2 below) in lieu of public open space contribution. This public open space contribution (4980sqm) together with the land swap (7922sqm) constitutes a total of 12,902sqm (1.29ha) of bushland reserve committed to Council.

In addition, Council officers have successfully negotiated for a further 4,078sqm (0.41ha) of bushland (shown in yellow in Figure 1 below) increasing the total contribution to approximately 1.70ha to be committed to Council. This broader bushland area is part of an identified Site of Biological Significance – State Level.

The total 1.70ha of bushland reserve is to be transferred to Council and this intent needs to be updated and reflected in a new section 173 agreement. The recording of the new agreement will allow Council to assert the outcome of the bushland negotiation.

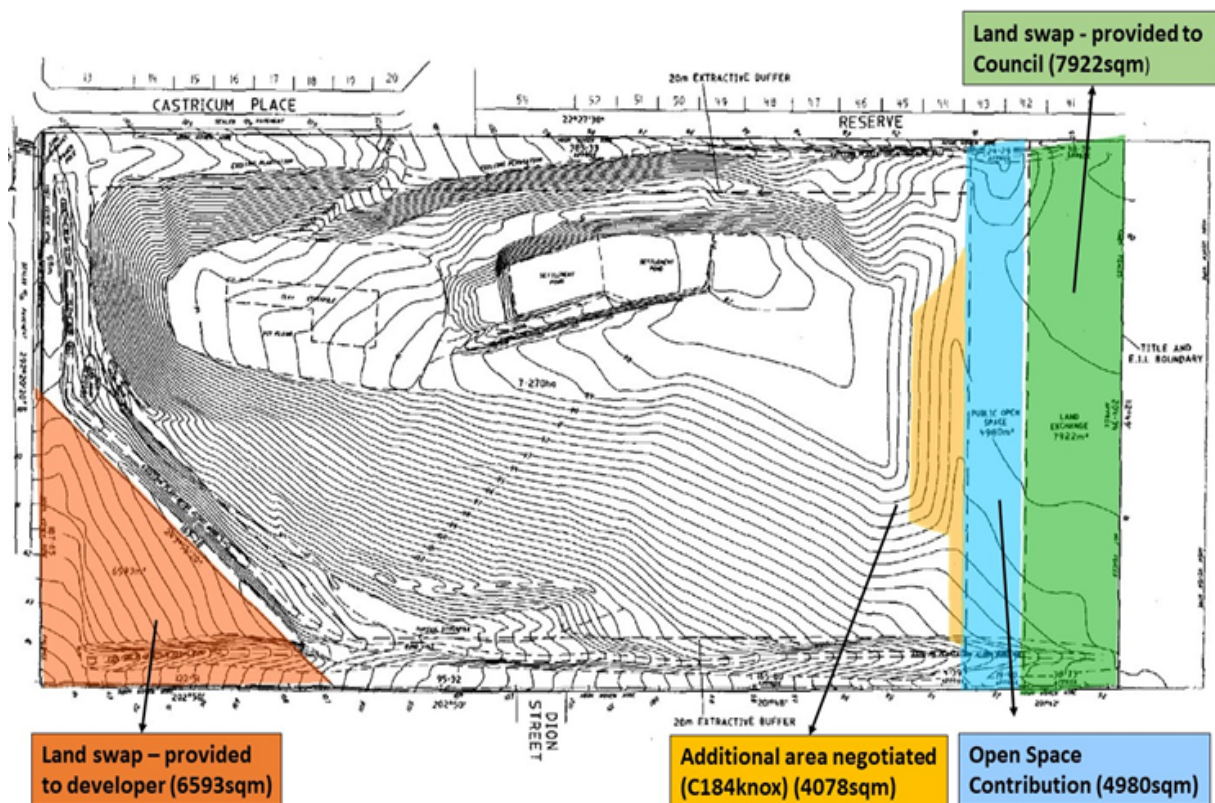


Figure 2 – Land swap and open space contribution areas

The current section 173 Agreement AG370823M needs to be ended and replaced with a new section 173 agreement to record the matters outlined above. The new draft section 173 agreement (**Attachment 3**) has been prepared by Council’s lawyers Russell Kennedy. Urbis Pty Ltd, on behalf of the proponent, supports the draft section 173. A letter of in-principle support from the proponent is in **Attachment 4**.

Whilst there are delegated powers for officers under Council’s current instrument of delegation to end a section 173 and enter into a new agreement, this delegation does not apply to a section 173 agreement that was entered into via resolution of Council.

Consequently, a Council resolution must be sought to end the current agreement and replace it with a new agreement reflecting updated UDGs and a revised bushland reserve contribution. This is recommended ahead of Council’s consideration of Amendment C184knox. A new section 173 agreement preceding Amendment C184knox will enable Council to clearly assert its position with regards to the bushland reserve and provide greater clarity in assessment of the development proposal through the revised UDGs.

3. CONSULTATION

The transfer of the bushland reserve is the result of 2 years of negotiation between Council officers and the landowner. This negotiation involved several internal departments including City Strategy and Planning officers, Landscape officers, Biodiversity officers, Emergency Management officers, as well as Country Fire Authority officers.

The updated Urban Design Guidelines (UDGs) was referred to key internal departments and resulted in the final version presented in annexure 2 of **Attachment 3**.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

The new Agreement will enable Council to:

- assert the negotiated bushland reserve which is a positive outcome that protects the biodiversity and remnant native vegetation of the site whilst also balancing bushfire risk; avoids the removal of any significant trees including no net loss of bushland area and provides certainty for abutting residents in terms of both the natural amenity of the site as well as its ongoing management.
- reflect updated UDGs that improve local amenity by supporting better pedestrian and cyclist connections to surrounding areas and ensure the surrounding character of the area and the 'green and leafy' aspirations are respected and considered in any future development proposal.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The negotiation, drafting and execution of the proposed new agreement can be accommodated within the City Futures operational budget.

Maintenance of the future bushland reserve transferred to Council, including fire preparedness, will be implemented within existing operational budgets.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The new agreement will provide certainty about the future of this bushland reserve and enable a greater sense of belonging for local residents and active community groups.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 1 - We value our natural and built environment

Strategy 1.1 - Protect and enhance our natural environment

Strategy 1.2 - Create a greener city with more large trees, indigenous flora and fauna

Strategy 1.3 - Ensure the Knox local character is protected and enhanced through the design and location of urban development and infrastructure

Goal 2 - We have housing to meet our changing needs

Strategy 2.1 - Plan for a diversity of housing in appropriate locations

Strategy 2.3 - Support the delivery of a range of housing that addresses housing and living affordability needs

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

A Council resolution is sought to end the current agreement and replace it with a new agreement reflecting updated UDGs and a revised bushland reserve contribution. A new section 173 agreement preceding Amendment C184knox will enable Council to clearly assert its position with regards to the bushland reserve and provide greater clarity in assessment of the development proposal through the revised UDGs.

Subject to Council's resolution, the new agreement will be signed and sealed by the Chief Executive Officer or such person as the Chief Executive Officer selects.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Patrick Dubuc, Senior Strategic Planner

Report Authorised By: Director City Strategy and Integrity, Matt Kelleher

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - Current Section 173 Agreement A G 370823 M [6.2.1 - 18 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - SPC Minutes - 11 July 2006 - Item 6. Norvel Road Quarry [6.2.2 - 14 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - Norvel Estate New Draft Section 173 Agreement - Revised Urban Design Guidelines and Bushland Reserve [6.2.3 - 33 pages]
4. Attachment 4 - In principle confirmation letter from the proponent - Norvel Estate UDG and bushland [6.2.4 - 1 page]

Register Search Statement - Volume 11909 Folio 763

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REGISTER SEARCH STATEMENT (Title Search) Transfer of Land Act 1958

VOLUME 11909 FOLIO 763

Security no : 124088097388X
Produced 12/02/2021 04:10 PM

LAND DESCRIPTION

Lot 2 on Title Plan 963860L.
PARENT TITLES :
Volume 08328 Folio 822 Volume 10808 Folio 226
Created by Application No. 137158W 23/12/2016

REGISTERED PROPRIETOR

Estate Fee Simple
Sole Proprietor
NORVEL ESTATE PTY LTD
AQ306807L 03/10/2017

ENCUMBRANCES, CAVEATS AND NOTICES

Any encumbrances created by Section 98 Transfer of Land Act 1958 or Section 24 Subdivision Act 1988 and any other encumbrances shown or entered on the plan set out under DIAGRAM LOCATION below.

AGREEMENT Section 173 Planning and Environment Act 1987
AG370823M 25/02/2009

DIAGRAM LOCATION

SEE TP963860L FOR FURTHER DETAILS AND BOUNDARIES

ACTIVITY IN THE LAST 125 DAYS

NUMBER	STATUS	DATE
AT904728V	CONVERT A PCT TO AN ECT Completed	23/12/2020

-----END OF REGISTER SEARCH STATEMENT-----

Additional information: (not part of the Register Search Statement)

Street Address: 18Q DION STREET FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTICES

NIL

eCT Control 14973C D Y & CO LAWYERS

Effective from 23/12/2020

DOCUMENT END

The information supplied has been obtained by SAI Global Property Division Pty Ltd who is licensed by the State of Victoria to provide this information via LANDATA® System. Delivered at 12/02/2021, for Order Number 66515469. Your reference: MA10554.

Delivered by LANDATA®, timestamp 12/02/2021 16:27 Page 1 of 14

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Form 18

Section 181

APPLICATION BY A RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY FOR THE MAKING OF A RECORDING OF AN AGREEMENT

Planning and Environment Act 1987

Lodged at the Land Titles Office by:

Name: Maddocks
Phone: 9288 0555
Address: 140 William Street, Melbourne 3000 or DX 259 Melbourne
Ref: TGM:5234519 **Customer Code:** 1167E

The Authority having made an agreement referred to in section 181(1) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* requires a recording to be made in the Register for the land.

Land: Volume 10808 Folio 226, Volume 8328 Folio 822 and Volume 9381 Folio 087

Authority: Knox City Council, 511 Burwood Highway, Wantirna South, Victoria 3152

Section and Act under which agreement made: Section 173 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

A copy of the agreement is attached to this application

Signature for the Authority: *[Handwritten Signature]*

Name of officer: **CLAIRE ANDERSON**

Office held: **PROJECT MANAGER - STRATEGIC PLANNING**

Date: **18/2/09**

{5234519: 6071691_1}

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Date 12 / 2 / 2009



Maddocks

Lawyers
140 William Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000 Australia
Telephone 61 3 9288 0656
Facsimile 61 3 9288 0666
Email info@maddocks.com.au
www.maddocks.com.au
DX 259 Melbourne

**Agreement under Section 173 of the
Planning and Environment Act 1987**

Land: Norvel Road Quarry

Knox City Council

and

Robertson Industries Pty Ltd ACN 004 435 376

Affiliated offices
Adelaide, Brisbane, Colombo, Dubai,
Hong Kong, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur,
Manila, Mumbai, New Delhi, Perth,
Singapore, Sydney, Tianjin

[5234519: 4570277v1] : tmp154

AG370823M



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Agreement under Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987

DATE 12 / 2 / 2009

AG370823M



BETWEEN

KNOX CITY COUNCIL
of Municipal Offices, 511 Burwood Highway, Wantirna South 3152

(Council)

AND

ROBERTSON INDUSTRIES PTY LTD ACN 004 435 376
care of Pitcher Partners Level 19, 15 William Street, Melbourne 3000

(Owner)

RECITALS

- A. Council is a Planning Authority for the Planning Scheme.
- B. The Owner is or is entitled to be the registered proprietor of the Robertson Land.
- C. Council is entitled to be the registered proprietor Triangular Land.
- D. Council and the Owner have agreed to an exchange of part of the Robertson Land in return for the Triangular Land upon certain terms and wish to record those terms in this Agreement.
- E. The Owner has asked Council to prepare an amendment to the Planning Scheme to allow the balance of the Robertson Land after the land exchange facilitated by this Agreement to be developed for residential and associated purposes.
- F. On 11 July 2006, Council resolved to prepare an amendment to the Planning Scheme provided the Owner enters into an agreement to provide for a land exchange as described in this Agreement.
- G. The parties enter into this Agreement to give effect to the requirements of the Council Resolution and by entering into it the parties intend to achieve or advance the objectives of planning in Victoria or the objectives of the Planning Scheme.

THE PARTIES AGREE

1. DEFINITIONS

In this Agreement the words and expressions set out in this clause have the following meanings unless the context admits otherwise:

Act means the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Agreement means this agreement and any agreement executed by the parties expressed to be supplemental to this Agreement.

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Amendment means an amendment to the Planning Scheme which rezones the Robertson Land excluding the Open Space Land and the Northern Parcel to Residential 1 Zone with a Development Plan Overlay and which may include the use of other planning scheme provisions.

Approval Date means the date on which a copy of the Notice of Approval of the Amendment is published in the Government Gazette.

Approved Management and Rehabilitation Plan means the management plan lodged under clause 3.3.1 of this Agreement and approved by Council.

Commencement Date means the date of this Agreement.

Development means the development of the Robertson Land for the purposes envisaged by the Amendment.

Ministerial Direction means "Direction No. 1 Potentially Contaminated Land" prepared pursuant to Section 12(2)(a) of the Act and dated 27 September 2001 (or as amended).

Mortgagee means the person or persons registered or entitled from time to time to be registered by the Registrar of Titles as Mortgagee of the Robertson Land or any part of it.

Northern Parcel means that part of the Robertson Land situated at the northern end and which has an area of 7922 square metres and which is identified and delineated as "Land Exchange" on the Survey Plan.

Open Space Land means that part of the Robertson Land which is identified and delineated on the Survey Plan as Public Open Space and having an area of 4980 square metres.

Open Space Works means any works to construct or landscape any area of land which is intended to be Open Space.

Original Agreement means the agreement dated 10 June 1980 between Council and Robertson Industries Pty Ltd made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1961.

Owner means the person or persons registered or entitled from time to time to be registered by the Registrar of Titles as proprietor or proprietors of an estate in fee simple of the Robertson Land or any part of it and includes a Mortgagee-in-possession.

party or parties means the Owner and Council under this Agreement as appropriate.

Planning Scheme means the Knox Planning Scheme and any other planning scheme that applies to the Robertson Land.

Quarry means the quarry on the Robertson Land.

Residential Lot means a lot which by virtue of its size and dimensions, is intended for final use as a home site.

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Robertson Land means the land situated at Norvel Road, Ferntree Gully being the land more particularly referred to in Certificates of Title Volume 10808 folio 226 ✓ Volume 8328 Folio 822 and Volume 9381 Folio 087 and any reference to the Robertson Land in this Agreement includes any lot created by the subdivision of the Robertson Land or any part of it.

Subdivision Plan means any plan lodged as a supporting document to a planning permit application seeking the subdivision of the Robertson Land so as to create a lot or lots comprising the Northern Parcel and the Public Open Space.

Survey Plan means the plan prepared by H J Macey land surveyor reference 1080 sheet 1 of 1 dated 2 June 2006 and which is attached to this agreement as Annexure 1

Triangular Land means land which is part of the Robertson Land and which is triangular in shape having an area of 6593 square metres and which is located in the south east corner of the Robertson Land and delineated on the Survey Plan.

Urban Design Guidelines means the "Norvel Road Quarry, Ferntree Gully Urban Design Guidelines, prepared for the Knox City Council by Jones & Whitehead Pty Ltd (Amended by Council, Draft May 2006) or as amended from time to time with the consent of the Responsible Authority and the Owner.

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2. INTERPRETATION

In this Agreement unless the context admits otherwise:

- 2.1 The singular includes the plural and vice versa.
- 2.2 A reference to a gender includes a reference to each other gender.
- 2.3 A reference to a person includes a reference to a firm, corporation or other corporate body and that person's successors in law.
- 2.4 If a party consists of more than one person this Agreement binds them jointly and each of them severally.
- 2.5 A term used in this Agreement has its ordinary meaning unless that term is defined in this Agreement. If a term is not defined in this Agreement and it is defined in the Act it has the meaning as defined in the Act.
- 2.6 A reference to an Act, Regulation or the Planning Scheme includes any Acts, Regulations or amendments amending, consolidating or replacing the Act, Regulation or Planning Scheme.
- 2.7 The introductory clauses to this Agreement are and will be deemed to form part of this Agreement.
- 2.8 The obligations of the Owner under this Agreement, will take effect as separate and several covenants which are annexed to and run at law and equity with the Robertson Land provided that if the Robertson Land is

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subdivided, this Agreement must be read and applied so that each subsequent owner of a lot is only responsible for those covenants and obligations which relate to that owner's lot.

3. SPECIFIC OBLIGATIONS OF THE OWNER

The Owner agrees that:

3.1 Transfer of the Northern Parcel

- 3.1.1 it must transfer or vest the Northern Parcel to or in Council as the case may be;
- 3.1.2 the transfer or vesting of the Northern Parcel to or in Council must be effected within 90 days of the Approval Date unless each of the parties agree in writing to a different time frame;

3.2 Transfer of the Open Space Land

- 3.2.1 it will transfer or vest the Open Space Land to or in Council as the Public Open Space contribution that would otherwise be required under clause 52.01 of the Planning Scheme for the subdivision of the balance of the Robertson Land;
- 3.2.2 the transfer or vesting of the Open Space Land to Council must be effected within 90 days of the Approval Date unless each of the parties agree in writing to a different time frame.

3.3 Management and Rehabilitation Plan

- 3.3.1 within 28 days of the Approval Date, it will submit a management and rehabilitation plan to the satisfaction of and for approval by Council in respect of:
 - o the continued operation of the quarry which addresses how the continued operation of the quarry will avoid the removal of vegetation on the Northern Parcel and on the Open Space Land;
 - o the rehabilitation of the quarry so that its final contours are such as to be suitable for residential development and use;
 - o proposed security measures that will be put in place in respect of the Northern Parcel, the Open Space Land and the Quarry;
 - o access arrangements (including the grant of licenses for access) that are to be put in place in respect of the Northern Parcel to enable Council and its servants and agents access to the land prior to its transfer or vesting in Council; and
 - o how it is proposed to fill the Quarry as part of the rehabilitation of the land including proposed finished contour levels;

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3.3.2 the Quarry and its subsequent rehabilitation must be conducted in accordance with the Approved Management and Rehabilitation Plan and otherwise in such a manner that does not result in the damage or destruction of any vegetation on the Open Space Land or the Northern Parcel;

3.4 Fencing

3.4.1 it will keep in place and maintain in good condition the cyclone wire fence situated on the boundary of the Northern Parcel and the Open Space Land until completion of the obligations under this Agreement; and

3.4.2 it will allow Council to install a fence to demarcate the boundary between the Northern Parcel and the Quarry to the satisfaction of Council.

4. ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND OBLIGATIONS OF COUNCIL

Council agrees that:

4.1 Triangular Land

it will forego its rights to the Triangular Land under the Original Agreement;

4.2 Other lands

it will forego its rights to the land described as Industrial Buffer under the Original Agreement;

4.3 Public Open Space Contribution

the transfer or vesting of the Open Space Land to or in Council in accordance with the terms of this Agreement by the Owner will comprise and be treated as the open space contribution required by clause 52.01 of the Planning Scheme for the subdivision of the balance of the Robertson Land notwithstanding that the contribution is made prior to the making of the requirement under clause 52.01 of the Scheme;

4.4 Preparation of the Amendment

it will expeditiously seek authorisation under the Act and use its best endeavours to prepare and exhibit the Amendment to the Planning Scheme and undertake the necessary statutory processes required to submit the Amendment to the Minister for approval by the Minister; and

4.5 Erection of a fence

it will construct at its cost a fence to demarcate the boundary between the Northern Parcel and the Quarry.

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5. ACKNOWLEDGMENT BY BOTH PARTIES

Council and the Owner agree that:

- 5.1 immediately upon the Commencement Date, the Original Agreement ends and Council will make application to the Registrar of titles to remove the recording of that agreement from the title to the Robertson Land;
- 5.2 notwithstanding anything contained in clause 3.3 of this Agreement, the Owner may remove vegetation from the Open Space Land and the Northern Parcel provided it is removed in accordance with a written consent of Council;
- 5.3 in seeking consent to remove any native vegetation from the relevant area under this Agreement, the Owner must demonstrate how the Owner has endeavoured to avoid the removal of native vegetation and if avoidance is not possible, how the removal of native vegetation has been minimised;
- 5.4 the southern boundary of the Northern Parcel may be realigned by agreement in writing between the parties prior to its transfer or vesting to or in Council;
- 5.5 the Schedule to the Development Plan Overlay (applied to the Robertson Land by the Amendment) should generally reflect the principles of the Urban Design Guidelines to the extent possible having regard to the form of development and use of the Robertson Land proposed by the Owner at the time of preparation of the Amendment; ;
- 5.6 in preparing the Amendment, the parties (including Council in its capacity as planning authority for the Amendment), will ensure that the Amendment complies with the Ministerial Direction by requiring that the land to be rezoned to Residential 1 Zone be included within an Environmental Audit Overlay in the Planning Scheme in the event that one or both of the parties considers that an Environmental Audit Overlay is necessary in the circumstances;
- 5.7 the Owner, at its discretion, may continue to extract clay from any area of the Robertson Land that is licensed for clay extraction purposes for a period of up to two (2) years after the Approval Date (**Clay Extraction**). The Clay Extraction will be undertaken in a manner that results in a final land form suitable for residential development without incurring construction cost penalties associated with excessive slope of the land;
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- 5.8 the Owner may only continue the Clay Extraction in accordance with clause 5.7 at an extraction rate that is at or less than the average rate of extraction achieved in the 12 month period immediately prior to 11 July 2006.

6. FURTHER OBLIGATIONS OF THE OWNER

6.1 Notice and Registration

The Owner further covenants and agrees that the Owner will bring this Agreement to the attention of all prospective purchasers, lessees, mortgagees, chargees, transferees and assigns.

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**6.2 Further actions**

The Owner further covenants and agrees that:

- 6.2.1 the Owner will do all things necessary to give effect to this Agreement;
- 6.2.2 the Owner will consent to Council making application to the Registrar of Titles to make a recording of this Agreement in the Register on the Certificate of Title of the Robertson Land in accordance with Section 181 of the Act and do all things necessary to enable Council to do so including signing any further agreement, acknowledgment or document or procuring the consent to this Agreement of any mortgagee or caveator to enable the recording to be made in the Register under that section.

6.3 Council's Costs to be Paid

The Owner further covenants and agrees that the Owner will immediately pay to Council, an amount equal to 50% of Council's reasonable costs and expenses, including legal expenses) of and incidental to the preparation, drafting, finalisation, engrossment, execution and registration of this Agreement which are and until paid will remain a debt due to Council by the Owner.

7. AGREEMENT UNDER SECTION 173 OF THE ACT

Council and the Owner agree that without limiting or restricting the respective powers to enter into this Agreement and, insofar as it can be so treated, this Agreement is made as a Deed pursuant to Section 173 of the Act and specifies the conditions pursuant to which the Robertson Land may be used or developed for specified purposes.

8. OWNER'S WARRANTIES

Without limiting the operation or effect which this Agreement has, the Owner warrants that apart from the Owner and any other person who has consented in writing to this Agreement, no other person has any interest, either legal or equitable, in the Robertson Land which may be affected by this Agreement.

9. SUCCESSORS IN TITLE

Without limiting the operation or effect that this Agreement has, the Owner must ensure that, until such time as a memorandum of this Agreement is registered on the title to the Robertson Land, successors in title shall be required to:

- 9.1 give effect to and do all acts and sign all documents which will require those successors to give effect to this Agreement; and
- 9.2 execute a deed agreeing to be bound by the terms of this Agreement.

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25/02/2009 \$99.90 173



10. GENERAL MATTERS

10.1 Notices

A notice or other communication required or permitted to be served by a party on another party must be in writing and may be served:

- 10.1.1 by delivering it personally to that party;
- 10.1.2 by sending it by prepaid post addressed to that party at the address set out in this Agreement or subsequently notified to each party from time to time; or
- 10.1.3 by sending it by facsimile provided that a communication sent by facsimile shall be confirmed immediately in writing by the sending party by hand delivery or prepaid post.

10.2 Service of Notice

A notice or other communication is deemed served:

- 10.2.1 if delivered, on the next following business day;
- 10.2.2 if posted, on the expiration of two business days after the date of posting; or
- 10.2.3 if sent by facsimile, on the next following business day unless the receiving party has requested retransmission before the end of that business day.

10.3 No Waiver

Any time or other indulgence granted by Council to the Owner or any variation of the terms and conditions of this Agreement or any judgment or order obtained by Council against the Owner will not in any way amount to a waiver of any of the rights or remedies of Council in relation to the terms of this Agreement.

10.4 Severability

If a court, arbitrator, tribunal or other competent authority determines that a word, phrase, sentence, paragraph or clause of this Agreement is unenforceable, illegal or void then it must be severed and the other provisions of this Agreement will remain operative.

10.5 No Fettering of Council's Powers

It is acknowledged and agreed that this Agreement does not fetter or restrict the power or discretion of Council to make any decision or impose any requirements or conditions in connection with the granting of any planning approval or certification of any plans of subdivision applicable to the Robertson Land or relating to any use or development of the Robertson Land.

AG370823M

25/02/2009 \$99.90 173



11. COMMENCEMENT OF AGREEMENT

This Agreement commences upon the Commencement Date.

12. ENDING OF AGREEMENT

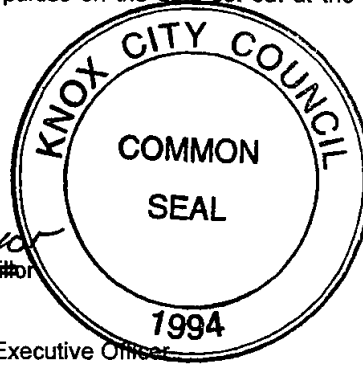
- 12.1 This Agreement ends when the Owner has complied with all of the obligations imposed on the Owner under this Agreement as evidenced in writing by a letter from Council to that effect.
- 12.2 At the time Council issues a Statement of Compliance under the *Subdivision Act* 1988 in respect of any stage of the Robertson Land, provided the Owner has fulfilled all of the obligations of this Agreement relating to that stage to the satisfaction of Council, Council will, at the request and expense of the Owner, prepare and execute an application pursuant to section 183(2) of the Act to enable this Agreement to be removed from the Certificate of Title(s) to every lot within that stage of the Robertson Land.

AG370823M



SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED as a Deed by the parties on the date set out at the commencement of this Agreement.

THE COMMON SEAL OF THE KNOX CITY COUNCIL was hereunto affixed in the presence of:



Handwritten signatures of three individuals on dotted lines.

Mayor
Councillor

Chief Executive Officer

Councillor

Executed by ROBERTSON INDUSTRIES PROPRIETARY LIMITED ACN 004 435 376 in accordance with section 127 of the Corporations Act 2001:

Handwritten signature of Peter Dutton Robertson
Director/company secretary

Handwritten signature of Jennifer Mary Robertson
Director

PETER DUTTON ROBERTSON
Name of director/company secretary (BLOCK LETTERS)

JENNIFER MARY ROBERTSON
Name of director (BLOCK LETTERS)

Annexure 1 – Survey Plan

The plan which is annexure "1" has been removed from this counterpart of the Section 173 Agreement due to difficulties with imaging for recording purposes.

A copy of the plan identified is included in each of the counterparts to this section 173 agreement which are held by:

- The Minister for Planning;
- The responsible authority
- The Owner of the land as at the date the agreement was executed

A copy of the counterpart agreement together with Annexure A is available for inspection at Council offices during normal business hours upon giving the Council reasonable notice.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Lusk'.

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TITLE PLAN		EDITION 2		TP 963860L	
LOCATION OF LAND PARISH: SCORESBY TOWNSHIP: SECTION: CROWN ALLOTMENT: 54A (PT) LAST PLAN REFERENCE: LOT 1 ON PS523004B & LOT 1 ON TP574584C DERIVED FROM: VOL.10808 FOL.226 & VOL.8328 FOL.822 DEPTH LIMITATION: NIL			NOTATIONS		
EASEMENT INFORMATION E - ENCUMBERING EASEMENT R - ENCUMBERING EASEMENT (ROAD) A - APPURTENANT EASEMENT				THIS PLAN HAS BEEN PREPARED BY LAND VICTORIA FOR TITLE DIAGRAM PURPOSES	
Easement Reference	Purpose / Authority	Width (Metres)	Origin	Land benefited / In favour of	
E-1	SEWERAGE	3	PS 523004B	SOUTH EAST WATER LIMITED	
				Checked by: Date: 24 / 08 / 2017 Bav Assistant Registrar of Titles	
LENGTHS ARE IN METRES	SCALE	DEALING / FILE No: AP137158W		DEALING CODE: SEC 103	
		GOVERNMENT GAZETTE No:		SHEET 1 OF 1	

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RECORD OF ALL ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO THE PLAN		PLAN NUMBER TP963860L				
WARNING: THE IMAGE OF THIS DOCUMENT OF THE REGISTER HAS BEEN DIGITALLY AMENDED. NO FURTHER AMENDMENTS ARE TO BE MADE TO THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENT OF THE REGISTER.						
AFFECTED LAND/PARCEL	LAND/PARCEL IDENTIFIER CREATED	MODIFICATION	DEALING NUMBER	DATE	EDITION NUMBER	ASSISTANT REGISTRAR OF TITLES
		RECTIFICATION	AQ221621X	07/09/17	2	BAV



Knox City Council

KNOX CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Meeting held
at the Civic Centre,
511 Burwood Highway
Wantirna South
on
Tuesday 11 July 2006

Meeting Opened at 7.31 pm

Present

<i>Cr D Cooper (Mayor & Chairperson)</i>	<i>Scott Ward</i>
<i>Cr J Penna</i>	<i>Baird Ward</i>
<i>Cr M Davey</i>	<i>Chandler Ward</i>
<i>Cr J Cossari</i>	<i>Collier Ward</i>
<i>Cr A Gill (Arrived at 8.19pm)</i>	<i>Dinsdale Ward</i>
<i>Cr K Orpen</i>	<i>Dobson Ward</i>
<i>Cr D Field</i>	<i>Friberg Ward</i>
<i>Cr T Kamitsis</i>	<i>Taylor Ward</i>
<i>Cr M Van de Vreede</i>	<i>Tirhatuan Ward</i>
<i>Mr G Emonson</i>	<i>Chief Executive Officer</i>
<i>Mr I Bell</i>	<i>Director – Engineering & Infrastructure</i>
<i>Mr S Dunn</i>	<i>Director - City Development</i>
<i>Mr M Jaensch</i>	<i>Director – Corporate Development</i>
<i>Mr G José</i>	<i>Director – Community Services</i>

Apologies

Nil

Declarations of Interest or Conflict of Interest

Nil

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BAIRD WARD

ITEM

6. NORVEL ROAD QUARRY, FERNTREE GULLY – PROPOSED FUTURE USE AND DEVELOPMENT, LAND EXCHANGE AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACE CONTRIBUTION

SUMMARY: *Project Manager – Strategic Planning (Helen King)*

This report outlines the issues involved in the proposed residential redevelopment of the Norvel Road quarry and the process proposed to be followed. It recommends a proposed land exchange between Robertson Industries Pty Ltd (the owners of the quarry) and Council, implemented through a draft S173 Agreement, which also addresses associated matters such as initiating a planning scheme amendment and introducing a management plan for the site.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Norvel Road quarry has operated as an extractive industry site for the extraction of clay since 1955. The owner of the site is currently considering options when the land ceases use as a quarry. It is likely that the land will be redeveloped for residential uses.

In 1980, Council and the owners of the quarry were party to an Agreement, providing conditions for the on-going quarry use and waste disposal use once the quarry operations ceased. This agreement would need to be varied or superseded to provide for an alternative use.

The implementation of a new agreement provides opportunities to negotiate an improved outcome for both parties. For example, there is potential for land owned by Council, located south-east of the quarry, to be exchanged for land in the northern part of the quarry site. This will maximise the development potential for the quarry owner, and provide Council with a vegetated parcel of high environmental significance adjacent to Council reserve along Blind Creek. In addition, there is a requirement for an open space contribution to be provided, as part of any future residential subdivision of the site.

The purpose of this report is to advise Council about the issues involved in the proposed residential development and the process that needs to be followed. It aims for a resolution on the proposed land exchanges between Robertson Industries Pty Ltd and Council, including the proposed Section 173 Agreement to facilitate this exchange.

2. DISCUSSION**2.1 The site and surrounds**

The extraction of the quarry commenced at the southern side of the site, with the work face currently covering over 50% of the site. The total area of the site is 8.5825 hectares. The remaining land within the site is heavily vegetated. The extent of existing extraction activities, vegetation and surrounding residential development can be seen in Appendix A.

6. Norvel Road Quarry, Ferntree Gully – Proposed Future Use and Development, Land Exchange and Public Open Space Contribution (cont'd)

The quarry abuts Norvel Road to the south and Castricum Place to the west, with access to the site currently limited to Castricum Place. Land to the north of the quarry is owned by Council, and abuts other parkland along the Blind Creek corridor.

The Council reserve is addressed in a Management Plan for Blind Creek Billabong, Ferntree Gully, which suggests that the area should be treated as a flora reserve rather than public parkland for recreational purposes, due to the significance of the vegetation.

When the quarry first commenced operations, it abutted residential land to the east, and an abattoir to the west. Subsequently, the abattoir ceased operations and the western abutting land was redeveloped in the late 1980s/early 1990s for dwellings. The lots to the east and west of the quarry are between 700m² and 800m² in size.

2.2 Background

The Norvel Road quarry has operated as an extractive industry site for the extraction of clay since 1955. The extractive industry licence (EIL) currently in operation is a 'life of resource' approval, meaning that it does not expire until all the resources identified in the Works Approval have been extracted from the site. The Works Approval contains approval for the removal of vegetation on the site within the approved extractive area.

In 1980 Council was party to an agreement with the land owner (Robertson Industries Pty Ltd) which provided for:

- Rezoning of the quarry land from residential to extractive industry and consent to operate as a quarry.
- Provision of two parcels of land to Council, with a further two parcels of land purchased by Council at an agreed price, comprising the existing public open space along Blind Creek (the area in light green shown in Appendix B) and a triangular parcel in the south-east portion of the site to Council at an agreed price (shown as Area A in Appendix B). The land abutting Blind Creek has been transferred to Council; however the triangular parcel of land has not yet been transferred to Council.
- Progressive transfer of the quarry to Council for use as a tip at an agreed price.
- Consent to subdivision of the remaining residential land.

6. Norvel Road Quarry, Ferntree Gully – Proposed Future Use and Development, Land Exchange and Public Open Space Contribution (cont'd)

Since this time, the long term plans of Council and Robertson Industries Pty Ltd have both changed. It is no longer considered appropriate to use the land as a waste disposal landfill. It is desirable that a replacement agreement is entered into that enables the vegetated area in the north, which has significant flora and fauna values, to be retained as a flora and fauna reserve, whilst enabling the balance of the site to be used for a residential purpose.

In 2004, consultants were engaged by Council to prepare Urban Design Guidelines to guide the future development of the quarry site for residential purposes.

The guidelines recognise the importance of the northern area of the quarry, and seek to balance the protection of the area within the context of a viable development proposal. A copy of the Urban Design Guidelines is contained in Appendix C.

In 2005, approval was granted for 16 lot subdivision of a separate parcel of land abutting the quarry to the south, with the lots ranging in size from 431m² to 667m². Construction of houses on the subdivided land has recently commenced.

2.3 Current proposal

The quarry material is used by Daniel Robertson Pty Ltd as source material for their brick manufacturing. In the long term, the company will not require the material within the site as they are proposing alternative sources. As such, the land is proposed to be redeveloped for residential purposes. The owner, however, proposes to continue extracting material from the site for a two year period following any approval for residential uses. This will allow continuity of materials until extraction can occur from an alternative location.

In order to use the land for residential uses, the following matters will need to be addressed:

- Minimising the slope of the site, to allow residential development to occur.
- Ensuring that the site is adequately drained.
- Provision of an open space contribution to Council required as part of any residential subdivision.
- Retention of vegetation within the northern part of the site.
- Guidelines for the appropriate form of development on the site.
- Rezoning of the site and application of a Development Plan Overlay via a planning scheme amendment.

6. Norvel Road Quarry, Ferntree Gully – Proposed Future Use and Development, Land Exchange and Public Open Space Contribution (cont'd)

- Environmental Assessment of the site – may require remediation works for residential purposes.

An important aspect of this plan is exchanging a parcel of land earmarked in the original agreement for Council with vegetated land in the northern portion of the site. This land exchange could be coupled with the requirement for an open space contribution (that forms part of any residential subdivision), to maximise the retention of the vegetated land on the site.

2.4 Existing controls, strategies and future site conditions

The land is currently contained within a Special Use Zone No 2 (Extractive Industry) with a Vegetation Protection Overlay No. 1 over the northern part of the site (refer to Appendix D). The zoning of the land will need to change to facilitate the proposed residential uses.

The use of the site for residential purposes is consistent with the direction outlined in the approved Knox Housing Statement, as the site is identified as a 'strategic redevelopment site' suitable for housing development. This is also reflected within the proposed new Municipal Strategic Statement.

Under the Knox Planning Scheme, subdivision of land into lots with an area of less than 725 square metres in a Residential 1 Zone or Residential 2 Zone require a minimum contribution of 8.5% of the total land to be subdivided for public open space. There is scope for this to be provided as a monetary contribution, however given the importance of the vegetated area in the northern portion of the site, it is suggested that a land contribution would be preferable.

The inclusion of the northern part of the site within the Vegetation Protection Overlay and its identification within the City of Knox's Sites of Biological Significance study recognises the area's state significance. However, the use of the land is controlled by a Works Approval issued by the predecessor to the State Government Department of Primary Industries. The works approval overrides the VPO, with the exception of a 20m buffer area specified within the Works Approval.

Prior to the approval of any planning scheme amendment, it is anticipated that the applicant will seek approval to fill part of the quarry, to assist in developing it for residential purposes. A planning permit is required unless the existing Works Approval requires filling to occur as part its rehabilitation requirements. It appears that a planning permit will be required for any filling of the Norvel Road quarry to occur however this is being further researched by consultants on behalf of the quarry owners.

6. **Norvel Road Quarry, Ferntree Gully – Proposed Future Use and Development, Land Exchange and Public Open Space Contribution (cont'd)**

2.5 Issues

Council officers have been in dialogue with the owners of the quarry site regarding the potential exchange of land, and the provision of public open space. These requirements are proposed to form the basis for a new Section 173 Agreement, with the key elements set out in Appendix E. The dialogue has been based on the following considerations:

- Determining what would comprise an equitable exchange of land, with recognition of land previously provided by the quarry owners to Council, and the legal requirements to provide open space under the Planning Scheme.
- Consideration of a land transfer based on land value based on valuations provided for Council by an independent Valuer rather than a straight land area exchange.
- Attempting to maximise the amount of vegetated land retained to the north of the quarry, which will also be impacted by the length of time any negotiations occur.

Appendix B shows the parcels of land proposed to be exchanged by Council (Area A) and Robertson Pty Ltd (Areas B and part of C), as well as the land to be provided as part of the open space contribution. The table in Appendix F sets out the workings of the proposed exchange.

The rationale behind the proposal is as follows:

- All the land is valued at a residential land value. This reflects the existing 1980 Agreement in which Council agreed to purchase the quarry site at a percentage of residential value.
- Different parcels of land are valued at different residential rates, reflecting the different land constraints that each is encumbered by.
- The highest valued land (shown as Area B in Appendix B), at \$125/m², is the land immediately abutting the quarry. It is relatively flat, and although still vegetated, can be cleared under the existing works approval without any Council involvement.
- A buffer area with a width of 20 metres forms the northern part of the quarry and is located between the Council reserve and the unencumbered land listed above (shown as Area C in Appendix B). Under the works approval, it cannot be excavated, and therefore there is an assumption that it will remain vegetated. As a result, its residential development potential is reduced. It has been valued at \$60/m².

6. Norvel Road Quarry, Ferntree Gully – Proposed Future Use and Development, Land Exchange and Public Open Space Contribution (cont'd)

- The triangular shaped parcel of land which was to be transferred to Council as part of the original agreement (shown as Area A in Appendix B), owned by Council, has high development potential. However, due to its shape and size, its potential is not as great as the unencumbered land owned by Daniel Robertson. As such, it has been valued at \$110/m².
- The quarry has constraints based on the slope, and has been valued at \$105/m² (shown as Area D in Appendix B). In addition, in recognition that some of the land will not be able to be developed due to excessively steep slopes, the valuation is based on a reduced area.

2.6 Urban Design Guidelines

Jones and Whitehead Pty Ltd have been commissioned by Council to prepare Urban Design Guidelines based on the future development of the quarry site for residential purposes.

The guidelines make an assessment of the opportunities and constraints that the quarry site presents when considering the future development of the site for residential purposes. The guidelines also provide objectives and guidelines for the future development of the quarry site.

In summary, the guidelines recognise the importance of the vegetated area currently included in the Vegetation Protection Overlay and seek to balance the protection of this area within the context of a viable development proposal. Bearing in mind, that the landowner under the existing Extractive Industry License can remove the vegetation included in the overlay without requiring consent from Council. Clause 52.17 of the planning scheme exempts the need for planning approval for the removal of native vegetation necessary for carrying on an extractive industry, including an extractive industry authorised by a work authority under the Extractive Industry Development Act 1995. To allow for this existing right, the formulae applied to the land to calculate a reasonable development scenario includes the yield achievable on the total parcel of land being applied to the existing cleared area at a density similar to that of the surrounding development.

In conclusion, the guidelines recommended that in principle support be given to:

1. The area affected by the Vegetation Protection Overlay treated as a flora reserve managed jointly with the Council land to the north; and
2. Up to 80 dwellings on the remainder of the site, distributed and in a form appropriate to fit the terrain.

6. Norvel Road Quarry, Ferntree Gully – Proposed Future Use and Development, Land Exchange and Public Open Space Contribution (cont'd)

As a result of discussions with the quarry owner, some modifications are proposed to the draft guidelines. The main change proposed is to vary the potential yield of the site, in recognition of the reduced site area, due to the steep landfall, but allow a higher density on the remaining land. An overall yield of 15 lots per hectare could be sought, subject to urban character considerations, giving an indicative yield of an approximately 110 lot subdivision. The land owner has also indicated support for the provision of a land area to Council the equivalent value of 8.5% public open space contribution.

The proposed Urban Design Guidelines would form the basis for a Development Plan Overlay that would set out the requirements and objectives for the future residential development of the site and would need to be implemented via a planning scheme amendment.

The proposed revised guidelines form Appendix C to this report.

2.7 Draft Section 173 Agreement

A request (contained in Appendix G) has been received from Robertson Industries requesting a planning scheme amendment and for Council to proceed with organising a replacement 173 Agreement.

A draft Section 173 Agreement has been prepared, incorporating the key elements in Appendix E and the revised guidelines in Appendix C. The draft agreement is contained in Appendix H. The final agreement details are still being resolved with the quarry owners.

The principles within this draft Section 173 Agreement have been agreed with the owner following discussions over several months. The draft provided in Appendix H has been prepared by lawyers acting for Council, however it is likely that legal advisors acting for both parties will suggest further wording changes before the Agreement is ready to sign. On this basis, it is recommended that Council delegate to the Chief Executive Officer the ability to consent to further changes to the Agreement and to finalise the document prior to it being signed and sealed.

3. CONSULTATION

It is proposed that, prior to commencing any formal process to exhibit a planning scheme amendment or to apply for planning approval to commence any quarry fill, consultation will be undertaken by the proponent with the surrounding community. The details of the consultation process have not yet been provided by the proponent however the company has been informed of the process used for the proposed redevelopment of the CSR Quarry, Scoresby, as a suitable model.

6. Norvel Road Quarry, Ferntree Gully – Proposed Future Use and Development, Land Exchange and Public Open Space Contribution (cont'd)

A future planning scheme amendment that will propose to rezone the quarry for residential purposes and introduce a development plan overlay to guide development of the site will also be subject to community consultation.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

The Biosis Report and the Management Plan for Blind Creek Billabong have outlined the significance of the land covered by the Vegetation Protection Overlay and the contribution it makes as habitat for local fauna and its significance at a state level for biodiversity.

The Biosis Report also indicates that indigenous trees within residential allotments have a low probability of retaining significant ecological values in the long term. Subdivision and development of the vegetated area would be incompatible with the aims of preserving the vegetation community.

Any interface or amenity issues arising from the existing residential development surrounding the site will be addressed through the development of the concept plan and urban design guidelines for the site.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

If Council chooses to take a land contribution for public open space as a requirement of the development of the land for residential purposes there will be an additional bushland area to be managed by Council.

If Council takes on the responsibility of all the land covered by the VPO as bushland reserve, it has been estimated that the additional financial costs for maintenance will be in the order of \$13,000 per annum. Any reduction in the area to be managed by Council would invariably result in a proportional reduction in the ongoing maintenance costs. The maintenance costs associated with acquisition of the additional land are minimal given that its future use will be used as a flora and fauna bush land reserve requiring minimal works.

On balance, there are long-term social and environmental benefits for the community through the long-term protection of the vegetation and its valuable contribution to ecological sustainability on a broader scale.

6. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN

The 2003-2006 Council and Community Plan under 'Vibrant and Connected Communities' has a key three year objective under 'Sustainable Natural Environment' to *"protect and enhance the built and natural environment for future generations and build community awareness of sustainability"*.

6. Norvel Road Quarry, Ferntree Gully – Proposed Future Use and Development, Land Exchange and Public Open Space Contribution (cont'd)

The current proposal meets this objective as the land exchange and open space contribution proposed will enable protection of a parcel of land with high biodiversity value, as well as providing the community with the benefit of access to this land.

7. CONCLUSION

This report outlines a proposed land exchange and provision of bush land associated with the future redevelopment of the Norvel Road quarry. The proposed exchange will enable improvements to the open space provision for the community and Council, whilst improving the development opportunities for the land owner.

The use of the remainder of the site for residential purposes is consistent with the direction outlined in the approved Knox Housing Statement and the proposed new Municipal Strategic Statement. The revised Section 173 Agreement provides a means of ensuring that a planning scheme amendment is initiated to consider the implications of any future development, the management issues for the vegetated land and other associated issues to facilitate the land exchange.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

There are no confidentiality issues associated with this report with the exception of a confidential attachment (Appendix H) which has been circulated separately.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to:

- 1. Enter into an agreement under Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 with Robertson Industries Pty Ltd, to replace the existing Agreement between Council and Robertson Industries Pty Ltd, generally in accordance with the draft Agreement shown in Appendix H of this report and that it include the following requirements:**

6. Norvel Road Quarry, Ferntree Gully – Proposed Future Use and Development, Land Exchange and Public Open Space Contribution (cont'd)

Recommendation (cont'd)

- a) Council's commitment to exhibit, subject to Ministerial authorisation, a planning scheme amendment to rezone the land to a Residential 1 Zone, Public Park and Recreation Zone and a Development Plan Overlay over the Residential 1 Zone, with the schedule to the Overlay reflecting the principles of the Urban Design Guidelines shown in Appendix C, as amended and agreed. The amendment must comply with Ministerial Direction No. 1, Potentially Contaminated Land.
- b) Council will exchange its triangular shaped parcel of land adjoining the southern part of the property, as defined in the existing agreement, on a "value for value" basis for land owned by Robertson Industries Pty Ltd abutting Council's land at the northern boundary of the quarry.
- c) Robertson Industries Pty Ltd will transfer 8.5% by area of the proposed Residential 1 Zone as a public open space once off contribution, to be transferred at the same time as the triangular parcel of land is transferred, but no earlier than the gazettal of the planning scheme amendments described above. This public open space land will abut Council's existing and proposed ownership of land at the northern edge of the quarry.
- d) Acknowledge that Daniel Robertson Quarries will continue to extract clay within the licensed area in accordance with current rates of extraction for a further period of two years after gazettal of the abovementioned zonings, except a lesser period may be agreed between the parties. Such extraction will be undertaken in a manner that results in a final land form suitable for residential development without incurring construction cost penalties associated with excessive slope of the land. Within these constraints, the removal of significant vegetation will be minimised or an agreed area of vegetation will be retained.
- e) Include the need for the preparation of a Management Plan to be prepared to manage the existing use of the land prior to the development for residential purposes, addressing the issues of access, security and safety. The Management Plan will not require, except by mutual agreement, the existing extraction and transport operations / arrangements to alter.

6. Norvel Road Quarry, Ferntree Gully – Proposed Future Use and Development, Land Exchange and Public Open Space Contribution (cont'd)

Recommendation (cont'd)

2. **Designate Appendix H as confidential information in accordance with Section 77 of the Local Government Act 1989 on the grounds that the document relates to contractual matters relating to a proposed development under section 89(2)(d) and (e) of the Act.**
3. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make further changes to the Agreement and to finalise the Agreement consistent with the requirements set out in recommendation 1 above.**
4. **Sign and seal the Agreement once it has been finalised by the Chief Executive Officer.**

MOVED: CR. PENNA

SECONDED: CR. VAN de VREEDE

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED



KNOX CITY COUNCIL

and

NORVEL ESTATE PTY LTD
(ACN 619 386 855)

**AGREEMENT MADE PURSUANT TO
SECTION 173 OF THE PLANNING AND
ENVIRONMENT ACT 1987**

URBAN DESIGN AND BUSHLAND RESERVE

Property: Norvel Estate, Norvel Road, Ferntree
Gully Victoria 3156

Russell Kennedy Pty Ltd ACN 126 792 470 ABN 14 940 129 185
Level 12, 469 La Trobe Street, Melbourne VIC 3000 PO Box 5146, Melbourne VIC 3001 DX 494 Melbourne
T +61 3 9609 1555 F +61 3 9609 1600 info@rk.com.au russellkennedy.com.au

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.

Ref LAG 115608-00327

An international member of

AllyLaw

© Russell Kennedy Pty Ltd

THIS AGREEMENT is made on

20

PARTIES

- 1 **KNOX CITY COUNCIL**
of 511 Burwood Highway, Wantirna South, Victoria, 3152
(Council)
- 2 **NORVEL ESTATE PTY LTD**
ACN 619 386 855
[REDACTED]
(Owner)

RECITALS

- A The Council is the responsible authority under the Act for the Scheme.
- B The Owner is registered or is entitled to be registered as proprietor of the Land.
- C The Owner wishes to achieve the Development, a precondition to which is the approval of the Amendment.
- D This Agreement is to be entered into, and recorded on the titles to the Land, as a precondition to exhibition of the Amendment.
- E This Agreement has been entered into in order to:
- ensure the vesting of the Bushland Reserve to the Council;
 - ensure the Development occurs in accordance with the Urban Design Guidelines;
 - achieve and advance the objectives of planning in Victoria or the objectives of the Scheme in relation to the Land.
- F This Agreement is made under Division 2 of Part 9 of the Act.

OPERATIVE PROVISIONS

1 DEFINITIONS

In this Agreement:

- (a) **Act** means the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.
- (b) **Agreement** means this Agreement, including the recitals and any annexures to this Agreement.
- (c) **Amendment** means proposed Planning Scheme Amendment C184knox to the Scheme.
- (d) **Annexure** means any annexure attached and forming part of this Agreement.
- (e) **Bushland Reserve** means the part of the Land marked "Bushland Reserve" totalling approximately 1.6980 hectares, as located on the Concept Plan.
- (f) **Business Day** means Monday to Friday excluding public holidays in Victoria.

- (g) **Concept Plan** means the current concept plan in respect of the Amendment for the Development, including the designation of a Stage 1 and a Stage 2, area marked "Bushland Reserve" and area marked "Reserve". A copy of the Concept Plan is attached as Annexure 1.
- (h) **Development** means the proposed residential development and subdivision, of the Land, facilitated through the Amendment.
- (i) **GST Act** means the *A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999* (Cth) (as amended).
- (j) **GST** means the goods and services tax as defined in the GST Act.
- (k) **Input Tax Credit** in relation to a supply, means a credit under the GST Act for the GST payable by the recipient in respect of the supply.
- (l) **Land** means:
- (i) lot 1 on Title Plan 297137X being the land more particularly described in certificate of title volume 09381 folio 087;
 - (ii) lot 1 on Title Plan 963860L being the land more particularly described in certificate of title volume 11909 folio 762; and
 - (iii) lot 2 on Title Plan 963860L being the land more particularly described in certificate of title volume 11909 folio 763.
- (m) **Mortgagee** means the person or persons registered or entitled from time to time to be registered by the Registrar of Titles as mortgagee of the Land or any part of it.
- (n) **Owner** means the person or persons who are registered or are entitled to be registered as proprietor of an estate in the Land or any part thereof, and includes a mortgagee in possession.
- (o) **Permit** means any planning permit issued under the Act, to facilitate the Development.
- (p) **Plan of Subdivision** means a plan of subdivision of the Land (or any stage thereof) under the Subdivision Act.
- (q) **Previous Agreement** means the previous agreement, under section 173 of the Act, affecting the Land and recorded in dealing AG370823M.
- (r) **Scheme** means the Knox Planning Scheme or any other planning scheme which applies to the Land from time to time.
- (s) **Subdivision Act** means the *Subdivision Act 1988* (Vic).
- (t) **Tax Invoice** in relation to a supply, means an invoice for the supply required by the GST Act to support a claim by the recipient for an Input Tax Credit for the GST on the supply.
- (u) **Urban Design Guidelines** means the document entitled "*Norvel Estate, Ferntree Gully, Urban Design Guidelines, Revision D dated 30 May 2021*", attached as Annexure 2, or such other amended guidelines approved in writing by the Council in accordance with this Agreement.

2 COMMENCEMENT

This Agreement comes into force on the date it was made as set out above.

3 ENDING OR AMENDING AGREEMENT

3.1 Previous Agreement

The parties have agreed the Previous Agreement shall end upon the execution and recording of this Agreement on the folio of the Register to the Land.

3.2 Ending or amending

This Agreement:

- 3.2.1 ends in respect of the obligations relating to the Bushland Reserve, upon the vesting or transfer of the Bushland Reserve to the Council;
- 3.2.2 ends in respect of the Urban Design Guideline compliance in accordance with clause 5.3; and
- 3.2.3 otherwise, if this Agreement ends or is amended in accordance with the Act.

3.3 Cancellation or alteration of recording

As soon as reasonably practicable after:

- 3.3.1 the Previous Agreement; or
- 3.3.2 this Agreement,

has ended or has been amended, the Council must, at the request and at the cost of the Owner, apply to the Registrar of Titles under the Act to cancel or alter the recording of the relevant agreement on the folio of the Register to the Land.

4 BUSHLAND RESERVE

4.1 Vesting of Bushland Reserve

The Owner covenants and agrees that it must, at no cost to the Council:

- 4.1.1 vest the Bushland Reserve to the Council as a reserve as set out in this Agreement; and
- 4.1.2 if for any reason the Bushland Reserve cannot be vested as a reserve, the parties will cooperate to achieve a transfer to the Council of a lot made up by the Bushland Reserve.

4.2 Time of Vesting

- 4.2.1 The Bushland Reserve must be designated as a reserve to vest as part of the next Plan of Subdivision to be lodged in respect of the Land;
- 4.2.2 The Bushland Reserve may be created by:
 - (a) a separate plan pursuant to section 35 of the Subdivision Act, or
 - (b) some other Plan of Subdivision which creates superlots, together with a reserve to create the Bushland Reserve.

- 4.2.3 The Bushland Reserve must be vested in, or transferred to the Council:
- (a) following the approval and prior to the gazettal of, the Amendment; and
 - (b) if the approval of the Amendment is delayed then, in any event, no later than 30 June 2023 (or such later date agreed to by the Council).

4.3 **Condition of Reserve**

The Owner agrees that prior to the vesting or transfer of the Bushland Reserve to the Council it must:

- 4.3.1 not lop, remove, damage or destroy any trees or other vegetation located on the Bushland Reserve;
- 4.3.2 allow the Council or its agents to continue to access the Bushland Reserve area to mow, maintain, weed or treat the Bushland Reserve, to facilitate its ongoing preservation and enhancement; and for fire protection purposes; and
- 4.3.3 not impede or make any claim against the Council arising from the Council access and works on the Bushland Reserve.

4.4 **Public Open Space and Obligations**

- 4.4.1 In addition to the Bushland Reserve the Owner acknowledges the need to set aside, as part of the Development, a reserve, the area of approximately 0.3676 hectares as a reserve for drainage, fire buffer and other purposes as, noted on the Concept Plan at Annexure 1 or such varied area, identified during the Amendment or Permit approval process.
- 4.4.2 The Owner remains responsible for the payment of any rates, taxes or other charges relating to the area making up the Bushland Reserve calculated and payable prior to the vesting or transfer of the Bushland Reserve to the Council.
- 4.4.3 The transfer or vesting of the Bushland Reserve to or in Council in accordance with the terms of this Agreement by the Owner will comprise and be treated as the public open space contribution required by the Planning Scheme or under the Subdivision Act for the subdivision of the balance of the Land notwithstanding that the contribution is made prior to the making of the requirement.

4.5 **Urban Design Guidelines**

The Owner covenants and agrees that:

- 4.5.1 the Development constructed on the Land must be constructed in accordance with the Urban Design Guidelines; and
- 4.5.2 the Owner must implement the Urban Design Guidelines on the Land, and maintain the Land in accordance with the Urban Design Guidelines,
all at the sole cost of the Owner and to the satisfaction of the Council.

4.6 **Amendment of Urban Design Guidelines**

- 4.6.1 The Owner may propose and the Council must consider, any requested amendment of the Urban Design Guidelines arising out of the proposed Amendment, any future permit or otherwise requested.

4.6.2 The Council may, for good and reasonable cause, require and direct the amendment of the Urban Design Guidelines including a requirement for the Owner to procure the preparation of any amended version of the Urban Design Guidelines.

4.6.3 To be effective, any amended version of the Urban Design Guidelines must first be approved (by dating and signing) by the Council after being submitted by the Owner for such approval. Once approved by the Council that amended version will replace the Urban Design Guidelines at Annexure 2 to this Agreement.

4.7 **Ending Application of Urban Design Guidelines**

The requirements of this clauses 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7 will end upon registration of a plan of subdivision for the relevant part of the Development completed in accordance with those Urban Design Guidelines.

4.8 **Further Dwelling Design Requirements**

The Owner acknowledges the further design requirements in relation to the built form of future dwellings may be applied via future planning permits for the Land.

5 **OWNER'S GENERAL COVENANTS**

5.1 **Successors in title**

Until this Agreement is recorded on the folio of the Register which relates to the Land pursuant to section 181 of the Act, the Owner must ensure that the Owner's successors in title give effect to and do all acts and sign all documents which will require those successors to give effect to this Agreement including requiring the successors in title to execute a deed agreeing to be bound by the terms of this Agreement. Until that deed is executed, the Owner, being a party to this Agreement, remains liable to perform all of the Owner's obligations contained in this Agreement.

5.2 **Further assurance**

The Owner must do all things necessary (including signing any further agreement, acknowledgment or document) to enable the Council to record this Agreement on the folio of the Register which relates to the Land.

5.3 **Payment of Council's costs**

The Owner agrees to pay on demand to the Council the Council's costs and expenses (including any legal fees incurred on a solicitor-client basis) of and incidental to the preparation, execution, recording, removal, amendment and enforcement of this Agreement.

5.4 **Mortgagee to be bound**

The Owner covenants to obtain the consent of any Mortgagee to be bound by the covenants in this Agreement if the Mortgagee becomes mortgagee in possession of the Land.

5.5 **Indemnity**

The Owner covenants to indemnify and keep the Council, its officers, employees, agents, workmen and contractors indemnified from and against all costs, expenses, losses or damages which they or any of them may sustain incur or suffer or be or become liable for or in respect of any suit action proceeding judgement or claim brought by any person arising from or referable to this Agreement or any non-compliance with this Agreement.

5.6 Non-compliance

If the Owner has not complied with this Agreement within 14 days after the date of service on the Owner by the Council of a notice which specifies the Owner's failure to comply with any provision of this Agreement, the Owner covenants:

- 5.6.1 to allow the Council its officers, employees, agents, workmen and contractors to enter the Land and rectify the non-compliance;
- 5.6.2 to pay to the Council on demand, the Council's reasonable costs and expenses (**Costs**) incurred as a result of the Owner's non-compliance;
- 5.6.3 to pay interest at the rate of 2% above the rate prescribed under section 2 of the *Penalty Interest Rates Act 1983* on all moneys which are due and payable but remain owing under this Agreement until they are paid in full;
- 5.6.4 if requested to do so by the Council, to promptly execute in favour of the Council a mortgage to secure the Owner's obligations under this Agreement,

and the Owner agrees:

- 5.6.5 to accept a certificate signed by the Chief Executive Officer of the Council (or any nominee of the Chief Executive Officer) as prima facie proof of the Costs incurred by the Council in rectifying the Owner's non-compliance with this Agreement;
- 5.6.6 that any payments made for the purposes of this Agreement shall be appropriated first in payment of any interest and any unpaid Costs of the Council and then applied in repayment of the principal sum;
- 5.6.7 that all Costs or other monies which are due and payable under this Agreement but which remain owing shall be a charge on the Land until they are paid in full; and
- 5.6.8 if the Owner executes a mortgage as required by clause 5.6.4, any breach of this Agreement is deemed to be a default under that mortgage.

5.7 Standard of works

The Owner covenants to comply with the requirements of this Agreement and to complete all works required by this Agreement as expeditiously as possible at its cost and to the satisfaction of the Council.

5.8 Council access

The Owner covenants to allow the Council and its officers, employees, agents, workmen and contractors or any of them, to enter the Land (at any reasonable time) to assess compliance with this Agreement.

5.9 Covenants run with the Land

- 5.9.1 The Owner's obligations in this Agreement are intended to take effect as covenants which shall be annexed to and run at law and in equity with the Land and every part of it, and bind the Owner and its successors, assignees and transferees, the registered proprietor or proprietors for the time being of the Land and every part of the Land.
- 5.9.2 The Owner will do all things necessary to enable the Council to make an application to the Registrar of Titles to make a recording of this Agreement on the Certificate

of Title to the Land in accordance with Section 181 of the Act including the signing of any further agreement, acknowledgement or other document.

5.10 **Owner's warranty**

The Owner warrants and covenants that:

- 5.10.1 the Owner is the registered proprietor (or is entitled to become the registered proprietor) of the Land and is also the beneficial owner of the Land;
- 5.10.2 the execution of this Agreement by the Owner complies with the Registrar's Requirements for Paper Conveyancing Transactions made under section 106A of the *Transfer of Land Act 1958*;
- 5.10.3 there are no mortgages, liens, charges or other encumbrances or leases or any rights inherent in any person other than the Owner affecting the Land which have not been disclosed by the usual searches of the folio of the Register for the Land or notified to the Council;
- 5.10.4 no part of the Land is subject to any rights obtained by adverse possession or subject to any easements or rights described or referred to in section 42 of the *Transfer of Land Act 1958*; and
- 5.10.5 until this Agreement is recorded on the folio of the Register which relates to the Land, the Owner will not sell, transfer, dispose of, assign, mortgage or otherwise part with possession of the Land or any part of the Land without first disclosing to any intended purchaser, transferee, assignee or mortgagee the existence and nature of this Agreement.

6 **ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF OBLIGATIONS OF COUNCIL**

The Council will proactively facilitate the processing and decision making in respect of the Amendment, Planning Approvals or any other approvals that are required to be granted by Council in order for construction of the Development to occur.

7 **GOODS AND SERVICES TAX**

7.1 **Definitions and expressions**

Expressions used in this Agreement that are defined in the GST Act have the same meaning as given to them in the GST Act, unless expressed to the contrary.

7.2 **Amounts payable do not include GST**

Each amount, of whatever description, specified as payable by one party to the other party under this Agreement is expressed as a GST exclusive amount unless specified to the contrary.

7.3 **Liability to pay any GST**

Subject to clause 7.4, in addition to any amount payable by one party to the other party under this Agreement in respect of a taxable supply, the party liable to pay the amount (**Recipient**) must pay to the other party (**Supplier**) a sum equivalent to the GST payable, if any, by the Supplier in respect of the taxable supply on the date on which the Supplier makes a taxable supply to the Recipient irrespective of when the Supplier is liable to remit any GST under this Agreement in respect of a taxable supply to any governmental authority.

7.4 Tax Invoice

A party's right to payment under clause 7.3 is subject to a Tax Invoice being delivered to the Recipient.

8 GENERAL

8.1 No fettering of Council's powers

This Agreement does not fetter or restrict the Council's power or discretion in respect of any of the Council's decision making powers including but not limited to an ability to make decisions under the *Local Government Act 1989*, and the Act or to make or impose requirements or conditions in connection with any use or development of the Land or the granting of any planning permit, the approval or certification of any plans of subdivision or consolidation relating to the Land or the issue of a Statement of Compliance in connection with any such plans.

8.2 Time of the essence

Time is of the essence as regards all dates, periods of time and times specified in this Agreement.

8.3 Counterparts

8.3.1 This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts and all the counterparts together constitute one and the same instrument; and

8.3.2 A copy of an original executed counterpart received by email:

- (a) must be treated as an original counterpart;
- (b) is sufficient evidence of the execution of the original; and
- (c) may be produced in evidence for all purposes in place of the original.

8.3.3 If the signatures on behalf of one party are on different counterparts, this will be taken to be, and have the same effect as, signatures on the same counterpart and on a single copy of this Agreement.

8.4 Governing law and jurisdiction

This Agreement is governed by and is to be construed in accordance with the laws of Victoria. Each party irrevocably and unconditionally submits to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of the courts and tribunals of Victoria and waives any right to object to proceedings being brought in those courts or tribunals.

8.5 Enforcement and severability

8.5.1 This Agreement shall operate as a contract between the parties and be enforceable as such in a Court of competent jurisdiction regardless of whether, for any reason, this Agreement were held to be unenforceable as an agreement pursuant to Division 2 of Part 9 of the Act.

8.5.2 If a Court, arbitrator, tribunal or other competent authority determines that a word, phrase, sentence, paragraph or clause of this Agreement is unenforceable, illegal or void, then it shall be severed and the other provisions of this Agreement shall remain operative.

9 NOTICES

9.1 Service of notice

A notice or other communication required or permitted, under this Agreement, to be served on a person must be in writing and may be served:

- 9.1.1 personally on the person;
- 9.1.2 by leaving it at the person's address set out in this Agreement;
- 9.1.3 by posting it by prepaid post addressed to that person at the person's current address for service;
- 9.1.4 by email to the person's current email address notified to the other party; or
- 9.1.5 by facsimile to the person's current number notified to the other party.

9.2 Time of service

A notice or other communication is deemed served:

- 9.2.1 if served personally or left at the person's address, upon service;
- 9.2.2 if posted within Australia to an Australian address by express post, five (5) Business Days; by standard post, six Business Days after posting;
- 9.2.3 if sent by email, subject to the clause 9.2.5, at the time of receipt as specified in section 13A of the *Electronic Transactions (Victoria) Act 2000*;
- 9.2.4 if served by facsimile, subject to the clause 9.2.5, at the time indicated on the transmission report produced by the sender's facsimile machine indicating that the facsimile was sent in its entirety to the addressee's facsimile; and
- 9.2.5 if received after 5.00pm in the place of receipt or on a day which is not a Business Day, at 9.00am on the next Business Day.

9.3 Proof of receipt of notice by email

In proving that a notice given by email has been received by the recipient, it is sufficient to produce an acknowledgement or receipt that the email has reached the recipient's email address.

10 INTERPRETATION

In this Agreement, unless the contrary intention appears:

- 10.1 the singular includes the plural and vice versa;
- 10.2 a reference to a document or instrument, including this Agreement, includes a reference to that document or instrument as novated, altered or replaced from time to time;
- 10.3 a reference to an individual or person includes a partnership, body corporate, government authority or agency and vice versa;
- 10.4 a reference to a party includes that party's executors, administrators, successors, substitutes and permitted assigns;

- 10.5 words importing one gender include other genders;
- 10.6 other grammatical forms of defined words or expressions have corresponding meanings;
- 10.7 a covenant, undertaking, representation, warranty, indemnity or agreement made or given by:
 - 10.7.1 two or more parties; or
 - 10.7.2 a party comprised of two or more persons,is made or given and binds those parties or persons jointly and severally;
- 10.8 a reference to a statute, code or other law includes regulations and other instruments made under it and includes consolidations, amendments, re-enactments or replacements of any of them;
- 10.9 a recital, schedule, annexure or description of the parties forms part of this Agreement;
- 10.10 if an act must be done on a specified day that is not a Business Day, the act must be done instead on the next Business Day;
- 10.11 if an act required to be done under this Agreement on a specified day is done after 5.00pm on that day in the time zone in which the act is performed, it is taken to be done on the following day;
- 10.12 a party that is a trustee is bound both personally and in its capacity as trustee;
- 10.13 a reference to an authority, institution, association or body (original entity) that has ceased to exist or been reconstituted, renamed or replaced or whose powers or functions have been transferred to another entity, is a reference to the entity that most closely serves the purposes or objects of the original entity;
- 10.14 headings and the provision of a table of contents are for convenience only and do not affect the interpretation of this Agreement.
- 10.15 Unless otherwise specified a reference to the Council includes the Council in its capacity as responsible authority pursuant to the Scheme.

EXECUTED pursuant to Division 2 of Part 9 of the Act.

THE COMMON SEAL of KNOX CITY)
COUNCIL was affixed in the presence of:)

Councillor

Councillor

Chief Executive Officer

EXECUTED by **NORVEL ESTATE PTY LTD**)
in accordance with section 127(1) of the)
Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) by being signed)
by the authorised person:)

Sole director and sole company secretary

Full name

Usual Address

ANNEXURE 1
(Concept Plan – describing Bushland Reserve)



TP 052A



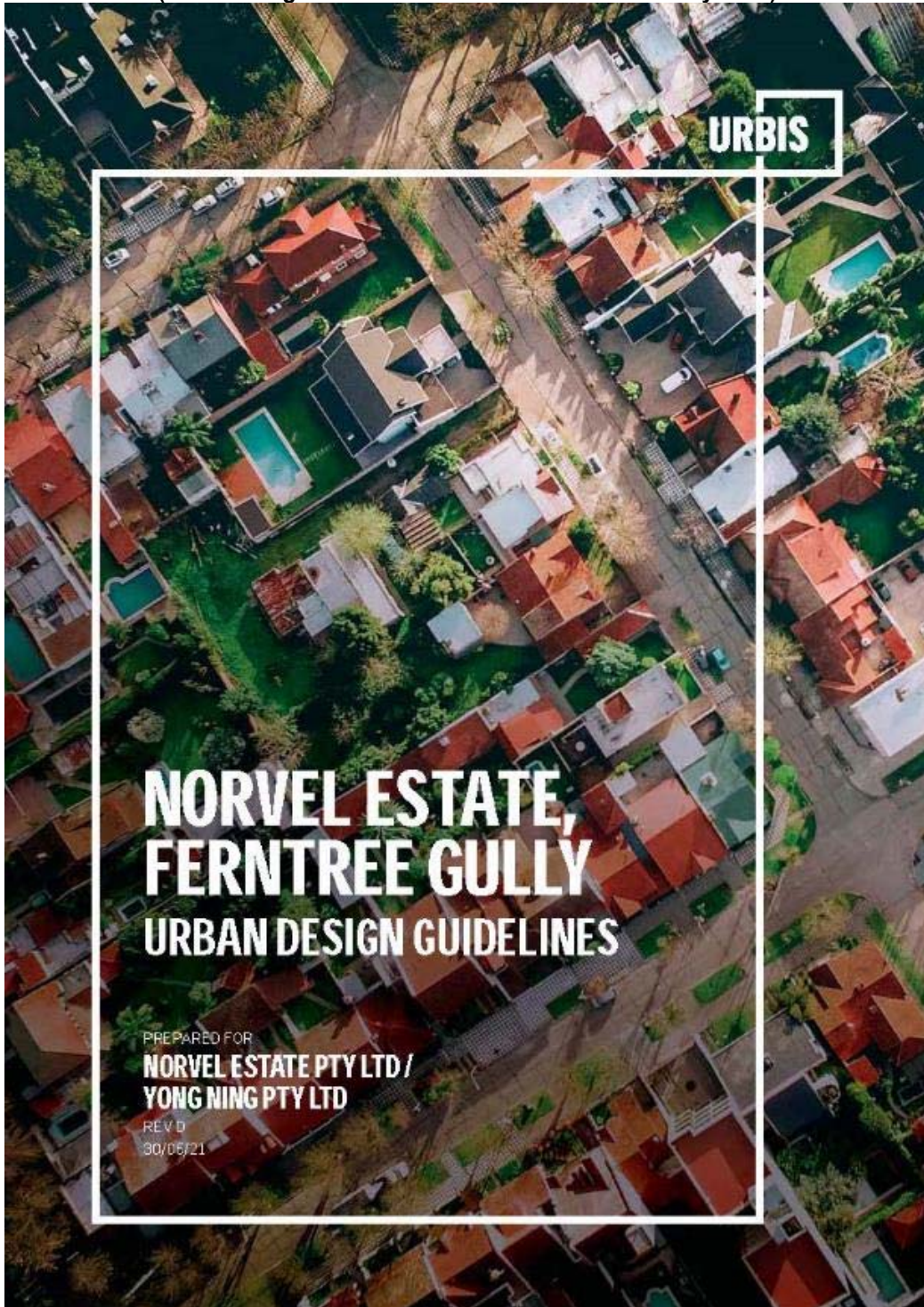
| 1750 @ A1 / 11500 @ A3

NORVEL ROAD | FERNTREE GULLY
RESIDENTIAL MASTERPLAN
36-0125

PEDDLE THORP

ANNEXURE 2

(Urban Design Guidelines – Revision D dated 30 May 2021)



URBIS STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS REPORT:

Director - Peter Haack
B.LandArch, Dip.AppSc(Hort), RLA, FAILA

Associate Director - Josie Alvaro
B.DesSt, M.LandArch, M.Plan(UrbDes)

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INTRODUCTION

Norvel Estate, formerly Daniel Robertson's Quarry, is a 9.2 hectare site within Knox City Council, Victoria. It is bordered by Blind Creek to the north and is surrounded by suburban residential development.

DEFINITIONS

Figure 1 provides definitions for some commonly used terms within this document.

The 'Public Open Spaces' section of the guidelines refers to green areas that are being developed within and directly adjacent to the subject site (e.g. the wetland and swale, and the linear reserve to the west of the subject site)



Figure 1 Site Plan



PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINES

The Urban Design Guidelines are intended to provide broad character guidance for a macro development of Norvel Estate. They have been prepared by Urbis to supersede the existing Urban Design Guidelines for the subject site which were prepared in 2004 by Jones & Whitehead Pty Ltd for Knox City Council (the 2004 Guidelines).

The 2004 Guidelines are referenced in Agreement AG370823M under Section 173 (S173) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 for Norvel Road Quarry between Knox City Council and Robertson Industries Pty Ltd. in Clause 5.5

The Schedule to the Development Plan Overlay (applied to the Robertson Land by the Amendment) should generally reflect the principles of the Urban Design Guidelines to the extent possible having regard to the form of development and use of the Robertson Land proposed by the Owner at the time of preparation of the Amendment

These Urban Design Guidelines are prepared with the intent to be registered into a new S173 agreement replacing current agreement AG370823M.

CONTEXT

In the 17 years since the 2004 Guidelines were written, some significant changes to the site and its context have occurred. The quarry has ceased operation and been filled, some vegetation has been cleared, and market expectations around lots sizes and housing typologies have changed.

More information on these changes is provided in the appendices, and a full analysis of the subject site and context can be found in the Norvel Estate Urban Context and Design Response Report by Urbis (2018).

STRUCTURE OF THE GUIDELINES

These Urban Design Guidelines are broadly based on the Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria, (The State of Victoria Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017).

Consistent with the Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria, urban elements are arranged under the following categories:

1. Urban Structure
2. Movement Network
3. Public Open Spaces
4. Public Transport Environs
5. Buildings
6. Objects in the Public Realm

OBJECTIVES & GUIDELINES

Table 1 Norvel Estate Urban Design Guidelines (Urbis 2021), developed with reference to the Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria (2017)

OBJECTIVES	GUIDELINES
1 - URBAN STRUCTURE	
To provide a permeable and functional urban structure of blocks and streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an interconnected street layout with regular block sizes. • Create a permeable block layout. • Connect streets, pedestrian and bicycle paths from existing areas into new areas, while minimising disruption to the remnant bushland area. • Align pedestrian connections along desire-lines.
To provide a legible urban structure of blocks and streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lay out street and block patterns to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provide streets that are generally direct, straight or near straight; – Ensure the design works with the underlying topography to achieve an accessible movement network and minimise the level changes required between lots; – Allow clear view lines to key landmarks or features in the landscape where possible; and – Avoid cul-de-sacs, but if they are necessary, limit their length and maintain a straight alignment and clear sightlines to the end as well as pedestrian thoroughfare.
To ensure the urban structure supports accessibility to surrounding destinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow for continuous, direct pedestrian and bicycle access from the development to railway stations, bus routes, regional trail network and local services.
To integrate the development site into its surrounding area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect the development’s movement network to the movement network of the surrounding area. • Ensure new portions of streetscape along Norvel Road and Castricum Place complement the existing streetscapes.
To ensure the public realm structure provides for accessible, safe and conveniently located public spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create public open spaces where the local catchment has sufficient potential users to activate the space. • Any amenities and functions within new public open spaces should help to fill gaps in what is currently provided in the local area.
To ensure a public realm structure where streets support the amenity and function of neighbourhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the streets sufficiently wide to serve their function in the movement network and as a public place, and to accommodate services infrastructure. • Provide space within the street for trees, landscaping, pedestrian movement and utility infrastructure. • Maximise opportunities for houses to face onto streets and adjacent public open spaces rather than lining these with back and side fences.
To ensure the public realm structure provides high amenity and safe interfaces between different uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design the interfaces around public open spaces (including the bushland reserve) to avoid blank frontages and encourage passive surveillance, for example by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Providing public paths / streets along both edges; – Designing buildings to front onto the space; and/or – Use of low height and/or visually permeable fencing types where fences are unavoidable. • Development near the bushland reserve should be designed to satisfy relevant bushfire guidelines and/or CFA (Country Fire Authority) advice.

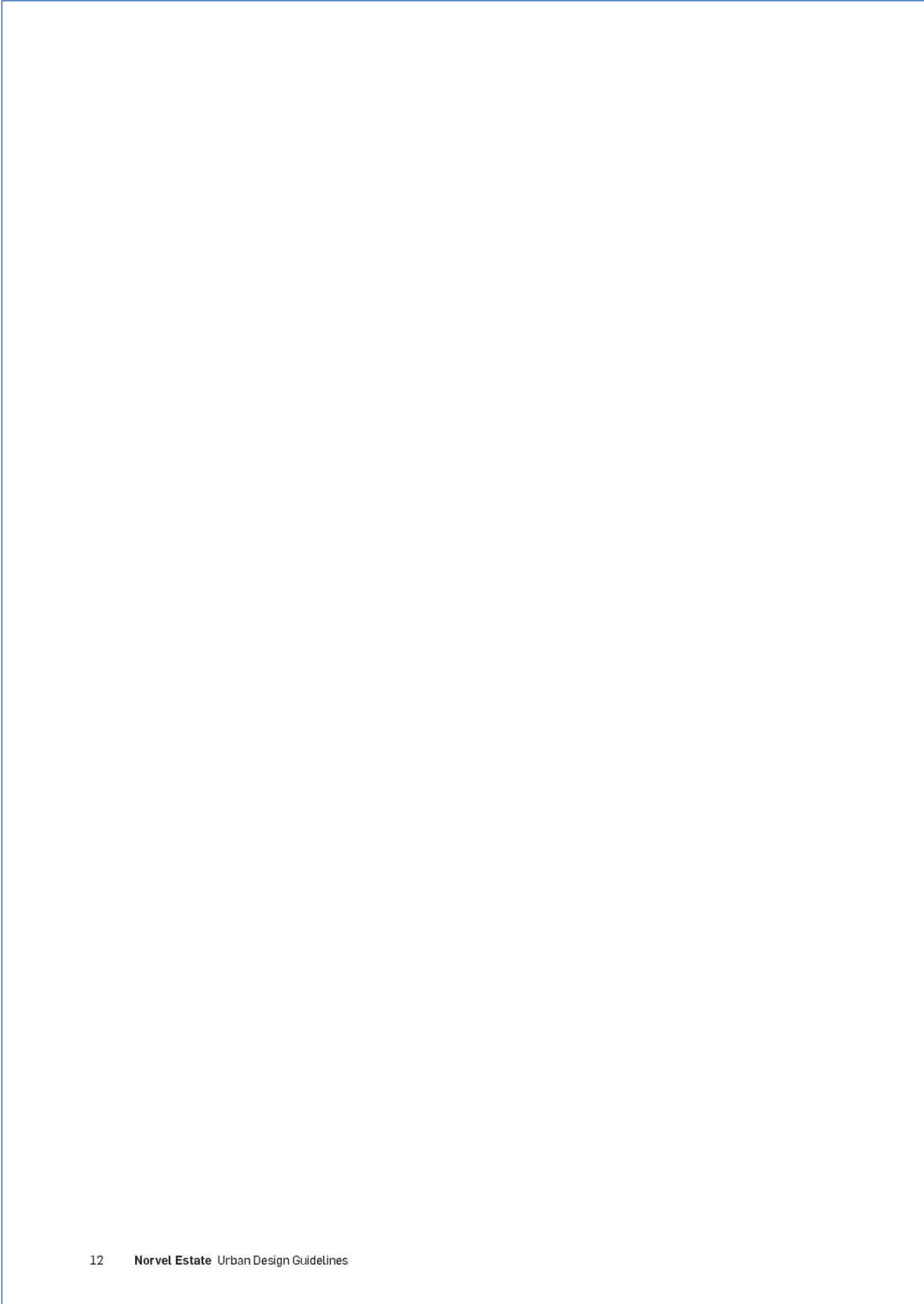
OBJECTIVES	GUIDELINES
To provide a granularity of subdivision that supports private and public amenity, while allowing for an appropriate density	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide lots that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are large enough to provide a good quality private landscape outcome that contributes positively to the character of the public realm; and Take into account the changing market expectations for smaller lot sizes compared to what has traditionally been provided in the local area.
To ensure a well-managed, high amenity public realm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the public open space, civil infrastructure and streets to a standard acceptable for ongoing maintenance and management. Establish an integrated management agreement for the maintenance and repair of the public realm.
2 - MOVEMENT NETWORK	
To ensure the movement network accommodates a diversity of transport modes and supports activities, including active transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a pedestrian network that caters for persons of all abilities. Provide for walking and on-road cycling on all streets.
To ensure the movement network provides for safe interactions between transport modes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each lot to have a maximum of one crossover. Arrange vehicle crossovers to allow clear sightlines between drivers entering the crossover and pedestrians on the footpath and cyclists on the street. Garages to be set back sufficiently from the front boundary to minimise the potential for cars in driveways to overhang the footpath.
To ensure effective pedestrian and bicycle path connections to destinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a continuous system of pedestrian paths connecting the development with adjacent neighbourhoods, along all streets, continuing through public spaces, and to public transport nodes. Provide pedestrian and cyclist connection to the Blind Creek Shared Use Path (SUP). Include footpaths along the street frontage of each property.
To ensure pedestrian and bicycle paths are accessible and serviceable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set path widths to accommodate the anticipated or predicted levels of pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Preserve a minimum height of at least 2.5m above paths that is clear from overhanging objects. Where bicycle paths curve, set an inside radius of at least 15m and preferably 30m. Lay out paths to allow pedestrians and cyclists clear sightlines for a distance of at least 15m ahead. Where pedestrian or bicycle paths are bordered by fences, maximise opportunities for informal surveillance from adjacent properties and/or streets. Path design should comply with the relevant standards. Provide directed, low-glare lighting to pedestrian and bicycle paths.
To ensure pedestrian and bicycle paths provide safety for pedestrians and cyclists on vehicle crossovers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locate vehicle crossovers on straight street sections to ensure high visibility to approaching pedestrians and cyclists. Continue path treatments across vehicle crossovers to signal priority for pedestrians.
To minimise hazards to pedestrians and cyclists from path edges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set pedestrian and bicycle paths back from the roadway or other obstructions. Set trees back from pedestrian and bicycle path edges, in accordance with relevant standards. Maintain low planting adjacent to pedestrian and bicycle path edges. Maintain clear sightlines along paths and avoid creating obstructions in areas adjacent to pedestrian and bicycle paths.

OBJECTIVES	GUIDELINES
To ensure streets have a green character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a street cross-section that accommodates adequate space free of conflict with other infrastructure for street tree planting.
To ensure convenient and safe at-grade crossings for pedestrians and cyclists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locate at-grade crossings on roads where pedestrians and cyclists can be seen by approaching drivers. Provide a clear space for pedestrians waiting to cross a road, separate from the through pedestrian path. Provide at-grade pedestrian crossing that facilitates desire line and shortest pedestrian movement to destination.
To ensure efficient provision of on-street parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a street cross-section that accommodates the appropriate level of on-street parking for the development.
3 - PUBLIC OPEN SPACES	
To ensure convenient and safe access to and through public open spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide clear and legible pedestrian paths through public open spaces that link with the surrounding pedestrian network.
To ensure amenity and safety for public open space users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide areas and facilities which are consistent with Council's open space strategy Locate paths and facilities where they will be visible from surrounding properties, paths and/or streets. Provide lighting along main pedestrian paths in areas that are intended for night-time use, lit to the same level as surrounding streets. Do not light areas intended for day time uses only. Consider the purpose of the bushfire defendable area in the choice and location of recreational structure.
To ensure comfortable and enjoyable public spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where possible, arrange paths, seating and any recreational areas to catch the sun during winter and be shaded during summer. Locate any seating to provide users with a pleasant outlook and opportunity to watch passers-by.
To emphasise a sense of place and character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select planting and landscape elements that support the existing character or preferred future character of the local area and also considers bushfire risk. Establish large trees and other plants to enhance the local habitat and microclimate. New trees should be a mix of predominantly indigenous and/or native species as recommended in the relevant Council guidelines. Integration of locally relevant urban art is encouraged
To ensure the public open spaces are well maintained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When designing public open spaces, take account of the management agency's capacity to resource ongoing maintenance and management. Regularly maintain hard and soft landscape elements to ensure the spaces are inviting, comfortable and safe. Within the bushfire defendable area, position and maintain trees and other plants to comply with relevant bushfire safety guidelines and/or the advice of the CFA.

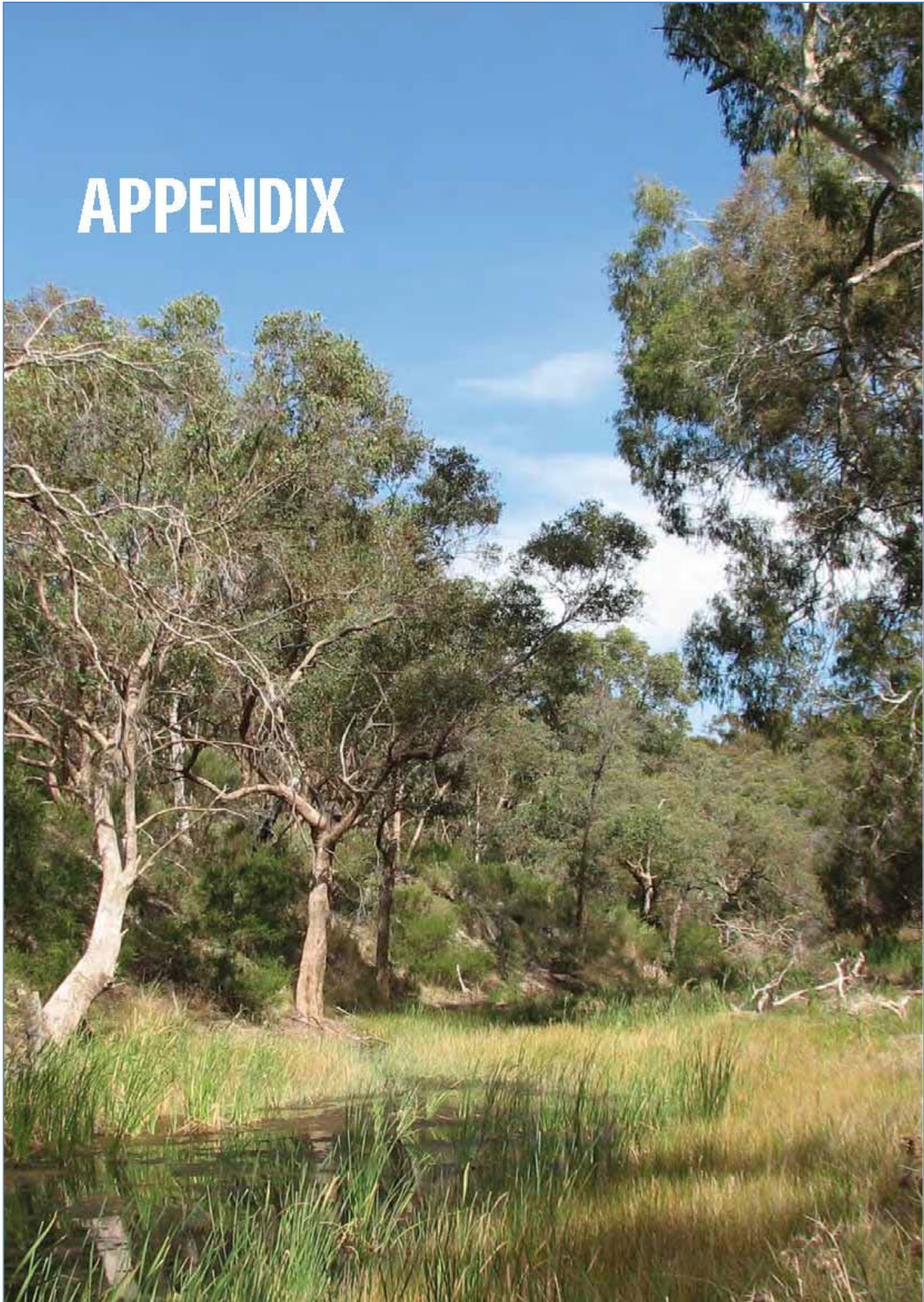
OBJECTIVES	GUIDELINES
<p>To protect the ecological values of the bushland reserve, Blind Creek, and the local area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain and protect remnant indigenous vegetation. • Maintain the biological integrity of the bushland as a future reserve. • Avoid the use of potentially invasive plant species anywhere within the development. • Ensure the site's stormwater run-off is treated prior to entering Blind Creek. • Provide paths through the bushland reserve where necessary for maintenance and emergency services vehicles, and for pedestrians where it is safe and of minimal impact to do so. • Any paths through the bushland reserve should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Be located in areas that have already been disturbed where possible; – Be constructed in a manner that minimises disturbances to remnant vegetation and topography (e.g. no-dig boardwalks where appropriate); – Be permeable to water; and – Appear naturalistic in character and be designed to minimise any visual impact.
<p>4 - PUBLIC TRANSPORT ENVIRONS</p>	
<p>To ensure convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to railway stations and public transport nodes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow for continuous, direct, pedestrian and bicycle access routes to railway stations and public transport nodes.
<p>5 - BUILDINGS</p>	
<p>Allow for higher density development on the site with varied building types relative to surrounding areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow for a mix of building types which includes detached houses and potentially other low-scale housing types (e.g. duplexes, terraces, town houses). • Allow for a greater proportion of multi-storey houses in the development compared to the surrounding area.
<p>Ensure that the form and character of buildings is complementary to that of the surrounding residential and open space areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that building setbacks and façade treatments are varied or articulated to avoid a continuous street wall effect. • Set back garages behind the front building line • Front setbacks of outward facing lots should respond to the surrounding neighbourhood character
<p>Maintain the amenity of adjacent residential uses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Windows should not overlook into adjacent private spaces. • Dwellings bordering the east property boundary to be set back to respect the open rear yard character of the development along this interface.
<p>Ensure the placement and form of buildings supports bushfire safety.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trees within the defendable area are to be maintained to comply with CFA requirements.
<p>Ensure the built form supports the establishment of new trees and preservation of existing trees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front setbacks within the development site to be set back sufficiently from the street to ensure space for small canopy tree planting where it does not conflict with bushfire defendable space requirements.
<p>Minimise construction and post construction impacts of development on the site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise the extent of impermeable paved areas to avoid excessive stormwater run-off. • Minimise earthworks near significant vegetation. Where earthworks are necessary, ensure root zones of existing vegetation are protected to preserve tree health. • Provide water-permeable surfaces around significant trees.

OBJECTIVES	GUIDELINES
6 - OBJECTS IN THE PUBLIC REALM	
<p>To ensure that objects in the public realm support safety and amenity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid unnecessary clutter, for example by consolidating lighting / signage functions into a single object. Place all objects outside of main pedestrian or bicycle travel paths and away from street corners. Larger infrastructure objects should be either visually unobtrusive (e.g. screening with plants) or purposefully designed to be visually pleasant and complement the surrounds. Place power and communications cables underground to reduce visual clutter and allow for the planting of canopy street trees.
<p>To ensure objects in the public realm are robust and easy to maintain</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a simple, standardised palette of materials and designs for street furniture and objects. Use resilient materials that are easily cleaned, maintained and repaired or recycled. Use local Council design standards for street furniture where appropriate.
<p>To locate street and park furniture in accessible and convenient places</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place seats where people linger such as the local park and locations where people can enjoy views or watch activities. Position any bicycle parking hoops to accommodate a bicycle on either side.
<p>To select trees and planting that are fit-for-purpose</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select lawn types that are suitable for sitting on and for recreation. Use drought-resistant plant species when irrigation is not available. Use plant species appropriate to the available root space. Select deciduous tree species where winter sun is desired (e.g. north of windows). Select dense, canopied tree species where summer shade is desired. Select evergreen species with dense foliage where screening is needed. Ensure proposed plant species within the bushfire defensible area are selected and placed to satisfy relevant bushfire guidelines and/or CFA advice.
<p>To ensure trees and planting contribute to local identity and context</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select trees and planting appropriate to the cultural context and local identity. Provide trees and planting that engage the senses. Select trees in keeping with the scale of the street or space. Position trees and planting to define a street or path. Position trees in streets to form a canopy and enclose the space. Favour the selection of indigenous species where appropriate
<p>To ensure trees and planting support the safety and amenity of public space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select tree species with clear trunks, and no branches or foliage below 2500mm in height. Select shrub and ground cover plantings to be no more than 800mm in height. Position trees and planting to allow clear sightlines along streets and across the different mode paths. Position trees away from overhead wires and public lighting to limit overshadowing of public lighting and interference with overhead wires. Within the bushfire defensible area, position and maintain trees and plants to satisfy relevant bushfire guidelines and/or CFA advice. This may include but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - avoiding creating a continuous tree canopy, - limiting total area of tree canopy cover, - maintaining trees to have a clean trunk, - maintaining grasses to an appropriately low height, particularly during the declared fire danger period, and - limiting the sizes of the areas of shrubs and providing adequate spacing between clumps of shrubs.

OBJECTIVES	GUIDELINES
<p>To ensure trees and planting are managed and maintained</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage ongoing maintenance and replacement of trees and planting according to a precinct-wide plan. • Manage street planting to maintain clear sightlines along paths and streets. • Maintain vegetation clear of lighting to allow direct illumination of paths. • Maintain trees clear of overhead wires. • Maintain trees and other planting within the bushfire defendable area to be compliant with the relevant bushfire guidelines and/or CFA advice. • Keep bushfire defendable area clear of leaf and other flammable debris during the declared fire danger period. • Minimise impact on nocturnal wildlife in biologically significant area "Site 34" as defined in "Sites of Biological Significance in Knox, Vol.2" (2010).
<p>To ensure that fences contribute to the character of the area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a style, scale and materials for side and rear fences that contribute to the existing or desired future character of the area.
<p>To maximise informal surveillance to the street and public spaces</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid the use of fences along front property boundaries • For property side boundaries abutting a street or public space, front yards should ideally have no fencing, or otherwise use fencing types that are of a low height and/or are visually permeable.
<p>To ensure lighting supports night-time social and recreational activity, amenity and safety in the public realm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate lighting for safe travel and wayfinding along pedestrian and bicycle paths, and to emphasise crossings, landmarks and destinations. • Light only those public space areas and paths intended for night use. • Where pedestrian and bicycle paths pass through public open space, light the paths to the same level as surrounding streets. • Locate lighting at points of potential pedestrian-vehicle and pedestrian-bicycle conflict.
<p>To ensure lighting aids wayfinding and contributes to local character</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use external lighting to enhance landscape features. • Integrate lighting with signs, landscaping and other public space elements. • The overall lighting level in public spaces may comprise light from a combination of sources including street lights and residences. • Provide consistent, continuous lighting levels along paths. • Use lighting types that minimise distortion and glare, and maximise colour recognition of objects and surfaces. • Place lighting poles and lamps away from tree canopies, verandas and overhead wires. • Direct the path and activity lighting downwards to illuminate the immediate surrounds. • Where lighting bollards are adjacent to pathways, direct the light beam downwards. • Provide lighting levels that enable recognition of an approaching person's face from approximately 10-15 metres away.
<p>To ensure signs inform pedestrians and cyclists and aid way-finding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where appropriate, provide signs along paths showing connections and destinations, and the location of public facilities and public transport routes. • Provide clear and regular sign posting on main pedestrian routes. • Concentrate pedestrian signs at node points on the pedestrian routes. • Position signs clear of pedestrian and bicycle spaces and paths. • Position signs clear of vegetation. • Place pedestrian and cyclist signs at user eye level. • Locate property street numbers to be visible from the street, day and night.



12 **Norvel Estate** Urban Design Guidelines



LAG 11547244v4 LAG

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APPENDIX 1 SUMMARY OF CHANGES 2004-PRESENT

When the 2004 Guidelines were written, some of the advice was responsive to conditions of the site and context that have since changed. These key changes are summarised below.

SUBJECT SITE

Norvel Estate was previously known as the Norvel Road Quarry. It was owned by Robertson Industries and was used for clay extraction to manufacture bricks under the Daniel Robertson brand.

Within the past eight years, the clay pit has been filled so the site has a relatively consistent, gentle slope and the vegetation south of the most densely vegetated remnant woodland has been cleared.

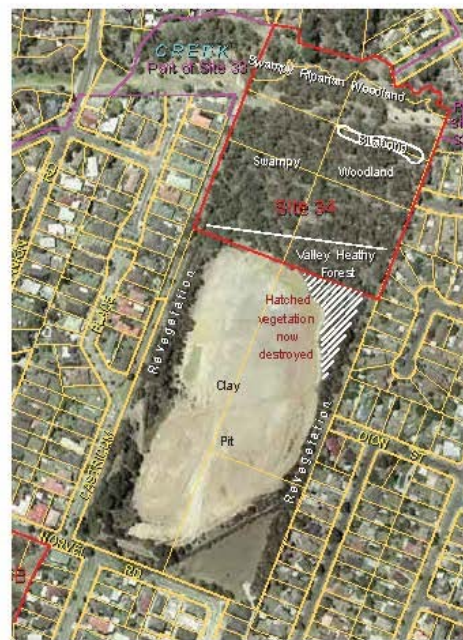


Figure 2 Site in Feb 2007
(Source: Sites of Biological Significance In Knox Vol.2, p.180)



Figure 3 Site in Sept 2013




NTS 



Figure 4 Site in Feb 2017 (conclusion of major changes)

NTS 

LEGEND

-  Subject site
-  Vegetation cleared
-  Clay pit filled in

CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENT

Residential lots in the surrounding area are most commonly around 750m² in area and contain single detached dwellings of 1-2 storeys in height. However, there is a trend towards further subdividing older lots to accommodate multiple dwellings on sites that would have originally contained a single detached dwelling. This is reflective of changing home buyer expectations and housing affordability pressures, relative to the time many decades ago when the land was first developed.

LEGEND

-  Subject site
-  Green space
-  Typical residential lots (mostly with single low scale detached dwelling)
-  Finer-grain subdivided residential lots
-  Pavilions in a park
-  Industrial
-  Local road
-  Minor road
-  Dead-end minor road



Figure 5 Surrounding urban form

APPENDIX 2 REVIEW OF 2004 GUIDELINES

COMMENTARY SECTION

On pages 1 to 4 of the Urban Design Guidelines (2004, Jones & Whitehead Pty Ltd) the following points required review:

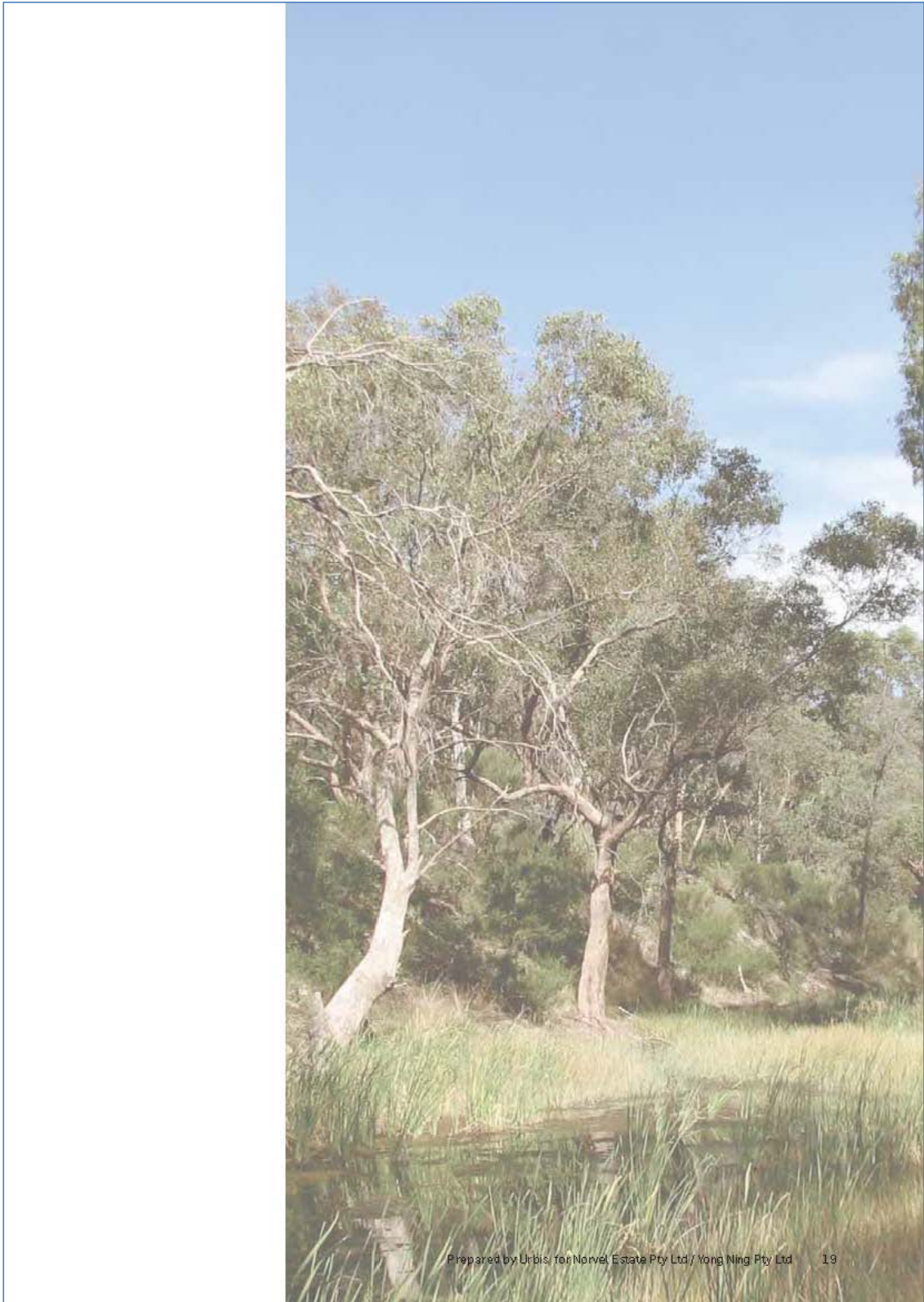
- Description of the current usage of the quarry is out of date.
- Justification of what is an appropriate density for the site is no longer a compelling case.
- Commentary on protected vegetation areas – this is unclear since the supporting maps do not specifically define all of the areas named in the text. A portion of the trees within the Vegetation Protection Overlay have already been removed.
- Recommendation that the remnant vegetation should become a gated "flora reserve" with limited public access no longer reflects the position of Council.
- The section "Other Vegetation on the Site" is no longer applicable since it has all been cleared.
- Much of the commentary on steep slopes is no longer relevant since the site has been filled.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES AND GUIDELINES SECTION

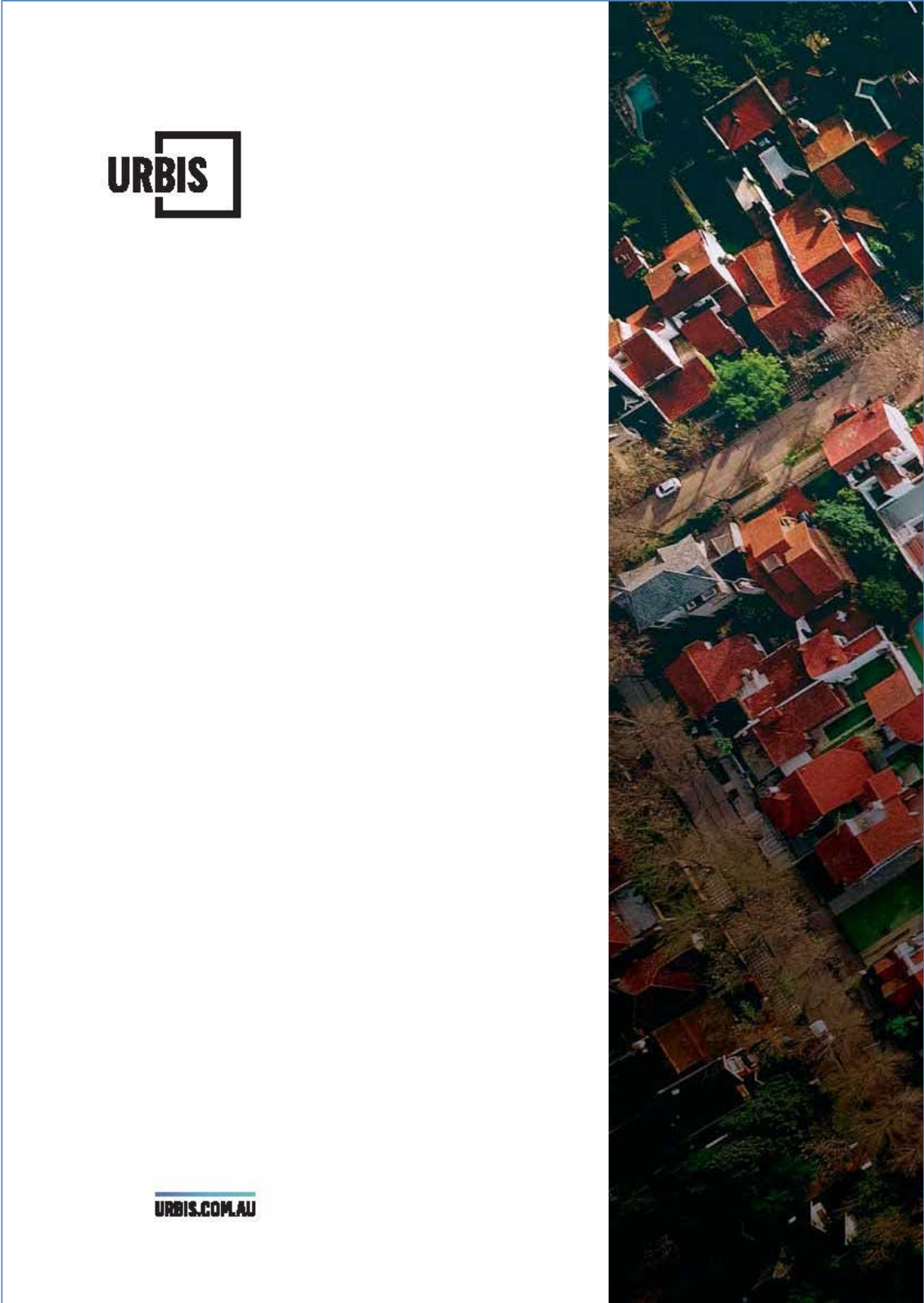
General Objectives and Guidelines are listed on pages 5 to 12 of the 2004 Guidelines. For brevity, only the main overarching objectives are quoted, but the commentary also relates to individual guidelines under each objective - see Table 2.

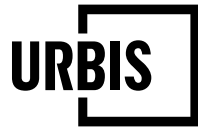
Table 2 Review of General Objectives and Guidelines in superseded Urban Design Guidelines (Jones & Whitehead Pty Ltd, 2004, p. 5-12)

OBJECTIVE	CURRENT STATUS
Ensure that development is complementary to surrounding residential neighbourhoods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At a high level the objective is still valid, but requires some refinement
Allow for development on quarried areas of the site at a higher density and with varied building types relative to surrounding areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Quarried' areas have been filled in, but still valid in principle.
Protect and restore significant indigenous vegetation communities including canopy trees, understorey and herbaceous elements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Still valid in principle, however the specifics of public access have changed
Create an interface between development and the flora and fauna reserve that helps to protect the ecological values of the reserve while allowing benefits to residents and the broader community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The high level objective is valid, however many of the guidelines are no longer supported. Based on previous advice from Council, the guideline to "support fenced outdoor spaces with minimal plantings next to the reserve" is no longer correct.
Create links with parkland along Blind Creek.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Still valid
Minimise the impacts of construction during, and as a result of, development of the site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Still valid
Follow best practice in design, construction and operation of drainage systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Still valid
Support energy-efficient buildings and landscapes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Still valid
Plan streets within the site as an integral part of the local street network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most points still valid Guideline to "Design streets with a character similar to streets in adjoining areas (width, pavement materials)" is limited in some respects by the need to provide a finer grain of subdivision in order to be commercially viable.
Create an attractive public interface between the new housing and other public open spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At a high level the objective is still valid Some of the specific guidelines for achieving the objective are questionable and may not be in line with the most recent Urban Design Framework for Knox.



Prepared by Urbis, for Norvel Estate Pty Ltd / Yong Ning Pty Ltd 19





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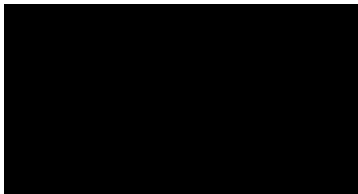
22 July 2021

Patrick Dubuc
Senior Strategic Planner
Knox City Council

Dear Patrick,

We confirm that our client accepts the Section 173 agreement provided to us via email on 21st July 2021.

Kind regards,



[Redacted]

Consultant



S173 Confirmation letter - Norvel Estate

6.3 Endorsement of Draft Green Areas and Rural Strategy (GARS) for Community Consultation

SUMMARY: Senior Strategic Planner, Nasrin Dehghani

The draft Green Areas and Rural Strategy (GARS) provides strategic direction for selected precincts within Knox that are of environmental, recreational, agricultural, rural living and landscape significance to the community. It provides a vision for each of its precincts and details actions that would guide future decision making. Building upon the evidence base, technical analysis, stakeholder input and preliminary community feedback from earlier stages, a draft strategy has now been prepared which is proposed to undergo public consultation in November-December 2021 to ensure the views of the community and key stakeholders are sought. It is recommended that Council endorses the draft GARS for the purpose of community consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorses the draft Knox Green Areas and Rural Strategy (draft GARS) as provided in Attachment 1 for the purpose of public consultation for a minimum of 4 weeks in November – December 2021;
2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or such person the Chief Executive Officer selects) to make minor changes to the draft GARS as appropriate prior to public consultation; and
3. Notes that following consultation, the results will be presented together with the final strategy for Council's consideration.

1. INTRODUCTION

The GARS project represents a strategic planning review of selected precincts within Knox that are of high environmental, recreational, agricultural, rural residential and landscape value to the Knox community. The project was initiated in 2016 with some preliminary research and analysis undertaken, however, was progressed more effectively from mid-2018.

The Study Area is indicated in Attachment 1 and comprises the following Precincts:

- Precinct 1: The Basin Rural Landscape Precinct
- Precinct 2a: Lysterfield Valley and Hills
- Precinct 2b: Lysterfield Quarries and Surrounds
- Precinct 3: Dandenong Creek Valley Precinct
- Precinct 3a: Tirhatuan Wetlands
- Precinct 4: Healesville Freeway Reservation and Surrounds.

These precincts contain areas of public and private land that are used for a variety of rural living, agriculture, recreation, resources or environmental conservation purposes. The Study Area affects the following wards in the Knox municipality: Chandler, Dobson, Taylor, Tirhatuan, Scott, Collier and Dinsdale.

The project is supported by the Knox Planning Scheme which requires further investigation of Knox Green Wedge land and the Dandenong Creek Valley Parklands. The need for this strategy is also driven by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) which requires councils to provide local strategic direction for Green Wedge areas.

The project has been carried out in five stages as follows:

- Stage 1: Setting the Current Scene
- Stage 2: Issues and Opportunities Analysis
- Stage 3: Visioning
- Stage 4: Strategy Development (current stage)
- Stage 5: Implementation and Monitoring

In March-April 2020, public consultation was undertaken to evaluate the findings of Stages 2 and 3 and to engage the stakeholders and the community early in the process of strategy development.

The consultation sought feedback on the issues and opportunities identified and invited ideas to develop a future vision for each precinct. Through a variety of methods, including online surveys, brochures, mail outs, presentations and meetings, the consultation established a preliminary understanding of public sentiment towards the project and provided an opportunity for the community to raise issues and matters that could be investigated as part of this project.

The consultation process and findings were presented to Council at its meeting on 24 August 2020 and are outlined in the [GARS Community Consultation Report: Visioning Consultation](#). Broadly, the findings include:

- The overall direction and approach to the project was generally supported by the key stakeholders;
- The draft vision and opportunities for each precinct received beneficial feedback from the community that has helped improve or refine the recommendations in the draft GARS;
- Protecting these precincts from future development and change was a key priority for the broader Knox community. However, some of the individual landowners within the Study Area objected to this outcome, in particular, those outside the Urban Growth Boundary who stated they favour rezoning to allow for urban development or smaller lot rural subdivision in proximity to the urban area;
- Ecological protection and enhancement was another important issue to the broader community with substantial feedback focusing on native vegetation, biodiversity and waterways;
- Walking and cycling safety was raised by many participants with suggestions for improvements and additional shared paths/trails;
- While there was an overall negative sentiment towards high-impact, large-scale tourism or intensification of recreational uses, general support was expressed for more parkland, low-key recreation, and small scale complementary business or community uses in the right locations where they do not detract from the environmental or scenic qualities of these precincts.

2. DISCUSSION

Building upon the issues and opportunities and reflecting on the public feedback received, the draft GARS strategy (Attachment 1) presents future strategic directions for the Study Area.

The document has two main parts:

- Part A sets the scene by providing an overview of the current conditions, policy context and key project drivers;

- Part B provides a future vision, objectives, strategies and actions. The discussions and actions are divided into those that apply to the entire Study Area and those that are precinct-based. Attachment 2 provides a one page summary of the GARS strategic framework including objectives and strategies which are organised under three overarching themes:
 - Ecology;
 - Landscape and Heritage;
 - Land Use and Access.

This strategic framework guides the analysis for each precinct and is translated into individual actions across the document. Overall, the strategy seeks to achieve the following key outcomes:

- Protecting the urban growth boundary in The Basin, Lysterfield and Rowville;
- Better clarifying and acknowledging the unique environmental and landscape characteristics of each precinct with the intention of protecting them from incremental change or loss of value;
- Enhancing waterway health and habitat values including along the wildlife corridors associated with the Dandenong Creek and its tributaries;
- Detailing the landscape and character values, including natural, rural and pastoral landscapes, and protecting key view lines and scenic areas;
- Protecting the floodplains from development and level change to prevent flooding downstream;
- Maintaining capable agricultural land and promoting sustainable agriculture practices;
- Identifying compatible economic opportunities such as tourism and agri-tourism;
- Preventing the introduction or intensification of sensitive uses in proximity to bushland to prevent additional bushfire risk;
- Maintaining low intensity rural buffers surrounding rich habitat and bushland areas;
- Improved heritage protection and identifying places for further investigation;
- Identifying opportunities for additional parkland and recreational uses; and
- Identifying locations for additional shared paths and improvements to roads and pedestrian/cyclist connectivity and safety.

Once adopted, the strategy will be accompanied by an Implementation Plan that comprises all actions across the document and specifies how each Action will be delivered.

3. CONSULTATION

Subject to Council's endorsement, the draft GARS will be made available for public comment for a minimum of four weeks. The planned public consultation (November to December 2021) represents the second round of community engagement and will seek feedback on the draft GARS including the proposed strategic directions and actions prior to Council's consideration for adoption.

An Engagement Plan and a Communication Plan have been prepared which detail the various stakeholders, approach to engagement and methods to be used. An engagement consultant has also been engaged to assist with pop-up sessions and intercept surveys (subject to COVID-19 restrictions).

The planned consultation will generally include the following methods:

CONSULTATION METHOD	TARGET AUDIENCE
Pop-up sessions and intercept surveys in appropriate locations within or in proximity to each GARS precinct (subject to COVID-19 restrictions)	Residents, visitors, recreational users, cyclists, the general community
Direct mail notification	Property owners, residents and business operators within the study area
Advertising in community papers (Boronia and Basin News, Rowville-Lysterfield Community News, Ferntree Gully News)	Local communities
Targeted consultation (presentation, email notification)	Knox Advisory Committees, user/interest groups, state government stakeholders, neighbouring local governments, previous submitters
Knox eNewsletter, web news, social media platforms and digital screens (libraries, hubs, community centers)	Broader Knox community
Council's Have Your Say platform and the project webpage - will include the draft GARS summary, full document and an online survey for each precinct	All audiences will be called to visit the page to find more information and complete the surveys

Following the engagement, the consultation results will be presented to Council with a final strategy for adoption.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

There are no environmental/amenity risks arising from the proposed consultation. The strategy as a whole seeks to improve environmental and amenity qualities within the Study Area and will contribute positively towards the protection of the environment and amenity.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The proposed public consultation on the draft GARS will be resourced from the allocated City Futures operational project budget.

Subject to Council adoption of the draft strategy, the proposed implementation actions supporting the strategy will inform the annual business plans of the respective responsible departments. Additional resources, if required, will be the subject of business cases in future years.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposed consultation has positive social outcomes in terms of public engagement, as it enables participation in decision making. Owners/occupiers within the Study Area as well as the

broader community are likely to have an interest in the project and the consultation will provide the broader community with an opportunity to have a say and influence outcomes.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 1 - We value our natural and built environment

Strategy 1.1 - Protect and enhance our natural environment

Strategy 1.2 - Create a greener city with more large trees, indigenous flora and fauna

Strategy 1.3 - Ensure the Knox local character is protected and enhanced through the design and location of urban development and infrastructure

Goal 3 - We can move around easily

Strategy 3.2 - Improve bike and footpath connectivity, including identifying gaps between existing bike routes, footpaths and key places

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.1 - Protect and preserve our local cultural heritage

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.1 - Build, strengthen and promote good governance practices across government and community organisations

Strategy 8.2 - Enable the community to participate in a wide range of engagement activities

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

The draft GARS provides the necessary evidence base and strategic directions to enable improved decision making for the study area. This work has been informed by significant research and technical input and would benefit from broader public engagement to ensure the views of the community and key stakeholders are captured.

It is recommended that Council endorses the draft GARS to enable the planned community engagement to commence.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Senior Strategic Planner, Nasrin Dehghani

Report Authorised By: Director City Strategy and Integrity, Matt Kelleher

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - Draft GARS for Public Consultation [6.3.1 - 122 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - GARS Strategic Framework Summary [6.3.2 - 1 page]

KNOX

your city



Knox City Council

Draft Green Areas & Rural Strategy (GARS)

A plan for Knox Green Wedge land and Green Corridors

Draft for Consultation – October 2021



Document Register					
Rev	Purpose	Prepared By	Reviewed By	Date of Issue	Changes
1	Initial draft	ND	Project Working Group	05/05/2020	
2	Draft for EMT	ND	MC & AP	20/05/2020	Internal comments incorporated
3	Draft for Councillors Issues Briefing	ND	EMT	01/06/2021	Minor edits
4	Draft for public consultation	ND		04/10/2021	Changes to reflect Issues Briefing feedback

Melbourne Water Drainage Information - Melbourne Water

Whilst every endeavour has been made to ensure that the mapping information is current and accurate, no responsibility or liability is taken by Knox City Council or any of the above organisations in respect to inaccuracy, errors, omissions or for actions based on this information.

Planning information should be used only as a means of preliminary investigation. For accurate overlay information please obtain a Planning Certificate from DELWP.

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Drainage and flood extent information has been provided to Council on a yearly basis by Melbourne Water for indicative purposes only. Where the latest Melbourne Water drainage and flood extent mapping is critical, please contact Melbourne Water.

Acknowledgement of the Traditional Owners

Knox City Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the City of Knox, the Wurundjeri and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation.

Contributors

This document has been written by officers of the Knox City Council and is informed by a number of background technical reports. Knox City Council acknowledges the contribution of the following consultants to the background reports:

Hansen Partnership, Urban Enterprise, Context, RMCG, Ecology and Infrastructure International (EII), Urban Ecology in Action and EcoAerial.

Disclaimer for maps in this report:

Roads and Title Boundaries - State of Victoria, Knox City Council
 Planning Scheme Information - DELWP, Knox City Council
 Aerial Photography - AAM



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Executive Summary

The Knox Green Areas and Rural Strategy (GARS) has been prepared by Knox City Council (KCC). It provides a strategic planning framework for precincts along the municipal boundaries that contain some of the most important bushland, green wedge, open space and rural landscapes in Knox. The strategy guides the future of the precincts by identifying their key values and providing direction on how to protect these values. It also aims to proactively attend to the existing and emerging challenges while realising future potential.

The strategy identifies significant ecological values in the Study Area due to the existing waterways – the Dandenong Creek and its tributaries – and significant areas of native vegetation. The GARS precincts are home to a variety of wildlife species including endangered ones. Some of the open space and rural areas, even those with dispersed or no vegetation, provide essential buffers, movement opportunities and stepping stones that facilitate wildlife connectivity. Vast floodplains in the creek valleys complement these ecological systems while playing a key role in stormwater management and the prevention of flooding downstream in the urban area.

The strategy also details the Study Area's social contributions, including its important role in providing parkland, leisure and nature-based recreation opportunities for the Knox community as well as the broader regional catchment. In the coming years as the urban settlement densifies to cater for a growing population, enhancements to the open space areas and improved access to these opportunities will be essential, to ensure the health and wellbeing needs of the community are met.

The Study Area includes some of the most significant scenic landscapes in Knox, featuring rolling hills, open pastoral valleys and long range views to the Dandenong foothills. These landscapes define the edges of the urban boundary and are highly valued by the community as unique places providing a sense of belonging and attachment.

The challenges of climate change further highlight the important role of these precincts. Considering more extreme weather events are predicted, the strategy places its key focus on protecting the floodplains, avoiding development intensification in bushfire prone areas, and maintaining vegetation cover to prevent the urban heat island effect. In addition, the strategy puts forward ideas for sustainable approaches to design, infrastructure and economic practices, and supports carbon capture and renewable energy production in identified areas.

Protecting identified environmental and social values from incremental changes will be a key challenge in the coming years. The underlying land use and economy will play a critical role. The Study Area provides for a range of rural living, agriculture, food production and

rural industries in proximity to the urban area. The strategy seeks to promote a healthy and thriving rural economy that supports land use and economic activities that complement and sustain the environmental and social values, and enhance these values where possible. Once implemented, the strategy will provide Knox City Council with a tool that can assist in influencing future outcomes, in particular at planning decision making.

Considering their diverse characteristics, a vision is provided for each precinct. The vision is supported by objectives and strategies under three themes: Ecology, Landscape & Heritage and Land Use & Access. The theme-based objectives are as follows:

Ecology:

- To protect and enhance biodiversity and wildlife connectivity.
- To protect and increase tree and vegetation canopy cover.
- To improve waterway health and flood management.

Landscape & Heritage:

- To protect and enhance local character and landscape values.
- To recognise, protect and promote existing heritage.

Land Use & Access

- To recognise and protect the values of Knox Green Wedges.
- To ensure land uses are located and managed to be consistent with the values and functions of the Study Area.
- To facilitate connectivity and safe movement for all users.

The above objectives are supported by a set of strategies that are then translated into more detailed and measurable actions. Some of the actions apply to the entire Study Area, while the others are precinct-based. Selected key actions of the strategy relate to:

- Protecting the Urban Growth Boundary in the Study Area
- Prioritising vegetation and habitat protection and enhancing wildlife corridors
- Better defining and protecting the landscape qualities and local character
- Undertaking further heritage investigation
- Protecting capable agricultural land from inappropriate development and use
- Enhancing shared path connectivity
- Improving community access to recreational opportunities
- Identifying opportunities for tourism, open space, leisure and community uses
- Protecting floodplains and bushfire prone areas from intense development
- Updates to the Knox Planning Scheme to reflect this strategy.

The strategy is accompanied by an Implementation Plan.



INTRODUCTION

The Knox Green Areas and Rural Strategy (the Strategy) provides objectives and strategic directions for precincts in Knox that are of high environmental and landscape significance. The Study Area contains areas on the edge of Metropolitan Melbourne as well as significant corridors of open space and rural land that accommodate significant conservation, resources, open space, recreation and other public functions.

As a land use planning strategy, a key purpose of this document is to inform the planning framework, including the Knox Planning Scheme (the Scheme), and guide future decision making. In addition, the project provides non-statutory recommendations in the fields of environmental management, parks and recreation, utility services, land management and community partnerships, where appropriate.

Study Area

The Study Area, as indicated in **Figure 1**, has been divided into the following precincts based on location, landscape characteristics and existing planning controls:

- Precinct 1:** The Basin Rural Landscape
- Precinct 2a:** Lysterfield Valley and Hills
- Precinct 2b:** Lysterfield Quarries and Surrounds
- Precinct 3:** Dandenong Creek Valley
- Precinct 3a:** Tirhatuan Wetlands
- Precinct 4:** Healesville Freeway Reservation and Surrounds

Outside the Study Area (see discussion in the following section):

- * Rowville Lakes Golf Course (Tirhatuan Golf Course)
- † Waverley Golf Course

The Study Area comprises land outside the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) in The Basin to the north east of the municipality, and in Lysterfield to the south east, which provide a transition between suburban areas in Knox and the Dandenong Foothills to the east. The Study Area also includes rural and parkland/conservation land in the Dandenong Creek Valley to the west of Knox, as well as the area reserved for the proposed Healesville Freeway extension to the north-west of the municipality.

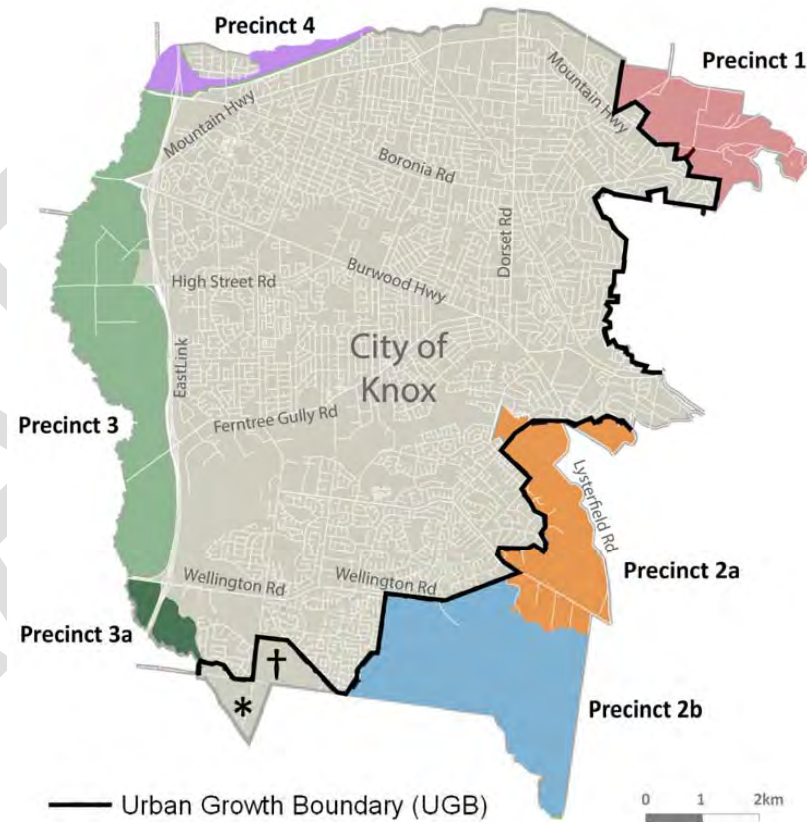


Figure 1 - Study Area



Precinct 1: The Basin Rural Landscape

Precinct 1 - The Basin Rural Landscape is 383ha in size and is located in the north-eastern corner of the Knox municipality. The precinct abuts the Dandenong Ranges National Park (DRNP) and Doongalla State Forest and contains significant native vegetation. It also includes sections of the Dandenong Creek and Dobsons Creek.

The precinct is characterised by large allotment sizes and provides attractive rural amenity, including idyllic views of Mount Corhanwarrabul. The floodplains of Dobsons Creek provide for agricultural activities while the eastern part of the precinct rises up to the Sassafras Forest, and contains privately owned rural residential properties scattered amongst indigenous vegetation. A number of mixed grazing properties including sheep, goats, alpacas and horse agistment are present, ranging from semi-commercial in scale to hobby farming. The precinct also includes public parklands and popular access routes to the DRNP which provides significant recreational opportunities for the local and broader community.

Precinct 2a: Lysterfield Valley and Hills

The Lysterfield Valley and Hills Precinct (Precinct 2a) is almost 500ha in area and provides an important rural green wedge between the suburban areas of Rowville and the Ferntree Gully-Belgrave ridge of the Dandenongs. Located around the Monbulk Creek Valley, the precinct is characterised by a noticeable land use transition from suburb to pastoral and agricultural open landscapes. The primary land uses within this precinct are agricultural, with market gardening and grazing currently dominating, along with hobby farming, horse agistment and larger lifestyle residential allotments. A number of horticultural businesses are present along Lysterfield Road, including production of Brussel sprouts and nursery plants.

Excellent views across the landscape are available from Glenfern Road and Mount Morton highlighting the visual transition between the metropolitan fringes and the forested slopes of the Dandenong Ranges.

Precinct 2b: Lysterfield Quarries and Surrounds

The Lysterfield Quarries and Surrounds Precinct (Precinct 2b) is approximately 877ha in area. Predominant features of Precinct 2b are the Boral and Hanson Quarries, the ridge top and slopes of the Lysterfield Hills and Lysterfield National Park, with the backdrop of Churchill National Park to the south.

The precinct contains parts of Lysterfield Park including sloped areas of forest and woodland which are of environmental significance and are used by the community for a

variety of recreational activities include walking, cycling, picnic, horse riding, mountain biking and orienteering.

The two quarries contain reserves of hard rock comprising granodiorite and hornfels which are extracted and processed on site. Quarrying activity comprises extracting rock and transporting it to an onsite crushing plant, then stockpiling the processed stone for sale. The quarry supplies markets in the surrounding southern and eastern suburbs and the CBD with high quality construction materials for use in the concrete and road construction industries.

Precinct 3: The Dandenong Creek Valley

The Dandenong Creek Valley is the largest precinct (975ha) and incorporates the land corridor between EastLink and the Dandenong Creek extending 10km along the Creek. This area accommodates large tracts of cleared farmland, semi-rural land, bushland, parklands and developed sporting facilities. It also includes large private properties designated for future public acquisition. Dandenong Creek runs along the Precinct's western boundary, which also serves as the boundary between Knox and the neighbouring municipalities of Whitehorse and Monash.

There is a high level of public land ownership in this precinct, with Parks Victoria and Melbourne Water responsible for a relatively large amount of this precinct due to its proximity to Dandenong Creek. Almost two-thirds of the Dandenong Creek Valley comprises waterways, public open space including sports fields, walking and cycling trails and water treatment facilities.

Precinct 3a: Tirhatuan Wetlands

This area consists of two large allotments south of Wellington Road generally between the Dandenong Creek and Corhanwarrabul Creek. The area accommodates the Tirhatuan wetlands that provide a key stormwater retention and treatment function while accommodating significant vegetation, habitat and wildlife linkages. These allotments are designated as Public Use Zone (PUZ1) in the Knox Planning Scheme and are managed by Melbourne Water.

No changes are expected to the use and function of this area over the life of this Strategy, with key priority being stormwater management and environmental protection. Considering the public zoning and ownership in this area, this area is not threatened by change and this Strategy has not included it in the detailed analysis provided for Precinct 3. However, the overarching objectives and strategies, in particular those pertaining to ecological and landscape values of the Dandenong Creek corridor in Precinct 3 are extendable to this area.



Precinct 4: Healesville Freeway Reservation and Surrounds

The Healesville Freeway Reservation and Surrounds (Precinct 4) is the smallest of the GARS precincts at 127.5ha. Originally reserved for the 'Healesville Freeway' in 1969, the reservation east of EastLink has been retained for possible future road construction. Much of the Healesville Freeway Reservation has been cleared and is used for a number of purposes including horse agistment, livestock properties, sports fields, nurseries and community gardens. The area is highly urbanised, surrounded by residential development and industrial estates.

The precinct adjoins the south side of Dandenong Creek and KCC's boundary with the City of Maroondah. Land is low lying and prone to flood.

Out of scope: Waverley and Rowville Lakes Golf Courses

The two golf courses (indicted on Figure 1) are located at the southernmost area of Knox, outside the Urban Growth Boundary, and form part of Knox Green Wedge land. However, they are not included in the Study Area for the purpose of this Strategy. This exclusion is due to the fact that the future direction for these sites is different from Council's vision for other areas of Green Wedge land in Knox.

Waverley Golf Club (and adjoining sites on Stud Road) are identified as a strategic investigation site by the Knox Housing Strategy (KHS). The KHS provides support for future rezoning of this site, subject to a successful application to the State Government to review the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). Subject to the UGB being reviewed in favour of the site, residential development at a range of densities is considered suitable by KHS. The KHS envisages a possible future capacity of 350 dwellings and provides high level strategic direction for future housing types, location of higher densities, access, interfaces and environmental issues, to be addressed through future planning process for the site.

Rowville Lakes Golf Course (Tirhatuan Golf Course) is located to the west of Stud Road. There are no existing plans to change the use of this site. In case of future investigations into the use or development of this site, the planning process will be guided by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) which may require a change to the UGB and compliance with Ministerial Direction No. 21 – Golf Course Redevelopment and the draft Planning Guidelines for Golf Course Redevelopment. These guidelines include a decision-making framework that would be used to assess proposals for the future redevelopment of surplus golf course land. Due to the different nature of planning process, this site has also been excluded from the GARS Study Area.



Methodology

To ensure the strategic directions are informed by adequate analysis and consultation, the preparation of this Strategy has been undertaken in five stages.

Stage 1: Setting the Current Scene

The first stage of the project included gathering data about the Study Area through research and consultation. This stage also included a preliminary analysis of the information to develop a comprehensive understanding of the existing conditions in each precinct. As part of this stage, the existing geospatial datasets were sourced and thematic analytical maps were prepared, overlaying multiple layers of data to enable more detailed analysis.

This stage also represented a gap analysis of the existing information, which identified the key areas where additional technical consultant work was required. The outcomes of this stage are summarised in the **GARS Setting the Scene Report**.

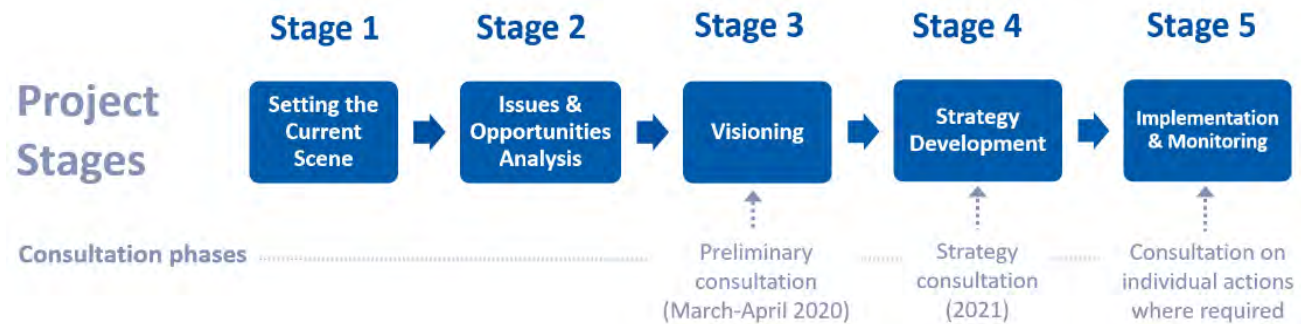
Stage 2: Issues and Opportunities Analysis

The second stage included the following tasks to undertake a detailed analysis of the issues and opportunities for the Study Area.

- i. Review of the information collated and procured in Stage 1. This included the extraction of relevant recommendations from the following consultant reports that were specifically procured for this projects:

- *Knox Wildlife Conservation and Connectivity Report (Ecology and Infrastructure International (EII); Urban Ecology in Action; EcoAerial, 2017). This study also provided the GIS database for Knox Wildlife Atlas.*
- *Landscape Values and Character Assessment (Hansen Partnership, 2019).*
- *Preliminary Heritage Review: Knox Rural Heritage (Context, 2017).*
- *Assessment of Agricultural Potential of Rural Land in Knox (RMCG, 2016).*
- *GARS Economic Study (Urban Enterprise, 2019).*
- ii. Internal analysis and targeted consultation with internal and external stakeholders
- iii. Consideration of best practice and relevant studies from other Councils, in particular from adjoining councils
- iv. Strategic assessment of competing issues and opportunities for precincts or specific places. For example, the assessment of economic potential vs. environmental values vs. landscape sensitivities
- v. Organising and mapping the issues and opportunities under three emerging themes: Ecology; Landscape & Heritage; and Land Use & Access
- vi. Evaluating the recommendations in terms of reasonableness and practicality
- vii. Preliminary consideration of the recommendations in light of current provisions of the Scheme and translating the recommendations into planning language where necessary

The above analysis along with the draft recommendations from Stage 2 are summarised in the **GARS Issues and Opportunities Report**.





Stage 3: Visioning

Stage 3 included the development of a draft vision for each precinct taking into consideration the following matters:

- State-wide vision for the Study Area including guidance from *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050*, the Planning Policy Framework and the strategic directions from the Scheme.
- Council vision including the Community and Council Plan, the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) in the Scheme and other KCC policy and position.
- Community vision – Community vision was captured through public engagement.

Preliminary Consultation (2020)

In March and April 2020, stakeholder and community feedback was undertaken to seek feedback on the draft issues and opportunities identified. As part of this consultation, comments were also invited on a draft vision for each of the precincts. The consultation results have been used to develop this Strategy, including the objectives, strategies and actions identified.

The consultation received a considerable level of interest and participation. The engagement webpage was visited 16,146 times and a total of 188 online surveys were completed during the consultation period. Amongst the GARS precincts, Precinct 1 received the highest level of engagement, followed by Precinct 3.

Full consultation results are provided in the **GARS Community Consultation Report: Visioning Consultation**.

Stage 4: Strategy Development

Following public consultation, a draft Strategy has been prepared which provides strategic directions for the Study Area. The preparation of the draft strategy has included the following steps in response to the community feedback received:

- Refining the vision for each precinct
- Review of issues and opportunities
- Developing objectives and strategies under each theme
- Providing detailed recommendations in the form of actions for “all precincts” and “precinct-specific” actions
- Preparing an Implementation Plan.

Final Consultation and Adoption

Subject to Council endorsement the draft Strategy will be advertised for public comment. After the consideration of public comments, the Strategy will be presented to Knox Council for potential adoption.

Stage 5: Implementation and Monitoring

The Strategy is complemented by an Implementation Plan which lists the actions identified, noting the leading agency/department within KCC.

A key implementation measure of the Strategy is likely to be a Scheme amendment. Other implementation measures include internal or external partnerships, further investigation, technical studies or ongoing education/advocacy work.



PART A: SETTING THE SCENE

DRAFT



1. Strategic Context

1.1. State Planning Context

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 (Plan Melbourne) is the Victorian government's overarching plan that sets high level directions for land use planning in metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria. Plan Melbourne defines an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) for Melbourne and defines the outside area as Green Wedges. The plan encourages urban consolidation within the UGB and seeks to protect Green Wedges and peri-urban areas from inappropriate development.

Some of the key directions of Plan Melbourne for the Study Area relate to:

- Supporting the productive use of land and resources in Melbourne's non-urban areas.
- Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges.
- Making Melbourne cooler and greener by strengthening the integrated metropolitan open space network.
- Protecting and restoring natural habitats.
- Creating a network of green spaces that support biodiversity conservation and opportunities to connect with nature.
- Protecting and enhancing the health of urban waterways.

Plan Melbourne also sets the strategic basis for the application of a range of Planning Scheme controls including zones and overlays to limit urban growth and development.

Resilient Melbourne (2016)

Resilient Melbourne was published by the City of Melbourne in May 2016 as a joint project of 32 metropolitan Melbourne councils, Melbourne's academic, business and community sectors, and the Victorian Government. It represents the first resilience strategy for Greater Melbourne to face the challenges associated with the trends of urbanisation, globalisation and climate change. The plan considers how to respond to both chronic stresses - including sea level rise, increasing pressures on healthcare services, unemployment, and deeper social inequality - and acute shocks - such as heatwaves, bushfires, floods, pandemics, and extremist acts, including cyber-crime.

Resilient Melbourne identifies four long-term (30 years or more) objectives and an action framework under four action areas of Adapt, Survive, Thrive and Embed.

Knox Green Areas and Rural Strategy

Resilient Melbourne provides direction for this Strategy as the Study Area contains some of the City's most significant areas in terms of biodiversity, tree canopy, water systems, parkland and recreation. These areas are key to the resilience of Knox and the broader region.

Living Melbourne: Our Metropolitan Urban Forest (2019)

A flagship action from Resilient Melbourne was the preparation of a metropolitan urban forest strategy. This Strategy developed the evidence base and actions required to connect, extend and enhance urban greening across the metropolitan area. Living Melbourne was endorsed by 41 organisations representing Victorian government, water authorities, statutory agencies and industry bodies and local government,

KCC was one of the local government partners involved as part of the Eastern region which also included the municipalities of Manningham, Maroondah, Monash, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges. The document sets targets for tree canopy and shrub cover in the Eastern region as follows.

Table 1 - Living Melbourne targets for the Eastern Region

Existing 2015	Total% tree canopy	25
	Total% tree canopy & shrubs	44
Target 2030	Total% tree canopy	27
	Total% tree canopy & shrubs	49
Target 2040	Total% tree canopy	29
	Total% tree canopy & shrubs	50
Target 2050	Total% tree canopy	30
	Total% tree canopy & shrubs	50

Living Melbourne also provides strategies to achieve the targets and provides guidance for councils to develop monitoring programs and local tree canopy targets. The Living Melbourne actions and targets need to be translated at the municipality level into relevant and measurable actions for Knox and the Study Area.

Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037 (2017)

Prepared by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) in 2017, this document is Victoria's plan to stop the decline of native plants and animals and improve the natural environment. Coupled with reviews of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (FFG Act) and native vegetation clearing regulations, the Plan seeks to ensure



that Victoria has an effective approach to protecting and managing biodiversity. It sets high level directions for community engagement, planning (in particular for protections in reserves) funding and delivery of biodiversity related projects.

Integrated Water Management Framework (2017)

Representing another key recommendation of Resilient Melbourne, an Integrated Water Management (IWM) Framework was prepared in September 2017. The document sets out the management framework to deliver a safe and secure water supply, efficient stormwater management, healthy and valued urban landscapes and reflecting community values in place-based planning. It sets out a governance framework of IWM forums at state and regional levels and IWM Working Groups to deliver place-based IWM Plans.

Other Water-Related Plans and Programs

There are a number of other Melbourne Water plans and programs that guide KCC's management of the waterways and stormwater operations:

- Water for Victoria
- Melbourne Water's Urban Cooling Program
- Healthy Waterways Strategy – Melbourne Water
- Water for a future thriving Melbourne.

Linking People and Spaces: A Strategy for Melbourne's Open Space Network (Parks Victoria, 2002)

This document is a regional level strategy for Melbourne's open space network and specifies actions for parks, trails and waterways. The document is out of date and Parks Victoria has been working on the preparation of an updated strategy, which is also an action item from Plan Melbourne.

Movement and Place in Victoria

The Department of Transport's new approach, the Movement and Place framework, seeks to balance the needs of both transport users and place users and design a mix of transport modes that are appropriate to how the road and places are used by communities, whether they are pedestrians, drivers or cyclists.

Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018-28

The Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018-28 is prepared by Transport for Victoria and seeks to increase the number, frequency and diversity of Victorians cycling for transport. Its goals are to invest in a safer, lower-stress, better-connected network and make cycling a more inclusive experience.

Principal Bicycle Network (PBN)

The PBN is designed by VicRoads and is a network of proposed and existing bicycle routes that provide access to major destinations. The main purpose of the PBN is to guide State Government investment in bicycle infrastructure and facilities. In addition to the PBN, a network of Bicycle Priority Routes (BPR) has also been identified which represents those routes of a higher priority.

The PBN routes (existing and proposed) have been considered as part of the access and movement analysis for the Study Area.

Strategic Cycling Corridors (SCC) Network

The SCC network supports the needs of commuter trips (to work or education) and other important trips, such as to stations, shops or schools. The SCC network links up important destinations, including along EastLink and east-west linkages within the Dandenong Creek Valley. The SCCs are intended to prioritise the provision of separated cycling paths rather than shared user paths where possible.

Parts of the Dandenong Creek Trail, Eastlink Trail and east-west linkages through the Dandenong Creek Valley (Precinct 3) are classified as primary and main routes by the SCC.

Agriculture Victoria Strategy

In May 2017, Agriculture Victoria released its ten-year Agriculture Victoria Strategy. This is a reform framework articulating Agriculture Victoria's priorities to enhance Victorian agriculture's global competitiveness, innovation and resilience. The document focuses on large-scale agriculture and more intense agricultural activity. While it has limited direct action affecting the Study Area, it sets general guidance on preserving existing agriculture land and production activities.



Extractive Resources in Victoria: Demand and Supply Study 2015-2050

In 2016, the then Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) released the “Extractive Resources in Victoria: Demand and Supply Study 2015-2050”. The Study identified 15 Local Government Areas that are critical for supplying extractive resources for Victoria’s future construction needs. Knox was rated as the 4th most critical resource location in Victoria. This was mostly due to the two hard rock quarries in Lysterfield and Rowville – which are significant suppliers to the Melbourne construction industry and are well located for supplying the Melbourne region.

1.2. Regional Planning Context

Draft Land Use Framework Plan: Eastern Metro Region

Work is underway by DELWP on the preparation of regional Land Use Framework Plans (LUFs) to implement *Plan Melbourne* desired outcomes at a regional scale. The LUFs are intended to inform the Regional and Local Planning Policy, and to identify a series of actions which can be delivered through new partnerships, including:

- Long-term strategies (30 years) around population growth, jobs, housing, infrastructure, major transport improvements, open space and urban forests.
- Short-term actions (5 years) for State and local government to implement the LUF’s priorities and achieve the outcomes of Plan Melbourne.

Melbourne East Sport and Recreation Strategy 2016

Key messages from the Melbourne East Sport and Recreation Strategy 2016 are:

- There are high participation rates in primary sports across the region, including basketball, netball, football, cricket and soccer.
- There is current demand for more indoor courts for basketball and netball, and an immediate need for a gymnastics facility.
- There is an immediate need for additional hockey pitches in the region.
- Formalised sports such as tennis, basketball, soccer, netball, football and cricket are prominent and are the highest structured participation sports in the region.

Living Links

Living Links is an urban nature project to create a web of green spaces across Melbourne’s south-east. By linking up the many parks, reserves and other natural places, it aims to make the area a world-class urban ecosystem, improving habitat for wildlife and making it easier for people to connect with nature as part of their daily lives.



Figure 2 - Living Links Corridors



The initiative represents a partnership between the local governments in the south-east region, Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria, South East Water, Conservation Volunteers Australia and Bushwalking Victoria.

Figure 2 indicates the 17 inter-connecting corridors that have been identified through the Living Links master-planning process as offering particularly important opportunities for new or improved links across the region. In Knox, The Dandenong Creek, Blind Creek, Corhanwarrabul Creek/Monbulk Creek corridors are identified as Living Links. **Figure 3** indicates individual projects in Knox.

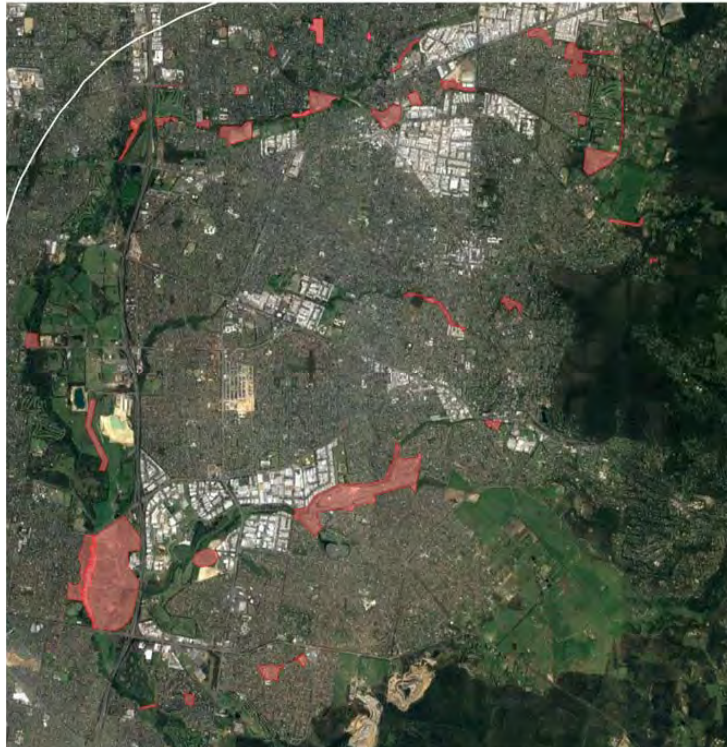


Figure 3 - Living Links Projects in Knox

Knox Green Areas and Rural Strategy

Enhancing Our Dandenong Creek

In 2013 Melbourne Water and EPA designed a program to protect public health and improve storm water quality impacting Dandenong Creek between Bayswater and Endeavour Hills. A Natural Amenity Working Group was established in 2014 to represent a range of local community views. We worked together to identify priority projects to revitalise our creek. As a result, a five-year program was developed that seeks to:

- construct new habitats for threatened fish species
- increase the natural amenity and signage of the creek
- focus on pollution prevention and detection
- manage uncontrolled sewage spills for customers.

Dandenong Valley Parklands Future Direction Plan (2006)

The plan covers areas within the Cities of Knox, Monash and Whitehorse and provides strategic management directions, and identifies management zones and key actions to guide decision making about current and future uses. The document states that the time horizon of the plan is 10-15 years, which means the plan is due for a review.

Eastern Regional Trail Strategy (September 2018)

The document sets out actions for the below four trails that affect Precinct 3 (Dandenong Creek Valley):

- Dandenong Creek Trail
- Ferny Creek Trail
- Blind Creek Trail.

Dandenong Integrated Water Management Forum: Draft Strategic Directions Statement (7 August 2018)

The Forum was convened in December 2017 with subsequent Forums meeting throughout 2018 to discuss and prioritise integrated water planning and management in the catchments flowing into Port Phillip Bay from Port Melbourne to Point Nepean. City of Knox was a member of this forum and features as a collaborative partner in a number of initiatives in this paper.



Churchill National Park and Lysterfield Park Management Plan (Amended 2020)

In 2020 Parks Victoria updated the Churchill National Park and Lysterfield Park Management Plan in consultation with the community. This document details planned upgrades and management measures and is accompanied by an updated management zones map.

Eastern Region Pest Animal Strategy

KCC has endorsed a Regional Pest Animal Strategy which has been prepared in collaboration with several neighbouring councils in the eastern region as well as Parks Victoria, VicRoads and Melbourne Water. This document supports the management of invasive species and protection of native wildlife in the Study Area.

1.3. Local Planning Context

Knox Community and Council Plan 2017-21

The following table outlines how the Strategy aligns with the Knox Community and Council Plan (CCP). However, it is noted that a new CCP is currently being prepared. It is recommended that alignment is re-checked once a new CCP is adopted.

Element	Relevance to this Strategy
<p>Knox Vision 2035:</p> <p>Nestled between the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges and the wetlands of the Dandenong Creek Valley, Knox has a rich natural environment and picturesque landscape, highly valued by residents and visitors alike. Knox encompasses the best of city and suburban living. From the thriving modern city vibe of Knox Central at its heart, plentiful public open spaces, outstanding civic facilities and diverse residential offerings to its leafy suburban centres with abundant space, clean air, excellent schools and good transport links, Knox is the</p>	<p>The project aligns with the vision in terms of supporting a rich natural environment, picturesque landscape, public open spaces and leafy suburban character.</p>

	preferred place to live, work and play today and for generations to come.	
Goal 1 – We value our natural and built environment	Strategy 1.1 Protect and enhance our natural environment.	Including vegetation cover, creek systems, and biodiversity corridors.
	Strategy 1.2 Create a greener city with more large trees, indigenous flora and fauna.	
	Strategy 1.3 Ensure the Knox local character is protected and enhanced through the design and location of urban development and infrastructure.	The project precincts each play a key part in protecting the key landscapes and view lines to the Dandenong foothills.
Goal 3 – We can move around easily	Strategy 3.1 Enable improved transport choices supported by integrated and sustainable transport systems and infrastructure.	The Study Area includes some of Knox’ key recreational walking and cycling trails.
	Strategy 3.2 Improve bike and footpath connectivity, including identifying gaps between existing bike routes, \ footpaths and key places.	
Goal 4 – We are safe and secure	Strategy 4.3 Maintain and manage the safety of the natural and built environment.	Safety and perception of safety should be considered as a key objective in all precincts.
	Strategy 4.4. Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity.	
Goal 5 – We have a strong regional economy, local	Strategy 5.4 Increase and strengthen local opportunities for lifelong learning, formal education pathways and skills development to improve	The Study Area play a role in Knox’ economy as it contains agriculture, tourism and agri-tourism uses.



<i>employment and learning opportunities</i>	economic capacity of the community.	
Goal 6 – We are healthy, happy and well	Strategy 6.2 Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health.	The Study Area contains some of the key areas of parkland, conservation reserves and sporting facilities in Knox.
Goal 7 – We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity	Strategy 7.1 Protect and preserve our local cultural heritage.	The Study Area has significant character and heritage values and contributes to Knox’ identity as a green/leafy City providing gateways and corridors to the Dandenongs.
Goal 8 – We have confidence in decision making	Strategy 8.1 Build, strengthen and promote good governance practices across government and community organisations.	The Strategy provides strategic direction and evidence base to better inform future decision making.

Knox Climate Response Plan (Underway)

KCC is currently developing a Climate Response Plan (CRP) which recognises that we are in a state of serious climate and environment change, and acknowledges the seriousness, urgency and significance of this matter. The CRP seeks to consider climate change and biodiversity protection as key environmental factors in assessment of Council policies, projects and actions.

Knox WSUD and Stormwater Management Strategy (2010)

The Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) and Stormwater Management Strategy aims to protect and improve the health of Knox’s streams and creeks while ensuring that flooding impacts are minimised. It identifies the high value catchments in Knox which include Dobsons Creek (GARS Precinct 1), Blind Creek, Ferny Creek and Monbulk Creek (GARS Precinct 2a). For each catchment, it includes strategies and actions to improve catchment health, with a focus on WSUD. Some of the actions include disconnection of directly connected impervious surfaces, construction of WSUD systems, and appropriate monitoring and management of the Directly Connected Impervious (DCI) areas.

[Knox Green Areas and Rural Strategy](#)

City of Knox Flood Modelling Project (underway)

KCC and Melbourne Water are currently undertaking flood modelling with the intention of preparing updated flood maps taking into consideration most recent climate scenarios. Once completed, the modelling is likely to lead to a Scheme amendment to ensure areas affected by significant flooding are accurately identified and protected. This Strategy considers any implications from this project within the Study Area.

Knox Integrated Transport Plan 2015-2025

Prepared in February 2015, this plan sets objectives and strategies, and provides detailed and costed action and initiatives for all modes of transport. Covers all modes of transport. Actions are prioritised: high priority (1-2 yrs), medium priority (3-5 yrs) and low priority (beyond 5 yrs).

The plan includes a public transport vision map, however, this is superseded by a more recent position paper endorsed by Council (refer to the next item below).

The plan does not provide a proposed cycling or pedestrian network, however, it includes action items to review the Knox Pedestrian Plan (which was reviewed in 2017) and the Knox Bicycle Plan (due for a review).

Public Transport Advocacy

KCC has long advocated for improved public transport connectivity to Knox. Relevant initiatives that are considered with respect to the Study Area (mostly Precinct 3) are:

- A heavy rail line along Wellington Road connecting to Rowville, or as an interim solution, a trackless rapid tram.
- A new light rail route along Burwood Highway connecting to Upper Ferntree Gully – or extension of Route 75 as an interim measure.



Knox Bicycle Plan Review (2008)

The plan details individual projects which include new on-road and off-road bicycle facilities, upgrades, end of trip facilities and initiatives to improve safety and community awareness. It also incorporates a costed action plan and provides detailed precinct-scale mapping of existing and proposed facilities. The plan is due for a review.

Draft Knox Principal Cycling Network (underway)

This plan updates KCC's plan for Knox's bicycle network including prioritising routes in accordance with the Movement and Place classification framework. Once adopted, this plan will be accompanied by an action plan detailing individual projects. Recommendations for shared paths and cycling facilities in this Strategy have been aligned with this current project

Knox Principal Pedestrian Network (2017)

Provides an in-depth analysis of pedestrian connectivity and accessibility in Knox and provides a Principal Pedestrian Network (PPN) plan with detailed implementation actions. There are PPN actions within all GARS precincts including new shared paths, footpaths, and intersection improvements. These actions will need to be considered as part of the analysis of issues and opportunities for each precinct.

Knox Open Space Plan 2012-2022

Builds on the 2004-14 Open Space Plan and provides a strategic framework for areas open space across the City. These strategic directions encompass themes of sustainability, community involvement, greater community use of open space and linkages between open space areas. It operates alongside Council's Open Space Asset Management Plan which defines Council open space asset and service management performance.

Knox Leisure Plan 2014-2019

Encourages greater use and connectivity of urban and natural environments to cater for leisure needs. Action 16 of the Implementation Plan provides guidance for GARS Precinct 2b: *"Investigate opportunities for the provision of additional sports reserves, with a particular focus on opportunities in Rowville."*

[Knox Green Areas and Rural Strategy](#)

Knox Arts and Cultural Plan 2012-22

The Knox Arts and Cultural Plan sets the vision and framework for the provision and direction of Council-supported arts initiatives across the City, ranging from improving the City's dedicated art facilities and events, to working with and supporting third party providers.

The only art facility covered in this document which falls within the GARS Study Area is The Basin Theatre in Precinct 1, which is owned and operated by The Basin Theatre Company.

Knox Strategic Assets and Investment Strategy (underway)

The only SAIS asset that falls within the Study Area is the Wantirna Reserve. At this stage it is still unknown whether there will be any impact on the Wantirna Reserve as part of SAIS. Future further confirmation will be sought at future project stages from the SAIS project team.

Gardens for Wildlife Program

The Gardens for Wildlife (G4W) program is a partnership between Knox City Council, Knox Environment Society (KES) and the Knox community. The program encourages Knox residents and businesses to create an area in their garden to support local wildlife. This can be done by providing habitat planted with locally indigenous, Australian native or suitable introduced species. The program is free to join and provides residents with access to specialist advisors who do site visits and provide advice to the participants.

Several properties within the Study Area currently participate in this program. These properties have been considered in the GARS biodiversity assessment for their contribution to wildlife habitat and movement.

Gardens for Harvest Program

A partnership between KCC and the Shire of Yarra Ranges, the Gardens for Harvest program aims to help build skills and knowledge in residents to grow and maintain a veggie garden. The Knox Gardens for Harvest program provides residents with information guides, workshops on various gardening topics and access to Gardens for Harvest competitions and special offers. A very small number of properties in the Study Area are currently participating in this program, which is not unexpected, as the program is more relevant to the urban setting rather than larger rural landholdings.

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2. Knox Planning Scheme

This section reviews existing strategic directions in the Knox Planning Scheme (the Scheme). Whilst there are a variety of clauses and provisions of the Scheme that have some level of application within the Study Area, this section only focuses on those provisions that have specific relevance or significant implications.

The Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF) is currently under review for translation into a new PPF structure, being led by DELWP. The analysis of the existing policy is based on the current local content in the Scheme, on the assumption that the translation will be policy neutral. However, the recommendations in this Strategy take into account the new PPF structure and format.

2.1. Planning Policy Framework (State)

The Planning Policy Framework (PPF) are applied statewide and provide high level direction for land use and development. The key clauses of the PPF that provide direction for the Study Area are outlined below.

Clause 11 settlement sets the basis for the Urban Growth Boundary to limit urban sprawl and direct growth into existing settlement. This clause the values of green wedge and rural land including environment and landscape values, biodiversity, and native vegetation, waterways and wetlands.

Clause 13 environmental risks and amenity aims to minimise the impacts of natural hazards including bushfire and flood and to adapt to the impacts of climate change. This policy emphasises the flood storage function of floodplains and waterways and seeks to prevent intensifying the impact of flooding through inappropriately located use and development.

Clause 14 natural resource management aims to protect agricultural land and water, earth and energy resources.

Clause 15 built environment and heritage guides the protection of rural character, heritage values and community health and wellbeing.

Clause 17 economic development encourages tourism to maximise the economic, social and cultural benefits of developing the state as a competitive domestic and international tourist destination.

Clause 18 transport seeks to ensure an integrated and sustainable transport system that provides equitable access to social and economic opportunities and contributes to environmental sustainability.

Clause 19 infrastructure sets the basis for the provision of adequate open space. It provides for long term planning protection to meet demand for future open space along the Dandenong Valley parklands.

2.2. Local Planning Policy Framework

There are multiple clauses within the Municipal Strategic Statement of the Scheme which provide strategic direction for the Study Area. A full analysis of these clauses is included in the Setting the Scene report.

Within the foothills policy area and the Dandenong Creek Valley, the Strategic Framework Plan requires the protection of major environmental and landscape features. However, the Scheme also recognises gaps and recommends to complete an assessment of and provide strategic directions for all rural and green wedge land that consider its aesthetic, biodiversity, landscape, amenity, cultural and agricultural values.

The Dandenong Creek Valley is identified as a Significant landscapes (Sub-clause 21.03-5), however, limited strategic direction is currently provided. The Scheme requires further investigation to strategically plan for this corridor to consolidate and improve the recreational activities and landscape and to address interface issues between parkland and urban development. It also recommends to review planning strategies and zoning in the area surrounding the Dandenong Valley Parklands to ensure consistency with objectives for development of the park.

Precincts 1, 2a and 2b are within the Dandenong Foothills Local Area (Sub-clause 21.10.1) where the Scheme aims at protecting and enhancing the landscape significance of the Dandenong Foothills. Uninterrupted view lines of the Foothills from within the municipality and around metropolitan Melbourne are maintained by ensuring retention of canopy trees and buildings and that works are sensitively designed and sited to sit below the dominant tree canopy height.



Figure 4 - Knox Planning Scheme Built Environment and Heritage Map (Clause 21.05 as at May 2021)

The following objectives are sought within the Foothills policy area:

- To maintain and improve the continuous closed tree canopy of the Foothills.
- To maintain the low density residential character of the Foothills by ensuring that existing subdivision patterns and lot sizes are retained.
- To protect and enhance the aesthetic, environmental and metropolitan landscape significance of the Dandenong Foothills.
- To protect the rural environments of The Basin and the Lysterfield Valley and Lysterfield Hills.
- To require new buildings, works and landscaping in The Basin and the Lysterfield Valley and Lysterfield Hills to protect the physical and visual amenity of the open pastoral setting.

The Scheme also requires further strategic work to undertake an assessment of agricultural land in rural and green wedge areas to better understand their productivity (including potential food production) and economy.

Clause 21.05 Built Environment and Heritage also provides guidance for the Study Area. **'Gateways'** are landscape-dominant entry points into the City that intersect with the natural significant landscapes of the Dandenong Foothills, the Lysterfield Valley and the Dandenong Creek Valley. **'Bush Boulevards'** are arterial roads with wide reservations that are planted with informal avenues of native trees. As 'Bush Boulevards' extend eastwards into the Foothills they become **'Paths into the Hills'** that have roadside verges containing significant understorey and canopy vegetation. Buildings along these roads generally contribute to this character with setbacks from the street and canopy tree planting. These attractive road corridors link the suburbs of Knox to the landscape character of the Dandenong Foothills.

2.3. Planning Scheme Controls

A thorough analysis of existing zones and overlays that apply within the Study Area has been undertaken which is included in the background "Setting the Scene" report. Another relevant set of controls are the Green Wedge Core Planning Provisions (Clause 51.02) which guide land use permissibility in Precincts 1, 2a and 2b.

The above analysis has informed recommendations in this Strategy including those under the Theme Land Use and Connectivity to ensure appropriate planning controls are applied.



3. Key Drivers

3.1. Direction for Green Wedge Land

Knox is located on the eastern edge of Melbourne’s Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and covers rural areas that are adjacent to the urban boundary. The non-urban areas outside the UGB are called Green Wedges, providing a transitional buffer between the metropolitan urban area and the surrounding peri-urban areas. The identification of protection of key values in these areas has been a key priority for this study

Green wedges were first set aside in the 1970s to conserve rural activities and significant natural features and resources between the growth areas of metropolitan Melbourne as they spread out along major road and rail links. Since 2002, Green Wedges have been defined under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. New planning zones and stronger regulations were also introduced at this time to better control the subdivision and use of green wedge land. There are 12 designated Green Wedges situated within the 17 metropolitan-fringe local government areas (Figure 5). Municipalities with significant proportions of both urban and green wedge land have also formed a group known as the Interface Councils to represent their shared interests and challenges.

Knox contains parts of two broader Green Wedge systems. Areas of land in The Basin are located within the ‘Yarra, Yarra Ranges and Dandenong Ranges Green Wedge’, while areas in Lysterfield and Rowville fall within the ‘Southern Ranges Green Wedge’.

Three of the GARS precincts are defined as Green Wedge land (Figure 6). The Knox Green Wedge areas are located on the edge of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and serve as places of transition between the urban area and the significant landscapes of the Dandenong Ranges and Lysterfield National Park.

Protection of Green Wedges from inappropriate development has long been a key priority from a state and local policy perspective. A key factor that has contributed to the protection of Green Wedges is the requirement for ratification by Parliament for any amendment to a metropolitan fringe planning scheme that has been approved by the Minister that amends the UGB or facilitates the land to be subdivided into more lots or into smaller lots than allowed for in the planning scheme.

There is a requirement for Green Wedge Management Plans (GWMPs) to be prepared by councils to provide a future vision and strategic directions for each Green Wedge area. To assist with this, DELWP has prepared guidelines that set the role and purpose of GWMPs and outline the information that are to be covered.

With respect to Green Wedge areas that run across multiple municipalities, the expectation has been that joint GWMPs through collaboration between councils. However, this expectation has not been realised as most Councils have prepared GWMPs to the extents of their municipality.

The two Green Wedges that affect Knox are largely located within Yarra Ranges Council and the City of Casey. These councils have previously prepared individual GWMPs for parts of Green Wedge areas within their boundaries.



Figure 5 - Melbourne Green Wedges and KCC Boundary

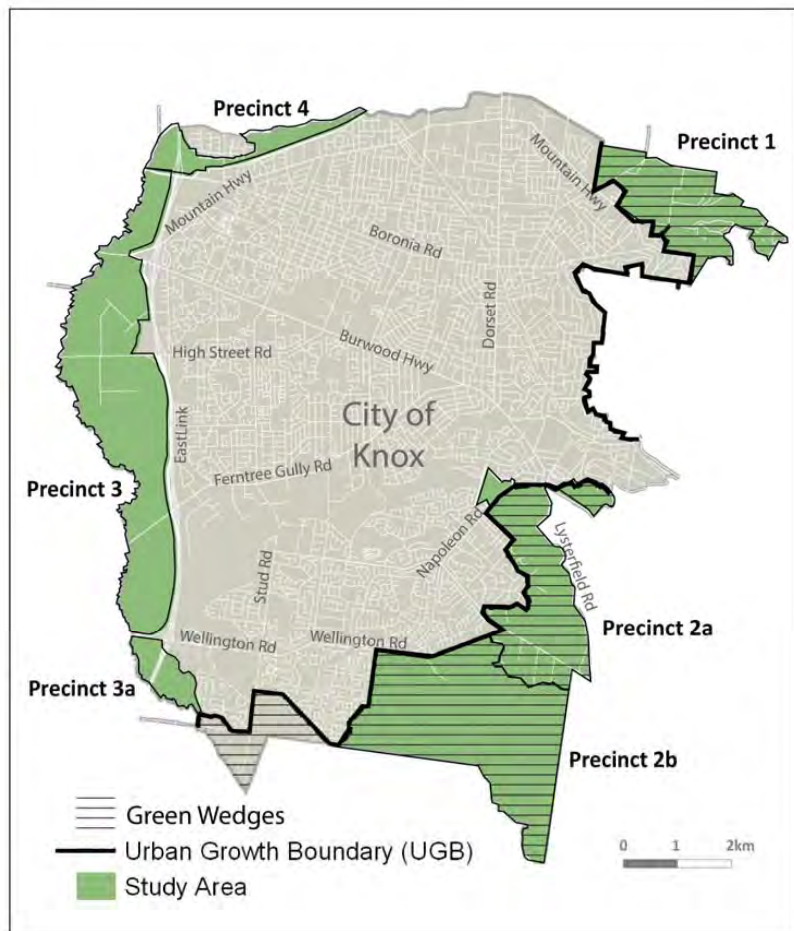


Figure 6 – The UGB and Green Wedge areas in the Study Area

Knox Green Wedge land is not of a size that warrants a separate GWMP. However, there is a current gap in policy vision and place-based direction for some of these areas. To

address this issue, this Strategy includes parts of the Knox Green Wedge land where a lack of strategic direction exists. The inclusion of these precincts along with other rural and open space corridors provides an opportunity for integrated planning and broader consistency, which is particularly beneficial to open space and wildlife connectivity across Knox.

It is expected that instead of having separate GWMPs, the City’s policy regarding these areas should align with broader Green Wedge planning by the Shire of Yarra Ranges. This project will confirm and formalise such a position and will provide direction on the best approach to ensure adequate controls and management practices are in place for these areas in the absence of a stand-alone GWMP.

It is also noted that the State Government is currently reviewing their policy and Victorian Planning Provisions applicable to Green Wedges, including the draft changes released for consultation in late 2020. This Strategy takes into consideration the proposed changes and seeks to avoid inconsistency or conflict.

3.2. Climate Change

In the coming years as Knox faces the challenges of climate change, the Study Area, due to its unique physical, environmental and land use characteristics, will play a key role in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The Study Area contains some of the richest wildlife habitats in Knox, which are highly sensitive to change. The Study Area provides unique opportunities to protect and enhance the environmental conditions to ensure a variety of wildlife species can continue to inhabit the area or use it to move around.

On the other hand, the Study Area provides significant vegetation and green surface cover in close proximity to built up areas. During extended periods of hot and dry weather, this green cover can play a key role in moderating the temperatures, mitigating the urban heat island effect and providing health and wellbeing benefits for the community. The Study Area also offers great opportunities for additional tree planting which can assist with KCC’s vision to provide carbon offsets.

Rural areas in proximity to bushland are also at a growing risk of bushfire due to climate change. Inappropriate development or use intensification in these areas should be avoided to prevent increases to bushfire risk or vegetation loss to enable bushfire management.

More extreme flooding events are also expected which pose severe risks to the community, infrastructure assets and wildlife habitat. The Study Area contains some of the



key waterways in Knox, including the Dandenong Creek and its tributaries, and accommodates large areas of floodplains which play a key role in flood storage and retention to prevent flooding in the wider catchments. The protection of these floodplains from development and landform change will be necessary to reduce the risk of flooding in the urban area and to protect the health of the waterway ecosystems.

Retaining viable agricultural land and production close to the urban area is another priority in a changing climate. Farming practices (such as those that lead to beneficial increase of carbon reserves in the soil) will also need to evolve and regulatory processes must keep pace with new technologies and climate change responses.

KCC is currently preparing a Climate Response Plan (CRP). Once adopted, the CRP will deliver a pathway to an emissions neutral KCC by 2030 and set interim targets. It demonstrates how Knox will adapt and improve its resilience to the climate hazards that impact the city now and in future climate scenarios. The CRP outlines the social, environmental and economic benefits expected from implementing the Plan in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and details Council’s governance, powers, and the partners who need to be engaged in order to accelerate the delivery of Knox’s mitigation targets and resilience goals.

This Strategy aligns with and supports the CRP direction by protecting ecological values, prioritising community health and wellbeing and dealing with land use challenges such as bushfire, flood and agricultural land management.

3.3. Biodiversity and Wildlife Connectivity

Preventing loss of biodiversity and extinction of species was a key priority for the community in all five precinct as raised during the preliminary public consultation for this Strategy. The Study Area plays a critically important role in both the conservation and movement of wildlife within Knox and the broader area. Native vegetation or areas with indigenous tree cover occupy less than five percent of the Knox municipality and the Study Area contains a significantly large proportion of Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs), including those listed as endangered, compared to the remainder of Knox (Figure 6). Each precinct provides different values and functions from each other and each is valuable in its own right.

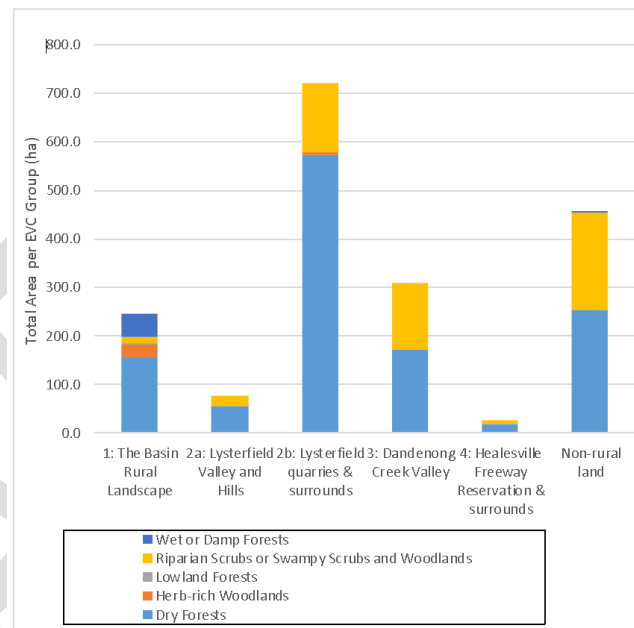


Figure 7 - Extent of EVC Group in GARS precincts compared to the remainder of Knox.

The *Sites of Biological Significance in Knox – 2nd Edition* (Lorimer, 2009) is a key study that currently guides the protection of Knox’ biodiversity values and holds significant weight in planning decision making. This study is a reference document in the Knox Planning Scheme and serves as the background document behind the Environment Significance Overlays (ESOs) applied. The document contains detailed information about each identified site and provides site-specific biological information such as wildlife records, habitat requirements and movement patterns. Detailed analysis of Site of Biological significance in the Study Area is provided in the GARS Setting the Scene Report.

While the above document provides comprehensive biodiversity information, a need was identified to explore wildlife movement and connectivity further, at scales broader than individual sites. This is particularly important in the Study Area as it includes waterway



corridors and linear open spaces that provide significant wildlife linkages at the municipal and regional scale.

To investigate this matter, a technical study was procured in 2017 titled the *Knox Wildlife Conservation and Connectivity Report* (Ecology and Infrastructure International et al.). The report was adopted by Council in February 2018. A key component of the study was the collation and incorporation of previous wildlife records including observation data and evidence. Complementing the report is a “Knox Wildlife Atlas” which provides a comprehensive snapshot of wildlife occurrence within the municipality.

This report maps important areas for conservation and movement of wildlife with particular regard to ten focal species in Knox, being the Australian Reed-warbler, White-throated Treecreeper, Eastern Yellow Robin, Superb Fairy-wren, Black Wallaby, Sugar Glider, Short-beaked Echidna, Blue-tongue Lizard, Eastern Snake-necked Turtle and Southern Bullfrog.

This is done through applying a number of buffers around different landscape elements, based on the needs of the focal species. The key buffers applied are as follows:

- 180 m buffers around treed Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs) - in line with the distance that Sugar Gliders and Eastern Yellow Robins have been recorded travelling outside bushland.
- 300m buffers around EVCs represent distances travelled by Black Wallabies and Blue-tongued Lizards.
- Farm dams are buffered by 375m as a study of Eastern Long-necked Turtles found that 95% of all records were within this distance from the nearest dam.
- As per State Government guidelines, watercourses are buffered by 200m to support Growling Grass Frogs.
- Melbourne Water recommended buffers including the 1% AEP (1:100yr ARI) flood level, and the Core Riparian Zones which provide a minimum buffer width of water courses depending on stream order, ranging from 50 m along the Dandenong Creek to a minimum of 20m for smaller creeks.

By overlaying the various buffers, the report identifies the location and extent of areas that are likely to be critical for the conservation of wildlife. The report then provides recommendations for each of these areas.

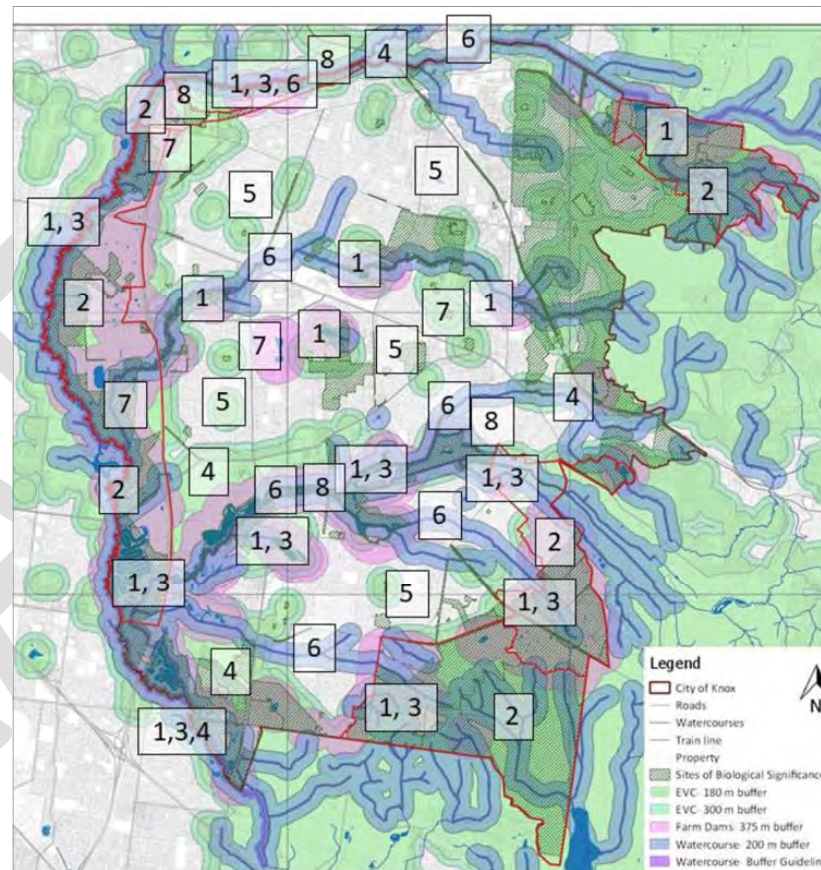


Figure 8 - Important areas for protecting habitat quality and wildlife movement within Knox. The darker shaded areas indicate a larger number of overlapping values, and hence greater importance for wildlife conservation. The GARS precincts are outlined in red. For interpretation of numbered labels refer to Table 2.



Table 2 - Reference details for Figure 8

Type	Important ecological value for wildlife conservation and connectivity
1	Locations with multiple overlapping ecological values, where remnant vegetation, riparian areas and farm dams or other waterbodies exist in close proximity to each other.
2	Large consolidated areas of greenspace with ecological values that are largely restricted to the GARS precincts.
3	High density of farm dams, offering opportunity for wetland species (turtles, frogs) to move in search of food, nesting sites or mates. Higher density of farm dams support larger populations, with more individuals and greater genetic diversity and therefore a higher likelihood of surviving future challenges.
4	Areas with very high ecological values for wildlife connectivity outside of Rural Land Precinct zones provide important connections between large areas of remnant vegetation (e.g. National Parks).
5	Developed areas with small, isolated locations with one or two high ecological values for wildlife.
6	Areas within high ecological value buffer zones where development has already occurred but still offer important opportunities for wildlife connectivity and conservation (e.g. along Blind Creek and Corhanwarrabul Creek, and Dandenong Creek between Precincts 1 and 4).
7	New developments in areas containing or adjacent to features of ecological value (e.g. golf courses, hobby farms, horse agistment) provide a critical opportunity to retain and enhance ecological values in the area while also meeting the needs for an increasing human population.
8	Construction of linear infrastructure (e.g. roads, bridges) in locations that are currently held as reserves has the potential to significantly decrease connectivity and habitat values for wildlife in those locations, through both the loss of existing habitat, and the replacement of corridors with barriers.

As seen from **Figure 8**, the GARS precincts contain important areas with multiple overlaying layers of value and therefore, play an important role in wildlife connectivity. This Strategy refers to the relevant and applicable recommendations from this report to provide strategic directions for each precinct.

3.4. Landscape and Character

The Study Area contains some of the most significant landscapes in Knox that are highly valued by the community. The Basin and the Lysterfield Valley straddle the urban/rural interface with a strong rural and natural character set in the attractive backdrop of mountain forests in the Dandenong Ranges and Lysterfield Park. The Dandenong Creek Valley Parklands is a regionally significant open space corridor with strong natural, rural and agricultural landscape elements. The Study Area presents scenic landscapes with open long range views that provide a sense of place for residents and visitors.

Like any other landscape, the Study Area is at the risk of change. Urban encroachment, new buildings, higher impact uses and associated vegetation removal all can potentially and incrementally change these landscapes.

A series of protections are currently in place by the Knox Planning Scheme for parts of the Study Area. The planning policy framework includes strategic guidance for protecting views to the foothills and the protection of significant landscapes. This policy vision has been translated into Significant Landscape Overlays (SLOs) that cover large areas in Precincts 1, 2a and 2b and include Key landscape character objectives and control tree removal and seek to ensure built form responds to the surrounding landscape.

While the SLOs have played a key role in protecting these areas from inappropriate development and change, they have a very broad scale approach to landscape (mostly to protect views to the Dandenong Foothills) and lack local-level direction to clarify the various landscape elements that need protection or enhancement. It is considered that a more place based approach to landscape and character is required in the Study Area, to inform future assessment of proposals.

Another key issue is that limited landscape direction is available for the Dandenong Creek Valley. This corridor is identified by the planning framework as a significant landscape, however, its qualities are not detailed, no strategic direction is provided and no landscape overlays are in place in this corridor. The Planning Scheme prescribes that further strategic work be undertaken to establish the landscape characteristics of the Dandenong Creek Valley Parklands, and to address interface issues between parkland and urban development.

To fill the above information gap, the *GARS Landscape Values and Character Assessment* (Hansen Partnership, 2019) has been prepared. This study provides a character assessment for each precinct to understand the prominent landscape elements and ingredients within each precinct, as a basis for comparative analysis of their importance in their contribution to the overall ‘sense of place’ found within the settings. This analysis is followed by visual



landscape analysis featuring viewshed analysis and visual sensitivity analysis. The study identifies various landscape values within each precinct and makes recommendations on how to protect, manage and monitor each set of values. These findings have been incorporated into the recommendations of this Strategy.

3.5. History and Heritage

It is difficult to tell the complete story of the Study Area from a historical perspective, as there is a clear knowledge gap about Aboriginal history at the local level. The *City of Knox Heritage Study 1993*, which is the key heritage inventory for Knox, narrates the local history from the time of European settlement and includes little information about the land's Aboriginal history. The majority of reference to Aboriginal presence in the area in this document relates to encounters as seen from the viewpoint of settlers.

This Strategy has tried to develop a better understanding of the Aboriginal sites and areas of cultural heritage sensitivity in the Study Area. Detailed information has been sourced from Aboriginal Victoria (AV) which is the key state government agency responsible for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage data and management. However it should be noted, while Knox officers have access to AV information to assist with policy and decision making, Council is not allowed, by the State Government, to publish all Aboriginal heritage information publicly due to the sensitive nature of the data. Hence the Aboriginal heritage data and mapping provided in this strategy are limited to those publicly available. However, the land use recommendations in this strategy have taken into consideration additional layers of Aboriginal heritage information to what is shown on the maps.

Regarding non-Aboriginal heritage, it has been important for this strategy to develop a preliminary understanding of places of heritage significance within the Study Area, and make recommendations on future actions. This has included a review of the heritage places included in the *City of Knox Heritage Study 1993*, some of which are currently protected by the Heritage Overlay. This exercise, however, does not represent a fresh heritage assessment of these places, but rather provides recommendations on which places are worthy of further assessment, as part of a future municipality-wide heritage study. This component of the Strategy has been informed by the report titled *Preliminary Heritage review: Knox Rural Heritage* (Context, 2017).

3.6. Agriculture

The Study Area contains the majority of agricultural land in Knox. Cattle grazing and horse agistment are the predominant agricultural use in Knox with small scale horticulture and

hobby farming occurring in parts of the Study Area. One of the objectives of this strategy has been to develop a better understanding of the existing land capacity for agriculture and future potential.

Being an interface council, KCC faces constant pressure from property holders on the edge of the urban boundary to rezone large agricultural lots to facilitate subdivision into smaller rural lifestyle properties. On many occasions, these proponents argue that the land has limited agricultural value due to soil types, slope or other issues.

Therefore one of the aspects of this Strategy has been to develop evidence base regarding the quality and vitality of agricultural land in Knox. This component of the Strategy has been informed by two technical reports.

The *Assessment of Agricultural Potential of Rural Land in Knox* (RMCG, 2016) provides an assessment of whether rural land in Knox is capable of supporting agriculture, what agricultural production it is suitable for, and whether there are any relevant externalities, which may exclude agriculture. The study has included the following assessments informed by desktop analysis, spatial analysis and site validation:

1. Agricultural capability assessment takes into account the physical nature of the land, such as soil type, climatic condition and topography to determine the capability of the land to support sustainable soil-based agriculture.
2. Agricultural suitability assessment considers the economic, social and/or policy factors such as the economics of production, distance from markets and the strategic or policy context that may impact the production opportunity for specific agricultural commodities.
3. Externalities assessment included any remaining factors that were not eliminated through either the capability or suitability assessment, such as land use conflict and landscape value.

The study provides an analysis of each precinct's potential for different types of agriculture, agri-tourism, and related activities and presents future directions for parcels of land within each precinct. Overall, the study concludes that there is limited opportunity for commercial-scale agriculture in the Study Area, however, it highlights that the Study Area will continue to provide for perennial horticulture, livestock grazing and hobby farming. The study also makes recommendations to promote agri-tourism and recreational uses that support agriculture and complement the environmental and landscape values of land.

It is also important to analyse Agriculture from a strategic point of view within the broader economic mix, as detailed in the next section.



3.7. Rural Economy

A strong and sustainable rural economy can support the long term vitality of Green Wedge and rural areas and enable landowners to protect and enhance the various environmental and social values of this land.

One of the priorities for this Strategy has been to establish a better understanding of the current economic activities and trends in the Study Area, and to identify future opportunities and needs. The economic recommendations in this Strategy are informed by the *GARS Economic Study* (Urban Enterprise, 2019). This study provides the following assessment:

- Regional catchment analysis and proximity to transport and tourist routes
- Population and demographic profile
- Industry profile including employment and output
- Visitor profile including visitor type, purpose and origin
- Economic role of each precinct including existing businesses and property ownership
- Potential for economic, tourism and recreation uses including case studies
- Assessment of Planning Scheme controls in terms of the potential uses
- Evaluation of other constraints
- Recommendations to facilitate the identified potential

3.8. Health and Recreation

Significant areas of parkland with active recreation opportunities are present in the Study Area, as well areas of native bushland that are highly popular amongst the local community and visitors for passive recreation and connecting with nature.

The Dandenong Creek Valley (Precinct 3) is an integrated open space corridor connecting a network of parklands and sport/recreation facilities that serve a large population catchment. Lysterfield Park and Churchill National Park (Precincts 2a & 2b) are other parks of regional significance that provide excellent opportunities for bushwalking, mountain biking and general recreation.

Trails and tracks in the Study Area are highly used facilities that provide recreational and wellbeing benefits to a diverse range of users. Local parks and bushland such as Wicks Reserve and Bateman Street bushland provide excellent opportunities for passive recreation and connecting with nature in proximity to residential areas.

As the Knox population grows and urban densification occurs, it is important to protect the existing recreational values, upgrade the existing facilities and seek opportunities for new areas of open space to meet the needs of the community. As part of this Strategy, the Study Area has been investigated for these opportunities. In addition, opportunities have been explored, in consultation with the community, to maximize community access to the existing recreational opportunities.

3.9. Rural Living

The Study Area contains residential properties in high amenity rural and pastoral settings. Many of the rural properties in the Study Area enable residents to mix residential use with agriculture, agri-business and horse agistment activities. The rural residents in Knox have long been key contributors to the City's environmental conservation by taking care of the remnant vegetation and existing habitat opportunities on their properties.

To maintain the quality of rural living, it is important to draw a clear picture of the existing land use and the issues faced, in consultation with the local community. The identification of risks, including bushfire and flooding risks, and preventing conflicting uses that adversely affect local character and amenity, has been an important driver for this Strategy. The suitability of the existing infrastructure, including access and connectivity, has also been assessed to ensure they meet the needs of the local communities.

Another key task has been the evaluation of existing planning controls, including zoning and subdivision sizes, to ensure they consider observed and emerging issues, enable economic potential, and support land use sustainability in the long term.



PART B - STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

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4. Objectives and Strategies for All Precincts

The GARS precincts each have a range of highly important values that need to be protected and enhanced. However, considering their location, they are likely to continue to experience pressure for urban development and interface tension between urban and rural land.

This Strategy aims to balance these competing priorities by providing a series of theme-based **Objectives** that provide the overarching goals and priorities for the Study Area. The Objectives articulate what the document aims to achieve by means of a particular set of strategies and actions.

Each Objective is supported by a suit of **Strategies** which further clarify the method or processes used to achieve the Objective, such as how Council will assess and guide proposals within the Study Area.

Considering the various characteristics and opportunities, a specific **Vision** has been developed for each precinct. The precinct-based vision sets a desired future state for each precinct and has been informed by background research, policy alignment and stakeholder and community consultation. The visioning consultation involved the local community and businesses, state government agencies, utility and service providers, environmental groups, local advisory groups and property owners and occupiers.

The vision for each precinct is better clarified through the recommendations for each precinct and is translated into specific **Actions**. Actions are more tangible or measurable tasks that can be allocated, placed within a timeframe, and may even need specific funds allocated. The Actions have been linked back to Objectives to ensure strategic alignment and consistency in direction.

The broad Objectives and Strategies are similar and provide guidance for all precincts, while the individual Actions are divided into precinct-based Actions and Actions that apply to the entire Study Area.

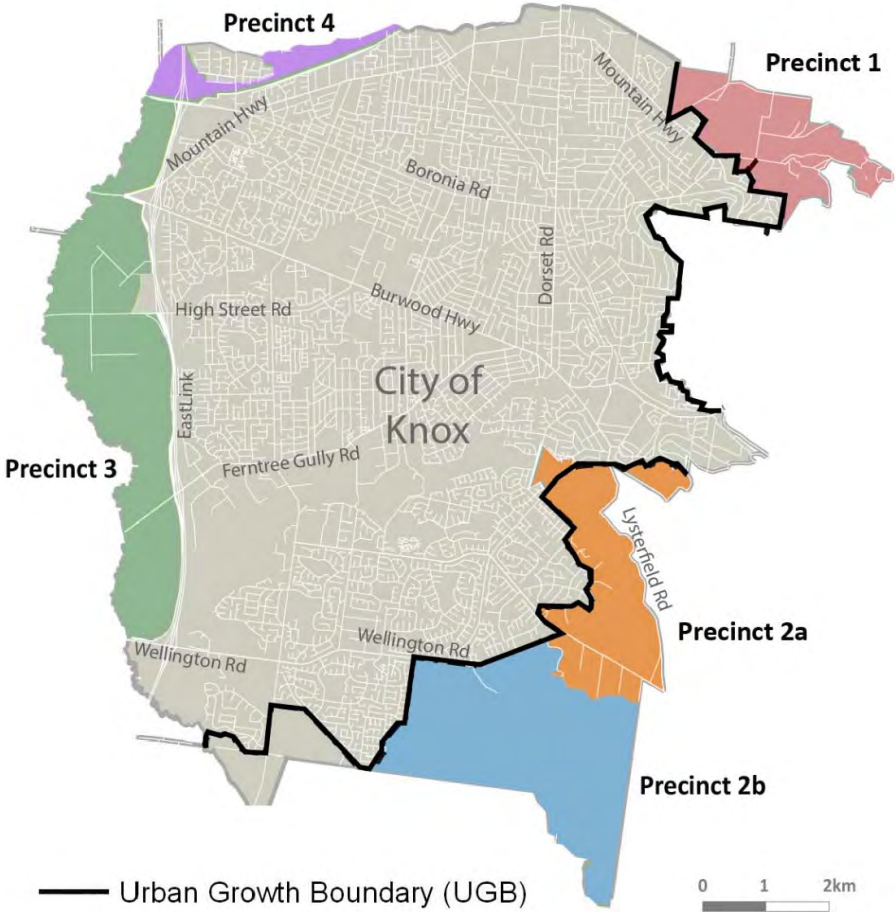
Objectives and Strategies for all GARS precincts

Theme	Ecology			Landscape & Character		Land Use & Access		
Objective	To protect and enhance biodiversity and wildlife connectivity	To protect and increase tree and vegetation canopy cover	To improve waterway health and flood management	To protect and enhance local character and landscape values	To recognise, protect and promote existing heritage	Recognise & protect the values of Knox Green Wedges	To ensure land uses are located and managed to be consistent with the values and functions of the Study Area	To facilitate connectivity and safe movement for all users
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve existing wildlife habitat and biodiversity values. • Improve wildlife connectivity and ecological corridors. • Increase community awareness and engagement in ecological improvements • Facilitate improved weed and pest management practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and enhance vegetation and tree canopy cover. • Monitor changes to tree canopy, vegetation and surface cover. • Recognise the role of trees and vegetation cover in moderating the temperature and reducing the urban heat island effect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve existing wildlife habitat and biodiversity values. • Protect floodplains from development and change. • Enhance water quality and the ecological health of the waterways. • Identify flood prone areas and improve stormwater management. • Encourage WSUD systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and protect local character within the Study Area • Define and protect landscape values including vistas and long range views. • Ensure land uses do not adversely affect the local character. • Ensure built form considers and responds to the local character and landscape values. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, celebrate and promote the heritage values and history, including Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage. • Promote greater community knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage. • Protect places of heritage significance from inappropriate development and use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide strategic direction for Green Wedges and interface areas in the Knox Planning Scheme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure new uses do not adversely impact on existing ecological and landscape values or existing settlements. • Protect agricultural land from inappropriate development and use. • Promote and support the ongoing viability of agricultural practices. • Strengthen and promote the recreational, cultural, sporting and tourism role. • Protect the amenity and character of existing residential areas. • Manage risks including those associated with bushfire, pollution and contamination. • Facilitate better land management practices. • Support and facilitate public art in appropriate locations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular connectivity and access. • Advocate for improved public transport connectivity. • Enhance movement safety for all users. • Reduce traffic conflict between various modes.



5. Recommendations for All Precincts

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Theme 1: Ecology

Wildlife Conservation and Connectivity

The Study Area plays a key biodiversity role in Knox as it contains some of the most significant areas of native bushland and waterways. Considering their location, ecological qualities, current land use and lot configuration, each of the GARS precincts present unique opportunities for future enhancements including habitat restoration and improvements to wildlife connectivity. Such opportunities may not exist to the same extent in some other areas of biodiversity value in Knox, including those within the urban area which are more likely to be impacted by urban land use nearby. There is therefore a strong case for prioritisation of ecological preservation and enhancements in the Study Area.

- Building upon the evidence base set in the *Knox Wildlife Conservation and Connectivity Report* (Ecology and Infrastructure International et al., 2017), this Strategy aims at better incorporating wildlife connectivity into the planning framework. The following recommendations from the above report are considered to be related to the planning framework and have implications for the Study Area:
- Mandating an ecologically sensitive development approach in high ecological buffer zones
- Strengthening mechanisms for native vegetation protection
- Developing planning mechanisms to protect riparian buffer zones, particularly along Dandenong Creek, Blind Creek, Corhanwarrabul Creek and their tributaries, to:
 - Prohibit further development within the Melbourne Water Core Riparian Zones and adjacent vegetation buffers;
 - Minimise any additional development in the remaining areas of the 200m buffer zone identified by the Growling Grass Frog Sub-Regional strategy; and
 - Mandate Water Sensitive Urban Design interventions within the 200m buffer zone to disconnect stormwater drains from natural waterways and help reinstate more natural water cycles.
- Reducing the barrier effect at the specific sites identified to increase connectivity for all fauna species.

This Strategy confirms the important role of the Planning Scheme, including the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO). While the majority of habitat areas in the Study Area are covered by this overlay, the Strategy seeks to strengthen the implementation of the existing requirements. Revegetation and habitat improvements are also encouraged,

in appropriate locations where they do not cause an increase to bushfire risk to the existing settlements.

Pest and weed management was another issue that was highlighted during the consultation for this Strategy. KCC has been involved in discussions regarding the development of a Regional Pest Animal Strategy. There are also opportunities to support improved maintenance practices including on private land.

The local community will continue to play a key role in habitat protection and enhancement. Friends/community groups in Knox provide a valuable source of local knowledge and stewardship and have contributed to a variety of habitat enhancement projects in Knox over the past years.

Council should continue to support community efforts by providing resources, funding and links to state and regional programs. The Knox Gardens for Wildlife program is one example of a biodiversity initiative that has been well received by the residents, including rural residential properties in the Study Area. This program provides an opportunity to link people to nature and involve the community in broader actions around ecological enhancement.

It is also noted, while this Strategy provides recommendations within the boundaries of the Study Area, wildlife connectivity requires broader consideration to ensure connectivity continues outside the Study Area.

Objective:

To protect and enhance biodiversity and wildlife connectivity.

Strategies:

- Conserve existing wildlife habitat and biodiversity values.
- Improve wildlife connectivity and ecological corridors.
- Increase community awareness and engagement in ecological improvements.
- Facilitate improved weed and pest management practices.

Action 1. Investigate options to incorporate relevant recommendations from the Knox Wildlife Conservation and Connectivity Report (Ecology and Infrastructure International et al., 2017) into the Knox Planning Scheme, including the following recommendations:

- a) Ensuring the connectivity elements and important habitats are considered in the review of planning applications and strategic planning decisions.
- b) Applying appropriate buffers along the waterways including the Dandenong Creek, Dobsons Creek, Monbulk Creek and Blind Creek to the extent of the Study Area, to:
 - Prohibiting further development within the Melbourne Water Core Riparian Zones.
 - Minimising development and intense land use within 200m buffer zones.
 - Mandating Water Sensitive Urban Design approaches within 200m buffer zones.
- c) Mandating an ecologically sensitive development approach to new development and the construction of linear infrastructure (e.g. roads, bridges) within high ecological value buffer zones.
- d) Encourage habitat restoration and revegetation within 300m buffer zones to existing areas of native vegetation, in areas that do not increase bushfire risk to existing settlements.

The above action might entail new policy or overlay provisions and making the Knox Wildlife Conservation and Connectivity Report a reference document in the Scheme, subject to further planning investigation.

Action 2. Investigate the need for further guidelines to facilitate Ecologically Sensitive Design for new development and the construction of linear infrastructure (e.g. roads, bridges).

Action 3. Advocate for wildlife linkages to continue outside the Study Area, in accordance with the recommendations of the Wildlife Conservation and Connectivity Report (Ecology and Infrastructure International et al., 2017).

Action 4. Continue collaboration with other councils and the state government regarding pest management and pollution control.

Action 5. Continue to support and grow community partnerships and initiatives including the Gardens for Wildlife program.

Vegetation Canopy Cover

The Study Area contains significant vegetation and makes a key contribution to the overall tree canopy cover in Knox. These areas play a key role in preventing the urban heat island effect and controlling the temperature in the nearby suburbs.

Tree canopy loss is an issue faced across Metropolitan Melbourne including in Knox. Data published by DELWP (2019) suggests that tree cover has fallen in Knox from 19.1% in 2014 to 18.0% in 2018, a loss of 120 hectares. The largest loss has occurred on residential properties but public infrastructure, such as streets also saw a loss.

The Study Area presents unique opportunities to maintain and increase the canopy cover. Parts of the Study Area are outside the Urban Growth Boundary where development is limited and protections are currently in place from intense development and tree removal. In addition, considerable land in the Study Area is publicly owned or zoned for conservation or public recreation purposes, where tree protection or planting is easier to enforce.

Due to existing planning controls, the majority of the Study Area is not at the risk of large scale clearing, however, faces the threat of incremental loss of canopy and green ground cover. This relates to a variety of reasons such as gradual increases to building site coverage, the natural death of trees over time or poor maintenance. There are also challenges faced due to bushfire management requirements considering Knox sits at the edge of the urban area where settlement meets the bush.

Knox does not currently have strategic guidance or targets for maintaining or increasing its total tree canopy cover. It is also noted that the cooling effect of trees is not currently reflected in the existing policy and planning controls. The Scheme currently values trees for three main reasons:

- Biodiversity values - native habitat trees (implemented through ESOs)
- Amenity and exotic values (through VPOs)
- Landscape values (through SLOs)

As discussed earlier, *Living Melbourne* provides high level guidance and direction for monitoring the tree canopy. It guides councils to develop monitoring programs and local tree canopy targets. These actions need to be translated at the municipality scale to be able to provide locally relevant and measurable targets for Knox.

Another known issue is that mapping anomalies exist in the Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO). This matter is currently under review. An investigation of the VPO in the Study Area has found locations where the overlay map does not correspond with the correct location of trees on the ground. These errors have been identified on the precinct maps.

Objective:

To protect and increase tree and vegetation canopy cover.

Strategies:

- Protect and enhance vegetation and tree canopy cover.
- Monitor changes to tree canopy, vegetation and surface cover.
- Recognise the role of trees and vegetation cover in moderating the temperature and reducing the urban heat island effect.

Action 6. Undertake a project for Knox to:

- a) Map the existing tree canopy and vegetation cover broken down by height strata and surface cover types.
- b) Investigate setting of measurable tree canopy cover targets including sub-targets for public land (parks, streets) and private property.
- c) Define actions to achieve the canopy targets.
- d) Establish a program for regular monitoring of vegetation cover and control progress against the established targets.
- e) Facilitate enforcement in cases of unlawful tree removal.

Action 7. Undertake a review of the Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO) to correct the existing anomalies and identify opportunities for additional trees to be protected by the overlay.

Action 8. Investigate Planning Scheme options to recognise the role of trees, vegetation and surface cover types in moderating the temperature and reducing the urban heat island effect.

Waterways and Flood Management

The health of waterways in the Study Area, including the Dandenong Creek, Blind Creek, Monbulk Creek and Dobsons Creek needs to be prioritised over the coming years. This is to ensure healthy waterway ecosystems, appropriate flood management and habitat conservation.

Waterway management requires collaboration with neighbouring councils, landowners, community groups and Victorian government agencies including Melbourne Water and DELWP. Collaborative projects such as *Living Links* and *Enhancing our Dandenong Creek* are good examples of multi-agency partnerships that offer particularly important opportunities for new or improved waterway health across the region.

Some of the creeks in the Study Area run within privately owned land which creates additional challenges. The protection of these waterways through appropriate planning controls and supporting the landowners to manage the waterways and their buffers will be critical in the coming years.

The protection of floodplains in the Study Area is another priority to prevent flooding in the urban area, maintain the natural flow of water, reduce pressure on the waterways and prevent habitat loss. The floodplains are constantly under pressure from development and land use that changes topography and reduces surface perviousness. Such changes would adversely affect the Study Area's role in the natural flow, storage and retention of water in particular during stormwater events.

This Strategy has identified that some of the floodplains within the Study Area are not currently covered by adequate planning controls. The key overlay in the Scheme that protect floodplains of the natural waterways is the LSIO. Another flood-related overlay is the SBO which controls development within areas that are subject to the 1% AEP (1:100yr ARI) flood and ensures adequate siting of buildings and design standards within these areas. The Knox SBO has not been updated since 1999 and only covers the Melbourne Water drainage network area.

KCC and Melbourne Water have been working to prepare updated flood models taking into account up to date data and projected future scenarios associated with climate change. Once completed, the new flood map needs to be incorporated in the Planning Scheme, to be able to guide future land use and development. The draft flood model suggests areas of land within the Study Area will be affected by the new flood map, where protection or management will be critical.

Catchment management will also be important to maintain and enhance water quality. KCC's *Water Sensitive Urban Design and Stormwater Management Strategy 2010* has

identified some of the waterways in the Study Area as “high value” and has led to actions and investments to improve catchment hydrology. In this respect, KCC has Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) initiatives including disconnecting impervious areas from the creeks, providing stormwater tanks to residents and the construction of WSUD infrastructure.

In the Study Area, gradual increases to impervious surfaces such as by larger buildings or uses that require large areas of car parking (such as places of worship) have the potential to adversely impact catchment hydrology. It is important to consider the previous investments in water quality and ensure future development and infrastructure construction practices do not compromise these values.

Objective:

To improve waterway health and flood management.

Strategies:

- Protect floodplains from development and changes to topography.
- Enhance water quality and the ecological health of the waterways.
- Identify flood prone areas and improve stormwater management practices.
- Encourage an ecologically-sensitive and water-sensitive approach to development and infrastructure.

Action 9. Following the completion of the flood mapping project by KCC and Melbourne Water (MW), undertake a Scheme amendment to apply adequate overlays to areas affected by the 1% AEP (1:100yr ARI) flood level, including:

- a) Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) to areas affected by flooding from natural waterways.
- b) Special Building Overlay (SBO) to areas affected by flooding from the drainage network (SBO1 for MW network and SBO2 for KCC network).

Action 10. Provide greater guidance in the Planning Scheme to limit the extent of impervious surface including guidance for car parking areas in the Study Area.

Action 11. Continue to collaborate with stakeholders on regional and multi-agency initiatives that improve the waterways and catchments, including the Living Links and the Enhancing our Dandenong Creek projects.



Theme 2: Landscape and Heritage

Theme 2: Landscape and Heritage

Landscape and Character

It is noted that currently there is limited statewide guidance on how best to define and protect rural and Green Wedge landscape values. In recent years, DELWP has been workshopping ideas with councils to develop a planning framework for the assessment and recognition of Green Wedge landscapes. However, this work to date has not resulted in any recommendations that could assist with landscape assessment for the Study Area.

To fill the current gaps, the *GARS Landscape and Character Study* (Hansen Partnership, 2019) was prepared as part of this Strategy which identifies the key character elements and landscape values of each precinct. Based on these elements, the study recommends the following levels of ‘significance’ to be assigned to each precinct based on a comparative analysis of their contribution to the overall ‘sense of place’ found within the settings.

Precinct	Prominent Landscape Character Elements	Landscape Significance
Precinct 1: The Basin Rural Landscape	1. Dobsons and Dandenong Creek Flood Plain 2. Basin Township Entry & Boulevard 3. Western Isolated Hilltops 4. Dandenong Ranges Foothills & Gullies	Municipal
Precinct 2a: Lysterfield Valley and Hills	1. Lysterfield Foothills Open Ridgeline 2. Wellington Road Flood Plain & Flats 3. Eastern Slopes to the Monbulk Creek Valley 4. Monbulk Creek Floodplain	Metropolitan
Precinct 2b: Lysterfield Quarries and Surrounds	1. Rising Wellington Road Ridgelines 2. Lysterfield Park Bushland Silhouette 3. Extractive Industries & Works 4. Open Grassland	Metropolitan
Precinct 3: Dandenong Creek Valley Precinct	1. Dandenong Valley Park & Wetlands 2. Dandenong Creek Riparian Corridor 3. East-West Aligned Road Corridors 4. High Voltage Power Line Infrastructure	Regional
Precinct 4: Healesville Freeway Reservation and Surrounds	1. Wantirna Road Cutting 2. Bateman Street Bushland 3. Dandenong Creek Floodplain 4. Dandenong Creek Riparian Corridor 5. EastLink Corridor	Local

The landscape character analysis describes the major form, features and attributes of each precinct including topographical features, landscape settings and physical elements of significance. The study then performs a visual analysis featuring viewshed and visual sensitivity analysis to determine level of visibility from key vantage points. The study concludes with detailed recommendations on valuable landscape elements in each precinct and how to protect and manage them. These recommendations have been incorporated in the precinct-based recommendation within this Strategy.

It is recommended that this study informs the Planning Scheme to ensure the identified values are considered when reviewing proposals. Currently, parts of the Study Area including Precincts 1, 2a and 2b are covered by the Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO) which sets controls applicable to vegetation, earthworks, building bulk, character and other scenic qualities. The Knox Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) Clause 21.10 Local Areas also recognises these precincts as significant landscape and provides high level strategic direction to protect their values. There are opportunities to build upon these existing provisions and provide more site-specific guidance for the key character elements identified.

In addition, while Precinct 3 has been identified as being a regionally significant landscape, limited landscape direction is currently provided in the Scheme, and no SLOs apply in this precinct. It would be important that the identified values for this precinct are incorporated into the Scheme.

Objective:

To protect and enhance local character and landscape values.

Strategies:

- Identify and protect local character within the Study Area
- Define and protect landscape values including vistas and long range views.
- Ensure land use and built form do not adversely affect the local character.
- Ensure built form considers and responds to the local character and landscape values.

Action 12. Undertake a review of the existing Planning Scheme provisions to recognise the character and protect landscape values in the Study Area, in line with the findings of the GARS Landscape and Character Study.



Theme 2: Landscape and Heritage

Heritage

This Strategy recommends a full review of heritage values in Knox, including both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage.

It is considered that there is a role for KCC to establish the Aboriginal history of Knox at a local level and incorporate it into its historical narrative and educational initiatives.

Non-Aboriginal heritage values of the Study Area are currently informed by the municipal-wide Heritage Study which was prepared in 1993. No comprehensive review of Knox cultural heritage has been undertaken since. A number of heritage sites within the Study Area are part of large scale landscape and environmental systems that need to be assessed in their broader heritage context and thematic history. Examples are the Dandenong Ranges and Lysterfield Park which form part of larger heritage areas.

To assist with such review, this Strategy includes a preliminary examination of places of heritage significance within the Study Area, and make recommendations on the way forward. This has included a review of the 27 heritage places included in the *City of Knox Heritage Study 1993*. Some of these places are currently protected by the Heritage Overlay while some others do not have statutory protections in place. This has been informed by the report titled *Preliminary Heritage review: Knox Rural Heritage (Context, 2017)* which, through a combination of site inspections and desktop research, provides the following information:

- Confirmation of whether the heritage places still exist;
- Photographic evidence of the places;
- Map of the places (analogue mapping) or provide an indication of the locality;
- Preliminary assessment of the existing conditions of each place; and
- Recommendations including whether further heritage investigation of the place is required.

Where sites have been able to be accessed and found, the majority of recommendations are to retain existing Heritage and other Overlays. Where sites were not found or insufficient information has been available, a recommendation for further investigation has been made. Many of the sites without current statutory protection are recommended for assessment. It should be noted that this preliminary review does not represent a fresh heritage assessment of the places.

Objective

To recognise, protect and promote existing heritage.

[Knox Green Areas and Rural Strategy](#)

Strategies:

- Identify, celebrate and promote the heritage values and history, including Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage.
- Promote greater community knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- Protect places of heritage significance from inappropriate development and use.

Action 13. Undertake a comprehensive review of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage across the municipality, taking into consideration the specific recommendations in the *Preliminary Heritage review: Knox Rural Heritage (Context, 2017)*.



Theme 3: Land Use and Access

Green Wedge Interface

This Strategy has reiterated the importance of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) in protecting Precincts 1, 2a and 2b from inappropriate development. The UGB has proven to be a strong and effective planning tool to maintain the integrity of Knox Green Wedge land in these areas, despite ongoing pressure for subdivision and rezoning outside the UGB.

Another key finding is, while Knox is an interface council, a simple transitional buffer solution to the urban/rural interface is not practical. Instead, a place-based approach to the protection of values, including environmental, landscape and rural economic values, is recommended. In other words, simply because an area is close to the UGB does not mean it is appropriate for smaller lot sizes or more intense development.

This is because some of Knox' most sensitive landscapes and biodiversity hotspots are located in proximity to the UGB. Some of these landscapes present scenic views that uniquely define the gateways not only to Knox, but also to Metropolitan Melbourne. For example, this Strategy has identified highly valuable landscapes in The Basin or environmental buffers in Lysterfield and Rowville, which are highly sensitive to change and should be protected from inappropriate development and change.

This matter is also seen in light of recent discussions by DELWP regarding potential location of more intense uses such as places of worship and schools adjacent to the UGB. This Strategy strongly opposes such idea and confirms that proximity to the UGB is not an appropriate locational criterion for such uses.

Assessing proposals in the interface areas needs to take into account their impacts on a case by case basis. This includes the visual impact - in particular for those uses that present highly dominant built form – the environmental impact, the extent of impervious surface required for car parking, and the traffic impact on the locality. The cumulative impact of multiple buildings within a limited interface area should also be considered as it could be to the detriment of local character, landscape and environmental values.

On many occasions, these uses are more appropriate within the urban area in close proximity to residential settlement and transport services. In the Green Wedges, proposals of these types should be considered on a case by case basis, taking into consideration the site context and values to protect.

The Green Wedge policy direction in the Scheme is currently limited to State and Regional policy. Providing local strategic direction for Green Wedge land is required to ensure the identified values as part of this Strategy are recognised and protected.

Objective:

Recognise and protect the values of Knox Green Wedges.

Strategy:

- Provide strategic direction for Green Wedges and interface areas in the Knox Planning Scheme.
- Provide a place-based approach to Green Wedge interface.

Action 14. Avoid any changes to the Urban Growth Boundary in Precincts 1, 2a and 2b.

Action 15. Investigate Planning Scheme options to provide local strategic direction for Knox Green Wedge land in line with the recommendations of this Strategy for Precincts 1, 2a and 2b.

Action 16. Clarify, through strategic directions in the Planning Scheme, that a transitional buffer approach to the Green Wedge interface is not intended, and that a place-based, value-based approach to assessment is required.

Land Use and Economy

This Strategy has identified agricultural land that is worthy of protection including in the Dandenong Valley, Lysterfield Valley and Dobsons Valley (The Basin). While precinct-based recommendations are provided later in this Strategy to protect these areas, it is noted that the Scheme currently does not provide local policy direction for agriculture in Knox. It would be important that policy direction is also provided to support long term protection of agricultural land and production in Knox.

The Study Area offers considerable open space, recreation, tourism, sport, art and culture land use opportunities. It also contains extractive industries that are likely to continue operation for a couple of decades. Detailed direction and actions to support these land uses is provided in the precinct-based recommendations section.



Theme 3: Land Use and Access

Summary of Economic, Tourism, Community and Recreation Potential

	Precinct 1 The Basin Rural Landscape	Precinct 2A Lysterfield Valley and Hills	Precinct 2B Lysterfield Quarries and Surrounds	Precinct 3 Dandenong Creek Valley	Precinct 4 Healesville Freeway Reservation & Surrounds
Suitability for agriculture intensification	Medium	Medium	Low	High	Low
Suitability for agri- tourism	High	Medium	Low	High	Low
Suitability for standalone tourism uses	High	Low	Low	High	Low
Suitability for community / social enterprise	High	Low	Low	High	Medium
Accessible to population catchments	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	High
Accessible by public transport	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
Accessible by bike/hiking/walking	Low	Low	Medium	High	High
Suitability for Active Recreation	Medium	Low	High	High	High
Suitability for other intensive industry	Low	Low	High	Medium	Low
Suitability for Passive Recreation	Low	Low	High	High	Medium
Ranking	19	13	18	28	18

Objective:

To ensure land uses are carefully located and managed to be consistent with the values and functions of the Study Area.

Strategies:

- Ensure new uses do not adversely impact on existing ecological and landscape values or existing settlements.
- Protect agricultural land from inappropriate development and use.
- Promote and support the ongoing viability of agricultural practices.
- Strengthen and promote the recreational, cultural, sporting and tourism role.
- Protect the amenity and character of existing residential areas.
- Manage risks including those associated with bushfire, pollution and contamination.
- Facilitate better land management practices.

Action 17. Investigate Planning Scheme options to provide strategic direction for agriculture and agricultural land in Knox.

Action 18. Investigate initiatives and incentives, such as rate exemptions, to help protect agricultural production and improve land management practices.

Action 19. Investigate the potential for Carbon Farming and climate friendly agricultural practices including regenerative agriculture.

Public Art

The Study Area provides great opportunities for new public art to be incorporated into the landscape. In particular, some of the precincts are located at gateways to Knox where a high level of visitation where highly visibility exists and public art can create unique places and contribute to a sense of belonging and pride.

The Study Area has been assessed to identify locations that provide opportunities for public art. This assessment takes into consideration matters such as visitation rate, visibility, land ownership, gateways to Knox, community interest, green space, parks, trails, waterways potential for place making, storytelling and accessibility.



The above assessment has identified potential locations for public art in The Basin Triangle, Dorset Road extension/Napoleon Road intersection, Burwood Highway/EastLink and High Street Road. These locations have been indicated on the land use maps.

Strategy:

- Support and facilitate public art in appropriate locations.

Action 20. Support the provision of public art in the Study Area including at the locations identified, subject to detailed assessment.

Access and Connectivity

The Study Area contains some of the highly used trails in Knox and provides linkages to fantastic bushwalking and cycling opportunities. There are opportunities across the GARS precincts to enhance walking and cycling connectivity with additional shared paths and improvements to existing facilities.

Some of the local roads including in The Basin and Lysterfield provide key access routes to recreational destinations in national parks, however, do not provide cycle lanes or shared paths. Traffic conflict between various modes, including vehicles, walkers, cyclists and horse riders, was raised as a key issue on these roads during the public consultation.

The Study Area has limited public transport coverage and is partially served by bus services. This is a greater issue in the Dandenong Creek Valley where future residential area is planned as part of Boral Quarry redevelopment.

The below Access and Connectivity strategies are further clarified through actions identified in the precinct-based recommendations.

Objective:

To facilitate connectivity and safe movement for all users.

Strategies:

- Enhance pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular connectivity and access.
- Advocate for improved public transport connectivity.
- Enhance movement safety.
- Reduce traffic conflict between various users.

Action 21. Advocate for the construction of outstanding shared paths and cycle lanes identified as part of PBN.



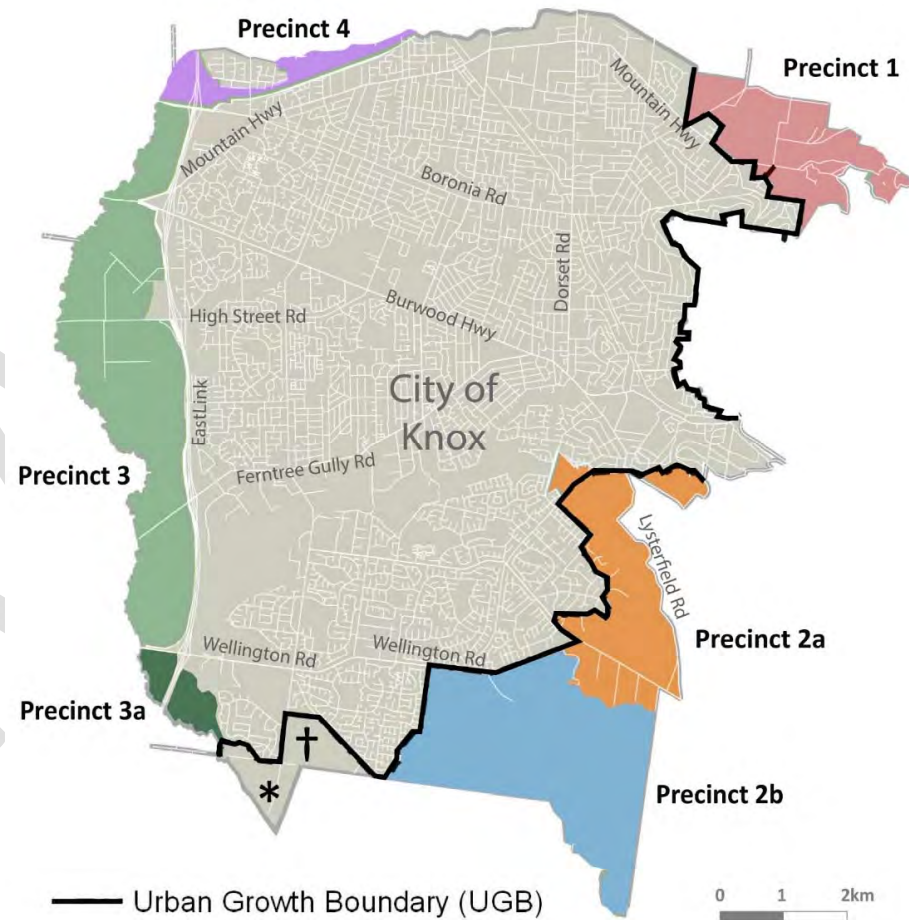
6. Precinct-based Recommendations

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Precinct 1:
The Basin Rural Landscape

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Vision for Precinct 1

The Vision for Precinct 1 reflects feedback received during public consultation involving the stakeholders and the community. Key themes from the public consultation are summarised below:

- **Prioritising environmental conservation**
There was overwhelming support for the focus in this precinct to be on ecological protection. It was suggested that this focus be strengthened to prevent a clash of priorities and ensure environmental values are not compromised by land uses such as agriculture or tourism.
- **Protecting from development**
The feedback demonstrated significant concerns about the possibility of future development or change and suggested that the vision emphasises the protection of floodplains in The Basin to manage stormwater and support the waterways.
- **Concerns about tourism/economic opportunities**
Concerns were raised about potential tourism and business activities due to the number of visitors to the area and its impact on the environmental qualities and local traffic.
- **Protecting the distinct natural and rural character**
Protecting the current natural landscape and the green/rural character within the backdrop of the Dandenong Ranges was considered very important.
- **Ecological enhancement**
There were suggestions for targeting “enhancement” in addition to “protection” of ecological values.
- **Bushfire risk**
Concerns were raised that revegetation in wrong areas might increase bushfire risk.

Vision for Precinct 1:

The Basin Rural Landscape Precinct will be protected as an ecologically significant area with a distinct natural and rural landscape character, providing a scenic gateway to the Dandenong Ranges. The conservation and enhancement of the precinct’s biodiversity, waterways and landscape values will be prioritised, while supporting compatible land use such as sustainable agriculture, rural living, recreation and community uses that complement and enhance these values.



Theme 1: Ecology

Biodiversity and Wildlife Connectivity

Almost two-thirds of Precinct 1 supports native vegetation, and most of the precinct has been classified as Sites of Biological Significance for Knox, based primarily on the occurrence of native vegetation.

Being surrounded on the southern, eastern and north-eastern boundaries by the DRNP, the precinct provides an important consolidated ecological link between Doongalla Forest and Upper Ferntree Gully. The precinct plays a key role in wildlife habitat and movement as it contains large extents of native vegetation and a high density of watercourses. Maintaining the continuous cover of vegetation in this precinct will be essential to support the long-term viability of wildlife, larger populations and greater opportunities for movement and dispersal in multiple directions.

The precinct also contains Wicks/Wicks East Reserves (managed by KCC) and Liverpool Road Retarding Basin (managed by Melbourne Water) which are public reserves of high biodiversity value while assisting with stormwater management for the broader catchment.

A large extent of the vegetation and sensitive habitat in the precinct are located within private properties which will play a key role in the coming years to protect biodiversity and wildlife movement. The eastern part of the precinct, which consists of lots in the Rural Conservation Zone, is predominantly used for residential purposes. This area accommodates a dense and continuous cover of vegetation which connect with Doongalla Forest/DRNP and is at risk of incremental vegetation loss due to land use conflict and fire management requirements.

The larger properties in the central part of in Precinct 1 also provide important linkages, stepping stones and floodplain habitat. The Salvation Army land in The Basin offers complementary and additional resources to wildlife and its buffer role is recognised in protecting the adjacent Rural Conservation Zone, as well as providing opportunities for connectivity to the Liverpool Rd Retarding Basin. The Dobsons Creek traverses this property and provides a densely vegetated ecological corridor.

Whilst the majority of waterways in Knox are protected by public zoning (incl. PCRZ), there are sections of the Dandenong Creek and the Dobsons Creek within Precinct 1 that are within private land and are not protected by public zoning. However, the entire precinct is covered by the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO1 and 2) which provides good protections for vegetation and habitat. The ESO generally requires planning permits for

building, subdivision, carrying out of works and the removal of vegetation. Exemptions are provided for vegetation removal that are necessary for emergency works and management of land including fire management, weed control, infrastructure or resources where other permits exists.

The conflict between tree protection and fire management was an important concern raised by the community during the project consultation. There was a strong message that preserving the natural environment needs to take precedence in this precinct, and new development that requires tree removal to address bushfire risk should be prevented.

The majority of vegetation cover in Precinct 1 is located on private property used for residential purposes. Many of these areas are affected by the bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) that seeks to ensure human safety in proximity to bushland. While significant vegetation clearing has not occurred since the implementation of ESOs and SLOs, incremental loss of vegetation has been observed. This is sometimes caused by increasing building and outbuilding footprints on rural lots where additional defensible space or fuel reduction is required around new or added structures.

Objective:

To protect and enhance biodiversity and wildlife connectivity.

- Action 1.1.** Review the planning framework to
- ensure the protection of native vegetation and habitat is prioritised in Precinct 1
 - recognise the role of Dandenong and Dobsons Creeks in wildlife connectivity
 - ensure bushfire risk and management in BMO affected areas is considered from early stages of any development proposal, such as pre-application stage, and proposals that require vegetation removal to comply with the bushfire requirements are not supported.
- Action 1.2.** Reduce the wildlife barrier effects at the following sites in accordance with the recommendations in Appendix 1:
- Dandenong Creek - Liverpool Road (ID: 1)
 - Dandenong Creek – Dobson Lane (ID: 2)
- Action 1.3.** Investigate mechanisms to support private landowners to improve maintenance and weed control including of Sugarloaf Hill.

Waterways and Flood Management

Precinct 1 is within the Upper Dandenong Creek catchment and contains a section of Dandenong Creek and also Dobsons Creek which is a tributary to Dandenong Creek.

The Dobsons Creek catchment has been identified as the highest value waterway in Knox by KCC's *Water Sensitive Urban Design and Stormwater Management Strategy 2010*. KCC has undertaken Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) initiatives in this catchment to improve catchment hydrology. This has included disconnecting impervious areas from the creek to improve its ecological health, providing stormwater tanks to residents and the construction of Wicks Reserve (Ferdinand Von Mueller) Raingarden. KCC has also constructed swales in Basin-Olinda Road and a roadside retention facility along Sheffield Road. The WSUD project locations are indicated on Map 1.

Situated along the creek path is also the Liverpool Road Retarding Basin which was developed by Melbourne Water (MW) to provide for the storage of stormwater to prevent flooding downstream.

Apart from the smaller rural lots north of Doongalla Road, the vast majority of lots in Precinct 1 are not connected to piped drainage. This is in line with KCC's strategy to disconnect properties from the drainage network and promote a water sensitive approach to drainage within this precinct.

Incremental increases to impervious surfaces (e.g. house extensions, outbuildings, paved outdoor areas) places additional pressure on the drainage systems in this high value catchment. There are opportunities to build upon the previous investments in improving water quality within the Dobsons Creek catchment and ensure future development and infrastructure construction practices protect these values.

The precinct also plays a key role in flood retention and management as it contains floodplains of the Dobsons and Dandenong Creeks. Protecting these floodplains from development and topographic change will be important to prevent flooding downstream and maintain the health of the waterways. The current flood map adopted in the Knox Planning Scheme is outdated and does not accurately map the flood prone areas in Precinct 1. For instance, the Dobson Creek floodplain has no flood overlays. An updated flood map is currently being prepared which is recommended for incorporation into the Scheme.

Objective:

To improve waterway health and flood management.

- Action 1.4.** The planning framework to acknowledge that Precinct 1 is in the high value catchment of the Dobsons Creek.
- Action 1.5.** Investigate options to incorporate WSUD measures as part of new development in the Dobsons Creek catchment.
- Action 1.6.** Support a WSUD approach to public works and infrastructure including the constructions or upgrade of roads within this precinct.
- Action 1.7.** Ensure the Dobsons/Dandenong Creek floodplain is protected from development and level change.

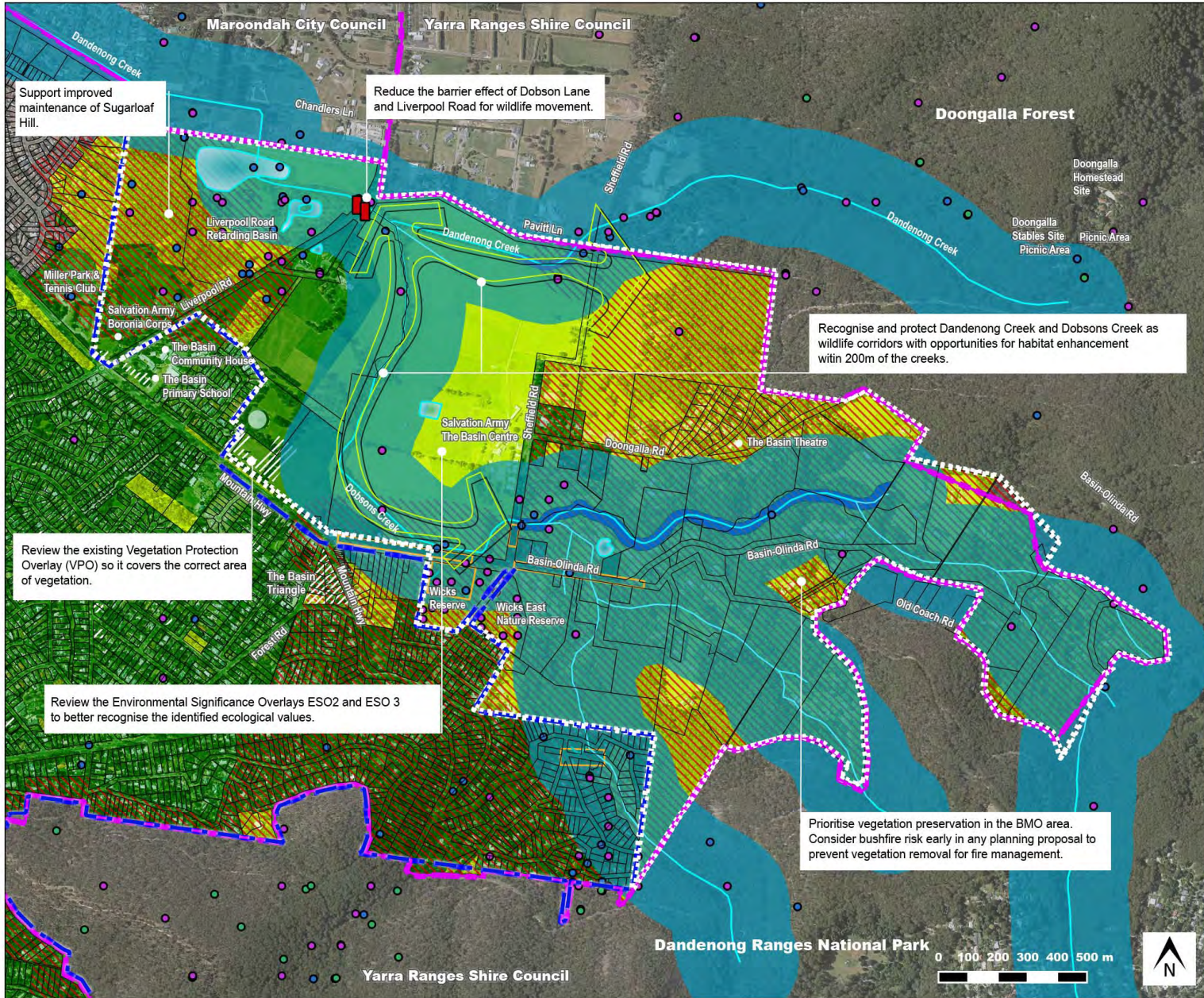


Map 1

Precinct 1- The Basin Rural Landscape

Theme: Ecology

Knox Green Areas & Rural Strategy (GARS)



Legend

Knox Wildlife Atlas (1995-2017)

- Wildlife Records - Multiple Sources
- Wildlife Records - Victorian Biodiversity Atlas
- Knox Focal Species 2017
- Barriers to Wildlife Movement

Knox Planning Scheme

- Environmental Significance Overlay 2 (ESO2)
- Environmental Significance Overlay 3 (ESO3)
- Floodway Overlay (FO)
- Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO)
- Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)
- Urban Floodway Zone

Other

- Precinct Boundary
- Creeks and Lakes
- WSUD - Project Area
- Knox City Boundaries
- Urban Growth Boundary

Theme 2: Landscape and Heritage

Landscape and Character

The GARS *Landscape and Character Study* (Hansen Partnership, 2019) has identified the Basin Rural Landscape precinct as a highly valued and diverse landscape. The Dobsons and Dandenong Creek Floodplain has significant character value within this precinct, is highly visible from public vantage points and is recommended for protection. The union between the heavily vegetated ridges, gullies and open uninterrupted flood plains are the important landscape for The Basin. The study identifies the following character areas (as shown on the map) and details key landscape values for each area:

Character Area	Description	Approach	Key Landscape Values
1	The Basin’s Dobsons and Dandenong Creek Floodplain	Protection	Rural integrity and open character; short and long open views from roads; low-lying valley conditions
2	The Basin Township and Entry	Management	Corridor views; roadside vegetation
3	The Western Isolated Hilltops	Monitoring	Vegetation; views to hilltops
4	The Dandenong Foothills and Gullies	Management	Natural landscape condition

Currently, the majority of Precinct 1 is covered by the Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO4) which sets controls applicable to vegetation, earthworks, building bulk, character and other scenic qualities. Clause 21.10 of the Scheme also recognises the whole precinct as a significant landscape and provides high level strategic direction to protect its values. There are opportunities to build upon these existing provisions and provide more site-specific guidance for the key character areas identified.

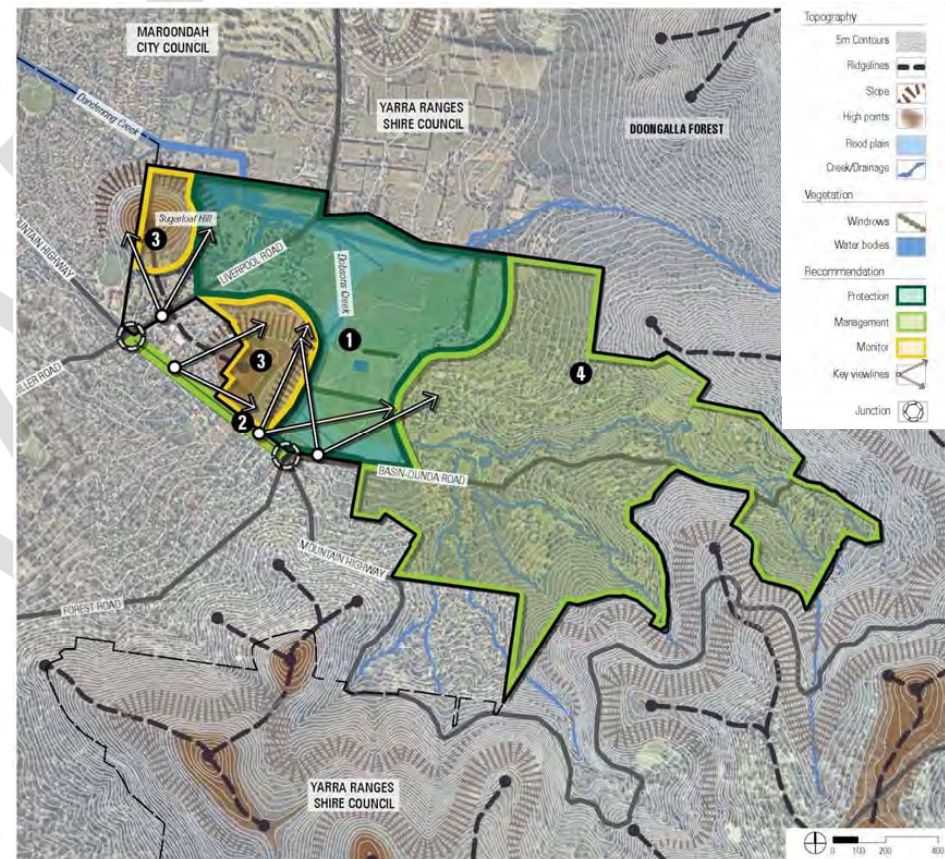
Objective:

To protect and enhance local character and landscape values.

Action 1.9. Undertake a review of the existing Planning Scheme provisions to better recognise and protect landscape values, in line with the findings of the GARS Landscape and Character Study.

Action 1.10. Discourage fragmentation of land within the Dobsons Creek floodplain character area.

Action 1.11. Investigate opportunities for weed management and removal of shrub, to open up foothill views, particularly those on public owned land.



Map 2 – Precinct 1 Landscape Assessment (Source: Hansen Partnership)



Theme 2: Landscape and Heritage

Heritage

Precinct 1 contains significant areas of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity associated with the Dandenong and Dobsons creeks and the Dandenong foothills. The precinct also includes an area of artefact scatter.

The precinct contains three non-Aboriginal heritage places that are protected through the Heritage Overlay (HO), and seven places that are included in the City of Knox Heritage Study 1993 but are not protected through the Scheme.

The *Preliminary Heritage Review: Knox Rural Heritage* (Context, 2017) reviews the existing heritage places within the precinct (HO items and non-HO items listed in Knox Heritage Study 1993) and provides recommendations for each place.

Objective:

To identify, protect, celebrate and promote the heritage values and history, including Indigenous cultural heritage and post-contact heritage.

Action 1.12. Ensure adequate consultation occurs prior to any proposals affecting the Aboriginal Sites and Areas of Cultural Sensitivity as shown on the heritage map.

Action 1.13. Undertake a review of the heritage places in accordance with the recommendations from the *Knox Rural Heritage Report* (Context, 2017), as summarised below.

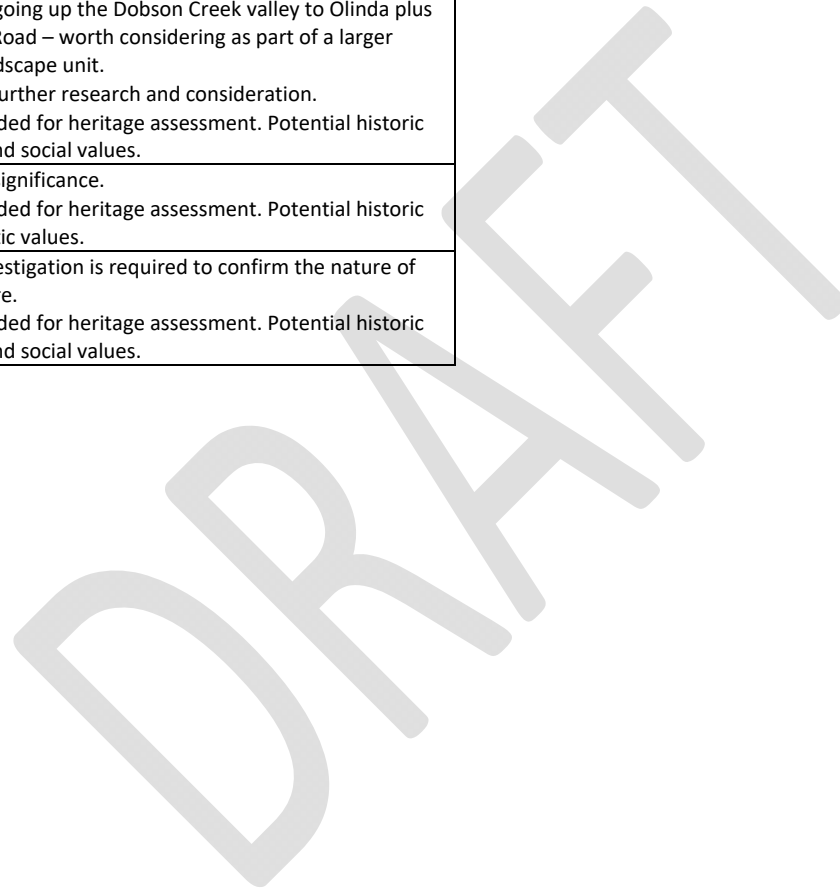
Place Name and Description	Recommendations
HO places	
HO5 Wicks Reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of historic and social/recreational significance. • Well documented and part of the area ESO, SLO and HO – no further research / assessment required. • Retain Environment, Heritage and Significant Landscape Overlays.
HO54 One Oak Tree (Basin Olinda Road, The Basin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intact and in good condition • Of historic and aesthetic significance • No further consideration required • Retain Heritage Overlay

HO8 Chandler Oak Tree, Sheffield Road, The Basin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of historic and aesthetic significance due to age and size. • Well documented and no further consideration required. • Retain Heritage Overlay.
Non-HO places	
Western face of the Dandenongs The whole of the western and part of the north-western slopes of the main Dandenong Range stretching from Montrose to the southern boundary of the Ferntree Gully National Park	Undertake an Integrated Aboriginal, Natural and cultural heritage assessment to explore these different aspects of significance in a holistic manner.
Dandenong Ranges The whole of the Dandenong Ranges form a backdrop to Knox but are predominantly in Yarra Ranges	Undertake an integrated Aboriginal, Natural and cultural heritage assessment would be appropriate for the Dandenong Ranges. This would involve an initial assessment at the state level (for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register) which would involve other municipalities. There may also be a case for the identified heritage values to be nominated for inclusion in national level listing.
Salvation Army site 1 Liverpool Road, The Basin	While there are no known archaeological reviews of the site, given that it contains 2 watercourses (Dobsons and Dandenong Creeks), it is identified as an area of cultural sensitivity. Recommended for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment. Potential Aboriginal, historic, aesthetic and social values.
Clevedon Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of historic significance as a site only. • Difficult to put forward as a HO without further investigation into the garden. • ‘Tentative list’ – although it’s possibly too far removed from its historic origins (not a priority). • Recommended for further investigation. Potential historic aesthetic and social values.



Theme 2: Landscape and Heritage

Glen Elbourne Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worth following up, either on an 'open day' or with the owner. • Note the large wholesale nursery next door and other properties going up the Dobson Creek valley to Olinda plus Old Coach Road – worth considering as part of a larger historic landscape unit. • Worthy of further research and consideration. • Recommended for heritage assessment. Potential historic aesthetic and social values.
Old Coach Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of historic significance. • Recommended for heritage assessment. Potential historic and aesthetic values.
Mountain Highway The Basin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further investigation is required to confirm the nature of the structure. • Recommended for heritage assessment. Potential historic aesthetic and social values.





Map 3

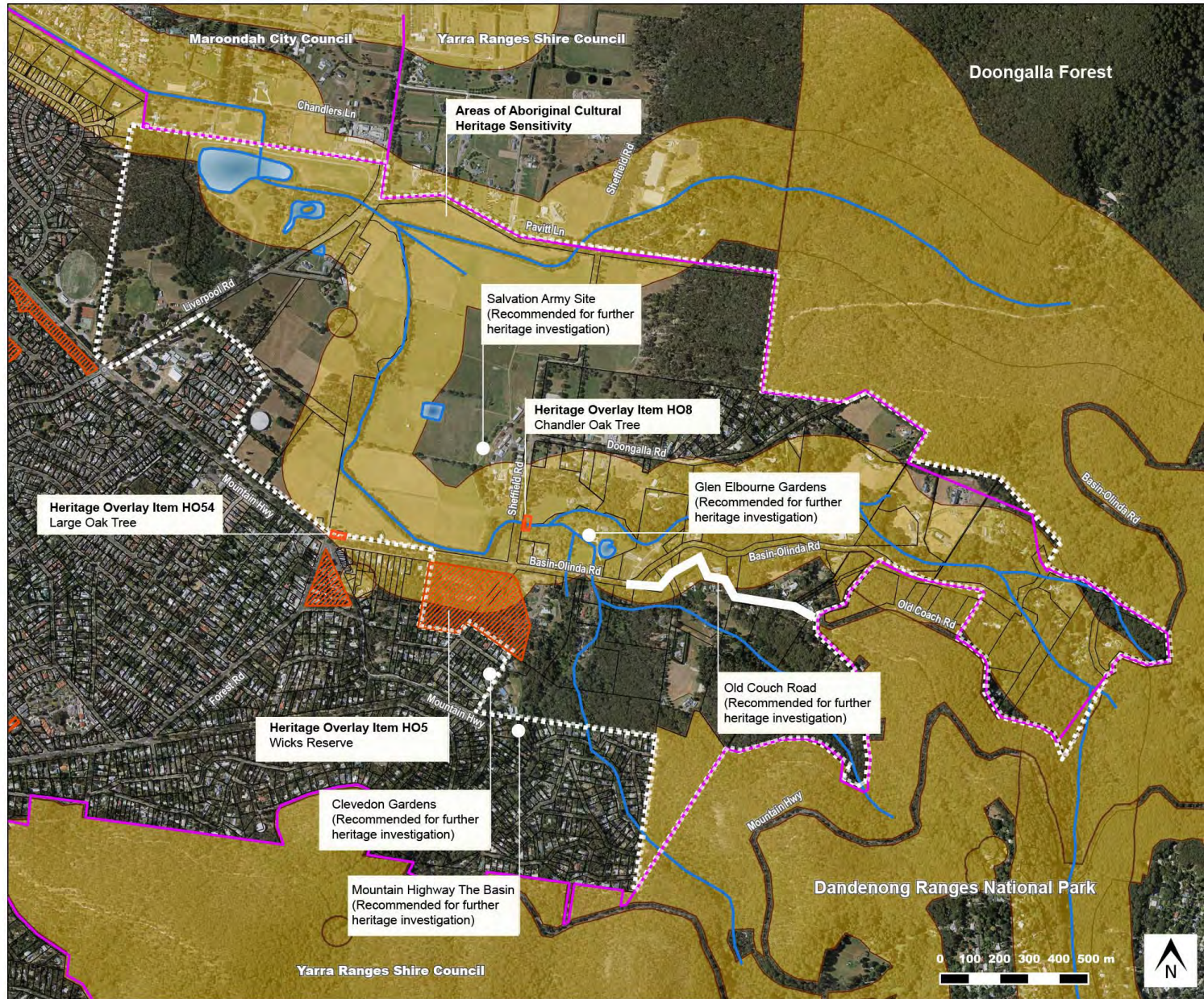
Precinct 1- The Basin Rural Landscape

Theme: Heritage

Knox Green Areas & Rural Strategy (GARS)

Legend

- Precinct Boundary
- Creeks and Lakes
- Heritage Overlay (HO)
- Areas of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity (Aboriginal Victoria)





Theme 3: Land Use and Access

Land Use and Economy

Precinct 1 is part of Knox Green Wedge located adjacent to the urban boundary and contains high quality agricultural land in the floodplains of the Dobsons Creek and uniquely valuable landscapes and significant vegetation. Protection of the precinct from urban development and subdivision will be a key priority in the coming years.

The precinct also benefits from proximity to the Basin Triangle, community and art facilities, parks, cycling trails and scenic tourist routes. Within limits of the planning framework that applies in Green Wedges, the precinct offers opportunities for rural based business such as eco-tourism, agri-tourism, community/social enterprise and small scale café/restaurant uses which can benefit and complement the precinct's agricultural, landscape and environmental values. However, such uses can only be supported if they are of low intensity and do they do not adversely affect the identified environmental and landscape values.

The *Knox Green Areas and Rural Strategy Economic Study* (Urban Enterprise, 2019) provides the following evaluation of economic, tourism, community and recreation potential for Precinct 1:

Summary of Economic, Tourism, Community and Recreation Potential

Suitability for agriculture intensification	Medium
Suitability for agri- tourism	High
Suitability for standalone tourism uses	High
Suitability for community / social enterprise	High
Accessible to population catchments	Medium
Accessible by public transport	Low
Accessible by bike/hiking/ walking	Low
Suitability for active recreation	Medium
Suitability for other intensive industry	Low
Suitability for passive recreation	Low

Larger Rural Properties (Green Wedge Zone 2 (GWZ2) and Special Use Zone 1 (SUZ1))

The central and western part of the precinct contains a number of larger lots which are used for agriculture, grazing and special uses. The past and present involvement of the Salvation Army in the area is a major contributor to its current open valley, rural outlook. The Basin Centre on Sheffield Road runs rehabilitation programs focused around the benefits of farming, growing crops, raising livestock, bakery and dairy activities. The

Boronia Corps is located adjacent to Miller Park on Liverpool Road and accommodates worship services, community activities, a thrift shop, laser strike and a community garden.

Rainfall and good quality soils provide agriculture potential within the floodplains of the Dobsons Creek. This area has potential for livestock grazing, perennial horticulture or horse agistment. However, the site is limited in scale and isolated from other livestock producers meaning economies of scale are difficult to achieve for a commercial operator. Agriculture use of this land is likely to be of a hobby farming nature used in conjunction with other uses.

This larger lots in the precinct present opportunities for targeted business attraction such as restaurant, winery, visitor accommodation and eco-tourism uses. The property sizes would allow for siting buildings and activities carefully to minimise negative impact on the environmental and landscape values and prevent changes the existing character. For further detail and case studies refer to the report *Knox Green Areas and Rural Strategy Economic Study* (Urban Enterprise, 2019).

The SUZ1 is not supportive of a number of tourism uses including visitor accommodation and restaurant, which are identified as some of the best fit uses for the precinct. The land uses allowed under the SUZ1 conflict with both the Green Wedge objectives and the use table under the Core Planning Provisions (Clause 51.02 of the Scheme). In case of future changes, more alignment with Green Wedge objectives are recommended.

Rural Living Lots (Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ1))

The eastern part of Precinct 1 is characterised by rural residential uses with relatively smaller lot sizes in the range of 4ha. These residential lots play a key role in the conservation of native vegetation and the vegetated foothills character. The area is home to a range of homebased businesses including consulting, creative industry and other professional services. This area also accommodates existing community uses such as The Basin Theatre and a place of worship.

For this area, more direction is required to assist with land use decisions. Existing trends indicate an appetite for home based business and small-scale café/restaurant uses in this area. Decision on these uses should ensure they do not adversely affect the local character and biodiversity values. Consideration must be given to bushfire risks, prevention of vegetation removal, traffic impact, car parking. The accumulative impact of such uses in this predominantly residential area should also be considered.

Parks and Reserves

Protecting the existing open space and recreational values is another priority in Precinct 1.



Theme 3: Land Use and Access

The precinct contains Wicks Reserve and Wicks East Nature Reserve which are popular recreational destinations in a rich bushland setting.

The Liverpool Road Retarding Basin, managed by Melbourne Water, is another parkland in Precinct 1 which serves an important drainage function in preventing flooding downstream by providing a considerable area for stormwater retention along the Dandenong Creek. In addition to its drainage function, the retarding basin features a high amenity parkland with recreational opportunities including fishing, cycling and dog walks. Shared paths near the retarding basin provide panoramic views of the hills.

The Basin Triangle

The Basin Neighbourhood Activity Centre (outside Study Area) is recognised as a Knox Gateway in the Planning Scheme and has opportunities for revitalization and enhancements to public realm. Car parking in road verges and reserves is a current problem the area.

Any commercial growth should be limited to the south of Mountain Highway while the priority in the north will be to preserve the openness and long range views.

Other constraints

Limited street lighting is available within the precinct. However, additional street lighting is not desirable due to its potential impact on wildlife.

The majority of the precinct is not connected to reticulated sewer. Servicing needs to be considered as part of any future proposal.

Objective:

Recognise and protect the values of Knox Green Wedges.

Action 1.14. Protect Precinct 1 from more intense urban development.

Objective:

To ensure land uses are carefully located and managed to be consistent with the values and functions of the Study Area.

Action 1.15. Ensure future land use and development complements the precinct's primary environmental and landscape values, including environmental conservation, agriculture, agribusiness, art and culture, with complementary small scale tourism-related purposes.

Action 1.16. Protect the Dobsons Creek valley, as a significant landscape with capable agricultural land, from inappropriate development and use that would compromise these values.

Action 1.17. Maintain the existing residential settlement character and prevent further intensification and vegetation loss. Consider bushfire risks and vegetation impacts early in the planning process and do not support proposals that rely on vegetation removal including for fire management or car parking.

Action 1.18. Maintain the current minimum subdivision sizes in Precinct 1 and prevent fragmentation of land.

Action 1.19. Support enhancements to amenity, scenic qualities and recreational values.

Action 1.20. Facilitate enhancements to The Basin Neighbourhood Activity Centre, through a potential master planning process, to

- strengthen and diversify commercial land use within the existing commercial zones to the south of the roundabout;
- protect and maximise public access to open range views to the north of the roundabout;
- revitalise and enhance the public realm and local character; and
- support and facilitate public art to complement the local character.

Action 1.21. For the larger rural properties within the central and western part of the precinct (GWZ2 and SUZ1), support discretionary uses (i.e. Section 2 uses) that are for tourism, agri-tourism, educational and commercial purposes, where proposals are sited and designed sensitively to protect and enhance the environmental, agriculture and landscape values of this precinct, and do not increase bushfire risk.

Action 1.22. Investigate opportunities to establish parkland to the north of The Basin Triangle roundabout to protect long range views from this location and provide additional passive recreation opportunities.

Action 1.23. In case of future changes to the SUZ1 zoning, support alignment with the VPP Green Wedge objectives and use permissibility, while preventing urban development and land fragmentation.

Access and Connectivity

Due to its general amenity and proximity to recreational and visitor destinations in the DRNP and Doongalla Forest, Precinct 1 presents great opportunities for recreational walking and cycling. Map 4 indicates the existing trails and tracks within and around Precinct 1, including:

- Existing tracks in the Doongalla Forest. Some of these are also used for horse riding.
- The Dandenong Creek Trail to the north-west of the precinct.
- Off-road paths along Mountain Highway and dedicated on-road cycle lanes along Forest Road.
- Victoria Walks Doongalla Homestead walk starts at the Basin shopping centre and visits multiple points of interest including Wicks Reserve, Chandler Oak heritage site and The Basin Theatre before heading into the forest. This walk uses Basin Olinda Road, Sheffield Road and Doongalla Road within Precinct 1.

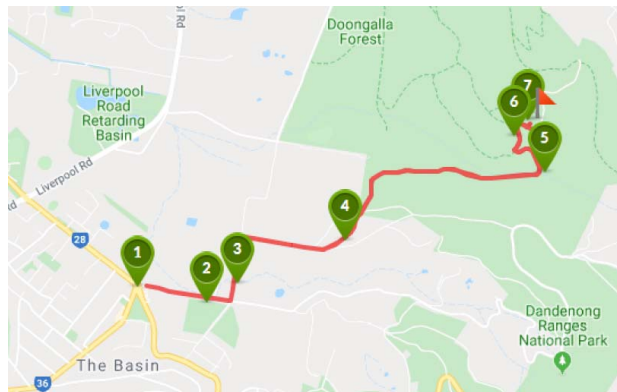


Figure 9 - Doongalla Homestead Walk (Source: Victoria Walks website)

In terms of public transport, bus route 755 runs along Mountain Highway and connects the Bayswater Station and Knox City Shopping Centre via Boronia, The Basin and Ferntree Gully. Other than the areas within the catchment of this route, the rest of Precinct 1 is not within walkable distance to public transport.

The precinct has a good level of access and permeability for vehicular movement. Mountain Highway and Basin-Olinda Road, and to some extent Old Coach Road, provide connectivity to destinations to the east and serve as tourist routes for visitors to the

Knox Green Areas and Rural Strategy

Dandenong Ranges. Liverpool Road and Sheffield Road provide the essential north-south connectivity between the suburban areas to the south and Kilsyth/Kilsyth South to the north of the precinct. The precinct also contains some local roads, some of them being unsealed. It is noted that the unsealed roads contribute to the rural and natural character of the precinct and are not considered an issue.

While the precinct provides a good level of connectivity, there are concerns about traffic safety on local roads due to a conflict between walking/cycling and vehicle traffic, in particular on roads without segregated paths. A strong message from the public consultation for this precinct was related to a need for improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure. Multiple respondents mentioned the existing safety concerns along Liverpool Road and the need for an adequate segregated shared path. Similarly, there were concerns raised regarding movement safety along Sheffield Road/Doongalla Road due to a mix of pedestrian, bicycle, horse riders and vehicular traffic.

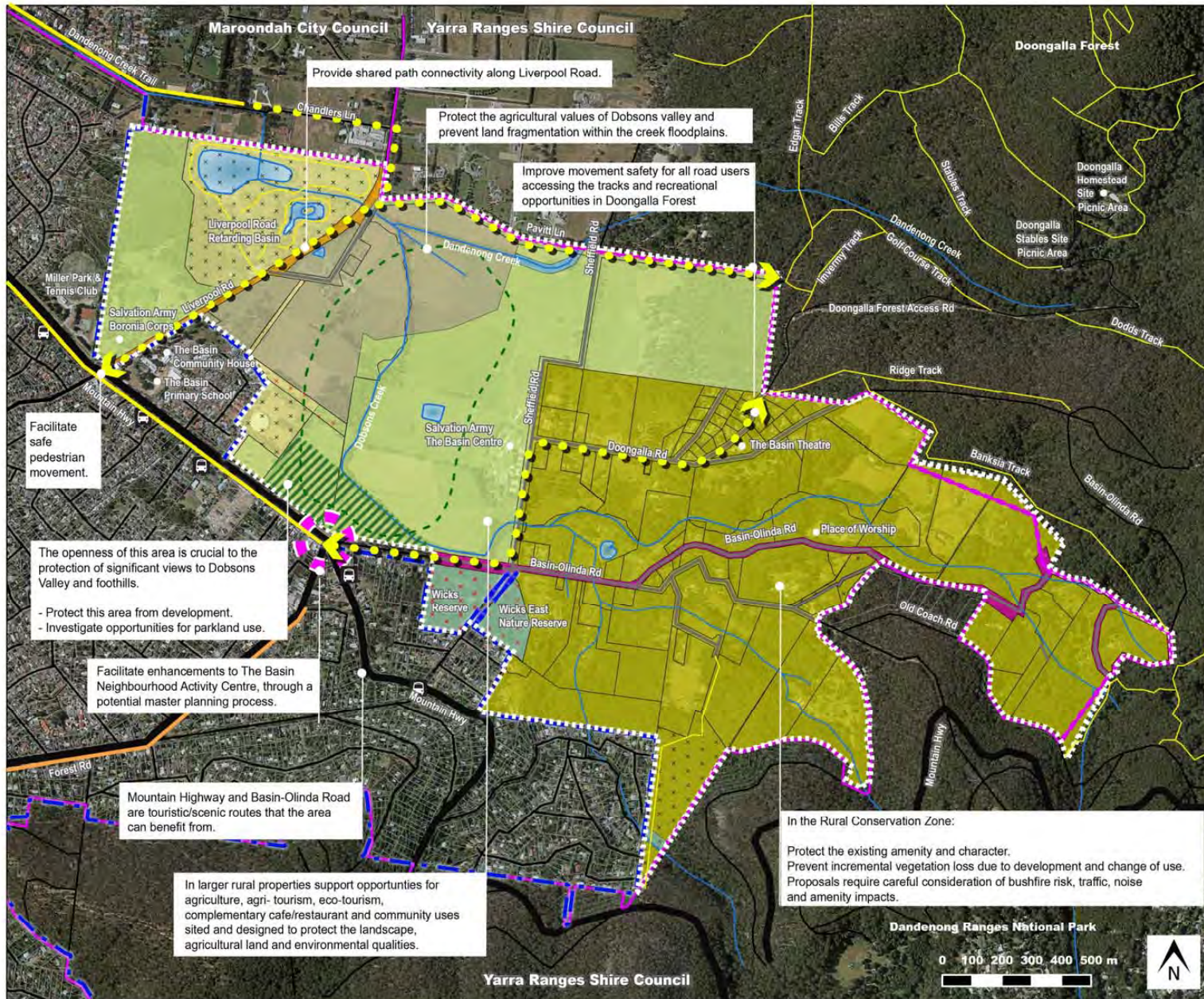
Another issue identified during the consultation was the need for a pedestrian crossing at the intersection of Liverpool Road and Mountain Highway to address current pedestrian safety issues near The Basin Primary School. There were also specific suggestions for additional trail linkages connecting to the existing tracks to the south of the precinct and to the Dandenong Creek Trail to the north-west.

While the community supported such improvements, it was also noted that new facilities should not be at the expense of native vegetation.

Objective:

To facilitate connectivity and safe movement for all users.

- Action 1.24.** Investigate upgrades to the Sheffield Road/Doongalla Road route to:
- Provide a safe multi-user path for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.
 - Potentially reduce traffic speeds.
 - Provide signs regarding horse manure catcher and cleaning up after dogs.
- Action 1.25.** Investigate upgrades to the Liverpool Road to:
- Provide a shared path.
 - Facilitate improved pedestrian movement around the Mountain Highway intersection to ensure safe connectivity to The Basin Primary School.
- Action 1.26.** Advocate for improved pedestrian safety on Mountain Highway and Basin-Olinda Road near The Basin roundabout.



Map 4

Precinct 1 - The Basin Rural Landscape

Theme: Land Use and Access

Knox Green Areas & Rural Strategy (GARS)

Legend

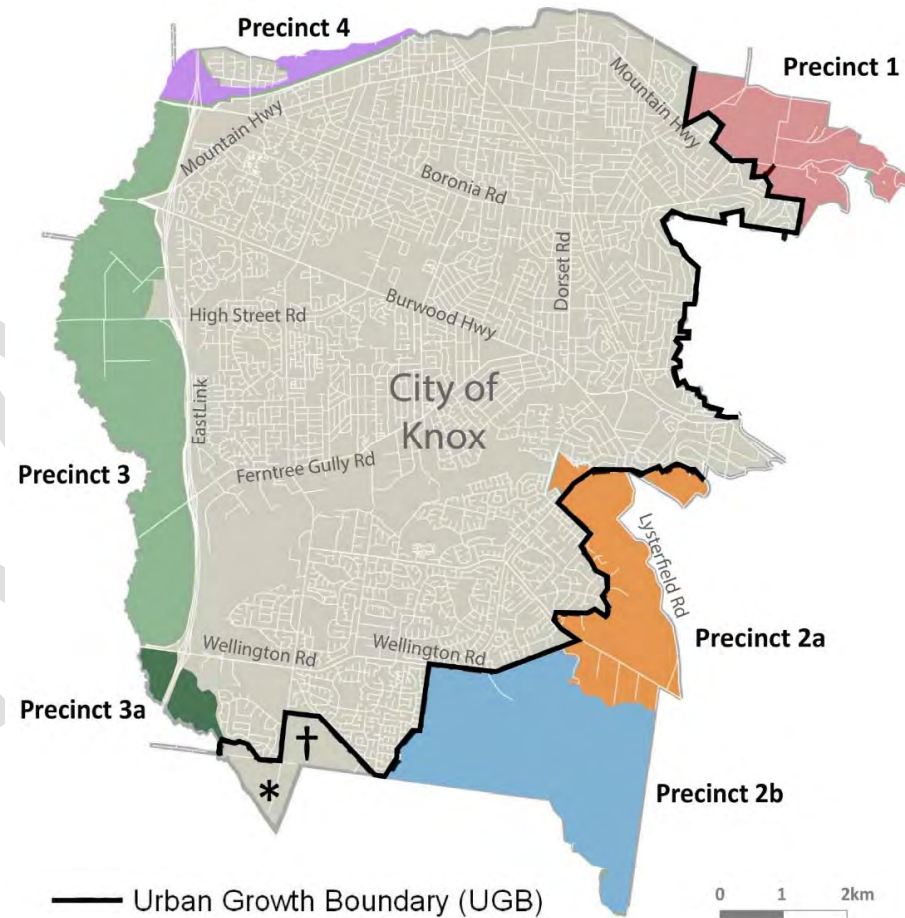
- Precinct 1 Boundary
- Urban Growth Boundary copy
- Knox Council Boundaries
- Creeks and Lakes Areas
- Cadastre
- Land Ownership**
 - Local Government
 - State Government/Agencies
- Roads**
 - Local Streets/Rds
- Zones - Knox Planning Scheme**
 - GWZ2
 - PCRZ
 - PPRZ
 - PUZ (Multiple)
 - RCZ1
 - RDZ1
 - RDZ2
 - SUZ1
 - UFZ
- Pedestrian/Bicycle Network**
 - Existing On Road
 - Existing Off Road
 - Proposed Walking/Cycling Routes
- Other**
 - Knox Gateways



Precinct 2a:

Lysterfield Valley and Hills

DRAFT





Vision for Precinct 2a

The Vision for Precinct 2a reflects feedback received during public consultation involving the stakeholders and the community. Key themes from the public consultation are summarised below:

- **Prioritising environmental conservation**
Suggestions were made about moving the reference to biodiversity/wildlife connectivity earlier in the vision statement to give it a higher priority over other matters.
- **Green buffer role**
It was recommended that the vision acknowledges the role of this area as part of the green fringe backdrop of Knox providing a buffer between the urban landscape and the hills.
- **Future development**
Some comments stated that protecting this area from further development should be a priority, while others believed some development and growth should be permitted to allow people to enjoy living there.
- **General support**
Overall, there was a high level of support for the draft vision subject to minor changes.

Vision for Precinct 2a:

The Lysterfield Valley and Hills will be protected as a distinct landscape of natural and pastoral character providing an open green buffer on the edge of the urban area with important biodiversity and wildlife connectivity values. The precinct supports agriculture, rural industries and lifestyle living while providing an important role in flood management and water quality.



Theme 1: Ecology

Wildlife Habitat and Connectivity

Due to its creeks, pockets of native vegetation, farm dams and lack of intense development, Precinct 2a provides an important connection for wildlife movement between Lysterfield National Park and the Upper Ferntree Gully block of the DRNP.

The southern two-thirds of this precinct contains well connected farm dams and is likely to provide important overland connections for water-dependent species such as the Southern Bullfrog and Eastern Snake-necked Turtle, as well as other ground dwelling amphibians such as the EPBC-listed Growling Grass Frog *Litoria raniformis*, which was historically recorded in this area.

While existing Scheme controls support wildlife conservation and connectivity, there are opportunities for strengthening habitat protection in particular in the vicinity of Monbulk Creek. Currently, Monbulk Creek is covered by a 20m wide ESO2. ESO2 also covers pockets of native vegetation across the precinct. It is understood that Yarra Range is considering a 30m wide ESO over the stretch of Monbulk Creek to the east of Precinct 2a. There are opportunities for connectivity/consistency with this adjoining overlay and to work with the property owners to improve the riparian corridor. The *Knox Wildlife Conservation and Connectivity Report* encourages habitat enhancements within a 200m corridor.

It is also noted that parts of the Site of Biodiversity area protected by ESO2 are being used for sheep grazing. This poses risks to vegetation and habitat values of this area.

The proposed Dorset Road Extension reservation runs through the floodplains of Monbulk Creek. Should the road be constructed in traditional ways, it is likely to have a negative impact on the wildlife conservation and connectivity values of this precinct. However, there are opportunities to approach this road project in ways that deliver improved connectivity benefits for both wildlife and people. A case study example of how this project could be undertaken to deliver both a transport and a wildlife corridor is presented in Appendix 8 of *Knox Wildlife Conservation and Connectivity Report*.

Six barriers to wildlife movement have been identified within or abutting Precinct 2a as shown on the map, generally where roads intersect the creeks.

Objective:

To protect and enhance biodiversity and wildlife connectivity.

Action 2a.1. Support enhancements to the riparian corridor of Monbulk Creek and strengthen habitat values and connectivity within 200m of the creek.

Action 2a.2. Review the existing ESO over Monbulk Creek to ensure it properly covers the environmentally significant areas, in consultation with Melbourne Water to identify the Core Riparian Zone (CRZ) and the adjacent vegetation buffers.

Action 2a.3. For the proposed Dorset Road Extension, advocate for a concept of a multi-modal road/pedestrian and nature conservation corridor that supports both wildlife and human connectivity and contributes to habitat restoration within 200m of Monbulk Creek.

Action 2a.4. Reduce the wildlife barrier effects at the following sites in accordance with the recommendations of Appendix 1 to this report:

- Monbulk Creek – Blackwood Park (ID 19)
- Monbulk Creek – Napoleon Road (ID 20)
- Monbulk Creek – Lysterfield Road (ID 21)
- Monbulk Creek – Dorset Road Extension (ID 40)
- Drainage Channel - Dorset Road Extension (ID 41)
- Drainage Channel – Lysterfield Road (ID 42)

Action 2a.5. Undertake initiatives for supporting/partnering with rural land-holders to protect and enhance the ecological values including the riparian vegetation, and ensuring grazing practices do not damage habitat values.

Waterways and Flood Management

The main waterway in Precinct 2a is the Monbulk Creek which runs through private properties and connects to Corhanwarrabul Creek to the west. The entire precinct is within the Corhanwarrabul Creek catchment.

The floodplains of the Monbulk Creek are currently protected by a 400m wide Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO). The floodplain map needs to be updated in the Scheme to ensure it covers flood prone areas based on up-to-date rainfall scenarios. This section of the creek also is covered by a rectangular shaped Floodway Overlay (FO). Considering the unnatural shape of the overlay, a review is required to investigate if the overlay is correctly imposed.

Further protection and enhancement in the northern section of this precinct could help strengthen the resilience of this area. For example, creek embankment and vegetation restoration within the 200m zone adjacent to Monbulk Creek are likely to reduce the risk of flooding in the downstream urban zones. This is something that has become increasingly important considering that construction has occurred in the Comprehensive Development Zone in Waterford Valley to the north-west of this precinct and that future climate will cause more extreme rainfall events.

It is also noted that a small section of Ferny Creek runs through Gilmour Park. This park is owned by Melbourne Water and is publicly managed.

The proposed Dorset Road extension alignment is located in proximity to Monbulk Creek within an areas affected by the 1% AEP flooding from the creek.

Objective:

To improve waterway health and flood management.

- Action 2a.6.** Protect the floodplains of Monbulk Creek from development and level change to maintain their flood storage and retention values and prevent flooding downstream.
- Action 2a.7.** Advocate for the proposed Dorset Road extension to consider flooding from Monbulk Creek and apply a water sensitive design approach to maximise the natural flow and retention of water.
- Action 2a.8.** Review the Floodway Overlay over Monbulk Creek to ensure it serves a purpose and covers the correct area.

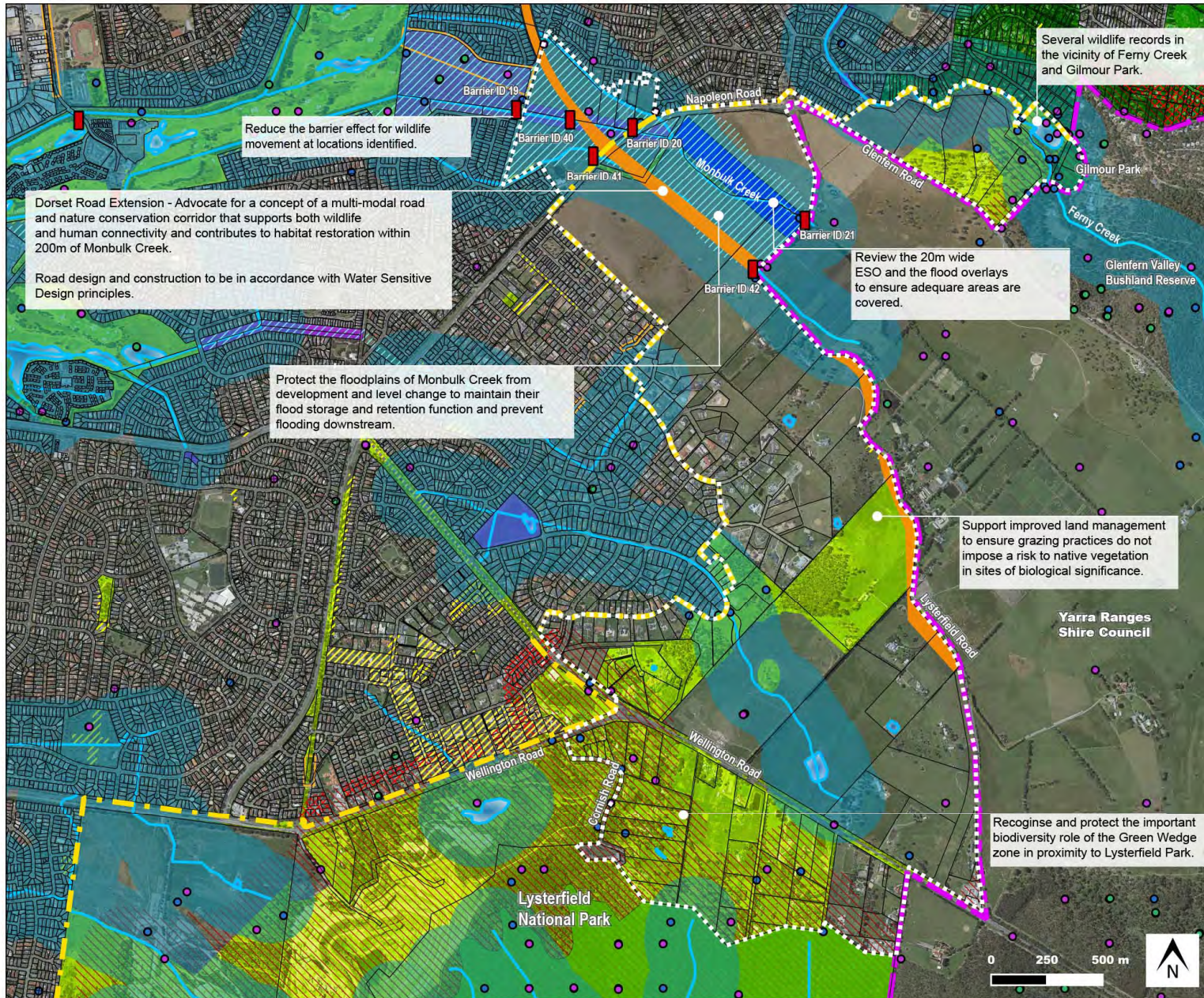


Map 5

Precinct 2a - Lysterfield Valley and Hills

Theme: Ecology

Knox Green Areas & Rural Strategy (GARS)



Legend

- Knox Wildlife Atlas (1995-2017)**
- Wildlife Records - Multiple Sources
 - Wildlife Records - Victorian Biodiversity Atlas
 - Knox Focal Species 2017
 - Barriers to Wildlife Movement
 - Waterways 200m Buffer
- Knox Planning Scheme**
- Environmental Significance Overlay 2 (ESO2)
 - Environmental Significance Overlay 3 (ESO3)
 - Floodway Overlay (FO)
 - Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO)
 - Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)
 - PCRZ
 - Urban Floodway Zone
 - Public Acquisition Overlay (Vic Roads)
 - Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO)
- Other**
- Precinct 2a Boundary
 - Creeks and Lakes
 - WSUD - Project Area
 - Urban Growth Boundary
 - Knox City Boundaries

Theme 2: Landscape and Heritage

Landscape Values

The GARS Landscape and Character Study (Hansen Partnership, 2019) states that open views towards the bare Lysterfield ridgeline are particularly prominent landscape elements in the local and regional panorama. The study recommends that the ridgeline and the associated slopes be recognised as an important scenic feature. The study identifies the following character areas and details key landscape values for each area:

No.	Description	Approach	Key Landscape Values
1	The Lysterfield Foothills Open Ridgelines	Protection	Bare open ridgelines and saddles, panoramic views from roads, windrow and vegetation clusters
2	The Wellington Road Flood Plain and Flats	Management	Rural integrity and open character, windrow and vegetation clusters, low-lying valley conditions
3	The Monbulk Creek Valley (Eastern Slopes)	Protection	Bare open ridgelines and saddles, panoramic Views from roads, windrow and vegetation clusters
4	The Monbulk Creek Floodplain	Monitoring	Open rural character, riparian vegetation, low lying valley conditions

The minimum subdivision area of 20ha in GWZ1 has been an important factor protecting the topographic landscape values. The majority of Precinct 2a is covered by SLO1 which protects vegetation and viewlines and controls building heights, development above 115m AHD, colours and materials. Clause 21.10 of the MSS also provides strategic direction to protect landscape values in this precinct. There are opportunities to build upon these existing provisions and provide specific guidance for the character areas above.

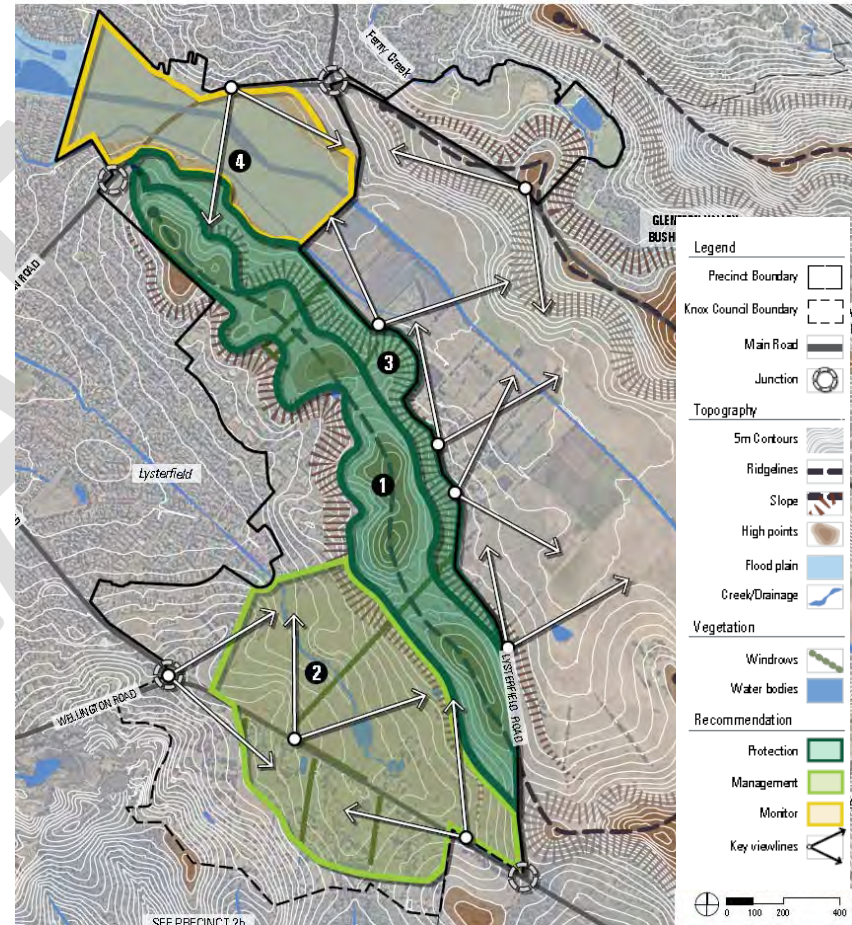
The proposed Dorset Road Extension will have a significant impact on Area 4 and long range views to the ridgeline in Areas 3 and 4.

Objective:

To protect and enhance local character and landscape values.

Action 2a.9. Review the existing Scheme provisions including the MPS, PPF and SLO1 in light of the findings of the GARS Landscape and Character Study (Hansen Partnership, 2019).

Action 2a.10. Advocate for the future Dorset Road extension design to respect the landscape character, and celebrate and emphasise the key views and the open rural character of the valley.



Map 6 – Precinct 2a Landscape Assessment (Source: Hansen Partnership)



Theme 2: Landscape and Heritage

Heritage

Precinct 2a contains areas of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity associated with Monbulk Creek and around Ferny Creek in Gilmour Park. Some artefact scatter is found in this precinct.

The precinct contains a number of Oak trees listed in the Heritage Overlay (HO) and five places from Heritage Study 1993 that are not included in the HO.

The *Preliminary Heritage Review: Knox Rural Heritage* (Context, 2017) reviews the existing heritage sites within the precinct (HO items and items listed in Knox Heritage Study 1993) and provides recommendations for each place.

Objective

To recognise, protect and promote existing heritage.

Action 2a.11. Ensure adequate consultation occurs prior to any proposals affecting the Aboriginal Sites and Areas of Cultural Sensitivity as shown on the heritage map.

Action 2a.12. Review the places of heritage significance in accordance with the recommendations from the *Preliminary Heritage Review: Knox Rural Heritage* (Context, 2017), as summarised in the table below.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for more research to establish the historic landscape character and to help define significant sites and boundaries.
Former Lysterfield School, 1430 Wellington Road Lysterfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended for heritage assessment. • Potential historic, aesthetic and social values.
Lysterfield cheese factory, Lysterfield Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place is also part of the Lysterfield valley landscape. • Recommended for heritage assessment. • Potential historic, aesthetic and social values.

Site Name and Description	Recommendations
HO Places	
HO43 Avenue of Honour, Lysterfield Road (ten Silky Oaks, two English Oaks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of historic and social significance • Consider updating the heritage citation to incorporate the description provided in the Knox Heritage Study. • Retain Heritage and Significant Landscape overlays.
Non-HO Places	
Lysterfield Valley Lysterfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended for heritage assessment for sites within the landscape. • Recommended for Significant Landscape Assessment.
Fern Tree Gully Market Gardens (Remnant green corridor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended for heritage assessment for sites within the landscape. Recommended for significant landscape assessment.



Map 7

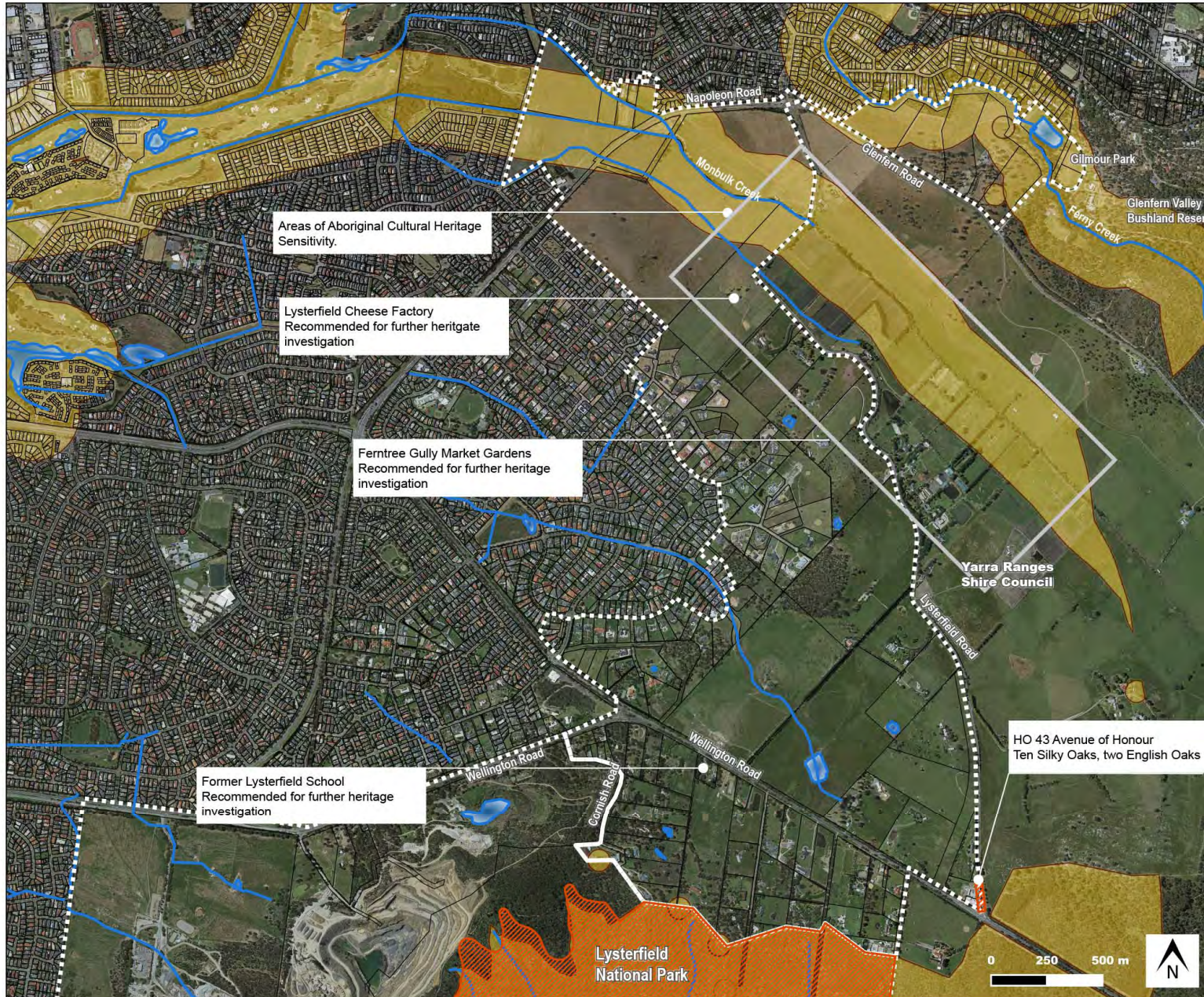
Precinct 2a - Lysterfield Valley and Hills

Theme: Heritage

Knox Green Areas & Rural Strategy (GARS)

Legend

- Precinct Boundary
- Creeks and Lakes
- Heritage Overlay (HO)
- Areas of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity (Aboriginal Victoria)





Theme 3: Land Use and Access

Land Use and Economy

The land use and economic analysis suggests that the economic potential for this precinct is achievable under the current Planning Scheme controls. Overall, the *GARS Economic Study* (Urban Enterprise, 2019) provides the following evaluation of economic, tourism, community and recreation potential for Precinct 2a:

Summary of Economic, Tourism, Community and Recreation Potential

Suitability for agriculture intensification	Medium
Suitability for agri- tourism	Medium
Suitability for standalone tourism uses	Low
Suitability for community / social enterprise	Low
Accessible to population catchments	Medium
Accessible by public transport	Low
Accessible by bike/hiking/ walking	Low
Suitability for Active Recreation	Low
Suitability for other intensive industry	Low
Suitability for Passive Recreation	Low

Central Valley and large Green Wedge lots

The central valley area within Precinct 2a is characterised by larger landholdings which contain hobby farms, lifestyle properties, horse agistment, horticulture and rural stores along Lysterfield Road. The northern part of this area is affected by the floodplains of the Monbulk Creek extending to the east into Yarra Ranges. There is a minimum Subdivision of 20ha in the Green Wedge Zone 1 (GWZ1).

Medium agricultural capability exists in the low lying areas of the Monbulk Creek floodplain. Elsewhere, agriculture potential is lower due to steep slope and water supply issues for commercial farming. In these areas, opportunities exist for livestock grazing, growing of low water crops, nurseries and other large format supplies.

A small area in the north of the precinct is within the Urban Growth Boundary. This area is zoned Rural Living (RLZ) however is highly affected by flooding from Monbulk Creek and is currently used for farming (incl. brussel sprouts) and rural living purposes.

Larger land holdings in the Lysterfield Valley provide for the agricultural uses while maintaining the open rural landscape character of the valley. Potential uses for this precinct are livestock grazing, perennial horticulture, nursery, large format supplies and restaurants if co-located with and ancillary to other uses such as a vineyard or garden centre. The existing minimum subdivision including the 20ha which applies in the GWZ1 is considered appropriate in this area.

Agricultural production in the precinct is at the risk of land fragmentation, in particular as Dorset Road extension will cut through the precinct. High land values and encroachment issues also threaten long term viability of commercial horticulture enterprises.

Green Wedge lots

Relatively smaller rural residential lots in the range of 2-4ha are located in the northern and southern part of the precinct in Green Wedge Zone 2 (GWZ2). This zone consist of grazing land on the hillside to the north of Glenfern Road, as well as smaller lots in the range of 2-3ha to the south of Wellington Road. These lots provide for a variety of rural uses including lifestyle living, hobby farming and dog kennels.

The area south of Wellington Road has provided for a different range of rural economy within the precinct. Site layouts and considerable building setbacks from Wellington Road have provided for a high quality scenic amenity and rural character in this area. These lots also have an important biodiversity role due to their proximity to Lysterfield National Park

Rural Conservation lots

The western part of the precinct is characterised by smaller Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ1) lots in the range of 0.5ha to 2ha which are located on the edge of the urban area in proximity to the suburban residential areas of Lysterfield. The subdivided area within this zone has resulted in a relatively intense residential character with limited vegetation or biodiversity value which is not in line with the zone purpose. Most of the lots contain extensive building footprints consisting of large houses and outbuildings.

The rural residential uses support home based business of varying typologies including creative businesses, construction trades and other professional services.

Public Art Opportunities

The future Dorset Road extension within the Monbulk Creek valley in Precinct 2a will be a highly visible alignment within a scenic landscape setting. This corridor offers opportunities for the incorporation of public art to complement the landscape and mitigate the visual impact of the new road.



Theme 3: Land Use and Access

Objective:

Recognise and protect the values of Knox Green Wedges.

Action 2a.13. Protect Precinct 2a from more intense urban development.

Objective:

To ensure land uses are carefully located and managed to be consistent with the values and functions of the Study Area.

Action 2a.14. Maintain the current zoning regime.

Action 2a.15. Support the continuation of agriculture within the floodplains of Monbulk Creek.

Action 2a.16. Acknowledge and support the different role of each zone within this precinct to enable a diversity of rural economy and character.

Action 2a.17. Maintain the current minimum subdivision lot size requirements to support landscape values and agricultural potential of land.

Action 2a.18. Support land use which respects the existing landscape character, protect key viewlines and provides positive biodiversity outcomes.

Action 2a.19. Support tourism, agri-tourism and restaurant/café uses where they are accompanied by agriculture or natural systems and protect the landscape and character values.

Action 2a.20. Support and facilitate public art along the Dorset Road extension within the Monbulk Creek valley in Precinct 2a.

Access and Connectivity

The precinct is well connected for vehicular movement through a network of arterial roads (Wellington Road, Lysterfield Road, Napoleon Road, Glenfern Road and Kelletts Road) and local roads within the precinct.

These roads also provide important routes for visitors to the Dandenong Ranges including Wellington Road which serves as a key gateway and touristic corridor into the hills.

Overall, public transport connectivity is limited to Precinct 2a. Bus Route 691 runs along Napoleon Road connecting the local residents to Boronia and Waverley Gardens. Routes 681 and 682 which are loop services to the Knox City Shopping Centre run via Kelletts Road, Rosewood Boulevard and Heritage Way. Some of the smaller Rural Conservation lots are within walking distance to these bus routes.

Precinct 2a benefits from proximity to Lysterfield Park, which contains very popular and highly used bushwalking and mountain biking trails. There are opportunities to improve connectivity and access to these trails.

Roads in/abutting Precinct 2a do not provide segregated bike lanes or shared paths. The Principal Bicycle Network (PBN) proposes new on-road bicycle lanes along Wellington Road, Kelletts Road and Napoleon Road.

Action 2a.21. Advocate to the State Government to provide the planned PBN cycle lanes along Wellington Road, Kelletts Road and Napoleon Road.

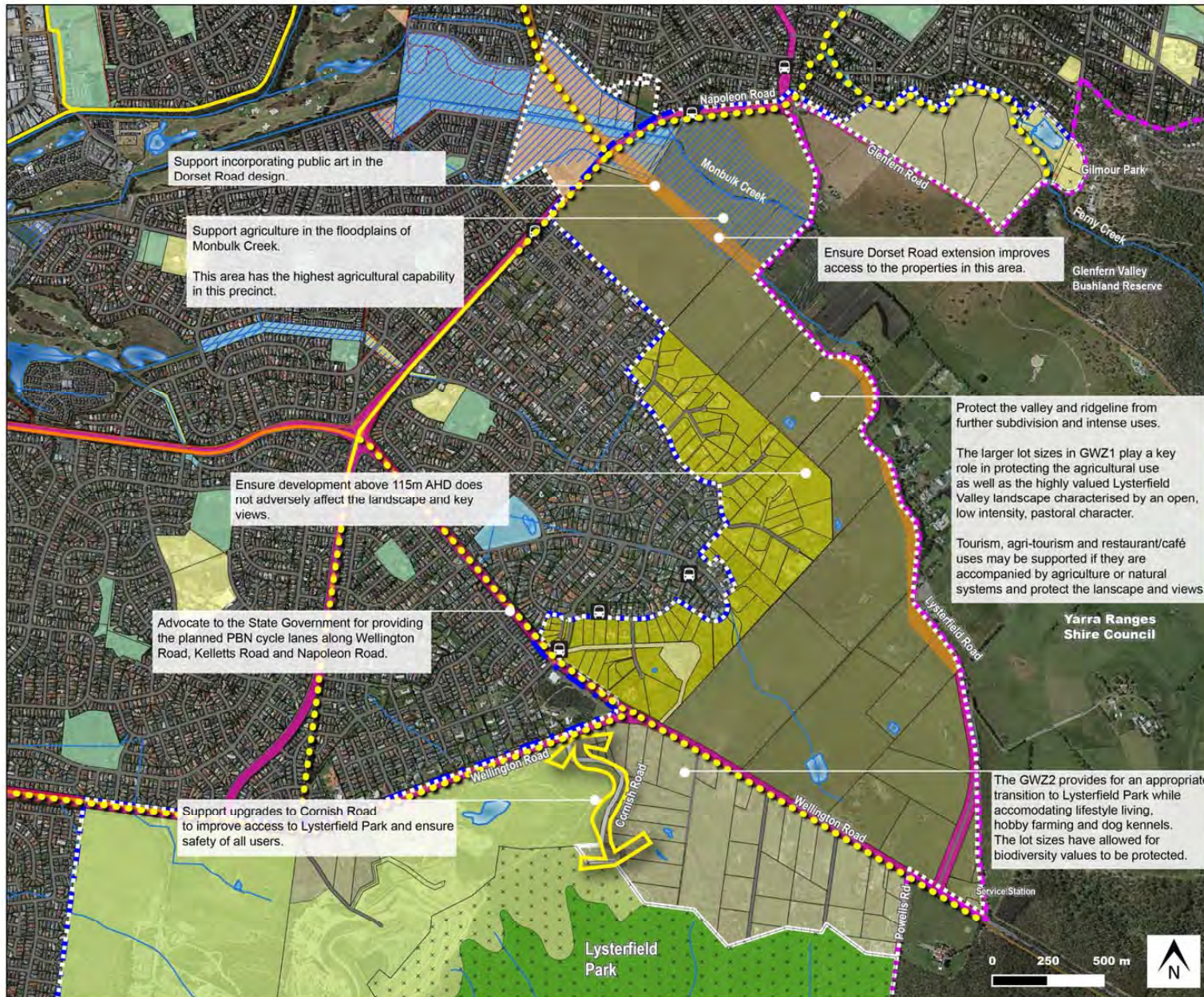
Action 2a.22. Ensure Dorset Road extension improves access to rural lots in the Monbulk Creek Valley.



Map 8
Precinct 2a - Lysterfield Valley and Hills

Theme: Land Use & Access

Knox Green Areas & Rural Strategy (GARS)



Legend

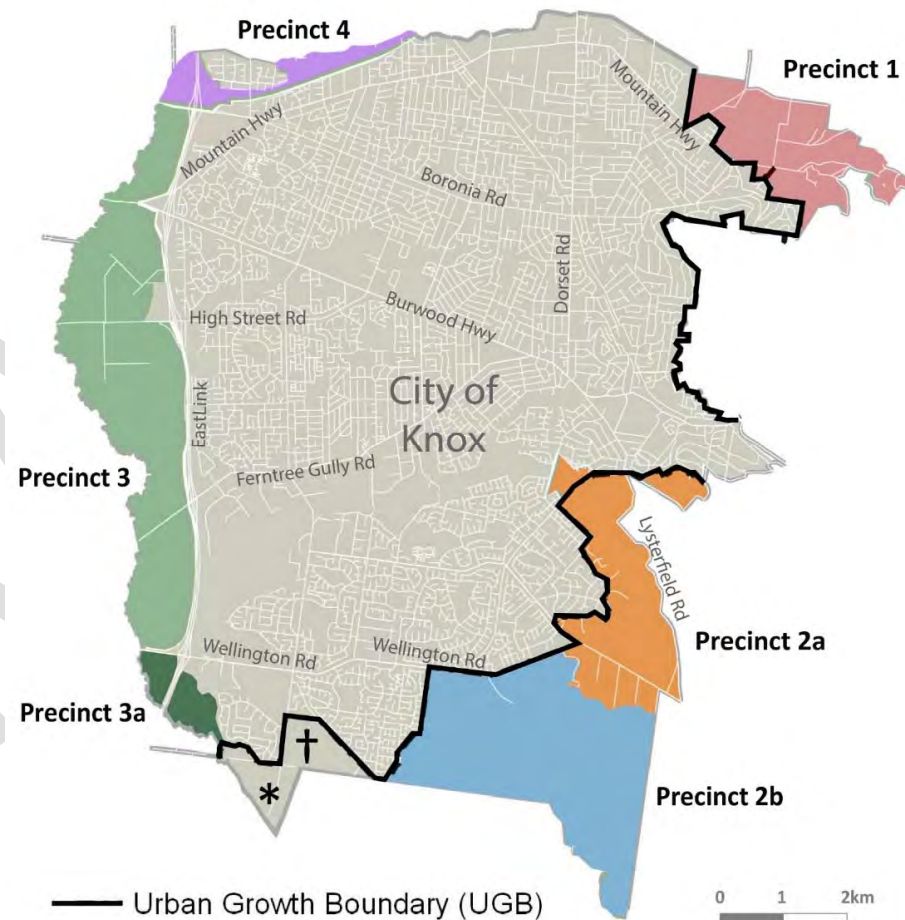
- Precinct Boundary
 - LGA Boundaries
 - Urban Growth Boundary
 - Creeks and Lakes Areas
 - Cadastre
- Zones - Knox Planning Scheme**
- GWZ1
 - GWZ2
 - PCRZ
 - PPRZ
 - PUZ1
 - RCZ1
 - RDZ1
 - RLZ
 - UFZ
 - Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO)
 - Public Acquisition Overlay (Vic Roads)
- Road Centrelines**
- Local Streets/Rds
- Pedestrian/Bicycle Network**
- Existing On Road
 - Existing Off Road
 - Proposed Walking/Cycling Routes
 - Proposed Multi-user Road Enhancements



Precinct 2b:

Lysterfield Quarries and Surrounds

DRAFT





Vision for Precinct 2b

The Vision for Precinct 2b reflects feedback received during public consultation involving the stakeholders and the community. Key themes from the public consultation are summarised below:

- Prioritising environmental conservation**
 Protecting vegetation and wildlife in this precinct was considered an important priority for many respondents.
- Extractive industries**
 A considerable level of opposition was expressed to the operation of the two quarries in this precinct, in terms of their scenic, environmental and amenity impacts. In this respect, it is noted that the quarries' lifetime and operation is regulated by the Victorian Government and exempted from KCC planning approval process. The vision seeks to recognise the economic role of the quarries while managing their impact on the surrounding area.
- Tourism**
 Some concerns were raised about the notion of tourism, in particular as it may be interpreted as significant or intense tourism uses. The vision has been amended to clarify that improving access to nature tourism opportunities in the national parks is intended.

Vision for Precinct 2b:

The Lysterfield Quarries and Surrounds will preserve significant vegetation and habitat within Lysterfield Park and Churchill National Park while enhancing access to recreation and nature tourism opportunities. The precinct will continue to provide a low density rural buffer between the urban area and the sensitive wildlife habitat in the national parks. The economic role of the existing extractive industries will be supported while minimising negative impacts on the surrounding urban areas.

Theme 1: Ecology

Wildlife Habitat and Connectivity

Precinct 2b contains portions of Lysterfield Park and Churchill National Park that hold significant ecological and biodiversity values.

The north-east section of this precinct abuts rural land in Precinct 2a, with the many farm dams and the adjacent catchment of Monbulk Creek. Maintaining this connection between the native vegetation and the adjacent agricultural lands will help preserve the populations of Short-beaked Echidna, Southern Bullfrog, Black Wallaby, and the four bird focal species that occur in this landscape.

The national park areas are well protected through a combination of zoning (PCRZ, PPRZ), public ownership, environmental (ESO) and heritage (HO) overlays. The vegetation outside the parkland is also protected by the ESO.

While the majority of existing vegetation in Precinct 2b is protected by overlays, exemption from Planning Permit processes may apply within the scope of the approved work plans for the two quarries. This makes some of the sites of biodiversity in Precinct 2b vulnerable to future clearing in case of extensions to quarry activities. Hanson Quarry has indicated of its intention to expand the quarry activities to the west of the existing quarry area. This is likely to impact native vegetation in this area.

The northern part of Precinct 2b serves as an important buffer between the Rowville residential areas to the north and the significant habitat areas in Lysterfield Park and Churchill National Park. It is important that this rural buffer is protected and maintained. The fact that this area is outside the Urban Growth Boundary helps with the protection of this buffer from intense development.

The precinct offers great opportunities for additional vegetation planting to strengthen the existing habitats. Clause 21.10 of the Scheme requires 80% of all new vegetation (both canopy trees and understorey) to be indigenous.

Objective:

To protect and enhance biodiversity and wildlife connectivity.

Action 2b.1. Maintain the northern area within Precinct 2b as a low density, rural, open space area to create a buffer between the Rowville residential areas and the sensitive habitat in Lysterfield Park and Churchill National Park.

Action 2b.2. Maintain the current Urban Growth Boundary to prevent intense development within Precinct 2b.

Action 2b.3. Undertake planting and revegetation within Precinct 2b, with the objective of maintaining and strengthening wildlife connectivity and linkages to the bushland areas within Lysterfield Park and Churchill National Park.

Action 2b.4. Require a net gain contribution for any vegetation removal as part of the planned quarry expansion, by native vegetation planting to enhance habitat and wildlife connectivity.

Waterways and Flood Management

The precinct contains a number of streams and much of the catchment for these streams which feed into Lysterfield Lake. The majority of Lysterfield Park is within the Eumemmerring Creek catchment with the north western part the precinct being within the Dandenong Creek (Police Road to Bayswater Road) catchment.

A number of small lakes exist in the precinct, including one within Heaney Park. The key waterways in this precinct are in a public zone and well protected by the planning framework.



Map 9
Precinct 2b - Lysterfield Quarries and Surrounds

Theme: Ecology

Knox Green Areas & Rural Strategy (GARS)

Legend

Knox Wildlife Atlas (1995-2017)

- Wildlife Records - Multiple Sources
- Wildlife Records - Victorian Biodiversity Atlas
- Knox Focal Species 2017

Knox Planning Scheme

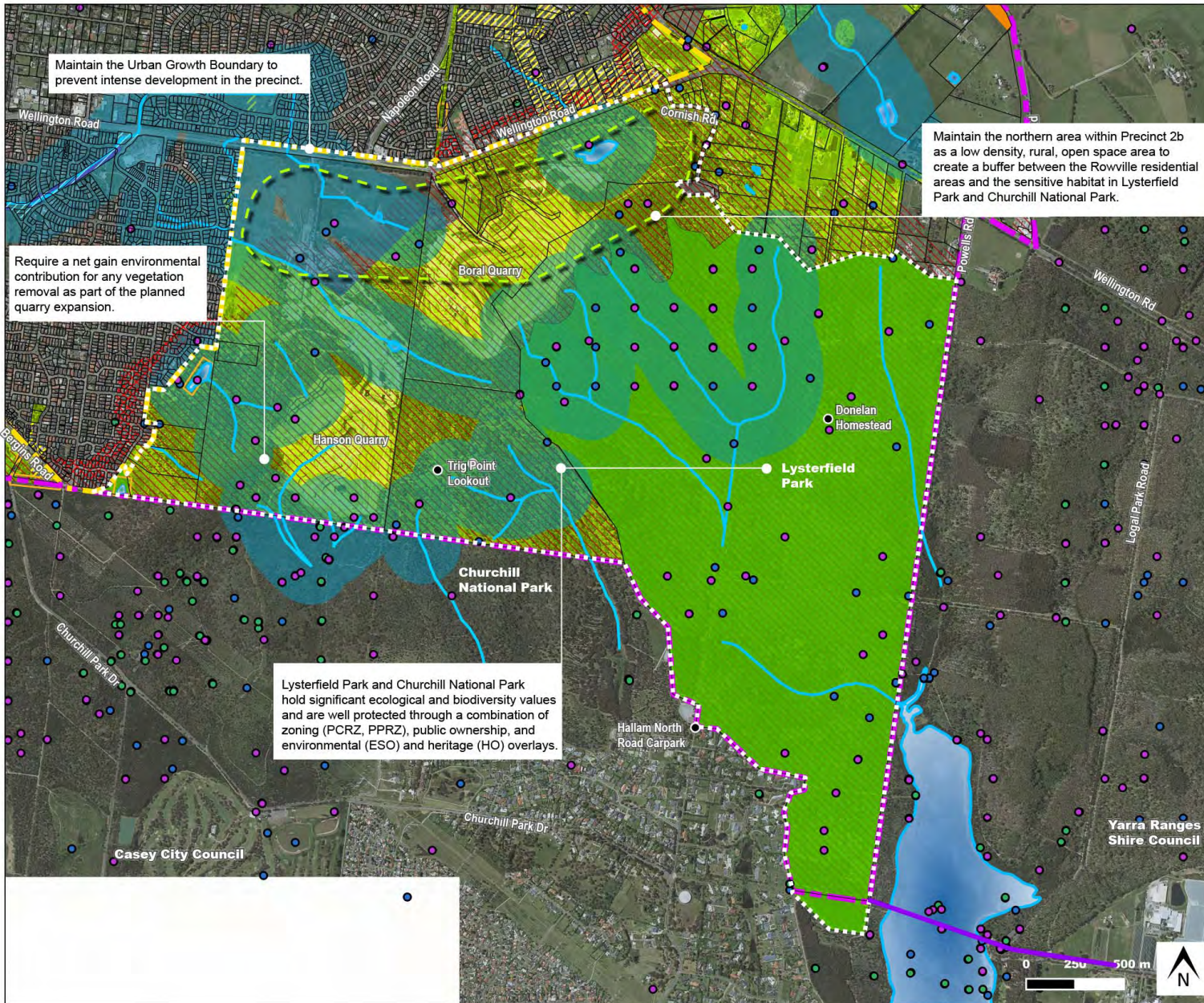
- Environmental Significance Overlay 2 (ESO2)
- Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO)
- Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)

Zones - Areas

- PCRZ
- UFZ

Other

- Creeks and Lakes
- WSUD - Project Area
- Precinct 2b Boundary
- Urban Growth Boundary
- Knox City Boundaries



Theme 2: Landscape and Heritage

Landscape Values

The *GARS Landscape and Character Study* (Hansen Partnership, 2019) recommends that the defining forested edge of this part of Knox be recognised. Topography and native vegetation cover are important features in this precinct with key view corridors along Wellington Road to both the east and west. The study identifies the following character areas (as shown on the map) and details key landscape values for each area:

No.	Description	Approach	Key Landscape Values
1	The Rising Wellington Road Ridgelines	Management	Native bushland condition
2	The Lysterfield Park and Bushland Silhouette	Protection	Native bushland condition
3	The Extractive Industries and Works	Management	N/A
4	The Open Grazing Land	Monitoring	Rural integrity and open character

The vegetation and landscape qualities of Lysterfield Park are well protected through zoning and public ownership of land. The majority of Precinct 2b is covered by SLO1 which protects vegetation and viewlines. SLO1 also controls building heights, development above 115m AHD, colours and materials.

The north-western corner of the precinct (within Area No 4) is covered by SLO5 which requires that development is sensitive to the natural characteristics of the land including slope, terrain and any remnant vegetation, and that development minimises impact on views of the Dandenong Ranges, Lysterfield Valley, Lysterfield Hills and significant ridgelines.

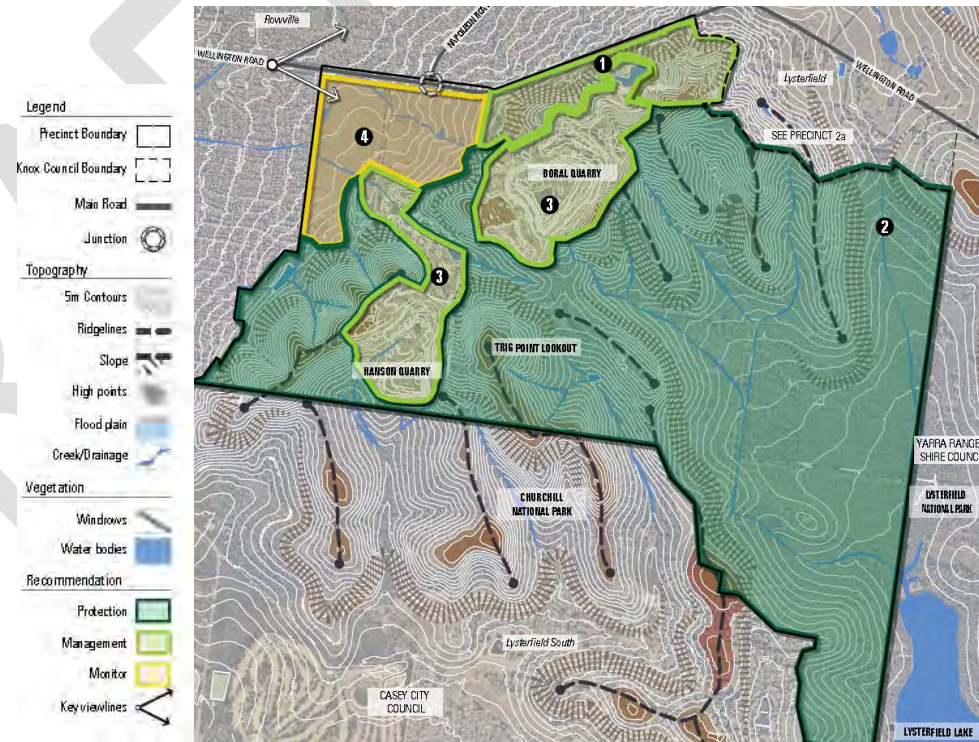
The Scheme at clause 21.10 provides strategic direction to protect landscape values in this precinct. There are opportunities to expand these provisions.

Objective:

To protect and enhance local character and landscape values.

Action 2b.5. Review the existing Scheme provisions including the MPS, PPF and SLO1 and SLO5 in light of the findings of the *GARS Landscape and Character Study* (Hansen Partnership, 2019).

Action 2b.6. Ensure future changes on Hanson Quarry land do not adversely impact the key landscape values.



Map 10 – Landscape Assessment (Source: Hansen Partnership)



Theme 2: Landscape and Heritage

Heritage

Precinct 2b contains areas of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity and artefact scatter within Lysterfield Park.

Precinct 2b includes two heritage places listed in the HO and two non-listed places listed in Knox Heritage Study 1993. The *Preliminary Heritage Review: Knox Rural Heritage* (Context, 2017) reviews the existing heritage places within the precinct (HO and non-HO items) and provides recommendations for each place.

Action 2b.7. Ensure adequate consultation occurs prior to any proposals affecting the Aboriginal Sites and Areas of Cultural Sensitivity as shown on the heritage map.

Action 2b.8. Review the places of heritage significance in accordance with the recommendations from the *Knox Rural Heritage Report* (Context, 2017), as summarised in the table below.

Site Name and Description	Recommendations
HO Places	
HO1 Lysterfield Lake Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of historic (HO1) and environmental significance (ESO2) Public land, recommend co-ordination with Parks Victoria for assessment of individual sites
HO2 Heany Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well documented, no further consideration Retain heritage and other overlays
Non-HO Places	
Churchill National Park, Churchill Road Rowville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public land, co-ordinate with Parks Victoria. Recommend heritage assessment for specific sites within the Park
Lysterfield Quarries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage assessment not recommended







Map 11

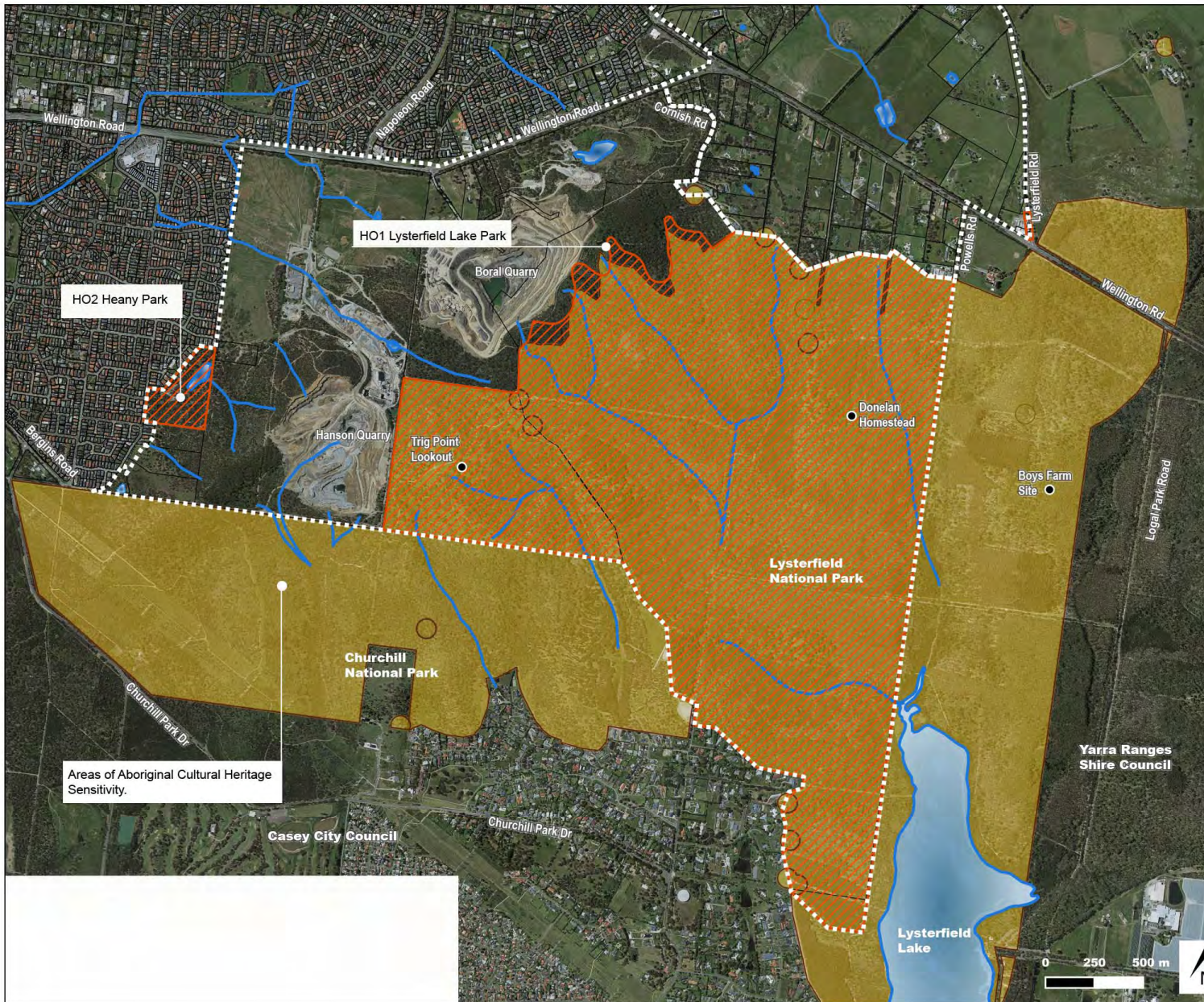
Precinct 2b - Lysterfield Quarries and Surrounds

Theme: Heritage

Knox Green Areas & Rural Strategy (GARS)

Legend

-  Precinct Boundary
-  Creeks and Lakes
-  Heritage Overlay (HO)
-  Areas of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity (Aboriginal Victoria)





Theme 3: Land Use and Access

Theme 3: Land Use and Access

Land Use and Economy

Overall, the *GARS Economic Study* (Urban Enterprise, 2019) provides the following evaluation of economic, tourism, community and recreation potential for Precinct 2b:

Summary of Economic, Tourism, Community and Recreation Potential

Suitability for agriculture intensification	Low
Suitability for agri- tourism	Low
Suitability for standalone tourism uses	Low
Suitability for community / social enterprise	Low
Accessible to population catchments	Medium
Accessible by public transport	Low
Accessible by bike/hiking/ walking	Medium
Suitability for Active Recreation	High
Suitability for other intensive industry	High
Suitability for Passive Recreation	High

Public Parks

The parts of Lysterfield Park and Churchill National Park that fall within Precinct 2b contain sloped areas of forest and woodland which are owned and managed by Parks Victoria. The parks are popular for a variety of recreational activities including walking, cycling, nature tourism, picnic, horse riding, mountain biking and orienteering.

Lysterfield Park is one of the best places to mountain bike close to Melbourne. It contains parts of the State Mountain Bike Course which was used for the 2006 Commonwealth Games. The course consists of a network of well connected trails which flow up and down steep hills and through native vegetation. A short diversion from the top of the State Mountain Bike Course provides access to Trig Point Lookout which offers views across to Melbourne’s CBD.

The management framework for the area is outlined in Parks Victoria’s document *Churchill National Park and Lysterfield Park Management Plan* which was originally prepared in 1998. Parks Victoria amended the management plan in 2020 to reflect changes to the recreational use of these parks over the past twenty years. The scope of this amendment

process was to recognise mountain biking as a significant recreational activity in the park, document existing trails, update management zones and ensure contemporary management practices for Aboriginal cultural heritage are reflected in the management plan. Northern areas within the park have been identified to be protected by a special protection area and special management areas overlay in the amendment to the park management plan to protect park values. The parks have nature based recreation and tourism values that could be enhanced in line with the management plan recommendations.

Within the surrounding area, there are opportunities for outdoor education uses that can leverage from the extensive mountain biking activity that takes place in the precinct of Lysterfield Park.

Heany Park is also a smaller park along the western boundary of Precinct 2b which is owned by KCC. The Park consists of a bushland and a lake, accommodates scout camps and is home to Heany Park Scout Group. The park and the Green Wedge lots to its south provide an important vegetated buffer between the Hanson Quarry and the residential areas to the west.

Extractive Industries

There are two quarries in Precinct 2b operated by Boral and Hanson Australia. Together, the two quarries place Knox as the 4th most critical resource location for hard rock in Victoria.

The quarries have operated for over 30 years, and are currently operating pursuant to Work Authorities issued by the State Government. Hanson Australia seeks to expand its existing extraction limits which would extend the operating life of the quarry by five to ten years, with potential cessation of quarrying activities at the site in 25-30 years.

The extractive industries in this precinct are significant suppliers to the Melbourne construction industry and are well located for supplying the Melbourne region. They provide a significant economic role, including employment and economic output within the region.

The quarries are located on two large parcels of land zoned Special Use Zone (SUZ2). Limited guidance is currently provided within the planning framework regarding future use following the cessation of operation. While such development will be outside the life of his strategy, it is considered that the sustainable long term use of the land should avoid creating a lake following the completion of quarrying and aim for an improved community outcome, including ongoing protection of remaining significant vegetation outside the



Theme 3: Land Use and Access

extent of extraction, improved access to the national parks and the provision of active and passive recreation opportunities.

Rural Use

The northern strip of Precinct 2b is currently used for rural purposes including grazing and horse agistment on parts of the Hanson quarry land. The precinct also includes a number of smaller privately held Green Wedge Zone (GWZ2) lots abutting Wellington Road and to the south of Heany Park.

This rural area provides an essential buffer role between the Urban Growth Boundary and Lysterfield Park which helps protect the significant biodiversity and scenic landscape values of the park. In case of future rezoning following the life of the quarries, urban development outside the UGB will not be supported. A GWZ2 zone may be appropriate, in line with the existing residential pockets within this rural buffer, subject to detailed investigation.

The northern part of the Hanson Quarry land is clear of vegetation and is currently used for grazing/agistment. There are opportunities for community uses during the ongoing operation of the quarry through the provision of an active recreation complex. KCC has been liaising with Hanson regarding the potential development of the north eastern portion of the Hanson property for community facilities including sporting ovals.

Economic opportunities in Precinct 2b will be based on those uses that can build upon and complement the existing land uses such as recreation and education opportunities including outdoor education. Due to existing land use patterns and constraints, there are limited opportunities for other land uses including agriculture.

Public Art Opportunities

The future Dorset Road extension within the Monbulk Creek valley in Precinct 2a will be a highly visible alignment within the broader setting. This corridor offer opportunities for public art to complement this scenic landscape and mitigate the visual impact of the highway.

Objective:

Recognise and protect the values of Knox Green Wedges.

Action 2b.9. Protect Precinct 2b from more intense urban development.

Objective:

To ensure land uses are carefully located and managed to be consistent with the values and functions of the Study Area.

Action 2b.10. Support the ongoing operation of the Boral and Hansen Quarries within the approved work plan areas.

Action 2b.11. Investigate and support the use of the northern part of the Hanson quarry land for active recreation and sporting facilities.

Action 2b.12. Encourage the use of the quarry land following the completion of quarrying to provide for improved community and environmental outcomes, and facilitate permeability to enhance community access to the national parks.

Action 2b.13. Investigate general alignment with the Green Wedge Zone 2, in case of future rezoning of the northern part of the precinct, to provide a low intensity buffer to the national parks.

Action 2b.14. Collaborate with Parks Victoria regarding enhancements to nature based recreation and tourism opportunities within Lysterfield Park and improving access from Knox.

Action 2b.15. Support and facilitate public art along Wellington Road potentially as part of future planned ovals/recreation reserve.

Access and Connectivity

Precinct 2b can provide a positive role in improving connectivity between Lysterfield Park and the residential areas to the north of precinct 2b.

The main access to Lysterfield Park and its highly valued trail network is from south and currently, direct access is limited for the nearby residents in Knox. The quarries act as a physical barrier and there is a lack of connecting shared paths/tracks or a formalised entry point from Knox.

This has resulted in informal car parking issues in the vicinity including on Lysterfield Road approaching the Wellington Road intersection. Powells Road and Cornish Road currently provide informal entry to the parks which creates issues for the local residents. Powells Road has limited capacity due to its narrow road reservation and local traffic generated by rural industry uses. Cornish Road, on the other hand, is believed to be a more suitable option, however, requires substantial upgrades. The current issues relate to traffic and cyclist safety, drainage issues and environmental degradation. It is noted that the *Churchill*



National Park and Lysterfield Park Management Plan does not provide for improved access from the northern side.

The precinct is not within walking catchment of public transport, which is another reason why urban development should not be supported.

Objective:

To facilitate connectivity and safe movement for all users.

Action 2b.16. Provide connectivity between the Lysterfield Park trail network and the suburban areas, as part of future redevelopment of the quarries.

Action 2b.17. Investigate opportunities for upgrades to Cornish Road and the possibility of a formalised entry point, including car parking, to provide access to Lysterfield Park, in collaboration with Parks Victoria.

Action 2b.18. Facilitate improvements to Powells Road to address existing informal car parking issues.

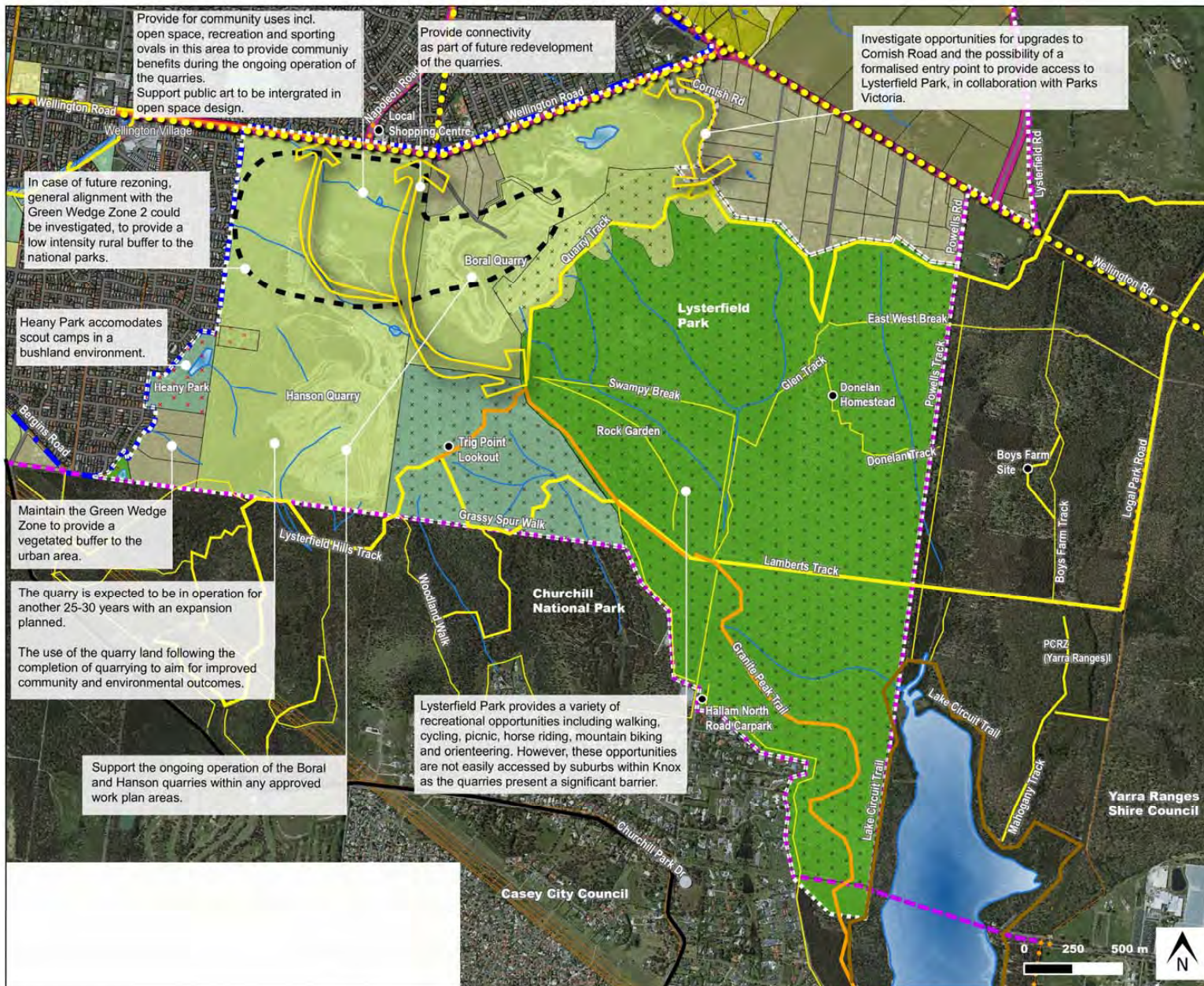


Map 12

Precinct 2b - Lysterfield Quarries and Surrounds

Theme: Land Use & Access

Knox Green Areas & Rural Strategy (GARS)



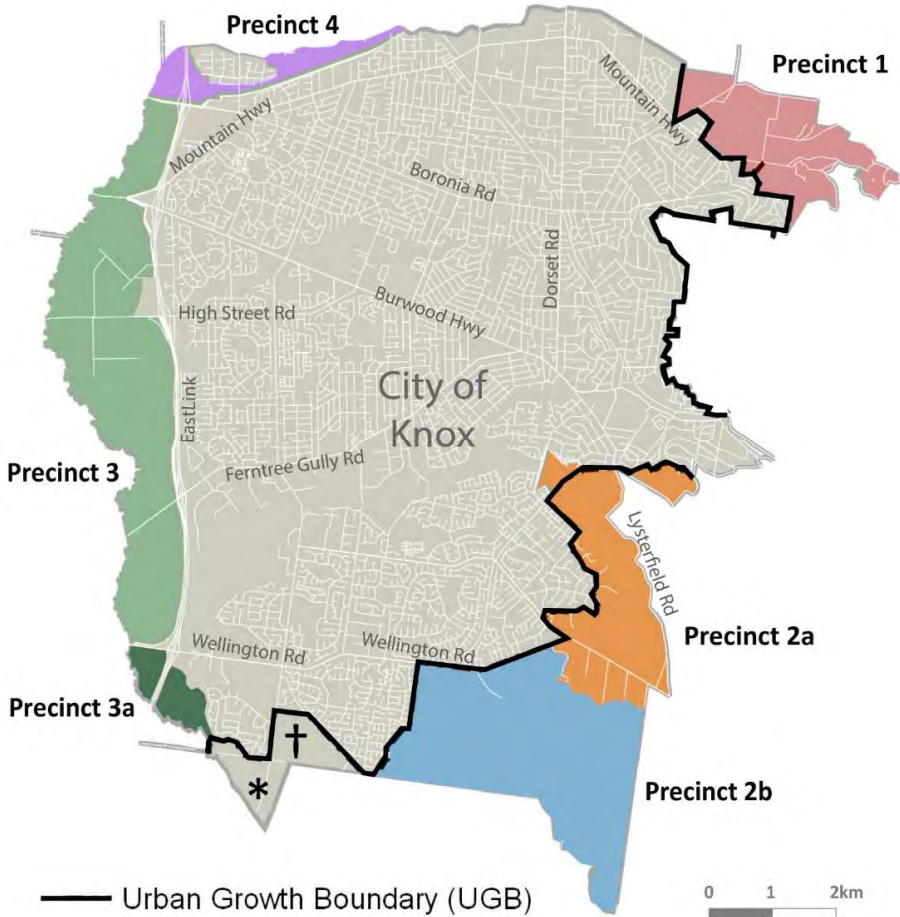
Legend

- Precinct Boundary
 - LGA Boundaries
 - Urban Growth Boundary
 - Creeks and Lakes Areas
 - Cadastre
- Zones - Knox Planning Scheme**
- GWZ2
 - PCRZ
 - PPRZ
 - RDZ1
 - RDZ2
 - SUZ2
 - UFZ
 - Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO2)
- Land Ownership**
- Local Government
 - State Government/Agencies
- Road Centrelines**
- Local Streets/Rds
- Pedestrian/Bicycle Network**
- Existing On Road
 - Existing Off Road
 - Proposed Walking/Cycling Routes
 - Routes for improved connectivity



**Precinct 3:
Dandenong Creek Valley**

DRAFT





Vision for Precinct 3

The Vision for Precinct 3 reflects feedback received during public consultation involving the stakeholders and the community. Key themes from the public consultation are summarised below:

- **The importance of waterways and wildlife corridors**
The consultation highlighted the importance of the waterways and the role of this precinct in wildlife movement and connectivity which needs to be recognised by the vision.
- **Development pressures**
Concerns were expressed about the future potential development at Jenkins Orchard and the Boral Redevelopment Site and how they would interact with and affect the function of this precinct as a green lungs corridor.
- **Horse agistment**
Maintaining the current horse agistment activities in this precinct was considered an important and rare recreational opportunity for the community.

Vision for Precinct 3:

The Dandenong Creek Valley Precinct is a consolidated “green lungs” corridor protecting key waterways and wildlife corridors while providing considerable recreational, nature conservation, flood mitigation, urban agriculture and parkland opportunities within the Eastern Metropolitan region.”

Theme 1: Ecology

Wildlife Habitat and Connectivity

Precinct 3 offers significant habitat values as it contains the widest core riparian zones of the Dandenong Creek, many well-connected billabongs, large extents of flood plains, as well as a relatively consistent spread of remnant vegetation along the length of the precinct.

Knox Wildlife Atlas indicates a high level of wildlife sightings recorded along the Dandenong Creek, Blind Creek and Corhanwarrabul Creek which highlight the role of these creek systems in wildlife connectivity. The pockets of remnant vegetation scattered across the precinct also provide important habitat and linkages for wildlife movement.

Public land ownership and management has played a key role in preserving biodiversity values in this precinct. Parks Victoria is a key landowner in Precinct 3 and a key contributor to the protection of habitat values. Melbourne Water also contributes to the health and habitat values of the Dandenong Creek. As part of the Enhancing Our Dandenong Creek project, KCC has been working with Melbourne Water and Environment Protection Authority (EPA) to identify projects including constructing new habitats for threatened fish species, increasing the natural amenity, pollution prevention and detection. Significant investment into the natural assets in this precinct were made by a number of agencies during the construction of EastLink.

The community also contribute significantly to the environmental state of the precinct. There is a high level of community involvement in environmental management including by the Friends of Dandenong Valley Parklands, individual volunteers, students and other community groups.

The Boral redevelopment site has previously been designated for residential development. This site provides a significant opportunity to enhance connectivity along the Blind Creek and incorporate habitat restoration into master planning and open space design.

Poor maintenance of orchards and weed control have the potential to reduce the wildlife connectivity and conservation values of this precinct if they encroach upon areas of native vegetation or other areas of habitat. However, in some cases areas of existing weeds may provide habitat values for wildlife. Therefore, any actions to remove or reduce weed cover should be undertaken in a staged basis, alongside active planting of native vegetation as replacement habitat.

Six barriers to wildlife movement have been identified within or abutting Precinct 2a as shown on the map, generally where roads intersect with the creeks.

An analysis of the Planning Scheme controls indicates that the majority of the identified habitat areas including the riparian vegetation are well protected through the Scheme either, through PCRZ zoning or ESO overlays. The analysis has found the following issues that are recommended for investigation.

Two parcels of land have been identified along the Dandenong Creek corridor that are not zoned for conservation purposes:

- 115-123 Axford Road, Wantirna South – This area of crown land is densely vegetated and the Rural Living Zoning seems to be an anomaly. This matter is currently being investigated by DELWP and Parks Victoria.
- 1A Burwood Highway, Wantirna –The area has been cleared and developed for retail purposes (gardening and landscaping supplies). It is recommended that any future redevelopment of the area incorporates habitat restoration.

Objective:

To protect and enhance biodiversity and wildlife connectivity.

- Action 3.1.** Acknowledge the significant role of this precinct in providing wildlife habitat and connectivity at a regional scale which is due to the integrity of existing native vegetation and the creek corridors.
- Action 3.2.** Continue the application of ESO2 across the precinct and review the local content to strengthen the provisions in accordance with the recommendations of this Strategy.
- Action 3.3.** Support rezoning to ensure the Dandenong Creek corridor is protected for conservation purposes, in consultation with stakeholders, including at 115-123 Axford Road, Wantirna South.
- Action 3.4.** Encourage reestablishment of the riparian vegetation and habitat as part of any future redevelopment at 1A Burwood Highway, Wantirna.
- Action 3.5.** Provide for habitat restoration and connectivity along the Dandenong Creek, and along Blind Creek as part of future development of the Boral Quarry site.
- Action 3.6.** Reduce the wildlife barrier effects at the sites indicated on the map in accordance with the recommendations of Appendix 1 to this report.



Action 3.7. Investigate and rectify the identified zoning anomalies along the Dandenong Creek corridor.

Action 3.8. Advocate for enhancements within this precinct to continue along the creek corridor south of Wellington Road.

Waterways and Flood Management

Precinct 3 supports important waterbodies including the Dandenong Creek, Blind Creek, Corhanwarrabul Creek and their tributaries. The precinct is within the Blind Creek and Dandenong Creek catchments, which flows from the Dandenong Ranges to Port Phillip Bay via Patterson River. The upstream section of Blind Creek in Boronia (outside Study Area) is identified as a “High Value” waterway in Knox as part of the Knox WSUD and Stormwater Management Strategy.

The billabongs and wetlands in Precinct 3 play a key role in water quality of the creek system while providing significant habitat for aquatic species. Melbourne Water works with KCC to manage these creek systems including ongoing monitoring of water quality and sediment control at the Corhanwarrabul Creek and Dandenong Valley treatment wetlands.

Precinct 3 contains large flood plains associated with the creeks. Large open space areas in Precinct 3 assist with flood mitigation. The southern part of the precinct accommodates the floodplain wetlands associated with the Corhanwarrabul Creek. This area has a major impact on flows and water quality in the Dandenong Creek.

The areas affected by flooding are protected by the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO). The flood overlay that currently applies is due for review. Melbourne Water and KCC are currently undertaking the 1%AEP flood modelling using the most recent techniques and methodology. Once this work is completed it is essential that the results are incorporated into the Scheme to ensure adequate development controls apply within floodplains.

Future redevelopment of the Boral quarry site will have to ensure that stormwater impacts are minimised and managed properly to prevent any negative impacts on the waterways or surrounding area. The section of Blind Creek that runs through the Boral quarry site was realigned from its original route and currently presents poor conditions. The future redevelopment of the Boral quarry site presents great opportunities for naturalization of the creek and enhancement of its condition as a healthy waterway.

Objective:

To improve waterway health and flood management.

Action 3.9. Protect the floodplains and wetlands in Precinct 3 for their flood storage and retention values.

Action 3.10. Continue the KCC/MW/Parks Victoria collaboration to improve waterway health and sediment control in Precinct 3.

Action 3.11. Future redevelopment of the Boral quarry site is to ensure that stormwater impacts are minimised and managed to the satisfaction of the relevant agencies.

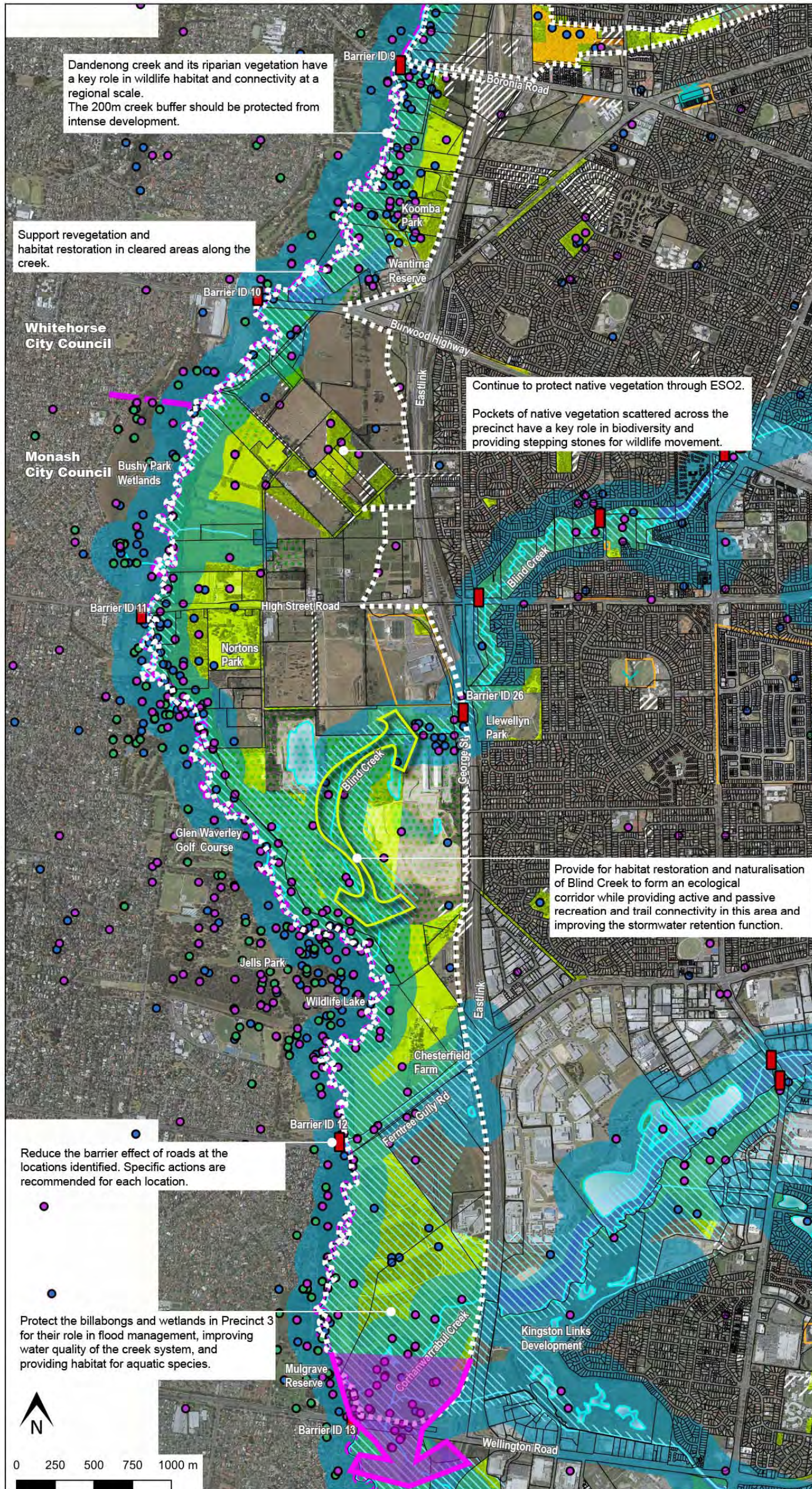
Action 3.12. Naturalise the Blind Creek and enhance its condition as a natural waterway corridor as part of the future development of the Boral quarry site.



Map 13
Precinct 3 - Dandenong Creek Valley Parklands

Theme: Ecology

Knox Green Areas & Rural Strategy (GARS)



Legend

Knox Wildlife Atlas (1995-2017)

- Wildlife Records - Multiple Sources
- Wildlife Records - Victorian Biodiversity Atlas
- Knox Focal Species 2017

- Barriers to Wildlife Movement

- Waterways 200m Buffer

Knox Planning Scheme

- Environmental Significance Overlay 2 (ESO2)
- Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO)
- PCRZ
- Urban Floodway Zone

Other

- Creeks and Lakes
- Floodplains
- WSUD - Project Area
- Precinct 3 Boundary
- Knox City Boundaries

➔ Enhancements within this precinct are to continue along the creek corridor south of Wellington Road



Theme 2: Landscape and Heritage

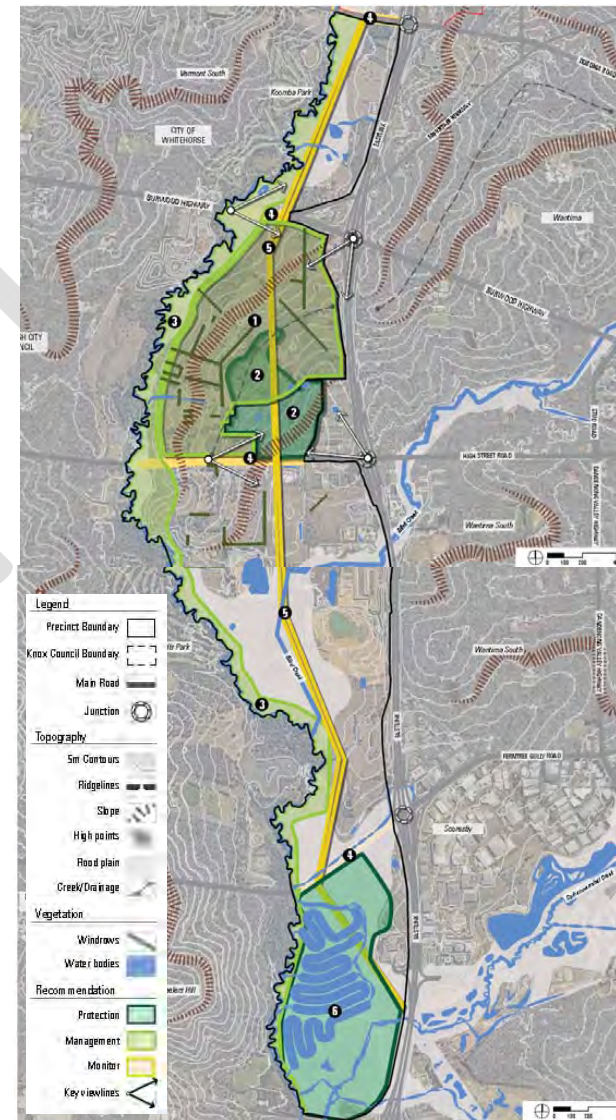
Theme 2: Landscape and Heritage

Landscape Values

The GARS *Landscape and Character Study* (Hansen Partnership) advises that while the corridor is a single entity, there is a notable distinction between the character of its northern sector (with elevated land between the Blind and Dandenong Creeks - immediately north of High Street Road) and its low southern wetlands. The openness and mixed vegetated quality of the valley is important to its character, in particular the elevated Wantirna South Ridgeline and cultivated hilltop. The study identifies the following character areas (as shown on the map) and details key landscape values for each area:

No.	Description	Approach	Key Landscape Values
1	The Wantirna South Ridge	Management	Rural character on rising land; roadside/windrow vegetation; native bushland patches
2	The Central Cultivated Hilltop	Protection	Rural character; Panoramic views from roads; Roadside/windrow vegetation; native bushland patches
3	The Dandenong Creek Riparian Corridor	Management	Riparian vegetation; low-lying valley conditions
4	The East-West Aligned Road Corridors	Management	Framed/open views from roads
5	The High Voltage Power Line Infrastructure	Management	The mitigating effect of vegetation
6	The Dandenong Valley Park and Wetland	Protection	Wetland vegetation; low-lying valley conditions

The Scheme refers to the precinct as a significant landscape and sets high level strategies to protect and enhance the landscape qualities. However, these strategies are not translated into any landscape overlays. Most vegetation within the precinct including the Dandenong Creek riparian corridor are protected through a combination of ESO2 and VPO2. The predominant PPRZ and PCRZ zoning also provides some protections. It is recommended to complement these existing provisions with more direction based on the findings.



Map 14 – Precinct 3 Landscape Assessment (Source: Hansen Partnership) 82



Theme 2: Landscape and Heritage

Objective:

To protect and enhance local character and landscape values.

Action 3.13. Review the existing Scheme provisions including the MPS and PPF in light of the findings of the *GARS Landscape and Character Study*. New strategic policy direction for landscape values of the precinct and a new SLO are to be investigated.

Heritage

Precinct 3 contains areas of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity associated with Dandenong Creek, Blind Creek and Corhanwarrabul Creek. It also includes a number of Aboriginal sites including artefact scatter and scarred trees.

The precinct includes three heritage places listed in the HO and three non-listed places. The *Preliminary Heritage Review: Knox Rural Heritage* (Context, 2017) reviews the existing heritage places within the precinct (HO and non-HO items) and provides recommendations for each place.

Objective

To recognise, protect and promote existing heritage.

Action 3.14. Ensure adequate consultation occurs prior to any proposals affecting the Aboriginal Sites and Areas of Cultural Sensitivity as shown on the heritage map.

Action 3.15. Review the places of heritage significance in accordance with the recommendations from the *Knox Rural Heritage Report* (Context, 2017), as summarised in the table below.

Site Name and Description	Recommendations
HO Places	
HO36 Clow Cottage, Dandenong Valley Parklands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain heritage overlay. Recommend heritage assessment to inform current listings.
HO10 Chesterfield Farm, Ferntree Gully Road Scoresby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain heritage and other overlays.
HO50 Boronia Road Wantirna (west of EastLink) - Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further investigation required to determine extent. Retain heritage and other overlays.
Non-HO Places	
Axford Road Ruin, Axford Road Wantirna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend further investigation and heritage assessment.
Bushy Park, 3 Bushy Park Lane Wantirna South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended for heritage assessment.
Norton Park and Shepherds Bush, Wantirna South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public land - co-ordinate with Parks Victoria. Recommend heritage assessment for specific sites within the Park.



Map 15

Precinct 3 - Dandenong Creek Valley Parklands

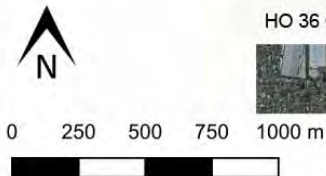
Theme: Heritage

Knox Green Areas & Rural Strategy (GARS)



Legend

- Precinct Boundary
- Creeks and Lakes
- Heritage Overlay (HO)
- Areas of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity (Aboriginal Victoria)



Theme 3: Land Use and Access

Land Use and Economy

The Dandenong Valley Parklands play a key role within the broader open space network as a large scale consolidated green corridor reserved for open space purposes, serving the eastern suburbs catchment. A large portion of the parkland is owned by Parks Victoria and is zoned for public and conservation purposes.

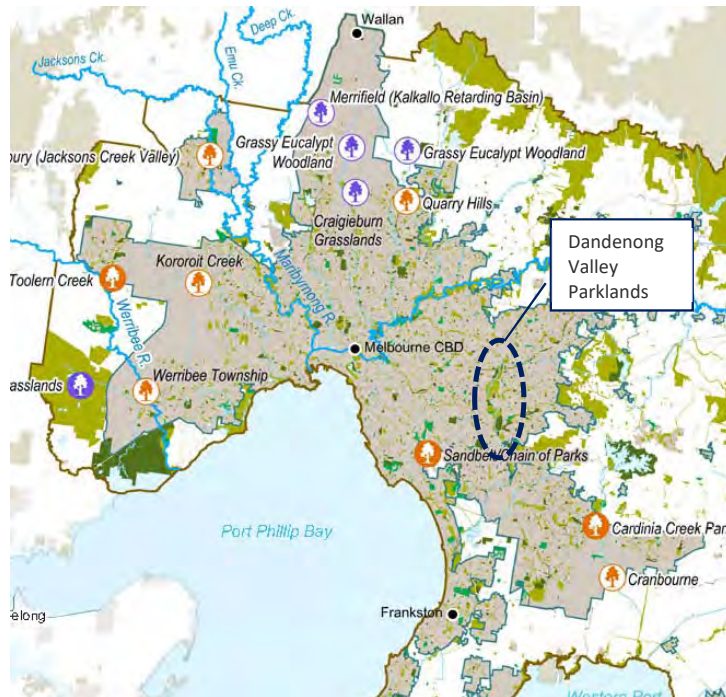


Figure 10 - Dandenong Creek Valley Parklands in the metropolitan open space context (Source of base map: Plan Melbourne)

Some areas of this corridor have been developed for parkland, sport and recreation purposes. The other parts are leased by Parks Victoria to private operators who use the land for a variety of purposes including horticulture, fresh produce markets, horse agistment and cattle grazing. Chesterfield Farm is an example of leased land which provides educational and tourism services such as interaction with farm animals and farm shows. Parts of the parklands are owned privately and have a Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) on them.

Parks Victoria prepared the Dandenong Valley Parklands Future Directions Plan in 2006. This document sets out Parks Victoria’s vision, management framework and implementation actions for the wider Dandenong Valley Parklands area. The plan is due for a review however no review is planned by Parks Victoria in the short term.

Out of the GARS precincts, this precinct offers the greatest opportunities for agriculture, recreation, agri-tourism and community uses. The *GARS Economic Study* (Urban Enterprise, 2019) provides the following evaluation of economic and land use potential for Precinct 3:

Summary of Economic, Tourism, Community and Recreation Potential

Suitability for agriculture intensification	High
Suitability for agri- tourism	High
Suitability for standalone tourism uses	High
Suitability for community / social enterprise	High
Accessible to population catchments	High
Accessible by public transport	Medium
Accessible by bike/hiking/ walking	High
Suitability for Active Recreation	High
Suitability for other intensive industry	Medium
Suitability for Passive Recreation	High

As the population increases in Knox and the region, there are opportunities to explore this additional potential to meet the growing demand of the community. This would be in line with Plan Melbourne vision for an integrated and high quality open space network, as well as the purpose of the PPRZ zone.

While the above opportunities have been identified, preliminary consultation for this Strategy did not find sufficient support from the stakeholders and the local community to



Theme 3: Land Use and Access

support changes in the short term. It is also noted that Parks Victoria as a key landowner has no immediate plans for comprehensive planning for the parklands.

The evidence base in this Strategy can be used to guide future planning in partnership with the stakeholders in case opportunities arise in the future.

Objective:

To ensure land uses are carefully located and managed to be consistent with the values and functions of the Study Area.

Action 3.16. Acknowledge the important role of the Dandenong Creek Valley Parkland as a significant green corridor within the eastern region.

Action 3.17. Support the following opportunities for the Dandenong Creek Valley parklands:

- a) Enhancements to open space to enable more active and passive recreational use.
- b) Tourism, agri-tourism, urban agriculture and cafes.
- c) Community partnerships with opportunities for KCC to connect community businesses and commercial partners with Parks Victoria.
- d) Education opportunities such as nature-based education.
- e) Cycling-oriented activities/businesses along the bike routes, support opportunities for such as bike shops, storage, organic trails and food trails.
- f) Urban agriculture models such as city farms/community gardens, community nurseries and plant exchanges, edible landscapes, food forests, indigenous food production, institutional and demonstration gardens and restaurant gardens (refer case study of CERES in the *GARS Economic Study*).

High Street Road Corridor

High Street Road serves an important role as a key gateway to Knox with a distinct rural, horticultural character. With the future redevelopment of Jenkins Orchard and the Boral

quarry, it would be important to recognise the existing landscape character and take actions to maintain and complement the character where possible.

The future development in these areas will need to respond to the local character. Monitoring changes to the other parcels of land on this corridor will also be important over the coming years.

Action 3.18. Define High Street Road corridor as a Gateway to Knox. Protect the rural, horticultural character of this corridor and seek opportunities to enhance its aesthetics through landscaping, building design and public art which respond to and complement the rural, horticultural and bushy character of this corridor.

Boral Quarry Redevelopment Site

The Boral Quarry site at 191 George Street, Wantirna South has been designated as a Strategic Investigation Site in the Scheme for future residential and employment uses.

The development will include residential and employment areas and provide for nature conservation and passive recreation uses in proximity to the Dandenong Creek riparian corridor.

The current use of the site as a quarry and the modified section of Blind Creek has lowered wildlife connectivity through this area. The development presents great opportunities to undertake revegetation and habitat restoration along the creek to revitalise its function as an ecological corridor.

Action 3.19. Future redevelopment of the Boral Quarry site to

- a) Provide for the revegetation and naturalisation of Blink Creek to reestablish its function as an ecological corridor.
- b) Protect and enhance the habitat values of the Dandenong Creek ecological corridor.
- c) Provide for passive and nature based recreation in appropriate areas.

Knox Regional Sports Park

Knox Regional Sports Park is located on crown land managed by KCC. It currently includes an indoor sports stadium, two synthetic soccer pitches and associated soccer pavilion, open grassed areas for informal recreation, grassed field and operations area for the



Theme 3: Land Use and Access

Victorian Association of Radio Model Soaring (VARMS), car parking areas and groups of predominantly native and indigenous trees.

In 2018 KCC has approved a Masterplan for the sports park which provides for the following upgrades:

- Ten additional domestic basketball courts;
- A new gymnastics facility suitable for regional level competition;
- A Centre of Excellence facility and high-performance training centre;
- An 8,000 seat capacity sports/entertainment area with overflow parking for 2,500 vehicles within the adjacent Cathies Lane Landfill site;
- The conversion of the existing 5-a-side soccer pitches to one full size field, six new 5-1-side pitches and extension to the existing pavilion; and
- At grade car parking facilities and intersection upgrade works to facilitate parking demands and traffic flows.

The Masterplan is KCC's response to growing demand across Knox for high quality sporting and recreational facilities. Basketball, gymnastics and soccer are all experiencing significant growth and, as a result, demand for facilities at a local level is exceeding supply. Implementation of the Masterplan will be funded jointly by KCC and the State Government.

Action 3.20. Support complementary uses in proximity to the Knox Regional Sports Park including allied health and sports medicine.

Existing Parks

Koomba Park is a popular destination for birdwatching and incorporates both the Dandenong Creek Trail which branches off to a boardwalk section and the EastLink Trail that continues on to follow EastLink. An area of land zoned Road Zone 1 (RDZ1) exists within Koomba Park. This area could be investigated for potential rezoning and inclusion in Koomba Park.

Wantirna Reserve on the corner of EastLink and Burwood Highway is currently managed by KCC by agreement with Parks Victoria. A Masterplan is currently being prepared for Wantirna Reserve.

The approved masterplan for the expansion of Knox Regional Sports Park presents great opportunities for the surrounding area, including for allied health and sports medicine.

Nortons Park (also a dog park) is managed by Parks Victoria. A leash free dog park has recently been created which has improved visitor experience and has been well received by the community.

A number of small pockets of land are used for parkland purposes but are not correctly zoned. These have been identified on the map for investigation.

Action 3.21. Investigate the area within Koomba Park which is zoned for road purposes for potential rezoning and inclusion in the park.

Action 3.22. Investigate parkland lots that are not zoned PPRZ for potential rezoning, in consultation with subject to consultation with DELWP and Parks Victoria.

Action 3.23. Advocate for further improvements to Nortons Park by Parks Victoria.

Cathies Lane Landfill Site

Cathies Lane landfill site is currently vacant, however, land use opportunities for this site are limited due to soil condition and applicable buffers. This site is currently being investigated for a potential solar park by KCC.

Action 3.24. Investigate opportunities for renewable energy production (solar park) at the Cathies Lane landfill site.

Public Art Opportunities

The east-west corridors within Precinct 3 provide gateways to Knox with a high level of visibility. These corridors offer opportunities for public art to enhance aesthetics and help

Action 3.25. Support and fund public art along the High Street Road and Burwood Highway to enhance amenity and sense of place consistent with the local character.

Access and Connectivity

Precinct 3 is well served by the arterial road network including EastLink, Boronia Road, Burwood Highway, High Street Road, Ferntree Gully Road and Wellington Road. The precinct is also supported by an excellent network of trails including the Dandenong Creek Trail and the EastLink Trail. These trails provide strong linkages with surrounding municipalities and other recreational areas.



Theme 3: Land Use and Access

Multiple bus services run along Boronia Road, Burwood Highway, High Street Road, Ferntree Gully Road and Wellington Road. However, a large area internal to the precinct, including the Boral redevelopment site is not within walkable catchment of public transport.

The area to the north of High Street Road presents a barrier to connectivity, both for vehicular movement and walking/cycling connectivity. Road access is limited to a number of cul-de-sacs, mostly rough surfaced. Overall this area does not provide much permeability.

The PBN proposes on-road cycle lanes on Burwood Highway and the section of EastLink south of Ferntree Gully Road. The Strategic Cycling Corridors (SCC) Network also However, it does not propose any upgrades along High Street Road. This road has no cycle lanes or shared paths which is an issue considering the number of bus services stopping at this location. Considering the potential for future urban developments at the Boral and Jenkins Orchard sites, and the expansion of the Knox Regional Sports Park, there will be more demand for pedestrian and cyclist movement on this road.

The Boral Quarry redevelopment will create a new population catchment which needs adequate connectivity to the surrounding network. Main access will be from High Street Road. The development needs to provide a high level of permeability and connectivity including shared path connectivity through the site and to the surrounding trails including the Dandenong Creek Trail, EastLink Trail and the Regional Sports Park. The Blind Creek corridor presents great opportunities for shared path connectivity and new linkages to Jells Park which is a popular destination.

EastLink (freeway) represents a barrier to pedestrian/cyclist connectivity. The area near Kingston Links has been identified as a missing link by the Eastern Regional Trail Strategy's Ferny Creek Trail extension to the Dandenong Creek Trail. A new bridge connection is appropriate at this location.

Objective:

To facilitate connectivity and safe movement for all users.

Action 3.26. Advocate for and support the on-road and off-road cycling proposals of the PBN.

Action 3.27. Advocate for a shared path along High Street Road connecting with the EastLink Trail with the Dandenong Creek Trail.

Action 3.28. Seek opportunities to improve access and connectivity through the area between High Street road and Burwood Highway.

Action 3.29. The Boral redevelopment site to provide for shared path connectivity through the site connecting with the surrounding trails, including along the Blind Creek linking to Jells Park.

Action 3.30. Support the provision of public transport to the Boral redevelopment site and ensure the road network are designed to facilitate bus movement.

Action 3.31. Improve access to Knox Regional Sports Park.

Action 3.32. Support shared path connectivity across Eastlink to Kingston Links.

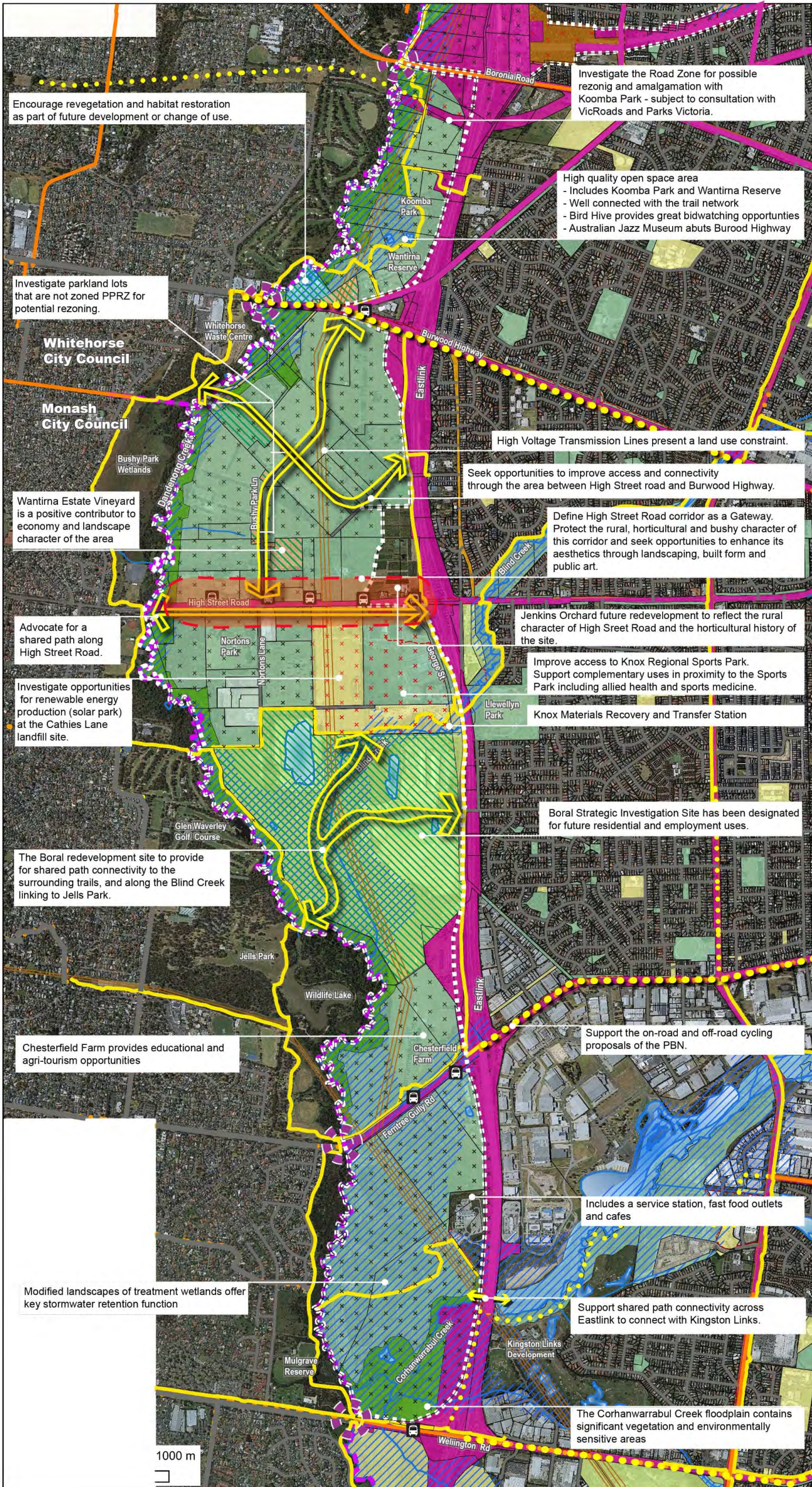


Map 16

Precinct 3 - Dandenong Creek Valley Parklands

Theme: Land Use & Access

Knox Green Areas & Rural Strategy (GARS)



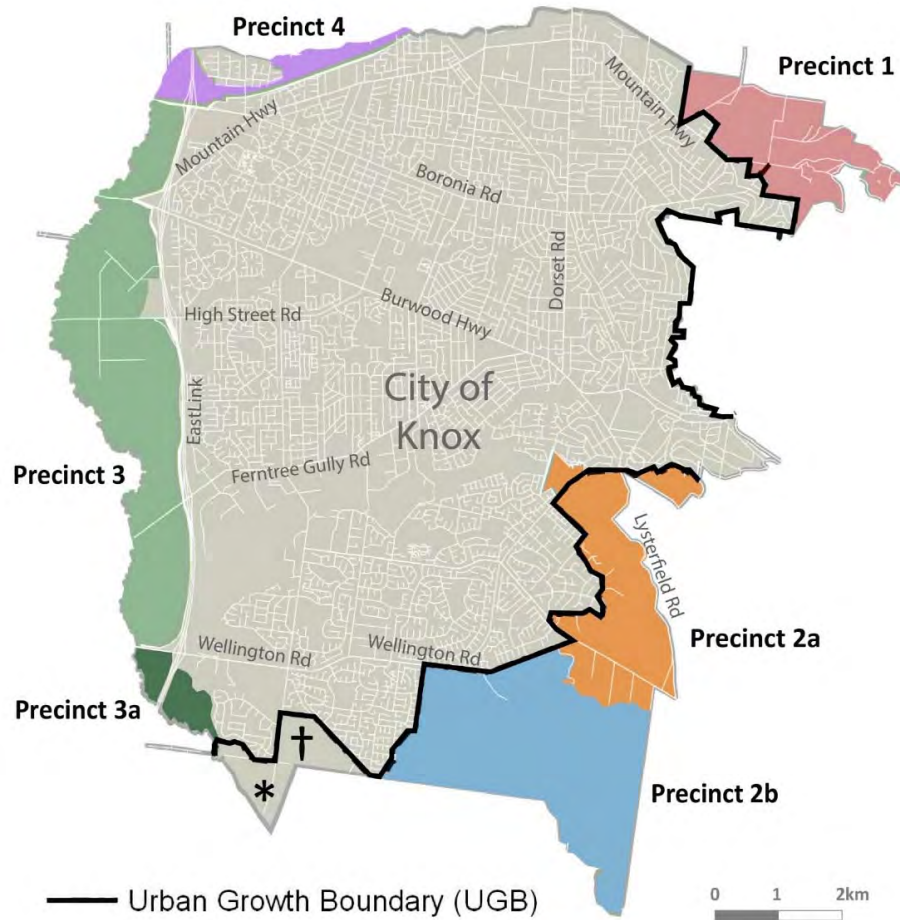
Legend

- Precinct 3 Boundary
- LGA Boundaries
- Creeks and Lakes Areas
- Cadastre
- Zones - Knox Planning Scheme**
- FZ
- PCRZ
- PPRZ
- PUZ6
- RDZ1
- RDZ2
- RLZ
- SUZ2
- UFZ
- HV Transmission Lines
- Scheme Overlays**
- Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO)
- Public Acquisition Overlay PAO1
- Public Acquisition Overlay PAO2
- Land Ownership**
- Local Government
- Local Government Other
- State Government/Agencies
- Pedestrian/Bicycle Network**
- Shared paths - existing
- On-road cycleways - existing
- Proposed Bicycle Routes
- Proposed walking/Cycling connectivity (GARS)
- Knox Gateways (existing)



Precinct 4:
Healesville Freeway Reservation and Surrounds

DRAFT





Vision for Precinct 4

Precinct 4 contains the land corridor reserved by the State Government for the potential extension of the Healesville Freeway to connect to EastLink. Plans for this road corridor to the west of Knox in Whitehorse were cancelled a few years ago and the reservation area was declared surplus. The land was rezoned, master planned and redeveloped subsequently.

The stretch of the reservation within Knox, however, has been maintained by VicRoads with no timelines for design or construction. The uncertainty surrounding the road has resulted in a lack of clear direction or long term purpose for the reserved land as well as the surrounding area.

To accommodate this uncertainty, the vision and recommendation for this precinct are formulated under two scenarios: a **“Road Scenario”** and a **“No-Road Scenario”**.

The Vision for Precinct 4 reflects feedback received during public consultation involving the stakeholders and the community. Key themes from the public consultation are summarised below:

- **Open space/parkland opportunities**

The creation of new parkland (recreational & environmental) was supported to provide opportunities to provide a linkage between Dandenong Creek, Bateman St Bushland and surrounding park/habitat sites.

- **Biodiversity and conservation buffer**

One comment suggested that the vision should make a direct reference to “Biodiversity” as an important priority for this precinct.

Vision for Precinct 4:

Road Scenario: The future Healesville Freeway extension will be sensitive and responsive to the Dandenong Creek ecological and waterway corridor, seeking opportunities for water and habitat enhancements, while supporting the open space and recreational uses.

No Road Scenario: The precinct will provide an integrated high quality open space and parkland corridor with complementary uses which protect and enhance native vegetation, wildlife connectivity and waterway health.

Theme 1: Ecology

Wildlife Habitat and Connectivity

The precinct includes parts of the Dandenong Creek and its 200m buffer zone which has significant biodiversity values. The Knox Wildlife Atlas indicates high levels of wildlife records in proximity to the creek and within areas of native vegetation. Previous revegetation and restoration efforts by KCC and Maroondah City Council and community groups such as Friends of Dandenong Creek have greatly added to the wildlife habitat and dispersal opportunities.

The greatest threat to wildlife habitat in this precinct is the Healesville Freeway reservation which affects some areas of native vegetation located on land parcels either zoned for road purposes or affected by a Public Acquisition Overlay.

This includes the Bateman Street Bushland which is a Site of Biodiversity of state-level significance and contains one of the largest and most intact areas of endangered Valley Heathy Forest in the Melbourne region. This bushland is protected by ESO2, however, is subject to a Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO1).

Winton Wetlands is another area of high habitat values, with significant wildlife sightings recorded. Although the vegetated area is protected by PCRZ zoning, it abuts land zoned Road Zone and could be affected by future road works. This area requires careful protection in case of future road construction to minimise wildlife exposure to traffic. Should the adjoining land not be required for road purposes, the land within 200m of the Creek is recommended to be rezoned to PCRZ to facilitate protection and revegetation.

The creek and its riparian vegetation are well protected through the Scheme. The Urban Floodway Zone (UFZ) covers the Dandenong Creek and the Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ) protects the adjoining riparian corridor. There are great opportunities within 200m of the creek to improve habitat through revegetation which would also provide additional passive recreation opportunities.

Compatible land-uses for this precinct are: nature-based health activities to complement and strengthen health outcomes, nature-based or open air sports and recreation, bush playgroups and community gardens.

Objective:

To protect and enhance biodiversity and wildlife connectivity.

- Action 4.1.** Continue the application of ESO2 in Precinct 4 to protect native vegetation and habitat values.
- Action 4.2.** Acknowledge the role of the Dandenong Creek corridor and previous investments in bushland restoration along the creek in wildlife connectivity within the broader region.
- Action 4.3.** Prohibit development within the Melbourne Water's Core Riparian Zone (CRZ) and the adjacent vegetation buffers.
- Action 4.4.** Investigate mechanisms to achieve an ecologically sensitive development approach to new development and the construction of linear infrastructure (e.g. roads, bridges) across the precinct.
- Action 4.5.** Reduce the wildlife barrier effects of EastLink over the Dandenong Creek corridor in accordance with the recommendations of Appendix 1 to this report.
- Action 4.6.** Review the VPO in Precinct 4 to ensure it covers all the intended vegetation.

Road Scenario

- Action 4.7.** Advocate for an underpass design to protect Bateman Street bushland.
- Action 4.8.** Minimise the risk of exposure of wildlife to vehicular traffic from the future freeway through adequate buffer areas.
- Action 4.9.** Design and construction in proximity to Winton Wetlands should be sensitive to the ecological values of this wetland and minimise wildlife exposure to works or traffic.

No-Road Scenario

- Action 4.10.** Protect the Bateman Street Bushland and other Sites of Biological Significance and enhance their environmental and passive recreation values.
- Action 4.11.** Support future uses of the reservation corridor that can protect and enhance the ecological values.

Action 4.12. Investigate the Road Zone land in the vicinity of Winton Wetlands which is within 200m of the Creek for possible rezoning to PCRZ to protect habitat values and facilitate revegetation.

Waterways and Flood Management

Precinct 4 abuts the Dandenong Creek along its northern and western boundaries and the entire precinct is within the Dandenong Creek catchment.

The strip of land to the north of the Healesville Freeway reservation, including Manson Reserve and the golf driving range have a key role in the storage and retention of flooding from the Dandenong Creek.

Wetland building has recently been undertaken at JW Manson Reserve to improve stormwater management and water quality.

The existing open spaces and road reservation are affected by floodplains of the Dandenong Creek.

Objective:

To improve waterway health and flood management.

Action 4.13. Any development or the addition of impervious surfaces in the flood affected area (1% AEP level) needs to be accompanied by adequate studies and plans to demonstrate how flooding can be managed in particular through WSUD measures.



Map 17

Precinct 4 - Healesville Freeway Reservation & Surrounds

Theme: Ecology

Knox Green Areas & Rural Strategy (GARS)

Legend

Knox Wildlife Atlas (1995-2017)

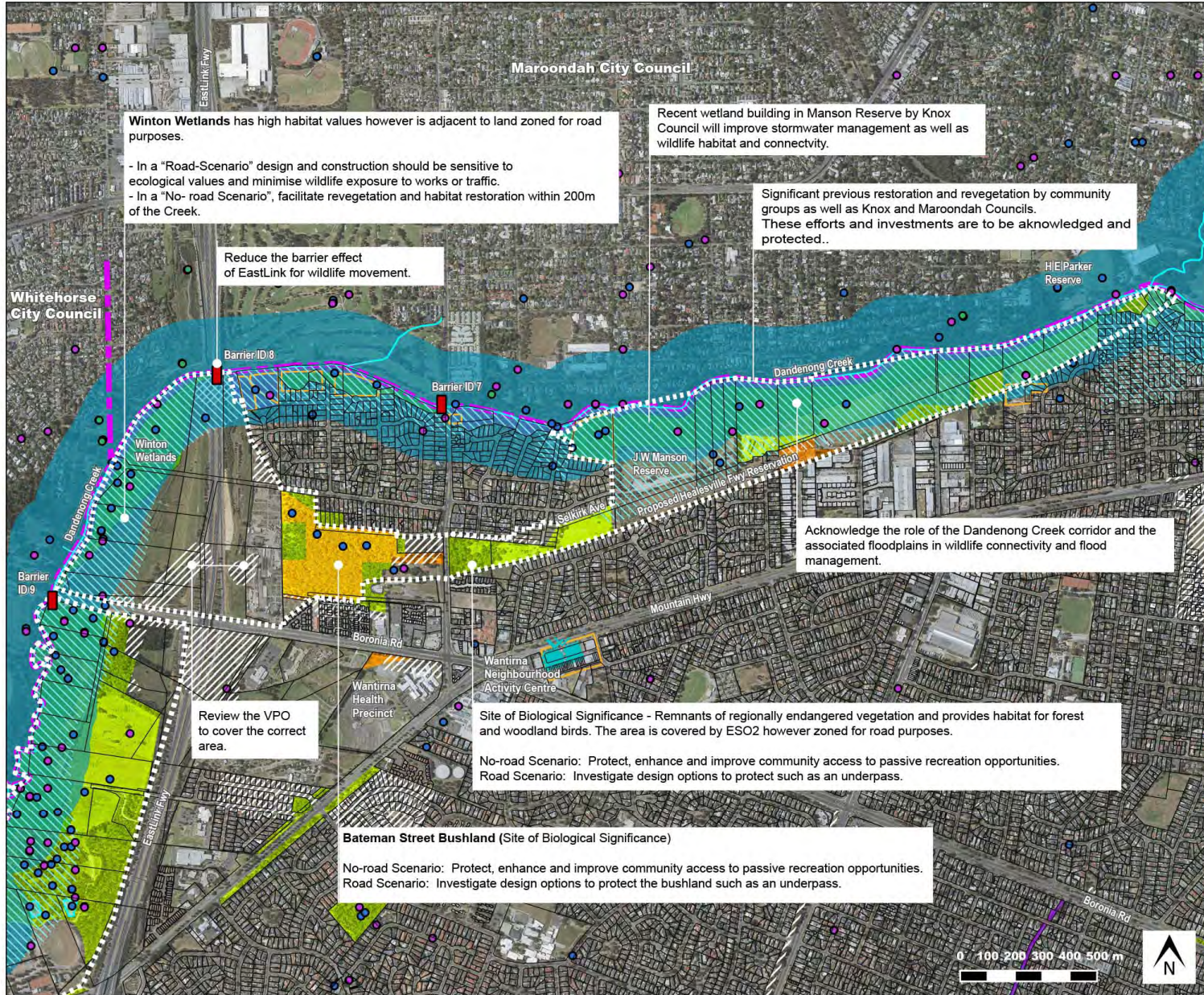
- Wildlife Records - Multiple Sources
- Wildlife Records - Victorian Biodiversity Atlas
- Knox Focal Species 2017
- Barriers to Wildlife Movement
- Waterways 200m Buffer

Knox Planning Scheme

- Environmental Significance Overlay 2 (ES02)
- Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO)
- Urban Floodway Zone
- Public Acquisition Overlay (Vic Roads)

Other

- Creeks and Lakes
- Floodplains
- WSUD - Project Area
- Knox City Boundaries
- Precinct 4 Boundary



Winton Wetlands has high habitat values however is adjacent to land zoned for road purposes.

- In a "Road-Scenario" design and construction should be sensitive to ecological values and minimise wildlife exposure to works or traffic.
- In a "No- road Scenario", facilitate revegetation and habitat restoration within 200m of the Creek.

Recent wetland building in Manson Reserve by Knox Council will improve stormwater management as well as wildlife habitat and connectivity.

Significant previous restoration and revegetation by community groups as well as Knox and Maroondah Councils. These efforts and investments are to be acknowledged and protected..

Reduce the barrier effect of EastLink for wildlife movement.

Acknowledge the role of the Dandenong Creek corridor and the associated floodplains in wildlife connectivity and flood management.

Review the VPO to cover the correct area.

Site of Biological Significance - Remnants of regionally endangered vegetation and provides habitat for forest and woodland birds. The area is covered by ES02 however zoned for road purposes.

No-road Scenario: Protect, enhance and improve community access to passive recreation opportunities.
Road Scenario: Investigate design options to protect such as an underpass.

Bateman Street Bushland (Site of Biological Significance)

No-road Scenario: Protect, enhance and improve community access to passive recreation opportunities.
Road Scenario: Investigate design options to protect the bushland such as an underpass.



Theme 2: Landscape and Heritage

Theme 2: Landscape and Heritage

Landscape Values

The GARS Landscape and Character Study (Hansen Partnership, 2019) advises that the key landscape character of the Healesville Freeway Reservation and Surrounds relates to the natural native vegetation corridor along the Dandenong Creek and the Bateman Street Bushland. The area has a modest profile suitable for future recreation activities and facilities if required.

The study identifies the following character areas (as shown on the map) and details key landscape values for each area:

No.	Description	Approach	Key Landscape Values
1	The Wantirna Road Cutting	Monitoring	Roadside vegetation aspect to nature
2	The Bateman Street Bushland	Management	native bushland condition
3	Dandenong Creek Floodplain	Monitor	open aspect and views
4	Dandenong Creek Riparian Corridor	Management	Riparian vegetation low lying valley conditions

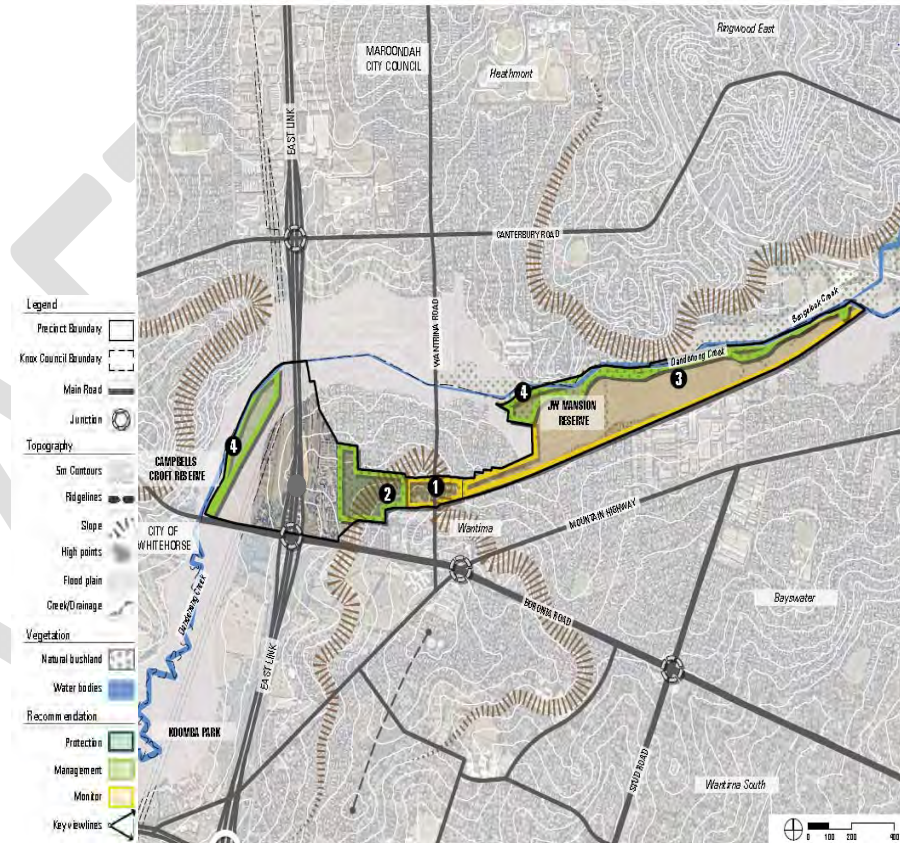
No landscape policies or overlays currently apply in Precinct 4. The Landscape Study confirms that “Protection” from a landscape perspective is not required in this precinct. It is considered that areas identified for “Management” coincide with areas of native vegetation which are recommended for protection for environmental reasons. The open areas are also identified for monitoring so that open views to the vegetated areas are maintained. It will be important to ensure any future development or road construction in this precinct is sensitive to this bushland character and where possible enhances the natural/leafy character of the area.

Objective:

To protect and enhance local character and landscape values.

Action 4.14. Review the Scheme provisions for opportunities to reflect the findings of the GARS Landscape and Character Study.

Action 4.15. Ensure future development responds to the character areas, celebrates the natural/leafy character of the precinct and provides opportunities for views to the vegetated areas.



Map 18 – Precinct 4 Landscape Assessment (Source: Hansen Partnerships)



Theme 2: Landscape and Heritage

Heritage

Precinct 4 contains areas of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity associated with Dandenong Creek and a number of sites of artefact scatter.

The precinct includes one Heritage Overlay (HO) item which covers several trees along Boronia Road. The *Preliminary Heritage Review: Knox Rural Heritage (Context, 2017)* reviews the existing heritage sites within the precinct and provides recommendations for each place.

Objective:

To recognise, protect and promote existing heritage.

Action 4.17. Ensure adequate consultation occurs prior to any proposals affecting the Aboriginal Places and Areas of Cultural Sensitivity as shown on the heritage map.

Action 4.18. Review the places of heritage significance in accordance with the recommendations from the Knox Rural Heritage Report (Context, 2017), as summarised in the table below.

Site Name and Description	Recommendations
HO Places	
HO50 Boronia Road Wantirna (west of EastLink) - Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further investigation required to determine extent • Retain heritage and other overlays.



Map 19

Precinct 4 - Healesville Freeway Reservation and Surrounds

Theme: Heritage

Knox Green Areas & Rural Strategy (GARS)

Legend

-  Precinct Boundary
-  Creeks and Lakes
-  Heritage Overlay (HO)
-  Areas of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity (Aboriginal Victoria)





Theme 3: Land Use and Access

Theme 3: Land Use and Access

Land Use and Economy

The Healesville Freeway corridor in Knox has been protected through a combination of Road Zone (RDZ1) and Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO). A number of lots within the reservation and to the north of the reservation are owned by VicRoads. KCC also owns a number of properties in this precinct including the Bateman St Bushland.

Apart from its environmental values, Bateman Street Bushland provides excellent nature-based recreation and opportunities for the surrounding residential areas.

The creek and the trail network along it provide high quality recreational benefits. JW Manson Reserve contains sporting grounds that are owned and managed by the City of Maroondah. The facility is used by the community for recreation as well as a variety of community events. Parts of Manson Reserve which are used for open space are currently zoned Rural Living Zone.

Land fragmentation and lack of long term certainty has resulted in short term uses and the precinct is generally considered under-utilised. The current uses include a plant supply nursery, a golf driving range, community gardens and a number of horse agistment properties. Some of these represent interim uses as the land reserved for the road is leased by VicRoads to private operators. The golf driving range is subject to site specific controls incorporated into the Scheme to allow for the use.

Land use in this precinct is affected by significant constraints. Large areas of land are affected by the Dandenong Creek floodplain including the 1%AEP flood level. The entire site is also within the Declared Bushfire Prone Areas.

Overall, the *GARS Economic Study* (Urban Enterprise, 2019) provides the following evaluation of economic, tourism, community and recreation potential for Precinct 4:

Summary of Economic, Tourism, Community and Recreation Potential	
Suitability for agriculture intensification	Low
Suitability for agri- tourism	Low
Suitability for standalone tourism uses	Low
Suitability for community / social enterprise	Medium
Accessible to population catchments	High
Accessible by public transport	Medium
Accessible by bike/hiking/ walking	High
Suitability for Active Recreation	High

Suitability for other intensive industry	Low
Suitability for Passive Recreation	Medium

Future land use within this precinct depends largely upon the future of the Healesville Freeway reservation. It is noted that the western stretch of this reservation within the Whitehorse City Council was declared surplus, rezoned and developed largely for open space purposes. To date, VicRoads plan is to maintain the reservation in case the freeway extension in Knox is required.

Should road construction go ahead, it is important that the road protects the amenity and functionality of the existing open space and recreational uses, and improves access and connectivity to these areas where possible.

In the event that the reservation be declared surplus, there will be opportunities for consolidation of the land parcels within this precinct and undertake comprehensive planning. The following matters could be provided for as part of comprehensive planning:

- **Open Space and recreation** - Knox faces a growing demand for open space, recreational and sport facilities, in particular as we have planned for densification across the municipality, including the implementation of the Housing Strategy and the delivery of activity centres such as Boronia and Bayswater. It would be crucial for Knox to maintain existing open space and also seek opportunities to expand and enhance them where possible. This corridor presents a unique opportunity to create a network of high quality active open space while maintaining the environmental values of the creek system.
- **Urban farm** - Due to good soils, the precinct offers opportunities for small scale urban agriculture.
- **Compatible Development**– Opportunities may be investigated for compatible development to be integrated with the open space, including café/restaurant uses or mixed use opportunities. The key constraint to development within this corridor is flooding. Stormwater investigation and consultation with Melbourne Water would be required to determine whether the stormwater can be mitigated, potentially through a water sensitive design approach across the entire precinct, and to determine if any areas within the corridor could be considered for potential development.
- **Connectivity** – Improved vehicular access and walking/cycling connectivity through the site as well as to the surrounding area.



Theme 3: Land Use and Access

Objective:

To ensure land uses are carefully located and managed to be consistent with the values and functions of the Study Area

Action 4.19. Advocate for VicRoads to review the operation of the broader traffic network to determine whether the Healesville Freeway Reservation in Knox is required.

Road Scenario

Action 4.20. Ensure the new road alignment preserves the existing recreational values of the existing open space and trails.

No- Road Scenario

Action 4.21. Remove the PAO from Bateman Street Bushland and rezone to PCRZ for conservation purposes.

Action 4.22. Undertake comprehensive planning for the precinct to:

- a) Consolidate land with possible amalgamation and rationalization of zoning along the reservation.
- b) Expand and upgrade the existing open space to create a high quality active and passive open space corridor.
- c) Improve vehicular access and walking/cycling connectivity, making the open space corridor more accessible the surrounding community.
- d) Investigate opportunities for compatible uses to be integrated with the open space, including café/restaurant or mixed use development, subject to flood mitigation investigations.
- e) Enhance the environmental values associated with the creek.
- f) Incorporate water into the design, through a water sensitive design approach with potential swales integrated with the open space.

Access and Connectivity (Map 23)

Precinct 4 is accessed via local roads coming off Wantirna Road and Mountain Highway. Access to the open spaces and trails within the precinct is very poor due to limited permeability through the leased properties along the reservation. The main access to

Manson Reserve is via Selkirk Ave which runs through the residential area to the west and then becomes a cul-de-sac. Proximity to main roads and trails provides great opportunities for access improvements in this precinct.

The Healesville Freeway extension, if constructed, provides opportunities for improved access. However, this corridor could also act as an urban barrier if not planned well.

The Dandenong Creek Valley Trail in Precinct 4 runs within the Knox side of the creek which provides strong opportunities for additional walking/cycling linkages with the surrounding recreational destinations. The PBN proposes new on-road cycle lanes along Wantirna Road and a new shared path along the potential future Healesville Freeway.

Traffic projections for Wantirna Road suggest that it will need to be duplicated at some point in the future. However, the recently constructed bridge over the Dandenong Creek may prevent that.

Bus services currently run along Wantirna Road and Mountain Highway. The majority of the precinct is not within walking catchment of public transport.

Objective:

To facilitate connectivity and safe movement for all users.

Action 4.23. Support the PBN proposals within Precinct 4.

Action 4.24. Support continuous shared trail connectivity and linkages to Dandenong Creek Trail and the Whitehorse section of Healesville Freeway Reserve.

Road Scenario

Action 4.25. Ensure the future Healesville Freeway extension does not present an urban barrier but rather facilitates improved access to Manson Reserve, the Dandenong Creek Trail and other recreational opportunities in the area.

No- Road Scenario

Action 4.26. Improve vehicular access to the open space as part of comprehensive planning, preferably through the industrial area on Mountain Highway to avoid traffic pressure on the residential streets to the west. Shared path connectivity is to be provided to this residential area as well as the Dandenong Creek Trail. Alternatively, a part of the Healesville Reservation can be used to create a new access road with a shared path connecting this area to Wantirna Road.



Map 20

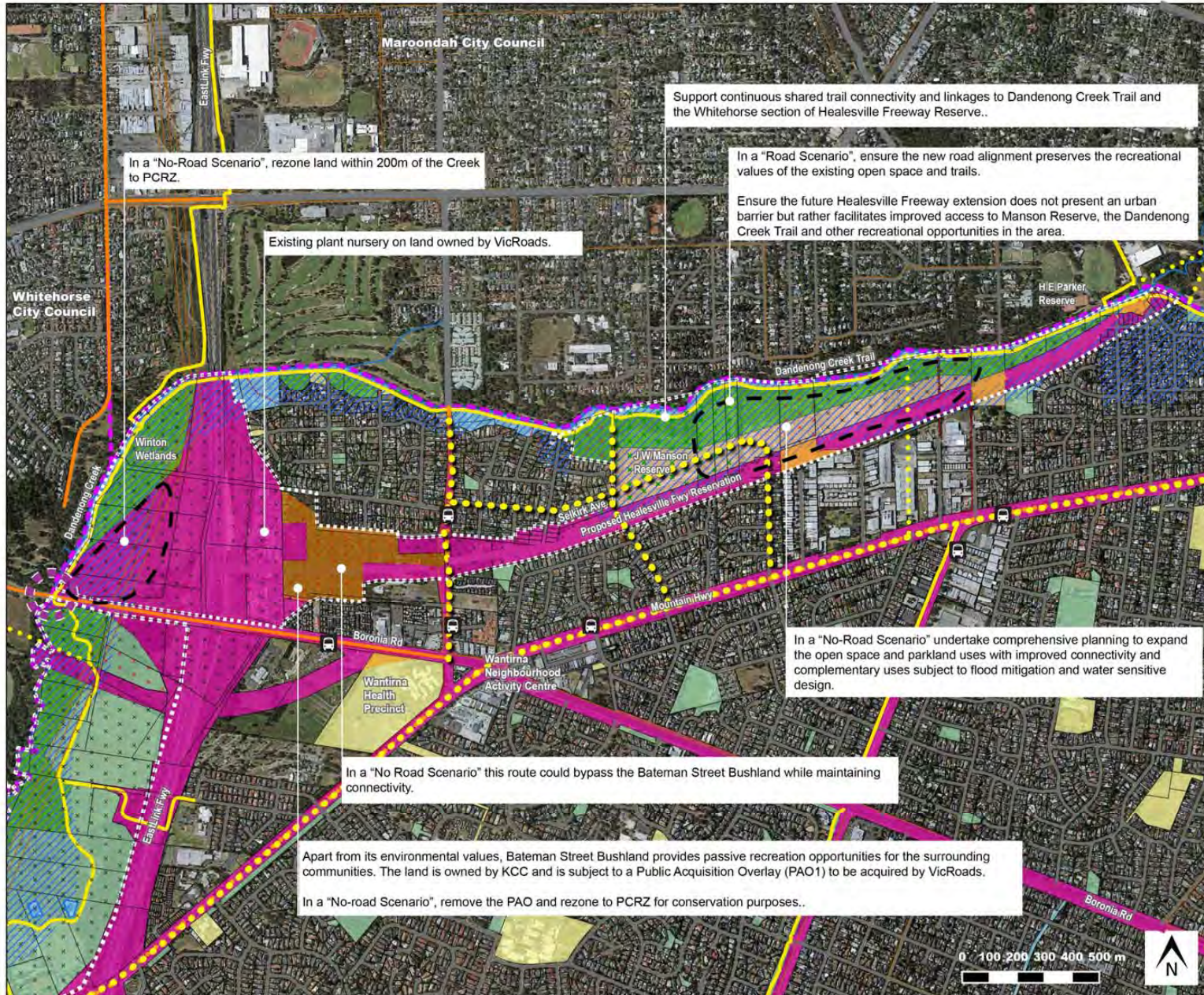
Precinct 4 - Healesville Freeway Reservation & Surrounds

Theme: Land Use & Access

Knox Green Areas & Rural Strategy (GARS)

Legend

- Precinct Boundary
- LGA Boundaries
- Creeks and Lakes Areas
- Cadastre
- Zones - Knox Planning Scheme**
- PCRZ
- PPRZ
- RDZ1
- RLZ
- UFZ
- Scheme Overlays**
- Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO)
- Public Acquisition Overlay (Vic Roads)
- Land Ownership**
- Local Government
- Local Government Other
- State Government/Agencies
- Pedestrian/Bicycle Network**
- Existing On Road
- Existing Off Road
- Proposed Walking/Cycling Routes
- Knox Gateways





7. Implementation and review

Successful implementation will require effective monitoring, evaluation and review processes. KCC is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the actions identified within this Strategy.

Subject to Council adoption of the Strategy, an Implementation Plan will be prepared incorporating the actions identified within this document.

Targeted communications are proposed to ensure government departments, agencies, key stakeholders and the community as a whole will remain well-informed and engaged in the implementation process.

Examples of communication include (but are not limited to):

- Major projects/tasks and milestones published via KCC community publication or via a media release
- KCC website will be updated (when considered necessary) to advise the community of the achievements and milestones for projects/actions.

The monitoring and evaluation process will allow the community, stakeholders and government agencies to have access to information about the progress of the management plan and increases KCC's credibility and accountability.

The Strategy will be reviewed every five years and updated as required.



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List of Abbreviations

AEP	Annual Exceedance Probability	Precinct 2a	Lysterfield Valley and Hills Precinct
AHD	Australian Height Datum	Precinct 2b	Lysterfield Quarries and Surrounds Precinct
BMO	Bushfire Management Overlay	Precinct 3	Dandenong Creek Valley Precinct
CBD	Central Business District	Precinct 4	Healesville Freeway Reservation and Surrounds Precinct
CRZ	Core Riparian Zone	PUZ	Public Use Zone
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning	PUZ6	Public Use Zone – Local Government
DRNP	Dandenong Ranges National Park	PUZ1	Public Use Zone – Service and Utility
EPA	Environment Protection Authority	RCZ1	Rural Conservation Zone (Schedule 1)
EPBC Act	Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999	RCZ2	Rural Conservation Zone (Schedule 2)
ESO	Environmental Significance Overlay	RDZ1	Road Zone (Category 1 Road)
ESO1	Environmental Significance Overlay (Schedule 1)	RDZ2	Road Zone (Category 2 Road)
ESO2	Environmental Significance Overlay (Schedule 2)	RLZ	Rural Living Zone
ESO3	Environmental Significance Overlay (Schedule 3)	RMIT	Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
ESO4	Environmental Significance Overlay (Schedule 4)	SBO	Special Building Overlay
EVC	Ecological Vegetation Class	SBO1	Special Building Overlay (Schedule 1)
FO	Floodway Overlay	SBO2	Special Building Overlay (Schedule 2)
FZ	Farming Zone	SLO	Significant Landscape Overlay
GARS	Knox Green Areas & Rural Strategy	SLO1	Significant Landscape Overlay (Schedule 1)
GW	Green Wedge	SLO4	Significant Landscape Overlay (Schedule 4)
GWMP	Green Wedge Management Plans	SLO5	Significant Landscape Overlay (Schedule 5)
GWZ1	Green Wedge Zone (Schedule 1)	SUZ1	Special Use Zone (Schedule 1)
GWZ2	Green Wedge Zone (Schedule 2)	SUZ2	Special Use Zone (Schedule 2)
HO	Heritage Overlay	The Scheme	The Knox Planning Scheme
KCC	Knox City Council	UFZ	Urban Floodway Zone
LGA	Local Government Area	UGB	Urban Growth Boundary
LSIO	Land Subject to Inundation Overlay	VPO	Vegetation Protection Overlay
MPS	Municipal Planning Strategy	VPO2	Vegetation Protection Overlay (Schedule 2)
MSS	Municipal Strategic Statement	WSUD	Water Sensitive Urban Design
MW	Melbourne Water		
PAO1	Public Acquisition Overlay (Schedule 1)		
PAO2	Public Acquisition Overlay (Schedule 2)		
PBN	Principal Bicycle Network		
PCRZ	Public Conservation and Resource Zone		
PPF	Planning Policy Framework		
PPRZ	Public Parks and Recreation Zone		
Precinct 1	The Basin Rural Landscape Precinct		



Appendix 1 - Wildlife Barrier Locations and Recommendations

Precinct 1: The Basin Rural Landscape Precinct

Site Name and Map ID	Structure type, purpose and dimensions (H x W x L)	Assessment and recommendations	Site Images
Dandenong Creek and Liverpool Rd ID #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 concrete box culvert • 3m x 3m x 16m • For creek flow • Natural substrate(?) • Tree gap ~30m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely barrier to some focal bird species due to traffic volume • Replace culvert with open span bridge • No dry passage – add shelf • Plant trees between Dobson Ln and Liverpool Rd or install rope bridge over Liverpool Rd 	
Dandenong Creek and Dobson Ln ID #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 concrete box culvert • 3m x 3m x 5m • For creek flow • Natural substrate • Tree gap ~20m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low traffic volume service road adjacent to Liverpool Rd • Unlikely a barrier to wildlife movement due to narrow road and low traffic volume • Plant trees between Dobson Ln and Liverpool Rd or install rope bridge over Dobson Ln • Replace culvert with open span bridge • No dry passage – add shelf 	



Precinct 2a: Lysterfield Valley and Hills

Site Name and Map ID	Structure type, purpose and dimensions (H x W x L)	Assessment and recommendations	Site Images
Monbulk Creek and Blackwood Park Dr ID #19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 open span bridge for pedestrians • 1 open span bridge for traffic • Pedestrian bridge 2m x 5m x 3m • Traffic bridge 2m x 5m x 5m • Both bridges for creek flow • Natural substrate • Tree gap ~10m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road bridge is currently single lane only, likely to be widened in near future • If widening occurs, ensure open span bridge with maximum height and allow for flat embankment on both sides of creek channel • Not a barrier for gliders or turtles • Possibly a barrier for focal bird species due to traffic volume, but gap size small so less of a concern • Likely a barrier for wallabies due to narrow channel, lack of flat embankment and road bridge filled with water 	



<p>Monbulk Creek and Napoleon Rd ID #20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open span bridge • 4m x 12m x 15m • Natural substrate • For creek flow • Tree gap ~40m • No flat embankment on either side of creek 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlikely a barrier to focal birds due to narrow road and dense shrub growth in river channel • Possible barrier to gliders • Install rope bridge, but powerlines on one side of Napoleon Rd is a complication • Re-contour embankments under bridge to create some flat space on one or both sides of creek 	
<p>Monbulk Creek and Lysterfield Rd ID #21</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open span bridge • 2m x 6m x 16m • For creek flow • Natural substrate • Tree gap ~4m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a complete barrier to any focal species • Might hinder movement of focal bird species due to relatively high traffic volume 	



<p>Monbulk Creek and Dorset Rd extension ID#40</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An easement exists for an extension of Dorset Rd to the south of Burwood Hwy, currently used as informal open space The Dorset Rd extension will traverse Monbulk Creek near Napoleon Rd, potentially disrupting movement along the creek 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the crossing of Monbulk Creek takes into account the natural values of the adjacent area and enhances both the quality of habitat and the landscape connectivity for wildlife. Special consideration should be given for platypus as there are recent records in this area The easement for the Dorset Rd extension should also encompass recreational and conservation uses (see Appendix 8) 	
<p>Dorset Rd extension and drainage channel ID#41 and Lysterfield Rd ID#42</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An easement exists for an extension of Dorset Rd to the south of Burwood Hwy. The easement for Dorset Rd runs through private property to the south-east of Blackwood Park Drive The drainage channel is a small drain to the south east of Napoleon Rd, within private property, and the Dorset Rd extension encompasses this drainage channel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the function, flow and quality of the channel by returning it to a natural stream, with bends and floodplains The easement for the Dorset Rd extension should also encompass recreational and conservation uses (see Appendix 8) 	



Precinct 2b: Lysterfield Quarries and Surrounds

Site Name and Map ID	Structure type, purpose and dimensions (H x W x L)	Assessment and recommendations	Site Images
Nil			

Precinct 3: Dandenong Creek Valley

Site Name and Map ID	Structure type, purpose and dimensions (H x W x L)	Assessment and recommendations	Site Images
Dandenong Creek and Boronia Rd ID #9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two open span bridges, separated by 2m • Each structure 12m wide • For creek flow and pedestrians • Pedestrian section 4m x 2.5m x 12m • Creek flow section 4m x 13m x 12m • Tree gap size ~ 60m • Pedestrian section with concrete base • Creek flow section with large rocks in creek and concrete abutment. • Pedestrian path fenced from creek-flow section 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrier to gliders • No issues for turtles or birds • Lack of natural stream bank a limitation for terrestrial species • Reduce weed cover and revegetate • Plant trees in median of Boronia Rd and on verges of both bridges • Install rope bridge above Boronia Rd 	



<p>Dandenong Creek and Burwood Hwy ID #10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two open span bridges, separated by 12m • Each bridge 2.5m x 40m x 15m • For creek flow and pedestrians • Pedestrian path fenced from creek-flow section • Centre channel for creek has concrete base • Flood zones either side of creek channel with natural substrate • Dense reeds and shrubs on both approaches • Tree gap size ~ 60m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlikely a barrier to most focal species, except gliders • Plant trees between bridge structures and within median of Burwood Hwy • Lots of cat, dog and fox prints in mud under bridges, including rat footprints (possibly water rat?) • Install rope bridge above bridges over Burwood Hwy 	
<p>Dandenong Creek and High Street Rd ID #11</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 open span bridges, separated by 2m • Each bridge 2.5m x 30 m x 15 m • For creek flow and pedestrians • Natural substrate for section with creek flow • Pedestrian path with concrete substrate • Pedestrian path fenced from creek-flow section • Tree gap ~40m • For pedestrians and creek flow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlikely a barrier to birds given dense reeds and understorey • Possibly a barrier for gliders, given gap size and relative height of trees and bridge structure • Not an issue for turtles • Replace weed cover with native shrubs and grasses • Plant trees between within median and possibly between bridge structures if sufficient space • Consider installing rope bridge above High Street Rd • Install furniture (logs, rocks etc) under bridge structures to provide shelter for small vertebrates 	



<p>Dandenong Creek and Ferntree Gully Rd ID #12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 open span bridges, separated by 4m • Each bridge 2.5m x 40m x 15m • For creek flow and pedestrians • Pedestrian path has concrete substrate • Pedestrian path fenced from creek-flow section • Natural substrate for section with creek flow • Tree gap ~50m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely a barrier for glider movement due to gap size and low relative height of trees above bridge height • Unlikely a barrier for other species – lots of fox and cat prints in mud under bridge • Plant trees within median of Ferntree Gully Rd • Plant trees between bridge structures • Install rope bridge above creek • Install furniture (logs, rocks etc) under bridge structures to provide shelter for small vertebrates 	
<p>Dandenong Creek and Wellington Rd ID #13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 open span bridges, separated by 3m • Each bridge 3.5m x 45m x 15m • 1 concrete pipe culvert, 2m diameter x 50m • Substrate under bridge is concrete, but with soil and grass growth covering much of it • Bridge for high-flow events and pedestrians • Pedestrian path fenced from creek-flow section • Culvert takes regular creek flow • Tree gap ~70m • Powerlines on south side of Wellington Rd 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrier to gliders • Unlikely an issue for other species, but approaches to bridge structure quite open and will limit use by small birds • Replace concrete base with natural substrate • Plant trees in median of Wellington Rd • Plant trees and shrubs on both approaches to bridge structure • Install rope bridge over Wellington Rd • Install furniture (logs, rocks etc) under bridge structures to provide shelter for small vertebrates 	



<p>Blind Creek and EastLink ID #26</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 multi-span bridges for EastLink separated by 7m • 3 pipe culverts for bike path adjacent to EastLink • Bridges 2.4m x 40m x 28 m • Culverts 1.5m x 6m • Bridges for creek flow and pedestrians • Culvert for creek flow • Tree gap > 100m • Natural substrate for creek under EastLink and concrete for pedestrian path • Culvert has metal substrate • Pedestrian path is fenced from creek section • Wire mesh fence along bike path will limit wildlife movement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-span bridges have large open spaces underneath • Definitely a barrier to gliders • May limit movement from focal birds due to large open spaces under bridges, but not a complete barrier • Install rope bridge underneath EastLink • Install furniture (e.g. logs, rocks etc) to provide cover for wildlife • Plant trees and shrubs on both approaches and between multi-span bridges and between EastLink bridges and bike path • Replace wire mesh fence with more open-style barrier to allow wallaby movement, if occurring in area 	
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Precinct 4: Healesville Freeway Reservation and Surrounds

Site Name and Map ID	Structure type, purpose and dimensions (H x W x L)	Assessment and recommendations	Site Images
<p>Dandenong Creek and Wantirna Rd ID #7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open span bridge • 4m x 20m x 13m • For pedestrians and creek flow • Pedestrian path fenced from creek-flow section • Tree canopy gap ~30m, with powerlines on west side 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor barrier to most species • Undertake revegetation on both sides to improve approaches • Replace concrete base with natural substrate • Plant trees on west side of Wantirna Rd 	



<p>Dandenong Creek and EastLink (North), Wantirna ID #8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two open span bridges, separated by ~10m • 3m x 60 m x 18m • Natural substrate under bridges • For creek flow and pedestrians • Pedestrian path is not fenced from creek-flow section • Tree gap size > 100m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete barrier to gliders • No issues for turtles • Minor barrier to other focal species due to lack of vegetation on approaches to underpass • Protect small tree growing between the two structures • Plant trees and shrubs on both sides of EastLink and between both structures • When trees sufficiently tall, install rope bridge under or over EastLink • Place 'furniture' (i.e. logs, tree stumps, rock etc) under bridges to provide cover for small animals 	
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Appendix 2 – Action Plan

Actions for all precincts

Action 1. Investigate options to incorporate relevant recommendations from the Knox Wildlife Conservation and Connectivity Report (Ecology and Infrastructure International et al., 2017) into the Knox Planning Scheme, including the following recommendations:

- a) Ensuring the connectivity elements and important habitats are considered in the review of planning applications and strategic planning decisions.
- b) Applying appropriate buffers along the waterways including the Dandenong Creek, Dobsons Creek, Monbulk Creek and Blind Creek to the extent of the Study Area, to:
 - Prohibiting further development within the Melbourne Water Core Riparian Zones.
 - Minimising development and intense land use within 200m buffer zones.
 - Mandating Water Sensitive Urban Design approaches within 200m buffer zones.
- c) Mandating an ecologically sensitive development approach to new development and the construction of linear infrastructure (e.g. roads, bridges) within high ecological value buffer zones.
- d) Encourage habitat restoration and revegetation within 300m buffer zones to existing areas of native vegetation, in areas that do not increase bushfire risk to existing settlements.

The above action might entail new policy or overlay provisions and making the Knox Wildlife Conservation and Connectivity Report a reference document in the Scheme, subject to further planning investigation.

Action 2. Investigate the need for further guidelines to facilitate Ecologically Sensitive Design for new development and the construction of linear infrastructure (e.g. roads, bridges).

Action 3. Advocate for wildlife linkages to continue outside the Study Area, in accordance with the recommendations of the Wildlife Conservation and Connectivity Report (Ecology and Infrastructure International et al., 2017).

Action 4. Continue collaboration with other councils and the state government regarding pest management and pollution control.

Action 5. Continue to support and grow community partnerships and initiatives including the Gardens for Wildlife program.

Action 6. Undertake a project for Knox to:

- a) Map the existing tree canopy and vegetation cover broken down by height strata and surface cover types.
- b) Investigate setting of measurable tree canopy cover targets including sub-targets for public land (parks, streets) and private property.
- c) Define actions to achieve the canopy targets.
- d) Establish a program for regular monitoring of vegetation cover and control progress against the established targets.
- e) Facilitate enforcement in cases of unlawful tree removal.

Action 7. Undertake a review of the Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO) to correct the existing anomalies and identify opportunities for additional trees to be protected by the overlay.

Action 8. Investigate Planning Scheme options to recognise the role of trees, vegetation and surface cover types in moderating the temperature and reducing the urban heat island effect.



Action 9. Following the completion of the flood mapping project by KCC and Melbourne Water (MW), undertake a Scheme amendment to apply adequate overlays to areas affected by the 1% AEP (1:100yr ARI) flood level, including:

- a) Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) to areas affected by flooding from natural waterways.
- b) Special Building Overlay (SBO) to areas affected by flooding from the drainage network (SBO1 for MW network and SBO2 for KCC network).

Action 10. Provide greater guidance in the Planning Scheme to limit the extent of impervious surface including guidance for car parking areas in the Study Area.

Action 11. Continue to collaborate with stakeholders on regional and multi-agency initiatives that improve the waterways and catchments, including the Living Links and the Enhancing our Dandenong Creek projects.

Action 12. Undertake a review of the existing Planning Scheme provisions to recognise the character and protect landscape values in the Study Area, in line with the findings of the GARS Landscape and Character Study.

Action 13. Undertake a comprehensive review of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage across the municipality, taking into consideration the specific recommendations in the *Preliminary Heritage review: Knox Rural Heritage* (Context, 2017).

Action 14. Avoid any changes to the Urban Growth Boundary in Precincts 1, 2a and 2b.

Action 15. Investigate Planning Scheme options to provide local strategic direction for Knox Green Wedge land in line with the recommendations of this Strategy for Precincts 1, 2a and 2b.

Action 16. Clarify, through strategic directions in the Planning Scheme, that a transitional buffer approach to the Green Wedge interface is not intended, and that a place-based, value-based approach to assessment is required.

Action 17. Investigate Planning Scheme options to provide strategic direction for agriculture and agricultural land in Knox.

Action 18. Investigate initiatives and incentives, such as rate exemptions, to help protect agricultural production and improve land management practices.

Action 19. Investigate the potential for Carbon Farming and climate friendly agricultural practices including regenerative agriculture.

Action 20. Support the provision of public art in the Study Area including at the locations identified, subject to detailed assessment.

Action 21. Advocate for the construction of outstanding shared paths and cycle lanes identified as part of PBN.

Precinct 1

Action 1.1. Review the planning framework to

- ensure the protection of native vegetation and habitat is prioritised in Precinct 1;
- recognise the role of Dandenong and Dobsons Creeks in wildlife connectivity; and
- ensure bushfire risk and management in BMO affected areas is considered from early stages of any development proposal, such as pre-application stage, and proposals that require vegetation removal to comply with the bushfire requirements are not supported.



- Action 1.2.** Reduce the wildlife barrier effects at the following sites in accordance with the recommendations in Appendix 1.
- Action 1.3.** Investigate mechanisms to support private landowners to improve maintenance and weed control including of Sugarloaf Hill.
- Action 1.4.** The planning framework to acknowledge that Precinct 1 is in the high value catchment of the Dobsons Creek.
- Action 1.5.** Investigate options to incorporate WSUD measures as part of new development in the Dobsons Creek catchment.
- Action 1.6.** Support a WSUD approach to public works and infrastructure including the constructions or upgrade of roads within this precinct.
- Action 1.7.** Ensure the Dobsons/Dandenong Creek floodplain is protected from development and level change.
- Action 1.9.** Undertake a review of the existing Planning Scheme provisions to better recognise and protect landscape values, in line with the findings of the GARS Landscape and Character Study.
- Action 1.10.** Discourage fragmentation of land within the Dobsons Creek floodplain character area.
- Action 1.11.** Investigate opportunities for weed management and removal of shrub, to open up foothill views, particularly those on public owned land.
- Action 1.12.** Ensure adequate consultation occurs prior to any proposals affecting the Aboriginal Sites and Areas of Cultural Sensitivity as shown on the heritage map.
- Action 1.13.** Undertake a review of the heritage places in accordance with the recommendations from the *Knox Rural Heritage Report* (Context, 2017).
- Action 1.14.** Protect Precinct 1 from more intense urban development.
- Action 1.15.** Ensure future land use and development complements the precinct's primary environmental and landscape values, including environmental conservation, agriculture, agribusiness, art and culture, with complementary small scale tourism-related purposes.
- Action 1.16.** Protect the Dobsons Creek valley, as a significant landscape with capable agricultural land, from inappropriate development and use that would compromise these values.
- Action 1.17.** Maintain the existing residential settlement character and prevent further intensification and vegetation loss. Consider bushfire risks and vegetation impacts early in the planning process and do not support proposals that rely on vegetation removal including for fire management or car parking.
- Action 1.18.** Maintain the current minimum subdivision sizes in Precinct 1 and prevent fragmentation of land.
- Action 1.19.** Support enhancements to amenity, scenic qualities and recreational values.
- Action 1.20.** Facilitate enhancements to The Basin Neighbourhood Activity Centre, through a potential master planning process, to
- strengthen and diversify commercial land use within the existing commercial zones to the south of the roundabout;
 - protect and maximise public access to open range views to the north of the roundabout;
 - revitalise and enhance the public realm and local character; and
 - support and facilitate public art to complement the local character.
- Action 1.21.** For the larger rural properties within the central and western part of the precinct (GWZ2 and SUZ1), support discretionary uses (i.e. Section 2 uses) that are for tourism, agri-tourism, educational and commercial purposes, where proposals are sited and designed sensitively to protect and enhance the environmental, agriculture and landscape values of this precinct, and do not increase bushfire risk.



Action 1.22. Investigate opportunities to establish parkland to the north of The Basin Triangle roundabout to protect long range views from this location and provide additional passive recreation opportunities.

Action 1.23. In case of future changes to the SUZ1 zoning, support alignment with the VPP Green Wedge objectives and use permissibility, while preventing urban development and land fragmentation.

Action 1.24. Investigate upgrades to the Sheffield Road/Doongalla Road route to:

- a) Provide a safe multi-user path for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.
- b) Potentially reduce traffic speeds.
- c) Provide signs regarding horse manure catcher and cleaning up after dogs.

Action 1.25. Investigate upgrades to the Liverpool Road to:

- a) Provide a shared path.
- b) Facilitate improved pedestrian movement around the Mountain Highway intersection to ensure safe connectivity to The Basin Primary School.

Action 1.26. Advocate for improved pedestrian safety on Mountain Highway and Basin-Olinda Road near The Basin roundabout.

Precinct 2a

Action 2a.1. Support enhancements to the riparian corridor of Monbulk Creek and strengthen habitat values and connectivity within 200m of the creek.

Action 2a.2. Review the existing ESO over Monbulk Creek to ensure it properly covers the environmentally significant areas, in consultation with Melbourne Water to identify the Core Riparian Zone (CRZ) and the adjacent vegetation buffers.

Action 2a.3. For the proposed Dorset Road Extension, advocate for a concept of a multi-modal road/pedestrian and nature conservation corridor that supports both wildlife and human connectivity and contributes to habitat restoration within 200m of Monbulk Creek.

Action 2a.4. Reduce the wildlife barrier effects at the following sites in accordance with the recommendations of Appendix 1 to this report.

Action 2a.5. Undertake initiatives for supporting/partnering with rural land-holders to protect and enhance the ecological values including the riparian vegetation, and ensuring grazing practices do not damage habitat values.

Action 2a.6. Protect the floodplains of Monbulk Creek from development and level change to maintain their flood storage and retention values and prevent flooding downstream.

Action 2a.7. Advocate for the proposed Dorset Road extension to consider flooding from Monbulk Creek and apply a water sensitive design approach to maximise the natural flow and retention of water.

Action 2a.8. Review the Floodway Overlay over Monbulk Creek to ensure it serves a purpose and covers the correct area.

Action 2a.9. Review the existing Scheme provisions including the MPS, PPF and SLO1 in light of the findings of the *GARS Landscape and Character Study* (Hansen Partnership, 2019).

Action 2a.10. Advocate for the future Dorset Road extension design to respect the landscape character, and celebrate and emphasise the key views and the open rural character of the valley.



Action 2a.11. Ensure adequate consultation occurs prior to any proposals affecting the Aboriginal Sites and Areas of Cultural Sensitivity as shown on the heritage map.

Action 2a.12. Review the places of heritage significance in accordance with the recommendations from the *Preliminary Heritage Review: Knox Rural Heritage* (Context, 2017).

Action 2a.13. Protect Precinct 2a from more intense urban development.

Action 2a.14. Maintain the current zoning regime.

Action 2a.15. Support the continuation of agriculture within the floodplains of Monbulk Creek.

Action 2a.16. Acknowledge and support the different role of each zone within this precinct to enable a diversity of rural economy and character.

Action 2a.17. Maintain the current minimum subdivision lot size requirements to support landscape values and agricultural potential of land.

Action 2a.18. Support land use which respects the existing landscape character, protect key viewlines and provides positive biodiversity outcomes.

Action 2a.19. Support tourism, agri-tourism and restaurant/café uses where they are accompanied by agriculture or natural systems and protect the landscape and character values.

Action 2a.20. Support and facilitate public art along the Dorset Road extension within the Monbulk Creek valley in Precinct 2a.

Action 2a.21. Advocate to the State Government to provide the planned PBN cycle lanes along Wellington Road, Kelletts Road and Napoleon Road.

Action 2a.22. Ensure Dorset Road extension improves access to rural lots in the Monbulk Creek Valley.

[Precinct 2b](#)

Action 2b.1. Maintain the northern area within Precinct 2b as a low density, rural, open space area to create a buffer between the Rowville residential areas and the sensitive habitat in Lysterfield Park and Churchill National Park.

Action 2b.2. Maintain the current Urban Growth Boundary to prevent intense development within Precinct 2b.

Action 2b.3. Undertake planting and revegetation within Precinct 2b, with the objective of maintaining and strengthening wildlife connectivity and linkages to the bushland areas within Lysterfield Park and Churchill National Park.

Action 2b.4. Require a net gain contribution for any vegetation removal as part of the planned quarry expansion, by native vegetation planting to enhance habitat and wildlife connectivity.

Action 2b.5. Review the existing Scheme provisions including the MPS, PPF and SLO1 and SLO5 in light of the findings of the *GARS Landscape and Character Study* (Hansen Partnership, 2019).

Action 2b.6. Ensure future changes on Hanson Quarry land do not adversely impact the key landscape values.

Action 2b.7. Ensure adequate consultation occurs prior to any proposals affecting the Aboriginal Sites and Areas of Cultural Sensitivity as shown on the heritage map.

Action 2b.8. Review the places of heritage significance in accordance with the recommendations from the *Knox Rural Heritage Report* (Context, 2017).

Action 2b.9. Protect Precinct 2b from more intense urban development.

Action 2b.10. Support the ongoing operation of the Boral and Hansen Quarries within the approved work plan areas.



- Action 2b.11.** Investigate and support the use of the northern part of the Hanson quarry land for active recreation and sporting facilities.
- Action 2b.12.** Encourage the use of the quarry land following the completion of quarrying to provide for improved community and environmental outcomes, and facilitate permeability to enhance community access to the national parks.
- Action 2b.13.** Investigate general alignment with the Green Wedge Zone 2, in case of future rezoning of the northern part of the precinct, to provide a low intensity buffer to the national parks.
- Action 2b.14.** Collaborate with Parks Victoria regarding enhancements to nature based recreation and tourism opportunities within Lysterfield Park and improving access from Knox.
- Action 2b.15.** Support and facilitate public art along Wellington Road potentially as part of future planned ovals/recreation reserve.
- Action 2b.16.** Provide connectivity between the Lysterfield Park trail network and the suburban areas, as part of future redevelopment of the quarries.
- Action 2b.17.** Investigate opportunities for upgrades to Cornish Road and the possibility of a formalised entry point, including car parking, to provide access to Lysterfield Park, in collaboration with Parks Victoria.
- Action 2b.18.** Facilitate improvements to Powells Road to address existing informal car parking issues.

Precinct 3

- Action 3.1.** Acknowledge the significant role of this precinct in providing wildlife habitat and connectivity at a regional scale which is due to the integrity of existing native vegetation and the creek corridors.
- Action 3.2.** Continue the application of ESO2 across the precinct and review the local content to strengthen the provisions in accordance with the recommendations of this Strategy.
- Action 3.3.** Support rezoning to ensure the Dandenong Creek corridor is protected for conservation purposes, in consultation with stakeholders, including at 115-123 Axford Road, Wantirna South.
- Action 3.4.** Encourage reestablishment of the riparian vegetation and habitat as part of any future redevelopment at 1A Burwood Highway, Wantirna.
- Action 3.5.** Provide for habitat restoration and connectivity along the Dandenong Creek, and along Blind Creek as part of future development of the Boral Quarry site.
- Action 3.6.** Reduce the wildlife barrier effects at the sites indicated on the map in accordance with the recommendations of Appendix 1 to this report.
- Action 3.7.** Investigate and rectify the identified zoning anomalies along the Dandenong Creek corridor.
- Action 3.8.** Advocate for enhancements within this precinct to continue along the creek corridor south of Wellington Road.
- Action 3.9.** Protect the floodplains and wetlands in Precinct 3 for their flood storage and retention values.
- Action 3.10.** Continue the KCC/MW/Parks Victoria collaboration to improve waterway health and sediment control in Precinct 3.
- Action 3.11.** Future redevelopment of the Boral quarry site is to ensure that stormwater impacts are minimised and managed to the satisfaction of the relevant agencies.
- Action 3.12.** Naturalise the Blind Creek and enhance its condition as a natural waterway corridor as part of the future development of the Boral quarry site.
- Action 3.13.** Review the existing Scheme provisions including the MPS and PPF in light of the findings of the *GARS Landscape and Character Study*. New strategic policy direction for landscape values of the precinct and a new SLO are to be investigated.



- Action 3.14.** Ensure adequate consultation occurs prior to any proposals affecting the Aboriginal Sites and Areas of Cultural Sensitivity as shown on the heritage map.
- Action 3.15.** Review the places of heritage significance in accordance with the recommendations from the *Knox Rural Heritage Report (Context, 2017)*.
- Action 3.16.** Acknowledge the important role of the Dandenong Creek Valley Parkland as a significant green corridor within the eastern region.
- Action 3.17.** Support the following opportunities for the Dandenong Creek Valley parklands:
- Action 3.18.** Define High Street Road corridor as a Gateway to Knox. Protect the rural, horticultural character of this corridor and seek opportunities to enhance its aesthetics through landscaping, building design and public art which respond to and complement the rural, horticultural and bushy character of this corridor.
- Action 3.19.** Future redevelopment of the Boral Quarry site to
- Action 3.20.** Support complementary uses in proximity to the Knox Regional Sports Park including allied health and sports medicine.
- Action 3.21.** Investigate the area within Koomba Park which is zoned for road purposes for potential rezoning and inclusion in the park.
- Action 3.22.** Investigate parkland lots that are not zoned PPRZ for potential rezoning, in consultation with subject to consultation with DELWP and Parks Victoria.
- Action 3.23.** Advocate for further improvements to Nortons Park by Parks Victoria.
- Action 3.24.** Investigate opportunities for renewable energy production (solar park) at the Cathies Lane landfill site.
- Action 3.25.** Support and fund public art along the High Street Road and Burwood Highway to enhance amenity and sense of place consistent with the local character.
- Action 3.26.** Advocate for and support the on-road and off-road cycling proposals of the PBN.
- Action 3.27.** Advocate for a shared path along High Street Road connecting with the EastLink Trail with the Dandenong Creek Trail.
- Action 3.28.** Seek opportunities to improve access and connectivity through the area between High Street road and Burwood Highway.
- Action 3.29.** The Boral redevelopment site to provide for shared path connectivity through the site connecting with the surrounding trails, including along the Blind Creek linking to Jells Park.
- Action 3.30.** Support the provision of public transport to the Boral redevelopment site and ensure the road network are designed to facilitate bus movement.
- Action 3.31.** Improve access to Knox Regional Sports Park.
- Action 3.32.** Support shared path connectivity across Eastlink to Kingston Links.

[Precinct 4](#)

- Action 4.1.** Continue the application of ESO2 in Precinct 4 to protect native vegetation and habitat values.
- Action 4.2.** Acknowledge the role of the Dandenong Creek corridor and previous investments in bushland restoration along the creek in wildlife connectivity within the broader region.
- Action 4.3.** Prohibit development within the Melbourne Water's Core Riparian Zone (CRZ) and the adjacent vegetation buffers.
- Action 4.4.** Investigate mechanisms to achieve an ecologically sensitive development approach to new development and the construction of linear infrastructure (e.g. roads, bridges) across the precinct.



- Action 4.5.** Reduce the wildlife barrier effects of EastLink over the Dandenong Creek corridor in accordance with the recommendations of Appendix 1 to this report.
- Action 4.6.** ..Review the VPO in Precinct 4 to ensure it covers all the intended vegetation.
- Action 4.7.** Advocate for an underpass design to protect Bateman Street bushland.
- Action 4.8.** Minimise the risk of exposure of wildlife to vehicular traffic from the future freeway through adequate buffer areas.
- Action 4.9.** Design and construction in proximity to Winton Wetlands should be sensitive to the ecological values of this wetland and minimise wildlife exposure to works or traffic.
- Action 4.10.** Protect the Bateman Street Bushland and other Sites of Biological Significance and enhance their environmental and passive recreation values.
- Action 4.11.** Support future uses of the reservation corridor that can protect and enhance the ecological values.
- Action 4.12.** Investigate the Road Zone land in the vicinity of Winton Wetlands which is within 200m of the Creek for possible rezoning to PCRZ to protect habitat values and facilitate revegetation.
- Action 4.13.** Any development or the addition of impervious surfaces in the flood affected area (1% AEP level) needs to be accompanied by adequate studies and plans to demonstrate how flooding can be managed in particular through WSUD measures.
- Action 4.14.** Review the Scheme provisions for opportunities to reflect the findings of the GARS Landscape and Character Study.
- Action 4.15.** Ensure future development responds to the character areas, celebrates the natural/leafy character of the precinct and provides opportunities for views to the vegetated areas.
- Action 4.17.** Ensure adequate consultation occurs prior to any proposals affecting the Aboriginal Places and Areas of Cultural Sensitivity as shown on the heritage map.
- Action 4.18.** Review the places of heritage significance in accordance with the recommendations from the Knox Rural Heritage Report (Context, 2017).
- Action 4.19.** Advocate for VicRoads to review the operation of the broader traffic network to determine whether the Healesville Freeway Reservation in Knox is required.
- Action 4.20.** Ensure the new road alignment preserves the existing recreational values of the existing open space and trails.
- Action 4.21.** Remove the PAO from Bateman Street Bushland and rezone to PCRZ for conservation purposes.
- Action 4.22.** Undertake comprehensive planning for the precinct to:
- Action 4.23.** Support the PBN proposals within Precinct 4.
- Action 4.24.** Support continuous shared trail connectivity and linkages to Dandenong Creek Trail and the Whitehorse section of Healesville Freeway Reserve.
- Action 4.25.** Ensure the future Healesville Freeway extension does not present an urban barrier but rather facilitates improved access to Manson Reserve, the Dandenong Creek Trail and other recreational opportunities in the area.
- Action 4.26.** Improve vehicular access to the open space as part of comprehensive planning, preferably through the industrial area on Mountain Highway to avoid traffic pressure on the residential streets to the west. Shared path connectivity is to be provided to this residential area as well as the Dandenong Creek Trail. Alternatively, a part of the Healesville Reservation can be used to create a new access road with a shared path connecting this area to Wantirna Road.



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Objectives and Strategies for all GARS precincts

Theme	Ecology			Landscape & Character		Land Use & Access		
Objective	To protect and enhance biodiversity and wildlife connectivity	To protect and increase tree and vegetation canopy cover	To improve waterway health and flood management	To protect and enhance local character and landscape values	To recognise, protect and promote existing heritage	Recognise & protect the values of Knox Green Wedges	To ensure land uses are located and managed to be consistent with the values and functions of the Study Area	To facilitate connectivity and safe movement for all users
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve existing wildlife habitat and biodiversity values. • Improve wildlife connectivity and ecological corridors. • Increase community awareness and engagement in ecological improvements • Facilitate improved weed and pest management practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and enhance vegetation and tree canopy cover. • Monitor changes to tree canopy, vegetation and surface cover. • Recognise the role of trees and vegetation cover in moderating the temperature and reducing the urban heat island effect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve existing wildlife habitat and biodiversity values. • Protect floodplains from development and change. • Enhance water quality and the ecological health of the waterways. • Identify flood prone areas and improve stormwater management. • Encourage WSUD systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and protect local character within the Study Area • Define and protect landscape values including vistas and long range views. • Ensure land uses do not adversely affect the local character. • Ensure built form considers and responds to the local character and landscape values. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, celebrate and promote the heritage values and history, including Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage. • Promote greater community knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage. • Protect places of heritage significance from inappropriate development and use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide strategic direction for Green Wedges and interface areas in the Knox Planning Scheme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure new uses do not adversely impact on existing ecological and landscape values or existing settlements. • Protect agricultural land from inappropriate development and use. • Promote and support the ongoing viability of agricultural practices. • Strengthen and promote the recreational, cultural, sporting and tourism role. • Protect the amenity and character of existing residential areas. • Manage risks including those associated with bushfire, pollution and contamination. • Facilitate better land management practices. • Support and facilitate public art in appropriate locations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular connectivity and access. • Advocate for improved public transport connectivity. • Enhance movement safety for all users. • Reduce traffic conflict between various modes.

6.4 Draft 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan

SUMMARY: Coordinator Projects and Improvement, Janet Simmonds

Council's 2017-2021 Domestic Animal Management Plan ('the current DAM Plan') is due to expire in December 2021. This report presents the draft 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan ('the draft DAM Plan') for endorsement, prior to proceeding to the final stage of community consultation. The draft DAM Plan has been developed following an extensive community consultation campaign undertaken during July - August 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Endorses the draft 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan (Attachment 1) for the purposes of community consultation;**
- 2. Notes the community feedback provided in the phase 1 consultation (Attachment 2); and**
- 3. Notes that Phase 2 community consultation on the draft Domestic Animal Management Plan will occur from 28 October to 28 November 2021, and that feedback will be considered prior to finalising the Plan.**

1. INTRODUCTION

Section 68A(1) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 requires that every council prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAM Plan) every 4 years. The 2021-2025 DAM Plan, as in previous Plans, must address specific legislated matters with regards to the ownership of cats and dogs, and presented in line with the Plan template issued by the Victorian Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR).

Each council's DAM Plan must outline its programs, services and strategies that:

- Promote and encourage responsible ownership of dogs and cats;
- Encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats;
- Minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals;
- Minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance;
- Address specific issues including over-population and high euthanasia rates of cats and dogs; and the management of dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs in the municipality;
- Outline programs for the training of Council's authorised officers to ensure they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of the Act; and
- Ensure the Act, the regulations and any related legislation are complied with by the community.

Council's current 2017-2021 DAM Plan received a letter of commendation from the Secretary of the former Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources in May 2019 which described the plan as "an outstanding and thorough DAM Plan" and specifically noting "I was very pleased to see Council's inclusion of the benefits of pet ownership and how it links to healthy communities". As Council's current DAM Plan is of a recognised high standard, the updates required to the Plan for the next 4 years are not anticipated to be extensive – subject to consultation and feedback from community, relevant stakeholders and Councillors.

2. DISCUSSION

The draft 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan (Attachment 1) has been developed following the phase 1 community engagement campaign held in July/ August 2021, to gather feedback on the current DAM Plan, and emerging issues for the next Plan. Council received a very high level of community participation in this engagement, as outlined in the following table:

Engagement activity	Responses
Community survey	3,256
Email submissions	32
One-on-one consultations (on request)	25
Domestic animal business survey	4

Attachment 2 to this report provides an Engagement Summary Report – Phase 1, which summarises the community engagement approach and the findings/analysis of the feedback provided. The report also outlines the high-level themes of community concern and suggestions of community priority for animal management services in the municipality.

The draft DAM Plan has been updated to reflect Council's current animal management services, and has also been informed following benchmarking of neighbouring council's plans and activities. As requested by Council in the Notice of Motion No. 117 resolved at the Ordinary meeting of Council on 24 May 2021, the development of the draft DAM Plan includes a review of Knox's approach to managing dogs off leash across the municipality. Attachment 3 provides information requested in the Notice of Motion No. 117, including the history of Knox's dog off lead arrangements and benchmarking of neighbouring council dog off lead arrangements. The draft DAM Plan proposes to enhance community education and signage regarding the dogs off lead arrangements in Knox, which was identified in the recent community consultation that:

- Over 80% of respondents did not know that all parks and reserves in Knox are off-leash areas for dogs, for the exception of 9 designated on-lead parks
- Only 26.3% of respondents knew what reserves are dog off-leash and on-leash areas in Knox; and
- Approx. 23% of respondents did not know that dog owners must be able to control their dog by hand or voice control when off lead in Knox.

The draft DAM Plan also plans to undertake an annual review of Council's dog in public places order, and update it as required, to ensure it continues to meet our community's needs and expectations.

The draft DAM Plan proposes to build upon the current Plan initiatives and services, to better support the community in regards to management of cats and dogs in the municipality. Some of the key new initiatives proposed in the draft plan include:

- The provision of free/ discounted cat and dog desexing to eligible vulnerable and/or disadvantaged residents in 2022
- The introduction of a 24 hour cat curfew, to keep cats safe whilst also reducing issues that wandering cats can have on neighbours and native wildlife
- Development of an annual communication plan including alternative signage options, to assist with communicating key messages around responsible pet ownership

- The annual animal registration process be improved through increased public education activities and incentives to increase the numbers of animal registrations and promote the overall value proposition of animal registration; and
- Exploring the introduction of a pet companionship program, targeted at socially isolated and lonely older persons living alone.

Subject to Council endorsement, the draft 2021-2025 DAM Plan is proposed to be released for public exhibition and feedback over a 4 week period in November – being the phase 2 community consultation on this Plan. Phase 2 consultation will be accompanied by a comprehensive communication campaign, developed in consultation with Council’s Communications department.

Following the phase 2 consultation, it is proposed that a final 2021-2025 DAM Plan will be prepared and presented to Council for consideration in late 2020/ early 2021. An extension will be sought from the Secretary of the Victorian Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) via Animal Welfare Victoria, due to the final 2021-2025 DAM Plan not being submitted by the 4 December 2021 deadline. A copy of the approved 2021-2025 DAM Plan is required to be sent to the Secretary of DJPR in accordance with Section 68A(3)(b) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994.

3. CONSULTATION

Consultation is an essential component of the review and creation of the new Plan, to obtain input and feedback on the effectiveness of the current animal management services, and to identify emerging community issues.

The community engagement approach for the development of Council’s 2021-2025 DAM Plan includes two rounds of engagement:

- Phase 1 – consultation to gather feedback from a broad range of stakeholders on their feedback on the current DAM Plan, and ideas for the next Plan (which was conducted in July 2021); and
- Phase 2 – consultation to gather feedback on the draft 2021-2025 DAM Plan (scheduled for November 2021 – subject to Council approval).

Phase 1 of the community consultation ran from the 2nd July to 1st August 2021 (31 days) and had a very high level of participation by our community, with over 3,300 responses provided across the range of consultation methods including community and animal business surveys, email submissions and one-on-one consultations undertaken with community members upon request. The details and outcomes from this consultation are outlined in the Engagement summary report – phase 1 report (Attachment 2).

Internal stakeholder consultation sessions were also held with various departments of Council during August 2021, and included an all-day workshop with the Community Laws and Prosecution staff, and sessions held with representatives from Council’s Leisure Services, Community Access and Support, Operations (Sportsfield, Reserves and Capital works) and Customer Service departments. A dedicated session was also held with the CEO of Animal Aid (Council’s Animal Pound provider) during June, to obtain feedback on a range of initiatives to support objectives of the DAM Plan including increased animal rehoming, microchipping and reduced euthanasia of animals.

Subject to Council approval, the draft 2021-2025 DAM Plan is proposed to be published for public exhibition and feedback from 28 October to 28 November 2021 – being the Phase 2 community consultation on this Plan. Feedback from this consultation will inform further changes ahead of the plan being finalised.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

The 2021-2025 DAM Plan will review and evaluate the current animal management services, and through consideration community engagement feedback and benchmarking, will consider amendments to Council's programs that provide safety, amenity and protection of the environment within the municipality.

Both the current and next DAM Plan are legislatively required to have objectives and initiatives that specifically relate to the:

- Reduction and management of nuisances caused by dogs and cats in the community; and
- Reducing incidents of dogs wandering at large and dogs attacks, and ensuring dogs are adequately contained.

The initiatives referenced in the draft DAM Plan support principles of the community and pets living in harmony together – where issues and nuisances caused by cats and dogs are minimised. The dogs in public spaces order also supports the sharing of Council's open spaces (reserves, parks and sports grounds) for use by both pet owners to exercise their animals, in a way that does not adversely impact the use of these public open spaces by the greater community.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

As published on the Victorian Government Know Your Council website, Knox's animal management services for 2019-20 cost \$5.35 per person (population based), being lower than the 'Similar Council' comparison of \$6.01 and substantially lower than the 'All Council' average cost of \$12.54 per person.

Council's current animal management services are predominantly funded by animal registration fee income, and supplemented by budget through other Council income sources, primarily rates revenue. Council collected in excess of \$1.418 million in cat and dog registration fees income in 2020-21, and also collects in excess of \$100,000 per year in fine income relating to animal non-compliance and enforcement (fine amounts are set by State Government). The setting of the animal registration fees are considered and approved during the Annual Budget process, and any decision to introduce or amend registration fees to support animal management initiatives through this Plan will need to be costed and incorporated into future Annual Budget processes.

A new initiative for 2022 in the draft Plan is a discounted dog and cat desexing program for vulnerable and/or disadvantaged Knox residents, funded by a \$25,000 State Government grant recently awarded to Knox Council. Outside of this one-off grant funding, the scope of the 2021-2025 DAM Plan is to continue to provide Council's animal management services within existing resources and budget allocations. If Council recommends to expand or introduce new services through this next Plan, any proposal will be supported by a Budget and Resource Planning Business case for Council consideration as part of the next Annual Budget cycle.

The review and development of the 2021-2025 DAM Plan is being undertaken within existing budget and resources.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The draft DAM Plan seeks to increase responsible pet ownership within Knox, and compliance with legislation related to pet ownership. Currently one in every three households in Knox own a registered cat or dog, which is an underestimate of the actual level of ownership - estimated to be

50% of all households in the municipality. Cat and dog ownership provides a range of health, wellbeing and social benefits to the owners, families and friends – including the social networks and community connectedness that comes through the participation in community groups, training classes and animal organisations by cat or dog owners.

The initiatives in the draft DAM Plan are expected to encourage and support the responsible ownership of cats and dogs in the community, and provide mechanisms to address any safety and amenity issues caused by cats or dogs in the municipality. The review and development of the draft DAM Plan has considered possible social implications that could arise from the amendment or introduction of specific animal management initiatives in the municipality.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.2 - Enable the community to participate in a wide range of engagement activities

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

The approval of the draft 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan for public exhibition and comment, provides the opportunity for the community to engage and inform the services and strategies regarding dog and cat ownership for the next four years. The preparation of the draft DAM Plan will ensure Council fulfills its legislative requirement to prepare a plan every four years.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Coordinator Projects and Improvement, Janet Simmonds

Report Authorised By: Director, City Strategy and Integrity, Matt Kelleher

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025 [6.4.1 - 69 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Engagement summary report - phase 1 - August 2021 [6.4.2 - 47 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - Dogs off Leash - Notice of Motion 117 [6.4.3 - 5 pages]

KNOX
your city



Knox City Council

Domestic Animal Management Plan

2021-2025



Executive summary

The Knox City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAM Plan) has been developed in line with the legislative requirement that all councils develop a DAM Plan every four years. The DAM Plan details Council's strategies for the management of dogs and cats, including providing education to the community, promoting responsible pet ownership, and minimising problems generated by irresponsible pet owners.

Knox City Council has used a consultative approach to the development of this Plan to consider opinions and feedback from residents, local domestic animal businesses and other relevant stakeholders. Through the consultation process many Knox residents emphasised that dogs and cats are important members of their family.

Animal management is now a specialised industry that has evolved from merely collecting stray dogs and addressing compliance issues. Council plays a key role in promoting responsible animal ownership in the community, essential to maintaining sustainable communities and a healthy environment.

The Plan broadly outlines the following nine areas of focus:

1. Training of authorised officers;
2. Responsible Pet ownership;
3. Registration and identification;
4. Nuisances;
5. Dog attacks;
6. Dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs;
7. Overpopulation and high euthanasia;
8. Domestic animal businesses; and
9. Other matters (e.g. Council Orders).

In addition to many ongoing actions that are part of Knox's daily animal management activities, this Plan introduces the following key Plan actions:

- The annual animal registration process be improved through increased public education activities and incentives to increase the numbers of animal registrations and promote the overall value proposition of animal registration.
- Provide free/discounted cat and dog desexing to eligible vulnerable and/or disadvantaged residents.
- The introduction of a 24 hour cat curfew.
- Explore the introduction of a Pet Companionship program, targeted at socially isolated and lonely older persons living alone.
- Development of an annual communication plan including alternative signage options, to assist with communicating key messages around responsible pet ownership.

The Plan also considers approaches that will aim to ensure that dog attacks and dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dog matters are promptly dealt with, in line with community expectations.

This plan introduces the development of a dog attack kit, to provide greater support and transparency of the process for all those involved (including the victim and offending dog owner).

62% of homes in Australia have a pet (exceeded only by the US and New Zealand). 3.6 million Australian homes have a dog, and 2.9 million homes have a cat.

Source: Pets in Australia: a national survey of Pets and People, 2019, Animal Medicines Australia

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Quotes published in this document were received from the
Knox City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan Community Survey, July/August 2021

Introduction

Knox is a municipality located approximately 25kms from the Melbourne GPO. Knox is one of the most populous municipalities in Victoria with over 165,000 residents living in eleven localities.

Knox residents are proud of their city's leafy green image. They are protective of the nearby Foothills and other special places of biological significance. It is a community concerned for the welfare of others with the 2020 Municipal Survey showing that nine in ten Knox residents report that it is important that the environment is cared for, and nine in ten also reporting that it is important to support those most in need.

The Knox community is diverse, at the 2016 Census Knox was home to residents from 140 different countries who speak more than 120 different languages, with 30% (in excess of 46,000) born overseas and 25% (almost 39,000) speaking a language other than English at home.

Knox has an area spanning 114 square kilometres and includes the suburbs of Ferntree Gully, Upper Ferntree Gully, Boronia, The Basin, Rowville, Wantirna, Wantirna South, Lysterfield, Knoxfield, Scoresby and Bayswater. In 2019, an estimated 18% of the Knox population were children aged less than 15 years old and 28% were aged 55 years and older. 4.8% of the population in Knox require assistance in their day to day lives due to disability. The number of couple-only and lone person households in Knox is forecast to surpass the number of families with children in 2024, and it is forecast that the total population for the municipality will reach almost 179,000 by 2031.

As at September 2021, Knox had 18,233 dogs registered and 7,294 cats registered. For the 2020/2021 registration period, Knox had a total of 28 domestic animal businesses registered.

They included:

- 7 pet shops
- 10 dog training businesses
- 9 boarding facilities
- 1 animal shelter/ pound
- 1 animal breeding/ rearing facility.

Council's Community Laws team is part of the City Safety and Health Department and is part of the broader City Strategy & Integrity Directorate. Community Laws is aligned to the City Safety and Health values and promotes and protects the safety, health and amenity of the community so the objectives of the Knox Vision can be realised. This will be achieved through integrated planning, community education and engagement, service provision, community capacity building, regulation and enforcement.

Community Laws delivers varied departmental roles within Council, which includes the education and enforcement of state and local legislation. The department's roles include animal management, traffic enforcement, local laws and school crossing supervision.

The Community Laws Department consists of the following authorised Animal Management Officers:

- 1 Coordinator, Community Laws
- 1 Team Leader Community Laws and Animal Management
- 1 Team Leader, Parking Management
- 6 Community Laws/ Animal Management Officers.

The department is further supported by a dedicated business support and prosecutions team.



Pets add so much more to a home. »

Domestic animal statistics and data – City of Knox

The table below provides a snapshot of the domestic animal management services provided by Council in 2020-21, and as previously reported in prior Domestic Animal Management Plans:

	2012-2013	2016-2017	2020-2021
Population	>154,000	>157,000	>165,000
No. of authorised animal management officers	10	9	9
Number of Domestic Animal Businesses	22	22	28
Dogs in Knox			
No. of registered dogs (total)	18,805	18,839	18,233 at Sept 2021
No. of registered restricted breed dogs	6	3	1
No. of registered declared menacing dogs	3	1	1
No. of registered declared dangerous dogs	6	6	11
Dogs impounded at the pound	784	630	326
Dogs reclaimed from pound	579	501	275
Dogs adopted	130	71	29
Dogs reclaimed by owner or adopted %	90.4%	90.8%	93.3%
Dogs euthanised	98	39	18
Dogs euthanised %	12.5%	6.2%	5.5%
Customer requests responded to:			
• Dogs - Barking	597	394	51
• Dogs - Pick up	799	601	384
• Dogs - Wandering at large	453	266	169
• Dog - Attacks	122	95	140
• Dog - Rush	75	47	39
Cats in Knox			
No. of registered cats (total)	5,878	6,266	7,294 at Sept 2021
Cats impounded at the pound	436	402	296
Cats reclaimed from pound	59	65	61
Cats adopted	236	215	147
Cats reclaimed by owner or adopted %	67.7%	69.7%	70.3%
Cats euthanised	142	88	76
Cats euthanised %	32.6%	21.9%	26.7%
Customer requests responded to:			
• Cat cage requests	196	150	100
• Cats picked up	244	199	182

** Please note that the Knox City Council 'Council and Community Plan' is currently under development and pending finalisation and council approval. This document will be updated to ensure that it aligns with the new plan when it is finalised **

Development of this Plan

The development of this Plan was informed by community and stakeholder consultation, feedback from our Councillors, Council staff experiences, research and benchmarking. This Plan builds on the previous Plans, with the aim to deliver better animal management services for the Knox municipality for the next 4 years.

The community engagement for the development of this plan included two rounds of consultation:

- Phase 1 – consultation to gather feedback from a broad range of stakeholders on their feedback on the current 2017-2021 Plan, and ideas of the next Plan (July/ August 2021); and
- Phase 2 – consultation to gather feedback on the draft 2021-2025 Plan (scheduled for November 2021).

The Phase 1 engagement undertook consultation with the local community and domestic animal businesses, to hear our community's views on how cats and dogs are managed in the Knox municipality, including feedback on Council's animal management services and suggestions on what could be improved. A total of 3,317 responses were received from the community and businesses, through the following channels:

Engagement activity	Responses
Community survey	3,256
Email responses	32
One-on-one consultations (on request)	25
Domestic animal business survey	4

The engagement was promoted through a range of Council's communication channels including: a flyer distributed to over 53,000 homes in the municipality; SMS messages sent to registered cat and dog owners; coreflute signs installed in 50 key parks across the municipality; news articles in Council's newsletters and website; Facebook advertising; and direct emails to a range of stakeholders, inviting them to provide feedback.

Some of the key findings of the Phase 1 engagement were:

- High engagement in the survey from dog or cat owners (90%) demonstrates a high level of interest in animal management and a commitment to responsible pet ownership in Knox.
- Many community members supported that the animal management services are either 'very important' or 'important'.
- The need for a review of and/or increased compliance and community education regarding dog off leash rules and areas.
- Consideration of the range of support requested by the community, to assist with the introduction of the 24 hour cat curfew in April 2022.
- A need for solutions to address the problem of dog waste (poo) not being collected and disposed of properly.
- Provision of public education and communication campaigns to increase the community awareness of their responsibilities (including registration & microchipping, having your dog under effective control, etc) when owning a pet in Knox.

Domestic Animal Management Plans

Under Section 68A of the Domestic Animals Act, every Council must prepare a domestic animal management plan, as follows:

68A Councils to prepare domestic animal management plans

1. Every Council must, in consultation with the Secretary (of the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions), prepare at 4 year intervals a Domestic Animal Management Plan.
2. A Domestic Animal Management Plan prepared by a Council must:
 - a. set out a method for evaluating whether the animal control services provided by the Council in its municipal district are adequate to give effect to the requirements of this Act and the regulations; and
 - b. outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in the Council's municipal district; and
 - c. outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district:
 - i. to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of dogs and cats; and
 - ii. to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation; and
 - iii. to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals; and
 - iv. to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats; and
 - v. to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats; and
 - vi. to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance; and
 - vii. to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations; and
 - d. provide for the review of existing orders made under this Act and local laws that relate to the Council's municipal district with a view to determining whether further orders or local laws dealing with the management of dogs and cats in the municipal district are desirable; and
 - e. provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary; and
 - f. provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlined under the Plan.
3. Every Council must:
 - a. review its Domestic Animal Management Plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the Plan; and
 - b. provide the Secretary with a copy of the Plan and any amendments to the Plan; and
 - c. publish an evaluation of its implementation of the Plan in its annual report.

“ My cat means everything to me, she keeps me company when I have no one to talk to. ”



1

**Training
of authorised officers**

Section 68(A)(2)(b) of the Act requires Council to outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in the Council's municipal district.

The animal management staff within the Community Laws team are multi-skilled, and in addition to animal management matters, administer and enforce a range of other legislative requirements.

Knox Community Laws officers undertake regular training relevant to their role, including:

- Animal handling
- Customer service
- Conflict resolution
- Investigations
- Prosecutions.

What animal management services are important to the Knox community:

- Collect/ return stray dogs/ cats to their owners - 92.5%
- Investigation of animal cruelty matters - 98.1%
- Investigation and enforcement of dog attacks on people and other animals - 95.5%
- Investigation of illegal dog and cat breeders (ie. puppy farms) - 96.4%
- Education about responsible pet ownership - 87.6%
- Responds to reports of nuisance dogs/ cats - 85.2%
- Reduce the rate of cat and dog euthanasia through increased rehoming/ animal adoptions - 89.5%

Ref: DAMP Community Survey, 2021



Current & planned training

Knox City Council requires all authorised officers to possess adequate qualifications and skills, and ensure officers undergo appropriate training/ re-training relevant to their role. The table below highlights authorised officer training requirements for Knox Authorised Officers.

Core capabilities (required training or equivalent experience essential)

Approved Officer Training - Basic	Current Status (2021)	Planned
Certificate IV <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal Regulation & Management • Government (Statutory Compliance) • Government (Investigations) • Government (Court Compliance) 	Six officers either have a minimum certificate IV qualification or in excess of five years' relevant experience	Training assigned as required and determined through Performance Development Review Process
Animal Management training and information days	All officers have the opportunity to attend this training	Offered regularly by the relevant State Government agency
Municipal Association of Victoria and Local Government Professionals training and Information days	All officers have the opportunity to attend this training	Offered regularly by the relevant State Government agency
Baton training	All officers have completed this training	Refresher training done annually
Situational awareness	All officers have completed this training	Refresher training done annually
Nationally accredited first aid and CPR training	All officers have the opportunity to attend this training	Training assigned as required and determined through Performance Development Review Process
Induction program for new staff, including familiarisation with work instructions and animal management tasks	All officers have completed this training	All new staff inducted upon commencement
Australian Institute of Animal Management - Annual Conference	All officers have the opportunity to attend this training	Participation when available

Training of authorised officers

Approved Officer Training - Basic	Current Status (2021)	Planned
Industry training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal handling • Animal assessment • Statement taking • Prosecution • Restricted breed dog identification • DNA collection 	Ongoing	Training assigned as required and determined through Performance Development Review Process
OH&S – dealing with aggressive customers, dealing with aggressive animals	As required	Training assigned as required and determined through Performance Development Review Process
Customer Service - including Conflict Resolution	As required	Training assigned as required and determined through Performance Development Review Process



Our plans

Training of authorised officers objectives

To ensure that all staff involved in animal management have the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their work, and to deliver services in a manner which ensures officer and animal safety and welfare.

Current/ ongoing activities:

- Seek qualifications (or equivalent) relevant to the role when recruiting new staff.
- Attendance of relevant animal management training and information days offered by the relevant State Government agency.
- Attendance of Animal Management Officers at Municipal Association of Victoria and Local Government Professionals training and information days.
- Attendance of Animal Management Officers at the Australian Institute of Animal Management annual conference.

Planned programs and initiatives:

- Provide all staff with access to Council's Corporate Learning calendar.
- All staff to complete Council's Corporate Compliance training.
- Provide the opportunity for Animal Management Officers to attend relevant animal management training and information days offered by the relevant State Government agencies.
- Municipal Association of Victoria, Local Government Professionals, RSPCA and other relevant training sessions, workshops and seminars attended by officers.
- Enhance Animal Management Officers skills in animal behaviour - including, identifying risk behaviours and managing nuisance animals.
- Enhance Animal Management Officers mediation skills and customer service training..
- Attendance by staff and involvement in relevant industry committees.



Objective 1: Ensure all Officers involved in animal management are appropriately qualified and skilled

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop training plans for each officer	Annually	Review annually to determine training goals and identification of skill gaps, as part of the learning and development plan for each individual officer

Objective 2: Review working arrangements for all staff and associated impact on operations

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review of current working arrangements	2021/25	Review conducted annually to ensure that service delivery meets needs
Undertake ongoing workforce planning reviews, to ensure the appropriate staffing to deliver the services in the Plan	2021/25	Review conducted annually to ensure that service delivery meets needs
Review the impacts of increased Prevention of Cruelty to Animals complaints and external agency referrals (RSPCA/ DJPR) on existing workforce capacity	2021/25	Review conducted annually to ensure that this additional responsibility is able to be delivered with the existing workforce capacity
Investigate the introduction of a permanent ongoing 'Trainee Community Laws Officer' role (or similar), including detailed cost-benefit analysis for consideration by the Executive	2022/23	Delivery of the new role, to meet the current shortfall of appropriately skilled applicants in this industry

“ My dog means protection, comfort, care and love. ”

“ A dog is a great friend for life. ”

“ My pets have helped me through the tough times in my life. ”



2

Responsible pet ownership

Section 68A(2)(c)(i) of the Act requires Council to outline the programs, services and strategies to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of dogs and cats.

Current situation

The responsible ownership of dogs and cats encompasses a broad range of issues and stakeholders, to ensure the welfare needs of the animals are met, whilst ensuring that the animals do not pose any safety or nuisance concerns within the community.

Community consultation in the recent survey identified a need for improved communication and education regarding a range of issues regarding dog and cat ownership with:

- Over 73% of respondents did not know what parks and reserves are dog off and on-leash areas in Knox, and 23% of respondents did not know how dogs owners are required to have effective control of their dog whilst off lead
- 24.52% of respondents stated their cat was not registered, and over 21% admitted their cat was not microchipped - which are key identification means that assist Council in reuniting lost cats and reducing the high rates of euthanasia of cats who are unable to be rehomed
- 69% of respondents were not aware that Knox Council provides a free cat trap loan service to address cat nuisance issues; and
- 83% of respondents were not aware what animal management services are funded by pet registration fees in Knox.

Responsible Pet ownership programs for children

A portion of every animal registration is paid to the State Government each year as a state levy, with the registered pet owners of Knox contributing in excess of \$117,000 in the

2020/2021 financial year. This funding is used by Animal Welfare Victoria to provide a range of community and education programs, including responsible pet ownership programs for children in our municipality.

The Responsible Pet Ownership (RPO) program educates children from ages 4 to 12 on:

- living safely with dogs; and
- responsible pet ownership.

Since 2017, the pet educators and their dogs have delivered over 327 sessions in Knox's kindergartens and primary schools to over 8,000 children - to promote the vital safety messages through animated presentations, song and role play.

Our current education/ promotion activities

Knox City Council has a number of education and promotional activities in place.

- Responsible pet ownership is promoted through Pets in the Park; an event held annually. Note COVID19 has resulted in recent cancellation of this event, but it is planned to continue during this plan.
- Participation in information sessions about responsible animal ownership for both children and the community.
- Promotion of registration and responsible pet ownership in Council's Knox News publication.
- Website: Council's website contains a wide variety of information in relation to responsible pet ownership and annual registration.
- Patrols: Proactive and complaint based park patrols are undertaken throughout the year.
- Social media: Council promotes a number of responsible pet ownership topics via social media channels including Facebook.

Objective 1: Educate and promote responsible pet ownership messaging to pet owners

Activity	When	Evaluation
Explore ways to further increase public awareness of registration and responsible pet ownership.	Ongoing	Increased number of dog and cat registrations
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The benefits of pet registration (ie. reuniting lost pets) • Containing and keeping dogs under effective control • Dogs on leash/off lead in Knox • Desexing of cats and dogs to prevent overpopulation 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented.
Introduce a 24-hour cat curfew. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of a communications plan to provide support and guidance to the community with the introduction of the curfew • Provide information on DIY cat enclosures and cat proof fencing 	2022	Reduction of cat nuisance complaints
Investigate alternative effective signage options to assist with communicating key messages around responsible pet ownership	Ongoing	Evaluation/ feedback sought from the community
Promote responsible pet ownership through increased education, awareness and enforcement of the requirement to carry waste bags and pick up after their dog, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased education and awareness campaigns directed towards dog owners and encouraging self-regulation • Explore the installation of signage/ footpath stencils and bins in problem areas. 	Ongoing	Reduction of dog waste complaints
Investigate the sourcing of a supplier of pooch pouches (or similar) to provide to dog owners. Pooch pouches are small bags that hold plastic bags and can be clipped to the dog lead.	2022	Pooch pouches provided with new registrations or on request

Objective 1: Educate and promote responsible pet ownership messaging to pet owners - continued

Activity	When	Evaluation
Actively promote the Responsible Pet Ownership program conducted by Dept. of Jobs, Precincts & Regions (DJPR) to kindergartens and primary schools within Knox	Ongoing	Increased participation by Knox kindergartens and primary schools
Partner with Council's Animal Pound provider (Animal Aid) to promote initiatives including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Seniors for Seniors" adoption program (discounted adoption of pets over 8 years of age by Senior card holders) • Free cat microchipping • Discounted desexing programs 	Ongoing	Increased participation rates in these programs Increased number of dog and cat registrations



New dedicated dog park in Knox

In July 2021, a new second designated 'destination' off leash dog park was opened at Emerson Place Reserve in Rowville. This park delivers on the plan for the development and establishment of this additional off leash dog park, included in the 2017-2021 Plan.

This new fenced dog off-lead area at Emerson Place Reserve in Rowville provided Council with a purpose-built area for residents and their dogs to exercise, socialise and interact with other dogs and their owners. The social and physical health benefits of responsible pet ownership are widely recognised and understood, and for many dog owners, exercise undertaken with their dogs is their primary form of physical activity. This park contains the following features:

- Boundary fencing 1200mm high with a sensory buffer of vegetation.
- Four double gate entry points (two along the adjacent shared trail and two from within the reserve).
- Two vehicular/maintenance access points.
- Landscape features such as rock climbers, rock and vegetation clusters, and mature trees groves.

- A formal, concrete pathway for universal access.
- A 'main enclosure' and a 'quiet dog' enclosure to cater for quieter or smaller dogs.
- Use of existing simulated dry creek bed to provide a sensory experience with different textures to that of the general surface material.
- A timber boardwalk installed over the dry creek bed, to create access between the small dog enclosure and the main enclosure.
- Bins and signage regarding fenced off -leash area rules located at all entry/access points.
- Five park benches.
- Two drinking fountains.
- Two sculptural art pieces.

Both the two and four-legged residents of Knox and surrounds are invited to come and experience this new park.







3

Registrations & identification

Section 68A(2)(c)(v) of the Act requires Council to outline programs, services and strategies to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats. - also addresses *Section 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)*

Current situation

The Domestic Animals Act 1994 requires all dogs and cats to be registered with Council at 3 months of age, with renewals due annually on 10 April. When a pet is registered with Council they are required to be microchipped and are provided with a Council identification tag. Knox makes every effort to reunite lost cats and dogs with their owners that are registered and wearing their Council tag.

Animal registration fees go toward the ongoing operational costs associated with the running of Knox's animal management services which includes:

- Animal management staff to support the collection and return of stray animals to owners.
- The costs of running both an animal pound service, and an after-hours animal collection service.
- Enforcement of the Domestic Animal's Act 1994 and Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986.
- Investigation and prosecution of animal matters, including dog attacks, or the keeping of unregistered animals.
- Registration and inspection of domestic animal businesses (including pet shops, animal boarding, dog trainers and animal breeders).

- Investigation of animal complaints including barking dogs, trespassing complaints and animal welfare concerns.
- Knox's Pets in the Park festival - which is a free community event promoting responsible pet ownership.
- Subsidised desexing voucher scheme for concession card holders, and discount incentive schemes for new registrations.
- Individualised registration tags for each registered dog and cat within Knox.

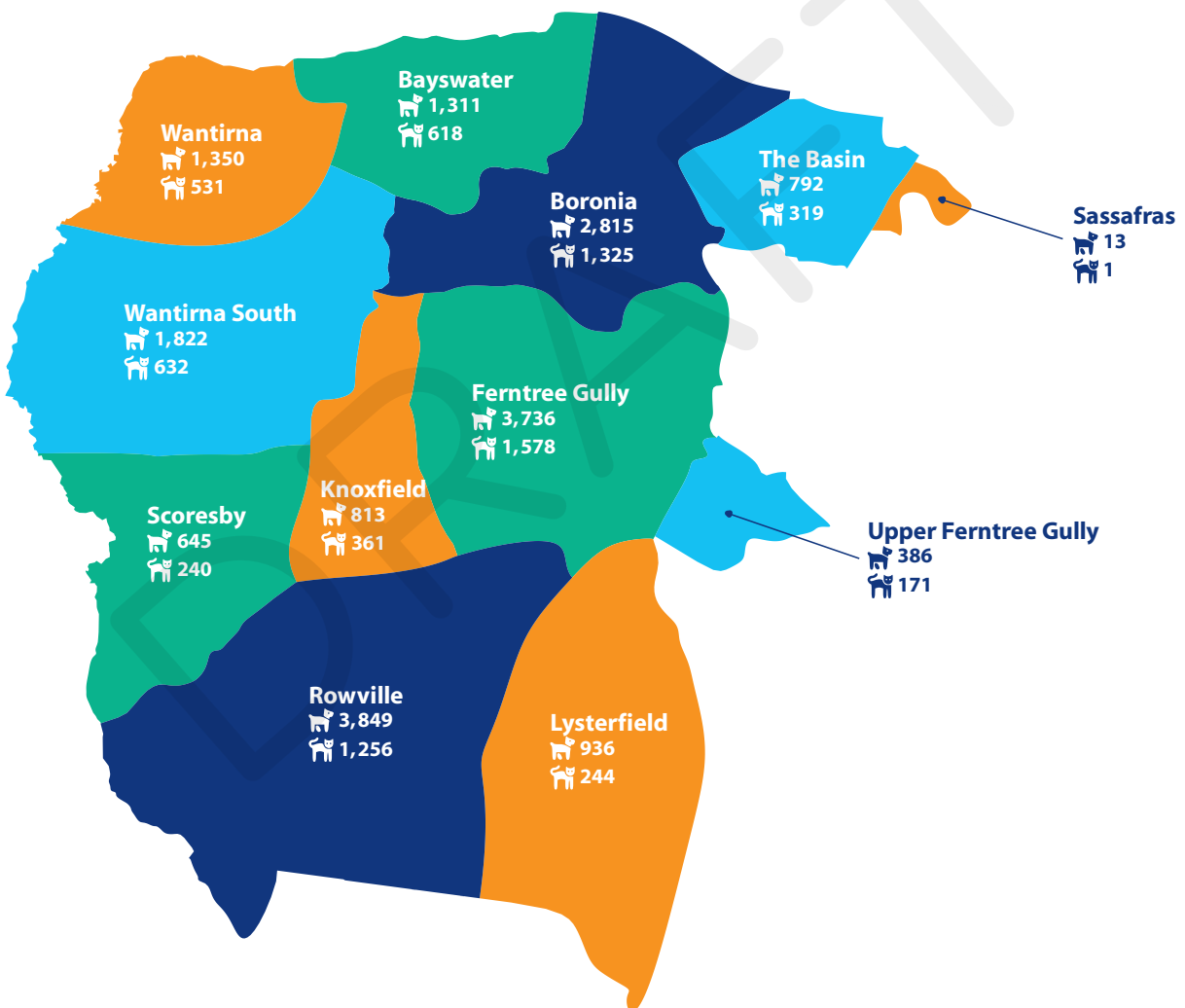
Due to COVID-19 restrictions, Council's Animal Management officers were not able to undertake the annual registration audit follow-up of unpaid registrations. The annual registration audit in previous years has been a key activity in maintaining and encouraging registration compliance.



Table 1: Animal registration comparison rates from 2016/17 to September 2021

Registrations	2016/17 registration period	2017/18 registration period	2018/19 registration period	2019/20 registration period	Registrations at September 2021
Dogs	18,839	17,576	18,312	16,765	18,233
Cats	6,266	6,164	7,309	7,402	7,294
Total	25,105	23,740	25,621	24,167	25,527

Knox dog and cat registrations by suburb



Pet registration incentive

Currently Council offers a registration incentive to encourage the registration of pets. Any dog or cat, which has been newly acquired from a registered domestic animal business, will receive free registration when registered within 28 days from the date of purchase. This program has been in place for a number of years and will continue throughout the life of this Plan.

Registration renewals

Council currently send registration renewal notices to dog and cat owners prior to their annual 10 April renewal, together with a SMS reminder and final reminder notice for those that remain unpaid.

Council has been utilising SMS messaging since 2016 as a reminder for unpaid registration renewals, in addition to posted notices to animal owners. The use of SMS messaging has resulted in a significant reduction of reminder notices being issued.

For those registration renewals that remained active in Council's database but unpaid, registration audits are undertaken and infringements are issued for any unregistered animals identified.

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures Orders

Domestic Animals Act 1994 section 10A(1) - Attachment A.

The order provides that Knox City Council will not, after 10 April 2011, accept the registration of a cat unless the cat is desexed or exempted under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 from any requirements to be desexed. Any cat that is not desexed cannot be registered. Failing to register can result in penalties under the Act.

Local laws

Knox City Council Amenity Local Law 2020

Limits on number of animals kept

4.1 An owner or occupier of private land, the area of which is less than or equal to 4,000 square metres must not, without a permit, keep or allow to be kept on that private land more than:

Type of animal	Number
Dogs	2
Cats	2

Our current education/ promotion activities

Knox City Council has a number of education and promotional activities in place.

- Responsible pet ownership is promoted through Pets in the Park; an event held annually. Other Council events are attended as required.
- Promotion of registration and responsible pet ownership in Council's Knox News publication.
- Engage with the community on responsible animal ownership.
- Provision of subsidised desexing scheme for concession card holders in association with the MAV and Australian Veterinary Association (AVA).
- Website: Council's website contains a wide variety of information in relation to responsible pet ownership and animal registration. Registration forms can also be downloaded from the website.
- Provision of a range of registration payment options.
- Microchipping: Discounted micro-chipping is available at the annual Pets in the Park event.
- Patrols: Proactive and complaint based park patrols are undertaken throughout the year.
- New animal registrations are provided with information on responsible pet ownership.

- Registration incentive scheme information along with general responsible pet ownership information.
- Council promotes a number of responsible pet ownership topics via traditional and social media channels.
- Act on referrals from State Government relating to Pet Exchange register and source number breaches in relation to the breeding and selling of cats and dogs.
- Review the registration fees annually.
- Council provides significantly discounted registration fees for animals that are both microchipped and desexed.
- Ensure the correct State Government Levy is charged on the animal registrations.

Our current compliance activities include:

- Council will investigate and carry out enforcement action when identifying unregistered dogs or cats.
- Issuing of annual registration renewal notices and follow-up overdue notices.
- Sending out SMS reminder messages.
- All non-renewals are followed up and reviewed by the annual registration audit.
- The issuing of infringement notices for unregistered dogs and cats or for failing to wear their registration tag.
- Animal registration database is continually updated as the status of animals change.
- Domestic Animal Business notifications: Following up on the registration of a dog or cat after the owner has been sent their new owner letter.
- Ensure all impounded or seized dogs and cats are registered prior to being released to their owner.
- All authorised officers are provided with mobile technology enabling access to animal owner details in the field.

Summary

Animal registration has been an area of strong focus in previous Domestic Animal Management Plans, and continues to be an area of strong focus over the life of this Plan. The promotion and public education of the benefits of animal registration will be further explored in this Plan. Further to this Council will investigate incentives to provide additional benefits to pet owners for registering their pets. Knox recognises that there is currently a significant number of unregistered animals in the municipality. To address this the Plan aims to increase the awareness of the requirement to register dogs and cats, promote the benefits of their registration, and to increase the number of registrations.

“ My pets played an important role in teaching my children about respect, responsibility, affection and caring for others ”

Our plans – registration & identification

Objective 1: Increase the number of animal registrations within the municipality

Activity	When	Evaluation
Reconcile data contained in national microchip registries with Council's registration database to identify unregistered animals, and restricted breed dogs.	Annual	All microchipped animals within Knox are registered
<p>Review the annual registration process to improve the timeliness and compliance of registration.</p> <p>This would incorporate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issuing of annual registration renewal notices and follow-up overdue notices • Promoting online notification of a change of details (ie. pet has died, lost or left Knox) or address change • Sending out SMS reminder messages • Undertake an annual registration audit of non-renewed registrations. 	Annual	Increased number of dog and cat registrations registered by 10 April
<p>Offer free initial registration for any dog or cat purchased from an animal shelter with an 84Y agreement with Council.</p> <p>Offer discounted registration fees for newly acquired animals purchased/adopted within 4 weeks.</p> <p>Consider additional initiatives such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further discounting of registration fees for those on an aged pension or on a disability pension • Further expanding the current registration incentives offered by Council. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>2022-2023</p>	Increased number of dog and cat registrations
Continue the current MAV and AVA desexing voucher scheme, with existing financial support of Council, to provide financial incentives to concession card holders in the desexing of their animals.	Ongoing	Monitor community uptake of scheme

Objective 1: Increase the number of animal registrations within the municipality - continued

Activity	When	Evaluation
Advocate to the State Government (DJPR) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a further discount to annual registration if the dog is both desexed and trained by a recognised organisation • Introduction of a centralised state-wide animal registration database 	2022-2023	Provide submission to State Government
Partner with Council's Animal Pound provider (Animal Aid) to promote services including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discounted cat and dog desexing • Free cat microchipping 	2022-2024	Increased number of registrations, as microchipping and cat desexing is a requirement of registration in Knox

Objective 2: Educate and promote the benefits, value and opportunities of dog and cat registration to pet owners

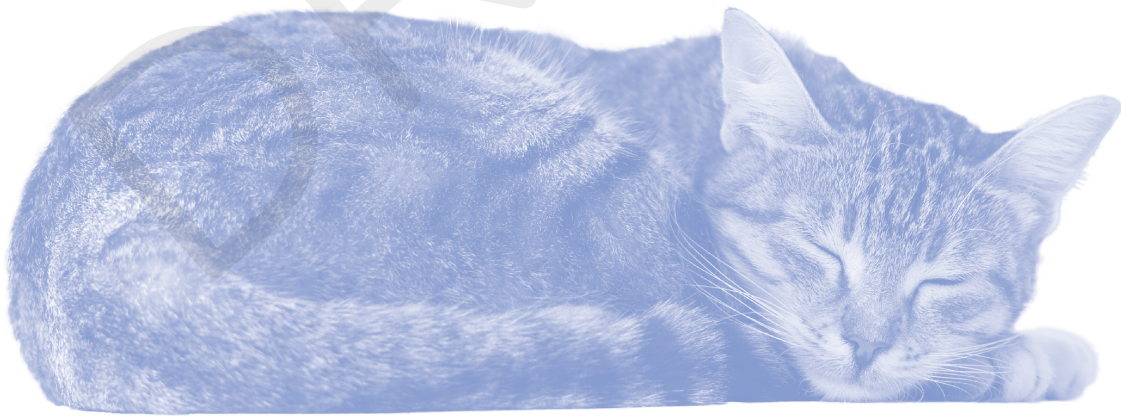
Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The benefits of pet registration (ie. reuniting lost pets) 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented Increased number of dog and cat registrations
Develop an info-graphic depicting how registration fee income is allocated and make this available to the community through communication channels including animal registration notices	2022	Reduction in the number of enquiries regarding what the registration fee pays for
Reunite registered and identifiable (wearing Knox Council tag) impounded cats and dogs with their owners. Registered animals returned to their owner will not be issued with a fine* on the first occasion, but will be provided with an official warning.	Ongoing	Increased number of dog and cat registrations and lower the number of impounded animals * Fines may apply when negligence is established or matters are subject to further investigation, such as a dog attack.
Installation of signs at dogs parks advising that unregistered dogs will be fined.	2022	Number of fines issued.

Objective 3: Clarify Local Law policies relating to animal registrations

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop and review policies for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unregistered animals • Registered animals not wearing a tag • Application for registration and renewal of registration for dogs and cats • Seizing and impounding of unregistered and/ or unidentified dogs and cats • Others as identified 	Ongoing	Updated standard operating procedures and protocols and annual review planned

DRAFT

“They are our fur babies.”





4

Nuisance

Section 68A(2)(c)(vi) of the Act requires Council to outline programs, services and strategies to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance. - also addresses *68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)*

Current situation

Council has been successful in dealing with nuisance complaints and promoting responsible pet ownership for a number of years. This has seen a reduction in the number of nuisance related complaints received over the last five years, as outlined in the table below. With the expected population growth, pet numbers are also expected to increase over the life of this Plan.

Table 1: Number of nuisance related complaints per calendar year

Complaint	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Cats - Cage request	150	145	174	218	100
Cats - Cats pick up	199	223	246	277	182
Dogs - Barking	394	372	480	439	51
Dogs - Pick up	601	698	520	480	384
Dogs - Wandering at large	266	238	188	248	169

Nuisance barking

In recent years there has been a decrease in the number of complaints relating to nuisance barking. A barking dog complaint requires the complainant to submit noise log sheets, and if the matter remains unresolved statements and attendance at court is required. Council also uses noise recording equipment to assist with nuisance investigations and to establish an offence.

Barking dog investigations can be quite resource intensive taking significant time to resolve. The majority of barking dog complaints resolve simply, as in many cases the owner has not been aware that their dog was barking and then takes appropriate steps to address the issue. Ongoing barking issues that do not resolve quickly can affect the wellbeing of the individual and community.

In 2019, Council reviewed the barking dog process to move to an educative process with all parties, which has resulted in a significant reduction in the total volume of complaints and the number of matters that require enforcement.

Dog litter

The issue of dog litter and decaying pet waste can potentially pose both health and environmental risks to the community. It is a requirement under the Knox City Council Amenity Local Law 2020 to carry a plastic bag or similar to pick up after dogs and this is enforced during officer patrols. Council currently provide poo bags via dispensers at Knox's dog play parks and will continue to do so.

Further to this, the Plan proposes to provide Pooch Pouches (or similar items) for dog owners. The pouch can be attached to a dog's leash and holds plastic bags for the owner to use for the collection of dog litter.

Dog play park

Regular park users meet and socialise their dogs frequently, forming their own networks and encouraging socialisation amongst themselves. While the dog play parks have been generally well received by the community, both two and four legged, dog play park usage will continue to be monitored to ensure that the setting provides the best community outcomes.

Nuisance cats

Council regularly receives complaints from residents regarding nuisance cat issues. In response to this Council has offered a cat trap hire service to residents to assist them in the management of feral and nuisance cats.

This Plan proposes to further address the issue of feral and nuisance cats by introducing a cat curfew order, requiring all cats to be confined within their property boundary at all times. This order aims to keep cats safe and to prevent cats wandering and nuisances such as spraying and fighting, and to protect native wildlife.

Council promotes the use of cat enclosures and cat proof fencing as effective cat containment measures.

👉 Our cats
give us unconditional
love and they assist
with our mental health
& well being. 🗨️

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures Orders:

- **Compulsory desexing of cats**
(Domestic Animals Act 1994 section 10A(1) – Attachment A) This order provides that:

Knox City Council will not, after 10 April 2011, accept the registration of a cat unless the cat is desexed or exempted under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 from any requirements to be desexed.

- **Dogs in public places**
(Domestic Animals Act 1994 section 26 – Attachment B)

This order provides that dogs are permitted to be off lead, but under effective control in a public park or recreation reserve, subject to conditions.

Local laws:

Knox City Council Amenity Local Law 2020

Limits on number of animals kept

- 4.1 An owner or occupier of private land, the area of which is less than or equal to 4,000 square metres must not, without a permit, keep or allow to be kept on that private land more than:

Type of animal	Number
Dogs	2
Cats	2

Removal of Animal Waste

- 4.6 A person in charge of an animal on Council land or on a road must carry a facility for the effective removal of any waste that may be deposited by that animal.
- 4.7 A person in charge of an animal on Council land or on a road must collect from the Council land or road and appropriately dispose of any waste deposited by that animal.

Animal noise and odour

- 4.8 The owner of an animal and the owner or occupier of the private land on which the animal is kept must not allow noise or odour to emanate from the animal as to interfere with the amenity of the immediate area.
- 4.9 Clause 4.8 does not apply to any class of animal where another Act or legislation applies.



Our current education/ promotion activities:

- The Community Laws team run the annual Pets in the Park event, which provides information relating to nuisance issues.
- Website: Council's website has a wide variety of information in relation to dog and cat nuisances and responsible pet ownership.
- Domestic Animal Business notifications. Council is notified of new pet owners by Domestic Animal Business's. A new owner letter is sent out providing responsible pet ownership information.
- Promote DIY cat enclosure and cat proof fencing brochures via council website and hard copies available on request.
- Provision of information in relation to barking dogs.
- Encourage desexing of pets to reduce nuisance complaints.

Our current compliance activities:

- Reactive enforcement: Addressing the issue of a nuisance dog or cat when a complaint is lodged.
- Reports of dogs wandering at large or not securely contained are investigated immediately. Fines may be issued to owners of offending dogs. If the animal is impounded the owner must also pay a reclaim fee.
- Issues of dog containment relating to inadequate fencing are investigated and the owner provided with relevant information.
- Reports of dogs off lead are investigated and the owner may be fined when they are able to be identified.
- Reports of dog owners not removing dog litter are investigated and owners may be fined when they are able to be identified.

- Noise recording devices are available for nuisance barking complaints.
- Cat traps are available to the community to assist with nuisance cat complaints.
- Issuing of a Notice to Comply to assist in resolving complaints if required and fines issued for non-compliance.
- Local Law permits required for excess animals.
- Encourage parties to seek mediation where possible to resolve nuisance issues.
- Prosecution at the Magistrates' Court for those matters that remain unresolved.
- Link all complaints to the animal's registration.

Summary

This Plan announces the introduction of a 24 hour cat curfew to assist in reducing nuisance cat problems. Council will continue to seek compliance and provide education and information to address a range of nuisance complaints.

Council is committed to supporting cat owners with the introduction of the cat curfew, through the provision of education materials and officer engagement on their specific needs.

The ongoing use of technology including noise recording devices and the regular review of processes will assist in ensuring that nuisance matters are resolved as efficiently and as soon as reasonably possible.

Council remains committed to providing more opportunities for dog play areas, as these benefit dogs and their owners, providing socialising opportunities and strengthen community connectedness.

Our plans - nuisance

Objective 1: Improved response to barking dog complaints

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review the barking assessment of barking dog complaint processes to ensure current best practice	Ongoing	Improved processes to resolve barking dog matters.
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing dogs and barking dog complaints 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented
Use of noise recorders to assist barking dog investigations, as required	Ongoing	Increased quality of evidence gathered
Review and update information to assist owners and complainants of barking dogs	Ongoing	Review and update current material

Objective 2: Ensure dogs are adequately contained - wandering at large, not securely contained, inadequate fencing

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Securely containing dogs 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented
Provide advice to pet owners on pet care during thunderstorms, fireworks and holiday periods	Ongoing	Updated information on social media and website
Impounding dogs wandering at large or not securely confined and taking enforcement action against owners	Ongoing	Number of dogs impounded and infringements issued
Identify repeat offenders for increased enforcement action	Ongoing	Increase in compliance of repeat offenders

Objective 3: Dogs off lead/ use of open spaces for dogs

Activity	When	Evaluation
Establish operational management protocols associated with Knox dog parks (for both smaller fenced dog parks and larger destination parks)	2022-2023	Criteria established for the operational management of dog parks
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating improved messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dogs on leash/ off lead in Knox Keeping dogs under effective control 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented

Objective 4: To reduce cat nuisance problems within the community

Activity	When	Evaluation
Introduce a 24 hour cat curfew. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of a communications plan to promote the introduction of the curfew Amend pet registration forms to advise of curfew requirements Update new animal letters advising of curfew requirements Provide information on DIY cat enclosures and cat proof fencing 	April 2022	Reduction of cat nuisance complaints Successful media strategy in place Registration forms updated Letters updated Information provided on website and hard copies on request
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cat nuisance issues 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented
Provide residents with nuisance cat problems with loan cat traps	Ongoing	Review customer requests annually
Develop a letter for residents to advise neighbours of a cat nuisance issue	2022	Reduction of cat nuisance complaints

Objective 5: To reduce dog waste litter problems in public spaces

Activity	When	Evaluation
Promote responsible pet ownership through increased education, awareness and enforcement of the requirement to carry waste bags and pick up after their dog, through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased education and awareness campaigns directed towards dog owners and encouraging self-regulation. • Explore the installation of signage/footpath stencils and bins in problem areas. 	Ongoing	Reduction of dog waste complaints
Investigate the sourcing of a supplier of pooch pouches (or similar) to provide to dog owners. Pooch pouches are small bags that hold plastic bags and can be clipped to the dog lead	2022	Pooch pouches provided with new registrations or on request



5

Dog attacks

Section 68A(2)(c)(iii) of the Act requires Council to outline programs, services and strategies to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals.
 - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

Current situation

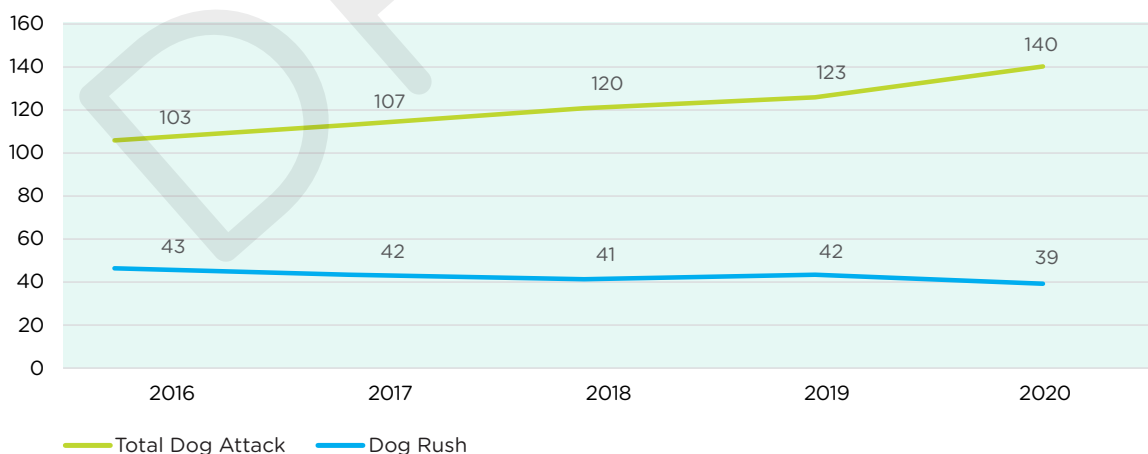
Dog attacks and dog aggression in public places represent the highest risk in animal management – both to the community, other animals and to the Animal Management Officers who must investigate and resolve these issues. Council investigates all reported dog attacks and prosecutes those of a serious nature in the Magistrates’ Court. Council may seize and impound any dog suspected of being involved in a dog attack or dog rush until the outcome of the prosecution.

The following graph outlines the number of complaints received over the last five years relating to dog attacks and dog rushes (a dog that approaches a person to a distance of less than 3 metres in an aggressive manner). The majority of attacks are associated with dogs not adequately socialised that are not contained to their owners’ property, at large, or not under effective control.

There are a range of reasons surrounding how and why dog attacks are reported to Council. Reports of dogs attacks are received from a range of sources including other Government agencies, other Councils, Veterinary clinics - in addition to the parties involved (ie. victim, dog owner, etc). The decision to report an attack is also motivated by a range of factors including, but not limited to: community safety, financial compensation for out-of-pocket expenses, responsibility to report, etc.

Whilst there is an upward trend in the number of reported dog attacks, this is contributed to by an increase awareness of the various ways to report a dog attack, and also due to an increase in the number of incidents occurring in the municipality.

Dog attack related complaints



Knox has experienced an increasing trend in the number of reported dog attacks over the past 5 years. This is a concern that Council will investigate further to identify what preventative measures can be implemented to address this trend. The increasing trend may have been contributed to by the increase number of dogs owned in the community particularly during the COVID pandemic,, together with the higher amounts of areas where dogs can exercise off-lead within the municipality (compared to other Councils).

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures Orders:

- **Dogs in public places**
(Domestic Animals Act 1994 section 26 - Attachment B)

This order provides that dogs are permitted to be off lead, but under effective control in a public park or recreation reserve, subject to conditions.

- Local Laws
Knox City Council Amenity Local Law 2020

Limits on number of animals kept

- 4.1 An owner or occupier of private land, the area of which is less than or equal to 4,000 square metres must not, without a permit, keep or allow to be kept on that private land more than:

Type of animal	Number
Dogs	2
Cats	2



Policies and procedures:

Dangerous dog declaration and destruction process

Council will determine at the commencement of a prosecution for a serious dog attack whether an order to destroy a dog will be sought from the Court. Any prosecution that involves the recommendation for a destruction order must be authorised by the Manager City Safety and Health or the Director City Strategy & Integrity. The dog owner will be informed of Council's position and also advised that in the event that Council is unsuccessful in obtaining a destruction order, Council will consider declaring the dog dangerous.

To determine whether a dog will be declared dangerous, the owner of the dog owner will be invited to provide written and/ or oral submissions to the decision maker (Domestic Animals Act Submissions). This will usually occur within 48 hours of the Court outcome. The submissions process is discussed with the dog owner before the Court outcome to ensure that the matter is dealt with as soon as possible and to avoid holding the dog at the pound for longer than necessary.

The decision maker on a dangerous dog declaration will be the Director, City Strategy & Integrity or the Manager Governance. The decision maker must have had no involvement with the matter during the prosecution process.

Our current education/ promotion activities:

- Provide information on dog attacks and promote responsible pet ownership at Knox Pets in the Park.
- Website: Information is available relating to the containment of dogs, the dog attack process, how to report a dog attack, investigations and potential outcomes.
- Promote dog obedience training and the importance of early socialisation of dogs.
- Promote desexing of dogs to reduce aggressive tendencies and wandering at large.

- Domestic Animal Business notifications: Council is notified of new pet owners by Domestic Animal Businesses. A new owner letter is sent out providing them with responsible pet ownership information
- Brochures/ information sheets.

Our current compliance activities:

- Reactive enforcement: Owners of dogs involved in alleged rushes or attacks are provided with information relating to the investigation process, potential outcomes and information relating to the declaration of menacing or dangerous dogs.
- Provide an immediate response to reported dog attacks or rushes.
- Reports of dogs wandering at large are addressed immediately. This includes both responses during business hours and includes after-hours reports to an on-call officer, in an attempt to reduce the number of potential attacks or rushes.
- Collect/secure dogs found wandering at large or not adequately confined to their premises.
- Seize dogs involved in a serious dog attack or has a history of being involved in an attack or a rush, pending further investigation and/or prosecution.
- Conduct random patrols in parks and reserves where there are reported incidents or concerns about dogs off lead.

- Where appropriate request a Court Order for the destruction of offending dogs involved in a serious attack.
- Communicate with other Councils in relation to declared dogs which have moved out of or into Knox.
- Where appropriate declare offending dogs as menacing or dangerous dogs.
- Ensure the Victorian Declared Dog Registry and in house registry is kept up to date with records for all declared dogs in Knox.
- Conduct random, unannounced inspections of all properties where declared dogs are housed or where Court orders have been issued in relation to containment of offending dogs.
- Link all complaints to the animal's registration.

Summary

Dog attacks are one of the most serious matters facing the community and Animal Management Officers. As a result, Council's procedure for dealing with dog attacks is a priority and Officers respond immediately to ensure any risk or potential risk to the community is minimised. As with other key processes, the way dog attacks are investigated are regularly reviewed to ensure matters are referred for appropriate action in a timely manner.



Our plans - dog attacks

Objective 1: Reduce the incidents of dogs wandering at large and dog attacks

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Containing and keeping dogs under effective control Dogs on leash/off lead in Knox 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented
Develop a dog attack kit to be provided to the relevant parties, including a clear outline of, and role in, the investigation and enforcement processes	2022-2023	Feedback sought from users of the new kit
Review dog attack investigation process to ensure timely investigation of all dog attacks	Ongoing	Process updated and reviewed annually
Investigate the benefits of referring Court outcomes to media team to prepare media releases	Ongoing	Internal process developed to publicise Court outcomes
Enforcement - increased patrols in public areas Provide 24 hour access to an animal management officer	Ongoing	Proactive patrols at off leash and on leash parks will be scheduled as part of routine work
Investigation of all reported dog attack matters and the prosecution of those serious in nature and issuing of infringements for those minor in nature	Ongoing	Numbers of infringements issued and prosecutions undertaken for all dog attack matters with adequate evidence
Officers exercising their power to seize and impound dogs suspected of being involved in a dog attack or dog rush	Ongoing	Number of animals seized
Undertake property inspections to ensure adequate containment of problem dogs and aggressive dogs	Ongoing	Reduction in repeat offending
Advocate to State Government for statewide advertising campaigns to highlight the impact of dog attacks in the community and responsible dog ownership. This includes the importance of reporting dog attacks, dog containment, dog socialisation and training	2022-2023	Provide submission to State Government



6

Dangerous, menacing & restricted breed dogs

Section 68A(2)(c)(vii) of the Act requires Council to outline programs, services and strategies to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations - also addresses *68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)*

Current situation

Council follows up all reports of dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs promptly to reduce risk to the community. In addition, all declared dogs on Council's database are inspected annually to ensure that they are compliant with the relevant legislation and regulations.

Dangerous dogs can be three types of dogs:

- A dog declared dangerous by Council due to an attack
- A dog kept as a guard dog for the purposes of guarding non residential premises
- A dog trained to attack or bite any person.

Council may also declare a dog to be a dangerous dog if the dog is a menacing dog and the owner is in breach of the associated regulations or if the dog has been declared a dangerous dog under the law of another State or Territory of the Commonwealth.

Menacing dog is a dog declared menacing by Council because:

- The dog has rushed at or chased a person
- The dog bites any person or animal causing a non-serious injury
- The dog has been declared a menacing dog under a law of another State or Territory of the Commonwealth.

Restricted breed dog: is a dog that is any one of the following breeds:

- Japanese Tosa;
- Fila Brasileiro;
- Dogo Argentino;
- Perra de Presa Canario (or Presa Canario);
- American Pit Bull Terrier (or Pit Bull Terrier)

Council's authorised officers undertake the Ministerial approved Canine Anatomy Identification Training course under section 98A(4)(b) of the Act. This training assists officers in the identification of restricted breed dogs and the application of the restricted breed dog standard.

the safety of my pet and other pets in the community is of paramount importance to me.

Dangerous, menacing & restricted breed dogs

Table 7: Declared dogs in Knox

Declared dogs	2012/2013 registration period	2016/17 registration period	2020/21 registration period
Menacing dogs	3	1	1
Restricted breed dogs	6	3	1
Dangerous dogs	6	6	11



“ We love our dog very much, he’s a part of our family. ”

“ Having a dog gets people outside and meeting other people with shared interest. ”

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures

Council will determine at the commencement of a prosecution for a serious dog attack whether an order to destroy a dog will be sought from the Court. Any prosecution that involves the recommendation for a destruction order must be authorised by the Manager City Safety and Health or the Director City Strategy and Integrity. The dog owner will be informed of Council's position and also advised that in the event that Council is unsuccessful in obtaining a destruction order, Council will consider declaring the dog dangerous.

To determine whether a dog will be declared dangerous, the owner of the dog owner will be invited to provide written and/ or oral submissions to the decision maker (Domestic Animals Act Submissions). This will usually occur within 48 hours of the Court outcome. The submissions process is discussed with the dog owner and scheduled before the Court outcome to ensure that the matter is dealt with as soon as possible and to avoid holding the dog at the pound for longer than necessary.

The decision maker on a dangerous dog declaration will be the Director, City Strategy & Integrity or the Manager Governance. The decision maker must have had no involvement with the matter during the prosecution process.

Our current education/ promotion activities:

- Promote responsible pet ownership at Council's annual Pets in the Park event.
- Brochures/ information sheets.
- Ensure the owners of a declared dog are aware of their legal obligations in owning and housing the dog. They are provided with extensive information in relation to their requirements as well as information advising them of the possible outcomes should they breach the requirements.

Our current compliance activities:

- Reactive enforcement: Owners of dogs involved in alleged rushes or attacks are provided with information relating to the process involved with the investigation, potential outcomes and information relating to the declaration of menacing or dangerous dogs.
- Ensure all declared dogs are recorded on the Victorian Declared Dog Register, including any changes to details.
- All declared dogs are recorded on an in house register.
- Inspections of declared dogs are conducted on an annual basis.
- Communication with other Councils in relation to declared dogs which have moved out of or into Knox.
- Proactive inspections of industrial areas to identify undeclared guard dogs.
- Issuing of infringement notices or summons when in breach of the Domestic Animals Act or Regulations.

Summary

Authorised officers will conduct annual inspections of Council's declared and restricted breed dogs to ensure that they are kept in compliance with the relevant Regulations and to ensure community safety.

Officers will receive the Ministerial approved Canine Anatomy Identification training course when available. This training assists officers in the identification of restricted breed dogs and the application of the restricted breed dog standard.

Our plans – dangerous, menacing & restricted breed dogs

Objective 1: Identify and register all declared dogs within the municipality

Activity	When	Evaluation
Restricted breed dog identification training for all animal management officers.	Ongoing	Training completed as required
Use microchip registries to identify restricted breed dogs or potential restricted breed dogs within the municipality.	Ongoing	Ongoing review of microchip databases
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Declared dogs 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented
Monitor all new registrations for potential restricted breed dogs	Ongoing	Inspections of any dogs identified as potential restricted breed dogs
Review of Council animal registration data of non-residential areas to identify non-declared guard dogs	Ongoing	Six monthly audit of industrial areas and patrols where required
Ensure all declared dogs are recorded on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry	Ongoing	Register is up to date and accurate
Information relating to declared dogs provided to owners to ensure compliance	Ongoing	Information provided

“ Our dogs are our life. I work in a stressful job and could not cope doing this job without having them to come home to. ”

“ He is my best friend, he means the world to me. ”

Objective 2: Effectively inspect and audit all declared dog premises annually to ensure they are following containment requirements

Activity	When	Evaluation
Conduct unannounced inspections of all declared dogs to ensure compliance with the Domestic Animals Act 1994 and Regulations	Annually	Audit completed and full compliance with all legislative requirements achieved
Prosecute any significant breaches of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 or Regulations when required	Ongoing	Prosecutions completed
Refresher information provided regarding obligation of owning a declared dog when required	Ongoing	Information provided





7 D R A

Overpopulation & high euthanasia

Section 68A(2)(c)(iv) of the Act requires Council to outline programs, services and strategies to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats. - also addresses *68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)*

Current situation

In recent years, there has been a reduction in the number of euthanised impounded cats and dogs. This can be attributed to a range of activities, including a dedicated effort by Council's animal management officers to reunite registered animals wearing their Knox Council tag with their owners, increased levels of enforcement for dogs at large, and greater community responsibility in relationship to pet ownership.

Although the number of euthanised cats has decreased, it is still considerably higher when compared to that of dogs. Of the 296 cats impounded at Council's pound in 2020-2021, only 61 (20.6%) were reclaimed by their owner - which is an improvement on the 16% reclaim rate in 2016-2017 period. A further 147 (50%) cats found new homes through adoption, and 76 (25.7%) were euthanised in the past year. In comparison dogs are more likely to be reunited with their owner, with 275 (84%) of the 326 dogs impounded in 2020-2021 being reclaimed by their owner. A further 29 (9%) dogs were adopted and only 18 (5.5%) were euthanised in the past year.

Whilst Council's pound attempts to re-home all animals that are not reclaimed it is not always possible as the Code for Shelters and Pounds prevent animals with health and temperament issues from being re-homed. Percentages do not total to 100% as some animals were held in foster care to assist in the likelihood of the animal being adopted or were awaiting adoption as at 30 June 2021. Following is a table summarising the total number of dogs and cats admitted to Council's pound over the past 3 DAM plan reporting periods of 2012-2013, 2016-2017 and for the most recent 2020-2021 period.



Table 8: Impounded animals

Dogs	2012-2013	2016-2017	2020-2021	Cats	2012-2013	2016-2017	2020-2021
Incoming dogs (brought in by Council, strays & surrenders)	784	630	326	Incoming cats (brought in by Council, strays & surrenders)	436	402	296
Adopted	130	71	29	Adopted	236	215	147
Euthanised	98	39	18	Euthanised	142	88	76
Reclaimed	579	501	275	Reclaimed	59	65	61
Total	807	611	322	Total	437	368	284

Desexing

A Council Order requiring the compulsory desexing of cats prior to registration has been in place in Knox since April 2011. Pet owners in Knox may be eligible for a MAV/ AVA (Municipal Association of Victoria and Australian Veterinary Association) desexing voucher to assist them in the desexing of their cat or dog. This scheme provides financial assistance to concession card holders with the desexing of their animals at a reduced rate. The provision of desexing vouchers will continue in this Plan.

This plan also includes an initiative in 2022 to provide free or discounted cat and dog desexing to vulnerable and/or disadvantaged residents of Knox, funded through a \$25,000 grant from the State Government.

Semi-owned cat population

The semi-owned cat is one that someone within the community will feed, provide water or shelter to it, however they are not willing to take full responsibility for that cat by way of taking on ownership of it or having it desexed and registered. Many people don't realise that by feeding the cat they are in fact contributing to the overpopulation of un-owned or semi owned cats in the community. Feeding un-owned cats keeps them healthy and strong enough to reproduce. Council's Animal Management team will help anyone who needs assistance with a semi-owned or un-owned cat in their neighbourhood. Cat traps are available to the community to assist with the trapping of feral, un-owned, semi-owned or nuisance cats.



Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures Orders

Domestic Animals Act 1994 section 10A(1)
The order provides that Knox City Council will not, after 10 April 2011, accept the registration of a cat unless the cat is desexed or exempted under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 from any requirements to be desexed.

Local Laws

Knox City Council Amenity Local Law 2020 provides limits on the number of animals kept

- 4.1 An owner or occupier of private land, the area of which is less than or equal to 4,000 square metres must not, without a permit, keep or allow to be kept on that private land more than:

Type of animal	Number
Dogs	2
Cats	2

Our current education/ promotion activities

- Promote responsible pet ownership at Council's annual Pets in the Park event.
- Website -Excess animal permit forms can be downloaded from the website.
- Promote the benefits of desexing:
 - Reduction of unwanted litters
 - Fewer animals euthanised
 - Reduced aggression
 - Reduced wandering
 - Cost benefits
 - Health benefits.
- Registration audits are conducted to locate and identify unregistered pets.
- State Government initiatives at Council's Pets in the Park event and on Council's website.
- Promote impounded animals on Council's Lost Animals in Knox Facebook page.

Our current compliance activities:

- Reactive enforcement: Owners of excess numbers of pets are advised of the requirement to apply for a permit during the investigation of a complaint.
- Cat traps available from Council for residents with nuisance/ feral cat problems.
- Investigate complaints relating to excess number of animals.
- Enforcement of Local Laws in relation to numbers of animals on a property.
- Enforcement of registration and requirement to wear a registration tag.
- Significantly higher registration fees for entire animals to encourage desexing.
- Investigate reports of unauthorised backyard breeders to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation and regulations.

Summary

During the life of this Plan all cats in Knox will be required to be desexed as per the Council Order. Desexed animals with microchips will qualify for an ongoing reduction in registration fees, which is expected to provide a strong incentive for owners to have animals desexed and registered. Council works closely with its pound provider to develop business practices with an increased focus on rehoming animals and to ensure euthanasia rates are kept to a minimum. Knox also offers a desexing voucher scheme providing holders of an eligible concession card with subsidised desexing of their pet.

This plan also includes an initiative in 2022 to provide free or discounted cat and dog desexing to vulnerable and/or disadvantaged residents of Knox, funded through a \$25,000 grant from the State Government.

👉 A loyal and loving friend. I feel more secure knowing she's around. 🗨️

Our plans – overpopulation & high euthanasia

Objective 1: Increase desexing rates of registered dogs and cats

Activity	When	Evaluation
Provide free/discounted cat and dog desexing to eligible vulnerable and/or disadvantaged Knox residents	2022	Increase in number of desexed animals registered
Partner with Council's Animal Pound provider (Animal Aid) to promote services including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discounted cat and dog desexing 	Ongoing	Increase in number of desexed animals registered
Maintain Council's compulsory desexing of cats order	Ongoing	Ensure all registered cats are desexed
Reduced registration fees for desexed and microchipped animals	Ongoing	Increase in number of desexed animals registered
Promote the MAV/ AVA desexing voucher schemes	Ongoing	Audit use of vouchers
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desexing of cats and dogs to prevent overpopulation Promotion of the benefits of desexing 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented

Objective 2: Reduce euthanasia rate at Council's pound facility

Activity	When	Evaluation
Partner with Council's Animal Pound provider (Animal Aid) to promote services including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free cat microchipping Discounted cat and dog desexing 	Ongoing	Reduction in the number of cats euthanised
Work closely with Council's pound provider to ensure a focus on rehousing animals and a reduction in euthanasia rates	2021-2025	Ensure pound provider has processes in place to minimise euthanasia rates
Promote unidentified and unclaimed impounded animals on Council's Lost Animal in Knox Facebook page	Ongoing	Facebook page updated regularly
Provide free initial registration for any dog or cat purchased from an animal shelter with an 84Y agreement with Council	Ongoing	Increased number of dogs and cats registered at adoption
Promote the adoption of animals at Council's pound through the Lost Animals in Knox Facebook page	Ongoing	Regular links on Council's Facebook
Promote the MAV/ AVA desexing voucher schemes	Ongoing	Audit use of vouchers
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desexing of cats and dogs to prevent overpopulation Promotion of the benefits of desexing 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented

Objective 3: Promote the importance of up to date microchip information

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of up to date microchip information 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented
Contracted pound facility to ensure microchip information is accurate and up to date upon the release of an impounded animal	Ongoing	Regular review of contract services

Objective 4: Manage and promote the awareness of semi-owned cat populations

Activity	When	Evaluation
Introduce a 24 hour cat curfew. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of a communications plan to promote the introduction of the curfew Amend pet registration forms to advise of curfew requirements Update new animal letters advising of curfew requirements Provide information on DIY cat enclosures and cat proof fencing 	April 2022	Successful media strategy in place Registration forms updated Letters updated Information provided on website and hard copies on request
Support and promote State Government initiatives at Council's Pets in the Park event and on Council's website.	Ongoing	Annually review material available from State Government
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-owned cat populations (ie. feeding an unowned cat) 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented
Provide residents with loan cat traps to assist in the trapping of feral, un-owned, semi-owned or nuisance cats	Ongoing	Review customer requests annually
Develop a letter for residents to advise neighbours of a cat nuisance issue	2022	Reduction of cat nuisance complaints



8

Domestic animal businesses

Section 68A(2)(c)(ii) of the Act requires Council to outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation - also addresses *68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(d),(f)*

Current situation

Council ensures that all Domestic Animal Businesses (DABs) located within Knox are registered with Council. Inspections are carried out upon registration, as well as annually to ensure compliance.

Council will investigate all reports of suspected backyard breeders and follows up on all cats and dogs sold to Knox residents, ensuring that they have been microchipped and registered.

In 2021, Knox had a total of 28 domestic animal businesses registered.

They included:

- 7 pet shops
- 10 dog training businesses
- 9 boarding facilities
- 1 animal shelter/ pound
- 1 animal breeding/ rearing facility.

Our Orders, Local Laws and Council Policies and Procedures:

- Inspections of all new DABs
- Annual audits of DAB premises
- Utilisation of reporting tools provided by State Government for inspections.

Our current education/ promotion activities:

- A Community Laws officer will work with each Domestic Animal Business annually to provide education regarding their legislative responsibilities and working with those who require assistance to bring align their operations with the regulations and codes of practice.

Our current compliance activities:

- All Domestic Animal Businesses must be registered with Council.
- Annual inspections are conducted at all Domestic Animal Businesses.
- Follow up on non-compliance as required.
- Enforcement action, including issuing infringements and prosecutions for repeat non-compliance.
- Proactive monitoring of the illegal sale of pets.
- Complaints from the public relating to a Domestic Animal Business are investigated.
- Follow up of all cats and dogs sold by DABs to Knox residents, ensuring that they have been microchipped and registered.

Summary

All Domestic Animal Businesses within Knox are inspected annually. Inspections are conducted regularly to ensure compliance with the relevant Code of Practice. Council will endeavour to work with the business to achieve compliance. Where this approach fails, enforcement action will be taken.

Any proposed new DAB will need to demonstrate compliance with legislative requirements of both Council's planning department and Community Laws.

Our plans - domestic animal businesses

Objective 1: Identify and register all Domestic Animal Businesses (DABs) in the municipality

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify all businesses that should be registered as DABs in the municipality, by reviewing all relevant information sources. Follow up will determine registration requirements	Ongoing	DABs registered and compliant
Proactive monitoring of the illegal sale of pets and ensuring those identified are compliant	Ongoing	Enforcement/ education action taken where appropriate
Investigate all reports of suspected backyard breeders	Ongoing	Enforcement/ education action taken where appropriate

Objective 2: Annually inspect and audit all registered Domestic Animal Businesses to ensure compliance with relevant Codes of Practice

Activity	When	Evaluation
Annually inspect and audit all registered DABs	Ongoing	Audits completed and enforcement action taken for non-compliance

Objective 3: Inspect residential properties where excess animals are registered to determine if they should be a registered Domestic Animal Business

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify properties where more than two dogs or more than two cats are registered to determine if they are an animal breeder requiring registration as a DAB	Ongoing	Regular audits completed by officers



9

Other matters

Section 68A(2)(e) provides for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary.

Benefits of pet ownership - encouraging a healthy community

Many studies have been undertaken which provide a wealth of knowledge supporting the benefits of pet ownership and their use in therapy. A number of different studies have found a link between better health, both physical and mental, and pet ownership.

Together with the Domestic Animal Management Plan it is envisaged that the Knox community will embrace the importance of pet ownership in providing a healthier and fitter community.

Animal welfare issues

Council's Animal Management Officers are authorised under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act to deal with any animal cruelty or welfare issues. Officers work with the RSPCA for more complex matters. There are occasions where Council is called upon to assist with the collection of injured animals that are then required to be transported to seek veterinary attention. Council has a good relationship with local veterinary clinics for those injured animals requiring urgent assistance.

Animal welfare and domestic violence

Council acknowledges the impact of domestic violence in regards to pets, where the emergency accommodation is required for both the owner and the pet. Council aims to increase the community's awareness and promote services that are available for women and animals exposed to domestic violence.

Council Order - dogs in public places

The Council Order stipulates the areas in which dogs can be exercised off lead. It is also a requirement for any dog to be under effective control.

The Council order identifies 9 environmentally sensitive areas where dogs are not permitted to be off lead. Dogs are also not permitted to be off lead in children's playgrounds, in an active reserve where an organised sporting event is being conducted, at an organised public meeting, or in a permanent barbeque or picnic area.

Exercising a dog in an off leash area must only be done if the owner can maintain effective voice or hand control of the dog at all times. The dog is not allowed to bother, worry or annoy another person or a dog.

Off leash areas are shared space and it is important that dog owners are respectful of other people using that space.

The Council Order will be reviewed periodically as required to ensure it is relevant and maintains safety and amenity in shared areas in the municipality.

Current situation

Our current Council policies and procedures:

- Council Order – Dogs in Public Places Domestic Animals Act 1994 s26 (Attachment B)
- Council Order – Compulsory Desexing of Cats Domestic Animals Act 1994 s10A(1) (Attachment A)
- Eastern Metropolitan Region Emergency Animal Welfare Plan – this Plan defines the roles and responsibilities of Animal Management Officers and support staff during an emergency. The Plan is reviewed annually to be aligned with the Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan to ensure Local Government responsibilities are addressed.

Our current education/ promotion activities:

- The message of responsible pet ownership is actively promoted at Council's Pets in the Park event.
- Council website and social media.

Our current compliance activities:

- All animal complaints are investigated. Serious issues such as dog attacks, rushes and injured animals are dealt with as a high priority.
- All Council's Community Laws officers are authorised under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 (POCTA).
- Authorised Officers will investigate any reports of alleged animal cruelty and will enforce provisions of the Act.

Summary

While animal ownership is a benefit to the community, it is important that all animal owners are responsible and comply with relevant orders, regulations and legislation in our community.

Council is playing an increasing role in the animal welfare and prevention of animal cruelty space. This is represented in an increased number of animal cruelty matters, which have previously been handled by other agencies.

Council has a role to play with emergency planning in relation to animal management services. Council staff participate in annual training exercises in conjunction with other Council's, government and welfare agencies.

‘ They my little pals. ’

‘ I love my cats and give them the best care possible. ’

Our plans - other

Objective 1: Encourage responsible management of pets through Council Orders

Activity	When	Evaluation
Maintain Council's dogs in public places (off lead) order	Ongoing	Review the order as required to meet community needs
Maintain Council's compulsory desexing of cats order	Ongoing	Ensure all registered cats are desexed
Introduce a new Council Order for a 24 hour cat curfew	April 2022	Reduction of cat nuisance complaints

Objective 2: Encourage pet ownership for companionship

Activity	When	Evaluation
Explore the introduction of a Pet Companionship program, targeted at socially isolated and lonely older persons living alone	2022-2023	Participation rates in this program, with a corresponding increase in animal registrations

Objective 3: Ensure the welfare of animals in the event of an emergency

Activity	When	Evaluation
Eastern Metropolitan Region Emergency Animal Welfare Plan	Ongoing	Plan up to date
Regular emergency management training is conducted which includes Knox and neighbouring Councils as well as other government and community support agencies	Ongoing	Training completed
Community education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council website and social media • Brochures/ handouts 	Ongoing	Audit of website to ensure up to date information on an annual basis and social media posts when required

Objective 4: Keeping abreast of animal management matters for the Knox community

Activity	When	Evaluation
Explore the feasibility and options of establishing a regional animal pound facility in collaboration with neighbouring municipalities	2022-2025	Maintain visibility and awareness of neighbouring Council's pound arrangements, to provide Council alternate options if a change to the animal pound service was required
Explore the opportunity for a Knox domestic animal business (including veterinary clinics) forum to discuss local domestic animal issues	2022-2023	Establishment and participation levels in the forum





10

DRAFT

Annual review of plan & annual reporting

Section 68A(3) every Council must:

1. review its Domestic Animal Management Plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan
2. provide the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions' Secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan
3. publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.

Council will review this Plan annually with a full review being done in year four. Action items within the plan have time lines which will be reviewed on a regular basis throughout the life of the plan.

The relevant State Government Secretary will also be advised and provided a copy of any other amendments to the Plan which may arise during the review process.

Table 9: Evaluation of implementation of Domestic Animal Management Plan (July annually - for inclusion in annual report)

	Comments
For each activity, was it completed?	Yes/ No
If no, provide an explanation for each activity not completed.	
Did you complete each objective successfully?	Yes/ No
If no, provide an explanation.	
If yes, describe level of success.	
Are any amendments required for the DAM Plan? If so, please describe.	
If DAM Plan has been amended, has a copy been provided to the Secretary?	

Annual review of plan & annual reporting

Objective 1: Comply with Section 68A(3) of the Act

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review the Plan annually and if required amend the Plan	Annually	Plan amended as required
Provide the State Secretary with a copy of the Plan and any amendments of the Plan	December 2021	Plan submitted to State Government
Publish an evaluation of the implementation of the Plan in the annual report	Annually	Evaluation published within the annual report





11

Attachments

Attachment A

Section 10 order – compulsory desexing of cats

Victoria Government Gazette - No. G 8 Thursday 24 February 2011

Domestic Animals Act 1994

Knox City Council, by resolution dated 24 August 2010, made an Order under section 10A(1) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994. The Order provides that Knox City Council will not, after 10 April 2011, accept the registration of a cat unless the cat is desexed or exempted under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 from any requirement to be desexed.

Exemptions relevant to this Order include:

1. The following cats do not have to be desexed to be registered or to have their registration renewed by a Council in accordance with section 108 of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 -
 - a. a cat that is owned by a person or body that conducts a domestic animal business under which cats are bred and the cat is used for breeding purposes in connection with that business;
 - b. a cat that is owned by a person who is a current member of an applicable organisation and the animal is registered with that organisation;
 - c. a cat that is the subject of written veterinary advice that the health of the cat is liable to be significantly prejudiced if it is desexed.
2. Renewal of an existing registration.
3. Where applicants have an objection to desexing a cat when required to be registered at three months of age, they may apply for a deferral for the first year of registration after which time proof of sterilisation must be provided to Council. Otherwise the cat will be deregistered.

This order has been made in conjunction with ongoing development and implementation of the Knox City Council Domestic Animals Management Plan.

GRAEME EMONSON
Chief Executive Officer

Attachment B

Section 26 order – dogs in public places

Victoria Government Gazette - No. G 15 Thursday 13 April 2006

Notice is hereby given that Knox City Council, at its meeting on 22nd November 2005, resolved to make the following Order under Section 26 of the Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994.

This order is effective from 10 April 2006.

1. Dogs shall be kept on lead in public places.

All dogs must be restrained by means of a chain, cord or leash within:

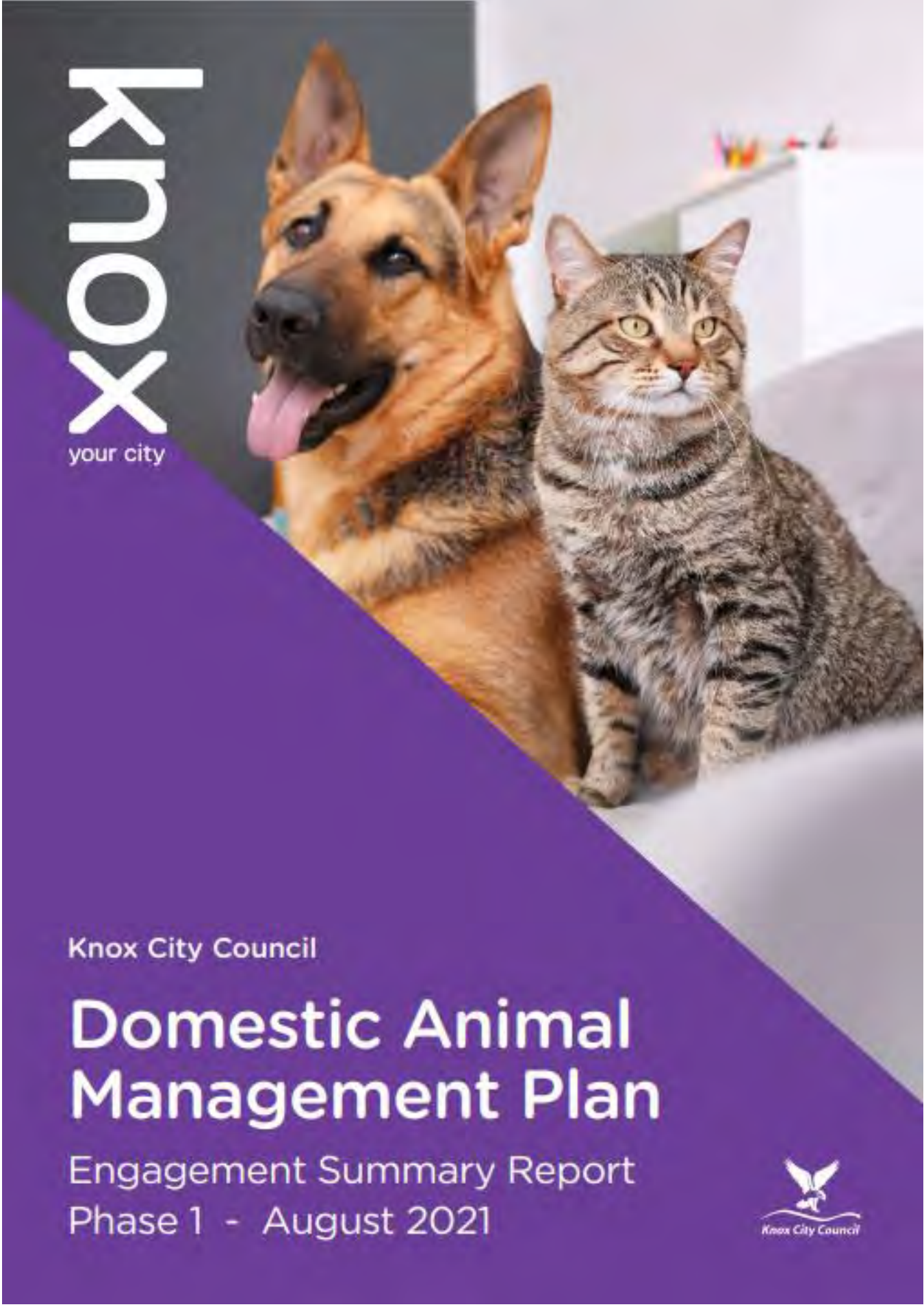
- a. an active reserve where an organised sporting event is being conducted
- b. a children's play equipment area
- c. an organised public meeting
- d. a permanent barbecue or picnic area

2. Public places include footpaths, shopping center's, car parks, bike tracks, walking tracks and conservation bushland areas. Conservation bushland areas include:

- a. Egan Lee Reserve
- b. Flamingo Road Reserve
- c. Gilmore Park Retarding Basin
- d. J W Manson Reserve
- e. Koolunga Native Reserve (except the lawn areas)
- f. Lakewood Reserve
- g. Wicks Reserve (east and west)
- h. W G Morris Reserve
- i. Tim Neville Arboretum

3. Dogs may be off lead but under effective control in a public park or recreation reserve, subject to the following conditions:

- a. Dog owners must carry a chain, cord or leash sufficient to restrain the dog should it behave in a threatening manner; and
- b. Dog owners must remain within effective voice or hand control distance of the dog at all times; and
- c. A person in charge of the dog must not allow the dog to worry, chase or threaten another person or animal.



KNOX
your city

Knox City Council

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Engagement Summary Report
Phase 1 - August 2021





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Executive summary

Preparing a Domestic Animal Management Plan

The Victorian *Domestic Animal Act 1994* requires every Victorian Council to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan, outlining how it will manage dogs and cats within its municipal boundaries. This Plan is renewed every four years.

The Knox City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) details Council’s strategies for the management of dogs and cats, including providing education to the community, promoting responsible pet ownership, and protection of the community and environment from nuisance dogs and cats. The DAMP also outlines how Council will enforce all legislative requirements and compliance with our local laws.

Community engagement approach

The community engagement approach for the development of Council’s DAMP includes two rounds of community engagement:

- Phase 1 – consultation to gather feedback from a broad range of stakeholders on their feedback on the current 2017-2021 DAMP, and ideas for the next DAMP (August 2021); and
- Phase 2 – consultation to gather feedback on the draft DAMP (scheduled for November 2021).

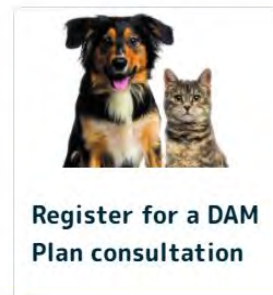
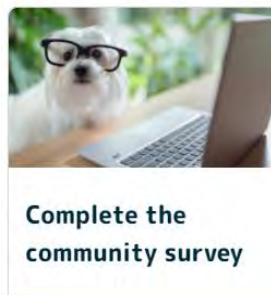
During the Phase 1 of engagement, we wanted to hear from our community their feedback on how dogs and cats are managed in the Knox municipality, including feedback on Council’s animal management services and suggestions on what could be improved. The feedback from this community consultation, together with feedback from other stakeholders and benchmarking of how other Council’s manage cats and dogs, will inform the preparation of the draft 2021-2025 DAMP.

The Phase 1 of engagement ran from 2nd July to 1 August 2021 (31 days), and offered the following ways to engage primarily via Council’s *Have Your Say* website, by:

- Survey – for community members/ residents (Appendix 1)
- Survey – for businesses who work with cats and dogs, including animal welfare organisations

For those unable to access Council’s online options, consultation was offered to receive feedback via:

- Request a one-on-one consultation (in lieu of drop-in sessions or community meetings – due to COVID)
- Provide a submission/ feedback – via email, mail (postage paid) or to Council’s customer service centre.





The audience for Phase 1 of the engagement was:

- Registered cat and dog owners (approximately 7,000 registered cats and 19,000 registered dogs in Knox, which is around 1/3 of Knox households)
- Unregistered cat and dog owners
- People interested in animal welfare
- People concerned about animal nuisance / people who have made complaints in the past 12 months
- Users of our public spaces which includes off-lead parks and reserves
- Non-pet owner residents
- People that engaged in the previous Domestic Animal Management Plan Consultation
- Business owners of domestic animal businesses (e.g. animal boarding) and veterinary clinics; and
- Local community groups (e.g. Knox Obedience Dog Club).

The engagement was promoted via a range of Council's communication channels, including:

- News articles (2) on Council's website home-page
- A flyer distributed to over 53,000 homes in the municipality (pictured)
- SMS message sent to over 95% of registered cat and dog owners in the municipality, being over 18,600 pet owners (that have provided Council with a mobile phone contact number)
- A3-sized coreflute signs installed in 50 key parks across the municipality (pictured)
- Digital screens in Council's Civic Centre and libraries
- News article in Knox's e-Newsletter in July 2021
- Facebook advertisement
- Direct emails to a range of stakeholders including:
 - Council's domestic animal businesses, veterinary clinics, animal pound, animal welfare and animal training organisations/ groups
 - Previous participants who followed the previous DAMP consultation
 - Residents that have lodged a cat/dog issue to Council in the previous 12 months.



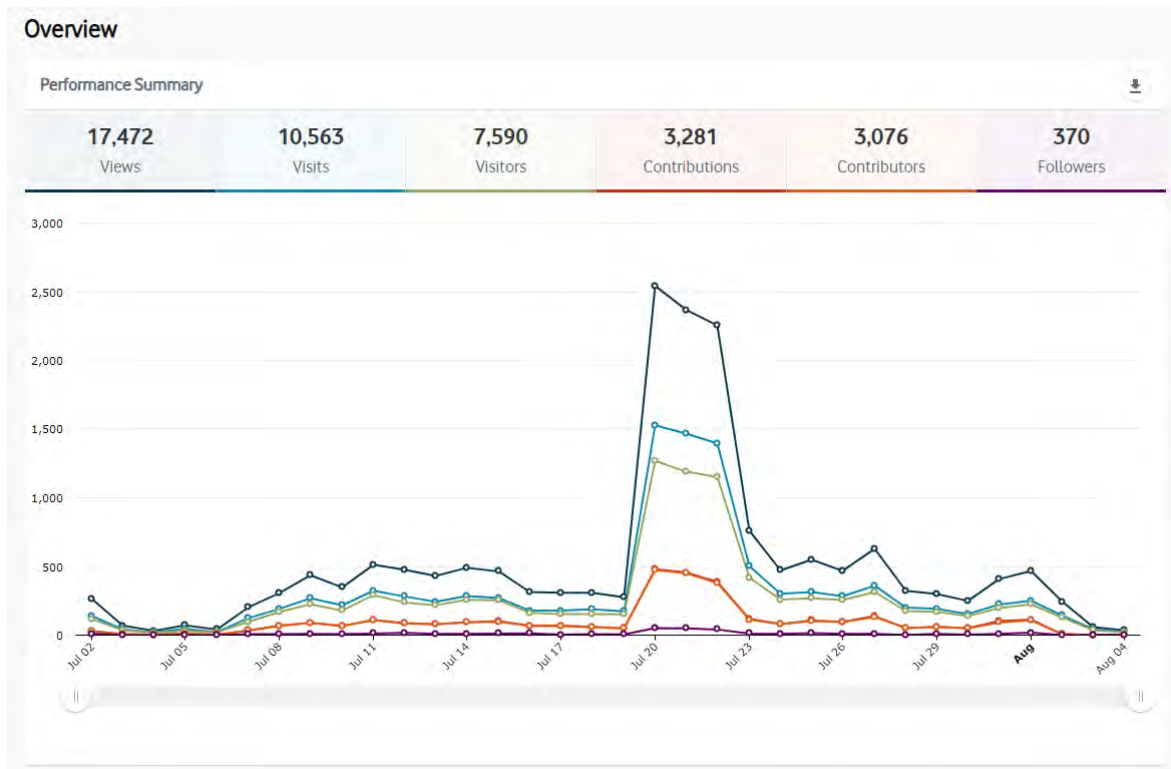


Summary of engagement findings

In July 2021, Knox City Council undertook a consultation with the local community and domestic animal businesses to inform the development of the next Domestic Animal Management Plan. A total of 3,317 responses were received from the community and businesses, through the following channels:

Engagement activity	Responses
Community survey	3,256
Email responses	32
One-on-one consultations (on request)	25
Domestic animal business survey	4

The following graph shows the number of visits/ views and contributions made on the dedicated **“Managing Cats and Dogs in Knox”** webpage on Council’s Have You Say community engagement website haveyoursay.knox.vic.gov.au/dogs-and-cats Note the peak submission spike shown in the graph corresponds with the sending of SMS messages to registered cat and dog owners – inviting their participation in this consultation.



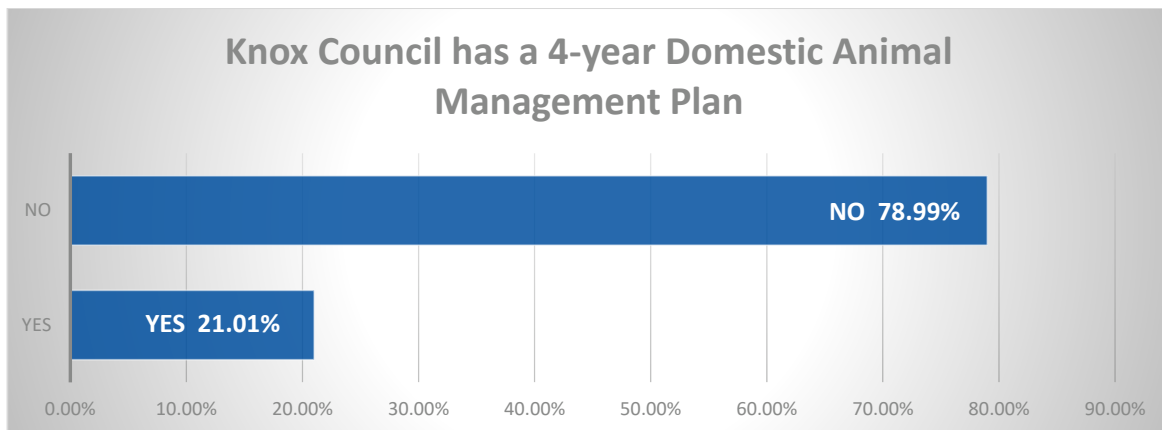


The consultation results have identified a number of key themes – regarding how our community feels about cats and dogs, and how Knox City Council can better support both pet and non-pet owners.

Some of the key findings of the engagement were:

- High engagement in the survey from dog or cat owners (90%) demonstrates a high level of interest in animal management and a commitment to responsible pet ownership in Knox.
- Many community members supported that the animal management services are either very important or important.
- The need for a review of and/or increased compliance and community education regarding dog off leash rules and areas.
- Consideration of the range of support requested by the community, to assist with the introduction of the 24 hour cat curfew in April 2022.
- A need for solutions to address the problem of dog waste (poo) not being collected and disposed of properly.
- Provision of public education and communication campaigns to increase the community awareness of their responsibilities (including registration & microchipping, having your dog under effective control, etc) when owning a cat or dog in Knox.

The survey also identified that 79% of respondents did not know that Council has a 4-year Domestic Animal Management Plan, with over 88% of respondents saying they had not read Council’s 2017-2021 DAM Plan.



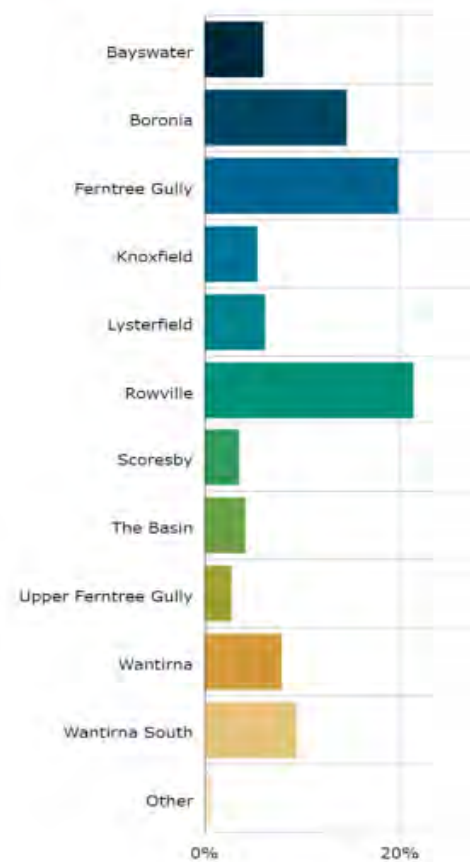


Engagement findings

Who we heard from

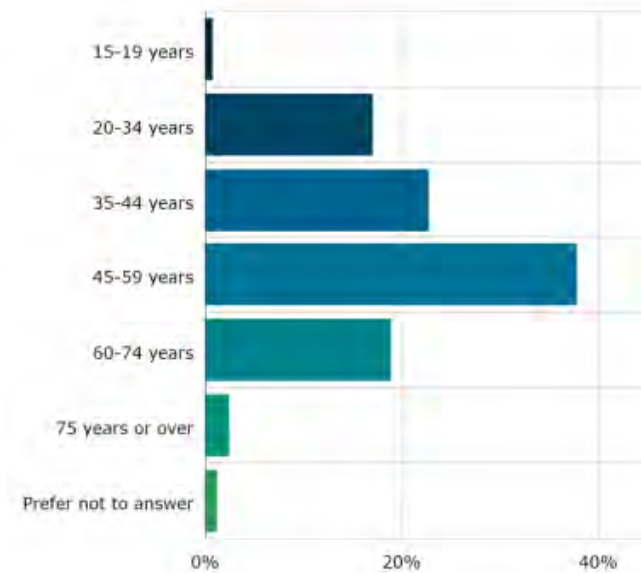
24. Which suburb do you live?

Select Box | Skipped: 94 | Answered: 3,162 (97.1%)



25. What is your age bracket?

Select Box | Skipped: 99 | Answered: 3,157 (97%)



26. What best describes your household?

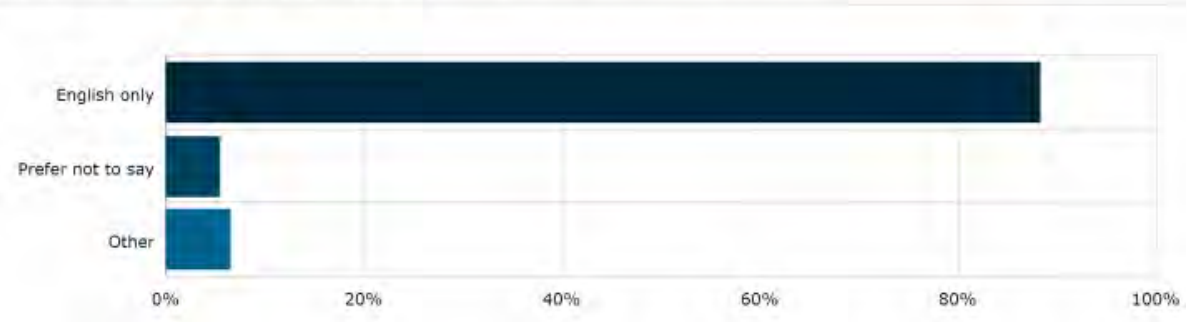
Select Box | Skipped: 119 | Answered: 3,137 (96.3%)

I live on my own	10.68%	335
I live with another adult, no children at home	33.25%	1,043
I live with another adult, with children in the home	46.19%	1,449
I am a single parent, with children in the home	5.93%	186
Other	3.95%	125
TOTAL	100%	3,137



27. Do any members of your household speak a language other than English at home?

Select Box | Skipped: 187 | Answered: 3,069 (94.3%)

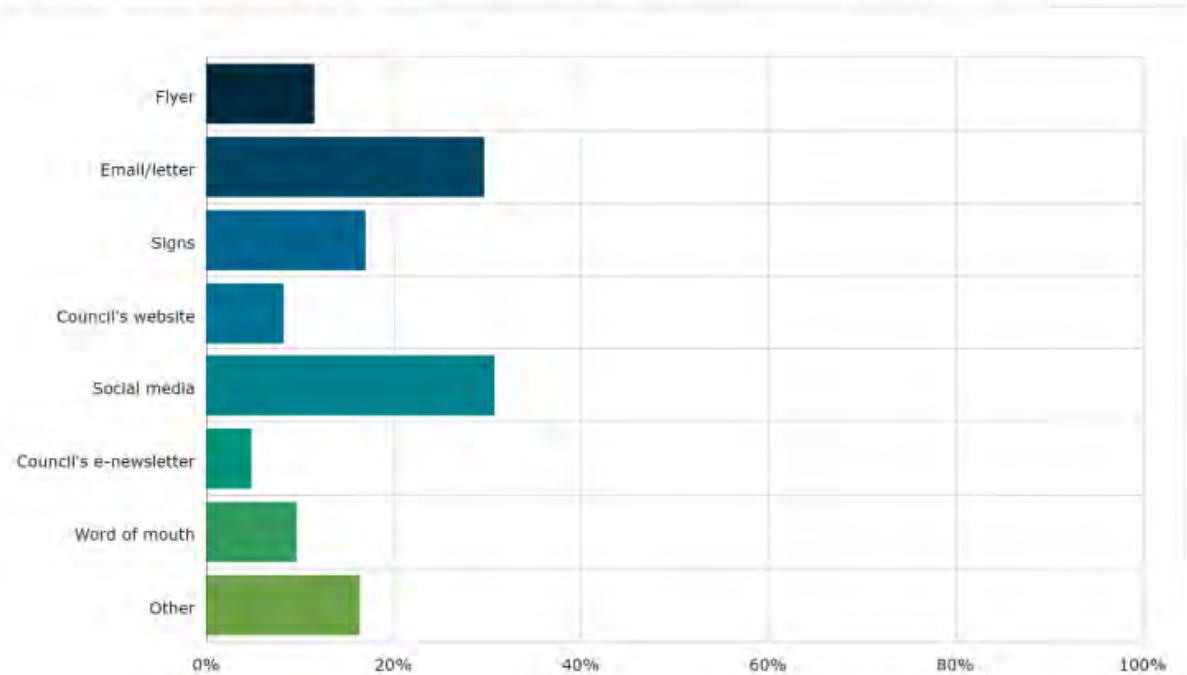


The respondents who chose “Other” identified over 30 languages other than English spoken in their home. The most common other languages were identified as Chinese (including Mandarin, Cantonese & Hokkien), Spanish, German, Greek, Polish, Sinhalese, Italian, Russian, French, Dutch and Hungarian.

How survey respondents heard about the consultation

28. How did you find out about Knox Council’s Domestic Animal Management Plan review and consultation?

Multi Choice | Skipped: 138 | Answered: 3,118 (95.8%)



The majority of respondents who answered “Other” identified receiving an SMS/ text on their mobile phone from Council – which was sent to registered animal owners. The inclusion of a QR code on the signs and flyers, together with a link in the SMS’ message that took respondents directly to the consultation webpage – enabled 72% of respondents to complete the survey from a mobile device. 23% of respondents completed the survey from a desktop device, and the remainder from a tablet.



29. Would you like to be kept informed on the progress of the 2021-2025 Plan?
 Multi Choice | Skipped: 93 | Answered: 3,163 (97.1%)



Nearly 53% of respondents to the survey have asked to be kept informed on the progress of the next DAM Plan, and have provided their email addresses for this purpose.

Summary of key results

The table below presents the questions we asked, and the total number of responses received. The results for each question are presented as a proportion of responses (percent). Note that no questions in the survey were mandatory – however the high participation rate shows very few respondents skipped questions, showing a high level of engagement.

We asked	You said
Relationship with dogs and cats in Knox (3,239 responses)	89.87% are a dog/ cat owner 9.05% does not own a cat or dog 2.93% are a member of a dog club 1.27% are a member of an animal welfare/ advocacy/ rescue group
Desexed status of pets (2,268 responses)	85.76% of dogs are desexed 80.31% of cats are desexed
Registration status of pets (2,306 responses)	89.55% of dogs are registered 75.48% of cats are registered
Microchipping status of pets (2,287 responses)	91.47% of dogs are microchipped 78.77% of cats are microchipped
New cat or dog during the COVID-19 pandemic (2,786 responses)	19.35% welcomed a new cat or dog during the COVID pandemic

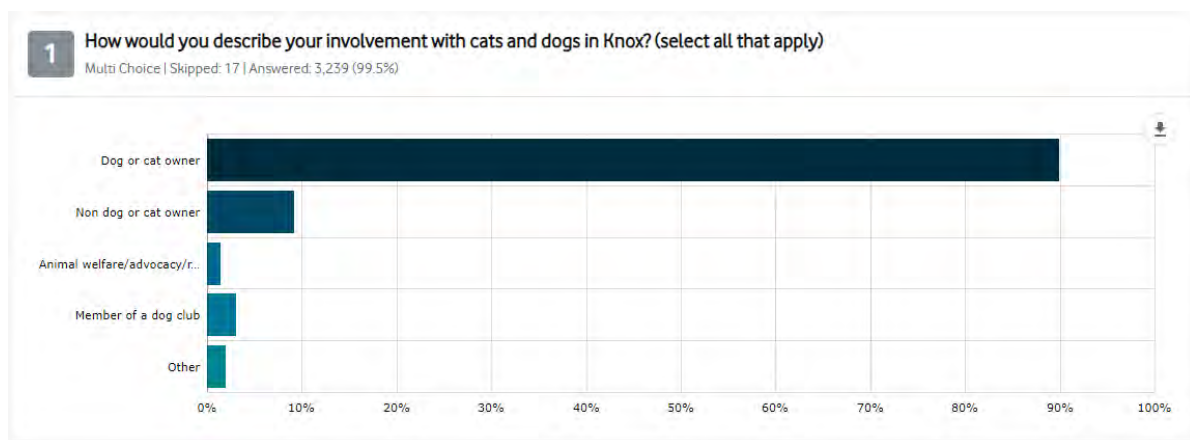


We asked	You said
Supporting the community with the introduction of the cat curfew (2,513 responses)	Top suggestions: 1. Free or subsidised cat enclosures or fencing 2. Clear communication with cat owners and the community 3. Guidance or help with sourcing, installing or building cat enclosures or fencing
Dogs off lead (3,224 responses)	65.55% say dogs should be required to be on-leash in all public areas unless otherwise signed Dogs should be restricted from being off-leash around children's playgrounds (83.39% agree); sporting and recreation reserves during organised event (82.33%) and environmentally sensitive areas (75.6%)
Issues related to dogs (3,226 responses)	Most frequent issues: 50.59% reported owners not picking up after their dog 20.24% reported dogs barking 'always' or 'often'
Issues related to cats (3,145 responses)	Most frequent issues: 24.93% say cats enter their property at night 'always' or 'often', with a further 20.6% 'sometimes' 13-15% reported cats causing a nuisance to their property or garden 'always' or 'often'
Awareness of State Government requirements about owning a cat or dog in Victoria (3,167 responses)	94.5% knew that cats and dogs over 3 months are required to be registered with your local Council 91.92% knew that cats and dogs must be microchipped 14.82% knew that you are deemed the legal owner of a cat if you feed a stray cat
Awareness of Knox Council's requirements about owning a cat or dog in this municipality (3,180 responses)	31.27% knew that Council provides a free cat trap loan service to address cat nuisances 19.9% knew that all parks and reserves in Knox are off-leash areas for dogs, except for 9 designated parks 61.82% knew that all cats must be desexed before being able to be registered with Council in Knox 16.56% knew what animal management services are funded by pet registration fees 62.44% knew what to do if you find/ lose a pet in Knox 37.44% knew what to do if a dog rushes at or attacks you in Knox
Improving animal management services – suggestions (3,081 responses)	Top suggestions: 1. 83.38% want photos of lost and found pets on Council's website/ social media 2. 77.41% want registration incentives or discounts 3. 67.02% want better signage about relevant dog restrictions in public spaces 4. 56.73% want support for companion pet ownership by seniors in our community



Relationship with dogs and cats in the Knox municipality

Survey respondents were asked about their association with cats and dogs and the Knox municipality, to gain an insight into the different groups interested in Council’s Domestic Animal Management Plan. As the plan specific relates to the keeping of cats and dogs, the majority of survey respondents (89.87% or 2,911) identified as being a dog or cat owner. Those who identified as “Other” involvement with cats and dogs primarily identified as (i) previously owning a cat or dog; (ii) a family or household member where they reside owns a cat or dog; or (iii) they work with cats or dogs, in a veterinary clinic or as an animal trainer.



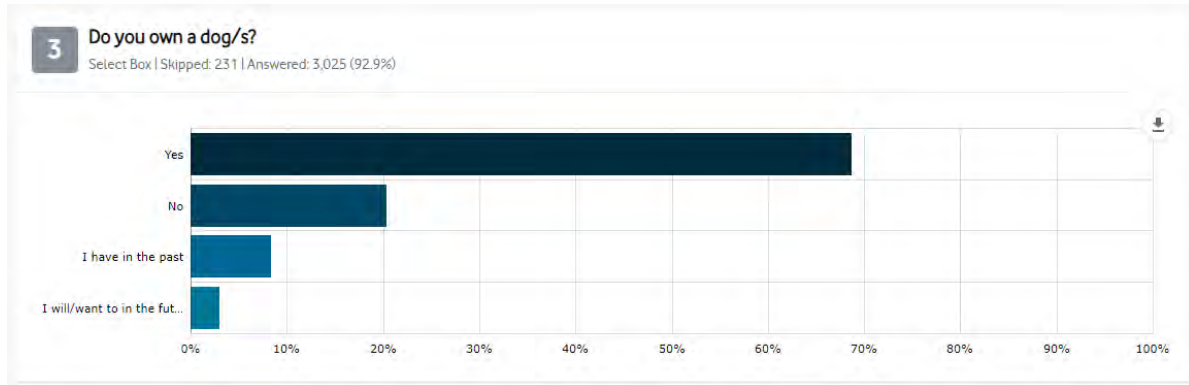
Question 2 asked survey respondents to provide the name of any cat or dog organisation that you are part of. A range of dog and cat breeder clubs, training organisation/ clubs and animal welfare organisations were identified in the responses with the most number of responses identified as being members of the following:

2. Please tell us the name of any cat or dog organisations that you are part of:
 Short Text | Skipped: 2,562 | Answered: 694 (21.3%)

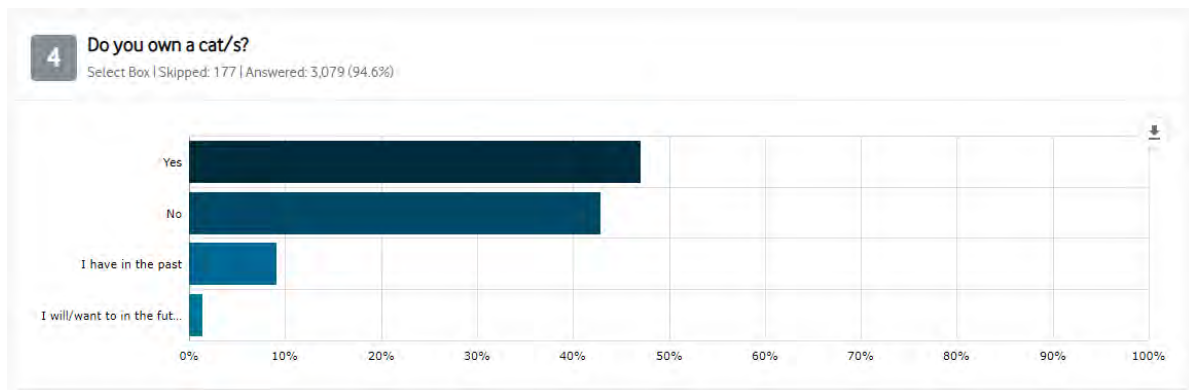
Knox Dog Obedience Club	61
Dogs Victoria	24
RSPCA	23
Alpha Dog training	22
SOS Dog Obedience Club	10
German Shepherd Dog Club	10



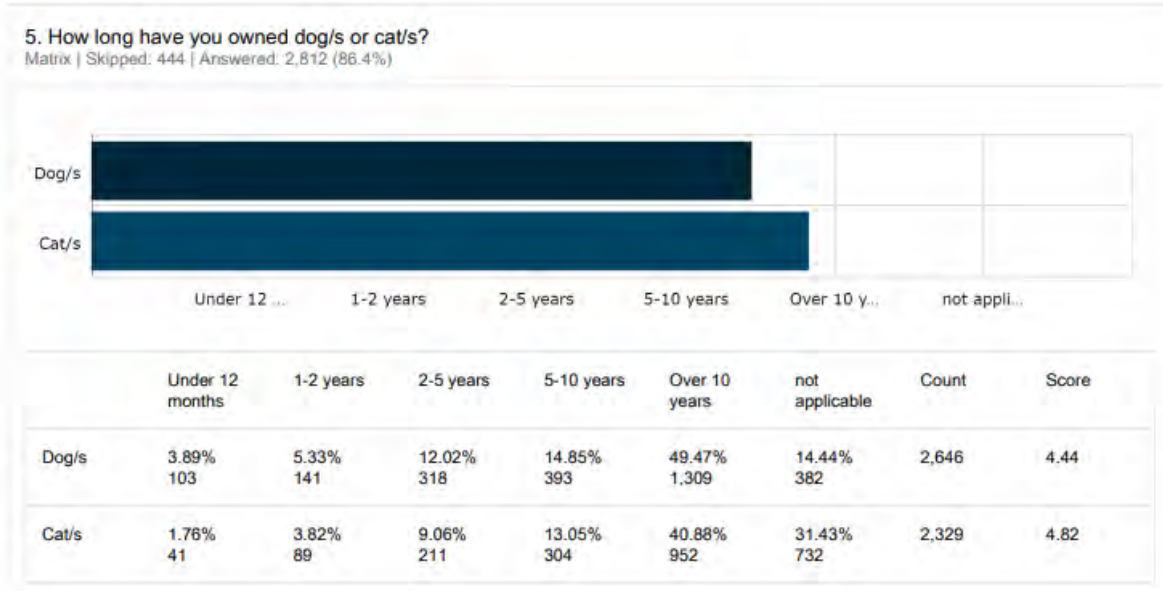
Dog and/or cat ownership in Knox



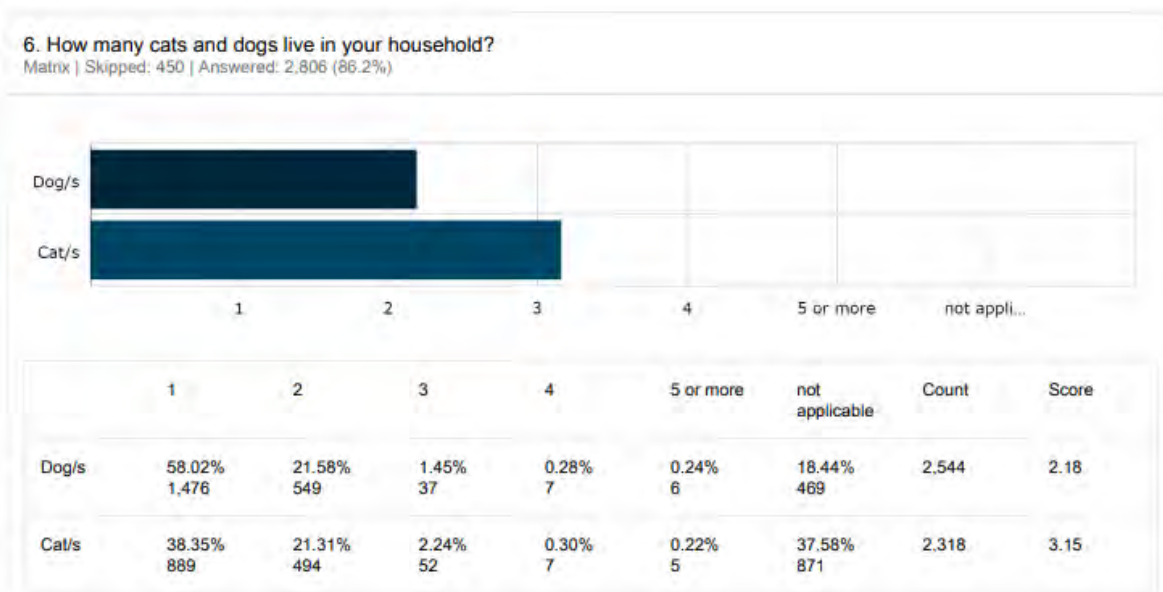
68.6% or 2,075 of survey respondents identified as owning a dog, with a further 8.3% (251) having owned a dog in the past. 86 respondents (2.84%) said they will or want to own a dog in the future – whilst 20.26% or 613 respondents identified as not owning a dog.



47% or 1,446 of survey respondents identified as owning a cat, with a further 9% (277) having owned a cat in the past. 40 respondents (1.3%) said they will or want to own a cat in the future – whilst 42.7% or 1,316 respondents identified as not owning a cat.



When it comes to owning cats or dogs, the higher proportion of respondents have owned animals for over 10 years (49.47% for dogs and 40.88% for cats). This supports a high level of interest in this engagement from a community passionate about their cat and/or dog.

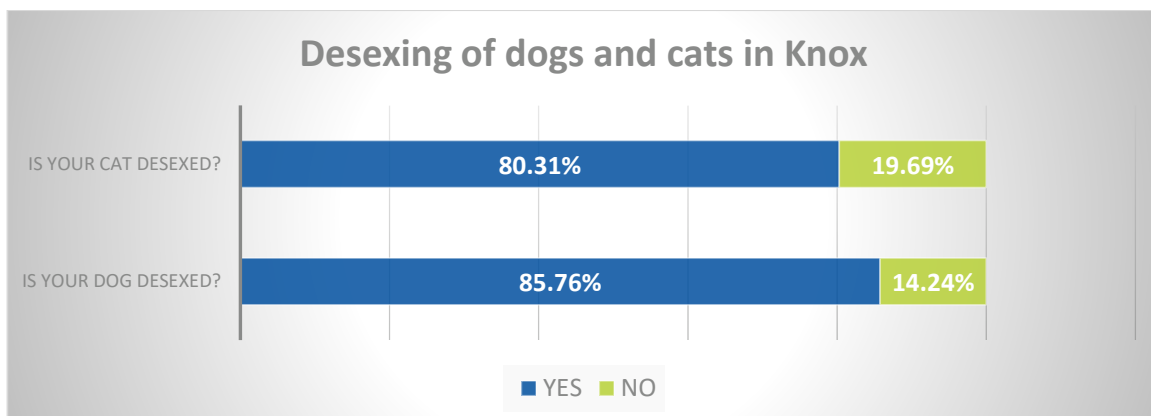
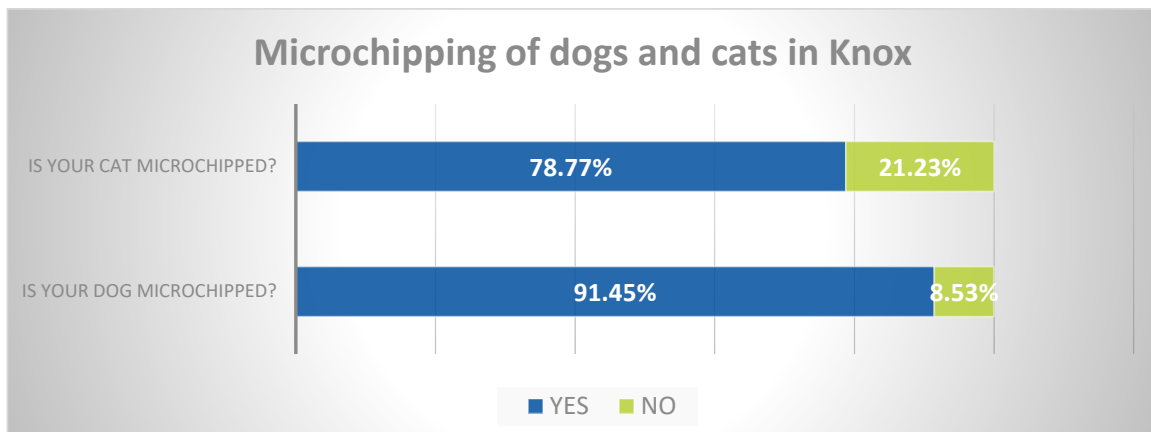
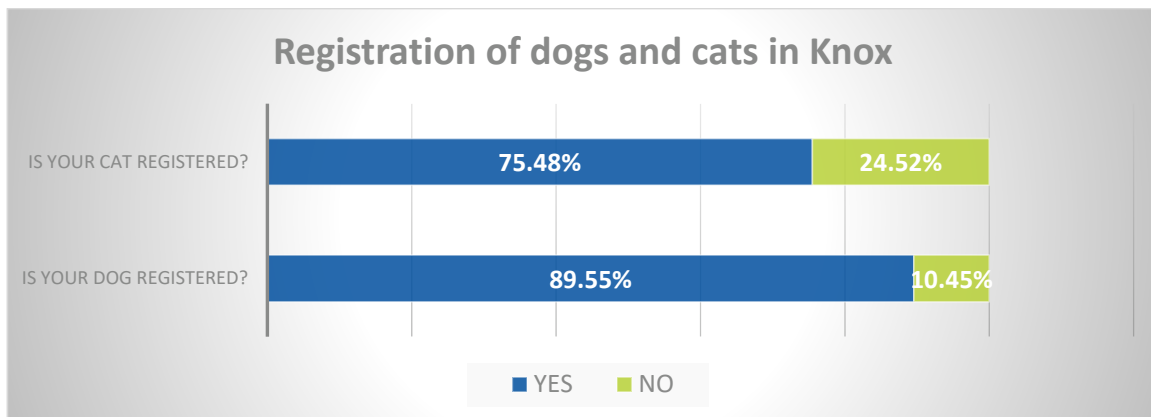


When it comes to the number of cats or dogs in your household, the majority of dog (58%) and cat (38.35%) owners only own one dog or cat respectively, with a further 21.58% owning two dogs, or 21.31% owning two cats. Only a very small proportion of respondents (4%) identified as owning 3 or more cats or dogs – which would require an excess animal permit in accordance with *Council's Amenity Local Law*.



Question 7 asked survey respondents about whether:

- You welcomed a new cat or dog during the COVID pandemic
- The registration status of your cat or dog
- The microchip status of your cat or dog; and
- The desexing status of your cat or dog.





	Yes	No	Count
Have you welcomed a new cat or dog during the COVID-19 pandemic?	19.35% 539	80.65% 2,247	2,786
Is your dog/s registered?	89.55% 2,065	10.45% 241	2,306
Is your cat/s registered?	75.48% 1,413	24.52% 459	1,872
Is your dog/s microchipped?	91.47% 2,092	8.53% 195	2,287
Is your cat/s microchipped?	78.77% 1,443	21.23% 389	1,832
Is your dog/s desexed?	85.76% 1,945	14.24% 323	2,268
Is your cat/s desexed?	80.31% 1,452	19.69% 356	1,808

Despite the State Government requirement that all cats and dogs over 3 months of age be registered with their local Council, 700 survey respondents stated that their cat or dog was not registered – with nearly 1 in 4 cat owners (24.52%) admitting that their cat is not registered. 584 survey respondents also stated that their cat or dog was not microchipped – with over 21% of cat owners admitting that their cat is not microchipped. These results unfortunately support the distressing statistics provided by Council’s Animal Pound provider (Animal Aid) regarding the very low levels of reuniting of lost cats, due to not being able to identify their owner – and subsequent higher rates of euthanasia of cats who are unable to be rehomed or adopted. Both the current and next DAM Plan have dedicated chapters regarding Council’s initiatives to encourage animal registration, identification (including microchipping) and ways to reduce high euthanasia of cats and dogs.

The 75%-91% of pet owners who identified as having registered and microchipped their dogs and cats clearly show that the majority of pet owners in Knox are responsible – when it comes to these important ways to identify their animals to enable them to be reunited if they became lost, and to comply with the registration requirements required on all cat and dog owners in Victoria.

Over 19% or 539 of the survey respondents also said that they welcomed a new cat or dog during the COVID-19 pandemic. This highlights the importance that cats and dogs have to our community – and the companionship and support that having a pet provides people in challenging times.



What your pet means to you...

Question 8 provided respondents with a free-text field to write (in their own words) *“what your pet means to you”*. 81.2% or 2,644 of respondents provided their personal and heart-felt statements of what their cat and/ or dog means to them and their family. The draft DAM Plan intend to include a word diagram to showcase a range of these responses – to share with our community. Some of the common answers reference pets as a companion; friend; family member; and many responses reflect on the importance their pet is to their mental and physical wellbeing. A sample of the responses provided to this question are included below:

A companion, who gives comfort and love. An opportunity for my children to provide care to.

A great mate, entertainer and my personal fitness trainer.

A house is only a home when it has a dog in it.

A loyal and loving friend. I feel more secure knowing she's around.

A valuable part of the family, companion, helps with stress, depression & anxiety.

We consider them our children as we have not yet had any human children of our own.

Additional support and company for my mother as she gets older.

After 17 years of looking after me, he is still going strong – my buddy and companion especially since my wife passed away.

All 3 pets play a large role in the emotional development of our children. They add responsibility to our children and are great companions to all of us.

Almost the most precious thing in my life, my constant companion.

All my pets mean the world to me, they go everywhere – if it's too wet to walk, they go for a ride in the car.

Agatha (my cat) is my best friend and great companion. She helps to keep my blood pressure and anxiety under control.

Pets break down barriers, give unconditional love and help relieve feeling lonely.

Angus and Archie mean the world to me. I live by myself and they are my family and constant companions. Especially during the covid lockdowns they give me a sense of belonging and purpose. I talk with them during the day and Angus loves to sit on my lap in the evenings while I'm watching TV.

As we aren't having kids we are those people that probably spoil their dog a bit much!

Best friend, companion, unconditional love.

Both our pets are our fur babies. A very big part of our family, we have no children.

Comfort companionship friendship loyalty. Animals give back more than they receive from us and don't question our motivations.

Companionship and a reason to get up in the morning!!

Company - I'm now living alone since my wife died 3 years ago and it's been good to have some/one/thing to talk to and care for

Essential to my emotional and social well-being

My sanity as a single mid 30's male.

Love, happiness and joy!

My cat is my constant companion. I never feel lonely since I got her 3 years ago.

My pets are my life, I'm a recluse so all I have in this world are my pets...

She is part of our family so very important, especially helping us get through all the lockdowns

Cat Curfew – how can Council support the community to implement this

Survey participants were asked the question “Ahead of a cat curfew commencing, what support do you believe Council can offer to assist the community with this new initiative?”. 77.2% or 2,513 responses were provided to this question – with responses ranging from comments about the curfew, through to a range of ideas about how Council can assist the community.

A high number of respondents utilised this free-text field to provide their opinion about the introduction of the 24 hour cat curfew, as resolved by Council at the June 2021 Ordinary Meeting of Council. The sentiment of the responses provided were mixed – with a range of negative (opposition to the 24 curfew); positive (supporting the 24 hour curfew); and those in support of an alternate curfew model (ie. 12 hour or night-time curfew).

The community provided a range of suggestions of ways Council can assist with this new initiative, which include:

- Free or subsidised cat enclosures or fencing
- Clear communication with cat owners and the community
- Guidance or help with sourcing, installing or building cat enclosures or fencing
- Advice on how to manage cats indoors
- Reasonable approach to enforcement (ie. official warnings rather than fines)
- Explain the reasons and benefits of a curfew
- Reduced cat registration fees
- Assistance to residents to capture or report roaming cats
- Education/ reassurance/ stimulation for cats to be happy indoors
- Advice on how to stop cats escaping their property
- Financial assistance for other costs to owners to contain their cat (ie. Increased litter costs, vet bills)
- Animal behaviourist or pet psychology sessions
- Ways to support renters/ tenants who can not make modifications to the fencing/ property
- Assistance to those rely on their cat for their mental health (suffers of depression/ mental health)
- Provide advice on cat-friendly and cat-deterrent plants in your yard
- Provide education/ resources that show how far cats roam from home
- Invest in buying additional cat traps to support the cat trap program
- Translate the education materials about the curfew into other languages
- Ways to reduce behavioural issues with cats (ie. Cat spraying, cat meowing, etc)
- Encourage ownership of cat breeds that are more docile, better indoors, etc.

An education and communication campaign is being developed to assist cat owners with the introduction of the curfew in April 2022.



What our Domestic Animal Businesses had to say

A dedicated survey was sent to the veterinary clinics, dog boarding facilities, catteries, registered animal trainers as well as animal pounds and other animal welfare organisations as part of this consultation – to ask their views on a range of questions regarding the management of cats and dogs in Knox. 4 responses were provided to this specific survey (primarily by local veterinary clinics), however additional responses were provided in the community survey by respondents who identified themselves as working in Knox’s animal businesses as a veterinary nurse, dog trainer, business owner, etc.

The feedback and suggestions provided by the respondents to were as follows:

- Concerns about the process whereby the public can take uninjured lost animals to the veterinary clinic. This causes resourcing issues and possible legal issues once they are brought into their care.
- Community education about responsible pet ownership (ie. How to control your dog off lead, reactive dogs, management of stray cat populations ie. *“If you feed it – it’s yours”* programs)
- Allow veterinarians to scan animal microchips and reunite a lost animal with their owner.
- More timely collection arrangements (especially after business hours) of animals from the clinic by Council, to make the animal reuniting process more efficient.
- Tightening of Council’s ‘effective control’ requirements for dogs off lead, due to seeing many dogs that have been attacked both off lead and on lead – with comments including:
 - *“in practice, people have limited recall over their animals”*
 - *“Dog parks are great places but can also be scary and dangerous places for both dogs and their owners. They rely on people not only having control over the dog but also understanding their own dogs limitations when socialising. This is where most people fall short.”*
- Mixed views were provided about the cat curfew – identifying the benefits of keeping cats inside, whilst also sharing the concerns that some cats will experience anxiety if kept indoors (ie. Urine spraying indoors).
- Development of resources to help owners transition their cats to living indoors (in collaboration with vets).
- Cross-checking Council’s registration database with the microchip databases to identify dogs and cats that have not been registered.
- More Council ranger patrols to provide enforcement for dogs off lead.



Dogs in Knox – what behaviours have you seen...

Survey participants were asked a range of questions below to rate the frequency of common nuisance issues that relate to dogs in Knox. The responses below are shaded to represent the majority of responses (ie. 75% or more):

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Dog poo left on the ground	22.36%	28.23%	31.68%	15.19%	2.55%
Dogs wandering at large (loose, or without an owner present)	2.8%	7.28%	17.39%	44.95%	27.59%
Dogs annoying/ intimidating other dogs	2.49%	6.81%	23.34%	42.75%	24.61%
Dogs annoying/ intimidating other people	1.93%	5.11%	15.84%	38.15%	38.97%
Dogs chasing/ attacking wildlife	0.97%	2.21%	7.82%	24.0%	65.0%
Dogs in playgrounds	5.02%	15.18%	31.95%	27.78%	20.07%
Dogs barking causing a nuisance	6.81%	13.43%	27.74%	37.61%	12.40%
Dog owners picking up their dog's poo	10.56%	50.93%	28.85%	8.01%	1.65%
Dog owner unable to control their dog	1.46%	8.75%	25.92%	41.93%	21.93%
Dogs in public spaces who are friendly and well behaved	19.01%	63.66%	15.12%	1.74%	0.47%

Dog waste

Dog waste (poo) that is not cleaned up by the owner was identified as a common issue (noticed 'always' or 'often') by over 50% of respondents. It was also an issue identified through the one-on-one consultations and internal stakeholder conversations throughout this consultation. A range of suggestions were offered as to how the issue might be reduced, including increased provision of dog waste bags/ bins, public awareness campaign, and greater enforcement by Council staff.

Dogs barking causing a nuisance

Dog barking causing a nuisance was identified as a common issue (noticed 'always' or 'often') by over 20% of respondents. Response to barking dog complaints is an initiative in the current Knox DAMP, and will carry-forward into the next DAMP – to address nuisances caused by dogs barking in the municipality.

Dogs annoying/ intimidating/ attacking others

The survey asked a range of questions to assess the impact of dogs displaying behavior that risks the safety of others (people, animals and wildlife). A very low number of respondents (3.18%) identified dogs chasing/ attacking wildlife as a common issue (noticed 'always' or 'often'). A small number of respondents (7.04% & 9.3%) said they had seen dogs in Knox annoying/ intimidating other people or other dogs respectively.

Dogs in playgrounds

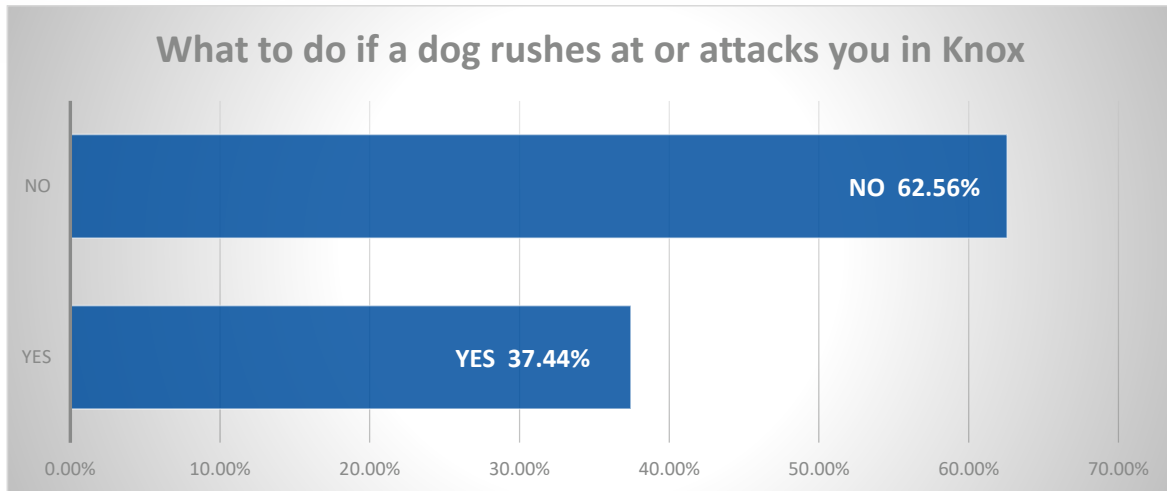
Over 20% of respondents identified that they had seen dogs in playgrounds 'always' or 'often', with a further 31.95% seeing dogs in playgrounds 'sometimes'. Council currently has an Order made under the *Domestic Animals Act* that requires dogs to be on-leash in a playground. This order will be considered as part of the greater review of dog off leash provisions as part of the review of the next DAMP.

Behaviour of dogs in public spaces

Over 82% of respondents identified that they observed dogs in public spaces who are friendly and well behaved 'always' or 'often', with only a very small proportion (2.2%) rarely or never observing this behavior in Knox.



About Dogs in Knox – do you know...





Dogs off-leash in Knox

Survey participants were asked a range of questions below to get their views to the following statements about dogs off-leash in Knox. The responses below are shaded to represent the majority of responses (ie. >60% or more):

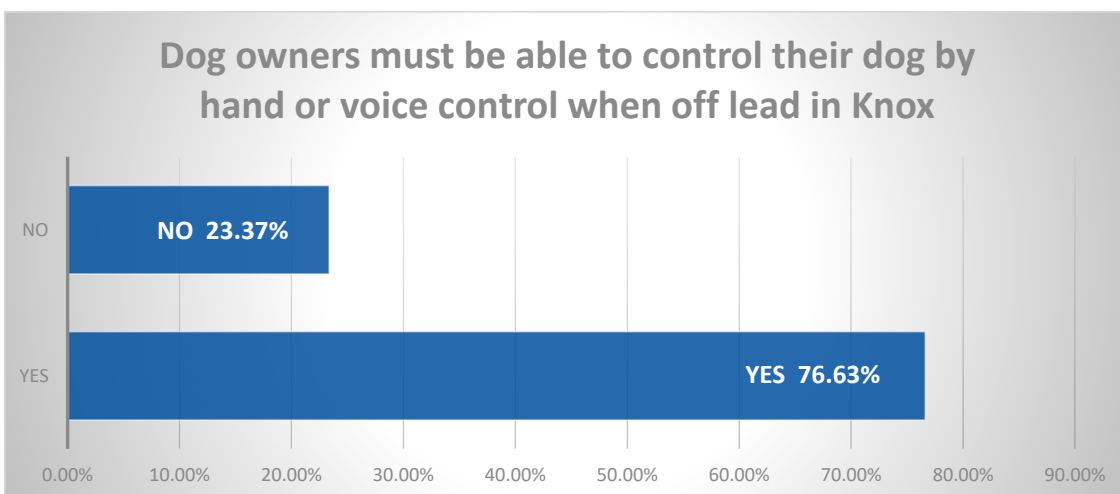
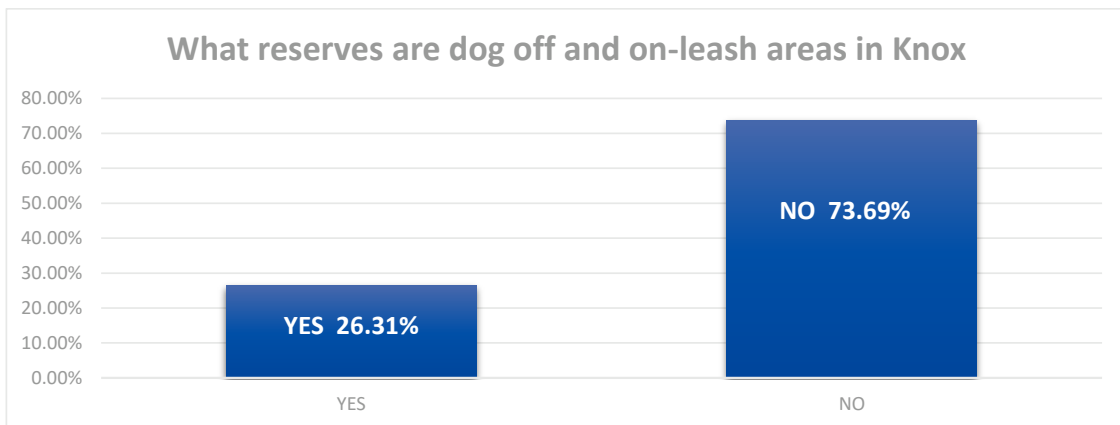
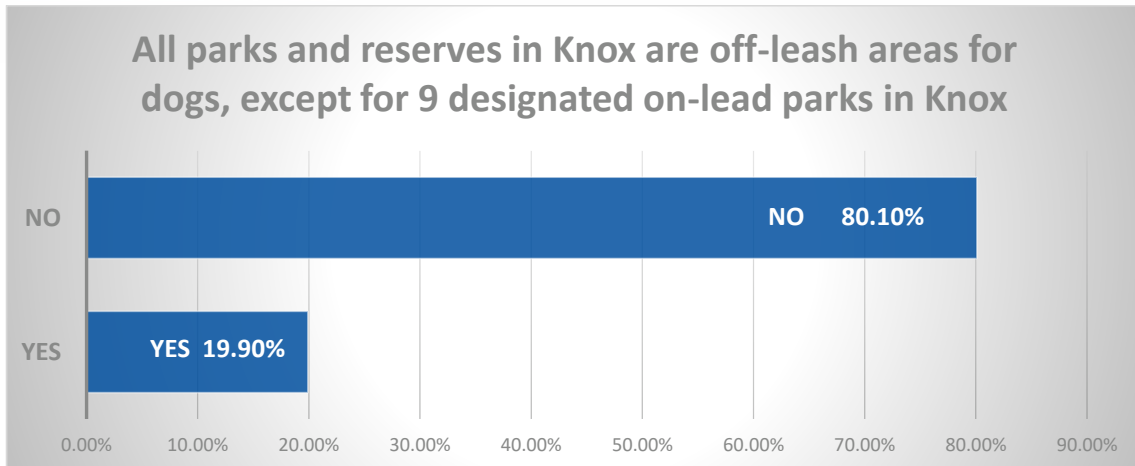
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know/ not relevant
I have had a negative experience with a dog off-leash in Knox	13.68%	19.41%	22.22%	29.67%	15.02%
I support more areas where dogs can exercise off-leash in Knox	38.57%	34.81%	12.27%	6.38%	7.97%
I don't think dogs should be off-leash in any public place	17.37%	17.53%	30.04%	30.79%	4.27%
Dogs should be restricted from being off-leash on/ around:					
• Children's playgrounds	44.95%	38.44%	9.70%	3.73%	3.17%
• Sporting and recreation reserves (during organised sporting events)	41.10%	41.23%	9.13%	4.08%	4.46%
• Sporting and recreation reserves (anytime)	18.37%	19.93%	34.52%	21.96%	5.22%
• Barbeques and picnic areas	27.61%	36.26%	23.33%	8.74%	4.06%
• Council buildings	24.10%	35.30%	16.25%	6.34%	18.01%
• Environmentally sensitive areas	38.66%	39.94%	11.84%	4.14%	5.42%
Dogs in Knox should be required to be on-leash in all public areas unless otherwise signed	34.91%	30.64%	18.13%	12.99%	3.33%
Off-leash areas allow my dog and I to socialise and meet new friends	30.56%	31.25%	7.95%	3.76%	26.49%
I have concerns for the welfare of native wildlife due to dogs off-leash in Knox	10.66%	17.69%	35.76%	25.53%	10.35%
I exercise more because I can do this with my dog off-leash in Knox	18.62%	16.46%	19.63%	9.23%	36.06%
I am concerned for my pet and/or my own safety when dogs are off-leash in Knox	20.30%	24.75%	26.69%	17.26%	11.00%

A greater proportion of the respondents to the survey questions regarding dogs off-leash in Knox support the provision of more dog-off leash areas in Knox, whilst supporting that dogs should be restricted from being off-leash on/ around children's playgrounds, sporting and recreation reserves (during organized sporting events), barbeque and picnic areas, Council buildings and environmentally sensitive areas.

Survey respondents were mixed in their views on the restriction of dogs off lead from sporting and recreation reserves (anytime); exercising more with your dog off-leash; and regarding concern for their pet or their own safety when dogs are off-leash in Knox.



Dog off-leash areas in Knox – did you know...





Feedback about dogs off leash in Knox

Survey respondents were asked to "Please provide any comments or feedback you have regarding dogs off-leash in Knox". 52.2% or 1,700 responses were provided to this request – which raised the following issues:

A range of negative issues caused by dogs off lead were included in the feedback, primarily relating to:

- Dog Attacks and dog rush incidents
- Dog owners not picking up after their dog while off leash
- Dogs not under effective control
- Dog owners being distracted/ ignoring what their dog is doing off lead
- Training and obedience requirements on dogs off lead
- Issues of safety in dog off lead parks
- Anxiety, stress and fear some community members have of dogs off lead
- Dogs going into the lake/ water/ creek – disturbing the wildlife
- Concerns regarding dogs off lead in/ around:
 - Playgrounds and children
 - Schools
 - Walking and bike paths
 - Open areas and sports grounds
- Behaviour of owners of dogs off lead (including aggression).

A range of positive feedback was also provided about the benefits created by dogs off lead in Knox, including:

- The socialisation and community interaction through exercising dogs with other owners
- Dogs that are well trained behave appropriately off lead.
- Benefits/ requirements of obedience training for dogs and their owners.
- Mental and physical wellbeing provided through exercising your dog – especially during COVID.
- Request for more fenced dog parks, to keep dogs contained.

Respondents also provided a range of comments about some community members preference for dogs being on-lead in Knox, for many of the reasons (safety, anxiety, etc) raised above.

In addition to the community feedback, internal stakeholder engagement sessions were held with departments across Council – where dogs off lead interact with the services/ programs being delivered. The feedback identified that dogs being able to exercise/ be off lead on Knox's sportsgrounds/ fields is causing a range of issues including:

- Damage caused to the playing surface by dogs (including an example of one park in Knox having to have damage repaired 17 times in the last cricket season)
- Dog poo on the ground – that needs to be picked up by parents/ players/ volunteers prior to training sessions and sporting events commencing on the ground
- Issues with the ground surface after being top-dressed with sand (as dogs dig in the sand)
- Possible poisoning issues to dogs accessing the sportsgrounds after chemical spraying has occurred
- Issues with diseases (ie. Dog gastro) transmitted/ contracted by public area water-bowls for dogs at some parks and grounds.

It is acknowledged that there is a large number of responsible dog owners who are doing the right thing regarding their dog in these public areas, but a small number of dog owners not doing the right thing are contributing to the problems identified above. The ability for Council to patrol all the off-lead dog areas in Knox (in excess of 300 parks and reserves) is limited with the current resourcing levels.



Dogs Parks in Knox

Survey participants were asked the questions below to get their views to the following statements about their experiences in using Knox's dog parks. The responses below are shaded to represent the majority of responses (ie. >60% or more):

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know/ not relevant
I have had a negative experience with a dog in a fenced off-leash park in Knox	7.01%	12.01%	21.23%	18.99%	40.75%
Fenced off-leash areas (dog parks) give me peace of mind	19.63%	38.01%	12.64%	6.21%	23.51%
There should be more parks that are designed primarily for use by dogs	28.57%	41.35%	10.71%	4.35%	15.02%
I prefer to exercise my dog in a larger open area non-fenced off-leash area	16.08%	17.67%	18.27%	10.09%	37.90%

A greater proportion of the respondents to the survey questions regarding dog parks in Knox answered that they 'don't know/ not relevant to me' to several of the questions – which may suggest that they are not users of the two dedicated dog parks in Knox.

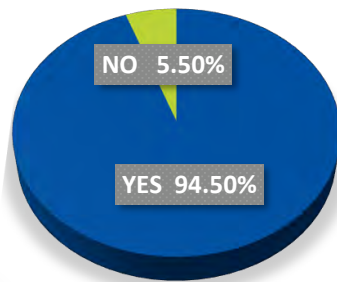
Those who are users of Knox's dog parks, more respondents indicated that they had not had a negative experience with a dog at a Knox dog park, and there was greater support for more parks that are designed primarily for the use of dogs.

Responses were divided regarding the preference to exercise their dog is a larger open area (non fenced) off leash area, whilst nearly 58% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that a fenced off-leash area (dog park) gives them peace of mind.

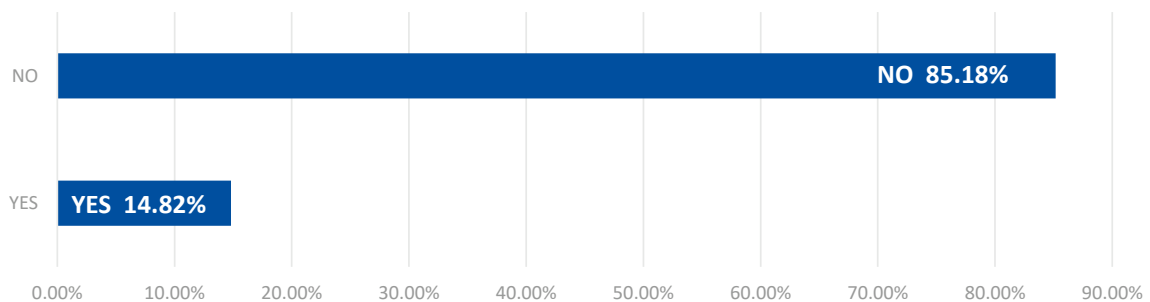


State Government laws about cats and dogs – did you know...

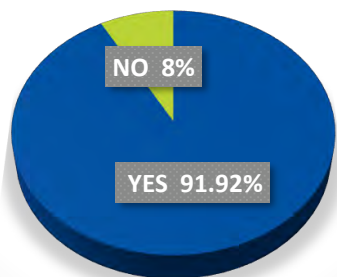
Victorian State law requires all cats and dogs over 3 months of age be registered with your local Council



Victorian State law deems you the legal owner of a cat if you feed a stray cat



Victorian State law requires all cats and dogs be microchipped before being able to be registered with your local Council





Cats in Knox – what behaviours have you seen...

Survey participants were asked a range of questions below to rate the frequency of common nuisance issues that relate to cats in Knox. The responses below are shaded to represent the majority of responses (ie. 75% or more):

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Cats entering your property at night	10.67%	14.26%	20.60%	23.72%	30.75%
Cats entering your property during the day	8.35%	12.27%	22.43%	29.47%	27.49%
Cats preying on wildlife	4.32%	7.99%	15.79%	26.37%	45.52%
Cats that appear unowned	3.68%	5.98%	14.74%	24.11%	51.49%
Cats fighting or making loud noises	3.26%	6.80%	18.65%	34.62%	36.67%
Cats causing nuisance to your property	5.83%	7.55%	12.29%	18.44%	55.89%
Disturbed garden beds due to cat activity	5.66%	7.81%	11.62%	18.02%	56.90%
Cats in sensitive environmental areas or reserves	2.96%	5.22%	9.82%	16.93%	65.07%

Despite that only 47% (or 1,446) of the overall survey respondents identified as being cat owners, over 3,100 survey responses were provided each of the cat behavior questions in the table above. Therefore over 50% of the survey respondents to these questions are people who do not own a cat.

The majority of responses (shaded in blue) indicated that the respondents either only 'rarely' or 'never' experienced the cat nuisance issues that include preying on wildlife (71.89%), appear being unowned (75.6%), causing nuisance to your property (74.33%), disturbed garden beds due to cat activity (74.92%), or cats in sensitive environmental areas or reserves (82%).

Cats entering your property

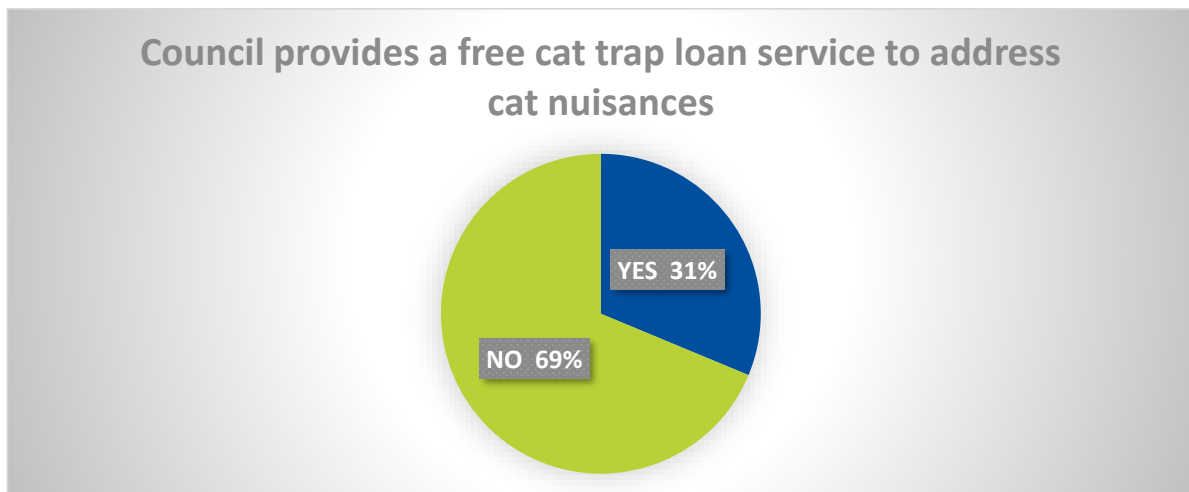
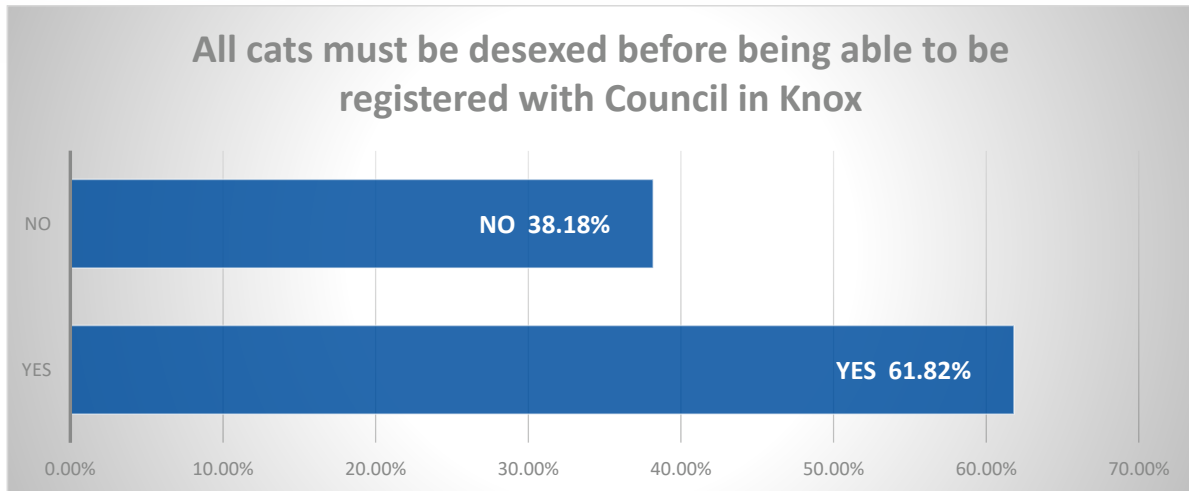
Cats entering your property (at night or during the day) was identified as an issue (noticed 'always' or 'often') by between 20-25% of respondents, with a further 20-22% experiencing this issue 'sometimes'. Therefore between 43-45% of survey respondents identified cats entering their property (either during the day or night). Conversely, 55-57% of respondents identified as having 'rarely' or 'never' experienced cats entering their property (day or night).

Cats fighting or making loud noises

Cats fighting or making loud noises was identified as an issue (noticed 'always' or 'often') by 10% of respondents, with a further 18.65% experiencing this issue 'sometimes'. The greater proportion of respondents (72%) identified as having 'rarely' or 'never' experienced cats fighting or making loud noises.



Cats in Knox... did you know?



Feedback on the management of cats in Knox

Survey respondents were provided with a free-text field to provide their comments to the question “Do you have any other suggestions that may improve the management of cats in Knox?” 44.7 or 1,455 responses were provided to this question, with the main themes being:

- Feedback on the cat curfew – positive, negative and mixed responses
- Cat ownership issues including compulsory desexing
- Containment of cats to their property
- Education on responsible cat ownership,
- Option of cats being walked on leashes
- Impact of feral and unowned cats in Knox
- Cats and their impact on wildlife and the environment; and
- Issues of cat poo in resident’s gardens.



Council's Animal Management Services

Survey participants were asked a range of questions to indicate what animal management services are important to the community. The responses below are shaded to represent the majority of responses (ie. 75% or more):

	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not very important	Not at all important
Respond to reports of nuisance dogs/ cats	47.35%	37.81%	10.94%	2.54%	1.36%
Education about responsible pet ownership	54.48%	33.11%	9.21%	2.03%	1.17%
Collect/ return stray dogs/ cats to their owners	64.95%	27.52%	5.84%	0.98%	0.70%
Protect/ enforce dog-free nature reserves or environmentally sensitive areas	48.44%	32.78%	13.84%	3.41%	1.53%
Discounted dog/cat desexing for pensioners	56.10%	27.50%	12.62%	2.07%	1.72%
Patrols of public spaces to ensure compliance with rules	31.67%	32.37%	22.45%	8.33%	5.18%
Checking dog/ cat registration via patrols or door-knocks	15.51%	20.88%	30.96%	17.64%	15.00%
Cat trap hire for resident's use	16.09%	22.94%	33.85%	12.67%	14.46%
Annual Pets in the Park event	15.46%	22.87%	38.49%	11.31%	11.88%
Investigation and enforcement of dog attacks on people or other animals	70.14%	25.37%	3.47%	0.60%	0.41%
Investigation of animal cruelty matters	85.64%	12.48%	1.33%	0.22%	0.32%
Reduce the rate of cat and dog euthanasia through increased rehoming/ animal adoptions	64.40%	25.10%	8.05%	1.34%	1.11%
Investigation of illegal dog and cat breeders (ie. Puppy farms)	80.37%	15.98%	2.73%	0.38%	0.54%
Welfare of animals in domestic violence situations	69.99%	23.64%	5.03%	0.83%	0.51%
Welfare of animals owned by people who are homeless/ rough sleepers	54.89%	31.81%	10.60%	1.62%	1.08%

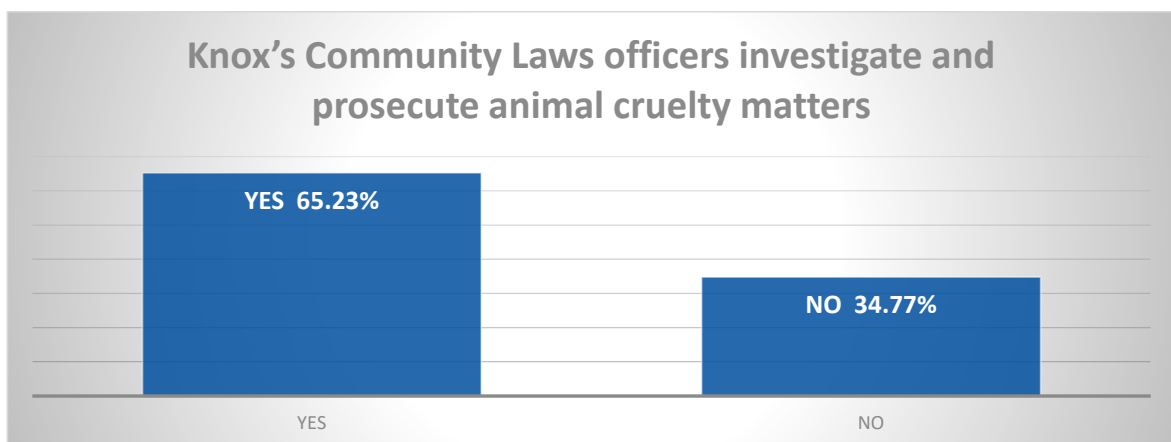
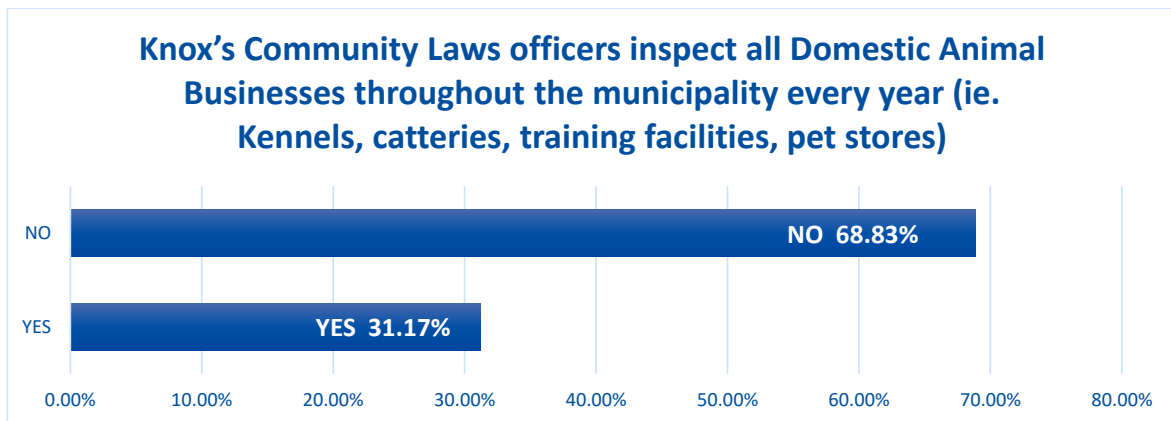
The results above support that the majority of Animal Management Service activities undertaken by Council for the community – are deemed 'very important' or 'important'.

These results will be reviewed to inform the activities and priorities in the next Domestic Animal Management Plan.



Council’s animal management services – did you know...

Survey participants were asked a range of questions below to determine their understanding of the range of Council’s animal management services, as well as a range of laws/ rules regarding the keeping of cats and dogs.





Over 97.7% or 3,180 survey respondents answered the questions below that asked “Before today, were you aware that...” to a range of questions regarding:

- The requirements for the keeping of cats and dogs in Knox
- The State Government laws regarding owning a cat or dog in Victoria; and
- Awareness of the animal management services provided by Knox City Council.

The responses to these questions are in the table below. Note: The responses below are shaded to represent the majority of responses (ie. 60% or more):

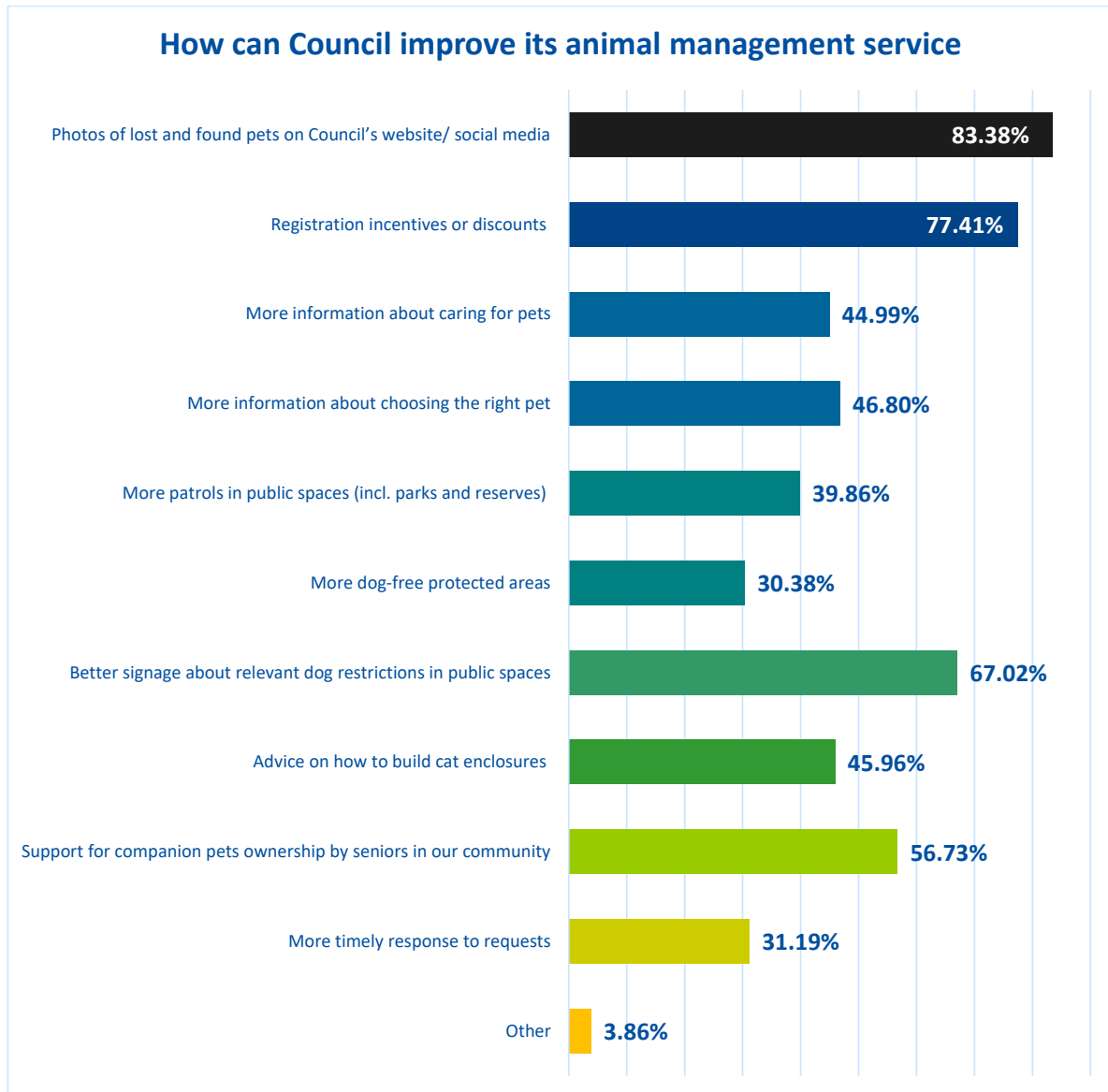
	YES	NO
Knox Council has a 4-year Domestic Animal Management Plan	21.01%	78.99%
If yes, have you read the Knox Council 2017-2021 Plan?	11.83%	88.17%
Victorian State law requires all cats and dogs over 3 months of age be registered with your local Council	94.50%	5.5%
Victorian State law requires all cats and dogs be microchipped before being able to be registered with your local Council	91.92%	8.08%
Victorian State law deems you the legal owner of a cat if you feed a stray cat	14.82%	85.18%
Council provides a free cat trap loan service to address cat nuisances	31.27%	68.73%
All parks and reserves in Knox are off-leash areas for dogs, except for 9 designated on-lead parks in Knox	19.90%	80.10%
All cats must be desexed before being able to be registered with Council in Knox	61.82%	38.18%
What animal management services are funded by pet registration fees	16.56%	83.44%
Knox’s Community Laws officers inspect all Domestic Animal Businesses throughout the municipality every year (ie. Kennels, catteries, training facilities, pet stores)	31.17%	68.83%
Knox’s Community Laws officers investigate and prosecute animal cruelty matters	65.23%	34.77%
What reserves are dog off and on-leash areas in Knox	26.31%	73.69%
Dog owners must be able to control their dog by hand or voice control when off lead in Knox	76.63%	23.37%
The requirement to carry a poo bag when walking a dog in Knox	90.65%	9.35%
What to do if you find or lose a pet in Knox	62.44%	37.56%
What to do if a dog rushes at or attacks you in Knox	37.44%	62.56%

The results highlight some areas where improved education and community messaging would assist to increase the awareness of the rules regarding owning a cat or dog, and opportunities to better promote how Council can assist the community regarding the animal management services available.



Improvements to Council’s animal management service

Survey respondents were provided with the listing below of a range of options – to select any or all that you believe Council should do more of – to improve its animal management service in Knox. 94.6% or 3,081 respondents provided their views on this response, and the results were as shown below:



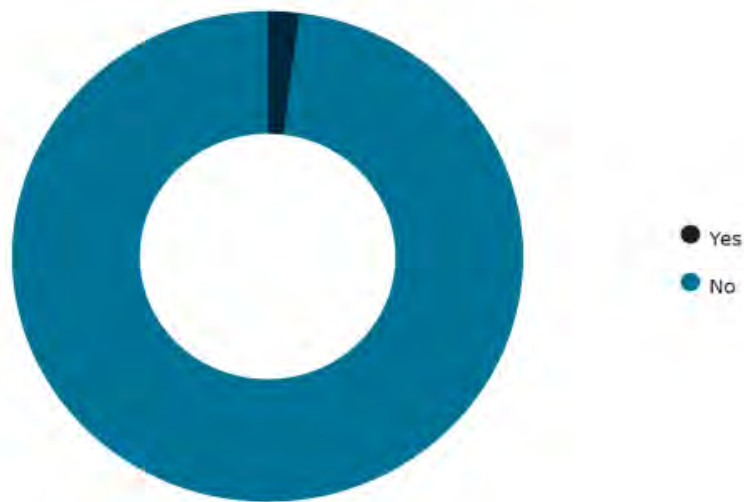
These results will be considered for new or amended activities in the next Domestic Animal Management Plan.



Council's Animal Pound service

21. Have you had your dog or cat taken to this pound in the past two years?

Multi Choice | Skipped: 110 | Answered: 3,146 (96.6%)



Survey participants were asked to provide any comments or feedback on Council's animal pound service, provided by Animal Aid at Coldstream. 14.1% or 460 respondents provided feedback on Council's animal pound services, which were (in order of most common comments):

- It is a great service
- Animal Aid Coldstream is too far away from Knox
- It is too expensive to retrieve your animal (note: this is a fee set by Council)
- The importance to locate owners or rehome animals (not euthanasia)
- Not aware of this service
- We have used the service to adopt our animal
- Council will need a bigger pound due to the cat curfew.



Appendix 1: Community survey

Open

Thank you for taking the time to provide valuable insight to help shape the way Council provides animal management services in Knox – both now and for the next four years.

You don't need to be a pet owner to participate – we value input from all members of the community.

The full survey should take 10-15 minutes to complete – but you can choose to answer only those questions you want. Thank you in advance.

1. How would you describe your involvement with cats and dogs in Knox? (select all that apply)

- Dog or cat owner
- Non dog or cat owner
- Animal welfare/advocacy/rescue group
- Member of a dog club
- Other (please specify)

2. Please tell us the name of any cat or dog organisations that you are part of:



Your pet ownership

Step 2 of 8

3. Do you own a dog/s?

4. Do you own a cat/s?

5. Please tell us what your pet means to you:

Cat curfew in Knox - Update

Following the evaluation of a cat curfew trial in 2020, Council has recently decided that from 1 October 2021, all cats in the municipality will be required to be confined to their property at all times (24 hours a day). All registered pet owners will receive a letter outlining the new curfew requirements, and resources available to assist cat owners with this new requirement.

6. Ahead of the cat curfew commencing, what support do you believe Council can offer to assist the community with this new initiative?



Dogs and your neighbourhood

Step 3 of 8

Knox Council is home to more than 18,000 registered dogs. We would like your input on what services and initiatives we can put in place to ensure the keeping of dogs does not pose a risk to the community or present a nuisance – whilst promoting good welfare outcomes for dogs.

7. In the last year, have you seen any of the following things about dogs when in Knox?

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Dog poo left on the ground	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dogs wandering at large (loose, or without an owner present)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dogs annoying/intimidating other dogs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dogs annoying/intimidating other people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dogs chasing/attacking wildlife	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dogs in playgrounds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dogs barking causing a nuisance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dog owners picking up their dog's poo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dog owner unable to control their dog	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dogs in public spaces who are friendly and well behaved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Dog off-leash and public spaces

Step 4 of 8

Knox currently has a Council Order that allows for dogs to be off-leash (but under effective control) in all public parks or recreation reserves – with the exception of the following Conservation bushland areas: Egan Lee Reserve; Flamingo Road Reserve; Gilmore Park Retarding Basin; J W Manson Reserve; Koolunga Native Reserve (except the lawn areas); Lakewood Reserve; Wicks Reserve (east and west); W G Morris Reserve; and the Tim Neville Arboretum. Dogs in Knox must also be on-leash on footpaths, at shopping centres, car parks, walking tracks and bike tracks.

8. Please tell us your views to the following statements about dogs off-leash in Knox

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know / not relevant to me
I have had a negative experience with a dog off-leash in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I support more areas where dogs can exercise off-leash in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I don't think dogs should be off-leash in any public place	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dogs should be restricted from being off-leash on/ around: - Children's playgrounds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



- Sporting and recreation reserves (during organised sporting events)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
- Sporting and recreation reserves (anytime)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
- Barbeques and picnic areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
- Council buildings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
- Environmentally sensitive areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dogs in Knox should be required to be on-leash in all public areas unless otherwise signed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Off-leash areas allow my dog and I to socialise and meet new friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have concerns for the welfare of native wildlife due to dogs off-leash in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I exercise more because I can do this with my dog off-leash in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am concerned for my pet and/or my own safety when dogs are off-leash in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



9. Please provide any comments or feedback you have regarding dogs off-leash in Knox

Dog parks in Knox

Knox has two fenced off-leash dog parks at the Knox Park Reserve (Knoxfield) and a new park at Emerson Place Reserve (Rowville).

10. Please tell us your views on the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know/not relevant to me
I have had a negative experience with a dog in a fenced off-leash park in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fenced off-leash areas (dog parks) give me peace of mind	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There should be more parks that are designed primarily for use by dogs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I prefer to exercise my dog in a larger open area non-fenced off-leash area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



11. Do you have any other suggestions that may improve the management of dogs in Knox?



Cats and your neighbourhood

Step 5 of 8

Knox Council is home to more than 7,000 registered cats. We would like your input on what services and initiatives we can put in place to ensure the keeping of cats does not pose a risk to the environment or present a nuisance – whilst promoting good welfare outcomes for cats.

12. In the last year, have you noticed any of the following things about cats when in Knox?

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Cats entering your property at night	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cats entering your property during the day	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cats preying on wildlife	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cats that appear unowned	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cats fighting or making loud noises	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cats causing nuisance to your property	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disturbed garden beds due to cat activity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cats in sensitive environmental areas or reserves	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



13. Do you have any other suggestions that may improve the management of cats in Knox?

Knox Council's Animal Management Services

Step 6 of 8

14. Before today were you aware that:

	Yes	No
Knox Council has a 4 year Domestic Animal Management Plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If yes, have you read the Knox Council 2017-2021 Plan?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Victorian State law requires all cats and dogs over 3 months of age be registered with your local Council	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Victorian State law requires all cats and dogs be microchipped before being able to be registered with your local Council	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Victorian State law deems you the legal owner of a cat if you feed a stray cat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Council provides a free cat trap loan service to address cat nuisances	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All parks and reserves in Knox are off-leash areas for dogs, except for 9 designated on-lead parks in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All cats must be desexed before being able to be registered with Council in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



What animal management services are funded by pet registration fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knox's Community Laws officers inspect all Domestic Animal Businesses throughout the municipality every year (i.e. Kennels, catteries, training facilities, pet stores)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knox's Community Laws officers investigate and prosecute animal cruelty matters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
What reserves are dog off and on-leash areas in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dog owners must be able to control their dog by hand or voice control when off lead in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The requirement to carry a poo bag when walking a dog in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
What to do if you find or lose a pet in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
What to do if a dog rushes at or attacks you in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



15. How important do you think it is for Council to provide the following services for the community?

	Very important	Important	Neutral	Not very important	Not at all important
Respond to reports of nuisance dogs/ cats	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Education about responsible pet ownership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collect/return stray dogs/cats to their owners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Protect/ enforce dog-free nature reserves or environmentally sensitive areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Discounted dog/ cat desexing for pensioners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Patrols of public spaces to ensure compliance with rules	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Checking dog/cat registration via patrols or door-knocks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cat trap hire for resident's use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Annual Pets in the Park event	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Investigation and enforcement of dog attacks on people or other animals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Investigation of animal cruelty matters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reduce the rate of cat and dog euthanasia through increased rehoming /animal adoptions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Investigation of illegal dog and cat breeders (i.e. puppy farms)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Welfare of animals in domestic violence situations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Welfare of animals owned by people who are homeless/rough sleepers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



16. How can Council improve its animal management services for pet owners? (Select all that apply)

- Photos of lost and found pets on Council's website/ social media
- Registration incentives or discounts
- More information about caring for pets
- More information about choosing the right pet
- More patrols in public spaces (incl. parks and reserves)
- More dog-free protected areas
- Better signage about relevant dog restrictions in public spaces
- Advice on how to build cat enclosures
- Support for companion pets ownership by seniors in our community
- More timely response to requests
- Other (please specify)

17. Do you have any feedback you would like to provide that will assist Council in delivering Knox's Animal Management Services?



Animal Pound Services

Knox Council contracts Animal Aid in Coldstream to provide animal pound services for the municipality.

18. Have you had your dog or cat taken to this pound in the past two years?

- Yes
- No

19. Do you have any comments or feedback regarding the Animal Aid pound service?

Any further comments

Step 7 of 8

20. Do you have any further comments or suggestions of how Knox Council can improve how cats and dogs are managed in our municipality – or other considerations for inclusion in the 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan?



About you

Step 8 of 8

21. Which suburb do you live?

22. What is your age bracket?

23. What best describes your household?

24. Do any members of your household speak a language other than English at home?

Keeping you informed

25. How did you find out about Knox Council's Domestic Animal Management Plan review and consultation?

- Flyer
- Email/letter
- Signs
- Council's website
- Social media
- Council's e-newsletter
- Word of mouth
- Other (please specify)

26. Would you like to be kept informed on the progress of the 2021-2025 Plan?

- Yes please
- No thanks



Dogs off Lead/leash

Response to Notice of Motion No. 117

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a response to the information requested by Council in the Notice of Motion No. 117 (shown below), adopted at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 24 May 2021.

24 May 2021

Notice of Motion No.117

Dogs off lead

I hereby give notice that it is my intention to move at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 24 May 2021 the following motion.

That Council, as part of the forthcoming review of its Domestic Animal Management Plan 2017-2021 and the preparation of the new plan, include within the scope of this work to review its approach to managing dogs being off leash across the municipality. The scope should reflect on the history of Knox Council being quite different to other municipalities, and provide any available background information on this approach, as Knox allows dogs to be off leash throughout the municipality unless otherwise signed or controlled; whereas it is common in other councils for dogs to be required to be contained on leash unless otherwise permitted to be off leash in areas such as designated dog parks. Further, the scope should include an understanding of the relevant considerations that need to be addressed before Council made such a change and any implementation considerations.

Cr Lisa Cooper
Scott Ward

24 May 2021

2. Legislative power to restrict dogs off lead

Section 26 (2) of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* allows a Council to make an order under this section which may do all or any of the following –

- (a) Prohibit the presence of dogs and cats in any public place of the municipal district of the Council;
- (b) Impose all or any of the following conditions on the presence of dogs or cats in any public place of the municipal district of the Council –



- i. Conditions as to the means of restraint of dogs or cats;
- ii. Conditions as to the times at which the presence of dogs or cats is or is not permitted;
- iii. Any other conditions that are specified in the order.

If a dog or cat is found in a place that is in contravention to any terms or conditions of that order, the owner is guilty of an offence [Section 26(1) of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*].

The penalty for this offence is \$181 by way of an infringement notice/ fine (1 penalty unit – currently \$181.74 for 2020-21, and amended by the State Government at 1 July each year). The maximum penalty for this offence that the Court can impose is 2 penalty units (currently \$363) for the first offence, and 4 penalty units (currently \$727) for a second or subsequent offence.

3. Dog off lead requirements in the Knox municipality

Knox City Council has the following Section 26 order – dogs in public places (Gazetted 13 April 2006)

1. Dogs shall be kept on lead in public places.

All dogs must be restrained by means of a chain, cord or leash within:

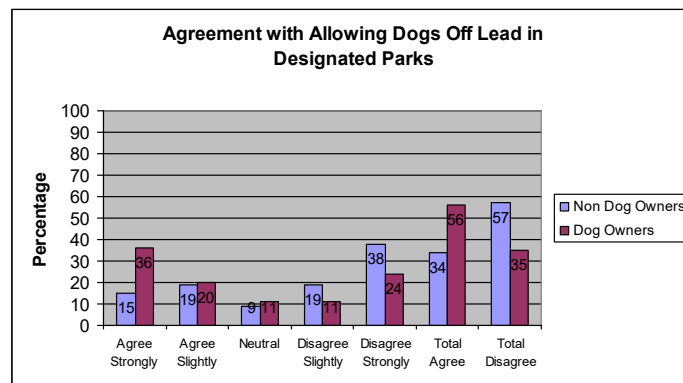
 - a. An active reserve where an organised sporting event is being conducted
 - b. A children's play equipment area
 - c. An organised public meeting
 - d. A permanent barbecue or picnic area.
2. Public places include footpaths, shopping centers, car parks, bike tracks, walking tracks and conservation bushland areas. Conservation bushland areas include:
 - a. Egan Lee Reserve
 - b. Flamingo Road Reserve
 - c. Gilmore Park Retarding Basin
 - d. J W Manson Reserve
 - e. Koolunga Native Reserve (except the lawn areas)
 - f. Lakewood Reserve
 - g. Wicks Reserve (east and west)
 - h. W G Morris Reserve
 - i. Tim Neville Arboretum
3. Dogs may be off lead but under effective control in a public park or recreation reserve, subject to the following conditions:
 - a. Dog owners must carry a chain, cord or leash sufficient to restrain the dog should it behave in a threatening manner; and
 - b. Dog owners must remain within effective voice or hand control distance of the dog at all times; and
 - c. A person in charge of the dog must not allow the dog to worry, chase or threaten another person or animal.



4. History of Knox Council's dogs off lead/leash arrangements

Knox City Council has historically required that dogs within the Knox municipality be kept on a leash and controlled by the person in custody of the dog at all times in conservation bushland area, on bicycle/ walking tracks, and in children's playgrounds.

During community consultation on the review of the *General Provisions Local Law* in 2004, feedback was provided that the majority of people prefer that dogs be kept on lead in all areas, and that Council could provide a number of parks and reserves to enable people to exercise their dogs off lead whilst still having them under effective control. Based on this feedback, Council requested that staff undertake an extensive consultative process on the issue – which was conducted from May to September 2005. A report was presented to Council in November 2005, that included the graph below. The report to Council identified that although there was a *'preference moving toward a philosophy of dogs on lead, it also demonstrates that there is a very high demand and a relatively high acceptance level of retaining open space as off lead areas'*.



The 2005 Council report provided Council with three options regarding dogs off lead in public places:

1. Retain the status quo
2. Adopt an on lead approach as a general principle but agreeing to adopt up to 30-40 reserves within the municipality as off lead areas and undertake further consultation in regards to these specific reserves.
3. Adopting an on lead approach but substantially increasing the areas that are available for off lead subject to specific controls.

Option 3 was proposed as the preferred option that would require that all dogs must be on lead whilst in public places as the general rule, whilst allowing dogs to be allowed off leash in public parks and reserves subject to specific rules to maintain effective control of the dog. The report stated this approach would *'provide a position which is supported by a majority of the Knox community (54%) but also recognise that there is high degree of acceptance that dogs should be allowed off lead under reasonable controls. This approach is not substantially different from Council's existing approach'*.

Option 3 was adopted by Council, which was accompanied by Council's approval of the Section 26 Order – Dogs in Public Places as outlined in Section 3 above. This order is current and has not been amended since being passed by Council on 22 November 2005, with an effective date of 10 April 2006.



5. Comparison of other municipalities dog off lead/leash arrangements

The table below has been prepared – comparing Knox’s dog off leash arrangements to those of the neighbouring municipal councils. The results in the table below highlight that:

- For the exception of Casey, most neighbouring councils have between 15-35 designated dog leash-free parks or reserves within their municipalities.
- All of the neighbouring council’s have distance restriction requirements in their dog off-leash orders – that require that the dog be on lead within set distances from particular locations (ie. Playgrounds or children’s play equipment; public picnic facilities and barbeques; organised sporting events; shared paths).
- Knox’s current Order for dogs off lead (2006) has not been amended in the past 15 years.

Council	Leash free Parks	Distance restrictions requirements	Order last updated
Knox	Over 300 (all except 9)	Nil	2006
Maroondah	35	15 metres	2012
Monash	31	20 metres	2015
Whitehorse	22	2.5 metres	2018
Greater Dandenong	15 (increasing to 21)	20 metres	2019
Yarra Ranges	23	2.5 metres	2013
Casey	Over 600 (all except 17)	20 metres	2017

The conditions in many other council’s dog off-lead orders are also more prescriptive regarding Council’s requirements of the owner to have their dog under ‘effective control’. For instance:

- Dogs must remain in visual and audible range of their handler to allow it to be effectively recalled at any time.
- The owner is within 25 metres and has a clear unobstructed view of the dog at all times
- The dog immediately returns to its owner upon command.

City of Casey developed a *Dog Friendly Spaces policy* in 2017 which encourages people and dogs to socialise and exercise within an open space setting. The Policy supports their Open Space Strategy’s vision ‘to deliver a connected network of quality and diverse open spaces now and into the future to improve the liveability of the City for residents and visitors’. Features of their policy include:

- Providing 1-2 dog friendly spaces in or adjacent to each of Casey’s Urban Local Areas, and to plan for dog friendly spaces in a similar ratio in Casey’s growth areas
- The open space site should be approximately 2 hectares in size, to ensure that a suitable sized dog friendly space of at least 0.5 hectares can be provided, whilst providing an appropriate buffer for other park users.
- Dog Friendly spaces located along open space corridors to improve accessibility and flexibility of the space.

Greater Dandenong Council undertook a review and published their *Dog off-leash strategy* in 2019, which will see a modest expansion of their dog off-leash parks from 15 to 21, to provide more opportunity to safely and legally exercise their dogs, whilst allowing the community time to adjust to the change in further off-leash reserves.



6. Considerations in amending the current dog off lead/leash arrangements

Dog off-leash issues in public open spaces is a contentious issue within the community due to long-standing and diverse community views and interests – particularly between dog owners (1 in 3 households in Knox) and non-dog owners. Providing open space for dogs to exercise off leash and encouraging responsible pet ownership is a balancing issue due to finite open spaces, growing population density and competing interests and priorities for limited public open space.

The positive health, wellbeing, social benefits of dog ownership (including the exercising of dogs in open spaces) support the objectives in several of Council's existing plans. The need for access to open space whilst balancing competing interests and meeting community exceptions of safety and amenity is an important consideration.

The recent community survey undertaken for Phase 1 of Knox's DAM Plan review (that received over 3,200 survey responses) identified that:

- Over 80% of respondents did not know that all parks and reserves in Knox are off-leash areas for dogs, for the exception of 9 designated on-lead parks
- Only 26.3% of respondents knew what reserves are dog off-leash and on-leash areas in Knox; and
- Approx. 23% of respondents did not know that dog owners must be able to control their dog by hand or voice control when off lead in Knox.

There is a clear need for increased education and communication to inform our community regarding both the areas and rules that apply when having a dog off-lead in Knox.

Several departments across Council have involvement and/or responsibilities associated with our parks, reserves, sporting ground, etc. This includes Council's Operations, Community Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Leisure Services' departments – dealing with aspects from reserve maintenance, design, signage, environmental protection and the management of contracts for their usage by community sporting groups.

Matters for consideration as part of a future review or ongoing planning of open spaces for use by dogs off-leash in Knox could include:

- Proportionate allocation of dog off-leash areas across ward/ suburbs
- Planning for dog friendly spaces in Knox's growth areas
- Identification of suitably-sized open spaces to support the exercise of large and small dogs
- Protection of environmentally sensitive areas where dogs (and possibly cats) be prohibited from
- Ensure the review of dog off-lead areas aligns with existing Council policies regarding the use of open spaces and existing contract arrangements (ie. Exclusive use of certain reserves by sporting clubs, grass mowing/ maintenance and waste collection contracts).

In accordance with Council's Community Engagement policy, any consideration of a review of, or changes to, the availability of Council's open spaces would be classified as a Level 1 community engagement – due to the:

- Expected high level of interest from the community
- High level of political interest
- Could have an impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of the broader community
- Could have an environmental change or impact; and
- Need to understand community values and priorities.

This would require a community engagement plan, which includes deliberative engagement practices – to meet Council's requirements under the *Local Government Act 2020*.

7 Public Question Time

8 Infrastructure Officers' Reports for consideration

Nil

9 Connected Communities Officers' Reports for consideration

9.1 Minor Grants Program 2021-22 Monthly Report

SUMMARY: Community Partnerships Officer, Deb Robert

This report summarises the grant applications recommended for approval in October 2021 for the 2021-22 Minor Grants Program. All applications have been assessed against the criteria set out in the Minor Grants Program Policy.

Applications under the Minor Grants Policy are limited to a maximum of \$3,000 within the current financial year.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- Approve three applications for a total of \$7,610.00 as detailed below:**

Applicant Name	Project Title	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended
The Food Affectionist	Hot Meals for Locals	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Knox Gardens Cricket Club	Build a Female Program in the Club	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Shishukunj Melbourne Inc	Diwali Care Packages	\$2,610.00	\$2,610.00
TOTAL		\$7,610.00	\$7,610.00

- Note that inclusive of the above recommended grants, totalling \$7,610.00, a total of \$60,756.74 has been awarded to date under the 2021-22 Minor Grants Program supporting 28 community-based organisations and their programs.**

1. INTRODUCTION

The Minor Grants Program provides a pool of grant funding that can respond on a monthly basis to requests for small amounts of funding to assist with short term, one-off projects or initiatives that are relatively minor in nature.

The objective of the Minor Grants Program is to be an accessible and responsive funding source to assist a wide range of community led activities across the municipality and support volunteer effort and civic participation.

It operates under the principles of other Knox Council grants programs to ensure:

- Funded projects will provide benefit to the Knox community and help meet Council objectives;
- Co-operation and collaboration between groups will be encouraged;
- The grant process will be consistent, equitable and transparent; and
- The grant process will support and strengthen community groups in developing local solutions to local needs.

Applications are assessed against criteria specified in the Minor Grants Program Policy (updated and approved in April 2020) to determine the eligibility of the applicant organisation and the eligibility of the grant application.

The Policy sets out an open and transparent grant program that meets the principles of good governance and is compliant with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020.

In accordance with the Policy, applications for funding have been assessed by the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, for Council's approval.

2. DISCUSSION

This report presents to Council the recommendations for recent Minor Grant applications in accordance with the Policy.

Three complete grant applications were received since the Council meeting on 27 September 2021, requesting grants totalling \$7,610. All applicant groups are eligible to apply.

One of the applicants, Shishukunj Melbourne, a locally based cultural group for Gujarati-speaking families, has requested an amount more than they are currently eligible to receive under Cl 6.21 of the Minor Grants Program Policy. The group is seeking \$2,610 to support the distribution of Diwali festival packs to local Knox families in lieu of an event they would usually host pre-pandemic. The group had received a grant for first-aid earlier this year as lockdowns appeared to be lifting, which has put them over their annual limit, so they are currently only eligible to receive \$936.00.

As this group's usual fund-raising has been impacted by COVID restrictions and the extended lockdowns have made usual Diwali celebrations impossible, it is considered an appropriate application of Cl.7 of the Minor Grants Program Policy to waive Cl.6.21 in this instance.

The other applications are summarised as follows:

- The Food Affectionist is a locally based community trainer and caterer who has been donating prepared meals for local communities in Knox and Yarra Ranges impacted by COVID and the recent damaging storm. The application, requesting \$2,000 to assist the purchase of protein foods, has been auspiced by a not-for-profit group that helps distribute the food; and
- Knox Gardens Cricket Club is seeking \$3,000 to support establishment of a women's cricket team, with purchase of equipment and uniforms to minimise participation costs.

Application details are provided in Attachment 1.

3. CONSULTATION

Consultation is undertaken with organisations in relation to their grant applications whenever possible and if necessary, to clarify details regarding their applications prior to Council's consideration.

Advice or information may be sought from officers across Council in relation to either the applying organisation or the proposed project, or both, if considered necessary.

The Policy specifies assessment can occur by the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, and make recommendation for Council's determination.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

There are no environmental or amenity issues associated with this report.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The approval of Minor Grants is managed within Council's adopted budget. The 2021-22 budget provides \$193,729 for the Minor Grants Program (comprising the annual allocation of \$150,582 plus an additional \$43,147 carried forward from the 2020-21 Minor Grants Program, as per the Minor Grants Policy).

Recommended applications for the October period total \$7,610.00.

If approved as recommended, the remaining Minor Grants budget for 2021-22 will total \$135,562.90 before GST adjustments.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Minor Grants Program allows Council to respond promptly to requests from Knox- based community groups for small amounts of funding to assist a variety of community-based programs, projects or activities. Council's Minor Grants are a simple and streamlined source of funding that can make a significant difference for local community organisations in need of short-term, specific purpose assistance.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.1 - Mitigate lifestyle risks such as smoking, risky alcohol consumption and drug use, obesity, lack of physical activity and poor nutrition

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.1 - Protect and preserve our local cultural heritage

Strategy 7.2 - Celebrate our diverse community

Strategy 7.3 - Strengthen community connections

Strategy 7.4 - Promote and celebrate the contribution of our volunteers

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

This report contains the recommendation for funding through the Minor Grants program for October 2021.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Community Partnerships Officer, Deb Robert

Report Authorised By: Director, Connected Communities, Tanya Scicluna

Attachments

1. ATTACHMENT 1 - Minor Grant Applications - October - 2021-10-25 [9.1.1 - 18 pages]

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 2 of 2)
Application 53- MGP - 2021-22 From The Food Affectionist
 Form Submitted 7 Oct 2021, 7:48pm AEDT

MINOR GRANTS PROGRAM APPLICATION FORM

Minor Grants Information

To meet the policy requirements for funding applications under the Minor Grants Program, requests must meet the following criteria:

1. Applications must be from individuals who reside in Knox or community groups that provide services to the Knox community.
2. Applications for funding cannot be made retrospectively and must be received before the event or activity to which the funding relates is undertaken.

Application Amount	Incorporated or Auspiced?	Assessment & Determination	Acquittal
< \$500	No	Assessed and determined by the CEO or delegate.	Proof of expenditure / purchase (i.e. receipt).
\$501 to \$1,000	Yes	Assessed by the CEO or delegate. Determined by Council at the monthly ordinary meeting of Council.	Proof of expenditure / purchase (i.e. receipt).
\$1,001 to \$3,000	Yes	Assessed by the CEO or delegate. Determined by Council at the monthly ordinary meeting of Council.	Funding Agreement & Acquittal required.

Application Category

Application Amount

< \$500 \$501 to \$1,000 \$1,001 to \$3,000

APPLICANT DETAILS

*** indicates a required field**

Applicant Details

Organisation Name *

The Food Affectionist

Organisation Address *

[REDACTED]

ate/Province, Postcode, and Country are required.

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
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Contact Name

[REDACTED]

Project Contact Address *

[REDACTED]

ate/Province, Postcode, and Country are required.

Phone Number

Must be an Australian phone number.

Mobile Phone Number *

[REDACTED]

ustralian phone number.

Email *

[REDACTED]

Please provide your ABN

51 108 838 193

Information from the Australian Business Register	
ABN	51 108 838 193
Entity name	Lillie Giang
ABN status	Active
Entity type	Individual/Sole Trader
Goods & Services Tax (GST)	Yes
DGR Endorsed	No
ATO Charity Type	Not endorsed More information
ACNC Registration	No
Tax Concessions	No tax concessions
Main business location	3152 VIC

Information retrieved at 5:51am today

Must be an ABN.

provide ABN of auspice organisation if relevant. If no ABN please complete a Statement by Supplier declaration.

Is your organisation Incorporated? * Yes No

If No please provide details of Auspice below

Auspice Details**Auspice Organisation Name ***

Outer East Foodshare Inc

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 2 of 2)
Application 53- MGP - 2021-22 From The Food Affectionist
 Form Submitted 7 Oct 2021, 7:48pm AEDT

Auspice ABN
 96 742 344 380

Information from the Australian Business Register	
ABN	96 742 344 380
Entity name	Outer East Foodshare Inc
ABN status	Active
Entity type	Other Incorporated Entity
Goods & Services Tax (GST)	Yes
DGR Endorsed	Yes
ATO Charity Type	Charity More information
ACNC Registration	Registered
Tax Concessions	FBT Rebate, GST Concession, Income Tax Exemption
Main business location	3158 VIC

Information retrieved at 1:20am today

Must be an ABN.

Auspice Project Contact *

[REDACTED]

Auspice Position *

Chair of Board

Auspice Phone Number *

[REDACTED]

tralian phone number.

Auspice Email *

[REDACTED]

Signature of auspice representative - permission required *

Filename: Knox CouncilAuspice.docx

File size: 14.9 kB

Please upload signed declaration from auspice representative

PROJECT DETAILS

*** indicates a required field**

Request Details

Project Title *

Hot Meals for Locals

Project Start Date *

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 2 of 2)
Application 53- MGP - 2021-22 From The Food Affectionist
 Form Submitted 7 Oct 2021, 7:48pm AEDT

25/10/2021
 Must be a date.

Project End Date *
 31/12/2021
 Must be a date.

(a) Briefly describe details of the request: *

To enable the preparation of around 100 free hot meals per week for needy people in the Knox Council area. Free vegetable and fruit are sourced from SecondBite and Foodbank Victoria each week, but there is rarely any protein.

This grant will enable the purchase of protein foods to be used in this hot food program, and the purchase of new 'takeaway' size food containers for distribution to clients.

(b) What community benefit is gained from this project / activity? *

A number of community members are still struggling with the combined impact of the massive winter storms and Covid 19. Free hot meals provide people with good nutrition and the connection with community. Many of the recipients would have accessed a community hot meal program at community venues in the past. Due to Covid 19 most of these have ceased completely, some have been replaced by the distribution of frozen FareShare meals. Some of the people currently struggling would not have met local Food Relief Agency requirements if they do not hold a Health Care Card. This program will provide hot meals to anyone requesting until the end of December 2021.

How many people will directly benefit from or participate in your project / activity? *

300
 Must be a number

How many of the above are Knox residents? *

240
 Must be a number

BUDGET

*** indicates a required field**

(d) What is the total cost of the project / activity? *

\$3,000.00
 Must be a dollar amount.
 What is the total budgeted cost (dollars) of your project?

(c) What amount is being requested? *

\$2,000.00
 Must be a dollar amount.
 What is the total financial support you are requesting in this application?

Minor Grant Expenses

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 2 of 2)
Application 53- MGP - 2021-22 From The Food Affectionist
 Form Submitted 7 Oct 2021, 7:48pm AEDT

Please detail the items you would like the Minor Grants Program to fund.

Expenditure	\$
Takeaway food containers	\$360.00
Protein foods (mince, chicken, eggs)	\$1,640.00
	Must be a dollar amount.

Minor Grant Budget Total

Total Expenditure Amount
 \$2,000.00

This number/amount is calculated.

Quotes For Planned Expenses

Attach quotes for expenses here. *

Filename: containerpricing.jpeg
 File size: 148.7 kB

Filename: Protein Foods to be purchased for the Hot Food Program under The Food Affection
 istv2.docx
 File size: 10.7 kB

Other Grant Funding

(e) Have funds been sought / provided from other Council grants? *

Yes No

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION

*** indicates a required field**

Evidence of Public Liability

Evidence of current Public Liability Insurance must be supplied *

Filename: Lillie Glang BIZPACK_InsurerCertificateOfCurrency2022.pdf
 File size: 76.7 kB

Public Liability Expiry Date *

30/09/2022
 Must be a date.

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 2 of 2)
Application 53- MGP - 2021-22 From The Food Affectionist
Form Submitted 7 Oct 2021, 7:48pm AEDT

Please attach relevant supporting documentation, including:

- **A project plan**
- **Evidence of Incorporation**

Attach relevant documentation:

Filename: TFABusinessPlan2021.docx
File size: 14.3 kB

DECLARATION

*** indicates a required field**

**I declare that all information within this application is true and correct.
If successful the organisation commits to provide an acquittal of all grant funds to
Council as outlined in the Minor Grants Program Policy.**

Name *

[REDACTED]

Position (if organisation) *

Member Outer East Foodshare Inc

Declaration Date *

07/10/2021

Must be a date.

Privacy Statement

The personal information requested in this application form is for the purposes of administering the Minor Grants Program and will only be used by Council for that primary purpose or directly related purposes. Whilst information relating to groups and the specific request/project details will be published, personal information in regards to individuals will not be disclosed except as required by law.

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022
Application 54- MGP - 2021-22 From Knox Gardens Cricket Club
 Form Submitted 30 Sep 2021, 4:01pm AEST

MINOR GRANTS PROGRAM APPLICATION FORM

Minor Grants Information

To meet the policy requirements for funding applications under the Minor Grants Program, requests must meet the following criteria:

1. Applications must be from individuals who reside in Knox or community groups that provide services to the Knox community.
2. Applications for funding cannot be made retrospectively and must be received before the event or activity to which the funding relates is undertaken.

Application Amount	Incorporated or Auspiced?	Assessment & Determination	Acquittal
< \$500	No	Assessed and determined by the CEO or delegate.	Proof of expenditure / purchase (i.e. receipt).
\$501 to \$1,000	Yes	Assessed by the CEO or delegate. Determined by Council at the monthly ordinary meeting of Council.	Proof of expenditure / purchase (i.e. receipt).
\$1,001 to \$3,000	Yes	Assessed by the CEO or delegate. Determined by Council at the monthly ordinary meeting of Council.	Funding Agreement & Acquittal required.

Application Category

Application Amount

< \$500 \$501 to \$1,000 \$1,001 to \$3,000

APPLICANT DETAILS

*** indicates a required field**

Applicant Details

Organisation Name *

Knox Gardens Cricket Club

Organisation Address *

[REDACTED]

Address, Telephone, Email, Website, Postcode, and Country are required.

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022
Application 54- MGP - 2021-22 From Knox Gardens Cricket Club
 Form Submitted 30 Sep 2021, 4:01pm AEST

Contact Name

[REDACTED]

Project Contact Address *

[REDACTED]

vince, Postcode, and Country are required.

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

tralian phone number.

Mobile Phone Number *

[REDACTED]

tralian phone number.

Email *

[REDACTED]

Please provide your ABN

22 007 710 567

Information from the Australian Business Register	
ABN	22 007 710 567
Entity name	Knox Gardens Cricket Club Inc
ABN status	Active
Entity type	Other Incorporated Entity
Goods & Services Tax (GST)	No
DGR Endorsed	No
ATO Charity Type	Not endorsed More information
ACNC Registration	No
Tax Concessions	No tax concessions
Main business location	3152 VIC
<i>Information retrieved at 12:15am today</i>	

Must be an ABN.

provide ABN of auspice organisation if relevant. If no ABN please complete a Statement by Supplier declaration.

Is your organisation Incorporated? * Yes No

If No please provide details of Auspice below

Incorporation Details**Please provide your Incorporated number**

A0018324E

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022
Application 54- MGP - 2021-22 From Knox Gardens Cricket Club
 Form Submitted 30 Sep 2021, 4:01pm AEST

PROJECT DETAILS

* indicates a required field

Request Details

Project Title *

Build a Female Program in the club by fielding our first 2 new female teams in season 2021/22

Project Start Date *

01/11/2021
 Must be a date.

Project End Date *

31/03/2022
 Must be a date.

(a) Briefly describe details of the request: *

Our project is overall about maximising the chances of as many females participating in active sport and our community as possible. Research has shown that there are many less females participating in sport than males and it is an objective of Governments to encourage and increase female participation in Sport by eliminating barriers such as cost, unwelcoming clubs, ability to try before registering, etc.

We would like to use the grant to support us to lower the costs of participating by purchasing kit and gear to be used by our first ever female teams that we will field this upcoming 2021/22 season. Through subsidising these essential for participation items we will be able to minimise fees and increase participation in a traditionally male-dominated sport such as cricket. This project also provides an opportunity for women to be more involved and included in the community. This strengthens social inclusion especially for females and bridges any gap that is currently present when it comes to female participation in sports. The grant will provide about half of the amount needed for us to purchase the items while the club shoulders the other half and will significantly lower the fees and expenses for the females to participate thus encouraging as many females to participate this season and many to come. Most items will last for many years.

(b) What community benefit is gained from this project / activity? *

The project / activity builds social inclusion as we engage more females to join a traditionally male dominated sport such as cricket. Most of the females we are tapping for this initiative are also financially struggling due to unemployment brought by the pandemic. It helps create an equal opportunity for all regardless of gender and socio-economic status and allows the females to influence how the sports can become more inclusive going forward. This in turn creates a well balanced community that presents equal opportunities for all and allows the benefits of physical activity, networking, and social and community engagement to be reaped by all community members and not just a select, advantaged few.

How many people will directly benefit from or participate in your project / activity? *

26
 Must be a number

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022
Application 54- MGP - 2021-22 From Knox Gardens Cricket Club
 Form Submitted 30 Sep 2021, 4:01pm AEST

How many of the above are Knox residents? *

26

Must be a number

BUDGET

*** indicates a required field**

(d) What is the total cost of the project / activity? *

\$6,752.84

Must be a dollar amount.

What is the total budgeted cost (dollars) of your project?

(c) What amount is being requested? *

\$3,000.00

Must be a dollar amount.

What is the total financial support you are requesting in this application?

Minor Grant Expenses

Please detail the items you would like the Minor Grants Program to fund.

Expenditure	\$
Cricket Equipment (as per attached quote)	\$4,893.84
Cricket Playing Uniforms (as per attached quote)	\$1,859.00
	Must be a dollar amount.

Minor Grant Budget Total

Total Expenditure Amount

\$6,752.84

This number/amount is calculated.

Quotes For Planned Expenses

Attach quotes for expenses here. *

Filename: Quote Cricket Equipment.xlsx
 File size: 1.6 MB

Filename: Quote Cricket Uniforms.xlsx
 File size: 303.9 kB

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022
Application 54- MGP - 2021-22 From Knox Gardens Cricket Club
Form Submitted 30 Sep 2021, 4:01pm AEST

Other Grant Funding

(e) Have funds been sought / provided from other Council grants? *

Yes No

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION

*** indicates a required field**

Evidence of Public Liability

Evidence of current Public Liability Insurance must be supplied *

Filename: Knox Gardens CC PLI.pdf
File size: 110.7 kB

Public Liability Expiry Date *

30/06/2022
Must be a date.

Please attach relevant supporting documentation, including:

- **A project plan**
- **Evidence of Incorporation**

Attach relevant documentation:

Filename: Knox Gardens CC Inc Cert.pdf
File size: 111.2 kB

DECLARATION

*** indicates a required field**

I declare that all information within this application is true and correct.

If successful the organisation commits to provide an acquittal of all grant funds to Council as outlined in the Minor Grants Program Policy.

Name *

[REDACTED]

Position (if organisation) *

President

Declaration Date *

30/09/2021
Must be a date.

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022
Application 54- MGP - 2021-22 From Knox Gardens Cricket Club
Form Submitted 30 Sep 2021, 4:01pm AEST

Privacy Statement

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Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 3 of 3)
Application 59- MGP - 2021-22 From Shishukunj Melbourne Incorporated
 Form Submitted 6 Oct 2021, 10:34am AEDT

MINOR GRANTS PROGRAM APPLICATION FORM

Minor Grants Information

To meet the policy requirements for funding applications under the Minor Grants Program, requests must meet the following criteria:

1. Applications must be from individuals who reside in Knox or community groups that provide services to the Knox community.
2. Applications for funding cannot be made retrospectively and must be received before the event or activity to which the funding relates is undertaken.

Application Amount	Incorporated or Auspiced?	Assessment & Determination	Acquittal
< \$500	No	Assessed and determined by the CEO or delegate.	Proof of expenditure / purchase (i.e. receipt).
\$501 to \$1,000	Yes	Assessed by the CEO or delegate. Determined by Council at the monthly ordinary meeting of Council.	Proof of expenditure / purchase (i.e. receipt).
\$1,001 to \$3,000	Yes	Assessed by the CEO or delegate. Determined by Council at the monthly ordinary meeting of Council.	Funding Agreement & Acquittal required.

Application Category

Application Amount

< \$500 \$501 to \$1,000 \$1,001 to \$3,000

APPLICANT DETAILS

*** indicates a required field**

Applicant Details

Organisation Name *

Shishukunj Melbourne Incorporated

Organisation Address *

[REDACTED]

Address, Postcode, and Country are required.

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 3 of 3)
Application 59- MGP - 2021-22 From Shishukunj Melbourne Incorporated
 Form Submitted 6 Oct 2021, 10:34am AEDT

Contact Name

[REDACTED]

Project Contact Address *

[REDACTED]

Province, Postcode, and Country are required.

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Australian phone number.

Mobile Phone Number *

[REDACTED]

Australian phone number.

Email *

[REDACTED]

Address.

Please provide your ABN

47 677 174 433

Information from the Australian Business Register	
ABN	47 677 174 433
Entity name	Shishukunj Melbourne Incorporated
ABN status	Active
Entity type	Other Incorporated Entity
Goods & Services Tax (GST)	No
DGR Endorsed	No
ATO Charity Type	Charity More information
ACNC Registration	Registered
Tax Concessions	GST Concession, Income Tax Exemption
Main business location	3152 VIC
<i>Information retrieved at 3:28am today</i>	

Must be an ABN.

provide ABN of auspice organisation if relevant. If no ABN please complete a Statement by Supplier declaration.

Is your organisation Incorporated? * Yes No

If No please provide details of Auspice below

Incorporation Details**Please provide your Incorporated number**

A0109307G

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 3 of 3)
Application 59- MGP - 2021-22 From Shishukunj Melbourne Incorporated
 Form Submitted 6 Oct 2021, 10:34am AEDT

PROJECT DETAILS

* indicates a required field

Request Details

Project Title *

Diwali Care Packages

Project Start Date *

26/10/2021

Must be a date.

Project End Date *

31/12/2021

Must be a date.

(a) Briefly describe details of the request: *

We have another year with the festive season, Diwali upon us and yet the grim outlook of COVID remains. Shishukunj supports a children welfare organisation to educate and advance Indian culture. We have run our fortnightly sessions from "in person" at Kent Park Primary to online Zoom sessions. We feel the Diwali care package to 58 families will bring joy and a light of sense of belonging to the children. Some items in the hamper include activities like glass decoration, salt dough diva, Rangoli making, candle making, toran making, activity book (recipes, facts, puzzles etc) and edible sweets to celebrate the Diwali occasion.

(b) What community benefit is gained from this project / activity? *

We have 92 members (58 families). The majority of the members are of Indian culture. The suburbs coverage of this project is Ferntree Gully, Baywater, Wantirna, Boronia, Knoxfield, Scoresby and other 4 families come from Lynbrook, Hopper Crossing, Narre Warren, Glen Waverly.

The hamper will bring joy and a cultural significance to the children. The activities will provide the children an educational experience and handy craft to do while in lock down/ December Holidays. The involvement of parents and children on the online Zoom sessions, to present their handy work (from the hampers) is priceless!, the children's enthusiasm at the presentations are with quite a sense of achievement and fulfillment.

The supplier is Cakes on Cloud Nine, a local business based in Scoresby and details are attached in this application.

Shishukunj has reduced the membership fees by 50% for 2021 (COVID subsidy)- thus quite substantial reduction in Shishukunj's contributions. The grant will be of great assistance to our NFP institution to serve the local community.

How many people will directly benefit from or participate in your project / activity? *

290

Must be a number

How many of the above are Knox residents? *

275

Must be a number

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 3 of 3)
Application 59- MGP - 2021-22 From Shishukunj Melbourne Incorporated
 Form Submitted 6 Oct 2021, 10:34am AEDT

BUDGET

*** indicates a required field**

(d) What is the total cost of the project / activity? *

\$2,610.00

Must be a dollar amount.

What is the total budgeted cost (dollars) of your project?

(c) What amount is being requested? *

\$2,610.00

Must be a dollar amount.

What is the total financial support you are requesting in this application?

Minor Grant Expenses

Please detail the items you would like the Minor Grants Program to fund.

Expenditure	\$
58 Hampers from Cakes on Cloud 9	\$2,610.00
	Must be a dollar amount.

Minor Grant Budget Total

Total Expenditure Amount

\$2,610.00

This number/amount is calculated.

Quotes For Planned Expenses

Attach quotes for expenses here. *

Filename: Invoice_30_2021-11-05.pdf

File size: 103.7 kB

Other Grant Funding

(e) Have funds been sought / provided from other Council grants? *

Yes No

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 3 of 3)
Application 59- MGP - 2021-22 From Shishukunj Melbourne Incorporated
Form Submitted 6 Oct 2021, 10:34am AEDT

*** indicates a required field**

Evidence of Public Liability

Evidence of current Public Liability Insurance must be supplied *

Filename: Shishukunj Melbourne Inc. CoC PL expiry 29Jan2022.pdf
File size: 48.2 kB

Public Liability Expiry Date *

29/01/2022
Must be a date.

Please attach relevant supporting documentation, including:

- A project plan
- Evidence of Incorporation

Attach relevant documentation:

Filename: 2021 08 29 Special Committee Meeting - resolution for Diwali hamper.pdf
File size: 343.8 kB

Filename: CERT-A0109307G Shishukunj Incorporation.pdf
File size: 116.2 kB

Filename: Diwali hamper 2021.pdf
File size: 209.1 kB

Filename: Hamper Photo Distribution 2020.pdf
File size: 224.4 kB

DECLARATION

*** indicates a required field**

I declare that all information within this application is true and correct.

If successful the organisation commits to provide an acquittal of all grant funds to Council as outlined in the Minor Grants Program Policy.

Name *

[REDACTED]

Position (if organisation) *

Treasurer

Declaration Date *

05/10/2021
Must be a date.

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 3 of 3)
Application 59- MGP - 2021-22 From Shishukunj Melbourne Incorporated
Form Submitted 6 Oct 2021, 10:34am AEDT

Privacy Statement

The personal information requested in this application form is for the purposes of administering the Minor Grants Program and will only be used by Council for that primary purpose or directly related purposes. Whilst information relating to groups and the specific request/project details will be published, personal information in regards to individuals will not be disclosed except as required by law.

9.2 Community Development Fund Grant Recommendations 2021-22

SUMMARY: Community Partnerships Officer, Deb Robert

This report presents the recommendations of the Community Development Fund (CDF) Evaluation Panel for Council's 2021-22 CDF Grants Program allocation to not-for-profit community groups operating within Knox.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Approve the recommendations of 2021-2022 Community Development Fund (CDF) Evaluation Panel to allocate 49 grants totaling \$371,917.73, as detailed in Attachment 2 of this report; and**
- 2. Note that an on-line grants announcement will be scheduled in November 2021 to highlight the 2021-2022 approved projects and a networking event for grant recipients will be held in February/March 2022 to launch next year's grants program.**

1. INTRODUCTION

The Community Development Fund (CDF) provides annual grants to locally focused, not-for-profit organisations to encourage and support community activities and initiatives of Knox residents. Over the past five years, this Council program has provided over \$1.5 million to community organisations. The CDF Program is administered in accordance with the Knox CDF Policy and CDF Evaluation Panel Terms of Reference, in line with best practice principles in local grant making.

The annual allocation of CDF grants aims to:

- Support projects that encourage residents to become involved and engaged in their local community;
- Improve the health and wellbeing of Knox residents through projects that promote healthy active lifestyles and community safety;
- Build community pride, strength, and resilience;
- Promote harmony and respect through projects promoting inclusion and social interaction;
- Improve skills of Knox residents across a range of areas; and
- Support a positive sense of place and activities that celebrate our community.

The CDF Grants Program encourages one-off or short-term projects, as well as offering support to established community events that have been held annually for over three years. The Program does not fund capital works (e.g., structural building improvements), projects which are primarily fundraising events, projects currently supported by other Council grant programs or activities that are clearly the responsibility of another level of government. Funding applications of up to \$20,000 are considered for projects that meet the CDF criteria and support the goals of the Knox Community and Council Plan 2017-2021.

This year's CDF Program introduced a category for Community Festivals and Events with grants up to \$15,000, to acknowledge the increasing cost of event planning and risk management, including COVID-19 mitigation.

The CDF Program continues to provide opportunities for local community organisations to plan their response to the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and consider activities and initiatives that will help rebuild community momentum and involvement.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Applications for 2021-2022

Despite the ongoing uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic, 81 applications were received this year, with requests totaling \$698,296.85. The number of applications decreased by 27.6% from last year's record number, however this was not unexpected given the ongoing challenges of the pandemic.

There are currently 19 organisations with funding carried forward from the 2019-20 CDF round due to projects or events impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. These grants are being monitored and contact maintained with any group that has not been able to meet funding timelines. Several groups have returned funding that has not been able to be spent and two groups withdrew their grant application for this current round.

Applications were submitted by 75 organisations, with five submitting more than one application each, as allowed in the CDF Guidelines and Policy.

Council's Community Partnership team spoke with representatives from some 60 organisations to discuss potential CDF grant projects, and 64 proceeded to submit applications. There were 26 first time applicants.

Applications for the 2021-2022 period continue to reflect the broad range of community priorities seen in previous years, notably sports club equipment, community connection activities, cultural celebrations and early years support programs and play space revitalisation. There were also several significant community welfare projects building on last year's COVID-19 pandemic support programs, and others responding to mental health and family violence in Knox. Multicultural groups were well represented, as were applications for disability services. Several arts focused projects were received targeting various interest groups and there were four projects highlighting the importance of digital literacy and capacity.

2.2 Application and Assessment Process

The seven-week application period commenced on Monday, 24 May 2021 and closed on Monday, 12 June 2021.

Of the 81 applications received, two were determined to be ineligible; one being an organisation that has gaming machines and the other was not yet a not-for-profit organisation.

A further six applications withdrew for assorted reasons prior to the final assessment meeting of the Panel.

Additional details of all CDF applications, ineligible, recommended, and not recommended, are provided in Attachments 1, 2 and 3.

The assessment of the eligible grant applications was conducted by the 2021-2022 CDF Evaluation Panel (the Panel), comprising Councillor Nicole Seymour (Chair), Councillor Susan Laukens,

Councillor Yvonne Allred and community representatives, Gary Saultry, Jeff Somers and Stacey Barass.

Council officers from Council's Community Partnership Team participated in a support capacity.

The assessment process included:

1. An initial staff review of all received applications regarding basic eligibility and provision of required information;
2. A preliminary meeting of the Panel held on 27 July 2021 to confirm applications eligible for assessment and identify any conflicts of interest for Panel members with any of the received applications. Panel members with a declared conflict of interest in an application were excluded from assessment of that application and required to exclude themselves from Panel decision-making in relation to that application;
3. Consultation by CDF staff with other Council departments to confirm and/or clarify programs or strategies relevant to applications and advise of potential project duplication or any issues of concern in relation to any applications;
4. CDF Panel members had four weeks to do their individual assessment and scoring of eligible applications against criteria in the program guidelines to provide the basis for Panel discussion and deliberation; and
5. All eligible applications were then reviewed by the Panel at four meetings held over two weeks commencing on Tuesday, 31 August, at which the proposed funding allocations for each project were discussed and determined.

The Panel agreed at its preliminary meeting to not take up the option of inviting applicants for larger grants (\$15,000 and over) to make presentations to the Panel, due to the number of applications in that category and in the interests of equity across applications.

2.3 CDF Evaluation Panel Recommendations

The Panel recommends the allocation of 49 grants to a total of \$371,917.73 (GST adjusted). A table listing the recommended projects with both the amount requested and the grant amount recommended is in Attachment 2.

The community organisations recommended for funding represent a broad range of diverse needs and interests across the Knox community. The projects, programs and/activities they propose will support many different sectors of the community and enhance the contribution of many volunteers.

The Panel has recommended that 26 of these projects receive a lesser amount than requested, in response to managing the gap between the total grant amounts sought and the budget available to allocate. These recommended allocations considered priorities identified by applicants in the context of relative need and a reasonable assessment that modified project outcomes are still achievable.

The Panel considered other grant opportunities and support made available by Council and has referred six applications to the Minor Grants Program.

The potential for changing circumstances if the COVID-19 emergency continues to impact community activity was taken into account. If a project is unable to proceed in 2022 the Panel acknowledges that any reimbursed grant funds will be rolled over into next year's CDF round, in accordance with the CDF Program Policy.

Based on both the initial ranking process and subsequent discussion at the Panel meetings, 24 applications have not been recommended for funding. The Panel's recommendations considered the relative demonstration of community need, project clarity, financial capacity and the extent to which projects could be funded or supported through other avenues. The Panel also noted applications which had not adequately demonstrated local collaboration or consultation relevant to a proposed project and those which did not demonstrate a clear benefit to Knox residents.

Unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback on their applications and given an opportunity to discuss options for alternative funding that may be available locally or from other levels of Government. A table listing the projects not recommended for funding with the amount requested is in Attachment 3.

All grants are subject to funding agreements, which outline the conditions under which the grant is offered including reporting commitments and community group obligations in relation to advertising Council's support. The funding agreements also document the circumstances in which funding may be required to be returned to Council. The potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will be referenced in funding agreements and Council staff will follow up on projects that may be at risk.

3. CONSULTATION

Promotion of the 2021-2022 CDF Program commenced in March 2021 with on-line Community Training sessions for Council grants and updates of the website. Promotion continued across April, May and June with Facebook posts, notification in the Community Wellbeing Department's e-bulletin to 540 community group subscribers across Knox and an email message to previous Minor Grant and CDF applicants. Council's Communications team included an article in Knox News and produced video clips interviewing previous CDF recipients.

Bulletins and reminders were also sent out to the community through other Council department external newsletters.

Council's Community Partnerships Team were proactive in calling previous grant recipients to check on how their groups were managing with the pandemic restrictions, and fielded calls from potential applicants over the seven-week period.

More than 60 community groups/organisations were engaged through either on-line sessions or one-on-one meetings with Council's Community Partnership team to promote the opportunities of the CDF.

The CDF Evaluation Panel, which met five times throughout the assessment process, supported active consultation and collaboration between Councillors, community representatives and Council staff. This approach brings a range of perspectives and skills to the application and assessment process to support positive community grants outcomes for the municipality.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

Several projects are targeted at improving the amenity of local community facilities.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The program costs of \$371,917.73 for the recommended allocations will be covered by the following:

- \$364,787.44 - comprising approved 2021-22 budget allocation for CDF and any carry forward of returned grants; and
- \$7,186.26 - estimated GST (as applicable).

There is a difference of \$55.97 between the program costs (excl. GST) and the program budget to allow for further GST adjustment if required.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The CDF Grant Program facilitates engagement between Council and a diverse range of community groups, strengthening existing relationships, broadening understanding and initiating new collaborations. It also enables the delivery of projects/programs to contribute to the implementation of the Knox Community and Council Plan 2017-2021.

CDF grants are a means by which Council supports not-for-profit community groups and assists them to be active, sustainable and resilient. During the current COVID-19 Pandemic the CDF and the Minor Grants Program have been a valuable connection point for Council staff to check in on community activity and wellbeing and facilitate positive planning for the future.

Grants offered through the CDF Grant Program complement the information and training support provided through Council's Community Group Training Program. Both programs contribute to the broader objective of building the capacity of local groups to be self-sustaining and viable. The recommended projects will benefit and engage a wide cross-section of the Knox community and provide opportunities for many community service organisations and residents, both as service providers and participants, to enhance community wellbeing.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 1 - We value our natural and built environment

Strategy 1.3 Ensure the Knox local character is protected and enhanced through the design and location of urban development and infrastructure

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.1 - Encourage and support the community to take responsibility for their own safety, and the safety of others

Strategy 4.2 - Enhance community connectedness opportunities to improve perceptions of safety

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity

Strategy 4.5 - Support the provision of emergency services

Goal 5 - We have a strong regional economy, local employment and learning opportunities

Strategy 5.4 - Increase and strengthen local opportunities for lifelong learning, formal education pathways and skills development to improve economic capacity of the community

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.1 - Mitigate lifestyle risks such as smoking, risky alcohol consumption and drug use, obesity, lack of physical activity and poor nutrition

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.1 - Protect and preserve our local cultural heritage

Strategy 7.2 - Celebrate our diverse community

Strategy 7.3 - Strengthen community connections

Strategy 7.4 - Promote and celebrate the contribution of our volunteers

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.1 - Build, strengthen and promote good governance practices across government and community organisations

Strategy 8.2 - Enable the community to participate in a wide range of engagement activities

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

The CDF Grants Program is an important Council program that assists in building and supporting local community capacity and enhancing quality of life. It also supports community initiatives that contribute to implementation of the Knox Community and Council Plan 2017-2021.

The grants are a tangible means of supporting local ideas, activities and services that benefit residents and the Knox community more broadly, as well as acknowledging the significant volunteer effort represented in many of the grant applications.

The CDF projects recommended for funding in 2021-22 represent a range of community led activities in Knox and will support a diverse cross-section of the Knox community.

Unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback on their applications and be given an opportunity to discuss options for alternative funding that may be available locally or from other levels of government.

Successful applicants are required to sign project specific service agreements that commit them to the provision of relevant project reporting and acquittal forms.

The annual function to celebrate both the CDF and the Leisure Minor Capital Works (LMCW) Grant Programs cannot be held again this year. However, it is proposed to host an online event in November 2021 to acknowledge successful applications. A face-to-face event to enable more networking for CDF participants will be planned for early 2022, when next year's CDF program is launched.

The CDF Evaluation Panel will meet for its annual reflection meeting in late November 2021 to evaluate the assessment process of the 2021-22 CDF Program and recommend any appropriate changes to Council's Policy and Procedure.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Community Partnerships Officer, Deb Robert

Report Authorised By: Director Connected Communities, Tanya Scicluna

Attachments

1. ATTACHMENT 1 Community Development Fund 2021 22 Projects deemed ineligible [**9.2.1** - 1 page]
2. ATTACHMENT 2 Community Development Fund 2021 22 Projects Recommended [**9.2.2** - 6 pages]
3. ATTACHMENT 3 Community Development Fund 2021 22 Projects Not Recommended [**9.2.3** - 2 pages]

ATTACHMENT 1 – Community Development Fund 2021-22 - Applications deemed ineligible

Organisation	Project	Rationale
Eastside Recovery	"Aftercare" program	Organisation ineligible as not a not-for-profit.
Ferntree Gully Bowling Club	Update Equipment	Organisation ineligible due to Gaming clause in CDF Policy.

ATTACHMENT 2 – Community Development Fund 2021-22 Projects **Recommended**

Applicant	Project/Event	Brief description	Amount Requested	Grant Recommended
Alchester Village Pre-School	Outdoor PVC blinds for expansion of playspace	Increase the all-weather playspace at the kindergarten without impacting existing significant tree	\$7,000.00	\$6,300.00
Bayswater CFA (Country Fire Authority)	Bayswater CFA Conference Room System	Installation of conference room technology to enable off site members to participate in meetings and training sessions.	\$9,372.00	\$9,372.00
Be the Ripple Project Community Houses Association	Food with a Heart	Meals and social support to assist people with a life limiting illness to remain in their home.	\$20,000.00	\$15,000.00
Belgravia Foundation	All In Swim Program	Subsidised swimming lessons for CALD groups and people with disabilities and mentoring to upskill swim teachers.	\$12,908.40	\$6,630.00
Bipolar Life Victoria inc.	Bipolar Education and Support	Offering 5 workshop sessions with professional lecturers for local bipolar support group.	\$3,503.00	\$3,503.00
Boronia Bowls Club	Improved shelter	Upgrade shade structures to improve member protection from sunburn and skin cancer.	\$8,635.00	\$5,000.00
Boronia Hawks Football Netball Club Inc	Kitchen upgrade for Tormore Reserve Facility	Equipment replacement for improved energy efficiency, capacity and safety – fridge, freezer and bainmarie	\$14,776.00	\$7,240.00
Boronia Soccer Club	Junior portable soccer goals	Portable goals for Under 8 & Under 9 players to meet increased interest	\$3,415.00	\$3,415.00

Applicant	Project/Event	Brief description	Amount Requested	Grant Recommended
Bridges Connecting Communities	Digital Literacy Champion	Coordinate training program for seniors to support development of digital skills, safety and confidence	\$20,000.00	\$10,000.00
Community of Benedikt Reserve Incorporate Association	Mural for Benedikt Reserve Pavilion	Improve appearance of pavilion, bring community together, involve local students in design and implementation	\$19,800.00	\$6,000.00
Coonara Community House	Tight Knit Connections	An event to promote community group knitting for Salvation Army - learning new skills and meeting new people.	\$3,000.00	\$1,500.00
Coonara Community House	Social connect	Develop and co-ordinate an engagement program specifically for people over 50 with barriers to social engagement.	\$14,550.00	\$12,150.00
Different Journeys	Autism Family Swim Nights Inclusion & Connection	Consolidate successful model for people with autism and their families to participate in recreational experiences.	\$19,190.00	\$15,000.00
Eastern Area Multiple Birth Association (EAMBA)	Knox Multiple Birth Association Playgroup Trial	Provide support for multiple birth families in Knox.	\$3,942.60	\$3,942.60
Eastern Domestic Violence Service	Level Playgroup for Multicultural Families	Partnering with Migrant Information Centre to deliver culturally sensitive playgroups to promote gender equality and respectful relationships.	\$19,766.00	\$19,766.00
Fab Nobs Theatre	Keyboards, Speaker Accessories & Vacuum	Equipment to support musicians and volunteers in musical productions.	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00
Ferntree Gully News	Supporting Gully News Volunteers	Recognition of volunteers producing and distributing the newspaper and software platform for digital version.	\$3,480.00	\$1,400.00

Applicant	Project/Event	Brief description	Amount Requested	Grant Recommended
Ferntree Gully Tennis Club	All Abilities Tennis Program	Provide opportunity for people with disabilities to access tennis in a way that is safe, fun and inclusive.	\$10,000.00	\$5,000.00
Ferntree Gully Traders Assoc	Ferntree Gully Village Food Trail	Strengthen sense of community by promoting food as a connection with Ferntree Gully businesses and to foster participation in the Traders Association.	\$11,250.00	\$11,250.00
Foothills Community Care Inc.	Foothills Community Casseroles	Meet the increased demand for the Community Casseroles service from people impacted by COVID.	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
Glengollan Village	Lets Get Connected	Technology stations to encourage and build residents' confidence with online services.	\$8,500.00	\$4,250.00
Heany Park Scout Group	Heater for scout hall	Split system to improve amenity in the hall and replace stolen heater.	\$3,950.00	\$3,950.00
Hindi Niketan Inc	Festival of Colors - Holi	Enhance the inter-cultural understanding and will help improve social harmony in the multicultural Australian society.	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Hungarian Community Co-Op Association Ltd	Refurbishment at the Hungarian Community Centre	Replace old tables with lighter, better designed and user friendly tables.	\$7,562.50	\$4,000.00
Interchange Outer East	Better Together Conference	Build capacity of people with disability, parents and carers of young people with disability, as well as staff and volunteers of the community sector, with in-person and online sessions.	\$10,000.00	\$9,250.00

Applicant	Project/Event	Brief description	Amount Requested	Grant Recommended
Jesuit Social Services	This is Christmas! Workshop & community event	Develop community leadership skills and celebrate the talents of youth with an intellectual disability in a collaborative performance event.	\$4,158.00	\$4,158.00
Knox & District Toy Library Inc.	Inclusive Fun, Play & Learning	Improve accessibility and inclusion for children with disabilities	\$10,011.02	\$7,500.00
Knox Chinese Elderly Citizens Club	Active Healthy Ageing & Living	Equipment for social activities and community meals	\$3,989.00	\$3,989.00
Knox City Football Club	Every Little Helps	Equipment to support volunteers and members.	\$4,550.00	\$1,458.00
Knox Community Gardens Society Inc	New Raised Plots and New Garden Plots	Increase number of available plots and availability of raised plots.	\$7,928.40	\$7,928.40
Knox Community Playgroups Inc	Playgroup Support Officer Pilot	Develop an auspice model to support volunteer-run community playgroups in Knox.	\$15,388.00	\$15,388.00
Knox Environment Society	Volunteer Hub	Set up an area for volunteers to relax, socialise, host talks and meetings.	\$5,232.43	\$5,232.43
Knox Historical Society Inc.	Conservation Workshop	Workshop for general public with expert heritage conservators on conservation of paper documents and photographs, with training for Society volunteers.	\$3,822.00	\$3,822.00
Knox Infolink	Stage 2 - COVID 2IC Caseworker/Volunteer Support	Increase, train and support the volunteer team to be better equipped to meet the fluctuating demands COVID has placed on ER service	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00

Applicant	Project/Event	Brief description	Amount Requested	Grant Recommended
Knox Learning Alliance	Festival of Food	Promote community connections through a series of 5 multicultural food events to be held throughout 2022 hosted at the 5 Knox Community Houses.	\$7,500.00	\$5,500.00
Liberty Avenue 3-year-old kindergarten and on behalf of Liberty Avenue Playgroup	The Cosy Cubby Project- Two groups, one home.	Replace existing rotting cubby and provide positive collaborative project to re-engage kinder and playgroup families	\$8,173.57	\$7,070.00
Lions club of Rowville	Buying new equipment	Purchase of new snow cone machine for festival and events	\$3,014.71	\$2,000.00
Relationships Australia Victoria	You Are Not Alone	Pilot program that aims to create a safe and supportive environment for women in Knox affected by family violence.	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
Rotary Club of Bayswater Inc.	The 48th Annual Knox Art Exhibition	Provide local artists and photographers the opportunity to display and sell their original work at an established and well-known exhibition.	\$8,000.00	\$5,000.00
Rowville Men's Shed Inc	New computer, printer & software	Updated computer equipment and software for club activities and administration	\$3,850.80	\$3,850.80
SLAMS Music Theatre Company	Procurement of Audio Equipment	Suite of audio equipment for ongoing use in productions and provide lower cost resource for others in community	\$14,782.00	\$14,782.00
Tamminya House Op Shop	Upgrading interior of Op Shop	Carpet replacement and painting for op shop supporting crisis accommodation units.	\$5,188.80	\$5,188.80
Templeton Tennis Club	Grooming equipment and windbreaks for courts 7 & 8	Wind reduction screens to reduce wind interference around two courts	\$6,530.70	\$4,891.70

Applicant	Project/Event	Brief description	Amount Requested	Grant Recommended
The Basin Music Festival Association Incorporated	The Basin Music Festival	Community-led music festival promoting local talent and live music.	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
The Haven Day Centre	Client/Carer Outings	Day trip outings for people with dementia and their carers	\$10,620.00	\$5,820.00
Upper Ferntree Gully Football Club	1.Goal Post Pad Replacement 2.Junior Club BBQ Area	Equipment for junior football club activities	\$10,672.00	\$5,385.00
Wantirna South Football Club	Upgrade of Cooling Systems & Internal Lighting	Replacement with existing equipment with more energy efficient cooling system and lighting	\$6,510.00	\$5,035.00
Zomi Melbourne East	Khuado - year end Harvest Festival	Celebration of Zomi culture and wellbeing for the refugee community from Myanmar in eastern suburbs and Knox.	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00
Zonta International Melbourne East	Buy a Gazebo,2 banners and 8 orange lady statues	Equipment for activities to raise awareness of domestic violence and advocate for girls and women	\$4,000.00	\$3,500.00
			Total Amount Requested \$469,021.93	Total Amount Recommended \$371,917.73
Total Amount Requested by all 79 eligible applicants received \$690,366.85				

ATTACHMENT 3 -- Projects **not recommended for funding through 2021-22 Community Development Fund**

Applicant	Project/Event	Rationale	Amount Requested
Australian Red Cross First Aid and Mental Health	Learning to save lives on World First Aid	Insufficient demonstration of consultation/collaboration or necessary partnerships	\$18,672.73
Australian Search and Rescue K9 Inc.	Equipment for land search and rescue dog teams	Needs more clarity about the benefit to Knox and evidence of local partnerships	\$8,148.68
Bengali Puja and Cultural Society of Victoria	Durgotsov Festival 2022	Insufficient detail and relevance to Knox community	\$5,000.00
Colchester Park Pare-School	A cubbyhouse to enhance accessibility and learning	Insufficient detail provided and further consultation with Council required about proposed structure	\$14,696.00
Coonara Community House	Strengthening Families	Multiple applicant – other applications stronger	\$9,666.59
Didi Bahini Samaj Victoria	Let's Dance! Promoting community well-being	Further scoping and detail to demonstrate benefit to Knox – recommend referral to Minor Grants program	\$3,000.00
Ferntree Gully Traders Assoc	Ferntree Gully Village Fair	Insufficient financial documentation and clarity of project approach relative to other applications	\$15,000.00
Interchange Outer East	Volunteer Engagement Camp 2022	Insufficient documentation of project approach and potential risk of COVID impact	\$10,243.80
Knox City Tennis Club	Play Uniforms	Insufficient demonstration of financial need and community benefit relative to other applications	\$5,000.00
Knox Community Gardens Society Inc	New Fence Line Trees & Shrubs and New Herb Garden	Multiple applicant – other application stronger. Other funding options could be explored	\$7,372.87
Knox Gardens Tennis Club	Replace old Fridges. Replace broken T.V.	Refer project to Minor Grants Program	\$3,000.00
Life Saving Victoria	Survival Swimming for Knox Youth	Stronger grant applications demonstrated greater community need	\$17,076.00
Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Limited	Chinese Seniors Information Sessions Project	Refer project to Minor Grants Program	\$3,021.00

Applicant	Project/Event	Rationale	Amount Requested
Polish Community Care Services Inc	Polish Seniors Diversity Picnic	Insufficient demonstration of financial need. Refer to Minor Grants for partial assistance.	\$5,000.00
Reading Out of Poverty Inc	Books from Birth	Insufficient demonstration of consultation/collaboration or necessary partnerships	\$8,000.00
Ringwood Community Garden Inc.	Installation of Raised Vegetable Beds	Insufficient detail and demonstration of benefit to Knox Refer to Minor Grants for partial assistance.	\$3,786.09
Rotary Club of Knox	Simple Steps Solutions Mental Health Support	Insufficient demonstration of consultation/collaboration or necessary local partnerships. Further scoping and documentation to clarify proposed model.	\$15,000.00
Studfield Wantirna Community News Inc.	Volunteers are Vital at SWCN	Stronger grant applications demonstrated greater community need	\$3,120.00
Temple Society Australia	"Building better mental health"	Insufficient demonstration of consultation/collaboration or necessary partnerships. Further scoping and detail needed.	\$9,152.06
Templeton Tennis Club	Replace Seating Equipment	Multiple applicant – other application stronger.	\$9,000.00
The Links at Waterford Residents Association Inc	Workshop Extension and Fit-out	Insufficient demonstration of financial need relative to other applications. Refer to Minor Grants for partial assistance.	\$5,624.80
The Onemda Association	Partnership through Sport	Insufficient clarity of project plan or unclear on consultation/collaboration or necessary partnerships	\$19,918.00
VBRA Knox Inc.	VBRA Developmental Camp/Program	Insufficient financial documentation and clarity of project approach relative to other applications	\$11,700.00
YMCA Victoria	Knox Youth Cafe / Training Hub	Insufficient demonstration of financial need and sustainability of proposed model. Further scoping and detail of program approach required.	\$11,146.30
		Total amount not recommended	\$221,344.92

9.3 Knox COVID-19 Household Survey Results

SUMMARY: Coordinator Health Planning and Liveability, Kylie Osborne

The COVID-19 Pandemic continues to impact the health and wellbeing of our community in ever-evolving ways. As we continue to adapt to our changing circumstances, the prevalent social and health outcomes and community priorities are equally agile. To better understand the persisting health and wellbeing outcomes and concerns for the Knox community, a second iteration of the COVID-19 Household Survey was fielded in July 2021, with the first conducted in June 2020.

Whilst the results of the second survey presented new insights into the evolving concerns of the community, key health and social issues continue to impact with only minor improvement, indicating a continued need for Council to prioritise COVID-19 Pandemic recovery focused health and wellbeing initiatives. Encouragingly, the issues of concern remain in areas where Council continues to remain responsive.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the findings of the second wave COVID-19 Household Survey July 2021, focusing on the new priority areas and existing key health and social issues requiring continued attention.

1. INTRODUCTION

The 2020 Knox COVID-19 Household Survey brought into focus the real impacts of the Pandemic on the Knox community as our new health crises made its impression on how we lived our lives. Twelve months on, and with a rolling and ever-changing Pandemic environment, the updated 2021 COVID-19 Household Survey results bring a new emphasis on the issues that remain every present; those that have worsened or improved and new emerging areas of concern. The impacts of 2020 are most definitely still with our community, however, lockdowns, inability to plan and vaccination concerns dominate the long term impacts identified. This report provides an overview of the 2021 survey findings. For full results, refer to Attachment.1.

2. DISCUSSION

The 2021 iteration of the COVID-19 Household Survey replicated the 2020 approach to ensure the data collected was as closely comparable as possible. Questions were largely kept the same, with changes to reflect relevance and the inclusion of some additional measures (refer Attachment 1, pages 25-26 for Survey amendments).

The Survey was fielded between 20 May to 6 July, 2021. Notably during this time, a number of restrictions were implemented, causing ongoing changes and varying impacts on the community (refer Attachment 1, page 24 for restriction changes).

The respondents were segmented into two discrete groups: the first being a randomised sample drawn by a computer system using the rates database. The Survey was sent via email, or where no email address was identified, by mail. These two methods resulted in a combined initial reach of 7,236, with 565 failing to reach the resident (bounced emails or returned mail). The response rate for this cohort between email and mail was 10% and 9% respectively, 4% lower than the 2020

iteration. By the end of the survey period, a total of n=688 completed surveys were received from the representative sample.

The second group included those who had registered for future participation after being involved in the initial survey (n=59) and those who accessed the Survey via a link distributed through networks (n=116). This distribution approach yielded 17% of the equivalent 2020 sample size.

To ensure the sample represents the overall population, a weighting is attributed to responses.

For instance, in the representative Survey, 5% of respondents were aged 18-34, whereas in the Census 29% of the population is 18-34. Therefore, the weighting means that each 18-34 year old in the sample acts as if it is 5.8 responses in the weighted results. Conversely, 44% of the representative sample was 65+ years old, compared to 20% in the Census, so each 65+ year old in the sample acts like 0.45 responses in the weighted results. (ASDF Research 2021).

Table 1 illustrates the distribution of responses across locations comparative to Census location.

Table 1

Location	Census	Representative Sample	General Access Sample	Representative Sample	General Access Sample
Boronia/Bayswater	22%	24%	22%	27%	19%
Wantirna/Wantirna South	21%	21%	23%	20%	19%
Rowville	22%	17%	17%	17%	17%
Ferntree Gully	17%	21%	22%	20%	25%
Knoxfield & Scoresby	9%	8%	9%	9%	10%
Hills	9%	10%	8%	7%	10%

Table 2 - Responses by Ward

Ward	% Response	Ward	% Response
Dinsdale	11%	Friberg	11%
Baird	11%	Scott	10%
Collier	11%	Taylor	9%
Chandler	15%	Tirhatuan	8%
Dobson	14%		

The 2021 response sees a gender split similar to Census data, and age demographics were also similar across the 35–49 and 50-64 age groups, however, young people were notably under-represented, with people over 65 years over represented – the highest respondent group.

Respondents were heavily represented by home owners and couples with no children, with people who speak languages other than English at home under-represented.

The base survey questions covered the following topic areas:

- Salient improvements and setbacks;
- Specific Coronavirus impacts, with a focus on employment, housing, safety, physical health, parenting responsibilities, and food/groceries;
- Behaviour change since the Pandemic (specific to health and wellbeing: exercise, healthy eating, alcohol consumption, social isolation, gambling);
- Impacts on social connection and mental health;
- Financial vulnerability and employment;
- Safety;
- Parenting and caregiving;
- Resilience;
- Vaccinations; and
- Communications.

2.1 Results Snapshot

2.1.1 Overall Concerns

Four new emerging general areas of concern were raised in the 2021 survey including:

- Lockdowns (19%);
- Vaccine rollout (11%);
- Travel restrictions (8%); and
- Quarantine effectiveness (8%).

The results also bring to light six key existing areas for continued monitoring or action by Council:

- Mental Health;
- Physical Health;
- Safety;
- Financial Wellbeing;
- Social Isolation; and
- Housing.

These items align with the results from the 2020 survey and importantly are areas already prioritised by Council and detailed in the new Council and Community plans.

2.1.2 Council's Response

Following the 2020 survey iteration, renewed and focused attention was directed to the identified areas of concern. Actions undertaken include the development of the Mental Health Action Plan, establishment of the Mental Health Roundtable, settings-based action on social isolation for older people, food relief grants, business support and vaccination awareness for our culturally diverse community. Examples of concrete action and outcomes are evident across Council in response to the needs of our community and this work continues to be demonstrated and is further reinforced in Council's draft Council and Community Plans.

2.1.3 Setbacks and Improvements

The 2021 Survey was amended to capture personal “top of mind” concerns regarding perceptions of the longer term setbacks or improvements. Restrictions to travel and personal activities was the stand out setback (31%), followed by continued social isolation/inability to connect with family and friends, and employment and financial stressors. Both the inability to plan and effects on long term local business and economic impact were raised for the first time (4% each).

Long term improvements illustrated a considerable departure from the short term improvements in the 2020 results. Family time, slower pace and saving money featured in 2020, however, 2021 sees improved work environment the predominant gain, with better public hygiene practice and community connectedness also acknowledged.

2.1.4 Vaccinations

The 2021 Survey included specific questions pertaining to the COVID-19 vaccine, with 75% indicating they have either already received part or whole of the vaccine or intend to do so. This high rate is likely due to the heavy representation of older age respondents. Approximately 10% indicated that they are unlikely to get the vaccine and those who speak a language other than English show the highest level of hesitancy at 22%.

The two main concerns regarding the vaccine were either the rushed roll-out or vaccine hesitancy. Of those unlikely to have the vaccine (n=101) the primary reasons were:

- Uncertainty about the long term impacts;
- Health risks such as blood clots;
- Current health conditions; and
- Perception that they are at low risk of contracting COVID-19.

Hesitancy was most predominantly seen amongst 18-29 year olds, with willingness to have the vaccine correlating with growing age.

2.1.5 Safety

Only a minor reduction was evident in the proportion of people reporting an overall impact of the Pandemic on perceptions of safety, however, whilst overall the number is similar (71% in 2021, 79% in 2020), the reasons for feeling unsafe have altered to:

- Significant increase in people feeling unsafe due to anger and violence in the community (up to 35%, from 23%);
- Increased crime (23%, from 16%); and
- An increase from 2% to 5% reporting anger and violence in the home.

2.1.6 Housing

Whilst the overall impact on housing remains at a consistent 17%, the degree of impact has made a significant shift with almost double the number of people reporting a “big” impact – jumping from 4% to 7%, with the balance of responses indicating a slight impact.

2.1.7 Health Behaviours

Emotional, social and physical wellbeing continue to remain a concern with:

- 41% indicate they have not returned to pre-COVID-19 state for exercise;

- 23% are still not eating as healthily despite access and availability to groceries improving significantly;
- 1.9% had accessed emergency relief food; and
- Concerningly, 21% continue to consume more alcohol than pre-COVID-19 times. The rate is lowering for men, with only 18% now drinking more than before, whilst women reporting additional consumption from 18% now up to 25%, and people 18-34 increasing significantly from 22% to 34%.

2.1.8 Mental Health

Reports on various mental health measures continue to remain high with 72% indicating an impact in some way. Whilst individual levels of anxiety have fallen we still see 32% indicating an inability to relax, feeling insecure, confused or worried, with 27% reporting ongoing stress from juggling demands of work, kids, house and finances. Reports of mental health impacts and worry were more commonly reported by females. Impact on mental health was reported highest in the 18-34 year age group (82%), however, is at a similar level to 2020.

The mental health measures, however, should be considered in partnership with the health behaviours results, as we know reduced exercise, increased addictive behaviours such as alcohol consumption and gambling (increased from 1% to 3%) and poor food choices can correlate and may be responses to underlying mental health concerns.

2.1.9 Financial Vulnerability and Employment

Respondent financial vulnerability improved across all indicators, however, it still remains a persistent concern, with:

- 13% named employment or financial stress as a “top of mind” setback caused by the pandemic;
- Overall, 56% report an impact on their financial position;
- People with a language other than English, and 18-34year olds report the highest level of impact at 62% and 65% respectively;
- 24% continue to receive less income;
- Overall, financial stress was less indicated, reducing to 9% from 17%; and
- Impact on employment was significantly higher amongst 18-34 year olds (89%).

2.1.10 Work Environment

Work environment was a new question added in the 2021 Survey, including changes in work locations:

- Moving forward, 13% expect to continue to work from home in some capacity; and
- 14% of business owners said they have fewer staff.

2.1.11 Resilience

Very little change in resilience measures was evident, with 41% of people continuing to indicate they do not have people they can rely on in an emergency. An improvement was seen in a reduction to 16% (down from 20%) now indicating they could not access \$2,000 in an emergency.

2.1.12 Parenting and Caregiving

Parents and carers increasingly bear the burden of rolling restriction changes with 72% (up from 67%) reporting an impact on their parenting responsibilities.

2.1.13 Transport

Transport concerns saw a rise, up to 50%, likely due to concerns around the inability to plan travel.

2.1.14 Communications

Encouragingly, the community is seeking COVID-19 Pandemic information from reputable sources such as the Coronavirus Helpline and GP's, a significant move away from media sources.

3. CONSULTATION

The same professional researcher from ASDF Research was engaged to conduct both iterations of the Survey.

The initiative was led by the Community Wellbeing Department. Using the 2020 Survey as a base, officers from across Council were consulted to ensure the revisions were relevant to the current context and any new measures could be captured.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

No environmental or amenity issues arose during the development of this Survey. However, Survey results may indicate implications for environment or amenity issues currently and in the future for the community.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

This survey is a responsive initiative resulting from the COVID-19 Pandemic. This second wave COVID19 Household Survey was funded through the Community Wellbeing operational budget.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As with the 2020 Survey, there was an understanding that some questions were personal and potentially stigmatising, such as disclosing financial status. A clear explanation of the Survey, including confidentiality, was highlighted in a letter with the paper Survey and in the electronic Survey preamble. All ethical issues follow the same concern when adopting the model in 2020 and were once again applicable and addressed by ensuring care was taken in the development, collection, storage and use of the data and Survey.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.3 - Strengthen community connections

Goal 8- We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.2 Enable the community to participate in a wide range of engagement activities

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

The two Covid-19 Household surveys have provided Council with a rich data set and an evidence base for action and monitoring of key community health and social issues. Encouragingly, the findings reaffirm the importance and relevance of the work currently underway and prioritised across Council, but also present us with new opportunities for where we may strengthen our impact.

As the effects of the pandemic endure, the data will continue to inform and guide our direction and provide us with a baseline for our progress. Importantly, this community data will also help inform our community agencies and partners who work alongside us to progress outcomes for the Knox community.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Coordinator Health Planning and Liveability, Kylie Osborne

Report Authorised By: Director, Connected Communities, Tanya Scicluna

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - Draft Knox COVI D-19 Community Impact Survey Results [9.3.1 - 65 pages]

Attachment 1

DRAFT

KNOX
your city

**Covid-19 Community
Impact Survey**
Wave 2 survey findings
July 2021



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Prepared by ASDF Research
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 19 July 2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

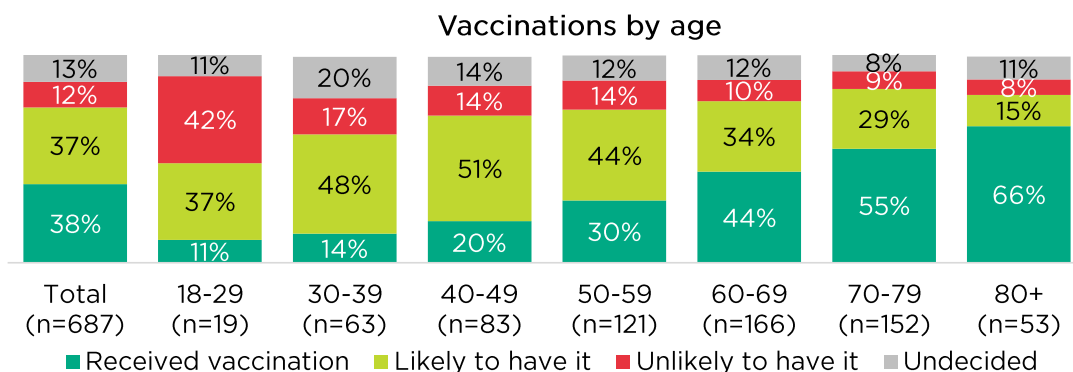


This report presents the findings from the second wave of Covid-19 community impacts research conducted in the City of Knox. This survey was in field from 20 May to 6 July 2021, and used representative random sampling of the rates database to achieve n=688 representative responses, alongside n=175 general community responses through distributing an online link and paper surveys through Council networks.

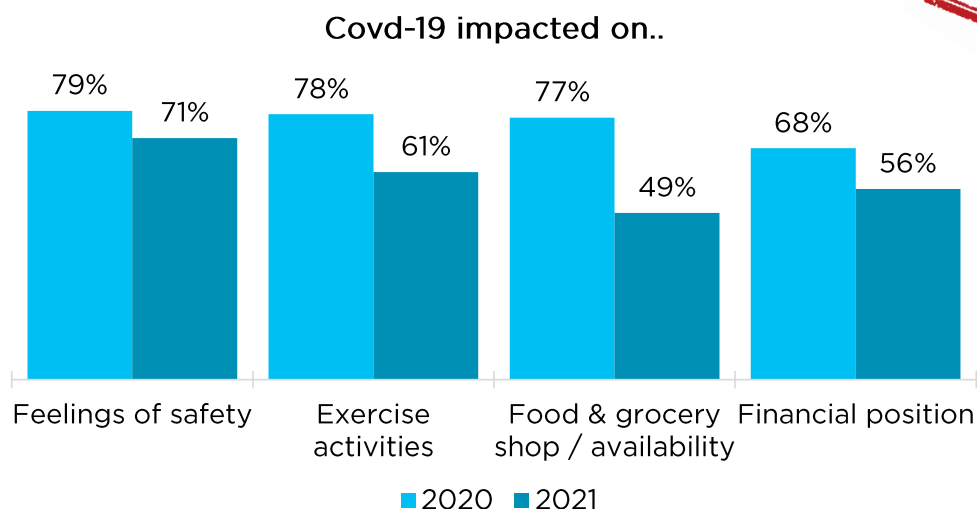
The aim of the research was to track how community experiences are changing through the pandemic. For most of the fieldwork period, metropolitan Melbourne was experiencing a lockdown due to Covid-19 cases (see [appendix](#) for details).

The main findings were:

- People are keen to **start travelling** and having holidays without the risk of getting caught in snap lockdowns. Many are concerned that restricted travel options are going to be a long-term impact of the pandemic.
- **Vaccines** are the most salient issue for the community at the moment. Many have been vaccinated already, with high vaccination rates amongst older people. However, some have concerns about the long term impact, and many, particularly those who speak a language other than English, are undecided about whether they will get the vaccine (highlighting an opportunity for better communication with this segment).



- The main recognised **opportunities for long-term improvements** from the Covid-19 experience are a shift towards more flexible work options for improved work life balance, better public hygiene practices, and social cohesion.

DRAFT

- Overall there is less widespread concern about getting sick when in public spaces, but there are still concerns about safety, with a shift towards perceptions of violence and crime cited as safety issues.
- While most of the community are still experiencing some impact on socialising, leisure, food availability, finances and work, fewer are experiencing a big impact in 2021 when compared to 2020.
- There are small yet growing segments experiencing big impacts on transport and housing.
- People are gradually returning to pre-Covid-19 levels in terms of exercise and talking to neighbours, but there hasn't been any shift towards healthier eating, and the incidence of people drinking more alcohol than pre-Covid-19 remains constant.
- Mental health impacts continue to be widespread, although the current survey does show some reduction in the proportion of people reporting anxiety.
- Fewer people are experiencing difficulty getting food and groceries, but that is not transferring into healthier eating.
- The extent of impact on finances and work is gradually declining, but there are still over half of the population experiencing an impact. Most of those who switched to working from home had returned to work for at least some of their working week, although 32% are reporting more flexibility (either still working from home or working from home some of the time).
- Resilience has had a slight improvement in line with a reduction in financial challenges, with fewer reporting that they couldn't access \$2,000 in a week for an emergency.
- When seeking out information, there has been a shift away from word of mouth and media sources, with more reliance on GPs.

INTRODUCTION

DRAFT

This report presents the findings of the second wave of community impact surveying for Knox City Council.

This document shows how things have changed compared to the 2020 findings. Please see the 2020 research report for further detail, including analysis descriptions (thematic, statistical and weighting) and questions asked.

Methodology



For this research, respondents were sourced using two methods:

1. **Random proportional representative sampling of the rates database.** Selected addresses were matched against Council's contact database to source email addresses. Where an email address was available the household was sent an email invitation to the survey. If no email address was available they were posted a paper version of the survey (with an option to complete online included in the cover letter). This sample provides insights from across the municipality, rather than just those who are engaged with Council's communication channels and services and has been weighted in line with age and gender within each locality (interlocking).
2. **General access online survey.** This was distributed through Council networks and services, and a paper form was available upon request. This sample was completed by those who are engaged with Council and interested in the topic.

Some analysis presents **combined data** showing responses across the whole sample.

Report design

Throughout this report, data has been colour-coded as follows (2021 is the darker shade):

2021	2020	
		Representative data
		General access data
		Combined data

Where statistically significant variations have been identified for 2021 when compared to 2020, this has been indicated with a ↓ to show significant reduction or ↑ to show a significant increase.



Survey timing

A lockdown was announced soon after commencement of the survey fieldwork period (survey period 20 May to 6 July, lockdown from 25 May). During the survey period the restrictions varied a number of times. Full details of dates and changes can be found [at the end of this document](#).

Weighting explained

The weight of each individual survey response towards the overall results is adjusted to balance out demographic variations in the sample. That way your results better represent the views of the overall population. For instance, in the representative survey 5% of respondents were aged 18-34, whereas in the census 29% of the population is 18-34. Therefore the weighting means that each 18-34 year old in the sample acts as if it is 5.8 responses in the weighted results. Conversely, 44% of the representative sample was 65+ years old, compared to 20% in the census, so each 65+ year old in the sample acts like 0.45 responses in the weighted results. We applied an interlocking weighting to the representative sample covering age, gender and region.

SURVEY COVERAGE

The response rate for the representative survey was slightly lower than the first round, likely due to 'covid-fatigue' (people are sick of talking about it). This is a finding in itself as it suggests that Covid-19 is less of a critical issue for some people. The final sample size for the representative sample (n=688) is robust enough to identify how community impacts are changing.

Representative survey mode	Returned	Sent	Response rate	2020 response rate
Mail out, online	41	4,760	10%	14%
Mail-out, paper	430			
Email	217	2,476	9%	13%

Email - 2,973 sent, 497 bounced. Mail - 4,828 sent, 68 return to sender

An invite was sent to those who registered for future participation during the round 1 research, achieving n=59. These have been included in the general access sample. The general access survey, distributed through Council networks, only achieved n=116 responses in 2021, which represents only 17% of the 2020 sample size.

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The following tables show a summary of the distribution of respondents across locations and demographics, compared to the 2016 Census and the 2020 survey. In these tables the Rep column shows the representative sample results, while the GA column shows the 'General access' survey results.

Distribution of the survey across both sample sources is relatively in line with population distribution across the five Knox regions. Alignment of the representative survey component is slightly better in 2021 than the initial survey in 2020.

	2021			2020	
	Census	Rep	GA	Rep	GA
Boronia and Bayswater	22%	24%	22%	27%	19%
Wantirna and Wantirna South	21%	21%	23%	20%	19%
Rowville	22%	17%	17%	17%	17%
Ferntree Gully	17%	21%	22%	20%	25%
Knoxfield and Scoresby	9%	8%	9%	9%	10%
Hills	9%	10%	8%	7%	10%

It was possible to break out the representative data by ward (matching address to ward), as outlined in the following table (not weighted). However, there were no meaningful differences in findings when analysing data by ward.

Ward	Sample	Percent	Ward	Sample	Percent
Dinsdale	76	11%	Friberg	76	11%
Baird	78	11%	Scott	66	10%
Collier	75	11%	Taylor	61	9%
Chandler	100	15%	Tirhatuan	57	8%
Dobson	98	14%			

DRAFT

In the 2021 wave of surveying, the gender distribution of the representative survey is almost in line with the census. There is a notable under-representation of younger people, although this is typical of social research in the sector.

The representative survey also shows a slight under-representation of those who speak a language other than English and households with children; and an over-representation of people who own their home outright and couple households with with no children at home. These are similar distributions to those experienced in the first round of surveying.

	2021			2020	
	Census	Rep	GA	Rep	GA
Male	49%	44%	25%	41%	13%
Female	51%	54%	74%	57%	86%
18-34	29%	5%	15%	11%	19%
35-49	26%	20%	24%	22%	45%
50-64	26%	31%	32%	28%	22%
65+	20%	44%	29%	37%	13%
LOE	25%	13%	11%	18%	7%
Owned outright	33%	51%	43%	46%	25%
Mortgage	41%	31%	40%	35%	54%
Renter	17%	12%	11%	12%	15%
One person	20%	21%	16%	17%	8%
Children at home	50%	33%	48%	35%	61%
Couple no children	24%	38%	27%	36%	21%
Household income <\$650 per week	15%	21%	17%	22%	14%

CONCERNS



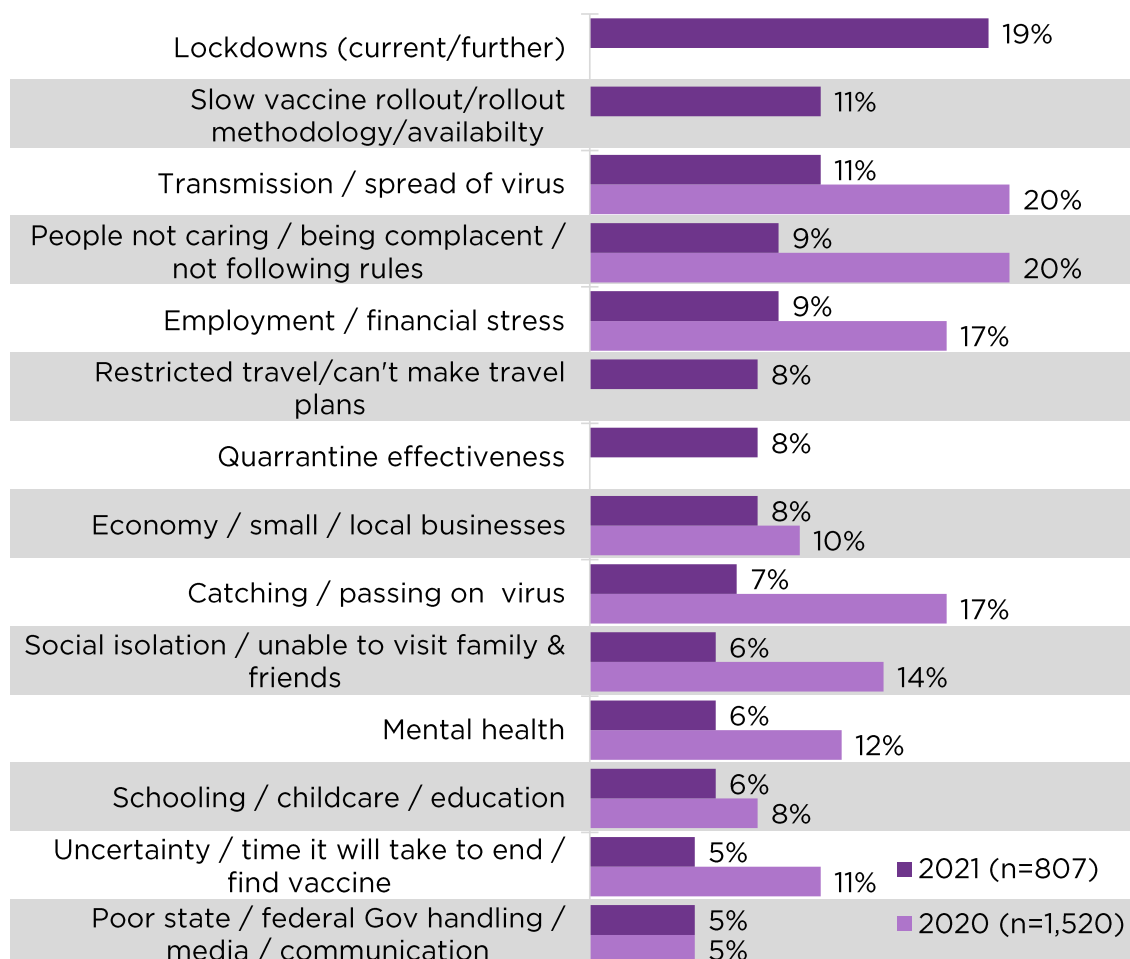
In 2020 the top two concerns being mentioned were relating to transmission of the virus and other people not following the rules. In 2021, whilst concern about the transmission of Covid-19 remains in the top 3, it is less commonly mentioned; instead there has been an emerging concern about ongoing lockdowns and their potential impact on business and the community.

In 2021 the vaccine has become one of the key concerns, specific to lack of availability, perceptions that the roll-out has been too slow, or that the methodology is flawed. A later section of this report explores [vaccines](#) in further detail.

The other key concerns to emerge in 2021 were relating to inability to make travel or holiday plans, and questioning quarantine effectiveness. Catching the virus and employment stresses were less salient in 2021.

Frequent lockdowns, restrictions to movement,, impact on business and lifestyle

Concerns



TOP-OF-MIND SETBACKS AND IMPROVEMENTS

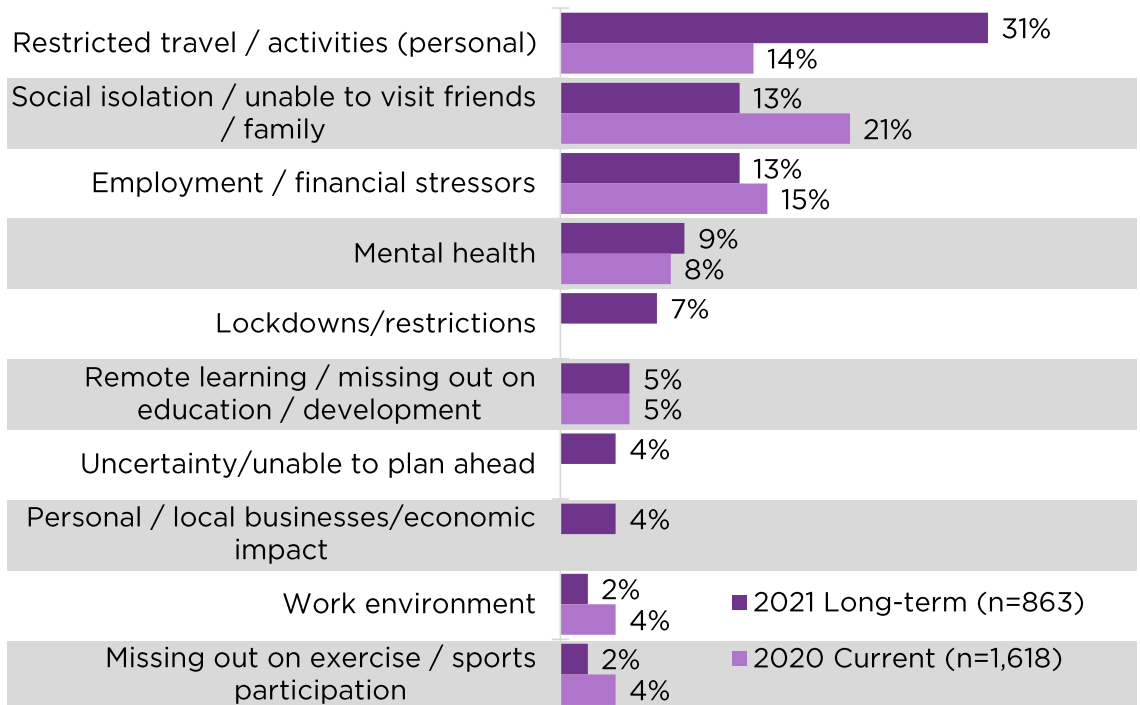
In 2020, respondents were asked to specify the current setbacks and improvements from Covid-19. In 2021, the question was revised to seek out perceived **long term impacts**. In 2021, 79% of respondents mentioned a potential long term setback and 62% suggested a long-term improvement.

Findings suggest that there is an expectation of long term setbacks relating to social isolation and employment / financial stress, factors that were also commonly being experienced in 2020. The stand out potential long term setback in 2021 relates to restricted travel due to restrictions and fear of getting stuck due to snap lockdowns; and the impacts that has on ability to see family and have holidays.

I stopped planning day trips and holidays simply because I might be cut off from returning to Melbourne if there is another unexpected lock-down.

limited travel, especially oversea traveling is the main concern from me. I can't see any possibility international travel will be back to normal in 2 years.

Setbacks





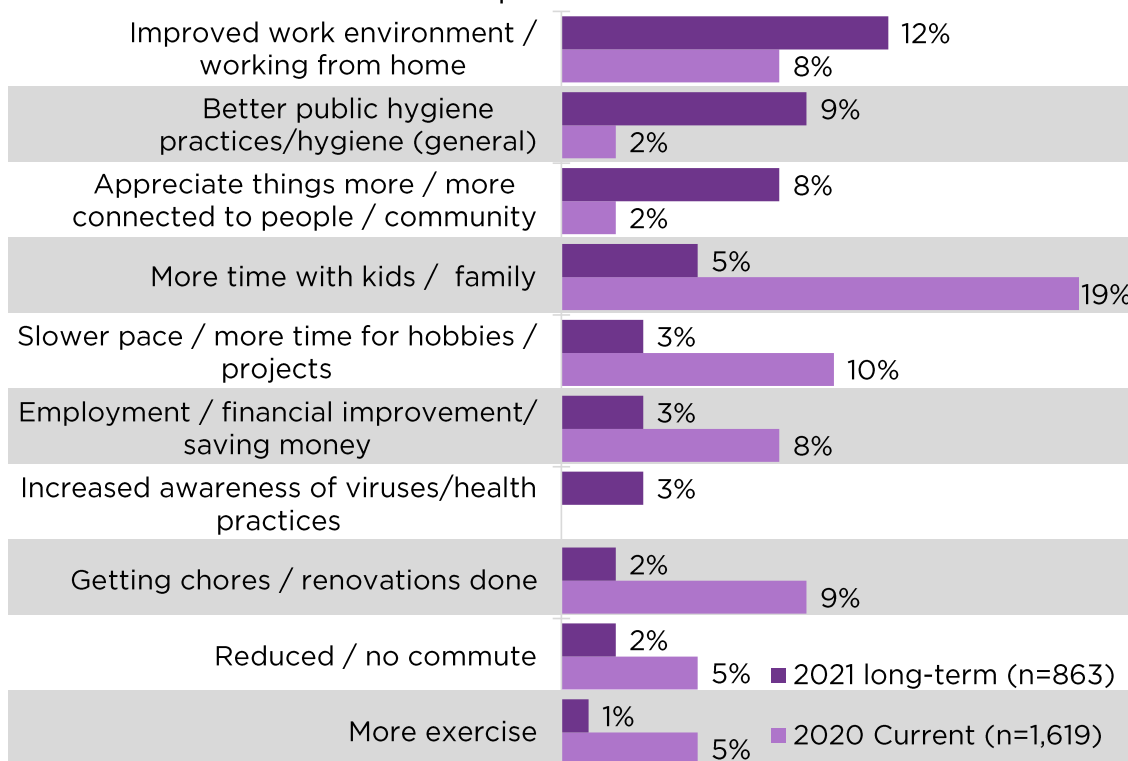
In 2020 the main immediate stated improvements were being able to spend more time with children and the family, and the slower pace. These are seldom put forth as a potential long-term improvements in 2021, as during much of the survey fieldwork period schools were back to on-site, and many had returned to their workplaces for at least some of their work hours (see [employment](#) section).

Instead, the main long-term improvements mentioned in 2021 were relating to the work environment (specifically the opportunity for more remote / flexible working), improved public hygiene and more community connections.

business - more meetings are conducted via internet - more efficient use of resources.

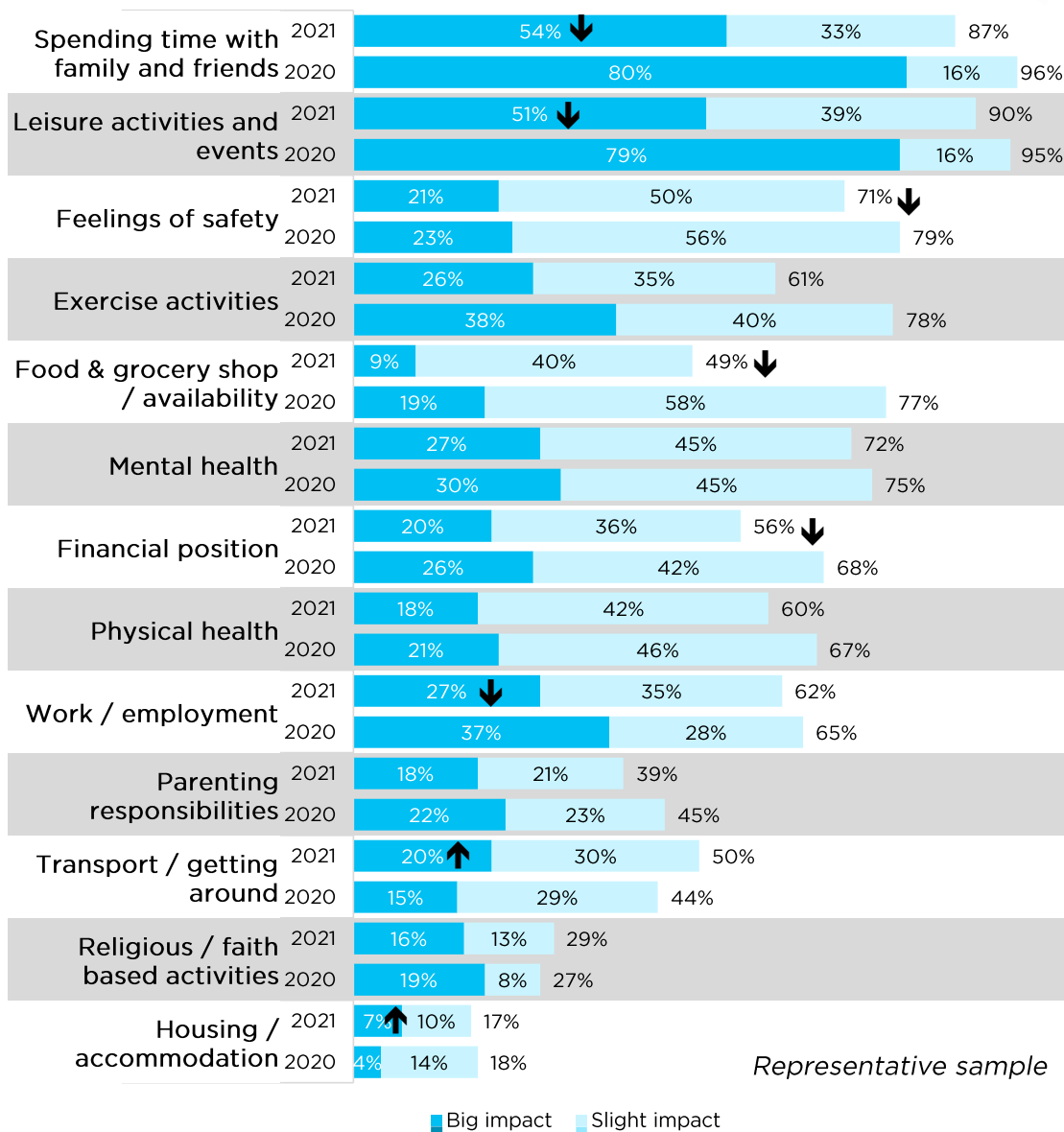
Working from home is so much safer, reducing the risk of bringing covid-19 back to the family (both the elderly and the young). In addition, more time can be put at work instead of travelling a total of about 3 hours daily. Going to the city takes approximately 50 minutes. With the daily traffic jams, travelling to work easily takes about 1.5 hours one way. All these time is now better spent.

Improvements



IMPACTS OF COVID-19

DRAFT



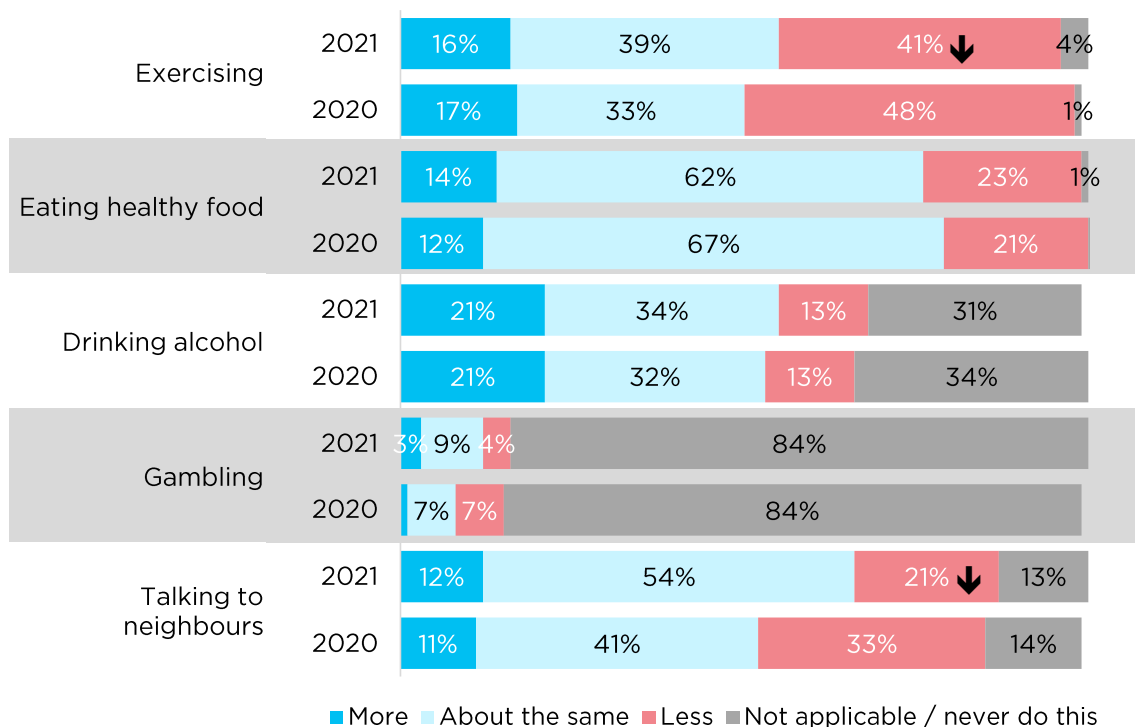
The main changes to impact measures in the last 12 months were:

- Although most are still experiencing impacts on socialising and leisure activities, the strength of these impacts has reduced.
- Far fewer residents are experiencing impacts on food and grocery availability.
- The impact of Covid-19 on financial position and work is less common now, although half are still experiencing impacts.
- Impact on mental health remains high, and has changed very little.

HEALTH BEHAVIOURS



Health behaviours



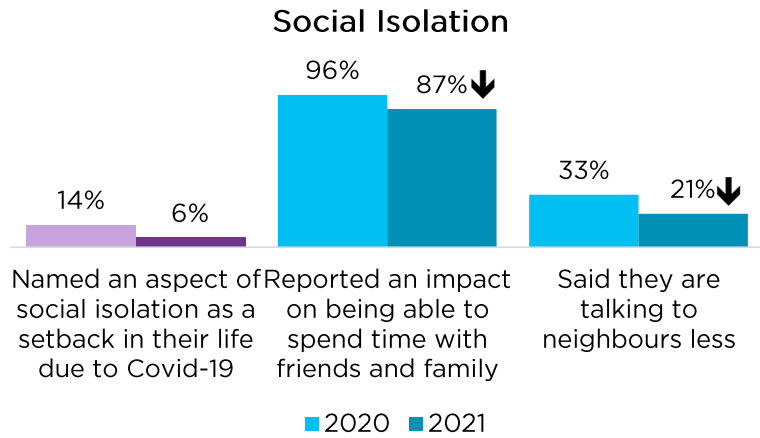
There has been a slight shift back towards pre-Covid-19 levels for exercising and talking to neighbours. However, there is still a segment of the community who is drinking more (unchanged proportion) and almost a quarter are still eating less healthy food than before Covid-19.

SOCIAL ISOLATION



DRAFT

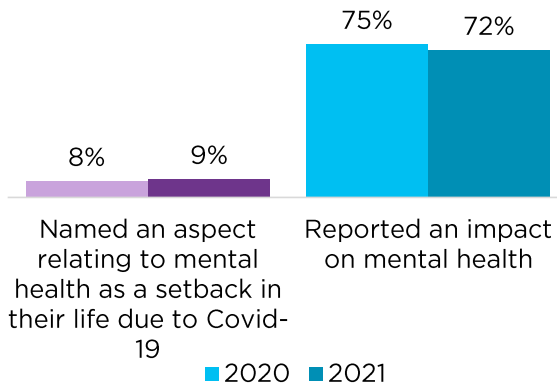
Social isolation is still the top impact being experienced by the community, although the proportion of the community being impacted by this has fallen slightly.



MENTAL HEALTH



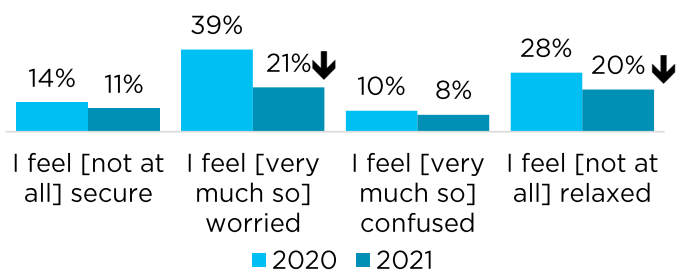
Mental Health



There has been no change in the proportion of residents reporting mental health challenges, suggesting that this is an issue that is going to persist throughout the duration of the pandemic. Males more commonly report no impact on mental health (31%, 23% females).

Individual anxiety levels have fallen slightly in 2021, although there are still 32% who experience one of these (a significant reduction from 49% in 2020). Males less commonly feel worried (21% not at all, 8% females).

Anxiety

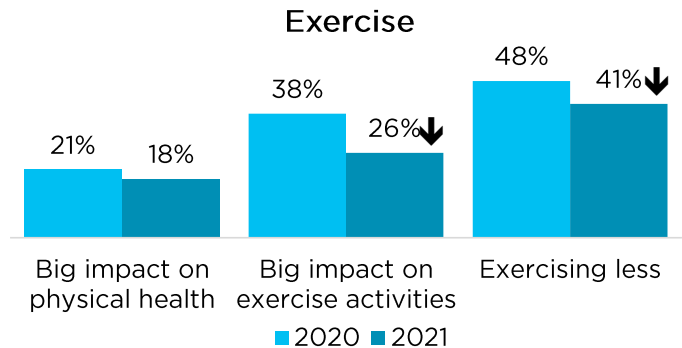


EXERCISE

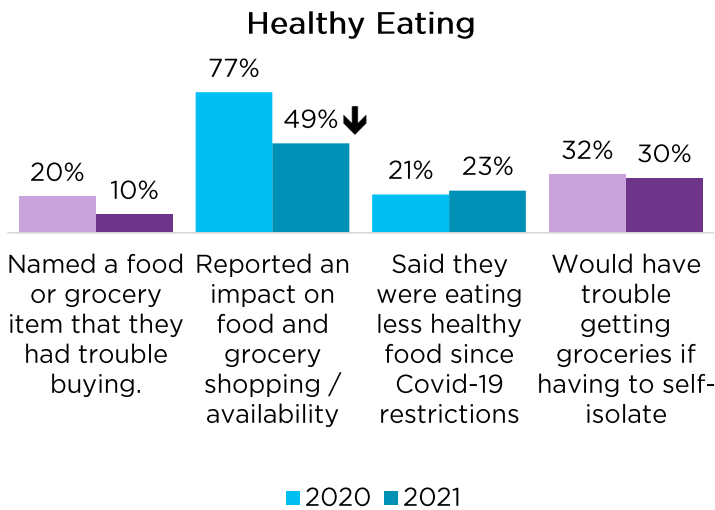


Whilst the impact of Covid-19 on exercise has reduced slightly in the past year, there are still four in ten residents who are exercising less than before Covid-19.

There was a higher level of optimism that in the future exercise would increase in 2020 (30%) than 2021 (23%).



HEALTHY EATING

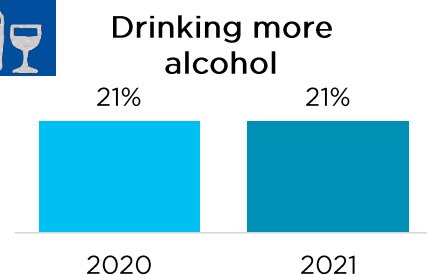


Covid-19 is having a less widespread impact on food and grocery shopping in 2021, however this has not translated to changes in healthy eating habits, with one in five continuing to eat less healthy food. 1.9% said they had accessed emergency food relief.

ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION



There has been no change in alcohol consumption behaviours in the last year.

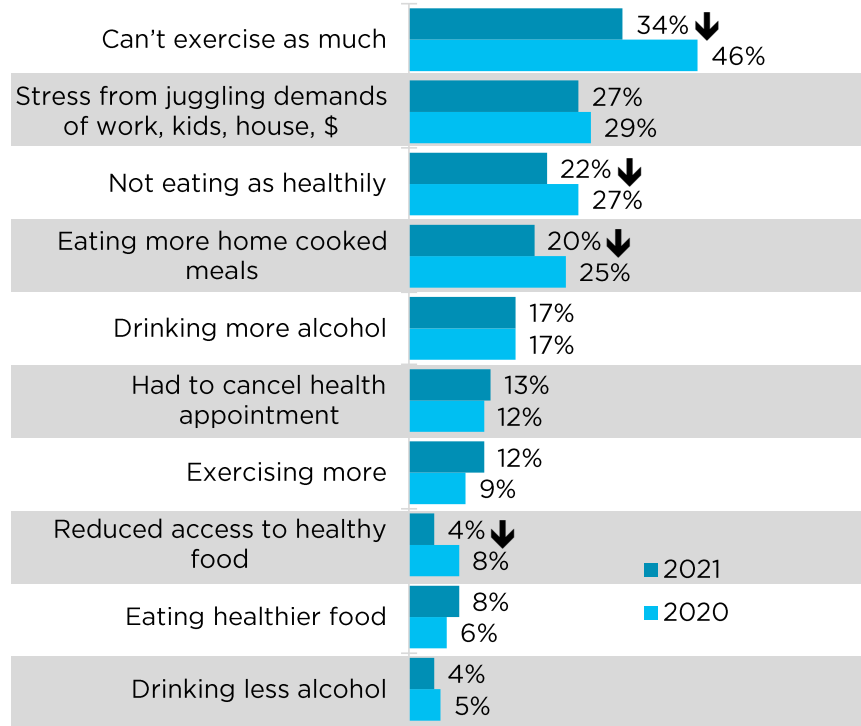


IMPACTS ON HEALTH



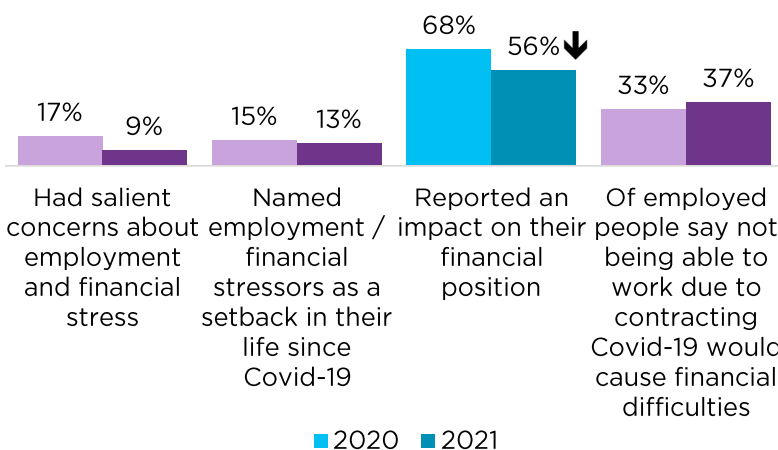
The impact of Covid-19 on individual physical health behaviours is reducing over time, although more than a third are saying that they still can't exercise as much.

Impacts on physical health



FINANCIAL VULNERABILITY \$

Financial Difficulties



The impact of Covid-19 on financial position has declined slightly in the last year, although over half still experience an impact.

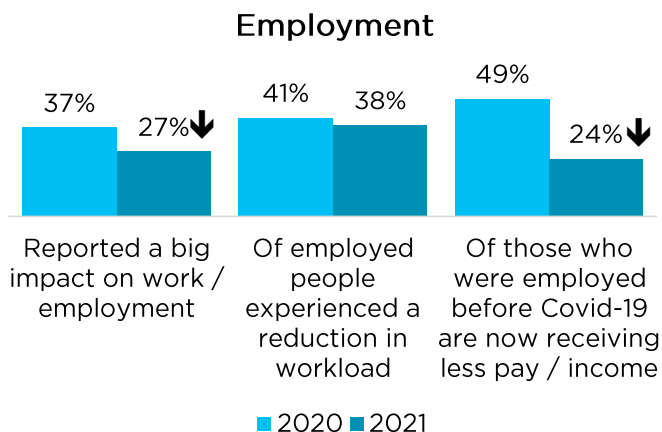
19% said they were on jobseeker or jobkeeper (23% in 2020). The removal of these supports has resulted in a reduction in wages for some people, with impacts such as not being able to pay bills or housing, and business closures.

EMPLOYMENT



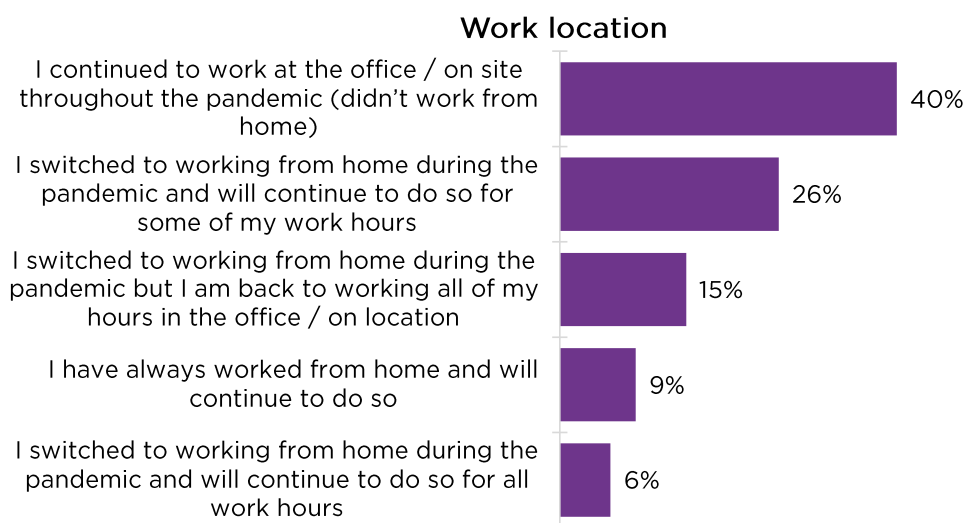
The proportion of the population experiencing a big Covid-19 impact on work and employment has reduced when compared to 2020, with fewer receiving less pay.

Whilst the proportion experiencing a reduction in workload hasn't changed, more have experienced an increase (31%, compared to 16% in 2020).



A new question was added in 2020 to understand how working environments have changed, and the rate of return to pre-Covid-19 work conditions. From the findings it is evident that:

- Almost half of workers switched to working from home during the pandemic, and most of these have returned to on-site working for at least part of their working week.
- Those with a hybrid work model are mostly working more than half their time at home (65%), with 38% working 50-69% of their time at home.



The proportion expecting to continue to work from home in the future fell to 13%, from 20% in 2020.

Of those who run a business (n=66), 12% said they have more staff than before Covid-19, whereas 14% said they have fewer. Most stated no change to staffing levels (68%).

SAFETY

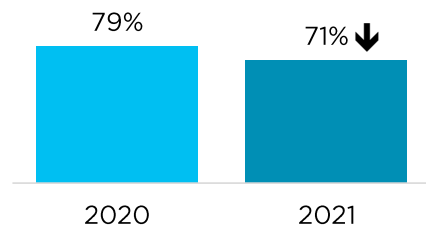


There has only been a minor reduction in the proportion of the community who report an impact of Covid-19 on their feeling of safety.

These perceptions of safety do seem to be shifting, however, away from fear of getting sick in public, and more so towards anger and violence in the community and crime.

Twice as many people mentioned anger and violence at home (family violence measure) in 2021 than in 2020.

Impact on safety



Impacts on perceptions of safety

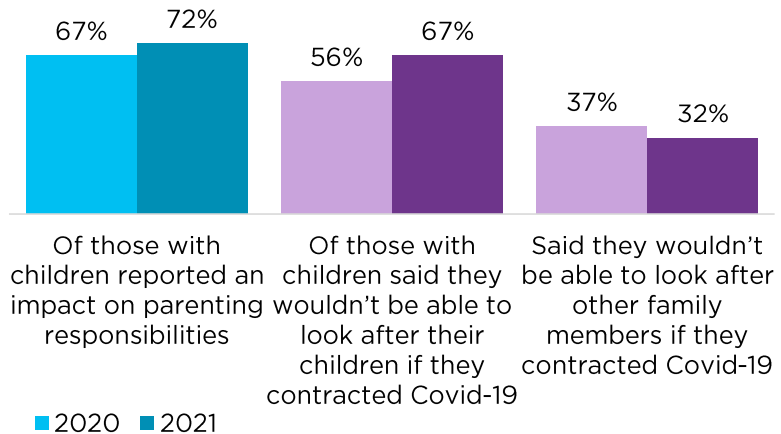


PARENTING AND CAREGIVING



Parenting and Carer Responsibilities

Covid-19 continues to place a significant burden on parents, with no easing of this impact when compared to this time last year.



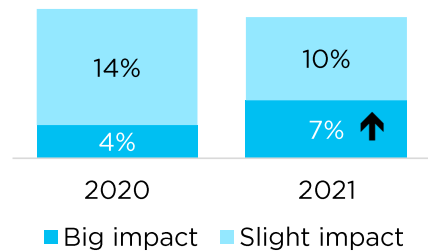
HOUSING



The overall proportion of the population experiencing impacts to their housing remains constant, although the percentage experiencing a big impact has almost doubled.

The main big impact is not being able to afford maintenance and repairs (36% of those experiencing a big impact).

Impact on Housing



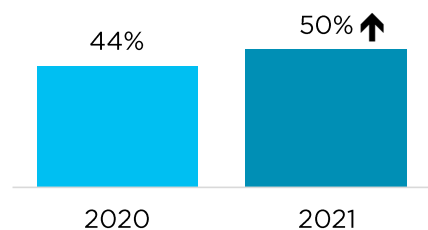
TRANSPORT



The proportion of the population experiencing an impact on transport is slightly higher in 2021 when compared to 2020.

A follow-up question about transport impacts wasn't included in 2021, however based on other responses throughout the survey, it is likely this increase is due to travel restrictions (distance caps) and not being able to plan to travel for fear of not being able to return due to lockdowns.

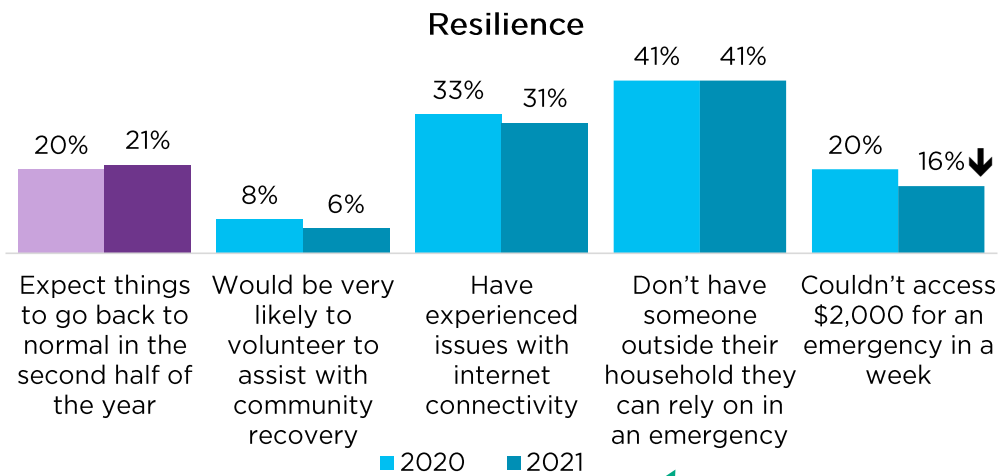
Impact on Transport



RESILIENCE



There have been no changes in most resilience measures when comparing current data to that recorded a year ago. Although, there has been a slight decline in the proportion who couldn't access \$2,000 in a week in an emergency.



In the 2017 Victorian Population Health survey 7% of respondents said that they don't have someone outside of their household they can rely on in an emergency, compared to 41% in the Covid-19 surveys. This data isn't directly comparable as it employs a different methodology, however it is a notable difference beyond what one would expect from methodology variations (the question wording was the same). It may be that the context of the survey (relying on others during a pandemic) may be different to normal times and therefore influencing how respondents interpret the question.

VACCINATIONS

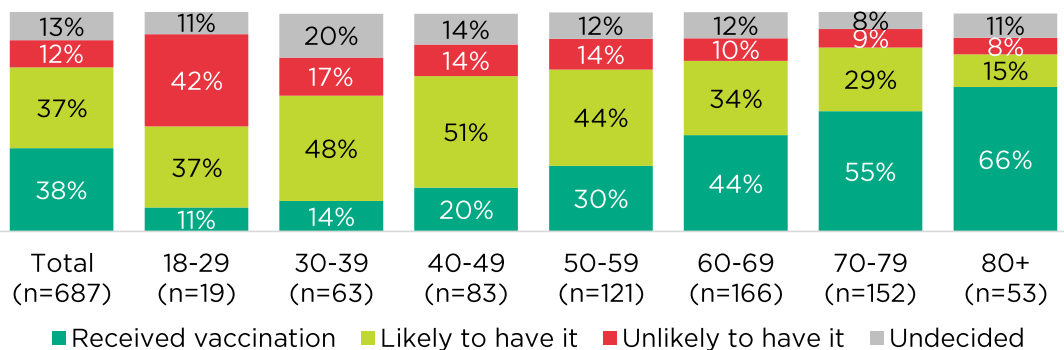


In the initial concerns question, vaccines featured prominently, with 11% mentioning the slow vaccine rollout, 4% mentioning vaccine hesitancy in the community, and 4% stating vaccine safety concerns.

Additional questions were included in 2021 to understand vaccine uptake and hesitancy, providing the following insights:

- Most of the community (75%) has either already received the vaccine (first or both doses) or intends to.
- Given the roll-out schedule focused on older adults, it is not surprising that coverage is higher amongst the older age groups.
- Around one in ten indicated they wouldn't be likely to have it, although this was mostly due to concerns about it being rushed; presumably they might be swayed further into the future, once their concerns about long-term side-effects can be addressed.

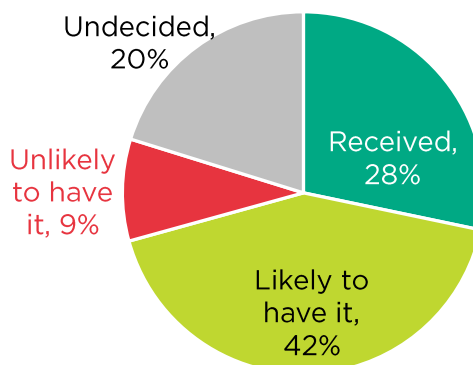
Vaccinations by age



Representative sample, unweighted

Language other than English (n=109)

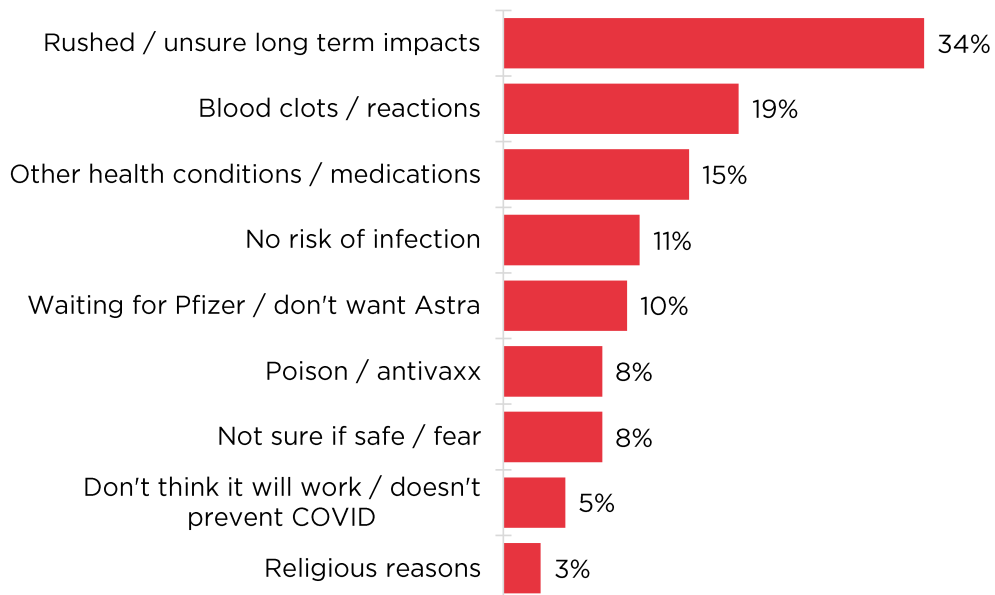
Those who speak a language other than English show a high instance of being undecided (20%, compared to 10% English only speakers)





Vaccine hesitancy was mostly due to concerns about it being rushed; presumably they might be swayed further into the future, once their concerns about long-term side-effects can be addressed.

Reasons for being unlikely to have the vaccine (n=101)



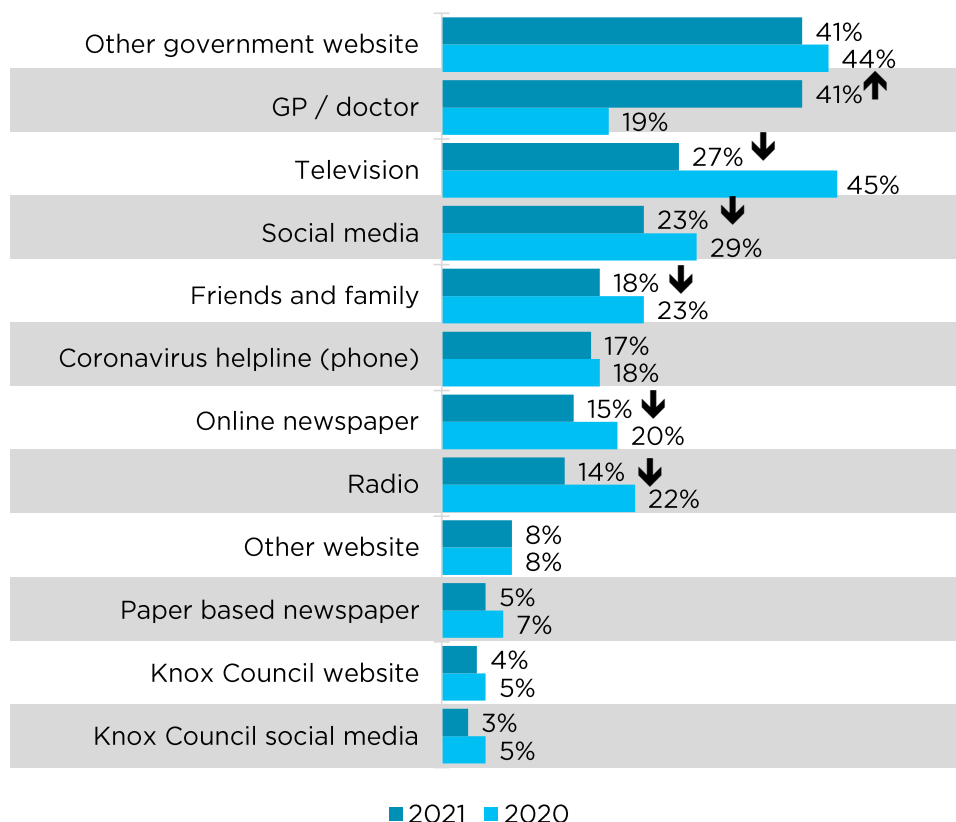
Concern that the vaccine was rushed is more prominent amongst young people (75% 19-29 year olds who are unlikely).

COMMUNICATIONS



There has been a clear decline in relying on word of mouth or media sources for Coronavirus information. Instead there has been a shift towards seeking out information from medical professionals. This is likely due to the changing nature of information being sought towards vaccine information.

Sources people use for Coronavirus information



COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS DURING SURVEY



The first wave of surveying occurred in July to August 2020, whilst restrictions required mandatory face masks, only leaving the house for 4 reasons (shopping for food, outdoor exercise, medical care and study or work if it can't be done from home), and no visitors or public gatherings. Since then, the Greater Melbourne region has gone through a prolonged stage 4 lockdown (with curfews and travel distance limits), followed by a period in early 2021 of no cases, and brief lockdowns to control small outbreaks.

This second wave of surveying occurred between 20 May to 6 July 2021. During this period the following restrictions were in place for metropolitan Melbourne:

- 25-27 May – 5 visitors in-home per day, public gathering limit of 30 people, face masks indoors, on-site work permitted, density limits for workplaces.
- 27 May – 3 June – stay at home except for 5 reasons (food shopping, authorised work, care, exercising up to 2 hours within 5km of home, vaccination), masks outside the home, no gatherings (public or private), school closures, and essential services only open.
- 3-10 June – Travel increased to 10km, Schools open for years 11-12, and mandatory QR check-in at retail.
- 10-17 June – Removed restriction on reasons to leave the home, schools open, eateries open with limits, outdoor gatherings of 10 people, facemasks indoors (outdoors not needed), and travel limit extended to 25km.
- 17-24 June – Removal of 25km travel limit, 2 visitors a day permitted in home, public gatherings outside of 20 people.
- 24 June onwards – 15 private visitors a day allowed in-home, 50 people can gather outside, increases in capacity limits for workplaces.

The requirement for masks indoors wasn't removed until 8 July (after the end of fieldwork period).

QUESTIONNAIRE ALTERATIONS



The full questionnaire script can be found in the appendix of the 2020 survey report.

The following alterations were made in the 2021 wave of surveying.

- Q1a wording altered from **If there have been any changes due to Coronavirus that have resulted in setbacks and/or improvements in your life, please tell us about them below to What do you think are likely to be the long term changes to your life as a result of the coronavirus pandemic?**
- Removal of question asking about transport impacts (K2).
- In 2011 the employment question (Q11) was separated into 3 sections: before, Covid-19 during Covid-19, and now.
- Q12 was revised in 2021 from **As a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, has your number of working hours / workload...?** to **During the Coronavirus lockdown in 2020, did your number of working hours / workload...?**
- K3 was revised in 2021 from **Has your pay/wage changed?** to **How does your current wage compare to how much you were being paid before the Coronavirus pandemic?**
- New question added in 2021:
Which of the following best describes your work location?
 I have always worked from home and will continue to do so
 I switched to working from home during the pandemic and will continue to do so for all work hours
 I switched to working from home during the pandemic and will continue to do so for some of my work hours [IF YES] Please specify % of work hours from home
 I switched to working from home during the pandemic but I am back to working all of my hours in the office / on location
 I continued to work at the office / on site throughout the pandemic (didn't work from home)
 Other (specify)
 Don't know
- New question added in 2021:
How do your staffing levels now compare to before the Coronavirus pandemic?
 More staff now
 No change
 Fewer staff now
 Something else (specify)

QUESTIONNAIRE ALTERATIONS

A red stamp with the word "DRAFT" in a bold, sans-serif font, tilted slightly upwards to the right. The stamp has a distressed, ink-like texture.

- Removed Q16 in 2021.
- K5 added row for Emergency food relief through a local organisation and then a follow-up question for those who answered yes: **Have you accessed / used emergency food relief in the last month?**
- New question added in 2021 for those who said they received jobseeker or jobkeeper:
What impact has the reduction of JobSeeker / JobKeeper ending had on you? (open ended)
- Q17, added an option for 'I received the vaccine'
- New question added in 2021 for those who hadn't received the vaccine:
How likely are you to have the Coronavirus vaccine?
Very likely
Quite likely
Neither likely nor unlikely
Quite unlikely
Very unlikely
Those who said unlikely were asked to type in why.
- Removed K7, Q26, K14 and K15.

Appendix A

LOE


n=109

n=90

Covid-19 Survey 2021

Those who speak a language other than English at home (LOE) more commonly experience COVID-19 prompted challenges with exercise, fear of getting sick, mental health and not having help outside the household in an emergency. Whilst 21% indicated they had already had the COVID vaccine (compared to 29% of English only speakers), a high proportion (30%) said they were neither likely nor unlikely to get it, suggesting that further education is needed for LOE residents on the COVID vaccine.

 **55%** go to a GP/doctor for COVID-19 info
44% English only

 **30%** Undecided Covid Vaccine
16% Knox overall

 **9%** Very likely to Volunteer
6% Knox overall

		2020		2021		
Measure		LOE	English	LOE	English	
Social isolation	Mentioned as a main concern	11%	15%	8%	6%	
	Mentioned as a setback	20%	22%	17%	13%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on time with family and friends	89%	97%	91%	89%	
	Talking to neighbours less	53%	28%	42%	17%	●
Safety	Mentioned as a main concern	53%	48%	16%	11%	
	COVID-19 has impacted safety	80%	78%	84%	70%	●
	Fear of getting sick at work	26%	25%	30%	17%	●
	Fear of getting sick in public	61%	58%	63%	47%	●
	Feel unsafe catching public transport	28%	17%	42%	26%	●
Exercise	Mentioned as a setback	3%	5%	1%	2%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on exercise	84%	76%	73%	60%	●
	Doing less exercise	53%	46%	35%	43%	

Key:

Statistically significant – Segment worse off:







● English only

● LOE



■ Whole sample

■ Representative sample

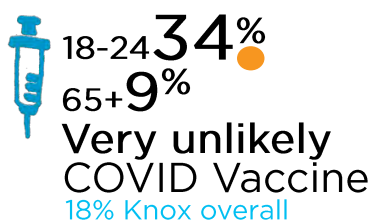
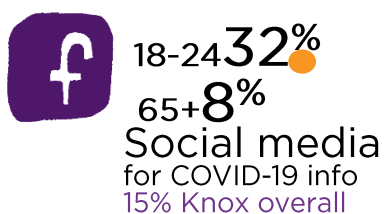
	Measure	LOE	English	LOE	English	
Financial vulnerability	Mentioned as a main concern	21%	17%	8%	10%	
	Mentioned as a setback	8%	16%	9%	13%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on financial position	72%	66%	62%	56%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on work/employment	64%	66%	71%	58%	
	Receiving less pay due to COVID-19*	22%	30%	24%	25%	
	Experienced a reduction in workload due to COVID-19*	38%	42%	36%	36%	*Of those employed pre-COVID
Mental health	Mentioned as a main concern	6%	13%	8%	6%	
	Mentioned as a setback	7%	8%	5%	9%	
	COVID-19 has big impact on mental health	23%	31%	37%	26%	
	Very much so worried at the moment	52%	32%	20%	22%	
Food and alcohol	Had trouble buying food or groceries	18%	20%	7%	12%	
	COVID-19 has big impact on food and grocery shopping	28%	16%	16%	7%	
	Eating less healthy food	20%	21%	23%	23%	
	Would have trouble getting groceries if had to self-isolate	37%	30%	34%	29%	
	Drinking more alcohol	14%	24%	18%	23%	
Caregiving	COVID-19 has impacted on parenting [#]	60%	69%	90%	68%	
	Couldn't care for children if caught COVID-19 [#]	54%	56%	75%	66%	[#] Of those with children
	Providing unpaid care or assistance	20%	31%	22%	42%	
Resilience	Wouldn't be able to care for others if caught COVID-19	39%	37%	36%	31%	
	Experienced internet connectivity issues	36%	31%	38%	30%	
	No one to rely on in an emergency	56%	36%	53%	36%	
	Couldn't find \$2,000 in a week in an emergency	22%	20%	14%	17%	

Youth & Older Adults

18-34	n=37	n=62
65+	n=287	n=338

Covid-19 Survey 2021

Young people continue to more commonly experience impacts on financial vulnerability, mental health and food and alcohol consumption. Very few 65+ year olds experience any of these challenges.



		2020		2021		
Measure				18-34	65+	
Social isolation	Mentioned as a main concern	16%	19%	7%	5%	
	Mentioned as a setback	17%	28%	19%	12%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on time with family and friends	92%	99%	83%	80%	
	Talking to neighbours less	22%	35%	23%	20%	
Safety	Mentioned as a main concern	6%	4%	7%	13%	
	COVID-19 impacted on safety	78%	70%	61%	66%	
	Fear of getting sick in public	73%	42%	48%	46%	
	Feel unsafe catching public transport	23%	21%	23%	32%	●
	Fear of getting sick when shopping	54%	35%	19%	25%	
Exercise	Mentioned as a setback	12%	6%	5%	2%	
	COVID-19 impacted on exercise	82%	70%	56%	51%	
	Doing less exercise	53%	40%	43%	30%	●

Key:

Statistically significant - Gender worse off:

- 18-34
- 65+

- Whole sample
- Representative sample



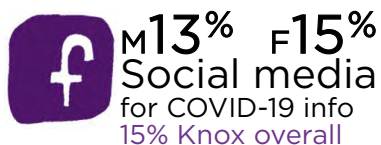
	Measure	18-34	65+	18-34	65+	
Financial vulnerability	Mentioned as a main concern	21%	8%	20%	2%	
	Mentioned as a setback	16%	5%	24%	4%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on financial position	73%	53%	65%	38%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on work/employment	85%	14%	89%	19%	
	Receiving less pay due to COVID-19*	48%	42%	30%	25%	
	Experienced a reduction in workload due to COVID-19*	52%	42%	52%	42%	*Of those employed pre-COVID
Mental health	Mentioned as a main concern	18%	6%	5%	3%	
	Mentioned as a setback	11%	2%	15%	4%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on mental health	86%	50%	82%	51%	
	Very much so worried at the moment	49%	28%	16%	20%	
Food and alcohol	Had trouble buying food or groceries	38%	19%	23%	8%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on food and grocery shopping / availability	79%	73%	53%	47%	
	Eating less healthy food	28%	9%	28%	8%	
	Would have trouble getting groceries if had to self-isolate	35%	34%	41%	32%	
	Drinking more alcohol	22%	11%	34%	5%	
Caregiving	COVID-19 has impacted on parenting [#]	41%	NA	84%	NA	[#] Of those with children
	Couldn't care for children if caught COVID-19 [#]	72%	NA	69%	NA	
	Providing unpaid care or assistance	22%	22%	25%	36%	
Resilience	Wouldn't be able to care for others if caught COVID-19	34%	26%	30%	26%	
	Experienced internet connectivity issues	51%	11%	40%	17%	
	No one to rely on in an emergency	39%	28%	46%	38%	
	Couldn't find \$2,000 in a week in an emergency	20%	14%	6%	14%	

Gender

Male	n=296	n=338
Female	n=364	n=493

Covid-19 Survey 2021

When analysing the data with a gender lens it is clear that females more often experience COVID-19 related challenges with caregiving and mental health. Males more commonly experience an impact on financial position, and have no one to rely on in an emergency. There is more vaccine hesitancy amongst males, coupled with a lower incidence of having already received it (23% males, compared to 29% females).



		2020		2021		
Measure		Male	Female	Male	Female	
Social isolation	Mentioned as a main concern	14%	14%	4%	8%	●
	Mentioned as a setback	18%	23%	10%	17%	●
	COVID-19 has impacted on time with family and friends	94%	96%	85%	88%	
	Talking to neighbours less	35%	31%	25%	17%	●
Safety	Mentioned as a main concern	43%	51%	13%	12%	
	COVID-19 impacted on safety	74%	84%	70%	71%	
	Fear of getting sick in public	56%	60%	49%	49%	
	Concern for older family members getting sick	44%	58%	38%	41%	
	Fear of getting sick when shopping	39%	46%	27%	25%	
Exercise	Mentioned as a setback	5%	4%	2%	2%	
	COVID-19 impacted on exercise	76%	81%	63%	60%	
	Doing less exercise	46%	50%	43%	39%	

Key:

Statistically significant - Gender worse off:

Whole sample Representative sample

● Males
● Females



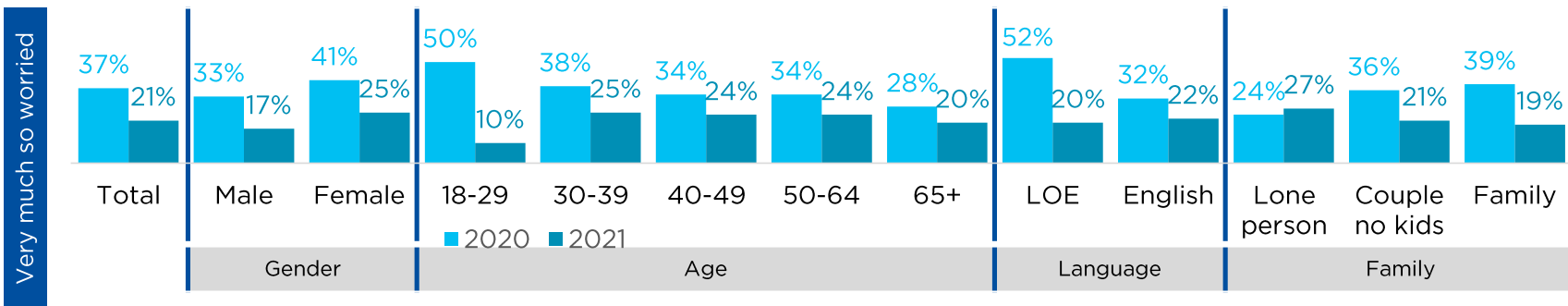
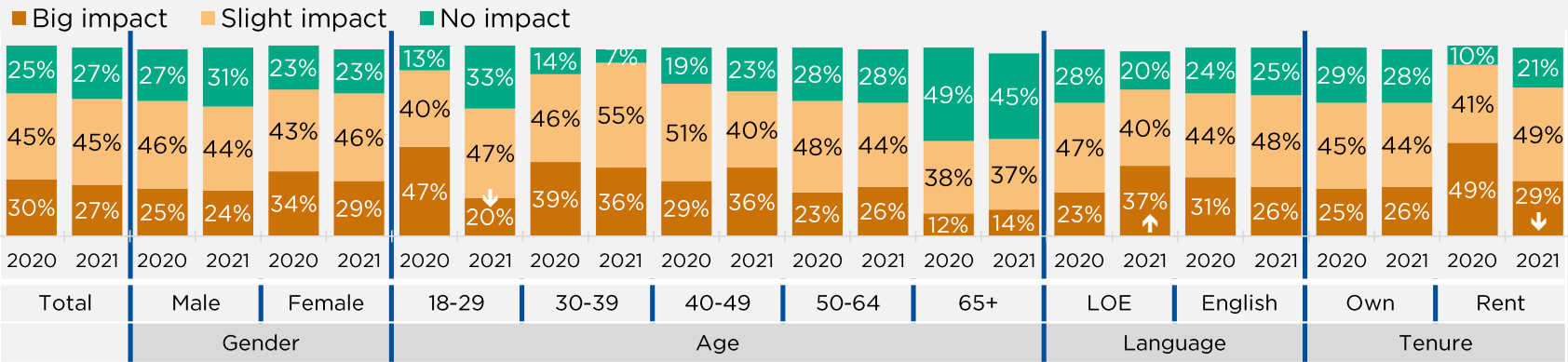
	Measure	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Financial vulnerability	Mentioned as a main concern	19%	17%	8%	10%	
	Mentioned as a setback	11%	16%	13%	12%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on financial position	71%	65%	59%	53%	●
	COVID-19 has impacted on work/employment	71%	61%	65%	59%	●
	Receiving less pay due to COVID-19*	34%	22%	26%	21%	
	Experienced a reduction in workload due to COVID-19*	45%	37%	36%	39%	*Of those employed pre-COVID
Mental health	Mentioned as a main concern	7%	14%	5%	7%	
	Mentioned as a setback	4%	10%	4%	12%	●
	COVID-19 has impacted on mental health	71%	77%	68%	75%	
	Very much so worried at the moment	33%	41%	17%	25%	●
Food and alcohol	Had trouble buying food or groceries	18%	20%	9%	11%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on food and grocery shopping / availability	75%	78%	49%	50%	
	Eating less healthy food	20%	21%	18%	27%	●
	Would have trouble getting groceries if had to self-isolate	35%	30%	32%	28%	
	Drinking more alcohol	23%	19%	18%	25%	●
Caregiving	COVID-19 has impacted on parenting [#]	68%	65%	69%	68%	[#] Of those with children
	Couldn't care for children if caught COVID-19 [#]	42%	60%	49%	72%	●
	Providing unpaid care or assistance	26%	30%	28%	45%	●
Resilience	Wouldn't be able to care for others if caught COVID-19	30%	40%	28%	34%	●
	Experienced internet connectivity issues	31%	35%	28%	33%	
	No one to rely on in an emergency	47%	34%	44%	38%	●
	Couldn't find \$2,000 in a week in an emergency	19%	21%	12%	19%	●

Mental Health

2020 n=854 | 2021 n=626

Covid-19
Survey
2021

72% of residents in 2021 say COVID-19 has impacted on their mental health...This is a similar proportion to 2020 (75%). In the last year, the proportion of 18-29 year old and renters reporting a big impact on mental health has fallen, whilst the proportion of those who speak a language other than English reporting a big impact on mental health has increased..



There has been a reduction in the proportion of residents saying they are very much so worried in 2021, particularly amongst younger people and those who speak a language other than English. The main impacts on mental health stated in 2021 were anxiety (19%), isolation (10%), and depression (8%). Also emerging in 2021 as reasons for impact on mental health were comments about dissatisfaction with government response (6%) and concerns about the vaccine (4%).

↑↓ Significantly higher/lower
Representative data used in this analysis

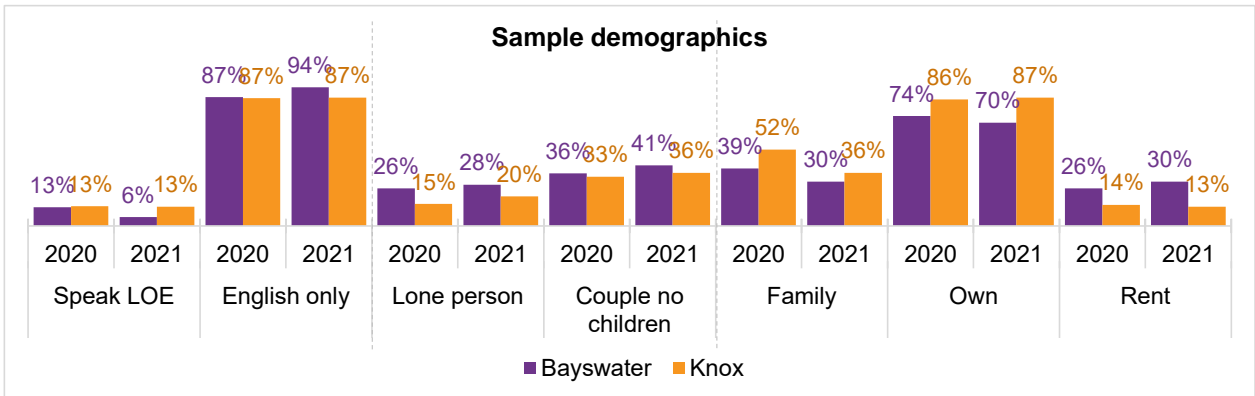
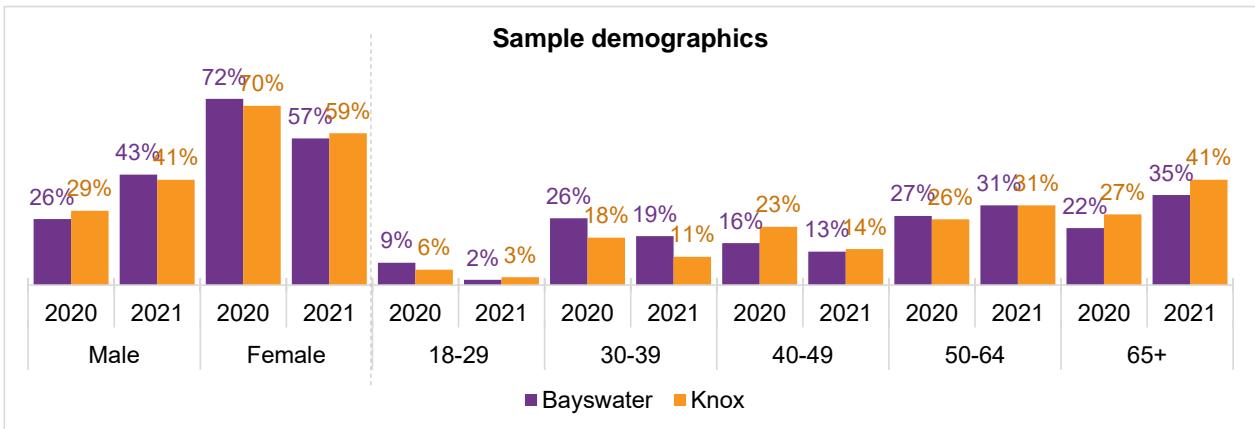


Report for Bayswater

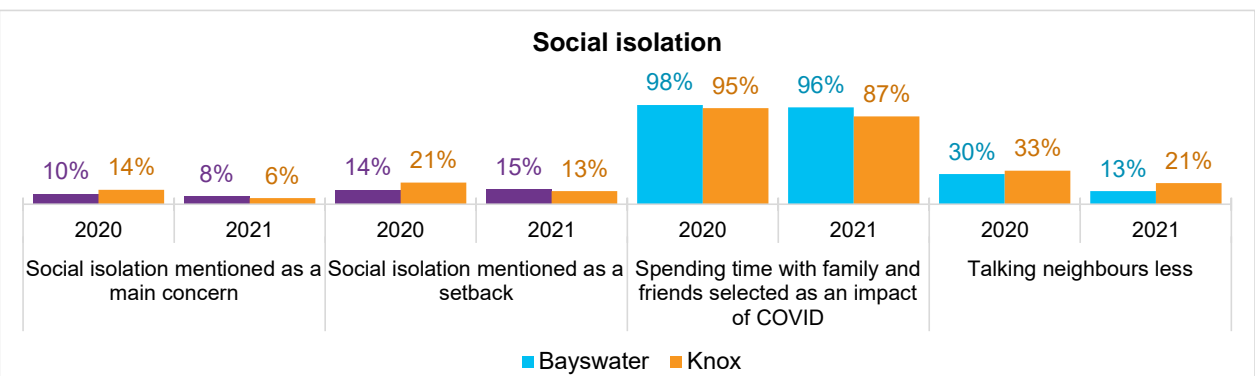
Compared to Knox

	Bayswater		Knox	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Total sample =	105	54	1596	846
Representative sample =	59	42	865	640

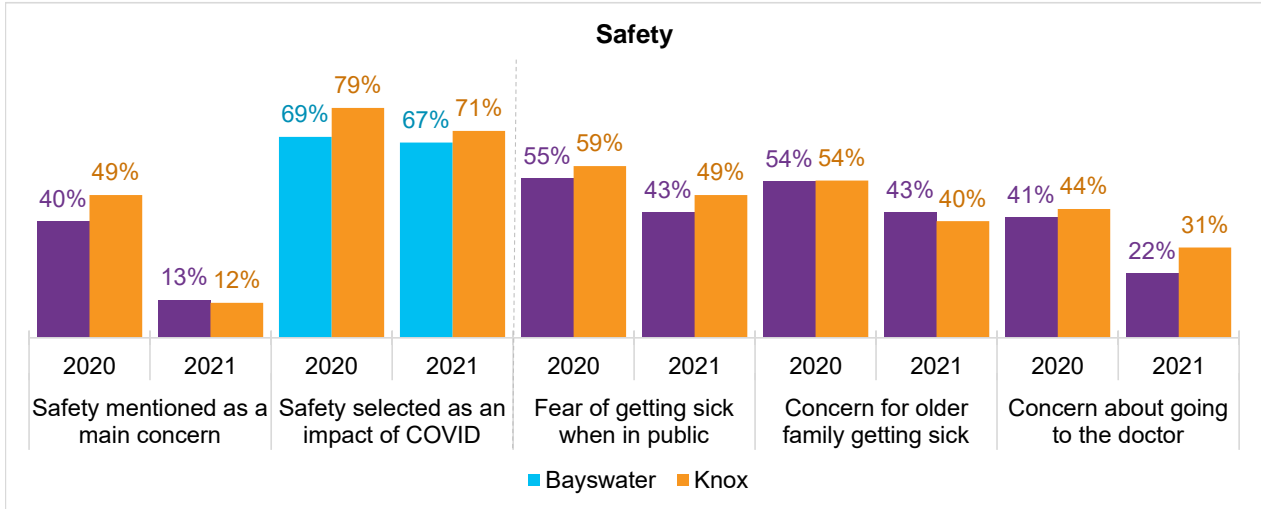
■ Overall sample
■ Representative sample




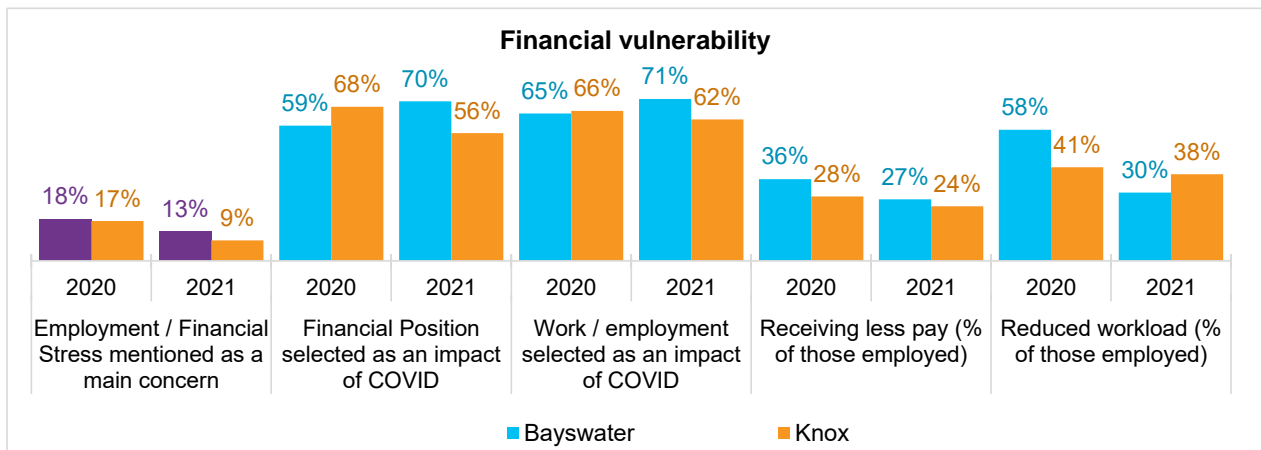
Social Isolation



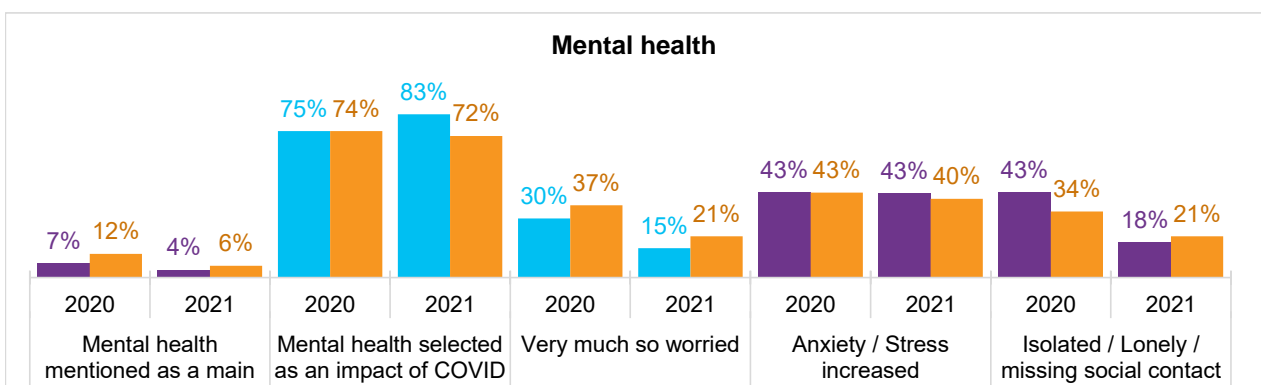
Safety 



Financial vulnerability 



Mental health 

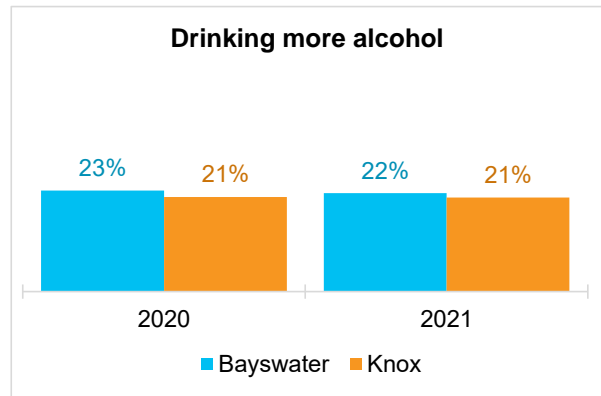
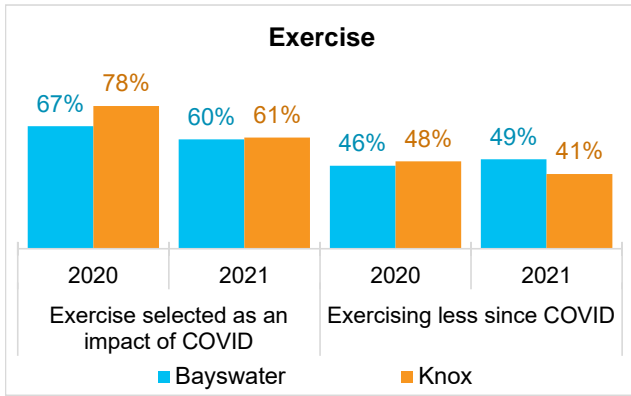


concern

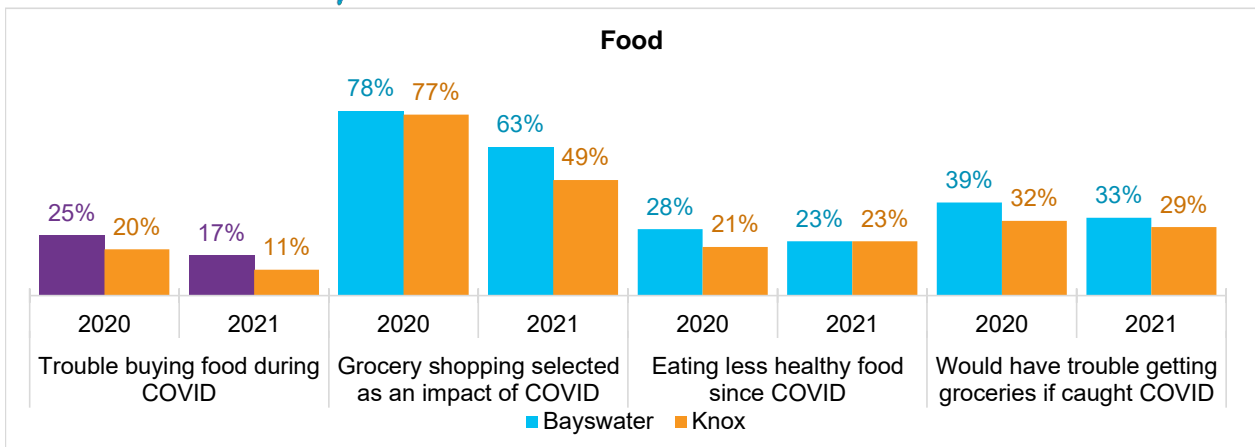
■ Bayswater

■ Knox

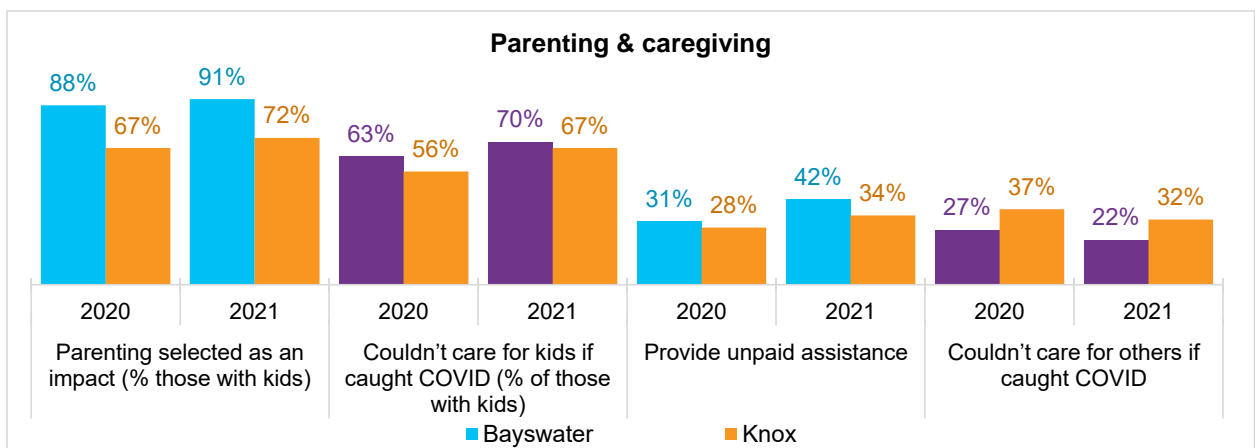
Exercise & Alcohol



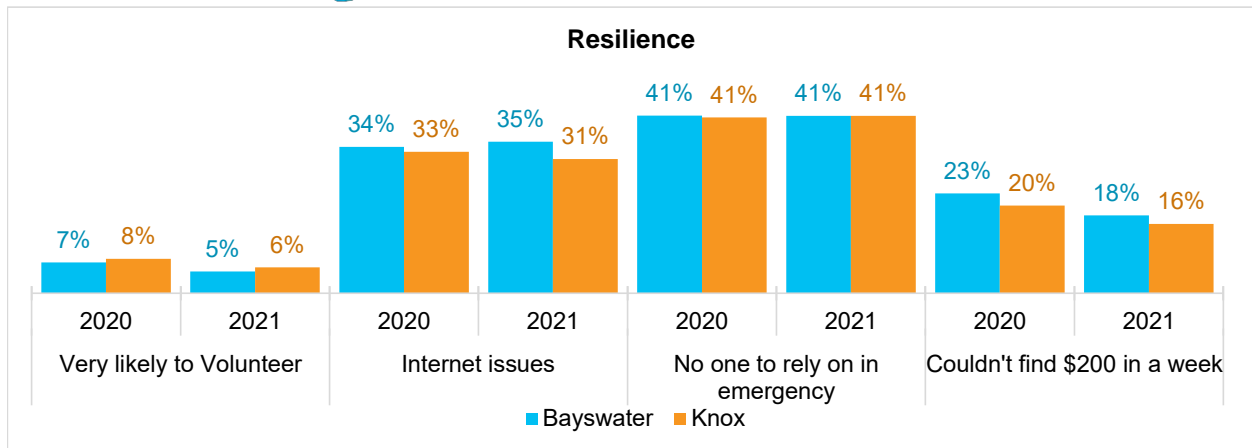
Food



Parenting & caregiving



Resilience 

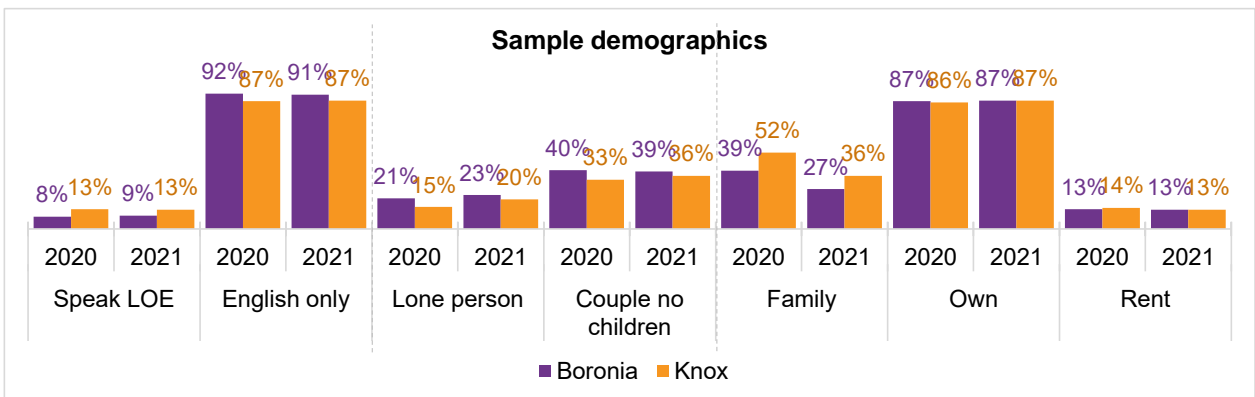
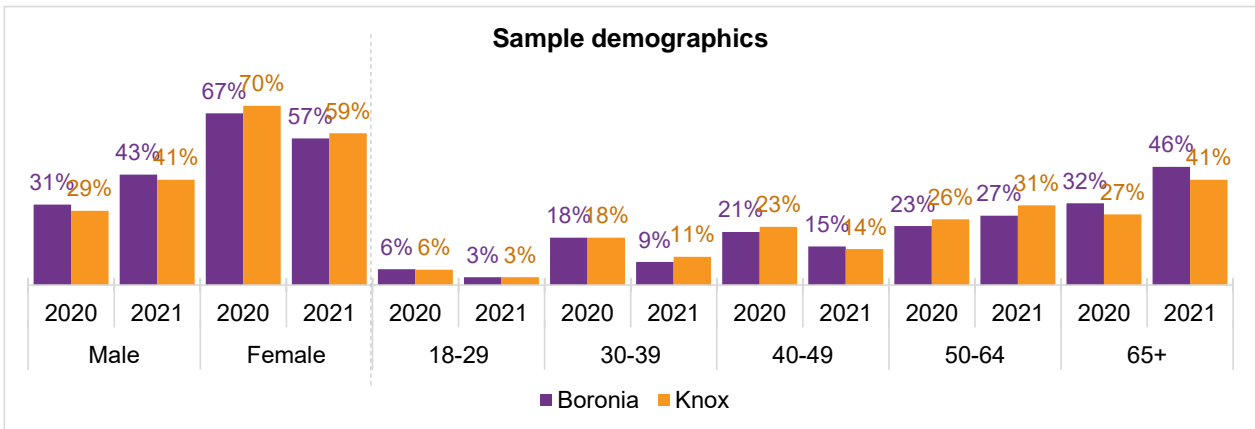


Report for Boronia

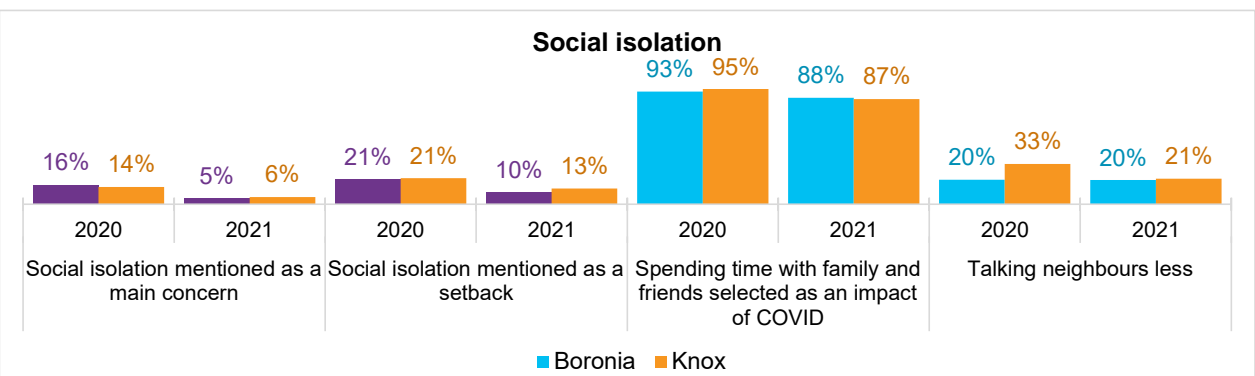
Compared to Knox

	Boronia		Knox	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Total sample =	268	146	1596	846
Representative sample =	134	101	865	640

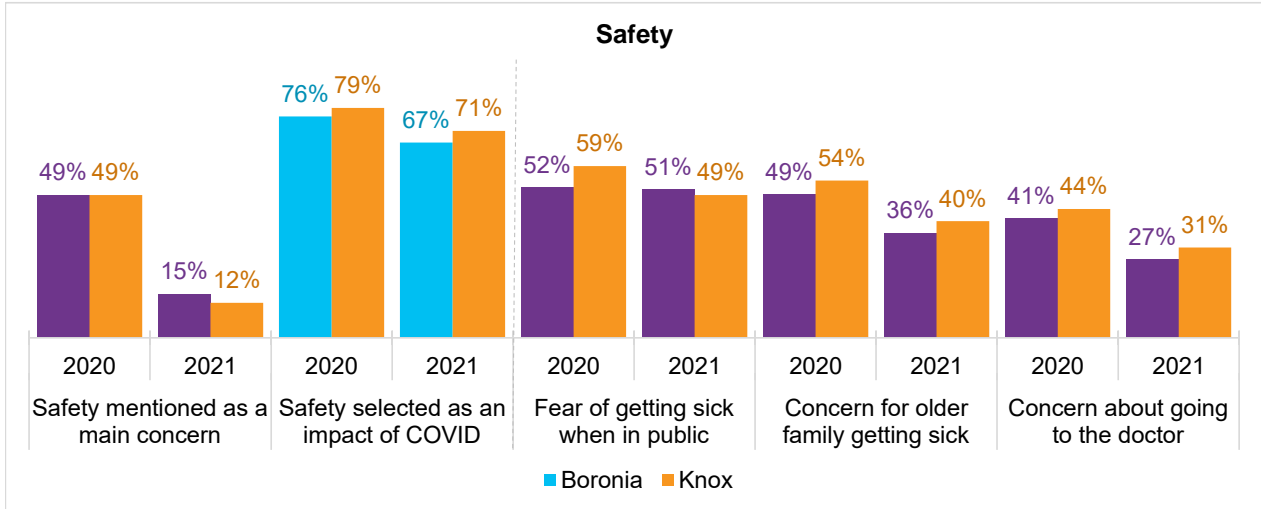
■ Overall sample
■ Representative sample




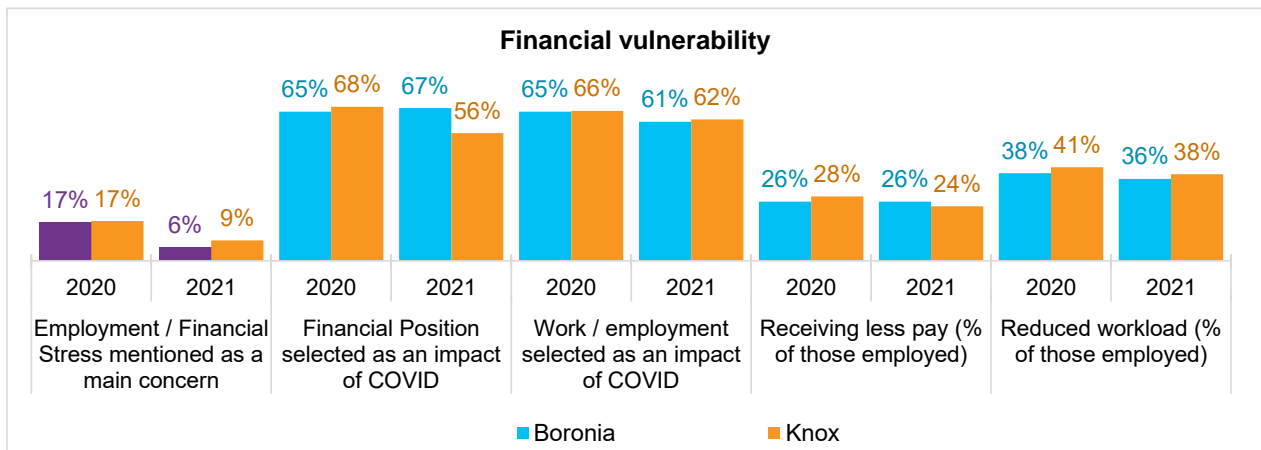
Social Isolation



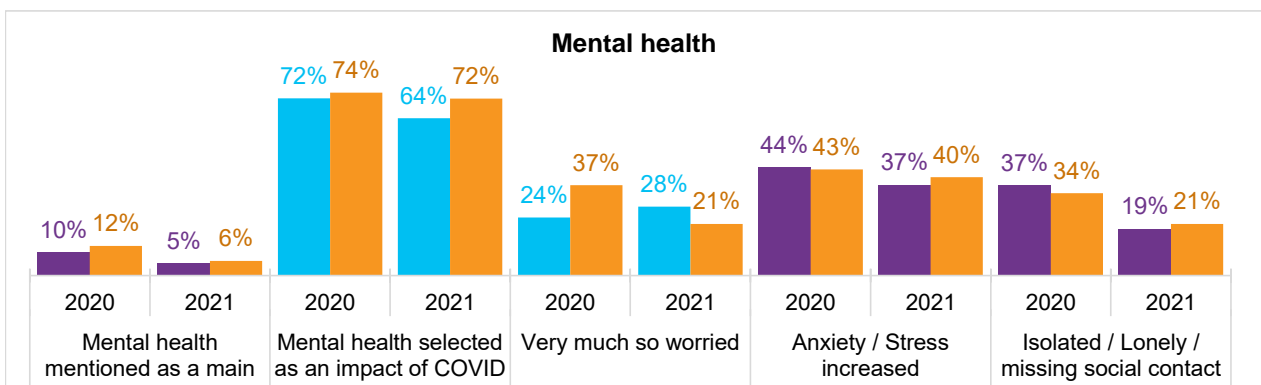
Safety 



Financial vulnerability 



Mental health 

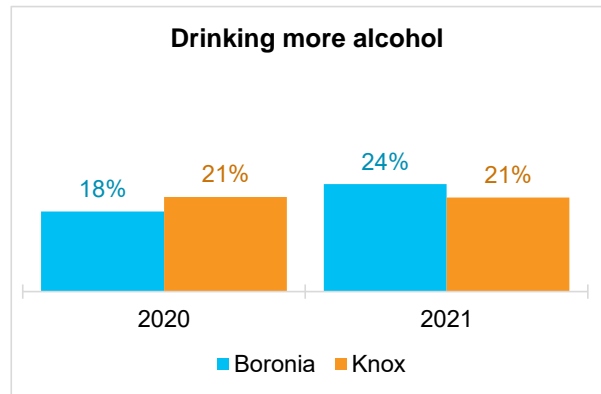
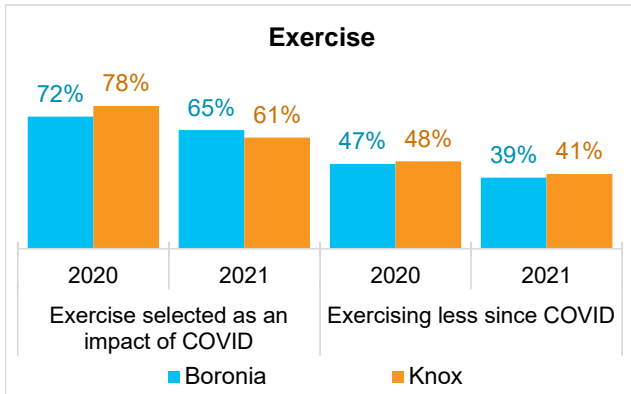


concern

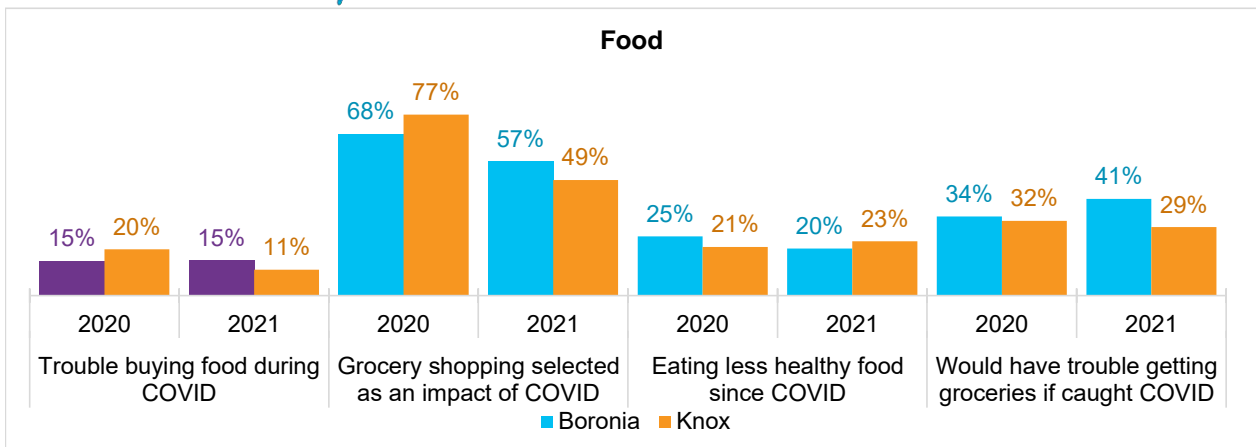
Boronia

Knox

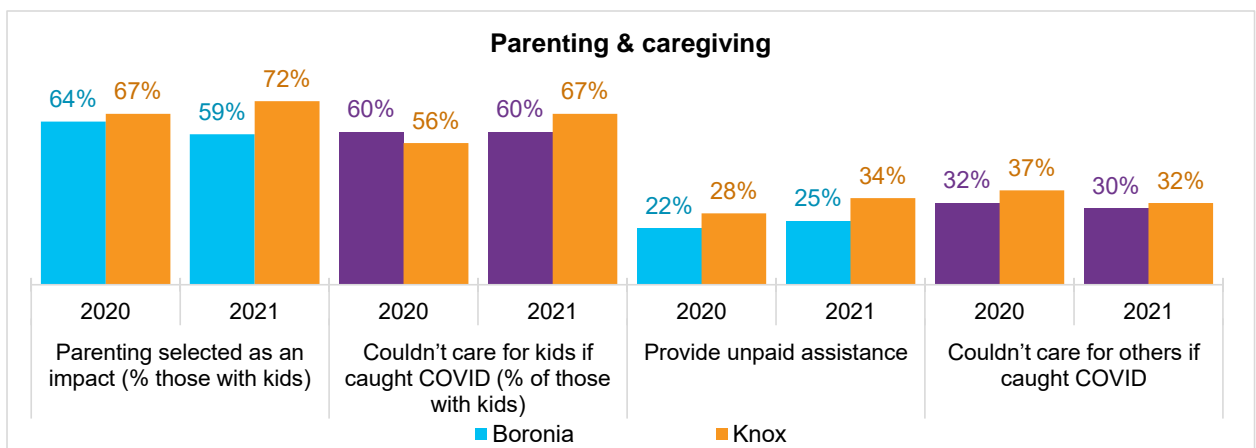
Exercise & Alcohol



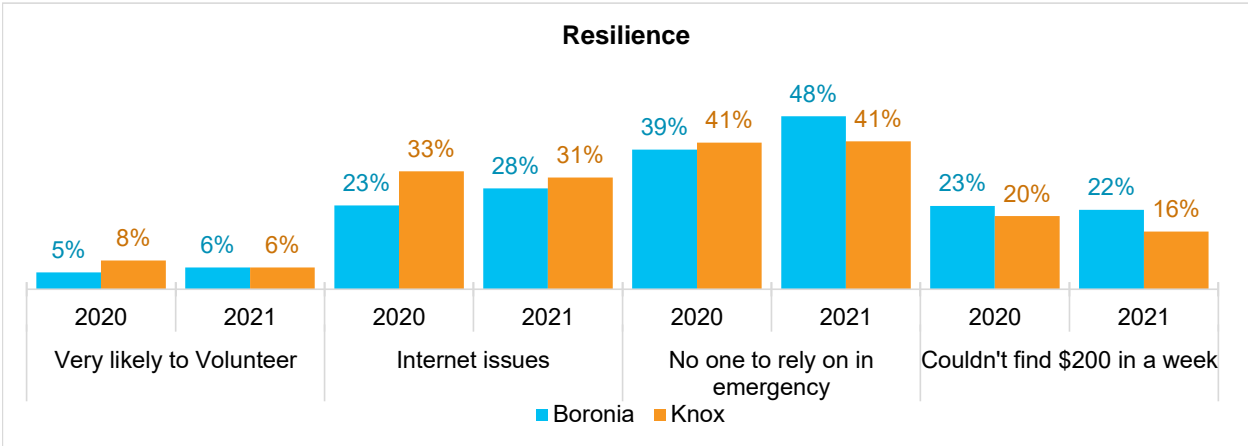
Food



Parenting & caregiving



Resilience 

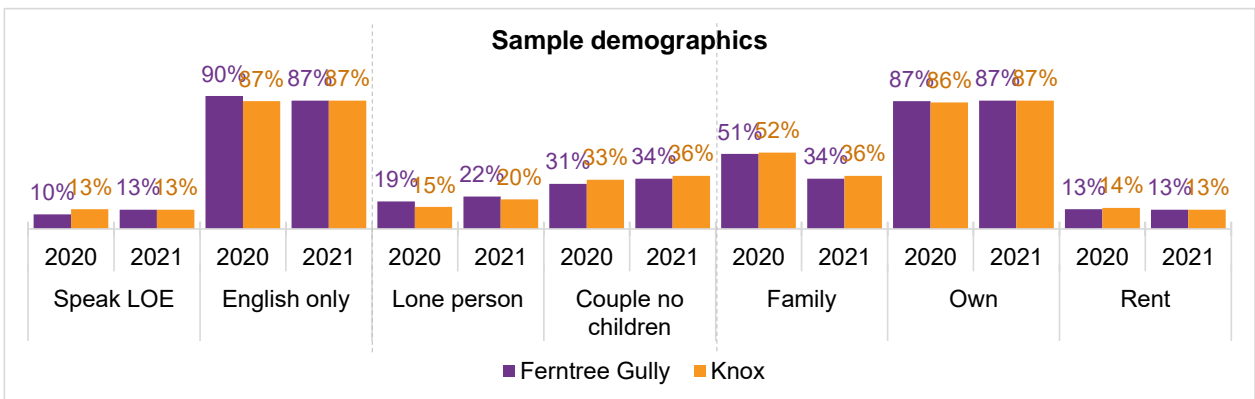
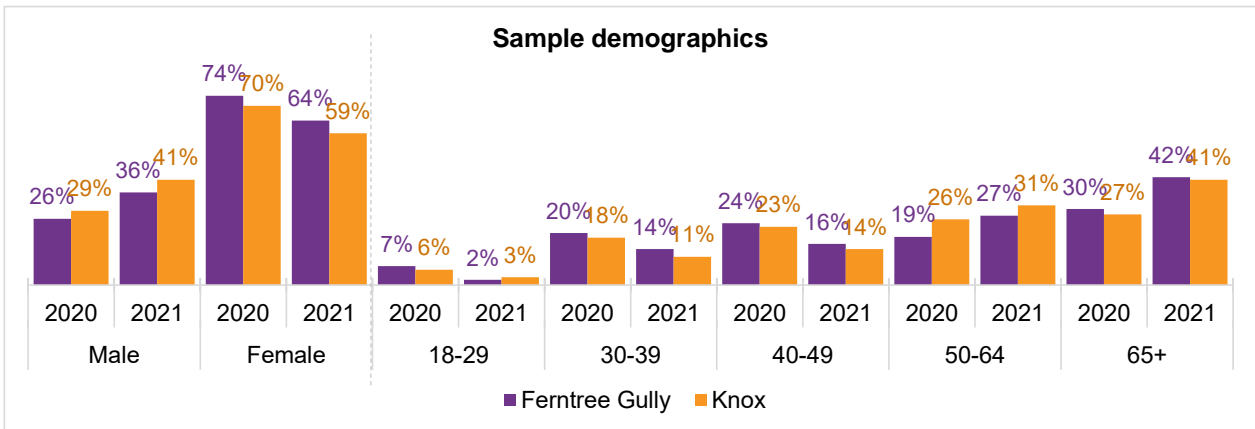


Report for Ferntree Gully

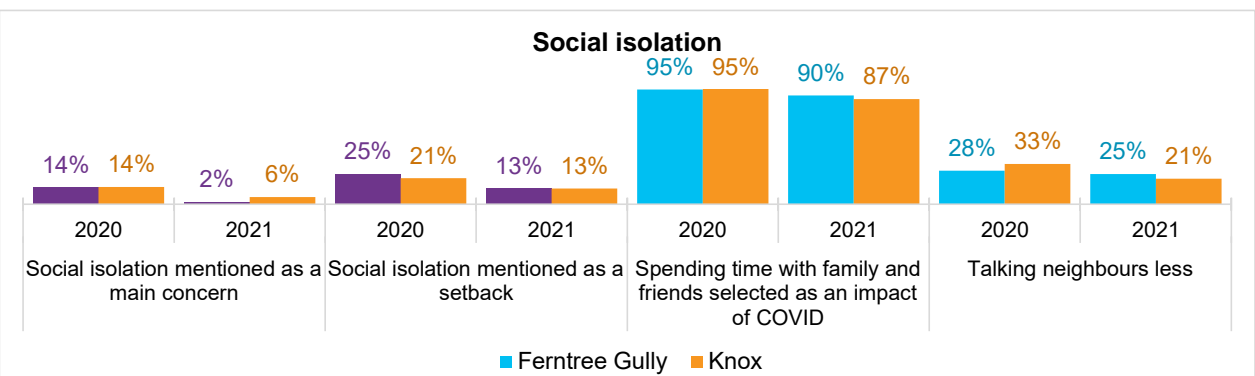
Compared to Knox

	Ferntree Gully		Knox	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Total sample =	345	179	1596	846
Representative sample =	147	110	865	640

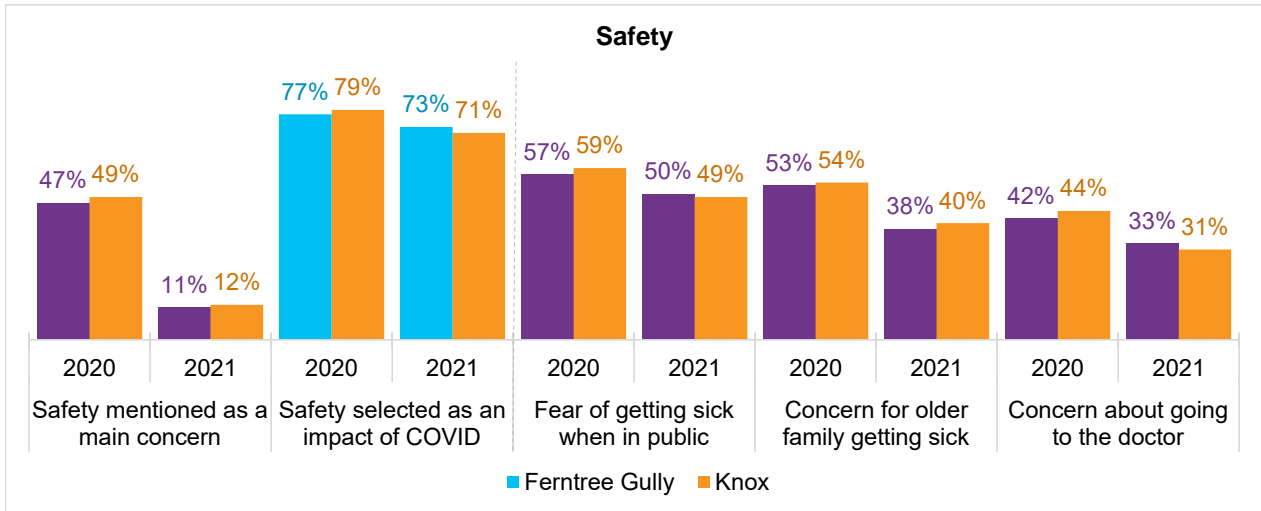
■ Overall sample
■ Representative sample



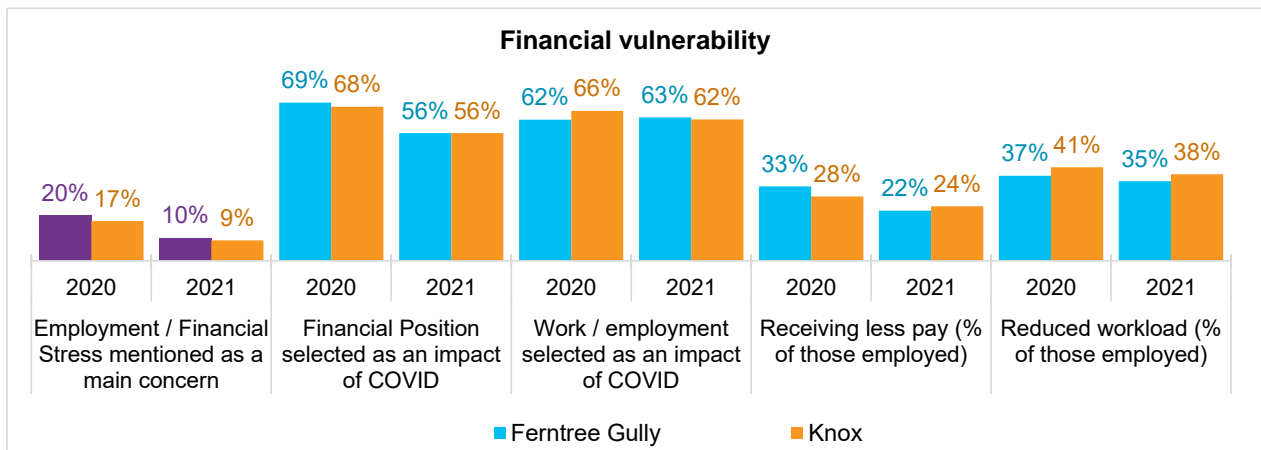
Social Isolation



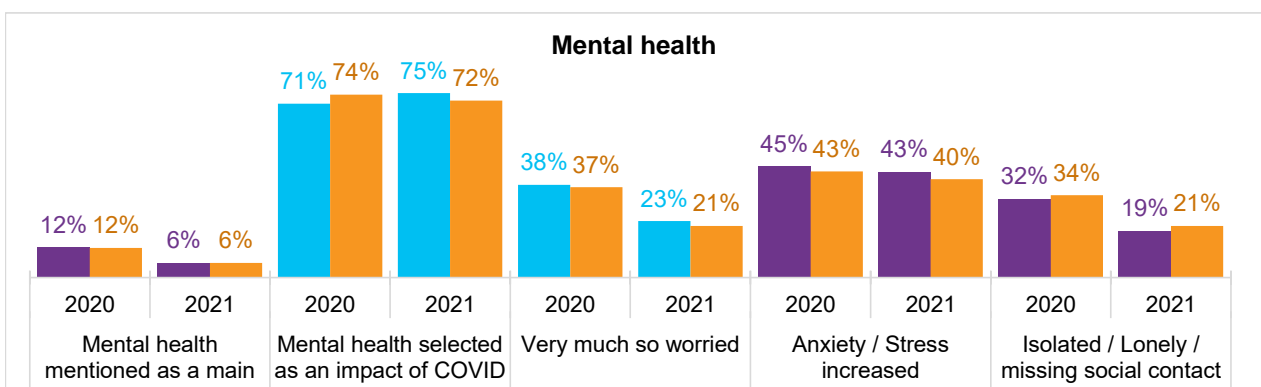
Safety 



Financial vulnerability 



Mental health 

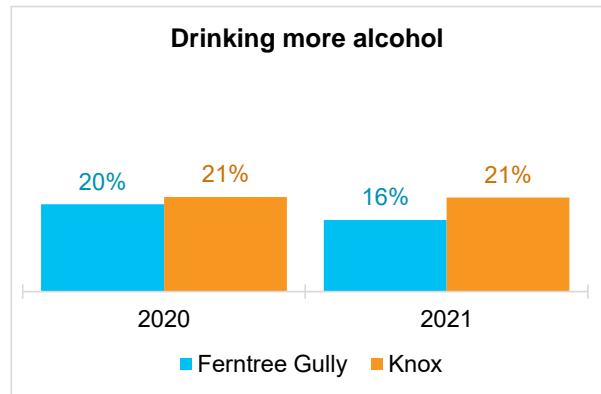
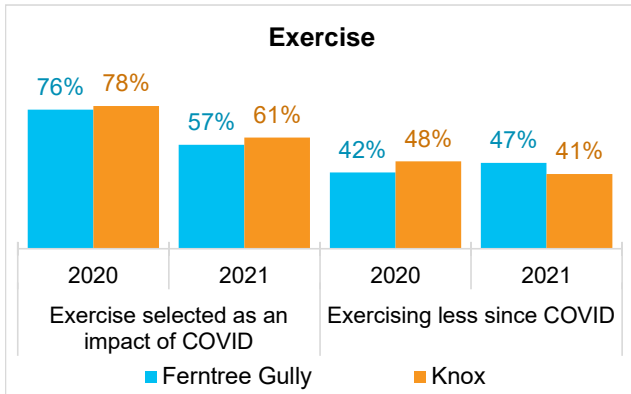


concern

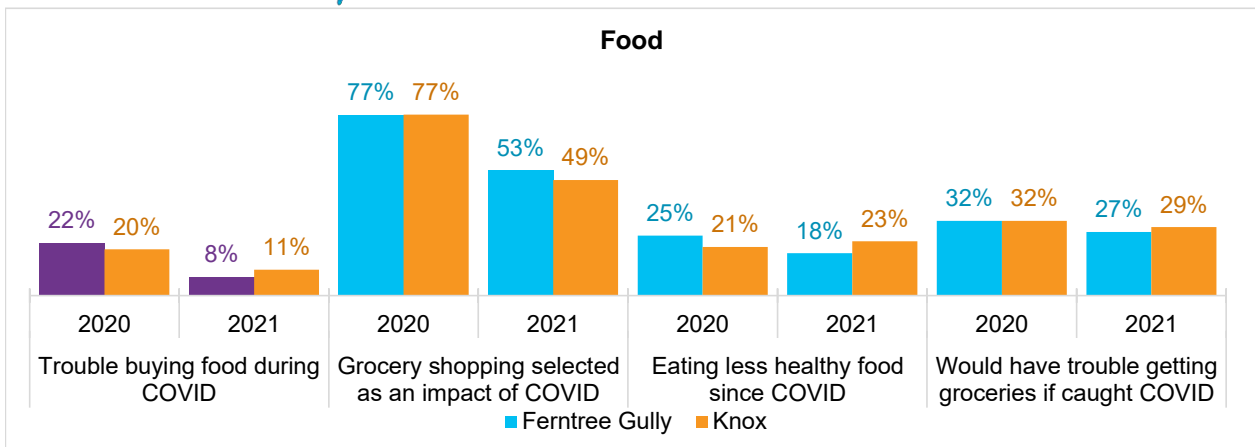
Ferntree Gully

Knox

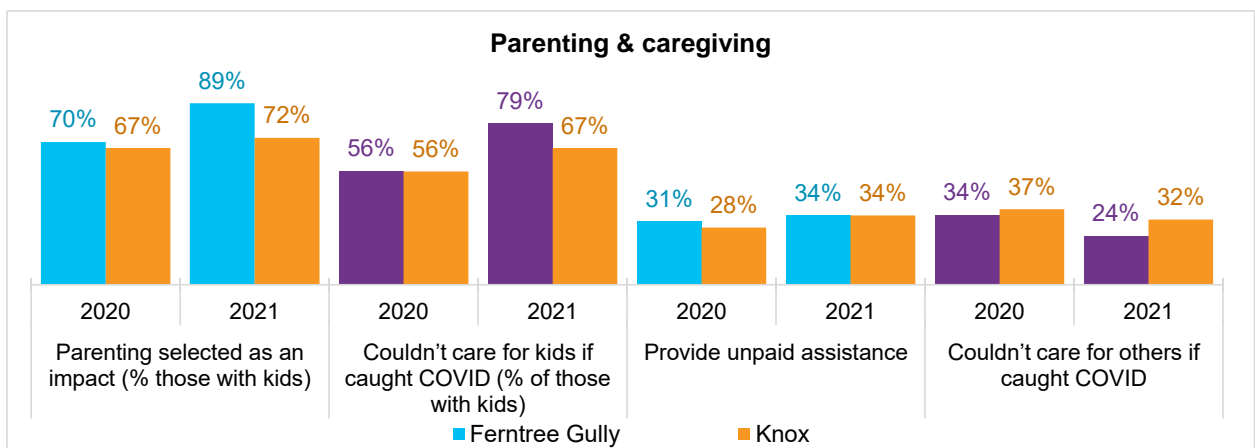
Exercise & Alcohol



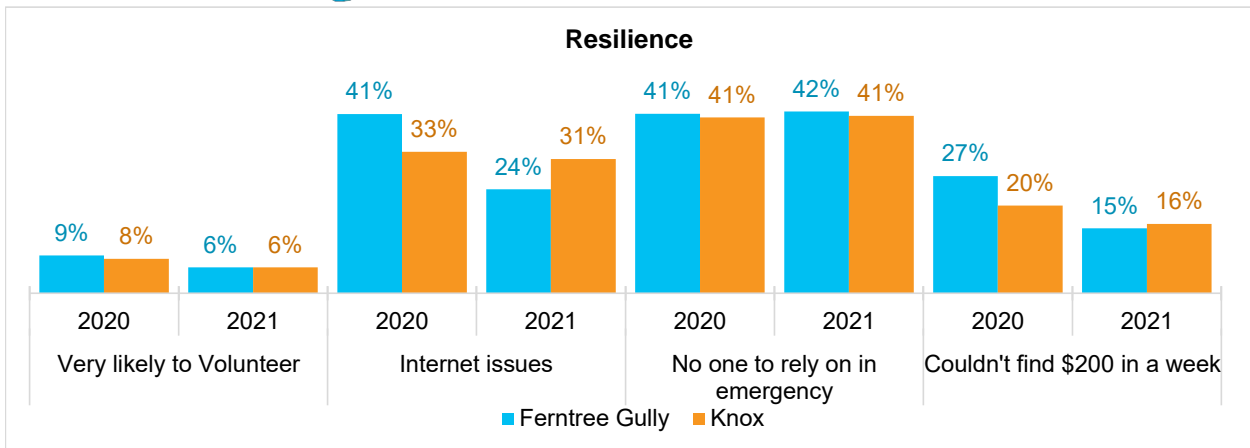
Food



Parenting & caregiving



Resilience

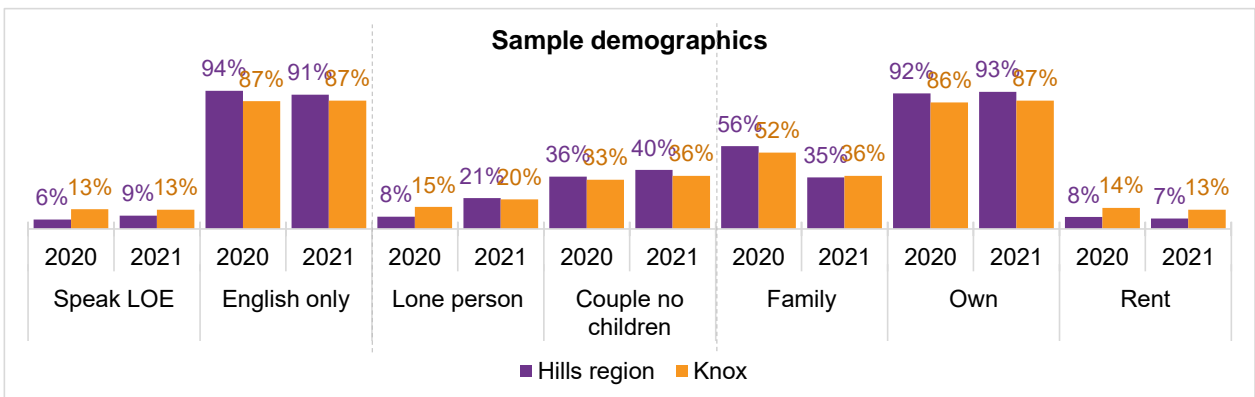
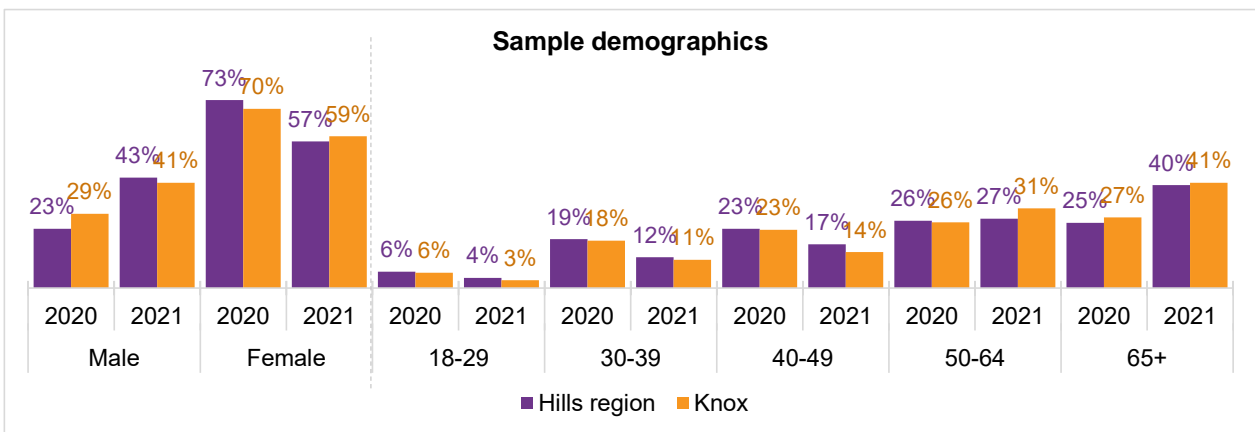


Report for Hills region

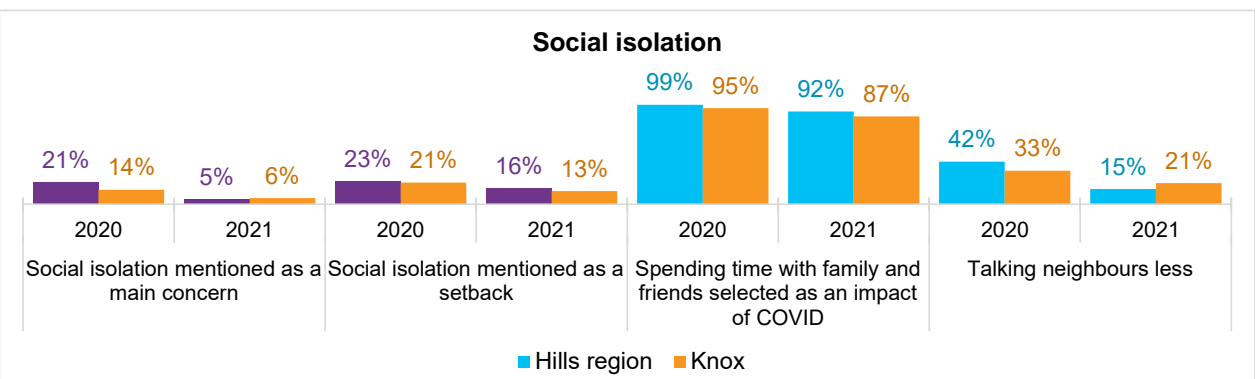
Compared to Knox

	Hills region		Knox	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Total sample =	130	79	1596	846
Representative sample =	79	54	865	640

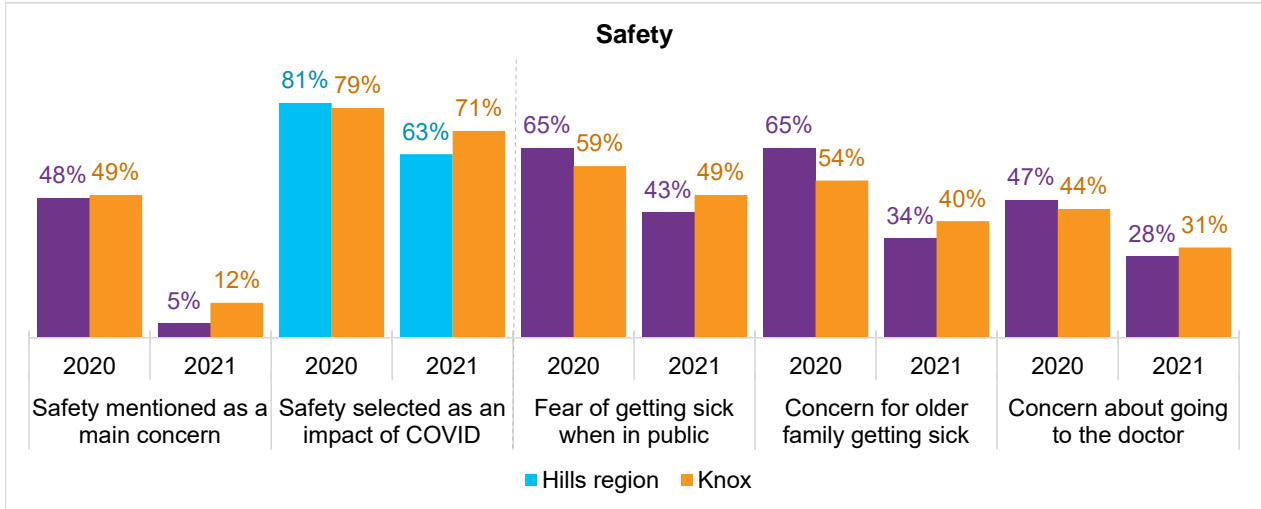
■ Overall sample
■ Representative sample




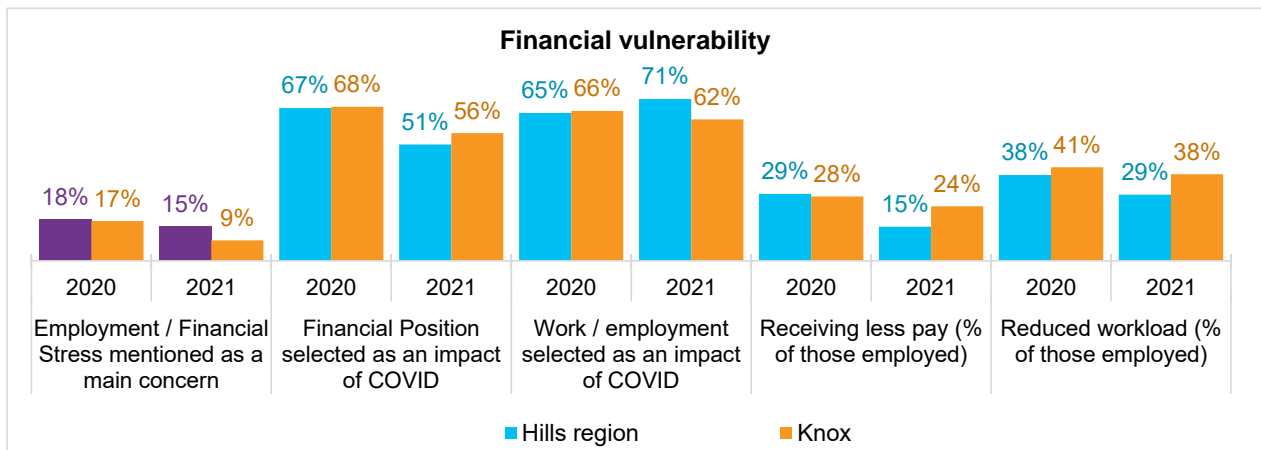
Social Isolation



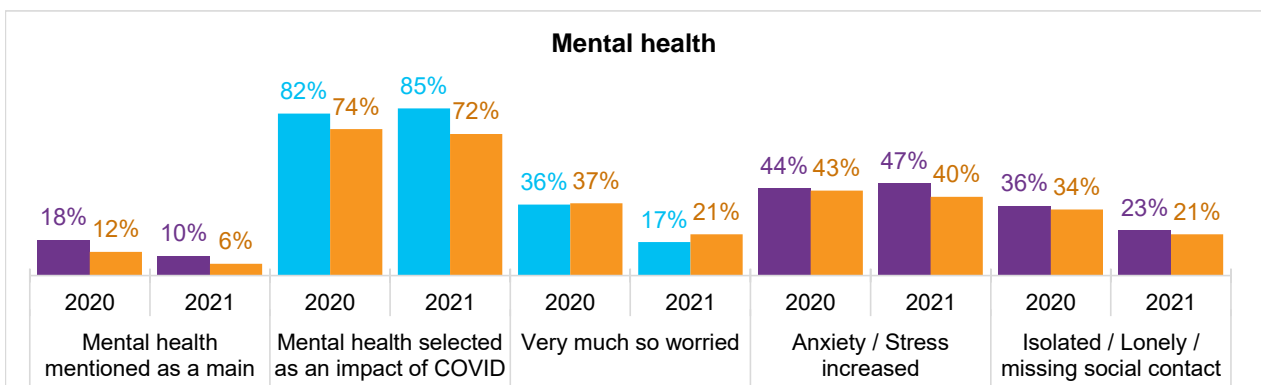
Safety 



Financial vulnerability 



Mental health 

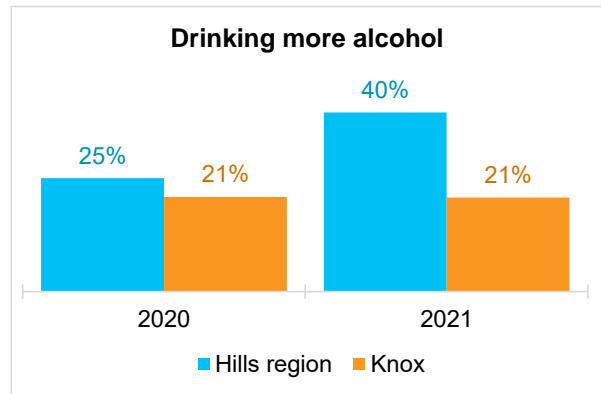
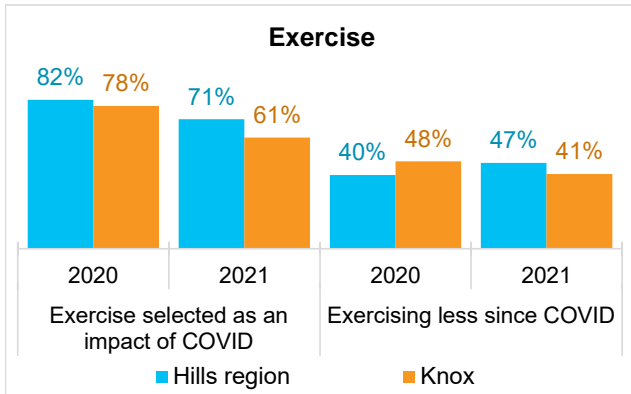


concern

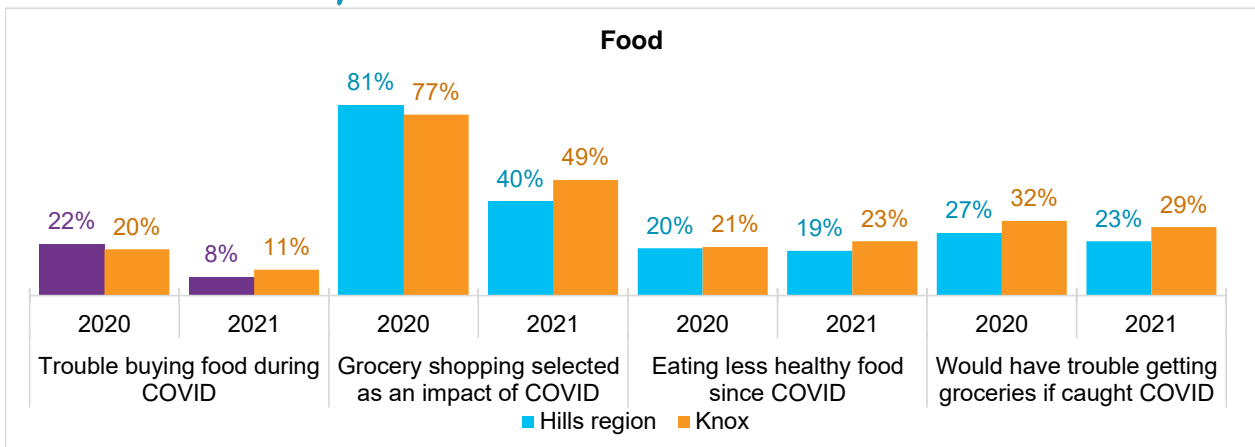
Hills region

Knox

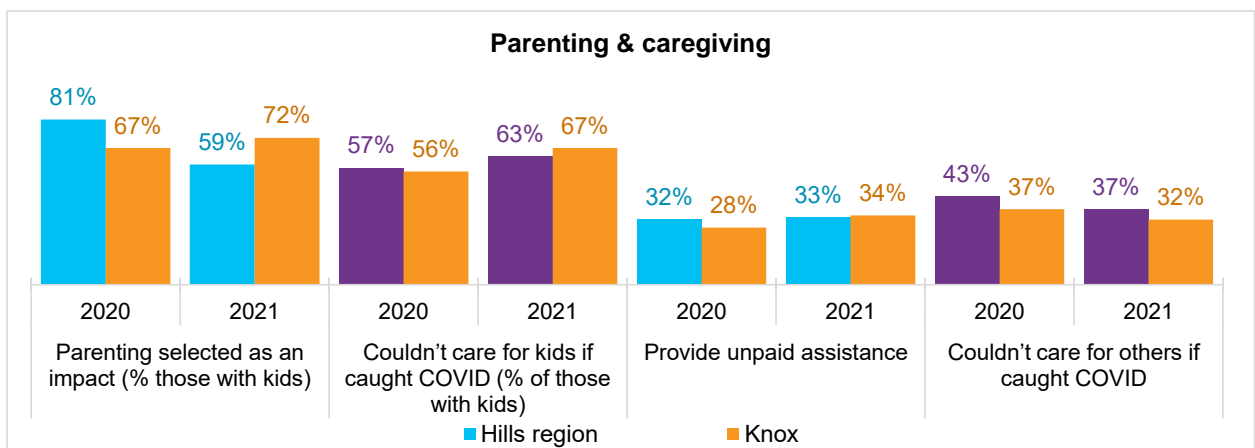
Exercise & Alcohol



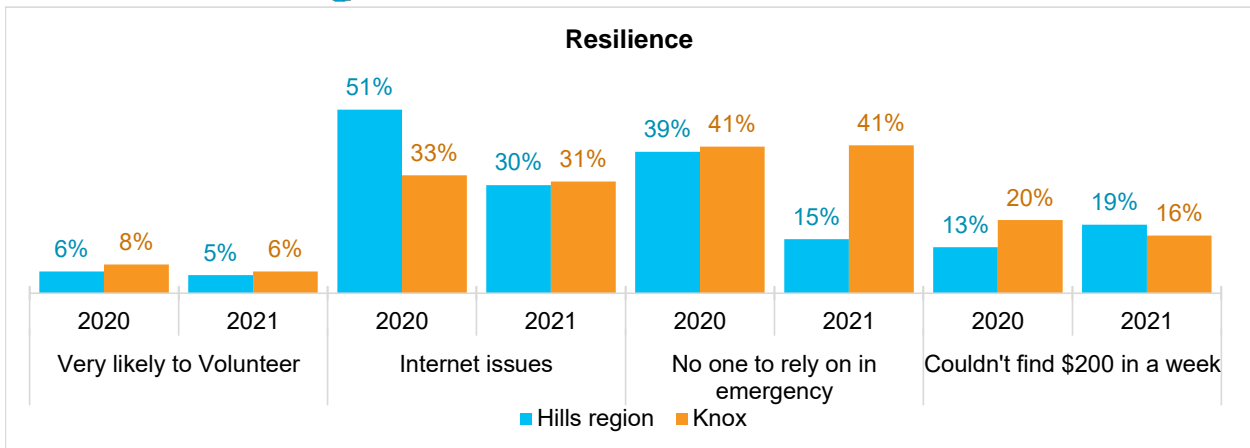
Food



Parenting & caregiving



Resilience

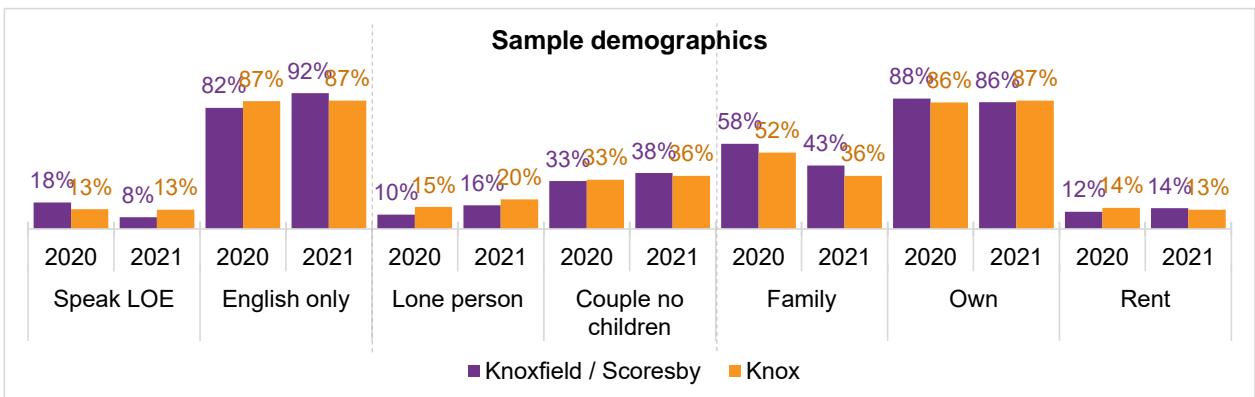
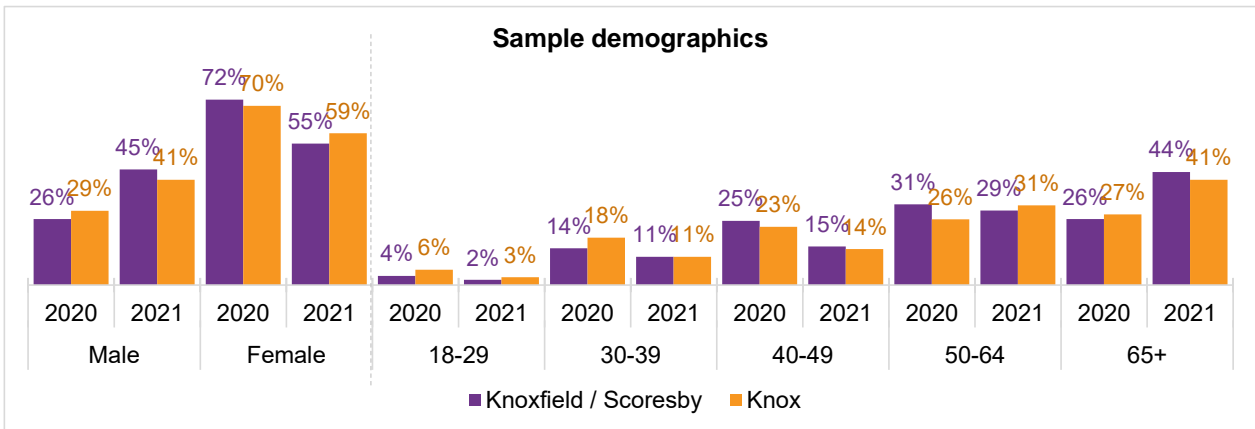


Report for Knoxfield / Scoresby

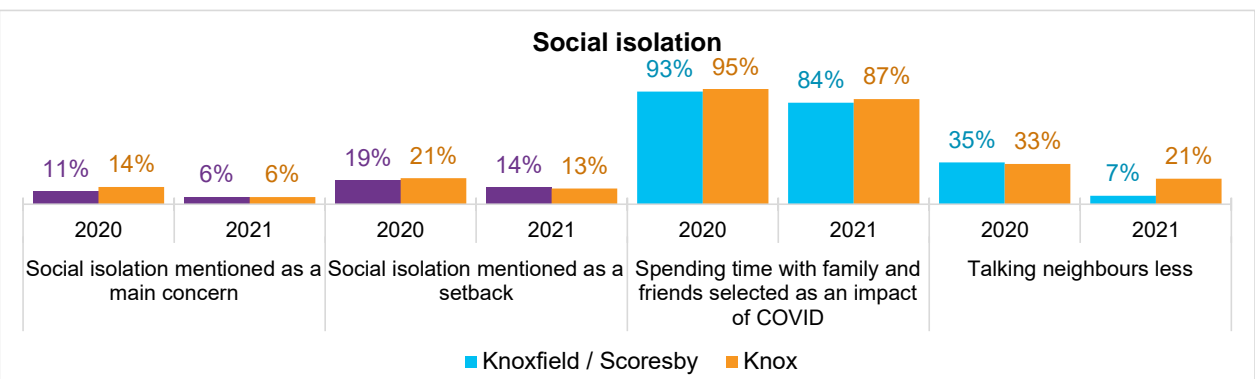
Compared to Knox

	Knoxfield / Scoresby		Knox	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Total sample =	140	69	1596	846
Representative sample =	74	55	865	640

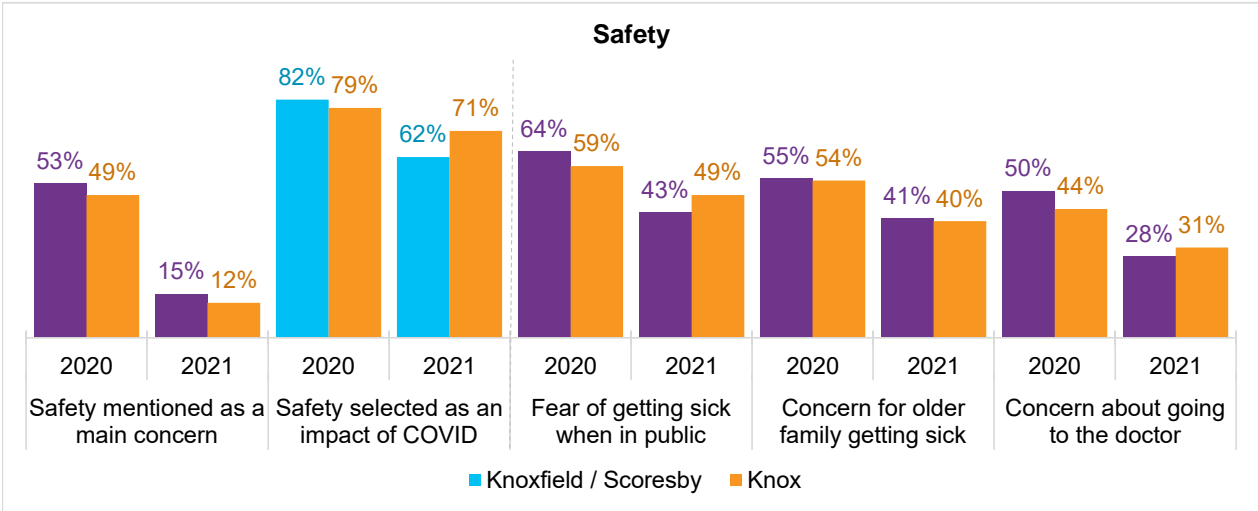
■ Overall sample
■ Representative sample




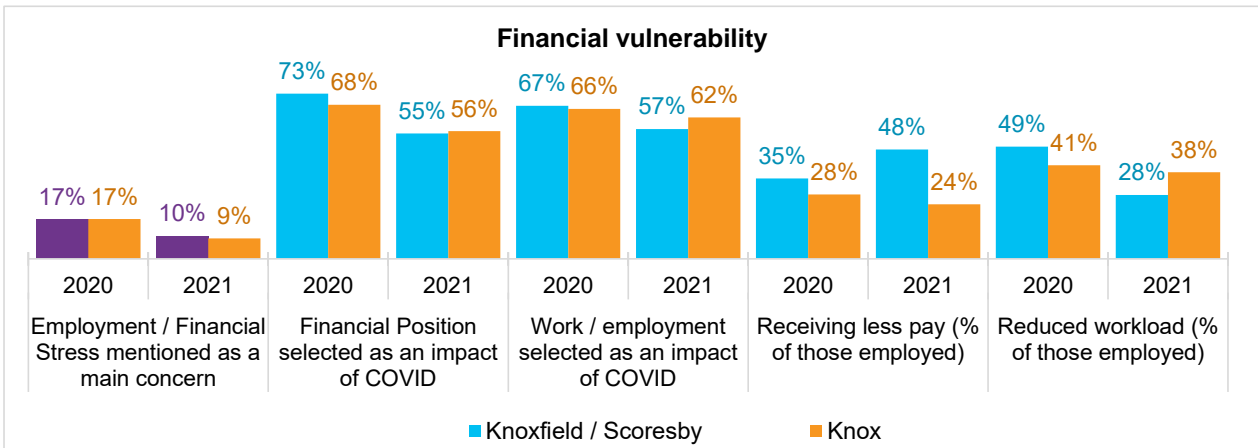
Social Isolation



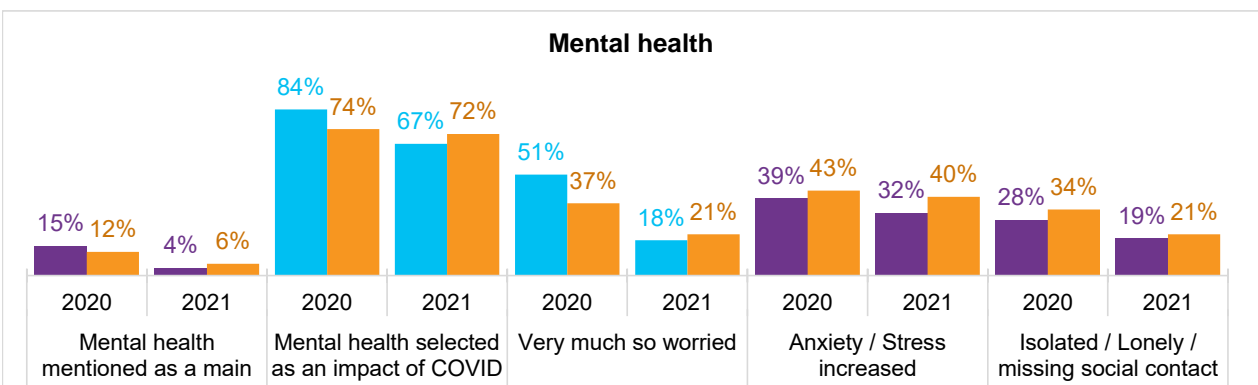
Safety 



Financial vulnerability 



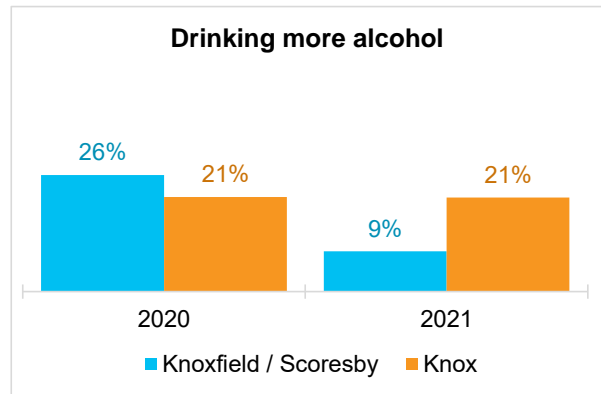
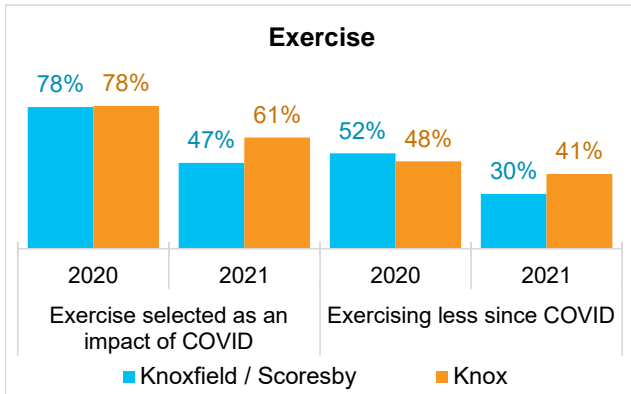
Mental health 



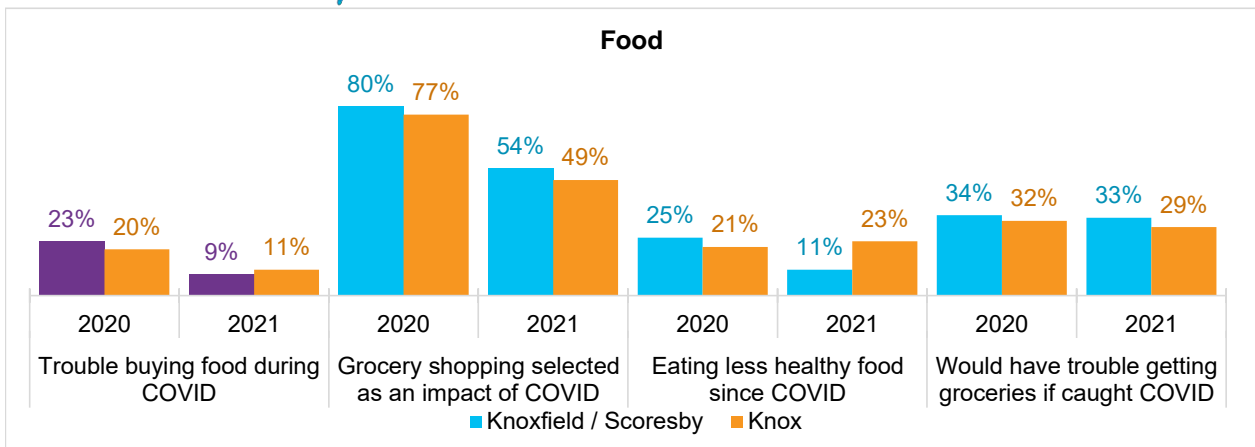
concern

■ Knoxfield / Scoresby ■ Knox

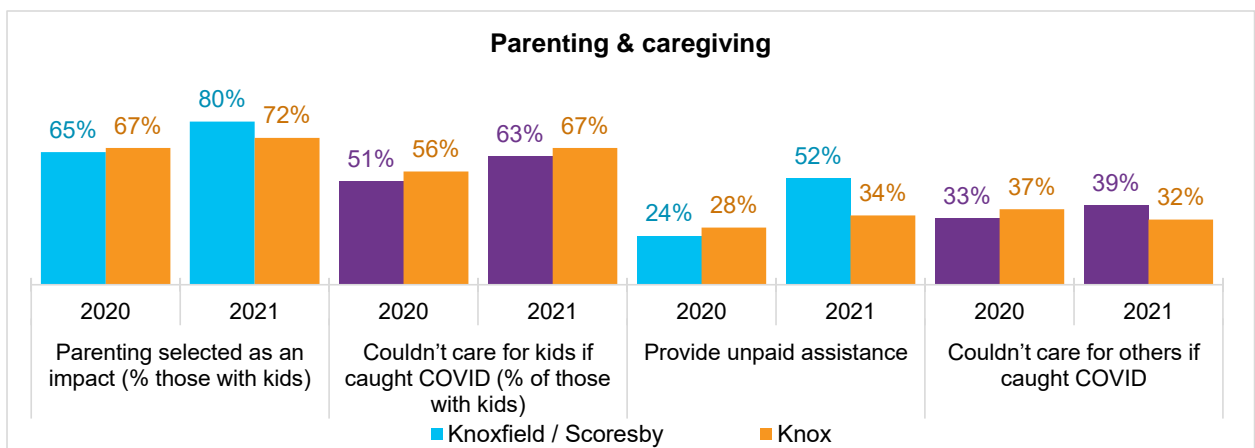
Exercise & Alcohol



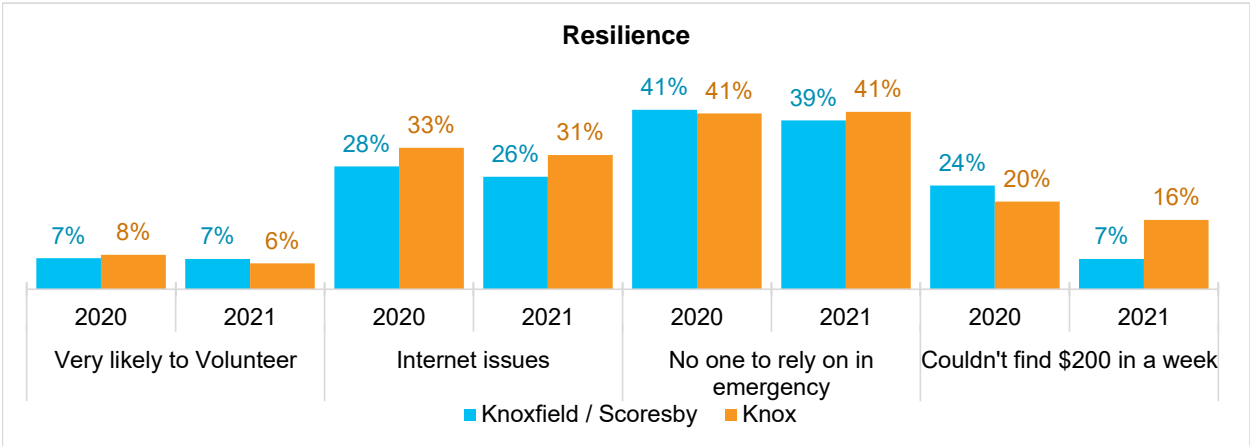
Food



Parenting & caregiving



Resilience

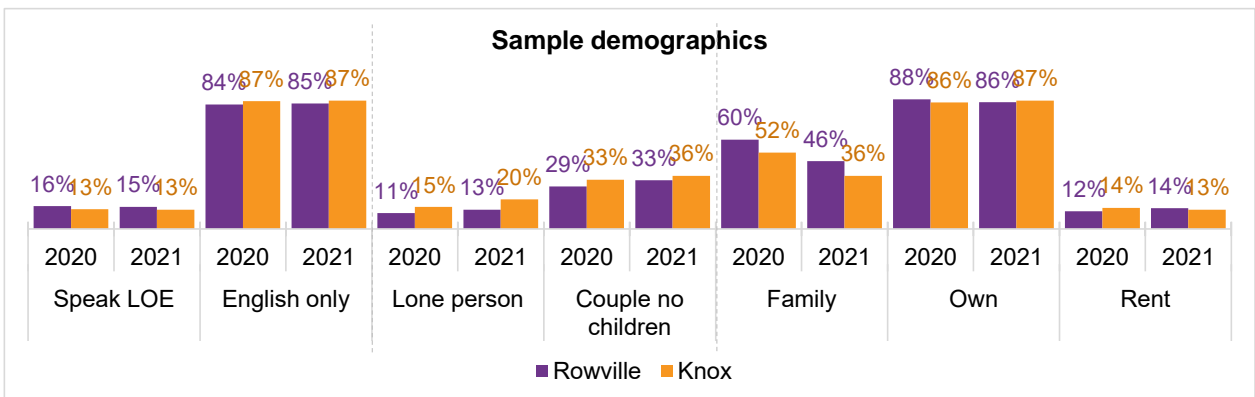
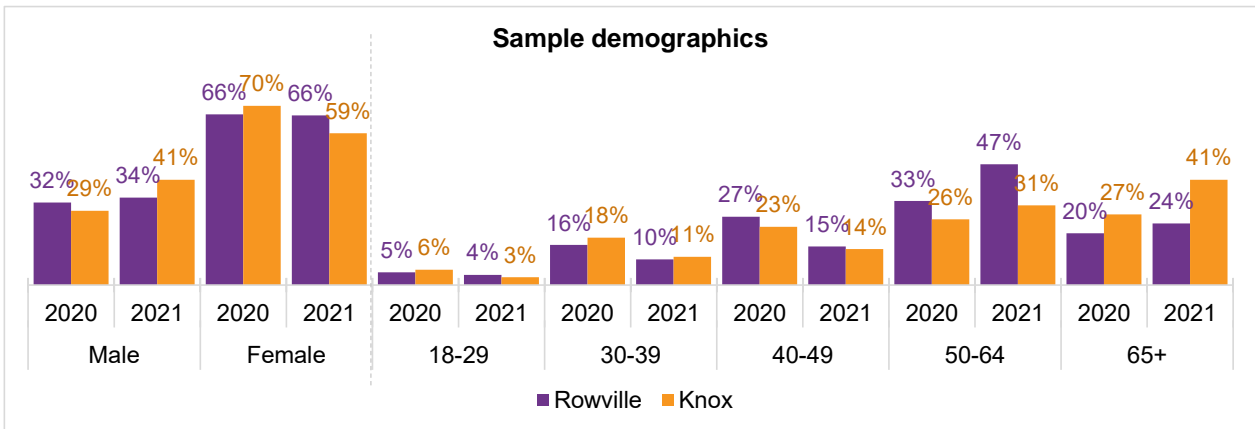


Report for Rowville

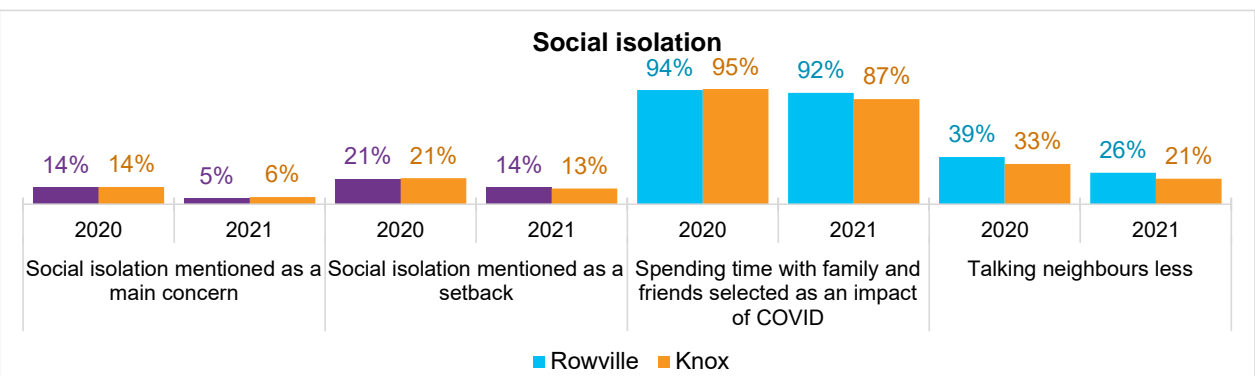
Compared to Knox

	Rowville		Knox	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Total sample =	262	141	1596	846
Representative sample =	184	137	865	640

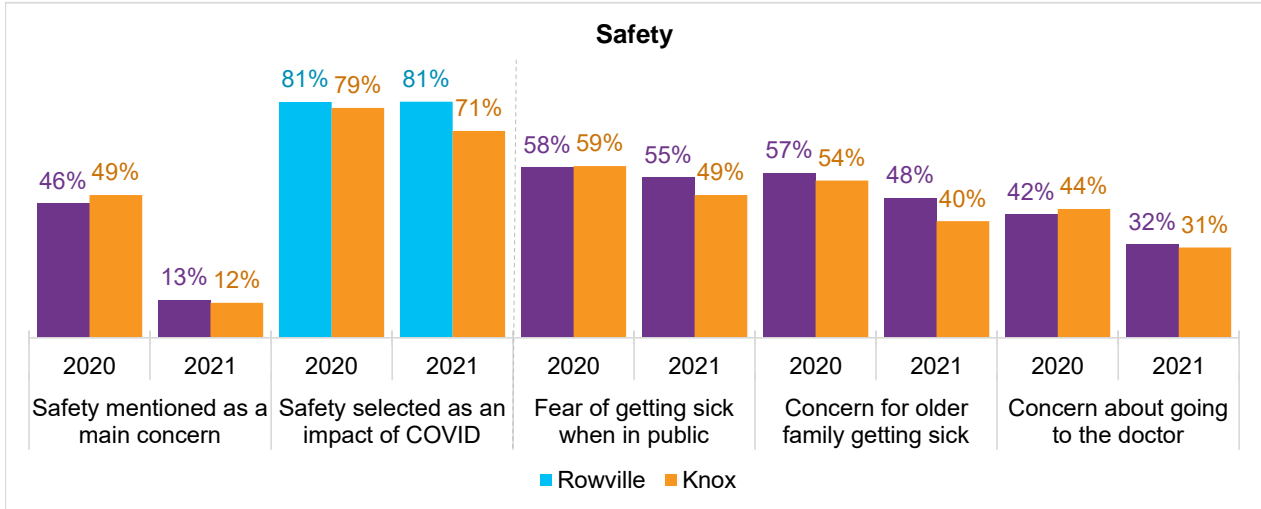
■ Overall sample
■ Representative sample



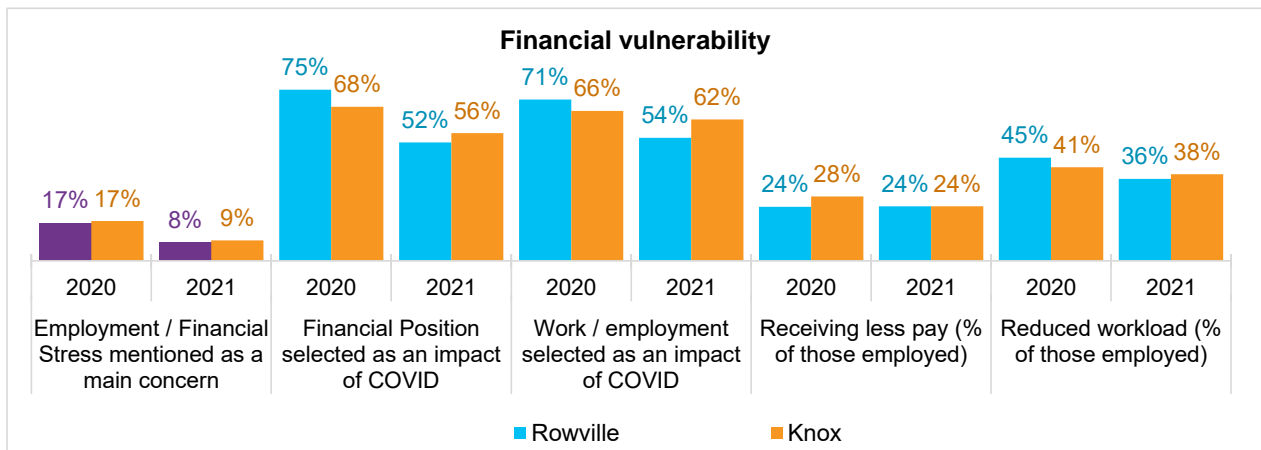
Social Isolation



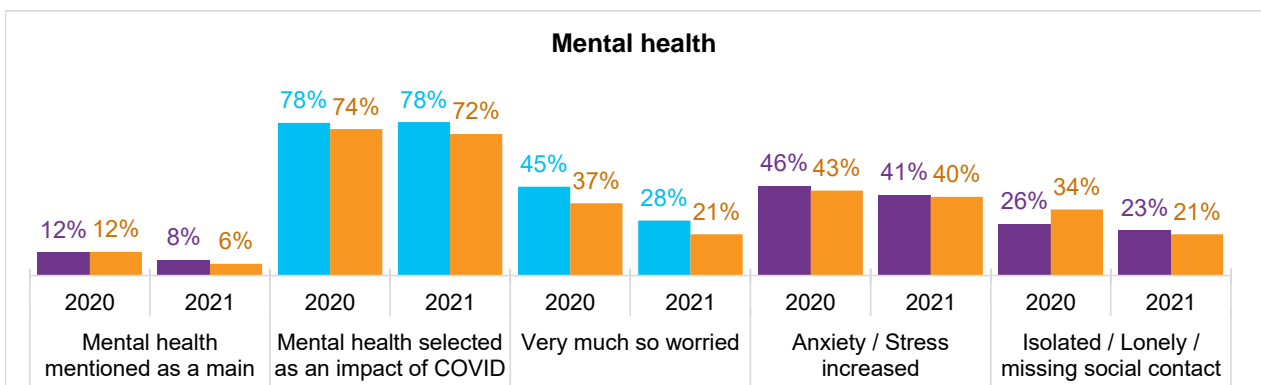
Safety



Financial vulnerability



Mental health

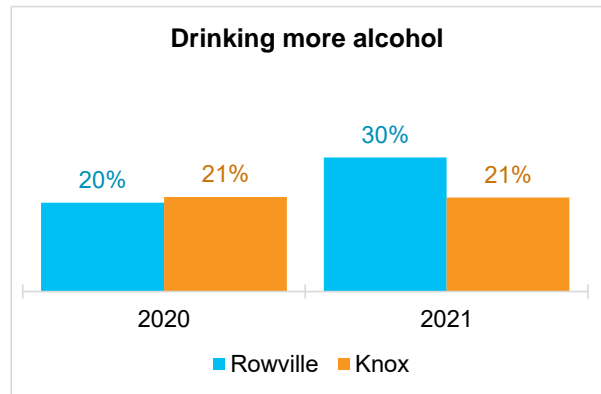
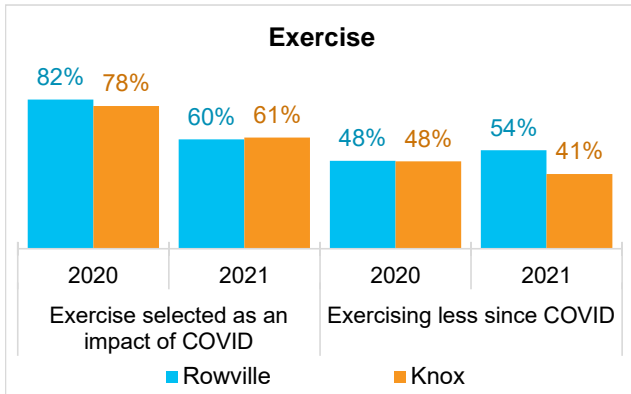


concern

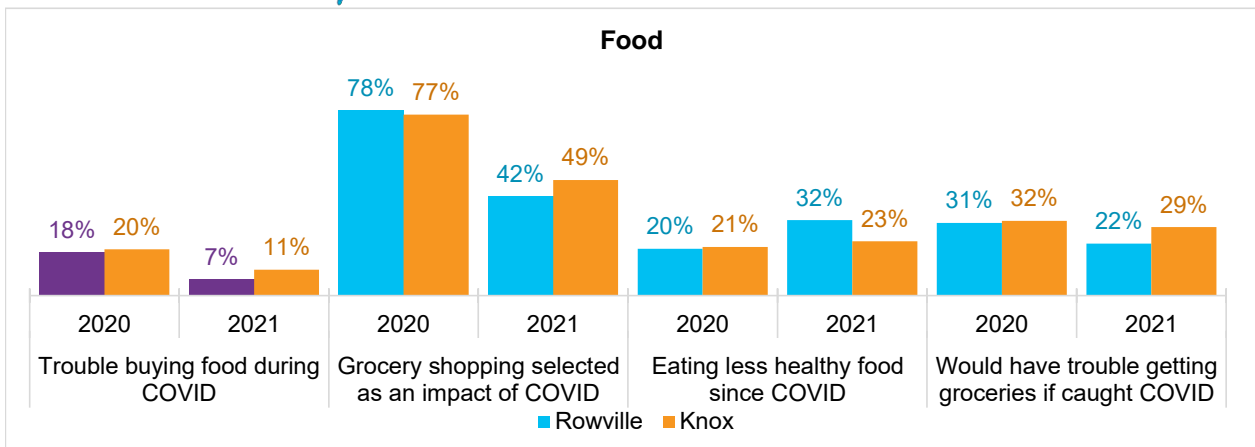
■ Rowville

■ Knox

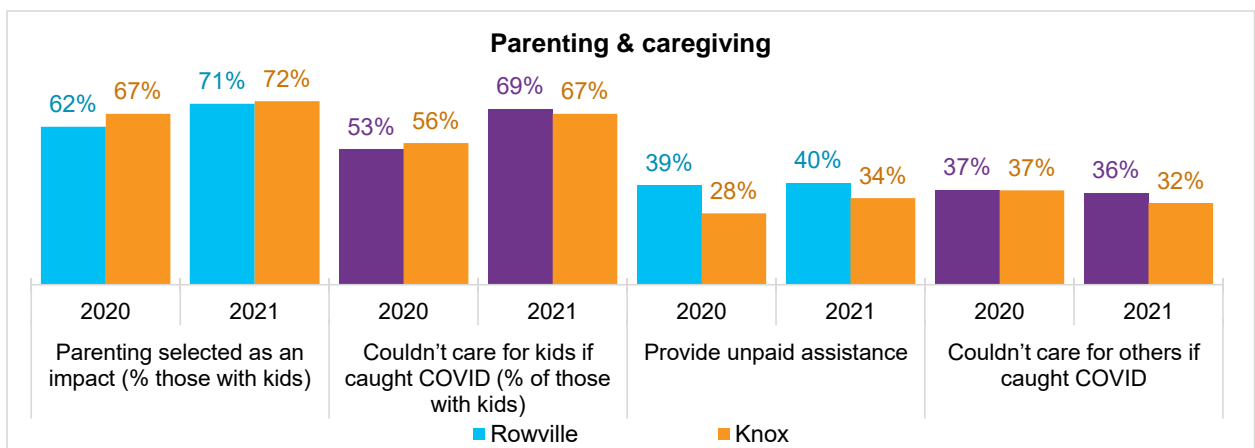
Exercise & Alcohol



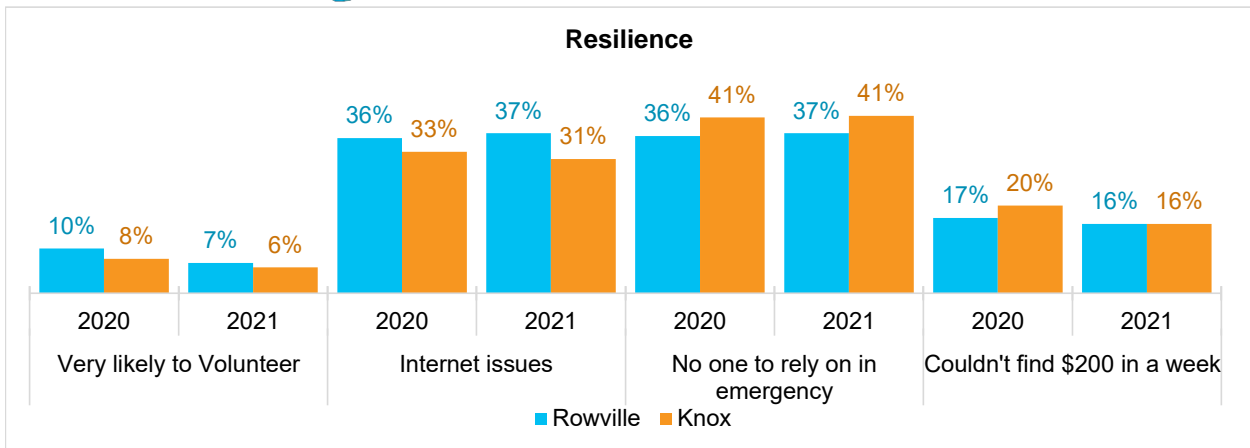
Food



Parenting & caregiving



Resilience

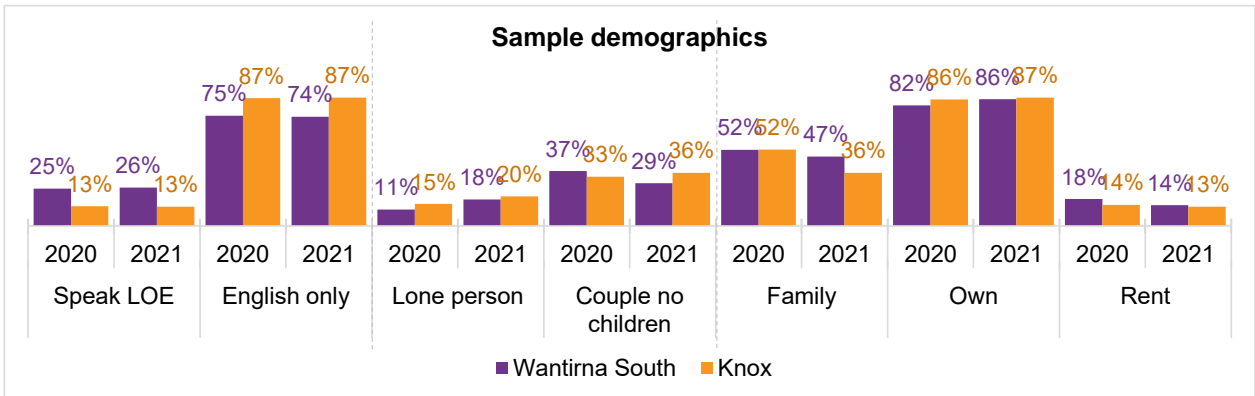
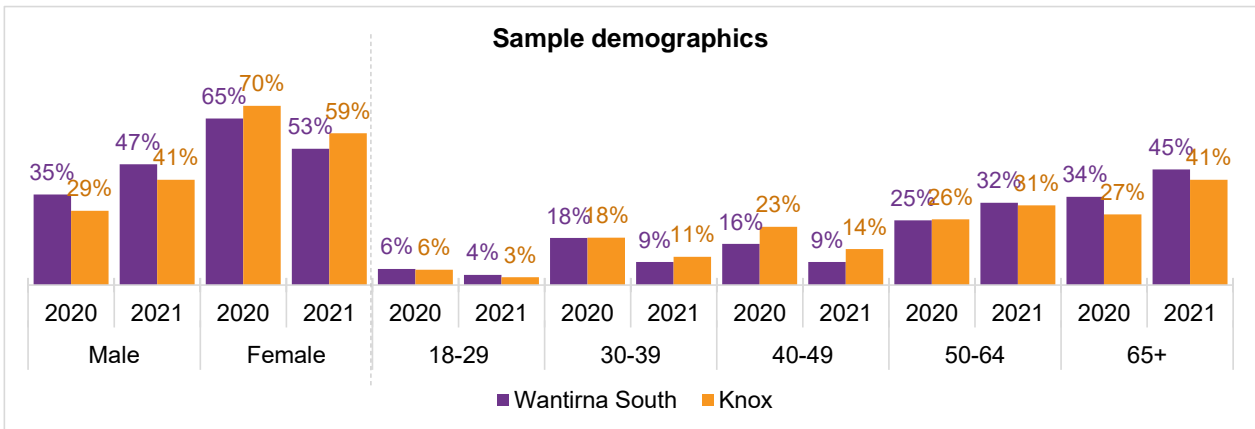


Report for Wantirna South

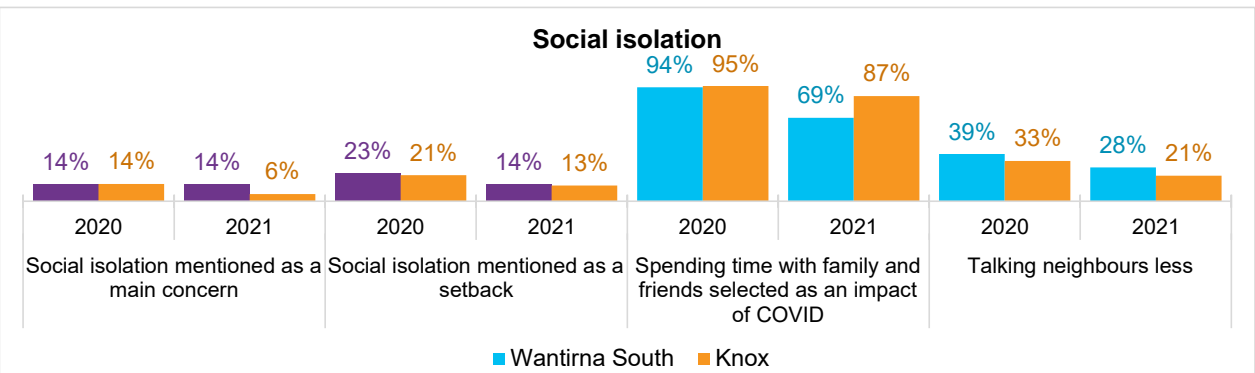
Compared to Knox

	Wantirna South		Knox	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Total sample =	176	104	1596	846
Representative sample =	120	81	865	640

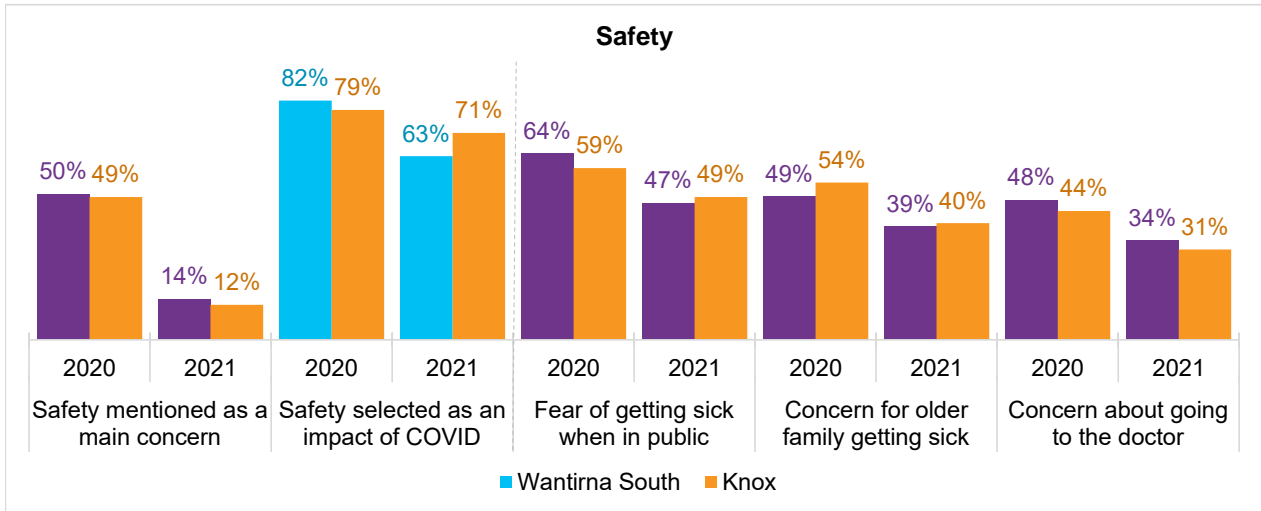
■ Overall sample
■ Representative sample



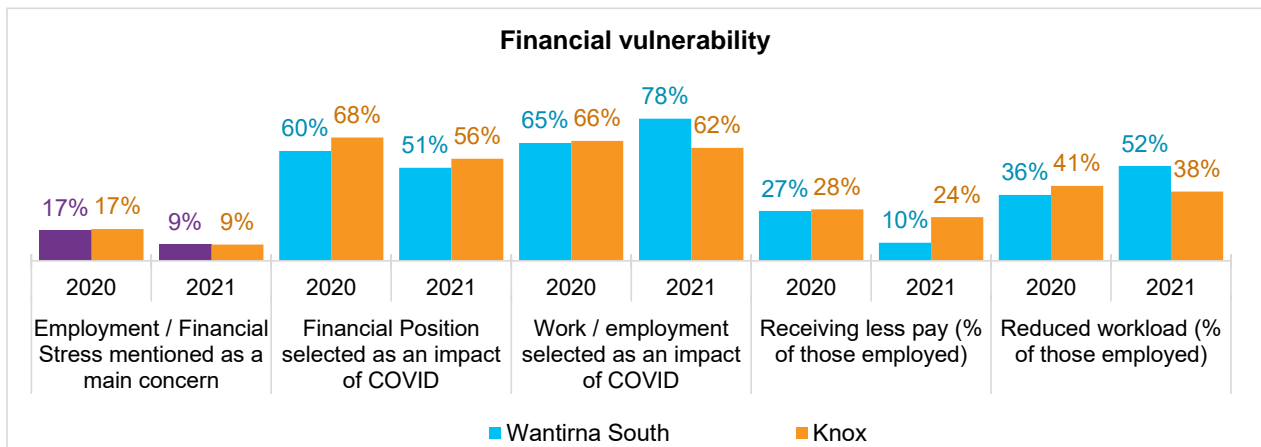
Social Isolation



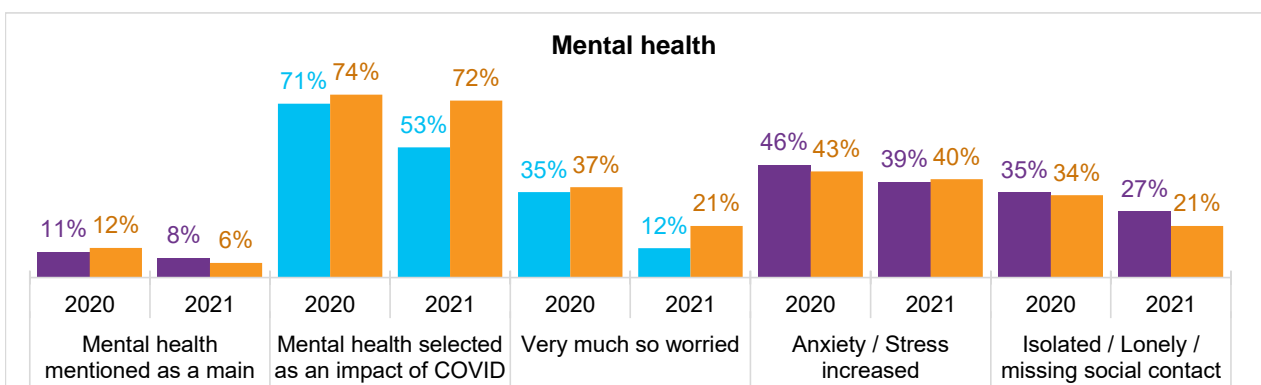
Safety 



Financial vulnerability 



Mental health 

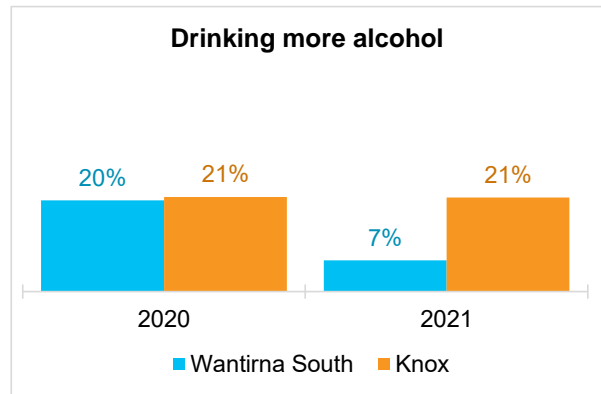
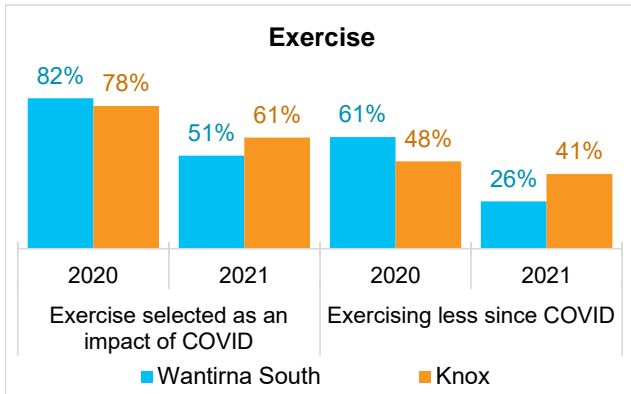


concern

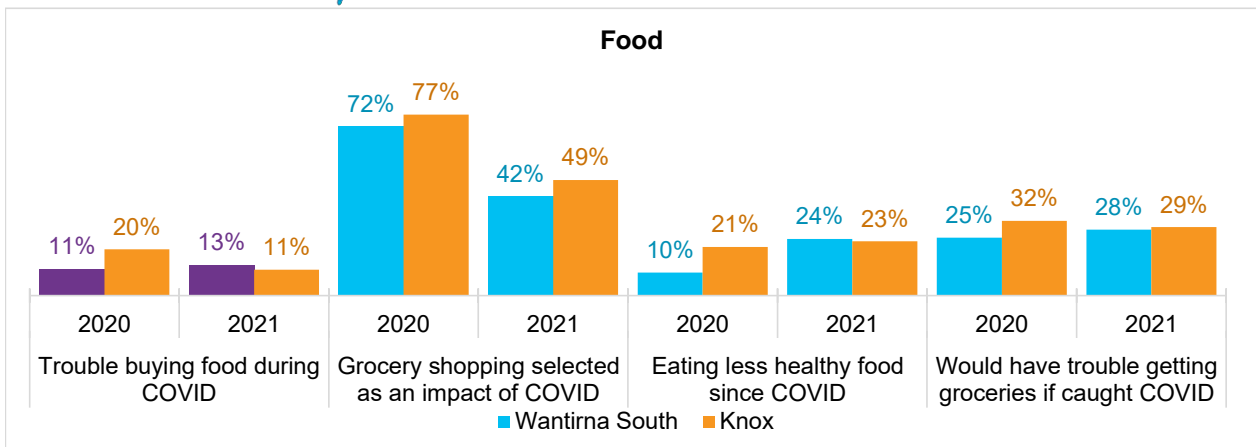
■ Wantirna South

■ Knox

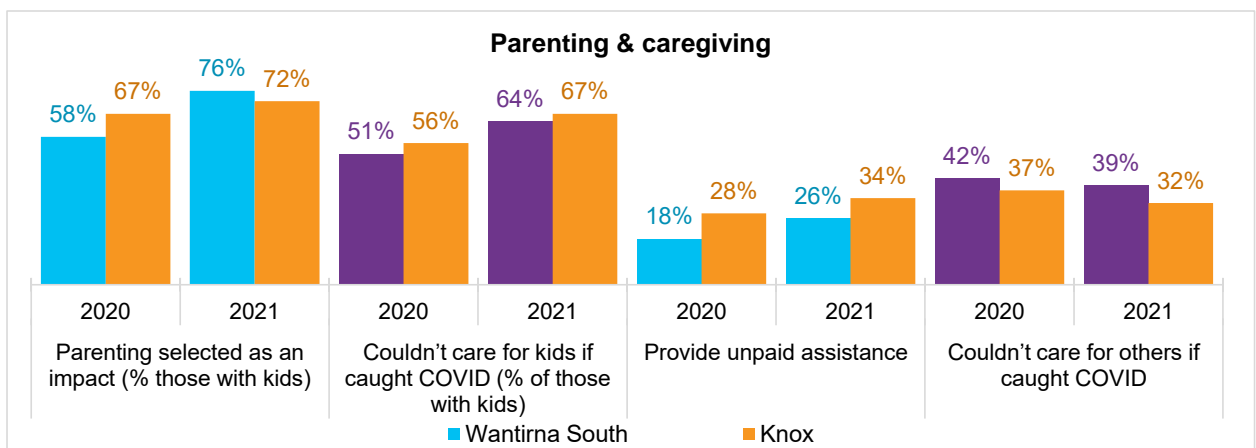
Exercise & Alcohol



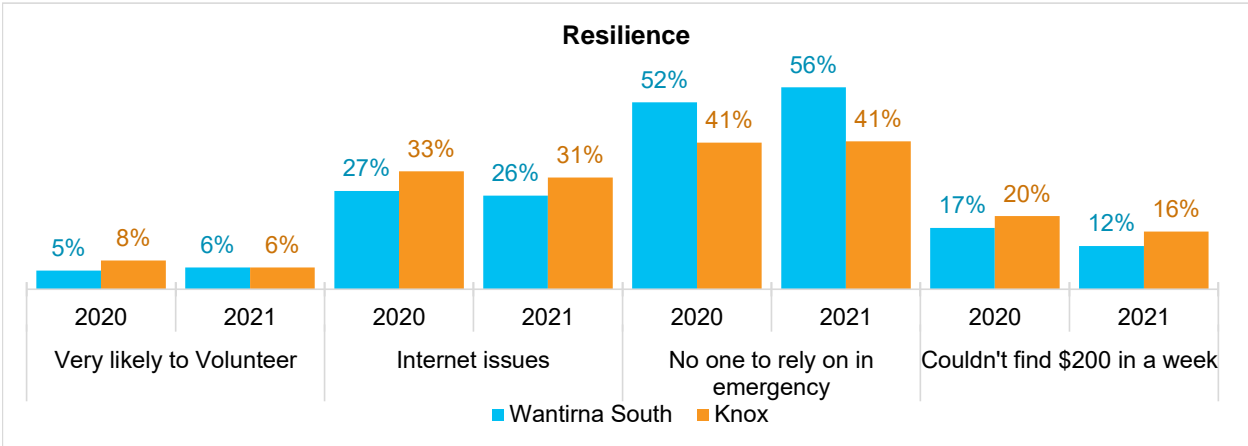
Food



Parenting & caregiving



Resilience

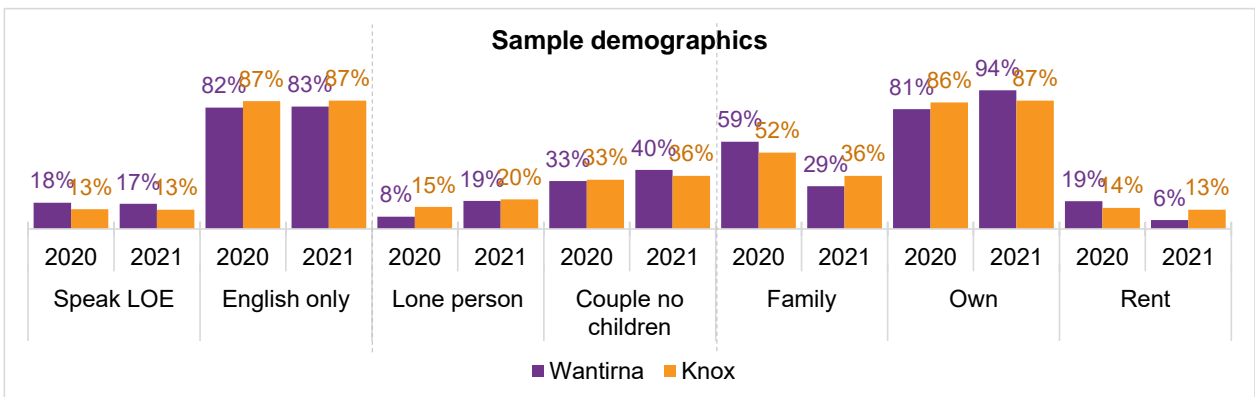
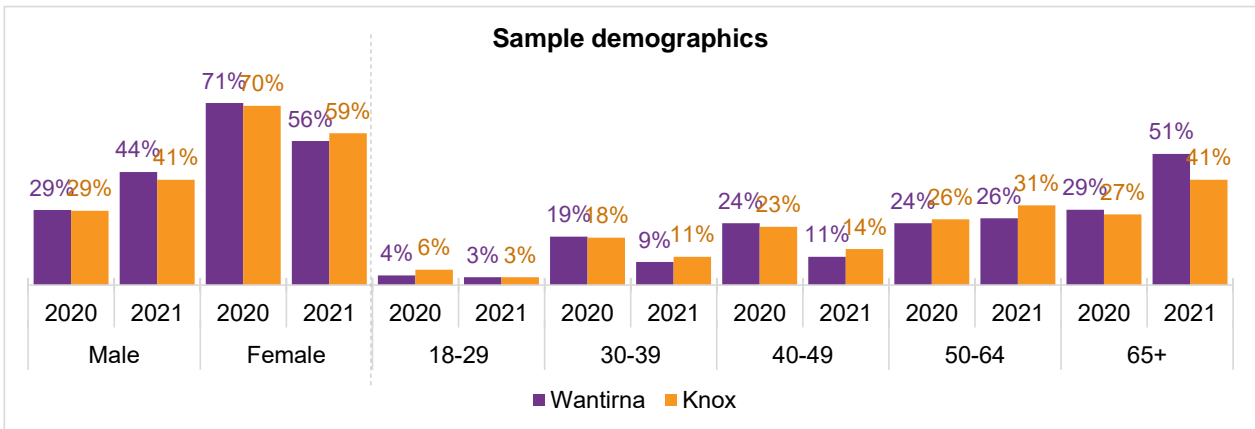


Report for Wantirna

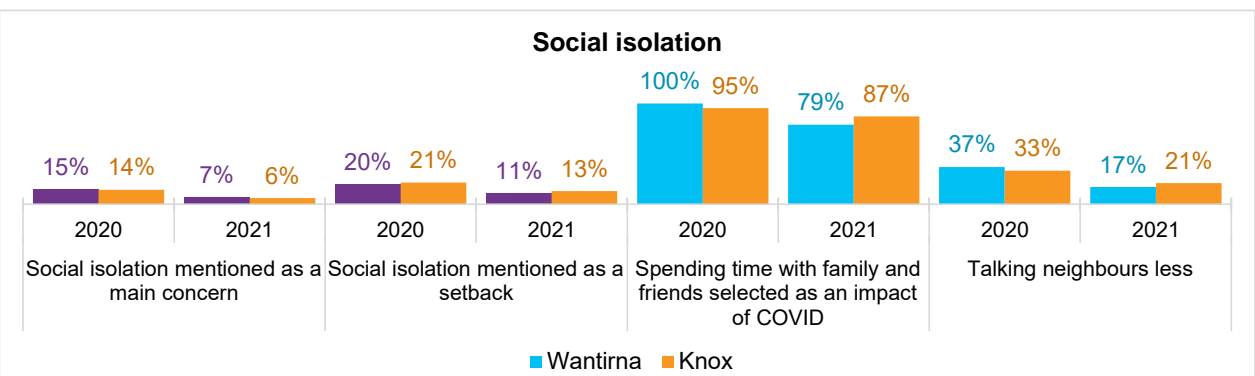
Compared to Knox

	Wantirna		Knox	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Total sample =	137	74	1596	846
Representative sample =	69	59	865	640

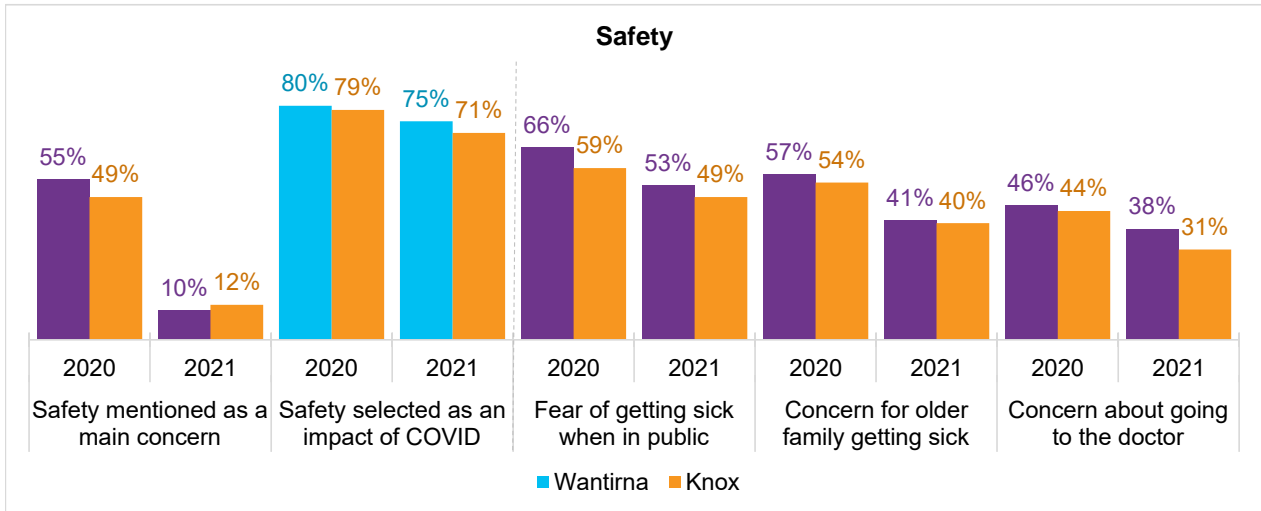
■ Overall sample
■ Representative sample



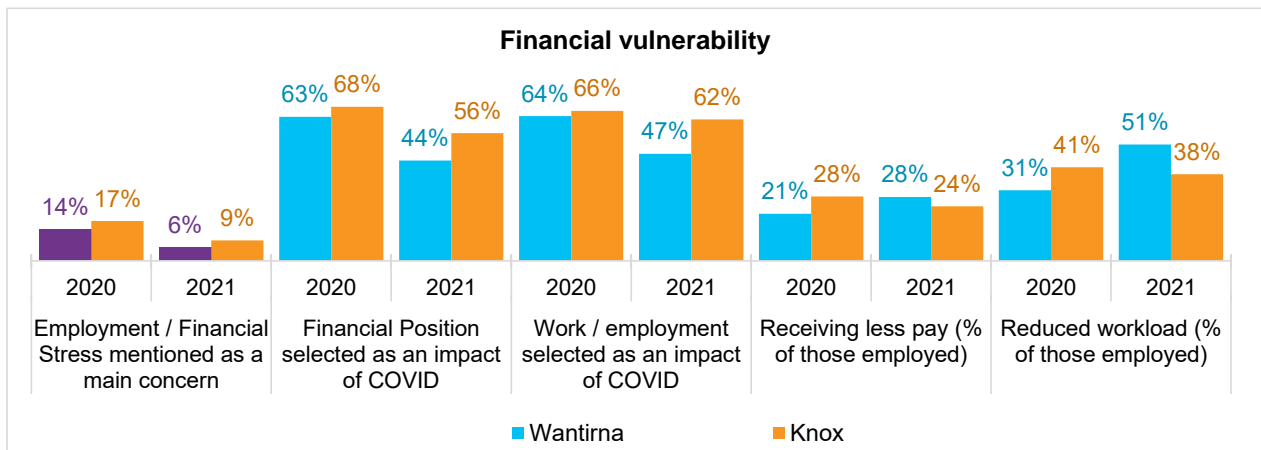
Social Isolation



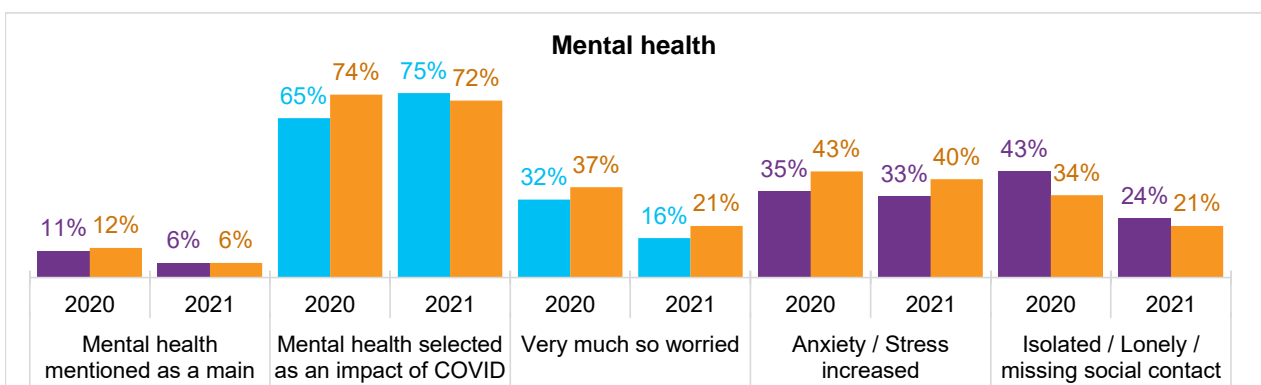
Safety 



Financial vulnerability 



Mental health 

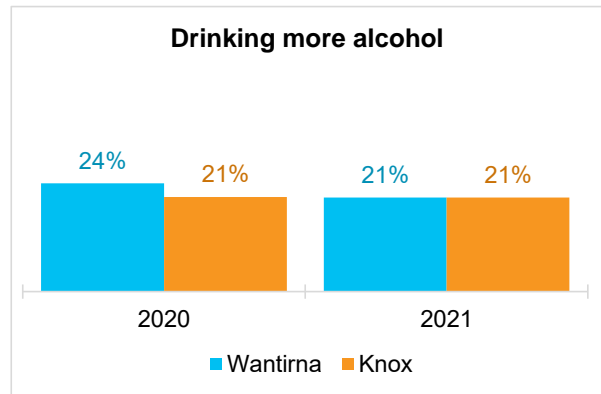
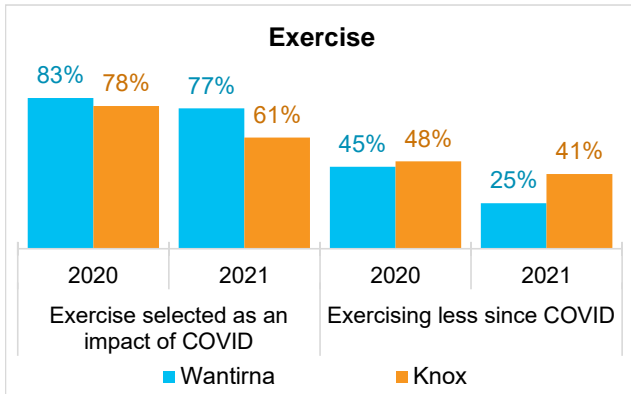


concern

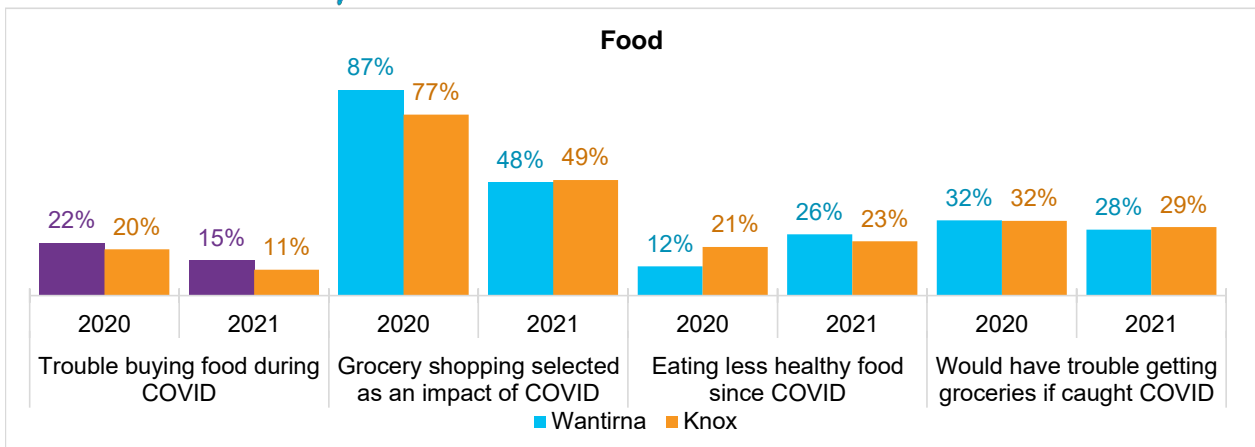
■ Wantirna

■ Knox

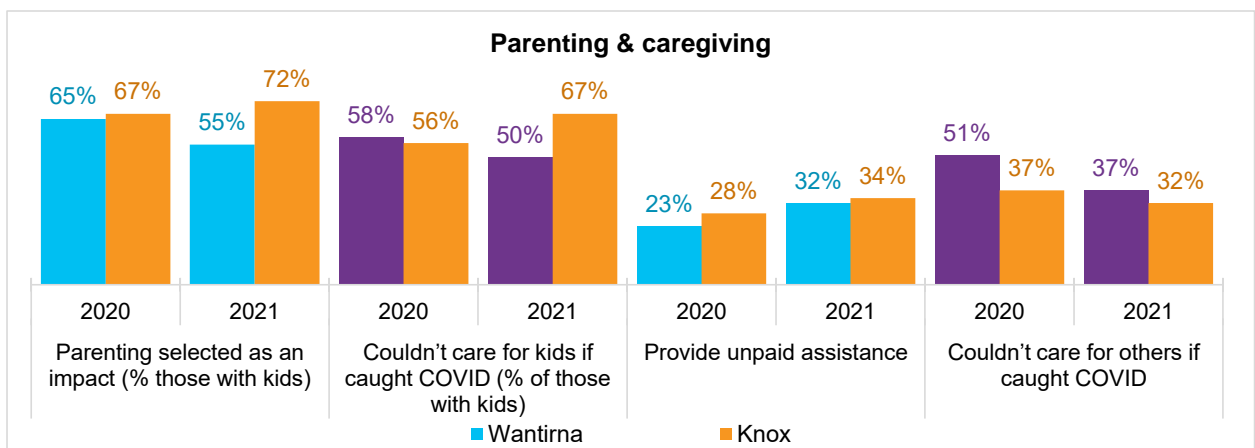
Exercise & Alcohol



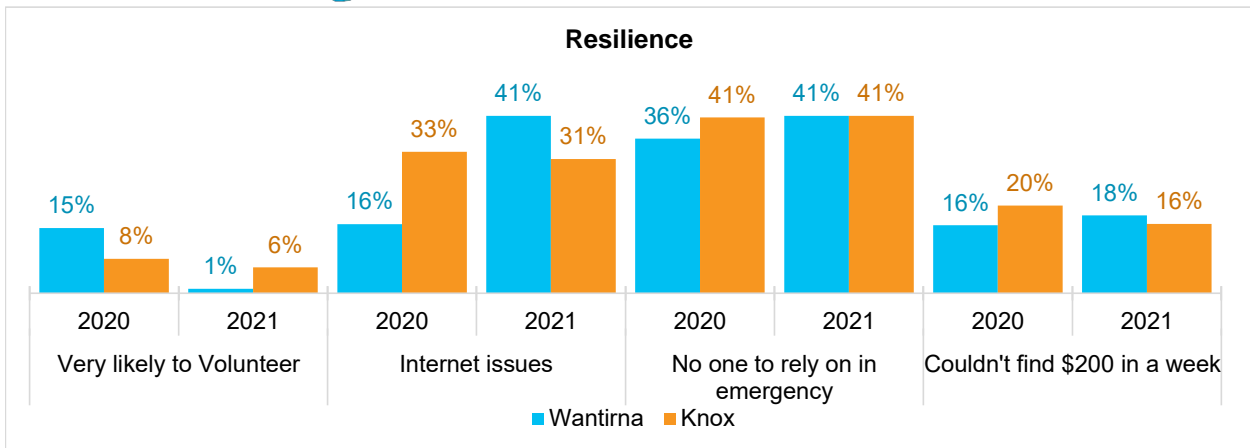
Food



Parenting & caregiving



Resilience



9.4 COVID-19 Pandemic Community and Business Support

SUMMARY: Principal Safety, Wellbeing and Pandemic Response, Catherine Dwight; Manager City Futures, Shiranthi Widan; and Manager Community Wellbeing, Petrina Dodds Buckley

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Council has approved four Community and Business Support Packages to date. This report presents an overview of the restrictions impacting the Knox Community since May 2021, the current supports being delivered and facilitated by Council, and a summary of the State and Federal Government grant and relief options available to community and business. This report also recommends a further extension of some initiatives and additional targeted support.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note the continued positive impact that Council's support initiatives and adjusted services have had so far on the Knox community and business.
2. Approve the following initiatives for inclusion in a fifth Community and Business Support Package:
 - a. Waive all not-for profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for a further period 1 October 2021 to 31 December 2021;
 - b. Note that Sporting Group tenancy agreements will be allocated a *pro-rata* charge from January 2022, pending easing of State Government restrictions which allow community sport to return both indoor and outdoor with minimum numbers, spectators and public gathering limits;
 - c. Provide funding to the value of \$20,000 for the implementation of a Digital Upskills Program for businesses; and
 - d. Provide funding to the value of \$20,000 towards the Commercial Advice and Mentoring Program.
3. Divert unexpended community-based grant funds totaling \$79k to a new Grant stream to respond to ongoing food relief supplies and/or pandemic emergency relief requests.
4. Continue to offer the second round of the Placemaking and Liveable Communities grants stream to test its relevance for the business community and take up with the remaining \$66,679 from the Business Support Grants and review the program in February 2022 and redirect remaining funds from the program towards the Knox eCommerce program.
5. Fund the above initiatives with any balance from previously allocated funding and review any additional funding required through the mid-year budget process.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the declaration of the COVID-19 Pandemic in March 2020, Council has approved four packages of financial support in recognition of the impact on the Knox community.

These packages were adopted at the following Council Meetings:

- 30 March 2020 (refer attachment 1);
- 25 May 2020 (refer attachment 2);
- 21 September 2020 (refer attachment 3); and
- 21 March 2021 (refer attachment 4).

These packages have had a positive impact through the support provided for local businesses and service providers, community and sporting groups, ratepayers, and those who are experiencing hardship and vulnerability during and in response to the Pandemic. Additionally, some initiatives were funded to support longer-term recovery from the Pandemic, including the Be Kind Campaign and the COVID-19 Household Survey.

Metropolitan Melbourne has faced three more lockdowns since 21 May 2021; with Lockdown 4 commencing on 28 May 2021 and finishing on 10 June 2021; Lockdown 5 commencing 16 July 2021 and finishing 27 July 2021; and the current Lockdown 6, commenced 5 August 2021.

As a result of the increased restrictions since May 2021, officers have undertaken to understand the current and evolving situation associated with the COVID-19 restrictions and the impacts on the community. This has included a review of last year's COVID-19 response and recovery planning and has included liaising with the local relief providers and community service providers and groups to understand community need, as well as the latest iteration of the COVID-19 Household Impact Survey (July 2021).

On 19 September 2021, the Victorian Government announced the Road Map for Metropolitan Melbourne (refer Attachment 5). The Roadmap has been developed based on expert modelling from the Burnet Institute and is set against COVID-19 thresholds including hospitalisation rates, and the vaccination targets already set out in the *National Plan to Transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response*. As the State achieves 70 per cent and 80 per cent double dose vaccination targets, the Roadmap lists the easing of specific settings and restrictions, along with opening of certain venues and services for opening – but only on the condition that all eligible attendees to the venue are vaccinated.

1.1 Council's Approach to Community Recovery

The COVID-19 Pandemic has impacted our community in many ways and continues to do so. In 2020, Council staff spoke with a range of stakeholders to understand:

- The economic impacts on local businesses and industries;
- The impacts on the natural environment and local built infrastructure; and
- The impacts on the emotional, social, spiritual, financial and physical wellbeing of individuals in Knox and local communities in the municipality.

In addition to these conversations, we collected perspectives and experiences from the community using the *COVID-19 Household Impact Survey*. The findings of this comprehensive survey supported the learnings of our informal engagements occurring between Council and community on an ongoing basis during this period.

The cumulative impact of the pandemic over time is yet to be seen but is expected to significantly affect some areas, in particular:

- Mental health;

- Social isolation;
- Business and family/individual financial health; and
- Reinforcing existing and creating new vulnerabilities in our community.

The ongoing nature of the Pandemic requires flexibility. We are responding to the Pandemic by implementing a range of relief measures and supporting those most at risk now, while we plan for recovery.

The goal for recovery is to support our community to deal with the impacts of the Pandemic and build our resilience for the future. It is not just about getting things “back to normal”, it is about rebuilding, learning from this challenge and innovating, so we can emerge stronger.

Throughout the development of the Draft Council Plan key initiatives have been identified that will be undertaken over the next four years to support our community’s recovery and build resilience.

2. DISCUSSION

Significant support has been provided by Council to the Knox Community and Business over the past 18 months and support continues to be available. Council services have adjusted wherever possible to new and/or virtual formats to ensure services have been able to continue to provide much needed support. Council has partnered with local relief and community service providers and regional partners to deliver crucial support and assistance. While not an exhaustive list of everything Council has done to support the community during the pandemic, the following provides a summary of key support initiatives Council has delivered.

2.1 Current Knox Community Based Supports

Minor Grants

The Minor Grants stream provides a monthly opportunity for organisations to apply for funding to respond to crisis relief and recovery initiatives. The Minor Grants Policy has been amended to enable community organisations to address COVID-19 and can include items such as social media platforms, technology, social isolation, food relief, community connection, IT equipment and literacy. The 2021-2022 budget provides \$193,729 for the Minor Grants Program (comprising the annual allocation of \$150,582 plus an additional \$43,147 carried forward from the 2020-21 Minor Grants Program, as per the Minor Grants Policy). As of September 2021, the remaining Minor Grants budget for 2021-22 will total \$142,560 (GST exclusive).

CDF (Community Development Fund)

The Community Development Fund (CDF) Program offers grants for activities and projects that benefit the Knox community. CDF grants are provided to help develop, enhance and support the many different not-for-profit community groups in Knox. The annual Community Development Fund Grant Program’s purpose and guidelines has been broadened to enable community organisations to apply for funding to support the reactivation and rebuild of community momentum and initiate recovery once the current COVID-19 crisis passes.

Total funding for the program 2021-22 is \$364,787 – comprising approved 2021-2022 budget allocation and carry forward of \$5,032 returned grants. At the time of writing this report, a separate report has been prepared for Council on 25 October 2021.

Hot Food Grant Programs (Carried Forward from 2020-2021)

The impact of the COVID-19 Stage 3 restrictions saw the suspension of regular community free meal services from several Emergency Relief Services in Knox. The Hot Meals Program for Vulnerable Families Grant was a one-off allocation of funding made available to support local service providers to increase hot and frozen meals and food parcels for Knox residents during, and into the recovery period, of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The funds were allocated in an uncontested and contested stream to applicable Knox community agencies:

Uncontested Food Grant

Uncontested funding was provided to two community organisations, these being Foothills Community Care in Ferntree Gully and St. Paul's Anglican Church in Boronia, for providing hot take away meals on a weekly basis for the community. Foothills, who are a large agency were provided with \$155,800 to scale up their food operations, whilst St Paul's and partners (a much smaller operation) accepted a smaller amount, offered \$28,212 to help them maintain business as usual. In keeping with the unpredictable and changing times, the service agreements offered to these agencies were flexible allowing for budgets to be reallocated or scaled up in the case of St Paul's.

Contested Food Grant

Established food relief providers servicing Knox were invited to apply for support from the contested stream. Twelve applications were received from emergency relief providers including: Church of Christ Boronia (two applications), Temple Society, Rowville Lions Club, City Life Community Care, Hari Krishna Fries, Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) – Wantirna, Ferntree Gully, Rowville Lysterfield (three applications as encouraged by the COVID Supporting Local Services Panel), Wellington Care Centre and Mental Health Foundation Australia. Ten of these applications were granted. The grant applications for this stream amounted to \$48,087 in value, with a total of \$50,500 set aside for this grant stream.

Uncommitted Funding for Food Grants

Overall, there was a \$79,000 surplus in funds not expended from the Hot Meals Grant Program. It is intended to divert this funding to a new grants stream to manage unexpected food relief requests or emergency relief supplies as the uncertainty of the pandemic continues.

Feedback from Local Community Relief and Support Providers

Feedback from Local Community Relief and Support Providers generally supports the notion that overall, organisations are managing the current community demand.

Infoclink have been successful in securing a grant from the DJPR to commence a community breakfast for vulnerable people living in Boronia including an additional \$22,000 from Council to support food purchase. Foothills has indicated that they will need assistance soon, however, they are still utilising the COVID-19 Hot Meals Grant funding. All other organisations appear to be managing on State Government funding or Council funding provided either from the second Community and Business Support Package or the monthly Minor Grants and annual CDF.

Community Access and Support Services

Council's Specialised Access Team had been providing additional support that was funded by the State Government's Community Activation and Social Isolation (CASI) initiative. Provision of food and practical items such as small electrical appliances, and groceries were provided to vulnerable community members, along with masks and assistance to access long term services. Community Outreach initiatives have been going ahead, with the focus on those most vulnerable and isolated.

Other initiatives were regular newsletters to isolated people with information about staying physically mentally well, and how to contact support services, along with phone “check in” to people who self-identified as being isolated and/or lonely and were able to refer on to supports as needed.

The Community transport service provides support to residents to access COVID-19 testing and vaccination hubs, along with medical appointments and shopping assistance.

Rowville Community Centre Showering Program

As services have closed, members of the community whom are already vulnerable were finding it near impossible to access appropriate facilities to continue to wash clothes and to shower. The Showers and Laundry Program which has been run out of Rowville Community Centre two days per week in partnership with Infolink, provides these facilities to local residents in need.

City Safety and Health

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 21 September 2020, Council resolved to provide 100% fee relief in the 2021 calendar year for health and food premises. Since the Pandemic commenced, the team have been assisting the community with the drop off and collection of sharps containers whilst the Civic Centre is closed. In response to State Government directions, officers have only be enforcing essential parking restrictions (predominantly safety reasons and red zones) during peak lockdown periods of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Monday 23 August 2021, Council resolved to waive new trading permit fees relating to outdoor dining, display of goods and business A-frame signage received from 1 September 2021 on the basis that the application fee will be waived until the end of the 2021/2022 permit period (31 August 2022).

In order to make it easier for residents to provide evidence to support an internal review the Infringements and Compliance Officer relaxed the requirements to provide evidence in a statutory declaration. The Infringements and Compliance Officer also provided a greater number of payment plans under discretionary power. These actions were approved by the Manager City Safety and Health last year.

Financial Assistance

On 23 August 2021, Council endorsed supporting a measure from previous support packages being the continuation of the COVID-19 addendum within the Payment Assistance Policy and resolving to not charge interest on rates until 31 March 2022.

Not-for-Profit Community Group Leases/Licenses and Sporting Group Tenancy Agreements

As part of Council’s 4th Community and Business Support Package approved in March 2021, Council determined to waive all not-for-profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for an additional period from **1 April 2021 to 30 September 2021**, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded. Fees are due to recommence from 1 October 2021, including those related to summer seasonal and annual tenancy arrangements.

In line with the State Government Roadmap, Community Facilities will not reopen for indoor activity until at least 5 November 2021 and at this stage only for fully vaccinated users with density quotas. Given the current restrictions and limitations flagged with regards to reopening of community facilities, it is reasonable to consider waiving not-for-profit community group leases and licenses to the end of December 2021 given the likely gradual scale up to opening whilst applying a pro rata fee to sporting club tenancies from January 2022.

Should Council wish to extend this period for a further three months to the end of December 2021, the full financial impact, if it includes sporting tenancy agreements, would be **\$107,693*** (*excluding KBI).

All summer and annual sporting tenancy applications have been made by clubs to Council but they will not be approved until we have confirmation of recommencement dates in line with the State Roadmap. Should sport be able to return and have access to facilities in 2022, a pro rata option may be an optimal outcome for Council's consideration so as not to create further precedent for winter clubs should 2022 be disrupted. Cricket Clubs and annual tenants are keen to return to any pre-season training as soon as practical.

Theatre Hire Fees – Sliding Scale Reduction

The arts and cultural sector are widely recognised as one of the sectors that has been impacted the most by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Many activities, services and events were unable to operate during most of 2020 and were the last to resume under the State Government's Roadmap to Recovery. Since May 2021, this group has again been significantly impacted. Additionally, smaller businesses and events may not be eligible for State Government grant funding that is targeted at larger-scale events. As a result, in March 2021, Council determined to provide a sliding scale of fee relief for casual hirers of Knox Community Arts Centre, in line with the percentage reductions of theatre seating capacity to meet COVIDSafe compliance. Dependent on restrictions easing and venues once again allowing patrons, this sliding scale should continue into the first quarter of 2022.

Financial Assistance for Knox Basketball Inc

Due to the impact of COVID-19 and the closure of the State Basketball Centre and the Knox Stadium, Council is providing \$497,019 in relief to Knox Basketball Inc, which was endorsed at its meeting of 27 September 2021. Community sport has been heavily affected with the suspension of play and programming, especially in an indoor environment.

Belgravia – Knox Leisureworks

Once again, due to COVID-19 and the closure of Knox Leisureworks, Council, at its meeting on 27 September 2021, endorsed further support for Belgravia, the details of which are commercial in-confidence.

Commercial Rent Relief

The Victorian State Government released regulations for two commercial rent relief schemes for the periods 29 March 2020 to 28 March 2021 and 28 July 2021 through to 15 January 2022. Each scheme has eligibility requirements. Where tenants are eligible, Council has an obligation to comply. The commercial tenants that have requested rent relief are in varied situations, with most having to abide by a Government forced shutdown. The Property Management team has assessed a number of these requests and secured Council support, throughout the pandemic.

Vaccination Support

Council has recently supported EACH with a no cost tenancy arrangement in a Council facility for the purpose of community vaccination. Officers also supported Interchange with access to a vacant Council facility to enable them to vaccinate their vulnerable clients, support workers and family members during June to August 2021.

The Community Connections Officer has worked with the High Risk Accommodation Response (HRAR) at EACH to rollout COVID-19 vaccinations to five older persons housing estate residents

with an in-reach model. This took place over a period of three weeks, with approximately 40 residents participating.

In conjunction with this work, there was also a collaboration with the KCC Immunisation team to rollout Flu vaccinations to seven older adults housing estate residents with an in-reach model. This took place over a four week period with around 25 people taking up the opportunity to be vaccinated.

There is planning underway to work with St Paul's, Foothills Community Care, Knox Infolink and HRAR at EACH to offer COVID-19 vaccination to people who access community meals with an in-reach model.

Weekly vaccination rates released by the Commonwealth Government at State and Local Government level show that the Knox community COVID-19 vaccination rates are above state and national levels, with the community being on track to achieve 70 per cent fully vaccinated by the week of 18 October.

2.2 Knox Council Business Supports

Commercial Advice and Mentoring Program

The Commercial Advice and Mentoring Program was designed to provide fast, free professional advice to businesses. Two providers were engaged, one a financial services provider (Hayes Girling), and the other a small business mentor (ION Group) to support businesses in response to COVID-19. Initially, the service was provided as an open expression of interest process promoted via Council's social media channels, Knoxbiz website, eBulletin and through direct phone contact from Council officers. Less than ten businesses took part in this version of the program.

Small group mentoring programs have been delivered via Council's provider ION Group. Two programs have rolled out with 17 businesses attending. These programs consisted of a series of three online workshops, followed by three one-on-one sessions with a business mentor. The programs were targeted at businesses most directly affected by the lockdowns such as hair and beauty, retail, hospitality, gyms and yoga amongst others. The feedback on these programs has been positive with 85 per cent of attendees saying they would recommend the program to others.

Hayes Girling Financial was engaged to run a series of workshops titled Finance Essentials which covered topics including cashflow basics, pivot and adapt in business, people management, tax obligations, managing a family business and exiting business. Seventy-five businesses registered for these events, with 58 attendees across all workshops (there was some drop-off in numbers that attended). Hayes Girling Financial sought to collect feedback from attendees for these sessions but received very few responses. Council officers attended each of the sessions and there was good engagement from attendees and positive comments in the chat at the end of each session.

Following on from the Finance Essentials workshops, Hayes Girling have been delivering one-on-one financial advice and planning sessions with businesses. Each business was offered up to three sessions with a qualified accountant and business advisor to develop a business-specific recovery plan.

Thirteen businesses have accessed this service so far. Whilst not all businesses have completed their three sessions, feedback was sought to inform this process and was overwhelmingly positive.

The one-on-one format was the most expensive to deliver at \$1,500 per business. Council could consider extending this support, targeting the most severely impacted sectors. A request can be made to the provider to restructure the program to deliver it for \$1,000 per business. The

program could be opened for another 20 businesses which would total an additional \$20,000 for this program.

Business Support Grants

Three Business Support Grant programs were created with a total budget of \$335,000.

The Knox eCommerce Grant provided up to \$2,000 for businesses to implement eCommerce websites, online stores or social media strategy and delivery. Grants totaling \$96,469 were awarded to 57 applicants for projects in this grant program.

The Knox Manufacturing and Supply Chain Transition Grant provided up to \$20,000 for manufacturing businesses to adapt their operations and cater for opportunities related to COVID-19. There were six projects awarded funding in this program with a total of \$90,765.

The first round of Creative and Cultural Sector Grants awarded \$81,087 in funding to 15 applications. Eleven of these applications were via the Industry Facilitation stream which funded professional development, website and social media projects and new product development. Four projects were funded through the Placemaking and Liveable Communities stream, stimulating creative events, exhibitions and public art in Knox's retail centres.

Of the 30 grant recipients that have completed acquittals so far, 100% of the projects fully or partially met the aims set out by the businesses. There was a range of challenges identified by the grant recipients, many of which were related to delays caused by COVID-19 lockdowns. Others included issues with contractors engaged to deliver the projects going over the initial budget. There were many comments from grant recipients through the acquittal process expressing gratitude for the support provided through the business grant program.

The remaining budget of \$66,679 for the Business Support Grants has been allocated to a second round of Placemaking and Liveable Communities stream acknowledging the struggle of the creative, retail and hospitality sectors. This second round has attracted some applications, the majority of which have not met project eligibility requirements so far. Eligible projects in this program include public art exhibitions, events or partnerships with traders to deliver shopfront refurbishment or creative merchandising. Projects must be delivered in one of Knox's retail centres to encourage activation of these areas once restrictions ease. The applications received to date include events that are not planned to be delivered in a retail centre, or they are to be delivered indoors at specific venues.

The most recent rounds of lockdowns have put even more pressure on already stretched businesses and officers believe that the uncertainty around lifting of restrictions is limiting applications for this grant program. On this basis, it is recommended Council continue to offer the second round of the Placemaking and Liveable Communities grants stream to test its relevance for the business community and take up, particularly beyond the current stage of lockdown. Should the program not attract suitable applications or there are funds remaining through the program, officers propose to review the program in February 2022 and redirect the remaining funds towards the Knox eCommerce program.

Digital Upskills Program

Digital marketing skills are consistently identified as key areas of improvement for small to medium enterprise owners. The Digital Upskills Program was aimed at providing a tailored program to support better website content creation, search engine optimisation, social media and online marketing for Knox's SMEs. The program consisted of six by two-hour workshops focused on specific digital marketing topics. Workshops were recorded and made available to participants

to watch again as needed. There was a Facebook group created to encourage networking and collaboration between participants.

A total of 56 people registered for the program, 50% of these people rented commercial space for their business and 30 per cent were home-based. Feedback provided on this program from 22 participants showed that 100 per cent would have recommended the program to others.

Seventy-eight (78) per cent of participants said that as a result of the program they were working on a clear digital marketing plan and 95 per cent of participants were interested in more digital marketing training, specifically social media content, LinkedIn, Facebook for business and social media advertising. Support for providing digital marketing programs was further supported at our recent Women on the Go networking event. Feedback provided at that event suggested that digital marketing tips and workshops would be valuable to those attendees.

This program could be extended to provide support for businesses most impacted by COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions. A consultant could be engaged to provide tailored social media strategies to businesses to support their recovery when restrictions ease. An estimated budget for this program would be to support 25 businesses at \$800 each, totaling \$20,000.

Retail Activation Strategy

Knox's Retail Activation Strategy is currently being prepared. The aim of the strategy is to create a buy local campaign to promote local businesses to residents and to create a range of activations to reinvigorate retail spaces once restrictions allow. The draft strategy will be brought to Council for consideration and endorsement for public consultation in the coming months.

Outdoor Eating and Entertainment

State Government provided \$500,000 funding to Council in October 2020 to deliver outdoor dining projects in Knox. Part of the funding was used to resource a project officer role for ten months. In that time the following outdoor dining projects were delivered:

- Seven outdoor dining "parklets" located outside existing Knox food businesses;
- Pop-up entertainment programming for the "Picnic in the Basin" event;
- Two permanent outdoor dining installations;
- Fifty hand sanitiser stands and hand sanitiser for 45 local businesses; and
- Installation of eight permanent outdoor dining pods to benefit 35 hospitality businesses in Mountain Gate Shopping Centre, Alchester Village and The Basin Triangle.

The feedback on this project was very positive with business and residents showing their appreciation for the new dining options. The outdoor dining pods delivered towards the end of the project received an overwhelmingly positive response with 600+ reactions and comments on the Facebook post about their installation.

It was noted in the State Government delivery of the Roadmap out of lockdown, that there was a strong emphasis on outdoor dining as a strategy to support struggling hospitality businesses. Whilst there has been no indication of an extension to this program via extra funding, there needs to be further discussion internally about how we might facilitate more of this activity in the next six to twelve months.

2.3 State and Federal Government Funding

Over the past six months, both the State and Federal Government have initiated further measures of support for both community and business.

Community Based Relief/Support

On 5 September 2021, the Victorian Government announced more than \$27 million for food and financial relief for our most vulnerable, a boost to family violence services, and more support for our culturally diverse communities. This is intended to build on the \$30 million announced in June and it is expected that Knox will be allocated funding to support those families required to isolate.

The funding also includes \$5.9 million to extend the **Extreme Hardship Support Program** to 31 December 2021. Delivered by the Red Cross, the program provides support to people on temporary and provisional visas and undocumented migrants facing extreme financial hardship who are ineligible for Commonwealth payments. The **CALD Communities Taskforce**, established in August 2020, will receive a \$7.2 million boost to provide tailored local support, promote vaccine uptake and deliver more emergency food relief to culturally diverse communities.

To keep women and children safe, \$2.25 million will be allocated to **specialist family violence services** to help more survivors access safe accommodation, put food on the table, and provide immediate aid. A further \$850,000 will support case work for single mothers and deliver women's mental health projects.

On 6 September 2021, the Victorian Government announced more relief for Victorians struggling to pay their rent with new grants to help them keep their tenancies. The **COVID-19 Rent Relief Grant Program** will help renters who are experiencing rental hardship due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Grants of up to \$1,500 will provide direct financial support to renters by making a contribution towards the cost of their rent directly to their landlord on their behalf.

The one-off payment is specifically for renters paying more than 30 per cent of their income in rent who are living in a primary residence to help them maintain safe, secure, and stable accommodation. Grants will be targeted at those who have lost an income of 20 per cent or more due to the Pandemic. There is an annual income limit of \$62,860 for singles and \$94,300 for couples, and to be eligible applicants can't have more than \$2,000 in savings. The landlord and renter will also need to enter into a rent reduction agreement for a period after 27 May 2021.

DFFH funding to support vulnerable residents in mandatory isolation, has allocated \$40,000 to Knox Council (managed via the Community Access and Support Department).

During September the **Department of Job, Precincts and Regions** announced the Sporting Club Grants Program will provide grants to assist active recreation and sporting clubs that incurred financial loss during the recent lockdowns in Victoria. Victorian sport and active recreation organisations that were impacted by the recent lockdowns in Victoria can now apply for a funding lifeline courtesy of the Victorian Government's Sporting Club Grants Program.

Grants of \$2,000 for Victorian sport and active recreation organisations with a payroll of up to \$3 million, to compensate for irrecoverable costs greater than \$2,000 arising directly from the cancellation or postponement of events during lockdowns from 11.59 pm on Thursday, 15 July to 27 July 2021 and 8 pm on Thursday, 5 August to 23 September 2021.

Business Relief/Support

On 24 August 2021, the Victorian Government announced further relief for commercial tenants struggling with rent payments, with new regulations finalised as part of the **Commercial Tenancy**

Relief Scheme. The scheme will help small and medium-sized businesses with an annual turnover of less than \$50 million that have experienced a loss in turnover of more than 30 per cent during the Pandemic.

Businesses will get financial relief in the form of a proportionate reduction in rent. For example, a business with a turnover of 40 per cent of pre-Pandemic levels can only be charged 40 per cent of its rent. Of the balance, at least half must be waived, with the remainder to be deferred.

On 4 September the Victorian Government announced a jointly-funded support package from the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments to provide a critical four-week boost to small and medium-sized Victorian businesses most impacted by the current public health lockdown.

The joint package of up to \$2.34 billion is intended to deliver certainty to around 175,000 Victorian businesses.

Funding of up to \$1.6 billion will support about 132,000 businesses across multiple sectors who were recipients of the **Business Costs Assistance Program Round 2** or July Extension. Businesses throughout Victoria will receive automatic payments of \$2,800 a week (annual payroll below \$650,000), \$5,600 a week (payroll of 650,000 to \$3 million) or \$8,400 (payroll of \$3 million to \$10 million) to cover ongoing costs such as wages, rent, utilities and insurance. Businesses will remain eligible while they are unable to operate due to public health restrictions.

Licensed hospitality businesses that have previously received grants under the **Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund 2021** or July Extension Programs will receive automatic payments of \$5,000, \$10,000 and \$20,000. Payment amounts are tiered according to premises capacity: \$5,000 for a capacity of up to 99 patrons or where patron capacity is not specified, \$10,000 for a capacity of 100 to 499 patrons, and \$20,000 for a capacity of 500 or more. Up to \$289 million funding will support more than 9,300 premises impacted by lockdown. Hospitality businesses will remain eligible while they are unable to operate due to public health restrictions.

The **Small Business COVID Hardship Fund** will receive a \$448 million boost, increasing the total grant amount available to small and medium-sized businesses from \$14,000 to \$20,000 in recognition of the impact of the lockdown extension. The Fund now stands at \$700 million, providing support for up to 35,000 businesses. Some 16,000 businesses that have already received a Small Business COVID Hardship Fund grant will receive an automatic top-up payment of \$6,000. This program supports businesses that have been ineligible for Victorian Government business support programs since May but have experienced a reduction in revenue of at least 70 per cent. This includes businesses that are legally allowed to operate but are restricted in their ability to generate revenue.

3. CONSULTATION

In 2020/21, Council officers spoke with a range of stakeholders to understand:

- The economic impacts on local businesses and industries.
- The impacts on the natural environment and local built infrastructure.
- The impacts on the emotional, social, spiritual, financial and physical wellbeing of individuals in Knox and local communities in the municipality.

There continues to be ongoing consultation and engagement with residents, businesses, community relief and support partners and Council Departments during the Pandemic. These discussions have informed considerations for the proposed updates.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

The closure of Council facilities and services, and local businesses has a direct impact on the amenity of the Knox community. Support provided with the Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package grant is assisting hospitality businesses to realise additional economic benefits and assist with the activation of Knox's local shopping strips.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

In 2020-21, Council adopted a budget of \$3.0 million to support the community during the Pandemic. The adopted budget for 2021-2022 does not include an allocation for COVID-19 relief. Officer's proposals for consideration in this report total \$0.148 million.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The COVID-19 Pandemic is resulting in significant economic and social upheaval. The situations being faced by our community are unprecedented and whilst we have anecdotal information about the types of challenges being faced in our community, we have little understanding of the prevalence of these experiences. Whilst there is data available about the short-term impacts of the pandemic, the medium and potential longer-term impacts of the Pandemic and the restrictions imposed in Greater Melbourne at different stages since March 2020 are not yet fully understood. Ongoing conversations with the community, local businesses and non-Council organisations continue to inform recovery planning to rebuild the local economy and address social, health and wellbeing concerns.

Officers continue to work with the community, contractors and community groups to support the various transition points as the Victorian Roadmap to lift restrictions is delivered.

As part of Council's Community and Business Support Packages, which aimed to assist the community through and out of the current Pandemic, a household survey was commissioned to inform future action. The results of this survey informed strategic service planning and longer - term relief and recovery planning across Council. A further survey was undertaken in February 2021, to keep up with the changing needs of the community.

While most of the community are still experiencing an impact on food availability, finances and work; fewer are experiencing the level of impact in 2021 compared with that of 2020. The extent of impact on finances and work is gradually declining but there is still over half the population experiencing an impact.

Resilience has had a slight improvement in line with a reduction in financial challenges, with fewer reporting that they could not access \$2,000 in a week for an emergency. Far fewer residents are experiencing impacts on food and grocery availability.

People are gradually returning to pre COVID levels of exercising and talking to neighbours, but there has not been a shift towards healthier eating and the incidence of people drinking more alcohol than pre-COVID remains constant. Mental health impacts continue to be high and widespread and whilst the impact has changed very little, the survey shows some reduction in the proportion of people reporting anxiety.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.2 - Enhance community connectedness opportunities to improve perceptions of safety

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity

Strategy 4.5 - Support the provision of emergency services

Goal 5 - We have a strong regional economy, local employment and learning opportunities

Strategy 5.1 - Attract new investment to Knox and support the development of existing local businesses, with particular focus on Advanced Manufacturing, Health, Ageing and Business Service sectors

Strategy 5.3 - Promote and improve infrastructure and technology within the municipality and enhance strategic employment places for business

Strategy 5.4 - Increase and strengthen local opportunities for lifelong learning, formal education pathways and skills development to improve economic capacity of the community

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.1 - Mitigate lifestyle risks such as smoking, risky alcohol consumption and drug use, obesity, lack of physical activity and poor nutrition

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.3 - Strengthen community connections

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.2 - Enable the community to participate in a wide range of engagement activities

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

The fifth Community and Business Support Package will provide additional support in recognition of the continued impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on parts of the Knox community. Ongoing and emerging impacts are still being monitored, and recovery planning and response initiatives are being integrated with Council's ongoing service delivery, and within the draft Community Plan 2021 to 2031 and Council Plans for 2021 to 2025.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Principal Safety, Wellbeing and Pandemic Response, Catherine Dwight; Manager City Futures, Shiranthi Widan; and Manager Community Wellbeing, Petrina Dodds Buckley

Report Authorised By: Director Connected Communities, Tanya Scicluna and
Director City Strategy and Integrity, Matt Kelleher

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - 2020-03-30 - Ordinary Meeting of Council - Response to COVI D-19 [**9.4.1** - 5 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - 2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting of Council - Community and Business Support Package [**9.4.2** - 57 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - 2020-09-21 - Ordinary Meeting of Council - COVI D-19 Community and Business Support P [**9.4.3** - 11 pages]
4. Attachment 4 - 2021-03-22 - Ordinary Meeting of Council - COVI D-19 Community and Business Support P [**9.4.4** - 24 pages]
5. Attachment 5 - 2021-09-19 - Roadmap- Metro [**9.4.5** - 12 pages]

2020-03-30 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

14.1.1 Response to COVID-19

SUMMARY: Manager Governance, Phil McQue

COVID-19 is an unprecedented crisis, presenting Council with a complex and unpredictable challenge. The impact of COVID-19 on the Knox community will be significant from a health, wellbeing and economic perspective. Knox has a diverse range of industry sectors, with many businesses immediately vulnerable to the impact of COVID-19. Knox's community clubs and organisations also face an uncertain future as they typically do not have the cash reserves to sustain them in a period of declining or in some instances nil revenue.

Council has a key role to play in managing and responding to COVID-19, including supporting community health and wellbeing, delivering emergency responses, implementing stimulus projects and driving community recovery.

Council has been planning for and progressively implementing a range of measures to protect the health, wellbeing and safety of our community, Councillors and staff. Council has prioritised the ongoing delivery of critical services to support our vulnerable and elderly residents. Council has deployed its Crisis Management Plan, Pandemic Sub-Plan and various Business Continuity Plans, ensuring that essential services continue to be delivered to the community.

This report recommends that Council provide an initial round of community relief measures, targeted to support programs not presently offered by the Federal and Victorian State Government. The relief measures specifically targets the Knox community at a grass roots level, in the knowledge that further initiatives and support will be required by Council as this crisis unfolds.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Undertake an immediate review of the *Knox Payment Assistance Policy* with a view to addressing emerging consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the livelihoods of the Knox community;
2. Resolve to not charge interest on rates from 31 March 2020 to 30 June 2020 for late payments and charges; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;
3. Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 30 March 2020 until 30 June 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;
4. Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded;

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5. **Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year;**
6. **Amend the 2019-20 Budget by providing COVID-19 Emergency Funding of \$100,000, such amount to be expended by the Chief Executive Officer wholly in connection with Council's response to COVID-19 as is considered appropriate;**
7. **Indefinitely defer the following proposed events due to government imposed restrictions on gatherings:**
 - a. **Fire Fighter Recognition Function**
 - b. **Annual Joint Advisory Committee Meeting; and**
8. **Continue to formulate its Community Relief Plan, complimenting the Federal and Victorian State Governments COVID-19 response, with priority of addressing any identified gaps that particularly impact Knox community, with further reports to be presented to Council for consideration and implementation as soon as practicable.**

1. INTRODUCTION

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organisation declared Coronavirus (COVID-19) as a pandemic and the State of Victoria subsequently declared a State of Emergency on 16 March 2020.

This report responds to a number of operational matters affecting Council operations and decision-making in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In all responses to date, Council has considered occupational health and safety, public health concerns, community impact assessment, economic impact assessment and investigated options for alternative service delivery options.

2. DISCUSSION

Council Staff have initiated appropriate actions under Council's Crisis Management Plan and Pandemic Sub Plan and the Executive Management Team has now convened and operationalised the Knox Crisis Management Team, which is meeting daily to guide the organisation's response to the evolving pandemic. Daily meetings are held with the Chief Executive Officer, Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Following risk based assessments, a range of measures have been implemented. These measures have not been taken lightly, particularly in relation to changes to service levels. Given the dynamic nature of this pandemic, there may be further measures required in the future. Where services to the community are impacted, there are associated communication plans in place to inform the community.

At the time of preparing this report, Council had closed the following services and facilities:

- Knox Civic Centre Customer Service Counter
- Knox Regional Netball Centre
- Knox Community Arts Centre
- Ferntree Gully Community Arts Centre
- Carrington Park Leisure Centre

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- Rowville Community Centre, except for immunisations sessions which will continue
- Knox Libraries (as part of the Eastern Region Library Corporation approach)
- Various other sites such as Knox Athletics Track, Knox BMX Track, Waterford Valley Golf Course and the Youth Information Centre.

The recommendations in this report will contribute towards ensuring that Council is agile enough over the short to medium term, to continue to respond to unforeseen circumstances in a timely manner.

The following additional support measures are recommended for consideration by Council:

Funding to address COVID-19

This report recommends that Council authorise the expenditure of unbudgeted funds to a maximum of \$100,000, to ensure the organisation is in a position to respond to unforeseen circumstances which may arise requiring funding.

Deferral of Council Events

Council has postponed or cancelled more than 50 events from March through to May 2020. Two specific Council functions require a resolution to defer, being the Fire Fighter Recognition Function (*required to be held in April / May*) and the Annual Joint Advisory Committee Meeting (*required to be held by May 2020*).

This report notes that whilst Victoria is subject to a declared State of Emergency, the Chief Executive Officer, in discussion with the Mayor, will continue to make urgent decisions and defer and cancel meetings, events and identified matters as is considered necessary and appropriate to mitigate risks associated with COVID-19.

Assistance to Knox Council Ratepayers

Many Knox Council ratepayers will be facing immediate hardship from COVID-19. At the time of preparing this report, the four major banks have already received approximately 100,000 applications for deferral of housing loan payments.

Council is committed to protecting the livelihood and wellbeing of its residents and will be considering a range of initiatives in coming months, including a review of Council's *Knox Payment Assistance Policy*. In the interim, it is recommended that Council resolve to not charge interest from 31 March 2020 to 30 June 2020 for late rate payments.

Community Relief Package

Not-For-Profit community groups are an essential fabric of the Knox community, playing a significant role in building and maintaining social infrastructure, capital and resilience. Council has long recognised the important role that community facilities provide to the community in encouraging social and civic participation and supporting the wellbeing of residents.

Council recognises the significant impact that COVID-19 will have on community organisations with the restrictions presently in place. Currently, there are 166 Not-For-Profit community groups operating out of a Council facility, which includes pavilions and grounds, with a lease or license (including seasonal tenancy) agreement. This does not include those Not-For-Profit organisations who currently utilise a Council facility under a hire agreement.

To ensure the ongoing sustainability of these community groups, the following initiatives are recommended:

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- Waive all Not-For-Profit hire, license and lease fees for the remainder of 2019-20 Financial Year (*valued at approximately \$1,346,612 per annum*) and refund any fees paid in advance pro-rata for this period; and
- Waive Knox Basketball Associations' Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year (*\$105,916 annual fee*)

Council are recognises the importance of small business within the Knox community and it is recommended to waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business trading signage, as of 30 March 2020 until 30 June 2020, noting that payments made to date will receive full refunds;

3. CONSULTATION

This report has been prepared in consultation with Councillors at a Special Confidential Issues Briefing on 26 March 2020.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

The closure of Council facilities and services has a direct impact on the amenity of the Knox community.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The economic impact of COVID-19 is largely unknown and will be very difficult to quantify this financial year, particularly in relation to the loss of revenue, which will be to the value of millions for Knox City Council. This uncertainly makes it difficult to formulate reliable estimates that are required for prudent responsible budgeting. The potential financial and economic implications associated with the COVID-19 pandemic will be the subject of separate reports and discussions with Councillors.

Council has written to the Minister for Local Government requesting that the State Government defer the statutory requirement for councils to adopt the 2020-21 budget until October 2020, in line with the action taken by the Federal Government and Victorian State Government in the adoption of their respective 2020-21 budgets.

This will provide the required time for the economic and fiscal impacts of COVID19 to be known and understood, and the potential scale of recovery efforts, ensuring councils can adopt a responsive and responsible budget that assists Victoria in surviving this crisis and the path to economic recovery.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council has a role to play in responding to COVID-19, particularly in supporting the limiting of the spread of the virus.

Council will also have a critical role to play in recovery activities once COVID-19 is minimised within the community.

Council acknowledges the critical role that local Not-For-Profit organisations and community groups play in supporting community access to key activities and services across all life stages, particularly access by disadvantaged and socially isolated groups. These groups significantly

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encourage social and civic participation and engagement, supporting the health and wellbeing of the Knox community.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity

Strategy 4.5 - Support the provision of emergency services

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.1 - Build, strengthen and promote good governance practices across government and community organisations

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under section 80c of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Author – Manager Governance, Phil McQue- In providing this advice as the Author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Officer Responsible Director, City Development, Matt Kelleher - In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

9. CONCLUSION

Council has a key role to play in managing COVID-19, including supporting community wellbeing, delivering emergency responses, implementing stimulus projects and driving community recovery. This report recommends a number of immediate initiatives to assist in appropriately responding to COVID-19.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

Nil.

Report Prepared By: Manager Governance, Phil McQue

Report Authorised By: Director City Development, Matt Kelleher

Attachments

Nil

2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

9.1 Community and Business Support Package

SUMMARY: Manager Community Wellbeing, Petrina Dodds Buckley and Manager City Futures, Anthony Petherbridge

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, both the Community Wellbeing and City Futures Departments have worked together to identify key initiatives that respond to community and business needs across the municipality. These initiatives have been incorporated into a Stage 2 Community and Business Support Package. Stage 1 support was endorsed by Council at its meeting of 30 March 2020, and some of the initiatives as part of the Stage 1 Package are proposed to be extended as part of the Stage 2 Package recommended in this report.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council, in response to the impact that COVID-19 has had on the Knox community and businesses resolves to:

1. Note the positive impact that Councils Stage 1 Community and Business Support Package has had on the Knox community;
2. Endorse the extension of the following Stage 1 initiatives:
 - a. Resolve to not charge interest on rates for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 for late payments and charges;
 - b. Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 31 December 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period;
 - c. Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded; and
 - d. Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020.
3. Approve the Stage 2 Community and Business Support Package and commence implementation of the following initiatives, effective from 25 May 2020:
 - a. Increase funding for the Council Minor Grant Program to the value of \$51,500, for the purpose of supporting community initiatives;
 - b. Increase funding for the Council Community Development Fund to the value of \$80,000, for the purpose of reactivating community connectedness and initiating recovery projects;
 - c. Establish a one-off Council 'Supporting Local Services Fund' to the value of \$200,000, for the purpose of supporting local service organisations to increase service provision;
 - d. Provide funding to the value of \$15,000 for the purpose of enabling a temporary Council facility, at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer, for the purpose of providing shower and laundry facilities for the vulnerable in our community;

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- e. **Provide funding to the value of \$50,000 for the purpose of investigating and implementing an ongoing solution for a permanent shower and laundry facility for the vulnerable in the Knox community;**
 - f. **Provide funding to the value of \$315,000 for the purpose of Council partnering with local organisations to enable and support the provision of hot meals to the vulnerable in our community;**
 - g. **Provide funding to the value of \$200,000 to deliver a Mental Health First Aid Training and Awareness Program to local sporting clubs, for the purpose of assisting with the well-being and resilience of community members;**
 - h. **Provide funding to the value of \$25,000 to undertake a municipal-wide survey assessing the impact of COVID-19 on Knox households to inform strategic service planning and longer-term relief and recovery planning;**
 - i. **Provide funding to the value of \$160,000, for a one-off \$1,000 Facility Operating Contribution for Not-for-Profit Groups and Clubs with a lease or licence in a Council facility, to support facility operating costs such as utilities and COVID-19 related expenses;**
 - j. **Provide funding to the value of \$30,000, to expand Council's Mentoring Support Program, for the purpose of assisting local business to manage and response to COVID-19;**
 - k. **Establish a Council "Commercial Advice Program" to the value of \$30,000, for the purpose of providing leasing, tenancy, taxation and financial advice to local business;**
 - l. **Establish a Council "Digital Upskills Program" to the value of \$20,000, for the purpose of enhancing digital marketing skills for local business;**
 - m. **Establish a Business Support Grants Program, to the total value of \$335,000, that includes an "e-commerce Grant" for the purpose of enhancing e-commerce capability and functionality for local business, a "Manufacturing and Supply Transition Grant" for the purpose of assisting the pivoting of local business; and a "Creative and Cultural Sector Industry Facilitation and Place Activation Grant" for the purpose of providing assistance to Knox's creative and cultural sector; and**
 - n. **Prepare a Retail Activation Strategy to the value of \$50,000, for the purpose of developing a "buy-local" program to support increased trade for local businesses.**
4. **To receive a report at the June 2020 Ordinary Meeting of Council to consider the governance arrangements necessary for the grants and payments established under the relevant new grant initiatives;**
 5. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to execute all agreements relating to the above initiatives; and**
 6. **Note that further allocations from the balance of the Community and Business Support Package for the purpose of Stage 3 COVID-19 support initiatives will be considered by Council at a later stage.**

2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

1. INTRODUCTION

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 30 March 2020, Council resolved to:

1. *Undertake an immediate review of the Knox Payment Assistance Policy with a view to addressing emerging consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the livelihoods of the Knox community;*
2. *Resolve to not charge interest on rates from 31 March 2020 to 30 June 2020 for late payments and charges; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;*
3. *Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 30 March 2020 until 30 June 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;*
4. *Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded;*
5. *Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year;*
6. *Amend the 2019-20 Budget by providing COVID-19 Emergency Funding of \$100,000, such amount to be expended by the Chief Executive Officer wholly in connection with Council's response to COVID-19 as is considered appropriate;*
7. *Defer the following proposed events due to government imposed restrictions on gatherings:*
 - a. *Fire Fighter Recognition Function; and*
 - b. *Annual Joint Advisory Committee Meeting; and;*
8. *Continue to formulate its Community Relief Plan, complementing the Federal and Victorian State Governments COVID-19 response, with priority of addressing any identified gaps that particularly impact Knox community, with further reports to be presented to Council for consideration and implementation as soon as practicable.*

Resolutions 2 to 5 were supported until 30 June 2020 and are identified as Stage 1 of Council's support package.

In response to the evolving impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and Resolution 8 above, a Stage 2 Community and Business Support Package (see Attachment 1) has been developed to address the social and economic ramifications of the closure of places of work and the cessation of services provided across the municipality.

The Stage 2 Package comprises of a range of initiatives identified by both the Community Wellbeing and City Futures Departments and focusses on providing relief and recovery for Local Community Organisations, Local Service Providers and Local Business Operators.

In some cases they are complementary to Federal and State Government initiatives, and in others they respond to the gaps and lack of funding at the local level and are based on feedback from local relief agencies, community groups and businesses.

2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

This report provides detailed project briefs outlining the rationale behind these initiatives. It speaks to the very real crisis currently being played out in our community and the hardship it is inflicting on our residents. From a social and health perspective, residents are grappling with financial insecurity, housing stress, escalating mental health illness, family violence, social isolation and computer access and literacy. From an economic perspective, many businesses have lost customers, revenue and employees as a result of no longer being able to operate or having to substantially change their business practices.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Extension of Some Stage 1 Initiatives

The initiatives endorsed by Council at its Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 30 March 2020 have provided invaluable financial assistance to members of the Knox Community. It is recommended that some of these initiatives be extended to provide additional and much needed assistance, as follows.

1. Resolve to not charge interest on rates for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 for late payments and charges;
2. Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 31 December 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period;
3. Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded; and
4. Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020.

2.2 Community Wellbeing

Over a four-week period, around 80 organisations were contacted (some numerous times) to gather information on emerging social needs, due to outbreak of COVID19 across the city of Knox.

Themes to emerge are as follows:

- Homelessness
- Limited access to showers, hot food, laundry for vulnerable people
- Mental health services and counselling
- Housing accommodation, significant increase in demand
- Family violence reports – being widely reported by police and services
- Financial hardship
- Food insecurity
- Computer access, literacy and IT equipment
- Social isolation
- Lack of internet connection for most vulnerable
- Need for food relief and support for the Aboriginal community.

2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

As unemployment and job insecurity increases so too has the emergence of “a new vulnerable”. Individuals and families facing social and economic hardship, some for the first time, are finding themselves in unfamiliar territory and unable to cope with the daily stresses.

This Community and Business Support Package has been developed to reach out to those most in need and assist them via increased funding for local service providers and increased community services for the most vulnerable. These initiatives, as detailed in Attachment 1 to this report, respond to all the identified above needs.

In summary the Community Wellbeing Initiatives are as follows:

- **Current Community Wellbeing Grants**

The Minor Grants stream provides a monthly opportunity for organisations to apply for funding to respond to crisis relief and recovery initiatives. The Minor Grants policy has been amended to enable community organisations to address COVID-19 and can include items such as social media platforms, technology, social isolation, food relief, community connection, I.T. equipment and literacy.

The annual Community Development Fund Grant Program’s purpose and guidelines has been broadened to enable community organisations to apply for funding to support the reactivation and rebuild of community momentum and initiate recovery once the current COVID-19 crisis passes.

- **New Supporting Local Services Fund**

The COVID-19 Supporting Local Services Fund is a one-off allocation of funding that aims to support local service providers, based in Knox or providing services and support to Knox residents, in the face of increased demand due to the current COVID-19 Pandemic. The Fund will assist not-for-profit community organisations to address local community priorities that have arisen as a result of COVID-19.

- **Showers and Laundry Program**

As services have closed, members of the community already vulnerable are finding it near impossible to access appropriate facilities to continue to wash clothes and to shower. The Showers and Laundry Program provides short and long term options to provide these facilities to local residents in need.

- **Hot Meals Program**

The impact of the COVID-19 Stage 3 restrictions has seen the suspension of regular community free meal services from a number of Emergency Relief Services in Knox. Currently, only two services, being Foothills Community Care in Ferntree Gully and St. Paul’s Anglican Church in Boronia, are providing hot take away meals on a weekly basis for the community. This initiative supports these services to expand and provide a higher capacity service to assist those in need.

- **Sporting Club Mental Health First Aid and Awareness Training**

As a result of the current situation, there is a significant increase in feelings of stress, anxiety, isolation and concern.

Through Mental Health Awareness Programs delivered to sporting clubs, it is apparent how this can bring significant positive change to a group. By providing clubs with sessions on mental health, resilience and wellbeing awareness, it educates and assists participants to recognise and act on signs of mental illness amongst group members, friends and families.

- **COVID-19 Research Program**

2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

The COVID-19 Pandemic is resulting in significant economic and social upheaval. The situations being faced by our community are unprecedented and whilst we have anecdotal information about the types of challenges being faced in our community, we have no understanding of the prevalence of these experiences. The aim of this research is to collect information from the community to inform strategic service planning and longer-term relief and recovery planning.

- **Not-for-Profit Group Facility Operating Contribution**

Despite the closure of community and sporting facilities due to COVID19 restrictions, many costs continue to be incurred by those groups responsible for facility operations. For example, utilities to ensure security through alarms, lighting, etc. and power bills to maintain club assets such as canteen stock. The closures are having an impact on the ability of Not-for-Profit groups to cover existing and new operating costs due to limited or falling revenues. A one off contribution towards these groups will enable their ongoing operation through the pandemic. Establishing a one off Not-for-Profit Group Facility Operating Contribution of \$1000 (total \$160,000) for those Not-for-Profit Groups and Clubs with a current lease or licence operating in a Council facility, will assist with facility operating costs such as utilities and COVID related operating expenses.

2.3 City Futures (Economic Development)

The Economic Development Team within City Futures has reviewed how it can best facilitate additional programs/projects to assist local businesses during COVID-19, which are complementary to Federal and State Government initiatives.

Themes to emerge from a recent regional survey and direction conversations with businesses are as follows:

- Facilitating advice on legal matters, tax breaks and wage subsidies;
- Facilitating tailored business mentoring and coaching;
- Upskilling businesses in digital optimisation;
- Assisting businesses with eCommerce functionality;
- Assisting businesses with manufacturing and supply chain transition;
- Facilitating creative and cultural initiatives and place activation; and
- Retail activation.

The Business Support Package has been prepared to complement the existing Federal and State Government economic packages, and seeks to provide local businesses with financial and mentoring support to enhance their viability. The Business Support Package fundamentally seeks to support and encourage a prosperous local economy that will result in positive social outcomes for the local community.

In summary, the City Futures (Economic Development) initiatives are as follows:

- **Mentoring Support Program**

As businesses seek to rebound from the personal and economic challenges of this pandemic, mentoring and tailored advice to local businesses is needed to assist with managing the impacts of COVID-19.

2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

- **Commercial Advice Program**

There is a lot of information available to local businesses at the moment, and together with the complicated nature of the available information, it is a challenge for some business owners and operators to fully understand the complexities, the possibilities and the implications. Legal, tax and financial advice can assist businesses to keep employees at work, improve cash flow and plan for the future.

- **Digital Upskill Program**

With social distancing requirements affecting businesses, and retail in particular through reduced foot traffic, it is important that businesses optimise their digital marketing skills in areas such as website content development, search engine optimisation, social media and online marketing and video content creation and application.

- **Business Support Grants**

The Business Support Grants will provide financial assistance in a variety of areas. Given the closure of some retail, and the reduced visitation to retail as a result of social distancing restrictions, grants to enhance eCommerce capability or functionality will be of benefit to businesses. Some manufacturing businesses are also well placed to pivot their manufacturing to align with alternative supply chains. Another grant opportunity is to assist manufacturing businesses with pivoting.

In addition to retail and manufacturing, another industry heavily impacted by social restrictions associated with COVID-19 is the creative and cultural sector. Many people working in this sector have secondary jobs in hospitality, which is also experiencing a downturn. Grants related to industry facilitation and place activation can provide assistance to Knox's creative and cultural sector.

- **Retail Activation Strategy**

Retail trade revenue has recently decreased by 26.4%, and anecdotally through conversations between retailers in Knox and members of the Economic Development team, smaller retailers of clothing, furniture, and giftware are experiencing difficulties. In order to assist local retail, a Retail Activation Strategy is proposed that encourages local residents and workers to shop local.

3. CONSULTATION

Local community and business organisations were contacted to ascertain the relief and recovery requirements of their sectors. Advice was sought from local community and not-for-profit organisations for their observations on the ground. Over 80 organisations provided feedback as to the current and perceived need across the municipality.

Engagement and discussions were also held with Council staff working across Community Services, City Development, the Executive Management Team and Senior Management Team.

The Business Support Package included in this report has been informed and guided by conversations and feedback from businesses on what they are experiencing throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic. In addition, data collected from a recent survey undertaken by the Melbourne East Regional Economic Development Group (MEREDG) has also informed the Business Support Package.

2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

There are no environmental or amenity issues pertaining to this report.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

\$3M has been allocated for a Knox Community and Business Support Package to manage and respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic. This will enable a broad range of community wellbeing and business initiatives to be implemented across the municipality to facilitate relief and recovery.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

These recommendations speak to the social, health and wellbeing challenges currently facing our local community. It is anticipated that this need will continue to grow and worsen over the next 12 months as the enormity of this crisis peaks and plays out over time.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity.

Strategy 4.5 - Support the provision of emergency services.

Goal 5 - We have a strong regional economy, local employment and learning opportunities

Strategy 5.1 - Attract new investment to Knox and support the development of existing local businesses, with particular focus on Advanced Manufacturing, Health, Ageing and Business Service sectors.

Strategy 5.3 - Promote and improve infrastructure and technology within the municipality and enhance strategic employment places for business.

Strategy 5.4 - Increase and strengthen local opportunities for lifelong learning, formal education pathways and skills development to improve economic capacity of the community.

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health.

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.3 - Strengthen community connections.

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.2 - Enable the community to participate in a wide range of engagement activities.

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under Section 80c of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Author – Manager Community Wellbeing, Petrina Dodds Buckley and Manager City Futures, Anthony Petherbridge – In providing this advice as the Authors, we have no disclosable interests in this report.

2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

Officer Responsible – Director Community Services, Tanya Scicluna and Director City Development – Interim Director Finance and Governance, Matt Kelleher – In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, we have no disclosable interests in this report.

9. CONCLUSION

The Community and Business Support Package will provide additional financial and programmed service support for those that have been most impacted by COVID-19, including the most vulnerable members of our community. It is recommended that this Package be supported by Council, and that the additional budget be allocated in the 2020-21 financial year to support the initiatives included in the Package.

Subject to the assessment, identification and need for additional initiatives, Stage 3 of a Community and Business Support Package may be presented to Council for further consideration.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There are no items of a confidential nature in this report.

Report Prepared By: **Manager Community Wellbeing, Petrina Dodds Buckley and
Manager City Futures, Anthony Petherbridge**

Report Authorised By: **Director Community Services, Tanya Scicluna and Director City
Development – Interim Director Finance and Governance, Matt
Kelleher**

Attachments

1. DRAFT Report - Community and Business Support Package - May 2020 [9.1.1 - 48 pages]



COVID-19 Stage 2 Community and Business Support Package

May 2020



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COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Executive Summary

In response to COVID-19, a **Stage 2 Community and Business Support Package** has been developed to address the social and economic ramifications of the closure of places of work and the cessation of services provided across the municipality.

The Package includes the extension of some previously endorsed Stage 1 initiatives, and comprises of a range of additional initiatives identified by both the Community Wellbeing and City Futures Departments and focusses on providing relief and recovery for Local Community Organisations, Local Service Providers and Local Business Operators.

A further suite of initiatives are anticipated to be prepared and presented to Council for consideration at a later point in time, and will form Stage 3 of a Support Package.

Extension of Some Stage 1 Initiatives

At its meeting of 30 March 2020, Council endorsed a suite of Stage 1 initiatives to assist the Knox Community in response to COVID-19, including but not limited to:

- Resolve to not charge interest on rates from 31 March 2020 to 30 June 2020 for late payments and charges; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;
- Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 30 March 2020 until 30 June 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;
- Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded; and
- Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year.

The above initiatives are set to expire on 30 June 2020, however there is merit in extending these to further support our Community.

In summary the proposed extension to some Stage One Initiatives are as follows:

- Resolve to not charge interest on rates for the period **1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020** for late payments and charges;
- Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period **1 July 2020 to 31 December 2020** as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period;
- Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the period **1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020**, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded; and
- Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the period **1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020**.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Community Wellbeing

The methodology used to collate data relied on intelligence from organisations operating in Knox and contact was made by way of email or phone. Over a four week period, around 80 organisations were contacted (some numerous times) to gather information on emerging social needs.

Themes to emerge are as follows:

- Homelessness
- Limited access to showers, hot food, laundry for vulnerable people
- Mental health services and counselling
- Housing accommodation, significant increase in demand
- Family violence reports – being widely reported by police and services
- Financial hardship
- Food insecurity
- Computer access, literacy and IT equipment
- Social isolation
- Lack of internet connection for most vulnerable
- Need for food relief and support for the Aboriginal community.

As unemployment and job insecurity increases so too has the emergence of ‘a new vulnerable’. Individuals and families facing social and economic hardship, some for the first time, are finding themselves in unfamiliar territory and unable to cope with the daily stresses.

This Community Support Package has been developed to reach out to those most in need and assist them via increased funding for local service providers and increased community services for the most vulnerable. These initiatives as detailed in this report respond to all the identified above needs.

In summary the Community Wellbeing Initiatives are as follows:

Current Community Wellbeing Grants

The **Minor Grants** stream provides a monthly opportunity for organisations to apply for funding to respond to crisis relief and recovery initiatives. The Minor Grants policy has been amended to enable community organisations to address COVID-19 and can include items such as social media platforms, technology, social isolation, food relief, community connection, IT equipment and literacy.

The annual **Community Development Fund** Grant Program’s purpose and guidelines has been broadened to enable community organisations to apply for funding to support the reactivation and rebuild of community momentum and initiate recovery once the current COVID-19 crisis passes.

New Supporting Local Services Fund

The COVID-19 Supporting Local Services Fund is a one-off allocation of funding that aims to support local service providers, based in Knox or providing services and support to Knox residents, in the face of increased demand due to the current COVID-19 pandemic. The Fund will assist not-for-profit community organisations to address local community priorities that have arisen as a result of COVID-19.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Showers and Laundry Program

As services have closed, members of the community already vulnerable are finding it near impossible to access appropriate facilities to continue to wash clothes and to shower. The Showers and Laundry Program provides short and long term options to provide these facilities to local residents in need.

Hot Meals Program

The impact of the COVID-19 Stage 3 restrictions has seen the suspension of regular community free meal services from a number of Emergency Relief Services in Knox. Currently, only two services, being Foothills Community Care in Ferntree Gully and St. Paul's Anglican Church in Boronia, are providing hot take away meals on a weekly basis for the community. This initiative supports these services to expand and provide a higher capacity service to assist those in need.

Sporting Club Mental Health Awareness Training

As a result of the current situation, there is a significant increase in feelings of stress, anxiety, isolation and concern. Through Mental Health Awareness Programs delivered to sporting clubs, it is apparent how this can bring significant positive change to a group and the broader community. By providing clubs with sessions on mental health, resilience and wellbeing awareness, it educates and assists participants to recognize and appropriately respond to signs of mental illness amongst others including their friends and family.

COVID -19 Research Program

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is resulting in significant economic and social upheaval. The situations being faced by our community are unprecedented and whilst we have anecdotal information about the types of challenges being faced in our community, we have no understanding of the prevalence of these experiences. The aim of this research is to collect information from the community to inform strategic service planning and longer term relief and recovery planning.

Not-for-Profit Group Facility Operating Contribution

Despite the closure of community and sporting facilities due to COVID19 restrictions, many costs continue to be incurred by those groups responsible for facility operations. For example, utilities to ensure security through alarms, lighting, etc. and power bills to maintain club assets such as canteen stock. The closures are having an impact on the ability of Not-for-Profit groups operating in Council facilities to cover existing and new operating costs due to limited or falling revenues. A one off contribution towards these groups will enable their ongoing operation through the pandemic. Establishing a one off Not-for-Profit Group Facility Operating Contribution of \$1000 (up to \$160,000) for those Not-for-Profit Groups and Clubs with a current lease or licence operating in a Council facility, will assist with facility operating costs such as utilities and COVID related operating expenses.

City Futures - Economic Development

The Economic Development Team within the City Futures Department has reviewed how it can best facilitate additional programs and projects to assist local businesses during COVID-19; which are complementary to Federal and State Government initiatives.

The Business Support Package included in this report has been informed and guided by conversations and feedback from businesses on what they are experiencing throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, data collected from a recent survey undertaken by the Melbourne East Regional Economic Development Group



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

(MEREDG), which included responses from Knox businesses has also informed the Business Support Package. For more information on the background to the Business Support Package, see Attachment 1.

Themes to emerge from the regional survey undertaken by MEREDG and direction conversations with businesses are as follows:

- Facilitating advice on legal matters, tax breaks and wage subsidies;
- Facilitating tailored business mentoring and coaching;
- Upskilling businesses in digital optimisation;
- Assisting businesses with eCommerce functionality;
- Assisting businesses with manufacturing and supply chain transition;
- Facilitating creative and cultural initiatives and place activation; and
- Retail activation.

The Business Support Package has been prepared to complement the existing Federal and State Government economic packages, and seeks to provide local businesses with financial and mentoring support to enhance their viability. The Business Support Package fundamentally seeks to support and encourage a prosperous local economy that will result in positive social outcomes for the local community.

In summary the City Futures/Economic Development Initiatives are as follows:

Mentoring Support Program

As businesses seek to rebound from the personal and economic challenges of this pandemic, mentoring and tailored advice to local businesses is needed to assist with managing the impacts of COVID-19.

Commercial Advice Program

There is a lot of information available to local businesses at the moment, and together with the complicated and dispersed nature of the available information, it is a challenge for some business owners and operators to fully understand the complexities, the possibilities and the implications. Legal, tax and financial advice can assist businesses to keep employees at work, improve cash flow and plan for the future.

Digital Upskill Program

With social distancing requirements affecting businesses, and retail in particular through reduced foot traffic, it's important that businesses optimise their digital marketing skills in areas such as website content development, search engine optimisation, social media, online marketing and video content creation and application.

Business Support Grants

The Business Support Grants will provide financial assistance in a variety of areas. Given the closure of some retail, and the reduced visitation to retail as a result of social distancing restrictions, grants to enhance eCommerce capability or functionality will be of benefit to businesses. Some manufacturing businesses are also well placed to pivot their manufacturing to align with alternative supply chains, with the program supporting this opportunity.

In addition to retail and manufacturing, another industry heavily impacted by social restrictions associated with COVID-19 is the creative and cultural sector. Many people working in this sector have secondary jobs in



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

hospitality, which is also experiencing a downturn. Grants related to industry facilitation and place activation can provide assistance to Knox's creative and cultural sector.

Retail Activation Strategy

Retail trade revenue has recently decreased by 26.4%, and anecdotally through conversations between retailers in Knox and members of the Economic Development team, smaller retailers of clothing, furniture and giftware are experiencing difficulties. In order to assist local retail, a Retail Activation Strategy is proposed that encourages local residents and workers to shop local, within the confines of applicable pandemic restrictions and their anticipated gradual easing.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Recommendations (summary of every section)

#	Recommendations	2020-21 Financial Year
Extend some Stage 1 initiatives		
1.	Waive hire, leases and licence fees until 30 September 2020 (currently waived to 30 June 2020).	\$325,000
2.	Waive penalty interest on rates to 30 September 2020 (currently waived to 30 June 2020).	\$150,000
3.	Waive business trading fees until 31 December 2020 (currently waived to 30 June 2020).	\$18,000
4.	Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020.	\$ 26,479
Sub-total		\$519,479
Community Wellbeing		
5.	Increase funding for Minor Grants (monthly) to address current Relief stage community initiatives.	\$51,500
6.	Increase Community Development Fund (annual) grants to support organisations to reactivate community connectedness and initiate recovery stage projects.	\$80,000
7.	Establish a Supporting Local Services Fund (one off) as an opportunity for local service organisations to increase service provision.	\$200,000
8.	To open a facility to enable access to shower and laundry facilities for vulnerable people in the community.	\$15,500
9.	To consider a long term solution to the lack of shower and laundry facilities by repurposing a facility within Knox.	\$50,000
10.	Partner with local organisations to enable and support an increase in the provision of hot meals to vulnerable people.	\$315,000
11.	Deliver Mental Health First Aid training, resilience and awareness programs to all sporting clubs across the municipality over two phases.	\$200,000
12.	Undertake a municipal-wide survey to a statistical household sample to assess family impact of Covid-19, inform strategic service planning and longer term relief and recovery planning.	\$25,000
13.	Establish a one off \$1000 Facility Operating Contribution for those Not-for-Profit Groups and Clubs with a lease or licence in a Council facility, which will support these groups with facility operating costs such as utilities and COVID related operating expenses	\$160,000
Sub-total		\$1,097,000
City Futures - Economic Development		
14.	Expand the Mentoring Support Program.	\$30,000*



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

#	Recommendations	2020-21 Financial Year
15.	Introduce a Commercial Advice Program that specialises in lease/tenancy agreement issues and tax and wage subsidy advice.	\$30,000*
16.	Introduce a Digital Upskill Program.	\$20,000
17.	Establish an eCommerce Grant.	\$100,000**
18.	Establish a Manufacturing and Supply Chain Transition Grant.	\$100,000**
19.	Establish a Creative & Cultural Sector and Place Activation Grant.	\$135,000**
20.	Prepare a Retail Activation Strategy.	\$50,000
	Sub-total	\$435,000
	Total	\$2,051,479

* These will be managed as part of one program with an allocated value of \$60,000, and allocation will be guided by demand.

** This will be run as a combined Business Support Grants program, with a combined allocated value of \$335,000. Allocation of grants will not be determined by these estimated amounts, but guided by demand.

Next Steps

Subject to Council support, Council officers will commence planning for and implementation of the initiatives identified within the Stage 2 Community and Business Support Package in June 2020, in anticipation of budget being allocated to the Package in the 2020/21 financial year.

During this planning phase, Council officers will refine the projects and processes associated with the grants programs, and in particular will prepare funding guidelines to support the grants programs.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

1. Extension to Some Stage 1 Initiatives

Background

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 30 March 2020, Council resolved to:

1. *Undertake an immediate review of the Knox Payment Assistance Policy with a view to addressing emerging consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the livelihoods of the Knox community;*
2. *Resolve to not charge interest on rates from 31 March 2020 to 30 June 2020 for late payments and charges; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;*
3. *Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 30 March 2020 until 30 June 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;*
4. *Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded;*
5. *Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year;*
6. *Amend the 2019-20 Budget by providing COVID-19 Emergency Funding of \$100,000, such amount to be expended by the Chief Executive Officer wholly in connection with Council's response to COVID-19 as is considered appropriate;*
7. *Defer the following proposed events due to government imposed restrictions on gatherings: a. Fire Fighter Recognition Function b. Annual Joint Advisory Committee Meeting; and*
8. *Continue to formulate its Community Relief Plan, complementing the Federal and Victorian State Governments COVID-19 response, with priority of addressing any identified gaps that particularly impact Knox community, with further reports to be presented to Council for consideration and implementation as soon as practicable.*

Resolutions 2-5 were supported until 30 June 2020 and constitute Stage 1 of Council's support. This Stage 2 Community and Business Support Package responds to Resolution 8 above.

As part of Stage 2 of Council's support, it is also proposed to extend the following initiatives from the above Council resolution of 30 March 2020, until 30 September 2020:

Aims

The extension of the following initiatives that were previously presented to Council at its meeting of 30 March 2020, will provide additional and much needed assistance to members of the Knox Community that are negatively impacted by COVID-19:

1. Resolve to not charge interest on rates for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 for late payments and charges;



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

2. Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 31 December 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period;
3. Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded; and
4. Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020.

The above initiatives are summarised in the recommendations below.

Recommendations

1. **It is recommended to waive hire, leases and licence fees until 30 September 2020 (currently waived to 30 June 2020).**
2. **It is recommended to waive penalty interest on rates to 30 September 2020 (currently waived to 30 June 2020).**
3. **It is recommended to waive business trading fees until 31 December 2020 (currently waived to 30 June 2020).**
4. **It is recommended to waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020.**



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

2. Community Grants

2.1 Minor Grants

Background

The Minor Grants Program is a responsive funding program that provides community groups with the opportunity to apply for small grants up to \$3,000, to meet immediate or short-term needs that are relatively minor in nature.

Aims

The Minor Grants Program is offered as an accessible and responsive funding source to assist a wide range of community-led activities across the municipality and support volunteer effort and civic participation.

Applications are assessed against criteria specified in the Minor Grants Program Policy to determine the eligibility of the applicant organisation and the eligibility of the grant application.

The Minor Grants Program will be broadened to give Knox community groups and organisations the opportunity to apply for grants that respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and offer crisis relief, as well as recovery initiatives.

Recommendation

5. **It is recommended that the Minor Grants Program be increased by \$51,500 for the 2020-21 financial year; bringing the total grant pool for 2020-21 to \$200,000.**

2.2 Community Development Fund (CDF) Grants Program

Background

The Community Development Fund Grant Program provides funds to support a range of events, arts and cultural projects, services and activities provided by not-for-profit groups or organisations for the benefit of Knox residents.

Aims

The aim of the Community Development Fund is to develop, enhance and support the involvement of community groups in activities and projects which respond to identified needs in the Knox community.

Projects and events that involve collaboration with other organisations and services, share resources within the community, and involve volunteers, are favourably considered. The CDF grants encourage one-off or short-term projects, as well as offering support to established community events that have been held annually for over three years.

Funding applications of up to \$20,000 are considered for projects that meet the CDF criteria and support the goals of the Knox Community and Council Plan 2017-2021.

The 2020-21 grant round opened on 22 April, 2020 and will close on 22 June, 2020. This extended application period will give groups the opportunity to consider projects that will help rebuild community momentum and involvement once the current COVID-19 crisis passes.



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Recommendation

6. It is recommended that the Community Development Fund Grants Program be increased by \$80,000 for the 2020-21 financial year to enable an increase in grants/financial assistance to support COVID-19 recovery initiatives; bringing the total grant pool for 2020-21 to \$437,183.

2.3 COVID-19 Supporting Local Services Fund (New)

Background

Knox City Council recognises the vital role that local service providers are playing during the COVID-19 crisis. In recognition of the increased need from the community, Council has created a new, one-off community grant, the COVID-19 Supporting Local Services Fund. Council will seek expressions of interest from local service providers who are looking to boost their services or supports to Knox residents in a time of unprecedented demand.

Aims

The COVID-19 Supporting Local Services Fund (the Fund) is a one-off allocation of funding that aims to support local service providers, based in Knox or providing services and support to Knox residents, in the face of increased demand due to the current COVID-19 pandemic. The Fund will assist not-for-profit community organisations to address local community priorities that have arisen as a result of COVID-19. Expressions of interest should identify which priority area they are addressing and how the wellbeing of recipients will be improved as a result of the Fund. The priority areas that will be addressed through this Fund include:

- Homelessness and lack of crisis accommodation;
- Housing stress;
- Mental health;
- Financial Counselling;
- Food insecurity;
- Family violence;
- Technology issues including technology literacy; and
- Social isolation.

Fund Principles

The COVID-19 Supporting Local Services Fund is underpinned by the following principles:

1. Facilitation of responsive and cost effective services and supports that meet the emerging and increased health and wellbeing needs of the Knox community during the COVID-19 pandemic;
2. A responsive and equitable process; and
3. Accountability for funding.

Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, the following requirements must be met:

1. Applicants must be able to demonstrate:



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- a) An increase in demand for their services due to the COVID-19 pandemic; or
- b) A need to adapt their service delivery model to meet the needs of the community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Service organisations unable to meet this requirement could be considered for other Council grant programs that may be more appropriate for their project idea, including projects that focus on community recovery once the crisis has ended.

2. Applicants must be an incorporated association, a co-operative, a company limited by guarantee or a trust or other organisation established under an Act passed by the State; or Commonwealth. Consideration will be given to organisations under the auspice of another organisation which meets any of these criteria.
3. Applicants must demonstrate a direct benefit to the Knox community.
4. Applicants must have satisfactorily acquitted and reported on previous Knox grants and have no outstanding debts to Knox City Council.

Application Process

Organisations can submit an expression of interest seeking Council support to cover additional costs that have arisen as a result of an increase in demand for services, or for adapting service delivery to meet the needs of the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Such costs may include (but are not limited to):

- Additional staffing;
- Volunteer expenses;
- Food or goods for material aid provision;
- Wellbeing initiatives; and
- Equipment such as IT resources to enable organisations to address the identified social issues.

Applicants will need to give an overview of how the funding will be spent. Due to the responsive nature of this Fund, Council will be asking for estimations of costs, rather than evidence of exact costs.

Submission Period

Council is seeking expressions of interest from eligible not-for-profit community organisations. This one-off funding round will remain open until all funds have been distributed.

Assessment Process

Once an expression of interest has been received, Council's Community Partnership Team will check the eligibility of the organisation. Each expression of interest will then be assessed and determined by an Assessment Panel, on a fortnightly basis.

A recommendation will be made to Council's Chief Executive Officer, or Delegate, for determination. All funding will be allocated under the delegation of the Chief Executive Officer. Once a decision has been made, the applicant will be informed of the outcome. Officers will provide Councillors with a fortnightly update on all EOI's assessed and recommended and not recommended via a memo and a formal report will be prepared for Council on a monthly basis, advising of outcomes and the remaining quantum. This process will continue until the fund is fully expended.



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Assessment Panel

A temporary panel will be formed to assess all expressions of interest. The Assessment Panel will comprise the following Council officers:

- Director Community Services (Chair);
- Manager Community Wellbeing;
- Manager Governance or delegate (Probity Officer); and
- Relevant delegates from Active Ageing and Disability Services; Youth Leisure and Cultural Services; Family and Children's Services; Emergency Management; City Futures; or Health Services depending on the specific nature of the application or expertise required for assessment.

Successful Applicants

If successful, the organisation will be asked to complete a funding agreement and electronic funds transfer form. Organisations will also be required to submit an acquittal report outlining:

- Outcomes for the Knox community including the number of residents who have benefited; and
- Financial acquittal.

Consultation

Consultation was undertaken with a number of community service providers in Knox to assess the need for a community relief fund.

Recommendation

7. **It is recommended that the COVID-19 Supporting Local Services Fund is allocated \$200,000 for the 2020-21 financial year, for distribution as need arises.**



3. Homeless Shower and Laundry Program

Objective

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic spreading around the State of Victoria, Knox City Council services and not-for-profit organisations around the municipality responded accordingly and closed down in accordance with State and Federal restrictions. As services have closed, members of the community already vulnerable are finding it near impossible to access appropriate facilities to continue to wash clothes and to shower. Knox City Council has recognised this issue and is responding accordingly.

With the majority of Council owned buildings becoming vacant during the social isolation period, an opportunity has become available for facilities to be re-purposed to service community members that are in need and to open as a potential essential services centre.

Purpose

This report provides a high level investigation and an analysis of current information. Council officers have contacted neighbouring Councils, existing partnerships with NFP and internal departments to get this project of the ground as soon as possible.

Methodology

- Contact existing community groups to gain partnerships to run the program;
- Investigate Council owned buildings that are vacant to determine potential use for laundry and showering facilities;
- Investigate and understand the needs of existing vulnerable people;
- Explore what is within scope;
- Create a timeframe; and
- Provide recommendations for consideration.

Existing need

The requirement for shower and laundry services has been identified as a critical need across the municipality.

Partnerships

Council sort partnerships from not-for-profit community groups located within the Knox municipality to assist in delivering this service. Council's role will be to enable and facilitate the project with the intention of having volunteers to operate the service. Table 1 shows the groups that have been contacted and the comments attached.



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Table 1 – Potential partnerships

Organisation	Comments
Uniting	Assess and Assist.
Infolink	Open for partnership. Infolink already have a system set up with referrals to Knox LeisureWorks pre COVID-19 restrictions. Infolink are willing to assist with referrals, providing towels, shampoo and condition, warm clothing and blankets to hand out. Options for laundry services were discussed.
Salvation Army	Can provide additional shower amenities if required. Have 12 (young) volunteers on roster. Have packages available to assist with clothing, etc.

Model**Management**

In order to get the program active, Council will require to partner with volunteers and existing active services.

Council will ensure:

- Building is available, unlocked and ready for use; and
- Building is cleaned before, during and after use.

Volunteers:

- Have the same staff on as regular as possible (discretion is important)
- Ensure social distancing measures are adhered

In talking with Council's Leisure Team who already assist members of the community in need, it is important that Council ensures an environment that is comfortable for use. Lessons learnt suggest members don't like to be questioned when entering the building. They prefer to have some familiarity with staff so they don't have to introduce their situation over and over.

Covid-19 requirements (as updated at Australia Government Department of Health website)

Until the Australian Government declares otherwise, the following must be applied, and adhered to, at all times:

- Wash hands often with soap and water;
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitisers;
- Clean and disinfect frequently used surfaces such as benchtops, desks and doorknobs;
- Keep 1.5 metres away from others; and
- Social distancing principles are adhered to — 1 person per 4 square metres.



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An example of precautionary measures that will be undertaken include:

- Hand sanitiser for users when they enter and exit the building;
- Cleaning schedule – regular between uses;
- Soap, shampoo and conditioner to be provided to users; and
- 30 minute showering sessions.

Laundry requirements

- Water tap connections;
- Power points;
- Drainage point; and
- Providing and laundering towels.

Shower requirements

- Multiple showers available that are in individual stalls.

Operation times

- Scheduling appropriate times is critical to maximise attendance; and
- A trial period of twice-a-week, potentially one morning and one afternoon.

Out of Scope

- Sleeping facilities; and
- Access to a hot meal (users will be connected to existing services).

Potential Facility and Selection Criteria

Potential facilities were considered using the following criteria:

- Close to public transport;
- Close to an activity centre;
- Containing a large space to cater for social distancing requirements; and
- Currently vacant or closed



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Recommendation - Short term (3 months)

- 8. **Based on an analysis of available facilities a temporary facility be selected to be opened twice a week, four hours at a time. Total eight hours per week.**

At this stage, it is anticipated for this program to conclude when restrictions are eased and the facility is back in use.

Council's role: Make the building available, organise cleaning and ensure Council officers onsite when facility is open.

Partnerships

- Salvation Army: If required can provide volunteers to be available at the site.
- Knox Infolink:
 - Provide a Coordinator, with two volunteers as support, who will work 6 hours per week in conjunction with Council to set up, co-ordinate and facilitate the program;
 - Provide a voucher/appointment process from the Knox Infolink office to facilitate a limited number of people in the space at any one time – practicing social distancing;
 - Knox Infolink will supply towels and toiletries to each person: a freshly laundered towel with a personal mini pack of shampoo, soap toothbrush/toothpaste, deodorant, shaver or if more appropriate we can supply large bottles of shampoo and pump soap at the facility, but the other items are more personal and we will provide a supply of them for each individual; and
 - Knox Infolink will collect the wet, used towels at the end of each day and launder

Laundry

It is preferred that the selected facility has an existing washing machine and dryer. If usage is high, Council can purchase another unit of each to allow faster usage to comply with social distancing rules.

Furthermore, Council officer can explore interim measures with local laundromats. For example, tokens to be pre-purchased at Bel-Aire Dry Cleaners (located on the corner of Lupton Way and Dorset Road).

Budget

Commercial cleaner	\$80 per 2 hour session for Council contracted commercial cleaners who specialise in disease. 2 sessions per week for 6 months = \$4,160
Washing machine	Brand: Haier 9kg Front Load washer Model: HWF90BW1 Price: \$640 Source: The Good Guys



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Dryer	Brand: Haier 8Kg Condenser Dryer Model: HDC80E1 Price: \$700 Source: The Good Guys
Utility bills	Approx. \$5,000 for 6 months
Miscellaneous	\$5,000 for immediate assistance over the next 6 months i.e. Sanitizer and Cleaning products
Total	\$15,500

Recommendation Medium-term (6 to 12 months)

9. Repurpose Council facility to make space for Infolink to expand and provide shower and laundry services

Council’s Community Wellbeing Department have been investigating fit-for-purpose needs of both St. John’s Ambulance and Knox Infolink, pre-COVID-19 restrictions. In summary, St. John’s require more space in order to have access around their vehicle that is stored at 136 Boronia Road, Boronia. Officers have been investigating potential sites to relocate St. John’s that better suits their need requirements. Potential locations have been sought and a resolution is close.

The space at 136 Boronia Road can be repurposed to make space for Infolink to expand services such as allowing space for collaboration with Orange Skye, portable shower instalments (see Figure 1 below), washing machine and dryer instalment and potentially other services such as lockers for homeless to access, hot meal, haircuts, etc.

Council officers would also like to explore the possibility of partnering with **Orange Sky** (mobile laundry) and **Clean as Casper** (mobile shower) to fund their services on a long term basis. This may involve buying mobile units to set up permanently in the municipality. Further work and costing is underway to determine viability.

Budget

Fit out	\$30,000
Washing machine	Brand: Haier 9kg Front Load washer Model: HWF90BW1 Price: \$645 Source: The Good Guys
Dryer	Brand: Haier 8Kg Condenser Dryer Model: HDC80E1 Price: \$779 Source: The Good Guys



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Portable shower hire (if Orange Sky not available)	TBC
Miscellaneous	\$10,000
Total	Approx. \$50,000

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4. Hot Meals Program for Vulnerable Families

Background

The Knox Emergency Relief Network is a network of agencies and organisations that provide emergency relief and material aid such as food vouchers and food parcels to people in financial crisis living in Knox.

The impact of the COVID-19 Stage 3 Restrictions has seen the suspension of regular community free meal services from a number of Emergency Relief Services in Knox. Currently, only two services, (Foothills Community Care in Ferntree Gully and St. Paul's Anglican Church in Boronia) are providing hot take away meals on a weekly basis for the community. Other Emergency Relief Services in Knox are continuing to provide frozen meals and packaged non-perishable food parcels that include personal care items on a regular basis to meet community need.

The hot meal take away service is now supporting a board cohort of the community, due to the impact of businesses closing and large sections of the community now without regular income.

Objective

For Council to explore partnership opportunities with Foothills and St Paul's to support and enable increased capacity for the provision of Hot Meal services to the community.

Purpose

To discuss with the Emergency Relief Service Hot Meal Coordinators current and future community need. Explore opportunities for Council to support/enhance or expand the service as required.

Overview of organisations

- **Foothills Community Care**

The aim of the service is to provide:

- Home-cooked, nutritious meals to locals who are not able to access them regularly;
- A safe, positive, welcoming environment for people to connect with others; building positive and inclusive community; and
- A meaningful way for locals to volunteer and give back to their community, including young people from local schools.

The Foothills Community Care programs is supported by a Program Manager and over 200 volunteers.

Services provided during Stage 3 Restrictions include:

- Hot Meal Take Away Service (Wednesday evening distributed from Girl Guide Hall – Underwood Road, Ferntree Gully);
- Community Casserole Program;
- Pay Forward Food Vouchers – supporting local restaurant businesses;
- Material Aid – personal care items supplied through food programs; and



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- Support for volunteers – petrol vouchers.

Demand for these services has increased during Stage 3 Restrictions. The Program Manager indicated that new families are attending having lost income, seeking food and material aid. A snapshot of the food service demand: approximately 400 meals provided over four days.

- **St. Paul's Anglian Church**

The Hot Take Away Meal Service is coordinated by a Church volunteer from St. Paul's. The Service is supported by five local churches and volunteers on a rotating weekly basis.

Services provided during Stage 3 Restrictions include:

- Hot Meal Take Away Service (Thursday evening distributed from St. Paul's Anglican Church – Dorset Road, Boronia);
- Volunteers from the church community prepare, cook and package meals; and
- St. Paul's Church have a functional commercial kitchen that supports meal preparation and distribution.

This Service is managing to meet demand at this time – approximately 30-40 meals are provided on a weekly basis.

Both Foothills and St. Paul's (in partnership with five other churches) are currently managing to provide Hot Meals two nights a week, as well as deliver community casseroles to the isolated, elderly and more vulnerable members of our community. With an increase in demand, it is anticipated that this service may need to expand to include a Saturday night as well as increase volume on the Wednesday and Thursday nights, and increase the Casserole program (frozen meals). Additional to this, Foothills offers families food vouchers to use at local restaurants, to not only supplement cooked meals but to provide 'normality' and dignity to vulnerable families.

Council has been in discussions with both Foothills and St. Paul's to explore potential for growth and to provide financial support for the purchase of raw food, restaurant vouchers, petrol vouchers (volunteers) and material aid. Additional volunteers will be required to support the programs over the coming months which Council can assist with.

As this report was being finalised more recent information pertaining to the steep increase of demand was being reported. Council will continue to work with all Emergency Relief centres to respond to this escalating situation and ensure funding is available through a formal request process to all Emergency Relief Centres providing hot meals and food packages to vulnerable people.

The following Table details areas of need with approximate costings.



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Table 2 - Proposal to support Foothills Community Care & St. Paul's Anglican Church-Hot Meal Service
 (The resources included in this table are approximates only)

Emergency Relief Service	Activity	Current Status	Fresh /nonperishable food	Food Vouchers/ Pay forward meal vouchers	Petrol Vouchers - Volunteers	Material Aid	Budget (12 months)
Foothills Community Care	Hot take away meal program (Wednesday night – FTG).	The program is meeting the demand. Monitor on a weekly basis.	Support ongoing purchase of food.	Supermarket vouchers to support meals program.	Meals are delivered to elderly or people in social isolation.	N/A	\$69,600
	Expand hot meals take away program to include Saturday night.	Consideration for Meals Coordinator & Volunteers to support this initiative. Training and availability.	Support ongoing purchase of food	N/A	Meals are delivered to elderly or people in social isolation.	N/A	\$19,600
	Community Casserole Program(frozen): Target group -elderly and isolated community members. Delivered by volunteers.	Ongoing. <i>Local business has donated a large commercial freezer to support program</i>	Support ongoing purchase of food:	N/A	Meals are delivered to elderly or people in social isolation.	N/A	\$19,600



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Emergency Relief Service	Activity	Current Status	Fresh /nonperishable food	Food Vouchers/ Pay forward meal vouchers	Petrol Vouchers - Volunteers	Material Aid	Budget (12 months)
	Personal care packages provided with food program.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Purchase personal care items as required, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toiletries; • Feminine Hygiene; and • Baby Care products. 	\$10,000
	Pay forward meal vouchers.	Ongoing – Support for local restaurant business - 30 vouchers distributed to date.	N/A	Pay forward vouchers to compliment meals programs	N/A	N/A	\$17,500
	Special events, (e.g. Mother’s Day and Father’s Day) meals. Partnered with Melbourne Food Squad, Bayswater and Hygiene Business in Bayswater North.	Supplying 500 meals - take away or delivered and pamper packs. (Donated goods & meals)	N/A	Pay forward meal vouchers included in pamper packs.	Petrol vouchers	N/A	\$19,500



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Emergency Relief Service	Activity	Current Status	Fresh /nonperishable food	Food Vouchers/ Pay forward meal vouchers	Petrol Vouchers - Volunteers	Material Aid	Budget (12 months)
St. Paul's Anglican Church	Hot Meal Take Away Food program Thursday night (Boronia)	Ongoing – meeting demand at present	Support ongoing purchase of food	Supermarket vouchers to support meals program.	N/A	Purchase personal care items as required, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toiletries; • Feminine Hygiene; and • Baby Care products. 	\$91,200
	Pay forward meal vouchers	Currently not providing this service.	N/A	Pay forward vouchers to compliment meals programs	N/A	N/A	\$17,500
Emergency Relief Centres	In anticipation of restrictions lifting and further Emergency Relief Centres re-establishing their suspended services an additional \$50,500 has been included.						\$50,500
Total Budget: \$315,000							



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Recommendation

- 10. That Council allocate \$315,000 towards the costs of supporting an increase in the provision of hot meals, food vouchers and material aid to the isolated, elderly and more vulnerable people.**



5. Sporting Club Mental Health Awareness Training

Background

As a result of the changing environment in which all Victorians are now living, there is a significant increase in the causes for feelings of stress, anxiety, isolation and concern. Many people have lost employment, social connections, the ability to pursue hobbies and in some cases, loved ones. As a result, there is an expectation of increased need for support across the areas of mental health.

Evidence indicates that community groups, including sporting clubs, provide a unique opportunity for people to gather, connect and grow. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the opportunity to connect as they have traditionally done has been lost. However once restrictions are lifted, the sporting club environment will be the perfect place to provide mental health awareness training and support. It is understood that by reaching one person in a sporting club, this can have a positive impact on up to 10 people within the community.

Aim

Through previous programs delivered to, and within sporting clubs, Council has seen how mental health awareness training can bring significant positive change to a group. By providing members of clubs with sessions on mental health and wellbeing awareness, it educates large numbers of people across the Knox community on how to have real conversations about mental health. It also equips participants with the ability to 'look for the signs' among their teammates and friends. Finally, it also reduces any negative stigmas which may still linger around mental health within the community.

Purpose

The initial stage of this program is offered to provide basic mental health awareness training to all clubs (clubs that opt in) across Knox, with a second phase proposed to offer a more intensive training in Year 2.

Program Delivery

A further, more intensive training offered to those clubs who wish to extend their mental health training within their Club. This would involve an eight hour (part online, part in person) training for two people within the club to become an accredited 'Mental Health First Aider'. The Mental Health First Aid training is more intensive and teaches skills to assist people who are developing a mental health problem, experiencing a worsening of an existing mental health problem or in a mental health crisis, until appropriate professional help is received or the crisis resolves.

This would be offered as a second phase, once the initial training has been rolled out, given there is an opportunity to make more of an impact by reaching more people through Phase 1.



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Table 1 – Mental Health Awareness Training Phases

Phase	Description	Costs	Total Budget
Phase 1	The Mental Health First Aid training would consist of a 90 minute Mental Health Awareness session, delivered at the Club’s tenanted facility to the playing group, coaches and committee. The session works best in intimate groups of under 30, so where there are clubs with multiple teams, it is proposed that a number of sessions are offered.	The delivery costs associated with the Mental Health Awareness session is \$800 per session. 220 sessions (80 – 100 clubs) @ \$800 per session = \$176,000 inc. GST	Total program budget - \$200,000 inc. GST
Phase 2	A further, more intensive training offered to those clubs who wish to extend their mental health training within their club. This would involve an eight hour (part online, part in person) training for two people within the club to become an accredited ‘Mental Health First Aider’. The Mental Health First Aid training is more intensive and teaches skills to assist people who are developing a mental health problem, experiencing a worsening of an existing mental health problem or in a mental health crisis, until appropriate professional help is received or the crisis resolves. This would be offered as a second phase, once the initial training has been rolled out, given there is an opportunity to make more of an impact by reaching more people through Phase 1.	The delivery costs associated with the Mental Health First Aid Training is \$500 per 2 club members. This will allow some further targeted training from Phase 1. 24 clubs, offering 2 people at each 48 \$500 = \$24,000 inc. GST	

Recommendation

- 11. Deliver Mental Health First Aid training and awareness programs to all sporting club members across the municipality.



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6. COVID-19 Research

Background

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is resulting in significant economic and social upheaval. The situations being faced by our community are unprecedented and whilst we have anecdotal information about the types of challenges being faced in our community, we have no understanding of the prevalence of these experiences.

Aim

The aim of this research is to collect information from the community to:

- Identify prevalence of issues, and how these occur within geographic and demographic community profiles;
- Fine-tune immediate service delivery to meet the needs of community members;
- Inform recovery planning; and
- Assist with the design of future Pandemic Response Plans.

Methodology

Survey

The base survey questions cover the following topic areas:

- Anxiety (mental health measurement);
- Specific coronavirus impacts, with a focus on employment, housing, safety, physical health, parenting responsibilities, and food/groceries.
- Behaviour change since the pandemic (specific to health and wellbeing: exercise, healthy eating, alcohol consumption, social isolation, gambling);
- Business owner impacts (changes to staff);
- Coronavirus health status (whether they have been tested / infected or know anyone who has);
- Where they go for information about Coronavirus; and
- Extensive demographics (to enable cross-analysis by location, gender, age, household type, vulnerable households, culturally and linguistically diverse, health risks). Opportunities for community resilience, connectedness and strengths.

Additional questions will be developed between the consultant and key stakeholders within Council to ensure it adequately covers Council priorities, and can provide information to assist with the development of the Community and Council Plans 2021-2025.



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Distribution

The survey will be distributed in two ways:

1.	Open access	<p>Through social media, internal networks, print advertisements, posters, etc.</p> <p>Anyone can access and complete this version of the survey. We generally see people with higher levels of need participating in this type of distribution, therefore it provides detailed information about these needs, but not the incidence of need across the municipality (prevalence).</p> <p>The open access link will be provided by the contractor, and Council will distribute the link through aforementioned channels.</p>
2.	Representative	<p>To understand how common these needs are across the whole community, the representative distribution will aim to speak to households across the shire, representing the variety of demographics and household types. This can then show a more accurate picture of the prevalence of need.</p> <p>The options for representative distribution have been outlined below.</p> <p>The representative survey will be wholly managed by the contractor.</p>

Representative distribution options

Type	Benefits	Limitations
Telephone survey <i>(50% landline, 50% mobile)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trained telephone interviewer can convince people to participate, and talk through the question particulars and clarify if the respondent has any queries. Can better screen for a range of demographics (so that we get better demographic coverage). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social desirability bias (respondents may not be as honest when talking to a person). Under-representation of mobile only households.
Letter/email invite to online survey <i>(using rates database proportional random sampling)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach all households (not just those with a landline/listed mobile number). More honest responses as they don't have social desirability bias. Selected households where Council has an email address will receive an email invite, reducing resource use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low response rate (3-5%) so would need a large number of initial letters to be sent out. Self-selection, meaning people are more likely to not do the survey.
Letter invite with paper form and option to complete online / email invite <i>(using rates database proportional random sampling)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach all households (not just those with a landline/listed mobile number). Higher response rate (15-40%) as they have the survey immediately in paper form. Selected households where Council has an email address will receive an email invite, reduces resource use. More honest responses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-selection Additional resource use (paper survey forms).

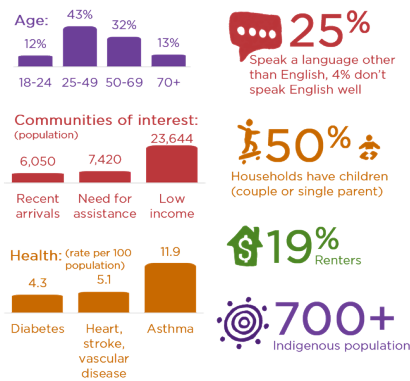


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Representative survey parameters

For the representative survey we will aim for the following parameters, to ensure adequate coverage of the municipality:

- n=50 sample within each of the Wards, with a total of 500 plus sample;
- 50% male/ 50% female; and
- Aim for reasonable representation of key groups, as demonstrated through 2016 Census and ABS Health Survey data:



The open access survey will be left open, with no cap on the number of responses it can receive.

Timeline

A typical timeline for undertaking this work is as follows:

Activity	Duration
Survey design	1-2 weeks
Online / telephone survey programming, database sampling, and paper form design (as needed)	1 week
(if required) printing and mail-out	1 week
Undertake fieldwork	4 weeks
Analysis workshop	1 week
Report	2-3 weeks

Recommendation

- 12. Undertake a municipal wide survey to a statistical household sample to assess family impact of Covid-19 and inform strategic service planning, longer term relief and recovery planning as well as the new Community and Council Plans.**



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7. Not-for-Profit Group Facility Operating Contribution

Despite the closure of community and sporting facilities due to COVID19 restrictions, many costs continue to be incurred by those groups responsible for facility operations. For example, utilities to ensure security through alarms, lighting, etc. and power bills to maintain club assets such as canteen stock.

The closures are having an impact on the ability of Not-for-Profit groups to cover existing and new operating costs due to limited or falling revenues. A one off contribution towards these groups will enable their ongoing operation through the pandemic.

It is recommended to establish a one off Not-for-Profit Group Facility Operating Contribution of \$1000 (total \$160,000) for those Not-for-Profit Groups and Clubs with a current lease or licence operating in a Council facility, to assist with facility operating costs such as utilities and COVID related operating expenses.

Recommendation

- 13. It is recommended to establish a one off, \$1000 Facility Operating Contribution for those Not-for-Profit Groups and Clubs with a lease or licence in a Council facility.**



8. Mentoring Support Program

Background

Mentoring is often used as a support tool to help business owners/operators implement what they are learning into their business planning. Knox City Council currently offers mentoring to those small and medium-sized enterprises/professionals that need urgent advice. The Australian Small Business Advisory Services (ASBAS) and Small Business Victoria (SBV) also continues to provide support, advice and training to businesses.

As businesses seek to rebound from the personal and economic challenges of this pandemic, a more nuanced approach to meaningful and practical business mentoring needs to be explored. Mentoring topics that are more holistic and which focus on financial management, managing relationships, personal and financial support opportunities, are some of the topics that need to be explored.

Aims

The objective is to increase the amount of mentoring and tailored advice to local businesses to assist with managing the impacts of COVID-19.

It is critical that targeted and timely guidance and advice be provided to local businesses wishing to participate in the Mentoring Support Program.

Proposal

The Economic Development team will initially triage local businesses for the Mentoring Support Program, to ensure appropriate and tailored mentoring is provided and benefits are realised.

An external consultant(s) is to be funded and appointed to provide mentoring and coaching to local businesses. The number and length of sessions with each business is to be jointly determined on a case-by-case basis by the external consultant and the Economic Development Team.

Mentoring is typically a private session between the external consultant and the business owner/operator of approximately 1-1.5 hours' duration. It is proposed that up to six mentoring sessions be offered to local businesses.

The Mentoring Program is expected to be promoted in June 2020, with the program commencing in July/August 2020.

A detailed list of topics will be planned with delivery partners when funding is finalised. A key focus will be around business mentoring that considers a more holistic approach to operating a business. Such topics might include:

- Management and leadership strategies;
- Balancing business with personal needs;
- Business growth and expansion;
- Achieving alignment with your business, your people and family/friends;
- Managing crisis, conflict and change;
- Understanding cash flow; and



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- Transitioning out of your business.

Quotes will be sought from external providers to provide mentoring and coaching to local businesses, in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy.

Recommendation

- 14. It is recommended that the Mentoring Support Program be supported, and together with the Commercial Advice Program, be allocated \$60,000 (in total) in the 2020-21 financial year.**



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9. Commercial Advice Program (lease arrangements, tax and wage subsidies)

Background

COVID-19 has had unprecedented impacts on businesses in Knox. Many businesses have either closed their doors or had their operations restricted through social distancing measures. Incomes have been dramatically reduced which has flow-on effects to employees, suppliers, landlords and the local economy.

There is a lot of information available to local businesses at the moment, and together with the complicated nature of the available information, it is a challenge for some business owners and operators to know who to turn to, in order to fully understand the complexities, the possibilities and the implications. Advice relating to legal and matters can assist businesses to understand their rights and their legal obligations. Guidance on tax and finances can assist businesses to keep employees at work, improve cash flow and plan for the future.

Aims

The objective is to provide commercial and legal advice for local businesses via a series of coordinated workshops (and if needed in one-on-one follow up meetings), in relation to lease arrangements, as well as tax and wage subsidies.

As per the Mentoring Support Program, it is critical that targeted and timely guidance and advice be provided to local businesses.

Proposal

An external consultant and/ or legal firm to be funded and appointed to provide specialist commercial advice. These services can be quite costly for businesses, so this program proposes to offer this advice to Knox-based businesses at no cost.

The suitability of the business owners/ operators to receive specialist commercial and legal advice will be jointly determined on a case-by-case basis by the external consultant/ legal firm and the Economic Development team.

The Commercial Advice Program is expected to be promoted in June 2020, with the program commencing in July/ August 2020. Depending on the level of interest in this Program, an alternative events program will be considered that provides general legal and commercial advice.

Quotes will be sought from external providers to provide specialist commercial advice to local businesses, in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy.

Recommendation

15. **It is recommended that the Commercial Advice Program be supported, and together with the Mentoring Support Program, be allocated \$60,000 (in total) in the 2020-21 financial year.**



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

10. Digital Upskill Program

Background

Theoretical teaching of online business practices can be overwhelming for participants, given the amount and evolving nature of information. With current social distancing restrictions, digital optimisation of businesses is critical.

Aims

The objective is to provide local businesses with the skills and understanding of how to enhance the digital nature of their business.

Proposal

The Digital Upskill Program will include a series of practical, small-group sessions in which participants work on their own online channels in real time. This program will complement the Knox eCommerce Grant in offering businesses hands-on skills development in a range of topics related to doing business online.

A digital health check will give participants a view of their current website performance, social media presence, visual identity and comparison to competitors. This will give a clearer understanding of the online gaps the business has and to make a plan post-workshop.

The Program will include a suite of workshops, and is proposed to address:

- Digital Health Check for each participating businesses.
- Skills development and practical application of the following:
 - Website content development;
 - Search engine optimization;
 - Social media and online marketing;
 - eCommerce (online retailing); and
 - Video content creation and application.
- Collateral for participants to build an online strategy to implement post-workshop.

The number and length of workshops may vary depending on the subject matter, and will be confirmed with the external provider appointed to run the workshops.

The Digital Upskill Program is expected to be promoted in June 2020, with the program commencing in July/August 2020.

Quotes will be sought from external providers to provide the immersive workshops, in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy.

Recommendation

16. **It is recommended that the Digital Upskill Program be supported, and \$20,000 be allocated in the 2020-21 financial year.**



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

11. Business Support Grants

Extensive grants and funding are available from the Federal and State Governments. The grants described below complement existing grants and programs offered by other levels of government.

Business Support Grant Funding Guidelines will be developed to support the Program and once finalised, the grants will generally be open to businesses operating in Knox, subject to specific criterion listed below. Businesses will need to demonstrate how the grant will help support their businesses in response to the impact of COVID-19.

The Guidelines formulation and grant evaluations will draw on industry and stakeholder expertise. In addition, a grant value has not been specified for each grant type. Rather, a value has been identified for the entire Business Support Grants program, as flexibility is recommended to respond to demand and specific circumstances.

11.1 Knox eCommerce Grant

Background

Customers have moved to online retail purchasing in large numbers since COVID-19 social distancing restrictions came into place. A second wave of growth is expected due to permanent changes in shopping behaviour.

Aims

The objective of this grant is to support existing businesses in Knox to build their online eCommerce presence and capability including website, social media and other online marketing channels.

This Grant is intended to complement the Digital Upskill Program, where businesses will learn a range of digital optimisation skills in addition to eCommerce.

Providing financial support to businesses in Knox to meet the needs of their customers will not only support their shopfront operations once they reopen or return to normal, it could generally increase and widen their range of customers.

Fund Principles and Scope

The Knox eCommerce Grant is underpinned by the following principles:

1. A responsive and equitable process; and
2. Accountability for funding.

The Knox eCommerce Grant will have the following parameters:

- Businesses with up to 20 staff will be able to apply for up to \$2,000;
- Businesses with up to 50 staff will be able to apply for up to \$3,000;
- Council will reserve the right to part-fund projects; and
- Retrospective projects undertaken from 2 March 2020 can also be considered.



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The application process will require businesses to justify how the eCommerce project will improve outcomes due to the impact of COVID-19, and will include activities such as:

- Website development or redevelopment with eCommerce functionality;
- Online shopping or eCommerce platform development external to the website;
- Social media and other online marketing strategy or delivery; and
- Capability development and/or training for staff to use and implement online activities.

The Knox eCommerce Grant will not be available for:

- Ongoing costs such as web and email hosting, or staff costs;
- Purchase of IT equipment such as computers, tablets or point of sale equipment; and
- Purchase or subscription costs for software or applications.

Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, the following requirements must be met:

- Operating from a commercial or industrial zoned premises in Knox LGA with up to 50 staff;
- Have had a minimum 30% reduction in turnover in their business since February 2020;
- Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN) and have been trading for at least 12 months;
- Be an Australian owned business;
- Be able to show how the project will support their business due to the impact of COVID-19; and
- Hold all relevant licences, permits and approvals necessary to be operating.

Application and Assessment Process

- Applications will be received via Council's SmartyGrants software. Applicants will need to provide proof of eligibility and either an invoice (for retrospective applications) or a quote outlining the project.
- An assessment panel of Council officers and an external member will be convened to assess applications on an ongoing basis. A recommendation will be made to Council's Chief Executive Officer, or Delegate, for determination.

Submission Period

- The submission period is expected to commence in July/ August 2020 and will be open for a six week period, with assessments taking place on a fortnightly basis.

Successful Applicants

- Successful grant recipients will need to sign a letter of offer including terms and conditions prior to funding being provided.



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- Once the project has been completed, the recipient must complete a grant acquittal via SmartyGrants.

Recommendation

- 17. It is recommended that the Knox eCommerce Grant be supported as part of an overarching Business Support Grants Program (with a total program value of \$335,000) allocated in the 2020-21 financial year.**

11.2 Knox Manufacturing and Supply Chain Transition Grant

Background

Knox is home to a number of medical, scientific and pharmaceutical manufacturing firms from global leaders, to smaller family owned businesses. A number of large health equipment wholesalers and medical supply procurement centres are also located in Knox. Future investment at the Wantirna Health Precinct will also expand the profile of health and medical industries in Knox. With such as concentration of firms and high value sub-sectors (the pharmaceutical product manufacturing sub-sector alone adds close to \$1B to the Knox economy), the municipality could have a comparative advantage in medical supplies that merits further investment and industry facilitation.

Recent industry engagement has shown that a number of local manufacturing businesses have responded to COVID-19 created gaps in supply chains, and pivoted their manufacturing using existing capital, labour and knowhow. Such new investment has been for in-demand goods such as personal protective equipment (PPE), sanitation products and fast moving consumer goods for health and nutrition. There may also be other gaps in supply chains that might benefit from manufacturers pivoting.

Manufacturers pivoting to health and medical devices/good supply chains may have to comply with regulations from agencies such as Therapeutic Goods Administration (Australia), and funding to assist with this process would also be beneficial.

The Federal Government has established a platform for the manufacturing sector. Driven by the Department of Industry, with support from respective State Government departments (i.e. DJPR), this program seeks to capture expressions of interest from Australian based manufacturers and individuals looking to assist with supply of goods, services or knowledge in tackling the current COVID-19 outbreak in Australia. This grant will complement this platform.

Aims

The objective of this grant is to support existing manufacturing businesses in Knox to transition and pivot their manufacturing to respond to medical, health and other supply chain needs that have arisen due to COVID-19. In addition, the objective is to assist with regulatory processes, maintain and create jobs, create new local business-to-business opportunities, and build on Knox's comparative advantage in the medical and health sector.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Fund Principles and Scope

The Knox Manufacturing and Supply Chain Transition Grant is underpinned by the following principles:

1. A responsive and equitable process; and
2. Accountability for funding.

The Knox Manufacturing and Supply Chain Transition Grant will have the following parameters:

- Manufacturing businesses will be able to apply for up to \$20,000; and
- Council will reserve the right to part-fund projects.

The application process will require manufacturing businesses to justify how the grant will improve outcomes due to the impact of COVID-19, and will include activities such as:

- Capital/equipment to facilitate meeting health, medical and other demonstrated supply chain opportunities;
- Obtaining expertise/specialist advice to oversee process improvements, partnership arrangements or compliance requirements;
- Accessing local research/ testing that will support businesses to pivot to new opportunities; and
- Obtaining support/advice to assist local firms that have COVID-19 export opportunities.

Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, the following requirements must be met:

- Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN) and have been trading for at least 12 months;
- Be an Australian owned business;
- Be able to show how the grant funding will support their business to transition to new supply chain opportunities arisen due to COVID-19; and
- Hold all relevant licences, permits and approvals necessary to be operating.

Application and Assessment Process

- Applications will be received via Council's SmartyGrants software. Applicants will need to provide proof of eligibility and a quote outlining the project.
- An assessment panel of Council officers and an external member will be convened to assess applications on an ongoing basis. A recommendation will be made to Council's Chief Executive Officer, or Delegate, for determination.

Submission Period

- The submission period is expected to commence in July/August 2020 and will be open for a six week period, with assessments taking place on a fortnightly basis.



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Successful Applicants

- Successful grant recipients will need to sign a letter of offer including terms and conditions prior to funding being provided.
- Once the project has completed, the recipient must complete a grant acquittal via SmartyGrants.

Recommendation

- 18. It is recommended that the Knox Manufacturing and Supply Chain Transition Grant be supported as part of an overarching Business Support Grants Program, with a total program value of \$335,000 allocated in the 2020-21 financial year.**

11.3 Knox Creative & Cultural Sector and Place Activation Grant

Background

Knox is home to a diverse mix of creative and cultural industries that have been highly impacted by the current pandemic. Analysis of data in the creative and cultural sector shows that there are well over 700 local creative and cultural businesses that are registered for GST, however there are many other smaller creative and cultural businesses that will also be significantly impacted by COVID-19.

The State Government's agency Creative Victoria undertook significant research into the sector in 2013-2015 and estimated that Victoria's creative and cultural economy contributed \$22.7 billion to Victoria in 2013 – representing 8% of the State's total economy, which was more than construction (\$19.8 billion).

The creative and cultural industries also have a much deeper role in our community and are central to expressing identity, liveability, and are linked to social practices and traditions. Many people that work in the creative and cultural sector also have secondary employment in retail trade or accommodation and food services – sectors that are also heavily impacted by COVID-19.

As a sector where there are a number of start-ups, sole traders/micro-businesses and freelancers, the cultural and creative sector is unlikely to have had business continuity and financial measures in place to meet the challenges of COVID-19.

Aims

The objective of this grant is to support cultural and creative sectors in Knox – a sector that is heavily reliant on patron numbers, events/ festivals and tourism. The funding compliments the Sustaining Creative Workers initiative issued by the State Government to support the continued work of Victoria's independent creative practitioners.

Fund Principles and Scope

The Knox Creative & Cultural Sector and Place Activation Grant is underpinned by the following principles:

1. A responsive and equitable process; and
2. Accountability for funding.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

The Knox Creative & Cultural Sector and Place Activation Grant will have the following parameters:

Stream 1 – Industry Facilitation Grant

- Creative and cultural businesses will be able to apply for up to \$5,000;
- Needs to be an individual business application; and
- Council will reserve the right to part-fund projects.

Stream 1 – Industry Facilitation Grant is proposed and will include activities such as:

- Invest in training packages e.g. creative seminars/ creative classes online with skills/ social interaction;
- Innovate their marketing and communication activities such as building search engine optimisation, exploring social media strategies or other communications engagement; and
- Facilitate partnership/ network or research and development opportunities with other creative professionals across new platforms, channels, portals, etc.

Stream 2 – Placemaking and Liveable Communities Grant

- Creative and cultural businesses will be able to apply for up to \$10,000;
- Needs to demonstrate partnerships and community outcomes; and
- Council will reserve the right to part-fund projects.

Stream 2 Placemaking and Liveable Communities Grant will enhance placemaking/liveability and activity centre renewal activities, in Wantirna, Bayswater, Boronia and Ferntree Gully Village, post COVID-19 restrictions.

With COVID-19 having a deep impact on retail, hospitality and community arts and recreation services, this grant recognises the link between vibrant retail and activity centres and the creative and cultural sectors.

These initiatives could include:

- Funding neighbourhood pop-up activations, community art projects/ installations, and cultural development activities;
- Running events/performances/multimedia/digital exhibitions that are connected to the activity centres;
- Supporting partnership arrangements between artists and traders to improve visual merchandising/rejuvenation of shopfronts, activity centre beautification or marketing; and
- Footpath, trading and dining displays that compliment commercial and community activity in these centres.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, the following requirements must be met:

- Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN);
- Be currently operating within the cultural and creative sector, as listed by the ABS/Creative Victoria;
- Be an Australian owned business;
- Be located in or operating within Knox; and
- Hold all relevant licences, permits and approvals necessary to be operating.

Application and Assessment Process

- Applications will be received via Council's SmartyGrants software. Applicants will need to provide proof of eligibility and a quote outlining the project.
- An assessment panel of Council officers and an external member will be convened to assess applications on an ongoing basis. A recommendation will be made to Council's Chief Executive Officer, or Delegate, for determination.

Submission Period

- The submission period is expected to commence in July/August 2020 and will be open for a six week period, with assessments taking place on a fortnightly basis.

Successful Applicants

- Successful grant recipients will need to sign a letter of offer including terms and conditions prior to funding being provided.
- Once the project has completed, the recipient must complete a grant acquittal via SmartyGrants.

Recommendation

19. **It is recommended that the Knox Creative & Cultural Sector and Place Activation Grant be supported as part of an overarching Business Support Grants Program (with a total program value of \$335,000) allocated in the 2020-21 financial year.**



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

12. Retail Activation Strategy

Background

The restriction of economic activity due to COVID-19 has hit some industries harder than others. A survey conducted by REMPLAN has suggested that revenue for Arts & Recreation businesses is down 55.7% and Accommodation & Food Services is down 49.3%. Whilst the results of this survey show that Retail Trade revenue is down 26.4%, this number may be skewed by the huge increase in shopping for grocery items at the beginning of the crisis. Small retailers of clothing, furniture, giftware and others may be suffering losses closer to that of arts, food and accommodation businesses. This has been found anecdotally through conversations with retailers in Knox and members of the Economic Development team.

Aims

The objective is to prepare a Retail Activation Strategy that encourages local residents and workers to shop local.

Proposal

The Retail Activation Strategy will align with work to facilitate creative and cultural initiatives and place activation. Once social distancing measures are rolled back to an acceptable level and it is safe for people to be gathering in larger groups, the Retail Activation Strategy will be able to begin. The Strategy will primarily be based on a 'Buy & Play Local' platform to promote local businesses, places, and art and cultural events. Short to medium term, this program should encourage collaboration between businesses, artists and community organisations operating in these spaces and from a business perspective it could work to support trader organisations to form and build the profile of their local area.

Longer term, after this program has rolled out, work could continue to support traders in local strip shopping centres.

Project scoping is still to occur, however the Program could include:

- Preparation of a Retail Activation 'Buy & Play Local' Strategy; and
- Engagement with local businesses in activity centres to build capacity and support traders.

Project planning and scoping for the Retail Activation Strategy will commence in June/July 2020. A procurement process will follow this. Quotes will be sought from external consultants to prepare the Retail Activation Strategy, in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy.

Recommendation

- 20. It is recommended that the Retail Activation Strategy be supported, and \$50,000 be allocated in the 2020-21 financial year.**



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

13. Attachment 1 – Business Support Package background

Over previous weeks, feedback has been received from businesses on what they are experiencing throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Regional survey data and direct conversations with businesses has informed a Knox Business Support Package that can further complement Federal and State Government business support packages.

The Federal Government’s business support offering is far-reaching and totals \$320B, with a key component being the \$130B JobKeeper Payment scheme. The Victorian Government has established an economic survival package to support Victorian businesses. The \$1.7 billion Economic Survival Package complements the work of the Federal Government and offers a combination of eight funding streams and rebate style support mechanisms such as reimbursement of liquor licensing fees.

Melbourne East Regional Economic Development Group

Knox City Council contributes to, and participates in, the Melbourne East Regional Economic Development Group (MEREDG). A survey was made available to all businesses across the municipalities of Knox, Monash, Whitehorse, Manningham, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges, with a view to obtaining an understanding of how COVID-19 is impacting businesses. This survey closed on 6 April 2020, and a summary of this survey is provided below:

- 823 businesses participated.
- In terms of business types, ‘Accommodation and food services’ had the highest amount of responses (131), and ‘Retail trade’ was the second highest (with 119 responses). The third highest was manufacturing with 61 responses.
- The majority (89.1%) of respondents were small businesses of less than 20 employees.
- 81.1% of businesses indicated that they had been impacted by COVID-19. In terms of how the impacts of COVID-19 had been felt, 90.3% of respondents stated that revenue loss would impact them, and 77.3% believed that customer loss would impact them.
- Just over half of the respondents (423) have either a Risk Management Plan or Business Continuity Plan in place.
- When asked if their business could operate long term if some or all of the employees were unable to attend work due to self-isolation, 58.1% of respondents stated ‘No’.
- When asked how long businesses could remain viable for if they are negatively impacted by COVID-10, the highest response was three months or less (38.7%). This graph is shown below.

Value	Percent	Responses
3 months	38.7%	314
6 months	17.5%	142
9 months	1.0%	8
1 year	5.4%	44
Unsure	37.4%	303



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

- In terms of support from Government (across Federal, State and Local), the following was identified:
 - Tax incentives – 29.4%.
 - Loan (reduced/ interest free) – 23.3%.
 - Support services – 11.5%.
 - Listing of local suppliers/ capability – 2.2%.
- A number of other individual ideas were identified. The ideas that could be relevant to Local Government include:
 - General financial/ grant assistance – for businesses and for artists:
 - Advertising; and
 - Creation of suitable web platforms.
 - Reduction of Council rates.
 - Promote locations of 'hard-to-get' items.
 - Assist with the supply of additional cleaning and sanitising materials.
 - Guidance through the multitude/ range of information that is now available in relation to business support.

Based on the MEREDG results, providing business support and guidance, and triaging information, requests and connections, continues to be a critical focus for the Economic Development team.

Direct conversations

The Economic Development Team has engaged with businesses and had in-depth discussions regarding COVID-19 impacts. Each business engaged has requested different levels of support or assistance. Most, if not all, have had to make changes within their business, with some of the changes including standing down staff, establishing eCommerce functionality etc.

The Economic Development Team has referred businesses to State and Federal government support packages, and has provided connections to external mentoring.

Initial analysis of our direct engagement has indicated a need for the following:

- Legal advice to assist in better understanding and navigating issues relating to commercial tenancies and leases;
- Assistance and facilitation for businesses to transition and pivot their manufacturing to products that might be in greater demand, including health sector products; and
- Tax and wage subsidy advice to provide businesses with relevant government package information, including JobKeeper advice.

Information from direct conversations has reiterated the need for the Economic Development Team to continue and enhance its support services.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Current activities from the Economic Development Team

- **Communication**
 - An Electronic Direct Mail (EDM) is regularly sent to the KnoxBiz database, and is tailored to provide responsive and relevant advice.
 - Regular and relevant COVID-19 updates continue to be made to the Knox Biz website.
 - The Bayswater Business Precinct (BBP) Connect web platform has recently been created and launched. COVID-19 updates and links to government information have also been placed on this web platform.
 - The next edition of Knox Business Life will include relevant COVID-19 updates.

- **Ongoing program/ support services**
 - Ongoing support and guidance is provided to all businesses that have contacted them.
 - In discussions with relevant Council departments, planning permission will not be required during the COVID-19 shutdown period for any wholesale food businesses seeking to retail temporarily from their production site.
 - Connections have been brokered between local manufacturers with health agencies, to assist with pivoting manufacturing and deliver health related products.
 - Small business mentoring is being offered to local businesses that need urgent advice.
 - Online events and training from Australian Small Business Advisory Services (ASBAS) and Small Business Victoria (SBV) continues to be supported and regularly promoted.

- **New projects**
 - A new web platform has been created to provide our residents (and surrounding LGA residents) with information on where food and drinks premises are still open. This has been created to assist those restaurants and cafes that can no longer host patrons on site.
 - The BBP Connect web platform is a forum for businesses within the Bayswater Business Precinct to connect and share information, and to enhance supply chains. Registration for BBP Connect was previously restricted to businesses only within the Bayswater Business Precinct. This has now been opened up to allow all businesses from Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges to register.

2020-09-21 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

9.1 COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

SUMMARY: Manager Pandemic Response and Recovery, Angela Morcos

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Council approved its first Community and Business Support package on 30 March 2020, and the second on 25 May 2020. This report recommends initiatives for a third package of support.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note the continued positive impact that Council's support initiatives have had so far on the Knox community.
2. Approves the following initiatives for inclusion in the third Community and Business Support Package:
 - a. Waive all not-for profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the period 1 October 2020 to 31 March 2021, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded;
 - b. Refund existing trading permits relating to outdoor dining, display of goods and business A-frame signage with a pro-rata refund applied for permit fees paid for the period 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021;
 - c. Waive new trading permits fees relating to outdoor dining, display of goods and business A-frame signage received between 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021 on the basis that the application fee will be waived and only an adjusted pro-rata permit fee to cover the period of 1 April 2021 to 31 August 2021 (the remainder of the 2020/21 permit period) will be applied;
 - d. Waive new trading permits relating to outdoor dining, display of goods and business A-frame signage received after 31 March 2021 on the basis that the application fee will be waived and a pro-rata permit fee will be applied (adjusted monthly) until the end of the 2020/21 permit period (31 August 2021);
 - e. Provide financial assistance to Knox Basketball Incorporated as outlined in Section 2.3;
 - f. Provide 100% fee relief in the 2021 calendar year for health and food premises as listed in Table 1;
 - g. Provide funding to the value of \$85,000 to respond to some impacts of the Pandemic identified from the results of the COVID-19 Household Survey; and
 - h. Provide funding to the value of \$40,000 for a community campaign.
3. Funds the above initiatives with the balance from previously allocated funding and review any additional funding required through the mid-year budget process.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Since March 2020, Council has approved two packages of financial support in recognition of the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Knox community. On 25 May 2020, Council noted that further allocations from the balance of funding for the Community and Business Support Package for the purpose of Stage 3 COVID-19 support initiatives will be considered by Council at a later stage.

In accordance with that decision, this report presents a third Community and Business Support Package. Initiatives in this package can mostly be funded with the balance of funding already approved and an estimated additional \$870,000 that will be considered through the mid-year budget review.

Initiatives in the first and second packages provided support for local businesses and service providers, community and sporting groups, ratepayers, and those who are experiencing hardship and vulnerability during the Pandemic.

The detail of Council decisions for the first and second Community and Business Support Packages are provided in Attachment 1.

2. DISCUSSION

When Council approved its second Community and Business Support Package on 25 May 2020, Stage 3 restrictions imposed during March and April in Victoria were progressively being lifted. However, in response to increasing positive cases of COVID-19, Stage 3 restrictions were imposed again on 9 July 2020 and Stage 4 restrictions on 2 August 2020 in Metropolitan Melbourne.

There will continue to be economic and social impacts from this second wave and tighter restrictions under Stage 4. The Knox COVID-19 Household Survey was undertaken during this time, and the results provide useful insight into the impact on the Knox community to date.

Importantly, the results from the Household Survey confirm that Council's first and second Support Packages have been targeted to areas of need and are already demonstrating positive impact for the Knox community as noted by Council on 25 May 2020. In response to the continued impact of the Pandemic on the Knox community, the third package proposes the extension of some initiatives into the 2021 calendar year and additional items in response to some emerging issues.

2.1 Lease, License and Hire Fees

Council has supported not-for-profit community organisations using Council's facilities by waiving all hire agreement, license and lease fees from 30 March to 30 September 2020, or refunding as required. The not-for-profit community organisations continue to be severely impacted through loss of income and not being able to operate, and Council will continue to monitor and support these organisations. Extending this fee relief to 31 March 2021 is estimated at \$650,000.

2.2 Business Trading Fees

Council has also provided much needed relief and assistance to local businesses by refunding and waiving trading fees including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees; and not charging application fees for new permits for the period 30 March 2020 to 31 December 2020. Many of these businesses continue to have trading restricted or trading has temporarily ceased under

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current COVID-19 restrictions. Extending this fee relief for existing permit holders and refunding permit fees and not charging application fees applicable up to 31 March 2021 is estimated at \$9,000.

These permits are valid for a 12-month period from August to August. As an incentive for local businesses to resume trading and new businesses to commence in 2021, waiving the application fee for permits and charging pro-rata fees from 1 April 2021 to 31 August 2021 is estimated at \$12,000.

2.3 Knox Basketball Incorporated

On 7 August 2020, Knox Basketball Incorporated wrote to Council requesting financial assistance because of the impacts of their shut down due to COVID-19. Further information is provided in Confidential Attachment 2 circulated under separate cover.

The following assistance is recommended for Knox Basketball Incorporated until the end of December 2020:

- Extension to the current freeze on their lease and license fees, and Capital Improvement Fund from 30 September 2020 to 31 December 2020 estimated at \$94,751.
- A fully non-repayable financial assistance package that includes a \$20,000 per calendar month payment to assist in paying ongoing monthly fixed premises costs, totaling \$100,000 from 1 August 2020 to 31 December 2020.
- Two one-off financial assistance payments to be made prior to 31 December 2020 to cover annual maintenance costs for items such as State Basketball Centre show court maintenance (\$11,319) and State Basketball Centre and Boronia court re-surfacing (\$46,970). A total cost of \$58,289.

Total assistance recommended: \$253,040

A future report may be presented to Council to consider any further assistance to be provided to Knox Basketball Incorporated beyond 31 December 2020.

2.4 Knox Payment Assistance Policy

On 24 August 2020, Council approved the Payment Assistance Policy addendum COVID-19 Pandemic Payment Relief. The initial addendum covered the period 31 March 2020 to 30 September 2020. The revised addendum is due for review by 1 March 2021 and the substantive Payment Assistance Policy is due for review February 2021.

The addendum provides details of the assistance available to those currently experiencing, or at the risk of experiencing financial hardship due to the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic. It provides the additional assistance of:

- Zero-payment plans for the term of the addendum.
- Less stringent requirements for interest free periods during the term of the addendum.
- Interest free periods for all categories of rate payers.
- Payment plans that exceed a period of 12 months from the date of issue of a rates notes (for rates only).
- Council deferral of debt collection where payment plans are in place.

Interest waived to March 2021 is estimated at \$500,000.

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2.5 Fee Relief for Food and Health Premises

Council registers business premises in accordance with the Food Act 1984 and Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008. There are approximately 1,400 premises across the various classes (listed in the table below). All businesses renewed their registration at the end of 2019 for the 2020 calendar year with fees ranging up to \$608.00 (except large supermarkets with fees of \$2080.00).

Health premises, restaurants and cafes were significantly impacted by Stage 3 restrictions in March 2020 that required them to close or reduce their business functions to take away or delivery only. All forms of in-house dining were prohibited, resulting in financial impact on these proprietors, some of whom have requested refunds of registration fees.

Easing of these restrictions in May 2020 allowed in-house dining with limited capacity due to density quotient requirements of 4sqm per person and a maximum of 20 persons in an enclosed area. Whilst many businesses re-opened with these controls in place, some chose to remain closed anticipating further easing of restrictions would be more economically viable.

As tighter restrictions were re-introduced in July and August, health premises were required to close and food businesses closed or modified their service to take away or delivery again where possible. These restrictions are in place until at least 13 September 2020, and no detail is currently available about potential restrictions post this date.

Information provided to the Department of Health and Human Services Regional Office demonstrates some variation in council responses to supporting food and health premises across the Eastern Region:

- Council A: 2021 fees have been reduced by 25%.
- Council B: 2020 fees 25% refunded if impacted, and 100% refund if closed until the end of the year or indefinitely.
- Council C: Fee relief not yet determined but will be provided in some form.
- Council D: No relief for 2020 and 2021 not yet determined.

The registration renewal process for 2021 will commence with initial documentation sent to business operators in late October, to be paid by 31 December. At this stage there are many unknowns, particularly how many businesses will survive COVID-19 and reopen. The current impacts of the Pandemic are varied across and within different categories or classes of business and future impacts are somewhat unknown. Some businesses have thrived through the Pandemic, such as chain supermarkets and some food manufacturers, but most have been severely impacted financially. No fee relief has been provided for the 2020 calendar year.

Table 1:

Class	Type of Business	Recommended Fee Relief
Class 1	Aged Care, Child Care and Hospitals	No fee relief
Class 2 and 3	Restaurants, Take-Away, Cafes, School Canteens, Chain Supermarkets Supermarkets, Service Stations (including 7-Eleven) and other premises with sealed packages	Fee relief with exception of chain supermarkets (Woolworths, Coles, Aldi), food manufacturers and large chain food premises (i.e. McDonalds, KFC etc.)

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Class	Type of Business	Recommended Fee Relief
Class 4	Notification only – packaged confectionery, e.g., newsagents	N/A – no fee charged
Street Trader	Itinerant/temporary food sellers, markets	Fee relief
Health Premises	Beauty Parlour, Nail Salon, Tattooist, Accommodation	Fee relief (with exception of rooming houses)

100% fee relief for the businesses listed above for the 2021 calendar year is estimated at \$500,000.

2.6 Flexible Funding – Response to COVID-19 Household Survey

Data from the Household Survey is still being analysed, however, several areas have been identified where the COVID-19 Pandemic is having a concerning impact on the health and wellbeing of the Knox community.

An initial assessment has been undertaken of these concerns and impacts against work already underway and initiatives already funded from Council and external grants to identify potential gaps where funding could be targeted. Areas where there currently limited or no resources dedicated include:

- Social isolation.
- Safety (including family violence and perception of safety outside the home).
- Exercise, alcohol consumption and healthy eating, including food security for some groups.
- Financial vulnerability, resilience and parenting/caregiving, mental health.

Specific actions or initiatives to respond to these areas have not yet been determined because the survey results are still being analysed. However, \$85,000 is recommended in this support package to fund Council's response to some impacts in the areas listed above.

2.7 Community Campaign

The sudden sharp increase in COVID-19 cases in Victoria reignited community anxiety and heightened concerns about impacts on individuals and the economy. A community campaign is proposed to generate a sense of empowerment to make a difference in difficult times by supporting local business, being kind to ourselves and one another and using help available if people need it. It will support Council's response, relief and recovery effort by generating awareness of information and services available to individuals and businesses and contributing to a cohesive story that gives the community hope that we will emerge stronger together from the Pandemic. It will also set the foundations for recovery which identifies the importance of community and business led initiatives to build resilience.

The campaign will extend on the "Be Kind" campaign running in neighbouring councils Maroondah, Casey, Yarra Ranges and Manningham to support a regional response while the emphasis will be on messages that target priorities specific to Knox. It will make use of visual assets such as pavement stickers, window decals, floor stickers, bin surrounds, bus stops and billboards in high impact locations such as neighbourhood shopping precincts and shared paths to maximise reach in the community. It will use storytelling to highlight community and business led initiatives in line with the campaign objectives and activities that residents can get involved in

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from home. A digital advertising campaign will convert online shoppers to support local businesses with ecommerce facilities, and campaign assets will be used to address key social issues emerging from the Pandemic.

Total budget for this campaign is estimated at \$75,000. \$40,000 has been included in funding sought for the third package and \$35,000 will be funded from existing budgets.

3. CONSULTATION

There is ongoing consultation and engagement with residents, businesses, partners and Council staff during the Pandemic. These discussions and data from the Household Survey have informed considerations for the third Community and Business Support Package.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

The closure of Council facilities and services, and local businesses has a direct impact on the amenity of the Knox community.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

\$3 million has been allocated for initiatives to support the Knox community and businesses in Knox to manage and respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic from the 2020-21 adopted budget. \$1.82 million was allocated to initiatives in the second package that included a broad range of community wellbeing and business initiatives to be implemented across the municipality to facilitate relief and recovery.

In consideration of the impact of recent restrictions and data gathered from the COVID-19 Household Survey, initiatives in this report are estimated at \$2,049,040. Once the remaining \$1.82 million from the original \$3 million allocated is accounted for, it is estimated an additional \$869,040 to fund the recommended components of the third relief package may be required.

Initiative	Estimated Cost
Lease, License and Hire Fees	\$650,000
Business Trading Fees	\$21,000
Knox Basketball Incorporated	\$253,040
Penalty Interest Waived	\$500,000
Food and Health Premise Registration Fees	\$500,000
Response to Household Survey	\$85,000
Be Kind Community Campaign	\$40,000
Estimated Total	\$2,049,040

Officers are monitoring opportunities for grant funding from State and Commonwealth Governments to support Council's response to the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

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At the time of writing in early September, the Victorian Government has only just released its "Roadmap to COVID-Normal"; and has only just announced its support package that will be provided to assist the Victorian community in recognition of the impacts of the Roadmap. Details of this support package need to be investigated to understand opportunities and implications for the Knox community.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The second wave of the COVID-19 Pandemic will worsen impacts initially expected in Victoria and the local Knox community. Initiatives presented in this report will provide immediate relief in some areas where there is known impact. Support provided by Council to date has been well-received by the community and has had positive impacts as noted by Council on 25 May 2020.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.2 - Enhance community connectedness opportunities to improve perceptions of safety

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity

Strategy 4.5 - Support the provision of emergency services

Goal 5 - We have a strong regional economy, local employment and learning opportunities

Strategy 5.1 - Attract new investment to Knox and support the development of existing local businesses, with particular focus on Advanced Manufacturing, Health, Ageing and Business Service sectors

Strategy 5.3 - Promote and improve infrastructure and technology within the municipality and enhance strategic employment places for business

Strategy 5.4 - Increase and strengthen local opportunities for lifelong learning, formal education pathways and skills development to improve economic capacity of the community

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.1 - Mitigate lifestyle risks such as smoking, risky alcohol consumption and drug use, obesity, lack of physical activity and poor nutrition

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.3 - Strengthen community connections

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.2 - Enable the community to participate in a wide range of engagement activities

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under Section 80c of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

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Author – Manager Pandemic Response and Recovery, Angela Morcos – In providing this advice as the Author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Officer Responsible – Director, Community Services, Tanya Scicluna – In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

9. CONCLUSION

The third Community and Business Support Package will provide additional support in recognition of the impact of the COVID-19 on the Knox community.

The short, medium and potential longer-term impacts of the Pandemic and the restrictions imposed since July 2020 will become clearer in the coming months, and this will inform the recovery plan to rebuild the local economy and address social, health and wellbeing concerns.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

Attachment 2 is included in the confidential agenda, having been declared confidential information pursuant to Section 77(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 1989, as the information relates to Council business information, that will prejudice Council's position in commercial negotiations.

Report Prepared By: Manager Pandemic Response and Recovery, Angela Morcos

Report Authorised By: Director Community Services, Tanya Scicluna

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - Council Decisions First and Second COVID-19 Support Packages - IB 2020-09-07 [9.1.1 - 3 pages]

**ATTACHMENT 1**

COUNCIL DECISIONS: FIRST AND SECOND COVID-19 COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS SUPPORT PACKAGES

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 30 March 2020, Council resolved to:

1. Undertake an immediate review of the Knox Payment Assistance Policy with a view to addressing emerging consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the livelihoods of the Knox community;
2. Resolve to not charge interest on rates from 31 March 2020 to 30 June 2020 for late payments and charges; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;
3. Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 30 March 2020 until 30 June 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;
4. Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded;
5. Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year;
6. Amend the 2019-20 Budget by providing COVID-19 Emergency Funding of \$100,000, such amount to be expended by the Chief Executive Officer wholly in connection with Council's response to COVID-19 as is considered appropriate;
7. Defer the following proposed events due to government imposed restrictions on gatherings:
 - a. Fire Fighter Recognition Function; and
 - b. Annual Joint Advisory Committee Meeting; and;
8. Continue to formulate its Community Relief Plan, complementing the Federal and Victorian State Governments COVID-19 response, with priority of addressing any identified gaps that particularly impact Knox community, with further reports to be presented to Council for consideration and implementation as soon as practicable.



At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 25 May 2020, Council resolved to:

1. Note the positive impact that Council's Stage 1 Community and Business Support Package has had on the Knox community
2. Endorse the extension of the following Stage 1 initiatives:
 - a. Resolve to not charge interest on rates for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 for late payments and charges;
 - b. Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 31 December 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period;
 - c. Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded; and
 - d. Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020.
3. Approve the Stage 2 Community and Business Support Package and commence implementation of the following initiatives, effective from 25 May 2020:
 - a. Increase funding for the Council Minor Grant Program to the value of \$51,500, for the purpose of supporting community initiatives;
 - b. Increase funding for the Council Community Development Fund to the value of \$80,000, for the purpose of reactivating community connectedness and initiating recovery projects;
 - c. Establish a one-off Council 'Supporting Local Services Fund' to the value of \$200,000, for the purpose of supporting local service organisations to increase service provision;
 - d. Provide funding to the value of \$15,000 for the purpose of enabling a temporary Council facility, at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer, for the purpose of providing shower and laundry facilities for the vulnerable in our community;
 - e. Provide funding to the value of \$50,000 for the purpose of investigating and implementing an ongoing solution for a permanent shower and laundry facility for the vulnerable in the Knox community;
 - f. Provide funding to the value of \$315,000 for the purpose of Council partnering with local organisations to enable and support the provision of hot meals to the vulnerable in our community;
 - g. Provide funding to the value of \$200,000 to deliver a Mental Health First Aid Training and Awareness Program to local sporting clubs, for the purpose of assisting with the well-being and resilience of community members;
 - h. Provide funding to the value of \$25,000 to undertake a municipal-wide survey assessing the impact of COVID-19 on Knox households to inform strategic service planning and longer-term relief and recovery planning;



- i. Provide funding to the value of \$160,000, for a one-off \$1,000 Facility Operating Contribution for Not-for-Profit Groups and Clubs with a lease or licence in a Council facility, to support facility operating costs such as utilities and COVID-19 related expenses;
 - j. Provide funding to the value of \$30,000, to expand Council's Mentoring Support Program, for the purpose of assisting local business to manage and response to COVID-19;
 - k. Establish a Council "Commercial Advice Program" to the value of \$30,000, for the purpose of providing leasing, tenancy, taxation and financial advice to local business;
 - l. Establish a Council "Digital Upskills Program" to the value of \$20,000, for the purpose of enhancing digital marketing skills for local business;
 - m. Establish a Business Support Grants Program, to the total value of \$335,000, that includes an "e-commerce Grant" for the purpose of enhancing e-commerce capability and functionality for local business, a "Manufacturing and Supply Transition Grant" for the purpose of assisting the pivoting of local business; and a "Creative and Cultural Sector Industry Facilitation and Place Activation Grant" for the purpose of providing assistance to Knox's creative and cultural sector; and
 - n. Prepare a Retail Activation Strategy to the value of \$50,000, for the purpose of developing a "buy-local" program to support increased trade for local businesses.
4. To receive a report at the June 2020 Ordinary Meeting of Council to consider the governance arrangements necessary for the grants and payments established under the relevant new grant initiatives.
 5. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to execute all agreements relating to the above initiatives.
 6. Note that further allocations from the balance of the Community and Business Support Package for the purpose of Stage 3 COVID-19 support initiatives will be considered by Council at a later stage.

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14.1 COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

SUMMARY: Manager Pandemic Response and Recovery, Angela Morcos

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Council has approved three Community and Business Support Packages to date. This report recommends initiatives for a fourth package of support.

Further to the Community and Business Support Package, this report also provides an update on the Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package funded by the State Government and recommends a continuation of part of the program for one year past 31 August 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note the continued positive impact that Council's support initiatives have had so far on the Knox community.
2. Note the appreciation and thanks expressed by Knox Basketball Incorporated for support provided by Council during the COVID-19 pandemic, and that no further Council financial support is sought.
3. Approves the following initiatives for inclusion in the fourth Community and Business Support Package:
 - a. Provide a sliding scale of fee relief for casual hirers of Knox Community Arts Centre as outlined in Section 2.5 of report;
 - b. Refund existing trading permits relating to the display of goods and business A-frame signage with a pro-rata refund applied for permit fees paid for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 August 2021;
 - c. Waive all new trading permits fees relating to outdoor dining, the display of goods and business A-frame signage received between 1 April 2021 and 31 August 2021;
 - d. Waive interest on rates for the period 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 for late payments and charges; and
 - e. Extend the review date of the substantive Payment Assistance Policy through to 30 June 2021 and adopt the updated Payment Assistance Policy provided in Attachment 2.
4. Support the retention of parklets (outdoor dining areas in car parking spaces) for a further year, between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022, for those hospitality businesses that have had them installed between 1 September 2020 and 31 August 2021.
5. Write to the Minister for Local Government, and request that rather than returning any unspent funds from the Local Government Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package, which is due to be expended by 30 June 2021, that Knox Council be given the ability to utilise the grant on outdoor dining and entertainment until all the grant funding is expended.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Since the declaration of the COVID-19 Pandemic in March 2020, Council has approved three packages of financial support in recognition of the impact on the Knox community. These packages were adopted at the following Council Meetings:

- 30 March 2020
- 25 May 2020
- 21 September 2020

These packages have had a positive impact through the support provided for local businesses and service providers, community and sporting groups, ratepayers, and those who are experiencing hardship and vulnerability during and in response to the Pandemic. Additionally, some initiatives were funded to support longer-term recovery from the Pandemic, including the Be Kind campaign and the COVID-19 Household Survey.

The detail of Council decisions for the three Community and Business Support Packages are provided in Attachment 1.

In September 2020, the State Government announced the Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package, which encourages Victorian hospitality businesses to establish outdoor dining spaces. As part of the Package, metropolitan councils were provided with a grant of \$500,000 to assist businesses with outdoor dining, with Council receiving the grant at the end of October 2020. The grant is required to be expended by June 2021, with any unspent funds returned to the State Government.

The Economic Development/Business Recovery team within City Futures is working with hospitality businesses to install outdoor dining spaces, either on footpaths or in car parking spaces, (known as “parklets”). The funding, which is available until 30 June 2021, has also supported Council to waive outdoor dining fees that are ordinarily applicable. There is an opportunity to increase the amount of outdoor dining and entertainment in Knox if Council had more time to expend the \$500,000 grant. Separate to the matter of funding, businesses that have had parklets installed could realise additional economic benefits if the installations are allowed to remain in place for a longer period of time.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Current Impact of Council’s Relief Support

Council’s Community and Business Support Packages have had a positive impact for the Knox community as noted by Council on 25 May 2020 and 21 September 2020, and the results from the Knox COVID-19 Household Survey confirmed that they have been targeted to areas of need.

A summary of the outcomes and impact to date of these packages is outlined below:

- Business Support Grants:
 - Manufacturing: six successful grants totaling \$99,842.
 - eCommerce: 57 successful grants totaling \$106,115.96.
 - Creative and Cultural Sector: 15 successful grants totaling \$87,014.

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- Outstanding: \$42,028.04 (discussions are currently underway about how to allocate the remaining budget).
- Retail Activation Strategy – in development with business engagement and place audits occurring in late February and March.
- Six workshops delivered through the Digital Upskills Program with 56 businesses registered and an average attendance of 29 per session achieving above industry average of 52% attendance. 100% of participants would recommend the program to others and 78% of participants are working on a clear digital marketing plan as a result of attending the workshops.
- Approximately 20 businesses have accessed support from Council’s business mentor or financial advisory consultants through the Mentoring and Commercial Advice program. A series of workshops titled Finance Essentials are being delivered fortnightly from 23 February to 4 May 2021.
- \$50,000 allocated to ten applicants through the contested Hot Meals Program for Vulnerable Families and over \$180,000 provided through the uncontested Hot Meals Program.
- \$199,999 provided to 13 successful applications to the Supporting Local Services Grants.
- Approximately ten people per week are accessing the shower program operating from Rowville Community Centre.
- 112 recipients of additional funding through the Community Development Fund.
- Additional \$51,500 expended for recovery and relief through the monthly minor grants program.
- Second COVID Household Survey planned for April 2021.
- Multicultural and LGBTIQ+ consultation and engagement completed by March 2021.
- Be Kind campaign actively supporting and driving strategic recovery communications.

Council’s Specialised Access Team is also providing support that is funded by the State Government’s Community Activation and Social Isolation (CASI) initiative:

- Support provided to 115 people, including help seekers referred by the Community Support Phone Line and those who were referred from within Knox. Of these, 102 people were offered supports, including practical assistance, emergency (same-day) food parcels, masks and supported referrals as required.
- Four hundred and forty-nine (449) people over 65 years expressed feeling socially isolated during the COVID lockdown when surveyed between July to September 2020. CASI funding enabled outreach to occur through phone calls that resulted in 300 isolated people being supported with practical assistance, facilitated referrals and/or regular wellbeing phone calls.
- Local service provider networks and partnerships have been strengthened through this work.

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2.2 Current COVID-19 Context

Stage Four restrictions introduced in August 2020 in response to Victoria's second wave were progressively relaxed from mid-October 2020. Victoria transitioned to "COVIDSafe Summer" settings before the end of 2020, however, since then there have been some shorter periods of tightened restrictions and a five-day "circuit breaker" lockdown with Stage Four level restrictions in mid-February 2021 to manage specific clusters and outbreaks.

The current COVIDSafe settings allow the majority of businesses, organisations and activities to operate and function. There are some restrictions that may have an impact on some industries and sectors, such as reduced capacity for customers and the need to comply with COVIDSafe practices such as increased cleaning. However, it is important to note that the impact is varied, and some industries and sectors are experiencing positive impacts with increased patronage.

The initiatives recommended as part of a fourth package of support have been developed in consideration of the potential continued impact of the Pandemic on some parts of the Knox community.

2.3 Lease, License and Hire Fees

Not-for-profit community groups operating in Council's facilities have received relief for their fees via the previous Community and Business Support Packages. It has been noted that not-for-profit community groups are an essential fabric of the Knox community, playing a significant role in building and maintaining social infrastructure, capital and resilience. Council has long recognised the important role that community facilities provide to the community in encouraging social and civic participation and supporting the wellbeing of residents.

Currently, there are 166 not-for-profit community groups operating out of a Council facility, which includes pavilions and grounds, with a lease or license (including seasonal tenancy) agreement. This does not include not-for-profit organisations who currently utilise a Council facility under a hire agreement. \$456,099 in support has previously been provided to groups with a lease or license agreement.

As part of Council's second Community and Business Support Package, all not-for-profit groups and clubs with a lease or license in a Council facility were also provided with a one-off \$1,000 facility operating contribution to support operating costs such as utilities and COVID-19 related expenses. Most sporting clubs were also able to tap into the State Government - Community Sector Short Term Survival Package, where grants of up to \$2,000 were available for associations and leagues and grants of up to \$1,000 were available for individual clubs and community sporting and active recreation organisations. A top-up grant of \$1,000 for associations and leagues and \$500 for clubs and community sporting and active recreation organisations was provided automatically to organisations who received a grant through the first funding round of this program.

Sporting and Leisure Clubs

As a result of this previous relief and the impact of COVID19, some of the Winter Seasonal Tenants have written to Council to request that their tenancy fees for the coming 2021 season also be waived.

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Council officers are seeing some of the impacts of COVID19, such as a potential divide between the stronger and weaker clubs following the 2020 winter season where they were unable to play. Some clubs will have limitations placed on their social functions, Thursday night meals and match days as a result of the COVIDSafe density quota limitations whilst others will be less impacted. Clubs may need to get creative (i.e. outdoor options or looking to have more than one session) with how to best manage through these challenges because it is likely some COVIDSafe restrictions will be in place for some time. Several questions have also been raised regarding return of team numbers (participation), possible lack of volunteers and loss of sponsorship.

Discussions with clubs have indicated there is an expected drop in female teams in soccer by approximately 30 percent. This issue is prevalent in football as well with ages 10, 12, 14 showing a drop. The average numbers in clubs remain almost unchanged even with the drop in female and girls' participation, thus, indicating a significant growth in boys' teams.

Representatives from several winter sporting clubs have all informed officers that they have more teams than last year. Of note, Knox has a unique fee structure – there is a ground fee, a pavilion fee and a team fee. Therefore, less teams equals being charged a reduced team fee.

Volunteer retention is of concern to many clubs this coming season and hence may create additional pressure on those people who have chosen to be involved in a community club.

Sponsorship for many clubs was an area where clubs may have suffered throughout COVID19, however, many larger clubs and astutely managed clubs have had very little impact in this area. Some clubs have either retained sponsors or had an increase in sponsorship.

Reductions in members or participation have had less of an impact as first thought, and is also likely to be offset by State Government grants, and increased sponsorship for some, therefore minimising the need for further assistance from Council.

The following Eastern Region Councils have returned to charging their tenant sporting clubs:

- Whitehorse;
- Boroondara;
- Maroondah;
- Monash; and
- Yarra Ranges.

Neighbourhood Houses, Senior Citizens Groups and Other Community-Based Organisations

The impact of COVID restrictions in 2020 was varied across other not-for-profit groups operating in Council buildings. Some were unable to operate at all, some were able to deliver essential services only, and others were able to continue operating by adjusting their service delivery options to provide COVID-related services such as testing.

Summary

All groups have resumed operating under current COVIDSafe requirements and on balance, it is expected there will be limited financial impact on most groups during 2021 assuming the COVID-19 situation remains stable.

If Council considers continued fee relief for not-for-profit organisations in Council facilities, the potential cost is detailed below.

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Description	Potential Fees Waived April to June 2021	Potential Fees Waived July to September 2021
Annual Rentals, e.g., Senior Citizens and Neighbourhood Houses	\$3,237.00	\$3,237.00
EACH Commercial Rental	\$11,250.00	\$11,250.00
Leisure Annual Rentals includes Tennis Clubs	\$6,270.00	\$6,270.00
Leisure Winter Rentals – April to September	\$112,986.50	\$112,986.50
Total	\$133,743.00	\$133,743.00

2.4 Knox Basketball Incorporated

Knox Basketball Incorporated have reported that participation has decreased by approximately 20 – 30% as compared to pre-COVID. Knox Basketball Incorporated have strategies in place to address this such as enabling late entry of teams into the season. They anticipate that within the next month that the remaining teams will return to competition. As expected, junior competition has returned at a stronger rate than that of senior competition.

There have been some positive outcomes, including one new club joining the competition (moved from Dandenong Stadium). This equates to an increase of approximately 20 junior teams into the competition. There are an additional 15 teams in the adult social competition.

In practice, this equates to the peak timeslots being fully occupied. At present due to the slight decrease in team numbers, sessions are concluding earlier in the evenings. All staff have returned to work.

Additional events such as cheerleading are still impacted by COVID restrictions. Bookings have been discussed but not confirmed. For Knox Basketball Incorporated these bookings are accommodated by rescheduling games from the State Basketball Centre to an alternate stadium location. So, whilst these bookings do reflect a decrease in revenue, the booking does not impact on participation in basketball at the State Basketball Centre and Boronia Basketball Stadium.

Knox Basketball Incorporated are confident they are on a good recovery path and do not require additional assistance beyond the end of March 2021. Their CEO has expressed that they are extremely thankful of Council's support to date. It is considered appropriate that no further Council financial support be extended to Knox Basketball Incorporated.

2.5 Theatre Hire Fees – Sliding Scale Reduction

The arts and cultural sector is widely recognised as one of the sectors that has been impacted the most by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Many activities, services and events were unable to operate during most of 2020 and were the last to resume under the State Government's Roadmap to Recovery. Additionally, smaller business and events may not be eligible for State Government grant funding that is targeted at larger-scale events.

Casual hirers of Knox Community Arts Centre (KCAC) are impacted by COVIDSafe regulations, whereby the capacity of patrons within the theatre has been reduced to as low as 50% in recent times in order to meet social distancing requirements for indoor entertainment centres.

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Council officers have received feedback from several regular casual theatre hirers, including Knox-based community theatre groups and schools, that it is not viable for them to hire the space at the usual 100% full hire fee when they are unable to fill the theatre to 100% capacity. This is because each seat represents ticket sale income, so reducing the venue seating capacity also reduces the income capacity by the same amount.

Charging the usual theatre hire fees with this reduced potential income from ticket sales has made hiring KCAC financially challenging for many local groups, and some may choose to hire other local theatres where a percentage discount is offered based upon venue capacity, such as Karralyka Theatre, Knox's most similar local theatre venue.

Many Councils represented in the Victorian Association of Performing Arts Centres (VAPAC) have adopted the same framework for reduced hire fees on a sliding scale in line with the reduced seating and ticketing capacity as provided by the current Victorian COVIDSafe regulations for entertainment venues.

It is recommended that the VAPAC sliding scale discount for casual hirers of KCAC is applied, in line with the percentage reductions of theatre seating capacity to meet COVIDSafe compliance. The discount framework and financial impact to Council is as follows:

COVID Patron Capacity Restriction	Casual Entire Venue Hire Fee applied	Discount Offered	Income Based on Current April to June 2021 Booking Enquiries	Known Financial Impact (Income Loss) to Council
NONE	\$96/hour (100%)	0	\$9,408	\$0*
75% **	\$72/HOUR (75%)	25%	\$7,056	\$2,352
50%	\$48/hour (50%)	50%	\$4,704	\$4,704

* Where no discount is applied, we are likely to lose at least half of the current booking enquiries.

** 75% is the most likely scenario or venue capacity restrictions for the period of April to June 2021, which is the current COVIDSafe restrictions for entertainment venues.

2.6 Business Trading Fees

Council has provided much needed relief and assistance to local businesses by refunding and waiving street trading permit fees for businesses wish to display goods or a sign on Council Land 31 March 2021. Council also waived fees for a broad range of food premises across Knox for the 2021 calendar year, affected by the pandemic. Retail and hospitality sectors are widely recognised as two of the hardest hit sectors during COVID-19.

Extending this fee relief for existing permit holders up to 31 August 2021 is estimated at \$5,800 and can be supported by the available grant funding.

2.7 Knox Payment Assistance Policy

As of 1 March 2021, Council has 867 rate assessments currently on COVID-19 relief arrangements and a further 303 have accessed such arrangements and subsequently cleared the debt.

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Council is still receiving requests for payment assistance relating to the impact of COVID-19 from ratepayers on a daily basis while there are also a significant number of ratepayers yet to contact Council by way of payment or request for assistance. Support provided through the Commonwealth's Jobkeeper initiative is due to end at the end of March 2021. Whilst the impact of this is not yet known, the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on households in suburbs in Knox ranges from ratings of medium to high, according to the Taylor Fry COVID-19 Financial Impact Index.

Other councils offering relief to ratepayers until 30 June 2021 include:

- Glen Eira;
- Monash; and
- Darebin.

Extending the interest free period for all categories of rate payers to 30 June 2021 by updating the addendum will further support those already on arrangements and those who subsequently enter arrangements. This extension would continue to provide:

- Zero-payment plans for the term of the addendum
- Less stringent requirements for interest free periods during the term of the addendum
- Interest free periods for all categories of rate payers
- Payment plans that exceed a period of 12 months from the date of issue of a rates notes (for rates only)
- Council deferral of debt collection where payment plans are in place

A draft updated Payment Assistance Policy addendum is provided in Attachment 2.

Interest that would be waived from 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 if this proposal proceeded is estimated at \$300,000.

Considering the ongoing need for financial rates relief demonstrated by ratepayers, it is recommended that Council support the continuation of support for ratepayers as outlined in the updated Payment Assistance Policy addendum to provide ongoing assistance to ratepayers financially impacted by COVID-19 through to 30 June 2021 (refer to Attachment 2).

Further, it is recommended that Council extend the review date of the substantive Payment Assistance Policy through to 30 June 2021 to allow for further consideration to Council's assistance if necessary.

2.8 Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package (State Funded)

Utilising the available State Government grant, the Economic Development/Business Recovery team worked with a number of different teams and departments at Council, as well as an external contractor, to create three pilot outdoor dining spaces for five hospitality businesses in December.

The three pilot outdoor spaces included:

- Pilot 1 – Chilli and Basil Thai Restaurant and Kokoro Asian Café, Station Street, Bayswater (installed on the footpath).
- Pilot 2 – Noos Noodles, Wantirna Mall (installed on the footpath).

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- Pilot 3 – Junior Tan and 24 Spices, Mountain High Shopping Centre, Bayswater (installed as a parklet over three car parking spaces).

The Economic Development/Business Recovery team is now working with hospitality businesses to deliver parklets at the following locations:

- Paddy's Tavern and Italianissimo – Ferntree Gully Village.
- Schokolade and Studfield Charcoal Chicken – Wantirna South.
- Code 9 Café – Wantirna South.

The State Government's Local Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Grant of \$500,000 is required to be expended by 30 June 2021, with any unspent funds to be returned to the State Government.

The Economic Development/Business Recovery team is working towards expending all of the grant funding prior to the end of June, however there are some variables that may affect this – namely generating enough interest from hospitality businesses wanting to participate in the Outdoor Dining Program (and have outdoor dining spaces installed) which has had some challenges, and also whether appropriate contractors are able to be engaged within the timeframe.

Utilising all of the grant will enable Council to maximise the number of outdoor dining spaces as part of the Outdoor Dining Program and provide economic benefits to businesses and social opportunities. Given there is no certainty, at this stage, that the entire grant can be expended by 30 June 2021, it is recommended that Council write to the Minister for Local Government and request that rather than returning any unspent funds from the Local Government Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package, which is due to be expended by 30 June 2021, that Knox Council be given the ability to utilise the grant on outdoor dining and entertainment until all the grant funding is expended.

COVID Outdoor Dining Permits have been, and will be, issued at no cost for the period between 1 September 2020 and 31 August 2021. Given that the parklets have been installed in December 2020, and the next three will be constructed in March 2021, it provides a timeframe of between five to eight months of the parklets being installed before the next round of permit renewal is required. While the installation of outdoor dining on footpaths is expected across Melbourne, the installation of parklets (and use of car parking spaces for dining) is new for the Knox community. By continuing to support parklets, at least for another year, it will ensure that hospitality businesses can realise additional economic benefits, and also assist with the activation of Knox's local shopping strips.

It is therefore recommended for Council to:

1. Support the retention of parklets (outdoor dining areas in car parking spaces) for a further year, between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022, for those hospitality businesses that have had them installed between 1 September 2020 and 31 August 2021.
2. Write to the Minister for Local Government, and request Council be given the opportunity to expend all of the Local Government Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Grant.

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3. CONSULTATION

There is ongoing consultation and engagement with residents, businesses, partners and Council Departments during the pandemic. These discussions have informed considerations for the fourth Community and Business Support Package.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

The closure of Council facilities and services, and local businesses has a direct impact on the amenity of the Knox community. Support provided with the Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package grant is assisting hospitality businesses to realise additional economic benefits and assist with the activation of Knox's local shopping strips.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Council has provided approximately \$4million worth of support through the three Community and Business Support Packages to date. Additionally, over \$1.3million was allocated against Council's 2019-2020 operating budget to fund the continuation of Council's services in a COVIDSafe way.

Officers have been actively seeking grant funding that can support the delivery of recovery initiatives and some funding has been provided by the State and Commonwealth Governments to support the delivery of services for children and older residents. This includes approximately \$1.7million in funding received for kindergarten, child care, the Commonwealth Home Support Program, food services and the Community Activation and Social Isolation Initiative. \$500,000 has been received as part of the State's Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package.

The financial impact of initiatives presented in this report are listed below:

Initiative	Estimated Cost to Council	Initiative End Date	Recommended/ Not Recommended
Lease, License and Hire Fees	\$133,743 \$133,743	June 2021 September 2021	Not recommended
Theatre Hire Fees – Sliding Scale Reduction	\$4,704	June 2021	Recommended
Business Trading Fees	\$5,800	August 2021	Recommended
Knox Payment Assistance Policy	\$300,000	June 2021	Recommended
Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package	N/A \$500,000 grant	Seeking to extend to August 2022	Extension recommended

The estimated cost of initiatives recommended for inclusion in a fourth package of support is **\$310,504**.

The estimated cost of including fee relief for not-for-profit tenants in Council facilities to June is estimated at **\$444,247**; or to September **\$577,990**.

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By utilising the entire \$500,000 Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package grant, additional outdoor dining and entertainment spaces can be created. This, together with the continuation of parklets (outdoor dining areas in car parking spaces), will increase the chance of economic prosperity for Knox's hospitality businesses.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Options for support presented in this report will provide some assistance in areas where there is known or anticipated impact. Support provided by Council to date has been well-received by the community and has had positive impacts as noted by Council on 25 May and 21 September 2020.

Whilst there is data available about the short-term impacts of the pandemic, the medium and potential longer-term impacts of the Pandemic and the restrictions imposed in Greater Melbourne at different stages since March 2020 are not yet fully understood. Ongoing conversations with the community, local businesses and non-Council organisations continue to inform recovery planning to rebuild the local economy and address social, health and wellbeing concerns.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.2 - Enhance community connectedness opportunities to improve perceptions of safety

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity

Strategy 4.5 - Support the provision of emergency services

Goal 5 - We have a strong regional economy, local employment and learning opportunities

Strategy 5.1 - Attract new investment to Knox and support the development of existing local businesses, with particular focus on Advanced Manufacturing, Health, Ageing and Business Service sectors

Strategy 5.3 - Promote and improve infrastructure and technology within the municipality and enhance strategic employment places for business

Strategy 5.4 - Increase and strengthen local opportunities for lifelong learning, formal education pathways and skills development to improve economic capacity of the community

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.1 - Mitigate lifestyle risks such as smoking, risky alcohol consumption and drug use, obesity, lack of physical activity and poor nutrition

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.3 - Strengthen community connections

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.2 - Enable the community to participate in a wide range of engagement activities

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8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

The fourth Community and Business Support Package will provide additional support in recognition of the continued impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on parts of the Knox community. Ongoing and emerging impacts are still being monitored, and recovery planning and response initiatives are being integrated with Council's ongoing service delivery, and with the Community Plan 2021 to 2031 and Council Plans for 2021 to 2025 that are currently being developed.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: **Manager, Pandemic Response and Recovery, Angela Morcos**

Report Authorised By: **Director, Connected Communities, Tanya Scicluna**

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - Council Decisions - First Second and Third COVID-19 Support Packages [14.1.1 - 4 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Proposed Changes - Rates Assistance Policy Addendum - IB 2020-03-15 [14.1.2 - 8 pages]

**ATTACHMENT 1**

COUNCIL DECISIONS: FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD COVID-19 COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS SUPPORT PACKAGES

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 30 March 2020, Council resolved to:

1. Undertake an immediate review of the Knox Payment Assistance Policy with a view to addressing emerging consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the livelihoods of the Knox community;
2. Resolve to not charge interest on rates from 31 March 2020 to 30 June 2020 for late payments and charges; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;
3. Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 30 March 2020 until 30 June 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;
4. Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded;
5. Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year;
6. Amend the 2019-20 Budget by providing COVID-19 Emergency Funding of \$100,000, such amount to be expended by the Chief Executive Officer wholly in connection with Council's response to COVID-19 as is considered appropriate;
7. Defer the following proposed events due to government imposed restrictions on gatherings:
 - a. Fire Fighter Recognition Function; and
 - b. Annual Joint Advisory Committee Meeting; and;
8. Continue to formulate its Community Relief Plan, complementing the Federal and Victorian State Governments COVID-19 response, with priority of addressing any identified gaps that particularly impact Knox community, with further reports to be presented to Council for consideration and implementation as soon as practicable.



At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 25 May 2020, Council resolved to:

1. Note the positive impact that Council's Stage 1 Community and Business Support Package has had on the Knox community.
2. Endorse the extension of the following Stage 1 initiatives:
 - a. Resolve to not charge interest on rates for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 for late payments and charges;
 - b. Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 31 December 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period;
 - c. Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded; and
 - d. Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020.
3. Approve the Stage 2 Community and Business Support Package and commence implementation of the following initiatives, effective from 25 May 2020:
 - a. Increase funding for the Council Minor Grant Program to the value of \$51,500, for the purpose of supporting community initiatives;
 - b. Increase funding for the Council Community Development Fund to the value of \$80,000, for the purpose of reactivating community connectedness and initiating recovery projects;
 - c. Establish a one-off Council 'Supporting Local Services Fund' to the value of \$200,000, for the purpose of supporting local service organisations to increase service provision;
 - d. Provide funding to the value of \$15,000 for the purpose of enabling a temporary Council facility, at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer, for the purpose of providing shower and laundry facilities for the vulnerable in our community;
 - e. Provide funding to the value of \$50,000 for the purpose of investigating and implementing an ongoing solution for a permanent shower and laundry facility for the vulnerable in the Knox community;
 - f. Provide funding to the value of \$315,000 for the purpose of Council partnering with local organisations to enable and support the provision of hot meals to the vulnerable in our community;
 - g. Provide funding to the value of \$200,000 to deliver a Mental Health First Aid Training and Awareness Program to local sporting clubs, for the purpose of assisting with the well-being and resilience of community members;
 - h. Provide funding to the value of \$25,000 to undertake a municipal-wide survey assessing the impact of COVID-19 on Knox households to inform strategic service planning and longer-term relief and recovery planning;



- i. Provide funding to the value of \$160,000, for a one-off \$1,000 Facility Operating Contribution for Not-for-Profit Groups and Clubs with a lease or licence in a Council facility, to support facility operating costs such as utilities and COVID-19 related expenses;
 - j. Provide funding to the value of \$30,000, to expand Council's Mentoring Support Program, for the purpose of assisting local business to manage and response to COVID-19;
 - k. Establish a Council "Commercial Advice Program" to the value of \$30,000, for the purpose of providing leasing, tenancy, taxation and financial advice to local business;
 - l. Establish a Council "Digital Upskills Program" to the value of \$20,000, for the purpose of enhancing digital marketing skills for local business;
 - m. Establish a Business Support Grants Program, to the total value of \$335,000, that includes an "e-commerce Grant" for the purpose of enhancing e-commerce capability and functionality for local business, a "Manufacturing and Supply Transition Grant" for the purpose of assisting the pivoting of local business; and a "Creative and Cultural Sector Industry Facilitation and Place Activation Grant" for the purpose of providing assistance to Knox's creative and cultural sector; and
 - n. Prepare a Retail Activation Strategy to the value of \$50,000, for the purpose of developing a "buy-local" program to support increased trade for local businesses.
4. To receive a report at the June 2020 Ordinary Meeting of Council to consider the governance arrangements necessary for the grants and payments established under the relevant new grant initiatives.
 5. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to execute all agreements relating to the above initiatives.
 6. Note that further allocations from the balance of the Community and Business Support Package for the purpose of Stage 3 COVID-19 support initiatives will be considered by Council at a later stage.

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Attachment 14.1.1



At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 21 September 2020, Council resolved to:

1. Note the continued positive impact that Council's support initiatives have had so far on the Knox community.
2. Approve the following initiatives for inclusion in the third Community and Business Support Package:
 - a. Waive all not-for profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the period 1 October 2020 to 31 March 2021, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded;
 - b. Refund existing trading permits relating to outdoor dining, display of goods and business A-frame signage with a pro-rata refund applied for permit fees paid for the period 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021;
 - c. Waive new trading permits fees relating to outdoor dining, display of goods and business A-frame signage received between 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021 on the basis that the application fee will be waived and only an adjusted pro-rata permit fee to cover the period of 1 April 2021 to 31 August 2021 (the remainder of the 2020/21 permit period) will be applied;
 - d. Waive new trading permits relating to outdoor dining, display of goods and business A-frame signage received after 31 March 2021 on the basis that the application fee will be waived and a pro-rata permit fee will be applied (adjusted monthly) until the end of the 2020/21 permit period (31 August 2021);
 - e. Provide financial assistance to Knox Basketball Incorporated as outlined in Section 2.3;
 - f. Provide 100% fee relief in the 2021 calendar year for health and food premises as listed in Table 1;
 - g. Provide funding to the value of \$85,000 to respond to some impacts of the Pandemic identified from the results of the COVID-19 Household Survey; and
 - h. Provide funding to the value of \$40,000 for a community campaign.
3. Fund the above initiatives with the balance from previously allocated funding and review any additional funding required through the mid-year budget process.

21 December 2020

Financial assistance was requested by Knox Basketball Incorporated in relation to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the organisation. The relief that was granted to Knox Basketball Incorporated by virtue of the confidential report considered on 21 December 2020 is consistent with the support given to Knox Basketball Incorporated and various other groups, in September 2020. The relief granted comprised an extension to the freeze on rents, licence fees and contributions to the capital improvement fund; and financial assistance for KBI's monthly fixed premises costs; the support for the period from 1 January to 31 March 2021 has a total cost of \$154,751 (ex GST).

4



Payment Assistance Policy

ATTACHMENT 2

Policy Number:	2007/04	Directorate:	City Development - Finance and Governance
Approval by:	Council	Responsible Officer:	Manager- Business and Financial Services
Approval Date:	24 August 2020	Version Number:	8
Review Date:	12 February 2021 (Addendum to be reviewed on or before 1 March 2021)		

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide Council with a framework to make available payment assistance to individuals. This Policy provides details of the assistance available to those currently experiencing, or at the risk of experiencing, financial hardship. Council is committed to assisting the community in meeting their financial obligations to Council by providing payment support, including arrangements, for property and service based debts.

The Policy includes a special addendum (addendum 1) in response to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic; with the purpose of establishing the policy framework to provide assistance to those in the Knox community experiencing financial hardship due to the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic.

2. Context

Part 8 Division 1 of the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act) establishes the power of Council to declare Rates and Charges. Sections 170-172 of the Act discusses the deferment and waiver provisions when considering financial hardship.

Whilst Rates and Charges are the largest source of Council's income, payment assistance may be sought for other fees and charges including the request for payment arrangements.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to balances outstanding from ratepayers and sundry debtor customers who are currently, or are at risk of, experiencing financial hardship.

4. References

- 4.1 Community & Council Plan 2017-2021
 - Goal 8- We have confidence in decision-making
- 4.2 Relevant Legislation
 - Local Government Act 1989 – Conflict and Interest Provisions
- 4.3 Charter of Human Rights



- This policy has been assessed against and complies with the charter of Human Rights
- 4.4 Related Council Policies
- Payment Assistance Addendum COVID-19 Pandemic Payment Relief
- 4.5 Related Council Procedures
- Nil
- 4.6 Other Guidance
- Hardship Policy Guidelines (November 2013) – Municipal Association of Victoria

5. Definitions

Detail any definitions within the policy.

Council	means Knox City Council, whether constituted before or after the commencement of this Policy.
Deferment	means the postponement of payment in completely or in part and can be for a specified period and subject to any conditions. When Rates and Charges are deferred payment is not required until the Council issues a Notice requiring payment, the property is sold, there is a change in ownership or there is a change in ratepayer. Deferred Rates and Charges remain a charge on the property.
Deferment Interest Rate	means the official 180 day bank bill rate sourced from Council’s contracted banking services provider as at 1 July each year and will be the net penalty interest rate levied against overdue amounts where Rates and Charges have been deferred, rounded to 1 decimal place, plus 2.0% per annum
Waiver	means the relinquishment or the removal of the liability to pay and may include the whole or part of any Rate and Charges, interest charge, fee or other charge.

6. Council Policy

Council, in applying this policy, will ensure that wherever possible, all outstanding debts will eventually be recovered.

6.1 Rates and Charges

Rates and Charges, including interest and legal costs, are a charge on the property. Council has the power under Section 181 of the Local Government Act 1989 to sell land (the property) to recover unpaid rates and charges.

Interest and Interest Waivers

- 6.1.1 Unless otherwise specified in this Policy, penalty interest will be charged on overdue rates and charges in accordance with Section 172 of the Local Government Act 1989. Penalty interest is calculated at the annual fixed rate as declared by the Attorney General under Section 2 of the Penalty Interest Rate Act 1983.
- 6.1.2 Interest charges may be waived, in part or in full, under the following circumstances:



- 6.1.2.1 Administrative Waiver – interest charges may be waived in the event of an administrative issue, error or omission which caused or significantly contributed to the failure to pay rates and charges by the due date.
- 6.1.2.2 Waiver on Compassionate Grounds – interest charges may be waived where the ratepayer has demonstrated compassionate grounds for the late payment of rates and charges.
- 6.1.2.3 Waiver of Interest due to Financial Hardship – ratepayers experiencing financial hardship may apply to have interest charges waived subject to the following conditions:
 - a) The ratepayer must be experiencing undue financial hardship. Ratepayers who are eligible pensioners or who can prove temporary unemployment may apply for current year rates and charges to be paid within 12 months from the date of issue of the Rates Notice, interest free. Such interest free arrangements only remain in place while agreed payments are being received. Applications should be directed to the Coordinator Rates and Valuations.
 - b) All other ratepayers (not eligible ratepayers or unable to prove temporary unemployment) may apply in writing to the Manager Financial Services detailing the circumstances affecting the ratepayer's ability to pay current rates and charges by the due date. If approved, the waiver of interest in full or in part will not exceed a period of 12 months from the date of issue of the Rates Notices.

Payment of Rates and Charges by Arrangement

- 6.1.3 Any ratepayer may request to pay outstanding rates and charges by way of a payment arrangement. Payment arrangements will attract penalty interest on outstanding balances but allow ratepayers additional time to make payments. Council will not take any legal action to recover rates and charges provided conditions of the payment arrangements are honoured.

Payment arrangements generally provide support to settle current rates and charges within 12 months. Payment arrangements beyond 12 months require approval of the Coordinator Rates and Valuations.

Deferral of Rates and Charges

- 6.1.4 The deferral of rates and charges and/or interest is available to Residential and Retirement Village property owners only. Rates and charges will not be deferred for Commercial, Industrial, Vacant Land or Cultural and Recreational Land properties.
 - 6.1.4.1 Residential and Retirement Village property owners may apply to have rates and charges and/or interest in full or in part, deferred. Rates and charges including interest will continue to be levied. Applications for deferral will only be considered under the following circumstances:
 - a) The ratepayer must be experiencing, and be able to demonstrate, undue and unavoidable hardship; and



- b) The ratepayer is either an eligible pensioner or a current recipient of unemployment benefits for at least 3 consecutive months; and
- c) The ratepayer is both the legal owner of, and resides in, the property; and
- d) The total amount of rates and charges, including any interest, to be deferred should not exceed 10% of the capital improved value of the subject property.

6.1.4.2 Interest charged on overdue rates and charges, including any interest, that are deferred will be set at the Deferment Interest Rate rather than the penalty interest rate. The Deferment Interest Rate only applies after the approval of the deferment. Previous interest charges at the penalty interest rate remain.

6.1.4.3 Deferrals may be offered for a period of up to three (3) years, at which time the ratepayer may apply for a further deferral subject to the assessment of personal circumstances prior to the continuation of any deferral agreement.

6.1.4.4 All deferral agreements must be approved by the Manager Financial Services.

Waiver of Rates and Charges

6.1.5 Rates and charges will not generally be waived. This is to ensure that payment assistance offered to one ratepayer does not have a redistribution effect on Council's rate base.

The Local Government Act 1989 is specific in relation to the grounds for the consideration of waiving rates and charges under financial hardship. The Local Government Act 1989 will be the basis for the consideration of any application for waiver.

Applications for the waiver of rates and charges must be addressed to the Chief Executive Officer. Applications must be supported by evidence of necessitous circumstances causing or likely to cause financial hardship. The waiver of rates and charges must be approved by Council.

Termination of Payment Assistance

6.1.6 Payment assistance support is terminated in the event of the sale or transfer of ownership of the subject property afforded payment support provided in 6.1.1 through 6.1.5 inclusive.

6.2 Sundry Debtor

The principles of this Policy will apply to sundry debtors. Requests for the waiver of a fee or charge must be submitted to the Manager of the relevant service for consideration. Recommendations for the waiver of fees and charges in full or in part must be forwarded to the Manager Financial Services for approval and processing.

Requests for payment arrangements for Sundry Debtor accounts should be submitted to the Manager Financial Services. Payment arrangements will generally not exceed a period of 12 months from the date of



the original invoice. Penalty interest may be charged on overdue amounts during the payment arrangement period.

6.3 All information provided in accordance with this Policy will remain confidential.

7. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this policy. Where an update does not materially alter this policy, such a change may be made administratively. Examples of minor administrative changes include changes to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this policy, it must be considered by Council.

Policy updated 27 April 2020.

Addendum 1 to Policy updated 24 August 2020.



Knox Payment Assistance Policy – Addendum

COVID-19 Pandemic Payment Relief

Policy Number:	2007/04	Directorate:	City Development – Finance and Governance Office of the CEO
Approval by:	Council	Responsible Officer:	Manager – Business and Financial Services – Chief Financial Officer
Approval Date:	24 August 2020 <u>xxxxxx 2021</u>	Version Number:	23
Review Date:	1 March 2021 <u>1 June 2021</u>		

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy addendum is to provide Council with a framework to make available payment assistance to individuals, businesses and other community members currently experiencing, or at the risk of experiencing, financial hardship as a result of impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic

2. Context

Part 8 Division 1 of the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act) establishes the power of Council to declare Rates Council recognises that the effects of social distancing and Australia’s response to Coronavirus will, and already has, led to significant impacts on the entire community including local businesses and households. Some of these impacts include people losing their jobs, people being employed for reduced hours, businesses shutting down and businesses reducing their operations.

Part 8 Division 1 of the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act) establishes the power of Council to declare Rates and Charges. Sections 170-172 of the Act discusses the deferment and waiver provisions when considering financial hardship.

Rates and charges are a critical source of revenue that Council uses to deliver services to the community. In addition, other service charges being, fees, licensing and lease income are also an important source of revenue.

Council is constantly assessing the impact of the COVID-19 and will be reviewing its approach to how it supports the community through the pandemic regularly. This policy addendum provides the framework for how Council implements these decisions with regard to payment assistance.

3. Scope

To provide direction to Council’s Officers when collecting and providing for debts owed and ensure Council takes into consideration the financial hardship on debtors caused by COVID-19.

Council will provide assistance to those in financial hardship in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989, while ensuring it does not jeopardise the funding of its operations.



This policy addendum will be guided by the principles of transparency, efficiency, capacity to pay and equity by treating all debtors consistently and in a fair manner.

4. References

- Refer to the Knox Payment Assistance Policy above 2007/04.

5. Definitions

Review Date means on or before ~~1 March 2021~~ 30 June 2021

6. Council Policy

Council, in applying this addendum policy, will ensure that wherever possible, all outstanding debts will be recovered.

6.1 Financial Hardship – Rates and other services including, fees charges, licenses, leases

Financial hardship is a circumstance of experiencing a lack of financial means, which may be either ongoing or temporary.

This policy addendum is to address temporary financial hardship due to impacts of COVID-19.

Who can apply for hardship?

Any individual, business or community member that has or will experience a loss (or reduced income) of employment or a decrease in sales revenue because of COVID-19 can apply for a payment plan.

People must request assistance from Council **in writing**, providing full details of the circumstances preventing them from meeting their financial obligations to Council.

6.2 Payment Plans

~~All ratepayers have the option to apply to enter into a payment arrangement to pay off their outstanding rates and charges and Council will not levy interest during this period (refer 6.3 below)~~

~~If the individual, business or community member is unable to enter into a payment plan, Council will defer the debt accumulated during the COVID-19 pandemic and will hold interest on this debt from 31 March 2020 to 31 March 2021 to allow time for the debt to be paid without interest.~~

Ratepayers will have the ability to enter into zero payment plans for the period 31 March 2020 to ~~31 March~~ 30 June 2021.

If any debt is still outstanding at 1 ~~April~~ July 2021, Council's Payment Assistance Policy may apply.

6.3 Zero Interest



Interest will not be charged on overdue debts effective from Monday, 31 March 2020, until ~~31 March~~ 30 June 2021. Interest already accrued and charged prior to 31 March 2020 for overdue debts will remain.

Financial thresholds for the waiving of interest (per payment plan or arrangement) are as follows:

- a) Up to \$250.00 - Coordinator Rates and Valuations
- b) Up to \$500.00 - Manager Business and Financial Services
- c) Up to \$750.00 - Director City Development, Interim Finance and Governance
- d) Up to \$1,000.00 - CEO

6.4 Debt Recovery

Council will make a reasonable attempt to contact debtors during the term of the Addendum, to reassess COVID-19 applications for financial hardship.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Council will hold off on all legal action for the collection of debts.

7. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Council officers will monitor Council's cash flow position and will include this report in the monthly finance paper to Executive Management Team and Council.

In the event that the State of Emergency is extended beyond the review date, Council will reassess financial relief and this addendum updated accordingly and/or when Council's cash flow position has been compromised; whichever is the earliest event.

All personal information provided in accordance with this Policy will remain confidential.

8. Administrative Updates

Nil.

Victoria's Roadmap: Delivering the National Plan

Summary of proposed restriction levels - Metropolitan Melbourne

Note 1: The settings below are indicative only and subject to change. All changes to the Chief Health Officer's Directions are based on public health advice (including epidemiological evidence) and legal advice (including as to compatibility with the Charter for Human Rights and Responsibilities) at the relevant time, in light of the specific risks to public health and changes/measures proposed. All directions must be reasonably necessary to protect public health and the Chief Health Officer (or delegate) must act in a way that is compatible with the Charter for Human Rights and Responsibilities.

Note 2: Cleaning, signage, record keeping, and other COVIDSafe requirements for work premises continue to apply for all venues and facilities with onsite operations as per Workplace Directions and Workplace (Additional Industry Obligations) Directions. Density quotients (DQ) apply to all venues and spaces that are accessible to the public.

Note 3: All proposed easings from 80% fully vaccinated (indicatively 5 November) are dependent on the ability for venues and employers to confirm vaccination status of patrons and employees, respectively.

	National Plan: Phase A	National Plan: Phase B	National Plan: Phase B	National Plan: Phase C	National Plan: Phase D
Category	80% of 16+ with a single dose Indicative date: 26 September 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	Returning Students to the Classroom Indicative date: 5 October 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	70% of 16+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: 26 October 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	80% of 16+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: 5 November 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	80% of 12+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: Two weeks later Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time
Social gatherings, leaving home and visitors	Stay at home unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> shopping for necessary goods and services (once a day, one person per household) caregiving or compassionate reasons essential work or permitted education exercise getting COVID-19 vaccination Outdoor socialising in limited groups within exercise time limit (total 4 hours) other specified reasons (specific exemptions apply) Stay at home curfew from 9.00pm - 5.00am	No change	Stay Safe <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No restrictions on reasons to leave home No curfew 	No change	For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response

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Category	80% of 16+ with a single dose <small>Indicative date: 26 September 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time</small>	Returning Students to the Classroom <small>Indicative date: 5 October 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time</small>	70% of 16+ fully vaccinated <small>Indicative date: 26 October 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time</small>	80% of 16+ fully vaccinated <small>Indicative date: 5 November 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time</small>	80% of 12+ fully vaccinated <small>Indicative date: Two weeks later Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time</small>
Social gatherings, leaving home and visitors	Intrastate travel: Must not travel further than 15km from place of primary residence, except: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to access necessary goods and services where those goods and services cannot be accessed closer than 15kms from home to visit an intimate partner to travel for authorised work and permitted education caregiving and compassionate reasons (specific exemptions apply) resident of metropolitan Melbourne allowed to leave the Restricted Area to receive a COVID-19 vaccination if it is in an adjacent LGA to where they reside. permit fully vaccinated Victorian residents to return from interstate provided they have a negative pre-arrival COVID test 	No change	Intrastate travel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must not travel further than 25km except for permitted reasons Interstate Borders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May introduce new reduced quarantine arrangements for vaccinated residents returning from interstate (National Plan) 	Intrastate travel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allowed Interstate Borders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May exempt vaccinated residents from all domestic restrictions (National Plan); International Travel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised quarantine arrangements for International arrivals (returning citizens or permanent residents) to Victoria subject to requirements of the National Plan 	For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response
	Face coverings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required indoors and outdoors 	No change	No change	Face coverings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required indoors only 	
	Private gatherings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private gatherings not permitted. Intimate partner visits and single person bubble visits are allowed. 	No change	No change	Private gatherings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private gatherings permitted for up to 10 people including dependants. 	Private gatherings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 25 Dec, 30 visitors to the home

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Social gatherings, leaving home and visitors	Public gatherings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public gathering allowed for personal training for up to 2 people, plus the trainer. Public gathering for social interaction allowed for 2 people. Public gathering of 5 people from 2 households if all persons aged 18 or older are fully vaccinated. 	No change	Public gatherings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated up to 10 people outdoors Unknown vaccination status: up to 5 people outdoors 	Public gatherings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated up to 30 people outdoors Unknown vaccination status: no change from previous Remove mask for alcohol permitted 	For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response
	Work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must work from home Only workers on the Authorised Provider and Authorised Worker (APAW) List may leave home to work 	No change	Work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must work from home 	Work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work from home if you can OR, Go to work if you are fully vaccinated DQ2 for areas non-accessible to public Masks must be worn indoors in workplaces. 	
Education and Childcare	Early childhood education and care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open to vulnerable and children of single parents and APAW workers. DQ of 1 person per 4sqm except in spaces used by children/for the purposes of student use. Only one parent or guardian (if two parent / guardian family) is required to be on the APAW List, either working away from home or working at home but no alternative supervision. x2 weekly PCR testing for employees crossing in-out of metro/regional 	No change	Early childhood education and care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open to children already attending (vulnerable children and children of parents who were APAW workers prior to 26/10) Open for children with fully vaccinated parent(s) 	Early childhood education and care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open 	

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Education and Childcare	Schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remote learning for most students but open to vulnerable children and the children of APAW workers. x2 weekly PCR testing for employees crossing in-out of metro/regional 	Schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to vulnerable children and children of APAW workers On 5 October, GAT students From 6 October, on-site learning for VCE Unit 3/4, final year VCAL and IB students From 18 October, on-site learning for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prep (Monday - Wednesday) Year 1 & 2 (Thursday - Friday) Out of school hours care operating all days On-site learning must have safety measures in place 	Schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vulnerable children VCE Unit 3/4, final year VCAL and IB students Prep (Monday - Wednesday) Year 1 & 2 (Thursday - Friday) From 26 October, on-site learning for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Years 3 & 4 (Tuesday - Wednesday) Years 5 & 6 (Thursday-Friday) Year 7 (full-time, five days) Years 8 & 9 (Tuesday - Wednesday) Years 10 (Thursday-Friday) Years 11 (full-time, five days) Out of school hours care operating all On-site learning must have safety measures in place 	Schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On site learning for all levels with safety measures in place 	For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response
	Adult education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed, remote learning only. Final exams to proceed enabled by APAW List. 	No change	Adult education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must learn from home, on-site learning for hands-on, skills-based learning Final exams to proceed enabled by APAW List. 	Adult education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn from home if you can, on-site learning for hands-on, skills-based learning AND, On-site if you are fully vaccinated, DQ4 	
Places of worship	Religion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No in-person gatherings permitted. Broadcast permitted (maximum 5 people in attendance). 	No change	Religion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only DQ4, 50 cap Unknown vaccination status: Outdoor only DQ4, 20 cap 	Religion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap Unknown vaccination status: 20 cap, DQ4 	
Funerals	Funerals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involves no more than 10 people (and those necessary to conduct the funeral) 	No change	Funerals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: allowed with up to 50 attendees, DQ4. Unknown vaccination status: 20 people per facility (and those necessary to conduct funeral), DQ4 	Funerals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 and 500 cap Unknown vaccination status: 20 people per facility (and those necessary to conduct funeral), DQ4 	For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response

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Weddings	Weddings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not permitted unless end of life or other compassionate reasons. Involves only 5 people (and marrying couple plus those necessary to conduct wedding) 	No change	Weddings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4, 50 cap Unknown vaccination status: 10 people per wedding (and marrying couple plus those necessary to conduct wedding) Outdoor only DQ4 	Weddings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap Unknown vaccination status: 10 people per wedding (and marrying couple plus those necessary to conduct wedding), DQ4 	
Physical recreation & sport <small>(Includes indoor playcentres, indoor skateparks and indoor trampoline centres)</small>	Physical recreation & community sport: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdoor facilities open for contactless recreation All others closed Fully vaccinated: Outdoor personal training up to 5 cap If not fully vaccinated: Outdoor personal training up to two people plus the trainer Five people allowed to broadcast workout instructions at a gym 	No change	Physical recreation & community sport: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4, 50 cap Outdoor community sport open for training only (no competition); minimum number required, spectators public gathering limits apply Changing rooms closed 	Physical recreation & community sport: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap Community sport permitted indoors and outdoors with minimum number required, spectators public gathering limits apply Outdoor seated physical recreation and community sport: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Lesser of 25% or 5000 per venue State significant venues to be considered for larger crowds 	
Swimming pools, hydrotherapy pools, spas, saunas, steam rooms, springs	Swimming pools, spas, saunas, steam rooms and springs (indoor and outdoor): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed, exceptions for hydrotherapy for essential medical care. 	No change	Swimming pools, spas, saunas, steam rooms and springs (indoor and outdoor): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4, 50 cap Changing rooms closed Indoor pools, saunas, steam rooms closed, exceptions for hydrotherapy for essential medical care. 	Swimming pools, spas, saunas, steam rooms and springs (indoor and outdoor): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap 	For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response

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Outdoor playgrounds, outdoor skateparks, outdoor gym equipment	Playgrounds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open. Public gatherings limits apply Skateparks and communal gym equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Public gatherings limits apply 	No change	Outdoor playgrounds, outdoor skateparks, outdoor gym equipment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open 	Outdoor playgrounds, outdoor skateparks, outdoor gym equipment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open 	
Community Facilities	Community Facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed, unless hosting an essential public support service Permitted for groups of 10 for essential support. Permitted to remain open for 'click and collect' purposes to facilitate loaning, and returning books, toys, and other items from these facilities 	No change	Community Facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4 50 cap Hosting an essential public support service permitted Permitted for groups of 10 for essential support (vaccinated status does not apply). Can remain open 'click and collect' 	Community Facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap 	
Creative Studios	Creative Studios: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed 	No change	Creative Studios: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4, 50 cap 	Creative Studios: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap 	

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<p>Entertainment and Leisure When an entertainment or leisure facility hosts an activity which fulfils the definition of a public event, the Restricted Activity Directions allow for organisers to apply for their activity to be considered under the Public Events Framework (PEF)</p>	<p>Entertainment venues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed Up to five people can attend an entertainment venue to broadcast a performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change. 	<p>Entertainment venues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4, 50 cap <p>Animal facilities (zoos):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: 25% capacity, indoor spaces closed 	<p>Seated indoor and non-seated indoor entertainment venues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap per space. <p>Outdoor seated entertainment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Lesser of 25% or 5000 per venue. Indoor spaces DQ4 and 150 cap. <p>Outdoor non-seated entertainment (for example animal facilities):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: 50% capacity, indoor spaces DQ4 150 cap. <p>Significant venues to be considered for larger crowds</p>	<p>For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response</p>
	<p>Arcades, escape rooms, bingo centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed 	<p>No change</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>Arcades, escape rooms, bingo centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap 	
	<p>Drive-in cinemas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed 	<p>No change</p>	<p>Drive-in cinemas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open patrons must remain in cars unless accessing takeaway food or toilets 	<p>Drive-in cinemas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open, hospitality limits apply 	
	<p>Amusement parks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed 	<p>No change</p>	<p>Amusement parks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4, 50 cap 	<p>Amusement parks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap per space, outdoors DQ2 500 cap per space 	
	<p>Casino:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed 	<p>No change</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>Casino:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap per space 	
	<p>Retail betting venue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed 	<p>No change</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>Retail betting venue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open with DQ4 	

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Entertainment and Leisure (cont)	Electronic gaming: • Closed	No change	No change	Electronic gaming: • Remain seated • Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap • Caps are not in addition to hospitality limits	For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response
	Sex on premises, brothels and sexually explicit venues: • Closed	No change	No change	Sex on premises, brothels and sexually explicit venues: • Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap	
	Karaoke and Nightclubs: • Closed	No change	No change	Karaoke and Nightclubs: • In line with food and drink • Seated service only • Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap	
General retail	Essential retail: • Open, DQ 1 person per 4sqm Other/general retail: • Closed (contactless click and collect/delivery only). Auction houses: • Closed (open for online only).	No change	Essential retail: • Open, DQ 1 person per 4sqm Other/general retail: • Open for outdoor service only (plus contactless click and collect/delivery). Auction houses: • Closed (open for online only).	All retail: • Open with DQ4	
Hairdressing, beauty, personal care	Hairdressing, beauty, personal care: • Closed	No change	Hairdressing, beauty, personal care: • Indoors DQ4 and 5 patron cap (fully vaccinated)	Hairdressing, beauty, personal care: • Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap	

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Hospitality	Food and drink facility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open for take-away only, masks cannot be removed to consume food and drinks in shopping centres. 	No change	Food and drink facility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seated service only Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4, 50 cap 	Food and drink facility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open for seated service only Small venues: up to 25 people if fully vaccinated before DQ applies Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap 	For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response
	Food courts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed Takeaway only, mask cannot be removed indoors to consume food or drink 	No change	No change	Food courts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takeaway only, mask cannot be removed indoors to consume food or drink 	
	Accommodation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed, unless for permitted reasons, or shelter in place. No new bookings except for authorised reasons. An authorised worker is allowed to book accommodation if they are required to travel for their work irrespective of them being a Victorian resident or not 	No change	Accommodation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open for household, intimate partner and bubble buddy 	Accommodation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open in line with private gathering limits Each household can nominate another as part of their 'bubble' Members of each household can visit each other or holiday together. 	
Real Estate Services	Real Estate Services (inspections and auctions): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auctions: Closed (remote auction only with the agent working remotely). Real estate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single household can inspect vacated property (with agent outdoors) for end of lease or new purchase 	No change	Real estate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspections: Single household can inspect vacated property (with agent outdoors) for end of lease or new purchase Auctions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4, 50 cap 	Real estate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap 	

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Tours and tour transport	Tours (e.g. walking tours, cycling tours): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed Tour transport (e.g. tour buses): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed 	No change	Tours (e.g. walking tours, cycling tours): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4, 50 cap Tour transport (e.g. tour buses): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed 	Tours (e.g. walking tours, cycling tours): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open • Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap Tour transport (e.g. tour buses): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open • Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap 	For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response

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Care Facilities Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two visitors at a time up to two per day, except for end of life or life threatening conditions (2 visitors at a time with no total limit per day). Visits must be for a purpose which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide care and support for the resident's physical and emotional wellbeing For residents under 18 years of age As a nominated person under the Mental Health Act To provide interpreter or informal language support To support the resident's care upon discharge Do not have to be from the same household. No time limits. A group may exceed the "two visitors at a time" rule if dependents of a visitor (or patient in hospital) are in the group and care for the dependents cannot be arranged. Prospective residents not permitted except as: Inpatients in acute hospitals awaiting discharge to residential aged care facilities (RACFs) (noting this may need to be a nominated family member in some scenarios, not the inpatient) Residents of care facilities that are due to close and require support to find alternative accommodation prior to the closure of their current accommodation Non-essential contractors (such as hairdressers) are not permitted to enter. 	<p>No change</p>	<p>Visitor restrictions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easing of visitor restrictions 	<p>Visitor restrictions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easing of visitor restrictions 	<p>For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response</p>

Metro Melbourne

Category	80% of 16+ with a single dose Indicative date: 26 September 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	Returning Students to the Classroom Indicative date: 5 October 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	70% of 16+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: 26 October 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	80% of 16+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: 5 November 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	80% of 12+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: Two weeks later Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time
Hospital Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two visitors at a time up to two per day, except for end of life or life-threatening conditions (2 visitors at a time with no total limit per day). Visits must be for a purpose which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a parent, guardian or carer of a child who is a patient in hospital To provide support that is necessary for the patient's emotional or physical wellbeing. As a nominated person under the Mental Health Act To providing interpreter or informal language support For leaning to support the resident's care upon discharge As a carer of a patient with a disability Accompanying someone to the emergency department or outpatient clinic As a partner of a pregnant woman or patient in a maternity ward Do not have to be from the same household. No time limits. A group may exceed the "two visitors at a time" rule if dependents of a visitor (or patient in hospital) are in the group and care for the dependents cannot be arranged. Non-essential contractors (such as hairdressers) are not permitted to enter. 	<p>No change</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>Visitor restrictions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easing of visitor restrictions 	<p>For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response</p>

9.5 Knox Hockey Update

SUMMARY: Strategic Planning Coordinator Active and Creative Communities, Paul Reading

Further to the Council report of 26 April 2021, this report discusses the potential development of a new hockey facility within the City of Knox. The report also presents an overview of the outcome of the community and stakeholder consultation processes and provides commentary and advice on the preferred site for a home for hockey in Knox.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorse the development of a new hockey pitch at Wantirna Reserve.
2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such as person as the Chief Executive Officer selects) to formalise the execution of all documents associated with the Knox School site, including the transfer of the accrued surplus to the project, which has been held in trust by the Knox School for the development of a new pitch for the Knox Hockey Club.
3. Advise the Knox Hockey Club, the Knox School and other interested parties of Council's decision.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report is provided to discuss the outcome of the feasibility studies and the community and stakeholder consultation processes that have been undertaken to date to determine a preferred site for the potential development of a new hockey facility in the City of Knox. This facility would be a new home for the Knox Hockey Club who are currently without a facility as the Knox School synthetic grass pitch will not be available from the 2022 season onwards.

The report outlines the outcomes of the feasibility studies and the community and stakeholder consultation process and as a result recommends that Council considers the development of a new facility at the Wantirna Reserve (East) site, replacing the existing football and cricket oval and utilising the existing pavilion and car parking.

2. DISCUSSION

As a result of the Knox School redeveloping the space that has accommodated the Knox Hockey Club in Wantirna for over twenty years, the Knox Hockey Club needs to find an alternative home. Council has been working with the Club since 2017, including working with the Outer East Region, in an attempt to resolve the issue and to find an alternative site that could be developed to meet the needs of the Club and the sport within the Knox municipality.

The investigations included a:

- Visual assessment.
- Detailed feature survey.
- Geotechnical investigation.
- VicPlan Assessment.

- High level assessment of ground services.
- Development of draft concept plans.
- Community amenity assessment.
- Community consultation and engagement (Wantirna Reserve and Benedikt Reserve).

Four key sites have been investigated to determine the viability to develop them as a hockey facility.

A high-level summary of the key sites that were investigated in detail is included below:

- **Wantirna Reserve (West)** – this site is well suited to the development of a new facility as it is close to transport is part of a larger sporting complex and has minimal impact on the surrounding residents or broader community amenity, however, following further technical assessment it was ruled out due to subsidence issues resulting from previous land use that would require complex and highly expensive construction techniques.
- **Wantirna Reserve (East)** – this site is well suited to the development of a new facility as it is close to transport, is part of a larger sporting complex and has minimal impact on the surrounding residents or broader community amenity. A technical assessment of the site suggests that there are no specific boundaries to development, traditional construction methods can be utilised, the site meets the needs of the Knox Hockey Club and community, and stakeholder engagement indicates strong support for the proposal.
- **Benedikt Reserve** – investigations into this site indicated that it is also well suited to the development of a hockey facility, however it has the potential to impact on the local community amenity. The proposal was not supported by the surrounding community during community consultation and as a result has been ruled out as a viable option. This site will continue to be allocated as an active reserve for other seasonal tenants into the future.
- **JW Manson Reserve** (owned by Maroondah City Council) has also been considered in consultation with Maroondah, however, has also been ruled out principally due to potential cost implications, undetermined timelines, and a strong preference by Knox Council to invest in a centrally located, Knox based and owned facility for the benefit of Knox residents.
- Several other sites, including Stud Park, Gilbert Park and Heathmont College, were also considered but were not progressed to detailed investigation as they offered less opportunity than the sites above or had other extensive limitations.

Below is a summary of the outcomes for the work undertaken in relation to Wantirna Reserve (East):

2.1 Wantirna Reserve (East) Feasibility Study

The feasibility study that has been undertaken demonstrated that whilst there are technical and administrative complexities, the project can be achieved in a timely manner that will require tight budget management.

The placement of the pitch on the existing oval will allow the utilisation of the existing pavilion and carpark and provide an opportunity for the future development of a practice area and the provision of open space for passive use.

The overall order of cost for the development of the Wantirna Reserve proposal is \$3,093,877 (excl. GST).

The table below summarises the probable opinion of the cost for the Wantirna Reserve proposal.

Table 1 - Wantirna Reserve East	
Construction Preliminaries: Cost shown preliminary pending cost of in-ground services, TBC	\$178,000
Demolition	\$261,337
Stormwater Drainage	\$116,550
In-ground Services: Electrical: install L.E.D sports lighting (incl. footings) - TBC	\$500,000
Construct synthetic field	\$1,350,047
Miscellaneous: Fencing Sports equipment and shelters:	\$160,113
Subtotal (excl. GST)	\$2,566,047
Contingency (15%)	\$384,907
Design consultancy (7%)	\$178,923
Total (excluding GST)	\$3,093,877

The feasibility study and the stakeholder consultation identified the need for future consideration of improvements to the car parking and road access in the reserve. This will be considered as part of an overarching Reserve Masterplan that is awaiting the outcome of some existing geotechnical studies on the former landfill site to better understand the opportunities available. It is hopeful this will commence in 2022.

2.2 Community and Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement – Wantirna Reserve (East)

Community and stakeholder consultation has now been undertaken regarding the concept plans for the delivery of a facility at Wantirna Reserve (East) on the existing Football and Cricket oval. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the process involved a series of online meetings or phone conversations with the key stakeholders from the site including Wantirna South Junior Football Club, Wantirna Cricket Club, Wantirna Tennis Club, 2nd Wantirna Scouts Group, Friends of Dandenong Creek, Reveg Nursery, Jazz Archives, the Knox School and the Knox Hockey Club.

Following consultation with the key internal stakeholders, letters were also sent to all residents and businesses within a 500 metre radius (284 in total) on 20 September 2021 via priority mail. The letter referred people to Council's 'Have Your Say' page which includes the draft Wantirna Reserve Concept Plan, an aerial view for context, and a brief description of the project. The letter asked for comments on the proposal via the 'Have Your Say' page by 4 October 2021.

Data from the "Have Your Say" page indicates that there have been 144 views of the page since 22 September 2021 and that four comments have been received. Two of the comments were highly supportive, one questioned the loss of an oval and one was unclear.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions no onsite meetings have taken place nor have any signs been installed on site. Should the proposal be supported, further detailed consultation and collaboration with the impacted sporting clubs, (cricket, football and hockey) will be undertaken as well as the installation of signage to provide information to the wider public users of the site.

The primary outcomes from meetings with the key and heavily impacted stakeholders are summarised below:

Wantirna Cricket Club (WCC)

Wantirna Reserve is the Club's home ground and the Club stated they are reluctant to leave the site, however, understand the situation and are supportive of working through alternative ground options for the club should the development be approved. It is considered likely that the Club will relocate to Shultz Reserve in Wantirna.

Wantirna South Junior Football Club (WSJFC)

The Club is supportive of the development. It was indicated that Lewis Park would be the most viable option for the Club, and they saw this as a welcome opportunity to grow and to also build a more collaborative approach with the senior team. Further discussions with the Club will be required to consolidate their ground options if the proposal is approved.

Wantirna Tennis Club (WTC)

The Club were supportive of the proposal and saw opportunities for improved security at Wantirna Reserve and the prospect to develop a relationship with the Knox Hockey Club.

2nd Wantirna Scouts Group

The group are also supportive of the proposal, they would like to see improved security at the reserve and believe there are opportunities to develop a relationship with the Knox Hockey Club.

Friends of Dandenong Creek

The group are supportive of the project and felt that the development would add to the community use of the reserve. They did suggest that the design of the lighting and the pitch should be undertaken to minimise impact on biodiversity and water quality. This concern can be addressed through the detailed pitch design and specification of lighting.

Reveg Nursery

Supported the project, however, suggested that there needs to be a whole precinct approach particularly regarding the traffic infrastructure (including tree protection), runoff management and access to the playground. This will be addressed both through the Master Plan but also this project.

Jazz Archives

Are supportive of the proposal and of a Master Plan in general.

The Knox School

Council Officers have continued to keep the Knox School updated on the progress of the site options and the feasibility study through quarterly meetings. The Knox School are supportive of the proposal and have worked with the Club and Council to ensure the Club's transition to a new site since they announced their plans to develop the school site.

The Knox Hockey Club

The Club are supportive of the approach and are excited about the opportunity. The Club will be engaged in the detailed design should the project be approved.

General Comments

Overall, the stakeholder consultation was positive and collaborative. Fine tuning of any future arrangement for the cricket and football clubs will need to be undertaken sensitively but based on the discussions to date, Council officers are confident that the outcome/relocations for the existing clubs will be positive.

Groups mentioned the need to balance the environmental impact with the social outcomes but agreed that the proposal overall was a positive outcome for the reserve and the local community.

The key concerns from some of the site stakeholders were the internal road system, carparking, and amenity for the other users of the reserve such as dog walkers and cyclists. These broader reserve issues will be addressed in future consultation and planning as Council officers undertake the broader site master planning in 2022.

Thus, after undertaking the feasibility studies and the community and stakeholder engagement at Wantirna and Benedikt Reserves, the Wantirna Reserve (East) site is considered the most viable option to provide for the Knox Hockey Club and hockey more broadly in the municipality. (See Attachment 1).

2.3 Development Process

Should the project be approved, the following steps will need to occur:

Detailed Design – a concept design has already been completed which includes preliminary geotechnical studies. A detailed design and further geotechnical work will be required and can be completed by the end of 2021.

Consultation – Further detailed consultation will be required with the Knox Hockey Club and other users of the reserve. Information signs will also be erected at the reserve.

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning - Council is the Committee of Management of the reserve; however, it remains Crown Land, thus permission to develop is required from DELWP. Initial conversations suggest that this will be supported, however, a formal request with detailed designs is required to obtain final approval.

Tender & Construction - Once a detailed design is completed and permission from DELWP (and any other authorities) is granted it is expected that a tender process and construction could be undertaken in 2022.

3. CONSULTATION

Consultation has been undertaken with the surrounding community, the reserve stakeholders, the Knox School and the Knox Hockey Club as discussed earlier in the report. Internal consultation has also been undertaken in the development of the feasibility reports and this report, with the Major Initiative Unit and the Parks and Open Space planning teams.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

The development of a synthetic hockey pitch will increase storm water runoff and will require careful design to ensure there are no other environmental impacts. Detailed engagement with the relevant internal subject matter experts will be undertaken during the design phase.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The estimated cost for the development of an International Hockey Federation approved synthetic hockey field, including appropriate sports field fencing and lighting, but excluding a pavilion provision or redevelopment, is \$3,093,877.

Within the current 2021/22 capital works budget there is a balance of \$125,000 for planning and detailed design and an allocation of \$3.5M (including the Knox Hockey Club's contribution of \$400,000 to the project).

There is a further provisional capital allocation to Wantirna Reserve in future years to upgrade the car park more broadly. The design and construction of these improvements are contingent on the outcomes of the overall masterplan for the reserve.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The development of a new hockey facility in the Municipality will provide the Knox Hockey Club with a permanent home and provide other aspiring hockey players an opportunity to join the club and participate. Hockey is a sport that encourages diverse participation and has a strong history of women's participation, is family orientated and encourages participation of older adults into their later years.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 1 - We value our natural and built environment

Strategy 1.3 - Ensure the Knox local character is protected and enhanced through the design and location of urban development and infrastructure

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.1 - Mitigate lifestyle risks such as smoking, risky alcohol consumption and drug use, obesity, lack of physical activity and poor nutrition

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

Hockey is a sport that encourages participation by a diverse range of people of all ages, it provides a positive gender balance and creates a family friendly environment. The Knox Hockey Club has a long history in the municipality and no longer has a home ground to operate from. The Club is professionally managed, growing in numbers and can make a large financial contribution to the project.

Council officers have undertaken a comprehensive process to identify a site (Wantirna Reserve East) within the municipality that can effectively accommodate hockey now and into the future.

It is considered that the development of Wantirna Reserve as a home for hockey in Knox will not only benefit the Club and hockey in general but will add to the broader amenity and activation of Wantirna Reserve.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

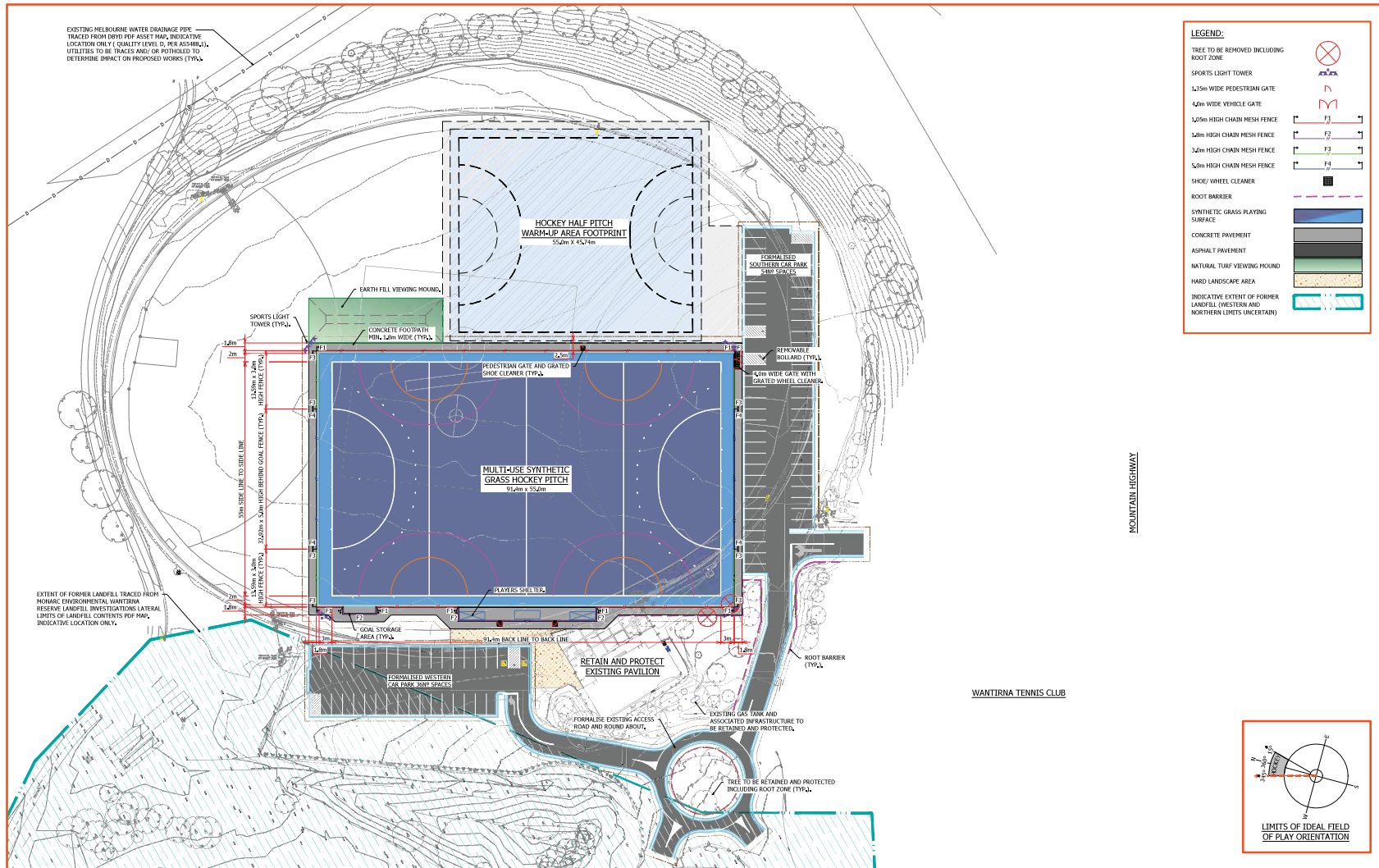
There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By Strategic Planning Coordinator, Active and Creative Communities,
Paul Reading & Manager Active and Creative Communities, Nicole
Columbine

Report Authorised By Director Connected Communities, Tanya Scicluna

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - Wantirna Reserve - Draft Design [9.5.1 - 1 page]



SPORTENG™ PROJECT: KNOX REGIONAL HOCKEY FEASIBILITY STUDY

PROJECT NO: 10498-00 SKETCH TITLE: WANTIRNA RESERVE OVAL - FUNCTIONAL LAYOUT PLAN, OPTION 2

SKETCH NO: SE_10498_SKT-202_WANTIRNA REV: A DATE: 09/08/21 DRAWN BY: JAS SCALE: 1:400 @ A1

© SPORTENG

9.6 Contract 2790 - Management of Knox Skate and BMX Facilities at Gilbert Park

SUMMARY: Leisure Contracts and Project Officer, Rhonda Snijders

This report considers and recommends the appointment of Victoria YMCA Community Programming Pty Ltd as the successful tenderer for the Management for Programs, Services and Events for Knox Skate and BMX facilities at Gilbert Park Reserve, Knoxfield.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Accepts the tender from Victoria YMCA Community Programming Pty Ltd for contract No. 2790, Management for Programs, Services and Events for Knox Skate and BMX facilities at Gilbert Park Reserve, Knoxfield; for the initial term (1 November 2021 to 31 May 2026) at a cost of \$495,753 (ex GST)**
2. **Note Contract 2790 includes provision for a an extension for a further five year term (1 November 2026 to 31 May 2031) exercisable at Council's discretion.**
3. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer selects) to:**
 - a. **Negotiate and execute all documents necessary to give effect to the Council's decision; and**
 - b. **Negotiate and execute an extension to Contract No. 2790 to the maximum 10 year term.**
4. **Advise the tenderer accordingly.**

1. INTRODUCTION

This contract is for the Management of Programs, Services and Events for Knox Skate and BMX Facilities at Gilbert Park Reserve, Knoxfield.

In line with Council's Procurement Policy a tender process was undertaken to engage with a suitably experienced contractor to deliver the services.

The key objectives for the Knox Skate and BMX Park services include:

- Achieve a high level of customer satisfaction and engagement.
- Increase participation among children and young people, with particular emphasis on young females, people with disabilities, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Generate strong public awareness of the facility and its programs and services.
- Continued growth in social media engagement, to promote the programs and events provided at the Skate and BMX Park.
- Activation of the new purpose-built pavilion for youth activities.

This report considers and recommends the appointment of a tenderer to provide the Management of Programs, Services and Events for the Knox Skate and BMX facilities at Gilbert Park Reserve, Knoxfield.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Background

Knox Skate and BMX Park at Gilbert Park is a regional facility which provides opportunities for children and young people to be active. The facility is a community hub where young people can meet, have fun and engage. In addition to attracting high participation from children and young people, skating and BMX are legitimate forms of transport that requires innovative approaches to managing how skaters and riders safely interact with the urban environment.

Since the facility opened in January 2008, the Knox Skate and BMX facility continues to attract over 20,000 visitations annually and has created a niche in the market known for delivering quality programs and infrastructure.

The skate, scooter, inline and BMX facilities at Gilbert Park includes a mixture of street and transition elements. Bowls compliment intermediate to advanced free style riders and boarders, whilst street elements cater for beginners.

A new pavilion was completed in April 2021, providing greater opportunities to deliver programs utilising work benches, tools and equipment. The pavilion was purpose built as a space to engage with young people and to create a space where people can learn and develop new skills.

Council has previously engaged with a professional contractor to manage the programs, services and events at the Knox Skate and BMX facilities at Gilbert Park Reserve on weekends and school holidays. This contract expired in May 2021.

2.2 Proposed Management of Programs, Services and Events for Knox Skate and BMX Facilities at Gilbert Park Reserve, Knoxfield

The YMCA tender response included a focus on activation designed to create positive social change through targeted programs and service delivery to build a more active, inclusive, engaged and connected Knox community.

The deliverables include engagement and increased participation with non-traditional user groups including a strong focus on girls and women, mentoring and training of volunteers leading to local employment opportunities, and programming opportunities for people with a disability and people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

2.3 Tenders Received

The tender process commenced on 31 July 2021 and closed on 19 August 2021. Following the close of tenders, one tender submission was received from:

- Victoria YMCA Community Programming Pty Ltd.

2.4 Tender Evaluation Panel

As required under Council's contract administration procedures, a Tender Evaluation Panel (TEP) was formed to assess the tenders.

All members of the Panel signed the Tender Evaluation Panel Declaration Form indicating that they had no conflict of interest or association with the tenderer.

2.5 Evaluation Criteria and Weighting

The tender was evaluated against the criteria outlined in Table 1 as advertised in the tender conditions, with weightings established prior to the assessment of the tenders.

Table 1: Evaluation Criteria and Weighting

Criteria	Weighting
Compliance with Specification	20%
Capability	20%
Relevant experience, past performance, and category management	20%
Local, social and environmental considerations	10%
Pricing	30%

In the tender, the Victorian YMCA included a response on non-conforming items in the contract. Officers sought clarity from the Victorian YMCA and as a result all outstanding matters have been resolved.

2.6 Tender Evaluation Results

After evaluating the tender submission, the evaluation panel recommends Victoria YMCA Community Programming Pty Ltd as the successful tenderer. The proposal by the YMCA represents value for money for Council, having met all the criteria and demonstrating capability of providing, quality programs, services and events that align with the Council and Community Plan. The outcomes from the panel assessment have been presented in the Procurement Report attached separately to the report as Confidential Attachment 1.

2.7 Preferred Tenderer

The TEP recommends that Council accept the five year guaranteed lump sum initial term for \$495,753 (excluding GST) and for a further five year option at Council's discretion from the conforming tender received from Victoria YMCA Community Programming Pty Ltd.

3. CONSULTATION

Officers from Connected Communities, Infrastructure and City Strategy and Integrity have been consulted in the development of the service specification for the facility and the tender process.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

The contract specification states a number of environmental/amenity requirements that must be complied with during the term of the contract.

The evaluation methodology and criteria ensured that local, social and environmental considerations were responded to by the tender applicant and were assessed by the TEP.

There are no environmental or amenity concerns with the tender submission received.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The specification outlines the contract type for the Management of Programs, Services and Events for Knox Skate and BMX Facilities. The 2021/22 contract costs associated with the service delivery for the Knox Skate and BMX Park will be funded through Councils current operational budget. The tender sum is for a fixed price lump sum and includes cost escalation for 2021/22. This cost escalation will be covered by savings achieved through use of budget funds from leisure sports facilities and programs.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council's key objectives for the Knox Skate and BMX Park have been addressed by the tenderer in their proposal.

The tenderers vision is to create a:

- Vibrant and active hub for young people in Knox.
- Place where young people can connect, learn, contribute, and impact their own lives and the lives of others.
- Place to celebrate Knox Skate and BMX culture and community
- Safe and inclusive space where everyone is welcome and encouraged to participate.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.2 - Enhance community connectedness opportunities to improve perceptions of safety

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.2 - Celebrate our diverse community

Strategy 7.3 - Strengthen community connections

Strategy 7.4 - Promote and celebrate the contribution of our volunteers

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

The tender submitted by Victoria YMCA Community Programming Pty Ltd represents value for money to Council for the delivery of skate and BMX services at Gilbert Park Reserve. The application provided evidence for pricing value, previous experience, and capability to deliver the contract specifications for the Management of Programs, Services and Events for Knox Skate and BMX facilities.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidential Attachment 1 is included in the confidential agenda, as it contains confidential information pursuant to Council's Governance Rules and Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2020, as it relates to private commercial information, that if released, would unreasonably expose the Victoria YMCA Community Programming Pty Ltd to disadvantage because it would release financial information about the business that is not generally available to their competitors.

Report Prepared By: Leisure Contracts and Project Officer, Rhonda Snijders

Report Authorised By: Director Connected Communities, Tanya Scicluna

Attachments

Confidential Attachment 1 is circulated under separate cover

10 Office of the CEO Reports for consideration

10.1 Loan Borrowings

SUMMARY: Chief Financial Officer, Navec Lorkin

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Council exercise its powers to borrow up to \$50.03 million to enable funding of the 2021-22 capital works program, and to authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign documents with relevant lending institutions to execute the borrowings.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Note Council's adopted 2021-22 Revised Budget includes provision for borrowings of \$50.03 million within the 2021-22 financial year.**
- 2. Resolve to borrow up to \$50.03 million in the 2021-22 financial year.**
- 3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to:-**
 - a. Determine the final value of borrowings to be procured to a maximum of \$50.03 million having regard for the latest cash flow forecast;**
 - b. Identify and select a finance provider through an appropriate procurement process; and**
 - c. Execute all relevant documents necessary to give effect to the above resolutions.**

1. INTRODUCTION

Section 104 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) gives Council the power to borrow, on the basis that borrowings are included in the Budget or Revised Budget. Council can borrow up to this amount without needing to further revise the adopted 2021-22 Revised Budget.

Council's adopted 2021-22 Revised Budget includes loan borrowings of \$50.03 million and repayments of \$3.835 million in the 2021-22 financial year. In addition, the Revised Budget also noted forecast borrowings of \$40.906 million in the 2020-21 financial year. These forecast borrowings were not ultimately be required in 2020-21 due to sufficient cash flow being available through to 30 June 2021. The total borrowings included in the Revised Budget inclusive of the 2020-21 forecast amount is \$90.936 million.

Although Council has made provision for these borrowings in the adopted budget, a resolution is required to constitute authorisation to activate these borrowings and authorise the Chief Executive Officer to draw down the borrowings when they are required and to determine an appropriate term and interest rate.

Approval is being sought to borrow \$50.03 million, to assist in funding the approved \$127.980 million capital works program. A further report will be presented to Council in the first quarter of next calendar year should the remaining borrowings be required.

2. DISCUSSION

These borrowings will be drawn over the remainder of the 2021-22 financial year as required by Council's cash flow requirements. The timings of the borrowings will be governed by the delivery of the capital program, and the loan structure.

Local Government Victoria have recently announced the Local Council Lending Framework, which gives Council access to lower interest rates financed through Treasury Corporation of Victoria (TCV). Access to these funds is not limited to works of a specific nature and can be used to fund infrastructure and general working capital requirements. Subject to meeting the credit criteria, Council will be eligible to apply for a TCV loan from January 2022 for the 2021-22 financial year.

Officers will conduct a process to seek quotations from a number of banks and/or seek funding through the TCV Lending Framework, depending on the timing of funding needs.

Officers will consider the most appropriate facility based on the timing of funding requirements and will undertake cash flow modelling to inform this.

The preferred borrowings option will be the one most favourable to Council based on the interest rate and preferred terms and conditions.

As noted above, the borrowings for which approval is sought in this report are consistent with the amount included in Council's adopted 2021-22 Revised Budget.

3. CONSULTATION

Loan borrowings have been included in the draft 2021-22 Budget which was publicly advertised and provided the opportunity for budget submissions. A hearing for budget submissions was held on 7 June 2021 and the budget adopted on the 26 June 2021 and a Revised 2021-22 Budget adopted on the 23 August 2021.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

This report does not have any environmental or amenities issues for discussion.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The total cost of these borrowings have been factored into Council's adopted 2021 22 Revised Budget and Council's draft Long Term Financial Plan.

Council's adopted 2021-22 Revised Budget includes loan repayments of \$3.835 million and loan interest payments of \$0.743 million. Principal repayments and borrowing costs have been factored into Council's draft Long Term Financial Plan.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct social implications arising from this report.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.1 - Build, strengthen and promote good governance practices across government and community organisations

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

It is proposed that Council exercise its power to borrow up to a total of \$40.906 million to help fund the capital works program and authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign documents giving effect to the acceptance of a preferred lender.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Chief Financial Officer, Navec Lorkin

Report Authorised By: Chief Executive Officer, Bruce Dobson

Attachments

Nil

10.2 ICT Governance Committee Terms of Reference

SUMMARY: IT Program Coordinator, Shona Richards

This report presents the Terms of Reference for the Information Communications Technology Governance Committee (ICTGC) for approval by Council. The original Terms of Reference were approved by Council on 28 August 2017 and were due for review in August 2021. The original Terms of Reference have been reviewed and no changes are proposed, save for updates to the responsible directorate and officer. It is proposed the next review of the Terms of Reference be undertaken by 31 August 2023.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the revised ICT Governance Committee Terms of Reference as set out in Attachment 1.

1. INTRODUCTION

The objectives of the Information Communications Technology Governance Committee (ICTGC) are to:

- Oversee the implementation of the Digital Strategy, the ICT Strategy and ICT Roadmap.
- Evaluate and recommend IT-enabled projects regarding future investment in changed or new IT capability, via a review of project briefs and/or business cases demonstrating strategic alignment, IT solution options, risk management plans and return on investment predictions and making recommendations to Council.
- Provide guidance and recommendations regarding strategic investment priorities, decision making responsibilities and project methodologies, provide strategic advice to project teams via their Project Steering Committee.
- Provide oversight and monitor the implementation of the approved IT program of work including key risks and dependencies and review budget, schedule and scope changes to ensure the organisation realises benefit and value from its IT investments.
- Provide oversight and support the principles of IT governance as detailed in *AS ISO/IEC 38500:2016 Information Technology - Governance of IT for the Organisation*, and the Knox City Council IT Governance Model.
- Provide recommendations to inform the decision-making process of Council (the governing body) regarding investment in IT-enabled projects.
- Report to Council all recommendations as determined by the ICTGC, and any other matter or issue considered appropriate and within the ICTGC's Terms of Reference.

The membership of the Committee shall comprise:

- Mayor
- Two Councillors
- Three Independent external members

The contracts of independent members are renewed every three years (currently renewed to August 2023).

2. DISCUSSION

A review of the currency of the Terms of Reference was conducted by the IT Program Coordinator and Chief Information Officer and were deemed to be effective for the current governance requirements.

The recommendation to retain the Terms of Reference and review them again by 31 August 2023, aligns to the date when the independent member contracts are to be reviewed – and therefore a more holistic change can be considered. This expiration date will allow time for a proposed ICT Strategy Refresh, which may result in changes in the required governance model.

This recommendation has been supported by the Chair of the ICT Governance Committee, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Manager Strategy, People & Culture and the Chief Information Officer.

No amendments were made other than of an administrative nature to the responsible directorate and officer.

3. CONSULTATION

Internal consultation occurred during September 2021 and the expiration of the Terms of Reference and recommendation to extend the current terms was an outcome of a discussion with the Chair of the ICT Governance Committee on 27 September 2021.

The recommendation was discussed with the Chief Executive Officer, Executive Manager Strategy, People & Culture and the Chief Information Officer on 4 October 2021, and all were supportive of the recommendation to retain the existing Terms of Reference.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

There are no environmental or amenity issues related to this report.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The resources required to service this Committee are included within the ICT Strategy budget.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Committee will take an active role in recommending initiatives and supporting improved technology outcomes for community members across Knox City Council's services, and within our staff.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

The ICTGC provided specific advice, feedback and recommendations throughout the year against strategies and initiatives across a range of Council objectives in the Community and Council Plan.

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

No substantive changes are proposed to the Terms of Reference for the ICT Governance Committee and it is recommended Council adopt the updated Terms of reference for 2021-2023.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There are no items of a confidential nature in this report.

Report Prepared By: IT Program Coordinator, Shona Richards
Report Authorised By: Chief Information Officer, Scott Coleman

Attachments

1. Terms of Reference ICTGC Committee [**10.2.1** - 6 pages]



Terms of Reference



Information Communication Technology (ICT) Governance Committee

Directorate:	Office of the CEO	Responsible Officer:	Executive Manager, Strategy People & Culture, Interim Information Technology & Transformation
Approval Date:	25 October 2021 (proposed)	Committee Group:	Advisory
Review Date:	31 August 2023		

1. Purpose

The Knox City Council ICT Governance Committee (“ICTGC”) is an Advisory Committee of Knox City Council. The Committee’s purpose is to evaluate, recommend and monitor IT-enabled projects regarding future investment in changed or new IT capability in accordance with AS/NZS 8016:2013 (Governance of IT-enabled Projects).

2. Objectives

The objectives of the ICTGC are to:

- Oversee the implementation of the Digital Strategy, the ICT Strategy and ICT Roadmap
- Evaluate and recommend IT-enabled projects regarding future investment in changed or new IT capability, via a review of project briefs and/or business cases demonstrating strategic alignment, IT solution options, risk management plans and return on investment predictions and making recommendations to Council.
- Provide guidance and recommendations regarding strategic investment priorities, decision making responsibilities and project methodologies, provide strategic advice to project teams via their Project Steering Committee.
- Provide oversight and monitor the implementation of the approved IT program of work including key risks and dependencies and review budget, schedule and scope changes to ensure the organisation realises benefit and value from its IT investments
- Provide oversight and support the principles of IT governance as detailed in AS ISO/IEC 38500:2016 and the Knox City Council IT Governance Model.
- Provide recommendations to inform the decision making process of Council (the governing body) regarding investment in IT-enabled projects.
- Report to Council all recommendations as determined by the ICTGC, and any other matter or issue considered appropriate and within the ICTGC’s Terms of Reference.



3. Membership, Period of Membership and Method of Appointment

The membership of the Committee shall comprise:

- Mayor
- Two Councillors
- Three Independent external members

Independent external members will have a background in the ICT industry and or governance. An awareness of local government would be an advantage.

Any Councillor, not appointed to the Committee, may attend the meeting and will not have any voting entitlement.

3.1 Selection and Recruitment of Community and Professional Industry Representative Members

The process to appoint community members will be advertised in local newspapers, on Council's internet site and through local networks. Applicants must make application via an expression of interest process.

Eligible community members will have an interest in and good working knowledge of Information Technology.

The approach and method for appointing representatives will include the following:

- Community and professional/ industry members will be selected by a panel comprising a Councillor and 2 Council Officers from the relevant service unit;
- The method of appointment will be via an expression of interest process;
- Members will be appointed for a two year term;
- All members will be eligible to re-apply for appointment, however continuous membership for longer than four years will not be considered;
- Council will be responsible for appointing all Councillor, community and professional/industry representative members; and
- Casual vacancies which occur due to community members being unable to complete the full term of their appointments may be filled by co-opting suitable candidates from a previous selection process for the remainder of the previous incumbents' terms. The selection panel will make a recommendation to the CEO, who will have the authority to appoint the recommended candidate to the committee for the remainder of the previous incumbent's term.

Professional/industry representatives unable to attend a committee meeting are able to nominate a proxy or alternate member from the organisation they represent. Any proxy attendance should be notified to Council's nominated officer at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. It is expected the appointed professional/ industry representative will provide an appropriate briefing of the committee purpose and objectives and relevant meeting notes to enable active participation and contribution of the proxy representation to the meeting.

The committee may invite observers to meetings from time to time. This is at the discretion of the committee.

Guests may also be invited to attend and participate at meetings, this would generally for a specific purpose and/or specified period of time. This is at the discretion of the committee.

All elected representatives who are Council volunteers and industry representatives are required to undertake prescribed Child Safe Training and any other training required by Council within their term on an Advisory Committee. This is a legislative requirement as part of reforms from the State Government to ensure all Committee representatives are aware of child safety practices in the event a relevant issue arises. This



requirement relates to the following Committees who have volunteer and community members: Early Years Advisory Committee, Youth Advisory Committee, Active Ageing Committee, Environment Committee, Community, Safety, Health and Wellbeing Committee, City Futures Committee, Disability Committee, Multicultural Committee, Arts and Culture Committee and the Community Development Fund Panel.

3.2 Councillors

Council will appoint Councillor representation annually.

Unless otherwise appointed to the committee by Council, the Mayor is, by virtue of the Office, an ex officio member of the committee. It is important that whilst the Mayor may not chair these meetings, appropriate recognition should be given to the presence of the Mayor if in attendance.

The role of Councillors is to participate in the meetings, listen to community and stakeholder views and keep the Council informed, through reports on committees by Councillors at Council meetings, on issues of community interest being considered at meetings.

3.3 Council Officers

Council officers will be nominated to support the committee by the CEO as required to provide advice and administrative support to the committee

4. Delegated Authority and Decision Making

The committee acts in an advisory capacity only and has no delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of Council.

5. Meeting Procedures

The committee will meet on a quarterly basis and an annual schedule of meetings will be agreed upon at the first meeting of the committee in each year. The committee will also participate in the 6 monthly Group Meetings and the annual advisory committee Forum.

The committee is not required to give public notice of its meetings and its meetings are not open to the public.

At the commencement of each financial year, the committee will develop a work plan for the upcoming year. This will generally be aligned with the Community and Council Plan. The committee may also highlight any emerging issues, which will also be documented. For efficiency purposes, the business of the committee throughout the ensuing year should align with the work plan and list of emerging issues.

Meetings will follow standard meeting procedure protocols, which are in summary:

- Commence on time and conclude by the stated completion time;
- Be scheduled and confirmed in advance with all relevant papers distributed (as appropriate) to each member;
- Encourage fair and reasonable discussion, participation and respect for each other's views;
- Focus on the relevant issues at hand; and
- Provide advice to Council as far as possible on a consensus basis.

6. Chair



The members of the Committee will appoint a Chairperson annually at the commencement of the first meeting each calendar year. The Chairperson is to be an independent member of the Committee. The members of the Committee may also appoint a Deputy Chairperson who is to be an independent Committee member, to undertake the duties of the Chairperson where the elected person may not be able to undertake their duties.

When appointing the Chairperson, the Committee should consider a candidate's relevant professional and personal skills required to undertake this role.

7. Agendas and Meeting Notes

Agendas and meeting notes must be prepared for each meeting.

The Agenda must be provided to members of the committee not less than 7 days before the time fixed for the holding of the meeting in both digital and hard copy formats with the only exception being when a public holiday falls on the day agendas are due, in which case agendas are to be provided close of business 6 days in advance. Officer reports that fail to meet the timelines will only be permitted to be included in the relevant agendas of; Ordinary Council Meetings, Strategic Planning meeting, Issues Briefings or Special Committees, with the approval of the Mayor, and Council Committees with the approval of the Chair of the Committee.

The Chairperson must arrange for meeting notes of each meeting of the committee to be kept.

The meeting notes of a Council Committee must:

- a) contain details of the proceedings and recommendations made;
- b) be clearly expressed;
- c) be self-explanatory; and
- d) incorporate relevant reports or a summary of the relevant reports considered by the committee.

Draft meeting notes must be:

- a) submitted to the Committee Chairperson for confirmation within 7 days of the meeting;
- b) distributed to all Committee Members following confirmation from the Chairperson and within 14 days of the meeting; and
- c) submitted to the next meeting of the Committee for information.

In compliance with section 58 of the 2020 Act and the requirements of the Council's Public Transparency Policy the agenda and minutes of this group will be made available on Council's website unless:

- the information contained in the agenda and/or minutes is confidential by virtue of the 2020 Act or any other Act; or
- the public availability of the information has been deemed by the Chief Executive Officer or nominee to be contrary to the public interest.

8. Voting

When the ICTGC is unable to determine a matter by consensus, the matter will be determined by a vote.

- Councillor and independent members have voting rights.
- Staff provide support and advice to the Committee only and have no voting rights.
- In the event of an equality of votes the Chairperson has a second, casting vote.

9. Conflict and Interest Provisions

In performing the role of Advisory Committee member, a person must:

- Act with integrity;



- Impartially exercise his or her responsibilities in the interests of the local community;
- Not improperly seek to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person;
- Treat all persons with respect and have due regard to the opinions, beliefs, rights and responsibilities of other persons;
- Commit to regular attendance at meetings; and
- Not make improper use of information acquired because of their position or release information that the member knows, or should reasonably know, is confidential information.

Meetings of the Panel will typically constitute a Meeting Conducted under the Auspices of Council pursuant to Council's Governance Rules and Councillors are consequently required to comply with the conflict of interest provisions as set down in section 131 of the 2020 Act and Chapter 5 of the Council's Governance Rules.

Councillors must:

- disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those present immediately before the matter is considered;
- absent themselves from any discussion of the matter; and
- as soon as practicable, provide the CEO with a written notice recording the nature of the conflict.

Where a member of staff or a community member has a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest in relation to a matter before the Group, they must disclose the matter to the group before the matter is considered or discussed. Disclosure must include the nature of the interest and be recorded in the meeting notes. It will be at the discretion of the Chairperson if the staff and/or community member remains or leaves the room whilst the matter is discussed, and this must also be recorded in the notes of the meeting.

All members of the Advisory Committee shall participate in training on the Conduct and Interest provisions which will be run a minimum of annually by the Governance team.

10. Reporting

The committee will prepare a formal report on an annual basis in line with their stated objectives. The report must be adopted by the committee and should directly reflect the objectives and the performance measures of the committee as set out in the Terms of Reference. Once adopted by the committee the report will be presented to Council.

11. Administration Support

Administration support will be provided by the Corporate Development Directorate.

12. Contact with the Media

Contact with the Media by Advisory Committee members will be conducted in accordance with the Councillor and Staff Media Policies. Community members should defer any media enquiries to the Chairperson in the first instance and should take care not to respond as a representative of the committee.

13. Review Date

The committee will sunset after 4 years. If the committee continues to have a relevant function, a report must be presented to Council prior to this date that includes a review of the committee's Terms of Reference and seeking endorsement from Council to continue act in an advisory capacity.



14. Meals

The provision of refreshments during the course of a committee meeting will be provided in accordance with the Meals and Beverages for Council Committees Policy.

15. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this Terms of Reference, such a change may be made administratively. Examples of minor administrative changes include change to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this Terms of Reference, it must be considered by Council at a Council or delegated Committee meeting.

10.3 Adoption of the Community Plan 2021-2031, Council Plan 2021-2025 & Financial Plan 2021-2031

SUMMARY: Corporate Planning Lead, Kathryn Holland

The Knox Community Plan 2021-2031, Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) and Financial Plan 2021-2031 are Council's new key strategic planning documents. They have been developed based on the community's needs and aspirations and will guide the work of Council over the coming years.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Adopt the Community Plan 2021-2031, Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) and the Financial Plan 2021-2031 in accordance with sections 88, 90 and 91 of the Local Government Act 2020.**
- 2. Submit the Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) to the Minister for Local Government and Secretary of the Department of Health.**
- 3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make minor typographical or editorial changes if required prior to submission (as per Recommendation 2 above) and publication.**

1. INTRODUCTION

The Local Government Act 2020 (s88, 90 and 91) requires Victorian councils to develop a Community Vision, Council Plan and Financial Plan in accordance with their deliberative engagement practices and adopt these plans by 31 October in the year following a general election.

Section 26 of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 also requires councils to produce a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) every four years within 12 months of a general election. Knox has been granted an exemption to produce a standalone MPHWP from the Department of Health and has incorporated it into the Council Plan.

The Community Plan, which includes the Community Vision, the Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) and Financial Plan 2021-2031 meet Council's legislative requirements and are presented at this meeting for adoption.

2. DISCUSSION

The new Community Plan 2021-2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) replace the Knox Community and Council Plan 2017-2021. Based on feedback received on the 2017-2021 plan, the decision was made to create two separate plans that are designed in both context and look, to fit together.

Community Plan 2021-2031

The Community Plan 2021-2031 (see Attachment 10.3.1) was developed with and for the Knox community. It sets out their long-term aspirations and provides essential insights that have

informed the development of the Council Plan for the next four years. It also contains the Community Vision and describes the Key Directions, which provide areas of focus for Council, our partners, stakeholders and individuals in our community to achieve that vision.

Council Plan 2021-2025

The Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) (see Attachment 10.3.2) outlines the strategic direction of the organisation and Council's contribution towards the achievement of the Community Vision. It outlines the strategies we will use, the initiatives we will undertake, and the indicators that will measure if we are heading in the right direction.

The Council Plan also provides context and data around the health and wellbeing of our community. It ensures the priorities for supporting, protecting and improving the health and wellbeing of our community are at the forefront of everything we do and are integrated across all Council services and initiatives.

Financial Plan 2021-2031

The Financial Plan 2021-2031 (see Attachment 10.3.3) is a new requirement of the Local Government Act 2020. It provides a long-term view of the resources required by Council and the proposed use of those resources over a 10-year period. It covers all aspects of the Council's role including services and capital investment/assets, and shows the resources required to implement the Council Plan and other legislated responsibilities.

3. CONSULTATION

Development of Knox's new strategic plans began in early 2020 with a large research and community engagement project.

Data was collected about the municipality through the State of Knox Report, which is a collection of data that identifies trends and changes in Knox over time. A Municipal Survey was also undertaken which asked residents and businesses about the importance of, and their satisfaction with, 16 aspects of Knox.

To validate this data and seek the opinions of our community, a variety of engagement activities were conducted. There were broad discussions about a vision for Knox, our future focus and priorities, and what role Council and stakeholders can play in responding to these. Specific engagement activities were also conducted with the community, stakeholders and Council staff to understand the health and wellbeing perspectives crucial to Knox.

Community members and stakeholders participated in online forums and focus groups. Prior to attending these sessions, participants were given background information, relevant data including the results of the COVID-19 Household Impact Survey, and findings from previous engagement activities.

Several community members participated in multiple engagement activities, allowing for progression through the process from broad to more in-depth discussions on the future of Knox.

The engagement activities were directed at people who live, work, learn and play in Knox to:

- gain an understanding of the community's aspirations for the future of Knox
- test the data gathered through research

- gain feedback on the goals in the current plan
- identify priority areas for the community and Council.

All of this information was used to create our Community Vision and Community Plan, as well as directly inform the development of our Council Plan and Financial Plan.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

Issues regarding the environment and amenity have featured throughout the engagement and have been identified as priorities through the proposed strategies and initiatives in the new Community and Council Plans.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The development of the Community and Council Plans has been built into Knox's budget. The resources required to implement these plans have also been considered as part of the Financial Plan 2021-2031.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The new Community and Council Plans seek to address many of the social issues that are currently impacting the Knox community, including the COVID-19 pandemic, and ensuring our community is healthy, resilient and connected, now and in the future.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.1 - Build, strengthen and promote good governance practices across government and community organisations

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

The Community Plan 2021-2031, Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) and the Financial Plan 2021-2031 meet Council's legislative requirements under the Local Government Act 2020 and the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008. These plans articulate our Community Vision and identify the priorities we need to focus on and the resources required to achieve that vision. The plans respond to our community's changing needs and provide strategic direction to Council for the next 10 years.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Corporate Planning Lead, Kathryn Holland

Report Authorised By: Chief Executive Officer, Bruce Dobson

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - Community Plan 2021-2031 [**10.3.1** - 30 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Council Plan 2021-2025 [**10.3.2** - 36 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - Financial Plan 2021-2031 [**10.3.3** - 34 pages]



KNOX
your city



Community Plan

2021 - 2031

Acknowledgement of traditional land owners

Knox City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation as Traditional Custodians of the land. The Knox Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community come from a variety of different Nations within Australia and Torres Strait, including the Traditional Custodians and Stolen Generation. As such we pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past and present, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the region's history.

Located at the foot of the Dandenong Ranges, Knox has many places of historic significance to the Kulin nation. Important cultural and historical sites within Knox hold both the traditional knowledge of the First Nations People and the traumatic stories of colonisation.

The journey ahead for Knox involves the land, the traditional custodians, the local Indigenous community, the wider community and the Council itself. Walking together and listening together to create a culturally safe and culturally rich community for all.



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Knox Community Plan

The Knox Community Plan 2021-2031 represents the voices of our community and stakeholders. It is a guide for this council and future ones, all levels of government, community groups, organisations and businesses, ensuring we work together to make Knox a great place now and in the future.

Our Community Vision 2031:

“Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive.”

Message from the Mayor



This plan represents our commitment and contribution to achieving the Community Vision:

Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive.

The plan guides Council's work over the next four years to deliver on the priorities identified in the Community Plan. It also incorporates our Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan, highlighting our commitment to our community's health and wellbeing.

Our community is still feeling the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and our response and recovery as a city will be a key focus over the next four years. We will continue to prioritise delivering services for those facing hardship, helping local businesses to bounce back, and working towards a healthy, happy and resilient community into the future.

We would like to acknowledge and thank all those who contributed to the development of this plan. Our community provided valuable input and feedback which helped to shape our priorities and we encourage you to continue the conversation with us as we enact this plan.

Councillor Lisa Cooper

Knox City Council Mayor, 2020-21

Our commitment to addressing climate change

Knox City Council recognises that we are in a state of climate emergency. As a community, we need to take action to reduce our impact on the environment and to prepare for the effects of a changing climate.

We are committed to managing our greenhouse gas emissions and response to climate change and on 27 September 2021, adopted the Climate Response Plan 2021-2031. The plan sets out our targets and provides a roadmap with measurable actions on how this will be achieved in partnership with the Knox community. It also provides a roadmap for Council to reach net zero emissions by 2030 and for the Knox community to reach net zero emissions by 2040.

Council's commitment to addressing the Climate Emergency is reflected in the Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan).



Knox Community Snapshot

Who we are

Population
forecast **166,791**
..... (2021)

Predicted by
2031 to be **178,904**
..... (2031)



30%

of residents were born overseas



25%

of residents speak a language other than English at home



5%

of people require assistance in their day-to-day lives due to disability



39 Years

is the median age

Source: 2016 Census & id. Estimated Residential population

Knox Community Snapshot

How we live



84%

of dwellings are single detached houses



50%

Households are families with one or more children



20%

of people in Knox live by themselves



385

people identify as homeless

Source: 2016 Census & id. Estimated Residential population

How we work



80%

of people travel to work in a private car



14,046

businesses in Knox



66,224

jobs in Knox



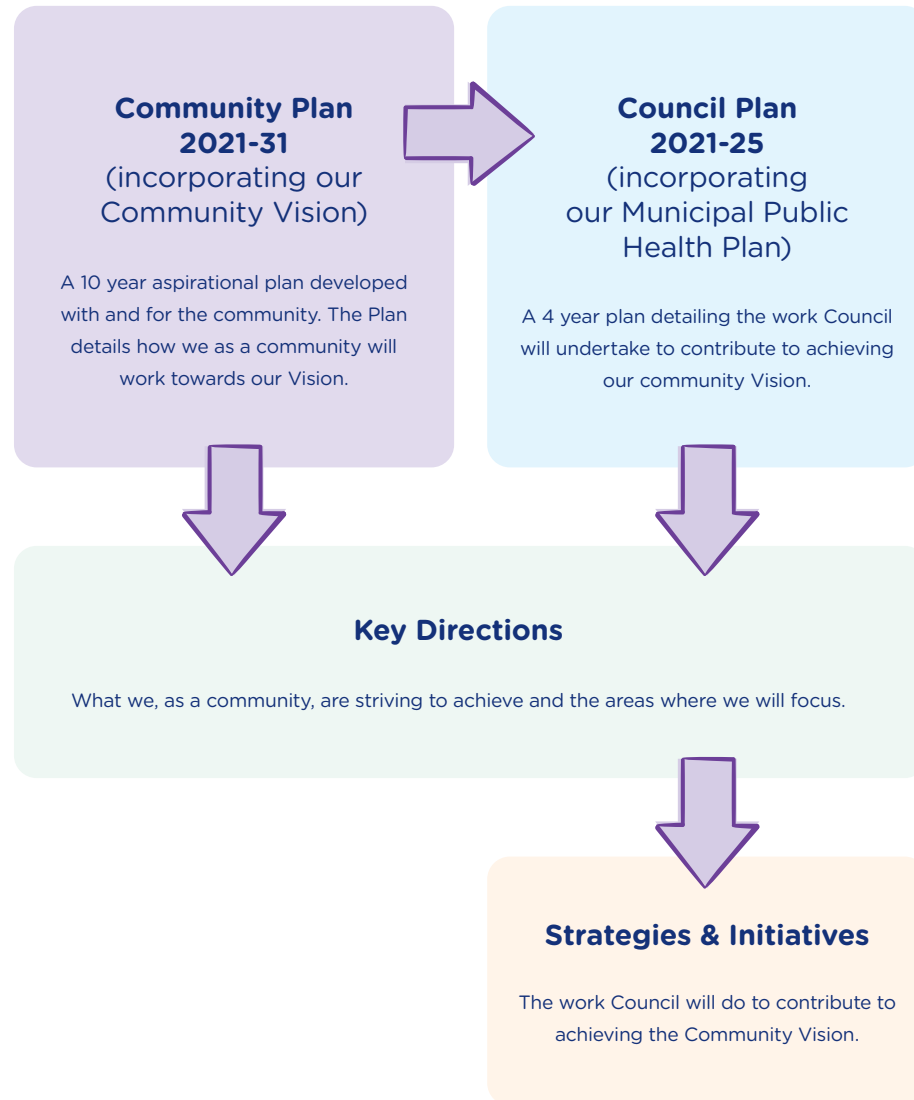
More Knox residents work in health care and social assistance than any other industry

What is a Community Plan?

The Knox Community Plan 2021-2031 is a long term document developed with and for our community. It includes our Community Vision statement, and describes what we, as a collective, will focus on to achieve that vision.

Knox City Council plays a significant role in making this plan come to life but cannot do it alone. Council will work with key stakeholders including community members and groups, businesses, agencies and other levels of government to ensure we achieve the Community Vision outlined in this plan.

The Knox Community Plan 2021-2031 is an important document that will guide Council's future planning over the next 10 years. How Council will contribute to the Community Plan and the initiatives it will undertake over the next four years, are outlined in the Council Plan 2021-2025.



How the plan was developed

In 2020 and 2021, Knox City Council undertook an extensive research and engagement program to inform the development of the new Community Plan 2021-2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025.

To inform these pieces of work, a range of information has been collected about the municipality via research and community engagement activities.



Almost 4,500 people shared their thoughts on shaping the future of Knox. The engagement activities were directed at people who live, work, learn and play in Knox to:

- Gain an understanding of the community's aspirations for the future of Knox.
- Test the data gathered through research.
- Gain feedback on the goals in the current plan.
- Identify priority areas for the community and Council.



“Knox is home and I have been living here for over 20 years. My kids were raised here and went to kindergarten, primary school and high school all in Knox. For me Knox is a beautiful place to live and it’s all about that feeling of home.

A great community is one that supports each other to achieve a common goal and embraces our differences.

My vision for Knox over the next ten years is that it will continue to grow and evolve. I want to see people doing well and succeeding and I want people to be healthy.”

Diana, Smiles for Miles Coordinator
at EACH and mum of three.

Our Community Vision

Our Community Vision describes our long-term hopes and aspirations for Knox.

It helps to plan for the needs of our community now and into the future. It's based on the idea that by creating a picture of the future that we all agree to, we can all make a shared commitment to work together to get there.

This is our vision for the future of Knox, as developed with and voted for by the community:

Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive.

During 2020, we asked you to come together to talk about what you love about our community, and what you want it to look and feel like in 10 year's time.

At the 2020 Knox Festival we asked you to make a 'wish for Knox'. Your wishes were written on postcards and placed in our 'wishing well'. Children also drew pictures which were displayed at our Festival Community Hub.



We went on to further explore what your aspirations are for the future of Knox through a series of online forums and focus groups.

Many agreed that Knox is already a great place to live, work, play and raise a family. You told us that going forward, we need to strengthen what already exists and work together to improve the things we don't have quite right. By working together towards a common goal, we can ensure we don't lose the things we value the most.

Based on what we heard, five vision statements were developed, which were put to the public for voting. The vast majority of those that voted, chose this vision statement as the one that best reflected their aspirations for the future.

“The people. The place. That feeling of community - all of these things make Knox so great.”

Community forum participant
(September 2020)

“A great community is about feeling like we belong not just to other people but also to the place. Animals, trees, land and the history of the land.”

Community forum participant
(September 2020)



Our Key Directions

The following pages describe in further detail what we will focus on over the next 10 years to achieve our Community Vision.

Based on research and community engagement, five Key Directions were developed that explain what we, as a community, are striving to achieve. They describe why we should focus on these areas, what we already know about them, what your aspirations are and how we might know when we've achieved success.

The five Key Directions are very closely linked - without one, it may be difficult to achieve the outcomes of the others. An example of this is health and wellbeing. According to our framework, our community's physical and mental health and wellbeing sits under the Connection, Resilience & Wellbeing Key Direction. However, it is very clear that our health and wellbeing relies on success in all of the other Key Directions.

Our Community Vision cannot be achieved without us all working towards each of the Key Directions. They will collectively lead us to achieving our vision.



Opportunity and innovation

Knox strives to be a city of opportunity, embracing innovation and change, and providing local learning and employment opportunities for all. It's a place where people and business can thrive.



Neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure

Building on what's great about our city, Knox's housing and infrastructure will meet the changing needs of our community.



Natural environment and sustainability

Knox's natural environment is protected and enhanced to ensure sustainability for future generations.



Connection, resilience and wellbeing

Knox is a place to call home. Our community is strong, healthy and we support and respect each other.



Civic engagement and integrity

Knox Council is a trusted and respected leader in our community, acting appropriately and ensuring all voices are heard.

The Key Directions will also be used to guide the work of Council over the next four years. In the Council Plan 2021-2025, Council has described its contribution to these Key Directions, and ultimately the Community Vision, in the form of strategies and initiatives.

The Community Plan 2021-2031 and the Council Plan 2021-2025 are based on your needs and aspirations, and work together to inform all of our planning and decisions, guiding the future of Knox.



Opportunity and innovation

Knox strives to be a city of opportunity, embracing innovation and change, and providing local learning and employment opportunities for all. It's a place where people and business can thrive.

Why is this important?

Learning and employment are key to creating opportunity, moving away from disadvantage and are good for our mental health and social connection.

By ensuring all people in our community have access to a variety of learning opportunities, individuals in Knox will benefit from better education, increased skill development, and will enjoy a greater sense of purpose and belonging.

As our skills develop, technology advances and spaces are created for people to come together to share ideas, opportunities to innovate will increase. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many businesses and organisations were forced to do things differently. Creating opportunities for people to work together and innovate makes a place more attractive for new business and investment to the local area, which in turn makes our local economy stronger.

What we know

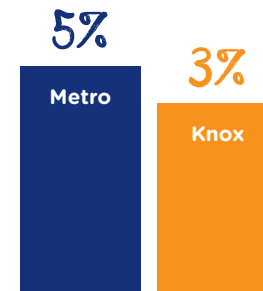
You told us that learning and employment are very important, and you want to see a focus on supporting employment programs, creating jobs, and accessible education and training.

66,244

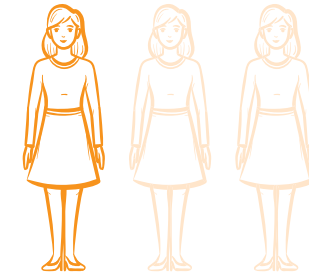
total jobs in Knox

80%

of youth are fully engaged in work or study



Unemployment is below the metropolitan Melbourne average



One third of employed residents work in Knox. This is expected to rise as an outcome of the pandemic

Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population & Housing (2016) and REMPLAN (2016 & 2019)



Opportunity and innovation

Aspirations for the future

You told us that you want Knox to be a strong business hub, making the most of our location and accessible transport and arterial connections. A place where business and organisations can establish themselves, with co-working hubs and spaces, and opportunities for networking.

You want our city to be open to new and growth industries and innovative start-ups, which in turn will create opportunities for more local employment for people of all ages and abilities. We need to look for new and smarter ways of working, having reliable internet coverage, and programs and resources available for businesses and organisations.

You have a strong desire to have learning opportunities available to all people in our community. Our learning begins with good early childhood education, schools, TAFEs and universities. Our youth will have greater opportunities for 'real life' learning through connections with business and industry. You also want life-long learning opportunities through a variety of places like libraries, community groups and neighbourhood houses.

“I think in 10 years’ time, if we saw a headline where it said something like 90% of people in Knox also work in Knox that would be pretty awesome!”

Employment and Education focus group participant (November 2020)

“I think Knox needs to be quite a strong business hub... with some vibrancy, attracting business and industry to the area.”

Employment and Education focus group participant (November 2020)



Opportunity and innovation

We can make a difference by:

- Encouraging businesses to come, stay and grow .
- Local businesses employing local people of all abilities.
- Creating spaces for start-ups to interact and network.
- Providing and supporting opportunities for education and skills development for all life stages.
- Embracing technology and supporting innovation.

We'll know we've succeeded when we see:

- More organisations and businesses coming to Knox.
- Existing business remaining in Knox.
- More people living and working in Knox.
- More people with disabilities offered gainful employment.
- An increase in the skills base of the community.



“I like that Knox is very centralized. It’s easy to get to, whether from the city or anywhere in Melbourne, by road, tram, buses or even train.

I love that people are able to come together and freely express themselves without any kind of judgement.”

**Deepak,
Financial Advisor**



Neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure

Building on what's great about our city, Knox's housing and infrastructure will meet the changing needs of our community.

Why is this important?

Our neighbourhoods are important to us, creating a sense of belonging. Having appropriate housing and the infrastructure and amenities to support our lifestyles, ensures we feel safe, secure and valued as a member of our community.

Our community is made up of people from different walks of life, at different ages and stages, and with differing needs. Having housing that is appropriate, accessible and affordable means that all members of our community can enjoy a good quality of life.

The surrounding places and spaces in our neighbourhoods need to provide opportunities to access services, connect with others, work and enjoy leisure time. How we get to those places, is also important. We need the right transport options, and safe and accessible roads and paths that connect to each and where we need to go.

What we know

You told us that housing and infrastructure are key components to making Knox a great place to live. You want more affordable housing and adequate infrastructure. You want to see better roads and improved public transport.

77%

The proportion of the social housing need that can be met with existing local social housing and affordable private rentals

385

people identified as homeless

64%

of households are within 400m of any public transport stop compared to the metropolitan average of 69%

Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population & Housing (2016), Homes Victoria (2020), and Australian Urban Observatory (2018)



Neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure

Aspirations for the future

You told us there's more that we can all be doing to protect those most vulnerable, like providing more affordable and social housing, and embracing innovations such as tiny houses and even 3D printed houses!

It's important to you that the housing in Knox is appropriate for different ages, stages and abilities. You also want to see housing developments in Knox that are sustainable and not to the detriment of the environment.

Our neighbourhoods need to be equally accessible. With the desire for us to be less reliant on cars, our footpaths and shared paths need to be adequate to ensure we can safely walk, ride, push prams and use mobility aids or wheelchairs. Our public transport also needs to be reliable and have better connections, with our train stations and bus stops being safe places to wait.

For those times we do need to use our cars, you want to see safe roads and adequate parking, particularly for seniors and those with disabilities.

You even told us that you want to see better use of technological advances in electric vehicles and driverless cars, however it's also important that these are not to the detriment of other road or path users.

"... I've got to know my neighbours in this last year more than before. So I'm hoping in the future it will be more like that and maybe more community spaces to bring people together, build that community."

Environment and Housing focus group participant
(November 2020)

"So if you're thinking about people on the street, what you need is shelter - safe shelter - and a group or cluster of tiny houses on a piece of council land, for example, could do that."

Environment and Housing focus group participant
(November 2020)



Neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure

We can make a difference by:

- Supporting those who may be struggling to find affordable and appropriate housing options.
- Planning for and investing in different housing types to suit all needs.
- Creating and maintaining the network of paths that connect up and are accessible for all people.
- Providing new and innovative community transport solutions across the municipality.
- Advocating for more social and affordable housing and better public transport options.
- Making sure our buildings and community spaces are inclusive and accessible.

We'll know we've succeeded when we see:

- A greater mix of housing to meet different needs.
- Reduced homelessness.
- More public art that enhances different places and spaces.
- Less reliance on cars.
- More people walking and riding, using shared paths that are accessible and have good connections.
- Better access to and increased use of public transport.



“I’ve lived in Knox for 54 years and I think we have some of the best facilities, like the athletics track, basketball stadiums, the netball centre and libraries everywhere.

I want to be healthy and as I get older I want to be able to access all the services I need and interact with my community without having to travel too far.”

Gary, retiree and avid lawn bowls player



Natural environment and sustainability

Knox's natural environment is protected and enhanced to ensure sustainability for future generations.

Why is this important?

Connection to nature is vital to our health. Not only do we benefit from activity and the opportunity for social connection in these spaces, but spending time in nature can also have mental health benefits, like reducing anxiety and depressive symptoms.

Our trees and shrubs provide shade and protection from heat and wind. They also contribute to our local biodiversity and offer homes for our native birds and wildlife. Having good tree canopy is a key factor in improving the landscape, attractiveness, and local sense of place.

In order to protect our environment we need to combat the effects of climate change. Our average annual temperatures are rising as a direct result of climate change. With this comes increased costs of living and rising energy costs.

As our climate changes and temperatures increase, we are increasingly exposed to extreme weather events, fires, and floods. Those most vulnerable in our community – humans, wildlife and plants – are at greater risk during these events.

What we know

You told us that caring for the environment and our bushland and nature reserves are two of the most important aspects of Knox. You want better maintenance of public spaces, streets, and roads and better care for the environment, including addressing climate change.

69%

of dwellings in Knox are within 400m of open space

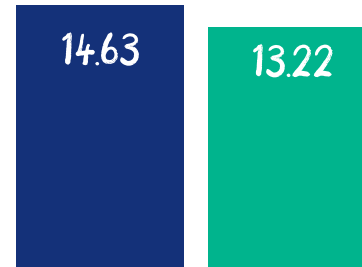


There has been a decline in waste generation of 28kg per household



18%

of Knox's total area is under tree canopy cover



Knox

EAGA

the tonnes per capita of greenhouse gas emissions in Knox are higher than the Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (EAGA) average

Sources: Australian Urban Observatory (2018), Sustainability Victoria (2017), RMIT Centre for Urban Research (2018), and Snapshot Community Climate Tool (2017)



Natural environment and sustainability

Aspirations for the future

You told us you value all the bushland areas, nature reserves, parks, reserves and waterways that Knox has to offer. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many people found a strong connection with nature. We need to continue to protect and enhance our waterways, bushland, nature reserves and parklands, so they will be there for generations to enjoy. We need to find the balance of being able to enjoy these spaces without damaging the natural habitat of our native bird, wildlife and plant species.

Your hope is that Knox can become a centre of excellence for energy and materials conservation, creating a circular economy. This means moving away from a cycle of 'make, use, dispose' in favour of re-using and recycling as much as possible. By doing this we can conserve the energy needed to produce goods, reduce waste to landfill and significantly reduce our carbon emissions and the impact on our climate.

“I think beauty is really important and having natural spaces, wide open spaces, where you can see the sky and enjoy gardens, parks, waterways. I think those are really important and fundamental to our well-being.”

Community forum participant (September 2020)

“I love living here because I feel like there is a lot of greenery. I hope none of it is lost and we can preserve that and build on it.”

Environment and Housing focus group participant (November 2020)



Natural environment and sustainability

We can make a difference by:

- Reducing, reusing and recycling whenever possible.
- Ensuring local businesses are energy efficient and dispose of waste correctly.
- Looking after our parks and bushland.
- Planning our city in a way that reduces the negative impacts.

We'll know we've succeeded when we see:

- Increased tree canopy cover.
- More diversity in flora and fauna.
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions.
- Increased renewable energy use.
- A reduction in waste generation.
- More homes with access to open space.



“My vision for Knox over the next ten years is that it will continue to develop as a place that is family friendly, considers the needs of all ages and incorporates work opportunities and a healthy way of living. A place where we foster the things that we know are valuable about life and find new and better ways to do things to keep our community beautiful, spacious, family orientated, creative and loving.”

**Fiona, Artist, Art Coach,
and mum to two girls**



Connection, resilience and wellbeing

Knox is a place to call home. Our community is strong, healthy and we support and respect each other.

Why is this important?

Good health and wellbeing is related to almost everything we do and how we do it. Without it, our quality of life suffers.

Our health and wellbeing links to the natural environment by providing us spaces to enjoy activities, social connections and the various aspects of nature and biodiversity. The impacts of climate change can, however, have a negative effect on our health through extreme weather, loss of land, threat to food security, and air and water pollution.

Connection to the place we live in and the people around us also contributes to our health and wellbeing and helps us to feel a sense of purpose and belonging. Having appropriate facilities, services and infrastructure is critical to providing us with opportunities for the best possible health and wellbeing.

The COVID-19 pandemic shone a light on our physical and mental wellbeing in 2020, and continues to do so. Some of the already prominent health and wellbeing issues in our community were exacerbated by the pandemic and the associated restrictions. It is important that we tackle the issues and support those most affected.

What we know

You told us health, wellbeing and safety were the most important aspects of Knox and, you want better support for the vulnerable and improved community safety and security.

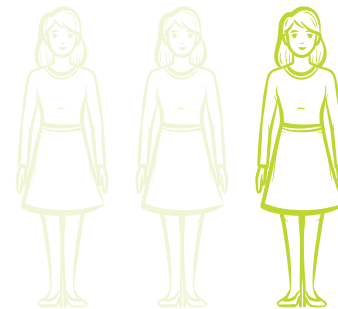
You told us that social isolation, anxiety, stress, depression, and loneliness were the most prominent mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.



of adults rate their health as very good or excellent compared to 38% in 2014



of adults suffer from psychological distress, up from 11% in 2011. This is higher than the metropolitan average of 15%



of women say they feel safe in their neighbourhood at night compared to 71% of men



Connection, resilience and wellbeing

Aspirations for the future

You told us that all people in Knox should be able to enjoy good health and wellbeing. Your hope is that everyone in our community has access to healthy food, is free from drugs and other harmful substances, enjoys physical activity that suits their age and ability, and has good emotional and social wellbeing.

When discussing what could be done to achieve good health and wellbeing, many of you connected this with other aspects of our lives. For example, having adequate shelter, access to support services for those in need, using visual art and performance to improve mental health and reduce depression, and ensuring people have access to technology so they can connect when not being able to leave home.

Another key aspect of your aspirations for the future is social connection, including spiritual and cultural. In particular, you told us that we should honour and celebrate our First Nations culture. Respect and inclusion of all of our people is critical to ensuring our community can achieve its vision.

Many of you are concerned about the issue of safety, as it relates to our homes, physical environment, crime, and prejudice or discrimination. Family violence and elder abuse were two significant and concerning issues raised. To ensure we feel safe in Knox, you told us there needs to be a focus on education, promoting respectful relationships in families, between different cultures and in the broader community, and better and more accessible services and infrastructure.

“... we could have pop-up stalls, every weekend... people can just bring in stuff they want to share with the community, and anyone can come without feeling embarrassed. That kind of sharing and caring through some small pop-up stalls, that would be good...”

Health and Wellbeing focus group participant (November 2020)

“We need balance in our lives. Not just work, work and work... we need more physical exercise, healthy eating habits, and good mental health.”

Health and Wellbeing focus group participant (November 2020)



Connection, resilience and wellbeing

We can make a difference by:

- Making time to look after ourselves, physically and mentally.
- Maintaining connections with others – social, cultural and spiritual.
- Volunteering time or joining community group.
- Showing respect, embracing differences and supporting others.
- Ensuring there are good quality support services for those most in need.
- Providing safe spaces for those most vulnerable.

We'll know we've succeeded when we see:

- Reduced alcohol consumption.
- Reduced tobacco use.
- Increased access to good quality food and reduced obesity rate.
- A more active community.
- Overall improved mental health and reduced levels of depression and anxiety.
- More gender equality and respectful cultural and intergenerational relationships.
- Increased sense of being valued and sense of empowerment.
- People feeling safe and secure in the community.



**“The people are what makes Knox!
My vision for Knox is that we
return to a village concept.
To have places where people
can meet and be together.”**

**Chris, retired and Board Member
of the 1812 Theatre Company**



Civic engagement and integrity

Knox Council is a trusted and respected leader in our community, acting appropriately and ensuring all voices are heard.

Why is this important?

Civic engagement is about making a difference in our community. Having a voice in decision making and all issues affecting our lives is critical to making that difference.

Our local decision makers need to demonstrate transparency and be open to listening to all views, in order to make the best decisions for our community, based on our needs.

As the level of government closest to the community, Council needs to fulfil its leadership role by acting appropriately, using its resources effectively and efficiently, and being accountable for all its actions and decisions.

What we know

You told us that opportunities to have a say and social inclusion are key components in making Knox a great place to be. You think we need to work on building community spirit and making sure all voices are heard.

42%

of people in Knox said they feel valued by society, compared to 50% in 2014

26%

of adults said they feel there are opportunities to have a real say on matters that are important to them compared to 37% in 2011

47%

of adults think Council is good or very good at keeping the community informed

Sources: Victorian Population Health Survey (2017) and Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey (2020)



Civic engagement and integrity

Aspirations for the future

You told us you want to have a say in decisions that impact you the most. All voices, not just the loudest ones, need to be heard, listened to and acted on, in an open and respectful way.

You want Council to find interesting and interactive ways for you to be involved in and contribute to decisions and plans for the future. It needs to seek out the voices of those that otherwise may not engage and ensure they have equal opportunity to participate.

Council needs to show that its decision-making processes are transparent and their actions are held to account. You want resources to be used efficiently and effectively, disclosing freely how ratepayer's money is being spent in a way that is easy to understand.

You told us you want Council to be easy to deal with and reduce 'red-tape'. You want information about Council's services and facilities, all plans and documents to be accessible and the language inclusive.

“We need to identify and train some community leaders who are going to work at building the community in Knox... Council can't do it all. We are all in this together.”

Community Engagement and Belonging
focus group participant (November 2020)

“Council needs to get out more into the community... not just shopping centres, go to day services and go to the places where the people who don't have a voice are.”

Community Engagement and Belonging
focus group participant (November 2020)



Civic engagement and integrity

We can make a difference by:

- Participating in consultation and engagement activities.
- Listening to the community and making decisions based on their needs.
- Being more open and transparent in decision making, and regularly reporting back on plans and projects.

We'll know we've succeeded when we see:

- More opportunities for the community to have a say.
- Greater transparency in Council decision making and actions.
- More information about what Council does, the services it provides and where to get help.
- An engaged community that feels part of the decision making process.



“I love that in Knox we have the ability to welcome everyone from different areas. They don’t look at your background or the way you look as a definition of how they should treat you. They treat everyone equally.

Good communication between people, and between our Council and the people is really the key to a great community.”

Susie, full time university student

Partnerships

We all worked together to develop the Community Plan and now we need collaborative partnerships to ensure its success.

Council will partner and continue to work with a range of stakeholders including community members and groups, service providers, businesses and state and federal government organisations.

Our partners will be able to work with us in a number of ways including membership on Council's advisory committees, participating in working groups, and providing feedback and submissions on specific projects through consultation and engagement opportunities. Working together will ensure both Council and our partners have access to the best available information, and can coordinate our efforts to achieve the greatest impact.



Monitoring our progress

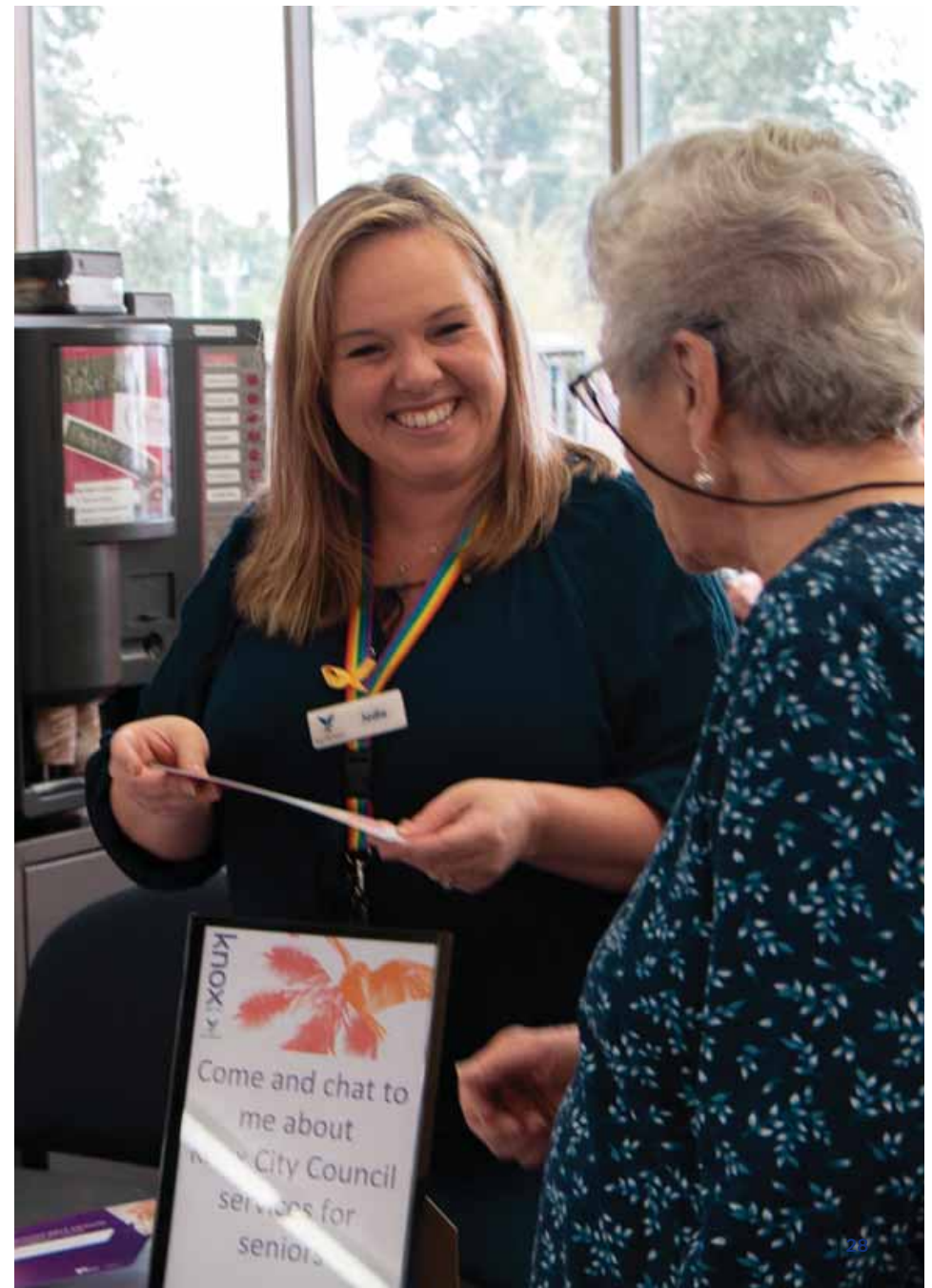
There are many ways we monitor our progress and make sure we are on the right track.

Knox City Council collects data from numerous sources, conducts regular surveys and undertakes community engagement activities to keep track of what's happening in our community and inform future planning.

Going forward, we will look at different ways to collaborate and contribute to Knox's success over the next 10 years. We will engage with our partners and stakeholders to build on our strengths, embrace opportunities and find solutions to the challenges facing our community.

We will review the Community Plan every four years as we produce a new Council Plan. These reviews will take Knox's pulse and make sure the Community Plan is still reflective of our community's aspirations. We will check on the availability of new data, touch base with the community, and review the key directions and strategies with agencies and stakeholders to ensure they are still relevant and meeting community needs.

As a Council, we will keep you up to date on the work we are doing to contribute to achieving the Community Vision through regular reporting against our Council Plan. You can find this information in our annual reports, in various publications and on our website.



Keeping in touch and opportunities to have your say

Knox City Council is committed to seeking feedback, making sure you are aware of issues that affect you and providing opportunities to have your say.

Visit our Have Your Say website to see how you can contribute to projects and tell us what you think of our draft plans and strategies - www.knox.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay

Knox City Council has several Advisory Committees that provide advice on the development, implementation, monitoring, and review of programs or activities. These committees are made up of community members, Council officers and current Councillors. Find out if there are opportunities available in your area of interest on our website: www.knox.vic.gov.au/our-council/about-council/council-committees

Sign up to receive Knox eNews, our monthly email newsletter which will keep you informed about the latest news, events and activities across the community: www.knox.vic.gov.au/email-newsletter

You can also contact
Council via the
following methods

Phone: 9298 8000

Email: knoxcc@knox.vic.gov.au

Website: www.knox.vic.gov.au


Social media: facebook.com/knoxccouncil
or via Twitter @knoxcc

Visit Council in person: Knox Civic Centre
511 Burwood Highway
Wantirna South 3152

knox
your city

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i [knoxccouncil](#)

 133 677 (ask for 03 9298 8000)

 Interpreter
131 450

Speak and Listen Users
1300 555 727 (ask for 03 9298 8000)

ABN 24 477 480 661

**For any queries please call the
Civic Centre on 9298 8000 or email
communityplan@knox.vic.gov.au**



knox

your city



Council Plan

2021 – 2025

Incorporating the Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan

Acknowledgement of traditional land owners

Knox City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation as Traditional Custodians of the land. The Knox Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community come from a variety of different Nations within Australia and Torres Strait, including the Traditional Custodians and Stolen Generation. As such we pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past and present, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the region's history.

Located at the foot of the Dandenong Ranges, Knox has many places of historic significance to the Kulin nation. Important cultural and historical sites within Knox hold both the traditional knowledge of the First Nations People and the traumatic stories of colonisation.

The journey ahead for Knox involves the land, the traditional custodians, the local Indigenous community, the wider community and the Council itself. Walking together and listening together to create a culturally safe and culturally rich community for all.

In 2021 Knox City Council announced an intention to promote a "whole of business" mindset, moving forward in its acknowledgement and respect of First Nations people, ensuring cross functional collaboration as opportunities present themselves.

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Message from the Mayor



This plan represents our commitment and contribution to achieving the Community Vision:

Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive.

The plan guides Council's work over the next four years to deliver on the priorities identified in the Community Plan. It also incorporates our Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan, highlighting our commitment to our community's health and wellbeing.

Our community is still feeling the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and our response and recovery as a city will be a key focus over the next four years. We will continue to prioritise delivering services for those facing hardship, helping local businesses to bounce back, and working towards a healthy, happy and resilient community into the future.

We would like to acknowledge and thank all those who contributed to the development of this plan. Our community provided valuable input and feedback which helped to shape our priorities and we encourage you to continue the conversation with us as we enact this plan.

Councillor Lisa Cooper

Knox City Council Mayor, 2020-21

Our commitment to addressing climate change

Knox City Council recognises that we are in a state of climate emergency. As a community, we need to take action to reduce our impact on the environment and to prepare for the effects of a changing climate.

We are committed to managing our greenhouse gas emissions and response to climate change and on 27 September 2021, adopted the Climate Response Plan 2021-2031. The plan sets out our targets and provides a roadmap with measurable actions on how this will be achieved in partnership with the Knox community. It also provides a roadmap for Council to reach net zero emissions by 2030 and for the Knox community to reach net zero emissions by 2040.

Council's commitment to addressing the Climate Emergency is reflected in this Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan).



About this plan

Knox's integrated strategic planning and reporting framework (on the following page) illustrates the medium and long term plans that we produce to guide and manage our city.

The Knox Community Plan 2021-2031 includes the Community Vision, describes your aspirations for the future and what we, as a collective, need to focus on to achieve that vision.

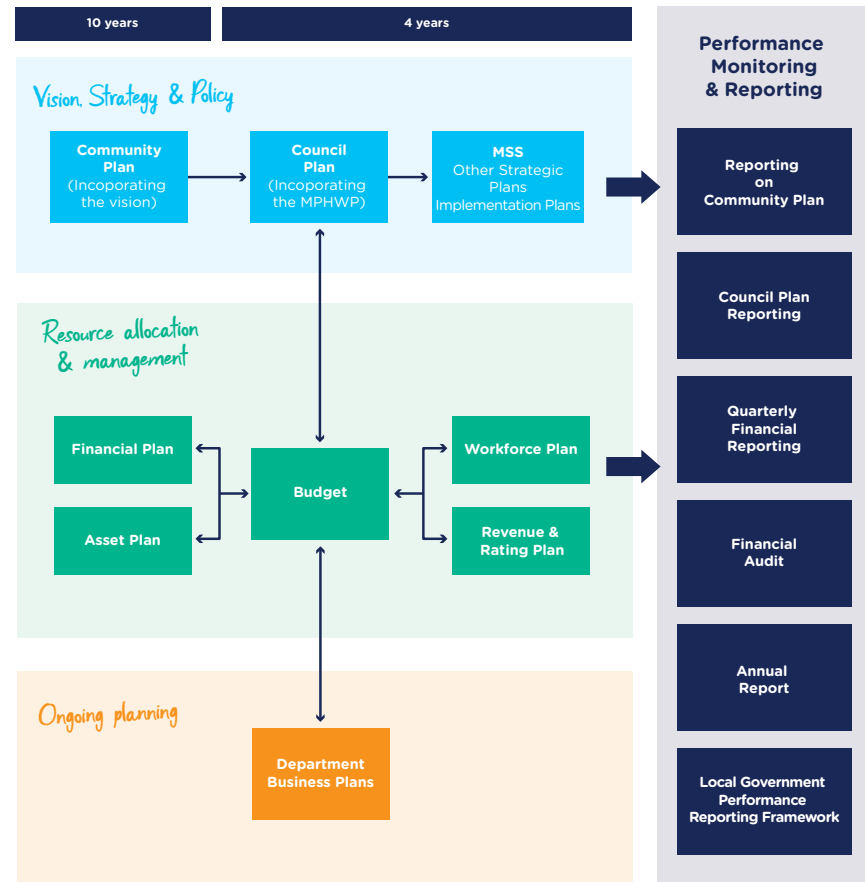
Knox's Council Plan 2021-2025 is Council's key strategic plan. It provides direction to the organisation, describes how we're going to contribute to the achievement of the Community Vision and shows how we're going to measure our success. It also demonstrates our commitment to the health and wellbeing of the community by incorporating Knox's Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP).

There are also a number of other plans that guide our work. They include plans about how we're going to manage our financial resources (the Financial Plan, Budget and Revenue and Rating Plan), manage and maintain our assets (the Asset Plan) and make sure we have the right staff to deliver our services and initiatives (the Workforce Plan).

We will also monitor and report back to you on the progress of our plans through different mechanisms, ensuring we remain open, transparent and accountable.

The diagram opposite shows how our plans fit together, working toward achieving our Community Vision, and how we track our progress against them.

Integrated strategic planning and reporting framework





How it was developed

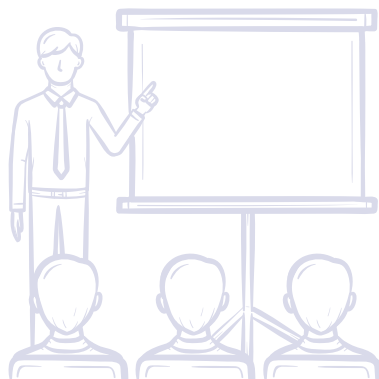
During 2020, a large research and engagement program was undertaken to inform the development of our Community Plan 2021-2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025.

The process began with a range of data being collected about the municipality via research, including:

- The State of Knox Report, which is a collection of data that identifies trends and changes in Knox over time.
- The Municipal Survey which asked residents and businesses about the importance of, and their satisfaction with, 16 aspects of Knox.

A summary of this information can be found in Knox in 2020 – a summary of the State of Knox Report 2020 and the results of the 2020 Municipal Survey, which is available on Council's website.

To validate this data and seek the opinions of our community, a variety of activities were conducted. These ranged from broad discussions about a vision for Knox, to conversations around the goals in the Community and Council Plan 2017-2021, determining priorities and considering what role Council and stakeholders can play in responding to these.



Community members and stakeholders were given pre-reading prior to participating in forums and focus groups which outlined background information, relevant data including the results of the COVID-19 Household Impact Survey, and findings from the previous engagement activities.

A number of community members participated in multiple engagement activities, allowing for progression through the process from broad to more in-depth discussions on the future of Knox.

The engagement activities were directed at people who live, work, learn and play in Knox to:

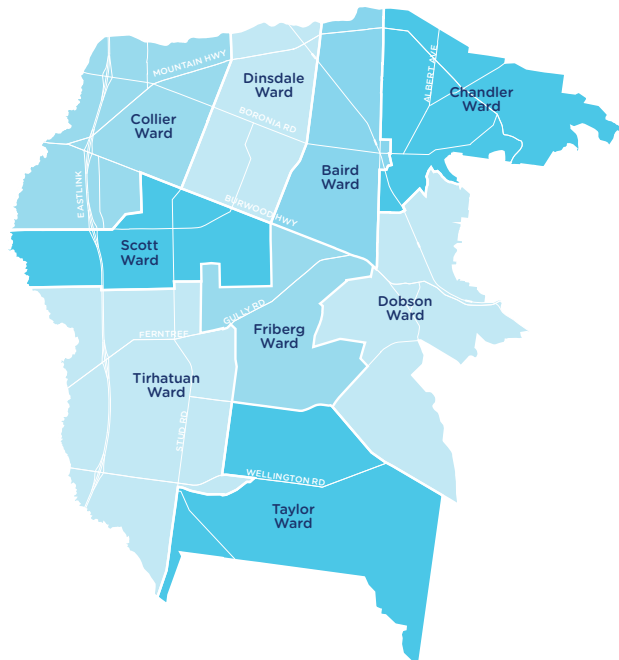
- Gain an understanding of the community's aspirations for the future of Knox.
- Test the data gathered through research.
- Gain feedback on the goals in the current plan.
- Identify priority areas for the community and Council.

All of this information was used to create our Community Vision and Community Plan, as well as directly inform the development of our Council Plan.

You can read more about our engagement in Development of the new Community and Council Plans - Community Engagement Report, January 2021, which is available on Council's website.

Knox City Council who we are and what we do

The municipality of Knox is made up of 11 suburbs, approximately 25 kilometres from the Melbourne central business district. Knox will be governed for the next four years by the nine Councillors who were elected by our community in October 2020.



Our Councillors work together to set and guide strategic direction and decisions for our community. Every decision they make is guided by the needs of the people of Knox, and they work closely with the Chief Executive Officer and the organisation to do this.



SCOTT
Cr Lisa Cooper
Mayor 2020-21



FRIBERG
Cr Susan Laukens
Deputy Mayor 2020-21



BAIRD
Cr Yvonne Allred



CHANDLER
Cr Jude Dwight



COLLIER
Cr Marcia Timmers-Leitch



DINSDALE
Cr Sorina Grasso



DOBSON
Cr Meagan Baker



TAYLOR
Cr Darren Pearce



TIRHATUAN
Cr Nicole Seymour

There are various roles that we play in leading, guiding and managing our city and community.

Advocate

We raise awareness at state and federal government level and with other stakeholders about the issues and needs of the Knox community, as well as initiating or supporting campaigns for positive change.

Partner

We develop trusting formal and informal relationships and alliances, working with others to achieve common goals.

Provide

We offer a range of services and support, preventative interventions, infrastructure and facilities to individuals and groups.

Fund

We provide grants, funding and subsidies to local groups and agencies to progress and develop services and infrastructure for individuals and groups.

Educate

We share information, raise awareness, and develop knowledge and skills to empower individuals and groups.

Plan

We pro-actively plan for services and infrastructure that respond to current and future community needs.

Regulate

We provide governance and regulatory controls such as local laws and health and building controls.

Research

We collect and analyse data to inform planning, priority setting, decision-making and evaluation.

But most of all, we are here for you – our community!

We will seek to listen to you, act in your best interests and make decisions based on your needs, now and into the future.

This plan represents our commitment to you over the four-year elected term of office.

Our community Who we are

166,791

people call Knox home



51%

of residents
are female



49%

of residents
are male



39

is the
median age



28%

are aged 55 years
and over



30%

of residents were
born overseas



25%

speak a language
other than English
at home

Source: 2016 Census & id. Estimated Residential population

Our community

How we live



84%

of dwellings are single detached houses



15,300

Households are families with children under 15 years of age



20%

of people in Knox live by themselves



385

people identify as homeless

Source: 2016 Census & id. Estimated Residential population

How we work



30%

of residents work in Knox



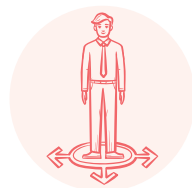
80%

of people travel to work in a private car



14,046

businesses in Knox



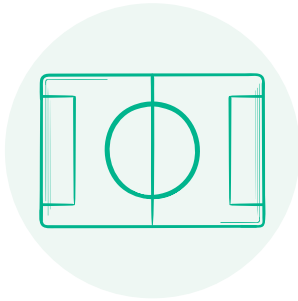
66,224

jobs in Knox



More Knox residents work in health care and social assistance than any other industry

Council maintains



57

sportsgrounds and major reserves



243

council owned buildings



38,445

drainage pits



211

playgrounds



917

open space sites



724km

of local roads



1,242

footpaths

Our commitment to improving health and wellbeing in Knox

Our health and wellbeing provides the foundation for a strong, cohesive and resilient community, as well as contributing to a productive workforce and viable economy.

This Council Plan incorporates Knox's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. This ensures the priorities for supporting, protecting and improving the health and wellbeing of our community are at the forefront of everything we do and are integrated across all Council services and initiatives.

To improve the health and wellbeing of our community, it's important to understand the factors that contribute to good health. Social structures such as policies, organisations and even the interaction between individuals and communities, can greatly influence a person's feeling of inclusion, access to resources and opportunities for a healthy lifestyle.

The physical environment can also influence whether we lead a healthy lifestyle. Access to public open space, housing, food and transport can all have an effect on our individual choices and behaviours.



Six Key Health Priorities

During 2020-21 we conducted youth, community, stakeholder and staff workshops and surveys specifically about the health and wellbeing of our community. Through this engagement, we established and discussed the following six key health priorities for Knox.

You can read more about these engagement activities in the Health and Wellbeing Engagement Report 2021 and the COVID-19 Household Impact Survey Report on Council's website.



Mental Health

Although the focus of mental health differed across cohorts and engagements, there was an overarching need to improve mental health through a variety of methods with particular focus on increasing social connection.



Physical Activity

Overall, physical activity was the most prominent health and wellbeing issue (along with mental health) to emerge from the engagement activities.



Healthy Eating & Food Security

Healthy eating and food security were not as prominent as mental health and physical activity in engagement discussions but were still mentioned in all engagement activities. Generally, this was in relation to eating healthier foods with less regard to food security and its implications.



Family Violence

Family violence wasn't discussed broadly in public forums (some people can find this a difficult subject to discuss), but many at the workshops spoke of the importance of gender and culture roles in addressing family violence. It was also raised without prompting during the initial COVID-19 Household Impact Survey.



Drugs & Alcohol

Whilst many acknowledged drug and alcohol as a concern in the community, there was not a huge amount of discussion on the topic. During workshops, community members spoke about the importance of evidence-based education, whilst stakeholders took a broader approach suggesting a need to focus on the factors leading to alcohol consumption and drug use.



Climate Change & Health

Those in the community workshops were most concerned about the environment and spoke extensively about how the physical environment of Knox can be addressed to minimise the impact of climate change.

Health and Wellbeing in Knox

Below is a snapshot of our community's health and wellbeing.



Impacts of COVID-19 on our Health & Wellbeing

Below is a snapshot of our community's health and wellbeing.



Some of the COVID-19 impacts were positive



A partnership approach

Our plan details our commitment to work in a collaborative and coordinated way to create and improve the physical, social, natural, cultural and economic environments that promote health and wellbeing.

However, we can't do this alone. It requires the collective effort of policy makers, service providers, community groups and individuals. Council has a role in prevention, promotion and protection, and will work together with others to achieve optimum health and wellbeing for the community.

We are committed to continuing our contribution to state, regional and local partnerships, such as the following:

The Boronia Community Network:

Bringing together organisations and service providers across Boronia to improve social and health conditions for the community of Boronia.

Knox Mental Health Roundtable:

Focuses on improving mental health and wellbeing outcomes for the community of Knox. Membership includes leading state agencies and local service providers.

Together for Equality & Respect:

A family violence and gender equality regional network to streamline practice, focus resources and build capacity.

Regional Family Violence Partnership:

An eastern collaborative of frontline and prevention services to share and improve best practice, build capacity and enhance awareness of referral pathways for victims of family violence.

Eastern Physical Activity Network: An outer-east network that identifies opportunities to collaborate on regional actions.

Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance:

A collaboration between six Councils (Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Monash, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges) whose aim is to advocate for improved housing affordability and to increase the supply of social and affordable housing across the region.

Regional Local Government Homelessness and Social Housing Charter:

A partnership of 13 Councils representing Melbourne's East and South East region whose purpose is to address the urgent need for increased social housing and a more effective, integrated and supported homelessness services system.

Action on Alcohol Flagship Group:

This is a partnership of eastern Councils, community health services and specialist agencies from across the East working together to reduce the harmful impacts of alcohol in our local communities.

Eastern Elder Abuse Network:

A collaboration of agencies across the east leading primary prevention practice of abuse of the older person. This network covers communications, primary prevention and response.

Knox Emergency Relief Network:

This network is a collaboration of emergency relief agencies. Their purpose is to collaborate, share expertise and identify opportunities to improve emergency relief for the community.

We will also continue to:

- Work with the State Government and its agencies to undertake public health initiatives, projects and programs.
- Support and collaborate with service providers and community groups to provide health and support services, particularly for those in need.
- Work with First Nations organisations to ensure positive health and wellbeing outcomes for Kulin country and the Knox Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- Work with private business, specialised health peak bodies, neighbourhood houses and other community groups, Victoria Police, community health organisations (such as Eastern Access Community Health and Eastern Health).
- Work and collaborate with other councils.
- Ensure individuals have the right information to make informed lifestyle choices, and know where to go for help when needed.
- Work with community members through advisory committees, community engagement, grant programs, etc.

Some of our partners who participated in the engagement and contributed to our Council Plan are listed below. These organisations, and all our partners, are committed to contributing to positive health and wellbeing outcomes for our community.

- Baptistcare
- Boronia Community Church of Christ
- Community Pharmacy
- Department of Education and Training
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
- Department of Health
- Eastern Access Community Health
- Eastern Community Legal Centre
- Eastern Domestic Violence Service
- Eastern Health
- Ferntree Gully Arts Society Inc.
- Gamblers Help
- Knox Environment Society
- Knox InfoLink Inc.
- Migrant Information Centre
- National Disability Insurance Scheme
- Outer East Primary Care Partnership
- Regional Family Violence Partnership
- SalvoCare Eastern
- Shree Swaminarayan Temple Society Australia Melbourne
- Swinburne University of Technology
- Temple Society Australia
- Victorian Council of Churches Emergencies Ministry

Health and Wellbeing initiatives

Throughout this Council Plan, there are a number of strategies and initiatives that show how Council will contribute to our community's health and wellbeing. These were informed by:

- The Victorian public *Health and Wellbeing plan 2019-2023*.
- Research including Victorian population data, crime statistics, etc, and community engagement activities with the community, stakeholders and Council staff to identify emerging priorities and community need.
- The *Climate Change Act 2017* and the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, as well as the requirement for councils to outline ways in which they will contribute to reducing family violence.
- The actions and achievements of the *Community and Council Plan 2017-2021*.
- The results of the COVID-19 Household Impact Survey to understand the impact on health and wellbeing and to inform recovery.

We have flagged the initiatives that will contribute to the health and wellbeing of our community with a ♦ symbol. When you see this symbol you will know that these initiatives will help us become a healthier, stronger, more resilient and connected community.



Knox Council Plan

Family violence

Preventing family violence continues to be one of Council's key priorities and is evidenced by the breadth of work Council does in this space, spanning prevention through to response.

In 2020, Council endorsed a Family Violence Statement of Commitment, publicly reaffirming our role in preventing and responding to family violence. An organisational scan was conducted in 2021 which highlighted the extent of family violence initiatives including:

- **Primary prevention** - engagement with state and local campaigns on gender equality, healthy masculinities, ageism and racism, community training and health promotion initiatives.
- **Early intervention** - resource development for early identification and help seeking resources for both broader community engagement and settings-based.
- **Response** - counselling services, building capacity of our early years and emergency management teams in identifying family violence and strengthening links with our partner agencies for more effective referral.

To further focus our work a Family Violence Action Plan will be developed over the coming months.



Our First Nations People

Our First Nations People are an important part of Knox's past, present and future. In 2021, Knox City Council undertook an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Needs Analysis. It identified five areas of focus in relation to engagement with and support for our First Nations People.

- **Health and Wellbeing:** For the health and wellbeing of the Knox Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to flourish it must include a holistic, whole of life cycle view of health that includes physical, cultural, spiritual, emotional, economic and mental health and wellbeing.
- **Recognition and Respect:** Respect and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their cultures increases everyone's awareness and appreciation of a culture and civilisation enriching our history for at least 65,000 years.
- **Employment and Economic Development:** Employment and Economic Development is essential to start bridging the gap of inequality between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Adequate employment is a key to health and wellbeing in any community.
- **Civic Participation:** Effective civic participation can be achieved when all members of the community feel valued, safe and recognised.
- **Cultural Heritage:** Access to Land and Protection of Cultural Heritage. Country plays a significant role in Aboriginal culture, there are many places that tell stories of events and practices within the landscape.

We commit to working in partnership with our First Nations organisations and community to address these focus areas and implement key initiatives to ensure understanding, respect, trust and wellbeing of our First Nations People.



Helping our community recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our community in many ways, and continues to do so.

In 2020, Council staff spoke with a range of stakeholders to understand:

- The economic impacts on local businesses and industries.
- The impacts on the natural environment and local built infrastructure.
- The impacts on the emotional, social, spiritual, financial and physical wellbeing of individuals in Knox and local communities in the municipality.

In addition to these conversations, we collected perspectives and experiences from the community using the COVID-19 Household Impact Survey. The findings of this comprehensive survey supported the learnings of our informal engagements occurring between Council and community on an ongoing basis during this period.

The cumulative impact of the pandemic over time is yet to be seen but is expected to significantly affect some areas, in particular:

- Mental health.
- Social isolation.
- Business and family/individual financial health.
- Reinforcing existing and creating new vulnerabilities in our community.

The ongoing nature of the pandemic requires flexibility. We are responding to the pandemic by implementing a range of relief measures and supporting those most at risk now, while we plan for recovery.

The goal for recovery is to support our community to deal with the impacts of the pandemic and build our resilience for the future. It's not just about getting things 'back to normal', it's about rebuilding, learning from this challenge and innovating, so we can emerge stronger.

Throughout this Council Plan we have identified some key initiatives that will be undertaken over the next four years to support our community's recovery and build resilience.



Our 10-year Community Vision

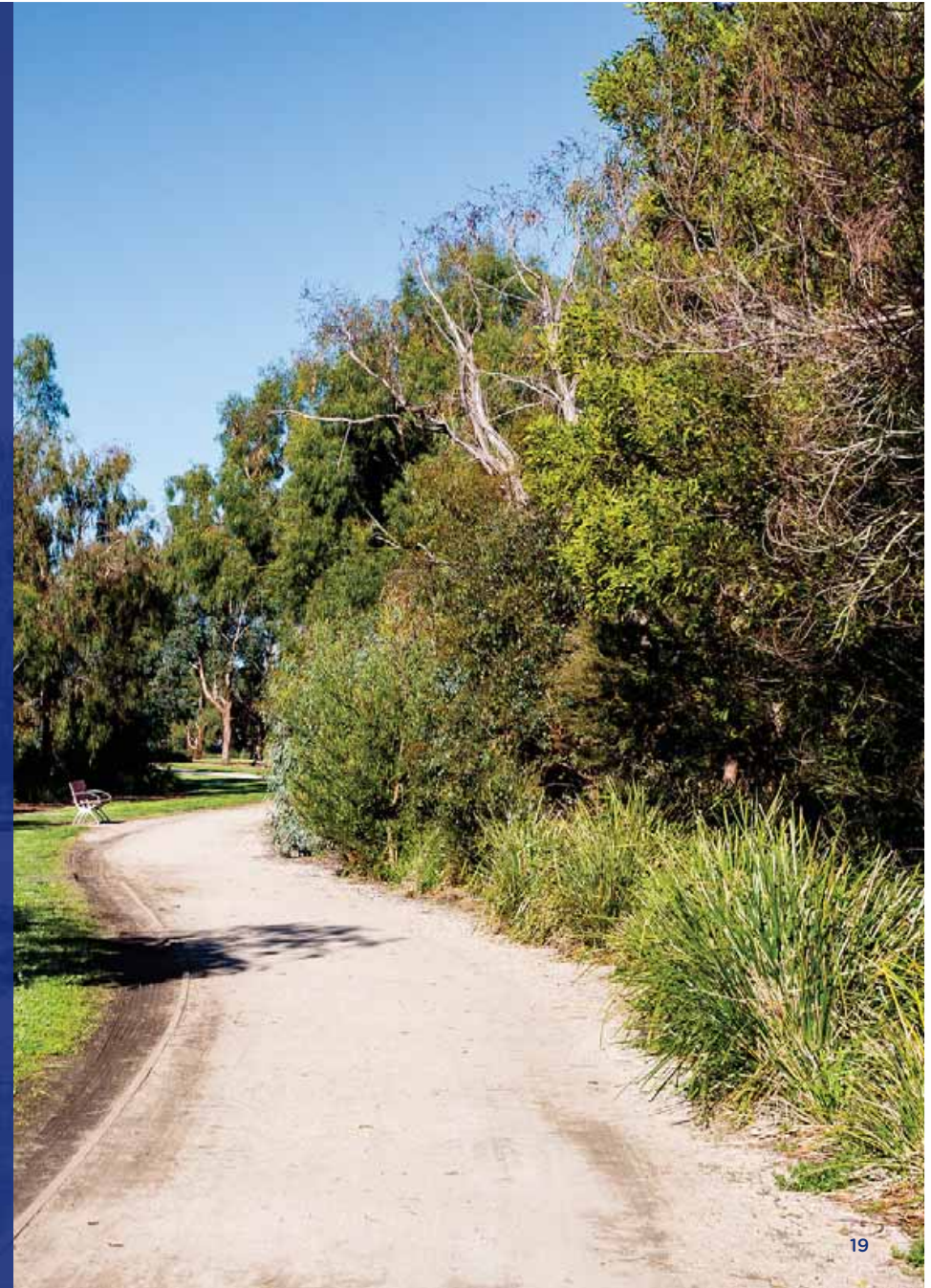
In 2020 we asked you to tell us about your aspirations for the future of Knox. Through face-to-face activities and online community forums and focus groups, people of all ages told us what they love about Knox now and what they want it to be like in 10 years.

Based on what we heard, we developed and released five vision statements for public voting. This vision statement was selected by the vast majority of those that voted as the one that best reflects our community's aspirations.

Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive.

This is the future of Knox! It's what everyone in our community – individuals, community groups, organisations, and Council - will all work towards over the next 10 years.

You can read more about our Community Vision and the aspirations of our community in the Knox Community Plan 2021-2031 on Council's website.



Our Key Directions

The Community Plan is a long-term document which talks about what you want Knox to be like in the future. It contains five Key Directions which describe in further detail what we as a community are going to focus on to achieve our Community Vision.



Opportunity and innovation

Knox strives to be a city of opportunity, embracing innovation and change, and providing local learning and employment opportunities for all. It's a place where people and business can thrive.



Neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure

Building on what's great about our city, Knox's housing and infrastructure will meet the changing needs of our community.



Natural environment and sustainability

Knox's natural environment is protected and enhanced to ensure sustainability for future generations.



Connection, resilience and wellbeing

Knox is a place to call home. Our community is strong, healthy and we support and respect each other.



Civic engagement and integrity

Knox Council is a trusted and respected leader in our community, acting appropriately and ensuring all voices are heard.

These Key Directions drive the work of Council and ensure we are working towards achieving the Community Vision. The following pages detail the work we will do under each Key Direction and how we will know if we are making a difference.

How - the strategies that Council will use.

What - the initiatives that Council will undertake.

When - the year of the Council Plan that we will deliver our initiatives.

How we'll know if we're making a difference

These are indicators that tell us if the work that we're doing is contributing to a positive change in our community. Some of these Council will have sole control over, and others it will have influence over, but there are others (eg. other levels of government, service providers etc) that will also contribute to that change.

Our ongoing work

The services we provide and the everyday work that Council does that all contribute to our success in these areas.

Other strategic documents

The various other strategies and plans that we've adopted that will contribute to these Key Directions.

It must be noted that many of the initiatives we undertake, services we provide and plans we develop may contribute to more than one Key Direction. In this plan, they have been placed under the Key Direction to which they contribute the most.



Opportunity and innovation

Knox strives to be a city of opportunity, embracing innovation and change, and providing local learning and employment opportunities for all. It's a place where people and business can thrive.

What you told us

You told us you want Knox to:

- Support businesses that have suffered from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Be recognised as a strong business hub, supporting existing businesses and attracting new investment.
- Have local employment for people of all abilities.
- Provide lifelong learning opportunities for all people.

“...I believe, our strength is that we have a highly skilled workforce that other countries don't, especially in the emerging economies”

Focus group attendee (November 2020)

How is this important for our health and wellbeing?

Having access to lifelong learning opportunities and local employment is essential for our social connection, mental health, self-expression, and financial stability and growth.

How Council will contribute to our success

We will partner with and support industries and businesses to create a strong local economy with employment and lifelong learning for all.

HOW (the strategies we'll use)	WHAT (the initiatives we'll undertake)	WHEN (years)
Maximise the local economy by supporting existing businesses and attracting new investment.	Work with Maroondah and Yarra Ranges Councils to deliver key initiatives of the Bayswater Business Precinct Transformation Strategy.	1-4
	Work alongside the State Government on the implementation of the Wantirna Health Precinct Masterplan. ♦	1-2
	Research and review supply chain connectivity and networks, to enable and advance the circular economy.	2-4
	Continue to monitor the local economy to inform the strategic direction of future economic development initiatives.	2-4
Encourage and support opportunities for skills development and lifelong learning for all people in Knox.	Support the implementation of the State Government reform for the roll out of 3-year old kindergarten in the Knox municipality.	1
	Implement Council's decision regarding kindergarten expansion.	2-4
	Explore opportunities to increase the number and diversity of creative learning opportunities offered through Council's cultural and community venues. ♦	2
Support organisations in Knox to navigate recovery and new ways of working.	Implement business recovery programs identified through Knox recovery planning and continue to monitor the impacts of COVID-19 to inform future programs.	1
	Coordinate the implementation of Knox's Retail Activation Strategy.	1-3
	Support, connect and strengthen the creative industry sector through arts, cultural and economic development programs.	1

How we'll know if we're making a difference

Below are the indicators that will help us understand if we're making a difference under this Key Direction.

MUNICIPAL INDICATORS:	COUNCIL INDICATORS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining the number of existing businesses in Knox. • An increase in new businesses in Knox. • More residents employed in Knox. • More people with need for assistance employed in Knox. • An increase in Knox's Gross Regional Product/capita. • Improved secondary school completion rates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased participation in Knox's Business Education program. • More community education programs run by Knox. • Participation in funded 3-year old kindergarten. • Increased participation in funded 4-year-old kindergarten.

Our ongoing work:

The services we provide that contribute to this Key Direction include:

- Economic Development
- Investment & Partnerships
- Innovation
- Strategy, Learning and Evaluation (Family and Children's Services)

Other strategic documents:

There are other strategic documents we've adopted that help us plan in this area. These include:

- Knox Land for Business Plan
- Knox ICT Strategy





Neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure

Building on what’s great about our city, Knox’s housing and infrastructure will meet the changing needs of our community.

What you told us

You told us you want Knox to:

- Have a range of appropriate, affordable and accessible housing options.
- Be a great place to live, work, connect and play.
- Have accessible paths that connect well.
- Have good public transport services.

“...what Knox can do is to bring appropriate housing into the environment in such a way that the environment is also catered for. So for example, for every new building there has to be one new tree... so that there’s a balance between the two.”

Focus group attendee (November 2020)

How is this important for our health and wellbeing?

Affordable and accessible housing and infrastructure are essential to the safety and wellbeing of individuals and increase the liveability of Knox.

How Council will contribute to our success

We will provide well-planned and maintained neighbourhoods and advocate for integrated and accessible transport options.

HOW (the strategies we'll use)	WHAT (the initiatives we'll undertake)	WHEN (years)
Plan for and support diverse housing to meet changing community needs.	Develop and implement a Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan to increase the supply of social housing and address homelessness in Knox. ♦	1-4
	Commence review of the Knox Housing Strategy 2015. ♦	3-4
	Build on regional partnerships by contributing to the work of the Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance (EAHA). ♦	2-4
Create, enhance and maintain places and spaces for people to live, work, play and connect.	Facilitate and support the implementation of the Boronia Renewal program.	1-4
	Progress implementation of the Knox Central program.	1-4
	In response to the Victorian Government's kindergarten expansion reform, continue to work with the State Government to plan for early years infrastructure in the municipality. ♦	1
	Advocate to state and federal governments for funding to implement Stage 2 of the Lewis Park Master Plan.	1
	Update Council's flood modelling across Knox.	1
	Understand community needs across the suburbs of Knox to plan for community infrastructure requirements for the next 5-20 years. ♦	2-4
	Develop an Integrated Major Infrastructure Development Plan for sport, leisure and recreation.	2

Table continued on following page

HOW (the strategies we'll use)	WHAT (the initiatives we'll undertake)	WHEN (years)
Create, enhance and maintain places and spaces for people to live, work, play and connect.	Commence review and upgrade of Council's strategic planning documents including the Open Space Plan, Play Space Plan and Liveable Streets Plan. ♦	2-3
	Review and develop the Knox Domestic Animal Management Plan.	1 & 4
	Finalise and implement the Bayswater Renewal Strategy.	3-4
Provide, maintain and advocate for accessible and sustainable ways to move around Knox.	Advocate to State Government for improved public transport and arterial road connectivity in Knox. ♦	1-4
	Enhance sustainable transport utilisation through delivery of active transport infrastructure. ♦	2-4
	Implement Knox's Parking Strategy.	1-2
	Provide new and innovative community transport for the Knox community. ♦	2-4

How we'll know if we're making a difference

Below are the indicators that will help us understand if we're making a difference under this Key Direction.

MUNICIPAL INDICATORS:	COUNCIL INDICATORS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More social and rental housing that is affordable to low income households in Knox. • A reduction in the median household incomes needed to purchase a typical house. • Increased public transport usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More one and two bedroom dwellings approved for construction in Knox. • An increase in the number of cyclists recorded on a typical day at a typical site on Knox's shared path networks. • Improved community satisfaction with recreation facilities, arts centres and libraries, appearance of public areas, sealed local roads, and planning for population growth.

Our ongoing work:

The services we provide that contribute to this Key Direction include:

- Asset Management
- Building
- Community Transport
- Facilities
- Major Initiatives
- Municipal Strategic Social Planning
- Open Space Management
- Operations
- Planning
- Social and Community Infrastructure
- Strategic Land Use Planning
- Traffic and Transport

Other strategic documents:

There are other strategic documents we've adopted that help us plan in this area. These include:

- Affordable Housing Action Plan
- Integrated Transport Plan
- Bicycle Plan
- Bridge Asset Management Plan
- Road Asset Management Plan
- Road Management Plan
- Carpark Asset Management Plan
- Liveable Streets Plan
- Drainage Asset Management Plan
- Building Asset Management Plan
- Open Space Plan
- Domestic Animal Management Plan
- Play Space Plan
- Playground Asset Management Plan
- Public Toilet Implementation Plan



Natural environment and sustainability

Knox’s natural environment is protected and enhanced to ensure sustainability for future generations.

What you told us

You told us you want Knox to:

- Protect and enhance its biodiversity and waterways.
- Have developments that are not to the detriment of the natural environment.
- Combat the negative impacts of climate change.
- Reduce, reuse and recycle, creating less waste.

“...the lovely native flora and fauna - number one priority is that it is preserved...”

Focus group attendee (November 2020)

How is this important for our health and wellbeing?

A healthy natural environment is essential to good food supplies and clean air and water. Our reserves and parkland also provide spaces to enjoy and connect with nature, which can also reduce stress and improve our mental health.

How Council will contribute to our success

We will plan our city in a way that preserves and enhances our natural environment, identify ways to reduce waste and work with our community to respond to the impacts of climate change.

HOW (the strategies we'll use)	WHAT (the initiatives we'll undertake)	WHEN (years)
Preserve our biodiversity and waterways, and enhance our urban landscape.	Undertake vegetation mapping analysis and habitat corridor planning to manage our urban biodiversity.	1
	Implement Knox's Biodiversity Resilience Plan. ♦	2-4
	Develop a Domestic Wastewater Management Plan for Knox.	3
Prepare for, mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.	Commence implementation of the high priority Year 1 actions of the Climate Response Plan, including the development of the landfill solar farm business case. ♦	1
	Implement the high priority actions from Years 2-4 of the Climate Response Plan. ♦	2-4
	Trial new and recycled materials in the construction of shared paths and as part of Council's road renewal program. ♦	2-4
	Investigate electric heavy vehicle transport options to deliver Council services.	2
Lead by example and encourage our community to reduce waste.	Enhance Knox's Waste and Recycling Education programs to focus on reducing waste to landfill and increasing recycling. ♦	1
	Implement Food and Green Organics (FOGO) waste service across Knox. ♦	2
	Secure long-term solutions for the treatment and disposal of residual waste streams.	2-4
	Progress planning and programming to standardise bin lids across Knox in line with Recycling Victoria policy.	2

How we'll know if we're making a difference

Below are the indicators that will help us understand if we're making a difference under this Key Direction.

MUNICIPAL INDICATORS:	COUNCIL INDICATORS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More houses within 400m of open space. • An increase in tree canopy coverage. • A reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. • An increase in renewable energy usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction in Council's corporate greenhouse gas emissions. • An increase in Council's corporate renewable energy usage. • A higher annual net gain of trees in Knox. • Improved community satisfaction with waste management and environmental sustainability. • An increase in kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill.

Our ongoing work:

The services we provide that contribute to this Key Direction include:

- Biodiversity
- Integrated Water Management
- Sustainable Futures
- Waste Management

Other strategic documents:

There are other strategic documents we've adopted that help us plan in this area. These include:

- Climate Change Response Plan.
- Stormwater Quality Management Plan
- Street Tree Asset Management Plan
- Waste Management Plan





Connection, resilience and wellbeing

Knox is a place to call home. Our community is strong, healthy and we support and respect each other.

What you told us

You told us you want Knox to:

- Be a community that respects, supports and values all people.
- Have good physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- Provide the right services for those in need.
- As a community, be ready to respond to all emergencies and threats to our wellbeing, and support each other to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“People who care about each other and their community comes from shared respect and shared values; build on the harmony...”

Focus group attendee (November 2020)

How is this important for our health and wellbeing?

Belonging and social inclusion are essential to mental health and general wellbeing. The ability to practice and connect with culture is also essential to all forms of health and wellbeing.

How Council will contribute to our success

We will partner with others to deliver services that are inclusive and accessible to the whole community, and that support wellbeing, healthy and safe living, connection to the community, and cultural interaction.

HOW (the strategies we'll use)	WHAT (the initiatives we'll undertake)	WHEN (years)	
Support our community to improve their physical, mental and social health and wellbeing.	Respond to emerging social and health issues caused by COVID-19 pandemic. ♦	1-2	
	Prioritise mental health and wellbeing initiatives by focusing on community partnerships and collective impact. ♦	1-4	
	Progress implementation of the Children, Youth and Seniors Plan. ♦	2-4	
	Develop and implement an Active Participation Plan - Beyond Structured Sport. ♦	2-4	
	Review the Sports Club Development Program and usage of Council resources to support club sustainability. ♦	2-3	
	Explore opportunities for active cultural tourism through creating a Public Art Trail.	2	
	Support the creation of new physical activity-based programs and community infrastructure across the municipality. ♦	2-4	
	Develop and implement programs to enable older and vulnerable residents to access technology. ♦	2-4	
	Foster inclusivity, equality, belonging and safety within the community.	Contribute to the collective efforts in preventing and responding to family violence. ♦	1-4
		Embed the State Government's Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) to support the safety and wellbeing of children. ♦	2-4
Develop and implement the Municipal Disability Leadership Plan. ♦		2-4	
Develop and implement the Dementia Friendly Action Plan. ♦		2-4	
Work and partner with the multicultural community and key services to support our diverse communities. ♦		2-3	
	Implement Council's adopted Gender Equality Action Plan. ♦	2-4	

Table continued on following page

HOW (the strategies we'll use)	WHAT (the initiatives we'll undertake)	WHEN (years)
Foster inclusivity, equality, belonging and safety within the community.	Develop and implement education and advocacy programs to address ageism and increase community respect and inclusion for all ages across Knox. ♦	2-4
	Develop and deliver a range of evidence based community training initiatives to build volunteer capacity. ♦	2-4
Honour and integrate First Nations Culture into actions and environments.	Work in partnership with local First Nations people, relevant services and key networks to progress Reconciliation. ♦	1-4
Support the community to identify and lead community strengthening initiatives.	Develop and implement a Resilience Plan to support the community to cope with stresses, emergencies and disasters.	1-4
	Participate in the review of the Eastern Region Pandemic Plan.	2
	Support the review of the Knox Municipal Emergency Management Plan and associated sub plans.	2
	Develop a sustained and responsible model for supporting community-led events, particularly in a post-COVID-19 environment.	2-4

How we'll know if we're making a difference

Below are the indicators that will help us understand if we're making a difference under this Key Direction.

MUNICIPAL INDICATORS:	COUNCIL INDICATORS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reduction in the number of adults who report high or very high psychological distress. More residents who report their health as good, very good or excellent. An increase in the level of agreement that multiculturalism makes life better. Improved perceptions of safety. An increase in the number of adults who feel a sense of belonging. More adults in Knox who volunteer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More infants and children in the Knox region immunised at Council run immunisation sessions. Increased participation in key ages and stages Maternal and Child Health visits. Improved satisfaction with cultural activities. An increase in the number of opportunities and avenues to include First Nations Culture within Knox. An increase in the number of meals delivered through Meals on Wheels. More clients and community members supported through Council's Community Access and Support programs. Greater sports participation rates.

Our ongoing work:

The services we provide that contribute to this Key Direction include:

- Active Communities
- Active Living
- Arts & Cultural Services
- Business Performance (Community Access & Support)
- Community Access, Equity and Safety
- Community Partnerships
- Community Safety
- Emergency Management
- Integrated Services (Family and Children's Services)
- Leisure Services
- Libraries
- Local Laws
- Occupational Therapy
- Youth Services

Other strategic documents:

There are other strategic documents we've adopted that help us plan in this area. These include:

- Key Life Stages Plan
- Community Access and Equity Implementation Plan
- Arts and Culture Plan
- Municipal Fire Management Plan



Civic engagement and integrity

Knox Council is a trusted and respected leader in our community, acting appropriately and ensuring all voices are heard.

What you told us

You told us you want Knox to:

- Have lots of opportunities to have a say on matters that affect you.
- Use our resources effectively and efficiently.
- Be led by a Council that is open, transparent and accountable.

“Community ownership and people willing to speak up about their community and speak up about what’s important to them. There is an ownership to the place and people will take pride in where we/they live.”

Community Forum attendee (September 2020)

How is this important for our health and wellbeing?

The opportunity to be heard allows people to help shape their community and in turn create a sense of belonging and being valued.

How Council will contribute to our success

We will pro-actively lead our changing community, using transparent decision-making, well-planned and effective collaboration, and ensuring all voices are heard.

HOW (the strategies we'll use)	WHAT (the initiatives we'll undertake)	WHEN (years)
Provide opportunities for all people in Knox to have their say.	Implement priority actions of the Community Engagement Framework and Action Plan.	1-4
Manage our resources effectively to ensure financial sustainability and improved customer experience.	Develop and implement a Customer Experience Strategy and Action Plan.	1-4
	Refresh and implement Council's ICT Strategy, including consideration of Smart Cities technology.	2-4
	Refresh and implement the 'THRIVE: Future Ready Knox' organisational strategy.	2-4
Ensure our processes are transparent and decisions are accountable.	Develop a procurement policy to ensure commercial and best practice outcomes.	1
	Conduct the 2024 General Election and implement a comprehensive induction program for the elected members.	4
	Implement an internal self-assessment process to monitor Council's performance in decision making.	2

How we'll know if we're making a difference

Below are some of the indicators that will help us understand if we're making a difference under this Key Direction.

COUNCIL INDICATORS:

- Community satisfaction in the areas of:
 - Decision making.
 - Customer service.
 - Overall direction.
 - Overall performance.
 - Consultation & engagement.
- More council services with a technology based self-service option.
- Meet liquidity and indebted targets from the adopted budget.

Our ongoing work:

The services we provide that contribute to this Key Direction include:

- Communications
- Customer Service
- Financial Services
- Governance
- People and Culture
- Information Technology
- Research and Mapping
- Strategy and Business Intelligence

Other strategic documents:

There are other strategic documents we've adopted that help us plan in this area. These include:

- Financial Plan 2021-2031
- Thrive: Future Ready Knox organisational strategy
- Annual Budget
- Revenue and Rating Plan
- Strategic Asset Management Plan
- Community Engagement Policy and Framework
- ICT Strategy



Our people

Our organisation is made up of over 1,000 staff members, led by our Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Bruce Dobson.

The CEO reports directly to Council and is responsible for establishing and maintaining an organisational structure that ensures the decisions of Council are implemented, the Council Plan is delivered, and ultimately our Community Vision is achieved.

The Executive Leadership Team is appointed by the CEO and assists in the overall leadership and governance of the organisation. The Executive Leadership Team is below and the organisation structure, as at October 2021, is illustrated to the right.



Bruce Dobson
Chief Executive Officer



Matt Kelleher
Director, City Strategy and Integrity



Tanya Scicluna
Director, Connected Communities



Samantha Mazer
Director, City Centre



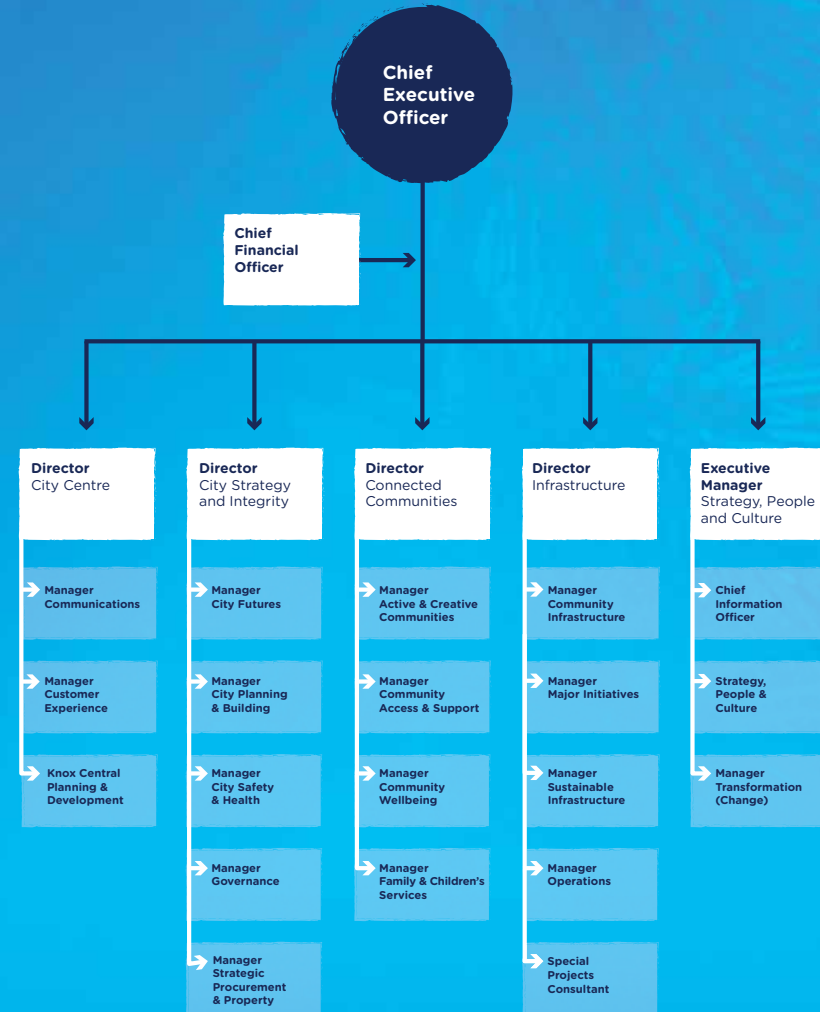
Grant Thorne
Director, Infrastructure



Sam Stanton
Executive Manager, Strategy, People & Culture

Each member of the Executive Leadership Team is responsible for a Directorate or an area of the organisation that reports directly into the CEO.

Organisation structure

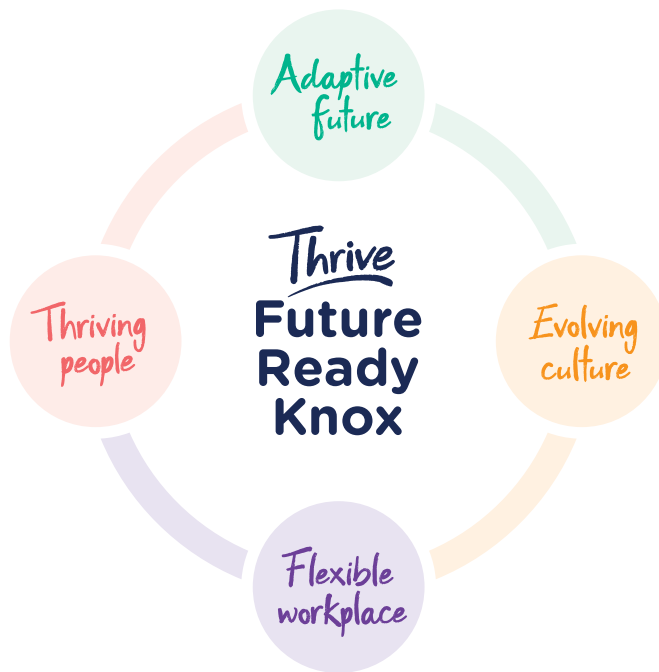


Our values

Thrive: Future Ready Knox is our organisational strategy that has been developed by Knox staff, for Knox staff.

We need to think about the future of work and adapt how we lead our changing business, so we have the right skillsets and mindsets to meet the changing needs of our community. We want to invest in our people so that everyone feels empowered to succeed for themselves and for others.

THRIVE commits us to leading our future across four inter-related priorities.



Adaptive future

We will be a resilient, adaptable and sustainable workplace, with a clear strategy of excellence and service.

Evolving culture

We strive to be an agile organisation built on a foundation of psychological safety and trust in our leaders, our teams and ourselves.

Flexible workplace

We will thrive in our inclusive and connected workplace, defined by flexible practices and spaces, and enabled by new technologies and business intelligence.

Thriving people

We will be defined by our resilient, diverse and capable people and will support them to keep growing and leveraging their passions, talents and skills.

Our values

Thrive also outlines our values which are the foundation to our success and culture at Knox. They represent what we stand for, inspire us and create a shared understanding to align the way we work with our organisational purpose of **'empowering our diverse community to thrive and prosper'** and ultimately our Community Vision.



Monitoring our progress

There are many ways we monitor our progress and make sure we are on the right track.

Knox City Council collects data from numerous sources, conducts regular surveys and undertakes community engagement activities to keep track of and inform what's happening in our community.

Going forward, we will look at different ways to collaborate and contribute to Knox's success over the next 10 years. We will engage with our partners and stakeholders to build on our strengths, embrace opportunities and find solutions to the challenges facing our community.

We will review the Community Plan every four years as we produce a new Council Plan. These reviews will take Knox's pulse and make sure our Community Vision is still reflective of our community's aspirations. We will check on the availability of new data, touch base with the community, and review the key directions with agencies and stakeholders to ensure they are still relevant and meeting community needs.

Similarly we will conduct thorough annual reviews of our Council Plan (including the Municipal Health & Wellbeing Plan) to ensure we are still meeting the needs of the community and remain adaptive to our changing environment. We will make sure our strategies are still the right ones, and add to or change our initiatives where appropriate.

We will keep you up to date on the work we are doing to contribute to achieving the Community Vision through regular reporting against our Council Plan. You can find this information in our annual reports, in various publications and on our website.



Keeping in touch and opportunities to have your say

Knox City Council is committed to seeking feedback, making sure you are aware of issues that affect you and providing opportunities to have your say. There are a number of ways you can do this.

Visit our Have Your Say website to see how you can contribute to projects and tell us what you think of our draft plans and strategies - www.knox.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay

Knox City Council has several Advisory Committees that provide advice on the development, implementation, monitoring, and review of programs or activities. These committees are made up of community members, Council officers and current Councillors. Find out if there are opportunities available in your area of interest on our website: www.knox.vic.gov.au/our-council/about-council/council-committees

Sign up to receive Knox eNews, our monthly email newsletter which will keep you informed about the latest news, events and activities across the community: www.knox.vic.gov.au/email-newsletter

You can also
contact Council
via the following
methods

Phone: 9298 8000

Email: knoxcc@knox.vic.gov.au

Website: www.knox.vic.gov.au

Social media: facebook.com/knoxccouncil
or via Twitter @knoxcc

Visit Council in person: Knox Civic Centre
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knox
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**For any queries please call the
Civic Centre on 9298 8000 or email
communityplan@knox.vic.gov.au**





knox

your city



Financial Plan

2021 – 2031

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1. Legislative Requirements

Knox’s integrated strategic planning and reporting framework (pictured below) illustrates the medium and long term plans that guide and manage our city.

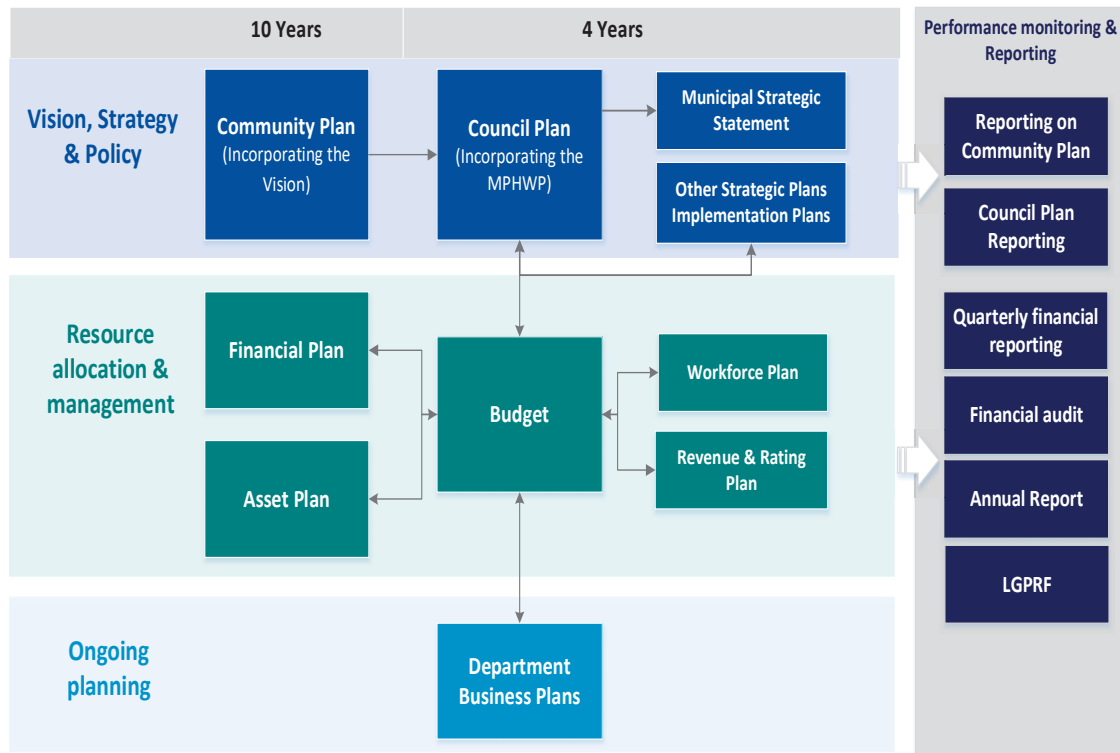
The Knox Community Plan 2021-2031 incorporates a Community Vision statement and describes our community’s aspirations for the future. It sets out Key Directions which articulate what we, as a collective, need to focus on to achieve our vision.

Knox’s Council Plan 2021-2025 provides direction to our organisation, describes how we’re going to contribute to the achievement of the Community Vision and shows how we’re going to measure our success. It also demonstrates our commitment to the health and wellbeing of our community by incorporating Knox’s Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP).

There are also a number of other plans that guide our work. They include plans about how we’re going to manage our financial resources (the Financial Plan, Budget and Revenue and Rating Plan), how we’re going to manage and maintain our assets (the Asset Plan) and how we can make sure we have the right staff to deliver our services and initiatives (the Workforce Plan).

This plan is a new requirement of the *Local Government Act 2020*, which needs to be developed or reviewed and formally adopted by 31 October in the year following each Council election. It is an important part of Council’s integrated planning framework, all of which is created to help Council achieve its community vision:

“Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive”.



1.1 Strategic Planning Principles

The Financial Plan provides a 10 year financially sustainable projection regarding how the actions of the Council Plan may be funded to achieve the Community Vision. The Financial Plan is developed in the context of the following strategic planning principles:

- a) Council has an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting.
- b) Council financial plan addresses the Community Vision by funding the aspirations of the Council Plan. The Council Plan aspirations and actions are formulated in the context of the Community Vision.
- c) The Financial Plan statements articulate the 10-year financial resources necessary to implement the goals and aspirations of the Council Plan to achieve the Community Vision.
- d) Council's strategic planning principles identify and address the risks to effective implementation of the Financial Plan. The financial risks are included at section 1.2.2 below.
- e) The Financial Plan provides for the strategic planning principles of progress monitoring of progress and reviews to identify and adapt to changing circumstances.

1.2 Financial Planning Principles

The Financial Plan demonstrates the following financial management principles:

- 1.2.1 Revenue, expenses, assets, liabilities, investments and financial transactions are managed in accordance with Council's financial policies and strategic plans.
- 1.2.2 Management of the following financial risks:
 - a) the financial viability of the Council (refer to section 2.1 Financial Policy Statements).
 - b) the management of current and future liabilities of the Council. The estimated 10 year liabilities are disclosed in section 3.2 Balance Sheet projections.
 - c) the beneficial enterprises of Council (where appropriate).
- 1.2.3 Financial policies and strategic plans are designed to provide financial stability and predictability to the community.
- 1.2.4 Council maintains accounts and records that explain its financial operations and financial position (refer section 3 Financial Statements)

1.3 Community Engagement

During 2020-21 Council undertook a large research and engagement project to shape the future of Knox and inform the development of its new plans.

Almost 4,500 community members and organisations, businesses, stakeholders, partners and members of Council's Advisory Committees took part in various engagement activities to:

- gain an understanding of the community's aspirations for the future of Knox;
- test the data gathered through research;
- gain feedback on the goals in the current plan; and
- identify priority areas for the community and Council.

Based on the information gathered through the engagement, five Key Directions were established to provide the framework for our plans and guide the work of Council.

Council and the community will work together, focusing on these Key Directions over the next 10 years to achieve our vision:

- **Opportunity and Innovation** - Knox strives to be a city of opportunity, embracing innovation and change, and providing local learning and employment opportunities. It's a place where people and business can thrive.
- **Neighbourhoods, Housing and Innovation** - Building on what's great about our city, Knox's housing and infrastructure will meet the changing needs of our community.
- **Natural Environment and Sustainability** - Knox's natural environment is protected and enhanced to ensure sustainability for future generations.
- **Connection, Resilience and Wellbeing** - Knox is a place to call home. Our community is strong, healthy and we support and respect each other.
- **Civic Engagement and Integrity** - Knox Council is trusted and respected leader in our community, acting appropriately and ensuring all voices are heard.

1.4 Service Performance Principles

Council services are designed to be purposeful, targeted to community needs and value for money. The service performance principles are listed below:

- a) Services are provided in an equitable manner and are responsive to the diverse needs of the community. The Council Plan is designed to identify the key services and projects to be delivered to the community. The Financial Plan provides the mechanism to demonstrate how the service aspirations within the Council Plan may be funded.
- b) Services are accessible to the relevant users within the community.
- c) Council provides quality services that provide value for money to the community. The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) is designed to communicate council's performance regarding the provision of quality and efficient services.
- d) Council is developing a performance monitoring framework to continuously improve its service delivery standards.
- e) Council is developing a service delivery framework that considers and responds to community feedback and complaints regarding service provision.

1.5 Asset Plan Integration

Integration to the Asset Plan is a key principle of the Council's strategic financial planning principles. The purpose of this integration is designed to ensure that future funding is allocated in a manner that supports service delivery in terms of the plans and the effective management of Council's assets into the future.

The Asset Plan identifies the operational and strategic practices which will ensure that Council manages assets across their life cycle in a financially sustainable manner. The Asset Plan, and associated asset management policies, provide council with a sound base to understand the risk associated with managing its assets for the community's benefit.

The Asset Plan is designed to inform the 10-year Financial Plan by identifying the amount of capital renewal, backlog and maintenance funding that is required over the life of each asset category. The level of funding will incorporate knowledge of asset condition, the risk assessment issues as well as the impact of reviewing and setting intervention and service levels for each asset class.

In addition to identifying the operational and strategic practices that ensure that Council manages assets across their life cycle in a financially sustainable manner, the Asset Plan quantifies the asset portfolio and the financial implications of those practices. Together the Financial Plan and Asset Plan seek to balance projected investment requirements against projected budgets.

2. Financial Plan Context

This section describes the context and external / internal environment and consideration in determining the 10-year financial projections and assumptions.

2.1 Financial Policy Statements

This section defines the policy statements, and associated measures, that demonstrates Council’s financial sustainability to fund the aspirations of the Community Vision and the Council Plan.

Policy Statement	Measure	Target	Forecast 2020-21	Budget 2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Consistent underlying surplus results	Adjusted underlying result greater than \$0	\$0	\$5,700	(\$54,217)	\$4,617	\$10,105	\$12,438	\$20,409	\$20,504	\$17,801	\$19,022	\$23,756	\$26,977
Ensure Council maintains sufficient working capital to meet its debt obligations as they fall due	Current Assets / Current Liabilities greater than 100%	100.00%	144.58%	123.28%	119.89%	121.37%	118.89%	127.96%	144.28%	138.37%	116.99%	121.22%	117.99%
Allocate adequate funds towards renewal capital in order to replace assets and infrastructure as they reach the end of their service life	Asset Renewal and Upgrade Expenses / Depreciation above 100%	100.00%	164.89%	362.66%	217.58%	206.55%	184.52%	152.14%	141.35%	149.36%	174.65%	143.64%	132.49%
That Council applies loan funding to new capital and maintains total borrowings in line with rate income and growth of the municipality	Total Borrowings / Rate Revenue to remain below 80%	80.00%	0.00%	69.00%	82.28%	74.31%	69.17%	57.64%	54.60%	58.11%	53.47%	40.97%	25.48%
Council maintains sufficient unrestricted cash to ensure ongoing liquidity as well as to address unforeseen cash imposts if required	Unrestricted Cash / Current Liabilities to be maintained above 60%	60.00%	60.87%	43.43%	44.52%	45.58%	51.22%	63.72%	80.93%	76.16%	57.67%	60.36%	55.65%

2.2 Strategic Actions

Following a series of community engagement activities, Council has identified the following strategic actions that will support the community’s aspirations identified in the Community Plan 2021-2031 and delivery of the Council Plan 2021-2025.

The strategic actions are included to the 10-year financial plan and, where appropriate, referenced in the commentary associated with the 10-year Comprehensive Income Statement and the 10-year Statement of Capital Works.

- That council adopt the budgeted statement of financial performance (Comprehensive Income Statement) as an integral part of the budget setting process for current and future budgets.
- That Council adopt the budgeted statement of financial position (Balance Sheet) as being an integral part of the budget setting process for current and future budgets.
- That Council adopt the budgeted statement of cash flows as being an integral part of the budget setting process for current and future budgets.
- That the working capital ratio be targeted to remain above a ratio of 1.0.
- That capital expenditure on asset renewal projects (and upgrades that have a significant renewal component) to exceed depreciation expense, and that the asset renewal gap be reduced.
- That debt funding be applied to growth infrastructure where necessary.
- That Council consider the most appropriate fees and charges strategy so that adequate funds are recovered to offset operational expenses in annual and future budgets.
- Maintain essential services at not less than current levels.

2.3 Assumptions to the Financial Plan Statements

This section presents information regarding the assumptions to the Comprehensive Income Statement for the 10 years from 2021-22 to 2030-31. The assumptions comprise the annual escalations / movement for each item of the Comprehensive Income Statement.

Escalation Factors % Movements	Budget									
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
CPI	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Growth in Properties (number)	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600
Rates and Charges	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Supplementary Rates (\$'000)	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250
Statutory Fees and Fines	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
User Fees	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%
Grants - Operating (excluding VGC)	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Grants - Operating (VGC)	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Grants - Capital (excluding VGC)	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Grants - Capital (VGC and Roads to Recovery)	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Contributions - Monetary	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Contributions - Non-Monetary (\$'000)	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Other Income	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Employee Costs	2.61%	2.61%	2.61%	2.61%	2.61%	2.20%	2.20%	2.20%	2.20%	2.20%
Materials and Services	0.50%	0.75%	1.00%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%
Utilities	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%
Contributions and Donations	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Other Expenses	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%

2.3.1 Rates and Charges

Planning for future rate increases has been an important component of the Financial Plan process. The State Government has introduced the *Fair Go Rates System* which sets out the maximum amount councils may increase rates in a year. The Financial Plan assumes a rate increase of 1.5 percent in 2021-22. The rates in 2022-23 (1.75 percent) and 2023-24 (2.0 percent) have been based on the Department of Treasury and Finance CPI estimates in November 2020. Increases from 2024-25 onwards are estimated to be 2.5%.

The Financial Plan assumes an additional 600 property assessments per annum, while supplementary rates are anticipated to be \$0.250 million per annum. The average Rates per Assessment for 2021-22 is estimated at \$1,603.

Waste management charges are levied on the basis of cost recovery. This is consistent with the position of the majority of councils given that waste charges are outside the Minister's Rate Cap. The budget reflects both an increase in Waste and Recycling Charges as well as increased contractor expenses.

More information can be found in Council's *Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-22*.

2.3.2 User Fees

User fees relate mainly to the recovery of service delivery costs from Council's extensive and highly diversified range of services provided to the community. Examples of user fees include:

- Kindergarten and Childcare fees
- Waste Management fees
- Aged and Health Care service fees
- Leases, recreational reserve and facility hire fees

Council endeavours, as much as possible, to be a full cost recovery service provider.

2.3.3 Statutory Fees and Fines

Statutory fees are fees and fines levied in accordance with legislation. Examples of statutory fees and fines include:

- Planning and subdivision fees
- Building and Inspection fees
- Infringements and fines
- Land Information Certificate fees

Increases in the Financial Plan have been based on the projected CPI.

2.3.4 Grants

Council receives tied operating grant funding from State and Federal sources, with these operating grants budgeted to increase by 2 percent per annum.

Council receives untied Financial Assistance Grants via the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission. These grants are composed of an operating and capital component, and are anticipated to increase by 1 percent per annum. The Roads to Recovery grant is also anticipated to increase by 1 percent.

Council does not budget for capital grants for specific projects that have not been confirmed. However Council will pro-actively advocate to other levels of government for grant funding support to deliver important infrastructure and service outcomes for the community. Council may use its own funds to leverage higher grant funding and maximise external funding opportunities.

2.3.5 Contributions

Contributions represent funds received by council, usually from non-government sources, and are usually linked to projects. Contributions can be made to council in the form of either cash payments or asset hand-overs.

Examples of contributions include:

- Monies collected from developers under planning and development agreements;
- Monies collected under developer contribution plans and infrastructure contribution plans;
- Contributions from user groups towards the upgrade of facilities;
- Assets handed over to council from developers at the completion of a subdivision, such as roads, drainage, and streetlights.

Contributions linked to developments can be received well before any council expenditure occurs. In this situation, the funds will be identified and held separately for the specific works identified in the agreements.

Developer contributions are statutory contributions and are transferred to a restricted reserve until utilised for a specific purpose through the capital works program or delivered as works in kind by developers. Income of this nature is unpredictable and is directly contingent on developer activities in the municipality.

2.3.6 Other Income

Revenue from other income mainly comprises investment income plus the recovery of income from a variety of sources and rental income received from the hire of Council buildings.

2.3.7 Employee Costs

Increases for employee costs reflect the salary increase for all staff pursuant to Council's Enterprise Bargaining Agreement. The increase in the Superannuation Guarantee of 0.5 percent each year through to 2025-26 has been factored in to the employee cost increases. No provision or allowance has been made for any call from the Defined Benefits fund.

2.3.8 Materials and Services

Material costs include items required for the maintenance and repairs of Council buildings, roads, drains and footpaths which are governed more by market forces based on availability rather than CPI. Other associated costs included under this category are utilities, waste management, materials for the supply of community meals, and consumable items for a range of services. Council also utilises external expertise on a range of matters, including legal services and audit. Discretionary material costs are budgeted to increase by CPI, less an efficiency target of 1 percent. Non-discretionary costs such as utility costs are budgeted to increase by 5%.

2.3.9 Contributions and Donations

Contributions and donations includes Council's annual contribution to the Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation. Council also offer a range of grants and funding to community members, organisations and businesses across a range of areas.

2.3.10 Depreciation and Amortisation

Depreciation estimates have been based on the projected life of Council's existing property, infrastructure, plant and equipment, together with the projected capital spending contained in this Financial Plan.

2.3.11 Borrowing Costs

Borrowing costs comprise the interest expense to service Council's loan portfolio that is described in Section 5.1 Borrowing Plan.

2.3.12 Other Expenses

Other expenses includes administration costs such as Councillor allowances, operating lease rentals and audit expenses.

2.4 Other Matters Impacting the 10-Year Financial Projections

Due to the significant uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 outbreak and the government's response to this, it is not possible to estimate the full impact on Council's operations, financial position and cash flows at this point in time. This being the case, Council does not consider it practicable to provide a quantitative or qualitative estimate of the potential impact of this outbreak on Council at this time.

3. Financial Plan Statements

This section presents information regarding the Financial Plan Statements for the 10 years from 2021-22 to 2030-31.

- Comprehensive Income Statement
- Balance Sheet
- Statement of Changes in Equity
- Statement of Cash Flows
- Statement of Capital Works
- Statement of Human Resources

3.1 Comprehensive Income Statement

	Actual	Budget									
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
INCOME											
Rates and charges	122,309	126,258	130,499	135,217	140,707	146,366	150,909	155,596	160,432	165,423	170,574
User fees	13,428	16,212	17,547	20,017	21,061	21,794	22,761	23,772	25,109	25,932	27,086
Statutory fees and fines	2,689	4,098	4,545	4,610	4,670	4,787	4,907	5,030	5,156	5,285	5,417
Grants - operating	30,752	23,339	20,247	20,624	21,000	21,353	21,712	22,078	22,450	22,798	23,184
Grants - capital	5,293	19,622	3,172	2,504	1,953	1,972	1,991	2,811	2,031	2,052	2,073
Contributions - monetary	6,795	10,606	8,088	18,200	7,729	7,743	7,758	7,773	7,788	7,804	7,820
Contributions - non-monetary	0	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Share of net profits (losses) of associates	154	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other income	1,178	1,031	1,037	1,048	1,059	1,647	1,767	1,878	1,840	1,752	1,678
TOTAL INCOME	182,598	203,166	187,135	204,220	200,179	207,662	213,805	220,938	226,806	233,046	239,832
EXPENSES											
Employee costs	80,316	75,784	75,678	77,289	79,117	81,182	82,968	84,793	86,658	88,564	90,512
Materials and services	58,113	82,702	69,438	70,859	70,383	68,595	70,410	72,718	74,815	73,230	74,105
Contributions and donations	6,371	6,053	5,758	5,815	5,870	6,017	6,168	6,322	6,480	6,642	6,809
Depreciation	22,417	24,787	26,311	27,372	28,242	29,065	29,838	30,738	31,835	32,873	33,721
Amortisation - intangible assets	478	893	893	893	893	893	893	893	893	893	893
Amortisation - right of use assets	645	1,311	1,346	1,390	1,403	1,403	1,403	1,403	1,403	1,403	1,403
Borrowing costs	0	758	1,408	1,514	1,407	1,354	1,158	1,175	1,385	1,350	1,056
Finance costs - leases	33	69	71	73	74	74	74	74	74	74	74
Bad and doubtful debts	278	75	76	77	78	80	82	84	86	88	90
Net loss (gain) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	3,575	40,645	(3,280)	(4,880)	(2,380)	(4,080)	(2,380)	1,433	1,433	1,433	1,433
Other expense	797	630	669	643	654	670	687	704	722	740	759
TOTAL EXPENSES	173,023	233,707	178,368	181,045	185,741	185,253	191,301	200,337	205,784	207,290	210,855
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	9,575	(30,541)	8,767	23,175	14,438	22,409	22,504	20,601	21,022	25,756	28,977
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE RESULT	9,575	(30,541)	8,767	23,175	14,438	22,409	22,504	20,601	21,022	25,756	28,977
LESS											
Grants - capital - non recurrent	3,400	17,711	1,250	570	0	0	0	800	0	0	0
Contributions and donations - capital	475	3,965	900	10,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Contributions - non-monetary	0	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
UNDERLYING SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	5,700	(54,217)	4,617	10,105	12,438	20,409	20,504	17,801	19,022	23,756	26,977

3.2 Balance Sheet

	Actual	Budget									
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
CURRENT ASSETS											
Cash and cash equivalents	45,598	34,103	36,189	37,850	38,055	43,510	54,458	54,881	44,400	42,834	41,296
Other financial assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trade and other receivables	18,989	19,585	20,279	21,032	21,876	22,543	23,232	23,942	24,676	25,434	26,217
Non-current assets classified as held for sale	2,072	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other assets	1,276	1,295	1,318	1,344	1,378	1,412	1,447	1,483	1,520	1,558	1,597
Inventories	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	67,946	54,994	57,797	60,237	61,320	67,476	79,148	80,317	70,607	69,837	69,121
NON CURRENT ASSETS											
Investments in associates	5,074	5,074	5,074	5,074	5,074	5,074	5,074	5,074	5,074	5,074	5,074
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	1,982,808	2,041,431	2,068,466	2,083,177	2,094,348	2,098,635	2,108,440	2,136,846	2,163,910	2,173,427	2,179,842
Right-of-use assets	1,533	1,533	1,533	1,533	1,533	1,533	1,533	1,533	1,533	1,533	1,533
Intangible assets	1,371	1,371	1,371	1,371	1,371	1,371	1,371	1,371	1,371	1,371	1,371
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS	1,990,786	2,049,409	2,076,444	2,091,155	2,102,326	2,106,613	2,116,418	2,144,824	2,171,888	2,181,405	2,187,820
TOTAL ASSETS	2,058,732	2,104,403	2,134,241	2,151,392	2,163,646	2,174,089	2,195,566	2,225,141	2,242,495	2,251,242	2,256,941
CURRENT LIABILITIES											
Trade and other payables	13,856	14,063	14,310	14,594	14,962	15,335	15,720	16,112	16,517	16,931	17,355
Trust funds and deposits	1,857	1,885	1,918	1,956	2,005	2,055	2,106	2,159	2,213	2,268	2,325
Unearned income	11,657	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Provisions	19,019	19,505	20,004	20,516	21,041	21,580	22,046	22,522	23,009	23,507	24,016
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	0	8,551	11,371	11,961	12,963	13,159	14,379	16,646	18,008	14,301	14,282
Lease liabilities	605	605	605	605	605	605	605	605	605	605	605
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	46,994	44,609	48,208	49,632	51,576	52,734	54,856	58,044	60,352	57,612	58,583
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES											
Provisions	3,608	3,640	3,672	3,705	3,740	3,775	3,805	3,836	3,868	3,900	3,933
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	0	78,565	96,005	88,524	84,361	71,202	68,023	73,778	67,770	53,469	29,187
Lease liabilities	934	934	934	934	934	934	934	934	934	934	934
TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES	4,542	83,139	100,611	93,163	89,035	75,911	72,762	78,548	72,572	58,303	34,054
TOTAL LIABILITIES	51,536	127,748	148,819	142,795	140,611	128,645	127,618	136,592	132,924	115,915	92,637
NET ASSETS	2,007,196	1,976,655	1,985,422	2,008,597	2,023,035	2,045,444	2,067,948	2,088,549	2,109,571	2,135,327	2,164,304

	Actual	Budget	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
EQUITY											
Accumulated surplus	706,532	696,976	705,689	728,308	746,189	770,039	791,982	812,020	834,477	861,666	890,074
Reserves	1,300,664	1,279,679	1,279,733	1,280,289	1,276,846	1,275,405	1,275,966	1,276,529	1,275,094	1,273,661	1,274,230
TOTAL EQUITY	2,007,196	1,976,655	1,985,422	2,008,597	2,023,035	2,045,444	2,067,948	2,088,549	2,109,571	2,135,327	2,164,304

3.3 Statement of Changes in Equity

	Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000	Other Reserves \$'000
2021 ACTUAL				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	1,991,745	697,657	1,255,640	38,448
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	9,575	9,575	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	5,876	0	5,876	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(10,020)	0	10,020
Transfer from other reserves	0	9,320	0	(9,320)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,007,196	706,532	1,261,516	39,148
2022 BUDGET				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,007,196	706,532	1,261,516	39,148
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(30,541)	(30,541)	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(6,054)	0	6,054
Transfer from other reserves	0	27,039	0	(27,039)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	1,976,655	696,976	1,261,516	18,163
2023				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	1,976,655	696,976	1,261,516	18,163
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	8,767	8,767	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(6,554)	0	6,554
Transfer from other reserves	0	6,500	0	(6,500)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	1,985,422	705,689	1,261,516	18,217
2024				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	1,985,422	705,689	1,261,516	18,217
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	23,175	23,175	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(7,056)	0	7,056
Transfer from other reserves	0	6,500	0	(6,500)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,008,597	728,308	1,261,516	18,773
2025				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,008,597	728,308	1,261,516	18,773
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	14,438	14,438	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(7,057)	0	7,057
Transfer from other reserves	0	10,500	0	(10,500)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,023,035	746,189	1,261,516	15,330
2026				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,023,035	746,189	1,261,516	15,330
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	22,409	22,409	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(7,059)	0	7,059
Transfer from other reserves	0	8,500	0	(8,500)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,045,444	770,039	1,261,516	13,889

	Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000	Other Reserves \$'000
2027				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,045,444	770,039	1,261,516	13,889
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	22,504	22,504	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(7,061)	0	7,061
Transfer from other reserves	0	6,500	0	(6,500)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,067,948	791,982	1,261,516	14,450
2028				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,067,948	791,982	1,261,516	14,450
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	20,601	20,601	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(7,063)	0	7,063
Transfer from other reserves	0	6,500	0	(6,500)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,088,549	812,020	1,261,516	15,013
2029				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,088,549	812,020	1,261,516	15,013
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	21,022	21,022	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(7,065)	0	7,065
Transfer from other reserves	0	8,500	0	(8,500)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,109,571	834,477	1,261,516	13,578
2030				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,109,571	834,477	1,261,516	13,578
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	25,756	25,756	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(7,067)	0	7,067
Transfer from other reserves	0	8,500	0	(8,500)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,135,327	861,666	1,261,516	12,145
2031				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,135,327	861,666	1,261,516	12,145
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	28,977	28,977	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(7,069)	0	7,069
Transfer from other reserves	0	6,500	0	(6,500)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,164,304	890,074	1,261,516	12,714

3.4 Statement of Cash Flows

	Actual	Budget									
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES											
Rates and charges	121,271	125,925	130,080	134,751	140,165	146,020	150,554	155,232	160,059	165,041	170,182
User fees	11,707	16,028	17,354	19,814	20,851	21,569	22,528	23,529	24,856	25,670	26,812
Statutory fees and fines	1,951	4,019	4,462	4,524	4,580	4,691	4,807	4,926	5,048	5,172	5,300
Grants - operating	30,752	21,757	20,247	20,624	21,000	21,353	21,712	22,078	22,450	22,798	23,184
Grants - capital	5,293	9,547	3,172	2,504	1,953	1,972	1,991	2,811	2,031	2,052	2,073
Contributions - monetary	6,795	10,606	8,088	18,200	7,729	7,743	7,758	7,773	7,788	7,804	7,820
Interest received	55	150	150	150	150	738	858	969	931	843	769
Other receipts	1,123	881	887	898	909	909	909	909	909	909	909
Net movement in trust deposits	273	28	33	38	49	50	51	53	54	55	57
Employee costs	(79,560)	(75,266)	(75,147)	(76,744)	(78,558)	(80,608)	(82,472)	(84,286)	(86,139)	(88,034)	(89,970)
Materials and services	(47,509)	(82,589)	(69,289)	(70,675)	(70,129)	(68,335)	(70,144)	(72,444)	(74,534)	(72,943)	(73,810)
Contributions and donations	(6,371)	(6,053)	(5,758)	(5,815)	(5,870)	(6,017)	(6,168)	(6,322)	(6,480)	(6,642)	(6,809)
Short-term, low value and variable lease payments	(7)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)
Other payments	(790)	(622)	(661)	(635)	(646)	(662)	(679)	(696)	(714)	(732)	(751)
NET CASH PROVIDED BY / (USED IN) OPERATING ACTIVITIES	44,983	24,403	33,610	47,626	42,175	49,415	51,697	54,524	56,251	61,985	65,758
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES											
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	1,575	22,604	14,067	15,667	13,167	14,867	13,167	1,167	1,167	1,167	1,167
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(40,765)	(143,480)	(63,026)	(51,764)	(49,092)	(43,033)	(49,322)	(60,638)	(60,391)	(43,883)	(41,629)
Payments for investments	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Proceeds from sale of investments	9,900	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NET CASH PROVIDED BY / (USED IN) INVESTING ACTIVITIES	(29,290)	(120,876)	(48,959)	(36,097)	(35,925)	(28,166)	(36,155)	(59,471)	(59,224)	(42,716)	(40,462)

	Actual	Budget	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	2020-21	2021-22	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES											
Finance costs	0	(758)	(1,408)	(1,514)	(1,407)	(1,354)	(1,158)	(1,175)	(1,385)	(1,350)	(1,056)
Proceeds from borrowings	0	90,936	28,811	4,480	8,800	0	11,200	22,400	12,000	0	0
Repayment of borrowings	0	(3,820)	(8,551)	(11,371)	(11,961)	(12,963)	(13,159)	(14,378)	(16,646)	(18,008)	(24,301)
Interest paid - lease liability	(33)	(69)	(71)	(73)	(74)	(74)	(74)	(74)	(74)	(74)	(74)
Repayment of lease liabilities	(646)	(1,311)	(1,346)	(1,390)	(1,403)	(1,403)	(1,403)	(1,403)	(1,403)	(1,403)	(1,403)
NET CASH PROVIDED BY / (USED IN) FINANCING ACTIVITIES	(679)	84,978	17,435	(9,868)	(6,045)	(15,794)	(4,594)	5,370	(7,508)	(20,835)	(26,834)
NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH HELD	15,014	(11,495)	2,086	1,661	205	5,455	10,948	423	(10,481)	(1,566)	(1,538)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	30,584	45,598	34,103	36,189	37,850	38,055	43,510	54,458	54,881	44,400	42,834
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT END OF YEAR	45,598	34,103	36,189	37,850	38,055	43,510	54,458	54,881	44,400	42,834	41,296

3.5 Statement of Capital Works

	Actual	Budget									
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
PROPERTY											
Land and Buildings	10,457	61,026	31,463	23,967	20,910	13,847	19,986	31,687	30,519	11,261	7,819
TOTAL PROPERTY	10,457	61,026	31,463	23,967	20,910	13,847	19,986	31,687	30,519	11,261	7,819
PLANT AND EQUIPMENT											
Plant, machinery and equipment	1,240	2,885	2,457	2,011	2,695	2,776	2,845	2,916	2,989	3,064	3,141
Computers and telecommunications	3,357	12,624	4,809	4,805	3,100	3,193	3,273	3,355	3,439	3,525	3,613
Artworks	54	267	123	124	125	46	47	48	49	50	51
TOTAL PLANT AND EQUIPMENT	4,651	15,776	7,389	6,940	5,920	6,015	6,165	6,319	6,477	6,639	6,805
INFRASTRUCTURE											
Roads	9,054	10,260	9,794	10,409	10,913	11,643	11,934	12,232	12,538	12,852	13,174
Bridges	1,272	715	467	425	385	381	391	401	411	421	432
Footpaths and cycleways	5,032	5,527	5,614	5,360	5,856	5,899	6,046	6,198	6,354	6,513	6,676
Drainage	2,619	6,158	4,545	3,184	3,381	4,160	4,264	4,370	4,479	4,591	4,705
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	9,995	62,542	11,339	7,699	6,948	5,400	5,536	5,675	5,817	5,962	6,112
Off street car parks	925	1,570	1,240	1,326	848	905	928	952	975	1,000	1,025
Other infrastructure	399	557	252	259	266	269	276	283	290	297	304
TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE	29,296	87,329	33,251	28,662	28,597	28,657	29,375	30,111	30,864	31,636	32,428
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS EXPENDITURE	44,404	164,131	72,103	59,569	55,427	48,519	55,526	68,117	67,860	49,536	47,052
REPRESENTED BY											
Asset renewal	26,218	43,475	36,688	35,053	37,324	37,828	38,775	39,745	40,740	41,758	42,803
Asset upgrade	10,746	46,417	20,560	21,485	14,787	6,392	3,400	6,166	14,860	5,461	1,875
Asset new	5,929	64,971	14,435	2,961	3,281	4,229	13,279	22,132	12,185	2,240	2,295
Asset expansion	1,511	9,268	420	70	35	70	72	74	75	77	79
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS EXPENDITURE	44,404	164,131	72,103	59,569	55,427	48,519	55,526	68,117	67,860	49,536	47,052

	Actual	Budget										
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
CAPITAL WORKS FUNDING SOURCE												
EXTERNAL												
Loan proceeds	0	90,936	28,811	4,480	8,800	0	11,200	22,400	12,000	0	0	
Grants - capital	5,293	15,111	3,172	2,504	1,953	1,972	1,991	2,811	2,031	2,052	2,073	
Contributions - capital	475	1,685	900	10,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
TOTAL EXTERNAL FUNDING	5,768	107,732	32,883	17,484	10,753	1,972	13,191	25,211	14,031	2,052	2,073	
INTERNAL												
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets	1,575	20,532	14,067	15,667	13,167	14,867	13,167	1,167	1,167	1,167	1,167	
Movement in reserve funds	6,033	21,155	6,500	6,500	10,500	8,500	6,500	6,500	8,500	8,500	6,500	
Rate funding	31,028	14,712	18,653	19,918	21,007	23,180	22,668	35,239	44,162	37,817	37,312	
TOTAL INTERNAL FUNDING	38,636	56,399	39,220	42,085	44,674	46,547	42,335	42,906	53,829	47,484	44,979	
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS FUNDING SOURCES	44,404	164,131	72,103	59,569	55,427	48,519	55,526	68,117	67,860	49,536	47,052	
LESS OPERATING PROJECTS EXPENDITURE												
Operating Projects Expenditure	4,027	20,651	9,077	7,805	6,335	5,486	6,204	7,479	7,469	5,653	5,423	
NET CAPITAL WORKS (CAPITALISED EXPENDITURE EXCLUDING OPERATING PROJECTS EXPENDITURE)	40,377	143,480	63,026	51,764	49,092	43,033	49,322	60,638	60,391	43,883	41,629	

3.6 Statement of Human Resources

	Forecast	Budget									
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
STAFF EXPENDITURE											
Employee costs - operating	80,316	75,784	75,678	77,289	79,117	81,182	82,968	84,793	86,658	88,564	90,512
Employee costs - capital	2,812	2,454	3,684	3,507	3,595	3,689	3,770	3,853	3,938	4,024	4,113
TOTAL STAFF EXPENDITURE	83,128	78,238	79,362	80,796	82,712	84,871	86,738	88,646	90,596	92,588	94,625
STAFF NUMBERS											
Full time equivalent (FTE) employees	717.03	719.43	716.83	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13
TOTAL STAFF NUMBERS	717.03	719.43	716.83	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13

3.7 Planned Human Resource Expenditure

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
CEO										
<i>Permanent - Full Time</i>	2,519	2,580	2,643	2,706	2,777	2,838	2,900	2,964	3,029	3,096
Female	1,832	1,876	1,922	1,968	2,019	2,064	2,109	2,156	2,203	2,251
Male	687	704	721	738	757	774	791	808	826	844
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Permanent - Part Time</i>	639	654	670	687	705	720	736	752	769	786
Female	639	654	670	687	705	720	736	752	769	786
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CEO	3,158	3,234	3,313	3,393	3,482	3,558	3,636	3,716	3,798	3,882
CITY CENTRE										
<i>Permanent - Full Time</i>	2,521	2,782	2,862	2,948	3,025	3,091	3,160	3,229	3,300	3,373
Female	2,003	2,210	2,274	2,342	2,403	2,456	2,510	2,565	2,622	2,679
Male	518	572	588	606	622	635	649	664	678	693
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Permanent - Part Time</i>	1,708	1,885	1,940	1,996	2,048	2,093	2,139	2,186	2,234	2,284
Female	1,599	1,765	1,816	1,869	1,918	1,960	2,003	2,047	2,092	2,138
Male	109	120	124	127	130	133	136	139	142	145
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CITY CENTRE	4,229	4,667	4,802	4,944	5,073	5,185	5,299	5,415	5,534	5,656
CITY STRATEGY AND INTEGRITY										
<i>Permanent - Full Time</i>	11,337	11,445	11,681	11,907	12,218	12,487	12,761	13,042	13,329	13,622
Female	5,393	5,411	5,522	5,629	5,776	5,903	6,033	6,166	6,301	6,440
Male	5,944	6,034	6,159	6,278	6,442	6,584	6,728	6,876	7,028	7,182
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Permanent - Part Time</i>	5,072	5,089	5,194	5,295	5,433	5,553	5,675	5,800	5,927	6,058
Female	3,765	3,778	3,856	3,931	4,034	4,122	4,213	4,306	4,400	4,497
Male	1,307	1,311	1,338	1,364	1,400	1,430	1,462	1,494	1,527	1,560
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CITY STRATEGY AND INTEGRITY	16,409	16,534	16,875	17,202	17,651	18,039	18,436	18,842	19,256	19,680

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
CONNECTED COMMUNITIES										
<i>Permanent - Full Time</i>	12,796	12,563	12,845	13,162	13,506	13,803	14,106	14,417	14,734	15,058
Female	11,381	11,178	11,429	11,711	12,017	12,281	12,551	12,827	13,110	13,398
Male	1,415	1,385	1,416	1,451	1,489	1,522	1,555	1,589	1,624	1,660
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Permanent - Part Time</i>	14,137	13,836	14,148	14,498	14,876	15,204	15,538	15,880	16,229	16,586
Female	13,353	13,069	13,363	13,693	14,050	14,359	14,675	14,998	15,328	15,665
Male	784	767	785	805	826	844	863	882	901	921
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CONNECTED COMMUNITIES	26,933	26,399	26,993	27,660	28,382	29,006	29,644	30,297	30,963	31,644
INFRASTRUCTURE										
<i>Permanent - Full Time</i>	14,560	14,580	14,926	15,294	15,693	16,038	16,391	16,752	17,120	17,497
Female	2,903	2,907	2,976	3,049	3,129	3,197	3,268	3,340	3,413	3,488
Male	11,657	11,673	11,950	12,245	12,565	12,841	13,124	13,412	13,707	14,009
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Permanent - Part Time</i>	658	659	674	692	710	726	742	758	775	792
Female	658	659	674	692	710	726	742	758	775	792
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE	15,218	15,239	15,600	15,986	16,403	16,764	17,133	17,510	17,895	18,289
PEOPLE AND INNOVATION										
<i>Permanent - Full Time</i>	5,611	5,259	5,330	5,488	5,631	5,755	5,882	6,011	6,143	6,279
Female	3,333	3,034	3,075	3,166	3,249	3,320	3,393	3,468	3,544	3,622
Male	2,278	2,225	2,255	2,322	2,383	2,435	2,489	2,543	2,599	2,656
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Permanent - Part Time</i>	1,838	1,796	1,821	1,874	1,923	1,965	2,008	2,053	2,098	2,144
Female	1,838	1,796	1,821	1,874	1,923	1,965	2,008	2,053	2,098	2,144
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL PEOPLE AND INNOVATION	7,449	7,055	7,151	7,362	7,554	7,720	7,890	8,064	8,241	8,422
Casuals, temporary and other expenditure	2,388	2,550	2,555	2,570	2,637	2,695	2,754	2,813	2,876	2,938
Capitalised labour costs	2,454	3,684	3,507	3,595	3,689	3,770	3,853	3,939	4,024	4,113
TOTAL STAFF EXPENDITURE	78,238	79,362	80,796	82,712	84,871	86,738	88,646	90,595	92,588	94,624

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
CEO										
<i>Permanent - Full Time</i>	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00
Female	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00
Male	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Permanent - Part Time</i>	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44
Female	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CEO	21.44	21.44	21.44	21.44	21.44	21.44	21.44	21.44	21.44	21.44
CITY CENTRE										
<i>Permanent - Full Time</i>	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00
Female	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00
Male	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Permanent - Part Time</i>	17.07	17.07	17.07	17.07	17.07	17.07	17.07	17.07	17.07	17.07
Female	15.91	15.91	15.91	15.91	15.91	15.91	15.91	15.91	15.91	15.91
Male	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CITY CENTRE	42.07	42.07	42.07	42.07	42.07	42.07	42.07	42.07	42.07	42.07
CITY STRATEGY AND INTEGRITY										
<i>Permanent - Full Time</i>	102.00	102.00	102.00	102.00	102.00	102.00	102.00	102.00	102.00	102.00
Female	48.00	48.00	48.00	48.00	48.00	48.00	48.00	48.00	48.00	48.00
Male	54.00	54.00	54.00	54.00	54.00	54.00	54.00	54.00	54.00	54.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Permanent - Part Time</i>	45.86	45.86	45.86	45.86	45.86	45.86	45.86	45.86	45.86	45.86
Female	33.83	33.83	33.83	33.83	33.83	33.83	33.83	33.83	33.83	33.83
Male	12.03	12.03	12.03	12.03	12.03	12.03	12.03	12.03	12.03	12.03
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CITY STRATEGY AND INTEGRITY	147.86	147.86	147.86	147.86	147.86	147.86	147.86	147.86	147.86	147.86

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
CONNECTED COMMUNITIES										
<i>Permanent - Full Time</i>	129.00	129.00	129.00	129.00	129.00	129.00	129.00	129.00	129.00	129.00
Female	115.00	115.00	115.00	115.00	115.00	115.00	115.00	115.00	115.00	115.00
Male	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Permanent - Part Time</i>	143.00	143.00	143.00	143.00	143.00	143.00	143.00	143.00	143.00	143.00
Female	134.65	134.65	134.65	134.65	134.65	134.65	134.65	134.65	134.65	134.65
Male	8.35	8.35	8.35	8.35	8.35	8.35	8.35	8.35	8.35	8.35
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CONNECTED COMMUNITIES	272.00	272.00	272.00	272.00	272.00	272.00	272.00	272.00	272.00	272.00
INFRASTRUCTURE										
<i>Permanent - Full Time</i>	151.00	151.00	151.00	151.00	151.00	151.00	151.00	151.00	151.00	151.00
Female	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00
Male	121.00	121.00	121.00	121.00	121.00	121.00	121.00	121.00	121.00	121.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Permanent - Part Time</i>	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55
Female	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE	158.55	158.55	158.55	158.55	158.55	158.55	158.55	158.55	158.55	158.55
PEOPLE AND INNOVATION										
<i>Permanent - Full Time</i>	41.00	41.00	41.00	41.00	41.00	41.00	41.00	41.00	41.00	41.00
Female	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00
Male	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Permanent - Part Time</i>	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03
Female	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL PEOPLE AND INNOVATION	55.03	55.03	55.03	55.03	55.03	55.03	55.03	55.03	55.03	55.03
Casuals, temporary and other expenditure	22.48	19.88	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18
Capitalised labour costs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL STAFF NUMBERS	719.43	716.83	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13

4. Financial Performance Indicators

The following table highlights Council's projected performance across a range of key financial performance indicators. These indicators provide an analysis of Council's 10-year financial projections and should be interpreted in the context of the organisation's objectives and financial management principles.

Indicator	Measure	Notes	Actual 2020-21	Budget 2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	Trend + / o / -
Operating Position (measures whether a council is able to generate an underlying surplus)														
Adjusted Underlying Result	<u>Adjusted Underlying Surplus (Deficit)</u> Adjusted Underlying Revenue	1	3.19%	(30.21%)	2.52%	5.29%	6.28%	9.92%	9.68%	8.16%	8.46%	10.28%	11.34%	+
Liquidity (measures whether a council is able to generate sufficient cash to pay bills on time)														
Working Capital	<u>Current Assets</u> <u>Current Liabilities</u>	2	144.58%	123.28%	119.89%	121.37%	118.89%	127.96%	144.28%	138.37%	116.99%	121.22%	117.99%	o
Unrestricted Cash	<u>Unrestricted Cash</u> <u>Current Liabilities</u>	3	60.87%	43.43%	44.52%	45.58%	51.22%	63.72%	80.93%	76.16%	57.67%	60.36%	55.65%	+
Obligations (measures whether the level of debt and other long term obligations is appropriate to the size and nature of the Council's activities)														
Loans and Borrowings	<u>Interest Bearing Loans and Borrowings</u> Rate Revenue	4	0.00%	69.00%	82.28%	74.31%	69.17%	57.64%	54.60%	58.11%	53.47%	40.97%	25.48%	+
Loans and borrowings	<u>Interest and Principal Repayments</u> Rate Revenue	4	0.00%	3.63%	7.63%	9.53%	9.50%	9.78%	9.49%	10.00%	11.24%	11.70%	14.87%	-
Indebtedness	<u>Non Current Liabilities</u> Own Source Revenue	5	3.11%	53.90%	62.56%	55.26%	50.81%	41.63%	38.68%	40.48%	36.23%	28.28%	16.02%	+
Asset Renewal	<u>Asset Renewal and Upgrade Expenditure</u> Depreciation	6	164.89%	362.66%	217.58%	206.55%	184.52%	152.14%	141.35%	149.36%	174.65%	143.64%	132.49%	-
Stability (measures whether a council is able to generate revenue from a range of sources)														
Rates Concentration	<u>Rate Revenue</u> Adjusted Underlying Revenue	7	68.43%	70.34%	71.32%	70.74%	71.00%	71.17%	71.25%	71.33%	71.36%	71.60%	71.72%	o
Rates Effort	<u>Rate Revenue</u> Property Values (CIV)	8	0.24%	0.24%	0.25%	0.26%	0.26%	0.27%	0.28%	0.28%	0.29%	0.30%	0.30%	o
Efficiency (measures whether a council is using resources efficiently)														
Expenditure Level	<u>Total Expenditure</u> No. of Assessments		\$2,548	\$3,420	\$2,588	\$2,604	\$2,648	\$2,619	\$2,682	\$2,785	\$2,837	\$2,835	\$2,860	o
Revenue Level	<u>Residential Rate Revenue</u> No. of Residential Assessments		\$1,581	\$1,609	\$1,640	\$1,674	\$1,717	\$1,753	\$1,791	\$1,830	\$1,870	\$1,912	\$1,955	o
Workforce Turnover	<u>No. of Resignations & Terminations</u> Average No. of Staff		15.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	o

Key to Forecast Trend:

- + Forecasts improvement in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator
- o Forecasts that Council's financial performance/financial position indicator will be steady
- Forecasts deterioration in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator

Notes on indicators

4.1 Adjusted underlying results

Adjusted underlying result is the net surplus or deficit for the year (per Australian Accounting Standards) adjusted for non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure, non-monetary asset contributions, and contributions to fund capital expenditure other than grants and non-monetary asset contributions. It is an indicator of the sustainable operating result required to enable Council to continue to provide core services and meet its objectives. Improvement in financial performance is expected over the period. The significant decrease in 2021-22 is largely driven by the net loss anticipated on the disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment, in particular the transfer of the Knox Regional Sports Park assets to the State Government. This transfer has been carried forward from the 2020-21 financial year.

4.2 Working capital

Working capital (current assets / current liabilities) is the proportion of current liabilities represented by current assets. It is a general measure of the organisation's liquidity and its ability to meet its commitments as and when they fall due. The working capital ratio is anticipated to remain around 100% for the ten year period, with the decline from the current year forecast due to a reduction of cash and cash equivalents together with the utilisation of interest-bearing loans and borrowings to fund the Capital Works Program.

4.3 Unrestricted cash

Unrestricted cash means all cash and cash equivalents other than restricted cash, including cash that will be used to fund capital expenditure from the previous financial year. Restricted cash means cash and cash equivalents, within the meaning of Accounting Standard *AASB 107 Statement of Cash Flows*, that are not available for use other than for a purpose for which it is restricted. The decline from the current year forecast demonstrates a reduction of cash and cash equivalents together with the utilisation of interest-bearing loans and borrowings to fund the Capital Works Program. Statutory reserve balances will remain steady before a decrease from 2024-25.

4.4 Debt compared to rates

Loans and borrowings means interest bearing loans and borrowings compared to rates and charges revenue. The balance of interest bearing loans and borrowings is shown as a percentage of rates revenue. Loans and borrowings also refers to interest and principal repayments compared to rate revenue. The ratio describes Council's cash flow debt repayment capacity through the inclusion of interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings as a percentage of rate revenue. The trend indicates an increased reliance on debt against annual rate revenue over the next two years due to borrowings to fund the Capital Works Program, with this debt substantially paid down over the ten year period.

4.5 Indebtedness

Indebtedness compares non-current liabilities to own source revenue. Own source revenue is defined as adjusted underlying revenue other than revenue that is not under the control of Council (including government grants). Interest-bearing borrowings will increase in 2021-22 to fund the Capital Works Program. There will be a further increase in 2022-23 followed by decreases for the remainder of the ten year period.

4.6 Asset renewal

Asset renewal is calculated as asset renewal expenditure as a percentage of depreciation. This indicates the extent of Council's renewal of assets against its depreciation charge (an indication of the decline in value of its existing capital assets). A percentage greater than 100 indicates Council is maintaining its existing assets, while a percentage less than 100 means its assets are deteriorating faster than they are being renewed and future capital expenditure will be required to renew assets. Council's asset renewal indicator is greater than 100% through the ten year outlook.

4.7 Rates concentration

Rates concentration is measured as rate revenue compared to adjusted underlying revenue. Adjusted underlying revenue is defined as total income excluding non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure, non-monetary asset contributions, and contributions to fund capital expenditure from sources other than grants and non-monetary contributions. Rates concentration reflects the extent of reliance on rate revenues to fund all of Council's on-going services. The trend is relatively steady for rates concentration.

4.8 Rates effort

Rates effort, which is intended to examine the community's capacity to pay, presents rate revenue as a percentage of the capital improved value of rateable properties in the municipality. The trend is relatively steady for rates effort.

5. Strategies and Plans

5.1 Borrowing Strategy

5.1.1 Current Debt Position

Council has no borrowings as at 30 June 2021. The forecast borrowings for the 2020-21 financial year have been carried forward to the 2021-22 financial year.

Council has forecast to access debt funding to complete a range of major infrastructure projects including the construction of Early Years Hubs and for the Knox Central project.

5.1.2 Future Borrowing Requirements

The following table highlights Council's projected loan balance, including new loans and loan repayments for the 10 years of the Financial Plan.

	Actual 2020-21 \$'000	Budget 2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000
OPENING BALANCE	0	0	87,116	107,376	100,485	97,324	84,361	82,402	90,424	85,778	67,770
Plus new loans	0	90,936	28,811	4,480	8,800	0	11,200	22,400	12,000	0	0
Less principal repayment	0	(3,820)	(8,551)	(11,371)	(11,961)	(12,963)	(13,159)	(14,378)	(16,646)	(18,008)	(24,301)
CLOSING BALANCE	0	87,116	107,376	100,485	97,324	84,361	82,402	90,424	85,778	67,770	43,469
Interest payment	0	758	1,408	1,514	1,407	1,354	1,158	1,175	1,385	1,350	1,056

5.1.3 Performance Indicators

The following table highlights Council's projected performance across a range of debt management performance indicators.

Performance Indicator	Target	Forecast 2020-21 \$'000	Budget 2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000
Total Borrowings / Rate Revenue	Below 80%	0.00%	69.00%	82.28%	74.31%	69.17%	57.64%	54.60%	58.11%	53.47%	40.97%	25.48%
Debt Servicing / Rate Revenue	Below 5%	0.00%	0.60%	1.08%	1.12%	1.00%	0.93%	0.77%	0.76%	0.86%	0.82%	0.62%
Debt Commitment / Rate Revenue	Below 10%	0.00%	3.63%	7.63%	9.53%	9.50%	9.78%	9.49%	10.00%	11.24%	11.70%	14.87%
Indebtedness / Own Source Revenue	Below 80%	3.11%	53.90%	62.56%	55.26%	50.81%	41.63%	38.68%	40.48%	36.23%	28.28%	16.02%

Council maintains its loan borrowings within prudent and management limits as demonstrated by the following performance indicators.

Total Borrowings / Rate Revenue

This indicator compares interest bearing loans and borrowings to rates and charges revenue. The balance of interest bearing loans and borrowings is shown as a percentage of rates revenue. The trend indicates an increased reliance on debt against annual rate revenue over the next two years due to borrowings to fund the Capital Works Program, with this debt substantially paid down over the ten year period. The ratio exceeds the target ratio in 2022-23, but remains within the target range for the remainder of the outlook period.

Debt Servicing / Rate Revenue

This indicator compares interest payments on interest bearing loans to rate revenue. The trend is relatively steady over the ten year period, and remains well within the target range.

Debt Commitment / Rate Revenue

This indicator describes Council's cash flow debt repayment capacity through the inclusion of interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings as a percentage of rate revenue. The trend indicates an increased reliance on debt against annual rate revenue over the next two years due to borrowings to fund the Capital Works Program, with the debt commitment then remaining relatively steady for the remainder of the ten year period while debt is paid down. The ratio exceeds the target ratio from 2028-29 while the interest bearing loans are reduced.

Indebtedness / Rate Revenue

Indebtedness compares non-current liabilities to own source revenue. Own source revenue is defined as adjusted underlying revenue other than revenue that is not under the control of Council (including government grants). Interest-bearing borrowings will increase in 2021-22 to fund the Capital Works Program. There will be a further increase in 2022-23 followed by decreases for the remainder of the ten year period.

5.2 Reserves Strategy

5.2.1 Current Reserves

HACC capital grant reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to refurbish, upgrade and maintain minor capital within the Home and Community Care funded programs.

Open space reserve

The Open Space Reserve is used to provide funding for future purchases and improvements of open space. Funding is provided from developer's contributions for open space which is initially recognised in the comprehensive income statement and then transferred to the reserve from accumulated surplus to facilitate separate tracking of the total funds received but not yet spent.

Aged care reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to set aside the proceeds from the divestment of the Amaroo Gardens Aged Care Facility by Council on 2 November 2011 for aged services and infrastructure within the Knox municipality.

Basketball stadium infrastructure reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to improve basketball stadium facilities within the Knox municipality.

Blue Hills reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to construct the Early Years Hubs facilities for the benefit of the Knox Community.

City futures fund

The purpose of this reserve is to construct major facilities within the Knox municipality.

Knox Regional Sports Park - Football pitch replacement fund

The purpose of this reserve is to provide for future football pitch replacement at Knox Regional Sports Park.

Mountain Gate reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to enhance community facilities within Mountain Gate.

Revegetation net gain reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to ensure any loss of vegetation through development is re-established in a sustainable location.

Revolving energy fund

The purpose of this reserve is to re-invest savings in energy costs to be invested in further works to minimise energy consumption.

Scoresby Recreation reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to invest the income derived from lease of this site into the Scoresby Recreation Reserve.

Stamford Park reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to develop the Stamford Park site for the benefit of the Knox Community.

State basketball centre asset renewal fund

The purpose of this reserve is to provide for asset renewal works at the State Basketball Centre (Knox Regional Sports Park).

Unexpended grants reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to quarantine early payment of Victoria Grants Commission General Purpose and Local Roads Federal Grant funding for use in the following year.

5.2.2 Reserve Usage Projections

The table below discloses the balance and annual movement for each reserve over the 10-year life of the Financial Plan. Total amount of reserves, for each year, is to align with the Statement of Changes in Equity.

Restricted reserves are to be included to the disclosure of restricted cash assets.

Reserves	Statutory / Discretionary	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000
HACC Capital Reserve	Statutory										
Opening balance		635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635
Open Space Reserve	Statutory										
Opening balance		15,630	13,026	13,026	13,526	10,026	8,526	9,026	9,526	8,026	6,526
Transfer to reserve		6,000	6,500	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000
Transfer from reserve		(8,604)	(6,500)	(6,500)	(10,500)	(8,500)	(6,500)	(6,500)	(8,500)	(8,500)	(6,500)
Closing balance		13,026	13,026	13,526	10,026	8,526	9,026	9,526	8,026	6,526	7,026
Statutory Reserves Summary	Total Statutory										
Opening balance		16,265	13,661	13,661	14,161	10,661	9,161	9,661	10,161	8,661	7,161
Transfer to reserve		6,000	6,500	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000
Transfer from reserve		(8,604)	(6,500)	(6,500)	(10,500)	(8,500)	(6,500)	(6,500)	(8,500)	(8,500)	(6,500)
Closing balance		13,661	13,661	14,161	10,661	9,161	9,661	10,161	8,661	7,161	7,661
Aged Care Reserve	Discretionary										
Opening balance		4,891	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		(1,574)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317
Basketball Stadium Infrastructure Reserve	Discretionary										
Opening balance		100	126	152	179	207	236	266	297	329	362
Transfer to reserve		26	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
Transfer from reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		126	152	179	207	236	266	297	329	362	396
Blue Hills Reserve	Discretionary										
Opening balance		3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
City Futures Reserve	Discretionary										
Opening balance		2,915	247	247	247	247	247	247	247	247	247
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		(2,668)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		247	247	247	247	247	247	247	247	247	247
Knox Regional Sports Park - Football Renewal	Discretionary										
Opening balance		727	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		(727)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Reserves	Statutory / Discretionary	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000
Mountain Gate Reserve	Discretionary										
Opening balance		140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140
Revegetation Net Gain Reserve	Discretionary										
Opening balance		461	461	461	461	461	461	461	461	461	461
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		461	461	461	461	461	461	461	461	461	461
Revolving Energy Fund	Discretionary										
Opening balance		60	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		(23)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
Scoresby Recreational Reserve	Discretionary										
Opening balance		144	172	200	229	258	288	319	351	384	418
Transfer to reserve		28	28	29	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
Transfer from reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		172	200	229	258	288	319	351	384	418	453
Stamford Park Reserve	Discretionary										
Opening balance		8,923	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		(8,923)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
State Basketball Centre Asset Renewal	Discretionary										
Opening balance		597	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		(597)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unexpended Grants Reserve	Discretionary										
Opening balance		4,038	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		(4,038)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Discretionary Reserves Summary	Total Discretionary										
Opening balance		22,999	4,503	4,557	4,613	4,670	4,729	4,790	4,853	4,918	4,985
Transfer to reserve		54	54	56	57	59	61	63	65	67	69
Transfer from reserve		(18,550)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		4,503	4,557	4,613	4,670	4,729	4,790	4,853	4,918	4,985	5,054

Reserves	Statutory / Discretionary	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000
Total Reserves Summary	Statutory & Discretionary										
Opening balance		39,264	18,164	18,218	18,774	15,331	13,890	14,451	15,014	13,579	12,146
Transfer to reserve		6,054	6,554	7,056	7,057	7,059	7,061	7,063	7,065	7,067	7,069
Transfer from reserve		(27,154)	(6,500)	(6,500)	(10,500)	(8,500)	(6,500)	(6,500)	(8,500)	(8,500)	(6,500)
Closing balance		18,164	18,218	18,774	15,331	13,890	14,451	15,014	13,579	12,146	12,715

11 City Centre Reports for Consideration

11.1 State and Federal Government Advocacy Requirements

SUMMARY: Imogen Kelly, Manager Communications

All levels of government have a role to play in ensuring our community has access to education opportunities, jobs, housing, services, facilities and transport while protecting Knox for our future generations by adapting to the changing climate and reducing our emissions. Upcoming state and federal elections present a moment in time to secure commitments from governments and opposition to support initiatives which contribute to maintaining our status as one of Melbourne’s most liveable regions. Items proposed to be included in requests of government leading into the next state and federal elections have been selected for their project readiness and the likelihood of achieving funding and/or policy commitments ahead of the next elections.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorse the issues to be included in requests of government and opposition representatives ahead of the next federal and state elections.

1. INTRODUCTION

Council plays an important role in advocating the needs of the Knox community to other levels of government who have responsibility for policy settings, services and infrastructure that contribute to liveability. Upcoming state and federal elections present a moment in time to seek commitments from governments and opposition to support initiatives which contribute to desired community outcomes. Advocacy needs to be targeted and specific, and align with shared priorities of other levels of government. This report presents recommended requests of government assessed for their likelihood of success at this point in the electoral cycle.

2. DISCUSSION

The community’s recently expressed vision for Knox is, “Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive.” Knox City Council contributes directly to the achievement of this aspiration through the provision of services and infrastructure and indirectly, through advocacy to other levels of government who share responsibility for delivering on this vision.

Some items identified for advocacy in the draft Community Plan 2021-2031 and draft Council Plan 2021-2025 are long term and require further evidence and planning to identify solutions. Impending state and federal elections present an opportunity to gain specific commitments for some of the initiatives Council has identified which are shared responsibilities and contribute to the achievement of desired community outcomes.

Given where we are in the electoral cycle the items proposed to be included in requests of government leading into the next state and federal elections have been assessed for their project readiness and the likelihood of achieving funding and/or policy commitments ahead of the next elections. Contributing factors include:

- Clear evidence base defining the problem
- Solution defined
- Solution easily implemented
- Level of community support
- Identified Council priority
- Aligns with state government policy priorities
- Aligns with federal government policy priorities
- Project readiness

Discussions are commencing and planned with state and federal members and election candidates. While many of the priorities are positions on which Council has formed a position previously, it is important nonetheless that Council formally endorses the list of priorities being specifically targeted at this time.

Recommended priorities are summarised below. Detailed fact sheets are being prepared for each item as part of a published advocacy pack.

2.1 Kindergarten

In the biggest reform to kindergarten services yet, the Victorian Government aims to ensure access to two years of funded kindergarten for all 3 and 4-year-old children in Victoria from 2022. Two years of universal kindergarten has wide-ranging social and educational benefits for children, particularly those considered to be vulnerable or developmentally at risk.

Infrastructure requirements to deliver the reform are a significant challenge as existing facilities cannot be easily modified to meet demand. Funding available under the Building Blocks Program only covers 9% to 16% of the costs of building projects to increase the number of kindergarten places.

Ask

Target: Victorian Government

Council seeks funding for the full cost of five priority building projects that would yield a total of 163 extra kindergarten places:

- Haering Road, Boronia (\$9.5 million)
- Knoxfield (\$15.2 million)
- Taylors Lane, Rowville (\$9.3 million)
- Talaskia, Upper Ferntree Gully (\$8.9 million)
- Alice Johnson, Ferntree Gully (\$11.4 million)

2.2 Social Housing

The Victorian Government has established the \$1 billion Victorian Social Housing Growth Fund to address increasing levels of homelessness by partnering with councils (and other sectors) to deliver additional supply of social and affordable housing.

There is a significant shortfall of housing for Knox's most vulnerable people with over 365 residents sleeping rough or deemed to be homeless as of 2016. This figure is likely to be significantly higher due to under-reporting and increased pressure since COVID. Two cohorts are most at risk, single women and children and single women over the age of 55 years, both of which are often impacted by family violence and relationship breakdown.

Knox was not considered a priority in the last round of funding. Knox City Council is willing to contribute \$4.5 million or land to partner in the Government's social housing agenda.

Ask

Target: Victorian Government

Council seeks \$9 million for a total of \$13.5 million (or equivalent land contribution from Council) to put towards two projects in partnership with housing providers.

Council also seeks legislative reform to enable mandatory developer contributions and mandatory inclusionary zoning.

2.3 Mental health

The Australian Government has invested \$114.5 million to establish an adult mental health centre in each state and territory. Knox City Council understands planning is underway for further permanent centres in Victoria and wants a permanent adult mental health centre built in Wantirna.

Adult mental health centres offer on-the-spot treatment for short and medium term episodes of care and connect people to ongoing support by integrating with other local community services including GPs, local primary health network services and state operated services. They reduce the number of emergency department presentations by providing a more accessible entry point to the mental health system.

Wantirna Health Precinct offers an ideal location for an adult mental health centre to service the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged adults in Melbourne's east. Knox City Council has worked in partnership with state government agencies, including the Victorian Planning Authority, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Transport and Eastern Health to prepare a visionary masterplan for an integrated, connected and comprehensive centre that promotes, patient, carer and staff wellbeing and is expected to become a nationally recognised health centre in Melbourne's eastern region.

Ask

Target: Australian Government. The Victorian Government will be requested to support advocacy to the Australian Government given its investment in this site.

Council seeks that an adult mental health service be established in the Wantirna Health Precinct.

2.4 Sporting infrastructure

Sport is an effective means of helping to reduce rising rates of obesity and chronic illness and can help achieve mental and physical health and social development. Not having access to appropriate facilities is a known barrier to participation.

2.4.1 Hockey

Knox Hockey Club has been based at the Knox School for 23 years and needs to relocate as the school is expanding. Council is exploring several locations to provide a new facility, comprising a synthetic hockey field, energy efficient sports lighting and associated infrastructure, including parking.

Ask

Target: Victorian Government

We seek a 50% contribution towards a new facility in the order of \$1.9 million.

2.4.2 Sports club facilities

Many sports facilities within Knox now fall short of contemporary facility standards and guidelines and lack the fundamental requirements to enable sporting activities to occur.

Ask

Target: Victorian and Australian governments

Council seeks \$2.4 million (based on 50% contribution towards \$1.6 million per site) for change rooms and \$1.1 million (based on 50% contribution towards \$300K per site) to upgrade sports lighting.

Change rooms:

- Park Ridge Reserve, Rowville (Lysterfield CC and Rowville Eagles Football Club and Knox United Soccer Club) 2022/23
- Milpera Reserve, Wantirna (Waverley City Soccer Club, Templeton Cricket Club) 2022/23
- Carrington Park, Knoxfield (Knoxfield Knights Cricket Club, Rowville Knights Football Club) 2023/24

Lighting:

- Kings Park Baseball, Upper Ferntree Gully (Upper Ferntree Gully Baseball Club) 2022/23.
- Guy Turner Reserve, Bayswater (Bayswater Strikers Soccer Club, Bayswater Park Cricket Club) 2022/23 – Application pending with Sport and Recreation Victoria.
- Windermere Reserve, Ferntree Gully (Lysterfield Junior Football Club, Mountain Gate Cricket Club) 2022/23.
- Wantirna Reserve, Wantirna (Wantirna South Junior Football Club, Wantirna Cricket Club) 2023/24.
- Stud Park Reserve (overflow venue cricket, football) 2023/24.
- Chandler Park (Boronia Cricket Club and Wantirna South Cricket Club) 2023/24.
- Kings Park No 3 (Ferntree Gully Cricket Club, Upper Ferntree Gully Football Club) 2023/24.

2.5 Place

2.5.1 Lewis Park

Lewis Park is a critical asset that will provide significant generational benefits for the community for years to come. The masterplan for the 40 hectare site aims to enhance the lives of future residents by providing safe, inclusive, and accessible green open space.

With a surrounding population expected to grow to 61,284 by 2041 and 14 million visitors annually to the adjacent Westfield Shopping Centre, this project is expected to deliver significant environmental and health benefits.

Ask

Target: Victorian and Australian governments

\$9 million (or 50%) contribution towards implementation of Stages 2, 3 and 4 of the masterplan.

- Stage 2 (2023/24): Sports and Play Hub. Cost \$10 million.
- Stage 3 (2023/24): Biodiversity Zone, dog park, native grasslands, and discovery trail. Cost \$1 million.

- Stage 4 (2024/25): Civic Precinct and Art, including art/cultural trail, upgraded path network and integration with future Knox Central Civic Space with terraced landscapes, shelters, picnic and barbecue facilities. Cost \$7 million.

2.5.2 Boronia Train Station

Council has a strategy to renew Boronia activity centre. The Victorian Government's Suburban Revitalisation Fund has allocated approximately \$2.5 million to improve the centre of Boronia but this funding will not be sufficient to renew the railway station at the heart of the precinct. When redeveloped, the precinct is envisaged to include better pedestrian and cycling connections, a new civic space forecourt, community facility, parkland, as well as more restaurants and street activation, and an improved intermodal public transport interchange. The Australian Government has committed to constructing additional commuter car parking. The investment from all levels of government will reactivate local businesses and accelerate recovery from the impacts of the pandemic by attracting new investment and creating new jobs alongside a new and improved heart of Boronia.

Ask

Target: Victorian and Australian governments

Rebuild Boronia Railway Station incorporating a new multideck commuter car park for up to 500 cars.

2.6 Transport

Commuters in Melbourne's east are overly reliant on cars due to limited public transport options. We have an opportunity to support economic growth by delivering a transport system that connects more people with jobs, education, health, business, retail, and entertainment precincts and help the Victorian Government achieve its aim of establishing 20-minute neighbourhoods. This includes encouraging people to consider travel modes other than the private vehicle such as walking, cycling and public transport use.

Ask

- 2.6.1 Reallocation of the committed \$475 million Monash Rail federal funding towards the development of a feasibility study, business case, and the delivery of the trackless tram. Council still supports the delivery of the Rowville Rail as a long term solution to improve public transport in Melbourne's outer east. In addition, the Suburban Rail Loop's Monash University Station should be future proofed to cater for seamless connectivity between the Rowville Rail and the Suburban Rail Loop. (Target: Victorian and Australian governments).
- 2.6.2 A feasibility and economic study to extend the Route 75 Tram from Vermont South to Upper Ferntree Gully Train Station via Burwood Highway and Bayswater Business Precinct via Mountain Highway (Target: Victorian and Australian governments).
- 2.6.3 Feasibility study and business case to extend Police Road from Churchill Park Drive to Stud Road (Target: Victorian and Australian governments).
- 2.6.4 Improve bus services by (Target: Victorian Government):
 - Modernising the frequency and services times on existing bus routes in Knox to, in the least, meet minimum service levels.

- Improving the Smart Bus 900 travel times by completing missing sections of the dedicated bus lane and median crossings at particular locations between Avalon Road, Rowville and The Close, Scoresby.
 - Upgrading the Burwood Hwy and Cathies Lane intersection with traffic lights and bus priority queue jump lanes.
 - Trialing an on-demand/flexiride bus service to better service the Bayswater Business Precinct and improve public transport connection to the Bayswater Train Station.
 - Establishing a new bus route between Bayswater Train Station and Stud Park Shopping Centre via Henderson Road.
- 2.6.5 Expand the bike path network by (Target: Australian and Victorian governments):
- Completing the northern bike path network along Mountain Highway between Wantirna Health Precinct to The Basin Triangle.
 - Extending the regionally significant Ferny Creek Trail from Acacia Road to Glenfern Valley Bushland Reserve to better support Kings Park and Gilmour Park.
 - Upgrading the Railway Trail shared path connection at the Ferntree Gully Station to provide a safer cycling connection.
 - Burwood Hwy between Scoresby Road to Ferntree Gully Road.
 - Liverpool Road between Mountain Hwy to Chandler Lane to improve the connection between Dandenong Creek Trail and The Basin's 1 in 20 ride.
- 2.6.6 Reduce congestion and improve freight access through provision of traffic signals (Target: Australian and Victorian governments):
- Ferntree Gully Road and Rushdale intersection, Knoxfield.
 - Burwood Hwy, McMahons Road and Clyde Street intersection, Ferntree Gully.
 - High Street Road and Mowbray Drive, Wantirna South.
- 2.6.7 Improve pedestrian safety by installing pedestrian operated signals (Target: Australian and Victorian governments):
- Scoresby Road near Kent Street, Knoxfield.
 - Stud Road near Rosa Street, Scoresby.

2.7 Climate Change

Councils are required to manage climate change risks by adapting to the changing climate and putting in place actions to reduce emissions. The Climate Response Plan 2021-2031 sets a goal to reduce Knox City Council's own greenhouse emissions to zero by 2030 and the Knox community's greenhouse emissions to zero by 2040. Fifty-six (56) key actions totaling \$33 million have been identified to enable Knox to meet the proposed targets and support a resilient and health community.

Two immediate term actions are upgrading 3,300 streetlights on major VicRoads roads to energy efficient LED lights and doubling our tree planting program to improve tree canopy coverage. Replacing the streetlights will slash greenhouse emissions by 20,000 tonnes over the 20-year life of the lights and result in better lighting of the roadway and footpath, improving visibility for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists. Doubling our tree planting program on public land will stem the decline in tree canopy coverage and contribute to cooling the suburban landscape, mitigating carbon dioxide increases, improving air quality, reducing pollution, and providing enhanced biodiversity and habitat for local flora and fauna.

Ask

Target: Victorian Government

- 50% contribution towards the \$1.7 million cost of upgrading streetlights
- \$1 million per annum over three years to double our tree planting program

3. CONSULTATION

These priorities have been identified by departments across Council and informed by strategic planning and various stakeholder and community consultation programs. This includes consultation processes for the development of the Community Plan 2021-2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025, Climate Change Response Plan, COVID-19 Household Survey, and stakeholder engagement to develop COVID-19 response packages, Lewis Park Masterplan, Wantirna Health Precinct Masterplan and proposed new hockey facility.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

This work will contribute positively to the achievement of desired environmental outcomes, including reducing carbon emissions, mitigating carbon dioxide increases, improving air quality, reducing pollution, enhancing biodiversity, flood mitigation, adoption of sustainable transport choices and creating green open spaces.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

A core challenge for Council is maintaining and upgrading its ageing infrastructure to respond to changing community needs in a financially responsible way. Local government collects only 3-6 cents of every \$1 raised in Australian taxes. The Victorian Government's rate capping legislation severely limits what funds Council can raise of its own accord and reforms imposed by other levels of government such as introducing another year of kindergarten often come unfunded or under-funded, resulting in direct cost shifting onto local government. Council does not collect enough revenue through rates, fees, fines, and charges to fund all its responsibilities and must rely on contributions from the Australian and Victorian governments.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Many of the issues canvassed here for inclusion in Council's federal and state election platform address social issues of shared importance and responsibility. As a region, we are grappling with the magnitude of social issues such as homelessness and housing stress, financial vulnerability, family violence, social isolation, gambling, and substance use. Poor mental health is both an underlying cause and effect of these social issues.

Safe, secure, and appropriate housing is essential to good health outcomes, intersecting and influencing other social challenges such as mental health and wellbeing, family violence, alcohol and drug use and financial disadvantage. Access to high quality kindergarten programs is one of the few strategies that improve outcomes for all children. This reform will have wide-ranging social and educational benefits for children, particularly those considered to be vulnerable or developmentally at risk. These advocacy items will ensure access for the Knox community to the intended benefits of statewide initiatives to improve the supply of social and affordable housing and boost educational outcomes.

Expenditure on healthcare as a proportion of total expenditure has been and is forecast to continue rising. Sport for children and adults is an effective means of helping to reduce the rising rates of obesity and chronic illness. There is an increased focus on the broader benefits derived from participation in sport, including physical and mental benefits, crime prevention and social inclusion. The broader benefits of sport are being increasingly recognised by governments. Sport can help achieve mental and physical health and social development. If managed appropriately, it can be an effective mechanism to help achieve social inclusion for marginalised groups and reduce crime rates.

While climate actions are primarily designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and climate risks, research and evidence have shown that climate change will exacerbate existing socio-economic issues, disproportionately impacting those most vulnerable in the community, widening the social inequality gap and disrupting jobs and employment patterns.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 1 - We value our natural and built environment

Strategy 1.1 - Protect and enhance our natural environment

Strategy 1.2 - Create a greener city with more large trees, indigenous flora and fauna

Goal 2 - We have housing to meet our changing needs

Strategy 2.3 - Support the delivery of a range of housing that addresses housing and living affordability needs

Goal 3 - We can move around easily

Strategy 3.1 - Enable improved transport choices supported by integrated and sustainable transport systems and infrastructure

Strategy 3.2 - Improve bike and footpath connectivity, including identifying gaps between existing bike routes, footpaths and key places

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.3 - Maintain and manage the safety of the natural and built environment

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity

Strategy 4.5 - Support the provision of emergency services

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.1 - Mitigate lifestyle risks such as smoking, risky alcohol consumption and drug use, obesity, lack of physical activity and poor nutrition

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.3 - Strengthen community connections

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

Continued hard work and collaboration between Council and the Victorian and Australian governments is needed to maintain our status as one of Melbourne's most liveable regions. Knox offers a unique balance between urban living with access to employment, transport and services. Council has worked with the community to maintain this balance, but we can't do it alone. The Victorian and Australian governments both have a crucial role to play in ensuring the Knox community has access to education opportunities, jobs, housing, services, facilities and transport while protecting Knox for our future generations by adapting to the changing climate and reducing our emissions.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: **Communications Manager, Imogen Kelly**

Report Authorised By: **Chief Executive Officer, Bruce Dobson**

Attachments

Nil

12 Items for Information

12.1 Capital Works Program Report

SUMMARY: Coordinator, Capital Works, Gene Chiron

The Capital Works Program Report shows projects on Council's Capital Works Program and indicates the status of each project as of 6 October 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the Capital Works Program Report, as of 6 October 2021.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report summarises Council's Capital Works Program for the 2021/22 financial year.

The aim of this report is to provide a regular and succinct status summary of each project over the last month. The Capital Works Report, as of 6 October 2021, is attached as Attachment A.

Highlights of the Works Report as of 6 October 2021 include:

- Berrabri Kindergarten, Scoresby - Verandah Space Upgrade - Complete.
- Carrington Park Reserve, Knoxfield - Cricket Net Renewal - Complete.
- Eildon Park Reserve, Rowville - Tennis Courts 4-6 Renewal - Complete.
- Bayswater Bowls Club - Car Park Upgrade - Complete.
- Rowville Children and Family Centre (Childcare) Refurbishment - Contract Awarded.
- Alma Avenue, Ferntree Gully - New School Crossing - Complete.

The recent COVID restrictions have had an impact on delivery of projects across the past month, however there is a strong expectation that construction activity will rebound in the leadup to Christmas.

2. CONFIDENTIALITY

There are no items of a confidential nature in this report.

Report Prepared by: Coordinator – Capital Works, Gene Chiron

Report Authorised by: Director Infrastructure, Grant Thorne

Attachments

1. Works Report as at 6 October 2021 [KFK8] [**12.1.1** - 22 pages]

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1	Bridges Renewal Program	\$714,225
All Wards	Contracts awarded for renewal works at Ferntree Gully Community Centre shared path bridge and Koolamura Waters pedestrian bridge. Works expected to commence after construction industry shutdown.	
4	High Risk Road Failures	\$500,000
All Wards	Works being scoped for various locations across Knox.	
7	Road Surface Renewal Program	\$5,193,000
All Wards	Road resurfacing works are programmed for various locations. Completed streets include Bridgewater Way Rowville, Rose Street Upper Ferntree Gully, Ashby Court, Ernest Street and Larne Avenue Bayswater.	
8	Drainage Pit and Pipe Renewal Program	\$3,410,000
All Wards	Drainage projects in progress at various locations including the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Grant funded projects, including Wilhelma Ave, Bayswater, Valerie St, Boronia and Lloyd St, Knoxfield and David St Knoxfield.	
9	Footpath Renewal Program	\$2,785,943
All Wards	Footpath rehabilitation works are in progress at various locations across the municipality.	
10	Bicycle / Shared Path Renewal Program	\$516,794
All Wards	Some works have finalised and the remainder of the program will commence once the latest condition audit data has been evaluated.	
16	Building Renewal Program	\$6,532,000
All Wards	Program is approximately 10% committed/expended. Works commencing or nearing completion over October include: 100 Station Street rental - roof replacement works, Park Crescent Children's office/kitchen refits, KLW - lifeguard station refit, waterslide rectifications, pool plant replacements, Billoo Park Preschool - light fittings and ceiling fans, Billoo Park MCHC - light fittings, Alchester Village Preschool- fencing/gates, light fittings, Alchester Village Playgroup - Fencing/gates, light fittings, Bayswater Senior Citizens - light fittings and fencing/gates, Carrington Park Activities Centre - roof restoration works, Goodwin Estate Preschool - switchboard, light fittings, ceiling fans, Taylors Lane Preschool - plumbing fixtures, Kinderlea Preschool - light fittings, ceiling fans, Orana Centre - roof restoration, downpipes, Basin Preschool - light fittings, ceiling fans, Coinda Preschool - light fittings, The Basin Playgroup - light fittings.	Centre -
17	Playground Renewal Program	\$2,015,968
All Wards	Contract awarded for 2020/21 playgrounds. Construction was to commence late September but delayed to Construction shut down. Consultation for Stud Park Concept Design has commenced. Will be seeking comments on Tim Neville play space in October.	
22	Fire Hydrant Replacement Program	\$142,000
All Wards	Expenditure is not likely to be required until June 2022.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
24	Carpark Renewal	\$700,000
All Wards	Carpark rehabilitation projects currently being scoped and include Wally Tew carpark, Liberty Reserve carpark and Knox Athletics Track-northern carpark.	
25	Plant & Machinery Renewal Program	\$2,885,000
All Wards	Fleet renewal program experiencing some delays due to international shipping - 20% funds committed, 10% funds expended but delays in deliveries for larger plant are expected later in the year.	
26	Street Tree Replacement Program	\$525,471
All Wards	Currently delivering infill street tree planting program.	
31	Stamford Park Redevelopment	\$10,298,748
Tirhatuan	The Lake/Ephemeral precincts are subject to final Melbourne Water approval. Final drawing amendments being completed ready for submission.	
104	Roadside Furniture Renewal Program	\$100,000
All Wards	Works yet to commence.	
147	Energy Retrofits for Community Buildings	\$164,671
All Wards	Scoping and quotes underway including lighting replacement at Dorset Square car park.	
229	Building Code Australia Compliance	\$50,000
All Wards	Program of works for 2021/22 being finalised with rollout scheduled from December.	
345	Asbestos Removal	\$100,000
All Wards	Asbestos audit scope review nearing completion with expectation that quotations will be received by end of October. Asbestos removal program will follow from the audits with rollout scheduled from January 2022.	
347	Miscellaneous Industrial Roads - Pavement Rehabilitation	\$250,000
All Wards	Program scoping in progress.	
409	Parks Furniture Renewal	\$75,000
All Wards	Installation of park benches completed at Greenbank and Juniper Reserves. Scoping of renewals continuing.	
410	Parks Signage Renewal	\$20,000
All Wards	Replacement of damaged acrylic signage at Ferntree Gully completed. Scoping of further works continuing.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
412	Water Sensitive Urban Design Renewal	\$460,000
All Wards	Upgrade works at Tim Neville Arboretum completed, further works needed for optimum output.	
441	Significant Municipal Site Renewal	\$322,575
Dobson	Scoping of works being finalised.	
443	Reserves Paths Renewal	\$75,000
All Wards	Scoping of works being finalised.	
492	Food Act Compliance - Kitchen Retrofitting	\$25,000
All Wards	Program of works being finalised with quotations being sought in November for December/January installation.	
536	Parkland Asset Renewal	\$75,000
All Wards	Scoping of works being finalised.	
537	Roadside Plantings Renewal	\$120,000
All Wards	Roadside garden bed renewals underway.	
566	Artwork Renewal	\$107,169
All Wards	Contractor (Meridian) due to commence sculpture restoration project October. Continued maintenance and cleaning of Public Art collection as required. Some delay due to COVID-19 and current health restrictions.	
576	Emergency Warning Systems in Early Years Facilities	\$100,000
All Wards	Program of works finalised. Cooinda, Berrabri and Kinderlea scheduled for installations in January 2022, Scoresby West and Eildon as part of refurbishment projects in June 2022 and April 2022 respectively and Alchester Village Playgroup in April 2022.	
587	Upper Ferntree Gully Neighbourhood Activity Centre Design	\$9,343
Dobson	Consultation on new lighting closed in September. Seeking quotations in October/November.	
593	Marie Wallace Reserve, Bayswater Masterplan Implementation Stage 4	\$60,070
Dinsdale	Awaiting final approval of signage scheme.	
649	Scoresby (Exner) Reserve - Masterplan Implementation Stage 4	\$201,776
Tirhatuan	Quotations received for the supply and install of solar path lighting. Design of path links currently under review.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
675	Public Art Project	\$201,655
All Wards	Public art projects are in progress and planned for delivery in 2021-22 including Lupton Way, Fairpark Reserve, Laneway Lightboxes, McCauley Place, Knox Regional Netball Centre and Beautify Boronia, plus project management contracting for major projects. Minor delays in project planning and delivery due to COVID-19 and health restrictions.	
708	Cricket Run Up and Goal Square Renewal Works	\$82,212
All Wards	Works due to commence at various locations in October.	
717	Knox Central Package	\$18,235,000
Dinsdale	Negotiations to acquire parcels for future road corridor and delivery of Knox Central Masterplan continue. Residual funding from the Operations Centre land acquisition to remain allocated to the project should additional land be required.	
724	Knox (Interim) Library	\$664,205
Dinsdale	Interim library is proceeding for delivery by mid - January 2022.	
746	Revegetation Plan	\$100,000
All Wards	Priority sites are being scoped and designed for site preparation in February 2022.	
755	Talaskia Reserve, Upper Ferntree Gully - Masterplan Implementation Stage 3	\$60,000
Dobson	Stage 2 of Masterplan implementation works are now complete. Maintenance period has come to an end.	
834	Oversowing of Sports Fields	\$60,000
All Wards	Fertilising schedule ongoing.	
837	Westfield Library (Permanent) - Design and Fitout	\$3,200,000
Dinsdale	A Request for Quotation for high level schematic design services for a Permanent Library is underway. Schematic designs produced will allow for liaison with Westfield regarding new base build design. The interim library is proceeding for delivery by mid - January 2022.	
838	Bayswater Community Hub - Scoping	\$70,000
Dinsdale	Tenders have been received and awarded.	
849	Installation of Change Tables into Kindergartens	\$48,065
All Wards	Change tables have been delivered and installed into 17 kindergartens in preparedness for the introduction of 3 year old Kindergarten in 2022.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
867	Knox Regional Netball Centre Extension	\$12,531,053
Dobson	Construction progressing well. Due to construction industry lockdown, the concrete slab now due for completion mid October.	
868	H V Jones, Ferntree Gully - Masterplan Implementation Stage 3	\$873,211
Friberg	Currently seeking comments from community on netball court upgrades and additional carparking.	
869	Gilbert Park, Knoxfield - Masterplan Implementation Stage 3	\$333,529
Friberg	Stage 2 of Masterplan completed. Tender documents for stage 3 underway.	
871	Energy Performance Contract Implementation	\$553,437
All Wards	Building Management System installation at Knox Community Arts Centre and Ferntree Gully Library and Community Arts Centre have been completed. LED lighting works have also been completed at a number of sites. Construction shut down has delayed a number of projects underway at the time including solar installations at two sites - both recommenced early October.	
935	Scoresby (Exner) Reserve - Tennis Court Renewals	\$57,815
Tirhatuan	Surface Defects - negotiations underway with contractor on remedial works solution. Courts 4 & 5 - initial survey completed. Geotechnical investigation and consultation with arborists underway.	
941	Knox Regional Netball Centre - Court Renewals	\$123,594
Dobson	Scope of works has been finalised and contractor engagement to start in October.	
942	Tree Management	\$63,321
All Wards	Works undertaken as required in conjunction with Council initiatives.	
944	Knox Central (Former Operations Centre Remediation)	\$3,514,194
Dinsdale	Remediation works ongoing with soil vapour testing being undertaken. Contract for demolition and asbestos removal of additional buildings (old SES and rental property) has been awarded and works to be completed prior to Christmas.	
946	Boronia Precinct Planning	\$360,500
Baird	The revised Boronia Renewal Strategy has been adopted by Council on 23 August. Further community consultation will be undertaken in early 2022 subject to Ministerial authorisation of Amendment C192 to the Knox Planning Scheme. In the meantime, the internal Project Control Group provides directions on the implementation of a number of priority projects.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
948	Modular Building Program	\$3,822,522
All Wards	Lakesfield Reserve Modular Building is nearing completion with onsite works commenced in late August. There is a delay to delivery program with site restrictions and construction industry shutdown with completion of modular component of the program scheduled for late November. Demolition of existing building and carpark works will follow to complete the project in early 2022. Marie Wallace Modular and existing pavilion refurbishment is progressing through finalisation of detailed design with expectation that tenders for will be let for November with aim to appoint Contracts by December. Gilbert Park Modular Construction Contract was awarded by Council 11 October.	
950	Family & Childrens Services Buildings & Facilities	\$278,100
All Wards	Appointment of consultants delayed due to the current COVID 19 restrictions. Scoping and detail designs expected completion by January 2022. Tender and Award by March 2022 and Construction in Term 2 (April - June 2022).	
951	Community Toilet Replacement Program	\$674,286
All Wards	Delayed due to current COVID-19 and Construction industry restrictions.	
961	Knox Regional Netball Centre Floodlight Outdoor Courts 5 to 8	\$198,130
Dobson	Works to be undertaken after completion of redevelopment project at the centre.	
995	Peregrine Reserve, Rowville - Masterplan Implementation Stage 2	\$464,905
Taylor	Design and Construct Tender currently open.	
997	Llewellyn Reserve, Wantirna South - Masterplan Implementation	\$469,595
Scott	Project has commenced and is currently in the design phase.	
999	Lewis Park, Wantirna South - Masterplan Implementation	\$1,112,743
Dinsdale	Waterways - 60% Detailed design package complete. Sport & Play - Concept design 50% complete. Community Gardens - carpark complete. Fencing the only item still to occur.	
1002	Egan Lee Reserve, Knoxfield Masterplan Implementation - Stage 2	\$365,543
Scott	Stage 2 works have commenced. Drainage phase has been completed.	
1003	Wantirna Reserve, Wantirna - Masterplan	\$30,000
Collier	Works on hold pending soil report outcome.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1054	Knox Regional Sports Park - Stages 2 and 3	\$27,045,920
Scott	The expansion of the State Basketball Centre is being managed by the State Government through Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) and Development Victoria (DV) on behalf of stakeholders including Council as project partner. Site establishment phase is currently progressing with contractor appointed by the State. The detailed design of the Victorian Association of Radio Model Soaring (VARMS) to establish a new clubhouse at the Rowville Recreation Reserve is being project managed by Council as a part of the overall expansion project and is progressing.	
1119	Wantirna Reserve, Wantirna - Tennis Court Renewals	\$494,086
Collier	Courts 1-5: design underway including consideration of concrete slab design in conjunction with lighting design to work around existing site limitations as well as consultation with AusNet to meet electrical safety regulatory requirements. Footprint siting dependent on interpretation of recent HV electrical survey results. Courts 6-10: Temporary remedial works for Court 9 underway. Geotechnical investigation coordinated by Waste for Wantirna Reserve overall site underway. Awaiting outcome of investigation findings to progress with appropriate design methodology.	
1121	Eildon Park, Rowville - Cricket Net Renewal	\$58,100
Taylor	A concrete platform will be laid in front of net, with linking path. Work for completion was interrupted by the recent State Government Construction lockdown. Scheduled to be completed late October.	
1123	Public Tennis / Netball / Basketball Court Renewals	\$95,000
All Wards	Priority sites currently being selected from audits.	
1124	Sportsfield Fencing Renewals	\$133,888
All Wards	Gilbert Park Fence Renewal has been awarded to TFR Construction. Lakesfield Reserve Boundary Fence Upgrade has been awarded to TFR Construction.	
1125	Stormwater Harvesting Infrastructure Renewal	\$60,000
All Wards	Carrington Park works to commence in October.	
1128	Gilbert Park Reserve, Knoxfield - New Drainage	\$36,500
Friberg	Works have been awarded to Aquatek.	
1134	Ferntree Gully Community Arts Centre Office Upgrades	\$50,000
Dobson	Scoping being undertaken with design being undertaken by end of October. Expectation that quotes/tenders will be sought in November and Contractor appointed in December.	
1136	Arts Facility Upgrades	\$134,000
All Wards	Works Program being finalised with view to tender in November and appoint Contractor in January.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1137	Knox Leisureworks - Major Redevelopment	\$154,500
Baird	List of works being collated from pool structural audit, pool plant audit and HVAC plant audit with view to progress to quotation/tender from November for individual works packages depending on prioritisation/estimated and installation over January-April.	
1145	Glenfern Road, Ferntree Gully - Footpath Construction	\$191,810
Dobson	Contract has been awarded. Contractor due to commence by mid - October.	
1148	Montana Avenue, Boronia - Footpath Construction	\$66,529
Chandler	Further consultation required with residents and school.	
1155	Kelletts Road, Rowville (973 Stud Road to Taylors Lane) - Shared Path	\$18,456
Taylor	Path construction completed. Quotations sought for line marking.	
1162	Templeton Street, Wantirna - Linemarking and Intersection Treatments	\$65,000
Collier	Line marking treatment currently being installed.	
1163	Renou Road, Wantirna South - Intersection Treatments	\$106,577
Collier	Reviewing shared path layout at intersection with Burwood Hwy.	
1165	Mowbray Drive & Argyle Way, Wantirna South - On Road Bicycle Link	\$120,000
Scott	Line marking treatment currently being installed.	
1166	Timothy Drive, Wantirna South - Intersection Treatments	\$35,000
Scott	Line marking treatment currently being installed.	
1170	Mountain Highway, Boronia (near Scoresby Rd) - Footpath Connection 4	\$80,000
Baird	In principle support from land owners. Drafting up licence agreement.	
1173	Quarry Reserve, Ferntree Gully - Masterplan Implementation Stage 3	\$689,554
Dobson	Contractor has been engaged to construct new public toilet. Delays to construction start with current Melbourne restrictions. Tender open for Design & Construct of Quarry Lookout.	
1174	Principal Avenue - Dorset Road Streetscape Upgrade	\$100,000
Chandler	Planning for future planting works.	
1176	Solar in Community Facilities	\$112,639
All Wards	Solar install at Mariemont Preschool affected by the construction shut down. Works will recommence by mid - October. Scoping for other sites underway.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1180	Forest Rd to Koolunga Reserve, FTG - Wetland Construction	\$386,056
Chandler	Community engagement, Bushland Management Plan review and Master Planning in progress while project is on hold.	
1182	Norvel Quarry Reserve Water Quality System - Design & Construction	\$40,000
Baird	Project alternatives still being investigated.	
1183	Peregrine Reserve - Wetland Construction	\$60,000
Taylor	Awaiting detailed site survey.	
1184	Egan Lee Reserve - Wetland Construction	\$550,000
Scott	Analysis for retarding basin and upstream/downstream catchment are underway. Amendment of concept design pending survey.	
1216	Carrington Park Reserve, Knoxfield - Cricket Net Renewal	\$30,669
Friberg	Nets and path completed, soil around nets to be topped up for completion.	
1225	Commercial Road, Ferntree Gully (Burwood Hwy to Wilson St) - Reconstruction	\$150,000
Baird	Project achieved Practical Completion in August and is now in a Defects Liability period.	
1226	Lewis Road, Wantirna South (Tilba PI to Kanooka Rd) - Reconstruction	\$100,000
Dinsdale	Construction works completed. Practical Completion inspection imminent.	
1227	Albert Street, UFTG (Talaskia Rd to Townley Place) - Reconstruction	\$300,000
Dobson	Construction works completed. Practical Completion inspection imminent.	
1228	Malvern Street, Bayswater (Edelmaier St to Scoresby Rd) - Reconstruction	\$460,000
Baird	Construction works, including new footpath, anticipated to commence in early October.	
1229	Sullivan Court, Wantirna (Rachelle Drive to End)- Reconstruction	\$160,000
Collier	Works anticipated to commence in April 2022.	
1230	Wanaka Close, Rowville (Erie Avenue to End) - Reconstruction	\$90,000
Tirhatuan	Works anticipated to commence in April 2022.	
1231	Winnifred Crescent, Knoxfield (Allister Close to Christie Close) - Reconstruction	\$135,000
Friberg	Construction works well underway with 30% completed.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1232	Chandler Road, Boronia (Floriston Rd to Albert Ave) - Design	\$23,936
Chandler	Design deferred until further notice - awaiting direction from Boronia Renewal Strategy Working Group.	
1237	Carrington Park - Multi Purpose Facility - Construction	\$2,381,577
Friberg	Construction works stopped due to Covid industry shutdown. Site affected by Covid restrictions (25% maximum capacity) prior to shutdown.	
1238	BAMP Facility Upgrades	\$1,320,274
All Wards	Program development progression expected to be finalised by end of November with nominated projects finalised by early December. Design/scoping are to be undertaken from January 2022, with view to have tender packages out by March 2022.	
1261	Wantirna Reserve - Car Park Upgrade (Design)	\$40,000
Collier	Consultation with Leisure & Waste underway in relation to potential hockey ground location. Design deferred until Master Plan work is completed and advice is received on project status and scope.	
1262	Cultural Facilities - Knox Pop Up Events Trailer & Kit	\$5,000
All Wards	Trailer maintenance to take place upon the return of public events in early 2022, including trailer signage and purchase of additional equipment.	
1265	Park Crescent Children and Family Centre, Boronia - Refurbishment Scoping	\$154,618
Baird	Detailed design progressing for provision by end of November with cost plan provision for planned construction in 22/23.	
1266	Rowville Children and Family Centre (Childcare) Refurbishment	\$971,988
Tirhatuan	Contract has been awarded with expected commencement by mid - October and completion in April 2022.	
1267	Early Years Facilities - Landscaping Upgrades	\$287,133
All Wards	Projects to renew the outdoor play spaces including The Basin Kindergarten and the replacement of decking at Wantirna Hub have been planned for January 2022.	
1269	Rosa Benedikt Community Centre, Scoresby - Minor Upgrade	\$37,238
Tirhatuan	On hold pending further investigation.	
1271	Wantirna Community Infrastructure Planning	\$40,000
Collier	On hold due to staffing resources.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1274	Mountain Hwy, The Basin (Wicks Road - Claremont Ave) - Footpath Design	\$11,462
Chandler	The project is currently under design review to identify key constraints to inform a cost estimate for the project. Pending this, there will be consultation with Council (through the budget process) and potentially with the community in relation to the proposal.	
1276	Liverpool Road, The Basin - Footpath Design	\$12,361
Chandler	Waiting confirmation of additional funding for the detail design.	
1281	Ferntree Gully Road, Knoxfield (O'Connor Road and Henderson Road)- Shared Path	\$110,000
Tirhatuan	Path design between O'Connor Rd and Henderson Rd to be renewed.	
1282	Ferntree Gully Road Shared Path - Scoping	\$10,000
Friberg	Requires a lease agreement. Investigating appropriate course of action.	
1297	Amesbury Avenue, Wantirna - Intersection Treatments	\$133,427
Collier	Discussed with local school assistant principal regarding shared path and works on Amesbury Ave. Site visit conducted and project planning in progress.	
1300	Parking Management Plan Implementation	\$90,000
All Wards	Arrangements made for parking signs to be updated on Floriston Rd, Dorset Sq (west side only), Dorset Rd and Erica Ave.	
1306	Dog Park Installations	\$225,809
All Wards	Emerson Place Reserve Fenced Dog-Off Lead Area completed. Maintenance period now in progress. Initial feasibility work for the construction of a car park to commence shortly. Scoping for future dog parks will follow.	
1308	Kevin Ave, FTG UFTG Flood Investigation - Scoping	\$18,115
Dobson	Scoping confirmed and Detailed Design underway and around 50% complete. Survey completed, underground service locating and proving completed.	
1309	1825 Ferntree Gully Road - Flood Mitigation Works	\$425,792
Friberg	Drainage upgrade within Commercial Rd area included within road renewal package - construction works completed. Additional area - finalising detailed design according to design review comments. Arborist consultation completed. Recommendations incorporated in the detailed design.	
1310	Flood Mitigation Reactive Complaints Upgrade Works	\$250,000
All Wards	Egan Lee upstream/downstream catchment mitigation assessment underway.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1311	Major Roads LED Streetlight Replacement	\$340,370
All Wards	Project Manager appointed to commence on-site audit of lights in Boronia. Once the audit is completed, the design will be finalised to aid the procurement and installation stages of the project.	
1312	Cathies Lane Landfill Solar Feasibility - Stage 2	\$53,314
All Wards	Work underway to prepare a report to Council presenting options for Council to switch to renewable energy including the impact of recent regulatory changes announced by the Australian Energy Market Commission.	
1315	Fairpark Reserve - Pavilion Upgrade (incorporating U3A extension)	\$5,574,861
Baird	Council officers have commenced the Detailed Design of the facility and final stage of design prior to tendering for construction.	
1316	Rowville Recreation Reserve - Car Park Upgrade	\$152,036
Taylor	Stage 1 design completed and quote received from Construction - this has highlighted funding shortfall. Stage 2 (Car park extension) design underway including geotechnical investigation. Car park to be constructed together with stage 1 works when funding is anticipated to be available for total works in 22/23.	
1318	Miller Park Reserve - Cricket Net Renewal	\$250,000
Chandler	Works have been awarded, demolition complete, delays on site due to covid restrictions.	
1319	Gilbert Park Reserve, Knoxfield - Batting Cage Renewal	\$128,819
Friberg	Quotations have been assessed and a preferred tender has been selected. Commencement of works delayed due to awaiting Melbourne Water approval.	
1320	Eildon Park Reserve, Rowville - Tennis Court Renewals	\$490,252
Taylor	Construction works including lighting installation for Courts 4-6 complete along with Practical Completion inspection. Courts 7-9: Initial survey complete. Geotechnical investigation and consultation with arborists underway.	
1321	Millers Reserve, The Basin - Tennis Court Renewals	\$425,000
Chandler	Tennis court construction works essentially complete with Practical Completion to be arranged. Additional works associated with additional hardstand area underway.	
1322	Glenfern Park (FTGTC) - Tennis Court Renewals	\$739,806
Dobson	Courts 5-6: Construction underway with works approximately 20% complete with structural re-design underway due to poor sub-grade. Anticipate concrete slab re-design proposal to be presented by Contractor mid-late October and construction to re-commence in November. Consultation with Tennis Club completed. Courts 1-4: Design 80% completed with geotechnical investigation underway to inform design detail.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1363	Lupton Way Shared Zone Construction and Public Art Lighting	\$533,220
Baird	Design pending on Metro Trains Melbourne agreement. Finalising license agreement with 255 Dorset Road. Final consultation with other private properties.	
1365	Programmed Road Renewal Works from June annual Audits	\$715,000
All Wards	Funds available to supplement funding requirements for various road renewal works as required.	
1367	Rowville Tennis Court Renewal	\$26,000
Taylor	The club has requested that the works be completed next year due to numerous lockdowns causing losses of coaching revenue and memberships.	
1386	Parks - New Tractor	\$120,000
All Wards	Plant expected to arrive in August. COVID restrictions have created a backlog.	
1389	Egan Lee Reserve Renewal - Top Oval Renewal	\$1,500,000
Scott	Project on hold until consultation has occurred.	
1390	Golf Practice Nets	\$80,000
All Wards	Contractor ASTE Tennis to commence works mid October.	
1391	Knox Hockey Facility Development	\$3,625,000
Tirhatuan	Alternative site investigations undertaken. Awaiting Council decision.	
1392	3-Year Old Kindergarten Facility Management	\$250,000
All Wards	Officers continue to plan and prepare for the introduction and expansion of 3 year old Kindergarten services to Council's early years programs, identifying facilities which will need to be considered as part of Council's capital works program over the next five years.	
1394	Knox Park Athletics - Changeroom Upgrade	\$59,460
Friberg	Design is nearing completion with view to progress to tender late October and award the works for construction from January 2022.	
1396	Gilbert Park - Floodlighting Upgrade (Diamonds 1 and 2)	\$494,975
Friberg	Contractor appointment imminent for Diamond 2. Diamond 1 Contract already let and construction commenced.	
1402	Bayswater Bowls Club - Car Park Upgrade	\$113,188
Dinsdale	Works completed.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1404 Tirhatuan	Berrabri Kindergarten, Scoresby - Verandah Space upgrade Project complete.	\$105,000
1405 Dobson	F W Kerr Kindergarten, Ferntree Gully - External upgrade Scope of works being assessed.	\$20,000
1406 Chandler	Miller's Homestead - Upgrade Works not yet detailed due to Covid restrictions for site visits and assessments. Various structural considerations need to be further investigated (inclusive of heritage limitations) including kitchen and bathroom upgrade, accessibility compliance, repairs of water damaged areas, artwork tracking upgrades and external signage, security and lighting. The required works are currently being assessed and scoped with view to finalise by late October for preparation of specification for works package.	\$217,500
1408 Baird	St John's Ambulance Hall - Upgrade On hold pending further investigation following report to Senior Management.	\$25,000
1411 Baird	Mountain Hwy, Bayswater, (Scoresby Road to Jersey Road) - Shared Path In principle support from land owners. Drafting up licence agreement.	\$309,082
1412 Dinsdale	Macauley Place, Bayswater - Shared Safety Zone Deferred due to current construction works at Mountain High Shopping Centre.	\$250,000
1413 Dobson	Kings Park Reserve, Upper Ferntree Gully - Masterplan Implementation Request for quotation process completed and a consultant appointed.	\$464,091
1414 Baird	Cardiff Street - Flood Mitigation Works Awaiting detailed survey and service proving. Scoping scheduled for October.	\$700,000
1415 Dobson	Olivebank to Underwood & Alexander Reserve, FTG - Wetland Treatment -Scoping & Analysis Scoping and initial catchment analysis completed. Modelling quotation process scheduled for October.	\$400,000
1418 Dobson	Wally Tew (FTG Reserve) - Stormwater Harvesting Upgrade Audit report review complete, discussing the results with Parks and Recreation, to validate the upgrade needs.	\$120,000
1419 Friberg	Carrington Park Reserve - Stormwater Harvesting Upgrade Audit report review completed, discussing the results with Parks and Recreation validate the upgrade needs.	\$80,000

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1422	Gilbert Reserve - Wetland (Scoping & Analysis)	\$57,578
Friberg	Melbourne Water pipe realignment detailed survey and design quote obtained. Functional and detailed design for realignment anticipated to be completed in November in readiness for community consultation early 2022.	
1425	Albert Street UFTG & Chandler Road Boronia - Passive Irrigation Research & Development	\$60,000
All Wards	This project is in partnership with Melbourne University. Scoping underway during October.	
1426	The Basin Triangle Masterplan	\$60,000
Chandler	Request for quotation process completed and a consultant appointed.	
1428	Violen Street, Bayswater - Reconstruction	\$185,000
Dinsdale	Works anticipated to commence in early 2022.	
1429	Edinburgh Road, Boronia - Reconstruction	\$180,000
Baird	Construction works well underway with 40% works completed.	
1430	Wilhelma Avenue, Boronia - Reconstruction	\$250,000
Baird	Construction works underway with 40% completed - works integrated with Drainage Renewal project.	
1431	Manuka Drive, FTG - Reconstruction	\$365,000
Baird	Construction works well underway with 70% completed.	
1432	Murene Court, Boronia - Reconstruction	\$210,000
Baird	Works anticipated to commence in early 2022.	
1434	Harcrest Estate Lake & Wetland Renewal	\$0
Scott	Harcrest Estate wetland Ring Wall repair work as required.	
1437	1000 Steps Car Parking and Shared Use Path Bridge	\$300,000
Dobson	Bridge design on hold. Alternative carpark design ongoing.	
1439	Mossfield Avenue, Ferntree Gully - Design Only	\$45,000
Baird	Survey completed. Design 30% complete with Geotechnical investigation underway.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1440	Mountain Gate Drive, Ferntree Gully - Design Only	\$65,000
Friberg	Concept design completed in consultation with Traffic and Transport. Geotechnical investigation underway. Design 20% complete.	
1441	Studfield Shops, Rear Laneway, Wantirna South - Design Only	\$40,000
Dinsdale	Concept design completed in consultation with Traffic and Transport. Geotechnical investigation and title re-establishment survey underway. Design 20% complete.	
1442	Avalon Road, Rowville - Design Only	\$70,000
Tirhatuan	Survey completed. Design 10% complete with Geotechnical investigation underway.	
1443	Faraday Street Boronia - Design Only	\$45,000
Baird	Survey completed. Design 20% complete with Geotechnical investigation underway.	
1444	Adele Avenue, Ferntree Gully - Design Only	\$35,000
Friberg	Survey complete. Design 70% complete with Geotechnical investigation underway.	
1445	Marlborough Road, Bayswater - Design Only	\$30,000
Dinsdale	Survey completed with Geotechnical investigation underway. Design to commence in 2022.	
1446	Windermere Reserve, Ferntree Gully - Oval Renewal	\$1,350,000
Friberg	Tender approved.	
1447	Knox Gardens Reserve, Wantirna South - Drainage #2 Oval	\$155,645
Scott	Evaluation has recently been completed. Works to be awarded early October.	
1448	Fairpark Reserve, Ferntree Gully - Netball Court Renewals	\$300,000
Baird	Design complete. Quotation to be sought in October.	
1449	Fairpark Reserve, Ferntree Gully - Re-turfing	\$250,000
Baird	Project on hold while works under review.	
1450	Reta Matthews Reserve, Ferntree Gully - Tennis Court Renewals	\$350,000
Baird	Initial survey complete. Geotechnical investigation and consultation with arborists underway.	
1451	Carrington Park Reserve, Knoxfield - Tennis Court Renewals	\$175,000
Friberg	Initial survey completed. Geotechnical investigation underway. Awaiting advice from Leisure on project scope.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1452	Llewellyn Reserve, Wantirna South - Cricket Pitch Renewal (Oval #1)	\$20,000
Scott	Works to commence early October.	
1453	Kings Park, Upper Ferntree Gully (Oval #2) - Sportsfield Drainage	\$88,849
Dobson	Project has been withdrawn from program with funds to be redistributed to other projects. Investigation into this ground showed that a new drainage system would not be beneficial to the ground improving. An alternate proposal will be presented to the forward capital works program.	
1454	Lewis Park, Wantirna South (Oval 2) - New Irrigation	\$150,000
Dinsdale	Project has been withdrawn from program with funds to be redistributed to Carrington Park and Eildon Park cricket net lighting. There is a masterplan currently being developed at Lewis Park and oval 2 has been flagged as a full redevelopment within the next few years. The irrigation system will need to be removed when the ground is re-constructed therefore, it would be inefficient to deliver at this time.	
1455	Talaskia Reserve, Upper Ferntree Gully - Cricket Net Renewal	\$250,000
Dobson	Tenders being assessed prior to contractor appointment.	
1456	Dobson Park, Ferntree Gully - Cricket Net Renewal	\$250,000
Baird	Tender closed 24 September.	
1457	Wantirna Reserve, Wantirna - Sportsfield Renewal - Scope	\$15,000
Collier	The sportsfield to be designed is not yet identified. Audits are being finalised to assist with the discussion.	
1458	Knox Gardens Reserve, Wantirna South - Tennis Court Renewals	\$50,000
Scott	Initial survey complete. Geotechnical investigation and consultation with arborists underway.	
1459	Lewis Park, Wantirna South - Oval 1 Floodlighting	\$250,000
Dinsdale	Contractor appointment expected by mid - October.	
1460	Templeton Reserve, Wantirna - Floodlighting Upgrade	\$250,000
Collier	Contractor appointment expected by mid - October.	
1461	Kings Park, Upper Ferntree Gully - Oval 1 - Floodlighting	\$280,362
Dobson	Contractor appointment expected by mid - October.	
1462	Knox Athletics, Knoxfield - New Shade Structures	\$100,000
Friberg	Design underway for construction to commence in December.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1463	Tormore Reserve, Boronia - Safety Fencing (Behind Goals)	\$100,000
Baird	Location to be confirmed following easing of lockdown restrictions. Quotes will then be sought. Works to occur early 2022.	
1464	Schultz Reserve, Wantirna - Pavilion Refurbishment	\$75,000
Collier	Consultation with Clubs underway.	
1465	Knox Park Athletics, Knoxfield - Lighting to Track	\$300,000
Friberg	Scope confirmed. Works scheduled to commence early 2022 with completion by 30 June.	
1466	Schultz Reserve, Wantirna - Shade Structure	\$50,000
Collier	Consultation with Clubs underway.	
1467	Fairpark Reserve, Ferntree Gully - Safety Netting (Southern End)	\$50,000
Baird	Works scheduled to occur upon completion of the major pavilion redevelopment and associated carpark and landscaping works. This is likely in 2022/23.	
1468	Park Ridge Reserve, Rowville - Existing Pavilion Refurbishment	\$20,000
Taylor	Works will align with the new modular project.	
1469	Milpera Reserve, Wantirna - Existing Pavilion Refurbishment	\$20,000
Collier	Works will align with the new modular project.	
1470	Electronic Entry to Sporting Pavilions.	\$60,000
All Wards	Priority projects currently being worked through/finalised with view to commence scoping in November and seek prices in the new year for a March/April installation period.	
1471	Knox Skate & BMX Park, Knoxfield - Access Road	\$120,000
Friberg	Initial survey completed. Consultation with Leisure and Ambulance Victoria completed. Geotechnical investigation and design underway.	
1472	Wally Tew Reserve, Ferntree Gully - Car Park Upgrade	\$40,000
Dobson	Survey completed with Geotechnical investigation underway. Design to commence in 2022.	
1473	Egan Lee Reserve, Knoxfield - Car Park Extension - Design	\$35,000
Scott	Initial survey completed and concept layout options submitted and approved option selected. Geotechnical investigation underway along with consultation with arborists.	
1474	Knox Skate & BMX Park, Knoxfield - Carpark - Design	\$35,000
Friberg	Initial survey and arborist assessment completed. Geotechnical investigation and design underway.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1475	Gilmour Reserve, Upper Ferntree Gully - New Car Park - Design	\$35,000
Dobson	Majority of site is within Melbourne Water land and any proposal for development is subject to agreement with M.W. Consultation with stakeholders and coordinated by Leisure is underway.	
1476	Community Placemaking Program - Murals and Lighting - Scope	\$105,000
All Wards	Arts and Cultural Services currently scoping options for managing this project externally within the capital allocation as it is beyond existing staffing capacity.	
1477	FTG Library, Ferntree Gully - External Blinds	\$20,000
Dobson	Scoping underway.	
1478	Locker Program - Council Kindergartens	\$50,000
All Wards	Replacement program of children's lockers and make good to existing spaces with quotations being sought for January 2022 holidays and April 2022 holidays installation.	
1479	Liberty Avenue, Rowville Kindergarten - Verandah Replacement - Design	\$10,000
Tirhatuan	Scoping progressing with view for provision of design/cost plan by end of November.	
1480	Park Ridge Kindergarten, Rowville - Verandah - Design	\$10,000
Taylor	Scoping progressing with view for provision of design/cost plan by December.	
1481	Alice Johnson Children and Family Centre, Ferntree Gully - Verandah	\$65,000
Baird	Quotations currently being sought with expectation to appoint Contractor by November for a construction period of December-January 2022.	
1482	Billoo Park Kindergarten, Wantirna - Storage & Verandah Upgrade - Design	\$10,000
Collier	Scoping is progressing with view to complete detailed design/cost plan by end of November.	
1483	Update FCS signage from Preschool to Kindergarten	\$60,000
All Wards	Funds being redirected to Rowville Children's Centre Redevelopment as per Budget Variation approval.	
1484	136 Boronia Road (Knox Infolink) - Redevelopment	\$30,000
Baird	On hold pending further investigation.	
1485	The Basin Community House - Kitchen Upgrades	\$10,000
Chandler	Scoping underway with quotes expected to be sought from November for January 2022 installation.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1486	The Basin Progress Hall - Event Upgrades	\$40,000
Chandler	Scoping underway.	
1487	Knox Community Gardens, Boronia - Shed Removals	\$50,000
Dinsdale	Quotes being sought in October with expectation of Contractor being appointed to undertake the project from November.	
1488	Knox Community Gardens, Boronia - New Facility Design	\$20,000
Dinsdale	Project due to commence in October.	
1489	Public changing outlets to support vulnerable persons - Scoping	\$10,000
All Wards	Scoping underway.	
1490	Bergins Road, Rowville - Footpath Construction	\$129,998
Taylor	Site inspection conducted. Finalising quantities prior to obtaining quotes for the project.	
1491	Malvern Street, Bayswater - Footpath Construction	\$120,000
Baird	Construction works expected to commence by mid - October.	
1492	Francis Crescent, Ferntree Gully - Footpath Construction	\$43,890
Dobson	Scheduled to commence early 2022.	
1494	1726 Ferntree Gully Road, Ferntree Gully - Footpath Design	\$4,180
Friberg	Site inspection conducted.	
1495	Ferntree Gully Road, Scoresby - Footpath Construction	\$29,260
Tirhatuan	Design completed.	
1496	Short Street, Boronia - Footpath Design	\$35,000
Baird	Site inspection conducted. Quotations being sought for design for a DDA compliant path.	
1497	Cypress Avenue, Boronia - Footpath Design	\$20,000
Baird	Initial site inspection conducted.	
1498	Pleasant Road, Ferntree Gully - Footpath Scope	\$10,000
Dobson	Scheduled to commence early 2022.	
1499	Buckingham Drive, Rowville - LATM Treatment	\$120,000
Taylor	Consultation letters sent to residents.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1500	Liberty Avenue, Rowville - LATM Design	\$15,000
Tirhatuan	Consultation letters sent to residents.	
1501	Dobson Street, Ferntree Gully - Traffic device	\$10,000
Friberg	Scoping in progress.	
1502	High Street Road, Wantirna South - Shared Path	\$346,500
Scott	Feature survey completed. Working on path alignment and design.	
1503	Burwood Highway, Knoxfield - Shared Path	\$400,000
Scott	Feature survey completed. Working on path alignment and design.	
1504	Napoleon Road, Rowville -Shared Path	\$155,925
Taylor	Walk through completed. Finalising design.	
1505	Mountain Highway, Boronia - Shared Path - Design	\$80,000
Chandler	Site inspection completed which indicated further investigation for service road treatment.	
1508	Sasses Avenue, Bayswater - On Road Bicycle Lanes	\$40,000
Dinsdale	Site inspection conducted. Investigating alternative route options.	
1509	Moirra Avenue / Johnson Drive Intersection, Ferntree Gully - Traffic Island	\$15,000
Baird	Working on notification letter and design.	
1510	Kelletts Road at Lakesfield Drive, Lysterfield - Footpath link at School crossing	\$3,000
Dobson	Project scoped. Drafting brief for design.	
1511	Alma Avenue, Ferntree Gully - New School Crossing	\$30,000
Dobson	School crossing works have been completed.	
1512	Maryborough Road, Boronia - Rumble Strips	\$10,000
Baird	Project scoped. Finalising design.	
1513	Regency Terrace, Lysterfield - Connection to Napoleon Road Bus Stop	\$24,000
Taylor	Walk through completed. Finalising design.	
1514	Carrington Park, Knoxfield - Masterplan Implementation	\$300,000
Friberg	Contractor engaged for construction of new playspace. Construction to commence mid-October.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1515	Major Crescent Reserve, Lysterfield - Landscape Plan	\$25,000
Taylor	Site analysis completed. Internal consultation completed in September. Draft Landscape Plan October-December.	
1516	Lakesfield Reserve, Lysterfield - Landscape Plan	\$25,000
Dobson	Site analysis completed. Internal consultation completed in September. Draft Landscape Plan October-December.	
1517	Flamingo Reserve, Wantirna South - Landscape Plan	\$25,000
Collier	Site analysis completed. Internal consultation completed in September. Draft Landscape Plan October-December.	
1518	Schultz Reserve, Wantirna - Landscape Plan	\$25,000
Collier	Site analysis completed. Internal consultation completed in September. Draft Landscape Plan October-December.	
		Total: \$154,056,543

12.2 ICT Capital Works Report

SUMMARY: Chief Information Officer, Scott Coleman

The ICT Capital Works Report shows projects on Council's ICT Capital Works Program and indicates the monthly status of each project.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the ICT Capital Works Report, as of 14 October 2021.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report summarises Council's ICT Capital Works Program for the 2021/2022 financial year. The aim of this report is to provide a regular and succinct status summary of each project over the last month. The Capital Works Report, as of 14 October 2021 is attached in the Confidential section of Council's agenda.

Highlights of the Capital Works Report as at 14 October 2021 include:

- The Asset Management project has re-baselined timelines following Steering Committee approval of a change request, with implementation now expected in May 2022. This change was a result of vendor acquisition impacting on delivery timelines.
- The Digital Customer Channel Transformation Program has commenced its Phase 2 which will see the replacement of Council's Intranet. Project Initiation approach has been approved by ICT Governance bodies. Project has now commenced a procurement activity to source vendor support for a Intranet design phase.
- The Early Years Project customer experience research has concluded with findings from Community consultation from "Today Strategic Design" presented back to project stakeholders. Requirements, internal process maps, and customer insights are now being reviewed by the Enterprise Architecture team, before a market procurement engagement is conducted.
- The Corporate Reporting Project will review solutions to meet our strategic risk management and corporate reporting obligations. The project approach has been approved by the ICT Governance bodies. The requirements have been handed to the Enterprise Architecture team for solution review, ahead of a market procurement engagement.

2. CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidential information is contained in Attachment 1 in the confidential agenda, in accordance with Sections 3 and 66 of the Local Government Act 2020 as the information relates to contractual matters; and the premature disclosure of the information could be prejudicial to the interests of Council or other persons.

The information also meets the definition of confidential information under the Local Government Act 2020 on the basis that the information includes:

- Council business information the disclosure of which may prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations; and/or

- Private commercial information that may unreasonably expose a business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage if disclosed; and/or
- Information which has previously been declared as confidential information for the purposes of Section 77 of the Local Government Act 1989.

Report Prepared By: Chief Information Officer, Scott Coleman

Report Authorised By: Executive Manager Strategy, People & Culture, Interim Information Technology and Transformation (Change), Sam Stanton

Attachments

1. ICT Capital Works Report [**12.2.1** - 3 pages]
Confidential Attachment 1 is circulated under separate cover.

Knox City Council Project Status Report

15-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name
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789	Facilities Booking Solution
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All Wards	The new Priava meeting room and fleet booking solution went live to staff on 14 Dec 2020. Additional meeting rooms for the new Operation Centre and Knox Community and Leisure Centres were made available for staff bookings.
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A planned second phase will commence in May 22 to extend booking capabilities to the general public enabling booking of Knox external facilities including halls, pavilions, reserves etc.

812	Asset Management Information System
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All Wards	Lifecycle' system is a critical tool to manage Council Assets. This project replaces the current Asset Management Information system with contemporary, modern, well supported equivalent that meets Council's current and future needs. The project is in implementation build/test/train stage with activity presently focused on Migration of Asset and Legacy data, Configuration and Validation of Parks & Works processes and finalisation of GIS Mapping tasks for go live plan. Integration to Pathway, KX, Computron and IntraMaps is progressing, with Pathway/KX in final stages of testing. Training and integration testing with Key Stakeholders and Confirm Champions progressing well. The delivery timeline for Stage 1 Parks & Works is in November 2021. Stage 2 Facilities, Plant & Fleet in April 2022 and Stage 3 Renewals in May 2022.
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827	Digital Customer Channels Transformation (DCCT) - Phase 3 Cust Portal & Integration
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All Wards	This phase will expand on earlier delivery of the program, with the implementation of a secure portal to Knox staff, a Knox business hub, and fully integrate with Knox systems. The phase will commence 2022.
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977	Pathway Program
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All Wards	The ICT funding for Pathway enhancements has concluded and ongoing development is transitioning to BAU operations in August and September. IT will continue to support Pathway and ePathway development as a core application at Knox. To support the transition, a new support model to support Pathway activities will be put in place. The IT Business Engagement team are currently leading a process to identify business needs regarding long-term Pathway support and designing a plan to support this.
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1031	Spatial Capability
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All Wards	The Spatial Capability program looks to improve processes and tools by utilising geographical information such as mapping. Spatial Capability is currently being delivered as an outcome of all ICT Projects, however remaining desired capability will be delivered near the end of the ICT Roadmap. The project is therefore on pause whilst the roadmap progresses and available GIS resources are engaged in other ICT projects. Geo Spatial Analyst is working to establish a GIS strategy and scope for the ICT Spatial Capability Project to restart.
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1034	Business Intelligence
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All Wards	This project is now complete. The Business Intelligence (BI) Project has finalised its set objectives to enable Council teams with BI and Analytics capability by implementing a structured approach to address BI and data related requests. Through the implementation project a total of 16 use cases across 11 departments were delivered over the last 12 months. Power Users have been identified and provided with advanced training on BI tools. The Strategy and BI team will continue to support business on BI and Analytics requirements following project closure in July 21.
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Knox City Council Project Status Report

15-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name
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1036	HR System
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All Wards	This project is now complete. New systems are in place for Recruitment, Learning, Onboarding, Time and Attendance, Performance and Succession Planning. Formal handover has occurred with Strategy, People & Culture.
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1037	Project Management Office - ICT Governance
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All Wards	This budget allocation is to cover costs associated with ICT governance including independent members of the ICT Governance Committee.
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1242	Digital Customer Channels Transformation (DCCT) - Phase 1 Website Development
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All Wards	Following the successful deployment of Council's new website in June the project team have continued to monitor the website and support the newly established Digital Experience Team. The project will conclude project closure in October. Once all actions are complete it will enable project resources to focus on Phase 2 of the Digital Customer Channel Transformation - KCC's staff intranet re-development.
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1245	Corporate Reporting Solutions
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All Wards	The Corporate Reporting Project will deliver process and technical solutions for risk management and business planning. Project Initiation Document endorsed by ICT Governance in October 21. Benchmarking with other councils complete. Holistic review of requirements by Enterprise Architecture underway to inform Scope. Scoping document to be presented to ICT Steering Committee November, then ICT Governance Committee early December 2021. Procurement Plan, Communications Plan and Change Management plan commenced.
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1257	Project Management Office
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All Wards	Project Management Office oversees quality aspects of the overall Portfolio of ICT, and the budget for this function continues to be managed according to plan.
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1368	Enterprise Integration Platform
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All Wards	This project will deliver a new Enterprise Integration Platform which will manage integration between our disparate IT systems and reducing complexity when transferring data between them. The Enterprise Integration Platform Project Initiation Document (PID) was approved by Steering Committee on 24th August and endorsed by ICT Governance Committee on 7 th October. Initial Proof of Concept (PoC) contenders have been identified and are being engaged to secure licenses and software. Scoping for PoC is in progress.
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1369	Master Data Management
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All Wards	Master Data Management (MDM) is a cultural change program focused on the collaborative effort between service areas, people, systems and processes to form a common understanding of how the Council will maintain and support key datasets.
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The project is progressing with the recruitment of a data lead, which will take the lead on forming our data management strategy. The Project Manager has resigned, so recruitment for a new PM will commence to align with the start of the new data lead. The team is concluding work on a problem statement, which will be required to complete project scoping.

Knox City Council Project Status Report

15-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name
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1371	Participation Platform
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All Wards	This project is now complete. The Knox Have Your Say platform went live in February 2021. The solution underpins the policy and framework for Knox's engagement with the community on decision making that affects them. Additional staff awareness sessions and on-demand training are available to support the ongoing use of the tool.
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1373	Active Aging System Platform
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All Wards	The Active Aging Project will review service requirements, ensuring the correct solution is in place to meet process and technical requirements, whilst also delivering a better experience for our online community. The Active Ageing & Disability Services manager has requested that the ICT project is commenced later on the ICT roadmap to allow for an embedding of recent changes in service provision in the team. The current Carelink contract will expire in 2024 and the project will be established to tender for ongoing support will commence in 2022.
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1374	Early Years Platform
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	The Early Years Project will review services requirements, ensuring the correct solution is in place to meet process and technical requirements whilst delivering a better experience for our online community. Customer experience research is complete with final showcase of findings, journey maps and moments that matter presented to the Project Team on 8 th October. Expression of interest for a new kindergarten and childcare solution is being finalised. Scope document is also being finalised and will be tabled at the November ICT Steering Committee for approval.
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1376	Digital Customer Channels Transformation - DCCT Ph2
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All Wards	The project will implement a new Intranet to replace with a new modern equivalent to support staff effectiveness in service provision to our community. In September the Project Initiation Document (PID) was approved by the ICT Steering Committee and ICT Governance Committee in October. The project team will now conduct a procurement stage to contract a specialist to lead research and to define business requirements for a new staff intranet.
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1377	Cloud Solutions
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All Wards	Project waiting to be scheduled.
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1379	Customer Relationship Management (CRM)
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All Wards	Customer Relationship Management refers to all strategies, techniques, tools, and technologies used by Council for effectively servicing our community-based customers. This project is due to commence in late 2021 in line with the completion of the Customer Experience Strategy.
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13 Notices of Motion

14 Supplementary Items

15 Urgent Business

16 Questions Without Notice

17 Confidential Items

17.1 Chief Executive Officer Performance Evaluation Committee -
Engagement of Independent Advisor

A confidential report is circulated under separate cover.