MINUTES

COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 27 February 2024
6:30 pm

Northern Aquatic and Community Hub,
1-9 Cox Road, Norlane

LIVE STREAMED ON THE CITY'S WEBSITE:

www.geelongaustralia.com.au/meetings

COUNCIL:

Cr T Sullivan (Bellarine Ward) - Mayor
Cr A Aitken (Windermere Ward) - Deputy Mayor
Cr J Mason (Bellarine Ward)
Cr E Wilkinson (Bellarine Ward)
Cr M Cadwell (Brownbill Ward)
Cr E Kontelj (Brownbill Ward)
Cr P Murrihy (Brownbill Ward)
Cr B Harwood (Kardinia Ward)
Cr B Moloney (Kardinia Ward)
Cr R Nelson (Kardinia Ward)
Cr S Hathway (Windermere Ward)

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

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Present: Crs T Sullivan (Mayor), A Aitken, M Cadwell, B Harwood, S Hathway, J Mason, P Murrihy, R Nelson, E Wilkinson

Also Present: A Wastie (Chief Executive Officer), J Stirton (Executive Director City Infrastructure), T Edwards (Executive Director Corporate Services), T Bradley (Executive Director Placemaking), A Basford (Executive Director City Life), J Douglas (Acting Manager Governance)

1. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1. Acknowledgement of Country

Council acknowledges the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the Land, Waterways and Skies. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of our Greater Geelong community today.

Presentation

Councillors Hathway and Aitken presented the meeting with a snapshot of activities and projects in the Windermere Ward.

1.2. Apologies

Cr Moloney, Cr Kontelj (Leave of Absence)

1.3. Leaves of Absence

Nil

1.4. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

Nil

1.5. Confirmation of Minutes

Cr Aitken moved, Cr Wilkinson seconded –

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 30 January 2024 be confirmed.

Carried

1.6. Public Question and Submission Time

The following persons submitted questions prior to the Council Meeting on the following various subjects:

1. Michael Leslie – St Leonards Masterplan
2. Jarred Crowe – Bike Lanes
3. Charles Street – Lara Incinerator – Environmental Contamination Concerns
4. Barry White – Serendip Sanctuary and Advocacy
5. John Winkler – Kyema Drive, Lara
6. Marylyn Pettit – Lara Traffic Management/Funding – Sandy Creek Road
7. Marcus McEwen (President Lara RSL) – Funding – Anzac Day Dawn Service
8. Jane Compston – Lara Incinerator
9. James Compston – Waste Management
10. Jan Farrell – LGBTIQA+ Action Plan
11. Paul Brady – Councillor Project Priorities – Community Facilities

12. Dale Purcell – Windsor Park Masterplan
13. Rowland Bone – Windsor Park Masterplan
14. Johanna Duncan – Lara Incinerator – Traffic Management
15. David Jackson – Northern Aquatic and Community Hub
16. Liz Bonner – Social Housing Plan
17. Emilie Flynn – Social Housing Plan
18. Simon Reeves – Corio Norlane Structure Plan
19. Lorraine Kulic – Beckley Park – Stadium
20. Greg Wilson – Kevin Hoffman Walk in Lara – Project Funding
21. Jeanne Nel -Tree Management – Engagement
22. Louis De Koker – Tree Management – Engagement
23. Jenny Knox – Tree Management – Engagement

Charles Street asked:

Question 1:
We understand that there are several Ramsar wetlands within the City of Greater Geelong. See https://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/wetlands/article/item/8d2ae1d2f66b786.aspx. We are particularly interested in the Limeburners Bay Ramsar wetland, at the mouth of Hovells Creek.

See https://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/parks/item/limeburnerslagoon.aspx. We note that Lara Big Incinerator stack is just 4,000 metres from the centre of the Limeburners Bay Ramsar wetland and well within the range of its plume. We also note that the groundwater at the incinerator site at 164-200 McManus Road Lara is contaminated. “Groundwater concentration of boron, hexavalent chromium, copper, nickel, silver and zinc were reported to exceed the adopted criteria for Water Dependent Ecosystems and Species.” (Jacobs 2020). Of greatest concern is hexavalent chromium. “Construction of the proposed EfW plant would involve the excavation and removal of approximately 178,000 m3 of sub-surface material, from a maximum anticipated excavation depth of 11 m below ground level.” (Jacobs 2020). Of course, this hole will fill with ground water which must be pumped out (probably continuously) during construction. Site surface waters and groundwater flow into Hovells Creek by default.

What action is Council taking to ensure that Hovells Creek and the Limeburners Bay Ramsar wetlands are protected from contamination by the incinerator plume, and by contaminated waters from the Lara Big Incinerator construction site?

Thank you for your questions, Charles.

Appreciating that the City will be providing advice as a Recommended Referral Authority, this development will still be required to satisfy all applicable environmental planning regulations as per any land development within Victoria.

The EPA holds responsibility for ensuring State and Federal environmental legislation is adhered to, including removal of prescribed waste and discharge from site. We will refer matters to them where identified through normal business operations.

Question 2:
Normally, Council has decision making powers regarding almost every construction project within the City of Greater Geelong borders. This is a normal part of good local government practice. But not so in the particular case of the Lara Big Incinerator project. Council has been relegated to the status of “referral authority” only, with no decision-making powers. There must be a document (a “legal instrument”?), or perhaps more than one, which has removed Council’s normal decision-making powers in relation to the Lara Big Incinerator project, or projects of that type. Would Council please provide us with a copy of the said legal instrument(s), or internet link(s) to same, please?

In accordance with Clause 72.01-1 for all Planning Schemes state-wide, it is noted that the Minister for Planning is the Responsible authority for matters under Divisions 1,1A,2 and 3 of Part 4 of the Act (Planning and Environment Act, 1987), for a (sic) approval of or being satisfied with matters in relation to use and development of land for a:

Energy generation facility with an installed capacity of 1 megawatt or greater.

Barry White asked:

Question 1:
Councillors will be aware of developments impacting on Serendip Sanctuary and previous action including correspondence from the Mayor on at least two occasions to support the sanctuary, and its wildlife displays which are (or were) its central attraction.

Serendip has major conservation, education, community and tourism value and is an important asset for our region. This is an important community and regional site which should be invested in, not destroyed, as is presently the direction under Parks Victoria (and identified in an FOI requested 2020 Business Plan but only able to be accessed in June of 2023).

Will Council contact the Minister for Tourism's office (Steve Dimopoulos) and request a meeting with his advisors, Council, and community reps to discuss the future of this invaluable Geelong Region asset?

Question 2:
Will Council contact the Executive Director Greater Geelong and Bellarine Tourism to request that she becomes more proactive in supporting and promoting this asset through her role on the Stakeholder Reference Group, as there is little evidence of this action to date?

Thank you for your questions, Barry.

Tourism Greater Geelong and The Bellarine's Sustainable Destination Master Plan specifically calls out Serendip Sanctuary Upgrades as one of the top 20 demand driving projects, supporting the allocation of funding and resources to improve the visitor experience.

Parks Victoria is engaging with a Stakeholder Reference Group in an $11 million project to upgrade You Yangs Regional Park and Serendip Sanctuary. The Group includes representatives from Tourism Greater Geelong and The Bellarine, Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, Zoos Victoria as well as a range of community user groups and stakeholders. The City understands the Group has made positive contributions to the direction of the project, and it is progressing toward some excellent outcomes for the community in terms of upgraded facilities and new experiences that will support the strategic goal for Serendip Sanctuary.

The Tourism Greater Geelong and The Bellarine Executive Director has been an active participant on the Stakeholder Reference Group, contributing to discussions about how to prioritise the $11 million funding and adding tourism perspective to conversations about the direction of the Sanctuary.

John Winkler asked:

Question 1:
The residents of Kyema Drive Lara are still waiting for flood mitigation over 40 years since our homes were first inundated. We have endured five separate flood studies that all agreed, followed by four solid Council promises to resolve the issue of which three of these promises were subsequently broken.

We are still waiting patiently since our fourth committed project was put on hold but are becoming very nervous again. Along the way more has been spent on flood studies, planning and property purchase than is currently on-hold waiting for a shovel to actually realising gains.

Could Council please confirm to our community that the Kyema Drive Drainage Upgrade Project will proceed as promised as the tap re-opens?

Thanks for your question, John.

This financial year a vegetation assessment and a preliminary cultural heritage assessment have been completed. The design phase of the project is 90% complete with the finalisation of the mechanical and electrical design for the pump system outstanding. Upon finalisation of these design works we will have a Quantity Surveyor reevaluated the work, ensuring the project is accurately priced during budget discussions.

Future budget considerations will determine the schedule of works for Kyema Drive/Lipson Drive stormwater upgrades We acknowledge there are many vulnerable areas within our community in relation to stormwater impact and will ensure any investment is directed toward areas of greatest need first.

Marylyn Pettit asked:

Question 1:
Councillors should be aware of the 2019-2029 Lara Traffic Management Plan, first proposed in 2017 and approved in 2020. In that plan, the upgrade of Sandy Creek Rd was identified for short term high priority, to enable diversion of heavy trucks from the sand quarries away from the townships of Lara and the You Yangs Tourist and Recreational Precinct. It is now 2024, we are still waiting for this to happen and the road remains dangerous.

The issue has been raised with council many times by myself the Lara Care Group and community stake holders, including the quarry industry. Time and time again it has been put up for funding and knocked back due to funding shortages. We understand Federal Government money was made available for road development and although plans for Sandy Creek Rd upgrade were completed and ready to go, council diverted these funds to other non-road related projects. It is time the Council meets its community commitments and allocate funds as a matter of urgency.

What is the point of a Traffic Management Plan developed in consultation with the community, if it is simply continually ignored by you. My question is, can you promise us when the Sandy Creek Rd works will be done.

Thank you for your question, Marylyn.

The City notes your concerns regarding the lack of action to upgrade Sandy Creek Road.

Sandy Creek Road is managed as un unsealed road in accordance with our Road Management Plan and was last graded on 23rd November 2023. The next full grading of the road will occur within the next 4 weeks.

The City confirms Sandy Creek resealing and upgrading works were acknowledged as an opportunity for the City to strengthen our road network within the Lara Traffic Management Plan 2019 - 2029.

To date, grant opportunities have been sought but have not been successful. And at this point, construction funding has not been allocated for Sandy Creek Road due to the large value of works. We will continue to look for external state and federal funding opportunities from other levels of government or other bodies to assist in completing the works.

Marcus McEwen (President Lara RSL) asked:

Question 1:
Could I please respectfully ask why the COGG is not providing funding to support the Lara RSL Sub Branch ANZAC Day Dawn Service? It costs the Sub Branch $4,500 to put this important commemorative event on and without funding from COGG, this money will have to be taken from funding that is meant to support Veteran Welfare. I have previously asked the Chair of the Veterans Portfolio and was informed that there is no funding available.

Thank you for your question, Marcus.

The City strives to have a fair and equitable funding process for community programs and events. The City has funded the Eastern Beach Services for the past few years through grant funding, however the Community Event Grants and other City grant programs did not receive any funding applications in the 2023/24 competitive round for any 2024 ANZAC Day services.

Officers are happy to assist with grant applications for 2024/25 ANZAC services.

Joanna Duncan asked the following question on behalf of **Jane Compston**:

Question 1:
I asked a question at your last meeting about the concern I am having about the building of a massive incinerator in Lara. Thank you for your reply which included the wording, "As part of the process for consideration Council, along with concerned residents, has voiced its concerns to the Minister for Planning about the proposed application through a formal letter to the Minister. Council will continue to raise its concerns with the Minister."

Has Council raised its concerns with the Minister for Planning again since 30th January?

Thank you for your question Jane.

The City have not raised their concerns with the Minister for Planning since Council meeting on 30 January. This is the response from Council, not individual Councillors.

Today the Mayor and CEO raised our concerns with our local MP Ella George.

Charles Street asked the following question on behalf of **James Compston**:

Question 1:
I gratefully acknowledge that the Council has stated that its strategic plans for waste management do not involve incineration and that the Council does not plan on using incineration. I commend the Randwick City Council's unambiguous public display of its rejection of waste incineration as depicted in the photo sent earlier to CEO Ms Ali Wastie. I ask the Council if the COGG could similarly adorn at least some of the City's rubbish collection trucks, publicly indicating COGG's opposition to, and rejection of, the waste incinerator proposed for McManus Road Lara.

Thank you for your question, James.

Our kerbside collection and associated infrastructure are operated by an external Contractor. As per the previous question, we continue to raise our concerns and advocate through appropriate channels.

Jan Farrell asked:

Question 1:
I ask the following questions as the Co-Convenor of the Rainbow Local Government team – a campaign auspiced by the Victorian Pride Lobby to encourage councils to work with their local LGBTIQA+ communities to ensure their municipalities are welcoming and inclusive. Rainbow Local Government attended the Geelong Pride March last week and collected signatures for a petition that Cr Hathway will be presenting tonight. It was great to see so many Councillors attend and march beside the Geelong LGBTIQA+ community and their allies.

A year ago I attended your February meeting at the Potato Shed and asked "will Council commit to developing a stand-alone LGBTIQA+ Action Plan to advance LGBTIQA+ inclusion for employees and community members, in line with similar plans at other Councils across the state and in consultation with Council's LGBTIQA+ advisory committee?" I was provided with a waffling response from the Mayor about Council's commitment to the Rainbow Ready Road Map.

Are Councillors aware that the Rainbow Ready Road Map is simply an audit tool that is used as a stepping stone to an actual community driven LGBTIQA+ Action plan, a plan which is long overdue, given that 8 of the current Greater Geelong councillors committed to it almost four years in 2020.

Question 2:
Geelong Rainbow Inc organised a wonderful festival last week in Johnstone Park that included a Pride March. As the Councillors who attended are aware, a decision was made by this organisation to withdraw the official Council contingent of Councillors and Officers from the March due to supposed issues with a permit, even though the local police supported the March.

Given that Council's decision to withdraw from the March created some ill-will with Geelong Rainbow Inc. and others, will Council commit to providing better support to community organisations in general, and Geelong Rainbow Inc. in particular, to ensure that these kinds of events are not put at risk in future by overly bureaucratic protocols and procedures?

Thank you for your questions, Jan.

I was pleased to attend the Rainbow Festival at Johnstone Park on 17th February and see such great representation from Council and our Community. Geelong Rainbow informed Council on 14th February that the parade was to be changed to a rally and approvals had not been received from Vic Police.

The City will work closely with event organisers, Rainbow Inc. in future to ensure the march component of the festival is formalised with necessary permits to better support attendees safety, road closures, alternative public transport routes and traffic control. The City would gladly support Rainbow Inc in the coming months to begin preparing early for the 2025 Geelong Rainbow Festival.

The development of a dedicated LGBTIQA+ action plan is not in the plan of work for the next financial year, but may be considered in the future.

The Victorian Government has produced the Rainbow Ready Roadmap https://www.vic.gov.au/rainbow-ready-roadmap, a set of resources for Victorian rural and regional communities to build LGBTIQA+ inclusion. This was developed through extensive consultation with LGBTIQA+ communities, including Geelong and is used to inform our future priorities.

The City is proud to support diversity and inclusion, including our LGBTIQA+ community.

Paul Brady asked:

Question 1:
Why do Council project priorities change when there are changes in personnel? Shouldn't plans be carried through regardless of employee/Councillor movement?

Question 2:
North Shore has no issue with other council funding such as the Elderslie Reserve women's upgrade. Why can't the council do both projects?

Thank you for your question regarding Windsor Park Facility Development Plan, Paul.

The FDP builds on the previous Master Plan for the reserve and details a scope of works valued at $6.5 million, with 18 funding opportunities, including a pavilion extension, sealed car park, coaches boxes, player shelters, community garden space, skate park, female friendly facilities and cricket nets.

The State Government's election commitment of $2 million will be used to commence construction of the pavilion. Further implementation of the master plan will be considered by Council with all other funding priorities. Investment in community facilities is based on affordability, strategic alignment, and community need. The City is working closely with North Shore Football and Netball Club on the delivery of this project and is looking forward to discussing this with you in your meeting with MP Ella George, Deputy Mayor Cr Aitken, CEO Ali Wastie and Executive Director Anthony Basford tomorrow.

Joanne Duncan asked:

Question 1:
Planning permit PA 2001035 Waste Incinerator. During construction of the Incinerator traffic impacts are a concern, the Jacobs estimates are 300-400 one-way, full-time staff in light vehicles. 300 one way daily heavy vehicles carrying materials and equipment. 10 oversized over dimensional heavy vehicles.

Once operational, if that should occur, 200,000 trips annually carrying 50% of the waste in 26m B Double trucks 100,000 trips annually carrying 25% in 19m semi-trailer bulk haul vehicles 100,000 trips annually carrying a further 25% of the waste in refuse collection trucks. On top of the 450-500 vehicles per year carrying consumables, Ash, and scrap metal removal 3000-3500 trucks per year approx. 60 per week. Given the state of roads, if there is a road, who is financially responsible for the building or upgrade of Bacchus Marsh Rd, Forrest Rd, Production Way, McManus Rd, and Broderick road, should this project go ahead.

Thank you for your questions, Johanna.

The City of Greater Geelong is aware of the potential impact on the surrounding road network and has recently provided the Dept of Transport and Planning with a request for further information to better assess the proposal.

The City of Greater Geelong is recognised under ministerial planning permit process as a Recommending Referral Authority as identified in the Schedule to Clause 66.04 in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme and Section 55 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. We acknowledge that advice given under this referral capacity is discretionary however we hope that conditions within any permit would necessitate acceptance from the local authority.

Bacchus Marsh Road and Forest Road South are both managed by the Victorian Dept of Transport.

Production Way, McManus Road and Broderick Road are local roads managed by the City of Greater Geelong. Heavy loads are anticipated within an industrial precinct such as this and any reconstruction of these roads will consider the increasing mass of vehicles operating on the Victorian road network.

Authorising larger numbers of heavy loads on local roads such as these is considered by the City's engineers via a National Heavy Vehicle Regulator permit process. If it is found that any of our existing road network necessitates upgrades, the City would most likely seek funding through state grants to support such works.

Liz Bonner asked:

Question 1:
Real Deal Geelong is a broad-based community alliance of Unions, Faith groups, Community Centres and Community organisations which formed in early 2022 and represents the interests of over 46000 residents. It jointly endorsed a policy platform to address the Issues of Secure Housing, Meaningful Work and the Cost of Living and Care and Connection in December 2023.

The City has a comprehensive Social Housing Plan (updated January 2023) with worthy actions and targets which must be implemented to help address our housing crisis. Of particular concern is the shortage of social and affordable housing in Geelong, with a shortfall of over 7000 social housing dwellings identified. a. Can the City provide a detailed update regarding the outcome of the Actions in the Social Housing Plan to date and what will be implemented this year please?

Thank you for your questions, Liz.

The City continues to work towards the 15 actions set out in the Social Housing Plan 2020 – 2041. The city continues to advocate to the Commonwealth and State Government for investment in social housing and advocate to the State Government for mandatory planning controls for social housing. We are working with developers to negotiate voluntary agreements as well as exploring options with Registered Housing Providers.

Question 2:
Is the City on track to see the estimated 675 social housing dwellings required per annum identified in its Social Housing Plan delivered over the next 20 years?

We acknowledge the Social Housing Plan has an ambitious target over its 20 years. We know that the short term delivery is going to be difficult and that we will need exponential growth of social and affordable housing delivery to achieve this target. We are working with both the Government and private sector as well as identify Council owned sites where social housing can be delivered.

Emilie Flynn asked:

Question 1:
Following on from Liz Bonner's questions from the Real Deal around social housing: Will the City invest in public education this financial year about the importance of and need for social housing in the community to improve community support for and investment in social housing by all levels of government?

Question 2:
Will additional resources (including staffing, financial and in-kind) be allocated in this year's budget to ensure progress is made on implementing the Social Housing Plan?

Thank you for your questions, Emilie.

Council has dedicated Officers to support the community and understand the importance of social housing. Council takes a partnership approach and works with NFPs, Neighbourhood Houses, Community Housing Providers and other community organisations to support community education initiatives. We work with the development industry to encourage provision of social and affordable housing across the municipality. We advocate to all levels of Government to address the shortfall of social housing.

Simon Reeves asked:

Question 1:
Congratulations to the council for building this facility in Norlane. This facility has already instilled a great sense of pride, showing the people of Norlane that the rest of Geelong cares and hasn't forgotten about them. However, what are the future plans? How does the council intend to continue providing opportunities for the residents of 3214 to thrive and flourish?

The Corio Norlane Structure Plan was compiled in 2012, which feels like a long time ago and the world has since changed. There was Deakin research commissioned by the Council called "Vital Communities," which many of us contributed to, but it seems to have fallen by the wayside.

Given Norlane's continued decline in the SEIFA index and its current ranking as the most socially, economically, and environmentally disadvantaged suburb in Victoria, the challenges our neighbourhood faces are not disappearing. Despite the strength and resilience of the locals, Norlane continues to struggle with numerous hardships and health issues. It should, therefore, be a high priority for the Council.

While I understand that the council cannot do everything and that addressing these issues would require a collaborative, integrated, and multi-level government, community, and business approach, we still need leadership and a plan from the council.

So, is there a plan to address the issues we face in Norlane and Corio? If not, how can we work together to create one?

Thank you for your questions, Simon.

The Corio and Norlane suburbs have been identified by the Victorian Government as a priority area for urban renewal in the recently released Victoria's Housing Statement, The Decade Ahead 2024-2034.

Officers have been working with the Victorian Planning Authority to understand the next steps for this work. Urban revitalisation in all areas is a complex process requiring all levels of government and agencies to work together. We look forward to working with Norlane Community Initiatives if a planning project proceeds.

Achieving social equity remains a priority of Council and to this end the City's Leadership Team is working to establish an integrated approach to working with the community and key stakeholders to implement strategies in the 5 key domains for action; employment; education; housing; health and wellbeing; and liveability.

Lorraine Kulic asked:

Question 1:
The Lara Giants Basketball Club has over 1000 members covering all ages and abilities. We are the biggest club We pay to hire the three courts (all at public schools in Lara) and have them booked out five nights a week. The club were fortunate to receive funding for a council approved business case for a stadium at Beckley Park. We are shovel ready!

The club's question is what do the Lara Giants need to do to have council develop a funding model and funding advocacy plan to deliver this essential stadium at Beckley Park in the Geelong region and don't have a home facility.

Thank you for your questions, Lorraine.

Officers have been meeting with the club to discuss this proposal, with the next meeting scheduled for tomorrow night where members of the City's Executive team, Councillors and Lara MP Ella George will be present.

The City has undertaken a review of its Indoor Recreation Facilities Strategy to identify critical issues and opportunities impacting on indoor facility provision and to develop a strategic plan that will guide future infrastructure planning and development. This review identified the need for more indoor courts across the entire municipality and has identified a number of strategic priorities for the City.

Jeanne Nel asked:

Question 1.
The Report on Trees on Private Land tabled for tonight, a report that missed the motion deadline by 8 months, contains no community engagement. The CoGG Community Engagement Policy states that "A collaborative partnership between Council and the community can be a powerful way to deliver positive changes across our region.

Greater Geelong has a proud history of community-inspired leadership and our community is rich in lived experience and diverse in its expertise. The participation of everyone in our community is encouraged, welcomed, and valued because it helps us make better decisions and achieve better outcomes." In particular, the Policy states that "the purpose of the engagement process is to seek feedback and insights about issues that might affect, impact or interest the community, such as planning." The Policy requires the Council to engage with people 'likely to be affected by, or interested in, planning and decision-making by Council, including individuals, community groups, advisory committees, businesses and organisations, peak bodies and other levels of government."

The City's Urban Forest and tree canopy is vital to liveability. It directly affects the health, well-being and the financial and general resilience of the City and every resident.

Question: How does a report with no community engagement at all comply with the engagement policy?

Thank you for your questions, Jeanne.

Extensive research was carried out in consultation with independent arborists, other Councils, the Department of Transport and Planning, the Country Fire Authority and Barwon Water to ensure best practice when developing the Report on Trees on Private Land.

The Notice of Motion called for officers to provide an assessment of options to Council. The planning control options in the report would include extensive consultation when these options are implemented.

Question 2:
The report on Trees on Private Land tabled for tonight states that "community support for further planning protection for existing trees in urban environments has not been explored." The report speculates, without evidence, and includes several statements about red tape concern. However, the report fails to mention individuals and community groups that have very clearly, repeatedly and on public record, indicated support for tree protection. In particular, the report does not mention the tree canopy petition with 1541 signatures submitted at the 14 December 2021 Council meeting.

The first request of the petition that the CoGG "Adopt appropriate tree protection laws that reflect the Council's current concerns about urban heat island risks and urban forest development but also balance the need for housing density and diversity with the health and amenity requirements of current and future residents."

Question: Can the Council explain the omission?

Thank you for highlighting the petition and the ongoing advocacy from CoolGeelong. We understand that this is an important issue for the community and look forward to Councillors discussions on the inclusions of the report later in the meeting.

Louis De Koker asked:

Question 1:
The City of Greater Geelong Urban Forest Strategy 2015-2025 calculated urban Geelong's canopy cover at 14%, with approximately 7% on private land and 7% on Council land and stated: "Peer reviewed literature recommends an optimum urban land use canopy cover of 40% because it delivers the maximum benefits to an urban environment."

The report to be considered tonight (Protecting Trees on Private Land Strengthening Geelong's Regulations, October 2023) records the CoGG's low target of increasing the canopy cover in urban Greater Geelong to 25 per cent by 2045, with an interim target of 20 % by 2030. The report does not mention that the GoCC states that its total net increase in canopy trees on public land is only 50 trees per year, roughly equal the number of trees that can be lost in a single sizable development of private land in Geelong.

There is no practical way to reach a meaningful tree canopy cover target in urban Geelong without working with the community and community-based organisations. Yet, since the GoCC's decision in July 2022 to limit its existing tree policy to public land, no meaningful engagement has taken place and, despite requests and even cost-saving offers of assistance with initiatives, this report was only published on the Friday afternoon ahead of this meeting.

Question: When is it best governance practice for the COGG to exclude public consultation and engagement before accepting a report and recommendations that impact on the community?

Thank you for your questions, Louis.

As mentioned in the previous response, the Notice of Motion called for officers to provide an assessment of options to Council. The planning control options in the report would include extensive consultation when these options are implemented.

Question 2:
The Report on Trees on Private Land tabled for tonight repeatedly cites the cost to Council as a barrier to the development of a Significant Tree Register. However, it does not mention the public oral and written offer made by CoolGeelong during Council meetings and in budget submissions to provide support for free.

Question: Why does the report fail to mention the offer of community support while it speculates about potential community concerns about costs and regulation?

Officers and Council have considered the idea for CoolGeelong and the wider community to nominate trees and prepare the tree register. To have a tree register that met the rigour of the planning scheme amendment, it must be overseen and reviewed by a planning arborist.

The costings and process assume that data would be collected by a crowd sourced methodology such as CoolGeelong members and validated by a professional arborist. While community data collection can reduce costs, it cannot eliminate all costs.

Jeanne Nel asked the following on behalf of **Jenny Knox:**

Question 1.
The City recently announced its recognition as a Tree City of the World for the second year. Eight other Cities in Australia are also recognised as Tree Cities. One of the benefits of membership is that member cities have access to a wealth of resources and sharing of information on tree canopy management. The Tree Report tabled for tonight consulted with a number of cities. But only one Australian World Tree City.

Question: Why did the Report not consult with more Australian World Tree Cities recognised for their Tree Management?

Thank you for your questions, Jenny.

As the study was about regulations on the protection of trees in private land, we focused consultation on cities with the same regulatory framework as the City of Greater Geelong. The City of Greater Bendigo, among Australian World Cities was consulted based on their similarity in context and location within Victoria, with the aim of benefiting from their experiences.

The following question was taken from the floor:

Brendon Chavasse (General Manager – Lara Sporting Club) asked the following question regarding funding around the Northern Suburbs.

The Lara Recreation Reserve serves as the township of Lara's only Multi-sport Recreation Reserve with an area population of approximately 20,000. The current gender biased facility serving sports for the public. Ovals one and two are currently inadequate – these inadequate facilities include rooms built in the 1950's with a single shower room with no petition and a grandstand built in the 1940's patched together over the decades with blood and sweat from our volunteers. Add onto this the City's planned northern growth corridor a booming population and importantly ever-increasing participation from women's football and cricket. Our facilities are becoming substantially inadequate even inappropriate. In 2019 the Lara Sporting Club, along with groups in the reserve, petitioned and took an active part in the City's Lara Recreation Reserve Masterplan. After months of consultation and work the Masterplan was submitted and along with its budget was endorsed by this Council. We recognize the City have completed Stage one and about to complete Stage 3 of the Masterplan. This means our netball and baseball clubs no longer need to operate out of shipping containers, or having diesel generators to power their facilities on game days. However, Stage 3 is an essential and vital part of supporting and ever-expanding community. Stage 3 relates to demolishing facilities built in the post 2nd World War, yet it is my understanding there is no mention of this is the current or proposed budgets moving forward, meaning actual use of these vital facilities are years away at the earliest. The Lara Sporting Club is proud to have over 2,000 active members and yet our facilities cannot handle men and women at the moment.

Question: When will the City honor its 2019 Council endorsed commitment to finish the Lara Recreation Reserve Masterplan and more specifically include Stage 3 of the Masterplan in its next budget?

The Mayor took the question on notice for a written response and thanked Brendon for his attendance and supporting his continued advocacy of this project, which has been one with multiple stages, and has been sorely needed in the Lara community.

1.7. Petitions

Karl Schultz presented a petition containing approximately 50 signatures requesting the installation of speed humps along Cabernet Court, Corio to slow down dangerous and speeding drivers.

Cr Hathway presented a petition containing approximately 116 signatures on behalf of the Rainbow Local Government requesting Council develop an LGBTIQA+ Action Plan.

Cr Hathway requested the following recommendation (as per 3.22.9.1 of the City's Governance Rules) in relation to the LGBTIQA+ petition:

Cr Hathway moved, Cr Wilkinson seconded -

That Council request the Chief Executive Officer prepare a written report on the contents of the petition for presentation to a meeting by no later than May 2024.

Carried

2. REPORTS

2.1. Cat Curfew Review

Source: **City Life**
Executive Director: **Anthony Basford**

Purpose

1. To present community engagement findings of a review of cat containment and seek Council endorsement of an amended order requiring cats to be contained to their owner's premises 24-hours a day.

Background

2. The current cat curfew order enacted 1 July 2009 requires owners of a cat to keep their cat/s securely confined to their premises between sunset and sunrise.

3. Community engagement to inform Council's Domestic Animal Management Plan 2022-25 (DAMP) identified wandering cats as an issue important to the community, both for their impact on neighbours and on environment and wildlife. A key action in the DAMP is to investigate the option of 24-hour cat confinement as a tool to address nuisance cats.

4. Community engagement on a review of the cat curfew was undertaken in 2022 which demonstrated strong support (61.9%) for the introduction of 24-hour cat confinement. An engagement analysis report can be found in **Attachment 1**.

Key Matters

5. The amended cat confinement order (**Attachment 2**) proposes that:

    5.1. All cats kept within the City of Greater Geelong must be securely confined to their owner's premises at all times.

    5.2. Cats may leave their owners premises if they are securely confined in a cat carrier or other reasonable means of restraint.

6. The cat confinement order aims to promote responsible pet ownership and address the impact of wandering domestic cats on environment and wildlife.

7. By confining cats to their owner's property at all times, the order is likely to reduce registered cats' impact on neighbours and their pets or becoming a risk to the environment and wildlife.

8. Cats will be required to be confined to the owner's property including any outdoor areas.

9. Officers will implement a six-month transition period to allow cat owners time to make modifications to their property and cats behaviour. A communications plan to educate and support community transition to the order will be undertaken, and include:

    9.1. Written communication to all registered cat owners advising of changes to cat confinement and implementation timelines.

    9.2. The reasons for, and benefits of the cat confinement order, including links to external resources such as RSPCA, Zoos Victoria and Animal Welfare Victoria.

9.3. How owners can achieve compliance.

9.4. Details of information sessions to be held in areas of the municipality where there is high cat ownership.

ORIGINAL RECOMMENDATION

Cr Murrihy moved, Cr Wilkinson seconded -

That Council:

1. **Notes the findings of the community engagement review of City of Greater Geelong cat curfew (Attachment 1);**
2. **Adopts the revised cat confinement order (Attachment 2) requiring all cats within the municipality to be confined to their owner's premises at all times unless the cat is securely restrained; and**
3. **Notes that the order will come into effect on 1 September 2024, and that upon coming into force, the previous cat confinement order of 1 July 2009 is revoked.**

ALTERNATIVE

RESOLUTION - Item 2.1

Cr Cadwell moved, Cr Aitken seconded

That consideration of the report be deferred.

Carried

Financial Sustainability

10. A 24-hour cat confinement order is likely to see a reduction in the number of cats impounded at Council's Pound, which will represent a significant cost saving to Council.

11. The cost (estimated $5000) of the proposed communication plan, including advertising of the order are included in the 2023/2024 budget.

12. Positive outcomes will include identification and subsequent registration of unregistered cats. Council will retain income from any fines that may be issued and offset staffing required for enforcement of the order.

Community Engagement

13. Community consultation in 2021 to inform Council's DAMP highlighted the management of nuisance cats as a concern to the community, with 68% of the 337 responses to the topic of "nuisance pets" suggesting 24-hour cat confinement to reduce cat impact on neighbours, wildlife and the environment.

14. Community engagement on cat curfews was undertaken for a six-week period in June – July 2023. A survey was available via the City's Have Your Say platform and included three opportunities for face-to-face engagement with City Animal Management officers. We received 2352 responses to the survey, 10 attendees at face-to-face engagement and two written submissions.

    14.1. 49.36 per cent of participants were cat owners, 49.62 per cent did not own a cat and the remainder were cat foster care providers.

    14.2. 65.5 per cent of all respondents reported issues with wandering cats in their neighbourhood, with trespass, spraying and defecating on their property, killing of wildlife and cat fights as the most common issues experienced.

    14.3. 61.9 per cent of respondents preferred changing to 24-hour cat confinement, while 38.7 per cent preferred to keep the sunset to sunrise curfew.

    14.4. 60.98 per cent of cat owners feel the current curfew works well compared to 16.54 per cent of non-cat owners. Conversely 39.02 per cent of cat owners and 83.46 per cent of non-cat owners feel the current level of curfew is ineffective at managing cat nuisance and destructive behaviours.

15. A full community engagement analysis report has been prepared and is provided as **Attachment 1**.

Social Equity and Sustainability

16. Implementing a 24-hour cat confinement order for the City of Greater Geelong provides equity in containment requirements for cat owners as those that exist for dog owners.

17. Council's DAMP contains several objectives to promote responsible pet ownership, including an objective that all cats over the age of three months are desexed and registered. Council actively supports this objective by offering reduced annual registration fees to desexed and microchipped cats, in addition to concession holder discounts.

18. Community engagement identified a concern from cat owners that 24-hour confinement may result in financial impact on cat owners who choose to erect infrastructure on their property to ensure safe containment.

19. Officers have considered a variety of initiatives and incentives in the implementation of 24-hour cat confinement, including reimbursements or vouchers to support cat owners in making alterations to their premises to comply with containment requirements. These initiatives are not supported by Council Officers due to the impact on Council resources, and existing requirements for cat owners to keep their cat confined to their premises from sunset to sunrise.

20. Registered cat owners (10,575) account for 3.82 per cent of the City's population.

21. Registered cat owners will have six months to implement any property modifications or steps to alter cat's behaviour to comply with the 24-hour cat confinement order.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

22. Council may by resolution implement specific orders requiring cats in the municipality to be confined to the owner's premises per section 25 of the *Domestic Animals Act 2104*.

23. The proposed 24-hour cat confinement order will allow Council Authorised Officers a greater mechanism of enforcement when managing domestic cats not confined to their registered premises.

24. A cat confinement order under section 25 of the *Domestic Animals Act 2014* allows Authorised Officers to issue an infringement to a cat owner for breaches of the order; one penalty unit for a first offence and three penalty units for a second or subsequent offence. The reduced infringement for first time offences will be used as an opportunity to further educate cat owners of responsible cat ownership and ways they may be able to achieve compliance with the confinement order.

25. Councils existing sunset to sunrise cat confinement order will be revoked and replaced with the amended 24-hour cat confinement order. This order will be published in the government gazette and a local newspaper in accordance with legislative requirements and come into effect 1 September 2024.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

26. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
    Healthy, caring and inclusive community.
    Sustainable growth and environment.

27. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
    An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.
    Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.

Conflict of Interest

28. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

29. It is anticipated there will be both positive and negative community response to this order, however the strong community support identified through engagement supports the change.

30. It is anticipated a strong communication and awareness campaign speaking to the underlying reasons for the change; the wellbeing benefits of cat confinement on cats, and the protection of environmental values will help to mitigate this.

Environmental Sustainability

31. Implementing 24-hour cat confinement represents proactive and positive action towards reducing the impact of cats on the environment and wildlife within the municipality.

Attachments

1. Cat Curfew Full Engagement Report January 2024 [**2.1.1** - 52 pages]
2. Section 25 Cat Confinement Order City of Greater Geelong 2024 [**2.1.2** - 1 page]

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

CAT CURFEW REVIEW

ENGAGEMENT REPORT

FEBRUARY 2024

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

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Executive Summary

PROJECT OVERVIEW

2352 submissions were received by the City during the Cat Curfew Review consultation which ran between the 5 June – 16 July, 2023).

The City aimed to explore if cat behavior issues raised in previous community engagements were experienced by the wider community and if a change to cat curfew conditions was supported.

Consultation ran for six weeks, and included an online and hardcopy survey, as well as face-to-face drop-in sessions, to collect feedback from Greater Geelong residents (cat owners and non-cat owners alike).

Overall, 38.78% of respondents felt that the current dawn to dusk cat curfew works well.

61.9% of respondents supported the introduction of a 24-hour cat curfew model, requiring cats to be contained to their owners' premises at all times.

All responses have been reviewed and analysed and key findings are presented in this report. This engagement report will inform the Council report about cat management that is expected to go to Council in February 2024.

Introduction

PROJECT BACKGROUND

One of the strong themes that emerged from the community's feedback during the City's Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) review in 2021, was the preference for cats to be contained to their owner's property 24 hours a day, due to the various undesirable behaviours they may pose on neighbours, wildlife, and the environment.

This sentiment was raised by 68% of the 337 people who provided feedback on 'nuisance pets'.

ENGAGEMENT PURPOSE

Addressing 'Nuisance Cats' was subsequently made a key action in our DAMP 2022 – 2025.

The purpose of this engagement was to ascertain how regularly our community witness unwanted cat behaviours, and what level of cat curfew the community felt is most appropriate to manage cats across our municipality.

This consultation was managed by the City's Health and Local Laws department, as the responsible authority for setting and enforcing animal management orders.

The engagement also provided the City with the opportunity to understand how well the community understands the inherent and legally required responsibilities of cat ownership, as well as provide education on these expectations and the services offered by the City.

The findings in this engagement report will be used to inform the Council Report presented to Councillors in February 2024, and if a change to the cat curfew is recommended, this would likely be enacted in mid 2024.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report intends to:

- Collate and summarise engagement findings that will be reported back to all stakeholders including the community.

How We Engaged

AT A GLANCE

This community consultation was comprised of:

- Have Your Say online survey, open for 6-weeks from 5 June to16 July 2023
- 3 x Face-to-face drop-in sessions, held at:
  - Waurn Ponds Library, on 17 June from 9am – 11am
  - Drysdale Library, on 24 June from 10am – 12pm
  - Lara Hall, on 1 July from 2 – 4pm
- Hardcopy surveys available at City Customer Service Centres throughout the consultation period.

Consultation advertising

The engagement was advertised through:

- Social media:
  - Paid ads on Facebook
  - Posts on Twitter
- CityNews print advertising in the following newspapers (Appendix A):
  - Geelong Advertiser
  - Geelong Independent
  - Geelong Times
  - Bellarine Times
  - Armstrong Creek Times
- A-Frame corflute signage scattered around the City's various trails, reserves, and high traffic public spaces (Appendix B)

Who We Engaged

WHO WE PLANNED TO ENGAGE

The Cat Curfew Review consultation was open to all residents across the City who wanted to submit feedback on their experience with cats and their views on the current dawn to dusk cat curfew and a possible 24-hour cat curfew.

PARTICIPATION

Over the 6-week community consultation, we received 2352 survey submissions as well as 10 attendees across our three drop-in sessions.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Response rates by suburb

The most common locations respondents reported living were:

1. Highton 9.69%
2. Belmont 6.85%
3. Lara 6.68%
4. Ocean Grove 6.55%
5. Armstrong Creek & Grovedale 4.93% respectively

An additional 51 Greater Geelong suburbs were represented in the responses (see chart on this page).

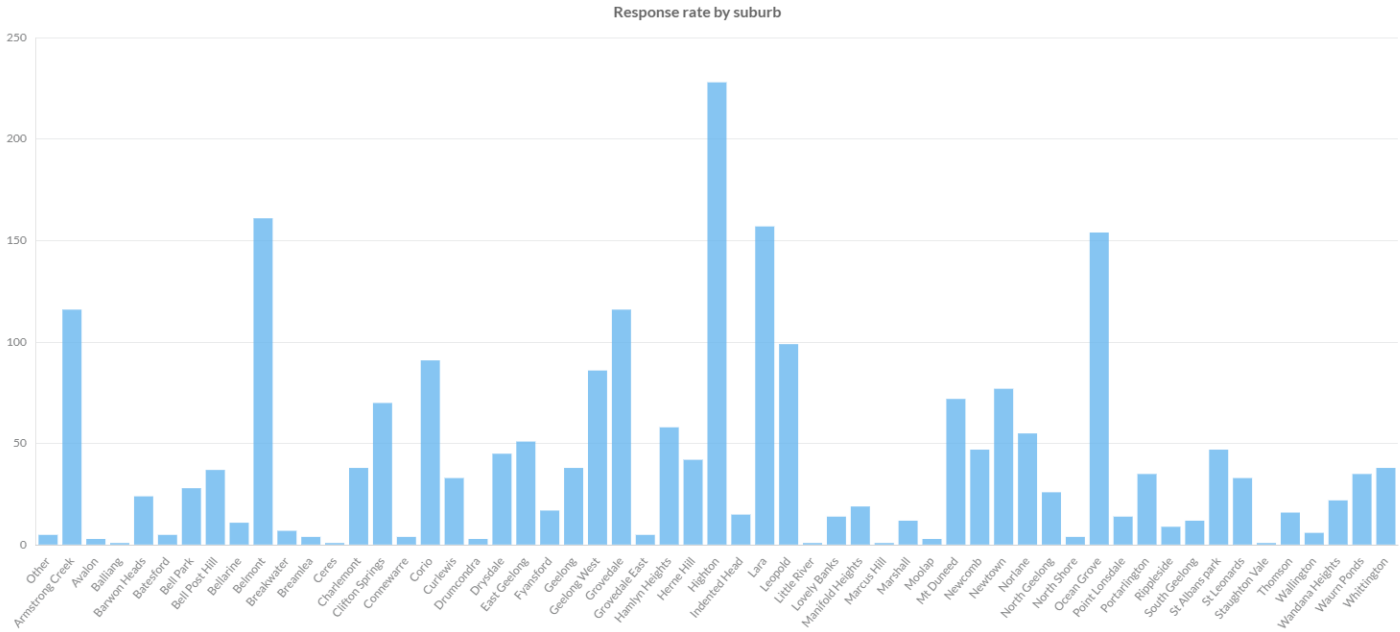


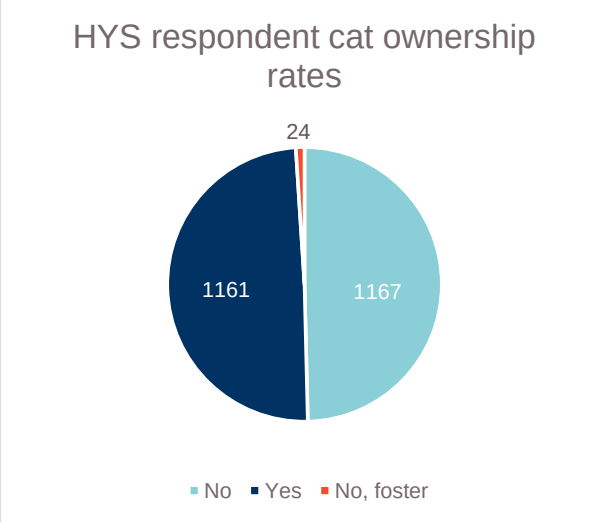
Chart 1: Response rate by suburb

Cat ownership

Non-cat owners had the highest representation marginally at 49.62%, followed closely by cat owners at 49.36%. An additional 1.02% were cat foster carers.

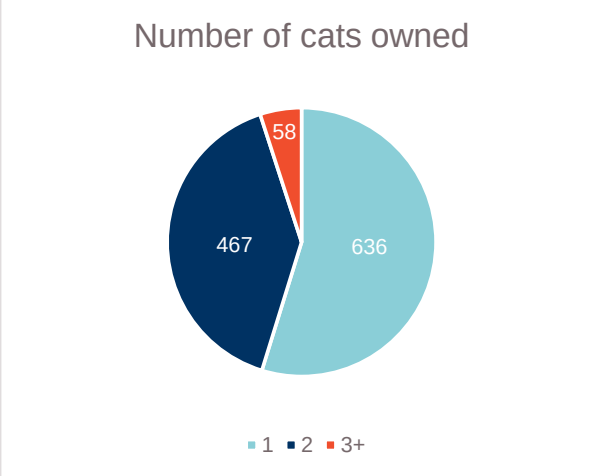
Informed Decision Forecasting (2022) predicts that the City of Greater Geelong's 2023 population is 282,888 people, and there are 10,062 registered cats. Registered cat owners represent 3.56% of our residents.

The high level of cat owner participation is not surprising considering the interest this stakeholder group has in the care and management of their pets.



Graph 2: HYS respondent cat ownership rates

Of the cat owner respondents, the breakdown of the number of cats owned was as follows, with a single cat being the most common answer:



Graph 3: Number of cats owned

WHO ACTIVELY ENGAGED

This engagement had strong participation, with the most responses received for a City engagement for some time.

2352 responses were received from residents all across our municipality, with considerable interest from cat owners (49.36%) and non-cat owners (49.62%) alike.

What We Asked

WHAT WE ASKED

The survey asked:

- Suburb
- Cat ownership status
- Questions about *Current cat ownership requirements*, to establish the level of knowledge the community had about responsible cat ownership expectations outlined by the City, including the need to:
  - Keep cats contained inside from dusk to dawn
  - Desex cats by 3 months of age
  - Ensure their cats aren't deemed a nuisance by neighbours
- Questions about *Personal experience and opinions* which asked respondents to rate how well they felt compliance to cat orders was followed in their area, as well as:
  - If they had issues with cats
  - What type of cats (e.g., neighbourhood, stray etc)
  - What the issues were
  - Whether community cats were present in their area
  - If they had used the City's cat trapping service
- Questions about *Cat curfew conditions:*
  - If they thought the current dawn to dusk cat curfew was working well
  - If they would support a 24-hour cat curfew
  - Opportunity to provide other cat related feedback.

WHY WE ASKED

Asking suburb and cat ownership status allowed us to analyse responses at a suburb and cat ownership level, as well as looking at responses overall.

The other questions asked gave us an insight into respondents':

- Level of knowledge about responsible cat ownership expectations
- Cat compliance issues and concerns
- Level of support for the current dawn to dusk curfew and a possible 24-hour cat curfew.

Visit www.yoursay.geelongaustralia.com.au/catcurfew to see the online engagement, including survey questions.

What we heard

KEY FINDINGS OVERVIEW

- 2352 survey responses
- 49.36% of respondents were cat owners
- 49.62% who were non-cat owners
- Respondents who provide cat foster care made up the remaining 1.02%
- 38.78% of respondents believe the current cat curfew is working well
- Support for the cat curfew to change to a 24-hour model was 61.9%

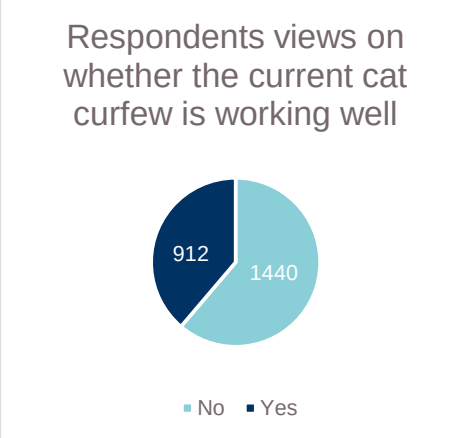
BREAKDOWN OF FINDINGS – CAT CURFEW PREFERENCES

The main purpose of this consultation was to determine which level of cat curfew the community felt is most appropriate to manage cats across our municipality.

The following section details the level of support for each of the curfews; the key themes that emerged for and against each curfew; a comparison of cat owners versus non cat owner responses; verbatim comments from the survey responses; and cat curfew preferences by suburb.

Current Curfew - Dusk to dawn

Overall, 38.78% (912) of respondents told us that the current cat curfew arrangement - cats being required to be kept inside from dusk to dawn - was 'working well'.

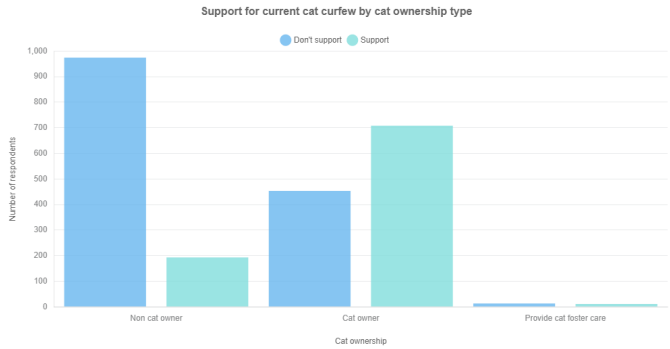


Graph 4: Respondents views on whether the current cat curfew is working well

Comparison of Cat Owners Vs. Non-Cat Owners views on the current curfew

Do you think the current cat curfew requiring cats to be contained to their property from dusk to dawn is working well?

	Yes	No
Cat owners	60.98%	39.02%
Non-cat owners	16.54%	83.46%
Cat foster carers	45.83%	54.17%



Graph 5: Support for current cat curfew by cat ownership type

Current cat curfew – response themes

When comparing the responses from cat owners and non-cat owners who thought the **current cat curfew wasn't working well**, there were many overlapping themes:

- Lack of compliance by cat owners
- Wildlife protection concerns
- Inadequate enforcement and consequences
- Lack of awareness of the current curfew and its conditions.

The common themes between cat owners and non-cat owners who thought the **current cat curfew worked well**, included:

- Reduced sightings of cats at night, due to compliance with the current curfew
- Protection of wildlife sufficient with current curfew due to cats nocturnal hunting behaviours
- Pest control of rodents
- Cats aren't as problematic as believed
- Balances freedom with environmental protection

Themes: Cat owners who don't think the current dusk-to-dawn curfew is working well (39.02% of cat owners):

Lack of compliance: Many cat owners believe that other owners do not follow the curfew and let their cats roam freely at night.

Difficulty in enforcement: Respondents mention that it is challenging to enforce the curfew due to the difficulty of catching cats at night.

Ignorance or lack of awareness: Some respondents claim that they were not aware of the curfew, or the penalties associated with non-compliance, and believe that others might not know about it either.

Cats are nocturnal: Some cat owners argue that cats are naturally nocturnal animals and enjoy roaming at night, making it challenging to keep them indoors during those hours and they should be allowed to roam outside during the night.

Wildlife concerns: Concerns about cats hunting and preying on native wildlife are mentioned, supporting the need for a curfew to protect local fauna.

Difficulty in containment: Some cat owners find it challenging to keep their cats contained indoors during the curfew hours as they may be more active and alert during dusk and dawn, making it difficult to control their movements.

No consequences: Many cat owners believe that the curfew is not strictly enforced, and there are no significant consequences for those who ignore it.

Ineffectiveness: Many respondents claim that the curfew is not effective, as they still observe cats outside during the restricted hours.

Responsibility of owners: Some respondents argue that responsible cat owners keep their cats indoors or provide contained outdoor spaces, but others do not take the same level of responsibility

Themes: Non-cat owners who don't think the current dusk-to-dawn curfew is working well (83.46% of non-cat owners):

Widespread lack of compliance: Many respondents mention that cat owners do not adhere to the curfew rules, allowing their cats to roam freely at night.

Impact on wildlife: Non-cat owners express concerns about cats roaming at night, hunting, and harming native wildlife, particularly birds.

Inadequate Enforcement: The lack of enforcement and penalties for non-compliance with the curfew was a common concern among respondents. They believed that without proper enforcement, some cat owners wouldn't take the rules seriously.

Indifference of irresponsible cat owners: Belief that cat owners don't care about the curfew or its consequences, nor do they take responsibility for their cats' actions and do not consider the impact on their neighbours or local wildlife.

Cat-related nuisances: Complaints about cats defecating in gardens, fighting, and setting off security alarms during the night.

Lack of awareness: Several respondents mention that they were not aware of the curfew, indicating a need for better communication and education about the regulations.

Inadequate penalties: Express the need for stricter fines and consequences for cat owners who violate the curfew.

Difficulty in identifying owned vs. stray cats: Many respondents pointed out the challenges of distinguishing between owned cats and strays, making it difficult to enforce the curfew effectively, whereas a 24-hour curfew makes the rules clear for cat collection.

Inadequate resources: Some believe that there is a lack of resources and support, such as a shortage of cat traps, and the absence of an

anonymous reporting system, which is under-resourcing of the issue.

Cats roaming during the day: Several people pointed out that cats also roam and cause harm to wildlife during daylight hours, and the curfew does not address this issue.

Themes: Cat owners who think the current dusk to dawn curfew is working well (60.98% of cat owners):

Responsible cat owners comply with curfew: Many cat owners believe that the majority of cat owners in their area are responsible and comply with the curfew, keeping their cats inside at night and ensuring their cats' safety and reducing potential issues.

Reduction in night-time sightings: Several respondents mention that they rarely or never see cats roaming around their neighbourhood at night since the curfew was implemented.

Cat safety and protection: Many cat owners support the curfew because it keeps their own cats safe from potential dangers, such as traffic accidents, cat fights or attacks from other animals.

Protection of wildlife: Many cat owners appreciate the curfew as it helps protect local bird and wildlife species, which can be vulnerable to cats hunting during the night.

Balance of freedom: Appreciate the curfew as it strikes a balance between providing outdoor time for cats during the day while keeping them safe inside at night.

Cats aren't as problematic as believed: Some respondents believe that most cats are indoors during the curfew hours and don't cause problems.

Pest control: Some respondents mention the positive role cats play in keeping rodent populations under control, but they still support the curfew to balance safety and wildlife conservation.

Nocturnal behaviours negated: Some respondents recognise that cats are naturally more active at night, which reinforces the need for a curfew to mitigate potential issues.

Stray and irresponsible owners: Some respondents acknowledge that the issue with roaming cats may be attributed to a small percentage of irresponsible cat owners or strays.

Limited stray/feral cats: Several respondents mention that they haven't seen or heard stray or feral cats in their neighbourhood, suggesting that the curfew has helped reduce the presence of such cats.

Themes: Non-cat owners who think the current dusk to dawn curfew is working well (16.54% of non-cat owners):

Reduced cat sightings: Many respondents mention that they rarely or never see cats roaming around their neighbourhoods at night.

Protection of wildlife: Some respondents express concern for native birds and wildlife, emphasising the need to keep cats indoors at night to protect these species.

Responsible cat owners: Several respondents appreciate the responsible cat owners who comply with the curfew and keep their cats indoors during the designated hours.

Fewer cat-related issues: Respondents note a decrease in cat-related problems such as cats roaming at night, cat fights, cat faeces, and spraying due to the curfew.

Support for limited curfew: Believe the current curfew to be sufficient for managing cat behaviour and reducing potential disturbances.

Positive impact on rodents: A few respondents mention that the curfew may contribute to a decrease in rodent populations, as cats are known for hunting mice and rats.

Enforcement and Compliance: Several respondents believe that the curfew is effective when people adhere to it, though there may still be some non-compliance.

Verbatim comments from survey respondents

Responses from people who think the current cat curfew is working well:

It must be as I hardly ever see a cat, and think the rules are rather harsh.

We don't have any roaming cats in our suburb owners are very diligent in keeping their cats indoors at night.

Very rare to see cats on the street even in the daytime.

I never see cats outside in our neighbourhood after dark.

We had a stray cat a few years ago but it's is gone now.

We really have no issues with cats trespassing.

This works for our family cat.

I am not sure what you mean by 'working well'. This assumes agreement with the policy. I think that these sorts of restrictive control measures are misguided. As I stated above I think that cats have lived in the CoGG rural-urban matrix for a long time and I don't think this is a bad thing. I think it would be much better for the council to support desexing programs for cats living in homes with humans and for community cats.

I think from dusk to dawn is fair as it is too dangerous for cats to be out when it's dark as it's easy for them to be hit and they can't be kept with an eye on them if their owners are sleeping so I think it's fair.

Most cats do not belong inside 24 x 7. Like humans they need to be able to roam in the fresh air and ground on earth. Cats also love to climb trees, fences and explore. I think it is cruel to expect cats to remain indoors as they get depressed. It goes against their natural habitat. They also keep mice and rats off our property. Our neighbour also advised he was happy we had a cat because of this reason.

Responses from people who think the current cat curfew is not working:

I experience cats outside after dusk across a spread of area of the township.

Not communicated well enough by COGG.

People don't think they are going to get caught, and they deem it too 'difficult' to find their cats at the appropriate time.

While the majority of cat owners are responsible and keep their moggies in at night, too many just don't. It would be too difficult to police this issue as cats are very difficult to catch and would mean officers need to be roaming at night, too.

Because there are still lots of cats around, hunting, night and day.

The main time we have stray cats around our house is evening/night time.

A 24/7 curfew is the only way to protect wildlife and cats effectively

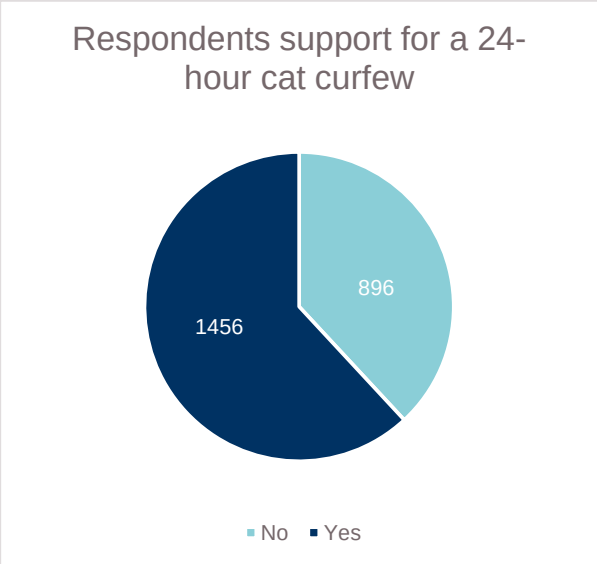
I think a lot of pet owners don't care.

I think a lot of owners don't take the rule seriously, and most other people in the neighbourhood just don't know they can complain to the council.

It may be that most cat owners are doing the right thing. But we still see cats out at night, and roaming, which means the current curfew isn't adequate. They can also obviously attack wildlife and themselves be injured during the day, not just at night.

24-hour Curfew

61.9% of all respondents supported the introduction of a 24-hour cat curfew.



Graph 6: Respondents support for a 24-hour cat curfew

Comparison of Cat Owners Vs. Non-Cat Owners views on a 24-hour cat curfew

Would you support the introduction of a 24-hour cat curfew?

	Yes	No
Cat owners	38.1%	61.9%
Non-cat owners	85.6%	14.4%
Cat foster carers	62.5%	37.5%

24-hour cat curfew - response themes

When comparing the responses from cat and non-cat owners who did not support the introduction of a 24-hour cat curfew, the following shared views were identified:

- Cruel to keep cats indoors all day
- Financial burden to set up cat proof enclosure or fencing
- Difficult to enforce
- Concern about abandoned cats and overwhelming the animal shelters
- Pest control of rodents will be hindered

Common themes between cat owners and non-cat owners supporting the introduction of a 24-hour cat curfew included:

- Wildlife preservation
- Cat safety
- Responsible cat ownership
- Neighbour property damage

Themes: Cat owners opposed to a 24-hour curfew:

Concern for the well-being and mental health of cats: Confining cats indoors 24-hour is cruel and goes against their natural instincts, affecting their well-being and mental health.

Financial constraints and practicality: The costs associated with building expensive cat enclosures or implementing measures to contain cats within properties are seen as financially burdensome and impractical, especially for renters and families.

Disproportionate focus and unfairness: Respondents question why cats are being singled out for restrictions when other animals can also cause nuisances and environmental issues. They argue that responsible pet ownership should be the focus instead.

Difficulty in enforcement and policing: Respondents express doubts about the feasibility and effectiveness of enforcing a 24-hour curfew for cats. They highlight the challenge of monitoring cats and ensuring compliance, given their agility and ability to roam beyond property boundaries.

Lack of evidence for the need of a 24-hour curfew: Scepticism is expressed about the necessity of stricter regulations, as respondents have not personally experienced issues with roaming cats or believe that complaints are minimal compared to the overall population.

Concerns about cat haters and violence: Restricting cats could lead to hostility from cat haters, potentially endangering the safety of cats. Respondents argue that surveys capturing complaints about cats may not be representative and may attract a certain type of person.

Dusk-to-dawn curfew as a sufficient measure: Many respondents suggest that the existing dusk-to-dawn curfew for cats is adequate and strikes a balance between allowing outdoor time and addressing potential nuisance issues.

Individual cat behaviour and responsible ownership: The emphasis is placed on responsible cat ownership and training to mitigate potential issues caused by cats.

Punishing all cat owners: There is the belief that the actions of a few irresponsible individuals is punishing many responsible cat owners, and that this is considered unfair.

Wildlife management: Respondents argue that cats play a role in pest control, particularly in areas with rodent problems, and that a 24-hour curfew could have unintended consequences for urban environments.

Prioritising other issues: Some respondents believe that resources should be directed towards addressing other pressing issues, such as abandoned houses or feral animal populations, rather than implementing strict cat curfews.

Themes: Non-cat owners opposed to a 24-hour curfew:

Cruelty to cats: Many respondents believe that confining cats indoors 24-houris cruel and goes against their natural instincts and needs for exercise and fresh air.

Ineffectiveness of curfew: Some respondents question the effectiveness of a 24-hour curfew in controlling cats and believe that the current dusk-to-dawn curfew is sufficient.

Cat owners' rights: Many respondents emphasise that cat owners should have the right to decide whether their cats should be indoor or outdoor pets.

Difficulty in enforcement: Several respondents believe that enforcing a 24-hour curfew would be challenging and may lead to more issues, such as cat abandonment.

Impact on rodents and wildlife: Some respondents argue that cats help control rodent populations and that other factors, such as dogs, are more significant contributors to wildlife issues.

Financial burden on owners: Many respondents mention the high costs associated with building outdoor enclosures, making it unfeasible for some cat owners.

Impact on mental health: Some respondents mention the positive mental health benefits of having outdoor cats and interactions with them.

Responsibility of pet owners: Several respondents emphasise that responsible cat owners should be educated and incentivised to comply with current regulations rather than implementing stricter rules.

Nuisance caused by other pets: Cats are not the only pets causing issues in the neighbourhood and that the focus should be on responsible pet ownership in general.

Concerns about abandoned cats: Some respondents express concern that a 24-hour curfew may lead to an increase in abandoned cats or pets being surrendered to shelters.

Themes: Cat owners in support of a 24-hour curfew:

Wildlife Conservation: Protecting native animals and preventing hunting and killing by containing cats.

Cat Safety and Well-being: Ensuring cats are kept indoors or in enclosed areas to protect them from accidents, fights, diseases, and unwanted pregnancies.

Responsible Ownership: Emphasising the importance of taking full responsibility for the well-being and safety of pets.

Property Disturbances: Addressing complaints about cats roaming onto properties, causing disturbances, defecating in gardens, and potentially harming other pets.

Environmental Impact: Recognising the damage caused by cats to native ecosystems and the threat they pose to local wildlife.

Regulation and Enforcement: Advocating for stricter regulations, enforcement of curfews, fines, penalties, and reporting avenues similar to those for dogs.

Health Benefits of Indoor Living: Highlighting the longer lifespan, reduced disease exposure, and better overall health for cats kept indoors.

Alternative Containment Methods: Exploring the use of enclosures and cat runs to provide environmental stimulation while keeping cats contained.

Public Support and Incentives: Seeking financial incentives, subsidies, or support from local councils to help cat owners create outdoor enclosures or secure their properties.

Lost and Stray Cat Concerns: Addressing concerns about lost cats, the importance of identification, and preventing euthanasia of unclaimed cats without microchips.

Themes: Non-cat owners in support of a 24-hour curfew:

Concern for wildlife: Many respondents expressed concerns about cats' impact on native wildlife, citing incidents of cat attacks on birds and other animals. They believe that a curfew would help protect the local wildlife.

Responsible cat ownership: Believe that cat owners should be responsible for their pets' actions, just like dog owners. They want cat owners to be fully aware of their pets' whereabouts and to take measures to prevent their cats from trespassing on other people's properties.

Property damage and nuisance: Several respondents mentioned that cats can cause damage to gardens, leave faeces on properties, and disturb their own pets. They believe that a curfew would reduce these issues.

Fair treatment for all pets: Respondents argued that if dogs are required to be contained on their owners' properties, the same rules should apply to cats. They believe that all pets should be kept safe and secure on their owners' premises.

Safety of cats: Some respondents mentioned that a curfew would also protect cats from potential dangers, such as road accidents or conflicts with other animals.

Enforcement and Compliance: Some respondents questioned the effectiveness of the current dusk-to-dawn curfew and called for stronger enforcement to ensure compliance with any curfew regulations.

Public health and hygiene: Roaming cats can defecate in other people's yards, leading to health concerns and unpleasant clean-up tasks, as well as drop dander/hair which leads to allergic reactions in those with sensitivities.

Reduction of feral cat population: Some respondents believe that a curfew can help control the feral cat population and in turn reduce their impact on the environment and disease spreading.

Education and awareness: A curfew can raise awareness about responsible pet ownership and the potential harm roaming cats can cause**.**

Verbatim quotes from survey respondents

Support for the introduction of a 24-hour curfew:

It is safer for both the cats themselves and the native wildlife if they are indoors all the time.

Our cats are indoor only and happy, and they used to be outside all the time at our old house.

If dog owners have to keep their dogs enclosed in their property it should be the same for cats.

They are destructive to wildlife and are only ever a nuisance to neighbours, and it's negligent for the owners do not care about their own cat's health and well-being.

We have many cats in our front and back yard at all times of the day and night.

I have 2 indoor-only cats who are perfectly fine being indoor only. They live longer and are healthier. If you can't create a stimulating indoor environment for cats, perhaps you shouldn't own any.

I'm in full support of it, and if it's going to be an issue with some pet owners (which I know it will

be), then my advice to them is to get a cat run, or if they've got a cat run, to extend it.

People need to be accountable for their pets, I wouldn't expect my neighbour to have to put up with my dog if it could jump out fence and roam the neighbourhood killing wildlife and defecating on their private property.

Many cat owners in my area do not believe they are responsible for their cats' actions outside of their property and believe it is a cats right to wander.

People that live in my area legit do not care about the curfew as cats are everywhere at night and there are no consequences for the owners.

Opposition to the introduction of a 24-hour Curfew:

Most of the cats appear not to be out at night, or if they are I do not see/hear them.

It's not fair on or natural to the cat to be confined to the inside for the rest of its life.

I don't have any issues with the cats in my area and have no issues if they want to visit during the day.

I believe that a 24-hour cat curfew would not be the correct answer to our current problem, yes it can be easier to in force but for the older cats that have had the freedom to go outside until this updated curfew comes to pass it will be very hard for them to adjust.

I think there should be some sort of financial help for those who want cat runs set up at their homes to be able to since if the rules suddenly change when the cats are used to living a certain type of lifestyle, this could be horrific for the cats and owners.

Cat owners should be the ones to decide if their cat is an indoor or outdoor cat and not the council!

If you want people to keep their cats inside 24-hourpeople will not own cats and children will not learn the love and responsibility of looking after an animal.

I currently work at Geelong animal welfare society, and we have so many unowned, unclaimed cats as it is, by enforcing a 24-hour curfew the difficulties and cost will mean more people will just befriend a neighbourhood cat, insisting "it's not my cat" and not take responsibility for desexing, vaccination or registration.

The problem is with stray cats (which is not the cats' fault - these are abandoned or abused cats that have run away, and owners who do not desex their cats).

If owners worked away from home during the day, their only option would be to keep their pets locked up indoors or in a cage, and that is not the same restriction as placed on other pets such as dogs.

Other Comments

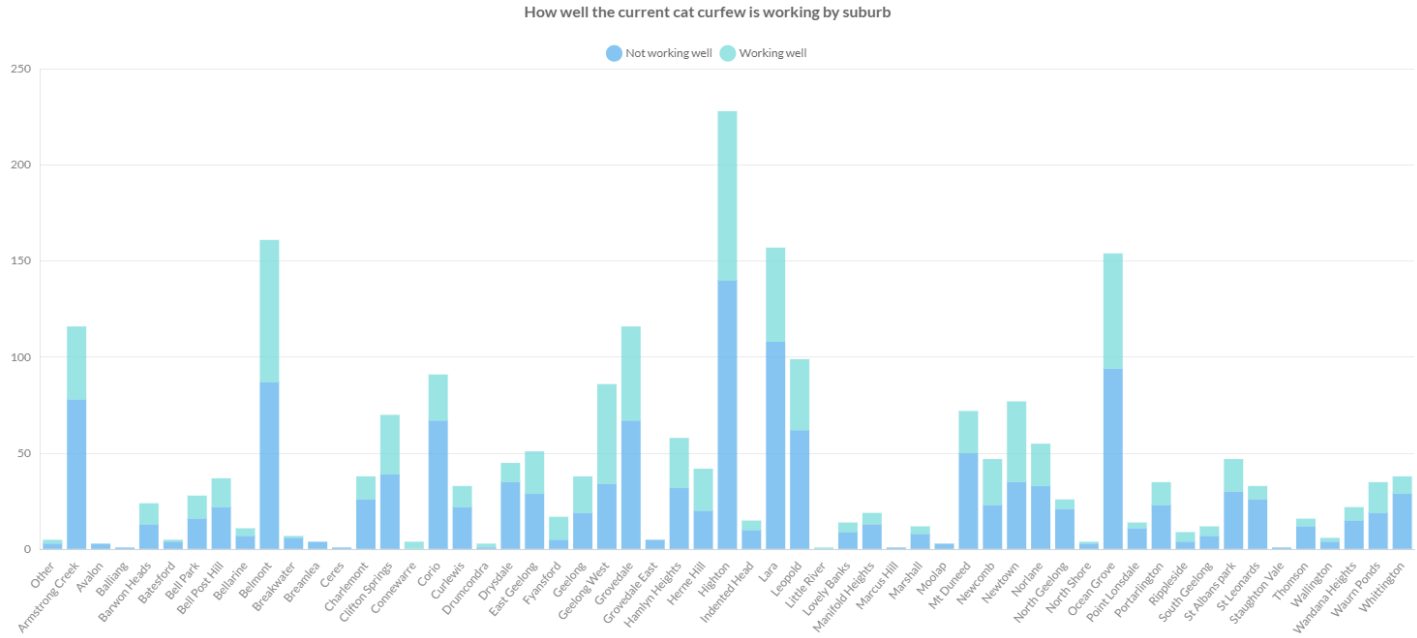
We will always be an advocate for the safety and well-being of pets and if a cat 24hr curfew is imposed we will stand by it unfortunately this requirement may push people to purchase more cats and not have them registered as they will not be seen, which will cause other problems in the long run.

People who believe they have a right to let their cat out are going to do so regardless of the curfew and the risks to their cat

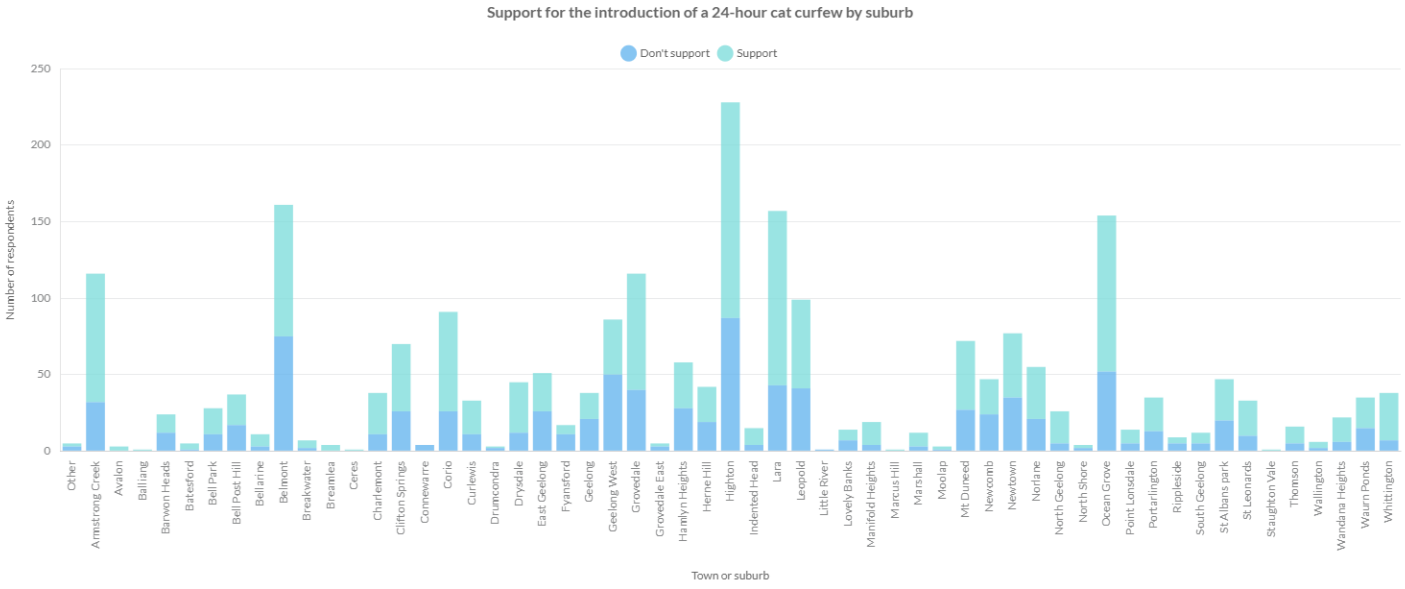
Most cat owners seem to comply with the night curfew and desexing, but there's always some who think the rules don't apply to them and that it does no harm to breed their cat (or have it roam when not desexed) and then have to try to find homes for the kittens.

Cat curfew model preference by suburb

Response rates and support for the two cat curfew models differed at a suburb level. The following two charts detail which suburbs think the current curfew is working well and which don't think it is working well and which suburbs are in support of a 24-hour model and which aren't.



Graph 7: How well the current cat curfew is working by suburb



Graph 8: Support for the intro. of a 24-hour cat curfew by suburb

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

In addition to the survey responses, the City received two written submissions; one from the **Invasive Species Council** (see Appendix E) who supported the move to a 24-hour cat curfew and cited the following key points:

- The RSPCA and PETA recommend cats be kept inside on a 24-hour curfew to drastically improve their health and wellbeing, as 1/3 cats are victim to a car accident and 2/3 cats are lost to roaming incidences.
- Pet cats being natural predators and a 24-hour cat curfew is the only way to truly protect native wildlife from the impact of cats – and this aligns with the City's Environment Strategy 2020 – 2030, to "protect and restore our regions biodiversity".
- The transition to a 24-hour cat curfew would need to be supported by the City with ample education, community engagement, promotion, and potential incentives/rewards for compliance.

The second written submission from the **Australian Pet Welfare Foundation** (see Appendix F) opposed a 24-hour cat curfew for the following reasons:

- Whilst the APWF encourages cats being kept inside whenever possible, mandated cat curfew has not yet been proven effective
- Mandated cat curfew results in more cat nuisance complaints, more pressure on animal shelters, increase cat and kitten euthanasia, and difficulties for council to enforce.
- Focus should be on cheap desexing of owned and semi-owned cats to reduce wandering cat numbers by limited litters.

Five (5) additional surveys with extended answer submissions attached have been included in Appendix G.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS BREAKDOWN

In addition to cat curfew questions, the survey asked questions to help the City better understand how well the community understands the inherent and legally required responsibilities of cat ownership, as well as provide education on these expectations and the services offered by the City.

Best thing about owning a cat

Cat owners and foster carers were also asked if they wanted to tell us "what is the best thing about having a cat?" and the key themes that became apparent were:

1. Companionship
2. Love and affection
3. Entertainment/quirky personality
4. Improve mental wellbeing
5. Low maintenance

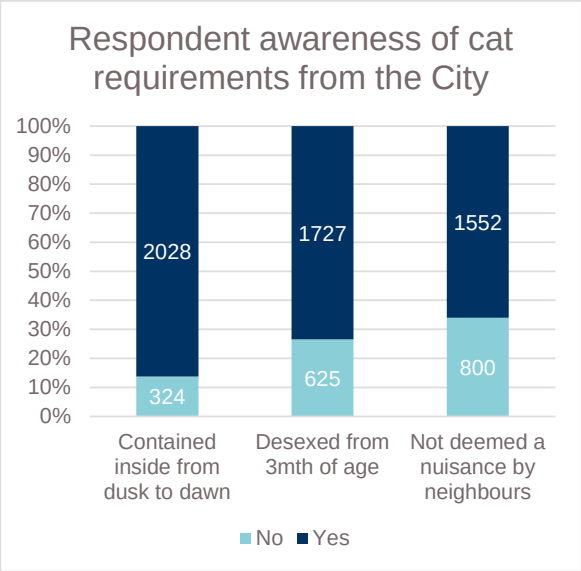
Awareness of cat ownership responsibilities in the City

There are several legal requirements expected of cat owners in the City of Greater Geelong, to ensure these animals are cared for responsibly, and do not have a detrimental impact on neighbours, wildlife or contribute to feral or stray cat populations.

Survey respondents were asked if they were aware that the city requires cats to be:

- Contained inside from dusk to dawn
- Desexed by 3 months age
- Not deemed a nuisance by neighbours from unwanted trespassing

Results for each question are displayed below.



Graph 9: Respondent awareness of cat requirements from the City

The community's recommendations on how to increase public awareness of these expectations included use of:

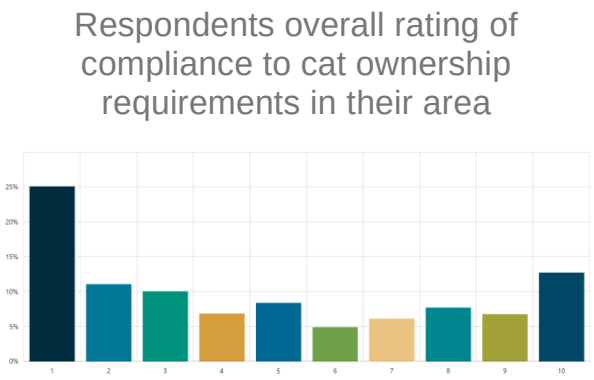
- Educational campaigns
- Brochures/flyers sent out with registration or rates forms, as well as at local vets
- Social media
- Email

Many comments were also received stating cat owners already know the regulations or at minimum where to find them, but some will choose to ignore them regardless.

Personal experiences and opinions

Respondents were asked to rate how well they felt compliance to cat ownership requirements were being followed in their local area, and to provide a reason for this rating.

The average score out of 10 across all respondents was 4.71, with the most common answer being 1/10 (25.13%).



Graph 10: Respondents overall rating of compliance to cat ownership requirements in their area

When responses were filtered to compare cat owners versus non-cat owners' perceptions on compliance, cat owners rated compliance much higher with the most common ranking being 10/10, and non-cat owners rated the compliance levels lower, with the most common ranking 1/10.

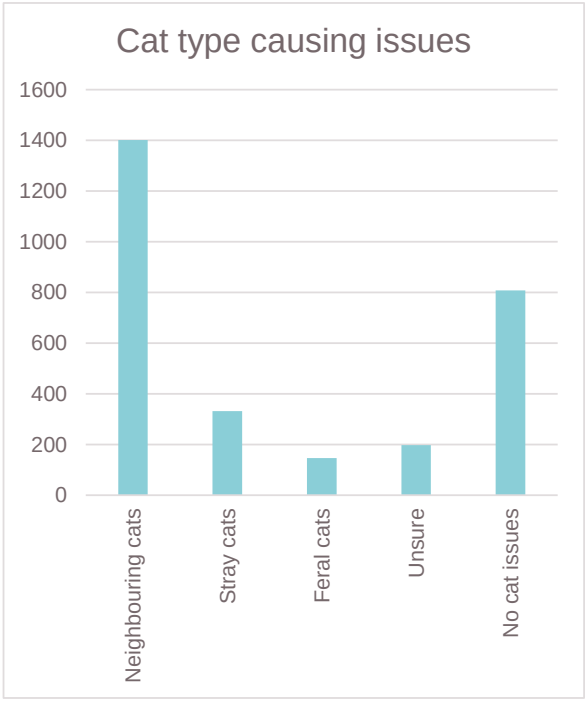
A full breakdown of perceived level of compliance by cat ownership status, is displayed in a chart in Appendix F.

34.35% of respondents reported that there were no issues with cats in their neighbourhood.

The remaining 65.65% of respondents who said they did have issues with cats, were able to select more than one type of cat they felt was responsible for various nuisances experienced.

These respondents said issues were most commonly caused by neighbourhood cats (59.57%), stray cats (14.12%), and feral cats (6.21%).

8.42% noted they were unsure which type of cat was causing the nuisance.



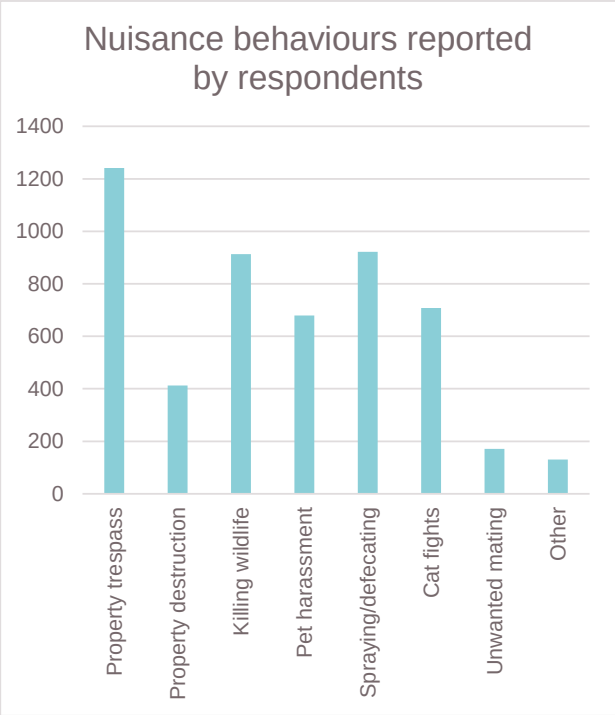
Graph 11: Cat type causing issues

When asked "Why are these cats causing issues?", the three top answers related to:

1. Cats trespassing (78.1%, 1241)
2. Spraying or defecating on my property (58.02%, 922)
3. Killing of wildlife (57.46%, 913)

"Cat fights" (44.56%), "they harass my pets" (42.73%), "they are destructive on my property" (25.99%), and "unwanted mating" (10.76%) were other acknowledged issues.

129 respondents (8.24%) stated "other".

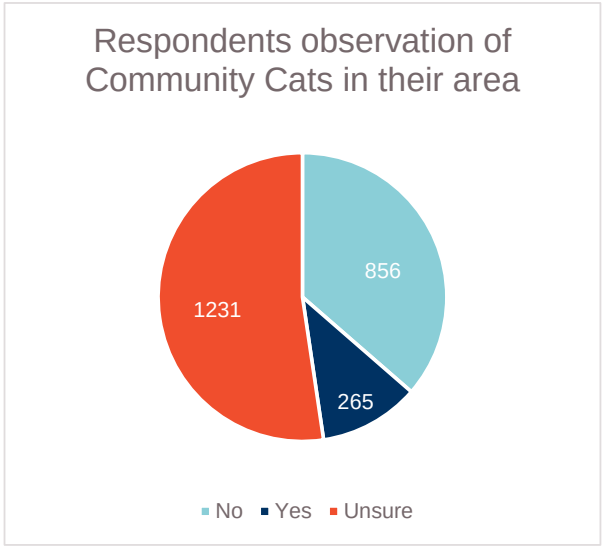


Graph 12: Nuisance behaviours reported by respondents

Community cats

Respondents were asked if they thought community cats were in their area, with responses broken down as follows:

- No (36.39%, 856)
- Yes (11.27%, 265)
- Unsure (52.34%, 1231)



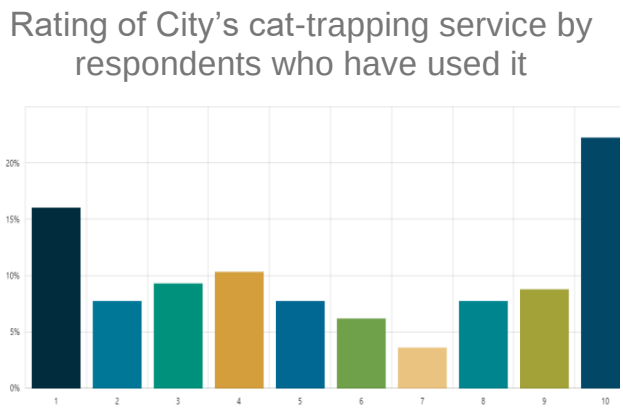
Graph 13: Respondent's observation of community cats in their area

136 respondents provided an address where community cats are an issue near them that they would like investigated.

Cat trapping

8.59% of responses confirmed that they had used the City's free cat-trapping service if a cat was frequently trespassing on their property.

When respondents confirmed they had used the cat-trapping service, they were asked an additional question of "how would you rate this service?" (out of 10), with the average answer being 5.67 and the most frequent rating being 10 (22.28%).



Graph 14: Rating of City's cat-trapping service by respondents who have used it

Further cat-related feedback

The final question in the survey asked respondents if they had any further cat-related feedback they would like to share with the City, and whilst 1181 (50.21%) skipped this question, some common themes that emerged that were not curfew related, were:

- Cat trapping program needs improvement, regarding trap availability and wait-time.
- How will renters be supported
- Feral cats need addressing
- More educational campaigns on cat ownership expectations
- Responsible pet owners should be rewarded
- Anonymous reporting line would be helpful
- City needs to run/continue to run subsidised cat desexing program
- Other animal nuisances/pests are a higher priority

Perceived level of cat owner compliance

We further filtered down the perceived level of cat responsibility compliance into cat owners and non-cat owners, to see whether the two groups felt similarly on this subject.

The graph included in Appendix C displays the ranking of the two stakeholder groups comparatively and displays an overall trend that cat owners perceive better compliance, and non-cat owners perceive worse compliance to the various cat ownership responsibilities on cat owners.

Appendix A – CityNews Article

CREATING A **CLEVER AND CREATIVE FUTURE** FOR GREATER GEELONG

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

CITYNEWS

This year's cover image: Corio Bay Aerial by Lasith Perinpanayagam

Send in your stunning images to feature in our calendar

We're calling for amateur and professional photographers to help showcase our beautiful region in the 2024 Geelong Calendar. All ages are encouraged to get creative and submit an entry.

We want to see Greater Geelong through your lens, seeking images that represent what makes our region unique and diverse.

There are so many breathtaking places to capture, from iconic scenic views, stunning seascapes, wildlife sanctuaries, historic sites and heritage buildings, to inner-city streets, bustling laneways and our waterfront. With some of the most picturesque landscapes in Australia, there are limitless ways to celebrate and showcase our region.

A public vote will be held to determine the final 13 photographs for the calendar, including the calendar cover photo. Last year more than 5,400 voters cast their votes to select that featured in our calendar.

After the final 13 photographs are selected in September, more than 135,000 calendars will be printed and then posted to households in November.

So, start snapping – and get your entries in by **5.00pm** on **Friday 11 August**.

For more information and to enter, scan the QR code or visit **geelong.link/calendarcomp**

HAVE YOUR SAY

Cat Curfew Review

When we reviewed our Domestic Animal Management Plan in 2021, the community had a lot to say about unwanted cat behaviours and cat curfews.

One of the strong themes to emerge was the preference for cats to be contained to their owner's property 24 hours a day, due to the various nuisances they may pose on neighbours, wildlife and the environment.

We want to explore this further. We want to understand from the community:

- how commonly they experience cat nuisance behaviours
- what level of cat curfew is felt to be most appropriate to manage cats across our community.

Your thoughts and contributions are a vital part of our planning and decision making.

To have your say, scan the QR code or visit **geelong.link/catcurfew** by **5.00pm** on **Sunday 16 July**.

You can also attend one of the following drop in sessions where our Health and Local Laws team members will be available to answer questions and record all feedback:

- **Saturday 17 June, 9.00am** to **11.00am** Waurn Ponds Library, 230 Pioneer Road, Grovedale
- **Saturday 24 June, 10.00am** to **12.00pm** Baronggook Drysdale Library, 2–8 Wyndham Street, Drysdale
- **Saturday 1 July, 2.00pm** to **4.00pm** Lara Hall, 1A Flinders Avenue, Lara

Draft Central Geelong Parking Strategy

Community members, central Geelong traders and key stakeholders are invited to have their say on our draft Central Geelong Parking Strategy.

The draft strategy proposes six key strategic moves that would allow the us to manage the current and future demand for parking in central Geelong in a way that is agile and adaptable.

To have your say, scan the QR code or visit **geelong.link/cgps**

- Feedback is open until **11.59pm** on **Sunday 2 July**

Attend a drop in session at Wurriki Nyal, 137–149 Mercer Street, Geelong:

- Saturday 17 June, 10.00am to 12.00pm

Chat to us outside Westfield Shopping Centre (on Malop Street):

- Wednesday 21 June, 11.30am to 1.30pm
- Wednesday 28 June, 11.30am to 1.30pm

Neighbourhood Amenity Local Law Review

We're seeking your feedback on our Neighbourhood Amenity Local Law 2014.

Designed to secure community safety, protect public assets and enhance neighbourhood amenity, the local laws relate to your property, animals, waste, business and public places.

Let us know what you like in our current local law and what you would like to see changed, removed or added.

Scan the QR code or visit **geelong.link/LocalLaw** to have your say by 5.00pm on **Friday 14 July.**

Kind people are our kind of people

In recent weeks, our team have received an increased number of abusive phone calls and emails. Like you, our team is passionate about Greater Geelong.

Remember, behind every phone call or email is a person dedicated to serving you and providing the best possible experience.

We believe that every interaction should be rooted in respect and kindness, especially when it comes to our dedicated Customer Service staff who aim to make your experience with us a positive one.

If you are experiencing frustration or dissatisfaction, we encourage you to express your concerns in a calm manner.

Our Customer Service team is eager to listen, understand and work towards a resolution that satisfies everyone involved.

Let's work together to make a safe and respectful environment for us to help you.

NEWS

Grand farewell for Waterworld

Content to come

2023 GEELONG SMALL BUSINESS FESTIVAL

Geelong Chamber of Commerce

GEELONG

APPLY NOW TO HOST AN EVENT!

Scan the QR code or visit gsbf.com.au

2023 -24 Community Grants writing workshop

Increase your skills and confidence to apply for grants! Learn how to clearly explain your project and the benefits, respond to assessment criteria, prepare a budget and get tips for a successful application.

To learn more about grant writing and book now to attend our grant writing workshop, presented in partnership with Leisure Networks.

Tuesday 20 June, 5.30pm to **7.30pm, Wurriki Nyal, 137-149 Mercer Street, Geelong**

Book your spot at geelong.link/GrantsSession3 or by scanning the QR code.

Further information about the grants, key dates, assessment criteria and how to apply is available at **geelong.link/Grants** or by scanning the QR code.

GET LOST INSIDE A BREATHTAKING MIRROR MAZE

13 MAY - 18 JUNE
JOHNSTONE PARK

KALEIDOSCOPE

by Keith Courtney

TICKETS $15

GEELONG.LINK/KALEIDOSCOPE-GEELONG

KICK ON

13 May - 18 June

Looking to Kick On, Geelong?

To celebrate Kaleidoscope, we've pulled together a feast of offers from Central Geelong businesses.

Scan the QR code or visit kickongeelong.com.au to find yourself a deal!

We make every effort to ensure City News is accurate at the time of publishing, but information may be subject to change.

THE CITY OF GREATER GEELONG IS PROUDLY LOCATED ON WADAWURRUNG COUNTRY

geelongaustralia.com.au

Appendix B – A-Frame Corflute Insert

CAT CURFEW REVIEW

We are seeking your feedback about our cat curfew.

When we reviewed our Domestic Animal Management Plan in 2021, the community had a lot to say about unwanted cat behaviours and cat curfews.

One of the strong themes to emerge was the preference for cats to be contained to their owner's property 24 hours a day, due to the various nuisances they may pose on neighbours, wildlife and the environment.

We want to explore this further and your thoughts and contributions are a vital part of our planning and decision making.

Tell us what you think

- Scan the QR code or visit **geelong.link/catcurfew** for more information and to share your feedback
- Attend an open-house session:

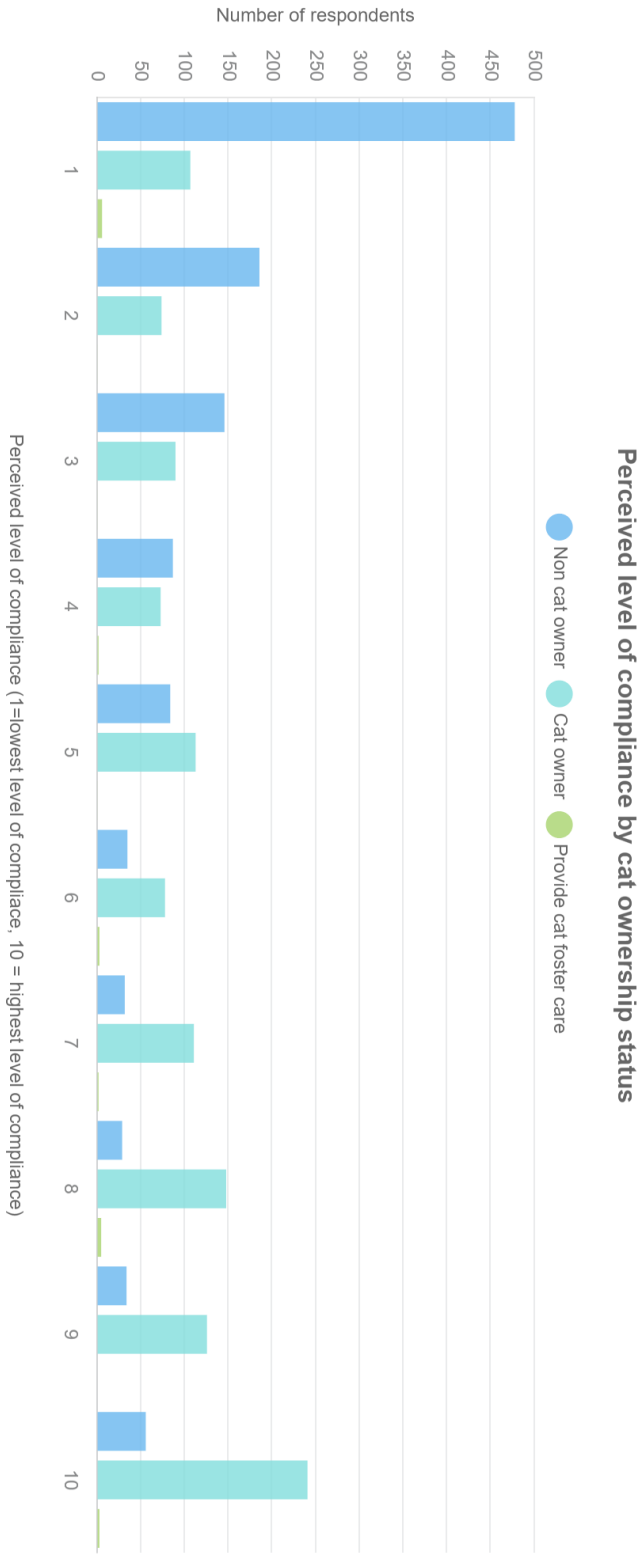
  Saturday 17 June, 9am to 11am Waurn Ponds Library, 230 Pioneer Road, Grovedale

  Saturday 24 June, 10am to 12pm Baronggook Drysdale Library, 2–8 Wyndham Street, Drysdale

  Saturday 1 July, 2pm to 4pm Lara Hall, 1A Flinders Avenue, Lara
- Share your feedback **by 5.00pm on Sunday 16 July**
- If you would like a form to provide feedback, **call us on 5272 5272.**

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

Appendix C – Perceived Compliance To Cat Requirements By Cat Ownership Status



Appendix D - Written Submission: Invasive Species Council, Australia

Address for reply: cats@invasives.org.au

14 July 2023

Support for transitioning to a 24/7 cat curfew in the City of Greater Geelong

To whom it may concern,

We are writing to **express support for the City of Greater Geelong to introduce 24/7 cat containment requirements under your local laws.** Please find below a response detailing our support and recommendations.

24/7 cat containment benefits

Keeping cats contained 24/7 is the most effective option for keeping pets and wildlife safe.

According to the RSPCA, cats kept safely at home live up to 10 years longer (than those allowed to freely roam) and 2 in 3 cat owners have lost a cat due to a roaming-related accident, 1 in 3 to a car accident. This is why major animal organisations, like RSPCA Australia and PETA recommend keeping cats at home 24/7[1,2].

Research published in June 2023 found that over 323 million native birds, mammals and reptiles are killed every year in Australia because people allow their pet cats to roam and 62 million of these are killed in the Greater Melbourne area[3].

Keeping cats contained 24/7 is the only effective option to prevent predation on all wildlife.

Pet cats are natural predators that hunt during the day and night. Council currently has a night-time cat curfew in place. Encouraging people to keep their cats in at night helps prevent predation on nocturnal mammals and frogs, but does not entirely prevent it, rather – it shifts the type of prey cats affect. During the day, cats are more likely to predate on native birds and reptiles which are more active during these hours.

Relationship between responsible pet ownership and existing council strategies

Cat and dog attacks are a recognised cause of distress and injury to wildlife. Additionally, the presence of cat and dogs can indirectly affect wildlife presence and movements; scientific evidence suggests that scents left by free-roaming cats can elicit fear and stress responses in wildlife.[4]

[1] RSPCA Australia, 'Keeping your cat safe and happy at home', www.safeandhappycats.com.au.
[2] PETA Australia 2017, 'Two non-opposable thumbs up for cat curfews', https://www.peta.org.au/news/cat-curfews-australia/.
[3] The Age 2023, 'The staggering death toll of roaming pet cats finally revealed', 9 June 2023, https://www.theage.com.au/environment/conservation/the-staggering-death-toll-of-roaming-pet-cats-finally-revealed-20230606-p5dc8u.html
[4] Fardell, L.L., Pavey, C.R. and Dickman, C.R 2023, 'Influences of roaming domestic cats on wildlife activity in patchy urban environments', *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution*, doi: 10.3389/fevo.2023.1123355

Enhancing measures to manage free-roaming cats complements the City of Greater Geelong's Environment Strategy 2020-30 goal to 'protect, enhance and restore our region's biodiversity'. Principle 4.3 within the plan seeks to 'restore biodiversity in modified landscapes.' Reducing threats to urban wildlife, such as the threat posed by free-roaming cats and dogs, alongside habitat restoration interventions will maximise success of restoration efforts and create spaces safe for wildlife.

A holistic approach to introducing 24/7 cat containment

Introducing a 24/7 cat local law would help standardise companion animal management approaches across Victorian councils - helping to normalise keeping cats at home and making it easier for pet owners to do the right thing.

Achieving compliance with companion animal local laws requires a multi-pronged approach, including education, community engagement and enforcement. For example, RSPCA Australia recommends education programs are used to increase the acceptance and uptake of 24-hour cat containment[5].

Although many councils have introduced a cat curfew, there are few case studies available on the effectiveness of such measures. One council that has monitored compliance and uptake of cat containment is Kingborough Council, Tasmania. In 2019 Kingborough Council introduced a 24/7 cat containment by-law to Bruny Island as part of a broader cat management strategy. According to Kingborough Council, 74% of known households with a pet cat fully comply with the by-law[6]. To achieve this result, Kingborough Council worked closely with the community. Strategies they implemented to encourage compliance included: programs in local schools, education campaign, stalls at community events, engagement with the local cat rescue, working with the local men's shed to provide enclosures, wildlife monitoring, engaging the community to report cat sightings, as well as compliance activities like issuing cautionary infringement notices.

Implications for semi-owned and unowned domestic cats

We note that 24/7 cat curfews are an appropriate strategy for current and future cat owners, however, separate strategies are required to reduce the number of free-roaming cats that do not have an owner. Desexing is a key tool for preventing unplanned litters (and the resulting animal abandonment), thus helping to reduce the flow of cats into the unowned cat population.

Recommendations for the City of Greater Geelong:

1. **Transition to a 24/7 cat curfew**
   As part of the implementation process, we encourage the City of Greater Geelong to consider:

[5] RSPCA Australia 2018, 'Identifying best practice domestic cat management in Australia', https://kb.rspca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Findings-and-Recommendations-Identifying-Best-Practice-Domestic-Cat-Management.pdf

[6] Kaylene Allen 2023, 'Community engagement in cat management on Bruny', presented to the National Domestic Cat Management Working Group forum.

- Implementing an education campaign in conjunction with local vets and animal welfare groups to raise awareness about the law and encourage cat owners to contain their cat.
- Ensuring messages targeting cat owners focus on the safety of cat, with conservation as a secondary message. Social research has repeatedly shown that cat owners are more receptive to messages that focus on their pet's safety.
- As resources allow, develop an incentive program for cat owners. E.g. The Shire of Capel, WA offers cat owners a $200 rebate to install a new catio (see here: https://www.capel.wa.gov.au/news/catio-rebate/)
- Providing community members with a clear mechanism for reporting roaming cats and a support strategy, e.g. follow-through with phone calls from council to reported cat owners to discuss the importance of cat containment.

2. **Encourage the uptake of cat desexing, registration and identification**
   To increase the uptake of responsible pet ownership measures, we encourage the Greater City of Geelong Council to:
   - Enhance its existing annual desexing program, including making it more visible on the council's webpage titled 'owning a cat' and offering an increased subsidy (or free desexing) for low-income households.
   - Consult and work with the Geelong Animal Welfare Society to identify local priorities and needs for cat management.

We congratulate the City of Greater Geelong for proactively considering transitioning to a 24/7 cat curfew.

Appendix E – Written Submission: Australian Pet Welfare Foundation

Australian Pet Welfare Foundation Position Statement on Cat Containment

Summary

The Australian Pet Welfare Foundation (APWF) strongly encourages inside containment of cats at night, and where possible, contained to the owner's property during the day in a comfortable environment which meets the cat's physical and mental needs.
However, the APWF is strongly opposed to *mandated* cat containment (night curfews and 24/7) because it leads to increased cat nuisance complaints, increased cat impoundments, increased cat and kitten euthanasia, increased costs and enforcement difficulties for local governments, increased mental health damage to veterinary staff and community residents caused by euthanasing healthy cats and kittens and no reduction in the overall number of wandering cats.

Mandated Cat Containment is Ineffective

Mandated cat containment has been proven to be an ineffective strategy; a failure at reducing wandering cats in the short and long term, both in Australia and internationally. Mandated cat containment is not an effective strategy to reduce wandering cats because most wandering cats are strays with no owner to contain them. Even for cats with an owner, containment is often not achievable due to factors such as housing limitations, lack of financial resources and concerns about the welfare of confined cats.
Mandated cat containment actively prevents the resolution of the problem of wandering cats because it presents a huge barrier to cat semi-owners taking full ownership of the stray cat they are feeding.

What is Effective

A more effective approach is to help people with the desexing and microchipping of their semi-owned cat, and supporting them to take full ownership. This is achieved through Community Cat Programs, i.e., high-intensity free desexing programs targeted at areas of high impoundments or complaints.

By significantly reducing the number of unwanted kittens born, such programs, not mandated curfews, are the key solution to the problem of wandering cats and the associated issues such as nuisance complaints, costs to local governments and potential wildlife predation.

Position Statement on domestic cats and Australian native wildlife populations

Summary

While the impact of feral cats on Australian native wildlife populations in natural environments is well-documented, there is no scientific evidence that domestic cats (cats that live in the vicinity of people), have any viability or conservation impacts at a population level on native wildlife. In fact, Australian population studies have not found a measurable effect of domestic cats on native wildlife (Barratt 1998, Grayson 2007, Lilith 2010, Maclagan 2018). An ongoing issue is that feral cat impacts are often wrongly attributed to domestic cats, even though these are two distinct and geographically separate populations of cats with different behaviour and ecology.

Feral cats live and reproduce in the wild and are never found where people live or work. Feral cats are not the subject of nuisance complaints and they do not enter shelters or pounds. In contrast, Domestic cats live among people and are either owned, semi-owned (receive food from people intentionally) or unowned (receive food unintentionally from people such as from food waste bins). Domestic cats are sometimes called stray cats if they don't have an identified owner or microchip.

False blame is harmful and prevents a resolution to the free-roaming cat issue

Despite the lack of scientific evidence, domestic cats in Australia still receive significant blame for negative impacts on native wildlife populations. False blame for wildlife impacts directed at domestic cats is harmful because it contributes to the implementation of ineffective domestic cat management strategies and can be used as a justification for lethal approaches to domestic cats. This perpetuates the unnecessary and pointless killing of many healthy cats and kittens which causes devastating psychological damage to staff and community residents involving depression, traumatic stress and increased risk of suicide. In addition, this lethal approach does not reduce the overall number of free-roaming cats overtime as the population quickly replenishes to original levels (Baran 2009, Reeve 2005, Rohlf 2005, Rollin 2011, Tiesman 2015, Whiting 2011, Lazenby 2015, Miller 2014, NSW Animal Seizures – Pound Data Reports).

False blame can also promote the use of inhumane killing methods; be used as a justification for cruelty towards cats, increasing pain and suffering; and be used as an argument for mandatory cat containment which is not an effective strategy for reducing free-roaming cats or associated issues such as potential wildlife predation.

What is the main threat

Habitat loss is recognised as the main threat to Australian native wildlife populations (Australia State of the Environment Report 2021). In contrast to domestic cats, population studies have found that habitat loss does have a measurable effect on Australian native wildlife populations.

What is Effective

Habitat preservation and prevention of land clearing for human use such as urban development and agriculture is likely to be the most effective strategy to protect Australian native wildlife. Habitat preservation should be combined with Community Cat Programs, i.e., high-intensity free desexing of owned and semi-owned stray cats targeted to areas of high cat intake or complaints. These programs significantly reduce the number of unwanted kittens born, free-roaming cats and associated issues such as nuisance or potential wildlife predation. Additional effective strategies include: Bed-time feeding – feeding pet cats their evening meal inside after securing them inside for the night, wildlife road safety measures, and targeted protection of threatened and endangered species (e.g., exclusion fencing).

Key issues to consider related to mandated 24/7 cat containment

Why is mandated 24/7 cat containment proposed by some groups?
Mandated 24/7 cat containment (also known as a 24-hour cat curfew) is generally proposed because of a belief that it will reduce wandering cats and associated issues such as nuisance complaints or potential wildlife predation, and protect cats from potential harm. While it seems logical and compelling that mandated 24/7 cat containment would reduce the number of wandering cats and associated issues, this assumption is not supported by the evidence.

Is mandated 24/7 cat containment effective at reducing wandering cats?
The evidence in Australia and internationally clearly shows that mandated 24/7 cat containment is not an effective strategy to reduce wandering cats or associated issues such as nuisance complaints or potential wildlife predation. Mandated 24/7 cat containment is already proven to be a failure at reducing wandering cats in the short, medium and long-term.

> **RSPCA Australia** *Identifying Best Practice Domestic Cat Management in Australia 2018 report:*
>
> "Overall, councils with cat containment regulations have not been able to demonstrate any measurable reduction in cat complaints or cats wandering at large following the introduction of the regulations".

1. **City of Yarra Ranges** (Victoria), in the 3rd year after mandating 24/7 cat containment:
   - cat-related complaints increased by 143%
   - Yarra Ranges Council acknowledged that the significant increase in cat complaints, is likely to be a result of the introduction of a 24-hour cat curfew in 2014
   - impoundments increased by 68%
   - euthanasia increased by 18% (human population only increased by 2%) (Yarra Ranges 2021)

Yarra Ranges Council data

Measure	2012/13	2016/17	Difference	% Change
Resident population	149, 026	152,246	+3,220	^ 2.16%
Cat nuisance complaints	237	576	+339	^ 143 %
Cats impounded	440	738	+298	^ 67.7 %
Cats euthanased	232	273	+41	^ 17.67 %

2. **City of Casey** (Victoria), 20 years after introducing mandated 24/7 cat containment (Casey 2001, 2021):
   - the number of cats impounded was still 296% higher than baseline (from 264 cats in 1998 to 1,047 cats in 2019/20), more than double the rate of the human population increase.

Casey Council data

Measure	1998	2019/ 20	Difference	% Change
Resident population	156,128	364,600	+208,472	^ 134%
Cats impounded	264	1047	+783	^ 296%

The number of cat nuisance complaints and impoundments are important parameters because they reflect the size of the wandering cat population in the surrounding area.

3. **Merri-bek City Council** (Melbourne Victoria) supports targeted, free desexing programs (including semi-owned cats) combined with education as the approach to cat management rather than mandated cat containment/curfews (Merri-bek 2022).

4. **City of Hobsons Bay** (Melbourne Victoria) undertook an assessment of cat curfews and concluded that mandated 24/7 cat containment is not an effective strategy for reducing the number of wandering cats or associated issues and has rejected cat curfews (Hobsons Bay 2014).

5. **Hume City Council** in (Melbourne Victoria) investigated the viability of implementing a cat curfew in 2018 and concluded that a cat curfew would not be effective in reducing nuisance cat complaints and predation of native wildlife by cats (Hume Council 2018).

6. Some **USA jurisdictions** have introduced mandated 24/7 cat containment known as cat "leash laws" which have proven to be ineffective and impossible to enforce. When leash laws are passed, animal control impound more stray cats because they do not have an "owner" to contain them. This results in more cats being impounded and then killed but without reducing the overall number of roaming cats in the area. A number of **USA jurisdictions** have repealed their cat leash laws because they found they were unenforceable including Smithfield Virginia 2003, Edmonds City Council Washington 2012, and Gretna City Council LA 2014 (Hughes 2002, Alley Cat Allies 2022).

Based on data from councils, 24/7 cat containment regulations would not provide any measurable benefit in reducing cat complaints, cat impoundments, potential wildlife predation or cat-related costs and would instead increase costs to local governments.

Why is mandated 24/7 cat containment not effective at reducing wandering cats?

Mandated 24/7 cat containment is not an effective strategy to reduce wandering cats because most wandering cats are strays with no owner to contain them. Even for cats with an owner, containment is often not achievable due to property limitations (for e.g. rental properties), lack of financial resources and concerns about contained cat welfare (McLeod 2015, van Eeden 2021).

Stray cats

Stray cats are usually overlooked when mandated 24/7 cat containment is proposed, even though stray cats represent the majority of wandering cats. Most cats entering animal welfare shelters and council pounds are classed as strays, originate from low socio-economic areas and were born in the preceding 6 to 12 months (Kerr 2018, Alberthsen 2013 & 2016, Miller 2014, Ly 2021, Rinzin 2008, Zito 2016).

Most stray cats are semi-owned domestic cats being fed by people who do not perceive they own the cat but have an emotional attachment to the cat (Rand 2021). When mandated cat containment is introduced it creates a significant barrier to semi-owners being willing or able to take full ownership of the stray cat they are feeding due to the imposition of an added responsibility and potential penalty associated with cat ownership. Transforming cat semi-owners into full owners represents the **key solution** to significantly reduce the number of unwanted kittens, wandering cats and associated issues, but mandated cat containment actively prevents this resolution (Banyule City Council 2020, Cotterell 2021, APWF 2021).

Mandated cat containment perpetuates the failed *Trap, adopt or kill* approach

Mandated cat containment results in more stray cats being trapped, impounded and then killed because they do not have an "owner" to contain them. However, this *Trap, adopt or kill* approach does not reduce the overall wandering cat population in the area overtime because it results in low-level *ad hoc* culling, insufficient to override the high cat reproductive rate, immigration of new cats into the area and increased survival of juveniles (Lazenby 2015, Miller 2014, Tan 2017, RSPCA Australia 2018). The result is a repetitive cycle of trapping, impounding and killing cats, followed by new cats being trapped, impounded and killed,

over and over again, but without reducing the overall number of wandering cats as the population quickly replenishes to original levels (Boone 2019, NSW Animal Seizures Pound Data Reports, Hughes 2002).

Cat admissions into NSW council pounds has remained relatively stable over the past decade reflecting a stable stray cat population with no measurable decrease despite costly *Trap, adopt or kill* being applied by many councils (NSW Animal Seizures – Pound Data Reports).

High-level culling or desexing is required to produce a sustained decrease in wandering cats. However, high-level culling is cost prohibitive for local governments and unacceptable to the majority of the community (Rand 2019) and there are no published reports of high-level culling at the suburb or city level being successful (Boone 2019).

Why is mandated 24/7 cat containment not feasible?
Enforcement of mandated 24/7 cat containment is problematic and essentially impossible for several reasons including:

- Enforcement can only be undertaken by cat trapping programs and cat-trap loan schemes.
- It is difficult or impossible to capture cats in breach of containment regulations. Animal Management Officers (AMOs) are not able to chase cats that are wandering at large in breach of containment and this present WHS risks.
- The majority of trapped and impounded cats are not owned or traceable to an owner so there is no possibility of taking any enforcement action because an owner cannot be identified (Lancaster 2015, RSPCA Australia 2018).
- The experience of councils that have introduced mandated 24/7 cat containment shows that limited infringement notices have been issued (Hobsons Bay 2014).
- Trapped unidentified cats need to be rehomed or euthanased, increasing costs for cat management and increasing the number of cats euthanased, which negatively affects the mental health of staff involved.
- Enforcement is very time-consuming and costly requiring expansion of cat-trap services, purchase of additional traps to reduce waiting times, and additional staff to deal with the increased nuisance complaints, trapping and impoundments that occur after mandated cat containment is introduced.
- Trapping by AMOs is very time-consuming because multiple trips to the site are often required including a trip to set up the trap and then trips to check the trap each morning (for animal welfare reasons) and to reset the trap each evening until the cat is caught. Times required to trap cats can range from an average of 8.9 days to 29 days per cat to trap 90% of the target cats (Nutter 2005, Lazenby 2015).

Hume City Council in Melbourne Victoria stated in 2018 that cat impoundment statistics and learnings from other councils demonstrate that a cat curfew would be largely unenforceable (Hume Council 2018). **The City of Hobsons Bay** in Melbourne also acknowledged in 2014 that introduction of mandated cat containment would lead to community expectations about enforcement that cannot be delivered. This is consistent with findings from jurisdictions in the USA (Smithfield Virginia 2003, Edmonds City Council Washington 2012, Greta City Council LA 2014, Police Chief Rowland Payson City Council Utah 2003, Alley Cat Allies 2022).

Based on the evidence in Australia and internationally, mandated 24/7 cat containment is essentially unenforceable, rendering mandated 24/7 cat containment impractical and unfeasible.

What are the negative consequences of mandated 24/7 cat containment?
Based on the evidence, mandated 24/7 cat containment has many negative consequences including:

1. Increases cat nuisance complaints to local governments because an expectation is created in the community that cats should not be seen.
2. Increases cat impoundments because increased nuisance complaints and community expectations that cats should not be seen both lead to increased cat trapping and impoundment (Yarra Ranges 2021, RSPCA SA 2022b).
3. Increases euthanasia of healthy and treatable cats and kittens in council pounds, shelters and veterinary clinics because the more cats impounded, the more cats euthanased (Kreisler 2022, Marsh 2010).
4. Increases well-documented and life-threatening mental health damage to staff and community residents caused by the euthanasia of healthy cats and kittens including depression, traumatic stress and increased suicide risk (Baran 2009, Reeve 2005, Rohlf 2005, Rollin 2011, Tiesman 2015, Whiting 2011).
5. Increases costs to local government for cat trapping and management. Costs of impounding, returning to owner, rehoming or euthanasing cats are typically $500/cat ($250 to $750 or more per cat). Trapping, impounding and managing 100 more cats per year costs approximately $500,000, ultimately paid by rate-payers.
6. Increases staff burnout, staff turnover and attrition rates associated with the euthanasia of healthy and treatable cats and kittens (Australian Veterinary Association 2022, Rogelberg 2007).
7. Promotes continuation of the reactive and ineffective typical approach to domestic cats in Australia known as *Trap, adopt or kill* which has failed to reduce the number of wandering cats over many decades (Boone 2019, NSW Animal Seizures – Pound Data Reports).
8. Creates a major disincentive for cat ownership, reducing cat adoption and increasing euthanasia.
9. Actively prevents resolution of the wandering cat issue because it creates a significant barrier to semi-owners taking full ownership of the stray cat they are feeding – this is the **key solution** to significantly reduce the number of unwanted kittens born and the number of wandering cats and associated issues (Banyule City Council 2020, Cotterell 2021, APWF 2021).
    - Semi-owners represent a **huge pool of potential cat adopters** for shy and timid stray cats which are difficult to adopt and are at high risk of euthanasia in shelters, pounds and veterinary clinics. Semi-ownership of cats is common with 3% to 9% of Australian adults feeding daily an average of 1.5 cats they do not perceive they own (Rand 2019, Zito 2015).
    - **Cost is the main barrier to desexing**, not lack of education or knowledge about the benefits of desexing. Most semi-owners will take full ownership of the stray cats they are feeding, registering their details on the cat's microchip and registration databases if offered free desexing and microchipping as part of Community Cat Programs (please see below).
    - But **mandated containment is a major barrier** to this process because most semi-owners are in low socio-economic areas in low-income households unable to afford containment system costs ($700-$2000+), and many are in rental properties. On average across Australia, 20% of households (2.4 people) live on less than $650 per week (Rand 2021, ABS data 2022).
10. Criminalises cat ownership for low-income households and people with 'door-dasher' cats. Mandated 24/7 cat containment ignores social justice of legislation and the inability of low-income households and those with difficult to contain door-dasher cats to comply. Even an expensive containment enclosure does not prevent door-dasher cats from escaping.

11. Increases cat relinquishment and abandonment due to the imposition of an added responsibility and potential penalty to cat ownership (RSPCA SA 2022a).
12. Places semi-owned stray cats being fed by people who have an emotional attachment to the cat at significant risk of being impounded and killed. 42% of all cats impounded by Australian councils are euthanased (Chua 2022 MPhil thesis).
13. Increases risks to pet cats of being trapped and killed.
    - One third of cat owners lose their pet at least once in the pet's lifetime and 41% of lost cats are indoor-only cats, as pet cats can still become lost through windows or doors accidently left open.
    - Even microchipped pet cats aren't guaranteed to be safe as microchips are not necessarily found on the first scan of a cat, and it is recommended that if no microchip is found, that cats should be scanned over 3 consecutive days. Even then, microchips can be faulty or move around the cat's body and may not be found, leading to pet cats being killed (Lord 2008, Lancaster 2015).
14. Negatively impacts the welfare, quality of life, and health of some contained cats which can include obesity, immobility, lower urinary tract disease and behaviour problems increasing risk of relinquishment or abandonment (RSPCA Australia 2018, Palmer & Sandoe 2014).
15. Increases risks of cruelty towards cats, increasing animal pain and suffering.
16. Increases the number of wandering cats due to influxes of new cats after dominant resident cats are trapped and removed and increased survival of juveniles (Lazenby 2015, Miller 2014).

What are the evidence-based solutions to reduce wandering cats and associated issues?

1. Community Cat Programs

Community Cat Programs based on high-intensity free desexing and microchipping of cats targeted to areas of high cat impoundments and complaints (which are typically the low socioeconomic areas) significantly reduce the number of wandering cats and associated issues such as nuisance complaints and potential wildlife predation (fewer wandering cats means less potential wildlife predation).

Community Cat Programs are very effective at transforming semi-owners who are feeding stray cats into full official owners and preventing unwanted kittens being born.

Scientific evidence, including from Australia, repeatedly demonstrates that Community Cat Programs significantly reduce:

- the number of wandering cats impounded by councils and shelters
- cat complaints
- euthanasia of healthy and treatable cats and kittens and associated negative mental health impacts on staff and community residents caring for cats.

Recent Australian data demonstrate that Community Cat Programs are cost-effective and result in a 30-50% decrease in council pound cat intake, more than an 80% reduction in cat euthanasia, and a 30-50% decrease in cat nuisance complaints over 1 to 3 years, with these parameters reflecting the decrease in the surrounding wandering cat population (APWF 2022, Banyule City Council 2020, Cotterell 2021, Spehar & Wolf 2019, Swarbrick 2018, Levy 2014, Boone 2019, Gunther 2021,).

City of Banyule

In stark contrast to Yarra Ranges and Casey which have mandated 24/7 cat containment, in the **City of Banyule** (Melbourne, Victoria) which does not have mandated cat containment, in the third year after implementing a high-intensity free desexing program (a community cat program) targeted to where cat-related calls and impoundments were occurring in Banyule (typically the low socio-economic areas):

- impoundments decreased by 61%
- euthanasia decreased by 74%
- cat-related calls decreased by 64% (from 11 to 4 cat calls/1000 residents)

Since 2013, Banyule has spent $60,000 on its free desexing program and saved $397,500 on cat impoundment costs alone (Cotterell 2021, Banyule 2020).

2. Bed-time feeding of cats

Bedtime feeding of cats is recommended as a highly effective way to assist cat owners at minimal to no additional cost to keep owned pet cats safely inside at night and prevent potential wildlife predation. This strategy involves feeding cats inside at bedtime and ensuring all doors and windows are shut for the night before feeding the evening meal. This provides owners with a way to safely confine their cat inside overnight.

Bed-time feeding should be widely promoted to raise awareness among cat owners to increase cat containment at night. However, containment should not be made mandatory because mandating containment leads to increased costs and enforcement difficulties for local governments and other negative consequences (please see above).

What about mandated night curfews?

Mandated night curfews are also not an effective strategy to reduce wandering cats because most wandering cats are strays with no owner to contain them. Even for cats with an owner, containment may not be achievable due to property limitations (for e.g. rental properties), lack of financial resources and concerns about contained cat welfare (McLeod 2015, van Eeden 2021). Mandated night curfews also create a barrier to semi-owners taking full ownership of the stray cat they are feeding (which is the key solution to the wandering cat issue) due to the imposition of an added responsibility and potential penalty associated with cat ownership. Night containment may also be difficult to achieve with "door-dasher" cats and poorly socialised cats that are not house trained, where mandating night containment then criminalises cat ownership.

A number of councils continue to report wandering cat issues despite longstanding mandated night cat curfews such as Horsham (introduced in 1995), Geelong (introduced in 2009) and Bendigo (introduced in 2004) (Horsham Council 2021, Geelong 2021, Bendigo 2016 & 2021).

Bendigo Council introduced a night cat curfew in 2004. Despite this, cat impoundments and cat euthanasia increased from 2014/15 to 2020/21, at a higher rate than the resident population increase.

Bendigo Council

Measure	2014/15	2020/21	Difference	% Change
Resident population	109,908	121,221	+11, 313	^ 10.29%
Cats impounded	1131	1348	+217	^ 19.18 %
Cats euthanased	367	516	+149	^ 40.59 %

Do domestic cats in urban areas have an impact on wildlife populations?
Wildlife protection is an argument often proposed as a reason for mandated cat containment, critically however, there is no evidence that domestic cats in urban areas negatively impact native wildlife populations. Nor is there any evidence that cat restrictions in urban areas benefit wildlife populations.

> *An ongoing issue is that feral cat impacts are often wrongly attributed to domestic cats, even though they are two very distinct populations with different behaviour and ecology.*

The impact of feral cats on native wildlife in natural environments is well-documented. Surprisingly however, and contrary to popular belief, there is actually no scientific evidence demonstrating population viability or conservation impacts at a population level on Australian wildlife by domestic cats living around people.

Despite this lack of evidence, domestic cats in Australia still receive significant blame for negative impacts on native wildlife populations. Multiple Australian studies have been unable to detect a measurable impact in urban areas of domestic cats on native mammals (Maclagan 2018, Lilith 2010), or birds (Grayson 2007), but found that vegetation quality, housing density, distance from bushland and size of bushland were significant factors. Other studies demonstrate the positive impact cat predation has by reducing the numbers of rats that predate bird nests (Matthews 1999). Very importantly, domestic cats that are obtaining food intentionally or unintentionally from humans predate significantly fewer animals than feral cats which have to hunt to supply all their nutritional needs (Murphy 2019, Woinarski 2017).

False blame for native wildlife impacts directed at domestic cats living in the vicinity of people is very dangerous and harmful because it is used as a justification for the use of lethal control methods for domestic cats. This perpetuates the unnecessary killing of healthy cats and kittens, and associated severe mental health damage to community residents, council pound, animal shelter and veterinary staff caused by the killing of healthy cats and kittens. This false blame can also be used as a justification for cruelty towards cats, increasing pain and suffering. Given it has never been proven that the presence of cats, living in the vicinity of people, has any impact on wildlife populations, communities and governments should not assume that just because cats are present it means they are having wildlife population impacts.

Summary
It is imperative that domestic cat regulations are evidence-based reflecting the available science to ensure they are effective and humane. Mandated cat containment should be rejected because it is not an effective strategy for reducing wandering cats or associated issues such as nuisance complaints or potential wildlife predation. In addition, mandated cat containment has unintended negative consequences including causing psychological harm to people associated with the euthanasia of healthy cats and kittens, and preventing resolution of the wandering cat issue by creating a barrier to semi-owners taking full ownership of the stray cat they are feeding (the key solution to resolving the wandering cat issue). Furthermore, mandated cat containment is not a feasible strategy because it is essentially unenforceable. Instead of ineffective mandated cat containment, evidence-based solutions which do reduce the number of wandering cats including proactive Community Cat Programs and Bed-time feeding, which are non-lethal and humane, and do not cause psychological harm to people, should be implemented urgently.

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Data to support Position Statement:

Domestic cats and Australian native wildlife populations

Many recent publications have raised concerns about the impacts of domestic cats - cats which live in the vicinity of people - on wildlife populations in Australia. Wildlife protection is an argument often proposed as a reason for mandated cat containment measures such as cat curfews or 24/7 cat containment.

However, it is important to note that there is actually no scientific evidence that domestic cats living in the vicinity of people, impact Australian native wildlife populations. In fact, population studies have not found a measurable effect of domestic cats on native birds and mammals (Barratt 1998, Grayson 2007, Lilith 2010, Maclagan 2018). In addition, there is no evidence that cat restrictions in urban areas benefit native wildlife populations.

An ongoing issue is that impacts of feral cats on wildlife are often wrongly attributed to domestic cats, even though they are two distinct and geographically separate populations with different behaviour and ecology.

The impact of feral cats on native wildlife in natural environments is well-documented. Surprisingly, however, limited research exists on domestic cat wildlife impacts. The impacts (if any) of domestic cats on native wildlife populations is largely unknown. Contrary to popular belief, there is actually no definitive scientific evidence demonstrating viability or conservation impacts at a population level on Australian native wildlife by domestic cats living around people. Despite this lack of evidence, domestic cats in Australia still receive significant blame for negative impacts on native wildlife populations. See: Cat Definitions in Appendix.

Listen to talk by Emeritus Professor Rand presented at the Animal Justice Party conference Sydney 2022. The Myth of Cats and Urban Wildlife:

Australian research findings:

Australian studies were unable to detect a measurable impact in urban areas of domestic cats on native mammals (Maclagan 2018, Lilith 2010), or birds (Barratt 1998, Grayson 2007), but found that vegetation quality, housing density, distance from bushland and size of bushland were significant factors (summarised below). Other studies demonstrate the positive impact cat predation has by reducing the numbers of rats that predate bird nests (Matthews 1999).

Importantly, the **NSW Wildlife Rehabilitation Government Dashboard (2021) shows that in 2019-20, 402 threatened species were reportedly rescued as a result of loss of habitat, 290 as a result of collisions with motor vehicles, 127 as a result of dog attacks and 31 because of cat attacks.** Additionally, domestic cats that are obtaining food intentionally or unintentionally from humans predate significantly fewer animals than feral cats, which have to hunt to supply all their nutritional needs (Murphy 2019, Woinarski 2017).

Study 1: **Do cat restrictions lead to increased species diversity or abundance of small and medium-sized mammals in remnant urban bushland? City of Armadale WA (Lilith 2010)**

This Australian study analysed cat regulations enacted within differing suburbs, to test the hypotheses that the species diversity (measured by the Shannon-Weiner index) and abundance of small and medium-sized mammals should be higher in native bushland within or adjacent to subdivisions where cats are restricted, compared to similar areas where cats are not restricted. There were three different cat regulation regimes at the three different experimental sites and these were compared and assessed for impact on native mammals:

1. no-cat zone (strict prohibition of cat ownership)
2. compulsory bells on cats and night curfew of cats,
3. no cat-related regulations

These different cat regulations were in place for approximately 10 years prior to the study. The researchers also measured structural and floristic features of the vegetation at each site that might influence the species diversity and abundance of small and medium-sized mammals, either independently, or interactively with cat activity.

Findings:

- No significant differences in species diversity were found across the sites and KTBA (known -to-be-alive) statistics for Brushtail Possums and Southern Brown Bandicoots, the two most abundant medium-sized mammals present, were similar across all sites.
- The smaller mardo (*Antechinus flavipes*), which the authors suggested could be regarded as the most susceptible to cat predation of all the native species trapped because of its size, was trapped mostly at an unregulated cat site.
- Total mammals trapped at the unregulated cat sites exceeded those caught at the two sites with restrictions, but these unregulated sites also had significantly denser vegetation.

Conclusion: The authors concluded that pet cats did not negatively impact the species diversity or abundance of small and medium-sized mammals at these sites and that vegetation characteristics are likely more important. In addition, cat related by-laws, including prohibition of cat ownership, had no measurable benefits on wildlife.

Study 2: **Species richness and community composition of passerine birds in suburban Perth: is predation by pet cats the most important factor? Perth WA (Grayson 2007)**

This study was conducted across 57 sites in metropolitan Perth. The researchers investigated factors affecting passerine bird community composition. Bird data were collected at each site, and a questionnaire distributed to surrounding neighbours to determine cat and dog density.

Findings:

- No link was found between cat or dog density and passerine bird species richness (abundance and diversity).
- However, a negative correlation was found between richness of bird species and both housing density and increasing distance from bushland (and decreasing size of bushland).

Conclusion: These findings led the authors to conclude that habitat destruction and degradation were the critical factors affecting richness of bird species, rather than cats or dogs.

Study 3: **Do Pet Cats Deserve the Disproportionate Blame for Wildlife Predation Compared to Pet Dogs? NSW, Queensland and Victoria (Franklin 2021)**

This Australian study analysed pet cat and dog predation and challenges longstanding assumptions and beliefs about the impacts of pet cats on native wildlife.

Findings:

- Not all pet cats were observed to catch prey which concurs with previous research. Of the pets observed to catch prey, the median numbers of native animals caught per dog or cat over 6 months were actually low (3 native animals per cat that predated).
- Only a very small minority of cats were prolific hunters countering common claims that all cats are efficient and prolific hunters that kill many animals. This finding also potentially invalidates often-used calculations estimating the number of native animals predated by pet cats.
- Most prey animals in the study were common native or introduced species suggesting that cats may not be having a significant negative effect on these populations.

Conclusion: The authors stated that, as others have concluded, hunting by domestic dogs and cats appears to be of relatively minor conservation concern compared with issues such as habitat loss and urban development. Therefore,

efforts directed at habitat preservation are likely to be the most effective strategy to protect wildlife, as opposed to pet control regulations.

Study 4: Don't judge habitat on its novelty: Assessing the value of novel habitats for an endangered mammal in a peri-urban landscape. Melbourne Victoria (Maclagan 2018)

Novel ecosystems are increasingly common across the world, particularly in areas heavily impacted by people such as urban and peri-urban landscapes. As a result, interest in their potential contribution to biodiversity conservation is increasing, including their ability to sustain populations of threatened species. Few studies have explored whether novel habitats can support viable populations over time and how they compare to less modified, remnant habitats.

This Australian study investigated the capacity for novel habitats to support an endangered mammal, the southern brown bandicoot (*Isoodon obesulus obesulus: Peramelidae*), in a highly-modified landscape near Melbourne. The study compared bandicoot abundance and body condition between five novel sites that were highly modified by human development, and two remnant sites that were bushland reserves, and examined whether novel sites support residency and key demographic processes necessary for bandicoot population persistence.

Findings:

- Bandicoot abundance was higher at novel sites where cats were common, than at remnant sites (cats were uncommon), with the highest abundance at the novel site with the most urbanised surroundings.
- Female body condition was similar between novel and remnant sites. The majority of bandicoots at novel sites were resident, and breeding activity, recruitment of first-year adults, and survival of mature adults were observed at all novel sites.
- It remains unclear how sufficient numbers of bandicoots at novel sites were avoiding predation by invasive red foxes, cats and other predators.
- The results demonstrate the potential significance of novel urbanised habitats for conserving threatened species within heavily-modified landscapes. The quality of habitats should not be judged on their novelty alone. Broadening appreciation of the potential value of novel ecosystems could increase off-reserve species conservation opportunities - a key priority area in modern times.

Conclusion: The authors concluded the study showed novel urbanised habitats (where cats were common) can offer new conservation opportunities for species that have the adaptive capacity to exploit them. Traditional assumptions that human-modified habitats are automatically poorer in quality to remnant bushland habitats – such as the Human Threat Hypothesis - need careful re-examination. The capacity of habitat to support species of concern should be assessed without bias regarding its degree of novelty. As novel ecosystems become increasingly prevalent worldwide and off-reserve conservation becomes more important, conservation approaches should exploit novel conservation opportunities.

Study 5: Domestic cat stomach content analysis study (Brisbane, Qld)
Analysis of the stomach contents of trapped urban stray cats (domestic cats) in the City of Brisbane revealed that the only prey species consumed were introduced black rats (BBC Invasive Times Newsletter).

Study 6: Domestic cat stomach content analysis study (Southern Downs Shire, Qld)
Cats impounded by the Southern Downs Shire (Qld) found predominantly cat food, house mice and carrion (eastern grey kangaroos) and no species of conservation concern in cat stomach and colon samples (Leis 2021).

Collectively, these findings from Australian research studies contrast with the well-documented adverse effects of feral cats on native wildlife populations in undisturbed natural environments.

Inaccurate estimates of domestic cat impacts on Australian native wildlife populations

Highly publicised impacts of domestic cats on birds (Woinarski 2017), mammals (Murphy 2019), reptiles (Woinarski 2018) and amphibians (Woinarski 2020) are based on extrapolating the findings from stomach and faecal samples of

feral cats and surveys of pet cat hunting behaviour. This has resulted in highly inaccurate conclusions regarding implied population effects of domestic cats in urban areas.

Flawed data collection and calculations

For example, the effects of stray cats are extrapolated from just 5 studies, 3 of which were from rubbish dumps in small rural towns, and the other two explicitly stated they only analysed stool samples that contained evidence of wildlife remains and excluded those that had evidence of cat food. The authors then calculated that all 0.7 million unowned cats living in highly modified environments (stray cats) predated similarly to those samples analysed. Clearly these results are in no way representative of urban stray cats, the vast majority (>99.9%) are fed intentionally by humans (unpublished data from Australian Community Cat Program 2022).

Similarly, the effects of pet cats were extrapolated from 25 to 30-year-old studies of cats that were observed to predate and the authors then assumed that all 3.88 million pet cats predated similarly. For example, the authors estimated that every pet cat, regardless of whether it was contained inside or never seen to predate, killed 15.6 birds a year. This has resulted in a gross overestimation of pet cat predation, given that many pet cats are confined solely inside, and not all cats predate, particularly older cats.

Other confounding factors

In compounding these errors, the authors then imply this data translates to a population effect. For birds, for example, this is erroneous, because birds killed by cats in urban areas are significantly less healthy than birds killed by cars or flying into windows (Baker 2008, Møller & Erritzøe 2000), leading these authors to conclude that cat predation in urban areas represents a compensatory rather than an additive form of mortality. In other words, cat predation does not cause a secular change in the overall mortality of bird populations.

Therefore, the inherent biases, inaccuracies, and limitations of the study design of these highly quoted studies by Woinarksi and Murphy mean that there can be little to no confidence in the implied population effects. In contrast, actual Australian population studies have not found a measurable effect of domestic cats on urban wildlife.

Furthermore, as concluded by Barratt (1998), estimates of predation by house cats, particularly extrapolated estimates, should be treated with caution. Predation estimates alone do not prove that prey populations are detrimentally affected, especially in highly disturbed and modified environments such as urban areas.

False blame directed at domestic cats

False blame for wildlife impacts directed at domestic cats is harmful because it contributes to the implementation of ineffective domestic cat management strategies and can be used as a justification for lethal approaches to domestic cats. This perpetuates the unnecessary and pointless killing of many healthy cats and kittens under the ineffective *Trap, adopt or kill* model, which causes devastating psychological damage to staff involved and community cat carers (Rolf 2005, Whiting 2011, Scotney 2023). It does not reduce the overall number of wandering cats overtime as the population quickly replenishes to original levels due to the high cat reproductive rate, immigration of new cats into the area and increased survival of juveniles (Lazenby 2015, Miller 2014, Boone 2019, NSW Animal Seizures – Pound Data Reports).

Australian shelter staff are often required to repeatedly kill large numbers of healthy cats and kittens, resulting in a significant human cost. Many workers directly involved with the euthanasia of healthy animals develop post-traumatic stress, which is associated with depression, substance abuse, high blood pressure, burnout, sleeplessness

and increased risk of suicide (Australian Veterinary Association 2022, Baran 2009, Reeve 2005, Rohlf 2005, Rollin 2011, Tiesman 2015, Whiting 2011).

Two quotes from shelter staff support research showing that killing healthy and treatable animals can result in severe mental health damage and increases the risk for suicide.

> *"The effect on mental health is a very real problem, and veterinarians were the most affected – it was terrible to see the impact on them" (senior shelter staff member)*
>
> *"I have seen so many people's lives damaged by having to kill a never-ending stream of kittens and cats" (senior shelter veterinarian)*

False blame for wildlife impacts directed at domestic cats can also promote the use of inhumane killing methods; be used as a justification for cruelty towards cats, increasing pain and suffering. This blame is also be used as an argument for mandatory cat containment which is not an effective strategy for reducing wandering and stray cats, and has many negative consequences. See Position Statement on Cat Containment https://petwelfare.org.au/our-position-statements/

Recommendations

To reduce any potential impacts of domestic cats on native wildlife in Australia, strategies must reduce the number of wandering domestic cats (fewer wandering cats means less potential wildlife predation). The Australian Pet Welfare Foundation recommends implementation of evidence-based and cost-effective strategies including Community Cat Programs and Bed-time feeding, instead of ineffective and costly *Trap, adopt or kill* or mandated cat containment. Community Cat Programs and Bed-time feeding will significantly reduce the number of wandering cats and associated issues including nuisance complaints, cat impoundments and costs, euthanasia and mental health impacts on staff and community residents caring for cats, and potential native wildlife predation particularly of threatened and endangered species.

1. Community Cat Programs

Community Cat Programs are based on high-intensity free desexing and microchipping of cats micro-targeted to locations of high cat complaints and impoundments (which are typically the low socioeconomic areas). These proactive and humane programs are scientifically proven in Australia and internationally to significantly reduce the number of wandering cats and associated issues.

Recent Australian data demonstrate that community cat programs are cost-effective and result in a 30-50% decrease in council pound cat intake, more than a 60% - 80% reduction in cat euthanasia and a 30-50% decrease in cat nuisance complaints over 1 to 3 years, with these parameters reflecting the decrease in the surrounding wandering cat population (APWF 2022, Banyule City Council 2020, Cotterell 2021, Spehar & Wolf 2019, Levy 2014, Swarbrick 2018).

City of Banyule (Melbourne Victoria)

In the third year after implementing a high-intensity free desexing program (a community cat program) targeted to where cat-related calls and impoundments were occurring in Banyule (Cotterell 2021, Banyule 2020):

- impoundments decreased by 61%
- euthanasia decreased by 74%
- cat-related calls decreased by 64% (from 11 to 4 cat calls/1000 residents)

Since 2013, Banyule has spent $60,000 on its free desexing program and saved $397,500 on cat impoundment costs alone.

Community Cat Programs are non-lethal, which Australian research shows the majority of the community support (Rand 2019) and importantly, they do not cause psychological damage to staff or community residents associated with euthanasia of healthy cats and kittens, because they are based on desexing rather than euthanasia.

Community Cat Programs increase adoptions

Community Cat Programs are very effective at getting desexed kittens adopted and getting cat semi-owners to take full official ownership of the stray cat they are feeding. This increases responsible pet ownership rates and prevents a significant number of unwanted kittens being born. In addition, community cat programs facilitate higher return to owner rates (reclaim rates) due to increased numbers of microchipped cats.

Of critical importance, research shows that the majority of cats admitted into shelters and pounds were born in the preceding 6-12 months, emphasising the need to desex cats to reduce shelter and pound admissions (and subsequent euthanasia of healthy cats and kittens). Please refer to the APWF Info sheet: How to implement a Community Cat Program 11 steps. https://petwelfare.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/APWF-Community-Cat-Program-Fact-Sheet.pdf

2. Bed-time feeding

Bed-time feeding of cats is recommended as a highly effective way to assist cat owners at minimal to no additional cost to keep owned pet cats safely inside at night and prevent potential wildlife predation. This strategy involves feeding cats their evening meal inside and closing windows, screens and doors before the evening meal is fed, to prevent the cat from leaving the dwelling after it has eaten that night. Night-time is when native animals of conservation concern that may be vulnerable to cat predation are most active (most are nocturnal mammals). Bed-time feeding should be widely promoted to raise awareness among cat owners to increase cat containment at night. However, containment should not be made mandatory as this has many negative consequences including preventing a resolution to the wandering and stray cat issue. Please refer to the APWF Infographic: Bed-time feeding.

3. Native wildlife habitat preservation

Given that the NSW Government Dashboard (2021) shows that in 2019-20, **402 threatened species were rescued as a result of loss of habitat, compared to only 31 because of cat attacks**, governments should focus on habitat preservation and the prevention of any further land clearing for human use such as urban development or agriculture, to best protect native wildlife. Habitat loss is recognised as the primary threat to native wildlife in Australia (Australia State of the Environment Report 2021). It is therefore imperative that areas of native wildlife habitat have regulatory protection from future land clearing.

4. Targeted protection of threatened and endangered wildlife

Local governments are encouraged to use citizen science backed by wildlife cameras (camera trapping) to identify locations where wildlife of conservation concern are present. Local governments should target these areas with resources such as barrier or exclusion fencing, and/or assist cat owners with constructing cat-proof fencing. Local governments should also educate both dog and cat owners to contain their pets inside the house at night, given that most threatened species, which may potentially be predated by dogs and cats, are nocturnal. For cats, this can be achieved with minimal to low cost using bed-time feeding.

Additionally, the NSW Government Dashboard (2021) shows that in 2019-20, **290 threatened species** were rescued as a result of **collisions with motor vehicles**, therefore governments should also focus efforts on road safety measures to prevent native wildlife road accidents, particularly in areas of threatened and endangered species.

Importantly, **127 threatened species** were rescued as a result of **as a result of dog attacks. Most of these species were nocturnal,** so in urban and peri-urban areas where these species are located, dog owners should be encouraged to **confine their dogs at night.**

In conclusion, there is no scientific evidence that domestic cats living in the vicinity of people impact Australian native wildlife populations. However, to reduce any potential predation of native wildlife by domestic cats, strategies must effectively reduce the number of wandering cats. Mandated cat containment and the traditional *Trap, adopt or kill* approach are not effective strategies for reducing the number of wandering cats and therefore will not protect native wildlife. In contrast, evidence-based Community Cat Programs and Bed-time feeding will significantly reduce wandering cats and potential wildlife predation, and should be combined with habitat preservation, road safety measures and targeted protection of threatened and endangered wildlife.

Appendix

Appendix 1 Cat definitions

The definitions utilised by Australia's leading national welfare agency, the R**oyal Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)** and used by the Commonwealth Government and some state governments is recommended, **with cats categorized based on how and where they live.**
Feral cats live and reproduce in the wild (e.g., forests, woodlands, grasslands, deserts) and survive by hunting or scavenging; none of their needs are fulfilled intentionally by humans.
Domestic cats are **owned, semi-owned** (fed intentionally by humans), and **unowned** (obtain food from humans unintentionally) living in and around cities, towns, and rural properties.
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Appendix F – Long Answer Survey Submissions of Note

Submission A

I would like to address several other points relating to the provided 'justifications' for the cat curfew and it's potential impacts.

A major issue I have with the proposed changes is that you don't represent cats as agents of meaningful lives for themselves. They are spoken in reference to 'owners' and people in all cases and it doesn't sound like you've considered these policies from a cat's perspective. I think an important step would be to ask, 'what might the neighbourhood cat think about these policies?'. Given cats are sentient individuals we should consider their interests and our moral obligations toward them.

First, the suggestion that the cat curfew would limit cats to their carer's property is disingenuous. In reality it is a restriction to living inside 24/7. This is because cats are difficult to contain within property boundaries given their ability to climb and get through small spaces. For many people living with cats keeping them inside 24-hourmay be impossible. The dynamics of the household with different human and animal members might mean keeping doors/windows closed at all times is difficult. Most people will not have the means to provide a safe outdoor space for their cat and it will likely not be an option for mots renters.

Cat wellbeing - you make the claim that "on average, cats who are kept inside live longer, healthier lives (less incidents of injury, disease spreading, car accidents)". This claim presupposes that a long life is a good life. Some cats will prefer to live inside all of the time, but many want and need to go outside to maintain their mental and physical health. Just as humans found during lockdowns, living inside the same house 24-hourcan caused significant mental and physical health issues. The same is true for cats. While indicating some benefits of indoor cats you've chosen to omit the risks for indoor cats which include poor mental health, behavioural problems, and health problems like obesity. These issues also heighten human-cat conflict within the home and are more likely to lead to abandonment into the environment or at GAWS.

Cats impact on the environment and native animals - You claim that "native animals are better protected when cats are contained to their properties" which is unqualified. The fact is that CoGG has many abundant synanthropic animals who have abundant populations. Where research has been done on this issue the results suggest that cats mostly prey upon non-native animals like mice, rats, and rabbits. There is also a lack of evidence that cats significantly impact native populations in and around urban areas. For instance, Grayson et al (2007; https://doi.org/10.7882/FS.2007.024) said that "...blaming cats for bird conservation issues in long-established suburbs may be a scapegoat for high residential densities, inappropriate landscaping at a range of scales or poor conservation of remnant bushland." And Lilith et al (2010; https://www.publish.csiro.au/pc/PC100162) "found no evidence that regulation of pet cats was important in determining the presence or abundance of small mammals in our study sites. Instead, vegetation characteristics were probably the greatest influence."

The council's policy also ignores the benefits that cats can have in human dominated landscapes, that they suppress rodent populations. As Badenes-Perez (2023; 10.1111/csp2.12861) suggests, "Management of cats should take into account the complex interactions that occur between cats, rodents, and the species they prey upon." Which doesn't seem to be the case in CoGG.

Finally, as highlighted in the excellent talk by Prof Jacquie Rand called 'Do veterinary staff still need to kill healthy cats and kittens for population control?' (https://petwelfare.org.au/2022/09/09/do-veterinary-staff-still-need-to-kill-healthy-cats-and-kittens-for-population-control/). Increases in cat control will create a significant burden on those who have to carry out the killing of kittens and cats. Killing healthy animals causes significant trauma and mental health issues to animal workers. I would suggest the council take a different approach if they want to take an ethical, evidence based, and compassionate approach towards cats in CoGG. This includes: - Invest in Community Cat Programs and desexing wild and home cats - Put in restrictions on any cat breeding within Geelong (stop allowing people to breed cats) - Partner with researchers to understand the role cats play in CoGG both socially and environmentally.

Submission B

We've lived in the area for over three decades, and there has not been a time when we have been free of the nuisance of cats or their killing of wildlife in our garden. I think cats are beautiful creatures and make wonderful pets, but they need to be responsibly owned and restricted. Neighbourhood cats continue to stalk the birds and native species here, both during the day and at night. The skinks that once lived in the front garden are gone. We don't hear frog calls anymore and the ringtail possums live a precarious life. Too often over the years I've had to bury the bloodied remnants of a possum after hearing terrified calls during the night. Birds have also been frequent victims. I'm currently worried about a pair of Southern Crimson Rosellas that visit our garden to feed on the last remaining pomegranates after seeing a cat crouching on the top of the pergola near the tree. Even more concerning is the fact that the endangered Gang Gang cockatoos visit, though their numbers have steadily declined over the years. It would be a tragedy if one of these docile and unique birds was taken by a cat from our neighbourhood. (NB I'm a member of iNaturalist and have posted and identified online over 500 mostly native species from our garden).

Submission C

Containment to their owners' properties should be strongly encouraged where cats' physical and mental needs can be met. But mandatory containment should be rejected. It will not protect native wildlife, the commonly cited justification, because it does not measurably reduce the number of free-roaming cats." The full article can be found at this link: https://theconversation.com/australian-shelters-and-pounds-kill-50-000-mostly-healthy-cats-and-kittens-in-a-year-theres-a-way-to-prevent-this-pointless-killing-201947?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20May%2030%202023%20-%202640426590&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20May%2030%202023%20-%202640426590+CID_384a7b99073b6cf2ef9796930a4bc2df&utm_source=campaign_monitor&utm_term=Australian%20shelters%20and%20pounds%20kill%2050000%20mostly%20healthy%20cats%20and%20kittens%20in%20a%20year%20Theres%20a%20way%20to%20prevent%20this%20pointless%20killing

Submission D

I hope the Geelong council makes an educated, informed decision here based on facts and science and doesn't bring in a knee-jerk reaction response destined to fail which is what a 24-hour cat curfew would be because of a very small but loud minority of people that hate cats. Further from the article cited above:

"In contrast, Hume, Hobsons Bay and Merri-Bek councils in Victoria have rejected mandatory containment. Their decisions cited reasons such as it is ineffective and unenforceable because most stray cats don't have an owner to contain them. Even for owned cats, containment is sometimes not achievable due to factors such as housing limitations, cost – containment systems typically cost $700-$2,000 – and concerns about the welfare of confined cats. Mandatory containment creates a barrier to semi-owners adopting the stray cat they are feeding and also potentially criminalises cat ownership for disadvantaged families, particularly those in rental properties.

Submission E

I would like to know the decision-making process for this Review? Are there community participants on the decision panel? On what basis will a change be made? Will it be based on solely on the survey results? Is it a valid review if not all cat owners have had input into the review? Is it a valid change if only a small proportion of people respond to the survey compared to the proportion of cat owners or total resident? Are the vested interests of the "anti-cat" respondents to be given equal weight with cat owners? What are the review and appeal processes for the many cat owners who will be unhappy with a change to 24-hour curfew? I would like to be involved in the decision-making process - please feel free to contact me [redacted]

Support for a 24-hour cat curfew by suburb

The left hand column below shows suburbs where the majority supported a 24-hour curfew. The right hand column shows the suburbs where the majority were opposed to a 24-hour curfew.

Suburbs with majority support for 24-hour curfew	Suburbs with majority opposition to 24-hour curfew
Armstrong Creek*	Connewarre
Avalon	East Geelong
Batesford	Fyansford
Bell Park*	Geelong
Bell Post Hill	Geelong West
Bellarine*	Little River
Belmont**	Newcomb
Breakwater	Rippleside
Breamlea	
Ceres	
Charlemont**	
Clifton Springs	
Corio**	
Curlewis	
Drysdale	
Grovedale**	
Hamlyn Heights**	
Herne Hill**	
Highton	
Indented Head	
Lara**	
Leopold	
Manifold Heights	
Marcus Hill	
Marshall	
Moolap	
Mount Duneed	
Newtown**	
Norlane	
North Geelong	
Ocean Grove	
Point Lonsdale	
Portarlington	
South Geelong	
St Albans Park**	
Staughton Vale	
Thomson**	
Wallington**	
Wandana Heights	
Waurn Ponds	
Whittington**	

**Suburbs with more cat owner respondents, who had majority support for 24-hour cat curfew indicating high levels of support from cat owners.

Suburbs with equal support and opposition included Barwon Heads, Lovely Banks, and North Shore.

COUNCIL ORDER MADE UNDER SECTION 25 OF THE DOMESTIC ANIMALS ACT 2014

At its meeting on 27 February 2024 the City of Greater Geelong Council resolved to make the following Order pursuant to section 25(2) of the ***Domestic Animals Act 1994.***

1. Application of Order

This order applies to all areas of the City of Greater Geelong municipality.

2. Definitions

In this order, Owner has the same meaning as the *Domestic Animals Act 1994.*

3. Cats must be confined

All cats kept within the City of Greater Geelong municipal district must be securely confined to their owner's premises at all times, subject to 3.1.

3.1 Cats may leave their owners property if they are securely confined with an appropriate cat carrier or other reasonable means of restraint.

4. Owners obligations

The owner of a cat kept in the City of Greater Geelong municipal district is responsible for ensuring confinement in accordance with this order.

This Order becomes effective 1 September 2024

DRAFT

2.2. Planning Controls for Trees on Private Land

Source: **Placemaking**
Executive Director: **Tennille Bradley**

Purpose

1. To provide regulatory options to increase tree protection on private land in urban environments within the City of Greater Geelong.

Background

2. Council sought options to protect trees on private land in urban areas via a notice of motion at the 26 July 2022 Council meeting.

3. There are currently no consistent state-wide planning provisions to protect trees in urban environments.

Key Matters

4. The analysis identified five options which considered the risks and opportunities in protecting trees throughout urban environments. The options are:

    4.0. Option 1 – Advocacy. Write to the Minister for Planning supporting statewide regulation to protect trees on private land.

    4.1. Option 2 – Tree planting guidelines. Continue to promote the benefits of trees through council projects, strategy, and policies.

    4.2. Option 3 – Expand existing planning policy to promote tree retention.

    4.3. Option 4 – Develop a significant tree register and introduce a planning overlay.

    4.4. Option 5 – Develop a significant tree register and introduce a local law.

5. Advice from the Department of Transport and Planning is that a local planning scheme approach is unlikely to be supported while the Melbourne Plan action on recognising urban heat island effect and the benefit of urban greening is yet to be implemented.

6. The attached document “Protecting Trees on Private Land Strengthening Geelong’s Regulations – October 2023” discusses the options in more detail as well as the associated costs.

ORIGINAL OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Note the report on options for the protection of trees on private land in urban environments within the City of Greater Geelong.**

2. **Note officers will consider the opportunities to strengthen planning policy identified in option 3 as part of the local planning policy framework review.**

3. **Endorse that Council advocate on this matter to the Minister for Planning and the Municipal Association of Victoria to support a statewide approach for protecting trees in urban environments and recognising the importance of trees to increase amenity, for physical and mental health, reduction of urban heat island effect and climate change impacts.**

**** The following revised officer recommendation was issued prior to commencement of the meeting.***

RESOLUTION - Item 2.2

Cr Mason moved, Cr Cadwell seconded –

That Council:

1. **Note the report on options for the protection of trees on private land in urban environments within the City of Greater Geelong.**

2. **Will engage directly with community organisations and the broader community to explore options available to strengthen tree protection on private land.**

3. **Endorse that Council advocate on this matter to the Minister for Planning and the Municipal Association of Victoria to support a statewide approach for protecting trees in urban environments and recognising the importance of trees to increase amenity, for physical and mental health, reduction of urban heat island effect and climate change impacts.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

7. Option 1 and some elements of option 3 can be absorbed into existing work and can proceed immediately. Option 2 requires a budget of approximately $50,000.

8. Options 4 and 5 would require $250,000 - $300,000 to implement and ongoing annual costs will be determined once the appropriate planning tools are finalised. Both options 4 and 5 require a significant amount of upfront work, including surveying, assessing, and mapping trees in all urban areas, community consultation, legal fees, and implementation.

Community Engagement

9. Consultations have been taken place both internally within Council departments and externally with the following councils: City of Boroondara, City of Casey, City of Greater Bendigo, City of Melbourne, City of Monash, and City of Wyndham. Consultations have been conducted with Department of Transport and Planning, Country Fire Authority, Barwon Water, and independent arborists.

10. The extent of community support for further planning protection for existing trees in urban environments has not been explored as part of this work. There may be community concern against the additional red tape and cost required to trim or remove trees on their property.

11. Extensive community engagement would be required to implement options 4 or 5.

Social Equity and Sustainability

12. The identified options provide tools to maintain tree canopy cover by identifying trees that can be protected. They also provide the ability for the local community to nominate trees as significant and to be protected.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

13. Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future 2017 provides a 30-year vision for the City: "*By 2047, Greater Geelong will be internationally recognised as a clever and creating city-region that is forward looking, enterprising and adaptive, and cares for its people and the environment.*"

14. The vision supports "*sustainable development that responds to climate change*" and seeks to achieve 25 per cent urban tree canopy.

15. Greater Geelong Environment Strategy 2020-30 is a major strategy in the City's planning hierarchy that will be implemented in conjunction with other adopted strategies including:

16. Urban Forest Strategy 2015 – 2025 focuses on enhancing the public and private tree population in all of the suburbs and townships across Greater Geelong with the vision of a cool green city for the future. The four key objectives of this strategy are to:

    16.1. Green the city by increasing tree planting and associated vegetation in appropriate and prioritised locations.

    16.2. Cool the city by increasing tree canopy cover.

    16.3. Engage the City's community and build regional partnerships.

    16.4. Demonstrate best practice urban tree management.

17. Climate Change Response Plan 2021-2030 details how the City supports coordinated and collective action to achieve net zero community emissions by 2035 and increase the resilience of the region to the impacts of climate change. Actions include increasing tree canopy cover in urban Greater Geelong to 25 per cent by 2045, with an interim target of 20 per cent by 2030, to enhance resilience to the urban heat island effect. This aligns with Environment Strategy 2020-30's goal of creating greener community spaces.

18. There are several clauses in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme to address sustainable design, shading and urban heat principles. These include:

    18.1. Clause 15.01-2L Environmentally sustainable development.

    18.2. Clause 11.03-6L-01 Bellarine Peninsula.

19. The Greater Geelong Planning Scheme has requirements for planning permit applications to include landscape plans and meet a minimum level of permeability, additional private open space and minimum garden area requirements in specific areas. There is a requirement for canopy trees to be planted for each dwelling constructed in targeted areas.

20. There is limited use of targeted overlays for tree protection in localised areas across the municipality.

21. There is a clear tension between reducing regulation in the housing sector to stimulate development and increased tree canopy to address increasing urban cooling. The State Government is undertaking consultation of a strategic plan to guide Victoria's longer-term development which presents an opportunity to provide further policy about urban tree canopy coverage and tools to implement recommendations.

22. Officers will consider the opportunities to strengthen planning policy identified in option 3. This will be undertaken as part of the local planning policy framework review to consider the impact of tree canopy on neighbourhood character as part of rezoning and development applications.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

23. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
    Sustainable growth and environment.

24. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future" community aspiration:
    Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.

Conflict of Interest

25. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

26. Developing a Significant Tree Register and introducing a planning overlay or local law will entail upfront and ongoing costs and take significant time to prepare. Apart from the City of Melbourne, experience by other councils indicates that between 70-90 per cent of trees are approved for removal.

27. Department of Transport and Planning have advised they would be unlikely to support a local planning scheme approach. Preparation of a significant tree register without a pathway for regulatory implementation will not result in trees being protected.

Environmental Sustainability

28. Tree canopy is essential for environmental sustainability. Trees improve air quality by filtering dust and pollution, sequestering carbon and releasing oxygen. In urban areas, they reduce stormwater runoff and urban heat island effect, enhancing climate resilience.

29. Trees also support biodiversity by serving as habitats and reduce energy consumption by providing natural shade and protecting buildings and infrastructure from weather exposure. In the context of climate change, preserving and expanding urban tree populations is important for a sustainable future.

Attachments

1. Protecting Trees on Private Land Final Report, 3 October 2023 [**2.2.1** - 41 pages]

Protecting Trees on Private Land
Strengthening Geelong's Regulations
October 2023

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

BURSILL BC CONSULTING

Document Review

Version	Date	Details	Author
1	12/04/2023	Draft Report	Greg Bursill
2	19/06/2023	Revised Report	Greg Bursill
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5	3/10/2023	Final Report	Greg Bursill

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- Glen Waters, Arborist.
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1 Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to identify options to increase tree protection on private land in urban environments within the City of Greater Geelong (the City). The following options have been identified:

- **Option 1 – Advocacy.** Write to the Minister for Planning and request the State Government to introduce State-wide regulation to protect trees on private land.
- **Option 2 - Education / Tree Planting Guidelines.** Continue to promote the benefits of trees through council projects, strategy, and policies.
- **Option 3 - Amend existing controls to promote tree retention and replacement as part of new development.** Add s stronger focus on tree protection and replacement of lost trees.
- **Option 4 - Develop a Significant Tree Register (STR) and introduce a planning overlay**. Identify trees and protect them with planning overlay.
- **Option 5 - Develop a Significant Tree Register (STR) and introduce a local law.** Identify trees and protect them with local law.

A blanket up front Local Law was considered but was not proposed as an option for investigation. Such Local Laws do not show up on vendor statements and must be regularly communicated to residents, they require a high level of resources to manage (from residents and Council) and it is likely that more than 90% of trees would be permitted to be removed. They present as red tape and are not considered to be a good use of community resources.

When considering the most appropriate direction and options to pursue, regard can be had to the following matters:

- **Red Tape**. The additional costs and red tape burden that would be created for residents including application costs, cost of arborist advice and time delays.
- **Resources**. Up front cost of studies and planning panel hearings, as well as ongoing operational costs such as for staff, management time, GIS and software.
- **Arborist Advice**. The cost and availability of arborist advice and the preparation of reports, independent reviews, and the cost to carry out works.
- **Enforcement**. Resourcing of enforcement, dispute resolution, mediation, independent advice, and legal costs.
- **Impact on 50% Infill Target**. Impact of tree retention on urban consolidation policies, including Council's 50% infill target.
- **Tree Protection Outcomes**. Protection of trees on private land consumes considerable resources, however, based on the experience of other Councils, it is likely that more than 90% of trees will be allowed to be removed.
- **Tree Equity**. Achieving equity across the municipality, including boosting tree canopy in communities with low tree cover.
- **Value for Money.** An overarching consideration that can have regard to the above criteria.

2 Introduction

In response to increasing development and housing diversity needs in Greater Geelong, Council is continuing to receive community feedback about concerns over the removal of trees on private land.

Council considered a Notice of Motion on 26 July 2022 and resolved:

> *"That Council requests the Chief Executive Officer to allocate the resources to provide a report to Council by 30 June 2023 that:*
> - *Summarises existing protections for trees on private land in Greater Geelong;*
> - *Investigates policies and planning controls in place in other municipalities that provide greater protection for trees on private land;*
> - *Outlines options for enhancing protection of trees on private land in urban environments within Greater Geelong, including potential pros and cons; and*
> - *Identifies the process/s for introduction of any such initiatives, should Council wish to pursue them, including timelines, costs and community consultation."*

This report responds to the Notice of Motion and provides options for increased tree protection.

The process to prepare the report broadly included the following:

- Prepare a summary of existing protection for trees on private land in Greater Geelong, including the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, Local Laws and adopted State Government and Council policies and strategies.
- Identify policies and planning controls in place in other municipalities that provide strong protection for trees on private land.
- Hold discussions with staff at other municipalities and discuss tree protection controls, resources required and experiences to inform the project report.
- Undertake consultation with the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) and Barwon Water, as well as independent expert arborists.
- Consider relevant Planning Panels Victoria findings and Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) cases around tree protection.
- Outline options for enhancing the protection of trees on private land in urban environments within Greater Geelong, including their likely pros and cons.
- Identify the process for each option for introduction of any initiatives, including timelines, costs, and appropriate community consultation.
- Document the outcome of consultation with the State agencies and comparable Councils.
- Consider potential increase in Council operational resources that would be required to manage the implementation of any new arrangements for tree protection.
- To provide recommendations on which options the City should consider.

This report provides a concise summary of the above work to assist Officers to respond to the above Notice of Motion.

3 Geelong's existing vegetation

Geelong's existing tree canopy on private land is at a relatively low level compared to other Victorian municipalities. Council's Urban Forest Strategy, based on 2015 data, identifies the following areas and their respective tree canopy coverage:

Canopy cover between 20% and 25%:

- Barwon Heads.
- Newcomb.
- Newtown.
- Ocean Grove.

Canopy cover between 15% and 20%:

- Manifold Heights.
- Breamlea.
- Herne Hill.
- Belmont.
- Hamlyn Heights.
- Lara.

Canopy cover between 10% and 15%:

- Corio.
- Highton.
- Bell Park.
- St Albans Park.
- Bell Post Hill.
- Point Lonsdale.
- Whittington.
- Portarlington.
- Norlane.
- Geelong West.
- St Leonords.
- East Geelong.
- Leopold.
- Drysdale / Clifton Springs.

Less than 10%:

- Wandana Heights.
- North Shore.
- Indented Heads.
- Lovely Banks.
- Geelong North.
- Moolap.
- Geelong South.
- Waurn Ponds.
- Breakwater.
- Rippleside / Drumcondra.
- Geelong.
- Marshall.

4 Significant Trees

Most Council's either do not protect trees on private land or only focus on protecting significant trees. This targeted approach is often considered to be an efficient use of community resources. The definition of what is a significant tree varies widely between individual Councils. Leading practise for protection of significant trees are demonstrated by the City of Melbourne, and the City of Casey follows a similar approach. The key features of leading practise are:

- Providing a clear definition of what constitutes a significant tree.
- Adopting the National Trust significant tree selection criteria to register significant trees.
- Providing the ability for the local community to nominate trees as significant.

Criteria Definition

Creating a significant tree register, does not protect the nominated trees. Each tree then needs to be provided regulatory protection, usually through the planning scheme. A clear definition of a tree 'significant' and worthy of protection through the planning process is required. The City of Melbourne has built on the National Trust assessment criteria, and includes:

- **Aboriginal association or cultural value**. Including canoe trees, scar trees or birthing trees.
- **Aesthetic value**. Any tree of outstanding aesthetic significance.
- **Curious growth form**. Any tree that exhibits a curious growth form or physical feature.
- **Environmental/microclimate services**. Any tree that provides a significant modification to the local micro-climate.
- **Historical value**. Any tree commemorating a particular occasion, including plantings by notable people, or having associations with an important event in our history.
- **Horticultural value**. Any tree that is of outstanding horticultural or genetic value and could be an important source of propagating stock, including specimens that are particularly resistant to disease or exposure.
- **Location or context**. Any tree that occurs in a unique location or context so as to provide a major contribution to the landscape and/or local place character.
- **Outstanding example of species**. Any tree that is an outstanding example of its species.
- **Outstanding habitat value**. Any tree that has outstanding value as habitat for indigenous wildlife.
- **Outstanding size**. Any tree outstanding in size of some capacity.
- **Particularly old**. Any tree that is particularly old or venerable.
- **Rare or localised**. Any tree species or variety that is rare or of very localised in distribution, enhancing the diversification of the local urban forest.
- **Social, cultural or spiritual significance**. Any tree that is important to a community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

Methods to Nominate Trees

The National Trust adopts a rigorous process to select what it considers to be a significant tree providing a starting point for the City which can build on this work. Some Councils provide an opportunity for the community to nominate trees for assessment against the significant tree criteria and inclusion on the register.

5 Existing Tree Protection and Promotion

There are a range of strategies or policies that are relevant when considering strengthening tree protection for the City. These include:

- International conventions or tree protection and expansion agendas.
- Commonwealth legislation and policy.
- State legislation and policy.
- City of Greater Geelong policy.

5.1 International Agendas

The City is seeking to be recognised as a Tree City of the World (see Tree Cities of the World). To receive recognition, the City must meet the following core standards:

1. Establish Responsibility. The city must have a written statement delegating responsibility for the care of trees within the municipal boundary to a staff member, department, or citizens.
2. Set the Rules. The city has in place a law or an official policy that governs forests and trees.
3. Know What You Have. The city has an updated inventory or assessment of the local tree resource so that an effective long-term plan for planting, care, and removal can be established.
4. Allocate the Resources. The city has a dedicated annual budget for a tree management plan.
5. Celebrate Achievements. The city holds an annual celebration of trees to raise awareness among residents and to acknowledge citizens and staff members who assist trees.

This project will assist the City to meet part of these standards for private land which is most of the land in the City. Also, broadly relevant to this project are the following international conventions:

- Kyoto Protocol and the Paris UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
- Various bilateral migratory bird agreements.

5.2 Commonwealth Legislation

Some Commonwealth legislation and policies which are relevant when considering strengthening tree protection for the City include:

- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. This Act establishes processes for listing and protecting threatened species and requires assessment and approval of any proposed action that is likely to have a significant impact on a matter of national environmental significance.
- National Strategy for the Conservation of Australia's Biological Diversity. This provides a framework for Commonwealth and State protection of biodiversity.

Commonwealth legislation is more relevant for Geelong's coastal zones, proposed greenfield growth areas where native grasses are present and rural and farming areas. Given, the existing urban areas are largely developed, the legislation is less relevant for those areas.

5.3 State Legislation and Policy

There are a range of State legislation and policies that are relevant when considering strengthening tree protection for the City. These include:

- Wadawurrung People, Caring for Country, 2020.
- Victoria's Climate Change Framework and Adaptation Plan.
- National Trust, Register of Significant Trees, 2014.
- Victorian Planning Provisions.

The relevance of these policies to tree protection on private land is summarised below.

5.1.1 Wadawurrung People, Caring for Country, 2020

The Wadawurrung Healthy Country Plan has the vision of: *"All people working together to make Wadawurrung Country and Culture strong."* The vision and principles are more detailed and broad ranging and chart a strong new future for the region.

The actions below are extracted from the Plan and relate most specifically to biodiversity and tree protection:

- *"WTOAC2: By 2030, the current extent of volcanic grass lands and woodlands is increased by 5%.*
- *WTOAC3: By 2030, no more of our native animals have become threatened.*
- *WTOAC4: By 2035, at least one threatened species is no longer threatened."*

Based on these actions, ensuring protection of remnant large old native trees in urban Geelong would support these strategies.

5.1.2 Victoria's Climate Change Framework and Adaptation Plan

Victoria's Climate Change Strategy is a roadmap to net-zero emissions and a climate resilient Victoria by 2050. The adaption plan has the following relevant activities:

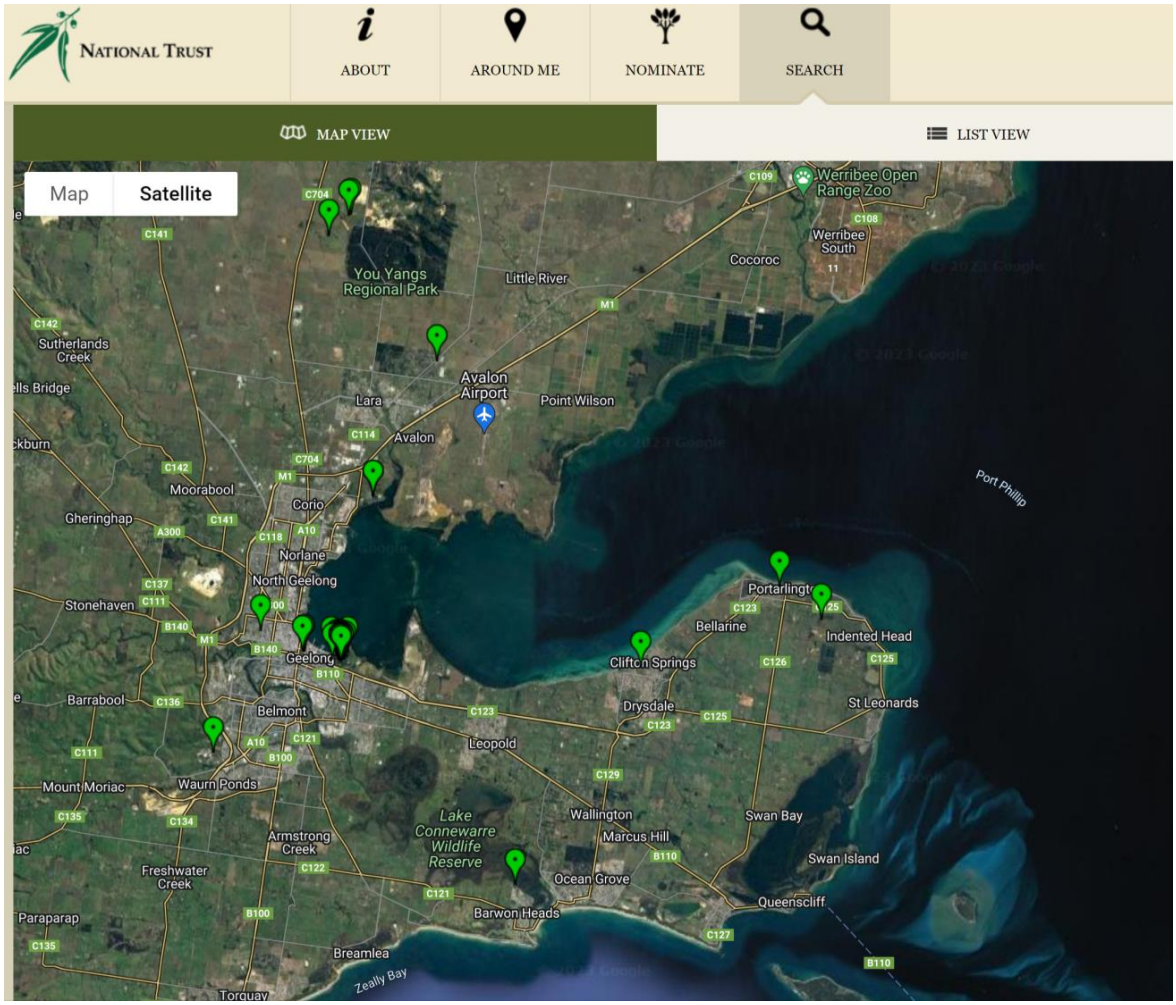
- Updating planning and building systems to respond to climate change.
- Mapping heat vulnerability in urban areas and preparing advice for cooling homes and streets.
- Developing policy response to assist urban cooling, particularly in more vulnerable areas.

Protecting existing trees is an important part of creating climate resilience for urban areas.

5.1.3 National Trust, Register of Significant Trees, 2014

The National Trust has a significant tree register. A small number of registered trees are in Geelong, as shown on the plan below. It will be important to ensure they are provided planning scheme protection, as they are presently identified but not protected.

Figure 1: National Trust Significant Tree Register



Victorian Planning Provisions

The Victorian Planning Provisions (VPPs) established under the Planning and Environment Act, are designed to standardise and streamline planning across Victoria. The VPPs provide a range of statutory tools designed to trigger the need for a planning permit for tree removal or lopping. It is important to understand that the VPP also exempt certain activities from requiring a permit for tree removal related to protection of life, assets and property.

The VPP tools include zones, development control related standards and planning overlays. Planning scheme enforcement is also an important element of these regulations.

DTP provide guidance on how tree protection can be addressed through planning controls here: https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0035/638927/PPN07-Vegetation-Protection-in-Urban-Areas.pdf

Figure 2 summarises the advantage and disadvantages of each of the main planning scheme mechanisms.

Zones and Related Development Standards

The VPP include standard residential and other urban zones that are applied by Councils across relevant areas of their municipality. The residential zone standards can be varied within each municipality by applying varied schedules to specific areas.

The VPP have clauses that can impact on opportunities for retaining or planting vegetation on private land in new developments. The relevant clauses or schedules discussed in this section include:

- Residential zone garden area requirements.
- Clause 54 related to a single dwelling on a lot.
- Clause 55 related to multi dwelling development.
- Clause 55.07 and 58 related to apartment development.

Planning Overlays

There are also several overlay controls that can be applied in certain circumstances, including:

- Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO).
- Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO).
- Design and Development Overlay (DDO).

Planning Scheme Enforcement

Councils administer and enforce their Planning Scheme as the Responsible Authority for all land within its municipality in accordance with the provisions of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. As with any other law or regulation, the Planning Scheme is only effective if the regulatory requirements are administered and enforced.

Enforcement occurs when there is a clear breach of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, the Planning Scheme, permit condition or section 173 agreement and the breach warrants enforcement, especially if it causes detriment to the community.

The main emphasis of enforcement is to obtain compliance rather than prosecution of offenders. The City has an existing enforcement team that manage enforcement of the planning scheme.

Figure 2: Advantages and Disadvantages of VPP Tree Protection Mechanisms

Options	Advantage	Disadvantage
Clause 54 and 55 Standards	• Landscape standards can be strengthened based on Council's Urban Forest Strategy. These standards can require space for the planting of canopy trees in new developments. • Tree protection standards can also be strengthened. • The new standards can be drafted so they are mandatory which means they cannot be varied by Council or VCAT.	• These standards are normally only triggered where a single dwelling or multi-unit development application is proposed for approval. • A strategic planning investigation and community engagement should occur to provide the strategic basis for a change to the planning scheme. • Controls should be moderated or balanced in areas proposed for major redevelopment to ensure development outcomes are consistent with Council prepared structure plans or development strategies.
Vegetation Protection Overlay	• Can cover whole suburbs or specific neighbourhoods to protect trees where strategic justification exists. • Can target certain tree heights, sizes or types (remnant, native, exotic or all). • Exemptions can remove the need to obtain approval where circumstances warrant. • The City can fine tune exemptions over time to improve regulation and outcomes. • Transparent to the landowners as the VPO forms part of the vendors statement when property is sold. • Planning fees and enforcement processes are clear and set by legislation and regulations.	• Usually only applied to more heavily treed urban areas. • Requires clear policy, a strategic vegetation assessment and community engagement to provide the strategic basis for the controls. • Only regulates actual tree removal and lopping, does not manage or regulate works or development around the tree.

Options	Advantage	Disadvantage
Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO)	• An ESO can be used to protect trees and to ensure that nearby subdivision or development activities do not impact the health of the tree. • Transparent to the landowners as the ESO forms part of the vendors statement when property is sold. • Planning fees and enforcement processes are clear and set by legislation and regulations. • Planning Panels Victoria have stated in many panel reports that this is the preferred method to protect significant trees.	• Requires clear policy, a strategic vegetation assessment and community engagement to provide the strategic basis for the controls.
Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO)	• In relation to tree protection, the schedule can be designed to be like the ESO described above to protect trees and the areas immediately around the tree from inappropriate development. • Transparent to the landowners as the SLO forms part of the vendors statement when property is sold. • Planning fees and enforcement processes are clear and set by legislation and regulations.	• Requires research regarding landscape quality and community engagement to provide strategic justification. • Only relevant where the landscape quality is high and existing trees provide the basis of that character. • Would only be relevant in limited urban areas within Greater Geelong with high landscape quality.

5.2 Tree Disputes in Victoria

Dispute Settlement Victoria helps resolve disputes between neighbours. A range of detailed information about tree disputes can be found here: Trees in Victoria | Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria

The main disputes mentioned include things like:

- Tree roots can cause damage to foundations, drainage, water and sewer pipelines.
- Trees can facilitate the spread of weeds and creeping plants.
- Trees can overhang and shadow secluded private open space of neighbours.
- Tree leaf litter can cause damage or create hazards (e.g., slippery pathways).
- Unsafe trees and branches can create hazards (e.g., poisonous fruit or leaves).
- Trees can impede a view and/or block sunlight, and/or affect solar panels.

- Trees have potential risk of damage due to a branch or the entire tree falling.
- Tree branches can cause nuisance by hanging over boundary lines.
- Tree flowers or fruits can cause allergies for some people.

The Dispute Settlement Victoria Web Site explains that:

> *"A private nuisance can only be decided at court. A private nuisance is when your use and enjoyment of your land is affected by another person's act or omission. You need to apply to court for a private nuisance claim, so get legal advice first. If you do proceed, you need to show the nuisance is significant and unreasonable.*
>
> *When deciding on your matter the court will consider:*
> - *your neighbourhood's general environment*
> - *where the interference took, or is taking place*
> - *what's causing it*
> - *how long it's been happening and if it's ongoing*
> - *the impact on you*
> - *if the interference was there when you moved in*
> - *how useful or necessary the activity causing the interference is*
> - *what reasonable people would think of the interference.*
>
> *Keep in mind that trees drop leaves, bark, sticks, flowers, fruit and sap as part of their normal life cycle. This isn't usually considered a private nuisance. The court will use common sense to inform their decision.*
>
> *It's important to recognise that living in a neighbourhood means that at times there will be competing interests or activities from people nearby. The court takes a pragmatic look at these and recognises that some noise, annoyance, inconvenience and discomfort are likely to occur wherever people live."*

This information about disputes is a reminder that the City will need to ensure there is a clear dispute process for any decisions it makes about tree removal to be reviewed / appealed. The planning system has a clear process through VCAT to resolve disputes. However, Local Law permits would benefit from a more developed process. One solution would be for Council to provide a cost-effective pathway for an experienced independent arborist to review Council decisions and advise on whether the decision is considered reasonable in the circumstances.

There are Australian Standards for tree pruning and for retaining trees on development sites and these are recommended to be considered as policy is developed.

5.3 City of Greater Geelong policy.

There are a range of Council policies that are particularly relevant when considering strengthening tree protection for the City including:

- Greater Geelong, A Clever and Creative Future, 2017.
- Urban Forest Strategy, 2015.
- Biodiversity Strategy, 2003.
- Environment Strategy, 2020.
- Sustainability Framework 2020.
- Public Tree Management Policy.

The relevance of these policies to tree protection on private land is summarised in this section. The key policies are also shown in the diagram below sourced the City's Sustainability Action Plan.

Figure 3: Council Environmental Planning Framework

As Figure 3 shows, this long-term strategy is helping to realise the community's 30-year vision, as described in *Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future*. The vision is as follows:

"By 2047, Greater Geelong will be internationally recognised as a clever and creative city-region that is forward looking, enterprising and adaptive, and cares for its people and environment."

In particular, the strategy will help deliver on these community aspirations:

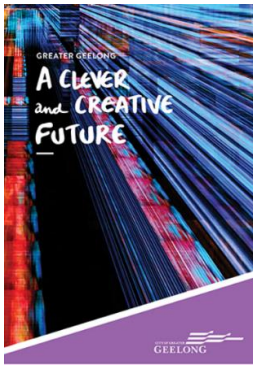
- Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.
- Development and implementation of sustainable solutions.

The *City of Greater Geelong Environment Strategy 2020–30* is a major strategy in our planning hierarchy that will be implemented in conjunction with other adopted strategies including:

- *Sustainability Framework* – a framework and policy that embeds sustainability within the City, so it is considered in everything we do
- *Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2020–30*
- *Stormwater Services Strategy 2020–30*
- *Settlement Strategy October 2018* and the
- *Urban Forest Strategy 2015-25*

As Figure 3 shows, this strategy will be supported by an action plan that will be updated every two years.

Greater Geelong, A Clever and Creative Future, 2017



Provides a 30-year vision for the City:
"By 2047, Greater Geelong will be internationally recognised as a clever and creating city-region that is forward looking, enterprising and adaptive, and cares for its people and the environment."

The vision supports *"sustainable development that responds to climate change"* and seeks to achieve 25% urban tree canopy.

Environment Strategy, 2020

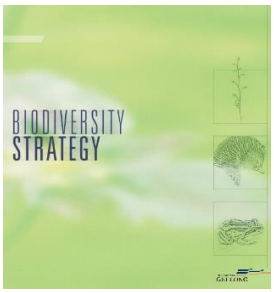
The relevant goals include:

- Become a zero-emission, climate-ready city and region.
- Create greener community spaces.
- Protect, enhance, and restore our region's biodiversity.

Targets include:

- Increase tree canopy cover in urban Greater Geelong to 25% by 2045, with an interim target of 20% by 2030.
- Develop an urban ecology plan by 2025.
- Plant one million trees in Greater Geelong by 2030.
- Identify priority urban greening sites by 2023.

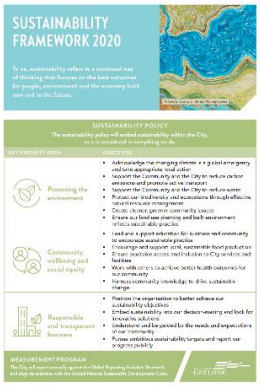
Biodiversity Strategy, 2003



The strategy objectives include to:

- Protect conservation areas and ecological assets.
- Recognise the role that general open space and tree protection may play in protection of biodiversity.
- Recognise the need for planning controls, incentives, zoning and policies to safeguard biodiversity.
- Not that this strategy is currently being updated by the City.

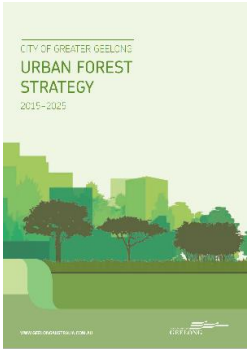
Sustainability Framework, 2020



The sustainability framework includes the following objectives:

- Acknowledge that climate change is a global emergency and take appropriate local action.
- Protect our biodiversity and ecosystems through effective natural resource management.
- Ensure our land use planning and built environment reflects sustainable practice.

Urban Forest Strategy, 2015



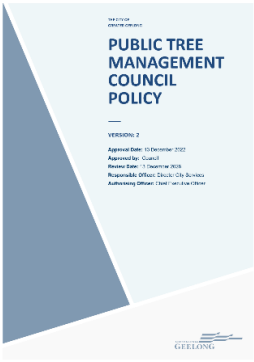
The vision is *"Geelong will be a cool green city for the future"*.
"The City of Greater Geelong values the immense benefits of the City's urban tree population. Our trees provide shade and cool the city. They improve the look, feel and liveability of Geelong. They also have a strong positive influence on the health of our community. Geelong's trees have extraordinary valuable assets that are worth investing in for the future."

To achieve this vision, Council is aiming for 25% canopy cover for urban Geelong within 30 years.
The four key objectives are:

1. To green the City. Increase tree planting and associated vegetation in appropriate and prioritised locations.
2. To cool the City. Increase tree canopy cover, increase use of smart water sensitive urban design and an increase in landscape permeability.
3. To engage the City's community and build regional partnerships.
4. To demonstrate best practice urban tree management, including:

- Develop a complete Urban Tree Management Manual.
- Develop and maintain a Significant Tree Register.
- Ensure trees removed must be replaced.

Public Tree Management Policy



This policy ensures the management of trees within City of Greater Geelong improves the urban forest, enhances canopy cover and builds connections with native vegetation. The policy establishes when the City will plant, prune or remove a tree and what measures must be undertaken to protect and enhance the tree population.
The policy applies to all City officers in relation to all trees within the City of Greater Geelong located on Council owned and managed land.

6 Existing protection for trees on private land in Geelong

This section summarises the current regulatory arrangements for tree protection which include:

- Greater Geelong Planning Scheme.
  - State and local policy in the planning scheme.
  - Residential zones and zone schedules:
  - Overlays:
    - Vegetation Protection Overlay.
    - Significant Landscape Overlay.
    - Environmental Significance Overlay.
    - Heritage Overlay.
    - Design and Development Overlay.
- Greater Geelong Local Laws.
- Legislation, policies and strategies.
- Planning Panels Victoria and VCAT.

6.1 Greater Geelong Planning Scheme

6.1.1 State policy in the planning scheme

Clause 12 of the planning scheme states that planning should protect, restore and enhance sites and features of nature conservation, biodiversity, geological or landscape value. Planning should help to protect the health of ecological systems and the biodiversity they support and conserve areas with identified environmental and landscape values.

Specific sub-clauses with relevance to the Site and proposal include:

- Clause 12.01- 1 S - Protection of biodiversity - aims to assist the protection and conservation of Victoria's biodiversity.
- Clause 12.01 -2S - Native vegetation management - seeks to ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.
- Clause 12.05- 1 S - Environmentally sensitive areas - seeks to protect and conserve environmentally sensitive areas.
- Clause 12.05-2S - Landscapes - seeks to protect and enhance significant landscapes and open spaces that contribute to character, identity and sustainable environments.

State policy for native vegetation is set out in Clause 12.01-2S and is partly extracted below:

> "Ensure decisions that involve, or will lead to, the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation, apply the three-step approach in accordance with the *Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017):
>
> - *Avoid the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.*
> - *Minimise impacts from the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation that cannot be avoided.*
> - *Provide an offset to compensate for the biodiversity impact from the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.*

Neighbourhood Character

Clause 15 of the planning policy framework states that planning should ensure all land use and development appropriately responds to its surrounding landscape and character, valued built form and cultural context. State policy allows Councils to not only protect an existing neighborhood character, but to define a preferred future character (for example that includes additional tree canopy) and manage development to achieve that outcome.

Clause 15.01 contains policies relating to urban design, building design, subdivision design, healthy neighbourhoods and neighbourhood character. Objectives of which are to:

- Create urban environments that are safe, healthy, functional and enjoyable and that contribute to a sense of place and cultural identity.
- Achieve building design outcomes that contribute positively to the local context and enhance the public realm.
- Ensure the design of subdivisions achieves attractive, safe, accessible, diverse and sustainable neighbourhoods.
- Achieve neighbourhoods that foster healthy and active living and community wellbeing.
- Recognise, support and protect neighbourhood character, cultural identity, and sense of place.

Melbourne's Future Planning Framework

Melbourne's Future Planning Framework does not apply to Geelong but many of its directions and strategies are relevant. The framework elevates State policy to increase tree canopy significantly, including:

- Strategy 103. Protect more trees on private land outside of locations identified for higher levels of housing and mixed-use change.
- Strategy 104. Support alternative siting of buildings and more compact building forms to retain mature canopy vegetation.
- Strategy 107. Encourage tree planting as part of the redevelopment of key sites and activity centres and along key pedestrian and active transport links.

Increasing tree canopy is a key strategy to boost climate change resilience and mitigate impact of people's health.

The new Minister for Planning has recently announced that Plan Melbourne will be refreshed later in 2023, and that the policy will be extended to cover all of Victoria. It is reasonable to expect that this will strengthen tree canopy retention and expansion policy across the State.

6.1.2 Local policy in the planning scheme

There are several clauses currently in place in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme to address sustainable design, shading and urban heat principles. There are also specific requirements in place for planning permit applications to include landscape plans and meet a minimum level of permeability and garden area in appropriate zones. Further, in some General Residential and Neighbourhood Residential Zone areas, there is a requirement for canopy trees to be planted for each dwelling constructed.

There are several clauses currently in place in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme to address sustainable design, shading and urban heat principles. These include:

- Clause 15.01-2L Environmentally sustainable development.
- Clause 11.03-6L-01 Bellarine Peninsula.

Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD)

The relevant parts of the ESD policy in the scheme is extracted and highlighted below with underline:

> *"**Objective***
> *To achieve best practice in environmentally sustainable development from the design stage through to construction and operation.*
>
> ***Urban ecology strategies***
> *Protect and enhance biodiversity by incorporating natural habitats and planting indigenous vegetation.*
> *Reduce urban heat island effects through building design, landscape design, water sensitive urban design and the retention and provision of canopy trees.*
> *Encourage the provision of space for productive gardens, particularly in larger residential developments."*

The ESD policy applies to certain developments as set out in the scheme. There is an opportunity to design the scheme to apply similar policies, for example through adjustments to the residential zone schedules, to include stronger requirements for tree protection and metrics requiring space for the planting of new canopy trees.

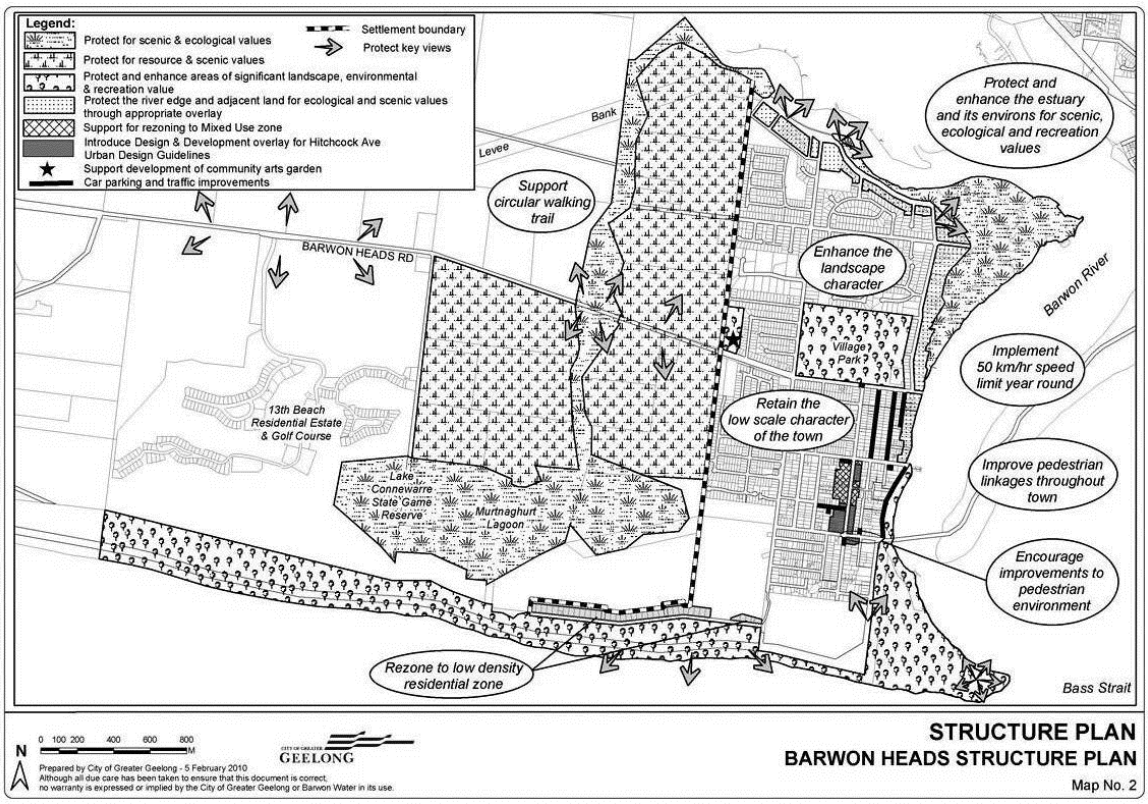
Barwon Heads Strategies

Barwon Heads includes specific policy references to tree protection. The relevant policy elements are extracted and highlighted below with underline.

> *"Protect the unique character of Barwon Heads as a coastal village located within a sensitive environment and significant landscape setting.*
>
> *Protect the very low density residential character of the Warrenbeen Court area to ensure that development has minimal impact on the indigenous vegetation and landscape character of the area.*
>
> *Protect existing street trees and where possible informal landscaping in streets."*

The Structure Plan included in the scheme and extracted below reinforces the need for protecting the landscape character of parts of the town.

Figure 4: Extract from Greater Geelong Planning Scheme



6.1.3 Zones and zone schedules

Residential Zones

The City has certain specific requirements for planning permit applications to include landscape plans and meet a minimum level of permeability and garden area in specific areas. There is also a requirement for canopy trees to be planted for each dwelling constructed.

General Residential Zone Schedules

The City of Greater Geelong Planning Scheme includes the following schedules to the General Residential Zone:

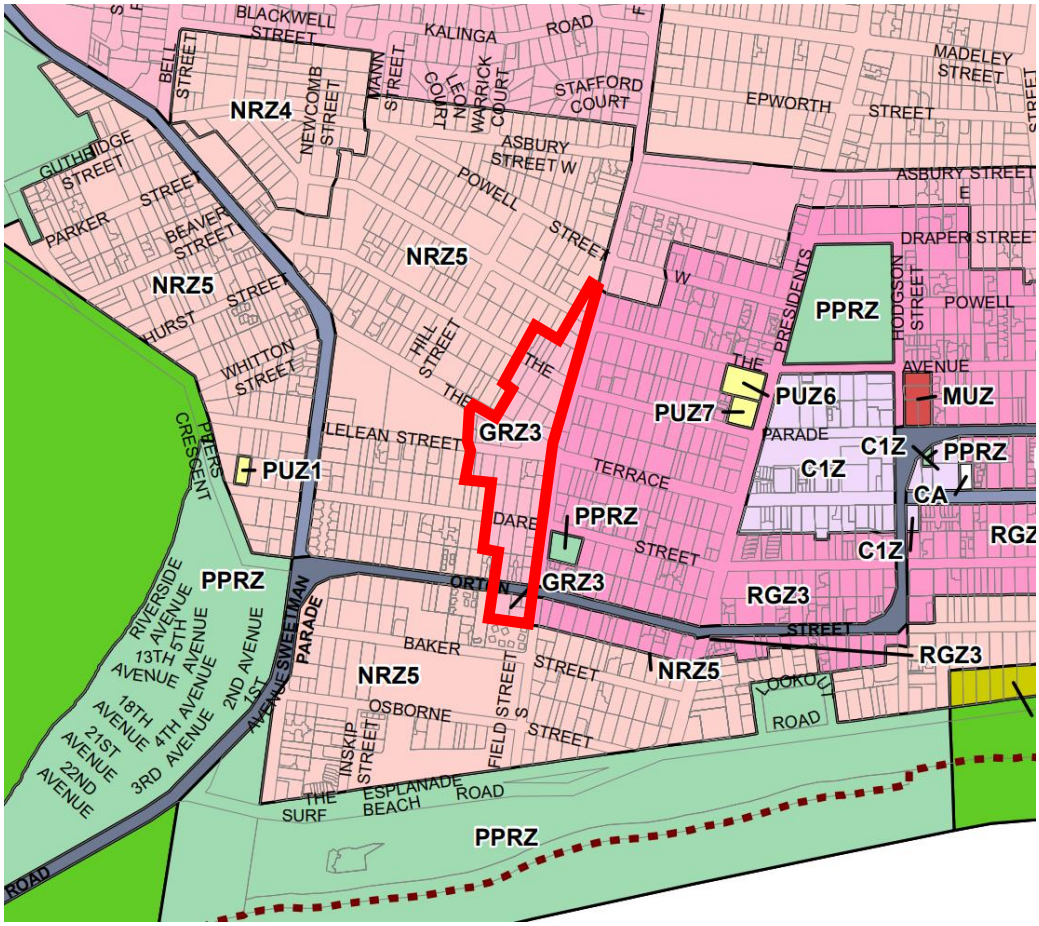
- General Residential Zone Schedule 1. General Residential Areas which have no requirement.
- General Residential Zone Schedule 2. Incremental Change Areas which include a requirement for additional private open space which can also provide space for new trees.
- General Residential Zone Schedule 3. Ocean Grove General Residential Zone which includes a range of requirements that protect and enhance urban tree canopy.
- General Residential Zone Schedule 4. Urban Increased Housing Diversity Areas which include a requirement for a maximum site coverage and additional private open space areas.

An outline of the General Residential Zone Schedule 3 is provided below. The changes around site coverage and private open space in Schedule 2 and 4 have not been designed for tree canopy.

General Residential Zone Schedule 3 Ocean Grove Field Street South Area

This schedule applies to the area shown outlined in **red** below.

Figure 5: Area of GRZ Schedule 3 in Ocean Grove



The neighbourhood character objectives for Schedule 3 to the General Residential Zone include:

- To provide a balance between vegetation and built form such that development sits within a vegetated setting.
- To promote vegetated streetscapes where the vegetation acts to filter and soften the appearance of buildings and hard surface areas.
- To provide adequate space in new developments for the retention of existing significant trees wherever practicable and for the planting of new trees.

The schedule includes a requirement for a Clause 55 applications for more than one dwelling on which varies that landscape standard B13 as follows:

Landscaping	B13	At least 30% of the site is available for landscaping. Two canopy trees (indigenous and/or Australian native) per site (parent lot).

The Schedule also includes the following requirement for Clause 54 and Clause 55 applications:

Site coverage	A5 and B8	50%

This reduces the maximum site coverage to 50%, which provides additional space for green space and canopy tree planting.

The Schedule 3 also includes the following decision guidelines:

> The following decision guidelines apply to an application for a permit under Clause 32.08, in addition to those specified in Clause 32.08 and elsewhere in the scheme which must be considered, as appropriate, by the responsible authority:
>
> - Whether the landscaping requirement can be met by including existing trees that are considered worthy of retention.
> - Whether the development provides for adequate landscaping opportunities.
> - Whether a subdivision proposal has sufficient land area and minimum dimensions to be in keeping with the surrounding subdivision and development patterns.

Neighbourhood Residential Zone Schedules

The scheme includes 8 schedules to the Neighbourhood Residential Zone of which the following elements are relevant:

- Schedule 1. There are no relevant standards.
- Schedule 2. Urban Preservation Areas includes a tree canopy provision.
- Schedule 3. Geelong West includes a tree canopy provision.
- Schedule 4. Ocean Grove Significant Tree Area includes several provisions.
- Schedule 5. Ocean Grove Hillside and Coastal Fringe Area includes various provisions.
- Schedule 6. Barwon Heads Incremental Change Area There are no relevant standards.
- Schedule 7. Warrenbeen Court Residential Area, Barwon Heads. There are no relevant standards.
- Schedule 8. Incremental Change Areas. Includes a canopy tree requirement.

These specific changes to standards provided in zone schedules are outlined below.

Neighbourhood Residential Zone Schedule 2 Urban Preservation Areas

Landscaping	B13	One canopy tree per dwelling.

Neighbourhood Residential Zone Schedule 4 Ocean Grove Significant Tree Area

The neighbourhood character objectives for Schedule 4 to the Neighbourhood Residential Zone include:

- To maintain the unique spacious bush garden character of the area distinguished by the high number of significant Australian native trees.
- To encourage development that sits within a vegetated setting.

- To maintain vegetated streetscapes where the vegetation acts to filter and soften the appearance of buildings and hard surface areas.
- To provide adequate space in new developments for the retention of existing significant trees wherever practicable and for the planting of new canopy trees.

The Schedule adjusted standard A5 and B6 which relate to site coverage and standard B13 which applies to Clause 55 applications as follows:

Site coverage	A5 and B8	40%
Landscaping	B13	At least 40% of the site is available for landscaping. Two canopy trees (indigenous and/or Australian native) per site (parent lot).

The decision guidelines are:
- Whether the landscaping requirement can be met by including existing trees that are considered worthy of retention.
- Whether new lots and developments are of a spacious nature and allow for a design that is respectful of neighbourhood character.
- Whether the development provides for adequate landscaping opportunities.
- Whether a subdivision proposal has sufficient land area and minimum dimensions to be in keeping with the surrounding subdivision and development patterns.

Neighbourhood Residential Zone Schedule 5 Ocean Grove Hillside and Coastal Fringe Area

The neighbourhood character objectives for Schedule 4 to the Neighbourhood Residential Zone include:
- To provide a balance between vegetation and built form such that development sits within a vegetated setting.
- To promote vegetated streetscapes where the vegetation acts to filter and soften the appearance of buildings and hard surface areas.
- To provide adequate space in new developments for the retention of existing significant trees wherever practicable and for the planting of new trees.

The Schedule adjusted standard A5 and B6 which relate to site coverage and standard B13 which applies to Clause 55 applications as follows:

Site coverage	A5 and B8	50%
Landscaping	B13	At least 30% of the site is available for landscaping. Two canopy trees (indigenous and/or Australian native) per site (parent lot).

The decision guidelines are:

- Whether the landscaping requirement can be met by including existing trees that are considered worthy of retention.
- Whether the development provides for adequate landscaping opportunities.
- Whether a subdivision proposal has sufficient land area and minimum dimensions to be in keeping with the surrounding subdivision and development patterns.

Neighbourhood Residential Zone Schedule 8 Incremental Change Area

The Schedule adjusted standard B13 which applies to Clause 55 applications as follows:

Landscaping	B13	One canopy tree per dwelling

6.1.4 Overlays

Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO)

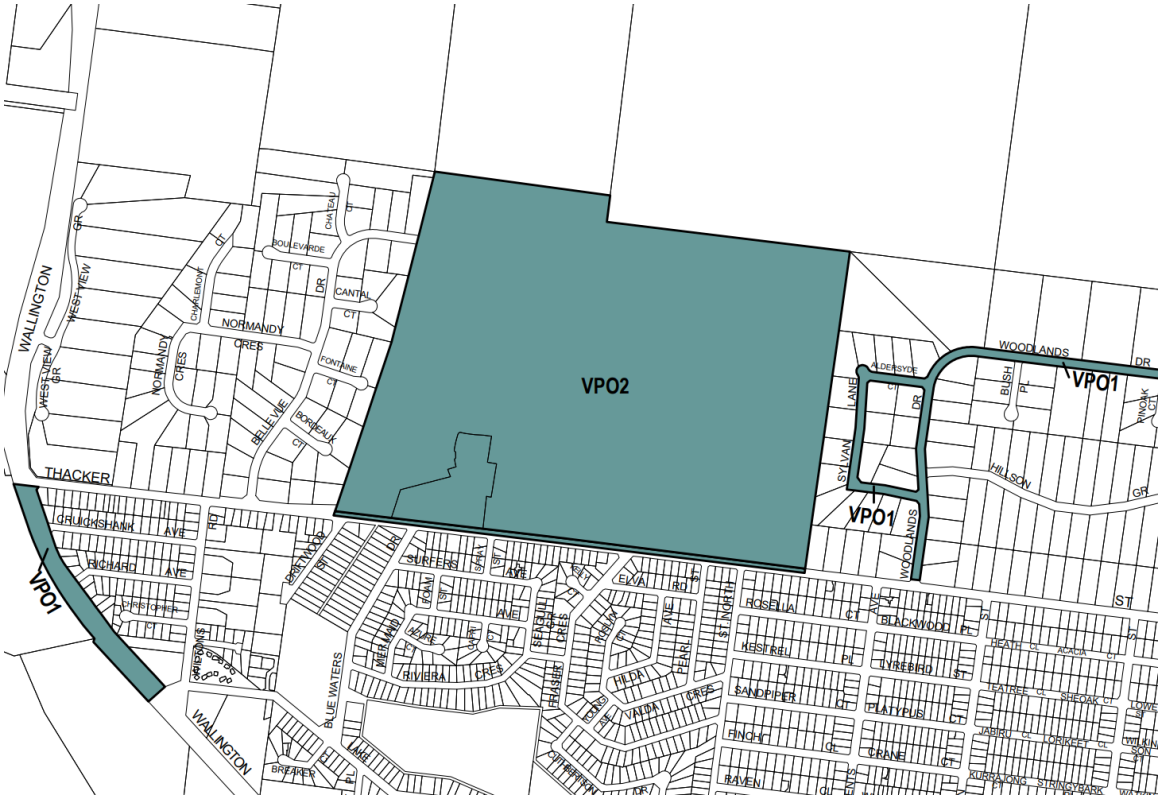
The VPO has been applied in two instances in the City:

- Schedule 1 is applied to public land and road reserves, which is not relevant to this report as it instead focuses on private land.
- Schedule 2 has been applied to land in Thacker Street in Ocean Grove.

The provisions of Schedule 2 for Thacker Street are outlined on the next page.

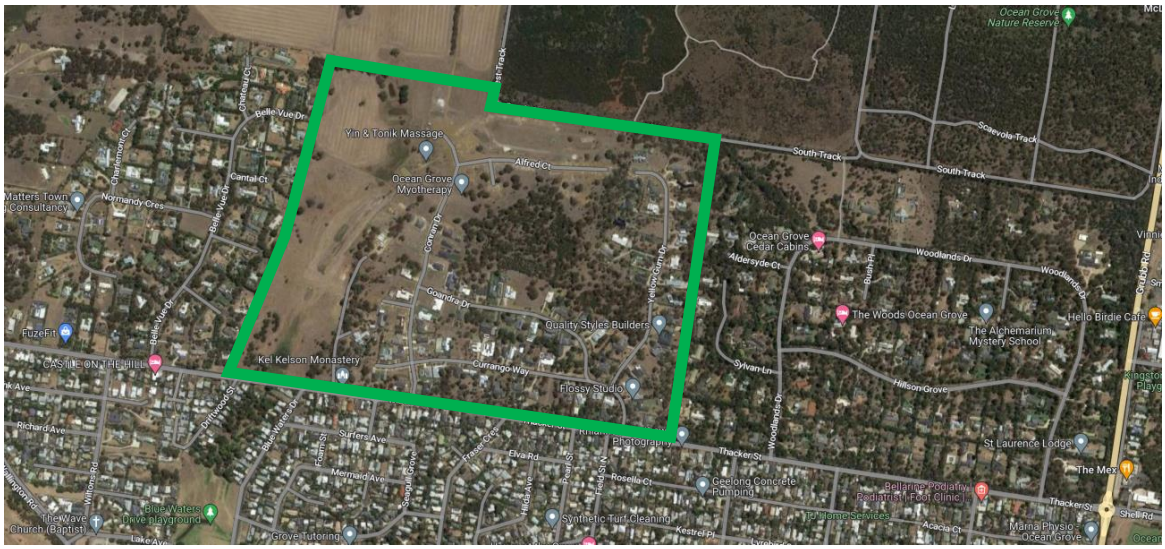
The Thacker Street VPO Schedule 2 applies to a specific area within Ocean Grove, shown on the following page.

Figure 6: Thacker Street VPO Schedule 2 (Source: Greater Geelong Planning Scheme)



An NearMap aerial photo of the site is provided below. There are significant stands of vegetation shown.

Figure 7: Aerial Photo of VPO Schedule 2 Area



The Schedule 2 provides the following vegetation protection objectives:

- It comprises remnant Bellarine Yellow Gum – Coast Manna Gum Grassy Woodland which is of

national significance.
- It contains a large population of Eucalyptus leucoxylon ssp bellarinensis protected under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988.
- It has high conservation significance containing a diverse range of State and regionally significant plant species.
- The vegetation forms a link with the Ocean Grove Nature Reserve and remnant vegetation in surrounding residential areas.

Although the vegetation protection overlay has not been extensively used in the City, other Overlays such as the Significant Landscape Overlay have been designed to also protect existing vegetation in certain areas. There is scope to extend the application of the VPO in the City if based on sound research and following community engagement around key implementation issues.

Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO)

There are 17 Schedules to the Significant Landscape Overlay applied through the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. The relevant schedules that specifically incorporate vegetation protection include:
- SLO Schedule 6, Wallington Road Ocean Grove. This Schedule is designed to protect the landscape qualities of this area. The existing vegetation is a key component of the landscape quality and is integral to the purpose of the SLO.
- SLO Schedule 8, Barwon Heads Semi-Bush Landscape Area. This Overlay has a strong focus on tree protection, it requires a permit to remove native trees, with a range of exemptions.
- SLO Schedule 15, Ocean Grove Significant Tree Residential Area. This schedule is generally like Schedule 8 and is designed to protect native trees.

Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 6

The SLO Schedule 6 seeks to enhance the coastal character and environmental qualities of the area including the balance between buildings, vegetation, and sea views by minimising the loss of native vegetation and ensuring developments sit within a landscaped setting.

Under the Schedule 6 a permit is not required to construct a building or construct or carry out works, provided all the following requirements are met:

- *"The height of any part of the building, excluding any television antenna, chimney or flue, is less than 7.5 metres above natural ground level.*
- *No more than 70 per cent of the site is covered by buildings and impervious/hard surfaces including driveways, paving, decks, crushed rock, swimming pools or tennis courts.*
- *At least 30 per cent of the site is available (free from hard surfaces) for soft landscaping (i.e. areas of natural ground surface set aside for vegetation).*
- *Proposed buildings are set back a minimum of 2 metres from one side boundary.*
- *There is only one dwelling on the lot."*

This schedule is drafted to encourage development to meet the standards incorporated, such as the site coverage standard. There are a range of exemptions included in the schedule, for example:

"A permit is required to remove, destroy or lop a tree. This does not apply to:

- *Australian native trees less than 3 metres in height.*
- *Exotic trees.*
- *A tree listed within the incorporated document Environmental Weeds, City of Greater Geelong, September 2008, except Coastal Tea-tree Leptospermum laevigatum, which contributes to the coastal character of this area.*
- *Pruning a tree to improve its health or appearance, provided its normal growth habit is not retarded.*
- *A tree that presents an immediate risk of personal injury or damage to property, if only that part of the tree which presents the immediate risk is removed, destroyed or lopped.*
- *Pruning a tree to remove any branch that overhangs an existing dwelling or is within 2 metres of an existing dwelling.*
- *A tree that is dead.*
- *Maintaining a Minor Utility Installation to the minimum extent necessary by the relevant authority.*
- *Works carried out in accordance with the Geelong Street Tree Policy by or on behalf of the responsible authority."*

Significance Landscape Overlay Schedule 15

This precinct within Ocean Grove is distinctive due to the high number of significant canopy trees (indigenous and other Australian native) located on both public and private land. These trees are a dominant feature of the neighbourhood with buildings nestled within spacious bush garden settings. The schedule wording is similar in general structure to Schedule 6 as described above.

Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO)

Like the Heritage Overlay, the ESO is applied to specific sites with broad environmental significance well beyond tree protection. While it is possible to create a more specific ESO schedule, as has occurred in some other municipalities, the City has used it consistent with the purpose of the tool.

Design and Development Overlay (DDO)

There are 47 Schedules to the Design and Development Overlay applied through the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. These are targeted at built form controls. Only Schedule 10, Fellows Road, Point Lonsdale includes a requirement to protect existing trees where they have environmental significance or protect against erosion. The primary purpose of the overlay however is around built form controls.

6.2 Council Local Laws

The City does not currently have a Local Law that protects trees on private land. The Neighbourhood Amenity Local Law 2014 only addresses tree protection when trees on private land impact Council land.

Council has guidelines for the offence and removal of overhanging trees or other obstructions in the Local Law Procedure Manual, which can be found here: Local Law 2014 Procedure Manual - City of Greater Geelong (geelongaustralia.com.au)

7 Other Council Case Studies

The tree protection mechanisms of other Councils have been analysed including discussions with the relevant officers. A summary of each Council case study is provided below. The case studies illustrate a variety of different approaches. Most Councils have limited control over tree removal on private land or where controls exist a lack of enforcement is an issue.

Figure 8: Summary of Comparable Council Tree Protection Controls

Municipality	Significant Tree Register	VPO	Tree Focused SLO	Tree Focused ESO	Local Law	Clause 54/55 Variations
Boroondara	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Casey	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Darebin	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Greater Bendigo	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Manningham	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Melbourne	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Merri-Bek	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
Monash	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Morn. Peninsula	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Stonington	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Surf Coast	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Wyndham	DRAFT	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Bass Coast	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Greater Geelong	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes

There are diverse approaches to tree protection on private land across municipalities. This reflects the tree and vegetation types, local community engagement, resourcing and views and the flexibility of the VPP tools to deal with different circumstances.

For example:

- Nillumbik, Banyule and Monash have used the VPO to cover a majority of their municipality.
- Whitehorse and Maroondah have applied a SLO over most of their urban area.

- City of Melbourne and the City of Casey has a strong focus on a Significant Tree Register implemented with an ESO.
- Merri-bek has poor canopy and strong development demand, so the focus is to create new tree canopy throughout the urban area as part of development. Its variations to Clause 55 are detailed and extensive based on comprehensive development and tree modelling.
- Mornington Peninsula has extensive use of VPO and SLO over most urban areas.
- Boroondara has a very strong and well-resourced use of local laws, and tree retention is a focus in neighbourhood character statements to guide property redevelopment decisions.
- Stonnington almost exclusively (except for very small areas) use a local law to control tree removal on private land.

Of the 36 municipalities analysed in relation to Clause 54 and 55 provisions the following observations are made:

- 12 Councils (33%) have varied Standard B13 to improve tree outcomes.
- 9 Councils (23%) have varied application requirements to improve tree outcomes.
- 5 Councils (14%) have varied decision guidelines to improve tree protection and landscaping.
- 22 Councils (61%) did not have any amended requirements.

The variations to Standard B13 relating to landscaping for new development are:

- Height or size of trees (Banyule, Brimbank, Darebin, Monash, Whitehorse, Whittlesea).
- Location of trees (Banyule, Brimbank, Darebin, Greater Dandenong, Knoz, Whitehorse, Whittlesea).
- Number of trees based on a site dimension, area or width (Banyule, Brimbank, Darebin, Greater Dandenong, Knox, Whittlesea).
- Minimum permeable area to accommodate trees ie 5 by 5m area (Knox, Darebin, Whittlesea).
- Encourage retention of trees, include application requirements and decision guidelines.

Figure 9 below indicates available information around tree protection resourcing across Councils.

Figure 9: Available Council Tree Protection Operational Resourcing Information

Municipality	Tree Regulation Type	Fees / Penalties	Number Per Year	Resources	% removal approved
Bayside	Local law and planning controls			3 planning arborists	95%
Boroondara	Primarily local law and limited planning controls	Tree removal fee of $1,000	1,000	3.6 arborists, 1 landscape compliance officer and 1 admin	70%
Casey	ESO for significant trees	Enforced under P&E Act	20	No dedicated resources	95%
Greater Bendigo	Limited planning controls	Enforced under P&E Act	93	No dedicated resources	95%

Municipality	Tree Regulation Type	Fees / Penalties	Number Per Year	Resources	% removal approved
Kingston	Local law and planning controls		900	6 arborists for public land and 3 private land	
Melbourne	Exceptional Tree Register protected by ESO	Variable, enforced under P&E Act	Maximum 1 or 2	1 Full Time arborist who also performs other tasks	0%, not usually approved
Stonington	Local law		650		70%

City of Boroondara

Context. Inner Melbourne, known for its heavily treed neighbourhoods.

Current Controls. The focus of tree protection is a local law. Tree controls include:

- A comprehensive Significant Tree Register protected by a local law.
- Vegetation Protection Overlay which applies to two specific sites.
- Adjusted clause 54 and 55 standards improve development outcomes.
- A general tree protection local law protecting all large trees, not just significant trees.

Strategic Work Undertaken. The Council undertook a significant tree assessment and determined which trees were outstanding trees. The register has been periodically updated. The Council has an excellent web-based tool for residents to search for trees on the register. Several years ago, the Council developed detailed guidelines for considering applications improving the process significantly.

Tree Statistics:

- The City of Boroondara has about 1,300 trees on the significant tree register.
- Council receives about 1,000 applications per year. This includes pruning and tree removal.
- About 70% of tree removal applications are approved. Most relate to dead and dying trees.
- Council receives about 40 applications per year for poisoned trees and requires space for a new tree or trees to be replanted on the land.

Resourcing:

- Council advises that it is close to achieving cost recovery through fees and enforcement.
- The Tree removal fee is $1000 and raises around $90,000 per annum.
- Council issues about 100 infringements per year which equates to about $200,000 in income.
- Council has 3.5 arborists to implement the local law including 1 team leader, 1 senior arborist and 1.5 planning arborists, 1 landscape compliance officer and 1 administration officer.
- The arborist team also performs 500 planning referrals per year.
- Support staff resources are also required in local laws, planning, admin support and IT.
- A Local Laws offense has a maximum $2,000 fine which will lift to $3,800 in 2026.
- Under the Planning and Environment Act fines can be greater but are much harder to achieve. Council has found that a typical fine under the Act is about $900 to $1,500.

- Local laws must be satisfied separately to planning scheme requirements. There is a limited opportunity to challenge a local law decision, and challenges are rare. A senior independent officer who was not involved in the decision hears resident appeals. On occasion, in a dispute, Council will engage an independent arborist to provide advice.
- Court appeals are rare and usually relate to major developments where VCAT approves tree removal, but Council refuses to agree to a local law tree removal. Council de-risks this now by advising the applicant at the outset that this may occur.

Summary Analysis. Boroondara has a strong focus on tree protection through local laws. Council has been consistent with applying the laws and have a strong enforcement focus. Council deliberately captures a large number of trees to ensure existing canopy can be maintained by requiring replacement planting. It is understood that there is strong community support for the tree protection local laws.

City of Casey

Context. Mature outer South-East Melbourne municipality experiencing greenfield growth.

Current Controls:

- A significant tree register with an ESO Schedule 7 to protect River Red Gums on the Significant Tree Register and an ESO Schedule 8 to protect other native and exotic trees.
- VPO over two small sites.
- SLO over a significant part of the original Berwick Township focused on tree protection.

Strategic Work Undertaken. The City of Casey developed a significant tree register in 2011. The process to create the register took about 9 years to complete. About 1,000 trees are protected by the Significant Tree Register. Casey has committed to adding additional trees if they are identified from time to time through future planning scheme amendments. A biennial desk-top review generally occurs, and periodic inspection and reporting of the identified trees will be conducted as advised by a consultant arborist.

The City of Casey prepared a Berwick Township Significant Landscape Strategy in 2007. This report provided the justification for the application of a detailed SLO for the township area which has been instrumental in protecting the old township part of Berwick from inappropriate redevelopment, protecting existing trees and ensuring there is space for large new trees to be planted in new developments.

Tree Statistics:

- Casey has a significant tree register of about 1,000 trees which are protected by an ESO.
- Casey received about 15 to 20 ESO planning permit removal applications per year.
- Council has also identified that about 20 trees are removed each year without a permit.
- Council does not have specific enforcement resources and may not follow up and enforce the planning scheme with respect to tree protection.

Resources:

- Casey does not have a planning arborist. Casey asks for an arborist report to be submitted with an application. Council can obtain an independent arborist report, but this impacts budget and so does not normally occur.
- Casey do not have any specific compliance resources for vegetation removal.
- Have taken enforcement action on one occasion were they had clear evidence.

Summary Analysis. The SLO is effective in Old Berwick. There is some tension as most people want the character protected, yet at the same time often seek approval for redevelopment.

Many people are not happy with an ESO for significant tree protection on their land and community support is relatively low. Casey only provides one per property to avoid people being impacted too greatly. Further community education would help with tree protection and enhancement. That may also lead to community support for the application of new resources.

City of Greater Bendigo

Context. Regional Victoria with significant native vegetation throughout the municipality.

Current Controls. The City of Greater Bendigo uses the VPO to protect remnant vegetation, including:

- Schedule 1, Wildlife Corridor Protection, focused on remnant vegetation.
- Schedule 2, Significant Vegetation, focused on remnant vegetation.
- Schedule 3, Roadside Vegetation.
- VPO over key remnant vegetation and vegetated corridors on the city fringes.

The City also uses the SLO and ESO to protect vegetation in specific urban fringe locations.

Strategic Work Undertaken. Council has not undertaken specific native vegetation or significant tree studies. Council is exploring the need for specific tree controls but has not yet allocated resources to undertake strategic work.

Tree Statistics:

- Bendigo advise that a search on their planning database has found that the number of permits with the word “vegetation” in the description, whether it’s stand-alone or as part of other permit components, has been as follows:

2018	77
2019	91
2020	64
2021	60
2022	93

Resources:

- Council has limited resources to address tree protection on private land, though it is an area they would like to address in the future.

Summary Analysis. The City of Greater Bendigo has limited planning controls in relation to tree protection on private land. For individual trees it would only be where they are picked up within a heritage overlay. There are no local laws for tree protection.

City of Melbourne

Context. Inner Melbourne.

Current Controls:

- The City of Melbourne has a tree register which is called the Exceptional Tree Register. Trees on the register are protected through an ESO.
- The City of Melbourne does not have authority over trees on private property except when they are listed on the Exceptional Tree Register and protected through the ESO.
- Council can of course consider tree protection when it considers individual planning permit applications and is required to do so in many circumstances by the planning scheme.

Strategic Work Undertaken. The Exceptional Tree Register was developed by the City of Melbourne in response to a resolution by the Future Melbourne Eco-City Committee in June 2011 to develop and maintain a register of exceptional trees on private property within the municipality and was an endorsed action in the Urban Forest Strategy 2012–2032.

The Exceptional Tree Register 2012 was endorsed by Council at the 3 July 2012 Future Melbourne Committee meeting, with the updated register ('Exceptional Tree Register 2019') endorsed by Council at the 21 July 2020 Future Melbourne Committee meeting. The Exceptional Tree Register was established in 2015 following a public nomination process in 2012. In 2019, a second round of nominations was held to expand and update the register.

Once formally listed on the Exceptional Tree Register, the land where the tree is located, and those properties included in the Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) are included in a Planning Scheme Amendment where the property is listed in Schedule 2 to the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO2 Schedule).

In deciding on pursuing a Significant Tree register, the City of Melbourne Tree Logic Assessment can be found in a Council Report on this link: https://spaces.hightail.com/receive/rhlm9Uht7v The City of Melbourne found that research indicates that tree controls in other municipalities are largely ineffective because over 90 per cent of applications for lopping or removal of trees were approved in those municipalities. Council officers considered that the associated cost of protecting 10 percent of trees is questionable when the time and cost of administering the application process is considered. For this reason, the City of Melbourne adopted a more focused method of tree protection for trees that are considered exceptional because of their amenity, ecological, or cultural value.

In support of the City of Melbourne decision-making Tree Logic advised the following:

> *"Experience in tree management strongly suggests that there is not wholesale removal of trees on private land, even after storm events. In our experience, pressure on tree retention*

invariably comes via development. Research has found that public sector policies regulating land development can have a major influence on the environmental impacts and protecting the extent of tree canopy (Landry & Pu, 2009).

Tree regulations do allow greater control of tree removal (slow down removals by disincentive). Conversely, they can also provide a disincentive to new tree planting. What tree regulations do allow is an opportunity for education about the benefits of trees, alternatives to tree removal and the promotion of tree replanting.

However, when considering applying tree controls within a municipality a one-size approach does not fit all. And to be successful there needs to be broad community support and a patient thorough approach. Trees are dynamic organisms and it is difficult to regulate living plant life and the environment they are growing in, while balancing community expectations and the right of landowners to use their land.

Life-long protection of individual trees after they reach a certain size or life stage may incur on-going maintenance costs, and also reduces the flexibility for property owners, which in turn develops a disincentive for planting large tree species or allowing them to reach their mature size.

Consequently the retention of trees on private property can be tenuous, whereas there is far greater security of tenure for public trees. The question is invariably asked by sectors of the community; why restrict people's right to use their land for the benefit of the broader community? The regulations can also be seen as onerous and another tier of bureaucracy and an increase in costs such as permit applications and arborist reports."

City of Melbourne Council officers also considered that there appeared to be a general opinion that tree regulations encapsulated with the planning scheme offered greater control, particularly around enforcement activities.

Tree Statistics:

- The City of Melbourne's Exceptional Tree Register includes a total of 268 trees from across the municipality. The register offers the opportunity to recognise and protect the exceptional trees in our city that exist on land not owned or managed by the City of Melbourne.
- Council receives a maximum of 1 or 2 applications per year, in the past year there have been no applications. Council does not normally approve removal of any exceptional trees, but on occasion has when there is a good reason to do so.

Resources:

- No specific resources are allocated to implement the Significant Tree Controls.

Summary Analysis. The City of Melbourne only protects trees on its Exceptional Tree Register. The Exceptional Tree Register is protected by an ESO in the scheme. City of Melbourne does call for community nominations for new exceptional trees. When this occurs, significant resources are required to review trees, talk to landowners and run a planning scheme amendment process to implement any new controls. This part of the process is resource intensive.

8 Options

The following options have been identified:

- **Option 1 – Advocacy.** Write to the Minister for Planning and request the State Government to introduce Statewide regulation to protect trees on private land.
- **Option 2 - Education / Tree Planting Guidelines.** Continue to promote the benefits of trees through council projects, strategy, and policies.
- **Option 3 - Amend existing controls to promote tree retention & replacement as part of new development.** Add focus on tree protection and replacement of lost trees.
- **Option 4 - Develop a Significant Tree Register (STR) and introduce a planning overlay**. Identify trees and protect them with planning overlay.
- **Option 5 - Develop a Significant Tree Register (STR) and introduce a local law.** Identify trees and protect them with local law.

There is a base case of a "Do Nothing Option" also. The advantage of the Do-Nothing Option is that there is no requirement for additional resources. The disadvantage is that:

- Geelong's urban tree canopy may not be maintained or expand to the extent that it otherwise would.
- State and Council policy will not be achieved.
- Community concerns about tree loss will not be addressed.
- Urban forest and urban cooling goals and policies may not be achieved to the same extent.

8.1 Option 1 – Advocacy

Description. Write to the Minister for Planning and request the State Government to introduce State-wide regulation to protect trees on private land. Discussions with DTP have identified that the State is giving consideration to methods to strengthen tree protection on private land throughout the State. Such mechanisms are likely to focus on adjusting existing standards in Clause 54, 55, 56 and 57 and to providing stronger direction for use of planning scheme mechanism such as ESOs and VPOs.

Strategic Work Required. No additional strategic work is required by Council.

Implementation. The proposal is for a letter to be written to the Minister from Council. This does not require additional resources and would be prepared using existing staff resources.

Ongoing Resourcing. There are no specific ongoing costs.

Consultation. No specific consultation would be required.

Advantages and Disadvantages. The advantage of this approach is that it is inexpensive and would encourage the State to move quickly to provide some additional controls. This option relies on the State for action.

8.2 Option 2- Education / Tree Planting Guidelines

Description. Continue to promote the benefits of trees through council projects, strategy, and policies.

Strategic Work Required. While strategic planning work is not required, some other research would be required to support this initiative to ensure its effectiveness.

Implementation. Additional resources are required to prepare upgraded communications. An allowance of $50,000 for part 0.4 FTE for development and implementation of an educational program.

Ongoing Resourcing. This action could be delivered without additional operational resources. However, an additional 0.5 EFT would provide resources to make a significant difference.

Consultation. The essence of this action is around undertaking community engagement.

Advantages and Disadvantages. Other Councils have been advised that building a groundswell of community support for tree protection is critical to allow for new, stronger approaches to be implemented. This provides useful community resources but does not protect trees on private land.

8.3 Option 3 – Amend Existing Controls to Promote Tree Retention and Replacement as Part of New Development

Description. Add focus on tree protection and replacement of lost trees.

Strategic Work Required. Utilise existing local planning policy review, consultation as part of amendment process.

Implementation. Medium additional costs are required.

Ongoing Resourcing. This action could be delivered with low additional resourcing.

Consultation. This action requires high level of consultations.

Advantages and Disadvantages. Provides support to retain trees and provide replacement planting; however, it only applies if a permit is required.

8.4 Option 4 - Develop a Significant Tree Register (STR) and Introduce a Planning Overlay

Description. Identify trees and protect them with planning overlay.

Strategic Work Required. Require consultant to prepare a tree study, write planning controls, consultation, amendment to introduce into planning scheme. The estimated cost of this work is

Implementation. A budget should be considered comprising:

Upfront:

- ~$255,000 for background report, tree surveys and assessment, technical staff and project management
- ~$150,000 for planning scheme amendment

Ongoing:

- Total cost about $66,500 to $99,750. Income of $35,000 to $53,000 per year. This is based on 30 to 45 tree removals per year and 10-15 legal tree removals.

Consultation. This option requires high level of consultation.

Advantages and Disadvantages. This option is resource intensive for the community and Council. Tree removal approvals under this regime typically protect between 10% and 30% of the trees identified when applications for removal are made. However, it should be note that the City of Melbourne does not normally approve tree removals of they are protected through this method. This option requires the application of staff and resources.

8.5 Option 5 - Develop a Significant Tree Register (STR) and introduce a local law

Description. Identify trees and protect them with local law

Strategic Work Required. Require consultant to prepare a tree study, write local law, consultation.

Implementation. A budget should be considered comprising:
Upfront:

- ~$255,000 for background report, tree surveys and assessment, technical staff and project management
- ~$100,000 for legal advice, drafting and local law

Ongoing:

- Total cost about $66,500 to $99,750. Income of $35,000 to $53,000 per year. This is based on 30 to 45 tree removals per year and 10-15 legal tree removals.

Consultation. This option requires high level of consultations.

Advantages and Disadvantages. There are questions over the legality of local laws being used for this purpose. This option is resource intensive for the community and Council. Tree removal approvals under this regime typically protect between 10% and 30% of the trees identified when applications for removal are made.

9 Assessment of Options

Figure 10 provides a summary assessment of options.

Figure 10: Assessment of Options

#	Option	Strategic Work Required	Consultation	Time	Costs	Resourcing
1	**Advocacy**	Write to state govt and bring tree focus to existing work	None	Short	No additional cost required	None
2	**Education / Tree Planting Guidelines**	Community education and Prepare guidelines in-house or engage consultant	Low	Short-Medium	Upfront: • Up to $50,000 for part 0.4 FTE for development and implementation of education programs Ongoing: • Minimal	Low
3	**Planning permit tree protection and replacement as part of development**	Utilise existing local planning policy review, consultation as part of amendment process	High	Medium	Upfront: • Minimum as a permit for development is already triggered	Low
4	**Significant Tree Register or Tree Study and Planning Overlay**	Require consultant to prepare a tree study, write planning controls, consultation, amendment to introduce into planning scheme.	High	Long	Upfront: • ~$255,000 for background report, tree surveys and assessment, technical staff and project management • ~$150,000 for planning scheme amendment Ongoing: • Total cost about $66,500 to $99,750. Income of $35,000 to $53,000 per year.	High
5	**Significant Tree Register or Tree Study and Local Law**	Require consultant to prepare a tree study, write local law, consultation	High	Long	Upfront: • ~$255,000 for background report, tree surveys and assessment, technical staff and project management • ~$100,000 for legal advice, drafting and local law Ongoing: • Total cost about $66,500 to $99,750. Income of $35,000 to $53,000 per year.	High

When considering the most appropriate direction and options to pursue, the following matters should be considered:

- **Red Tape**. The additional costs and red tape burden that would be created for residents including application costs, cost of arborist advice and time delays.
- **Resources**. Up front cost of studies and planning panel hearings, as well as ongoing operations costs such as for staff, management time, GIS and software. Preparation of any new planning controls require research to create a strong evidence base, and they need to be able to withstand scrutiny with expert evidence under cross examination. Independent reports and research, together with community consultation will be important elements to address before any planning scheme controls are proposed. Consideration can be given to breaking down the types of controls, or controls over certain areas into stages for implementation that have a strong and clear basis of evidence to justify them. This would make it easier for the community to accommodate the new controls and allows Council staff resources to be gradually built up over time as experience is gained with the new approach.
- **Arborist Advice**. The cost and availability of arborist advice and the preparation of reports, independent reviews, and the cost to carry out works. Arborists are difficult to source as permanent staff members.
- **Enforcement**. Resourcing of enforcement, dispute resolution, mediation, independent advice, and legal costs.
- **Impact on 50% Infill Target**. Impact of tree retention on urban consolidation policies, including Council's 50% infill target. This can be addressed through detailed design of any regulations.
- **Tree Protection Outcomes**. Broad protection of trees on private land such as Local Laws or Vegetation Protection Overlays, can consume considerable resources. However, it is likely that more than 90% of trees will be allowed to be removed based on other Council's experience. More targeted measures, such as a Significant Tree Register implemented through an ESO, can produce targeted results.
- **Tree Equity**. Achieving equity across the municipality, including boosting tree canopy in communities with low tree cover. Direct public investment in tree planting can be used to increase tree equity.
- **Value for Money** is an overarching consideration that should be applied to all options.

2.3. Northern and Western Geelong Growth Areas - Annual Progress Report

Source: **Placemaking**
Executive Director: **Tennille Bradley**

Purpose

1. To provide Councillors with an annual report on the progress of the Northern and Western Geelong Growth Areas precinct structure planning program.

Background

2. The Northern and Western Geelong Growth Areas will be the next major urban growth areas and will be home to 110,000 new residents.

3. Urban development in the Northern and Western Geelong Growth Areas will be guided by precinct structure plans and development contributions plans.

4. At its 13 December, 2022 meeting Council resolved that officers would provide an annual report to Council on the progress of the precinct structure plans and communicated timelines.

Key Matters

5. Further field work is required to survey for habitat and individuals for the recently rediscovered Victorian grassland earless dragon across the growth areas.

6. The City is preparing the four precinct structure plans. The status is:

    6.1. Creamery Road – Infrastructure design and development contribution plan preparation are being completed following landowner consultation on the draft development contributions inputs and associated technical studies. Council adoption is expected in September 2024. The precinct structure plan is delayed 18 months from the originally anticipated adoption date of March 2023.

    6.2. Elcho Road East – draft future urban structure and precinct structure plan are prepared and the remaining technical work is awaiting outcomes from the Victorian grassland earless dragon habitat suitability mapping and targeted surveys expected in May. The precinct structure plan was due for Council adoption in late 2024/early 2025. A revised precinct structure plan timeline will be published when the extent of biodiversity conservation areas is confirmed in mid-2024 following the field work.

    6.3. Elcho Road West (including Heales Road West) and Batesford North - expression of interest for third party funding agreements have been sought. Funding agreements are with the developers in these precincts to sign.

7. Supporting implementation of the precinct structure plans is the preparation of the:

   7.1. Biodiversity conservation strategy – the draft strategy has been to consultation with the Geelong Strategic Assessment in August 2023. The strategy will be updated in response to submissions and the strategic response to grassland earless dragon. A planning scheme amendment to implement the recommendations and changes to the framework plan will occur in 2025.

   7.2. Geelong Growth Areas Transport and Services Strategy – technical work is underway including the design and costing of the three bridges in the western growth area.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.3

Cr Mason moved, Cr Cadwell seconded -

That Council note the progress on the Northern and Western Geelong Growth Areas precinct structure planning program.

Carried

Financial Sustainability

8. The City has third party funding agreements in place to cover the technical studies required to deliver the precinct structure plans and technical work.

9. The development contributions are being prepared based on full cost recovery for the infrastructure where this is facilitated by the ministerial guidelines for the preparation of the development contributions plans.

10. There are no confirmed development infrastructure levies yet for any of the precincts.

11. Due to the high forecast cost associated to the development contributions levy in Creamery Road, landowners were provided with the opportunity to review the draft development contributions costings and provide feedback. This engagement and the further work resulting from landowner feedback was not initially planned and included in the timing of the completion of the plan.

12. There are significant state transport infrastructure and services that will be required to facilitate development in the growth areas. The City will continue to advocate for the early delivery of public transport services and the early planning for state transport corridors to support growth.

Community Engagement

13. Landowners, agencies and Traditional Owners have provided feedback through the design and preparation of the precinct structure plans and supporting studies.

14. The precinct structure plans, development contributions plans and supporting strategies will be subject to public exhibition and an advisory committee hearing through the planning scheme amendment process.

Social Equity and Sustainability

15. The framework plan outlines the aspirations for sustainable development for the precincts including local access to employment and services, housing diversity and social and affordable housing.

16. Requirements and guidelines for these outcomes are being drafted for inclusion in the precinct structure plans.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

17. Preparation of the precinct structure plans and development contributions plans is guided by state and local policy in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme.

18. The Northern and Western Geelong Growth Areas Framework Plan provides the strategic direction for the land use and infrastructure outcomes to be included in the precinct structure plans.

19. Delays in the precinct structure planning program are impacting the short-term supply of zoned land for housing.

20. Whilst there appears to be a recent shift in Victorian Government attention to the development of infill sites, the City will continue to plan and deliver housing stock across both infill and greenfield sites concurrently to meet its future housing needs and to ensure diversity of housing types.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

21. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
Sustainable growth and environment.

22. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.

Conflict of Interest

23. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

24. The precinct structure planning program is happening concurrently with securing federal environmental approvals. Regular engagement is occurring with the federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water to progress the Geelong Strategic Assessment and minimise risks that the conservation outcomes proposed do not align with federal environmental regulations.

25. The Elcho Road East Precinct is a challenging site due to its complex topography and extent of biodiversity values present. Additional infrastructure design options testing is being undertaken to evaluate all design solutions for the drainage network to minimise impacts on existing residents, minimise long term costs and risks and ensure the design solution can be implemented. This additional work has added time to the initial program.

Environmental Sustainability

26. The biodiversity conservation strategy and Geelong strategic assessment being prepared under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act will resolve how urban development and biodiversity conservation will be managed in the growth areas.

27. Further field work is required to survey for habitat and individuals for the recently rediscovered Victorian grassland earless dragon.

28. A third-party funding agreement has been reached with the majority landowner in the northern growth area to undertake the further work. These surveys are being undertaken from February – May 2024. This will be the largest survey program for the species undertaken in recent years.

29. The recovery plan for the Victorian grassland earless dragon has not been finalised and there is a high degree of uncertainty about the preferred habitat of the species. Uncertainty about conservation planning for the species makes it difficult to have confidence about how impacts to the species will be avoided and offset and which areas should be protected for conservation. A precinct structure plan cannot be completed without the resolution of areas to be protected for conservation.

30. The framework plan outlines the aspirations for sustainable development for the precincts including zero emissions development, tree canopy and integrated water management.

31. Requirements and guidelines for these outcomes are proposed for inclusion in the precinct structure plans.

Attachments

Nil

2.4. Amendment C383ggee - Advertising Sign Guidelines - Consideration of Panel Report and Adoption

Source: **Placemaking**
Executive Director: **Tennille Bradley**

Purpose

1. To consider the independent Panel Report with regard to Planning Scheme Amendment C383ggee and adopt the amendment.

Background

2. Amendment C383ggee seeks to replace the advertising sign guidelines incorporated in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme with the City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines (February 2024).
3. **Attachment 1** provides a background summary of the amendment process.
4. Following a hearing on 16-17 October 2023, the Panel's report was received on 1 December 2023. Under section 27 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, the Planning Authority must consider the Panel's report before deciding to adopt the amendment.

Key Matters

5. Exhibition of the amendment in May and June 2023 resulted in eight written submissions. All submissions requested changes, with seven objecting submissions and one supportive submission. Issues included the prescriptiveness of the guidelines, in particular specific guidelines regarding growth areas and certain sign types.
6. The submissions were considered and Council under delegation on 30 August 2023 resolved to refer all submissions to an independent Panel appointed by the Minister for Planning subject to some changes being made to the amendment.
7. The independent Panel hearing was held in October 2023 and found the amendment to be strategically supported by planning policy and recommended that it be adopted with changes, including those negotiated with submitters during the Panel Hearing.
8. Whilst most of the Panel's recommendations are supported, **Attachment 1** provides the City's detailed response to the Panel Report.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.4

Cr Mason moved, Cr Cadwell seconded -

That Council:

1. **Adopt Amendment C383ggee - Sign Guidelines in the form outlined in Attachments 2 and 3 of this report; and**
2. **Submit the adopted Amendment C434ggee together with the prescribed information to the Minister for Planning requesting approval.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

9. There are no significant financial implications to Council. The amendment will not result in additional planning permit applications being lodged with the Council and will provide greater clarity and certainty for how discretion will be exercised when considering applications for signage. This will result in improved clarity for all parties on Council's expectations when lodging applications for signage across the municipality.

Community Engagement

10. Amendment C434ggee was exhibited in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

11. All submitters had an opportunity to be heard before an independent Panel. The Panel considered all submissions referred to it, not just the submissions presented at the hearing.

12. The City has advised submitters of the release of the independent Panel Report. Submitters will be notified of the final decision of Council and the Minister for Planning.

Social Equity and Sustainability

13. There are no significant social equity considerations.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

14. The amendment supports the following state policies from the Planning Policy Framework:
    - Clause 15.01-1S Urban design; and
    - Clause 18.01-1S Land use and transport integration.

    The amendment supports the following policies from the Local Planning Policy Framework:
    - Clause 11.03-1L Activity Centres in Greater Geelong; and
    - Clause 15.04-1L-02 Pakington Street North Urban Design.

    The amendment supports the following clause from the Particular Provisions:
    - Clause 52.05 Signs.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

15. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
    Sustainable growth and environment.

16. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future" community aspiration:
    Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.

Conflict of Interest

17. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

18. There are no notable risks associated with implementing the recommendation contained in this report.

Environmental Sustainability

19. There are no environmental sustainability implications associated with implementing the recommendations contained in this report.

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - C 383 ggee - Background and Discussion [**2.4.1** - 18 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - C 383 ggee - Planning Panel Report Executive Summary [**2.4.2** - 2 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - C 383 ggee - Planning Scheme Ordinance [**2.4.3** - 30 pages]
4. Attachment 4 - C 383 ggee - City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines (February 2024) Adoption [**2.4.4** - 39 pages]
5. Attachment 5 - City of Greater Geelong Advertising Signs Issues and Options Paper (May 2022) [**2.4.5** - 13 pages]

Attachment 1 – Background and Discussion

BACKGROUND

Purpose of the amendment

1. The main purpose of the Amendment is to implement new sign guidelines by updating the incorporated documents and making associated changes to the planning scheme. Specifically, the amendment:

   - Inserts new Clauses 15.01-1L-03 (Signs in urban environments) and 15.01-6L (Signs in rural areas) to require signs in urban and rural areas to comply with the City of Greater Geelong Advertising Sign Guidelines (May 2022).
   - Amends the schedule to Clause 72.04 (Documents Incorporated in this Planning Scheme) by removing Advertising Signage Guidelines, City of Greater Geelong 1997 and replacing it with *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines* (February 2024) as an incorporated document.
   - Amends the schedule to Clause 72.08 (Background Documents) by inserting the *City of Greater Geelong Advertising Sign Guidelines Review – Issues and Options Paper* (May 2022) as a background document.

2. The City prepared the *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines* collaboratively with Urban Design consultants Urban Fold, based on the recommended structure and issues identified in the Issues and Options Paper. These Guidelines, as well as the Issues and Options paper, have been peer reviewed by Transect Planning Consultants. Further changes were made as a result of recommendations from Planning Panel's Victoria, which are discussed below.

3. Please note, as discussed below, the panel report recommended the change of the policy document name to *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines*. The date has also been updated to reflect the most recent changes. This report will refer to the new guidelines only as *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines* (February 2024).

Council decisions, authorisation and public exhibition

4. On 28 February 2023 Council resolved to support the preparation and public exhibition of Amendment C383ggee.

5. The Amendment C383ggee was exhibited from 18 May and 26 June 2023.

6. Eight submissions were received during the exhibition period. These submissions addressed common issues, namely concerns that the Guidelines were overly restrictive and argued for a finer-grain approach. There was push back against sections of the Guidelines seen to have an unduly negative restriction on the 'branding' of growth area developments. Questions were raised around the specific distances in a number of guidelines. Concerns were also raised that guidelines regarding electric signs were too restrictive.

7. Council considered all submissions and on 30 August 2023, resolved:

   "That Council having considered all submissions to Amendment C383ggee to the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, resolves to:

   1) Request the Minister for Planning to appoint an Independent Panel under Part 8 of the Planning and Environment Act, 1987;

   2) Refer all submissions to the Panel; and

   3) Submit to the Panel its response to the submissions generally as outlined in this report."

8. All eight submissions were referred to an independent Panel appointed by the Minister for Planning.

Panel hearing

9. The Panel conducted an in-person hearing on 16-17 October 2023. Council officers presented to the panel as did two other parties. Council called expert evidence from a planning expert.

10. Council's submission to the Panel included some proposed changes to the wording or removal of some strategies, objectives and guideline as recommended by Council planners and Council's expert witness.

11. The Panel has provided its report which must be considered by Council as the Planning Authority before adopting the Amendment.

12. **Attachment 2** of the Council report provides the Panel's Executive Summary and the full Panel report is on the City's C383ggee Part webpage.

DISCUSSION

Panel summary of key issues, conclusions and recommendations

13. The panel report describes the issues with the Guidelines as follows:

"The Panel's review of the issues reveals parts of the 2022 Guidelines:

- *do not follow drafting guidance*
- *duplicate provisions in Clause 52.05 (Signs)*
- *are not responsive to the issues identified in the City of Greater Geelong Advertising Sign Guidelines Review – Issues and Options Paper May 2022 that informed the Amendment.*

The Panel agrees with many of the proposals put forward by submitters to encourage the display of signs in locations responsive to site conditions and context, including the dynamic condition of growth areas as they transition from farmland to thriving new communities."

14. The Panel recommends that Greater Geelong Planning Scheme Amendment C383ggee be adopted as exhibited subject to two recommendations responded to below.

City Response to Panel report

15. The City considers that the Panel has thoroughly reviewed all the issues raised in submission to the amendment.

16. The following excerpt is a good description of the extensive and thorough review undertaken by the Panel: "*The Panel considered all written submissions made in response to the exhibition of the Amendment, observations from site visits, and submissions, evidence and other material presented to it during the Hearing. […] All submissions and materials have been considered by the Panel in reaching its conclusions, regardless of whether they are specifically mentioned in the Report."*

17. The City supports and accepts in principle the majority of the conclusions reached by the Panel and its two recommendations which are responded to further below:

Panel recommendation 1. Amend Clauses 15.01-1L-03 and 15.01-6L in accordance with the Panel preferred version at Appendix E (of the Planning Panel Report).

18. The City agrees with the panel's recommendations.

19. The wording of Clauses 15.01-1L-03 and 15.01-6L was exhibited as follows:

Clause 15.01-1l-03 Signs in urban environments

Policy application

This policy applies to all urban land in the municipality

Strategies

Ensure signs are in accordance with the City of Greater Geelong Advertising Sign Guidelines (May 2022).

Clause 15.01-67 Signs in rural environments

Policy application

This policy applies to all rural land in the municipality

Strategies

Ensure signs are in accordance with the City of Greater Geelong Advertising Sign Guidelines (May 2022).

20. Council's planning expert identified an opportunity to strengthen the exhibited wording of Clauses 15.01-1L-03 and 15.01-6L. The Panel's recommended wording detailed below draws from that recommendation, and will ensure the Guidelines (May 2022) are appropriately referred to within the planning scheme.

Clause 15.01-1L-03 Signs in urban environments

Policy application

This policy applies to all urban land in the municipality.

Objectives

To encourage signs to meet the objectives of the *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines* (February 2024).

Strategies

Encourage signs to meet the strategies of the *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines* (February 2024).

Policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- Policy guidelines of the *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines* (February 2024).

Policy documents

Consider as relevant:

- *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines* (February 2024).

Clause 15.01-6L Signs in rural environments

Policy application

This policy applies to all rural land in the municipality.

Objectives

To encourage signs to meet the objectives of the *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines* (February 2024).

Strategies

Encourage signs to meet the strategies of the *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines* (February 2024).

Policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- Policy guidelines of the *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines* (February 2024).

Policy documents

Consider as relevant:

- *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines* (February 2024).

21. Updated ordinance detailing the changes is provided in **Attachment 3**.

Panel recommendation 2. Amend the Incorporated Document 'Greater Geelong Advertising Sign Guidelines, 2022'.

22. The City agrees in part with the Panel's fourteen sub-recommendations (2a-2n) which are responded to individually below.

Recommendation 2a) revise the description of policy guidelines in accordance with Document 23b

23. The City agrees with the panel's recommendations.

Recommendation 2b) *delete 'objectives' and 'strategies' that duplicate the provisions of Clause 52.05*

24. The City agrees in principle with the panel's recommendations.

25. In addition to objective and strategies deleted or amended in the Panel preferred version, Table 1 of Appendix B outlines further objectives and strategies have been deleted to comply with this recommendation.

26. Where the structure and usability of the policy documents require the objective or strategy to frame the subsequent policy guidelines, it has been retained.

Recommendation 2c) *redraft detailed guidance under 'strategies' as 'policy guidelines'*

27. The City agrees with the panel's recommendations.

Recommendation 2d) *delete 'guidelines' that do not provide direct and prescriptive measures*

28. The City agrees with the panel's recommendations.

Recommendation 2e) *delete 'strategies' and 'guidelines' that provide blanket opposition to specific sign types*

29. The City agrees with the intent of the panel's recommendation.
30. Drawing on the advice of the panel report and *A Practitioner's Guide to Victorian Planning Schemes Version 1.5, April 2022*, Council officers made the following general changes:
    - Where a 'strategy' or 'guideline' uses 'conclusive' verbs such as avoid, ensure, prevent and the use of such verbs may be read as 'blanket opposition' to specific sign, 'discouraging' verbs are used instead.

Recommendation 2f) *make terminology consistent with the Victoria Planning Provisions, as shown in Table 5 of this report*

31. The City agrees with the panel's recommendations outlined in Table 5 of the report, reproduced below.

Table 5 Comparison of terms used in the Guidelines and Clause 73.02

2022 Guidelines term	Clause 73.02 term
Advertisement area × The height or width of a promotion sign should not exceed 6 metres and the total advertisement area should not exceed 8 square metres.	Display area ✓ The height or width of a promotion sign should not exceed 6 metres and the total display area should not exceed 8 square metres.
Advertising sign × City of Greater Geelong Advertising Sign Guidelines	Sign ✓ City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines
Signage × To ensure signage is subordinate to the built form and landscape context in which it is located.	Signs ✓ To ensure signs are subordinate to the built form and landscape context.

32. These changes in the wording improve consistency between the policy document and the wording within the planning scheme, particularly terms defined in Clause 73.02.

33. A key change emerging from this recommendation is the change of the policy document to be incorporated in the Planning Scheme. Council officers recommend the adoption of this change, and that the policy document should be renamed to *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines.* This change will also be reflected in the various ordinance documents as required.

Recommendation 2g) *revise Section 2 'General Guidelines' as shown in the Panel preferred version at Appendix F:1 of the Planning Panel Report, included in this document at Appendix B.*

34. The City agrees with the panel's recommendations. While the panel preferred version of the General Guidelines removes a number of guidelines, this is acknowledged as a reasonable outcome to avoid duplication of elements of Clause 52.05 or overly prescriptive guidelines.

Recommendation 2h) *revise Section 3 'Pedestrian Orientated Commercial Areas' as shown in the Panel preferred version at Appendix F:2 of the Planning Panel Report, included in this document at Appendix B.*

35. The City agrees with the Panel's recommendations.

Recommendation 2i) *revise Section 3 'Highway Orientated Commercial Areas' as shown in the Panel preferred version at Appendix F:3 of the Planning Panel Report, included in this document at Appendix B*

36. The City agrees with the Panel's recommendations.

Recommendation 2j) *revise Section 4 'Industrial Areas' as shown in the Panel preferred version at Appendix F:4 of the Planning Panel Report, included in this document at Appendix B*

37. The City agrees with the Panel's recommendations.

Recommendation 2k) *revise Section 7 'Interface Areas' as shown in the Panel preferred version at Appendix F:5 of the Planning Panel Report, included in this document at Appendix B*

38. The City agrees with the Panel's recommendations.

Recommendation 2l) *revise Section 11 'Growth Areas' as shown in the Panel preferred version at Appendix F:6 of the Planning Panel Report, included in this document at Appendix B*

39. The City agrees in part with the panel's recommendations.

40. The panel recommended a number of changes to the Growth Area Guidelines which generally serve to strengthen the applicability and relevance of the policy document.

41. However, the panel recommended the deletion of the objective, derived from expert evidence received at the panel, on the grounds that it duplicates a purpose of Clause 52.05 and is therefore redundant.

42. While the City agrees with the assessment of this wording, the structure and usability of the policy documents require an objective to guide the application of the policy. The City therefore elects to keep the objective as informed by the expert witness.

Recommendation 2m) *revise Section 12 'Major Promotion Signs' as shown in the Panel preferred version at Appendix F:7 of the Planning Panel Report, included in this document at Appendix B*

43. The City agrees with the panel's recommendations.

44. The Panel preferred version suggests the policy guideline "*Consider as relevant: Limiting major promotion signs on walls to:*

- *20 per cent the wall area*
- *A maximum area of [to be specified] square metres.*"

45. In relation to this policy guideline, the City elects a maximum of 25 square metres. Similar sign policies exist in other Planning Scheme. Namely, Cardinia nominates a maximum of 21 square metres. The proposed size, while indicative rather than prescriptive, will assist in managing the level of impact on surrounding amenity in accordance with the purposes of Clause 52.05 and the local policy objectives.

Recommendation 2n) *revise Section 13 'Electronic Signs' as shown in the Panel preferred version at Appendix F:8 of the Planning Panel Report, included in this document at Appendix B.*

46. The City agrees to the panel's recommendations.

47. In accordance with the panel reports discussion, the chapter has been expanded to refer to electronic and animated signs, in addition to the changes show in the Panel preferred version.

CONCLUSION

48. A full copy of the *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines* (February 2024) is included as **Attachment 4**.

49. The *City of Greater Geelong Advertising Signs Issues and Options Paper* (May 2022), as exhibited and proposed for adoption, is included as **Attachment 5**.

APPENDIX A.

Table 1. Objectives and strategies non-compliant with Recommendation 2b.

Chapter	Type	Exhibited Version
3. Highway Oriented Commercial Areas	Objective	To avoid signage that adversely affects the amenity of the host site and surrounding area.
5. High Amenity Areas	Objective	To avoid amenity impacts from intrusive signage such as illuminated and electronic signage.
6. Sensitive Areas	Strategy	Discourage illuminated signs unless it can be demonstrated that there is no adverse impact upon amenity or character.

Appendix B

Appendix F Panel preferred version of Sign Guidelines

F:1 Panel preferred version General Guidelines

Panel notes:

- *changes are based on the Day 1 version of Advertising Sign Guidelines 2022 (Document 4)*
- *highlighted content subject to specific recommendations*
- *all other content should be reviewed in accordance with Panel threshold recommendations 2b, c, d, e and f (refer Executive Summary).*

Objectives
To ensure signs respond to the natural setting and urban context in which they are located.
To ensure signs do not alter or obscure views to significant natural or built features.
To ensure signs do not dominate the streetscape, host site or building.
To ensure that signs do not interfere with movements and viewlines of pedestrians and cyclist movements and the safety of roads and railways.
Objective 5 deleted.
To facilitate the display of signs for businesses and community groups for identification and promotion where appropriate.

Strategies	Policy Guidelines
1. Deleted	1. Deleted 2. Deleted
2. Encourage signs to be co-located and consolidated wherever possible, particularly where there is more than one tenancy.	3. New development should nominate consistent areas for the display of signage for each business tenancy.
3. Encourage signs that are integrated with and proportionate in height and scale to the host building, site and streetscape.	4. Encourage the preparation of signage strategies for non-residential proposals with a large floor area or multiple tenancies.
4. Manage the number and repetition of signs on a single lot and streetscape.	5. Flat signs on building walls should relate to the architecture of the building in style and placement.
5. Avoid signs that dominate or obscure business identification signs within a site or the surrounding area.	6. Encourage use of individual letters as an alternative to large, flat signs on building walls where appropriate.
6. Encourage signs to integrate with the architectural or landscape features of the host site or building.	7. Deleted 8. Deleted 9. Deleted
7. Encourage signs that are sensitive to the movement, visibility, functionality and amenity of the public realm and infrastructure.	10. Encourage signage that retains existing trees and introduces new landscaping and vegetation.
	11. Deleted
	12. Reflective signs should be avoided.

F:2 Panel preferred version Pedestrian Orientated Commercial Area Guidelines

Panel notes:

- *changes are based on the Day 1 version of Advertising Sign Guidelines 2022 (Document 4)*
- *highlighted content subject to specific recommendations*
- *all other content should be reviewed in accordance with Panel threshold recommendations 2b, c, d, e and f (refer Executive Summary).*

Objectives
To ensure signs are subordinate and not intrusive to the built form and streetscape environment.
To protect visibility between the public realm and inside buildings.
To encourage a signage character that is consistent with a human scale built form and streetscape.
To maintain open and framed views to the sky from the public realm.
To avoid signs that compromise the architectural values of buildings and landscape.

Strategies	Policy Guidelines
1. Ensure signs are of a size and height that maintain the built form and streetscape character. 2. Discourage any sign that would block a view from the public realm between buildings and to the sky. 3. Limit use of electronic signs. 4. Avoid signs that obscure visibility through building windows to and from the street. 5. Avoid freestanding signs, unless the building which it relates to on the site is set back from road more than 20 metres.	Consider as relevant: 1. Encourage signs in the locations shown in Figure 1. 2. Discourage signs in the locations shown in Figure 2. 3. Signs should not exceed a maximum street wall or building height, or encroach an upper level setback, identified in a zone, overlay or schedule. 4. Signs should not project more than one metre from the building and not be lower than 2.7 metres above a pedestrian thoroughfare. 5. Limiting electronic signs to one sign per building. 6. Buildings should not be painted in corporate colours, which is regarded as signage. 7. Ground level and parapet are the preferred locations for small illuminated signs (particularly non-flashing, neon tubular art signs) and electronic signs, where appropriate. 8. Discourage signs that cover upper level windows or other openings of buildings. 9. Minimise signs on back or side walls of buildings, particularly at upper levels. 10. Limit total signage for premises with less than 5 metres street frontage to a maximum of 8 square metres. 11. Avoid sky signs, high wall signs and bunting signs. 12. Deleted

F:3 Panel preferred version Highway Orientated Commercial Area Guidelines

Panel notes:

- *changes are based on the Day 1 version of Advertising Sign Guidelines 2022 (Document 4)*
- *highlighted content subject to specific recommendations*
- *all other content should be reviewed in accordance with Panel threshold recommendations 2b, c, d, e and f (refer Executive Summary).*

Objectives
To ensure signage is subordinate to the built form and landscape context in which it is located.
To provide for the clear identification of premises.
To discourage signs that interfere with the functionality of a site.
To avoid signage that adversely affects the amenity of the host site and surrounding area.

Strategies	Policy Guidelines
1. Deleted 2. Avoid oversized and excessive numbers of signs. 3. Avoid signs that interfere with pedestrian or vehicular thoroughfares or business entrances. 4. Avoid signs that result in loss of amenity or adversely affect the natural or built environment, or the safety, appearance or efficiency of a road or rail corridor.	1. Encourage signs in the locations shown in Figure 3. 2. Discourage signs in the locations shown in Figure 4. 3. Incorporate areas for the display of signage for each business tenancy within the building design. 4. Minimise the number of businesses identified on freestanding signs for multi-tenanted development. 5. Discourage freestanding signs unless there is no opportunity for signs to be incorporated into buildings, or the building which it relates to on the site is set back from road more than 20 metres. 6. Freestanding business identification signs should: - Be placed at a right (90 degree) angle to sensitive interfaces (such as open space and residential areas) - Not protrude over a dominant skyline, including buildings, structures and tree canopies, when viewed from the ground within 1 kilometre. - Be less than the height of the building to which it relates, excluding parapets, or 7 metres, whichever is lesser. - For sites with one street frontage, be restricted to one sign per premises. - For sites with more than one street frontage and the frontages are both greater than 150 metres long and each have access to a road, be limited to a total of two freestanding signs, with not more than one sign on each frontage. - Be spaced and set back from the street

	consistently with the prevailing spacing and setbacks in the streetscape. 7. Avoid sky signs, high wall signs and bunting signs.

F:4 Panel preferred version Industrial Area Guidelines

Panel notes:

- *changes are based on the Day 1 version of Advertising Sign Guidelines 2022 (Document 4)*
- *highlighted content subject to specific recommendations*
- *all other content should be reviewed in accordance with Panel threshold recommendations 2b, c, d, e and f (refer Executive Summary).*

Objectives

To provide for the adequate identification of premises.

To ensure signage is subordinate to the built form and landscape context in which it is located.

To discourage signs that interfere with the functionality of a site.

Strategies	Policy Guidelines
1. Ensure signs respect the built form and the landscape context, and are not the dominant feature. 2. Deleted 3. Incorporate areas for the display of signage for each business tenancy within the building design. 4. Limit freestanding signs. 5. Avoid signs that interfere with pedestrian or vehicular thoroughfares or business entrances. 6. Avoid signs that have an adverse effect on the safety, appearance and efficiency of a road.	1. Encourage signs in the locations shown in Figure 5. 2. Discourage signs in the locations shown in Figure 6. 3. Deleted 4. Freestanding business identification signs should: - be placed at a right (90 degree) angle to sensitive interfaces (such as open space and residential areas). - not protrude over a dominant skyline, including buildings, structures and tree canopies, when viewed from the ground within 1 kilometre. - not exceed the dominant existing building height of an area. - for sites with one street frontage, be restricted to one sign per premises. - for sites with more than one street frontage and the frontages are both greater than 150 metres long and each have access to a road, be limited to a total of two freestanding signs, with not more than one sign on each frontage. - be spaced and set back from the street consistently with the prevailing spacing and setbacks in the streetscape.

F:5 Panel preferred version Interface Area Guidelines

Panel notes:

- *changes are based on the Day 1 version of Advertising Sign Guidelines 2022 (Document 4)*
- *highlighted content subject to specific recommendations*
- *all other content should be reviewed in accordance with Panel threshold recommendations 2b, c, d, e and f (refer Executive Summary).*

Objectives
To ensure signs in commercial and industrial areas do not have a detrimental impact on high amenity and sensitive areas.

Strategies	Policy Guidelines
1. Signs should not dominate the outlook from or result in increased illumination to adjoining landscapes, passive open space or nearby dwellings. 2. Ensure signs do not have a detrimental impact on access to daylight or sunlight, or overshadowing of any sensitive space (including footpaths, public and private open space, windows) at any time of the year.^ 3. Ensure signs near rural areas are sympathetic in scale and do not dominate any landscape, coastal or environmental features, view corridors or vistas. 4. Discourage the use of floodlit signs and ensure that they are primarily directed away from visually sensitive areas.^ 5. Illuminated signage should be limited near residential areas, open space and other sensitive interfaces.	1. Deleted 2. Limit the number of signs on any one property that are visible from the high amenity or sensitive area to the minimum number necessary to identify the premises. 3. Signage colours should be compatible with surrounding landscape. 4. Illuminated signs should be located, baffled and the level of illumination controlled to ensure there is no unreasonable spill of light beyond the area of the sign or loss of amenity.^ 5. Discourage internally illuminated panels and boxes on or above verandah level.

^ in format of Final Day Changes

F:6 Panel preferred version Growth Area Guidelines

Panel notes:

- *changes are based on the Day 1 version of Advertising Sign Guidelines 2022 (Document 4)*
- *highlighted content subject to specific recommendations*
- *all other content should be reviewed in accordance with Panel threshold recommendations 2b, c, d, e and f (refer Executive Summary).*

Objective	
Deleted	
Strategies	**Policy Guidelines**
1. Deleted	Consider as relevant:
2. Encourage a whole-of-estate approach to signs in growth areas.	1. Providing a minimum of 150 metres between onsite promotion signs on the same road. 2. Limiting off site promotion signs to: - within 5 kilometres of the estate - 4 signs per estate - a minimum 250 metres between each sign. 3. Combined with Policy Guideline 2 4. Combined with Policy Guideline 1 5. Deleted. 6. Limiting the display of promotion signs for 5 years or until the last lot is sold, whichever is the earlier. 7. Deleted.

F:7 Panel preferred version Major Promotion Sign Guidelines

Panel notes:

- *changes are based on the Day 1 version of Advertising Sign Guidelines 2022 (Document 4)*
- *highlighted content subject to specific recommendations*
- *all other content should be reviewed in accordance with Panel threshold recommendations 2b, c, d, e and f (refer Executive Summary).*

Objectives
To ensure major promotion signs respect the scale and form of their built form and landscape context.
To ensure major promotion signs are developed in appropriate locations.
To ensure major promotion signs are sensitive to the character, amenity and functionality of a site or area.
To avoid major promotion signs that dominate the surrounding area.

Strategies	Policy Guidelines
1. Encourage the provision of architectural interest in the design of major promotion signs. 2. Ensure major promotion signs are designed to avoid unreasonable overshadowing or result in loss of amenity to useable areas of the host site or adjoining land. 3. Ensure major promotion signs are spaced at a sufficient distance apart in order to avoid visual clutter. 4. Avoid major promotion signs that dominate buildings and uses on the host site and adjoining land. 5. Avoid major promotion signs in land near sensitive interfaces including river corridors, passive open space and residential areas, particularly where it will form part of the skyline when viewed from these areas. 6. Deleted	Consider as relevant: 1. Providing a minimum 1 kilometre separation between major promotion signs on the same road. 2. Deleted 3. Discourage major promotion signs that would restrict the development of a site or conflict with an identified strategic development objective. 4. Avoid 'pop out' elements 5. Limiting major promotion signs to one per intersection. 6. Limiting major promotion signs on walls to: • 20 per cent the wall area • A maximum area of [to be specified] square metres.

F:8 Panel preferred version Electronic Sign Guidelines

Panel notes:

- *changes are based on the Day 1 version of Advertising Sign Guidelines 2022 (Document 4)*
- *highlighted content subject to specific recommendations*
- *all other content should be reviewed in accordance with Panel threshold recommendations 2b, c, d, e and f (refer Executive Summary).*

Objectives
To encourage electronic signs in appropriate locations that add vitality and light to a commercial or industrial area. To avoid electronic signs that unreasonably affect the amenity of a site or area.^ To avoid electronic signs that may have an effect on road safety.

Strategies	Policy Guidelines
1. Avoid electronic and animated signs that will result in unreasonable light spill, glare, disturbance, intrusion or other detrimental effects on the amenity of surrounding rural or residential areas or public open space.^ 2. Encourage animated signs (including digital media, holographic, 3D and projections) to activate public places. 3. Ensure electronic signs prioritise road and rail safety. ^ in format of Final Day Changes	Consider as relevant: 1. Control electronic signs to have appropriate levels of illumination responsive to sunlight, weather conditions and time of day. 2. Limiting electronic signs to one per premises. 3. Discourage electronic signs that face a residential area, passive open space or other sensitive interfaces. 4. Deleted. 5. Deleted. 6.Deleted.

Executive summary

Planning policy in Victoria requires development to achieve high quality urban design outcomes, including through the display of signs. Greater Geelong Planning Scheme Amendment C383ggee (the Amendment) responds to this goal by proposing the introducion of a new Incorporated Document *Greater Geelong Advertising Sign Guidelines 2022* (2022 Guidelines) to guide decision making on signs. The 2022 Guidelines provide objectives, strategies and guidelines for displaying signs in specific areas and for different sign types.

Public exhibition of the Amendment attracted eight opposing submissions, the majority of which objected to guidance proposed for growth areas. Submitters argued the guidance was too restrictive and failed to account for the temporary nature of growth area signs.

A Practitioner's Guide to Victorian Planning Schemes Version 1.5, April 2022 and *Ministerial Direction: The Form and Content of Planning Schemes* provides guidance and diretions on the drafting of local policy. Importantly, the guidance confirms there is a role for local policy to guide the exercise of discretion where it can be demonstrated local circumstances require it.

The Panel's review of the issues reveals parts of the 2022 Guidelines:

- do not follow drafting guidance
- duplicate provisions in Clause 52.05 (Signs)
- are not responsive to the issues identified in the *City of Greater Geelong Advertising Sign Guidelines Review – Issues and Options Paper May 2022* that informed the Amendment.

The Panel agrees with many of the proposals put forward by submitters to encourage the display of signs in locations responsive to site conditions and context, including the dynamic condition of growth areas as they transition from farmland to thriving new communities.

The Panel's recommendations reflect the need to revise the 2022 Guideline to address these matters. With these changes, the Panel is satisfied the 2022 Guidelines will add value and appropriately guide decision making on signs in Greater Geelong.

Recommendations

Based on the reasons set out in this Report, the Panel recommends that Greater Geelong Planning Scheme Amendment C383ggee be adopted as exhibited subject to the following:

1. **Amend Clauses 15.01-1L-03 and 15.01-6L in accordance with the Panel preferred version in Appendix E.**
2. **Amend the Incorporated Document 'Greater Geelong Advertising Sign Guidelines, 2022' to:**
   a) **revise the description of policy guidelines in accordance with Document 23b**
   b) **delete 'objectives' and 'strategies' that duplicate the provisions of Clause 52.05**
   c) **redraft detailed guidance under 'strategies' as 'policy guidelines'**
   d) **delete 'guidelines' that do not provide direct and prescriptive measures**
   e) **delete 'strategies' and 'guidelines' that provide blanket opposition to specific sign types**
   f) **make terminology consistent with the Victoria Planning Provisions, as shown in Table 5 of this report**

g) revise Section 2 'General Guidelines' as shown in the Panel preferred version at Appendix F:1

h) revise Section 3 'Pedestrian Orientated Commercial Areas' as shown in the Panel preferred version at Appendix F:2

i) revise Section 3 'Highway Orientated Commercial Areas' as shown in the Panel preferred version at Appendix F:3

j) revise Section 4 'Industrial Areas' as shown in the Panel preferred version at Appendix F:4

k) revise Section 7 'Interface Areas' as shown in the Panel preferred version at Appendix F:5

l) revise Section 11 'Growth Areas' as shown in the Panel preferred version at Appendix F:6

m) revise Section 12 'Major Promotion Signs' as shown in the Panel preferred version at Appendix F:7

n) revise Section 13 'Electronic Signs' as shown in the Panel preferred version at Appendix F:8.

Planning and Environment Act 1987

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

AMENDMENT C383GGEE

INSTRUCTION SHEET

The planning authority for this amendment is the Greater Geelong City Council.

The Greater Geelong Planning Scheme is amended as follows:

Planning Scheme Ordinance

The Planning Scheme Ordinance is amended as follows:

1. In **Planning Policy Framework** – insert new Clause 15.01-1L-03 in the form of the attached document.

2. In **Planning Policy Framework** – insert new Clause 15.01-6L in the form of the attached document.

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

4. In **Operational Provisions** – Clause 72.08, replace the Schedule with a new Schedule in the form of the attached document.

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

15.01 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

31/07/2018
VC148

15.01-1S Urban design

31/07/2018
VC148

Objective

To create urban environments that are safe, healthy, functional and enjoyable and that contribute to a sense of place and cultural identity.

Strategies

Require development to respond to its context in terms of character, cultural identity, natural features, surrounding landscape and climate.

Ensure development contributes to community and cultural life by improving the quality of living and working environments, facilitating accessibility and providing for inclusiveness.

Ensure the interface between the private and public realm protects and enhances personal safety.

Ensure development supports public realm amenity and safe access to walking and cycling environments and public transport.

Ensure that the design and location of publicly accessible private spaces, including car parking areas, forecourts and walkways, is of a high standard, creates a safe environment for users and enables easy and efficient use.

Ensure that development provides landscaping that supports the amenity, attractiveness and safety of the public realm.

Ensure that development, including signs, minimises detrimental impacts on amenity, on the natural and built environment and on the safety and efficiency of roads.

Promote good urban design along and abutting transport corridors.

Policy documents

Consider as relevant:

- *Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017)

15.01-1L-01 Development in activity centres

07/07/2022
C417ggee

Policy application

This policy applies to all buildings and works applications in activity centres.

Objective

To ensure the design and layout of new or expanding centres minimise amenity impacts on surrounding uses and contribute positively to the streetscape and surrounding area.

Strategies

Ensure blank walls and loading bays are not adjacent to sensitive land uses and key vehicle and pedestrian accessways to a centre.

Ensure illuminated signage does not impact on sensitive land uses.

Ensure new development provides visually interesting and active street frontages where buildings abut the street or a public space.

Encourage car parking areas to be located to the side or rear of a centre.

Ensure car parking areas do not visually dominate the front setback area of a centre by providing landscaping including canopy trees.

Ensure there are safe and convenient pedestrian connections from car parking areas and the surrounding footpath network to the entrance(s) of a centre.

15.01-1L-02 Pakington Street North urban design

07/07/2022
C417ggee

Policy application

This policy applies to buildings and works and subdivision applications in Pakington Street North, Geelong West, as shown on the Pakington Street North Urban Design Area Map in this clause.

Objectives

To retain and enhance the identified elements that contribute to the preferred urban design character of Pakington Street North.

To improve the quality of the pedestrian environment and the interface of development with the street.

To support buildings that are designed to respond to the characteristics of the site and locality, and demonstrate a high standard of contemporary expression.

To encourage development that minimises impacts on adjacent residential areas.

To provide a safe and convenient environment for pedestrians and improve pedestrian permeability to the areas surrounding Pakington Street.

To minimise the visual impact of car parking areas.

Streetscape character strategies

Enhance the pedestrian environment with active frontages at ground level that relate to the footpath and street.

Discourage development that has no relationship to its site or the Pakington Street setting.

Address streets with building frontages rather than yards, car parks or servicing areas.

Orient commercial buildings towards the street with the main pedestrian entrance and display windows on the street frontage where possible.

Discourage development that presents blank walls to Pakington Street or any side streets.

Avoid the use of roller shutters over shop fronts.

Where located on a corner site, orient buildings to address both street frontages.

Discourage the removal of the diverse mix of building stock.

Encourage the retention of landmark buildings in the street by:

- Re-using landmark structures for alternative uses.
- Protecting landmark structures such as corner former hotel buildings.

Building siting and large site layout strategies

Reinforce the linear layout of the street, as part of the historic street grid of Geelong West by:

- Designing buildings to be perpendicular to the street with building frontages parallel to the front boundary.
- Siting buildings consistently on the front boundary (i.e. zero metre setback from front boundary).

Minimise the impact of commercial buildings on adjacent residential areas by locating development that may generate noise away from adjacent residential uses.

On larger sites where residential uses are permitted, site residential uses to provide a buffer between new commercial uses and the existing residential uses.

Building siting and large site layout policy guideline

Consider as relevant:

- Allowing occasional setbacks from street frontages to provide areas of public open space in front of buildings.

Building form strategies

Support buildings that respect the predominant building height in the street and of adjacent properties.

Articulate the form of buildings and elevations.

Design buildings that respect the dominance of 19th century and Inter War era places of Pakington Street in a contemporary manner.

Encourage development to provide a transition in scale to adjacent residential areas.

Design development to minimise overlooking and loss of solar access to adjacent residential areas.

Design building forms that express the fine grain pattern of facades in the Pakington Street Activity Centre, particularly on larger sites.

Building form policy guideline

Consider as relevant:

- Discouraging buildings that exceed the predominant building height in the street by more than one storey.

Building finishes and details strategies

Use simple building details and a mix of contemporary materials, colours and finishes that complement the palette of materials and colours in the street.

Use architectural detailing that integrates with the architecture of the building and contributes to the character of the street.

Discourage signs that dominate the building or streetscape and detract from the pedestrian environment.

Building finishes and details policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- Awnings or verandahs that reflect the architectural era of the building.
- Relating the height of the awning to the building elevation. On double storey buildings locate the awning at first floor level.
- Providing subtle down lighting under awnings wherever possible and avoiding fluorescent style, ‘white’ lighting.
- Incorporating subtle façade lighting on landmark buildings.
- Providing signs only on the awning fascia or under the awning wherever possible.
- If a flat wall sign is proposed, relating the sign to the architecture of the building in style and placement (i.e. individual letters as opposed to large, flat rectangular signs).
- Avoiding large, visually dominant signs, particularly above first floor level such as roof signs, sky signs and above awning signs.
- Avoiding large wall signs that do not relate to the building.

Heritage interface strategies

Design buildings to respect the scale and form of adjacent heritage buildings.

Provide a transition in scale to heritage buildings on adjoining sites.

Sustainability strategies

Design buildings for energy efficiency, utilising sustainable energy and construction techniques wherever possible.

Design buildings to maximise solar access and opportunities for cross ventilation.

Walkability strategies

Provide weather protection to footpaths where appropriate.

Encourage pedestrian connections through larger development sites by connecting existing lanes or cul de sacs.

Discourage large internalised developments that do not connect with existing streets and residential neighbourhoods.

Discourage the use of blank walls fronting onto footpaths and other pedestrian links.

Walkability policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- Maintaining and extending the continuous north-south laneway access along the rear of Pakington Street properties, where possible.
- Discouraging the provision of footpaths through large ground level car parks.

Vehicle access and car parking strategies

Minimise the number and width of vehicle crossings from Pakington Street.

Locate car parking areas at the rear of the site to minimise visibility from Pakington Street and adjacent residential areas.

Minimise the width of vehicle access points to car parking areas.

Design car parking areas to minimise large expanses of unrelieved hard surface, including providing shade trees and other planting to ground level car parks.

Vehicle access and car parking policy guideline

Consider as relevant:

- Discouraging vehicle crossings that are greater in width than 2 lanes.

Policy document

Consider as relevant:

- *Pakington Street North Urban Design Guidelines* (Planisphere, 2004)

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

Pakington Street North Urban Design Area Map

15.01-1L-03 Signs in urban environments

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Proposed C383ggee

Policy application

This policy applies to all urban land in the municipality.

Objectives

To encourage signs to meet the objectives of the *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines* (February 2024).

Strategies

Encourage signs to meet the strategies of the *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines* (February 2024).

Policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- Policy guidelines of the *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines* (February 2024).

Policy documents

Consider as relevant:

- *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines* (February 2024).

15.01-2S Building design

01/01/2024
VC250

Objective

To achieve building design and siting outcomes that contribute positively to the local context, enhance the public realm and support environmentally sustainable development.

Strategies

Ensure a comprehensive site analysis forms the starting point of the design process and provides the basis for the consideration of height, scale, massing and energy performance of new development.

Ensure development responds and contributes to the strategic and cultural context of its location.

Minimise the detrimental impact of development on neighbouring properties, the public realm and the natural environment.

Improve the energy performance of buildings through siting and design measures that encourage:

- Passive design responses that minimise the need for heating, cooling and lighting.
- On-site renewable energy generation and storage technology.
- Use of low embodied energy materials.

Restrict the provision of reticulated natural gas in new dwelling development.

Ensure the layout and design of development supports resource recovery, including separation, storage and collection of waste, mixed recycling, glass, organics and e-waste.

Encourage use of recycled and reusable materials in building construction and undertake adaptive reuse of buildings, where practical.

Encourage water efficiency and the use of rainwater, stormwater and recycled water.

Minimise stormwater discharge through site layout and landscaping measures that support on-site infiltration and stormwater reuse.

Ensure the form, scale, and appearance of development enhances the function and amenity of the public realm.

Ensure buildings and their interface with the public realm support personal safety, perceptions of safety and property security.

Ensure development is designed to protect and enhance valued landmarks, views and vistas.

Ensure development considers and responds to transport movement networks and provides safe access and egress for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.

Encourage development to retain existing vegetation.

Ensure development provides landscaping that responds to its site context, enhances the built form, creates safe and attractive spaces and supports cooling and greening of urban areas.

Policy documents

Consider as relevant:

- *Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017)
- *Apartment Design Guidelines for Victoria* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2021)
- *Waste Management and Recycling in Multi-unit Developments* (Sustainability Victoria, 2019)

15.01-2L Environmentally sustainable development

07/07/2022
C417ggee

Policy application

This policy applies to residential and non-residential development, excluding subdivision, in accordance with the thresholds detailed in this policy other than where an ESD plan or framework has been previously approved.

Objective

To achieve best practice in environmentally sustainable development from the design stage through to construction and operation.

General strategies

Facilitate development that minimises environmental impacts.

Encourage environmentally sustainable development that:

- Is consistent with the type and scale of the development.
- Responds to site opportunities and constraints.
- Adopts best practice through a combination of methods, processes and locally available technology that demonstrably minimise environmental impacts.

Energy performance strategies

Reduce both energy use and energy peak demand through design measures such as:

- Building orientation.
- Shading to glazed surfaces.
- Optimising glazing to exposed surfaces.
- Inclusion of or space allocation for renewable technologies.

Integrated water management strategies

Reduce total operating potable water use through appropriate design measures such as water efficient fixtures, appliances, equipment, irrigation and landscaping.

Encourage the use of alternative water sources, including greywater, rainwater and stormwater.

Incorporate water sensitive urban design to improve the quality of stormwater runoff and reduce impacts on water systems and water bodies.

Indoor environment quality

Achieve a healthy indoor environment quality, including thermal comfort and access to fresh air and daylight, prioritising passive design over mechanical heating, ventilation, cooling and lighting.

Reduce indoor air pollutants by encouraging use of materials containing chemicals that have low levels of toxicity.

Minimise noise levels and noise transfer within and between buildings and associated external areas.

Transport strategies

Design development to promote the use of walking, cycling and public transport, in that order; and to minimise car dependency.

Promote the use of low emissions vehicle technologies and supporting infrastructure.

Waste management strategies

Promote waste avoidance, reuse and recycling during the design, construction and operation stages of development.

Encourage use of durable and reuseable building materials.

Ensure sufficient space is allocated for future change in waste management needs, including (where possible) composting and green waste facilities.

Urban ecology strategies

Protect and enhance biodiversity by incorporating natural habitats and planting indigenous vegetation.

Reduce urban heat island effects through building design, landscape design, water sensitive urban design and the retention and provision of canopy trees.

Encourage the provision of space for productive gardens, particularly in larger residential developments.

Policy guidelines

Residential

Consider as relevant:

A Sustainable Design Assessment (including an assessment using BESS, STORM or other methods) for:

- 3 - 9 dwellings.
- A building for accommodation other than dwellings with a gross floor area between 100 square metres and 1500 square metres.

A Sustainability Management Plan (including an assessment using BESS, STORM, Green star, MUSIC or other methods) and a Green Travel Plan for:

- 10 or more dwellings.
- A building for accommodation other than dwellings with a gross floor area of 1500 square metres or more.

Non-residential

Consider as relevant:

A Sustainable Design Assessment (including an assessment using BESS, STORM, MUSIC or other methods) for:

- A non-residential building with a gross floor area between 300 square metres and 1500 square metres.
- An extension to an existing non-residential building creating between 300 square metres and 1500 square metres of additional gross floor area.

A Sustainability Management Plan (including an assessment using BESS, STORM, Green star, MUSIC or other methods) and a Green Travel Plan for:

- A non-residential building with a gross floor area of 1500 square metres or more.
- An extension to an existing non-residential building creating 1500 square metres or more of additional gross floor area.

Mixed use

Consider as relevant:

Applicable assessments or plans for the residential and non-residential components of the development.

Policy documents

Consider as relevant the following tools to support a Sustainable Design Assessment or Sustainability Management Plan:

- *Sustainable Design Assessment in the Planning Process* (IMAP, 2015)
- *Built Environment Sustainability Scorecard 'BESS'* (Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment 'CASBE')
- *Green Star* (Green Building Council of Australia)
- *Model for Urban Stormwater Improvement Conceptualisation 'MUSIC'* (Melbourne Water)
- *Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme 'NatHERS'* (Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency)
- *Stormwater Treatment Objective - Relative Measure 'STORM'* (Melbourne Water)
- *Urban Stormwater Best Practice Environmental Management Guidelines* (Victorian Stormwater Committee, 1999)
- *Waste Management and Recycling in Multi-Unit Developments - Better Practice Guide* (Sustainability Victoria, 2018)

Commencement

This policy does not apply to applications received by the responsible authority before 17 October 2019.

Expiry

This policy will expire if it is superseded by a comparable provision in the Victoria Planning Provisions.

15.01-3S Subdivision design

01/01/2024
VC250

Objective

To ensure the design of subdivisions achieves attractive, safe, accessible, diverse and sustainable neighbourhoods.

Strategies

In the development of new residential areas and in the redevelopment of existing areas, subdivision should be designed to create liveable and sustainable communities by:

- Creating compact neighbourhoods that have walkable distances between activities.
- Developing activity centres in appropriate locations with a mix of uses and services and access to public transport.
- Creating neighbourhood centres that include services to meet day to day needs.
- Creating urban places with a strong sense of place that are functional, safe and attractive.
- Providing a range of lot sizes to suit a variety of dwelling and household types to meet the needs and aspirations of different groups of people.
- Creating landscaped streets and a network of open spaces to meet a variety of needs with links to regional parks where possible.
- Protecting and enhancing habitat for native flora and fauna, and providing opportunities for people to experience nature in urban areas.
- Facilitating an urban structure where neighbourhoods are clustered to support larger activity centres served by high quality public transport.
- Reduce car dependency by allowing for:
  - Convenient and safe public transport.
  - Safe and attractive spaces and networks for walking and cycling.
  - Subdivision layouts that allow easy movement within and between neighbourhoods.
  - A convenient and safe road network.
- Minimising exposure of sensitive uses to air and noise pollution from the transport system.
- Being accessible to people with disabilities.
- Creating an urban structure that:
  - Responds to climate related hazards.
  - Incorporates integrated water management, including sustainable irrigation of open space.
  - Minimises peak demand on the electricity network.
  - Supports energy efficiency and solar energy generation through urban layout and lot orientation.
  - Supports waste minimisation and increased resource recovery.
- Providing utilities and services that support the uptake of renewable energy technologies, such as microgrids and energy storage systems, including batteries.
- Providing all-electric lots.

Policy documents

Consider as relevant:

- *Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017)

15.01-3L Subdivision design in low density and rural residential areas

07/07/2022
C417ggee

Policy application

This policy applies to the subdivision of land in the Low Density Residential and Rural Living Zones.

Strategy

Design subdivisions to create lots with a clearly identifiable street frontage.

Policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- Vehicle accessways to have a minimum width of 4 metres where the length of the driveway exceeds 30 metres.
- Lots to have a minimum street front of 4 metres.

15.01-4S Healthy neighbourhoods

31/07/2018
VC148

Objective

To achieve neighbourhoods that foster healthy and active living and community wellbeing.

Strategies

Design neighbourhoods that foster community interaction and make it easy for people of all ages and abilities to live healthy lifestyles and engage in regular physical activity by providing:

- Connected, safe, pleasant and attractive walking and cycling networks that enable and promote walking and cycling as a part of daily life.
- Streets with direct, safe and convenient access to destinations.
- Conveniently located public spaces for active recreation and leisure.
- Accessibly located public transport stops.
- Amenities and protection to support physical activity in all weather conditions.

Policy documents

Consider as relevant:

- *Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017)

15.01-5S Neighbourhood character

09/10/2020
VC169

Objective

To recognise, support and protect neighbourhood character, cultural identity, and sense of place.

Strategies

Support development that respects the existing neighbourhood character or contributes to a preferred neighbourhood character.

Ensure the preferred neighbourhood character is consistent with medium and higher density housing outcomes in areas identified for increased housing.

Ensure development responds to its context and reinforces a sense of place and the valued features and characteristics of the local environment and place by respecting the:

- Pattern of local urban structure and subdivision.
- Underlying natural landscape character and significant vegetation.
- Neighbourhood character values and built form that reflect community identity.

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

15/01/2024
VC249

SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 72.04 INCORPORATED DOCUMENTS

1.0 Incorporated documents

~~15/01/2024~~ ~~--/--/----~~
~~VC249~~Proposed C383ggee

Name of document	Introduced by:
3 Bridge Road, Barwon Heads (June 2020)	C415ggee
14 Shepherd Court, North Geelong, Cotton On Office Redevelopment (July 2011)	C257
Adventure Park Comprehensive Development Plan (May 2014)	C288
~~Advertising Sign Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, November 1997, Amended October 2014)~~	~~C296~~
Anakie, Lara & Lovely Banks Heritage Places Incorporated Plan (May 2016)	C316
Armstrong Creek East Native Vegetation Precinct Plan (May 2010)	C206
Armstrong Creek East Precinct Structure Plan (May 2010, Amended November 2011)	C214
Armstrong Creek East Precinct Development Contributions Plan (Urban Enterprise, December 2023)	VC249
Armstrong Creek Horseshoe Bend Precinct Structure Plan (September 2014)	C259
Armstrong Creek North East Industrial Precinct Development Contributions Plan (Urban Enterprise, December 2023)	VC249
Armstrong Creek North East Industrial Precinct Growling Grass Frog Conservation Management Plan (May 2010)	C207
Armstrong Creek North East Industrial Precinct Native Vegetation Precinct Plan (May 2010)	C207
Armstrong Creek North East Industrial Precinct, Precinct Structure Plan (May 2010)	C207
Armstrong Creek South Precinct Structure Plan (February 2016)	C301
Armstrong Creek Town Centre Precinct Structure Plan (March 2014)	C267
Armstrong Creek Town Centre Development Contributions Plan (Urban Enterprise, December 2023)	VC249
Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Plan Framework Plan (November 2008, updated September 2012 and June 2015)	C301
Armstrong Creek West Precinct Development Contributions Plan (Urban Enterprise, December 2023)	VC249
Armstrong Creek West Precinct Native Vegetation Precinct Plan (November 2012)	C240
Armstrong Creek West Precinct Structure Plan (September 2012)	C240
Australian Standard AS 2021-1994, Acoustics - Aircraft Noise Intrusion - Building Siting and Construction (Standards Association of Australia, 1994)	NPS1
Barwon Heads Road (Settlement Road, Belmont to Reserve Road, Marshall) Duplication Project Incorporated Document (October 2020)	C413ggee
Batman Park, Indented Head Incorporated Plan (June 2015)	C274
BUPA Aged Care Facility, Bellarine Lakes (May 2016)	C336
Central Road Drysdale Development Contributions Plan (Urban Enterprise, December 2023)	VC249
Chisholm Road Prison Project, Lara, Incorporated Document (June 2019)	C389ggee

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

Name of document	Introduced by:
City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines (February 2024)	C383ggee
"Claremont" 12-16 Kinsmead Street, Waurn Ponds Design Guidelines Incorporated Plan (February 2022)	C422ggee
"Claremont Homestead" 12-16 Kinsmead Street, Waurn Ponds Statement of Significance (February 2022)	C422ggee
Commercial Tenancies at 55, 57 & 59 Kilgour Street, Geelong (July 2017)	C358
Community Care Accommodation Facility, 120 Russells Road, Mount Duneed, Incorporated Document (September 2020)	C401ggee
Drysdale Bypass (November 2017)	C369
Environmental Weeds (City of Greater Geelong, September 2008)	C129 (Part 1)
Fibre Optic Project, Integrated Approval Requirements (December 2002)	VC17
Geelong City Urban Conservation Study Vol. 1 Restoration and Infill Guidelines, Commercial and Civic Buildings (Graeme Butler for the City of Geelong, 1993)	C258
Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre Strategic Development Site Project (April 2023)	C456ggee
Geelong Library and Heritage Centre Redevelopment (March 2013)	C287
Geelong Ring Road – Section 4C Incorporated Document (June 2010)	C232
Geelong TAC Office Development (October 2006)	C142
Geelong Waterfront Safe Harbour Precinct Project Incorporated Document (July 2019)	C398ggee
Great Western Hotel Heritage Place 177-179 Aberdeen Street, Newtown Incorporated Plan (December 2017)	C365
Heritage and Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 1997)	NPS1
HO1613 McLeods Waterholes Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1613 McLeods Waterholes Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1617 Rocky Point Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1617 Rocky Point Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1618 Woollen Mills Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1618 Woollen Mills Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1620 Drysdale Commercial Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1620 Drysdale Commercial Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1622 Latrobe Terrace Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1622 Latrobe Terrace Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1623 Newtown Hill Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee

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Name of document	Introduced by:
HO1623 Newtown Hill Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1624 Latrobe Terrace Shops Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1624 Latrobe Terrace Shops Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1625 Chilwell and Saffron Street Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1625 Chilwell and Saffron Street Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1626 Aberdeen, George and Skene Streets Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1626 Aberdeen, George and Skene Streets Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1627 Aphrasia Street Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1627 Aphrasia Street Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1628 Autumn Street Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1628 Autumn Street Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1630 Drumcondra and Rippleside Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1630 Drumcondra and Rippleside Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1631 The Esplanade Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1631 The Esplanade Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1632 Girton Crescent Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1632 Girton Crescent Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1633 Lawton Avenue Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1633 Lawton Avenue Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1634 Pakington Street Commercial Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong 2022)	C417ggee
HO1634 Pakington Street Commercial Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1635 Villamanta Street Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1635 Villamanta Street Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1637 Geelong Commercial Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee

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Name of document	Introduced by:
HO1637 Geelong Commercial Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1638 Woolstores Industrial Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1638 Woolstores Industrial Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1639 City East Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1640 Civic Centre Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1640 Civic Centre Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1641 City South Residential Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1641 City South Residential Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1642 Early Twentieth Century Residential Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1642 Early Twentieth Century Residential Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1643 Post World War 1 Residential Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1643 Post World War 1 Residential Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1644 City South-East Residential Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1644 City South-East Residential Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1649 Flinders Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1649 Flinders Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1650 Golf Links Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1650 Golf Links Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1732 Fyans Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1732 Fyans Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1903 Wimmera Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1905 Evans Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1906 Kardinia Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1908 Belmont Heights Estate Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee

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Name of document	Introduced by:
HO1909 Elderslie Estate Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1916 Aberdeen Street (Newtown) Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1917 Eyre Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1918 Hermitage Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1919 William and Margaret Streets Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1920 Shannon Avenue Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1921 Clarkes Hill Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1922 Bareena Estate Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1923 Mercers Hill Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1924 Cairns Avenue Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1925 Fairview Avenue Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1926 Bona Vista Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1958 Ballinasloe Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1959 Great Western Road Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1960 Milton Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1961 Pineville Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1962 Waterloo Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO2005 Upper Skene Street Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO2006 Newtown West Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO2007 West Melbourne Road Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO2016 Austin Park and Environs Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong 2022)	C417ggee
HO2017 Myers Street Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO2018 Western Beach Road Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
Horseshoe Bend Precinct Development Contributions Plan (Urban Enterprise, December 2023)	VC249

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Name of document	Introduced by:
Jetty Road Urban Growth Area Stage 1 Development Contributions Plan (Urban Enterprise, December 2023)	VC249
Lara West Development Contributions Plan (Urban Enterprise, December 2023)	VC249
Lara West Growth Area, Lara, Native Vegetation Precinct Plan (September 2013)	C246
Lara West Precinct Structure Plan, Revision J (25 September 2013)	C246
Melbourne Geelong Interconnection Project (June 2010)	C229
Manzeene Village, Lara, Native Vegetation Precinct Plan (June 2014)	C285
Mental Health Beds Expansion Program Incorporated Document (November 2020)	GC176
Native Vegetation Precinct Plan: Armstrong Creek Town Centre Precinct (July 2021)	C399ggee
Native Vegetation Precinct Plan, Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct (March 2013)	C243
Native Vegetation Precinct Plan, Horseshoe Bend Precinct, Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Area (July 2021)	C399ggee
Newtown Heritage Study Review Report, Volume 3 (City of Greater Geelong, 2008)	C191
New Station Estate Restructure Plan (July 2010, Amended December 2017)	C376pt1ggee
Part 1 / 250 Beach Road, Avalon, August 2022	C448ggee
Rail Gauge Standardisation Project, Integrated Approval Requirements (December 2002)	VC17
Regional Fast Rail Project, Integrated Approval Requirements (December 2002)	VC17
Rail Upgrades at Geelong Port Project (May 2010)	C211
Rippleside Comprehensive Development Plan (David Lock Associates and James D. Ramsey, February 2000)	C2
Rippleside Urban Design Guidelines (David Lock Associates and Andrew Olszewski, June 2000)	C2
Saleyards Comprehensive Development Plan (April 2023)	C434ggee
Small Lot Housing Code (December 2012)	C267
Specialist Training Facility Incorporated Document (June 2019)	C392ggee
Stage 5 GMHBA Stadium Development Kardinia Park Moorabool Street, Geelong South Incorporated Document (March 2021)	C423ggee
Thirteenth Beach Golf Resort, Barwon Heads Comprehensive Development Plan (Land Design Partnership, Anthony Cashmore & Associates and the Planning Group, May 2001 amended September 2006)	C54
Warrnambool Line Upgrade Incorporated Document (December 2019)	GC121
Waterfront Geelong Design and Development Code (Keys Young, July 1996)	NPS1
Waurn Ponds Train Maintenance and Stabling Facility Project Incorporated Document (May 2020)	GC104
West Fyans-Fyans Street Precinct Structure Plan (June 2009)	C205

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

31/07/2018
VC148

SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 72.08 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1.0 Background documents

~~14/11/2023~~ --/--/----
~~C427ggee~~Proposed C383ggee

Name of background document	Amendment number - clause reference
Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Plan Background Report (City of Greater Geelong, 2006)	Clauses 02 and 17
Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Plan (Collie Pty Ltd, 2010, Amended 2012)	Clause 02
Ashby Heritage Review Stage 2 (Dr David Rowe Authentic Heritage Services Pty Ltd and Wendy Jacobs, 2009)	Clauses 02 and 15
Barwon Heads Structure Plan (City of Greater Geelong, 2010)	Clauses 02 and 11
Batman Park & Boat Sheds, The Esplanade, Indented Head, Heritage Review (Dr David Rowe Authentic Heritage Services and Wendy Jacobs, 2013)	Clauses 02 and 15
Bellarine Heritage Study Volumes 1-3 (Huddle, Howe, Lewis and Francis, 1996)	Clauses 02 and 15
Bellarine Peninsula Strategic Plan (City of Greater Geelong, 2006)	Clauses 02 and 11
Belmont Heritage Areas Report Volume 1 (Dr David Rowe, Authentic Heritage Services Pty Ltd, 2007)	Clauses 02 and 15
Belmont Heritage Areas: Inventory of Places Volume 2 (Dr David Rowe Authentic Heritage Services Pty Ltd, 2007)	Clauses 02 and 15
Belmont Heritage Report: Individual Citations Volume 3 (Dr David Rowe Authentic Heritage Services Pty Ltd, 2007)	Clauses 02 and 15
Buckley Falls Management Plan (Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, 1990)	Clause 02
Building in Wildfire Management Overlay Areas (CFA, 2002)	Clause 02 and 11
Central Geelong Framework Plan - A plan for the heart of Djilang (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2023)	Clauses 37.08-s1, 43.02-s47, 43.04-s38 to 45
Central West Victoria Estuaries Coastal Action Plan (Western Coastal Board, 2005)	Clauses 02, 12 and 13
Central West Victoria Regional Coastal Action Plan (Western Coastal Board, 2003)	Clauses 02, 12 and 13
Ceres Heritage Citations Project (Dr David Rowe Authentic Heritage Services Pty Ltd and Wendy Jacobs, 2017 updated 2018)	Clauses 02 and 15
City Fringe Heritage Area Review Part 1 and Part 2 (RBA Architects + Conservation Consultants Pty Ltd, 2017 updated 2018)	Clauses 02 and 15
City of Geelong West Urban Conservation Study Volumes 1-2 (Huddle, Aitken and Honman, 1986)	Clauses 02 and 15
City of Greater Geelong Advertising Sign Guidelines Review – Issues and Options Paper (May 2022)	Clause 15
City of Greater Geelong Economic Development Strategy (City of Greater Geelong, 2005)	Clauses 02 and 17
City of Greater Geelong Environment Management Strategy 2006 - 2011 (City of Greater Geelong, 2006)	Clauses 02, 12 and 13
City of Greater Geelong Housing Diversity Strategy (alphaPlan, David Lock Associates and City of Greater Geelong, 2007)	Clauses 02, 11, 15 and 16

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

Name of background document	Amendment number - clause reference
City of Greater Geelong Housing Strategy Background and Issues Report (Swinburne University, 2005)	Clauses 02, 11, 15 and 16
City of Greater Geelong Retail Strategy 2020-2036 (City of Greater Geelong and SGS Economics and Planning, August 2020)	Clauses 02, 11, 15 and 17
City of Greater Geelong Rural Land Use Strategy (Parsons Brinckerhoff, 2007)	Clauses 02, 14, 17 and 19
City of Greater Geelong Settlement Strategy (City of Greater Geelong, August 2020)	Clauses 02, 11, 15, 16, 17, 19
City of Greater Geelong Stormwater Management Plan (WBM Oceanics Australia, 2002)	Clauses 02, 12, 13 and 19
City of Greater Geelong Urban Furniture Style Manual (Taylor and Cullity Pty Ltd, 1996)	Clauses 02, 11, 15 and 16
City of Newtown Urban Conservation Study Volumes 1-4 (Context Pty Ltd, 1991)	Clauses 02 and 15
City of Newtown Urban Conservation Study, Volumes 5(a) and 5(b) (Richard Peterson, 1997)	Clauses 02 and 15
Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study (Planisphere, 2006)	Clauses 02 and 11
Code of Practice for The Greyhound Industry Dealing with Greyhound Premises and The Keeping and Welfare of Greyhounds (Geryhound Racing Victoria, March 2008)	Clauses 14
Corangamite Regional Catchment Strategy 2013-2019 (Corangamite Catchment Management Authority, 2013)	Clauses 02, 12, 13 and 19
Corio Bay Coastal Action Plan (Central Coastal Board and the City of Greater Geelong, 2005)	Clauses 02, 12, 13 and 19
Corio Norlane Structure Plan Background Report (City of Greater Geelong and the Department of Planning and Community Development, 2011)	Clause 02 and 11
Corio Norlane Structure Plan (City of Greater Geelong and Department of Planning and Community Development, 2012)	Clause 02 and 11
Drysdale-Clifton Springs Structure Plan (City of Greater Geelong, 2010)	Clauses 02 and 11
Drysdale Urban Design Framework (City of Greater Geelong, 2012)	Clauses 02 and 11
Former Dennys Lascelles Woolstore 20 Brougham Street Heritage Assessment (Dr David Rowe Authentic Heritage Services Pty Ltd and Wendy Jacobs, 2017)	Clauses 02 and 15
Geelong Biodiversity Strategy (City of Greater Geelong, 2003)	Clauses 02, 12, 13 and 19
Geelong City Urban Conservation Study 'C' Citations, Volume 4(a) (Helen Lardner, 1995)	Clauses 02 and 15
Geelong City Urban Conservation Study, Volumes 2-5 (Graeme Butler for the City of Geelong, 1991)	Clauses 02 and 15
Geelong Economic Development Strategy 2005-2010 (City of Greater Geelong, 2005)	Clause 02, 14, 17 and 18
Geelong Flood Mitigation Strategy (Gutteridge Haskins & Davey Pty Ltd, 1997)	Clauses 02, 12, 13 and 19
Geelong Region Historic Buildings and Objects Study Volumes 1-3 (Allan Willingham, 1986)	Clauses 02 and 15
Geelong Regional Floodland Study (Geelong Regional Commission, 1979)	Clauses 02, 12, 13 and 19

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

Name of background document	Amendment number - clause reference
Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct Urban Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2010)	Clauses 17 and 43.02-s18
Geelong Sale Yards Conservation Management Plan (Dr David Rowe and Wendy Jacobs, 2007)	Clauses 02 and 15
Geelong Saleyards Precinct Surface Water Management Strategy (BMT, 2021)	Clauses 02 and 11
Geelong Seafood Industry Strategy (City of Greater Geelong, 2003)	Clauses 02 and 17
Geelong Transit City Station Precinct Urban Design Framework (Hassell, Parsons Brinckerhoff and Charter Keck Cramer, 2008)	Clause 02
Geelong Transport Strategy (Victorian State Government and City of Greater Geelong, 2002)	Clauses 02, 11, 18 and 19
Geelong Verandah Study (Authentic Heritage Services Pty Ltd and Wendy Jacobs, 2006)	Clauses 02, 11, 15 and 16
Geelong Waterfront Safe Harbour Precinct - Public Access & Infrastructure Development Project Master Plan (Terroir Pty Ltd, May 2019)	Clause 02
Geelong Western Wedge Framework (Planisphere and Jones & Whitehead Pty Ltd, April 2005, updated September 2005)	Clauses 02 and 37.08 Schedule 1
Geelong Wetland Strategy (City of Greater Geelong, 2006)	Clauses 02, 12, 13 and 19
Greater Geelong Gaming Policy Framework (City of Greater Geelong, 2007)	Clauses 02 and 17
Greater Geelong Outer Areas Heritage Study Volume 1 (excluding Belmont precincts) and Volumes 2-4 (Authentic Heritage Services Pty Ltd, 2000)	Clauses 02 and 15
Goandra Estate Fence Design Guidelines (Hansen Partnership, July 2023)	Clauses 37.01-s8, 43.02-s49 and 52.02s
Heales Road Industrial Estate Framework Plan (MacroPlan Australia and the City of Greater Geelong, 2007)	Clauses 02 and 17
Heritage citation sheet for the Osborne Park bluestone pillar and cast/wrought iron gates (City of Greater Geelong, 2016)	Clauses 02 and 15
Heritage citation sheet for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Avenue of Honour (City of Greater Geelong, December 2016)	Clauses 02 and 15
Heritage Report 9 Bridge Road, Barwon Heads (Post-Panel Version) (Context Pty Ltd, May 2017)	Clauses 02 and 15
Hovells Creek, Lara: Flooding – December 10, 1988 (Technical Services Department Shire of Corio, 1990)	Clauses 02, 12, 13 and 19
Indented Head Structure Plan (City of Greater Geelong, 2016)	Clauses 02 and 11
Infrastructure Design Manual (Local Government Infrastructure Design Association, 2021)	Clauses 02 and 19
Jetty Road Urban Growth Plan (City of Greater Geelong, 2007 amended September 2008)	Clauses 02 and 11
Lara Heritage Review Phase 2, Volumes 1, 2 and 3 (Dr David Rowe and Wendy Jacobs, 2013 revised 2016)	Clauses 02 and 15
Lara Structure Plan (City of Greater Geelong, 2011)	Clauses 02 and 11
Lara Structure Plan Retail Development Issues (Tim Nott, 2009)	Clauses 02 and 11
Lara Town Centre Urban Design Framework (David Lock Associates, 2006)	Clauses 02 and 11

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

Name of background document	Amendment number - clause reference
Leopold Structure Plan (City of Greater Geelong, 2011 amended 2013)	Clauses 02 and 11
Leopold Urban Design Framework (City of Greater Geelong, 2011)	Clauses 02 and 11
Managing Development in Rural Areas, Planning Policy Review (City of Greater Geelong, 2015)	Clauses 02, 14 and 17
Moolap Coastal Strategic Framework Plan (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2019)	Clauses 02 and 11
Newtown Heritage Study Volumes 1-3 (City of Greater Geelong, 2008)	Clauses 02 and 15
Newtown West Heritage Review, Volumes 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 (Dr David Rowe Authentic Heritage Services Pty Ltd & Wendy Jacobs, 2016)	Clauses 02 and 15
Northern and Western Geelong Growth Areas Framework Plan (City of Greater Geelong, August 2020)	Clauses 02, 11, 15, 16 and 19
Ocean Grove Structure Plan (City of Greater Geelong, 2015 amended 2016)	Clauses 02 and 11
Ocean Grove Urban Design Framework (City of Greater Geelong, 2014)	Clauses 02 and 11
Pakington Street North Urban Design Guidelines (Planisphere, 2004)	Clause 15
Pakington Streetscape Improvements Plan (Loder & Bayly, 1990)	Clause 15
Point Lonsdale Structure Plan (Planisphere, 2009 amended 2011)	Clauses 02 and 11
Portarlington Structure Plan (City of Greater Geelong, 2016 amended 2017)	Clauses 02 and 11
Saleyards Precinct Plan (City of Greater Geelong, 2021)	Clauses 02 and 11
St Leonards Structure Plan (City of Greater Geelong, 2015)	Clauses 02 and 11
Statement of Significance for the former stables to Armytage House and classrooms 19-21 Hermitage Road, Newtown (Dr David Rowe and Kevin Krastins, 2003)	Clauses 02 and 15
Study of Open Space Networks (City of Greater Geelong, 2001)	Clauses 02, 11, 18 and 19
Wandana Structure Plan (City of Greater Geelong, 1998)	Clause 02

15.01-5L Neighbourhood character

07/07/2022
C417ggee

Objectives

To manage the impact of urban change on existing neighbourhoods.

To protect areas with a significant garden character.

Strategies

Support medium density housing that respects the existing neighbourhood character in the General Residential Zone areas.

Design development on the periphery of the Residential Growth Zones to be responsive to and respectful of the neighbourhood character in any adjoining residential zones.

Retain existing vegetation wherever possible, particularly vegetation that contributes to the municipality's tree canopy.

Avoid gated communities.

15.01-6S Design for rural areas

31/07/2018
VC148

Objective

To ensure development respects valued areas of rural character.

Strategies

Ensure that the siting, scale and appearance of development protects and enhances rural character.

Protect the visual amenity of valued rural landscapes and character areas along township approaches and sensitive tourist routes by ensuring new development is sympathetically located.

Site and design development to minimise visual impacts on surrounding natural scenery and landscape features including ridgelines, hill tops, waterways, lakes and wetlands.

15.01-6L Signs in rural areas

--/--/----
Proposed C383ggee

Policy application

This policy applies to all rural land in the municipality.

Objectives

To encourage signs to meet the objectives of the *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines (February 2024)*.

Strategies

To encourage signs to meet the strategies of the *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines (February 2024)*.

Policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- Policy guidelines of the *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines (February 2024)*.

Policy documents

Consider as relevant:

- *City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines (February 2024)*.

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

SIGN GUIDELINES

FEBRUARY 2024

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The City of Greater Geelong acknowledges the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of this Land, Waterways and Skies.

It also acknowledges all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are part of the Greater Geelong community today.

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USER GUIDE

01

USER GUIDE

These guidelines apply to all planning permit applications for signs in Greater Geelong, and must be considered as relevant in addition to any other relevant provisions of the Planning Scheme, including the decision guidelines of Clause 52.05 (Signs).

Before you start, you will need to know:

- The type of sign proposed, using the sign terms in Clause 73.02 of the planning scheme.
- The zone and any overlays that apply to the land the sign will be located on.
- The category area the sign is in. The category area is shown near the end of the zone ordinance, or sometimes in the schedule to the zone.
- Is a planning permit required for the sign, such as under Clause 52.05 or an overlay?
- If a permit is required for a sign under an overlay, any requirements in the overlay will need to be addressed, in addition to these Guidelines.
- If a permit is required, you will also need to know the zones and sign category area types of opposite and adjacent land.

Select from the following list all guidelines that apply to your application.
Note there will often be more than one guideline that applies.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- [x] Use the general guidelines for all signs

Also use one of the following guidelines, for the category nominated in the zone or zone schedule where the sign will be located:

Commercial areas (Category 1) are divided into two types: Pedestrian Oriented and Highway Oriented Commercial Areas. These are described on pages 14 and 15. Use the Guidelines for the area the sign will be located in only.

CATEGORY AREA GUIDELINES

- [ ] Commercial (Category 1) Pedestrian Oriented Commercial Area
- [ ] Commercial (Category 1) Highway Oriented Commercial Area
- [ ] Industrial Areas (Category 2)
- [ ] High Amenity Areas (Category 3)
- [ ] Sensitive Areas (Category 4)

If they apply to the proposed sign, use one or more of the following guidelines:

PARTICULAR GUIDELINES

- [ ] Interface Areas
  Signs in a Commercial or Industrial (Category 1 or 2) area, but to or opposite a High Amenity or Sensitive (Category 3 or 4) area.
- [ ] Central Geelong
  Signs in the Central Geelong Activity Centre Zone (schedule 1) and Design and Development Overlay (schedules 17 and 46).
- [ ] Heritage Places
  Signs in a Heritage Overlay. Please note the requirements of the Heritage Overlay must also be addressed, in addition to these guidelines.
- [ ] PAD sites
  Signs located at a freestanding service station, retail premises, freeway service centre, medical centre or veterinary centre.
- [ ] Growth Areas
  Signs in greenfield and large infill development areas
- [ ] Major Promotion Signs
- [ ] Electronic Signs

EXAMPLES OF APPLICATIONS

Each section of the guidelines is divided into objectives, strategies and guidelines.

Objectives specify the outcomes this policy document seeks to achieve.

Strategies describe how the objectives are to be achieved.

Guidelines indicate how objectives can be met and how strategies can be implemented. A responsible authority must take a relevant policy guideline into account when it makes a decision under this planning scheme, but is not required to give effect to it. If the responsible authority is satisfied that an alternative approach meets the objective, the alternative may be considered. (Clause 71.02-2 of the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme)

Example 1

Business identification sign above verandah height in a Commercial 1 Zone, Pedestrian Oriented Commercial Area, for a freestanding service station. The adjacent and opposite land is also in a Pedestrian Oriented Commercial Area.

- [x] General Guidelines
- [x] Commercial (Category 1) Pedestrian Oriented Commercial Area
- [ ] Commercial (Category 1) Highway Oriented Commercial Area
- [ ] Industrial Areas (Category 2)
- [ ] High Amenity Areas (Category 3)
- [ ] Sensitive Areas (Category 4)
- [ ] Interface Areas
- [ ] Central Geelong
- [ ] Heritage Places
- [x] PAD sites
- [ ] Growth Areas
- [ ] Major Promotion Signs
- [ ] Electronic Signs

Example 2

An electronic major promotion sign in Central Geelong, facing the Waterfront precinct. The land on which it is proposed is in the Activity Centre Zone and Heritage Overlay.

- [x] General Guidelines
- [x] Commercial (Category 1) Pedestrian Oriented Commercial Area
- [ ] Commercial (Category 1) Highway Oriented Commercial Area
- [ ] Industrial Areas (Category 2)
- [ ] High Amenity Areas (Category 3)
- [ ] Sensitive Areas (Category 4)
- [x] Interface Areas
- [x] Central Geelong
- [x] Heritage Places
- [ ] PAD sites
- [ ] Growth Areas
- [x] Major Promotion Signs
- [x] Electronic and Animated Signs

GENERAL GUIDELINES

02

GENERAL

The objectives, strategies and guidelines for apply to all land in the municipality.

Objectives:

- To ensure signs respond to the natural setting and urban context in which they are located.
- To ensure signs do not alter or obscure views to significant natural or built features.
- To ensure signs do not dominate the streetscape, host site or building.
- To ensure that signs do not interfere with movements and viewlines of pedestrians and cyclists, and the safety of roads and railways.
- To facilitate the display of signs for businesses and community groups in order to provide opportunities for identification and promotion where appropriate.

Strategies:

1. Encourage signs to be co-located and consolidated wherever possible, particularly where there is more than one tenancy.
2. Encourage signs that are integrated with and proportionate in height and scale to the host building, site and streetscape.
3. Manage the number and repetition of signs on a single lot and streetscape.
4. Avoid signs that dominate or obscure business identification signs within a site or the surrounding area.
5. Encourage signs to integrate with the architectural or landscape features of the host site or building.
6. Encourage signs that are sensitive to the movement, visibility and functionality of the public realm and infrastructure.

Policy Guidelines:

1. New development should nominate consistent areas for the display of signs for each business tenancy.
2. Encourage the preparation of signage strategies for non-residential proposals with a large floor area or multiple tenancies.
3. Flat signs on building walls should relate to the architecture of the building in style and placement.
4. Encourage use of individual letters as an alternative to large, flat signs on building walls where appropriate.
5. Encourage signs that retains existing trees and introduces new landscaping and vegetation.
6. Reflective signs should be avoided.

COMMERCIAL AREAS

CATEGORY 1

Pedestrian Oriented Commercial Areas

Highway Oriented Commercial Areas

03

CATEGORY 1 COMMERCIAL AREAS

Category 1 areas in Greater Geelong are designated as either a Pedestrian Oriented Commercial Area or Highway Oriented Commercial Area.

PEDESTRIAN ORIENTED COMMERCIAL AREAS

These areas are typically main streets in suburban areas or town centres, with low vehicle speeds and a walkable environment. The built form in these areas often has the following attributes:

- Zero or a minimal setback from the street, laneway and side boundaries,
- Promotes continuity of the frontage between adjacent buildings,
- Facilitates active pedestrian interaction between the building and street, and
- Incorporates other pedestrian-friendly features such as weather protection.

The objectives, strategies and guidelines for Pedestrian Oriented Commercial Areas apply to land in the following zones:

Commercial 1 Zone (excluding areas listed in Highway Oriented Commercial Areas)
Activity Centre Zone (excluding precinct 3 - Geelong Waterfront)
All land that is in the Commercial 1 or 2 Zone and Design and Development Overlay Schedule 26 (West Fyans Precinct Structure Plan), South Geelong and Newtown.
All land in a commercial zone on Pakington Street (between Church Street and Spring Street) and Gordon Avenue (between Pakington Street and Latrobe Terrace), Geelong West.
Commercial 2 Zone: • All lots in the area along Moorabool Street between Fyans Street and Carr Street, South Geelong. • All land that is in both the Commercial 2 Zone and Design and Development Overlay Schedule 39 (Grubb Road Activity Centre And Restricted Retail Precinct), Ocean Grove.
Urban Growth Zone: • All Category 1 precincts, unless specified as a Highway Oriented Commercial Area in the zone schedule or precinct structure plan.

Example Pedestrian Oriented Commercial Area

HIGHWAY ORIENTED COMMERCIAL AREAS

These areas are mainly accessed by car and often located on an arterial roads and other higher speed environments. The built form is typically characterised by:

- Substantial setbacks from the street/public realm and adjacent developments without continuity to the streetscape, and
- Large areas of the site often devoted to vehicular access, parking and landscaping to the perimeter of the development.

The objectives, strategies and guidelines for Highway Oriented Commercial Areas apply to land in the following zones:

Commercial 2 Zone (excluding areas listed in Pedestrian Oriented Commercial Areas)
Commercial 1 Zone activity centres as follows (shown in Appendix 1): • Waurn Ponds, Pioneer Rd, Grovedale (Waurn Ponds Plaza and 245-253 South Valley Road, Highton) • Corio Village, Bacchus Marsh Rd, Corio • Leopold Gateway Plaza, Bellarine Hwy, Leopold • Barrabool Hills, Provence Bvd, Highton • Bell Post, Anakie Rd, Norlane • Bellarine Village, Bellarine Hwy, Newcomb • Grovedale Central, Heyers Rd, Grovedale • Marketplace, Shell Rd, Ocean Grove • Newcomb Central, Bellarine Hwy, Newcomb • Surf Coast Hwy, Grovedale (142 – 158 Torquay Rd)

Example Highway Oriented Commercial Area

CATEGORY 1 COMMERCIAL AREAS

PEDESTRIAN ORIENTED COMMERCIAL AREAS

Objectives:

- To ensure signs are subordinate and not intrusive to the built form and streetscape environment.
- To protect visibility between the public realm and inside buildings.
- To encourage a signage character that is consistent with a human scale built form and streetscape.
- To maintain open and framed views to the sky from the public realm.
- To avoid signs that compromise the architectural values of buildings and landscape.

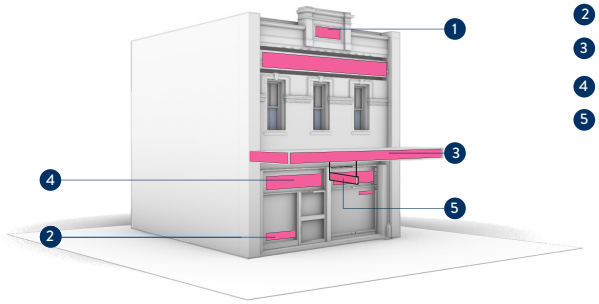
Strategies:

1. Ensure signs are of a size and height that maintain the built form and streetscape character.
2. Discourage any sign that would block a view from the public realm between buildings and to the sky.
3. Encourage signs that ensure visibility through building windows to and from the street.
4. Avoid freestanding signs, unless the building which it relates to on the site is set back from road more than 20 m.

Policy Guidelines:

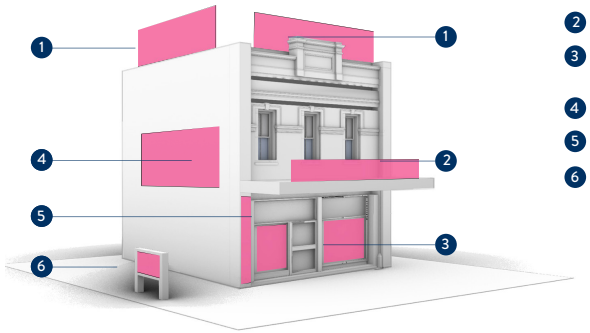
Consider as relevant:

1. Encourage signs in the locations shown in Figure 1.
2. Discourage signs in the locations shown in Figure 2.
3. Signs should not exceed a maximum street wall or building height, or encroach an upper level setback, identified in a zone, overlay or schedule.
4. Signs should not project more than one metre from the building and not be lower than 2.7 m above a pedestrian thoroughfare.
5. Limiting electronic signs to one per building.
6. Buildings should not be painted in corporate colours, which is regarded as signage.
7. Ground level and parapet are the preferred locations for small illuminated signs (particularly non-flashing, neon tubular art signs) and electronic signs, where appropriate.
8. Discourage signs that cover upper level windows or other openings of buildings.
9. Minimise signs on back or side walls of buildings, particularly at upper levels.
10. Limit total signs for premises with less than 5 metres street frontage to a maximum of 8 square metres.
11. Discourage sky signs, high wall signs and bunting signs.



1. In parapet
2. Up to 20 per cent of display windows
3. On fascia
4. In transom
5. Under verandah, located a minimum 2.7 m above footpath and 1 m from building

Figure 1 Appropriate Signage Locations in Pedestrian Oriented Commercial Areas



1. Above roofline
2. Above fascia
3. More than 20 per cent of display windows
4. More than 20 per cent of side wall
5. On front wall
6. Free-standing signs

Figure 2 Inappropriate Signage Locations in Pedestrian Oriented Commercial Areas

CATEGORY 1 COMMERCIAL AREAS

HIGHWAY ORIENTED COMMERCIAL AREAS

Objectives:

- To ensure signs are subordinate to the built form and landscape context in which it is located.
- To provide for the clear identification of premises.
- To discourage signs that interfere with the functionality of a site.

Strategies:

1. Avoid oversized and excessive numbers of signs.
2. Avoid signs that interfere with pedestrian or vehicular thoroughfares or business entrances.
3. Avoid signs that result in loss of amenity or adversely affect the natural or built environment, or the safety, appearance or efficiency of a road or rail corridor.

Policy Guidelines:

1. Encourage signs in the locations shown in Figure 3.
2. Discourage signs in the locations shown in Figure 4.
3. Incorporate areas for the display of signs for each business tenancy within the building design.
4. Minimise the number of businesses identified on freestanding signs for multi-tenanted development.
5. Discourage freestanding signs unless there is no opportunity for signs to be incorporated into buildings, or the building which it relates to on the site is set back from road more than 20 m.
6. Freestanding business identification signs should:
   - Be placed at a right (90 degree) angle to sensitive interfaces (such as open space and residential areas)
   - Not protrude over a dominant skyline, including buildings, structures and tree canopies, when viewed from the ground within 1 km.
   - Be less than the height of the building to which it relates, excluding parapets, or 7 m, whichever is lesser.
   - For sites with one street frontage, be restricted to one sign per premises.
   - For sites with more than one street frontage and the frontages are both greater than 150 m long and each have access to a road, be limited to a total of two freestanding signs, with not more than one sign on each frontage.
   - Be spaced and set back from the street consistently with the prevailing spacing and setbacks in the streetscape.
7. Discourage sky signs, high wall signs and bunting

1. Parapet
2. Fascia
3. Transom
4. Up to 20 per cent of display windows
5. Signage integrated into the building
6. If building is set back from street by more than 20 metres appropriately scaled freestanding signage may be considered

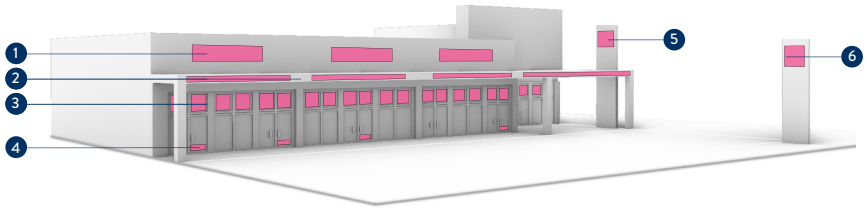


Figure 3 Appropriate Signage Locations in Highway Oriented Commercial Areas

1. Above roofline
2. Above parapet
3. Above fascia
4. More than 20 per cent of display windows
5. Taller than building
6. More than 20 per cent of side wall

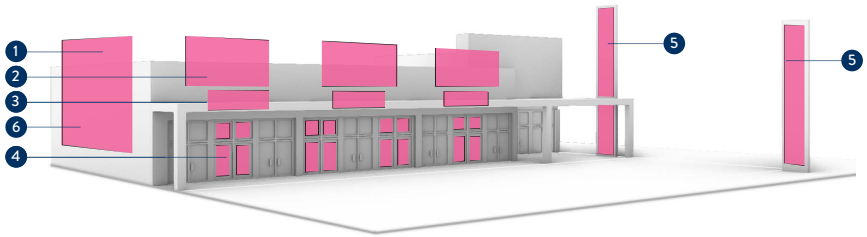


Figure 4 Inappropriate Signage Locations in Highway Oriented Commercial Areas

INDUSTRIAL AREAS

CATEGORY 2

04

CATEGORY 2 INDUSTRIAL AREAS

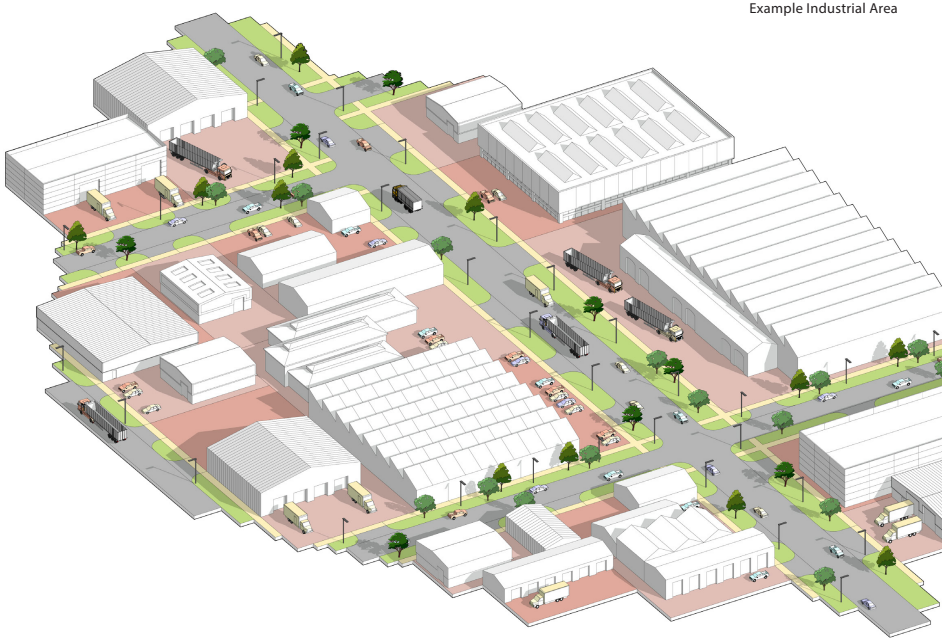
The following objectives, strategies and guidelines apply to land in the following zones:

Industrial zone, Port Zone and, where nominated, in schedules to the Special Use Zone, Urban Growth Zone and Public Park and Recreation Zone (the sports stadium at Kardinia Park).

Objectives:

- To provide for the adequate identification of premises.
- To ensure signs are subordinate to the built form and landscape context in which it is located.
- To discourage signs that interfere with the functionality of a site.

Example Industrial Area



Strategies:

1. Ensure signs respect the built form and the landscape context, and is not the dominant feature.
2. Incorporate areas for the display of signs for each business tenancy within the building design.
3. Limit freestanding signs.
4. Avoid signs that interfere with pedestrian or vehicular thoroughfares or business entrances.
5. Avoid signs that have an adverse effect on the safety, appearance and efficiency of a road.

Policy Guidelines:

1. Encourage signs in the locations shown in Figure 5.
2. Discourage signs in the locations shown in Figure 6.
3. Freestanding business identification signs should:

- Be placed at a right (90 degree) angle to sensitive interfaces (such as open space and residential areas)
- Not protrude over a dominant skyline, including buildings, structures and tree canopies, when viewed from the ground within 1 km.
- Not exceed the dominant existing building height of an area.
- For sites with one street frontage, be restricted to one sign per premises.
- For sites with more than one street frontage and the frontages are both greater than 150 m long and each have access to a road, be limited to a total of two freestanding signs, with not more than one sign on each frontage.
- Be spaced and set back from the street consistently with the prevailing spacing and setbacks in the streetscape.

1. Up to 20 per cent of front facade
2. Up to 20 per cent of window
3. If building is set back from street by more than more than 20 m, appropriately scaled freestanding signage may be considered

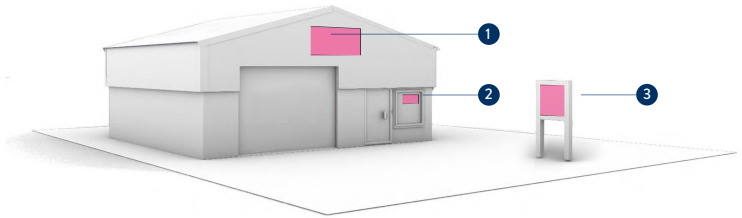


Figure 5 Appropriate Signage Locations in Industrial Areas

1. Above roofline
2. More than 20 per cent of side wall or front facade
3. Large freestanding signs
4. More than 20 per cent of window

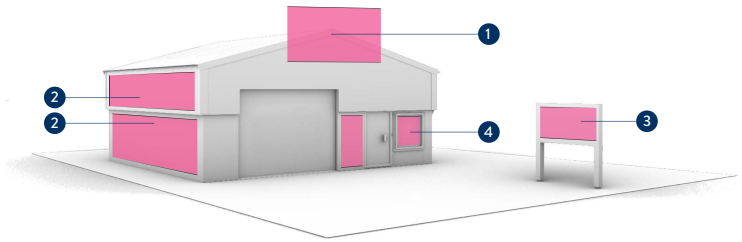


Figure 6 Inappropriate Signage Locations in Industrial Areas

HIGH AMENITY AREAS

CATEGORY 3

05

CATEGORY 3 HIGH AMENITY AREAS

Note: For an application for estate promotional signs (a sign that promotes the sale of land or dwellings, whether or not the sign is located on the land for sale) in a Growth Area, these guidelines do not apply. Instead refer to Chapter 11 Growth Areas.

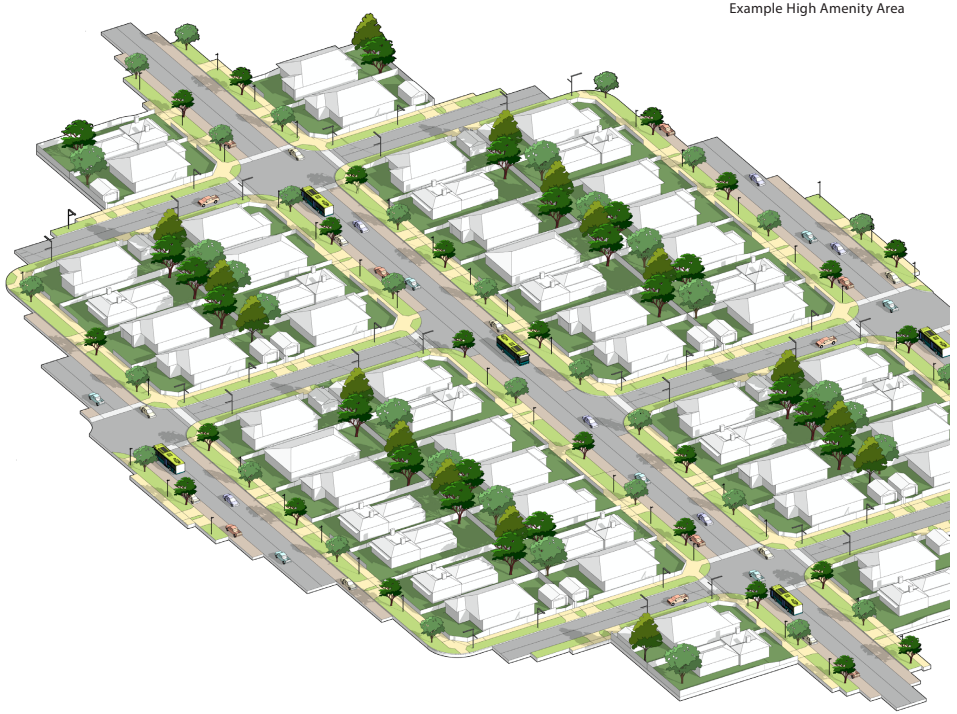
The following objectives, strategies and guidelines apply to land in the following zones:

- Residential zones,
- Rural Living Zone,
- Mixed Use, Special Use and Comprehensive Development zones, other than those in which the schedule to the zone specifies a different category,
- Central Geelong Waterfront (Activity Centre Zone schedule),
- Precinct 5 of the Armstrong Creek Town Centre (Urban Growth Zone, schedule 5), and
- Ocean Grove Park (Public Park and Recreation Zone).

Objectives:

- To protect the character of residential and other high amenity areas.

Example High Amenity Area



Strategies:

1. Ensure signs are appropriately scaled to the host site and building as well as the surrounding built form character.
2. Ensure signs do not dominate the streetscape.
3. Encourage signs that are fully integrated into the built form of either the building or front fence.
4. Discourage illuminated, floodlit, animated, electronic and reflective signs, unless there is no adverse impact upon high amenity or sensitive land uses.
5. Minimise the number of signs on any one property necessary to identify the premises.
6. Avoid signs that obscure views through building windows to and from the street.
7. Avoid signs that have a detrimental impact on access to daylight or sunlight, including perception of light and shadow, or overshadowing of any sensitive space (including footpaths, public and private open space, windows) at any time of year.
8. Minimise signs that do not relate to the site on which they are located.

Policy Guidelines:

1. Encourage signs in the locations shown in Figure 7.
2. Discourage signs in the locations shown in Figure 8.
3. Where possible, consolidate the number of signs for businesses on a lot to a single sign only
4. If there are no options for integrating signs into the built form (including fence) and it must be freestanding the signs should be:

- Placed at a right (90 degree) angle to sensitive interfaces (such as open space and dwellings)
- Located in the front setback of the building
- Located on the street frontage with the greatest amount of traffic, if the site has more than one street frontage.
- No higher than 2 m above footpath level
- Incorporated into the landscape treatment

5. Illuminated signs should be located, baffled and the level of illumination controlled to ensure there is no spill of light beyond the area of the sign.

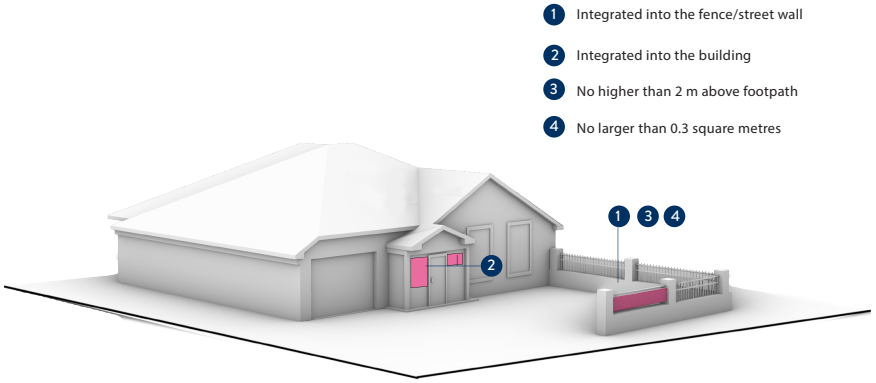


Figure 7 Appropriate Signage Locations in High Amenity Areas

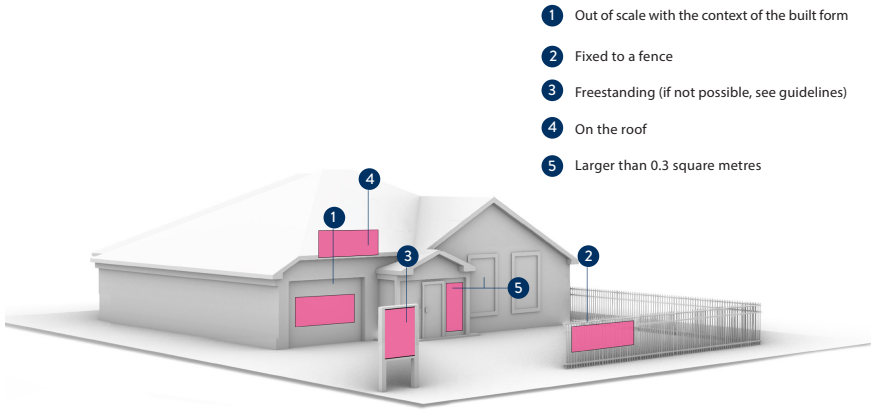


Figure 8 Inappropriate Signage Locations in High Amenity Areas

SENSITIVE AREAS

CATEGORY 4

06

CATEGORY 4 SENSITIVE AREAS

The following objectives, strategies and guidelines apply to land in the following zones:

Rural and public land zones,

Urban Floodway Zone is included in this category, and

Schedules 1, 5 and 13 of the Special Use Zone.

Objectives:

- To ensure that signs do not have a physical effect on the surrounding landscape in public spaces, rural environments and natural environments.
- To discourage signs that dominate the surrounding landscape.
- To minimise the number of signs in sensitive areas.
- To avoid the intrusive effects of illuminated signs

Strategies:

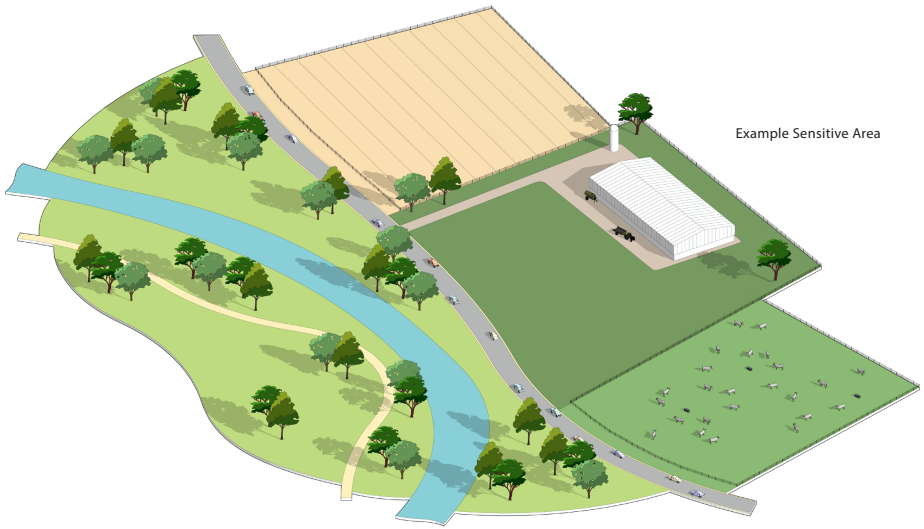
1. Ensure that signs in rural or natural areas are sympathetic in scale and form to rural and coastal landscapes, environmental features, view corridors and vistas.
2. Ensure that the physical effects of signs do not include overshadowing, blocking of daylight/ sunlight or interfere with the existing perception of light or shadow.
3. Restrict the number of signs on any one property to a single sign.

Policy Guidelines:

1. Signs should be of a low height and scale and not stand out above the horizon.
2. Business identification signs should be limited to one per site.
3. Signs should be:

- Attached to a fence or freestanding, located near the front of the site
- No more than 2 m above ground height, and
- Incorporated into landscape treatment along the boundary of the property.

4. Colours used in any signs should be compatible with the surrounding landscape



Example Sensitive Area

INTERFACE AREAS

SIGNS IN A COMMERCIAL OR INDUSTRIAL AREA, WHICH ARE ADJOINING OR OPPOSITE A HIGH AMENITY OR SENSITIVE AREA.

07

INTERFACE AREAS

The following objectives, strategies and guidelines apply to:

Proposals for signs on land within a Category 1 or 2 area, which are adjoining or opposite land in a Category 3 or 4 area.

Objectives:

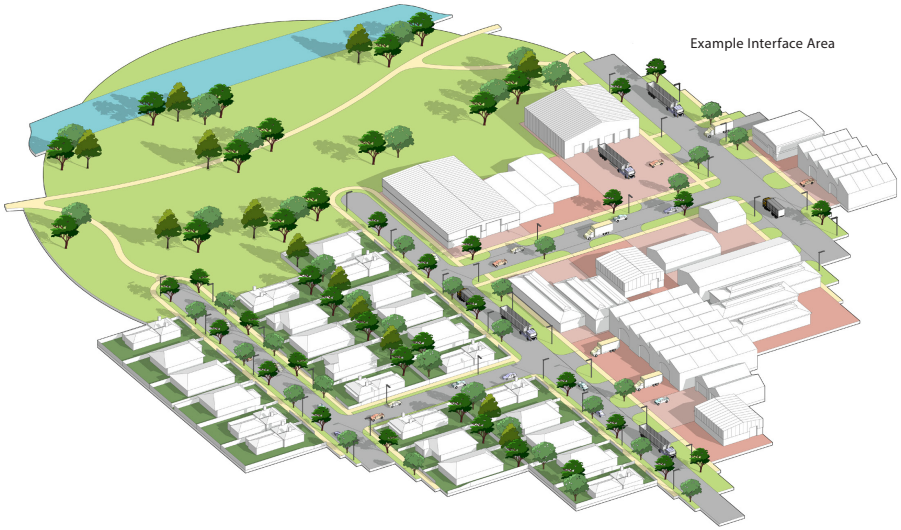
- To ensure signs in commercial and industrial areas do not have a detrimental impact on High Amenity and Sensitive areas.

Strategies:

1. Signs should not dominate the outlook from or result in increased illumination to adjoining landscapes, passive open space or nearby dwellings.
2. Ensure signs do not have a detrimental impact on access to daylight or sunlight, including perception of light and shadow, or overshadowing of any sensitive space (including footpaths, public and private open space, windows) at any time of the year.
3. Ensure signs near rural areas are sympathetic in scale and do not dominate any landscape, coastal or environmental features, view corridors or vistas.
4. Discourage the use of floodlit signs and ensure that they are primarily directed away from visually sensitive areas.
5. Illuminated signs should be limited near residential areas, open space and other sensitive interfaces.

Policy Guidelines:

1. Limit the number of signs on any one property that are visible from the High Amenity or Sensitive area to the minimum number necessary to identify the premises.
2. Sign colours should be compatible with surrounding landscape.
3. Illuminated signs should be located, baffled and the level of illumination controlled to ensure there is no unreasonable spill of light beyond the area of the sign or loss of amenity.
4. Discourage internally illuminated panels and boxes on or above verandah level.



Example Interface Area

CENTRAL GEELONG

ACTIVITY CENTRE ZONE (SCHEDULE 1) AND DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY (SCHEDULES 17 AND 46)

08

CENTRAL GEELONG

The objectives, strategies and guidelines apply to:

- All land within the Activity Centre Zone (schedule 1) and Design and Development Overlay (schedules 17 and 46)

Objectives

1. To ensure that signs do not impact opportunities to view the wider geographic setting from within Central Geelong.
2. To ensure signs respond to their built form context and contribute to an undulating city skyline that tapers down to the Geelong waterfront and the edges of the Activity Centre.
3. To ensure that signs are visually subordinate to the architectural and built form elements, particularly at a pedestrian level.
4. To encourage signs that are compatible with the objectives of the precinct in which they are located, as described in the zone or overlay schedule.
5. To maintain shared access to bay views.
6. To protect the heritage built form, character and scenic qualities along and fronting the Waterfront precinct.

Strategies

1. Protect views to Corio Bay, the You Yangs/Wurdi Youang beyond and church spires, particularly from buildings and along key north-south street corridors identified in schedule 1 to Clause 37.08 (Activity Centre Zone) and schedule 46 to Clause 43.02 (Design and Development Overlay).
2. Protect and enhance the undulating skyline of Central Geelong and key views of the city from Cunningham Pier, Corio Bay, the Esplanade and from neighbouring suburbs to the east, south and west.
3. Ensure signs do not have a detrimental impact on access to daylight or sunlight, including perception of light and shadow, or overshadowing of any sensitive space (including footpaths, public and private open space, windows) at any time of the year.
4. Ensure signs do not obscure views to the sky, landmarks and other views and vistas between buildings from the street.
5. Encourage signs in the Retail Core Precinct that complement or enhances the character of the area.
6. Discourage sky signs unless they replace lawfully existing sign(s) and improve the amenity of an area or appearance of the host building and streetscape.
7. Discourage freestanding major promotion signs.
8. Discourage promotion signs in the cultural precinct that are unrelated to the key arts, culture or education functions of this district.
9. Discourage signs located above seven storeys height.
10. Manage overall signs in the area between Malop Street, Yarra Street, Ryrie Street and Moorabool Streets.

Policy Guidelines

1. Discourage signs between buildings (Figure 10).
2. Major promotion signs in Central Geelong should be located only where they abut Ryrie Street, Moorabool Street, Gheringhap Street, Malop Street, Latrobe Terrace.
3. Major promotion signs should not be:
   - Located in the Waterfront, West Village, York and Station precincts,
   - Located or protrude above an established building line or parapet or above seven storeys above ground level
4. Signs in laneways and narrow streets should be of human scale, aimed at pedestrians and located below verandah level.
5. Signs should not project more than 1 m from wall face of the host building.
6. Signs should retain any prominent architectural features as the dominant visual elements at a pedestrian level.
7. Encourage signs that activate existing blank walls or garage doors (longer than 3 m) in laneways at street level, where appropriate.
8. Minimise signs on elevations in areas surrounding the Waterfront Precinct that would be visible from the Waterfront Precinct.

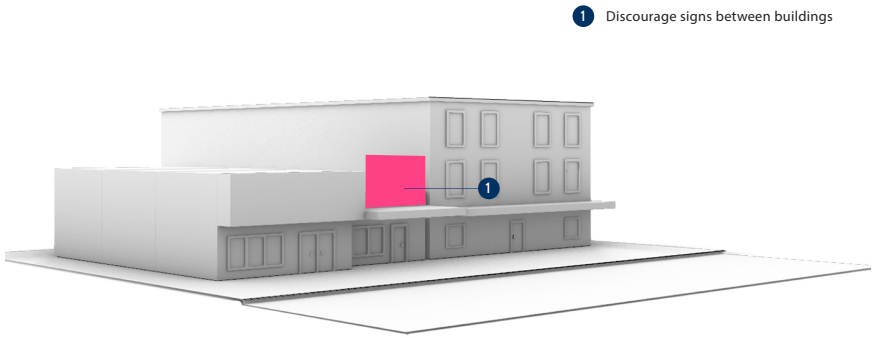


Figure 10 Inappropriate sign between buildings

HERITAGE PLACES

09

HERITAGE PLACES

The objectives, strategies and guidelines apply when a permit is required under the Heritage Overlay. They must be read in addition to the requirements of the overlay.

Objectives:

- To ensure that the heritage value and significance of a building or place is not diminished by signs.
- To ensure illuminated or eletronic signs are appropriate and responsive to the heritage area or heritage building.
- To encourage the retention of signs with heritage value.

Strategies:

1. Ensure signs are of a size and height that is subordinate to the heritage character and will not detract from the heritage qualities and integrity of the buildings.
2. Ensure new signs preserve the architectural features of the building or site to remain the dominant feature.
3. Discourage mock heritage sign design.
4. Restrict the removal or alteration of signs with heritage value.
5. Restrict the use of electronic signs in heritage places.
6. Avoid signs which physically damage the heritage fabric.
7. Avoid signs that conceal specific building features or historic painted signs.

Policy Guidelines:

1. Use clear, simple lettering styles with not more than two type faces.
2. Buildings should not be painted in corporate colours, which is regarded as signage.
3. Promote the use individual letters instead of large, flat rectangular signs.
4. Ensure that the erection, display and removal of signs does not damage any part of the significant building fabric both during and after any works.
5. Encourage signs to only be located on the parts of a building which were traditionally used as advertising areas - in parapet frame, on fascia, or below verandah.
6. Encourage innovative illuminated signs where appropriate, such as back-lit individually illuminated letters.
7. Encourage new signs associated with heritage places that are in keeping with historical signs in terms of size and proportion.
8. Discourage internally illuminated panels and boxes on or above verandah level.
9. Avoid signs in excessively bright colours.
10. Avoid sky signs and bunting signs.

PAD SITES

FREESTANDING SERVICE STATIONS, RETAIL PREMISES, FREEWAY SERVICE CENTRES, MEDICAL CENTRES AND VETERINARY CENTRES.

10

PAD SITES

PAD sites are locations for freestanding commercial buildings, which are typically based on access by car. Parking is generally provided onsite with direct access to a road. They are often located on prominent corner sites and/or on freeways, highways and main roads. Common examples are service stations and drive through convenience restaurants.

Development (or redevelopment) of pad sites often requires a package of signs as part of a planning permit application for use and development.

The following objectives, strategies and guidelines apply to:

Freestanding service stations, retail premises, freeway service centres, medical centres and veterinary centres.

Objectives:

- To encourage signs that respect the character and amenity of the surrounding area
- To minimise the number and size of signs to what is necessary to identify the use and function of the site.

Strategies:

1. Ensure signs are entirely integrated into the design of the built form and architecture.
2. Discourage signs other than business identification signs.
3. Limit use of corporate colours, which is regarded as signage.
4. Strongly discourage bunting signs.

Policy Guidelines:

1. Encourage signs in the locations shown in Figure 11.
2. Discourage signs in the locations shown in Figure 12.
3. Freestanding business identification signs should:

- Be limited to one sign per road frontage.
- Be less than the height of the building to which it relates, excluding parapets, or 7 m, whichever is lesser.
- Be incorporated into landscaping treatment.
- Not have adverse impacts upon residential amenity.

4. Directional signs for a pad site should:

- Be limited to one per road entry point.
- Not exceed 0.3 square metres in size.

1. Up to 20 per cent of windows
2. Does not protrude above parapet, roofline or canopy
3. Is consistent in size and placement throughout canopy and building
4. Single free-standing sign per road frontage less than 7 m tall

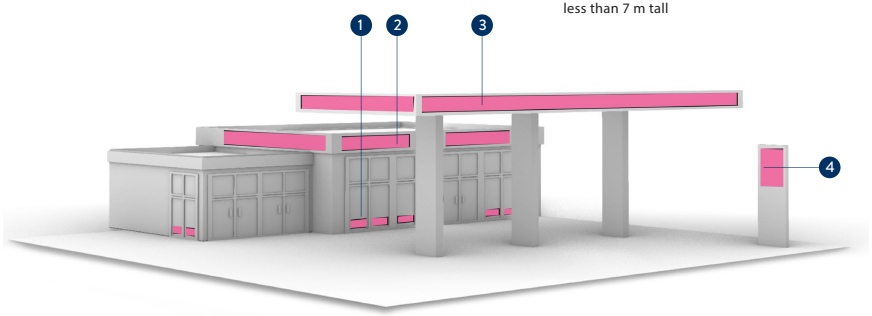


Figure 11 Appropriate Signage Locations on PAD Sites

1. More than 20 per cent of windows
2. Protrudes above parapet, roofline or canopy
3. Is not consistent in size and placement throughout canopy and building
4. Multiple free-standing sign per road frontage more than 7 m tall
5. Utilises bunting, flags, balloons

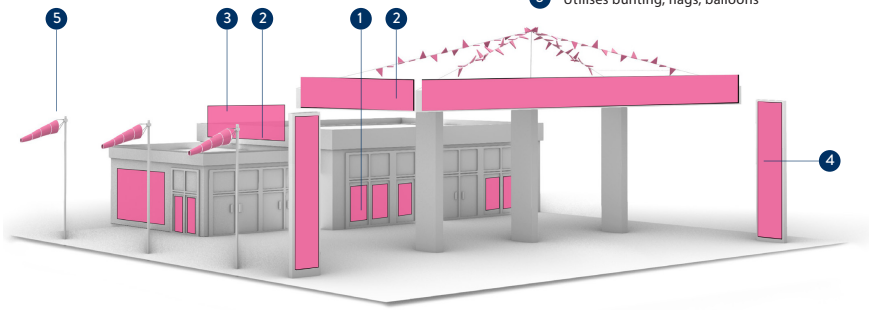


Figure 12 Inappropriate Signage Locations on PAD Sites

GROWTH AREAS

GREENFIELD AND LARGE INFILL DEVELOPMENT AREAS

11

GROWTH AREAS

The following objectives, strategies and guidelines apply to:

Greenfield and large infill development areas, generally included in the Urban Growth Zone, Development Plan Overlay, Design and Development Overlay.

The term 'estate promotional signs' refers to a sign that promotes the sale of land or dwellings, whether or not the sign is located on the land for sale.

Objectives:

- To appropriately manage the visual impact of signs in areas of new development and to avoid unreasonable visual clutter.

Strategies:

1. Encourage a precinct or whole-of-estate approach to subdivision and new estate signs.

Policy Guidelines:

Consider as relevant:

1. Providing a minimum of 150 metres between onsite estate promotion signs on the same road.
2. Limiting offsite estate promotional signs to:

- Within 5 kilometres of the estate
- 4 signs per estate
- a minimum 250 metres between each sign

3. Limiting the display of estate promotion signs for 5 years or until the last lost is sold, whichever is the earlier.

MAJOR PROMOTION SIGNS

12

MAJOR PROMOTION SIGNS

The following objectives, strategies and guidelines apply to:

- Major promotional signs as defined in the planning scheme.

Objectives:

- To ensure major promotion signs respect the scale and form of their built form and landscape context.
- To discourage major promotion signs in inappropriate locations.
- To avoid major promotion signs that adversely affect the character, amenity and functionality of a site or area.
- To avoid major promotion signs that dominate the surrounding area

Strategies:

1. Encourage the provision of architectural interest in the design of major promotion signs.
2. Ensure major promotion signs are not located in, overshadow or result in loss of amenity to usable areas of the host site or adjoining land.
3. Ensure major promotion signs are spaced at a sufficient distance apart.
4. Avoid major promotion signs that dominate buildings and uses on the host site and adjoining land.
5. Avoid major promotion signs in land near sensitive interfaces including river corridors, passive open space and residential areas, particularly where it will form part of the skyline when viewed from these areas.

Policy Guidelines:

Consider as relevant:

1. Providing a minimum 1 kilometre separation between major promotion signs on the same road
2. Discourage major promotion signs that would restrict the development of a site or conflict with an identified strategic development objective.
3. Discourage 'pop out' elements.
4. Discourage more than one major promotion sign at any intersection.
5. Limiting major promotion signs on walls to:

- 20 per cent of the wall area
- A maximum area of 25 square metres

ELECTRONIC AND ANIMATED SIGNS

13

ELECTRONIC AND ANIMATED SIGNS

The following objectives, strategies and guidelines apply to:

- Electronic and animated signs as defined in the planning scheme.

Objectives:

- To encourage electronic and animated signs in appropriate locations that add vitality and light to a commercial or industrial area.
- To avoid electronic and animated signs that unreasonably affect the amenity of a site or area.
- To avoid electronic and animated signs that may have an adverse effect on road or rail safety.

Strategies:

1. Avoid electronic and animated signs that will result in unreasonable light spill, glare, disturbance, intrusion or other detrimental effects on the amenity of surrounding rural or residential areas or public open space.
2. Encourage animated signs (including digital media, holographic, 3D and projections) to activate public places.
3. Ensure electronic and animated signs prioritise road and rail safety.

Policy Guidelines:

Consider as relevant:

1. Control electronic and animated signs to have appropriate levels of illumination responsive to sunlight, weather conditions and time of day.
2. Limit the number of electronic signs to one per premises.
3. Discourage electronic signs that face a residential area, passive open space or other sensitive interfaces.

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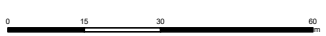
CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

APPENDIX 1:

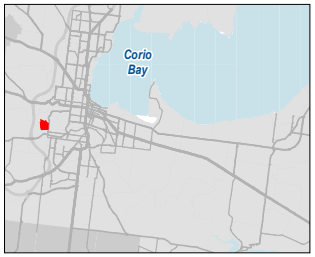
MAPS OF HIGHWAY ORIENTED COMMERCIAL AREAS IN THE COMMERCIAL 1 ZONE

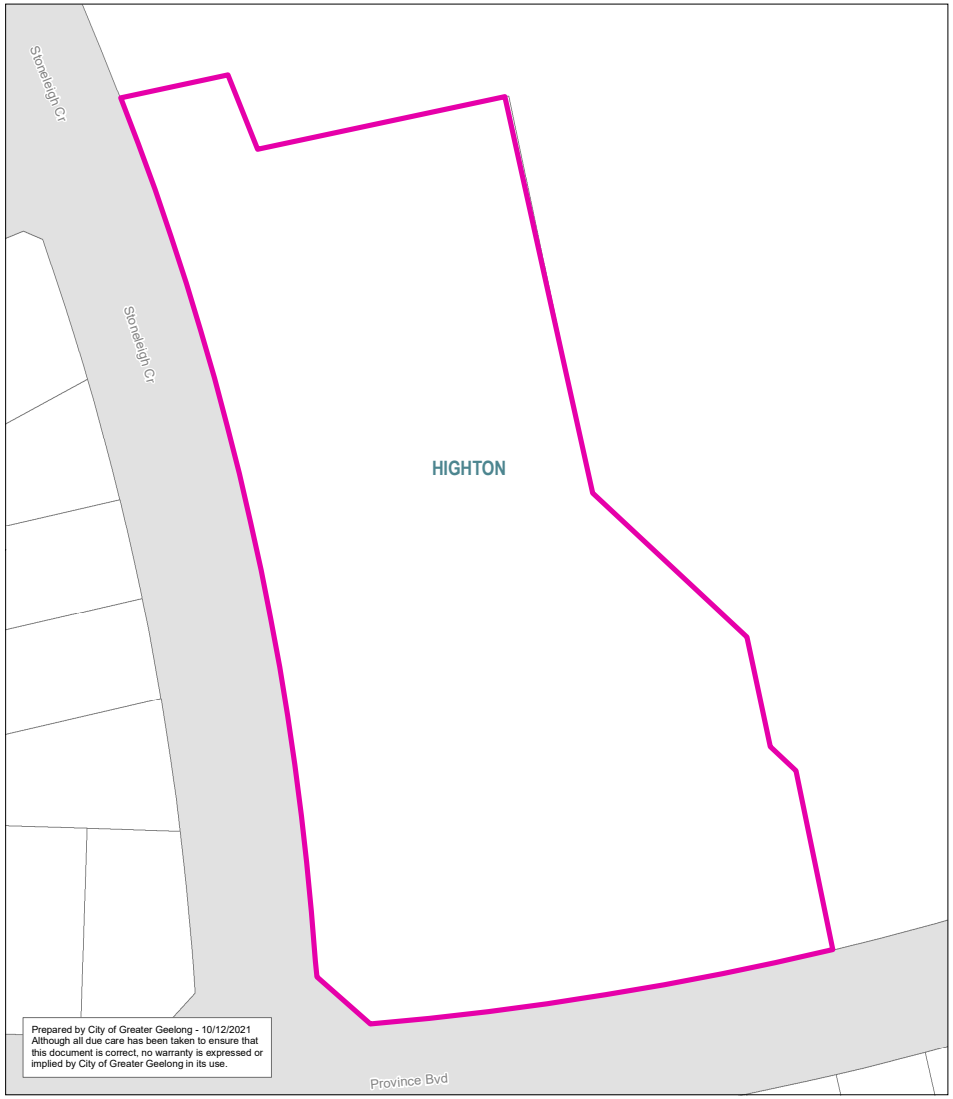
BARRABOOL HILLS, PROVENCE BVD, HIGHTON

Activity Centre Boundary



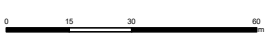
CITY OF GREATER GEELONG



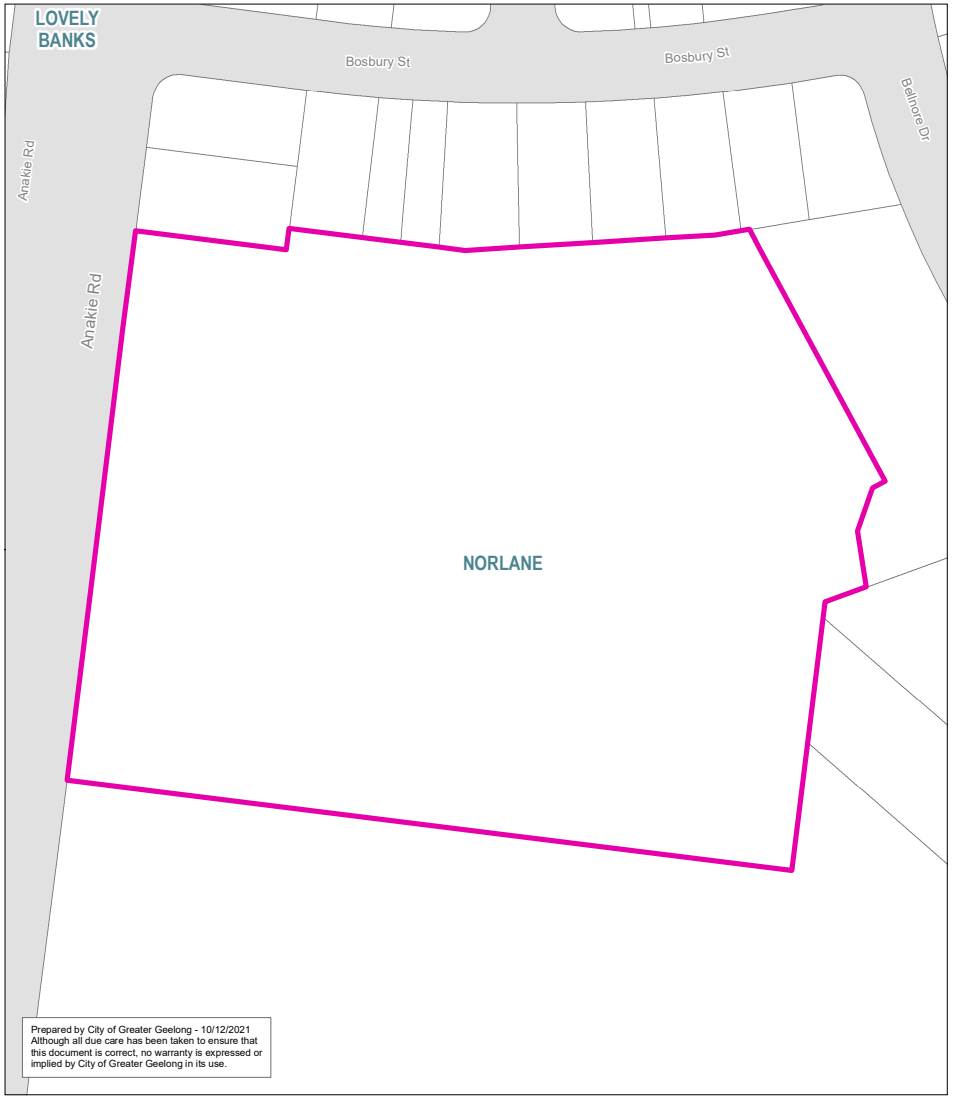


BELL POST, ANAKIE RD, NORLANE

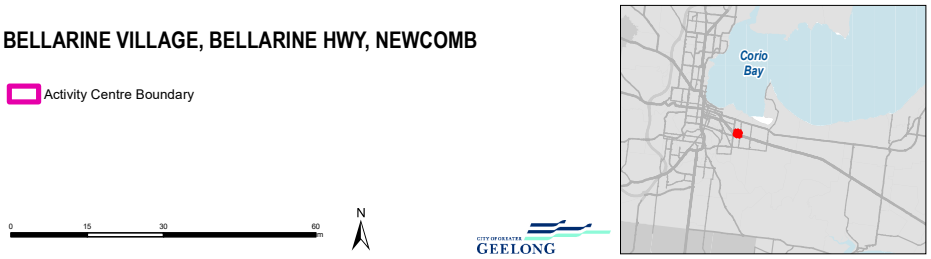
Activity Centre Boundary



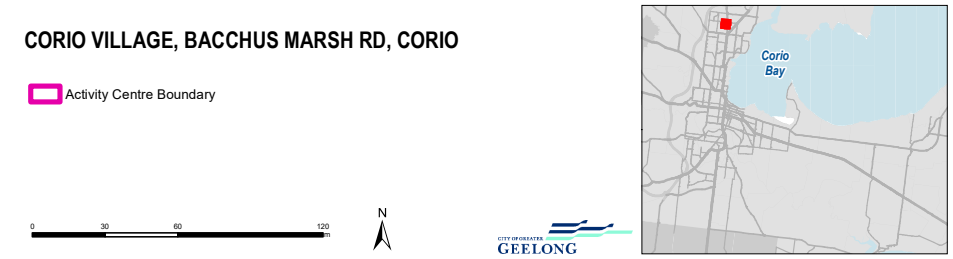
CITY OF GREATER GEELONG



BELLARINE VILLAGE, BELLARINE HWY, NEWCOMB



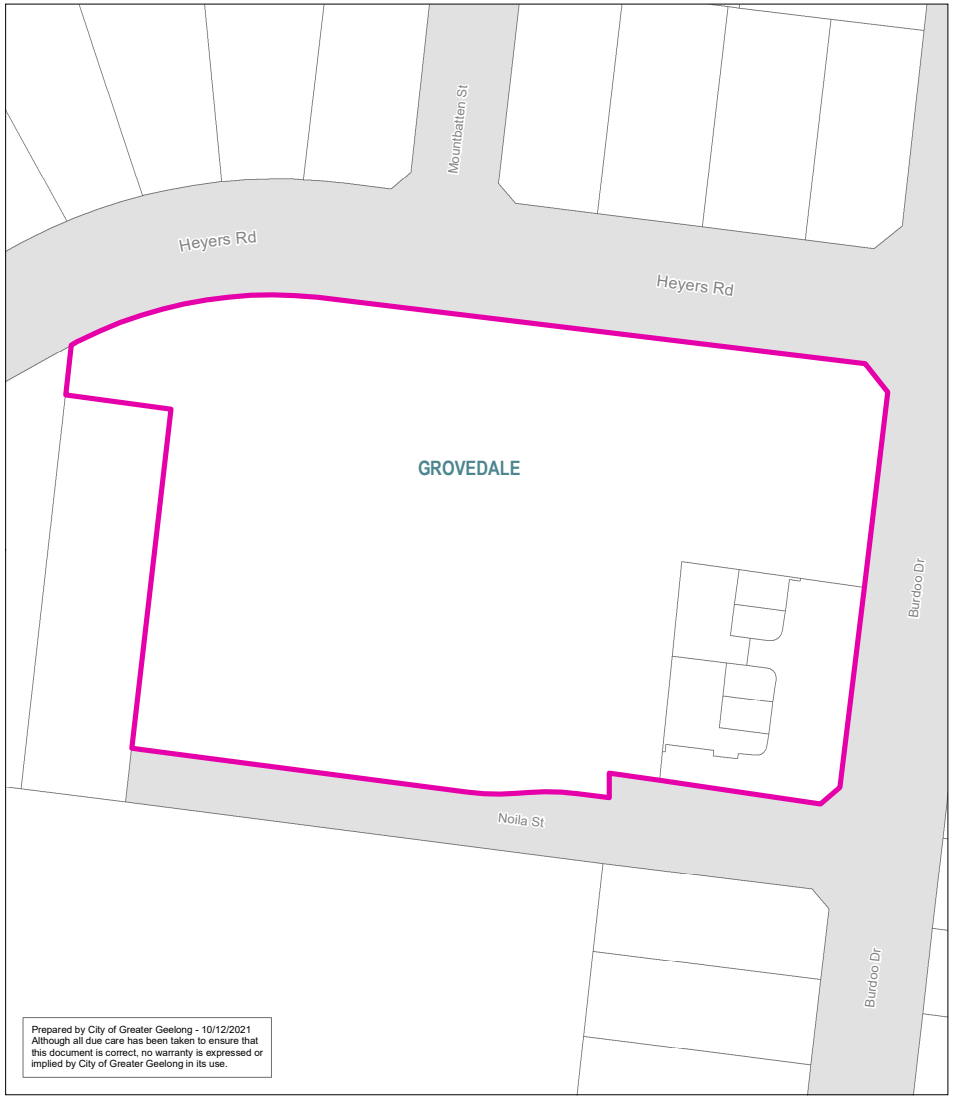
CORIO VILLAGE, BACCHUS MARSH RD, CORIO



GROVEDALE CENTRAL, HEYERS RD, GROVEDALE

Activity Centre Boundary

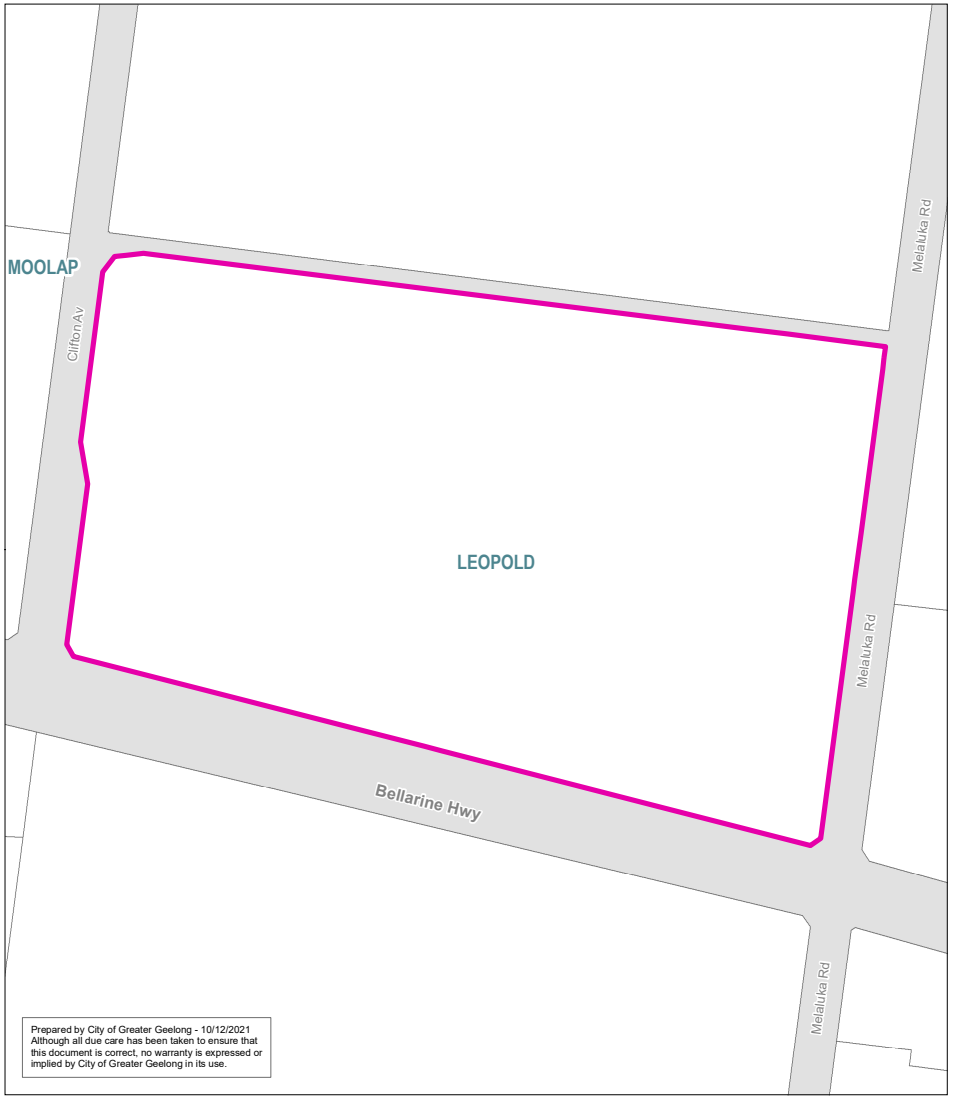
CITY OF GREATER GEELONG



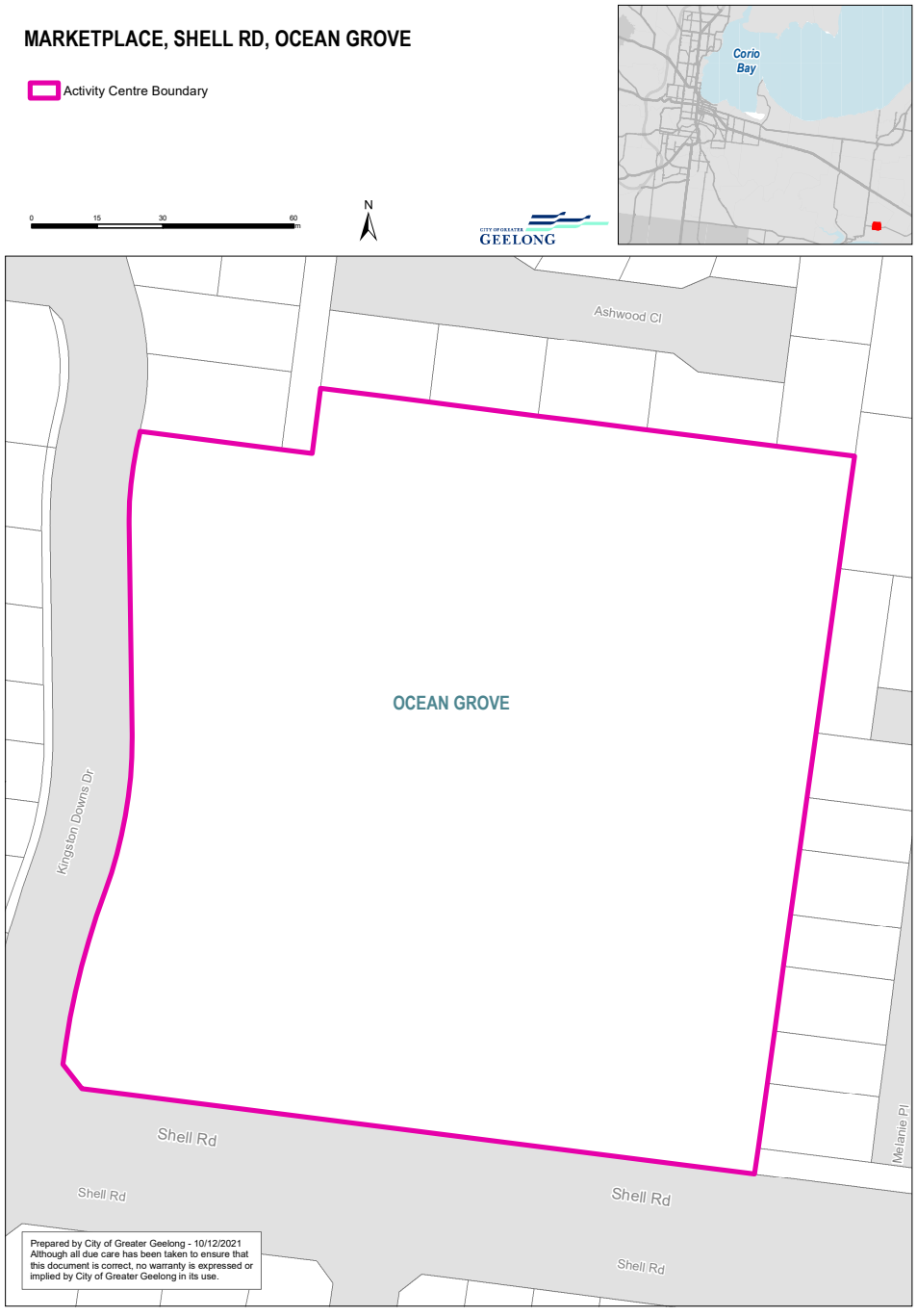
LEOPOLD GATEWAY PLAZA, BELLARINE HWY, LEOPOLD

Activity Centre Boundary

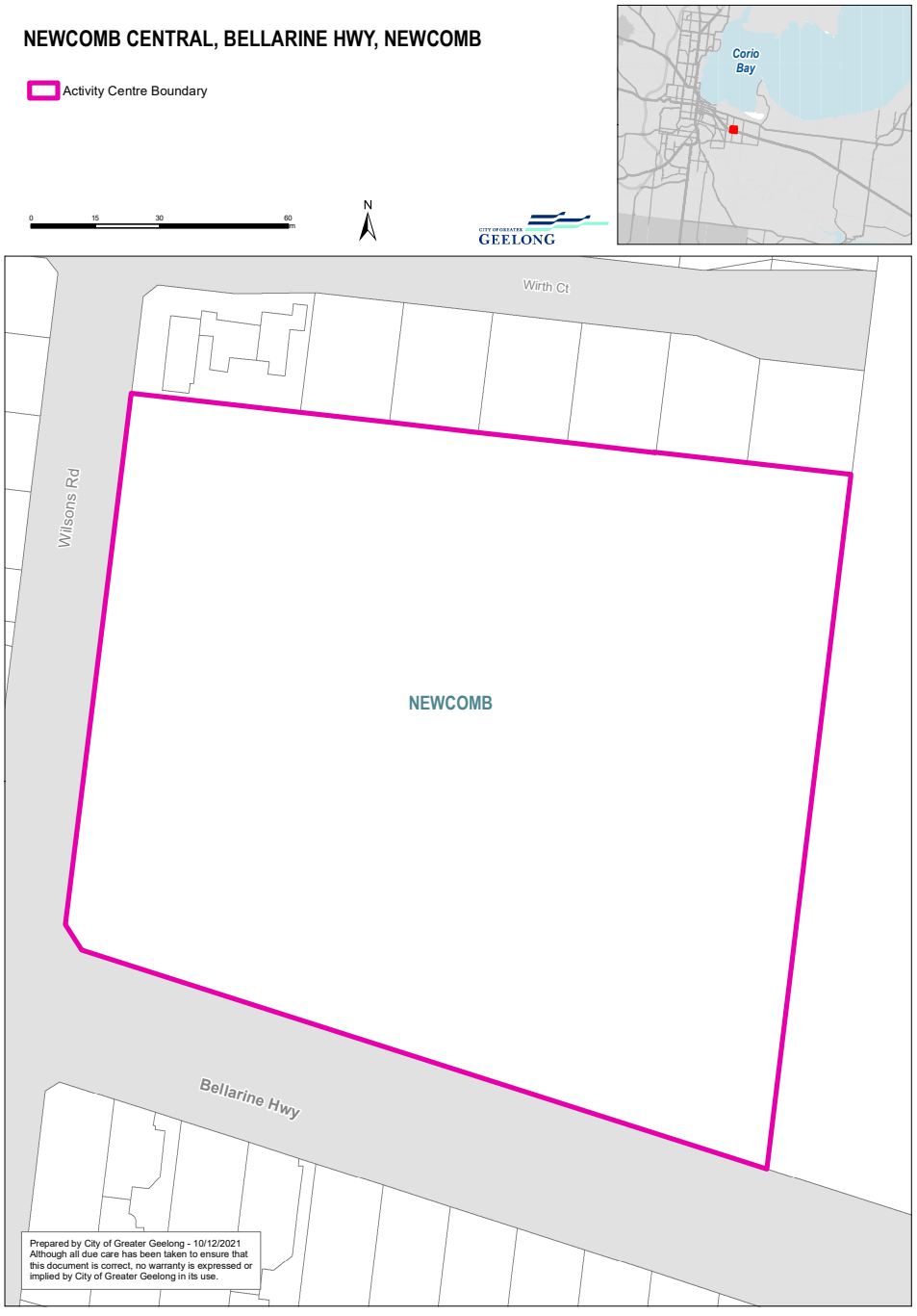
CITY OF GREATER GEELONG



MARKETPLACE, SHELL RD, OCEAN GROVE



NEWCOMB CENTRAL, BELLARINE HWY, NEWCOMB

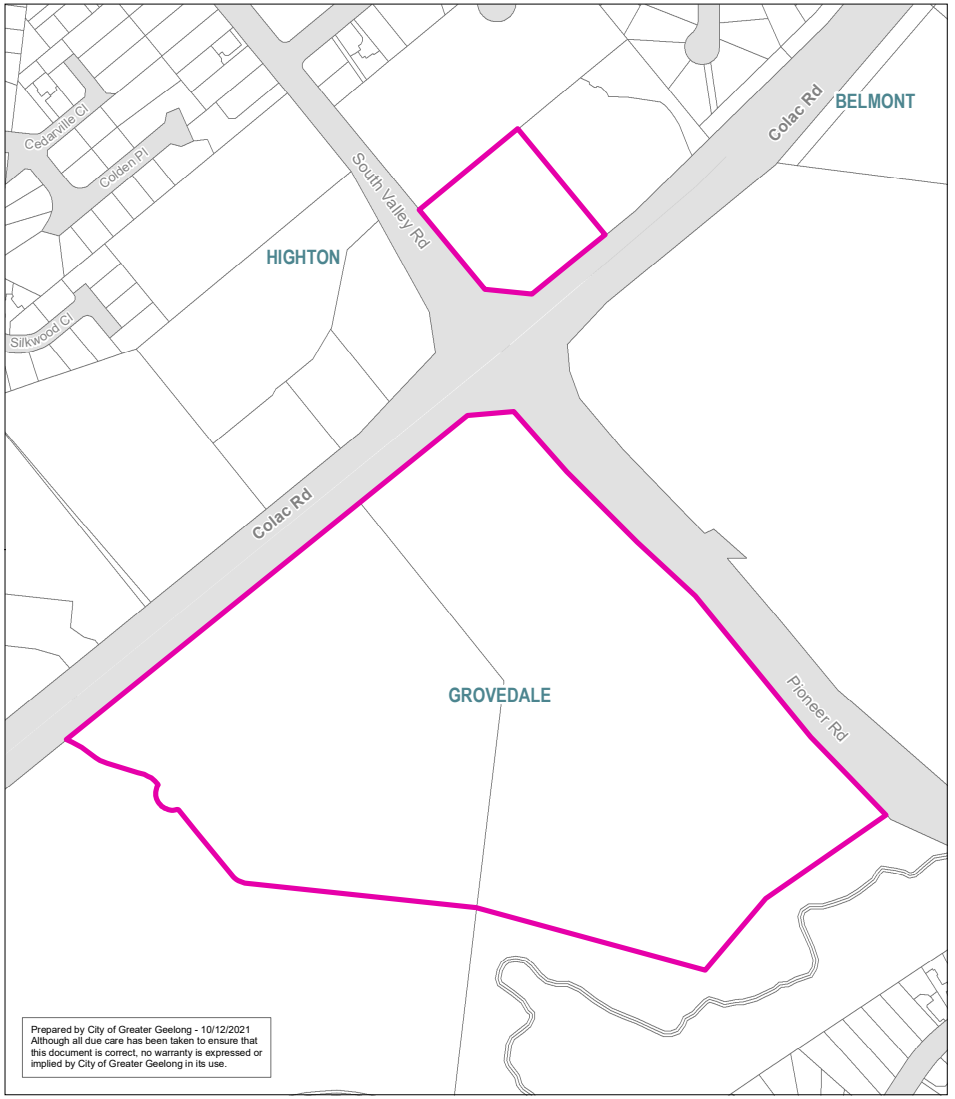


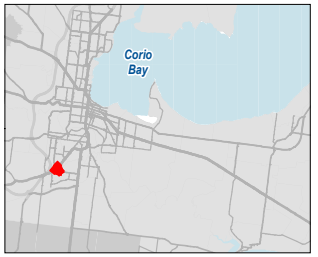
SURF COAST HWY, GROVEDALE (142-158 TORQUAY RD)

Activity Centre Boundary

WAURN PONDS, PIONEER RD, GROVEDALE

Activity Centre Boundary





THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

ADVERTISING SIGN GUIDELINES REVIEW

ISSUES AND OPTIONS PAPER

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The City of Greater Geelong acknowledges the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of this Land, Waterways and Skies.

It also acknowledges all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are part of the Greater Geelong community today.

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Issues	9
Options	20
Recommendations	22

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The issues and recommendations of this review have focussed on the impacts of advertising signs, grouped into areas where they most commonly occur. The areas identified are as follows:

- Central Geelong
- Pedestrian oriented commercial areas
- Highway oriented commercial areas
- Industrial areas
- Heritage places
- Open space
- Residential areas
- Growth areas
- Major promotion signs

Some issues common across all areas are also identified, which are:

- Visual clutter resulting from excessive numbers and sizes of signs, as well as their placement (such as where they block out a competing sign).
- Impacts on buildings, particularly where signage is not in proportion to the building or alters or obscures architectural features.
- Impacts on the area, such as from signs that are of a size or height that dominate the built form character and streetscape.
- Signs that obscure or dominate views or vistas to significant natural or man-made features, as well as to the sky or between buildings from public places (such as the street or parks).
- Use of variable messaging signs to promote sales or other commercial activities and the detrimental impact they have on road users and the amenity of an area.

Issues identified with the current statutory and policy framework are:

- Age of the current incorporated document (Advertising Signage Guidelines, City of Greater Geelong 1997)
- Generalisation of different types of commercial areas in the current Advertising Signage Guidelines
- Need to update in the Planning Policy Framework context

The options suggested include the development of new guidelines to replace the current ones, to be included in the planning scheme as either a background or incorporated document, and/or a local policy in the Planning Scheme.
The recommended option is to prepare a succinct local planning policy and new Advertising Guidelines, as an incorporated document.

The recommended structure of the guidelines would be based on the areas and issues identified, as follows:

1. General
2. Central Geelong precincts (excluding Waterfront)
3. Category 1 areas. These areas are commercial and most are identified in the City of Greater Geelong Retail Strategy 2020-2036 (August 2020). There are two main development types, with different preferred signage characters:
   a. Pedestrian oriented commercial areas. This will include most Commercial 1 Zone areas, as well as a small number of Commercial 2 and Urban Growth Zone areas with this development type. Typically these areas have, or are planned to, a 'main street' built environment.
   b. Highway oriented commercial areas. Most Commercial 2 Zone areas and a number of Commercial 1 Zone places that have a different established signage and built form character to Pedestrian oriented commercial areas. These include large format retail (bulky goods) and shopping centres surrounded by large carparking areas.

   To enable ease of use, the incorporated document should include a list of Commercial 2 Zone areas that are in Pedestrian oriented commercial areas and Commercial 1 Zone areas that are in Highway oriented commercial areas.
4. Category 2 areas. These areas are chiefly industrial, but also include some in the Armstrong Creek growth area.
5. Category 3 areas
   a. Residential areas.
   b. Central Geelong Waterfront.
6. Category 4 areas (Rural and public land)
7. Heritage places
8. Interfaces with sensitive areas
9. Growth Areas
10. Major promotion signs
11. Electronic signs

PURPOSE

Advertising signage is an important part of the economy, helping to promote and generate business. Some signs help identify the location of businesses and places, or promote local events. Others, such as large billboards, can promote projects of regional significance (such as new housing estates) or road safety messages.

Done well, signage can also add to the vitality of an area and contribute to its character. A corporate logo on an office building can provide a landmark that helps orient city users. It can also provide a sense of connection between a business and its locality and signify its importance to the local economy, such as the Worksafe building in central Geelong.

Done poorly, however, the opposite can true. Signage can block important views of natural or architectural features, or create an unattractive, cluttered appearance to an area. Signage that is too large or high can also dominate and detract from the amenity of a public place, such as a square or park.

There is a need to update the City of Greater Geelong Advertising Signage Guidelines (1997), which are over 20 years old and have not been changed since their introduction. Since this time there have been numerous changes to the planning scheme, including to the number and types of commercial zones, as well as to the advertising sign particular provision (Clause 52.05). The evolving nature of advertising signage and urban design also require updated direction for planning permit applications.

In addition, Geelong's status as a UNESCO City of Design provides a strong basis for the quality of its natural and built environments to be enhanced, in which signage has an important contributing role.

The purpose of this report is therefore to:

- Outline the current statutory and policy context for advertising signage in Greater Geelong;
- Identify and discuss relevant signage issues in different environments, including a number of case studies in Geelong and other municipalities.
- Identify and discuss issues with the current statutory framework, particularly the Advertising Signage Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 1997).
- Review emerging technology in advertising signage, including digital signs.
- Provide options (including a recommended option) to update the Planning Scheme, including the format and structure of a new Advertising Guidelines document.

POLICY AND STATUTORY CONTEXT

STATE

There are two strategies for signage in state policy:

- Clause 15.01-1S (Urban design)
  Ensure that development, including signs, minimises detrimental impacts on amenity, on the natural and built environment and on the safety and efficiency of roads.
- Clause 18.01-1S (Land use and transport integration)
  Design the transport system and adjacent areas to achieve visual outcomes that are responsible to local context with particular reference to landscaping, the placement of signs and providing buffer zones and resting places.

It is noted the Urban Design Guidelines, which are a reference document in Clause 15.01-1S, provide little guidance for signage and instead redirect users to Clause 52.05.

Clause 52.05 (Signs) is the primary section in the planning scheme which addresses signage requirements. It includes permit triggers and decision guidelines. A 'category' based system is used, which is as follows:

- Category 1 - minimum limitation. Includes Commercial 1 and 2 zones. It also applies to:
  - All precincts of the Central Geelong Activity Centre Zone schedule except precinct 3 (Waterfront).
  - Precinct 1 in the Armstrong Creek Town Centre (Urban Growth Zone, schedule 5).
  - Precincts 4, 5 and 6 of the Armstrong Creek North East Industrial Precinct (Urban Growth Zone, schedule 1).
- Category 2 - low limitation. Includes Industrial 1, 2 and 3 zones, as well as the Port Zone. It also applies to:
  - Special Use Zone schedules 4 (Beckley Park) and 12 (Lara Energetic Materials Manufacturing Plant).
  - Precincts 2, 3 and 4 of the Armstrong Creek Town Centre (Urban Growth Zone, schedule 5).
  - Precincts 1, 2 and 3 of the Armstrong Creek North East Industrial Precinct (Urban Growth Zone, schedule 1).
  - The sports stadium at Kardinia Park (Public Park and Recreation Zone).
- Category 3 – medium limitation. This category applies to most residential areas (including the Rural Living Zone). This category is the default category for the Mixed Use, Special Use and Comprehensive Development zones, other than those in which the schedule to the zone specifies a different category. It also applies to:
  - Central Geelong Waterfront (Activity Centre Zone schedule).
  - Precinct 5 of the Armstrong Creek Town Centre (Urban Growth Zone, schedule 5).
  - Ocean Grove Park (Public Park and Recreation Zone).
- Category 4 – maximum limitation. These areas include rural and public land zones. The Urban Floodway Zone is included in this category. The category also applies to schedules 1, 5 and 13 of the Special Use Zone.

In a Road Zone and Public Use Zone 4 (Transport), the sign category which generally applies is the category which applies to the adjoining zone nearest to the land.

Clause 73.02 (Sign terms) provides definitions of different types of signage.

It is noted local policy provisions must be consistent with and be within the scope of these state provisions.

LOCAL

The Advertising Signage Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 1997) provide directions for signage and are an incorporated document in the scheme. A minor amendment to the Guidelines was made in 2014 to address a specific requirement for signage at Kardinia Park. There has not, however, been a comprehensive revision of the guidelines since their introduction.

Notably the Guidelines do not provide guidance for electronic signs or major promotion signs and includes some outdated references to sign types and policies that are inconsistent with the current scheme provisions.

There are a number of objectives, strategies and policies in the following local provisions and schedules in the scheme:

- Clause 15.01-1L-02 (Pakington Street North Urban Design)
- Schedule to Clause 37.08 (Activity Centre Zone)
- The following schedules to Clause 43.02 (Design and Development Overlay):
  - Schedule 17 (Central Geelong Western Wedge)
  - Schedule 18 (Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct)
  - Schedule 20 (Industrial 1, 2 and 3 Zones)
  - Schedule 21 (Portarlington town centre)
  - Schedule 24 (St Leonards town centre)
  - Schedule 25 (Barwon Heads town centre)
  - Schedule 26 (West Fyans Precinct Structure Plan)
  - Schedule 29 (Lara Town Centre expansion area)
  - Schedule 31 (Bellarine Hwy mixed use centre - Leopold)
  - Schedule 39 (Grubb Rd Activity Centre - Commercial 1 and 2 zones)
  - Schedule 40 (Ocean Grove town centre)
- The following schedules to Clause 42.03 (Significant Landscape Overlay:
  - Schedule 10 (Lake Connewarre)
  - Schedule 11 (Lake Victoria)
  - Schedule 12 (Swan Bay)
  - Schedule 14 (Clifton Springs - Portarlington coast)

COUNCIL POLICIES (NON-PLANNING)

The following council polices are applicable to signs requiring approval under local laws.

Recreation Reserve Advertising Signage Policy

This policy establishes guidelines for approval of advertising and sponsorship signage at Council sporting reserves. It relates to all Council owned and managed reserves and associated facilities, except for the sports stadium at Kardinia Park. This policy is proposed to be revoked and superseded by a new set of *Recreation Reserve Advertising Signage Guidelines* which are currently under development.

Footpath and Designated Roads Trading and Activity Policy

This policy sets out requirements for the conduct of trading and other activities on Council's footpaths, including signs.

General Signage (Including Electoral Advertising Signs) On Council Road Reserves and Land

This policy provides direction on the assessment and determination of applications to place general signage on any Council land, municipal building or road. It does not include signs relating to the placement of a sign on a Council footpath, which are covered in the Footpath and Designated Roads Trading and Activity Policy. It does not include directions on the placement of electoral signs, which are covered in the Placement of Electoral Signs Policy. This policy is being revoked and an updated set of guidelines are under development.

Guidelines For The Placement of Electoral Signs

This policy sets the guidelines for the placement of electoral signs in Greater Geelong.

GEELONG UNESCO CITY OF DESIGN

On 31 October 2017 Geelong was designated a member of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network. The aim of the network is to make creativity an essential driver for sustainable urban renewal and development. Cities in the network are designated one of seven creative fields which include crafts and folk art, design, film, gastronomy, literature, music and media arts. Geelong is the only city in Australia to receive this designation.

As a Creative City of Design, Council has committed to:

> Integrating design thinking into all aspects of urban planning and development, as well as raising Geelong's international profile as a clever and creative city

UNESCO – Creative Cities Network website
https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities//node/982

This is supported in Council's thirty year vision A Clever and Creative Future (City of Greater Geelong, 2017) which outlines a blueprint for the City as a 'Clever and Creative' city-region. While there are no specific directions for signage, some broader principles are relevant, including:

- an active street culture involving student and café precincts
- urban design that encourages activity and comfortable open public areas in all seasons
- revitalisation of Central Geelong

ISSUES

IMPACTS OF ADVERTISING SIGNS

The issues relating to this topic have been grouped into places where they most commonly occur. Many issues will, however, be relevant to a number of settings.

Some of the issues are common across all areas, which are as follows:

- Visual clutter resulting from excessive numbers and sizes of signs, as well as their placement (such as where they block out a competing sign).
- Impacts on buildings, particularly where signage is not in proportion to the building or alters or obscures architectural features.
- Impacts on the area, such as from signs that are of a size or height that dominate the built form character and streetscape.
- Signs that obscure or dominate views or vistas to significant natural or man-made features, as well as to the sky or between buildings from public places (such as the street or parks).
- Use of variable messaging signs to promote sales or other commercial activities and the detrimental impact they have on road users and the amenity of an area.

The following places, or local environments, are based on the different types of urban environments in the municipality. They were identified in a review of the current City of Greater Geelong Advertising Signage Guidelines (1997), Clause 52.05 category area types and a number of key strategic documents described in the following section.

Two distinct sub-types of commercial environments were identified, following a review of the activity centres described in the City of Geelong retail strategy. These have been described as 'pedestrian oriented' and 'highway oriented' commercial areas. Comparative policies and VCAT cases have also been examined to provide insight into contemporary policy in other municipalities.

A separate non-place group is identified for major promotion signs.

Central Geelong

The Activity Centre Zone applies to much of Central Geelong. Amendment C341ggee has been prepared, which includes a draft framework plan (containing a new structure plan and urban design guidelines) and schedule to the zone. This was placed on exhibition 25 May 2021 and hearings and a committee report is scheduled for the second half of 2021.

The draft framework plan and zone schedule do not include directions for advertising signage. The current Central Geelong Urban Design Guidelines (October 2008) do include guidance, although there is only limited direction in the current zone schedule. Therefore if the proposed zone schedule and framework plan proceed, there will be no local signage policy for Central Geelong.

It is further noted the age of the guidelines was criticised by the Tribunal in *Drive By Developments Pty Ltd v Greater Geelong CC* (2016).

Central Geelong Framework Plan (as shown in draft schedule to the Activity Centre Zone, May 2021)

Central Geelong has some significant sensitivities, including heritage, views and a need for the different precincts to develop a character. Built form and streetscapes will play a key role and advertising signage can either help or hinder this being achieved.

The cultural precinct will be sensitive to signage. The Central Geelong Arts and Cultural Precinct Masterplan 2017 seeks to create a distinctive character for this area through public realm streetscape treatments. Art is proposed to be integrated into the public realm and built form, such as through projections and installations on blank walls. While some advertising related to the functions of this district would be appropriate (such as for performances or exhibitions), the introduction of unrelated commercial advertising would likely threaten this character.

Laneways are also a key feature of Central Geelong. There is a need for signage in these spaces to be human scale – particularly aimed at pedestrians and minimised to avoid visual clutter. The Laneways Action Plan, a background document to the proposed framework plan, seeks to avoid blank walls and long garage doors. Signs may have a role to play in activating these.

The proposed draft Central Geelong urban design guidelines also notes that buildings above seven storeys height will form part of the skyline. Likewise signs above this level will have the potential to form part of the skyline and consideration should be given to whether they (particularly major promotion signs) should be limited to seven storeys.

The proposed zone schedule designates all precincts, other than the Waterfront (which is mainly open space) as 'Category 1' signage areas, which have the lowest level of limitation. Two of the precincts, York and Station, are proposed to be principally residential (with some allowance for commercial uses). Policy direction is needed to ensure signs in these areas do not conflict with the character sought.

Similarly while the Waterfront is included in a Category 3 area (medium limitation), there would be no guidance for signage to ensure signage does not have a detrimental impact on this renowned space.

The lack of policy for signs in the current and proposed zone schedules also does not reflect the prioritisation of the Retail Core precinct as the focus for commercial activity.

CASE STUDY: CENTRAL GEELONG

131 Malop Street, Geelong - Drive By Developments Pty Ltd v Greater Geelong CC [2016] VCAT

Image above: Electronic signage approved on heritage building in Central Geelong

The Tribunal issued a planning permit for an electronic major promotional sky sign, placed on top of a single storey building on a street corner in Central Geelong.

While council officers raised concerns with the compatibility of the sign with the area and its dominance of the host building, the Tribunal found the proposal was not incompatible with the 'bulk and scale of the robust buildings' of the area. The Tribunal also gave little weight to the current Central Geelong Urban Design Guidelines, due to their age.

Commercial areas

Commercial areas in Greater Geelong are outlined in Clause 02.03-1 (Settlement), which is based on the City of Greater Geelong Retail Strategy 2020-2036 (August 2020). Under Clause 02.03, there are six types of centres: one regional centre (Central Geelong), five sub-regional centres (Belmont, Waurn Ponds, Corio, Leopold and Armstrong Creek), six town centres (Ocean Grove, Drysdale, Lara, Barwon Heads, Portarlington and St Leonards). There is also one Specialised Centre (Pakington Street), twenty four Neighbourhood Centres and eight restricted retail centres.

The built form of these commercial areas can vary significantly, with some being in the form of traditional shopping strips, such as Hitchcock Avenue in Barwon Heads and Ormond Road in East Geelong.

Other commercial areas are largely based around access by car. These are often located along main roads and highways and include enclosed shopping centres surrounded by large carparking areas, as well as bulky goods 'homemaker' centres. Freestanding (or 'pad site') development, such as service stations and drive-through restaurants, are also included in this type.

These two main types of commercial areas have significantly different signage types and issues. It is acknowledged some areas have attributes of both built form environments, such as large 'standalone' supermarkets set behind large carparks in main street environment, or older restricted retail strips with buildings close to a highway frontage. Most areas can, however, be grouped into either of the two commercial area types and therefore are discussed separately under the following headings.

Pedestrian oriented commercial areas

Examples: High Street, Belmont; Hitchcock Avenue, Barwon Heads; Ormond Road, East Geelong

These areas are characterised in the advertising signage local policy of the Greater Dandenong planning scheme, as having the following attributes:

- zero or a minimal setback from the street, laneway and side boundaries;
- promotes continuity of the frontage between adjacent developments;
- facilitates active pedestrian interaction between the building and street; and
- incorporates other pedestrian-friendly features such as weather protection.

Often these areas are also in a low vehicular speed environment (under 50 km/h), although there are exceptions (such as Ormond Road, East Geelong).

Much of Central Geelong and Commercial 1 zoned activity centres are in this type of area (at street level), as are a number of suburban commercial areas and town centres.

Example of pedestrian oriented development in Belmont

Issues that have been identified in these areas are:

- Signage that blocks views between people on the street and people on the ground and upper floors of buildings. This can have a detrimental impact on safety and activity in the street.
- Animated signs and large signs (particularly electronic and illuminated ones) can dominate and have a major detrimental impact on these types of centres.
- Signs that interfere with pedestrian sightlines and movements.
- Large signs that are disproportionate to their host building and streetscape.
- Signs located above verandah can dominate the host building and streetscape, particularly if they form part of the skyline.
- Painting of whole buildings in corporate colours.
- Freestanding signs, such as pole or pylon signs, can be inconsistent with the built form character.

Highway oriented commercial areas

(Examples: Colac Road, Waurn Ponds and Grovedale; Melbourne Road, Norlane; Murradoc Road, Drysdale)

This type of commercial area is generally accessed by car and characterised by:

- substantial setbacks from the street/public realm and adjacent developments without continuity to the streetscape and,
- large areas of the site often devoted to vehicular access, parking and landscaping to the perimeter of the development

Most areas in the Commercial 2 Zone have these characteristics, as well as some in the Commercial 1 Zone.

These areas are often located along arterial roads and highways and include car based, enclosed shopping centres surrounded by large carparking areas, as well as bulky goods 'homemaker' centres. Freestanding (or 'pad site') development, such as service stations and drive-through restaurants are other examples. Signage is often aimed at passing vehicles in a higher speed environment.

The issues identified in these areas are:

- Excessive number of freestanding signs.
- Freestanding signs, particularly major promotion signs and pylon signs, that are of a height and size disproportionate to the streetscape (such protruding above a skyline of trees or buildings).
- Signs (particularly major promotion signs) that interfere with the function and visibility of other signs. In particular signs that block, obscure or dominate business identification signs should be avoided.
- Freestanding major promotion signs that adversely affect the amenity and functionality of a site or area, including the land on which they are located. This is particularly the case where a sign would be located on a 'key development' or 'significant building' site identified in a strategy, such as in Central Geelong or Ocean Grove.

Example of car-based stand-alone development from Cardinia Advertising Signage Design Guidelines (Cardinia Shire Council, 2020)

Industrial areas

Industrial areas in Greater Geelong typically have similar built form environment and signage to Highway oriented commercial areas. The issues experienced in these areas are the same as those in the Highway oriented commercial areas.

Heritage places

A number of older commercial areas have substantial numbers of heritage buildings, including in Central Geelong, Pakington Street (Geelong West), East Geelong, Drysdale and Portarlington. Older industrial areas in Corio, North Geelong, Newtown and South Geelong also have significant heritage.

Issues in these heritage areas, in addition to those identified earlier, as follows:

- Impact on heritage buildings and places, such as concealing architectural features and details or become a dominant feature.
- Retention of existing signs with heritage value
- Signs which damage the heritage fabric (physical material of the place).
- Multiple signs on a single site, typically where there are multiple tenancies.
- Digital signs are generally incompatible with the character of heritage places.
- Illuminated signage have previously been discouraged (including in the current Guidelines), but recent technology has provided opportunities for certain types of sign lighting (such as subtle illuminated of letters).

CASE STUDY: HERITAGE PLACES

165 Moorabool Street, Geelong (PP-1273/2013)

Image above: Electronic signage approved on heritage building in Central Geelong

This proposal involved digital signage on a heritage building, in which case Council took the view the signage would add some vibrancy to the city centre and that this outweighed what was considered 'limited adverse heritage impact'. This decision is an example of tensions between heritage and place activation objectives relating to signage.

It is noted this decision was prior to 2014 and there has been considerable change in Central Geelong since then, which should be taken into account when considering new signage guidelines, particularly relating to impacts on heritage buildings and places.

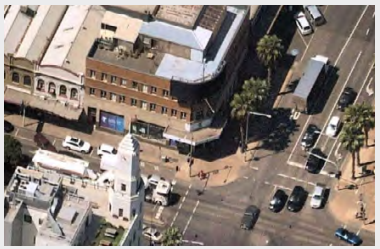

Image above: Electronic signage as constructed at 165 Moorabool Street, Geelong (Nearmap, 25 November 2020)

Open space

Open space includes sport open space (often referred to as 'active' open space) and various types of other open space (often referred to as 'passive' open space) such as community parks, town squares and significantly landscaped streetscapes.

The issues identified for open space are:

- Signage that dominates open space (particularly non-sporting open space), particularly significant areas such as the Geelong Waterfront.
- Intrusive effects of illuminated, electronic and animated signs on open space.
- Physical effects of signage such as overshadowing, access to daylight and sunlight, perception of light and shadow, of open space and other sensitive spaces such as footpaths and private open space, windows at different times of the year.
- Impact of signs in industrial areas adjacent to waterways and open space, such as in Breakwater, South Geelong, Newtown and Fyansford which are all located adjacent to the Barwon River environs.

CASE STUDIES: OPEN SPACE

120 Barwon Terrace, South Geelong (PP-1248-2020

A planning permit application was lodged for an electronic major promotion sign proposed adjacent to a bridge that crosses the Barwon River, in an industrial zone.

Image above: Location of sign proposed in PP-1248-2020 shown with green marker (Places Weave, April 2019)

In this scenario, there is a potential conflict between the decision guidelines of Clause 52.05, which discourage major promotion signs around waterways and require consideration of the sensitivity of waterways and open space, while also encouraging them in industrial locations.

The application was refused by Council and the decision upheld by the Tribunal in Joystic Pty Ltd v Greater Geelong CC (2022). The Tribunal noted the industrial zoning but held the sign would be out of place and have a negative impact on the amenity of nearby dwellings.

Image above: Illustration of proposed major promotion sign in PP-1248-2020, viewed west from the Breakwater Road bridge (anonymous, 2020).

Armstrong Creek Town Centre (PP-146-2020)

The current Advertising Sign guidelines do not provide direction for how signage should address open space. In this planning permit application, an 8.5sqm internally illuminated Coles sign was shown above the entrance of a shopping centre, adjacent to a town square (public open space), as shown in the image below.

Image above: Coles sign adjacent to town square (LHS) in PP-146-2020. The Armstrong Creek Town Centre logo is shown immediately right of the sign, in addition to lettering on the adjacent wall

This example offers an opportunity to reflect on the impact signage has on this type of open space. The sign, in terms of its size, height above ground, colour and illumination is prominent and therefore a dominant feature.

Residential areas

Non-residential uses in or adjoining residential often need signage. Residential areas are, however, particularly sensitive to impacts from signage.

The issues identified for these areas are:

- Signs that face adjoining dwellings, such as from adjoining commercial sites.
- Excessive signage in residential areas can have a detrimental impact on the neighbourhood character.
- Illuminated and electronic signs can be particularly intrusive in residential areas and can result in light spill and glare on nearby dwellings.
- Signs can have detrimental amenity impacts similar to those in open space (such as perception of light and shadow and access to daylight) discussed earlier.
- Signs that dominate the outlook from dwellings, such as major promotion signs that may be located some distance away but above the skyline.
- The character and amenity of rural living areas are particularly sensitive to signs.
- Ensure that the amenity of residential areas is not adversely affected by the provision of outdoor signage for non-residential uses, particularly along non-arterial roads.

Growth areas

The issues identified for these areas are:

- Visual clutter from excessive developer or real estate signage in and around new estates.
- Signs that are put up distant from the actual development site.
- Signage is sometimes unattractive, such as when attached to shipping containers or other structures.
- Use of trailer mounted signs.

CASE STUDY: RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Maple Media Pty Ltd v Port Phillip CC [2018] VCAT

Maple concerned a case where the applicant sought the endorsement of amended plans based on as-built rooftop signage. The key point of interest in this decision was that the Tribunal noted ResCode standards did not directly apply and instead applied a 'more qualitative' approach. It considered impacts on light courts, daylight and sunlight access, as well as the perception of light and shadow. It is noted in this case shadows were assessed at the equinox.

The Tribunal allowed a permit to be issued in this case, but the consideration of the physical impacts of signage, such as overshadowing, suggests a holistic approach to the impacts of signage should be applied when determining an application for signs. This is particularly relevant when assessing amenity impacts of signs, particularly for sensitive spaces such as footpaths, public and private open space, as well as windows and any other area that would be detrimentally impacted by loss of light.

The effect of signs on light access and overshadowing are not addressed in the current City of Greater Geelong Advertising Guidelines, or in the decision guidelines of Clause 52.05. Inclusion of these matters for consideration in the planning scheme would be beneficial, particularly for urban areas such as Central Geelong or other commercial areas where residential amenity needs to be balanced with the competing need for signage.

Major promotion signs

These signs are defined in the planning scheme as promotion signs over 18 sqm in size, such as large billboards. These are often located along main roads on freestanding structures, or on buildings. Many of the issues identified earlier are applicable to this type of sign. In addition to these, some issues that are particularly relevant to these signs are:

- Dominance of other signs, particularly business identification signs.
- Loss of amenity either within or external to a site, such as through overshadowing.
- Impact of large freestanding major promotion signs on the functionality of the host site.
- Major promotion signs can be particularly dominant if located on a vacant site.
- Visual clutter from major promotion signs without sufficient spacing between, such as along highway routes.
- Major promotion signs that require removal of established trees or landscaping.
- Where a major promotion sign would restrict the development of a site or conflict with an identified strategic development objective.
- Electronic major promotion signs that are not in a major activity centre or adjacent to a freeway which has only a commercial, office or industrial interface.

CASE STUDY: MAJOR PROMOTION SIGNS

Total Outdoor Media Pty Ltd v Buloke SC [2019] VCAT

The Tribunal considered a proposal for a two-sided major promotion sign, with a display area of 42.2sqm to each side and a total height of 7 metres above ground. It was to be located in a commercial area at the entrance into the Charlton township.

The Buloke planning scheme did not include an advertising sign policy, but included a strategy to 'consider the presentation of town entrances and streetscapes…', which was given weight in the decision.

In the decision to uphold Council's refusal of the application, the Tribunal gave weight to the strategy.

There are numerous townships and urban areas in the City of Greater Geelong that could benefit from a similar strategy derived from this one in Buloke.

CASE STUDY: MAJOR PROMOTION SIGNS

26 Rossack Drive, Waurn Ponds - iOM Pty Ltd v Greater Geelong CC [2014] VCAT

In this example the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal issued a permit for a freestanding major promotion sign, which has since been constructed. The sign is located in the carpark of a site occupied by a multi-tenanted restricted retail complex (known as Waurn Ponds Plaza), as well as a convenience restaurant close to the sign.

Image above: Location of sign shown with green marker (Places Weave, April 2019)

Image above: Major promotion sign in carpark of Waurn Ponds Plaza

The sign has a significant impact on its host site and the buildings and other signs on them. It is located only 4m (approximately) from the convenience restaurant, but is substantially higher and has a large footprint. It dominates the site and has resulted in visual clutter, with substantial business identification and promotional signage within the site, as well as directional road signage in front.

STATUTORY AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

Age of the current incorporated document

The Advertising Signage Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 1997) have not been substantively revised since adoption in 1997 and inclusion in the new format planning scheme in 2000. Since then, changes have been made to the Victoria Planning Provisions, including to Clause 52.05 (Signs), 73.02 (Sign terms) and the introduction of VicSmart. There also have been changes in the types of signage, including the emergence of animated and electronic displays, which are not addressed in the guidelines.

Generalisation of commercial areas in current *Advertising Signage Guidelines*

Clause 52.05 includes pedestrian oriented commercial areas and highway oriented commercial areas in the same signage category (Category 1). These two types of areas have a significantly different built form environment, as described earlier. The current Advertising Sign Guidelines provide directions based on each category in Clause 52.05, as well as individual sign types, which does not address the differences in environment.

Image above: Corio Village shopping centre (Places Weave, viewed 29 June 2021)

Image above: Corio Village, viewed from Bacchus Marsh Road and Purnell Road intersection

This approach results in large indoor shopping centres, such as Corio Village, having the same guidelines as traditional street-based activity centres, such as Ormond Road, East Geelong.

Image above: Ormond Road shopping area (Places Weave, viewed 29 June 2021)

Image above: Ormond Road shopping area, East Geelong. Viewed south along Garden Street, from Ormond Road intersection

Some issues with this approach are:

- There is little direction for planners about how to apply the guidelines to different built form environments.
- Some guidelines do not reflect the sensitivity of the area. An example is the guidance given for pylon (or pole) signs, which could be viewed as too restrictive for Highway oriented commercial areas or too permissive in Pedestrian oriented commercial areas.

Need to update in the Planning Policy Framework context

There is no 'stand alone' policy for signage in the scheme.

Clause 52.05 sets out a list of decision guidelines, but does not allow for localised content other than notice and review exemptions in the schedule. Given they are decision guidelines, they set out matters which require consideration and do not (except for major promotion signs) provide guidance on what is acceptable. For instance, it states some considerations are:

- The relationship to the streetscape, setting or landscape:
  - The proportion, scale and form of the proposed sign relative to the streetscape, setting or landscape.
  - The position of the sign, including the extent to which it protrudes above existing buildings or landscape and natural elements.

Clause 52.05 does not elaborate on what an acceptable proportion or position for a sign would be, which is potentially a scenario for which local policy could provide further guidance for applicants, planners, councillors and the community.

NEW TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL SIGNS

The current guidelines do not address electronic signage and as noted earlier, the draft Central Geelong Urban Design Guidelines do not address signage. Issues associated with digital advertising signs include:

- Dwell time of images and flashing.
- Excessive levels and intensity of illumination, including light spill.
- Visually obtrusive light fixtures, such as exposed cabling/ conduit systems and junction boxes.
- Inappropriate content.
- Use of audio to accompany advertisements.
- Projections (including holographs). A recent high profile example was the projection of a horse racing promotion onto the Sydney Opera House in 2018, which received a substantial public backlash at the time.
- Road safety impacts.

New forms of digital signs are also emerging, which include the following technology:

- Interactive signage:
  - The use of QR codes allow for a direct engagement between the business and viewer, as has become prevalent during the Covid pandemic. There are also opportunities that could provide public benefit, such as wayfinding and making advertisements more accessible.
  - Touchscreens can also be used. Gesture recognition (which has already been trialled in some cities) may increase the use of this type of advertising in future.
  - Use of locational data (including 'real time') and facial recognition software for the delivery of more targeted outdoor advertising.
- Three dimensional billboards, ranging from a simple V-format sign to holographic displays. The images displayed in these can appear to 'pop out' of a building.
- The potential for signage to provide (and fund) electric vehicle charging stations. This has recently been trialled in Adelaide in a study part-funded by the federal government (Metro Advertising Revenue Funded Electric Vehicle Charging Trial Project, Jolt Charge 2021).

CASE STUDY: ELECTRONIC SIGN

Westfield Limited v Manningham CC [2011] VCAT

In Westfield a very large (112 sqm) electronic sign was proposed at a congested intersection. The proposal was opposed by Council and VicRoads on road safety grounds. The Tribunal upheld Council's refusal and found the precautionary principle should apply, noting that while there is no evidence showing a link between traffic accidents and signs, this does not mean it does not exist.

This is as applicable to Geelong as it is in Melbourne, particularly noting the expected significant population growth and corresponding increase in traffic. Direction for electronic signs should be provided in the Guidelines to prioritise driver safety over other considerations, in accordance with this case.

OPTIONS

Implementation into the planning scheme

A number of options are available to respond to the issues raised. It is considered new guidelines or local policy are required, which could be implemented in the planning scheme as follows:

1. Insert the Guidelines into the planning scheme as an Incorporated Document.
2. Reference the Guidelines in the planning scheme as a Background Document.
3. Insert the Guidelines into the planning scheme as a local policy.
4. Insert the Guidelines as an Incorporated Document in addition to a brief local policy that would cross reference the Guidelines

A fifth option is also available to remove the current guidelines as an Incorporated Document and insert relevant guidelines in zone or overlay schedules where they currently apply.

The merits of each option are discussed as follows:

1. Insert the Guidelines into the planning scheme as an Incorporated Document.

An advantage of including the design guidelines as an Incorporated Document is that they are part of the planning scheme and have statutory weight. A disadvantage is that any change to the Incorporated Document requires a planning scheme amendment.

2. Reference the Guidelines in the planning scheme as a Background Document.

If the guidelines are included as a background document, they could be used to provide information that helps better understand the reasons for advertising sign policy in the Scheme. Unlike incorporated documents, however, background documents are not part of the planning scheme and therefore cannot directly affect decision making.

3. Insert the Guidelines into the planning scheme as a local policy.

A comprehensive local policy could potentially avoid reliance on the guidelines, which are currently not as easily located by users of the planning scheme. If the guidelines are a background document, then a comprehensive policy would provide the statutory weight required for decision making.

This approach would limit the directions available for signage to what can be included in the planning scheme. There would be limited opportunities to provide visual direction, compared with a guidelines document. An information sheet could assist in meeting this shortfall.

This option appears to be the most common approach, including Wyndham, Bendigo, Boroondara and Knox Councils. All of these have a comprehensive local policy. Moreland City Council also has primarily a local policy (which is succinct), although includes an incorporated document for signs specifically for sports grounds. Melbourne City Council also has a comprehensive policy and includes guideline documents for specific sites and areas such as Citylink and Melbourne Aquarium.

A number of Councils have an approach that combines options 2 and 3, including:

- Cardinia Shire Council which, in addition to a guidelines background document, is proposing a number of comprehensive local policies addressing advertising signs.
- Monash City Council, which has a comprehensive local policy and an 'Outdoor advertising brochure' background document.
- Banyule City Council with a succinct local policy and also a background document for advertising signs.

4. Insert the Guidelines as an Incorporated Document in addition to a brief local policy that would cross reference the Guidelines.

A brief local policy would meet the overall direction for the planning scheme to be as concise as possible. If the guidelines as an incorporated document, they would still be part of the scheme and carry statutory weight.

5. Remove current guidelines (as an Incorporated Document) and insert relevant guidelines in zone or overlay schedules where they currently apply.

This approach would remove obsolete directions in the current guidelines. It would not provide guidance for applicants, planners, councillors and the community for advertising signage beyond the current directions in the planning scheme.

Place specific sign requirements could be included, such as those currently included in a number of Design and Development Overlay schedules, listed earlier in the 'Policy and statutory context' section of this report.

Structure of Advertising Sign Guidelines

There are a number of ways a guidelines document could be structured. Guidelines could be developed to address one or more of different sign types, zones, areas, locations, built form or categories identified in Clause 52.05 (Signs). The current City of Greater Geelong Advertising Sign Guidelines groups policy guidance in the following structure:

- Categories (as identified in Clause 52.05)
- Heritage overlay areas
- Drysdale commercial area sign controls
- Sign types

The approach taken by councils in their advertising sign and/or guidelines documents structure is quite varied across the state. The different structures appear to be predominantly based on one of the following:

- Sign categories, as identified in Clause 52.05 (Wyndham and Knox councils).
  - This allows for easy cross-reference from Clause 52.05 and is the format of the first section of the current advertising guidelines. A disadvantage of this approach is the categories in Clause 52.05 are based primarily on land use and not built form. Therefore 'homemaker centres' (restricted retail) and industrial areas, which often have a similar built form environment, are in different signage categories. Similarly traditional main streets, bulky goods 'homemaker centres' and fast food drive-throughs, which have significantly different built form, are all in the 'Category 1' commercial area under Clause 52.05.
- Area types, such as commercial, industrial and restricted retail, residential, new residential estates and rural areas. Some guidelines provide for different environments, such as major activity centres and traditional main street commercial areas and freestanding shopping centres. Policy and/or guidelines of Melbourne, Greater Dandenong and Banyule councils have this structure.
  - This approach allows for signs to be considered in the context of their built form environment, without the duplication that is necessary in a structure based on sign categories. The disadvantages of this approach are that not all built form in these areas will be the same, such as a standalone supermarket located in an otherwise traditional main street shopping area. It also places greater reliance on the applicant and assessing planner to identify the area type, unless this is identified in policy or the guidelines document.
- A combination of guidelines based on sign and area types (Cardinia, Melton and Monash).
  - This is perhaps not the easiest format to use, as it requires users to review different sections of policy or guidelines. There is certainly a basis for some signs (such as major promotion and electronic signs) to have specific guidance, but the benefit of this for each sign type is uncertain.
- Issues, such as maintaining active frontages. This structure is reflected in Boroondara and Bendigo advertising sign policy.
  - The major disadvantage of this approach is it provides guidance for only the issues addressed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is considered the best option is to prepare a succinct local policy provision for advertising signage, as well as new advertising sign guidelines that would be included in the planning scheme as an incorporated document. There is sufficient strategic justification for this given the age of the current guidelines and the need to provide contemporary guidance for signage, particularly in the local context.

There is a need for the guidelines to be an incorporated document as it would provide essential guidance, particularly visually, for planners, applicants and the community for advertising signage (where a planning permit is required). As the guidelines cover most areas in the municipality, it would also be too large to include as a local policy.

The guidelines could have a structure based on the area types identified earlier, as well as the categories in Clause 52.05. The different area types can enable informed decisions for how advertising signs should be designed and adapted to different locations in Greater Geelong. Further guidelines are also required to address particular signage issues. The guidelines should also address areas not discussed in this report, such as rural. An example structure is as follows:

1. General
2. Central Geelong precincts (excluding Waterfront)
3. Category 1 areas. These areas are commercial and most are identified in the City of Greater Geelong Retail Strategy 2020-2036 (August 2020). There are two main development types, with different preferred signage characters:
    a. Pedestrian oriented commercial areas. This will include most Commercial 1 Zone areas, as well as a small number of Commercial 2 and Urban Growth Zone areas with this development type. Typically these areas have, or are planned to, a 'main street' built environment.
    b. Highway oriented commercial areas. Most Commercial 2 Zone areas and a number of Commercial 1 Zone places that have a different established signage and built form character to Pedestrian oriented commercial areas. These include large format retail (bulky goods) and shopping centres surrounded by large carparking areas.

    To enable ease of use, the incorporated document should include a list of Commercial 2 Zone areas that are in Pedestrian oriented commercial areas and Commercial 1 Zone areas that are in Highway oriented commercial areas.
4. Category 2 areas. These areas are chiefly industrial, but also include some in the Armstrong Creek growth area.
5. Category 3 areas
    a. Residential areas.
    b. Central Geelong Waterfront.
6. Category 4 areas (Rural and public land)
7. Heritage places
8. Interfaces with sensitive areas
9. Growth Areas
10. Major promotion signs
11. Electronic signs

The local policy and incorporated document will need to consistent with state provisions as well as avoid conflict with existing local provisions, such as Design and Development Overlay schedules and other incorporated documents, including Precinct Structure Plans. They should also provide guidance for signage in places that are not easily categorised, such as freestanding petrol stations and supermarkets

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CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

2.5. State Government Grant Opportunities

Source: **City Life**
Executive Director: **Anthony Basford**

Purpose

1. To approve recommended projects for submission to the Victorian Government's Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund administered by Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV); and

2. To approve the Council co-contribution of up to $6,016,000 for grant applications (dependent on successful outcomes).

Background

3. The Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund (RCSIF) is a Victorian Government competitive investment program, open to Local Government Authorities in rural and regional Victoria and Alpine Resorts Victoria, to deliver new and upgraded community sports infrastructure. There are five funding streams and two funding rounds.

4. The RCSIF will prioritise proposals in rural and regional Victoria that can demonstrate commitment to the following outcomes:

   4.1. Additional participation by developing multi-use infrastructure;

   4.2. Increased participation opportunities for people with disability and other individuals and groups who participate less including socio-economically disadvantaged communities;

   4.3. Equitable and inclusive participation opportunities for women and girls;

   4.4. Increase local economic activity;

   4.5. Modern, accessible, and welcoming places and spaces; and

   4.6. New active recreation opportunities.

5. To be eligible for funding, applications must:

   5.1. Adhere to relevant funding stream requirements;

   5.2. Demonstrate the infrastructure projects will be completed within 24 months of execution of the grant agreement with the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions;

   5.3. Include confirmation of Council financial co-contribution; and

   5.4. Include mandatory site-specific schematic plans, project costings, evidence of community and stakeholder consultation and other desired supporting documentation.

6. Applications close 5.00pm Wednesday 27 March 2024 and outcomes for Round 1 are announced from July 2024.

7. Execution of grant agreements for successful applications commences in July 2024.

8. RCSIF Round 2 opens in November 2024 and closes in March 2025.

Key Matters

9. City officers have reviewed the eligibility and assessment criteria of the grant guidelines, Council's strategic direction, the Social Infrastructure Plan – Generation One 2020-2023, adopted masterplans, asset condition reports, community benefit and project readiness to develop short lists and priorities of suitable projects for funding applications.

10. City officers briefed Councillors on a number of projects during the assessment process which include;

- One project for the Indoor Stadiums and Aquatic Centres funding stream;
- Three projects for the Community Facilities funding stream;
- Three projects for the Women & Girls funding stream; and
- Three projects for the All Abilities Infrastructure funding stream.

11. The following projects are identified as meeting funding criteria and priority for applications;

Projects	Funding Stream	Cost	Requested funding amount	Expected City Co-contribution
Regional Community Sport Infrastructure Fund				
Kardinia Aquatic Centre Pool Boiler Renewal/Electrification	Indoor stadiums and Aquatic Centres	$1,698,000	$1,132,000	$566,000
Aldershot Reserve Masterplan upgrades: Play Space, Pump Track, Fitness Station and Trails	Community Facilities	$ 2,500,000	$1,000,000	$ 1,500,000
Hamlyn Park Female Friendly Change Upgrades	Women & Girls	$ 1,700,000	$1,000,000	$700,000
Wallington Reserve All Abilities Pavilion Upgrade	All Abilities Infrastructure	$4,250,000	$1,000,000	$3,250,000
Wallington Reserve Bellarine Bears and Wallington Cricket Club all abilities programs	All Abilities Participation	$50,000	$50,000	n/a
	Total	$10,198,000	$4,182,000	$6,016,000

ORIGINAL RECOMMENDATION

Cr Harwood moved, Cr Wilkinson seconded -

That Council:

1. Approves the submission of applications to the Victorian Government's Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund and pre-commits co-contribution funding in the 2024-25 budget for the following projects:

1.1. Kardinia Aquatic Centre; $566,000;

1.2. Aldershot Reserve: $1,500,000;

1.3. Hamlyn Park: $700,000;

1.4. Wallington Reserve (infrastructure) $3,250,000; and

1.5. Wallington Reserve (programs) $0.

ALTERNATIVE

RESOLUTION - Item 2.5

Cr Murrihy moved, Cr Cadwell seconded -

That Council:

1. Approves the submission of applications to the Victorian Government's Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund and pre-commits co-contribution funding in the 2024-25 budget for the following projects:

1.1 Kardinia Aquatic Centre; $566,000;

1.2 Aldershot Reserve: $1,500,000;

1.3 Elderslie Reserve *(Female Friendly Change Upgrades):* $1,250,000;

1.4 Wallington Reserve (infrastructure) $3,250,000; and

1.5 Wallington Reserve (programs) $0.

2. Approve the Council co-contribution is increased from $6,016,000 up to $6,566,000 for grant applications (dependent on successful outcomes).

Carried

Division:
For: **Crs Cadwell, Mason, Murrihy, Harwood, Hathway, Nelson**
Against: **Crs Sullivan, Nelson, Aitken**

Financial Sustainability

12. The total estimated cost of recommended projects is $10,198,000. The total grant funding request is $4,182,000.
13. The City's expected co-contribution is at least $6,016,000 if all applications are successful.
14. There is no current budget allocation for the recommended projects, except for Aldershot Reserve which has $1,000,000 ($150,000 in 2023-24 and $850,000 in 2024-25).
15. The decision to proceed with these funding applications requires Council to pre-commit the co-contribution amount of $6,016,000 to the 2024-25 budget.
16. If projects are not successful in obtaining funding via this grant opportunity projects will be placed on hold until financial affordability is found, from Council's budget, further grant rounds or other grant opportunities.

Community Engagement

17. The City has consulted sporting clubs, players and participants, schools, club committees, community members and key stakeholders during the preparation of planning documents required for infrastructure projects.

Social Equity and Sustainability

18. The identified projects align with social equity and sustainability directions of Council's Our Community Plan.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

19. There are no known legal or statutory impediments to the arrangement proposed in this report.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

20. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:

    Healthy, caring and inclusive community

21. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future" community aspiration:

    An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community

Conflict of Interest

22. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

23. There is a financial risk to Council of current preliminary projects costs may change/increase as detailed design and construction is complete. If this was to occur Council may be required to increase its co-contribution to complete project delivery or decrease project scopes.

Environmental Sustainability

24. There are no known environmental implications.

Attachments

Nil

2.6. Financial Performance Report Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

Source: **Corporate Services**
Executive Director: **Troy Edwards**

Purpose

1. To endorse the Financial Performance Report Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023.

Background

2. On 27 June 2023, the 2023-24 budget was adopted with a recurrent operating surplus of $362,000 and a non-recurrent surplus of $135,047 million resulting in a net surplus of $135,409 million.

3. Financial performance reports will be presented to Council on a quarterly basis, with this report representing quarters 1 and 2 for the 2024 financial year (FY2024).

4. Further to the performance, the report provides the forward forecast for FY2024 indicating the budget is likely, as planned, to deliver a small surplus.

Key Matters

5. The recurrent operating result to 31 December is a surplus of $6.9 million favourable to the year-to-date budget. A summary of the year-to-date variances is provided in the attachment.

6. The forecast operating position is $4.5 million favourable to the year-to-date budget, primarily driven by financial integrity measures.

7. Capital works expenditure to 31 December 2023 is ($2.4 million) unfavourable to the year-to-date budget. A summary of the year-to-date variances is provided in the attachment.

8. The forecast capital works expenditure position is $3.4 million favourable to the year- to-date budget, primarily driven by timing variances including Drysdale Sporting Precinct Masterplan Stage 2 ($6.1 million) and Digital Modernisation ($5.8 million) due to a shift in approach.

9. Cash and investment balance as at 31 December 2023 is ($82.9 million) unfavourable to the year-to-date budget, primarily due to the delay in borrowings of $40 million. This is due to the change in approach to the management of cash and cash equivalents.

10. Cash inflows from Rates and Charges is ($5.0 million) unfavourable to the year-to- date budget due to lower cash collection rates. The next instalment, and the full year instalment is due on 29 February, this will provide a clearer indication of the collection rate.

11. The forecast cash position is ($21.7 million) unfavourable to the year-to-date budget, mostly due to opening cash being $26.1 million lower than expected. The full year net cashflow position is materially consistent with budget.

12. The current full year forecast is an expected $4.853 million operating surplus, which is $4.491 million favourable to budget.

13. There were no environmental upgrade agreements entered into for the quarter. There is one existing agreement in place valued at $115,000.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.6

Cr Harwood moved, Cr Aitken seconded -

That Council endorses the Financial Performance Report Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023.

Carried

Financial Sustainability

14. As detailed within the attached Financial Performance Report Year to Date Ended

15. 31 December 2023.

Community Engagement

16. Community engagement was undertaken during the development of the 2023-24 budget. Internal consultation has occurred with managers on the development of the full year forecast. Project managers have been consulted and provided the latest project updates which have been factored into this report.

Social Equity and Sustainability

17. Incomes and expenditures of the City's social equity programs are included in the attached Financial Performance Report Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

18. The report is provided in accordance with the requirements under section 97 of the *Local Government Act 2020.*

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

19. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
    High-performing council and organisation.
    Strong local economy.

20. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future" community aspiration:

21. A prosperous economy that supports jobs and education opportunities.

Conflict of Interest

22. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

23. There are no high or extreme risk arising from the subject of this report.

Environmental Sustainability

24. Incomes, expenditure, and investments focus on the preservation and enhancement of the City's commitment to environmental strategies and targets.

Attachments

1. Financial Management Report [**2.6.1** - 20 pages]

Financial Performance Report

Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

Year to Date Financial Performance Report – December 2023

Chief Financial Officer **Darren Schultz**
Head of Financial Planning & Analysis **Shaun Owens**

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Financial Performance Report

Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

1. Introduction & Purpose

To present the financial performance from 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2023.

This report is intended to identify any material items in Council's financial performance and those expected in the future by way of forecasts.

2. Financial Performance

a) Summary

Summary	Year To Date			Full Year		
	Actual $000	Budget $000	Variance $000	Forecast $000	Budget $000	Variance $000
Operating						
Income	220,804	221,415 ▼	**(611)**	462,995	458,594 ▲	**4,401**
Expenditure	221,739	229,285 ▲	**7,545**	458,141	458,232 ▲	**91**
Net Surlpus/(Deficit)	**(935)**	**(7,870)** ▲	**6,935**	**4,853**	**362** ▲	**4,492**
Capital Works Expenditure	69,779	67,346 ▼	**(2,434)**	192,464	195,885 ▲	**3,421**
Cash & Investments	88,847	171,765 ▼	**(82,918)**	120,477	142,162 ▼	**(21,685)**
Loans	151,102	189,181 ▲	**38,079**	184,036	180,924 ▼	**(3,112)**

The operating result is $6.9mil favourable to budget, primarily driven by a high level of vacancy and underutilisation of materials and services. Current expenditure trends are mostly expected to continue and result in full year savings.

The forecast operating position is $4.5mil favourable to budget, primarily driven by financial integrity measures. This ensures our expenditure is correctly classified and our budget is correctly constructed. This is offsetting a material variance in depreciation which is expected to be ($10.9mil) unfavourable to budget.

Capital works expenditure is ($2.4mil) unfavourable to budget, primarily driven by timing variances in Northern Aquatic and Community Hub ($3.0mil) and Armstrong Creek Town Centre Library ($6.5mil).

The forecast capital expenditure position is $3.4mil favourable to budget, primarily driven by timing variances including Drysdale Sporting Precinct Masterplan Stage 2 ($6.1mil) and Digital Modernisation ($5.8mil) due to project delays.

The current cash position is ($82.9mil) unfavourable to budget. This is mostly due to a delay in borrowings of $40mil. Other items impacting the current cash position are the opening cash balance being lower than expected ($26.0mil) and Rates & Charges collection being unfavourable ($5.0mil).

The forecast cash position ($21.7mil) unfavourable to budget, mostly due to opening cash being $26.1mil lower than expected. The full year net cashflow position is materially consistent with budget.

Financial Performance Report

Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

b) Operating Result

Actual Variance to Budget

$6.9mil favourable variance between actual results and the budget. The key variances are:

Item	Impact	Comment
Revenue		
Federal Assistance Grant	($2.7mil)	The funding for FY24 was received in full in FY23, whereas the budget assumed 25% would be received in FY24.
Family Services Grants	+$0.7mil	Higher than expected utilisation for childcare, which will result in full year favourability. This additional utilisation will also create increased operating costs.
Expenditure		
Salaries, Wages & Labour	+$3.8mil	Higher than anticipated vacancies is driving salaries savings YTD. This is partially offset by spending on supplementary labour.
Consultants & Contractors	+$3.9mil	Largely underutilised by the business. NWGGA is currently $1.2mil favourable to budget due to project delays.
Interest Expenditure	+$1.8mil	Capitalisation of interest costs and delays in borrowing have resulted in operational interest savings of $1.8mil.

Forecast Variance to Actual

$4.5mil favourable variance between actual results and the budget. The key variances are:

Item	Impact	Comment
Revenue		
Leisure & Recreation	+$2.8mil	Operating assumptions in Leisure & Recreation will no longer occur, resulting in a further $2.8mil of revenue being included in the forecast.
Expenditure		
Salaries, Wages & Labour	+$4.9mil	Vacancy and savings in salaries expected to continue for the remainder of the year, but not to the level experienced YTD.
Consultants & Contractors	+$6.9mil	Current trends of underutilisation are expected to continue for the remainder of the financial year.
Interest Expenditure	+$3.9mil	Capitalisation of interest costs and delays in borrowing will result in operational interest savings of $3.9mil
Leisure & Recreation	($3.8mil)	Operating assumptions in Leisure & Recreation will no longer occur, resulting in a further $3.8mil of expenditure being included in the forecast.
Depreciation	($10.9mil)	Full year position will be impacted by the depreciation on found assets and revaluations not included in the budget.

Financial Performance Report

Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

c) Capital

Actual Variance to Budget

($2.4mil) unfavourable variance between actual results and the budget. The key variances are:

Item	Impact	Comment
Project/Program		
Northern Aquatic and Community Hub (Northern Arc)	($3.0mil)	Expenditure that was expected to occur in Q4 FY23 has landed in Q1 FY24.
Armstrong Creek Town Centre Library and Learning Hub Design	($6.5mil)	Expenditure that was expected to occur in Q4 FY23 has landed in Q1 FY24.
Armstrong Creek land acquisition program	($2.3mil)	Purchase of land in Horseshoe Bend occurred earlier than anticipated in the budget.
North Bellarine Aquatic Centre	($1.9mil)	Expenditure that was expected to occur in Q4 FY23 has landed in Q1 FY24.
Open Space Renewal Program	+$3.1mil	Delays in commencement of renewal programs.

Forecast Variance to Actual

$3.4mil favourable variance between actual results and the budget. The key variances are:

Item	Impact	Comment
Project/Program		
Northern Aquatic and Community Hub (Northern Arc)	($4.0mil)	Expenditure that was expected to occur in Q4 FY23 has landed in Q1 FY24.
Armstrong Creek Town Centre Library and Learning Hub Design	($10.7mil)	Expenditure that was expected to occur in Q4 FY23 has landed in Q1 FY24.
Drysdale Sporting Precinct Master Plan Stage 2	+$6.1mil	Changes in project scope has resulted in the majority of expenditure being pushed into FY25.
Intersection - Reserve Road - Horseshoe Bend Road - Drews Road	+$3.5mil	Project has been delayed with only design costs now expected to be incurred in FY24.
Intersection - Surf Coast Hwy and Boundary Road	+$3.2mil	Project has been delayed with only design costs now expected to be incurred in FY24.

Financial Performance Report

Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

3. Balance Sheet

a) Overall

Balance Sheet Summary	Year To Date			Full Year		
		Budget $000	Variance $000	Forecast $000	Budget $000	Variance $000
Current Assets	337,629	409,546 ▼	**(71,917)**	177,958	194,633 ▼	**(16,675)**
Non-Currents Assets	4,821,218	4,409,748 ▲	**411,470**	5,186,267	4,510,073 ▲	**676,195**
Total Assets	**5,158,847**	**4,819,294** ▲	**339,553**	**5,364,225**	**4,704,706** ▲	**659,520**
Current Liabilities	278,046	189,790 ▼	**(88,256)**	139,911	142,933 ▲	**3,022**
Non-Currents Liabilities	164,555	198,209 ▲	**33,654**	196,198	189,977 ▼	**(6,221)**
Total Assets	**442,601**	**387,999** ▼	**(54,602)**	**336,109**	**332,911** ▼	**(3,199)**
Net Assets	**4,716,246**	**4,431,295** ▲	**284,950**	**5,028,116**	**4,371,795** ▲	**656,321**
Accumulated Surplus	2,160,905	2,091,744 ▲	**69,161**	2,286,721	2,075,356 ▲	**211,365**
Reserves	2,555,341	2,339,552 ▲	**215,789**	2,741,395	2,296,439 ▲	**444,956**
Total Equity	**4,716,246**	**4,431,295** ▲	**284,950**	**5,028,116**	**4,371,795** ▲	**656,321**
Working Capital Ratio	**1.21**	**2.16** ▼	**(0.94)**	**1.27**	**1.36** ▼	**(0.09)**

With a working capital ratio of 1.21 at period end, there is a sufficient level of liquidity held. This is lower than expected in budget due to a lower than expected cash position.

b) Trade & Other Receivables

Summary	Year To Date		
	Dec-23 $000	FY23 $000	Movement $000
Rates			
Rates Debtors - Current	190,284	4,396 ▼	**(185,888)**
Rates Debtors - Arrears	9,316	12,337 ▲	**3,021**
Total Rates Debtors	**199,600**	**16,733** ▼	**(182,867)**
Infringements			
Infringements - Parking	10,587	10,340 ▼	**(247)**
Infringements - Animal	2,308	2,197 ▼	**(111)**
Infringements - Other	1,265	1,144 ▼	**(121)**
Total Infringements	**14,160**	**13,681** ▼	**(479)**
Other Debtors	**16,713**	**11,884** ▼	**(600)**
Total Receiveables	**230,473**	**42,298** ▼	**(183,946)**

Our receivables have increased $183mil from 30 June 2023. This represent that majority of rates for FY24 are still be collected.

Financial Performance Report

Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

Current collection of $108.8m is 1.7% down compared to December 2022 and 2.7% down versus December 2021. Annual rate payments are due in February, which will provide a more accurate view of where we will land at year end.

The arrears balance is currently $9.3m, up from $8.0m in December 2022. Reducing this remains a key focus, to try to limit it compounding.

The doubtful debt provision includes Belcher's building ($3.98m), Norris Plant Hire ($0.33m – in liquidation) and Ledge Pty Ltd ($0.18m - 3rd party agreement relating to the Creamery Road Precinct Structure Plan, CoGG's legal team now involved).

c) Investment Analysis

Summary	Year To Date			Full Year		
	Actual $000	Budget $000	Variance $000	Forecast $000	Budget $000	Variance $000
Cash & Cash Equivalents	58,244	118,503 ▼	**(60,258)**	74,696	98,079 ▼	**(23,383)**
Other Financial Assets	30,603	53,263 ▼	**(22,660)**	45,781	44,083 ▲	**1,698**
Total Cash Balances	**88,847**	**171,765** ▼	**(82,918)**	**120,477**	**142,162** ▼	**(21,685)**
Current Loan Liabilities	12,656	16,138 ▲	**3,482**	13,030	16,138 ▲	**3,108**
Non-Current Loan Liabilities	138,446	173,044 ▲	**34,597**	171,006	164,786 ▼	**(6,220)**
Total Loan Balances	**151,102**	**189,181** ▲	**38,079**	**184,036**	**180,924** ▼	**(3,112)**

The budget assumed that $70mil was to be drawn down in Aug-23, however only $30mil has been drawdown this year. This variance of $40.0mil impacts both our cash and loan balances. Other items impacting the unfavourable cash position are the opening cash balance being lower than expected ($26.0mil) and Rates & Charges collection being unfavourable ($5.0mil).

Planned loan drawdowns in FY24 will still occur, although later than planned. Loan balances will be $3mil higher than expected. The FY24 loan draw downs will be interest-only, whereas the budget assumed these would be principal and interest. This is intentional and being managed using a portfolio approach to cash and cash equivalents, a position supported by TCV.

Financial Performance Report

Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

4. Financial Sustainability Measures

Measure	Target	Result	Comment
Operating Result			
Operating Result Ratio	**>0%**	**+$4.8mil**	Currently forecasting a full year surplus of $4.8mil.
Capital Investment			
Capital Projects Delivery	**<80%**	**104%**	YTD Capital expenditure is 4% higher than budget due to material timing variances.
Asset Sustainability Ratio	**>70%**	**25.4%**	Several renewal programs are behind schedule.
Cash & Borrowings			
Liquidity Ratio	**>1.0**	**1.21**	A healthy level of liquidity currently held.
Indebtedness Ratio	**<60%**	**49.4%**	Only $30mil of $70mil planned borrowings for this financial year have been drawn down.

Financial Performance Report

Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

Appendix A – Operating Statement

Operating Statement	Year To Date			Full Year		
	Actual $000	Budget $000	Variance $000	Forecast $000	Budget $000	Variance $000
Revenue						
Rates & Charges	154,768,346	154,712,441	**55,905**	305,705,416	305,288,258	**417,158**
Fees, Charges & Other	42,335,102	41,722,556	**612,546**	89,457,534	85,349,122	**4,108,411**
Government Grants	23,455,228	25,055,374	**(1,600,146)**	67,345,942	67,926,169	**(580,227)**
Gain/(Loss) on Sale of Property	245,614	(75,500)	**321,114**	485,614	30,200	**455,414**
Total Operating Revenue	**220,804,290**	**221,414,870**	**(610,580)**	**462,994,506**	**458,593,750**	**4,400,756**
Expenditure						
Salaries, Wages & Employment	96,282,472	100,289,677	**4,007,205**	194,868,205	200,660,159	**5,791,954**
Materials & Services	64,487,827	69,716,639	**5,228,812**	137,764,419	143,948,645	**6,184,227**
Depreciation	46,510,070	43,625,264	**(2,884,806)**	98,241,832	87,250,528	**(10,991,304)**
Community Support	9,372,554	10,585,272	**1,212,718**	18,418,425	18,554,187	**135,762**
Utilities	5,149,061	5,099,953	**(49,108)**	10,481,921	9,421,821	**(1,060,100)**
Total Operating Expenditure	**221,801,985**	**229,316,806**	**7,514,821**	**459,774,802**	**459,835,341**	**60,539**
Internal Charges						
Internal Charge Allocation	12,875,805	14,996,051	**2,120,246**	27,808,091	29,928,338	**2,120,246**
Internal Cost (Recovery)	(12,938,621)	(15,028,320)	**(2,089,699)**	(29,441,625)	(31,531,591)	**(2,089,965)**
Total Operating Internal Charges	**(62,816)**	**(32,270)**	**30,547**	**(1,633,534)**	**(1,603,253)**	**30,281**
Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	**(934,878)**	**(7,869,665)**	**6,934,788**	**4,853,237**	**361,662**	**4,491,575**
Non-Recurrent Revenue						
Developer Contributions	8,719,675	10,423,345	**(1,703,670)**	22,126,669	23,830,339	**(1,703,670)**
Capital Grants	7,521,702	8,015,927	**(494,225)**	23,769,252	18,480,197	**5,289,055**
Contributed Assets	2,570,000	-	**2,570,000**	112,570,000	90,000,000	**22,570,000**
Gain/(Loss) on Sale of Property	9,572	153,500	**(143,928)**	(3,155,428)	(1,715,500)	**(1,439,928)**
Other Non-Recurrent Revenue	270,485	794,189	**(523,704)**	4,715,166	4,512,294	**202,872**
Tota Non-Recurrent Revenue	**19,091,434**	**19,386,961**	**(295,527)**	**160,025,659**	**135,107,330**	**24,918,329**
Net Comprehensive Surplus/(Deficit)	**18,156,556**	**11,517,296**	**6,639,261**	**164,878,896**	**135,468,992**	**29,409,905**

Financial Performance Report

Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

Key Variances – Operating Statement

Item	Comment
Operating Revenue	
Rates & Charges	*Budget* • Current result materially on track with budget expectations. *Forecast* • Interest on rates expected to be $394K favourable to budget. Due to uncertainty on the chargeable interest rate when preparing the budget, a conservative approach was taken.
Fees, Charges & Other	*Budget* • Commercial Waste Disposal is $688K ahead of budget due to higher than expected volumes at Drysdale Landfill. • Learn to Swim program is $700K ahead of budget due to higher than expected membership numbers. • Third party contributions for NWGGA are ($763K) behind budget due to the project being delayed. *Forecast* • The efficiencies in Leisure & Recreation assumed in the budget will no longer occur, resulting in a further $2.8mil of revenue included in the forecast.
Government Grants	*Budget* • Federal Assistance Grant is ($2.7mil) unfavourable to budget due to the timing of the FY24 contribution. • Family Services grants are $0.7mil favourable to budget higher than expected utilisation for childcare, which will result in full year favourability. *Forecast* • The timing of the Federal Assistance Grant creates potential risk in FY24. The forecast assumes 75% of the FY25 funding will be paid in FY24, resulting in an unfavourable impact of ($2.4mil). • The favourability in Family Services is expected to continue, which offsets part of the risk of the Federal Assistance Grant.
Gain/(Loss) on sale of Property	*Budget* • Gain on sale of our light fleet is $245K favourable to budget. Currently receiving higher than expected prices on second hand vehicles. *Forecast* • Expecting to exceed original budget consistent with current trends.

Financial Performance Report

Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

Operating Expenditure	
Salaries, Wages & Employment	*Budget* • Salaries & Wages are $5.1mil favourable to budget. There was a high level of vacancy in Q1+Q2 driven by strategic recruitment review. • Supplementary labour is ($1.3mil) unfavourable to budget. This is a partial offset to the favourability in salaries and wages as external labour is used to offset vacant roles. *Forecast* • Vacancy and savings in salaries expected to continue for the remainder of the year, but not to the level experienced YTD. • This will be partly offset by Supplementary Labour, which his expected to continue as per the current trend.
Material & Services	*Budget* • Capitalisation of interest costs and delays in borrowing have resulted in interest savings of $1.8mil. • Northern and Western Geelong Growth Area (NWGGA) is $1.2mil favourable to budget due to delays in the project. *Forecast* • The efficiencies in Leisure and Recreation assumed in the budget will no longer occur, resulting in a further ($3.8mil) of expenditure included in the forecast. • Capitalisation of interest will continue and will create full year savings. • The delays in NWGGA will result in full year savings.
Depreciation	*Budget* • In Q4 FY23, a high value of assets were recognised which were not in included in the FY24 budget. This has resulted in an unfavourable variance in depreciation. • Depreciation on Open Space asset is ($3.0mil) unfavourable as this comprises the largest asset class of recognised assets. *Forecast* • Full year position will be impacted by the depreciation on assets not included the depreciation budget.
Community Support	*Budget* • Current favourability relates to timing of community grants. *Forecast* • No material changes expected between forecast and budget.
Utilities	*Budget* • Current result materially on track with budget expectations. *Forecast*

Financial Performance Report
Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

	• The efficiencies in Leisure & Recreation assumed in the budget will no longer occur, resulting in a further ($1.1mil) of expenditure included in the forecast. • This is offset by savings of $220K for a new gas contract for Splashdown and Kardinia which comes into effect on 1 Jan 2024.
Non-Recurrent Revenue	
Developer Contributions	*Budget* • A Public Open Space Equalisation payment of $8.1mil (discounted amount) relating to Armstrong Creek was made earlier than anticipated in the budget. • Lara West DCP is $3.8mil favourable to budget with levies being received earlier than expected in the budget. *Forecast* • No material changes expected between forecast and budget.
Capital Grants	*Budget* • Delays in the Drysdale Sporting Precinct project have resulted in an a grant of $4mil being delayed. *Forecast* • A number of programs will receive grant funding that wasn't anticipated in the budget including Avalon Beach Boat Ramp & Car Park Upgrades ($1.4mil), Northern Bellarine Aquatic Centre ($1.3mil) and Armstrong Creek West Community Hub ($1.1mil).
Contributed Assets	*Budget* • Recognition of found land of $2.6mil occurred in Dec-23. *Forecast* • Consistent with prior year trend, this number has been forecast upwards.
Gain/(Loss) on Sale of Property	*Budget* • Current result materially on track with budget expectations. *Forecast* • Disposal of Engineering assets will impact full year result.
Other Non-Recurrent Revenue	*Budget* • Delay in receiving contribution for the LED Street Lighting & Smart Control Technology ($729K) *Forecast* • No material changes expected between forecast and budget.

Financial Performance Report

Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

Appendix B – Statement of Financial Position

Statement of Financial Position	Year To Date			Full Year		
	Actual $000	Budget $000	Variance $000	Forecast $000	Budget $000	Variance $000
Current Assets						
Cash & Cash Equivalents	58,244	118,503	**(60,258)**	74,696	98,079	**(23,383)**
Inventories	1,123	1,675	**(553)**	1,630	1,627	**3**
Non-Current Assets Classified As Held For Sale	11,439	18,700	**(7,261)**	18,700	18,700	**-**
Other Assets	10,666	6,089	**4,578**	6,200	6,205	**(6)**
Other Financial Assets	30,603	53,263	**(22,660)**	45,781	44,083	**1,699**
Trade & Other Receivables - Current	225,554	211,317	**14,237**	30,951	25,939	**5,012**
Total Current Assets	**337,629**	**409,546**	**(71,917)**	**177,958**	**194,633**	**(16,675)**
Non-Current Assets						
Property, Infrastructure, Plant & Equipment	4,781,346	4,376,277	**405,069**	5,150,132	4,473,944	**676,189**
Intangible Assets	11,400	5,062	**6,337**	8,063	8,063	**-**
Investments in Associates, Joint Arrangement &	9,629	9,119	**510**	9,119	9,119	**-**
Right-Of-Use Assets	6,507	6,589	**(82)**	5,839	5,839	**-**
Trade & Other Receivables - Non-Current	12,337	12,701	**(364)**	13,114	13,108	**6**
Total Non-Current Assets	**4,821,218**	**4,409,748**	**411,470**	**5,186,267**	**4,510,073**	**676,195**
Total Assets	**5,158,847**	**4,819,294**	**339,553**	**5,364,225**	**4,704,706**	**659,520**
Current Liabilities						
Interest-Bearing Liabilities - Current	12,656	16,138	**3,482**	13,030	16,138	**3,108**
Lease Liabilities - Current	657	1,356	**699**	1,374	1,374	**-**
Prepaid Income	173,913	65,331	**(108,582)**	22,271	22,273	**3**
Provisions - Current	39,610	42,605	**2,995**	43,638	43,637	**(1)**
Trade & Other Payables - Current	21,572	35,419	**13,847**	45,294	45,200	**(94)**
Trust Funds & Deposits	29,638	28,941	**(697)**	14,304	14,311	**7**
Total Current Liabilities	**278,046**	**189,790**	**(88,256)**	**139,911**	**142,933**	**3,022**
Non-Current Liabilities						
Interest-Bearing Liabilities - Non-Current	138,446	173,044	**34,597**	171,006	164,786	**(6,220)**
Lease Liabilities - Non-Current	6,132	5,500	**(631)**	4,814	4,814	**-**
Provisions - Non-Current	19,977	19,665	**(312)**	20,379	20,378	**(1)**
Total Non-Current Liabilities	**164,555**	**198,209**	**33,654**	**196,198**	**189,977**	**(6,221)**
Total Liabilities	**442,601**	**387,999**	**(54,602)**	**336,109**	**332,911**	**(3,199)**
Net Assets	**4,716,246**	**4,431,295**	**284,950**	**5,028,116**	**4,371,795**	**656,321**
Equity						
Accumulated surplus	2,160,905	2,091,744	**69,161**	2,286,721	2,075,356	**211,365**
Revulation Reserves	2,485,763	2,249,168	**236,595**	2,708,927	2,249,168	**459,759**
Other Reserves	69,578	90,384	**(20,806)**	32,467	47,271	**(14,804)**
Net Assets	**4,716,246**	**4,431,295**	**284,950**	**5,028,116**	**4,371,795**	**656,321**

Financial Performance Report

Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

Key Variances – Statement of Financial Position

Item	Comment
Currents Assets	
Cash & Cash Equivalents, Other Financial Assets	*Budget* • The budget assumed that $70mil was to be drawn down in Aug-23, however only $30mil has been drawdown this year. This variance of $40.0mil impacts both our cash and loan balances. • Cash inflows for Rates and Charges are $5.0mil unfavourable due to lower than expected rates collection. • Variance in opening cash position in budget of $26.0 mil. *Forecast* • The full year net cashflow position is materially consistent with budget, majority of variance relates to the opening variance.
Trade & Other Receivables – Current	*Budget* • Cash inflows for Rates and Charges are $5.0mil unfavourable due to lower than expected rates collection, resulting in a higher than expected debtors balance. *Forecast* • A higher receivables balances is being forecast due to the the lower than expected collection rates.
Non-Current Assets	
Property, Infrastructure, Plant & Equipment	*Budget* • In Q4 FY23, a high value of assets were recognised that were not in included in the FY2024 budget. This has resulted in a higher than expected asset balance against the budget. *Forecast* • The current variance will be a permanent impact, resulting in a higher than expected PP&E full year value. • Consistent with prior year trends, Contributed Assets and Asset Revaluations have been forecast upwards which will leader to higher PP&E values.
Intangible Assets	*Budget* • A position was formed in FY23 that the spend on the financial system was to classified as an intangible asset. This was not included in the budget, and has resulted in a higher than expected asset value against the budget. *Forecast* • The current variance will be a permanent impact, resulting in a higher than expected intangible asset full year value.

Financial Performance Report

Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

Current Liabilities	
Interest Bearing Liabilities – Current	*Budget* • Delay in planned borrowings of $40mil has resulted in lower than anticipated loan repayments. *Forecast* • With planned borrowings of $40mil being interest only, there will be lower than anticipated loan repayments.
Non-Current Liabilities	
Interest Bearing Liabilities – Non Current	*Budget* • The budget assumed that $70mil was to be drawn down in Aug-23, however only $30mil has been drawdown this year. This variance of $40.0mil impacts both our cash and loan balances *Forecast* • Loan balance will be higher than budget due to intentional portfolio debt management approach by using interest only borrowings in FY24.

Financial Performance Report

Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

Appendix C – Statement of Cashflows

Statement of Cashflows Inflow/(Outflow)	Year To Date			Full Year		
	Actual $000	Budget $000	Variance $000	Forecast $000	Budget $000	Variance $000
Cashflow from Operating Activities						
Rates & Charges	115,108	120,142 ▼	**(5,034)**	293,457	305,131 ▼	**(11,675)**
Fees, Charges & Other	37,071	38,287 ▼	**(1,216)**	85,302	81,384 ▲	**3,918**
Grants - Operating	23,455	25,055 ▼	**(1,600)**	67,346	67,926 ▼	**(580)**
Grants - Capital	7,522	9,240 ▼	**(1,718)**	24,498	18,480 ▲	**6,018**
Contributions - monetary	8,720	11,194 ▼	**(2,474)**	26,261	28,283 ▼	**(2,022)**
Interest Received	2,379	2,087 ▲	**292**	4,330	4,270 ▲	**60**
Employee Costs	(99,814)	(103,623) ▲	**3,810**	(201,346)	(207,330) ▲	**5,984**
Materials, Services & Community Support	(90,919)	(87,895) ▼	**(3,024)**	(169,370)	(169,949) ▲	**580**
Cashflow from Operating Activities	**3,523**	**14,487** ▼	**(10,965)**	**130,478**	**128,195** ▲	**2,282**
Cashflow from investing activities						
Property, Plant & Equipment	(74,811)	(68,877) ▼	**(5,934)**	(203,785)	(203,618) ▼	**(168)**
Proceeds from Sale	428	3,580 ▼	**(3,152)**	4,220	7,160 ▼	**(2,940)**
Cashflow from investing activities	**(74,383)**	**(65,297)** ▼	**(9,086)**	**(199,565)**	**(196,457)** ▼	**(3,108)**
Cashflow from financing activities						
Finance Costs	(1,811)	(2,933) ▲	**1,122**	(4,990)	(6,049) ▲	**1,059**
Proceeds from Borrowings	30,000	70,000 ▼	**(40,000)**	70,000	70,000 ▬	-
Repayment of Borrowings	(5,957)	(7,881) ▲	**1,923**	(11,994)	(16,138) ▲	**4,144**
Repayment of Lease Liabilities	(627)	(778) ▲	**150**	(1,555)	(1,555) ▬	-
Cashflow from financing activities	**21,605**	**58,409** ▼	**(36,805)**	**51,461**	**46,259** ▲	**5,203**
Net Cash Inflow/(Outflow)	**(49,256)**	**7,600** ▼	**(56,855)**	**(17,626)**	**(22,003)** ▲	**4,377**
Opening Cash Balance	**138,104**	**164,166** ▼	**(26,062)**	**138,104**	**164,166** ▼	**(26,062)**
Closing Cash Balance	**88,848**	**171,765** ▼	**(82,917)**	**120,477**	**142,162** ▼	**(21,685)**

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Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

Key Variances – Statement of Cashflows

Item	Comment
Cashflow from Operating Activities	
Rates & Charges	*Budget* • Cash inflows for Rates and Charges are $5.0mil unfavourable due to lower than expected rates collection. *Forecast* • Current data suggests collection rate will be lower than expected, resulting in unfavourable cash inflows from rates.
Cashflow from Investing Activities	
Property, Plant & Equipment	*Budget* • Cash outflows from Property, Plant & Equipment is $5.9mil unfavourable due to Capital Expenditure exceeding budget. *Forecast* • No material changes expected between forecast and budget.
Cashflow from Finance Activities	
Proceeds From Borrowings	*Budget* • The budget assumed that $70mil was to be drawn down in Aug-23, however only $30mil has been drawdown this year. This variance of $40.0mil impacts both our cash and loan balances. *Forecast* • No material changes expected between forecast and budget, with planned borrowings of $70mil still anticipated at a later stage this financial year.

Financial Performance Report

Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

Appendix D – Statement of Capital Works

Statement of Capital Works	Year To Date			Full Year		
	Actual $000	Budget $000	Variance $000	Forecast $000	Budget $000	Variance $000
Property						
Land	3,291	927 ▼	**(2,364)**	37,530	40,006 ▲	**2,476**
Buildings	32,051	23,469 ▼	**(8,582)**	53,638	35,567 ▼	**(18,071)**
Heritage Buildings	43	25 ▼	**(18)**	138	2,050 ▲	**1,912**
Total Property	**35,385**	**24,421** ▼	**(10,964)**	**91,306**	**77,623** ▼	**(13,683)**
Plant & Equipment						
Plant, Machinery & Equipment	1,178	2,716 ▲	**1,538**	6,544	5,432 ▼	**(1,112)**
Fixtures, Fittings & Furniture	95	245 ▲	**151**	454	490 ▲	**36**
Computers & Telecommunications	646	4,048 ▲	**3,402**	6,716	8,954 ▲	**2,238**
Total Plant & Equipment	**1,918**	**7,009** ▲	**5,091**	**13,714**	**14,877** ▲	**1,162**
Infrastructure						
Roads	12,054	11,824 ▼	**(231)**	24,300	29,496 ▲	**5,196**
Bridges	4	150 ▲	**146**	15	301 ▲	**285**
Footpaths & Cycleways	3,267	2,992 ▼	**(276)**	6,343	8,833 ▲	**2,490**
Drainage	1,001	501 ▼	**(501)**	3,773	6,019 ▲	**2,246**
Recreational, Leisure & Community Facilities	977	1,219 ▲	**241**	2,476	- ▼	**(2,476)**
Waste Management	710	1,357 ▲	**647**	2,872	2,229 ▼	**(643)**
Parks, Open Space & Streetscapes	7,669	11,693 ▲	**4,024**	28,743	33,328 ▲	**4,586**
Other Infrastructure	6,793	6,181 ▼	**(613)**	18,922	23,180 ▲	**4,258**
Total Infrastructure	**32,477**	**35,916** ▲	**3,439**	**87,444**	**103,386** ▲	**15,942**
Total Capital Expenditure	**69,779**	**67,346** ▼	**(2,434)**	**192,464**	**195,885** ▲	**3,421**
Represented by:						
New Asset Expenditure	44,412	37,193 ▼	**(7,218)**	123,824	129,352 ▲	**5,528**
Asset Renewal Expenditure	19,197	25,154 ▲	**5,957**	51,904	52,618 ▲	**714**
Asset Upgrade Expenditure	6,171	4,999 ▼	**(1,173)**	16,736	13,915 ▼	**(2,820)**
Total Capital Expenditure	**69,779**	**67,346** ▼	**(2,434)**	**192,464**	**195,885** ▲	**3,421**

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Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

Key Variances – Statement of Capital Works

Item	Comment
Property	
Land	*Budget* • Armstrong Creek Land Acquisition Program is ($2.3m) unfavourable due to a purchase of land in Horseshoe Bend that occurred earlier than anticipated in the budget. *Forecast* • New Station Land Development is expected to be $3.7mil favourable due to project delays.
Buildings	*Budget* • Armstrong Creek Town Centre Library and Learning Hub Design is ($6.5m) unfavourable to budget due to Expenditure that was expected to occur in Q4 FY23 has landed in Q1 FY24. • Northern Aquatic and Community Hub is ($3.0m) unfavourable to budget due to Expenditure that was expected to occur in Q4 FY23 has landed in Q1 FY24. *Forecast* • The current unfavorability will impact the full year result due to timing variances in Northern Aquatic and Community Hub ($4.0mil) and Armstrong Creek Town Centre Library ($10.7mil).
Plant & Equipment	
Computers and telecommunications	*Budget* • Core Program - IT Asset Replacement is $927K favourable due to delay in spend against budget assumptions. • Digital Modernisation is $2.1mil favourable due to delays in the project. *Forecast* • Digital Modernisation expected to be $2.0mil favourable due to delays in the project.
Infrastructure	
Roads	*Budget* • Current result materially on track with budget expectations. *Forecast* • Intersection - Reserve Road - Horseshoe Bend Road - Drews Road is expected to be $3.5mil favourable due to project delays. • Intersection - Surf Coast Hwy and Boundary Road is expected to be $3.2mil favourable due to project delays.

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Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

Other Infrastructure	*Budget* • Current result materially on track with budget expectations. *Forecast* • LED Lighting and Smart Control Delivery is expected to be $1.1mil favourable due to project delays. • Boundary Road and Baanyip Boulevard Traffic Signals is expected to be $2.9mil favourable due to project delays.

Financial Performance Report

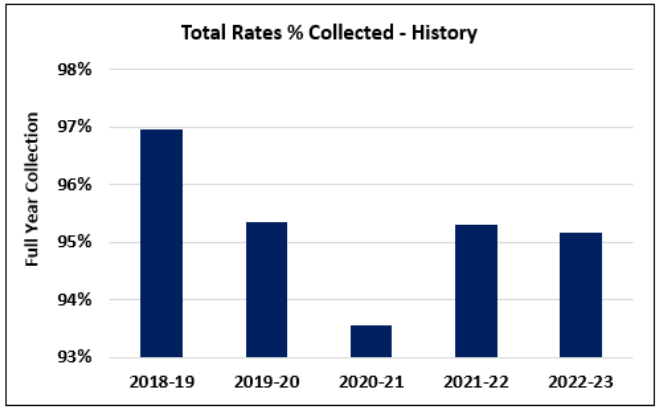
Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023

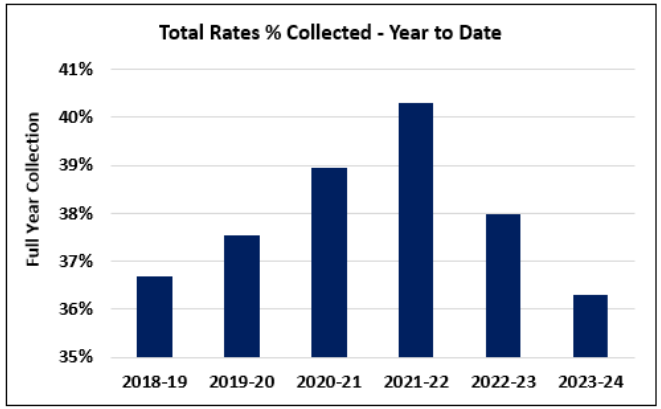
CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

Appendix E – Rates Collection & Debt Management Report

Rates Collection – December 2023

Figures in $000s	YEAR TO DATE Opening Bal	- Receipts	= O/S Bal	% Collected	% Collected v Prior YTD	PRIOR YEAR TO DATE Opening Bal	- Receipts	= O/S Bal	% Collected
Current	$ 299,063	$ 108,779	$ 190,284	36.37%	(1.65%)	$ 278,791	$ 106,001	$ 172,789	38.02%
Arrears	$ 14,339	$ 5,023	$ 9,316	35.03%	(2.31%)	$ 12,764	$ 4,765	$ 7,999	37.34%
TOTAL	$ 313,403	$ 113,802	$ 199,600	36.31%	(1.68%)	$ 292	$ 110,767	$ 180,788	37.99%





- Current collection of $108.8m is 1.7% down compared to December 2022 and 2.7% down from December 2021. Annual rate payments are due in February, which will provide a more accurate view of where we will land at year end.

2.7. G21 Regional Football (Soccer) Strategy 2023-2033 (Final Report)

Source: **City Life**
Executive Director: **Anthony Basford**

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is for Council to note the final G21 Regional Football (Soccer) Strategy 2023 – 2033.

Background

2. Football Victoria in partnership with G21 regional local government authorities, commissioned the development of the G21 Regional Football (Soccer) Strategy 2023 – 2033.

3. The strategy provides an update to the initial 2012 strategy. The strategy identifies a roadmap for the continued enhancement of facilities provision and participation in Football (Soccer).

4. The strategy highlights the previous strategies achievements and indicates new initiatives in response to changes and trends since 2012.

5. The strategy provides clubs and associations, local government authorities and other stakeholders in the G21 region the opportunity to align planning, investment, and development priorities across the region for the next 10 years.

Key Matters

6. The strategy was on public exhibition for a period of six weeks from 30 July to 10 September 2023. As a result of community feedback, minor changes were made to the final document. Details of changes are included in the attached public consultation overview.

7. The growth in football across the City of Greater Geelong has increased significantly over the past 10 years, with an overall growth of 67 percent.

8. The strategy has highlighted a range of issues that Football Victoria and the G21 Local Government Authorities face, particularly related to growth in participation. This strategy seeks to develop a plan that drives participation and enhances the experience of all participants, while identifying the priorities for investment in related infrastructure.

9. The strategy has considered a range of regional and local issues specific to the City of Greater Geelong including:

    9.1. Deliver the Armstrong Creek West sub-regional football facility.

    9.2. Improve the quality and capacity of existing pitches where shortfalls exist.

    9.3. Improve the quality to player and referee change facilities, so they are suitable for all genders.

    9.4. Provide support to existing indoor facilities to support increased participation in futsal.

    9.5. Activate new and existing sites where provision shortages exist, demand necessitates, particularly in growth areas.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.7

Cr Wilkinson moved, Cr Nelson seconded -

That Council note the final G21 Regional Football (Soccer) Strategy 2023-2033.

Carried

Financial Sustainability

10. The strategy outlies the priorities for the sport (Football/Soccer). The strategy will act as guidance to the City when considering a range of social infrastructure priorities in future budget planning.

Community Engagement

11. Consultation with key stakeholders has taken place throughout the development of the strategy, and in July 2023 G21 region Council's approved the release of the draft strategy for a six-week public exhibition period from 30 July to 10 September 2021.

12. The public exhibition period was hosted on the appointed consultant's website (Inside Edge Sports Planners). A total of 20 submissions were received throughout the engagement, which resulted in very minor changes being made to the final strategy document.

13. The final strategy has been endorsed by the Project Control Group and the G21 Sport & Recreation sub working group.

14. Each G21 Council will present the final strategy for noting or endorsement in February 2024.

15. A copy of the public consultation overview is provided with the final report.

Social Equity and Sustainability

16. Ensuring social equity in investment is one of the key principles underpinning some of the strategic priorities in this draft strategy, including (but not limited to) an investment in inclusive, gender-neutral facilities to accommodate the rapidly increasing and extensive numbers of females participating in football and futsal.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

17. There are no known statutory impediments to the arrangement proposed within this report.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

18. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
Healthy, caring and inclusive community.

19. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future" community aspiration:
An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.

Conflict of Interest

20. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

21. The final strategy includes the City of Greater Geelong within the G21 membership group. Noting membership with the G21 will cease in April 2024. Identified priorities within the draft strategy for the City of Greater Geelong will not change because of cessation of membership and will remain relevant for the duration of the strategy.

Environmental Sustainability

22. The development of any new and upgraded facilities will need to consider the City's Sustainability Framework and Universal Design Principles.

Attachments

1. G 21 Regional Football Strategy 2023 to 2033 - Public Exhibition Summary [**2.7.1** - 4 pages]
2. G 21 Region Football Strategy 2023 - 2033 FINAL [**2.7.2** - 51 pages]

CONSULTATION OVERVIEW

Public exhibition on the Draft G21 Football Strategy 2023 - 2033 occurred from 31 July 2023 to 10 September 2023.

Following the Draft Strategy being noted by all five G21 LGAs at their respective Council meetings, the document was released for public exhibition.

Feedback was hosted on the project consultant's website and each LGA advertised the public exhibition period via their social media platforms. In some cases, individual LGAs used additional communication methods (e.g. newsletters) to contact football stakeholders.

The Geelong Region Football Committee promoted the public exhibition period at their monthly meeting and distributed the link to provide feedback to their network.

20 submissions were received. Most submissions included feedback on multiple topics related to the Strategy. Feedback themes have been grouped on the subsequent pages of this document.

ENGAGEMENT STATISTICS

20
Submissions

5+
Social Media posts

6 week
Engagement period

CONSULTATION OVERVIEW

Theme	No. of responses received	Summary of feedback	Responses and change to report (if required)
Sub regional and regional facility development	3	The Armstrong Creek facility was a priority of the previous Strategy and still not delivered. Requesting consultation regarding future regional facility development. Regional facility development is required to demonstrate future commitment to football.	Noted and acknowledged however no change. The updated Strategy has confirmed that the sub-regional facility is still the key infrastructure priority for football to 2023. A regional football facility feasibility study was recently been undertaken by the City of Greater Geelong for the north-western areas of the municipality alongside football stakeholders however deemed a longer-term prospect at this stage. No change to report.
Greater support for Geelong Galaxy	4	Facility allocation for Geelong Galaxy (female football club) including pitches and club rooms. Movement of the club with no certain home has distributed its participant base.	The Strategy is focused around continuing and improving inclusivity and supporting fair and equal access to facilities. As the Strategy has a regional focus, it does not include specific recommendations for existing clubs as this may change over time. The Strategy in its intent however will support outcomes for female participation and in turn the Geelong Galaxy. No change to report.
Create more pitches and fields of play for football	4	Reduce the ratio of fields to players, preference of providing pitches that are available to football all year round.	Action 2.1 in the Strategy is to 'Advocate for the continued investment into creating more sustainable football facilities including improved playing surfaces, sports lighting and change rooms'. This supports feedback received. Providing pitches that are available all year round is difficult for LGAs to accommodate given they have so many competing priorities to access playing surfaces. No change to report.
Improve pitch quality	4	Increase lighting and surface quality of football pitches.	Action 2.1 in the Strategy is to 'Advocate for the continued investment into creating more sustainable football facilities including improved playing surfaces, sports lighting and change rooms'. This supports feedback received. No change to report.

Theme	No. of responses received	Summary of feedback	Responses and change to report (if required)
Golden Plains facility provision	1	More funding towards football facilities in remote areas of Golden Plains Shire.	Whilst there is likely to be some demand for football (soccer) in more remote/regional areas, forecasting suggests that we need to build facilities in Golden Plains Shire where there is sufficient people within the active age cohort (5-39) to sustain demand. Hence why a focus on Bannockburn growth area is recommended in the Strategy. No change to the report. Remote townships are unlikely to have the capacity to sustain a new football club, which is supported by current and projected population statistics. However, Council believe there is opportunity to support football in the North of the Shire, with Ross Creek identified as a potential location for future infrastructure. No change to the report.
Facilities in Colac Otway	2	Focussed investment in football facilities in Colac Otway Shire is needed. There is a need for a more centrally located football facility. The Colac Otway Rovers have no solid home base. Training facilities at Central Reserve require attention. Alternative venues and facility upgrades at existing venues is needed. Opportunities for futsal to be provided in Colac.	Colac Otway Shire Council acknowledges there is a lack of suitable football (soccer) facilities in the Shire for competition and training. The Strategy appropriately addresses actions for the future provision of football (soccer) facilities within the Shire including the planning and construction of fit for purpose, multi-use, gender neutral soccer facilities in the Colac/Elliminyt area. Whilst the actions related to providing new facilities are medium to long term priorities, this rating considers Council's current resource and financial capabilities for implementing the actions. No change to the report. Council has considered alternative venues for training and matches, however acknowledge there are facility gaps in being able to support alternative venues in the interim until new facilities can be constructed. Ensuring the Colac Otway Rovers AFC sustainability will be crucial to investing in dedicated soccer facilities. As identified in the Strategy, the club, like the other G21 region clubs, will need to actively participate in club development, game development, participation and marketing recommendations identified in the Strategy. No change to the report. Support for futsal to be trailed at the Bluewater Centre is acknowledged and outlined within the report. No change to the report.
Club culture and welcoming environments	2	Support clubs to create more inclusive and welcoming environments. Support financial inclusivity to ensure everyone can participate.	Strategic Priority 1 ‘Club Development’ in the Strategy outlines initiatives and actions to support clubs through programs and education. This will assist in creating the welcoming environments desired. No change to report.

Theme	No. of responses received	Summary of feedback	Responses and change to report (if required)
Player, coach and referee development	2	Ensure referee education, player pathways, player retention and marketing are paramount. Support clubs to develop coaches and volunteers. Support referee development and retention. Support clubs to be more welcoming and inclusive.	This is all covered in the Strategy so great that it is supported in the feedback. No change to the report.
New club development	2	Strategy needs to include more around the formation of new clubs, especially in the new emerging growth areas as well as in localities where football is not catered for (e.g Newtown/Highton/Fyansford as well as in the Borough of Queenscliffe).	The Strategy identifies that the development of any new club(s) will be ideally situated in the designated growth areas of G21. At this point in time, this is focused around the Armstrong Creek sub-regional venue and potentially Surf Coast Shire. There are no other new venues to accommodate new or potential clubs identified to 2033. The next opportunity will be in the NWGGA growth area however is a medium to longer term prospect. Through the analysis of population and participation data, there is insufficient demand at this point in time to support the creation of football club and facility in the Borough of Queenscliffe. No change to report.
Futsal and futsal development	3	Concern over current affiliated Football Victoria futsal provider and data provided. Consider how other private providers can be supported to deliver futsal participation. Support for the delivery of futsal programs in other LGAs where it is not presently provided. Consider opportunities to support futsal through development of new indoor facilities.	Data within report is verified and support by the Project Control Group. No change to report. Update report to support other futsal providers to become affiliated with FV to deliver programs and competitions. Change to report made. Opportunity to include futsal within new and existing indoor facilities is included within the document. No change to report.

G21
GEELONG REGION ALLIANCE

G21 REGIONAL FOOTBALL (SOCCER) STRATEGY

2023-2033

FINAL REPORT

FOOTBALL VICTORIA
Surf COAST SHIRE
GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE
Colac Otway SHIRE
CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

G21
GEELONG REGION ALLIANCE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

In the spirit of Reconciliation, Football Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to all First Nations Peoples today.

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FOREWORD

Football Victoria are delighted to introduce the G21 Regional Football Strategy, which outlines the region's vision and road map for the development and growth of football over the next decade. This updated Strategy takes into account the latest Football Victoria and Football Australia strategic frameworks, and focuses on key areas such as Female Football, Facilities & Infrastructure, the Fair Access Policy, Club & Game Development, and other critical factors across the G21 Football Community.

"Football is more than just a sport; it brings people together, fosters a sense of community, and promotes physical activity and mental wellbeing."

The G21 Region has a rich football history, and this Strategy builds on that legacy by providing a clear direction and plan for the future. The region is home to many talented players, coaches, administrators, and volunteers, and this Strategy aims to support them in achieving their potential and to create an environment where football can thrive.

"The updated Strategy places a strong emphasis on Women & Girls Football, which has experienced significant growth in recent years leading into the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup hosted in Australia & New Zealand."

We recognise the need to provide equal opportunities and support for women and girls in football, and this Strategy outlines specific initiatives to achieve this goal. The Strategy also includes the implementation of the Victorian Government's Fair Access Policy, which ensures that football is accessible to everyone regardless of their background, abilities, or gender.

"In 2023, Football in the G21 Region is expected to see more participants than ever before. At present, our club registrations are 7.9% higher than they were in 2022, and G21 resident participation has increased 5.5%."

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on community sport, and the football community has not been immune to this impact. The pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges for clubs, players, coaches, and administrators. Nevertheless, the football community has shown resilience and adaptability in responding to these challenges, and this updated Strategy recognises the need to build on these strengths.

The Geelong football community is made up of a diverse range of clubs, including those with an entrenched community history and newer clubs that have been formed in the region's growth corridors. The Strategy recognises the importance of supporting these clubs to grow and develop in a sustainable way.

The Strategy also recognises the significant population growth being experienced in the G21 Region. As the region grows and evolves, it is essential that the football community continues to meet the changing needs and expectations of the community.

"The Strategy provides a road map for the development of football that is responsive, adaptable, and sustainable."

Finally, this Strategy recognises that football is constantly evolving, and we must adapt and respond to changes in the wider football landscape. The Strategy takes into account the latest Football Victoria and Football Australia strategic documents and seeks to align our region's priorities with those of the wider football community.

In conclusion, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the development of the Strategy, including the G21 Geelong Region Alliance, Local Government Authorities, Football Victoria Staff, our Community Partners, Clubs, and the broader Geelong Football Community. The G21 Regional Football Strategy provides a clear direction and plan for the future of football in our region, and I am excited to see the positive impact it will have on our community.

Sincerely,
Lachlan Cole
Head of Growth & Development
Football Victoria

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

By 2033, Football in the G21 Region has a vision to be united, diverse, inclusive and focused on growing all facets of the sport alongside its clubs, partners and community.

The 2012 G21 Football (Soccer) Strategy saw significant outcomes in facility investment and participation growth. The Strategy has now been updated to ensure football and its stakeholders can respond to emerging trends and changing environmental influences.

Football in the G21 region has

5,600
PARTICIPANTS
+2,300 since 2015

+114%
INCREASE IN FEMALE PARTICIPATION
since 2015

25%
OF ALL PARTICIPANTS ARE FEMALE
in 2022

The 2023–2033 Strategy provides the pathway for the future needs of football and futsal and ensures a collaborative approach and collective voice moving forward.

The Strategy builds on the priorities that Football Victoria are already working towards, including:

- A 50/50 gender parity in football goal by 2027
- Football Victoria Facilities Strategy to 2026
- Football Victoria's Strategic Plan
- Football Victoria's Vision for Women & Girls

The Strategy's implementation will include undertaking continuous monitoring and a formal annual review of its progress.

Six key priorities that will have the greatest impact on football participation in the G21 region by 2033.

- Delivery of the Armstrong Creek West Active Open Space including Sub-Regional Football Facility
- Improved quality of existing football pitches
- Improved quality of all gender change rooms for players and referees
- More training and support for the recruitment, development and retention of coaches, referees and volunteers
- Greater access to indoor facilities for futsal
- Greater promotion and delivery of programs to support all ages, genders, abilities and cultures

OUR G21 FOOTBALL JOURNEY

The 2012 G21 Regional Football (Soccer) Strategy was established to guide the development and delivery of football and futsal to 2022.

This included a rationale for the future of facilities, participation opportunities and collaborative approaches to working with stakeholders and funding partners.

A regional approach to planning continues to benefit all stakeholders, with significant investment being secured since the 2012 Strategy's inception. Football Victoria recognises the contributions made to date, particularly by G21 Local Government Authorities and the Victorian Government.

To 2033, the refreshed G21 Regional Football Strategy will assist will address:

- A changing, diverse and growing population forecast, seeing the G21 region experience areas of exponential growth, as well as pockets of stagnation.
- Participation increases, particularly within designated growth areas, creating greater demand for facilities for training, games and events.
- Greater demand for data driven, prioritised investment, particularly within the current economic climate and alongside competing demands.
- Participation trends and demand for social and flexible formats of the game, including futsal.
- COVID-19 recovery and the impact on community sport including the attraction and retention of players, volunteers, coaches and referees.

Key outcomes and achievements of the 2012 Strategy

37
Football infrastructure projects completed

>80%
Strategic actions completed or underway

114%
Increase in female football participation

$54M
Investment in G21 football facility infrastructure

70%
Increase in overall football participation

48%
Growth in junior football (<18yo) participation

THE G21 REGION: A SNAPSHOT

The G21 Region offers the best of regional, rural and coastal lifestyles and will see strong population growth between 2023 and 2033.

The G21 Region encompasses the following LGAs and their respective geographic areas:

- City of Greater Geelong
- Surf Coast Shire
- Golden Plains Shire
- Colac Otway Shire
- Borough of Queenscliffe

368,891
2023 G21 region population

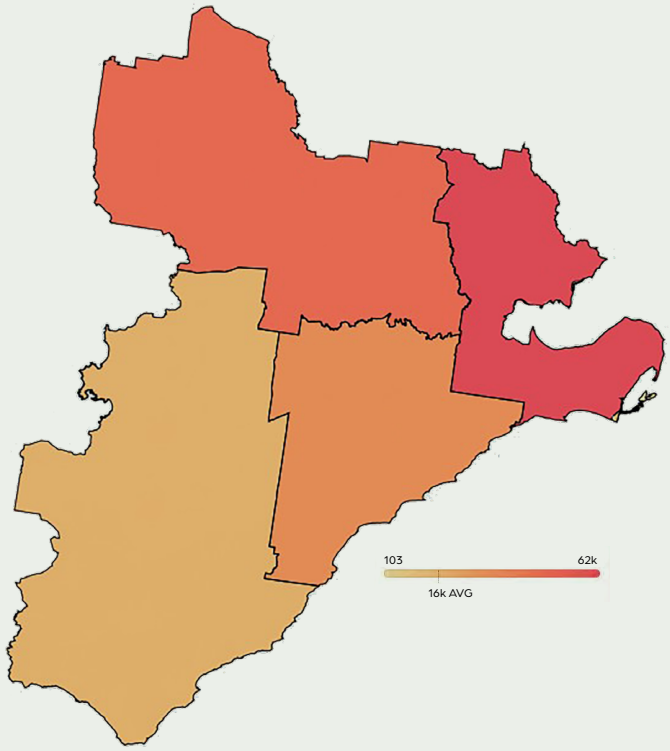
408,609
2028 G21 region population
+39,718 from 2023

453,373
2033 G21 region population
+84,482 from 2023

25-39
Largest G21 region age cohort 2023

3 out of 5 G21 LGAs (City of Greater Geelong, Surf Coast Shire and Golden Plains Shire) appear in the 10 fastest growing Victorian municipalities.

Source: www.population.gov.au



WHAT IS INFLUENCING THE NEW STRATEGY

Many factors are influencing the 2023-2033 G21 Regional Football Strategy that require a coordinated response. These influences have been identified via the activities associated with of this report and through extensive stakeholder consultation.

PARTICIPATION GROWTH

Forecasted participation growth will see more than 1,500 additional football and futsal players over the next 10 years. A high proportion of participants will be female, with a goal to achieve 50/50 gender representation by 2027.

In some instances, participation growth in the region is inhibited by a lack of football facilities. The delivery of new, and activation of existing venues presents the opportunity to increase greater than forecasted participation outcomes.

POPULATION CHANGES

80,000 additional people are expected to reside in the G21 region by 2033. A high proportion of these people will be aged within the key demographic for organised sport.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

The strategic drivers of government and sport continue to evolve however both have an underpinning objective to create more inclusive and welcoming environments for all genders and all abilities.

To enable this, key focus areas for sport and government include:

- Increasing women and girls participation
- Multi-use and multi-generational facilities
- Fair and equal access to facilities
- Prioritising investment where it's needed most
- Collaborative investment partnerships
- Increasing opportunities for participation by people of all abilities, genders and cultural identities

CLUB AND GAME SUSTAINABILITY

Through consultation, the following issues were identified as being critical to football's success and sustainability within the G21 region, including:

- Attracting and retaining volunteers
- Attracting, retaining and developing coaches
- Attracting, retaining and developing referees
- A review of the current competition structure
- Improving the connection between football and futsal

FACILITY PROVISION AND DELIVERY

- Consultation and facility audits identified that 36% of existing football pitches in the G21 region are considered to be in 'poor' condition.
- A lack of multi-pitch facilities, including those with hybrid and synthetic surfaces, limits the region's ability to attract events and tournaments.
- There is an uneven distribution of football facilities across the region seeing a high concentration of venues in the north, and limited venues in the south and west.
- In most G21 municipalities there is a deficit in football pitches when considered against best practice population to provision ratios.
- Limited access of suitable facilities for futsal which is inhibiting growth of the sport.

ADVOCACY, LEGACY & PROMOTION

With major events including the FIFA 2023 Women's World Cup, football has significant opportunity to work with its partners in capitalising on participation, marketing and infrastructure opportunities that will be as a direct result or as part of the legacy of these events.

THE STRUCTURE OF G21 FOOTBALL

Football in G21 is delivered via Football Victoria, the sport's peak body, alongside the Geelong Region Football Committee who are an official advisory group.

The G21 region football consists of 21 clubs competing across several competitions including "National Premier League (NPL) and State League at senior levels, Junior Boys & Girls National Premier League (JBNPL & JGNPL) at junior levels, and via the local community competitions at senior and junior levels.

Football Victoria is responsible for the administration, promotion and delivery of football and presently have one full-time staff member, among a broader team of centralised staff, who oversee the coordination of all regional football activities.

The Geelong Region Football Committee is an official advisory group consisting of volunteer membership. Presently, the GRFC consists of one elected representative from each eligible G21 region football club. The GRFC's role is to provide advice to FV on regional matters, as well as advocate to government for improved outcomes for football.

Geelong Futsal is an independent organisation who is affiliated with Football Victoria and considered the recognised provider of futsal within the region. Geelong Futsal has 3.50 Full Time Employees. At present, there is one futsal competition within the region.

FOOTBALL VICTORIA

- Administration
- Promotion
- Delivery of football
- Support for delivery of futsal
- Delivery of schools programs
- Delivery of referee and coaching training

FOOTBALL VICTORIA
GEELONG REGION

GEELONG REGION FOOTBALL COMMITTEE

- Advisory Committee of Football Victoria
- Promotion and development of football
- Advocacy body to government on behalf of G21 region football clubs

FUTSAL GEELONG

GEELONG FUTSAL

- A recognised provider delivering futsal competitions who are affiliated with Football Victoria

INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES BY LGA

G21 LGA PRIORITIES FOR FOOTBALL

As the land owners and managers of most grassroots sporting facilities, Local Government Authorities (LGAs) are integral stakeholders to football. They are also key partners in the production and implementation of the G21 Regional Football Strategy. A summary of football in each LGA, including high level strategic priorities are outlined on the following pages.

The summaries include what is considered the key infrastructure focus areas for each municipality to 2033. These priorities should be considered against the regional strategic framework on page 19 and its implementation guide on page 27.

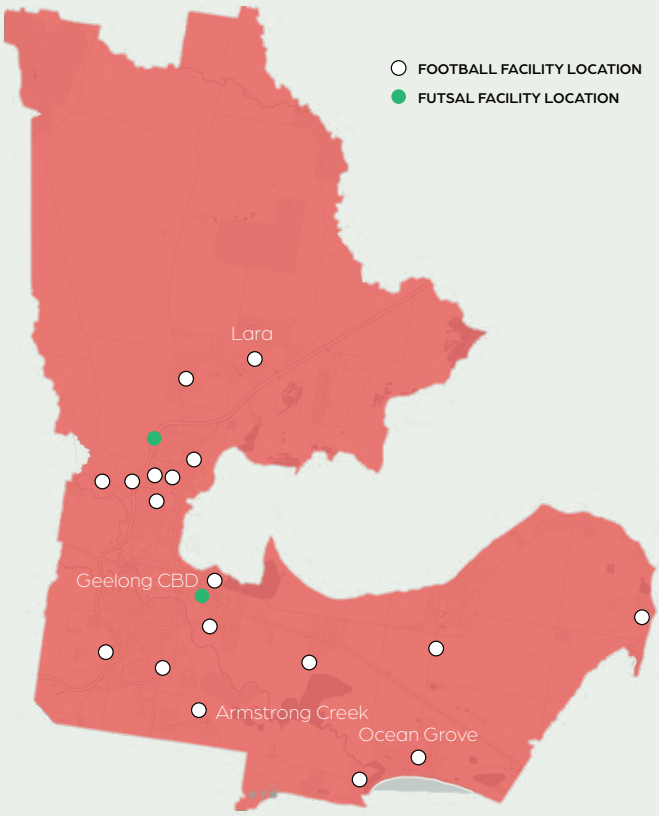
Further information regarding LGA population forecasts and participation forecasts, facility condition and provision information can be found within the Appendices section of this report.

City of Greater Geelong

Population (2023): **280,450**
Population forecast (2033): **342,706**
5–39 y.o change (2023–33): **+28,828**
Existing Sites/Pitches: **18 sites / 40 pitches**
Football & futsal participation (2022): **5,252**
Futsal & futsal participation (2033): **5,690**
Current football pitch to population ratio*: **1 : 7,011**

KEY INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES TO 2033

1. Deliver the Armstrong Creek West Active Open Space Sub-Regional Football Facility
2. Improve the quality and capacity of existing football pitches where shortfalls exist
3. Improve the quality of player and referee change facilities so that they are suitable for all genders
4. Provide and/or facilitate access to existing indoor facilities to support increased participation in futsal
5. Activate new and existing sites for football where provision shortages exist, and demand necessitates, particularly within designated growth areas



Note: pitch to population ratio used is based on benchmarking, best practice and from G21 LGA's preferences.
Standard pitch to population ratio is considered to be 1 : 5,000

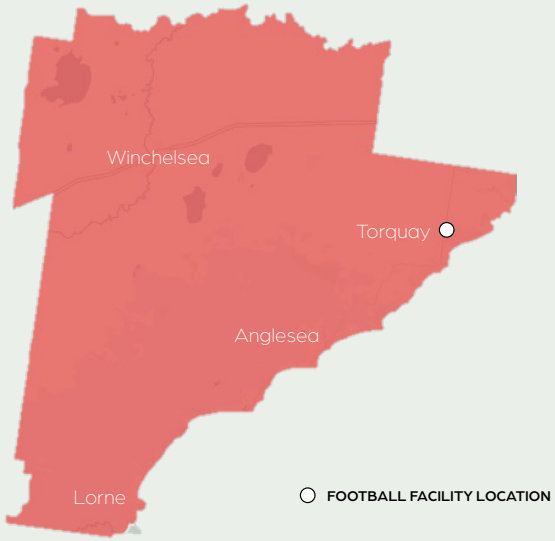
Population and demographic data for the City of Greater Geelong, Golden Plains Shire and Colac Otway Shire sourced from forecast.id. Surf Coast Shire sourced from REMPLAN. Borough of Queenscliffe sourced from Victoria in Future (2019)

Surf Coast Shire

Population (2023): **37,694**
Population forecast (2033): **49,774**
5–39 y.o change (2023–33): **+3,413**
Existing Sites/Pitches: **1 site / 3 pitches**
Football & futsal participation (2022): **583**
Football & futsal participation (2033): **698**
Current Football Pitch to Population ratio*: **1 : 11,610**

KEY INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES TO 2033

1. Support opportunities for increased participation in football, and if demand exists, consider options to activate existing recreation reserves for new clubs within Surf Coast Shire
2. Provide and/or facilitate access to existing indoor facilities to support increased participation in futsal
3. Support regional advocacy for the Armstrong Creek West Active Open Space Sub-Regional Football Facility

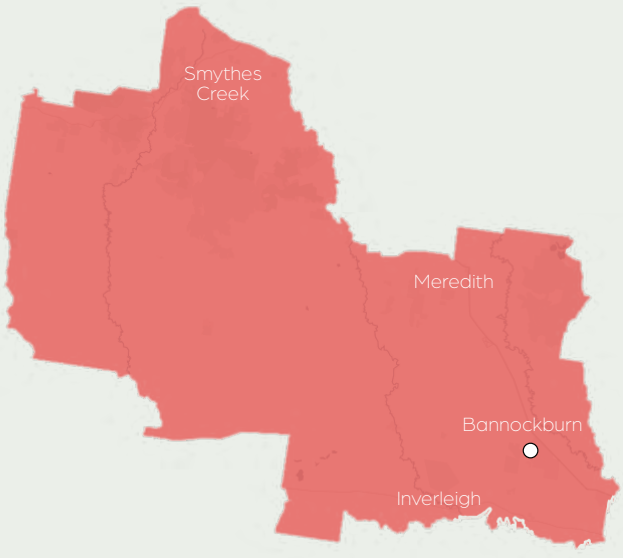


Golden Plains Shire

Population (2023): **24,943**
Population forecast (2033): **32,800**
5–39 y.o change (2023–2033) **+3,834**
Existing Sites/Pitches: **1 site / 2 pitches**
Football & futsal participation (2022): **481**
Football & futsal participation (2033): **615**
Current Football Pitch to Population ratio*: **1 : 12,472**

KEY INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES TO 2033

1. Activate a new recreation reserve within Golden Plains Shire to support more football participation
2. Provide and/or facilitate access to existing indoor facilities to support increased participation in futsal
3. Support regional advocacy for the Armstrong Creek West Active Open Space Sub-Regional Football Facility



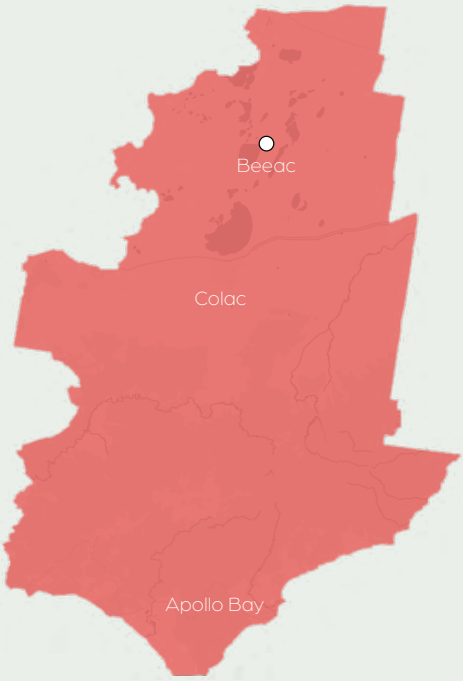
Note: pitch to population ratio used is based on benchmarking, best practice and from G21 LGA's preferences. Standard pitch to population ratio is considered to be 1 : 5,000

Colac Otway Shire

Population (2023): **22,471**
Population forecast (2033): **24,657**
5–39 y.o change (2023–33): **+777**
Existing Sites/Pitches: **1 site / 1 pitch**
Football & futsal participation (2022): **64**
Football & futsal participation (2033): **70**
Current Football Pitch to Population ratio*: **1 : 22,471**

KEY INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES TO 2033

1. Plan and deliver infrastructure to enable greater provision of multi-use football facilities to meet current and future demand for training and competition in the Colac area
2. Provide and/or facilitate access to existing indoor facilities to support increased participation in futsal
3. Improve the quality and capacity of existing football pitches and player and referee change facilities where shortfalls exist
4. Support regional advocacy for the Armstrong Creek West Active Open Space Sub-Regional Football Facility



Borough of Queenscliffe

Population (2023): **3,333**
Population forecast (2033): **TBC**
Existing Sites/Pitches: **None**
Football & futsal participation (2022): **56**
Football & futsal participation (2033): **60**
Current Football Pitch to Population ratio*: **0 : 3,037**

KEY INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES TO 2033

1. Advocate and provide support for the Armstrong Creek West Active Open Space Sub-Regional Football Facility

Note: pitch to population ratio used is based on benchmarking, best practice and from G21 LGA's preferences. Standard pitch to population ratio is considered to be 1 : 5,000

FACILITIES & PARTCIPATION REPORT CARD

G21 PARTICIPATION SNAPSHOT

Football

Since the initial G21 Strategy, football participation in the G21 region has increased significantly. The following snapshot is a summary of (resident[1]) football participation from 2015 to 2022. Individual LGA participation summaries can be found in the Appendices section of this report.

5,600
G21 football participants in 2022

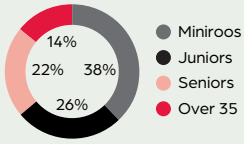
+70%
Overall participation growth 2015 to 2022

+114%
Female participation growth 2015 to 2022

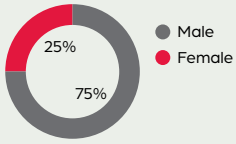
+62%
Additional Miniroos (0–11 year olds) 2015 to 2022

48
Football referees in 2022

65%
Of participants in 2022 are juniors (i.e. <18 years old)



Age cohort participant % in 2022

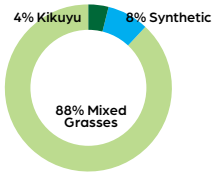
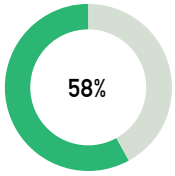
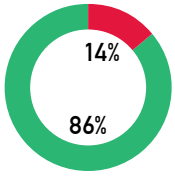
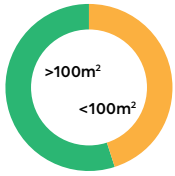
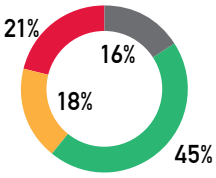
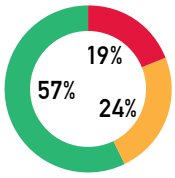
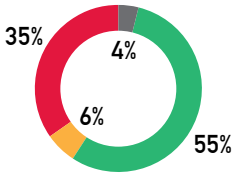
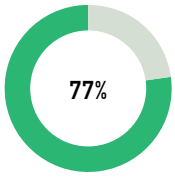
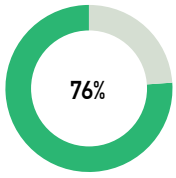
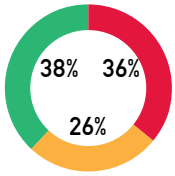
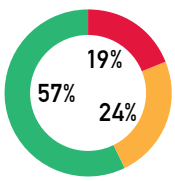
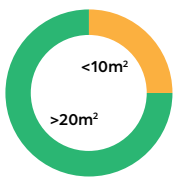


Male/female participant % in 2022

1. Resident participation – all known participants living in the G21 Region and participating in football anywhere.

G21 FOOTBALL FACILITIES: CONDITION SNAPSHOT

A summary of G21 football facility condition is provided below. A summary of individual venues can be found in the Appendices section of this report.

Sites	Playing Fields	Change Facilities	Pavilion/Referee Rooms
21 Sites	 Pitch surface types	**28** Player change rooms	**24** Pavillions
40 Playing fields	 Irrigation	 Player change size compliance	 Social room size compliance
1:9,143 Region population to pitch ratio	 Drainage	 Player change shower type	**18** Referee change rooms
1:140 Region participant to pitch ratio	 100+ Lux playing field lighting	 Gender neutral player change	 Gender neutral referee change
Indicates provision does not meet or is below requirements Indicates provision meets requirements however limitations identified Indicates provision meets or exceeds requirements Indicates that accurate assessment could not be obtained "	 Overall condition of playing field	 Overall condtion	 Referee size compliance

G21 PARTICIPATION SNAPSHOT

Futsal

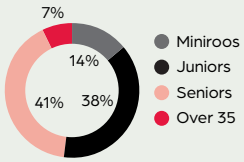
A summary of current futsal participation in the G21 region is provided below. Individual LGA participation summaries can be found can be found in the Appendices section of this report.

865
Futsal participants in 2022

1,450
Average number of annual participants from 2016 to 2022
Excluding seasons 2020 and 2021 which were heavily impacted due to COVID-19.

7%
Female futsal participation in 2022

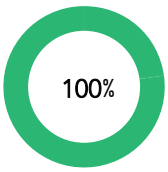
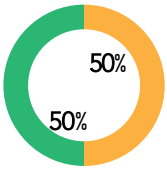
21 years
Average age of futsal participant in 2022



Age cohort participant % in 2022

52%
Of futsal participants are aged under 18 in 2022

G21 FUTSAL FACILITIES: CONDITION SNAPSHOT

Sites	Change Facilities
2 Sites	4 Player change rooms
8 Futsal Courts	 Player change size compliance
1:45,716 Region population to provision ratio	 Player change shower type
1:108 Region participant to provision ratio	Indicates provision meets requirements however limitations identified Indicates provision meets or exceeds requirements

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

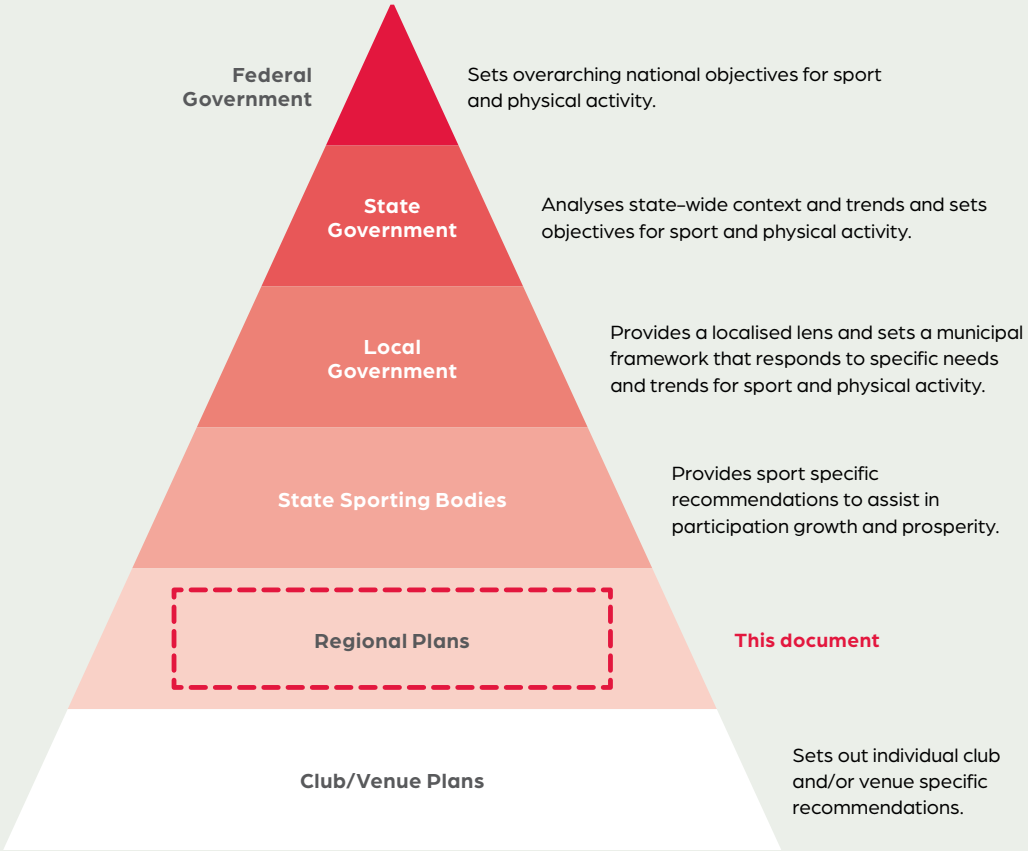
THE BENEFITS OF A REGIONAL PLAN FOR FOOTBALL

A regional sports plan plays an integral role in the hierarchy of strategic documents for key stakeholders and partners.

A regional plan incorporates the strategic directions of all levels of government, along with the objectives of relevant peak sporting bodies to set specific, achievable and measurable recommendations.

Utilising relevant data, insights and consultation, a regional plan provides project stakeholders with a clear vision and strategy for the collaborative delivery of sport over a 10 year period. Engaging a range of partners enables coordinated, well planned and equitable investment in programming and infrastructure.

The G21 Regional Football Strategy will not provide infrastructure development cost estimates or a proposed capital works program. These will continue to be developed at the discretion of LGAs, in consultation with users, pending analysis of identified facility gaps, venue usage requirements and available investment opportunities.



FOOTBALL AND GOVERNMENT POLICY OBJECTIVES

The following themes and directions of government and sport will support the vision and priorities for G21 football to 2033

National, State and Local Government objectives for sport

Attract, retain, grow and sustain participation in sport and physical activity

The provision of, and equal access to, fit for purpose, safe sustainable and inclusive infrastructure

Inspire and encourage women and girls' participation in non-traditional sport settings

Proactively plan for growth and demand

Drive collaboration in investment and delivery

Enhance the quality and availability of participation data

Drive asset utilisation and demonstrate responsible financial management

Football Victoria objectives for football and futsal

50/50 gender equity goal by 2027

Creating an inclusive, welcoming and diverse game

Expanding football's footprint and engagement with schools

Advocating and support for providing fit-for-purpose facilities

Establishing and continually improving relationships with government

Increasing the exposure of football and futsal and leveraging opportunities through major events i.e. FIFA WWC23

Utilise and improve data collection methods to drive decision making and monitor trends

G21 Football's Vision and Priorities 2023-2033

Vision

Football in the G21 region is united, diverse and inclusive. We are focused on growing all facets of football alongside our clubs, partners and community.

Priorities

1. **CLUB DEVELOPMENT**
   Grow a diverse and sustainable G21 football community

2. **FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE**
   Plan and deliver functional, sustainable and fit for purpose football and futsal facilities

3. **GAME DEVELOPMENT**
   Implement initiatives to deliver programs, competitions, events and pathways for all

4. **ENGAGEMENT & PROMOTION**
   Increase the engagement and promotion of football to inspire and ignite participation

5. **PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION**
   Work with our partners to advocate, support and deliver football and futsal across the region

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: CLUB DEVELOPMENT

Focus areas

Grow a diverse and sustainable G21 football and futsal facilities

- We will support our affiliates to attract and retain volunteers as the lifeblood of not-for-profit clubs and organisations.
- We will educate and support our clubs to be better equipped in their management and operations.
- We will strive to achieve our 50/50 gender equity goal by 2027.
- We will support clubs to become more inclusive through more programs and opportunities for people of all abilities, genders and cultural identities.
- We will support our clubs in the development of strategies that assist them to deliver our combined objectives.
- We will work with our partners to develop participation strategies in areas of growth and decline.
- We will deliver formats of football that appeal to a broad cross section of the community.

Key Actions for Strategic Success

1. Support clubs to access resources that improve volunteer attraction and retention.
2. Leverage Football's Legacy 23 volunteer planning following the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup.
3. Request that clubs undertake the Football Australia Club Changer Club Development Program on an annual basis. Monitor results to create support and development programs.
4. Partner with Regional Sports Assemblies to deliver targeted training and club education workshops.
5. Support clubs in funding applications that directly impact and improve outcomes in inclusion, equity, access, participation, sustainability and diversity.
6. Continue to drive female participation growth in the region by supporting specific club-led female initiatives and programs.
7. Work with LGA partners to identify support mechanisms needed to deliver participation strategies in areas of growth and/or decline.
8. Support the activation of additional and/or existing football facilities in the Surf Coast Shire, Colac Otway Shire and Golden Plains Shire to drive participation growth.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2:
FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

Focus areas

Plan and deliver functional, sustainable and fit for purpose football facilities

- We will advocate for inclusive and modern facilities that support the diversity of participants attracted to the game.
- We will support our LGA partners to understand needs and gaps in facility provision, and where infrastructure is needed most.
- We will address the demand for sub-regional/regional football facilities.
- We will advocate for increased access to indoor facilities to support the growth of futsal.
- We will support clubs and LGAs in the development and implementation of the Fair Access Policy to create equitable usage of infrastructure for women and girls.

Key Actions for Strategic Success

1. Advocate for continued investment into creating more sustainable football facilities including improved playing surfaces, sports lighting and change rooms.
2. Support the ongoing planning and development of sub-regional/regional football facilities. The Armstrong Creek West Active Open Space facility is seen as the immediate priority. The provision of future sub-regional/regional facilities should include a focus on the provision of pitches with hybrid and synthetic surfaces.
3. Support LGAs to roll out the Victorian Government's Fair Access Policy.
4. Identify and advocate for new or improved local football facilities that support population and participation growth. This includes investigation into the provision of pitches with hybrid or synthetic surfaces to promote greater use and function.
5. Activate existing suitable indoor facilities for futsal. Noting a preference for indoor facilities that are accessible and suitable for wheelchair participation.
6. Assist clubs to deliver venue improvement plans for local football venues that outline collaborative infrastructure priorities.
7. Continue to utilise the Sports Facility Auditor program to collect annual facility information to analyse facility development progress, performance and need.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: GAME DEVELOPMENT

Focus areas

Implement initiatives to deliver programs, competitions, events and pathways for all.

- We will provide more support, training and development for existing and prospective coaches and referees to ensure a high standard across the region, and to assist in attraction and retention.
- We will review the current G21 football competition structure to ensure there are opportunities for players to access every level of the game.
- We will deliver more programs that enhance participation opportunities for people of all cultures, abilities and genders.
- We will support futsal to expand their programs into new LGAs to drive participation outcomes.
- We will increase our footprint in local schools to continue to promote and introduce new people to the game.
- We will support our talented players by increasing the visibility of the pathway into NPL and semi-elite competition.
- We will create more positive game day environments through club and spectator education.

Key Actions for Strategic Success

1. Increase the number of training and development opportunities for coaches across the region.
2. Review findings and recommendations within Football Victoria's Optimal Referee Model Review and identify opportunities to further support the recruitment and retention of referees.
3. Review the existing football competition structure with a view to address key issues.
4. In conjunction with Action 2.5 (see Implementation Guide) support the trialling of futsal in existing indoor centres to increase the exposure and availability of flexible and social formats of the game.
5. Increase FV's focus and resourcing to drive school engagement via the FV Schools Program.
6. Increase FV's focus to deliver programs that support participation outcomes for all abilities, gender and cultures (see Implementation Guide for further detail).
7. Position the G21 region as the preferred location for significant football events.
8. Enhance the education and awareness of positive on and off field behaviours on game day. Provide an avenue to report and escalate incidents.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: ENGAGEMENT & PROMOTION

Focus areas

Increase the engagement and promotion of football to inspire and ignite participation.

- We will leverage promotional opportunities following the FIFA 2023 Women's World Cup to energise and encourage female football participation.
- We will seek out and improve cross-promotional opportunities for football and futsal.
- We will develop an annual state of play report for the G21 region to monitor participation trends, track strategy implementation and highlight achievements.

Key Actions for Strategic Success

1. Develop a marketing plan in partnership with the GRFC to understand how to best promote football across the region .
2. Leverage promotional and potential funding opportunities following the FIFA 2023 Women's World Cup.
3. Work with the GRFC and Geelong Futsal to cross-promote both sports.
4. Undertake an annual state of play report in consultation with stakeholders to illustrate and monitor participation trends, investment outcomes, strategy implementation and ongoing priorities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5: PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION

Focus areas

Work with our partners to advocate, support and deliver football and futsal across the region

- We will identify Football Victoria's regional staffing requirements and deliver additional resources as required.
- We will continue to partner with stakeholders to advocate for football, and be co-ordinated and united in our approach to leveraging investment and grant funding opportunities.
- We will host an annual G21 LGA football forum to strengthen our partnerships and improve communication.
- We will identify support mechanisms for the GRFC.

Key Actions for Strategic Success

1. Prioritise the delivery of additional Football Victoria human resource requirements throughout the G21 region where shortfalls are identified.
2. Utilise the Strategy as a vehicle to enhance communication with stakeholders to ensure a collaborative approach to investment.
3. Create an annual G21 LGA football forum to strengthen partnerships, communicate priorities and understand regional and local issues.
4. Continue to support the GRFC as the voice of G21 region football clubs. Ensure that the GRFC is resourced to assist in the Strategy's delivery as an official committee of FV.

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

HOW WILL THE STRATEGY BE DELIVERED?

The Strategy will rely on its partners and stakeholders to help deliver key actions. The following organisations are considered critical to the Strategy's implementation and success.

FOOTBALL VICTORIA

Football Victoria will play a lead role in the Strategy's implementation, including:

- Coordinating, delivering, supporting and evaluating actions.
- Convening and facilitating stakeholder groups to engage, interpret and prioritise actions.
- Identifying investment opportunities and resources to leverage external funding opportunities.
- Advocating to all levels of government for support to achieve the Strategy's objectives.
- Collaborating with LGAs in the delivery of actions where identified.

G21 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES

- Support Football Victoria in the delivery of actions where identified
- Continue to be responsible for the management and delivery of identified recreation reserves including the coordination of new infrastructure within greenfield sites.
- Incorporate the directions and actions, where appropriate, into other relevant LGA strategies and policies.
- Identifying investment opportunities and resources to leverage external funding opportunities.

GEELONG REGION FOOTBALL COMMITTEE

- Support Football Victoria in the Strategy's implementation where identified.
- Continue to advocate for the needs of football in line with the Strategy's directions.
- Continue to be the conduit between G21 football clubs and Football Victoria.

REGIONAL SPORTS ASSEMBLIES

- Help create more welcoming and diverse sporting environments.
- Support to deliver club capacity building initiatives including education.

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

- Provide investment opportunities to help deliver the Strategy and its actions.
- Guide LGAs and FV in policy development through identifying trends for sport and recreation.
- Promote the benefits of the Strategy and be involved in the Strategy's evaluation.

G21 FOOTBALL CLUBS & COMMUNITY

- Continue to deliver club related activities
- Support the delivery of the initiatives outlined within the Strategy where identified

GEELONG FUTSAL

- Continue to deliver futsal club related activities.
- Support the delivery of initiatives outlined within the Strategy where identified.

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: CLUB DEVELOPMENT

Grow a diverse and sustainable G21 football community

TIMEFRAMES
Short 0–3 years
Medium 3–5 years
Long 5+ years

No.	Recommendation	Timeframe	Frequency	Deliverer	Supporter
1.1	Create awareness of existing resources, such as those on www.clubhelp.org.au that offer templates and guides to assist clubs with volunteer attraction and retention strategies.	Short	Annually	FV	GRFC, Leisure Networks, Clubs Sports Central
1.2	Utilise Football Australia and Football Victoria's 'Legacy 23' project which aims to connect 2023 FIFA WWC volunteers to local clubs.	Short	2023	FV	GRFC, Clubs
1.3	Request that clubs undertake annual health checks utilising the Football Australia Club Changer Club Development Program. Monitor results to assist with creating content for Action 1.4.	Short	Annually	FV	GRFC, Clubs
1.4	Partner with Regional Sports Assemblies to deliver targeted training and bi-annual club education workshops that address gaps and issues identified from Action 1.3.	Short–Medium	Bi-annually	Leisure Networks, Sports Central, FV	GRFC, Clubs
1.5	Support the delivery of participation programs that remove barriers for women and girls, culturally diverse communities, young people, First Nations people, LGBTIQ+ community older adults and people with a disability. Deliver in conjunction with Action 4.3	Short–Medium	Annually	FV	GRFC, Clubs
1.6	Communicate funding opportunities and support clubs in applications that directly impact and improve outcomes in inclusion, equity, access, sustainability and diversity.	Ongoing	As required	FV	GRFC, LGAs, Victorian Government
1.7	Work with LGA partners to identify support mechanisms needed to deliver participation strategies in areas of growth and/or decline. Assist LGAs in mapping the establishment and distribution of new clubs particularly in urban growth areas.	Medium	As required	FV, LGAs	GRFC
1.8	Support the activation of additional and/or existing football facilities in the Surf Coast Shire, Colac Otway Shire and Golden Plains Shire (see Action 2.4, 2.5 & 2.6) to drive participation growth.	Medium–Long	As required	FV, LGAs	Victorian Government, GRFC

TIMEFRAMES
Short 0–3 years
Medium 3–5 years
Long 5+ years

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

Plan and deliver functional, sustainable and fit for purpose football and futsal facilities

No.	Recommendation	Timeframe	Frequency	Deliverer	Supporter
2.1	Advocate for continued investment into creating more sustainable football facilities including improved pitch surfaces (including alternate surface types), drainage and LED lighting as well as inclusive, all gender player and referee facilities. Advocate to LGAs to enhance or create cyclical upgrade programs (where appropriate) and contribute to a works plan of pitch improvements.	Ongoing	Ongoing	FV, LGAs	GRFC, Victorian Government
2.2	Partner with the City of Greater Geelong to support the ongoing planning, development and advocacy for sub-regional and regional football facilities. The Sub-Regional Football Facility within the Armstrong Creek Active Open Space precinct is seen as an immediate short term priority to support football participation in the region. A future Armstrong Creek facility will be a multi-pitch, multi-use facility capable of accommodating a range of different sports. This facility will investigate the viability of synthetic and hybrid surfaces to improve programmability and usage.	Short-Medium	Ongoing	FV, City of Greater Geelong	Victorian Government, LGAs, GRFC
2.3	Support LGAs to roll out the Victorian Government's Fair Access Policy through club education and support, as well as fixturing assistance.	Short-Medium	Ongoing	LGAs, Victorian Govt.	FV, Clubs
2.4	Work with the City of Greater Geelong to deliver new, and increase access to existing facilities where shortfalls in football pitch provision is identified (see Appendices on page 49)	Medium-Long	Ongoing	FV, City of Greater Geelong	Victorian Government
2.5	In line with participation projections, explore opportunities to activate an additional existing site for football within the southern corridor of Surf Coast Shire when demand necessitates.	Short-Medium	As required	FV, Surf Coast Shire	Victorian Government

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE (CONTINUED)

TIMEFRAMES
Short 0–3 years
Medium 3–5 years
Long 5+ years

Plan and deliver functional, sustainable and fit for purpose football and futsal facilities

No.	Recommendation	Timeframe	Frequency	Deliverer	Supporter
2.6	Support the delivery of multi-use football facilities to meet current and future demand for training and competition in the Colac area of Colac Otway Shire	Medium–Long	As required	FV, Colac Otway Shire	Victorian Government, GRFC
2.7	Support the activation of a new football facility in Golden Plains Shire to service increasing demand. Preference should be afforded to a site within the Bannockburn area as the main population centre.	Medium	As required	FV, Golden Plains Shire	Victorian Government, GRFC
2.8	Activate suitable indoor facilities for futsal within the City of Greater Geelong including the reactivation of Corio Leisuretime Centre. Work with the City of Greater Geelong to create opportunities for futsal to be expanded into other indoor venues, particularly within the Armstrong Creek area.	Short	Ongoing	FV, Geelong Futsal, City of Greater Geelong	GRFC
2.9	Trial futsal within suitable indoor facilities within Surf Coast Shire, Colac Otway Shire and Golden Plains Shire. These facilities may include Bluewater, Wurdi Baierr Stadium and Bannockburn YMCA.	Short–Medium	Ongoing	FV, Geelong Futsal	Surf Coast Shire, Colac Otway Shire, Golden Plains Shire
2.10	Assist clubs to deliver venue improvement plans for local football venues that have identified infrastructure gaps. The venue improvement plans should be delivered in collaboration with LGAs to outline mutual infrastructure priorities and opportunities for investment in line with FV's facility development guidelines.	Medium–Long	Ongoing	FV, Clubs	LGAs, Clubs
2.11	Continue to utilise the Sports Facility Auditor program to undertake annual audits to monitor facility development progress, performance and need.	Annually	Annually	FV	LGAs

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: GAME DEVELOPMENT

Implement initiatives to deliver programs, competitions, events and pathways for all

TIMEFRAMES
Short 0–3 years
Medium 3–5 years
Long 5+ years

No.	Recommendation	Timeframe	Frequency	Deliverer	Supporter
3.1	Increase the number of training and development opportunities for coaches across the region and ensure these are affordable and accessible. Goal to increase number of registered coaches by 25%.	Annually	Annually	FV	GRFC
3.2	Review findings and recommendations within Football Victoria's Optimal Referee Model Review, and identify opportunities to further support the recruitment and retention of referees. Work with Geelong Futsal to identify where football referees can also be trained for futsal and vice versa. % growth target for referees?	Short	2023	FV	Geelong Referee Association, GRFC, Geelong Futsal
3.3	Review the existing football competition structure with a view to address key issues such as negating extensive travel requirements, retention of players not succeeding at NPL level, female participation, all abilities participation and reduction of affiliation fees.	2023 - 2024	As required	FV	GRFC
3.4	In conjunction with Action 2.8 & 2.9 support the trialling of futsal in existing indoor centres to increase the exposure and availability of flexible and social formats of the game.	Short-Medium	As required	FV, Geelong Futsal	GRFC, LGAs
3.5	Increase FV's focus and resourcing to drive school engagement via the FV Schools Program. Ensure these programs drive linkages into local clubs. Goal to deliver 50 programs annually.	Short-Medium	Annually	FV	GRFC, Clubs, Dept. of Education
3.6	In conjunction with Action 1.5 deliver programs that enhance and increase participation opportunities for all. This includes more uptake in programs such as GoFutsal, GoProud (LGBTIQ+), GoDeadly (First Nations), GoSoccerMums, Walking Football.	Short	As required	FV	GRFC, LGAs
3.7	Position the G21 region as the preferred location for significant football events. Events include, but are not limited to, CLFA Country Championships Tournament, FV SAP Gala Day, FV TIDC Gala Day, Geelong Community Cup etc.	Ongoing	As required	FV	GRFC
3.8	Support other futsal providers to become affiliated with Football Victoria to support the delivery of futsal competitions and programs.	Ongoing	As required	FV	GRFC, Geelong Futsal

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: ENGAGEMENT & PROMOTION

Increase the engagement and promotion of football to inspire and ignite participation

TIMEFRAMES

Short	0–3 years
Medium	3–5 years
Long	5+ years

No.	Recommendation	Timeframe	Frequency	Deliverer	Supporter
4.1	Develop a marketing plan to outline an approach to the promotion of football across the region (including for players, referees and coaches). Aim to publicise football as the sport of choice, and highlight information on how to get involved.	Short–Medium	As required	FV	GRFC
4.2	Consider utilising local football social media channels with existing followings as part of marketing activities. Increase visibility and promotion of the GRFC	Short	As required	FV	GRFC
4.3	Leverage promotional and potential funding opportunities associated with the FIFA 2023 Women's World Cup that target female participation. Support the development of a calendar of events, in conjunction with the timing of the WWC that are specific for females only across the region.	Short	2023–2024	FV	GRFC, LGAs
4.4	Work with the GRFC and Geelong Futsal to cross-promote both sports. Enhance local content on playfootball.com.au as the central point that connects the community to football and its providers. Identify the best club and organisation representatives that are equipped to field enquiries and who can buddy/mentor potential participants.	Short–Medium	As required	FV	GRFC, Geelong Futsal
4.5	Undertake an annual state of play report in consultation with GRFC, LGAs, Geelong Futsal and Leisure Networks to illustrate and monitor participation trends, investment outcomes, Strategy implementation and ongoing priorities	Short	Annually	FV	GRFC, LGAs, Geelong Futsal, Leisure Networks

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5: PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION

Work with our partners to advocate, support and deliver football and futsal across the region

TIMEFRAMES
Short 0–3 years
Medium 3–5 years
Long 5+ years

No.	Recommendation	Timeframe	Frequency	Deliverer	Supporter
5.1	Football Victoria Executive and staff undertake an environmental scan of the G21 region and its associated human resources. Identify any shortfalls and develop business cases for additional support.	Short–Medium	As required	FV	GRFC
5.2	Formalise engagement methods between FV, GRFC and Geelong Futsal to strengthen partnerships and increase collaboration. Continue to support Geelong Futsal as the Football Victoria affiliated provider to deliver futsal competitions and programs across the region.	Ongoing	Immediate	FV	GRFC, Geelong Futsal
5.3	Deliver an annual G21 Local Government forum which brings together key football stakeholders and LGA staff. Forum topics include G21 Strategy implementation progress, annual facility audit findings (see Action 2.11), regional and local football issues and opportunities.	Ongoing	Immediate	FV	GRFC, LGAs
5.4	Work with the GRFC and Geelong Futsal to cross-promote both sports. Enhance local content on playfootball.com.au as the central point that connects the community to football and its providers. Identify the best club and organisation representatives that are equipped to field enquiries and who can buddy/mentor potential participants.	Short–Medium	As required	FV, Geelong Futsal, GRFC	LGAs
5.5	Undertake quarterly meetings with the GRFC as a way of sharing information, understanding current operational and strategic issues and monitoring G21 Strategy implementation.	Ongoing	Quarterly	FV	GRFC

APPENDICES

FACILITY DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Football Victoria's facility development guidelines recommend a range of initiatives to increase the capacity of venues, improve financial and environmental sustainability and ensure facilities attract diversity in participation. The following design trends are recommended to be strongly considered in the upgrade, redevelopment or provision of new football facilities in the G21 region.

INCLUSIVE CHANGE FACILITIES

Change facility design has improved to provide spaces that support all participants and officials. The Football Victoria Building Development Guide outlines inclusive design principles for community facilities, including the provision of private spaces to shower and change, replacing urinals with toilet cubicles and improvements to safety and security.

While the growth in female participation has accelerated the need to rethink change facility design, the provision of inclusive change facilities benefits all users.

SYNTHETIC AND HYBRID PLAYING SURFACES

Synthetic and Hybrid playing surfaces have become a viable option to increase facility capacity, particularly in areas of high facility use and limited green space availability. Established population areas are generally good candidates for the use of synthetic surfaces, as they can cater for up to three times the use of natural turf.

Football Victoria has an established synthetic surfaces program that outlines the technical requirements for synthetic playing fields.

MODULAR BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

Growing participation is putting pressure on existing facilities and increasing the need to find new venues. The emergence of modular building construction provides an opportunity to deliver new change and pavilion facilities in a timely and cost effective manner, whilst still meeting recommended design standards.

Modular construction provides opportunities to expand existing building footprints to cater for growth, as well as increasing options for new venues to be established efficiently.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Improvements in facility design are allowing more efficient use of resources and decreasing environmental impacts. Water re-use systems, drought tolerant turf, LED sports lighting and solar panels are now becoming standard components within community football facilities.

Ongoing improvements to the environmentally sustainable design of facilities will be vital in managing the ongoing impacts that climate change will have on community football.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Engagement with the G21 region football community has aimed to understand current challenges, issues and opportunities to help inform future priorities.

The football stakeholder survey opened between September and October 2022.

The survey received 22 responses.

Key feedback from the survey is outlined below and on the subsquent page.

What our football community told us:

"The lack of referee numbers is a huge factor in our region"

"Volunteers are scarce and eventually are burnt out and lost to many clubs"

"Not enough sub/regional pitches and venues, as well as synthetic surfaces when turf gets muddy or water logged"

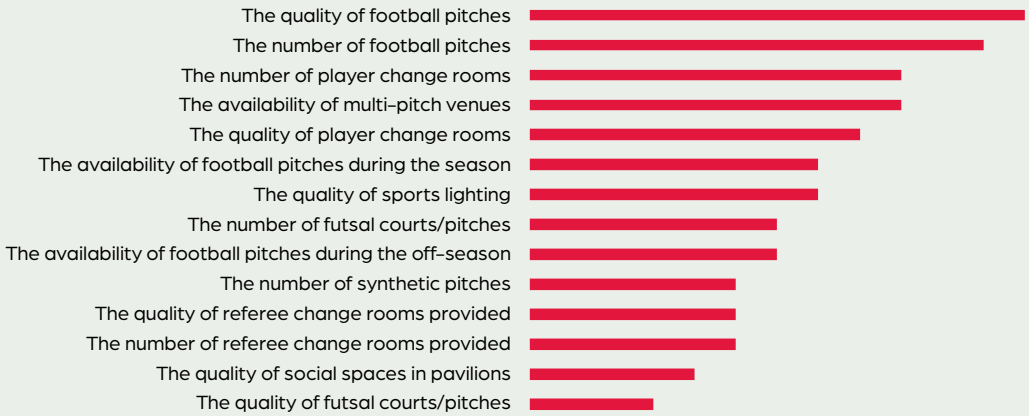
'Many clubs need more pitches or better quality pitches with improved drainage"

"We need to recruit and retain coaches to increase participation. This is also true for the volunteer base to run clubs"

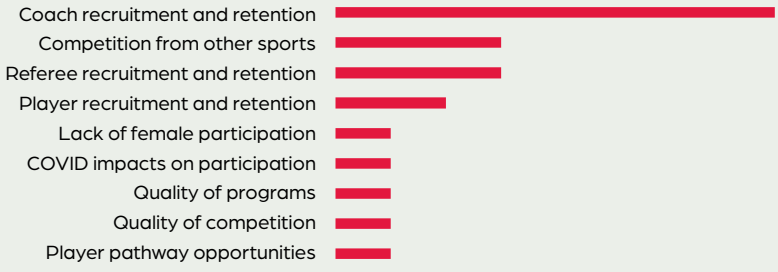
"Not enough help for smaller clubs with facility upgrades, marketing or fundraising"

FOOTBALL STAKEHOLDER SURVEY SUMMARY

Highest dissatisfaction rating of football infrastructure according to G21 football clubs



Greatest challenges for G21 football clubs outside of infrastructure



Needs for football over the next 10 years according to G21 football clubs

1. More football pitches
2. Improved quality of existing pitches
3. Participation growth and development
4. A regional/sub-regional facility
5. Referee and coach attraction and retention
6. Competition structure and development
7. Improved club infrastructure
8. More promotion and marketing of G21 football

FOOTBALL PARTICIPATION SUMMARY - BY LGA

The following participation trends have been identified through the analysis of data provided by Football Victoria. The summary also includes an overview of participant age groups, gender and penetration rates (i.e. participation/population).

LGA	2022 PARTICIPANT AGE				2022 - Total	2022 - Male	2022 - Female	2022 Penetration Rate	Change From Season 2021-2022	Change From Season 2015-2022	(%) Change From Season 2015-2022
	Miniroos (0-11)	Juniors (12-18)	Seniors (19-35)	Over 35's							
Colac-Otway	19	14	26	2	61	57	4	0.27%	+3	-5	-8%
Golden Plains	235	136	59	34	464	353	111	1.88%	+26	+335	+260%
Greater Geelong	1,599	1,203	1,062	639	4,503	3,384	1,115	1.64%	+314	+1,805	+67%
Surf Coast	224	151	74	67	516	351	165	1.37%	+56	+153	+80%
Queenscliffe	26	17	1	12	56	37	19	1.73%	+9	+25	+81%
TOTAL	**2,103**	**1,521**	**1,222**	**754**	**5,600**	**4,182**	**1,414**	**1.58%***	**+408**	**+2,313**	**+70%**
							Victorian average penetration rate	1.18%			

FOOTBALL PARTICIPATION SUMMARY - BY LGA

The table below outlines the trends in football participation in each G21 LGA from 2015 to 2022.

The tables summarise participation data in two different formats, being:

1 – **RESIDENT PARTICIPATION** – Participants who live in G21 but participate anywhere.

2 – **CLUB PARTICIPATION** – Participants who play at clubs within the municipality and live anywhere (either within or outside of the region).

Understanding both data sets will assist in formulating participation insights including player migration within and outside of individual LGAs and the broader region.

Resident Participation

LGA	2015 TOTAL	2016 TOTAL	2017 TOTAL	2018 TOTAL	2019 TOTAL	2020 TOTAL	2021 TOTAL	2022 TOTAL
Colac-Otway	66	70	63	52	41	32	58	61
Golden Plains	129	148	152	158	200	490	438	464
Greater Geelong	2698	2982	3172	3269	3523	4052	4189	4503
Surf Coast	363	375	421	401	399	426	460	516
Queenscliffe	31	39	36	39	45	39	47	56
TOTAL	**3,287**	**3,614**	**3,844**	**3,919**	**4,208**	**5,039**	**5,192**	**5,600**
Annual % change	-	+10%	+6.4%	+2%	+7.4%	+19.7%	+3%	+7.9%

Club Participation

LGA	2015 TOTAL	2016 TOTAL	2017 TOTAL	2018 TOTAL	2019 TOTAL	2020 TOTAL	2021 TOTAL	2022 TOTAL
Colac-Otway	69	69	59	41	41	36	73	57
Golden Plains	89	159	161	150	150	407	329	352
Greater Geelong	2780	3037	3235	3377	3377	3967	4225	4527
Surf Coast	407	433	468	439	439	333	420	481
Queenscliffe	N/A – No football clubs located within the municipality							
TOTAL	**3,345**	**3,698**	**3,923**	**4,007**	**4,280**	**4,743**	**5,047**	**5,417**
Annual % change	-	+10.6%	+6%	+2.1%	+6.8%	+10.8%	+6.4%	+7.3%

FOOTBALL PARTICIPATION PROJECTIONS 2023 – 2033

Participation in football is projected to grow by an additional 1,282 players and 88 teams by 2033.

Assumptions around future forecasts have been made based on the current penetration rate of each LGA remaining the same to 2033. Should this change, the forecast will be subject to fluctuation.

The table below shows that player numbers will increase by approximately 1,282 players and 88 teams by 2033. This is based on an average team size of 15 players. This average team size is a typical number, considered in the context that players under 11 years of age are likely to be part of a Miniroos offering (i.e. not team based) and participants over the age of 50, for example, may take part in a walking football version of the game.

The City of Greater Geelong's population forecast is estimated to see an additional 60,000 residents over the next 10 years. Within the municipality there are 15 individual planning areas. To provide a more accurate understanding of these future football participation forecasts, a breakdown of each planning area has been provided on page 49.

LGA	POPULATION			FORECASTED ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS AND TEAMS					
	2023	2028	2033	2028 – Additional participants	2028 – Additional teams	2033 – Additional participants	2033 – Additional teams	If +1% On Current Pen. Rate: 2028 Additional Participants	If +1% On Current Pen. Rate: 2033 Additional Participants
Colac–Otway	22,471	23,515	24,657	+3	0	+6	0	+235	+247
Golden Plains	24,943	27,540	32,800	+48	+3	+146	+10	+275	+328
Greater Geelong	280,450	311,298	342,706	+495	+33	+1,000	+67	+3,113	+3,427
Surf Coast	37,694	43,173	49,774	+75	+4	+165	+11	+432	+498
Queenscliffe	3,333	3,400	3,436	-4	0	+2	0	+31	+34
TOTAL	**368,891**	**408,926**	**453,373**	**+603**	**+41**	**+1,282**	**+88**	**+4,086**	**+4,534**

FUTSAL PARTICIPATION SUMMARY

Overall Futsal Participation Summary

	2016 TOTAL	2017 TOTAL	2018 TOTAL	2019 TOTAL	2020 TOTAL	2021 TOTAL	2022 TOTAL
TOTAL	1,685	1,782	1,500	1,459	468	345	865
Annual % change	-	+5.8%	-16%	-2.7%	-68%	-26.3%	+150%

Futsal Participation Forecast

	2022 Penetration Rate	2028 Additional participants	2033 Additional Participants	If +0.5% On Current Pen. Rate: 2028 Additonal Participants	If +0.5% On Current Pen. Rate: 2033 Additional Participants
TOTAL	0.24%	+126	+237	+1,077	+1,195

2022 G21 LGA Futsal Player Breakdown

Colac-Otway	Golden Plains	Greater Geelong	Surf Coast	Queenscliffe	Other (outside of G21)
3	17	749	67	4	25

UNDERSTANDING FACILITY PROVISION

Facility provision ratios within this section of the report are used as a guide to assist in understanding the potential capacity of existing facilities, as well as identifying any shortfalls or overprovision.

These ratios cannot be used as a standalone measurement however and must be considered amongst other influencing factors such as:

- The proximity and geographical spread of sporting infrastructure
- Population demographics and activity preferences
- Localised demand for sport
- Facility access and/or ownership limitations
- Condition of existing assets and their level of capacity

RATIOS

The following ratios have been used as a guide to inform the Strategy:

Pitch to population ratio (1 : 5,000) – this ratio has been derived from reviewing relevant G21 LGA documentation that note provision ratios for football, as well as benchmarking of several LGAs across metropolitan, regional and rural Victoria.

Pitch to player ratio (1 : 170) – this ratio assists to understand how demand for pitches can change based on participation levels as opposed to population alone. Within this report, the pitch to player ratio has been applied to both resident and club participation given there is evidence of player migration which may influence the analysis. This ratio has been identified as a best practice approach as is indicative only.

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING FOOTBALL FACILITIES

Existing facilities included in the venue analysis (see page 47) are those which have been identified as 'Tier 1 (i.e. NPL venues)' and 'Tier 2 (i.e. community venues') only. This report does not consider venues used for training, overflow or potential future venues.

FOOTBALL FACILITIES RATING SUMMARY (BY LGA)

The following section provides individual facility assessment scores by LGA. The below ratings outline subsequent scores.

- Indicates core provision strongly aligns with all requirements
- Indicates core provision does not meet or is below requirements

CLUB ROOM FACILITIES RATINGS

MAIN PAVILION (out of 10)	
Excellent condition (as new)	10
Good condition (some wear)	8
Moderate condition (considerable wear but still comfortable for users)	6
Poor (multiple quality issues identified)	4
Very poor (multiple quality issues identified, and immediate intervention required)	2
Unable to provide accurate assessment	0

CHANGE ROOMS (out of 10 for main home and away change facility)	
Excellent condition (as new)	10
Good condition (some wear)	8
Moderate condition (considerable wear but still comfortable for users)	6
Poor (multiple quality issues identified)	4
Very poor (multiple quality issues identified, and immediate intervention required)	2
Unable to provide accurate assessment	0

GENDER NEUTRAL/FEMALE FRIENDLY (score provided for home and away change facility)	
Yes – Gender Neutral compliance (including pan toilets, cubicle showers and a safe, modern environment)	2
No – Gender Neutral compliance (facility does not meet above standards)	0

MATCH OFFICIALS' FACILITIES (out of 10 for main and secondary (if applicable match officials' facilities)	
Excellent condition (as new)	10
Good condition (some wear)	8
Moderate condition (considerable wear but still comfortable for users)	6
Poor (multiple quality issues identified)	4
Very poor (multiple quality issues identified, and immediate intervention required)	2
Unable to provide accurate assessment	0

GENDER NEUTRAL/FEMALE FRIENDLY – Match Officials Facilities	
Yes – Gender Neutral compliance (including pan toilets, cubicle showers and a safe, modern environment)	2
No – Gender Neutral compliance (facility does not meet above standards)	0

Indicates core provision strongly aligns with all requirements

Indicates core provision does not meet or is below requirements

PITCH RATINGS

DRAINAGE SCORE (out of 4)	
Drainage in good condition – operating and efficient	4
Drainage functional but requires improvement	2
Drainage system present but dysfunctional	1
No drainage provided	0
Unable to make accurate assessment	0

IRRIGATION SCORE (out of 2)	
Automatic irrigation system	2
Synthetic surface (no irrigation required)	2
Hose or manual system	1
No irrigation	0
Unable to make accurate assessment	0

IS THERE A CRICKET WICKET ON THE PLAYING FIELD	
No	2
Yes	0

PITCH CONDITION (out of 10)	
Excellent condition (as new)	10
Good condition (some wear)	8
Moderate condition (considerable wear but still playable)	6
Poor (multiple quality issues identified)	4
Very poor (multiple quality issues identified, and immediate intervention required)	2
Unable to provide accurate assessment	0

SPORTS LIGHTING (out of 20)	
500+ lux	20
300–499 lux	15
200–299 lux	12
150–199 lux	10
100–149 lux	8
50–99 lux	6
Less than 50 lux	4
Lighting provided but unable to provide accurate assessment	0
No lighting provided	0

OVERALL RATINGS

	CLUB ROOMS TOTAL RATING	PITCHES TOTAL RATING	RECOMMENDATION
Low	0–20	0–10	Major shortfalls in infrastructure identified. Immediate planning and investment required.
Moderate	21–30	10–25	Some shortfalls in infrastructure identified. Short term planning and investment required.
High	30–40	25–30	Infrastructure mostly meets requirements. Minor improvements may be required.
Very High	40+	30+	Infrastructure is meeting requirements. Continue to monitor performance.

FOOTBALL FACILITIES RATING SUMMARY – CLUB ROOMS (BY LGA)

	Rate overall condition of the home change room facilities	Is the home change room suitable for all-gender use? Yes = 2 No = 0	Rate overall condition of the away change room facilities	Is the away change room suitable for all-gender use? Yes = 2 No = 0	Rate overall condition of main match official change room facilities	Is the main match officials' change room suitable for multi-gender use? Yes = 2 No = 0	Rate overall condition of secondary match officials' change room facilities	Is the secondary match officials' change room suitable for all-gender use? Yes = 2 No = 0	Rate overall condition of general facilities within the main clubroom	**TOTAL** (Maximum total score for club room facilities = 58)
CITY OF GREATER GEELONG										
Armstrong Creek East	10	YES	10	YES	10	YES	10	YES	10	58
Barwon Heads Village Park	4	YES	4	YES	0	0	0	0	6	18
Bell Park Sports Club^	2	NO	2	NO	2	NO	2	NO	10	18
Deakin University*	8	YES	8	YES	2	NO	4	NO	0	26
Drysdale Sport Precinct	6	YES	6	YES	6	YES	0	0	6	30
Elcho Park*	10	YES	8	YES	6	YES	0	0	8	38
Estuary Reserve	10	YES	10	YES	10	YES	10	YES	10	58
Evans Reserve	4	YES	4	YES	2	YES	0	0	6	22
Grovedale Recreation Reserve	8	YES	8	YES	10	YES	0	0	8	40
Howard Glover Reserve	2	NO	2	NO	2	NO	0	0	4	10
Hume Reserve	10	YES	10	YES	10	YES	0	0	10	46
Lara Reserve	10	YES	8	YES	8	YES	0	0	10	42
Leisuretime Centre	10	YES	10	YES	0	0	0	0	0	24
Myers Reserve	6	YES	6	YES	6	YES	4	YES	8	38
Shell Road Reserve	8	YES	8	YES	8	YES	0	0	8	38
St Leonards Lake Reserve	8	YES	8	YES	6	YES	0	0	8	36
Stead Park	8	YES	8	YES	6	NO	0	0	10	36
White Eagle House*	2	NO	2	NO	2	NO	0	0	4	10
SURF COAST SHIRE										
Banyul Warri Fields	8	YES	6	YES	8	YES	8	YES	8	46
GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE										
Bannockburn Rec Reserve	8	YES	8	YES	8	YES	8	YES	8	50
COLAC OTWAY SHIRE										
Beeac Recreation Reserve*	4	NO	4	NO	0	0	0	0	6	14

* indicates non-Council owned facility. ^ Indicates change room redevelopment currently underway at the time of writing the report.

FOOTBALL FACILITIES RATING SUMMARY - PITCHES (BY LGA)

	PITCH 1						PITCH 2					
	Drainage score	Irrigation score	Does the Pitch have centre cricket wicket Yes = 2 No = 0	Rate overall playing surface condition	Provide sports lighting rating	**TOTAL** Maximum total score for = 38	Drainage score	Irrigation score	Does the Pitch have centre cricket wicket Yes = 2 No = 0	Rate overall playing surface condition	Provide sports lighting rating	**TOTAL** Maximum total score for = 38
CITY OF GREATER GEELONG												
Armstrong Creek East	1	2	0	4	0	7	1	2	0	4	6	13
Barwon Heads Village Park	2	0	0	2	6	10	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bell Park Sports Club	2	2	2	4	4	14	4	2	2	4	4	16
Deakin University	4	0	2	8	12	26	-	-	-	-	-	-
Drysdale Sport Precinct	2	2	2	6	8	20	2	2	2	6	8	20
Elcho Park	4	2	2	8	8	24	2	2	2	8	6	20
Estuary Reserve	1	2	2	2	8	15	2	2	0	4	0	8
Evans Reserve	4	0	0	4	10	18	4	2	0	4	10	20
Grovedale Recreation Reserve	4	2	2	4	8	20	2	2	2	4	8	18
Howard Glover Reserve	1	2	2	6	4	15	0	0	2	4	0	6
Hume Reserve	4	2	2	8	8	24	4	2	2	8	8	24
Lara Reserve	4	2	2	8	8	24	4	2	2	8	8	24
Leisuretime Centre	4	0	2	10	12	28	-	-	-	-	-	-
Myers Reserve	2	0	2	6	8	18	4	0	0	6	8	18
Shell Road Reserve	0	0	2	4	8	14	0	0	2	4	8	14
St Leonards Lake Reserve	1	0	0	4	10	15	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stead Park	4	2	2	10	12	30	4	2	2	10	12	30
White Eagle House*	0	1	2	2	4	9	0	1	2	2	4	9
SURF COAST SHIRE												
Banyul Warri Fields	4	2	2	6	12	26	4	2	2	6	15	29
GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE												
Bannockburn Rec Reserve	4	2	2	8	8	24	4	2	2	8	8	24
COLAC OTWAY SHIRE												
Beeac Recreation Reserve*	0	0	0	4	0	4	-	-	-	-	-	-

* indicates non-Council owned facility. ^ Indicates change room redevelopment currently underway at the time of writing the report.

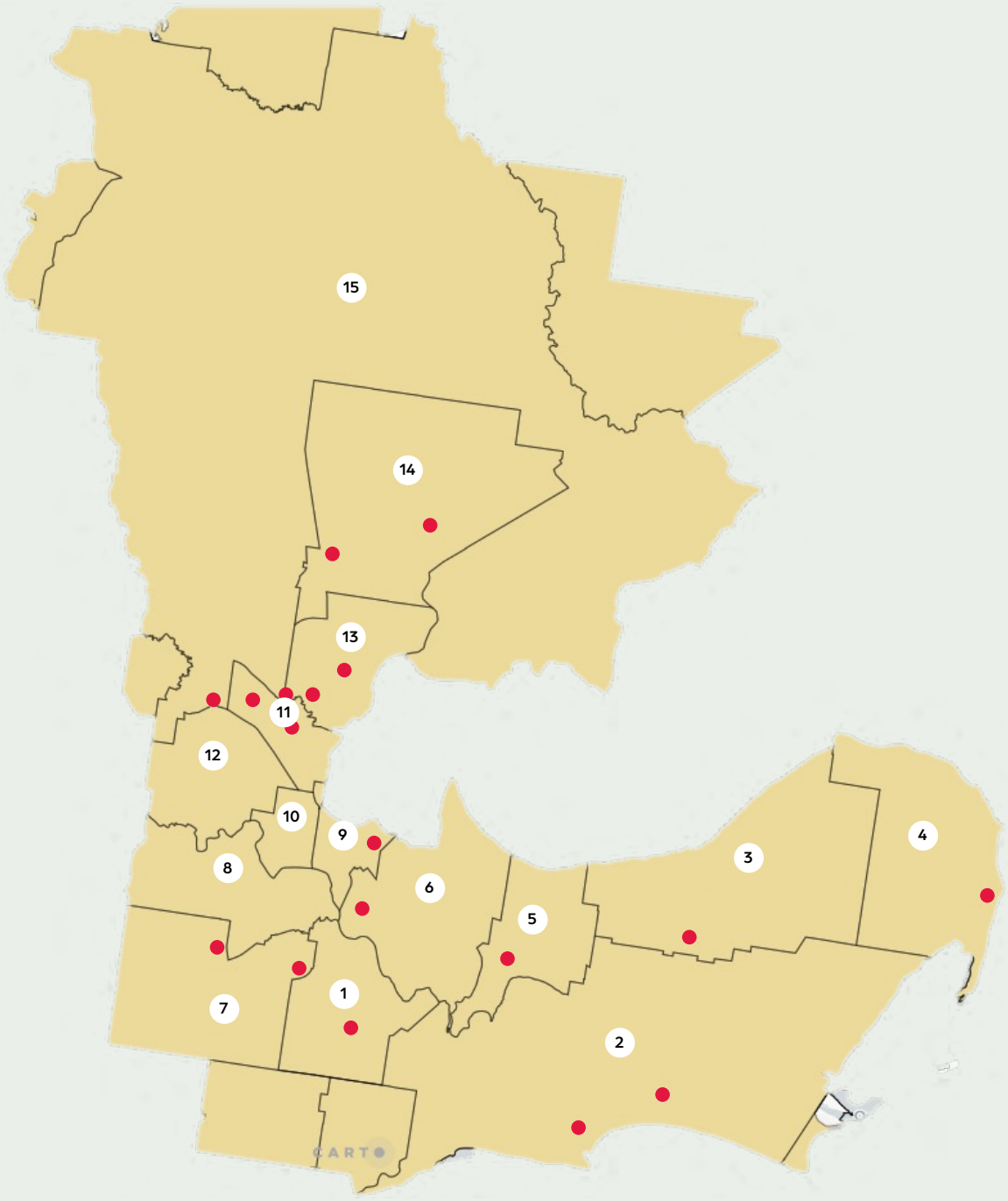
CITY OF GREATER GEELONG – PARTICIPATION AND PROVISION FORECAST BY PLANNING AREA

	Planning Area number	2023 Population	2028 Population	2033 Population	No. of playing fields	2022 No. of players	2022 Penetration rate	2022 Player to Pitch ratio (1 : 170)	2023 Population to Pitch ratio (1 : 5,000)	2028 No. of players	Additional players 2022–2028	Additional teams in 2028	Pitch gap / surplus in 2028 by players*	Pitch gap / surplus in 2028 by population*	2033 No. of participants	Additional players 2022–2033	Additional teams in 2033	Pitch gap/surplus in 2033 by players*	Pitch gap/ surplus in 2033 by population*
Armstrong Creek, Marshall – Charlemont	1	17093	26737	34866	2	400	2.34%	1 : 200	1 : 8547	626	226	15	–2	–3	816	416	28	–3	–5
Barwon Heads – Connewarre – Breamlea, Ocean Grove, Rural Bellarine Peninsula	2	26567	28870	30148	3	560	2.11%	1 : 187	1 : 8856	609	49	3	–1	–3	635	75	5	–1	–3
Clifton Springs, Curlewis, Drysdale – Bellarine	3	18664	21105	24298	2	329	1.76%	1 : 165	1 : 9332	372	43	3	0	–2	428	99	7	–1	–3
Portarlington, St Leonards – Indented Head	4	8604	9636	10674	1	133	1.55%	1 : 133	1 : 8604	149	16	1	0	–1	165	32	2	0	–1
Leopold	5	13533	14659	16100	2	188	1.39%	1 : 94	1 : 6767	204	16	1	1	–1	224	36	2	1	–1
Newcomb – Moolap, St Albans Park, Thomson – Breakwater, Whittington	6	18696	19222	19710	3	194	1.04%	1 : 65	1 : 6232	199	5	0	2	–1	205	11	1	2	–1
Grovedale, Mount Duneed, Waurn Ponds	7	26915	32289	35722	4	764	2.84%	1 : 191	1 : 6729	917	153	10	–1	–2	1014	250	17	–2	–3
Belmont, Highton – Wandana Heights – Ceres	8	40318	41904	43015	0	115	0.29%	0	0	120	5	0	–1	–8	123	8	1	–1	–9
East Geelong, Geelong – South Geelong – Drumcondra	9	12484	13542	15110	2	322	2.58%	1 : 166	1 : 6242	349	27	2	0	–1	390	68	5	0	–1
Geelong West – Manifold Heights, Newtown	10	21293	21770	22455	0	112	0.53%	0	0	115	3	0	–1	–4	118	6	0	–1	–4
Bell Park, Bell Post Hill, North Geelong – Rippleside	11	15633	16931	19689	6	486	3.11%	1 : 81	1 : 2606	526	40	3	3	3	612	126	8	2	2
Hamlyn Heights, Herne Hill – Fyansford	12	11556	12658	13996	0	281	2.43%	0	0	308	27	2	–2	–3	340	59	4	–2	–3
Corio, Norlane – North Shore	13	25741	26500	27155	7	318	1.24%	1 : 45	1 : 3677	327	9	1	5	2	335	17	1	5	2
Lara	14	18646	19897	21239	5	134	0.72%	1 : 27	1 : 3729	143	9	1	4	1	153	19	1	4	1
Lovely Banks – Batesford – Moorabool, Rural North	15	4706	5575	8528	3	167	3.55%	1 : 56	1 : 1569	198	31	2	2	2	303	136	9	1	1

Note: the above pitch provision analysis should be considered (in some locations) again the ownership of football venues within the City of Greater Geelong. Non-Council owned venues (see page 47) may see limited public access.
* Provision gap/surplus analysis based on existing number of football pitches remaining the same.

MAP OF CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

● City of Greater Geelong existing football facilities



FOOTBALL VICTORIA

insideEDGE sport and leisure planning

2.8. Proposed Road Discontinuance and Sale of Land at the Rear of 35 Villamanta Street, Geelong West

Source: **Corporate Services**
Executive Director: **Troy Edwards**

Purpose

1. To advise Council of the outcome from the community engagement relating to the proposed sale of a portion of discontinued road at the rear of 35 Villamanta Street, Geelong West in Timms Lane.

Background

2. The owner of 35 Villamanta Street, Geelong West requested to purchase approximately 25m2 of road reserve at the rear of their property in Timms Lane, where a portion of their brick fence encroaches onto Timms Lane. See attached for location.

3. Council approved the commencement of the statutory process in accordance with section 223 of the *Local Government Act 198*9 and section 114 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and its Community Engagement Policy at the Council meeting on 24 October 2023.

Key Matters

4. Community engagement on the proposed sale was undertaken and four written submissions were received.

5. All submissions were withdrawn once it was clarified that the requirement for the partial road discontinuance and sale was to rectify a minor encroachment and no further encroachment or narrowing of Timms Lane would occur.

6. Council has the authority to sell land in accordance with section 114 of the *Local Government Act 2020.*

RESOLUTION - Item 2.8

Cr Cadwell moved, Cr Murrihy seconded -

That Council:

1. **Note the outcome of the community engagement process; and**

2. **Approve the road discontinuance and sale of approximately 25m2 of Timms Lane at the rear of 35 Villamanta Street, Geelong West.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

7. The City has obtained a current market valuation of the land and the land will be sold at the valuation.

8. The City will be reimbursed for all costs incurred for the road discontinuance and the sale of the land by the purchaser.

Community Engagement

9. Public notice and community engagement were undertaken by publishing a notice in the Geelong Independent on 3 November 2023 and the Geelong Advertiser and on the Geelong Australia website via Have Your Say from 27 October 2023 to 27 November 2023.

10. Submissions were invited and four submissions received and subsequently withdrawn.

Social Equity and Sustainability

11. The are no social equity and sustainability implications created by the recommendation to sell the land.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

12. Council has complied with Section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989 and* section 114 of the *Local Government Act 2020* by undertaking community engagement and inviting submissions.

13. Council has the authority to discontinue a road under Clause 3 of Schedule 10 of the *Local Government Act 1989* by notice published in the Government Gazette.

14. Section 114 of the *Local Government Act 2020* applies to the sale of land.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

15. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
High-performing council and organisation.

16. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
Development and implementation of sustainable solutions.

Conflict of Interest

17. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

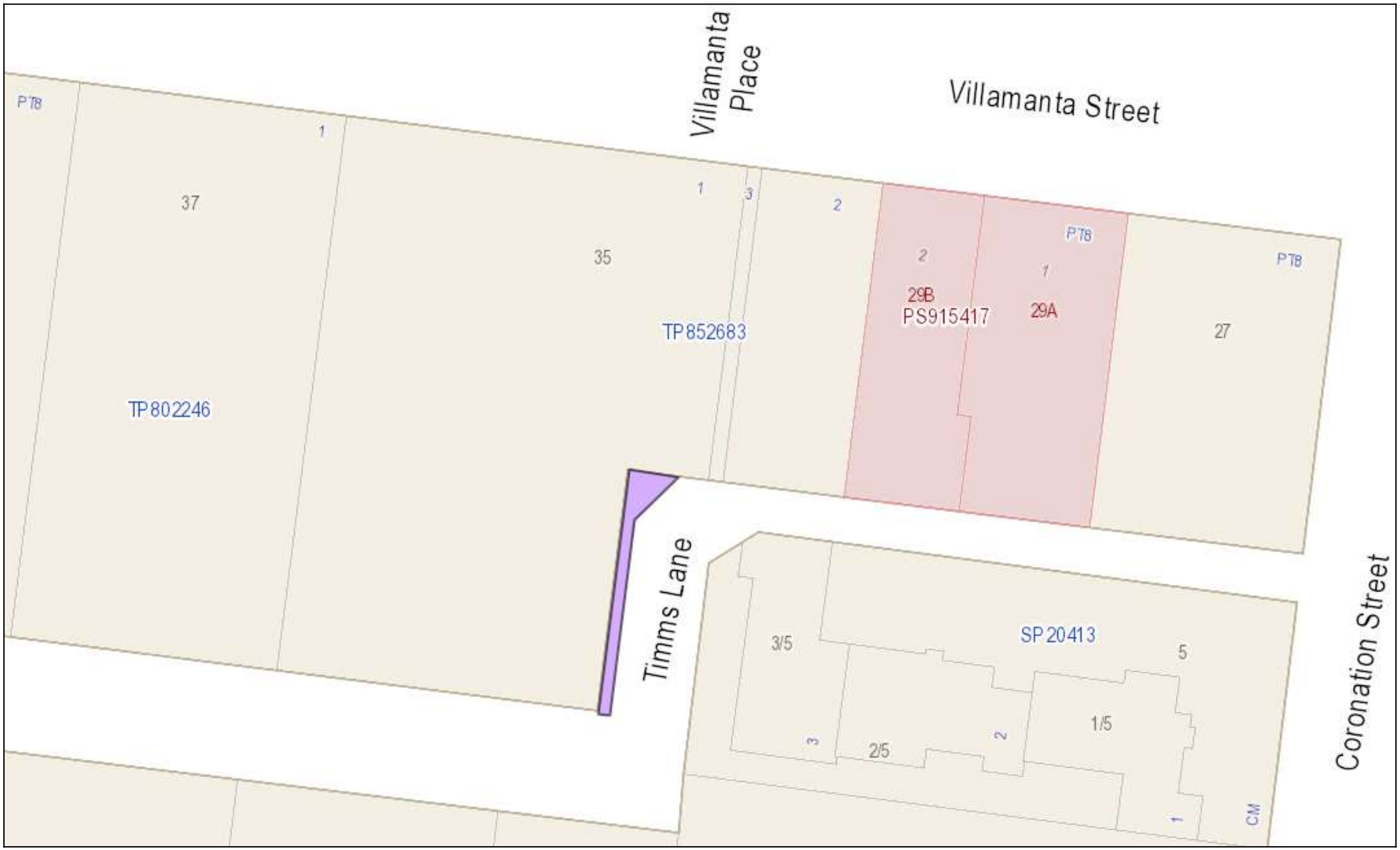
18. Consultation with Engineering and Transport has been completed and both departments support a road discontinuance and sale of the land. External authorities have been referred to and have no objection.

Environmental Sustainability

19. There are no environmental implications to this proposal.

Attachments

1. Location Plan - Part of Timms Lane, Geelong West [**2.8.1** - 1 page]



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CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

29 Aug 2023 14:47 Prepared by the City of Greater Geelong - PLACES MGA Zone 55 Scale 1 : 367

2.9. Proposed Road Discontinuance and Sale of Land at the rear of 160-172 Malop Street, Geelong

Source: **Corporate Services**
Executive Director: **Troy Edwards**

Purpose

1. To seek Council approval to initiate the statutory process for the proposed road discontinuance of part of Powell Place at the rear of 160-172 Malop Street, Geelong, and the sale of the land within the road reserve as shown in the attachment.

Background

2. The owners of 160-172 Malop Street and 2 Powell Place, Geelong request to purchase approximately 141m2 of road reserve at the rear of and adjacent to their properties in Powell Place. See attached for location.

Key Matters

3. The part of Powell Place proposed to be discontinued and sold does not provide for through traffic so is of no use or benefit to any other party other than the current abutting owners.

4. The proposed discontinuance and sale will allow for future development opportunities.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.9

Cr Murrihy moved, Cr Cadwell seconded -

That Council:

1. **Endorse community engagement and invite submissions in accordance with section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, section 114 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Council's Community Engagement Policy, of its intention to discontinue part of Powell Place at the rear of 160-172 Malop Street, Geelong and sell the land measuring approximately 141m2;**

2. **Appoint a Submissions Review Panel to hear any submissions if any person wishes to appear in person or be represented by a person specified in support of a submission; and**

3. **Note that a further report will be presented to Council to consider the outcome of the community engagement.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

5. The City will be reimbursed for all costs incurred for the road discontinuance and the sale of the land by the purchaser.

6. If sold, the land will be sold at a value determined by a registered valuer.

Community Engagement

7. Community engagement will be undertaken on the Have Your Say page and a notice published in the Geelong Advertiser.

8. Community engagement will include notice to abutting property owners.

9. Any person will have an opportunity to make a written submission on the proposed road discontinuance and sale of the land. A submitter is entitled to request in the submission that the person wishes to appear or be represented by a person specified in the submission, at a meeting to be heard in support of their submission.

Social Equity and Sustainability

10. There are no adverse social equity issues created as a result of this proposed road discontinuance and sale of land.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

11. Council has the authority to discontinue a road under Clause 3 of Schedule 10 of the *Local Government Act 1989* by notice published in the Government Gazette.

12. A person may make a submission in accordance with Section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* on the proposed exercise of power to discontinue a road.

13. Section 114 of the *Local Government Act 2020* applies to the sale of land.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

14. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
High-performing council and organisation.

15. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
Development and implementation of sustainable solutions.

Conflict of Interest

16. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

17. Preliminary internal consultation with the Engineering Department and the Transport Department has been completed and both departments support a road discontinuance and sale of the land. External authorities have been referred to and have no objection.

18. There are no other risks associated with the implementation of the recommendation.

Environmental Sustainability

19. There are no environmental sustainability implications to the recommendations.

Attachments

1. Powell Place, Geelong - Location Plan [**2.9.1** - 1 page]
2. Powell Place, Geelong [**2.9.2** - 1 page]

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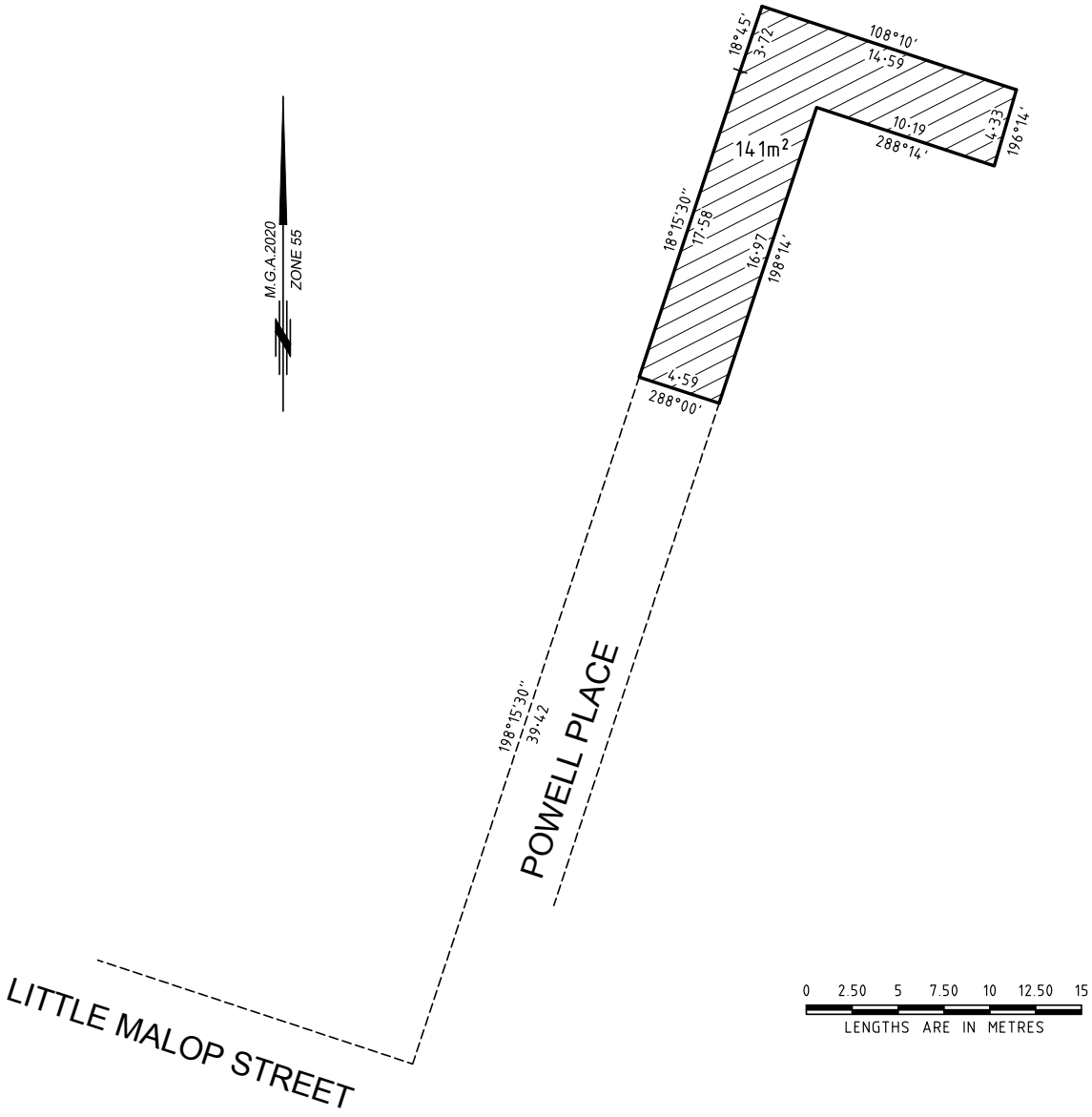
CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

16 Nov 2023 14:21 Prepared by the City of Greater Geelong - PLACES MGA Zone 55 Scale 1 : 833


M.G.A.2020
ZONE 55
18°45'
3·72
108°10'
14·59
10·19
288°14'
4·33
196°14'
141m²
18°15'30"
17·58
16·97
198°14'
4·59
288°00'
198°15'30"
39·42
POWELL PLACE
LITTLE MALOP STREET
0 2.50 5 7.50 10 12.50 15
LENGTHS ARE IN METRES

2.10. T2300116 Grinding and Decontamination Services

Source: **Corporate Services**
Executive Director: **Troy Edwards**

Purpose

1. To award contract C2300116 Grinding and Decontamination Services to Green Care Mulching Pty Ltd as Trustee for the Norton Development Trust (ABN 84 158 549 262) for the submitted schedule of rates.

Background

2. The decontamination of garden organic material collected from residential property's kerbside bin collection and the subsequent grinding of the material at Point Henry Transfer Station.
3. The City collects some 35,000 to 40,000 tonnes of green organic material annually for effective decontamination.
4. Garden organic material decontamination is critical to ensure the organic material is suitable for its end use as compost.

Key Matters

5. The current contract for these services expires 10 April 2024, with the new contract commencing the following day 11 April 2024.
6. The Procurement Services Unit administered an open tender process on behalf of the Waste Services Department to find a suitable contractor that had the experience and resources to provide this service to the City.
7. Based on the tenderers experience, capability, capacity and pricing the Tender Evaluation Panel recommend that Green Care Mulching Pty Ltd as Trustee for the Norton Development Trust be awarded the contract for these services as they provided the best value for money.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.10

Cr Harwood moved, Cr Aitken seconded -

That Council:

1. **Award Contract C2300116 Grinding and Decontamination Services to Green Care Mulching Pty Ltd as Trustee for the Norton Development Trust (ABN 84 158 549 262) for the tendered schedule of rates; and**

2. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to execute Contract number C2300116 and any other documents required by or to give effect to the terms of the contract on behalf of Council.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

8. The estimated cost of the Grinding and Decontamination Services under this contract is expected to fall within the annual allocated budget amount for this service.

Community Engagement

9. No community engagement was required for this contract as it is a continuation of a current service.

10. There were no opportunities for collaboration for these services at this time.

Social Equity and Sustainability

11. Tenderers were asked to provide human resource management philosophy and policies.

12. The response received from Green Care Mulching Pty Ltd as Trustee for the Norton Development Trust was detailed, thorough and copies of the human resources manual and policy were provided.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

13. This tender was advertised in accordance with the requirements of section 109 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the tender process has been conducted in accordance with the City's Procurement Policy.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

14. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
High-performing council and organisation.
Sustainable growth and environment.

15. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future" community aspiration:
Development and implementation of sustainable solutions.

Conflict of Interest

16. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

17. The tender evaluation process involved the assessment of work, health and safety policies, procedures, and risk assessment documents. Any other risks associated with the acceptance of this tender will be managed through the contract conditions.

Environmental Sustainability

18. The quality of air in Victoria is protected under the State Environment Protection Policy (Ambient Air Quality) (SEPP AAQ) and the State Environment Protection Policy (Air Quality Management) (SEPP AQM). The contractor must address the environmental indicator of 50 µg/m3 per day.

19. The regulatory approvals require the Environment Protection (Schedule Premises and Exemptions) Regulations 2007 prescribe that premises that are subject to works approval and/or licensing by EPA.

Tender Details

Contract Details

1. C2300116 Grinding and Decontamination Services

Invitation to Tender

2. The City issued an invitation to tender on 12 July 2023 seeking to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced contractor for the Grinding and Decontamination Services at the Point Henry Transfer Station.

Table 1 Invitations to Tender

Medium	Date Advertised
Print Media	21 July 2023
eProcure	12 July 2023

Tender Evaluation Panel

3. The Tender Evaluation Panel consisted of the following staff.

Table 2 Tender Evaluation Panel

Position Title	Panel role
Procurement Services Officer	Chair
Coordinator Waste Management	Voting Member
Waste Contract and Project Delivery	Voting Member
Team Leader Garden Organics	Voting Member
Operations Leader Garden Organics	Voting Member

Tender Submissions

4. Tenderers were required to meet minimum OH&S requirements as determined by the City; and

5. To evidence their experience, capability, and capacity to complete these works.

6. At tender close the City received two (2) submissions

Table 3 Tender Submissions Received

Tender		Conforming tender
A	Green Care Mulching Pty Ltd as Trustee for the Norton Development Trust	Yes
B	Tender B (withdrawn)	Yes

Tender Evaluation

7. All submissions were conforming and evaluated on both qualitative and pricing criteria.

8. The tender was evaluated by the tender evaluation panel in two stages.

   8.1. Qualitative assessment of the abovementioned comparative criteria; and

   8.2. Evaluation of price.

   As a schedule of rates tender the Value for Money was calculated by weekday operating cost per hour across details of each piece of plant as described within: Site Dedicated Wheeled Loader and Operator, Manual Pickers, Site Dedicated Versatile Hydraulic Lifting United and Operators, Fogging Machine & Site Dedicated Grinder & Site Dedicated Wheeled Loader/Excavator and Operator.

Table 4 Comparative Criteria Weighting

Comparative Criteria	Weighting
Economic & Local Content contribution (mandatory)	10%
Methodology/plan for performing contract	10%
Documented Quality and Audit Systems	10%
Capability and Experience (past performance)	20%
Proposed Plant and Equipment Levels	25%
Proposed Staffing Levels & Extent of Subcontracting	25%

Tender Evaluation Scores

9. At the conclusion of the qualitative evaluations the tenders were ranked as shown below. The price was evaluated and the value for money determined.

Table 5 Tender Evaluation Scores

Tender		Rank
A	Green Care Mulching Pty Ltd as Trustee for the Norton Development Trust (ABN 84 158 549 262)	76.38%
B	Tender B (withdrawn)	76.50%

Post Tender Contact

10. Clarifications with Green Care Mulching Pty Ltd as Trustee for the Norton Development Trust & Tender B (withdrawn) was required after the evaluations were complete.
11. Green Care Mulching Pty Ltd as Trustee for the Norton Development Trust was asked to clarify their pricing schedule as there was a typo in respect to the Dust Fighters Rate, whilst there were further clarifications in regard to the proposed grind at specified rates of 150mm or less, any additional costs for two grinders being used & further information on staffing.
12. Tenderer B (withdrawn) provided detailed information in response to the clarification questions regarding plant contingency procedures, further information on staffing & how many specified electric wheeled loaders were to be used.

13. Once all clarifications were acknowledged and analysed, Green Care Mulching Pty Ltd as Trustee for the Norton Development Trust remained the shortlisted tenderer with a highly competitive Value for Money (VFM) and more competitive rates.

Probity

14. No probity issues were identified.

Attachments

Nil

2.11. Variation to Procurement Policy

Source: **Corporate Services**
Executive Director: **Troy Edwards**

Purpose

1. For Council to endorse a variation to the Procurement Policy.

Background

2. Section 108 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (**Act**) requires the City to develop, approve and review its Procurement Policy (**Policy**) at least once during each four-year term of the Council commencing 1 January 2022.

3. Council last reviewed and adopted the Policy in December 2021.

4. The Policy provides a framework for the purchase of goods, works and services that emphasises value-for-money while conducting business in a fair and equitable manner. The purpose of the Policy is to:

   4.1. provide guidance, consistency, and controls over procurement activities.

   4.2. demonstrate accountability to ratepayers.

   4.3. provide guidance on ethical behaviour in public sector purchasing.

   4.4. demonstrate best practice elements in purchasing; and

   4.5. increase probity of obtaining the right outcome when purchasing goods, works and services.

Key Matters

5. It has been identified that a restriction in exemption category 3 in paragraph 5.14 of the Policy (relating to extensions of contracts while the City is at market) has the effect of putting continued service delivery in some contracts at risk whilst the City is conducting market procurement activities.

6. The restriction to extending contracts by 3 months while the City is at market only allows for a single limited short term extension to be put in place, meaning that a delay to a market process can result in a contract being at risk of ending during the market process, creating the potential for significant risk in service delivery and reduced or no transition of services from one supplier to another.

   6.1. The removal of the 3 month cap on extending contracts while the City is at market will not present any procurement governance risk to the City because:

      6.1.1. the provisions relating to interim arrangements with alternatives suppliers and the need for public interest will remain;

      6.1.2. the contractor performance requirements will remain;

6.1.3. the existing exemption approval regime set out in paragraph 5.15 of the Policy will require the continued exercise of the delegated authorities set out in that paragraph for all exemption approvals.

6.2 The proposed change to the Policy by the deletion of the 3-month cap on extending contracts while the City is at market is shown in the copy of the Policy in **Attachment 1,**

RESOLUTION - Item 2.11

Cr Harwood moved, Cr Aitken seconded -

That Council adopt the Procurement Policy (Attachment 1).

Carried

Financial Sustainability

7. The City spends more than $400 million annually on procuring goods, works and services.

8. The City is committed to buying from local businesses on a value for money basis and supports the engagement of local suppliers, sub-contractors, and apprentices.

9. The City continues to improve its local spend commitments through the application of relevant criteria being applied to tenders and quotations through social and sustainability outcomes, engagement of apprentices and trainees, engagement with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander enterprises and persons, and the ongoing commitment with the GROW initiative.

10. The criteria for local content and engagement is applied at 10% of the total weighted score for all procurement activity, and a further 5% applied to the other social criteria that is applied as applicable based on the category of the goods, works or services being procured.

Community Engagement

11. The community was provided an opportunity to comment on the draft procurement policy in 2021 after which the City received two submissions, which were focused on reducing the City's carbon footprint through our procurement activities, and the engagement of local contractors and suppliers through the development of innovation.

12. Community engagement has not been carried out in relation to removal of the 3 month time cap for extensions to contact which are out to market on the basis that the proposed amendment is minor and a community engagement process will be undertaken when a broader review of the Policy is carried out.

Social Equity and Sustainability

13. The Policy articulates that the City commits to:

    13.1. setting targets for a range of social procurement outcomes (including GROW initiatives);

    13.2. publicising the targeted social procurement objectives including the key performance indicators; and

    13.3. actively trying to achieve these outcomes through procurement activities and providing a range of ways to elevate the importance of the social procurement outcomes throughout the procurement process, including awarding some contracts based on the supplier's proposal significantly benefiting the City in achieving the frameworks key performance indicators.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

14. This Policy is created and reviewed in accordance with section 108 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

15. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
High-performing council and organisation.

16. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.

Conflict of Interest

17. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

18. The Policy accords with the enterprise risk management framework and applies risk management strategies at all stages of the procurement process.

Environmental Sustainability

19. The City demonstrates sustainable procurement in accordance with the City of Greater Geelong – Environment Strategy 2020-30 by:

    19.1. Being accountable for its impacts on society, the economy and the environment including the impacts of the organisation’s supply chain;

    19.2. Examining anticipated organisational, project and/or community needs;

    19.3. Continually improving sustainability specifications, practices and outcomes; and

    19.4. Planning and undertaking sustainability evaluations as part of contracting activities.

Attachments

1. Procurement Policy [**2.11.1** - 15 pages]

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

PROCUREMENT POLICY

VERSION: 1

Approval Date: 14 December 2021

Approved by: COUNCIL

Review Date: 31 December 2025

Responsible Officer: Manager Property, Procurement and Assets

Authorising Officer: CEO

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

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Definitions and Abbreviations

This section defines the key terms used in this policy.

TERM	DEFINITION
Act	*Local Government Act 2020*
City	The City of Greater Geelong organisation, led by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
Conflict of Interest	A general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest within the meaning of sections 127 and 128 of the Act respectively.
Contract Risk Framework	A framework that outlines the City's appetite for contractual risk that is prepared by the City's Legal Services Unit and approved by the City's Executive Leadership Team from time to time.
Councillor	A person who has been elected to the office of Councillor of Council with the City of Greater Geelong.
GROW	G21 Region Opportunities for Work Program which is aimed at changing the way the City buys and employs locally, to support local businesses and help create equitable and sustainable jobs.
Probity	Undertaking Procurement in a way that ensures: a) compliance with legal obligations; b) fairness, impartiality and accountability; c) appropriate management of any Conflicts of Interest; d) transparency, subject to any confidentiality obligations, and e) ability to withstand internal and external scrutiny.
Procedure	The procedures manual and contract management guideline that implement this policy.
Procurement	The process of acquiring of goods and services, including for the carrying out of works.
Public Market Approach	A competitive process that tests the market for the supply of goods or services, which may include calling for tenders or seeking quotations.
Staff	Includes permanent and temporary employees of the City.
City Representative	The person nominated by the City in the contract to exercise powers and duties associated with the administration of a contract.
Supplier	Any supplier or potential supplier of goods or services to the City.
Sustainability	Acting in a way that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.
Value for Money	A measure of the benefits the City obtains for its expenditure, taking into account both cost and non-cost factors including:

TERM	DEFINITION
	a) advancement of the City's corporate strategies and priorities, including the Council Plan, Social Procurement and other policies; b) non-cost factors, including fitness for purpose, quality, service and support; and c) cost-related factors including whole-of-life costs and transaction costs associated with acquiring, using, holding, maintaining and disposing of the goods, services or works. Lowest price is not the sole determinant of Value for Money.

POLICY

1. PURPOSE

1.1 The City of Greater Geelong is Victoria's largest regional city. With a population of 259,000 as at June 2020, the City spent $243.9m in the 2020/2021 financial year. When undertaking a Procurement, the City is committed in ensuring that:

(i) Public funds are spent responsibly;

(ii) It has regard to relevant Council approved frameworks (social procurement, equity and diversity and Sustainability);

(iii) Rules and process are clear, are transparent, assign accountability and deliver procurements with the standards of probity expected by a local government authority in the eyes of its community;

(iv) The incidence of illegal activity (including fraud and corruption) and other behaviours that may bring disrepute to the City are minimised by the establishment of appropriate controls; and

(v) Best Value for Money and open and fair competition are promoted.

1.2 In recognition of the above considerations, the purpose of this policy is to provide the guidelines and rules regarding all Procurement activity conducted by the City.

1.3 This policy is made in accordance with section 108 of the Act with regard to the governance principles in section 9, particularly:

- making Council decisions in accordance with relevant law;
- achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community (including future generations);
- promoting economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigating and planning for climate change risks;
- pursuing innovation and continuous improvement;
- seeking collaboration with other Councils, Governments and statutory bodies; and
- ensuring the ongoing financial viability of the Council.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Procurement at the City, and to Councillors and Staff involved in any Procurement.

3. COMPLIANCE

3.1 Councillors and Staff involved in any Procurement must comply with this policy.

3.2 Failure to comply with this policy may lead to disciplinary action in accordance with the City's Employee Code of Conduct, other relevant policies and legislation.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Councillors

Councillors must:

4.1 comply with the Councillors' Code of Conduct insofar as it relates to Procurement, including:

4.1.1 avoiding a conflict between their public duties as a Councillor and their personal interests and obligations and, where a conflict exists, disclosing and managing that conflict in accordance with the Councillors' Code of Conduct and the Procedures;

4.1.2 not misusing their position by making improper use of information acquired as a result of their position, disclosing confidential information or failing to disclose a Conflict of Interest; or

4.1.3 not accepting any gifts or hospitality related to Procurement;

4.2 not engage in any discussions with potential suppliers throughout the lifecycle of a Procurement; and

4.3 support the CEO to discharge the CEO's role and responsibilities under 4.4 below.

The CEO

The CEO will:

4.4 oversee the establishment and maintenance of procurement controls, including:

4.4.1 more than one person be involved in every stage of authorising and managing a transaction, especially paying a supplier;

4.4.2 Public Market Approach processes be managed centrally to ensure transparency in Procurement;

4.4.3 Procurement activities be clearly documented for audit purposes;

4.4.4 appropriate delegations be documented and maintained;

4.4.5 monitoring and performance measurement systems be implemented;

4.4.6 implementing a process for escalating procurement matters where appropriate (including procedural non-compliance) to the Executive Leadership Team, the Audit and Risk Committee and Council;

4.4.7 the Procedures, including a Contract Management Manual and any other documentation relevant to ensure compliance with this policy;

4.4.8 processes and controls that are continually improved with a focus on mitigating risk of fraud, corruption and inappropriate behaviour;

4.4.9 implementing a process for reviewing complaints from any person about Procurement; and

4.4.10 providing Procurement training and promoting Procurement awareness amongst Staff.

Procurement Services Unit

The Procurement Services Unit will:

4.5 for processes the Procurement Services Unit manages, be the City's representative to Suppliers and be the single source of communication during the Public Market Approach, evaluation and negotiation stages;

4.6 lead the City's Procurement function, including Public Market Approach processes;

4.7 prepare and oversee the Procurement Plan in accordance with this policy;

4.8 comply with the Procedures;

4.9 assign each Procurement to a category under paragraph 5.11;

4.10 conduct Procurement in accordance with best practice and with the Act, other laws and Council and management policy; and

4.11 monitor compliance with this policy, and record and report breaches in accordance with this Policy.

Staff

Staff must:

4.12 comply with the Employee Code of Conduct insofar as it relates to Procurement including:

4.12.1 behaving ethically and taking action to prevent unethical practices (for example, using their position to obtain personal gain in Procurement);

4.12.2 maintaining confidentiality of City information which a reasonable person would consider to be confidential;

4.12.3 reporting fraud or corrupt conduct to appropriate internal or external authorities;

4.12.4 refraining from acting in any way that would harm or potentially harm the reputation of the City (for example, endorsing products, services, providers or individuals without the permission of the City);

4.12.5 acting with honesty and integrity, and not allowing any external, personal, or financial interests or duties to compromise their obligations, responsibilities, and duties to the City;

4.12.6 where a conflict of interest exists, disclosing and managing that conflict in accordance with the Employee Code of Conduct and the Procedures; and

4.12.7 not accepting any gifts or hospitality related to a Procurement; and

4.13 other than those within the Procurement Services Unit accountable for a Procurement, not engage in any discussions with potential suppliers throughout the lifecycle of a Procurement process (excepting contract management); and

4.14 not acting outside their delegated authority.

Suppliers

4.15 Suppliers are encouraged to report misconduct, unethical behaviour or suspected corruption in accordance with this policy.

The Community

4.16 The community is encouraged to report misconduct in accordance with this policy.

5. THE PROCUREMENT FUNCTION

Procurement Principles

The City will undertake Procurement in accordance with the following principles:

Fair and honest dealing

5.1 All Suppliers must be treated impartially and afforded an equal opportunity to tender or submit a quotation.

Achieving Value for Money

5.2 The City will carry out Procurement with a view to achieving best Value for Money.

Whole of life considerations

5.3 The City will consider the whole life of the goods or services when undertaking Procurement.

Probity, accountability and transparency

5.4 Staff must be able to account for all Procurement decisions and must ensure that all Procurement activities are clearly documented for monitoring and reporting purposes.

Social Procurement Framework

5.5 The City will develop a Social Procurement Framework, including targets and key performance indicators, and will report on it annually. The Framework will include, at a minimum, targets for social, environmental and economic outcomes (which may include GROW initiatives). The City will publish its targets and key performance indicators.

5.6 The City commits to actively pursuing and raising the profile of social outcomes through Procurement, including:

5.6.1 considering the Social Procurement Framework in planning all Procurement activities; and

5.6.2 using the Social Procurement Framework and its key performance indicators as criteria where the City considers it suitable in each Procurement. The City may, from time to time, use the Social Procurement Framework as the determining factor in selecting a supplier.

5.7 The City commits to applying the principles of Sustainability to its decision-making and activities. The City will promote a clear understanding of Sustainability and how it applies to daily tasks amongst Staff.

5.8 The City will demonstrate sustainable Procurement by:

- considering the City's impacts on society, the economy and the environment, including the impacts of its supply chain;
- examining anticipated organisational, project and/or community needs;
- continually improving Sustainability specifications, practices and outcomes; and
- planning and undertaking Sustainability evaluations as part of Procurement.

Collaborative procurement

5.9 The City will seek to collaborate with councils and other public bodies in Procurement where it would enable the City to:

- take advantage of economies of scale; or
- achieve significant social outcomes.

Aggregation

5.10 During the planning phase of a Procurement, the City will consider the likely total value of current and foreseeable future Procurement of similar goods or services to identify any benefits (including economies of scale) in aggregating the Procurements.

How the City will procure – standard approach

5.11 The City will undertake Procurement by obtaining quotations or calling for tenders in accordance with the amounts set out in the following table:

Category	Description	Amount (excl. GST)	Procurement process (minimum)
All		Up to $25,000	One written quotation
Transactional	Low value, low supply risk due to the number of suppliers in the market (for example, stationery and catering)	$25,000 to $250,000	Three written quotes sought
Leveraged	Higher value, low supply risk due to the number of suppliers in the market (for example, panel contracts, architectural services and cleaning services)	$25,000 to $300,000	Three written quotes sought
Focused	Low value, unique or targeted Procurements in a limited supplier market (for example, valuation services, utility providers, IT hardware or software)	$25,000 to $300,000	Three written quotes sought
Strategic	High value and/or high business criticality with significant business or community impacts (for example, major construction and strategic waste projects)	$25,000 to $300,000	Three written quotes sought
Leveraged	Higher value, low supply risk due to the number of suppliers in the market (for example, panel contracts, architectural services and cleaning services)	$300,000 to $500,000	Five written quotes sought
All		Exceeding any threshold specified above	Open market tender

How the City will procure – exemptions

5.12 The City may use a method of Procurement other than the minimum process specified in paragraph 5.11 if:

5.12.1 the Procurement falls into a category listed in paragraph 5.14; and

5.12.2 the alternative is approved in accordance with paragraph 5.15.

5.13 The City must decide on any exemption before a Public Market Approach.

5.14 The circumstances in which an exemption may be granted are as follows:

Exemption Categories	Explanation
1. A contract made because of Emergency	An emergency due to the actual or imminent occurrence of an event that endangers or threatens to endanger the safety or health of any person in Victoria or that destroys or damages, or threatens to destroy or damage, any property in Victoria or endangers or threatens to endanger the environment or an element of the environment in Victoria including (but not limited to): a) an earthquake, flood, windstorm or other natural event; b) a fire; c) an explosion; d) a road accident or any other accident; e) a plague or an epidemic or contamination; f) a warlike act or act of terrorism, whether directed at Victoria or a part of Victoria or at any other State or Territory of the Commonwealth; g) a hi-jack, siege, or riot; and h) a disruption to an essential service.
2. Purchases from another government or government-owned entity, or through a government contract	Engagements: (a) with another government entity or government-owned entity. For example, Federal, State or Local Government or an entity owned by the Federal, State or Local Government; or (b) that have been entered into by the above entities for the benefit of local government authorities (including panel contracts established by the government entity or other quasi-government entities such as Procurement Australia and the Municipal Association of Victoria).
3. Extension of contracts while the City is at market	The City may extend an existing contract where the procurement process to replace the contract has commenced but will not be complete before the expiry of the existing contract. The City may extend the contract only: a) where the City considers that establishing an interim arrangement with an alternative supplier is not in the public interest (including if it would be cost prohibitive or present a transition or other risk in the delivery of critical public services); and b) where the existing Supplier's performance has been satisfactory. ~~; and~~ c) ~~for no more than three months.~~

Exemption Categories	Explanation
4. Professional services unsuitable for tendering	Including, but not limited to, Legal Services, Insurances.
5. Information technology resellers and software developers	Allows the City to renew existing software licenses and maintenance and support, or upgrade existing systems, where there is only one supplier of the software who holds the intellectual property rights to the software.
6. Regional waste and resource recovery groups	Situations where a Regional Waste and Resource Recovery Group constituted under the *Environment Protection Act 1970* had already conducted a public tender for and on behalf of its member councils.
7. Statutory compulsory monopoly insurance schemes	TAC WorkCover
8. Traditional Owners	Engagement of Traditional Owners where the primary purpose of the procurement activity is to gather information relating to Aboriginal culturally sensitive issues, including land management considerations pursuant to the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (Vic)*.
9. Infrastructure owners	Engagement of owners of infrastructure that needs to be changed or maintained where only one party can assist at our cost. e.g. utilities, telecommunication.
10. Sole or select sourcing	The City may engage with one supplier or a restricted group of suppliers where it is in the public interest and: (i) there is one or a limited number of available Suppliers; or (ii) the City is party to a joint agreement where it jointly owns the intellectual property with a third-party provider.

5.15 The following delegates have authority to approve exemptions in accordance with 5.12 where they reasonably consider that:

5.15.1 an alternative method of Procurement is better suited to the circumstances of that Procurement; and

5.15.2 the community's best interests will be served and best Value for Money will be achieved by an alternative method of Procurement.

Amount (excl. GST)	Delegated Authority
Up to $500,000	Director Corporate and Customer Services with the Manager Procurement
$500,000 to $1,000,000	CEO with the Director Corporate and Customer Services and Manager Procurement
Over $1,000,000	Council resolution upon recommendation from CEO, Director Corporate and Customer Services and Manager Procurement

Other Procurement considerations

Procurement for Innovation

5.16 From time to time the City may utilise a procurement for innovation process to identify Suppliers to deliver innovative goods or services. The Procurement Services Unit will determine when it is appropriate to utilise this process. Procurement for Innovation will be categorised as a Strategic Procurement.

Unsolicited proposals

5.17 The City generally will not consider an unsolicited proposal unless it claims a high level of innovation or demonstrates cost savings or productivity improvements.

5.18 Where the City elects to consider an unsolicited proposal, it must carry out Procurement in accordance with this policy.

Cumulative Spend and contract splitting

5.19 In determining what Procurement process this policy requires, the Staff involved in the Procurement must take into account the entire cost of the Procurement (including whole of life costs and any contract options exercisable by either the City or the Supplier).

5.20 Staff must not attempt to avoid the requirements of this policy by splitting what is essentially a single Procurement into more than one part.

5.21 The Staff responsible for managing expenditure with a certain Supplier or for a certain product category must ensure that the cumulative expenditure without a tender does not exceed the quotation thresholds in any 12 month period.

The Procurement Plan

5.22 The Procurement Services Unit will produce a rolling Procurement Plan, which provides a 12-month overview of the City's planned Procurement activity.

5.23 At a minimum, the Procurement Plan must include the following information:

- project name and quarter that the Procurement is planned to commence, including approved budget amount for the entire project;
- the Procurement's category under paragraph **Error! Reference source not found.**;
- the planned Public Market Approach;
- reasonable timelines to be adhered to during the entire Procurement lifecycle;
- the source of funds for the Procurement;
- how the Procurement will deliver best Value for Money;
- how the Procurement addresses the Social Procurement Framework and the key performance indicators, and if not, why not;
- the consideration given to efficiency measures, including collaborative procurement and aggregation; and
- any other matter the Council or the City's Audit and Risk Committee consider relevant.

5.24 At the time of publishing the budget, the Procurement Plan must also identify which contracts will require a Council resolution.

Council resolutions

5.25 A Strategic or Focused Procurement over the value of $2,000,000 must not be awarded without Council approval unless, at the time of approving the budget, the Council determines that it is an operational matter and delegates approval to the CEO.

5.26 A Leveraged or Transactional Procurement of any value may be awarded without Council approval if it is included in the Procurement Plan at the time the Council approves the budget. If a Leveraged or Transactional Procurement over the value of $2,000,000 is not included in the Procurement Plan at the time the Council approves the budget, it must not be awarded without Council approval.

5.27 The Council may call in any Procurement for its approval if it involves matters of strategic or community interest.

Prior to Market Approach

Probity

5.28 The City may appoint an external probity advisor where the Manager Procurement or the CEO consider a proposed Procurement to be particularly complex, high risk, or controversial and requiring a high level of public confidence.

5.29 The Manager Procurement will consider each Procurement valued at over $2,000,000 to determine whether a probity advisor is required.

5.30 The Manager Procurement, the CEO or the Internal Ombudsman may appoint a probity auditor to review a Procurement where they believe or suspect that Probity has been compromised.

Specifications

5.31 The project manager responsible for a Procurement must ensure that the specifications prepared in a Procurement are clear and fully describe the City's needs.

5.32 When the City is unable to produce a suitable specification, the City may look to undertake a procurement for innovation process to seek a partner to assist in the delivery of the project.

5.33 The Procurement specifications must be approved by the Procurement Services Unit before contract preparation under paragraph 5.34.

Contract preparation

5.34 The Procurement Services Unit will seek legal advice from the internal Legal Services Unit regarding a suitable contract for each Procurement it oversees.

5.35 Each contract used in a Procurement must comply with the City's Contract Risk Framework.

5.36 The Contract Risk Framework must be either published in or incorporated by the Procedures and updated as required.

Public Tenders

5.37 The City will publish all public tenders via the City's tendering portal and may also advertise them in the media.

5.38 The City will publish information regarding current tenders and awarded tenders on its website.

5.39 The tender evaluation process, evaluation criteria and Social Procurement objectives will be determined in consultation with the Procurement Services Unit and will be included in the tender documentation.

Evaluation and Negotiation

5.40 The Procurement Services Unit and the project team will determine a panel responsible for the evaluation of quotations and tenders.

5.41 Before scoring any submissions, each panel member must declare any Conflict of Interest.

5.42 The Procurement Services Unit will oversee the evaluation processes for quotes and tenders as a non-scoring chair to ensure impartiality in the process.

5.43 The City may consider a Supplier's performance in prior engagements with the City in evaluating its quotation or tender.

5.44 Any contract departures must be negotiated in accordance with the Contract Risk Framework and legal advice.

Shortlisting and Negotiation

5.45 The City may shortlist potential Suppliers during tender and quotation processes.

5.46 The City must ensure Probity in all negotiations.

Contract execution

5.47 The Procurement Services Unit will seek advice from and work with the Legal Services Unit to ensure that:

- the City documents the engagement in an appropriate contract(s) with the selected Supplier (including by amending the draft contract proposed in the Public Market Approach to reflect any later negotiations with the Supplier, and preparing a contract specification that fully describes the goods or services the Supplier has offered to provide);
- ensure that the City's contracts include key performance indicators which are measurable and reportable; and
- the contract and any other arrangements are approved by City Staff with the necessary delegated authority.

Post Contract Matters

Variations

5.48 The City must keep a centralised record of any request for, consideration of and award of a contract variation.

5.49 Any contract or scope variation must be approved in accordance with the CEO to Staff Delegations – Power to Approve Contract Variations. Staff must not approve a variation unless there is available budget in the project.

5.50 The following City officers may approve contract variations up to the amounts set out in the following table.

Delegate	Approval amount (excl. GST)
Coordinator or City Representative	Aggregate of all contract variations is up to 10% of the original contract value or $30,000, whichever is less
Manager	Aggregate of all contract variations is up to 20% of the original contract value or $200,000, whichever is less
Director	Aggregate of all contract variations is up to 30% of the original contract value or $500,000, whichever is less

5.51 All variations to a contract must be captured under a single purchase order and approved before being issued to the Supplier.

Contract Management

5.52 The City will evaluate and seek to improve on all aspects of procurement and contract management.

5.53 The Procurement Services Unit will provide contract management oversight all contracts entered by the City.

5.54 If a Supplier fails to comply with a City contract or performs poorly, and the City has communicated its concerns to the Supplier, the City may opt not to engage with a Supplier for a certain period depending on the seriousness of the breach or poor performance.

Supplier engagement and development plan

5.55 The City will develop a Supplier engagement and development plan to ensure the continued development of Suppliers within the region to provide the goods and services the City requires.

6. AUDIT AND REPORTING

6.1 The CEO will ensure the implementation of a program which seeks to identify breaches of this policy. The program will include an investigation of no less than 5% of all Procurement (determined by number of Procurements) in a particular financial year.

6.2 The City will report quarterly to the Council and the Audit and Risk Committee through the Council's Quarterly Financial Report on:

- any identified breach of this policy;
- opportunities to aggregate Procurements to achieve economies of scale;
- summary of findings through the 5% audit program;
- any major Procurement that was not captured in the Procurement Plan at time of publishing the budget;
- any other matter that the Council or the Audit and Risk Committee consider appropriate; and
- any serious breach that appears to involve fraud, corruption or non-compliance with paragraph 5.11 of this policy.

7. COMPLAINTS HANDLING

7.1 Complaints relating to any stage of the procurement process are to be reported to and investigated by the Manager Procurement.

7.2 Where a complaint alleges fraud or corruption, or an investigation identifies or raises a reasonable suspicion of fraud or corruption, the matter must be referred to the Internal Ombudsman for further investigation.

8. PROCEDURES

The City must develop Procedures that operationalise and do not exceed the framework established by this Policy.

9. POLICY REVIEW PROCESS

In accordance with the Act, the City will review this policy at least once during each 4-year term of the Council.

10. POLICY KEY LINKAGES

This Policy has clear linkages to a range of codes, charters, legislation, and City documents, including:

Local Government Act 2020 (Vic).

Management Procedure – Procurement Guidelines.

Codes of Conduct and associated policies.

Management Procedure – Contract management guidelines.

Council Plan 2021-2025.

Management Procedure – Project Management Framework.

The City of Greater Geelong - Environment Strategy 2020–30.

Other relevant legislative requirements include compliance with:

Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (Cth);

Goods Act 1958 (Vic);

Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth);

Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic);

Worker Screening Regulations 2021 (Vic);

Environment Protection Act 1970 (Vic) and Environment Protection Act 2017 (Vic);

Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth);

Financial Management Act 1994 (Vic);

and other relevant Australian Standards as deemed appropriate for each purchase.

2.12. Adoption of Council Policies

Source:	**Corporate Services**
Executive Director:	**Troy Edwards**

Purpose

1. For Council to adopt the following Council Policies;

    1.1. Conflict of Interest Policy;

    1.2. Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy;

    1.3. Sponsorships Policy.

Background

2. Policies are key governance documents used to guide decision making and set a framework of internal controls.
3. Section 138 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (**Act**) requires Council to have a Gift Policy.
4. Council adopted its Gifts Policy on 23 March, 2021.
5. Council does not have a policies in relation to conflicts of interest and sponsorships.
6. New policies have been developed to:
    6.1. update the provisions of the existing Gifts Policy; and
    6.2. set policy statements for the identification and management of conflicts of interest; and
    6.3. set a framework for sponsorship arrangements.
7. Whilst the existing Gift Policy contains provisions relating to conflicts of interest, it is recommended that a separate Conflict of Interest Policy is endorsed to clearly set out the process of the identification and management of conflict of interests by not only Councillors but also City officers. The separation of the conflicts of interest provisions into a separate policy better aligns with the Governance Rules, Councillor Code of Conduct, the Employee Code of Conduct and the Act.

Key Matters

8. The Sponsorship Policy:
    8.1. sets out the framework for providing, receiving and managing sponsorships;
    8.2. details the criteria for the assessment of applications for sponsorships;
    8.3. provides examples for financial tiers and benefits to be applied to sponsorship arrangements;
    8.4. set out conditions and limitation around sponsorship agreements; and
    8.5. establishes a framework for monitoring and reporting of sponsorship arrangements.

9. The Conflict of Interest Policy:
    9.1. provides information and guidance to Councillors and City Officers regarding the identification and management of potential and perceived conflicts of interest in accordance with the obligations set out in the Act;
    9.2. adopts language that is used in the Act to assist those to whom the Policy applies in identifying and managing potential and perceived conflicts of interest; and
    9.3. fosters a culture of early disclosure and management of conflicts of interest.
10. The Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy:
    10.1. will replace the existing Gifts Policy;
    10.2. provides clearer guidance to Councillors about receiving or being offered gifts, benefits or hospitality in connection with their role as a councillor;
    10.3. sets out transparent processes for dealing with gifts, benefits and hospitality;
    10.4. includes procedures for the maintenance of a councillors gift register;
    10.5. satisfies the requirements of section 138 of the Act.
11. All 3 policies are considered to be industry best practice.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.11

Cr Sullivan moved, Cr Aitken seconded -

That Council adopt the following three Council Policies:

1. **Conflict of Interest Policy;**
2. **Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy; and**
3. **Sponsorships Policy.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

12. There are no financial implications associated with the contents of this report.

Community Engagement

13. No community engagement has been completed as the policies are designed to reinforce legislative requirements and best-practice good governance practices.

Social Equity and Sustainability

14. The policies outline transparent processes for how council decisions and declarations are to be made which support fairness and equity and public awareness in decision making.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

15. The policies have been updated in accordance with and reflect the requirements of the Act.

16. The Conflict of Interest Policy aligns with the Governance Rules.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

17. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
High-performing council and organisation.

18. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
Development and implementation of sustainable solutions.

Conflict of Interest

19. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

20. Adopting the policies will assist Councillors in mitigating risks by ensuring they have adequate guidance material to make an informed decision.

Environmental Sustainability

21. There are no direct environmental implications associated with the contents of this report.

Attachments

1. Draft Gifts Benefits and Hospitality Policy [**2.12.1** - 11 pages]
2. Draft Conflict of Interest Policy [**2.12.2** - 10 pages]
3. Draft Sponsorship Policy [**2.12.3** - 11 pages]

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

COUNCILLOR GIFTS, BENEFITS AND HOSPITALITY POLICY

VERSION:	**V2**
TYPE OF POLICY:	**Council**
APPROVAL DATE:	**27 FEBRUARY 2024**
REVIEW DATE:	**27 FEBRUARY 2028**
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	**Chief Governance & Risk Officer**
AUTHORISING OFFICER:	**CEO**

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

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Introduction

PURPOSE

This Policy provides guidance to Councillors about receiving or being offered Gifts in connection with their role as Councillor. It sets out a transparent process for dealing with any Gift.

This Policy has been prepared to satisfy the requirements of section 138 of the Act. It includes procedures for the maintenance of a Councillor Gifts Register and sets out the minimum value of disclosable gifts.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all Councillors and members of Delegated Committees in relation to the acceptance and declaration of Gifts that may be offered to them in connection with their role as a Councillor or member of a Delegated Committee.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to this Policy:

Term	Definition
Act	*Local Government Act 2020*.
Anonymous Gift	A Gift given in circumstances where the name and address of the person making the gift are unknown to the Councillor.
Biannual Personal Interests Return	Has the same meaning as in section 132 of the Act.
Bribe	An offer of money or other inducement made to induce a person to act in a certain way.
Conflict of Interest	Any: ▪ general conflict of interest within the meaning of section 127 of the Act; and ▪ material conflict of interest within the meaning of section 128 of the Act.
Council	City of Greater Geelong.
Councillor Gifts Register	The register containing all Councillor Gift Declaration forms.
Councillor Gift Declaration	The declaration that a Councillor must complete after receiving any offer for any Gift in connection with their role as Councillor.
Donation Period	Has the same meaning as in section 3(1) of the Act.
Election Campaign Donation Return	The return provided by an electoral candidate to Council in accordance with section 306 of the Act.
ELT	The Executive Leadership Team of Council, as constituted from time to time.
Gift	Any type of gift, benefit or hospitality offered to a Councillor in connection with their role as Councillor.
Gift Disclosure Threshold	$500.

Term	Definition
	Where multiple Gifts are given to a Councillor by the same person, the cumulative value of the Gifts must be taken into account in determining whether the Gift Disclosure Threshold is reached. The Gift Disclosure Threshold does not include the value of any reasonable hospitality received by the Councillor at an event or function that they attended in their official capacity as a Councillor.
Inconsequential Gift	A Gift that is of inconsequential or trivial value to both the offeror and offeree. Examples include: ▪ promotional items such as pens and note pads; ▪ souvenirs; ▪ homemade baked goods; ▪ refreshments during a meeting or event; and ▪ other items of basic courtesy.
Policy	This Councillor Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy.

Policy

Council is committed to ensuring that Councillors are open and transparent in the course of performing their duties.

The acceptance of Gifts can create perceptions that a Councillor's integrity has been compromised.

This Policy establishes a framework to govern Councillors' acceptance and declaration of Gifts. It supports Councillors by ensuring that they avoid conflicts of interest and maintain high standards of integrity, transparency accountability and public trust.

1. MINIMUM COMMITMENTS

1.1 As minimum commitments under this Policy, Councillors must:

1.1.1 not seek, solicit, or use their position with Council to obtain Gifts from external organisations or individuals;

1.1.2 be aware that fraudulently receiving a Gift is an offence against the Act and may also constitute a common law offence;

1.1.3 ensure that they place no organisation or individual in a position whereby they feel obliged to offer Gifts to a Councillor in order to secure or retain Council business, or preserve their relationship with Council;

1.1.4 be fully accountable and responsible for their actions and ensure that the methods and processes they use to arrive at decisions regarding the offer of Gifts are beyond reproach and can withstand public scrutiny; and

1.1.5 report any incidences where a bribe and/or cash is offered to them in accordance with Council's Public Interest Disclosure Procedures.

1.2 Under the *Instructions supporting the Standing Directions of the Minister for Finance 2018*, the Victoria Public Sector Commission has set binding minimum accountabilities for the appropriate management of Gifts for Victorian public sector agencies. These may also be instructive for Councillors and can be found on the Victorian Public Sector Commission's website.

2. ACCEPTING OR DECLINING A GIFT

2.1 When determining whether to accept or decline a Gift, a Councillor should consider:

2.1.1 whether clause 5 of this Policy prohibits them from receiving the Gift;

2.1.2 whether the Gift has been offered in public or private;

2.1.3 the motivation for giving the Gift;

2.1.4 the value of the Gift;

2.1.5 the identity of the offeror and their relationship with the Councillor;

2.1.6 how accepting the Gift would be perceived by the local community.

2.1.7 the proportionality of the Gift in the context in which it was given;

2.1.8 whether accepting the Gift would result in any public benefit; and

2.1.9 whether declining the Gift would cause offence or embarrassment to the offeror.

3. THE GIFT DISCLOSURE THRESHOLD

3.1 The Gift Disclosure Threshold applies to any Gift given to a Councillor.

3.2 Any Gift or Gifts equal to or above the Gift Disclosure Threshold received by a Councillor:

3.2.1 in the five years preceding a decision on a matter may give rise to a material conflict of interest in respect of that matter; and

3.2.2 received since the Councillor submitted their last Biannual Personal Interests Return must be recorded in their next Biannual Personal Interests Return.

3.3 Councillors will take extreme care in considering whether to accept a Gift which is, or Gifts which are, equal to or above the Gift Disclosure Threshold.

3.4 If a Councillor is offered a Gift which is, or Gifts which are, equal to or above the Gift Disclosure Threshold, they must notify the CEO within five days, in addition to declaring the offer to the Governance Unit in accordance with clause 6 of this Policy.

4. INCONSEQUENTIAL GIFTS

4.1 A Councillor may accept any Inconsequential Gift.

4.2 Inconsequential Gifts must still be recorded in the Councillor Gifts Register in accordance with clause 6.

5. PROHIBITED GIFTS

5.1 Conflict of Interest

5.1.1 If a Councillor suspects that accepting a particular Gift would give rise to an actual or perceived Conflict of Interest, they must notify the Governance Unit when declaring the Gift so that the Conflict of Interest can be managed appropriately.

5.1.2 If the Governance Unit determines that the Conflict of Interest cannot be appropriately managed, the Councillor must not accept the Gift.

5.2 Anonymous Gifts

5.2.1 A Councillor must not accept, directly or indirectly, any Anonymous Gift that has a value which is equal to or exceeds the Gift Disclosure Threshold.

5.2.2 In accordance with section 137 of the Act, a breach of clause 5.2.1 could result in a Councillor being:

5.2.2.1 liable for a penalty of up to 60 penalty units; and

5.2.2.2 required to pay Council an amount equal to the value of the Anonymous Gift.

5.2.3 A Councillor does not breach section 137 of the Act or clause 5.2.1 if they surrender the Anonymous Gift to Council within 30 days of the Anonymous Gift being received.

5.3 Bribes

5.3.1 A Councillor must not accept any Gift which might constitute, or be perceived to constitute, a Bribe.

5.3.2 If a Councillor believes that a Gift offer constitutes a Bribe, they must immediately notify the CEO, who will determine whether it is necessary to report the incident as a public interest disclosure in accordance with Council's Public Interest Disclosure Procedures and the *Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011*.

5.4 Other Prohibited Gifts

5.4.1 A Councillor must not accept any Gift offer:

5.4.1.1 if the nature of the Gift or the integrity of the offeror could bring them or Council into disrepute;

5.4.1.2 made by a person in respect of whom they will likely make or influence a decision, including any offer:

(a) made by a current or prospective supplier;

(b) made during a procurement or tender process by a person involved in the process;

(c) made by a person with an application before Council; or

(d) made by a person in dispute with Council;

5.4.1.3 of money, or items easily convertible to money (such as gift cards or shares);

5.4.1.4 which could be characterised as a bequest;

5.4.1.5 where acceptance could be perceived as endorsement of a product or service; and/or

5.4.1.6 made by a person whose primary purpose is to lobby Council, Councillors or members of Council staff.

5.5 If a Councillor has concerns about whether a particular Gift is prohibited under this clause 5, they will consult with the Governance Unit in respect of the Gift.

6. DECLARING GIFTS

6.1 Declaration of Gifts generally

6.1.1 A Councillor must record the details of any Gift offered to them, including any Inconsequential Gift and/or any Gift which they decline, on the Councillor Gifts Register by completing a Gift Declaration Form and submitting the form to the Governance Unit.

6.1.2 Gift Declaration Forms for any Gift which is equal to or exceeds the Gift Disclosure Threshold must be submitted within 5 days of the initial offer of the Gift to the Councillor.

6.1.3 Gift Declaration Forms for any other Gift must be submitted within 2 weeks of the initial offer of the Gift to the Councillor.

6.2 Biannual Personal Interest Return disclosure

6.2.1 A Councillor must disclose any Gift with a value which is equal to or exceeds the Gift Disclosure Threshold in their Biannual Personal Interests Return, unless:

6.2.1.1 the Gift was received from a family member;

6.2.1.2 the Gift constituted reasonable hospitality received at an event or function that the Councillor attended in an official capacity as a Councillor; and/or

6.2.1.3 the Gift was already disclosed by the Councillor in an Election Campaign Donation Return.

6.3 Election campaign gifts

6.3.1 A Councillor must disclose, in their Election Campaign Donation Return, any Gift with a value which is equal to or exceeds the Gift Disclosure Threshold and which was received during the Donation Period by or on behalf of the Councillor to be used for or in connection with their election campaign while they are a candidate for election, unless:

6.3.1.1 the Gift was made in a private capacity to the Councillor for their personal use; and

6.3.1.2 the Councillor did not use, and will not use, the gift solely or substantially for a purpose related to the election.

6.3.2 It is unlawful for a Councillor, or for someone acting on their behalf, to receive any Anonymous Gift with a value which is equal to or exceeds the Gift Disclosure Threshold during the Donation Period while they are a candidate for election.

7. COUNCILLOR GIFTS REGISTER

7.1 The Governance Unit will be responsible for maintaining the Councillor Gifts Register.

7.2 The Governance Unit will publish an extract of the Councillor Gifts Register data on Council's website on a quarterly basis. The extract will include:

7.2.1 the date of any offer of a Gift;

7.2.2 the name of the Councillor to whom the Gift was offered;

7.2.3 a generic description of the class of person who offered the Gift (e.g. resident, customer, local business, sport association, developer);

7.2.4 a description of the Gift;

7.2.5 the estimated value of the Gift;

7.2.6 the reason for which the Gift was offered (if known); and

7.2.7 the Councillor's decision regarding the offer.

7.3 The Governance Unit will present the extract of the Councillor Gifts Register data to Council's Audit and Risk Committee for review every six months.

8. TRAINING

8.1 Council must ensure that all Councillors receive induction training and refresher training in the operation of this Policy and associated procedures, including:

8.1.1 information about the aim, principles, accountabilities, and requirements of this Policy;

8.1.2 practical guidance on how to comply with this Policy, i.e. where to obtain gift offer declaration forms and how to refuse a gift without giving offence;

8.1.3 advice that conduct that constitutes a breach of this Policy may also constitute a breach of the Councillor Code of Conduct, the Act, bribery or a form of corruption.

Implementation of this Policy

MONITORING AND REPORTING

All declarations will be monitored by the Governance Unit.

The Governance unit will present the extract of the Councillor Gifts Register data to Council's Audit and Risk Committee for review every six months.

ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

The Responsible Officer for this Policy manages the provision of advice to the organisation regarding this Policy.

A person who is uncertain how to comply with this Policy should seek advice from this person or from their Manager.

RECORDS

Council must retain records associated with this Policy and its implementation in accordance with its Records Information Management Policy

REVIEW

Council should review and, if necessary, amend this Policy within 4 years of the Approval Date.

References

LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 2020
Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020

OTHER DOCUMENTS

Councillor Code of Conduct
Council Expenses Policy
Governance Rules
IBAC Local Government Integrity Frameworks review (2019)
Local Government Victoria – Draft Conflict of Interest Guide (2020)
Public Interest Disclosures Procedure
Records Information Management Policy

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

VERSION:	V1
TYPE OF POLICY:	Council
APPROVAL DATE:	27 FEBRUARY 2024
REVIEW DATE:	27 FEBRUARY 2028
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Chief Governance & Risk Officer
AUTHORISING OFFICER:	CEO

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Introduction

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to provide information and guidance to all Relevant Persons regarding identifying and managing potential and perceived conflicts of interest in accordance with their obligations under the Act.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to Councillors, members of Delegated Committees, including those who are Councillors, members of Community Asset Committees who are Councillors and members of Council staff.

This Policy:

- outlines the categories of conflict of interest covered in the Act and how these can be identified;
- sets out Council's procedures for declaring and managing conflicts of interest;
- promotes understanding of and compliance with the conflict of interest provisions in the Act;
- promotes Council's commitment to maintaining high standards of good governance and minimising public perceptions of bias; and
- outlines Council's record-keeping requirements in respect of any declared conflicts of interest.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to this Policy:

Term	Definition
Act	The *Local Government Act 2020*.
Council	City of Greater Geelong.
ELT	The Executive Leadership Team of Council, as constituted from time to time.
Municipality	The municipal district of Council.
Officers	Members of Council staff.
Policy	This Conflict of Interest Policy as adopted by Council.
Relevant Person	A person to whom the conflict of interest provisions in the Act apply.

Policy

Councillors, Delegated Committee members, Community Asset Committee members and Officers hold positions of public trust. They must perform their duties impartially and in the best interests of the community.

Council acknowledges that conflicts of interest will arise for Relevant Persons and that they cannot always be avoided. They must, however, be identified and appropriately disclosed to ensure that Council maintains high standards of transparency, accountability and public trust.

1. PRINCIPLES

1.1 Council is committed to and will uphold the following principles in applying this Policy:

1.1.1 Public interest: All Relevant Persons have a duty to place the public interest above their private interests when fulfilling their roles as Relevant Persons.

1.1.2 Transparency: All Relevant Persons will contribute to the transparency of Council's decision-making by avoiding (wherever possible), or identifying and disclosing, any conflict of interest.

1.1.3 Accountability: Each Relevant Person is personally responsible and accountable for avoiding (wherever possible), or identifying and disclosing, any conflict of interest.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST CATEGORIES

2.1 A conflict of interest under the Act may be *general* or *material*.

2.2 **General conflict of interest**

2.2.1 A Relevant Person has a general conflict of interest in a matter if an impartial, fair minded person would consider that the Relevant Person's private interests could result in them acting in a manner that is contrary to their public duty.

2.2.2 Private interests means any direct or indirect interest of a Relevant Person that does not derive from their public duty (in this instance, as a Councillor, Delegated or Community Asset Committee member, or Officer). It does not, though, include an interest that is only a matter of personal opinion or belief (e.g. religious beliefs).

2.2.3 Public duty means the responsibilities and obligations that a Relevant Person has in their role at Council.

2.3 Material conflict of interest

2.3.1 A Relevant Person has a material conflict of interest in a matter where an 'affected person' would gain a benefit or suffer a loss depending on the outcome of the matter. The benefit may arise or the loss may be incurred directly or indirectly and in a pecuniary or non-pecuniary form.

2.3.2 An 'affected person', for the purposes of a material conflict of interest, includes:

2.3.2.1 the Relevant Person);

2.3.2.2 a family member of the Relevant Person;

2.3.2.3 a body corporate, including incorporated associations, of which the Relevant Person or their spouse or domestic partner is a director or a member of the governing body;

2.3.2.4 an employer of the Relevant Person, unless the employer is a public body;

2.3.2.5 a business partner of the Relevant Person;

2.3.2.6 a person for whom the Relevant Person is a consultant, contractor or agent;

2.3.2.7 a beneficiary under a trust or an object of a discretionary trust of which the Relevant Person is a trustee; and/or

2.3.2.8 a person from whom the Relevant Person has received a disclosable gift (as defined in the Act – currently a gift or gifts with a total value over $500).

2.4 Exemptions

2.4.1 A conflict of interest will not arise in the following circumstances:

2.4.1.1 the interest is remote or insignificant;

2.4.1.2 the interest is held in common with a substantial portion of residents, ratepayers or electors in the Municipality and does not exceed the interest held by them;

2.4.1.3 the Relevant Person has no knowledge of the interest;

2.4.1.4 the interest only arises because the Relevant Person is the representative of Council on a not-for-profit organisation that has an interest in the matter *and* the Relevant Person receives no personal advantage from the not-for-profit organisation;

2.4.1.5 the interest only arises because a family member of the Relevant Person is a member, but not an office-holder, of a not-for profit organisation;

2.4.1.6 the interest only arises because the Relevant Person is a member of a not-for-profit organisation that has expressed an opinion or advocated for an outcome in regards to the matter; and

2.4.1.7 in respect of a Relevant Person who is a Councillor, the interest arises in relation to a matter or in a circumstance that is prescribed to be exempt by regulations made under the Act.

3. IDENTIFYING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

3.1 The following examples provide some guidance on real or perceived conflicts of interests, contrasted with interests which will not be in breach of the Act. However, conflicts of interest should be judged by the specific circumstances of each case.

Potential conflicts of interest	Interests that are not in breach
An Officer assists in the preparation of a Council Report regarding a decision on a planning permit for their daughter's property.	A Governance Manager must engage a mediator for a Councillor Code of Conduct complaint and his former employer is a mediator.
A Councillor is a part owner of a development company which submits a planning application to Council.	A Councillor is a member (and not a board member) of a local surf lifesaving club. The Councillor took part in a planning decision in relation to the club's property. Her interests do not exceed others as a substantial proportion of the local community are members of surf lifesaving clubs.
An Officer makes a decision on a proposal to vary parking signs in the street where they live.	A Delegated Committee member works in gambling research for a university and voted on Council's strategic plan, which includes an objective to reduce harm associated with gambling.

A Contract Manager is issuing a purchase order under a panel contract where his wife's business is a panel member.	A Councillor's brother is a member (but not an office holder) of a community hockey club and the Councillor is involved in the consideration of an application for funding made by the club.
A Delegated Committee member takes part in a decision about a liquor licensing permit for a business next door to their property.	An Officer is deciding on a Local Law permit being sought by a couple whose café she frequents at lunchtime.
A Planning Officer's extremely close friend (note – the friendship must be akin to a familial relationship to give rise to a conflict of interest) is an applicant for a planning permit for which she is writing the Officer Report to Council.	A Planning Officer's friend is an applicant for a planning permit for a planning permit for which she is writing the Officer Report to Council.

4. DISCLOSING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

4.1 Chapter 6 of Council's Governance Rules sets out the procedures for disclosing and managing a general or material conflict of interest in certain circumstances. Those procedures govern circumstances where:

4.1.1 a Councillor has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a Council meeting at which they are present or intend to be present;

4.1.2 a member of a Delegated Committee has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a Delegated Committee meeting at which they are present or intend to be present;

4.1.3 a Councillor has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a Community Asset Committee meeting at which they are present or intend to be present;

4.1.4 a Councillor has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered by a meeting held under the auspices of Council at which they are present;

4.1.5 an Officer has a conflict of interest in a matter in respect of which they are preparing, or contributing to the preparation of, a report for consideration ay a Council meeting, Delegated Committee meeting or Community Asset Committee meeting; and

4.1.6 an Officer has a conflict of interest in a matter in connection with their exercise of a delegated power or statutory function.

4.2 All Relevant Persons must ensure that they comply with the procedures set out in the Governance Rules in respect of disclosing a general or material conflict of interest.

5. MANANGING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

5.1 If you suspect that you or another Relevant Person may have a potential or perceived conflict of interest, it is important to manage it properly to ensure that Council's decision-making processes are not compromised.

5.2 Any Relevant Person who suspects they have a potential or perceived conflict of interest should:

5.2.1 disclose the conflict of interest in accordance with the Governance Rules;

5.2.2 discuss the implications of the conflict of interest with the Governance Unit and seek additional advice if required; and

5.2.3 in consultation with the Governance Unit (and, in the case of an Officer, their direct manager), prepare and implement a management plan that will outline how the conflict of interest will be managed.

6. POLICY NOT EXHAUSTIVE

6.1 This Policy is intended to provide guidance to Relevant Persons when identifying and managing conflicts of interest. This Policy does not provide an exhaustive set of circumstances in which conflicts of interest might arise.

6.2 Relevant Persons are required to use their own judgement on ‘case by case’ basis. If further advice or guidance is needed, Relevant Persons should contact the Governance Unit.

Implementation of this Policy

MONITORING AND REPORTING

All conflicts of interest will be monitored and reported on by the Governance Unit.

Conflicts of Interest declared by Councillors will be recorded in the Council Agenda's & Minutes.

ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

The Responsible Officer for this Policy manages the provision of advice to the organisation regarding this Policy.

A person who is uncertain how to comply with this Policy should seek advice from this person or from their Manager.

RECORDS

Council must retain records associated with this Policy and its implementation in accordance with its Records Information Management Policy

REVIEW

Council should review and, if necessary, amend this Policy within 4 years of the Approval Date.

References

Legislation

Local Government Act 2020

Other Documents

Records Information Management Policy

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

SPONSORSHIP POLICY

VERSION:	**1**
TYPE OF POLICY:	**Council**
APPROVAL DATE:	**27 FEBRUARY 2024**
REVIEW DATE:	**27 FEBRUARY 2028**
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	**Manager Advocacy & Government Relations**
AUTHORISING OFFICER:	**Executive Director Placemaking**

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Introduction

PURPOSE

This Policy aims to provide an understanding of Council's objectives and approach to providing, receiving and managing sponsorships.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to:

- all Sponsorship Agreements entered into by the City as the provider or the recipient of sponsorships;
- Councillors, City Staff and persons wishing to enter into Sponsorship Agreements with the City.

This Policy does not apply to:

- donations, grants, bequests, advertising space or editorial content; or
- users and/or lessees of Council facilities.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to this Policy:

Term	Definition
Act	the *Local Government Act 2020* (as amended from time to time).
Annual Report	the Annual Report prepared under section 98 of the Act.
Assessing Officer	the member of City Staff who is allocated a Sponsorship Application for assessment.
City	the City of Greater Geelong organisation, let by the CEO.
City Staff	includes employees and contractors..
Council	The Greater Geelong City Council comprised of elected councillors led by the Mayor. .
ELT	the Executive Leadership Team of Council, as constituted from time to time.
Policy	this Sponsorship Policy adopted by Council.
Project	any program, project, event, asset, service or infrastructure delivered or managed by Council or another organisation.
Resolution	a resolution of Council made at a properly constituted Council meeting.
Sponsorship Agreement	an agreement entered into between the City and another person in respect of a sponsorship arrangement.
Sponsorship Application	an application submitted by a person seeking to provide to, or seek from, Council sponsorship.

Policy

Sponsorships support and empower Council to deliver, and assist in the delivery of, a diverse range of Projects to meet the needs of the community. They also provide opportunities for Council to develop meaningful relationships with external parties.

This Policy is intended to provide guidance for City Staff both providing and receiving sponsorships on behalf of Council.

The City reserves the right to suspend or terminate any Sponsorship Agreement if a circumstance arises that could negatively impact Council or perceptions of Council.

1. OVERVIEW OF SPONSORSHIP PROCESS

1.1 Council will offer opportunities to local organisations to:

1.1.1 sponsor Council Projects; and

1.1.2 seek sponsorships from Council for external Projects.

1.2 Sponsorships can be made in the form of cash or in-in kind, or a combination of both.

1.3 Sponsorship proposals must be made by formal application to the City's Advocacy & Government Relations Team].

1.4 The following table sets out the process by which the City will assess and award sponsorships.

Step	Description
1. Identification	The City identifies a possible opportunity for sponsorship, either independently or on receipt of a proposal.
2. Risk assessment	Discussions are held with relevant areas of the City and other relevant parties to check feasibility of pursuing a sponsorship, including cost vs benefits, resources, risks, timeframes and interdependencies.
3. Application / request	Applications and requests for sponsorship may be solicited or unsolicited.
4. Assessment	Sponsorship proposals are assessed in line with the criteria set out at clauses 2 and 3 of this Policy.
5. Endorsement and approval	If City Staff endorse an application to provide or receive sponsorship, it is then presented to Council or Council's delegate for approval.
6. Agreement	Following approval, the parties negotiate a Sponsorship Agreement.

2. ASSESSMENT OF SPONSORSHIP APPLICATIONS

2.1 A Sponsorship Application to provide or receive sponsorship will only be approved in circumstances where it:

2.1.1 supports the achievement of Council's objectives in the community;

2.1.2 is linked with key Council priorities and consistent with the Council Plan;

2.1.3 ensures value for money;

2.1.4 upholds ethical, impartial and fair principles; and

2.1.5 is made by an applicant with:

2.1.5.1 an ABN;

2.1.5.2 an appropriate legal structure; and

2.1.5.3 current public liability and professional indemnity coverage (where applicable).

2.2 The following table outlines the criteria that Assessing Officers will take into account in assessing a Sponsorship Application.

Criterion	Description
Alignment with Council's vision and objectives	The external party and Council will share similar goals and objectives in respect of the relevant Project.
Financial risk and stability	The external party has sufficient financial stability to meet its responsibilities under a prospective Sponsorship Agreement.
Community engagement	The external party will be committed to working with Council and the City to engage with the community through the sponsorship.
Transparency and ethics	The external party will have transparent business practices and a commitment to ethical behaviour.
Compliance with laws and regulations	The external party can provide evidence that they will be compliant with all laws and regulations related to the arrangement.

2.3 The City's Advocacy & Government Relations Team will determine the appropriate financial value of a sponsorship in line with the nature of the Project being sponsored. Examples of financial tiers for sponsorships are set out below.

Sponsorship tier	Financial contribution p.a	Example benefits for party receiving sponsorship	Example benefits for party providing sponsorship
Tier 1	$20,001 and greater	Financial contribution and/or in-kind support for a single major Project, or across multiple Projects.	Significant presence on marketing collateral related to the Projects (including logos on relevant materials). Exclusivity.

			Naming rights for an event or asset. Opportunities for significant presence at Projects, including: • speaking opportunities; and • opportunities to network and build relationships with influence community leaders • opportunities to host/chair. Exhibition space and website space.
Tier 2	$10,001 to $20,000	Financial contribution and/or in-kind support for a single Project, or a series of smaller connected Projects.	Significant presence on marketing collateral related to the Project(s) (including logos on relevant materials). Naming rights for an event or asset. Opportunity for limited presence at Projects. Exhibition space and website space.
Tier 3	$10,000 or below	Financial contribution and/or in-kind support for a single Project.	Significant presence on marketing collateral related to the Project (including logos on relevant materials). Exhibition space and website space.

3. EXCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

3.1 Unless exceptional circumstances exist, as determined by the City from time to time, the City will not enter into any Sponsorship Agreement with any person that:

3.1.1 may be directly impacted by a matter which is currently pending decision by Council;

3.1.2 has had an unrecovered or written-off debt with Council within the past two years;

3.1.3 has failed to meet the requirements of previous arrangements with Council, including sponsorship arrangements, grant arrangements, and commercial contracts;

3.1.4 is currently, or likely to soon be, involved in an active tendering or procurement process with Council;

3.1.5 is prohibited by law from participating in sponsorship or partnership arrangements;

3.1.6 is a registered political party;

3.1.7 is a religious group seeking to promote its spiritual beliefs through the arrangement;

3.1.8 is owned by, or has an officer holder, who currently occupies or is running for election to political office at any level of government;

3.1.9 engages in activities which conflict with Council's responsibilities to the community; and/or

3.1.10 may otherwise prove detrimental to the public image or reputation of Council.

3.2 The City will not allow any other party to a sponsorship arrangement to:

3.2.1 determine the content of any Council-organised Project;

3.2.2 have undue influence over Council City Staff; or

3.2.3 access any confidential or restricted information held by Council.

3.3 Council explicitly prohibits any arrangements which would give rise to an actual or perceived conflict of interest for any Councillor or City Staff, unless that conflict of interest can be managed in accordance with the Act and Council's Conflict of Interest Policy.

4. SPONSORSHIP AGREEMENT

4.1 Before commencing any sponsorship activities, Council will enter into a Sponsorship Agreement.

4.2 A Sponsorship Agreement will:

4.2.1 outline the details and objectives of the Project that will be funded or supported by the sponsorship;

4.2.2 outline the specific manner in which the sponsor will provide funding and/or in kind-resources for the Project;

4.2.3 outline the specific benefits that the sponsor will receive in consideration for the sponsorship;

4.2.4 outline each party's responsibilities in relation to the arrangement;

4.2.5 provide that the release of any communications in relation to the arrangement will be subject to consultation between the parties and the approval of Council;

4.2.6 contain clauses related to dispute resolution;

4.2.7 contain termination clauses, including a provision for Council to terminate the Sponsorship Agreement where it learns of new information that would give rise to one of the circumstances described in clause 3 of this Policy;

4.2.8 provide for the term of the arrangement;

4.2.9 provide for any relevant monitoring and evaluation activities to be conducted; and

4.2.10 be reviewed by the City's Legal Services Team prior to execution.

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

5.1 The City will monitor and evaluate each Sponsorship Agreement for effectiveness and value against the objectives set for the arrangements.

5.2 If a Sponsorship Agreement has a term of more than 12 months, the City will undertake monitoring and evaluation activities on an annual basis.

5.3 If a Sponsorship Agreement has a term of less than 12 months, the City will undertake monitoring and evaluation activities at the end of the arrangement.

6. TRANSPARENCY

6.1 Any funds received by Council through sponsorships will be treated as public monies and must be used solely for the agreed purpose as described in the Sponsorship Agreement.

6.2 Council will not accept in-kind sponsorship where the goods or services do not meet the objective criteria as established in Council's Procurement Policy.

6.3 Council will report on sponsorships in its Annual Report.

Implementation of this Policy

MONITORING AND REPORTING

The Manager Advocacy and Government Relations will monitor and report on this Policy.

ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

The Responsible Officer for this Policy manages the provision of advice to the organisation regarding this Policy.

A person who is uncertain how to comply with this Policy should seek advice from this person or from their Manager.

RECORDS

Council must retain records associated with this Policy and its implementation in accordance with its Records Information Management Policy

REVIEW

Council should review and, if necessary, amend this Policy within 4 years of the Approval Date.

References

Legislation

Local Government Act 2020

Other Documents

Records Information Management Policy

Local Government Better Practice Guide, Performance Reporting for Council's Annual Report.

2.13. CEO Employment and Remuneration Council Terms of Reference Review

Source: **Corporate Services**

Executive Director: **Troy Edwards**

Purpose

1. To endorse the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Committee Terms of Reference (**ToR**) (**Attachment 1**).

Background

2. Sections 44 and 45 of the *Local Government Act 2020* provide for Council to appoint a CEO and develop a CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy (**Policy**).

3. The Policy was adopted by Council on 12 December 2023 with effect from 1 May, 2024.

4. The Policy implements the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee (**Committee**).

5. During the Policy review it was determined, in consultation with the Municipal Monitors, that a ToR be developed to support the Policy implementation and the proceedings of the Committee.

Key Matters

6. Key benefits of the proposed ToR include:

    6.1. A mid-year review of the CEO's performance with the submission of a mid-year review report to Council by the Committee. The mid-year review report to Council will include:

        6.1.1. whether and to what extent the CEO has met the KPI's under the Performance Plan;

        6.1.2. whether and to what extent and KPI's or criteria need to be varied under the Performance Plan; and

        6.1.3. any other relevant matters.

    6.2. The Committee will be chaired by the independent member of the Committee. In that person's absence the chair will be the Mayor and in the Mayor's absence the chair will be the Deputy Mayor.

    6.3. The ToR include provisions relating to the recruitment and scope of services of the independent member .

RESOLUTION - Item 2.13

Cr Sullivan moved, Cr Aitken seconded -

That Council endorse the Terms of Reference for the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee, effective 1 May 2024.

Carried

Financial Sustainability

7. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Community Engagement

8. Given the nature of the Policy and its legislative requirement, no community engagement has been carried out during the development of the ToR.

9. The Municipal Monitors have been engaged in the development of the new ToR.

Social Equity and Sustainability

10. Social equity and sustainability are considered as part of the recruitment process for the independent member and overarching governance principles.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

11. The ToR are designed to support the Policy, which is a requirement of the section 45 of the Act.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

12. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority: High-performing council and organisation.

Conflict of Interest

13. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

14. The integrity of the processes associated with the employment of the CEO and compliance with legislative provisions of the Act are supported by the Policy and the ToR.

Environmental Sustainability

15. There are no known environmental implications associated with this report.

Attachments

1. CEO Employment Remuneration Committee ToRs [**2.13.1** - 6 pages]

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER EMPLOYMENT AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Version:	**1**
Approval date:	**27 February 2024**
Responsible officer:	**Chief People Officer**
Authorising officer:	**Executive Director Corporate Services**

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

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Terms of Reference

1. SCOPE

1.1 The purpose of the Committee is to guide and make recommendations to Council about:

1.1.1 the selection and appointment of the Independent Member;

1.1.2 independent advice received from time to time from the Independent Member;

1.1.3 performance monitoring of the CEO, including with respect to achievement of the KPIs;

1.1.4 annual review of the CEO's performance, including against the KPIs;

1.1.5 the CEO's remuneration;

1.1.6 the recruitment and appointment of a CEO, if required;

1.1.7 provisions to be included in the Contract of Employment from time to time;

1.1.8 the appointment of an Acting CEO; and

1.1.9 implementation of the Policy.

2. DATE OF COMMENCEMENT

2.1 These Terms commence operation on 1 May 2024.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 In these Terms, unless the context suggests otherwise, the following words and phrases mean:

3.1.1 **Act** means the *Local Government Act 2020*.

3.1.2 **Acting CEO** means the person appointed by Council in accordance with s 44(4) of the Act to act in the position of CEO.

3.1.3 **Agreement** means the consultancy agreement entered into between Council and the Independent Member.

3.1.4 **Chair** means the Chairperson of a Meeting and includes an acting, temporary and/or substitute Chairperson.

3.1.5 **Chief Executive Officer** or **CEO** means the Chief Executive Officer of Council.

3.1.6 **Committee** means the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee established under Council's CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy.

3.1.7 **Contract of Employment** means the contract of employment between Council and the CEO, including any schedules.

3.1.8 **Council** means the City of Greater Geelong.

3.1.9 **Council meeting** has the same meaning as in the Act.

3.1.10 **Councillors** means the individuals holding the office of a member of Council.

3.1.11 **Deputy Mayor** means the Deputy Mayor of Council.

3.1.12 **Independent Member** means the external professional appointed by Council to provide independent advice in accordance with s 45(2)(a) of the Act (as replaced from time to time).

3.1.13 **KPIs** means Key Performance Indicators or performance criteria however described.

3.1.14 **Mayor** means the Mayor of Council.

3.1.15 **Policy** means the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy adopted by council under s 45 of the Act from time to time.

3.1.16 **Resolution** means a Resolution of Council made at a properly constituted Council meeting.

3.1.17 **Total Remuneration Package** means the total gross remuneration package paid to the CEO pursuant to the Contract of Employment.

4. AUTHORITY

4.1 The Committee is an advisory committee and does not have the delegated authority of Council. Its role is to make recommendations to Council regarding the employment of its CEO.

5. COMPOSITION

5.1 The Committee will comprise of:

5.1.1 the Mayor;

5.1.2 the Deputy Mayor;

5.1.3 up to 4 other Councillors, as determined by Council from time to time; and

5.1.4 the Independent Member.

5.2 The Committee is to be chaired by:

5.2.1 the Independent Member; or

5.2.2 if the Independent Member is absent, the Mayor; or

5.2.3 if the Mayor is absent, the Deputy Mayor.

6. ROLE OF THE INDEPENDENT MEMBER

6.1 Without limiting the role and duties of the Independent Member, the Independent Member is required to:

6.1.1 attend all Committee meetings, at the times, dates and places as the Committee may determine;

6.1.2 chair all Committee meetings, and carry out the duties and exercise the discretions conferred on the Chair in accordance with any rules or procedures adopted by the Committee from time to time;

6.1.3 actively participate in the Committee's mid-year and annual review of the CEO's performance plan;

6.1.4 actively participate in the deliberations and recommendations of the Committee; and

6.1.5 oversee the preparation of documentation relevant to the Committee and the CEO's employment ad remuneration including Committee minutes and reports to the Council on the CEO's performance and remuneration reviews.

6.1.6 do all things reasonably required to ensure that the Committee discharges its role and complies with the Policy and the Act.

7. SELECTION OF THE INDEPENDENT MEMBER

7.1 The Independent Member will be appointed by Council by Resolution.

7.2 The Independent Member will be appointed for a 3-year term and can be reappointed by a Resolution.

7.3 The Independent Member must:

7.3.1 not be a Councillor;

7.3.2 not be a member of Council staff; and

7.3.3 be suitably qualified to advise the Committee on matters concerning the CEO's performance.

7.4 The Independent Member will have the following key competencies:

7.4.1 demonstrated knowledge of local government and the capacity to advise the Council on all aspects of the Policy.

7.4.2 demonstrated human resource management experience and leadership (specifically in the areas of recruitment, benchmarking, performance management and reviews and professional development of executive level staff);

7.4.3 experience in senior roles in business and/or the public sector; and

7.4.4 experience working with boards or other governance bodies.

7.5 When there is an impending vacancy in the role of the Independent Member, or the role becomes vacant, Council will source nominations for an appropriate candidate for the role of Independent Member.

7.6 All Committee members other than the current Independent Member will consider nominations received and make a recommendation to Council on the appointment of a preferred candidate.

8. REMUNERATION OF THE INDEPENDENT MEMBER

8.1 The Independent Member will be remunerated in accordance with the Agreement.

8.2 The Independent Member will be reimbursed for any transport costs incurred in attending and participating in Committee meetings and related activities in accordance with the Agreement.

9. QUORUM

9.1 A majority of the Committee Members constitutes a quorum.

10. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

10.1 The Committee is to hold meetings as often as is necessary to:

10.1.1 prepare documentation relevant to the CEO's employment and remuneration, including Council reports and contract documents, for the approval of Council;

10.1.2 conduct and maintain appropriate records regarding performance reviews of the CEO; and

10.1.3 review the Total Remuneration Package and conditions of employment of the CEO,

provided that the Committee meets at least twice in each year, as determined by Council.

10.2 Council will fix a schedule of meetings for the Committee at the outset of each Financial Year.

10.3 In addition to the minimum number of meetings set out in clause 10.1, additional Committee meetings may be called by:

10.3.1 Council;

10.3.2 the Committee; or

10.3.3 the Independent Member,

10.4 as and when required.

11. REPORTING

11.1 The business of the Committee shall be recorded in proper minutes.

11.2 The Committee will provide a report to the next available Council meeting following each Committee meeting describing its activities and making recommendations about any action to be taken by Council.

11.3 All meetings and records of the Committee will remain confidential unless Council determines otherwise.

12. REVIEW

12.1 These Terms of Reference may be reviewed at any time by the Committee or Council.

12.2 Changes to these Terms of Reference can only be made by Resolution.

3. RECORD OF INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS

Source: **Corporate Services**
Executive Director: **Troy Edwards**

Summary

1. The Governance Rules of the City of Greater Geelong require the tabling of records of informal meetings of Councillors at the next convenient Council meeting and that their record be included in the minutes of that Council meeting.
2. A summary of the informal meetings of Councillors is attached.

RESOLUTION - Item 3.1

Cr Wilkinson moved, Cr Mason seconded -

That Council receive the summary of the informal meetings of Councillors for the period to 27 February 2024.

Carried

INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS
(Council Meeting 27 February 2024)

Informal Meeting Details	Councillor Attendance/Apology	Officer Attendance	Agenda Items	Conflict of Interest Disclosures
Councillor Strategic Session **6 February 2024**	Crs Sullivan, Aitken, Cadwell, Harwood, Hathway, Kontelj, Moloney, Murrihy, Nelson, Wilkinson *Leave of Absence: Cr Mason*	A Wastie (CEO) T Bradley (EXEC DIR) T Edwards (EXEC DIR) A Locke (A/EXEC DIR) J Stirton (EXEC DIR) V Allan (Chief Legal Counsel) A Millar (MGR) A Higgs (MGR) J Meaden (CO ORD) W Lugg (Team Leader) S Owens (Chief Financial Officer) J Douglas (A/MGR) E Baensch (OFF)	• Regional Sporting Infrastructure • Governance Rules Workshop • Local Laws Review Workshop	• Nil
Councillor Briefing **13 February 2024**	Crs Sullivan, Aitken, Cadwell, Harwood, Hathway, Moloney, Murrihy, Wilkinson *Leave of Absence: Cr Mason* *Apologies: Crs Kontelj, Nelson*	A Wastie (CEO) T Bradley (EXEC DIR) T Edwards (EXEC DIR) A Locke (A/EXEC DIR) J Stirton (EXEC DIR) A Higgs (PROG MGR) A Miller (MGR) J Van Slageren (MGR) J Hurse (MGR) J Thomas (CO ORD) P Smith (CO ORD) J Meaden,(CO ORD) S Budd (PROJ MGR) S Owens (A/Chief Financial Officer) J Douglas (A/MGR) E Baensch (OFF)	*Presentations:* • Regional sporting Infrastructure Guidelines of Jobs Skills, Industry and Regions • Budget Update – Capital Projects • Cat Curfew Review *Reports:* • Cat Curfew Review • Northern and Western Geelong Growth Ares – Annual Progress Report • Planning Controls for Trees on Private Land • Amendment C383ggee – Advertising Sign Guidelines – Consideration of Panel Report and Adoption • Financial Performance Report Year to Date Ended 31 December 2023	• Nil

			• Proposed Road Discontinuance and Sale of Land at the Rear of 35 Villamanta Street, Geelong West • Proposed Road Discontinuance and Sale of Land at the Rear of 160-172 Malop Street, Geelong • T2300116 Grinding and Decontamination Services • Variation to Procurement Policy • Adoption of Council Policies • G21 Regional Football (Soccer) Strategy 2023-2033 (Final Report) • CEO Employment and Remuneration – Council Terms of Reference Review • 2023-2024 First Nations Cultural Heritage Grants (Confidential) • Audit and Risk Committee Summary Report (Confidential)	

4. PLANNING DELEGATIONS

Source: **Placemaking**
Executive Director: **Tennille Bradley**

Purpose

1. To provide the schedule of planning permit applications determined under delegation since the last report.

Background

2. Section 11 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and section 188 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* empower Council to delegate its powers, duties and functions under relevant legislation to members of Council staff.
3. Section 63 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and section 188 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* allow Council to establish a delegated committee with the power to determine planning permit applications.
4. Council to Staff Instrument of Delegation allows staff to determine planning permit applications where there are less than 6 objections lodged.
5. The Planning Committee's terms of reference provide for determination of planning permit applications where there are 6 or more objections lodged.
6. The City is required by Council to provide information on planning permit applications determined under delegation.

Key Matters

7. The Schedule attached to this report provides information on the planning permit applications determined under delegation since the last report.

RESOLUTION - Item 4.1

Cr Harwood moved, Cr Mason seconded -

That Council receive the information in the Schedule entitled Planning Decisions Report for January 2024.

Carried

Planning Decisions Report January 2024

App No	Location	Application Type	Decision Date	Description	Authority Description/ No of Objectors
PP-355-2023	2046-2100 Portarlington Road, DRYSDALE VIC 3222	Development of a telecommunications facility comprising a 35 metre monopole, associated antennas and equipment; Alteration of Access from the Transport Zone 2	22/01/2024	Grant a Planning Permit	Delegated Authority
PP-377-2023	54 Spruhan Avenue, NORLANE VIC 3214	Construction of Five (5) Dwellings and Five (5) Lot Subdivision	19/01/2024	Refusal	Decision Making Committee
PP-428-2023	57 Howitt Avenue, CORIO VIC 3214	Construction of Three (3) Dwellings	29/01/2024	NOD Planning Permit	Decision Making Committee
PP-588-2023	258 Pakington Street, GEELONG WEST VIC 3218	Construct and Display Business Identification Signage and an Internally Illuminated Sign and Gate	19/01/2024	NOD Planning Permit	Decision Making Committee
PP-595-2023	15 Punt Road, BARWON HEADS VIC 3227	Construction of Three (3) Dwellings and Three (3) Lot Subdivision	22/01/2024	Grant a Planning Permit	Delegated Authority
PP-596-2017/C	15 Lelean Street, OCEAN GROVE VIC 3226	Change of Use to a Food and Drink Premises (Cafe), Waiver of Loading Bay Requirement, Reduction of Car Parking, Business Identification Signage, Removal of Restrictive Covenant 0247472 and Use of the Land to Sell and Consume Liquor in Association with a Cafe/Restaurant	22/01/2024	Grant an Amended Planning Permit/Plans	Delegated Authority
PP-758-2023	94 Willis Street, PORTARLINGTON VIC 3223	Construction of Four (4) Dwellings	29/01/2024	NOD Planning Permit	Decision Making Committee

Planning Decisions Report January 2024

PP-768-2022	294 Torquay Road, GROVEDALE VIC 3216	Use and Development for a Service Station and Two (2) Convenience Restaurants, Construction and Display of Signs (including Internally Illuminated, Business Identification, Reflective and Promotion Signs), and Alteration of Access to a Road in a Transport Zone 2	23/01/2024	Grant a Planning Permit	Delegated Authority
PP-852-2015	1-43 Beach Road, LARA VIC 3212	Use and development of the land for a materials recycling facility in a Farming Zone subject to an Environmental Significance Overlay; Reduction in the number of car parking spaces required under Clause 52.06-5.	31/01/2024	PI - Extended Planning Permit	Delegated Authority
PP-1006-2023	17 Roberts Road, BELMONT VIC 3216	Construction of Two (2) Dwellings	12/01/2024	NOD - Delegate	1
PP-1053-2023	26 Stephen Street, NEWTOWN VIC 3220	Partial demolition and Alterations and Additions to Existing Dwelling	24/01/2024	NOD - Delegate	2
PP-1097-2023	60 Forest Road North, LARA VIC 3212	Removal of Restrictive Covenant from Lot 1 on PS431989M	8/01/2024	NOD - Delegate	1
PP-1119-2023	81 Stevens Street, PORTARLINGTON VIC 3223	Construction of Four (4) Dwellings & Four (4) Lot Subdivision	17/01/2024	NOD - Delegate	2
PP-1129-2023	25 Grafton Street, ST ALBANS PARK VIC 3219	Construction of Two (2) Dwellings & Two (2) Lot Subdivision	25/01/2024	NOD - Delegate	1
PP-414-2023	10 St Andrews Drive, LARA VIC 3212	Construction of Two (2) Sheds Associated with a Poultry Farm	17/01/2024	NOD - Delegate	5

Planning Decisions Report January 2024

PP-521-2023	199 Thompson Road, BELL PARK VIC 3215	Change of Use to Restaurant, Sale & Consumption of Alcohol associated with a Cafe/Restaurant Liquor Licence, Buildings & Works Associated with an extension to the Restaurant, Construct and Display Internally Illuminated and Business Identification Signage and Reduction in Car Parking Requirements	15/01/2024	NOD - Delegate	1
PP-567-2023	365 Autumn Street, NEWTOWN VIC 3220	Construction of Two (2) Dwellings and a Two (2) Lot Subdivision	15/01/2024	NOD - Delegate	1
PP-587-2023	2046-2100 Portarlington Road, DRYSDALE VIC 3222	Construct a Dwelling, Outbuilding and Swimming Pool	12/01/2024	NOD - Delegate	5
PP-846-2023	19 Willana Avenue, HAMLYN HEIGHTS VIC 3215	Construction of an Additional Dwelling	10/01/2024	NOD - Delegate	1
PP-851-2023	95 Old Ballarat Road, BATESFORD VIC 3213	Creation of Access to a Transport Road Zone 2	12/01/2024	NOD - Delegate	5
PP-914-2023	14 Stratford Court, GROVEDALE VIC 3216	Construction of Additional Dwelling and Two (2) Lot Subdivision	18/01/2024	NOD - Delegate	5
PP-961-2023	396 Pakington Street, NEWTOWN VIC 3220	Extension to a Building and Reduction in Car Parking	12/01/2024	NOD - Delegate	1

5. CONFIDENTIAL

Council will close the meeting to the public in accordance with the provision of section 66(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* to consider the following items:

5.1. 2023-24 First Nations Cultural Heritage Grants (Confidential)

Source: Corporate Services
Executive Director: Troy Edwards

Confidential

RESOLUTION - Item 5.1

Cr Harwood moved, Cr Wilkinson seconded -

That Council consider this report at the conclusion of the meeting as it is designated confidential by the Chief Executive Officer pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the information contained in this report is confidential because it contains Council business information being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations. This section is applicable because the agenda item contains a level of detail which if released would diminish the organisation's capacity to compete in a commercial environment.

Carried

5.2. Audit and Risk Committee Summary Report (Confidential)

Source: Corporate Services
Executive Director: Troy Edwards

Confidential

RESOLUTION - Item 5.2

Cr Harwood moved, Cr Wilkinson seconded -

That Council consider this report at the conclusion of the meeting as it is designated confidential by the Chief Executive Officer pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the information contained in this report is confidential because it contains Council business information being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations. This section is applicable because of the sensitive and varied nature of the information received and considered by the Audit & Risk Committee from time-to-time which can pertain to external stakeholders also.

Carried

CLOSE OF MEETING

Cr Mason moved, Cr Harwood seconded -

That the meeting be closed to the public.

Carried

The meeting was closed to the public at 9.42pm

Cr Harwood moved, Cr Wilkinson seconded -

That the meeting be re-opened to the public.

Carried

The meeting was re-opened to the public at 9.47pm

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 9.47pm on Tuesday 27 February 2024.

Signed: _____

Cr Trent Sullivan (Mayor)

Date: _____